



# Region 6E

## 2017 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan

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Prepared by:

Matthew Johnson  
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
333 Sixth Street SW, Suite 2  
Willmar, MN 56201-5615

Adopted by:

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
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## Executive Summary

**Section One** provides an introduction to the Region 6E 2017 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan. The purpose of the plan is explained and the Steering Committee members who assisted with developing the plan are listed.

**Section Two** profiles Region 6E, with information on demographics, population growth estimates, transportation infrastructure, transit providers, and the counties human resource departments.

**Section Three** provides an overview of the 2017 Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan. The plan serves as both a modal and investment plan and aligns with the State's 50-year vision and the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan.

**Section Four** summarizes the information collected through two forms of surveys near the beginning of the planning process. The first survey asked the people who use transportation providers a number of questions on how they view the services they receive. The second survey was sent via an online link through SurveyMonkey.com to Region's 6E's transportation stakeholders.

**Section Five** provides a needs assessment of Region 6E's transit and transportation issues. Information collected from three focus-group meetings and a public workshop is summarized.

**Section Six** conducts an assessment of the Region 6E 2011 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan's list of strategies and projects for improving transit coordination. The Steering Committee reviewed these strategies and projects to assess regional progress on transit coordination since 2011.

**Section Seven** identifies the transit and related transportation priorities for Region 6E for the years 2017-2022. The priorities and corresponding projects were identified from a variety of sources, including the needs identified in Section Five of this plan, the assessment of the 2011 Region 6E Transit Coordination Plan (Section Six of this plan), ideas communicated during the focus group and public workshops, and from Steering Committee recommendations. The following goal was developed to help guide the development of this plan:

***“TO ENSURE VIABLE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS EXIST TO MEET  
PEOPLE’S TRANSPORTATION NEEDS IN REGION 6E.”***

## **Section One:**

### **Introduction to the Plan**

The goal of transit coordination is to enhance transportation access by minimizing the duplication of services and facilitating the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation possible. The purpose of coordination between human services and public transit is to improve transportation services for all, but with special focus on persons with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with low incomes. By coordinating service, communities can maximize the use of transportation resources funded through public and private sources.

This document is an update of the 2011 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan and will assist stakeholders as they determine ways to coordinate human service transportation and transit services in Region 6E (Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker and Renville Counties). The 2017 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan evaluates the existing transportation services in Region 6E, and assesses the needs and gaps of these services among public transit agencies, social service agencies, and other providers. The plan also includes public participation feedback and stakeholders' preferred strategies and projects to improve transportation coordination.

A Local Human Services Public Transit Coordination plan is a federal requirement under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). Federal regulations require that projects eligible for funding under the Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities Program (Section 5310) must advance strategies identified in a Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan. This planning process fulfills federal requirements by engaging transportation providers, social services agencies, and members of the public in identifying strategies for regional transportation coordination.

Beyond fulfilling federal requirements, this planning process encouraged representatives of diverse organizations to join together to identify specific projects that would enhance transportation services in the Region. In addition, a Steering Committee was assembled to assist with the development of the plan (refer to Table 1). The final implementation plan provides a 5-year blueprint for future coordination efforts in Region 6E and reflects input from a broad range of regional stakeholders, Steering Committee members, and citizens.

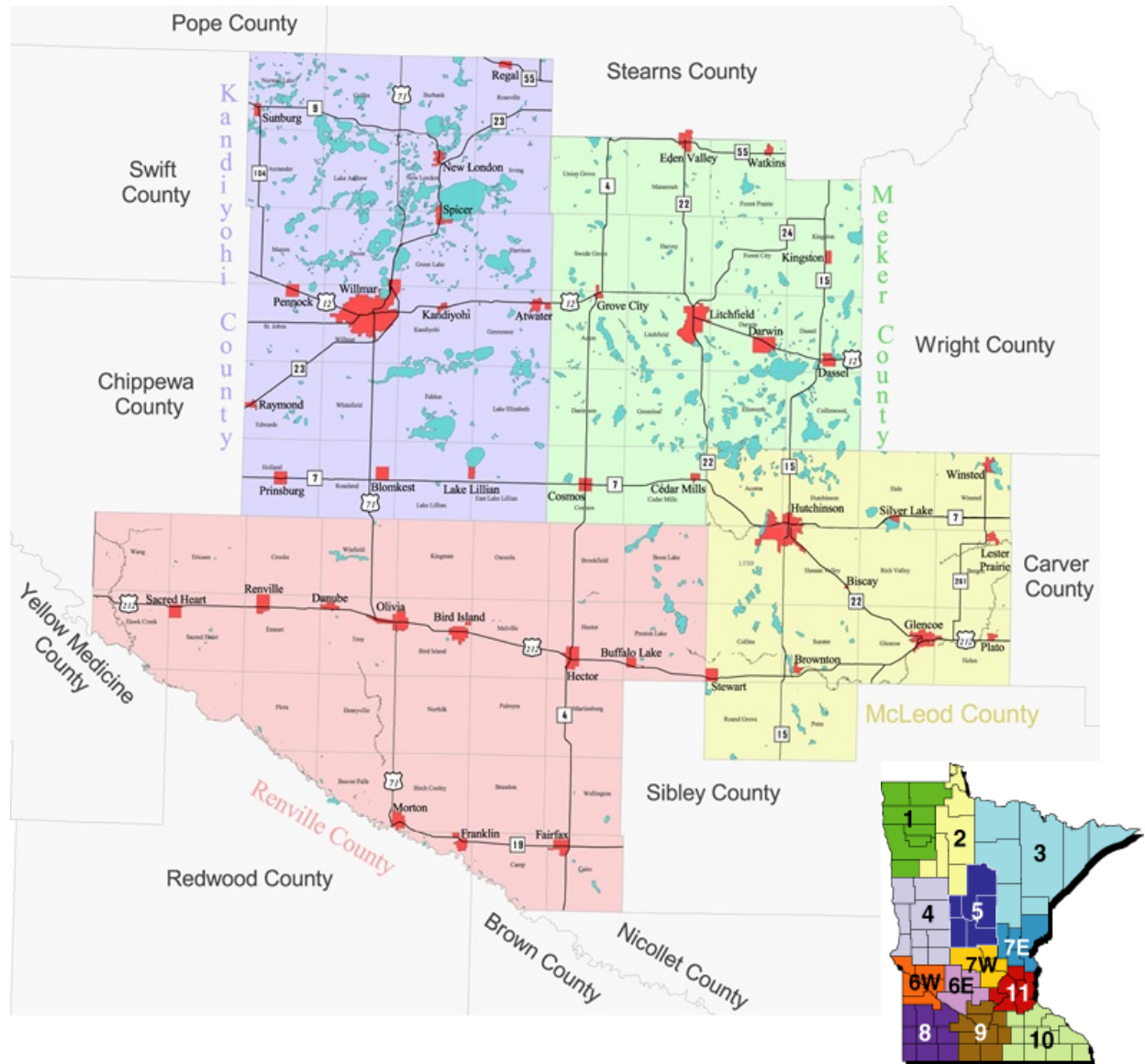
**TABLE 1: REGION 6E HUMAN SERVICE****TRANSIT COORDINATION PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Phone/Email</b>
Kathy Nelson	Kandiyohi County Human Services Supervisor	(320) 231-7800 Ext. 2434 Kathy_N@co.kandiyohi.mn.us
Paul Bukovich	Meeker County Social Services Director	(320) 693-5301 Paul.Bukovich@co.meeker.mn.us
Jill Pelzel	Renville County Financial Assistance Supervisor	(320) 523-2202 Ext. 3521 jillp@renvillecountymn.com
Gary Ludwig	Trailblazer Transit Executive Director	(320) 864-1000 gludwig@trailblazertransit.com
Tiffany Collins	Central Community Transit Director	(320) 222-7974 Ext. 200 tcollins@cctbus.org
Elaine Spain	MnRAAA Program Development Coordinator	(507) 5208-5496 kmadsen@mnraaa.org
Bev Herfindahl	MnDOT Transit Manager	(320) 214-6361 bev.herfindahl@state.mn.us
Cathy Baumgartner	Central MN Jobs & Training Services	(800) 284-7425 cbaumgartner@cmjts.org
Deb Brandt	United Community Action Partnership Community Services Director	(800) 992-1710 Ext. 1124 Debib@heartlandcaa.org
Gary Sprynczynatyk	McLeod County Human Services	(320) 864-3144 Gary.sprynczynatk@co.mcleod.mn.us
Jerry Brustuen	Renville County Human Services Director	(320) 523-2202 JerryB@renvillecountymn.com
Donn Winckler	Mid-Minnesota Development Commission Executive Director	(320) 235-8504 Ext. 225 Donn.Winckler@mmrdc.org
Matthew Johnson	Mid-Minnesota Development Commission Community Development Director	(320) 235-8504 Ext. 231 Communityplanning@mmrdc.org

## Section Two: Region 6E Profile

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC), was created in 1974, five years after the Minnesota State Legislature enacted the Regional Development Act of 1969. Referred to as 'Region 6E,' MMDC covers the four-county area of Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker and Renville Counties in West-Central Minnesota (refer to Map 1).

**MAP 1: MID-MINNESOTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (REGION 6E)**



## Demographics

Located just west of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area, Region 6E has steadily gained population according to historic Census counts. Table 2, however, shows the Minnesota State Demographer’s Office estimated the Region’s 2015 population dipped slightly from the year 2000, down from 155,899 residents to 114,230. MMDC estimates the Region’s population will rebound to grow by approximately 5% between 2015 and 2030, reaching a total population of approximately 120,195 residents by 2030. Two main factors will influence this growth rate: the net migration of people (the number moving into the region versus the number moving out); and the number of births compared to the number of deaths.

Table 2 also provides population data for the five largest communities located in Region 6E. Each of the five cities listed serve as regional centers, due to a wide variety of medical, industrial, educational and retail services. The Region’s two largest regional centers, the cities of Willmar and Hutchinson, are estimated to gain by approximately 8% in population by 2030. Overall, the Region could experience much higher growth rates due to its close proximity to both the Minneapolis-St. Paul and St. Cloud Metropolitan Areas. Improvements to the Region’s transportation network and transportation options will also contribute to accelerated growth.

**TABLE 2: REGION 6E POPULATION (2000 – 2030)**

*\*SOURCE: MINNESOTA STATE DEMOGRAPHER’S OFFICE*

<b>County/ Major Cities</b>	<b>2000*</b>	<b>2015*</b>	<b>2030 Estimate</b>	<b>% Growth (2015-2030)</b>
<b>Kandiyohi County</b>	<b>41,203</b>	<b>41,449</b>	<b>43,521</b>	<b>5%</b>
<i>City of Willmar</i>	18,351	19,848	21,345	8%
<b>McLeod County</b>	<b>34,898</b>	<b>35,451</b>	<b>37,224</b>	<b>5%</b>
<i>City of Glencoe</i>	5,453	5,540	5,706	3%
<i>City of Hutchinson</i>	13,080	14,170	15,260	8%
<b>Meeker County</b>	<b>22,644</b>	<b>22,745</b>	<b>24,427</b>	<b>3%</b>
<i>City of Litchfield</i>	6,562	6,761	7,031	4%
<b>Renville County</b>	<b>17,154</b>	<b>14,585</b>	<b>15,023</b>	<b>3%</b>
<i>City of Olivia</i>	2,570	2,437	2,510	3%
<b>County Totals</b>	<b>115,899</b>	<b>114,230</b>	<b>120,195</b>	<b>5%</b>

## Region 6E's Major Transportation Infrastructure

The transportation network in Region 6E consists of a great mix of U.S., state, county, and local roadways (refer to Map 1). Map 2 shows the location of the airports and railroads located in the Region. The major transportation infrastructure for each of the four counties is summarized below.

**Kandiyohi County:** U.S. Highways 12 & 71  
 State Highways 4, 7, 9, 23, & 55  
 Airports: Willmar  
 Railroads: BNSF

**McLeod County:** U.S. Highway 212  
 State Highways 7, 15, & 22  
 Airports: Hutchinson, Glencoe & Winsted  
 Railroads: TCWR

**Meeker County:** U.S. Highway 12  
 State Highways 4, 7, 15, 22 & 55  
 Airports: Litchfield  
 Railroads: BNSF

**Renville County:** U.S. Highways 71 & 212  
 State Highways 4, 19, & 23  
 Airports: Olivia & Hector  
 Railroads: TCWR & MPL

**MAP 2: REGION 6E'S AIRPORTS AND RAILROADS**





## Key Transportation Stakeholders

As part of the planning process, MMDC developed an inventory of the Region 6E's key transportation stakeholders. Appendix A contains a summary of the inventory. It should be noted the inventory needs to be updated frequently due to the ever-changing transportation environment. A brief summary is provided for some of the Region's key transportation stakeholders, including information on the Region's two public transit providers and an overview of the county's human service departments.



