

P5RTCC

Prairie Five Regional Transportation Coordination Council Operational Plan

2020



Prepared by
Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission & Prairie Five Community Action

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Introduction

This Regional Transportation Coordinating Council was created to coordinate all transportation services in the counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine.

Geographic Region

Prairie Five's service area is Region 6W which includes the counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine.



Greater Minnesota Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils (RTCCs)

The Minnesota Departments of Transportation and Human Services, in collaboration with other state agencies, are working with the Metropolitan Council and other local governments and organizations to create Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils as appropriate throughout Minnesota.

Coordination between transportation providers, non-profits and service agencies is a strategy that can help fill transportation gaps by providing more rides using the same or fewer resources, making transportation easier to use and giving customers more options of where and when to travel.

Value of an RTCC in our region

An RTCC would do the following in our region:

1. There would be an increased knowledge and awareness of transit that is available in the region which will fill in gaps felt by users and service providers.
2. We would reduce costs by utilizing the solution that is most appropriate for client in an efficient manner.
3. We would provide more efficient response times and better transit services through better organization of transit options.
4. We would address more transit issues through better understanding of the issues and solutions, and a more coordinated effort to address those issues.

Examples

There are numerous conversations and issues that come up on daily basis that could be addressed by having an RTCC.

Here are some *specific examples* of what an RTCC could assist with:

1. Coordinate all transit providers and transportation options.
2. Educate the riders **and agencies** utilizing transportation on best (cost effective) transportation options within the region.
3. Strengthen the available transportation options within the region made available to the population.
4. Guide riders and agencies utilizing transportation to the most cost-effective option and assist with scheduling rides when needed.
5. Coordinate an effort in Ortonville which is looking for a vehicle/driver that can serve mental health clients.
6. Coordinate an effort in Graceville which needs a van to deliver meals and transport individuals to medical appointments, groceries, etc.
7. Coordinate with schools that have regional transit needs.
8. Coordinate the acquisition of electric buses.
9. Coordinate volunteer driving program and advocate for issues that will make it more user friendly.

2017 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan

The Local Human Service Public Transit Plan outlines a long list of strategies identified through a planning process every five years. These strategies could be implemented by an RTCC.

Strategies related to RTCC:

- Explore supplemental transportation options (such as ride-sharing services like Liberty Mobility, Uber)
- Increase the driving staff of the current transportation organizations
- Increase driver pay at our current transportation organizations
- Increase the van fleet of the region (providers and city-owned)
- Expand the hours and days that public transit is offered
- Implement a discount for first-time riders
- Partner with churches to explore additional options for weekend service and create a volunteer ride directory
- Incentivize volunteer drivers to increase the number and availability of volunteer drivers
- Create an informational and marketing hub for the region
- Increase coordination between providers to ensure the appropriate ride service is being utilized
- Continue ongoing marketing strategies for the region
- Continue prepay cards that offer discounted rates to riders
- Continue to refine systems used for scheduling rides far in advance
- Improve notification times of confirmed rides
- Improve proactive communication between transit providers and riders
- Increased communication between hospitals, human service agencies and public transit providers
- Increased cooperation and coordination between hospital staff leadership and public transit leadership
- Utilize local 5310 vehicles during evenings and on the weekend when they are not being utilized by their agency

MN Statute 174.24 Public Transit Participation Program

The RTCC would assist in meeting the goals of MN Statute 174.24, in particular this section.

“The commissioner shall develop a greater Minnesota transit investment plan that contains a goal of meeting at least 80 percent of total transit service needs in greater Minnesota by July 1, 2015, and meeting at least 90 percent of total transit service needs in greater Minnesota by July 1, 2025.”

The full statute is on the next page.

174.24 PUBLIC TRANSIT PARTICIPATION PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Establishment; purpose.** A public transit participation program is established to carry out the objectives stated in section 174.21 by providing financial assistance from the state, including the greater Minnesota transit account established in section 16A.88, to eligible recipients outside of the metropolitan area.

