

MODEL CITIES JITNEY TRANSPORTATION IN BUFFALO

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The jitney program was first proposed by 3 senior citizens and 1 staff member from the Model Cities Agency. These 4 people became a committee to bring about the Model Cities Jitney Program.

The first proposed jitney program was supposed to provide transportation for everyone in the Model Cities Neighborhood area and to be a paid system.

The next proposal was to provide a free transportation service to any persons living in the neighborhood who were blind, handicapped, elderly, or members of any club, group, or organization. The franchised company offered no major opposition to this proposal, and arrangements were made with an established cab company in the area to operate the new system.

The proposed aims of the jitney program are to decrease the isolation of the elderly, the blind, and the handicapped and to help them get to doctors, hospitals, shopping, recreational activities, and back home again safely. The primary goals are to improve mobility of the elderly in general by offering a free door-to-door personalized service that can be obtained simply by a telephone call. The senior citizens call a day in advance to make arrangements for pickups the next day. At the same time they may also make the return trip arrangement, or that can be made the next day when they are ready to return.

The jitney program started on December 15, 1970, in the Model Cities Neighborhood area. The area has a population of 62,000 of which 7,000 (according to the 1970 Census) are aged 50 and older. Only those aged 59 and older are eligible to use the jitney service.

We began our operation with 4 buses. Three were to be used on a day-to-day basis, and one was to be left in the shop for emergencies. However, we found that we used all 4 buses every day, even

though at the time we did not have a noticeable number of people riding, because the area was just too large to cover with 3 buses.

On March 3 we put 3 new buses into service, and our total ridership went up approximately 2,000 people that first month. Our return times went from 30 to 20 minutes to less than 15 minutes on the average. Our riders increased more than 25 percent, and we were able to serve many more group trips. We took 2 of the 3 new buses and used them to pick up return trips, carry long-distance trips, help out when the regular bases fell behind, and help with group trips. The third bus was used for emergencies.

We find that practically everyone wants to ride between the hours of 7 and 11 a.m. Between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., most of the people who went out in the morning return; and from 5 to 10 p.m. ridership decreases. Although the period from 10 to 12 p.m. is slow, we keep our buses operating mainly because of the contract and also because we have a few people who are returning from work and churches.

We serve any Model Cities Neighborhood area club, group, or organization that makes reservations at least 3 days in advance; we do not serve anyone who is aged 59 or under, not handicapped, or not blind unless that person is in one of the reserving groups. (The exception is that senior citizens may be accompanied by someone to give them help or a small child with whom they are babysitting.) Group trips may be as far as 50 miles away.

<u>Buses</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
2	7 a.m.	3 p.m.
2	8 a.m.	4 p.m.
1	9 a.m.	5 p.m.
1	10 a.m.	6 p.m.
1	12 noon	8 p.m.

From 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., all 7 buses are in service, and we have no emergency vehicle. At 3 p.m., 2 drivers get off, and 1 driver starts the second shift. At 4 p.m., the last shift starts with 1 driver. Between 4 and 6 p.m. we have only 4 drivers and after 8 p.m. we have 2 drivers.