**CENTRAL COMMUNITY TRANSIT** Central Community Transit (CCT) provides public transportation in Kandiyohi, Meeker and Renville Counties. They offer demand response rides (dial-a-ride) and fixed flexible routes, which is a route that will deviate to pick up at any location within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from any of the scheduled route stops. CCT's hours of service are from 5:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays. In addition, bus routes are available at times to pick up passengers on the same day for an additional fee above the base fare. These requests are based on availability.

CCT also has a well-established volunteer driver transportation programs. The Senior Volunteer Program uses volunteer drivers using a personal vehicle to transport seniors 60 years of age or older to medical appointments, groceries, errands, etc. The Public Transportation Program uses volunteer drivers to transport the general public for a fee. Finally, the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program uses volunteer drivers through Medical Assistance and Managed Care Contracts. For more information on CCT, visit the following website: [www.cctbus.org](http://www.cctbus.org).



Trailblazer Transit provides public transportation in McLeod, Sibley and Wright Counties, plus all cities within one mile of the county borders. They offer demand response rides (dial-a-ride) which will pick up and drop off at any location with McLeod and Sibley County, and within the communities located in Wright County. Trailblazer operates from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. They also operate the Trailblazer Transit Volunteer Driver Program for non-emergency transport. For more information on Trailblazer Transit, visit the following website: [www.trailblazertransit.com](http://www.trailblazertransit.com).

### ***Local Health and Human Service Departments***

Each of the four counties have customized their health and human service departments to meet local needs. Collectively, they play a large role in providing a variety of financial assistance to people who need to get to work, medical appointments and other essential places. For more information on the types of services they provide, please contact them directly and/or visit their corresponding webpage.

#### ***Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Department***

***Website:*** [www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us/departments/public\\_health/index.php](http://www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us/departments/public_health/index.php)

***Phone:*** (320) 231-7800

#### ***McLeod County Social Services (Public Health is a separate department)***

***Website:*** [www.co.mcleod.mn.us/government/departments/social\\_services/index.php](http://www.co.mcleod.mn.us/government/departments/social_services/index.php)

***Phone:*** (320) 864-3144

#### ***Meeker County Social Services (Public Health is a separate department)***

***Website:*** [www.co.meeker.mn.us/239/Social-Services](http://www.co.meeker.mn.us/239/Social-Services)

***Phone:*** (320) 693-5300

#### ***Renville County Human Services***

***Website:*** [www.renvillecountymn.com/departments/human\\_and\\_health\\_services](http://www.renvillecountymn.com/departments/human_and_health_services)

***Phone:*** (320) 231-7800

## **Section Three:**

### **2017 Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan Overview**

The 2017 Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan connects the vision, goals and strategies from the 2010-2030 Greater Minnesota Transit Plan, a 20-year strategic plan, to the funding that each public transit system receives. The plan serves as both a modal and investment plan and aligns with the state's 50-year vision and the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan.

In 2010, the state legislature asked MnDOT to determine the level of funding required to meet at least 80% of transit needs in Greater Minnesota by 2015 and 90% of needs by 2025. Published in 2011, the Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan provides a link between the vision, goals and strategies from the 2009 plan and the funding allocations to each public transit system. As an investment plan, the document also outlines the investment priorities under different funding scenarios.

The 2017 Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan is a five-year update to refine both the investment priorities and strategic direction for transit in Greater Minnesota. The objective of the plan is to improve mobility for the general public with emphasis on:

- Seniors
- Low income populations
- Homeless population
- Individuals with disabilities (refer to Minnesota's Olmstead Plan section below)
- Veterans
- New Americans
- Commuter consumer groups

The plan combines technical analysis with extensive community input to develop a strategic direction and investment priorities.

#### ***Benefits of Greater Minnesota Transit***

Public transit has many benefits for Greater Minnesota:

- Transit provides reliable access to jobs and reduces the cost of travel to work.
- Transit enables people to live independently and stay connected to friends and family.
- Transit provides access to healthcare services and promotes physical activity.

- Transit connects people with education opportunities such as school, culture and community centers.
- Transit reduces the reliance on single occupant vehicles and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Transit connects regional communities and strengthens neighborhood bonds.

### ***2017 Plan Strategies***

- Improve public transit service coverage in Greater Minnesota.
- Improve regional connections and cross-system trips in Greater Minnesota.
- Make public transit a viable choice for transportation in Greater Minnesota.
- Improve public transit service quality based on performance standards.
- Create investment and performance-based policies based on the Regional Trade Center guidelines.
- Support coordination between public transit systems and other transportation providers.
- Make investment decisions based on performance standards.

### ***Minnesota's Olmstead Plan***

Olmsted Plans, named after a United States Supreme Court Decision called “Olmstead v. L.C.”, are a “public entity’s plan for implementing its obligation to provide individuals with disabilities opportunities to live, work, and be served in integrated settings.”

MnDOT is a participating agency in the development and implementation of Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan. The plan is a strategic process to ensure Minnesota will be a place where “people with disabilities are living, learning, working, and enjoying life in the most integrated setting.” To achieve this goal, Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan address goals related to broad topics including employment, housing, transportation, support and services, lifelong learning and education, healthcare and healthy living, and community engagement.

Transportation is a key aspect of an individual’s quality of life and recognizes and respects the importance, significance and context of place-not just as destinations, but also where people live, work, learn, and enjoy life regardless of socio-economic status or individual ability.

The Olmstead Plan identified a goal and strategies for transportation to ensure that people with disabilities will have access to reliable, cost-effective and accessible transportation choices that support the essential elements of life such as employment, housing, education

and social connections. MnDOT in conjunction with the Department of Human Services and Metro Transit will integrate Olmstead principals in the state's transportation systems. The state will continue to focus on providing accessibility improvements in its right of way and improving transit access and ridership. The state will also ensure that transportation is as integrated as possible and that transportation allows people with disabilities to participate in their communities.

### ***Olmstead and the Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan***

Transit service in Greater Minnesota is a core element of MnDOT's strategy to meet these goals. The Olmstead Plan identified three goals specifically related to transit and each goal will be addressed in the Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan.

1. Goal by 2025: additional rides and service hours will increase the annual number of passenger trips to 18.8 million in Greater Minnesota. The Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan will address this goal by developing a plan to increase the number of hours and days of transit service available to communities.
2. Goal by 2025: expand transit coverage so that 90% of the public transportation service areas in Minnesota will meet the minimum service guidelines for access as defined by the number of hours during the day when transit service is available in a particular area. The Transit Investment Plan will address this goal by setting a parameter and standard for a minimum level of access to transit services depending on community population.
3. Goal by 2025: transit systems' on time performance will be 90% or greater statewide. The Transit Investment Plan will establish a methodology for determining a standard for reliability and a plan for how to meet those standards.

### ***Transit in Greater Minnesota***

Greater Minnesota is made up of 80 counties and is served by more than 50 public transit systems, covering the entire state except the Twin Cities metro region. While most transit funding for the Twin Cities is received directly by the Metropolitan Council, a vast majority of transit funding for Greater Minnesota is received by the State. This means that MnDOT's Office of Transit is involved in overseeing the funding and performance of every Greater Minnesota transit system.

As the population of Greater Minnesota grows and ages, the need for public transit also increases. For example, in the five-year period from 2010 to 2014, Greater Minnesota transit ridership increased eight percent, more than 900,000 additional passenger trips. To support

an increasing number of passengers, Greater Minnesota transit operators expanded service to meet needs. From 2010 to 2014, hours of revenue service provided by Greater Minnesota transit operators grew by almost nine percent, with the largest increase in service provided by rural transit systems. As ridership and hours of service have increased, so have costs. During the same five-year period, total annual operating costs increased by more than 25 percent (approximately \$15 million).

### ***Markets for Transit in Greater Minnesota***

Transit service must meet the times and places where people need to travel. Transit must also evolve as lifestyles, demographics and technology change. MnDOT analyzed demographic and economic trends to gauge how changing patterns across the state may affect public transit in Greater Minnesota. Key trends that will shape the market for transit in the coming years are as follows:

#### ***Demographics:***

- After slight declines, the population in Greater Minnesota is projected to increase.
- The trends in Greater Minnesota are similar to those nationwide for the increasing growth of older adults.
- Greater Minnesota's population of individuals with limited English proficiency is increasing.
- Greater Minnesota's population of people with disabilities is increasing.
- Millennials and baby boomers are driving less and are interested in living in walkable communities.

#### ***Economic:***

- The poverty rate in some of Greater Minnesota's large urban areas exceeds the state poverty rate.
- Jobs continue to grow throughout Greater Minnesota since the 2007-2009 recession.
- Unemployment in Greater Minnesota continues to be below the national unemployment rate.
- Jobs in Greater Minnesota have diversified with more varied shift times.

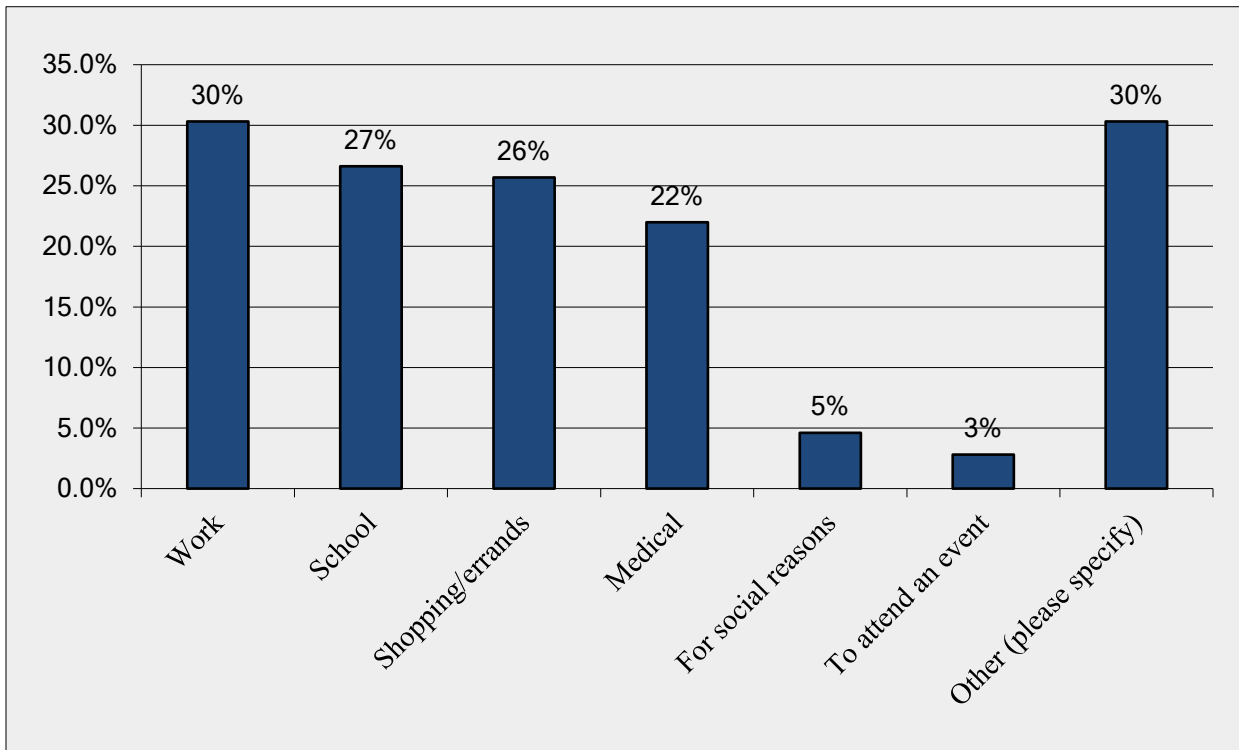
## Section Four: Region 6E Survey Results

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) administered two forms of surveys near the beginning of the planning process used to update this plan. The first survey asked the people who use transportation providers a number of questions on how they view the services they receive. This survey was referred to as the ‘Rider Survey.’ The second survey was sent via an online link through SurveyMonkey.com to Region’s 6E’s transportation stakeholders (refer to Appendix A for the inventory). The later survey was referred to as the ‘Stakeholder Organizational Survey.’ The results of both surveys are summarized below.

