

East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council Meeting 4, January 10

East Central Regional Development Commission Office

Meeting notes:

We had 25 participants at the meeting on Thursday. The list and agency represented is attached.

Progressed through the Power Point presentation (attached) using that as a structure for discussion.

Discussions:

Timeline:

***Updates:**

Advisory Board:

Relation of current work plan to past coordination plans:

****Mission Statement:**

*****Goals:**

Needs Assessment/Advisory Board & Transportation Services **Survey Results** (attached)

Update Clarification:

*Karen spoke at the Isanti County TRIAD meeting on 12/18 regarding the need for Volunteer Drivers and an explanation of what a Volunteer Driver Program is. TRIAD is a Senior led partnership with local (Isanti) Sheriff's department and the community. It opens the doors for Seniors to correspond with law enforcement. This partnership decreases police calls and puts the Senior community more at ease.

****Mission Statement:**

To coordinate the provision of multimodal transportation services to assure that transportation is convenient and affordable and will benefit those residents facing transportation barriers throughout the East Central Minnesota Region 7E.

******SURVEY RESULTS:**

Prevalent trend:

Family & Friends are the most utilized forms of transportation, for medical destinations, funded through Medicaid.

OBJECTIVES DISCUSSION:

1. Louis Cromwell from Congressman's Stauber's office will take with him, our plea to discuss with the Congressman, raising the **Volunteer Driver Charitable Reimbursement** rate from \$.14 cents/mile to align more congruently with the Business Reimbursement rate of \$.58 cents/mile.

2. Coordinate & Communicate with Transportation Professionals and Providers to build a **Regional Mobility Management Center**. Utilize services effectively to get away from redundancy. This may need to be a governmental agency of Regional, most likely State management.

3. Coordinate Regional Libraries as Intermodal Transit Center Hubs (ITCH). Clarification that the modes of transit must be ALL modes, not just public transit. Carla and Rachel from the Regional Library system will discuss the idea with Anoka County.

There was a question about the ability to provide accessible options for those needing it for arrivals and departures along with accessibility within the realm of parking ample numbers of and sizes of vehicles.

Talk continued about the need for local travel – people needing to get around our rural area. Volunteer Driver Programs and LYFT would be options for this issue. Getting information out and connecting volunteer

driver programs (TRY, Family Pathways, RSVP) to all who need it would be very helpful.

Discussion about other possible hub locations. Depending on where people need to go to. More information will be discovered through the Public Meetings.

Identify commonalities – for example:

Where are the most popular destinations and how do we get from Point A to Point B?

Loaning of Bicycles from libraries – there could be funding for this as a social enterprise.

Building warm spaces to wait outside of hub, with wi-fi connection, electricity, safety.

“Minnow Swap” – transitioning from one transportation service to another at a safe location in an organized and simple, understandable manner.

Later discussion as to whether Regional Libraries are the right fit for each community – this will need to be determined. Where is the library? Where is the grocery store?

4. Gain access to *Regional Libraries south into the Metro* for use by East Central Regional Public Transportation Services.

It was suggested that this Objective be removed and we focus on where the hubs will be located.

Publicity:

Talk with regional papers about doing a front page article about the ECRTCC and what we are doing.

Talk with regional papers about doing a front page article about the Public Meetings for Transportation needs to gain more interest.

Share information via Social Media :

Utilize the ECRDC facebook page,

Utilize the “What’s Happening In ... County” facebook pages,

Utilize the local Garage Sale pages,

Embed the Public Transportation Meeting poster and send to all Advisory Board Members as well as adding as an attachment,

Do a Facebook survey to ask questions needed to poll the public about transportation needs,

Make the Public Meeting Invitations Sharable Events.

The **Public Meeting** Poster did not have the fact that it is a **FREE Transportation Event** bold or clear enough.

Asked all to embellish their posters in order to gain interest and garner participation.

Public Transit Providers encouraged to speak at their specific meetings,

Veteran Service Providers encouraged as well.

Erica agreed to attend Kanabec County’s meeting.

Reminder that the Public Meetings are not open houses – they have a start (4pm) and finish (5:30pm) time.

At the Region 5 ECRTCC Public Meeting, they had 7 white boards with general transit questions for people to write their thoughts down. *This public information will help us in our development of our Goals & Objectives for the Implementation phase.*

They also had their Impromptu Goals clearly visible in the meeting space.

It is requested that All Advisory Board members ask questions & share with their staff:

“What are your transportation concerns?”

“What are your primary transportation needs?” ex: work, school, appointments, kids...

“How often do you need to get from Home to Work, Home to School, etc.”

“How do you get there now?”

“What would help you the most?”

Please feel free to add to this list as we do need well posed and challenging questions to ask at the

Public Meetings.

Please feel free to post questions on your sites in order to gain more information from people.

Stress on the importance of identifying the commonalities in the transportation needs of our stakeholder's group. What are the common issues for each group? Common issues can move the needle.

Navigant Study Preliminary Review will be available on January 15th. This information would allow us insight into whether our goals are congruent with the study. The need for a Statewide Dispatch system is a primary focus.

Consolidating transportation use – for example:

A person has been delivered to the Medical Center, her transportation has been paid for through Medical Assistance, while they are in the area, how can they get to the grocery store and do their errands at nearby locations?

Sue Siemers stressed that if any organization is having to turn down rides because of location, age, accessibility needs, or if appointments are cancelled because a patron/patient has no way to get there, these needs are true and **need to be documented** in order to get any funding to help repair the problem. If you are knowledgeable about issues and you are an agency of medical, clergy, health system, human services, etc. – please document the issues as they arise! This would really assist in facilitating change based upon our face to face, real regional problems.

Discussion on **Volunteer Driver Topic:**

Volunteer Drivers can cross county lines.

Transportation Resources for You (TRY) – Through Ashley Eckdahl. Northern Mille Lacs and Kanabec Counties through a grant from Easter Seals. Only volunteers – no compensation, although the TRY organization gives a gas gift card for folks who sign up and take their first rider. **Any age for rider or driver.**

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) – Through Monique Mendyke. Must be a member of the organization. Payment for drivers is through insurance, pooled and divided evenly amongst drivers depending on miles driven. **Drivers must be 55 or over. Riders can be of any age.**

Depending on the Funding Source, the determination of age of rider/driver is made. Through the Older American's Act, those using Aging Services funding – **drivers can be any age but riders must be 60 or older.** This is the case for **Family Pathways Volunteer Driver Program.**

It was brought to the group's attention that there may be many folks available to drive, but we need to make it extremely deliberate for them to do so. As was stated by Brandy Herbst, Owner of B's Home Care – she feels that many of her employees would be available to do some Volunteer Driving, but that the action of it must be very succinct for them. For example: They could pick up someone who's along the route they are already taking or not too far off their route. Time would need to correspond with when they are available, though kinks could be worked out and modifications made.

Please share the Public Meeting information (attached)

Feb. 21st suggested for next meeting.