

APPENDIX

Testimony of Karen Alexander
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Senate Select Committee on NJ TRANSIT
Services to People with Disabilities

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Thank you very much for the invitation to join you today. My name is Karen Alexander and I am the Managing Director of the New Jersey Travel Independence Program, NJTIP @ Rutgers. Since 2013, NJTIP has been a part of the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center, a unit of the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers. NJTIP @ Rutgers' mission is to increase the independence of seniors and people with disabilities by teaching them how to travel safely using fixed-route transit services and other mobility options in New Jersey. In 2016-17 I led the Rutgers' team that produced the "Go Farther – Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan," for the thirteen-county North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority region. "Go Farther" presents recommendations for improving mobility for almost 1 million transportation-disadvantaged people (older adults, people with disabilities, people living at or near poverty and veterans) living in northern New Jersey.

I have worked in New Jersey in various capacities for almost twenty years, at NJ TRANSIT, at the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest, and now at Rutgers University. Currently, I serve as an instructor for the National Transit Institute's "Advancing Mobility Management" course and I am also developing a course for transit providers on providing more elder-friendly fixed route transit services. My comments come from experience working with collaborative teams of travel instructors, researchers, community-based organizations, colleagues, and NJTIP graduates and their families.

My testimony today will be divided into three parts. First, I will briefly discuss how accessible fixed route transit systems deliver inclusive mobility for persons with disabilities, older adults and other individuals with varying mobility needs. I will then describe the current transportation systems and options available to transportation-disadvantaged people in New Jersey. I will conclude my remarks by identifying opportunities for leveraging our existing public transportation assets with strategies to improve our transportation network and make it more accessible, inclusive and available to riders of all ages and abilities.

Delivering Mobility to All

In 1990, with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), access to public transportation became a civil right. Transit properties across the nation were required to start a multi-year process to plan and then provide accessible transportation to all customers, on all modes of transportation.

Before 1990, under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, public transit services for people with disabilities could be provided *either* through fixed route service or paratransit.¹ This often resulted in transit buses with non-operable lifts and paratransit services without the capacity to meet trip demand. Seeking to reform these conditions, disability advocacy focused on advancing three key elements: accessible lift-equipped buses, accessible train stations, and paratransit. A court settlement in the mid-1980's between disability rights organizations and the City of New York incorporated these three components. In that agreement, New York City and MTA/NYCT agreed to make 54 "key" (subway) stations and all buses accessible and to appoint a committee to set up a paratransit system for New York City, now known as Access-A-Ride.² This "three-legged stool" served as the framework for the ADA.

With the adoption of the ADA in 1990, the accessibility requirements for public transit systems were further articulated, expanded and codified, nationally. In addition to the three elements above, new construction in stations and stops would be accessible, significant repairs completed so that the rehabilitated areas would become accessible, timelines established for fleet accessibility, and deadlines for retrofitting "key stations" determined. Paratransit would be available to eligible riders who could not use the fixed route system, with no built-in caps on service. Transit information would be made available in accessible formats, e.g. in Braille, large

¹Achieving Accessibility: How the Americans with Disabilities Act Is Changing the Face and Mind of a Nation, accessed 3/10/19 https://dredf.org/news/publications/disability-rights-law-and-policy/achieving-accessibility/#_ftnref9

²Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee, "Welcome Aboard, Accessibility at the MTA", accessed 3/10/19 <https://www.pcac.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Welcome-Aboard-Accessibility-at-the-MTA.pdf>

type, or on tape. As civil rights law, the ADA was incorporated into the provision of public transportation, with penalties levied for non-compliance.

Mobility for All in New Jersey: 2020

Almost 30 years after the adoption of the ADA, through the ongoing efforts of NJ TRANSIT, NJDOT and many others, we now have:

- A 100% fully accessible local fixed route bus system;
- Two fully accessible light rail systems built since the ADA – and much of the Newark light rail is accessible as well;
- NJ TRANSIT’s “key station” plan for rail is complete, there is an accessible car on every train, and new rail stations are all accessible; and
- 56,495 people are registered on the Access Link paratransit system (November 2019)

New Jersey has also maintained its county-based “elderly and disabled” transportation services supported through Casino Revenue funds, and additional revenues including federal grants, advertising, and county funding. These county systems provide mobility to transportation-disadvantaged riders, and are especially important in areas with limited or no NJ TRANSIT fixed route bus and rail services. These services operate as part of County government, and their service areas are often within county boundaries; some systems serve adjacent “buffer” areas, as well. NJ TRANSIT administers Federal Transit Administration sub-recipient grants to support county operations, some of which are door-to-door services, while others include shuttles and flexible routes. Every county operation is unique, but they all coordinate with NJ TRANSIT Local Programs staff and the NJ Council on Special Transportation (NJ COST).

Many municipalities also offer dial a ride services. In the “Go Farther” plan there were 181 towns or municipalities (47%) identified within the 13 NJTPA counties providing municipal transportation services, most often senior shuttles, senior vans or dial a ride services.³

³ Technical Memorandum #2 - Task 2.2 Review of Relevant Data Task Report, NJTPA Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, Revised February 15, 2017

Lastly, there are significant human service transportation resources provided in New Jersey often through alternate Federal funding streams, such as Medicaid, the Older Americans Act, Vocational Rehabilitation, Community Development/Community Services Block Grants, and the Veterans Administration, to name a few. Frequently connected to a specific service provider or agency site, these transportation programs take riders to fixed destinations such as medical appointments, congregate meal sites, or work programs. Older adults, people with disabilities and other transportation-disadvantaged often people rely on these programs.

In a December 2016 report prepared for NJDOT, Reducing Costs of Purchased Transportation for State Agencies, a Rutgers research team from the Voorhees Transportation Center documented levels of accessibility for human service consumer origins and destinations. Using trip data provided by four state department divisions: Aging Services, Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation, the team found that about half of all consumer origins and destinations were located within 1/8 mile of a public transit stop or a community transportation route. They also found that most consumers (86%) are located within 3/4 mile of a transit stop or community transportation route.⁴ This finding holds potential promise for serving human service consumers via traditional fixed-route transit systems and services.

Context Now and in the Near Future

The context of our current transportation network, demographic forecasts, and rapidly evolving technologies presents both challenges and opportunities to meet the mobility needs of New Jersey's transportation-disadvantaged populations. Consider the following:

- 1) Since the ADA was signed into law, New Jersey has made great strides toward improving the physical accessibility of transit systems. There is more to do and we need to do a better job of making sure that all riders are aware of accessibility features and have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to make the most of the system. Accessibility

⁴ Technical Brief: Reducing Costs of Purchased Transportation for State Agencies, <http://vtc.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Tech-Brief-Reducing-Costs-of-Purchased-Transportation.pdf>

is important not only to customers with physical mobility limitations, but also passengers with other types of disabilities, such as developmental disabilities, cognitive impairments, and emotional or mental health challenges.

- 2) With an aging population, there will be significantly more adults age 65+ in NJ. Many will no longer be able to drive safely but will require mobility to stay independent in their homes and communities. Current population forecasts from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development estimate that we will have 19.9% of the population, more than 1.8 million residents, age 65+ by 2030.⁵
- 3) With increases in technology, there are new and rapidly evolving opportunities to create more flexible and customer-centric mobility services. For example, UBER has been in New Jersey five years, and it is now a verb. There are transit agencies all over the U.S. rethinking how they provide service and experimenting with new approaches. As highlighted in Forbes Magazine, innovative new mobility startups are promulgating rapidly.⁶ For example, one startup targeting older adults and people with disabilities, called "Mobility 4 All," will vet and certify drivers from other transportation companies through its app.

Recommendations/Opportunities

The recommendations below come from looking at both sides of this equation: what do customers need, and what resources are potentially available to meet those needs.

1. NJ TRANSIT should capitalize on the investments it has made since the passage of the ADA in 1990, by better communicating current accessibility features to ALL potential riders. Nationally, 12.6% of the population has a disability and the most common types

⁵ Population and Labor Force Projections for New Jersey: 2010 to 2030, <https://www.nj.gov/labor/lpa/content/njsdc/2013WU%20PopLFProj2030.pdf>

⁶ 9 Shared Mobility Startups Eager to Disrupt Transportation, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffmcmahon/2019/03/06/9-shared-mobility-startups-eager-to-disrupt-transportation/#72d61939177e>

of disability involve difficulties with walking or independent living (2015 Census data). Current projections show that there are over 820,000 adults with disabilities in New Jersey.⁷ One thing that can/should be done is to integrate information on all accessible services (including private carrier and contract carriers, county services and dial-a-rides) within a centralized Transit Information Center or portal, so that more passengers (and their families and support networks) can envision using the complete range of accessible services.

2. State leaders can and should re-authorize the NJ Council for Access and Mobility, and charge the Council with figuring out ways to maximize the flow of Federal funding resources coming to New Jersey from the 130 Federal funding programs that can pay for human services transportation⁸ and support mobility management.⁹ An interdepartmental approach would encourage coordination across diverse areas as Special Education (DOE); Supportive Housing (DCA); Divisions on Aging, Disability Services and Developmental Disabilities (DHS), active living, community and workplace wellness (DOH), and Vocational Rehabilitation (LWD). The State should also create and fund an innovative transportation services pilot program that capitalizes on emerging technologies and the accessible fixed route network in New Jersey.
3. Transit operators in the State should provide focused customer service and sensitivity training for managers and operators of fixed route services (both NJTRANSIT and other

⁷ 2017 Disability Status Report: New Jersey. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability (YTI) http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/StatusReports/2017-PDF/2017-StatusReport_NJ.pdf?CFID=21261813&CFTOKEN=f4e697a5fd6196da-49C94FC1-F9BE-0FC1-2C18B43DDA64E340

⁸ Inventory of Federal Programs Providing Transportation Services to the Transportation-Disadvantaged, Published October 2019 <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/subdoc/261/ccam-program-inventory-summary-10-2019.pdf>

⁹ Mobility management focuses on meeting individual customer needs through a wide range of transportation options and service providers. It also focuses on coordinating these services and providers to achieve a more efficient transportation service delivery system.

carriers) so that they are more prepared to interact not only with customers with disabilities (as required by the ADA), but also with an increasingly older and more diverse population in New Jersey.

4. The State should also increase targeted marketing and education on accessible fixed route services to locations focused on transportation-disadvantaged populations, such as schools serving transition-age students with disabilities, supportive housing communities, community-based agencies with frequent paratransit pick-ups, and senior-serving agencies and housing sites. For example, classes and/or video training should be more readily available with on-vehicle travel training for groups or individuals. (NJ TIP @ Rutgers has provided these types of training for over a decade with significant success; 453 people have completed individual NJ TIP travel instruction and over 87% report using transit after graduation.) Another strategy should be to promote transit not only work trips but also for off-peak trips to cultural events, recreational sites, social and leisure destinations. Riverside, California's RTA service and Eugene, Oregon's Lane Transit District both deploy these types of strategies especially well.

5. Transit operators should also examine fare strategies to attract riders with disabilities and seniors to fixed route through better promotion of reduced fare programs, to encourage convenient and cost-effective transit use for transportation-disadvantaged people traveling to work, school, or other routine destinations. Transit operators should also work toward integrating fare structures with adjacent systems in New York and Pennsylvania and facilitating single ticketing. These approaches have been successfully implemented in Los Angeles County and in the San Francisco Bay Area. Finally, operators should consider providing fare incentives to promote accessible fixed route transit use; for example, in Las Vegas, on the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC), ADA paratransit users ride on fixed route buses for free,¹⁰ and

¹⁰ Ride Fixed Route for Free <https://www.rtcnv.com/ways-to-travel/paratransit-accessibility/riders-guide/>

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on SEPTA in Philadelphia, passengers age 65+ can ride on buses, trolleys, and subway/elevated trains for free.¹¹

6. Lastly, transit operators working with local governments throughout the State should undertake a coordinated effort to enhance rider comfort and convenience by improving bus stops with clearly marked and designated stop locations, protection from the weather (sun, snow, rain), lighting and seating where possible. Operators and municipalities should strive to locate bus stops as close as possible to sites with high concentrations of people with disabilities and older adults, and ensure a clear path of travel to/from those stops. Additional recommendations regarding customer enhancements to fixed route services designed to meet the needs of all riders are included in the "Go Farther: Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan."¹² Similar plans in the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) also make recommendations. All three plans are available online.

One of the comments we often hear from NJTIP travel training graduates and their families is appreciation for the opportunities and independence that mobility offers. As one young-adult graduate's mother put it,

"T. is quiet and dependent on me to drive her to work and social activities. The fact that she will be able to ride the bus unassisted to work or school will give her confidence, decision-making, independence and life skills."

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

¹¹ Seniors Ride Free <https://www.iseptaphilly.com/blog/seniorsridefree>

¹² NJTPA webpage, <https://www.njtpa.org/planning/regional-studies/transit/human-service-plan.aspx>

In Their Own Words:

**Recommendations on transportation
inspired by interviews with
persons with Developmental Disabilities
in New Jersey**



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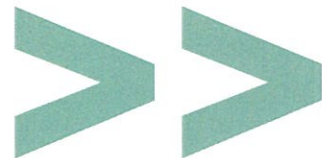
SHARE
WHAT
YOU
HAVE

*“If I had some transportation to get to where I need to go, that would be easier for me, having somebody to take me from point A to point B, get me where I need to go.”
(William)*

In Their Own Words:

Recommendations on transportation inspired by interviews with persons with Developmental Disabilities in New Jersey

Persons with developmental disabilities (DD) must access a diverse array of services during their lifetimes that may include supportive housing, employment/vocational training, recreational opportunities, healthcare, continuing education, and daily living trips such as shopping. Transportation provides access to these vital services and activities.



Transportation is the essential link for community inclusion for everyone, including people with disabilities. In an automobile focused state such as New Jersey, the challenges of meeting these needs without a driver's license or access to a car can be insurmountable.

As a result, reliable and accessible transport options that can help achieve healthy social living outcomes and physical independence are needed.

Background

The findings presented in this report reflect a collaborative research endeavor funded by The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities and undertaken by The Arc of New Jersey and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

The guiding principle of this research was to capture transportation experiences, both positive and challenging, directly from persons with developmental disabilities living in New Jersey. The researchers conducted interviews with individual volunteers. They audio-recorded their responses for analysis and dissemination to a wide audience of diverse stakeholders through means including The Arc-developed project website <https://www.arcnj.org/programs/njsap/intheirownwords.html>.

All participating researchers and team members were committed to the charge of amplifying the voices of persons with a developmental disability living in New Jersey. This was accomplished both literally through the interview audio recordings, as well as through this written report – regarding their transportation experiences, issues, and needs, with the core objective of achieving positive change and system improvements.

Finding Highlights

The interviews were conducted over the course of a one-year period with a total of 210 individuals, who volunteered to participate. Interviews were conducted statewide at 16 sites, with 27 interviews conducted via telephone. The overwhelming majority of interviews were conducted with

adults with DD (89.5%), with 10% conducted with parents/guardians, and one percent with persons who work with adults with DD. Interviewees live in one of 79 NJ municipalities from a total of 18 counties. Of the participants responding to the demographic questions posed during the interviews, slightly more than half were female. The majority (64%) identified as White not Hispanic, with most falling between the ages of 22 and 64 (87%).

The study team analyzed the audio recordings to identify both positive and challenging transportation experiences. Transportation barriers were mentioned by just under half of the interviewees. Most interviewees discussed general transportation barriers, followed by financial constraints, and safety concerns. General barriers included a lack of available services either where one resides or near desired destinations, uncertainty with how to determine available services, and difficulty in relying upon others for transport. Regarding how respondents learned to travel using the modes relied upon, the most common response was from family, followed by learning from support agency staff, and many noting they taught themselves to travel independently.

Participant experiences with eight specific transport modes were collected. The three modes most frequently commented on by interviewees included walking, followed by NJ TRANSIT fixed route services, and then by NJ ADA Complementary Paratransit (Access Link). Participants shared examples of both positive and challenging encounters with their travel mode(s). Many expressed their appreciation for the availability of the mode(s) utilized. They considered themselves satisfied users, even as they acknowledged one or more negative experiences in using a particular mode. Negative or challenging experiences discussed were typically mode specific, although themes such as safety were discussed in relation to several modes such as walking and driving. Detailed interviewee feedback related to specific modes is in the report appendix.

Recommendations

Based upon suggestions shared by interviewees and the analysis conducted by the researchers, 15 recommendations in three core categories were developed to improve the current transportation environment for New Jerseyans with DD.

The three themes for the 15 recommendations include:

- 1) Increased Investment in Transportation
- 2) Mobility as a Service
- 3) Advocacy and Education

Potential implementation partners as well as implementation time frame parameters are included in the Recommendation Implementation Matrix. This matrix should serve as a living document for the NJCDD and other interested partners, as they seek to achieve positive transportation changes.

The recommendations are presented below, a summary of interviews and demographics data can be found at The Arc of New Jersey's [In Their Own Words](https://www.arcnj.org/programs/njsap/intheirownwords.html) website: <https://www.arcnj.org/programs/njsap/intheirownwords.html>.

Increased Investment in Transportation

1 Develop DDD Payment Program for NJ County Paratransit Services

Restructure the current provider system to encourage the use of the state's 21 community/county paratransit services. This recommendation would be especially beneficial because of the positive experiences with these services shared by many interviewees. Specifically, over 70% of interviewees who discussed this mode indicated they were satisfied users.

A pilot project should be established that would permit a portion of the DDD budget to be allocated to New Jersey's community/county transport providers willing to crossing county boundaries.

2 Reinstate NJ DHS Transportation Planning Coordinator Position

Re-establish the Transportation Planning Coordinator position within the Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities. The person appointed to this position must have substantial knowledge and experience in transportation services for and needs of persons with DD. This individual should be charged with coordinating the current, emerging, and forecasted needs of the state's DD population with the state's various transportation providers and services. The person would serve a vital role in coordinating with NJ TRANSIT, the state's 21 county paratransit providers, and other public and private transport services. The Coordinator would develop a continued dialogue with these transportation providers so they are more aware of the transport needs and issues affecting the state's population with DD.

3 Create Voucher Program using DDD Funds to be Used for PASS Trained Ride-hailing or Taxi Services

Provide a system that allows a limited portion of an individual's DD budget to be used for state approved and PASS trained ride-hailing transportation and/or taxi services. This would facilitate needed spontaneous and emergency travel. A limited number of these trips could be allotted per month, as well as a limited amount of spending on the services determined. (Note - PASS, or Passenger Service and Safety training is the industry standard of training related to assistance that drivers should provide to passengers with special needs.)

4 Support and Expand Existing Successful Transport Services

The interviewees noted that several transportation modes were working well and could be expanded, including NJ County Paratransit Services and NJ TRANSIT fixed route services. These services should be supported and expanded to ensure their availability for both current and prospective users.

5 Invest in Intelligent Transportation Technologies that are Person-Centered

Various technologies exist that can improve quality of life, such as transportation-focused apps (e.g. Go Bus) and GIS-based navigation programs. Persons using public or community transportation must often rely upon transportation providers to utilize existing technologies that can contribute to a customer's improved quality of life.

These transportation providers should be encouraged to invest in person-centered Intelligent Transportation technologies that can better serve their customers. NJ TRANSIT's Access Link service offers one example of a NJ provider who has focused much recent effort on implementing more people-centered technologies (e.g. service reminder calls, email reservations) to better serve their customers.

