

# Highlights of Survey Results

In March and April, the planning team conducted surveys of three groups for input to help shape MCOTA's role, strategies, and tactics for the next 3-5 years. Questions were about their views of MCOTA's role, their organizations' alignment with MCOTA's legislative duties, and priorities that they believe would improve access to transportation throughout the state, especially for seniors and persons with disabilities.

1. MCOTA members: about MCOTA's role, mission and vision, structure and operations, and barriers to accomplishing its mission and vision; [6 responses for a response rate of ~50 percent]
2. RTCCs and TCAPs: about what they would most value from a statewide coordinating council; [16 responses and 1 member of public; response rate of ~95 percent]
3. Other stakeholders, such as transportation providers: 5310 recipients, NEMT, volunteer driver programs, transit agencies, Centers for Independent Living, Area Agencies on Aging, workforce centers, human services non-profits, and county human services providers. [64 responses; response rate of ~6 percent]

## Alignment with legislative duties

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The top legislative duties that align with all three survey groups are 4, 5, 6, 10, and 20.

Table 1: Top 3 MCOTA legislative duties for each survey group

Members	(4) identify barriers prohibiting coordination and accessibility ...	(6) identify stakeholders & seek input from them, ...	(20) advocate aggressively for eliminating barriers to coordination, ...
RTCCs/TCAPs (most helpful duties)	(10) encourage volunteer driver programs and recommend legislation...	(5) recommend policies and procedures for funding and services ...	(20) advocate aggressively for eliminating barriers to coordination, ...
Stakeholders	(4) identify barriers prohibiting coordination and accessibility ...	(6) identify stakeholders & seek input from them, ...	(10) encourage volunteer driver programs and recommend legislation...



## Barriers to coordination

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### Barriers for MCOTA members

- Not enough state agency members fully engaged.
- THE STATE AGENCY SILOS! more sharing needs to occur. get commissioners back at the table to get more commitment.
- Move from research & education to implementation for more direct results.
- Limited funding for providers, limited communication between providers

### Barriers for RTCCs/TCAPs

- Lack of funding (for actual coordination)
- Volunteer driver issues (legal definition, insurance, reimbursement, not enough)
- System needs:
  - mobility management system
  - ability to cross service areas throughout state
  - Multiple service providers providing services in different ways - not willing to change methods for collaboration

## Priorities for the public

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Very similar results from stakeholder survey as from RTCC/TCAPs

- More hours of service to get to jobs and community activities outside of 8-5
- Lower ticket prices, unified access across county lines, later times for bus services or just transportation in general, help getting to work on a daily basis.
- More on-demand transportation options
- Consistent equipment and training to ensure access for all riders
- Destinations: religious events, long distance healthcare transportation, 2nd and 3rd shift job transportation, social activities, shopping
- We need to put into place a system for the rural residents.

