

Business Leadership for Better Employee Transportation Choices

Policy Forum Summary

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edited by

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sponsors

**Institute for Public Administration
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Transportation Management Association of Delaware

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Preface

Dr. Jerome R. Lewis
Institute for Public Administration

As the director for the Institute for Public Administration (IPA), I am pleased to provide this report on the 2001 Delaware Policy Forum “Business Leadership for Better Employee Transportation Choices.” Held in Wilmington at the University of Delaware’s Goodstay Center, the forum was sponsored by the IPA in cooperation with the Delaware Department of Transportation, Transportation Management Association of Delaware and the Delaware Transit Corporation.

Through the forum, participants took part in a critical assessment of the state’s transit needs over the first decade of the 21st century by discussing, from their various perspectives, issues to be addressed, goals to be achieved and, particularly, how better communication, information sharing, joint service cooperation, and agenda setting can be used to enhance the quality and efficiency of transit service in Delaware.

I wish to acknowledge those who contributed to the success of this forum. My colleague, Dr. Robert Warren (School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware), was principally involved in the planning of this forum. I would like to acknowledge our speaker Robert Stanley of Cambridge Systematics Inc. for his keynote address on *New Paradigms for Local Public Transportation Organizations*. Under the direction of Dr. Warren, Christian Schlosser (Research Assistant, Institute for Public Administration) provided a report on *The Network of Public, Private and Nonprofit Transit Options in Northern Delaware* as an update to the *Atlas of Transit Resources in Delaware* research project. Tracey Tibbs (MBNA America), Thomas Davis (The DuPont Company) and Christine Fenimore Kubik (Transportation Management Association of Delaware) provided overviews on *Employer/Employee Transit Programs in Delaware*. State Representative Roger Roy (Transportation Management Association of Delaware) and Ray Miller (Delaware Transit Corporation) led forum participants in an agenda setting discussion. Gloria Wilkins (Institute for Public Administration) provided exceptional staff support for this forum.

I also want to recognize the valuable contributions of the following individuals involved in producing this report. Lisa Moreland (Institute for Public Administration) managed and coordinated the overall effort to produce the final printed document. IPA Research Assistants Michael Fortner and Anja Weng made available their meticulous notes of the event for the summary report. Lastly, Mark Deshon (Institute for Public Administration) provided the graphic design for the forum materials and report cover.

New Paradigms for Local Public Transportation Organizations

Mr. Robert Stanley, Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

In his presentation, Mr. Robert Stanley, Principal of Cambridge Systematics, Inc., proposed that fundamental change in public transportation will be inevitable in the next ten years. The questions that surround this hypothesis are:

- Why is fundamental change inevitable?
- What will be the nature of the change?
- How will fundamental change take place?

To answer these questions, we must look at the reasons a paradigm shift is needed, lessons from other transportation organizations, movement beyond the transit agency, and the individuals who are responsible for mobility. According to Mr. Stanley, there are six reasons that change is necessary: (1) our quality of life and economic vitality is at risk; (2) socioeconomic trends reduce relevance of traditional transit; (3) current reality has produced fragmented responsibilities, regulatory constraints, conflicting policies and goals; (4) hierarchical, monolithic operating agencies exist; (5) the current model is slow to grasp focus on customer experience; and (6) the existing paradigm is slow to embrace information age technologies. A new paradigm would embrace lessons learned from intermodal freight, airlines, and European transit operations.

In terms of freight, SeaLand and Maersk serve as models for reflection. For many years, the freight industry believed that working alone with dedicated assets (ships, containers, chassis, terminals, etc.) was the way to maintain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. During the past decade, however, the operating philosophy has evolved from being driven by the market, competition and cost to one obsessed with the consumer. In the new model of the freight industry, a customer deals with a company that operates as a logistics dispatcher, not with the capacity provider. The logistics dispatcher or mobility manager assembles an integrated package of dispatch and tracking functions—merging operating systems to engage customers in a way that provides efficient, seamless service. For customers, service coordination is more important than knowing who is actually providing modal capacity.