Subd. 1a. **Greater Minnesota transit investment plan.** (a) The commissioner shall develop a greater Minnesota transit investment plan that contains a goal of meeting at least 80 percent of total transit service needs in greater Minnesota by July 1, 2015, and meeting at least 90 percent of total transit service needs in greater Minnesota by July 1, 2025.

(b) The plan must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) an analysis of ridership and total transit service needs throughout greater Minnesota;
- (2) a calculation of the level and type of service required to meet total transit service needs, for the transit system classifications as provided under subdivision 3b, paragraph (c), of urbanized area, small urban area, rural area, and elderly and disabled service;
- (3) an analysis of costs and revenue options;
- (4) a plan to reduce total transit service needs as specified in this subdivision; and
- (5) identification of the operating and capital costs necessary to meet 100 percent of the greater Minnesota transit targeted and projected bus service hours, as identified in the greater Minnesota transit plan, for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025, and 2030.

(c) The plan must specifically address special transportation service ridership and needs. The plan must also provide that recipients of operating assistance under this section provide fixed route public transit service without charge for disabled veterans in accordance with subdivision 7.

Subd. 2. **Eligibility; application.** Any legislatively established public transit commission or authority, any county or statutory or home rule charter city providing financial assistance to or operating public transit, any private operator of public transit, any tribal government, or any combination thereof is eligible to receive financial assistance through the public transit participation program. Except as provided in subdivision 2b for assistance provided from federal funds, eligible recipients must be located outside of the metropolitan area.

Subd. 2a. **Eligible activities.** Activities eligible for assistance under the program include but are not limited to:

- (1) planning and engineering design for transit services and facilities;
- (2) capital assistance to purchase or refurbish transit vehicles and other capital expenditures necessary to provide a transit service;
- (3) operating assistance as provided under subdivision 3b; and
- (4) other assistance for public transit services that furthers the purposes of section 174.21.

Subd. 2b. **Federal aid.** (a) The commissioner may accept and disburse federal funds received and appropriated under section 174.23, subdivision 1, as an additional source of funds for implementing the public transit participation program established in this section. This authority includes, but is not limited to:

Purpose, Goals and Objectives of the P5RTCC

Through the planning process, the following purpose, goals and objectives were identified.

Purpose: (why exist)

Provide communication and coordination to improve transportation services in Region 6W.

Goals: (results)

1. Increase available transportation services
2. Reduce barriers to the programs that help address transportation issues (i.e. volunteer driver program, special needs ridership, insurance issues to vehicles can be utilized more readily, underutilized assets)
3. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation system in our region for riders, service agencies and providers

Objectives: (actions)

1. Identify and understand unmet transportation needs in our region
2. Identify and understand all available transportation options and resources in the region
3. Organize underutilized transportation assets
4. Coordinate between transportation providers
5. Identify and understand barriers to solutions of transportation issues
6. Develop solutions to reduce barriers
7. Develop an online/call center to serve as a one-stop shop and information center for riders in coordination with all transportation providers
8. Advocate for transportation solutions (i.e. reduce barriers) and high-quality transportation services (i.e. commuter rail and other services) in our region
 - a. Develop advocacy process, work with MNCOTA, etc.

Transportation Assessment of our Region: 2020

Planning Process

The planning committee started to meet in the spring of 2020 to discuss how an RTCC would best function for our region. Meetings were held with January 13 and February 10, 2020. Additional meetings were postponed by the Covid-19 pandemic until July 20 and Sept 9, 2020.

