

# Best Practices For Getting a DASH route!

## Stellar Examples –

- The North East Transportation Coalition (NETC) worked with about 5 neighborhood councils to submit 8 DASH route proposals and tweak one running line. One of their proposals, the Glassell Park/Eagle Rock proposal is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> by the Department of Transportation (DOT) on the list of DASH routes to be created.
- The Elysian Valley Riverside Neighborhood Council (EVRNC) increased their prospects of getting a DASH route from increasing DOT determined ranking from 32 to 6 within half a year. The proposed DASH route includes Elysian Valley, Lincoln Heights, and Atwater Village.

The *greatest lesson* learned by NETC and EVRNC is *not to give up*, but to continually work on improving their DASH route proposal. Both organizations saw a need in the community for more transportation services and recognized the opportunity for satisfying the need via DOT's DASH bus services. For the first time, all those who were involved in this project were given the chance to let DOT what their community needed, why there is a need, and how DOT can fill the gap. However, "don't forget about the overall vision." (Everett)

The *special benefit* of the DASH bus services is that it provides additional transportation options to people residing in areas that may be underserved. There are more bus stops, shorter waits, shorter rides, and most importantly: cheaper fares! Only 25 Cents!

The *greatest challenge* is garnering community support and consensus for a proposed DASH route that is feasible, practical, necessary, and most importantly: ranks high on DOT's Potential Index for Ridership scale! Work with other Neighborhood Council's!

*Remember* to check in with your DONE Project Coordinator for regulation updates, new info, and other resources!

## **Special thanks & acknowledgement to those interviewed:**

Everett Sarabia, Co-Chair of North East Transportation Coalition (NETC), member of Elections Committee, Glassell Park Neighborhood Council  
Mario Moya: Chair of Transportation Committee, Elysian Valley Riverside NC

Interpretation of interviews & creation of "best practices" by DONE intern: Helen Leung

## Best Practices for Getting a DASH Route:

- ❖ **Identify a need**
  - Especially in low-income areas with inadequate public transportation
- ❖ **Attend the DOT meetings**
  - Once the needs assessment cycle begins, about every 5 years, 2 meetings will occur in every area – ATTEND!
- ❖ **Gather a petition of at least 300 people**
  - “The more support, the better, makes for a stronger case”(Mario) and “a stronger front” (Everett)
  - Don’t just set up a meeting, go to where the meeting is at! (PTA meeting, farmer’s market, churches...)
- ❖ **Create a Transportation committee**
  - Must work with all stakeholders work with all differences
  - “Must see what’s best for the *whole* group” (Everett)
  - Get Neighborhood Council to pass official motion in support of proposal
- ❖ **Map out potential DASH route**
  - Remember to include schools, parks, libraries, and other transportation hubs – “create a circuit” (Mario)
- ❖ **Keep in mind all variables in DOT’s criteria**
  - Less than 9 miles, not duplicating existing MTA routes
  - Keep on fine tuning proposed route after the Potential Index for Ridership (PIR) has been determined – this is the *MOST IMPORTANT* aspect of the ranking criteria! EVRNC made 12 map permutations!
- ❖ **Create a coalition**
  - With Neighborhood Council’s and other outside organizations, especially the local Chamber of Commerce (they tend to have money!)
  - “Make sure everyone is on board to support it 100%...not just a word, but a commitment” (Everett)
  - “Piggyback off one another” (Mario) but in the end groups may go their own way, so remember to “stay on the same page” (Everett) and “set guidelines before working with one another” (Mario)
- ❖ **Work with your Council office**
  - They can provide you with the details of the process
  - Making sure proposal does not contradicting with the Council District’s vision
  - Have your Councilmember show up at the public hearing to voice support
- ❖ **Outreach, outreach, outreach**
  - Via flyers, posting on central hubs (e.g. Library, community center...), get at least one article in the local newspaper
  - Getting the word out is crucial in garnering community support
- ❖ **Don’t forget to work with...**
  - Unions - may see the DASH routes as a threat to the effectiveness of a strike
  - Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) for the DOT’s Transportation Committee – who are very knowledgeable about the process
- ❖ **Turnout ,turnout, turnout**
  - Shows DOT that the community is behind the plan
  - Use the city’s “Charter Bus” program to get people who do not have the means to attend the public hearings to attend the meeting
- ❖ **Be considerate**
  - Provide food, translations, and child care services at the meeting
  - Appreciate your fellow volunteers, be warm & welcoming, and most importantly, “THANK YOU!”