



CORPUS CHRISTI REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

## 2023 TTA State Conference, Expo and Rodeo

Below are some of the confirmed sessions for this year's conference:

Wednesday, April 12

Breakout Sessions – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor:

10:00 am-11:30 am

**SAFETY: New Resources for Human Trafficking Awareness and Public Transportation Training – Room 101**

10:00 am-10:40 am

What is human trafficking and where is it happening in Texas?

- How is public transportation part of the problem and how can we be part of the solution?
- Next steps, ideas, protocols and policy for public transportation will be provided, to join the fight to end human trafficking.
- New resources that focus on LABOR Trafficking Awareness directed to transit professionals
- New social media resources, signage, videos and training materials developed for transit use and are free for transit agencies and DOTS.

**Presenter:** Kristen Joyner, Founder, and President, KJ Backpack

**San Antonio's First Rapid Bus Network-Keeping San Antonio Moving! – Room 102**

10:00 am-10:40 am

This presentation will provide details on the process and projects involved in the progress on San Antonio's first Bus Rapid Transit Projects that are in the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grants Program across the North/South and East/West major city travel corridors.

**Presenter:** Jeffrey C. Arndt President and CEO and Kammy Horne, Senior Vice President Development, VIA Metropolitan Transit, San Antonio, Texas

**The role of digital mobility tools in delivering North America's largest on-demand microtransit service – Room 103**

10:00 am-10:40 am

This presentation will share key methodologies employed by DART in driving awareness and engagement from riders in preparation for transition to the new DARTZoom service model, and will present key learnings for a successful approach to major service redesign initiatives.

As many Agencies seek to pursue with approaches to respond to changes in ridership patterns, including the redefinition of their service models, this is a timely topic through which lessons learned and best practices may be shared to enable others to successfully rollout major service changes with minimal disruptive rider impact.

Target audience for this presentation is Transit CEOs and Executives, Planners, Digital Leaders, and Technology Executives, as well as any Agency representative looking for guidance towards the role of digital rider-facing technology in to support the successful introduction of a major service change.

**Presenter:** Gregory Elsborg, DART and Nicholas Stiglich, DART, Senior Manager of Innovation Partnerships

### **Bus of the Future – Room 104**

10:00 am - 11:40 am (1.5 Hours)

The FAST Act required a review of bus operator workstation design for the purposes of protecting operators from the risk of assaults and reducing blind spots that contribute to accidents involving pedestrians. To address these issues in very practical ways, the Bus of the Future project is redesigning the bus operator compartment and developing innovative improvements to promote safety, efficiency and passenger access. This session will provide an overview of the concepts and will seek meaningful input from session attendees to inform future phases of the project.

This work is being funded through a FTA Bus Operator Compartment Program grant awarded to the ITLC in 2020.

**Presenter:** Robbie Sarles, President, RLS & Associates, Inc.'s

### **One Screen to Rule Them All: maximizing efficiency for internal collaboration, Sponsored by Opitbus - Room 105**

10:00 am-10:40 am

Join us to learn about modern methods to improve workflows between your planning and scheduling staff. Discover how to view and evaluate ridership data, compare historic runtimes against timetables, analyze US Census data for Title VI considerations, apply GIS layers to your route maps, and have all this information synchronized into a scheduling optimization tool without having to replicate anything. While many of these features are available through a combination of software platforms, come see how a single solution on a single screen can perform all the tasks related to strategic and operation planning, optimized blocks and run cuts, and go all the way to rosters.

**Presenter:** Mike Loeffler, Regional Director - North America, Optibus

### **Financial Management: Peaks and Pitfalls—4-Hour Workshop (Limited to 35 seats-must pre-register) – Room 106**

10:00-11:30 am and 1:30- 4:00 pm

This session will provide an overview of Financial Management and the importance of good financial management for transit systems. A short introduction to what is required by the Federal Transit Administration will be provided. Good financial management can yield rewards for the local transit agency. These benefits, apart from FTA requirements, will be explored. At the same time, there are many pitfalls that must be avoided. Some of these are easier to avoid than others. Discussion will include how to set up a financial management system to avoid the pitfalls and benefit from the cost-effective use of available resources. Examples of good systems and a case study of a recent financial failure will be presented. The session will conclude with lessons to be learned, both from agencies which have done well and those which have fallen into pitfalls with discussion of how those traps might have been avoided.

