Photo by: Sam O'Keefe

MISSOURI RTAP

MISSOURI RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LOCATED AT MISSOURI UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Fourth Quarter 2024

eNEWSLETTER

NEED TRAINING?

Call our office to schedule training for your agency at 573.341.6155.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

National RTAP
Rural Transit Assistance Program

National RTAP is a program of the Federal Transit Administration dedicated to creating rural transit solutions through technical assistance, partner collaboration and FREE training.

LETTER FROM THE MANAGER

Dr. Heath Pickerill
Missouri RTAP Manager

CONTACT INFORMATION

DEAR TRANSIT FRIENDS,

Season's Greetings from the entire Missouri RTAP staff. As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited for the new services we're developing. The new RTAP data repository should be deployed by spring. We look forward to streamlining the reporting process for 5311 providers. The project is currently well underway and will function as part of our new learning management system (LMS), which will include online training options. I was recently invited by Cara Marcus, National RTAP Knowledge and Resource Manager, to explain the project to the Transportation Review Board (TRB) Information and Knowledge Management Committee. Check out the recording at http://trbikm.org.

We also plan to host a virtual orientation workshop next year for new directors to allow new transit managers a forum to ask questions, become engaged in information sharing, and hear about available resources. We plan to incorporate National RTAP resources available for new directors, including the Transit Managers Toolkit. We also want to start a mentor program for new managers and other staff to pair individuals with someone in the same or a similar position in another agency. The mentor could provide suggestions and share lessons-learned through an informal collaboration. We will use the National Local Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTAPA) peer-to-peer mentor program as a model.

Please send your 2025 training requests to Pat if you have not done so already. Our office will be closed from Christmas to New Years during the Winter Break when campus closes. Please keep in mind our office closure during this time when sending scholarship reimbursements or contacting Pat with training requests. We are looking forward to our time away. Everyone with Missouri RTAP wants to wish all our transit friends a very safe and happy holiday season.

Seasons Greetings!

Heath Pickerill,
Missouri RTAP Manager

WHAT IS RIDESHEET?

RIDESHEET

RideSheet is a simple and affordable tool for operating and reporting on small demand-response transportation services. It supports rural, small urban, and urban specialized services that are ready to move away from paper, whiteboards, and ad-hoc spreadsheets and move to systematic and accessible tracking tools.

FEATURES:

- Built on Google Cloud Infrastructure. Because RideSheet is in the cloud, you benefit from features like automatic backups and version tracking, easy collaboration across your organization, and data security that meets HIPAA regulations.
- Spreadsheet-Based. Anyone with experience in Excel, Google Sheets, or other spreadsheet applications will find it easy to learn RideSheet. Plus, it's flexible and easy to customize.
- Manages Tracking, Manifests, and Reports. RideSheet handles tracking customers, trips, runs and more, and makes it easy to generate manifests and reports. It is customizable to handle thorny problems such as splitting trips between multiple funding sources.

WHAT IS RIDESHEET?

A simple, spreadsheet-based tool for small demand-responsive transportation (DRT) services

RIDESHEET MIGHT BE FOR YOU, IF...

- You operate a small DRT service with 10 or fewer vehicles
- Your organization currently uses paper, whiteboards, or basic spreadsheets to track rides
- You're ready to start making more of your processes digital
- RideSheet is spreadsheet-based. It is based on Google Sheets and requires a Google Workspace account and a reliable internet connection. Most organizations will also need technical help setting it up.

WHAT RIDESHEET DOES

Tracking

RideSheet serves as a database for tracking Trips, Runs, Customers, Drivers, Vehicles, and Services. These records are easy to add, edit, and sort, because they are stored in a spreadsheet.

Past data is moved to review and then archived, allowing for a comprehensive record of all trips and runs.

Reporting

RideSheet can automatically produce reports from trip data and calculate billable trip duration and mileage. It can be configured to handle multiple funding sources and services, and customized to fit your organization's reporting needs.

