



## IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION TO HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Recent research from the National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) shows that a major barrier to healthcare is transportation. Lack of high-quality transportation options to and from healthcare facilities often leads to missed appointments. As a result, patients can experience poorer health outcomes and additional costs are incurred by patients, the public, and the healthcare system overall.

Recognizing the potential impacts of transportation barriers to healthcare, NCMM released follow-up guidance on how transportation providers can engage healthcare providers regarding transportation. The guidance recommends that transportation providers first contact high-level healthcare facility personnel, such as a Director of Operations or a similar title. Through this point of contact, the next step is to contact personnel responsible for discharging patients, as they are often responsible for managing transportation.

The guidance notes that a good setting for transportation providers to reach out to healthcare providers is during the community needs

assessment process. All hospitals are required to coordinate hospital community benefits, and these assessments are a good opportunity for transportation providers to get involved and interact with the healthcare representatives. Other possibilities for contacting healthcare providers include health conferences or housing and economic development meetings.

After getting in contact with the appropriate healthcare representatives, the guidance recommends that transportation providers engage them by appealing to the principles of the healthcare system, which are 1) providing high quality medical services 2) at a lower cost that 3) also brings about a good

patient experience. Specific topics of discussion, taken from NCMM's report discussed in last month's newsletter, include:

- Costs of missed appointments;
- Missed opportunities to improve patient care and outcomes;
- Cost of diverting patients to other facilities; and
- Penalties for patient readmission.

Each of these issues can be addressed by providing better transportation services to healthcare facilities. NCMM's research suggests that if patients have easier access to healthcare, they are more likely to make appointments and receive better care and are less likely to be readmitted or utilize



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# NOTES FROM THE TOP

BY MICHELLE HORNE

It's the holiday season and the hustle and bustle has begun. We all, however, need to take the time to reflect on our achievements as well as the things in which we were not so successful during the year and resolve to do things better in the coming year.

In 2017, the Public Transportation Staff conducted over 62 transit agency compliance reviews and 16 workshops on various topics in addition to the STARS trainings the Program Managers have provided throughout the year and our annual conference. The Public Transportation Staff attended several national conferences, workshops, and trainings including the Community Transportation Association of America conference, South West Transit Association conference, BusCon, and Transportation Safety Institute certification training for the Transit Bus System Safety.

The annual Public Transit Conference was held in November in Shreveport and was once again a huge success. A special thank you to the Public Transportation Staff for your hard work in ensuring the conference was successful! I would also like to express our appreciation to the vendors who participated and sponsored events. Congratulations to the 2017 Extra Mile Award and FTA Award recipients. All your efforts and contributions illustrate the depth of commitment we have to providing and supporting public transit in Louisiana.

We also have other events planned for next calendar year that will be of interest to many of you. There will be a second Office of Management & Budget 2 CFR 200 Super Circular training in the Spring. We are also working with the Louisiana Transportation Research Center to offer more computer training around the State. Stay tuned for more information.

I would like to remind you about the upcoming application deadline for the Rural Public Transportation, JARC, Intercity Bus, and Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities programs. Applicants may visit DOTD's website and apply online through the Louisiana Transit Electronic Application Management (LATEAM) system. Note that the Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus applications are only available to download online. Please call the DOTD Public Transportation Section at (225)379-3060 with any questions. Electronic applications must be submitted by February 1, 2018. The Intercity Bus Program application should be submitted to the Public Transportation Office also by February 1, 2018.

Finally, from all of us at DOTD Public Transportation Section to all of you, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year! We also wish you all a happy and prosperous 2018!

*Happy Holidays!*  




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# ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

Find more info. about DOTD's Louisiana Transportation Conference [HERE!](#)



## TRB EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: [www.trb.org](http://www.trb.org)

JAN. 7 - 11

2018 Annual TRB Meeting..... Washington, D.C.

## DOTD EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: DOTD Public Transportation Section

FEB. 25 - 28

Louisiana Transportation Conference..... Baton Rouge, LA

## SOUTH WEST TRANSIT ASSOCIATION EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: [www.swta.org](http://www.swta.org)

MARCH 5 - 7

Freedom Through Transit Annual Conference..... Denver, CO

## NATIONAL TRANSIT INSTITUTE COURSES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: [www.ntionline.com](http://www.ntionline.com)