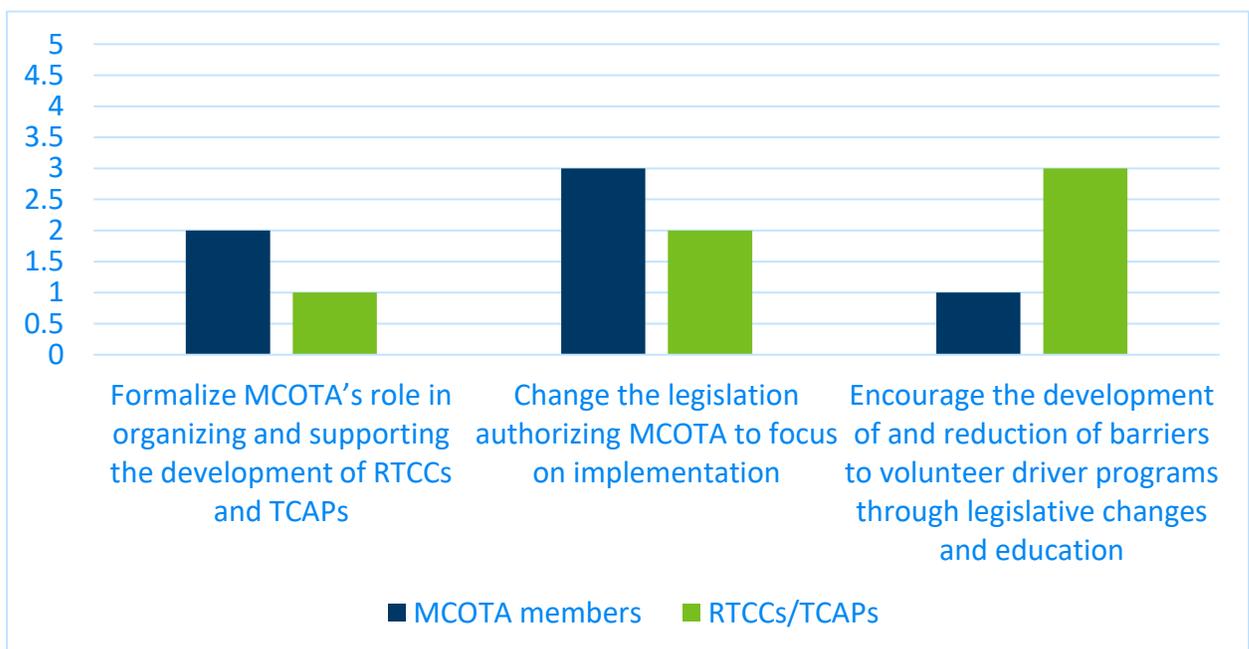
- People want affordable rides but are willing to contribute to the cost

## Priorities for MCOTA Identified in Surveys

MCOTA members and representatives of the RTCCs/TCAPs selected the same three priorities for MCOTA, though in different order.

1. Change the legislation authorizing MCOTA to focus on implementation (a higher priority for members).
2. Formalize MCOTA's role in organizing and supporting the development of RTCCs and TCAPs
3. Encourage the development of and reduction of barriers to volunteer driver programs through legislative changes and education (a higher priority for RTCCs and TCAPs)

