



Aging Americans, Are We Ready?

A recent report by Linda Bailey of the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) reveals important information gleaned from the 2001 National Household Transportation Survey conducted by the US Census Bureau. The STPP report is entitled "Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options." The report provides a snapshot of the state of older Americans and their public transportation needs. It also points to the coming public transportation crisis.

The report's main point is that as Americans get older, transportation systems need to change. The elderly rely more on alternate transportation, and current systems are not adequate to serve their needs. Transit, pedestrian, and bike options may be the only way that some of our elderly citizens can leave the house—particularly in rural areas and small-town communities.

The coming crisis will happen over the next 20 years. The demographic makeup of the US population will change dramatically between now and 2025. The baby boomers will be entering their 60s and 70s. In 2002, 12% of the US population was 65 or older. By 2025, that number will increase to an estimated 18% of the total population. The number of Louisiana residents over the age of 65 is right in line with the national numbers and is expected to be between 15 and 20% of the states population.

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As the American population ages, their participation in society and the economy will be greatly determined by the availability of alternative transportation.

In the report, Ms. Bailey reports the following major findings:

More than one in five (21%) Americans age 65 and older do not drive. Some reasons include:

- Declining health, eyesight, physical or mental abilities;
- Concern over safety (self-regulation);
- No car or no access to a car;
- Personal preference.

More than 50% of non-drivers age 65 and older - or 3.6 million Americans - stay home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options. The following populations are more heavily affected:

- Rural communities and sprawling suburbs;
- Households with no car;
- Older African-Americans, Latinos and Asian-Americans.

Older non-drivers have a decreased ability to participate in the community and the economy. Compared

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Notes from the Top

Callers to the Public Transportation Section at DOTD will hear a new voice. We were fortunate to be able to hire Ms. Randi Adams from private industry as our new Administrative Secretary. Randi comes to us highly recommended and although she has only been with us for a couple of weeks, she fits right in. If you are planning to come to our Public Transportation Conference in New Orleans on November 15-17, please take a moment to stop by the registration desk to say hello and welcome to Randi.

Also while at the conference, go by the Rural Application session and congratulate Michelle Horne. She has recently been promoted to Manager of the Rural Program.

The Spotlight article in this newsletter provides information on the rescheduling of our 17th Annual Public Transit Conference caused by Hurricane Ivan. The second day of the pre-conference workshop which started on September 13 had to be cancelled and participants, including myself and several of my staff, participated in the evacuation process. We were thankful we left as early as we did because others reported that the drive from New Orleans to Baton Rouge took up to 11 hours. Our drive took only about 4 hours. This experience reminds us of all the folks behind the scenes who participate in the evacuation process, particularly transit system staffs. We are most appreciative of RTA and staff, with special recognition to Bill Deville and James Tillie, for keeping us informed throughout the ordeal.

As many of you know, this is the second time a hurricane has disrupted one of our conferences. While holding the

conference in Lafayette several years ago, Hurricane Lily emergency preparedness activities caused several of our attendees to head for home... duty calls. We also cut several of the sessions short on the last day. Hopefully, this will be the last conference affected by a hurricane!

If you haven't visited our website for a while, please check us out at: www.dotd.louisiana.gov/intermodal/transit. We are trying to keep data as current as possible and have Alliance Transportation Group to thank for their efforts in working with the DOTD Public Transportation and Computer staffs. Annual applications and manuals are available on our website in a fill-in Word document. Hopefully, in the near future, applications will be completed and submitted online via the Internet.

We are working on other IT projects, such as a software program that will help local and state agencies to coordinate activities and help with scheduling, billing and reporting. Look for an update on our progress in the next newsletter.

If you have not updated your information in the Resource Guide, please do so as soon as possible. We encourage you to visit the Guide on a regular basis to ensure that your information is kept accurate and current.

This issue of the newsletter was slated to cover the Conference and accompanying events. However, another issue of the newsletter will be published in December that will cover the conference. In the mean time, if we don't see you at the conference, have a great Thanksgiving Holiday! 



