

**ADDENDUM
TO THE
SIOUX FALLS MPO AREA COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES
TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

2019 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

The Sioux Falls MPO Area Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) was adopted on November 8, 2018, and a progress report is required to be prepared annually. The purpose of the Coordinated Plan is to: 1) identify the unmet transportation needs for seniors and individuals with disabilities; and 2) develop strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery.

Based on input from providers and stakeholders, the following strategies for seniors and individuals with disabilities were identified:

- ✓ Work to implement the strategies of the Sioux Falls Transit Development Plan that includes improvements and expansion of the fixed-route system.
- ✓ Develop travel training sessions as a major marketing effort that engages the community and help train new and potential riders.
- ✓ Help create State Regional Transit Systems to help provide options to outlying MPO communities to access transit services within the region.
- ✓ Reimagine a community-wide volunteer driver program that agencies can access as a volunteer driver resource.
- ✓ Keep paratransit services parallel to all fixed-route service levels and within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of all fixed-route bus services.
- ✓ Develop an agency rate structure based on the full-cost allocation models to help off-set agency day trip costs on paratransit.
- ✓ Educate state and local policymakers about the specific benefits of human service transportation and public transit and how both play different roles in providing transportation to different rider needs.

2019 FTA Section 5310 Funding Recommendations

The Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) met on February 28th and developed funding recommendations. The Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meeting on March 6th and March 7th, respectively, recommended approval of the TCC funding recommendations. The Urbanized Development Commission met on March 7th and approved the TCC Section 5310 funding recommendations outlined below.

1. The MPO recommends funding the LifeScape request at \$34,000 in 5310 funds with a 20% local match requirement for capital funds. “LifeScape’s mission is to empower children and adults with disabilities to lead fulfilling lives.” This funding will assist LifeScape with the purchase of an ADA wheelchair-accessible minivan with a manual folding rear entry ramp.

How this project advances the Coordination of Human Service Transportation’s goal:

Strategies:

- ✓ Continue and expand a coordinated non-profit transportation system to help provide a safe, efficient, professional and specialized transportation option for human service agencies for non-ambulatory and ambulatory trips.
- ✓ Assist human service providers to provide the safest and most cost-effective transportation option possible based on the needs of the agency.
- ✓ Assist human service providers to secure funding when the agency is required to utilize their own transportation services.
- ✓ Coordinate with human service agencies with options to integrate their clients into the community with the most appropriate transportation option possible.

In addition, LifeScape has been actively involved in the coordinated planning process through its participation on the Transportation Coordination Committee, Public Transit Advisory Board, and Sioux Falls City Council Transit Task Force. It has also been a partner in the CCTS project.

2. The MPO recommends funding the Community Coordinated Transportation Systems (CCTS) request at \$130,817 in 5310 funds with a 20% local match requirement for capital funds to provide contracted services and \$87,000 in 5310 funds with a 20% local match requirement for capital funds to purchase an 18-passenger bus with 6 wheelchair positions. The contracted services are provided to DakotAbilities and LifeScape for day program commute trips, and the bus purchase will increase service flexibility to DakotAbilities and LifeScape.

“River Cities Public Transit (dba CCTS in Sioux Falls) is committed to providing safe, reliable and courteous public transportation to the members of the communities it serves by promoting quality of life, livability, self-sufficiency and freedom through mobility.” It is projected that CCTS will provide approximately 45,000 contracted service trips in 2020.

How this project advances the Coordination of Human Service Transportation’s and Coordination of Paratransit Transportation’s goals:

Strategies:

- ✓ Continue and expand a coordinated non-profit transportation system to help provide a safe, efficient, professional and specialized transportation option for human service agencies for non-ambulatory and ambulatory trips.
- ✓ Assist human service providers to provide the safest and most cost-effective transportation option possible based on the needs of the agency.
- ✓ Continue to identify opportunities to move agency day trips to CCTS.

3. The MPO recommends no funding for the Glory House. The Glory House requested \$16,200 in 5310 funds for operating and \$20,000 in 5310 funds for capital funds. The Glory House is a halfway house providing substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, and case management for clients of the justice system. Its primary mission is “Helping People Claim their Lives with Christian Compassion, Resources and Support.” The no funding recommendation was based on higher priority needs competing for the limited Section 5310 funding and the Glory House’s clients’ ability to utilize Sioux Area Metro’s fixed-route service for a significant portion of their transportation needs. Sioux Area Metro will work with the Glory House to see if Sioux Area Metro fix-route services can provide for the needed transportation services or if other transportation alternatives can be pursued. The Sioux Falls MPO and the Transportation Coordination Committee will work with the Glory House to ensure that its clients’ needs that fall within the scope of the Coordinated Plan are identified, quantified, and considered for funding in future Section 5310 funding rounds.

2019 Activities to Implement Coordinated Plan Strategies

Sioux Falls Area Metro Passenger Survey

The City of Sioux Falls initiated this survey during the fall of 2018. The primary objective for conducting the Sioux Falls Area Metro Passenger Survey was to gather accurate travel data from transit riders to assist in planning transportation improvements in the Sioux Falls metropolitan area. The on-board survey was administered to a random sample of 347 riders on the public transit system in Sioux Falls.

