



RTCC Project Memorandum #1 Peer Organization Research

To: *Brian Gibson, St. Cloud APO Executive Director*

From: *Tom Cruikshank, Project Manager*

Date: *November 7, 2018*

Re: *WSB Project No. 012670-000*

Introduction

The St. Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO) and WSB are working to develop an Operational Implementation Plan (OIP) for a Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC). This memo will explore existing RTCCs to advise the development of an OIP for an RTCC for the St. Cloud region.

Summary of peer RTCCs

The following RTCCs were reviewed for comparison:

- Dakota County Transportation Coordinating Collaborative (DCTCC) – Dakota County, Minnesota
- Human Services Transportation Coordination Council (HSTC) - Miami (OH) Valley Regional Transportation Coordination Council
- Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center - Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

Each of these RTCCs operates with different organization structures, membership requirements, staff support and funding.

Dakota County Transportation Coordinating Collaborative

Dakota County Transportation Coordinating Collaborative (DCTCC) – Dakota County, Minnesota

Website: www.dakota.mn.us

Contact:

Kelly Harder

Director of Community Services, Dakota County

651-554-5742

kelly.harder@co.dakota.mn.us

Organization Formation

The Dakota County Transportation Coordinating Collaborative (DCTCC), formed in 2015, coordinates transportation services for Dakota County within the Twin Cities Metropolitan area. Dakota County is the lead entity for the council.

The DCTCC works with stakeholders to develop and support coordinated transportation services and programs (Appendix A). The goal of these services and programs is to increase efficiencies and provide enhanced mobility and accessibility to all residents, particularly older adults and individuals with special transportation needs. The vision of the DCTCC is to have a fully coordinated transportation system providing continuous transportation access for Dakota County residents.

The DCTCC established the following Mission:

To work with stakeholders to develop and support coordinated transportation services and programs that will achieve increased efficiencies and will provide enhanced mobility and accessibility to all residents, particularly seniors and individuals with special transportation needs.

Based on this Mission, DCTCC developed the following goals:

- To develop community-wide awareness of available transportation services and increase participation in the coordinating collaborative
- To reach consensus on the mission framework and a formalized decision to implement it
- To reassess mobility shortfalls and gaps
- To update transportation plans and models to solve mobility shortfalls and gaps within and outside of Dakota County

DCTCC completed a Dakota County client needs assessment as well as a transportation asset inventory report. These reports identified gaps and opportunities for improved coordination. In 2018, DCTCC hired a contractor to provide travel training services to augment current services and capture more data on mobility needs of the target populations.

The travel training program provides the following training options:

- **Train the Trainer:** Training for those who can then train others
- **Group Training:** Training and experiential learning for up to 10 people in classroom and community settings
- **Trip Training:** Customized training to teach specific routes

The travel training program established the following goal:

Encourage independence of county residents by providing information and experience on available transportation options.

In 2018, the DCTCC provided the following progress updates:

- Implemented a Travel Training Program
- Assisted social services with Lyft pilot
- Developed a pilot project to provide transit service out of the Law Enforcement Center in Hastings
- Developed GoDakota branding

The DCTCC established the following goals for 2019:

- Goal #1 – Continue to enhance collaboration efforts
- Goal #2 – Expand transportation coordination
- Goal #3 – Support travel training and outreach
- Goal #4 – Enhance communication plan
- Goal #5 – Expand testing of mobility management model

Transportation Coordination

In addition to the travel-training program, DCTCC developed a concept model for mobility management. The model will help leverage technologies to increase transportation options for the target populations. The model also will benefit transportation agencies and local government with improved insights into travel patterns and mobility demand. Finally, the DCTCC hopes to include a funding component with the model to process payments for transportation services from a variety of funding sources such as waiver programs and private pay. DCTCC is currently evaluating process models to test the mobility management concept and hopes to implement a pilot in 2018.

Information and training on all transportation modes is provided within the county including the following:

- Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA)
- Metro Transit: Buses/Light rail, Transit Link, Metro Mobility
- Non-Emergent Medicaid Transportation (NEMT)
- Dakota Area Resources and Transportation for Seniors (DARTS): Loops, Select and Direct
- Ridesharing: (Uber/Lyft)
- Volunteer Driving

GoDakota outreach has been provided in the following areas in the county:

- High schools
- Transition Programs
- County case managers
- Libraries
- Senior living/retirement communities
- Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) locations
- Area agency on aging
- Disability organizations
- Chamber of commerce
- YMCA

Organization Membership

The DCTCC facilitates transportation and human services. An advisory board consisting of almost 20 stakeholders, representing transportation providers, sheltered workshops, faith community, MnDOT, Met Council, and key department leadership from the county provide input on transportation and human service needs. These organizations within the DCTCC voluntarily participate on the advisory board. These organizations have no formal authority but can provide recommendations to members implementing plans and strategies. DCTCC members develop collaborative recommendations based on resources, authority, and the decision-making process of each member organization.

