



U.S. Department of Transportation

ITS4US

IT'S TRANSPORTATION FOR ALL OF US

Transit Health Connector – The Pains and Gains in Effective Outreach

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA)

May 2023

Agenda

■ Purpose of this Webinar

- To share best practices and tips for effective outreach. Discuss project challenges and solutions our team implemented.

■ Webinar Content

- ITS4US Deployment Program Overview (Mike Barry)
- What is the Health Connector? (Brooke Ramsey)
- Identifying Stakeholders (Carl Lingen)
- Engagement with Stakeholders (Carl Lingen)
- Outreach efforts and challenges (Carl Lingen)
- Stakeholder Q&A (Brooke Ramsey)
- How to Stay Connected

■ Webinar Protocol

- Please mute your phone during the entire webinar
- You are welcome to ask questions via chatbox at the Q&A Section
- The webinar recording and the presentation material will be posted on the ITS4US website

Presenters – Mike Barry



Source: Mike Barry

Mike Barry
Transportation Specialist
FHWA Office of Planning

ITS4US Program Overview

- A USDOT Multimodal Deployment effort, led by ITS JPO and supported by OST, FHWA and FTA
- Supports multiple large-scale replicable deployments to address the challenges of planning and executing all segments of a complete trip



Vision: Innovative and integrated complete trip deployments to support seamless travel for all users across all modes, regardless of location, income, or disability

Presenters – Carl Lingen



Source: Capture Management Solutions

Carl Lingen
Capture Management Solutions

Presenters – Brooke Ramsey



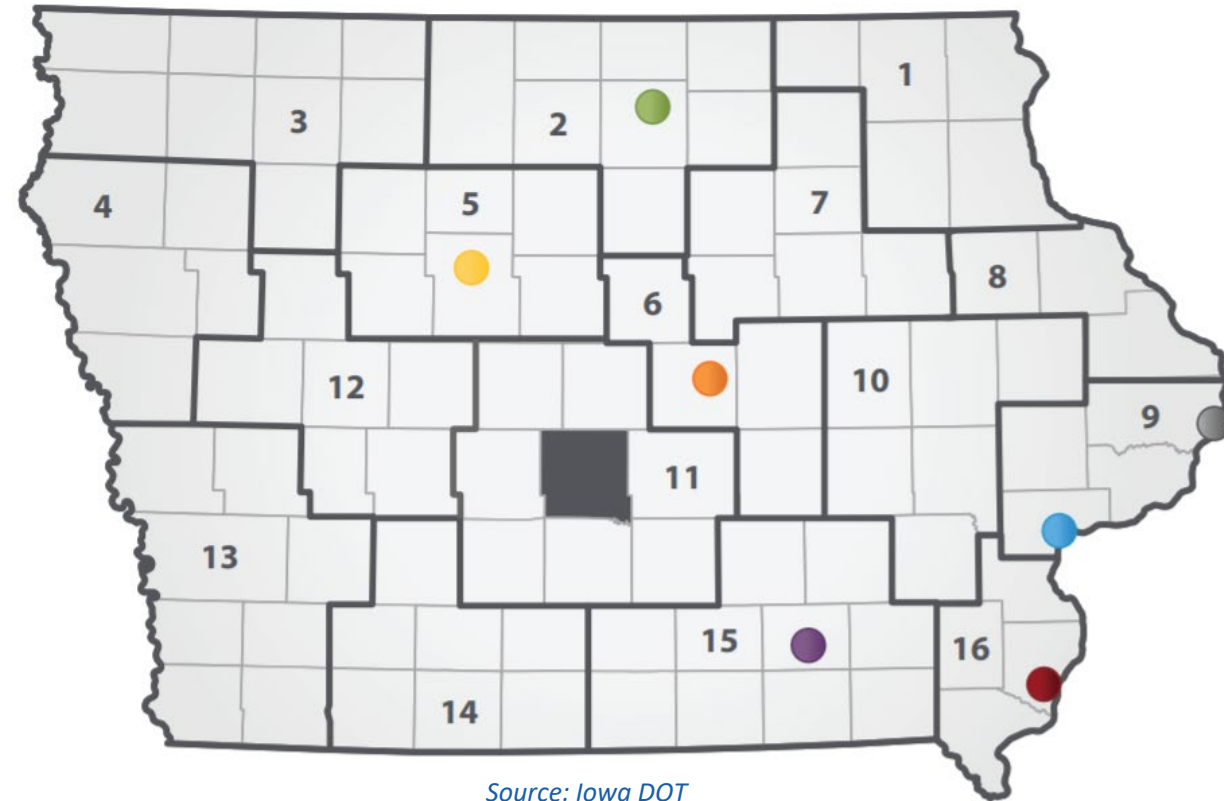
Source: HIRTA

Brooke Ramsey
Heart of Iowa Regional Transit
Agency

Iowa's Rural Public Transit Systems

Iowa Systems

- 35 State Designated Systems
- 16 Rural, like HIRTA
- 19 Urban



Source: Iowa DOT

- Burlington Urban Service
- City of Fort Dodge
- Marshalltown Municipal Transit
- City of Mason City
- City of Muscatine
- Ottumwa Transit
- City of Clinton, Municipal Transit Administration

- Region 1 - Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation
- Region 2 - North Iowa Area Council of Governments
- Region 3 - Regional Transit Authority
- Region 4 - Siouxland Regional Transit System
- Region 5 - MIDAS Council of Governments
- Region 6 - Region Six Planning Commission
- Region 7 - Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments
- Region 8 - Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson County Regional Transit Authority
- Region 9 - River Bend Transit
- Region 10 - East Central Iowa Council of Governments
- Region 11 - Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency
- Region 12 - Region XII Council of Governments
- Region 13 - Southwest Iowa Planning Council
- Region 14 - Southern Iowa Trolley
- Region 15 - 10-15 Regional Transit Agency
- Region 16 - South East Iowa Regional Planning Commission

Issue We Face

39%

Of survey respondents cited missing at least one healthcare appointment due to the lack of available transportation options

What is the Health Connector?

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) secured funding from US DOT to develop mobility solutions for residents to access health services in Dallas County

