

Neighborhood Centers Inc.



BUILDING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES



Neighborhood
Centers Inc.

As Houston grows,

we grow.



- 104 years old
- Settlement house roots
- 60 locations; 67 counties
- 50+ funding sources
- 250,000 impacted annually
- Four Divisions
 - ✓ Public Sector Solutions
 - ✓ Community Based Initiatives
 - ✓ Choices in Education
 - ✓ Sheltering Arms Senior Services



Neighborhood
Centers Inc.



BASIC ELEMENTS OF INFRASTRUCTURE

SUPPORT AND WILL OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

CAPABLE ORGANIZATIONS ABLE TO AID IN EMERGENCIES

How We Work



- Relentless search for strengths
- Managing multifaceted issues and programs
- Locus of control=local leaders, local government, local capacity
- “All in” collaborative approach
- Staying power
- Trusted community partner



Appreciative Inquiry

what we believe
about our neighbors...

- All people possess the strengths, talents and abilities we call “personal assets”
- All people nourish dreams and aspirations for themselves and their community
- Every person needs and wants to belong to a community

through appreciative inquiry
process with seniors
transportation identified as
key gap in community
services





UNMET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS:

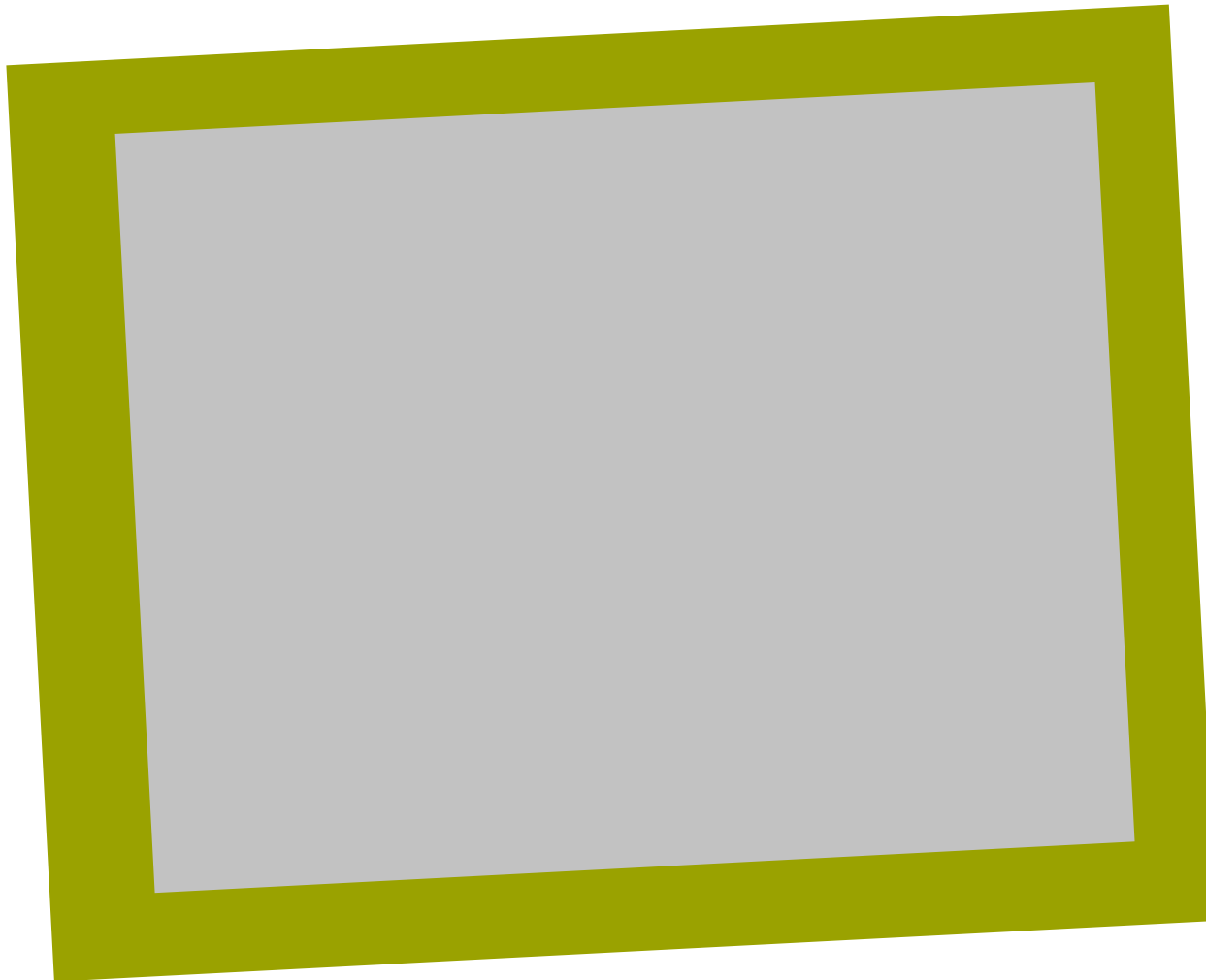
- Mobility of persons with disabilities, seniors and low income persons is tenuous whether they use public transportation or report driving
- 3 out of 5 report that they are unable to travel to where they wanted or needed in the last 6 months because they lack transportation
- Medical care and groceries are the chief destinations where access is limited
- Travel to, from and within Harris County is a challenge throughout the region for those that use public transportation
- Potential public transportation customers are often unaware of transportation services
- Passengers cite affordability as a challenge