Driver Manifests

Printable driver manifests for the day can be quickly generated. The driver manifest is a fully customizable template.

Features

- Address autocomplete from common locations (e.g. Petsmart, Bend OR)
- Autofill estimated hours and mileage from Google Maps
- Automatic backups and version history
- "In the cloud" - live collaboration available from any computer

What RideSheet Isn't

RideSheet is not a "smart" app. It will not make scheduling suggestions or optimizations.

SUCCESS WITH RIDESHEET

If RideSheet sounds right for your organization, there are a few things you can do to make sure that the switch is a success.

RideSheet is affordable. The base costs for hosting it are just a Google Workspace account. However, most organizations will need help installing RideSheet, and will benefit from a support plan to help with any issues that arise, and to ensure software updates are installed regularly. Any plan to get RideSheet should account for ongoing support & maintenance.

Your organization should also have a plan for security. Google Workspace has many security features, but especially if you are moving from paper, it's important to have a plan in place for cybersecurity basics, such as staff training in password management and how to use multi-factor authentication.

Finally, plan for training. It's important to train users to use Google Workspace effectively and set them up for success, especially if staff are new to cloud-based applications and are only familiar with applications and files that are stored on their local computer or network.

TRIP SHARING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

RideSheet is engaged in several pilot programs to implement TDS: The Transactional Data Specification. This allows organizations in the same service area to share trips and refer customers. If you are interested in using RideSheet for TDS, please get in touch.

nationalrtap.org/Technology-Tools/Ridesheet

docs.ridesheet.org/what-is-ridesheet/

Photo by: MODOT

TRANSIT MANAGER'S *Toolkit*

Introduction

[The Section 5311 program (Formula Grants for Rural Areas)](#) provides federal funding to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000. Funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are awarded to states, as well as American Indian tribes. States in turn award funds for local projects to "subrecipients," which can include local governments, tribes, transit authorities, and private nonprofit organizations that provide rural public transportation.

Subrecipients of federal funding must agree to certain terms, conditions and grant requirements that are tied to FTA grants such as Section 5311 funding. This section begins by explaining the role of FTA and the state in Section 5311 program administration, and it summarizes each requirement with which subrecipients are expected to comply.

Section 5311 is the focus of this section of the Transit Manager's Toolkit because Section 5311 is the federal grant program that specifically supports rural public transportation (as well as National RTAP and State RTAPs). In addition to Section 5311, rural transit systems may receive other FTA grant funding that is administered through the state, such as Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program) or Section 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities Program). Rural transit systems that operate services into an urbanized area (population 50,000 or more) may also receive Section 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula Program). Tribal transit systems may receive Section 5311(c) funding through a state and funding from the Section 5311(c) Tribal Transit Program directly from FTA. Each program is subject to a common set of federal grant management requirements, as well as requirements that are unique to the Section 5311, 5310, and 5307 programs.

This section of the Toolkit begins with a summary of the role of FTA in funding rural transit, followed by a discussion of the role of the state in administering the Section 5311 program. The FTA grant compliance requirements common to most FTA grants are then presented, with an emphasis on how these apply to Section 5311 program. Next, requirements that are unique to Section 5311 subrecipients are introduced, along with requirements specific to the Section 5310 program that may support some rural transit systems. The section concludes with a summary of what a rural transit system can expect as part of a Section 5311 compliance review conducted by their state DOT. (Note that the additional requirements specific to Section 5307 are not covered in this Toolkit.)

