

NC Transit Cares

Developing strategies and innovations to help NC Transit Systems effectively respond to COVID-19

Launch it Meeting

November 18, 2020



Meeting Orientation

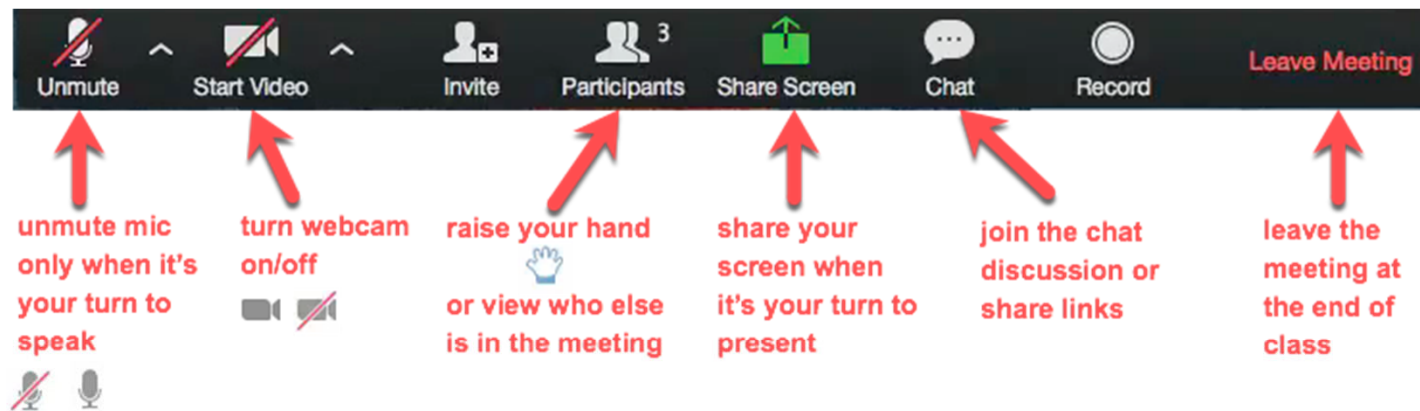
Warren Miller

Principal, Fountainworks

AGENDA

- ***Meeting Orientation***
- Welcome & Introductions
- Welcome & Thank You – Sec. Boyette
- NC Transit Cares Initiative Overview
- Congressman David Price
- NC Transit Systems - Innovative Responses to COVID-19
- BREAK
- Innovations
- Initiative Next Steps & Announcements
- Closing Remarks

Navigating Zoom



Meeting Rules

PRACTICE ONLINE PRESENCE



SHOW YOUR MULTITASKING SKILLS
...AFTER THE MEETING

EMBRACE TECH CHALLENGES



EVENTUALLY IT WILL WORK

MOVE



DON'T FORGET TO
STRETCH AND STAND

MUTE WHEN NOT SPEAKING



SO WE LIMIT UNNECESSARY NOISE

SPEAK UP



YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT

Welcome & Introductions

Julie White

Deputy Secretary for Multimodal
Transportation, NCDOT

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Welcome & Thank You

Eric Boyette
Secretary, NCDOT

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NC Transit Cares Initiative Overview

Jim Westmoreland

Managing Principal, Westmoreland
Strategic Enterprises

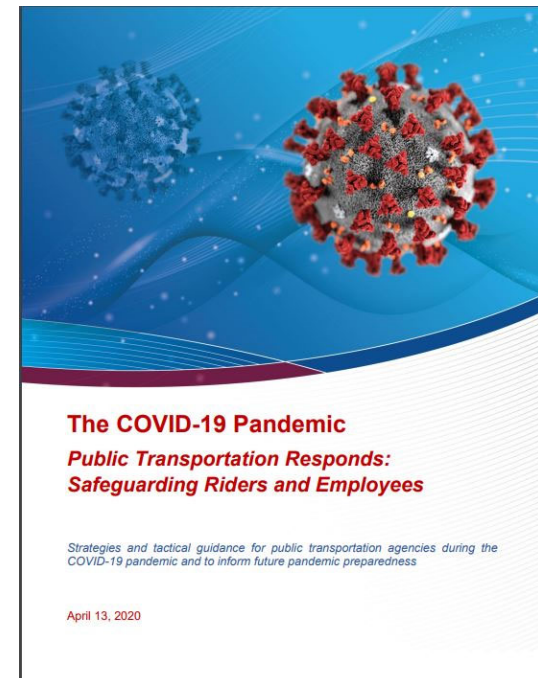
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NC Transit Cares - Overview

Project purpose:

- COVID-19 has significantly impacted NC transit in 2020
- Long term and permanent impacts are currently being experienced by NCDOT and NC transit agencies in the areas of safety, ridership, funding and revenues, and services
- NC Transit Cares will help identify both existing and new innovations and strategies to help respond to these impacts and help with recovery efforts



NC Transit Cares - Overview

Project approach and key goals:

- Through surveys and interactive virtual meetings, NCDOT engaged all NC transit agencies and other key stakeholders (i.e., MPOs, RPOs, and NCPTA) in a focused process to help identify COVID-19 impacts and innovative responses
- **Key goals:**
 - Validate COVID-19 impacts and challenges on NC Transit
 - Promote networking and information exchange between NCDOT and NC transit agencies on COVID-19 response ideas and best practices
 - Develop a priority list of new or promising innovations and strategies that warrant further action and, which make NCDOT and NC transit systems more resilient and prepared to handle future disruptions
 - Build upon the good work of the 2018 Public Transportation Strategic plan