The agendas for the meetings were as follows:

- ▶ RTCC Planning Committee Meeting #1 -January 13, 2020 10:30
 - Agenda:
 - Welcome and Introductions
 - RTCC Overview
 - Transportation Assessment
 - Discussion: RTCC in Our Region
 - Public Participation Plan for planning phase
 - Review timeline/Final thoughts

- ▶ RTCC Planning Committee Meeting #2 February 10, 9:30, Chippewa County Assembly Room
 - Agenda: Determine our direction
 - Welcome and introduction
 - Review and approve Public Participation Plan
 - Review 6W Local Transit Coordination Plan and Strategies
 - Review Transportation Assessment
 - Brainstorm goals and objectives of an RTCC in our region
 - Review examples of other RTCCs
 - What would our RTCC do for the public in our region? For the providers in our region?
 - Organizational structure options
 - Next meeting/final thoughts

- ▶ RTCC Planning Committee Meeting #3: via ZOOM - July 20, 2020, 1:00 – 2:00
 - Agenda: Nuts and Bolts – start to layout the future of an RTCC
 - Confirm definition of our region
 - Determine membership and legal structure
 - Define the bylaws
 - Determine staffing and budget of RTCC
 - There may be a 5-10% match required in the future.
 - Workplan for the Operational Implementation Plan
 - **Add implementation items on how to provide transit during a pandemic.**
 - Determine public participation plan for the Implementation Plan
 - Plan public meeting

- ▶ RTCC Planning Committee Meeting #4: September 9th
 - Draft Agenda
 - Review DRAFT Operational Guidelines and Summary
 - Review public outreach information
 - Finalize plan

Research was conducted between meetings. We also had outreach to other groups such as the Transportation Advisory Committee for P5 RIDES (TAC), Head Start, Family Service Director quarterly meetings, Outreach Offices, Food Distribution Points, Food Shelves, Mobile Community Center/Age friendly, and Subsidized Apartment Resident Boards.

Findings of the planning process

The planning committee gave the following feedback as we developed the Operational Plan:

- We do not want to add another layer of government
- Prairie Five RIDES (public transit) is doing a lot to address the transit needs in our region but they cannot fulfill all the needs.
- There are many exciting topics that could finally be addressed by having a formal RTCC in our region.

Public outreach during planning process

Public outreach started in early July in the middle of the COVID -19 pandemic. We modified our public participation plan which was approved by MnDOT and by the Planning committee at the July 20, 2020 meeting.

We started our outreach by creating a poster that was eye-catching and simple to place around the region. We also had the poster translated.

We created a series of PowerPoint slides, and even offered an audio version on our website. As materials were created, we worked on distribution in August.

A comprehensive list is below:

Created:

- Three posters in different languages: Spanish, Chuukese, and English
- PowerPoint presentation in Spanish, English, and English version with audio
- Poster versions designed for inclusion into food shelf boxes
- Transit user and stakeholder survey
- UMRDC webpage with links to all the created outreach documents
- Press release

Distribution:

- Posters were sent by email to local units of government and encouraged to print posters and hang in public buildings. Posters were sent to Head Start.
- Constant Contact email to stakeholders: Chambers of Commerce, Chiefs of Police, city council members, city clerks/managers, EDAs, Emergency Management Directors, Family Services, hospital administrators, Planning & Zoning, sheriffs, county commissioners, county coordinators, mayors, principals, school superintendents
- Food Shelf Boxes: Half-page posters were included in food shelf boxes (1,923 as of Sept 9th. More planned for September 24).
- Child Care Providers: 114 posters
- Social Media: Prairie Five and the UMRDC Facebook pages
- Press Release: A press release was sent to all local papers with basic information, request to complete survey and contact information

Public Participation Goals for planning process

- ▶ Go to the consumers and agencies that work with the consumers to get feedback and keep them informed instead of asking them to come to our meetings.
- ▶ Find ways to include communities of color, American Indian communities, immigrant populations, the youth and unemployed.
- ▶ Identify what the RTCC can do for the public.
- ▶ Identify the RTCC related services are needed for the public in our region.
- ▶ Consider MN State guidelines due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Challenges and Issues

The following list was gathered from previous surveys and information gathered through the 2017 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan, and discussions at the RTCC planning committee meetings.

This is the overall picture of transit in our region.

Issues in our region

The following three (3) HARD TRUTHS are important to keep in mind. There is little that can be done to change these.

1. Large geographic area, low population makes for fewer transit options
2. Currently have demand-response services, which is difficult in low population area.
3. Public Transportation cannot fulfill all the transit service needs in our region.

