R4RTCC

REGION FOUR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION COUNCIL

2020-2021 Operational Plan

Contents

Introduction

About West Central Minnesota Communities Action

West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc. (WCMCA) is located in Elbow Lake, MN and has been in existence since 1965, serving low income households primarily in Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens and Traverse counties in West Central Minnesota. The mission of WCMCA: "Partnering to build community and empower people to overcome poverty and achieve their full potential". WCMCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity with a 15-member board of directors.

WCMCA currently operates programming in the areas of energy assistance, affordable housing, housing rehabilitation, weatherization, Head Start, homeless services including FHPAP, long term homeless, transitional housing and rapid rehousing programs, supervised visitation, free tax preparation, asset development, financial education, benefits assistance including MNsure navigation services, food assistance, and volunteer driver transportation services. WCMCA has a vast network of partners throughout the service area and has a history of collaborative work.

WCMCA's implementation of the Ready Ride Senior Transportation Program through the Live Well at Home Grant has provided a solid foundation for building the RTCC. Many connections have been made with area transportation providers, county social services agencies and local non-profits. The outreach that has been done with Ready Ride has allowed for relationship building with not only other service providers but the general public as well.

Project Background

The Minnesota Department of Transportation and Human Services, in collaboration with other state agencies, worked with the Metropolitan Council, other local governments and organizations to create regional transportation coordinating councils as seen needed throughout the state of Minnesota. The active goal of providers and services agencies has been to coordinate transportation in a way that fills gaps, provides more services more effectively, breaks down barriers to access transportation and provides customers with more resources and options when seeking transportation.

A statewide framework for 8-10 Regional Transportation Coordination Councils (RTCC(s)) has been providing support to break down barriers and support convenient systems of transportation. The RTCCs hold the responsibility for coordinating services through a network of public, private and non-profit transportation services.

In the fall of 2017 MNDOT solicited RFPs for RTCC Organizational grants. West Central Minnesota Communities Action was awarded the grant in the summer of 2018. The RTCC organizational development plan was to serve all nine counties within the Region 4 planning area.

What is the Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTCC)?

The RTCC is described by the Minnesota Department of Transportation as stakeholders interested in improving mobility for those that are "transportation disadvantaged" which would include but is not limited to; older adults, individuals with disabilities, low income individuals and families, and/or military veterans. Involvement with the RTCC will include representatives from a wide variety of agencies and interests. The RTCC board will be diverse and extensive, it will include representatives from Region Four's social services departments, Area Agencies on Aging, Workforce Development, transportation providers, human service

agencies, veteran organizations, Continuum of Care Coordinators, Independent Living facilities, public and private funders of transportation. Mobility Management will be used to by the RTCC's to promote services to members and population.

Coordinate and Break Down Barriers: What does this look like?

80 programs fund transportation services for specific populations, including disadvantaged individuals, according to Federal Transit Agency. By avoiding duplication and encouraging the use of sharing existing community resources we are coordinating individual human services programs that makes the most efficient use of transportation resources. Coordination efforts are led typically by mobility managers with extensive knowledge in regional transportation options. In communities where coordination is a priority, citizens benefit from extensive services, lower costs and simpler access to multiple transportation options.

Mobility Management is managing and delivering coordinated transportation to the by public by meeting the needs of individuals using a ride range of transportation options and service providers. Transportation System Integrator (TSI) will function as policy coordinators, operations systems brokers and customer travel trainers. The focus for the TSI(s) will be to increase mobility management for individuals instead of structure enhancements. "One-stop shop" or "one call" system is what is used to best describe for mobility management for obtaining and coordinating transportation options.

Goals and Objectives

Goals
Long term goal:
- To implement an R4RTCC Schedule Access Hub with potential Brokerage Center (in conjunction with Transportation Management Coordination Center (TMCC)

Short term goal(s):
- Educate the public about transportation available by centralizing information about transit and distributing in high potential ridership locations - <u>Completed</u>
- Increase service hours, establish taxi-subsidy programs and establish/enhance assisted transportation
- Implement rural transit bus stops
- Develop a provider directory - <u>Completed</u>
- Start testing Transportation Management Coordination Center (TMCC)
- Develop a Volunteer Driver Program Committee - <u>Completed</u>
- Car Care Program involvement in more counties

Objectives
- Compile transportation data within our regions - <u>Completed</u>
- Create effective, efficient transportation services for individuals in our region
- Filling transportation gaps in all areas within our region
- Improving access across county lines

Members Involvement

West Central Minnesota Communities Action (WCMCA) will serve as the grant holder for the RTCC. The membership of the R4RTCC will consist of representatives from the above Agencies. Formal meetings may be capped at 27 voting members. There may be a cap of 3 representative per agency if needed. Members of the R4RTCC will be appointed by the R4RTCC's affective recommendations to the West Central Minnesota Communities Action. Attempts will be made to have at least two representatives from each county. Two WCMCA board members will also serve in the R4RTCC membership. Detailed by-laws are in Appendix A of this document.

