

# **GLOUCESTER COUNTY HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION**



## **UNITED WE RIDE COORDINATION PLAN**

**Adopted  
November 2007**

**Updated  
December 2013**

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## **BACKGROUND**

In 2004, President Bush issued Executive Order #13330, directing federal agencies to begin coordinating funding for human services transportation. Enacted by the United States Congress in August 2005, SAFETEA-LU – the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users” – authorized \$45.3 billion in transportation funding over a four year period (2005-2009). This federal transportation (SAFETEA-LU) bill mandated participation in the development in a local human services transportation coordination plan in order to be considered for future funding allocations under specific grants. The Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) named this initiative to examine human services transportation coordination as “United We Ride.”

In the State of New Jersey, NJ Transit assigned the responsibility for developing local United We Ride transportation plans to counties. Assigning this responsibility to counties was consistent with the current overall delivery of human services transportation since New Jersey law requires counties to develop an annual application to receive casino tax revenues through the Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP). This application process requires counties to maintain a transportation coordination plan, annually update efforts in the area of coordination and outline involvement of local transportation providers in the delivery of services.

### **1.0 Introduction**

#### **1.1 United We Ride (UWR) Coordination Plan Requirements and Study Approach**

The following are the essential components of the UWR coordination plan:

- ✓ Designate lead contact by governing body
- ✓ Convene group of local stakeholders to participate in the development of a local plan based upon the “Framework for Action Self-Assessment for Communities”
- ✓ Conduct an analysis of transportation needs for people with disabilities, older adults and low income residents
- ✓ Prepare an inventory of available resources and services
- ✓ Identify service gaps and duplication of services
- ✓ Identify coordination opportunities to address service gaps and attain service efficiencies
- ✓ Develop strategies for more efficient utilization of resources
- ✓ Prioritize implementation strategies

In Gloucester County, a lead contact was named by the Board of Chosen Freeholders and county administration in the late summer of 2006. Following several meetings sponsored by NJ Transit, Gloucester County began its initial effort to involve stakeholders with a well-publicized UWR kick-off meeting on February 7, 2007. The kick-off meeting attracted 88 people who had a stake in human services transportation. Attendees learned of the Gloucester County UWR transportation plan process and were encouraged to have input into the development of the plan. A brief questionnaire was distributed to attendees

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at the kick-off meeting asking about their interest and ability to participate in the planning process. From that questionnaire, 16 people expressed interest in being members of the UWR steering committee with an additional 22 people responding with a preference to receive updates for the purpose of providing comments throughout the planning process.

People expressing interest in participating in the update by being members of the Gloucester County UWR steering committee represented a broad range of human service transportation interests, from consumers to local agency representatives to state representatives.

Those same individuals that expressed interest in 2007 were sent an email inviting them to the next meeting. The initial update steering committee meeting was convened on May 9, 2013. Committee members agreed to establish regular meetings monthly with the self-assessment meeting scheduled on August 14, 2013. All meetings scheduled were held at the centrally located Gloucester County College.

***Steering Committee Members***

Bill Gordon	Arc Gloucester
Annette DiBartolomeo	Consumer (senior disabled)
Eileen Gallo	Gloucester County Office of Economic Development
Bill Marker	Arc Gloucester
Bob Dazlich	Consumer (disabled)
Jim Kneubuehl	Abilities Center of Southern NJ
Dale Benesh	Consumer (senior disabled)
Diane Powell	Camden County Sen-Han
Adele Riiff	Washington Township Public Works
John Rubis	Consumer
Dennis Cook	Gloucester County College, Special Needs Division
Karen Dickel	Gloucester County Office of Economic Development
Tom Bianco	Gloucester County Office of Economic Development
Hazel Porter	Gloucester County Division of Social Services
Theresa Ziegler	Gloucester County Division of Planning
Randi Woerner	City of Woodbury, Economic Development

**STAFF:**

Lisa Cerny	Gloucester County Department of Human Services
Mark Seigel	Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services
Carol Wilson	Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services
Holly Tongue	Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services

**Regional support to steering committee:**

Emily Costello	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
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**Special thanks to:**

*Gloucester County United We Ride Transportation Plan*

Theresa Ziegler – production of maps  
Dennis Cook – for scheduling college meeting room and services to human services transportation

Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Robert M. Damminger, Director  
Giuseppe Chila, Deputy Director  
Adam Taliaferro  
Larry Wallace

Vincent H. Nestore, Jr., Liaison  
Heather Simmons  
Lyman Barnes

Chad Bruner, County Administrator  
Gerald White, Deputy County Administrator

Gloucester County Local Citizen’s Transportation Advisory Committee (LCTAC)

Dennis Ledger  
Robert Dazlich  
Theresa Ziegler  
Dale Benesh  
Annette DiBartolomeo

Ron Bowers  
Anna Marie Gonella Rosato  
Dennis Cook  
Inez Nelson

Stakeholders who were invited to the initial kick-off meeting were invited to attend the self-assessment meeting held on August 14, 2013. The meeting reviewed the implementation schedule and recommendations of both long term and short term goals. They were broken down in sections.

The outcome of participation in the self-assessment process as well as reliance upon unanticipated changes in transportation landscape will be discussed throughout this document.

The UWR Plan contains the following components:

- ◆ Profile of Gloucester County
- ◆ Transit dependent populations and needs
- ◆ Inventory of existing transportation services and resources (including public and private) fixed route, paratransit, ridesharing and other transportation-related assets.
- ◆ Prioritization of transportation gaps and overlaps and estimate of unmet needs.
- ◆ Prioritization and ranking of strategies to address those unmet needs.

The UWR plan presents an update to both a “snapshot” of the current transportation environment and a “vision” of how the transportation landscape can be improved to better address the transportation needs of Gloucester County residents. The information gathered and perspective offered by the UWR steering committee provides decision-

makers and transportation planning professionals alike the opportunity to see the relationship between the status quo and a human services transportation system that considers a network of resources working together to offer enhanced mobility through greater education, efficient resource allocation and coordination.

## **2.0 Gloucester County Profile**

Gloucester County occupies 329 square miles in southwestern New Jersey. It is bordered by Cumberland and Atlantic Counties to the south-southeast, Camden County to the east-northeast, the Delaware River to the north-northwest, and Salem County to the southwest. Gloucester County is located about 5 miles south of Philadelphia, which is directly across the Delaware River. It is 45 miles west of Atlantic City and 10 miles east-northeast of Wilmington, Delaware.

Almost 12 percent of the population of Gloucester County in 2010 (35,699 persons) was age 65 or older. The 1995 percentage of population age 65 or older was 11.3 percent. The number of seniors in each community ranged from a low of 206 in Woolwich Township to a high of 4,233 in Washington Township. Senior residents as a percentage of a community's population were lowest in Logan Township (6.2 percent) and highest in Woodbury (16.5 percent). Ten of the county's 24 communities had a higher percentage of seniors compared with the general population than the state average of 13.23 percent:

◆ Deptford	14.99%	East Greenwich	14.94%
◆ Greenwich	18.12%	Newfield	14.23%
◆ Paulsboro	13.86%	Pitman	15.05%
◆ Wenonah	13.81%	Westville	14.07%
◆ Woodbury	16.51%	Woodbury Hts.	13.25%

Gloucester County is near the midpoint of New Jersey counties when it comes to median household income, ranking 12<sup>th</sup> of 21 counties in New Jersey in 1997. The estimated median household income for Gloucester County in 1997 was \$49,279; the New Jersey average was \$47,903. The estimated percentage of those living under the poverty level was 7.4 percent, compared to the New Jersey average of 9.3 percent.<sup>[1]</sup> In 1997, 7.7 percent of the total population in the county was living below the poverty level (defined by the U. S. Census according to family size, age of household head, and number of dependent children).

In 2000, nearly 13 percent of the occupied housing units (OHUs) in New Jersey had no access to a car according to the U.S. Census. In Gloucester County, 6.8 percent of OHUs had no auto access.

By individual community, the number of OHUs without a car available was highest in Woodbury, where 19.3 percent or 801 households were in this category.

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<sup>[1]</sup> New Jersey Economic Indicators, April 1997, p.24.