NC Transit Cares 2020 Schedule

NCTC
Survey to
Transit
Providers

**Kick It Off
Meeting**

July 22

10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Virtual

**Work on It
Meeting**

September 9

9 am – 11 am

Virtual

**Launch It
Meeting**

November 18

9 am – 11 am

Virtual

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

Initiative
Development
Committee
Meeting

11 am - Noon

VIRTUAL

Initiative
Development
Committee
Meeting

11 am - Noon

VIRTUAL

Initiative
Development
Committee
Meeting

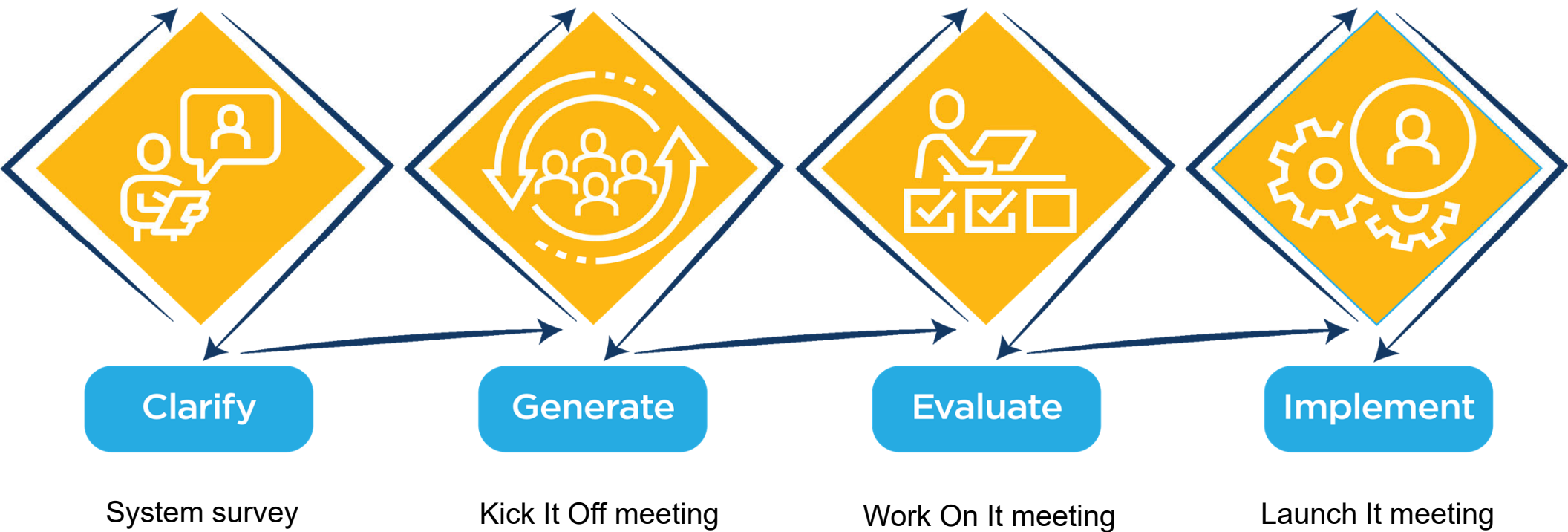
11 am - Noon

Virtual

Initiative Development Committee Members

- **Julie White** – NCDOT
- **Heather Hildebrandt** – NCDOT
- **David Howard** – NCDOT
- **Bruce Adams** – City of Greensboro/GTA
- **David Eatman** – City of Raleigh/
GoRaleigh
- **LJ Weslowski** – Concord Kannapolis Area
Transit
- **Sheila Blalock** – Mitchell County
Transportation
- **Bob Davis** – Cleveland County
- **Kerry Giles** – Rutherford County
- **Shelley Blake Curran** – GoTriangle
- **Irma Zimmerman** – Guilford County
- **Brian Litchfield** – Orange County/
Chapel Hill Transit
- **Todd Gardner** – Nash County/Tar River
Transit
- **Anthony Prinz** – City of Jacksonville
- **Vanessa Lacer** – Cape Fear Public
Transportation Authority (Wave Transit)
- **David Rhew** – NCPTA
- **Vicki Eastland** – Land of Sky RPO, NC
Association of RPOs Representative
- **Chris Lukasina** – CAMPO, NC Association of
MPOs Representative
- **Ryan Brumfield** – NCDOT Project Manager

NC Transit Cares



System survey results

Survey of all agencies to determine:

- **Immediate impacts of COVID-19**
 - *Reduction in ridership*
 - *Reduced revenue*
 - *Destinations closed*
- **NC Transit adaptations to COVID-19**
 - *Health screenings before trips*
 - *Phone messages*
 - *New services (i.e. delivering senior meals)*
- **Challenges facing NC Transit**
 - *Fewer riders per vehicle due to social distancing*
 - *Reduced ridership*
 - *Increased cleaning costs / reduced revenue*
- **Innovations interested in learning more**
 - *Scheduling technology*
 - *New sanitizing procedures*
 - *Passenger information displays*
- **NCDOT's role in innovation**
 - *Provide guidance*
 - *Generate ideas*
 - *Fund new innovations*



Kick It Off meeting process

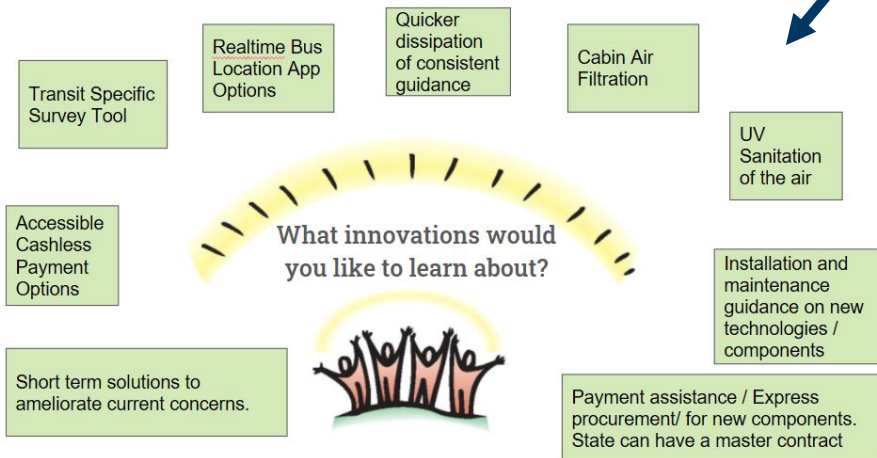
What are the biggest challenges facing NC transit?

What are you doing that is innovative in the areas of operations, customer service and funding?

Which innovations would you like to learn more about?

Sent survey to all transit agencies asking about challenges facing agencies. Brainstormed innovations at Kick It Off meeting. Top challenges emerged.

Biggest Challenges Facing NC Transit



- 1 How can we keep passengers and employees safe?
- 2 How can we offset ridership declines due to COVID-19?
- 3 How can we restore revenues and funding lost as a result of COVID-19?
- 4 How can we move to new service patterns as needs evolve?

Biggest Challenges Facing NC Transit

1

How can we keep passengers and employees safe?

2

How can we offset ridership declines due to COVID-19?

3

How can we restore revenues and funding lost as a result of COVID-19?

4

How can we move to new service patterns as needs evolve?

Development and Prioritization of Innovations

Sent survey to all transit agencies asking about challenges facing agencies. Brainstormed innovations at Kick It Off meeting. Top challenges emerged.

Created list of 18 innovations (4-5 innovations for each challenge) ; voted on top innovations at Work On It.

Created implementation plans for top 2 innovations per challenge.



Congressman David Price

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NC Transit Systems – Innovative Responses to COVID-19

David Rhew (Moderator)
Executive Director, NCPTA

Scott Rhine
Executive Director, PART

Craig Hughes
Director, AppalCART

Randall Conley
Director, McDowell County Transit

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Communication, Openness, and Transparency During COVID-19



Prioritize your Commitments

PART created a Business Continuity Plan

Next steps...

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Finding ways to reimagine a business-as-usual environment that minimizes disruptions for the organization

This document has been developed to be a resource for PART staff, a report of implemented and planned strategies; and a statement of the business conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic: How is PART addressing the current conditions: What business activities internally and externally will reshape our processes of a new “normal” as an outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following is presented in order of priority:





Expand your Messaging



Various Customers have varied needs

- PART Express bus customers
- PART Vanpool/Rideshare customers
- PART Employee's
- PART Member agencies and Regional Work program activities
 - Travel Demand Model (NCDOT, Triad MPO's)
 - Amtrak (Thruway Service), UNC Chapel Hill





Expand your Communication Portals

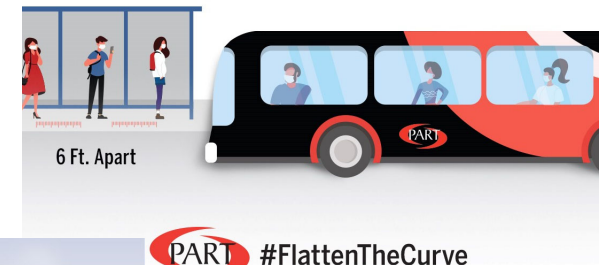


Social Media

Stay Notified



**REMEMBER TO
SOCIAL DISTANCE WHEN
BOARDING & RIDING**





Expand your Communication Portals



In vehicles and Facilities



ALL RIDERS ARE
**REQUIRED TO WEAR
FACE COVERINGS**
WHILE BOARDING
AND RIDING
THE BUS UNTIL
FURTHER NOTICE.



www.partnc.org

Help Keep Everyone Healthy





Expand your Communication Portals



Website



Policies



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairperson

Dan Besse
Winston-Salem

Vice-Chairperson

Leonard Williams
Burlington-Graham TAC

Treasurer

Carolyn Coleman
Guilford County

Secretary

Marikay Abuzaaiter

PART Board Personnel Committee Special Called Meeting April 15, 2020 Agenda / Minutes

Attendees: Fleming El-Amin (Chair), Kevin Austin, Darrell Frye, Lenny Williams
Members unable to join: Dan Besse, Neil Grimes, Carolyn Coleman

