



2019 report on

# Minnesota Council on Transportation Access

January 2020

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# Legislative Request

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This report is issued to comply with [Minn. Stat. 174.285, subdivision 5.](#)

## **174.285 MINNESOTA COUNCIL ON TRANSPORTATION ACCESS.**

### **Subd. 5. Report.**

By January 15 of each year, beginning in 2012, the council shall report its findings, recommendations, and activities to the governor's office and to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over transportation, health, and human services, and to the legislature as provided under section 3.195.

*The cost of preparing this report is about \$5,300.*

# Summary

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In 2010, under [Minn. Stat. 174.285](#), the Minnesota State Legislature created the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access to study, evaluate, oversee and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public.

As Minnesota's state-level coordinating council, MCOTA addresses transportation coordination topics from a statewide perspective. Transportation coordination actually happens at the local level and MCOTA is engaging with Regional Transportation Coordination Councils in Greater Minnesota and with coordination initiatives in the Twin Cities metropolitan region.

In this annual report, MCOTA provides a summary of 2019 activities that advance MCOTA's legislatively outlined duties to improve transportation coordination throughout the state.

In spring 2019, MCOTA engaged with stakeholders to update its 2015 strategic plan through a membership survey, stakeholder input, engagement with RTCC and TCAP representatives (including both Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metropolitan area collaboratives) and a strategic planning workshop. In addition, MCOTA provided website support for the new RTCCs and had representatives from the RTCCs provide updates to MCOTA, supported state and federal legislation for volunteer driver programs and revised the volunteer driver insurance brochure. MCOTA continued to inform stakeholders about its activities and meetings through email updates and through its website, [CoordinateMNTransit.org](http://CoordinateMNTransit.org).

MCOTA will finalize its strategic plan by early 2020 and determine the priorities for 2020 and for the next three to five years. Volunteer driver programs, RTCC/TCAP support and stakeholder communications are three areas expected to continue as priorities in 2020.

# Introduction

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Transportation is essential for connectivity among state residents. Improving coordination and efficiencies among transportation providers is critical to helping older adults, persons with low incomes, veterans and persons with disabilities enjoy independence and participate fully in the state's economy. As Minnesota's state-level coordinating council, MCOTA serves as an advisory group and a clearinghouse to address transportation coordination topics from a statewide perspective. While there has been some improvement in access, transportation services are still inadequate for transit-dependent residents, including persons with disabilities. MCOTA devoted time and attention in 2019 to determine how it could be more effective by adding more implementation activities.

The Minnesota State Legislature established MCOTA in 2010. It includes representatives from 13 agencies, listed in Appendix A. MCOTA's work focuses on increasing capacity to serve unmet transportation needs, improving the quality of transit service, improving understanding and access to these services by the public, and achieving more cost-effective service delivery.

In spring 2019, MCOTA engaged with stakeholders to update its 2015 strategic plan through a membership survey, stakeholder input, engagement with RTCC and TCAP representatives (including both Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metropolitan area collaboratives) and a strategic planning workshop. In addition, MCOTA provided website support for the new RTCCs and had representatives from the RTCCs provide updates to MCOTA, supported state and federal legislation for volunteer driver programs and revised the volunteer driver insurance brochure.

## MCOTA Mission

The mission of MCOTA is to work together to remove obstacles that prevent the successful coordination of transportation programs and resources among their respective customers.

## MCOTA Vision

Minnesotans will have access to coordinated transportation services to meet their mobility needs.

## MCOTA Legislative Duties

Under [Minn. Stat. 174.285](#), the purpose of MCOTA is to study, evaluate, oversee and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public.

To improve transit coordination and accessibility, the statute assigns the council 20 duties:

1. Compile information on existing transportation alternatives for the transit public, and serve as a clearinghouse for information on services, funding sources, innovations and coordination efforts.
2. Identify best practices and strategies that have been successful in Minnesota and in other states for coordination of local, regional, state and federal funding and services.
3. Recommend statewide objectives for providing public transportation services for the transit public.
4. Identify barriers prohibiting coordination and accessibility of public transportation services and aggressively pursue the elimination of those barriers.
5. Recommend policies and procedures for coordinating local, regional, state and federal funding and services for the transit public.
6. Identify stakeholders in providing services for the transit public, and seek input from them concerning barriers and appropriate strategies.
7. Recommend guidelines for developing transportation coordination plans throughout the state.
8. Encourage all state agencies participating in the council to purchase trips within the coordinated system.
9. Facilitate the creation and operation of transportation brokerages to match riders to the appropriate service, promote shared dispatching, compile and disseminate information on transportation options and promote regional communication.
10. Encourage volunteer driver programs and recommend legislation to address liability and insurance issues.
11. Recommend minimum performance standards for delivery of services.
12. Identify methods to eliminate fraud and abuse in special transportation services.
13. Develop a standard method for addressing liability insurance requirements for transportation services purchased, provided or coordinated.
14. Design and develop a contracting template for providing coordinated transportation services.
15. Recommend an interagency uniform contracting and billing and accounting system for providing coordinated transportation services.
16. Encourage the design and development of training programs for coordinated transportation services.
17. Encourage the use of public school transportation vehicles for the transit public.
18. Develop an allocation methodology that equitably distributes transportation funds to compensate units of government and all entities that provide coordinated transportation services.
19. Identify policies and necessary legislation to facilitate vehicle sharing.
20. Advocate for eliminating barriers to coordination, implementing coordination strategies, enacting necessary legislation and appropriating resources to achieve the council's objectives.