An overview of the county’s demographic and socioeconomic characteristics is summarized in Table 1.1:

**Table 1.1**

**Comparison of Gloucester County and State of New Jersey Characteristics**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Gloucester County</b>	<b>New Jersey</b>
<b>Area</b>	<b>329.0 square miles</b>	<b>7405.7 square miles</b>
2000 Population	254,673	8,414,350
2000 Population Density (persons/sq. mile)	774	1136
Increase in Population 1990-2000	10.7%	8.6%
Percentage of Population Age 65 or Older	11.7	13..2
Median Household Income, 1997	\$49,279	\$47,903
Percentage of Households with Income <\$15,000	7.4%	9.3%
Unemployment Rate, 2000	3.7%	3.8%

In 2010, there were 288,288 people residing in the 24 municipalities in Gloucester County. The area encompasses several densely populated areas, mostly small towns in the north-northeast and central sections of the county. The county is largely suburban, with tracts of rural areas in the west and south-southeast.

## 2.1 Transit Dependent Populations

### Elderly

For the purpose of this Plan, the definition of senior citizen will vary based upon available data for over 60 and over 65 years of age. This definition will be expanded further when discussing 55 and over housing.

Mobility is an important quality of life issue for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. As this phenomenal growth rate occurs, a corresponding growth will occur in number of people who can operate a vehicle safely. According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2005, those aged 65 and over represented 13% of population while accounting for 18% of all traffic-related fatalities. SmartMotorist.com, states drivers over the age of 65 are more likely to be involved in traffic accidents than younger drivers. In Gloucester County in 2013 there have been 24 fatalities; 15 of which were drivers. When older Americans lose their ability to drive and maintain an automobile, they become dependent upon outside providers for transportation (i.e., family, friends, government, private taxis, etc.). This situation can be severe for some, but for all senior citizens facing a life without driving, there is qualitative loss of independence and a disconnect with normal daily activities.

Gloucester County has experienced a 13.3% increase in the number of senior citizens in the age group of 60-85 from the 2000 census to the Year 2010 census. The Year 2010 census recorded 38,342 senior citizens in the 60-85 age brackets residing in Gloucester



County. Increases in the number of senior citizens and their corresponding health decline dictate the need to plan for service expansion.

### ***Assisted Living/Adult Day Care Facilities***

In Gloucester County there are eleven assisted living facilities and six known adult day care centers. These relatively small numbers of senior care facilities seems to indicate that there is not an overwhelming need for transportation at this time. In general, assisted living facilities operate their own bus to assist residents with medical, shopping and recreational trips. The adult day care centers also have vehicles available to transport their clients to/from their respective facilities. One of the larger adult day care centers in Gloucester County is Senior Care in Turnersville. Senior Care operates 4 buses and provides service to 86 adults per day. Evergreen Court Adult Day Care in Woodbury is a small facility with only one van serving 10-14 people per day. (See Appendix I)

### ***55+ Communities***

The proliferation of 55 and over communities in Gloucester County is cause for proper planning by political decision makers and transportation professionals alike. The Gloucester County Division of Senior Services indicates a current total of 16 adult communities of 55 and over throughout Gloucester County. These communities have all been built in the past 20 years. In addition, several more are under construction in the municipalities of Glassboro, East Greenwich, Franklin, Woolwich and Monroe. The experience of the Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services with 55+ communities over the past ten years suggests that paratransit services are not initially requested from these communities. However, as the people in the communities grow older, there is a corresponding increase in the demand for paratransit. Although DTS does not keep ridership data for 55+ communities, operational data indicates that more and more ridership from senior citizens is being generated by 55+ communities. Appendix E shows the map of existing 55+ communities in Gloucester County. The map shows that the communities are spread throughout Gloucester County with placement in both suburban and rural areas. (See Appendix I)

## **Persons with Disabilities - Non - Elderly**

“Persons with disabilities” is defined as those individuals who have “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities” in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

According to the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS), 28,046, or 9.7 % of the Gloucester County residents had reported having at least one type of disability. In 2011, the Disability Status Report for New Jersey published by Cornell University, that figure rose to 28, 910 or 10% of our county population.

According to the NJ Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development, “ambulatory difficulty” is the most common type of disability in NJ: 53.9% of individuals with disabilities have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. “Independent living difficulty” is the second most common type with 38.2% having difficulty going outside

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the home to shop or visit a doctor's office. "Cognitive difficulty" ranks a close third with 36.5% of individuals with disabilities reporting serious difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions

There are 17,490 people with disabilities in Gloucester County of working age between 16 and 64; \* approximately 35.5% are in the labor force in comparison to 80% of the total 16-64 population that is in the labor force. For these working age people, a lack of transportation may sometimes be the main reason these individuals are un-employed and may perhaps never leave their home.

How people get around affects every aspect of their lives; the 1990 ADA aimed to balance the accommodation of citizen's needs with the capacity of public and private entities to respond. An important part of the legislation was providing employment opportunities for people with disabilities; however transportation difficulties contribute to lower employment among the disabled.

Transportation plays such a pivotal role in daily living that without it a person might be totally homebound.

The transportation needs of the non-elderly disabled are many and varied. From the most basic needs, such as going to the bank and grocery store, or to participate in the work force, individuals with disabilities continue to face transportation barriers. These barriers are real for many people with disabilities in their pursuit of activities associated with employment, training/education, recreation and personal business.

Ready access to both public and private transportation is essential in order for people with disabilities to lead full, independent lives. Unless he/she owns a lift-equipped van or car, a wheelchair user cannot accept an offered job if there are no accessible buses, vans or taxis. Blind and hearing impaired individuals are left to fend for themselves without the audible or visible information they need to travel safely and effectively. Without a job, he/she will be forced to use public disability programs as a primary means of support, and forego the most basic step in integration.

The most significant barrier making travel outside the home difficult is the lack of a personal vehicle. Other difficulties include public transportation availability or cost and physical/sensory or cognitive problems that make transportation difficult.\*\*

A sample of employment statistics amongst persons with disabilities shown here is not specifically related to transportation, however, it can be logically extrapolated from the 2003 Harris poll that 1 in 4 of people surveyed below has an employment issue related to transportation. Below is further information from a 2003 Employment Survey describing, employment trends among people with disabilities:

### ***Residents with Developmental Disabilities***

This category of disability presents unique challenges in the area of transportation. There are far ranging levels of aptitude amongst residents with developmental disabilities; however, the need for various types of public and/or paratransit services is almost universal. The Gloucester County 2004 Needs Assessment Service Priorities Plan showed transportation services as the #2 ranked need for people who are developmentally

disabled. Higher functioning adults with developmental disabilities have employment opportunities (both gainful and sheltered employment) that are usually dependent upon their ability to acquire reliable and affordable transportation. Many higher functioning adults tend to live at home with their parents who are often unable to provide the needed transportation support due to work requirements or they are senior citizens caregivers who need the respite offered by transportation support. Residents with severe developmental disabilities are usually supported under the umbrella of services offered by non-profit provider organizations that include the Gloucester County Arc, Devereux Foundation, Bancroft and Kelsh. These organizations operate both group homes as well as supportive and independent living apartments for intellectually impaired residents and offer transportation for vocational as well as social and recreational opportunities.

### ***Newly Disabled/Change in Disability Status***

This category is critically important for many senior citizens and non-seniors alike. The ability to have resources in place to assist people who recently became disabled due to illness or accident can make all the difference in allowing people to adjust and maintain some level of normality in the face of a difficult challenge. Transportation is often a critical piece to helping people who are adjusting to the challenge of a newly inherited disability. The Gloucester County 2004 Needs Assessment Service Priorities Plan showed transportation services as #4 ranked need for people who have physical disabilities. The top 3 needs for the physically disabled were listed as, (1) Medical/Health Care (2) Socialization/group support and (3) Housing. The Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services (DTS) allows for a relatively quick response to residents who find themselves in need of paratransit services on short notice. DTS does not have a formal application process which allows requests for service to be accommodated within days for non-emergency medical purposes. One of the more common situations is a “change in disability status”. With DTS, this situation occurs often with people on dialysis or who are suffering from a degenerative disease. DTS may begin ambulatory transportation to a new dialysis patient, however, within a period of time the same patient may need a walker or wheelchair. Visual impairments or blindness may also accompany their failing health. The deteriorating condition of the patient may also require assistance from the home and/or the construction of a ramp to permit access from the home to the curb line.

