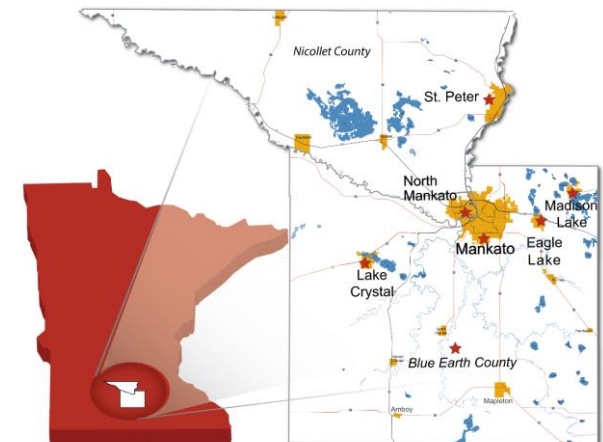


Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO)

**Planning Process for a Regional Transportation
Coordinating Council (RTCC) Servicing the South-Central
Region**

Minnesota MPO Conference
October 1, 2020



Contents

- Background
- Project Overview
 - MnDOT role
 - MAPO role
- Planning Process
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Workplan Goals
- Organizational Structure
- Next Steps
- Lessons Learned
- Questions



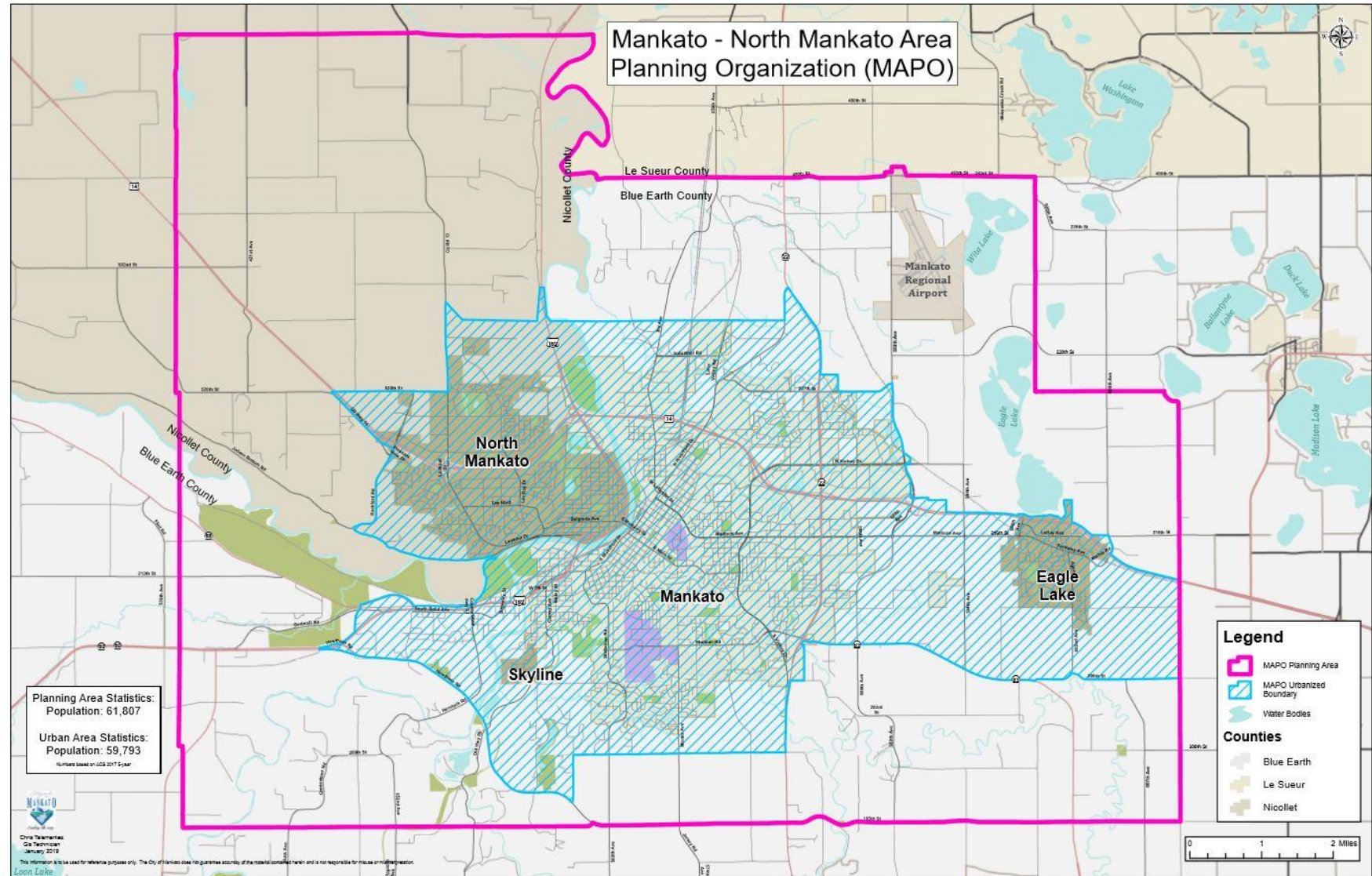
Cities: Eagle Lake, Mankato, North Mankato, Skyline