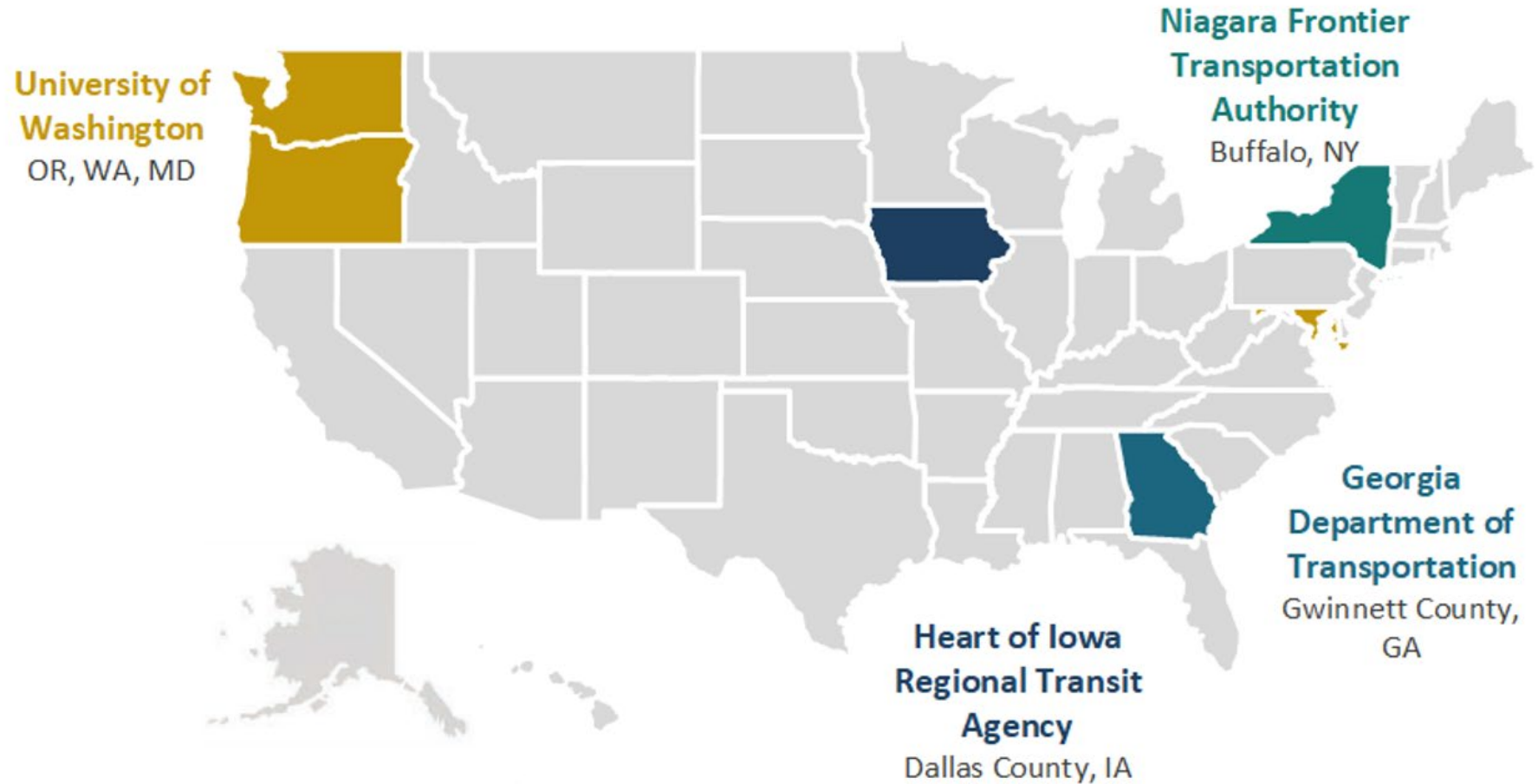
In coordination with

- Arcadis IBI Group
- Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)
- Dallas County Health Department
- Capture Management Solutions



Source: HIRTA

ITS4US Deployment Sites



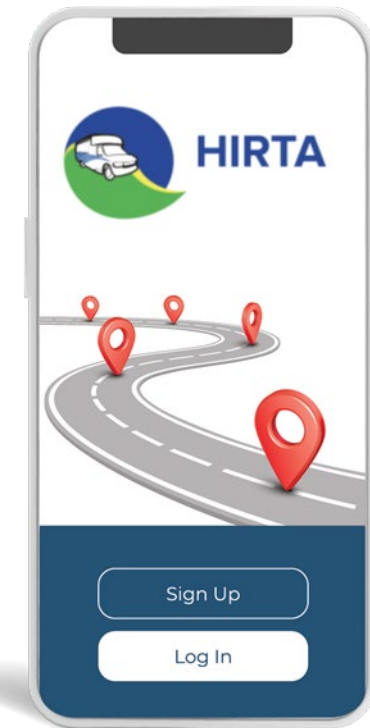
Source: USDOT

ITS4US Team Photo Collage



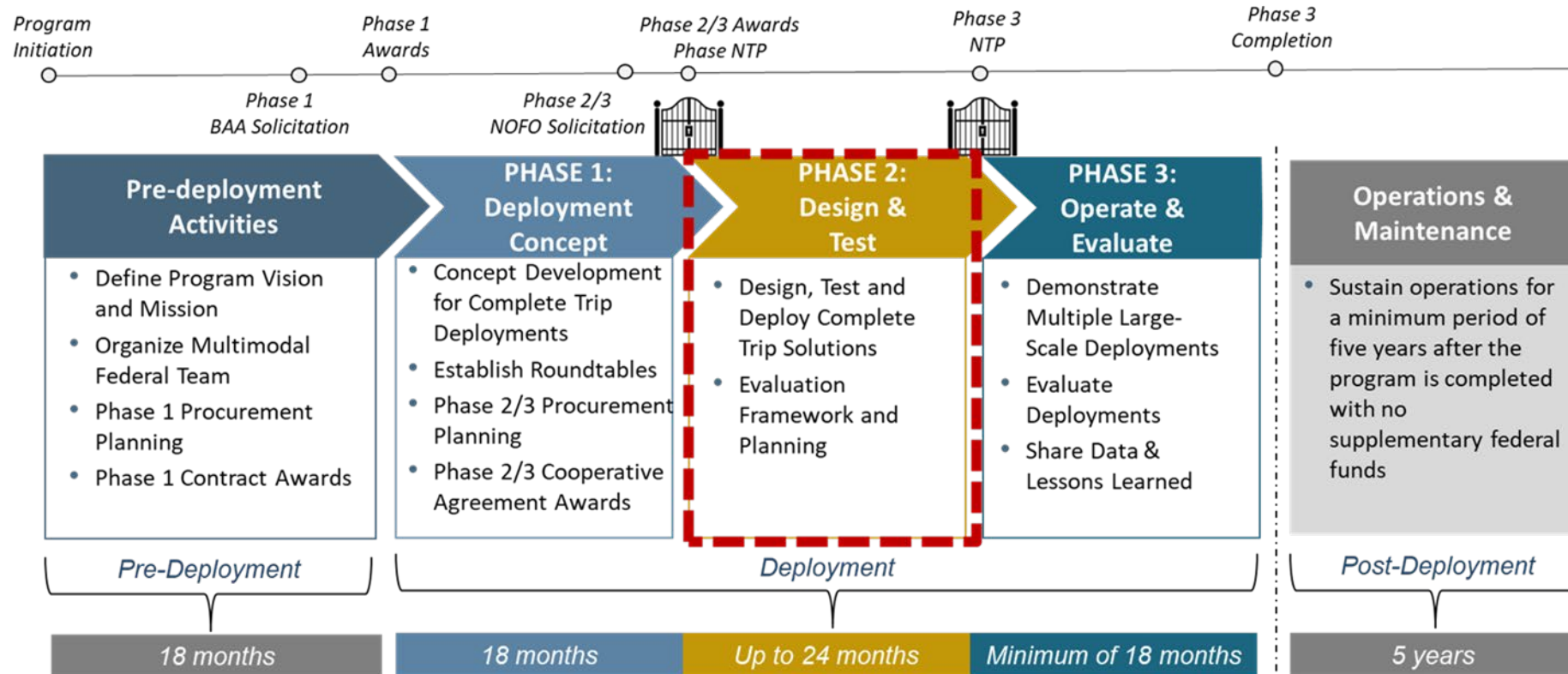
Purpose of The Health Connector

- Schedule and manage medical appointments and transportation services at the same time



