

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT

1999-2000 ANNUAL REPORT

The Estuary Transit District provides a range of public transit services for all persons, both young and old, residing in the nine towns of the Estuary Planning Region (Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Essex Killingworth, Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook). It has done so since 1981 when it was first organized.

In the fiscal year just ended, the District recorded a total of 64,417 trips on all of its transit services combined. This represents well over one trip for every man, woman and child residing in the nine town service area. The Estuary Dial-a-Ride and the Shoreline Shuttle, the two largest components, accounted for a large majority of these rides. The Shoreline Shuttle logged a total of 24,853 trips and the Dial-a-Ride carried some 31,774 riders last year.

For the convenience of those who use the bus service along Route One, a third bus was added to the Shoreline Shuttle fleet a year ago so that all twelve Dattco bus runs out of New Haven to Madison could be met. This third bus accounted for some 8,375 out of the total 24,853 trips recorded for the Shoreline Shuttle service. A fourth bus is now available as a backup vehicle for this service. All four are awaiting the addition of a yellow top when the newest vehicle in the fleet arrives so that the Shoreline Shuttle vehicles are more distinguishable from the other service vehicles, both to the users and to the community at large.

The demand for the District's medical outpatient transit service remained about the same as last year. This service is available to any resident of the nine town area who needs to get to medical services outside of the Region. Some 3,930 trips were recorded to more than 20 locations within the State last year. The vast majority of these were to Middlesex Hospital in Middletown and to the neighboring town of Madison. Other destinations included New Haven, New London, New Britain, Hartford and Guilford, among others. As one might expect, this is the most expensive service that the District provides but it is also one the most important. Two buses and one station wagon are used for this particular service.

Another of the District's services, the Tri-Town Service, which continues to serve the needs of the transit dependent residents of Chester, Deep River and Essex, is the oldest public transit service in the Estuary Region. It was established by the three towns at the time of the first gasoline crisis in 1973 and funded by them with town aid road funds until 1981 when the Estuary Transit District was organized. Since that time it has been a jointly funded service with the towns providing the required local match and the district paying the balance of the cost. Some 3,860 trips were counted on this service last year. It is provided by the Ryder Corporation under contract to the three towns.

The Estuary Transit District has a total of twelve vehicles in its fleet, five of them owned by the District and seven of them owned by its contracted service provider, the Estuary Council of Senior Clubs. All are lift equipped fourteen passenger vehicles with the exception of one station wagon. They range in age from one to five years and are replaced with new vehicles on a regular basis with funds provided for the purpose by the state and federal governments.

The nine towns of the Estuary Planning Region are all members of the Estuary Transit District. The affairs of the District are managed by a board made up of one representative from each member town, each having a weighted vote based on the population of the town they represent. The board meets four times a year to set policy, approve expenditures and establish an operating and capital budget for the next year. All services are provided by contracts with the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency (CRERPA) for administration and with the Estuary Council of Senior Clubs (ECSC) and the towns of Chester, Deep River and Essex for transit services.

Two new members joined the board last year to fill existing vacancies. They were Ray Mozzochi from Deep River and Maura Finan from Lyme. One long-standing member and former Chairman, Alice Pinsince of Essex, resigned last spring for personal reasons. Her seat remains to be filled by the Town of Essex.

The current members of the Board are Chairman Donald Croteau (Chester), Vice Chairman Doris Sanstrom (Westbrook), Secretary Virginia Zawoy (Clinton), Treasurer Cornelius McCrudden (Old Saybrook), Ray Mozzochi (Deep River), Eleanor Becker (Killingworth), Maura Finan(Lyme), and Kinsley Twining (Old Lyme). It meets on the third Monday of February, May, August and November at 8:00 A.M. in the CRERPA office at Saybrook Junction Market Place. All meetings are open to the public.