INEFFICIENCIES IN DELIVERY OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES:

- Potential local match funding that could be used to leverage other resources
- Overlapping service areas
- Uncoordinated County-Level Delivery Systems

Today



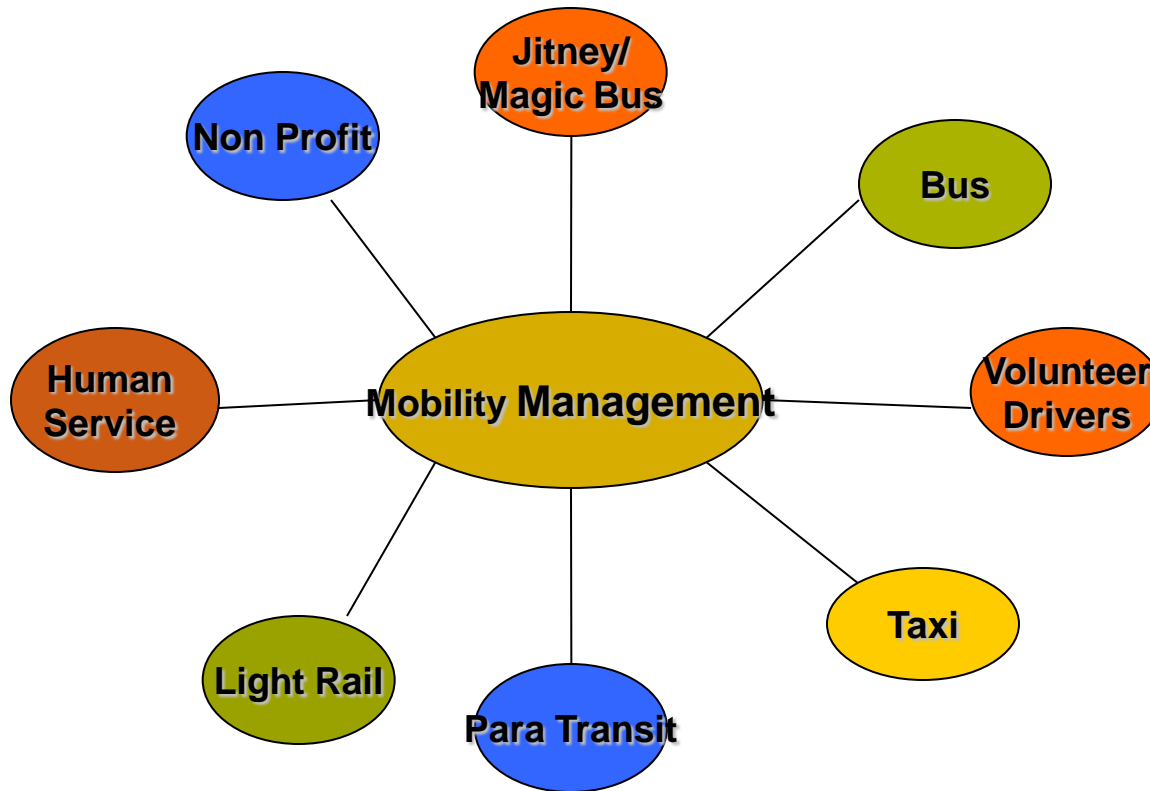
**Neighborhood
Centers Inc's
magic bus
provides
13,250 trips
per year**

