

Appendix B

Summary of Public Involvement Program

2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan

January 2009

**Prepared For
Minnesota Department of Transportation**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The goal of the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan* is to develop a future vision for public transportation across Greater Minnesota and to lay the foundation to achieve that vision. A key element in the development of the plan is public involvement. The following report outlines the public involvement program from the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan* and the results of that program.

2.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS

The *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan* set forth the following goals for the public involvement program.

- To create opportunities for public involvement, focusing on the specific stakeholder groups including minority groups, the elderly, low-income, disabled and commuter consumer groups, Greater Minnesota transit providers and Section 5310 fund recipients.
- To ensure that Greater Minnesota residents, businesses and community leaders are well informed about the Transit Plan and how they can get their issues and concerns heard.
- To use the public involvement strategies to identify opportunities within the state and to guide the development of Mn/DOT's vision for transit's future.
- To integrate and coordinate public involvement with technical tasks and timelines.

3.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

The project management and decision making structure for the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan* is presented below. The structure served as a guide for both internal and external communications.

Technical Team

The Technical Team provided overall project management and guided the work of the consultant team. For public involvement activities, Technical Team responsibilities included:

1. Review and approve surveys and other materials for release to stakeholders.
2. Facilitate stakeholder communications.
3. Obtain, organize, and integrate stakeholder and public input into the plan update process.

Technical Team members included select staff from the MnDOT Office of Transit.

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee has been responsible for providing advice at key project milestones on a broader level than that of the Technical Team. The public involvement responsibilities of the Advisory Committee included:

1. Provide advisory services for the development of the vision.
2. Provide assistance with stakeholder communications, including engaging stakeholders in the public involvement process.

Advisory Committee members are included in Exhibit A of this report.

4.0 KEY MESSAGES

Several key messages were developed to facilitate communications with stakeholders, the general public, and the media throughout the project. Key topic areas and the accompanying messages are listed below.

Purpose, Goals and Target Markets

- The intent of the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan* is to define the future vision for public transportation across Greater Minnesota and to lay the foundation to achieve that vision.
- The plan will identify steps needed to preserve the long-standing investment in current public transit services across the state and look for opportunities to enhance mobility options for the general public and target market groups of the elderly, low income, disabled and commuters.
- Through this plan, Mn/DOT continues working toward the goal of making public transportation available to residents of all 80 counties in Greater Minnesota.

Importance of Stakeholder Involvement

- Stakeholder involvement is key to the success of the project.
- Stakeholder input will provide the MnDOT Office of Transit with the information it needs to develop a public transportation plan and transit policies that will benefit Greater Minnesota and reflects the input of the stakeholders.

5.0 STAKEHOLDERS

A comprehensive list of stakeholders was developed as part of the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan*. Stakeholders were involved at several different levels, from participating in dialogue at workshops to receiving press releases with project information. The organizations listed on the following page represent the “universe” of stakeholder identified for the project and had varying levels of involvement.

Figure 1 - Project Stakeholders

<p><u>State/Government Agencies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Transportation Office of Transit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ District Managers • Minnesota Department of Human Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aging and Adult Services Division ○ Disability Services Division (Developmental Disabilities) • Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State Services for the Blind • Minnesota Department of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School Bus Division • Minnesota Department of Veteran's Affairs • Metropolitan Planning Organizations • Indian Affairs Council • Regional Development Commissions 	<p><u>Regional Human Services Agencies/Organizations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Departments of Human Services • Area Agencies on Aging • Disabled Veterans of Minnesota • Minnesota Board on Aging • Minnesota DeafBlind Association • American Council of the Blind of Minnesota • Regional United Way offices • Head Start and preschool programs • Senior community services • Regional workforce centers
<p><u>Public and Specialized Transit Providers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transit system operators • For-profit transit operators • Nonprofit transit operators • 5310 transit operators • Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section • Minnesota Public Transit Association • University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies 	<p><u>Healthcare Organizations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitals • Nursing homes
<p><u>General Public</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors • Low income • Disabled • Minority groups • Transit commuters • Youth 	<p><u>Business Organizations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chambers of Commerce <p><u>Elected Officials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal legislators • State legislators • County commissioners • City council members <p><u>Media</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local newspapers, radio and TV stations

6.0 STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT

The public involvement program for the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan* included three main strategies for identifying stakeholder needs and concerns - facilitated workshops, electronic surveys, and structured interviews. Below is a summary of the stakeholder assessment strategies and their outcomes.



September 24, 2008 facilitated workshop in Rochester, MN.

6.1 FACILITATED WORKSHOPS

A series of facilitated workshops were held to gather input on public transit service from key stakeholder groups, as well as provide an opportunity for the general public to learn about the project. Workshops were held in seven locations throughout Greater Minnesota on the following dates:

- Detroit Lakes – September 9, 2008
- St. Cloud – September 11, 2008
- Marshall – September 12, 2008
- Duluth – September 17, 2008
- Bemidji – September 18, 2008
- Rochester – September 24, 2008
- Mankato – September 25, 2008

Workshop invitations were distributed via email to transit providers and other key stakeholder agencies by the MnDOT Office of Transit. Press releases were also distributed by the MnDOT District Transit Project Managers to notice the workshops to the general public. In total, 124 participants attended all of the workshops combined. Attendance represented a mix of transit providers, agency leaders and the general public.

The workshops were structured into three main parts. The first portion of the workshop included presentations by staff on the background of the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan* and the process for developing the plan.

The second portion of the workshop was a facilitated discussion in which participants identified and discussed transit issues in Greater Minnesota. Key discussion topic areas included service, marketing, coordination, regulation, and insurance needs. Issues were recorded throughout the discussion for consideration in the development of the vision.



Prioritization exercise at Mankato workshop on September 25, 2008.

The final portion of the workshop was a prioritization exercise in which participants identified their top issues they wanted to be addressed in the Plan. The list of issues for prioritization included key issues identified in the 2006 locally developed coordination plans, as well as additional issues identified during the discussion portion of the workshop.

While the discussions and prioritizations varied slightly by region, there were several issues that were main themes at all seven workshops:

- Evening and weekend service
- Technology for trip scheduling
- Education for prospective users
- Right-size vehicles
- Expanded services in rural areas
- Expanded employee (commuter) service
- Coordination of trips with nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, and healthcare providers
- Expanded transportation services across county lines
- Park-and-rides/infrastructure
- Establishment of mobility managers

Additional information on the facilitated workshops is included in the exhibits of this report.

6.2 STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

To facilitate further discussion with agency leaders, 35 structured interviews were conducted with a selection of leaders from state and regional agencies in September 2008. Agencies represented in the interviews included state agencies, regional development commissions, area agencies on aging, chambers of commerce and others.

The interviews served to gather an assessment of how well current transit service in Greater Minnesota is meeting local needs. Questions focused on service gaps, groups benefiting from additional transit, priorities for expanding service and emerging transit issues.

A summary of the results of the interviews are included below. Additional information is included in the exhibits of this report.

Table 1 – Summary of Results from Structured Interviews

Topic	Top Responses
Greatest needs for additional transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded service area and hours Access to service in rural areas Education on available transit
Groups benefiting most from additional transit service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors (83%) Disabled (69%)
Greatest challenges facing transit in the next 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in fuel costs Availability of funding Aging population Coordination/crossing borders

6.3 ELECTRONIC SURVEY

An electronic survey was conducted with transit providers throughout Greater Minnesota as a complementary data collection method to the structured interviews. In October 2008, 35 surveys were completed with transit providers from across the state.

Survey questions focused on many of the same topics as the structured interviews, however, the on-line survey also included several questions on the coordination of services.

The table below shows a summary of the results from the electronic survey. Additional information is included in the exhibits of this report.

Table 2 – Summary of Results from Electronic Survey

Topic	Top Responses
Customer group benefiting most from additional transit service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors (37%) Commuters (23%)
Service gaps in current transit system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time of service (74%) Service area coverage (51%)
Current barriers to expanding/improving service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for operations (97%) Funding for equipment (43%)

Top priorities for new funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded service hours (43%) • Expanded service area (34%)
Greatest challenges to providing service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding (94%) • Fuel prices (29%) • Labor costs (29%)
Experiencing benefit from coordinating transit services with other organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (89%) • No (3%) • Does Not Apply (8%)

7.0 OTHER PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Several additional public involvement strategies were used to engage stakeholders and the general public.

Fact Sheet

A project fact sheet was developed to summarize the project and provide background. The fact sheet was provided to workshop attendees, placed on the project website, and provided to anyone, including media outlets, requesting additional information on the project.

Project Website

The project website was updated with MnDOT staff to reflect the most current information on the project. The website was promoted to stakeholders and the general public throughout the public involvement activities as a resource for learning about the project and staying informed about project updates.

Technical Team Meetings

Meetings with the Technical Team were held regularly to review public involvement materials. Ongoing communications were also conducted with the Team to ensure committee review of stakeholder communications materials, including interview and survey questions, fact sheets, press releases and web site content.

Advisory Committee Meetings

Meetings were held with the Advisory Committee to provide information and gain support on key public involvement strategies. The Advisory Committee also participated in the development of the vision, goals and strategies.

8.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM FINDINGS

The findings of the public involvement program include the below list of key themes identified by stakeholders.

- ***Expand Service Hours and Area***
The need for expanded service hours and area was noted throughout the stakeholder process. Key issues were evening and weekend service, as well as expanded options for service in rural areas.
- ***Expand the Core***
In contrast to the need for expanded service hours and area, a need for expanding core services was also identified. This includes increasing service frequencies and adding service capability during core service hours of 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- ***Technology***
Stakeholders identified a need for the expanded use of technology in trip planning and the coordination of services.
- ***Commuter Services***
Communities of all sizes expressed a need for increased commuter services to keep their transit systems and their communities viable.
- ***Rideshare***
Expanding or promoting rideshare resources was identified as a possible strategy for expanding service, particularly under budgetary constraints.
- ***Volunteer Driver Programs***
The expansion of resources for volunteer driver programs was also noted as a possible cost-effective strategy for expanding service.
- ***Infrastructure***
Infrastructure, such as park-and-rides, transfer stations, and service hubs, was identified as a need for expanding services.
- ***Right-Size Vehicles and Vehicle Accessibility***
The need for size-appropriate vehicles was noted as a need for increasing service availability and efficiency. A need for additional accessible vehicles was also expressed as a key need, particularly in rural areas.
- ***Coordination***
Coordination of services between transit providers and agencies was identified as a high priority to increase system efficiencies.
- ***Mobility Managers***
The use of a mobility manager, either statewide or regionally, was identified as a strategy for expanding and improving coordination efforts.
- ***Regulation and Insurance Issues***
Stakeholders expressed a need for clarification or easing of transit regulations. It was also noted that insurance issues need to be addressed.

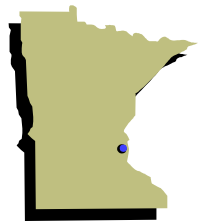
- ***Information and Education***
Stakeholders noted a lack of awareness on current transit options in Greater Minnesota and expressed a need for additional information and education on available services.
- ***Medical Service and Rider Aides***
Stakeholders identified a growing need for rider aides for transit users with specialized medical needs. A greater need for the coordination of medical trips by nursing homes and assisted living facilities was also identified.
- ***Funding and Costs***
The availability of funding was noted by stakeholders throughout the public involvement process as a challenge to providing service. Rising fuel prices were also identified as a challenge.

The above findings have provided a starting point for the development of the vision and transit policies for the *2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan*. The final vision and policies will reflect the issues and themes as identified by the public involvement program.

EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT A

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT METHODOLOGY MEMO



Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan

Public Involvement Methodology Memo August 12, 2008

Prepared for:

Minnesota Department of Transportation – Office of Transit

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Greater Minnesota Transportation Plan

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I. Memo Purpose and Project Background

This Memo outlines the methodology for involving stakeholders and the general public in the update to the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan. Key tactics for implementing the public involvement program are identified within this memo.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation's (Mn/DOT) Office of Transit is responsible for the provision of public transit services in Greater Minnesota in partnership with the federal government and local communities. To maintain this role, Mn/DOT uses policy documents, including the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan, to help guide and shape its investments. These plans are updated from time to time to reflect changing needs and priorities.

Prepared in 2001, the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan identifies reasonable targets for the state programs to meet a greater level of need for public transportation across the state. Through this plan, Mn/DOT continues working toward the goal of making public transportation available to residents of all 80 counties in Greater Minnesota.

The intent of revising the 2001 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan in 2008 is to update the 20-year strategic plan that is currently in place to refine the future vision for public transportation across Greater Minnesota and to lay the foundation to achieve that vision. The updated plan will identify steps needed to preserve the long-standing investment in current public transit services across the state and look for opportunities to enhance mobility options for the general public and target market groups of the elderly, low income, disabled and commuters.

II. Public Involvement Goals

The goals of the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan public involvement program are as follows:

- To create opportunities for public involvement, focusing on the specific stakeholder groups including minority groups, the elderly, low-income, disabled and commuter consumer groups, Greater Minnesota transit providers and Section 5310 fund recipients.
- To ensure that Greater Minnesota residents, businesses and community leaders are well informed about the Transit Plan and how they can get their issues and concerns heard.
- To use the public involvement strategies to identify opportunities within the state and to guide the development of Mn/DOT's vision for transit's future.
- To integrate and coordinate public involvement with technical tasks and timelines.

III. Project Management and Decision Making

The project management and decision making structure for this project is presented below. This structure serves as a guide for both internal and external communications.

- **Technical Team**

The Technical Team will provide overall project management and guide the work of the consultant team. For public involvement activities, the Team will:

1. Review and approve surveys and other materials for release to stakeholders.
2. Facilitate stakeholder communications.
3. Obtain, organize, and integrate stakeholder and public input into the plan update process.

Technical Team and Consultant Team members are identified on page 2 of this report and include select staff from the MnDOT Office of Transit.

- **Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee will be responsible for providing advice at key milestones on a broader level than that of the Technical Team. The Advisory Committee will:

1. Provide advisory services for the development of the vision.
2. Provide assistance with stakeholder communications, including engaging stakeholders in the public involvement process.

The Advisory Committee includes representation from the following organizations:

- Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)
 - Office of Transit
 - Office of Aeronautics
 - Office of Investment Management
 - Planning, Modal and Data Management Division
 - District Transit Project Managers
- Arrowhead Regional Development Commission
- Association of Minnesota Counties
- Center for Transportation Studies
- Chisago/Isanti County Heartland Express
- Duluth Transit Authority
- East Central Regional Development Commission
- Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Metropolitan Council
- Minnesota Board on Aging
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

- Minnesota Department of Health
 - Minnesota Department of Human Services
 - Minnesota Public Transit Association
 - Minnesota State Council on Disabilities
 - UDAC
- **MnDOT Commissioner**
The Plan will be complete upon signature of the MnDOT Commissioner.

IV. Key Messages

This section includes key messages that can be used throughout the project when communicating with stakeholders, the general public, and the media.

• **Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan**

The intent of the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan is to define the future vision for public transportation across Greater Minnesota and to lay the foundation to achieve that vision. The plan will identify steps needed to preserve the long-standing investment in current public transit services across the state and look for opportunities to enhance mobility options for the general public and target market groups of the elderly, low income, disabled and commuters. Through this plan, Mn/DOT continues working toward the goal of making public transportation available to residents of all 80 counties in Greater Minnesota.

• **Project Timeline**

Revisions to the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan began in June 2008 and is scheduled to be completed in December 2008. Public involvement activities will be ongoing throughout the project. Structured interviews and on-line surveys will take place with key stakeholders in July 2008. Additionally, a series of seven facilitated workshops throughout greater Minnesota are slated to occur in September 2008.

• **Importance of Stakeholder Involvement**

Stakeholder involvement is key to the success of the project. Stakeholder input will provide the MnDOT Office of Transit with the information it needs to develop a public transportation plan and transit policies that will benefit greater Minnesota and reflects the input of the stakeholders.

V. Stakeholders

The following is a list of possible stakeholders related to the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan Update. Stakeholders will be involved at several different levels, from participating in dialogue at workshops to receiving press releases with project

information. The organizations listed below are only potential stakeholders and may not all be incorporated into the stakeholder process. Final stakeholder lists will be created as each public involvement project element is developed.

State/Government Agencies

- Department of Transportation Office of Transit
 - District Managers
- Minnesota Department of Human Services
 - Aging and Adult Services Division
 - Disability Services Division (Developmental Disabilities)
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
 - State Services for the Blind
- Minnesota Department of Education
 - School Bus Division
- Minnesota Department of Veteran's Affairs
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Indian Affairs Council
- Regional Development Commissions

Public and Specialized Transit Providers

- Public transit system operators
- For-profit transit operators
- Nonprofit transit operators
- 5310 transit operators
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section
- Minnesota Public Transit Association
- University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies

Regional Human Services Agencies/Organizations

- County Departments of Human Services
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Disabled Veterans of Minnesota
- Minnesota Board on Aging
- Minnesota DeafBlind Association
- American Council of the Blind of Minnesota
- Regional United Way offices
- Head Start and preschool programs
- Senior community services
- Regional workforce centers

Business Organizations

- Chambers of Commerce

Healthcare Organizations

- Hospitals
- Nursing homes

Elected Officials

- Federal legislators
- State legislators
- County commissioners
- City council members

General Public

- Seniors
- Low income
- Disabled
- Minority groups
- Transit commuters
- Youth

Media

- Local newspapers, radio and TV stations

VII. Communication Strategies

Several strategies are proposed to address the public involvement needs for the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan Update.

Structured Interviews with Agency Leaders

Structured interviews will be conducted with approximately 35 leaders of state and regional agencies. The interviews will serve to gather an assessment of how well current transit service in greater Minnesota is meeting local needs. Questions will focus on service gaps, priorities for expanding service, emerging transit issues, and other topics related to public transit service in greater Minnesota. The results of the interviews will be summarized for use in developing the facilitated workshops (see below).

On-Line Survey

An on-line survey will be conducted with transit providers throughout the state of Minnesota. The survey will be a complementary data collection method to the structured interviews. Questions will focus on many of the same topics as the structured interviews, however, the on-line survey will also include questions on coordination of services. The on-line survey will be more succinct than the structured interviews to accommodate the electronic format. The results of the survey will also be used in developing the facilitated workshops (see below).

Facilitated Workshops

A series of seven facilitated workshops will be held in the Rochester, St. Cloud, Bemidji, Duluth, Mankato, Marshall and Moorhead areas. The workshops will serve the dual purpose of gathering input on public transit service from key stakeholder groups, as well as providing an opportunity for the general public to learn about the project. The workshops will be structured to include a facilitated discussion with key stakeholders along with an open forum to allow for the general public to learn about the project. The discussions will build upon information that was provided through the locally developed plans.

Fact Sheet

The project team will develop a fact sheet to summarize the project. The fact sheet will be available for use at the facilitated workshops and stakeholder communications. In addition, the fact sheet will be posted on the project web site.

Project Website

The project website will be updated on an as-needed basis to reflect the most current information on the project. The website will be promoted to stakeholders as well as the general public as a resource for learning about the project.

Media Relations

The project team will conduct media relations in coordination with the facilitated workshops. Prior to the facilitated workshops, the project team will issue press releases to regional media outlets to promote the workshops and gain coverage for the project. Additional media relations will be conducted on an as-needed basis.

Technical Team Meetings

Meetings with the Technical Team will be held on an as-needed basis to review public involvement materials. Ongoing communications will also be conducted with the Team to ensure committee review of stakeholder communications materials, including interview and survey questions, fact sheets, press releases and web site content.

Advisory Committee Meetings

Meetings will be held with the Advisory Committee on an as-needed basis to gain support on key public involvement strategies.

EXHIBIT B

PROJECT FACT SHEET

2008 Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan

Project Background

The update to the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan will define the future vision for public transportation across Greater Minnesota and lay the foundation to achieve that vision. The plan will:

- Identify steps needed to preserve the long-standing investment in current public transit services across the state.
- Look for opportunities to enhance mobility options for the general public.
- Focus on the target market groups of the elderly, low income, disabled and commuters.

Project Management

- Project Leader: Minnesota Department of Transportation Office of Transit
- Advisory Committee
 - o Assembled to provide guidance at key project milestones
 - o Members include key leaders in public transportation
- Technical Team
 - o Assembled to conduct public involvement and technical work needed to develop the plan
 - o Members include MnDOT and consultant staff
- Final Approval: The plan will be final following the approval of the MnDOT Commissioner.

Project Timeline

Task	Timeline
Project Launch	Spring 2008
Telephone and On-Line Surveys with Stakeholders	Summer 2008
Statewide Workshops	Fall 2008
Plan Finalized	Winter 2008

Public Input

Stakeholder involvement is key to the success of the project. MnDOT will use stakeholder comments to develop a public transportation plan and transit policies that will benefit greater Minnesota and reflects the input of the stakeholders.

For More Information

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FACILITATED WORKSHOPS

EXHIBIT C1: KEY THEMES BY WORKSHOP

EXHIBIT C2: RESULTS OF PRIORITIZATION EXERCISE

EXHIBIT C3: INDIVIDUAL WORKSHOP DISCUSSION NOTES AND ATTENDEES

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan:
Key Themes by Workshop**

DRAFT

11/14/2008

1. 9/9/08: Detroit Lakes

- Expand the core – need for more weekend, evening service
- Expand commuter service
- Educate prospective users
- Use more technology for trip scheduling
- Need size appropriate vehicles
- Already doing coordination well

2. 9/11/08: St. Cloud

- Expand service hours, particularly into the evenings, for disabled, workers, elderly and rural residents
- Educate prospective users
- Use more technology – trip sharing tools, aid in coordination
- Establish a mobility manager
- Need strategies and communication for coordination and crossing county lines
- Need infrastructure to support expanded service, including park and rides

3. 9/12/08: Marshall

- Extend service to additional rural communities/full county
- Provide evening service
- Provide weekend service
- Need to establish service standards
- Consolidate fragmented services
- Create web-based trip planning tool
- Educate prospective users
- Use more technology for trip scheduling
- Expand planning efforts between regional and local agencies
 - Cross state lines for medical trips
- More commuter service is needed
- Consolidation, not coordination
- Expand the core
- Number of riders needing aides is increasing
- Increasing need for bi-lingual drivers
- Service needs for preschool and school-age children

4. 9/17/08: Duluth

- Vision (high-speed rail)
- Expand commuter service and infrastructure (park and rides, hubs)
- Hybrid service – explore how to integrate modes (i.e. rideshare, volunteer drivers, park and rides, fixed route, door-to-door)
- Connect the modes (sidewalks, bikes)
- Extend service to rural communities/full county
- Develop high-speed rail between Duluth and the Twin Cities

11/14/2008

- Identify someone to lead coordination efforts on the local end (mobility manager)
- Create a regional approach to coordination – establish transit provider groups/networks/partnerships

5. 9/18/08: Bemidji

- Commuter service greatest need
- Use transit as a tool for economic growth. Large employers are tenuous due to lack of transit for employees in rural areas.
- Increase core service
- Work on coordination for service from rural areas to urban centers
- Already doing coordination well
- Need size-appropriate vehicles
- Aversion for elderly first-time riders

