FTA RESEARCH
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
REPORT SUMMARY

Transportation Needs of Disadvantaged Populations: Where, When, and How?

Background

The spatial mismatch of jobs and residences for low-income families has been a well-known problem that has not been dealt with effectively, given land-use patterns and community designs that suppress transit demand and a lack of capital and operating funding for transit properties. Two related problems faced by low-income households and workers are that the rapid rise of housing cost has shrunk the choices of residences available that have transit access to jobs, and higher-capacity transit services that are typically provided more frequently during peak commuting hours do not address access to many service jobs often taken by low-income workers who do not follow a regular 9-to-5 schedule.

Objectives

The purpose of this project was to use a combination of data sources, including the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP) and employment and housing data, to develop a methodology to assess the transit markets in terms of residential and job locations for low-income households; determine the temporal distribution of transit demand, especially for off-peak periods; analyze the housing availability to low-income families in relation to job locations; and evaluate existing transit services for improvements and potential development opportunities.

Findings and Conclusions

Linking the highway system and communities can result in adjusting demand to fit capacity and can provide better mobility for transportation disadvantaged populations.

In this study, transportation needs of disadvantaged populations (persons with disabilities, older adults, and the poor) were explored, and a methodology to address transit markets was examined to determine where, when, and how to provide for basic mobility needs assuming pedestrian and transit-accessible community development. Interrelated and innovative strategies are suggested that weave together suggestions for both the disadvantaged and those who would support a growing economy. Consequently, pathways for the whole population are envisioned.

Using a combination of data sources, this report suggests a methodology to assess the transit markets in Miami-Dade County in terms of residential and job locations. It provides choices for low-income households, determines the temporal distribution of transit demand, analyzes the housing availability to low-income families in relation to job locations, and evaluates existing transit services for improvements and potential development opportunities in Miami-Dade County.

Findings from this report suggest that:

- the highway system and communities that are linked to it could be built to last
- demand can be adjusted to fit capacity
- the system of multimodal transport could be very simple to use
- the many people to be seen and things to be done could be accomplished best when traveling on foot
- a mobility and accessibility computer program could improve use of a quickly-assembled multimodal transportation system that uses advanced transit-oriented developments and express bus service to expand on existing transit and passenger rail services.

By this means, the transportation needs of the general population and the transportation disadvantaged will be addressed.

Benefits

By building a cost-effective, rapid, and financially self-sufficient multimodal system that assumes that the last mile of every trip will be on foot or via community transit, both the general traveling public and the older adults, persons with disabilities, and the poor will be lifted up and provided with affordable transportation choices and opportunities for economic success and an increasingly high quality of life while adapting to the challenges of climate change and global competition.

Project Information

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