



# **Morgantown- Mon County Transportation Equity Project**

## ***Summary Report of Community Engaged Interviews with Underrepresented Populations***

**May 2022**

(Last updates July 2022)

### Suggested Citation

Andress, Lauri A.; Fallon, Sandra M.; Pyrialakou, Dimitra; Baker, Rachel E. (2022). *Morgantown- Mon County Transportation Equity Project Summary Report of Community Engaged Interviews with underrepresented Populations*. Geisinger School of Medicine and West Virginia University School of Public Health. Funded by City of Morgantown, Walmart Foundation & Geisinger School of Medicine May 2022.

# Table of Contents

How To Read This Report.....	4
Summary Statement of Purpose.....	4
Definition: Reliable Transportation .....	4
Report Layout.....	4
Background .....	5
Methods.....	6
Transportation Equity Research Team .....	6
Data Collection.....	7
Participatory Planning.....	7
Recruitment of Interviewees .....	7
Data Analysis.....	9
Results.....	10
Participant Demographics.....	10
A Review of Participatory Methods .....	12
Participatory Activity #1: Sharing Transportation Stories .....	12
Participatory Activity #2: Reacting Verbally or in Writing to Situations Presented in Videos/Photos.....	14
Participatory Activity #3: Participants Interviewing Each Other .....	15
Participatory Activity #4: Compare Current vs. Ideal Transportation Situation.....	16
Participatory Activity #5: Brainstorm: Ways Underrepresented Community Members Prefer to Be Involved in Transportation Planning .....	17
Big Picture: Transportation Stories About “Getting Around” .....	17
Cost Affordability .....	18
Accommodation.....	19
Convenience.....	22
Safety & Security.....	26
Access to Resources & Opportunities.....	29
Emotional, Bodily or Personal Possession Impacts .....	30
Engaging in Transportation Planning: Participant Perspectives.....	32
Recommendations .....	35
Before You Can Recruit.....	35
Recruitment .....	35

After Recruitment .....	37
Future Research & Exploration .....	39
Conclusion .....	40
APPENDIX .....	42

# How To Read This Report

## Summary Statement of Purpose

This report presents results from focus groups and one-on-one interviews with low-income, vulnerable, and other underrepresented citizens who have no personal vehicle, limited access to transportation, or rely on public transportation. The interviews were conducted to assess:

- Transportation experiences, needs, and recommendations.
- Communication methods for facilitating engagement and discussion that transportation planners could use to more effectively communicate and engage with underrepresented citizens; and
- Ways underrepresented citizens would be willing to participate in transportation planning.

## Definition: Reliable Transportation

Reliable personal and/or public transportation is essential in meeting people's basic needs including the need to feel competent, self-sufficient, and able to succeed, be food secure, have medical services, and earn a living wage.

In this work the definition of (Un)Reliable transportation may include not having any of the following: (1) access to high or medium frequency bus service; (2) bus schedules that align with available opportunities for employment; (3) money for a ride share service, cab, bus or fuel or to make repairs to a vehicle; (4) safe routes for pedestrians to get to and from places (5) the ability to secure rides from family or friends; and /or (6) a reliable personal vehicle.

## Report Layout

The report examines the data we collected based on these six coding themes:

- Cost Affordability
- Accommodation
- Convenience
- Safety
- Access To Resources and
- Emotional, Bodily or Personal Possession Impacts

We begin with a description of Methods including the data collection process followed by a description of the qualitative data analytical process.

This is followed by Results which includes: (1) a description of the participants; (2) analysis of five participatory methods used to conduct interviews (3) stories or data that we collected about transportation/pedestrian issues; and (4) findings on what it would take to get the interviewees involved in transportation planning.

Last, the report presents *Recommendations* in four different categories.

<a href="#">Before You Can Recruit</a> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<a href="#">Recruitment</a> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<a href="#">After Recruitment</a> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<a href="#">Future Research &amp; Exploration</a> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

## Background

**The Morgantown-Monongalia County Transportation Equity Project** is an effort affiliated with the “[Place and Health in West Virginia](#)” initiative. Place and Health in WV seeks to reframe the way West Virginians think about and address population health less automatically as individual responsibility shaped by access to health care and more as the outcome of intentional policy decisions that leaders make about the places where people live, work, and play (Achieving Health Equity: from root causes to fair outcomes, 2007).

While quantitative data are important evidence a community must make meaning out of and account for the lived experiences, narratives, images, and stories that describe the everyday occurrences of those that make up that community. Accordingly, the major aim of the website, [Place and Health in West Virginia](#)”, is to demonstrate how evidence of the lived experiences of West Virginia populations may be effectively presented in a meaningful way to contribute to efforts that decrease inequities through systemic and structural changes.

**The Transportation Equity Project** seeks to highlight transportation-related phenomena, information, images and stories from Morgantown and Monongalia County’s underrepresented citizens, who are defined as low income, minority, and other vulnerable populations who often lack affordable, accessible, and dependable access to personal vehicles, public transportation, and transportation amenities.

Having access to dependable and safe roads, sidewalks, intersections, cars, pedestrian and bicycle amenities, and public transportation is necessary for community members to meet their basic needs, take advantage of opportunities, and maintain their quality of life. Low income and vulnerable populations are perhaps most affected by lack of access to these basic amenities. In addition, they are much less likely to be able to participate in the transportation planning process or governing bodies’ related decisions, and subsequently have their needs show up in the long-range plans produced for communities, cities, and counties where they live.

Since 2018, Transportation Equity Project team members have met with transportation planning experts at the local (Morgantown, Monongalia County) and state levels (West Virginia) to determine their interest in engaging underrepresented citizens in transportation planning, and to assess and develop information and resources that would facilitate their doing so. To

better understand the situation and the types of information and resources that would address this need, the project team also:

- (1) Conducted numerous interviews with underrepresented citizens in Morgantown and Monongalia County to learn about their transportation experiences, needs, and recommendations;
- (2) Interviewed local social service agency personnel to assess their recommendations for engaging with underrepresented citizens, who are often their agencies' clients; and
- (3) Reviewed selected literature along with selected projects across the country that proactively engage underrepresented citizens in transportation planning to determine recommended best practices.

The project team developed a website, "[Transportation: The Equity Orientation](#)," featuring videos and photos illustrating underrepresented citizens' transportation stories and lived experiences. The team also developed a "[Transportation Equity Toolkit](#)" for transportation planners which is posted on the website and based on the findings from interviews with transportation planners, social service agency personnel, underrepresented citizens, and identified best practices. The Toolkit offers eight Guidebooks describing suggested practices for doing things differently to engage underrepresented citizens in transportation planning.

## Methods

### Transportation Equity Research Team

Lauri Address, Ph.D., MPH, J.D. Principal Investigator  
Associate Professor, Department of Medical Education, Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine  
Bio at [Contributors - Place & Health in West Virginia \(placeandhealthwv.com\)](https://placeandhealthwv.com)

Dimitra Pyrialakou, Ph.D. Co-Investigator  
Assistant Professor, Benjamin M. Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources,  
Wadsworth Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, West Virginia University

Sandra Fallon, M.Ed., Project Manager and Research Coordinator  
Independent Education/Training and Communications Consultant  
Bio at [Contributors - Place & Health in West Virginia \(placeandhealthwv.com\)](https://placeandhealthwv.com)

Rachel Baker, Graduate Research Assistant  
West Virginia University School of Public Health, Department of Health Policy, Management,  
and Leadership

# Data Collection

## Participatory Planning

The basis for this work on transportation planning are the concepts of equity, participatory planning, and inclusion. To increase community involvement in the planning process (infrastructure, land use, economic development) participatory planning emphasizes the melding of technical expertise with the preferences and knowledge of community members. This participatory paradigm is also integrated with an overlay of collective decision-making and the prioritization of traditionally marginalized groups in the planning process.

Additionally, in this work we utilized online participatory technology and planning (OPT)<sup>1</sup> to facilitate this interview process during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the start of the pandemic in 2020 the world, including community engaged projects and research activities, pivoted to online platforms. Our research team had experience with conducting interviews and focus groups using online participatory technology (OPT) in the form of Zoom. Previous experience demonstrated that the OPT process (OPTP) worked well with low-income groups and health providers on the topic of food access<sup>2</sup>.

Less successful online data collection techniques included having the participants together in one room sharing a laptop or (again) in a single room each with a laptop. In these instances, the conversation was logistically difficult because having interviewees in one room created difficulties with hearing and distinguishing responses.

## Recruitment of Interviewees

To recruit from the greater Morgantown area for the focus group and one-to-one interviews we relied on connections with “boots-on-the ground” (BOG) staff at social service agencies described below<sup>3</sup>. All of those interviewed received a gift card to recognize their contribution.

An exception was the one interviewee from Greenbrier County that came to us from work we were doing on the FARMacy “food as medicine” project with the West Virginia University Extension program. Through our qualitative evaluation of FARMacy we identified transportation as a major barrier to improved nutrition for the low-wealth clients enrolled in

---

<sup>1</sup> Afzalan, N. and B. Muller (2018). "Online participatory technologies: Opportunities and challenges for enriching participatory planning." *Journal of the American Planning Association* **84**(2): 162-177.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Andress incorporated the use of zoom during COVID for her research and evaluations on food security with low wealth individuals and health providers.

<sup>3</sup> The ability to engage the BOG staff was the result of an 18-month effort that started in January 2021. One of our team members (SF) started by asking key individuals involved in social services for their recommendations on who we should be speaking with. The subsequent focus group with the social service decision makers helped us to discover what these organizations knew about transportation planning and how it impacted their clients and the level of interest in knowing more. Additional details on this extensive process are available on request.

that program. We were asked to cross reference our inquiries into transportation for underrepresented groups with the issue of food security by interviewing FARMacy clients.

The process we used to contact BOG staff at social service agencies began in December 2021.