# MCOTA 2019 Activities and Accomplishments

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Since its creation in 2010, MCOTA has pursued projects and activities to improve transportation coordination in Minnesota. Below are brief descriptions of key council activities and accomplishments during 2019.

**Table 1: Key MCOTA 2019 Activities and Accomplishments**

Activity	Legislative Duties Addressed Under <a href="#">Minn. Stat. 174.285</a>
Updated Strategic Plan (ongoing)	All
Developed Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils: guidance, website assistance	1-11, 13-14, 16-17, 19-20
Created Volunteer Driver Program resolution, brochure	10, 13, 20
Continued stakeholder communications: website and e-mail updates	1
Received updates on Olmstead Plan progress	3, 4

See Appendix B for a list of all initiatives since the Council's inception grouped by legislative duty.

## Strategic Plan Update

The updated Strategic Plan puts the Council in a position to more effectively act on its legislatively defined duties through a revised governance structure, a focus on four key strategic priorities and by developing measures to assess the Council's progress in the future. MCOTA will complete its Strategic Plan in early 2020 and work towards implementing the vision of the plan throughout the next five years.

## Highlights of Survey Results

In March and April 2019, the planning team conducted surveys of three groups to help shape MCOTA's role, strategies and tactics for the next three to five years. Questions were asked about their views of MCOTA's role, their organizations' alignment with MCOTA's legislative duties and priorities that they believed would improve access to transportation throughout the state, especially for seniors and persons with disabilities.

The top legislative duties that align with all three survey groups are 4, 5, 6, 10 and 20.



**Table 2: Top Three MCOTA legislative Duties Identified by Each Group in Survey**

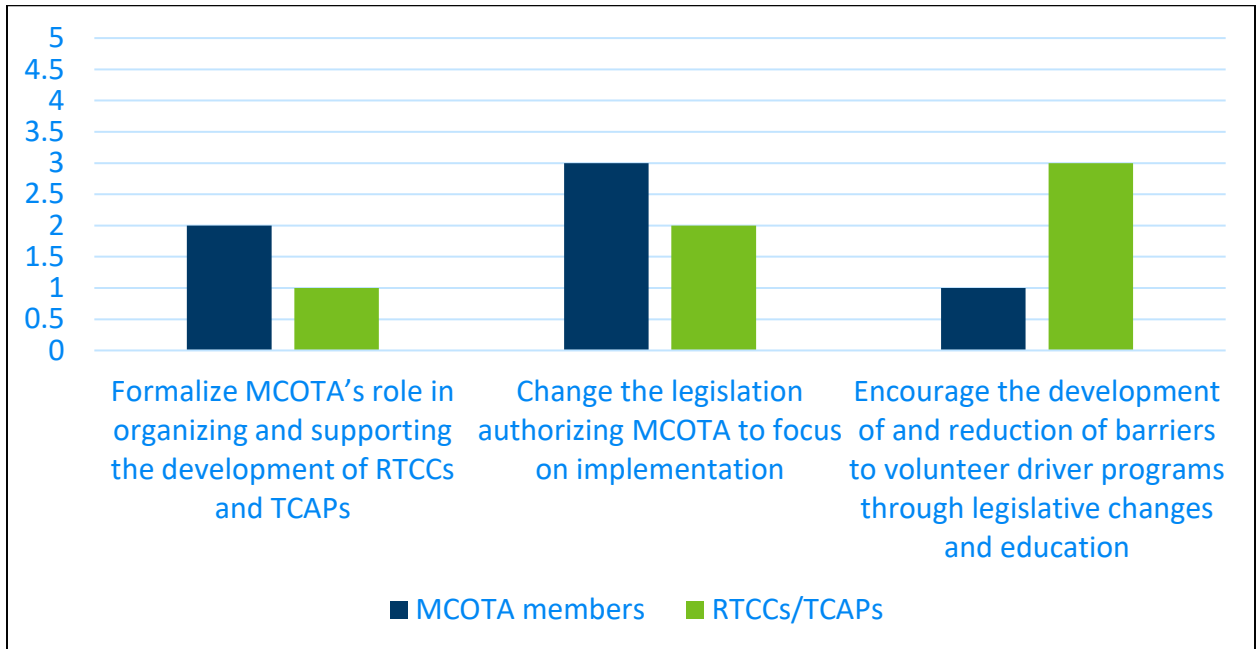
Survey Group	Most-Cited Legislative Duty	Second Most-Cited Legislative Duty	Third Most-Cited Legislative Duty
<b>Members</b>	(4) Identify barriers prohibiting coordination and accessibility of public transportation services and aggressively pursue the elimination of those barriers.	(6) Identify stakeholders in providing services for the transit public, and seek input from them concerning barriers and appropriate strategies.	(20) Advocate for eliminating barriers to coordination, implementing coordination strategies, enacting necessary legislation and appropriating resources to achieve the council’s objectives.
<b>RTCCs/TCAPs (most helpful legislative duties)</b>	(10) Encourage volunteer driver programs and recommend legislation to address liability and insurance issues.	(5) Recommend policies and procedures for coordinating local, regional, state and federal funding and services for the transit public.	(20) Advocate for eliminating barriers to coordination, implementing coordination strategies, enacting necessary legislation and appropriating resources to achieve the council’s objectives.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	(4) Identify barriers prohibiting coordination and accessibility of public transportation services and aggressively pursue the elimination of those barriers.	(6) Identify stakeholders in providing services for the transit public, and seek input from them concerning barriers and appropriate strategies.	(10) Encourage volunteer driver programs and recommend legislation to address liability and insurance issues.