\* 2011 Disability Status Report – New Jersey – Cornell University 2012  
<http://www.disabilitystatistics.org>

\*\*United States Department of Transportation - Bureau of Transportation Statistics

### ***Sheltered Workshop Employment – For People with Disabilities***

There are three primary agencies involved in providing job training to people with disabilities in a sheltered workshop setting in Gloucester County; each of which is located within a ¼ mile of each other. The largest provider of sheltered workshop employment, The Abilities Center, is located along Route 47 in the northern portion of Deptford Township. Just around the corner from the Abilities Center is the Crew Labor program sponsored by the Arc Gloucester. Across the street from both of these facilities is the adult program sponsored by St. John of God School. These sheltered workshops

employ 200, 40 and 57 people with disabilities respectively.

Currently several transportation providers serve these three sheltered workshops. Access Link, Gloucester County DTS, Arc Gloucester and several private operators are transporting over half the people attending these three (3) workshop locations.

### ***Adult Center for Transition – Gloucester County College***

The Transition Center is for post-secondary and skill training for young adults with disabilities, ages 16 to 24 years old. The goal of this program is to afford young adults with disabilities the optimum opportunity to achieve a successful transition to adult life. In order to realize this goal, GC-ACT offers a wide range of options including assessments, training, referrals and linkages in a collaborative and coordinated manner. Currently the Division of Transportation transports approximately 30 students to the ACT with 4 students on the waiting list.

### ***Working Poor***

Working poor is often a difficult category to define. This transit dependent category has been hampered by the lack of a common understanding of the term. A report developed by Legal Services of NJ & Poverty Research Institute and the Center of Economic Policy and Education called the Real Cost of Living: the Self-Sufficiency Standard for NJ in 1999 calculates transportation costs at \$157 per month for a single adult, \$167 for a single adult with child and two adults with child at \$318 per month for Gloucester County. The report does not mention how these costs were derived, and to the casual observer, these costs seem low for the owner of an automobile in New Jersey. The definition of poverty is one that continues to be debated amongst federal agencies and state and federal agencies alike. The debate over the definition is important since it supports the level of subsidies, if any, to those considered to be working in poverty.

During the second half of the 1990's, as millions of people moved off welfare rolls and into low-paying jobs, policy makers and policy analysts have become increasingly concerned about the challenges facing the working poor. (The annual earnings of a full-time, full year worker making \$7.15 per hour (minimum wage) are too low to lift a family of three above the poverty line in New Jersey). Despite the success of the bus pass program administered by the Division of Social Services, the challenge remains to find cost effective transportation in people who do not own automobiles.

### ***County Profile – Current Transportation Coordination Activities***

#### ***County Agencies***

In 1988, DTS began working more closely with other county departments, notably, the Office on Aging (now Division of Senior Services), Office of Disability Services and Office of Veterans Affairs to ensure that their constituents could be provided transportation with short-notice. This agreement, entitled Rapid Ride, developed a small funding base and a process to offer transportation to medical appointments on short

notice for certain medical procedures. This agreement has remained in effect since its inception.

***Sister Counties – Philadelphia Hospital Shuttle***

Gloucester County has continued its relationship with Camden County to provide shared passenger shuttle bus service to Philadelphia hospitals. The genesis of this agreement was a presentation made by representatives of each county to NJ Transit in 1995. Rather than duplicate services, the counties now use transfer locations to board passengers and only one bus goes into Philadelphia each day. Each county has a designated day for their bus to go into Philadelphia based upon an agreed upon schedule. Passenger information is shared with each other based upon agreed guidelines.

***South Jersey Transit Authority – Pureland Shuttle***

Since 2001, DTS has contracted with the SJTA to provide service through two towns in Gloucester County with the highest frequency of NJ Transit bus service for the purpose of offering resident’s access to the Pureland Industrial Park in Logan Township. These towns, Westville and Woodbury, also have high levels of low-income residents according to recent information from the Gloucester County Division of Social Services. The Pureland Industrial Park is home to over 200 employers. This contractual arrangement was conceived after SJTA and Gloucester County DTS were both providing transport to Pureland Industrial Park along parallel routes. This contractual arrangement removed the duplication of service that was occurring. The service has seen steady growth in ridership and SJTA has agreed to expand service over the past few years to include transportation for the 3 primary work shifts at the industrial park.

***Employment Destination Information***

The total working population in Gloucester County is 140,259. Research found in 2011 that 77 % of County residents worked in the State of New Jersey. This was broken down as 31.1%, or 43,615 individuals, worked and lived in Gloucester County and 46% of County residents, worked in other New Jersey counties. These numbers indicate that new jobs are likely to be found outside the County. New Jersey counties in which the highest numbers of Gloucester County residents worked included:

◆ Camden	27,427	19.6%
◆ Burlington	10,770	7.7%
◆ Cumberland	4,749	3.4%
◆ Atlantic	3,780	2.7%
◆ Mercer	2,968	2.1%

Another 10.9 % of Gloucester County workers (15,246) were employed in the City of Philadelphia, and 7.3% or 10,212 worked in other Pennsylvania locations. The remainder worked in other states.

According to New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Gloucester County’s employment is projected to increase by 8,500 jobs from 2010 to 2020. This 8.4

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percent increase is expected to be higher than the state (7.7%).

**Industries to have the fastest growth rate:**

◆ Natural Resources & Mining	41.9%
◆ Construction	24.8%
◆ Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	21.2%
◆ Wholesale Trade	5.4%
◆ Transportation and warehousing	14.7%

**Industries projected to have the greatest employment growth:**

◆ Retail Trade	1,900
◆ Construction	1,450
◆ Wholesale Trade	1,200
◆ Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	950
◆ Healthcare and Social Services	850

There are over 20 industrial parks in Gloucester County, housing over 200 companies. The plan presented in the next section includes considerations of how to get employees to these industrial centers and the major retail centers; therefore, spurring growth in the retail and manufacturing/distribution occupations.

According to information from the NJLWD Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages 2012, there were 79,456 private sector jobs in the County in 2012. This information is presented by community in Table 2.2. As shown, over 50% percent of private sector employment in Gloucester County was in five communities:

<u>Community</u>	<u>Jobs</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP	10,361	13%
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP	8,953	11%
MANTUA TOWNSHIP	7,853	10%
WEST DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP	7,518	10%
WOODBURY	7,183	9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,868</b>	<b>53%</b>

This information is significant since public transportation to/from the City of Woodbury is adequate from most areas of Gloucester County, yet, east-west public transportation to/from the municipalities of Washington, Mantua, West Deptford, and Deptford is minimal. The NJ Transit #463 bus operates east to west through Washington and Deptford townships on weekdays serving major employers such as: Gloucester County College, Underwood Hospital, and Kennedy Hospital in Washington Township and Gloucester County government offices in Woodbury. There is currently no service offered on weekends and evening service on the #463 is on two hour headway with last trips operating prior to 11:00pm. This service limitation adversely affects workers and potential workers at hospital sites and other shifts starting or ending at midnight. The NJ Transit #455 bus offers limited east-west service in Gloucester County by accessing Woodbury and the Deptford Mall from the areas of Paulsboro and National Park.

