Today’s Plan

**Goal**: Outline the need for and examples of regional transportation coordination councils, including the proposed concept for Minnesota.

1. Welcome
2. Definition of coordination
3. Models of regional coordinating councils
   1. Colorado
   2. Southwest
4. Proposed MN regional coordination council concept
5. Upcoming stakeholder workshops

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
Welcome

• Introduce team
• Purpose of today’s meeting: outline the need for and examples of regional transportation coordination councils, including the proposed concept for Minnesota
• Participant introductions
Participating Agencies

- ACC Midwest Transportation LLC
- AEOA/Arrowhead Transit
- Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging
- Blue Earth County
- Brown County Family Service/Heartland Express
- Care a Van
- Cass County HHVS
- Cedar Valley Services, Inc.
- Central Community Transit
- Community Thread
- Dakota County
- DARTS
- Episcopal Homes of Minnesota
- FACTS
- Fraser
- Freeborn County Department of Human Services
- HealthPartners
- Hennepin County
- Horizon Health Inc.
- Hubbard County Heartland Express
- Lac qui Parle County Family Services
- Lake of the Woods County Social Services
- Lighthouse Child and Family Services
- Metropolitan Center for Independent Living
- Metropolitan Council (Metro Mobility/Metro Transit)
- Minnesota Board on Aging
- Minnesota Department of Human Services
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging
- Morrison County Social Services
- MTM
- Neighbors, Inc.
- Olmsted County
- Peoples Express, Inc
- Pine County Health & Human Services
- Pine County Public Health
- Polk County Social Services
- Prairie Five CAC, Inc. (RIDES)
- Rainbow Rider
- Red Lake County Social Service Center
- Region Nine Development Commission
- Rise, Inc.
- Roseau County Social Services
- Semcac - Rolling Hills Transit
- St. Cloud Metro Bus
- Stearns County Human Services
- The Arc Greater Twin Cities
- Three Rivers, Hiawathaland Transit
- Todd County Health & Human Services
- Udac, Inc.
- Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission
- VINE Faith in Action
- Wadena and Becker County Transit
- Wadena County Human Services
- Washington County
- Western Community Action
- Wright County
Definition of Coordination

• Coordination is a strategy for managing resources. It is applied within community political environments. Fundamentally, coordination is about shared power and accountability among organizations that are working together to achieve common goals.

• Coordination focuses on management, resources, cost-effectiveness, broad perspectives, multiple stakeholders, cooperation, action and accountability.

• Coordination can be used to address problematic transportation situations, such as duplication of effort and opportunities for improving transportation resource efficiency. Coordinating transportation means doing better (obtaining more results, like trips) with existing resources by working together with persons from different agencies and backgrounds.
Barriers to Local/Regional Coordination

• Systemic issues. Most commonly cited barriers:
  – lack of resources (funding/staff time)
  – lack of regional leadership or project champions
  – inflexible policies and regulations
  – insufficient local partnerships
  – struggle to educate and influence policymakers, in spite of increased efforts to communicate with local and state officials
Barriers to Local/Regional Coordination

• Examples of specific activities that had little or no action taken:
  – Holding regular meetings of a regional coordination body
  – Creating an inventory or web-based provider directory
  – Centralizing regional facilities or dispatch
  – Sharing volunteers across agencies
  – Standardizing volunteer driver training across agencies
  – Developing a tool for user evaluation of services
  – Increasing the use of technology, such as GPS, to improve tracking and management of vehicles
Models for Local/Regional Coordination

Local Coordinating Councils Definition

- **Multidisciplinary** - coordinate among diverse transportation and human services providers
- **Regional** - coordinate across multiple cities, counties or other local jurisdiction
- **Ongoing** - engage in active, ongoing coordination, not just coordination planning or other intermittent activities.


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Models for Local/Regional Coordination

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Models for Local/Regional Coordination

- **Colorado – bi-level model**
  - State coordinating council “seeks policy changes and other steps to create an environment supportive of coordination”
  - Local/regional councils “implement coordinated transportation programs, oversee the agencies that provide coordinated transportation in their respective areas, and provide feedback to the state council as to what is working and what problems need to be addressed”
  - County or group of counties
  - Example, Douglas County’s Local Coordinating Council: MOU between 21 founding member organizations
Goal of proposed MN regional coordination council concept

• Support from state agencies to create a statewide framework of 8-10 Regional Transportation Coordination Councils
  – To break down transportation barriers and offer a seamless system of transportation services
  – Regional Councils would be responsible for coordinating transportation services through a network of existing public, private and non-profit transportation providers
Models for Local/Regional Coordination

The Southwest Minnesota Regional Ride Council (SMRRC)
Our History:
The SMRRC was born out of a need identified in both the 2008 and 2011 Region 8 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan.

As stated in the 2011 Plan, “Key to coordination is bringing key players to the table and getting them on the same page. This means agreeing on transit coordination issues, collectively identifying and implementing ways to resolve issues, using the same taxonomy, and increasing the awareness of both providers and the transit dependent.”