**Presenter:** Albert T. Stoddard III, Ph.D., P.E., Senior Advisor. LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

## **Wednesday 10:45 am-11:30 am**

### **Transit's Changing Role Post Pandemic – Room 101**

10:45 am-11:30 am

Public Transit proved itself resilient during the pandemic providing mobility to essential workers and more. Now though, the riders aren't coming back like we want. Most cities are stuck in a 3-day hybrid work week and the actual role of public transit agencies has changed. Join Transit Evangelist and Transit Unplugged Podcast/TV host Paul Comfort to review how transit agencies are responding to the new normal including focusing their services on equity and inclusion and environmental stewardship (the topic of his latest #1 best selling book – Conversations on Equity and Inclusion in Public Transportation) and they are adding in layers of microtransit, rebooting bus and train network schedules and focusing on customer experience.

**Presenter:** Paul Comfort, SVP, Chief Customer Officer, Modaxo Americas

### **Unlocking capacity: Using TNCs to expand transit services while lowering operational costs (Sponsored by Spare) – Room 102**

10:45 am-11:30 am

McKinney one of the fastest growing cities in the United States, is located just outside of Dallas, Texas and is home to roughly 20,000 seniors who have unique transportation needs.

In this presentation, Spare and Collin County Transit (CCT) present on how transit agencies of all sizes can respond to a sharp increase in rider demand and maximize operating costs by commingling dedicated vehicles and third-party transportation network companies (TNCs).

Attendees will discover how to expand service coverage, optimize vehicle usage, eliminate costs of operating dedicated fleets and provide unmatched flexibility to riders. They will get an overview of agencies who have adopted Spare's Open Fleets technology for intelligent trip brokering, and engage directly with Collin County Transit who has experienced an overall 260% ridership growth and cost savings of 47% per ride when using a TNC to complete rides in comparison to a dedicated fleet.

**Presenter:** Akia Pichon, Collin County Transit and Kristoffer Vik Hansen, Spare

**Stress, Attitude and Behavior: Factors that Influence Driving – Room 103**

10:45 am-11:30 am

Driving is fundamentally one of the most dangerous tasks we do. Stress, emotions and behaviors can affect one's ability to drive. Circumstances should not distract a driver from safely operating a motor vehicle. Strong safety cultures that are conscientious of factors including fatigue and driving style risks recognize the cascading effects and implement policies, programs and practices to enhance their transportation safety programs. In this session, Senior Program Manager Katie Mueller will explore what can cause stress behind the wheel and risky driving behaviors. She will focus on fatigue, distraction, speeding and aggression

**Presenter:** Mike Ezzell, NSC, Our Driving Concern

**Your Service, Your Money: Adjusting to 2020 Census Results – Room 105**

10:45 am-11:30 am

During this session, TxDOT will discuss census impacts on State Funding Allocations and sort through the various changes impacting transit programs across the state. There will also be an opportunity to sign up for individual meetings to discuss your agency and get answers to any questions you may have.

**Presenter:** Eric L. Gleason, Public Transportation Division Director, TxDOT

**Wednesday 1:30 pm-2:10 pm**

**Introducing a new and innovative fare payments system one step at a time- VIA's experience – Room 101**

1:30 pm-2:10 pm

The presentation will quickly explain VIA's goals in implementing its new fare payments system, before presenting how and why this was split into phases, and articulating what the capabilities of the new system are; from validation options to reducing cash payments on the agency's buses thanks to cash top-ups being made available at retail locations throughout San Antonio. The presentation will also explain how the new payment system has or will integrate with other innovative services offered by VIA to improve the rider experience, including trip planning through the Transit app, VIA's Mobility on Demand solution, and its existing CAD/AVL solution.

The presentation will provide attendees with a detailed overview of the lessons VIA has learned from implementing an innovative fare payments system, and answer any questions other interested agencies might have about the process of planning, developing and deploying a SaaS fare payments system

**Presenter:** David Tilley, David.Tilley@Viainfo.net; Chief Technology Officer, VIA Metropolitan Transit

**How Do You Pay for it All: Funding for Zero-Emission Transit Projects – Room 102**

1:30 pm-2:10 pm

While there are numerous benefits in moving to zero emissions, there are also significant costs associated with it. Learn about funding programs available to assist your transition to zero-emissions, strategies to ensure you develop a sound zero-emission fleet transition plan and innovative infrastructure options that can help you achieve your zero-emission fleet goals.

