

Region 1 2016 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan

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Date: June 6, 2017

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Executive Summary

The focus of 2016 Local Human Service-Public Transit Coordination Plan (Plan) is human service transportation coordination, with a special emphasis on transit dependent populations in Northwest Minnesota. Transit dependent populations include people with low-incomes, persons 65 and older, and people with disabilities. The largest concentrations of these populations are located in the county seats within each of our seven-county region. These communities have services such as shopping, medical, social services, housing, access to retail, and local human service offices. The Limited English Proficiently (LEP) populations are noted to be more reliant on transit service due to limited numbers obtaining driver's license due to language barriers. The 2017 Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan, non-English language was identified as a barrier to using public transit.

The transit workshop identified the transit dependent populations and will work to coordinate services to better serve the needs of these people. For instance, if language was identified as a barrier to service a simple solution was to invite a translator to ride along at no cost. This plan identifies several more objectives that help to coordinate not only the transit ride service but the efforts that take place from the initial phone call, to service of vehicles, cooperation with other governmental agencies and providers. The coordination of a ride starts with the great work of the employees that are scheduling that ride. The transit staff are a critical component to the great service the public receives in Region 1.

The Region 1 transit system is supported by Tri-Valley Heartland Express, Paul Bunyan Transit, and Fosston City Transit. Tri-Valley Heartland Express serves; Polk, Marshall, Pennington, Red lake, Norman, and Kittson County. Tri-Valley also serves the transit needs outside the NWRDC Region with service to the City of Bagley in Clearwater County, and Mahnomen County. Paul Bunyan Transit serves Roseau County and shares 3 buses between Roseau and Warroad. The City of Fosston operates a small urban service area with a radius of 1-mile from the city.

Tri-Valley Heartland Express is a rural public transit system, which operates thirty-one mid-size buses and provides transit service to a large portion of Northwestern Minnesota. The Tri-Valley system has grown 9 buses since the last regional transit plan completed in 2011-2012.

Tri-Valley is open to general public and provides both city and countywide service. This system has special start and end times as appropriate to drop off and pick up from places of employment, the general operating times are weekly from 7:30AM to 5:00 P.M. The Tri-Valley transit system provides transportation service to Fargo/Moorhead, Grand Forks, Bemidji, and a variety of smaller communities providing the most and best service as fiscally constrained. The Tri-Valley main office is located in Crookston and has two satellite offices in Thief River Falls and Ada.

Introduction

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

This document is an update of the 2011 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan and will assist stakeholders, such as Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils, as they determine ways to coordinate human service transportation and transit services in Region 1. The 2016 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan documents technical analysis that evaluates existing transportation services in Region 1 and assesses needs and gaps of transportation service provision among public transit agencies, social service agencies, and other providers. The plan also records public participation efforts and stakeholders' preferred strategies and projects to improve transportation coordination in Region 1.

A Local Human Services Transit Coordination plan is a federal requirement under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). Federal regulations state that projects eligible for funding under the Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310) program 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 in articulating specific projects that could advance transportation services in Region 1. Through public participation activities, stakeholders brainstormed project ideas and refined these ideas in a collaborative setting. The final project list reflects input from a broad range of regional stakeholders and provides a 5-year blueprint for future coordination efforts in Region 1.

The transit providers in Region 1 have historically worked well together to best serve the public with the available funding and system capacity. The providers have always tried to develop ways to best serve the public and get rides to those in need. Mn/DOT has helped to facilitate this process by amending rules and regulations that often make the delivery of rides cost prohibitive. New funding has enabled the transit providers to purchase more vehicles and to also provide longer hours of service during the weekday. Weekend service is a continued need region-wide, however there is now weekend service in both Crookston and Thief River Falls.

Another program Mn/DOT has funded in the past is the mobility manager position. This travel trainer has been a vital piece to educating the public on how to properly ride the bus and has instructed many residents about the process and procedures to safely ride and communicate with the transit provider dispatch. The providers hope this position continues to operate and provide valued benefit to the people of the state.

Existing Conditions

Region 1 Overview

Region 1 is located in the northwest corner of Minnesota and consists of Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau Counties. The political geography of Region 1 consists of seven counties, 54 incorporated cities, 228 townships and 6 unorganized territories. The Region has three regional trade centers, Thief River Falls, Crookston, and East Grand Forks. An MPO also represents East Grand Forks.

The Region features a climate with wide seasonal variations and a diversified economy based in agriculture and manufacturing. This combination of factors has encouraged independent progressive thinking, leading to the successful development of large manufacturing companies such as Polaris, Marvin Windows, Arctic Cat, and Digi-Key. The Region 1 counties continue to develop new business manufacturing opportunities that provide jobs to residents. Yet several of the counties continue to decline in population.

The independent way of life and the long travel distances between regional centers makes the use of public transportation difficult for area residents to comprehend and accept as a mode of travel. There is also a significant population that live on county gravel roads with very limited service.

The Region 1 transit system is supported by Tri-Valley Opportunity Council serving; Polk, Marshall, Pennington, Red lake, Norman, and Kittson County. Tri-Valley also serves the City of Bagley in Clearwater County. The City of Fosston operates a small urban service area with a radius of 1-mile from the city. Paul Bunyan Transit serves Roseau County and has a transit hub in Baudette.

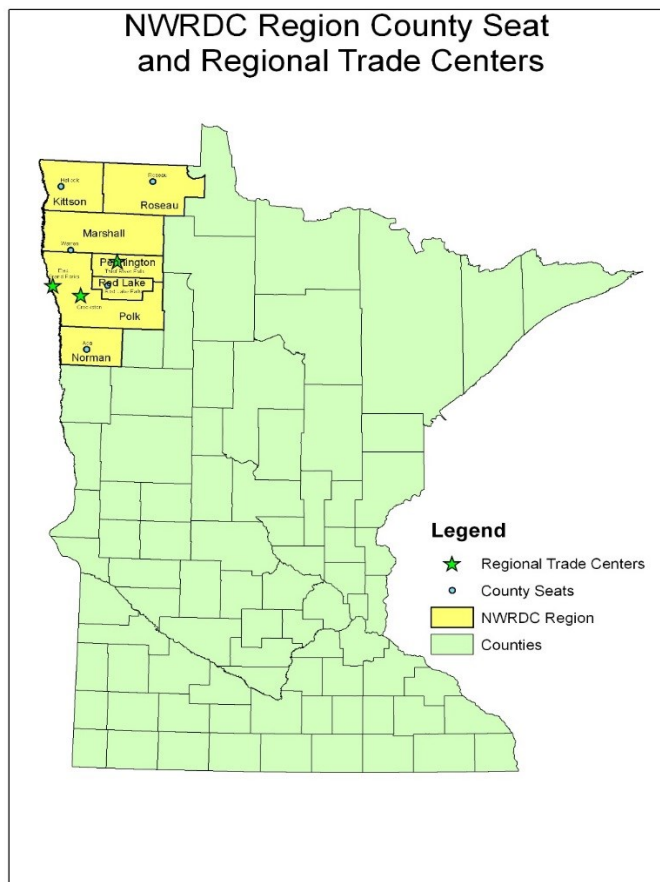
Paul Bunyan Transit provides public transportation for Beltrami County and the city of Bemidji. Roseau County the cities of Roseau and Warroad. Lake of the Woods County and Baudette. In the Roseau and Warroad communities the service area is a 4 mile radius of the center of each town.

Tri-Valley Heartland Express is a rural public transit system, which operates thirty-one mid-size buses and provides transit service to a large portion of Northwestern Minnesota. The system is open to general public and provides both city and countywide service. This system has special start and end times as appropriate to drop off and pick up from places of employment, the general operating times are weekly from 7:30AM to 5:00 P.M. The Tri-Valley transit system provides transportation service to Fargo/Moorhead, Grand Forks, Bemidji, and a variety of smaller communities to meet the needs the public has for the use of transit services. The Tri-Valley main office is located in Crookston and has two satellite offices in Thief River Falls and Ada.

The transit systems have comfortable seating capacity with large buses capable of carrying forty-four passengers. The buses are equipped with dependable wheel chair lifts and tie downs to provide safe and efficient transportation for the transit users.

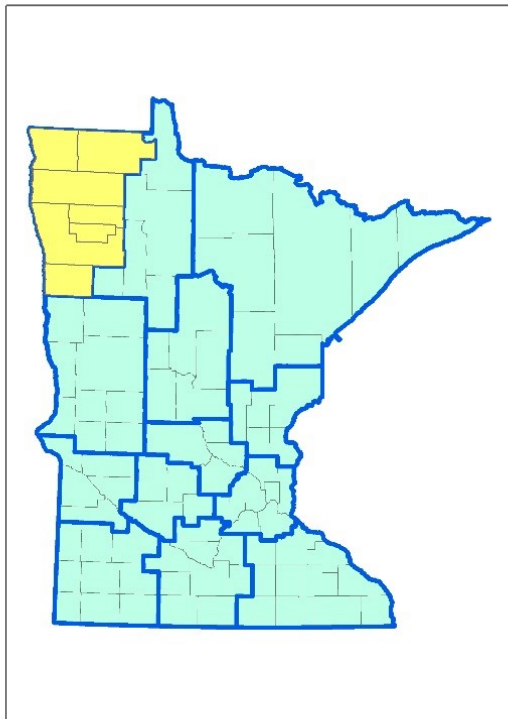
The Fosston Community Transit Service is a rural public system, which operate one small bus within the City of Fosston. The transit system provides dial-a-ride service on weekdays from 7:30A.M. to 5:30P.M. The system is owned and operated by the City of Fosston, with the City Clerk responsible for the day-to-day management of the system.

Region 1 has three regional trade centers as defined by the University of Minnesota Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. Grand Forks/East Grand Forks is listed as a primary trade center, with Crookston and Thief River Falls listed as shopping trade centers. Other major communities include the City of Roseau and Warroad; these communities employ thousands of people and have major manufacturing industries in the state with Marvin Windows and Polaris Industries. The map below shows the Region along with the trade centers.



The large manufacturing businesses within Region 1 draws employees from long distances that often originate in rural areas thus creating a need for park and ride facilities, this need is often met with the use of parking lots at large stores.

The NWRDC 7 counties is approximately 9% of the size of Minnesota. The large area is very rural with many residents living on county gravel roads or township roads where it's simply not economical for transit services to travel to these remote housing sites. The distance needed to drive for pick-up of relatively few people is the largest geographic barrier to service within Region 1. The map below depicts Region 1 in relation to the state of Minnesota.



Demographics

To better understand the relationship between regional demographics, transportation options, and key destinations, a series of maps was created depicting these elements in this region. These are included in Appendix A.

Demographic population change, 2000-2015 Economic Development Region 1 is a mostly rural, 7-county region located in the Northwest Minnesota planning area. According to population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Region 1 was home to 86,102 people in 2015, accounting for 1.6 percent of the state's total population. That made it the 3rd smallest (of 13)

regions in the state. It was also one of only three regions in the state to decrease in population, losing 2,370 residents from 2000 to 2015, a 2.7 percent decrease, as compared to an 11.6 percent increase statewide. As part of the Grand Forks Metropolitan Statistical Area, Polk County is the most populous in the region with 31,533 people, and is the 34th largest county (of 87) in the state. Polk County was one of two counties in the region that gained population since 2000, adding 164 residents over the past decade and a half. Having welcomed 635 new residents and grown 4.7 percent since 2000, Pennington was the fastest growing and 3rd largest county in the region, but still grew much slower than the state overall. The other five counties in the region all lost population over the past decade and a half, with Kittson and Norman seeing the biggest and fastest declines. Roseau, Marshall, and Red Lake also saw notable declines. The recent population losses are part of a longer-term trend in the region, where the population has declined by nearly 23,000 people over the past 65 years. The region suffered the most severe loss from 1950 to 1970, then again from 1980 to 1990. Since then, the region's population has been more stable, declining around 2,000 people each of the past two decades. In sum, Region 1 saw its population shrink by 21 percent from 1950 to 2015, again making it one of only three regions in the state to suffer a population decline. Five of the seven counties in the region suffered population declines from 1950 through 2015, including more than 40 percent declines in Kittson, Marshall, Norman, and Red Lake counties. All four of those counties were among the 11 fastest declining counties in the state, with Kittson ranking 2nd and Norman ranking as the 4th fastest declining. After losing just over 6,700 residents, Marshall County saw the biggest decline in the region. Polk County also lost about 4,700 residents, but that was just a 12.2 percent decline. In contrast, both Pennington and Roseau County added about 1,250 net new residents from 1950 to 2015, both averaging just under 10 percent growth over the last half of the last century.