This basic framework describes the purpose of the SMRRC, and our overall starting point.
Who We Are

The SMRRC is made up of members from a variety of human service disciplines including:

• Workforce Centers
• Disability Services
• Transportation (public, private, STS, volunteer)
• Health Care
• Mental Health
• Veterans Services
• Others, some just joining
Our Structure
The funds to create the SMRRC are housed within the transportation program at Western Community Action. The activities of the Council are separate from the operations of the transit system.

What We Are Doing
By meeting together regularly, the SMRRC is beginning to identify some major areas of need within transportation in our region. Bringing people together has opened some doors and conversations. Out of this we will bring one message forward to encourage legislative change.

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What We Are Doing (Continued)

• Extending resources for non-emergency medical transportation at the local level
• Creating partnerships to offer more cost effective ride options after public transportation hours
Moving the Council Forward

- Defining member roles
- Building understanding of need among all stakeholders
- Identifying a vision
- Supporting the objectives of transportation coordination, financially and logistically
- Developing an implementation plan so the Council can stand alone
Models for Local/Regional Coordination

Dakota County Transportation Coordinating Council

Matt Smith
Deputy County Manager

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Why is transportation coordination important for us?

- Costs and human services quality:
  - Studies since 2008 showed client transportation costs to County of several $million annually
  - Olmstead Plan compliance
- Growing senior and disabled population in “auto-centric” suburban communities
Current system impacts on County residents:

• One of the primary reasons adults with disabilities remain in residential care is lack of transportation services.
• It can take 3 hours each way to get to a one hour medical appointment.
• Residents attend technical colleges outside the County due to lack of transportation.

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Fragmented, siloed, uneven transportation

Minneapolis

Existing
Transit Services

Fixed Routes
ADA Service Area
Neighbors Service Area
Hastings Family Services
GAPP Services

Transit Centers
Park & Ride/Pool Lots
Metro Transit - Express
Metro Transit - Regular Route
MVTA - Express
MVTA - Regular Route
Metro Red Line
Metro Orange Line
Metro Blue Line
ADA Service Area
Neighbors
Hastings Family Services
GAPP Services

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“Spaghetti Bowl”

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
“Untangling the spaghetti” with assistance from UMN and others

- Advisory Committee
  - Metro Transit
  - MnDOT/MN Council on Transportation Access
  - Minnesota Valley Transit Authority
  - DARTS
  - Met Council
  - Dakota County

- Stakeholder input
  - Workshops
  - Small and large group discussions
  - Online surveys
  - Provider surveys sent to 36 providers
  - Advisory Committee
UMN-CTS/HHH Recommendations

1. Coordinating Collaborative
2. Mobility Management
3. Funding for Coordination
4. Consistent Data
5. Transportation and Land-Use Connection
6. Travel Training
7. Communications Plan

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Forming a DC Transportation Coordinating Collaborative (DCTCC)

- Grant funding (Federal 5310 program via MNDOT)
- Transitioning Transportation Advisory Committee to new role as Council
- Developing principles, mission, vision, goals
- Agreeing on DCTCC operational structure
DCTCC Key Roles and Responsibilities

• Prioritize and implement UM study recommendations
• Recommend implementation strategies and plans developed by working groups back to member organizations for voluntary implementation
• Share best/promising practices
• Engage current/future partners on the benefits of coordinating transportation
• Identify, discuss, and review policies that do or do not support coordinating transportation
DCTCC Current Membership

• Met Council
• MVTA
• CDA
• DARTS
• MnDOT
• Internal Dakota County staff representation from human services, transportation/transit and administration
Our next steps

• Hire Transportation Coordinator (5310 grant)

• 2015 work plan to include
  – Travel training
  – Data standardization and collection
  – Mobility management
  – Outreach

• Periodic updates to our Board

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Potential tasks of regional coordination councils

1. Lead activities to and advance coordination throughout region
2. Exercise the authority to make change based on a formal governing framework
3. Employ dedicated staff to implement change
4. Provide technical assistance to facilitate human service program vehicle sharing

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Potential tasks of regional coordination councils (cont’d)

5. Establish transportation provider performance standards for service, vehicles, and personnel

6. Actively participate in and/or lead the FTA required local transportation coordination plan process

7. Utilize a cost accounting system to accurately reflect the full costs of providing transportation services

8. Share quality assurance data and uniform reporting among stakeholders

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Potential tasks of regional coordination councils (cont’d)

9. Develop or promote existing van pool or rideshare services.
10. Oversee volunteer driver programs or coordination of volunteer programs.
11. Establish or promote existing travel training programs
12. Provide feedback to the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access as to what is working and where state level assistance may be needed.
Potential benefits of regional coordination councils

• Increased efficiencies
• Enhanced access to social and health services, education and employment
• Improved use of resources:
  – Vehicles
  – Staff training
  – Software
  – Call center staff
• Transportation service provision that contributes to more livable communities and a vital economy

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Next Steps

• **Regional workshops:**
  – **Duluth:** April 23, 1:00-4:15 p.m.
  – **St. Cloud:** April 30, 9:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
  – **Mankato:** May 13, 1:00-4:15 p.m.
  – **St. Paul:** May 14, 12:30-3:45 p.m.

Register at [www.CoordinateMNTransit.org](http://www.CoordinateMNTransit.org)
Questions?