

Franklin-Grand Isle Mobility Advisory Committee

Annual Workplan for FY2024 (October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024)

Approved May 23, 2024

A. Background

Vermont's Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities (O&D) Transportation Program plays an important role filling gaps in existing transportation services for older adults age 60 and above as well as individuals with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Vermont's public transit providers serve as regional transportation brokers and work with human service agency partners to coordinate O&D trips together with Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) provided through Medicaid, contracted service with community organizations and institutions, and transportation for the general public.

The Franklin-Grand Isle Mobility Advisory Committee provides oversight and guidance for transportation programs to assist older adults and persons with disabilities in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties. Programs support community members through affordable transportation to medical appointments, local adult day centers, senior meal sites, and to access food at the grocery store. These services supplement regular transit services in the area, filling in gaps left by programs like Medicaid.

B. Partner Organizations

- Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC): ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT - promotes community development within the two-county region and its member municipalities by providing expertise, information and a forum to discuss and resolve community needs and concerns. Point of Contact: Kathy Lavoie, klavoie@nrpcvt.com, (802) 782-1924, www.nepcv.com
- Green Mountain Transit (GMT): FUNDED PARTNER - promotes and operates safe, convenient, accessible, innovative and sustainable public transportation services in the northwest and central Vermont region that reduce congestion and pollution, encourage transit-oriented development and enhance the quality of life for all. Point of Contact: Timothy Bradshaw, ridegmt.com.
- Champlain Islanders Developing Essential Resources (CIDER): FUNDED PARTNER - provides services and resources (including transportation) that enable Grand Isle County elders and persons with disabilities to live independently and with dignity in their own home and community. Point of Contact: Jordan Posner, jordan@cidervt.org or info@cidervt.org
- Age Well: FUNDED PARTNER – provides a coordinated system of services to individuals 60+ and their caregivers to enhance quality of life and improve health outcomes. Point of Contact: Erica Marks, www.agewellvt.org
- CarePartners Adult Day Center: FUNDED PARTNER - fosters the strengths and abilities of frail adults while preserving their dignity, independence and quality of life. Point of Contact: Sue Chase, www.carepartnersvt.org
- VT Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Public Transit Division: FUNDER – provides oversight

and fiscal agent for the Elders and Persons with Disabilities (O&D) Transportation Program. Contacts Dan Currier, Public Transit Program Coordinator, Dan.J.Currier@vermont.gov

- United Way of Northwest Vermont: UNFUNDED PARTNER – regional partner working with various entities and individuals in support of workforce human service needs. Contact Cari Kelley, Workplace Donor Relations Manager, cari@unitedwaynwvt.org.
- Vermont Department of Health: UNFUNDED PARTNER – regional/state partner working to protect and promote the health of Vermonters, the state’s lead agency for public health policy and advocacy. Contact Jacqueline Kelley, Emergency Preparedness Specialist, Jacqueline.kelley@vermont.gov.
- HireAbility Vermont: UNFUNDED PARTNER – regional state partner, HireAbility Vermont is an energized network of employment and job skills specialists, and counselors who are dedicated to breaking down the barriers that have traditionally kept good jobs out of reach of Vermonters with disabilities. Contact Katie Coe, Business Account Manager, Katie.coe@vermont.gov

C. Program Funding: Program eligibility and criteria differs by partner and can be found in Welcome Guide.

Allocation of Funding:

Allocations are currently assessed based on the level of demand by a partner. The Committee will ensure there is transparency of funding allocations between partners, as well as a collaborative nature to the committee. If a partner’s needs require increased allocation, this request will be discussed at a meeting where all partners are at the table for decision making. The committee will continue to find ways to streamline the process.

Contracts, MOUs and Agreements:

GMT has a standard platform for partner agreements. After discussion between partners and GMT, GMT will draft an agreement with updated needs and will send it to partners for review and execution annually.