6 Utilize University Research Expertise

Stakeholders supporting the DD community should use the state's transportation research expertise available at state universities. They should conduct best practice research and assess service needs among the DD community.

By working with state universities and developing appropriate research programs, the university centers can provide the needed expert, unbiased knowledge and research on state transportation issues, without advocating for any one system or service. They can assist with service and model pilot testing and forecasting of future transportation requirements for various modes. The university centers can also assist with educational training and programs for the school system.

Mobility as a Service

7 Institute a Statewide Mobility Manager Dedicated to the Needs of Persons with DD

NJ should establish a dedicated statewide mobility manager for persons with DD. A trained mobility manager would assist residents throughout the state seeking information on transportation. The



"[Traveling is] hard because sometimes people discriminate against people with disabilities." Myrta

position should function as a resource for persons with developmental disabilities, as well as for service providers.

The mobility manager would be accessible via phone and would serve as a one-stop resource for transportation information for persons with DD and those who support this population. It is important to note that the mobility manager would not provide transportation.

The manager should serve as a critical missing link in helping to match available transportation services in the state for individuals with DD needing those services and seeking assistance from the mobility manager.

8 Provide Accurate Ride Times

The most frequent specific suggestion to improve transportation and mobility in NJ was to provide accurate ride time estimates. Interviewees requested both an accurate pick-up time window, as well as accuracy in estimating the transit time for reservation transportation services like Access Link, and for general public transit services. It

should be noted that Access Link and many of the county services are currently working to improve their performance on these issues, as technologies exist in the marketplace that would allow for more accurate ride time estimates.

9 Expand Service Routes and Hours

Expanding service hours and routes, both for fixed route services as well as paratransit services, should be pursued. In order to expand route service and hours, it is necessary to engage in a continuing dialogue with transportation providers, especially NJ TRANSIT, to investigate opportunities for service expansion and possible funding mechanisms to support the expansion.

While public transportation is not the only travel mode suitable for persons with developmental disabilities, expansion of these services to areas currently not served or under-served could benefit many adults with DD, their families, as well their caretakers and service providers.

10 Implement Enhanced Transportation Staff Training

Staff training for all transportation modes should

be improved. It is recommended that a specific training program be developed and implemented targeted to vehicle operators and front-line staff who have direct contact with adults with developmental disabilities. This training is needed for those operating all types of fixed-route transportation services (NJ TRANSIT, SEPTA), paratransit (NJ Transit Access Link, county and municipal services), private and volunteer services (NGOs), and ride-hailing and taxi services (Uber, Lyft, Taxis). It is vital that all levels of staff at transit agencies who interact with riders with developmental disabilities receive targeted training that will enable them to better understand and assist their customers.

11 Ensure Multimodal Accessible Vehicles and Stations

Ensuring vehicle and station accessibility is vital. A first step in addressing grievances related to a lack of accessible services is for individuals to be aware of their rights in this regard and the procedure(s) for submitting complaints to agencies such as NJ TRANSIT when their accessible service features do not work properly (e.g. wheelchair lift, bus kneeling feature) or when vehicle operators do not stop to pick up a customer in a wheelchair.



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NJ TRANSIT should also be encouraged to reconvene a once active voluntary body called the NJT ADA Task Force. This group discussed, reviewed, and recommended strategies to address issues concerning accessible vehicles and stations, as well as other barriers to transportation. The ADA Task Force can once again serve to help identify and address barriers and obstacles to persons with disabilities using accessible public transportation services. Finally, The Council and DDD should develop a dialogue with ride-hailing providers in NJ,

"I like to go to the mall and stuff, I sometimes will take an Uber... I have been working on studying for my permit test." Carly



such as Uber and Lyft, to discuss the pressing need for accessible ride-hailing vehicle options to better serve persons with DD in the State.

Advocacy & Education

12 Develop a Guide of Rights, Rules and Responsibilities for All Modes

Many interviewees had a limited understanding of an individual's rights and responsibilities in using transportation services, as well as the rules/regulations related to those service. This can create unrealistic expectations for the availability and quality of services, and the rights a customer has to the services. Development of a user-friendly Guide of Rights, Rules and Responsibilities for all modes in NJ should be created.

13 Expand Transportation Advocacy

Transportation advocacy with a focus on planning, pedestrian infrastructure, public transit service, Intelligent Transportation Systems, and autonomous and connected vehicles should be emphasized. Individuals with developmental disabilities must be involved in all transportation planning, design, operations, and research, and have a seat at the table for all decisions that will have an impact upon their lives. It is essential that persons with developmental disabilities and their caregivers actively support and advocate for improved high-quality pedestrian infrastructure and traffic calming measures in their community so persons with developmental disabilities can walk safely and have safe access to existing transportation services.

NJCDD and DDD should actively support efforts to integrate the transportation needs of persons with developmental disabilities with current research being conducted by Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) experts. Nationwide, new technologies that can provide support for independent or semi-independent travel for this population are under development, which can improve transportation access for adults with DD. Supporting these efforts can yield positive benefits for NJ's population with DD.



“What that I don’t like, it is usually with the bigger buses – some-times they don’t want to pick you up because you are in a wheel chair. Or they are complaining that the ramp doesn’t work.”
Omar

Finally, to address interviewee’s limited awareness and/or understanding regarding various transportation services, an integrated transportation service information campaign should be developed and implemented. This work can be done, at least in part, through an ambassador campaign, whereby service providers and current users are teamed together to conduct outreach showing how supportive the various services offered throughout the state can be for persons with developmental disabilities. This ambassador approach could be a stand-alone program, or one component of the work undertaken under the auspices of the recommended State mobility manager.

14 Develop Educational Curricula

Educational curricula focused on transportation should be developed and provided while young persons with DD are covered under the educational entitlement. Families and caregivers should also be provided with information on mobility options. This training will continue to benefit the individual with DD and their family during adult life; facilitating access to employment, continuing education, day programs, medical-related trips, recreational destinations, and daily living travel needs.

Programs must be developed to provide continuing support for transportation-focused training programs in the educational setting, as part of

students’ Individualized Education Program (IEP). The benefits of including transportation skills in IEPs must be considered and discussed with the New Jersey Department of Education, since such action could produce a statewide mandate that these skills be taught. Since many persons with DD will not be able to access public transportation on their own, families should have the opportunity to participate in travel orientation/education activities for all modes of service.

15 Create Person-Centered Plans with Transportation Component

The final recommendation relates to the Person-Centered Planning Tool (PCPT). Person-centered planning is an approach, embraced by the NJDDD, designed to assist an individual with DD plan for life services and supports. The PCPT is a mandatory discovery tool used to guide the person-centered planning process and to assist in the development of an individual Service Plan. The PCPT on the New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities website does not include questions about transportation and mobility in the community. This PCPT must be revised to include substantive and meaningful questions related to transportation, to enable the user of the tool to consider the vital role transportation has in meeting plan goals, as well as positive quality of life outcomes.

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Recommendation Implementation Matrix for In Their Own Words

The matrix on the facing page presents the 15 recommendations in the three core themes developed from suggestions shared by interviewees and through the experience of the study team.

Transportation modes relevant to each recommendation are specified as are potential recommendation implementation partners.

Recommendation Matrix Transportation Modes Impacted

NJ ADA Complementary Paratransit (Access Link)

NJ TRANSIT Bus, Rail, and Light Rail

NJ County Paratransit Services

Agency Provided Transportation

Ride-Hailing Transportation and Taxi Service

Driven by Family and/or Friends

Driving Self

Walking

Recommendation Matrix Partner Acronyms

NJCDD = NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities

NJCOST = NJ Council of Special Transportation

NJDCF = NJ Department of Children and Family Services

NJDHS = NJ Department of Human Services including but limited to Division of Developmental Disabilities

NJDOT = NJ Department of Transportation

NJDOE = NJ Department of Education

NJT = NJ TRANSIT

CILs = Centers for Independent Living

MPOs = Metropolitan Planning Organizations

NGOs = Non-Governmental Organizations

TMA = Transportation Management Associations

Recommendation Matrix Implementation Time Frame

Short Range (immediate to 3 years)

Intermediate (3+ years)

“I just think that it is a wonderful way to go independent. And that is traveling independently. I think it's an amazing way to explore adulthood in that aspect. I just think it is incredible to be able to have the ability to go certain areas on your own ... But I would say there are definitely pros and cons to transportation.” Se Quince

Recommendation Implementation Matrix for In Their Own Words

	Recommendations	Modes Impacted	Partners	Implementation Time Frame
Invest in Transportation	1. Develop DDD Payment Program for NJ County Paratransit Services	County Paratransit Agency Transportation Family & Friends	NJDHS NJCOST NJCDD * NJT	Intermediate
	2. Reinstate NJ DHS Transportation Planning Coordinator Position	All	NJDHS	Short Range
	3. Create Voucher Program using DDD Funds to be Spent on PASS Trained Ride-hailing or Taxi Services	Ride-hailing and Taxi Family & Friends	NJDHS NJCOST Uber/Lyft	Short Range
	4. Support and Expand Existing Successful Transport Services	All	NJDOT * NJT NJCOST * NJDHS MPDs	Short Range and Ongoing
	5. Invest in Person-Centered Intelligent Transportation Technology	All	NJDOT * NJT NJDHS NJCOST	Intermediate
	6. Utilize University Research Expertise	All	Universities NJDHS NJDOT * NJT NJDOE	Short Range and Ongoing
Mobility as a Service	7. Institute a Dedicated Statewide Mobility Manager for Persons with DD	NJ TRANSIT * Access Link County Paratransit Ride-Hailing & Taxi	NJDOT * NJT MPDs TMAs	Intermediate
	8. Provide Accurate Ride Times for All Modes	NJ TRANSIT Access Link County Paratransit	NJDOT * NJT NJCOST NJDHS	Intermediate
	9. Expand Service Routes and Hours	All	NJDOT * NJT NJCOST * NJDHS	Intermediate
	10. Implement Enhanced Transportation Staff Training	NJ TRANSIT * Access Link County Paratransit Ride-Hailing & Taxi Agency	NJDOT * NJT NJCOST NJDHS Uber & Lyft	Short Range
	11. Ensure Multimodal Accessible Vehicles and Stations	NJ TRANSIT Ride-Hailing & Taxi	NJDOT NJDHS NGDs Uber/Lyft	Intermediate
Advocacy & Education	12. Develop Guide on Users Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities	All	NJCDD NJDHS NJDOT * NJT NJCOST CILs * MPDs TMAs Universities	Short Range
	13. Expand Transportation Advocacy	All	NJCDD * CILs TMAs NJCOST	Short Range
	14. Develop Educational Curricula	All	NJDOE NJCDD NJDCF	Intermediate
	15. Create Person-Centered Plans with Transportation Component	All	NJDHS	Short Range

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A USDOT National University Transportation Center

Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy



The Arc

of New Jersey

Acknowledgments

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Select Committee on New Jersey Transit
Tom Baffuto, Executive Director, The Arc of NJ
January 16, 2020

Good Morning. The Arc of New Jersey is the largest statewide advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We have 20 affiliated local chapters providing services in all 21 counties in New Jersey. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families through advocacy, empowerment, and education.

Thank you for the invitation to speak today about NJ Transit and the ways in which the agency serves people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The majority of people with I/DD depend on public transportation to be integrated members of the community. Because of cognitive challenges, many of those we represent do not own and operate their own vehicle and so they are dependent on disability-specific transportation options or utilization of mass transit options. Insufficient or unreliable transportation services prevent people with I/DD from living independently, finding and maintaining competitive employment or socializing with friends and family. Without a variety of transportation options, family members, caregivers and Direct Support Professionals must shoulder a heavier burden as they must fill in the transportation gaps. With this in mind, we appreciate the opportunity to share recommendations on how to enhance transportation for people with I/DD so that the service reflects, and delivers on, the needs of the ridership.

In order to remedy the current offerings from NJ Transit for both fixed route services and the paratransit service Access Link, which are severely limited and restrictive for ridership, we must considerably increase resources and funding. Routes must be expanded. Hours of service must be more nimble to better fit the needs of people with disabilities. Overall, the availability of transportation must be transformed to increase utilization. However, in order to do this successfully, we believe NJ Transit must conduct a comprehensive, county by county assessment of services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This assessment should analyze current usage trends, gaps in services, and shortcoming, as well as where things are going well and how they could be modeled effectively in other parts of the State. The results of the assessment should serve as the foundation for any expansion or changes.

While we recognize that any expansion comes at a cost, the State must make this investment to better serve its residents. And on the topic of funding, NJ Transit administers the Senior Citizens and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program which is funded through an annual allocation of Casino Revenue Funds. The funding for this has dropped significantly since 2008, and we are concerned about how this has and will continue to impact services to people with I/DD.



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We urge NJ Transit to ensure transportation services for people with disabilities are maintained and if need be funded through other parts of the agency's budget.

Furthermore, as many individuals with I/DD can attest, Access Link's restriction of not crossing county lines makes travel a logistical headache and greatly increases the time it takes to reach a destination. In addition, the availability of NJ Transit services is very limited to those living in rural parts of New Jersey. These areas of the state, and the residents who live there, cannot and should not be ignored. More must be done to create adequate infrastructure and a realistic plan to expand services to those regions. While the solutions may be costly, simply telling people with disabilities in rural areas that they are essentially cut off from transportation options, is not an acceptable answer. Increasing transportation possibilities into the less urban portions of New Jersey would open up the connections that people with disabilities and their families both want and need.

We would also urge NJ Transit to expand technological advancements to better serve people with I/DD. We know changes on this front have occurred in the past year and we ask the agency to continue along these lines in order to stay on pace with new and improved assistive technologies and apps to make the transportation experience easier for riders with disabilities. The Arc of NJ would also encourage NJ Transit to think creatively about unused or underutilized resources that could benefit this population, and consider creative contracting to augment existing options. One such possibility could be partnering with community services providers who frequently maintain a large fleet of vehicles and vans to transport people with I/DD to day programs. The staff operating these vehicles are already trained and screened to work with this population, and vehicles that sit idle during the day could serve as a resource to individuals with I/DD seeking access to the community. Partnerships like this could expand current offerings and benefit all involved.

Additionally, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are, for the most part, very asset-limited. To become or remain eligible for vital Medicaid-funded services, the majority of people with I/DD are forced to impoverish themselves and remain poor for a lifetime. With this in mind, NJ Transit should make the cost of their fixed route services and their paratransit services as affordable as possible for this population. The cost of ridership should not be among the obstacles facing people with I/DD when they seek access to transportation.

In order for NJ Transit to better meet the needs of people with disabilities, they must hear first-hand experiences from those who use the services. We believe the agency must increase engagement with people with I/DD in order to learn more about what is occurring, what is working and where the shortfalls may lie. We urge NJ Transit to host hearings for this population, which are accessible and convenient to people in various parts of the state, in order to capture and understand current trends and happenings. NJ Transit, when making decisions, planning and



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testing transportation options and payment methods, must ensure individuals with I/DD are involved in the process.

We also urge NJ Transit to create a new position within their agency who could serve as a point person for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This staffer would assist people with I/DD navigate the system and would serve as the point person for questions. This would increase the agency's accessibility while at the same time offering riders a hub for feedback. Furthermore, the agency could improve their accessibility by forming a partnership with the New Jersey Department of Human Services. We believe a collaborative effort between these two entities would result in a strong effort to maximize transportation solutions. With each agency equipped and well-educated in their respective arenas, a partnership could produce beneficial results.

Additionally, NJ Transit must place an increased emphasis on training for their employees who interact and serve people in the community. A better understanding of people with disabilities – specifically related to their needs and challenges and the equipment they may use - like wheelchairs – would go a long way toward improving experiences. Feedback we've received from self-advocates indicates a lack of education about the population which can lead to negative interactions and a reluctance by people with disabilities to use NJ Transit services in the future. All transportation services offered by NJ Transit, whether they be the fixed routes or the paratransit program, must be accessible to all regardless of a person's physical or cognitive challenges.

It is also imperative for NJ Transit to do a full appraisal of their fleet to ensure it is maintained appropriately and that all disability-specific features are in working order. We have heard anecdotally that people with I/DD spend a long time waiting for transportation only to find out the chair lift on the van doesn't work and their wheelchair cannot be safely moved on board. This is not acceptable and we urge the agency to regularly maintain vans and vehicles to prevent this kind of scenario from occurring.

In closing, we thank you again for the opportunity to testify. It is our hope that after hearing today's testimony, the Legislature and NJ Transit can work together to ensure public transportation is adequately funded, fully financially and physically accessible, reliable to meet people's needs, and equipped to suit the physical, sensory, and cognitive needs of all people.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

New Jersey State Senate Select Committee on NJ Transit

Public Hearing

January 16, 2020

ACCSES New Jersey, Inc.

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**Testimony presented by
Floyd Nesse, Vice President ACCSES NJ &
Steven Cook, Executive Director, ARC Mercer**

alex

Maximizing Transportation Services to NJ Citizens with Disabilities

Senate President Sweeney and members of the committee: Thank you for this opportunity to comment on transportation services provided to NJ citizens with disabilities. I am Floyd Nesse, Vice President of ACCSES New Jersey. Accompanying me today is Steven Cook, Executive Director of Arc Mercer. We are speaking today on behalf of ACCSES New Jersey, which represents over 80,000 citizens with disabilities served in our members' 36 community-based vocational programs. We are here to present changes we believe that are necessary in order to maximize transportation services for NJ citizens with disabilities.

New Jersey citizens with disabilities lack sufficient access to mass transit, para-transit, trains, ferries, airplanes, their own vehicles, and other modes of transportation to perform everyday activities. Even where accessible public transportation exists, adults with disabilities consider transportation inadequate. In the U.S., 24 million individuals with disabilities use public transit to maintain their independence and participate fully in society. For many, it is their only transit option. Although federal and state legislation encourages more people with all types of disabilities to go to work, getting to work requires transportation. Inadequate transportation inhibits community involvement. Those living in rural areas often face the greatest challenge of all due to total lack of public transportation and long distances between destinations.

If we are to significantly impact the lives of our citizens with disabilities we need to make sure there is increasing flexibility and growth in available transportation options throughout New Jersey for our constituents, including those in rural areas. We need to make sure public transportation is adequately funded and available, that existing public transportation is accessible, available in a timely manner, and equipped to suit the physical, sensory, and/or cognitive needs of all people. We need to make sure para-transit systems, for those who need them, are available at comparable cost and funded as an alternative to mass transportation.

We have had several membership meetings the last few weeks and have compiled a few recommendations for the Committee, NJ Transit and ACCESS Link. First, the geographic coverage of the ACCESS Link system is vastly inadequate. The policy for ACCESS Link is to provide service within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from existing transit routes, bus stops and train stations. Although this system may work for the urban areas of the state, it does not work in areas where public transportation does not have routes in service. These tend to be the more rural areas of the state. Subsequently, people with disabilities cannot find any means of public transportation to and from commerce and community centers where the jobs mainly exist. We recommend that the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile rule be re-examined and that ACCESS Link be equipped and funded to provide more service to areas not covered by existing public transit routes with a concentration on providing service to and from commerce and community centers. In addition, in some areas of the state, ACCESS Link limits service on evenings and weekends. This needs to be changed as it hinders as opposed to supporting employment options.

