

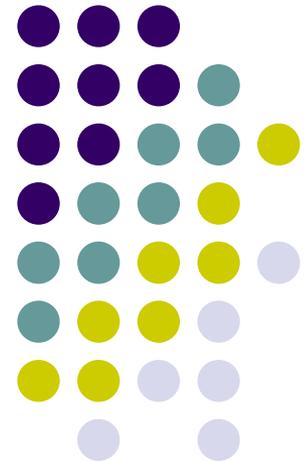
ADA Paratransit

Solano County Senior and Disabled
Transportation Summit II
October 30, 2009

Kristen Mazur, Transit Program Manager
Metropolitan Transportation Commission



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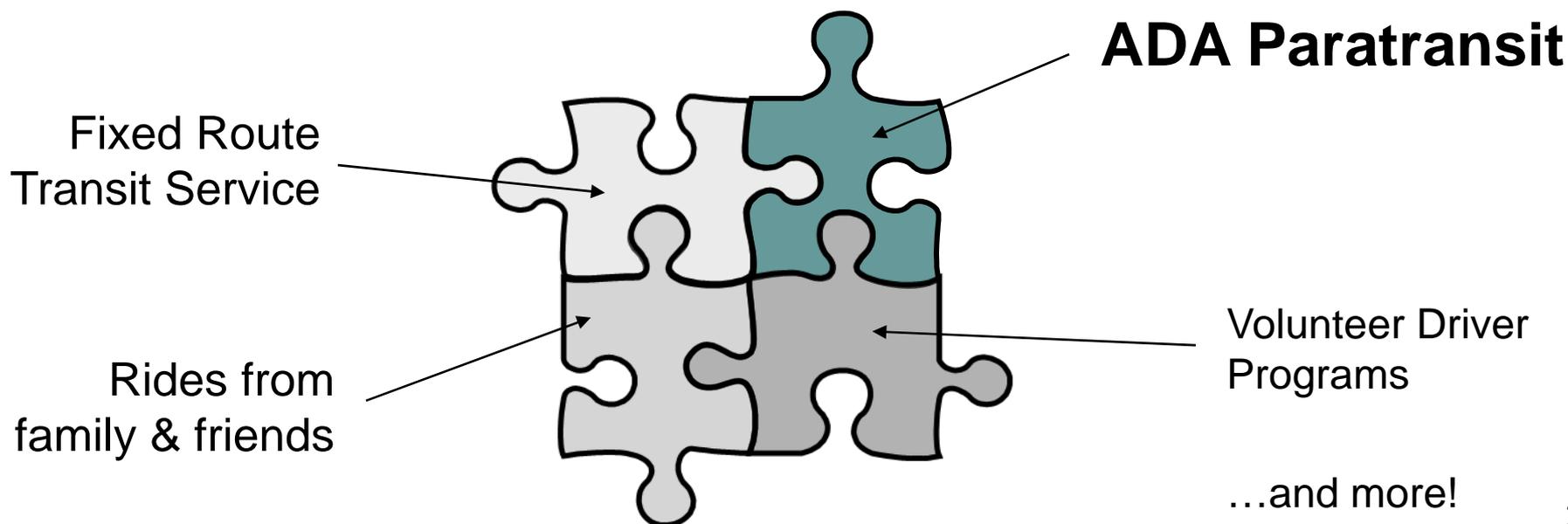




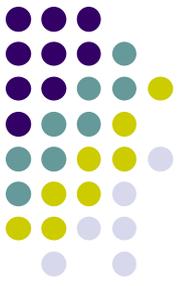
ADA Paratransit: One Piece of the Puzzle



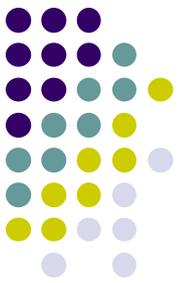
- There are a range of transportation services available to seniors and persons with disabilities