**Gloucester County Private Sector Employment – 2012**  
**Table 2.2**

Municipality	Average number of private sector employed persons
CLAYTON	763
DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP	10,361
EAST GREENWICH TOWNSHIP	1,119
ELK TOWNSHIP	488
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP	1,542
GLASSBORO	4,624
GREENWICH TOWNSHIP	598
HARRISON TOWNSHIP	2,478
LOGAN TOWNSHIP	4,708
MANTUA TOWNSHIP	7,853
MONROE TOWNSHIP	5,518
NATIONAL PARK	160
NEWFIELD	839
PAULSBORO	3,686
PITMAN	1,635
SOUTH HARRISON TOWNSHIP	95
SWEDESBORO	4,970
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP	8,953
WENONAH	649
WEST DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP	7,518
WESTVILLE	1,724
WOODBURY	7,183
WOODBURY HEIGHTS	1,181
WOOLWICH TOWNSHIP	813
<b>Gloucester County Total</b>	<b>79,456</b>

Source: NJLWD Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages 2012

## 2012 NJ Annual Average Labor Force Estimates by Municipality\*

(2012 Benchmark)

Name/County/Municipality	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
<b>Gloucester County Annual Average</b>	158,623	142,817	15,806	10.0
Clayton Borough	4,684	4,226	458	9.8
Deptford Township	16,899	15,105	1,794	10.6
East Greenwich Township	3,246	3,004	242	7.5
Elk Township	1,981	1,793	188	9.5
Franklin Township	9,773	8,534	1,238	12.7
Glassboro Borough	10,727	9,489	1,238	11.5
Greenwich Township	2,940	2,724	215	7.3
Harrison Township	5,309	4,878	431	8.1
Logan Township	3,736	3,574	161	4.3
Mantua Township	9,729	8,814	915	9.4
Monroe Township	19,524	17,486	2,038	10.4
National Park Borough	2,059	1,816	242	11.8
Newfield Borough	1,086	978	108	9.9
Paulsboro Borough	3,857	2,969	888	23.0
Pitman Borough	5,773	5,100	673	11.7
South Harrison Township	1,447	1,339	108	7.4
Swedesboro Borough	1,241	1,106	135	10.8
Washington Township	27,519	25,290	2,229	8.1
Wenonah Borough	1,462	1,327	135	9.2
West Deptford Township	13,320	12,109	1,211	9.1
Westville Borough	2,966	2,643	323	10.9
Woodbury City	5,819	5,146	673	11.6
Woodbury Heights Borough	1,846	1,712	135	7.3
Woolwich Township	1,834	1,700	135	7.3

**NOTE:** BLS areas (with 25,000 + population) are based on claims share. All others use census share.

\* Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Source: NJLWD Local Area Unemployment Statistics

### 3.0 Transportation Needs and Gaps

This section updates the current transportation needs and gaps in the existing human services transportation network in and around Gloucester County. These needs and gaps were identified as part of the 2002 Gloucester County Transportation study and the United We Ride steering committee process, including the self-assessment process



conducted by stakeholders on March 7, 2007. On May 9, 2013 the United We Ride Planning Committee reconvened to review the submitted plan and evaluation what was completed, started or eliminated. This group met several times to review short term and long term goals.

### **3.1 Existing Needs and Gaps**

#### ***Service Needs and Gaps – Elderly Residents***

The Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services recently surveyed passengers that use our service. DTS collected 211 surveys most were satisfied with services currently provided. Needs expressed included: need for less advance time to service providers to receive a ride to important medical appointments, more service to out-of-county doctors, particularly in the southern portions of Gloucester County and more service for personal and recreational endeavors.

Another important unmet transportation need for senior citizens that has been reported by both DTS and the Division of Senior Services is wheelchair transport that involves bringing people to the vehicle from inside their home. There are times when senior citizens have medical ailments, or suffer an accident (i.e., broken hip), that quickly changes their transportation needs and circumstances at home. There are many more senior citizens living into their 80's and 90's and becoming quite frail while trying to live an independent lifestyle in their own homes. However, without a wheelchair ramp or the availability of family or qualified people to assist or carry the wheelchair bound person from the home, senior citizens become dependent upon expensive ambulance services for their transportation needs. Gloucester County DTS provides curb-to-curb transportation with polite assistance from the driver.

DTS reports that requests for all types of medical related transportation by senior citizens have increased tremendously over the past 20 years. Transportation to dialysis treatments is one particular growth area. DTS reports difficulty in keeping up with the demand for dialysis transportation requests that are being made by social workers from the three dialysis units currently in Gloucester County, namely, the Renex Dialysis Center in the City of Woodbury, Renal Dialysis Center in Mantua and the Kennedy Dialysis Center in Turnersville. Currently we have 29 residents on the waiting list for transportation.

The disabled and non-disabled senior citizens of Gloucester County can use several available transportation alternatives such as fixed route public transportation, modified fixed route services provided by municipalities, demand responsive services provided by DTS and limited service provided by a host of human service agencies. The primary service gap that exists for senior citizens is capacity related, where demand for transportation exceeds the supply. This has been identified as a major concern by DTS and could become a greater problem in the future as the general population ages. As people get older, their ability to drive a private automobile to all destinations declines and the need for transportation alternatives increases. Other service gaps for senior citizens are related to the need for out of county or out of state transportation as well as the inability of senior citizens to access a vehicle at the curb line without considerable assistance.

There are different levels of service available to senior citizens based on the type of trip requested. Currently, DTS is operating at full capacity for medical related transportation for seniors. DTS reports out of service area trip denials or delays in providing transportation services because of the increasing demand, which may include trips for some of the most serious medical related needs, such as dialysis, radiation therapy, and other therapy services outside of the County. DTS continues to provide over 60,000 trips per year. Anecdotal evidence also points to the need for increased requests for trips associated with changes in medical procedures (e.g. shorter hospital stays, more out-patient procedures, access to pre-surgical tests and post-surgical therapy). There is also evidence that there is diminished support structure of family and friends to provide transportation for senior citizens. Routine medical appointments that do not meet DTS service criteria also are being denied or delayed. There also is insufficient capacity to fulfill trip demands for personal business, adult day care, and social activities. DTS reports an increase in the number of personal trip requests, such as visitation trips for family members to nursing care facilities, social activities for shut-ins, and trips to nutrition centers and other senior related services. The need also exists for senior citizens who do not have an automobile to have transit options available in the evening and on weekends. Municipal buses and county operated service is primarily operated on weekdays during daytime hours.

Another area of transportation that is quickly growing for senior citizens and their families is the need to access adult day care centers. To date, in Gloucester County, three primary providers of this service to senior citizens, Guardian Adult Day Care, Senior Care and Communicare, all provide their own vehicles to transport their clientele. However, two of the three agencies in the past have expressed an interest in talking to the Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services (DTS) to discuss service coordination issues.

The senior citizen population also includes many veterans of the armed services. In Gloucester County, veterans have VA hospital facilities in nearby Philadelphia and Elsmere, Delaware. In 2004, a regional VA Clinic in Sewell in Gloucester County opened. This expansion of medical procedures available to veterans is a positive development for veterans. However, Gloucester County DTS has not seen a reduction in the need for inter-state transportation of veterans since many procedures and prescription needs are still handled at the VA hospitals. DTS currently has 119 veterans registered in their computer database for transportation services.

### ***Service Needs and Gaps – People with Disabilities***

In Gloucester County, people with disabilities face similar challenges as indicated in the national data. Employment related transportation remains a critical unmet need according to the Gloucester County Division of Disability Services. Their office reports, that overall mobility is insufficient and a barrier. For example, where public transportation or paratransit may be available, safe crosswalks may not be for residents who are blind or wheelchair bound. Their office acknowledges a significant improvement in transportation opportunities for persons with disabilities seeking employment due to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 and the requirement of NJ Transit

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to offer complimentary paratransit services to their fixed bus route system. The complimentary service, entitled “Access Link”, began providing service to qualified Gloucester County residents in 1994.

Access Link has been the transportation answer for many people with disabilities since the service operates absent of trip purpose priorities and requirements. The implementation of NJ Transit sponsored complimentary paratransit has seen many successes, yet, in Gloucester County, there are on-going reports of service failures. The lack of service reliability on the part of Access Link has been cited as a critical issue by passengers, parents/guardians of passengers, the Division of Transportation Services, the Office of Special Needs at Gloucester County College and the Gloucester County Office of Disability Services. Fortunately, Gloucester County residents and advocates for people with disabilities have seen improvements in the Access Link delivery system since 2005. These improvements have been noted by critics of the service listed above.

The County paratransit system, DTS, has been unable to provide for many of the non-medical needs of the non-elderly disabled population. With limited funds, and a fare free service structure, DTS has adopted operating procedures that allow the service to provide for most in-county transportation needs, but restrict service to out-of-county areas and employment needs. The current DTS budget does not support the level of drivers and vehicles needed to serve the many and varied transportation needs of the disabled population in Gloucester County. DTS cites a waiting list for transportation to gainful employment and sheltered workshops as evidence that residents with disabilities are, (1) not eligible for complimentary paratransit offered by Access Link, (2) reluctant to use Access Link due to operating rules and service reliability concerns, and (3) prefer to have a free service offered by DTS rather than use Access Link or fixed route public transportation.