6. 9/24/08: Rochester

- High priority is park and ride facilities – expand, look at state incentives for developing and maintaining park and rides
- Increased demand for commuter service
- Rideshare technology tool needed (technology)
- Coordinate with school buses to either use vehicles when not in use or share trips between schoolchildren and other users
- Change DHS per diems to make coordination with other agencies easier
- Expand peak-hour service (increase the core)

7. 9/25/08: Mankato

- Clarify DHS regulations and eligibility rules
- Need more commuter service; look at rideshare programs, park and rides
- Need funding for local coordinators (mobility managers)
- Address insurance issues
- Bring DHS/MnDOT coordination down to local level
- Expand core service
- Use size-appropriate vehicles (vans vs. buses)
- Expand transportation services across county lines
- Coordinate services with health care providers, shift responsibility to them

Needs	Category	# Identified as Priority
Provide evening service	Service	40
Use more technology for trip scheduling	General Needs	33
Educate prospective users/create realistic expectations	Marketing/Info	32
Start using size-appropriate vehicles (vans versus buses)	Service	28
Extend service to additional rural communities/full county	Service	22
Expand employee (commuter) service	Service	22
Encourage nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, and healthcare providers to coordinate trips of residents	Service	18
Provide weekend service, particularly for disabled user groups	Service	17
Expand transportation services across county lines	Service	17
Start park and ride connections/develop infrastructure	Service	16
Establish a mobility manager	General Needs	16
Provide more shuttles/corridor-type service between hubs	Service	13
Expand planning efforts between local, regional and state agencies	Coordination	13
Fill gaps by using existing providers – don't start new	Service	12
Coordinate services between counties	Coordination	12
Clarify DHS regulations and eligibility rules	Regulation	12
Provide service to major (longer distance) medical facilities, particularly for elderly user groups	Service	11
Find ways to ease program regulations (inter-regional travel)	Regulation	11
Create web-based trip planning tool	Marketing/Info	11
Expand service day to include early weekday morning	Service	9
Provide more accessible vehicles in rural areas	Service	9
Address volunteer driver liability insurance issues	Insurance	8
Consolidate fragmented services	Service	7
Establish more coordination/collaboration	Coordination	7
Establish transit providers groups/networking or coordination	Coordination	7
Share "best practices" across state	Coordination	7
Implement changes to DHS per diems	Regulation	7
Provide standardized insurance through feds or state	Insurance	7
Create quick access telephone information service	Marketing/Info	7
Develop high speed rail between Duluth and Twin Cities	General Needs	7
Provide more service for elderly to social events	Service	6
Expand use of aids and escorts for agency clients with special needs	Service	6
Increase frequency of service	Service	6
Identify someone to lead coordination efforts on local end	Coordination	6
Establish partnerships for joint ventures	Coordination	6
Get adequate and affordable insurance coverage	Insurance	6
Conduct more advertising	Marketing/Info	6

Needs	Category	# Identified as Priority
Link agency web sites	Marketing/Info	6
Increase effectiveness (productivity) of volunteer drivers	General Needs	6
Work towards a vision for transit	General Needs	6
Connect modes (bikes, sidewalks)	General Needs	6
Expand opportunities for flexible scheduling	Service	5
Create incentives for providers of off-hour employment service	Service	5
Improve coordination of contract and general public riders	Coordination	5
Encourage agency-to-agency coordination	Coordination	5
Compile service inventories/resource guides	Marketing/Info	5
Promote services in actual service areas (not countywide)	Marketing/Info	5
Provide volunteers or escorts for first-time riders	Marketing/Info	5
Expand driver training	General Needs	5
Extend service to outlying job growth areas	Service	4
Establish medical feeders/hospital shuttles	Service	4
Coordinate user trip schedules with medical appointments	Service	4
Expand resources available to rideshare programs	Service	4
Expand peak hour service	Service	4
Coordinate with school buses	Coordination	4
Loosen regulations to broaden use of equipment	Regulation	4
Resolve conflict issues with private sector	General Needs	4
Find a way to use trips for off-hours services	General Needs	4
Establish connections to intercity bus carriers	Service	3
Link school districts and transit for after school activities	Service	3
Expand disabled access to jobs using "right-size" vehicles (vans, taxis, etc.)	Service	3
Identify agencies that have resources/expertise to share	Coordination	3
Modify STS regulations	Regulation	3
Provide bus schedules with listed stops	Marketing/Info	3
Develop a request a ride website	Marketing/Info	3
Keep track of service refusals/turn downs	General Needs	3
Level the fields between public and private providers	General Needs	3
Develop more fuel efficient (green) needs	General Needs	3
Provide college service	Service	2
Provide service to large retail centers	Service	2
Provide better service to veteran's hospitals (St. Cloud, Mpls)	Service	2
Use 5310 vehicles as back-up or supplements	Service	2
Use public transit vehicles to supplement 5310 service	Service	2
Promote better inter-agency scheduling of trips	Service	2
Use volunteer driver programs to expand demand response service	Service	2
Create passenger rail service	Service	2

Needs	Category	# Identified as Priority
Explore bulk purchases between human services and transit	Coordination	2
Improve consistency of state regulation across service types	Regulation	2
Clarify regulations of City-only versus local community service	Regulation	2
Eliminate insurance restrictions on sharing vehicles	Insurance	2
General information display	Marketing/Info	2
Implement a travel-training program	Marketing/Info	2
Create book of standards for use of volunteers by agencies	General Needs	2
Concentrate services in county seats	Service	1
Increase service to largest employers	Service	1
Provide long distance paratransit service to regional centers	Service	1
Identify human service trip generators	Service	1
Expand commuter coach service	Service	1
Coordinate delivery services with agencies	Coordination	1
Cross utilize volunteers across agencies	Coordination	1
Broaden availability of public planning data	Coordination	1
Get DHS to relax rules for consumer utilization of funds for transportation	Regulation	1
Create multi-purpose transportation permits	Regulation	1
Create web-based directory of providers	Marketing/Info	1
Create inventory of service eligibility requirements	Marketing/Info	1
Provide guides in 2nd grade english	Marketing/Info	1
Signage for park and rides	Marketing/Info	1
Market use of transit statewide	Marketing/Info	1
Develop mechanism to reimburse informal providers	General Needs	1
Provide seasonal service for resorts	Service	0
Establish connections to airlines	Service	0
Establish car loan/car repair program	Service	0
Encourage bilingual drivers/escorts	Service	0
Determine most appropriate service for new residential areas (route or demand)	Service	0
"Sell" coordination to administrators	Coordination	0
Expand coordination with faith-based groups	Coordination	0
Expand planning efforts between local and regional agencies	Coordination	0
Provide information in alternative languages (Spanish, Somali)	Marketing/Info	0
Ease qualification requirements for volunteers	General Needs	0
TOTAL		656

Attendees

1. Linda Bair, Hubbard County Heartland Express	2. Jody Martenson, MnDOT District 4
3. Colleen Winter, MN Workforce Center	4. Daryn Toso, Transit Alternatives/Otter Express Public Transit
5. Sel Forno, Transit Alternatives/Otter Express Public Transit	6. Pam Jenson, Wadena County Social Services (Friendly Rider Transit)
7. Nate Aalgaard, Freedom Resource Center	8. Harold Jennissen, Rainbow Rider Transit
9. Georgia Beaudry, Clay County Rural Transit	10. Lori Van Beek, Moorhead Transit
11. Pat Puetz, Lakes Area Bicycle Club/State Bicycle Advisory Committee	12. Wayne Hurley, West Central Initiative
13. Hank Ludtke, City of Frazee	14. Mark Tysver, Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging
15. Glenn Gifford, Lakes Area Bicycle Club	16. Keven Anderson, MnDOT District 4
17. Noel Shughart, MnDOT	18. Mike Schadauer, MnDOT
19. Joe Kern, SRF	20. Linda Gondringer, RRA

Discussion Notes

Service

- Seniors need evening service for social trips (life-enhancing trips)
- Evening service needed for shift work for both disabled and general workers
- Evening service needed in urban areas
- Weekend service need greater than evening service need
- Sunday service needed in some areas
- Trips to church, grocery store on weekends
- Ottertail has more requests on Saturdays
- Youth market is expanding - high demand in some areas by school districts/after-school activities
- Early weekday morning service is needed for early shift workers
- Small rural areas need transit –transit is intermittent
- Look at expanding shuttles/corridors for medium distance trips
- Need longer distance transit options to Fargo-Moorhead
- Need for more direct or express services between hubs
- Development of retail centers and other destinations on outskirts of communities presents challenges for transit (e.g. Walmart)

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan
Facilitated Workshop: Detroit Lakes, September 9, 2008**

DRAFT

- Need to expand service to outside perimeter of the city
- Need for longer distance medical destinations
- Growing need for college service, though carpooling is picking up
- Work to get buy-in from large employers
- Often hard to get enough riders to make expansion financially viable
- Very hard to group medical appointments, but it would help a lot
- Try to get para-transit to public/fixed route service by providing an aide
- Develop park and ride facilities
- State needs to fund accessible vans instead of buses
- Need to design pedestrian/bike friendly communities
- There is a need for a car loan program, but that is not public transit's responsibility
- Crossing county lines is not an issue
- Good connections established for intercity bus service
- Connections to airlines already taken care of by private providers

Marketing/Information

- Need for general information about availability of service
- Language barriers are still an issue
- More signage is needed
- Look at use of direct mail to educate prospective users
- Seniors are afraid to ride for the first time

General

- Drug testing is a barrier for using taxis for off hour-service needs
- Delete “need to reimburse informal providers” and “create a level playing field” from list of needs

Coordination

Barriers to Coordination

- Insurance limitations
- Turf issues
- Shift of responsibility with no funding
- Equipment availability

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan
Facilitated Workshop: Detroit Lakes, September 9, 2008**

DRAFT

Opportunities for Coordination

- State department dialogue –
 - Try a facilitated process – MnDOT should facilitate
 - Get Council of Disabilities, Veteran’s Affairs involved
- Contracting (e.g. sheltered employment)

Prioritization Exercise Results

Service	Marketing/Info	Other
Expand employee (commuter) service (8)	Educate prospective users (4)	Use more technology for trip scheduling (5)
Start using size-appropriate vehicles (vans vs. buses) (6)	General information display (2)	Find a way to use trips for off-hours services (4)
Provide evening service (seniors, workers w/ disabilities (shifts), urban services) (5)	Create inventory of service eligibility requirements (1)	Get consistency in MnDOT decisions on deployment of county-wide versus city and county services (1)
Provide weekend service, particularly for disabled groups. Sunday, AM services (4)	Translate guides in 2nd grade English (1)	
Encourage nursing homes and assisted-living facilities to coordinate trips of residents (3)	Signage for park and rides (1)	
Provide service to major (long-distance) medical facilities, particularly for elderly user groups (Fargo/Moorhead, Brainerd, St. Cloud, Bemidji) (2)		
Expand service day to include early weekday morning (early shifts) (1)		
Increase service to largest employers (1)		
Provide more accessible vehicles in rural areas (1)		
Expand use of aides and escorts for agency clients with special needs (1)		
Fill gaps by using existing providers - don't start new (1)		
Start park and ride connections (1)		

Attendees

1. Chris Heid, Tri-CAP Transit	2. Tom Cruikshank, St. Cloud Metro Bus
3. Steven Voss, MnDOT District 3	4. Scott Marick, St. Cloud APO
5. Mary Fenske, Self-Advocates Minnesota/ARC Central	6. David Knapp, St. Cloud Metro Bus
7. Tony Keller, St. Cloud Metro Bus	8. Terry Markfort, St. Cloud Metro Bus
9. Bob Bollenbeck, East Central Regional Development Commission	10. Mary Safgren, MnDOT District 3
11. Tom Jay, Brainerd/Crow Wing Public Transit	12. Dean Loidolt, Central Minnesota Council on Aging
13. Scott Gretsches, Hoglund Bus Company	14. Shannon Tietz, Tri-CAP Transit
15. Pete Brown, Industries Incorporated	16. John Carlstad, St. Cloud resident
17. Kelly Schroepfer, MN State Council on Disability	18. Cassie Hart, KNSI News
19. Mike Schadauer, MnDOT	20. Noel Shughart, MnDOT
21. Tim Henkel, MnDOT	22. Joe Kern, SRF
23. Linda Gondringer, RRA	24. Samantha Yocom, RRA

Discussion Notes

Service

- Need for additional evening services, especially for disabled and elderly users
- Need for Saturday and Sunday service
- Commuters need service on weekdays, particularly early mornings
- Transit needs expanded hours - urban centers are becoming 24/7 communities
- People cannot work certain shifts because they don't have transit
- Service needed in St. Cloud to 10:00pm or possibly 12:00 midnight on Saturdays, other weekdays as well
- Service for disabled users in rural areas is limited, need more evening service
- Need to acknowledge Northstar corridor and impact it will have on meeting needs
- More service to social events is needed
- Expand service hours - service 8-4 is no longer sufficient
- Need strategies for crossing county lines. Barriers to crossing county lines are mostly distance and vehicle availability issues, not political issues.
 - There are pockets of people that don't get served because provider doesn't serve that county
- Need for transit for workers in/to Brainerd area
- Need infrastructure to support expanded service, including park and rides
- Northstar Line commuter coach is coming in 2009; need to provide connector service or park and rides.