Public Transit Provider	Private Transit Providers	Agencies Veteran Affairs, Health Care, Law Enforcement, Schools, Family Services, etc.	Users Esp. those with special needs	Potential Solution/Resource
Marketing/Awareness Issues				
Not well known to the public. People think it is just for senior citizens.	Private providers are not well known.	All the options are difficult to know.	Do not know all their transit options. Do not get communication back when booking a ride.	Marketing. Coordination RTCC
Do not know what the private sector provides to fill in service gaps.	Specific services provided by private providers are not well known.	Do not know what the private sector provides to fill in service gaps.	Do not know what the private sector provides to fill in service gaps.	RTCC
Resources issues				
Not enough buses/vans, storage, and funding is limited for these capital expansions.				
Volunteer driver as a resource is dwindling. Used to have 42 volunteers; now down to 12.		Population is aging so rides are needed more than ever. Volunteers are also aging.		Change tax laws, reimbursement rates back to what they were.
Lack of workforce pool for paid drivers.				
Do not know what the private sector provides to fill in service gaps				RTCC
		Utilizing the least costly solution while addressing the physical needs for clients.		RTCC
Other issues not related to transportation complicates...sidewalk not shoveled, wheelchair but only car available, etc.		Other issues not related to transportation complicates...sidewalk not shoveled, wheelchair but only car available, etc.	Other issues not related to transportation complicates...sidewalk not shoveled, wheelchair but only car available, etc.	RTCC

Public Transit Provider	Private Transit Providers	Agencies Veteran Affairs, Health Care, Law Enforcement, Schools, Family Services, etc.	Users Esp. those with special needs	Potential Solution/Resource
Resources issues cont				
Hard to provide service for same day calls, esp outside of the region.		Hard to find a ride same day service for distance rides, or rides outside of the region.	Hard to find a ride same day service for distance rides, or rides outside of the region.	RTCC
Cannot do door to door service in the metropolitan area, cannot be picked up from airport etc.			Rides to and from the metropolitan areas are tricky.	RTCC
Service issues				
Unpredictable peak times. Can't provide rides if not prepared			Call for rides but sometimes cannot get a ride, or have to wait a long time to get a ride. Errors, inaccurate wait times.	RTCC
Cannot do weekends and evenings. (this means if someone's work hours are outside of this, cannot give rides to and from work).		Complicated to find ride when hospital discharge on evening or weekends.	Complicated to find ride when hospital discharge on evening or weekends. Would use transit more often if offered longer hours.	RTCC
Cannot do emergency services, mental health or rides for people with special needs.	Unknown limitations of provided service, unknown capabilities of current service.		Need a ride that provides special accommodations or assistance.	RTCC
Will do rides for young to and from school and daycare. Door to Door.		Will not do rides for very young – 3 & 4 year olds.	Hard to find rides for children, esp very young 3 & 4 year olds.	P5 can provide these rides.
	Unknown limitations of provided service, unknown capabilities of current service.		Cannot use public transport if needs more room for bags, moving.	RTCC
Denying 2-6 rides a day. Unknown what happens to clients who are unable to get a ride from P5.		Challenging reimbursement system for their clients.	Finding an affordable ride	RTCC
Cannot provide rides to someone out of town every day for work.			Users who are dependent on transit as their only form of transportation has limited services.	RTCC
			Elderly who want to attend evening and weekend events cannot use public transit.	RTCC

Resources and Strengths in our Region

Strengths

- People know people, neighbors help each other, stay late as needed
- Door to door services are provided in our region
- Have a public transportation offering cost efficient and reimbursable services
- GF decommissioned law enforcement vehicle – use for mental health transport
- Dawson hospital decommissioned law enforcement vehicle – use for mental health transport
- Volunteer program through RIDES (although may not be sustainable due to diminishing drivers)

Providers of Transportation services

- Prairie Five Rides - public transit
- Law enforcement
- Medical facilities
- Schools
- Development Achievement Center (DAC)
- Veterans Affairs
- Nursing Homes
- Church organizations
- Living at Home Block Nurse Program, Granite Falls
- Main Street Industries - Clinton
- Project Turnabout (driver for their own services)
- People's Express - private transit
- Turbo Taxi - private transit <http://turbotaxi3595.com/services>
- Clark Transportation – private transit

