

## **Promotes Development of a Coordinated Network DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT**

*Coordination of Transportation Services.* The Mobility Management Project (MM) is an example of cost effective and coordinated transportation programming and funding that upholds transportation recommendations from the 2019 Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan for Dane County. The Transportation Call Center (CC) maximizes the coordination of all area transportation resources in Dane County and surrounding counties. It is the only CC in the region and everyone is eligible to access the center to obtain cost effective transportation options. The two Travel Training programs (TT), Bus Buddy (BB) program and Mobility Training (MT) program, are part of a coordinated agreement with the City of Madison, to decrease costly paratransit use. All Dane County elderly and individuals with disabilities are eligible for travel training.

*Compliments Existing Transportation Services.* The CC is a single point of entry to Dane County transportation resources. The center refers riders to an array of existing transportation options, for example, public transit, ride-Share, NEMT and Dane County Human Services Transportation programs (see attached Dane County Transportation Programs). None of the Dane County programs are duplicative. The center connects seniors and individuals with disabilities to existing cost effective transportation programs. Examples, the Group Access Service Program (GAS) and Rural Senior Group Program (RSG) provide low cost group rides to meal sites, grocery/general shopping and community activities; the Retired Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP) transports elderly to medical appointments with the assistance of volunteer drivers and the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation program transports MA clients with state medical ride funds. These existing programs shift transportation options away from costly services such as paratransit, taxis and other expensive modes of transportation. Another example of existing services complimenting each other is the partnership between the Metro Transit In-Person-Assessment (IPA) program, to assess paratransit eligibility, and the two County TT programs. During the IPA paratransit eligibility assessment, if Metro determines appropriate, participants are referred to the CC for travel training. Successful training results in participants using mainline bus rather than costly paratransit. The TT programs are unique and not duplicative of other mobility services.

*Identifies Transportation Needs and Gaps.* The CC acts as an on-going needs assessment identifying transportation gaps and hard to serve customers. In March 2020, the COVID pandemic resulted in the closure of group ride programs and senior meal sites to accommodate social distancing and stay at home orders. Seniors and individuals with disabilities no longer had access to meals and grocery shopping. Numerous frantic Dane County residents contacted the CC requesting access to food. The Dane County Delivers: Senior Solutions to Groceries program was implemented to solve the food dilemma. GAS/RSG vehicles would shop for and transport groceries, food pantry supplies/kits and home delivered meals directly to the homes of seniors, individuals with disabilities and others. In addition, Volunteer driver programs such as RSVP and TimeBank closed due to the pandemic. Most of the volunteer drivers are elderly and susceptible to catching the virus thus choosing not to drive. These volunteer driver services transported seniors to medical appointments and delivered thousands of home delivered meals. RSVP and TimeBank customers were connected to the CC to obtain rides to essential medical appointments and home delivered meals were transported using GAS and RSG transportation services. The pandemic resulted in an increase in calls to the CC for transportation assistance. The TT programs halted at the start of the pandemic due to Metro Transit's decrease in service and change in rider protocols, compounded with volunteer mobility trainers and elderly choosing to follow stay at home orders rather than participate in travel training.

*Outreach.* In 2019, two transportation option presentations were held at each of the 12 senior centers in Dane County. At the staff presentation attendees were educated and encouraged to promote the CC, TT programs and other transportation options (see attached Dane County Human Services Transportation Programs). Program logistics were fine-tuned with staff input. At the public presentations seniors voiced transportation requests. The requests will be considered for future transportation programming. In addition, CC staff regularly attend the Aging, Disabilities, Mental Health and other service networks meetings to update organizations on available county transportation options. CC staff meet regularly with transportation providers to assure transportation efficiency and coordination of services. In addition, the County regularly meets with RSVP (BB Program) and the contracted MT Company to monitor travel training progress.

*Partners.* A variety of Dane County partners/agencies refer client to the Call Center and Travel Training programs, including the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center, Public Health, senior centers, medical clinics, homeless shelters, mobility training agencies and others. The service partners include TimeBank, RSVP/BB, DryHootch, Metro Transit/paratransit, Vets Helping Vets and other contracted transportation providers. We coordinate closely with these partners both on a systems level to ensure effective coordination, such as the Bus Pass Job Search Program coordinating rides to the Job Center and job interviews, and on an individual level, such as the mobility training progress of a BB candidate.