- Efforts have been made to link w/ schools in rural area; but school needs come at busiest time of the day.
 - Not enough capacity to serve school/after-school needs
 - Question of whose responsibility it is to take school trips
- Need connections to intercity bus carriers.
- Good to coordinate with 5310 providers, but their capacity if being filled by increased demand
- Equipment
 - Nice to have more small vehicles with lifts
 - Look at adding vans for 5310 providers
- Coordinate/supplement trips, working to fill vehicles when scheduling trips
- Flexible scheduling is needed, but is difficult to coordinate
- Technology
 - Use technology in rural areas to share information
 - Use the internet and low cost technology to coordinate
 - Create a conduit of information
 - We are missing trips, or having inefficiencies, by not using technology
 - Create a website for the general public so they can identify what they need
- Use existing providers first

Marketing/Information

- State needs to do a better job advertising
- Develop a request-a-ride website
- Need better information for sight-impaired citizens

General

- Need fuel efficient vehicles
- Volunteer driver requirements do not need to be eased

Coordination

- Expand/implement use of a mobility manager
- Educate staff on other services available
- Make referrals to other organizations
- Identify barriers to mobility
 - Talk to people working on scheduling

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan
Facilitated Workshop: St. Cloud, September 11, 2008**

DRAFT

- Need technology to understand current service
- Identify barriers (funding, county boundaries, etc.)
- Make coordination 2-way
 - Public < - > Private
- Educate legislators on need for transit
- Opportunities for coordination exist, but more communication is needed
- Funding should go to public transportation first

Prioritization Exercise Results

Service	Marketing/Info	Other
Provide evening service for disabled, workers, elderly and rural residents (12)	Educate prospective users (5)	Use more technology for trip scheduling (7)
Develop infrastructure for commuter service (park and rides) (6)	"Request a Ride" website (3)	Establish a mobility manager (5)
Use mobility manager (4)	Create a web-based planning tool (1)	Develop more fuel efficient (green) needs (3)
Provide weekend service (3)	Conduct more advertising (1)	Resolve conflict issues with private sector (1)
Expand transportation services across county lines (3)	Implement a travel-training program (1)	
Fill gaps with existing providers (3)		
Extend service to additional rural communities/full county (2)		
Provide more shuttles/corridor-type service between hubs (2)		
Extend service to outlying job growth areas (2)		
Provide more accessible vehicles in rural areas (2)		
Use public transit vehicles to supplement 5310 service (2)		
Expand commuter coach service (1)		
Provide service to large retail center (1)		

Prioritization Exercise Results Cont.

Service	Marketing/Info	Other
Establish connections to intercity bus carriers (1)		
Expand service to include early weekday morning (1)		
Encourage nursing homes and assisted living facilities to coordinate trips of residents (1)		

Attendees

1. John Groothuis, Kandiyohi Area Transit	2. Tiffany Collins, Kandiyohi Area Transit
3. Donn Winckler, Mid-Minnesota Development Commission	4. Nick Haggemiller, Montevideo Community Development Director
5. Bill McVicker, Pipestone County Transit	6. Jeanette Aguirre, Western Community Action
7. Ted Stamp, Southwestern Center for Independent Living	8. Cara Nielsen, Lincoln County Transit
9. Rachel Schniederma, Renville County Heartland Express	10. Donna Anderson, Meeker County Public Transit
11. Marvin Tinklenberg, Pipestone County Commissioner	12. Jacki Anderson, Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission
13. Michelle Miranowski, Murray County Heartland Express	14. Richard Olson, Prairie 5 Rides
15. Gary Ludwig, Trailblazer Transit	16. Dennis Smith, Granite Falls Heartland Express
17. Glenn Olson, City of Marshall Public Works	18. Ray Rought, MnDOT
19. Mike Schadauer, MnDOT	20. Noel Shughart, MnDOT
21. Beverly Hirfindahl, MnDOT District 8	22. Joe Kern, SRF
23. Samantha Yocom, RRA	

Discussion Notes

Service

- Demand for school/after school/recreation trips is increasing
 - Family members also need to get to work
 - Limited vehicle availability
 - Everything happening at peak hours
 - Serving children is a safety issue
 - Daycare, preschool needs are increasing, needs mid-day
- Aging population creating increased service demand
 - Increase in assisted living facilities resulting in increased demand for service
- Crossing state line for medical trips is an issue due to insurance and available resources
- Increased demand for specialty clinics
 - Clinics are not in regional centers, but are scattered throughout region
- Number of riders needing aides is increasing
 - Needed for long-distance medical trips
- 5310 recipients wanting to get out of transportation and leaning more on public transit

- Shopping increasingly only at regional centers, resulting in longer distance trips
- Elderly services/facilities are increasing group outings and relying on county transportation services, as they can't afford their own
- Businesses are asking for more service for employees
 - Want routes through neighborhood communities to businesses, but residents are too scattered to create an effective route
 - Commuters expect fast routes, want convenience
 - Commuter services, particularly for persons with disabilities, is needed to maintain access to jobs.
- More service needed in certain areas
- Evening/weekend/Sunday service is needed
- Expanded hours needed – expand hours of traditional day to 8pm
 - With 8-4 service hours, workers depending on transit have no way to run errands
- Need more of the same thing from 6am – 6pm (build the core)
- Rural elderly population needs door-to-door service
- Regular daily public transit is often limited to the largest town/city in the county. Service needs to be expanded to rural areas.
- Para-transit does not exist in rural areas

Marketing/Information

- English barrier is still an issue - more education in other languages is needed

General

- Finding good volunteer drivers is difficult
- Volunteer programs are expensive due to mileage reimbursement rates

Coordination

- Coordinate with public works/engineering issues
 - Develop streets to accommodate transit
- No formal way to share trip information between counties – need technology, resources, staff
- Need incentives to implement coordination
- Reporting, revenue is challenging to coordinate
 - Multiple billing sources
- Coordination is ineffective – need to move toward consolidation of services.

- Need to bridge services between communities, regions, and health care systems so the number of one-passenger vehicles going to similar destinations is reduced.
- Common “Standards and Procedures” are needed between State and local services, making possible efficient use of existing transit services.
- Policy issues exist between human service agencies, managed care providers and transit programs regarding interpretation of client rights in accessing services. There is resistance to change existing procedures on how things are done. Consequently, silos are created and services are duplicated.
- Funding usage limitations, service area boundaries, inter agency regulations/issues, and required specific uses of vehicles often limits/prohibits combined rider usage and restricts real coordination of services
- Need for readily available coordinated regional accessible public transit in greater MN
- Need a dedicated management information system to collect regional rider request information, including town of origin and destination.
- Non-standardized contracts/protocol between agencies is an issue
- Needs are counter-intuitive to performance standards

Prioritization Exercise Results

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Extend service to additional rural communities/full county (8)	Create web-based trip planning tool (8)	Use more technology for trip scheduling (11)	Expand planning efforts between local and regional agencies (7)
Provide evening service (6)	Educate prospective users (6)	Create book of standards for use of volunteers by agencies (2)	Find ways to ease program regulations (inter-regional travel) (4)
Provide weekend service, particularly for disabled user groups (5)	Link agency web sites (2)		Improve coordination of contract and general public riders (4)
Consolidate fragmented services (5)	Provide volunteers or escorts for first-time riders (1)		Coordinate services between counties (4)
Expand use of aids and escorts for agency clients with special needs (4)			Provide standardized insurance through feds or state (3)
Start using size-appropriate vehicles (4)			Share "best practices" across the state (2)

Prioritization Exercise Results Cont.

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Expand opportunities for flexible scheduling (3)			Modify STS regulations (1)
Encourage nursing homes and assisted living facilities to coordinate trips of residents (3)			Get DHS to relax rules for consumer utilization of funds for transportation (1)
Expand service day to include early weekday morning (2)			Get adequate and affordable insurance coverage (1)
Expand transportation services across county lines (2)			Eliminate insurance restrictions on sharing vehicles (1)
Provide more accessible vehicles in rural areas (2)			
Expand disabled access to jobs using "right-size" vehicles (1)			
Provide more shuttles/corridor-type service between hubs (1)			
Expand employee (commuter) service (1)			
Provide better service to veteran's hospitals (St. Cloud, Mpls) (1)			
Provide more service for elderly to social events (1)			

Attendees

1. Judy Breuer, Student	2. Patrick Dorin, Transit Advocate
3. Catherine Sampson, Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging	4. Al Hazebroek, Hermantown Resident
5. Susan Koschak, Minnesota State Bicycle Advisory Committee	6. Sarah Chambers, Duluth Resident
7. Cheri Pederson, City of Duluth Engineering Division	8. Dennis Jensen, Duluth Transit Authority
9. Jim Heilig, Duluth Transit Authority	10. Denny Johnson, MnDOT
11. Ben Van Tassel, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission	12. Holly Butcher, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission
13. Jack Larson, Arrowhead Transit/Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency	14. Don Mohawk, MnDOT District 1
15. Mike Schadauer, MnDOT	16. Noel Shughart, MnDOT
17. Joe Kern, SRF	18. Samantha Yocom, RRA

Discussion Notes

Service

- Jurisdictional barriers create a perceived rider challenge
- Difficult to accommodate elderly transit needs, as most are medical trips
 - Need to explore public-private partnerships
- Increased need for long-distance medical trips
- Missing service from rural areas to urban centers
- Need a focus on county systems
- Increase fuel and vehicle prices is driving increased demand for transit
- Ridesharing is an untapped resources
- Need accommodations for park-and-ride and rideshare users
 - Infrastructure (Lots with security)
 - Look at partnering with private partners to enhance options, use existing locations
 - Establish park-and-ride networks
- High demand for student service
- Make connections to inter-city bus service
- Many users not served by fixed route or ADA service
 - Look at expanding use of escorts
- Commuters need convenience in system (e.g. frequency, connections)

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan
Facilitated Workshop: Duluth, September 17, 2008**

DRAFT

- Formal transit not always best solution
 - Partner with flexible funds so that funding can go further (hybrid)
- Integrate modes
 - Connect transit with bike routes, keeping in mind that most popular bike routes may not be signed
 - Need safe places to secure bikes at stops and park-and-rides
 - Coordinate sidewalks with transit systems
- Work toward a vision of transit (high-speed rail, connectivity, etc.)