Possible resources - things to research

- Car rental options
- Casinos – what do they offer?
- Bus lines: Jefferson Lines, Greyhound
- Uber/Lyft
- School buses – working with the schools

Hard Truths

1. Large geographic area, low population makes for fewer transit options
2. Currently have demand-response services, which is difficult in low population area.
3. Public Transportation cannot fulfill all the transit service needs in our region.

Structure of the P5RTCC

The following lays out how the P5RTCC will be structured.

Membership of the P5RTCC

The Regional Transportation Coordination Council includes representatives from the following.

- County Commissioners (TAC)
- Cities (TAC) –
 - o All cities would be invited to have a rep.
- A Native American Tribal Community
- Family Service Directors
- Veteran Service Officers
- Countryside Public Health
- Health Care/Medical
- Private Transportation provider
- Public Transportation provider
- Workforce Development
- Prairie Five Board members
- Area Agency on Aging
- Law enforcement
- Business

Committees

The P5RTCC may establish committees to address general or specific areas of concerns. Committees may include P5RTCC Board members as well as stakeholders and individuals outside of the RTCC structure. A Board member will chair each committee.

TAC

The Transit Advisory Committee provides direction for the Prairie Five RIDES program and could be incorporated into the RTCC at a later time.

Bylaws

The RTCC is a part of the Prairie Five CAC.

The Prairie Five CAC Board of Directors approves the budget for the RTCC each year. Each Prairie Five Board meeting will include a summary of activities by the staff and a summary of RTCC meetings.

The P5RTCC is a council of stakeholders who meet to serve as a resource to the RTCC staff, implement the public participation plan, share new issues, and develop solutions. Any decisions made that affect budget or workplan will be reviewed and approved by the Prairie Five CAC Board.

Budget

The budget is projected to include two – three staff. The budget range is estimated to be between \$180,000 - \$220,000. This budget is being worked on during the fall of 2020 in preparation for the first implementation grant.

Meeting Schedule and Voting

P5RTCC will meet on a regular basis to guide the duties of the staff, give input, develop resources and help with solutions.

The P5RTCC shall meet at least four (4) times in each calendar year, with meetings scheduled as necessary. Special meetings can be convened by the chairperson or at the request of six P5RTCC Board members.

P5RTCC staff shall provide written notice of each regular meeting at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting date. Written notices may be sent electronically. In the event a special meeting is called, P5RTCC staff shall give written and verbal notice to all Council members at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Members may attend meetings either in person or via telepresence (telephone or video if available).

P5RTCC staff shall take, distribute and maintain copies of the minutes of all P5RTCC Board meetings. Minutes will be available upon request by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

A quorum will consist of 50 percent of Board members, including recognized agency alternatives/substitutes present at a meeting. Voting will be done by voice or show of hands. A roll-call vote or written ballot vote may be requested by any member. Voting by alternates and voting electronically via email is permitted. Transaction of any official business will be carried upon a majority vote of members present at any given meeting. Transaction of official business via email voting will be carried upon a majority vote of the full Board. For meetings lacking a quorum, business can be conducted, however all actions must be approved by a quorum either through electronic (email) voting or at the next regular meeting where a quorum is present.

Implementation Plan

Workplan for 2020 - 2023

YEAR 1

Create a database of public, private and non-profit transportation providers with details of services provided.

Research potential transit resources

- Brainstorm with the RTCC to identify resources beyond the current transit options. Some examples include:
 - o Car rental options
 - o Casinos
 - o Bus lines: Jefferson Lines, Greyhound
 - o Uber/Lyft
 - o School buses and working with the schools
 - o <https://www.minnesotahelp.info/>

Work with transit providers

- Create a process to develop relationships
- Develop comprehensive knowledge of hours of operation. Develop a way to keep this information up to date.
- Develop strategies to increase efficiencies

Work with service providers

- Create a process to develop relationships
- Create a process to develop relationships with all those that work with special needs: health care system, county social services, human service directors
- Develop strategies to increase efficiencies

Research barriers to transportation solutions (volunteer drivers, insurance issues, etc)

- Create strategies to reduce barriers and implement
- Research possible transit resources and volunteer driver pools

Implement Public Participation Plan

Implement the following four items from the Region 6W 2017 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan.

