



Transportation Collaboration

(Works to identify the transportation challenges members of the community face daily and to develop the partnerships to help address the needs)

Wednesday, April 19, 2017, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
United Way of Story County, 315 Clark Avenue
AGENDA

- I. Review January 11 Meeting Notes (pages 2-3)
- II. Update from HIRTA of Demand Response Service Action Plan Progress Report (pages 4-10)
- III. HIRTA Strategic Plan
- IV. Updates from Transportation Collaboration Members
- V. 2017 Meeting Dates (2nd Wednesday of the month from 1:00-2:30 pm): July 12, October 11

United Way of Story County Vision: To improve the quality of life in our community for individuals and families.

United Way of Story County is a strategic leader in building countywide partnerships to identify needs and to develop, support, and evaluate effective human services, especially in the areas of education, income, and health, for our diverse community.



Transportation Collaboration Minutes Wednesday, January 11, 2017

Attending: Tanya Ferguson, Central Iowa Center for Independent Living; Kathy Johnson, Central Iowa Community Services; Shari Atwood, CyRide and Ames Area MPO; Teal Wilson, Central Iowa RSVP; Sarah Constable and Brooke Ramsey, HIRTA; Shannon Bardole and Jean Kresse, United Way of Story County

Review October 12 Meeting Notes

Update from HIRTA of Demand Response Service Action Plan Progress Report

- #5: HIRTA will be purchasing two additional vehicles in 2017. The Dial-A-Ride bus is being replaced, but didn't come with the camera system it was ordered with. Service is delayed until probably early February when it can be installed.
- #13: In order to change phone provider, a system upgrade was necessary. Working to procure software to integrate with the radio and phone with quality assurance. It will record calls, radio traffic, and the dispatcher's monitor screenshot. There will not be a simple way to pull information on Dial-A-Ride clients.
- #16: There will be a "train the trainer" course in May. Refresher training for all drivers will be held in February.
- Additional comments: Ridership to Heartland Senior Services is way down, specifically to the Adult Day Center. No feedback has been received from HSS recently. Contact has been made to Mary Greeley Medical Center about relabeling their doors for more clear pick-up and drop-off of patients.

HIRTA Strategic Plan

- The Board wanted to make changes after draft was developed. Since then, new members have joined the Board and will want to review before approving. The new Board member from Story County is Supervisor Lauris Olson.

Transportation to Des Moines/Medical Appointments – Jean Kresse

- Deb, Jean, Shannon, Brian, Kalen, and Teal met to discuss RSVP Volunteer Transportation Program, which has been receiving more calls for medical trips to Des Moines. Although there are a few drivers willing to make the trip, it is very time consuming for a driver. Is it time to rethink a Des Moines route? HIRTA says no denial entries are in the system for rides to Des Moines. When there was transit to Des Moines, there was one rider on the bus, which was sometimes a no-show. Iowa City trip still happens monthly. RSVP clients feel most comfortable with that service that is a direct route from their home to their medical appointment and back. These are RSVP riders, not HIRTA riders. RSVP could survey their clients who utilize trips to Des Moines to ask what they would do if RSVP couldn't take them – listing HIRTA as an option. Executive Express travels to airport multiple times a day – could DART transport a client from airport to another location? Sarah is not encountering riders who need regular trips to Des Moines. HIRTA is no longer receiving calls from Primary Health Care in Ames. Medicaid is planning to implement integrated community changes, meaning group home residents would need to use same transportation as everyone else, and the group home would no longer be reimbursed for providing rides.

Transportation Brochure Update

- lowarideshare.org was added to the DART section of the brochure as of October. The brochure is always kept updated online at cyride.com/sct.

Updates from Transportation Collaboration Members

- Wheels for Work: The 15th car was given to a family at the end of 2016. The first car was given away in February 2015. The committee is scheduling a meeting soon to discuss program guidelines and to document some of practices that have recently come up, including that a family is not eligible to apply for a second vehicle.
- CyRide: Halfway through their system redesign process. Options will be presented to the transit board on January 19. A series of meetings in the community to share possible designs will occur between February 28 and March 2. Feedback is welcomed. Ridership numbers were handed out.

2017 Meeting Dates (2nd Wednesday of the month from 1:00-2:30 pm): April 19, July 12, October 11

- Shannon will be out of town April 12. The group decided to move the meeting date to April 19.

Demand Response Service Action Plan for Story County

Progress Report

April 17, 2017

Goal: Improve transportation efficiency and effectiveness of demand response public transit service through enhanced communication and relationships across partners as well as improved transportation infrastructure.