Separate providers, each operating with their own policies, programs and clients, have defined the old inefficient and costly paradigm. Partnering, therefore, becomes more effective than competing with well-established airline providers. Creating a single system of partnering organizations with integrated scheduling and dispatching meets the capacity needs of individual clients in a more free and open way. In terms of the airlines, there has been a formation of airline alliances assembling integrated service packages for customers. For instance, a customer may be rewarded with United Airlines frequent flier miles, while behind the scenes United and Lufthansa Airlines share tickets on Atlantic flights, and Star Alliance members provide modal capacity.

In responding to the paradigm shift, FedEx is trying to recast itself as a major provider of the very management systems that threaten the company. Working at their best, such systems would select the most logical and economical type of transport—air, land or sea—for delivering packages on time. The company's business with Cisco Systems provides an excellent example.

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, FedEx is “creating a unique system that will automatically select routes for an endless number of Cisco shipments...It is quite possible that FedEx’s system will route deliveries on ships, airplanes or trucks owned by other companies, even [competitors such as] UPS.” Understanding the “full trip” of the customer, FedEx as a mobility manager serves the door-to-door needs of the customer through an integrated system of routing, dispatching and tracking. Modal capacity may be provided by a number of suppliers.

The new transit services in Gothenburg serve as a case study in collaborative management in providing specialized transit services. The service is an example of horizontal integration of institutions. The old model had separate specialized service providers, each with their own programs and policies, servicing the needs of their own clients. These customer groups may have included a local hospital, school, the elderly, or people with disabilities. Each provider had their own vehicles and served only their constituents. The new model integrates these programs through a scheduling and dispatching service whereby modal capacity is provided jointly by many service providers. In this application of information technology, the customer-facing integrated services company serves the door-to-door transportation needs of the customer through a system of integrated routing, dispatching and tracking of providers. Thus, the integrated services company understands and meets the challenges of providing the “full trip” of the customer. This satisfies the customers and results in the use of the most economical modes of transportation for effective delivery of goods and services.

As another example of a European transit operator, the London Transport Bus (LTB) provides integrated services to their customers by providing integrated fares, schedules and standards for a number of suppliers. The LTB does not own any buses nor provide modal capacity. All modal capacity is outsourced. Yet it manages logistics centers that design, track, and evaluate the capacity services. Thus, the role of the LTB is to track and monitor privately provided services. They have developed two powerful management systems to award or deny incentives to the private bus operators. These management systems include the “Countdown” data that documents the efficiency of the performance of the modal carrier and the “Mystery Shopper Survey” that documents the performance of the carrier as experienced by the user.

So, what is common to each of these examples? Each model integrates across organizations by collaborating on policy, procedures, resources and assets. They integrate across modes—both public and private—and shift the strategic focus of the organization to the customers and their mobility. They also use state-of-the-art information technology to increase the quality of service and customer experience. In the new observed paradigm, clients deal with an integrated service provider concerned with the door-to-door trip; information technology is used to design, track and evaluate the services provided; and the modal capacity need not be provided on the dedicated assets of the customer-facing integrated services company. The mobility manager’s strategy must provide all of the modal alternatives needed to influence transportation behavior.

The implementation of coordinated programs has four overarching societal goals:

- 1. Land Use Planning and Management**

Land use planning and management includes transit-oriented development and zoning and locational strategies. The mobility strategy must be based on the work of agencies managing

land use. Transit is the key element of “Smart Growth” initiatives. Commercial areas should be designed to encourage walking, bicycling, or the use of public transportation to reach destinations by clustering stores, offices, houses and transit facilities.

2. **Infrastructure Management and Operations**

Infrastructure management and operations includes roadway operations, shared facilities and sidewalks. In this way, roadways, bikeways, sidewalks, and shared facilities need to be coordinated and designed to make the operation of the infrastructure system as efficient as possible.

3. **Environmental Strategies**

Environmental strategies include clean air mandates, energy conservation, resource management and mitigation commitments.