- Sandra Fallon (SF) sent emails and made phone calls to 23 social service providers affiliated with 19 organizations with an appeal to help us identify and reach out to their underrepresented clients.
- We secured contact with sixteen people who agreed to help. Each had a preferred approach to reaching out to their clients. For example, some wanted us to provide a flyer with information about the proposed interviews which they then shared with their clients. Others preferred to contact their contacts via email and ask interested people to contact us. Others personally reached out one-on-one to clients and asked them to collaborate with us, secured their permission to share their names and contact information with us, then provided us with that information.
- Three BOG staff succeeded in securing participation from their clients to interviews with us:
  - Abbie Shinn, Milan Puskar Health Right, set up a focus group with six clients of the Friendship House and Health Right which was held on January 26, 2022
  - Shay Petitto and staff members at Scotts Run Settlement House personally contacted nine clients and secured their interest and agreement to speak with us. Of those nine, we conducted one-on-one interviews with five of those clients.
  - Elizabeth Reynolds, a WVU Extension Educator in Greenbrier County, identified and put us in touch with one of her food and nutrition clients from Rainelle, WV<sup>4</sup>.

[The Friendship House](#) is a program of Milan Puskar Health Right, located at 231 Walnut St. in downtown Morgantown. It is a mental health drop-in center for adults with mental illness as well as a recovery center, serving vulnerable populations including but not limited to individuals with mental illness, substance use disorders, and people experiencing homelessness. Its mission is to provide accessible peer support services and offer coffee and prepackaged foods, warm items, a bathroom, crisis resting, and free COVID testing.

[Milan Puskar Health Right](#) (Health Right) is a free primary health care clinic for residents of West Virginia who are low-income uninsured or underinsured. It promotes health through direct service, education, and advocacy. Health Right has a staff of 26, a volunteer corps of more than 200, provides more than 28,000 patient encounters, and dispenses millions of dollars' worth of free medications to qualified patients every year.

[Scott's Run Settlement House](#)

---

<sup>4</sup> This person came to us from our qualitative evaluation of the food medicine program where we identified transportation as a major barrier to improved nutrition for the low-wealth clients enrolled in that program and were asked to cross reference our inquiries into transportation for underrepresented groups with the issue of food security by interviewing FARMacy clients.



Founded by the Women of The Home Missionary Society in the 1920s to help immigrant families in the area, Scott's Run Settlement House (SRSH) has expanded now to serve individuals and families in Monongalia County who find themselves marginalized by economic hardship. SRSH tries to address the root causes of why a community member needs help, then create a customized approach for each need—from coaching to educational assistance to food assistance. Services include a food pantry (including a senior food box program), a backpack feeding program to feed children, a baby pantry providing supplies for new parents in need, and a home repair program providing work teams to help with painting, roofing, and building ramps. In 2020 SRSH helped over 9,000 families in Mon County.

### [West Virginia University Extension Service](#)

WVU Extension offers a variety of programs designed to connect people in West Virginia's 55 counties to information and knowledge that enables them to change lives and improve their communities. Programs include 4-H youth development; family and health programs; community, workforce, and economic development initiatives; and agriculture and natural resource education.

## Data Analysis

All interviews and focus group data were converted by an external neutral company from the recordings using an online platform into transcripts. We used thematic analysis to review these transcripts. This is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. The method minimally organizes and describes the data set in (rich) detail and interprets various aspects of the research topic<sup>5</sup>.

To aide in analysis of the transcripts a draft deductive codebook was created by Dr. Address based on a literature review on equitable transportation and participatory planning, extensive training and knowledge about health equity and social status, and evidence-based research about food security in rural areas for low-income populations.

To ensure that the codes were consistent we utilized two methods. Without use of the draft code book, an engineering graduate student and one team member (DP) reviewed the focus group transcripts and provided a separate analysis based on their interpretation of the data. Next, the team implemented the concept of Inter Coder Reliability or Cross Checking<sup>6</sup>. The concern of inter coder reliability is to increase the odds that development of the coding scheme is reproducible or that different coders would code the same data the same way.

The draft code book was tested among the team where SF, DP, and RB coded transcripts from the focus group and interviews working separately. Next, the team traded coded transcripts

---

<sup>5</sup> Braun, V. and V. Clarke (2006). "Using thematic analysis in psychology." *Qualitative research in psychology* 3(2): 77-101.

<sup>6</sup> Memon, S., et al. (2017). "Application of constant comparison method in social sciences: a useful technique to analyze interviews." *Grassroots* 51(1).

and then met to discuss the coding. Agreement about discrepancies in codes was reached among the team through discussion. Finally, to identify differences and similarities, Dr. Address triangulated the agreed upon analysis of the coded transcripts in comparison to the focus group analysis provided by DP and the engineering graduate student. The final codes were selected by Dr. Address and shared back out to the team for agreement.

## Results

### Participant Demographics<sup>7</sup>

Eleven underrepresented citizens were interviewed either as part of a focus group or one-to-one interviews by the Transportation Equity team from January through May 2022. No racial/ethnic data were collected. However, a visual inspection of participants indicated that all the interviewees could be classified as White. One of the eleven interviewees was not from the Morgantown area<sup>8</sup>. Two of the eleven interviewees were a couple (transportation couple) that had a high level of transportation literacy and familiarity with the Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMMPO) and Mountain Line<sup>9,10</sup>.

All interviewees for the focus group lived in the greater Morgantown area and were recruited by a social worker with Health Right. The focus group was held via Zoom; all six participants gathered around one computer at Friendship House. Transportation Equity Research Team members participated via their own computers.

Four individuals from Monongalia County participated in one-on-one interviews: two participated via their cell phones--one interview was audio only, the other was audio and video. The other two interviewees, the transportation couple participated together via Skype on their home computer. These four participants were recruited with the assistance of the Scott's Run Settlement House (SRSB) Executive Director, Shay Petitto and Case Manager Deb Layman. SRSB is located in Osage, WV.

---

<sup>7</sup> See demographics table in Appendix

<sup>8</sup> One individual living in Rainelle, Greenbrier participated via cell phone in an audio-only format. She was recruited by West Virginia University Extension Service in Greenbrier County via Gina Wood, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) with the WVU Extension Service's Family Nutrition Program.

<sup>9</sup> The transportation *couple*, in comparison to all other interviewees, had a high degree of transportation literacy based on frequent usage of the public bus system and public opportunities made available through the MMMPO. Results from the interview are available on request. As an example, the couple regularly follows the bus tracker keeping a binder of all the routes and helping people who may be waiting for the bus and or trying to figure out the bus schedule.

<sup>10</sup> A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the policy board of an organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process see <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/transportation-planning/metropolitan-planning-organization-mpo>

One individual living in Rainelle, Greenbrier County was also interviewed for the project. She participated via cell phone in an audio-only format. She was recruited by Elizabeth Reynolds, an educator with West Virginia University Extension Service in Greenbrier County via Gina Wood, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) with the WVU Extension Service's Family Nutrition Program.

Age and Birthplace: Eleven total interviewees, seven males, four females. Ages ranged from 25 to 65 years old (25,29, 36, 43, 43, 44, 44, 53, 55, 57, 65). Eight were born in and currently live in Morgantown; at least two of the eight spent part of their lives in other places. One interviewee was born in Pennsylvania and moved to Morgantown in 2017; one was born in Brooklyn, NY and now lives in Star City; one was born in California and has lived in Rainelle, WV since 2005/2006.

Family and Living Situation: All four females were either married or living with a male partner. One had three children of her own (now adults) and three stepchildren that she helped care for. She lived in an apartment with her husband. One had two sons (now adults), she and her partner rented an apartment; one interviewee had three young daughters (ages 12, 10, 7) and a husband, they own their home; one lives with her husband (who was also an interviewee) in a rented mobile home. Of the seven male interviewees: Two lived in Granville with their life-partners. One reported having two young daughters including a newborn. One mentioned having a landlord. The three others did not mention their living situations; it's possible that one or more may have been unsheltered.

Employment: Three of the four females did not have employment at the time of the interview; one had a spouse who works; one used to be a waitress but is now disabled (a stroke and several injuries); the other interviewee also used to work but is now disabled. One male-female couple, both disabled, work as independent contractors delivering newspapers. Among the remaining male participants: one is disabled and helps out with little side jobs; one works as a carpenter; another makes a living from odd jobs; one is looking for a job; one does not work and is on SSI (Supplemental Security Income). The other did not mention his employment status.

Government Assistance: Of the five interviewees who participated in one-on-one interviews, all mentioned receiving one or more types of government assistance including SSI disability, Medicaid, and food stamps/SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). One of the focus group members mentioned being on SSI. The other focus group members did not mention if they received assistance.

Modes of Transportation: None of the interviewees have cars except for one female whose family of five currently has two cars but has had only one car at times in the past, leaving the mother and young daughters without a car for long hours.

All interviewees took the bus and walked, although the Rainelle interviewee has little or no bus service. Many relied on the bus every day. Some stated they often have not had money for the

bus, or they run out of money at the end of the month after paying bills. Many have had to walk because they had no other options.

One male and one female said they've had to ride a bike. Three males said they have sometimes had to hitchhike if no other options are available. One has had to hitchhike to work and has currently "resorted to buying an 80cc 2-stroke motor and putting it on a bicycle and getting to where I need to go." The two other interviewees, who recognized that hitchhiking is illegal, reported hitchhiked in extenuating/desperate circumstances such as getting to methadone treatments or being stranded in Fairmont or Clarksburg. The methadone patient reported trying to get into a bus-related program that offers landlords a tax write-off.

Some interviewees reported asking friends or family members for rides; one couple occasionally borrows a car from the male's aunt. At least one person has access to a Medicaid van for rides to doctor appointments but said the service is not very dependable.

## **A Review of Participatory Methods**

The following discussion provides information about each of the five participatory activities used during the focus group and one-on-one interviews, along with observations about what worked, what didn't work, and what might be changed.