Sources of information in this section include the following FTA documents:

- Circulars C 5010.1E, 9040.1G, and 9070.1G (see the FTA Circulars section of the Toolkit)
- FY23 Comprehensive Review Contractor's Manual, which FTA contractor reviewers use to ensure direct recipients (such as states) manage their FTA grants in compliance with federal requirements (including ensuring that local subrecipients comply with these requirements)
- Master Agreement for FTA Grants dated February 7, 2022 - The Master Agreement is the official FTA document containing FTA and other cross-cutting federal requirements applicable to the FTA recipient (i.e., the state for Section 5311) and its grant agreement. The Master Agreement for each federal fiscal year is effective the first day of the fiscal year (October) and is incorporated by reference as part of the grant agreement. The FTA recipient is responsible for ensuring that its subrecipients comply with requirements in the Master Agreement.
- FY2022 Certifications and Assurances - Certifications and assurances are a consolidated group of federal

requirements the applicant must agree to comply with before FTA may fund its project. Subrecipients must submit signed certifications and assurances with each FTA grant application to the state. Each state submits its own certifications and assurances for each grant with FTA, essentially providing the subrecipients' documents to the FTA on their behalf. In doing so, both the subrecipient and the state are agreeing to comply with FTA's terms. The required certifications and assurances are published each fiscal year in the Federal Register and are updated in the Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) system (which the state uses to apply for and report on FTA grants), and the Federal Register notice details which certifications and assurances apply to all grantees and which are specific to the type of award or grant section. Most of the requirements for a Section 5311 subrecipient are summarized below. Subrecipients should check each year's list of certifications and assurances for any changes that might be made, available here: FTA Certifications & Assurances web page.

NOTE: The requirements introduced on this page are based on the federal requirements and guidance issued under the FAST Act. At publication time, new federal requirements or guidance have not been issued for grants authorized under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which was signed into law on November 15, 2021. We strongly advise transit managers to refer to each grant agreement they have with the state for the requirements that apply to that grant and consult with the state program manager for the most current requirements within the state. Contact info@nationalrtap.org for any questions.

FTA Role in Section 5311 Program Administration

At its highest level, the Section 5311 program is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation's (U.S. DOT) FTA. FTA headquarters staff address program-level concerns about the administration of the program as explained in the 9040.1G Circular. For example, FTA:

1. Provides overall policy and program guidance for the Section 5311 program;
2. Apportions funds annually to the states;
3. Develops and implements financial management procedures;
4. Initiates and manages program support activities; and
5. Conducts national program reviews and evaluations.

FTA regional offices address the day-to-day concerns of the administration of the program. According to Circular 9040.1G, FTA regional offices are responsible for the following:

1. Reviewing and approving state grant applications;

2. Obligating funds; managing grants; overseeing the state's implementation of the annual program including revisions to the program of projects;
3. Receiving state certifications;
4. Reviewing and approving State Management Plans (SMPs);
5. Providing technical assistance, advice and guidance to the states as needed; and
6. Performing state management reviews every three years, or as circumstances warrant.

Contact information is available for FTA regional offices on the FTA website.

To read more, see page II-4 of Circular 9040.1G.

As a Section 5311 subrecipient, unless a transit agency is also a Section 5307 (urban) grantee or Tribal Transit Program direct recipient, the transit manager will most likely interact with the state-administered Section 5311 program office rather than the FTA regional office.

State Role in Section 5311 Program Administration

Section 5311 grants are awarded by states, as sub-grants of the state's grant from FTA. FTA gives the states freedom to design and manage 5311 programs (and other FTA programs) that address their specific public transportation needs. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR part 1201 allows states to use their own, rather than federal, laws and procedures for financial management systems, equipment, and procurement. (See "Basic FTA Grant Management Requirements" below for additional information.) State laws and procedures can be passed down to subrecipients that are public agencies and to private providers of public transportation services that enter into third-party contracts with a state or subrecipient. Subrecipients should be aware that a state policy, law, or procedure may sometimes supersede a published federal policy, law, or procedure. To find this information, consult the contract or grant agreement with the state agency that administers the Section 5311 program. The contract/grant agreement will give detailed instructions on the regulations with which the transit agency will be expected to comply. Federal regulations will be introduced later in this section of the Toolkit.