17th Annual Louisiana Public Transit Conference



November 15—17, 2004
New Orleans, LA

This year the conference will be held in the BIG EASY at the JW Marriott New Orleans as originally planned. The hotel is located at 614 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana. The last day to reserve a room at the guaranteed rate of \$110.00 per night (single or double) is October 21, 2004, so please contact the hotel at (504) 525-6500 or www.jwmarriottneworleans.com. Due to the new dates, the hotel room rates cannot be extended past October 21st and increases to \$209 per night after that date, so please make your reservations ASAP.

Events Calendar

NTI Courses:

Procurement Series II—Basic Cost & Price Analysis & Risk Assessment
October 25-29 Fort Worth, TX

Coordinated Mobility: A Unified Transportation Management Solution
November 16-17 New Brunswick, NJ

Management of Transit Construction Projects
December 14-16 Cleveland, OH

For more information, please visit:
www.ntionline.com

APTA Conferences

APTA Light Rail Conference
November 16-18 Portland, OR
www.apta.com

Other Upcoming Conferences/Training:

South West Transit Association
2004 Transit Marketing & Operations Seminar
November 14-16 Dallas, TX

South West Transit Association
25th Annual Conference & Expo
January 23-25 Houston, TX

TRB Sponsored Conference
Conference on Managing Travel for Planned Special Events
December 1-3 New Orleans, LA

TRB 84th Annual Meeting
January 9-13 Washington, D.C.

For more information on the TRB:
www.trb.org/calendar

17TH ANNUAL PUBLIC TRANSIT CONFERENCE

November 15-17 New Orleans, LA
JW Marriott on Canal Street

For more information contact:
Kay Ryall at (225) 274-4302 or
KayRyall@dotd.louisiana.gov

16th National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation
October 24-27 Roanoke, VA

Transportation Safety Institute Classes

Courses are offered around the country on various topics throughout the year. For more information, please visit:
www.tsi.dot.gov



Spotlight on...

Ivan Crashes 2004 Transit Conference

Conference Rescheduled

As you all know, the 17th Annual Louisiana Public Transit Conference scheduled for September 15-17 was cancelled. It has been rescheduled for Monday, November 15th thru Wednesday November 17th. The new conference information can be accessed on the DOTD Public Transportation Section website at:

www.dotd.louisiana.gov/intermodel/transit/

It will be an exciting event, so be sure to look at the new schedule!

Reserve BEFORE October 21st

We regret the rate increase, but re-scheduling on short notice limited our options. The JW Marriott Hotel room rate of \$110 per night is good until October 21st. After this date the rate will go up to \$209 per night. The hotel will not negotiate or extend the reservation cut-off date past Thursday, October 21st--No Exceptions or Extensions. Call the JW Marriott Hotel at: (504) 525-6500 and ask for the Louisiana Department of Transportation Conference rate of \$110.

Early Registrations Stay the Same

In order to be fair and keep it simple, all conference registrations submitted before the hurricane do not change. Any new, post-hurricane conference registrations before November 1st will cost \$250. This was the highest late fee prior to the hurricane. To see if you are on the registration list, go to the website listed above.

If your name is on the list and you wish to cancel for a full refund, please call us ASAP (before the cut-off of November 1st). If you did not find your name on the list and you plan to attend you will need to register by completing the "Post Hurricane Registration Form" also found on the website. For all your registration needs, please contact:

Kay Ryall (225)274-4301 or
KayRyall@dotd.louisiana.gov

Conference Registrations received after Nov 1st are \$300 each.

Ivan Crashes the Conference

During that week in September, New Orleans was voluntarily evacuated. New Orleans was thought to be extremely vulnerable to Hurricane Ivan. A direct hit may have caused as many as 50,000 deaths, according to one emergency manager. Unlike past hurricanes when "hurricane parties" kept up spirits, an "aggressive recommendation" to evacuate made this



Hurricane Ivan, September 16th 1:45

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with older drivers, older non-drivers in the United States make:

- 15% fewer trips to the doctor;
- 59% fewer shopping trips and visits to restaurants;
- 65% fewer trips for social, family and religious activities.

For trips outside their immediate neighborhood, public transportation is the only alternative to asking for a ride for many non-drivers. Where public transportation is available, older Americans make regular use of it.