### **Participatory Activity #1: Sharing Transportation Stories**

#### **Description**

Focus group members and selected one-on-one interviewees were asked to watch short videos in which other community members shared stories about their transportation and usage and experiences. Participants were then asked to verbally share their own transportation usage and experience stories. Note that some interviews were conducted via phone; in those cases, interviewees did not view videos. Instead, they were given a few examples of transportation stories relayed to us by others, and then asked to tell a story about a transportation experience of their choosing.

All members of the focus group and three of the one-on-one interviewees watched one or two videos. The videos relayed stories that were relevant to their unique situations. For example, the focus group interviewees, some of whom were or had experienced houselessness, watched a story about getting to work relayed by an unsheltered man. The one-on-one interviewees, for example, watched a story about transporting groceries home on the bus.

After each video, the researcher asked some initial questions to stimulate discussion, such as: "Does John's story bring up any stories related to your own experience?" "What does the video story bring to mind for you?" and "Tell a story about how you get around right now." As

participants relayed their stories, the researchers asked additional prompt questions to elicit more specific information from participants.

### **What worked?**

Showing videos of community residents sharing relatable transportation stories was meant to offer an example of this type of storytelling and encourage participants to share their own stories. The videos seemed to interest participants and offered a starting point for relaying their own stories.

Following up after participants watched each video with prompt questions was most effective in eliciting detailed responses from most participants. Participants in the one-on-one interview settings seemed to offer stories more readily than the participants in the focus group, perhaps because of the direct interaction and undivided focus between the participant and the interviewers/researchers. In the focus group setting, although a couple of participants offered stories immediately, others only offered information when the researcher directed a specific question to a specific person by name. For a couple of participants, repeated prompting helped draw out details of a particular experience.

### **What didn't work?**

Expecting participants to relay detailed stories about their transportation experiences with little or no prompting was less effective than using prompts and/or asking questions directed to a specific person. Also, asking general questions such as "What does this story bring to mind for you?" was usually less effective than asking a specific question such as "Can you tell a story about a time you felt unsafe?" or "What's the scariest experience you've had while walking along a roadway?"

The need to engage focus group participants one-on-one with prompts resulted in increased waiting time between each participant's response; some participants seemed to get distracted during those time lapses. It was also difficult for the group of six to see and hear the videos, and to see the photos and text posted on the computer screen by the researchers, due to being seated at a distance from the computer.

### **What might be changed?**

In a focus group setting, to help ensure that detailed responses are elicited from all participants, it's recommended that the interviewer/researcher be prepared to ask specific follow-up questions and prompts about specific topics and address them to specific participants by name.

Conducting a focus group via Zoom with a smaller number of participants, i.e., three or four participants rather than the six who shared one computer in this focus group, would allow researchers to focus more attention on each participant and likely allow for more interaction

and engagement among the participants due to the more intimate nature of a small group. It would also improve everyone's capacity to concentrate.

An alternative approach would be to ensure that each participant joined the focus group Zoom meeting via his or her own computer or cell phone, or via separate computers at a social service agency, if that option is available.

However, it must be noted that many people in the underrepresented population do not have computers, their computers may be down, and/or they do not have consistent or reliable internet access. Many people do have cell phones with internet connectivity; however, all do not. Many know how to use the cell phone for calling, texting, and accessing the Internet, but have little or no experience using Zoom or other apps or software. Additionally, their smartphone minutes may run out and they may not be able to immediately purchase more time.

## **Participatory Activity #2: Reacting Verbally or in Writing to Situations Presented in Videos/Photos**

### **Description**

Focus group participants viewed a video and two photos depicting traffic scenes around Morgantown and were asked to write or verbally state how the images made them feel (such as "looks unsafe," or "too many fast cars") and/or describe any transportation challenges the images might bring up for them. Several of the one-on-one interviewees also viewed either a video and/or a photo and were asked to verbally describe their reactions.

The video and photos depicted scenes such as heavy traffic along roadways with no sidewalks and intersections with no cross walks or sidewalks. The researcher asked questions such as "If you were standing at this intersection trying to cross, what are you thinking about?" and "Has anyone had an experience walking along roads like this?"

### **What worked?**

The video and photos of local street scenes were effective in eliciting participants' verbal responses about their experiences in those areas. Most participants recognized the locations and offered numerous responses about their experiences, along with experiences walking along similar roads. The images also spurred discussions on related topics, such as how people with disabilities negotiated difficult intersections and how people shopped for groceries. As with the earlier videos in Activity #1, participants offered more details when prompted by researchers' questions.

Allowing time and/or focusing the discussion on verbal responses vs. written responses was a more effective approach.

### **What didn't work?**

As with the videos used in Activity #1, showing the video and photos in the focus group of six people sitting around a table sharing one small computer made it difficult for everyone to easily see the images and hear the sound. It also made it difficult for the researchers to hear participants' responses.

The videos and the photos shared with participants in Activity # 1 and #2, although different, elicited similar responses about transportation usage and challenges. Using fewer videos and/or photos to stimulate discussion or engagement would likely suffice.

Asking interviewees to write their thoughts on paper was not an effective approach. None of focus group participants wrote anything down, even though they each had a note pad and pen. Subsequently, one-on-one interviewees were asked to provide verbal responses only.

### **What might be changed?**

Asking participants to verbally discuss their thoughts and ideas vs. asking people to write their responses is likely a more user-friendly approach with underrepresented populations that most likely have less experience participating in formal discussion sessions.

Using just two or three videos and/or photos to stimulate discussion is likely enough especially if they address similar topics. Hearing responses that become similar or repetitive when moving from one video and/or photo to the next is a good indicator of their usefulness in eliciting new information. However, the number of videos and photos necessary to stimulate the level, amount, and type of discussion and information the researcher is seeking may better indicate the number and types of videos and photos to be used. If each video or photo illustrates very different ideas or topics, it may be helpful to use as many as necessary to achieve specific goals.

## **Participatory Activity #3: Participants Interviewing Each Other**

### **Description**

In this activity, selected participants were shown four different topics on the computer screen. Focus group participants were asked to pair up with another participant, select one of the topics, and interview one another about it. One-on-one interviewees were asked to select a topic and share their answers verbally.

The four topics were:

1. How does money come up in all of this for you?
2. Do any of your transportation challenges impact employment for you?
3. What are some of the biggest transportation problems you face?
4. Do you miss important activities (work, doctor, getting medicine or food) because you don't have access to transportation?

**What worked?**

All participants seemed interested in discussing their personal thoughts regarding at least one of the topics, as illustrated by several immediately selecting a topic and beginning to relay information. Most people chose to discuss “Do you miss important activities (work, doctor, medicine or food) because you don’t have access to transportation?”

**What didn’t work?**

Participants in the focus group were not interested in teaming up in pairs and interviewing each other. One in particular said “OK, I’m just going to talk to the group.”

**What might be changed?**

Asking people to team up in pairs and interview one another would likely work better in situations that are roomier and/or more comfortable for participants. For example, if people had enough space to spread out, talk together, and hear each other; or if researchers were in the room with participants and could help facilitate people splitting up in pairs.

As in the other activities, when people are hesitant to speak or offer many details, asking specific questions about specific topics and, especially in a group situation, directing the question to a specific person, and following up with prompts can help draw out more details.

**Participatory Activity #4: Compare Current vs. Ideal Transportation Situation****Description**

Several one-on-one interview participants were asked to describe how they currently get to a certain destination (work, grocery store, doctor) and then identify transportation amenities/changes that would improve their ability to get to that destination. Specifically, they were asked to respond to two statements: “The way I get to [work, doctor, food store] now is...” and “My trip would be better if...”

This activity introduced the opportunity for participants to analyze their situation by identifying changes in transportation amenities or in their neighborhoods/locales that could decrease their problems with transportation, help improve their travel experience, and allow them to more easily or reliably get to essential destinations.

**What worked?**

Participants were interested in talking about this topic and readily described the way they got to a certain destination as well as improvements that would make the trip better. Most discussions focused on the need for improved public transportation options: more bus routes, more frequent bus routes, bus service available later in the evening, more weekend bus service, more bus shelters and bus stops.



### **What didn't work?**

Participants may not be aware of all the options that could exist for making a trip better and therefore not able to suggest them. (This may not necessarily be a problem, however).

### **What might be changed?**

This activity seemed to work well as implemented.

## **Participatory Activity #5: Brainstorm: Ways Underrepresented Community Members Prefer to Be Involved in Transportation Planning**

### **Description**

Information was shared with participants about how, when, where, and why transportation planning takes place in Morgantown and Monongalia County, along with the need for citizen input. Using the brainstorm technique, participants were asked questions about ways they would consider being involved in transportation planning and best ways to reach and recruit them. They were told that for each question they should (1) suggest any and all ideas that come to mind, (2) be creative, (3) understand that there are no wrong answers, and (4) know that researchers were interested in hearing all ideas that came to mind for them.

### **What worked?**

This simple, streamlined, direct and (somewhat) rapid-fire questioning approach worked well in eliciting responses from most participants. It allowed for many questions to be asked and a lot of information to be gathered in a small amount of time. In the focus group situation, it offered the opportunity for participants to react and respond to each other's answers, sometimes eliciting additional ideas.

### **What didn't work?**

Some participants in a group situation can be reticent to offer their thoughts or opinions. However, this can be addressed via the suggestion in "What might be changed?" below.

### **What might be changed?**

As indicated with other activities, in a group situation it may be necessary remain aware of people who are not responding and invite them, specifically by name, to share their ideas to ensure the participation of all. It is also helpful to manage and provide guidance to participants who may tend to dominate a conversation.

## **Big Picture: Transportation Stories About "Getting Around"**

This section describes the six transit and infrastructure issues listed below that emerged from discussions with the eleven underrepresented citizens. For each issue, a summary description of participants' perspectives along with specific quotes supporting these perspectives are provided.

- Cost Affordability
- Accommodation,
- Convenience,
- Safety
- Access To Resources; and
- Emotional, Bodily or Personal Possession Impacts

## **Cost Affordability**

Definition of code: This code reflects modes of transportation that are affordable.

