

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

2021 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.

2021 FTA Section 5310 Program Funding Recommendations

The Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) met on February 18th and developed funding recommendations. The Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meeting on March 10th and March 11th, respectively, recommended approval of the TCC funding recommendations. The Urbanized Development Commission met on March 11th and approved the TCC Section 5310 funding recommendations outlined below.

1. The MPO recommends funding the Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center request at \$20,000 in 5310 funds with a 50% local match for operating funds. Avera's voucher system will assist a high-risk portion of persons with disabilities with current medical needs and financial subsidization needs to cover private transit providers such as Wheelchair Express. Avera's Strategy & Social Innovation department has nonfederal funds budgeted for transit-related projects.

Avera will assist paratransit qualified persons with medical appointments at facilities outside of the paratransit service area but within the Sioux Falls urbanized area. For any patients in need of temporary wheelchair transportation, an assessment would be completed by the patient's case manager and physical therapy/occupational therapy staff to ensure they qualify cognitively/physically and financially for the subsidized transportation.

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

Strategies:

- ✓ The City of Sioux Falls and private transportation providers should explore voucher service options when additional services are required beyond the Sioux Area Metro service area.

Contingency:

- ✓ If awarded 5310 funds for this project, Avera must submit a copy of all reports required by the State to SECOG.
- ✓ Origin of rides restricted to the Sioux Falls Urbanized Area.
- ✓ Avera's active participation in the coordinated efforts complementing the strategies identified and advancing the goals stated in the Coordinated Plan is strongly encouraged. Future funding may be contingent upon the agency's ongoing participation.

2. The MPO recommends funding the Community Coordinated Transportation Systems (CCTS) request at \$116,088 in 5310 funds with a 20% local match requirement for contracted service/capital funds and at \$125,600 in 5310 funds with a 20% local match requirement for capital funds. "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." The contracted services funding will assist CCTS in providing services to DakotAbilities, LifeScape, and Pathways To Life for day program commute trips. The capital funding will enable CCTS to purchase an 18-passenger bus with 6 wheelchair positions and a 4&1 ADA van to increase service flexibility and reliability for DakotAbilities, LifeScape, and Pathways To Life. It is projected that CCTS will provide up to 55,000 contracted service trips in 2022.

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.

Contingency:

- ✓ If awarded 5310 funds for this project, CCTS must submit a copy of all reports required by the State to SECOG.
- ✓ A vehicle purchased with these funds must be utilized to provide transportation services for persons with disabilities in the Sioux Falls urbanized area.
- ✓ Efforts to foster a more efficient non-profit community transportation system are a top priority in the Sioux Falls MPO's Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan). As a major non-profit transportation provider in the Sioux Falls community, the agency's active participation in the coordinated efforts complementing the strategies identified and advancing the goals stated in the Coordinated Plan is strongly encouraged. Future funding may be contingent upon the agency's ongoing participation.

Development of CRRSAA/ARP Funding Recommendations

The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) received urban funding apportionments under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Apportionment Act (CRRSAA) and American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP). SDDOT allocated these funds based on the same percentage used in the Section 5310 formula apportionments. The Sioux Falls MPO was allocated \$44,941 under CRRSAA, and these funds never lapse. The MPO was allocated \$44,942 under ARP, and any unobligated ARP funds lapse after September 30, 2024. The ARP and CRRSAA funds are 100% federal funding requiring no local match.

SDDOT directed the MPO to conduct the same application process for these funds as conducted for the Section 5310 funds. The priority for the CRRSAA/ARP funds is payroll and operating expenses. Contracted services that are for operating are eligible. The only eligible capital expense is personal protection equipment (PPE).

The Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) met on July 29th and developed funding recommendations. The TCC recommended funding the Community Coordinated Transportation Systems (CCTS) at \$75,000 and LifeScape at \$14,883.

At the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting on August 11th, MPO staff presented the CRRSAA/ ARP funding recommendations developed by the TCC. In addition, staff presented SECOG recommendations funding CCTS at \$44,942 and LifeScape at \$44,941. The SECOG funding recommendations were provided because of concerns that the TCC placed too much emphasis on language in the LifeScape application that was removed and comments from outside parties regarding personal perspectives on LifeScape’s operations rather than the content of the funding application. Chuck Parsons made a motion to recommend approval of the CRRSAA/ARP funding recommendations developed by SECOG and was seconded by Dave Jackson. A voice vote was called, and the motion carried unanimously.

At the Technical Advisory Committee meeting on August 12th, MPO staff presented the CRRSAA/ARP funding recommendations developed by the TCC and the recommendations developed by SECOG and recommended for approval by the CAC. Shannon Schultz made a motion to recommend the CRRSAA/ARP be pro-rated based on requested amounts. The motion did not receive a second. Jim Feeney made a motion to recommend approval of the CRRSAA/ARP funding recommendations developed by SECOG and was seconded by Sam Trebilcock. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed on a vote of nine (9) ayes and three (3) nays with Jack Dokken, Travis Dressen, and Sarah Gilkerson voting nay. Ron Baumgart abstained from the discussion and vote.

