Filling the Gaps: Linking People and Jobs Through Community Based Transit

May 22, 2013
Transit in the Mon Valley

- Many areas without any transit service
- Many areas inaccessible to large transit buses - Subsidized housing
- Mon Valley has 13 of the 15 poorest communities in Allegheny County
- Mon Valley unemployment rate is currently 13 percent
Heritage WorkLink Overview

• Designed to serve the transit-disadvantaged areas of the Mon Valley
• Fixed-route transportation service
• Connects people to Port Authority or to workplaces
• Routes are flexible and responsive to community needs
• 3000 registered riders
• Only for work or work-related activities
• Most Riders are connecting to Port Authority
• To date has provided 886,579 rides; now up to 13,000 per month
• Service over capacity; passing up 2,000 riders annually
• 550 calls per month about WorkLink

Heritage WorkLink Overview
• Response to cuts in the regional transit system
• Ridership has increased from 70,000 to 130,000 in the last 3 years
• Funding is uncertain for the next year
• Without WorkLink, $134 million in economic output to the Mon Valley will be lost, including a rise in unemployment that could reach 18 percent
The Future of Transit in the Mon Valley

- Mon Valley Transportation Forum
- Transportation Management Association?
- Creating Transportation Solutions- Funded by the Pittsburgh Foundation
- Community Transit District
- Partnerships with stakeholders and transportation providers
AT ACTA, Everything Begins with a Community-Based Plan
Existing Conditions

- 4 Townships
- 19 Shopping Areas
- 236 Retail Stores
- 70 Restaurants
- 1 Mall-21M Visitors/Yr.
- 14 Hotels
- 12 Office Buildings
- 1 Office Park (RIDC)
- 4 Gasoline Stations
- Undeveloped Parcels
- 25,000 Jobs Within 1.5 Miles of the Bus Stop
An Area That Was Developed for SOVs, Now Accommodates Buses & Pedestrians
Pedestrian Access

- We documented existing sidewalks and walking paths (desire lines)
- We identified significant gaps in order to create a complete system of interconnected pedestrian paths and sidewalks.
- We addressed pedestrian access and safety issues at signalized and nonsignalized intersections
Existing Desire Lines
Existing and Proposed Sidewalks
Pedestrian Counts in Front of IKEA

The data shows the results of five (5) one-hour pedestrian counts conducted by ACTA during peak travel periods from May 22 through June 2, 2007. The pedestrian route widths represent pedestrians per hour.
The Main Port Authority Transfer Stop at IKEA

The bus stop at IKEA has the potential to be a “super stop” because it’s the hub of the Port Authority service:

- Move the entrance to IKEA
- Address the left turn out of the IKEA parking lot
- Improve pedestrian access and safety to the shelter across Park Manor Boulevard and other retail and restaurant destinations
- Address line-of-sight issues for bus riders crossing Park Manor Boulevard
- Replace the current bus shelter with a larger shelter that addresses multi-modal travel and becoming part of the retail environment

And so we began our two-pronged approach to increase modal choices by providing a last mile shuttle service and identifying and eventually finding funding for infrastructure improvements.
Our Goal for RideACTA Service

- Create a mobility management model for a typical suburban job generator that allows workers to get to jobs (reverse commute) and suburban residents to get to work using an on-demand shuttle for last-mile service between the work site and the bus stop.

- Make infrastructure improvements that support this model and broaden travel options for everyone.
- “Last Mile Service” between the bus stop and the work site

- Funded by JARC since 2004

- RideACTA is an on-demand shuttle that operates between the transit hub to businesses within a 1.5 mile radius of the bus stop

- Based on increased service demand, in September, 2009 we increased service from 12 hours/day to 32 hours/day
New Name & New Logo
New Schedules

just in time

A new FREE shuttle service — just in time to get you from the bus stop to work and back again! 1-888-600-1100
New Web Site

1-888-600-1100

New Number to Schedule Rides

1-888-600-1100
Posters in Local Bus Shelters

New FREE Shuttle Service
No signup, no fares—and no more walking in the dark, rain or snow!

rideacta

RideACTA IKEA
Pick-up and drop-off at the IKEA bus stop. If you work within 1.5 miles of the stop, RideACTA will carry you to and from work, Monday through Friday from 6 am – 10 pm.