### **Cost affordability issues:**

Interviewees experience many situations that impact their ability to afford transportation options, from owning a personal vehicle to being able to afford the bus, Uber, taxis, etc. which all can be cost prohibitive for people living on a low income. Interviewees said that (a) an outright lack of money, (b) living on a fixed income, (c) not being able to work as a result of being disabled, as well as (d) running out of money at the end of the month after paying bills all impact their ability to afford and access all of these transportation modes.

Interviewees indicated that the bus fare has doubled for some after the bus depot was relocated to Westover. Other issues of costs included vehicle maintenance and repair and having to choose between competing needs such as food and gas or medicine and vehicle repairs.

*“I think they should lower the prices on public transportation or do something for the less fortunate, so we're able to make doctor's appointments and other events that are important to us.” And “I do agree with what [another participant] said, lower the cost on transportation for the less fortunate that don't have income or is struggling month to month with their income of getting transportation.”*

One interviewee reported experiencing an accident in which a car was totaled and there was no money to repair or replace the vehicle. Another interviewee said she was currently trying to figure out how to pay her water bill, and that choosing which bills to pay, such as utilities, gas, medicine, food, is a situation her family faces. Our data show that many interviewees must walk; some resort to hitchhiking because they cannot afford bus fare and have no other options. Participants face these challenges every day.

*“There's times that I've walked from Brookhaven Road to in town here with the income that I do have coming in after I get like all my bills paid. I'm basically broke for the rest of the month. So yeah. It's kind of hard to get transportation when you're paying bills and have to get food and*

*stuff for your apartment or your house and try to get transportation, so yeah.”*

*“We're on a fixed income so I'm lucky if I have \$20 left at the end of the month, at the beginning of the month, paying all my bills. It's hard. It's hard.”*

*“My last car I got...last summer. I had my own car and somebody hit it. Well, so I got in an accident and somebody hit it and totaled it out. I mean, I was years just getting that car. Then it got totaled out and I don't know if I'm ever going to get another one or not. So I'm right back in there again. [It] was 15 years the first time before I got a car, and then I got a car and it last maybe a year, and then some woman hit me up on 705 and totaled it out, so I'm right back with the bus line and however I can get around...That's why I bought a bike kit, a motor bike kit. I mean, I don't know how else to get around. I mean, you can't afford cabs. Cabs are just ridiculous. Uber is crazy and that's really expensive.”*

*“Yes, I caught Uber back too. So that was like \$24 all the way around. Maybe a little bit more, \$24, \$25. One time I took Uber to the grocery store up to Walmart, and I had them wait...[when I went in and got groceries]...It was 40 some dollars already.”*

*“The cost of the bus...When they changed their routes and they put the depot over there, now it's double fare basically wherever I go. When the depot was in town, I used to be able to catch a bus from Granville straight into town, okay? And that was just one fare. But now, if I have to go to town from Granville, I have to go to the depot. I get off that bus, and then I have to catch another bus from there, which is another fare. So that's double fare just to get into town, which it used to be one fare. Now it's a double fare.”*

## **Accommodation**

Definition of code: This code reflects transportation that understands travelers' needs and makes changes to meet those needs, e.g., transporting grocery bags or trips out of town (within the Greater Morgantown area). Further, the organization responsible for transportation makes it easy to know how and where to report issues and needs.

### **Accommodation issues:**

Interviewees reported issues with getting groceries home on the bus or via walking from a grocery store or the pantry. In these cases, they face: an irregularly imposed restriction on the

number of bags they can carry onto the bus (i.e., four bags per customer), difficulty transporting groceries from the point of origin to home if walking with no way to carry the products; and constrictions on the kinds of food and products they can buy. The products bought could not include items that might spoil due to weather conditions (i.e., heat) or items that might get crushed in a backpack.

*"... sometimes I try to fit everything I can in the backpack, but I mean I've left bread 'cause it would get smashed with everything in there. Eggs because they'll get smashed and like just chips, they'll get crushed."*

*"That's also like going to a food bank and not being able to get all your groceries home because there's so much and you just can't carry everything and you got to lug everything on a bus, which is a little overwhelming."*

*".....And not only that, whoever's driving the bus, they will limit you to like four bags that you can literally carry on the bus to take your groceries home. So I feel I can vouch...about the bus situation with the groceries."*

*"As of now I haven't really been doing much walking except around my block because of having surgery on my ankle. I have rods on both sides of my ankle, on my left ankle. I can't do long distance walking, but when I was, yeah, I would walk down to ALDI's [in Star City], do my food shopping, what I could do, me and my husband. And then we would carry the bags up the hill to where we lived. It's stressful. It's stressful. Like I said, we're in our fifties. We're trying to get a car now, but like I said we're on a fixed income. My husband only gets the one income. It's hard, it's rough. It's rough. I've taken public transportation before, the bus, but oh dear God, they take you all over Morgantown."... "It's [the grocery store] right down the hill from where I live. So, it took me maybe seven minutes to walk down there. Especially in the heat, it's hot. Oh, dear God, is it hot here in summertime. It was stressful, but you know what? It's what I had to do. Nobody was going to take me, I couldn't afford a cab and plus the cab company here is horrendous. We did what we had to do, me and my husband. Take two bags, we'd get two bags of groceries each and bring them back up, when that ran out we'd do it again. Now, actually, he does it by himself because I can't walk down there with my leg being the way that I am right now. So, the other day he went down there and he did shopping, he had a case of water, and that stuff is heavy to carry up and down. He's going to be 58 tomorrow, you know? God willing. He's found a little shopping cart, so he said, "I'm not ashamed," so he got a whole bunch of groceries, put them in the shopping cart, and wheeled the cart up the mountain."*

*“What we do is we get the frozen stuff last, get in line, do that, bag them, and walk as fast as we can up the hill.”...” I have to say, the last three times before I had my accident with my ankle and the stroke, there was three nice people that gave us a ride up the hill, which was really nice. They saw us putting the stuff, holding the bags and starting to walk out of the parking lot. They pulled over, three different times...They were strangers. They said, ‘We know how it is, we’ve been there. Don’t worry, you’re going to get through it. It’s all in time, all in time.’”*

*“At times. If I have to, I try to avoid having to bringing the buggies [grocery store cart] home and things, so I would try to get something that I could carry or I’ll take a backpack and put my stuff in a backpack and carry it home...I’m at least there [Krogers] probably two to three times a month for large purchases. There’s times that I just run up there and grab a gallon and a milk or something, but the larger purchases are normally a couple times a month.”*

*“That [a better trip to the grocery store] would be more so, probably, if it was a larger shopping trip, it would be a family member or a friend that would take me. One thing that I can say that would make that better, if they’re not going to the store anyway, I feel bad about them having to use their gas with gas prices like they are, to take me somewhere. To make it a little bit more convenient, not so much give, but have the smaller size carts or things that people who need to walk, could put their groceries in, instead of having to try to carry bags of groceries or shove them in bag bags and try to carry them. I don’t know if the store would do something, like to rent them out for a day or something.”*

Most interviewees reporting not knowing how or where to report transportation needs, problems or concerns. As a result, and as an example, many who experienced problems associated with the bus service, including bus schedules, routes, reliability, shelters or stops did not report them.

Interviewees also had varying feelings about reporting bus problems ranging from being sympathetic to the bus driver just trying to do his or her job, to thinking no one will address the problems anyway. It’s important to note as well that some interviewees expressed appreciation for the bus and other transportation services and have had many good experiences.

*“It’s just them working...to keep their jobs...can’t really blame them if they’re not on time...”*

*“If busses are late constantly you can mention it but doesn’t mean they’re going to do anything about it.”*

*“...they should add more busses, sidewalks in certain areas where people can basically walk without worrying about getting hit with traffic.”*

*“Every day I go to a clinic. I was surprised, but I get a ride there and back, which is pretty nice. Mountain Lion does supply that. I was surprised. So they pick me up and they take me and they bring me back every day. Every day except for Sunday. I was really surprised about that.”*

*“I mean, not really, because they have to run on a certain timeframe too, from the depots. They have to wait for the other buses to depart, so it’s not really in their order.” When asked if a bus is repeatedly late, would he let anyone know, he said “They usually try to do it... They set guidelines at the depot for what times they have to be there, and what times they don’t. And they have to be at least at their quota for times as best as possible to keep their jobs. So just them working in general to keep their jobs, they have to stick to a timeframe anyway. So, we can’t really blame them if they’re not on time, because just to have the job in general, they have to keep time.”*

## **Convenience**

Definition of code: This code reflects the degree to which transportation is practical, serviceable, or operational. The code examines whether the transportation may be used with ease or difficulty, i.e., conveniently located, and functional considering sidewalks and other amenities and bus stops, dependability of bus service and frequency (i.e., days and hours of operation).

### **Convenience issues:**

When people do not have convenient access to personal or public transportation service and amenities, they face many challenges in meeting their basic needs and often spend extra time and planning to ensure they can get to and from their destinations, on time, with the packages or other items they may need to transport.

Oftentimes they must rely on other low, or no cost means like walking, hitchhiking, borrowing vehicles, or riding with friends or family because they have no other options. Challenges to food security were also described (see accommodation above).

Next, public transportation is not available every day or with enough regularity given the kinds of jobs available, and the employment and health issues of this population. The jobs that are available in most places in West Virginia may be characterized as low paying, service jobs that feature shift work that falls outside traditional work schedules that are Monday to Friday 9 am

to 5 pm. In contrast public transportation provides inconsistent/undependable service, travels indirect routes, or requires several transfers, and/or stops running at 8pm or 9pm.

