Recommended Routes (Dutchess County Flex)

The Task Force felt that a combination of Option 1 (fixed route) and Option 2 (point-deviated) would serve the study area best, utilizing a flexible route and allowing more time for deviations to reach people beyond the three-quarters of a mile limit prescribed by ADA regulations. In the area where hail and ride is more of a possibility due to denser populations along Route 22, the route would be fixed to allow for this; however, anyone calling for a deviation would be picked up at their door so long as the driver could stick to the fixed schedule. In all other areas, the route would be flexible depending on who called for pick-ups. The difference between the fixed and flex portions is that on the fixed portion, the driver makes “out and back” deviations, meaning if someone called to be picked up a mile or so off-route, the driver picks up the passenger and returns to Route 22 exactly where they left. On the flexible portion, the driver and the dispatcher have the discretion to make the deviation in whatever way makes the most sense given the demand that day.

Option 2 focuses on serving local trips within the combined zone area as well as providing one trip per day to Poughkeepsie. Similar to option 1, the route would run on a combined Northeast/Southeast zone with two vehicles on one day of the week – Thursday. One bus would run clockwise and the other, counterclockwise. A sample schedule and route map is shown in Figure 31 and Figure 32. Note that the schedule is still at the conceptual level; the county will drive the route like a bus to determine actual travel times.
Figure 31: Flex Deviated Route
Figure 32: Sample Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>LOOP Connection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Route Start</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:05</td>
<td>American Legion/Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15</td>
<td>Frenshlowton Dover Plains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:40</td>
<td>EDGC</td>
<td>D to POK 11:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:07</td>
<td>Elvin's Market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:28</td>
<td>Pecks Market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:50</td>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:12</td>
<td>Frenshlowton Amenia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15</td>
<td>Hudson River Health Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:25</td>
<td>Sharon Hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:55</td>
<td>Frenshlowton Dover Plains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:05</td>
<td>American Legion/Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10</td>
<td>Driver Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:10</td>
<td>Route Start</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15</td>
<td>American Legion/Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:25</td>
<td>Frenshlowton Dover Plains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45</td>
<td>Driver Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>Restart Route</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45</td>
<td>EDGC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:15</td>
<td>EDGC</td>
<td>D from POK 5:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:42</td>
<td>Elvin's Market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:03</td>
<td>Pecks Market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:28</td>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>End Shift</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Orange Route begins at 11 AM with a few minutes for deviations in Wingdale Village or the Harlem Valley-Wingdale train station, then travels north on Route 22 and west on 343, taking Dover residents to Millbrook for the transfer to Poughkeepsie on Route D at 11:45. The route travels north through Stanford, Pine Plains, Millerton, and Amenia picking up residents heading to Sharon Hospital, Hudson River Health Care, or Frenstown, then back down Route 22. After a break, the driver heads south on Route 22 and lays over for lunch at the American Legion. The
route begins again just after 4 PM and picks up passengers coming back from Poughkeepsie on Route D at 5:15, then delivers passengers back home.

The Blue Route also begins in Wingdale, and brings Dover and Amenia residents to Hudson River Health Care and Sharon Hospital. It picks up Amenia and Millerton residents heading to Poughkeepsie, then through Pine Plains and Stanford to Route D at 11:45. The driver lays over at the American Legion for lunch, then travels back north to Sharon Hospital, taking people back home to Millerton, Stanford, and Pine Plains. The driver meets the 5:15 LOOP D bus at Millbrook and takes Dover residents back home.

Pawling will be served by the Route E deviation, thus the Flex routes end at the American Legion, with potential deviations to Wingdale Village and the HarlemValley-Wingdale Metro-North station. At the end of Route E, the driver will have at least 30 minutes for deviations to passengers who call ahead for a pick-up. The deviation area shown on Figure 31 is approximately how far the driver can reach based on a 30 minute round trip. Residents of Wingdale requiring transportation to Poughkeepsie will be covered by Route E.