The eligibility process for service from ACCESS Link needs to be changed. The State already has clear eligibility requirements for DVRS, DDD and DMHS. We recommend that anyone who is already

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receiving services from a state agency serving people with disabilities that they also be deemed eligible for ACCESS Link.

Communications with ACCESS Link and their ridership relies heavily on their website. Although this has improved over the past few years, reaching ACCESS link by phone is challenging and often ineffective. We recommend that ACCESS Link deploy a new dedicated contact center prepared to deal with people with disabilities and their families. In addition, with the advent of UBER and Lyft, the technology exists to allow for better, timely mobile communication with riders and operators. We recommend that ACCESS Link look to upgrade their use of technology to allow for better, more timely communication. A dedicated contact center can also help in guiding users through the technology available to facilitate communication.

Although there are good, experienced and compassionate drivers employed by ACCESS Link, there does not seem to be consistency in their ability to understand the nuances of dealing with all types of disabilities. We recommend that drivers and customer service personnel undergo continuing education regarding inclusion and disability awareness.

Beyond our recommendations for ACCESS Link, we believe that all the resources available for providing transportation to NJ citizens with disabilities need to be comprehensively coordinated. The total system is fragmented and disjointed. Services from varying funding sources are often deployed in the same area at the same time. It is not uncommon to see ACCESS Link, County Para-transit and a non profit service provider on the same street at the same time providing transport to different users. Beyond logistics, a major challenge to providing efficient and comprehensive transportation services to NJ citizens with disabilities is navigating the variety and complexity of funding sources. We believe the best way to coordinate the complexities and logistics of service provision and in order to maximize the use of diversified funding sources is to employ localized Regional Transportation Coordinating agencies. The best example of how this may work is the work currently being done by the Arc of Mercer County.

At this point I will turn the floor over to Steven Cook, Executive Director of the Arc of Mercer County to describe the work they are doing and how it could be deployed/emulated in other areas of the State.

Good morning. I would like to thank Senate President Sweeney and the Committee Members for the invitation to present remarks before this esteemed body. Your interest in the issue of transportation for people with special needs is very much warranted and appreciated. A famous saying comes to mind, "If you build it, they will come." However, in the world of special needs, it should probably state that "if you build it, they will only come, IF you provide adequate transportation." I share this because it is important to recognize that for this population transportation is the key to community inclusion and to prevent isolation.

By way of background, I have served as Executive Director of Arc Mercer for over 13 years. The agency provides programs and services to over 1,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) including the ONLY healthcare center in the region exclusively serving people with developmental disabilities. My involvement with Arc Mercer actually began in 2000, serving on their Board of Directors as a volunteer. During that time, I also served as an employee of the New Jersey Senate in the role of Chief of Staff to State Senator Peter Inverso. That experience has taught me to try to be as brief and succinct as

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possible with my remarks. I will do my best. I would also add that prior to working for the Senator, I served the N.J. Department of Transportation in several relevant roles including roadway design engineer, project manager and regional manager for Community Involvement. This experience exposed me to the process of identifying, designing, building and operating transportation solutions.

As an active member of ACCSES NJ, Arc Mercer wholeheartedly endorses Floyd Nesse's stated recommendations for Access Link. However, I would like to amplify and elaborate on the recommendation for Regional Transportation Coordination Agencies (RTCAs) as I believe that an opportunity exists to improve the entire transportation infrastructure so many people depend on every day.

To place some perspective on the recommendation to deploy RTCAs, please allow me to share some information. In addition to being a part of the network of 36 vocational service agencies ACCSES NJ represents, Arc Mercer is also part of a larger network of more than 200 agencies in New Jersey that are funded, at least in part, by the Division of Developmental Disabilities. Each of these agencies depends on, and engages in, some level of transportation similar to Arc Mercer. As a result, they possess numerous handicapped accessible vehicles and drivers that are already trained to support individuals with disabilities. It is important to note, the State has already PAID for these significant investments.

To illustrate the magnitude of these resources, let's review the transportation activities of Access Link to those of Arc Mercer. While doing so, please keep in mind that Arc Mercer is only one of 200+ agencies in the State with similar capacity and needs. In 2017, Access Link reported 9.9M passenger miles while Arc Mercer drove 720,000 miles¹. The key point I am making is that, taken as a whole, Arc Mercer and the other (200) agencies combined form the majority of transportation capacity for people with developmental disabilities in New Jersey. From experience, I can share that with proper investment in technology, training and ongoing "inter-agency" coordination, the existing underutilized capacity of the 200+ other agencies can be transformed into a more efficient and effective service for all people with special needs.

It is for this reason that the RTCAs can be the key to both maximizing the existing capacity within each agency as well as integrating them across agencies, counties, and regions. The coordination agencies will serve to share best practices for fleet maintenance, vehicle routing and, most importantly, communication between drivers and passengers & their guardians.

I also have some very good news...there is no need to reinvent the wheel (no pun intended). The best practices I am referencing have already been developed thanks to grant funding through New Jersey Transit. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Anna Magri, Director of Local Programs, and her team, of New Jersey Transit who have been excellent partners in this endeavor.

Through our grant funding relationship with New Jersey Transit, over the past five (5) years Arc Mercer has been engaged in a project to transform our transportation capability. As a result, we believe we have developed a set of best practices than can be shared with other agencies to achieve similar outcomes. The results of our efforts have been very promising based on the following:

- **Travel times were reduced from 90 minutes to just under 30 minutes – each way - with the very positive result of giving each rider two (2) hours back of their life each day.**

¹ Based on New Jersey Transit Fast Facts published in 2017.

- **Travel Safety improved with a reduction in vehicle accidents from 20 in 2015 and only 2 reported in 2019.**
- **From an efficiency perspective, our Cost Per Passenger Mile was reduced by nearly 50%.**
- **Arc Mercer also enhanced communication with our drivers and passengers through technology, resulting in more efficiencies and an increase in rider & guardian satisfaction. Please note the rider feedback contained in our packet. The development of our specialized routing software and our own internal mobile application was a major breakthrough for our project.**

Through the use of RTCAs, our project outcomes and best practices could be deployed. This stage is already being developed by Arc Mercer with two (2) other agencies in New Jersey that are experiencing significant costs for their current transportation operations. Of course, incentives such as funding for the enhanced technology, ongoing dispatch staffing in each agency and resources for training could act as the 'carrot' to entice many of the 200 agencies to participate in this initiative. Finally, the new agencies would continue to serve as "facilitators" to integrate the newly enhanced transportation services of each individual agency to better serve the special needs community at large.

In closing, I would like to summarize that the recommendations for Access Link enhancements will greatly improve service to people with special needs in their service areas. However, in the areas where Access Link may not be prevalent, such as rural areas, the recommended Regional Transportation Coordination Agencies (RTCAs) can serve two functions. First, to take the lead on deploying already developed best practices in provider agencies similar to Arc Mercer. Second, to function as a coordinator to integrate the newly improved transportation resources to serve as an extension to the Access Link network.

Again, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before this committee. I appreciate the time to share our experience & perspective and applaud your interest in improving transportation for all individuals with disabilities.



To: Members of the Senate Select Committee on New Jersey Transit

From: Audrey Winkler, Executive Director JESPY House

NJ TRANSIT TESTIMONY

JESPY House is a nonprofit organization, located in South Orange, NJ, that works to enable adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to achieve their full potential and to lead independent lives. JESPY does so by supporting and promoting choice, life skills development, and independent living for the clients we serve. JESPY serves 250 clients, who range in age from 18-72.

Eighty (80%) percent or 200 of our clients actively use Access Link, the NJ Transit para transit program.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS & TESTIMONIALS

- Several supervisors of JESPY afternoon programs have noticed and noted improvement in Access Link service. They've expressed that drivers are friendly, pleasant, and accommodating to clients and staff. Some drivers call the main JESPY phone line when they are outside waiting for a client; will wait extra time for client, even if client is running late; and assist clients into the van if needed. Supervisors are now hearing fewer complaints from clients regarding service.
- A JESPY parent and supporter, recently shared that she is impressed & happy with Access Link's diligence and work ethic. The issues she had been having with using Access Link software have been resolved. Any new issues that she brought to their attention were taken care of in an attentive and timely manner. "Using the system has definitely improved," she says. "There is now a feature that lets riders get ride updates sent to phone through text which has helped a lot."
- Although there is still occasionally long onboard-times for some clients, they have reported that their lengthy time/trips on Access Link vans (while in transport) is shorter than before and is less frequent.
- The "Easy wallet" addition at Access Link is a big hit with a many clients.

Quotes from JESPY Clients most recently:

- "I like that Access Link is available so many hours."
 - "I can afford Access Link."
 - "Most of the drivers are nice."

ONGOING ACCESSIBILITY CONCERNS

- 200 JESPY clients work in towns throughout Essex county and beyond. Many rely on Access Link to help them get to work. Although presently less frequent, clients have reported being taken on circuitous routes to get home, waiting outside in the cold for extensive periods, and not being able to reach customer service via telephone. -Access Link took a JESPY client on a 3-hour ride, she lives in South Orange works in Newark and somehow got a tour of Bound Brook to Passaic and finally home to South Orange. That clearly is not the most direct route between South Orange and Newark.
- Limited pick up time windows (especially during rush hour times) is a real challenge. As a result, there has been limited transportation availability for clients and their work schedules. Some clients have had to take on part time jobs when full time is available. Others have had to leave work early because of the limited Access Link transportation schedule. This is a very serious issue for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Our goal is to advance independence for our clients, we find them full time jobs and then because public transportation via AccessLink is so limiting they are unable to take on full time positions. This is not promoting independence for a most vulnerable population.

CLIENT-REPORTED INCIDENTS IN 2018-2019

- **1)** Access Link picked up a client from her employer in Union County. The driver passed the client's South Orange home twice. Through tears, she begged the driver to stop so that she could go home to use the bathroom. The driver refused and continued on his pre-determined route and took her to Secaucus and Wayne before returning to her to South Orange many hours later.
- **2)** One client has limited mobility and uses a walker. She had to leave her job because Access Link was so unreliable. She said that taking Uber/Lyft as an alternative would have cost her too much money leaving her with only \$10 or \$20 a month from her salary.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CHALLENGES

- There have been ride cancellations the day before a forecasted day of inclement weather. This has impeded some clients from going to work for fear of not having transportation. Access Link transportation has also been cancelled during the middle of the day due to inclement weather. This has left clients stranded at their

location (e.g. worksite, day program, out in the community) with no transportation home.

- Delayed transportation due to inclement weather - Client had to take off work because the time delay would make client late to work. Client had to use PTO time (due to lack of transportation to work) to ensure that client still got paid.

TIME WINDOW AVAILABILITY MUST BE EXPANDED

- Clients have arrived at their destination past their expected window due to other customers being added to the ride at the last minute. Surely, there is a way to coordinate rides and timing more efficiently.
- Access Link vans have arrived before a client's shift ends, causing the client to feel as if he is being rushed out of work.
- When trying to book a ride, the time that's needed isn't available for request. Available pick-up times are either too early or later than what is needed. As an example, a client's shift starts at 9:00am. The only available pick up is at 6:00am or 10:00am, which has caused several clients to get to work much too early or much too late.
- Client called Access Link a week in advance to set up the ride for staff meeting at work, which started at 7:00pm. The client scheduled her pick up time for 4:00pm and wasn't picked up until 5:30pm. After client was picked up, the driver made several stops for other individuals on the van, which caused client to miss the staff meeting completely.
- Due to odd time windows/limited time selection, clients have to wake up extra early for their ride and hope that they get to their destination on time. JESPY's Shared Housing Supervisor has noticed that a lot of our elderly clients have had bad experiences in the past (before recent improvements) and have completely dismissed the idea of ever using Access Link again, regardless of improvements.

Notable Quotes from Clients at JESPY Day Habilitation and Vocational Program still having challenges:

- "Access Link makes me late for work."
- "Access Link cancels rides without reason or contact."
- "Dispatch needs to have more organization when it comes to drop off locations, times, and order."
- "My Access Link ride did not show up. My mom had to track them down."

- “If you lose something on Access Link, it is gone. The process of potentially finding it again is hard.”
- “The Access Link bus is not equipped to drive in the snow. That’s because it has 2 - wheel drive.”
- “Access Link is consistently late and because of that, it prohibits staff from closing the Day Program on time.”

CLIENT/STAFF TESTIMONIALS (Given at NJ Transit Board Meeting – Dec. 12, 2018)

NJ – JESPY client: *I use a walker. I have to stand outside for NJ Transit and Access Link in all types of weather because I can’t do the stairs. It takes me a while to come down. When I call for a ride, I am on hold for an hour or more. If their rides are 24 hours, the phones should be 24 hours also. When I say I have to be at work at a certain time, I get picked up 10 minutes before I have to be at work or two hours before it opens. The drivers go past my house and do not let me off. I have to use other ways to get around because I cannot count on Access Link. When I was able to do the stairs, I was by the front door. They did not see the front door, so I did not see them. They said I was a no show. We have to wait outside for 20 minutes. They stay for five minutes. When I have to go to a doctor appointment, the appointment is sometimes only one hour long. But I have to wait two hours for the ride home.*

BK – JESPY client: *I believe the system needs an overhaul. Why is it that if your route is beyond the 2 and a half miles of a bus route, Access Link refuses to do the drop off? Luckily there are other options now thanks to my colleague who orchestrated the Lyft/Uber deal. But still it should never have come to that. Also, if it takes 10 minutes to drive from one place to another, it should never take the rider 2 hours to get to a location, even if there is an additional pick up. Lastly, riders should never have to wait outside in the snow for their ride. We have had clients in the Concord [a South Orange apartment building] who have issues walking and having to wait outside in the snow. That is never good.*

Robert Slater, previous Vocational Manager, JESPY House: *In some cases, my job coordinators have to rearrange clients’ work schedules just for transportation purposes due to the irregularity of the Access Link schedule. This can often result in a client getting less hours and days of work due to these accommodations. I quite often have to call Access Link to help our clients schedule rides. This is because your system is NOT accessible to a wide variety of clients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.*

I can attest to the fact that when calling Access Link, it can take over two hours of waiting for an operator to actually take the call. In addition, it’s also a problem for our clients to have to accept a transportation schedule that has them waiting outside alone at their job location for an hour before another employee can open the establishment. Adjusting work schedules to match rides with Access Link is a challenge for me. Imagine if I weren’t available to our clients, how would they be able to negotiate these hurdles on their own with a system that is NOT accessible? If I am struggling to make it work, just imagine what it is like for someone

with a disability. I'm not sure at this point if it's a staffing issue on your part or a compassion problem, but your system is not working. Access Link administration should train their staff to have more sensitivity or a better understanding of the challenges of people with developmental disabilities.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Implement new scheduling software to increase efficiency of drop offs and pickups/routes.
- Explore options to condense routes to decrease onboard time.
- Drop off passengers when passing desired destination. It's important not to keep them on the ride to pick up another passenger that is past their drop off location.
- Open communication between schedule coordinators and drivers – passing along information from drop off to return trip. It is important for drivers to know which entrances clients should be dropped off at and picked up from.
- Offering same day trips and/or on demand rides.
- JESPY's Shared Housing Supervisor suggests better apps, better scheduling system, same day trips/on demand rides. She shares that Access Link is still somewhat difficult for clients to navigate the system. The interview process is should be made easier and take less time. "If you have a disability," she says, "you should always qualify. It doesn't mean clients always have to use the service, but they should be given that option."



New Jersey Association of Centers for Independent Living

January 16, 2020

Senator Sweeney and members of this select committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today about Transportation on New Jersey Transit.

- The current transportation situation is the number one barrier to successful employment for individuals with disabilities in NJ.
- Unemployment of people with disabilities in NJ runs at approximately 79%, plus or minus
- 1 or 2%, typically on the higher side.
- Successful competitive integrated employment of individuals with disabilities in NJ is between 17 – 19%.
- The unemployment rate in NJ runs somewhere between 10 - 12% for individuals with disabilities, 3-4 times that of people with no documented disability.
- The number one or two barrier to improved quality of life for individuals with disabilities in NJ is lack of adequate transportation services.
- The number one issue heard around the state is the long periods of time wasted to and from destinations, some specific examples in the other written testimony delivered to this committee.
- What is the specific mission and goal of the NJ Transit Advisory Committee to improve transportation for people with disabilities? Who will see the results of this committee during this process?
- If not already in place, a thorough research and analysis plan and team should be put in place internally by NJ Transit to review everything related to NJ Transit policy, procedures and processes.
- Research and appoint an outside entity to perform a thorough evaluation replicating NJ Transit's internal and more as required, using an entity with experience and expertise, possibly from another state with a related track record.
- Share the findings of this committees work with all those giving input to this committee and others.

Thank you,

Respectfully submitted by Scott Elliott, Chair



NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL
C/O PCIL, 3635 QUAKERBRIDGE ROAD, Suite 40, Hamilton, NJ 08619

Norman A. Smith
Chair

Prepared Remarks for the NJ State Senate
Select Committee on NJ Transit
January 16,, 220

Senator Sweeney and members of this select committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today about the most vexing issue that people with disabilities face daily: Transportation on New Jersey Transit.

My name is Norman Smith, and I'm chairperson of the NJ Statewide Independent Living Council. We are a federally-mandated council appointed by the Governor to, among other authorities, advocate for systems change to empower people with disabilities to live independently.

With this authority in mind, I'm here to report that New Jersey's transportation system is failing its citizens with disabilities on a daily basis, and NJ Transit is a major factor in this failure. This needs to change!

Each month this Council hears the frustration that people with disabilities have in trying to get to the store, the doctor, the bank, or to their job. We hear horror stories of riding on AccessLink for an hour to go a mere mile away. We hear about NJ Transit buuses rolling past people in wheelchairs at bus stops. We hear about waiting in a phone queue for hours to schedule a ride two weeks ahead of time. We hear about arriving two hours early for an appointment because that was the only slot available. We hear the anger about needing a last minute ride for an emergency and not being able to get one.

I have personally experienced the frustration of trying to attract the attention of a NJ Transit conductor to board a train on a crowded platform. I'm always wondering why I have to make a public spectacle of myself to get their attention when there are reasonable alternatives. I have experienced the anxiety of worrying that the elevator at my stop will be working and hoping that the urine stench is bearable. I have worried about being evacuated from a train in an emergency.

These examples are just a sample of the problems, barriers, and indignities that a person with a disability needing to use public transportation daily as he or she seeks a fulfilling life of independence. This needs to change.

Personally, I had hoped that with technology some of these issues would be solved, yet it seems like computer-based trip planning for AccessLink has caused less efficient scheduling for the riders and illogical trip routing.

While I have your attention, I want to mention a transportation topic outside of NJ Transit. The technology-based ride services of Uber and Lyft are failing to serve people in wheelchairs in most of the state. Combined with ride subsidies, these services could reduce the pressure on AccessLink for many trips, but the lift equipped vehicles for these services are not available except for areas around Philadelphia and New York. I note that SEPTA is an Uber contractor to provide on-demand services for people in wheelchairs. We need to bring this to New Jersey, and we need the Legislature and the Governor to weigh in with Uber and Lyft to change this.