The Gloucester County Office of Disability Services states that their interaction with a segment of consumers who are disabled reveals their desire to have social and recreational opportunities throughout the day and also after 5:00pm and on weekends. The concern was expressed that the life activities of individuals with disabilities does not stop at the end of the normal work day. The availability of transportation during evenings and weekends would allow for freedom and flexibility in the social and recreational life of persons with disabilities, particularly those who do not qualify for Access Link services. Most county transportation provided for individuals with disabilities is prioritized from medical purposes. Gloucester County has an active disabled population and we try our best to meet their demands but there are budgetary limitations.

### ***Employment Transportation Gaps – Transit Dependent Residents***

Suburban Gloucester County residents have greater access to public transportation than their rural counterparts. Residents who live in the more densely populated towns (e.g. Glassboro, Woodbury, and Williamstown) have a more extensive public transportation network available as an alternative. The City of Woodbury for example, has six NJ Transit bus routes traveling within its borders. Thus, transportation is less of a barrier to accessing job opportunities in the county and beyond. By comparison, rural clients without access to an automobile will have fewer alternatives, may have more difficulty

planning trips, and may be more restricted in the work destinations they can reach and therefore the job opportunities they can consider.

Jobs that are available may not involve “typical” work hours. They may involve evening and weekend hours or start and end times that are not in the traditional peak commuting hours. Thus, though there may be transit service available in the suburban communities, the actual schedule may not be conducive for making the work trip by bus. The biggest service gap identified is accessing NJ Transit buses is during off peak hours. Clients obtaining jobs on the second or third shift (evenings and overnights), for example, may find NJ Transit bus service intermittent or curtailed completely. Evening, midday, and weekend service may run on a headway of 60 minutes or greater between buses. This may force those with weekend and non-rush hour work shifts to endure commutes of an hour or more to and from work, especially if a transfer is involved. Workers ending their shifts after midnight may find no service available at all for the return trip.

For rural residents, the largest service gaps are capacity related. There are fewer bus routes in the rural areas, which limits the choice of alternatives for those without a car available. Southern and eastern Gloucester County (e.g. Franklin, Elk, Greenwich, South Harrison and Woolwich Townships) frequently are mentioned as the areas of the county most lacking in public transportation services. East-west cross county transportation also is a major concern for rural residents, with the majority of public transit routes running on a north-south axis toward the cities of Woodbury, Camden and Philadelphia. Again, those individuals on evening, night and weekend work schedules will be the most inconvenienced.

### ***Working Poor - Service Needs and Gaps***

The challenge of reliable and affordable transportation is one that must be resolved for the working poor to encourage work and economic well-being. Without a private automobile, the poor face dependence upon public transportation and its’ inherent lack of flexibility. This lack of flexibility was recognized by the Gloucester County WFNJ Transportation Committee in 2002 in the development of transportation options for welfare recipients. These same options are relevant to the working poor population, except that many times the working poor do not qualify for transportation-related subsidies - thus discouraging the concept of work.

Without an automobile, the ability to economically elevate oneself by accessing work sites and training programs is complicated by the lack of available and affordable transit systems in Gloucester County.

Areas with high population density, unemployment, senior populations, and lowest income also exhibited the highest need for public transportation services. In Gloucester County, the communities with the highest needs, in rank order are:

- ◆ Paulsboro;
- ◆ Clayton;
- ◆ Glassboro;
- ◆ Pitman;

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- ◆ Woodbury;
- ◆ Westville;
- ◆ Wenonah.
- ◆ Swedesboro;
- ◆ National Park;
- ◆ Deptford Township;
- ◆ Greenwich Township (Gibbstown);
- ◆ Logan Township
- ◆ Monroe Township (Williamstown);
- ◆ Washington Township (Turnersville); and
- ◆ West Deptford Township (Thorofare).

Areas shown to have a medium level of need for public transportation include portions of the following communities:

- ◆ Mullica Hill (Harrison Township);
- ◆ Monroe Township;
- ◆ Mantua Township;
- ◆ Washington Township;
- ◆ East Greenwich Township;
- ◆ Franklinville (Franklin Twp.); and
- ◆ Newfield.

According to the Administrator of the Gloucester County One Stop Career Center, below is a listing of current transportation-related employment needs in Gloucester County:

- ✓ Gloucester County residents not working in the County of Gloucester travel beyond the county and NJ state line. The top five areas of employment for Gloucester County residents include Camden, Burlington, Cumberland, and the City Philadelphia and Delaware County, Pa. Transportation to connect Gloucester County residents to jobs in the connecting counties without them having to ride more than one bus is limited. This can be cost and/or time prohibitive.
- ✓ Industrial Parks – Gloucester County has over 20 industrial parks that offer a variety of available jobs and many are shift work positions. Public transportation to these sites runs very infrequently, if at all. In addition, public transportation is not able to accommodate the various shifts in the Industrial Parks.
- ✓ “Off Hours” transportation – residents of Gloucester County have difficulty in accessing transportation that will get them to job opportunities that are outside normal business hours. This includes early morning and later to late evening hours.
- ✓ Transportation needs to be available for working parents who need to get their children to childcare. The inability to access transportation to a childcare facility and then arrive on time to their place of employment is a major impediment to getting people to work.

- ✓ “Emergency” and “Shift” work transportation is lacking for working individuals. Employees taking public transportation are bound to time schedules dictated by NJ Transit. Unfortunately, in the event of an emergency, these individuals are not able to access transportation to get to the emergency. They are also not able to take advantage of overtime opportunities and/or mandatory overtime because of lack of public transportation. This prevents individuals from being able to accept jobs that require mandatory overtime.
- ✓ Port of Paulsboro – the development of the Port of Paulsboro will bring job opportunities to Gloucester County. Currently there are only two (2) buses that run into Paulsboro which are the 402 and 455 with no midday service on the 402.
- ✓ A river route should be developed in order to allow individuals residing in the river towns to easily access transportation. Residents would have greater accessibility to employment opportunities beyond their immediate community.
- ✓ Rural Communities – Gloucester County has several communities that are not fully accessible to public transportation due to their rural location. These communities are predominantly residential and offer limited employment opportunities within their boundaries. Individuals living in these areas need access to transportation that can link them to employment.

## **4.0 Transportation Services and Options**

There are four major providers of public transportation service in Gloucester County. The primary fixed-route service provider is New Jersey Transit (NJT). Modified fixed route service for rural area residents and vocational rehabilitation clients is available from the Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services (DTS), using a combination of County owned vehicles and private vendors. The largest providers of demand-responsive service are DTS and NJT’s Access Link, the agency’s ADA-mandated complementary paratransit service. Gloucester County also has fifteen (15) municipalities operating buses primarily for shopping, personal business and recreational needs of senior citizens. There are also many smaller for profit and non-profit agencies in Gloucester County providing demand-responsive service. This section provides an overview of these existing services.

Another important aspect of transportation service is the investment in facilities and the transit infrastructure to make transportation services more convenient and affordable to use. Documentation of Gloucester County’s transit facilities/infrastructure, or lack of, is noted within this section.

### **4.1 Fixed Route Bus Transportation**

NJ Transit operates traditional line haul bus service with fixed routes on fixed schedules. Service is primarily designed to offer access to the major metropolitan areas of Camden, New Jersey and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The routes run north to south through Gloucester County along major arteries. The exceptions to the north-south routing are the

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#455 bus and #463 bus which offer needed east-west service intersecting with the north-south routes at various times for important transfer opportunities. The #463 bus serves Gloucester County College in Deptford.

### **NJ Transit**

NJ Transit operates 11 regular bus routes in Gloucester County. The 11 routes consist of:

- ◆ Nine regional interstate routes providing service through Gloucester and Camden Counties to Philadelphia: 313, 315, 400, 401, 402, 403, 408, 410, 412
- ◆ Two intrastate routes: one regional (455) and one local (463).

