

DATE	31 May 2018 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
VENUE	WILMAPCO
MEETING TITLE	PMC Meeting #1/Project Kick-off
CONTRACT NO	186700
PROJECT	Newark-Area Transit Study
ATTENDEES	<p>Heather Dunigan, WILMAPCO Tigist Zegeye, WILMAPCO Catherine Smith, DART John Sisson, DART John Calnan, DART Thomas Fruehstorfer, City of Newark Suzanne Kalmbacher, Cecil Transit Mary Ellen Gray, City of Newark Richard Rind, UD Rob Mullen, UD Shearee Barnett, UD Anna Lynn Smith, WSP Wesley Mitchell, WSP Alexis Howland, WSP Mike Perrotta, Century Engineering* Ken Liwag, WSP*</p> <p>*Attendees participated via phone</p>

ITEM

- 1.0 INTRODUCTIONS**
- Attendees introduced themselves and the organizations they represent.
 - Thomas Fruehstorfer (TF) said that the Unicity bus route needs improvement. He would like to see a new route come out of this process.
 - Catherine Smith (CS) said that she was interested in defining roles for each of the transit providers in Newark. She is also interested in better transfers for riders.
 - Tigist Zegeye said there is a strong need for coordination between the agencies. Since Newark is a small city, there shouldn't be four different ways of doing business.
 - Suzanne Kalmbacher (SK) explained that Cecil Transit has three routes in the Newark area. At the end of April, they launched a rail shuttle service that connects the Perryville MARC and Newark SEPTA rail stations.
- 2.0 LINES OF COMMUNICATION**
- Heather Dunigan (HD) said that everyone can reach out directly to Anna Lynn Smith (ALS), but to CC Heather on all communications.

3.0 PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- John Sisson (JS) explained that the current operators don't share bus stops, sometimes the different stops are just one block apart. He suggested that a network redesign could include shared bus stops for the operators.
- HD suggested considering priority transit corridors with signal priority for buses, e.g., on South College Ave. She also mentioned that UD IPA has been going a lot of research on automated and connected vehicles, and on how Newark might position itself to be a testing area for those technologies.
- With regards to paratransit service, JS said that DART has paratransit data. IPA has been working on paratransit issues, particularly with the Newark Senior Center, and how the bus routes/trips could be more efficient. HD said that Cecil County is a great example to look at how to coordinate with private providers for efficiency.
- Wes Mitchell (WM) asked if the paratransit aspect of the study is to focus on making the fixed routes more accessible to paratransit users. JS said that it was and to examine what infrastructure barriers there might be.
- **HD said she would share a GIS file to share on paratransit accessibility issues.**

4.0 PROJECT NAME

- HD asked if the project name could be changed to *Newark-Area Transit Study* and to use the TRIP branding. Everyone agreed to the name change and continued use of the TRIP branding.

5.0 SCOPE, SCHEDULE AND BUDGET

- ALS reviewed the schedule for the project, focusing on the nine-month schedule, outreach activities, and production of the final report.

6.0 STANDING DATE FOR PMC MEETINGS

- There will be follow-up communication from ALS regarding when the next PMC meeting will be.
- **HD will send around a Doodle poll to identify a date.**

7.0 OUTREACH EFFORTS

- ALS explained that four surveys (either distributed online or conducted in-person) will take place as part of the study: a resident survey, business community interviews, passenger intercept surveys, and bus driver interviews. She asked for feedback on when would be a good time to conduct the surveys, especially considering that many University of Delaware students are now gone for the summer.
- JS asked if the University of Delaware had a sense of what the student needs area. Richard Rind (RR) said that the students need transportation to the Wilmington Train Station, Newark Train Station, and the Philadelphia Airport.
- JS said it was important to collect student input and mentioned that student accommodations are spread out, e.g., the Retreat. RR said that the students will return August 28th. JS suggested waiting a few weeks after the start of school to solicit student feedback so that the freshman have time to acclimate and understand their transportation needs.
- HD suggested reaching out to Newark residents at the Newark Community Day, which is the third Sunday in September. She suggested reaching students by setting up a tent on campus.
- HD suggested replacing some of the PMC meetings with Advisory Committee meetings. The Advisory Committee could be key stakeholders who are invited to join for in-depth discussions, e.g., the Senior Center and the Downtown Partnership. **HD requested that attendees brainstorm ideas for potential participants and send them to her in the next couple weeks.**
- WM asked if 1 to 3 pm is ok for Advisory Committee meetings in terms of them being able to join the meeting with respect to business hours. HD said the Advisory Committee would primarily be people from different institutions and government liaisons, so the afternoon times would work well for them.
- For the surveys, **TF said that the City had a better map which divides Newark into 10 areas. He will share that.**
- JS said that the passenger intercept survey should have a way to capture passengers' home locations if they are not from Newark. TF also explained that there is possibility for confusion around what is and isn't Newark, given there are incorporated vs. unincorporated areas.

