



2017 PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Iowa Public Transit Association hosted the fourth annual Passenger Transportation Summit in Ankeny on May 18, 2017. The goal of the yearly conference is to bring together passenger transportation users, providers, and policymakers to discuss public transportation trends and needs in Iowa.

Riders: Why Do They Use Public Transit? After opening remarks, the summit featured a panel discussion with passengers of multiple transit systems throughout the State. The panel members talked about the reasons they personally use public transit and the issues they face in navigating the system. Some reasons the users presented included:

- Cost of either a first or second car in a family.
- Health or disability that may prevent an individual from driving.
- Newly arrived immigrants to Iowa.

Technology in Passenger Transportation. The next panel presented information on the use of technology in passenger transportation. Tai Tomasi of [Disabilities Rights Iowa](#) discussed the pros and cons of several apps available for passengers with disabilities, and nonuniversal design issues users may face with bus stop locations. Brooke Ramsey of [Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency](#) (HIRTA) showcased internal dispatch technologies being utilized in appointment scheduling, and Kelly Angell from the [American Cancer Society](#) explained how software is aiding in volunteer driver coordination.

Keynote Address. Becky Harper from the [Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council](#) discussed mobility issues some passengers may face prior to embarking on a passenger transportation trip. Ms. Harper highlighted that transportation may be thought of as a trip from point A to point Z; however, users may have difficulty even getting to point A. She also suggested that both users and providers should participate in solving these issues together.

Transportation Under Medicaid. LeAnn Moskowitz from Iowa Medicaid Enterprise discussed transportation benefits for Medicaid recipients in planning trips, and highlighted the cost differences in reimbursements between urban and rural communities. John Bryer from AmeriHealth Caritas gave an overview on how Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) provide passenger transportation services under Medicaid. According to Mr. Breyer, 20% of all Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) trips under Medicaid are on public transit.

Mobility Management in the Midwest. Jeremy Johnson-Miller from the DOT discussed the Department's role in Iowa's passenger transit system. Iowa is supported by 19 urban and 16 regional transit systems serving all 99 counties. Chad Eggen, from Missouri's [Mo Rides](#), talked about the challenges of reaching out to potential users of Missouri's mobility management systems. Mr. Eggen appreciated learning from the work Iowa has done in mobility management. Jordan Snow from the [National Center for Mobility Management](#) (NCMM) talked about current trends at the federal level. Mr. Snow's presentation highlighted that the federal government is looking to states to continue to develop and formalize mobility management roles and the potential of using public funds to attract private finance, and examine some pros and cons for supplementing passenger transit with Transportation Network Companies (TNC). TNCs have successfully piloted transit programs for seniors at retirement communities; however, questions about the reliability of TNCs remain, as some companies have ceased operations.

More Information. The next Passenger Transportation Summit has not been scheduled.

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