### Priorities for MCOTA Identified in Surveys

MCOTA members and representatives of the RTCCs/TCAPs selected the same three priorities for MCOTA, though in different order.

1. Consider changing the legislation authorizing MCOTA to focus on implementation (a higher priority for members)
2. Formalize MCOTA’s role in organizing and supporting the development of RTCCs and TCAPs
3. Encourage the development of and reduction of barriers to volunteer driver programs through legislative changes and education (a higher priority for RTCCs and TCAPs)

Figure 1: Top 3 Priorities for MCOTA Identified in Surveys



## Stakeholder Survey Results

Stakeholders identified the following priority areas that they would like MCOTA to address:

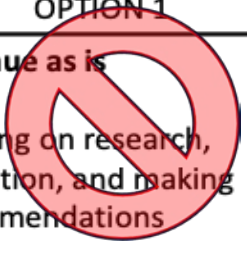
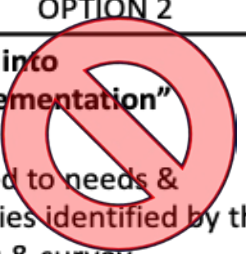
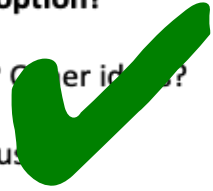
1. Rural transportation access
2. Improved access to health care
3. Improved coordination of services
4. Improved access to community resources
5. Development of future transportation options

# Strategic Planning Workshop

MCOTA members, MCOTA member organization staff and regional coordinating organizations (RTCCs and TCAPs) representatives who received grants to implement coordination at the local level, participated in a half-day strategic planning workshop on April 23, 2019. The workshop was facilitated by Etonde Awaah and Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn from LaCroix-Dalluhn Consulting and the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a shared understanding of MCOTA’s accomplishments and to develop a consensus for its future direction.

After sharing MCOTA’s accomplishments and highlights from the survey results, the group voted on three options for MCOTA’s direction: 1) Continuing as is; 2) Moving into implementation, and 3) Keeping some research and best practices, and adding implementation activities. The group overwhelmingly voted for option 3.

**Figure 2: Three options for the future direction of MCOTA**

OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
<p><b>Continue as is</b></p> <p>Focusing on research, evaluation, and making recommendations</p> 	<p><b>Move into “implementation”</b></p> <p>Related to needs &amp; activities identified by the report &amp; survey</p> 	<p><b>Another option?</b></p> <p>A hybrid? Other ideas?</p> <p>Let’s discuss</p> 

## Workshop Highlights

Workshop participants overwhelmingly voted to keep MCOTA’s current functions of conducting research, sharing best practices, maintaining an information clearinghouse and developing and/or sharing sample policies. One question for MCOTA is how to ensure the research and best practice activities are responsive to regional needs, that is, where should requests for research come from? One solution is for MCOTA to develop a simple, annual process for nominating and selecting research and best practice needs.

The second priority identified by survey respondents and workshop participants is to encourage the development and reduction of barriers to volunteer driver programs through legislative changes and education. Lastly, it was noted by many survey respondents that there is a need for focus on rural transportation.

