The Role of Public Transportation as a Job Access Mode: Lessons from a Survey of Persons with Disability in New Jersey

DiscoverAbility Webinar
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Leader in the research and development of innovative transportation policy in:

- Transportation equity and options for transportation disadvantaged populations
- Interrelationship between land use and transportation
- Transportation Security
- Climate change/environment
- Transportation policy and finance
- Pedestrian and bicycle mobility and safety
VTC five-year transportation action plan: “Meeting the Employment Transportation Needs of People with Disabilities in New Jersey”

http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/documents/TransEq.DDS_Final_Report.pdf

Plan recommendations pursued by VTC:

- *NJ Find A Ride transportation information website*
- *Travel Concierge Pilot*
- *NJ Community Transportation: Expanding Resources to Improve Services*
Today’s Focus: Presentation Outline

I. Survey Purpose and Administration

II. Findings
   a. Who are our respondents?
   b. What did they tell us about their employment history?
   c. What did they tell us about their experiences/thoughts on work-related transportation?

III. What can we learn from these findings?
Research Background

Research Need

• 11% of working age adults in the U.S. report one or more disabilities

• Civilian labor force participation rate in U.S. for persons with disability: 22% compared to 71% for those without disability

• Unemployment rate in U.S. for person with disability: 15% compared to 9% for those without disability

Impacts of these Findings

• Both **PERSONAL** & **SOCIETAL** costs
1. What are the transportation barriers to job seekers with disabilities in New Jersey?

2. What are the specific issues/obstacles people with disabilities in New Jersey experience with taking public transportation to/from work?
Survey Development

Survey Target Audience

- NJ Persons with Disability
- Age 18 and older
- Actively seeking employment

Final Survey Details

- About 50 questions
- Available both in paper version and online
Survey Dissemination

Reaching Population Required
Multi-Prong, Creative Approach

✓ NJ DVRS
✓ NJ County Offices of the Disabled
✓ NJ Centers for Independent Living
✓ NJ Division of Disability Services
✓ NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities
✓ ARC
✓ Jewish Vocational Service of MetroWest New Jersey
✓ Saint Clare’s Career Services
✓ MOSAIC Center for Disability Employment
✓ NJ TRANSIT
✓ And others
Who Participated?

489 responses
- 145 returned the mail-back survey
- 344 completed the online survey

14.1% indicated they received assistance from a friend/family member or other person
Where Are They From?
Survey Respondents by County

[Map of New Jersey showing counties with numbers indicating the number of survey respondents from each county.]
Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

Race

- White: 64% (VTC survey) vs. 61% (ACS Unemployed)
- Black: 28% vs. 24%
- Asian: 5% vs. 4%
- Other races: 3% vs. 11%
Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

Highest Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>VTC survey</th>
<th>ACS Unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School graduate</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College but less than bachelor's degree</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate degree</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>VTC Survey</th>
<th>ACS Unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

Household Income

- VTC survey
- ACS Unemployed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>VTC</th>
<th>ACS Unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $15,000</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-$24,999</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$34,999</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$149,999</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 or more</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

Vehicles in Household

- **VTC survey**
- **ACS Unemployed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicles in Household</th>
<th>VTC</th>
<th>ACS Unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Type of Disability

Physical: 59%
Cognitive/developmental: 51%
Mental health: 43%
Vision: 12%
Speech: 10%
Hearing: 8%
Current Employment Status

- Full time: 8%
- Part time: 21%
- Unemployed: 71%
Full or Part Time Position

- Full time: 44%
- Part time: 35%
- Either full or part time: 21%
What Jobs Are They Searching For? What Jobs Did They Previously Hold?

Top 5 Categories Seeking Job In Now
- Administration – 21%
- Sales – 21%
- Care – 11%
- Food – 11%
- Service – 10%

Top 5 Categories Previous Employment
- Administration – 17%
- Sales – 15%
- Food – 14%
- Service – 14%
- Construction – 13%
How Far Will They Commute?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 or less</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-30</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-90</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 90</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Important is Transportation for Job Seekers?