D. Roles and Responsibilities: Descriptions of roles and responsibilities of each partner organization

Partners’ Roles & Responsibilities: Partners will

- Participate and engage with the Committee.
- Increase community outreach and marketing efforts to better educate the public on the O&D program.
- Invite community members to O&D committee meetings to better understand the transportation needs within the community.
- Prioritize Rides Accordingly:

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- Critical Care (kidney dialysis and cancer treatment), and non-Medicaid medical
- Adult Day Program
- Senior Meals Program
- Grocery Shopping & other food-access (food shelves, etc.)
- Social/Personal
- Vocational
 - Currently unfunded
 - Requires prior approval of the supporting partner
- Assist transit providers with preparation of grant applications for submission to the Agency of Transportation.
- Assist in the development of the Regional O&D Committee Workplan, goals and objectives.

Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Roles & Responsibilities: NRPC will

- Organize and facilitate regular Committee meetings at least 4 times a year.
- RPCs shall be the leading agency for these meetings. RPCs are responsible for ensuring meetings comply with Vermont Open Meeting law and engage the full spectrum of providers of services and representatives of those needing rides.
- Include your TPI Planning Coordinator and Public Transit Coordinator on Committee correspondence.
- Update the Regional Committee annual work plan, goals and objectives.
- Continue to expand scope of Regional O&D Committee to include Medicaid, Recovery & Job Access, and other client-based transportation services, with the goal of fully transitioning the committee into a Regional Mobility Committee.
- Coordinate with VTrans and Public Transit Provider(s) to expand tracking of denials and unmet needs; Assist Committees with evaluating the data and potential.
- Help VTrans with centralized tracking of defined O&D basic information.
- Attend the annual O&D Summit (rotates between virtual and in-person).
- Assist VTrans with organizing the annual O&D Summit, particularly assisting with outreach and being a liaison to the O&D Committees.
- Assist with development and distribution of O&D Program Rider Survey; one RPC will be invited to serve on this task specific working group.
- Participate in discussion of how to incorporate equity principles and practices into the O&D program and regional committees' practices

Public Transit Provider(s) Roles & Responsibilities: GMT will

- Perform transportation service delivery, including coordination with other transportation programs, such as Medicaid. GMT will continue to coordinate daily with partners and clients to be most efficient and cost effective. If a significant issue arises, the Provider will bring it to the Committee to discuss and identify a consensus on modifications to policies or procedures.
- Assist RPCs with ensuring compliance with the Vermont Open Meeting Law.
- Assist VTrans with centralized tracking of O&D basic information and data, including, but not limited to:
 - Number of riders delineated by O&D Partners;

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- Number of trips based on trip purpose and trip mode;
- Number of denied rides and reason and/or trip purpose constraints;
- Cost per trip, mile, and hour by trip purpose and trip mode;
- Rider complaints with subset of driving or customer service related;
- Number of regionally coordinated trips with other Vermont transit providers; and
- Number of trips provided with multiple funding sources i.e., Medicaid and O&D.
- Provide periodic reporting to partners on ridership, budget status, and other topics.
- Propose the allocation of funds among partner organizations for review and approval by Committee.
- Develop contracts, MOUs, or other agreements with partner organizations.
- Increase volunteer recruitment efforts to reduce trip costs.
- Maximize regional trip coordination through Paratransit Dispatch software technology and statewide shared scheduling databases.
- Maximize vehicle ridership capacity through more efficient Mobility Management tools.

VT Agency of Transportation Roles & Responsibilities: VTrans will

- Provide guidance documentation and templates related to required tasks and objectives (work plan, ridership survey, etc.).
- Provide information and guidance on the basic information required to be tracked.
- Attend Committee meetings and assist with tasks as needed.
- Organize annual statewide summit.

E. Committee Function

Committee leadership – NRPC shall organize and facilitate the committee. RPCs are responsible for ensuring these meetings take place and engage the full spectrum of providers of services and representatives of those needing rides.