Marketing/Information

- Difficult to get accurate information on service – perceived as difficult to ride
- Expand information base
- Look at using 511-type program scheduling

General

- Costs for training and reimbursing volunteer drivers is an issue
- Capacity issues need to be solved with local funding

Coordination

- Create a regional approach to create seamless service across boundaries

Prioritization Exercise Results

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Extend service to additional rural communities/full county (4)	Promote services in actual service areas (not countywide) (2)	Develop high speed trains between Duluth and the Twin Cities (7)	Identify someone to lead coordination efforts on local end (6)
Expand employee (commuter) service (4)	Educate prospective users (1)	Work towards a vision for transit (6)	Establish transit providers groups/networking or coordination (6)

Prioritization Exercise Results Cont.

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Fill gaps by using existing providers first (4)	Compile service inventories/resource guides (1)	Connect modes (bikes, sidewalks) (6)	Establish partnerships for joint ventures (5)
Provide more shuttles/corridor-type service between hubs (3)	Create quick access telephone information service (1)	Level the fields between public and private providers (1)	Establish more coordination/collaboration (1)
Provide service to major (longer distance) medical facilities, particularly for elderly user groups (3)			Encourage agency-to-agency coordination (1)
Expand resources available for rideshare programs (3)			Create multi-purpose transportation permits (1)
Provide evening service (2)			
Expand transportation services across county lines (1)			
Provide college service (1)			
Provide long distance paratransit service to regional centers (1)			
Provide service to large retail centers (1)			
Link school districts and transit for after school activities (1)			
Start using size-appropriate vehicles (vans vs. buses) (1)			
Use volunteer driver programs to expand demand response service (1)			
Identify human service trip generators (1)			

Attendees

1. Mike Frisch, Tri-Valley Opportunity Council	2. Steve Butler, Far North Transit
3. Teri Nelson, Grand Forks-East Grand Forks MPO	4. Sandy Otto, Roseau County Committee on Aging/FAR North Public Transit
5. Richard Otto, Roseau County Committee on Aging/FAR North Public Transit	6. Mike Ness, Red Lake Transit
7. Greg Negard, Paul Bunyan Transit	8. Linda Bair, Hubbard County Heartland Express
9. Troy Schroeder, Northwest Regional Development Commission	10. Sheryl Anderson, Lutheran Social Services MN
11. Kim Fraley, Lutheran Social Services MN	12. Robin Wold, Hope House Community Support Program
13. Kent Ehrenstrom, MnDOT District 2	14. Ray Rought, MnDOT Central Office
15. Tim Henkel, MnDOT Central Office	16. Mike Schadauer, MnDOT Central Office
17. Noel Shughart, MnDOT Central Office	18. Joe Kern, SRF
19. Samantha Yocom, RRA	

Discussion Notes

Service

- County-wide difficulty getting people to work
 - Low-income population moving out of city for affordable housing, adding to difficulty of getting them to work
- Need more commuter service, especially to manufacturing jobs
- Difficult to get elderly, disabled population to use transit
- Need commuter services to keep employers in Greater MN
 - Larger employers have trouble getting employees to work
- Rural-to-urban coordination is difficult
- Transfers may not work for elderly or other populations – transfer results in loss of a customer
 - Drivers are point of security for some users
- Care facilities don't want their own buses
- Independence is a barrier to use – northern MN residents value their independence
 - Fuel costs will drive use
- Infrequent service is difficult for employees
- Need more frequency – service is below what is a reasonable minimum
- Need expanded service for after work, weekend
- Increase core service

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan
Facilitated Workshop: Bemidji, September 18, 2008**

DRAFT

- Service needed for long-distance medical trips
- Routine medical appointments are hard to serve, patients can't always afford service
- Life-enhancing service helps maintain economic viability
- Decreased funding for school district transit – look at partnering
 - Current law states public transit cannot accept money from schools
- More day care use of service – difficult to fit in with other rides
- High-demand for after-school services – need more buses
- Expand routes to be closer to schools, in neighborhoods
- Service refusals driven by limited resources
- Look at reallocation of public resources
- Infrequency of service difficult for users with mental health issues
- Public expects service to operate as a taxi
- Explore options for providing service to different populations

Marketing/Information

- Misconception on who can use service – more education is needed
- People need to lower expectations of immediacy of services

General

- Customer service is vital
- Need more support from elected officials
- Volunteer driver programs are spread thin
- Use size-appropriate vehicles
 - Current policy requires ADA vehicles – consider changing policy
- Look at alternative purchasing

Coordination

- Coordination is not an issue
- Insurance is a challenge

Prioritization Exercise Results

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Provide evening service (6)	Educate prospective users (3)	Increase effectiveness (productivity) of volunteer drivers (4)	Coordinate services between counties (4)
Expand employee (commuter) service (6)	Conduct more advertising (3)	Use more technology for trip scheduling (3)	Get adequate and affordable insurance coverage (3)
Extend service to additional rural communities/full county (5)	Provide bus schedules with listed stops (3)	Expand driver training (1)	Establish more coordination/collaboration (2)
Start using size-appropriate vehicles (5)	Compile service inventories/resource guides (1)	Resolve conflict issues with private sector (1)	Share "best practices" across state (2)
Provide weekend service, particularly for disabled user groups (3)	Provide volunteers or escorts for first-time riders (1)	Keep track of service refusals/turn downs (1)	Identify agencies that have resources/expertise to share (2)
Provide more accessible vehicles in rural areas (2)	Implement a travel-training program (1)		Explore bulk purchases between human services and transit (2)
Promote better inter-agency scheduling of trips (2)			Expand planning efforts between local, regional and state agencies (1)
Provide service to major (longer distance) medical facilities, particularly for elderly user groups (2)			Find ways to ease program regulations (inter-regional travel) (1)
Expand service day to include early weekday morning (1)			Loosen regulations to broaden use of equipment (1)
Provide more shuttles/corridor-type service between hubs (1)			Provide standardized insurance through feds or state (1)
Extend transportation services across county lines (1)			
Provide more service for elderly to social events (1)			
Link school districts and transit for after school activities (1)			
Provide service to veteran's hospitals (St. Cloud, Mpls) (1)			

Prioritization Exercise Results Cont.

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Expand disabled access to jobs using "right-size" vehicles (vans, taxis, etc) (1)			
Coordinate user trip schedules with medical appointments (1)			
Expand opportunities for flexible scheduling (1)			
Use volunteer driver programs to expand demand response service (1)			
Fill gaps by using existing providers first (1)			

Attendees

1. Deb Bond, Transit Authority of Rochester	2. Ken Bjornstad, Goodhue County
3. Kim Lang, City of Fairbault	4. Randy Long, Workforce Development, Inc.
5. Kim Mason, Ability Building Center	6. David Pesch, ROCOG
7. Curt Accola,	8. Tom Faella, Lacrosse Area Planning Commission
9. Bill Schneider, Rochester Citizens Advisory Committee for Transit	10. Anthony Knauer, City of Rochester
11. Scott Retzlaff, City of Rochester	12. Dan Holter, Rochester City Lines
13. Alec More, HDR Engineering	14. Michelle Erdmann, PossAbilities of Southern MN
15. Brian Erickson, City of Northfield	16. Lynn Skinner, CREST
17. Mike Rizzo, Rochester City Lines	18. Kelly Wosika, Department of Education
19. Mike Schadauer, MnDOT Central Office	20. Ray Rought, MnDOT Central Office
21. Jean Meyer, MnDOT District 6	22. Joe Kern, SRF
23. Samantha Yocom, RRA	

Discussion Notes

Service

- Peak hour service in Rochester is the priority – goal is to provide peak hour service in every community
- Availability of funding limits service expansion
- Increased demand for evening and weekend service
- Service to activity centers is needed
- Cross-city service has been ineffective – need improvements
- Develop incentives to create transit hubs
- Increased demand for transit from low –income population
 - Hard to find jobs in rural communities, as jobs are increasingly leaving rural areas
 - Low-income population often takes midnight, off-hours shifts and they need a way to get there
- Increased demand for commuter service
 - Service needed from bedroom communities in to city
- Need shared ride system feeding into urban area (ex. LaCrosse has designated transfer sites)
- Consider state assistance to employers to provide transit for employees

Marketing/Information

- Provide windows-based software to organize/share service information

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan
Facilitated Workshop: Rochester, September 24, 2008**

DRAFT

- Share rideshare information in the public realm, share between systems
 - Potential liability issues with rideshare matching services

General

- Use technology for trip scheduling
- Vehicle design changes needed to accommodate walkers, strollers
- High demand for park and ride facilities
 - Need for smaller, 30-40 vehicle capacity locations, in outlying communities with fixed route in to city
 - Look at placing park and ride lots in merchant spaces, churches
 - Look at state program to help fund lot maintenance
 - Explore local incentives for lot maintenance (e.g. break on stormwater management fee)
 - Need cooperative agreements for park and rides
 - Needed in small communities, not just within the city

Coordination

- Coordinate transit with new developments (ex. RCTC sports center)
- Coordinate use of vehicles and service with school districts for use of school buses
 - Mixing students and the general public leads to increased liability for districts
 - Create incentive for districts to offset increased liability
 - Develop a subscriber program for school bus use and test using a pilot program
 - Mix park and ride service with school bus use
 - Challenges experienced with pilot program:
 - Users must reserve spot ahead of time, resulting in increased staff time needed for program
 - Increased student demand leading to fewer routes
 - Narrower seats difficult for general public to use
 - Insurance costs
- Coordinate hubs/transfers between programs
- Per diems not recovering costs for partnering with other agencies

Prioritization Exercise Results

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Expand park and rides (9)	Create quick access telephone information services (6)	Use more technology for trip scheduling (4)	Implement changes to DHS per diems (7)
Provide evening service (5)	Compile service inventories/resource guides (3)	Establish a mobility manager (2)	Corodinate with school buses (4)
Create incentives for providers of off-hour employment service (5)	Provide volunteers or escorts for first-time riders (2)	Expand driver training (2)	Establish more coordination/collaboration (3)
Expand peak hour service (4)		Resolve conflict issues with private sector (1)	Expand planning efforts between local, regional and state agencies (3)
Extend service to additional rural communities/full county (3)			Loosen regulations to broaden use of equipment (3)
Extend service to outlying job growth areas (2)			Share "best practices" across state (2)
Create passenger rail service (2)			Coordinate delivery services with agencies (1)
Expand service day to include early weekday mornings (1)			Establish partnerships for joint ventures (1)
Provide more shuttles/corridor type service between hubs (1)			Identify agencies that have resources/expertise to share (1)
Provide service to major (longer distance) medical facilities, particularly for elderly user groups (1)			Improve consistency of state regulation across service types (1)
Expand employee (commuter) service (1)			Provide standardized insurance through feds or state (1)
Provide college service (1)			Broaden availability of public planning data (1)
Establish connections to intercity bus carriers (1)			
Link school districts and transit for after school activities (1)			
Provide more accessible vehicles in rural areas (1)			
Expand disabled access to jobs using "right-sized" vehicles (1)			

Prioritization Exercise Results Cont.