Respondents were asked to provide an overall rating of the services provided by the public transit system in Sioux Falls, based on the sum of “excellent” and “good” responses, the top rated services were: how safe I feel on-board the bus (94%), cleanliness of buses (92%), and courtesy of the drivers (87%). The services that were of most importance to respondents, based on the sum of their top three choices, were: Availability of weekend service (38%), availability of evening service (24%), and on-time reliability of buses (21%).

The top services/amenities indicated by respondents, based on “very likely” and “likely” responses, in which if provided they would use the bus more frequently, were: passenger alerts for when there are disruptions to service or delays that would be sent to a mobile device (75%) and real-time information about location of buses that can be accessed on a mobile device (75%). Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents indicated they do have a smart phone.

Long-Range Transportation Plan Market Research Study – Underserved Populations Survey

As an initial step in development the Sioux Falls MPO’s 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), ETC Institute was retained to prepare a LRTP Market Research Study. As part of the study, ETC conducted a survey of traditionally underserved populations during the summer of 2019. The survey was administered to a random sample of 222 persons who use public transportation services in the Sioux Falls area. The survey was designed to ensure that the needs

of low-income persons were adequately represented in the survey. Twenty-four percent (24%) indicated that their annual household income was less than \$20,000.

Major Findings of the Traditionally Underserved Populations Survey

- **Overall Satisfaction with the Region’s Transportation System Has Decreased Since 2014.** In 2005, 74% of the respondents surveyed rated the region’s transportation system as “excellent” or “good”; this number declined in 2010 to 71%, then to 61% in 2014, and then decreased to 27% in 2019.
- **Transportation Services Respondents Were Most Satisfied With.** The aspects of the region’s transportation system that respondents were most satisfied with, based upon a combined percentage of respondents who were “very” or “somewhat satisfied,” were:
 - Maintenance of interstates and highways around Sioux Falls (73%)
 - Adequacy of signage along streets and highways (64%)
 - Availability of safe biking facilities (56%)
 - Ease of travel between Sioux Falls and other communities in the area (52%)
- **Transportation Services That Were Most Important.** The aspects of the region’s transportation system that respondents felt were most important were: 1) the maintenance of streets in Sioux Falls, 2) the ease of travel from one side of Sioux Falls to the other and 3) the availability of public transportation in Sioux Falls.
- **Top Priorities for Transportation Improvements in the Sioux Falls Metropolitan Area.** Based upon a combined percentage of respondents who rated these items as “very high” or “high” priorities, the items that respondents felt should be the top priorities for improvement over the next 20 years were:
 - Improving transportation for seniors/person with disabilities (77%)
 - Improving east-west roads in Sioux Falls (71%)
 - Setting aside land for traffic corridors/roads (68%)
- **Transportation Improvements Respondents Were Most Willing to Fund With Their Tax Dollars.** The four transportation improvements that respondents were most willing to fund with their tax dollars were:
 - Improving East-West roads in the City of Sioux Falls
 - Improving public transportation inside the City of Sioux falls
 - Improving North-South roads in the City of Sioux Falls
 - Improving the timing of traffic lights
- **Public Transportation.** Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents indicated that they had used public transportation inside the City of Sioux Falls. The situations under which respondents were most likely to use public transportation, based upon a combined percentage of “very likely” and “likely” responses, were: if they could get real time information about the location of buses (61%) and if their employer provided incentives to use public transit (55%).

- **Sources of Information.** The top two ways that respondents felt it would be best to keep them informed about transportation improvements were: 1) social networks and 2) television news.

Transit Core Team process and anticipated transit pilot project

To address unmet needs of the Sioux Area Metro (SAM) transit system, Mayor Paul TenHaken created the Transit Core Team, a group of 14 City of Sioux Falls employees from across nine divisions. Together they are using human-centered design to find innovative transit solutions by working closely with the public and community. Their goal: Increase the economic benefit of public transit for residents and the City.

In an effort to approach public transportation from a new perspective, the Transit Core Team utilizes human-centered design. Human-centered design is exactly like it sounds – thinking about people first. Through the human-centered design process, the Transit Core Team has worked closely alongside the residents most closely impacted by the transit system, including bus riders, employers, and nonprofits.

After generating more than 50 ideas on how to improve public transit, the Transit Core Team identified the idea they believe could make the biggest economic impact for riders and for the city: shift fixed route service to a pooled on-demand service using our existing bus fleet. A pilot of this bus service will begin in 2020 by trying the service on Saturdays. Results of the pilot will determine if and when the service is expanded to other times and areas of the SAM system.

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Updates for Brandon and Harford/ICAP

Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership, Inc. (ICAP) is a multi-program Community Action Agency, serving low-income and elderly persons in a 14-county area in east-central South Dakota. The ICAP public transportation program operates Hartford Public Transit and provides administrative and management services to Brandon Public Transit. In 2019, ICAP contracted for updates of the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans for these transit systems. The updated Coordinated Plans were submitted to the South Dakota Department of Transportation in September 2019.