## Roles

Possible roles for MCOTA as a body that were identified in the workshop:

- Support RTCCs in statutory or legal issues, such as advocating for legislation that supports the Council’s mission or priorities.
- Encourage member agencies to work together to propose and submit bills.
- Clarify legislative charge to allow MCOTA to implement research findings and to go beyond those findings when appropriate.
- Assist in resolving state and federal barriers to coordination.

Roles for individual MCOTA members that were identified in the workshop:

- Frame transportation issues in ways that non-transportation agencies and organizations can understand.
- Advocate for administrative or regulatory change through state agencies or the Governor’s office.
- Serve as technical experts on how programs work so, as consumer and provider needs change, there is the flexibility to think about how those changes can be addressed.
- The RTCC and TCAP representatives in the surveys and in the workshop identified activities they want MCOTA to conduct.
- Provide overall statewide guidance about policies, standards, practices and inter-jurisdictional barriers.
  - Take a leadership role and help develop consistent standards across programs. For example, vehicle standards, driving insurance, etc. This would allow providers to be more nimble in working with different programs.
  - Develop or share tools/products/practices that could be used by RTCCs and TCAPs.
  - Translate RTCCs local perspective into policy (e.g., ridesharing, vehicle sharing).
  - Help resolve inter-jurisdictional barriers.
- Host an annual dialogue for all RTCCs and TCAPs (e.g. possibly add-on to MPTA Transit Conference in the fall)
- Provide funding for a unified IT system for transit providers statewide.

The surveys and workshops also showed a desire for MCOTA to take a lead role in marketing and engagement, in the following ways:

- Develop marketing materials to adapt, share and disseminate with the RTCCs and TCAPs.
- Continue to provide a clearinghouse for information.
- Bring county administrators and commissioners into this work. Regional groups have the ability to talk about funding with counties, including successes and benefits.
- Create a baseline of best practices for how to work with counties.
- Partner with RTCCs and TCAPs to provide travel training.
- Conduct focus groups specific to veterans, low-income, aging, disability groups, homeless, 5310 providers, etc.
- Look for opportunities statewide to engage with the public before issues arise.

- Work with regional groups to gain support from legislators and agency leaders.

## **Outcomes**

The outcome theme workshop participants shared was:

To have a greater impact on transportation access throughout the state by providing the resources and processes to achieve that impact and to generate support for providing those resources

1. Volunteer driver programs without driver shortages
2. Greater transit service on evenings and weekends
3. Affordable taxi and transportation network company trips
4. One-call, one-click reservations
5. Shared reservation and dispatch systems
6. Coordinated rides through multiple jurisdictions
7. Streamlined billing systems

## **Potential new members and stakeholders**

Workshop participants identified new organizations for MCOTA to reach out to as stakeholders (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Groups Identified for Greater Engagement with MCOTA**

Legislature	State Agencies	Other Stakeholders
Educate Legislature about funding	Attorney General's office	Counties
Rural legislative champion(s) needed (in addition to urban champion(s))	Governor or Lieutenant Governor's office	Employers and business community
	Commissioner involvement	Health care
		Health insurance
		AARP
		Extension service
		League of Minnesota Cities/Counties
		Transportation providers (public and private)
		Customers/public

# Regional Transportation Coordinating Council

## Development

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RTCCs consist of local stakeholders interested in improving mobility for the “transportation disadvantaged” – older adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with low incomes and/or military veterans. RTCCs will provide coordinated transportation services among stakeholders to create more transportation options and more cost-effective service for those needing transportation.

As Minnesota’s state-level coordinating council, MCOTA addresses transportation coordination topics from a statewide perspective. Transportation coordination happens at the local level and MCOTA agencies are working to develop RTCCs that will serve as the primary local drivers for transportation coordination with guidance from MCOTA.

## Greater Minnesota Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils

There are two primary phases to the RTCC grant process that the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s Office of Transit and Active Transportation administers: 1) Organizational planning (2018-19) and 2) Organizational implementation (July 2019-present). Nine RTCCs currently are active and maintain web pages on the [CoordinateMNTransit.org](https://www.coordinatemntransit.org) website listing their contact information, documents and upcoming events. The nine RTCCs are:

- Northeast Minnesota RTCC  
Arrowhead Regional Development Commission  
(Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis counties)
- East Central Minnesota RTCC  
East Central Regional Development Commission  
(Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, and Pine counties)
- North Central Minnesota RTCC  
Headwaters Regional Development Commission  
(Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, and Mahnomen counties)
- South Central Minnesota RTCC  
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
(Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Renville, and Sibley counties)
- Northwest Minnesota RTCC  
Northwestern Regional Development Commission  
(Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, and Roseau counties)
- Central Minnesota RTCC  
Region Five Development Commission  
(Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena counties)
- St. Cloud Minnesota RTCC  
St. Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO)  
(Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright counties)
- Southeast Minnesota RTCC  
Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.  
(Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona counties)
- West Central Minnesota RTCC  
West Central Community Action, Inc.  
(Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilken counties)