JAN. 29 - 30

Title VI and Public Transit..... Columbia, SC

JAN. 30 - FEB. 1

Management of Transit Construction Projects..... Nashville, TN

FEB. 19 - 23

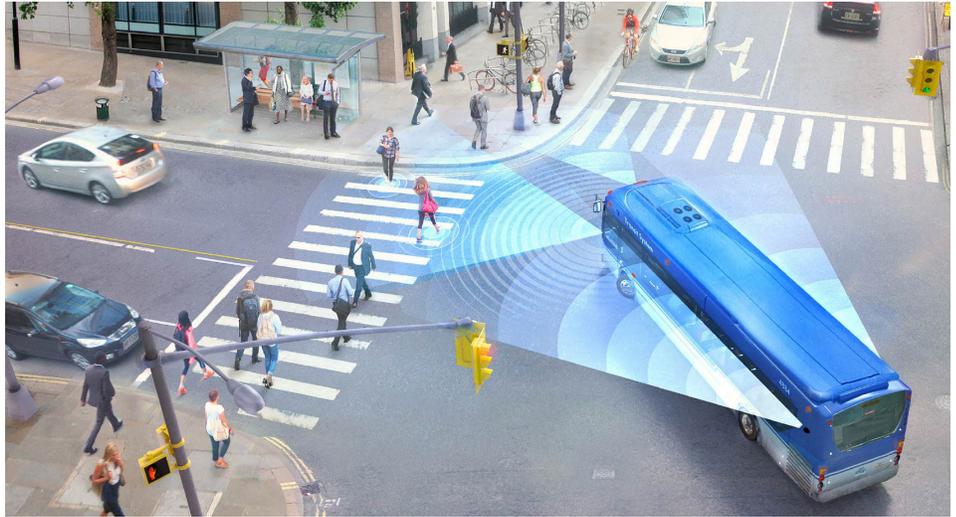
Orientation to Transit Procurement..... Houston, TX

**\*Note that all events are for 2018**

# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSIT (PART 6) - TRANSIT COLLISION AVOIDANCE SYSTEM AND DATA

Transit operations safety is an integral aspect of providing transit service. Providing a safe environment within transit vehicles and at transit stations for both operators and users is a key goal of transit service providers. In addition, operating buses in a fashion that provides a safe environment for other transportation users, such as auto drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists, is a key consideration for both transit agencies and the communities they operate in.



Agencies and communities are turning to technology, in the form of live transit-sensors, to help improve safety for all roadway/near roadway travelers along transit routes. Live transit-sensors relay real-time data to drivers to alert them about potential collisions and impacts with other automobiles, pedestrians, bicycles, or objects. Live transit-sensors provide continuous analysis of a buses surroundings and provide real-time feedback to the driver. For example, if a bus is swerving out of a lane or maneuvering into another vehicle in their blind spot, they will receive a real-time alert to correct their trajectory. In addition, the sensors collect and transmit data back to a central location, where transit supervisors and planning staff can monitor real-time performance of drivers or be aware of incidents much quicker. Ultimately, this technology aims to improve

service delivery, system reliability and transportation network safety using innovative technology.

While this technology improves real-time safety improvements and may limit potential incidents, an opportunity exists to use the data generated to help communities and transit agencies work together to plan for better transportation networks. Since the live transit-sensors are constantly collecting data with location information and transmitting it back to a central location, transit planners can review the data and assess trends. This will give agencies and communities the tools necessary to better understand where transit vehicle conflicts with other travelers are occurring and whether they are due to driver error or environmental issues. For example, the data could be analyzed to pinpoint specific locations where close-

calls with pedestrians are repeatedly occurring. This could help agencies and city planners work together to address pedestrian/transit infrastructure concerns at those locations to improve that interaction. Another potential application would be to analyze high automobile and transit traffic areas where stations/stops exist to identify any conflicts between automobiles and transit vehicles and to determine if a pullout bay or other treatment is appropriate for that specific location.

Both transit agencies and communities can use this technology to not only better serve transit users, but all transportation system users by providing more safe and positive interactions with buses. In addition, the technology can improve system reliability and limit maintenance/repair costs for agencies due to incidents.