Staff Attendees: Scott Rhine, Connie Conklin, Sabrina Glenn

Agenda:

- 1) PART Personnel Employee Handbook Amendment
- 2) Identify Essential personnel
 - a) Initiate Temporary Furlough for Non-essential personnel
- 3) COVID-19 Work Function, and Transitions of staff

Direct Communications



VANPOOL RIDER ALERT

March 26, 2020

To: PART Vanpool Participants
From: Sabrina Glenn, Director of Commuter Operations
Cc: David Morris, Operations Manager, Alice Long, Vanpool Coordinator
Date: March 26, 2020
Re: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on April Vanpool Groups





Communication Openness and Transparency during COVID19

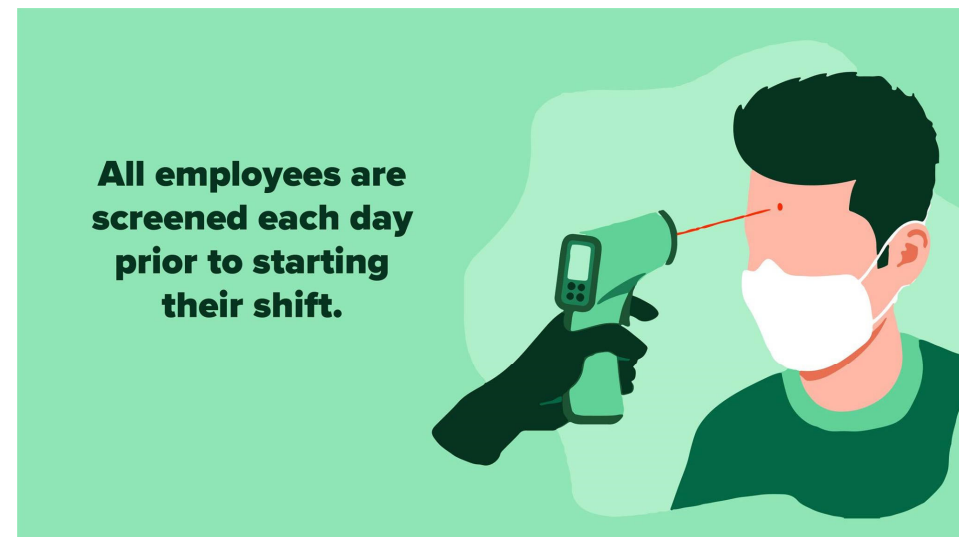
- ✓ Utilize the resources from medical experts as a tool for your messaging
- ✓ Be continuous – consistent – caring (#1 Priority – Put people safety first)
- ✓ Be flexible with your business processes
 - ✓ Adjust to meet your customer needs
 - ✓ Recognize your stability is based on their participation
- ✓ Earn the Trust



Scott W. Rhine
PART Executive Director
336.291.4316
scottr@partnc.org
www.partnc.org

A dark blue horizontal band with a white network pattern of dots and lines, resembling a molecular or digital structure.

AppalCART's COVID-19 Strategy and the Path Forward





Do not sit in marked seats.

Do not sit directly in front of or behind another passenger.

Social Distance: Skip A Seat

Because we are unable to accommodate the recommended 6 feet of space for social distancing, we ask that all passengers keep their masks on for the full duration of their ride.


AppalCART



No Mask, No Ride

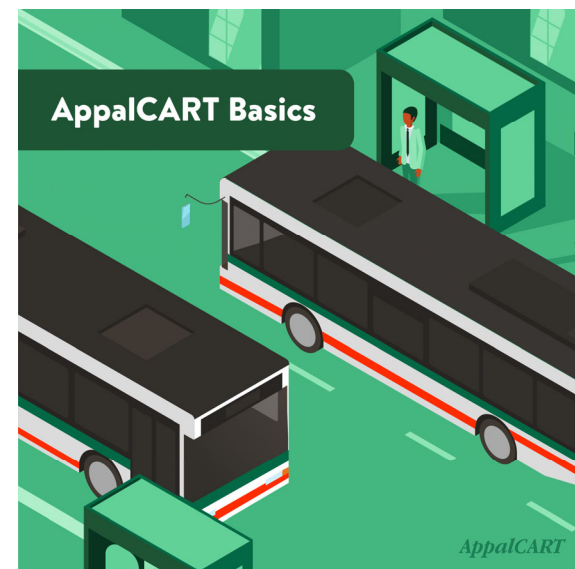
Exceptions will be made for those with health conditions that inhibit the use of a mask.

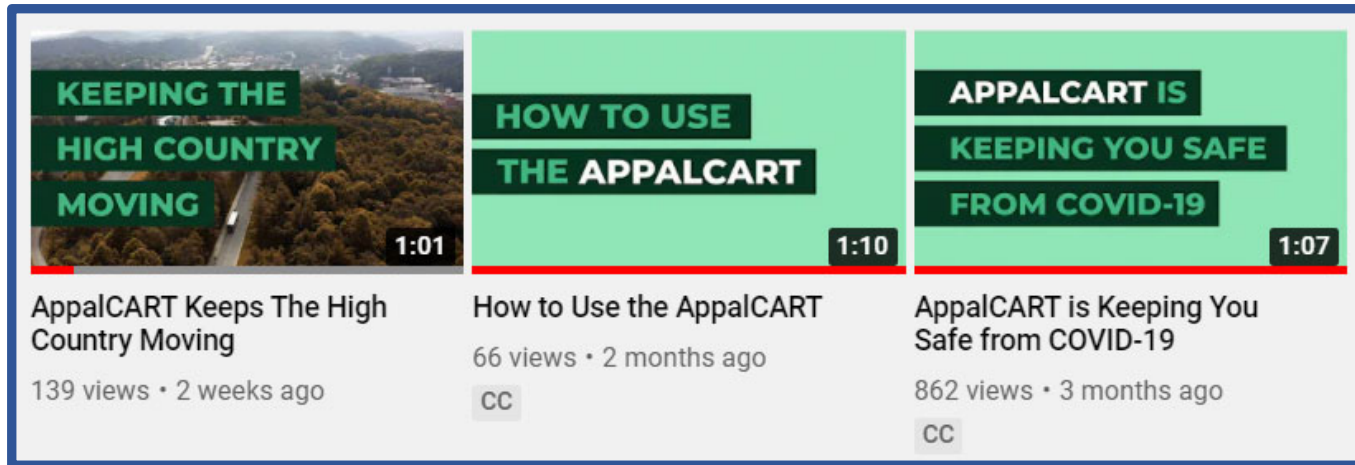
AppalCART



Select stops have been temporarily suspended from routes to reduce travel time for passengers.

COVID-19 Responses: Fall 2020





- Part of our long range communications planning
- Another way to share our story other than print or graphics
- Able to share through different types media
- Serves multiple communication purposes
- [“AppalCART Is Keeping You Safe From COVID-19” Video](#)

APPALCART IS

KEEPING YOU SAFE

FROM COVID-19

Covid-19: Food Box Delivery Program

**Presented by McDowell Transit
In Collaboration with Foothills Food Hub and
McDowell Access to Health and Care (MATCH)**



Pre-Covid Background

- Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the MATCH program and Foothills Food Hub were offering drive-thru meal box pick-ups at various sites around McDowell County
- McDowell Transit assisted McDowell County residents without access to vehicles by picking them up from their homes and taking them to the drive-thru sites



Beginnings

- During April 2020, representatives from McDowell Transit and MATCH met to discuss how we could better assist those impacted by Covid-19, either due to stay-at-home orders or loss of income
- Due to the social distancing requirements, it became clear that it would not be feasible to bring everyone in to the food distribution events already taking place
- After connecting with our NCDOT representative to make sure our plan was legal, McDowell Transit decided to implement a meal delivery service to anyone in need

