

10.10.2019

Transportation Exploration Sub-Committee Meeting

Attendees:

Kevin Stenson, Beth VanderPlaats, Bob Voss, Ashley Eckdahl, Karen Onan-Wakefield

Earlier this month, Ashley and Karen met with Linda Woulff (Cambridge City Administrator) and Carla Lydon (Regional Library Director) regarding the use of the new library in Cambridge as a transportation hub in Cambridge. The location of the library is not really conducive as it's:

- not in high traffic area,
- there is not enough parking for park & ride,
- there is no turn lane area for a bus to get to the side of 95 and
- no turn around area.

Linda suggested that we collaborate with the NLX station that will be located in the Marketplace Mall. This looks very promising. Ashley and Karen will be reaching out to the NLX staff and to Heartland Express.

Kevin brought up having spoken with Lyft and Uber drivers that live in Lindstrom only to find that they are not actually providing service where they live but that they generally go south. He mentioned that he would speak again with these drivers to find out if they are seeing a shift in ridership habits heading north.

Kevin suggested that possibly the Fairview Clinic which has a library attached with it could be a new public service provider hub in Chisago City. The parking lot is between Chisago City and Lindstrom. We should contact John Peckman – Chisago City Hall Administrator (who would have the contact information for the board owning the land referenced in the last point) and/or Bob Gustafson, Mayor of Chisago City (who is also a bus driver for Heartland Express). Bob's number is 651-295-5559. We need to go look at the site, check out the location of the facility on a map to see if metro bus could meet up there for ride to metro area.

LYFT meeting at 2 on Tuesday 10.15.19 – Telephone Conference with Chapin Hansen, LYFT representative for MN. If anyone wishes to be on the call, please let us know, otherwise, we will keep you informed of outcome of meeting. Please feel free to send any questions you wish for us to ask.

Discussed issues of senior's ability to utilize the LYFT app on the phone. GoGoGrandparent can be of assistance here as they act as middleman – if you make phone call to them they will contact UBER/LYFT for you. Another option would be the 7Co Sr Fed who could provide this service of assistance or Council on Aging who could possibly provide training for seniors on APP use. It seems we either need to provide education on using their APP technology or develop a call-in line to allow seniors to avoid having to use smartphone technology.

We will approach Chapin with the idea of having 3 LYFT Driver Recruitment Events, in order to enlist drivers for our region. Considering: one in Lindstrom, one in Princeton, one in Cambridge. Kevin mentioned that Lindstrom has a community center attached to city hall. If we were to choose this location we could work with him to select available dates. Bob suggested that we focus on the southernmost parts of the region in order to get the ball rolling well and glean success. We can proceed further north once we establish in the more populated areas.

Would LYFT be able to piggy-back on with a food delivery service? (McDonalds now delivers... seems to be that most restaurants use some sort of delivery now.) This service would generate more miles for LYFT drivers and more exposure in communities.

LYFT and Uber are not required to be ADA compliant- so this will not fill all gaps in our area.

Kevin brought up “WAYMO” which is an automated vehicle service in Chandler, AZ.

<https://waymo.com/mission/> <https://waymo.com/tech/> Watch some of the videos! It is SO Cool!!! WAYMO has an “Early Rider Program” to help them establish needs, address issues, concerns, etc. of riders by encouraging riders to comment on their rides. This also helps WAYMO to learn with every mile they drive.

He also had looked into “TU Simple” <https://www.tusimple.com/>– which is a driverless trucking service. We discussed the issue of Code Standardization – all of these automated vehicles are using different software to make them work, when they are all on the roads together – will they understand one another and integrate together?!

We began discussion of payment standardization. For those providers who don’t utilize credit cards, a standardized token would be the alternative. They could be deemed “CT Tokens” (CT for Coordinated Transit). We discussed the importance of all service providers utilizing the same form of payment for their riders for simplification of the process for riders. Beth mentioned the fact that TEALE’s Market is a TriCAP Token purchase location.

Karen brought up the idea of a “guide” or “helper” that could be utilized on a phone or device, that could assist riders with setting up rides, getting to location for pick up, understanding payment, assist in location of drop off, then alert as to pick up time/location to help them get home or to another stop. Karen would like this to be very simple, visual and interactive. Beth suggested that SIRI will do all of this. Maybe some SIRI training would be appropriate?

Discussions with seniors as a group (many discussions) as to what they need. Training on APPs, SIRI training? UBER/LYFT training?

We got onto the topic of Volunteer Drivers. Connie Cardinal in Mille Lacs County has a successful Volunteer Driver program. Many volunteer drivers only drive until they need to file the 1099 and/or they quit because the roads deteriorate in the winter. Timber Trails has lost some of their drivers recently. Beth commented that when Timber Trails stopped their public transit service in Mille Lacs Co., they also pulled out their volunteer drivers. Would Timber Trails be interested in reaching out to those people in order to enlist more volunteer drivers again? Past drivers may be interested in driving again.

Charging stations for electric cars and the issue of electric cars became a discussion. In MN, there is a gas tax that pays for roads. If there are less gas using cars, how will the roads be maintained. Is it fair to those who pay the gas tax when electric cars are even heavier than gas utilizing cars?

Mille Lacs County has a Mileage Tax. This mileage tax is added onto the cost of items purchased in Mille Lacs County and it goes to the County. Because many businesses are located along hwy. 169, many tourists/those travelling through pay this tax. Burdensome on those who shop locally though.

Another tax is the Wheelage Tax. Paid when you register your tabs.

NLX meeting October 23rd at Pine County Government Building (Jail) at 10a.m.

Next ECRTCC Meeting: October 31st from 10 – noon.