It’s as easy as 1-2-3.
1. Get off your bus at the IKEA stop, and pick up a RideACTA shuttle.
2. Tell the driver where you want to be dropped off.
3. Tell the driver what time you’d like to be picked up at the end of your workday, and the shuttle will return for you. If you don’t know when your workday will end, or if your schedule changes, just call the dispatcher at 1-888-600-1100 to arrange your pickup.

Call 1-800-600-1100 or visit rideacta.org

The Airport Corridor Transportation Association (ACTA) is a non-profit Transportation Management Association supporting and implementing programs that increase travel options and foster responsible economic growth.

All service on major holidays

Courtesy of Lamar Advertising
At 4:23:30pm the bus was at the following location:

(0.1 miles from) IHOP

Automatic Vehicle Locator Technology
Improving Technology to Increase Ridership

- In April ACTA developed a texting service for real-time shuttle information. (Service was discontinued in September due to low usage by riders.)

- RideACTA went on Facebook in November, 2011

- Staff is currently working to develop a mobile app for reservations
rideACTA is an on-demand service

- All trips must begin or end at the IKEA bus stop
- Exceptions are made for passengers going from one job to a second job
- The driver plans the trip based on the destinations of the passengers
- Passengers can make a reservation with the driver for the return trip or call our 800 number
- Using GPS, each trip is recorded and time-stamped
- ACTA monitors trips, shuttle capacity, shuttle etc. using daily reports sent from the operators
Service is evaluated daily by ACTA staff

In order to provide the best service, we keep in contact with our riders and the employers

Ridership is tracked by employer. Each month employers received information on the number of rides to their work site.

At many times of the day we are at or beyond beyond capacity. The driver often makes 2-3 trips to accommodate all the riders waiting at a single stop.
We Have a Strategy to Get More Employer Contributions

Your Employees Are Riding the Shuttle!
Top Ten Shuttle Users

1. TRG Sales Solutions
2. NCO (Penn Center West)
3. Walmart
4. Mall at Robinson
5. Marriott
6. Giant Eagle Market District
7. Cigna
8. FedEx
9. Four Points Sheraton
10. CCAC
Keeping Shuttle Riders Informed About Changes Coming to the Port Authority

- ACTA Developed Extensive Public Outreach Campaigns for Major Changes to Port Authority Bus Service
- Outreach Included New Publications, Mailings to 2,000+ Constituents, and On-Site Shuttle Awareness
- Transportation Events at the IKEA Bus Stop, the Mall at Robinson and Several Major Employers
Our Riders

We Conduct Periodic Rider Survey. Here’s What We Found:

- 88% Ride 4-5 Days Per Week
- 96% Use the Shuttle to Get to Work
- Over 70% of Riders are Low-Income
- 98% Rated RideACTA Service Good-Excellent
Celebrating Three Years

- **Since September 2009**, rideACTA's on-demand shuttles have provided **last-mile service** between the Port Authority bus stop and worksites in the busiest part of Pittsburgh's Airport Corridor.
- The result: a transportation success story. The growing service provides access to jobs that many employees couldn’t otherwise get to. And it reduces traffic congestion while improving air quality.
- RideACTA serves more than **130 businesses** with approximately **30,000 employees**.
- **100%** of trips take employees to work.
- In its third year, rideACTA provided **77,124 rides** for workers in the Robinson/North Fayette/Moon/Findlay commercial area.
- This year, rideACTA added **34 new stops** at local businesses.
- Each day there are **350 fewer vehicles on the road** because of rideACTA, resulting in a yearly decrease of **1.4 million pounds of carbon emissions**.
Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) Grant

**Project Highlights**

- Create a 4 leg intersection on Park Manor Boulevard with the IKEA Driveway and Robinson Town Centre (western) Driveway

- Install traffic signal at the intersection

- Install pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian signals at each approach to the new four leg intersection

- Create a Florida T on Park Manor Boulevard at the PNC driveway to replace the existing westbound left turn lane on Park Manor Boulevard

- Install shared bicycle lanes (including related signing) between the Montour Trail and the bus stop located at the IKEA driveway via Park Manor Boulevard, Robinson Town Centre Boulevard, and Robinson Centre Drive

- Install a new hub bus shelters with amenities including, lighting, advertising signage, picnic tables, bicycle racks, and a bike work station on Park Manor Boulevard at the IKEA bus stop.