## Coordination Projects in the Twin Cities Metro Area

Anoka, Scott, Dakota, Carver and Washington counties received Federal Transit Administration 5310 funds in 2019 to continue implementation of mobility management strategies. 5310 funds were also awarded to NewTrax, a local non-profit that provides mobility management primarily in Ramsey County. Additionally, both Hennepin County and Anoka County launched new efforts in 2019 to study transportation in their respective county and develop a mobility management plan.

### Carver/Scott County

SmartLink service was expanded to weekends and evenings. Travel training sessions were held for transition students, adult mental health clients and senior groups.

### Dakota County

Dakota County has successfully implemented a travel training program that trained 668 individuals in 2018 on how to access and use public transportation. With grant funding from the Department of Human Services, the county launched a pilot program with Lyft to transport clients with disabilities to employment sites.

### NewTrax

NewTrax continued to operate and create new community circulator transit routes in White Bear Lake, Mahtomedi, Vadnais Heights, Roseville and Forest Lake. These circulators travel between high density living facilities and grocery, pharmaceutical and financial institutions. NewTrax also serves as the primary provider for senior group outings at several senior housing facilities, coordinating and providing transportation to four-day programs for people with disabilities.

### Washington County

The county hired a mobility manager and implemented recommendations developed through a 2016-2017 Washington County Transportation Needs Study.

## Volunteer Driver Program Support

### State and Federal Volunteer Driver Legislation

After two studies documented the value and benefits of volunteer driver programs and the enthusiastic response to the 2018 Volunteer Driver Forum, MCOTA continued its efforts to foster volunteer driver programs by:

1. Advocating for federal legislation to increase the mileage reimbursement rate for volunteer drivers
2. Advocating for updated state legislation to define volunteer drivers



### 3. Updating the state's volunteer driver brochure

Serge Phillips, federal liaison in MnDOT's Office of Government Affairs, talked with MCOTA about the proposed federal volunteer driver reimbursement legislation that would increase the current 14 cent/mile reimbursement rate to be equal to the business rate for mileage reimbursement, which is closer to actual costs expended by volunteer drivers. In general, there is wide support for the change. Stakeholders have expressed a desire for the legislation to advance as stand-alone legislation and not part of a transportation reauthorization bill. Mr. Phillips cited a MCOTA research study on this topic.

On the state level, Sherry Munyon of the Minnesota Public Transit Association requested that MCOTA issue a resolution of support for state legislation that clarifies and improves laws related to volunteer driver programs. The statutes are vague regarding their application to volunteer drivers, and the interpretation by state agencies and insurance companies impacts volunteer driver programs. For example, the emergence of transportation network companies (e.g. Lyft, Uber) has changed how insurance companies handle insurance questions for volunteer drivers, so clarification is needed. MCOTA issued a [Resolution in Support of Volunteer Drivers](#) on Jan. 29, 2019.

## Volunteer Driver Brochure

Courtney Whited from the Minnesota Board on Aging led a group to update the volunteer driver brochure, *Getting There Safely*.

These activities relate to MCOTA legislative duties 10, 13 and 20 by identifying barriers to volunteer driver programs and recommending steps, including legislation and advocacy, to address barriers such as liability and insurance issues.

## Olmstead Plan Progress Updates

Minnesota's Olmstead Plan greatly influences the work of MCOTA, including the development of RTCCs and transportation coordination generally, which are important mechanisms for advancing Olmstead's goals. MCOTA was updated by MnDOT's ADA coordinator about the progress towards the Olmstead Plan's implementation, goals and measures at every meeting.

As of March 2019, membership in the Olmstead Plan subcommittee was officially changed to include the Metropolitan Council, Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The transportation infrastructure goals continue to be met, and the on-time performance goal for Greater Minnesota has been static.