- TF asked how big of an area is being considered for the study and how far out the Cecil and Unicity routes were being considered.
- John Calnan(JC) said that a regional rail connection is important to consider. TF said that a SEPTA question is needed on the surveys.
- JS asked where the passenger intercept survey would take place. ALS said it would happen at the Transit Hub. HD suggested that it also take place at the Park and Ride at Rts. 896 and 4.
- JS said the train station will increasingly be the focal point. Mary Ellen Gray (MG) asked if DART knew how many people were going to the train station. **JS said that they have OD data that can be shared. HD said that WILMAPCO can provide train station rider intercept data for Newark.**
- HD wants to include the Megabus stop on the survey (UD Parking Lot #6 on Christiana Dr.).
- TF said that the City can send out an alert about the survey on Facebook. He said the city pushes stuff out through the Nextdoor newsfeed website. He also suggested asking councilmembers if they could send the surveys out to their electronic mailing lists.
- JS said that hard copies should be brought to the Senior Center.
- ALS asked about the desire for including demographic questions on the surveys. JS said to remove the gender question, but leave the age question. CS said that they go through demographic questions for Title 6, so they don't need those questions answered in this effort.
- HD said that WILMAPCO has SurveyMonkey which can be used for the online surveys.
- Regarding bus driver interviews, CS said that the next "club room" would take place this summer. JS said that DART can facilitate an interview for their bus drivers that serve Newark. There are 70 drivers at DART. They switch to new routes twice per year, in December and in May.
- SK said that Cecil transit can facilitate interviews of their bus drivers, of which there would be 12 to 18. Cecil drivers have a rotating schedule and drive all routes.
- Bob Mullen (BM) said that the September training session for UD drivers is the best time to get their opinions. They have about 40 drivers.
- For the employer survey, HD suggested getting feedback from the City on potential employers to contact. SK said that Cecil County employers may also want to participate.
- **HD said that attendees have two weeks to provide feedback on the survey questions (comments due June 14).**

8.0 DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS

- There was brief discussion of the transit map created by Century. **It was decided there will be a follow-up GIS discussion with a smaller group.**
- JS said that it would be helpful to map the other operators' bus stops. TF explained that Unicity doesn't have bus stops outside of downtown, just on-demand service.
- WM asked if the University buses have GPS and AVL. RR said that the University buses have GPS tracking and APC. The Unicity buses only have internal-facing GPS.
- Different types of maps would be created – internally ones for team and PMC use and those that would be outward facing for the public. Helpful to have maps at two different scales: Newark inset and then the larger study area.

9.0 OTHER DISCUSSION

- TF expressed interest in focusing on how to get more people using the Unicity.
- ALS said that she had reviewed meeting minutes for a TRIP meeting from the prior year and there was a mission statement for each of the agencies and how they would serve Newark differently. She asked if there had been any further developments related to that. The group didn't indicate that there had been.
- HD said that the transit mode share in Newark is not as high as you would expect it to be given the rich overlap of transit services. JS agreed that Newark seems to have everything where transit should be performing better.
- TF said that the frequency of services needs to be often enough that if you come on DART, you don't have to wait long for your connecting bus, even if your original bus is early or late.
- JS said that DART is scheduled based, not headway based. TF said that Unicity has a schedule, but that it does not mean much.
- RR said that besides route and stop overlap, there is also policy overlap/conflict between the operators, including: fares, whether the service is free or not, and whether only UD affiliates are able to ride. TF said they had talked about getting an ID system where maybe residents could swipe an ID to get on the University buses.

- CS said that there are times of day when the University buses are full and cannot accommodate more passengers.
- JS talked about pulling all the information for all the services into one app or location. RR said that Iowa City does a good job of combining information for three services onto one map. HD expressed interest in including biking and parking information on the same map. JS said that DART will be rolling out real-time displays and he would like to see one system that displays all the ETAs. Desire to investigate potential for a fare free zone.
- TF said there may be challenges in modernizing the city's system, but need to paint the picture of how investments will make the overall transit network work better and can prove this via data. Potential to seek legislative support for funding.

10.0 NEXT STEPS

- ***Follow-up communication from ALS regarding next PMC meeting date and time. HD to send Doodle Poll to identify date.***
- ***ALS/HD to distribute notes from TrIP meetings for PMC review.***
- ***Attendees should send suggestions for potential Advisory Committee participants to HD within two weeks.***
- ***TF should share a map of Newark divided into ten areas with HD and ALS.***
- ***Attendees have two weeks to share feedback on the surveys with HD and ALS.***

DISTRIBUTION: Invitees

Copies to: Project File