In conclusion let me say this: I'm a frequent visitor of Washington, DC, for business. I can get around DC with my power-chair day or night through various options available for everyone. This type of transportation infrastructure needs to be developed for New Jersey with input from the disability community. In this regard, the New Jersey Statewide Independent Living Council is ready to lend its expertise about issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities to bring this about. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted:



His Mark

Norman A. Smith
Chair
NJ SILC

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SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON NEW JERSEY TRANSIT
COMMITTEE MEETING – JANUARY 16, 2020

Written by Steve Gruzlovic, New Jersey Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC): Transportation Chair

Senator Sweeney and Members of the Select Committee:

I would like thank you for the opportunity to share my expertise and personal experience regarding the best practices of transit agencies for providing service for individuals with disabilities, and more specifically my experiences with NJ Transit. I am hopeful that we can not only identify the issues that many people with disabilities face but also through a collaborative effort work toward solutions to make a more positive outcome.

I would like to start by introducing myself and explaining why this issue matters to me. My name is Steve Gruzlovic, I am a Mercer County resident from the town of Robbinsville. I also have a disability called Cerebral Palsy that requires the use of a wheelchair to function during every day activities of life. I am a member of the Progressive Center for Independent Living Board and I am the Transportation Chair for the NJ Statewide Independent Living Council. I also frequently use NJ Transit services by bus, train, River line, and Para Transit service Access Link as my main forms of transportation to and from appointments and engagements in and around this and the neighboring state of Pennsylvania.

I have spent a significant amount of time researching and studying our state as well as other states transportation structures in an effort to recommend potential suggestions and solutions to help individuals with disabilities live more independent and fulfilling lives. Unfortunately, NJ Transit misses the mark on many levels and needs to do much more to address the transportation needs of people with disabilities.

I would like to mention each service individually and will start with NJ Transit Bus Service. Some of the issues are bus shelters are not available or are not properly placed for individuals with disabilities some stops do not have one and others are placed too close to the curb for wheelchairs to use. The process to get a bus shelter installed is extremely complex and takes a long time and requires involvement from Mayor and township offices which can lead to extensive delays. The reason why this is important is because without a bus shelter people with disabilities and their adaptive equipment are exposed completely to the elements which can lead to health issues and equipment breakdown. I have also found issues within the buses that include drivers that do not know how to properly secure wheelchairs (which is a serious safety issue) the alert system switch on the underside of the chair to stop the bus sometimes malfunctions, the information system on the bus does not display the streets and stops at points, the ramp to get wheelchairs on the bus malfunctions, and when this happens maintenance response is sometimes slow (can be 45 minutes to an hour.)

While traveling on River Line I have noticed that ticket machines and validator's are often broken or not accessible, some locations are very remote and the emergency phone system does not work which is a safety concern, and there is a significant gap at times between the tram car and the platform which can be very dangerous for an individual who uses a wheelchair.

I frequently use the train to travel around the state and to Pennsylvania. I have experienced bridge plates that are unstable, elevators that do not work and are not fixed in a timely manner, going unnoticed by conductors and almost missing my train among a mass of people, and squeezing in between the row of seats with my chair because there is no designated area on the train car for a

wheelchair. Recently I discovered that an unusually high number of train stations are not wheelchair accessible. This limits the areas that people can go and may restrict employment prospects for many individuals. The list according to the NJ Transit App is as follows:

Allendale, Allenhurst, Anderson Street, Annandale, Avenel, Basking Ridge, Bay Head, Belmar, Berkeley Heights, Bernardsville, Bloomfield, Bound Brook, Bradley Beach, Brick Church, Bridgewater, Broadway Fairlawn, Chatham, Clifton, Convent Station, Delawanna, Dunellen, East Orange, Edison, Emerson, Fanwood, Far Hills, Garfield, Garwood, Gillette, Glen Ridge, Glen Rock, Hawthorne, High Bridge, Highland Ave, Hillsdale, Ho Ho Kus, Jersey Ave, Kingsland, Lake Hopatcong, Lebanon, Lincoln Park, Little Falls, Little Silver, Lyndhurst, Mahwah, Manasquan, Maplewood, Millburn, Millington, Monmouth Park, Morris Plains, Mount Tabor, Mountain Ave, Mountain Lakes, Mountain Station, Murray Hill, Netcong, Netherwood, New Bridge Landing, New Providence, Newark (Broad St), North Branch, Oradell, Orange, Otisville, Park Ridge, Passaic, Peapack, Pearl River, Perth Amboy, Plainfield, Plauderville, Port Jervis, Radburn, Raritan, Ridgewood, Rivers Edge, Roselle Park, Short Hills, Sloatsburg, Somerville, South Amboy, Spring Lake, Stirling, Suffern, Summit, Teterboro, Tuxedo, Upper Montclair, Waldwick, Walnut St, Watchung Ave, Watsessing Ave, White House, Wood-Ridge, and Woodcliff Lake

One of the biggest areas of concern is the states version of para transit called Access Link. We as a community could have a separate session just on this service alone. Over the last few years it has become progressively worse and fails to serve the needs of individuals with disabilities. Long wait times to schedule trips and limited availability is now the norm. Individuals are often times unable to make appointments or rides to their work, doctors' offices, family functions, and other gatherings. There are a few reasons for this which include some changes within the algorithm and policy for scheduling. It used to be a 15-minute interval then it was changed to a half hour and now currently it is on the hour. This leaves less time slots open and limits freedom of choice for individuals. When someone wants to make an appointment, they often have to go two hours earlier than they normally would just to make sure they get there on time and schedule a time long after they are done to avoid missing the ride. There is also no same day service for Access Link so if an emergency occurs you can not make a trip on the same day and have to book it 24 hours in advance.

Access Link recently unveiled a new online service that is supposed to make scheduling easier. There are several problems with the online system. The system only recognizes addresses that are previously in the system if you would like to go to a new address or destination you still need to call in for them to update it in the system for the first time. This does not save time and leads to increased frustration. The automatic EZ Wallet payment system malfunctions occasionally and takes out too much money. There has also been some concern regarding the pricing for trips. It is understood that Access link is a door-to-door cash service but pricing is often one and a half to three times what the price is for disabled customers on standard transit options.

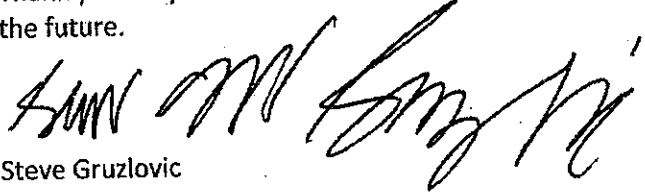
With the many issues described above I would now like to suggest a few solutions. As far as the process for obtaining bus shelters it must be streamlined and made less complicated. Drivers may need additional training on an experienced base level with regard to safely securing different types of wheelchairs. With regard to trains, bridge plates need to be secured to the actual train and should be released in fold out form from the floor there should also be designated area for individuals with wheelchairs to sit on New Jersey transit trains.

Most importantly with regard to Access Link, they seem to be overburdened with demand I would like to suggest that we as a state look over to Pennsylvania and follow their model of Uber WAV and Lyft Access. This would enable disabled people to get same-day service to any location. SEPTA was able to

get a contract with both Uber and Lyft and it greatly decreased the strain on their paratransit system while creating an additional stream of revenue for the state. This allows individuals with disabilities to go more places than ever before and truly live an independent life.

In conclusion, I would once again like to thank Senator Sweeney and Members of the Select Committee for allowing me the opportunity to share my experience with New Jersey Transit. I am hopeful that we will be able to solve these problems together not only the betterment of individuals with disabilities but for the betterment of society as a whole

Thank you for your time and I look forward to speaking with you about this and many other matters in the future.



Steve Gruzlovic

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January 14, 2020

Re: Testimony for Senate Select Committee on New Jersey Transit, 1/16/20

Dear Senators,

Good morning. My name is Anita Clavering. I live at 161 Garrett Drive in Long Branch, NJ. I am a member of the Monmouth County Democratic Disability Caucus, the Long Branch Housing Authority Board, and Secretary for Council 3 of the New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (NJSSAN).

I wanted to testify in person at the NJTransit hearing on Thursday, January 16th at the State House but was discouraged because of recent issues with Access Link. Traveling from Long Branch to Trenton on Access Link would not have ensured a timely arrival for me. A number of poor experiences in the past have caused me to be late or completely miss self-advocacy meetings, community events, and budget hearings over the years. Recently, when making a reservation on Access Link to go to The Arc of Monmouth County office in Tinton Falls to watch a Presidential Forum, I was told that Access Link does not service that area of Tinton Falls. This hasn't been the first time that I was denied a ride on Access Link.

I requested a ride on Access Link to and from The Arc of Middlesex County office to go to Council 3 self-advocacy meetings but was turned down because it does not go through the catchment areas that the buses and/or trains go on. I use Access Link as my primary source of transportation because it enables me to be more independent, and gives me the opportunity to travel anywhere (within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of a bus route) that I want. Last year I had an opportunity to meet with the General Manager of NJTransit, but because of Access Link's "time window" policies, I arrived after the meeting had already ended.

I am asking, is there possibly any way that NJTransit can expand their Access Link routes so people can come directly to the places they want to go instead of missing out? Access Link could be a wonderful service that opens the world of independent travel for so many people. Please expand the range of Access Link transportation, and make New Jersey accessible for people with disabilities. Thank you all very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Anita Clavering

Member of the NJ Statewide Self-Advocacy Network with The Arc of New Jersey

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Access Link User Testimony January 2020

Dear NJ Legislators,

There have been a lot of good improvements to the Access Link ride reservation and transportation services over the last year.

The online reservation feature and the EZ Wallet feature are both very helpful.

There are 2 items that I think can be improved as the result of issues that I have experienced with this online feature.

1) Not being able to cancel a ride in the online application, due to an illness or family emergency, within the hour before it arrives. Here is the detail of my experience: my son began throwing up about 45 minutes before his ride arrived, I could not cancel at that time online. I have seen the cancel function for rides before but it was not an available option that close to arrival time. So, I had to call to cancel, was placed on a long hold and was unable to reach someone who was then able to cancel the ride until moments before arrival time. The cancellation could have taken place 45 minutes before the arrival time if there was an online cancel feature or email cancel feature. I felt bad that the actual cancellation process took so long and that the driver did not know sooner.

2) There is no input option for pickup or drop-off location. You must select from a pulldown menu, the location is not always available to choose and so I must call for the ride reservation.

Here is the detail of my experience: My son wanted to go to see a movie at the AMC Marketfair 10 (3521 US-1, Princeton, NJ 08540). This did not appear in the location selection dropdown menu and so I had to call for the reservation.

Another suggestion for future improvement would be the development of an APP for the riders to use to access ride information and make reservations directly from their phone/mobile device. Sometimes my son forgets the website url and I have to text it to him. He is used to just clicking on an APP and that way he would never worry about forgetting the Access Link website url.

Dawn McKitty, mother of an adult with Autism

Resident of Mercer County, Hamilton, NJ

Dear NJ legislators,

I use Access Link to get to work several days out of the week. My schedule changes so I can't do a standing reservation, I have to make them week-to-week. There are times where I can't get a convenient pickup time and I have to go to work as much as two hours early and sit and wait. Waiting is a problem for pickups as well. I've found that doctors, banks, stores, and other places are not understanding that I have to wait for my transportation and they think I'm just loitering. As a power wheelchair user I really don't have any other options for these non-medical trips. There is a county service but they tend to have even less availability, especially in the peak times of morning and afternoon which often coincides with my work schedule.

Michael Powell

Hamilton, NJ

Dear NJ legislators,

My daughter is medically fragile and attended the Mercer County Community College DREAM Program (Developing Real Expectations for Achieving Mastery). DREAM is for students with intellectual/developmental disabilities as Stephanie also has autism. She had to attend school with a nurse due to five life-threatening conditions. We tried to utilize Access Link. She went through the eligibility process and DDD (Division of Developmental Disabilities) approved the nurse for travel as Stephanie has two rescue medications for resuscitation. When we called to schedule pickup and drop-off around her nursing and school schedule, we were told she could either be 20 minutes late each day or picked up an hour and half early. MCCC takes attendance and lateness counts. If we used Access Link's transportation schedule, she would have been kicked out of the program. Fortunately in our county (Mercer) we found TRADE (Transportation Resources to Aid the Disadvantaged and Elderly) Transportation. Since Stephanie was already eligible for Access Link, she was also eligible for TRADE. We had no problems with them and they worked with us whenever there were changes (such as different class schedule). TRADE is free but we appreciated them so much that we sent them \$25/month and when school ended last spring a thank you check of \$100. There was such a difference between how Access Link perceived lateness as customary vs. TRADE who understood timeliness, particularly as we had a nursing shift in addition to class schedule. There should be other options than Access Link in other counties.

L.A.

Mercerville, NJ 08619

Dear NJ Legislators,

Hello, thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony. I am a 42 year old woman, I have cerebral palsy, and I used a power wheelchair for most of my mobility needs. I have been using Access Link since 1996. There are a few points that I would like to make that point out shortcomings in the current system.

My biggest concern as a user of the system is the amount of time I often spend on the vehicle. In the year 2019 there were at least ten instances when I was taking a trip inside of Mercer County (trips of 3-5 miles) that I was on the vehicle for more than two hours. During these trips the bus came very close to my destination, even directly past where I was going, but the driver would not drop me off without dropping other riders off at further destinations first. This can not only cause me to miss important appointments, but also takes a physical toll on a rider (there are no restrooms on the bus!). Perhaps letting drivers who are much more familiar with the areas they serve have the ability to determine the order of drop-off would help prevent such unnecessarily long trips.

I was one of the pilot program testers for the new Access Link Online System. I have found this to be an improvement over the older phone-only system but I am experiencing an issue that should be addressed. The system only stores a finite amount of my riding history. At some point, setting up new rides causes my old rides to disappear. This means I cannot go to that location which is no longer in my history again, without having to use the phone and call NJ Transit. I have tried this from computers and mobile devices and the result is the same. If I type in an address I know to be correct, Access Link Online does not recognize it UNLESS it is in my ride history. Storing rides indefinitely, or having an auto-complete mechanism similar to Google Maps, would vastly improve my experience and help free phone lines for those who cannot access the service electronically.

Timika S. Cheek

Robbinsville, NJ

From: Kathy Moore <[REDACTED]>

Date: January 15, 2020 at 9:16:11 AM EST

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: New Jersey transit

I'm reaching out to you to help improve New Jersey transit problems. As a Commuter for work and other places that I attend I know I would be an asset to your board. I've been disabled for almost 23 years. I'm in a wheelchair and I go to so many different places and travel all over New Jersey I have a lot of experience with the buses and the trains and I would like to help fix some of the problems that the buses keep having . I can't tell you how many times I have attempted to go to work or someplace of importance and couldn't get there because the driver didn't even know how to use a lift properly or he brought out a bus Without Making sure that he had a bus with a working Lyft. I can't begin to tell you how many times I had to change appointments or arrive late just plain lost out because of these facts. I just want to make sure that no one else would have to through all these things and everything would run much smoother thank you for your time. Our Governvor even called me about the transportation problems that I was having. You can google me and you'll read about some of them. Thank you for your time Kathy Moore [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Hex

ACCESS LINK TESTIMONY

Dear NJ Legislators,

Good mornings my name be the ginamarie williams. I come last year to talks about the epic gaps in transportation program for the entire NJ transit system and the negatives impact on our lives. Since the then I ables use the ACI program in Middlesex County helps me get Access Link interview and ables be tell the yes to the program. With every program you be offer you put caps and excepts on it so there be no abuse – have you ever be think of who you be stop ables use with these. I be the brain injures survivor from accident and yes I be have the car (old but still the run with many high repair needs) I still have the license cause you no have law say anyone requires to retest after anythings. I be have the post stress and the car be major trigger me. I be freak the highway and sometimes side roads I be get confuse and lost even on roads I be go all my life. The doctor tell me I should be use the gps everywheres go even if just up block and no drives the far or the night time by the self. I be the family of one so how you be thinks this happen. Never be mind my ass be get the older and my car need more repair so I turn to the transport service you be have place in state for the disables.

I very excite be told the yes to use the access link – well now I need the helps to be told where I need travels to get to nj transit stop so I ables get the link service to get me where need go. And God helps me if I need travels far – like come here today from the Warren County. Do you have any ideas how many stop go tranfers I be need take and the time it be espeicals when you deal with special needs person that have triggers from car? You may say well I just one case and just how many case you be thinks I is in this state? How many us be the disables and how many us have the car triggers. How many us require use of program to get us out and about but you no awares of us and our need. Is you awares that they be have reports say from the 2019 show 65% increase of the bias incidents. How you be thinks that make feels when I need relays the strangers helps me and exploit that I be disables in order get that helps. I pray they be the ethics workplace cause as much you still be get the paycheck there be many that no be have the ethics acts when in the work place.

My case worker be helps me call the access link program and get the informations for me go my love you brain yoga class. So from the monmouth junctions to the pennington yoga studio where program be takes about 35-45 minute depend on traffic and if take back road instead the highway. (FYI – when use the access link service you no ables request please no take the highway use backroads or anything. They be go the road they be want to takes and no – they not always the exact bus route it what the driver want take) The access link say I must call the NJ transit to get travel times and other informations to make me be full awares of trip and other safety infromations about the ride service. I no be in zone so I must get to stop point and then be edcate on the transfers and other info requires. How come the access link number no ables help with this how I be need call more one the number and get piece meals informations for just one trip.

But then we get it all and find out from the nj transit folks I be requires about 2 hours with need get me the pick up point and need exacts moneys and also ables to be on the time for my transfers which they

I be say be 2 to get me my one hour fifteen minute love brain yoga class. So this mean I be expects spend 4 hours in vehicle to do a peace yoga class. How well you be think that be when I be call and complain with the wonky drive service that speed down highway and no cool beans respects my disables triggers. After talk with program I no ables do this and no ables go my free love your brain yoga program class.

I be move from the middlesex to the warren county. I be call the access link number to see if I ables get helps to get arounds and stuff and I be told I be lives 27 miles outside the service area. I be finals get affordables home but I be in complete dead zone.

I be work 2 days week 3 hr and it be 2 mile from my home. The access link no service my area to helps me to the from works. OH – Warren county have the white bus ables take me yes? I be told I need have least at the least one hour window to ables get me the work on the time for my 3 hour shift. So I be the limits disables and I have car triggers and you provides me service bus that take one hour take me 2 miles. How this be helps me quality life especial when you say great good keep the work but make it over the hards get me the works. So a 3 hr shift that I struggles to do now be take me minmum 5 hour day to take bus to and the from for 2 miles. The white bus no go off route 3/4 mile like the access link so I be need find way get the stop see if ables do it to use. And the time to and from the stop be add time my work day it becomes a 5 plus hours.

Also if you be remembers from last time when I be no the happy with the logisticare program, you have restricts on the access link to. The book rides service close at the 4pm for the access link so how I be get the safe ride to my hospital for next day surgery that they no call you for time until night before. This still no resolves and huge need for us to keep us safe and the healthys.

Is you have a program for us disables to get us to and the from hospitals for our schedules surgers cause I no be the only family of one that be needs the safe ride. If you do be have program please let no cause I no awares one and definitely need use it.

For having some the richest people in our nation live in our State we have major dead zones of no transportation services. How is this possible today when we keep expanding to build more warehouse and business districts to bring more volume to our State but you no considers those us already here alives and ables to want to work and lives in community.

There be much more studies that be the publish about benefits the mental and emotional wellbeing of person and the commit to healthier lifestyle. There be direct positives found from increase in companship and socialize - how we gonna do that if we no ables get out and about.