Each state's governor has designated a state agency (typically the state's Department of Transportation or DOT) to administer the Section 5311 program, and that state agency is responsible for the following tasks found in Circular 9040.1G:

- Document the state's procedures in a State Management Plan (SMP);

- Notify eligible local entities of the availability of the program;
- Plan for future transportation needs, and ensure integration and coordination among diverse transportation modes and providers;
- Solicit applications;
- Develop project selection criteria;
- Deview and select projects for approval;
- Forward an annual program of projects (POP) and grant application to FTA;
- Certify eligibility of applicants and project activities;
- Ensure compliance with federal requirements by all subrecipients;
- 1Monitor local project activity;
- Oversee project audit and closeout; and
- File a National Transit Database (NTD) report each year for each subrecipient.

To read more about the state's role in 5311 program administration, see page II-3 of Circular 9040.1G. It should be noted that the above list from the 2014 circular is not an exhaustive list of state DOT responsibilities, which also include management information system (MIS) reporting, development of transit asset management (TAM) group plans for Tier II transit agencies, and more.

State Management Plan

A State Management Plan (SMP) can be a good source of information on how a state administers its Section 5311 program. The SMP is a document that describes the state's policies and procedures in administering the Section 5311 program, including the state's objectives, policies, procedures, and administrative requirements. All states are required to have an approved SMP for the Section 5311 program on file with FTA, and to provide an opportunity for review by stakeholders (such as subrecipients) when it develops a new SMP or significantly revises an existing SMP. The Section 5310 and 5339 programs also require SMPs. Some states choose to combine two or more of these FTA programs into a single SMP.

Other state-specific sources of information, which vary from state to state, can include the Section 5311 grant application package, local grants management handbooks or manuals, sample policies and templates, and the checklist used by the state to ensure compliance by subrecipients.

Requirements Specific to Section 5311

Use of 5311 Funds for Public Transportation Projects

Section 5311 funds support public transportation projects (services which are open to the public on a regular and continuing basis) in rural areas. As stated on page III-6

of FTA Circular 9040.1G, Section 5311 service may be designed to maximize use by members of the public who are transportation disadvantaged, including seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals. The FTA FY 2023 Comprehensive Review Contractor's Manual states that coordinated human service transportation that primarily serves seniors and persons with disabilities, but that is not restricted from carrying other members of the public, is considered open to the general public if it is promoted as public transportation service.

Although there are no federal requirements specifying how a public transportation service is to be promoted, many states require that their subrecipients educate the public about their services. National RTAP's Marketing Toolkit is a great resource for developing a marketing plan and public education materials for rural public transit. National RTAP's Website Builder technology tool makes it easy for rural transit agencies to develop and maintain their websites.

Meal Delivery and Incidental Service

As stated on page III-6 FTA Circular 9040.1G, a rural transit provider may use a Section 5311 vehicle for non-passenger transportation on an occasional or regular basis, such as package delivery. This is referred to as "incidental use" which must not result in a reduction of service quality or availability of public transportation service. Section 5311 transit providers may also coordinate and assist in providing meal delivery service for homebound people on a regular basis if the meal delivery services do not conflict with the provision of transit services or result in a reduction of service to transit passengers. As stated on page III-6 FTA Circular 9040.1G, FTA expects that the nutrition program will pay the operating costs attributable to meal delivery, and Section 5311 capital assistance may not be used to purchase vehicles or equipment used solely for meal delivery.

nationalrtap.org/Toolkits/Transit-Managers-Toolkit/Compliance/grant-compliance-requirements#Construction Projects

Resources on Rides for Employment for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

Transportation enables older adults and individuals with disabilities to access and sustain paid employment or volunteer work activities. Depending on the geographic area, the transportation options can vary considerably. Urban areas often provide multiple options from public, fixed route systems to paratransit and even demand-response or on-demand transportation that goes above and beyond ADA requirements to offer the additional assistance some older adults and individuals with disabilities may need. Rural areas typically offer more limited options due to funding limitations. Even in communities with many transportation options, schedules, routes and cost can be barriers for some riders. Consequently, transportation providers and communities often look for creative ways to serve the mobility needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities and caregivers.

Rides to employment, in particular, may require reliability from transportation providers. Without access to reliable transportation, older adults and people with disabilities often find that they are unable to obtain or sustain employment or volunteer activities.