**Presenter:** Mike Hynes, CALSTART, Inc. , National Transit Bus Program Manager and Robert Meaney, Co-Founder Kaizen Clean Energy

**Forum Discussion: Woman in public Transportation Networking Forum – Room 103**

1:30 pm-2:10 pm

Women in any professional capacity are welcome to come together for a moderated discussion on the opportunities, challenges, achievements, and innovations women experience in the transit industry on a daily basis. Come prepared to share your stories and hear from your peers.

**Moderator:** Sarah Hidalgo-Cook, Southwest Area Regional Transit District (SWART)

**Meaningful Transit Equity Analysis Methods for Rural, Small Urban, and Large Urban Areas – Room 104**

1:30 pm -3:00 pm (1.5 Hours)

The session walks transit managers and planners through creative processes to identify and collect key data points that measure the impact of transit services, policies, and procedures on different populations. Service equity in this session includes members of groups identified by age, race, color, national origin, income levels, and mobility limitations. The session will include, but is not limited to, tools for developing a Title VI policy that is compliant with FTA Title VI Circular 4702.1B.

Transit providers understand that service and fare equity analysis are important to ensuring transit is provided in a non-discriminatory manner. What is sometimes unclear is how to conduct that analysis in a way that yields the truest results for the whole community. The session will demonstrate a range of methods used in urban, small urban, and rural areas for measuring disproportionate burden and

disparate impact, and discuss how the outputs of those methods could be interpreted in different ways and effectively used for understanding diversity in your community. A demonstration of measuring service equity will illustrate tools and activities that can help transit systems build compliant practices and policies that also truly improve access to community resources in a non-discriminatory manner, especially for underserved communities. Participants will receive sample policy language, direction on how to access available demographic data from the Census and other sources and explore successful service equity methods implemented by transit agencies.

**Presenter:** Laura Brown, RLS & Associates, Inc.

#### **Active Shooter Training – Room 105**

1:30 pm-2:10 pm

This session will educate individuals on preparation, prevention, and response during an active shooter event in a variety of environments.

**Presenter:** CCPD Senior Officer Travis Pace

#### **2:15 pm-3:00 pm**

#### **Service Guarantees: A Way to Reclaim Lost Ridership? – Room 101**

2:15 pm-3:00 pm

Service guarantees (e.g., a guarantee made by a transit agency that riders' trips will be on-time) are not common in the U.S. However, in Canada and abroad, many transit agencies have enacted service guarantees as a way to attract riders and retain riders if they experience a service disruption. This session will highlight the current practices and lessons learned from an industry scan on service guarantees in TCRP Synthesis Report 134. Attendees will receive a summary of the research and a small toolkit for establishing their own service guarantees. Attendees will also discuss the perceived pros, cons, and barriers to implementation at their own agencies.

Intended audience: Transit service managers.

**Presenter:** Michael J. Walk, Research Scientist and Program Manager, Transit Mobility Program, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

#### **Data Integrity Challenges and Best Practices in Transit (Sponsored by TransTrack Solutions Group) – Room 102**

2:15 pm-3:00 pm

TransTrack Solutions Group (TTSG) discusses real challenges that transit agencies experience when managing data integrity. They will discuss some of their panelist's favorite and least favorite methods of maintaining good data as well as share real-life experiences.

**Moderator:** Kelly Coughlin-Tran

#### **Panelists:**

Sarah Hidalgo-Cook – Southwest Area Regional Transit District (SWART)

Derrick Majchszak – Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA)

#### **"Hard Talk: Effective Conversations on Tough Topics." – Room 103**

2:15 pm-3:00 pm

Service cutbacks, bad behavior by agency leaders, layoffs, and workplace violence are just a few of the things facing transit managers. Dealing with these situations requires some tough conversations, and frankly, most managers do not want to talk about them. In this session, participants will learn strategies for these conversations, including elements of effective messages. The session will also include discussion on strategies for conducting these conversations and delivering essential messages.