Staffing

The Community Services Transportation Coordinator is responsible for leading the GoDakota Collaborative, an initiative of internal and external stakeholders focused on developing and supporting more accessible, coordinated transportation services and programs to increase the mobility of all Dakota County residents, particularly older adults and individuals with unique circumstances that may require special transportation needs. The Community Services Transportation Coordinator is employed by Dakota County.

Funding

In 2018, Dakota County provides 25% and MnDOT provides 75% of the funding (Section 5310 program) needed to operate the GoDakota Collaborative program. This funding pays for the Transportation Coordinator and related expenses.

Miami Valley Regional Transportation Coordination Council

Human Services Transportation Coordination Council (HSTC) – Miami (OH) Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC)

Website: www.mvrpc.org, www.miamivalleyridefinder.org

Contact:

Kim Lahman

MVRPC Director of Sustainable Solutions and Transportation Alternatives

klahman@mvrpc.org

937.531.6531

Organizations and individuals in Greene, Miami, Montgomery and northern Warren counties that are interested in the transportation needs of the elderly, individuals with disabilities and low-income individuals are invited to participate in the Regional Transportation Coordination Council. This council is convened quarterly by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission. The council was created in 2008 as a part of the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission. The Regional Planning Commission was originally established 1964 and is the supporting organization for the council.

The council was created to address these goals:

- Adopt a regional perspective and approach
- Improve transportation services for all travelers
- Implement transportation improvements in stages

- Maximize stakeholder participation
- Coordinate services
- Determine eligibility for federal and other types of funding
- Assess overall cost-effectiveness of services
- Gauge economic benefits to the region

Organization Formation

The Miami (OH) Valley Regional Transportation Coordination Council (MVRPC) was formed to improve transportation options for seniors, people with disabilities and low-income individuals, in part by implementing the recommendations of the Regional Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan and the update of that plan. Both plans are available on at www.mvrpc.org.

The MVRPC meets quarterly to provide input on making specialized transportation improvements and to share information concerning transportation for non-drivers. The committee is open to public, private and non-profit transportation providers, as well as seniors and individuals with disabilities and advocates for those groups. The MVRPC discusses the transportation needs of the populations identified above and makes recommendations on how to meet those needs in a coordinated fashion.

MVRPC hosts the Human Services Transportation Coordination Council (HSTC) meetings each quarter. The council's purpose is to increase options for people with disabilities and seniors through the coordination of public and private providers and the expansion of efforts and resources. Attendees include transit providers, users and human service agencies who exchange information and work to resolve issues.

The HSTC council meetings are also a requirement for those wishing to receive Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funding. This funding allows for organizations to purchase Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant vehicles for only 20% of their value. The vehicles are used to transport non-drivers, allowing them to stay engaged in the community by taking them to jobs, medical appointments, shopping and recreation.

Transportation Coordination

The greater Dayton region is very automobile-dependent. Most trips for work, recreation, education or essential errands are made in privately-owned vehicles. For those able to drive and own a dependable car, the region is easy to navigate. The traffic is manageable and, for most people, the commutes are reasonable. However, if you are a non-driving senior or a person with a disability who does not drive, getting around can be a challenge. For individuals without a reliable car, looking for work or needing to travel back and forth to a job is also very challenging. Reliable transportation is the second biggest barrier (behind childcare) to entering the workforce in the region.

There are options for non-drivers. If an individual lives near a bus line and can use standard bus service, there are many accessible destinations. Many organizations also provide specialized transportation, usually in the form of small vans, for people with special transportation needs. The problem is that providing transportation in a region that continues to "spread out" is complicated and expensive. Many suburban neighborhoods and destinations are not accessible by fixed route bus and are isolated

from shopping, doctors and other essential services. As more seniors “age in place” in car-dependent neighborhoods, the transportation challenge will grow.

To make better use of the limited transportation funds available to non-profits and governments and to make more transportation options available to those who need them, the MVRPC conducted a Human Services Transportation Coordination planning process. The original 2008 Regional Action Plan identified existing services, gaps in service and recommended strategies for improvement.

Creation of the HSTC

The HSTC was formed to improve transportation options for seniors, people with disabilities and low-income individuals, in part by implementing the recommendations of the Regional Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan and the update of that plan.