Important Transportation Definitions



- **Fixed Route:** service provided along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule
- **Demand responsive:** any service which is not fixed route (e.g., door-to-door service, general public dial-a-ride)
- **ADA complementary paratransit** (a.k.a. “ADA paratransit” or “paratransit”): a certain type of demand responsive service that is required by the law



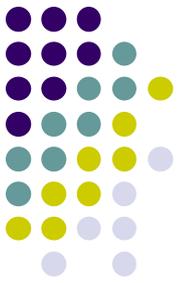
ADA Overview

1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Intent:

- Civil rights legislation to end discrimination against persons with disabilities
- To assure that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, are able to live independently, and can be economically self sufficient

ADA Overview



1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

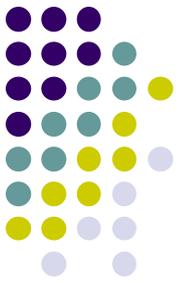
- **Public Transportation:** Prohibits public entities from denying individuals with disabilities the opportunity to use public transportation services, if the individuals are capable of using the system.



ADA Overview

Specific actions to avoid discrimination:

- Vehicles used in fixed route service must be accessible
- New facilities (e.g., transit stations) must be accessible
- Public entities which provide fixed route public transportation service **also** must offer comparable paratransit service to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route system → ADA Paratransit
- ...etc.

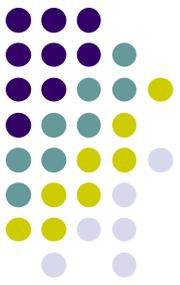


ADA Overview

What makes a service “accessible”?

- Physical access to vehicles and buildings
- Ramps, lifts and other accessibility hardware need to be properly designed to meet the needs of persons with disabilities and accommodate different mobility aids
- Proper training of personnel
- Proper maintenance of equipment
- Making public information and communications systems accessible to persons with vision and hearing impairments

When is ADA Paratransit Service Required?



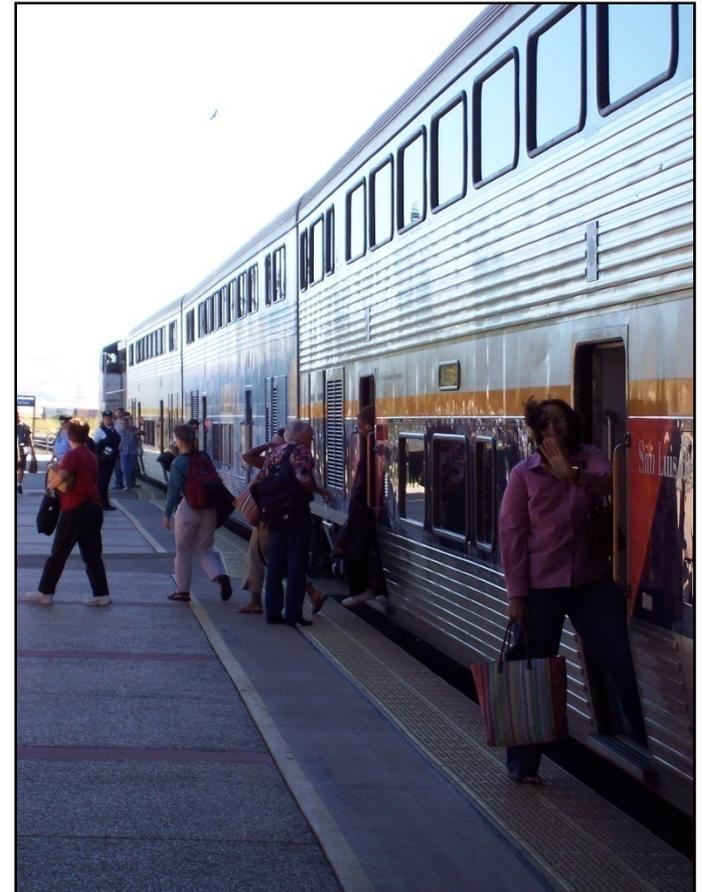
- Only required if the fixed route service is operated by a ***public entity***, AND
- Only required if the fixed route service is ***open to the general public***, AND



When is ADA Paratransit Service Required?

