

Upper Minnesota Valley Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan Public Workshop

UMVRDC

June 8, 2011

Appleton Civic Center

Dawn Hegland





Today's Goals:

- Understand coordinated transit planning
- Review coordinated transportation needs and existing services
- Discuss strengths & weaknesses of transit coordination in this region
- Brainstorm coordination projects

What is Transit Coordination Planning?

A locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation.

-Federal Transit Administration

What are Planning Requirements?

- Section 5310 Elderly and Disabled, Job Access Reverse Commute, New Freedom applications must be “derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan”
- Must be “developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public”

Target Populations

Elderly



Low Income



Persons with Disabilities



Why Participate?

- You represent your customer base in their quest for mobility choices
- Assures that JARC, New Freedom and 5310 funds are used to meet the particular needs of your community
- Discuss local solutions with local partners
- MN DHS and Minnesota Board on Aging strongly encourage coordinated transportation among transportation grantees
- Resources are limited for everyone and increasing efficiency through coordination makes sense

Coordinated Transit Progress

- Philadelphia Insurance insures most MN DT&H programs
- Will support “collaboratives,” e.g. a non-profit organization such as a DT&H transporting riders of another non-profit such as a church group
- Prefers written contractual agreement that spell out the operations, driver requirements and useage parameters

Coordinated Transit in MN

Paul Bunyan/Hubbard County Joint Dispatch

- Hubbard contracts for dispatch services from Paul Bunyan
- Uses software program to link vehicles from both systems
- Hubbard benefits from greater efficiency
- Paul Bunyan benefits from contract revenue
- Ridership on Hubbard system is up 18% since dispatch changes



2011 Upper MN Valley Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plan

Required Elements of a Coordinated Plan

- **Assessment** of transportation needs for persons with disabilities, older adults and people with low incomes
- **Assessment** of available transit services
- **Strategies** to address gaps between current services and needs and identify opportunities to improve efficiency of service delivery
- Prioritized **projects** to implement strategies



Plan Elements

Assessment of available services and current transportation needs

- Mapping: transit dependent population, key destinations, and transit routes
- Transportation provider inventory
- Review of 2006 plans and progress

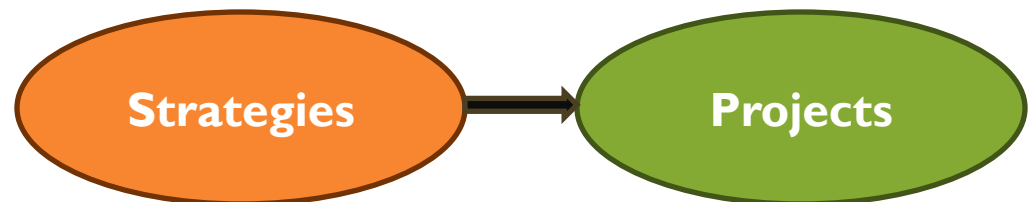


Plan Elements

Strategy and Project Identification

- Steering Committee

- Review 2006 project outcomes
- Attend public workshops
- Prioritize final strategies and projects before official RDC adoption



Plan Elements

Steering Committee Members

Ted Nelson - Prairie Five Rides

Bev Herfindahl – MnDOT District 8 Transit Manager

Peggy Heglund - YM Co. Human Services

Gale Mittelstaedt – Big Stone Co. Family Services

Heidi Hanson – Chippewa Co. Family Services

Rob Wolfington – City of Benson

Roman Fidler - City of Appleton

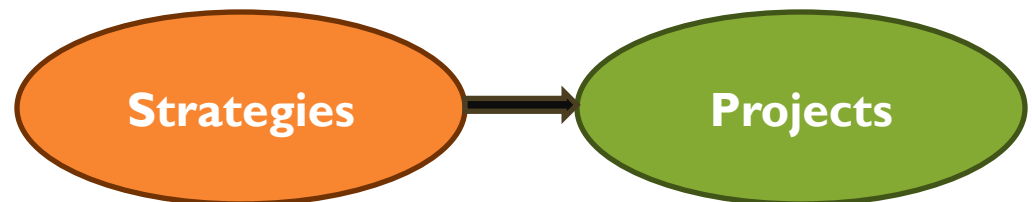
Theresa Knutson – Appleton Area Health Services

Robin Olson – Main Street Industries

Plan Elements

Strategy and Project Identification - Public Workshop

- Strengths and weaknesses of existing coordination efforts
- Strategy and project identification to inform steering committee prioritization



Needs Assessment: Findings in 2011

Regional Background

- Big Stone, Swift, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Yellow Medicine County cover 3,346 square miles
- 37 cities and 99 townships in the region. 70% of cities have populations of less than 500.
- There are 3,300 self-employed businesses in Region 6W, with \$116 million in total sales receipts in 2008.
- Region 6W's unemployment rate has stayed below the state and national rate during the recession, ending 2010 a full 3.0 percent below the U.S. rate (6.6% vs. 9.6%).
- The turnover rate for workers in Region 6W was 7.7%, as compared to 8.5% statewide.
- The average one-way commute time to work for workers in Region 6W was just 16.9 minutes, as compared to 22.2 minutes in Minnesota and 25.2 minutes in the United States. Over half (54.8%) of workers in Region 6W had commutes under 15 minutes, as compared to one-third (33.7%) of workers in Minnesota and 28.8% in the U.S.
- There are four unemployed workers competing for every job vacancy in Region 6W in the 4th quarter of 2010, as compared to one job for every six unemployed workers statewide and one job for every 12 unemployed workers in Central Minnesota.
- Southwest Minnesota's employment base is projected to grow 5.0% from 2009 to 2019.
- Region 6W's high school graduation rate is 85.6%, as compared to 78.4% statewide.