Implementation

- Residents in need are able to request deliveries by contacting the MATCH Program directly or by filling out a form provided by Google Docs
- MATCH team members contact respondents to connect them with additional resources as needed
- McDowell Transit Dispatch routes deliveries for Tuesdays and Fridays each week

FoodBox Delivery Request Form

Food Boxes will be delivered by McDowell Transit and a McDowellCares Volunteer on Tuesdays and Fridays between 9am-1pm. A new form must be submitted with each request. A MATCH team member will contact you to follow up on your request and provide additional assistance as needed. For questions contact 828.659.5289

* Required

First and Last Name *

Your answer

Contact Number *

Your answer

Delivery Address *

Your answer

Form can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/McDowellfoodbox>

Insights

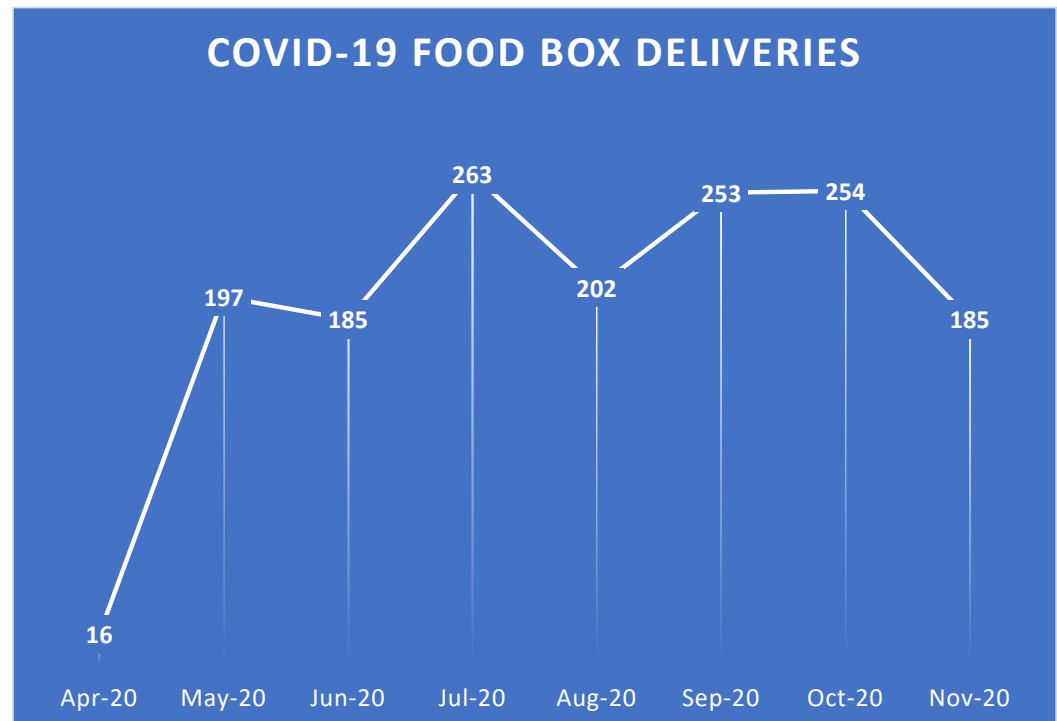


A delivery of food and cleaning supplies loaded into a transit van

- Due to insurance liability reasons, McDowell County drivers are not permitted to approach the home of clients on foot
- The Foothills Food Hub organizes volunteers to ride along with each delivery to exit the vehicle and make sure the food gets into the hands of those in need

Data

- Based on the numbers, McDowell Transit has determined that this is a necessary resource for our community during this time of great need
- With ridership numbers down due to virtual medical visits, this program has helped improve our numbers and kept our drivers at work



Thank you from McDowell Transit



BREAK

We will resume in ten minutes.

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Overview of Innovations

Morven MacLean

Project Manager, WSP

Jim Westmoreland

Managing Principal, Westmoreland
Strategic Enterprises

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Innovations

Priority Innovations for Implementation Plans

STRATEGIC PLAN

1

Safety

- Air Filtration Systems
- Transit Cleaning Accreditation Program

COVID-19 new consideration since 2018 plan

2

Ridership

- New marketing techniques
- Technologies to enhance service delivery flexibility

Tactic 12: Use technology to foster transit system integration, innovation, and operating efficiency

3

Funding and Revenues

- NCDOT improve data collection to demonstrate impacts of funding reductions
- Additional COVID-19 funding and funding flexibility strategies

Tactic 16: Support and enable greater flexibility in funding transit investments

4

New Service Patterns

- Statewide technology deployment and integration
- Expand micro-transit

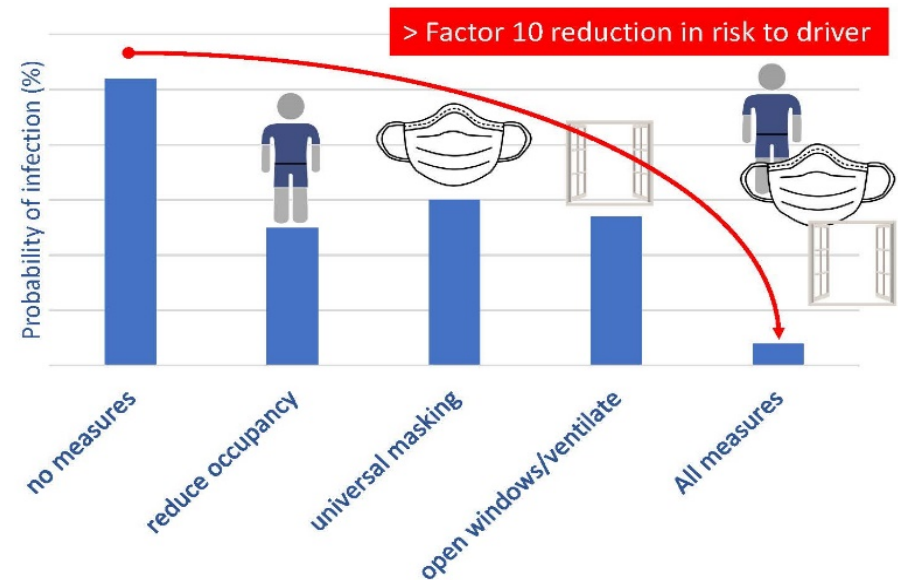
Tactic 17: Embrace Smart, Connected, and Autonomous Technology

Indoor Air Management Systems



Goals

- Improve airflow patterns, filtration efficiency and outdoor air ventilation in transit vehicles and facilities to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission



Challenge 1 - Safety



Indoor Air Management Systems



Actions

- Applied for FTA Public Transportation COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant Program



Challenge 1 - Safety

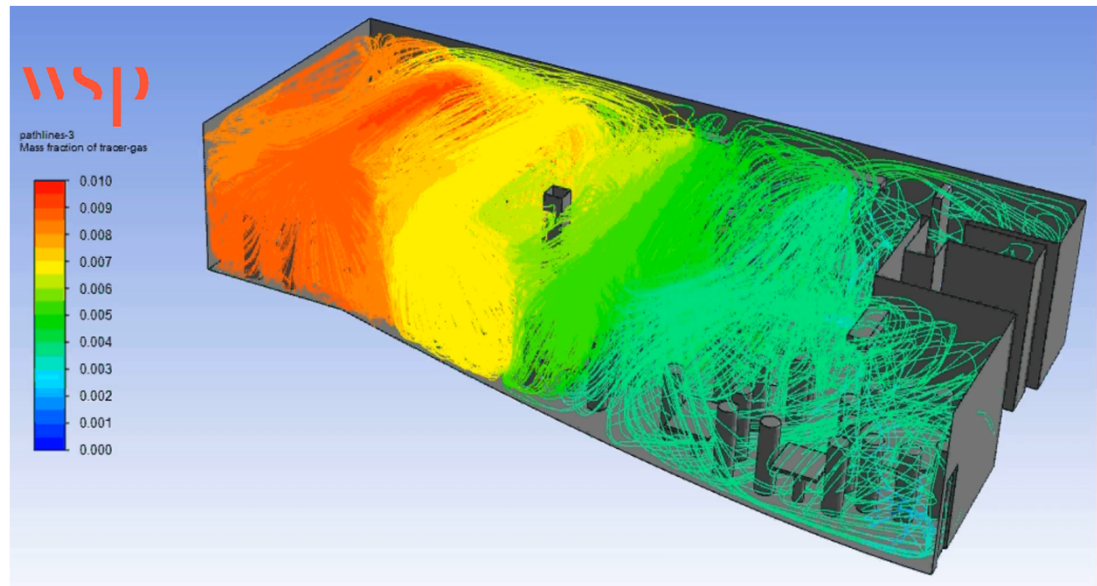


Indoor Air Management Systems



Actions

- Computational Fluid Dynamic (CFD) modelling of typical transit vehicles and facility common areas