- Public transportation trips by older non-drivers totaled an estimated 310 million in 2001;
- Older minority populations account for a significant share of these trips, with older African-Americans and Latinos more than twice as likely to use public transportation as their Caucasian counterparts.

A safe and inviting walking and bicycling environment provides mobility and health benefits to many older Americans.

- More than half of older Americans make walking a regular activity, and nearly two-thirds walk a half mile at least once a month.
- Four percent of older Americans ride a bicycle at least once a week.
- Research shows that moderate exercise, such as walking or bicycling, can contribute significantly to a healthy lifestyle.
- Improving the walking and bicycling environment is a priority for the general public.

More livable communities have lower rates of staying home, and higher rates of public transportation use and walking among non-drivers aged 65 and over.

- 61% of older non-drivers stay home on a given day in more spread-out areas, as compared to 43% in denser areas;
- More than half of older non-drivers use public transportation occasionally in denser areas, as compared to 1 in 20 in more spread-out areas;
- One in three older non-drivers walks on a given day in denser areas, as compared to 1 in 14 in more spread-out areas.

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much more serious. All lanes of Interstate 10 west of the city from Kenner to LaPlace were turned to one-way traffic to let more people leave the city. Traffic was bumper-to-bumper along evacuation routes for nearly 10 hours. The National Weather Service estimated 600,000 people left the city in 320,000 vehicles. Fortunately, New Orleans was spared the worst of the damage. There were no direct fatalities, and most damage was reported in the Plaquemines Parish area.

Ivan Puts a Damper on Pre-Conference Workshop

Several of you took advantage of the pre-conference workshop that was scheduled for September 13 & 14. CTAA's Chris Zeilinger was in New Orleans providing a two-day Certified Community Transit Manager (CCTM) training session. Many participants made it through the first day, however, some were called away to attend to emergency preparedness duties. The second day was cancelled due to the voluntary evacuation of New Orleans.

The workshop will be rescheduled for a later date... more details to follow in the next newsletter.

Chris was fortunate enough to get an early flight out of New Orleans and is safe and sound at home. Not, however, before he got his first ride on a New Orleans streetcar. As is the case with all who ride the streetcars for the first time, Chris was excited at the prospects and is looking forward to a return trip to the Crescent City. 🇺🇸



Chris Zeilinger

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The findings above present a picture that is important for transportation planners and policy makers. Current funding levels will not be sufficient to meet the needs of the aging population. Making alternative transportation available to elderly citizens will become increasingly important if they are to continue to participate in our society and economy.

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Maintaining the current public transportation system requires an annual capital investment of \$14.8 billion. The report indicates that to improve our public transportation system would require \$43.9 billion annually.

The conclusions and recommendations presented in the report ring true with many of the discussions taking place at the DOTD, MPOs and public transportation agencies concerning public transportation:

Substantially increase investment in public transportation systems to expand and improve services to meet the needs of older Americans in metropolitan and rural areas.

Increase funding for existing specialized transportation programs that provide mobility for older persons, such as FTA's Section 5310 program.

Incorporate mobility needs of older Americans into the planning and transportation projects, services, and streets. Coordinate with land use planning.

Improve coordination among human services agencies and between those agencies and public transportation agencies.

Complete the streets by providing a place for safe walking and bicycling for people of all ages.

Urge states to adopt federal guidelines for

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designing safer roads for older drivers and pedestrians.

Preserve the flexibility of state and local governments to spend federal transportation funds on improving public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and other alternatives that will meet the mobility needs of older Americans.

Support the "Transportation Enhancements" program, which is the only federal source of support for pedestrian and bicycle safety projects and facilities.

To see the full report: www.transact.org 



From Capital Hill...

There is no discernable progress on TEA-21 re-authorization, which is lingering in House-Senate conference negotiations.

Separately, Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) and the bipartisan leaders of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee have just introduced a bill that would authorize \$3.5 billion for public transit security improvements. This spending, should it become approved, would be in addition to any transit funding under TEA-21 or subsequent authorizations, and would be in addition to the existing Homeland Security appropriations for transit, rail and bus security measures. 