Q: “Transportation is important to my Job Search”

- 76% Strongly Agree
- 14% Agree
- 7% Neither agree/disagree
- 2% Disagree
- 1% Strongly Disagree
Mobility Options In New Jersey

Public Transit: NJ TRANSIT

- Bus
- Rail
- Light Rail
Mobility Options In New Jersey

Public Transit: NJ TRANSIT Access Link

- ADA accessible service
- Mirrors local fixed bus routes
- Curb to curb
- Shared ride
- Eligibility process

Photo credit: NJ Transit
Mobility Options In New Jersey

**County Paratransit**

- 21 systems, one in each county
- Service to people with disabilities, the elderly & other transportation disadvantaged
Mobility Options In New Jersey

Other Potential Accessible Options

- Municipalities
- NGO/Non-profits
- Taxis
- Volunteer drivers
- Walking
## Survey Respondent Travel Mode Use Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Frequently used mode for commuting</th>
<th>Frequently used mode for all purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car passenger</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive personal vehicle</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paratransit by county, city or non-profit</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Link</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter rail</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light rail</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car/vanpool</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importance of Public Transit for Survey Respondents

- 38% find public transportation useful in the job search
- 63% are considering public transit as a travel means for their next job

Photo credit: NJ Transit
Is Public Transit Available Near Home?

- Bus: 72%
- Commuter Rail: 51%
- Light Rail: 17%
- Access Link: 49%
- Paratransit-local govt or non-profit: 42%
- Carpool/vanpool: 10%
Public Transportation: Why Are They Dissatisfied with Level of Service?

- Service not available when needed: 23%
- Accessible service not available near home: 20%
- Service not available to destination: 19%
- Cost too high: 16%
- Too many transfers: 12%
- Other: 10%
### Public Transportation: How Satisfied Are They With Environmental Conditions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all satisfied</th>
<th>Not very satisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street crossings and intersections</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street lighting</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public Transportation: How Satisfied Are They With Transit Equipment?

- 89% satisfied with the bus lifts
- 84% satisfied with the bus kneels
- 69% with the train bridge plates

Photo credit above: GMTMA
### Public Transportation: How Safe and Secure Do They Feel?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety Category</th>
<th>Very Safe</th>
<th>Somewhat Safe</th>
<th>Don't Feel Safe</th>
<th>Don’t Feel Safe at All</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety at bus stop</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety onboard buses</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety at rail station</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety onboard trains</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety traveling to/from bus stop</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety traveling to/from rail station</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety at park and ride</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public Transportation: What Sources Are They Using for Information?

- Word of Mouth: 31%
- Internet: 29%
- Employment Counselor/Social Service Provider: 21%
- Mailings: 7%
- Telephone: 4%
- Newspaper: 8%
Public Transportation: What Informational and Familiarity Barriers Are They Facing?
Concluding Thoughts

+ POSITIVES +

- Transportation has a critical role in enhancing job access for people with disabilities
- Many respondents are currently using public transport; Willingness to consider using it to get to/from employment; And many report public transit has helped w/ job search process

- NEGATIVES -

- There does remain a variety of environmental, informational and service-related barriers to using public transportation
- Almost half of respondents are dissatisfied with the level of public transit service near their homes
Concluding Thoughts

Environmental barriers
- Work with municipalities

Informational barriers
- Develop new marketing efforts for public transit services & features
- Promote and expand travel training

Service barriers
- Conduct additional research focused on disability type and associated travel needs/obstacles
- Increase awareness for the variety of transportation options available in the state
NJ Public Transit Information Sources

NJ TRANSIT
Website: www.njtransit.com
(800) 772-2287 or TT (800) 772-2287 - automated 24/7
(973) 275-5555 - operator assistance 7am-7pm daily
(800) 955-ADA1 (2321) or TT (800) 955-6765 - Access Link Information

NJ County Paratransit Services
www.njtransit.com/tm/tm_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=ParaTransitTo
www.njcost.com (email address: njcost@aol.com)

NJ Transportation Management Associations
www.tmacouncilnj.org
http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/publicat/Facts/demand.shtm

NJ Online Transportation Information
www.njfindaride.org or Dial  211

Travel Training, NJTIP
Website: www.njtip.org
(973) 533-1665
For More Information

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