## Background on the Olmstead Plan

In 1999, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that "unjustified segregation of persons with disabilities constitutes discrimination in violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The court held that public entities must provide community-based services to persons with disabilities when (1) such services are appropriate (2) the affected persons do not oppose community-based treatment and (3) community-based services can be reasonably accommodated,

taking into account the resources available to the public entity and the needs of others who are receiving disability services from the entity.”<sup>1</sup>

In response to a 2011 federal lawsuit, the state of Minnesota agreed to develop an Olmstead Plan to document the state’s “plans to provide services to individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the individual. Effective Olmstead plans include analysis of current services, concrete commitments to increase integration (and to prevent unnecessary institutionalization), and specific and reasonable timeframes, among other components.”<sup>2</sup>

Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan describes how state agencies will provide services to individuals with disabilities to help them be as integrated in their community as is desirable and appropriate. On Sept. 29, 2015, the court approved the revised Olmstead Plan. The overall goal and purpose of the plan remains unchanged, which is to “ensure people with disabilities are living, learning, working, and enjoying life in the most integrated setting.”<sup>3</sup>

This activity fulfills some of the MCOTA legislative duties in 1-11, 13, 14, 16, 19 and 20 by identifying stakeholders that provide services for the transit public, seeking their input about appropriate strategies, identifying best practices, recommending statewide objectives, identifying barriers and ways to eliminate barriers, and advocating for implementation of recommendations to enhance coordination throughout the state.

## Stakeholder Communications

### Website

MCOTA continued to update its [CoordinateMNTransit.org](https://CoordinateMNTransit.org) website and added a section for the Greater Minnesota RTCCs to list their contacts and other basic information about their organizations and to publicize stakeholder meetings.

### Stakeholder E-mail Update

MCOTA also continued the periodic (approximately quarterly) email communication that began in 2017 in response to requests from stakeholders.

The distribution list includes people who were invited to or attended the workshops, other transit stakeholders and those who signed up on the [CoordinateMNTransit.org](https://CoordinateMNTransit.org) website.

The updates included announcements about the availability of the 2018 Minnesota AV workshop summary and presentations, new RTCC web pages, the strategic plan survey, and notices of upcoming meetings. The readership statistics are shown in Table 4.

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<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Justice, Americans with Disabilities Act website, About Olmstead

<sup>2</sup> Minnesota Governor’s news release: Minnesota’s new Olmstead Plan improves opportunities for people with disabilities, Nov. 1, 2013

<sup>3</sup> [mn.gov/olmstead](https://mn.gov/olmstead)

**Table 4: MCOTA E-mail Update Readership Statistics**

	December 2018	March 2019	June 2019	November 2019
Recipients	652	642	627	603
Open rate	26.0%	23.3%	25.2%	26.3%
Unique click-through rate	10.2%	11.0%	11.7%	5.6%

These communications tasks relate to MCOTA’s first legislative duty of sharing information with stakeholders on coordination efforts in the state.

## Other MCOTA Activities

An important function of MCOTA is keeping members informed about issues that affect transit and other forms of accessible transportation. Below are brief summaries of topics MCOTA members discussed in 2019.

### Department of Human Services Waiver Transportation Study

At the January 2019 MCOTA meeting, Minnesota Department of Human Services staff provided an overview of the legislatively-mandated study of waiver transportation, including recommendations for coordinating and increasing transportation accessibility across the state, creating a rate framework for waiver transportation and other recommendations to improve access. The final study is available on the [DHS website](#).

Summary of study recommendations:

- Identify changes to policies, regulations, and/or state law needed to support recommendations and secure enhanced federal Medicaid matching funds (90/10) for implementation of program administration changes.
- Develop and establish centralized, uniform statewide provider requirements and corresponding rates for a new waiver transportation service (includes program definitions and reporting requirements).
- Develop and implement centralized infrastructure to support a waiver transportation-specific provider network and payment management, which would include an online provider database for lead-agency use and the ability for provider invoices to be automatically converted into claims for state Medicaid reporting purposes.
- Develop and implement centralized infrastructure to support the lead-agency service authorization and coordination function—based on further study after implementing the previous recommendation. This function could include, for example, DHS contracting with

transportation coordination service organizations and the use of a mobile app for individuals and lead agencies, similar to the apps used by Uber and Lyft.

- Develop and implement a new rate methodology for waiver transportation that considers provider costs for doing business and the variation in provider and service types.

## **Connected and Automated Vehicle Technology**

In March, Jay Hietpas of MnDOT's Office of Connected and Automated Vehicle Office, or CAV-X, presented information about the agency's automated and connected vehicle technology work, which may offer potential solutions to accessibility for MCOTA in both the short- and long-term. Well-planned implementation of connected and automated vehicles will be crucial for safety and to reduce serious injuries and fatalities, as well as to increase mobility, equity, workforce, traffic operations, economic development, infrastructure and health and environment.

## Conclusion

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Transportation is crucial for Minnesotans' access to essential destinations and services: work, school, shopping, health care and recreation. In 2019, MCOTA advanced its legislatively outlined duties to improve transportation coordination throughout the state by providing website support for the new Regional Transportation Coordination Councils; having representatives from the RTCCs provide updates to MCOTA; supporting state and federal legislation in support of volunteer driver programs; and revised the volunteer driver insurance brochure. In addition, MCOTA continued to inform stakeholders about its activities and meetings through email updates and through its website, [CoordinateMNTransit.org](https://CoordinateMNTransit.org).