4. **Public Policy**

The mobility strategy must be based on components of local public policy: economic development strategies, access to jobs, and tax and pricing incentives.

The result is a revised paradigm for mobility which contrasts the historic paradigm of “I am providing you with a bus and a schedule” with the revised paradigm of “We have to work together to effectively provide mobility.” To achieve this, we must think across organizations, modes, programs, and resource bases.

The Network of Public, Private and Nonprofit Transit Options in Northern Delaware

Mr. Christian Schlosser, Institute for Public Administration, University of Delaware

Dr. Robert Warren, School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware

Christian Schlosser provided an update to the *Atlas of Transit Resources in Delaware*, a research report he and Robert Warren prepared. It is guided by a perspective that understands the entire transportation service supply in Delaware as an interrelated system of services and providers. The report presents the results of research conducted to identify and characterize public, private and nonprofit transit resources in Delaware and maps their specific spatial locations. The update includes available data on public, private and nonprofit transit providers in terms of types of services, user eligibility requirements, operating hours, area served, and number and type of vehicles operated. It also describes the organizational and financial interrelationships among the array of transit providers in the state and discusses their network-like nature. Lastly, the report explores options for the better utilization of existing transit resources to meet mobility needs in the state.

A recent report by the Texas Transportation Institute on travel trends in U.S. metropolitan areas indicates that problems associated with road transportation and congestion continue to increase. This condition is not due to a lack of proposals to deal with this issue. Many have been generated both within and outside the transportation field. Most of the solutions that propose to solve or reduce urban mobility problems are primarily focused on the dichotomy of private car travel on the one hand and mass public transit on the other. When attention is given to alternative transit resources, often termed “paratransit,” the discussion tends to be conducted at a general level or is aimed at single service needs such as welfare to work or the mobility of disabled persons. Another frequent characteristic in the discussion of urban transit issues is that it focuses on the providers or a supply view that emphasizes the production and delivery of services. As a result, there have seldom been efforts to look at transportation problems and solutions for a metropolitan area in terms of simultaneously assessing all transit resources that exist and all citizen mobility needs.

Urban centers do, in fact, have a wide range of specialized transportation services and providers in the private and nonprofit as well as public sectors that serve specific groups or service needs. These include private corporations, schools and universities, medical facilities, volunteer organizations, and families and friends. They transport employees, the elderly and disabled, students, and other segments of the population. A systematic consideration of these transit providers and their relationships to each other and larger scale public transit systems offer an additional perspective for identifying and assessing policies that can enhance urban mobility. Such a comprehensive framework of this type looks at a specific region’s total transit producers in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. They collectively constitute a transit *network* that can function with considerable or little coordination. Thus, identifying the parameters of this multi-sector network, its structure, and the extent and type of interaction of its components can contribute to designing strategies that can enhance its complementarity and effectiveness in meeting the variety of area transit needs.

Existing Research on Paratransit and Focus of the Project

There is a growing awareness that an adequate analytic and policy framework for responding to diverse mobility needs in urban areas requires new perspectives in terms of both the range of transit resources that are taken into account and how they can be utilized as a network of services. Especially significant is a shift in emphasis that is occurring from capital expenditure and physical construction projects to individual access to services and locations. The Study Group on New Paradigms for Public Transportation reported the importance of a wider and more comprehensive framework in transportation policy formulation in 1997, stating that there was a need for the fundamental “reinvention of how public transportation services are organized, designed, and delivered. The same group went further in 2000 to underscore the point that both large and small communities in major metropolitan areas required “a wider array of travel options...to sustain economic growth...and to guarantee access to opportunity and basic human services in both large and small communities.

Research on paratransit is particularly important in making clear that it is necessary to go beyond mass urban transit systems to understand mobility needs and options. Dr. Robert Cervero’s *Paratransit in America: Redefining Mass Transportation* (1997) is the most comprehensive recent research undertaken on the subject. The overall focus of his work is on the opportunities and constraints of paratransit services that exist in the U.S. in general and examines the “potential for private, free-enterprise paratransit services to provide a respectable transportation alternative to the private automobile.” Paratransit blends the multiple occupancy of mass transit and the flexible, on-call, point-to-point service of a private automobile. However, because of state and local restrictions that have limited free enterprise competition, most private paratransit operators in the U.S. have been limited to specialized, contract services such as for elderly or the disabled.