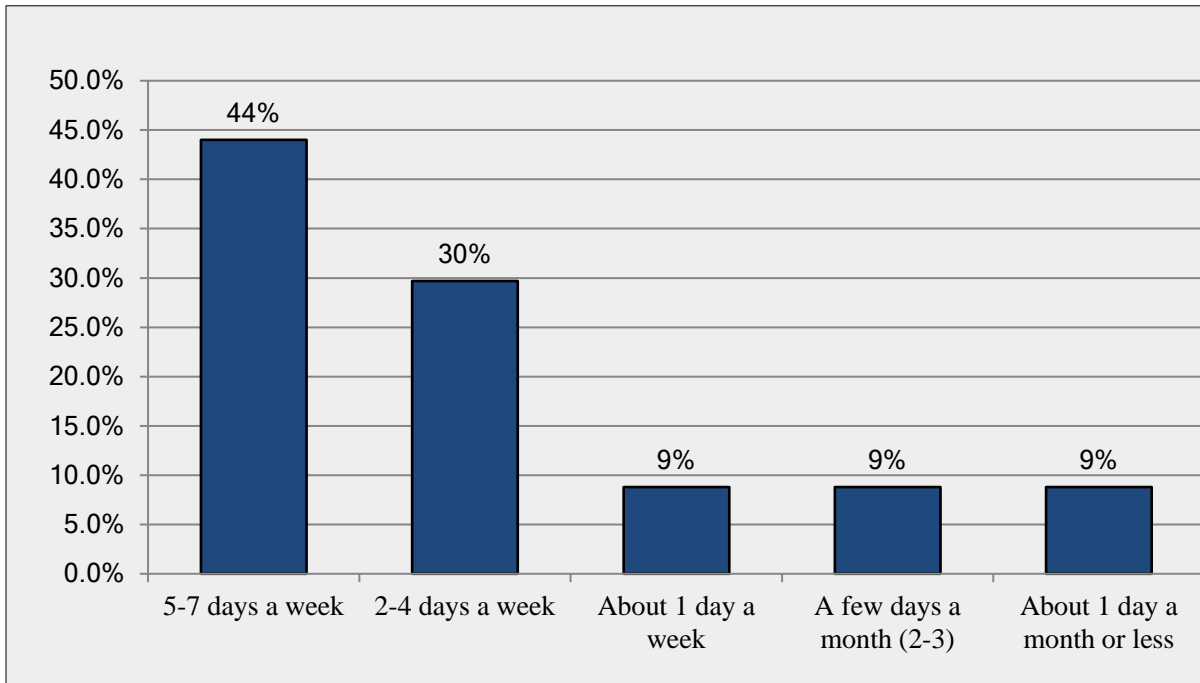
### **Rider Survey Results**

The Rider Survey was emailed to all of Region 6E’s transportation stakeholders (refer to Appendix A) along with the request for them to print and administer the survey to their clients and/or people who use transportation services. The survey was sent out in the beginning of March 2017, and was asked to be returned to MMDC by April 10, 2017. The process yielded 112 responses, which were then manually entered into a survey database. The results of the key questions are shown below.

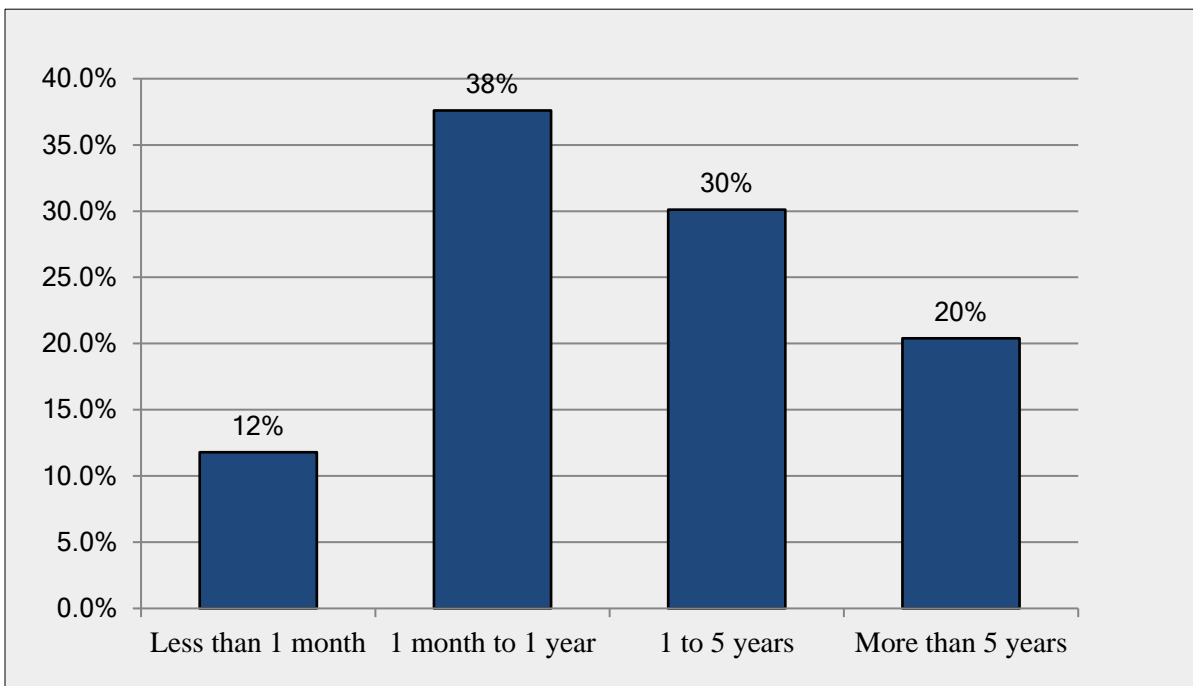
#### ***Question 1: What is the primary purpose you most frequently use transportation services?***



**Question 2: On average, how often do you use this service? Please select one answer...**

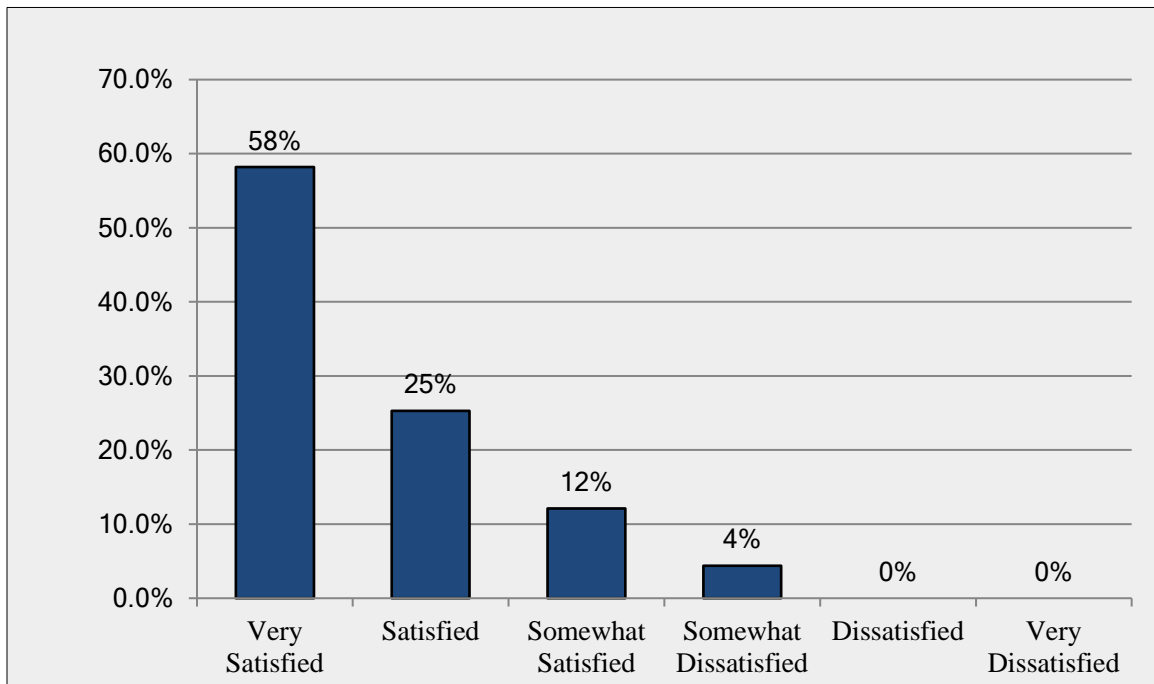


**Question 3: How long have you been using this service? Please select one answer...**

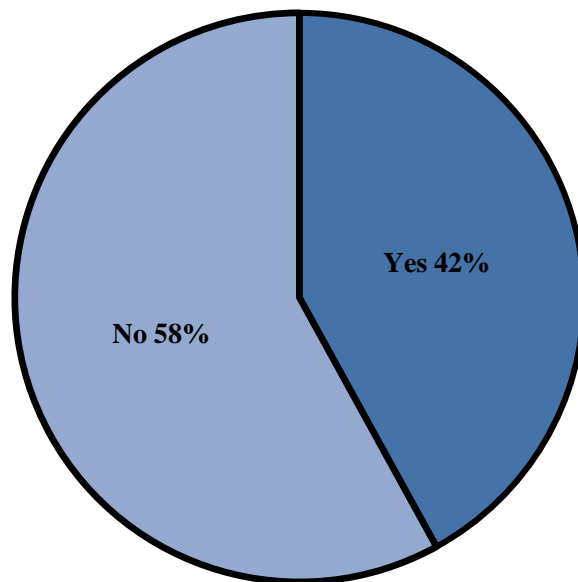




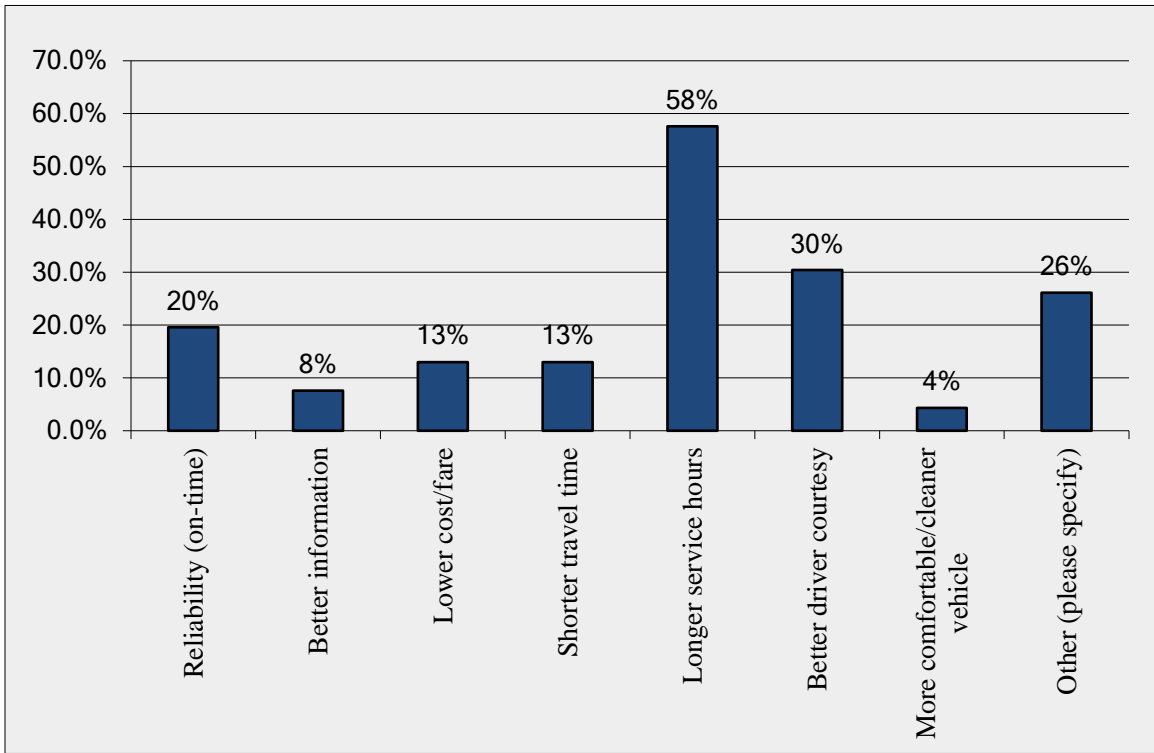
**Question 4: How satisfied are you with the availability of this service? Please select on answer...**