County Region

Demographics

How has population changed?

This page describes the total population and change in total population.

Note: with the exception of some 2000 Decennial Census data used on pages 1-3, all other data used in this report are from the American Community Survey (ACS) of the Census Bureau. Red, orange, and black text indicate different data quality thresholds – please read the Methods section in the Study Guide text.

Population, 2000-2015*

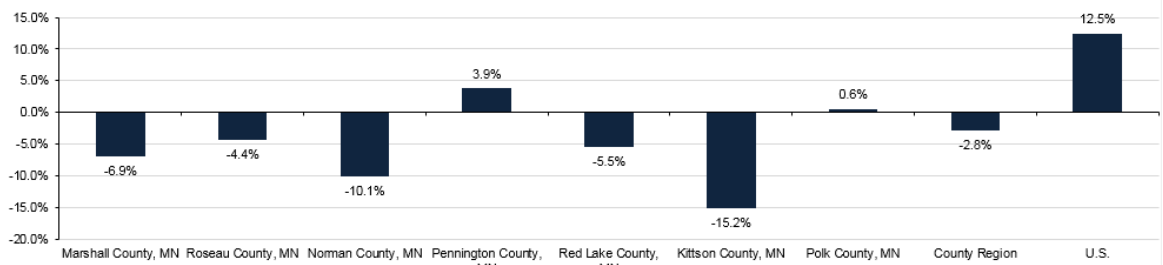
	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
Population (2015*)	9,453	15,615	6,692	14,110	4,061	4,480	31,547	85,958	316,515,021
Population (2000)	10,155	16,338	7,442	13,584	4,299	5,285	31,369	88,472	281,421,906
Population Change (2000-2015*)	-702	-723	-750	526	-238	-805	178	-2,514	35,093,115
Population Percent Change (2000-2015*)	-6.9%	-4.4%	-10.1%	3.9%	-5.5%	-15.2%	0.6%	-2.8%	12.5%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2011-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Percent Change in Population, 2000-2015*

• From 2000 to the 2009-2015 period, County Region had the smallest estimated absolute change in population (-2,514).

• From 2000 to the 2009-2015 period, U.S. had the largest estimated relative change in population (12.5%), and Kittson County, MN had the smallest (-15.2%).



Describe the region's demographics. Rely heavily on tech memo details from the demographic profile of the Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan (GMTIP) provided by Mn/DOT. Incorporate references to maps and insert these into Appendix A.

The population in Region 1 is less diverse than the state overall, but has had some significant changes over time. In 2014, just over 94 percent of the region's residents reported White alone as their race, compared to 85.2 percent of residents statewide. The region saw a decline in White residents from 2000 to 2014. The region had a smaller percentage of Black or African American residents, Asian or Other Pacific Islanders, and people of Two or More Races, and those of Hispanic or Latino origin than the state. However, those populations increased significantly in Region 1 since 2000. At 1 percent, Region 1 had an equal concentration of American Indian and Alaskan Natives in its population to the state, due to the nearby Ojibwa tribes on the Red Lake and White Earth reservations. However, the region saw a small decline in the number of American Indians from 2000 to 2014, while the state saw a small increase. The following graph shows the population by race in 2015.

Population by Race, 2015*

	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
Total Population	9,453	15,815	6,692	14,110	4,061	4,480	31,547	85,958	316,515,021
White alone	9,223	14,618	6,238	13,229	3,857	4,395	29,292	80,852	232,943,055
Black or African American alone	25	107	34	234	27	27	365	819	39,908,095
American Indian alone	34	208	143	200	65	7	320	977	2,569,170
Asian alone	18	417	27	118	11	9	263	863	16,235,305
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Is. alone	3	2	12	53	0	0	17	87	546,255
Some other race alone	31	37	63	41	37	4	484	697	14,865,258
Two or more races	119	226	175	235	64	38	806	1,663	9,447,883

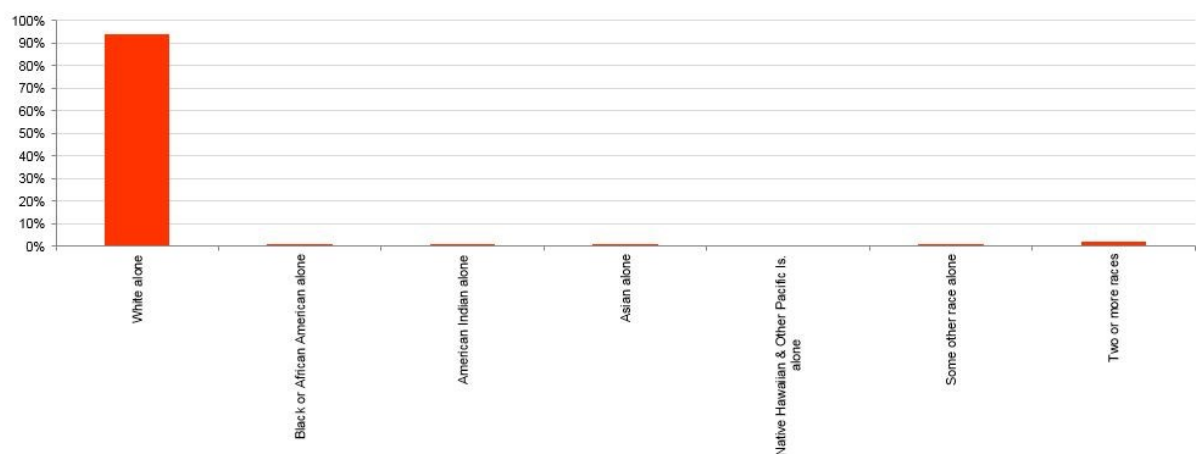
Percent of Total

White alone	97.6%	93.6%	93.2%	93.8%	95.0%	98.1%	92.9%	94.1%	73.6%
Black or African American alone	0.3%	0.7%	0.5%	1.7%	0.7%	0.6%	1.2%	1.0%	12.6%
American Indian alone	0.4%	1.3%	2.1%	1.4%	1.6%	0.2%	1.0%	1.1%	0.8%
Asian alone	0.2%	2.7%	0.4%	0.8%	0.3%	0.2%	0.8%	1.0%	5.1%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Is. alone	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Some other race alone	0.3%	0.2%	0.9%	0.3%	0.9%	0.1%	1.5%	0.8%	4.7%
Two or more races	1.3%	1.4%	2.6%	1.7%	1.6%	0.8%	2.6%	1.9%	3.0%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Population by Race, Percent of Total, County Region, 2015*

- In the 2009-2015 period, the racial category with the highest estimated percent of the population in the County Region was white alone (94.1%), and the racial category the lowest estimated percent of the population was native hawaiian & other pacific is. alone (0.1%).



Data Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce. 2016. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office, Washington, D.C.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS: With just 67.3 percent of the population aged 16 years and over in the labor force, Region 1 had lower labor force participation rates than the state's 70.1 percent rate. Interestingly, the region actually had higher labor force participation rates than the state for several age groups, yet the overall rate was lower because a higher percentage

of Region 1's labor force was in older age groups. In contrast, the region had lower participation rates than the state for all but one race group; and had large unemployment rate disparities for most minority groups, with the exception of American Indians. Region 1 had about 2,800 veterans and 2,750 workers with disabilities in the labor force, with both having lower unemployment rates in the region than the state. In sum, unemployment rates were highest for young people, minorities, workers with disabilities, and people with lower educational attainment.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: 2000-2015 Region 1 has consistently reported higher unemployment rates than Minnesota, regardless of the state of the economy. According to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, the unemployment rate in Region 1 hovered over 1 percent above the state rate from 2005 to 2007, but narrowed the gap from 2008 to 2010 at the height of the recession, and actually dropped below the state unemployment rate in 2009. Since 2011, Region 1's unemployment rate has dropped below 5.0 percent, but has remained well above the state rate.

Social Characteristics:

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY AGE GROUP, 2014 With 29 percent of adults aged 18 years and over having a college degree, Region 1 has lower educational attainment than the state, where 40.5 percent of adults have an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree. However, 11.7 percent of adults in Region 1 have an associate degree, and another 25.8 percent have some college experience, but no degree, which both outpace the state by more than 1 percent. Region 1 also has a higher percentage of people with a high school diploma or less – almost half (45.2%) of adults in the region. However, for the younger age groups, a different picture emerges. Just over 41 percent of people aged 18 to 24 years have attended some college, but hadn't earned a degree yet, and almost 13 percent already had a college degree. Region 1 also had a much higher percentage of people in the 25 to 44 and 45 to 64 year old age groups who had earned associate degrees, but much lower percentages of people with bachelor's degrees or higher. Finally, not only does Region 1 have a higher percentage of the population in the oldest age groups, those residents have much lower educational attainment than the rest of the state, and those in younger age groups.

What are education and enrollment levels?

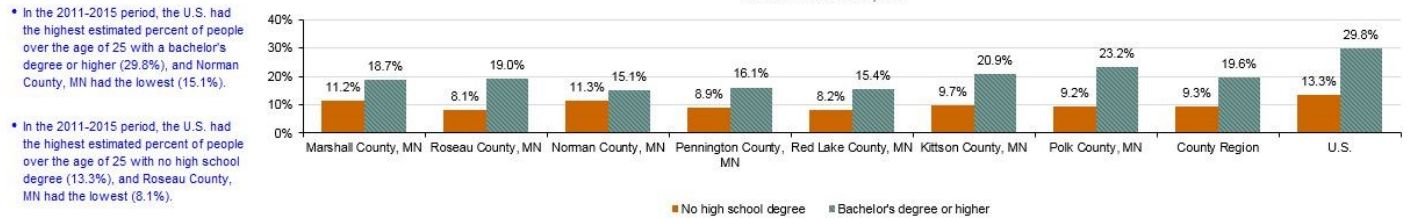
This page describes educational attainment and school enrollment.

Educational Attainment, 2015*

	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
Total Population 25 yrs or older	6,615	10,520	4,699	9,559	2,803	3,205	21,001	58,402	211,462,522
No high school degree	743	853	530	846	229	312	1,930	5,443	28,229,094
High school graduate	5,872	9,667	4,169	8,713	2,574	2,893	19,071	52,959	183,233,428
Associates degree	764	1,082	623	1,425	357	293	2,610	7,154	17,029,467
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,235	2,001	709	1,538	433	669	4,871	11,456	62,952,272
Bachelor's degree	956	1,494	584	1,127	330	538	3,425	8,454	39,166,047
Graduate or professional	279	507	125	411	103	131	1,446	3,002	23,786,225
Percent of Total									
No high school degree	11.2%	8.1%	11.3%	8.9%	8.2%	9.7%	9.2%	9.3%	13.3%
High school graduate	88.8%	91.9%	88.7%	91.1%	91.8%	90.3%	90.8%	90.7%	86.7%
Associates degree	11.5%	10.3%	13.3%	14.9%	12.7%	9.1%	12.4%	12.2%	8.1%
Bachelor's degree or higher	18.7%	19.0%	15.1%	16.1%	15.4%	20.9%	23.2%	19.6%	29.8%
Bachelor's degree	14.5%	14.2%	12.4%	11.8%	11.8%	16.8%	16.3%	14.5%	18.5%
Graduate or professional	4.2%	4.8%	2.7%	4.3%	3.7%	4.1%	6.9%	5.1%	11.2%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Educational Attainment, 2015*



• In the 2011-2015 period, the U.S. had the highest estimated percent of people over the age of 25 with a bachelor's degree or higher (29.8%), and Norman County, MN had the lowest (15.1%).