Mission, Goals and Strategies of the R4RTCC

Mission

"To coordinate and expand the provision of transportation services to benefit those residents of West Central Minnesota facing transportation barriers".

Goals and Action Steps

Long term goal:

To implement an R4RTCC Schedule Access Hub with potential Brokerage Center (in conjunction with Transportation Management Coordination Center (TMCC)

    a. Locations, times, maps, ways to pay
    b. A place to see all services and ways to access
    c. Online website
    d. User (client) and provider friendly
    e. People centered
    f. Governed body
    g. Staffed
    h. Expansion of Ready Ride services
    i. One call, one access point
    j. Provide respite transportation

Short term goal(s):

1. Educate the public about transportation available by centralizing information about transit and distributing in high potential ridership locations - <u>Completed</u>

    a. Radio ads
    b. Flyers and brochures
    c. Newspaper
    d. Social media
    e. Car wrap
    f. Grocery stores
    g. Superstores
    h. Employers
    i. Library
    j. Social Services

2. Increase service hours, establish taxi-subsidy programs and establish/enhance assisted transportation

a. Drivers working late hours, weekend hours, and accepting short notice rides
b. Carry groceries, wait for people at appointments, help with putting on shoes or jacket

3. Implement rural transit bus stops
    a. Centralized locations for bus or volunteer driver to pick up client
    b. Volunteer or taxi picking up client to bring them to a central bus location

4. Develop a provider directory - <u>Completed</u>

5. Start testing Transportation Management Coordination Center (TMCC)
    a. RTCC Phase 2 will provide different models and technology toolkits

6. Develop a Volunteer Driver Program Committee - <u>Completed</u>
    a. Organize and provide direction on state-wide Volunteer Driver Program Guidelines for a seamless network of volunteer drivers

7. Car Care Program involvement in more counties

Action Steps

1. Collect data within our region that's providing transportation services - <u>Completed</u>
2. Centralize information for all transit agencies
    a. Educate public about transportation available - <u>Completed</u>
    b. Distribute transit information to high potential ridership locations - <u>Completed</u>
3. Asset map with Region 4 transportation/ provider inventory
4. Create a regional map to put different transportation options within our region (website based-interactive map)
    a. Google Maps, software, tech savvy to build off Google Maps
5. Arranging for and authorizing MA, NEMT, Volunteer driver program, access transportations
6. Test different models for TMCC to establish one that fits R4RTCC needs
7. Establish needs in each county for Car Care Program

R4RTCC Identified Needs

West Central Region

According to the 2017 Local Human Services Transit Coordination Plan the transportation needs within the R4RTCC include but are not limited to:

- Access
- Cost
- Transit needs
- Citizens lack of understanding services
- Lack of specific/fixed routes
- Balancing the routes with ridership
- Limited hours of services
- Cost/expense for the riders in rural areas
- Reimbursement level for volunteers
- More care than "door-to-door" service

Work Plan

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3+
• Collect information and create a directory to include public, private, and non-profit transportation	• Create a travel trainer program	• Create a mobile friendly app
• Educate public about information collected and directory created	• GIS mapping available to the public	• Peruse long term funding for the RTCC program
• Develop a volunteer pool program	• Evolve transportation programs and access throughout 9 counties	• Design and implement a tracking system (Google, TMCC, etc.)
• Evolve transportation programs to be utilized in the workforce	• Increase service hours and enhance assisted transportation	
	• Work towards "one call, one-click" (TMCC)	
	• Research centralized bus stops	

Duties of the Transportation Systems Integrator

The R4RTCC will be led by Two- Transportation Systems Integrators (TSI) who will provide operational and administrative support. TSIs will be the primary contacts between transportation providers and the R4RTCC. Other duties include but are not limited to:

1. Coordination of the Regional Transportation Coordination Council
   a. Distinguish transportation barriers and coordinate with transportation providers to fill gaps
   b. Identify and disburse improvements to providers, staff and local/state officials
   c. Coordinate communication to network between transportation providers and the public
   d. Enhance the use of routes, systems, and other technical support for transportation providers
   e. Centralize transportation information and educate the public
   f. Develop a travel trainer program (self-paced process that teaches individuals how to use transportation independently)
   g. Advocate for funding resources

2. Support: Region 4 Transportation Coordination Council (R4RTCC) in Phase 3 Implementation. Region 4 includes the Counties of Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Ottertail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse and Wilkin.