- Increase coordination between providers to ensure the appropriate ride service is being utilized
- Improve proactive communication between transit providers and riders
- Increase communication between hospitals, human service agencies and public transit providers
- Increase cooperation and coordination between hospital staff leadership and public transit leadership

The follow is a work plan addition in response to the current COVID pandemic and recovery efforts.

Determine what our RTCC can do during the current and potential future pandemics and emergencies and implement for current pandemic.

- Document what transportation providers have been doing during this pandemic. Determine what has been working and what is not.
- Check with all providers to see what is needed. Identify business models and best practices for resiliency and find out what else could be done as well as what is not being done.
- Work towards providing essential needs in the community ie: food shelf to seniors.
- Do additional outreach to those in need.
- Create a policy for drivers and identify safety issues when getting drivers back on the road and working with volunteer drivers.
- Develop and share resource list for needed supplies.
- Build and maintain a list of vendors for supplies and resources.
- Work with county emergency response team to develop a plan for essential transportation resources and needs. Build transportation coordination into the emergency response, develop relationships between local agencies, and identify transportation resources and needs for emergencies.

YEAR 1 (summary)	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
<p>Create a database of public, private and non-profit transportation providers with details of services provided.</p> <p>Research possible transit resources</p> <p>Work with transit providers</p> <p>Work with service providers</p> <p>Research barriers to transportation solutions (volunteer drivers, insurance issues, etc)</p> <p>Implement Public Participation Plan</p> <p>Implement the following items from the Region 6W 2017 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan.</p> <p>Determine what our RTCC can do during the current and potential future pandemics and emergencies and implement for current pandemic.</p>	<p>Create a travel trainer program</p> <p>Work towards "one call/one click"</p> <p>Implement strategies to increase efficiencies</p> <p>Develop program to track results: rides served, money saved, success stories, continued barriers.</p> <p>Create an advocacy process to address barriers and look long term to transportation solutions.</p> <p>Implement Public Participation Plan</p>	<p>Implement "one call/one click"</p> <p>Track results</p> <p>Implement travel trainer program</p> <p>Implement advocacy process.</p> <p>Implement Public Participation Plan</p>

Staff Duties

The P5RTCC plans to utilize two (2) FTE staff to coordinate the program and communicate with the P5 Board.

The duties of this staff include but are not limited to:

1. Work with the RTCC to implement work plan.
2. Implement this Operational Plan including the work plan and public participation plan
3. Identify local mobility needs and create partnerships to fill gaps in service.
4. Promote local mobility and transportation improvements to service providers, planning staff, and local/state officials.
5. Assist in individual trip planning for car-free transportation outside local transit and the Prairie Five service area.
6. Cultivate direct working relationships, partnerships and coordination with local service providers, local elected officials, and public entities
7. Enhance communication between local transportation providers, social service networks, and the general public
8. Provide technical support and guidance to local transportation providers in promoting new routes, system improvements, or other service enhancements
9. Participate in mobility management and transportation related meetings
10. Develop and distribute materials, such as maps and reports, and organize events and activities about mobility and transportation to service providers, local officials, agencies, and the general public
11. Advocate and assist local entities with the development of funding resources for prioritized transit and/or mobility projects through grants and other sources (e.g., public/private partnerships)
12. Coordinate local/regional planning with an understanding of community players, and transportation and land use resources.
13. Offer training to local transportation providers and potential network users
14. Update local mobility plans in accordance with FTA and MnDOT guidelines;
15. Communicate best practices within the Prairie Five region and encourage statewide improvement processes
16. Assists local service providers to better understand rules, regulations and guidelines

Public Participation Plan

Our public participation plan is important to the work of the P5RTCC. The goal is to utilize needs assessments and outreach to the public to make informed strategies that increase efficiencies.