All routes except the 412 and 463 operate seven days a week. The 313 and 315 are shore routes (Cape May to Philadelphia) with limited schedules. Other routes, such as the 401, 402, and the 410, operate limited service during the midday. This limited service may prove a hardship to riders relying on buses to get to employment centers, especially if the jobs require shift work during off peak hours. A recent positive development has been the announcement by NJ Transit that the #412 bus route which operates between Philadelphia, Glassboro and Elsmere via the City of Woodbury also provides service to Rowan University in Glassboro and the Board of Social Services in Sewell due to recent route adjustments made by NJ Transit.

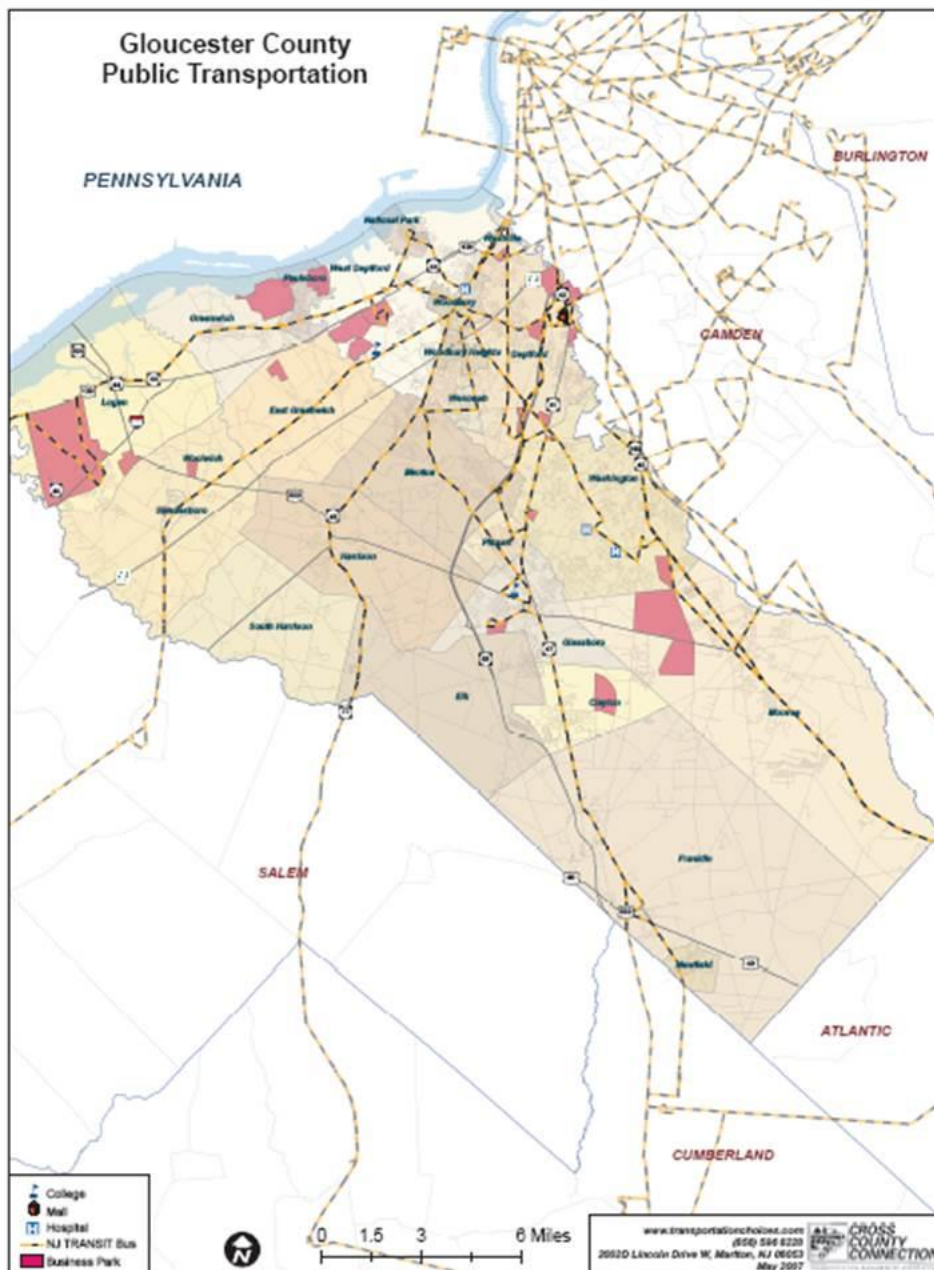
The two intrastate bus routes serving the County provide regional and local access. The 455 bus travels from Paulsboro to the Cherry Hill Mall in Camden County. It travels through four other Gloucester County communities and the Deptford Mall, providing shopping and employment opportunities to those residents able to utilize this route. The 455 is the only NJ Transit route serving National Park, an area with a large percentage of transit dependent residents. Prior to the establishment of the 455 route, National Park had no public transportation access. The 463 route is the main east-west cross county bus route. It travels through densely populated areas such as Woodbury, Woodbury Heights, Deptford Township, Washington Township, and Williamstown (Monroe Township). The lack of mid-day service operated by NJ Transit on a few bus routes continues to hinder the mobility needs of transit dependent residents. The lack of mid-day service and evening transportation on the #402 bus serving the Pureland Industrial Park is particularly restrictive for employees working odd shifts at Pureland. The lack of late evening bus transportation restricts job seekers who wish to work a 3<sup>rd</sup> shift, or have a need to come home early due to family emergencies or illness occurring while at work. Rural areas of Gloucester County continue to be underserved or unserved by public transportation. The inability of rural residents to access public transportation places limitations on their mobility, and subsequently, their options for employment and recreational endeavors.

According to a recent May 6, 2007 Newark Ledger article, new NJ Transit Chief Richard R. Sarles says “he wants NJ Transit to do a complete audit of its bus routes – something that has not been done in nearly 30 years - in hopes of finding ways to lure new customers to buses and to accommodate existing passengers better”. Mr. Sarles further said in the same article that he “wants to create express bus service into the southern part of the state and increase awareness of the agency’s park-n-ride locations (none are

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located in Gloucester County), to highlight transit as an attractive alternative to congested roadways.” Additionally, a newsletter article attributed to the Executive Director stated that “they will focus on improved connections between all modes in the region to ensure that our routes are properly aligned with where our customers live, work, and shop and spend their leisure time.”

The Gloucester County UWR steering committee is hopeful that the thoughts expressed by Mr. Sarles will not be lost on Gloucester County and contiguous counties. In the southern part of our state we see more traffic congestion with each passing day with less relative investment in our transit infrastructure, including bus lines that fail to offer proper transfers and much needed mid-day service.





## **4.2 Paratransit Services**

### **Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services (DTS)**

Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services, under the Department of Human Services, is a transportation service provided by the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders for senior, rural, low income, and disabled residents of the county. The Division of Transportation Services (DTS) receives federal and state grant funds and county funds specifically for the transport of senior citizens (age 60+), qualified persons with disabilities and Medicaid eligible residents via a contract with the Gloucester County Board of Social Services. In 2011, DTS stopped providing Medicaid transportation as the state hired a company to handle the Medicaid transportation as a broker system. Gloucester County is not a current vendor for LogistiCare.

DTS is considered the primary provider of paratransit services in Gloucester County. DTS operates its own fleet of 36 vehicles (twenty of which are lift-equipped). DTS has two (2) private sub-contractors. DTS places most of its staff effort in the provision of non-emergency medical transportation. The most commonly contracted out trips are weekend dialysis and early and late day weekday trips that extend beyond standard DTS business hours. DTS occasionally provides transport to various County events and accepts special service requests from social service agencies.

DTS operates five days a week, Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday DTS service is scheduled from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. to drug treatment centers on occasion. Service is provided throughout the day on Saturday by private operators, but is usually limited to dialysis transportation. Service is provided on a curb to curb basis. The DTS service area encompasses all of Gloucester County and most of Camden County, with limited weekday service to Philadelphia and Cumberland County. Trips are provided free of charge but voluntary donations are accepted from passengers to help defray costs. Requests for transportation service to medical appointments must be received at least three days prior to the appointment.