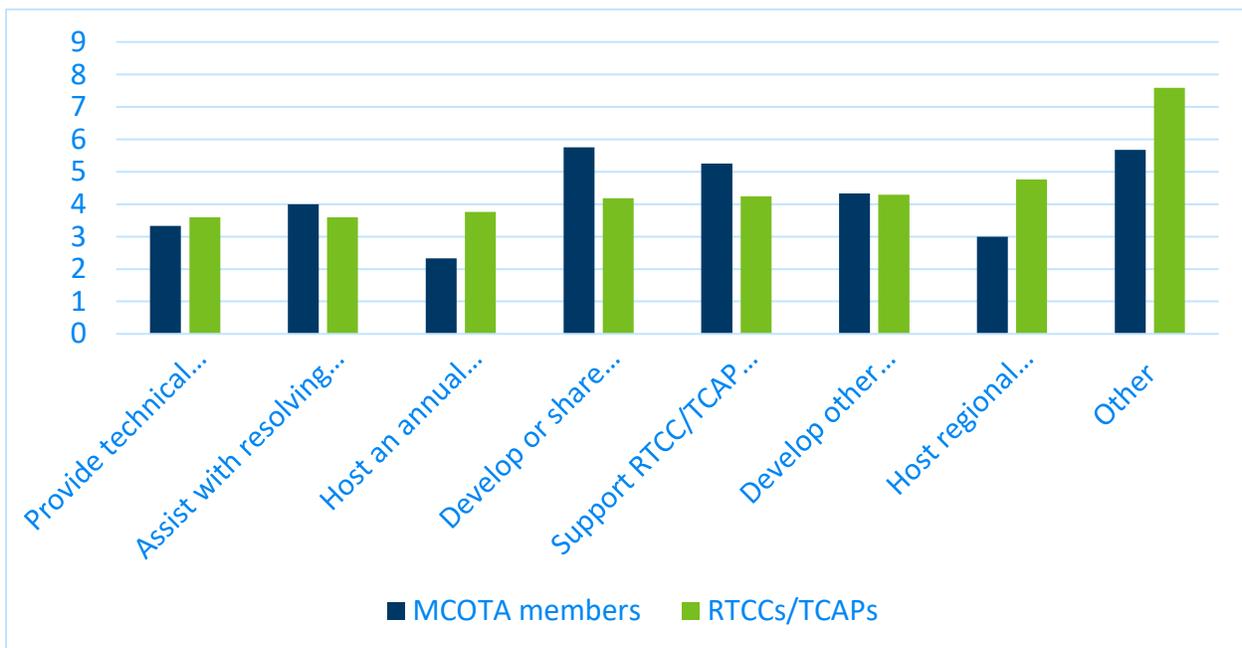
Figure 1: Top 3 priorities for MCOTA



## MCOTA's activities related to RTCCs and TCAPs, from surveys

1. Provide technical assistance to RTCCs and TCAPs
2. Assist with resolving state and federal barriers to coordination
3. Host an annual dialogue for all RTCCs and TCAPs
4. Develop or share tools/products that could be used by RTCCs and TCAPs
5. Support RTCC/TCAP pilot projects
6. Develop other infrastructure to facilitate communication within RTCCs and TCAPs
7. Host regional workshops for each RTCC/TCAP

Figure 2: MCOTA's Activities for RTCCs/TCAPs

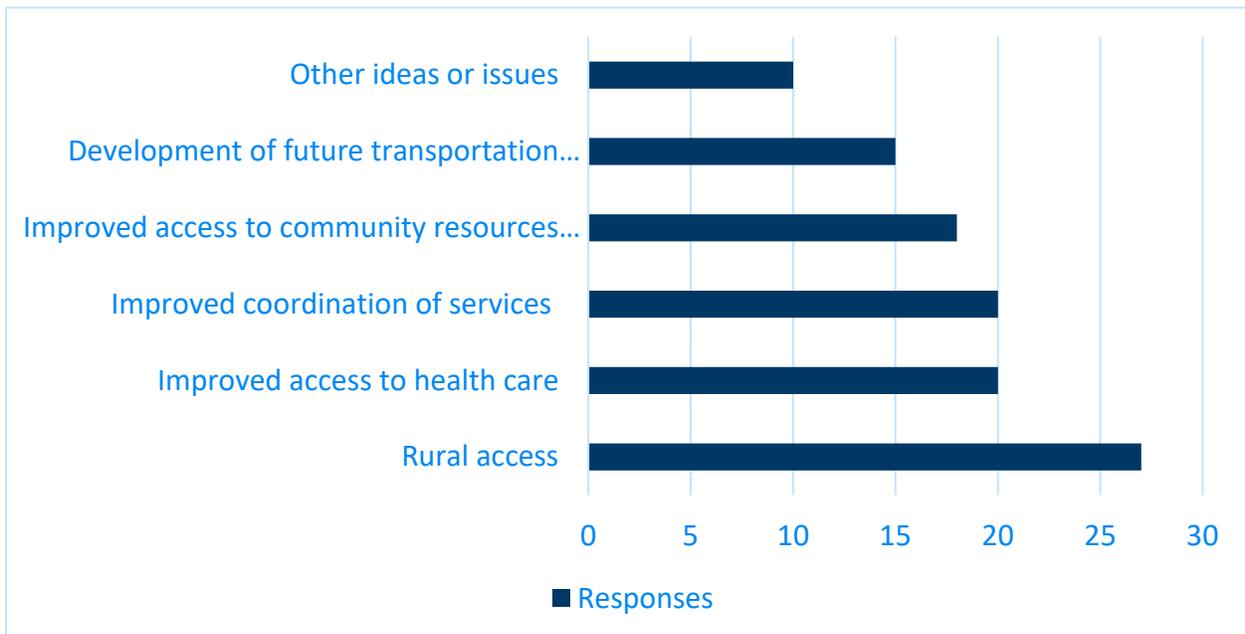


## What MCOTA's focus should be, according to stakeholder survey

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1. Rural transportation access
2. Improved access to health care
3. Improved coordination of services
4. Improved access to community resources
5. Development of future transportation options