Consequently, the report gives particular attention to identifying ways of creating a more entrepreneurial and competitive environment for urban transportation services that fit within the growing interest in advancing market-based transportation policies. Cervero divides paratransit services into two main groups: (1) *commercial services* including shared-ride taxis, Dial-a-Ride services, Jitneys, and Commuter Vans; and (2) *employer- and developer-sponsored services* including general shuttles, vanpools, and buspools.

While Cervero’s analysis is extensive, there are important components of the area’s transportation network that are unaccounted for from a policy perspective. These include nonprofit organizations that provide transit services or the extent to which people, especially school children and the elderly, depend on family and friends for transportation. The report seeks to fill these gaps in relation to Delaware’s urban centers as well as the state as a whole by identifying and mapping public, private, and nonprofit transit providers and the individuals they serve.

The *Atlas of Transit Resources in Delaware* is an inventory of the broad array of transportation resources in Delaware. The major services include:

- Fixed public transit routes such as DART First State, SEPTA regional rail service, Unicity (offered in the City of Newark in cooperation with the University of Delaware and funded by DART), and interstate routes operated by private firms such as Greyhound and Peter Pan.
- Fixed routes for special groups such as Delaware's 19 school districts and the University of Delaware.
- Paratransit services provided by DART First State for ADA certified customers and seniors.
- Dial-a-Ride services offered by DART that provide service from the customers' doors to the nearest fixed bus route as well as the Senior Citizen Affordable Taxi (SCAT) service for seniors.
- Community and private sector paratransit services including senior and community centers, nonprofit organizations and medical facilities; employer-sponsored services, TMA Delaware RideShare initiatives, and DelDOT vanpools; and commercial transportation service providers including limousine companies, medical transportation firms, charter, fixed route or other private bus operators, and taxicab companies.
- Private non-commercial and informal transportation services including non-employer-sponsored carpools, school transportation pools organized by parents, and transportation services offered by family members or friends in general. While these services were not included in the *Atlas*, they are important to the broader understanding of the supply and demand of metropolitan transportation services.

Each transit provider was mapped in order to give a clear visual picture of how the number and types of transit providers are spatially located in the state as a whole and within New Castle, Kent, and Sussex Counties. The locations of transportation resources reflect the spatial distribution of the population and economic activity that are highly concentrated in northern New Castle County. Transit resources in Kent and Sussex Counties are limited but there are a significant number of private and nonprofit services. The main result of the analysis shows that there are far more transit and paratransit resources available in Delaware cities and towns than are usually assumed, especially in Kent and Sussex Counties.

In the "Network of Transportation Services" section of the report, Mr. Schlosser also demonstrates the characteristics of the network that exists of financial and organizational interrelationships and dependencies among transportation services. These interrelationships occur between the federal government, state agencies and school districts, nonprofit organizations, private companies, and informal and non-sponsored transportation pools.

In stepping back and considering the above discussion of the various groups and organizations directly and indirectly involved in providing transit services in Delaware, a number of important features can be noted in relation to network characteristics. First, there are a variety of functional, financial and policy relations among intra- and inter-sectoral entities. The linkage among DART, the City of Newark and the University of Delaware in providing the Unicity service is one example. DTC's relationship with senior centers and DART's relationship with TMA reflect the public-nonprofit sectors intersection, and school districts contracting with bus companies reflect a public-private example. Corporations contracting with limousine services to transport

employees represent an intra-private sector case. The range of mutually influencing relationships between citizens or groups with public transportation providers or public agencies outside the transportation realm, or private and nonprofit companies often receives the least amount of attention. By making a distinction between formal and informal transit resources, this framework that makes it possible to recognize and incorporate family-based transit services that constitute a regularized resource as in the case of carpooling to take children to and from school. This analysis also makes clear that multiple entity linkages are involved.