Counties: Blue Earth, Nicollet

Townships: Belgrade, LeRay, Lime, Mankato, South Bend

Planning Area Pop:
61,807

Urbanized Area Pop:
59,793



Background

- Regionalization of transportation needs
 - Latent demand
 - Disbursed population
 - Aging population
 - Age-in-place preference
 - Diverse population
- “Transportation disadvantaged” – older adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with low incomes, and/or military veterans, new Americans.
- MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation provided financial support and technical assistance to develop and implement RTCCs



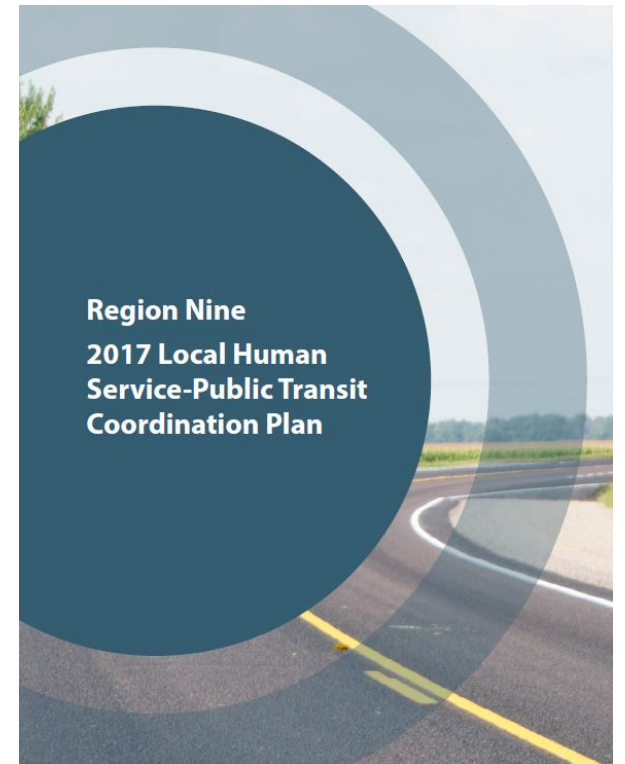
MnDOT Role

- MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation (OTAT)
- **PHASE 1**
 - Organizational Planning/Development
 - Funds for planning for RTCC (100%)
- **PHASE 2**
 - Organizational Implementation
 - Start producing solutions
 - Funds for administrative costs
- Phase 1 must be complete before Phase 2



Program goals

- Develop solutions toward providing safe, efficient, affordable regional transportation
- Build on work conducted via Human Service Plans
- Reduce rider confusion
- Work to address challenges of current system
- Streamline access
- Identify gaps, redundancies, & service inefficiencies
- Work to decrease costs for riders & customers
- Develop regional policies & procedures
- Coordinate grant/funding opportunities
- Address special regional issues