• In the 2011-2015 period, the U.S. had the highest estimated percent of people over the age of 25 with no high school degree (13.3%), and Roseau County, MN had the lowest (8.1%).

Language: The graph below shows the primary language spoken at home. Non English speaking users of the transit system may need assistance in communicating with the driver on their destination and service needs.

What languages are spoken?

This page measures the primary language people speak at home.

Language Spoken at Home: The language currently used by respondents five years and over at home, either "English only" or a non-English language which is used in addition to English or in place of English.

Language Spoken at Home, 2015*

	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
Population 5 yrs or older	8,865	14,656	6,327	13,183	3,769	4,244	29,565	80,609	296,603,003
Speak only English	8,424	14,063	5,963	12,662	3,636	4,125	27,402	76,275	234,171,556
Speak a language other than English	441	593	364	521	133	119	2,163	4,334	62,431,447
Spanish or Spanish Creole	281	58	186	168	74	61	1,184	2,012	38,694,150
Other Indo-European languages	127	215	120	170	37	54	612	1,335	10,884,070
Asian and Pacific Island languages	6	320	31	63	12	4	226	662	10,027,065
Other languages	27	0	27	120	10	0	141	325	2,826,162
Speak English less than "very well"	93	225	94	169	21	23	608	1,233	25,410,756

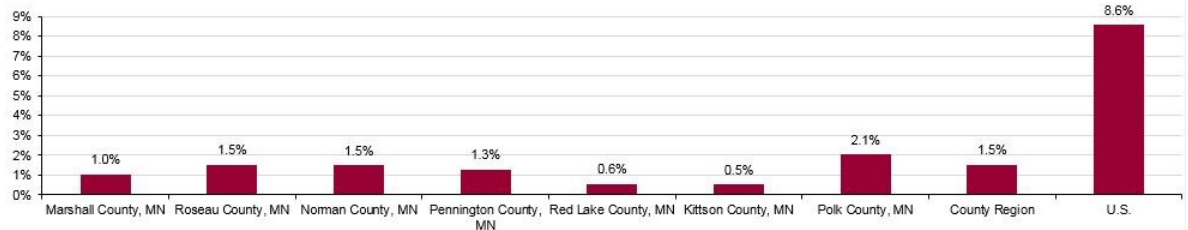
Percent of Total

Speak only English	95.0%	96.0%	94.2%	96.0%	96.5%	97.2%	92.7%	94.6%	79.0%
Speak a language other than English	5.0%	4.0%	5.8%	4.0%	3.5%	2.8%	7.3%	5.4%	21.0%
Spanish or Spanish Creole	3.2%	0.4%	2.9%	1.3%	2.0%	1.4%	4.0%	2.5%	13.0%
Other Indo-European languages	1.4%	1.5%	1.9%	1.3%	1.0%	1.3%	2.1%	1.7%	3.7%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	0.1%	2.2%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.8%	0.8%	3.4%
Other languages	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%	0.9%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%	1.0%
Speak English less than "very well"	1.0%	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%	0.6%	0.5%	2.1%	1.5%	8.6%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Percent of Population that 'Speaks English Less Than Very Well', 2015*

* In the 2011-2015 period, the U.S. had the highest estimated percent of people that spoke English less than 'very well' (8.6%), and Kittson County, MN had the lowest (0.5%).



COMMUTE SHED AND LABOR SHED: According to commuting data from the Census Bureau, the vast majority – about 79 percent – of workers in the region also live within the region. However, Region 1 is a net exporter of labor, having fewer jobs than available workers, forcing residents to drive to surrounding counties and states for work. In sum, 30,167 workers both lived and worked in Region 1 in 2014, while another 8,088 workers drove into the region for work, compared to 13,313 workers who lived in the region but drove to outside counties for work.

Tri-Valley has successfully operated several commuter routes that provides service from East Grand Forks to Crookston, East Grand Forks to Thief River Falls, Crookston to Thief River Falls and Bagley to Thief River Falls. The commuter route is serving the working population as well as the college students that travel between campuses.

What are commuting patterns?

This page describes workers who do not work from home by place of work and by travel time to work.

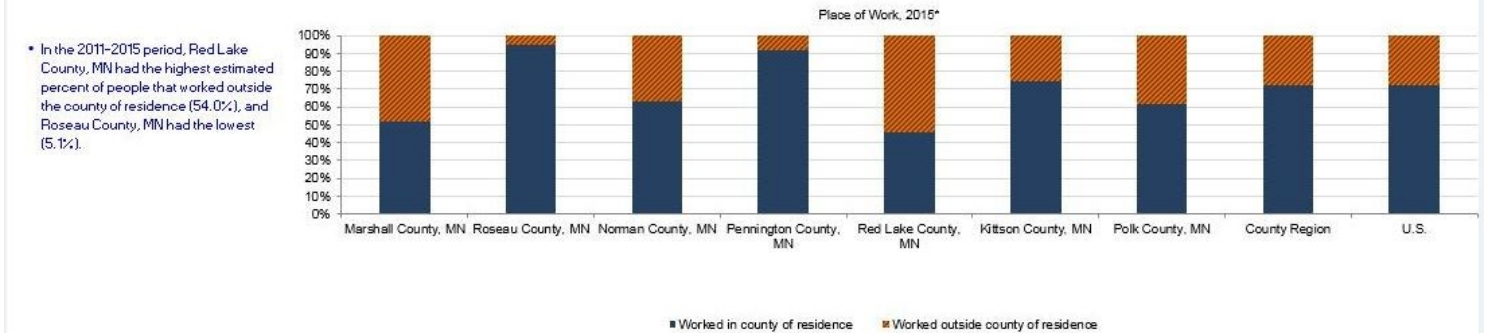
Commuting Characteristics, 2015*

	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
Workers 16 years and over	4,613	8,282	3,024	7,509	2,040	2,138	15,752	43,358	143,621,171
PLACE OF WORK:									
Worked in county of residence	2,385	7,861	1,898	6,909	939	1,594	9,743	31,329	103,991,263
Worked outside county of residence	2,228	421	1,126	600	1,101	544	6,009	12,029	39,629,908
TRAVEL TIME TO WORK:									
Less than 10 minutes	1,134	2,914	924	2,844	431	723	5,218	14,188	17,923,221
10 to 14 minutes	432	1,439	391	1,890	176	240	2,715	7,283	19,178,643
15 to 19 minutes	421	1,021	290	851	236	206	2,279	5,304	21,178,810
20 to 24 minutes	518	769	274	508	274	187	1,358	3,888	20,210,801
25 to 29 minutes	311	239	93	119	215	90	593	1,720	8,539,538
30 to 34 minutes	575	736	204	306	296	151	1,096	3,364	16,763,060
35 to 39 minutes	116	73	32	50	48	24	212	561	3,878,895
40 to 44 minutes	159	178	89	59	45	61	301	892	5,177,963
45 to 59 minutes	320	211	210	212	122	113	586	1,774	10,746,801
60 or more minutes	291	206	262	278	75	152	596	1,860	11,650,702
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	21.6	15.4	19.9	14.2	20.8	18.5	16.7	17.0	24.8

Percent of Total

PLACE OF WORK:									
Worked in county of residence	51.7%	94.9%	62.8%	92.0%	46.0%	74.6%	61.9%	72.3%	72.4%
Worked outside county of residence	48.3%	5.1%	37.2%	8.0%	54.0%	25.4%	38.1%	27.7%	27.6%
TRAVEL TIME TO WORK:									
Less than 10 minutes	24.6%	35.2%	30.6%	37.9%	21.1%	33.8%	33.1%	32.7%	12.5%
10 to 14 minutes	9.4%	17.4%	12.9%	25.2%	8.6%	11.2%	17.2%	16.8%	13.4%
15 to 19 minutes	9.1%	12.3%	9.6%	11.3%	11.6%	9.6%	14.5%	12.2%	14.7%
20 to 24 minutes	11.2%	9.3%	9.1%	6.8%	13.4%	8.7%	8.6%	9.0%	14.1%
25 to 29 minutes	6.7%	3.6%	3.1%	1.6%	10.5%	4.2%	3.8%	4.0%	5.9%
30 to 34 minutes	12.5%	8.9%	6.7%	4.1%	14.5%	7.1%	7.0%	7.8%	13.1%
35 to 39 minutes	2.5%	1.0%	1.1%	0.7%	2.4%	1.1%	1.3%	1.3%	2.7%
40 to 44 minutes	3.4%	2.1%	2.9%	0.8%	2.2%	2.9%	1.9%	2.1%	3.6%
45 to 59 minutes	6.9%	2.5%	6.9%	2.8%	6.0%	5.3%	3.7%	4.1%	7.5%
60 or more minutes	6.3%	2.5%	8.7%	3.7%	3.7%	7.1%	3.8%	4.3%	8.1%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2011-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.



Data Source: U.S. Department of Commerce 2016, Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office

Polk County is the largest employment center in the region, followed closely by Roseau and Pennington County. Employers in these counties draw workers from surrounding counties like Grand Forks, North Dakota; Beltrami, Lake of the Woods, Clay, and Clearwater. In contrast, the region also sends workers out of the region, primarily to larger metro areas including the Grand Forks and Fargo metropolitan statistical areas across the border in North Dakota

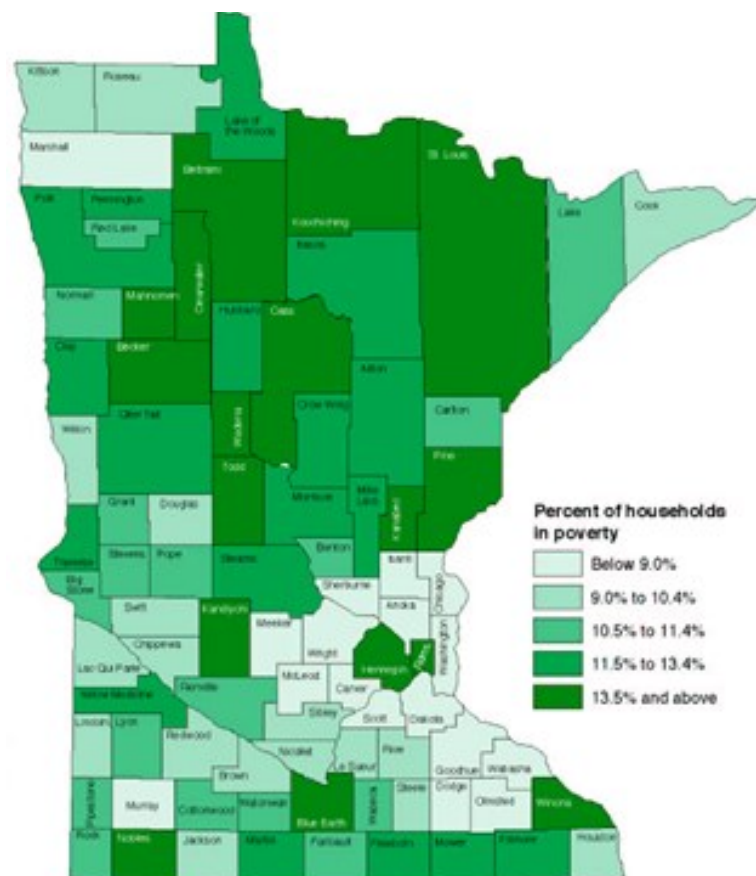
HOUSEHOLD INCOMES Household incomes were significantly lower in Region 1 than the rest of the state. Median household incomes ranged from \$46,758 in Norman County, which was the 14th lowest of 87 counties in the state, to \$53,311 in Marshall County, which was the 29th highest. Almost half (49.6%) of the households in Region 1 had incomes below \$50,000 in 2014, compared to 41.1 percent statewide. Over one-third of households earned between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in the region. In contrast, only 15.9 percent of households in Region 1 earned over \$100,000 per year, compared to nearly 26 percent of households statewide.

