

Equity Through Access (ETA) Summary of Public Outreach Activities

To create an equity-focused, comprehensive update of the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP), the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's (DVRPC) ETA project designed an iterative public participation and outreach plan to involve, engage, and connect the region's stakeholders. This was done through conducting stakeholder interviews, convening an advisory committee, and substantiating findings with community groups. The information collected from each outreach method built off the previous to formulate and affirm the project findings, which then became ETA's "Gaps and Bridges."

The following is an annotated process report on the ETA public participation and outreach plan. It outlines the foundations of ETA's findings and shares practices and ideas with agencies who would like to replicate this process.

Stakeholder Interviews

A list of stakeholders was assembled to represent various interests and experiences with transportation equity in human services. These stakeholders included both the traditional CHSTP network, like area agencies on aging (AAAs) and transportation management associations (TMAs), and stakeholders new to the planning process, like homelessness service providers and public health agencies. This list was gathered from DVRPC's existing network, as well as through online research of persons and organizations connected to transportation services, equity, community development, and health, totaling about 60 stakeholders.

Approximately 50 stakeholder interviews were conducted between December 2015 and February 2016. Each stakeholder was contacted by a member of the ETA team, who requested an interview to discuss transportation, equity, and human services in the region. Stakeholders who accepted the interview request were then scheduled for a 30–60 minute phone interview. Each stakeholder was asked the same set of eight questions, listed below, as well as a series of demographic questions.

1. What does "equitable access" or "equity through access" mean to you and/or your organization's mission?
2. What do you see as DVRPC's role in promoting or achieving equity?
3. What do you need or want to know about the regional transportation system to bring value, equity, and access to your constituents or populations of interest?
4. Do you regularly survey your clients/constituents? Do you have any population, demographics, or utilization information that would be interesting or helpful for this project?
5. Is there a data source you regularly use and trust to better understand your constituents/population of interest?
6. What are some best practices when it comes to planning, creating, and executing transportation needs?

7. Do you have any recommendations for what could be done to institute “equitable access” among your constituents/population of interest?
8. Who else should we talk to about this planning effort?

The stakeholder interviews included representatives from the following organizations:

- Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia;
- Bucks County Human Services Department–Area Agency for the Aging;
- Bucks County Planning Commission;
- Camden County Planning Commission;
- Chester County Department of Aging;
- Chester County Planning Commission;
- City of Philadelphia–Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems;
- City of Trenton Department of Health and Human Services;
- Cross County Connection;
- Delaware County Planning Department;
- Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA);
- Delaware River Port Authority;
- Delaware County Transportation Management Association;
- Gloucester County Human Services;
- Greater Mercer Transportation Management Association (GMTMA);
- Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association (GVFTMA);
- Impact Services;
- Mercer County–Office on Aging;
- Mercer County TRADE;
- Montgomery County Aging & Adult Services Human Services Center;
- Montgomery County Planning Commission;
- New Jersey Transit;
- Partners 4 Wellness;
- Partnership TMA;
- Pathways PA;
- Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations;
- Philadelphia Corporation for the Aging;
- Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO);
- Rutgers University;
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA);
- SEPTA Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC);
- Transnet; and
- Transportation Management Association of Chester County.

Notes from these stakeholder interviews were recorded by the ETA staff in a Microsoft Access database created for the project. No audio recordings were made of the interviews, to ensure the privacy of those interviewed as well as to eliminate the capacity burden of transcribing audio recordings. The interview responses were coded and analyzed for common trends, issues, and ideas. ETA team members then presented these findings to the ETA advisory committee.

Advisory Committee and Stakeholder Interviews

Most of the advisory committee members were also interviewed during the stakeholder interview process and tapped to help guide ETA project actions. The advisory committee met for a workshop in order to give feedback on the analysis of the interviews and brainstorm next steps in the ETA plan development.

At the advisory committee workshop the ETA team presented a history of the CHSTP, the ETA project landscape for the coming year, and the trends found in the stakeholder interviews. Advisory committee members then divided into five small discussion groups, each of which analyzed and made recommendations about one of the trends identified during the stakeholder interviews. These trend topics included vulnerable populations (i.e., low-income, seniors, physically disabled, mentally disabled, and/or transit-dependent persons), funding, marketing and education, data, and coordinating and convening. The discussions were facilitated and transcribed by ETA team members.

All the information collected from the steering committee workshop, the stakeholder interviews, and the research done by ETA team members was then compiled, assessed, and analyzed. The ideas from these sources formed the project's goals and objectives, which eventually became ETA's "Gaps and Bridges." Feedback from the advisory committee workshop's data discussion group also directly influenced the ETA Map Toolkit update.

Roadshow Presentations to Community Groups

To affirm ETA's project findings and gather feedback from a wider range of constituents, the ETA team organized a series of roadshows to community groups. At these roadshows, the ETA team presented the project background and the "Gaps and Bridges." Totalling seven in all, these presentations were given to advocacy organizations, public transit citizen advisory committees, and nonprofit groups. This process helped the ETA team hear feedback from a wider variety of end-users and providers, gaining more intimate insight into the problems facing the transit and human services systems.

Below is ETA's roadshow presentation schedule:

Community Group	Date of Roadshow
Bucks-Mont Collaborative	May 2016
Mercer United We Ride	May 2016
SEPTA Citizen's Advisory Committee	June 2016
PATCO Citizen's Advisory Committee	June 2016
Cross County Connection TMA	June 2016
SEPTA Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation	June 2016
Inglis Consumer Advisory Committee	June 2016

Feedback from the roadshows was added to the "Gaps and Bridges" and used as context when formulating the ETA final report pieces.