Source: Capture Management Solutions

Phase 2 and 3 Awardees

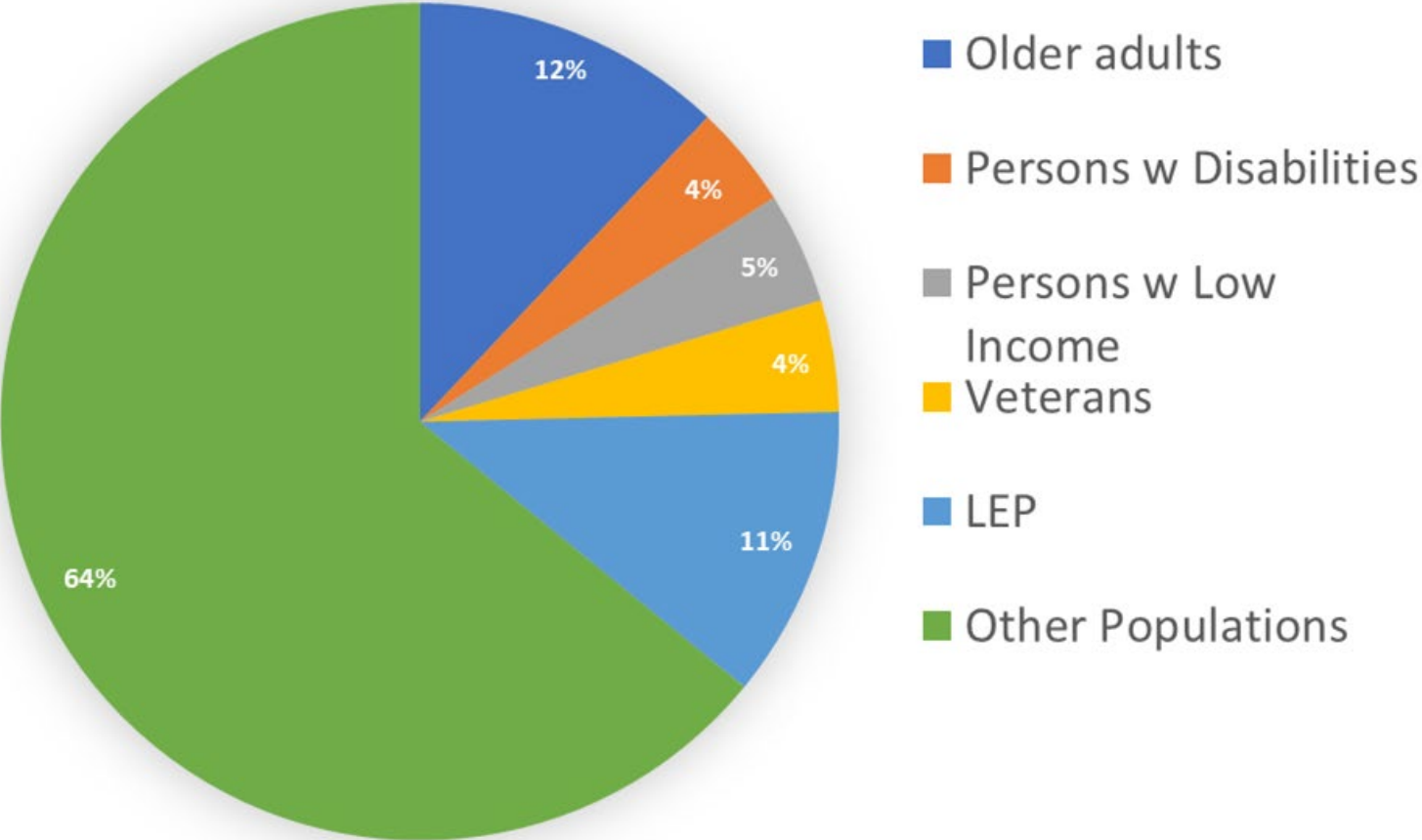


Source: USDOT

HIRTA and Dallas County Overview

- HIRTA provides demand response services to population in 7 county areas, including Dallas County
- Dallas County grew **36%** in the last decade
- Coordination of medical transportation services for underserved a major challenge

Dallas County Underserved Population



Source: HIRTA

Identifying Stakeholders

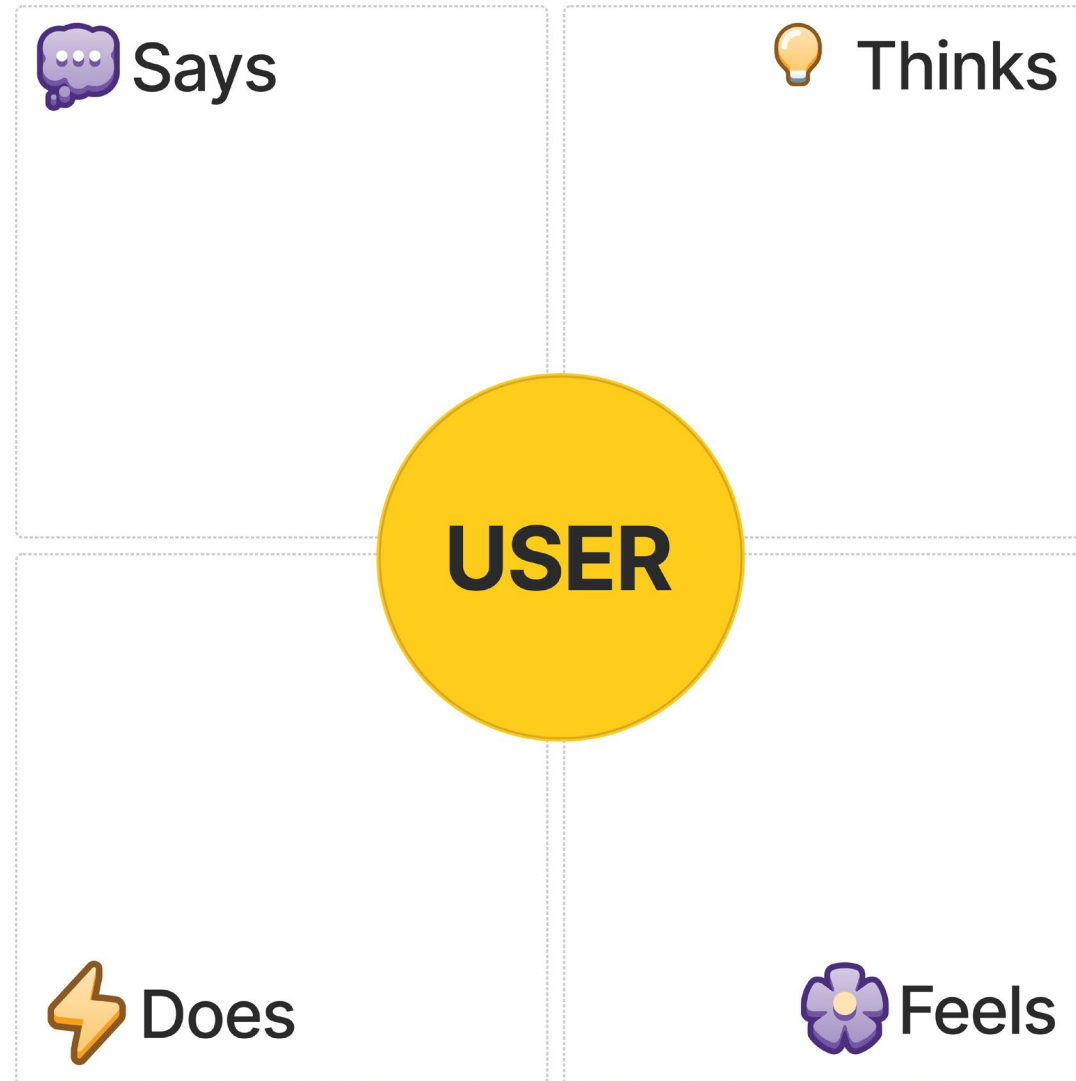
- How do we engage and understand the complexities of riders from different backgrounds and with different abilities?
 - Persons with disabilities
 - Language barriers
 - Technology limitations

Mapping Sessions (1 of 2)

Developed Stakeholder Mapping Sessions

- Incorporating empathy mapping (focus group) sessions
- Gathering feedback from stakeholders who represent silent or underserved populations focused on medical trips

Mapping Sessions (2 of 2)



Life of a Trip



Outlining our Mapping Sessions

We also needed to limit the scope with our stakeholders:

- Focus was on Dallas County while Polk County is also our largest county.
- Focus on those providing/involved in Medicaid integrated trips

Engaging our Stakeholders

First looked at current partners and other coalitions centered around transportation

- Dallas County Hospital
- Cancer Action Network
- VA
- Iowa's Developmental Disabilities Council
- Healthcare systems
- Iowa Refugee Services
- Aging Resources
- Epilepsy Foundation of Iowa
- Iowa Transportation Coordination Committee

Marketing to our Stakeholders

Marketing
Reaching out to
stakeholders we
had to market what
this project was
about



HIRTA's Health Connector
AN INCLUSIVE MOBILITY EXPERIENCE FROM BEGINNING TO END

What is Health Connector?

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA), in partnership with Arcadis IBI Group, Community Transportation Association of America, Dallas County Health Department, and Capture Management Solutions were successful in securing funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation to develop mobility solutions for our residents to access health services in Dallas County.

This will enable users to:

Schedule and manage medical appointments and transportation services at the same time.

This will provide the following:

Enhanced access to healthcare options for all travelers in Dallas County, Iowa with a specific **focus on people with disabilities and other underserved communities.**

IMAGINE IF YOU COULD BOOK YOUR
MEDICAL APPOINTMENT
+
TRANSPORTATION
AT THE SAME TIME



**No smartphone?
No problem!**

You can phone one number to do the same thing.

39% of survey respondents cited missing at least one healthcare appointment due to the lack of available transportation options.