The 2012 update of the plan (amended December 2016) identified six Regional Human Services Transportation Priorities. While there are many gaps in transportation services that need to be addressed and improvements that can be made, six areas have emerged that deserve specific attention:

1. The need for transportation to take individuals to medical appointments such as dialysis, chemotherapy, and physical rehabilitation
2. The region’s aging population and the growing transportation needs of seniors who have limited or stopped driving
3. The need for people with disabilities, the elderly and people of low income to be able to access employment, medical, educational and shopping destinations in an efficient manner, including trips that cross jurisdictional boundaries
4. The need to complete essential sidewalks, curb cuts and other elements of the pedestrian infrastructure, especially along fixed and flex-route transit lines to make transit more accessible and appealing to the target populations
5. The growing number of low-income residents who need transportation to get to jobs, medical appointments and other activities, and a growing number of low-income individuals are living in suburban and rural settings with limited transportation options.
6. An overarching emphasis on coordination among agencies, funders and users to ensure cost-effective use of the region’s transportation assets. Coordination should be emphasized to combine clients of various agencies on single vehicles, and to coordinate operations such as dispatching, maintenance, and driver training. (See Appendix D).

Coordination will be encouraged and rewarded in all funding governed by this plan.

Membership

Attendance at HSTC meetings and ongoing participation in this coordination council is mandatory for any organization wishing to request Section 5310 - Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and People with Disabilities funds.

The HSTC has 40 to 60 active members and maintains a mailing list of 500 individuals. To be a member of the HSTC, an individual must complete a membership application

on the MVRPC website. Members can participate in the HSTC with no membership expiration.

HSTC members receive information about transportation funding opportunities, including the recently revamped Section 5310 program, now named the Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities. Active participation in the HSTC, including attendance at the quarterly meetings is mandatory in order for an entity to request and potentially receive Section 5310 funding in Greene, Miami, Montgomery and northern Warren counties or to be eligible to provide services contracted through the 5310 program.

Any agency wishing to apply for funds must agree to site visits from MVRPC and must provide documentation confirming that it has the capacity to manage a transportation program (screening and training of drivers, sufficient operating funds, fully insured, scheduling/dispatching capabilities and appropriate accounting policies and procedures). Agencies are expected to provide a significant number of trips to the target populations and must be willing to consider coordination opportunities that would improve the mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Other benefits of being a MVRPC member include networking with other agencies involved in specialized transportation, having ongoing input into the coordination planning process, identifying potential coordination or contracting opportunities, receiving updates on innovative transportation efforts and being made aware of resources and training opportunities regarding specialized transportation. Meetings are typically held on the fourth Tuesday in February, May, August and November. Exact time and location may vary and will be announced to MVRPC members several weeks prior to the meeting. Meeting details are listed on the MVRPC website. Appendix B is an example of a recent HSTC Regional Council meeting.

Staffing

The HSTC is staffed by two individuals employed by the MVRPC who dedicate time to the Council as needed.

Funding

In 2012, MVRPC led the effort to update the HSTC plan. The HSTC plan and the update were developed to guide the use of grant funds under three Federal Transit Administration programs: the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC), the New Freedom Program, and the Specialized Transportation Program for the Elderly and People with Disabilities. Under Moving Ahead for Progress (MAP) 21, the JARC and New Freedom programs were merged into other FTA efforts and are no longer stand-alone programs. The Specialized Transportation Program is now known as Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities, and projects funded under that program must be derived from the coordinated plan.

Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center - Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center is a service of the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) is based in Silverthorne, Colorado. The NWCCOG provides multiple programs including Energy Program, Agency on Aging, Water Quality, and Economic Development.

Website: www.mtnride.org

Contacts:

Molly Tompkins
Mountain Ride Manager
970.468.0295 x105
mountainridemanager@nwccog.org

Chelsey Voden
Mobility Manager
970.468.0295 x113
mobilitymanager@nwccog.org

Organization Formation

Mountain Ride One-Call/One-Click Center is an organization managed by NWCCOG. The Mountain Ride One-Call/One-Click Center was founded to coordinate, manage, consolidate, educate, promote, enhance and facilitate a seamless access to transportation services for the veteran, people with disabilities, older adult and economically disadvantaged adult populations in the geographic region composed Garfield, Pitkin, Eagle, Summit, Grand, Jackson, and Routt Counties.

In August 2014 the NWCCOG and RTCC went live with the Mountain Ride Transportation Resource One-Call/One-Click Center which boasts ease of access across the region both online and with toll free phone access. In the first six months of operation the call center had coordinated 1,500 rides. As of January 1, 2015, Mountain Ride has become the acting broker for Non-Emergent Medicaid Transportation (NEMT) for the six-county region of Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin, Routt and Summit Counties.

Mountain Ride serves to coordinate regional transportation in Northwest Colorado assisting veterans, seniors, persons with disabilities and persons with low income get where they need to go safely and efficiently. It also provides information and referral services for local transportation in Garfield, Pitkin, Eagle, Summit, Grand, Jackson, and Routt Counties. Mountain Ride also coordinates Medicaid transportation for individuals needing to get to and from medical appointments in Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Park, Pitkin, Routt, and Summit Counties.

