

The Transportation Challenge in Rural Living

by Cara Anaam

When we think of public transit, we usually think of urban and suburban systems and their riders. But what if you live in a rural area or small town and there are NO public transportation options? Getting to doctors, hospitals, grocery stores, schools, town offices, or anywhere else for that matter, would be difficult for anyone who could not drive or who did not have a car. This is the situation faced by Holly Gray, a student at Exeter Adult Education in Exeter, NH:

“I’m a single mother of four children and have been attending classes five days a week, earning credits toward my high school diploma. I have been getting rides back and forth from friends for whom it is a real inconvenience. If there were public transportation in this area I would have another option for getting to school and would have been able to graduate in June 2007. As it is, I will probably have to wait until June 2008. I’ve wanted to complete my high school education for 20 years already, and I would be crushed not to be able to finish because of a transportation issue.”



What do you think?

Do you know of an area without adequate public transportation?

Do you think it’s fair that the location of your home can have such a significant effect on your ability to get an education?

Who is responsible for making sure people have access to transportation? How does public transportation get paid for?

Who benefits from the absence of public transportation? How?

Think of three possible ways that a community might address the problem of inadequate transportation. Use your imagination and write or draw your ideas.