Underserved populations face barriers such as a lack of information on transportation options to access healthcare, clinical services, or accommodations available at the facility being visited, information in accessible formats, the ability to locate the vehicle or destination facility, and other issues.



STEP 1
Book medical appointment. Request ride.

STEP 2
Board correct vehicle.

STEP 3
Arrive at healthcare center and easily navigate to correct area.

STEP 4
Complete appointment and request return ride, including stops needed along the way.

STEP 5
Board the correct vehicle and complete return trip.

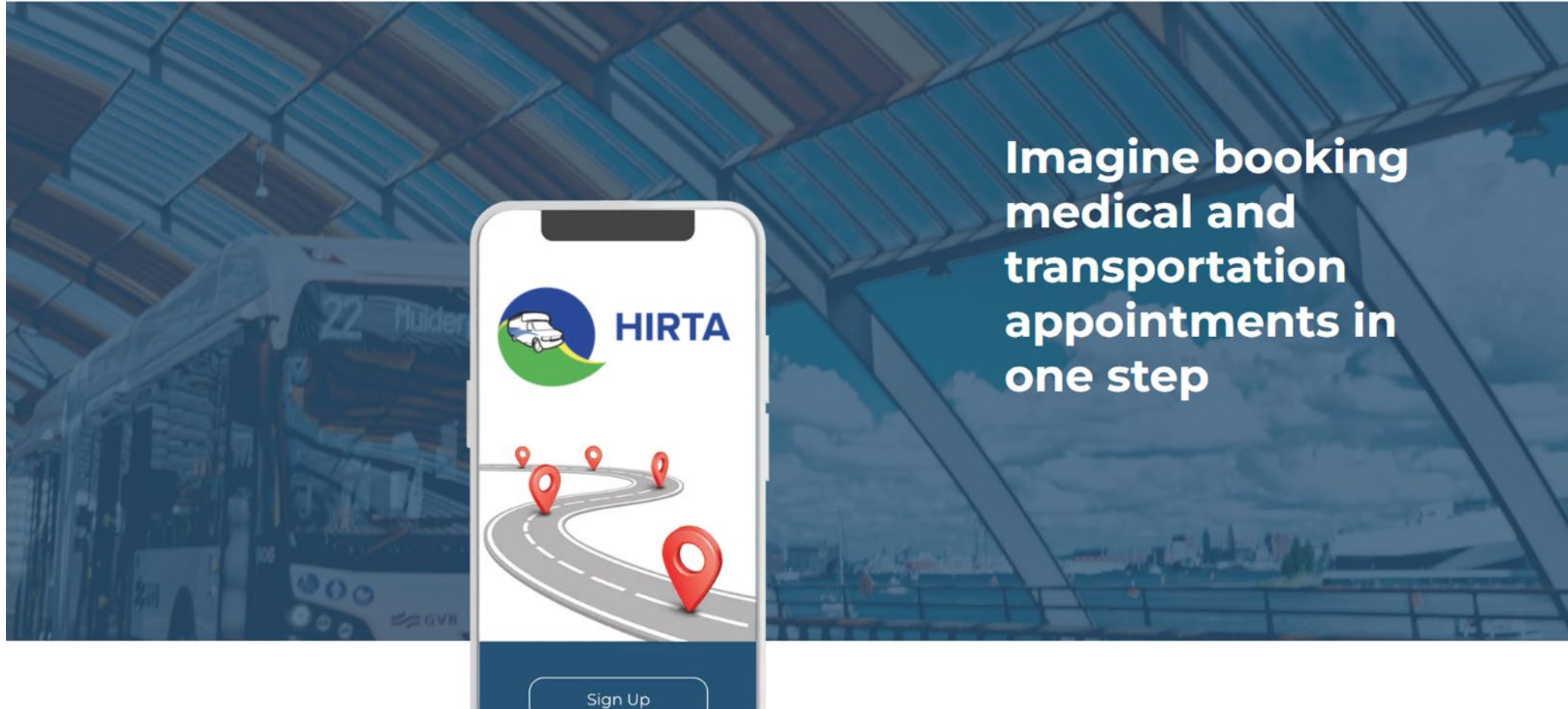
The Health Connector solution seeks to engage a broad coalition of community stakeholders and industry partners to understand transportation barriers to healthcare in Dallas County and explore how emerging technologies can address those.



Website for our Stakeholders



[HOW IT WORKS](#) [ABOUT THE PROJECT](#) [CONTACT US](#)