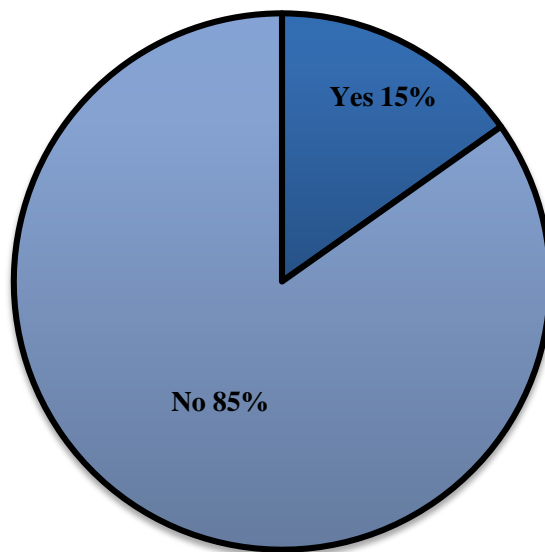
**Question 5: Do you have any other means of transportation?**



**Question 7: What improvements to this service would allow you to ride more frequently?**



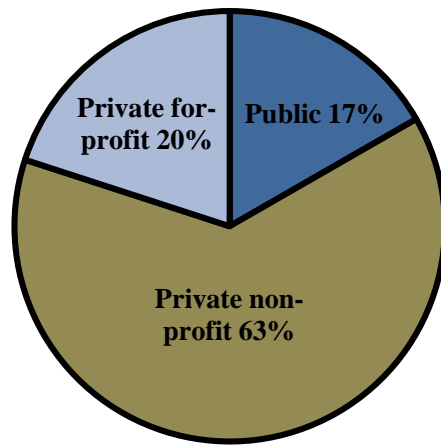
**Question 8: Is there anywhere you need to travel that you cannot get to using this service?**



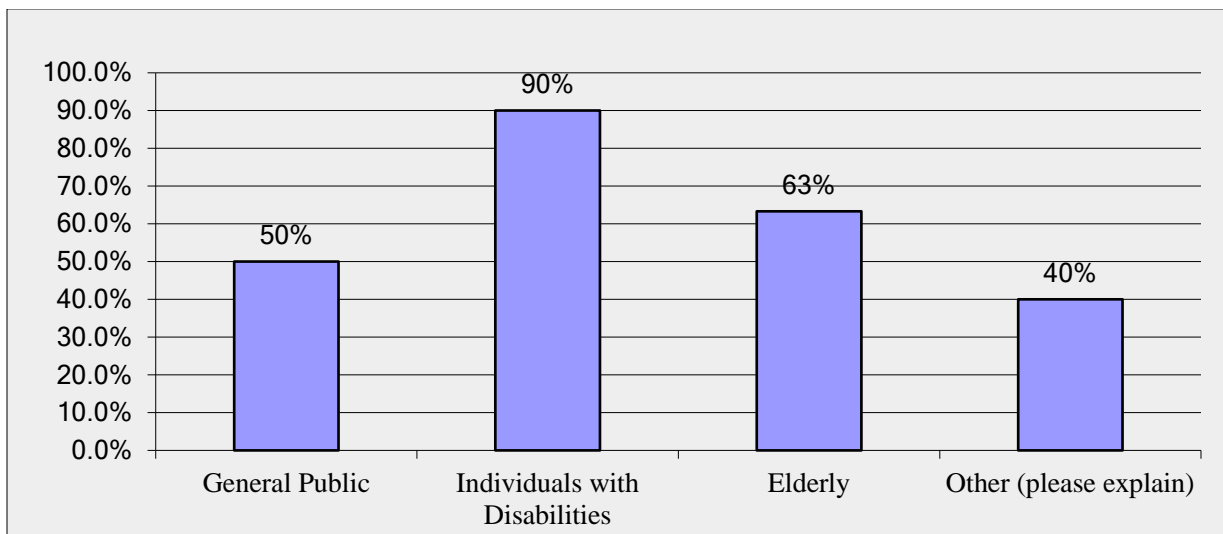
### **Stakeholder Survey Results**

The Stakeholder Survey was emailed to all of Region 6E’s transportation stakeholders (refer to Appendix A). The email directed the stakeholders to click an online link to the survey, which was setup using SurveyMonkey.com. They were asked to complete the survey by April 10, 2017. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B (note: the survey was only designed to be an online survey. As a result, survey shown in Appendix B was not formatted to look good on a handout). Overall, 30 organizations completed the online survey. The results of the stakeholder survey are summarized below.

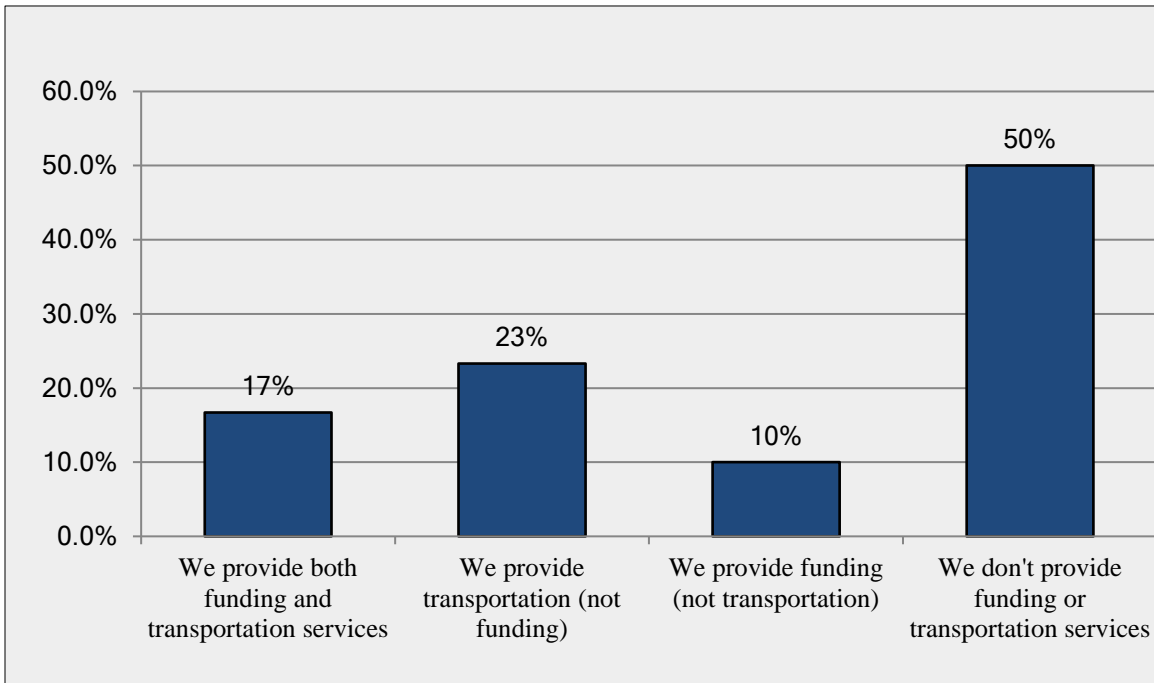
#### ***Question 3: What best describes your organization?***



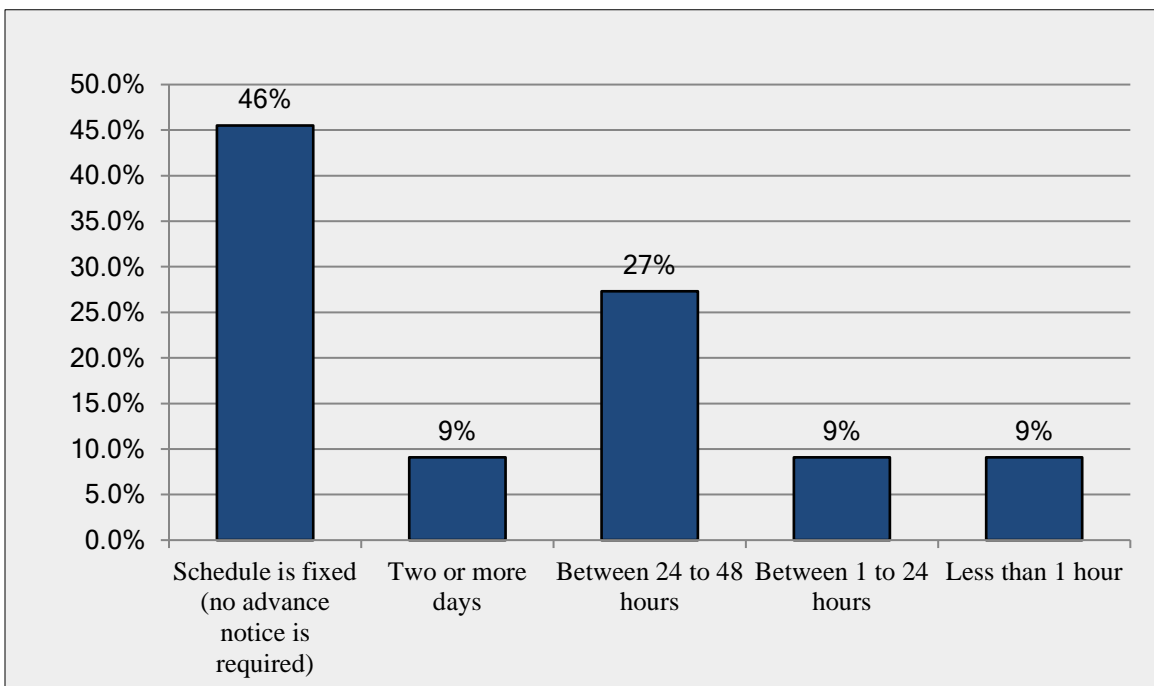
#### ***Question 5: What populations do you serve?***



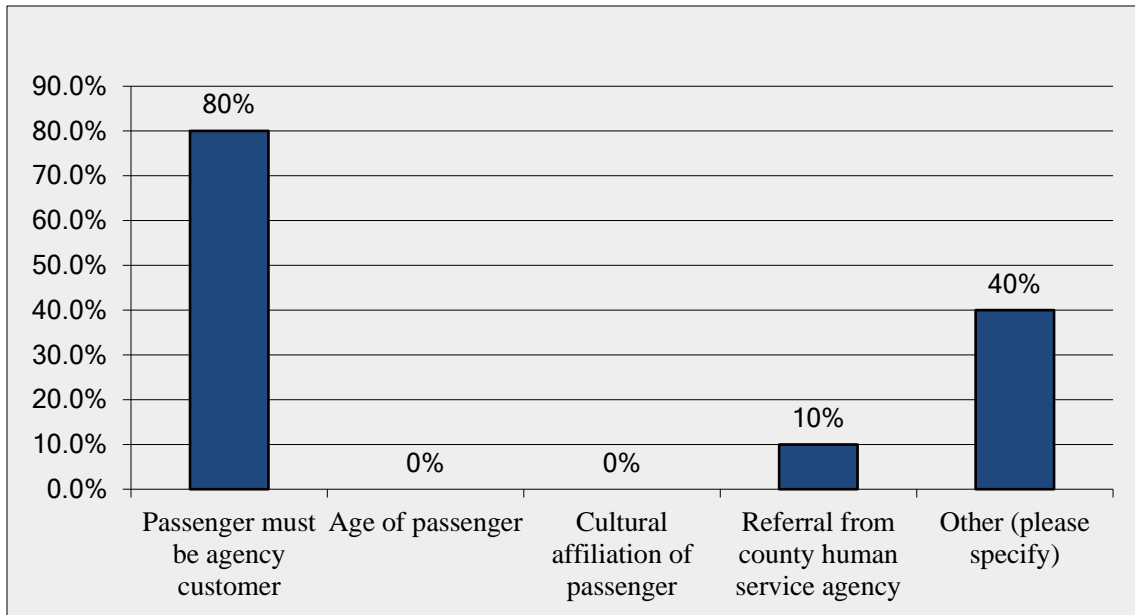
**Question 6: Does your organization provide funding or transportation services?**