I be use the State TBI Fund and talks about it last time and it be the postives and also the negtives for me. Here a hurtful thing – my case worker which every time she be email phone call or anything get the paid from my lifetime program moneys be say (I be have this in the writing email – in case someone wants to lie like last time about my case) reach out to 9 companies ask for the helps me in my warren

county and not the one ables tell her yes yet that they be the helps me get what need. That no the typo I use word need not the wants. We be talk about basic stuff for our lives keep us healthy in mind and body.

And the Access Link no ables helps me the either from where I be lives. So you may say again – like when I be here last the time – just moves. IT be take me over the 6 year find affordables place so how easy peasy you be thinks it for us to lives in area where you be make it cool beans for access link services. Do you ever review and see how the safe it be some these lay over stops especials for us that no live right on route or need switch overs and wait for another link to come get us. There be areas with no sidewalks or no covers from weathers. And what you be do with us that no have the cell phones so no ables just call easy peasy while we in route.

I no sures how be ables improve this but I keep the talk you tell you I be survive my accident and I gonna keep the lives and keep the talk and tell and ask for the propers care and helps. If it no be get for the me then maybe helps the people that survive after the me. The disables population keep the grow and NJ have one the highest stats for kids on spectrum so what you be think gonna happens when the parents pass and the kids age and we still here we still alives and we keep the fight to lives full positives life. In order do that we need get out and about and you and the access link program need to make this a positives commitment to our disabled lifestyle.

Here be another tidbit – the CDC be put the new data out that they be use the studys for that say a quarter of kids that be disables are no proper diagnose as disables. This just for the autistic spectrum what about other disability spectrum numbers?

Please contact me if be need anythings I be look forwards hear from you

Thank you much time and listen to my words

Ginamarie williams



TESTIMONY
to
Senate President Steve Sweeney and
Special Committee on Transportation

January 16, 2020

Susan Perron
President & CEO, Abilities Solutions
1208 Delsea Drive, Westville, NJ 08093
sperron@abilities4work.com

Transportation Needs of People with Disabilities in New Jersey

I am Susan Perron and I am the President and CEO of Abilities Solutions located in Gloucester County, serving all of South Jersey. I come to you today not as a transportation provider or expert but to represent the voices of 600 + people with disabilities receiving services from us everyday who rely on public transportation or para transit services.

What do all of these people have in common? They need access to the same things we all do:

- Social activities
- Friends
- Shopping
- Medical appointments
- Work

Abilities Solutions has been meeting the employment needs of people with disabilities in South Jersey for over 55 years. My comments will mostly address work related transportation challenges.

Current transportation options for people with disabilities include:

- Drive self
- Ride with family member
- Ride with sponsored housing staff member
- Use a county service
- Call a cab
- Use AccessLink, by far the most commonly used service for those living within three quarters of a mile of a NJ Transit bus route

Each of these has pitfalls. Less than 4% of the 400+ people we serve daily in competitive integrated employment have a drivers license and /or vehicle. Among the 200+ people served daily in transitional facility based employment programs, that number drops to less than 1%. For those relying on family members, those family members have responsibilities to their own work schedules and other family members needs. For many, their family members, if still alive, are older or disabled and no longer able to drive themselves. To rely on a staff member from a group home or other supported housing setting is not reasonable. Those individuals have responsibilities to other residents

and schedules can change. Many times they cannot be relied upon to pick up individuals who need to leave during the day.

The county transportation does not always have the same calendar as our programs and the county often has to prioritize the needs of riders, particularly in cases of inclement weather or holidays and those riders with serious medical needs. For this reason, reliability can become a factor. Private cabs are expensive and vehicles are privately owned and operated with little regulations. Drivers would likely not have adequate awareness of special needs.

AccessLink, the most popular and commonly used service, also has numerous problems which present obstacles to our clients.

- **Accessibility** is limited physically and electronically. Physically through the three quarter mile requirement and inadequate evening or “off” hours of service, and electronically with having a mobile app that is not accessible for most of our service recipients.
- **Reliability** is impacted by the 30 minute window for pick ups, changes to schedules and drivers. Many of our clients have a real fear of having a “no show” status if a family member picks them up early. That status could negate their standing order. When these situations arise, we definitely see heightened anxiety and increased behavioral problems. For individuals being dropped off at community jobs, arriving too early or too late can certainly pose a threat to employment. For families who rely on the services of a caregiver to be in their home to meet their loved one, a change in schedule could mean that person arrives home alone. This happened to one of our families. During the time that the person was alone, he let into the home a stranger who knocked, stole from the home and was seen leaving the property just as the caregiver was arriving at the appointed time. Lucky for our client, he was not harmed. His mother now has a paid caregiver arriving 2 hours earlier each day to insure that this potentially life threatening situation never happens again.
- **Driver Training** is inadequate regarding disability awareness and disability etiquette. There have also been multiple instances of drivers not checking their lists or waiting an appropriate amount of time before leaving. Driver training should ideally be conducted by disability providers / experts.

- **Communication** with AccessLink is difficult at best. When busses are late at dismissal, staff have been kept on hold for over an hour trying to determine the status of a bus. Even with the mobile app, if the client does not know his or her rider number or know how to use the app, it does them no good. Can that mobile app and rider numbers be made available to non-registered riders, such as providers? Our staff have been known to board the bus in order to get a driver to call in to AccessLink to determine the status of another vehicle.
- **Eligibility process** is redundant for those already deemed eligible for services through DVR or DDD. The process could be streamlined for those individuals.
Staff members staying late sometimes up to 2 hours - additional expense and aggravation – reality of admission criteria and actually leaving the person to fend for herself.

It is evident that any of these factors alone, but particularly when taken together, can create a dangerous domino effect for the person with a disability, the family, the employer and the provider.

Again, I am no transportation expert but any changes for improvement **MUST**: include input from the users and their families; address accessibility barriers physically and electronically; insure timely and accessible communication; and provide for a unified approach (possibly regional) to insure coordinated efforts on behalf of people with disabilities. Any solutions must also address systemic issues that would include differences based on type of disability, unique differences across individual counties; and the planning and approval processes for new or relocated disability service providers that take into account transportation to these offices. A prime example is the relocation of the Camden County One Stop and DVRS offices to a Cherry Hill location that, in spite of a NJ Transit bus stop and a sporadic shuttle, is proving difficult to access for people with disabilities. Other types of transportation models such as Uber or Lyft that would include a central dispatch, specially trained drivers, appropriately equipped vehicles and easy to use mobile apps and linkages for families and caregivers might provide one type of model.

I appreciate your attention to this important need, and know we can count on your support in addressing this need for our most vulnerable citizens.

Question 17.

It has been reported that individuals who rely on the paratransit services provided by NJ Transit often miss important doctor appointments or other scheduled events because the transportation is significantly late, including up to 90 minutes late in certain circumstances. The paratransit service operates as a lifeline for many of the clients who use it because they would not have access to transportation or mass transit, and thereby access to many of life's necessities, without paratransit.

(a) How does NJ Transit measure the performance of paratransit services, including timeliness of service? What is NJ Transit's existing mechanism to notify these customers when the service is running late? Is NJ Transit currently working on improving communication concerning these services? If so, how? Does NJ Transit have any plans to help provide and maintain a level of sufficient reliability for paratransit services?

RESPONSE:

NJ Transit provides paratransit services to its customers in need of accommodation in large part through Access Link. In accordance with federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, Access Link provides services in 18 of New Jersey's 21 Counties to customers with disabilities who cannot ride the local fixed route bus system. Access Link services five regions spanning New Jersey. A copy of the Access Link Region Map is appended hereto as Exhibit A [2020NJT0001]. Access Link contracts multiple service providers ("Service Providers") to offer ADA accessible services within at least three quarters of a mile of local fixed bus routes and light rail stations. Access Link shadows local bus service during the same times and days of the week as local fixed bus routes.

In FY 2019, Access Link conducted 1,551,168 trips, servicing approximately 54,000 clients. The average cost per trip in FY 2019 was \$44.48.

I. Performance Metrics

NJ Transit monitors and measures the following key metrics related to Access Link's performance: (1) timeliness of service; (2) service reliability and safety; and (3) efficiency.

A. *Timeliness of Service* is measured by (i) on-time performance, (ii) missed trips; and (iii) late service communications.

***On-time Performance* is measured by vehicle arrival time-stamped data through Trapeze PASS software and in-vehicle Ranger units. Vehicles that arrive within the 30-minute pick-up window confirmed in advance with the customer are**

considered “on time.” Ride duration is also monitored in real-time using the software. In June 2018, Access Link reduced the pick-up “on time” window by 25%, from 40 minutes to 30 minutes. Negative performance assessments are issued to Service Providers that fail to meet on-time performance requirements within the 30-minute window. These negative assessments result in monetary penalties to the Service Provider, which enables NJ Transit to recoup funds paid for services not rendered per specifications, or to be compensated for costs of additional action. NJ Transit anticipates a software upgrade in summer 2020 that will include updated street routing and we are also testing tablet systems that provide turn by turn directions and real time traffic information, which will be incorporated into Access Link vehicles. Both will result in more accurate trip time calculations and ETAs.

Missed trips occur where a vehicle does not arrive within the 30-minute pick-up window and the customer does not utilize the service. Where a missed trip is determined to be avoidable and/or are not accompanied by adequate communication to NJ Transit, a negative performance assessment is issued to the Service Provider.

Late Service Communications, communications between the Service Provider and customers regarding late pick-up times, are tracked and recorded. NJ Transit audits random samples of these records for content and timeliness. Service Providers that fail to meet communication requirements for late pick-ups are issued negative performance assessments.

B. *Service Reliability and Safety* is measured by (i) complaints, (ii) customer satisfaction, (iii) staffing levels, (iv) vehicle operator training and credentials, (v) collision rates, and (vi) injury and accident rates.

Complaint levels are monitored and tracked. The Customer Service Group transmits all customer complaints to the appropriate Service Provider for investigation and response. NJ Transit processes responses and provides follow-up to riders and to the Service Provider as appropriate.

Customer satisfaction with Access Link and its components is measured through NJ Transit’s semi-annual Scorecard Customer Survey process.

Service Staffing Levels are monitored through manpower reports that are provided to NJ Transit to indicate staffing levels regarding vehicle operators, dispatchers, schedulers, supervisors, maintenance technicians, managers and other staff at each regional location.

Vehicle Operator Training and Credentials: Vehicle operators must meet pre-hire requirements and receive a minimum of 104 hours of training that includes defensive driving, customer sensitivity, disability awareness, and mobility device

securement. Training Documentation is provided to NJ Transit. Vehicle operators must maintain credentials regarding licensing, background checks, motor vehicle records, satisfactorily pass drug and alcohol screenings, and maintain a safe driving record.

Collision rate measures vehicle collisions that meet NTD-reporting thresholds per 1,000,000 miles driven.

Injury rates are measured by monitoring three separate categories of injuries: (i) "collision injuries," or injuries (excluding Service Provider personnel) sustained in collisions that meet NTD-reporting thresholds per 1,000,000 miles driven; (ii) "customer accident rate," or customer injuries excluding those resulting from vehicle collisions (i.e. "slips and falls") that meet NTD-reporting thresholds per 1,000,000 customers transported; and (iii) "employee injury rate," or Service Provider employee injuries that meet OSHA-reporting thresholds per 200,000 employee hours worked.

Notably, in FY2019 Access Link Service Providers reduced the frequency of collisions by 7%, collision injuries by 15%, and customer accidents by 43%, despite a 4.6% increase in ridership and 7.5% increase in vehicle miles driven.

C. *Efficiency of Service* is measured by productivity and on-board times.

Productivity is measured by rides per revenue service hour, utilizing time-stamped data through Trapeze PASS software and in-vehicle Ranger units to compute and report rides provided and revenue service hours.

On-board time is measured and compared to fixed bus route times in random data samples, which are reviewed monthly. NJ Transit tracks excessive ride time complaints and are trended against performance. Additionally, NJ Transit has added new performance incentives in recent contracts, which offer incentives for achieving on-board time performance goals.

D. *Communicating Delays to the Customer*

NJ Transit has several existing mechanisms to notify customers that service is delayed: (i) Access Link Online, which provides customers real-time ride status as self-service feature, (ii) Imminent Arrival messages, (iii) the "Where's My Ride" text message feature, and (iv) the telephone system, using a touch-tone phone. Additionally, once notified of a late ride by Service Providers, NJ Transit Service Monitor staff initiate telephone calls to customers. These features are further detailed below in Section III.

II. Personnel

Access Link has addressed a number of issues to provide and maintain sufficiently reliable paratransit services, including staffing, new and updated technologies, fleet expansion and available drivers. NJ Transit's Access Link Unit is comprised of various groups that monitor service performance and reliability, which include:

A. *The Certification Group*, who manage and provide paratransit applications and eligibility determinations and provide education on NJ Transit's Bus, Rail and Light Rail accessibility. This section is on duty during business hours and coordinates in-person assessments with local community agencies. In 2019, the Certification Group answered 64,775 calls.

B. *The Customer Service and Outreach Group*, dedicated specifically to Access Link related operations, is responsible for processing customer complaints, commendations, inquiries, and requests for information. The group also assists customers utilizing Access Link services. The group follows-up directly with customer concerns, including Service Provider responsiveness, and attends field events in the local community performing outreach functions as well. In 2019, the Customer Service and Outreach Group answered 48,621 calls and attended approximately 50 events, averaging around four events a month.

C. *The Reservations Group* is responsible for all reservations intake functions for Access Link customers, including booking new ride reservations, changing existing reservations, cancellations, and responding to inquiries regarding fares, service area and general Access Link policies. This section is on duty for telephone calls from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM daily, 365 days per year. In 2019, the Reservations Group answered 502,049 calls.

D. *The Scheduling Group* monitors the production of scheduled vehicle routes for service timeliness, quality and efficiency. The group collaborates with Service Provider scheduling teams regarding run structures, capacity management, vehicle route hours, and coordination of inter-regional transfer trips. This group also maintains an internal database of common sites and manages the scheduling and maintenance of customer subscriptions. This section is on duty during business hours and provides support and assistance during major events or disruptions. In 2019, the Scheduling Group answered 8,734 calls.

E. *The Systems Team* ensures the functionality and connectivity of the Trapeze PASS scheduling and dispatch software, performs troubleshooting of interruptions, and oversees implementation of system and software upgrades and new modules. In 2019, the Scheduling Group answered 8,734 calls.

F. *The Contracts Management Team* monitors key performance indicators, ensures follow-up to service incidents, provides structure for operational protocols and ensures appropriate collaboration with contracted Providers. The group includes a group of Paratransit Specialists, a Fleet Coordinator, Program Assistant, and Fleet Assistant who monitors Provider performance, safety, quality, efficiency and contract adherence

G. *Operations Center staff*, including Paratransit Service Monitors, are on duty from 5:00 AM until 12:00 AM daily, supported by a team of Leads, Supervisors and Director.

H. NJ Transit has increased Call Center staff to reduce call hold times and improve the ASA (average speed of answer), and has seen significant improvement through FY19 (Reservations ASA has decreased from an average of 22:58 in the first half of FY 2019 to an average of 5:35 in the second half of FY 2019). Access Link recognizes the importance of a fully staffed call center and has addressed attrition by offering training programs with back to back classes to combat any losses in staffing.

III. Technology Initiatives

In the past twelve months, NJ Transit has implemented several technological features that provide customers access to service information and enable customers to conduct basic reservation transactions readily, improving convenience and reliability:

- *Access Link Online*: Available at njtransit.com, Access Link Online allows customers to perform common reservation transactions including booking, cancellations, check status and vehicle ETA, request subscription, pre-pay fares electronically using EZ-Wallet, and submit a comment, complaint or recommendation. This system went live system-wide in May 2019.
- *Access Link Application (App)*: Access Link is presently working with the Trapeze software team to develop iOS- and Android-compatible mobile versions of the Access Link Online services. The mobile app will offer the same functions as Access Link Online through a central hub dedicated to Access Link services. New Jersey Transit expects the Access Link App to be production ready by Fall 2020.
- *Interim Measures*: Pending the release of the Access Link App, Access Link is exploring the incorporation of an Access Link banner within the NJ Transit Application that would bring the user to the Access Link Online. This

addition would include Access Link information in the fully developed NJ Transit App while the specific Access Link App is being finalized.

- ***E-mail Reservations:*** In May 2008, Access Link began processing e-mail reservations, through which a customer can reserve their rides without the need to call the Reservations Group. Access Link has processed over 160,000 e-mail reservations through this feature since 2016.
- ***ALICE Self-Service (IVR) Option:*** By simply calling the 800 number and providing their customer identification number, customers may interact with Access Link's automated telephone reservation system, ALICE. This system allows customers to confirm and cancel scheduled rides just by using their touch-tone phone. Further, a customer can opt in to receive Imminent Arrival Messages and Where's My Ride? Text messages (detailed below). A customer may also select to speak with a live representative anytime during Operations Center operating hours.
- ***Imminent Arrival Messages:*** Access Link provides riders with automatic messages designed to notify customers that an Access Link vehicle will be arriving soon. When a vehicle is 10 minutes away (based on the ETA) and 1,500 meters away, the customer will receive either a phone call or a text message, depending on the customer's preference.
- ***Where's my Ride?:*** This function allows customers to receive the estimated arrival time for their coming Access Link ride via text message.
- ***Reminder Calls:*** Access Link places evening calls to customers, providing them with a reminder of the next day's scheduled rides and times.

IV. Fleet and Driver Pool

In order to maintain a system of sufficiently reliable paratransit services, NJ Transit is taking measures to increase Access Link's driver pool and fleet size, while also ensuring that drivers receive adequate training.

Driver Pools: NJ Transit has worked with contracted Service Providers to increase the recruitment of drivers and a recent series of collective efforts have increased Access Link's driver pool by 10%, which now stands at roughly 700 drivers. Driver recruitment is a known challenge in the transportation industry, and NJ Transit and Access Link have taken various measures to ensure effectiveness, including increased compensation, hiring bonuses, provisions for pre-CDL personnel, redeveloped driver training and increased oversight, and addition of dedicated local recruitment resources.

For example, one challenge in the transportation industry is the lack of CDL licensed drivers. To alleviate the lack of drivers available for NJ Transit's paratransit services, Access Link has worked with providers to allow non-CDL licensed drivers to transport customers with a commitment that the driver will obtain their CDL license within 12 months.

Driver Training: In addition to the defensive driving and over 50 hours of behind-the-wheel training drivers receive, Access Link drivers also undergo customer sensitivity, disability awareness, and mobility device securement trainings to better service customers utilizing the Access Link service.

Fleet Expansion: The Access Link fleet is currently comprised of approximately 500 vehicles. NJ Transit is currently exploring expanding the Access Link fleet by acquiring additional vehicles through purchases and lease agreement. NJ Transit has dedicated approximately \$7 million in the 2020 Capital Budget for the procurement of additional vehicles to the Access Link fleet. A copy of the 2020 Capital Program is appended hereto as Exhibit B [2020NJT0002-0006].

Additional Reliability Measures: NJ Transit is also planning the following initiatives to help maintain reliability:

- Transitioning the scheduling algorithm regarding distance calculation from triangulation to street routing;
- Implementing capability to incorporate real-time traffic information into vehicle navigation systems;
- Utilizing operational data regarding customer boarding and alighting to proactively make scheduling adjustments; and
- Adjust run-cutting processes to improve forecasting of vehicle levels needed for service.

