



## COMMUNITY GROUP RESEARCH FOR ITNEVERYWHERE™

*A Revolutionary Approach to Community Transport*

### **Introduction**

ITNEverywhere is a research and development project designed to evaluate how elements of the existing ITN® affiliate model may be used to serve communities smaller than the size required by the classic ITN model. The project will also study how to incorporate some innovative transport methods currently outside the ITN model which show promise in smaller communities. This document introduces how Community Groups may participate in the research and development of this new approach to community transport. In addition, it describes the background to the problem, how ITNAmerica is addressing the problem, and how a community organization might work with ITNAmerica's research team.

Community Groups will become pilot test sites in the United States and Canada, where ITNEverywhere is now being developed. In exchange for their investment, effort, and risk, the Community Groups will enjoy active participation in the development of ITNEverywhere equal to that of all other participating pilot test communities. That includes the local results of professional services such as landscape analysis and needs assessment of the community to identify specific transportation challenges and opportunities. We anticipate this research and development effort will be organized in a research and planning phase, and later an implementation phase.

### **Background to the Problem**

Smaller towns, villages, and semi-rural communities share a serious transportation problem. As the population ages, people who depend upon the private automobile experience great difficulty getting around when they stop driving. In some instances, older people who should stop driving remain behind the wheel because they feel they have no alternative. People with disabilities also have difficulty traveling, and public transport is not sufficient to meet their needs. Although alternative transportation has been identified as a significant unmet need, the problem seems too complex and too expensive to resolve.

Even those with the physical capabilities to drive safely would benefit from a more robust transportation system. An increasing number of Americans are aware of the environmental impact of driving and are seeking opportunities to reduce their carbon footprint. For others who restrict their driving, owning and operating a car which remains idle for long periods of time as it consumes a disproportionate share of household income. Ultimately, reducing the number of potentially unsafe drivers helps everyone in the community.

## How ITNAmerica is Addressing the Problem

ITNAmerica is the first national, non-profit transportation service for the aging population ([www.ITNAmerica.org](http://www.ITNAmerica.org)). Founded in 2004 to support the replication of the economically sustainable Independent Transportation Network® model in Portland, Maine (founded 1995), ITNAmerica now has affiliates in 16 communities in 12 states (as of February 2010). Communities or clusters of communities with a threshold population of approximately 200,000 and a density sufficient to support a sustainable system are eligible to become ITN affiliates. ITNAmerica provides all of the software, information management, technology, marketing, training, public policy, and research support necessary for the community to build a senior transportation system that will scale with the aging population and expand or contract with the economy, without relying on taxpayer dollars for operating expenses.

Sustainability is achieved gradually over a five year time frame. Affiliates gather once a year for training and social engagement at the Annual Affiliate Retreat; during the year, Learning Clusters, conference calls for sharing, meetings of the Affiliate Community Advisory Board, and 24/7 support from the help desk and the web portal provide the safety net so essential to success.

## ITNEverywhere Research and Planning Process

However many communities or community clusters of 200,000 ITNAmerica can support, many smaller, more rural communities cannot be served using this specific model. Because their population is more dispersed, their ride costs are higher and the resources available to cover those costs are fewer. Moreover, opportunities to create efficiency through shared rides are limited.

ITNEverywhere is a research and development project designed to solve this seemingly intractable problem. It takes the core business innovations of the original ITN model—personal transportation accounts and a flexible approach to resources (traded vehicles, volunteer credits, cash, co-payments, gift certificates)—and expands them to include the population as a whole *in conjunction* with a suite of software programs designed to access multiple forms of unused private capacity. In addition to the current ITNRides™ software that supports sustainable senior transportation, the other members of the ITNEverywhere transportation concept include:

**ITNCommunityTransport™** — for small communities with little or no public transport

**ITNRideshare™** — will use empty seats in private cars for voluntary shared rides

**ITNMyCar™** — will use donated or traded vehicles from ITN to add a mobility option

**ITNLite™** — provides small communities a simpler subset of the full ITNRides application

## Proposed Collaboration

ITNAmerica wishes to engage with several small communities in the transportation research for ITNEverywhere so they may have a role in developing a transportation solution for communities such as their own. ITNEverywhere will be developed through an iterative process that meaningfully engages potential end-users. Doing so ensures that it meets the core needs of communities in an economically viable way. Collaborating

with other communities, ITNAmerica will identify gaps in the current transportation system and test innovative solutions for filling them.

In addition to helping shape this breakthrough work, the Community Group will benefit from participation in this process through an assessment of both its current transportation landscape (supply) and its residents' unmet transportation needs (demand). The output of this research will be a report that will be provided to the Community Group. The Community Group will receive priority for participation in the Part II implementation phase, as well as the opportunity to join in any matching grant programs. The Community Group will receive:

- a description of the current landscape of transportation resources for its residents, including estimations of their usage, price points, and profiles of their user types;
- a summary of the market research conducted in the community;
- an assessment of unmet transportation needs raised during the market research process, segmented by distinct end-user groups;
- an estimation of the economic benefit to be gained through more robust community transportation systems.

While ITNAmerica and its team will be responsible for conducting the research, it will rely on the Community Group's assistance and expertise in helping to identify the most promising strategies to engage the community in this process.

### **Community Group Activities**

In support of ITNAmerica's research, the local community team must provide support for the effort including but not limited to:

- forming a Steering Committee;
- selecting a sponsoring agency;
- providing a meeting facility, support equipment and office services;
- identifying a local project manager to coordinate with ITNAmerica;
- the cost to the Community Group is \$50,000 in payments of \$12,500.

### **ITNAmerica Activities**

During the ITNEverywhere project, ITNAmerica will engage in a number of activities, including but not limited to:

- conducting a Landscape Analysis;
- performing market research to assess unmet needs;
- validating software prototypes and service model in the community;
- developing a Final Report.

### **Terms**

All parties understand that the work product and all intellectual property are proprietary and belong solely to ITNAmerica, with the exception of the community landscape and needs assessment described above. These will belong to the Community Group with the understanding that the report and underlying research will be used to inform the development and implementation of ITNEverywhere.