The set time points and deviations along the route will be located as follow:

- Eastern Dutchess Government Center – 131 County House Rd, Millbrook
- Elvin’s Market – Route 82 & Route 19, Stanfordville
- Pecks Market – East Church Street, Pine Plains
  - Veteran’s Clinic deviation
- Post Office – 33 Century Blvd, Millerton
- Sharon Hospital – 55 Hospital Hill Rd, Sharon
- Freshtown – 5094 Route 22, Amenia
- Hudson River Health Care – 3360 Route 343, Amenia
  - Wassaic Train Station
  - Dutchess Community Action Partnership - 3414 Route 22, Dover Plains
  - Tally Ho Mobile Home – Run along Scott Drive
  - Mental Health/Probation – 7 Market Street, Dover Plains
- Freshtown – 2081 Route 22, Dover Plains
- American Legion/Library/Shopping – 1797 Route 22, Dover Plains
  - Harlem-Valley Wingdale Train Station
  - Wingdale Village – pick up at U-Haul

The route combines a couple types of route structures to accommodate the diverse nature of the study area:

**Fixed Route Section** – Set route and set time points
- Many destinations along Route 22
Flex Route Section - Set time points, but not set route

- Low densities along Route 199, 82 – likely few hail and rides
- Flex route allows driver to skip a portion of the main road in order to efficiently pick up a passenger – driver does not have to return to main road at the same point of departure

Route Deviations – Passengers call in advance to schedule off-route pick-ups anywhere along the route (either fixed or flex)

- Schedule allows for deviations up to 50 percent of travel time. For example, drive time between Stanfordville and Millbrook is 20 minutes. With deviation time, 20+10=30 minutes allowed in schedule.
- Reaches people living a couple miles off the route
- Passengers may request drop-off anywhere along the route

The clockwise/counterclockwise routing allows a passenger to board one bus going to their destination and take the opposite direction bus back home. For example, if someone lives in Dover and needs to get to Sharon Hospital, that person would take the Blue Route counterclockwise, arriving at the hospital at 10:04 AM, then take the Orange Route clockwise at 1:28 PM heading back to Dover. In general, the Google Map travel time between time points was increased by a factor of 50 percent to accommodate deviations. That time was lowered in some cases, such as between Hudson River Health Care and the hospital, as drivers cannot pick-up passengers in Connecticut. The travel time was increased in some cases such as between Millbrook and Dover Plains, where the driver may have to pick up several people who need to get to Freshtown.

Sample Trips

- Dover Plains to Sharon Hospital
  - Board Blue Route (counterclockwise) at 9:34 at Freshtown (or call to request a pick-up)
  - Arrive at Sharon Hospital at 10:07
  - Board Orange Route (clockwise) at 1:25 at Sharon Hospital
  - Drop off at 1:55 at Freshtown (or wherever passenger was picked up)
- Stanfordville to Sharon Hospital
  - Board Orange Route (clockwise) at 12:07 at Elvin’s Market
  - Arrive at Sharon Hospital at 1:25
  - Board Blue Route (counterclockwise) at 3:02
  - Drop off at 4:18 at Elvin’s Market
- Dover resident to Freshtown, Dover Plains
  - Board Blue Route (counterclockwise) at 9:24 at the American Legion
- Arrive at Freshtown at 9:34
- Board Blue Route (counterclockwise) at 12:00
- Drop off at American Legion at 12:20

- Millerton resident to Poughkeepsie
  - Board Blue Route (counterclockwise) at 10:27 at the Post Office
  - Arrive at the Eastern Dutchess Government Center at 11:40
  - Transfer to LOOP Route D, departing at 11:45
  - Arrive in Poughkeepsie at 12:15
  - Board LOOP Route D at 4:45
  - Arrive at the Eastern Dutchess Government Center at 5:15
  - Board Orange Route (clockwise) at 5:15
  - Drop off at Post Office at 6:28

The level of calls and the amount of trips that can be accommodated will have to be closely monitored during Flex’s first six months. The route currently strikes a balance between efficient travel time between time points while accommodating people who live a couple miles off the main route. The level of deviations requested, however, as well as which towns need deviations, may require schedule modification.

