



Inclusive Coordinated
Transportation Planning Grant

accessDC Study



Project Outcomes and
Lessons Learned

November 30, 2017

Study Goal

The accessDC Study will identify ways to give people with disabilities and older adults in the District of Columbia better access to multiple transportation services, allowing for greater mobility with dignity and independence, and easier integration in the community.

Study Activities

- Established the Project Advisory Committee (PAC)
 - Community: 2 members who are older adults + 3 members who are people with disabilities
 - Agency Partners: DC Office on Aging, DC Department of Health Care Finance, DC Department of For-Hire Vehicles, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
- Hired a consultant team led by Nelson\Nygaard
- Team documented existing conditions to identify gaps
- Developed proposed strategies and recommendations
- Final Report

Public Engagement



- Project Website
- 2 Community Open Mics: 53 attendees
- 4 PAC Meetings (open to the public)
- Survey in English and Spanish: 255 respondents
- 15+ Agency Stakeholder and Provider Interviews

Study Outcomes

Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Strengths

- Older adults and PWD complete most trips on existing services
- All major District fixed-route public transportation services are ADA-compliant

Weaknesses

- About half of survey respondents who use MetroAccess said that service is unreliable
- MetroAccess and TransportDC do not have an integrated fare payment system

Opportunities

- ConnectorCard provides significant benefits, but is underutilized

TRANSPORTATION LINKAGES

Strengths

- Strong building blocks for creating a high level linkage service:
 - Several telephone-based referral services + regional transportation service repository
 - WMATA and DDOT have real-time information for fixed-route services
 - Multiple services use the same scheduling software

Weaknesses

- WMATA bus stop inventory is poorly integrated with trip planner

Opportunities

- Nearly half of surveyed customers use their smartphone to look up information
- 15% of MetroAccess trips are booked via the internet portal

Study Outcomes

Recommendations

- Identified nearly two dozen potential strategies and improvements
- Quick Wins: Bus Buddies Program, On-Site Group Training, Marketing Program, Connector Card Expansion and Simplification, Accessible Mobility Open Data Portal
- Layered Improvements: No Wrong Door Approach, Accessible Trip Planning

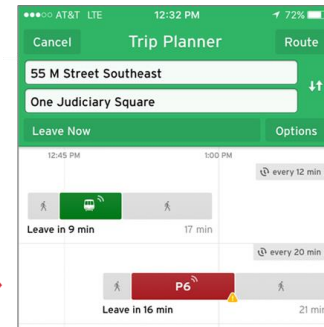
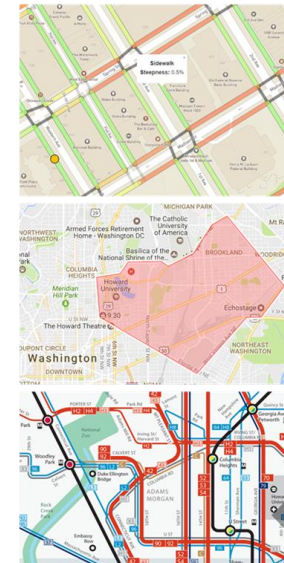
No Wrong Door Approach – Accessible Trip Planning



Sidewalk and Bus Stop Accessibility Data

Demand Responsive Transit Data

Fixed-Route Transit Data



Challenges, Impacts and Resolutions

Challenges	Impacts	Resolution
District Fiscal Year lagged grant funding year	Delays in starting project and consultant procurement	No cost extension
Inadequate funding for a robust public outreach effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inadequate translations for meeting materials and surveys ▪ Inability to take information out to facilities for seniors and PWD 	District staff backfilled to the extent possible but staff costs were unaccounted for in project costs
PAC members were not as engaged as expected	Project was largely driven by District and consultant team	A select few engaged and vocal community members provided valuable feedback
Community feedback was based on anecdotal experience	Feedback did not address big picture challenges	Study team drew from the feedback and applied to identifying weaknesses and recommendations for everyone
Change in leadership	Loss of priority and momentum	Identified new partners and completed the study

Lessons Learned

- Our scope of technical work for the study should have been smaller and allocated approximately 50% of the funding to public engagement
- District buy-in for the study and recommendations would have been stronger if one or more District agency had funded portion of the effort
- Logistics and accommodations for PWD and older adults at public meetings, e.g. facility accommodations such as adequate elevator and restroom access, preferred time of day during daylight hours, outside of peak travel periods, when multiple transportation options are available, accessible materials- font choices that are machine-readable

Project Sustainability

Pursue accessDC study recommendations through three working groups:

- **Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Council (MAAC)**
 - To be established by DC Council
 - Customer working group would include District transportation users with disabilities
 - Members would collaborate with District agencies to design and implement accessDC recommendations
- **Commission on Aging**
 - Members would collaborate with District agencies to design and implement accessDC recommendations
- **Reestablish the Transportation Collective**
 - District agencies that manage or operate specialized transportation services
 - Meets 4-6 times a year to analyze effectiveness of District transportation options

Thank You!

Questions/Comments, Contact:

Raka Choudhury
DDOT Project Manager
raka.choudhury@dc.gov
202-671-4608

David Koch
DDOT Deputy Project Manager
david.koch@dc.gov
202-285-2503

Dan Berez
Nelson\Nygaard
dberez@nelsonnygaard.com
857-305-9083