

Transportation Resilience, Accessibility, and Climate Sustainability (TRACS) Project Summary of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Background

People with disabilities (PWDs) are disproportionately low-income, transit-dependent, and more vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, and transit agencies, planners, and first responders lack sufficient data and insight into their travel and evacuation needs, preferred modes of transportation, and vulnerabilities. This project seeks to understand the transportation needs of PWDs, and present recommendations that are relevant to transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and county congestion management agencies, and establish a new model of collaboration in which the disability community, transportation planners, service providers, emergency management agencies and partners work together to find creative and innovative solutions and establish long-term partnerships.

In addition to engaging a Policy Advisory Group of key experts, consumers, advocates and other stakeholders to guide this project, the staff from the World Institute on Disability, with support from Metropolitan Transportation Commission staff conducted a number of stakeholder engagement events



for this project. Events included stakeholder interviews, focus groups and workshops, as well as an online survey. This qualitative research sought anecdotal information in the form of comments and stories, termed “participatory action research.”

Outreach for this qualitative research began with posting of fliers and emails to our networks and locales around the Bay Area. Invitations to participate in the focus groups were generally open, though we made a targeted effort to reach a culturally- and disability-diverse group of participants. Interested participants were encouraged to join our scheduled focus groups.

The population of participants were diverse with respect to disability, age, income levels, race, and geography. Types of disability included mobility impairments, such as wheelchair users, cane and crutch users; hearing impairments and deafness; vision impairments and blindness; chronic illness and pain; and autism. Intersectional categories with respect to disability included people with multiple disabilities; disabled parents; parents of disabled children; and seniors with a wide range of age-related impairments. The age of participants ranged from 22 to 81 years. The participant population came close to reflecting that of the greater San Francisco Bay Area, including approximately 40% people of color, and five participants spoke languages other than English. Participants were from a range of income levels and live throughout the Bay Area.



Goals for Stakeholder Engagement

1. Gather key transportation-related themes in the lives of PWDs that affect their lives in all arenas of daily life, with respect to opportunities for employment, housing, medical needs, and socializing.
2. Understand the travel needs, patterns, gaps, and barriers of the broad population of PWDs in the Bay Area.

Engagement Strategy #1: Policy Advisory Group

Objective: Establish Policy Advisory Group of key experts to provide overall guidance to the project

Established at the outset of the project, the Policy Advisory Group has provided guidance and input for this project. The Policy Advisory Group has reviewed project deliverables, helped to identify agencies, individuals and geographic regions for outreach, participated in outreach events, and reviewed findings. The Policy Advisory Group will continue to oversee this effort and provide feedback on consumer education materials and seminars, and policy toolkits and trainings for transportation providers. Below is a list of the members.

TRACS Policy Advisory Group Members

Name	Affiliation	Category
Debora Kaplan	Independent (lawyer/activist)	Advocate



Lewis Kraus	Pacific ADA Center	Advocate
John Cunningham	Contra Costa County	Coordination Partners
Kathleen Cortez	Sonoma County	Coordination Partners
Vance Taylor	Governor's Office of Emergency Services	Emergency Services
Christina Fitzgerald	Silicon Valley Independent Living Center	Independent Living Center
Thomas Gregory	The Center for Independent Living, Berkeley	Independent Living Center
Nikki Brown-Booker	Easy Does It Emergency Services	Transportation Provider
Gwen Buckley	SamTrans	Transportation Provider
Rashida Kamara	County Connection	Transportation Provider
John Sanderson	Solano Transit	Transportation Provider



Laura Timothy	BART	Transportation Provider
Annette Williams	SFMTA	Transportation Provider

Engagement Strategy #2: Stakeholder Interviews

Objective: Conduct ten (10) stakeholder interviews with PWDs

WID staff conducted a total of thirteen (13) interviews with stakeholders. The interviews were conducted one-to-one, in a semi-private setting. This allowed interviewees to give personal, anecdotal information on their transportation experiences. This information provided early input on further data to be collected from experts and practitioners. Eleven (11) of the interviews were conducted with PWDs and two (2) were conducted with transportation providers.

Engagement Strategy #3: Stakeholder Focus Groups

Objective: Conduct three (3) focus groups with PWDs

WID and MTC staff conducted a total of five (5) focus groups around the region. These meetings consisted of small group meetings with PWDs, as well as a few caregivers, disability experts, and transportation providers.



Qualitative data on key destinations, time of travel, service needs and gaps, physical and information barriers, etc., was collected during the focus groups. The small group atmosphere allowed participants to give personal, anecdotal information on their transportation experiences, and allowed participants to build upon each other's stories and ideas for improvement. While all of the focus groups included participants with varying types of disabilities, one of the focus groups was made mainly of individuals with visual impairments.

Focus Group Dates and Locations

Date	Location	City
April 29, 2019	Ed Roberts Campus	Berkeley
July 18, 2019	Silicon Valley Independent Living Center	San Jose
July 25, 2019	Independent Living Resource Center	San Francisco
August 26, 2019	LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired	San Francisco
November 18, 2019	Veterans Memorial Building	Santa Rosa



Engagement Strategy #4: Stakeholder Workshops

Objective: Host two (2) workshops to engage stakeholders on project findings

Based on the transportation analysis completed in a previous task for this project, as well as information gathered through interviews and focus groups, two workshops were held to engage project stakeholders on barriers within the existing transportation landscape and how best to make changes. Both workshops were held at the Ed Roberts Campus. The audience for workshop #1 focused on transportation professionals: those involved in making decisions about, designing and/or operating transportation systems. The audience for workshop #2 focused on PWDs, disability advocates, and those who represent the disability community.

Stakeholder Workshop Dates and Audiences

Date	Audience Focus
October 7, 2019	Transportation professionals
November 15, 2019	PWD and advocates

Engagement Strategy #5: Online Survey

Objective: Develop and distribute online survey



WID developed and distributed an accessible, online survey intended to reach a broad range of stakeholders in the region. There was a total of 375 respondents, and we had respondents from every county of the Bay Area. Respondents were asked about disability type, vehicle access, use of transportation modes, and factors in choosing transportation mode. Additionally, respondents were asked about specific factors related to their use of fixed-route transit and paratransit.

Survey Respondents by County

County	Percentage of Response
Alameda	26.6%
Contra Costa	14.6%
Marin	4.3%
Napa	1.3%
San Francisco	16.7%
San Mateo	5.2%
Santa Clara	18.0%
Solano	3.9%
Sonoma	9.4%

