



Planning Process for a Regional Transportation Coordinating Council – PMT #5

Wednesday September 23, 2020 – 1:00p.m. – 2:30p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

- Heather Anderson, Blue Earth County Employment Services
- Charles Androsky, MAPO
- Vickie Apel, SMILES
- Landon Bode, Mankato Transit
- Brandy Bring, Beyond Brink
- Bonnie Buchanan, Jefferson Lines
- Ron Decker, TRUE Transit
- Melinda Estey, MnDOT
- Tom Gottfried, MnDOT
- Bill Groskreutz, Faribault County
- Jamie Hayes, Blue Earth County
- Kelsey Johnson Rode, Partners for Affordable Housing
- Sara Junker, Nicollet County
- Joe Kapper, SRF Consulting
- Allison Karau, Take Me There Transit
- Jean Keenan, Life-Work Planning Center
- Michelle Lichtig, MnDOT
- Kari Loe, MRCI
- Patrick LaCourse, Brown County
- Jeremy Monahan, Faribault / Martin County Transit
- Naomi Ochsendorf, Watonwan County
- Angie Piltaver, MnDOT
- Sue Rynda, Le Sueur County
- Menno Schukking, SRF Consulting
- Erin Simmons, Boys and Girls Club
- Christi Wilking, Mayo Clinic
- Nick Winings, Blue Earth County Taxi

1. Introductions

- a. Joe Kapper, SRF Consulting, began the meeting with staff introductions.

2. Blue Earth County Taxi Update

- a. Nick Winings provided an overview of Blue Earth County Taxi's efforts to transport COVID-19 positive passengers. His company provides non-emergency medical transportation for insurance agencies. They use a separate vehicle for infected passengers with a divider between the passenger and the driver. The partition is similar to one used for police cars.
- b. Joe asked about personal protective equipment (PPE) usage by staff.
 - i. Staff received training from Jessica Elofson of Blue Earth County Public Health on proper PPE usage.

- c. Tom Gottfried, MnDOT, mentioned the state is setting up guidance on transporting COVID-19 positive passengers. There is a need for consistent coverage across the state and a request for proposals will be released in the coming weeks.
3. Planning Process for a Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) Project Overview
 - a. Joe provided an overview of the RTCC planning process and described changes to the project resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Stakeholder Outreach Update
 - a. Joe provided an update on stakeholder outreach, including meetings with county boards for resolutions of support and two virtual open houses in August and September.
 - b. Six county resolutions of support were secured from Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin and Nicollet counties.
5. Host Agency Selection Process
 - a. Joe provided an update on efforts to select a host agency for the RTCC.
 - i. The planning process was unable to secure a host agency for the RTCC at this time.
 - b. Nick asked about the qualifications necessary to become a host agency.
 - i. Joe responded that eligible recipients for 5310 grants, non-profits, public agencies, Community Action Partnership (CAP) agencies, and county departments with interest in serving the target populations could all act as the host agency. The host agency cannot have a shared board and oversight with a 5311 transit agency.
 - c. Sue Rynda, Le Sueur County, asked about the implications for the three counties currently represented by VINE if VINE becomes the host agency.
 - i. Joe responded that there are ongoing conversations with the VINE board. Agencies have some other priorities right now with COVID-19 and budget concerns before taking on new responsibilities, such as an RTCC. The counties would not be impacted.
 - d. Jeremy Monahan, Prairie Lakes Transit, asked if there is an alternative host agency being considered, and what is being done in other regions.
 - i. Joe said that project staff reviewed the model for the Prairie Five RTCC, but currently no other agencies are being considered.
 - ii. Tom added that there are matching capabilities from funding sources other than counties.
 - iii. Jeremy said that he hopes the effort continues and that it is not put on hold for another year if no agency is found by November.

- iv. Tom said COVID-19 showed the need for RTCCs and that MnDOT is willing to fund 100 percent but is looking for partners.
 - e. Ron Decker, VINE, stated that VINE is not opposed to becoming the host agency, but the timing right now is not great because the board is busy with COVID-19 and managing the retirement of the VINE executive director. The answer likely will not change before November, but they are willing to consider it again next year if no other host agency is found.
 - f. Jeremy asked if the county resolutions would still be valid next year.
 - i. Tom responded that as a courtesy, boards should be asked to pass a resolution again next year if no host is found this year.
- 6. RTCC Board Representation
 - a. Jeremy asked about county commissioner representation on the board since counties may be asked to support year two of implementation with a local match.
 - i. Joe responded that county levy funds, but also employers, philanthropic organizations, health care providers, non-profits, CAP agencies, could all provide matching funds. The more agencies provide matching funds, the more diverse and resilient the local match funding pool will be in the future.
 - ii. Joe agreed that having county staff or elected officials on the board would be very beneficial. The work plan outlines steps to establish board membership, including involvement from elected officials.
 - iii. Michelle Lichting, MnDOT said that matching funds could also come from other state funds, such as Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) funds through a CAP agency.
 - iv. Bill Groskreutz, Faribault County Commissioner, noted that the county would require a board member on the board to allocate county levy funds.
 - b. Jeremy asked about people who displayed an interest in serving on the board and how board membership is determined.
 - i. Joe said that this would be one of the first items to address upon securing funding and that the board would not be limited to 17 members, but could be flexible in size and include both county commissioners and agency representation.
 - c. Nick asked if there are stipulations for board membership, including whether board members can be in the transportation field or if that poses a conflict of interest.
 - i. Joe responded that it would definitely be of interest to have representation on the board from the transportation field.
- 7. Joe thanked everyone for participating in the planning process. A roadmap to implementation is available once a host agency is secured. The draft operational

implementation plan (OIP) will be distributed this week, please contact Joe or Menno with any comments.

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