**Neighborhood
Centers Inc's
Senior Services
coordinates
60,000 trips
per year to
congregate meal
sites**



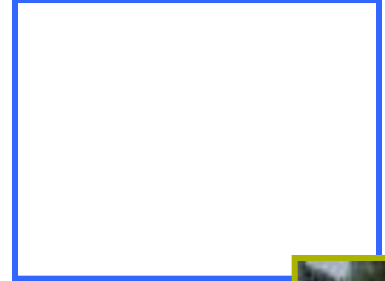
Tomorrow

Better coordination of transportation resources for vulnerable populations across Houston via **transportation options counseling**



Tomorrow

Additional and more flexible transportation modes for vulnerable populations across Houston via **volunteer driver voucher program**



Next Steps

New Freedom Funding

- Additional matching dollars to maximize impact
- Liaisons at transportation agencies to facilitate the application process of seniors with disabilities seeking services
- Referrals from social service providers for transportation options counseling services
- Letters of support
- Innovative ideas to strengthen proposal and program design



Mr. Neil Hackett
Houston-Galveston Area Council Public Outreach
PO Box 22777
Houston, Texas 77227

Dear Mr. Hackett:

On behalf of Neighborhood Centers Inc., I am pleased to provide input into the 2011 Update of the Houston-Galveston Area Council's 2008 Gulf Coast Region Coordinated Regional Public Transportation Plan. Neighborhood Centers Inc. draws on 104 years experience to serve more than 250,000 individuals and families each year across 87 counties in Southeast and Central Texas. Neighborhood Centers started as the first settlement house in Houston in 1907 and continues to strive today to fulfill our mission to bring resources, education and connection to emerging neighborhoods and our vision to ensure that individuals and communities (are) living up to their full potential. We work with individuals at all ages and stages, from infants to seniors. In 2010, we served over 2,400 seniors in Harris County and recently we formed a business combination with Sheltering Arms Senior Services, an organization that annually serves over 80,000 seniors and their caregivers. Through this significant experience, we have a thorough understanding of the transportation challenges faced by seniors. We are strong advocates for a range of solutions and a way for seniors to navigate the various (and often conflicting) solutions that do exist to ensure that all seniors the mobility they need to live independent and full lives.

Under the category of Access to Public Transportation, both the 2008 Plan and the Draft 2011 Update include "Travel Counseling" by reference as a potential pilot project (79). As initially described in the 2008 Plan, travel counseling is described as responding to the "many barriers to transportation services... related to access," presented by "physical and psychological" impediments. (Gulf Coast Plan, 2008, 5-16) Responding to these generalized challenges, the authors identify "four types of services that can address these impediments," including "counseling."

Counseling is described by the Plan's authors as: "not therapy but information on the processes and procedures of trip making related to their circumstances and need along with the type of assistance available. Once they realize the available support system and become more comfortable with the procedure, they may be more likely to make trips. In some cases, the individual may only need a walker, cane, or similar device to become more self-sufficient." (Gulf Coast Plan, 2008, 5-17) The authors describe "counseling" further as a "great area of cooperation between transportation providers who likely do not have this type of personalized

Next Steps

New Freedom Funding

New Freedom Planning Breakfast Meeting

Friday, October 21st

Neighborhood Centers

4500 Bissonnet

Board Room

8:00am-9:00am

Breakfast will be provided