Service Expansion: NJ Transit attempted to calculate the cost to expand Access Link services beyond the federally mandated 3/4 mile service area, however, it is essentially impossible to quantify the costs associated with such an expansion as it would require additional resources that are difficult to categorize based on many unknown variables. It is likely that a limited expansion of service would impact the NJ TRANSIT Access Link budget exponentially.

V. Other Services

Outside of Access Link's paratransit services, NJ Transit also provides the following services to customers with disabilities:

A. The *NJ Travel Instruction Program (NJTIP)* is a partnership between NJ Transit and the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University to provide Access Link customers training to use the less expensive, fixed route transit system. Since FY 2013, this program has been able to benefit those customers who require more intensive instruction than available in a group training setting. NJ Transit data shows that from FY14 through FY17, the 1:1 training program produced 151 "graduates" at a total cost of some \$1.3 million, or approximately \$8,500 per graduate. However, this cost is unaffordable considering the more than 50 percent decline in state Casino Program funds which pay the university's \$400,000 yearly budget. A copy of An internal memorandum regarding the Rutgers Travel Instruction Program is appended hereto as Exhibit C [2020NJT0007-0009]. Local Program and Access Link staff have been working with Rutgers to reduce the cost associated with the NJTIP while salvaging the important service it provides. In furtherance of this goal, NJ Transit entered into an addendum in July 2019 to supply an additional \$150,000 to Rutgers through June 2020. A copy of the July 9, 2019 Addendum is appended hereto as Exhibit D [2020NJT0010-0021].

B. The *State-funded Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP)*, commonly referred to as the casino revenue program, provides community-based transportation services to senior and disabled customers. Funding is derived from casino revenue taxes for counties or their designees to provide community-based transportation services to seniors and people with disabilities, 15% of the funds are set aside for NJT administration and accessible enhancements of NJ Transit services. Funding has decreased significantly since 2008 but is slowly increasing with the introduction of both internet and sports betting in New Jersey.

C. *Local Programs, Minibus Support and Community Transportation is responsible for pass through funding programs*, specifically for the enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities, general public transportation in New Jersey's rural areas and community-based transportation shuttles for low income residents specific to employment.

The transit services funded through these grant programs administered by NJ TRANSIT's Local Programs, Minibus Support and Community Transportation unit encompass more than 120 local partnerships (counties, municipalities and non-profits), providing needed transportation to the State's senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and rural and low-income residents where services would otherwise not be available.

VI. ADA Accessibility Service at Rail Stations

NJ Transit stations are fitted for accessibility for customers with disabilities, in tandem with ADA mandates. Moreover, NJ Transit has undertaken the effort to ensure that all newly built or acquired services stations are ADA accessible. Currently, roughly half of all rail stations are ADA accessible, including all 37 of the key stations and 58 of 62 Light Rail stations. NJ Transit has calculated the cost to achieve total ADA compliance of all service stations to be over \$2 billion. A copy of the System Map is appended hereto as Exhibit E [2020NJT0022], which designates all currently accessible stations. The newly constructed stations that are ADA accessible include:

- Pennsauken Transit Center (Atlantic City Line / River Line)**
- Westmont Station (Bergen County Line)**
- 8th St. Bayonne (Hudson-Bergen Light Rail)**
- Meadowlands Sports Complex (Meadowlands Line)**

NJ Transit is also in the process of developing a five-year Capital Plan, which will be released in April 2020. This Capital Plan is expected to include improvement projects aimed at providing ADA accessibility at a number of existing rail stations, as funding allows. The costs for these improvements can be considerable, and staff is currently evaluating candidate projects for inclusion in the five-year Capital Plan.

Region 5 (Union)
 First Transit
 Counties:
 Essex,
 Morris,
 Somerset,
 Union

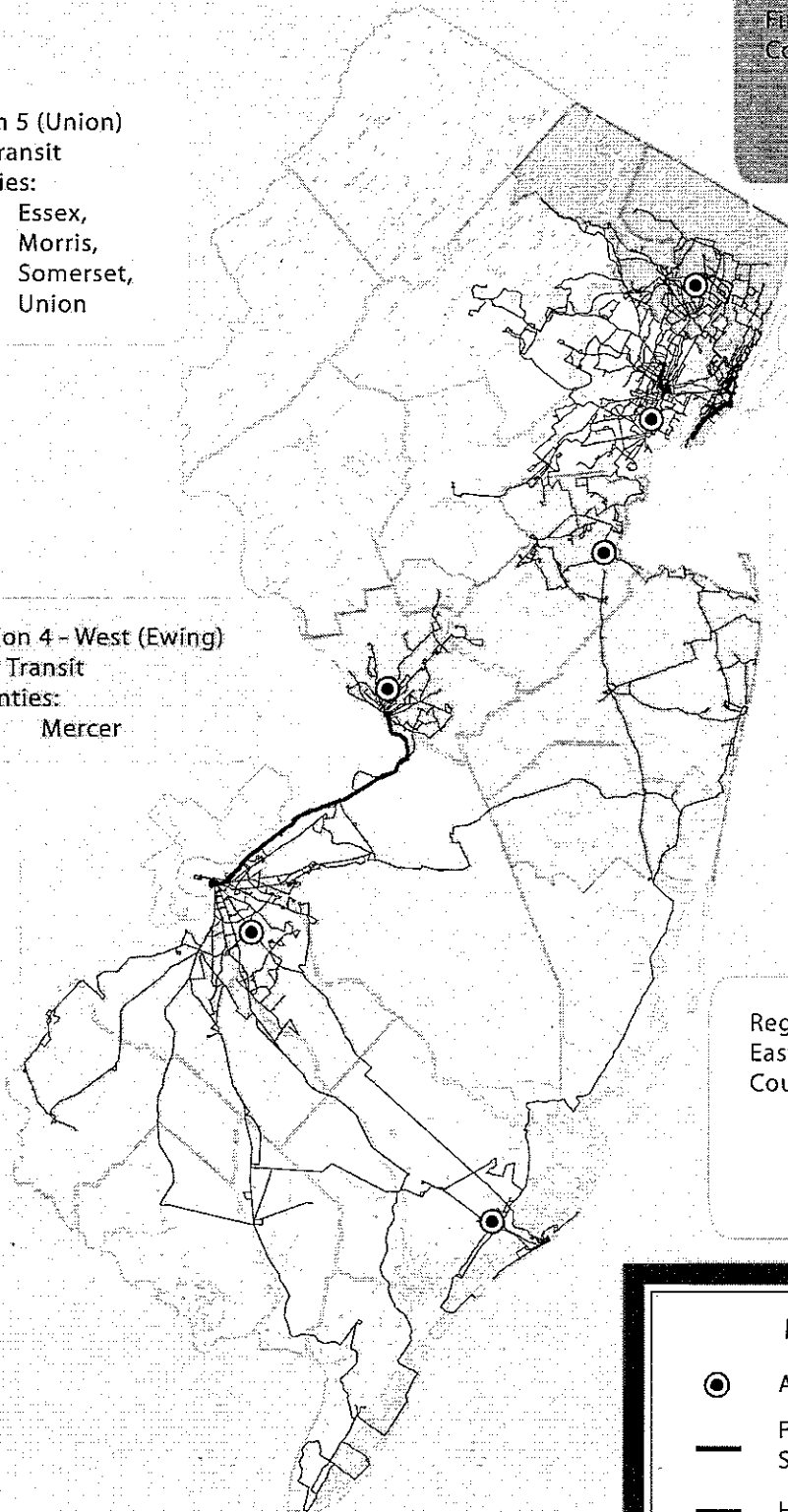
Region 6 (Elmwood Park)
 First Transit
 Counties:
 Bergen,
 Passaic,
 Hudson

Region 4 - East (Sayreville)
 First Transit
 Counties:
 Monmouth,
 Middlesex,
 North Ocean

Region 4 - West (Ewing)
 First Transit
 Counties:
 Mercer

Region 2 (Lawnside)
 First Transit
 Counties:
 Burlington,
 Camden,
 Gloucester,
 Salem

Region 3 (Pleasantville)
 Easton Coach
 Counties:
 Atlantic,
 Cape May,
 Cumberland,
 South Ocean



MAP KEY

- Access Link Garages
- Fixed Route Buses Shadowed by Access Link
- Hudson-Bergen Light Rail
- Newark Light Rail
- River LINE

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Legislative Report

NJ TRANSIT Fiscal Year 2020 CAPITAL PROGRAM

(\$ in Millions)

2020 PRINTSID	PROJECT NAME	FEDERAL FUNDING										OTHER		CMAQ LOCAL INITIATIVE		2020 TOTAL	
		URBAN 5307	SOGR 5337	BUS FAC 5339	ELDERLY/ DISABLED/ NF 5310	RURAL 5311	FPGA	FHWA	STP- TE	STATE	JARC/ OTHER/ DHS	METRO-N	OTHER	SANDY 5324	0.000		0.000
	ADA - Platforms/Stations - T143	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.500
	<i>ADA Platforms and Stations</i>																
	Bridge and Tunnel Rehabilitation - T05	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	57.937	0.000	0.000	0.000	57.937
	<i>Additional Bridge/Tunnel Rehab</i>																
	<i>Bridge Inspection Program</i>																
	<i>Bridge Painting Program</i>																
	<i>Bridge Rehabilitation Program - Overhead</i>																
	<i>Bridge Rehabilitation Program - Tie Deck-Program</i>																
	<i>Bridge Rehabilitation Program - Undergrade</i>																
	<i>Brielle Drawbridge-U.G. Bridge #36.09 NJCL Replcmnt Design</i>																
	<i>SANDY - Raftan River Bridge Replacement</i>																
	Bus Acquisition Program - T111	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	120.754	0.000	0.000	0.000	120.754
	<i>Access Link Bus Replacement Outyears</i>																
	<i>Cruiser Bus Replacements (1104)</i>																
	<i>Transit Bus Purchase (400) (192)</i>																
	Bus Passenger Facilities/Park and Ride - T06	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.800	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.800
	<i>Bus Passenger Facility Maint/Upgrade Program</i>																
	Bus Support Facilities and Equipment - T08	0.000	0.000	12.540	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.930	0.000	0.000	0.000	17.470
	<i>Bus Building Rehabilitation - Midlife</i>																
	<i>Bus Infrastructure Maint/Upgrade Program</i>																
	<i>Bus Signs/Shelters Maint/Upgrade Prog (FY14-18)</i>																
	<i>HQ-GOB Parking Deck Replacement</i>																
	<i>Non-Revenue Rolling Stock - Bus</i>																
	Bus Vehicle and Facility Maintenance/Capital Mainte	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<i>Bus Capital Maintenance</i>																
	Camden-Glassboro Light Rail Line - T302	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000
	<i>Glassboro to Camden Line Engineering</i>																
	Capital Ferry Improvement Program - T700	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	6.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	6.500
	<i>Ferry-NTD-FCIP</i>																
	<i>Ferry NTD-FCIP-Revenue Admin (25 percent)</i>																
	Capital Program Implementation - T68	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	21.470	0.000	0.000	0.000	21.470
	<i>HQ-Capital Program Implementation CPI</i>																
	Casino Revenue Fund - T515	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	18.508	0.000	18.508
	<i>Local-Casino Revenue Administration</i>																
	<i>Local-Casino Revenue Capital Contingency</i>																
	<i>Local-Casino Revenue Counties</i>																

GTX

2020

2020

OTHER

FEDERAL FUNDING

OTHER

PRINTSID	PROJECT NAME	URBAN 5307	SOGR 5337	BUS FAC 5339	ELDERLY/ DISABLED/ NF 5310	RURAL 5311	FFGA	FHWA	STP- TE	STATE	DHS	METRO-N	OTHER	SANDY 5324	CMAQ LOCAL INITIATIVE	TOTAL
	Claims Support - T13	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<i>HQ-Claims and Legal Services Support</i>															
	Cumberland County Bus Program - T170	1.020	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.020
	<i>Local-Cumberland Cty Bus Prog (Oper Assis) FY14-FY18</i>															
	Environmental Compliance - T16	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.000
	<i>HQ-Environmental Compliance</i>															
	High Speed Track Program - T43	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
	<i>High Speed Rail Track Program</i>															
	Hudson-Bergen and Newark LRT System - T87	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.270	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.270
	<i>HBLRT Capital Asset Replacement</i>															
	Hudson-Bergen LTR Northern Extension - T301	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	33.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	33.000
	<i>Hudson-Bergen LRT Northern Extension</i>															
	Immediate Action Program - T20	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.659	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.659
	<i>Immediate Action - Bus</i>															
	<i>HQ-Immediate Action - CP and P</i>															
	<i>Immediate Action - Rail</i>															
	Job Access and Reverse Commute Program - T199	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<i>Local-Job Access/Reverse Commute Prog</i>															
	Lackawanna Cutoff MOS Project - T535	8.844	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	8.844
	<i>Lackawanna Cut-off - Port Morris-Andover</i>															
	Light Rail Infrastructure Improvements - T95	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	17.675	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	17.675
	<i>HBLR Westside Sewer Replacement</i>															
	<i>NLR Facilities</i>															
	<i>NLR Infrastructure (FY13 and Beyond)</i>															
	<i>River Line Capital Asset Replacement</i>															
	Locomotive Overhaul - T53E	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.603	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.603
	<i>ALP46 Converter Module Overhaul</i>															
	<i>PL42 Extended Life SOGR Program (33 Locomotives)</i>															
	<i>Rail Rolling Stock Loco Reliability Program</i>															
	Miscellaneous - T122	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.500
	<i>SANDY Dmg 13SUPP 4 Prog Managemt/Oversight</i>															
	<i>SANDY Dmg 13SUPP 4 Program Admin and Insurance Claim</i>															
	<i>Vital Records</i>															
	NEC Elizabeth Rail Station Improvements - T600	0.000	0.000	0.082	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.082
	<i>Elizabeth Intermodal Station Reconstruction</i>															
	NEC Improvements - T44	19.710	22.850	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	116.981	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	159.541
	<i>PR/A</i>															
	<i>PR/A</i>															

65X

2020

2020

FEDERAL FUNDING

JARC/ OTHER/

CMAQ LOCAL INITIATIVE

PRINTSID PROJECT NAME URBAN 5307 SOGR 5337 BUS FAC 5339 ELDERLY/ NF 5310 RURAL 5311 FFGA FHWA STP-TE STATE DHS METRO-N OTHER SANDY 5324 TOTAL

Table with columns for funding sources and project categories. Rows include: County Yard Extension, New Brunswick Station Platform Ext. and Elevator I, NEC Middle Zone Stations, New CMAQ Bus and Rail Services - T126, NJ Shore Special Transit Service Summer 2015, 2016, Other Rail Station/Terminal Improvements - T55, Capital Engineering and Design Services (FY03-FY19), STARS Program, Physical Plant - T121, HQ-Materials Warehouse Equipment, HQ-Non-Revenue Rolling Stock - Admin Fleet, HQ-Work Environment Improvements, Portal Bridge North - T538, Portal Bridge North, Preventive Maintenance-Bus - T135, Preventive Maintenance-Rail - T39, Private Carrier Equipment Program - T106, Rail Capital Maintenance - T34, Rail Fleet Overhaul - T53G, Rail Rolling Stock Procurement - T112, Diesel Loco Purchase (33), Dual Power Loco Purchase (22), Electric Loco Purchase (27), Multi-Level Coaches Option A,B,C (Additional 131), Multi-Level Coaches Option D (Additional 37), Multi-Level Coaches Option E,F (Additional 50), Rail Rolling Stock Acquisition Program, RRS Technical Assistance Program, Rail Support Facilities and Equipment - T37.

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PRINTSID	PROJECT NAME	FEDERAL FUNDING										OTHER		CMAQ	
		URBAN 5307	SOGR 5337	BUS FAC 5339	ELDERLY/ DISABLED/ NF 5310	RURAL 5311	FHWA	STP. TE	STATE	DHS OTHER/	METRO-N	OTHER	SANDY 5324	LOCAL INITIATIVE	TOTAL
	SANDY Rsl 17RINF- 2 Gladstone Catenary Pole Resilincy(CLOSED)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
	Metro-North Joint Benefits Annual Contract Program														
	M of W Equipment Purchase Program														
	R of W Fencing Systemswide														
	R of W Improvements Systemswide-Program														
	Secaucus Training Facility														
	Traction Power High Voltage Substation Circuit Breakers Repl														
	FRA / APTA Mandated Standards														
	Non-Revenue Rolling Stock - Rail														
	Amtrak / Conrail Agreement														
	SANDY Rsl C3MAS 4 ROC Unit Substation	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
	Safety Improvement - T509														
	C3RS														
	Safety Improvement Program														
	Section 5310 Program - T150	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.500	0.000	0.000	8.800
	Local-E and D Bus Purch Prog														
	Section 5311 Program - T151	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.000	1.900	6.300
	Local-Rural Transit Program Contracts														
	Security Improvements - T508	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.610	0.000	0.000	2.610
	Police Department Enhancements														
	Police Non-Revenue Vehicles														
	Police Technology Security Program														
	Signals and Communications/Electric Traction Syst	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	67.221	0.000	0.000	67.221
	Electric Traction Improvements Systemswide														
	Signal and Communication Improvements Systemswide														
	SANDY - NJ TRANSITGRID														
	SANDY - NJ TRANSITGRID														
	SANDY Dmg 02RINF 4 ET Hoboken Terminal House Power Repair														
	SANDY Replacement Mason/Building 9 Substation														
	Small/Special Services Program - T120	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.473	0.000	0.000	1.473
	Local-East Windsor Comm Shuttle Oper Sppt (FY15-18)														
	Local-Travel Demand Management (TDM) In-House														
	Local-Travel Demand Management (TDM) TMAS														
	Local-Vanpool Sponsorship Program														
	Study and Development - T88	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.410	0.000	0.000	5.410
	Study and Dev - Bus Studies Program														
	Study and Dev - Corridor Planning - In House														
	Study and Dev - Light Rail Planning - In House														
	Study and Dev - Park and Ride Planning - In House														
	Study and Dev - Rail Planning - In House														
	Study and Dev - Ridership Demand Modeling														

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Memorandum

TO: Justin Davis, Chief of Staff
FROM: Paul Wyckoff, Chief, Government & External Affairs
DATE: May 14, 2018
SUBJECT: Rutgers Travel Instruction Program (One on One Travel Training, (1:1))

Recommendation:

One-on-one training of Access Link paratransit customers to use the less expensive, fixed route transit system is a genuine benefit to those customers who require more intensive instruction than available in a group training setting. However, Rutgers' cost of \$8,500 or more per NJ TRANSIT customer trained is unaffordable, given the more than 50 percent decline in state Casino Program funds which pay the university's \$400,000 yearly budget for 1:1 training.

I therefore recommend that Local Program and Access Link staff work with Rutgers to sharply reduce the size and cost of the current 1:1 program, and develop a smaller, much more efficient individual training program that can serve as an adjunct to the more efficient federally-funded group training that Rutgers also performs for NJ TRANSIT customers.

Background:

Since 2005, NJ TRANSIT (NJT) has contracted with outside providers to train Access Link customers to travel independently on the fixed route system. The goal is to not only provide customers with greater travel flexibility and options but also save NJT expense, as the average cost to the corporation of a regular mode trip is a fraction of that on Access Link (\$6 to \$8 regular mode vs. \$38 to \$60 on Access Link).