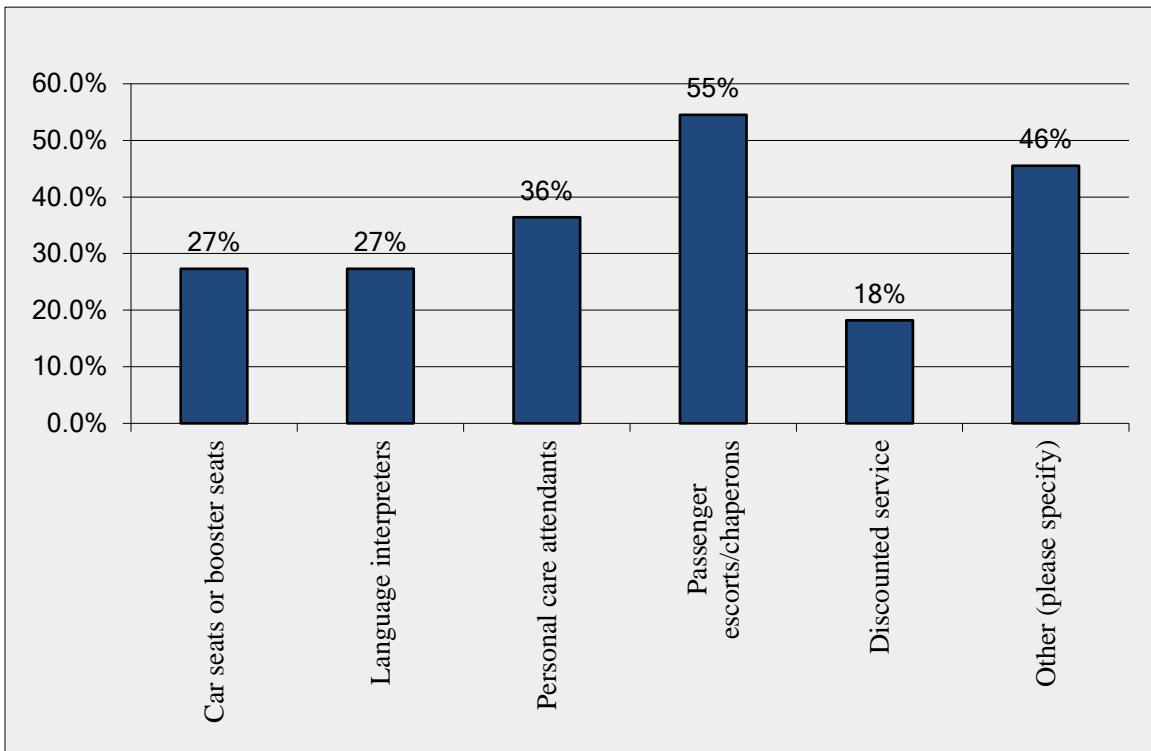
**Question 11: How far in advance must a passenger schedule a ride?**



**Question 13: Are there any eligibility requirements for using your services?**



**Question 15: What types of passenger accommodations do you provide?**



## Section Five: Region 6E Needs Assessment

In addition to conducting the rider and stakeholder organizational surveys, the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) hosted three focus group meetings to help identify transit and transportation needs in Region 6E. MMDC also invited key stakeholders and interested citizens to a public workshop focused on identifying needs and possible solutions. Frequent emails, press releases, and informational flyers were used to promote the events. Section Five summarizes the information collected from these meetings.

### **Focus Group Meetings**

***Hutchinson Stakeholder Focus-Group Meeting Summary:*** The first of three focus group meetings was held for Region 6E's transportation stakeholders. The meeting took place at the Hutchinson City Government Office on March 12, 2017, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Ten people participated in the focus-group meeting (refer to Appendix C). The following comments were made and discussed at the meeting:

- The consistency of the existing service is very good.
- There are a lot of hoops to go through for riders to get certified through financial assistance programs. Less red tape would be beneficial to all.
- Some people don't qualify for Medical Assistance but still have a tough time paying for transportation.
- One idea is to allow regular taxis companies to be reimbursed by the state.
- Our Region has made some progress on providing transit to adjacent areas, but there still needs to have some improvement.
- Many smaller organizations have abandoned having a bus or mini-van due to the high expenses of operating and maintaining them.
- Continue to work on extending hours and bringing rates down.
- The existing transit service is outstanding and would benefit from additional advertising.
- There needs to be a facilitator, grant writer, and central voice for our Region in the future to better address issues and secure proper funding.

- An effort should be made to help care centers better understand current transportation options.
- No insurance except Medical Assistance covers medi-van services.
- Patients pay \$400+ to get to a Metro medical appointment.
- Sometimes scheduling a ride can take a long time due to wait times.
- The VA does a great job of providing rides for area Vets.
- Funding for people to ride along need to be pursued and/or fixed.
- Ensure that stakeholders, such as group homes, fully understand how public transit operates to help minimize them from not being ready on time.
- Although it is difficult to always have rides be on time, being on time increase ridership.
- Increasing number of people who need assistance on/off transportation. There is also an increasing demand for through-the-door service.
- Although some cannot afford to pay for services, public transit overall is relatively inexpensive.
- There is a need to focus more on getting employees to work.
- Large employers, the medical community, and major retail establishments all should play a role in helping to provide solutions to getting their employees, clients, and customers to and from their facilities.

***Willmar Stakeholder Focus-Group Meeting Summary:*** The second of three focus group meetings was held for Region 6E's transportation stakeholders. The meeting took place at the Willmar Public Library on March 19, 2017, from 9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Eleven people participated in the focus-group meeting (refer to Appendix C). The following comments were made and discussed at the meeting:

- There needs to be some improvement on being flexible before and after medical appointments. Sometimes people wait 2-3 hours after an appointment before they are picked up.
- Region 6E has done a nice job expanding service hours and service area over the last five years.

- Communities need to focus on sidewalks, curb-cuts, safe crosswalks, etc.
- Educating all stakeholders continuously due to turn overs in staff and elected officials need to remain a high priority.
- State and Federal funding mechanisms are needed to help localities meet state and federal standards.
- There should be rider-focused events to help encourage those not currently using providers riding to learn how to ride.
- Not enough staff to get people where they want to go.
- Language barriers have become an increasing problem.
- Work still needs to be made to reduce the unnecessary amount of overlap of service.
- There is a need to accommodate public transportation to and from public events.
- Vehicle costs continue to rise (purchasing & maintenance) with fixed funding levels.

***Willmar Rider Focus-Group Meeting Summary:*** The third of three focus group meetings was held for the people who use transportation services in Region 6E. The meeting took place at the Willmar Public Library on March 19, 2017, from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Eight people participated in the focus-group meeting (refer to Appendix C). The following comments were made and discussed at the meeting:

- A couple of riders expressed they appreciate the expanded hours.
- There is less access to transportation options in the rural areas.
- Many Adult Basic Education students struggle with the language barrier during scheduling and communication with drivers.
- Those who speak English as a second language could be better served by providing interpreters or a language line. Signs and literature need to be interpreted.
- Additional shelters are needed.
- Ridership might increase if regular scheduled routes/stops were added.
- Make it a high priority to train drivers on safety for driving and working with people.



## **Region 6E Public Workshop**

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) held a public workshop to identify Region 6E's transit and transportation needs and to brainstorm for implementation ideas. The workshop took place at the Willmar Public Library on May 12, 2017, from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Eighteen people participated in the workshop (refer to Appendix C). The workshop served three main objectives. The following comments were made and discussed at the meeting:

### ***Transportation Needs Question:***

***“What transportation needs should be addressed in Region 6E's updated transit coordination plan.”***

- Public transit need to work with programs like Headstart to determine how they can accommodate transportation (lots of rules).
- Need to connect better with other transit systems.
- The average rider is getting older and needs more assistance.
- Hard to determine unmet needs.
- Relationships with 'feeder organizations' need to be strengthened.
- Need to do a better job helping seniors understand what current transportation options are available and how to schedule rides.
- There is an ongoing need to educate elected officials on all levels of the importance and need for transit.
- Wait times and ride times can sometimes be very lengthy.
- Tough to travel between Region 6E and the metropolitan areas.
- There is a need to assist getting employees to their jobs from both an employee and employer perspective. Some employers have a tough time finding employees who have reliable transportation. Some potential employees are limited to which jobs they can work due to not having reliable transportation.
- All stakeholders would benefit from having more knowledge on existing transportation options and programs.
- Better communication between stakeholders is crucially needed.

***Implementation Question:***

***“How would you address Region 6E’s transportation needs?***

***What strategies, action steps and projects should be considered?”***

- Increasing the capacity of transportation providers is the easiest way to reduce unmet needs.
- Bus buddies would help resolve a lot of issues and would increase ridership.
- Stakeholders all need to cooperate to better identify unmet needs.
- Use technology to make scheduling and using transportation services more user-friendly. Mobile apps and online scheduling seem to be the future.
- Focus on better connection between Region 6E and the metropolitan areas.
- Look for innovative funding sources to help address some of the needs, such as aging programs to help seniors.
- Support the formation of Regional Transportation Coordination Councils to help with all implementation steps.
- Continue to work towards centralized scheduling and information.
- Marketing/advertising need to reach vulnerable populations.
- Grant writing assistance is needed for all stakeholders in order to properly address these issues.
- Integrate health community objectives with transit/transportation objectives.
- Find a way to have stakeholders meet regularly to identify/address issues.

## **Section Six: Region 6E 2011 Local Human Service Public Transit Coordination Plan Outcomes**

Another component of the existing conditions is an analysis of the 2011 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan's list of strategies and projects for improving transit coordination. The Steering Committee reviewed these strategies and projects to assess regional progress on transit coordination since 2011. The group also identified causes for success and barriers to action regarding project implementation. The complete list of 2011 strategies and projects and an assessment of their outcome is presented below.

### *Assessment of 2011 Plan Implementation Steps*

1. **Advertise and Promote** the Region's transportation options including all forms of traditional media (i.e., newspaper and radio) and innovative forms of direct marketing (i.e., presentations to businesses, senior centers, etc.).

#### *Assessment:*

- This implementation step is considered ongoing with a 'satisfactory' level of accomplishment. There will always be the need for people who are new to transit and/or who need transit to better understand their options.
  - Advertising has been regular in traditional media sources, however, social media advertising is lagging behind and needs to be improved.
  - Transportation providers' websites need to be updated more frequently.
  - Transportation providers, especially dispatch, often are the main source of explaining transportation options.
  - Social media and mobile apps need to be developed to better assist with answering questions and arranging transportation.
2. **Centralized Call Center/Number** to share trip dispatch information under a single entity within a single organization either Region or Statewide. The central, statewide number would then coordinate rides with the various transportation providers.

#### *Assessment:*

- This implementation step has made some progress since 2011, but not exactly what was intended: no central call number/center has been established.

- The Senior Linkage Line, Disability Linkage Line, and Veterans Linkage Line all continue to be a great resource helping seniors understand their transportation options. They are considered a resource referral versus a central call number that can dispatch transportation services.
- There has been some improvement in Region 6E, since the number of public transit providers has been reduced after Meeker County Public Transit merged with Central Community Transit in 2016. Trailblazer Transit has also expanded services.
- MinnesotaHelp.info has been redesigned to provide more information on public services, including an extensive online search for local transportation services.
- Medical Assistance recipients need to call PrimeWest Health directly for modes 4-7.

3. **Maintaining the Vehicles** and better resources to educate the Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) on transportation issues.

*Assessment:*

- There is a vested interest in the transportation providers to maintaining their vehicles.
- Over the last five years, the Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) was not given funds to replace vehicles.
- Costs of maintaining (and purchasing new) vehicles has gone up considerably with funding levels remaining fixed.

4. **Establish Transportation Ambassadors (Bus Buddies)** to assist riders with understanding how to best use local transportation options.

*Assessment:*

- Trailblazer Transit has a volunteer program to help riders. They have provided outreach to the various senior centers in their service area.
- CCT does not have a similar type of program.
- Dispatchers uses valuable time explaining options and procedures.
- The number of non-English-speaking users have increased and have created additional confusion.

- Overall the goal of this implementation item has not be met. It still remains confusing to many people how to use local transportation options.
- There may be federal funds to help with enhanced transportation assistance, including person with disabilities, under the Older Americans Act.

5. **Merge Day Training & Habilitation (DT & H) Transportation with Transit.** One of the most logical expansions of public transit is to organize and provide transportation for the various Day Training and Habilitation services throughout the Region.

*Assessment:*

- Large strides have been made to accomplish this implementation step.
- The population who can't be served by public transportation has decreased in numbers due to the improvements made by providers.
- There still are some gaps that need to be improved. For example, rides made in town should be provided by public transportation. Rural areas that don't fit into scheduled routes might be best served by DT&H vehicles.
- There has been a discussed need for the public transit providers to be enrolled in the Minnesota Health Care Program (MHCP) so they can bill Waiver Programs.
- The majority in Renville County has been successfully merged. Kandiyohi, McLeod and Meeker Counties still have overlapping service.

6. **Regional Forum for Transportation/Transit Stakeholders.** This would be accomplished by identifying an organization to organize and facilitate this type of annual or semi-annual meetings, using the existing steering committee members.

*Assessment:*

- In 2017, stakeholders are much better organized and communicate regularly at the state level than they did in 2011. Regional forums, however, have not been developed.
- There has been a lot of recent discussion (mostly in 2015 and 2016) and movement by the State of Minnesota to establish Regional Transportation Coordination Councils (RTCC). The purpose of RTCC would be to facilitate coordination between transportation providers and service agencies in order to break down transportation barriers and offer a seamless system of transportation services throughout the state. MnDOT held regional meetings across the state to discuss the potential formation of RTCCs.