Needs Assessment Demographics

- ☐ Map 1- Population Density
- ☐ Map 2 Household in Poverty
- ☐ Map 3 Minority Populations
- ☐ Map 4 Limited English Proficiency
- ☐ Map 5 Density of Persons 65+
- ☐ Map 6 Zero Vehicle Households
- ☐ Map 7 Low Income Workers & Jobs

The overall population is declining and aging. Over twenty percent of the regional population is aged 65 years or older, prompting growing demand for healthcare and social service assistance services. The area is home to an aging workforce and a consistently declining population.

2010 Total Population		0-17	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Big Stone	5,269	1,105	297	972	1,571	1,324
Chippewa	12,441	2,914	885	2,717	3,525	2,400
Lac qui Parle	7,259	1,534	370	1,333	2,296	1,726
Swift	9,783	2,183	674	2,112	2,848	1,966
Yellow Medicine	10,438	2,475	756	2,259	2,917	2,031

Needs Assessment

Existing Conditions: Transportation

Using the post it notes before you please write answers to these questions:

- What is the profile of the transit rider?
- Where are these people traveling to?
- Where don't they go?

Needs Assessment

Transportation Provider Inventory

- March-May 2011
- All provider types: public, private, non-profit, school districts, churches, etc.
- Contacted 44 providers
- 16/44 completed the survey
- Attempt to create single, comprehensive look at all transportation services

Needs Assessment

Transportation Provider Inventory Findings

- 120 vehicles reported at 16 of 44 providers listed for our region.
 - 42 small buses <10 passengers
 - 28 minivans
- 2 providers served our entire 5-county region.
- Physical & mental assistance were the most common passenger needs that are accommodated.
- Most provided door to door service.
- Service hours range from 5am to 10pm M-F
- Only 1 provided Saturday service
- Most had fixed route service

Needs Assessment

Transportation Provider Inventory Findings

Top 5 barriers identified by providers:

- 1. Limited service area boundaries*
- 2. Billing and payment*
- 3. Cost*
- 4. Scheduling*
- 5. Limited service hour schedule*

Needs Assessment-

2006 Coordination Plan Review

- **Some action was taken on:**
 - **Considered the development of volunteer passenger assistance programs to fill the customer service gap.**
 - **Promoted transportation services as easier to use because of passenger assistants.**
 - **Worked to identify misconceptions consumers have about transit in the region.**
 - **To try keep costs down, systems reviewed using smaller vehicles, alternative fuels and volunteers.**
 - **Encouraging coordination between providers.**
 - **Encouraged MnDOT to consider funding/endorsing alternative and smaller vehicles.**

Needs Assessment-

2006 Coordination Plan Review

- **Actions recommended to no longer pursue:**
 - *Look into specialized transportation systems at different levels and certifications and crossing service boundaries.*
 - *Establishing service priorities*
 - *Identifying non-traditional service programs that exist in region to extend service hours.*
 - *Seek private sponsors to fund volunteer driver programs.*
 - *Increase levels of service to see if a larger scale would keep costs down.*



2011 Coordination Plan

Now it is your turn to help!

Small Group Activity

Strengths

What are the current strengths of transit coordination in our area?

- Who is being served? How well are they being served?
- What agencies are already working together and how?
- What systems or innovations are in place to allow coordination?
- What political support allows for coordination?



Small Group Activity

Weaknesses

- What are the current weaknesses of transit coordination in the area?
 - What are the gaps in areas served?
 - What are the gaps for individuals served?
 - Is there duplication or inefficiencies?
 - Is there a lack of political support?
 - Is there a lack of proper systems or processes?



Let's eat lunch!



Coordination Strategies

Coordinate and Consolidate Transportation Services and Resources

- Allow joint purchasing
- Outsource business functions
- Contract between agencies
- Contract with common carrier
- Share resources
- Coordinate dispatch
- Consolidate business functions
- Coordinate volunteer driver training
- Implement tools that support data management
- Coordinate agency schedules

Mobility Strategies

- Improve service convenience
- Establish/enhance volunteer driver programs
- Establish/enhance taxi subsidy programs
- Establish/enhance assisted transportation programs
- Improve access to transit stops
- Maintain existing vehicle fleet



Communication, Training, and Organizational Support

- Centralize information
- Hire mobility manager
- Provide technical training for coordination staff
- Offer customer travel training
- Convene regional coordination body
- Educate public of transportation options
- Educate regional professionals of transportation options

Coordination Strategies

Small Group Activity

- Individually write down 3+ ideas for projects within the coordination categories filling out part I of the yellow project idea worksheet. We would like to collect these worksheets in the end (15 minutes)
- Share/report out ideas to small group (10 min)
- As a small group, identify the following for each project: (20 minutes)
 - Project champion
 - Who will implement
 - Timing: short term year 1, mid term year 2-3, long term year 4-5
- Decide who will report ideas to full group



Coordination Strategies

Large Group Activity

- Small groups report on and post their project ideas on wall.
- Group similar project ideas.
- Individually pick 5 projects as most important to implement in the region.

Next Steps

- Steering committee project prioritization
- Prioritized project list available in July 2011 for those applying for JARC, New Freedom, and 5310 funding.
- Project list/Plan will be available for public review and comment on the UMVRDC website www.umvrdc.org
- Plan adopted by the UMVRDC in fall 2011

Additional Information

- Dawn Hegland, UMVRDC
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320-289-1981 x1
 - www.umvrdc.org
- JARC, New Freedom, 5310 funding info
 - <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/grants/index.html>
- Successful Coordination Practices
 - www.coordinatemntransit.org