

NVTA ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT STAKEHOLDER MEETING 2 MEETING SUMMARY

2024-10-29

Attendance

NVTA: Kate Miller, Diana Meehan, Rebecca Schenck, Libby Payan, Dexter Cypress

NN: Sophia Constantine, Naomi Armenta, Mallika Gupta

Stakeholders: Christine Smith, Elaine Clark, Ian Carson, Jill Jorgensen, John Pearson, Lesli Medina, Mark Frankenstein, Tamar Kurlaender, Kimberly Baldwin

Meeting Summary

Diana Meehan opened the meeting and introduced the NVTA team. Sophia Constantine and Naomi Armenta introduced the Nelson\Nygaard team.

Existing Conditions Findings

Both Task 3 - Existing Conditions and Task 4 – Peer Review are complete and published for stakeholder review. Sophia Constantine from Nelson\Nygaard noted:

Key existing conditions findings include:

- Medical Access is Imperative
- Navigating Available Transportation Options is a Challenge
- Limited Affordable Transportation Options
- Physical Infrastructure Improvements are Needed
- Travel Model Data Supports Survey and Planning Data
- Vine and VineGo Services are Optimally Located
- Service Gaps Exist for Out-of-County and Some In-County Trips
- Trips Occur Later Into the Evening
- Transit Cannot Meet All Needs Alone

Gaps include:

- Access to medical trips
- Need for coordination
- Access to information

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT
Stakeholder Meeting 2 Summary

- Limited affordable transportation options
- Inaccessible infrastructure to reach transit
- Service beyond VineGo
- Service for out-of-county and out-of-area trips
- Need for expanded service
- Funding for expanded services

Comments from attendees were focused on potential overlap with Napa Older Adult Assessment outcomes and helpful data from managed care plans.

Strategies

To address identified mobility barriers, strategies will focus on educating riders of all ages and abilities on their options, partnerships across sectors and geographies, and funding transportation programs and services.

People considered as targeted beneficiaries of the ATNA include older adults and people with disabilities. Additional user groups that may overlap include existing transit riders, residents of isolated communities in Napa County, and people who do not speak English as their first language.

Strategy 1: Access to Medical Trips

Strategy 1 is focused on accessing medical trips, including conversations with discharge planners; free, on-demand transportation from private hospitals; medical trips and senior shuttles through County and NVTA partnerships; and establishing non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) through Federal 5311 funds. Comments from stakeholders included:

- Communication with discharge planners may not help if transportation doesn't exist
- Goal of this strategy is to identify and let people know what is already available. Need to overcome a lack of awareness of what does exist.
- What about recurring NEMT trips, who don't interact with discharge planners?
- What is the volume of medical trips?
- Hospitals need to ask about transportation options
- Role of county in a partnership since county does not provide transportation
- Example of purchasing gas cards and providing them to low-income seniors who needed rides to medical trips
- Molly's Angels has gas card incentives for volunteer drivers based on the number of rides provided.

Strategy 2: Need for Expanded Services

Strategy group 2 is focused on supporting the expansion of non-NVTA options and providers. Strategies include marketing materials for volunteer driver programs; offering training programs for volunteer drivers; marketing the shared vehicle program; expanding door-through-door and

volunteer driver programs; and mileage reimbursement programs. Comments from stakeholders included:

- Interest in bringing the mileage reimbursement program back. Clients have asked why it disappeared.
- Solano Transportation Authority purchased two wheelchair accessible vans for non-profits to use. These don't require special licenses.

Strategy 3: Service Gaps for Out-of-County Trips

Strategy group 3 is focused on supporting new and restored service to neighboring counties. Strategies include participation in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)'s One Seat Ride pilot; connections to Santa Rosa; increased service between Up Valley and Vallejo; and increased communication with local/peer counties to address shared transportation problems. Comments from stakeholders included:

- Interest in bringing the mileage reimbursement program come back. Clients have asked why it disappeared.
- Solano Transit purchased two wheelchair accessible vans for non-profits to use. These don't require special licenses.

Strategy 4: Need for Coordination

Strategy group 4 is focused on creating a mobility manager and a committee and their responsibilities. Strategies include development of an accessible transportation task force; creation of a grant manager role; designation of a mobility manager; and development of a countywide coordinated entity or a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA). Comments from stakeholders included:

- NVRTA does not need to be the backbone of a CTSA. A CTSA doesn't have to be a transit agency.
- A task force could be renamed a coordination committee.
- Make sure that a task force is actionable.

Strategy 5: Access to Information

Strategy group 5 is focused on expanding outreach and education where riders are and developing a user-friendly mobility as a service (MaaS) platform. Strategies include partnerships with senior centers for marketing; recurring travel training and paratransit applications at senior centers; marketing the community ambassador program; informational and wayfinding tools; expanding marketing and educational options; development of a one-call/one-click program; development of a Find Your Ride bulletin; and expansion of information and referral services. Comments from stakeholders included:

- When an Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) gets set up, will need to train the staff and have an in-depth conversation about training and travel training.
- Tiffany Walkers is a good person to talk to for travel training modules.

- Meetings with hospital case workers is another avenue for education.
- Technology is becoming a larger part of the mobility ecosystem.

Strategy 6: Service Beyond VineGo

Strategy group 6 is focused on expanding VineGo services. Strategies include expanded paratransit service areas; service to St. Helena Hospital and Angwin; and expanded capacity for specialized transportation. Comments from stakeholders included:

- Travel from Calistoga to Santa Rosa is challenging. Getting an Uber or Lyft ride, especially when there isn't a special event, is very hard.
- Interest in travel to Richmond, Martinez, and Santa Rosa.
- The 2023 Community Health Assessment highlighted the difficulties traveling between Up Valley and Santa Rosa/Sonoma.
- Interest in having a small shared, accessible vehicle (like a van) stationed in the Up Valley to provide on-demand service.

Strategy 7: Limited Affordable Transportation Options

Strategy group 7 is focused on reducing cost barriers to transportation. Strategies include transportation voucher programs and means-based fare eligibility programs.

- Funding is needed to sustain mobility programs.
- Need to identify non-government funding sources.

Strategy 8: Inaccessible Infrastructure

Strategy group 8 is focused on encouraging universal design to support access to current transportation. Strategies include prioritization of existing accessible stops on bicycle and pedestrian plans and sidewalk improvements. Comments from stakeholders included:

- Interest in development of a place or dashboard where people can input their complaints about infrastructure and what's not working. This could go to the board.
- Caltrans owns the right-of-way for Route 11 and 12. It's difficult to work with them sometimes.

Strategy 9: Funding for Expanded Services

Strategy group 9 is focused on identification of new funding sources. Strategies include accessing Access for All funds and identification of potential funding sources for expanded services. Comments from stakeholders included:

- Funding options could include aging in place, housing, caregivers and families, or food-related.
- Look into using disaster funding for transportation.
- Use relationship with emergency services to always have an ADA accessible vehicle on call.