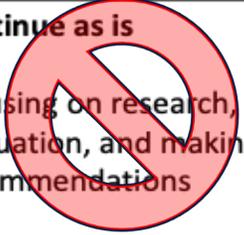
Figure 3: Needs MCOTA's attention (stakeholders)



# Strategic Planning Workshop

MCOTA member, MCOTA member organization staff, and representatives of the regional coordinating organizations (RTCCs and TCAPs), who have received grants to develop coordination at the local level, participated in a half-day strategic planning workshop on April 23, 2019. The workshop was facilitated by Etonde Awaah and Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn from LaCroix-Dalluhn Consulting and the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a shared understanding of MCOTA’s accomplishments and to develop a consensus for its future direction.

After sharing MCOTA’s accomplishments and highlights from the survey results, the group voted on three options for MCOTA’s direction. The group overwhelmingly voted for option 3: keeping some research and best practices and adding implementation activities.

OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
<p><b>Continue as is</b></p> <p>Focusing on research, evaluation, and making recommendations</p> 	<p><b>Move into “implementation”</b></p> <p>Related to needs &amp; activities identified by the report &amp; survey</p> 	<p><b>Another option?</b></p> <p>A hybrid? Other ideas?</p> <p>Let’s discuss!</p> 

## Highlights from small group work

Participants worked in seven small groups to answer specific questions to inform MCOTA’s next steps.

### Q1. What strategies can we identify to help MCOTA “grow teeth” and accomplish these activities?

#### 1. Building/leveraging relationships

- a. Communication & accountability to connect work with advocates & policymakers (RTCCs will bring local voices to MCOTA, MCOTA can bring it up to decision makers)
- b. MCOTA should be bringing in various agencies that impact RTCCs/TCAPs related to coordination & increasing efficiencies
- c. Collaboration
- d. Establish relationships between RTCCs: MCOTA hold bi-annual meetups. RTCCs share best practices amongst themselves (information flowing up and down)
- e. Stronger department representation at MCOTA level – e.g. commissioners. RTCCs participate with MCOTA members on a regular basis
- f. Mitigate barriers of the state agency silos at legislature
- g. Determine what research projects are recommended

- h. MCOTA needs additional funding by statute – be specific on how much and how it is used/distributed
  - i. Helping people know MCOTA exists & is a resource for local entities
  - j. Interaction/connection between TCAPs with RTCCs as well as all three (RTCCs, TCAPs & MCOTA)
  - k. Expand membership of MCOTA to include RTCCs & TCAPs OR create an implementation committee that would include regional groups
  - l. Annual add-on to the public transit conference to convene regional groups
  - m. Olmstead – potential for more proactive relationship between MCOTA and Olmstead (e.g. creating work plan as a way of getting commissioner attention and creating interagency cooperation)
  - n. Potential additional membership: AG, legislators, Lt. Gov. (Gov.'s Office), inclusion office
- 2. Increasing funding**
- a. Many funds come from different agencies – should MCOTA have a voice in how they are allocated? If so, how?
  - b. Educate legislature about funding – to get them to view MCOTA as a resource/good place to put funds. Legislators (or someone in Gov.'s Office) be included in MCOTA's membership
  - c. RTCCs & TCAPs pay membership dues
  - d. Help MCOTA find & implement best practices for increasing private partnerships
  - e. Rather than creating new funding, be more flexible on how existing funding can be used
  - f. Identify the funding sources clearly – where is it coming from and who is it going to?
- 3. Changing legislative charge (if needed)**
- a. Clarify legislative charge to allow MCOTA to implement research findings
  - b. Have someone from AG's office on MCOTA so they can help articulate policy changes
  - c. Including legislators & Gov.'s Office in MCOTA
  - d. Is MnDOT the correct department to lead (have funding authority over) MCOTA?
  - e. MCOTA needs to be more independent to be able to honestly/more transparently identify issues & identify corrective measures
  - f. MCOTA needs to identify deliverables & priorities to implement at regional level
  - g. How does MCOTA report back to legislators?
  - h. Need an entity responsible for coordination related to legislative changes needed (across state agencies) – MCOTA could be this

