

State of the State: Transportation Coordination Efforts in Nebraska



**Federal Transit
Administration**

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About the National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)

The National Center for Mobility Management is a national technical assistance center funded through a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration, and operated through a consortium of three national organizations—the American Public Transportation Association, the Community Transportation Association of America, and Easterseals Inc. The mission of the Center is to promote customer-centered mobility strategies that advance good health, economic vitality, self-sufficiency, and community.

Overview

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), along with a broad range of partnering agencies, initiated the Statewide Mobility Management Project in December 2015 with the goal of improving travel options for residents and visitors of the state. Through this statewide approach to addressing mobility needs, alternatives that fill in service gaps were identified, and an implementation plan was initiated.

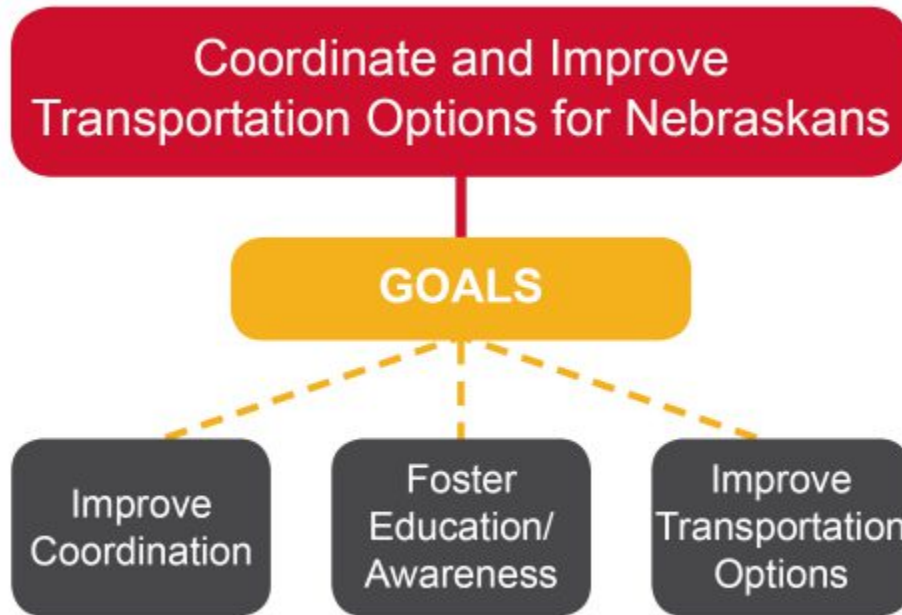


Figure 1 - The Vision for Mobility Management in NE. Source: Mobility Management Project Update – July 2019

To better address the diversity of the state, six regions were organized along county boundaries - Northwest or Panhandle, Southwest, North Central, South Central, Northeast and Southeast. In each region, a Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) was established to help understand transit needs and overlaps. Each RCC is a forum for bringing transportation providers, human service agencies, and other stakeholders together on a regular basis for:

- Sharing information and experiences that are likely to help in mutual learning and seeking advice
- Creating opportunities for partnership and seeking coordination ideas that help in economically efficient public transportation in the region
- Discussing and addressing mobility needs in the region
- Serving as an advisory body to the NDOT about the local mobility issues in the region and the identified coordination strategies

Complementing the RCC's is a Statewide Coordination Committee (SCC). This group was formed to bring together representatives from various agencies and stakeholder groups providing or supporting services that include client mobility. The SCC has been organized as an advisory group to the NDOT and is not a policy-making body. The committee, while made up of agencies with budgets that include transportation service, does not have the ability to develop its own funding mechanisms, nor operate a transit system.

