

Mobility Management in Wisconsin

Mobility Management

Mobility management is an approach for managing and delivering coordinated transportation services to customers, including older adults, people with disabilities, individuals with lower incomes and the general public. According to the National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM), the mobility management approach focuses more on the customer and their needs. These activities look beyond a single transportation service or solution or type of vehicle, scooter or bicycle, to a “family of services” strategy that tailors options to meet community demographics and needs. www.nc4mm.org

Wisconsin is a model in the nation for the widespread implementation of mobility management. Keys to success in Wisconsin include:

- Support and buy-in from the State
- Mobility management model not prescribed by the State but determined locally
- Emphasis on coordination
- State funding for specialized transportation and transit
- Mobility management infrastructure – Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers (WAMM)

Functions

Mobility Managers may have job titles like Transportation Coordinator or Mobility Specialist, and work in various organizations including Aging & Disability Resource Centers, Independent Living Centers, Community Action Programs or transit systems. Despite the difference in location and title, there are commonalities among mobility management programs which include:

- Compiling an inventory of available services;
- Identifying customer and community needs (survey, assessments, interviews);
- Developing strategies to meet the needs;
- Coordinating financial and other resources;
- Improving efficiencies and reducing duplication of existing services;
- Training staff and volunteers;
- Promoting the use of innovative technologies, services, and other methods to improve customer service and coordination;
- Developing educational information and trip planning tools;
- Forming partnerships and promoting collaboration among key community stakeholders;
- Marketing services;
- Leading and participating in the coordinated transportation planning process
- Providing Individual and group travel training
- Monitoring and facilitating implementation of shared-use mobility services

History

Federal Transit Administration New Freedom, 5317 funding was available starting in 2008 specifically for hiring mobility managers. There were 20 projects approved in 2008 and WisDOT implemented a training and certification program in 2009. In 2011, WisDOT stopped providing the training so Mobility Managers formed their own association, Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers (WAMM) that assumed the training, certification and advocacy on topics related to mobility and person-centered transportation options. WAMM is a 501(c)6 and an all-volunteer association of mobility management professionals.

Mobility Managers also benefit agencies and communities by increasing effectiveness and efficiency of programs, providing outreach and education, diversifying funding streams, increasing transportation access and advocating for the programs that help people get where they need to go.

The Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers (WAMM) membership includes over 50 mobility management professionals statewide covering most counties and some tribes in the state. The membership list and more information can be found at the WAMM website. <http://wi-mm.org/>

Funding

WisDOT Mobility Management study done in July 2015 found that mobility managers were funded with Federal and State funding, matched with county and local funding as well as private grants, donations, fundraising, contracted revenue streams and other non-profit funding. <http://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/transit/mob-prac.pdf>

The Federal funding used for mobility management is primarily Federal 5310, matched with a small amount of State 85.22 funding. The allowance of in-kind local match makes this an affordable way for rural areas and small agencies to add a dedicated transportation professional.

The Federal 5310 funding is also used for vehicles and operating expenses. Capital expenses, including the position of mobility manager can be funded with up to 80% of Federal funds. A smaller percentage is available for operating projects. The Federal funds are distributed to rural, small urban and urban areas by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and distributed directly to four designated urban areas through a formula. This competitive funding source is oversubscribed with demands for all three types of projects increasing. Each year, funding requests outnumber the money available.

Mobility Managers and mobility management programs benefit the agency in which they work, the community at large, as well as individual customers. Mobility Management is an effective component of the overall transportation system statewide and especially as we plan for our transportation needs now and long-term.

To Learn More about Mobility Management

WI Assn. of Mobility Managers (WAMM) - is a professional association of Mobility Management professionals
www.wi-mm.org

Mobility Managers: Transportation Coordinators for Older adults, People with Disabilities, Veterans, and Other Members of the Riding Public. AARP Public Policy Institute, 2019 <https://www.aarp.org/ppi/info-2019/emerging-innovations-mobility-managers.html>

WisDOT mobility management page - <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/transit/mobility.aspx>

Mobility Management Practices in Wisconsin: WisDOT Bureau of Local Roads, Railroads, and Harbors, 2015
<https://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/doing-bus/local-gov/astnce-pgms/transit/mob-prac.pdf>

National Center for Mobility Management <https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/> for technical assistance, grants, resources, e-learning and other training.