**Presenter:** Morgan Lyons, Lyons Strategic

### **Thursday, April 13**

#### **Breakout Sessions – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor:**

#### **10:00 am-10:40 am**

#### **Census Impacts - Transit Transformation – Room 101**

10:00 am-10:40 am

The 2010 U.S. Decennial Census reclassified City of Conroe, Texas and The Woodlands Township as a large urban area. This change in federal designation had resounding effects on the transit service provided. In 2020, there are communities within Texas that changed urban/rural classifications. Conroe and TWT Transit Managers and their team will discuss the opportunities and challenges of how a rural community can plan for census impacts and ultimately manage a transit system with various transit modes.

**Moderator:** Greg Goodman, Vice President, The Goodman Corporation

**Panelists:** Shawn Davis, City of Conroe Transportation Manager, De'Andre Guin, City of Conroe Operations Mobility Planner, and Ruthanne Haut, The Woodlands Township - Director – Transportation & Infrastructure

**OPEN – Room 102**

10:00 am-10:40 am

TBD

**Propane Autogas - A Pathway to Lowering Operating Costs and Meeting Emission Standards – Room 103**

10:00 am-10:40 am

The future of transportation is one that not only prioritizes efficiency and safety, but also sustainability through low-emissions energy solutions. As a multimodal energy source, propane is a clean and affordable option for business leaders and government agencies to adopt today to achieve environmental sustainability without compromising financial sustainability. This session will provide insight into how fleet managers can easily transition to propane in a variety of applications that impact the transit industry, including light- and medium-duty vehicles.

**Presenters:** Jill Drury, JLDrury Consulting, Transit Autogas Consultant Propane Education and Research Council and Randy Veenhoven from Roush Cleantec, and Derrick Breun VP, Southwest Region, TRANSDEV

**Introduction to Service Planning - 104**

10:00 am - 11:30 am (1.5 Hours)

This webinar provides an introduction to techniques and tools for planning public transit with an emphasis on service planning in rural areas and small cities. Types of service are explained with applications for each type of service. Discussion of service types will include the more traditional forms of public transportation with a comparison of emerging modes of service delivery including microtransit and partnerships with Transportation Network Companies. Data needs and analysis techniques are explained with an interactive discussion of service planning examples and considerations for selecting the appropriate service type.

**Presenter:** Albert T. Stoddard III, Ph.D., P.E., Senior Advisor. LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

**FTA Shares Best Practices for Oversight Reviews – Room 105**

10:00 am-10:40 am

FTA will share updates on new procurement requirements and best practices and will highlight changes for upcoming oversight reviews.

**Presenters:** Sharon Coats, Director, Office of Financial Management and Program Oversight, FTA Region 6; Harold Tye, Senior Contracts Consultant, FTA Region 6; Michael Doss, Regional Counsel, FTA Region 6

**Communications: The Personalities of Transit—4-Hour Workshop (Limited to 35 seats—must register) – Room 106**

10:00-11:30 am and 2:00- 4:30 pm

Serving the public can be challenging for many reasons. Having a basic understanding of what drives, motivates and frustrates each of the four main personality types we encounter in the workplace, will improve communication with co-workers and passengers. Learning basic personality identifiers (DISC) can translate into improved safety, refined customer service skills and enhanced management expertise.

**Presenter:** Kristen Joyner, Founder and President, KJ Backpack

**10:45 am-11:30 am**

**Forum Discussion: Rural Transit Networking Forum Open – Room 101**

10:45 am -11:30 am

Join rural transit providers from across the State of Texas for an informal, peer-led discussion of key issues facing systems in rural communities.

**Moderator:** Sarah Hidalgo-Cook, Southwest Area Regional Transit District (SWART)

**Keeping The Drivers: A Case Study in Bus Operator Turnover and Retention – Room 102**

10:45 am -11:30 am

Many transit agencies in the Texas are experiencing an unprecedented level of bus operator turnover and difficulty in hiring and retaining their operators. This session provides attendees with the current research on bus operator turnover, including the science behind retaining employees, and a case study of an in-progress study at Capital Metro in Austin, TX. The case study will provide steps that transit agencies can take (beyond increasing wages) to better understand the causes of operator turnover and how to design initiatives and strategies to help improve operator retention. The case study will include the method and results of TTI's focus groups with operators,

surveys of current operators, and surveys of previous operators—reiterating that operators may be the best source of information about what can be done to help.

