



APPENDIX D

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

Introduction

Coordinated Planning

Presidential Executive Order 13330 on the Coordination of Human Service Programs—issued by the president on February 24, 2004—created an interdepartmental Federal Council on Access and Mobility to undertake actions to reduce duplication among federally funded human service transportation services, increase the efficient delivery of such services, and expand transportation access for older individuals, people with disabilities, people with low incomes, children, and other disadvantaged populations within their own communities.

In 2006, the Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) established an executive order stating that agencies involved in the coordination or delivery of transportation services are required to produce a coordinated public transit human service plan. That executive order was carried over to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) in 2012 and subsequently the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in 2015. Additionally, federal transit law requires that projects selected to receive funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program are “included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan,” and that the plan be “developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of the public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers and other members of the public” utilizing transportation services.

Plan Description

The Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) planning initiative is being led by Metro COG, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Fargo-Moorhead. It is an update to the CHSTP completed in 2021. The CHSTP is intended to identify needs and gaps in human service transportation services for people experiencing disabilities, people living on low incomes, and senior populations in the Fargo-Moorhead region. The CHSTP can be used to guide the use of funds from the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. The plan is a unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of marginalized and special needs populations, lays out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizes services for these target populations.

Every five years, Metro COG is required to prepare an updated Coordinated Plan to meet federal requirements for documenting approaches and funding coordinated services to address transportation barriers specific to populations of concern: those of limited income status, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

Plan Objectives

Part of the obligation of Metro COG in preparing a Coordinated Plan is to ensure that projects funded through the Section 5310 Formula Program are derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. In accordance with federal requirements, the Coordinated Plan serves as a “unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery” that identifies the transportation needs of the target populations, lays out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizes service solutions.

Updating the Coordinated Plan also provides an opportunity to envision how the strengths of existing transportation providers can be coordinated to build a more efficient regional network of services that work together to provide effective mobility options to the residents, employers, medical providers, and human service agencies.

Funds are relatively limited for public transportation in general; therefore, it is always important for public transit providers and their partners to make strategic, targeted investments that address critical needs. The intent of the Coordinated Plan is for it to be a living document identifying needs and investment priorities. Transit providers in the Fargo-Moorhead region will use the plan to allocate funding and, along with local partners, will use the plan to develop and enhance transit services.

Planning Process

The coordinated planning process, while prescriptive, does allow room for each individual region to determine strategies that are best suited to improving overall coordination in the respective region. In general, however, the coordinated planning process consists of the following steps:

- Assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with limited income
- Inventory of available services that identifies areas of redundant service and gaps in service
- Strategies to address identified gaps in service
- Identification of coordination actions to eliminate or reduce duplication in services and strategies for more efficient utilization of resources
- Prioritization of implementation strategies

Data on transportation needs and gaps was gathered through the following methods:

- A demographic overview of people experiencing disabilities, low income, and populations of older adults in the Fargo-Moorhead region.
- Crosstabs from the MATBUS TDP 2025 Community Survey to gauge ridership and travel information from people with disabilities, people living on low incomes, and senior populations.
- A transportation questionnaire distributed in March 2025 to service providers in the Fargo-Moorhead region. The survey identified current services, transportation needs and gaps, and levels of coordination
- A focus group on January 30, 2025, with service providers, which helped identify the needs and gaps of the current services in the region as well as changes since 2021.
- A focus group held on January 30, 2025, with community-based organizations in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

Background

About the Fargo-Moorhead Region

The Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area Transit system—“MATBUS”—operates fixed-route transit, demand-response transit, and paratransit service in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area, which spans North Dakota and Minnesota. MATBUS has been publicly subsidized since 1971 and has been publicly managed since 1974.

In recent years, walkable urban environments with effective public transit systems have become more desirable, particularly for younger generations. Particularly around academic institutions, of which Fargo-Moorhead has several, demand for public transit is high. However, land use patterns and previous transportation investments make the provision of public transit challenging. Except for the historic parts of the region and several new mixed-use developments, land uses in Fargo-Moorhead are largely sprawling and low-density. This type of development makes it difficult to reach transit-supportive population and employment densities. Limited congestion and unconstrained parking make driving fast, cheap, and easy. Operating transit under these circumstances relies heavily on public subsidies. Challenges to the transit system were worsened significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic, which decreased ridership numbers significantly and increased operating costs. As is the case in many cities, ridership in the Fargo-Moorhead region has not returned to pre-COVID levels.

Transportation Programs and Policy

With a well-defined coordinated plan, goals and ideas for improving transit service can be put into action with a blueprint for services to add or expand, specific hours of service to adjust, and funding to pursue to cover additional operating and capital expenses. The plan also facilitates communication with the public, which will raise awareness of how and where transit and taxi services are provided.

Transit Funding in Fargo-Moorhead

Based on data from the National Transit Database (NTD), a list of identified federal, state, and local funding programs that are or can be used to fund transit projects in the Fargo-Moorhead region is found in Figure 1. State funding is more robust in Minnesota compared to North Dakota, resulting in a greater need for local contributions in North Dakota. In 2023, the most recent year NTD data is available, state funds in Minnesota make up a significantly greater proportion of operating revenue with a relatively small local contribution, whereas the opposite is true in North Dakota where local funds make up nearly half of operating revenues and state funds make up less than 10%.

Figure 1 Public Transit Funding Sources in the Fargo-Moorhead Region

Program/Source	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Operations						
FTA Funds (ND)	\$2,495,484	\$2,777,481	\$6,434,516	\$6,297,333	\$4,737,001	\$4,300,337
FTA Funds (MN)	\$415,000	\$386,000	\$794,493	\$740,611	\$900,909	\$906,042
State Funds (ND)	\$490,498	\$0	\$24,171	\$80,205	\$1,062,550	\$1,047,771
State Funds (MN)	\$1,916,603	\$2,132,747	\$1,977,245	\$2,370,320	\$2,564,861	\$2,644,499
Local Funds (ND)	\$2,952,986	\$237,671	\$1,817,332	\$3,592,006	\$3,927,002	\$4,856,756
Local Funds (MN)	\$92,500	\$1,008	\$40,610	\$1,127	\$24,613	\$25,904
Directly Generated (ND) ⁽¹⁾	\$1,878,312	\$2,028,747	\$718,534	\$2,078,814	\$1,229,517	\$1,067,556
Directly Generated (MN) ⁽¹⁾	\$456,629	\$525,442	\$172,827	\$368,139	\$393,101	\$572,003
Total	\$10,698,012	\$8,089,096	\$11,979,727	\$15,528,555	\$14,839,554	\$15,420,868
Capital						
FTA Funds (ND)	\$2,434,550	\$745,595	\$2,208,681	\$2,192,497	\$547,410	\$375,983
FTA Funds (MN) ⁽²⁾	\$81,505	\$183,481	n/a	\$157,935	\$15,210	\$173,536
State Funds (ND)	\$0	\$0	\$288,048	\$91,855	\$78,150	\$118,185
State Funds (MN) ⁽²⁾	\$884,152	\$0	n/a	\$25,674	\$0	\$3,600
Local Funds (ND)	\$1,177,101	\$237,671	\$343,924	\$114,622	\$33,947	\$92,872
Local Funds (MN) ⁽²⁾	\$108,023	\$668	n/a	\$38,616	\$3,803	\$55,803
Directly Generated (ND)	\$5,280	\$71,985	\$100,433	\$36,801	\$10,445	\$74
Directly Generated (MN) ⁽²⁾	\$12,152	\$0	n/a	\$0	\$0	\$3,499
Total	\$4,702,763	\$1,239,400	\$2,941,086	\$2,658,000	\$688,965	\$823,552

Source: National Transit Database

(1) Includes fares for fixed route and demand response; (2) Capital revenues for 2020 not available

Federal Funds for Public Transit

The following is an overview of federal transportation programs available to transit and transportation providers in the Fargo-Moorhead area. Transit services are subject to many federal and state guidelines, which may impact how improvements, expansion, and coordination are implemented. Additional federal programs with transportation benefits are listed in the appendix.

Federal Transit Administration

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Sections 5307, 5310, and 5311 provide formula-based grants to support capital, planning, and operating assistance. This section includes a description of these transit funding programs. In urbanized areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000, the state departments of transportation apply for, receive, and dispense funds. For urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 or more, funds are apportioned directly to the locally determined designated recipient. The Fargo-Moorhead area exceeded the population threshold of 200,000 people in the 2020 census and was reclassified as a transportation management area by the US Department of

Transportation (USDOT), therefore becoming a direct recipient of FTA funding for the metro area. This gave Metro COG and local jurisdictions more responsibility in prioritizing and selecting transportation projects for federal funding. MATBUS and Metro COG assist in compliance with FTA regulations such as training, safety, maintenance, service, and procurement. Any contracted service by transit agencies, including taxi services, must also comply with FTA requirements.

The FTA also requires compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Title VI, described in more detail further in this section. All local match (non-federal) funds for sections 5307, 5310 and 5311 programs must be provided from sources other than those provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Such sources may include:

- State or local appropriations
- Other non-transportation federal funds that are eligible to be used for transportation, such as:
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Medicaid
 - Employment training programs
 - Rehabilitation services
 - Administration on Aging
- Tax revenue
- Private donations
- Revenues for human service contracts
- Net income generated by social service agencies

In North Dakota, most matching funds are provided by local funds, while in Minnesota the state department of transportation provides the majority of local match funding. MnDOT provides 85–90% of operating expenses and covers most of the capital expenditure. MnDOT also offers a competitive grant program for service expansion that addresses gaps found in the Greater Minnesota Transit Plan. It may be beneficial for transportation providers to find a diverse range of local match funding providers, as it is likely to improve the resiliency of the transportation providers facing limited budgets. Additionally, having multiple local match funding partners can expand the geographic reach of providers by no longer being confined to the jurisdiction or service area of a single local match funding provider, such as a city or county.

Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program

The FTA Section 5307 funding program makes federal resources available to urbanized areas and states for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. The activities eligible for funding under section 5307 include:

- Planning, engineering, design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies
- Capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement, overhaul, and rebuilding of buses; crime prevention and security equipment; and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities
- Capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software.

In addition, associated transit improvements and certain expenses associated with mobility management programs are eligible under the program. All preventive maintenance and some Americans with Disabilities Act complementary paratransit service costs are considered capital costs.

In urban areas with a population of 200,000 or more, at least 1% of the funding apportioned to each area must be used for transit enhancement activities such as historic preservation, landscaping, public art, pedestrian access, bicycle access, and enhanced access for people with disabilities.

Section 5311: Non-Urbanized Area Formula Program

The Section 5311 Non-Urbanized Area (rural) program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transit in rural areas with a population of less than 50,000. The FTA bases 80% of the statutory formula on the rural population of the states and 20% of the formula on land area. No state may receive more than 5% of the amount apportioned for land area. In addition, the FTA adds amounts apportioned according to the Growing States formula factors to rural areas. Each state prepares an annual program of projects, which must provide for fair and equitable distribution of funds within the state and must provide for maximum feasible coordination with transportation services assisted by other federal sources.

Funds may be used for capital, operating, and administrative assistance to state agencies, local public bodies, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transit services. The maximum federal share for capital and project administration is 80%. Projects to meet the requirements of the ADA, the Clean Air Act, or bicycle access projects may be funded at 90% federal contribution. The maximum FTA contribution for operating assistance is 50% of the net operating costs. State or local funding sources may provide the local share.

Section 5311(b)(3), the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) provides funding to assist in the design and implementation of training and technical assistance projects, research, and other support services tailored to meet the needs of transit operators in non-urbanized areas. The FTA allocates \$65,000 to each state and then allocates the balance of funds to each state based on an administrative formula using the non-urbanized population according to the most recent decennial census.

The FTA makes available 15% of the Section 5311 funds in each state for improvement of intercity bus services, also known as the Section 5311(f) program. The funds are to be used for planning, infrastructure, and operating needs related to the linkage of cities through intercity bus carriers unless the chief executive officer of the state certifies that the intercity bus service needs of the state are being met adequately. If all funds are not obligated to intercity bus improvements, the funds may revert to the general Section 5311 program for public transit in rural areas.

Section 5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

Section 5310 provides formula funding to states for the purpose of meeting the transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meet these needs. The FTA apportions funds to the states based on their share of the population of seniors and people with disabilities.

Capital projects are eligible for funding. Most funds are used to purchase vehicles or to provide preventive maintenance for transit fleets, but acquisition of transportation services under contract, lease, or other arrangements and state program administration are also eligible expenses. The maximum federal share is 80%. State or local funding sources may provide the local share.

Other federal funding sources

- FTA Formula Funds
 - Section 5309 Capital Program – Fixed Guideway Modernization
 - Section 5340 Growing States and High-Density States Formula Program
 - FTA Section 5303 Metropolitan Transportation Planning
 - FTA Section 5304 Statewide Transportation Planning
- FTA Discretionary Funds
 - Section 5309 Capital Program – Bus and Bus Facility
 - Clean Fuels Grant Program
 - Section 5320 Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands
 - Section 5339 Alternatives Analysis
 - Section 5311(c)(1) Tribal Transit Program
 - Over-the-Road Bus Accessibility Program
- FTA Competitive Funds
 - Access and Mobility Partnership Grants
 - Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Grants Program
 - Low- or No-Emission Vehicle Program 5339(c)
 - Tribal Transit Program competitive grants
- Other major sources of federal funding for public transit
 - Surface Transportation Block Grant Program

Federal Programs and Regulations

Public transportation is regulated by a variety of federal regulations intended to increase equitable access to publicly funded transportation.

Title VI

The FTA requires all recipients and sub recipients to comply with U.S. Department of Transportation Title VI regulations, based on the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI requirements for transit services are generally related to supplying language access to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).¹ The state departments of transportation are the primary recipient of these identified FTA funds; thus, all the Section 5311 transit service providers are subrecipients. The state departments of transportation have the primary responsibility for Title VI compliance. Recipients of 5307 funding must have their own Title VI program.

ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability. In terms of FTA and the provision of transit service, the ADA is structured to ensure equal opportunity and access for people with disabilities.² ADA requirements apply to facilities, vehicles, equipment, bus stops, level of service, fares, and provision of service.

¹ [FTA Circular 4702.1B: Title 6 Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients](#)

² [FTA Circular 4710.1 - Americans With Disabilities Act Guidance](#)



All public transit vehicles are required to be ADA compliant. Any new facilities or bus stops must be constructed to be ADA compliant. All transit service providers must complete required ADA training. Service provision-related equivalencies include the following for demand response service:

- The response time, fares, geographic area of service, hours and days of service, trip purpose restrictions, and availability of information and reservation capabilities must be the same for all riders, including those with disabilities
- Regarding capacity denials (denials within the existing service parameters in the above bullet); denials are allowed for demand response service, if the frequency of denials is the same as the frequency for riders without disabilities
- Any priority given to persons with disabilities or higher levels of service is a local decision
- Requirements for demand response service are different than those required for ADA complementary paratransit associated with fixed route service

Olmstead Plan – Minnesota

In 1999, the Supreme Court affirmed that mental illness is a type of disability, that individuals with disabilities, including those with mental illness, have a right to live in their communities as opposed to forcing institutionalization, and are covered by the Americans Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) in *Olmstead vs. L.C and E.W.* The State of Minnesota is one of the more progressive states in instituting a specific Olmstead Plan. Minnesota's Olmstead Plan was updated most recently in March 2018. For transit providers in Greater Minnesota, outside the Twin Cities metro, the Olmstead Plan requires that people with disabilities, including those with mental illness, are covered by the same requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It means that the level of transit service available to the general public (the span of service, frequency of service, and service area coverage) is also available to people with disabilities, including mental illness. It also means that social and human service agencies and public transit agencies should coordinate as much as possible to provide service to individuals with disabilities.

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is a passenger transportation benefit of the Medicaid program. States are required in their Title XIX state plans to ensure necessary transportation of Medicaid beneficiaries to and from health care providers. Expenditures on transportation may be claimed as administrative costs of the state plan. Alternatively, the state may elect to include transportation as medical assistance under its state Medicaid plan but use a direct vendor payment system consistent with applicable regulations. There are various ways in which a state can construct the network by which these rides are provided to the users. Statewide, regional, or local provider networks are typical.

Older Americans Act

Various programs through the Older Americans Act support transportation of seniors. Grants can be made to social service agencies and transit providers to ensure older adults can reach necessary services such as nutrition, adult day services, and civil services such as government benefits, legal aid, and regular tasks that require presence at public agencies. Older Americans Act funding covers fare subsidy on behalf of the passenger if program funds are used to provide a transportation benefit.

Veterans Transportation Programs

Veterans Affairs (VA) contracts with medical and paratransit providers to provide transportation services for veterans who need access to health care. Social workers assist clients to refer them to public transit providers, or more specialized transport.

State of Minnesota

The State of Minnesota requires fixed route systems to offer free rides to veterans with disabilities. MATBUS allows veterans with disabilities (requires Veterans ID with “services connected”) to ride free on the entire system.

Head Start

The Head Start program supports early childhood education for low-income families. Head Start programs are not required to provide transportation services. However, when they do provide those services, there are key regulations in Transportation, 45 CFR § 1303.70 (2016) with which grantee and delegate agencies are required to comply.³

Transportation Disadvantaged Populations & Services

Transportation-disadvantaged people are those who are unable to transport themselves due to their age, income, or health condition. The travel needs of transportation-disadvantaged populations are as diverse as the travel accomplished by people with adequate access to transportation. Needs may include an elderly person trying to get to a specialized health center or to the grocery store, an unhoused person trying to get to a job interview, a single mom without a reliable car who works a second shift, or a visually impaired individual with a guide dog traveling to visit her parents after working all day.

Regional Demographics and Socioeconomic Characteristics

Demographic and socioeconomic measures can offer inferences on how many people in a community rely on transit. A transit-dependent population may consist of those with low incomes, older adults, or those who by choice or necessity do not have access to personal automobiles. Areas with aging populations and high percentages of people with disabilities and/or lower incomes are likely to have high demand for transit service as a lifeline connection to medical treatment and other services found in urban areas such as Fargo-Moorhead. Some of these standard measures include:

- Population growth and decline
 - Changes in total population can affect an area’s overall demand for transit. Growing regions often generate increased travel demand, including demand for transit travel to and from areas previously unserved by transit. Areas with declining populations can also see increasing transit demand, as a reduced number of residents must travel further to accomplish their daily needs.
- Youth population

³ <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/transportation/article/requirements-program-transportation-services>

- Youth (individuals under 18) often do not have a driver's license or access to a vehicle and exhibit a higher overall need for transit than the general population. Rural transit serves a higher proportion of young and school-age children than would typically be found in urban areas, in part due to Head Start and other childcare-oriented services.
- Older adults population
 - Adults over the age of 65 typically use public transportation and specialized transportation services more frequently than the general population. Older adults often exhibit higher demand for transit as they become less capable or willing to drive themselves or can no longer afford to own a car on a fixed income.
- Poverty status
 - Low-income households earn up to 150 percent of the federal poverty threshold. Low-income populations may not own a car or may temporarily not be able to afford to use their car due to deferred maintenance or the cost of gas.
- Disability status
 - Persons with disabilities are often heavily dependent on public transit service.
- Vehicle ownership
 - One of the most influential factors in transit need is whether a household has access to a car. Zero-vehicle households may include households that do not have the economic means of owning a vehicle, households that choose not to own a car, and/or individuals who are unable to drive, such as senior citizens and people with disabilities. Households with just one vehicle may need transit if the vehicle is used by one household member for commuting purposes, leaving remaining household members without a vehicle.
- Unemployment
 - A high unemployment rate may indicate a higher need for social services, while a low unemployment rate may indicate a need for commuter transit. A low unemployment rate may also negatively affect the transit agency's efforts to attract and retain staff.