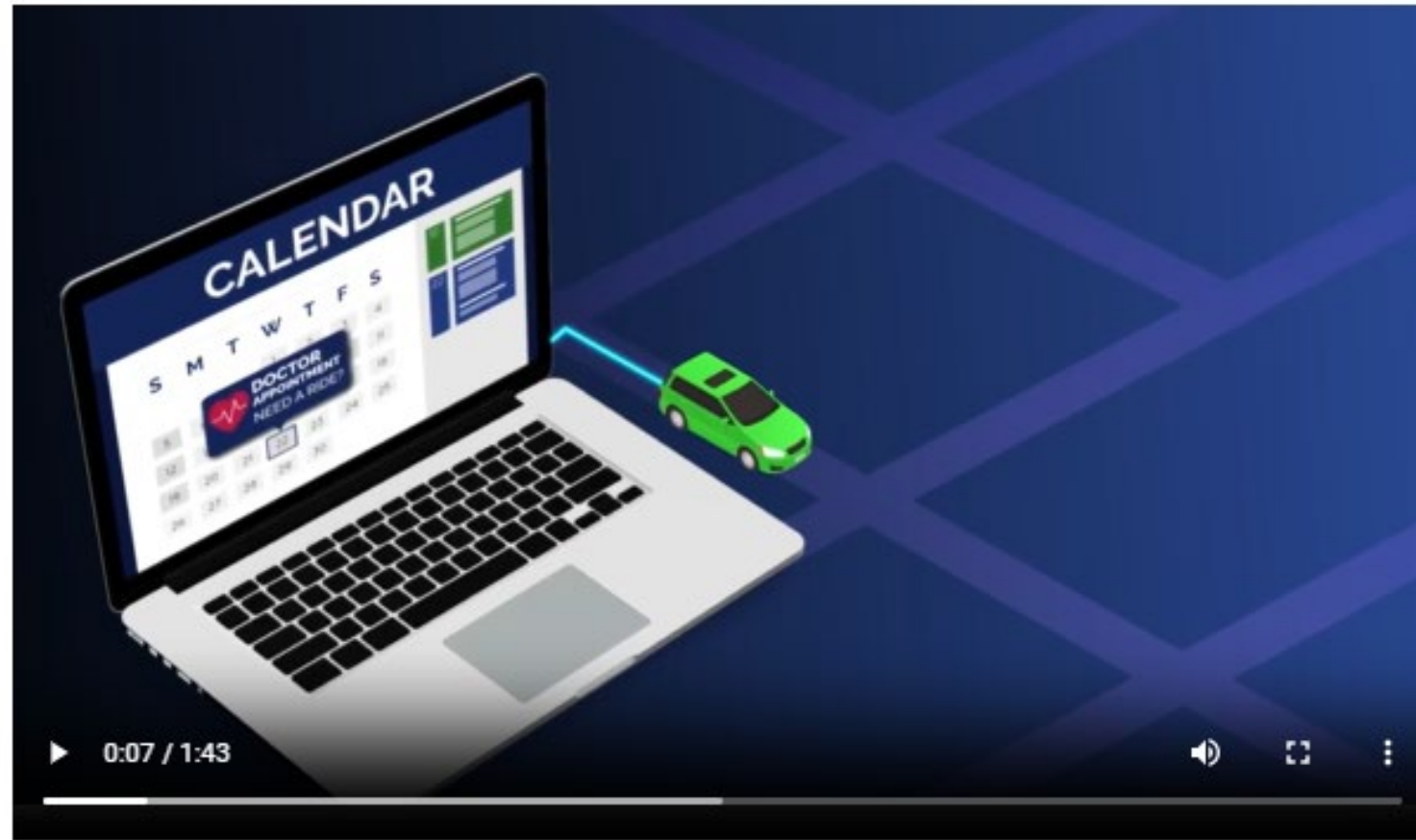


Source: Capture Management Solutions



U.S. Department of Transportation
ITS Joint Program Office

Video for our Stakeholders

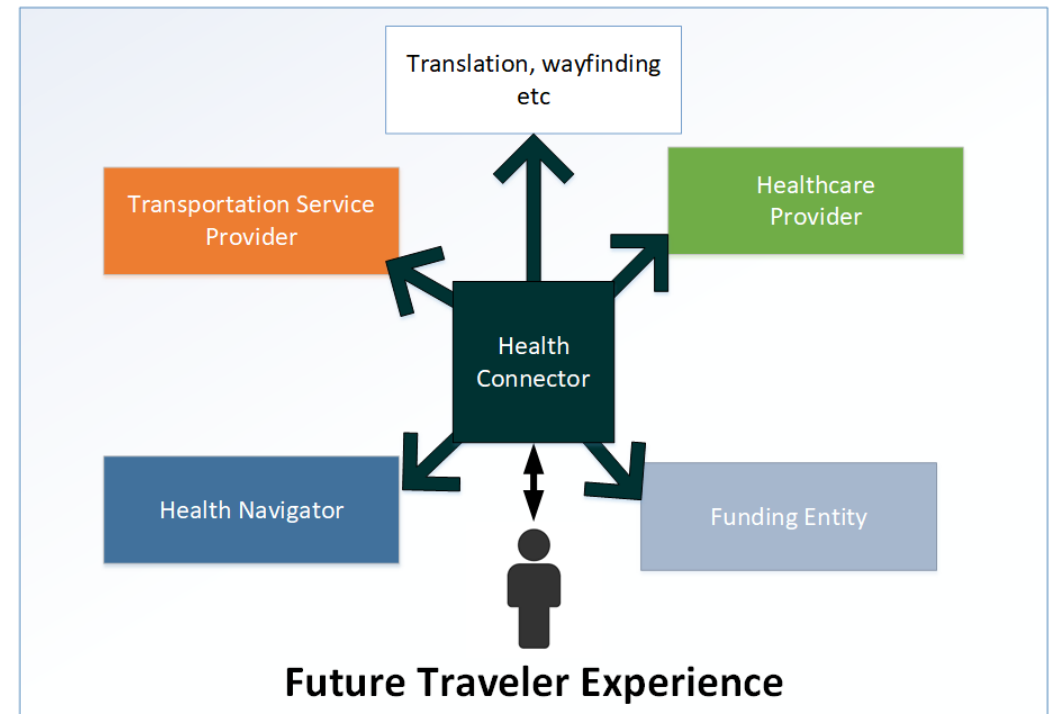
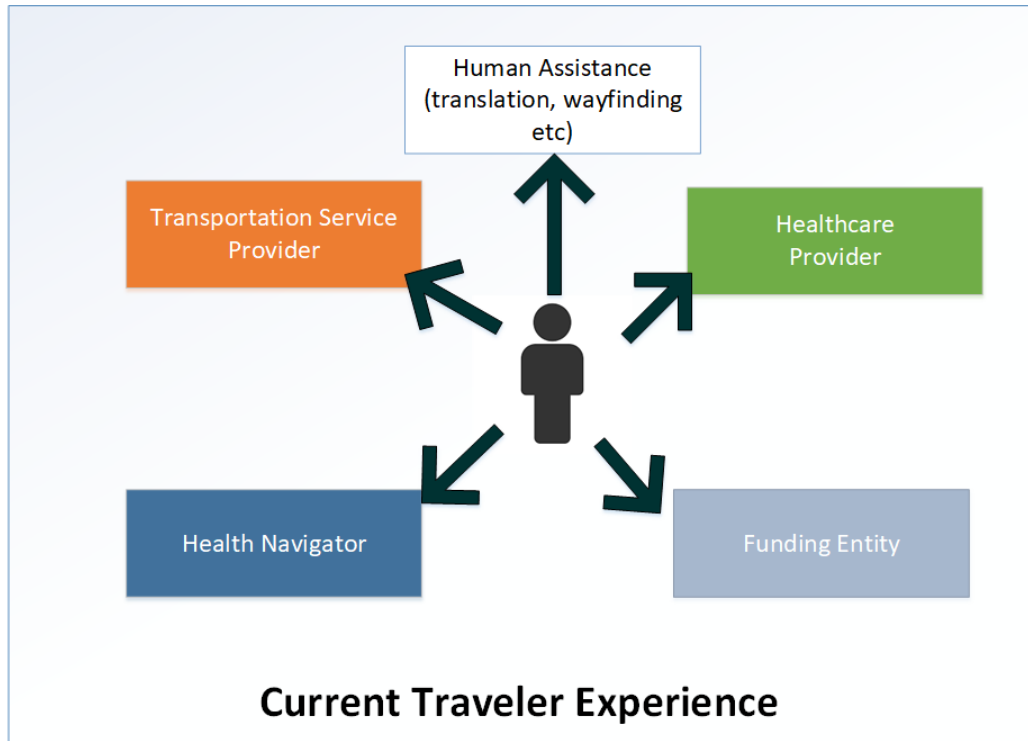


Source: Capture Management Solutions

High-Level Findings from Stakeholders

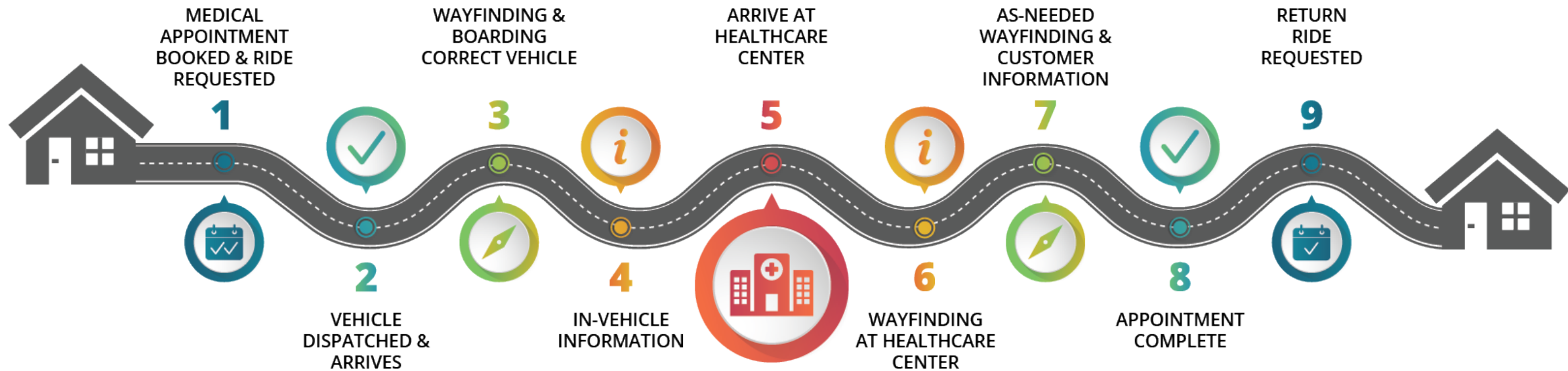
- Lack of awareness on transportation options
- Lack of integrated booking and trip management experience
- Limited capabilities in current modes to meet the needs of underserved
- Limited wayfinding capabilities
- Service management challenges with return trips
- Same day and after hour service issues
- Limited data sharing and reporting to measure the performance of healthcare transportation