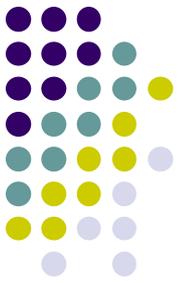


- Only required for ***certain types*** of fixed route service. The following are excluded:
 - Commuter rail
 - Intercity rail
 - Commuter bus
 - Airport shuttles
 - University shuttles





To Whom Must ADA Paratransit Service be Provided?



Three categories of eligibility:

- 1) Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment, to use the fixed route system on their own (i.e., cannot “navigate the system”)

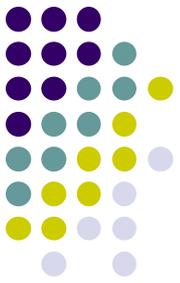


To Whom Must ADA Paratransit Service be Provided?



- 2) Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding device, and the fixed route on which they want to travel is not yet accessible

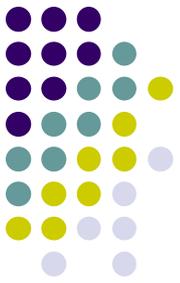
To Whom Must ADA Paratransit Service be Provided?



- 3) Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition that prevents them from getting to or from a bus stop or station on the fixed route system



To Whom Must ADA Paratransit Service be Provided?



- Place of residence is not relevant to eligibility
- A person's eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. Different levels

of eligibility:

Permanent

Temporary

Conditional



What Level of Service Is Required?

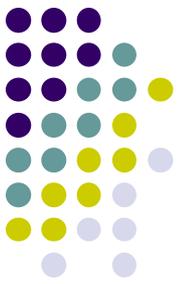


- Level of service must be ***comparable*** to that provided on the fixed route system
- Six criteria for determining comparability...



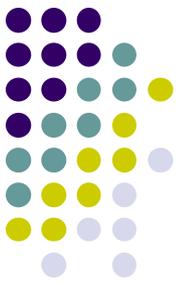


What Level of Service Is Required?



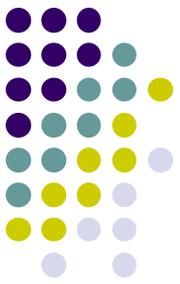
ADA Paratransit service must:

1. Operate in the same ***service area*** as the fixed route system
2. Have a ***response time*** that is comparable
3. Have comparable ***fares***
4. Have comparable ***days and hours of service***
5. Meet requests for any ***trip purpose***
6. Not limit service availability because of ***capacity constraints***



In Conclusion...

- **The ADA's ultimate goal:** transit services for persons with disabilities will largely be provided by integrated, accessible fixed route services
- However, the law recognizes that:
 - A fully accessible fixed route system will take time to implement
 - A small sub-group of persons with disabilities will not be able to navigate fixed route systems, even when they are fully accessible



In Conclusion...

- There are transportation needs which go beyond the scope and intent of the ADA
- Agencies are not prohibited from providing service that exceeds ADA requirements
- The regulations do not prohibit agencies from providing a different level of service to non-ADA eligible users of the paratransit system



In Conclusion...

- While providing a more comprehensive service should be a goal, priority must be given to meeting the minimum requirements established under the ADA
 - Eligible individuals have a ***civil right*** to ADA paratransit service



What is MTC's Role in Paratransit?



- Manage grant programs for projects that go “beyond the ADA”
- Provide State Transit Assistance funds to counties for paratransit operations (before state budget cuts)
- Fund capital projects that meet ADA standards (e.g., bus replacements, accessibility improvements)
- Allow federal capital funds to be used for paratransit operations
- Fund the Regional Paratransit Program, including a Paratransit Eligibility Program and Regional Eligibility Database that is shared by all transit operators in the region
- Manage the Bay Area's telephone- and web-based 511 traveler information service, including information about “accessible and senior transportation”

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