# DOTD ON THE GO...



One of the DOTD PT Section's mandates is to provide information and technical assistance to transit providers in Louisiana in order to assist them in meeting their requirements for FTA funding. These activities come in many different formats and venues. DOTD PT provides numerous training courses, workshops, and training materials, as well as a website and an annual conference. To keep all of our constituents up to date on DOTD PT's activities, DOTD On The Go features just a few selected items each quarter.

## SITE VISITS

Part of the outreach and assistance that DOTD provides to the Rural Public Transportation (Section 5311) and Elderly and Disabled (Section 5310) providers are site visits from the program managers. In the last quarter, DOTD visited the following 5310 & 5311 providers: Foundation Industries, Franciscan PACE, Options, Greyhound, Crossroads, St. Landry Parish, and Livingston Parish.

## OUTREACH

To further the goal of providing some form of public transportation in all 64 parishes, as listed in the Louisiana Vision 2020 Plan, DOTD has been conducting educational visits to all the parishes in Louisiana that do not currently have some form of public transit service. Last quarter DOTD completed outreach for the following parishes: West Baton Rouge, West Carroll, West Feliciana, and Lafourche.

## TRAINING

DOTD staff provided the following trainings in the last quarter: Compliance Report, Defensive Driving, STARS, OMB Super Circular - 2 CFR 200, Application, and Microsoft Word Level 1. DOTD also hosted an MPO Coordination Workshop and participated in the annual Louisiana Public Transit Conference.

*If your agency or someone within your agency deserves recognition for a job well done, or has already received recognition or an award, please let us know. Email or send a brief description, photos, and contact information to [Michelle.Horne@la.gov](mailto:Michelle.Horne@la.gov) or to Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development/Public Transit Section, attn: Michelle Horne, P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.*

# HIGHLIGHTS



**DOTD employees attend SPORTRAN's ribbon cutting ceremony for their new electric bus.**

**Santa using public transit to deliver gifts this Christmas in West Ouachita!**



emergency medical services, which is costly to healthcare facilities and patients. Explaining how transportation can help healthcare providers achieve their goals is a great starting point for working with them to improve public transportation services to healthcare facilities.

FTA attempts to address transportation barriers to healthcare through the Rides to Wellness Initiative. The goals of the initiative are to increase access to care, improve health outcomes, and reduce healthcare costs by increasing partnerships between health and transportation service providers. FTA's strategy includes promoting innovative practices in healthcare transportation, forming partnerships through its

Ride to Wellness Summit, and providing grants for projects that link the transportation system to healthcare facilities.

In 2016, FTA established the Rides to Wellness Demonstration and Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants pilot program. The pilot program provides funding for innovative projects that improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services. The program is intended to produce replicable best practices and solutions to address transportation access to healthcare facilities. An example of one of the projects selected for the award in 2016 is Jacksonville Transportation Authority developing a software

interface that connects medical scheduling programs with transit schedules so that receptionists and patients can estimate transit travel times and costs when scheduling appointments. Another example is Bi-State Development Agency's mobile health clinic which provides health screenings at local public transit stations.

The initiatives and guidance provided by FTA and NCMM highlight the importance of providing better transportation services to healthcare facilities. For more guidance on how to engage healthcare providers, you can access NCMM's report [HERE](#). More information about the Rides to Wellness initiative and pilot program can be found [HERE](#).

## FROM CAPITOL HILL...

In wake of this past hurricane season, transit agencies should be aware of potential emergency relief from FTA regulatory requirements in the case of a declared emergency. Per the FTA, transit agencies may provide services outside of their normal operations, as long as the services are a response to a specific event, Hurricane Harvey or Irma for example. This means that transit agencies may help with evacuations and providing transportation for shelter residents and utility workers.

Agencies are allowed to provide these types of services, as long as they do not violate charter rules that prohibit federally-funded transit agencies from providing charter bus service, for up to 45 days from a declaration of emergency by the President, governor, or mayor. After this time period, transit agencies must follow the Emergency Procedures for Public Transportation Systems (49 CFR Part 601, Subpart D) if they need to continue providing these emergency transportation services. More information on this topic can be found at the webpage below:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/about/news/fta-hurricane-response>