3. Keep immediate supervisor informed of all problems, unusual or extraordinary matters of significance coming to his / her attention, so that prompt corrective action can be taken as needed.

4. Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned by supervisors. Handle special administrative projects as well as overflow work from other departments and management team.

Meeting Schedule

An annual meeting of the R4RTCC shall immediately precede the first regular R4RTCC meeting of each fiscal

year, for the purpose of electing officers and members. In addition R4RTCC shall hold regular meetings at least once each fiscal year at such place as designated in the notice of the meeting. The fiscal year begins on July 1 of each calendar year and ends of June 30 of the following calendar year. The R4RTCC shall meet monthly, in addition to special meetings convened by the chairperson or the request of 14 R4RTCC members.

Other Organizations Resources Involved for Implementation

The R4RTCC will use a variety of resources and funding to operate successfully. TSIs will continually seek efforts to seek funding and provide technical support to local providers. Examples include but not limited to:

Federal-

FTA Coordinating Council on Access Mobility

FTA Funding Sources

State-

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access

MnDOT Office of Transit

MnDOT RTCC Database

Local-

West Central Initiative

Health Care provider, and/or other local partners of R4RTCC.

Other-

Bush Foundation

Other Non-Profit Foundations

Supplemental Funding

Public & Stakeholder Engagement

Ongoing Process

The R4RTCC will hold one meeting a month to discuss transportation barriers, issues, and solutions within the region from the public. The R4RTCC will solicit to the community about events and projects. Stakeholders will be encouraged to inform the R4RTCC of issues facing their citizens and community. The R4RTCC will also share best practices and promote efficient and effective transportation strategies with stakeholders.

Public Participation Plan

The Public Participation plan has been outlined in Appendix B. This plan includes the direction for obtaining public and stakeholder engagement.

Appendix A: By-Laws

Bylaws

Region Four Regional Transportation Coordination Council

Article I: Name, Jurisdiction, and Location

<u>Section 1 – Name.</u> The name of this organization shall be the Region Four Regional Transportation Coordinating Council, hereinafter called Region 4 RTCC (R4RTCC).

<u>Section 2 - Jurisdiction.</u> The R4RTCC shall function in the geographic region of residents of the Counties of Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Ottertail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse and Wilkin that are located in the Region 4 Economic Development Region identified by the State of Minnesota.

<u>Section 3 – Location.</u> The R4RTCC official office to conduct its affairs is at the West Central Minnesota Communities Action (WCMCA).

Article II: Purpose and Duties

<u>Section 1- Purpose of the R4RTCC is to:</u>

o Help identify unmet personal mobility needs of the West Central Minnesota residents, and facilitate the development of transit services that are responsive to those needs,

o Advocate for high quality transit services which are safe, efficient, effective, reliable, and responsive to the mobility needs of the West Central Minnesota residents,

o R4RTCC responsible for efficient coordination of transportation services through a network of existing public, private, and non-profit transportation providers is exactly what this region has been searching for and was identified in the regions 2017 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan.

o Increase access to services and centers of commerce,

o Stakeholders focus on improving mobility for individuals who have a disadvantage in meeting transportation needs

o Define and break down barriers by creating a mobility management system utilizing existing public, private and non-profit transportation providers.

o Remedy the lack of availability of transportation alternatives,

o Help facilitate public awareness of available transit services within the region,

o Advise the West Central Minnesota Communities Action Leadership team, WCMCA's Board, MNDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation and the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTAO on planning, policy, and other matters related to the provision of transit services.

Section 2. Major Duties of WCMCA include:

o   Serve as a "champion" for regional transportation coordination council planning.

o   Develop communications systems and promote cooperation among all of the partners required for coordinated transportation planning.

o   Bring order and direction to efforts to meet regional transportation need.