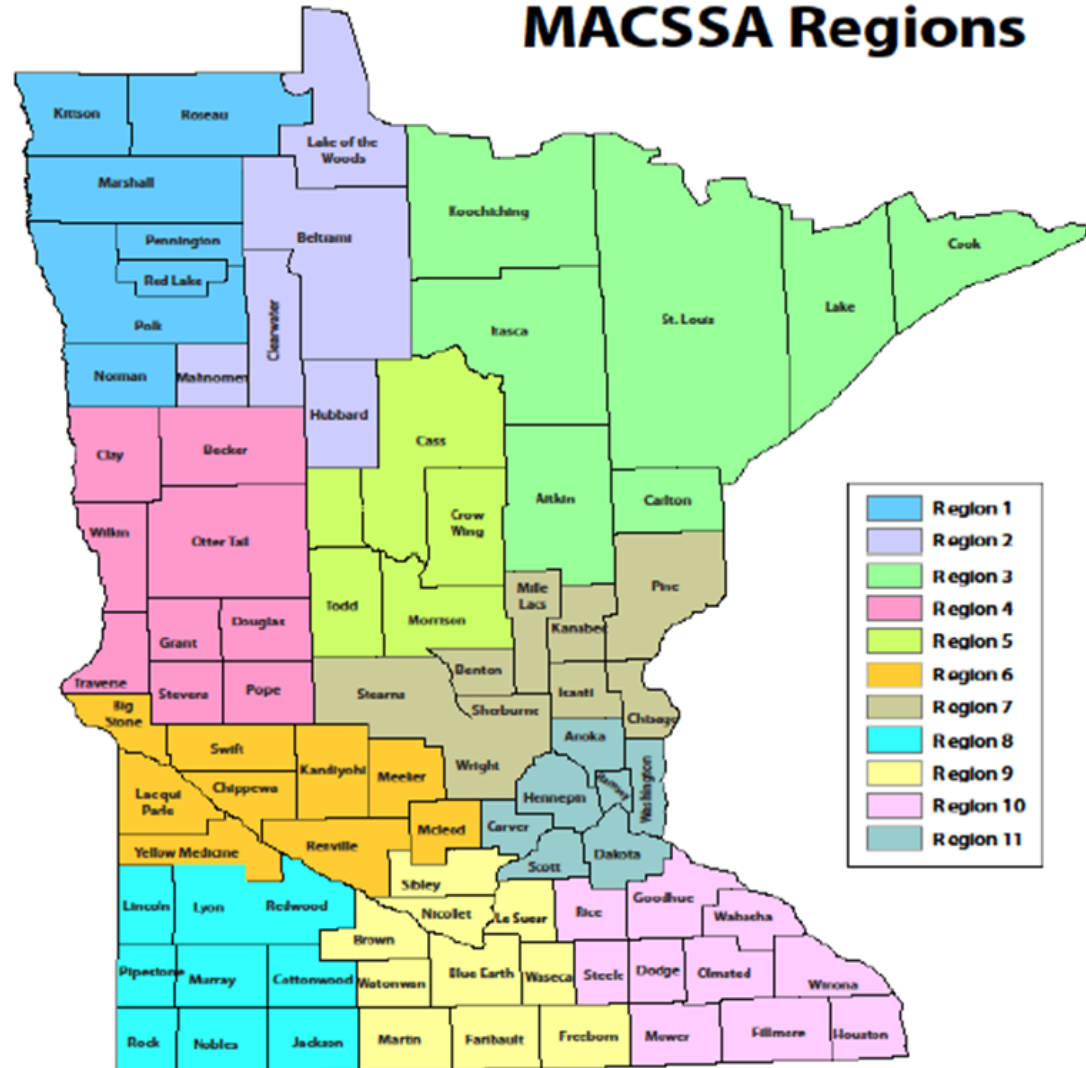


Greater Minnesota Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils
Phase 1: 2018 Application for Organizational Planning Grant

Attachment A: Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators (MACSSA)

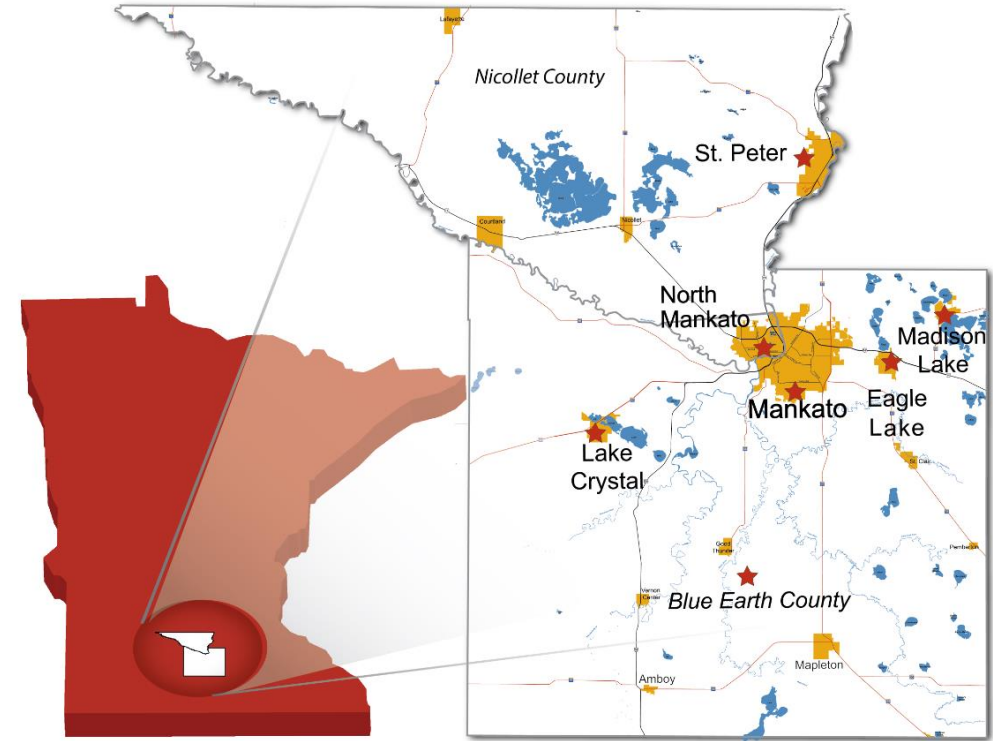
Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators

MACSSA Regions



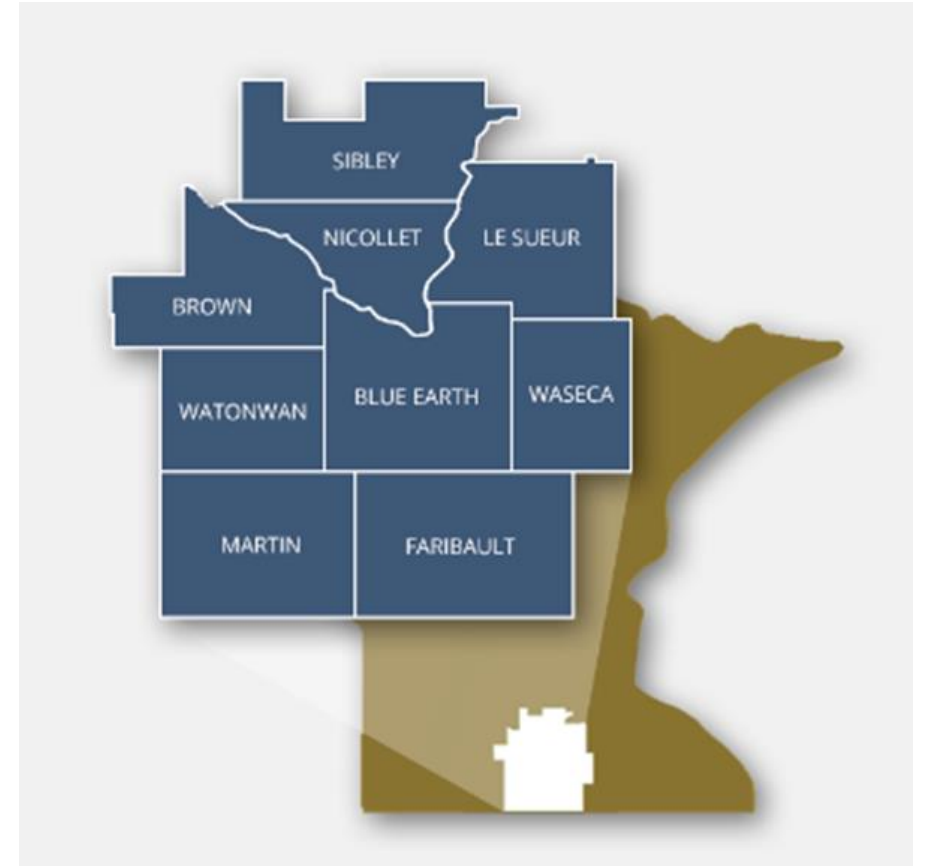
MAPO Role

- Lead Phase 1 – Planning process
- Stakeholder Outreach
- Existing Conditions
- Issues Identification
- Work Plan
- Organizational Structure
- Operational Implementation Plan

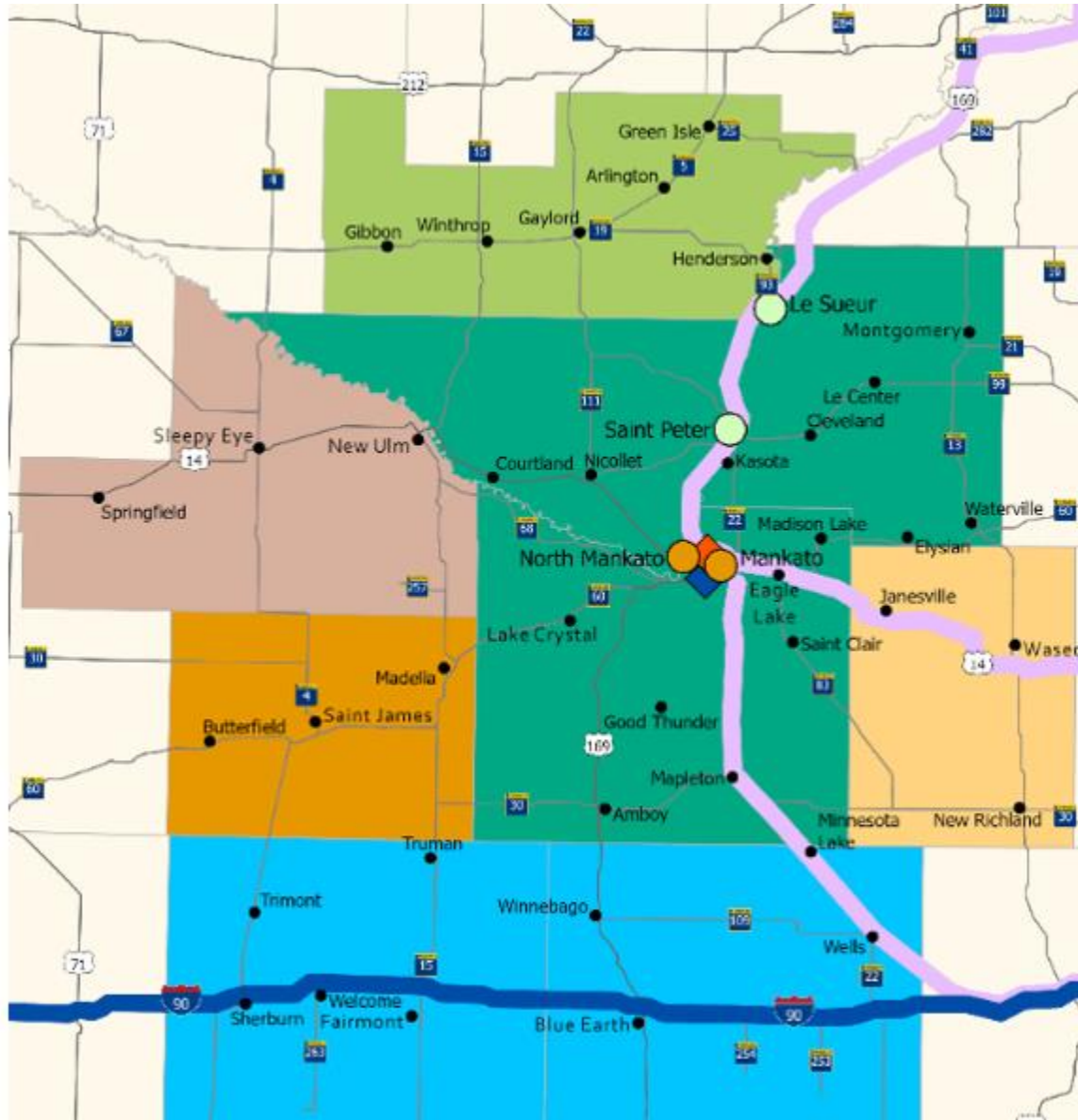


Regional characteristics

- 100+ different transportation providers
- Public, private, nonprofit/volunteer
- Vary in population served, geographic area served, size, operating hours, capacity, qualifications/certifications, structure, mission, dispatch system, driver training
- Diverse rider base
- Outgoing destinations include metro, Rochester



