

**TPB Human Service Transportation Coordination Task Force  
Proposed Strategies and Actions  
Draft of January 10, 2007**

**STRATEGY 1:** Tailor transportation services to better respond to the individual needs of low-income workers, people with disabilities and older adults. This strategy emphasizes increased awareness about how various types of disability – cognitive, physical and visual – impact people’s ability to travel, especially among transit providers.

*Action A: Accessible Taxi Service Subsidy Pilot*

A pilot program in a local jurisdiction that does not have accessible taxi cabs, such as D.C. or Prince George’s County, could use New Freedom funding for an operating program that would provide the minimum financial subsidies and incentives necessary to encourage taxi and other transportation firms to provide and maintain a sufficient supply of accessible service. To be effective, incentives must be aimed at both companies and drivers to ensure that accessible vehicles are not only purchased, but also put to use and available to customers with disabilities. Incentives directed towards companies include subsidies to offset the cost of vehicle purchase, maintenance, or insurance. For example, the city of Chicago made \$1 million available to cab companies to defray the incremental cost of an accessible ramp-equipped van versus a new Ford Crown Victoria.

The section 5310 program could help local governments provide accessible vehicles at little or no cost. Local governments could receive the vehicles from the program and lease them to taxi companies to operate in regular taxi service, at full fare and with immediate dispatching. These subsidies can be passed through to drivers by requiring taxi companies to offer lower daily leases to drivers (an example of this was done in Denver, CO).

Type of Project:	5310, New Freedom; Capital
Approximate Cost:	\$200,000 to \$500,000 Total (\$160,000 to \$400,000 Federal / \$40,000 to \$100,000 local)
Source(s) of Match:	Local jurisdictions

*Action B: Sensitivity Training for Transportation Providers*

A series of regional sensitivity trainings could be offered to bus drivers, Metro station managers, paratransit drivers, taxicab drivers, and other front-line transportation employees on general guidelines for serving customers with disabilities and older adults; and specific guidelines for serving customers who use wheelchairs or service animals, and customers with visual or auditory disabilities.

Type of Project: New Freedom, Operating  
Approximate Cost: \$10,000 to \$100,000 Total (\$5,000 to \$50,000 Federal / \$5,000 to \$50,000 local)  
Source(s) of Match: Transportation providers could split the cost of the match based on how much training they would like. Transportation providers and/or agencies that may be interested in contributing to such a program could include WMATA, local transit agencies, social service and non-profit groups, and taxicab regulators.

*Action C: Door-through-Door Service*

A local jurisdiction could do a demonstration project with New Freedom funding offering door-through-door service to people who qualify for MetroAccess and need that extra level of assistance when traveling. The program would need to be limited in some way, such as limited eligibility or a cap on the number of door-through-door trips that would be offered. Door-through-door service could be provided via specially trained taxicab providers, or the program could provide personal care attendants to travel with eligible individuals on MetroAccess.

Type of Project: New Freedom, Operating  
Approximate Cost: \$200,000 to \$500,000 total (\$100,000 to \$250,000 Federal / \$100,000 to \$250,000 local)  
Source(s) of Match: Human service agencies, Adult Day Care centers, other specialized non-profit programs and organizations, Federal non-DOT money?

**STRATEGY 2:** Provide improved, user-friendly information to customers and social service and non-profit agencies about the types of transportation programs available to low-income workers, people with disabilities and older adults.

*Action A: Compile and distribute a tailored user-friendly publication about transportation services and options available for low-income commuters*

This project would entail an agency or organization producing and distributing a customer-oriented comprehensive transportation information publication for areas that have a high number of low-income commuters, such as Langley Park in Maryland, the Route 1 corridor in Virginia, or Anacostia in the District of Columbia. A brochure or other type of written document would be produced with comprehensive information about the area, including information of fixed route services, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, car-sharing, commercial transportation services, specialized transportation services, commuter services, subsidy and incentive programs and maps.

This project differs from the web-based regional clearinghouse project because the product would be tailored to a specific geographic area and would be a publication rather than a website. The document should be available in multiple, accessible formats and available in languages other than English.

A good example of this type of document is Montgomery County's publication on transportation options for seniors and people with disabilities. Simply collecting the information is not enough, however. The project should also include a distribution strategy that includes mass mailings and distribution to social service agencies, employment sites, apartment buildings, churches, schools, civic associations and non-governmental organizations.

