

MEETING MINUTES

Date of Meeting: 10/21/20 **Re:** Grey Area Community Workshop (12 PM)

Location: Virtual **Issue** 10/28/2020
Date:

Submitted By: Katy Shackelford

In Attendance:

Katy Shackelford – LG	Jacqueline Terrell	Veera Boddu
Michael Grovak - LG	Thane Hunt	Brandon Hovey
Sharif Ullah - LG	Dawn Harper	Ed Andrews
Eric Miller – TCRPC	B. O’Connor	Mike Vanderhoof
Hannah Martin – TCRPC	Jeannine MacAllister	Brain Hiatt
Andy Dwyer - GPTMD	Ken Runkle	Marc (last name unknown)
Reema Abi-Akar – TCRPC	Adam Duvall	Jeff Becker
Grace Hartman - LG	Kristen Gisondi	

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

Poll Number 1: What is the single most important mobility challenge in the Grey Area?

- Trying to get transportation in areas that it is not offered
- Being able to pick up riders that are needing to go to important medical appointments that are outside of the normal boundaries.
- I'm not sure yet, I'm new to the area. On initial observation, no bus service in areas and lack of service on weekends/nights.
- Lack of affordable options
- Reaching healthcare appointments
- Dial-a-ride options?

Poll Number 2: What is the most important issue this study should address?

1. Lack of Available Transportation for elderly and disabled (31%)
2. Inadequate hours of operation (15%)
3. Unreliable Service (0%)
4. High Operating Costs (8%)
5. Limited service area (46%)

November 2, 2020

Page 2

6. Poor access to work and social services (0%)

Poll Number 3: How should we address these challenges?

1. Extend operation days/hours (31%)
2. Provide real-time travel information (8%)
3. Improve coordination among providers (46%)
4. Provide more payment options (0%)
5. Increase more information about existing services (15%)

Questions Asked:

Katy: Why is the study being performed now?

Eric: The study is now funded through a grant that has been awarded. It has been a back-burner project for a long time. The problem is growing and will only continue to do so. The Grey Area is expanding, and funding solutions are tricky. The IDOT grant was awarded to study the problem when combined with local money.

Hannah: Ever since the 2010 census, the urban areas have expanded. Some dedicated funding such as JARC and New freedom funds have since expired.

Question for Andrew: The matrix is a complex system, why do some get service and others do not?

Andrew: It comes down to jurisdiction and contracts, it is muddy. It is a luck of the draw in some instances. If someone in Bartonville, for example, is near a fixed route, they have access. It is difficult to determine if you are in a service area or not. We are trying to determine how to get service to those who do not have access. We do have data for ridership demand in the Grey Area which will be helpful.

Ed Andrews: Were there not latent transit districts formed to block City Link service?

Andrew: I cannot speak to as to why per se. The transit districts in the area that are not a part of Peoria West and Peoria Heights are the East Peoria mass transit districts. The only district I have heard of doing something similar is in Washington which founded some sort of transit district. I do not know why that was created and I am unaware of the intentions in the perceived Washington local.

Hannah: To add, I think I heard Savoy formed a transit district with no intent to provide service. It is something that has been done in other areas.

November 2, 2020

Page 3

Sharif: It was not Savoy, but the southwest part of Champaign which formed a district to annex the area.

Katy: Note, the Grey Area is not unique to Peoria. Sometimes it is also called the transit desert. Similar solutions of cooperation and shared resources have been proposed by others.

Kristen Gisondi – (HSTP coordinator from Champaign/Urbana) Grey Area transportation is a huge issue relating the rural to urban. I am on the call to see what Peoria is doing to solve the problem.

Brandon Hovey: What are some of the possible solutions we can learn from the other Grey Areas?

Katy: Sharing resources and pooling funds has been proposed in Springfield.

Comments Made:

CityLift has proven to be effective in picking up the slack for CountyLink. It is more responsible in terms of dollars and cents. Picking up additional people while driving through the same area. Trying to implement ride share across Peoria Region

Katy: One of the challenges is the unincorporated rural areas. Agencies and Jurisdictions would need to coordinate payments and services across the region. Cost share in the region is a part of the solution.

Eric: Elected official awareness is one thing people on the call could benefit from. There are a host of rules surrounding federal and state funds for transit and transportation. There is no way to navigate using these funds unless elected officials are aware there is a problem and aware there are funds available to use. The study is here to raise awareness.

Brain Hiatt – (General Manager) One example to illustrate the challenges faced by operators is Bartonville. It has ADA, Urban, and Rural. I have a lot to look at if depending on if it is an urban or rural rider to pick up. It also depends on which vehicles is in the area.

Dawn (EPIC) – The problem I run into with that is having to pay different fees for different buses.

Andy – To answer Dawn's question, previously, CountyLink service was operated by Peoria County, now Greater Peoria Mass Transit. With EPIC, the most recent contract has city and county link service. Effectively, anyone in the rural area pays \$6 and in urbanized areas they pay \$5. It does not matter which vehicle with the most recent contract. ADA rides are \$2. It used to depend on the vehicle, but it has changed recently. One fare across the board would make it all easier, I agree. One contract for both services has simplified it a little as of now.

November 2, 2020

Page 4

Veera Boddu – I am here to learn about how to use the service. My wife and neighbors do not like to drive. I live in the Grey Area currently and used to live in Champaign/ Urbana. The study of the service there did not go through because the Cherry Hills homeowners' committee did not want city buses in their neighborhoods.

The above constitutes our understanding of the meeting. If you believe there are omissions, additions, or corrections, please send your written comments within seven working days to Lochmueller Group.