Action	Category	Solutions	Action	
Community Partnerships				
1	I	Explore more effective short term and long term solutions for the use of resources with partners (i.e. ISU, taxi's, assisted living facility and agency/organization vehicles)	Schedule a meeting with human service agencies/organizations and transportation providers to discuss current gaps and capacity in transportation services	We now have a Train-the-Trainer Travel training program which can be scheduled through Sarah Constable our Mobility Coordinator. She held one in Ames in December, but it was decided to wait until the weather warmed up to hold another one. Sarah is ready to start up Travel training again since the weather is nice. You may reach out to her at mobility@ridehirta.com or 515-777-4796.
			Complete a trial period for group's recommendations	HIRTA will continue to have a representative attend the Human Service, Transportation Collaboration and Senior Collaboration meetings.
2	A	Mutually agree that transportation is a partnership and everyone will work collaboratively together to resolve issues	At close of task force meetings, all members will agree to move forward in a positive manner	Ongoing / DONE
3	A	All partners hold each other to the same expectations for a mutually beneficial relationship	Set a meeting to establish joint expectations that will allow for timely service and/or implement communication plan, if appropriate	Quarterly meetings have been established, and minutes can be found at http://www.cityofames.org/government/aampo/plans-programs/passenger-transportation-plan/transportation-collaboration

Action	Category	Solutions	Action
4	A	Involve all partners upfront in program development	<p>Establish a formal communications process to discuss human service agency/organization policy/program changes at the planning stage, that will impact transportation needs of passengers</p> <p>This was presented at the ETC meeting 4/13/16. DONE</p>
Infrastructure Improvements			
5	I	Improve physical condition of buses	<p>Communicate HIRTA's plan to update buses to partners</p> <p>We have purchased 2 new buses, with Federal funding and those are placed in Story County now. Story County Board of Supervisors approved funding the 20% match required. HIRTA will be purchasing 2 new buses in 2017. Buses have been ordered and are expected to be in service within the next 6 months.</p>
			<p>Develop grass root support for an adequately-funded bus replacement program</p> <p>CyRide will be purchasing a new bus to replace the one we currently have for use through our Paratransit contract with them. The bus has been delivered but is waiting on security cameras before going into service. Expect to see it in use by 2.1.17. New bus has been in service.</p>
			<p>Determine if newer, used buses are available for purchase to reduce their fleet age</p> <p>We are looking at leasing options and will be developing a 5 year vehicle replace plan within the next 12 months. The State of Iowa submitted a Federal grant for bus replacements throughout the state. If the entire grant is received, HIRTA has the potential of receiving 32 replacement vehicles. HIRTA received 4 vehicles from this grant. None of them are for Story County. Lease option not feasible.</p>
			<p>If feasible, develop a used bus purchasing program for vehicles outside of Iowa to systematically improve fleet conditions</p> <p>Goal for HIRTA for FY17. Look at purchasing used vehicles from other states and alternative funding. HIRTA is still researching other funding methods. HIRTA will receive funding through CIRTPA for capital improvements beginning FY18.</p>

Action	Category	Solutions	Action	
6	I	Incorporate enhanced technology in buses/vans for safety and passenger satisfaction	Research need for and cost of equipping all Story County buses with communication and safety technology	HIRTA now has tablets in all Story County vehicles. We have received some grant funding to get buses equipped with Security Cameras, and are continuing to apply for additional grant funding to get all HIRTA buses equipped. Notification module is up and running which calls people the day before to remind them of their scheduled trip. DONE
7	I	Employ and retain staff/drivers	Identify creative approaches to fully staff (employ and retain) its driver positions	We are stable with drivers as of now, but continue to advertise, so we can hire more people for expansion services. HIRTA is currently staffed to maintain services. If you have additional needs please share them with Brooke or Sarah. DONE
8	I	Explore the possibility of having a wheelchair on every bus	Complete an analysis of if/how wheelchairs can be purchased and secured on each vehicle	This possibility was explored and is not feasible. DONE (as of 10/12/16)
Internal Modifications for HIRTA				
9	A or I	Implement a process improvement program and make changes as appropriate	Identify the systems to be reviewed	DRS final report was presented and accepted by the HIRTA Board.
			Report to HIRTA board at completion of changes, with copies to funding agencies	We would need to identify improvements. Ridership survey started being distributed 10/4/16. Has question about improvements and additional services wanted.
10	A	Set and monitor performance standards	Develop a report and standards for system performance, such as average length of telephone calls, average hold time, email response time and establish a formal, written complaint system	Formal written complaint process has been established and will be presented at the ETC meeting 1/13/16. DONE HIRTA does monitor length of calls, hold times, etc. As of 3/31/16 the average length of a trip scheduling phone call is 5m 5s and the majority are scheduling 2 or more trips. The average hold time is 1m 44s. Ending 6/30/16, the average call was 4m 16s. Average hold time 47s before servicing. Longest hold time for month was 7m 13s.