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Expand opportunities for flexible scheduling (1)			
Expand use of aides and escorts for agency clients with special needs (1)			
Consolidate fragmented services (1)			
Expand resources available to rideshare programs (1)			

Attendees

1. Sandi Owen, LeSueur Transit	2. Connie Swanson, City of LeSueur Transit
3. Marjorie R. Smith, Wantonwan County dba TMT (Take Me There)	4. Kelly Thongvivong, Cottonwood County Transit
5. Terrie Gulden, Rock County Heartland Express	6. Karen DeBoer, Prairieland Transit System/Southwestern MN Opportunity Council
7. Mark Anderson, City of Mankato/Greater Mankato Transit System	8. Bonita Zimmer, Faribault County
9. State Representative Tony Cornish	10. Lisa Bigham, MnDOT
11. Ken Ondich, City of New Prague	12. Kathy Bailey, City of Blue Earth
13. Mike Pinske, AMV Transportation	14. Dalaine Remes, MN Disability Law Center, MDLC
15. Doug Haeder, MnDOT District 7	16. State Representative Bob Gunther
17. Nancy Gunther, Martin County Transit	18. Terry Genelin, R-9 Transportation Commission/Township of Nicollet County
19. Janice Klassen, MnDOT DTTTPM	20. Bob Ries, Department of Human Services
21. Carol Clark, VINE Faith in Action	22. Scott Higgins, Martin County
23. Ronda Allis, Region 9 Development Commission	24. Paul Lindfors, Minnesota State University Mankato
25. Commissioner Katy Wortel, Blue Earth County	26. Ted Downey, Hickory Tech
27. State Representative Terry Morrow	28. Annette Bair, Southwest Regional Development Commission
29. Tamra Rovney, Sibley County DHS	30. Bob Apitz, Brown County Family Services/Brown County Heartland Express
31. Judy Ellison, MnDOT Central Office	32. Deborah Ellis, MnDOT Central Office
33. Ray Rought, MnDOT Central Office	34. Noel Shughart, MnDOT Central Office
35. Jan Klassen, MnDOT District 7	36. Joe Kern, SRF
37. Samantha Yocom, RRA	

Discussion Notes

Service

- Need more frequent service
- Need evening service
- Need early morning service
- Need more commuter service - people are losing jobs because transit can't get them there

**Greater MN Public Transportation Plan
Facilitated Workshop: Mankato, September 25, 2008**

DRAFT

- Need commuter bus service along 169 corridor
- Opportunity to build ridership with commuters
- Develop statewide system for recreational trips
- Increase in denied trips for medical appointments for rural areas
- Greater Mankato is growing – difficult to stretch resources to serve expanded areas
- Connect public and private systems
- Challenge in who counts each ride
- Service area is bigger than one county
- Rural areas can't fill buses - MnDOT rules not working
- Need to balance user convenience with economical service
- Put more responsibility on healthcare providers on scheduling service
- Coordination with healthcare facilities on medical appointments very effective
- Coordination of employee services with businesses is difficult

Marketing/Information

- Need increased awareness of programs
- Create MnDOT bulletin board for trip sharing information

General

- Establish park and rides, rideshare programs
 - Look at program that uses state-provided vans
- Use accessible vans in rural areas (right size vehicles)
 - Need ability to move vehicles up and down in size
- In LeSueur County, need volunteer driver accessibility to accessible vehicles
- Provide MnDOT training for volunteer drivers to solve insurance issues
- Limited funding for existing programs limits program sustainability
- Move volunteer driver risk of passenger injury to government agencies
- Volunteers provide low-cost alternatives
- Need funding for coordinators (mobility managers)

Coordination

- Work on brokering with Department of Commerce and other departments to have insurance that allows a charge for volunteer driver services on a statewide level
- Need clarification on DHS regulations on rideshare - violation of HIPAA data privacy act?
- Insurance regulations hindering transit service - need to bring issues to legislators
- Bring inter-agency communication path down to local level
- Need Committee/task force to address DHS and MnDOT transit coordination
- Need to break down barriers to coordinate use of funding
- Need clarity on what to expect as an MA recipient
- Clarify eligibility for service through DHS
 - Use of aides makes users ineligible for STS services
- Funding doesn't come to County for coordination

Prioritization Exercise Results

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Start using size-appropriate vehicles (vans vs. buses) (12)	Educate prospective users/create realistic expectations (13)	Establish a mobility manager (5)	Clarify DHS regulations and eligibility rules (12)
Expand transportation services across county lines (10)	Link agency web sites (4)	Use more technology for trip scheduling (3)	Address volunteer driver liability and insurance issues (8)
Encourage health care providers to coordinate trips (6)	Promote services in actual service areas (not countywide) (3)	Expand driver training (2)	Find ways to ease program regulations (inter-regional travel) (6)
Expand service day to include early weekday morning/late in the day (6)	Create web-based trip planning tool (2)	Increase effectiveness (productivity) of volunteer drivers (2)	Coordinate services between counties (4)
Increase frequency of service (6)	Conduct more advertising (2)	Keep track of service refusals/turn downs (2)	Encourage agency-to-agency coordination (4)
Encourage nursing homes and assisted-living facilities to coordinate trips of residents (5)	Create web-based directory of providers (1)	Level the fields between public and private providers (2)	Expand planning efforts between local, regional and state agencies (2)
Provide more shuttles/corridor-type service between hubs (5)	Provide volunteers or escorts for first-time riders (1)	Resolve conflict issues with the private sector (1)	Modify STS regulations (2)
Provide more service for elderly to social events (4)	Market use of transit statewide (1)	Develop mechanism to reimburse informal providers (1)	Clarify regulations of City-only versus local community service (2)

Prioritization Exercise Results Cont.

Service	Marketing/Info	Other	Coordination
Establish medical feeders/hospital shuttles (4)			Get adequate and affordable insurance coverage (2)
Provide service to major (longer distance) medical facilities, particularly for elderly user groups (3)			Provide standardized insurance through feds or state (2)
Fill gaps by using existing providers first (3)			Establish more coordination/collaboration (1)
Coordinate user trip schedules with medical appointments (3)			Establish transit providers groups/netowrking or coordination (1)
Use 5310 vehicles as back-up or supplements (2)			Share "best practices" across state (1)
Provide weekend service, particularly for disabled user groups (2)			Improve coordination of contract and general public riders (1)
Expand employee (commuter) service (2)			Cross utilize volunteers across agencies (1)
Establish connections to intercity bus carriers (1)			Improve consistency of state regulation across service types (1)
Concentrate services in county seats (1)			Eliminate insurance restrictions on sharing vehicles (1)
Provide evening service (1)			
Consolidate fragmented services (1)			
Provide more accessible vehicles in rural areas (1)			

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

EXHIBIT D1: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

EXHIBIT D2: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

EXHIBIT D3: RESPONSE MATRIX

Greater MN Public Transportation Plan: Agency Leader Telephone Questionnaire

FINAL : 7/21/2008

FILL OUT BELOW INFORMATION PRIOR TO CALLING:

Contact Name: _____

Title/Organization: _____

Geographic area organization serves (District) _____

Call Attempts:

- **Attempt 1: Date and Time** _____ **Completed**
- **Attempt 2: Date and Time** _____ **Completed**
- **Attempt 3: Date and Time** _____ **Completed**

Introduction: Hello, this is _____ calling on behalf of the MNDOT Office of Transit. MnDOT is in the process of updating the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan and developing transit policies that will benefit greater Minnesota. You have been identified as a community/agency leader who could provide valuable information that would help shape the Plan.

- Do you have 10 minutes to share your views on needed transit improvements in Greater MN?
 - (If not, schedule a different time.)

Question Set 1: Background Information

A. Which groups of people is your organization currently serving?

(Read all options – ask respondent to select all that apply)

- Seniors
- Disabled
- Low-income
- Minorities
- Commuters
- Youth
- Other: _____

Notes:

Question Set 2: Additional Transit Service

- A. Are the people you serve expressing a need for additional transit? If so, what do you see as the greatest needs? (Use below as prompts as needed)
- No service available
 - Limited service area
 - Time of service
 - Connectivity to other systems
 - Other
- B. Who do you feel would benefit most from additional transit service? (Select all that apply)
- Seniors
 - Disabled
 - Low-income
 - Minorities
 - Commuters
 - Youth
 - Other
- C. If additional funding were available for transit, what do you see as the top priority for the use of those funds? (Select one)
- Expanded service area
 - Expanded service hours
 - More buses
 - More drivers
 - Other

Question Set 3: Emerging Issues

In your opinion, what do you see as the greatest challenges facing transit over the next 5 years? (Prompt with examples below if needed):

- Population diversity/language barriers
- Aging population
- Healthcare needs
- Commuter needs
- Crossing borders
- Funding
- Other

Question Set 4: Other Comments

Do you have any other comments that you would like to share with MnDOT as it updates the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan?

Greater MN Public Transportation Plan – Structured Interview Key Themes

10/2/2008

MnDOT Districts Represented

The table below represents the number of structured interviews completed by district.

MnDOT District	# Interviews Completed
D1	4
D2	4
D3	6
D4	3
D6	3
D7	3
D8	3
Statewide	9
TOTAL	35

Background Information

The table below represents the total number of organizations serving particular user groups as indicated in the structured interviews. Please note that many participants selected multiple user groups.

User Group	# Organizations Serving Group
Seniors	28
Disabled	28
Low-Income	26
Minorities	22
Commuters	20
Youth	21

A number of participants also indicated other user groups they currently serve. These groups included caregivers, veterans, students, and local units of government.

Additional Transit Service Needs

Of the 35 interviews completed, 33 participants indicated that the people they serve are expressing a need for additional transit. Some of the greatest needs participants identified included:

- Expanded service area
- Expanded service hours
- Access to service in rural areas
- Education on available transit options
- Increased transportation to medical appointments

Groups Benefiting from Additional Transit Service

The table on the following page shows which groups participants feel would benefit most from additional transit service. Please note that many participants selected multiple user groups.

User Group	# Organizations Indicating Group would Benefit from Additional Service
Seniors	29
Disabled	24
Low-Income	18
Minorities	12
Commuters	18
Youth	12

A number of participants also indicated other user groups they feel would benefit from additional transit service. These groups included veterans, students, rural users, and user groups that are completely transit dependent.

Greatest Needs if Additional Funding Were Available

When asked to identify the greatest needs for transit service if additional funding were available, participants responded as follows to the four options that were provided:

Need	# Participants Indicating As Greatest Need
Expanded Service Area	12
Expanded Service Hours	15
More Buses	1
More Drivers	1

Participants were also given the option of providing other needs they feel are most important if additional funding were available. Key needs identified included:

- Frequency of service
- Coordination between systems to reduce barriers
- Funding for alternative modes (i.e. volunteer driver programs, smaller vehicles)
- Technology

Emerging Issues

Participants were asked to identify the greatest challenges facing transit over the next five years. Key themes among the responses included:

- Increase in fuel costs, relating to both the cost of operating programs and increased ridership
- Availability of funding
- Aging population
- Coordination of service/crossing county lines

Other Comments

Other key comments provided by participants included:

- Increased awareness is needed on transportation options available
- Increased need for transit in rural areas - access to transit is needed to keep smaller communities viable
- Explore the use of hybrid models, using existing funding strategically and combining different types of services
- Expanded statewide coordination efforts are needed