*“The last time I rode the bus...I think it was last week...You're sitting there. You're waiting, you're waiting. They give you the schedule and sometimes they don't even run. It's like I'll call up there and they'll say, 'Well, we're not even running. The next bus will be maybe an hour or so.' Sometimes they get way behind or somebody doesn't show up for work or if they say they're shorted handed. I can see that. If you got to be somewhere, if you have a doctor's appointment or a very important meeting or an important something and you just can't get there until you get there. If you can't afford, like I said, an Uber is so expensive. If you don't have the money for Uber or a cab, it's crazy.”*

*“My children participate in the afterschool program and they don't have buses that bring them home from that, so there's been times that either they haven't got to go because I don't have a way or anybody who could go get them, besides walking and sometimes, depending on weather, it's not the greatest in the world to have the kids out in. Any of their doctors are in Lewisburg [35 minutes/25 miles away]. There's times I've had to change appointments because I don't have a vehicle. I've always tried to do my best to keep their doctor's appointments and things. I let my husband know a week or so in advance that, okay, on this day, I have to have the car. Then, either I get up with him and take him to work and come back home and then do what I need to do and have to go back and pick him up. We have had to do that a few times.”*

Any of these public or other transportation inconveniences can prevent people from getting to and from work, getting food, and getting to important medical and other appointments. The bus schedule plus schedule reliability safety was reported as the cause for interviewees becoming stranded in town or out of town, forgoing employment, or forcing them to walk long distances or hitchhike or find other options.

*“There is certain times that me and my husband have trouble getting transportation for like when we get food or even when I have to get mine and my husband's medicine or when I go to the doctor. There is only certain days that buses will run and we have to like literally walk to get to these places. And I feel that the buses should run six days of the week up until like eight, nine o'clock at night.”*

*“I go to the methadone clinic through the week and I have a transportation bus that picks me up every day but Saturday. And if I miss two days out of the week, I got to start over from the initial dosage from the beginning. And I've had to do that twice already, since I started back*

*to the clinic because I don't have transportation on Saturday. And so that means I go Saturday and Sunday without taking my medicine, which is another problem for me because of transportation. And it's just an issue right now. And I'm trying to work that out and I have no really good answer for that issue besides walk or hitchhike."*

*"I got regular doctor appointments every three months... My doctor's appointments are up on the other side of Richwood off of Mylan Road there or Chaplin Road. If I take a bus, I have to get a deviation...and that's extra. It's like 50 cents extra or something like that. But you have to ask for a deviation when you get on the bus or call them. Another thing too is they don't certainly run that hour because they're supposed to run every on the hour, on the half hour... Sometimes they get behind and they don't run that. Sometimes they knock that one out and then they wait for the next one. So that's an hour waiting... If I got an appointment say at 1 o'clock, and I catch the 12:30 coming out of outbound, and it doesn't come and I call them, and they'll say, "Well, we couldn't run the one at 12:30 because we're shorthanded, so the next one will be at 1 o'clock." So by the time he gets there 1 o'clock, he won't get there until probably 10, 15 after, maybe later. So say my appointment is at 1:00, so I'm already late. I probably don't get there until something until 2:00 or something. I'm like, "Well, there goes that." There's 40 minutes to maybe 50 minutes late"... [Interviewer asks "What do you do when you're late? Do they not see you?"] ...Answer: "I just have to call and cancel. Usually I just call and cancel and reschedule. Then sometimes it's hard because I called and doctors anymore are real super busy, I guess. It's hard to get another appointment. Maybe you might get another appointment two, three weeks later on you'll maybe get an appointment. If it's urgent, then you'll have to go somewhere else I guess."*

*"When I go to the doctors, I have Medicaid, so I get logistics. It's really a hit and miss with logistics, whether they show up to pick you up or not for your doctor's appointment. I can tell you off of the bat I've missed, well, let's put it this way. I haven't been to the doctors since the end of October because they just don't have drivers to get me to and from the doctors. Sometimes, not all their fault, sometimes I was sick. I just didn't go. It was very hard for me to get up and down the stairs in my apartment building with a cast on, and crutches. I was in a lot of pain, so sometimes I just said forget it, I'm not going. Lo and behold, they didn't show up anyway so it worked out well."*

The lack of bus service, bus stops, and bus shelters resulted in people being exposed to bad and inclement weather and other inconveniences. These issues include people with disabilities, the



elderly, and others with physical or medical problems that prevent them from easily walking, standing, waiting or carrying items. Getting to essential destinations was almost impossible for interviewees who lived outside of the city limits, miles from a bus line, or who needed to travel to another town in the Morgantown area.

*“...if somebody catches the bus all the time, they need to make more bus places where you can catch the bus and get in and out of the weather. There's only one or two here or there. And that one in Granville...I mean, the bus can go right by you. If you're sitting down in that thing, he can't see you. He just goes right on by. They usually have a little light there where you push the button and it shows if somebody's there. They don't work...I mean, if it's raining, you're going to get wet. If it's snowing, it's going to be cold. I mean, there's just one way to get out of it. It's either stand out in the weather or you don't catch the bus. It's that simple. You stand the weather or you don't... Basically [they need more shelters] where the elderly can sit down. If they're disabled, they have to stand out there. I'm lucky I'm in the shape that I'm in. I'm 65 and it's hard for me to stand there sometimes. I can imagine somebody...[with] leg trouble or whatever, and they got to sit down, where are they going to sit down at?”*

*“ I tried (hitchhiking to doctor's appointment) to, but I mean, it's illegal really. So I ain't trying to get in trouble for doing that. So if I was very desperate, I mean, there's been times that I've been stranded in Fairmont and Clarksburg, you know, I had no choice, but trying to hitchhike to get home. And I mean, it's just, sometimes you got to do what you got to do.”*

*“Yeah. And it's very dangerous to hitchhike on the interstate because the police will pick you up just for walking down the side of the interstate...Which is crazy. If that's the only way you have to get home, then they should not interfere with that.”*

We found that when people do not have convenient access to personal or public transportation, their decisions about where to live can be based on access to nearby basic necessities such as food, medicine, and work—if they can afford to live in town.

*“I'm remembering several situations that I was in with the bus line not running in the territory...Especially in the wintertime, you got to walk so far, maybe walk two, three miles to the bus line, if I can even get the bus line. If you go outside the Morgantown area...I lived up on Grafton Road, and it was impossible. If you didn't have somebody to take you, it's impossible. You walked or you didn't have a job. If you had a job, you had to get there, and it was just crazy. Most of the time, if you didn't get*

*there you'd get fired. Yeah, I've been in those situations several times...But I'm pretty lucky right now, because I'm right on the bus line, but yeah, it's tough. It's still tough. And you got to go to the doctor's, you got to go to the grocery store. You don't have much choice. You either go to where they go, or you don't go at all. I have to shop at Walmart, not unless I want to catch three or four different buses. I don't want to be out there for three or four hours, so it's Walmart. That's just it. I mean, you can't afford to take three or four different bus lines. It's crazy.”*

*“That was our decision, too, when we moved to Star City because everything was right here and it was in walking distance for us, except for Walmart. That's a little ways. The Sheetz, ALDI's, CVS is right there. That's where I get all my medications. That was one of our big reasons why we stayed in Star City...I did work at Texas Roadhouse too, and I worked at Sheetz also down the block. But I just couldn't do the Sheetz, I was on my feet too much. I had too many injuries and ailments that were stopping me from working a full shift, so I just had to let it go.”*

## **Safety & Security**

Definition of code: This code reflects safety and security issues for the participants, their children, and those with disabilities. The range of safety and security issues covered risks associated with the use of a transportation mode or infrastructure (roads, pedestrian facilities, intersection design, etc.) or safety from crime (e.g., danger from people one might encounter while walking).

### **Safety & Security issues:**

Interviewees identified transportation-related safety issues from several perspectives: their own personal safety, the safety of their children, and special safety challenges faced by people with disabilities. Bad or inclement weather can exacerbate and worsen safety conditions in all of these situations. The frequency and intensity of fear for themselves and others while walking alongside traffic, especially with nowhere to walk [no sidewalk] or standing alongside heavy traffic and waiving down or waiting for a bus could not be stressed enough.

Interviewees reported almost getting hit by a car or fearing they'd get hit by a car while walking or standing in these situations. Further, stories reported intersections as being dangerous also, especially those with no cross walks or sidewalks or other safe places to stand while waiting to cross or catch a bus.

One interviewee reported fearing for her safety while having to walk to work along railroads tracks and the dangers posed by snowy conditions as well as having to watch out for snakes and stray dogs.

Parents expressed transportation-related safety for their children and indicated they take a number of safety precautions such as always accompanying the children—whether walking, biking, or riding the bus-- and keeping a watchful eye out for traffic and other potential dangers.

Interviewees indicated that safety can be especially challenging for people with disabilities or people in wheelchairs, both navigating streets and intersections as well as getting on the bus, and they can face discrimination. Finally, we heard about safety issues for females walking alone including harassment by strangers asking for cigarettes or asking where they live.

Some of the quotes presented came from interviewees after viewing photos and videos from Westover, Route 7, Sabraton, or Hartmann Run Rd.