## Q2. What structure & relationships do MCOTA need to have in order to carry out these strategies?

### Who needs to be involved and how?

1. MCOTA – RTCC/TCAPs
  - a. All 14 departments need to be engaged. MCOTA needs commissioner level involvement, have the expertise & to set the agenda. AG office needs to be sitting on MCOTA's board.
  - b. Everyone already involved needs to be actively participating
  - c. Once RTCCs are fully established, have a regional representative on MCOTA (as voting members)
  - d. Other potential members: tribal representative, public safety, consumer representative (RTCCs/TCAPs could provide this perspective if they have the appropriate relationship/can speak for them). Adjust bylaws to give them voting power.
  - e. Need to be clear about what each agency's role is on MCOTA (e.g. MMB)
  - f. Don't want the MCOTA body to be too large...is there another mechanism to ensure those voices are represented? Should have some systematic way to ensure they have representation. (Possibly a part of the implementation committee? Someone designated from that group to report back to MCOTA)
  - g. Any state agency that pays for transportation with the purpose of trying to streamline rules and regulations should be involved in MCOTA
  - h. How do we frame transportation issues in a way that makes sense to agencies that aren't deeply involved? (e.g. DEED – relate transportation to employment, ability of businesses to thrive based on workforce, etc. MCOTA can help identify economic trends for different regions, etc. Huge incentive for active participation). Agencies are both providers and consumers...possibly another leverage point.
  - i. Bringing aging and disability populations together. Add AARP as a stakeholder?
  - j. UMN Extension, Chambers of Commerce, Leagues of MN Cities and Counties – should they be involved?
  - k. Public and private transportation providers – figuring out a way to have people with disabilities and seniors involved in service design
  - l. Have a provider representative on MCOTA board

### What is MCOTA's role in each?

1. Look at structure of Homelessness Council to inform MCOTA's structure (e.g., use of design teams, Executive Committee, etc.)
2. MCOTA – RTCC/TCAPs
  - a. Provide overall statewide guidance
  - b. Resources with research, best practices, sample policies
  - c. Translate RTCCs local perspective into policy
3. State agency involvement
  - a. Bring forth their own agency needs & ensure that transportation needs throughout the state are being met. Bring in each agency's voice/wheelhouse into transportation conversation

- b. Advocate for administrative change either through state agencies or Gov's Office. (Regulatory aspects)
  - c. Be technical experts on how programs run & willing to adapt and change based on consumer/provider needs.
4. Stakeholders
- a. Go to the public instead of the public coming to MCOTA/regional groups – is there a way to do this systematically (e.g. county fairs, etc.)? Who should be in charge of the statewide outreach?
  - b. Bring counties into this work. Regional groups have the ability to talk about funding with counties & how to better utilize resources and have other improved outcomes. [County administrators and/or commissioners]
  - c. Rural legislative champion needed (in addition to urban champion)
  - d. Engage focus groups specific to vets, low income, aging, disability groups, homeless, 5310 providers, etc.
  - e. Public representation on MCOTA? Project specific public focus groups to provide community engagement related to implementation efforts
  - f. Confirm and validate stakeholders' perspectives. Ensure them that they are needed at the table.
5. Public & private providers
- a. Will be a part of RTCCs/TCAPs to make sure they are aware of what's going on and collaborate together in order to achieve MCOTA vision/mission
  - b. Need to figure out when is transportation best provided by a public or private entity. (Possible research opportunity?)
  - c. Insurance companies, healthcare and managed care entities need to be involved & informing regional groups & MCOTA about transportation needs

## Strategic Priorities

Based on the survey and workshop results, here are three strategic priorities for MCOTA to consider.

1. Determine MCOTA's functions and activities
  - a. Determine what to keep from current legislative duties
  - b. Identify new activities and functions to consider
2. Determine MCOTA's structure to accomplish these activities
  - a. Review 3-4 options (Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness, Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths, and earlier proposed structure for MCOTA)
  - b. Review potential new members and stakeholders
3. Determine/identify funding options for MCOTA and coordinated transportation

## Next steps

Identify several concrete next steps to take in next 2-3 months.