- The Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2010 (Minn. Statute 2010 174.285) to "study, evaluate, oversee, and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public." The Council succeeds the Interagency Committee on Transit Coordination (ICTC), which was established in 2005 by Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty.

7. **Develop new programs such as SMART Ride.** Due to restrictions in Public Transit Providers service plans, programs such as SMART (Sibley McLeod Auxiliary Regional Transit) Ride have been developed to provide transit services to riders who would not be served by traditional transit options. This allows riders to go places where and/or at times when Public Transit options are not available.

***Assessment:***

- Trailblazer Transit's SMART Ride program has been a huge success. They provide rides after hours and on weekends when public transit routes are not available. They charge \$2.50 per loaded mile divided by the number of passengers.
- CCT has a JOYRIDE program that provides sober rides home on Friday and Saturday nights from Memorial Weekend through Labor Day. The JOYRIDE program operates between the cities of Spicer and Willmar with a cost of \$10 per person.
- There is a private service available in Meeker County for some special events.
- There seems to be high demand to maintain and expand these types of programs.
- Safety coalitions have been active in organizing sober bus rides for large events.

8. **Smart Card Technology** refers to issuing a credit or driver license type identification card that is unique to each transportation user. Up-to-date information on the user and their program eligibilities would be available upon scanning or typing in the person's identification number. The primary reason this project would be difficult, it that it represents an extraordinarily commitment on the various agencies involved with funding transportation services, to have current up-to-date information on all of the various clients and their corresponding program eligibilities.

***Assessment:***

- Trailblazer Transit examined smart card technology, but dropped it after realizing the costs and risks did not outweigh the benefits. Credit card fees were one of the software problems that could not be solved.

- PrimeWest Health was also exploring smart card technology, but are now working on developing a business plan with Uber to provide rides for people on Medical Assistance.

9. **Better Dispatch/Support Technology.** This may include hiring a mobility manager but does for sure include continuously making all necessary improvements to dispatch.

*Assessment:*

- The people working dispatch from both public transit providers in Region 6E received high remarks from the survey respondents. The most common problem reported was extensive wait times when the system is busy.
- The transit providers reported there are still many problems with the available scheduling software programs.
- Funds were not available to hire a mobility manager.
- The public transit providers have explored developing mobile and online apps to see when their rides will arrive. Numerous transit providers from around the country have had varying success with these types of programs. The technology seems to be improving and becoming more affordable.
- Another need identified is the ability for individuals to be able to go online to schedule their own rides.

10. **Statewide Committee to examine rules & regulations,** which would include both elected and non-political members.

*Assessment:*

- The Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2010 (Minn. Statute 2010 174.285) to "study, evaluate, oversee, and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public."
- The Transit Director from CCT serves on the MCOTA Board.
- The potential formation of Regional Transportation Coordination Councils (RTCC) was discussed extensively by stakeholders in 2015 and 2016. If RTCC's are formed, they will certainly assist with providing feedback on the State's transit and transportation-related rules and regulations.

11. **Cover no-load volunteer driver miles.** Currently drivers are not reimbursed for trips/mileage traveled without a recipient in the vehicle (i.e., no load miles). There are a variety of logical situations when this occurs, and the volunteer drivers should be reimbursed for actual miles driven.

*Assessment:*

- PrimeWest began paying for no-load miles when transporting individuals on Medical Assistance.
- Mileage reimbursement should continue to not be considered income to help attract more volunteers.
- Volunteer drivers might need to be paid positions if shortages occur.

12. **Expand the Volunteer Driver Program.** Many gaps in transportation services are currently filled by volunteer driver programs. These individuals use their own vehicle to transport individuals primarily when traditional transportation options are not available. As additional investments in public transit are made, the volunteer driver may someday become obsolete. Until public transit is fully operational to meet all transportation needs, however, volunteer driver programs will continue to play an important role in providing transportation options.

*Assessment:*

- Both CCT and Trailblazer Transit have continued their volunteer driver programs.
- Rules and regulations still need to be addressed to provide better incentives to drivers.
- One emerging problem that volunteer driver programs face is that people are choosing to retire at a later age. Many of the volunteer drivers are people who have recently retired.

13. **Expand service areas for counties.** This would include service both within and outside of Region 6E.

*Assessment:*

- CCT and Trailblazer Transit cover the entire Region 6E service area. Nights and weekend service has been expanded.
- It is much easier to get across county lines today than it was in 2011, however, there is still room for improvement, especially between different transit providers.
- Although ride sharing services have been expanded, more cooperation is needed.



- There still needs to be some improvement for employees to arrange rides work, especially between different communities.

14. **Improve convenience, safety, and comfort at bus stops.** Improvements made with the common pick-up and drop off locations. Coordinate efforts with the business community.

*Assessment:*

- CCT developed a Transit Hub in the City of Willmar.
- Numerous benches and bus stops have been added throughout the Region.
- More pedestrian and amenity improvements are still needed. Community stakeholder groups have been active in helping with these items.

15. **Web coordination with providers for users.**

*Assessment:*

- Trailblazer Transit is currently changing its website to include a section to coordinate with other transportation providers.
- MinnesotaHelp.info provides information on transportation providers. The website also explains and provides contact information for the Senior LinkAge Line, Disability Linkage Line, and the Veterans Linkage Line.
- Staying “current” has proved to be a challenge. Many web links are broken and do not have the correct redirects set up.

16. **Better Centralized Information.** Create and maintain a reliable centralized list of regional transportation services.

*Assessment:*

- MinnesotaHelp.info provides information on local and regional transportation providers via a search option.
- A regional list of transportation providers has not been created due to the lack of a clear leader in this role. The formation of Regional Transportation Coordination Councils would help to accomplish this task.
- Social media is being underutilized in this capacity.

## **Section Seven: 2017-2022 Implementation Plan**

This section of the plan identifies the transit and related transportation priorities for Region 6E for the years 2017-2022. The priorities and corresponding projects were identified from a variety of sources, including the needs identified in Section Five of this plan, the assessment of the 2011 Region 6E Transit Coordination Plan, ideas communicated during the focus group and public workshops, and from Steering Committee recommendations.

### **REGION 6E TRANSIT COORDINATION GOAL:**

***“TO ENSURE VIABLE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS EXIST TO MEET  
PEOPLE’S TRANSPORTATION NEEDS IN REGION 6E.”***

### **REGION 6E TRANSIT COORDINATION OBJECTIVES:**

To achieve the goal, the following three interrelated objectives were developed:

- ***Awareness:*** Increase the awareness and use of existing transportation options.
- ***Capacity:*** Increase the capacity of providers to transport people when and where they need transportation.
- ***Coordination:*** Save time, money and resources by helping people and stakeholders better communicate and coordinate rides.

### **REGION 6E TRANSIT COORDINATION IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:**

Each of the following implementation steps help to accomplish one or more of the three objectives. Unless otherwise noted, each project covers all of Region 6E and is the collective responsibility of the key transportation stakeholders. The implementation step shall also be considered ongoing unless otherwise noted. The implementation steps are not ranked in the order of their priority.

#### **1. Promote the use of the Region’s existing transportation options.**

- A. Continue to work towards a reliable source of centralized information.

- B. Make it a priority to keep websites updated with current information, services and programs. Provide links to other stakeholders and ensure they work properly.
- C. Develop new marketing strategies to reach additional people, including the use of social media.
- D. Develop brochures, flyers and newspaper ads with key contact information.
- E. Distribute promotional materials using existing stakeholder resources, such as utility bills, organizational newsletters, school mailings, etc.
- F. Work with the media to advertise and encourage them to cover events/stories.
- G. Meet with stakeholders (nursing homes, clinics, civic groups, etc.) on a regular basis so they can better understand what services are currently available.
- H. Ensure the Region's people of need (i.e., seniors, disabled, low-income, etc.) are aware of what services are available to them and how to schedule rides.
- I. Establish Transportation Ambassadors (Bus Buddies) to assist riders with understanding how to best use local transportation options.
- J. Invest in providing training to agency representatives, public transit employees (especially dispatch), and other stakeholders so they fully understand what transportation services are available and which funding programs may be available to individuals.
- K. Meet with key stakeholders periodically to assess what is working and what changes are needed.

**2. Centralized Call Center/Number** to share trip dispatch information under a single entity within a single organization either regional or statewide. The central, statewide number would then coordinate rides with the various transportation providers.

- A. Continuously update the database of available transportation options.
- B. Train staff to understand the various options available to get people where they need to be.
- C. Public transit options should be the first option if available.
- D. Develop a mechanism to follow-up with people after their transportation has been completed.

- E. Continue to support the development of better centralized information, such as MinnesotaHelp.info. Regionally promote the use of the Senior LinkAge, Disability Linkage, and Veterans Linkage Lines.

**3. Invest in software and technology to stay current and to improve coordination.**

- A. Strive to allow people to go online and/or use mobile apps to schedule rides.
- B. Software and technology investments increase the capacity of transportation providers and helps to address unmet needs.
- C. Regularly identify and address problems with the available scheduling software programs.

**4. Regularly communicate regional needs and issues with the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) and other key stakeholders.**

- A. Continue to work towards the formation of group of key stakeholders who can meet regularly to identify regional transit and transportation needs.
- B. Support the formation of Regional Transportation Coordination Councils (RTCC).

**5. Work with stakeholders and providers to reduce the overlap of redundant services.**

- A. Continue to make strides on having public transit provide Day Training & Habilitation (DT & H) transportation when feasible.
- B. Realize that rural areas that don't fit into scheduled routes might be best served by DT&H vehicles.
- C. Enroll public transit providers in the Minnesota Health Care Program (MHCP) so they can bill Waiver Programs.
- D. Work towards having a regional mobility manager that can help identify and eliminate redundant services.

**6. Expand and/or develop new programs to address unmet needs.**

- A. Continue to expand Trailblazer Transit's SMART Ride Program (Sibley McLeod Auxiliary Regional Transit). This allows riders to go places where and/or at times when public transit options are not available.
- B. Continue to expand Central Community Transit's JOYRIDE Program, which provides sober rides home on Friday and Saturday nights from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.
- C. Work towards ensuring that special events have viable transportation options.
- D. Realize that private providers, such as Uber and Lyft, will continue to expand and can assist with addressing some of the unmet needs.
- E. Realize that increasing capacity to provide unmet needs doesn't necessary mean expanding service hours and/or service areas. Increasing capacity also means adding bus service during current hours of operations.
- F. Work with the Region's major employers to identify unmet transportation needs and to determine what options are available to address them.
- G. Promote the development and expansion of ride-sharing programs, especially for employment opportunities.
- H. Encourage the expansion of Mode 6 'Protected Transport' services into Region 6E.

**7. Increase the number of volunteer drivers as a method to reduce the Region's unmet transportation needs.**

- A. Regularly identify, protect and address volunteer driver needs on the state and federal level. Works towards revising rules and regulations as necessary.
- B. Ensure that mileage reimbursements cover the true costs of providing transportation. This includes covering no-load miles and ensuring that volunteers are reimbursed at the Federal rate for business miles driven (versus for miles driven in service of charitable organizations).
- C. Work with stakeholders to encourage providing incentives for volunteer drivers, such as discounts on products and services.
- D. Encourage organizations to develop volunteer driver programs and to provide volunteers with access to vehicles when available.

- E. Volunteer drivers might need to be paid positions if shortages occur and/or if state and federal laws discourage people from volunteering.
- F. Mileage reimbursement should continue to not be considered as income to help attract more volunteer drivers.

**8. Develop a program to help seniors make the transition of not having a vehicle.**

- A. Work with key stakeholder to determine what resources are currently available to provide this type of assistance.
- B. Find a stakeholder who is interested in taking on this responsibility, including applying for grant funds and coordinating stakeholder resources.

**9. Work with communities to develop pedestrian and bicycle friendly amenities.**

- A. Encourage the development of Active Living Transportation Plans, which can help to identify needed pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
- B. Encourage communities to take ownership and responsibility of sidewalks, including A.D.A. assessable curb-cuts, pedestrian friendly crosswalks, proper lighting, and suitable places to rest.
- C. Improve the safety, convenience and comfort at transit stops. Coordinate efforts with the business community and other stakeholders.