Goals

1. Go to the consumers and agencies that work with the consumers to get feedback and keep them informed vs holding public meetings.
2. Find ways to include communities of color, Native American Tribal communities, immigrant populations, the youth and unemployed.
3. Identify what the RTCC can do for the public.
4. Identify the RTCC related services are needed for the public in our region.

Plan

- 1) Conduct public outreach through the following:
 - a. Attend back to school fair at the Upper Sioux Community
 - b. Attend health fairs
 - c. Attend Micronesian Women's Council
 - d. Work with Live Well, Age Wisely outreach coordinator
 - e. Attend Head Start Policy council
 - f. Attend Food Shelf board meetings
 - g. Attend TAC meetings
 - h. Attend Senior Expo
 - i. Distribute survey through transit providers
- 2) Invite the public to the P5RTCC annual meeting for comments.
- 3) Develop a resource center (website) with the ability to take public comments.

Limited English proficiency plan

Plan Statement

The Prairie Five Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (P5RTCC) will use this plan as a guide to provide meaningful access to transportation providers and customers with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). In accordance with federal and state guidelines, the P5RTCC will make reasonable efforts to provide or arrange free language assistance for its LEP clients when needed.

Who Has Access to Assistance

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and/or who has limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English is considered a LEP individual and is entitled to language assistance with respect to the Prairie Five Regional Transportation Coordinating Council.

Local Limited English Proficiency Demographics

According the 2017 American Community Survey, only 1% of people in P5RTCC's service area is considered to have Limited English Proficiency. The two most common non-English languages in the region are Spanish and Native American dialects, including Ojibwa. Map 1 in this document displays locations within the region which has the largest percentage of non-English speakers. However, LEP

peoples also includes those that read and/or comprehend the English language at or below a fifth grade level and not displayed on the included map.

Meaningful Access

If a client asks for language assistance, and P5RTCC determines the client is an LEP person and language assistance is necessary, the agency will make reasonable efforts to provide free assistance. Reasonable steps may cease to be reasonable if costs imposed substantially exceed benefits.

Interpretation Process

Language assistance includes interpretation (oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language to another) and translation (written transfer of a message from one language to another). Options to obtain LEP assistance is not limited to be includes:

- 1) Staff from Local Human Service Agencies and Prairie Five
- 2) Calling of A Language Assistance Line at 1-800-752-6096
- 3) Editing Documents to A Standard 5th Grade Reading Level

Appendix: Public Outreach materials

The following are the public outreach materials for this planning process.



The poster features a map of Minnesota with a red square highlighting the Upper Minnesota Valley region. Below the map, the title "Improving Transit Services" is written in a large, bold, red font. Underneath the title, the names of the five communities are listed in a cursive font: "Big Stone • Chippewa • Lac qui Parle • Swift • Yellow Medicine". The main body of the poster contains text about the formation of the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) and a list of services. A dashed box contains a section titled "Creating an RTCC to Meet Needs:" with two columns of text. At the bottom, there is an illustration of a bus stop with four people waiting and a red and blue bus. Logos for Prairie Five Community Action and the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission are also present.

Improving Transit Services
Big Stone • Chippewa • Lac qui Parle • Swift • Yellow Medicine

Prairie Five Community Action Council and the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission are working with stakeholders to form a Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) to coordinate all transportation services including:

**Private & public buses || Cars/volunteer drivers || Vans || Medical rides
Veteran's Affairs rides || Nursing home rides || etc.**

Creating an RTCC to Meet Needs:

Having an RTCC will help to make using transit easier, consolidate resources, provide more rides, and reduce barriers to the program's riders and providers depend on.

To give feedback on the project or get more information visit the UMRDC website.

<https://umvrdc.org/regional-transportation-coordination-council/>

Providing transit services in rural communities is extremely challenging. Even with the generosity of residents, the services provided by public and private transportation companies, too many people are not getting the rides they need.

