



McHenry County Transit Plan Focus Group August 9, 2018 Summary

The second McHenry County Transit Plan Update Focus Group Meeting was held on August 9, 2018 at the RedTail Golf Club, 7900 RedTail Drive, Lakewood, Illinois from 1:30-3 PM. **Five (5) people** were in attendance at this meeting (sign-in sheet attached), which was conducted in a round table discussion style format. Project team members present included Scott Hennings and Susan Borucki (McHenry County); Andrew Parker (TranSystems); and Janet Henderson and Victoria Watts (Images, Inc.). Exhibit boards displayed the current transit system conditions and proposed alternatives to the transit plan.

The participants were prompted with questions by the project team and remained very engaged throughout the discussion.

Below is a list of comments made throughout the Focus Group Meeting:

General Comments

- Ideally transit in the County would cater to everyone, but realistically because of financial constraints, those who need it most should be addressed first
- Transit should be more focused on seniors, individuals with disabilities and low income persons
- Should also cater to those who do not have access to a car or who are not able to drive
- Interested in services that take you to O'Hare International Airport
- More interested in spontaneous trips such as last minute grocery runs
- Would be interested in a bike sharing program

MCRide

- None of the participants had taken a trip using MCRide
- Thought it was only for the individuals with disabilities or seniors
- Didn't know it existed until today's meeting
- Does not serve the area where they live
- Seems very inconvenient and likely would not use the system, even if it was offered in their area
- Would like to see it utilize more with technology, such as the ability to track your ride



- Concerned with how the service would be practical for families to use
- Seems like a less convenient Uber
- Would choose to use Uber over MCRide
- Would be something they might consider using in an emergency scenario, i.e. if car broke down; however, it does not seem convenient for this type of situation either, since cars break down at the last-minute ride.
- As an employer, would be wary if an employee relied on MCRide as their main mode of transportation. It seems unreliable and they would assume employee would be consistently late
- Not convenient for those who would need to make multiple stops, like picking up the kids on the way home from work. They would have to make reservations for several trips to get home
- Should be advertised more, especially to the children or grandchildren of the seniors or disabled; the seniors themselves may not be comfortable setting up trips, but their adult children could help them if they knew about it.
- Consider advertising MCRide at Metra stations
- Should offer rider training or information sessions at local library to those who might need assistance using MCRide
- Show seniors this travel option by using real life examples such as “This is the route you could take to get to Dr. Joe’s office.”
- Would like to be able to pay online or with a Ventra card or Google pay
- Do not think it is convenient to have to pay with cash/exact change

Fixed Routes

- None of the participants had taken a Pace fixed route in McHenry County
- A concern with fixed routes is getting people to the bus stop or station
- People don’t use fixed routes because it does not match up with their work schedule; would be willing to take if they ran more often and it fit more with their work schedule
- As an employer, would feel more comfortable that an employee is getting to work by a fixed route rather than MCRide because it seems like a more stable and reliable source of transportation
- Interested in circulator routes; think they would serve more people



Metra

- One participant uses Metra every day for work. Because he is on a shift schedule, the service offered on weekends, is not ideal.
- Others use Metra only for special occasions/events, such as Cubs games
- Do not like how fares (including weekend passes) have increased steadily in the last couple of years; however, this has not deterred their use of Metra as it is still better than driving and parking
- Uses Metra mainly because it saves time; don't have to waste time stuck in traffic
- Would like if there were bus routes connecting different train lines

Summary of Recommendations

- Would prefer Option #3: Fixed Route Expansion
- Would like to see more service coverage
- Should market more, not very well-known
- First priority should be to seniors, disabled and low income
- Need to make transit desirable, such that people **want** to take it over driving



Photos





Event: Transit Plan Focus Group

Location: Lakewood 1:30

Date: 8/9/18

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