Type of Project:	JARC, Operating
Approximate Cost:	\$100,000 to \$300,000 total (\$50,000 to \$150,000 Federal / \$50,000 to \$150,000)
Source(s) of Match:	Local transit agencies, local agencies or other Federal programs aimed at providing job training or other related services to low-income workers

**STRATEGY 3:** Develop services that augment existing paratransit and fixed-route service, ensuring a back-up system for people who rely heavily on transportation. The strategy emphasizes the need to offer alternate services available for older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income workers who may experience lack of reliability with their everyday transportation service.

*Action A: Expand the Guaranteed Ride Home program for low-income workers*

The Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home program provides transit users and commuters who use vanpools or carpools with a free and reliable ride home, up to four times per year, due to an urgent circumstance. The program could be extended to offer rides up to eight times per year for low-income workers who face an urgent medical or non-medical circumstance, or for up to five days of job training. To be eligible, participants would show proof of receiving TANF funds, employer statement of job training, if applicable, and would register for the program. Guaranteed Ride Home is an insurance program for contingency purposes, which people can use as a back-up to their regular method of commuting.

Type of Project: JARC; Operating  
Approximate Cost: \$250,000 - \$500,000 (\$125-250,000 Federal/ \$125 - 250,000 local)  
Source(s) of Match: Federal TANF, County social service programs, Department of Labor, Department of Education

*Action B: Establish a Same-Day, Contingency Service Pilot*

A Same-Day Contingency Service pilot program could be developed to provide MetroAccess users with a reliable ride, up to four times per year, in the event of an urgent medical trip or a late ride. The program would initially be available only for MetroAccess users, although could be expanded later. To be eligible, participants would show a copy of their MetroAccess ID card. Participants could use the Contingency Service for a same-day emergency if there is no same-day service available, or to take the place of a late ride. Participants would have to verify that a ride is over an hour late. For a late ride, participants would not pay a fare. For a same-day ride, participants would pay a fare between \$5-7. The service is designed to be an insurance program for contingency purposes, which people can use as a back-up to their regular method of commuting.

Type of Project: New Freedom; Operating  
Approximate Cost: \$500,000 - 1,000,000 (\$250-500,000 Federal/ \$250-500,000 local)  
Source(s) of Match: County transportation programs, Medicaid, WMATA

**STRATEGY 4:** Develop and implement new programs to provide additional transportation choices for older adults, people with disabilities and low-income workers. Additional funding should also be identified and secured to support these programs.

*Action A: Establish a low-interest loan fund for low-income workers to purchase cars*

A revolving, low-interest loan fund should be established to help low-income workers purchase cars. The program would be limited to those workers who meet an income requirement, whose jobs or homes are inaccessible by transit, who work weekend or evening hours, or who otherwise cannot use transit to get to work. The program would focus on suburban and exurban commuters. Loans would be repaid to the fund, replenishing it for additional loans and keeping it self-sustaining.

Type of Project: JARC; Operating  
Approximate Cost: \$250,000 - 500,000 (\$125-250,000 Federal/\$125-250,000 local)  
Source(s) of Match: TANF funds, private funds

*Action B: Enhance weekend and evening bus service to employment sites*

Employer-based funding pools could be developed to provide evening and weekend bus service to better serve shift workers and reverse commuters. Large suburban employment centers, such as around the Dulles corridor, could contribute annually to a funding pool that would support shuttles to major employment centers, or to extend evening and weekend bus service from existing providers.

Type of Project: 5310, JARC; Operating  
Approximate Cost: \$100,000 - 500,000 (\$50-250,000 Federal/ \$50-250,000 local)  
Source(s) of Match: Private funds

*Action C: Accessible Taxi Service Subsidy Pilot*

*(See write-up under strategy 1)*

*Action D: Provide a range of travel training to older adults and persons with disabilities*

A travel training curriculum on the bus and rail system could be developed for all types of disabilities and offered region-wide. The curriculum would be coordinated with WMATA, local transit agencies and human service agencies to expand training services to ensure that they are widely available to all who need them, and to ensure that people with all different types of disabilities

can obtain training sufficiently suited to their needs so that they can safely use the bus and rail system.

Type of Project:	New Freedom; Operating
Approximate Cost:	\$20,000 to \$200,000 (\$10,000 - \$100,000 Federal/ \$10,000 - \$100,000 local)
Source(s) of Match:	WMATA, local transit agencies, human service agencies