In the category of fixed and subscription type bus service, DTS operates one modified fixed route and four subscription type bus routes throughout Gloucester County. The one modified fixed route service is the rural bus route that runs four days a week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. The bus uses a different route on each day, traveling from the rural sections of the county in the west and south to the more populated areas north and east, providing access to the shopping, medical and recreation centers in those towns. DTS also operates three vocational bus routes that provide subscription type transportation for developmentally disabled adults from their homes throughout the County to the Abilities Center of Gloucester County and the St. John of God School. DTS also contracts with a private operator to handle the other four bus routes to serve these facilities from the eastern part (i.e. Williamstown) of the county. The private operator of this route is paid with county funds. Both facilities are located on Delsea Drive (Rt. 47) in Deptford Township; both provide vocational counseling and other work related services for their clients. DTS and their private operator currently transport 75 residents to these sites for work activities.

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During the past several years, DTS has performed more employment related transportation in response to welfare to work initiatives. This service has included feeder type service, transporting residents from their homes to local bus stops to use NJ Transit bus service. There has also been direct service by taking a person to/from their homes to the job site, and in October 2000, DTS provided modified fixed route service to the Pureland Industrial Park from the municipalities of Deptford Township and City of Woodbury. The Pureland Shuttle was funded with a one year Demonstration Grant. Since January 2002, the service has continued through a coordination agreement with the Camden County Improvement Authority (now operated by the South Jersey Transit Authority).

The trend toward having the county service become more of a community transportation provider continues to evolve. No longer are county systems such as DTS being asked solely for medical rides. The varied transit needs of senior citizens, persons with disabilities, rural residents and low-income residents are forcing paratransit systems to integrate funding sources to consolidate and expand the service delivery system. According to DTS staff, service priorities continue to be the same for transit-dependent populations, with the elderly seeking medical rides, the non-elderly physically disabled seeking employment-related rides, and working poor seeking employment related rides. The primary change to service needs, according to DTS staff, lies not only in the increased volume of rides requested to service priorities among transit dependent groups but also the number of rides requested among the groups to the secondary and tertiary priorities, such as: food shopping, recreation, socialization and educational opportunities.

### **NJ Transit Access Link**

Access Link is NJ Transit's complementary paratransit service, developed in response to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The ADA required all public transportation systems to provide comparable paratransit service to individuals who are unable to use local bus service as a result of their disability. Access Link is a shared ride, curb to curb transportation service for eligible people with disabilities. Eligibility is determined by NJ Transit following intake by a designated local social service agency (i.e., a County Office for the Disabled). The service area and hours of service are determined by the local bus route network (i.e. service is only available during the times that the local bus route is in service and within  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles of that bus route). In Gloucester County there are many areas not served by bus routes, therefore many areas in the county are not within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of any NJ Transit bus route and are ineligible for any Access Link service. However, Gloucester County's Division of Transportation Services is available throughout the county. Gloucester County services to those residing outside of Access Link's service area will be subject to service policies that differ from Access Link.

Access Link trips are limited to pick up and drop off points within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of an eligible (non-commuter) NJT bus route. Access Link is designed to complement service available on local bus routes. As a result, transfers between different carriers may be necessary to bring people into the Access Link service area. Hours of Access Link service are the same as regularly scheduled local bus service, including weekends and

holidays. So, if a bus route that the customer would ride (if they physically capable) operates on Sundays from 10am-6pm, then Access Link (as a shadow paratransit service) is available on Sundays from 10am-6pm.

The fare for Access Link service is the same as the fare that would be charged if the customer rode the bus. NJ Transit has a zone based fare system for its regular bus service. Consequently, the fare depends on how far a customer is traveling. Customers pay the exact fare upon boarding the vehicle.

NJ Transit provides Access Link service statewide, matching their statewide bus network. They have a statewide call center for trip reservations, cancellations, trip status, customer service and certification. NJ Transit staff utilizes a computerized scheduling system to prepare preliminary schedules. Final schedule adjustments are made by the five (5) contracted service providers. NJ Transit's computer system also supports customer certification, data communications to vehicles, vehicle tracking for same day service monitoring, statistical data gathering and for logging customer service issues.

Access Link service is organized into 5 service regions. Gloucester County is part of region 2, which includes Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem counties. NJ Transit hires service providers to deliver the Access Link service through a competitive contracting process. Region 2 is currently operated by Laidlaw Transit Services.

To use Access Link, customers must apply in advance. Each customer must attend a pre-scheduled, in-person assessment. Once approved, customers call Access Link toll free to make a reservation for service. Customers call 1-14 days in advance to schedule a ride. Customers specify their requested pick-up time. Access Link will schedule service within one hour of the requested time. They will pick-up riders within 20 minutes of the time that they have scheduled.

Many customers have consistent travel needs. Service for these customers is pre-scheduled and is called "subscription" service. Subscription service accounts for over 60% of Access Link's total service in Region 2.

Access Link drivers will assist riders in going to/from their seat and to/from the curb. Drivers do not provide riders with assistance to/from the customer's door. This is a distinct difference between Access Link and some county and municipal services. Access Link does not deny trips and does not prioritize trips based upon trip purpose, in accordance with ADA regulations. In comparison, Gloucester County DTS prioritizes trips according to trip purpose and provides limited service options for lower priority and/or costly trips that are outside of capacity constraints.

### **Municipal Services**

Fifteen (15) municipalities throughout Gloucester County provide a modified form of fixed-route transportation service. These services are oriented to senior citizens and available to persons with disabilities that live in their particular community. In some

cases, the services may be limited to these users, rather than being available to the general public.

These services usually run three to five days a week. Typically, the routes are flexible and varied on alternating days and weeks to accommodate different destinations on the route. The municipal buses collectively provide over 100,000 rides per year. The services operate independent of each other, with no formal coordination agreements or centralized dispatching. Municipalities providing community bus service include:

- ◆ Clayton
- ◆ Deptford
- ◆ Franklin Township
- ◆ Glassboro
- ◆ Logan Township
- ◆ Mantua Township
- ◆ Monroe Township
  - ◆ Paulsboro
  - ◆ Pitman
- ◆ Washington Township
- ◆ West Deptford
- ◆ Westville
- ◆ Woodbury
- ◆ Woodbury Heights
- ◆ Wenonah

The municipal bus service is administered in various ways by the respective municipalities. Washington Township, which operates a shopping bus and medical bus for its residents, is administered through its Parks and Recreation Department. The buses operate under close supervision from Parks and Recreation staff. Residents have a publicized phone number to call and service is provided under established policies and guidelines. Other municipalities operating their own shuttle buses were found to have less structured administrative control which impacts their ability to provide uninterrupted, effective service. Furthermore, a review of the municipal bus systems found that municipalities, with exception of Wenonah and Woodbury Heights combining to provide shared service for their residents, operate independently of one another with no formal coordination agreement in place.

**Other Social Service Agency Transportation Providers**

The research conducted identified four other providers of demand responsive transportation services in Gloucester County. These services are oriented to the needs of agency clients. The following list of providers was compiled from the Division of Senior Services. It is not a comprehensive list of every available provider, but those who work in conjunction with Senior Services. The social service agency providers identified include the following:

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- ◆ *Senior Care, Turnersville* - Assisted Living Center and provider of Adult Day Care. Provides medical, shopping and recreational transportation, evenings Monday-Friday, 8am - 6pm and Saturday 9 am-2pm. Facility has four 14 passenger vehicles.
- ◆ *Communicare Adult Day Health Care Center*- provides preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, and rehabilitative services to meet the individual needs of the functionally impaired adult client. Provides transportation, meals, wellness programs and activities.
- ◆ *Evergreen Court Adult Day Services*- an exciting program ideal for the medically challenged adult and the frail senior. The program enables individuals to remain as independent as possible in the home environment by providing resources to meet individual needs of clients. Provides door-to-door transportation and activities.
- ◆ *St. John of God Community Services, Deptford* - Provides recreational and school related transportation only throughout the year.

Coordination between private, non-profit human service agencies could be greatly beneficial for all parties involved. Vehicle sharing (especially of backup vehicles) could reduce operating costs and provide for expanded hours of operation. Some of the caveats to this type of coordination, though, are the insurance and liability issues with vehicle sharing.