Rides to employment are a regular trip purpose for any transportation provider that qualifies for Federal Transit Administration Section 5307, 5310 or 5311 funding, but often local match requirements will mean that providers seek additional funds from public and private grants. The programs and resources on providing rides to work highlighted below can assist local communities in starting, improving, or expanding transportation services to help older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers access employment and volunteer opportunities more easily.

Programs

Vanpools and Inclusive Mobility on Demand (MOD)

Mountain Line in Flagstaff, Arizona, developed two innovative programs that help riders access employment. The first is a vanpool program funded by Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) using Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 grant funds, with a local match from Coconino County, to serve groups of commuters. With this funding, Mountain Line supports up to 22 vanpools. Contracting with Commute with Enterprise, a rideshare program which provides vehicles for the vanpool groups, Mountain Line provides a monthly $400 subsidy for each vanpool group to lower the lease price program participants pay.

While currently all vanpools are within Coconino County,

Mountain Line is working with Winslow Indian Health Care Center to provide service outside Coconino for the Navajo Nation to take employees from Navajo County to work at health care centers in Winslow and Dilkon, where the commutes are between 60 and 90 miles. Winslow Indian Health Care Center agreed to pay the vehicle lease costs and annual costs for three vanpools.

Mountain Line's second program began as an inclusive Mobility on Demand (MOD) pilot in November 2021 with grant funding from Transit Planning 4 All (TP4A). Mountain Line started a microtransit project in an area with more than 10 health and human service agencies that were previously underserved by public transit. Riders who need to access these agencies receive door-to-door service or connect with the fixed route bus service. Some riders, like those from the homeless shelter, have been able to use the new service to access employment.

For more information: mountainline.az.gov/services-programs/commuter-vanpool/ https://transitplanning4all.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/TP4As-Project-SpotlightSeries-2-Flagstaff-AZ.pdf

Employer/Employee Benefit

Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) promotes Wave to Work, a ride program for employers and employees. RIPTA describes the variety of options available on their website, highlighting 1) how employers can receive a tax deduction to subsidize employees' cost of using public transportation, 2) how employees can pay for bus fare with a pre-tax payroll deduction, and 3) how employees and employers can share the cost of bus fare. Employees who participate in the program use either a Wave smart card or mobile app when boarding RIPTA buses.

RIPTA, in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Human Services and the Comprehensive Community Action Program, also created the Rides Toward Work program. This program benefits participants in Rhode Island Works, a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program that provides financial and employment assistance for parents and families with little to no income who have children high school age or younger. Rides Toward Work is funded in part through a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Human Services Coordinated Research (HSCR) grant. It goes above and beyond offering RI Works participants bus passes. Rides Toward Work ensures that those facing transportation barriers can use other modes of transportation to access employment, job training, interviews, and other program-related services.

For more information: ripta.com/employer-programs/ https://dhs.ri.gov/programs-and-services/ri-works-program

Rural Connectivity

Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (CDC) and the Town of Ware, Massachusetts, operate the Quaboag Connector, a demand-response, curb-to-curb transportation service to help older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals access medical services, employment, and more. Serving 10 rural communities in the rural Quaboag Valley, 40 percent of the riders are older adults, and approximately 50 percent of rides are for employment. In partnership with a neighboring community, the town of Palmer, the Quaboag Connector operates the Palmer Rides to Work program, which provides discounted rides to employment, employment-related training or job interviews for Palmer residents funded through a community development block grant (CDBG).

For more information: rideconnector.org/quaboag-connector/

Technical Assistance Resources

Each program or resource is followed by a description and links to websites, pdf documents, or other relevant information. Additional transportation resources can be found atnadtc.org/resources-publications/. For technical assistance and additional information, please contact NADTC directly at contact@nadtc.org.