Transit is not used exclusively by these individuals; however, these user groups do stand to establish a market base for transit service. Community demographics are shown on page 8 of the Transit Development Plan.

Regional and Special Services Provider Inventory

An inventory of known transportation services in the region is provided below. These services include public fixed-route, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) complementary paratransit, demand response, and other transportation services. These providers either offer services within Fargo-Moorhead or regularly provide services to Fargo-Moorhead from outside the metro area. Most of these providers are also listed in the FM Ride Source directory published by the City of Fargo.⁴

Provider	Local, Regional, Intercity Geography	Lift or Ramp Equipped
1 Priority Transportation	Local	Yes
Anywhere Transport	Regional	Yes

⁴ [Fargo-Moorhead Ride Source Directory, 2024](#)

Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP)	Local	Yes
Ashtown Taxi	Local	No
CarAVan	Local	Yes
Community of Care Cass County	Regional – ND (rural Cass County ND)	No
Doyle's Yellow Checker Cab, Inc.	Local	No
FM Mobility Care	Local	Yes
FM Taxi & Limousine	Local	No
GoCab Transportation Company	Local	No
Handi-Wheels Transportation	Local	Yes
Jefferson Lines	Intercity	Yes
Lakes Medi-Van	Local	Yes
Lucky 7 Taxi Service	Local	No
Lyft	Local	No
MATBUS Fixed Route	Local	Yes
MAT Paratransit	Local	Yes
Maxime & Co	Local/regional	Yes
Metro Senior Ride	Local	No
Precision Transportation Inc.	Local	Yes
Ready Wheels – FM Ambulance	Local	Yes
ReeyuCab	Local	No
Resource Connect	Local	No
Ridey Taxi	Local	No
South Central Adult Services	Regional – ND (Barnes, LaMoure, Foster, Logan, McIntosh, Griggs, and Emmon Counties)	Yes
Transit Alternatives	Regional – MN (Fergus Falls, Perham, Breckenridge, and Parkers Prairie)	Yes
Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, T.H.E. Bus	Regional – MN (Mahnomon, Red Lake, Norman, Polk, Marshall, Pennington, Kittson, and Clearwater Counties)	Yes
Uber	Local	No
Rural providers with regular or occasional trips to Fargo-Moorhead area		
Benson County Transportation	Regional – ND	Yes
Pembina County Meals and Transportation	Regional – ND	Yes
Walsh CounComty Nutrition and Transportation Program	Regional – ND	Yes
James River Public Transit	Regional – ND (City of Jamestown, Stutsman, Wells, and Sheridan Counties)	Yes
Northlink Mobility	Regional – MN (Rochester)	Yes
Paul Bunyan Transit	Regional – MN (Beltrami, Lake of the Woods, and Roseau Counties)	Yes
Rainbow Rider Transit	Regional – MN (Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Todd, and Traverse counties)	Yes

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Rural Transportation Collaborative (RTC)	Regional – MN (Mahnommen, Red Lake, Norman, Polk, Marshall, Pennington, Kittson, and Roseau Counties)	Yes
Valley Senior Services	Regional – ND/MN	Yes

Community Resources for Information, Outreach, and Advocacy

In addition to the transportation service providers listed above, the following agencies provide resources to connect customers with transportation providers.

- FirstLink: Dial 2-1-1 for information on Fargo-Moorhead transportation and health and human service providers in the area, in addition to support for active military and veterans
- Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living: Call (701) 478-0459 for regional resources for people with disabilities. Information for home ramp building programs and other resources in the metro area
- Lakes and Prairies Community Action Agency: Moorhead and Dilworth senior citizens can find resources by calling (218) 291-5857
- Valley Senior Services: Fargo and West Fargo senior citizens can find resources by calling (701) 293-1440
- NDAD (North Dakota Association for the Disabled): Serves people of all ages in Fargo, West Fargo, and Moorhead. Financial assistance is available for individuals with physical disabilities who need accessible transportation. Call (701) 281-8215 for a financial assistance application.

Needs Assessment

An assessment of transportation needs for people with disabilities, people with low incomes, and senior populations can identify areas of improvement for transportation services and coordination. This assessment includes data collection and analysis of gaps and barriers in existing transportation services. This chapter includes an overview of the coordinated plan engagement activities and summarizes the identified needs.

Operating Environment

In the Fargo-Moorhead region, and similar Midwestern areas where there is a higher density metropolitan center surrounded by very low-density areas, there is a limited practicality to how much actual service coordination outside the city limits can be accomplished. Rural density development with smaller communities located miles apart creates an environment where agencies can justify/support only a small number of vehicles and a limited number of drivers. Within rural areas limited capital and personnel resources are controlling factors to the extent that coordination can be promoted. Trips can be coordinated if agencies can pick up riders along the way to larger urban centers, but the large distances between providers could make that too long of a deviation from the direct route. Rural providers do not want to lengthen the travel time further for their customers.

Coordinated Plan Engagement

The coordinated plan engagement was comprised primarily of responses to a transportation provider questionnaire, a focus group with transportation providers, and a focus group with community-based organizations. Feedback from the engagement process conducted as part of the Transit Development Plan was also incorporated into the coordinated plan.

Transportation Service Provider Questionnaire

Each of the local providers listed in the FM Ride Source Directory and the previous CHSTP were asked to complete a survey of questions designed to gather information on:

- Transportation agency background
- Hours of service, regular routes, and reservations procedures
- Customers/clients the organization supports or serves
- Equipment/fleet used to transport clients/customers
- Key trip origins and destinations in the metro area
- Trip purposes supported by the organization
- Regional transportation needs and barriers
- Levels of coordination with other transportation or human service providers
- Barriers to enhanced coordination between providers in the region

These questions helped identify the types of services available, transportation needs, and helped assess current levels of coordination among providers. The questionnaire was sent out to approximately 30 transportation providers, listed in the previous chapter, and responses were received from 10 regional service providers. One response was removed because it was partially filled out and the provider was not named; therefore, it was not included in the summary table. The questionnaire was distributed through an introductory email in March 2025, plus reminder emails were sent the following month. Figure 1 documents the information gathered from each of the organizations responding to the survey inquiry.

Figure 2 Transportation Provider Questionnaire Responses

Provider name	Valley Senior Services	Benson County Transportation	James River Senior Center	South Central Adult Services	Lakes Medi-Van Inc.	Handi-Wheels	Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, Inc.	Careavan	Walsh County Senior Citizens Council
Provider type	Nonprofit transportation provider	Public transit agency	Nonprofit transportation provider	Nonprofit transportation provider	Private for-profit transportation provider	Nonprofit transportation provider	Nonprofit human services agency	Other (specialized transportation)	Public transit agency
Populations served	Seniors (65 and older)	People with physical disabilities, people with developmental or cognitive disabilities, people in recovery from substance abuse, people with chronic medical needs, seniors (65 and older), low-income people, youth, general public	People with physical disabilities, people with developmental or cognitive disabilities, people in recovery from substance abuse, people with chronic medical needs, seniors (65 and older), low-income people, youth, general public	People with physical disabilities, people with developmental or cognitive disabilities, people in recovery from substance abuse, people with chronic medical needs, seniors (65 and older), low-income people, youth, general public	People with physical disabilities, people with developmental or cognitive disabilities, people in recovery from substance abuse, people with chronic medical needs, seniors (65 and older), low-income people, youth, general public	People with physical disabilities, people with developmental or cognitive disabilities, people in recovery from substance abuse, people with chronic medical needs, seniors (65 and older), low-income people, youth, general public	People with physical disabilities, people with developmental or cognitive disabilities, people in recovery from substance abuse, people with chronic medical needs, seniors (65 and older), low-income people, youth, general public	Other (people being discharged from facilities)	People with physical disabilities, people with developmental or cognitive disabilities, people in recovery from substance abuse, people with chronic medical needs, seniors (65 and older), low-income people, youth, general public
Services provided	Demand-response transit service	Demand-response transit service, non-emergency medical transportation	Demand-response transit service	Demand-response transit service, non-emergency medical transportation	non-emergency medical transportation	Demand-response transit service	Transportation for older adults	Non-emergency medical transportation	Demand-response transit service
Trip types served	Medical appointments, work, school, groceries, shopping, recreation, nutrition/wellness, senior center/adult day care,	Medical appointments, groceries	Medical appointments, work, school, groceries, shopping, recreation, nutrition/wellness, senior center/adult day care,	Medical appointments, work, school, groceries, shopping, recreation, nutrition/wellness, senior center/adult day care, religious, volunteer activities	Medical appointments	Medical appointments, work, school, groceries, shopping, recreation, nutrition/wellness, senior center/adult day care, religious, volunteer activities	Medical appointments, groceries, shopping, recreation, nutrition/wellness, senior	Medical appointments, discharge from facilities	Medical appointments, work, school, groceries, shopping, recreation, nutrition/wellness, volunteer activities

