# Annual Report For

# Fiscal Year 2023, July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

# Mobility Management in the Regional Coordination Council for Community Transportation of Greater Nashua (RCC7)

# The purpose of this document is to delineate the Mobility Management activities that occurred during the fiscal year of 2023, from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.

# Definition of Mobility Management

Operating under the umbrella of the State Coordination Council for Community Transportation and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, Mobility Management is a program to provide transportation information, referrals, and coordination efforts for the benefit of those who cannot access transportation. The Mobility Management Program seeks to assist seniors, disabled, and low-income individuals with transportation options that fit their specific situations. Mobility Management is also an effort to encourage coordination and cooperation among transportation service providers. In July of 2022, the NRPC hired its first Mobility Manager to lead the activities of the Greater Nashua Regional Coordination Council (RCC-7) for Community Transportation. The Regional Coordination Council (RCC) is comprised of local transportation providers, human service agencies, funding agencies/organizations, consumers, and regional planning commission staff. The Mobility Manager performs duties and tasks that are performed within the context of the Metropolitan Planning Organization initiatives defined by the National Regional Planning Commission and the statewide initiatives defined by the State Coordinating Council for Community Transportation in collaboration with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. The overall goal of the Mobility Manager is to promote the development of a coordinated, customer-centered, transportation network that allows residents to maintain independence and participate in work and community life no matter their age, ability, or income. The network includes the Nashua Transit System, the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative - SVTC, the Caregivers – a project of Catholic Charities, the Community Volunteer Transportation Company - CVTC, the Greater Salem Caregivers, the Gate City Bike Coop - GCBC, local municipalities, social service agencies, and interested residents.

**Some of the Mobility Manager’s Activities Included:**

* Making transportation referrals for individuals and for case managers from social service organizations.
* Participating in state. regional, local transportation, and social service meetings and subcommittees, such as the Volunteer Driver Program networking group, Elderly Wrap, and the Continuum of Care.
* Building partnerships with representatives from low-income, elderly, and disabled adult populations, veterans’ groups, and housing complexes serving transit-dependent populations.
* Collaborating with the other Mobility Managers in New Hampshire to find solutions to individual mobility challenges.
* Seeking solutions to the transportation gaps in the RCC 7.

**Bike Activities**

The Mobility Manager provided support to the Gate City Bike Coop. When it was reported that the Gate City Bike Coop had a surplus of bicycles that they could not store for the winter, the Mobility Manager informed other Mobility Managers throughout the state, and they began bike giveaways in their communities. Some of the state’s Mobility Managers contacted their local schools for bike giveaways as well as bike repair initiatives. Also, the Mobility Manager used her NRPC volunteer hours to write a strategic report for the Gate City Bike Coop. And when there was a critical need for help at the Gate City Bike Coop, the Mobility Manager was there to assist.

At various events in Nashua, the Mobility Manager also passed out bike vouchers to needy individuals so they would be eligible to receive a no-cost bike, helmet, and light. These bikes are distributed to those who would have no other viable means of transportation.

**Diverse Cultures Initiatives**

The Mobility Manager sought to include all cultures in the efforts to improve transportation in the RCC 7. The Mobility Manager assumed the leadership of the Cultural Connections Committee to bring the vitality of various cultures to the table when discussing transportation. The Cultural Connections Committee Leadership also allows information to be dispersed through various key communities.

**Interest in the Regional Coordination Council**

Interest in the issue of transportation and the Regional Coordination Council increased during the fiscal year, July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023. Attendance at the regular monthly meetings was as follows:

July – 18 January - 16

August - l6 February - 16

September – 13 March - 17

October – 15 April - 13

December – 13 June - 10

These numbers reflect a growing interest in transportation as well as an increase in the diversity of the attendees. The average monthly meeting attendance grew from 7 people to 14 people, a 100% increase.

**Materials Produced**

Shortly after being hired, the Mobility Manager produced a series of surveys tailored to the needs of municipalities, social service agencies, and senior centers. As soon as possible, the Greater Nashua Transportation and Mobility Guide was produced. The Mobility Manager produced call sheets for the facilities dealing with healthcare, vocational, and workforce transportation dilemmas. The Mobility Manager also produced a gap analysis chart demonstrating where there were gaps according to municipalities. In addition, specific brochures were produced for the municipalities of Mason, Pelham, and Merrimack, and going forward this list will include all municipalities in the NRPC district. The Mobility Manager also updated all the entries in the Transportation Directory by calling and emailing all the organizations. Each entry was checked for accuracy. The ones no longer in existence were deleted, and new organizations were added. The Transportation Directory was also added to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission website enabling visitors to the website to find transportation services.