The session could also include breakout sessions where small groups discuss their current challenges and strategies for improving operator retention, including whether those strategies were successful. Small groups could then report out remaining attendees to develop a short list of what seems effective in what circumstances here in Texas.

**Presenter:** Michael J. Walk, Research Scientist and Program Manager, Transit Mobility Program, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

### **Crisis Communications on a Card: The Essentials of an Effective Plan – Room 103**

10:45 am -11:30 am

Transit agencies are exposed to all sorts of potential crises. But it's not necessary, or even possible, to have detailed communications plans for every situation. This session will present the essentials of an effective crisis communications plan that can be scaled to most any agency size or crisis scenario. The presenter is a veteran transit communicator and former reporter who has worked through transit service disruptions, fatalities, leadership controversies and active shooters.

**Presenter:** Morgan Lyons, Lyons Strategic

### **The Three Causes of Job Misery – Room 105**

10:45 am -11:30 am

Are you struggling with low engagement, morale, or retention? What if you had a few simple strategies that would significantly and quickly impact all three? In this interactive breakout session, author and keynote speaker Mark Kenny will share the three causes of job misery, the three strategies for leaders to engage employees, and how to quickly implement these strategies with your leaders.

In this session you will:

- Recognize the three causes of job misery.
- Identify the three strategies to improve engagement, morale, and retention.
- Compose specific actions for you to personally implement.
- Discuss methods of implementing these strategies with other leaders in your organization.

**Presenter:** Mark Kenny, Strategic Team Consultant and Podcast Host

### **"Marketing Transit on a Shoe String Budget" – Room 101**

3:00 pm -5:00 pm

Does your community know about the services you offer and when you offer them? This presentation looks at all of the ways you can market your services, including recruiting for drivers, while not spending any budget funds, or stretching what you have as far as they will go.

**Presenter:** Mark L Szyperki, On Your Mark Transportation, LLC

### **Challenges and Successes with Shared-Use Mobility in Rural, Frontier, and Tribal Areas - Room 102**

3:00 pm -5:00 pm

Even as shared mobility options such as on-demand ridehailing, microtransit, carsharing, and micromobility vehicles have expanded their footprint in the U.S., most of these services are focused in large metropolitan areas. In some places, rural transportation agencies and local stakeholder organizations have worked with shared mobility companies to develop pilots or services for improving access to on-demand transportation. Issues for developing these services can include (but are not limited to) funding requirements and sustainability, service equivalency, driver and vehicle availability, broadband and cellular infrastructure, payment and software integration, and many more. Further improvements are needed in planning and coordination for on-demand service in these non-urban communities.

This session will be a listening session focused around discussion and audience input on needs for transportation in rural and tribal areas along with ideas and examples for solutions to service challenges. The goal of this session is to gather input from transportation-providing organizations, researchers, and other industry stakeholders that will further understanding to implement viable, scalable shared mobility services in rural, tribal, and frontier areas. The listening session outcomes will be incorporated as part of an ongoing research project.

**Presenter:** Zach Elgart, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

### **Operator Retention and Recruitment Workshop – Room 103**

3:00 pm -5:00 pm

Nationwide, operator shortages have forced service reductions. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, combined with the low unemployment rate, show that transit is competing for a limited pool of workers. The issue started years ago, but has been exacerbated during and post-Covid. Now, the competition has increased wages and benefits, putting transit further behind. This session will present low cost methods to enhance job satisfaction, potentially reducing turnover (voluntary quits); discuss methods to determine the cost of turnover for reinvestment into retention, and address non-traditional ways to broaden the recruitment pool.

**Presenter:** Arthur Gaudet, President, Arthur N. Gaudet & Associates, Inc.

**“How Planners Effectively Evaluate New Bus Service Requests” – Room 104**

3:00 pm -4:00 pm

Often times with minimal notice, a planner is faced with new bus service requests to new or relocated developments of various sizes and geographic locations. Learn how to effectively evaluate these types of requests using planning tactics and other methods to achieve successful outcomes in your community.

**Presenter:** Gordon Robinson, AICP, PMP, Director of Planning, CCRTA