Partial provider service area map



- Brown County Heartland Express
- Prairie Lakes Transit
- SMART
- Trailblazer Transit
- True Transit (Vine)
- Watowwan Take Me There
- Minnesota River Valley Transit
- Mankato-Greater Mankato Transit
- AmeriCare Mobility Van
- Blue Earth County Taxi
- Jefferson Lines
- Land to Air

Opportunities

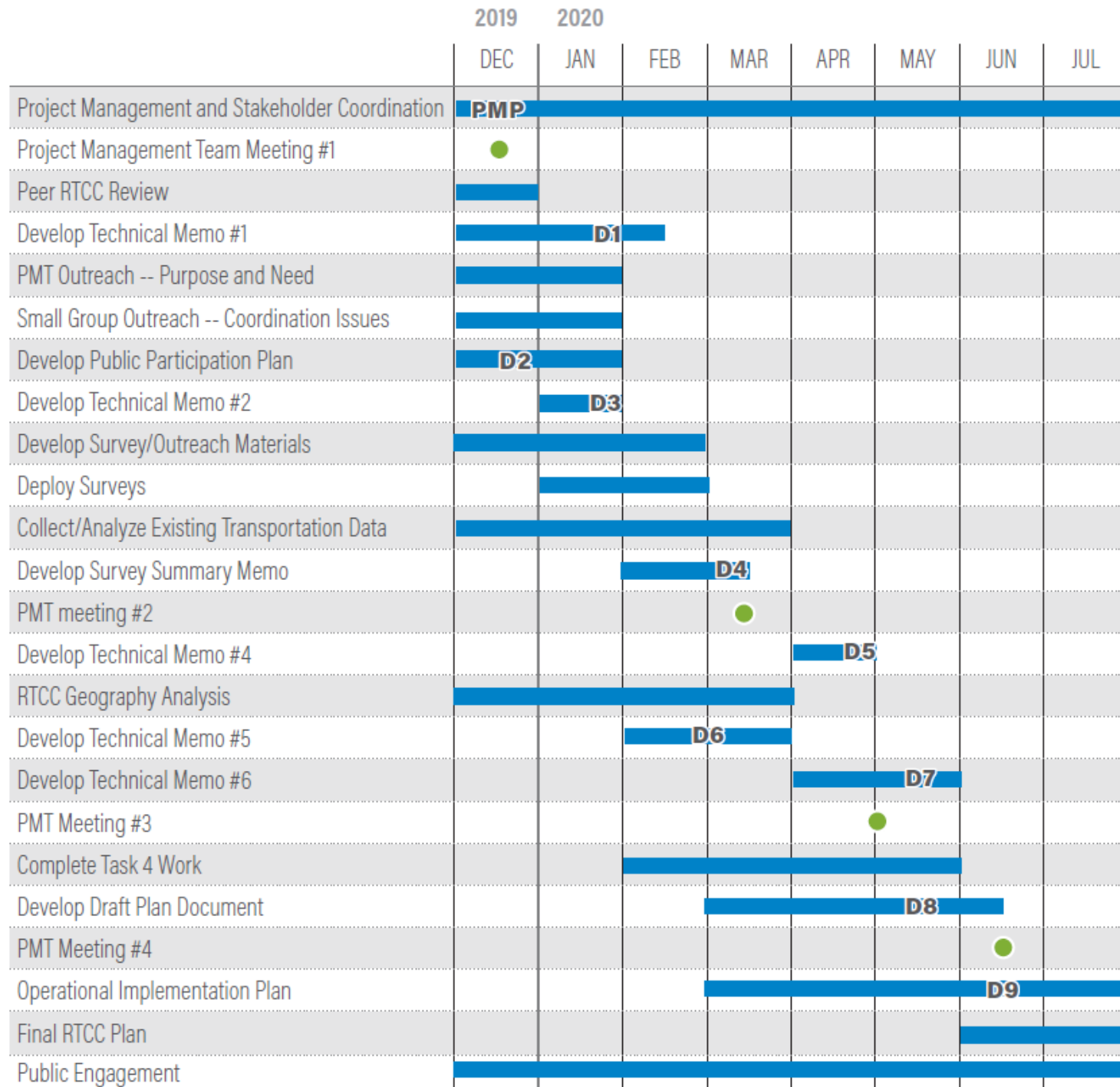
- Focus on all modes of transportation
- Simplify multi-provider trips
- Broad engagement
- Formalize strategies identified in coordination plans and long-range plans
- Improve both mobility and efficiency of services
- Overcome programmatic silos
- Connect providers with new business
- Create a better rider environment

Planning Process

Major Project Tasks

- PMT Meetings
- Stakeholder Engagement
- RTCC Work Plan
 - RTCC goals
- RTCC Organizational Structure
- Operational Implementation Plan





PMT

- “Large group” 100+ individuals
- “Small group” ~20 individuals
- Health, Human, & Social services
- Transit Providers
 - Public, private, nonprofit
- County Governance
- Workforce / Economic Development
- Youth & Senior
- Communities w/ Disabilities
- Transportation Planning / Programming