Justification for Change



Source: HIRTA

Project Overview



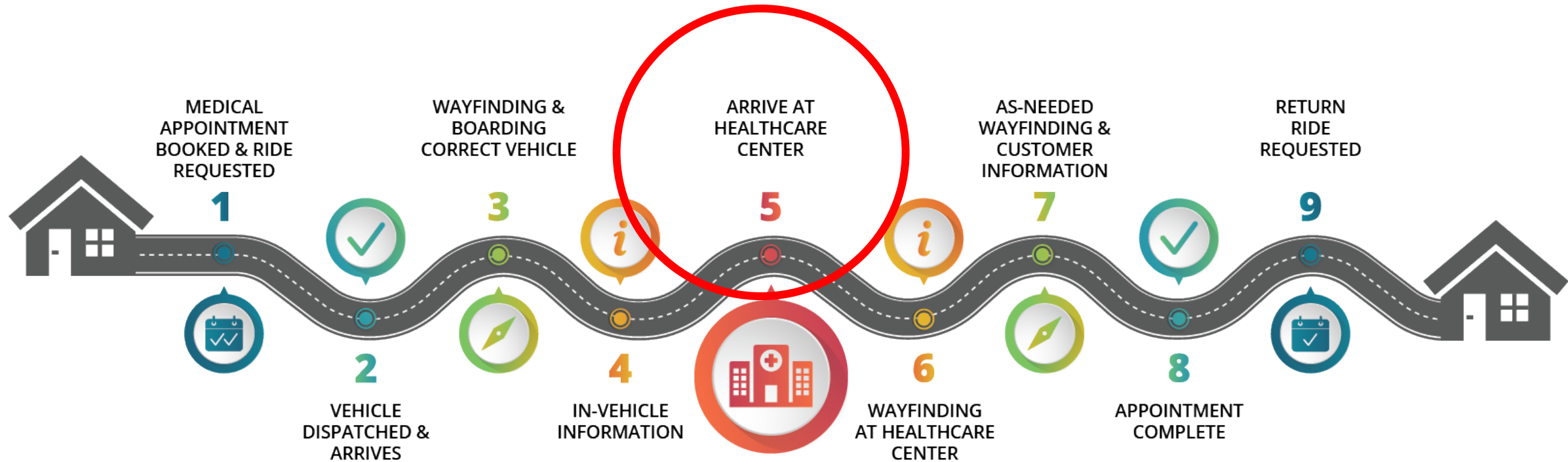
Source: Capture Management Solutions

Where Are We Heading?

Phase 2

- Design, Develop and Test
- Working with broad coalition of community stakeholders and industry partners to understand barriers
- Work with health systems

Working with Health Systems



Source: Capture Management Solutions

We Thought This Was Our Jam

Outreach efforts with healthcare systems started and we thought they would be **EXCITED** to get involved.



*Source: Microsoft Power Point stock image from Capture Management Solutions'
Microsoft license*

Outreach with Healthcare Systems (1 of 5)

We were hoping to get healthcare system access to also bridge with Epic



Source: Epic

Epic is an electronic medical record software

Outreach with Healthcare Systems (2 of 5)

Medical Assistance
Advisory Council
(MAAC) releases a
quarterly report

Top Reasons for Grievances

Voluntary disenrollment

Provider balance billed

Transportation – Driver delay

Poor Customer Service

Transportation – Driver no-show

Outreach with Healthcare Systems (3 of 5)

Cost of health systems when a member misses an appointment

\$150
billion per year

Outreach with Healthcare Systems (4 of 5)

Our team made assumptions that local healthcare system operators would be excited to partner with us.

Outreach with Healthcare Systems (5 of 5)

Nope.

Rethink our Strategy

Rethink Strategy:

- What was in it for them?
- What is the time commitment to be a partner?
- What are the privacy HIPAA concerns?

Outreach Tactics (1 of 3)

Outreach Tactic #1

Visualize the End Goal

Who We Are

HIRTA Public Transit, located in Urbandale, Iowa was awarded a project through U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) ITS4US Deployment Program to improve transit services to healthcare appointments.

HIRTA's focus on transportation to healthcare is rooted in Dallas County's Community Health Needs Assessment, which found transportation to be among the major barriers to accessing healthcare, particularly for people with disabilities, older adults, low-income individuals, rural residents, veterans, and limited English proficiency travelers.

Health Connector will provide reliable, timely transportation services, helping to:

- reduce missed appointments;
- reduce Medicare readmission penalties;
- improve preventive care appointment attendance; and
- improve the patient discharge process.

What Is The Health Connector?

Through Health Connector, patients traveling to healthcare appointments in Dallas County will have access to:

- extended transit service hours;
- on-demand transportation service;
- vehicles that support their individual mobility needs; and
- wayfinding support to help them navigate to and around healthcare facilities with easy to understand visual and audio directions.

Community health navigators and healthcare staff will be able to book transportation for clients at the same time that they book healthcare appointments. Patients will be able to schedule additional health-supportive trips along the way, including to pick up personal companions or prescriptions. Health Connector is funded through the USDOT; there is no cost for MercyOne to participate.



Source: Capture Management Solutions



U.S. Department of Transportation
ITS Joint Program Office

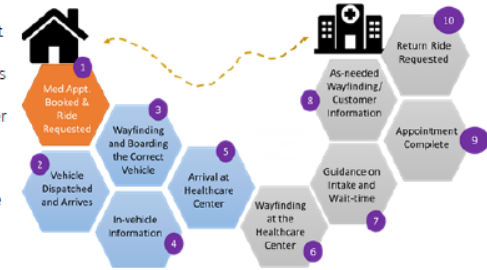
Outreach Tactics (2 of 3)

Outreach Tactic #2

Make it easy to understand

Partnership

This figure provides an overview of how Health Connector will work generally, but the specific experience at MercyOne will depend on how involved MercyOne wants to be in the pilot project. At a minimum, MercyOne patients will be able to register to use Health Connector and will benefit from having access to the Health Connector trip planning & booking app, extended hours of transportation service for healthcare related trips, and on-demand service for return trips and discharge.



If MercyOne staff are interested in integrating transportation planning into their workflow, staff can book transportation at the same time that the appointment is booked, can order rides for return trips or discharges, can make sure that ordered rides include stops to fill prescriptions, and more.

If MercyOne is interested in working with Navilens, our wayfinding partner, patients will have extra support in navigating to and through the facility, reducing appointment delays and improving patient experience navigating MercyOne. These benefits will be available to all MercyOne patients, even those who do not use Health Connector for their transportation.

Next Steps

We would value the chance to talk with you to:

- Better understand some of your key pain points related to patient transportation, including patient demographic factors that stand out as particularly relevant.
- Discuss the level of interest you have in MercyOne participating in the different components of Health Connector.
- Discuss opportunities for measuring the impact of Health Connector for your facility and your patients – to help improve the program and support future efforts to sustain funding.

HIRTA expects to have the Health Connector software vendor selected by the beginning of November 2022. Health Connector is planned to be launched in early 2023.

If MercyOne is interested in actively using Health Connector, the HIRTA team is committed to providing training and support for MercyOne staff and to providing on-going updates about program progress and evaluation.

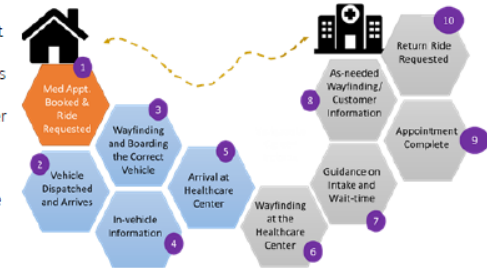
Outreach Tactics (3 of 3)

Outreach Tactic #3

Make clear expectations of next steps

Partnership

This figure provides an overview of how Health Connector will work generally, but the specific experience at MercyOne will depend on how involved MercyOne wants to be in the pilot project. At a minimum, MercyOne patients will be able to register to use Health Connector and will benefit from having access to the Health Connector trip planning & booking app, extended hours of transportation service for healthcare related trips, and on-demand service for return trips and discharge.



If MercyOne staff are interested in integrating transportation planning into their workflow, staff can book transportation at the same time that the appointment is booked, can order rides for return trips or discharges, can make sure that ordered rides include stops to fill prescriptions, and more.

If MercyOne is interested in working with Navilens, our wayfinding partner, patients will have extra support in navigating to and through the facility, reducing appointment delays and improving patient experience navigating MercyOne. These benefits will be available to all MercyOne patients, even those who do not use Health Connector for their transportation.

Next Steps

We would value the chance to talk with you to:

- Better understand some of your key pain points related to patient transportation, including patient demographic factors that stand out as particularly relevant.
- Discuss the level of interest you have in MercyOne participating in the different components of Health Connector.
- Discuss opportunities for measuring the impact of Health Connector for your facility and your patients – to help improve the program and support future efforts to sustain funding.

HIRTA expects to have the Health Connector software vendor selected by the beginning of November 2022. Health Connector is planned to be launched in early 2023.