Article III: Membership

Section 1. The R4RTCC may be comprised of representatives from throughout the West Central Minnesota service area and may include representatives from:

- Area Agency on Aging
- Workforce Development
- Human Service Agencies
- Transportation and Human Service Advocates
- Veteran Service Organizations
- MN Continuum of Care Coordinators
- Health Care Systems
- Centers for Independent Living
- Public Transportation Providers
- Private Transportation Providers
- County Commissioners
- Tribal Representation
- Community Action Partnership Agencies
- WCMCA Board Member

Other entities as deemed appropriate by the West Central Minnesota Communities Action.

Section 2. The R4RTCC Advisory Board may be selected with these criteria:
o   Knowledge of local transit needs and systems
o   Authority to influence rules, funding or programs
o   Policy, transit, design, funding, or process expertise
o   Representative of transit users (age, location, income)
o   Representative of transit providers (size, funding, client base)
o   Representation across geographic areas

Section 3. The membership of the R4RTCC will consist of representatives from the above Agencies. Formal meetings may be capped at 25 voting members. There may be a cap of 3 representative per agency if needed. Members of the R4RTCC will be appointed by the R4RTCC's affective recommendations to the West Central Minnesota Communities Action.

Section 4. The term of each member of the R4RTCC may be three years, except for the terms of the first members, which may be staggered terms of two and three years in equal proportions. Members may serve no more than six consecutive years, with the exception of the State representatives.

Section 5. When a member dies, resigns, is removed, or no longer meets the criteria by which he or she qualifies for R4RTCC membership, the R4RTCC may ask the appropriate constituency to nominate a member to serve for the duration of the unexpired term, subject to ratification by the R4RTCC.

Section 6. An R4RTCC represented Agency who does not attend three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings

and whose absence does not receive prior excused status from the chairperson, may be removed from the R4RTCC Advisory Board.

Section 7. All vacancies that occur prior to the end of a term in office may be filled by a majority vote of the members present at a duly called R4RTCC meeting. The Agency elected to fill a vacancy may serve in that capacity for the remainder of the involved term of office.

Section 8. An R4RTCC Advisory Board Agency Representative may designate a substitute from that Agency to attend any R4RTCC Advisory Board meeting in his or her stead. That R4RTCC will be counted as present for that meeting.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1. The officers of the R4RTCC will be a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary. No two officers may be nominated by any one constituency.

Section 2. The officers of the R4RTCC will be elected for two-year terms annually by the members of the R4RTCC at its annual meeting in January. No member may serve more than two consecutive two-year terms in any single office.

Section 3. An R4RTCC representative who does not attend four consecutive regularly scheduled meetings and whose absence does not receive prior excused status from the chairperson, shall be removed from the R4RTCC.

Section 4. Any officer may be removed with or without cause by the R4RTCC by a vote of the majority of all R4RTCC members. The matter of removal may be acted upon at any meeting of the R4RTCC provided that notice of intention to consider said removal has been given to each R4RTCC member and to the officer affected at least five days previously.

Section 5. A vacancy in any office may be filled at any time by a majority vote of the R4RTCC for the unexpired portion of the term.

Section 6. The chairperson will be the chief officer of the R4RTCC. It will be the duty of the chairperson to preside at meetings of the R4RTCC and have general supervision of the affairs of the R4RTCC. He or she will execute on behalf of the R4RTCC all instruments in writing that may be authorized by the R4RTCC for the proper and necessary transaction of the business of the R4RTCC.

Section 7. It will be the duty of the vice-chairperson to act in the absence or disability of the chairperson and to perform such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the chairperson or the R4RTCC. In the absence of the chairperson the execution by the vice-chairperson on behalf of the R4RTCC of any instrument will have the same force and effect as if it were executed on behalf of the R4RTCC by the chairperson.

Section 8. The secretary will be responsible for ensuring that R4RTCC meeting minutes at each monthly meeting are taken and submitted to WCMCA RTCC Staff within one week of the meeting date. WCI shall appoint an assistant secretary, not necessarily a member of the R4RTCC, who will perform specific duties and assume specific responsibilities of the secretary as set forth under the general direction of the secretary or chairperson.

Section 9. Any officer of the R4RTCC in addition to the powers conferred to him or her by these guidelines will have such additional powers and perform such additional duties as may be prescribed by the R4RTCC.