Data from the report show that there are far more transit resources in an area than are usually assumed and they are found in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Even though there is no central or formal planning for the transit resource network as a whole, there are a number of direct and indirect linkages among the elements of this network that produce a significant amount of formal policy direction through public funding and some market efficiencies are gained by entities through contracting for transit services. Competition and efforts at restrictive behavior can also exist.

Producing and mapping a comprehensive inventory of the transit resources in an area can be a starting point for determining how adequately and efficiently the transit needs of the general public and subsets of the population are being met. In turn, identifying all existing multi-sectoral transit resources and their patterns of interaction offers a framework for filling gaps that may exist and producing greater efficiencies by adding, modifying or enhancing the performance of the network by taking all its components and their possibilities into account.

Finally, five options for enhancing service integration and coordination were explored.

1. **Integration of school bus routes and public transit routes:** School transportation routes serving specific corridors could be made available for the general public's use. Focusing destination and corridors with high transit potentials could significantly reduce service duplication.
2. **Increasing geographic coverage and operating hours of the regular transit system through integrated paratransit options:** Cooperation with private taxi and limousine companies could efficiently fill service gaps by establishing demand oriented Dial-a-Ride systems to be applied to lower demand and low-density areas.
3. **Coordination of employee shuttles:** Service duplication could be reduced through coordination between employers that are located in the same geographic area and that offer services in the same corridor.
4. **Incorporation of private/nonprofit options to transit information channels:** Many community and senior center transportation services are unknown to large parts of the population that could be eligible to use them.
5. **Improving links between formal transportation agencies and informal transportation services:** This sector has the potential for coordination and enhancement by creating an administrative framework through an agency such as TMA Delaware to coordinate informal arrangements between individual employees or citizens for both informal and non-sponsored carpools.

Employer Tax Credit Program

Mr. Thomas Davis, Corporate Real Estate Group, The DuPont Company

The following is an edited summary of comments made by Thomas Davis during his presentation on DuPont's "Employer Tax Credit Program." The program is designed to reduce traffic congestion by encouraging alternatives to single occupancy vehicles.

DuPont implemented its Metro Transit Program (MTP) due to a change in the law that allows companies to offer transportation incentives to employees, including a pre-tax spending account for their commuting expenses. DuPont offers tax-free purchase of mass transit vouchers as permitted by current laws. These TransitChek vouchers are non-transferable and non-refundable and are to be used exclusively for employees' commute to and from work. Employees who use one of the mass transit companies participating in the program—DART First State, SEPTA, NJ Transit, Amtrak, PATCO, Capitol Area Transit and VPSI Vanpools—can achieve significant savings in their transportation costs. On average, employee savings on commuting expenses are about 40 percent.

The program was developed in cooperation with the Transportation Management Association of Delaware (TMA). During the planning process, DuPont's departments of Human Resource Management, Corporate Finance and Legal were consulted for their buy-in. The Metro Transit Program was initiated, following a series of employee focus groups, with a pilot program. To publicize the program, DuPont and TMA Delaware partnered to market the program's benefits. Their efforts included holding a transportation fair and mailing vouchers to employees. DuPont also provides programmatic information on the company's website to facilitate employees' access and enrollment.

Mr. Davis described the Metro Transit Program as a win for the company, employees and community. The program contributes to the overall net savings of the company and provides incentives to help the company attract and retain employees in city locations. According to Mr. Davis, the program encourages alternatives to single occupancy vehicles and is a way to improve company morale.

Wilmington Area Night-Owl Shuttle

Ms. Christine Fenimore Kubik, Transportation Management Association of Delaware

In her presentation, Christine Fenimore Kubik described the Transportation Management Association of Delaware's *Wilmington Area Night-Owl Shuttle*. The approach taken by TMA Delaware is to change commuters' choices of transportation.

