

CHAPTER IX

Implementation Plan

This chapter presents recommended steps for implementation of the proposed service plan. Key to implementation is the formation of the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) which will serve as the Implementation Task Force for the transit service.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

The implementation steps are outlined in this section. Specific steps, timing, and responsibilities are identified.

Form Implementation Task Force and Transit Advisory Committee

A Task Force should be established to implement the recommendations. This Task Force should become the Transit Advisory Committee as service is implemented. Representation on the Task Force should include the four counties, municipalities, and social service agencies. The Task Force will be responsible for obtaining some of the funding and coordinating the various implementation activities.

Timing

The Task Force should be formed immediately to begin the implementation activities.

Responsibility

Western Dairyland should take the lead in forming the Task Force and recruiting members. Western Dairyland should be responsible for setting meetings of the Task Force until the transit agency is established.

Establish Transit Agency

The new transit agency must be established by an intergovernmental agreement among the counties and municipalities which will participate in providing public transportation services. The Task Force will need to work with elected officials to draft and adopt the intergovernmental agreement.

Timing

The Task Force should begin establishing the intergovernmental agreement and the transit agency as soon as the Task Force is formed.

Responsibility

Responsibility for establishing the transit agency will be with the Task Force and the local governments.

Establish Transit Manager Position

Once the transit agency is formed, the Board of the new transit agency should establish a Transit Manager position. Currently there is no staff dedicated to public transportation or coordination of transit services.

The Transit Manager will assume the responsibilities for implementing this preferred plan and managing the day-to-day operations of the transit service. The Transit Manager should report directly to Transit Agency Board. A major benefit of the Transit Manager position is that responsibilities for implementation of this plan are given to one individual who is focused primarily on transit. An additional benefit is that sufficient staff will be available to operate the transit service.

The Transit Manager would be responsible for overseeing the transit services and performing transportation-related duties. A reasonable salary for this position would be in the range of \$50,000, including a benefit package.

The Transit Manager would be responsible for day-to-day operations of the transit service, provide assistance for coordination of services, prepare applications for grant funds, review transit funding recommendations made by other interested parties, analyze system performance and recommend changes in services, develop

promotional and marketing materials, coordinate purchasing, coordinate any marketing and promotional activities, provide any required reports, schedule and record minutes for the TAC, present reports to the transit agency Board, and the local governments, and respond to public comments and suggestions on service improvements.

Other major responsibilities of the Transit Manager include the following.

- Administer and manage the transit program, including the scheduling of passengers and drivers.
- Develop the service plan and implement the service recommendations.
- Monitor transit service and scheduling to ensure appropriate assignment of vehicles for each service.
- Evaluate service performance and recommend changes to meet transit goals.
- Complete designated state and/or federal statistical reports.
- Develop and monitor vehicle specifications or equipment requirements in conjunction with appropriate state agencies.
- Prepare grant applications for capital and operating assistance. Identify potential sources of new grants and prepare necessary documentation.
- Monitor budget expenditure and recommend appropriate actions to assure that budgets are followed.
- Monitor vehicle utilization through a uniform reporting process.
- Develop and monitor the preventative maintenance program.
- Supervise drivers and dispatchers.
- Attend training workshops as appropriate.
- Advertise for and interview qualified personnel for the system.
- Responsible for billing and collection of fees.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Director.

Timing

Hiring for the Transit Manager Position should begin immediately. The position should be funded in the next fiscal year (2004 or Year 1) budget. Hiring should take place when the position is funded.

Responsibility

Hiring of the Transit Manager will be the responsibility of the transit agency Board with assistance from members of the TAC.

Obtain Funding

Funding must be established for implementation of the new service. Some of the funding is currently used for other services. The coordination opportunities will

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identify potential funds which are currently used by other agencies, but could be used for a consolidated transit service.

Funding for purchase of vehicles should be sought through the FTA Section 5309, 5310, and 5311 programs. The local communities should be approached to provide funding based on the actual costs of service and the improved service which will be provided.

Sources of revenue which should be explored are the various social service agencies which currently provide their own transportation service, the Federal Transit Administration, the State of Wisconsin, local governments, and private foundations. Specific funding programs which should be considered are presented in Chapter VI.

The Task Force should prepare a final budget based on the Financial Plan and the actual funding which is obtained from the different sources.

Timing

The Task Force should begin development of funding immediately. Final budgets should be developed after the funding is obtained.

Responsibility

Funding will be a primary role for the Task Force. Members of the Task Force should be responsible for contacting various funding sources. Members of the Task Force should pursue funding from the local communities.

Finalize Service Plan

The operating plan for the service must be finalized prior to implementation. This will include identification of specific stops and any agreements for use of sites identified for stops. The service schedule will be finalized indicating the specific stops and scheduled times for the service. A key decision will be to determine whether the transit agency will operate the service or if a contract will be established with another operator.

Timing

The service plan should be finalized three months prior to the date established to begin service.

Responsibility

The Transit Manager will be responsible for developing the final service plan and schedules with input from the TAC. The Transit Agency Board must approve a contract for operation of the service.

Develop Marketing/Promotional Materials

Marketing and promotional materials will be needed to publicize the changes and the new type of service to be offered in the four counties.

Timing

Brochures, signs, and posters should be prepared one month prior to implementation. Signs and posters should be displayed one month before beginning the service with information about the start date. Speaking engagements should begin immediately to develop support for the service. Other marketing efforts should be an ongoing activity.

Responsibility

The Transit Manager should have primary responsibility for preparation of the materials with assistance from other members of the Task Force. Members of the Task Force should be responsible for displaying posters and signs throughout the service area.

Acquire Vehicles

The transit service in the four counties will require seven vehicles to begin operation. The financial plan presented in the previous chapter includes the capital cost to initially purchase the vehicles. Six vehicles are required for the service with one vehicle used as a backup.

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Vehicles should be equipped with wheelchair lifts, bicycle racks, and radios. The vehicles should accommodate 20 to 25 passengers with space for two wheelchairs. Other recommendations for equipment to be included on each vehicle are passenger tally boards and passenger comment boxes. It is also a good idea to provide space for route brochures and other information. Space for advertising, both interior and exterior, may be provided to obtain some additional revenue.

Vans to accommodate 15 passengers should be purchased for the vanpools. Although the capital plan in Chapter VIII shows two vehicles being purchased each year, these vehicles should be purchased based on actual demand and the formation of vanpools. The vans should have individual seats, enhanced air conditioning, tinted windows, and reading lights for passengers.

Timing

Efforts to purchase vehicles should begin immediately. Specifications should be developed for the vehicles. Funding requests must be submitted to obtain capital grants to purchase the vehicles. Vans for vanpools should be purchased based on demand when there are sufficient participants or employer financial support to support a vanpool.

Responsibility

Development of specifications and submission of grant applications will be the responsibility of the Transit Manager and the transit agency Board.