As an example of the potential deviations that could be called in, some of the addresses of survey respondents were input into Google Maps. Bus travel times are slightly longer than car travel times, so this is a general example of the time associated with deviations. In Figure 33, travel from Elvin’s to Millbrook takes 17 minutes. Adding 50 percent of travel time allows the driver to pick up a resident on Cold Spring Road. Travel time must be doubled in order to accommodate two deviations. Note that the most efficient route skips a portion of Route 82, which is why the service in this part of the study area is a flexible route.
Figure 33: Deviation sample – Elvin’s to Millbrook

In the next example, the person living at the second deviation is far enough off the main road that both deviations cannot be accommodated even when doubling travel time (Figure 34).
Currently, the chosen alternative adds 50 percent more time to travel time for deviations; however, as the route grows, that may need to be adjusted. Some ways of keeping the route on schedule might include:

- Prioritizing or limiting trips to medical purposes
- Limiting deviations to no more than 1 mile off-route
Charging fares to reflect time or distance required to deviate

These types of transportation services are new to the study area, so we recommend not placing limits or restrictions during the early phases of implementation. However, given limited resources, some restraints may need to be put into place to keep the bus running on schedule. In the beginning, no restrictions should be placed upon where people live or trip purpose; instead, encourage anyone living in the zone who needs transportation to call. If the system gets overloaded, restrictions can then be put into place.

Common deviations are shown on the route map (Figure 31). Deviations must be at points that have easy turnaround options for the bus. For example, a representative from Tally Ho said that events have been coordinated in the past and residents have been asked to wait along Scott Drive for pick-up. This road runs parallel to Route 22 and would be a good deviation for the bus as there are perpendicular roads connecting Scott Drive to Route 22. In the case of the two Metro-North stations, there are large parking lots the bus can use to turn around. At Wingdale Village, just south of the American Legion, there is a U-Haul at the entrance to the mobile home park that has parking along Route 22. Since the park is fairly small, residents are at most a 2 minute walk from the U-Haul.

**Backup Option – Point-Deviated**

Union Vale, Beekman, and Pawling were not part of this study, thus we have not completed detailed analysis on their transportation needs. The following option separates the zones back into Northeast and Southeast so that the full Southeast area can plan its own service. The option is similar to the Flex service option #2 described above – a point-deviated route with time built in for deviations to serve residents living a couple miles off the main roads. There would be no set route, just time points. In this way we are able to combine the reliability of a fixed route with the flexibility of demand-response. The two pieces of information passengers need to know in order to use a shared resource like public transportation is when they will arrive at their destination and when they will get home. A point-deviated route gives someone a window of time when they will be picked up at home, and a definite time when they will arrive at their destination. While travel time will be long for some people, riders have the security of knowing when they will get to their.

**Northeast Zone**

For the Northeast Zone, we have a very good sense of peoples’ transportation needs. A potential route would begin in Amenia, picking up passengers heading to Poughkeepsie or the hospital, and then circulate through Dover Plains and over to Millbrook for transfer to Route D to Poughkeepsie. Then the bus would travel through Stanford and Pine Plains, through Millerton, and then lay over at the hospital. In the afternoon, the bus would make the reverse trip. The route is simple and clear to understand. It does mean, however, that some people have a long trip time. It also means that Stanford, Pine Plains, and Millerton residents will not have an opportunity to get to Poughkeepsie. On the other hand, this route allows double the typical travel time for deviations, so if travel between time points typically takes 15 minutes, the schedule allows 30 minutes. The route prioritizes trips to Sharon. Also, this route can be complemented by the volunteer driver program and the potential new operator, who can act as a feeder for Route D or take home passengers who require more than one hour at Sharon Hospital. A sample schedule and map of the route are shown in Figure 35 and Figure 37.

Although Dover Plains is technically in the Southeast Zone, the hamlet has been grouped with the northeast. Being right on the border of Dover and Amenia, Dover Plains is more north-centric.
than the rest of the town. For example, ambulance calls from Dover Plains typically go to Sharon Hospital while ambulance calls from Wingdale go to New Milford.