	religious, volunteer activities		religious, volunteer activities						
Areas served	Metro area- Fargo, West Fargo, Horace, Moorhead and Dilworth	Benson County	Stutsman, Wells and Sheridan counties	Barnes, LaMoure, Foster, Logan, McIntosh, Griggs, Emmons and Nelson counties	Rural Minnesota	Fargo/West Fargo	Clay County	Based in Fargo, broad geographic range	Walsh County
Service days	Weekdays	Weekdays	Weekdays, Saturday, Sunday	Weekdays, Saturday, Sunday	Weekdays, Saturday, Sunday	Weekdays	Weekdays	Weekdays, Saturday, Sunday	Weekdays, Saturday
Funding sources	State funds	State funds, federal funds, county funds	State funds, federal funds, county funds, fares, donations	State funds, federal funds, county funds, city funds, fares, donations	Fares	State funds, federal funds, fares, donations	County funds, fares	Fares	State funds, federal funds, county funds, fares, donations
How services are booked	By appointment	By appointment	Clients call a dispatcher, and vehicles make pickups shortly thereafter	Clients call a dispatcher, and vehicles make pickups shortly thereafter	Clients call a dispatcher, and vehicles make pickups shortly thereafter	Clients call a dispatcher, and vehicles make pickups shortly thereafter	Dial-a-ride, clients must reserve rides at least 24 hours in advance	Client calls dispatcher to arrange rides	Dial-a-ride, clients must reserve rides at least 24 hours in advance
How many vehicles the organization operates	13 vans, 1 grocery bus	3 vans	7 vans and 4 cutaways	50 vans	38 vans		Several minivans, 1 mini-bus	9 vans	2 vans, 2 buses
Numbers of riders served on an average weekday	140		160	150	75	10	2	15	20
Number of riders served on an average Saturday	0		40	20	15			8	6
Number of riders served on an average Sunday	0		28	25	2			4	0

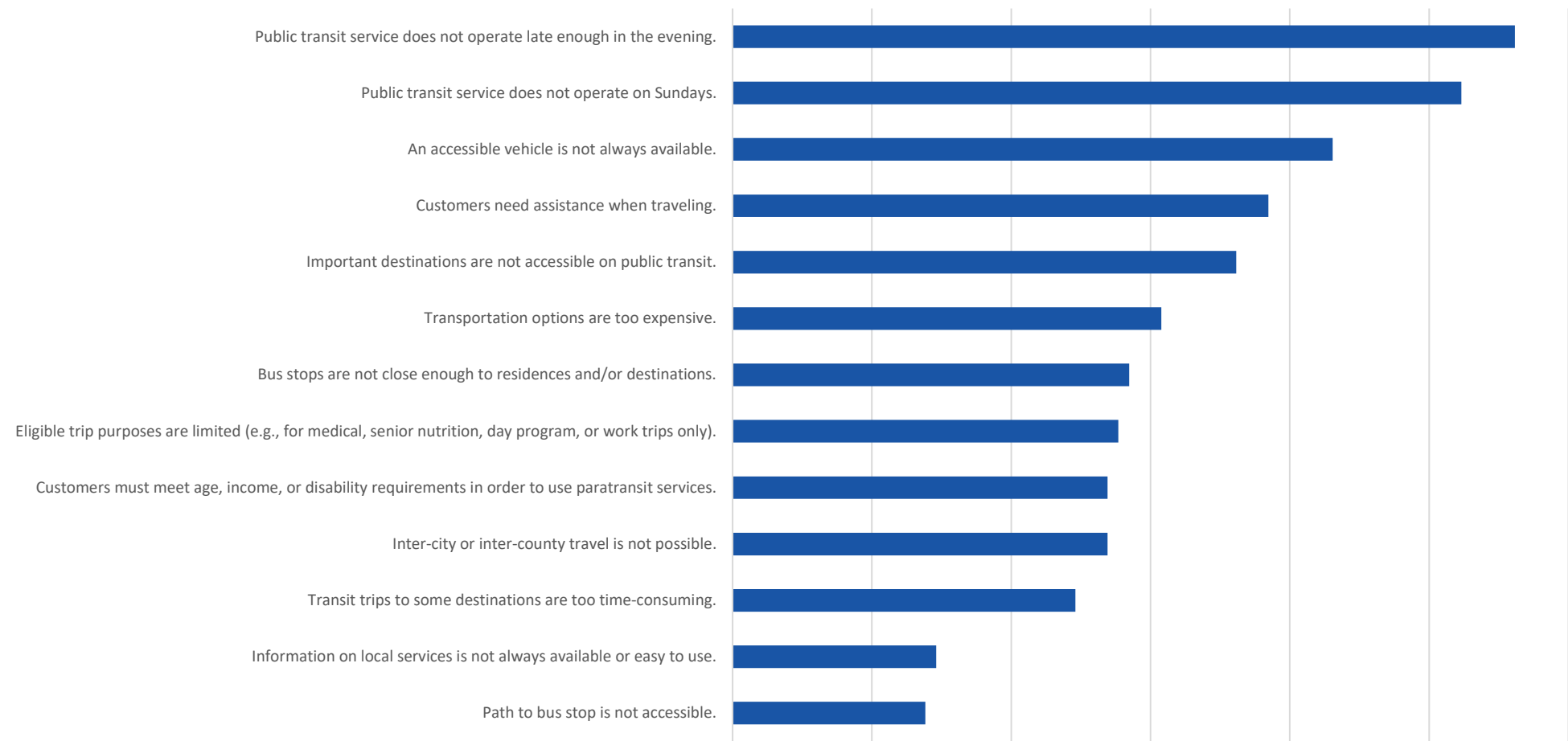
Number of riders served during a typical year	27000	15	37000	1500	18000	2472	200	4000	400
Top destinations for clients	Medical Shopping Senior Centers visiting other appointments	Devils Lake Harvey Rugby New Rockford	James River Medical Center Walmart Progress Activity Center Downtown Dental Art Center	Medical facilities in Fargo, Bismarck, Grand Forks & Jamestown Grocery stores Daycares Senior Centers Other	Sanford Fargo, ND Essentia Fargo, ND Mayo Rochester, MN U of M Minneapolis, MN Essentia, Duluth	Medical and dental clinics, various locations	Dilworth Walmart Fargo Smoke Shop Sanford Essentia Cash Wise	HOSPITALS TO OTHER FACILITIES R/T APPOINTMENTS FROM FACILITIES	Altru In Grand Forks, ND Aurora in Grand Forks, ND Walmart in Grand Forks, ND Hugos, Grafton, ND Life Skills in Grafton, ND
Top transportation challenges faced by customers/clients			Customers need assistance when traveling.	Awareness of services	Funding for non-emergency transportation is so underfunded that it is near the end for our organization	Inter-city or inter-county travel is not possible.	Important destinations are not accessible on public transit. Transit trips to some destinations are too time-consuming. Customers must meet age, income, or disability requirements in order to use paratransit services.		Public transit service does not operate late enough in the evening.
Please say a few words about public transit/human services transportation successes in your community. What specific services or programs work well for your customers/clients?	We work closely with paratransit as we are not public transportation		After school program rides School to Job Programs	Demand/Response	Our customers just have to call one number and transportation is handled with one call and one organization	Joint Section 5310 application: "People needing life-sustaining support (cancer treatments, dialysis, rehab, etc.) Handi-Wheels Transportation is a dial-a-ride, demand/response, door-to-door transit service for individuals that are disabled, elderly, and/or low-income. We help people maintain their self-		We think Fargo is well-represented in ride service	We pick up people in Grand Forks on our trips to Fargo

						sufficiency and help them live healthy lives. Handi-Wheels empowers a large number of individuals who cannot drive for themselves to take care of their health needs with life sustaining support (cancer treatments, dialysis, rehab, etc.) with the additional ability to access shopping, recreation, and worship services while remaining in their own homes where they are most comfortable. We have been serving the community for 50 years!			
Please let us know if you have other comments or suggestions for how transportation services can be better coordinated in the Fargo-Moorhead region.				Most of these issues are not applicable to us.		One issue with transportation services in the area pertains to funding. The NDDOT has determined that the Fargo area no longer fits under the umbrella definition of 'urban' for the 5310 program. Unfortunately, this will greatly impact the small agencies such as ours, who will lose this quarterly funding.			



Respondents were also asked to rank the top challenges faced by their clients/customers. The chart below shows the challenges sorted by weighted average, with the top challenges at the top of the chart.

Top transportation challenges faced by clients/customers



Main Themes

Transportation providers in the Fargo-Moorhead region provide transportation services for a wide range of populations, including seniors, people with disabilities, low-income people, and people in recovery from substance use disorders. They rely on multiple funding sources to provide their services, and lack of funding for some providers is a threat to their organizations.