Veterans' information in Region 1

County	Number of Veterans	Percentage of County Population	Largest Veteran Age Group	Percent Disabled Veteran	Median Income
Kittson	318	9.1%	65+	32.5%	NA
Roseau	1,080	9.3%	55+	31%	\$31,746
Marshall	642	8.8%	75+	30.5%	NA
Pennington	989	9.1%	65+	27.2%	\$35,194
Red Lake	264	8.6%	65+	32%	\$28,578
Polk	2,293	9.5%	75+	30.3%	\$26,958
Norman	500	9.7%	75+	28.9%	\$34,024

Source: US Census, American Fact Finder

Population in Poverty all ages, 2010 US Census:



Source: MN State Demographic Center / Center for Rural Policy and Development

The federal poverty line is only \$11,670 for an individual and \$23,850 for a family of four - well below full-time work at minimum wage. The current federal minimum wage is \$7.25 an hour and the state minimum wage for Minnesota is \$7.75 for small employers and \$9.50 per hour for large employers. An average person working at a small employer in Region 1, working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year would earn \$16,120 a year.

PER CAPITA INCOMES Per capita incomes were also lower in the region than the state, ranging from \$24,278 in Red Lake County to \$27,877 in Marshall County. The regional average, \$25,963 was over \$5,000 less than the per capita income statewide, but was comparable to the rest of the Northwest area of the state

COST OF LIVING According to DEED's Cost of Living tool, the basic needs budget for an average Minnesota family (which consists of 2 adults and 1 child, with 1 full-time and 1 part-time worker) was \$54,804 in 2016. The cost of living for a similar family in Region 1 was \$44,940. The highest monthly costs were for transportation, food, and housing; but the region's housing, child care, taxes, and transportation costs were significantly lower than the rest of the state.

Of the counties in Region 1, Pennington had the lowest basic needs budget in the region in 2016 at \$42,312 – the second lowest in the state. Marshall County registered the highest yearly costs in the region for an average family at \$46,656, with the largest cost differences found in transportation and taxes, though that was still significantly below the state cost of living. In order to meet the basic cost of living for the region, the workers in the family scenario listed above would need to earn \$14.40 per hour. For a single person living alone and working full-time, the estimated yearly cost in Region 1 would be \$25,800, which would require an hourly wage of \$12.40 to meet the basic needs standard of living.

Transit Dependent Populations

The majority of the transit dependent population in Region 1 are generally located in the larger cities. In Region 1 all of the county seats are the largest city with the exception of Crookston, where East Grand Forks has a larger population. These are the locations that have the highest percentage of job opportunity and housing available. These larger cities also have the most transit service available to the user. Transit-dependent would include senior citizens, disabled individuals, and people living in group homes, and low income individuals that do not own a car. Many of this population live in small towns throughout Region 1 and have limited transit service available. Many people still live on farms with family caring for them as they can't afford to go into assisted living or an elder care facility. A disabled individual may still be living with family members. The Limited English Proficiently (LEP) populations are noted to be more reliant on transit service due to limited numbers obtaining driver's license due to language barriers. The 2017 Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan identified non-English language as a barrier to using public transit. The graph below illustrates the number of non-English speaking residents over the age of 5 per county.

County Region

Social Characteristics

What languages are spoken?

This page measures the primary language people speak at home.

Language Spoken at Home: The language currently used by respondents five years and over at home, either "English only" or a non-English language which is used in addition to English or in place of English.

Language Spoken at Home, 2015*

	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
Population 5 yrs or older	8,865	14,656	6,327	13,183	3,769	4,244	29,565	80,609	296,603,003
Speak only English	8,424	14,063	5,963	12,662	3,636	4,125	27,402	76,275	234,171,556
Speak a language other than English	441	593	364	521	133	119	2,163	4,334	62,431,447
Spanish or Spanish Creole	281	58	186	168	74	61	1,184	2,012	38,694,150
Other Indo-European languages	127	215	120	170	37	54	612	1,335	10,884,070
Asian and Pacific Island languages	6	320	31	63	12	4	226	662	10,027,085
Other languages	27	0	27	120	10	0	141	325	2,826,162
Speak English less than "very well"	93	225	94	169	21	23	608	1,233	25,410,756

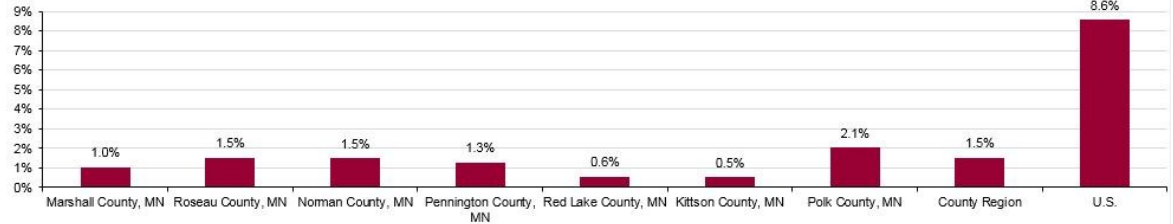
Percent of Total

Speak only English	95.0%	96.0%	94.2%	96.0%	96.5%	97.2%	92.7%	94.6%	79.0%
Speak a language other than English	5.0%	4.0%	5.8%	4.0%	3.5%	2.8%	7.3%	5.4%	21.0%
Spanish or Spanish Creole	3.2%	0.4%	2.9%	1.3%	2.0%	1.4%	4.0%	2.5%	13.0%
Other Indo-European languages	1.4%	1.5%	1.9%	1.3%	1.0%	1.3%	2.1%	1.7%	3.7%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	0.1%	2.2%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.8%	0.8%	3.4%
Other languages	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%	0.9%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%	1.0%
Speak English less than "very well"	1.0%	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%	0.6%	0.5%	2.1%	1.5%	8.6%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Percent of Population that 'Speaks English Less Than Very Well', 2015*

• In the 2011-2015 period, the U.S. had the highest estimated percent of people that spoke English less than 'very well' (8.6%), and Kittson County, MN had the lowest (0.5%).



This page describes the number of individuals and families living below the poverty line.

Poverty: Following the Office of Management and Budget's Directive 14, the Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to detect who is poor. If the total income for a family or an unrelated individual falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or an unrelated individual is classified as being "below the poverty level."

Poverty, 2015*

	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
People	9,314	15,365	6,543	13,833	4,026	4,354	30,383	83,818	308,619,550
Families	2,612	4,362	1,773	3,561	1,071	1,195	8,048	22,622	77,260,546
People Below Poverty	734	1,637	846	1,286	431	474	3,987	9,395	47,749,043
Families below poverty	136	347	144	208	80	79	619	1,613	8,761,164

Percent of Total

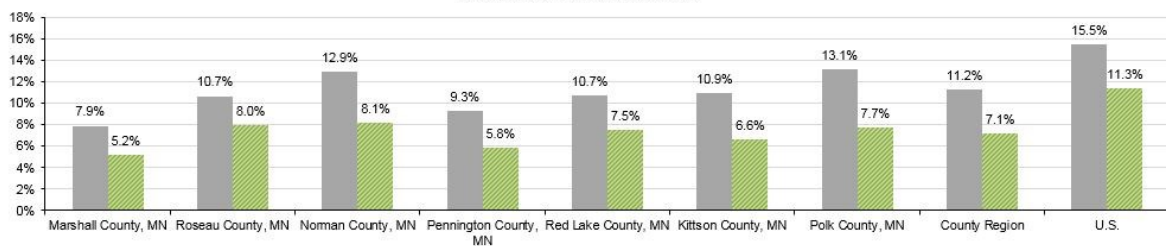
People Below Poverty	7.9%	10.7%	12.9%	9.3%	10.7%	10.9%	13.1%	11.2%	15.5%
Families below poverty	5.2%	8.0%	8.1%	5.8%	7.5%	6.6%	7.7%	7.1%	11.3%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2011-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Individuals & Families Below Poverty, 2015*

• In the 2011-2015 period, the U.S. had the highest estimated percent of individuals living below poverty (15.5%), and Marshall County, MN had the lowest (7.9%).

• In the 2011-2015 period, the U.S. had the highest estimated percent of families living below poverty (11.3%), and Marshall County, MN had the lowest (5.2%).



■ People Below Poverty ■ Families below poverty

The Colleges in Crookston, Thief River Falls, and East Grand Forks all have student populations that don't own vehicles and generally live in low cost apartment complexes closer to campus. Many transit dependent people live in mobile home parks that are located adjacent

to large manufacturing companies. Thief River Falls has Arctic Cat and Digi-Key in the same location and employ over 4,500 people. Digi-Key is the fourth largest electronic component distributor in North America and a broad-line distributor of electrical components. Digi-Key ranks as the fifth largest electronic component distributor in the world. They continue to expand, adding another 1-million square foot building in the next year and adding at least 100 jobs per year for the next 10 years. Arctic Cat designs, engineers, manufactures and markets all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles as well as related parts, garments and accessories. Both of these facilities employ a large number of the transit dependent population in the region. Digi-Key provides transit service to their employees.

Region 1 had a 2.8% decrease in population from 2000 to 2015. Marshall, Kittson, Norman, Red Lake, and Roseau all declined in population. Pennington and Polk increased in population numbers over the same time-span. Kittson County had the largest decrease at 15%, Pennington County had the largest increase at 3.9%.

County Region

Demographics

How has population changed?

This page describes the total population and change in total population.

Note: with the exception of some 2000 Decennial Census data used on pages 1-3, all other data used in this report are from the American Community Survey (ACS) of the Census Bureau. Red, orange, and black text indicate different data quality thresholds – please read the Methods section in the Study Guide text.