Background Information			Organization Currently Serving:								Additional Transit Service		Who would benefit most from additional service?							
Last Name	First Name	Organization	District	Seniors	Disabled	Low-Income	Minorities	Commuters	Youth	Other	Users Expressing Need?	What are the greatest needs?	Seniors	Disabled	Low-Income	Minorities	Commuters	Youth	Other	
1	Peterson	Andy	Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce	1							X	Expanded connectivity. Expanded air service. Train to Minneapolis. Rebuilding/maintenance of I35.						X		
2	Ferris	Skip	Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency	1		X			X			Families need additional transit	X	X	X				X	
3	Sampson	Catherine	Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging	1	X	X	X	X	X			Non-fixed route service, typically to medical appointments and errands. Difficult to meet needs other than 1 to 1 service.	X	X	X	X	X			
4	Anderson	Bryan	Arrowhead RDC, Region 3	1	X	X	X	X	X			Rural service	X	X	X	X				
5	Schroeder	Troy	Northwest RDC, Region 1	2	X	X	X	X	X			Evening/weekend service. No service in some areas. Has 1 county with no service. Busing service willing to host, but county Board not supportive. Local concern with diverting County residents outside the County for services.						X		Marketing to commuters needed
6	Dyrdahl	Matthew	Headquarters RDC, Region 2	2	X	X	X	X	X			Education on existing transit options - need way to get feedback on those available. Awareness needs to be raised before feedback is solicited.	X		X					
7	Tysver	Mark	West Central Area Agency on Aging	2	X					Caregivers		Time of service; evening service is still needed. Need availability in off-hours. Door-to-door service only available during regular hours.	X							
8	Berg	Nick	Northome Health Care Center	2	X							NOT SURE	X							
9	Etzler	Chris	Region 5 Development Commission	3	X	X	X	X	X			Time of service; need an increased presence, more hours in afternoon, longer service day	X	X	X	X	X	X		
10	Anderson	Fred	Disabled Veterans of America MN Chapter 9	3	X	X				Veterans (most have disabilities)		Need more volunteer drivers. Program is fully funded by volunteer drivers. If they had more drivers, they have more vans available for use.	X	X						Veterans (most have disabilities)
11	Bollenbeck	Bob	East Central RDC, Region 7E	3	X	X	X	X	X			Need in Kannabec and Pine - currently no transit. New starts in areas that don't have city service.	X							
12	Simonsen	Penny	East Central Area Agency on Aging	3	X		X					Service to medical appointments and affordability of service. Users with ongoing medical treatments (i.e. dialysis, cancer) have greatest need.	X	X	X				X	
13	Mareck	Scott	St. Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO)	3	X	X	X	X	X			Not hearing anything directly. Have been experience increased ridership	X	X	X					
14	Voss	Steve	Mn/DOT District 3 for Region 7W	3	X	X	X	X	X			Accommodating elderly transportation in counties without transit.	X						X	
15	Bright	Bob	Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (FMCOG)	4	X	X	X	X	X	Students		Expanding to new growth areas; frequency of service; types of service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Students
16	Hurley	Wayne	West Central Initiative	4	X	X	X	X	X			Expanded service - need expanded hours, days of service. Connections between systems including with commuter systems.	X		X			X		
17	Haugen	Earl	Grand Forks/East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization (GE/EGF MPO)	4	X	X	X	X	X			More frequent routes, expanded temporal coverage, Sunday service, intercity travel.	X	X	X	X	X	X		
18	Faella	Tom	LaCrosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC)	6	X	X	X	X	X			Expanded service area and hours - needed to service more origins and destinations								Transit dependent riders
19	Moates	Chris	Mn/DOT District 6 for Region 10	6	X	X	X	X	X			More funding for more service. General needs for service hours and service area.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
20	Wheeler	Philip	Rochester-Olmsted Council of Governments (ROCOG)	6	X	X	X	X	X			Flexible transit service system. Intercity bus connections to patients and visitors.	X	X				X		

If additional funding were available for transit, what are greatest needs?					Challenges	Other
Expanded Area	Expanded Hours	More buses	More drivers	Other	Greatest challenges facing transit over the next five years?	Other comments
1				Train to Minneapolis	Funding	Don't spend all the funding in the Twin Cities.
2				Funding - need more funding to keep transportation for Head Start going. Transportation for all school grades would be beneficial.	Scheduled service across borders/cost of fuel/multiple commuter routes to match worker schedules	Work with schools - would like to see public transportation work with schools. Look for incentives to encourage coordination. Look at alternative transportation options.
3				More tailored services, not necessarily more expensive. Need to be creative with resources and response.	Increased demand and flat or decreased revenue.	Need creativity in service - hybrid models. Impossible to get a handle on current inventory. Need to strategically use existing money through volunteer programs, use of existing non-profits. Government model can get spendy. Look at creative, low-cost options.
4	X				Funding; aging population; ability to reach rural areas.	
5	X				Funding - cost of fuel affects cost of providing service	Need access to transit to keep smaller cities viable. Need way for people to get to larger cities for medical, health care needs and services.
6				More routes	Fuel prices - people need alternatives in response to high cost of gas. Also, aging population, commuter needs, funding	Education on what's available is needed.
7	X				Aging population; fuel costs;	Transportation for home-delivered meals challenging with increased fuel cost.
8	X				Aging population and healthcare needs.	
9	X				Funding; making transit work in rural areas in an affordable way	Expanded service hours needed in rural areas for work purposes.
10				Hiring staff. Limited on volunteer driver availability. May look at hiring staff.	Population diversity/crossing borders. Jurisdictional and multiple agency coordination is needed.	Need statewide coordination effort. Try to get a state group together to discuss jurisdictional issues. There are outreach needs in Greater MN with growing transit needs in rural areas.
11				Funds for new starts	Perception of public transit - most people see it as for seniors or disabled. Need to be seen as able to be used by all.	
12	X	X			Ability to balance urban vs. rural needs	
13	X				Land use - not conducive to transit; length of trip - time it takes between distances (longer than in a vehicle, doesn't always work)	Develop land use initiatives that promote transit oriented development. Important to consider rural providers. Long-term - look at major transitways and expand to greater MN.
14	X	X			Funding. Need funding to ensure systems can operate. Need to encourage ridership by the broader public - people associate transit with the elderly.	
15				Frequency of service	Meeting needs in light of energy costs; successfully expanding service	
16	X			Wilkin County needs service	Funding/aging population	General lack of awareness that transit options exist in Greater MN - despite this, system is working well. Doing a pretty good job.
17	X	X		More frequent service; more area coverage issues; less strings attached to funding.	Funding. Difficult to contain costs to meet needs. Can we expand service and contain the cost?	
18				Expanded service - frequency, service area	Rising costs to provide services	Demand for transit increasing - MnDOT needs to make expanding transit services a priority
19	X				Aging population. Being able to adjust to more people needing service with increased fuel cost. Seeing an increased demand in rural area.	
20	X				Capital funding	Need connection to Chicago for Mayo Clinic to continue to grow. Need intercity connection. Look at transit within economic regions rather than between. Need to make priorities through cities to capture trips.

Background Information				Organization Currently Serving:							Additional Transit Service		Who would benefit most from additional service?							
Last Name	First Name	Organization	District	Seniors	Disabled	Low-Income	Minorities	Commuters	Youth	Other	Users Expressing Need?	What are the greatest needs?	Seniors	Disabled	Low-Income	Minorities	Commuters	Youth	Other	
21	Bair	Annette	Southwest RDC, Region 8	7	X	X	X	X	X		YES	Access to service, extended hours, service for disabled users. Because of dispersed population in rural mn, it's difficult to provide service at level of metro service. Need accessible vehicles, expanded volunteer driver programs. Rural programs not effective unless program is full.	X	X	X	X	X	X		
22	Allis	Ronda	Region 9 Regional Development Commission	7	X	X	X	X	X		YES	Expanded service - need more service, expanded service area, time of service, connectivity to other systems.	X	X	X	X	X	X		
23	Spain	Elaine	Region Nine Area Agency on Aging	7	X	X	X	X			YES	Individual access to rides to areas outside of public system service. Need rides outside of current service hours.	X	X	X	X				
24	Hegland	Dawn	Upper Minnesota Valley RDC, Region 6W	8	X	X	X			Cities and Counties	YES	Availability of service - destinations, days of service, and hours of service not serving needs. Volunteer drivers are needed. Higher demand for transit formerly directed to seniors.	X	X	X	X	X			
25	Winckler	Donn	Mid-Minnesota Development Commission, Region 6E	8						Local unites of gov't that serve all listed	YES	Generally need for expanded hours of service during weekends and evenings, getting out to smaller communities	X	X			X			
26	Selseth	Kate	Mid-MN Area Agency on Aging	8	X	X		X	X		YES	Transit to medical appointments; personal errands; volunteer assisted transit (door through door); personal assisted transit (escorts/aides); orientation for first time riders	X	X	X	X	X	X		
27	Bridges	Paul	MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development (Workforce Centers/DEED)	Statewide		X	X	X	X		YES	Limited service area; time of service; service in rural areas	X	X	X	X	X	X		
28	Benson	Doug	MN Dept. of Health	Statewide	X	X	X	X		rural population	YES	Affordability and availability of service - need service to/from medical appointments. Need handicap accessible service. Not dependable in meeting these needs.						X		hard to provide commuter service in rural areas
29	Freshley	Hal	MN Board on Aging	Statewide	X	X	X				YES	Healthcare access - referrals are to bigger cities without regard to how people can get there. Given car culture, it's difficult to realign our thinking along public transportation.	X	X			X			
30	Wosika	Kelly	MN Department of Education	Statewide					X		YES	Disabled, homeless students - charter school students attending care and treatment programs						X		
31	Willshire	Joan	MN State Council on Disabilities	Statewide		X					YES	Crossing county borders - lack of availability of service to cross borders. In addition, service availability in Northern MN is very limited.	X	X	X					
32	Osberg	Brian	MN Dept. of Human Services	Statewide	X	X	X	X	X		YES	Increased access to transportation services for medical - some people have trouble accessing service	X	X						
33	Ries	Bob	Human Services Dept.	Statewide	X	X	X	X	X	MN healthcare program eligible	YES	Expanded services - bus to taxi services. All levels of transportation to get to medical services. Spread pretty thin.	X	X						
34	Kalland	Laurie	State Services for the Blind	Statewide	X	X				visually disabled	YES	Transit from outlying areas into the city.	X	X						
35	Fenske	Mary	Self-Advocates Minnesota	Statewide		X	X		X		YES	Disabled community needs way to get to work; No way for disabled to get anywhere beyond medical appointments.		X			X			
				TOTALS:	28	28	26	22	20	21	33		29	24	18	12	18	12		

If additional funding were available for transit, what are greatest needs?					Challenges	Other
Expanded Area	Expanded Hours	More buses	More drivers	Other	Greatest challenges facing transit over the next five years?	Other comments
21				Need to go beyond transit system boundaries. Look at expanding boundaries across county lines. Look at a regionalized approach with mobility management personnel.	Fuel cost driving increased demand. Infrastructure for increased demand is not in place. Cost for everything will increase. May need to look at alternative fuels, but we're not ready to do that yet. A hierarchy may be needed for public transit - work and medical appointments are served first to deal with capacity issues.	Capacity issues - people do not always express complaints b/c they may not feel issues. Look at creating a transit ombudsman to take complaints. Difficult to deal with guide dogs, companion animals. Not all systems with volunteer drivers have criminal background checks - not consistent between systems.
22				Availability across region/expanded hours/affordable service	Crossing county lines - riders may need to cross county lines for medical appointments, other needs.	Don't forget about Greater MN
23	X			Coordination is needed between systems. Current public transit in rural areas is challenged in mobility management. Service needs to be more responsive to user needs. Use volunteer driver programs to enhance current service.	Funding and coordination; integrating technology.	Happy to see issue being addressed.
24	X		X	Extended hours/ more drivers	Funding - also aging population, crossing borders	Service area is very rural - urban centers with services are over 1 hours away. Any sort of expanded service can assist in improving access. Funding formulas of past have put them at a disadvantage. Age wave is already here. Struggling to meeting needs/demands now. Piecemeal approach at local level. How do areas connect? Population/per capita density not there.
25				Individual transit providers expanding in Greater MN	Fuel costs - also population diversity and aging population	Have a good representation of smaller transportation systems (vs. larger urban areas) when requesting feedback
26	X			Reduced barriers (cross-county restrictions). Inconsistent implementation of service.	Fuel prices; coordination across state; increasing ridership; time of service (length); need for personalized service	Look at other models. Explore interconnectivity between public and private transit. Use AAA/federal funds to build volunteer network. Door through door systems are important - look at paying through MnDOT. Systems need to be easy to navigate.
27	X				Fuel prices; difficult economy = limited public revenues	Work to become fully accessible to the disabled community.
28				Small multi-passenger vehicles with volunteer drivers - some combination of fixed schedule, dial-a-ride	Rising costs. Also healthcare needs, crossing borders.	Increased need for transit in rural areas - need to look beyond metro areas. Aging population, increased healthcare needs, and increasing diversity lead to increased need for service.
29				Technology - help coordinate existing programs using software for scheduling/routing to maximize efficiencies.	Accountability level/measurement - many funders with independent criteria/standards/expectations with different agendas, expectations of outcomes, goals	Difficult to operationalize certain standards - These are going to be extremely challenging to meet without pulling together different government agencies, transit providers, volunteers.
30				More funds for districts to provide additional/expanded services	Funding - lack of drivers, need more incentives	Coordination needed - work w/ other agencies to coordinate transportation routes/options
31	X				Accommodating needs of Greater MN as population ages - more people w/ disabilities and seniors will be looking for options. There is a high correlation between age and disability so we anticipate the need for greater MN greatly increasing!	Expanded service would greatly increase quality of life for disabled population. Other benefits would be seen as well. People w/ disabilities would have more job opportunities and getting to jobs would also benefit state's economy.
32				Developing fully coordinated/integrated service at local/regional level	Funding and program costs	
33				Establish reasonable rate so transit providers can remain financially viable.	Language barriers/healthcare needs/aging population/funding	Ease regulations - some transportation providers are not eligible to provide services due to insurance requirements. Make transit services available across providers. If they can take on additional riders, they should be able to do so. Lack of coordination overall across transportation providers needs to change.
34	X			Greater frequency of service.	Trying to keep up with demand. Given the price of fuel, system is not ready for the demand to come.	
35	X			Need a creative way to get people where they want to go using the existing infrastructure that's more effective than buses. There's often 1-2 people who want to go to a particular location.	Funding. Will do something and creativity will also be a challenge	There are small groups of people with particular destinations not being served. Expanded hours are also needed.
12	15	1	1			