*For more information on the Region 6E 2017 Local Human Service  
Public Transit Coordination Plan, please contact the  
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission Community Development  
Director at (320) 235-8504 or [mmrdc@mmrdc.org](mailto:mmrdc@mmrdc.org)*

## *Appendix A – Region 6E Key Transportation Stakeholders Inventory*

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Main City</b>
ACC Midwest Transportation LLC	Eric Labraaten	elabraaten@gmail.com	<a href="http://accmidwest.com">http://accmidwest.com</a>	Hutchinson
Adult Client Training Service (ACTS) - Olivia	Karen Borden	kborden@mchsi.com	<a href="http://www.actsofolivia.org">www.actsofolivia.org</a>	Olivia
Adult Training and Habilitation Center	Kevin Dietrich	kevin.dietrich@athc.org	<a href="http://www.athc.org">http://www.athc.org</a>	Hutchinson
Adult Training and Habilitation Center	Kate Benson	kate.benson@athc.org	<a href="http://www.athc.org">www.athc.org</a>	Winsted
Advocacy & Inclusion Matter of West Central Minnesota (AIM)	Kelly Doss	kelly@arckandi.org	<a href="http://www.aimwcm.org">http://www.aimwcm.org</a>	Willmar
Allina Health	Monica Stanton	monica.stanton@allina.com	<a href="http://www.allinahealth.org/New-Home/">www.allinahealth.org/New-Home/</a>	Hutchinson
Augustana Care Lakeside Campus	Bree Wolter	bwolter@augustanacare.org	<a href="http://augustanacare.org">http://augustanacare.org</a>	Dassel
Aveyron Homes, Inc.	Julie Johnson	julie@aveyronhomes.com	<a href="http://aveyronhomes.com">http://aveyronhomes.com</a>	Hutchinson
Bethesda Health & Housing	Caroline Chan	carolinec@bethesdawillmar.com	<a href="http://bethesdawillmar.com">http://bethesdawillmar.com</a>	Willmar
BOLD Public Schools	melissa sagedahl	melissa.sagedahl@bold.k12.mn.us	<a href="http://bold.k12.mn.us">http://bold.k12.mn.us</a>	Olivia
Care Transportation		info@caretransportation.com	<a href="http://www.caretransportation.com/">www.caretransportation.com/</a>	St. Cloud
Central Community Transit (CCT)	Tiffany Collins	tcollins@CCTbus.org	<a href="http://www.cctbus.org">http://www.cctbus.org</a>	Willmar
Central Minnesota Jobs & Training Services, Inc. (CMJTS)	Cathy Baumgartner	cbaumgartner@cmjts.org	<a href="http://www.cmjts.org">http://www.cmjts.org</a>	Monticello
Central Minnesota Senior Care, Inc.	Dawn Frericks	dawn@divinehouse.org	<a href="http://www.centralmnseniorcare.com">www.centralmnseniorcare.com</a>	Watkins
Chrysalis of Kandiyohi Co Inc	LuAnn Kruger	luannk@chrysalis-kandi.com		Willmar
Crow's Nest Programs				Kandiyohi
Diversified Lifestyles, Inc				Willmar

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Main City</b>
Divine Home Care, Inc.	Crystal Lawver	crystal@divinehomecare.com	<a href="http://www.divinehomecare.com">http://www.divinehomecare.com</a>	Litchfield
Divine Home Care, Inc.	Alison Mulder	alison@divinehomecare.com	<a href="http://www.divinehomecare.com">http://www.divinehomecare.com</a>	Willmar
Ecumen Oaks & Pines			<a href="http://www.ecumenoaksandpines.org">http://www.ecumenoaksandpines.org</a>	Hutchinson
Ecumen of Litchfield	Jennie Mattison	jenniemattison@ecumen.org	<a href="http://www.ecumenoflitchfield.org">http://www.ecumenoflitchfield.org</a>	Litchfield
Executive Express		info@executiveexpress.biz	<a href="http://www.executiveexpress.biz/">http://www.executiveexpress.biz/</a>	St. Cloud
Facing New Horizons				Willmar
Divine House - Fourth Avenue Homes Inc			<a href="http://www.divinehouse.org/fourth-ave">http://www.divinehouse.org/fourth-ave</a>	Willmar
Glacial Lakes Adult Basic Education	Ann Trochilil	trochlila@willmar.k12.mn.us		Willmar
Glencoe Regional Health Services	Laura Kuvaas	laura.kuvaas@grhsonline.org	<a href="http://grhsonline.org">http://grhsonline.org</a>	Glencoe
Grove City Area C.A.R.E. Program		gcacare@embarqmail.com	<a href="http://www.grovecitymn.com/care.html">http://www.grovecitymn.com/care.html</a>	Grove City
Handi Van Service	Dan Bennett	handivan@live.com		Morton
Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Litchfield		pbraaten@hutchtel.net		Litchfield
Jefferson Bus Lines		info@jeffersonlines.com	<a href="https://www.jeffersonlines.com/">https://www.jeffersonlines.com/</a>	
Kandi Works DAC	Deb TerWisscha	deb.kandiworks@gmail.com	<a href="http://kwdac.com/">http://kwdac.com/</a>	Kandiyohi
Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services	Kathy Nelson	Kathy_N@co.kandiyohi.mn.us	<a href="http://www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us">http://www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us</a>	Willmar
Lower Sioux Indian Community	Miranda Sam	miranda.sam@lowersioux.com	<a href="http://lowersioux.com">http://lowersioux.com</a>	Morton
Lutheran Social Service - Personal Support Services			<a href="http://www.lssmn.org/assisted_living_caregiver_support">http://www.lssmn.org/assisted_living_caregiver_support</a>	



<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Main City</b>
Lutheran Social Service - Personal Support Services		pss@lssmn.org	<a href="http://www.lssmn.org/assisted_living_caregiver_support">http://www.lssmn.org/assisted_living_caregiver_support</a>	
MBW Company (Glesener's, Inc.) - Bird Island		info@mbwcompany.com	<a href="http://www.gleseners.com">http://www.gleseners.com</a>	Bird Island
McLeod Alliance for Victims of Domestic Violence, Inc. - Hutchinson	Glynis Vacek	advocate@hutchtel.net	<a href="http://www.mcleodalliance.org">http://www.mcleodalliance.org</a>	Hutchinson
McLeod County Public Health	Laurie Snegosky	laurie.snegosky@co.mcleod.mn.us	<a href="http://www.co.mcleod.mn.us/government/departments/public_health/index.php">http://www.co.mcleod.mn.us/government/departments/public_health/index.php</a>	
McLeod Emergency Food Shelf	Lennie Albers			Hutchinson
McLeod Social Service Center	Gary Sprynczynatyk	gary.sprynczynatyk@co.mcleod.mn.us	<a href="http://www.co.mcleod.mn.us">http://www.co.mcleod.mn.us</a>	Glencoe
Meeker Council on Aging	Donna Whitcomb	donnawhitcomb@ecumen.org		Litchfield
Meeker County Community Homes		#REF!		
Meeker Area Food Shelf	Jayne Revermann	needfood@hutchtel.net		Litchfield
Meeker County Social Services	Paul Bukovich	paul.bukovich@co.meeker.mn.us	<a href="http://www.co.meeker.mn.us">http://www.co.meeker.mn.us</a>	Litchfield
Meeker County Veterans Services Office (CVSO)		donald.dufner@co.meeker.mn.us	<a href="http://www.co.meeker.mn.us/198/Veterans-Service">http://www.co.meeker.mn.us/198/Veterans-Service</a>	Litchfield
Meeker Memorial Hospital	Lori Rice	lrice@meekermemorial.org	<a href="https://meekermemorial.org">https://meekermemorial.org</a>	Litchfield
Minnesota WorkForce Center - Hutchinson		hutchinson.wfc@state.mn.us	<a href="http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/workforce-centers/workforce-center-locations/hutchinson-wfc">http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/workforce-centers/workforce-center-locations/hutchinson-wfc</a>	Hutchinson
Minnesota WorkForce Center - Litchfield (Central MN Jobs & Training Services)	Colleen McNab	cmcnab@cmjts.org	<a href="http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/workforce-centers/workforce-center-locations/litchfield-wfc">http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/workforce-centers/workforce-center-locations/litchfield-wfc</a>	Litchfield

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Main City</b>
Minnesota WorkForce Center - Willmar		willmar.wfc@state.mn.us	<a href="http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/workforce-centers/workforce-center-locations/willmar-wfc">http://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/workforce-centers/workforce-center-locations/willmar-wfc</a>	Willmar
Motivation Education and Training (MET)		willmar@metinc.org	<a href="http://www.metinc.org">http://www.metinc.org</a>	Willmar
MSOCs NuVision	Timothy Ardoff	timothy.ardoff@state.mn.us		Willmar
MSOCS Waves	Jeff Schimschock	Jeffrey.a.schimschock@state.mn.us		Willmar
Overcomers International Fellowship, Inc.		dreamcenterpath@aol.com	<a href="http://www.dreamcenterstcloud.org">http://www.dreamcenterstcloud.org</a>	Willmar
PACT for Families Cooperatorive	Char Erickson	char_e@pactforfamilies.org	<a href="http://www.pactforfamilies.org/">http://www.pactforfamilies.org/</a>	Willmar
Presbyterian Family Foundation	Kristi Maahs	kristim@pffwillmar.org	<a href="http://pffwillmar.com">http://pffwillmar.com</a>	Willmar
Prince of Peace Retirement Living - Hutchinson			<a href="http://www.poprl.org">http://www.poprl.org</a>	Hutchinson
ProWorks, Inc.	Dale Miller	dmiller@hutchtel.net	<a href="http://www.proworks-mn.com">http://www.proworks-mn.com</a>	Litchfield
Quality Quest Health Care - Willmar		rachel@qqhc.com	<a href="http://www.qualityquesthealthcare.com">www.qualityquesthealthcare.com</a>	Willmar
Reliant Transportation		info@reliantrides.com	<a href="http://www.reliantrides.com/index.html">http://www.reliantrides.com/index.html</a>	St. Cloud
Renville County Community Residence, Inc. (RCCR)		info@communityresidences.com	<a href="http://www.communityresidences.com">http://www.communityresidences.com</a>	Bird Island
Renville County Food Shelf	Mary Ann Lewis	mlewis1@mediacombb.net	none	Olivia
Renville County Hospital and Clinics		mahers@rchospital.com	<a href="http://www.rchospital.com">http://www.rchospital.com</a>	Olivia
Renville County Human Services		hs@renvillecountymn.com	<a href="http://www.renvillecountymn.com">www.renvillecountymn.com</a>	Olivia
Renville Health Services		kfitzner@renvilla.sfhs.org	<a href="http://rhs.sfhs.org">http://rhs.sfhs.org</a>	Renville
Rice Hospice	Lori Rice	lrice@meekermemorial.org	<a href="http://ricehospice.com">http://ricehospice.com</a>	Willmar

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Main City</b>
Ridgewater College	Heidi Olson	heidi.olson@ridgewater.edu	http://www.ridgewater.edu	Hutchinson
Safe Avenues	Jen Johnson	jenj@willmarshelter.com	http://www.willmarshelter.com	Olivia
Samah Home Health Care LLC	Ismahan Osman	ismahan@samahcare.com	http://www.samahcare.com	Willmar
Southwest Initiative Foundation		info@mncore.com	https://swifoundation.org	Hutchinson
Spectrum Health Companies		kathleenl@spectrumchealth.com	http://www.spectrumhealthcos.com	Willmar
Tomorrow LLC				Litchfield
Trailblazer Transit	Gary Ludwig	gludwig@trailblazertransit.com	http://www.TrailblazerTransit.com	Glencoe
United Community Action Partnership	Debi Brandt	debib@unitedcapmn.org	https://unitedcapmn.org	Willmar
Village Ranch, Inc.		tim.wright@villageranchinc.org	http://www.villageranch.com	Hutchinson
West Central Industries	Beth Theis	beth@wciservices.org		Hutchinson
West Central Industries	Michelle Prah	michelle@wciservices.org		Willmar
Westrom Realty, Inc. - Willmar		tim.wright@villageranchinc.org	www.westromrealty.com	Willmar
Willmar Area Food Shelf	Alana Ziehl	alana@willmarafs.org		Willmar
Willmar Salvation Army	Captian Linda Faye	tim.wright@villageranchinc.org	www.salvationarmynorth.org/community/willmar/	Willmar
Woodland Centers		tim.wright@villageranchinc.org	www.woodlandcenters.com	Willmar
The Link	Rhonda Olleson	thelinkservices@faithspicer.org		Spicer
Youth for Christ	Bob Poe	bob@yfcminnesota.com		
Kandiyohi County Veteran Services	Trisha Appeldorn	trish.appeldorn@co.kandiyohi.mn.us		Willmar

**Appendix B:**  
**MMDC Rider & Stakeholder Surveys**



# MID-MINNESOTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

*Serving the People of Region Six East*

## Public Transit Rider Survey

Thank you for completing this survey. The information you provide will be used to help make public transit decisions in Kandiyohi, Meeker, McLeod and Renville Counties. Your answers will remain confidential.