An Investment of Nearly $1 Million
From This....
To This...
The Future of RideACTA

Concerns

- With MAP-21, Repeal of Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Federal Funding
- No provision for Community Transportation Funding at the Federal, State or Local Levels
- Current Funding Guidelines Count VMT and Number of Senior Rides. Not Good Measures for Access to Work Shuttles
- No Institutional Interest to Include Community Transportation in a Network of Regional Transportation Services
- Lack of Will to Share Resources by Local Funding Partners
- The Current System Does Not Address Adequately Address Where People Live and Work in a Cost-Effective and Efficient Manner
- Rapid Growth in Ridership/Reaching Capacity
- Because of Uncertainty of Funding, Inability to Expand, Grow Service
- Finding a Reliable Funding Source
The Future of RideACTA

Opportunities

- Rapid Growth in Ridership
- Extending Beyond the 1.5 Mile Radius of IKEA
- RideACTA as a Service Model for Other Pittsburgh Suburbs
- Using Technology to Improve On-Demand Service and Increase Ridership
- Integrating RideACTA into the Greater Transportation System
- Support for Community Transportation by Elected Officials at Federal, State and Local Levels
- Getting Legislation to Fund Community Transportation Services Like RideACTA
- Commitment Among Regional Transportation Partners to a Varied Transportation Service Delivery System Model to Create a System That Meets the Needs of Existing and Potential New Riders
ACCESS Transportation Systems
Pittsburgh, PA

- Sponsored by Port Authority of Allegheny County
- ACCESS serves as broker
- 1.75 million rides provided annually in coordinated system
- 6000 rides av. weekday
- Over 125 sponsoring agencies
- Service provided by 7 companies – for profit and non profit with 400 vehicles
- On time performance 96.5%
- Average cost per trip $20
ACCESS Service
A seat for everyone

- ADA Paratransit
- 65 Plus Program – PA Lottery
- Area Agency on Aging
- Medical Assistance
- Churches
- Nursing/personal care homes
- Veteran’s Administration
- Community based human service agencies
- Access to work
- Protective service
- Vanpool emergency ride home
- General public service
- 34 years and still evolving

ACCESS Transportation Systems
ACCESS Transportation

Distinctions

- High level of coordination – founding principle
  - Multiple customers and funding
  - Cost sharing - fully allocated cost of trips
  - United We Ride National Leadership Award

- Decentralized brokerage – multiple providers
  - Competitive, cost control
  - High quality – low cost

- Service in excess of ADA requirements

- Integration between ACCESS and fixed route
Transit – we move people

Find a way to say Yes!

- Value of transit to the community
- Goal and mission
- Paratransit part of the overall system
- Resource – not burden
- Grow the service
- Why have empty seats?
Many Sponsors
One Transportation System

- Many agencies buy into transportation system instead of operating service
- Sponsor determines:
  - Eligibility
  - Service limitations (trip purpose, hours, etc.)
- Sponsor subsidizes part or all of fare
- Mobility Management Model
  - Customer may have multiple sponsors
  - “Right” choice for each trip
- Provision of transportation coordinated
  - Coordination creates more capacity
  - Transparency for customer
Benefits of using Coordinated System

Infrastructure Exists

- Vehicles – including wheelchair accessible
- Drivers and operations personnel
- Call center
- Insurance
- Safety, training and risk management
- Reporting
- Auditing and accountability

Avoid duplication – maximize existing resources
Coordinated system characteristics

- Likely to have high standards required by other sponsors
  - Drug and alcohol testing
  - Driver qualifications
  - Vehicle condition requirements
  - Technology including AVL and GPS
  - High level of on time performance
  - Monitoring and evaluation
Decisions

- Developing a new program
  - A distinct offering within the system
- Purchasing rides
  - Sponsoring a ride on the exiting system
Decisions

- What are the most important aspects?
  - Advance reservation policies
  - Customer fares
  - Driver assistance
  - Days and hours of service
  - Cost per trip
  - Integration with other modes

- Priorities and choices drive costs
Preliminary Discussions

Ensuring the best outcome

Before final model determined:
- Options for cost sharing
- Rider characteristics and trip levels
- Service delivery models
- Time of day vs. price – purchasing empty seats at lower cost
- Goals and priorities for service

Work with provider to analyze choices
- Costs analysis for various models
The value of relationships
Collaboration, cooperation

- Partnerships are the foundation
  - Consumers and advocates
  - PennDOT, MPO
  - Community based human service agencies
  - Faith based community
  - Health care providers
  - Private and non-profit providers
  - Elected officials