Discussion points

RTCC goals and objectives

How strategies identified in coordination plans will be implemented

RTCC membership

Bylaws

Organization resources

Work plan

Ongoing involvement

Funding plan

Stakeholder Engagement

- Direct engagement
 - In person, phone, virtual meetings
- Survey
- Interactive teleconferences to accommodate targeted population with disabilities.
- Open Houses: In person and live virtual engagements to accommodate public health guidance
- Project web presence, news releases

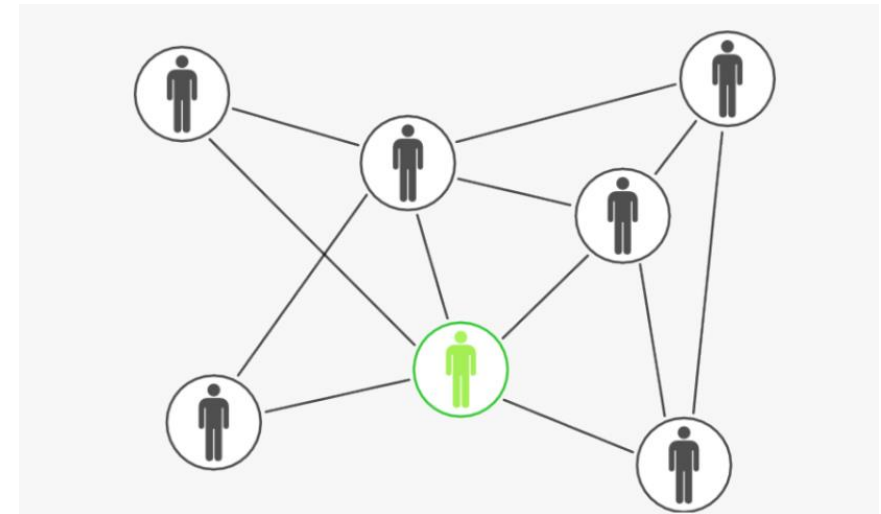
Issues identified

- Lack of understanding of options
 - Riders, agency staff, and providers
- Lack of organizational capacities
 - Staff, knowledge
 - Identification/application/administration of funding
- Lack of funding flexibility
- Service constricted by municipal boundaries
- Geographic and temporal service gaps
- Fragmentation
- General funding deficiencies



Workplan goal 1: Identify and understand all available transportation options in the region

- Objective 1.1: Develop a database of available transportation resources and services in the region
- Objective 1.2: Establish a service evaluation mechanism and performance measures
- Objective 1.3: Develop a one-call/one-click resource for transportation services



Workplan goal 2: Improve coordination between transportation providers

- Objective 2.1: Convene meetings of RTCC members to coordinate transportation activities and share ideas
- Objective 2.2: Collaborate with MnDOT on statewide emphasis areas
- Objective 2.3: Share regularly scheduled regional trips



Workplan goal 3: Identify opportunities for consistent communications for customers of all ages and abilities

- Objective 3.1: Create and expand customer travel training programs
- Objective 3.2: Create a marketing campaign to inform and educate the public about available transportation services



Workplan goal 4: Support the identification of additional funding sources

- Objective 4.1: Work with governmental, non-profit, and private partners to secure match funding for continued task implementation beyond Phase II



Workplan goal 5: Increase access to services, education, and centers of commerce

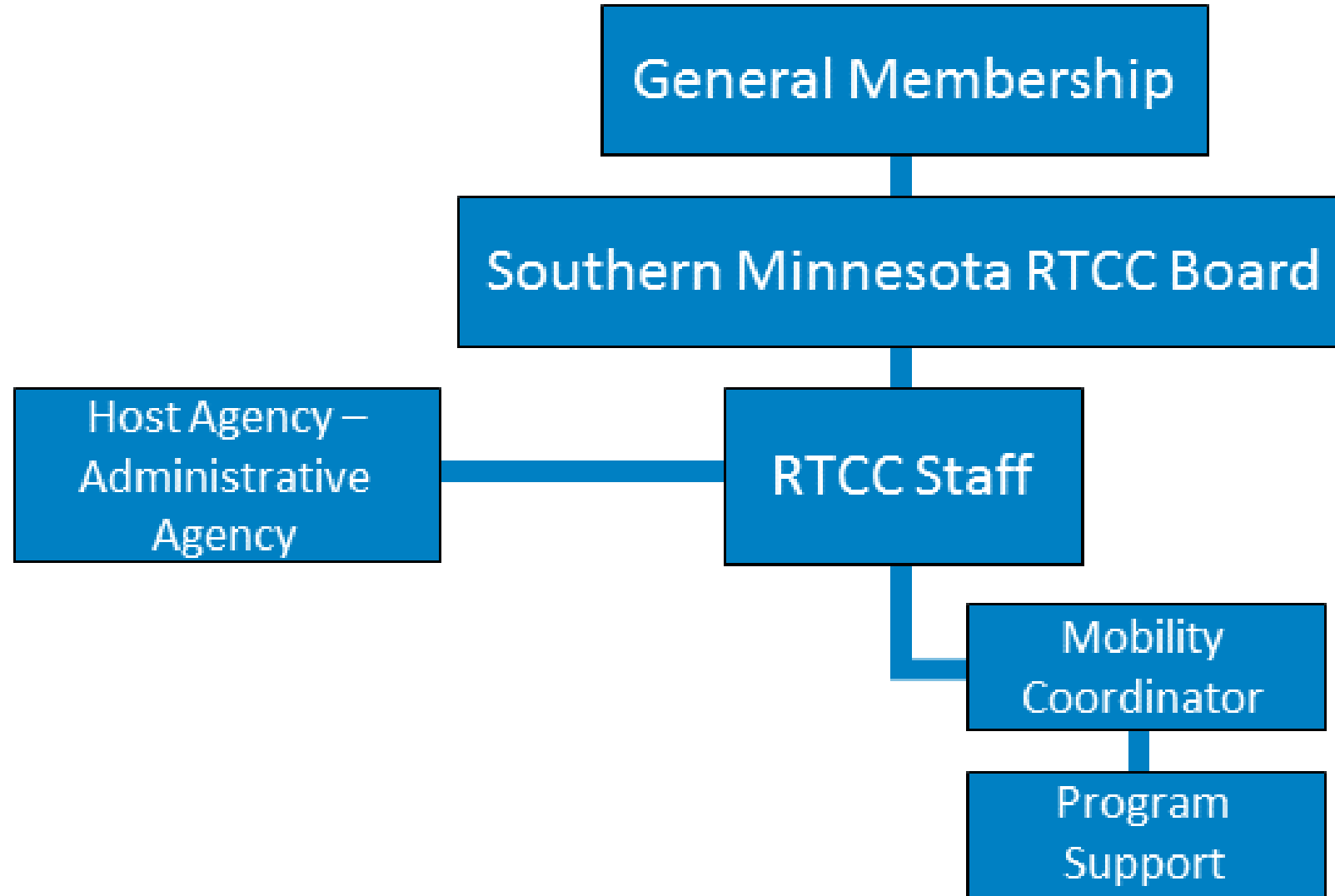
- Objective 5.1: Partner with human / social service providers to identify transportation options to bridge gap between people & services
- Objective 5.2: Provide outreach to health care providers & employers to promote scheduling that aligns with service patterns, hospital discharge, & work shifts
- Objective 5.3: Explore vanpool & carpool program viability