A Ride to Independence: Kyle's Story

This blog of one young man's experience showcases how transportation and job access have become an integral part of his daily support system and essential for him to be an active member of the community. (NADTC 2022)

nadtc.org/news/blog/a-ride-to-independence-kyles-story/

APRIL Toolkit for Operating a Rural Transportation Voucher Program

This model describes how to bring together community members and resources to develop and operate a transportation system for people with disabilities in rural areas, providing vouchers to use for employment, non-emergency medical, daily living chores and social activities.

umt.edu/rural-disability-research/resources/transp-voucher-prog/default.php

Autonomous Vehicles: Driving Employment for People with Disabilities

This information brief published by the Office of Disability Employment Policy in October 2019 and posted on the U.S. Department of Labor website summarizes a national dialogue to promote innovative thinking around the design and deployment of autonomous vehicles (AVs) for breaking down barriers to employment for people with disabilities.

dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/employment-supports/transportation

How Centers for Independent Living (CIL) can Promote Transportation Options in Rural Areas: Developing a Transportation Program

Access to transportation options is a barrier to employment, healthcare, goods and services and being an active part of a community. CILs can play an important role in advocating for and developing transportation options for persons with disabilities living in rural areas of the United States.

aoddisabilityemploymenttacenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/How-CILsCan-Promote-Transportation-Options-in-Rural-Areas.pdf

Conclusion

Many transportation programs offer rides to work among the ride purposes they provide, but not all providers have created a separate program to meet this need. Still, it is important to remember that access to reliable and affordable transportation for older adults and younger adults with disabilities who cannot drive may influence their ability to accept employment or participate in volunteer activities.

While some transportation programs focus on riders' medical and healthcare needs, others take a more general approach to serve rides for grocery shopping, education, social activities, and employment. Nevertheless, ensuring that older adults and people with disabilities who need or want to access employment may require a specific focus on their transportation needs. The examples and resources provided in this brief highlight the creative efforts of some communities to address this need.

nadtc.org/wp-content/uploads/USAging-NADTC-TA-Brief_Rides-to-Work-508.pdf

Who We Are

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center is funded through a cooperative agreement of Easterseals, USAging, and the U.S Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living.

Steering Towards Inclusion: Lessons Learned on Steering Committees for Inclusive Transit Planning

nclusion in transit planning often begins with a steering committee, but what is a steering committee? How is a steering committee formed? What contributes to its success? In this brief, Transit Planning 4 All (TP4A) explores inclusive strategies and lessons learned for developing steering committees that increase trust, strengthen communication and ultimately, improve coordinated transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities.

Transit Planning 4 All is an inclusive transportation planning project that funded a series of pilot projects across the nation. For each project, a steering committee that included people with disabilities, older adults, and other stakeholders helped guide the project. On August 31, 2023, Transit Planning 4 All held a virtual roundtable where project managers from three past TP4A projects discussed challenges and successes in forming their steering committees.

What is a Steering Committee?

A cornerstone of inclusive planning, steering committees are a group of community stakeholders that guide a project. Steering committees are often made up of participants (individuals from the community) and partners (representatives of stakeholder organizations). While similar in name and function to advisory committees, David Bernstein, a member of the Transit Planning 4 All team, often makes an important distinction: "Advisory committees advise. Steering committees steer." A wellformed and well-run steering committee doesn't simply advise, but is an essential part of the project team. While a successful project engages many members of the community, the project works most closely with participants

in the steering committee, so involving the committee in activities like engagement and implementation creates a more inclusive and cohesive project.

TP4A defines inclusion in transit planning as "the active and meaningful involvement of older adults and people with disabilities in transit planning and operations." Active and meaningful involvement means that participants are not only included, but share in decision-making and hold leadership roles. The Pathway to Inclusion is a graphic tool created by TP4A that can be used to measure the inclusiveness of program activities. Inclusion, however, is not the only important aspect of inclusive planning. When forming a steering committee, remember to focus on diversity and equity as well. A steering committee should reflect the diversity of the community impacted by the project and include potential riders of a transportation program. Reach out to populations in the community historically underserved by transit, which may include older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, people of color, and people with limited English proficiency, among others.