Since the second half of FY2013 the training has been provided by a unit of the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University in New Brunswick – the NJ Travel Instruction Program, or NJTIP. (From 2005 to the first half of FY13, training was provided by a non-profit.) NJTIP's training is broken down into two distinct programs, one federally funded with Section 5310 grant money, the other funded by the state's Casino Revenue Programs.

The federal money is awarded on a competitive basis and provides training that focuses primarily on group instruction, and on training other transit professionals, as well as on some less intensive client services, such as basic phone counseling on transit use. This program is overseen by NJT's Local Programs and Minibus Support unit. The state Casino Programs money funds a program that solely provides one-on-one (1:1) training. Under a 2013 memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Voorhees, reimbursements for this

program are not to exceed \$420,000 per year. The state-funded program is overseen by NJT's Access Link unit.

NJT data shows that from FY14 through FY17, the 1:1 training program produced 151 "graduates" at a total cost of some \$1.3 million, or approximately \$8,500 per graduate. Exact comparable figures do not seem immediately available for the federally-funded training program, but what data is available shows that, although the reported per-hour cost for the two programs calculates out to approximately the same amount for each (about \$64 to \$66 per hour), the cost per graduate of approximately \$270 is far, far less, due to the federal program's emphasis on group training.

The number of "graduates" does not represent the total number of customers given service by either the federally-funded or casino-funded program. Particularly with the 1:1 program, there are a significant number of customers who are interviewed for entrance to training, but either do not enter or do not complete training. For example, in FY16, Rutgers reported reaching out to some 1,216 potential trainees, but taking in only 78, then having 49 actually enter training, and then having just 36 finish and graduate from the training. All this came at a cost of almost \$343,000.

It also is notable that neither Rutgers nor NJT staff has precise data on the actual behavior of program graduates after graduation. This data would go to the heart of Rutgers' argument that their training actually saves NJT money by shifting higher-cost trips on Access Link to the lower cost, regular mode service.

For instance, Rutgers asserts that some 70 percent of 1:1 graduates reported using regular mode service after training "**at least once**" (emphasis mine). The qualifier begs the question: how much of the time do training graduates use regular mode, and how often do they continue to use Access Link? There seems to be no data on this important point.

Meanwhile, for NJT's part, a random sample of 100 graduates (who apparently were in the Access Link database) indicated 30 percent no longer used Access Link, while 48 percent continued to use Access Link. But again, there is no data on how many use regular mode sometimes and Access Link other times, or how often. And oddly, NJT data shows that 22 percent of the training's graduate were declared "not Access Link eligible" – which would seem to indicate they shouldn't have received expensive 1:1 training to begin with.

Casino Programs monies, of course, have declined by more than half in the last 10 years, mirroring the decline in the casino industry, thus placing significant pressure on the budgets of all programs that NJT funds with such monies. NJT Local Programs staff has therefore recommended that the Rutgers 1:1 training program be ended when the current MOU's term expires on June 30, 2018.

Local Programs staff states that one-on-one training is beneficial to a small number of customers, but that the costs are too high to warrant extending the program in its current form.

Discussion Points:

NJT Local Programs staff alerted Rutgers in April that it was likely not to renew the 1:1 MOU after June 30, 2018. Rutgers then reached out to both NJT GCR and NJT Board Member Flora Castillo to argue that the training program should continue. Subsequently,

Rutgers submitted an email offering suggestions on what it deemed alternative methods of funding 1:1 training. Unfortunately, these suggestions turned out to be nothing more than urging that NJT redirect existing federal program funds, funds that are already allocated to other transit needs. Rutgers did not provide any suggestions for new revenue sources that would not cannibalize other existing programs.

Rutgers officials state they must have certainty on NJT's plan for the coming year(s) soon, as they will have to make staffing adjustments if the 1:1 program ends. Rutgers has requested a face-to-face meeting with NJT executives to discuss continuation of the 1:1 training program.

NJT's options include:

- o Continuation of the 1:1 program under current terms
- o Reduce the 1:1 program's budget to reflect Casino Funding Program realities and impel Rutgers to develop significant efficiencies in its training and administrative protocols and costs
- o Eliminate the 1:1 program entirely as of June 30th, 2018

NJT staff reports that every transit agency they have contacted, large and small, and across the nation, has some training program to help customers use the regular network. Outreach to other agencies indicates a variety of approaches, from performing training in-house, to outsourcing, to a combination of both, and with a varying focus on individualized training.

Other agencies also report that they are reviewing the potential to reduce paratransit costs by utilizing transportation network providers (TNP) such as Uber, Lyft and others.

No matter what NJT's decision on the Rutgers 1:1 program, I recommend that NJT perform a comprehensive study of training approaches, including best practices of other agencies and any insight that APTA or paratransit associations can offer, and of other ways of reducing paratransit costs, including use of TNPs.

Conclusion:

Rutgers' 1:1 training program's cost of \$8,500 or more per graduate is startlingly large, and there is insufficient data to demonstrate the program pays for itself in reduced Access Link usage. It would be improvident and a waste of public tax dollars to continue the program under the current MOU terms, with Rutgers spending up to \$420,000 per year for so few customers being trained.

At the same time, NJT staff acknowledges a benefit to customers from the availability of individual training. I therefore recommend that Local Program and Access Link staff work with Rutgers to sharply reduce the size and cost of the current 1:1 program, and develop a smaller, much more efficient individual training program that can serve as an adjunct to the more efficient federally-funded training Rutgers performs.

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AGREEMENT BETWEEN

**THE NEW JERSEY TRANSIT CORPORATION, One Penn Plaza East, Newark, New Jersey 07105
AND**

**Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Div. of Grants and Contract Accounting
33 Knightsbridge Road, 2nd Floor East
Piscataway, NJ 08854
Dunns # 001912864**

**FOR LOCAL PROGRAMS AND MINIBUS SUPPORT
SENIOR CITIZEN AND DISABLED RESIDENT
TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SCDRTAP) Funding Agreement**

THIS AGREEMENT is made on 7/9/19, (date to be posted by NJ TRANSIT upon execution of this Agreement) by and between the New Jersey Transit Corporation (hereinafter "NJ TRANSIT"), an instrumentality of the State of New Jersey with offices at One Penn Plaza East, Newark, NJ 07105, and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey (hereinafter "SUBRECIPIENT").

WHEREAS, in 1981 the voters of the State of New Jersey approved an amendment to the New Jersey Constitution which provided that revenues from casino taxes deposited in the Casino Revenue Fund could be used for additional or expanded transportation services benefits to senior citizens and the disabled; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of New Jersey has found and declared that senior citizens and disabled residents in New Jersey require assistance in meeting their need for available and accessible transportation so that they may obtain the necessities of life; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of New Jersey therefore created the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of New Jersey has signed into law the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act on January 17, 1984; and

WHEREAS, in each fiscal year NJ TRANSIT is authorized to receive 8.5% of the revenues deposited in the Casino Revenue Fund during the preceding fiscal year to use for transportation purposes as set forth in the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of NJ TRANSIT at its meetings on January 29, 1985, March 21, 1989, November 28, 1995 and October 18, 2000 adopted revised Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act Program Guidelines which were developed in conjunction with NJ TRANSIT's advisory bodies, representatives or associations of New Jersey counties and other interested parties to implement the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of NJ TRANSIT at its meeting on July 12, 2017 gave the Executive Director the authority to enter into an Agreement with the SUBRECIPIENT;

NOW THEREFORE WITNESSETH THAT, in consideration of the mutual agreements and covenants herein set forth, NJ TRANSIT and the SUBRECIPIENT agree as follows:

1. **PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT**

This Agreement is solely for the purpose of allocating funds, expenses and responsibilities for transportation services for senior citizens and disabled residents pursuant to the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act under the SCDRTAP Guidelines promulgated by NJ TRANSIT on January 29, 1985, or as may be amended.

This Agreement shall address project operation necessary to provide the transportation services to senior citizens and people with disabilities described as detailed in the Continuation Framework attached as EXHIBIT A (Continuation Framework), which is incorporated herein. Any changes to the project described EXHIBIT A (Continuation Framework) must be submitted in writing to NJ TRANSIT for its approval.

2. **TERM OF AGREEMENT AND SERVICE**

A. **PROJECT OPERATION**

From July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, the SUBRECIPIENT shall provide Travel Training (hereinafter "contract service") in accordance with EXHIBIT A (Continuation Framework) submitted by the SUBRECIPIENT and as approved by NJ TRANSIT. Extensions are to be exercised at the discretion of NJ TRANSIT. NJ TRANSIT must approve any changes in contract service during the term of this Agreement in writing.

B. **LOCAL PUBLIC CONTRACTS LAW**

SUBRECIPIENT procurement standards shall meet or exceed the requirements of Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq. www.nj.gov/dca/lgs/lpc) including standards for competitive procurements; methods of procurement.

3. **PROJECT REIMBURSEMENT**

A. **MAXIMUM FUNDS PROVIDED BY NJ TRANSIT**

The maximum amount NJ TRANSIT shall pay the SUBRECIPIENT shall not exceed \$150,000.00.

B. **PAYMENT PROCEDURES**

The payment procedures of the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Act Program (SCDRTAP) contained in the Monthly Expenditure Report and Reimbursement Request EXHIBIT B, which are incorporated herein. Payment shall be made by NJ TRANSIT to the SUBRECIPIENT following submittal by the SUBRECIPIENT of properly executed Expenditure Report and Reimbursement Request forms, along with supporting documentation of actual expenses incurred and the corresponding Milestone Reports EXHIBIT C, the preparation of which is also described in Section 5(D)(5) below (Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance).

All reimbursement forms and documentation must be compiled monthly and submitted monthly no later than forty-five (45) days from the last day of the month in which the expenses were incurred.

NJ TRANSIT shall, subject to the availability of funds, make payment to SUBRECIPIENT for the actual costs incurred due to operation expenses.

4. **PROVISIONS APPLICABLE CONTRACTS UNDER THIS AGREEMENT**

A. **CONTRACTS UNDER THIS AGREEMENT**

Unless otherwise authorized in writing by NJ TRANSIT, the SUBRECIPIENT shall not assign any portion of the work to be performed, or of the rights or benefits to be received under this Agreement, or execute any contract, amendment or change order thereto, or obligate itself in any manner with any third party with respect to its rights and responsibilities under this Agreement without the prior written concurrence of NJ TRANSIT. All third party agreements including but not limited to bid specifications and executed vendor agreements require prior review by NJ TRANSIT and must be submitted to NJ TRANSIT in a timely manner.

SUBRECIPIENT's Designated Purchasing Agent (Complete Name, Title and Address):

Nimish Patel

Chief Procurement Officer, Assoc. VP-Procurement

33 Knightbridge Road, 1st Flr. East Wing

Piscataway, NJ 08854

5. **INSURANCE PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO PROJECT SERVICES**

A. **Insurance**

The SUBRECIPIENT and any provider hired by the SUBRECIPIENT to provide the services subject to this Agreement shall maintain commercial general liability insurance with combined single limit liability of \$2,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 in aggregate. The SUBRECIPIENT and any provider hired by the County to provide the services subject to this Agreement shall furnish NJ TRANSIT with certificates of insurance on an annual basis. The Certificate should indicate coverage in amounts stated herein, which will include NJ TRANSIT as an additional insured party. The SUBRECIPIENT shall provide for written notice to NJ TRANSIT within thirty (30) days of cancellation or reduction in the amount stated herein. The maintenance of insurance under this section shall not relieve the SUBRECIPIENT or its service provider of any liability where liability is greater than the insurance coverage.

B. **Indemnification**

The SUBRECIPIENT shall have full control of the service to be provided under this Agreement. The SUBRECIPIENT and any service provider hired by the SUBRECIPIENT to perform the services subject to this Agreement shall defend, protect, indemnify and save harmless the State of New Jersey, NJ TRANSIT, its departments, officers, board members, agents, subsidiaries and employees from and against all claims and expenses of any nature arising out of the acts or omissions of the SUBRECIPIENT, its officers, employees and agents, whether negligent or not, in its performance of the Agreement. In the event of any such claim, demand, or suit against or joining the State of New Jersey, NJ TRANSIT, their boards, officers, agents, and employees arising out of the performance of this Agreement, the SUBRECIPIENT shall assume and take over the investigation and defense thereof at its own cost and expense as set forth above.

5. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. SEVERABILITY

This Agreement embodies the entire agreement between the parties. It may not be modified or terminated except as provided herein or by subsequent written agreement of the parties. If any provision herein is declared invalid, it shall be considered deleted here from and shall not invalidate the remaining provisions.

B. NON-WAIVERS

The remedies in this Agreement provided in favor of NJ TRANSIT shall not be deemed exclusive, but shall be cumulative, and shall be in addition to all other remedies in its favor existing at law or in equity. The SUBRECIPIENT hereby waives any mandatory requirements of law, now or hereafter in effect, which might limit or modify any of the remedies herein provided to the extent that such waiver is permitted by law. The failure of NJ TRANSIT to exercise the rights granted it hereunder upon any occurrence of any events or contingency set forth herein shall not constitute a waiver of any such right upon the continuation or recurrence of any such event or contingency or similar contingencies.

C. NOTIFICATION

Any request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent, waiver or other document provided or permitted by this Agreement to be made upon, given, furnished, or filed with our party by the other party shall be in writing and be delivered by hand or by deposit in the registered mails of the United States, postage prepaid, in an envelope and addressed as follows:

If to NJ TRANSIT:

Director, Local Programs & Minibus Support
NJ TRANSIT
One Penn Plaza East, 4th Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07105-2246

If to SUBRECIPIENT: (Complete Name, Title and Address):

Chrissa Papaioannou
Rutgers, The State University
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
33 Knightsbridge Road, 2 East
Piscataway, NJ 08854-3925
848-932-4002
Cp847@ored.rutgers.edu

D. RECORDS AND REPORTS

1) ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF ACCOUNTING RECORDS

The SUBRECIPIENT must maintain separate accounts for the project, either independently or within its existing accounting system, to be known as the Project Account.

2) DOCUMENTATION OF PROJECT COSTS

Properly executed invoices, contracts, or vouchers showing in detail the nature and propriety of all expenditures shall support all charges to the Project Budget.

3) CHECKS, ORDERS AND VOUCHERS

Any check or order drawn by the SUBRECIPIENT with respect to any item which is or will be chargeable against the Project Account will be drawn in accordance with a properly signed voucher then on file in the office of the SUBRECIPIENT stating in proper detail the purpose for which such check or order is drawn. All checks, invoices, contracts, vouchers, orders or other accounting documents pertaining in whole or in part to the project shall be clearly identified, readily accessible, and to the extent feasible, kept separate and apart from all other such documents.

4) FILING REQUIREMENTS

The SUBRECIPIENT shall submit to NJ TRANSIT Expenditure Report and Reimbursement Request forms along with supporting documentation of actual expenses as set forth in EXHIBIT B. The SUBRECIPIENT shall also provide, as NJ TRANSIT may request, additional information NJ TRANSIT deems necessary. The SUBRECIPIENT shall also prepare and file, by the prescribed date, any and all reports required to be filed with any State or regulatory authority by reason of the operation of the project.

5) Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance

Quarterly Milestone Progress Report forms

The SUBRECIPIENT agrees to complete Quarterly Milestone Progress Report forms until procurement and/or projects are completed. (EXHIBIT C - Quarterly Milestone Progress Report). Reports are to be submitted by the 15th day of the month following the close of each calendar quarter, reports are required even if there is no progress to report. Chronic failure to complete quarterly progress reports accurately and promptly may result in termination of the agreement and withdrawal of project funding.

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Report Due No Later Than</u>
January - March 30	April 15
April - June 30	July 15
July - September 30	October 15
October - December 31	January 15

E. CHARGES, FEES AND EXPENSES

The SUBRECIPIENT shall be responsible for the payments of any charges, license fees, registration fees, inspection fees, or other costs, including gross receipts taxes, highway use taxes, or vehicle excise taxes, imposed upon the operation thereof, whether such taxes, charges, fees, or other costs are levied against the operator or the owner, the SUBRECIPIENT shall pay, in addition to the above expenses, all charges, fees and taxes incurred in connection with all expenses in connection with the use and operation of the equipment used during the term of this Agreement including but not limited to, fuel, oil, grease, repairs, maintenance, or other expenses thereof.

F. LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The SUBRECIPIENT shall comply with all governmental laws, regulations, and rules with respect to administration of the project and with respect to its use, possession, maintenance, and operation of Project Equipment. In case any part of Project Equipment shall be required to be changed or replaced, or in case any additional or other part is required to be installed on such Project Equipment in order to comply with laws, regulations, requirements, and rules, the SUBRECIPIENT agrees to make such changes, additions and replacements; and the

SUBRECIPIENT agrees to maintain the Project Equipment in full compliance with such laws, regulations, requirements, and rules during the term of this Agreement. The provision of this Agreement construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey and applicable Federal laws. If the SUBRECIPIENT fails to comply with this Section, NJ TRANSIT may withhold payments due the SUBRECIPIENT pursuant to Section 3 of this Agreement.

G. OBLIGATION TO PERFORM

The SUBRECIPIENT agrees that:

For the period of this Agreement the SUBRECIPIENT will not, unless otherwise approved in writing by NJ TRANSIT, initiate, take, or prosecute, and it will actively resist any proceeding before any State or Federal Agency or court for any order, approval, judgment, decree, or other, or other action impairing or limiting the right, power, or capacity of the SUBRECIPIENT to carry out and perform its obligations under this Agreement; and

SUBRECIPIENT will petition and prosecute proceedings before appropriate regulatory agencies and courts to secure and keep in effect all approvals, orders and other authority necessary for the SUBRECIPIENT to fulfill its obligations under this Agreement.

H. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:2-1 through 10:2-2 and N.J.S.A.10:5-31 et seq. (L. 1975, c.127, as amended and supplemented) dealing with discrimination in employment on public contracts, and the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereunto and the provisions set forth in the regulations, and the requirements of Exhibit D attached hereto, are hereby made a part of this Agreement (EXHIBIT D).

I. NO ABATEMENT OF SET-OFF

Sums payable by the SUBRECIPIENT to NJ TRANSIT under any provision of this Agreement shall not be subject to any defense, set-off, counterclaim, or recoupment whatsoever, by reason of damage to or loss or destruction of the Project Equipment or any part thereof, or by reason of any interruption from whatever cause in the use, operation, or possession of the Project Equipment or any part thereof.

J. COMPETITION

The SUBRECIPIENT certifies that it will not operate the contract service in competition with any autobus regular routes service.

K. AUDIT AND INSPECTION

Prior to conducting the audit, The SUBRECIPIENT agrees to give NJ TRANSIT the opportunity to identify program areas it wants reviewed. The SUBRECIPIENT agrees to provide NJ TRANSIT with an annual audit report as prescribed by **EXHIBIT E**, which is incorporated herein. NJ TRANSIT may require that specific areas be audited in detail at any time.

The SUBRECIPIENT agrees to retain all payroll records, and other documentation pertaining to work under the Agreement for a period of at least three (3) years after payment of the final voucher by NJ TRANSIT and as provided by applicable State statutes and regulations. The SUBRECIPIENT further agrees that NJ TRANSIT may have access to these records for purposes of audit during normal hours within the aforementioned retention period.