Challenge 1 - Safety





Indoor Air Management Systems

Actions

- Develop 'How To' guides for configuring a typical vehicle or to optimize airflow patterns, filtration efficiency, and outdoor air ventilation

Challenge 1 - Safety



SAFE SERVICE NOW

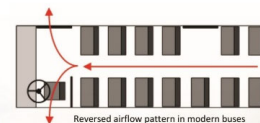
COVID-19 – Bus Airflows
and Solutions

Air in buses recycles in the cabin and then flows to the front carrying bacteria and viruses with it.

EVERY OPERATOR should use these **AIR CONTROL SETTINGS** to create safer airflow in their vehicles. Also, where temporary barriers have been installed, these settings will **INCREASE** effectiveness.

1. Driver's window **CLOSED**
2. Driver's air and front vents set to **FRESH**
3. Blowers on **FULL POWER** in Front (wear earplugs)
4. Passenger windows **CLOSED**
5. Front roof hatch **CLOSED**
6. Blowers **OFF** in back
7. Rear roof hatch **OPEN** at its back
8. **REAR DOOR** Boarding

When a bus is moving forward it creates reversed airflow in the cabin bringing viral particles into the driver's workstation and out through the driver's window and other air leaks. We can protect drivers who are currently at the wrong end of that flow with simple changes to air control settings.



Reversed airflow pattern in modern buses

Status Quo Creates Dangerous flow with recycled and very poorly filtered air. That is why the blowers should be shut off in back with the rear roof hatch open. Recycling also aerosolizes respiratory particles, creating small viral particles that stay in the air, putting passengers and operators at risk.



Implementation of Barriers Vastly Improves Air Flow Quality. The suggested air control settings with properly designed barriers are even more effective and will bring fresh air through the front and expel it at the rear of the bus, eliminating the recirculation of viral particles and reduce infection risk for transit workers and passengers. ATU International is working with engineers at the **Virginia Tech Transportation Institute** and the **University of Washington Aerodynamics Department** to design barrier prototypes for common bus designs. Temporary barriers can help tremendously, and semi-permanent design plans will be distributed soon. A semi-permanent barrier design is approaching completion at the Toronto Transit Commission.



To get involved, visit www.atu.org/covid-19 and go to the Safe Service Now section



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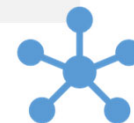
Health & Safety Accreditation Program



Goals

Establish an accreditation program that includes scientific information on:

- SARS-CoV-2 (the virus) and COVID-19 (the disease)
- Conditions for elevated risk of transmission
- How various safety measures can play a role in reducing the risk of transmission
- The art of effective health-related communications.



Health & Safety Accreditation Program



Actions

- Coordinate with UNC Gillings School of Public Health to develop training for NC transit agencies

Control of transmission by aerosols

Source control, masks
(also limit loud talking/singing)



Dilution, ventilation,
filtration



Distance and density



Minimize contact time



Receptor control, masks



Health & Safety Accreditation Program



Actions

- Develop and launch public marketing campaign

 **We're protecting each other.**

WE'RE DOING OUR PART **YOU'RE DOING YOURS**

Cleaning & disinfecting **Wear face coverings**



Challenge 1 - Safety



New Marketing Techniques



Goals

- Develop NC Transit Cares strategic marketing efforts to rebuild public trust in public transportation services.
- Catalog current best ideas by agencies around NC
- Research national best practices.
- NCDOT to create a pilot program marketing transit to the general public.

Challenge 2 – Restore lost ridership

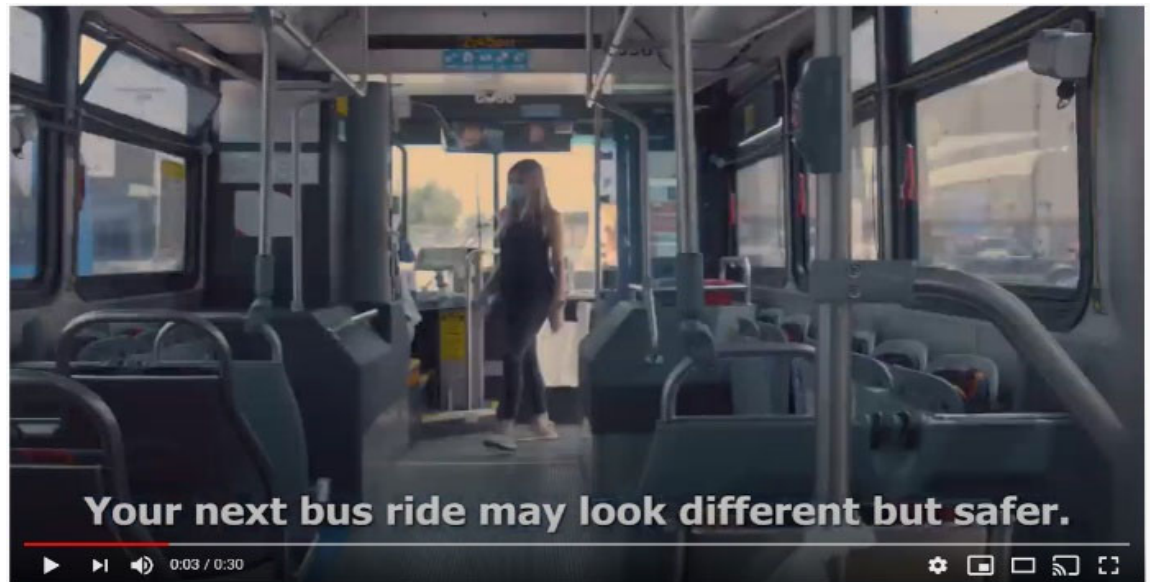


New Marketing Techniques



Actions

- Research to better understand:
 - Rider concerns
 - Best platforms for materials
 - How to reach underserved communities



Challenge 2 – Restore lost ridership



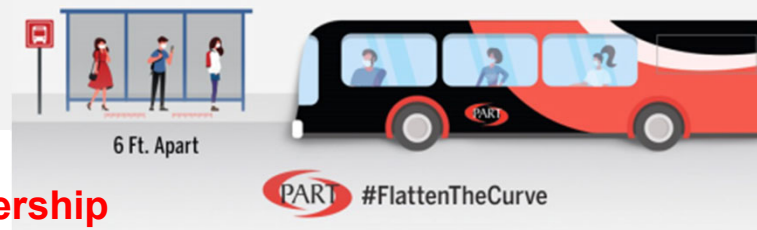
New Marketing Techniques



Actions

- NCDOT to create marketing campaign with graphics and content for agencies to use

**REMEMBER TO SOCIAL DISTANCE
WHEN BOARDING & RIDING**



Challenge 2 – Restore lost ridership



Technologies to enhance service delivery



Goals

- Create a mobile application (app) that could be used for trip planning, real time bus tracking, and the ability to see how full a vehicle is before boarding.