Meeting logistics – The Committee meets quarterly and more frequently as needed. Approximate meeting months are February, May, August, and December. Virtual meetings will be held via the Zoom platform and will be organized by NRPC. The Committee agendas and minutes will be posted on NRPC O&D Committee page. <https://www.nrpcvt.com/services-programs/transportation-planning/franklin-grand-isle-elders-persons-with-disabilities-transportation-program/>

Meeting participation – All meetings are open to the public. O&D meetings are to be held in accordance with Vermont Open Meeting Law effective January 1, 2021.

Reporting requirements – At each meeting, GMT will report on service usage since the previous meeting and status for the fiscal year to monitor program expenditures. The report will include statewide data for comparison and be used to support future evaluation in programming and planning at the public transit partners' level, as well as regional and state level. *See Section H. Annual Reporting.*

F. Annual Agenda: Description of and anticipated schedule for ongoing activities that the Committee will pursue during the coming year.

Ongoing Activities

- a. Adjust allocations among partners throughout the year as needed at Committee meetings for partner consensus.
- b. Oversee adjustments to priorities among eligible trip types (critical care medical, non-emergency medical, adult day health, congregate meals, shopping, social/personal/wellness, other) and adjustments to trip limits, if applicable, at a committee meeting for partner consensus.
- c. Description of and schedule for reporting to partner organizations
- d. Description of plan for communicating with partner organizations
- e. Annual performance monitoring (additional details below)
- f. Engaging Community on discussions that advance mobility of clients through networking with regional partners.

Quarter 1 (Jan – March)

- a. Budget Review

Quarter 2 (April-June)

- a. Assistance GMT with the preparation of the grant application to VTrans June submission. The grant fiscal year starts July 1 and ends June 30.

Quarter 3 (July – September)

- a. Allocation of funds to partner organizations

Quarter 4 (October – December)

- a. Mid-Year Analysis & Potential Amendment to Budget

G. Annual Performance: Description of goals and objectives and other activities that the Committee will pursue during the year to address local E&D transportation issues and needs.

Required:

- NRPCs will organize and facilitate a minimum of four (4) Committee meetings in each Fiscal Year.
- NRPC and GMT will participate in Vermont Annual O&D Summit (all partner participation is encouraged).
- NRPC, in coordination with partners, will develop/amend the Workplan as needed to reflect specific activities, goals and partners.
- NRPC, with assistance from GMT, will ensure Committee meetings comply with Vermont Open Meeting Law. Committee materials will be posted on NRPC's website and GMT will provide a link to the page.
- Partners will work with AOT & NRPC to facilitate the follow-up to the O&D Customer Satisfaction Survey to respondents who opted-in/volunteered to provide additional information on their

experience.

- Partners will identify stakeholder (riders, local advocacy groups, health care providers, workforce organizations, etc.) to engage with the Committee and coordinate outreach to expand participation in the regional program.
- Partners will assess, as able, the unmet need among O&D target populations in the region following methodology developed by VTrans and O&D committees.

H. Annual Reporting

Description of measures that the committee will use, in addition to currently required statistics that are identified in annual grant agreements between transit providers and VTrans to track progress toward accomplishment of committee's agenda items and achievement of its stated goals and objectives for the year. The Committee will work with NRPC to report measures to VTrans, following procedures and schedules defined by VTrans.

Measures for Tracking Progress:

- a. Number of trips of unduplicated riders (required),
- b. Number of unduplicated riders traveling to Critical Care appointments, including dialysis and chemo treatments (required),
- c. Number of one-way trips by service category and mode (required),
- d. Unit costs (required),
- e. Record trips denied and reason(s) for denial.

To track progress throughout the year, GMT in coordination with NRPC will provide the following information at quarterly meetings.

- Reports on the number of trips and measures for tracking progress above for each partner.
- Regional assessment of rides with a tracking spreadsheet that collects (by town, trip purpose, etc.).