Service providers identify the following as the top three issues facing their customers:

1. Service span of public transit in the evenings
2. Lack of public transit service on Sunday
3. Unavailability of accessible vehicles

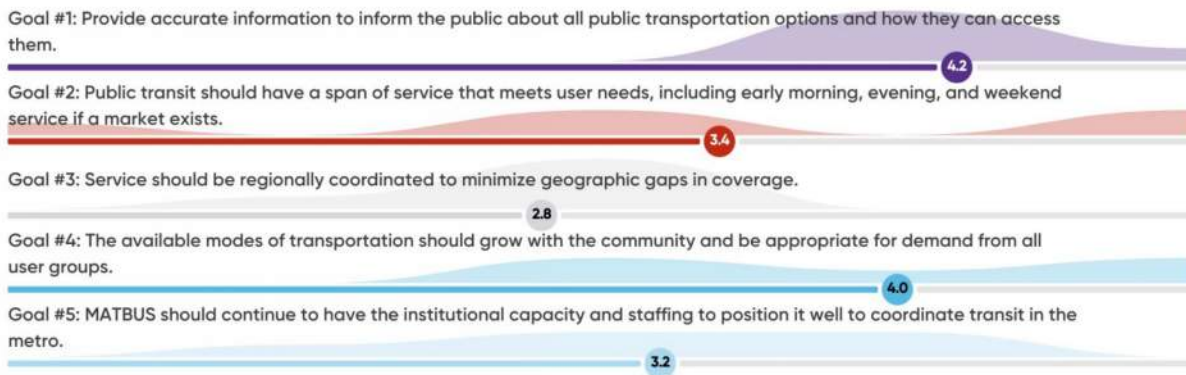
The top two findings regarding the challenge of public transit's service span indicate that some of the services' customers would use public transit if it were available later in the evening or on Sundays. This is significant because using existing fixed-route service is more cost-effective than paratransit or other transportation services provided on call for riders. Unlike MATBUS fixed-route service, paratransit is available on Sundays, but paratransit has limited eligibility and therefore isn't an option for all older adults or people with disabilities.

Human Services Focus Group

Main Themes

A focus group was held on January 30, 2025, and included representatives from several human service providers in the region. When asked to rank their top priority for future service improvements, the top three answers all had to do with service span: focus group participants prioritized Sunday service, earlier or later service on weekdays, and earlier or later service on Saturdays. Participants were also asked to identify the top challenges for their clients/customers. They identified long travel times/transfers, lack of Sunday service, fares for low-income clients, not enough transportation in industrial areas, safety, and the need to transport goods as current challenges.

A major focus of the CHSTP update is to evaluate the progress being made toward reaching the goals of the last CHSTP. To this end, participants were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 how effective the goals identified in the CHSTP have been in guiding regional coordination. Participants indicated that the region has been most successful at providing information to the public about public transportation options and has been least successful at minimizing geographic gaps in coverage.



The region's success in sharing information with the public about available public transportation options underscores the importance of FM Ride Source and the various helplines available for people to call.

The limited progress made on minimizing gaps in geographic coverage in the region emphasizes the challenges of operating in suburban and rural environments: serving low-density areas with towns that are separated by miles of rural land uses is expensive and time-consuming.

Community-Based Organizations Focus Group

Main Themes

A second focus group was held on January 30, 2025, with a representative of the Fargo Native American Commission. Key takeaways from that conversation are summarized below.

- Northern areas have less service available, particularly for new Americans without licenses/vehicles
- Transportation is noted as the #1 reason for missing appointments
- MATBUS generally has good, convenient routes, especially around popular destinations
- Cold weather is a challenge for riders
- Many people must walk 2-3 blocks to reach the bus stop
- Riders (65+ or with disabilities) utilizing food pantries have challenges riding the bus. Food boxes are heavy and access to the warehouse is a challenge. Wait times for the return bus is long.
- Info sharing is a challenge, particularly on the large transit map
- Training/education is a challenge, and it varies by demographic
 - Elderly populations want to call in
 - Younger populations are okay using a phone or website
 - Some people still prefer printed materials
 - Information should be digestible and personable to each population group.

Unmet Needs: Barriers and Gaps to Transit Use and Coordination

The demographic analysis conducted as part of the Transit Development Plan and engagement for the CHSTP identified gaps in mobility that impact the quality of life for seniors, low-income populations, or people with disabilities. Gaps that were identified across the range of input opportunities were identified to focus coordination efforts and develop recommendations for improving coordination. The following is a list of gaps and barriers, condensed into needs statements.

- **Longer service span.** There is a need for Sunday fixed route service as well as earlier and later service hours. This need emerged both from the coordinated plan engagement and from the scenario planning engagement conducted as part of the Transit Development Plan: service on Sundays was identified as the top priority by respondents, followed by the earlier and later service on weekdays and earlier and later service on Saturdays. A narrow span of service coupled with long headways make completing many types of trips by transit challenging, if not impossible. Common trip types that are difficult or impossible to make within the existing span of service include late-shift work trips, child-care evening pickups for families, social trips to restaurants and bars, and after-school activities or evening classes for students.
- **More (and less complicated) funding.** Transportation providers need assistance in securing capital funding and procuring vehicles. Most non-governmental transportation providers in the region cobble together a combination of public funding and private donations from various sources. Doing so is time- and labor-intensive. Additionally, funding for non-emergency medical transportation to the Fargo–Moorhead region is scarce. In rural areas, volunteer drivers are limited, which increases the need for paid drivers and increases operating costs. For agencies seeking federal funding to expand service, securing a local match can be challenging. For providers that are funded by local match funding partners, long trips that cross jurisdictional boundaries can be complicated to provide.
- **Shorter transit travel times and more reliable service.** Transit trips to some destinations are too time-consuming.
 - Within Fargo–Moorhead, access to some areas is still an issue, with some people walking two or three blocks to a bus stop. In the focus group with CBOs, transportation was noted as the top reason for missing appointments.
 - For trips traveling to and from Fargo–Moorhead from the surrounding region, rural land use patterns around Fargo–Moorhead make travel coordination challenging. Trip coordination is particularly challenging when a customer’s ability to be in a vehicle for a long period of time is limited. When long trips out of town are being completed, that vehicle is removed from service for in-town trips, which can lead to longer wait times for other customers. Travel to dispersed destinations leads to high numbers of deadhead miles, which increases operational costs.
- **Reduced fares.** Income-based ride programs and other reduced fare programs are desired. As income decreases, the cost of owning and using a private vehicle becomes a greater burden. As a result, people who live in poverty are generally less likely to own a private vehicle, and will thus depend on rides from other people, including friends, family, and public transportation. Reduced-fare programs decrease the financial burden of transportation for riders who depend on transit and can encourage those who can drive to take transit instead.
- **Increased service coverage and access to destinations.** MATBUS generally has good, convenient routes, especially around popular destinations. However, there are still areas with limited coverage. The northern areas of the region have less service available, which is particularly impactful on new Americans without licenses/vehicles. For riders who are older or who have disabilities accessing food pantries, riding the bus can be challenging. Food boxes are heavy, access to the warehouse is a challenge, and the wait times for a return bus are long.
- **Shorter wait times and better bus stop shelters.** Cold weather is a challenge for riders, and there is a desire to limit weather exposure while traveling. This is particularly true for older

adults or people with disabilities, some of whom might drive during good weather but rely more heavily on transit during poor weather.

- **Improved information-sharing.** Information-sharing remains a challenge, and vary for different demographic groups:
 - Older adults typically want to use the telephone to book transportation services.
 - Younger generations are generally comfortable using phones, websites, or apps.
 - Some people still want printed materials.
 - Overall, information should be digestible and personable to each population group.
- **On-demand travel options.** Many of the transportation services available for older adults and people with disabilities require a reservation that is made one or two days in advance. While this is useful for many regular trips such as scheduled medical appointments, this can be very limiting for other types of travel and can result in loss of independence for populations that rely on these services. This challenge is particularly acute for people who need wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Coordination Recommendations

Purpose of Strategy Identification

As with any coordinated plan, it is critical to outline goals for the region. Goals are statements that describe what the coordinated plan will accomplish as well as the overall value the plan contributes to the community and to public transit in the region. Goals are an essential component to any coordinated plan, providing an overall context for what the plan is working to accomplish. The goals identified for the CHSTP build on and complement the goals and objectives developed for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which will guide transportation investments over the coming decade. The MTP goals, outlined below, reflect extensive community engagement and align with current national priorities and state goals outlined in statewide planning plans:

- **Safety & System Security.** Provide a transportation system that prioritizes safety for all modes and is adaptable to environmental and social change.
- **Travel Efficiency & Reliability.** Improve regional mobility.
- **Walking, Biking, and Rolling.** Empower people to walk, bike, and roll more often as a mode of transportation.
- **Transit Access & Reliability.** Support people's access to reliable transit service.
- **Maintain Transportation Infrastructure.** Sustain transportation infrastructure in a state of good repair.
- **Community Context and Impact Reduction.** Strengthen equitable access to and support environmental considerations into transportation planning decisions.
- **Transportation Decisions.** Make regional transportation decisions that tie local and regional priorities together, promote fiscal responsibility, and support the movement of people and goods.
- **Emerging Transportation Trends.** Monitor transportation trends and new technologies shown to improve the way people travel and incorporate into regional transportation plans
- **Connecting People and Places.** Consider where people live and work and people's relationship to the built environment in regional long-term transportation decisions.

- **Freight Network – Moving Goods.** Accommodate freight movement to strength regional economic priorities and support efficient consumer mobility and delivery.

Goals

Goals for coordinated plans should point back to regional goals for transportation planning. They should also reflect and update goals from the previous coordinated plan. It is important to note that many of the recommendations (strategies) developed in the previous CHSTP have been implemented or are being addressed through the appointment of a Mobility Manager at MATBUS. This position is responsible for maintaining the FM Ride Source and serving as a central hub for coordination activities in the Fargo-Moorhead region.

As such, the updated goals for the 2025-2029 CHSTP reflect changing conditions in the transportation industry, progress made in terms of coordination since the last CHSTP, and overarching regional transportation goals. The updated goals have also been categorized and condensed to focus the recommendations presented below.