Challenge 2 – Restore lost ridership

MARKET ST AT BROAD ST DIR: Jersey City STOP: 18730 Last updated: 6:27 PM			
Route 1		All Routes	
25	SPRINGFIELD AV NWRK-PENN STA Bus #5818 Arriving in 2 min	6:29	Heavy
21	MAIN STREET NWRK-PENN STA Bus #6405 Arriving in 2 min	6:30	Medium
21	MAIN STREET NWRK-PENN STA Bus #6407 Arriving in 5 min	6:32	Medium
34P	NEWARK PENN STATION Bus #6293 Arriving in 5 min	6:33	Light

Example from NJ Transit

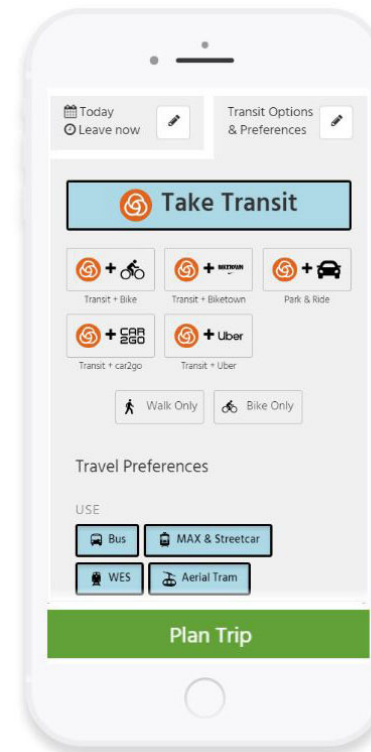


Technologies to enhance service delivery



Actions

- Establish working group to identify key needs/functions
- Develop recommendations for app functions



Example from TriMet

Challenge 2 – Restore lost ridership

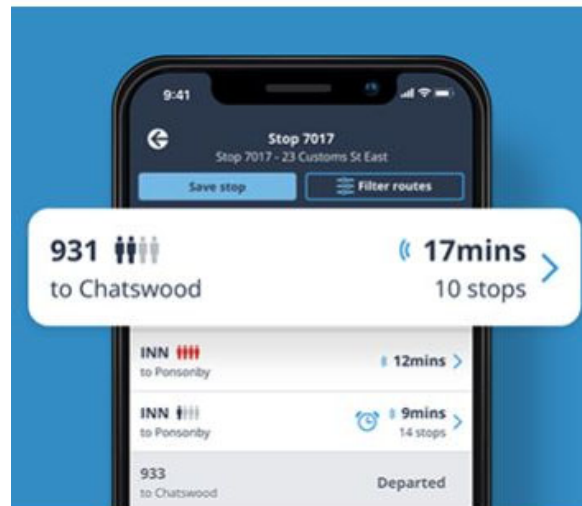


Technologies to enhance service delivery

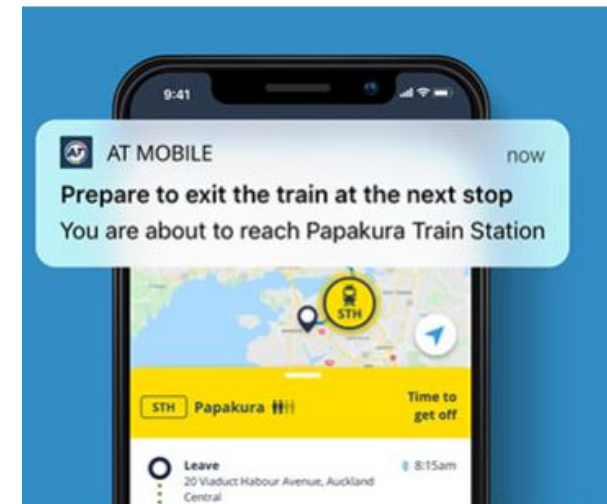


Actions

- Complete feasibility study that highlights implementation (costs, schedule, etc.) and conducts peer review of transit systems



Example from Auckland Transit



Challenge 2 – Restore lost ridership



Additional funding & strategies for funding flexibility



Goals

- Develop inventory of existing COVID-19 funding programs/resource opportunities (at Federal, State, and Local levels)
- Explore options to use funding programs and resources in new and innovative ways to help with response and impacts
- Research and identify new funding options to help address COVID-19 and other funding needs

Challenge 3 – Restore revenues and funding

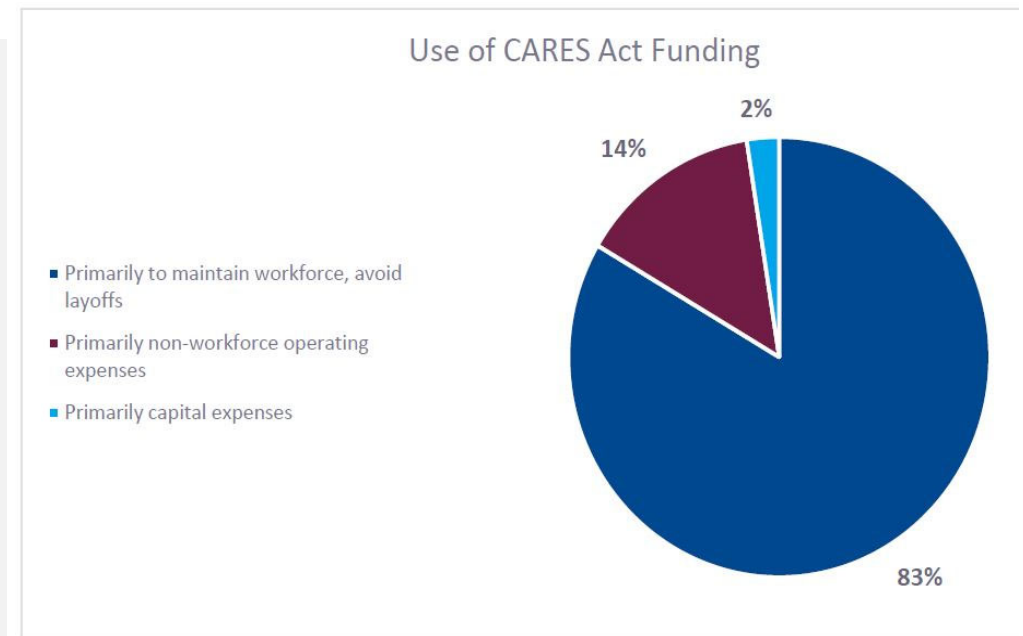


Additional funding & strategies for funding flexibility



Actions

- NCDOT convene an expanded work group to review items
- Subcommittees (existing and new options) develop action plans to address key issues
- Implement work group action plans



Challenge 3 – Restore revenues and funding



Improve statewide data collection



Goals

- Determine transit data collection needs to enhance overall understanding of COVID-19 transit ridership/operating trends, funding reduction impacts, and service benefits
- Develop a statewide governance strategy and framework for data collection standards
- Research, develop, and implement a common statewide data collection system and technology requirements