The RTCC was formed in 2010 as a result of Rural Resort Region's focus – *Seniors in Our Mountain Communities: Challenges and Opportunities*. This project collected data on the growing senior population in the region and identified the gaps in services. One of the priority gaps was transportation, not just within a particular county, but in the public transportation options available to travel across county boundaries to access

healthcare facilities and other services. The RTCC acknowledged the challenges faced by seniors are also faced by veterans, individuals with low income, and individuals with disabilities.

In 2010, National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) worked with the NWCCOG and representatives from its member jurisdictions to help them identify gaps in senior services. The goal was to help NWCCOG better plan to meet the needs of older adults living in mountain communities, making it easier for those residents to age in place.

The NRC facilitated discussions and conducted surveys – including the Community Assessment for Older Adults (CASOATM) – and completed a detailed analysis of existing data including demographics, regional reports and service inventory information. After seeing the need and doing the research, NWCCOG and the RTCC initiated the Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center in 2014.

Standards of Operation

The NW Colorado RTCC adopted a set of Standards of Operations (Appendix C) to outline the organization objective, membership, officers, committees, meetings and regional coordination responsibilities.

Membership

Mountain Ride Regional Transportation Coordination Committee is made up of 12-15 member organizations, appointed by their organization to serve on the advisory committee. The committee appoints a Chairperson, Vice Chair and Secretary and meets quarterly to discuss transportation issues and allow each organization to bring information to exchange with the committee. Members represent transportation service providers, human service providers, local government officials, Veteran services, disability community, older Americans agencies, volunteer driver programs, hospital/medical systems, workforce centers, and consumers.

Staffing

Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center has two paid staff who are employees of the NWCCOG; a Manager and a Mobility Manager.

In 2012, the NWCCOG was awarded a 5310 Mobility Management grant and the Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative grant (VTCLI) through the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). In July 2012 the Mobility Manager was hired to provide administrative support to the RTCC and help in identifying key organizations and individuals with potential interest in participating in the RTCC. The Mobility Manager was tasked to develop the One-Call/One-Click Center, a regional billing mechanism for Non-Emergent Medicaid Transportation, conduct a regional transportation services inventory which included both human services agencies and transit providers, conduct a detailed gap analysis of the transit needs across the region, and to expand coordination of and access to transportation resources. The services inventory and gap analysis were completed in 2013.

Funding

Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center is currently funded 45% with FTA grants through the Colorado Department of Transportation, 45% by local County Health

and Human Services, with the remainder from small grants (Anschutz Foundation), Medicaid Reimbursement service fees, and donations.

The Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center has been firmly supported by the local communities. The Rural Resort Region, local transit agencies, and human services transportation providers contribute to the success of the programs with matching of grant funds, and assistance with getting the community members where they need to go, when they need to go. NWCCOG staff continues to work on identifying the additional funding sources in an effort to maintain call center services and build the program to be self-sustaining.

The RTCC was originally awarded \$10,000 from CDOT; \$130,000 over 24 months from the FTA for the Mobility Manager position; \$322,600 over 18 months from the FTA Veteran Affairs (VA) for the One-Click/One-Call hardware and Route Match scheduling software; and \$50,000 in FASTER (Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act of 2009) funds, all to develop a regional call center to coordinate transportation for these specific populations.

The grant awards listed above come with requirements for matching funds. The Rural Resort Region has agreed to contribute their 2012 dues as matching funds. The RTCC will ask each of the existing transit agencies and human services transportation providers to contribute to match the grant funds. NWCCOG staff is working to identify the remaining funds needed to match the grants for the hardware and software needed to establish the regional call center. The expectation is that the Mobility Manager position and the call center will become self-sustaining.

Summary

Regional transportation coordinating councils vary slightly. All agencies focus on transportation and human services, with a strong emphasis on seniors and people with disabilities.

The Dakota County Transportation Coordinating Collaborative (Go Dakota) is working to improve coordination among transit providers. Dakota county has chosen to take on the lead role of hosting, managing and financially supporting the RTCC as well as employing a Community Transportation Coordinator.

The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission hosts the Miami Valley Regional Transportation Coordination Council, which focuses on improving transportation options for seniors, people with disabilities and low-income individuals. The MVPRC requires agencies seeking transportation funding be members of the RTCC. MVRPC is the host and financial supporting agency as well as employing the Director of Sustainable Solutions and Transportation Alternatives.

The Northwest Colorado Council of Governments created the Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center one-call/one-click resource to provide easy access to individuals needing transportation solutions. Mountain Ride program is staffed by two employees – a Program Manager and Mobility Manager. The Mountain Ride RTCC has a Standards of Operations and is financially self supporting with grants from the Colorado DOT and county HHS programs.