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11	A	Provide a person to address passenger's failed trip needs	Better utilize the Mobility Coordinator	Sarah attends various Human Service and transit meetings. She has established a Travel Training program and is responsible for all 7 HIRTA counties, so she is out and about traveling in the various counties approximately 90% of the time. Amber Falls is the person people should contact regarding failed trips needs. DONE
12	I	Dedicate a telephone line for the agencies/organizations to contact that would have direct access to a staff person for immediate concerns	Modify the telephone system to accommodate additional line and develop internal structure to answer in a timely manner	Internal structure is for Human Service agencies to contact Amber Falls, and individuals to contact one of our customer service reps through our 1-877-686-0029 line. DONE
13	I	Improved efficiencies in telephone and email system for passengers	Examine current systems for improvement opportunities	Ongoing – We continue to research enhancements. HIRTA is upgrading the phone system and will have more details on any new features at the next meeting. HIRTA is also working to secure software to integrate with the radio and phone for quality assurance. It will record calls, radio traffic, and the dispatcher's monitor screenshot. Finalizing the procurement for this software. Update at next meeting.
				Recently added the option to leave a voicemail or select option to remain on hold. The option to leave a message is working very well. We have a total of 4 full-time schedulers plus 1 supervisor.
14	I	Increase use of personal care attendants/ride-a-longs with passengers	Identify a support system of personal care attendants/ride-a-longs that can ride with passengers who are unable to be responsible for their safety & comfort during their transit trip; identify cost for program i.e. explore who could be volunteers	No update

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15	A	Provide training on passenger context/needs for HIRTA staff and drivers	<p>Review current HIRTA staff training and develop systems to “fill in the gaps” so that HIRTA staff provide polite and passenger-focused transportation</p> <p>We continue to provide training to our staff and are always looking for new training opportunities. We are implementing some new internal training and currently feel we have a solid team of Customer Service reps.</p> <p>Food for Thought: Since Customer Service is a key element in coordination, service and understanding, maybe there is a way to have training for participants from this group, and/or their trainers/staff, so all agencies participate in Customer Service training. DONE (as of 10/12/16)</p>
16	A	Set and monitor passenger standards	<p>Develop a system to classify appropriate response to passenger behaviors</p> <p>In 2015 HIRTA had a train-the-trainer program on de-escalation specific to persons with disabilities. We will continue to provide these types of opportunities to our drivers. HIRTA is researching options now to hold a similar training this year. HIRTA is holding train the trainer course in May 2017 which covers advanced passenger assistance.</p>
17	A	Establish method(s) to provide drivers/staff with additional information regarding passenger needs so that their trip is enjoyable and safety is enhanced	<p>Review current software program to determine if additional information could be accommodated within role/context of HIRTA/personal care attendant</p> <p>Our current sophisticated RouteMatch scheduling software can add a lot of various types of information. We currently include information that will allow us to appropriately book the trip, as well as inform the driver of any special needs.</p>

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18	I	Localized reservation system	Determine whether reservations for Story County could move from Urbandale to Ames	We had one of our Ops Supervisors work on developing all Story County trips to run in the most efficient manner. Service has been running more smoothly. The biggest issue in Story County currently is No-Shows. Jan=206 Feb=221 Starting in March, we began sending warning letters that service may be suspended, which we expect to have a stronger impact than just the phone calls we were making. The process is 1st we call, if no improvement, we send a warning letter. If still no improvement, we will send a suspension letter and temporarily suspend passenger from service. No-shows in Story County 7/15=8.91% 9/16 No-shows=5.5%
Partner Role Clarity				
19	I	Develop a Passenger and Caregiver User's Guide for use to establish expectations, educate passengers and passenger families on transportation services	Develop a written document that identifies policies, expectations, rider tips, contact information, etc.	Welcome packets are now being sent to all new riders, which include a copy of a Welcome Letter, Rider Guide, brochure, and magnet. The Welcome packet seem to be a success. HIRTA mailed out 169 packets in Story County March 2 - Sept 30, 2016. 139 Ames / 69 rural communities. This practice will continue. DONE (as of 10/12/16)
20	A	Share information on federal law interpretation related to transportation/passenger relationship (i.e. funding requiring community inclusion of passengers)	Annually, the Transportation Collaboration Committee will hold a meeting on transportation program changes with agencies/organizations	Ongoing – No Update
21	A	Discuss and solve issues at the grass roots level with the people directly involved in the issues	Mutually agree to respect the chain of command in respective agencies/organizations and resolve issues at the lowest level	Ongoing – No Update

Action	Category	Solutions	Action	
22	A	Discuss and solve issues at the management level with managers that are directly involved in the actions	Annually meet to resolve issues	Ongoing – No Update Working with other agencies has greatly improved from when this process started. There seems to be a better understanding of transit and how we can work together to resolve issues before they become major.
Service Improvement				
23	I	Dedicate one bus each day (unscheduled) to address unforeseen operational issues to ensure smooth operation of service	Hire adequate driving staff and secure a vehicle to implement service	Started 2/15/16. It is current not used as much as we anticipated, however, we have used it when a driver became ill in the middle of his shift, and for some hospital releases, as well as, to go out and examine problem pickup/drop-off areas. DONE

A - Can be accommodated within current charge/budget

I - Improvements that are above current charge/budget