

ESTUARY TRANSIT DISTRICT

2000-2001 ANNUAL REPORT

Since 1981, the Estuary Transit District has provided a range of public transit services for all persons, young and old, who reside in any of the nine towns of the Estuary Planning Region (Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook).

In the fiscal year just ended June 2001, the District recorded a total of 83,866 trips on all of its transit services combined. According to recent population statistics provided by the Department of Public Health (1999), our region represents well over one trip for every man, woman and child residing in the nine town service area according to the 1999 Department of Public Health Population Statistics of 57,500 for this Region. 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 29,984 trips and the Dial-a-Ride carried some 21,670 riders last year.

The Shoreline Shuttle Service has been able to provide continuing service along the Route One Corridor since 1999. Our shuttle bus meets the Dattco bus runs out of New Haven to Madison. As of May First, we provide free transfers aboard the Shoreline Shuttle for monthly rail pass holders and riders with current transfers. The Dattco to Shoreline Shuttle ridership this year accounted for some 9,360 out of the total 26,699 trips recorded for the Shoreline Shuttle service.

The district vehicles look exactly like the senior center vehicles and we have become aware that our services need more marketing and brand identification in order to be recognized by the general public as a service that is provided for everyone. Therefore, a new logo design is in the making. Liaisons with other transit districts are being established so as to promote effective management and improve the efficiency of operations.

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. Over 2,590 trips were

recorded to more than 25 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, and it is also the most important. One of the shuttle buses and the station wagon are scheduled to be replaced this fiscal year with capital grants provided by the Federal and State governments.

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 3,820 trips were accomplished with this service last year. It is provided by the First Student Transportation of Chester under contracts with 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 Seniors, Inc. 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 Seniors Inc. (ECSI) and the towns of Chester, Deep River and Essex for transit services.

Two new members are needed to fill two vacancies in the towns of Essex and Lyme. Requirements for Board Membership are residency in the town that you are volunteering to represent and being Appointed by the First Selectman of that same town to serve as the delegate. Meetings are quarterly, unless Special meetings of

Executive Committee Meetings are desired.. 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). We meet 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.