Overview

• Background
• Major accomplishments
• Statewide recommendations
• 2015 Strategic Plan
• Local coordination engagement
• Research recommendations
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Background
About the Council

• Formed by the MN State Legislature in 2010
• Succeeds the Interagency Committee on Transit Coordination (ICTC).
  – Established by MN Gov. Tim Pawlenty in 2005
• Made up of 13 separate agencies and organizations.
Mission and Vision

**Mission**

- The mission of MCOTA is to work together to remove obstacles that prevent the successful coordination of transportation programs and resources among their respective customers.

**Vision**

- Minnesotans will have access to coordinated transportation services to meet their mobility needs.
• Under Minn. Stat. 174.285, the purpose of MCOTA is “to study, evaluate, oversee and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public.”
Major Accomplishments
Information & Clearinghouse

- Minnesota coordination website
- Transportation section of Minnesotahelp.info
- Webinars on mobility management and other coordination topics
- Quarterly stakeholder e-mail communication
- Volunteer Driver Program Forum
Research

• 10 + studies on
  – Economic cost-benefit of coordination efforts
  – NEMT coordination
  – Local transit coordination case studies
  – Transit funding sources primer
  – Vehicle-sharing
  – Minnesota mobility management case studies
  – Volunteer transportation programs inventory and survey
  – Economic benefits of Minnesota volunteer driver programs
  – Public-private partnerships in transit
  – Best practices in youth employment transportation
Volunteer Driver Programs

• A survey and selected case studies of volunteer driver programs in Minnesota, including faith-based programs
• Volunteer transportation programs inventory and survey
• Study of economic benefits of Minnesota volunteer driver programs
• Volunteer driver insurance and reimbursement issues and education
• Volunteer Driver Program Forum, MN2030 priorities
Other

• Development of contract template
• Collaboration on the development of a Unified Transit Data Center pilot project in Scott and Carver counties.
Statewide Recommendations
Statewide Recommendations

• NEMT Advisory Committee support, coordination study
• Olmstead Plan goals and measures
• Volunteer Driver Program Resolution
2015 Strategic Plan
2015 Strategic Plan Priorities

1. Develop regional organizations to help people use statewide tools.
2. Optimize the number of service providers and agencies within the state.
3. Use common administrative tools to standardize recordkeeping and reporting.
4. Eliminate funding silos or find a way to share funds.
5. Offer state-supplied dispatch software and/or enable coordination between dispatch software programs throughout the state
Local coordination planning & engagement
Local coordination engagement

- Local coordination plans
- RTCC/TCAP needs
- Relationship between coordinating organizations and MCOTA
RTCCs and TCAPs

• 2015-16 statewide coordination workshops
• 2017-18: Planning Grants for 9 Greater Minnesota RTCCs
• 2015-2019: 5 active and 2 planned coordination efforts (TCAPS) in Twin Cities Metro Area
Draft MCOTA - RTCCs Roles and Relationship Framework

MCOTA fulfills the statutory role established to guide transportation coordination and accessibility
- Studies, evaluates, oversees, and makes recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public.
- Examples of this work could include:
  • Volunteer Driver Engagement/Coordination
  • Driver Insurance Issues

RTCCs will carry out the recommendations developed by MCOTA through local partnerships. This work could include the following illustrative examples:
- Volunteer driver engagement efforts by MCOTA bolster awareness of the program and improve coordination between volunteers.
- MCOTA has the opportunity to provide clear guidance on volunteer driver insurance issues through research and policy advocacy.

MCOTA responds to gaps identified through the implementation work of RTCCs
- MCOTA collects feedback from RTCCs on the application of policy direction and other coordination efforts developed by the Council.
- RTCC identified “gaps” or needs for further guidance/research feedback into the first stage of the feedback loop and present opportunities to conduct further work to provide guidance to RTCCs.

As partners at the local/regional level, RTCCs should identify gaps in meeting the goals of MCOTA and recommend actions to be taken by the Council.
- MCOTA endorses language that directs RTCCs to implement their research and policy recommendations and to provide feedback to the Council on how those recommendations work in practice.
- RTCCs report on “lessons learned” to MCOTA on a regularly-scheduled basis to establish accountability and structure for ensuring follow-through.

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
Research Recommendations
Research Recommendations

Synthesis of 2011 Greater Minnesota Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plans.

The most frequently identified strategies:

- Centralizing call taking and scheduling
- Convening a regional coordination body with representatives from a variety of stakeholder groups
- Educating regional officials about transportation resources and needs, conducting marketing campaigns and community outreach to increase the knowledge of the general public
- Establishing or expanding volunteer driver programs to improve service and availability.
Research Recommendations

NEMT Coordinators in Minnesota (2013)

1. The pending statewide NEMT reforms should leverage the rich local knowledge and organizational capacities that have arisen under the county-based system for ATS.
2. Increase and regularize the opportunities for information exchanges among counties and DHS regarding operational practices.
3. Streamline the DHS reimbursement process.
4. Utilize coordinators to improve statewide data collection for the NEMT program.
5. Investigate how DHS can provide counties more incentives to control NEMT costs and otherwise innovate.
Research Recommendations

Vehicle Sharing Among Human Service Providers in Minnesota: Steps to Address Barriers (2013)

1. Outreach and education. State agencies should work to increase education and outreach within the HSP community about vehicle sharing: should focus on the “how to” of vehicle sharing, and include guidance documents and training.

2. Forums for HSPs to exchange information about sharing opportunities.

3. Data collection. Efforts by state or local governments to promote vehicle sharing need to be supported by quantitative data collection about the nature and scale of the opportunities for sharing among HSPs.
Research Recommendations

Common Standards for Reporting Financial Information for Transportation (2015)

1. Meet with State Auditor’s Gov’t Accounting Standards Board re: chart of accounts and recommendations on implementation of common reporting standards.
2. Develop a policy or a statute to make collection and reporting of financial data related to public transit and human service transportation a requirement for participating agencies.
3. Utilize the Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils (RTCCs) as a method to support common reporting standards. One activity of the RTCCs could be to ensure that local agencies and systems have the same standards and requirements to report financial information.
Research Recommendations

Minnesota Transit Funding Primer (2015)
Next steps
Next Steps

• MCOTA priorities and actions in next 3-5 years: move into more implementation?

• Member survey, RTCC/TCAP survey, survey of other stakeholders

• Strategic planning workshop (most likely April 23)