In its mission to create innovative transportation solutions, TMA Delaware offers the Wilmington Area Night-Owl Shuttle as a door-to-door bus service that runs weekdays and Saturdays after regular bus service ends, and on Sundays, when regular bus service is not available. Subsidizing the subscription bus service, TMA Delaware collaborates with DART First State and local employers. The overall goal of the effort is to assist employees when public transit is not in service late at night and weekends—providing door-to-door service—and thereby eliminate public transportation barriers for employees.

The Wilmington Area Night-Owl Shuttle offers two routes to serve residents of downtown Wilmington. In June 2000, the shuttle began providing service to the City of Wilmington's employment centers and six months later service was initiated for employment centers on Concord Pike (December 2000). Participating employers include the Hotel DuPont, Strawbridges, and Shop Rite. Future routes will be developed where employer/employee need has been identified.

Sharing responsibility for the Wilmington Area Night-Owl Shuttle, DART First State provides bus service via contract with providers, develops the route scheduling based on employees' transportation needs, and collects a monthly subsidy from the employers.

TMA Delaware seeks out new employers and employees to benefit from the service by developing program materials, and coordinates ticket sales and registration of riders in RideShare Delaware's Guaranteed Ride Home program.

Employers participate by subsidizing the service (\$500/month), promoting the service to their employees, ensuring that riders are registered with TMA Delaware, and providing weekly employee schedules.

In order to use the night shuttle service, riders must register for the service and buy subsidized tickets (\$2 per one-way trip) from their employer. The service provides riders with a comfortable and safe door-to-door trip. Riders are responsible to be prompt to ride the shuttle and notify their supervisors if they need to cancel a scheduled trip.

To date, the Wilmington Area Night-Owl Shuttle provides transportation to approximately 80 riders and, in 2001, was awarded the ACT Outstanding Service Award in the Partnership Category. An Honorable Mention was awarded to the TMA Delaware.

MBNA Commuter Services – ClearWays Program

Ms. Tracey Tibbs, MBNA America

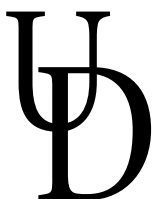
In her presentation, Ms. Tracey Tibbs provided an overview of MBNA America's ClearWays Program. The MBNA ClearWays Program was developed in 1993 as a response to the federal Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The program was designed to reduce traffic congestion and alleviate the demand for parking by offering incentives to encourage use of alternative commute modes such as public transit, car/van pooling, and walking/biking. Unveiled during Earth Week in 1994, the program is, according to Ms. Tibbs, a voluntary initiative unparalleled in the industry.

MBNA America offices participating in the program include Newark, Dover and Wilmington as well as offices in New Jersey, Maine and the United Kingdom. The ClearWays Program's incentive system provides tax-free public transit and vanpooling subsidies; offers guaranteed free parking and fuel for van pools; provides RideShare matching assistance; and allows employees to accumulate points for their participation, which they may use to purchase merchandise from the "Everything MBNA Gift Catalog," or for ClearWays Coupons that can be used in the MBNA Café, Gold Post, or Tailor Shop. The points system awards:

- 1,000 points upon initial registration and 75 points per day for participation
- 500 points for recruiting a new participant who remains in the program for at least 30 days
- 500 points for participating 60 days or more per quarter
- 250 points for participating 20 days or more per month
- 500 points for participating on a Mystery Day

Participation is tracked daily on *RideTrak* readers placed at most major entrances, and near the cafes. To date, 742 vehicles were taken off the road per day by utilizing 2-, 3-, and 4-person car pools, van pools, public transit, walking, bicycling and shuttles through the ClearWays Program.

The Institute for Public Administration (IPA) links the research and resources of the University of Delaware with the management, information, and leadership needs of schools and local, state, and regional governments in the Delaware Valley. IPA provides assistance to agencies and local governments through direct staff assistance and research projects as well as training programs and policy forums. IPA's wide range of program areas includes civic education, conflict resolution, health-care policy, land-use planning, local, state and international government, school leadership, water resources, and women's leadership. IPA's main office is on the University's Newark campus in 180 Graham Hall. Jerome Lewis is the director of the Institute and can be reached at 302-831-8971.



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