### **Federal Transit Administration Funded Transportation**

#### **Section 5310 Providers**

Gloucester County currently has three (3) recipients of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 vehicles. The three providers are:

- (a) Gloucester County Division of Transportation Services (DTS)
- (b) Gloucester County ARC
- (c) St. John of God School

#### **Section 5311**

Gloucester County has a large rural area in the western portion of the county and pockets of rural areas in the southern portion of this 329 square mile county. Gloucester County DTS is the sole provider of transportation under FTA Section 5311 funding. Rural service consists of a three day per week modified bus route service along with weekday subscription service and demand response service. Every Friday we provide rural transportation service to the Glassboro area, 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month they go to the Deptford Mall. Service provided with Section 5311 funds is critical in a county such as Gloucester County due to limited public transportation options in the rural areas. The municipality of South Harrison has no public transportation while other rural areas are offered only limited public bus service. There is no passenger rail service in any area of Gloucester County at present.

Subscription and demand response service offers rural residents the opportunity to access

medical facilities as well as work related opportunities. Trips are also provided for personal business and grocery shopping needs.

(b) Arc Gloucester

Arc Gloucester is a major provider of transportation in Gloucester County to moderately and severely disabled adults. This agency currently provides agency specific transportation, however, their transportation staff has been engaged in the UWR planning process. Arc Gloucester continues to be interested in developing coordination strategies to more effectively serve their population and help other area providers with their transportation needs.

(c) St. John of God School

St. John of God School in Westville, New Jersey has been awarded two FTA Section 5310 vehicles. This school has a work program for disabled adults and travels over 30,000 miles a year around Gloucester County.

**JARC/TANF Transportation**

Gloucester County has relied upon extensive coordination with area providers to offer work related transportation with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grant funds. Gloucester County DTS has an annual agreement with the South Jersey Transit Authority (SJTA) to provide modified fixed route shuttle bus service to the Pureland Industrial Park. This service is funded with JARC funds, and county funds. DTS drivers also provide JARC related transport via county vehicles.

With a large number of housing developments built in the past 15 years in the rural western portion of Gloucester County, the population has grown significantly in areas that were predominantly farm communities. This growth has not been met with additional transit resources. Dependence upon the automobile is imperative for many of the newer rural residents do not have traditional transit options. Gloucester County DTS has utilized Section 5311 funds to help many older residents who no longer drive and people with disabilities that are unable to drive an automobile.

**Transit Infrastructure in Gloucester County**

Gloucester County's current transit infrastructure is insufficient to support service expansion and coordination opportunities. Gloucester County currently has no passenger rail service, only one small park-n-ride lot with 20 parking spaces and no transit terminal to serve as a hub for bus transit coordination. Compare this transit infrastructure with Gloucester County's neighbor – Camden County. Camden County has passenger rail service with PATCO service, the River Line and the Atlantic City Rail Line. Furthermore, the Avandale Park-n-Ride facility is a large, quality park-n-ride lot located in Sicklerville, NJ. The lot is lighted, well-advertised, has bus shelters and lies in an excellent location along the Atlantic City Expressway. In addition, the City of Camden has a the Rand Bus Terminal that serves as a bus hub for most NJ Transit bus routes

operating from Philadelphia into Camden, Gloucester, Cumberland and Salem counties.

The lack of transit terminal in the Woodbury area of Gloucester County restricts the ability of NJ Transit bus service to operate more efficiently. The failure to develop a park-n-ride lot along Route 42 in Washington Township (despite over 20 years of study), has allowed traffic congestion along the Route 42 corridor to grow unabated for the past two decades. In the past, failure to bring any type of passenger rail service into Gloucester County has resulted in continued reliance on the automobile to access needed services. Hopefully with the future development of a passenger rail service, it will ultimately reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, traffic fatalities due to highway overcrowding and potential loss of economic opportunities by residents and businesses alike. There are also a limited number of NJ Transit ticket agencies in Gloucester County which inhibits use of public transportation due to the inability to use bus service at a discounted cost.

## **5.0 Updated Recommendations and Priorities**

The United We Ride stakeholder self-assessment process highlighted several strategies to address some gaps and needs in the current human services transportation delivery system service.

- ◆ There is a need to coordinate transportation services for senior with private carriers and municipal bus programs.
- ◆ For all populations there is a request to work more closely with NJ Transit so that our voices are heard on the following:
  - ◆ a request to NJ Transit to add east/west transportation either with existing shuttles or new routes
  - ◆ request to NJ Transit to run shuttle buses during off peak hours and extend service for weekends and after 5pm
  - ◆ feeder shuttles from existing NJ Transit routes to employment areas
  - ◆ requested that NJ Transit conduct a public transportation needs study in Gloucester County
  - ◆ would like NJ Transit to provide better service on the 402 route in Pureland
  - ◆ request NJ Transit to extend the 455 past Paulsboro to Pureland Industrial Park
  - ◆ request NJ Transit to provide more service during off peak hours, including nights & weekends
  - ◆ request NJ Transit to bring back 463 weekend service
  - ◆ request NJ Transit to develop more Parks & Rides since Gloucester County has zero
  - ◆ request NJ Transit to provide additional ticket agencies, vending machines at stop locations
- ◆ Gloucester County residents that are disabled would like the priority lifted for medical purposes.

- ◆ Persons with disabilities would like to see municipal transportation services extend services to include non-township events and have multiple pick-up locations.
- ◆ The development of Woodbury City Transit as a HUB to migrate public transportation options and services which would include ticket agencies/vending machines as well as a transfer station for both buses and potentially light rail.
- ◆ Would encourage the use of the Gloucester County rail line for employment, improvement of air quality and recreation needs.
- ◆ Advocate for the use of BRT to help with congestion.
- ◆ Improvement of the Pureland Shuttle Service:
  - ◆ Have the Pureland Shuttle operate at a fixed pick-up stops and coordinate with NJ Transit routes
  - ◆ Have Pureland Shuttle operate extended hours and weekends
  - ◆ Provide feeder service for Pureland Shuttle though out Pureland Industrial Park.
- ◆ To disseminate the information in a more concise manner, the following would be undertaken:
  - ◆ Update Gloucester County Transit's User's Guide for distribution and placement on county, municipal and public websites.
  - ◆ Increase the amount of literature that is distributed throughout the county when possible.
  - ◆ Investigate ways of finding funding to create and run cable ads, also place public service announcements on the cable community channels as a way of getting the word out about local transportation services.

## **6.0 PLAN SUMMARY**

### **Summary**

Opportunities abound for transportation services to be improved throughout Gloucester County. From public transit initiatives, to initiatives in the area of paratransit, there continues to be a tremendous social and economic value to improving the current network of transportation services. Socio-economic factors such as: people living longer, people with disabilities being more active and working, working poor trying to get to their job, suburban employers, and increasing traffic congestion; all contribute to the conclusion that we need to invest in our transportation network. These factors suggest that additional well-placed investment is needed now, since waiting will result in diminished opportunity and only greater challenges ahead.

Improvements outlined in this updated Plan have the potential to enhance the mobility of transit dependent populations and offer a better quality of life for all Gloucester County residents. It is an exciting time; with the development of a passenger rail service from the Glassboro area and the establishment of a Transit Terminal, the continued development of the Port of Paulsboro, the new partnership between Gloucester County College and Rowan University and the investment of new outside funding to help with the development of jobs, will result in broad social and economic benefits to the residents



*Gloucester County United We Ride Transportation Plan*

of Gloucester County. We hope to be able to assist NJ Transit with the proper placements of park-n-rides and proper placement of additional ticket agencies fulfilling Gloucester County's slogan: "*Close enough to everything yet far enough away.*"

## Appendix A

# KEY UNMET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

## Appendix B

# NEW POTENTIAL PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

## Appendix C

# SERVICE NEEDS AND STRATEGIES

# Appendix D

## COMPLETED FUNDING FORM

## **Appendix E**

# **SHELTERED WORKSHOP TRANSPORTATION**

## **Appendix F**

# **OVERALL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MAP**

# **Appendix G**

## **RURAL ROUTES**



## **Appendix H**

# **TRAFFIC GENERATORS / LARGE EMPLOYERS & SENIOR HOUSING**

# **Appendix I**

## **ADULT – RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES**

# **Appendix J**

## **PURELAND SHUTTLE**