**Figure 35: Northeast Zone Sample Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stop #</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>LOOP Connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8:30</td>
<td>Amenia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Dover Plains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>Millbrook</td>
<td>Route D - 9:30 Outbound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10:05</td>
<td>Stanfodville</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10:35</td>
<td>Pine Plains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11:10</td>
<td>Millerton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Sharon Hospital</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stop #</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>LOOP Connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12:30</td>
<td>Sharon Hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Millerton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1:35</td>
<td>Pine Plains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2:05</td>
<td>Stanfodville</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2:40</td>
<td>Millbrook</td>
<td>Route D - 2:30 Inbound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3:10</td>
<td>Dover Plains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3:30</td>
<td>Amenia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Southeast Zone**

While all the needs in the Southeast Zone are not known, the needs in Dover were analyzed in this study. Since Dover Plains is in the Northeast Zone, the remainder of Dover is in the Southeast. A potential schedule would start by picking people up in the general Dover area, then travel through Union Vale and Beekman to the Route E transfer at 10:30. Then Wingdale residents would be picked up and taken to New Milford Hospital, where the driver would take lunch. On the return trip, we have included a half hour of revenue time during which the driver will remain at the hospital. This is because the driver cannot have a break longer than one hour, so the driver technically returns to revenue service for a half hour in order to time the return trip so that the bus driver can pick up returning passengers on Route E at 2:40, then take residents back home, without having anyone returning from the hospital stranded somewhere along the route while the driver takes a break. A sample schedule and map are shown below.
Figure 36: Southeast Zone Sample Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stop #</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>LOOP Connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8:15</td>
<td>Dover area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9:15</td>
<td>Union Vale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9:55</td>
<td>Beekman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10:25</td>
<td>Pawling</td>
<td>Route E - 10:30 Outbound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10:45</td>
<td>Wingdale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11:15</td>
<td>New Milford Hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12:15</td>
<td>New Milford Hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12:45</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1:45</td>
<td>New Milford Hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2:15</td>
<td>Wingdale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2:35</td>
<td>Pawling</td>
<td>Route E - 2:40 Inbound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3:05</td>
<td>Beekman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3:45</td>
<td>Union Vale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4:45</td>
<td>Dover area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strengths:** This schedule adds 100% of travel time in order to reach peoples' homes in remote areas. The routes prioritize hospital trips over errands and travel to Poughkeepsie. The route combines the best characteristic of fixed-route (reliability) with the best of demand-response (flexibility).

**Weaknesses:** The bus will serve one main travel need – getting to the Sharon and New Milford Hospitals. Depending on where someone lives along the route, they could face long travel times. In addition not all residents of all towns in each zone have the opportunity to get to Poughkeepsie.
Figure 37: Point-Deviated Option Map
Backup Option – Fixed Route

An alternate option is to keep the clockwise/counterclockwise concept in place but widen the southern part of the loop to run down Route 82 and Route 55 to include Union Vale and Beekman. The route would be a fixed route. Since a round trip will take nearly three hours (the limit on how long a driver can operate without a break) the only deviations allowed will be the ¾ mile mandated by ADA.

Figure 38: Fixed Route Backup Option
Selected Alternative (Independent Operator)

Deciding a service model for an independent operator at the moment is premature. All efforts should be focused on finalizing Flex service and supporting its implementation to ensure a successful service. Because adding a new provider to the study area is a long-term goal, steps should be taken in the short term to begin inventoring needs, creating partnerships, and setting up the future service. The two most prominent transportation providers in the study area are the North East Community Center (NECC) and Friends of Seniors. Both organizations provide much-needed volunteer transportation. Given that the NECC has an established infrastructure in place, already owns vehicles, and expressed interest in expanding transportation services, it is recommended that the new operator would be housed by the NECC.

Starting up a transportation service requires a great deal of time and effort. In the short-term, the independent operator should focus on promoting existing county and volunteer services, and making partnerships and relationships with agencies, local residents, and county and state officials.

Funding Sources

There are several funding opportunities to support public transportation capital, operating, planning, and administrative programs. An overview of the individual funding programs is provided below, together with key web links and resources. All of the following funding sources require a local match, depending upon how the grant money will be used. For capital or administrative expenses, 20 percent must come from a local source. Operating grants require a 50 percent local match.

Elderly and Disabled Mobility Assistance (Section 5310)

These funds are primarily available for capital assistance (vehicle purchase) to support community organizations in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. Funds are apportioned through the state.

Resources

Rural and Small Urban Areas (Section 5311)

These funds support public transportation in areas of less than 50,000 people. Funds may be used for capital, operating, and administrative assistance to state agencies, transit operators, local public bodies, and nonprofit organizations. Funds are distributed by the NYSDOT. Dutchess County currently receives funding through this program. A potential new operator could receive 5311 funds based on the number of riders they serve. In the example of Steuben County ARC, the agency estimates how many general public trips it will serve in a year and the number is revisited and adjusted mid-year.