Coordination Organization

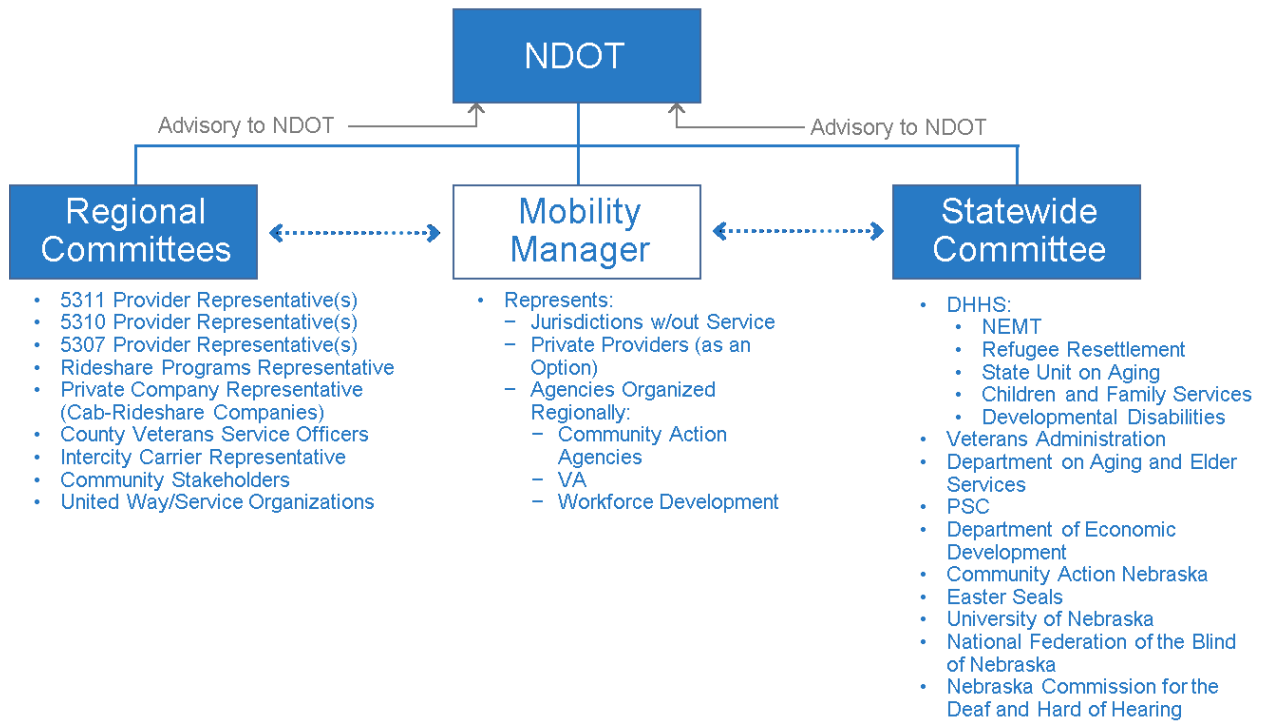


Figure 2 - Coordination Organization Structure for NE's Mobility Management. Source: [NDOT Mobility Manager Handbook](#)

Nebraska Statewide Mobility Manager

The role of Nebraska’s Statewide Mobility Manager is to provide statewide services including travel training, trip planning, marketing and coordination. The position also involves evaluating the need for mobility managers in each of the 6 identified regions. The statewide mobility manager will facilitate coordination among the 6 regions across the state.

In addition to the position, the mobility manager is tasked with the continued development of Nebraska’s Mobility Management Vision. This includes establishing specific goals and objectives for consistent messages for all levels of outreach, from state elected officials, transit agencies, and transit riders. Increase community awareness of Mobility Management program statewide. Incorporate in statewide vision – Mobility as a Service in Nebraska.

Purpose, Role and Responsibilities of Mobility Managers in RCC’s

The position is responsible to improve business and community support for the hosting transportation organization. It will require development and distribution of information that explains how to utilize the available resources in meeting the diverse travel needs of the market it serves. The purpose of the position includes:

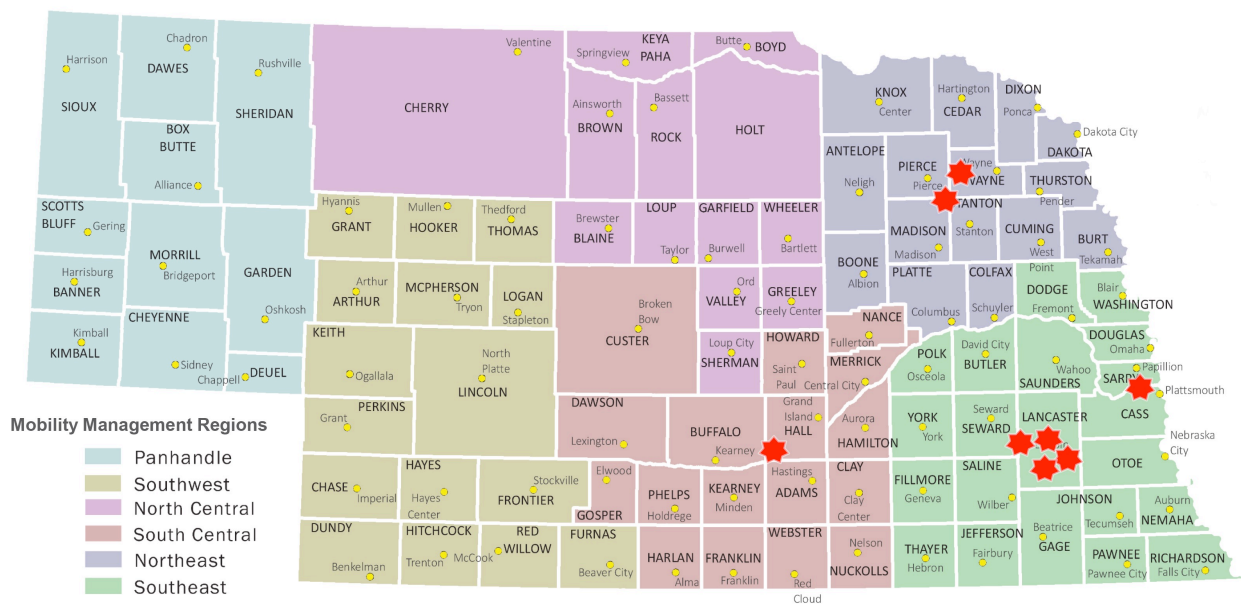
- To create partnerships between multiple agencies and organizations, including taxi and other private transportation providers to provide more transportation options.
- To promote a customer-driven, market-based approach to transportation that provides customers with a variety of transportation options through individualized trip planning.
- To offer support for trip planning and travel training.