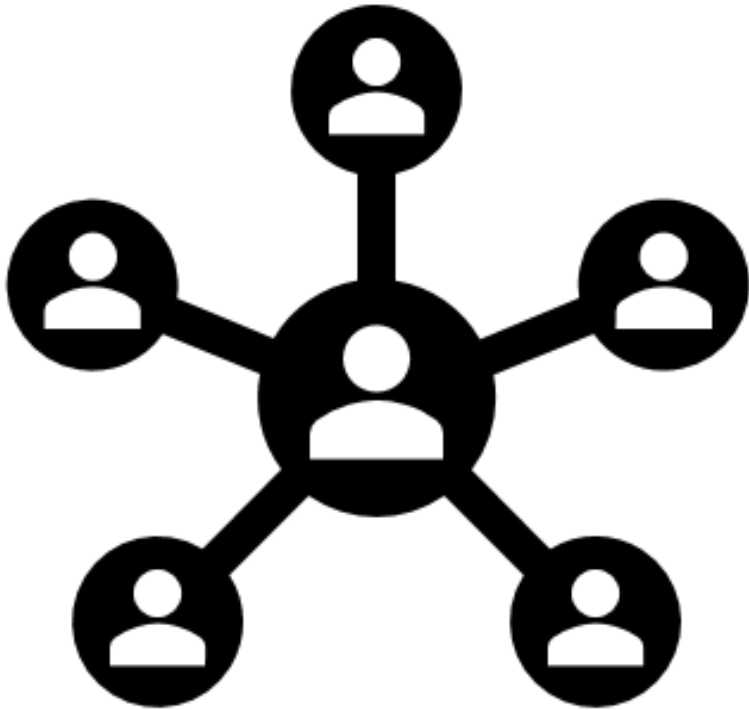
Workplan goal 6: Identify opportunities to improve the efficiency of existing transportation service and associated resources

- Objective 6.1: Provide administrative support to transportation providers for duties such as grant applications, asset management & maintenance, scheduling /dispatch, & driver training
- Objective 6.2: Inventory facilities & equipment to identify options for shared resources
- Objective 6.3: Work with public & private transportation providers to cooperatively purchase & share capital resources

Organizational Structure



Board Representation



- Recommend formation of a Steering Committee prior to Phase II that will transition into a formal RTCC Board
- Recommend representation from a variety of groups, but limited to ~ 2 per county to be inclusive
- Peer RTCCs have used existing board structures as RTCC Boards