Forming a Steering Committee

Forming a steering committee begins with outreach. Contact people your organization is already connected with, such as people involved in previous programs or committees, as well as seeking new partners. If advertising publicly, social media can be a great resource for reaching new committee members. Consider using a steering committee application process and a formal membership, as it solidifies commitment to the project.

Mountain Line sent letters to existing paratransit clients asking if they would be interested in the steering committee.

To get connected with new people, Mobility for All posted about the steering committee on the social app Nextdoor.

Tips for Diverse Steering Committees

When conducting outreach and weighing applications, remember the importance of having a committee with a diversity of perspectives and experiences. Before selecting the members of the steering committee, consider the makeup of the community and the goals of the project. Will the project serve people with limited English proficiency? Will it include driver education? While not always useful, an application or interview process can help with creating a committee with a balance of perspectives.

The Mobility 4 All pilot operated in a region with urban, suburban, and mountain areas, so they made sure to form a committee with geographic diversity.

Leading a Steering Committee

Leading a steering committee effectively is just as important as forming it. Think outside the box for meeting formats, and consider holding meetings in a neutral place, outside of a government agency.

SDOT's advice is to work on building trust, but don't rush. Their steering committee spent the first 20-30 minutes of each meeting on icebreakers. While spending intentional time getting to know each other is always important, Iñiguez Dawes explained that it was even more vital in their virtual setting, as in-person interactions are naturally less formal.

Leading a steering committee can also mean giving leadership over to members of the steering committee. Encourage committee members to take on leadership roles and form subcommittees where their interests lie.

Another important aspect of leading a steering committee is thinking through the process for decision-making. Estella Hollander, from Mountain Line, advocates for letting go of some control and letting the steering committee know what decisions they are authorized to make.

Compensation

Compensation is another important element of successful steering committees, as it shows respect for the time and expertise of participants. SDOT's steering committee was compensated using grant funding, a stipulation that was present in their original grant. Margo Iñiguez Dawes from SDOT said that it can sometimes be difficult to compensate participants using grant funding, but putting

into their original application helped give them to authority to use funding in that manner.

SDOT also compensated at an hourly rate, instead of giving a stipend, which allowed for different levels of participation from different steering committee members. They advertised that participation in the steering committee could range from 3-12 hours per month. The minimum showed potential members the necessary commitment, while the maximum allowed members to participate more in the project while being compensated fairly. If monetary compensation is not possible, there are other ways to demonstrate respect for the committee member's time and expertise.

More Lessons Learned from Transit Planning 4 All Projects

Steering committees have been a central feature of all of TP4A's inclusive planning demonstration projects. Here are more lessons learned from TP4A's projects.

- Establish expectations of the community and steering committee members as clearly as possible in the early phases. (Jewish Council for the Aging of Greater Washington)
- Forming additional work groups that focus on a specific component of a project creates an opportunity for individuals with specific interests and expertise to focus this expertise and their energy on specific aspects of the project. (Ride Connection)
- Plan the membership of your Advisory Panel [Steering Committee] so that it reflects the diversity of your community both in stakeholder programs and individual members. (Jewish Council for the Aging of Greater Washington)
- Create a culture that welcomes engagement and involvement of participants in the planning process by soliciting feedback on an ongoing basis and using a variety of methods (verbal solicitation, polls, affinity processes, etc.). (Mountain Line Liaison).

transitplanning4all.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Steering-Towards-Inclusion-Brief.pdf

The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) National Technical Assistance Center

The **Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) will lead the administration of the CCAM National Technical Assistance Center.**

The center will provide technical assistance to support the mission of the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM). As one of six FTA-funded centers that help federal grant recipients and other stakeholders develop innovative transportation solutions, CTAA will support CCAM Federal members and their partners in improving transportation access for people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals of low income.

The center will coordinate human services transportation that advances people's access to everyday destinations. It is anticipated to launch in early 2025.