- To help establish, improve and/or expand the mobility management activities by developing future expansion of transit options across municipal boundaries
- To serve as a liaison between the NDOT and the SCC or RCC to share ideas and recommendations for coordination and other successful mobility management practices.
- To bring unrepresented transportation gaps and needs to the table for RCC and SCC discussions.
- To represent the jurisdictions without transit service and the regionally organized human service agencies that might be affected by coordination strategies.
- To direct design, production and distribution of marketing materials directed at the public, employers, employees, human service agencies and other entities.
- To make public presentations on the benefits/costs of mobility management for the community

According to the [Mobility Manager Handbook](#), the mobility manager will be responsible for:

- Creating partnerships between multiple agencies and organizations, including taxi and other private transportation providers to provide more transportation options.
- Enhancing the rider's transit experience by making information about transportation options easily available in an accessible format (including transit services information on agency and Nebraska Transit website).
- Seeking input from RCC and SCC members for prioritizing coordination strategies and pursue the promising ones by providing regular coordination strategy updates to the coordination committees (via email or at the RCC/SCC meetings).
- Identifying, discussing with RCC/SCC, evaluating, and making recommendations on mobility issues.
- Providing advice to the NDOT on changes in public transportation policies, procedures or forms that are likely to improve mobility management.
- Assisting the NDOT with any training or education tasks need to be completed at the regional or state level.
- Ensuring maximum feasible coordination of public transit services addressing the transit gaps and overlaps.
- Providing appropriate technical assistance to the transportation providers to help in interagency coordination as well as efficient transit operations.
- Ensuring that the coordination strategies are complying with the federal regulations for funding program requirements.
- Providing marketing and advertising assistance to transit agencies including travel training to target populations in their service area.
- Facilitating communication between the transit providers, the NDOT, and the RCC/SCC.
- Providing periodic updates on mobility management for the Nebraska Transit website (www.nebraskatransit.com)
- Serving as a resource to other mobility managers for sharing experiences, tools, and expertise to enhance mobility management in the state.
- Staying in touch with other mobility managers (via email/phone correspondence) for regular mobility management updates in-between consecutive RCC/SCC meetings. Email listserv or customized email recipient list can be prepared for easy information dissemination.
- Discussing potential updates to the RCC, SCC and Mobility Manager handbook with the NDOT, coordination committees and other mobility managers at the RCC and/or SCC meetings.

Geographic Scale: Statewide coverage, broken down into Mobility Management Regions (see below)



Lead Agency: Nebraska Department of Transportation, under “GoNEWhere” Mobility Management Initiative

Establishing Authority: Nebraska Department of Transportation

Funding Sources: Section 5311, not 5310 because there are 60 5311 transit agencies who cover the rural areas and are open to the public. 5310 agencies in Nebraska are siloed and have trouble coordinating with one another.

Current status of network (July 2019): The Nebraska Department of Transportation launched Phase 3 of the Mobility Management Project in July 2019. The Mobility Management initial phases began over 10 years ago. Over the next three years, strategies will be implemented across the state. Leading and assisting many of the projects is Bill Bivin, Nebraska’s first Statewide Mobility Manager. Bill has worked extensively with transportation providers across the state, along with the NDOT Transit Division staff. His role is to understand transportation needs and challenges across the state and provide a perspective for the upcoming mobility management projects.

The project is focused on improving mobility in rural areas addressing the needs of the elderly, disabled and low-income population which forms most of Nebraska’s rural population. Currently, there are 13 counties in the state without any public transportation service and another 13 counties without rural area service. Through this statewide approach to addressing mobility needs, it is anticipated that alternatives that fill in service gaps can be identified and implemented.

Phase 3 – Stage 1 of the Mobility Management projects are underway. The goals are as follows:

- To ensure successful outcomes for each of the 7 priority NDOT projects:
 - [Grand Island/Kearney/Hastings Intercity Bus Study](#)
 - [Lincoln/Omaha Intercity Feasibility Study](#)
 - [Norfolk Flexroute Feasibility Study](#)
 - [Northeast Region Mobility Management/Coordination](#)
 - [Statewide Mobility Management Public Relations](#)

- [Statewide Mobility Manager](#)
- [Technology Project](#)
- To engage key community stakeholders for realistic sustainable projects/services.

Current hurdles:

Resources:

For this information, NCMM corroborated with the following stakeholders in Nebraska:

- One state-level stakeholder at Nebraska Dept of Transportation
 - William Bivin, Statewide Mobility Manager

Web links

- 1) [Nebraska Transit – Mobility Management Page](#)
- 2) [Nebraska Statewide Coordination Committee Handbook](#)
- 3) [Nebraska Regional Coordination Committee Handbook](#)
- 4) [Nebraska Mobility Manager Handbook](#)
- 5) [Nebraska Statewide Coordinated Plan](#)
- 6) [Nebraska Mobility Management Active Projects](#)