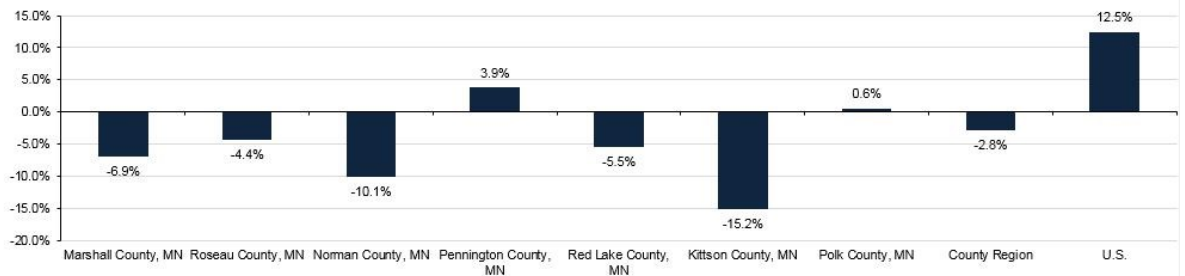
Population, 2000-2015*

	Marshall County, MN	Roseau County, MN	Norman County, MN	Pennington County, MN	Red Lake County, MN	Kittson County, MN	Polk County, MN	County Region	U.S.
Population (2015*)	9,453	15,615	6,692	14,110	4,061	4,480	31,547	85,958	316,515,021
Population (2000)	10,155	16,338	7,442	13,584	4,299	5,285	31,369	88,472	281,421,906
Population Change (2000-2015*)	-702	-723	-750	526	-238	-805	178	-2,514	35,093,115
Population Percent Change (2000-2015*)	-6.9%	-4.4%	-10.1%	3.9%	-5.5%	-15.2%	0.6%	-2.8%	12.5%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2011-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

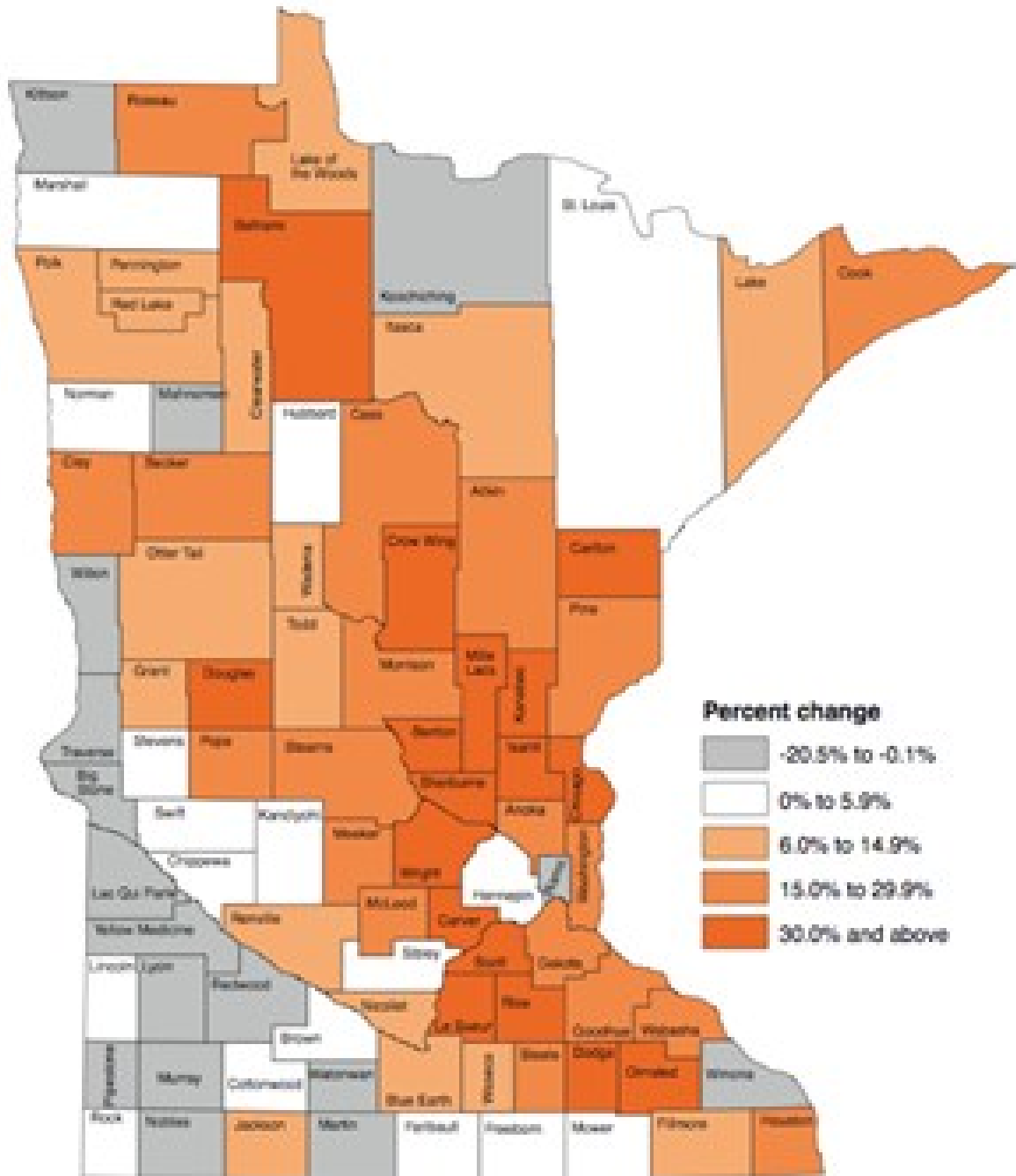
Percent Change in Population, 2000-2015*

- From 2000 to the 2009-2015 period, County Region had the smallest estimated absolute change in population (-2,514).
- From 2000 to the 2009-2015 period, U.S. had the largest estimated relative change in population (12.5%), and Kittson County, MN had the smallest (-15.2%).



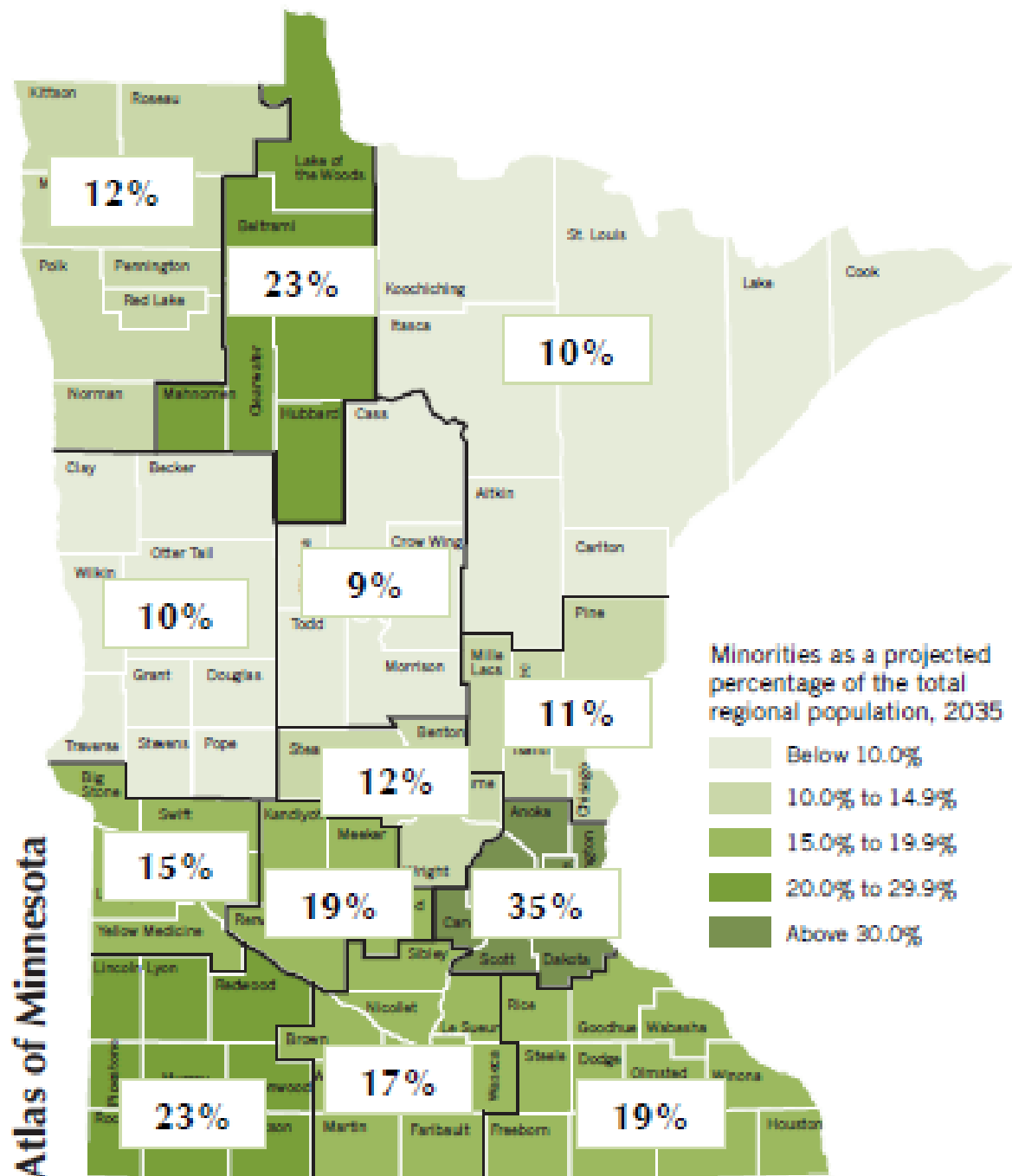
Thief River Falls continues to grow and expand business opportunities. Commercial space continues to grow on the south side of the city. Digi-Key is adding another building to their company site and plan to hire an additional 1000 people in the next 10-years. Sanford build a new hospital in Thief River Falls and North Valley Health build a new hospital in Warren.

The map below illustrates the projected population change from 2010-2035 Kittson County will see the largest decline in population. Roseau County will see the greatest increase.



Source: MN State Demographic Center / Center for Rural Policy and Development

Minorities as a projected percentage of the total regional population, 2035



Source: MN State Demographic Center / Center for Rural Policy and Development

Transportation Resources

The NWRDC developed an inventory meant to capture service information for all public, private, school district, human service, and non-profit transportation providers in the region. The inventory provides a source of comparison across agencies and a means to identify service gaps. To complete the inventory, NWRDC sent an online questionnaire to three of the region's transportation providers in Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Red Lake, Pennington, Polk, and Norman Counties. The questionnaire was also sent to the county social service directors within each of the seven counties. 22 responses were returned. A summary of the transportation resources is available in Appendix B.

Region 1 did a ride along on the bus to interview passengers and gather input into their use of the transit service. The people interviewed had very positive feedback on the transit services and many mentioned they didn't have any other option for travel without the bus service. The transit dependent population primarily use the bus to get to appointments, jobs, shopping and to visit family and friends. Some use the bus to catch a link to Jefferson lines that takes them to farther destinations like Fargo or Minneapolis. The majority of trips taken are within the city of origin. Tri-Valley has scheduled trips between East Grand Forks and Thief River Falls, East Grand Forks and Crookston, Crookston and Thief River Falls, and Bagley to Thief River Falls. The college campuses have begun to utilize the transit services for their students and has worked well. This service continues to grow.

The other primary travels include trips to the larger metropolitan cities like Minneapolis, Grand Forks, and Fargo. The transit dependent populations that don't have access to the transit services often use a family or friend vehicle to transport them to their location.

Transit Providers and service reach:

Region one has the primary transit services provided by Tri-Valley Heartland Express, Paul Bunyan Transit, Fosston city bus, and GF Metro serves the city of East Grand Forks. These providers cover the majority of need in the Region. There's a small number of population that lives in rural areas of the county that are uneconomical to travel for service to those individuals, so the service to this population is limited to no service. Special trips may be arranged by working with county social services.

Destinations and access to transit:

Crookston, and Thief River Falls, have service daily. Specialty appointments have weekly service provided in each county to drive into the regional centers that provide healthcare services or shopping opportunities.

Regional destinations including trips to Minneapolis, Grand Forks, Fargo, Thief River Falls, Bemidji, and Crookston can be scheduled with transit providers. Jefferson travels through Crookston and Grand Forks at least 4 times a week. The map below shows where the transit riders are traveling.