CTAA will manage the center with the following content partners contributing support:
- RLS and Associates
- Aspire 2 Action
- Policy Map
- American Association of Service Coordinators
- American Public Transportation Association
- Burton Blatt Institute
- Community Roots LLC
- Health Outreach Partners
- Justice Center: Council of State Governments
- National Association of Community Health Workers
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Community Action Partnership
- National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health
- Texas A & M University
- US Aging

In addition, the center will have committed guidance partners from seven agencies across four federal departments to support their work:

- U.S. Department of Transportation
  - Federal Transit Administration
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - Administration for Children and Families
  - Administration for Community Living
  - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
  - Health Resources and Services Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
  - Rural Development
- U.S. Department of Labor
  - Office of Disability Employment Policy

The diverse team of agencies and federal partners will carry out activities to encourage collaboration across the 130 Federal programs that can fund transportation, connect state and local CCAM grantees, and provide community planning and implementation grants to improve transportation access.

transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/access/ccam/about/coordinating-council-access-and-mobility-ccam-national

AVAILABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following is a list of the training programs and course length of each that are currently available to rural transit providers through Missouri RTAP. Requests for training can be made by contacting Pat Diaku, MO-RTAP Program Specialist, at diakup@mst.edu or 573-341-6155.

1. ACTIVE SHOOTER PREVENTION AND RESPONSE — 2 HOURS.
2. AGGRESSIVE DRIVING —1 HOUR.
3. ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION FOR TRANSIT OPERATORS — 1.5 HOURS
4. BACKING SAFETY — 1 HOUR.
5. BASIC FIRST AID — 1 HOUR.
6. BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS — 1 HOUR.
7. CPR & BASIC FIRST AID — 4 HOURS.
8. DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PASSENGERS — 2 HOURS.
9. DEFENSIVE DRIVING — 3 HOURS.
10. DISTRACTIVE DRIVING — 1 HOUR.
11. DIVERSITY & AWARENESS TRAINING - PROVIDING QUALITY CUSTOMER SERVICE FOR TRANSPORTATION PASSENGERS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES — 2 HOURS.
12. DRIVEN TO EXTREMES — 1 HOUR.
13. DRUG & ALCOHOL AWARENESS — 1 HOUR.
14. EMERGENCY & EVACUATION PROCEDURES — 1 1/2 TO 2 HOURS.
15. FATIGUE AWARENESS FOR DRIVERS — 2 HOURS.
16. HIPAA — 1 HOUR.
17. NIGHT DRIVING — 1 HOUR.
18. OPERATION LIFESAVER – HIGHWAY-RAIL CROSSING SAFETY — 1 HOUR.
19. PASSENGER ASSISTANCE/MOBILITY AID SECUREMENT — 2 HOURS.
20. REASONABLE SUSPICION TRAINING FOR SUPERVISORS — 2 HOURS.
21. SAFE & SECURE PROPER INFANT AND CHILD SEAT INSTALLATION — 2 HOURS.
22. SENSITIVITY AWARENESS — 1 HOUR.
23. SEXUAL HARRASSMENT — 1 HOUR.
24. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS — 1 HOUR.
25. VIOLENCE IN THE TRANSIT WORKFORCE – PREVENTION, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY — 1.5 HOURS
26. WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT — 2 TO 3 HOURS DEPENDING ON NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.
27. WINTER DRIVING SAFETY — 1 HOUR.

For more information on classes and to register please visit: mltrc.mst.edu/mortaphome/mortaptraining/

RESOURCES

National RTAP – Rural Transit Assistance Program
www.nationalrtap.org/

Transportation Safety Institute – Transit Safety & Security Training Division
www.tsi.dot.gov/Transit.aspx

Federal Transit Administration – Rural Transit Assistance Program Page
www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3554.html

Missouri Public Transit
www.mopublictransit.org/

National Transit Institute
www.ntionline.com/

Kansas RTAP – Kansas University Transportation Center
www.kutc.ku.edu/cgiwrap/kutc/rtap/index.php/index.html

Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)
www.tcrponline.org/