

## **Demonstration of Need and Project Benefits. DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT**

Dane County Department of Human Services, (an eligible local government body), requests continuation of the successful Mobility Management (MM) Project consisting of the Dane County Transportation Call Center (CC) and two Travel Training (TT) programs. The project is currently funded by the Section 5310 Program. This MM project is supported by the 2019 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan of Dane County. The project serves all of Dane County. Dane County total population 525,773 persons and 44,431 with a disability (8.5%). Total elderly (65+) 66,138 persons and 18,062 with a disability (27.3%).

*Project Description and Outcomes:* The CC is a comprehensive transportation information and service center staffed by a Mobility Manager. It is a person-centered operation that provides individualized transportation planning and options; eligibility determination, referral and ride authorization to Human Services Transportation Programs (see attached Dane County Human Services Transportation Programs) and other public and private transit resources. The CC has been operating since 2009. In 2018 and 2019 the center fielded 6,419 and 7,639 calls respectively, yielding 48,034 and 51,195 ride authorizations. For 2020 and 2021 projections see the goals section of the application. The service is available to all Dane County residents: seniors, individuals with disabilities, refugees, low income families and workers and others. It is the only Transportation CC in the region. At this time the CC data collection system requires underlying platform upgrading and license updating. Maintaining and fine-tuning the existing system is necessary to track the large amount of customer information and ride request data.

The two TT programs, Bus Buddy Program (BB) and Mobility Training Program (MT), train seniors and individuals with disabilities to utilize available transportation resources to more fully access their community. The BB program is operated by a nonprofit agency, Retired Seniors and Volunteer Program. Volunteers familiarize riders with Metro Transit fixed bus routes, local shared-ride taxi and group-ride programs. The program offers training individually and in groups. In 2018 and 2019 the BB program trained 102 and 124 participants respectively. For 2020 and 2021 projections see the goals section of the application. The MT program is contracted to a local nonprofit with a focus on community mobility. The program is staffed by Certified Occupational Therapy Aids to provide direct instruction on transit use for challenged seniors and individuals with disabilities. In 2018 and 2019 the MT program trained 11 and 6 challenged individuals respectively with 91 and 58.25 Occupational Therapy Aid training hours. For 2020 and 2021 projections see the goals section of the application.

*Transportation Needs and Coordinated Transportation Options.* Numerous transportation options are available in Dane County but accessing and learning about them can be overwhelming. The CC is a one-stop center that coordinates and consolidates transportation resources. The Mobility Manager counsels and directs seniors, individuals with disabilities and other Dane County residents to a multitude of transportation options that provide access to everyday life activities: grocery shopping, medical appointments, senior meal sites, general shopping, the library, the pharmacy, job seeking, etc. The CC can also assist with hard-to-serve transportation, for example, same day transport service for urgent medical appointments, transportation from rural areas to Dane County Housing Authority for annual reviews, transportation to the Job Center for the homeless, elderly and released offenders seeking employment, temporary transportation to and from work for recently employed individuals waiting for their first pay check, specialized transport for patients receiving day surgery that requires sedation, etc. The CC has access to unique transportation resources the public may not be aware of. As noted by the numerous fielded/logged calls the resource center is frequently contacted by community members. 90.2 % of the CC authorized rides served senior and individuals with disabilities.

Many seniors and individuals with disabilities are not familiar with transit or find themselves in changing life circumstances, such as an acquired disability or a transition to non-driving status. The two TT programs teach them to use a variety of public transportation options. These options allow them to independently access their community to participate in everyday life activities. The BB group training experience trains 20 to 25 seniors on fixed bus routes while participating in a fun community outing. The excursions are extremely popular and provide socialization while learning to ride the bus. Mastering public transit is a pathway to social independence. The MT program trains challenged individuals, who would typically be home bound, to fixed mainline bus use allowing them to access their community independently. 100% of the customers receiving training are seniors or individual with disabilities. Both TT programs receive a free Metro commute card if they migrate some trips (Metro determines) from paratransit to mainline fixed bus.

*Funding Needs:* While the project coordinates with and provides access to an array of local, state and federally-funded transportation resources, the staffing of the Call Center and the two Travel Training programs are dependent on Section 5310 funding. In addition, funding is required to upgrade the underlying platform and update licensure of the existing CC data collection system.