



LAB Report

South Carolina



PDRTA

Listening Session for Rural & Small Urban Transit Providers
August 2024 Stakeholder Convening

with support from **AARP**

Where We Started

In early 2024, an AARP volunteer alerted the state office about a cut to rural transit service due to limited funding. This story is not uncommon in South Carolina. With the state's growing population comes greater need for transportation systems to be equipped to handle that growth. However, transportation and transit agencies struggle to secure funding to maintain and grow their services. Though, that challenge is not the only one.

Opportunity

The Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC) is best known for supporting larger urban areas but are now at a moment where they are strategizing how they can better support all transit providers in the state. Through this project, AARP had the opportunity to initiate a partnership with TASC working together to identify challenges for rural and small urban transit providers, but also to envision future projects together.

Approach

Mpact:LAB worked with TASC to develop and administer a survey to gather input from South Carolina transit providers and subsequently facilitated a virtual conversation with TASC and stakeholders to identify shared challenges. The primary goal of this conversation was to re-introduce rural and small urban transit providers to TASC and share ideas about how TASC might support them.

Outcomes & Next Steps

Through this project, AARP established a relationship with TASC and already has ideas for additional partnership opportunities. During the virtual convening, participants voiced a variety of needs, both operational (driver recruitment and retention, bus procurement and maintenance) and administrative (adequate funding, limited staff bandwidth, training opportunities and peer learning). While participation in the survey and virtual meeting was moderate, the real success of this project was the planning process. It began with a couple of AARP volunteers and awareness of transit funding challenges. It ended with a strong connection to TASC, a survey, and an opening discussion.



I appreciated the authenticity of the conversation. It was refreshing and energizing.

– Dr. Kat Moreland,
Board Vice President,
TASC



Interested in learning more? Contact Sarah Rudolf at sarahr@mpactmobility.org.