2021-2025 CHSTP Goals	2025-2029 CHSTP Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal #1: Provide accurate information to inform the public about all public transportation options and how they can access them. • Goal #2: Public transit should have a span of service that meets user needs, including early morning, evening, and weekend service if a market exists. • Goal #3: Service should be regionally coordinated to minimize geographic gaps in coverage. • Goal #4: The available modes of transportation should grow with the community and be appropriate for demand from all user groups. • Goal #5: MATBUS should continue to have the institutional capacity and staffing to position it well to coordinate transit in the metro. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal #1: Service Availability and Accessibility. Public transit and supplemental transportation services should be available throughout the week, have a span of service that meets user needs, and be accessible to major destinations. • Goal #2: Education, Marketing, and Awareness. Accurate information should continue to be available to enhance awareness of current available services and how these services can be accessed. • Goal #3: Financial Sustainability and Fiscal Responsibility. Funding should be directed to promote coordination and to ensure regional partners continue to participate in coordination activities. • Goal #4: Promote Regional Coordination. Continue working with regional transportation providers to promote collaboration, outreach, and service coordination. • Goal #5: Use of New Technologies. The region should continue promoting new technologies to improve service delivery and coordination.

Transportation gaps and solutions identified in this plan become eligible to be funded through federal funds distributed by Metro COG to regional partners. These eligible solutions are referred to as projects. Projects are concrete solutions, such as new vehicles, improved sidewalk infrastructure or accessible bus stops, and software systems.

Recommendations—highlighted in the table below—are bigger-picture initiatives that stakeholders and Metro COG can implement or facilitate. These strategies grow directly from feedback received from stakeholder groups, public surveys, advocates for special populations, and existing local providers of transportation and human services. They are bound by regional policies and the powers that Metro COG, MATBUS, cities in the region, nonprofits, providers, and other stakeholders have to fund and implement

initiatives. For the purposes of simplicity, the recommendations are categorically organized by which goal they fall under.

Table 1: Summary of recommendations

Goal	Recommendation	Time Frame	Implementing Party
Goal 1: Service Availability and Accessibility	Plan to add Sunday service in areas of highest transit need	Mid-term	MATBUS
	Systematically add service early mornings and evenings	Short- to mid-term	MATBUS
	Work with the cities and developers early to plan for transit and access to transit in new residential communities, industrial areas, and major employment locations	Short-term, ongoing	Metro COG
	Explore opportunities to expand access to wheelchair accessible vehicles	Short-term	MATBUS
	Explore the possibilities for low-income fare/pass programs	Short-term	MATBUS
Goal #2: Education, Marketing, and Awareness	Develop marketing and informational materials in multiple languages to assist Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and New American populations	Short-term	RCC – <i>see Goal #4</i>
	Develop a mobility management newsletter focused on coordination activities, resources, and events	Short-term	RCC
	Continue promoting local and regional transportation services through the FM Ride Source	Ongoing	MATBUS
	Continue promoting travel training to help people become familiar with public transit and specialized transportation services in the region	Ongoing	MATBUS
Goal #3: Financial Sustainability and Fiscal Responsibility	Create funding matrix to bring awareness to available funds and upcoming deadlines for grant funding	Short-term	Metro COG
	Develop internal educational campaign for providers who would otherwise use grants, including 5310 funding on timelines and how funding works	Mid-term	Metro COG
Goal #4: Promote Regional Coordination	Develop regional coordination working group (RCWG) to promote coordination with public transit providers and specialized transportation services throughout the region	Short-term	Metro COG, MATBUS
	Continue coordinating with major employers, local colleges, and tribal nations	Ongoing	MATBUS, Metro COG, RCC
Goal #4: Use of New Technologies	Explore the use of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) to supplement paratransit or other specialized transportation services	Mid- to long-term	RCC
	Research platforms or apps that coordinate ride requests and scheduling for specialized transportation	Mid-term	RCC

Description of Recommendations

Goal 1: Service Availability and Accessibility

Increase Service Levels

One concern commonly heard in public and stakeholder outreach is the need for more transit service in the early morning and evening hours as well as on Sundays. This is carried forward from the previous coordinated plan and was discussed broadly as part of the Transit Development Plan.

Plan for Transit Service and Access

Access to transit and/or transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities should continue to be advocated for in the region. While MATBUS and Metro COG actively coordinate their services with regional partners, as new development in the region continues, it is important to ensure that transit and transportation services are considered early in the planning and development process.

Explore Reduced-Fare Program

Many agencies offer reduced fare programs for individuals with low incomes and agencies that serve those individuals. Often, eligible human service agencies can apply to receive discounted, or subsidized, passes for the individuals they serve. An example of a program from South Placer County (California) is outlined as follows:

Interested agencies may submit an application. The application must include how the agency will distribute tickets to clients and how this program will expand their current services. Once accepted, participating agencies will enter into an agreement with WPCTSA and become eligible to purchase a defined number of daily passes each month or as needed based on the estimated number of users. Agencies may purchase transit day passes for fixed-route buses only, directly from any of the three transit providers serving South Placer County (Auburn Transit, Placer County Transit, and Roseville Transit). Agencies may then distribute tickets to their clients based on the description provided in their application packet. Monthly, or less often at the agency's discretion, agencies will submit an invoice to WPCTSA for reimbursement of 75% of the cost of passes that have been purchased.

This approach works better and is faster than interviewing customers one by one and asking for their income information. It allows the human service agencies to do the “legwork,” so to speak, and simplifies the process through contracts between agencies.

This recommendation is also carried forward from the previous coordinated plan.

Expand Use of Accessible Vehicles

When asked to rank top transportation challenges on the transportation service provider questionnaire, the third highest challenge (after Sunday service and earlier/later service hours) was that accessible vehicles are not always available. While paratransit services operated by MATBUS offer fully accessible vehicles, this issue should be explored further to determine the extent of the challenge faced by transportation providers and identify potential solutions.

Goal #2: Education, Marketing, and Awareness

Marketing and Informational Materials

The development and enhancement of regional transportation marketing materials would inform current and potential riders (and human service agency personnel) about the services available to them and make the services easier to understand and use. Increasing the visibility of transit, paratransit, and other transportation services within local communities would also help to garner funding support. Better advertisement of available travel training services could also increase use of the program. All marketing materials should be available in large print format for older adults and in multiple languages for Limited English Proficiency populations.

FM Ride Source

FM Ride Source conveniently collates all transportation options in the Fargo–Moorhead area so that potential riders can determine what transportation options are best suited for their situations. Printed copies of the directory are available by contacting the MATBUS Mobility Manager or by self-printing the guide. Either option, however, requires accessing the FM Ride Source website. Older adults who are less comfortable with technology may not know that this option is available to them. MATBUS could expand the reach of FM Ride Source by providing printed copies to senior and retirement centers, as well as to other medical and health facilities that cater to older adults. The guide could be translated into multiple languages and distributed at public health departments and culturally relevant locations.

Mobility Management Newsletter

A mobility management newsletter released at regular intervals could provide information about coordination activities, resources, and events. This newsletter would be distributed to providers to improve regional coordination between providers in the area and Metro COG.

Goal #3: Financial Sustainability and Fiscal Responsibility

Funding Matrix

It is recommended that Metro COG, in conjunction with MATBUS, develop a funding matrix that clearly describes funding streams, sources, grant dates, and how to use the funding. This will help all agencies involved in coordinated planning to better understand available funds and how to access the funds. The federal formula funding write-up in Chapter 2 of this report may be used to contribute to the overall matrix. The purpose of a quick, easy-to-read and understand matrix is to be prepared with “shovel-ready” projects at any time funds are made available. This strategy also works in tandem with the internal education strategy for 5310 funding. Helping organizations who provide transportation services better understand funding for transportation and timelines will assist in gathering more applications for federal funding and better motivate agencies to participate in a regionally coordinated plan.

Goal #4: Promote Regional Coordination

Develop a Regional Coordination Working Group (RCWG)

As MATBUS and various organizations that are providing transportation (either directly operating service or funding service) work to implement the transportation improvement strategies, it will be important for all stakeholders involved in the planning process to continue to stay aware of the successes and failures of each program so others can learn and make progress toward addressing needs. It is suggested that a new working group, led by Metro COG, is formed. The Regional Coordination Working Group (RCWG) should have representation from several organizations, balancing the need to have broad representation from community stakeholders and the need to keep the committee from becoming too large. Possible representation may include the following organizations or organization types:

- MATBUS
- Non-governmental transportation providers (nonprofit and for profit)
- Municipalities
- Cass County and Clay County
- Tribal nations
- Representatives from nonprofit agencies
- Representatives from health and medical community
- Representatives from veteran and military communities
- Representatives from workforce and/or major employers
- Representatives from education/schools/higher education institutions
- Representation from Transportation Network Companies (TNCs)

The RCWG would coordinate with local transportation planning partners by acting as an advisory board for transportation planning decisions as the strategies contained in this plan are implemented. It could also work on various project strategies such as late night transportation, first mile/last mile connections, and regional marketing. MATBUS's mobility manager would work closely with the working group, and it will serve as a space for facilitating coordination with major employers, local colleges, and tribal nations.

Goal #5: Use of New Technologies

Emerging Mobility and Supplemental Options

Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) are for-hire vehicles that can be hailed via a smartphone, such as Uber and Lyft. As a method of expanding mobility in the Fargo–Moorhead region, a publicly sponsored and subsidized option to use TNCs and taxis could be developed. Public-private partnerships with a TNC or a taxi operator can be a cost-effective way to enhance transportation and meet needs. A sponsor agency (usually a transit agency or municipality) contracts with a taxi company or TNC to provide supplemental, subsidized, paratransit service for eligible customers. Customers place real-time trip requests, usually through a smartphone app. Drivers respond in their own vehicles or a vehicle owned by the taxi company.