- Public Input
  - Ongoing process
  - Meaningful
  - Prior to change

ACCESS Transportation Systems
Sharing the ride and our resources

ACCESS Transportation Systems
ACCESS...
A community working together

ACCESS Transportation Systems
Connecting people to life
COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

Lynn Colosi, Vice President
Community Transportation Solutions

- **Context**
  - Part of a greater transit system
  - Independent and serving particular gap

- **Profile**
  - Distinct rider groups
  - Small transit vehicles
  - Multimodal trips

- **Funding**
  - No dedicated source
  - Demonstration type grants
  - Cobbled together

- **Performance**
  - Passengers per revenue hour
  - Operating cost per revenue hour
  - Operating revenue per revenue hour
  - Operating cost per passenger
Community Transportation Solutions

Complications of this Framework

- Control
- Funding
- Performance
- Criteria
- Benchmarks
Community Transportation Solutions

- National Case Study
  - RTD Denver
- Local Examples
  - Heritage WorkLink
  - Ride ACTA
- Community Transit District Concept
Community Transportation Solutions

- Considerations
  - Funding within the framework
  - Community control through collaboration
  - Modifying standards
  - Redefining transit
  - Replicating the model
Transit-Oriented Development Typology Strategy for Allegheny County

PCRG Community Development Summit

May 22, 2013
So, what is GoBurgh?

• Leading non-partisan community voice on Pittsburgh’s transit issues;
• Knowledge-based, research-backed transit-oriented public policy and advocacy;
• Convener of organizations and communities working toward sustainable and vibrant transit infrastructure;
• Leverages transportation assets as community revitalization and economic development tools.
• Educate the public and stakeholders on transit’s vital role in the region;
• Work with communities to determine what county residents want the transit system of the future to do for them.
Why does transportation matter?

- Hidden cost of living
- Foreclosure crisis
- Job and service access equity
- Public health implications
- Maximizing existing systems to keep costs down for all
How should we judge affordability?

- Center for TOD Housing + Transportation Affordability Index, 2004 Bureau of Labor Statistics
What is the real cost of living?

Yellow and light green areas (less than 30%) perform better than or equal to the national standard.
What is the real cost of living?

Yellow and light green areas (less than 45%) perform better than or equal to the national standard.
What is the real cost of living?

Yellow and light green areas (less than 45%) perform better than or equal to the national standard.
Mobility also impacts public health...
...and burdens us with hidden costs.

**Table 2: The Cost of Transportation-Related Health Outcomes**

The consequences of inactivity, obesity, exposure to air pollution, and traffic crashes in the U.S. are staggering when viewed in terms of cost. Fortunately, with certain policy changes, these costs are largely preventable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The National Health Costs of...</th>
<th>$5 (Billions)</th>
<th>Estimate Includes</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<td>• Lost wages due to illness &amp; disability</td>
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<td>• Future earnings lost by premature death</td>
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<td>• Lost quality of life</td>
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All cost estimates adjusted to 2008 dollars.
Compact communities and transit reduce isolation among non-driving residents

Isolation and the elderly

- 33% of respondents said their communities fail to provide dependable public transportation
- 71% of older households want to live within walking distance of transit
- 25% of respondents gave their communities a D or F for offering amenities within walking distance

- AARP Survey, 2005:
Transit Oriented Districts Are....

Neighborhoods with affordable, equitable transportation choices:

• Safe, comfortable streets
• Bike lanes
• Predictable buses
• Get you where you want to go
Transit Oriented Districts Are....

Easy access to many job opportunities:

- Frequent bus and rail
- Predictable service
- Times that work for your commute
The Typology prioritizes implementation strategies

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<tr>
<th>Place Types</th>
<th>Building Capacity of Local TOD Champions</th>
<th>Planning/Visioning</th>
<th>Station Area Infrastructure (bike/ped, stormwater)</th>
<th>Community and Economic Revitalization</th>
<th>Catalytic Development</th>
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1. Encourage transit that supports TOD
2. New funding for small- to mid-sized infrastructure
3. Stable funding for planning, visioning
4. Build capacity at the local scale

Wilkinsburg CDC
5. Use typology to prioritize community and transit investments
Filling the Gaps: Linking People and Jobs Through Community Based Transit

May 22, 2013

PCRG Community Development Summit