Challenge 3 – Restore revenues and funding

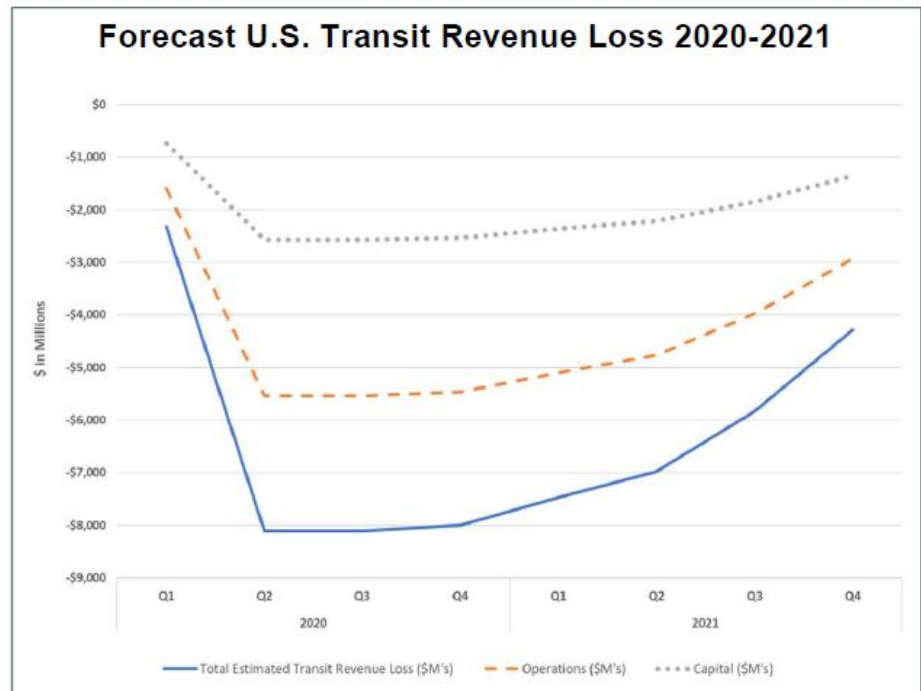


Improve statewide data collection



Actions

- NCDOT convene a work group to scan key stakeholders and determine data collection needs
- Work group to develop standards and action plan for statewide data collection system
- NCDOT to facilitate implementation of the action plan



Challenge 3 – Restore revenues and funding



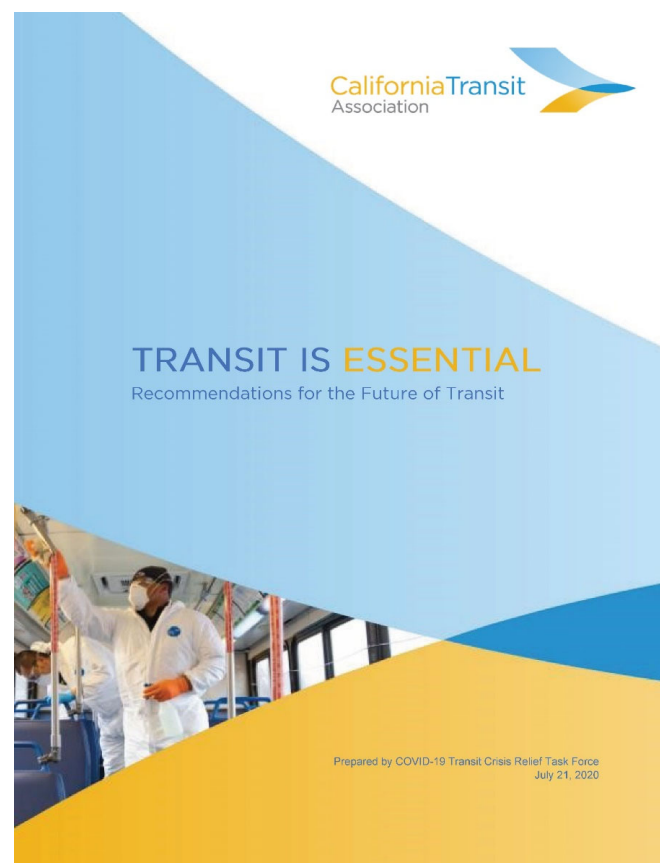
Statewide technology deployment and integration



Goals

- Develop inventory of statewide transit technology deployment and needs
- Research and identify technologies that best help with COVID-19 response and service impacts
- Develop plan to advance most promising technologies

Challenge 4 – New service models



Statewide technology deployment and integration



Actions

- Identify target areas of need and inventory existing technology systems



IndyGo Ticketing

Challenge 4 – New service models



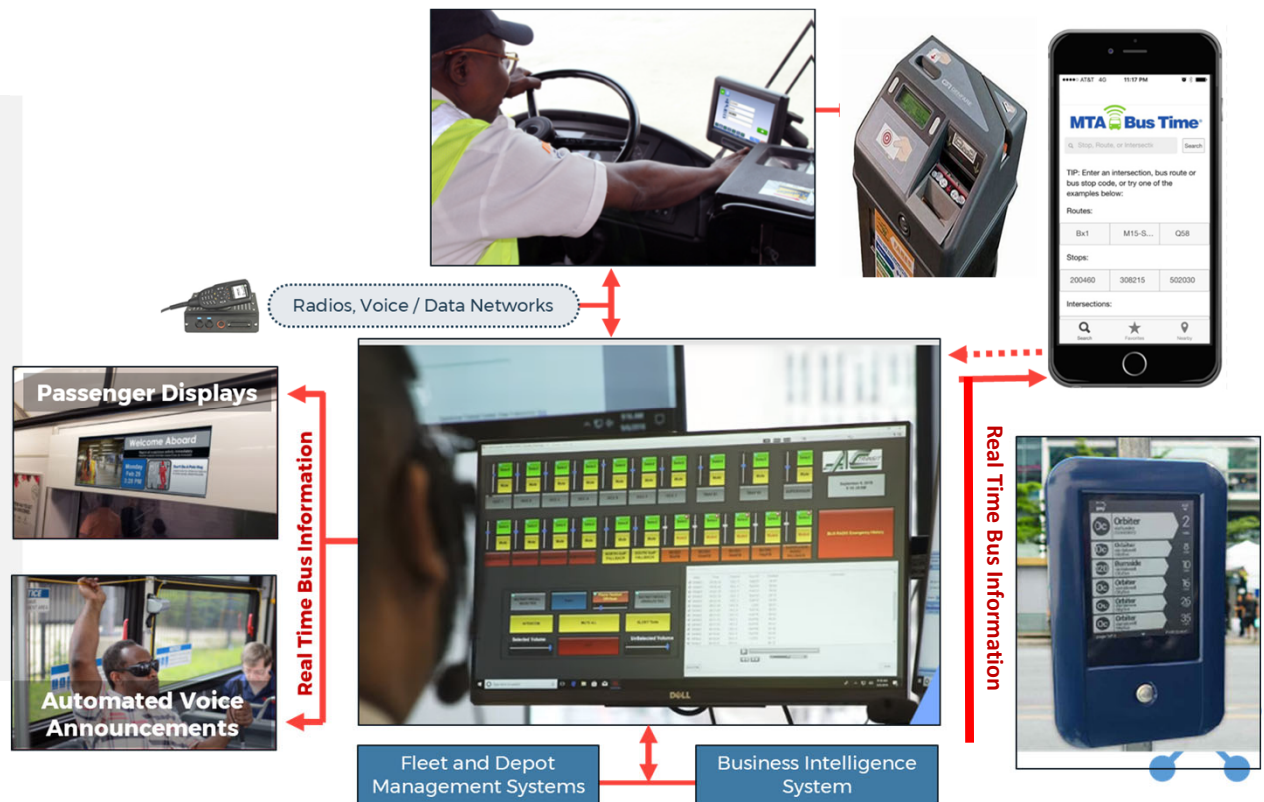
Statewide technology deployment and integration