Article V: Meetings & Quorum

Section 1. An annual meeting of the R4RTCC shall immediately precede the first regular R4RTCC meeting of each fiscal year, for the purpose of electing officers and members. In addition to its annual meeting, the R4RTCC shall hold regular meetings at least once each fiscal year at such place as may be designated in the notice of the meeting. The fiscal year begins on July 1 of each calendar year and ends of June 30 of the following calendar year.

Section 2. The R4RTCC shall meet monthly, in addition to special meetings convened by the chairperson or at the request of 14 R4RTCC members.

Section 3. WCMCA Staff (FCS Special Projects Coordinator), shall give written notice of each regular meeting at least 10 days prior to the meeting date. In the event that a special meeting is called, WCMCA Staff (FCS Special Projects Coordinator), shall give written and verbal notice to all R4RTCC members at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Written notices may be sent electronically. Members may attend meetings either in person or telephonically.

Section 4. Fifty-one percent of a variety of Agency representatives from the R4RTCC (which includes recognized agency alternates) shall constitute a quorum. Proxy voting is permitted. For meetings lacking a quorum, business can be conducted, however all actions must be approved at the next regular meeting having a quorum present.

Section 5. Roberts Rules of Order will be the authority for all questions of procedure at any meetings of the R4RTCC. The R4RTCC shall make decisions on a consensus basis and shall validate those decisions with a vote.

SECTION 5. At all meetings of the R4RTCC, each member present shall be entitled to cast one vote on any motion coming before the meeting. A majority of the members must be present at a duly called meeting to constitute a quorum.

SECTION 6. A simple majority affirmative vote of R4RTCC members present at a duly called meeting is required to pass a motion before the R4RTCC.

SECTION 7. Initial R4RTCC members shall have the authority to appoint an alternate with voting authority. Alternates for future R4RTCC members shall be selected using the same selection process used for regular members. Alternates shall be approved by the R4RTCC at the annual meeting, or as soon thereafter as practical. Proxies – assigning the voting authority of a R4RTCC member to another person, whether a member or non-member – shall not be permitted.

Article VI: Sub-Committees

The Committee may establish a sub-committee to deal with general or specific areas of concern. Members of such sub-committees shall be volunteer or appointed by the chairperson and approved by the membership of the advisory board.

Article VII. Staff

Staff of the R4RTCC shall be those persons hired, contracted, or otherwise designated by WCMCA, and shall be assigned as needed and as resources are available to support their functions. Hiring, supervision, compensation and management of staff resources of the R4RTCC shall be accomplished utilizing policies and practices adopted from time to time by WCMCA.

Article VII: Amendments and Parliamentary Procedure

These bylaws may be amended or repealed, in whole or in part, by a majority vote of the West Central Minnesota Communities Action. A copy of these bylaws and all subsequent amendments shall be available for review upon request by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Bylaws adopted: December 17, 2018

I hereby agree to join the R4RTCC Advisory Board:

_____
Printed Name/Agency

_____
Signature

_____
Date

Appendix B: R4RTCC Public Participation Plan - Completed

Public Meeting Plan--

Hosting 5 public meetings held in the R4RTCC region, areas include:
a. Moorhead
b. Alexandria
c. Morris
d. Wheaton
e. White Earth

Meetings will take place starting in February and will be completed by May 2019.

Agenda:

a. Introduction of the R4RTCC grant holders and the R4RTCC Board Members.
b. PPT presentation about the RTCC (to include the stages of development and the future of the R4RTCC).
c. Q&A

Advertising:

a. Facebook page to inform public about meetings and updates on the R4RTCC.
b. Signs made to advertised in high public areas throughout the region.
c. Email blasts to stakeholders and request for them to forward it on.

Appendix C: Limited English Proficiency Plan

Plan Statement

The R4RTCC will use this plan as a guide to provide meaningful access to transportation providers and customers with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). In accordance with federal and state guidelines, the R4RTCC will make reasonable efforts to provide or arrange free language assistance for its LEP clients when needed.

Who Has Access to Assistance

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and/or who has limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English is considered a LEP individual and is entitled to language assistance with respect to the Region Four Regional Transportation Coordinating Council.

Meaningful Access

If a client asks for language assistance, and R4RTCC determines the client is an LEP person and language assistance is necessary, the agency will make reasonable efforts to provide free assistance. Reasonable steps may cease to be reasonable if costs imposed substantially exceed benefits.