Transit Providers in Region 1:

Tri-Valley Bus is the major transit provider in Region 1. Tri-Valley is currently operating with a service fleet of 31 buses serving all of the NWRDC counties with the exception of Roseau which is covered with 3 buses from the Paul Bunyan Fleet. East Grand Forks is served by the Grand Forks bus fleet. Taxi service is available in Crookston, East Grand Forks, and Thief River Falls. Fosston has 1 bus that travels within 1 mile of the city limits. Public transportation is the least costly per passenger, Special Transportation Service (STS) and taxi service are the most expensive.

Transit Coordination:

Tri-Valley Heartland Express coordinates rides with the DAC, ODC, and the counties. Maintenance contracts are provided between providers to maintain bus fleet. The colleges in Thief River Falls, Crookston, and East Grand Forks have collaborated with Tri-Valley to provide service rides for the students between the colleges. Daily service UMC and Northland is working well and the students are utilizing the services.

Contracts have been structured with local dentistry offices to deliver patients to and from the dental office for scheduled visits. Transit providers work with the Veterans Affairs office to coordinate transportation for veterans to Fargo. Rural Transportation Collaborative (RTC) works with Roseau County, the tribal council on white earth, Paul Bunyan Transit, and Tri-Valley to coordinate rides.

Barriers to Coordination:

The largest barrier that was reported during the workshop was turf issues on which provider should serve the client. Whose client is it, and who gets paid for the service is an issue that needs to be resolved. Coordinating Specialized Transportation Services (STS) to help reduce the cost of these special trips that often are costly because of the additional care needed and the distance needed to travel. Another obstacle are the many federal and state regulations that are difficult to follow and the additional red tape increase the cost of the ride to the client. Dealing with insurance claims to cover a ride are often time consuming and ineffective.

There is the need for more transit service after normal transit service hours to help accommodate people that work late shifts or have doctor appointments that run past regular service hours. These riders are put into difficult and often costly circumstances when they have to try find a new ride home. This is especially problematic when the rider has mobility needs such as a wheel chair.

There could be more public transit service availability in smaller communities throughout the service area. As far as the Rural Transportation Collaborative, (RTC) there is always a need for more volunteer drivers.

Levels of Service:

Level of service is higher in Polk and Pennington Counties. Crookston, East Grand Forks, and Thief River Falls all have 7 day per week service. There continues to be a need in counties where service is not consistent, Kittson, Norman, Roseau, Marshall, and Red Lake. These counties have at least 1 day per week where transit services are available for transportation.

The office staff are huge in providing transportation, there are dispatchers and coordinators who work to schedule the buses and volunteer drivers. The maintenance staff keep the buses operating and clean. The driver supervisor keeps the drivers up to date on training and continues to hire new drivers as some drivers retire or leave their current position. The operations manager and the transit director work to keep the funding coming in and make sure the operations continue to happen on a consistent level.

- Region 1 coordination efforts

Tri-Valley Transportation coordinates travel through public transportation, volunteer drivers, and other methods of transportation available in the service area. This includes: Jefferson Lines, private STS providers, and 5310's such as DAC, ODC, etc.

- Barriers to Transportation

The cost of coordinating transit services within the region. Getting all transit providers to work together, at times there seems to be competition amongst transit providers on who serves what clients. Ongoing communications of all transit providers within the service area.

Public Participation Steering Committee

The plan Steering Committee closely guided plan decision-making. Steering Committee duties included:

- Evaluating strategies and assessing outcomes of projects identified in the 2011 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan
- Developing project ideas and identifying priority strategies as part of the public workshop
- Prioritizing project ideas identified at the public workshop for inclusion in the final plan

The Steering Committee was made up of representatives from transit providers, county human service agencies, area agency on aging representatives, centers for independent living representatives, passengers and others.

Members included:

Steering Committee Members for the NWRDC Regional Transit Plan

Cindy Pic, Tri Valley Bus	cpic@tvoc.org
Thomas Bray, Tri Valley Bus	Thomas@tvoc.org
Danica Robson, Land of the Dancing Sky AAA	danicarobson@nwrdc.org
Kent Ehrenstrom, MNDOT District 2 Transit	kent.ehrenstrom@state.mn.us
Sally Erickson, Thief River Falls DAC	fdacse@mncable.net
Ken Yutrzenka, Pennington County Social Services	kcyutrzenka@co.pennington.mn.us
Laurel Skala, City of Fosston Transit	laurel.skala@fosston.com
Cindy Gjerswold, Tri Valley Bus	Cindy.Gjerswold@tvoc.org
Lezlie Grubich, Paul Bunyan Transit	grubich@paulbunyan.net
Teri Kouba, Grand Forks/East Grand Forks MPO	teri.kouba@theforksmpo.org
Tori Peterson, ODC	tpeterson@odcmn.org

Strategies

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 2016 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 graph below lists the strategies that continue to be improved. These strategies originated and have expanded from the 2011 plan.

Strategy	Status	Discussion/Analysis	Successes/Barriers
Allow joint purchasing	In progress	Improving as the process goes forward	Sometimes the state regulations effect the ability to make purchases
Outsource business functions	In progress	Tri-valley has served as a host. Working with TRF DAC to take over their service	Work in progress.
Program coordinator/organizer/ dispatch	In progress	Started a dispatch system	Working to share with other transit providers.
Central Call Center	In progress	MNDOT is looking to fund a transit coordination council.	Should be in place soon.
PayPal type service/Card troll	Not Started	State is looking to move this forward.	Cost is becoming more efficient.
Web based transit scheduling	ongoing	App available for use on phone	Riders can now book rides online

Strategy	Status	Discussion/Analysis	Successes/Barriers
Organization/coordination of transit systems	ongoing	Coordination is going on	Turf issues and who gets paid is often an issue
Contract between agencies	ongoing	County, higher education, hospitals, schools, churches, daycares, head start, senior programs senior volunteer, bock grant nursing all have contracted services	Benefits the riders and providers
Contract with common carrier	ongoing	Transport with Boutique Air	Timing of when the other carrier leaves or arrives. Catching a train or plane schedule is often difficult
Share resources	ongoing	Maintenance crew with fix lifts systems on other buses. Do preventative maintenance, oil changes. Will provide buses to other providers	Working well. Other providers appreciate the service
Coordinate dispatch	In progress	Public transit and volunteer driver, do some coordination with ODC	none
Consolidate business functions	ongoing	Tri-valley has this happening in house. Do some fiscal work for other agencies.	none

Strategy	Status	Discussion/Analysis	Successes/Barriers
Coordinate volunteer driver training	ongoing	Done 2-3 times annually	Working well
Implement tools that support data management	ongoing	Dispatch system implemented. Reporting using black cat	Working well
Coordinate agency schedules	ongoing	DT&H needs to be done. Work with DEED to shuttle employees. Commuter transport between Crookston and EGF.	Working well
Improve service convenience	ongoing	Online dispatch is helping. Cell phone use is working better. Internet service is available on some buses.	Working well
Mobility manager exposure	ongoing	Improving, have funding this year to provide more mobility manager access.	Funding may be cut in FY 2018
Increase rides	ongoing	Rides are increasing steady the last 2 to 3 years	Rider capacity of 5 urban rides and 3 rides per hr. in the rural is difficult. Have a long distance to travel.
Coordination of volunteer drivers	ongoing	Over 100 volunteer drivers are utilized in the region	Working well
GPS Tracking in vehicles	ongoing	GPS on all buses and cameras 4 way	Going well, drivers are liking the protection.

Strategy	Status	Discussion/Analysis	Successes/Barriers
Small community service	ongoing	Trying to get service to each county seat at least once a week.	Benefit/cost ratio is limiting in some portions of the region
Mechanic on the fly	ongoing	Tri-Valley has a mechanic that will travel to other transit sites	Great success, helps other providers that don't have the staff capacity
Senior meal volunteer increase/availability	ongoing	Buses are used to provide trips to senior meals	Working well
Convene a regional coordinated group	ongoing	Have an advisory committee that meets quarterly. Certainly more meetings could be done between the 5 year time frame of the plan	Additional funding to the RDC to coordinate meetings a couple times a year will keep strategies moving
Enhancing customer travel	ongoing	Web service is available. Driver will help with travel trainer. Looking to have volunteer able to ride for free to assist the public	Successful, having the ability of a helper ride along is great asset
Establish/enhance assisted transportation programs	ongoing	Working with volunteer drivers	Liability and insurance is a concern
Establish/expand taxi subsidy programs	ongoing	Taxi has been too expensive. Stability of taxi has been lacking. Uber has helped	
Improve access to transit stops	ongoing	Not a fixed route. Coordinated with children pickup.	Successful where implemented. Saves in the number of stops
Maintain existing vehicle fleet	ongoing	State has helped to enhance the fleet. Newer	Working well

Strategy	Status	Discussion/Analysis	Successes/Barriers
		stock has been added to the fleet	
Centralize information	ongoing	Dispatch ongoing.	Working well
Hire mobility manager	ongoing	One on staff at Tri-Valley	Great success
Marketing	ongoing	A grant was given this year to market transit services	More affordable transportation
Web based transit services	ongoing	Dispatching is now web based	Working well, new service but has worked well.
Expand Education Efforts	ongoing	Travel training community education continues	successful
Software Improvements/GPS services	ongoing	AVL has been installed in all the buses. Fosston still needs to get the software.	Very successful, drivers like it
Pricing list availability	ongoing	Online, web accessible	Working well
Informational fact sheet for mentors	In progress	Available on line and in brochures.	Working well
Communication between providers	In progress	Has worked well. Continue to have communication and coordination with other providers. Received funding to help operate a route in Red Lake County	Continues to improve
Offer customer travel training	On going	Done via phone or in person.	

Strategy	Status	Discussion/Analysis	Successes/Barriers
Convene regional coordination body	On going	Meet quarterly.	
Educate public of transportation options	ongoing	Information online. Brochures, county fairs.	
Educate regional professionals of transportation options	ongoing	At meeting groups , chamber of commerce meetings,	

Implementation from 2011 Planning:

Steering committee members discussed what projects were implemented from the 2011 plan.

1. Tri-Valley received additional funding to run weekend service in Thief River Falls and Crookston.

This additional service covered a much needed population that was lacking in transportation options.

2. Enhanced the mobility manager position. Tri-Valley received funding to support a mobility manager position.

The additional funding provided other communities in rural counties the opportunity to have a travel trainer show the people how to ride the bus and how to schedule rides.

3. Improved dispatch center at the Tri-Valley facility and its hub sites.

A better dispatch system has been implemented at Tri-Valley in Crookston and Thief River Falls dispatch sites. Started to implement online dispatch services. Using the Black Cat reporting software.

4. Contracted additional transit services

The University of MN Crookston is providing shuttle service for students between Crookston and East Grand Forks. Thief River Falls and East Grand Forks also shuttles students between the Northland Technology Colleges. This additional service provides several trips between these cities daily. Ridership continues to increase on these routes.

5. Tri- Valley is providing maintenance service to other bus providers.

6. Started a commuter route between Crookston and East Grand Forks
7. Commuter route between Bagley and Thief River Falls and Crookston to Thief River Falls
8. Tri-Valley has increased its fleet size to 31 buses. Improving the number of people that are being served.

Focus Group

The NWRDC conducted two focus groups. The first focus group was held at the Occupational Development Center in Warren.

Rider Survey

The NWRDC spent a morning conducting focus groups on a transit bus interviewing clients as they road to their destination. The data collected was valuable and straight from the user in real time. The traveling experience illustrated the issues the riders deal with on a daily basis. Some streets that are not plowed very well or where the roads are crumbling make bus travel loud.