In spring of 2019, MCOTA engaged with stakeholders to update its 2015 strategic plan through a membership survey, stakeholder input, engagement with RTCC and TCAP representatives (including both Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metropolitan area collaboratives) and a strategic planning workshop.

MCOTA will finalize its strategic plan by early 2020, which will determine MCOTA's priorities for 2020 and for the next three to five years. Volunteer driver programs, RTCC/TCAP support and stakeholder communications are three areas expected to continue as priorities in 2020.

## Appendix A: MCOTA Members during 2019

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Tim Henkel, Chair  
Minnesota Department of Transportation

Joan Willshire, Vice Chair  
Minnesota State Council on Disability

Victoria Nill, At-Large Representative  
Minnesota Department of Transportation

Vacant  
Office of the Governor

Gerri Sutton  
Metropolitan Council

Harlan Tardy (through January 2019)  
Minnesota Board on Aging

Jim Varpness (since October 2019)  
Minnesota Board on Aging

Peter Brickwedde  
Minnesota Department of Commerce

Kelly Garvey  
Minnesota Department of Education

Thant Pearson (through April 2019)  
Minnesota Department of Employment and  
Economic Development

Jodi Yanda (since April 2019)  
Minnesota Department of Employment and  
Economic Development

Susan Bishop  
Minnesota Department of Health

Claire Wilson (through December 2018)  
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Diogo Reis (since January 2019)  
Minnesota Department of Human Services

Ron Quade  
Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

Laura Logsdon (through April 2019)  
Minnesota Management and Budget

Shawn Kremer (since May 2019)  
Minnesota Management and Budget

Tiffany Collins  
Minnesota Public Transit Association

## Appendix B: MCOTA Legislative Duties and Accomplishments

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Year(s)
2011-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #1
Compile information on existing transportation alternatives for the transit public and serve as a clearinghouse for information on services, funding sources, innovations and coordination efforts.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minnesota coordination website</li> <li>• Economic cost-benefit studies</li> <li>• Transportation section of Minnesotahelp.info</li> <li>• NEMT Advisory Committee support</li> <li>• NEMT Coordination Study</li> <li>• Local transit coordination case studies</li> <li>• Primer of funding sources for “transit public” in Minnesota</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> <li>• Study of economic benefits of Minnesota volunteer driver programs</li> <li>• Study of public-private partnerships in transit</li> <li>• Periodic stakeholder e-mail communication</li> <li>• Volunteer Driver Program Forum</li> <li>• Study on best practices in youth employment transportation</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #2
Identify best practices and strategies that have been successful in Minnesota and in other states for coordination of local, regional, state and federal funding and services.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEMT Advisory Committee support</li> <li>• NEMT Coordination Study</li> <li>• Vehicle-sharing study</li> <li>• Successful local transit coordination case studies</li> <li>• Minnesota mobility management case studies</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> <li>• Volunteer transportation programs inventory and survey</li> <li>• Study of economic benefits of Minnesota volunteer driver programs</li> <li>• Study of public-private partnerships in transit</li> <li>• Volunteer Driver Program Forum</li> <li>• Study on best practices in youth employment transportation</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #3
Recommend statewide objectives for providing public transportation services for the transit public.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEMT Advisory Committee support</li> <li>• NEMT Coordination Study</li> <li>• Definition of coordination</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• Olmstead Plan goals and measures</li> <li>• Homelessness and transportation services</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>



Year(s)
2012-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #4
Identify barriers prohibiting coordination and accessibility of public transportation services and aggressively pursue the elimination of those barriers.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEMT Advisory Committee support</li> <li>• NEMT Study</li> <li>• Synthesis of 2011 Greater MN regional transportation coordination plans</li> <li>• Planning guidance for the 2011 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plans in Minnesota</li> <li>• Maps of human service transportation providers' areas of service in MN</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• Olmstead Plan goals and measures</li> <li>• Homelessness and transportation services</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> <li>• Ways to increase vehicle sharing in Minnesota</li> <li>• Study of public-private partnerships in transit</li> <li>• Study on best practices in youth employment transportation</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #5
Recommend policies and procedures for coordinating local, regional, state, and federal funding and services for the transit public.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis of 2011 Greater MN regional transportation coordination plans</li> <li>• Successful local transit coordination case studies</li> <li>• Primer of funding sources for "transit public" in Minnesota</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> <li>• Study of public-private partnerships in transit</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011, 2014-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #6
Identify stakeholders in providing services for the transit public and seek input from them concerning barriers and appropriate strategies.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis of 2011 Greater MN regional transportation coordination plans</li> <li>• Participation in the MN State Council on Disability’s annual Town Hall Mtg.</li> <li>• Data collection and analysis of vehicle sharing</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• Homelessness and transportation services</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> <li>• Ways to increase vehicle sharing in Minnesota</li> <li>• Volunteer transportation programs inventory and survey</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #7
Recommend guidelines for developing transportation coordination plans throughout the state.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis of 2011 Greater MN regional transportation coordination plans</li> <li>• Planning guidance for the 2011 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plans in Minnesota</li> <li>• Successful local transit coordination case studies</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>