Actions

- Research industry best practices and share guidance with NC transit agencies

Challenge 4 – New service models

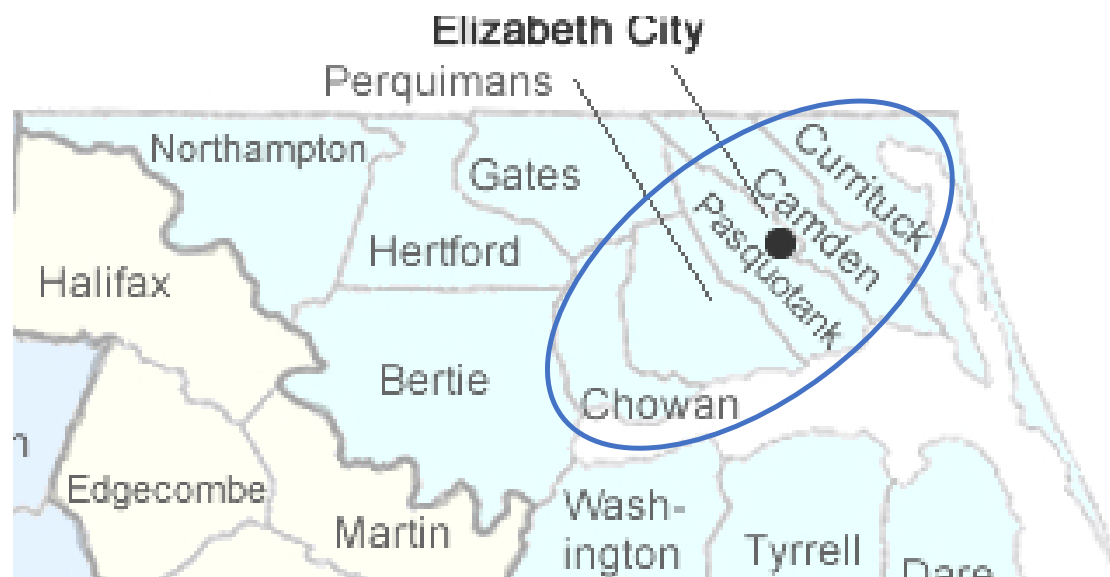


Statewide technology deployment and integration



Actions

- Develop pilot programs such as Mobility for All and evaluate results to implement statewide standards



Current pilot program with ICPTA within Pasquotank, Perquimans, Camden, Chowan and Currituck counties

Challenge 4 – New service models



Statewide micro-transit project development



Goals

- Determine statewide interest in micro-transit
- Build on Wilson pilot project to expand micro-transit in NC
- Develop plan to help facilitate statewide deployment



Wilson's RIDE program

Challenge 4 – New service models

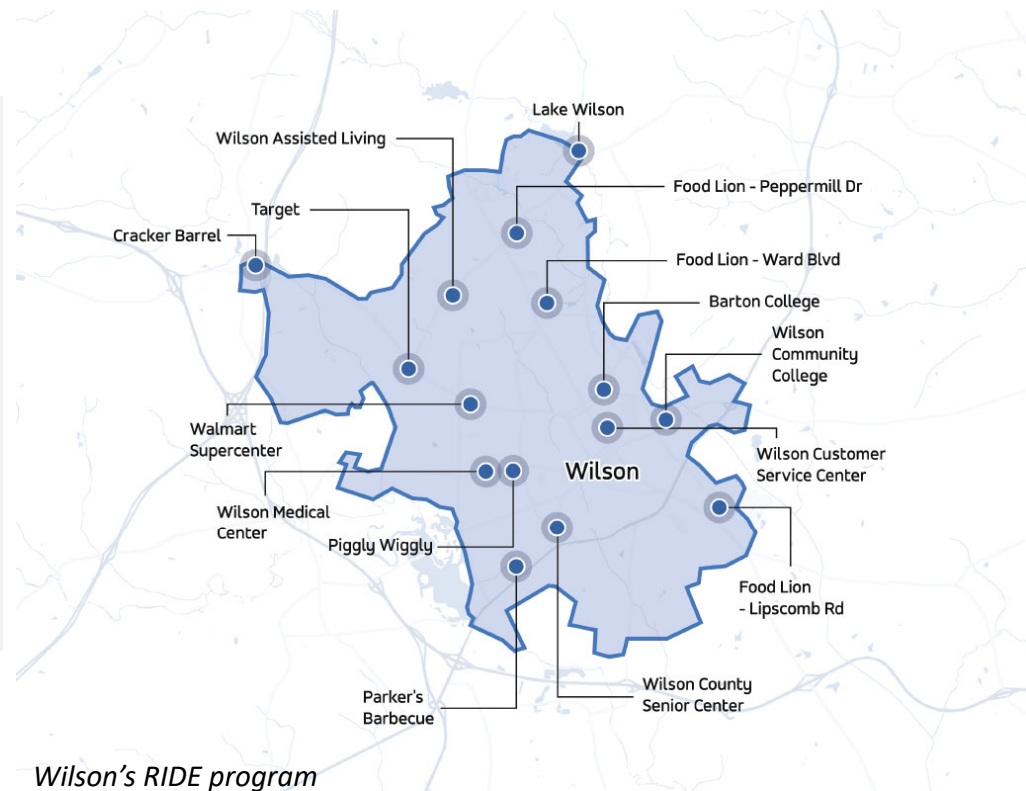


Statewide micro-transit project development



Actions

- Survey NC transit agencies to determine interest; service needs; and uses, such as increased access for disabled populations, first and last mile access, etc.



Challenge 4 – New service models



Statewide micro-transit project development



Actions

- Create a repository for information, case studies, and evaluations of micro-transit use cases
- Provide regular updates and lessons learned from Wilson

A Snapshot from California:



GET introduced its RYDE microtransit service in the southwest portion of its service area in April 2019. In response to the Governor's stay-at-home order, ridership dropped dramatically on all modes. RYDE, which is ADA accessible, has rebounded quicker than other modes. Riders indicate they feel safer riding with only one or two other people on the vehicles than

they do on the big bus and that they don't have to wait at bus stops or stations with other people. As a result, GET has plans to expand its microtransit service to other areas of town where requests for this service have increased dramatically and fixed route demand has not returned.

Challenge 4 – New service models



Statewide micro-transit project development



Actions

- Provide guidance and support for additional micro-transit pilots
- Develop plan to help facilitate deployment

Challenge 4 – New service models

How to book a RIDE.

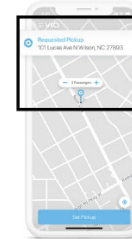
Welcome to RIDE! We're so glad you're here. To get started, download the Via app and follow the signup steps. Pay for trips using a standard credit/debit card, a prepaid debit card, or by paying for RIDE Credit in cash at the Customer Service Center (208 Nash Street). You cannot pay in cash on board.

If you don't have a smartphone, call (252) 595-5357 to get set up.

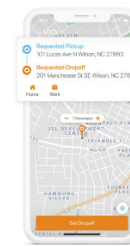
Have questions? Email us at: support-wilson@ridewithvia.com



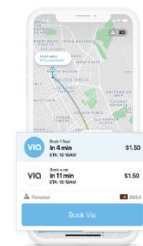
1 Enter your pickup address and press **Set Pickup**. Hit the + sign if you want to bring friends along!



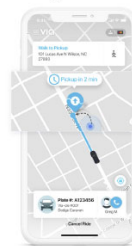
2 Enter your dropoff address and press **Set Dropoff**.



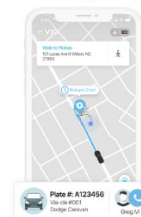
3 Choose the RIDE option that's best for you, then tap **Book Via**.



4 Follow the dotted line in the app to get to your exact pickup location, which may be a short walk.



5 We'll display your driver's name, vehicle model, and license plate number to help you locate your RIDE.



6 Hop in and enjoy your RIDE!



support-wilson@ridewithvia.com

Wilson's RIDE program



Initiative Next Steps & Announcements

Julie White

Deputy Secretary for Multimodal
Transportation, NCDOT

David Howard

Chief Deputy Secretary, NCDOT

AGENDA

- Meeting Orientation
- Welcome & Introductions
- Welcome & Thank You – Sec. Boyette
- NC Transit Cares Initiative Overview
- Congressman David Price
- NC Transit Systems - Innovative Responses to COVID-19
- BREAK
- Innovations
- ***Initiative Next Steps & Announcements***
- Closing Remarks

Closing Remarks

Michael S. Fox

Chairman, Board of Transportation

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Thank You!