The Urbanized Development Commission met on August 12th, MPO staff presented the CRRSAA/ARP funding recommendations developed by the TCC and the CRRSAA/ARP funding recommendations developed by SECOG and recommended for approval by the CAC and TAC. Sarah Gilkerson made a motion to recommend the CRRSAA/ARP funding be pro-rated based on requested amounts -- CCTS 59% and LifeScape 41% -- and was seconded by Michael McMahon. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion failed on a vote of two (2) ayes and seven (7) nays with Terry Fluit, Toby Brown, Kevin Smith, Jeff Barth, Shannon Schultz, Jim David, and Greg Neitzert voting nay. Jeff Barth made a motion to recommend approval of the CRRSAA/ARP funding recommendations developed by SECOG – CCTS 50% and LifeScape 50% – and was seconded by Kevin Smith. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed on a vote of seven (7) ayes and two (2) nays with Michael McMahon and Sarah Gilkerson voting nay.

CRRSAA/ARP Funding Recommendations

1. The MPO recommends funding the Community Coordinated Transportation Systems (CCTS) request at \$44,942 in American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) funds for contracted service. “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.” The contracted services funding will assist CCTS in providing services to DakotAbilities, LifeScape, and Pathways To Life for day program commute trips. It is projected that CCTS will provide up to 55,000 contracted service trips in 2022.

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.

Contingency:

- ✓ If awarded ARP funds for this project, CCTS must submit a copy of all reports required by the State to SECOG.
 - ✓ Efforts to foster a more efficient non-profit community transportation system are a top priority in the Sioux Falls MPO's Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan). As a major non-profit transportation provider in the Sioux Falls community, the agency's active participation in the coordinated efforts complementing the strategies identified and advancing the goals stated in the Coordinated Plan is strongly encouraged. Future funding may be contingent upon the agency's ongoing participation.
2. The MPO recommends funding the LifeScape request at \$44,941 in Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Apportionment Act (CRRSAA) for operating expenses. "LifeScape's mission is to empower children and adults with disabilities to lead fulfilling lives." This funding will assist LifeScape with payroll costs for the full-time employee providing general maintenance and repairs to its fleet of 147 vehicles. LifeScape continues to challenge itself to use our transportation resources in an efficient and fiscally responsible way. To optimize transportation options and quality of services, LifeScape staff work together to coordinate across the agency to provide people rides to and from work and other appointments. The goal is to provide adequate, appropriate, and safe transportation services for the people it supports at times that match their employment and community needs. People receiving services who are not eligible for Paratransit services or when rides are needed after the hours that Paratransit, River Cities, and Sioux Area Metro run, rely on LifeScape vehicles to provide rides to work locations outside of LifeScape, recreational events, church, medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other events.

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.

2020-2021 Activities to Implement Coordinated Plan Strategies

SAM On Demand 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.

The Core Team chose an on-demand transit pilot as the highest priority project to improve public transit in Sioux Falls. Sioux Area Metro and the City chose Pantonium to be the software platform for the on-demand system.

SAM On Demand is the Saturday bus service for Sioux Area Metro. Riders can book rides at the times and stops that are most convenient, rather than waiting for the bus on its own schedule. The service launched in December 2020 as a pilot program and has been expanded to serve all bus stops within Sioux Falls and a Crosstown East and West fixed routes added to meet rider demand of traveling between Sioux Falls' major shopping and working areas. Booking a ride with SAM On Demand can be done through a riders app, SAM website, or by calling SAM staff. The bus service is available at any bus stop.

COVID-19 Mitigation Activities

Of course, throughout much of 2020-2021, public transit and human services coordination activities were focused on the mitigation of the spread of COVID-19. Through much of 2020 Public transit enforced the following social distancing guidelines on SAM fixed-route and paratransit buses during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Riders should maintain as much distance as possible between other riders and the driver.
- All drivers and riders are required to wear masks on SAM buses. Masks are available on all buses and will be provided to all passengers.
- If you are feeling ill, please do not ride the bus and stay at home.

Throughout 2020-2021, Sioux Area Metro provided an enhanced cleaning method to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Expanded routine cleaning of commonly/frequently touched surfaces such as handrails, handles, seats, operating controls, and knobs.
- Each bus is equipped with a commercial disinfectant deodorant that sanitizes fabric and leather and kills several pandemic viruses. Drivers use the disinfectant as needed.
- SAM employees have been advised to wash their hands as frequently as possible.
- Thoroughly cleaning of buses when they return to the garage as often as possible with current available staff.

Human service agencies closed many of their programs during the spring of 2020. Some agencies opened programs back up during the summer and fall of 2020. As the below table and graph show, coordinated human services transportation was significantly down due to this situation but was important to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and maintain the health of clients.

2020-2021 Coordinated Human Service Rides						
COVID Effect	Paratransit			CCTS-River Cities		
	DA	Lifescap	Pathways	DA	Lifescap	Pathways
Jan	442	744	212	2158	964	361
Feb	245	712	200	1846	861	317
March	102	317	104	783	452	160
April	0	10	0	0	0	0
May	0	0	0	0	0	0
June	0	8	0	0	0	0
July	72	18	0	698	0	84
August	59	64	84	690	0	116
Sept	0	58	93	48	0	83
Oct	0	51	90	36	0	75
Nov	0	52	8	121	0	50
Dec	0	48	86	24	0	162
Jan	0	52	84	16	0	238
Feb	0	56	104	281	475	260
March	101	71	224	1487	0	338
April	211	285	196	2726	0	314
May	237	355	200	2578	0	292
June	174	124	86	2826	0	134
July	225	399	37	2685	0	40
August	225	350	35	2700	636	40

January 2020 to August 2021 Coordinated Human Service Rides