Payment is made by credit card through the same app. Fares may change throughout the day in response to supply and demand. Shared-ride fares may be offered. Alternate arrangements for reserving

trips by phone, paying with cash, or riding in an accessible vehicle could be available through the transportation provider or a third party. TNCs have established these alternative payment and trip reservations options in numerous communities nationwide where they are partnering with public transit providers.

The taxis and some TNCs offer wheelchair accessible vehicles. Certain TNCs offer Passenger Service and Safety (PASS) trained drivers with the requisite skills to secure passengers that use mobility devices. For those who are unable or unwilling to book via an app, there are a few options in emerging mobility and technology for senior adults. GoGoGrandparent is a phone-based app that assists senior citizens and those without a smartphone to take on-demand ride-share services. The app is similar to calling a taxi dispatcher; for a small fee, a client can call the GoGoGrandparent hotline and reserve a Lyft or Uber ride 24 hours a day. The app charges a 13% commission on each ride and a \$1.80 fee to cover operational costs. The service has additional features, such as scheduled services for recurring medical appointments and texts automatically generated to family members. Costs are higher for these services than for a traditional Lyft or Uber ride, but public-private partnerships can be used to decrease costs for users. For example, in Northern New Jersey, GoGoGrandparent has partnered with the local transit agency to give older adults more independence; riders pay between \$3 and \$5 per ride while the remainder is subsidized by a local public-private consortium.

Typical goals of transit agencies or municipalities that collaborate with TNC providers include reducing the cost of providing service and/or offering a more flexible, spontaneous service for customers. Rather than needing to book paratransit rides in advance, users can book a trip shortly before pickup. TNC and taxi providers can establish parameters of the program based on the needs of the community: parameters such as limited hours/days of operation, limited eligibility, geofencing to limit the size of the service area, and other key factors.

Platforms for ride request coordination

While Fargo–Moorhead has a centralized location for learning about transportation services—FM Ridesource—and has phone numbers that can be called for help identifying appropriate services, it does not have a centralized platform for people to book services. The potential need to call multiple services before booking with the correct one can serve as a deterrent for potential customers.

Another step for increasing mobility is to ensure that all routes and services are updated in Google Transit Feed Specification (GTFS). While the initial process is somewhat cumbersome, once the routes are in the system, updates are fairly easy. Transit routes are already loaded into GTFS for Fargo–Moorhead, but adding other transportation services helps give a fuller picture of what transportation options are available in the system and can help instill confidence in the public transit system.

Implementation

Fargo-Moorhead has several transportation providers that provide invaluable service to older adults, people with disabilities, and the community as a whole. The providers are faced with challenges that many other regions in the country face: limited funding, rural land use patterns, and changes to travel patterns prompted by COVID-19. The strategies for helping overcome these challenges are mostly related to increased coordination and information-sharing. The top priority for implementation is the establishment of a Regional Coordination Working Group that will provide a regular space for transportation providers, local governments, and social and human service providers to meet and share

information. The RCWG would take the lead on some of the strategies, such as the recommendations for technological improvements, the mobility management newsletter, and public-facing informational materials. For other strategies, the RCWG would be a space for sharing information, such as the funding matrix and plans to incorporate transit planning into future developments. Through the RCWG, lead agencies for each of the strategies would be identified and progress toward reaching the strategies would be tracked.

Appendices

Additional Federal Programs

Program Title	Program Benefit	Program Purpose	Eligibility
United States Department of Agriculture			
SNAP Employment and Training Program	Advanced payment for fuel/bus fare	Access to education, training, employment services and employment	Low-income (ages 16 to 59)
Department of Education			
21st Century Community Learning Centers	Contract for student transportation service	Access to educational services and programs	Students from low-income families
Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities	Purchase and operate vehicles, Contract for service	Access to educational services and programs	Children with disabilities
Centers for Independent Living	Referral, assistance and training in use of public transportation	Access to program services for general trips	Persons with significant disabilities
Independent Living services for Older Individuals who are blind	Referral, assistance and training in use of public transportation	Access to program services for general trips	Person 55-years or older with significant visual impairment
Supported Employment Services for Individuals with Severe Disabilities	Bus tokens	Access to employment, employment services, and vocational rehab services	Persons with significant disability
Vocational Rehabilitation Grants	Bus tokens	Access to employment, employment services, and vocational rehab services	Persons with physical and mental impairments
Department of Health and Human Services			
Community Services Block Grant Programs	Taxi vouchers and bus tokens	General trips	Low-income persons
Developmental Disabilities Projects for National significance	Transportation information	General trips	Persons with developmental disabilities
Department of Health and Human Services			



Head Start	Purchase and operate vehicles, contract with providers, coordinate with local education agencies	Access to educational services	Children from low-income families
Refugee and Entrant Assistance Discretionary Grants	Bus passes	Access to educational and employment services	Refugees
Refugee and Entrant Targeted Assistance	Bus passes	Access to educational and employment services	Refugees
Refugee and Entrant Assistance Voluntary Programs	Bus passes	Access to educational and employment services	Refugees
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	Any transportation related use, matching portion of JARC grants	General trips	Families with minor children
Grants for Supportive Services and Senior Centers	Contract for services	Senior program service access, medical and general trips	Person 60 years and older
Program for American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian Elders	Purchase and operate vehicles	Medical and general trips	American Indian, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian elders
Medicaid	Bus tokens and brokerage services	Access to health care	Low-income persons (generally, but state defines)
State Children's Health Insurance Program	Any transportation related use	Access to health care	Children from low-income families (state determines eligibility)
Community Health Centers	Bus tokens/passes, transportation coordinators, and drivers	Access to health care	Medically underserved population
Healthy Communities Access Program	Improve coordination of transportation	Access to health care	Uninsured/underinsured populations
Healthy Start Initiative	Bus tokens, taxi vouchers	Access to health care	Persons with significant perinatal health disparities

Maternal and Child Services Grants	Any transportation related use	Access to health care	Mothers, infants, and children from low-income families
Rural Health Care, Rural Health Network and Small Care Provider Program	Purchase vehicles and bus passes	Access to health care	Medically underserved populations
Community Mental Health Services Block Grants	Purchase vehicles and bus passes	Access to health care	Medically underserved populations
Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant	Any transportation related use	Access to health care	Persons with substance related disorder and/or recovering substance related disorder
United States Department of Labor			
Job Corps	Bus tickets	Access to Job Corps sites and employment services	Low-income youth
Native American Employment and Training	Bus tokens, transit passes	Access to employment	Unemployed American Indians and other persons of Native American decent
Senior Community Service Employment Program	Mileage reimbursement, reimbursement for travel costs, and payment for costs of transportation	Access employment	Low-income persons 55-year-old and older
Trade Adjustment Assistance – Workers	Transit fare	Access to training	Persons found to be impacted by foreign trade, increase imports, or shift in production
Welfare to Work Grants to Federally Recognized Tribes	Any transportation related use (no vehicle purchase)	Access to employment and employment services	American Indians and other persons of Native American decent who are long-term welfare recipients or are low-income

Welfare to Work Grants to States and Localities	Any transportation related use (no vehicle purchase)	Access to employment and employment services	Long-term welfare recipients or are low-income
Work Incentive Grants	Encourage collaboration with transportation providers	Access one-stop services	Persons with disabilities who are eligible for employment and training services under WIA
Workforce Investment Act Adult Program	Bus tokens/vouchers	Access to training	People on public assistance and low-income individuals
Workforce Investment Act Youth Activities	Public transportation	Access to training and other support services	Youth with low individual or family incomes
Youth Opportunity Grants	Bus tokens	Access program services	Youth from high poverty areas, empowerment zones or enterprise communities
Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project	Bus tokens	Access to employment	Homeless veterans
Veterans' Employment Program	Bus tokens	Access to employment	Veterans
Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration			
Veterans Medical Care Benefits	Contract for services	Access to health care	Veterans with disabilities or low incomes

CHSTP Service Provider Questionnaire

Metro COG Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Survey

The Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments, or Metro COG, is developing an update to its Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan to identify and prioritize coordination strategies that will improve the efficiency of public transit, paratransit services, and human services transportation programs. The Coordinated Plan will be integrated into the 2026–2030 Transit Development Plan (TDP).

Your participation in this survey will help identify transportation service gaps and duplicate services in the Fargo/Moorhead region, and to create improved transportation outcomes. The information provided will assist Metro COG in identifying strategies that encourage more efficient use of available service providers to bring enhanced mobility to the region's seniors and persons with disabilities.

In order to meet the overall coordination study schedule, we ask that you **complete the survey by Friday February 28, 2025**.



If you would like a PDF copy of this survey, please click the following link:
This survey is estimated to take 10–15 minutes of your time.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Paul Lutey via email or via telephone at 503-448-2238.

The following definitions are provided to assist in the taking of this survey.

Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan—required for use of Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Section 5310 funding to provide capital and operating assistance to support transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Plans are required to be developed locally and to include an inventory of available transportation services, an evaluation of transportation needs for the target populations, identification of strategies for addressing those needs, and input from seniors, people with disabilities, transportation providers, and other stakeholders.