Resources
Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316)

Section 5316 provides funds for programs that assist eligible low income individuals with transportation services they may need to access jobs and employment-related activities. JARC funds may be used to create new reverse commute travel services, develop a new route, extend hours on an existing route, guaranteed ride home, or purchase of vehicles with greater capacity. Funds are administered through the Poughkeepsie-Dutchess Transportation Council. As of 2000, the regional population reached the status of an urbanized area, meaning the PDCTC along with neighboring Ulster County Transportation Council and Orange County Transportation Council have been grouped into the Mid-Hudson Valley Transportation Management Area. This means all three counties compete for 5316 money, which is a competitive grant. Since annual awards available are typically small pots of money, the TMA lets the money accumulate for a few years before awarding it. Currently the TMA is ready to put 5316 money up for bid, but the members have not yet decided upon a deadline for applications.

Resources

New Freedom Program (Section 5317)

This program funds new public transportation services and capital improvements for programs and services for persons with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Eligible uses include: capital or operating expenses for NEW transportation services or alternatives beyond the requirements of ADA, travel training, voucher programs, vanpools, volunteer driver programs, mobility management, or coordination. Similar to 5316, this program’s funds are shared between Ulster, Orange, and Dutchess Counties.

Resources

Other State Funds

The following sources do not require a local match.

Statewide Transportation Operating Assistance (STOA)

STOA is a formula fund issued to public transit operators based on the number of passengers and number of miles they serve. In order to collect STOA, an agency must be identified by the county as an operator. STOA, while a generous funding source, would be an avenue for the independent operator a few years down the road when the new service is established and infrastructure is in place for the reporting and administrative work required by STOA. Funds received through this program may be counted as part of the local match required by federal
grants. For example, should the independent operator write an application for a $100,000 5316 grant to add new routes for job access, and the local share must be $50,000 for operations, then any STOA money the operator is receiving counts toward the $50,000.


Rural Transit Assistance Program
Administered by New York State, this federal program offers technical assistance and training. In Fiscal Year 2009, New York State’s RTAP allocation was $241,835. Uses for these funds include driver training and technical help.


Technical Assistance
Following are some organizations that provide assistance in finding funding, creating service plans, and basically getting a service up and running.

National Rural Transit Assistance Program
Part of the Federal Transit Administration, this program provides technical assistance, free training, and the ability to find a peer agency for guidance.

http://www.nationalrtap.org/

United We Ride
This is a federal interagency organization aimed at improving mobility for vulnerable populations. The organization provides best practices, information on useful technologies, operating strategies, and funding ideas. The web site also compiles training events going on around the country.

http://www.unitedweride.gov/

Community Transportation Association
The Community Transportation Association of America is a member-driven organization of agencies and individuals who work in the field of mobility improvement. The web site has numerous publications and resources available, including service planning documents, training materials, driver tests, and funding resources.


Mobility Management
In the short-term, the best step for the independent operator is to put together a 5317 application for a Mobility Manager. Mobility manager positions are increasing around the country, as the
need to coordinate resources and explore new transportation options has necessitated adding a staff position for those purposes. As systems grow, pieces are continually added on, and eventually a system may end up with overlapping services, little communication between providers, or the inability to grow further. Mobility management is not necessarily a difficult task, but it does require a good deal of staff time, which is why many agencies are devoting one full time or part time staffer to the task. Using New Freedom money to hire a mobility manager is an excellent way to improve the study area’s existing services, promote new county services, and begin preparations to have a new operator up and running.