ELECTRONIC SURVEY

EXHIBIT E1: ELECTRONIC SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

EXHIBIT E2: SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Greater MN Public Transportation Plan: Transit Providers Online Questionnaire

FINAL : 7/15/2008

The MnDOT Office of Transit is using this online survey to gather information on current public transit service in Greater Minnesota and how it is meeting local needs. The results of this survey will provide the MnDOT Office of Transit with valuable information needed to update the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan and develop transit policies that will benefit greater Minnesota.

This survey should take approximately _____ minutes to complete.

NOTE: Instructions on how to connect to survey will be included

Name of Organization: _____

Email Address: _____

(For follow-up purposes only - your email address will not be shared with other organizations)

Question Set 1: Current Transit Service

A. What geographic area does your organization serve? (Visit <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mntribes/handbook/graphics/rdc.gif> for a map of regions)

- a. Region 1: Northwest (Warren)
- b. Region 2: Headwaters (Bemidji)
- c. Region 3: Northeast (Duluth/Arrowhead)
- d. Region 4: West Central (Fergus Falls)
- e. Region 5: North Central (Staples)
- f. Region 6E: Mid-Minnesota (Willmar)
- g. Region 6W: Upper Minnesota Valley (Appleton)
- h. Region 7E: East Central (Mora)
- i. Region 8: Southwest (Slayton)
- j. Region 9: South Central (Mankato)

B. Which of the following customers does your organization provide transportation services to? (Select all that apply)

- a. Seniors
- b. Disabled
- c. Low-income
- d. Minorities
- e. Commuters
- f. Youth
- g. Other _____

Question Set 2: Additional Transit Service

- A. In your opinion, of the customers you serve, what customer group would benefit most from additional service? (Select one)
- a. Seniors
 - b. Disabled
 - c. Low-income
 - d. Minorities
 - e. Commuters
 - f. Youth
 - g. Other _____
- B. In your opinion, in what areas of the current transit system are there service gaps? (Select all that apply)
- a. Service area coverage
 - b. Time of service
 - c. Connectivity to other transportation systems
 - d. User markets
 - e. Other _____
 - f. No gaps
- C. In your opinion, what are the current barriers to expanding/improving service? (Select all that apply)
- a. Obtaining funding for operations
 - b. Obtaining funding for equipment
 - c. Service area limitations due to jurisdictional borders
 - d. High fuel prices
 - e. Insurance costs
 - f. Obtaining local matching funds
 - g. Other _____
 - h. No barriers
- D. If additional funding were available for transit in your area, what do you see as the top priority for the use of those funds? (Select one)
- a. Expanded service area
 - b. Expanded service hours
 - c. Equipment
 - d. Additional staff
 - e. Technology improvements
 - f. Other _____

Question Set 3: Emerging Issues

- A. In your opinion, what do you see as the greatest challenges to providing transit services within the next 5 years? (Select all that apply):
- a. Language barriers
 - b. Insurance costs
 - c. Labor costs
 - d. Fuel Prices
 - e. Funding
 - f. Other _____

Question Set 4: Coordination of Services (FOR 5310 PROVIDERS ONLY)

- A. Do you currently coordinate transit services with other organizations (e.g. private providers, health and human services organizations, etc.)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not apply
- B. Do you see any benefits from coordinating transit services with other organizations?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Does not apply

Thank you very much for your participation and input as MnDOT works to update the Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan. For additional information on the plan, please contact Noel Shughart at noel.shughart@dot.state.mn.us or (651) 366-4181.

Greater Minnesota Public Transportation Plan: Electronic Survey Results

10/28/2008

1. Participating Organizations

A total of 31 organizations, representing transit providers from across greater Minnesota, participated in the survey.

• Arrowhead Transit	• Montevideo Transit
• Brainerd & Crow Wing Public Transit	• Murray County Heartland Express
• Brown Co Family Series/Brown Co Heartland Express	• Northfield Transit
• City of Benson	• Paul Bunyan Transit
• City of Faribault	• Pipestone County Transit
• City of Hastings	• Prairie Five CAC, Inc.
• City of Hibbing – Hibbing Area Transit	• Productive Alternatives, Inc. DBA Transit Alternatives
• City of Le Sueur	• Rainbow Rider Transit
• City of Moorhead - Metro Area Transit	• Rochester Public Transit
• City of Morris - Morris Transit	• Rock County Heartland Express
• City of Stewartville - Heartland Express Bus	• Three Rivers CAP/Hiawathaland Transit
• Clay County	• Trailblazer Joint Powers Board
• Dawson Heartland Express	• Tri-County Action Program, Inc.
• Duluth Transit Authority	• Tri-Valley Opportunity Council
• FAR North Public Transit	• Watonwan County dba TMT (Take Me There)
• Faribault County	• Western Community Action, Inc.
• Friendly Rider Transit (Wadena County)	• Winona Transit Service
• Lincoln County Heartland Express	

2. Geographic Areas Represented

Survey respondents represented 11 different geographic regions from across Minnesota. At least one transit provider from every region participated in the survey, with the exception of Region 7E (East Central – Mora).

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Region 1: Northwest (Warren)	2.9%	1
Region 2: Headwaters (Bemidji)	5.7%	2
Region 3: Northeast (Duluth/Arrowhead)	8.6%	3
Region 4: West Central (Fergus Falls)	14.3%	5
Region 5: North Central (Staples)	2.9%	1
Region 6E: Mid-Minnesota (Willmar)	8.6%	3
Region 6W: Upper Minnesota Valley (Appleton)	5.7%	2
Region 7E: East Central (Mora)	0.0%	0
Region 7W: Central (St. Cloud)	5.7%	2
Region 8: Southwest (Slayton)	14.3%	5
Region 9: South Central (Mankato)	17.1%	6
Region 10: Southeast (Rochester)	14.3%	5

3. Customer Groups Served

Respondents were asked to identify the customer groups they serve from the following list, selecting all that applied.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Seniors	100.0%	35
Disabled	100.0%	35
Low-income	97.1%	34
Minorities	94.3%	33
Commuters	65.7%	23
Youth	100.0%	35
Other (please specify)	48.6%	17
Others Specified:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General public ▪ All ages/all populations ▪ Adults that don't fit the other categories ▪ We operate both regular route and ADA paratransit. ▪ Open to any riders re: Q2--we serve in Hastings only, although that is not an available option. Rochester is geographically closest to Hastings of all choices ▪ College and High School ▪ Adults /Workforce is another high customer group. We serve all ages - all incomes ▪ Anybody who calls for a ride. ▪ General public ▪ Children (with an adult) 		

4. Customer Groups Benefiting from Additional Transit Service

Respondents were asked to identify which customer group, of the groups they serve, would benefit most from additional transit service. Respondents were asked to provide only response.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Seniors	37.1%	13
Disabled	8.6%	3
Low-income	11.4%	4
Minorities	0.0%	0
Commuters	22.9%	8
Youth	5.7%	2
Other (please specify)	14.3%	5
Others Specified:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All of the above ▪ Our expansion plans focus on peak hour work trips. However, all passenger types benefit from expanded coverage. ▪ Anyone needing a ride. ▪ All of the above except for commuters since that service is not currently offered. ▪ To be able to provide more access on a more regular schedule would enhance transit for everyone in this region. 		

5. Service Gaps in the Current Transit System

Respondents were asked to identify in what areas of the current transit system there are service gaps. The list below was provided and respondents were asked to select all that applied.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Service area coverage	51.4%	18
Time of service	74.3%	26
Connectivity to other transportation systems	42.9%	15
User markets	2.9%	1
No gaps	2.9%	1
Other (please specify)	14.3%	5
Others Specified:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commuter services + evenings & weekends ▪ Amount of service at any given time (i.e. need more buses operating during core business hours) ▪ Weekend and Evening service, this area has no public service available on in the evenings or weekends. ▪ Connecting our communities together so someone can ride from community to community ▪ Getting people to medical appointments to health care facilities that are located a minimum of 2 hours from Roseau or Baudette. 		

6. Current Barriers to Expanding/Improving Service

Respondents were asked to identify current barriers to expanding/improving service. The list below was provided and respondents were asked to select all that applied.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Obtaining funding for operations	97.1%	34
Obtaining funding for equipment	42.9%	15
Service area limitations due to jurisdictional borders	20.0%	7
High fuel prices	48.6%	17
Insurance costs	8.6%	3
No barriers	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	5.7%	2
Others Specified:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of facilities to grow ▪ There is even some turf barriers to break through. 		

7. Top Priorities if Additional Funding Were Available

Respondents were asked to identify their top priority for transit in their area if additional funding were available. The list below was provided and respondents were asked to select only one response.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Expanded service area	34.3%	12
Expanded service hours	42.9%	15
Equipment	2.9%	1

Additional staff	2.9%	1
Technology improvements	8.6%	3
Other (please specify)	8.6%	3
Others Specified:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In our situation, it would extremely difficult to expand our service area and/or service hours without additional staff and much needed technology improvements. The residents of Brown County could greatly benefit from both, but additional funding for other operational / capital components is essential before the basics could be implemented. ▪ Both expanded service area and expanded service hours. ▪ Commuter Routes 		

8. Greatest Challenges Facing Transit

Respondents were asked to identify the greatest challenges to providing transit services within the next 5 years. The list below was provided and respondents were asked to select all that applied.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Language barriers	2.9%	1
Insurance costs	11.4%	4
Labor costs	28.6%	10
Fuel prices	48.6%	17
Funding	94.3%	33
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0

9. Coordination of Transit Services with Other Organizations

Respondents were asked if they currently coordinate transit services with other organizations.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	74.3%	26
No	11.4%	4
Does Not Apply	14.3%	5

As a follow up question, respondents were asked if they see any benefits from coordination transit services with other organizations.

Response	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	88.6%	31
No	2.9%	1
Does Not Apply	8.6%	3