The

Planning Workshop

The planning workshop on February 1, 2017 incorporated input from all interested stakeholders. A total of 12 people attended, listed in Appendix C. At the workshop, stakeholders identified strengths and weaknesses of transit coordination in the region. Building from these, stakeholders then identified priority strategies for transit coordination and brainstormed project ideas that could address these strategies. Using input gathered at this workshop, the Steering Committee prioritized the strategies and projects included in the final plan. A complete list of project ideas considered during the planning process is presented in Appendix D.

Strengths and Weaknesses

At the public workshop, participants identified strengths and weaknesses of existing coordination efforts in Region 1. Combined with the plan's technical findings, these strengths and weaknesses form the basis for identifying strategies to address transportation coordination in this region.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Willingness of providers to work together. Already coordinating services	Financial resources are at times an issue to share riders
Quality of fleet available within the region.	Limited service for outside city limits
Excellent Communications.	Limited service and the timing and availability of the service
Many agencies already have contracts with public transportation to provide some rides.	Collaboration of the service, sometimes doesn't work out with bus route time
Provide 7-day a week service in Thief River Falls, Crookston, and East Grand Forks	Lack of buses
Trips to the colleges between EGF, TRF, and Crookston	Need more service during peak hours of day
More trips to the smaller rural communities	Service hours don't work for many evening activities

Needs Assessment

The workshop participants and steering committee members discussed the needs within the region. The table below lists the needs in the Region and addresses the service gaps and unmet needs. Lists if the need has centralized information, if it has spatial limitations, temporal limitation. Lists whether or not the need is program eligible and has trip purpose limitations and lists the service quality.

Top Identified Gaps/Needs in the Region	Service Gaps & Unmet Needs	Centralized Information	Spatial Limitations	Temporal Limitations	Program Eligibility and Trip Purpose Limitations	Service Quality and Miscellaneous Issues
Qualified bus drivers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Heated Storage Shop	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Centralized Information	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Mobility Manager	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Limited English Proficiency	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Increase the number of vehicles (mobility accessible)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marketing	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Flexibility	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Volunteer Drivers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Improved Ride Service - Hours and days of service	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Improved Ride Service - Routes – workers/shifts	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Improved Ride Service - Event-entertainment destinations	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Improved Ride Service - Access to county seats and medical destinations	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Improve ride scheduling (phone app, online, phone)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Increase connectivity	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Cost effective options	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provider insurance requirements	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

The workgroup participants and steering committee members discussed the needs within the region to address gaps in service. Having longer service hours and more service days is always a top concern for the transit population. Finding ways to pay for the additional service is always the defining characteristic to implementation. There is also a need for more qualified drivers that have the personable skills to operate a bus and deal with the public. There's also a need for more volunteer drivers.

There's also a need for more heated shops to store the buses within the Region. Centralizing the data center to better keep track of daily operations is key to efficient services. There continues to be a need for continued marketing and having a mobility manager is very helpful in getting people introduced to riding the bus. Streamlined state and federal requirements will make the bus operators job much more efficient.

Strategies and Projects

To categorize project ideas, Steering Committee members created an "Effort vs. Impact" chart to compare these project ideas. This created a relative sense of how much effort (low to high) each project idea would take as well as how much impact (minor to major) each project could have in its region. This chart can be found in Appendix E. The strategies and projects listed below represent those ideas the steering committee prioritized as having the most potential to improve transit coordination in the Region.

Project Overview Increase the number of volunteer drivers	Provide access to more vehicles
Population Served Everyone	Additional drivers will provide more access to the transit population. Specially those living further from a city
Communities Served Region	Entire Region
Responsible Entities Local government	Social services will coordinate the volunteer drivers
Strategies Addressed Lack of enough drivers	Accessibility

Project Overview Coordinate agency schedules to more fit the need of the public	Work with the transit providers to coordinate transit exchanges
Population Served Everyone	All transit users will benefit

Communities Served Region	Please list all the communities here. Region-wide service
Responsible Entities Transit providers	What kind of agency or agencies will be required to help implement this project? Public transit
Strategies Addressed Ride Coordination	Better service

Project Overview Increase the number of accessible vans for remote pick up	Partner with other agencies to acquire more vans
Population Served Everyone	All transit riders will benefit
Communities Served Region	Region-wide service
Responsible Entities Transit providers	What kind of agency or agencies will be required to help implement this project? Keep this generic: public transit, disability advocate, etc.
Strategies Addressed Service	Provide more vehicles
Project Overview Improve the language barrier	Partner with other agencies to coordinate an interpreter to ride along for free
Population Served LEP population	Non English speaking people served
Communities Served All	Region wide service

Responsible Entities Local Government	County government can coordinate
Strategies Addressed Communication	Better communication
Project Overview Share resources between transit providers	Partner with other providers to share resources
Population Served Transit operators	Will save money for the providers
Communities Served Not applicable	None
Responsible Entities All the providers	Transit providers
Strategies Addressed Share resources	Work more efficiently

Project Overview Utilize a travel trainer across the entire region	Work with Mn/DOT to keep funding this position
Population Served Everyone	Please describe who will use the project such as seniors/elders, residents with disabilities, low income residents, etc. These should be general terms, not specific individuals.
Communities Served Regional	Will serve entire region

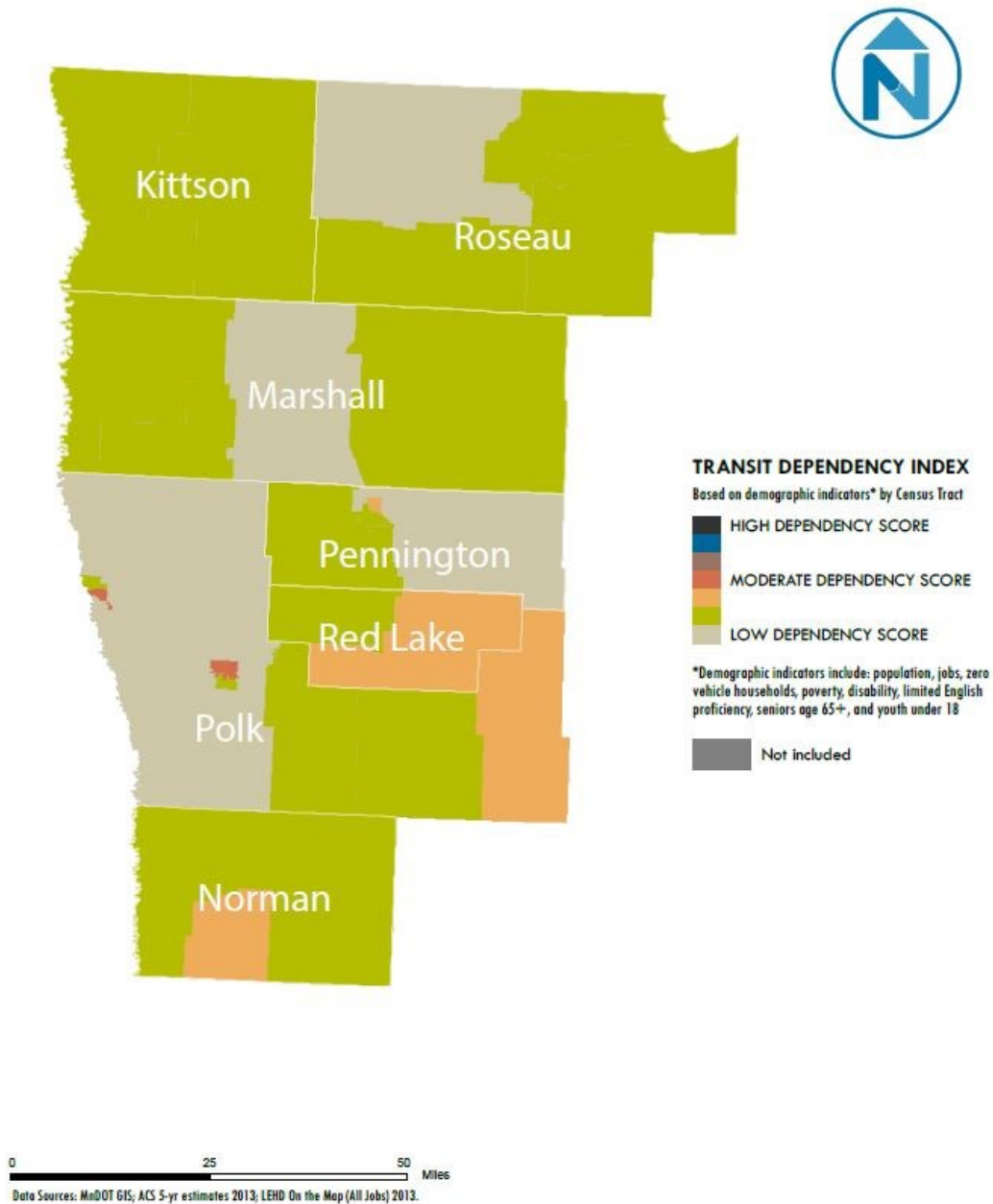
Responsible Entities Transit	public transit
Strategies Addressed People networking	Mobility manager will assist people in navigating the bus.

Project Overview Increase connectivity to serve more destinations	Work with other transit providers to coordinate rides
Population Served Everyone	Transit riders that need to travel long distance will be served
Communities Served All	Region served
Responsible Entities Transit providers	public transit
Strategies Addressed connections	Increase connectivity region-wide and across the state

Appendix A – Transit Services, Transit-Dependent Populations, and Key Destinations

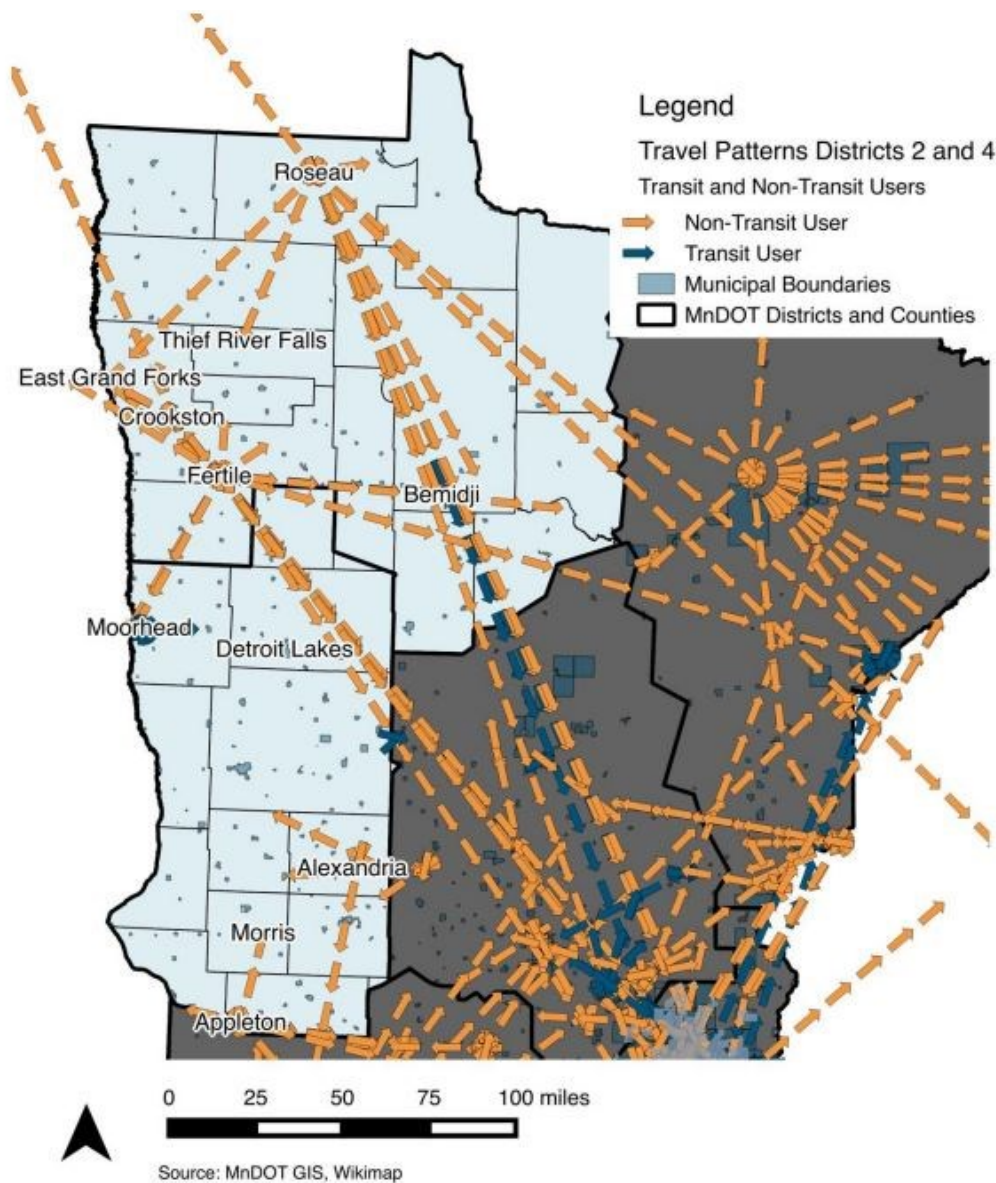
The map below illustrates the transit dependent population in Region 1. The majority of transit dependent population lives in the more populated parts of the region.