### 1. What is the primary purpose you use public transportation?

- Work
- School
- Shopping/errands
- Medical
- For social reasons (for example, to visit friends or relatives)
- To attend an event (for example, a movie or sporting event)

### 2. On average, how often do you use public transit? *Please select one answer...*

- 5-7 days a week
- 2-4 days a week
- About 1 day a week
- A few days a month (2-3)
- About 1 day a month

### 3. How long have you been using public transit? *Please select one answer...*

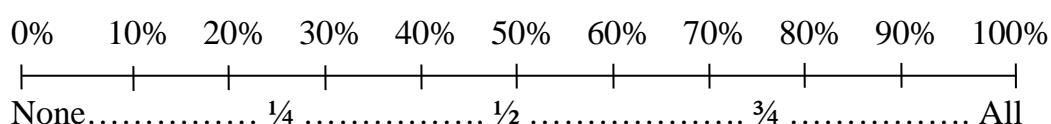
- Less than 1 month
- 1 month to 1 year
- 1 to 5 years
- More than 5 years

### 4. How satisfied are you with the availability of this service? *Please select one answer...*

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

### 5. Do you have any other means of transportation? Yes No

### 6. In the past week, approximately what percentage of your transportation needs have been met by public transit? *Please circle the percentage below...*



**7. What improvements to this service would allow you to ride more frequently?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reliability (on-time) | <input type="checkbox"/> Longer service hours (earlier or later) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better information    | <input type="checkbox"/> Better driver courtesy                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower cost/fare       | <input type="checkbox"/> More comfortable/clearer vehicle        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shorter Travel Time   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain below)            |
- 
- 

**8. Is there anywhere you need to travel that you cannot get to by using this service?**

- Yes       No

**9. If additional service was added, where should it go? *Please list locations below...***

---



---

**10. What improvements to this service would allow you to ride more frequently?**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Almost every day     | <input type="checkbox"/> A few days per month   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A few days per week  | <input type="checkbox"/> Once a month or less   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Very rarely/not at all |

**11. What is your gender?**       Male       Female

**12. Do you have a driver's license?**       Yes       No

**13. Are you a veteran?**       Yes       No

**14. Do you identify as someone with a disability?**       Yes       No

**15. What is your race/ethnicity?**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African/African American | <input type="checkbox"/> White/Caucasian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/Other     |

**16. Do you have any conditions that require assistance to use this service?**

- |   |  |                                   |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty hearing           | <input type="checkbox"/> Require lift device | <input type="checkbox"/> No, none |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty walking           | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairments  |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |  |                                   |

**17. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)      18. What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Thank you!**

## **Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan - Organization Questionnaire**

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. The information you provide will be used to develop an inventory of transportation resources available to Minnesota citizens as part of the Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan for Region 6E (Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, and Renville Counties). Please take approximately 15 minutes to provide information regarding transportation.

### **Agency Background**

#### **1. Contact Information**

Organization Name:

Mailing Address:

Address 2:

City:

Zip:

Contact Name:

Contact Title:

Contact Phone Number:

Contact Email:

Website:

#### **2. What best describes your organization?**

Drop-down: Public, Private non-profit, Private for-profit

#### **3. Your organization is primarily a...?**

Transportation Provider (e.g. public transit, school bus, taxi/shuttle, etc.),

Other (Explain)

#### **4. What population do you serve? Check all that apply**

General Public

Individuals with Disabilities

Elderly

Other (Explain)

#### **5. Does your agency provide funding or transportation services?**

No, (proceed to question 21)

Yes, provide funding only (proceed to question 21)

Yes, provide transportation services

Yes, provide funding and transportation services

### Transportation Service

6. What hours do you provide services? If no service is offered on some days, leave that day blank.

	Time
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

7. Please list the CITIES, TOWNS, or TOWNSHIPS where you PICK UP passengers.

Text Box

8. Please list the CITIES, TOWNS, or TOWNSHIPS where you DROP OFF passengers. (This may include the same locations listed above.)

Text Box

9. On average, how much do passengers pay for one ride on your service?

Text Box

10. How far in advance must a passenger schedule a trip? Check all that apply.

Schedule is fixed, no advance notice required

Less than 1 hour

Between 1 and 24 hours

Between 24 and 48 hours

2 or more days

11. What type of service do you provide? Check all that apply

Fixed Route (public transportation w/ complimentary paratransit)

Deviated Fixed Route (established route with deviations for pick-ups)

Demand Response (call-in to book a ride)

Scheduled (established routes for specific purposes e.g. program routes, out-of-town trips)

Ambulance (emergency transportation)

12. What level of service do you provide to passengers? Check all that apply.



Curb to curb

Door to door

Door through door

Other (please specify)

**13. Are there any eligibility requirements for using your services? Check all that apply.**

Passenger must be agency consumer

Age of passenger

Cultural affiliation of passenger

Income level of passenger

Cost of providing ride to individual passenger

Referral from county human service agency

Other (please specify)

**14. If you checked any responses in Question 13, please describe the process for qualification to receive rides.**

Text Box

**Passengers**

**15. What types of passenger accommodations do you provide? Check all that apply.**

Car seats or booster seats

Interpreters

Personal care attendants

Escorts

Discounted service

Other (please specify)

**16. What percentage of your passengers require assistance getting on and off your vehicles?**

Text Box

**17. Do you provide travel training?**

Yes

No

**Vehicles**

**18. How many vehicles do you own or lease within each category?**

	<b>Total Owned</b>	<b>Total Leased</b>	<b>Total Lift-Equipped</b>	<b>Total STS-certified</b>
<b>Sedans/Station Wagons</b>				
<b>Minivans</b>				
<b>Small Bus/Vans</b>				
<b>Small Light-Duty Bus</b>				
<b>Medium Light-Duty Bus</b>				
<b>Medium-Duty Bus</b>				
<b>Large Heavy-Duty Bus</b>				

**19. If your organization shares vehicles, with whom does your agency share vehicles and for what purpose? Please describe your vehicle sharing arrangement. If your organization does not share vehicles, skip this question.**

Text box

**20. Does your organization use personal vehicles to transport people?**

Yes

No

**Non-Transportation Provider Questions (Transportation Providers skip to question 31)**

**21. What hours do those you serve need/use transportation services?**

	<b>Time</b>
<b>Monday</b>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	
<b>Thursday</b>	
<b>Friday</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	

**22. Please list the CITIES, TOWNS, or TOWNSHIPS where those that use your services need to be PICKED UP.**

Text Box

**23. Please list the CITIES, TOWNS, or TOWNSHIPS where those that use your services need to be DROPPED OFF. (This may include the same locations listed above.)**

Text Box

**24. On average, how much do those that you serve pay for one ride?**

Text Box

**25. On average, how much does your agency spend on program transportation?**

**26. What type of service do those you service need? Check all that apply**

Fixed Route (public transportation w/ complimentary paratransit)

Deviated Fixed Route (established route with deviations for pick-ups)

Demand Response (call-in to book a ride)

Scheduled (established routes for specific purposes e.g. program routes, out-of-town trips)

Ambulance (emergency transportation)

**27. What level of service do those you service need? Check all that apply.**

Curb to curb

Door to door

Door through door

Other (please specify)

**28. What types of accommodations would need to be made to transport those you service? Check all that apply.**

Car seats or booster seats

Interpreters

Personal care attendants

Escorts

Discounted service

Other (please specify)

**29. What percentage of those you serve require assistance getting on and off your vehicles?**

Text Box

**30. Do you provide travel training for those you serve?**

Yes

No

**Transportation Coordination**

**31. What organizations do you coordinate with in regards to transportation? Check all that apply.**

Public Transit Providers

Churches

Day Training and Habilitation

Educational institutions

Elder day care

Intercity carrier (e.g. Amtrak, Greyhound, Jefferson Lines)

Private regional shuttles

Airports

Head Start

HMO or PMAP

Occupational training center

County human service agency or MNET

Tribal agency

My agency does not coordinate transportation services with other agencies

Other (Please name the agency)

**32. Please describe the coordination that takes place within each category checked above.**

Text Box

**33. What issues have you encountered in coordinating or attempting to coordinate services? RANK these barriers in order of greatest concern. (1=Highest Concern, 9=Lowest Concern)**

Billing and payment

Cost

Staff time requirements

Insurance

Driver qualifications

Scheduling conflicts

Limited service area boundaries

Limited service hour availability

Passenger security

**34. Have you encountered other issues not listed above? Please describe. If not, skip this question.**

Text box

**35. What changes are most needed to improve coordination in your service area?**

Text Box

## **Appendix C:**

### **Focus Group and Public Workshop Documents**

# Please Sign In!

Date: March 12, 2017

Location: Hutchinson

Purpose: Region 6E Local Transit Coordination Plan Focus Group Meeting

Name	Representing
1. Matthew Johnson	MMDC
2. Janice Hoss	Princeton Hutchinson
3. Patty Henderson	Glencoe Regional Health Services
4. Jill Hoff	Central MN Jobs + Training
5. Heidi Sticha	" "
6. Cathy Baumgartner	CMJTB
7. Laurie Snegosky	McLeod Co Public Health
8. Kevin Dietrich	ATHC
9. Eric Labraator	ACC Midwest
10. Jay Ludwig	Trailblazer Transit
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	

# Please Sign In!

Date: April 19, 2017

Location: Willmar Public Library

Purpose: Region 6E Local Transit Coordination Plan  
Focus Group Meeting for Riders

Name	Representing
1. Deb Grunwald (supervisor)	Kandiyohi Cty Health & Human Serv.
2. Lorie Skaro	Willmar Job SVC.
3. Clara Mangle	Willmar - consumer
4. Laura Morales	Willmar Adult Education, CCT Board Member
5. Angel Carrera-Valdez	Divine Inc
6. Samantha Darkow	consumer for Divine House
7. Matthew Pharo	MMPC
8. Don Wuchler	MMPC
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	

# Please Sign In!

Date: April 19, 2017

Location: Willmar Public Library

Purpose: Region 6E Local Transit Coordination Plan Focus Group Meeting

	Name	Representing
1.	Jill Pelzel	Renville County HS
2.	Val Honebrink	WCF
3.	Paula Dolby	LSS
4.	Tiffany Collins	CCT
5.	Donna Anderson	CCT
6.	Elsa Jacobo	CMJTS
7.	Kathy Nelson	KCHHS
8.	Heidi Olson	Ridgecrest College
9.	Clara Drabble	consumer
10.	Matthew Johnson	MMOC
11.	Tom Weckler	MMOC
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		
16.		
17.		
18.		
19.		



# Please Sign In!

Date: May 24, 2017 (9:30 a.m. ~ 1:00 p.m.)

Location: Willmar Public Library

Purpose: Region 6E Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan Workshop

Name	Representing
1. Donn Winkler	MnDOT Development Commission
2. Al Houdet	CCT
3. Nicole Beagle	MnDOT
4. Gary Ludwig	Trailblazer Transit
5. Gary Sprynczynatyk	McLeod County Human Services
6. Deb TerWisscha	KWDAC
7. Jettie Wallin	WCI
8. Heidi Olson	Ridgewater College
9. Lauren Nelson-Schneider	mnsc
10. Tiffany Collins	CCT
11. Deb. Boromat	UCAP
12. Corinne Torkelson	Kcty HHS
13. Cathy Baumgartner	CMJTS
14. Elaine Spain	MNRAAA
15. Lou Sisk	MMH
16. Kathleen Amick	UCAP
17. David Runkle	WCI
18. Matthew Johnson	MMPC
19.	



# MID-MINNESOTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

*Serving the People of Region Six East*

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June 7, 2017

From the Office of: Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
333 Sixth Street SW, Suite 2  
Willmar, MN 56201-5615  
(320) 235-8504

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## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, June 28, 2017, at 4:30 p.m. The hearing will take place at the Hutchinson Event Center in the AmericInn Room, located at 1005 Hwy 15 South, Plaza 15 in Hutchinson, Minnesota.

The purpose of the public hearing will be to solicit comments on the draft Region 6E 2017 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan. This plan can be viewed online at [www.mmrhc.org](http://www.mmrhc.org). Comments or questions can be directed to Matthew Johnson, MMDC Community Development Director, by email at [communityplanning@mmrhc.org](mailto:communityplanning@mmrhc.org) or calling (320) 235-8504 Extension 231. All comments received by June 28<sup>th</sup> will be incorporated into the public hearing.

Donn Winckler, Executive Director  
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
333 Sixth Street SW, Suite 2  
Willmar, MN 56201-5615  
(320) 235-8504