**Contact Kristi Fernholz at
320-289-1981 x106 or
Kristi.fernholz@umvrdc.org**

Prairie Five Community Action
Helping People. Changing Lives.

Upper Minnesota Valley REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Helping Communities Prosper

People vector created by pch.vector - www.freepik.com

Figure 1: English Outreach Poster

Big Stone • Chippewa • Lac qui Parle • Swift • Yellow Medicine

Autobuses Públicos & privados || Coches/choferes voluntarios || Furgonetas || Viajes médicos || Viajes a Asuntos de veteranos || Viajes a hogares de ancianos || etc.

Contacte a Kristi Fernholz
al 320-289-1981 x106 o
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Big Stone • Chippewa • Lac qui Parle • Swift • Yellow Medicine

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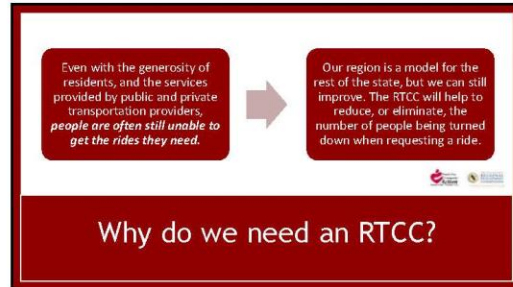
Figure 4: English PowerPoint Presentation 1st Slide



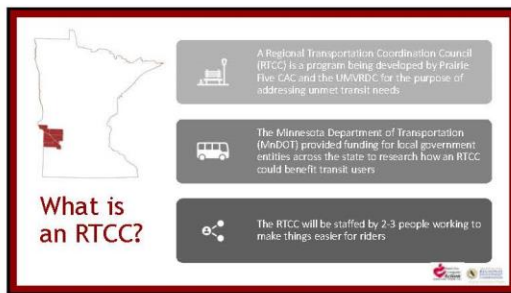
Figure 5: Spanish PowerPoint Presentation 1st Slide



1



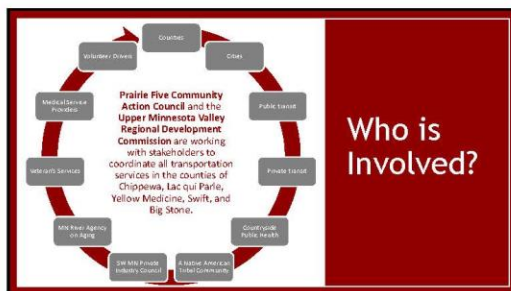
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Figure 6: Presentation Slides 1-6



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Questions or Comments?

To give feedback on the project or get more information visit the UMRDC website.

<https://umvrdc.org/regional-transportation-coordination-council/>

Contact Kristi Fernholz at the UMRDC for more information about the RTCC.
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Figure 7: Presentation Slides 7-9

PRESS RELEASE

August 20, 2020

FROM: Kristi Fernholz
Planning Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Please contact kristi.fernholz@umvrdc.org if you would like an electronic version of this press release.)

Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTCC) Planning Phase

Prairie Five Community Action Council and the **Upper Minnesota Regional Development Commission** are working with stakeholders to create a Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTCC) for the purpose of coordinating all transportation services in the counties of Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Yellow Medicine, Swift, and Big Stone.

The process has included input from volunteer drivers, medical service providers, veteran's services, MN River Agency on Aging, SW MN Private Industry Council, Countryside Public Health, private transit, public transit, a Native American Tribal Community, cities, and counties.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) provided funding for local government entities across the state to research how an RTCC could benefit transit users.

The goals of an RTCC include:

- Make transportation easier to use by customers
- Provide more rides with the same or fewer resources
- Reduce barriers that the program's riders and providers depend on

For more information and to comment on the project visit the UMRDC website, <https://umvrdc.org/regional-transportation-coordination-council/>

If you have any questions, please contact Kristi Fernholz at 320-289-1981 x106 or kristi.fernholz@umvrdc.org.

Figure 8: Press Release