*“I used to work at the tax place right there. And I used to walk back and forth to work and there was absolutely nowhere to walk. It was in the wintertime just like that. That might be me right there.”*

*Regarding a bus stop nearby Route 7, Sabraton, in front of Krogers, ...“it can get very dangerous if you're waiting on the side of the road for a bus and cars are flying by and you wave down a bus. It can get very dangerous for somebody.”*

*Bad weather makes walking along a roadway (such as Rt 7, Sabraton in front of Krogers) even worse. “I walked past there a lot and when it rains, one thing I really hate is getting splashed by mud puddles.” A second male agreed.*

*“With an intersection like this [Rt. 7 & Hartman Run Rd., Sabraton] there should be a crosswalk on every section of the intersection for people to get, like, from one side of the street to another safely and pay for the schools, like have a security guard there for when people's crossing the street when they need to.”*

*At the intersection in Westover in front of Family Dollar: “I crossed there lots of times. I stood there and caught the bus. I get off the bus there...if I'm coming from town. I get off every day...then...I have to walk down to the one down right below Family Dollar and catch the bus again. Boy, there's no bus stop... that's where I catch the Granville or the Cassville bus...Yeah. You see right there in front of the Family Dollar, there's a grate there, okay? Just a couple days ago a friend of mine was crossing right there and there's I guess some rebar or something sticking up there somewhere, and she tripped over the rebar and she skinned her knees up. Yeah. She got banged up pretty good just the other day.”*

*Westover intersection: "Now, right there there's no sidewalk. So yeah, that's really dangerous right there. That's really dangerous...I mean, a lot of people cross there too. I've crossed there all the time because I go to Walgreens is our pharmacy. So I go to the Family Dollar and sometimes I have to go across the street to the pharmacy. It's dangerous. It's super dangerous. You have to be super careful. Sometimes you run to that little island and you stand there until you can get across. Yeah, that's dangerous. All the way around there is dangerous. Anywhere you cross in that triangle is dangerous. I'm surprised that nobody's really got hurt there. They probably have. I just never heard about it."*

*"Over here where I'm at, in Star City, when I was able to walk down to Sheetz or ALDI's, there's no sidewalks on the left side if you're going down from where I'm at. Yeah, it could be hazardous because of the way they drive, they don't care. They'll just come around that corner, and if you're there, you're there. If you're not, you're lucky."...When asked if she's had any close calls? "Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, I have. Yes, and it was actually coming around the turn, coming up from ALDI's, the first right hand turn which is what I would take where my veterinarian is for the dog. Oh, dear God. They come around that turn doing Mach 2. It's crazy, yeah."*

*[A school aged daughter] "Well, they never walk home from school by their self...for what age that my oldest is at right now, she'll always have a parent walk her, at least until high school. We'll walk her to the bus stop... You know, you got a daughter, you got to make sure they're all right."*

*"I can understand where you're coming from because I have three step kids... And me and my husband make sure that those kids come first before anything... Well, with me and my husband, when we have my step kids, we never leave our apartment, unless we absolutely have to. And we usually have the kids sit in front of us. And then we sit behind them, or beside them on the bus. Or if we're out and about and we have the kids walking with us, my husband is on the outside of them, and I'm on the inside, and we have all three kids in between the both of us."*

*"We've walked to different places; we've rode bikes to different places. They enjoy the bicycle riding more than they do the walking. Most of the time, the walking is, I'm tired. I want to go home, can you carry me? You get them on their bikes and they, of course, leave me behind, but they ride so far and they stop or they turn around and come back and get me*

*and then ride with me... but there's been times that we've had to take the bikes out and go down to the Dollar Store to go pay a bill or something of that nature... I know that they're not supposed to and everything, but I normally leave them on the sidewalk and I'm in the road next to them. There's been places where we don't have the sidewalks that they have to go on the road and some of the drivers are screaming out the windows, 'That's what sidewalks are for' and things of that nature. I always have them at least slow down, if not come to a complete stop, even what I would call the little side streets and to make sure nothing's coming, because they'll pop out of nowhere and I don't want them hit..."*

*"I know a couple people that are in wheelchairs and they pretty much have to rely on the bus driver's help to get on the bus. And I haven't really seen anybody help handicapped people like wheelchair people out here, really too much."*

*[Bus drivers help] ..."but then they complain about it...The last time me and my husband rode a bus and there was a handicapped person that was in a wheelchair trying to get on the bus. And the bus driver had pulled over to get the person on, the bus driver had complained that it was taking too long for them to get this person onto the bus. And it was taking away from their scheduled time to pick everybody up and that they should just...the bus driver literally said to the passengers that was on the bus, including the handicapped person, that there should be a special bus, just for the handicapped to where they can pick them up with no complaints and everything. And I thought it was rude of the bus driver to say that. And the bus driver was literally discriminating [against] a handicapped person."*

## **Access to Resources & Opportunities**

Definition of code: This code reflects the ability to get to destinations and take advantage of resources and opportunities deemed important to everyday life including employment, healthcare, and sources of food.

### **Accessibility Issues:**

Due to unreliable or no access to transportation, interviewees reported missing needed medical appointments, the loss of employment or even opportunities for employment, absenteeism from work, and late arrivals to places of employment leading to loss of a job.

Interviewees provided stories about employers willing to be flexible with their schedules and the special challenge that can be encountered in an emergency when a family member needed to get to the hospital.

*“However you want to put it, as long as you can plan what you need or where you need to go, like doctor's appointments and things like that, you can probably find a neighbor or a friend or something of that nature, but in emergency situations, it's a completely a different story.... Well, I've had to with, my youngest, actually. She got a pretty good size cut and I figured it was going to need stitches, which of course, once I got to the hospital, they told me it would have, but getting there wasn't the issue. Yes, I could have dialed 911 and went, but of course, I had my other two [young children] and this was probably, I don't know, nine, 10 o'clock at night, so it was later of an evening. I'd have to leave the other two here or find somebody to watch them, which at times, that late of an evening can be a difficult thing to do. Then, of course, if you go over by ambulance, then you're stuck at the hospital because you have no way to get back home...I found a friend who was willing to take me over there and they wound up, actually, sleeping while we were in the emergency room. They slept in the car.”*

When asked about times when the Medicaid van does not show up for rides to scheduled doctor appointments an interviewee said the following.

*“... I just can't go. I just don't go. I know several people that have a car, but it's hard. People are busy with their lives, they have to do what they need to do for their families, and a lot of people, also, I find out here that nobody will do anything for nothing.”*

One interviewee said he misses appointments once-in-a-while, adding *“Some of the [bus] routes need to [leave] every half an hour in some places.”* Another said he sometimes misses appointments, *“It depends on traffic and everything else, when the bus is and all that.”* Another interviewee said he has not had any issues getting to work or doctor appointments, he just walks instead.

### **Emotional, Bodily or Personal Possession Impacts**

Definition of code: This code reflects the emotional distress, bodily harm, or discomfort, and/or wear and tear on personal property from getting around without use of a personal vehicle or reliable access to other transportation.

**Emotional, bodily, or personal possession impacts:**

When individuals struggle to make ends meet with low or no income these reported impacts create a competition between other expenses such as rent, medical care, utilities, food, vehicle repairs/ fuel and even personal possessions that require hard earned money for replacements.

Challenges with transportation can go beyond cost, convenience, safety and missing work or important appointments. Dealing with daily transportation challenges, may also lead to emotional frustration (such as quitting a job after missing the bus a few times) and/or self-blaming or self-criticism. For example, stories about unreliable transportation and employment seemed to be connected to the loss of a sense of competency, self-efficacy, or self-assurance in the ability to hold a job successfully. These emotional impacts may be even more damaging to people already experiencing emotional or physical disabilities/challenges.

One interviewee said he lost a job because the bus schedule *“didn’t line up with certain hours required for the job”*. He also had problems getting to work on time due to bus schedules. The interviewee said that once his employer *“realized that the bus was my main...way of transportation, then they were all right with me being a half hour, 40 minutes, either before or after I was supposed to be there”* .... This interviewee reported that after missing the bus a couple of times, he decided not to go. While the job loss was due in part to an unreliable bus schedule, the interviewee seemed to blame himself for the job saying, *“I have to be honest with you. It was my fault. So I just got discouraged at the time.”*

In this West Virginia context where jobs are few, largely in the service sector, and pay less than a living wage, the likelihood of getting enough money to buy a vehicle is questionable<sup>11</sup>. For example:

- The state’s unemployment rate is expected to see limited changes over the forecast horizon.
- While real per capita personal income is expected to grow over the next five years the fastest-growing segment of income will be in transfer payments such as Social Security and Medicare benefits.
- Employment in West Virginia is estimated to increase 0.2 percent per year on average through 2024, compared to an expectation of 0.6 percent for the nation.

These factors speak to population level economic problems with growth in wages, income, and jobs in West Virginia more than individual level issues with motivation. On the other hand, this confluence of factors seems to support the funding of an operational public bus service that runs according to the needs of the population.

However, again the loss of self-efficacy, incompetence, and self-blame came up again when an interviewee experiencing bus problems said, *“Makes me feel I need to motivate more so I can buy my own car.* When asked to clarify the meaning of “motivate more” the interviewee said

---

<sup>11</sup> Lego, B., et al. (2019). "West Virginia Economic Outlook: 2020-2024."

*“That means to get my butt in gear. Get your priorities in order, that way you’re able to buy a car, pay your rent, and pay your bus fare at the same time.”*

Stories from interviewees about walking along difficult, uneven terrain and in bad weather demonstrated how this kind of activity with no transportation or operational places to walk can be hard on a person’s feet or other parts of their bodies and create unexpected, costly expenses by damaging personal property or creating added expenses for gear sufficient for walking in cold, hot, or rainy conditions.

One interviewee said, “I mainly walk everywhere...My feet are raw, I’ll tell you that.” This statement was followed by a reference to “shoebroos.” Another interviewee explained, *“It’s (shoebroos) a known common name around here for people who walk, and they wear their tennis shoes out every time they walk.”* The word “Shoebroos” was documented during recorded interviews in 2019 on the transportation equity website at <https://placeandhealthwv.com/transportation/lifting-up-equity/>.

## **Engaging in Transportation Planning: Participant Perspectives**

Using a brainstorming approach, interviewees spoke about their interest and preferences for engaging in transportation planning meetings or discussions, and ways to include them in the discussions. Topics covered their interest in transportation planning, convenient times and locations for interaction, and ways to get them to attend meetings.

Most of the participants had never participated in a transportation planning meeting, nor had they ever attended a public or community meeting. Further, interviewees were not familiar with the MMMPO and where and when meetings were held. They also reported not knowing where to find this information about the MMMPO.

Exceptions to non-participation in civic activities included the use of Facebook to attend selected local city council meetings and leading a Girl Scout troop. The transportation literate couple also reported experiences attending MMMPO meetings<sup>12</sup>.

Reasons reported for not attending transportation meetings included not knowing the location; difficulty in getting there and the potential need to take several buses. Interviewees gave other reasons for not attending transportation meetings such as not knowing who to talk to or lack of knowledge about the expectations for meetings. Interviewees did say that with more knowledge they would most likely attend.