Transit Dependency Index - RDC 1



This state map illustrates the flow of transit from Northwestern Minnesota to the rest of the state. The major destinations include Fargo-Moorhead, Twin Cities, Bemidji, and Grand Forks.





The map above illustrates the travel patterns in Mn/DOT District 2. Travel patterns show the majority of travelers going to Grand Forks, Minneapolis, Bemidji, Fargo-Moorhead, with some traveling to Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Appendix B – Transportation Resources

The following includes contact information of all regional transportation providers for whom information was received. This is not a complete list of providers in the region.

Kittson County	
Name:	Kittson Central School District
Address:	444 North Ash, PO Box 670 Hallock MN 56728
Phone:	218-843-3682 ext. 232
Web:	www.kittson.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Name:	Kittson County Development Activity Center
Address:	102 Hill Street, Lake Bronson, MN 56734
Phone:	218-754-2225
Web:	Non-profit Transportation
Service Type:	
Name:	Kittson County Social Services
Address:	410 5th St. SE Suite 100, Hallock, MN 56728
Phone:	218-843-2689
Web:	www.co.kittson.mn.us
Service Type:	Volunteer Driver
Name:	Lancaster Public School
Address:	PO Box 217 Lancaster, MN 56735
Phone:	218-762-5400
Web:	www.lancaster.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Marshall County	
Name:	Marshall County Central
Address:	310 West Minnesota, Newfolden, MN 56738
Phone:	218-874-8530
Web:	www.newfolden.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Name:	Marshall County Social Services
Address:	208 E. Colvin Ave., Warren, MN 56762
Phone:	218-745-5124
Web:	www.co.marshall.mn.us
Service Type:	Non-profit Transportation
Name:	Occupational Development Center, Inc
Address:	404 East 2 nd Street, Warren, MN 56762
Phone:	218-745-4401
Web:	
Service Type:	Private Transportation

Name:	Stephen/Argyle Central
Address:	PO Box 279, Argyle, MN 56713
Phone:	218-437-6615
Web:	www.sac.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Pennington County	
Name:	Goodridge Public School
Address:	PO BOX 195, Goodridge, MN 56725
Phone:	218-378-4133
Web:	www.goodridge.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Name:	Falls Development Activity Center, Inc.
Address:	PO Box C., Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Phone:	218-681-5951
Web:	www.positivelyminnesota.com
Service Type:	Non-profit Transportation
Name:	Occupational Development Center
Address:	1520 Hwy 32 South, Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Phone:	218-681-6830
Web:	
Service Type:	Private Transportation
Name:	Pennington Co. Human Services
Address:	PO Box 340, Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Phone:	218-681-2880
Web:	www.co.pennington.mn.us
Service Type:	
Name:	Riverside Terrace
Address:	225 LaBree Ave South #614 , Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Phone:	218-681-7657
Web:	
Service Type:	Service is primarily for the residents
Name:	Thief River Falls Workforce Center
Address:	
Phone:	1301 Hwy 1 East, Thief River Falls, MN 56701
Web:	218-681-0909
Service Type:	www.positivelyminnesota.com
Polk County	

Name:	Altru Rehabilitation Center
Address:	701-780-2315
Phone:	www.altru.org
Web:	Transports patients to the Altru Rehab for therapy from within Grand Forks and East Grand Forks city limits.
Service Type:	
Name:	City of Fosston
Address:	220 East First St., Fosston, MN 56542
Phone:	218-435-1959
Web:	www.fosston.com
Service Type:	Public transportation
Name:	Climax – Shelly School District
Address:	111 East Broadway, Climax, MN 56523
Phone:	218-857-2835
Web:	www.climax.com
Service Type:	School Transportation
Name:	East Polk Development Activity Center
Address:	PO Box 178, Fosston, MN 56542
Phone:	Nonprofit transportation, referral from Social Services
Web:	
Service Type:	
Name:	Fisher ISD
Address:	313 Park Ave, Fisher, MN 56723
Phone:	218-891-4105
Web:	www.fisher.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Name:	Good Samaritan Society
Address:	2122 River Road NW, East Grand Forks, MN 56721
Phone:	218-773-7484
Web:	Private transportation
Service Type:	
Name:	Winemac ISD #2609
Address:	23130 345th Street SE, Erskine, MN 56535
Phone:	218-563-2900
Web:	www.win-e-mac.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Name:	MN-DEED – Crookston Workforce Center
Address:	1730 University Ave, Crookston, MN 56716
Phone:	218-281-6020
Web:	www.positivelyminnesota.com
Service Type:	Dislocated Worker program, and Workforce Investment Act.

Name:	Options
Address:	318 3 rd St NW, East Grand Forks, MN 56721
Phone:	218-773-6100 or 1-800-726-3692
Web:	www.macil.org/options
Service Type:	
Name:	Polk County Development Activity Center
Address:	515 5 th AVE South, Crookston, MN 56716
Phone:	218-281-4181
Web:	Private Transportation
Service Type:	
Name:	Polk County Social Services
Address:	612 North Broadway, Crookston, MN 56716
Phone:	218-470-8459
Web:	www.co.polk.mn.us
Service Type:	Private Transportation
Name:	Riverview Adult Day Services
Address:	323 South M St. Crookston, MN 56716
Phone:	Private Transportation
Web:	
Service Type:	
Name:	Tri-Valley Public Transportation
Address:	1345 Fairfax Ave., Crookston, MN 56716
Phone:	218-281-0700
Web:	www.tvoc.org
Service Type:	Public Transportation
Red Lake County	
Name:	Red Lake County Central School
Address:	PO Box 7, Plummer, MN 56748
Phone:	218-465-4222
Web:	www.plummer.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation
Roseau County	
Name:	Paul Bunyan Transit
Address:	706 S Railroad St SE, Bemidji, MN 56601
Phone:	218 751-8765
Web:	http://www.paulbunyantransit.com/
Service Type:	Public Transportation

Name:	Greenbush/Middle River School
Address:	401 Park Ave, Greenbush MN 56726
Phone:	218-782-2231
Web:	www.middleriver.k12.mn.us
Service Type:	School Transportation

Name:	Focus Corp MN Inc.
Address:	706 7 th Street SW, Roseau, MN 56726
Phone:	218-463-0411
Web:	
Service Type:	

Appendix C – Public Workshop Participants

Joyce Lamont	Resident/Rider from Thief River Falls
Cindy Gjersrud	Tri-Valley Transit
Lezlie Grubiel	Paul Bunyan Transit
LuAnn Bleiler	Paul Bunyan Transit
Kristi Nelson	Red Lake County Social Services
Julie Jaspersen	Resident/Rider from Thief River Falls
Dan Bartech	Pennington County Rider
Marcia Haglund	Tri-Valley Transit
Tom Bray	Tri-Valley Transit
Darla Waldner	Area Agency on Aging
Danica Robson	Area Agency on Aging
Troy Schroeder	Northwest Regional Development Commission

Appendix D - Project Analysis: Effort vs. Impact Assessment

The Public Planning Workshop utilized the following Effort versus Impact assessment to place the strategies in order to prioritize and identify which strategies to include in the 2017 Plan.

Difficult to do/Minor impact projects	Difficult to do/Major impact projects
Easy to do/Minor impact projects	Easy to do/Major impact projects

Difficult to do / Major impact projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase the number of volunteer driversCoordinate agency schedules to more fit the need of the publicIncrease the number of accessible vans for remote pick upIncrease connectivity to serve more destinationsShare resources between transit providersImprove the language barrierUtilize a travel trainer across the entire region
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Difficult to do / Minor impact projects	<p>Adhering to insurance requirements</p> <p>Following state and federal regulations</p>
Easy to do / Minor Impact Projects	<p>Share information with other transit providers</p> <p>Website accessibility made easier</p> <p>Distribution of brochure information</p> <p>Hire a consultant to develop a web based transit site</p>
Easy to do / Major impact projects	<p>Provide a travel trainer in each of the counties</p> <p>Share equipment and technologies between transit providers</p> <p>Install GPS units in buses</p> <p>One shop for maintenance</p> <p>Identify languages needed for scheduling rides</p> <p>Improve and increase public relations</p> <p>More weekend and evening service</p> <p>Longer hours of service</p>



Tri-Valley staff demonstration on a bus

Appendix E - Project Analysis: Effort vs. Impact Assessment Summary information updated from the 2011-2012 Transit Plan.

Summary information updated from the 2011-2012 Transit Plan.

Title of Project	Description of Project	Strategy Projects Fulfills	Champions & Potential Leader	Effort vs. Impact
Mobility Manager /Travel Trainer	Provide a travel trainer in each of the counties.	Maintain the mobility manager position with funding	Mn/DOT and Tri-Valley Transit	Easy to do, major impact
Shared Resources	Share equipment and technologies between transit providers	Improve the communication between providers	Transit systems	Easy to do, Major impact
GPS system for dispatch and buses	Install GPS units in buses	Tracking efficiency	Tri-Valley Transit	Easy to do, major impact
Transit fleet mechanic	One shop for maintenance	Organizational support	Tri-Valley currently is doing	Easy to do, major impact
Mentoring Program	Sharing information with other transit providers	Transit operators can share valuable information to other operators.	All transit providers, and the NWRDC	Easy to do, minor improvement
Extended Service Hours	More weekend and evening service	Improve service convenience	Transit Providers	Easy to do, major impact
More access to travel trainer	Have a travel trainer	Mobility Manager access	Tri-Valley currently has	Easy to do, Major improvement

	available in each county		funding for this position.	
Improved Service/convenience	Longer hours of service	Extended service	Tri-Valley currently providing more service in TRF and Crookston	Easy to do, minor
Enhanced driver volunteer program	Get more volunteer drivers	Improved service	Social services, community center leaders	Hard to do, major improvement
Marketing	Market the bus to general public. Bus wrap/ internet	Marketing	All transit providers, local government agencies	Easy to do, major impact
Call Center	Create a one stop call site that coordinates rides region-wide	Program Coordinator	Tri-Valley	Easy to do, minor impact
Web based Transit information	Hire a consultant to develop a web based transit site	Marketing	All transit providers	Easy to do, minor impact