**Media Activities**

The Mobility Manager collaborated with other mobility managers and regional planners to write an article, “The Challenges to Community Transportation in New Hampshire” for the New Hampshire Municipal Association. The article was published in the March/April 2023 edition of Town and City Magazine.

On Thursday, February 28th, the Mobility Manager appeared on Hudson’s Cable TV Channel to speak about the initiatives the State of New Hampshire is enacting regarding Mobility Management. Alejandro Urrutia is the host of the show and a leader in Greater Nashua’s Latino community.

The Mobility Manager also spoke on the United Way Community Connections Radio Show on Monday, January 23, 2023, with Michael Apfelberg. The purpose of Mobility Management was discussed and how listeners could access the services of the Mobility Manager. Also, present was Don Pare of the Gate City Bike Coop.

**Outreach – The Foundational Support for Mobility Management**

Outreach drives the Mobility Management program and provides a lens into the needs of the community. In an era when newspaper coverage is scarce, the importance of person-to-person outreach is paramount. Retail outreach spreads the word about the available services of Mobility Management and leads those needing community transportation to make the call or write an email to get service.

**Total Outreach Events in FY 2023 101**

**Type of Event**

Brazilian Community 2

Diverse Cultures 14

General Public 44

Legislators 2

Low Income 19

Medical Caregivers 2

Seniors 13

Veterans 5

**Requests for Assistance in FY 2023**

The Mobility Manager began receiving requests for assistance shortly after being hired by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, and outreach to those needing assistance had commenced. These requests often took the form of telephone calls, emails, responses to random social media posts, and personal encounters with individuals who needed transportation assistance. Most of the requests for assistance were the results of outreach to various social service agencies, municipalities, and senior citizen facilities. The statistics for Mobility Management Services for fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) are as follows:

**Total Number of Requests for Service/Information: 136**

**Requests by Location**:

Hollis 1

Hudson 11

Litchfield 5

Merrimack 7

Milford 3

Nashua 94

Pelham 1

Wilton 1

Out of Region 13

Thus, from these statistics, we observe that most requests are from the core center of the NRPC region, the area where residents may lack vehicles. Please see the chart below which demonstrates the ownership of vehicles in each municipality in the Nashua Regional Planning Commission District:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Amherst | 1.9% |
| Brookline | 1.1% |
| Hollis | 0.6% |
| Hudson | 1.2% |
| Litchfield | 1.6% |
| Lyndeborough | 0.8% |
| Mason | 1.2% |
| Merrimack | 2.0% |
| Milford | 3.9% |
| Mont Vernon | 4.3% |
| Nashua | 7.4% |
| Pelham | 2.2% |
| Wilton | 8.3% |

The residents of the City of Nashua, along with the towns of Hudson and Merrimack requested the highest number of transportation services. Many residents expressed gratitude for the Mobility Management services. Apart from wheelchair service in specific municipalities, most requests resulted in access to transportation.

**Types of Requests**

Bike 38

Bikes for Immigrants 8

Bus Info 5

Court Transport 1

Church 1

General Info 15

Medical Appointments 46

School 4

Social 1

Transport for Food 3

Travel Training 3

Voting 1

Work 8

Thus, many requests were for some type of medical appointment, followed by a request for a bike, then general information, work, and then the various lower digit requests.

**Volunteer Driver Feasibility Concluded**

Acknowledging that many NRPC staff labored on the Volunteer Driver Feasibility Study, the Mobility Manager contributed to this joint effort in many ways.  Upon being employed by NRPC, the Mobility Manager filled in core information surveying the various volunteer driver experts around the state.  The Mobility Manager also suggested that because of the glut of non-profits in the Greater Nashua area and the dearth of drivers (volunteers and paid drivers), it was not appropriate to suggest that a brand-new Volunteer Driver Program be established.  The recommendation was made to expand the existing volunteer driver programs or to piggyback on an existing non-profit such as the United Way.  The United Way stepped forward to begin a conversation on expanding the volunteer driving capability in the Greater Nashua area.  The United Way is now an active participant in the Regional Coordination Council meeting where an ongoing dialogue is occurring to spur the expansion of the existing volunteer driver programs in the area and to fill in the gaps that exist in the RCC7. At its conclusion, the Mobility Manager provided many edits and suggestions to improve the document.