If MercyOne is interested in actively using Health Connector, the HIRTA team is committed to providing training and support for MercyOne staff and to providing on-going updates about program progress and evaluation.

Source: Capture Management Solutions

External Threats to Consider

Barriers: External threats

Healthcare partners have urgent and higher priorities that happen suddenly

How do we Proceed?

At a Crossroads

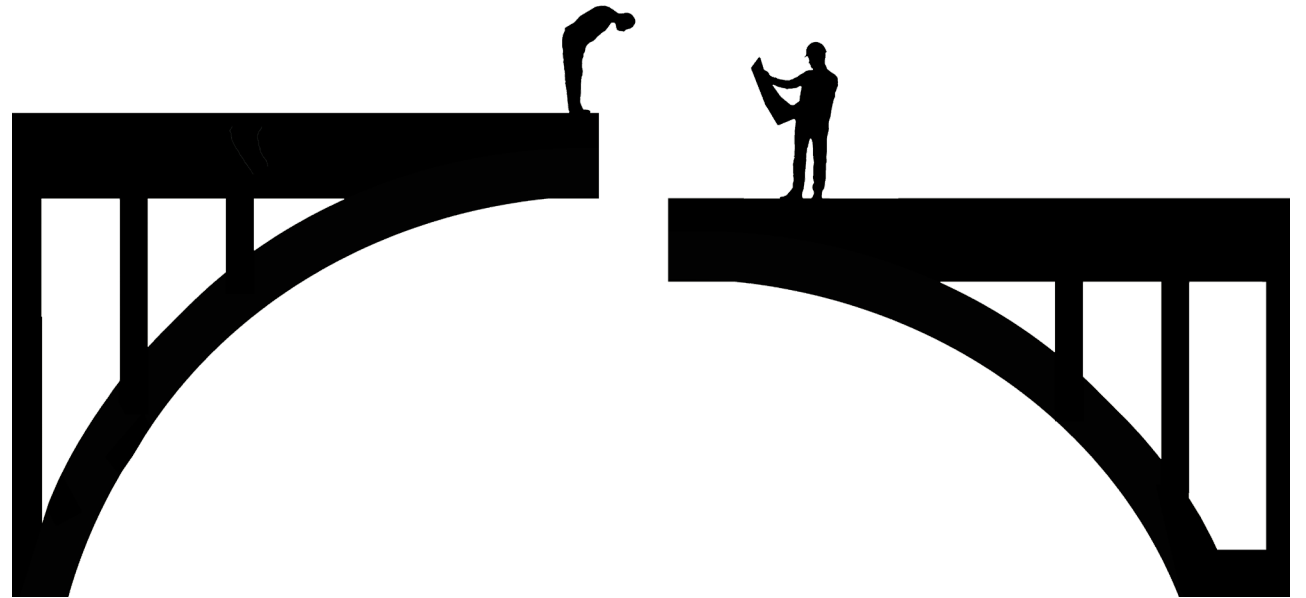


Source: Microsoft Power Point stock image from Capture Management Solutions'
Microsoft license

Pivoting our Outreach Plan

Plan ~~B/C~~ D

Regroup With Our
Partners and
Stakeholders



Source: Adobe Stock standard license

Rethinking our Approach

Talked with Team
Reassessed the importance of having large or more local health care systems to partner with

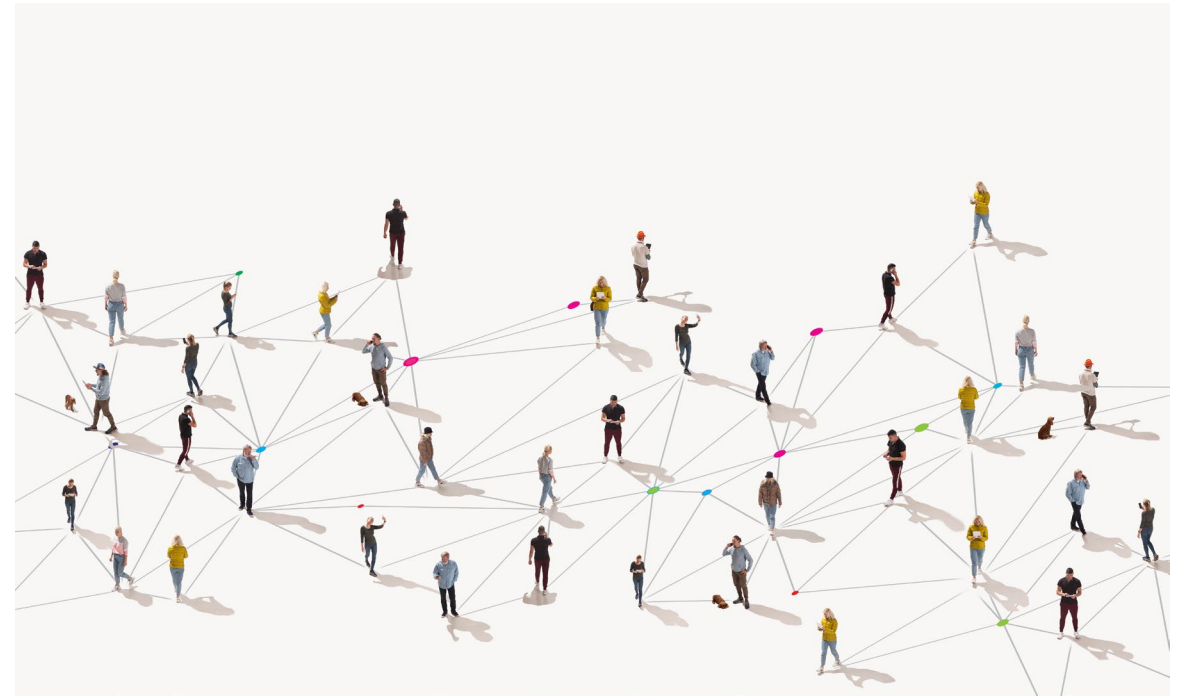


Source: Microsoft Power Point stock image from Capture Management Solutions'
Microsoft license

Regroup with Stakeholders

Outreach Stakeholders

Talked with stakeholders about their contacts with healthcare systems.
Discussed issues at our public meetings



