

Human Services Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

May 6, 2010

Atlanta Regional Commission, Executive Conference Room

Advisory Committee Attendees:

Ron Roberts, Cobb D.O.T

Jason Pope, Salvation Army

Pat Baker, Gwinnett County Health and Human Services

Timothy Sewell, Veolia Transportation, Gwinnett County Transit

Phil Boyd, Gwinnett County Transit

Margo Waters, disAbility Link

Sandra Morrow, DeKalb County Senior Affairs

John Keys, JKeys Solutions

Ericia Wheeler, DeKalb County Senior Affairs

Staff:

Kenyata Smiley, Transportation Planning Division, ARC

David Haynes, Transportation Planning Division, ARC

Carolyn Rader, Aging Division, ARC

Laura Keyes, Aging Division, ARC

Judy Dovers, Transportation Planning Division, ARC

Kenyata led the meeting with a welcome and introductions. Judy Dovers presented ARC's Plan 2040 and gave an overview of the purpose of the plan, the vision, goals and objectives and planning process of the 30 year comprehensive plan to be implemented in phases, now and into the future. The draft vision calls for sustainability as the organizing principle with aggressive leadership in how we get there with a triple bottom line approach – social, environmental and economic. She explained that this is the first regional plan that is comprehensive in scope, not just transportation and land use, but includes workforce, aging division and community services, and transportation demand management. The needs assessment and stakeholder interviews are completed; next step is development of policies,

methodologies and systems, strategies and testing the strategies. The purpose of Judy's presentation is to present the findings of the needs assessment, explain the Plan 2040 process and the Sustainability principle guiding Plan 2040. She announced that in addition to community meetings and presentations ARC has set up 24 hour on-line meetings. The first part of the on-line meeting comment period ends May 31<sup>st</sup> and there will be subsequent on-line meetings for review and comment and encouraged the HST members participation. Judy will get input from the group on HST Policies they would like to see included in Plan 2040, after completing the other agenda items.

John Keys then gave an update on the passage of HB 277 which includes a modification of SB 22, the Georgia Coordinating Council for Rural and Human Services Transportation. John explained that the changes made impact how the bill is carried out—top down versus bottoms up which is a major modification from SB 22. This version puts the oversight in the hands of the Governor's Development Council (GRTA). However, RCs are mandated to participate in the committee so the HST Advisory Committee is well positioned to provide input into the process. DCH is a willing participant as are the other state agencies. GDOT will lead the committee. They are in the process of updating their statewide HST plan so the timing is good. The first report of the Coordinating Committee is due in September.

#### Plan 2040 / HST Policy Discussion

Returning to the HST Policies for Plan 2040, Judy asked the members two questions: what should be integrated in to Plan 2040 for Human Services Transportation policies and what should be measured in Plan 2040 to help accomplish HST policies.

Maximize policies that recognize the needs of all transportation disadvantaged groups (youth and young adults, low English speaking proficiency adults, older adults, low income and adults with disabilities.

Infrastructure is not there that addresses transportation needs.

Educational and institutional

Connection within the community to services via public transportation.

Universal design and AARP built environment design guidelines (complete streets, road design for older drivers and pedestrians). If you design for elderly, you design for all ages.

Regional paratransit system and regional eligibility

Regional assessment and travel training for public outreach and how to navigate the system.

Synergy between land use planning, development plans and transportation specifically Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and we need ADA/AARP/Lifelong Communities goals and objectives in mind for all transportation facilities and access to transportation.

Public money picking up the road system

Design guidelines are locally based. Needs to be a plan review process that calls out important elements for such as 4-6 lanes of traffic needs refuge islands for pedestrians for safe crossings.

Concept of roundabout – allows for crossing a multiple of roads more safely – this could be a good tool to use for road design guidelines.

See where the communities needs are – closer to where they live.

DeKalb Senior Services example – the State will only purchase rides but provider needs upgraded vehicles and equipment to provide the rides. The I Care volunteer driver model is great but there is a lot of unmet need.

It may be useful to examine every agency's budget both capital and operating to see what really have (resources) in the region – throw it all together, see the number of trips we are providing and it will show how woefully inadequate it is. Utilize the management

No incentive for anyone to come together. It is inefficient for a residents of a senior high rise or assisted living facility to call Cobb Paratransit to ride 15 miles the other way to a grocery store because the one in the other direction, a mile down the street, is out of the ¼ mile paratransit buffer minimum.

Due to budget constraints, transit operators are operating on minimum requirements. In total transit providers are spending so much money but not adequately addressing the need. If we were allowed to consolidate it we could do it so much better.

Currently it costs Gwinnett \$60 to provide a one-way paratransit trip. The current overlap of services is too costly and not sustainable.

Other areas to consider: built environment and how to integrate volunteers. It take the broader community working together with government to address the needs of HST.

Current transportation policies have concentrated to heavily on reducing peak flow travel times which is the commuter traffic. Only ¼ to 1/3 of transportation is commute to work and this is what we have been fixated on. ARC is currently working to improve this in the transportation model.

How do we reduce the need for transportation? For every street and transportation corridor, having 'one more option', that doesn't increase in time and money to the personal vehicle, is one way.

Have self-sustaining communities

One pot – share computer technology for routing volunteer driver programs and other models.

Challenge – trying to educate not only the public but human services staff on Human Services transportation models and how to utilize them. Vouchers are an addition to demand response not necessarily a substitute.

Question is how to do go about it? Do we go to 2-3 counties to discuss these issues or is it county by county or regionally?

HST is about options for everyone and it is about community choices, based on need, whether you live in the city or the suburbs. We have to put all of the mixes together.

For example the city of Decatur took 10-12 years to look the way it does and to function as a walkable, mixed use community, to include Decatur Housing Authority fixed rate units on Tally Street.

With 102 LCIs there is opportunity for similar models.

Lifelong DeKalb steering committee is recognizing that they don't have the housing options they need and there is no current policy to link transit and transportation options to housing for older adults, low income and other HST groups.

The City of Atlanta has a new policy that in order for a permit to run a PCH it must be located within 150 feet of transit. DeKalb is looking into a similar policy on criteria for operating a PCH.

Kenyata provided an update on the HST Coordinated Plan. It was adopted at the April 21 ARC Board Meeting. The next step is to develop an Action Plan and to prioritize the recommendations. She reviewed several of the HST plan recommendations:

- Cost/ Benefit Analysis
- HST Summit/JARC and NF workshop
- Build Local coordination
- Update LCI/CTP
- Identify a leader to implement TMCC and concept of operations

After discussion, the members prioritized the Cost/benefit analysis as the first step to the goal of a establishing a TMCC, a one-stop call center.

The group agreed to identify those who would could assist with the Cost/Benefit analysis and to form a a sub-committee which would report back to the full HST Committee. The HST committee members also agreed to meet quarterly and to identify the best meeting day. Kenyata and Carolyn will follow up with the committee members to begin the Cost/Benefit analysis study and identify members and others who can serve on a sub-committee.

Hearing no other announcements or updates, the meeting was adjourned.