

Gloucester County Local Citizens'
Transportation Advisory Committee
February 13, 2025

Meeting started: 3:11pm

Roll Call: Robert Dazlich, Nick Cressman, Jacqueline Huston, Carol Weinhardt, Cadie DiGiambattista, Vinn Ferraro, Lisa Cerny, Tyler Bonaventure, Kristen Cervantes

Guests: Christina Velazquez, Rachel Bonaventure GC Department of Economic Development Housing & Community Development; Amy Swanson Aide of Commissioner, Deputy Director/Commissioner Liaison Jim Jefferson

Absent: Dana Marie Convery, Jessica Hampel

Open Public meeting statement was read.

Deputy Director/Commissioner Liaison Jefferson administered the 2025 Oaths of Office to Nick Cressman, Robert Dazlich, Jacqueline Huston, Carol Weinhardt, Cadie DiGiambattista

Reorganization of LCTAC:

- **Election of Chairperson-** Cadie DiGiambattista made a motion to elect Nick Cressman as Chairperson, Robert Dazlich seconded, Nick Cressman voted in to be Chairperson
- **Election of Vice Chairperson-** Nick Cressman made a motion to elect Robert Dazlich as Vice Chairperson, Cadie DiGiambattista seconded, Robert Dazlich voted in to be Vice Chairperson
- **Election of Secretary-** Nick Cressman made a motion to elect Kristen Cervantes as secretary, Robert Dazlich seconded, Kristen Cervantes voted in to be Secretary
- **Approval of 2025 Meeting Schedule-** Carol Weinhardt made a motion to approve the meeting schedule, Robert Dazlich seconded, meeting schedule for 2025 was approved

Approval of October 10, 2024 Minutes- Nick Cressman made a motion to approve the October 10, 2024 minutes, Robert Dazlich and Jacqueline Huston seconded, minutes were approved

Presentation- Christina Velazquez, Director: Office of Housing & Community Development, Department of Economic Development:

Here to discuss our consolidated 5-year plan from September 2025- August 2029, need to make an assessment of all the needs in the community and gather up all feedback from stakeholders. In the consolidated plan we exam housing, community development, economic development, fair housing, and social service needs as they benefit low and moderate low-income residents, and transportation. In surveying the disabled population-one of those needs

that we try to assess. We try to do the outreach to citizens through various committee meetings that serve those populations and gather as much intel and data as we possibly can. CDBG in home- funds different types of activities: we can do infrastructure; we can fund transportation; we can purchase equipment if it's a nonprofit- such as vans, bussing. We also fund programs in public services. Each activity must benefit low to moderate low-income individuals. The disabled adult population is a presumed low and moderate low-income beneficiary. A minimum of 70% of our funds have to serve that demographic. Our home activities include: affordable housing development, rental assistance, rehabilitation of housing as well. **Questions they would like to ask the group:**

- Can you identify the transportation and accessibility needs and gaps in the county?
 - **Answer:** Don't have enough.
- Specifically, to address transportation for disabled individuals or that Accesslink link is not sufficient?
 - **Answer:** Everything is not efficient.
- Are there any changes to the transportation system that should occur in Gloucester County and how would these changes benefit low to moderate low income?
 - **Answer:** Pureland East West Community Shuttle is not only for taking individuals to jobs but also to engage in the community whether it is to go shopping or going to doctor appointments things along those lines. Something else in the pipeline is the train (Glassboro- Camden line). Hope and goal is that we don't have a park and ride in Gloucester County, as Pureland East West Shuttle starts at the Avondale ride.
- How do you perceive the community has changed in the last 5 years?
 - **Answer:** Next 5 years is going to change dramatically just do to lower to moderate low-income housing is going to be built in the next 5 years and a lot of those people are transit dependent. In planning office alone 5,000 proposed houses are to be built in next 4-5 years. Percentage of low-income moderate houses to be built. A lot of them are not along transit routes. Thankfully some of them are along the East West Shuttle Route.
 - Nick will submit a summary of sustainable funding to Christinas' office
 - **Answer:** Also, with the housing (55 and over communities) they promote transportation but its Gloucester County Transportation, but we won't go in there because they promoted transportation. A lot of communities being developed but no transportation being offered except what the county and municipalities provides' and we don't have the staffing, not all municipalities have a municipal bus. We have outsourced our transportation operations to South Jersey Transportation Authority. So

that is one of the things that have changed in the last 5 years as we (GC) are no longer the operator. We have subcontracted out due to the lack of drivers. We were limited with our number of drivers, we had a lot of denials because of days that were closed out, because we did not have enough drivers to fill the need. Communities and buildings being built in areas that are not close to a transit line and GC is one of the fastest growing counties and where are they coming from.