The SUBRECIPIENT shall permit NJ TRANSIT personnel to inspect all project data records relevant to this project.

L. MARKETING AND PUBLIC OUTREACH DOCUMENTATION

Any marketing and public outreach material (i.e. schedules, timetables, flyers, videos, TV ads, radio announcements, internet, website, or any other public outreach material) that is developed to advertise the services funded by this grant must be reviewed and approved by NJ TRANSIT. This includes materials not specifically funded by this grant but which contain a description of services funded under the program. Any changes that are made to any marketing and outreach material during the course of the program year that were previously approved, must also be reviewed and approved by NJ TRANSIT. A copy of the final version of all marketing material shall be forwarded to NJ TRANSIT. NJ TRANSIT reserves the right to deny reimbursement for the cost of revising marketing and public outreach material developed and/or revised without review and approval of such by NJ TRANSIT.

M. PRESS RELEASES, PUBLICATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND NEWS ARTICLES

NJ TRANSIT, through Local Programs and Minibus Support Unit, must be notified immediately of any articles or news coverage regarding this grant funded program that appear in a newspaper, report or any other forms of media and, if applicable, a copy of that coverage must be forwarded in a timely way to NJ TRANSIT.

N. ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

The SUBRECIPIENT must notify NJ TRANSIT of any and all accidents or property damage, personal injury or death occurring within SCDRTAP funded service. Notification shall be within 24 hours either by fax, phone or email.

O. CODE OF ETHICS

NJ TRANSIT is governed by a number of civil and criminal laws which control how NJ TRANSIT does business with subrecipients. These provisions include various criminal laws prohibiting bribery (N.J.S.A. 2C:27-2), and prohibiting offers of unlawful benefits to public servants for official behavior (N.J.S.A. 2C:27-10 & -11). SUBRECIPIENT agrees to comply with provisions set forth in EXHIBIT F - NJ TRANSIT Code of Ethics. This Certification must be signed and notarized annually by the SUBRECIPIENT'S legal authority certifying compliance.

No SUBRECIPIENT shall either directly or indirectly pay, offer to pay, or agree to pay any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity, or other thing of value of any kind to any NJ TRANSIT Board Member, officer or employee or to any member of the immediate family, as defined by N.J.S.A. 2C:27-10 & -11 and N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13i of any such Board Member of employee, officer or to any partnership, firm, or corporation with which any such Board Member, officer or employee is employed or associated, or in which he/she has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 2C:27-10 & -11 and N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13i.

The solicitation of any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity or other thing of value by an NJ TRANSIT Board Member, officer or employee from any SUBRECIPIENT shall be reported in writing forthwith by the SUBRECIPIENT to NJ TRANSIT's Ethics Liaison Officer. (The term "gift" is broadly and widely defined. It includes all things and objects, tangible or intangible, including services, gratuities, meals, entertainment, tickets to events, access to membership clubs, travel costs, and lodging. Simply put, a "gift" is any thing of value.)

Whether or not pursuant to employment, contract or other agreement, expressed or implied, no SUBRECIPIENT may, directly or indirectly, undertake any private business, commercial or entrepreneurial relationship with, or sell any interest in such to any NJ TRANSIT Board Member, officer or employee having any duties or responsibilities in connection with the purchase,

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acquisition or sale of any property or services by or to NJ TRANSIT or with any person, firm or entity with which he/she is employed or associated or in which he/she has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 2C:27-10 & -11 and N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13i. Any relationships subject to this provision shall be reported in writing forthwith to NJ TRANSIT's Ethics Liaison Officer who will consult with the State Ethics Commission and the Office of the Attorney General about further action. The State Ethics Commission may, upon application of the NJ TRANSIT Board Member officer or employee, grant a waiver of this restriction upon a finding that the present or proposed relationship does not present a potential, or actual appearance of a conflict of interest.

No SUBRECIPIENT shall influence, or attempt to influence or cause to be influenced, any NJ TRANSIT Board Member, officer or employee in his official capacity in any manner which might tend to impair the objectivity or independence of judgment of any Board Member, officer or employee.

No SUBRECIPIENT shall influence, or attempt to influence or cause to be influenced, any NJ TRANSIT Board Member, officer or employee to use, or attempt to use, his official position in any manner to secure unwarranted privilege or advantage for the SUBRECIPIENT or any other person.

No SUBRECIPIENT may offer any NJ TRANSIT Board Member, officer, employee or family member any gift, payment, loan or other thing of value regardless of whether it might be reasonably inferred that such gift, payment, loan, service or other thing of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing the Board Member, officer or employee in the discharge of his or her official duties. In addition, Board Members, officer, employees or family members of NJ TRANSIT are not permitted to accept breakfasts, lunches, dinners, alcoholic beverages, tickets to entertainment and/or sporting events, wagers or other item or consideration which could be construed as having more than nominal value. Failure of SUBRECIPIENT to comply with this policy will subject them to debarment pursuant to N.J.A.C. 16:72-4.1.

Additional information and a thorough summary of the ethics laws applicable to entities that contract with State entities can be found at the State's Business Ethics Guide at: https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/purchase/ethics_guide.shtml.

P. TERMINATION

This Agreement may be terminated by mutual agreement of NJ TRANSIT and the SUBRECIPIENT or upon demonstration of just cause. In addition to its rights and options to terminate the Agreement as provided elsewhere herein, NJ TRANSIT reserves the right to at any time prior to the completion of full performance by the SUBRECIPIENT of all services under this Agreement terminate said Agreement without just cause by giving written notice to SUBRECIPIENT not less than thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of the termination by Certified mail of its intention to do so. If the agreement is terminated pursuant to this section prior to project completion, payment to the SUBRECIPIENT will be made, subject to the availability of funds, for any payments earned to the effective date of the termination less any payments previously made.

Q. COORDINATION

The purposes of this program are to assist SUBRECIPIENT, develop and provide accessible feeder transportation to accessible fixed route transportation services where such services are available (N.J.A.C. 16:78-1.1) and to coordinate or attempt to coordinate with other transportation programs for senior citizens and persons with disabilities as well as with public/private transportation operators in the service area for the provision of transportation to the senior citizens and disabled residents. Particular attention should be paid toward coordinating with NJ TRANSIT, contiguous counties, municipalities, federal transit programs (Section 5310, 5311, 5307, JARC, etc.) or state agencies such as New Jersey Department of Human Services

(DHS), New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOL), New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, etc. The SUBRECIPIENT'S coordination efforts should be documented in a coordination plan approved by the governing body of the county and updated from time to time as specified by NJ TRANSIT.

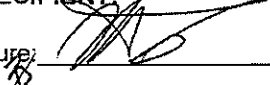
R. MODIFICATION

This Agreement may be modified only by written agreement of the parties.

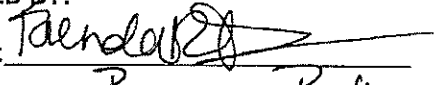
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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be duly executed as of the day of the year first above written.

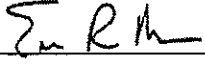
SUBRECIPIENT:

Signature:  06/06/19
PA 6964
Name (Print/Type): Chrissa Papaioannou
Title of Subrecipient Official: Assistant Director
Date: _____

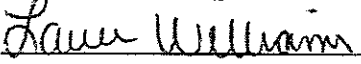
ATTESTED BY:

Signature: 
Name (Print/Type): Brenda Fokur
Title of Subrecipient Official: Contract Manager
Date: 06.07.19

NEW JERSEY TRANSIT CORPORATION

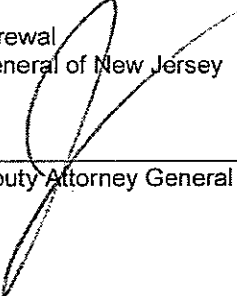
Signature: 
Name (Print/Type): Eric Daleo
Title of Official: Senior Vice President - Capital Programs
Date: 1 July 2019

ATTESTED BY:

Signature: 
Name (Print/Type): Lauren Williams
Title of Official: Regional Program Administrator
Date: 7/9/19

Approved as to form only.

Gurbir S. Grewal
Attorney General of New Jersey

By: 
Deputy Attorney General

Date: 6-26-19

July 1, 2018- June 30, 2019- OPERATING BUDGET
 NEW JERSEY TRANSIT SENIOR CITIZEN AND DISABLED RESIDENT
 TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT MONTHLY ADMINISTRATION
 EXPENDITURE REPORT AND REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

Grantee: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
 Report Number: _____ Agreement: From: 07/01/18 To: 6/30/19
 Report Date: _____ Expenses: From: _____ To: _____

REIMBURSEMENT PAYABLE TO: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
 Division of Grant and Contract Accounting of Transportation
 33 Knightsbridge Road, 2nd Floor East
 Piscataway, NJ 08854

Signature of Authorized Certifying Official: _____ Date: _____
 Maria L. Salviejo, Accounting Specialist
 Ph: 848-932-4168

BUDGETED EXPENDITURES REPORT			
OPERATING BUDGET LINE ITEMS	PROJECT BUDGET	REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST	REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTED TO DATE
Salaries/Fringe	\$119,667.00		
Standard Overhead/ Indirect Costs	\$13,637.00		
Office Supplies	\$915.00		
Training/Travel	\$10,182.00		
Miscellaneous	\$5,600.00		
Total Reimbursement Request	\$150,000.00		

THE EXPENSE DOCUMENTATION AND SERVICE REPORT MUST BE ATTACHED.

NJ TRANSIT USE ONLY			
REIMBURSEMENT SOURCE	AMOUNT	PROJECT	FOI
Approved Reimbursement Amounts			
Total Reimbursement Approved			

Approved for Payment _____ Date: _____

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NUTIP ONE-ONE TRAVEL

OPERATING BUDGET LINE ITEMS	PROJECT BUDGET
Salaries/Fringe Benefits (Operations)	\$119,666
Licenses, Registration, Ins.	
Third Party Contract Svcs. (NJ Transit)	
Maintenance & Repairs	\$0
Materials Consumed	\$915
Training/Travel	\$10,182
Miscellaneous	\$19,237
Total Reimbursement Request	\$150,000

Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Total
\$84,334.00	\$13,484.00	\$21,848.00	\$119,666.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
\$750.00	\$165.00		\$915.00
\$8,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$182.00	\$10,182.00
\$13,318.00	\$3,715.00	\$2,204.00	\$19,237.00
\$106,902.00	\$18,864.00	\$24,234.00	\$150,000.00

OPERATING BUDGET LINE ITEMS	PROJECT BUDGET
Salaries/Fringe Benefits	\$119,666
Standard Overhead/Indirect Costs	\$13,637
Facilities or Equipment Rental	
Third Party Contract Svcs.	
Office Supplies	\$915
Training/Travel	\$10,182
Marketing/Advertising (non-contracted)	
Insurance premiums	\$0
Miscellaneous	\$5,600
Total Reimbursement Request	\$150,000

Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Total
\$84,334.00	\$13,484.00	\$21,848.00	\$119,666.00
\$9,718.00	\$1,715.00	\$2,204.00	\$13,637.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
\$750.00	\$165.00		\$915.00
\$8,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$182.00	\$10,182.00
			\$0.00
\$3,600.00	\$2,000.00		\$5,600.00
\$106,902.00	\$18,864.00	\$24,234.00	\$150,000.00

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SENATE

CHRISTOPHER J. CONNORS
KRISTIN M. CORRADO
NIA H. GILL
LINDA R. GREENSTEIN
THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.
JOSEPH PENNACCHIO
STEPHEN M. SWEENEY
LORETTA WEINBERG

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JON M. BRAMNICK
JOHN J. BURZICHELLI
CRAIG J. COUGHLIN
JOHN DIMAIO
THOMAS P. GIBLIN
LOUIS D. GREENWALD
NANCY F. MUNOZ



New Jersey State Legislature

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

STATE HOUSE ANNEX
PO BOX 068
TRENTON NJ 08625-0068

PERI A. HOROWITZ
Executive Director
(609) 847-3901

AUTHORITIES, UTILITIES,
TRANSPORTATION and
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

MARVIN W. JIGGETTS
Director Of Central Staff
(609) 847-3880

CHARLES A. BUONO, JR.
Section Chief
(609) 847-3840

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Magyar & Gene Lepore

FROM: Patrick Brennan
Principal Fiscal Analyst

DATE: January 10, 2020

SUBJECT: Transportation for Persons with Disabilities

This memorandum is written pursuant to your request for an overview of the State's public transportation system for disabled persons and the challenges, funding issues, and complications involved in the provision of that service.

The primary public transportation system for disabled persons in the State is the same bus, light rail, and rail services made available to all other persons in the State. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that a state provide the same services to disabled persons as it does to all other persons. Unfortunately, our public transportation infrastructure is many decades old in some cases, and not all of the equipment and infrastructure is fully accommodating to all persons with disabilities. Whenever major improvements are made to public transportation infrastructure, the ADA requires that the infrastructure contains various accommodations for persons with disabilities, typically referred to as ADA compliant. This includes measures such as ramps or elevators rather than stairs, railings in certain locations, communications equipment, fare vending equipment, non-slip flat platforms with minimal gaps, and many other measures.

In the event that the standard bus service is not able to accommodate a person, NJ Transit is required to provide alternative accommodations. That requirement is met by the Access Link program. Access Link's service area is mandated to be within a corridor $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile wide around

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regular bus routes. If a person needs to go on a trip that is not within that service area, then the Access Link program would not accommodate them, and the person would need to use an alternate transportation option such as a private vehicle.

There is an additional gap service between regular route bus service and Access Link service that is provided at the county level. Each county designs its own community transit service for the elderly and persons with disabilities. The State funding to support these county programs is primarily funded through the Casino Revenue Fund through the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP). It consists primarily of county level para-transit services. In most counties there are two types of para-transit provided. The first is through direct taxi-like service provided to individual disabled/elderly persons that require door – to-door assistance. They register with the county, call at least 24 hours ahead, and schedule trips. The second service is through community shuttles, which are fixed route services that run on schedules similar to NJ Transit service. The major difference is that they use smaller buses and may go a block or two off route to better accommodate elderly and disabled passengers. The counties may also provide certain contract services with their equipment for shared ride taxi service to employment and medical trips. Another key feature of these services is that the routes target major residential clusters of senior citizens and disabled persons and connect them to common destinations for these populations, including healthcare facilities, government services, and shopping destinations.

The size of these programs varies widely by county and depends in large part on the elderly population of the county, the level of service that the county chooses to provide, and upon the quality of the operations themselves. Middlesex County, for instance, provided rides for 487,300 people in 2010 with 162,571 being single ride para-transit service and 324,729 rides through the shuttle service. Mercer County provides their para-transit service through Transportation Resources to Aid the Disadvantaged and Elderly (TRADE). Services provided through TRADE include one community shuttle that operates in Ewing, and full para-transit service. I was able to identify ridership for 2007 of 122,357.

County Transportation System managers have consistently cited unmet needs for para-transit services due to resource limitations. TRADE has a waiting list for dialysis and work trips, and a number of those trips go unfilled each month. Other counties face similar issues. The State organization for the county transit agencies is called NJ COST or the Council on Special Transportation. That organization has consistently identified a need for alternative state funding due to the declining SCDRTAP revenues from the decline in the Casino Revenue Fund. The State has a growing demand for para-transit services, but the Casino Revenue Fund is declining or flat and, as a result, counties are unable to fully meet their funding needs. Below is a summary of 2012 budget revenues for two county agencies:

Funding Source (FY 2012)	Middlesex County MCAT	Mercer County TRADE
Work First (TANF)	\$187,463	
SCADRTAP	\$2,038,034	\$835,000
County	\$1,218,315	\$1,130,000

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Transportation for Persons With Disabilities

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January 9, 2020

JARC (Fed reverse commute)	\$266,000	
Other Federal	\$142,000	\$60,000
Veterans	\$22,000	\$15,000
Title XX (SS block grant)	\$189,000	\$175,000
Fares/Donations/Advertising	\$280,000	\$10,000
State Dept Aging		\$90,000
Total Funding	\$4,342,812	\$2,315,000
Difference from 2008	-\$821,519	About the same

As service demands have grown, while county and State resources have failed to keep up with demand, counties have aggressively diversified their funding streams over the last decade. This has primarily involved the pursuit of various federal revenue streams and seeking payment through health care funding streams that might otherwise be paid to taxi companies and ride sharing companies or private medical para-transit services. Pursuing these revenue streams has filled some of the gaps in funding, but has created additional gaps in service, as providing service through various federal or medical programs places additional restrictions on the service that can be provided, causing the counties to not provide certain trips or routes that would be beneficial but lack a dedicated funding source.

The State funding provided by the Casino Revenue Fund is at a rate of 8.5% of the collections from the most recently completed fiscal year. For FY 2012, that reference year is FY 2010, when 8.5% of collections amounted to \$25.1 million Statewide. The FY 2020 amount is \$18.5 million. Based on the Middlesex cost per trip of about \$8.60 per trip, the FY 2020 funding level will result in about 767,000 fewer annual trips across the State. The subsidy cost for NJ Transit to provide each Access Link ride is \$54.19 as of January 2019, compared to \$2.49 per standard bus ride, and \$4.39 system wide. As a result, there is a clear financial incentive to shift passengers from Access Link to the regular bus system or to county transportation. In the aggregate, NJ Transit spent \$7.3 million to provide about 135,000 Access Link trips in January 2019 (\$87.6 million for 1.6 million trips annualized), compared with \$61.1 million for statewide bus service (\$733 million cost annualized), and just \$18.5 million in State SCADRTAP funding. Moving more passengers away from Access Link and onto standard fixed route service or county transportation services can save on cost as they provide service at a substantially lower cost per trip, while also integrating persons with disabilities into the primary transit system, where service is more consistent and reliable, compared with Access Link where there can be long wait times and pickup windows, as the trips a driver provides sometimes need to be coordinated over large geographic areas across multiple of the State's 250 bus routes.

The overall structure of this system of providing trips for persons with disabilities is generally sound. There are three tiers of service which are each structured differently and can provide a broad array of services according to the strengths of each type of service (commuter bus, smaller fixed route bus, and personal transit shuttle). The mix of county and statewide operations also has potential virtues because the county services have a more intimate knowledge of their geographies and are potentially better able to serve their specific communities. A major weakness

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of this system appears to be the distribution of trips among these three services and the overall level of funding. More funding is necessary to meet the need, and at the same time, if a greater share of funding were placed at the county level, the cost could likely be distributed more efficiently by reducing the number of required Access Link trips. At the same time, greater levels of capital investment need to be made into the primary transit infrastructure so that it can be more accommodating of different types of disability also reducing the need for Access Link trips.

An additional layer of potential weakness is in the roles and responsibilities of the different services. Access Link is a federally required safety valve that catches anybody who cannot be served by the main transit system. The county systems are chasing funding to provide as many trips as possible. The most fiscally efficient system may be to have a better funded county system that uses the existing NJ Transit route structure as a factor in its consideration of service areas. If designed with ADA requirements in mind, this could potentially allow a number of mandatory Access Link rides to be shifted to the fixed route county system where those trips could be completed at a much lower cost. This would require close operational coordination between NJ Transit and the counties and among the counties themselves. The counties have close relationships with NJ Transit, but those are primarily funding and oversight relationships, not around specific ADA service requirements and cross operational linkage. As a result, such a structuring of county service is not currently practical given their organizational and funding structure.

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