Source: Adobe Stock standard license

Our Story is Important

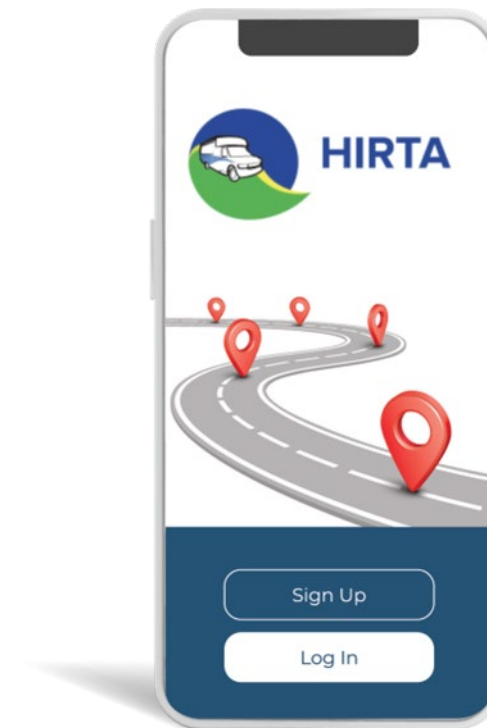
We Continued To Tell Our Story

- Found key personnel who were working on the Epic implementation

Finding our Champions

We Remain Optimistic

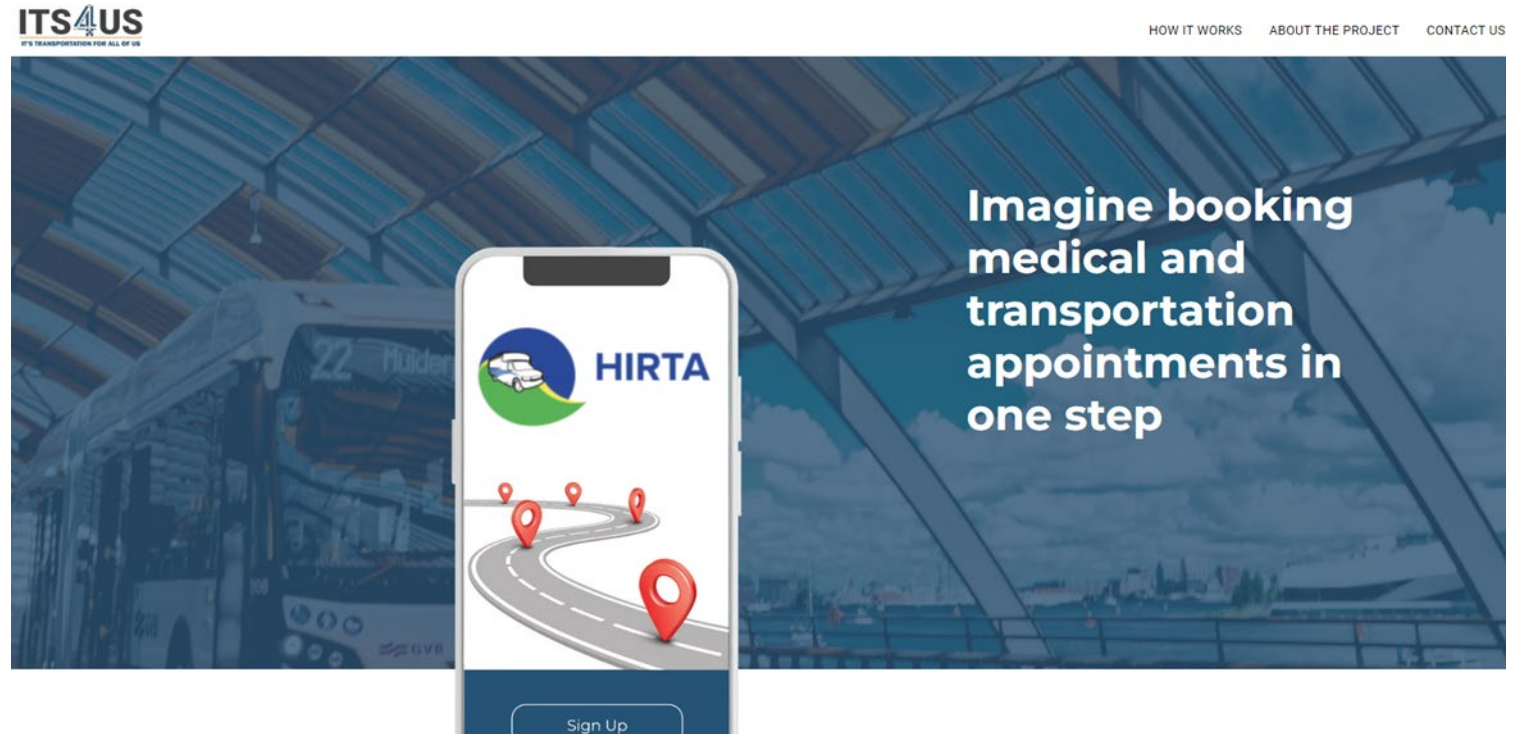
- We have the right people
- Do we have the buy-in and champions?



Source: Capture Management Solutions

Lessons Learned (1 of 5)

1. Consistently update your partners and stakeholders

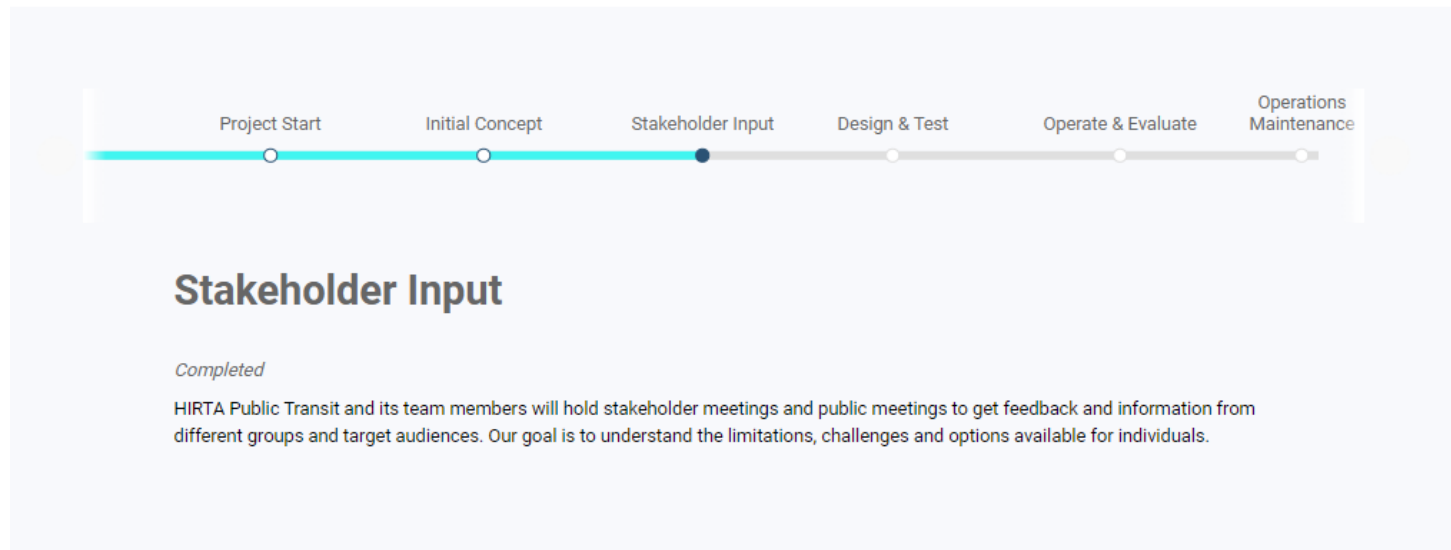


Source: Capture Management Solutions

Lessons Learned (2 of 5)



About the Health Connector Project



Source: Capture Management Solutions

Lessons Learned (3 of 5)

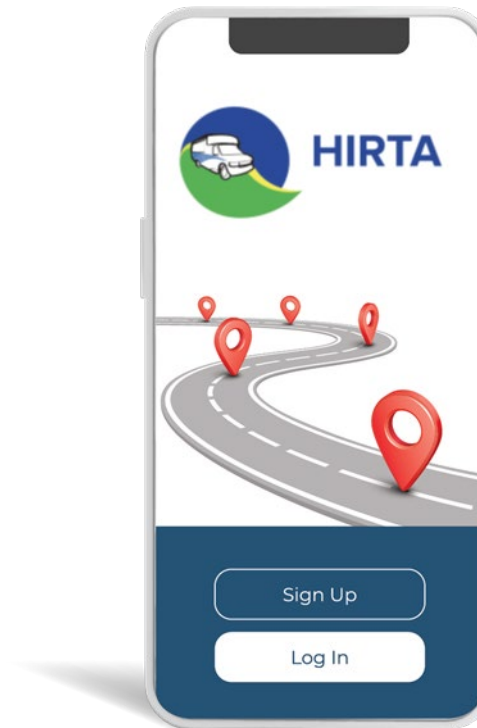
**2. Don't
assume
everyone is
going to be on
board**



Source: Adobe Stock standard license

Lessons Learned (4 of 5)

3. Clear expectations are always needed and visualize with the end in mind



Source: Capture Management Solutions

Lessons Learned (5 of 5)

4. Work to build an internal champion to assist with outreach efforts



Source: Adobe Stock standard license

Stakeholder Q&A

- Please keep your microphone muted
- Please use chat box to ask questions
- Questions will be answered in the order in which they were received

Stay Connected

For more information please contact:

Elina Zlotchenko, ITS JPO
ITS4US Program Manager
Elina.Zlotchenko@dot.gov

Mike Barry, FHWA Office of
Planning
Site AOR
Michael.Barry@dot.gov

Brooke Ramsey, HIRTA
Project Management Lead
bramsey@ridehirta.com

Visit the ITS4US Deployment Program
Website:

<https://its.dot.gov/its4us/>

ITS4US Deployment Program Video

<https://youtu.be/pzt11RyXAc>

Find Out More

www.transithealthconnector.org