---

<sup>12</sup> Detailed data collected from this couple’s interview are available upon request.



*“Really, I don't know where they're at, and probably transportation. That's why I never went... Because I think they're probably in the evenings or something...I'd probably have to catch two or three buses to get there or whatever, but I've never been there because of that”*

*“I don't know who I would talk to. I don't know if it would be a county or just a town thing.”*

On the other hand, while not having a track record of participation, interviewees expressed willingness to take part in transportation planning meetings.

*“No, I have never been to one. I guess when I was younger I could care less what was going on, but now that I'm older and have these elements that I'm facing, I would find it very interesting, actually. I've seen on C-SPAN when they do those kind of town meetings and stuff like that. It would be interesting, I think it'd be kind of fun.”...“I'd be willing to listen to anything, and to give my input on it as a member of this county and town. I'd go to more than one, too. I mean, I guess I'm at the age right now where I see things more clearly than I did when I was younger, so the way that this country is going right now I think we need a lot of people to step up.”*

A reported barrier to attendance was needing to take the bus to meetings and not having meetings located close to a scheduled bus route available at the time of the meetings. As preferable meeting locations Interviewees identified the courthouse, the town hall, downtown Morgantown, the library, churches, schools, Friendship House, and social service agencies they regularly visit.

It's important to note that many said they would need to take the bus to these meetings. So it's imperative that the busses are running and that Interviewees can get to the meeting place via a straight route on the bus. The Rainelle interviewee mentioned that the community did not have a community center and the closest social service agency is in Lewisburg (35 minutes away).

Interviewees expressed a preference for meeting in person and one-on-one rather than via Zoom, phone, or in a group. However, when asked about the use of OPT during the Pandemic they said that Zoom would be okay.

Interviewees reported having their own cell phones and said almost everyone they know had a cell phone. Additionally, we found that Friendship House clients are allowed to use the organization's phone. Hence, both land lines and cell phones could be used for communicating between social service agencies, clients, and transportation planners.

Interviewees indicated that the best ways to reach them about upcoming transportation meetings are personal contact via phone calls, email or contacting them through the state or

local social service agencies with whom they interact. One parent suggested sending notices home with kids from school.

There was variation in preferable meeting times. Some interviewees wanted meetings to be held on a weekday during the day as opposed to evenings or weekends. Other interviewees could only attend during evening hours.

This population, more likely than not, works multiple jobs that require a nontraditional schedule made up of evening, overnight or weekend hours and days. This variation speaks to the need to be certain about the characteristics of those being sought to attend planning sessions and avoiding a one size fits all standardized meeting time, place, and manner.

Interviewees reported that they might be inspired or decide to attend a public meeting if people such as the governor, the mayor, town council members, as well as neighbors, community leaders and some church pastors were present. Interviewees would like government leaders to see what needs to be improved or how the people of Morgantown get around the city.

Having leaders understand the needs of this population could be related to a process where leaders and transportation planners accompany them while they get around the region. Interviewees said they might be willing for transportation planner(s) to accompany them during a daily commute to show what it's like for them go move around in the Greater Morgantown area<sup>13</sup>. However, interviewees stressed the importance of knowing how this process would benefit them if they allowed planners to accompany them.

*“Oh, yeah [it’ important for neighbors to attend the meeting]. Yeah, for sure. For sure. Are you kidding me? That’d be really important I would say....I think there’d have to be some type of official there. That’s for sure.”*

*“It would be the town council and people who could actually, I guess, make a decision in the town because you can get a group of citizens together and have a meeting, but if there's not going to be a result to it, it could still be something that's needed and desired, but we wouldn't have any way to, I guess, enforce the decision.”*

Having childcare services at meetings might facilitate participation. On the other hand, interviewees expressed some hesitancy to the provision of babysitting services by someone they did not know. Certifying and/or making known those that would provide the childcare service is important. Hiring someone form the community to provide the childcare would be an added benefit to the transportation planning agency and the population

---

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Andress has used this method with low-income mom’s while shopping. The process is cited and studied under food security as a shop-along.

# Recommendations

## Before You Can Recruit

### Building Capacity of Social Service Agencies

Because, in our experience there is a need for a trusted intermediary between the experts and the underrepresented groups, we are not recommending that planners begin by educating the unrepresented groups. Instead, we think that to recruit unrepresented groups transportation planners should start by educating and building awareness among the social service agencies

This recommendation is built upon the creation of education sessions planned with an informed group of social service, "boots-on-the-ground" (BOG) staff. These are possible steps in planning the education sessions and format:

- (1) Identify the BOG staff to be involved using careful one to one outreach and not a mass invitation in writing;
- (2) Issue individual invitations to join in the planning of the transportation education sessions;
- (3) Establish an advisory group to tell you what they need to know and the best way to deliver this information;
- (4) Educational sessions should be onsite at the agency;
- (5) Consider asking the agencies to host the sessions and give them a stipend to host the sessions.

## Recruitment

### Underrepresented Groups: Time, Place, & Manner of Recruitment & Participation

First, we found that underrepresented groups want to be involved in transportation decisions. Nevertheless, we would advise that *before planners begin working with social service agencies to recruit underrepresented clients, we refer back to our first recommendation which is educating the social service agencies on transportation planning.*

*Next, developing relationships and partnerships and/or having an understanding in advance with social service agency personnel would provide several benefits: (1) improve the chances of obtaining their assistance; (2) make it easier to recruit underrepresented clients and (3) shorten the amount of time used to recruit the underrepresented population.*

As an example of the painstaking process used by our team, we refer to our timeline which goes back to January 2021 where SF started by reaching out one-to-one with key individuals

that might know something about the needs of underrepresented groups<sup>14</sup>. SF (solely responsible for this process) worked on this effort intermittently over the course of 18-months<sup>15</sup>. The representatives in the initial phase of getting to know social service agencies turned out to be women who had some decision-making authority at the agencies.

When we started this phase in the winter of 2021 the goal was to find out what social service agencies knew about transportation planning and its impact on their clients. We were not asking the agencies to help us recruit clients at this point. Instead, we wanted to know if they understood how transportation decisions were being made and how this process fit the lived experiences of their clients as they moved around the greater Morgantown area.

From these initial conversations with key decision makers, we were advised to work with BOG staff that had closer contact with underrepresented clients at the agencies. This advice was very important to our efforts to recruit underrepresented individuals.

Once these relationships have been established and the social the social service agencies have been educated, we offer the following guidance:

- Allow plenty of time for the social service staff to identify and recruit underrepresented participants, approximately one-month (or more) from start to finish;
- COVID has made it more difficult to arrange in-person meetings, due to people still being hesitant to meet in person, according to social service personnel;
- It was necessary for us to expand beyond our initial group of social service provider contacts for help recruiting underrepresented community members and reach out to many others suggested by them and other contacts. Many options are listed in the [Training Equity Toolkits' Guidebook 5: Reaching and Engaging Underrepresented Citizens through Their Trusted Allies and Advocates](#) (see list of agencies on pp. 13-14).

Once underrepresented groups have been recruited, we have the following observations on their participation in transportation planning.

- It may be necessary to get creative and offer potential interviewees more flexible options for engaging—in addition to in-person, Zoom and telephone interactions, as well as group or one-on-one options. We considered using the “Videoask” app which invites people to record answers via an online interactive video or asking people to video record answers to a few key questions on their phone and upload the video to a google folder, but in the end did not need to use these options.
- Most of the participants had never participated in a transportation planning meeting, nor had they ever attended a public or community meeting. Further, interviewees were

---

<sup>14</sup> Additional details on this extensive process to recruit social service agency representatives are available on request.

<sup>15</sup> The intermittent process over 18 months is both the result of our limited budget plus the need to start with intentional, one-to-one relationships.

not familiar with the MMMPO and where and when meetings were held. They also reported not knowing where to find this information about the MMMPO.

- A reported barrier to attendance was needing to take the bus to meetings and not having meetings located close to a scheduled bus route available at the time of the meetings. As preferable meeting locations Interviewees identified the courthouse, the town hall, downtown Morgantown, the library, churches, schools, Friendship House, and social service agencies they regularly visit.
- Interviewees expressed a preference for meeting in person and one-on-one rather than via Zoom, phone, or in a group. However, when asked about the use of OPT during the Pandemic they said that Zoom would be okay.
- Interviewees reported having their own cell phones and said almost everyone they know had a cell phone. Additionally, some social service agencies may allow clients to use the organization's phone. Hence, both land lines and cell phones could be used for communicating between social service agencies, clients, and transportation planners.
- Interviewees indicated that the best ways to reach them about upcoming transportation meetings are personal contact via phone calls, email or contacting them through the state or local social service agencies with whom they interact. One parent suggested sending notices home with kids from school.
- There was variation in preferable meeting times. This population, more likely than not, works multiple jobs that require a nontraditional schedule of meetings that avoids a one size fits all standardized meeting format as proscribed by regulations.
- This population might be inspired or decide to attend a public meeting if community and/or elected leaders and their peers were present.
- Even after a particular participant has been recruited, has agreed to participate, and has an interview date scheduled, it is helpful to keep them engaged prior to the interview date by maintaining close contact, especially as the date draws near. This can be accomplished via phone calls, text messages or emails, depending on a person's preference. Reasons for more personally engaging them include the following:
  - Many do not keep calendars and rely on more informal methods for scheduling and remembering meeting dates;
  - Many had other meetings or responsibilities come up at the last minute and needed to change the meeting date;
  - They may not be accustomed to participating in formal meetings and approach the process less formally than interviewers do.
- It is also recommended that the interviewer remain flexible when recruiting, interacting with, and scheduling meetings with this population, given the other daily challenges people are facing that can often make demands on and require much of their time.

## **After Recruitment**

### **Understanding the Lived Experiences of the Population**

First, we think it is worth revisiting and considering the five piloted participatory methods in this report.