Year(s)
None of the years between 2011-2019
Legislative Duty #8
Encourage all state agencies participating in the council to purchase trips within the coordinated system.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This model of centralized purchasing is not in place in Minnesota.</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011-2012, 2014-2019
Legislative Duty #9
Facilitate the creation and operation of transportation brokerages to match riders to the appropriate service, promote shared dispatching, compile and disseminate information on transportation options, and promote regional communication.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility management webinars</li> <li>• Planning guidance for the 2011 Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plans in Minnesota</li> <li>• Successful local transit coordination case studies</li> <li>• Minnesota mobility management case studies</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011, 2015-2019, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #10
Encourage volunteer driver programs and recommend legislation to address liability and insurance issues.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful local transit coordination case studies</li> <li>• A survey and selected case studies of volunteer driver programs in Minnesota, including faith-based programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Volunteer transportation programs inventory and survey</li> <li>• Study of economic benefits of Minnesota volunteer driver programs</li> <li>• Volunteer driver insurance and reimbursement issues and education</li> <li>• Volunteer Driver Program Forum</li> <li>• Volunteer Driver Program resolution, brochure</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2016, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #11
Recommend minimum performance standards for delivery of services.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>

Year(s)
None of the years between 2011-2019
Legislative Duty #12
Identify methods to eliminate fraud and abuse in special transportation services.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be addressed in future work plans</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2013, 2015-2019 expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #13
Develop a standard method for addressing liability insurance requirements for transportation services purchased, provided, or coordinated.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle-sharing study</li> <li>RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> <li>Ways to increase vehicle sharing in Minnesota</li> <li>Volunteer driver insurance and reimbursement issues and education</li> <li>Volunteer Driver Program resolution, brochure</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011-2012
Legislative Duty #14
Design and develop a contracting template for providing coordinated transportation services.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of contract template</li> <li>RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2011, 2014 expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #15
Recommend an interagency uniform contracting and billing and accounting system for providing coordinated transportation services.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration on development of a Unified Transit Data Center pilot project in Scott and Carver counties</li> <li>• Common standards for financial records</li> <li>• RTCC organizing and implementation</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2012-2016 expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #16
Encourage the design and development of training programs for coordinated transportation services.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEMT Advisory Committee support</li> <li>• NEMT Study</li> <li>• Mobility management webinars</li> <li>• Minnesota mobility management case studies</li> <li>• Minnesota Mobility Management Handbook</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2016, expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #17
Encourage the use of public school transportation vehicles for the transit public.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2014-2015 expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #18
Develop an allocation methodology that equitably distributes transportation funds to compensate units of government and all entities that provide coordinated transportation services.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common standards for financial records</li> <li>• RTCC organizing and implementation</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2013, 2015, 2016 expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Legislative Duty #19
Identify policies and necessary legislation to facilitate vehicle sharing.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle-sharing study</li> <li>• Data collection and analysis of vehicle sharing</li> <li>• Maps of human service transportation providers' areas of service in Minnesota</li> <li>• Outreach to providers about options and benefits of vehicle sharing</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> </ul>

Year(s)
2012-2019 expect to continue the Supporting Activities in 2020
Advocate aggressively for eliminating barriers to coordination, implementing coordination strategies, enacting necessary legislation, and appropriating resources to achieve the council's objectives.
Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEMT Advisory Committee support</li> <li>• Transportation section of Minnesotahelp.info</li> <li>• Primer of funding sources for "transit public" in Minnesota</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• RTCC development, stakeholder engagement, guidance and website assistance</li> <li>• Volunteer driver insurance and reimbursement issues and education</li> <li>• Volunteer Driver Program resolution, brochure</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: List of Abbreviations

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DHS.....	Minnesota Department of Human Services
DTCCC.....	Dakota County Transportation Coordinating Collaborative
MCOTA.....	Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
MnDOT.....	Minnesota Department of Transportation
MPTA.....	Minnesota Public Transit Association
NEMT.....	Nonemergency Medical Transportation
PTPP.....	Public Transportation Policy Plan
RTCC.....	Regional Transportation Coordinating Council
STS.....	Special Transportation Service
TCAP.....	Twin Cities Area Transit Coordination Assistance Project
TNC.....	Transportation Network Company (e.g., Lyft, Uber)