- **Answer:** The pandemic is also something different from 5 years we have not built up our numbers for the Pureland Shuttle from the pandemic. We were really rising prior to the pandemic and now we are trying to recover.
- Is there any return to work orders that might offset that?
 - **Answer:** No because the Pureland Industrial Park has warehouse workers that were working. The problem with Pureland is that the warehouse schedules don't reflect the schedules of public transportation. They do not want to change their schedules to meet the public transportation schedule because they feel like they are providing the jobs. Its our responsibility to get the people there. Its not their responsibility to get them there. We are not willing to change our timetables to meet those needs. That is why we can't get sustainable funding from them.
- There is a lot of housing for low to moderate low income, do you think that there is an adequate supply of housing that meet the needs for people with disabilities?
 - **Answer:** No.
 - **Answer:** Probably not.
 - **Answer:** A big thing happening now is towns avoiding that like Mt. Laurel building 55 and over communities, they can only do that as a percentage though.
 - **Answer:** The only one someone knows of for disability housing is Project Freedom, it is going in Harrison Township.
 - **Answer:** To meet the quota is veterans housing, 55 and over will dedicate some for the chronically homeless but not many, but its really for the disabled The ARC and/or Bancroft School some of those populations.
- Any other comments that would be beneficial for incorporating into our plan to see how our funding could be pivoted to address some of those issues?
 - **Answer:** It could take a widescale investment which we don't have and that your program doesn't have.
- Survey: Please participate in the survey if you can and want to.

- Required by NJ TRANSIT to do a coordinated human services transportation plan we have to update our plan, Lisa will share with Christina the last plan we had, and also make sure Christina is included in our planning process going forward.
- Beneficial to join the board in 2026.

Discussion items and updates:

- a. **Operations/2025 priorities-** SJTA increasing with trip count, a meeting was held with them last week to discuss the latest inspections, inspectors came down and inspected vehicles and there were some issues so we needed to come sit down with them to discuss the process and who was overseeing what part of it. Pretrips and post trips- they do not like using our ECOLANE software. They are using paper and it is not accurate and if not accurate again they will be forced to use ECOLANE software. We will continue to work with them for the maintenance pieces of the puzzle. We had to send up our maintenance plans and protocols to NJ TRANSIT.
 - **5310 grant** due Friday Feb 14, 2025 putting in for 2 hybrid vehicles
 - Trying to meet Governors mandate by 2030 to be emissions free
 - GC not fully equipped to go full electric at this point (charging stations, maintenance)
 - Dana meeting with SJTA to talk about a new route such as Woodbury Heights, Wenonah, Newfield that do not have public transportation and/or a municipal bus to assist with some shopping
 - Vehicles being loaned out to three municipalities Glassboro, Monroe, and Washington Township; Glassboro and Monroe have submitted their new shared services lease agreement with us (waiting to get the bus back from Washington Township)
 - 2 municipalities were awarded busses through the Counties Transportation Infrastructure Program -West Deptford, Woodbury City (county offsets the vehicle up to \$50,000.00)
 - Month of January- staff does the interviews for Accesslink 17 interviews- we get reimbursed for that
 - Total calls for SJTA and DTS 857; 165 DTS; 45 applications processed from DTS; 40 new applications sent out from DTS; SJTA 692 calls; 214 trips booked from SJTA for the month of January
 - Drug and alcohol policy- sent up a plan as to how we were drug testing since we do not have operations; SJTA will be submitting the MIS reports our HR manual 7.6 was sent up to NJ TRANSIT that was due Feb 14, 2025.
 - SCUCS pilot program still in the works to do extended hours/mileage transport
- b. **COST/Statewide Issues-** April is Transaction Conference- Rodeo at Harrah's Casino in Atlantic City (main focus is conferences and workshops)

- Casino money sports betting is still going to keep us afloat along with additional grant funds for 2027
 - National CTAA conference will be held in NJ at Harrah's in 2027 around 2,000 people should be attending
 - ModivCare meeting is next week
 - Statewide meeting Nathan with Coordinated Human Services Transportation- Dana and Lisa sit on executive board for the south (6 regions of southern counties) to talk about sharing models of software; pilot for that is SCUCS
 - **STATEWIDE** transit is under state review; Tri annual is first week in June; new employees at NJ TRANSIT CEO and president on down; grants are being reviewed
- c. **NJ CAC meeting-** new leadership; What the role of CAC is to be?
- d. **Regional Transit Issues-** ridership numbers for Pureland East West Shuttle month of December total of 2,351 one-way trips; 1,051 internal shuttle trips; grand total of 3,402 trips about 300 trips up from December 2023; application was made to NJ DOT for their TAMP program (to fund public transit) Nick applied for 1 million dollars and he was awarded the 1 million dollars for funding the Pureland East West Shuttle hopefully that will fund it for a additional two years; will still try to find sustainable funding from the state budget with help from legislative representatives; we had our kick off meeting with them 2 weeks ago for that program. Agreements should be sent out probably within the next month, have to be reviewed by county council before we enter into an agreement and then the funds should come in and we can start spending in July it is for 3 years.
- e. **Other- NONE**

Old business- NONE

New business- NONE

Public Portion- NONE

Adjournment- Nick Cressman made a motion to adjourn the meeting Jacqueline Huston and Robert Dazlich seconded the meeting, meeting ended at 3:46pm.