Coordinated Transportation Services—a cooperative arrangement between human services agencies and/or transportation providers to combine or consolidate some or all transportation functions or activities of the different organizations, in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of an area's transportation system. Many types and degrees of coordination exist, from vehicle sharing or the joint procurement of equipment or services to the performance of centralized administration and other functions by a single entity acting as a transportation broker. The intended result of coordination is lower costs for participating organizations through greater efficiency, which can mean better transportation services for the region.

Human Services Transportation—services provided to individuals with disabilities, seniors, persons with low income, and other individuals to enable them to access services and/or programs administered by public or private human services agencies.

Mobility Management—a broad term, usually meant to signify a customer-focused approach to connecting riders with transportation services so that seniors, people with disabilities, low-income workers, and youth can access the trips they need to get to jobs, services and community life. Mobility Management covers a number of activities, including comprehensive coordination efforts and lower level, complementary programs and services.

Mobility Manager—one mobility management strategy. Mobility Managers can be individuals who help customers identify transportation options, plan trips and perhaps make arrangements for those trips, or entities that have a wider range of responsibilities aimed at improving coordination among transportation programs and services and increasing mobility options.

Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities—a funding program administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that provides operating and capital support to transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities. Funds are apportioned to large urbanized areas and to states for rural and small urban areas (populations up to 200,000) by formula.

Eligible activities include:

1. Capital projects expressly designed for seniors and people with disabilities, where transit is insufficient, inappropriate or unavailable. Eligible subrecipients are nonprofit organizations or public entities that have been designated to coordinate services for seniors and people with disabilities in their areas. At least 55% of an area's allocation of 5310 funds must be spent on projects of this type. Note that "capital" projects also include mobility management activities and the purchase of service through a contract in addition to the purchase of vehicles.
2. Provision of services that exceed ADA requirements (such as offering paratransit service in areas or during days/hours when fixed route service is not in operation, or same-day paratransit service, or providing escorts for riders). Capital and operating expenses of such services are eligible 5310 expenses.

3. Public transportation projects to improve access to fixed route transit or reduce reliance on paratransit services. This includes capital and operating expenses associated with activities such as making accessibility improvements to rail stations not required by the ADA, creating accessible paths of travel to bus stops, or travel training.
4. Alternatives to public transportation that assist seniors and people with disabilities, including capital and operating expenses associated with activities such as supporting volunteer driver, transportation voucher, accessible taxi, or ridesharing or vanpool programs.

Up to 45% of an area's 5310 funds may be used for the latter three categories of eligible projects, for which nonprofit organizations, public transit providers, and state or local governmental agencies are eligible subrecipients. Capital projects in category 1 above that are carried out by transit providers, public entities, or nonprofit organizations may also be funded as part of an area's 45% portion of its 5310 funds.

1. Please provide your organization's name, address, and telephone number.

[textbox]

- a. Organization name
 - b. Address
 - c. Telephone number
2. Please provide your contact information for future follow-up. [textbox]
- a. Contact name
 - b. Title
 - c. Email address
 - d. Telephone number
3. Management/staffing structure – Are you the key decision-maker in your agency/organization with respect to transportation services?
- a. Yes
 - b. No – If no, please indicate that person's name and contact information.
4. Which of the following communities does your organizations represent/serve? [please select all that apply]
- a. People with physical disabilities
 - b. People with developmental or cognitive disabilities
 - c. People in recovery from substance abuse
 - d. People with chronic medical needs (e.g. kidney dialysis)
 - e. Seniors (65 or older)
 - f. Low-income people
 - g. Youth
 - h. General public
 - i. Other (please specify)
5. **What geographic area (county, town, city, or village) does your organization serve?** [textbox]
6. **Please select the option that best describes your organization. Choose only one of the following:** [multiple choice]
- a. Public transit agency
 - b. Public human services agency
 - c. Nonprofit human services agency
 - d. Health care provider
 - e. Faith-based organization
 - f. Youth transportation provider (e.g. school transportation, Head Start)
 - g. Private for-profit transportation provider
 - h. Nonprofit transportation provider
 - i. Volunteer driver program
 - j. Advocacy organization
 - k. Other (please specify)
7. Does your organization fund/sponsor transportation services? If so, which type?
- a. Contract transportation services with another agency/organization



- b. Provide transit tickets/passes to clientele
 - c. Provide taxi scrip/vouchers to clientele
 - d. Broker transportation services by volunteers with privately owned vehicles
 - e. Other (please specify)
- 8. Does your organization directly provide transportation services? [multiple choice]
 - a. Yes
 - b. No, we only fund or sponsor transportation services.
 - c. No, and we do not fund or sponsor transportation services.
- 9. What type of transportation services do you provide? [please check all that apply]
 - a. Fixed-route service
 - b. Demand-response service
 - c. Program transportation
 - d. Non-emergency medical transportation
 - e. Other (please specify)
- 10. What are the trip purposes allowed for the transportation services you provide?
 - a. Medical appointments
 - b. Work
 - c. School/training
 - d. Groceries
 - e. Shopping (other than groceries)
 - f. Recreation
 - g. Nutrition/wellness
 - h. Senior center/adult daycare
 - i. Religious
 - j. Volunteer activities
 - k. Other (please specify)
- 11. [If your organization operates vehicles], what type of vehicles does your agency offer?
[Please indicate the number of vehicles typically in service]
 - a. Car
 - b. Truck
 - c. Van
 - d. Bus
 - e. Other (please specify)
- 12. Does your agency/organization receive federal/state funding for providing transportation?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 13. How are transportation services funded? [please select all that apply]
 - a. Charging clients a fare
 - b. Private donations/fundraising/volunteers (please specify: _____)
 - c. State funds (please specify: _____)
 - d. Federal funds (please specify: _____)
 - e. City funds (please specify: _____)
 - f. County funds (please specify: _____)
 - g. Other (please specify: _____)
- 14. Please classify your riders/clients with respect to the following?
 - a. Seniors, without disabilities
 - b. Seniors with disabilities
 - c. People with developmental disabilities
 - d. People with other disabilities
 - e. Recovering substance abusers
 - f. Life-sustaining patients (e.g. kidney dialysis)
 - g. No disability



- h. General public
15. If clients pay for your transportation services, what fare do you charge? [dollar figure]
16. What days each week does your agency/organization regularly provide transportation services? [please select all that apply]
- a. Monday
 - b. Tuesday
 - c. Wednesday
 - d. Thursday
 - e. Friday
 - f. Saturday
 - g. Sunday
17. How do your clients schedule rides for the transportation services you provide?
- a. Fixed-route, clients board at regularly scheduled times
 - b. Clients call a dispatcher, and vehicles make pickups shortly thereafter
 - c. Dial-a-ride, clients must reserve rides at least 24 hours in advance
 - d. Rides are provided in association with other activities of my agency/organization
 - e. Other (please specify)
18. Facilities – Where does your organization/agency perform vehicle maintenance activities?
- a. On-site
 - b. Off-site at another facility we lease/own
 - c. We contract vehicle maintenance to outside vendors
 - d. N/A - We do not directly operate any vehicles ourselves
 - e. Other (please specify)
19. What are the top five destinations for your customers? Please include name, city/town, and street if there is more than one store/office/facility in that community.
- a. Destination 1
 - b. Destination 2
 - c. Destination 3
 - d. Destination 4
 - e. Destination 5
20. Please provide your best estimate of the number of riders you serve in each given period:
- a. Number of riders served on an average weekday
 - b. Number of riders served on an average Saturday
 - c. Number of riders served on an average Sunday
 - d. Number of riders served during a typical year
21. Please say a few words about public transit/human services transportation successes in your community. What specific services or programs work well for your customers/clients? Include your own organization's successes or those of others. Example services or programs may include:
- a. Travel training for potential fixed-route riders
 - b. Volunteer driver program
 - c. Joint Section 5310 application among multiple non-profit organizations
 - d. Service designed to provide access to jobs
 - e. Centralized directory of transportation information
 - f. Contracting for service with transportation providers
22. Please select the top transportation challenges faced by your customers/clients (select up to five):
- a. Public transit service does not operate late enough in the evening.
 - b. Public transit service does not operate on weekends.
 - c. An accessible vehicle is not always available.
 - d. Transportation options are too expensive.
 - e. Customers need assistance when traveling.
 - f. Important destinations are not accessible on public transit.



- g. Eligible trip purposes are limited (e.g., for medical, senior nutrition, day program, or work trips only).
 - h. Bus stops or rail stations are not close enough to residences and/or destinations.
 - i. Transit trips to some destinations are too time-consuming.
 - j. Customers must meet age, income, or disability requirements in order to use paratransit services.
 - k. Inter-city or inter-county travel is not possible.
 - l. Path to bus stop is not accessible.
 - m. Information on local services is not always available or easy to use.
23. Please rank the top transportation challenges faced by your customers/clients, with 1 representing the top challenge.
- a. Public transit service does not operate late enough in the evening.
 - b. Public transit service does not operate on weekends.
 - c. An accessible vehicle is not always available.
 - d. Transportation options are too expensive.
 - e. Customers need assistance when traveling.
 - f. Important destinations are not accessible on public transit.
 - g. Eligible trip purposes are limited (e.g., for medical, senior nutrition, day program, or work trips only).
 - h. Bus stops or rail stations are not close enough to residences and/or destinations.
 - i. Transit trips to some destinations are too time-consuming.
 - j. Customers must meet age, income, or disability requirements in order to use paratransit services.
 - k. Inter-city or inter-county travel is not possible.
 - l. Path to bus stop is not accessible.
 - m. Information on local services is not always available or easy to use.
 - n. [other, please specify]

THANK YOU! Your responses will help us answer important questions about transportation services and needs in the Fargo-Moorhead region.