Organizational Structure

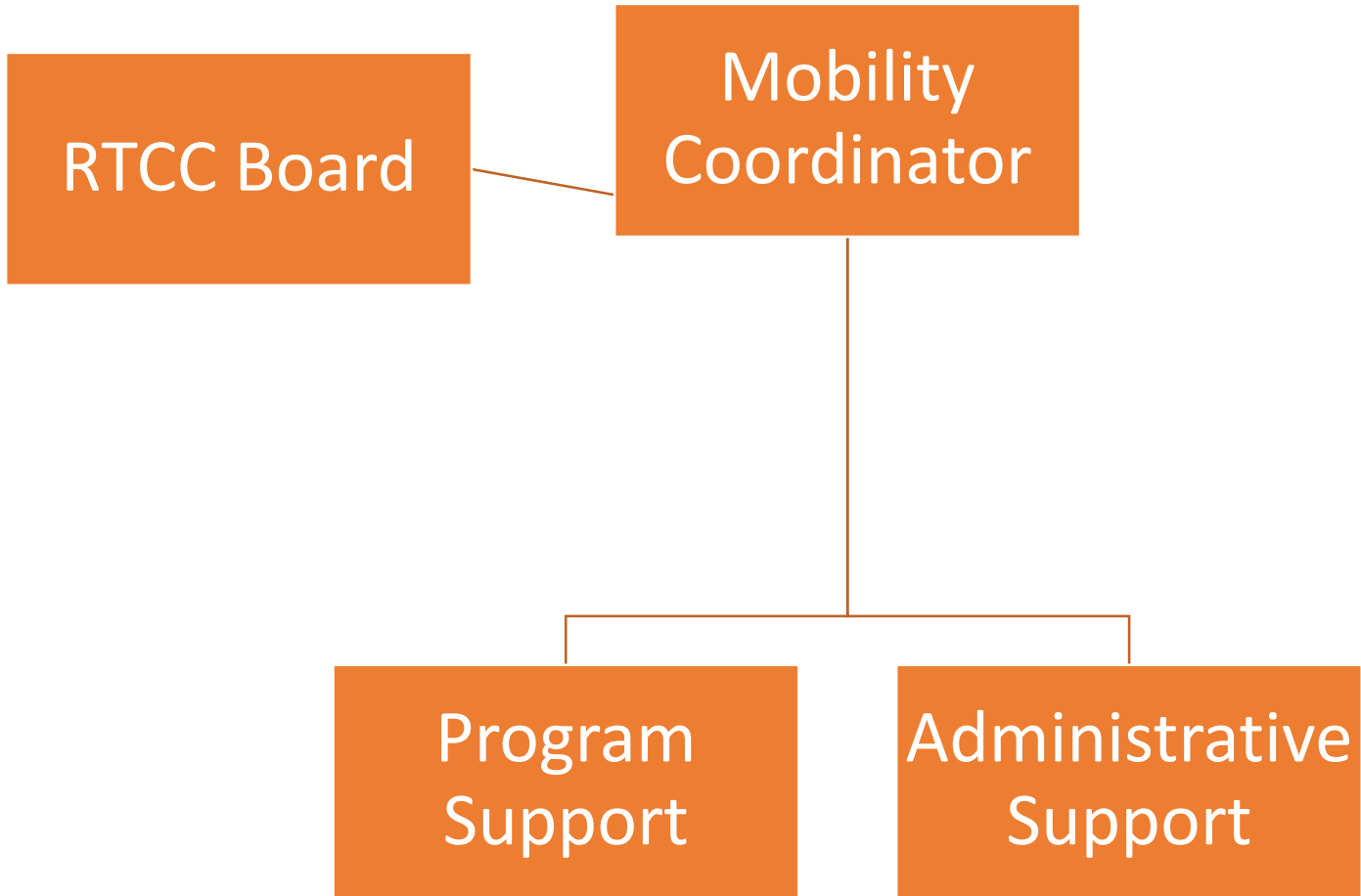
Host Agency

- Serve as MnDOT grant recipient/fiscal agent
- Initially employ RTCC project staff during Phase II
 - May do so long-term if housing at host agency is preferred

RTCC Board

- Mix of County and agency representation
- Quarterly meetings
- Cap of ~ 20 members

Staffing



Financial Plan (illustrative)

Category	Description	Full-time Equivalents (if applicable)	Year 2021 (January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2021)	Year 2022 (January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2022)
Personnel	Mobility Coordinator	1.0	\$70,000	\$72,100
Personnel	Program Support	1.0 (Year 1) 2.0 (Year 2)	\$58,000	\$119,480
Personnel	Host Agency Administrative Support	0.5 (Year 1) 0.3 (Year 2)	\$30,000	\$18,540
Personnel	Benefits	30% of salaries	\$47,400	\$63,036
Direct Cost	Office Expenses (Rent, Supplies, Printing, Technology, Legal/Auditing)		\$15,000	\$12,500
Direct Cost	Work Plan Implementation, Marketing, Stakeholder Outreach and Public Engagement		\$20,000	\$25,000
Direct Cost	RTCC Board Meeting Expenses		\$3,000	\$3,500
Direct Cost	Mileage Reimbursement for RTCC Staff Travel	1,000 Miles @ 57.5 cents per mile	\$575	\$575
Annual Total		2.5 FTE (Year 1) 3.3 FTE (Year 2)	\$243,975	\$314,731
State Share			\$243,975	\$283,257.90
Local Share			\$0	\$31,473.10

Next Steps

- Transition project to administrative agency, dependent on Phase II implementation funds awarded by MnDOT
- Complete and submit Phase II implementation grant application to MnDOT
- Upon securing Phase II implementation funding, establish initial RTCC Board after application process through steering committee
- Develop staffing structure and review position descriptions for RTCC staff; hire mobility coordinator and support staff

Lessons Learned

- Regional unfamiliarity of RTCC model
- General skepticism due to enduring challenges and previous efforts
 - Education/marketing of MPO, MAPO, RTCC concepts
 - Trust/relationship building
 - Direct stakeholder engagement to address questions
- Future funding concerns
 - Questions of potential “unfunded mandate” and enduring MnDOT participation
 - Continuing local stakeholder cost participation
- Capacity of local agencies to serve as host



Questions

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