[Participatory Activity #1: Sharing Transportation Stories](#) ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

[Participatory Activity #2: Reacting Verbally or in Writing to Situations Presented in Videos/Photos](#)..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

[Participatory Activity #3: Participants Interviewing Each Other](#) ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

[Participatory Activity #4: Compare Current vs. Ideal Transportation Situation](#).....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

[Participatory Activity #5: Brainstorm: Ways Underrepresented Community Members Prefer to Be Involved in Transportation Planning](#) ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Next, one of our *Transportation Equity Toolkit* resources, "[Guidebook 8: Convening Public and Other Transportation Meetings with Underrepresented Citizens](#)" includes additional recommendations from social service providers for convening transportation planning meetings and meaningfully engaging underrepresented citizens<sup>16</sup>.

Last, we strongly recommend community-institutional interaction as an effective way to understand the needs of this population. This method does not require that the community group read maps, reports, or other literature. It allows underrepresented citizens to express their experiences by demonstrating what it is like to travel around the region on a daily basis.

Having leaders understand the needs of this population could be facilitated by using a process where leaders and transportation planners accompany the underrepresented while they attempt to travel the region. Interviewees said they might be willing for a transportation planner(s) to accompany them during a daily commute to show what it is like for them to move around in the Greater Morgantown area<sup>17</sup>.

It should be noted however, that while interviewees expressed enthusiasm for this shadowing exercise, they also stressed the importance of knowing how this process would benefit them if they agreed to the exercise. In fact, best practices for community-based participatory procedures recommend the use of honorariums as a way of respecting the significance of the contribution that unrepresented groups make when they agree to community-institutional interactions<sup>18</sup>. Further, the recognition of the contributions of underrepresented groups using honorariums is a significant step in lowering the power differential inherent in interactions

---

<sup>16</sup> [Guidebook 8: Convening Public and Other Transportation Meetings with Underrepresented Citizens](#) in the [Transportation Equity Toolkit](#)

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Andress has used this method with low-income mom's while shopping. The process is cited and studied under food security as a shop-along.

<sup>18</sup> Andress, L., et al. (2020). "Addressing power dynamics in community-engaged research partnerships." *Journal of Patient-Reported Outcomes* 4: 1-8.

where “experts” go out into the field and seek input from the community<sup>19</sup>. We think it would be essential to compensate or reward the underrepresented citizens that agree to this process.

## Future Research & Exploration

- The MMMPO could work with MLTA to assess frequency, service hours, and coverage, especially in areas where a low-income population is located and investigate connections with employment centers, food stores, and health centers.
- Access to bus stops and connectivity should be explored. The identification of potential locations for physical bus stops along routes that run on particular incomplete streets might be needed.
- Network connectivity is of importance for this population group. Inventorying pedestrian infrastructure and identifying the missing connections should be a priority, especially in routes that provide access to major opportunities.
- The analysis and establishment of frequent, safe, and visible crossings should also be prioritized.

Other lived experiences of the underrepresented that should be investigated include the following:

- The likelihood that the transportation needs of a segment of the population deemed as underrepresented groups are not met and that these unmet needs create many barriers to accessing opportunities and services.
- The connection between lack of transit services and an economy where jobs are scarce, only in certain regions of the State, and may not pay a living wage which has the following outcomes:
  - Stigmatization and a loss of a sense of self-worth and competency,
  - Environmental issues from noise and air pollution,
  - Higher costs to replace personal possessions,
  - Competing expenses while on a limited income,
  - Risk of bodily harm,
  - Limitations in access to resources deemed important in a community, and
  - Exposure to law enforcement.
- Issues with the affordability of bus services due to the cost of the fare.
- Problems with transit services that frequently do not meet the needs of this segment (due to service hours, frequency, or coverage).
- Safety issues due to walking, as an alternative primary mode of transportation for this segment. Among the biggest challenges of these pedestrians is the lack of pedestrian infrastructure and incomplete networks as well as lack of safe crossings.

---

<sup>19</sup> Andress, L., et al. (2020).

- Limitations on access to food stores or food banks, and especially the ability to transport fragile items that are sensitive to cold, heat, or packaging and transport where there is a lot of jostling and traveling long distances.
- Lack of access to transit services also seems to limit access to health-related services.
- Limitations and barriers to employment opportunities.
- The likelihood of a policy that limits the bags/luggage/packages a person can carry on public transport.

## Conclusion

This work reflects the deeply held beliefs of our team that stories representing the issues and needs of underrepresented citizens are essential to transportation planning. Further, our efforts highlight the central tenet that the underrepresented should be able to actively participate in and influence the decisions that affect their lives.

Accordingly, this report along with our [“Transportation Equity Toolkit”](#) and website, [“Transportation: The Equity Orientation,”](#) is yet another effort to bring to life the idea of public involvement and representation of underrepresented citizens in transportation planning.

Transportation is said to have multiple externalities that vary across populations and space. Our work and other findings have identified some of these negative consequences to be<sup>20 21</sup>:

- Stigmatization and a loss of a sense of self-worth and competency
- Noise and air pollution,
- Higher costs to replace personal possessions
- Competing expenses while on a limited income,
- Geographic segregation across psychosocial -emotional spaces,
- Visual intrusion,
- Alterations in property values leading to gentrification,
- Risk of bodily harm,
- Limitations in access to resources deemed important in a community, and
- Exposure to law enforcement.

Further, available evidence on disparities in automobile ownership rates, trip-making behavior, mode choice, activity participation, and exposure to environmental burdens suggests that low-income people, racial/ethnic groups, people with disabilities, single mothers, older adults, and youth are at risk of various forms of inequitable outcomes and transportation injustice<sup>22</sup>.

---

<sup>20</sup> Karner, A., J. London, D. Rowangould and K. Manaugh (2020). "From Transportation Equity to Transportation Justice: Within, Through, and Beyond the State." *Journal of Planning Literature* 35(4): 440-459.

<sup>21</sup> Zavestoski, S. and J. Agyeman (2014). *Incomplete Streets: Processes, Practices, and Possibilities*, Routledge.

<sup>22</sup> Karner, A. and D. Niemeier (2013). "Civil rights guidance and equity analysis methods for regional transportation plans: a critical review of literature and practice." *Journal of Transport Geography* 33(0): 126-134.



Overall, efforts by transportation planners more commonly focus on technical fixes, legal mandates, and quantitative “equity” analyses that explain how the benefits and burdens of transportation plans and projects are distributed, often relying upon simulation models of future land use and travel behavior.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, public involvement deemed a best practice and legally mandated is conscripted and implemented by a set of guidelines that outline the minimum steps required to solicit public involvement. Unfortunately, while public involvement is solicited using the sanctioned process, it is often pro forma, and its results unlikely to affect ultimate decisions.

The basis for this work on transportation planning has included the concepts of equity, participatory planning, and inclusion. To increase community involvement in the planning process (infrastructure, land use, economic development) our version of participatory planning has melded technical expertise with the preferences and knowledge of impacted, often excluded community members. Last, our participatory paradigm seeks to integrate the knowledge of the transportation planning field with our efforts to consider the prioritization of traditionally marginalized groups in the planning process.

---

<sup>23</sup> Karner, et al. (2013).

# APPENDIX

## Sociodemographic Table Transportation Equity Final Report

Sociodemographic characteristics of underrepresented citizens(n=11)

<i>(Independent Variables Listed Below)</i>	Total, no.	Program 1, Friendship House & Health Right P1 no.	Program 2, Scotts Run Settlement House P2 no.	Program 3, WVU Extension P3 no.	Transportation Mode										
					Bus <sup>1</sup>	Bus w Property Tax Bus Pass <sup>2</sup>	Walk	Bicycle	Hitch hike	Ride from Friend, Family, Neighbor	Borrow Car	Currently Own Car <sup>3</sup>	Medicaid Transport Van	PRT	Other <sup>4</sup>
	[n=11]	[n=6]	[n=4]	[n=1]											
<b>Gender</b>															
Male	7	5	2		7	2	7	1	3	1	1		2	3	2
Female	4	1	2	1	4	1	4	1		2	1	1	1	1	1
<b>City of Residence</b>															
Morgantown		4													
Granville <sup>24</sup>		1	3												
Star City			1												
Brookhaven		1													
Rainelle				1											
<b>Age</b>															
20-29		2													
30-39		1													

<sup>24</sup> The transportation literate couple was from Granville and came to us through Scotts Run Settlement

40-49		2	1	1														
50-59		1	2															
60-69			1															
Birthplace																		
Morgantown		4	3															
PA		1																
NY Brooklyn			1															
CA				1														
Unknown		1																
Living/Domestic Situation																		
Married		1		1														
Co-habiting			4															
Single																		
Unknown		5																
Children																		
Natural, Yes		2	1	1														
Step, Yes		1																
No			2															
Unknown		4	1															
Housing																		
Own home				1														
Rent home or apartment		2	1															
Rent mobile home			2															
Unknown		4	1															
Government																		

Assistance (SSI, SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)																		
Yes <sup>25</sup>		6	4	1														
No																		
Unknown																		
Employed																		
Yes (full or part-time)		3	3															
No		2	1	1														
Unknown		1																
Race																		
White	11																	

- 1 Regarding the female participant from Rainelle: Rainelle does not have regular bus service, she needs to call ahead and schedule a pick-up
- 2 The Property Tax Bus Pass, a program of Mountain Line Transit Authority, offers reduced bus pass rates to property owners based on their property tax payment; rental property owners can offer bus passes to their tenants
- 3 Regarding the one car owner (the female from Rainelle): her family of five (husband, wife, three children) currently owns two cars but has had only one car many times in the past; her husband has had to take that car to work leaving her with no transportation for long hours
- 4 One male uses Uber when necessary and recently purchased a kit to build a motor bike; one couple uses cab service when necessary.
- 5 Racial/ethnic data was not collected. Visual surveillance suggests all appeared to be white.

---

<sup>25</sup> We assume that these clients are on government assistance since they were referred by Friendship House & Health Right.