This mobility manager would be a member of the NECC staff and work to improve transportation in the northeast area of the county. An example of their roles include:

- **Mobility Ambassador** – be the known face and name of transportation and mobility in the study area
  - Visit senior centers, friendship centers, and town halls – get to know people
  - Maintain regular contact with the Eastern Dutchess Transportation Task Force
  - Develop relationships with human service agencies, county officials, and other stakeholders
  - Work closely with the Flex system operators and dispatchers to understand travel needs in the study area
  - Reach out to the eastern Dutchess towns and assess service area for new operator

- **Volunteer Services**
  - Work with Friends of Seniors and Care Car to increase volunteers
  - Research best practices on volunteer recruitment and training
  - Assess viability of a volunteer travel training program for Flex and LOOP
  - Coordinate with volunteers and LOOP to fill gaps – for example, if someone can get to Poughkeepsie by LOOP but needs to be picked up by a volunteer
  - Work with volunteers to fill Flex gaps – schedule more volunteers on Thursdays if that is the day Flex ends up running

- **Promote/Assess county services**
  - Ask people if they use Flex – why or why not
  - Help the county distribute printed materials
  - Help create targeted materials for certain populations or trips (for example, a route map specifically on how residents can get to Sharon Hospital, or a route map for people living in Tally Ho)
  - Create advertising and marketing campaigns

- **Seek partnerships and creative funding strategies**
  - Work with Sharon Hospital to assess need for commuter service
  - Potentially businesses at fixed stops like Freshtown would help fund bus shelters; also Lions Club may be willing
- Work with social service and health agencies to book subscription trips
- Work with existing providers like ARC

- Expand mobility options
  - Pros/cons of becoming a Medicaid provider
  - Research taxi voucher program
  - Explore the need for Metro-North Commuter Train Connection
  - Promote NuRide and MetroPool in Dutchess County – especially relevant to the Spanish-speaking population

- Begin steps toward adding transportation
  - Develop thorough understanding of the primary funding sources of transportation and reporting procedures
  - Work with towns to assess the gaps in Flex and what type of service a new operator should run
  - Work with Geer, Columbia County, and other providers to gain knowledge of best practices
  - Research optimal scheduling software and dispatching system

A list of mobility manager job descriptions can be found on the CTAA web site: [http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=372](http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=372)

One important aspect of the grant will be showing that the steps being taken by the independent operator are in line with the recommendations from the county’s *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. Produced in 2008, this is a required document mandated by the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act. This planning effort inventories existing transportation and identifies transportation needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low income.²

The independent operator, through the mobility manager, will follow several action items in the coordinated plan:

- Improve quality and availability of customer information for all public transit systems
- Develop a process to identify locations for new bus shelters and other passenger amenities
- Continue to support transit demand management activities (e.g. Metro-North commuter rail, inter-county commuter bus, and MetroPool)
- Support implementation of priority recommendations from the Transit Development Plan
- Promote existing services through education and awareness
- Explore partnerships to increase funding
- Expand volunteer recruitment

² Full text can be found here: [http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/Planning/cpthstplanjuly2008.pdf](http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/Planning/cpthstplanjuly2008.pdf)
In writing the grant, the independent operator should address how hiring a mobility manager will achieve the goals of the coordination study.

The 5317 grant is for administrative costs only, as there will be no operation of service as of yet. The local match will have to be 20 percent. A yearlong grant for a mobility manager is estimated at:

- Salary - $50,000 ($40,000 plus $10,000 in benefits)
- Office rental and admin, or expansion of existing office ($10,000)
- Marketing budget ($5,000)
- Taxi vouchers, volunteer drivers ($5,000)

  Total: $70,000

The mobility manager is the shepherd of the eventual goal of becoming a transportation operator. Should the independent operator be awarded the grant, a renewal will be required annually as long as the 5317 program remains in place. Since the grant will be for mobility management, which is an administrative cost, the local match will be 20 percent. During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the North East Community Center was awarded $20,000 in grants for Care Car, received around $7,000 from government contracts, and another $1,200 from program fees, which totaled $28,311. This money can be used as the local match. The grant should explain that a primary goal of the mobility manager will be increasing volunteer services, including recruitment and retaining of volunteers, potentially using the minivan for group trips, and other expansions. In this way the money already being put into Care Car will count toward the remaining 80 percent.

Ideally, the Mobility Manager will have a background in public relations, transportation, marketing, business, or communication. The person must be people-oriented and care about the issues at hand, and be willing to put in a lot of legwork to make themselves known. As this is a rural community, one of the biggest ways people get information is through word of mouth. The Mobility Manager must be willing to travel throughout the service area and meet people, gather input, and maintain relationships with agencies and residents. The Mobility Manager must also work very closely with Dutchess County Mass Transit in the creation of any materials for distribution, potential new services or partnerships, or service schedules.