8. Transportation Goals & Objectives

This chapter addresses identification of goals and objectives for the transportation system serving Ravalli County. The goals and objectives described in the following text pertain specifically to the operation of the RCCOA Transportation in our role as the primary transit-type provider in the study area.

Goals

Three major goals were developed to guide the future development of the area’s transportation system.

Goal #1 Obtain operating funds and ensure that the RCCOA Transportation System remains financially sustainable.

Goal #2 Significantly increase ridership and quality of service by expanding to a five day per week operation and expanding to outlying areas.

Goal #3 Assign a Transportation Coordinator to manage RCCOA Transportation so that it operates efficiently, with an appropriately sized and equipped vehicle fleet.

Objectives

Specific objectives were defined to address previously identified deficiencies in the system, and as an aid to achieving each of the individual goals which are listed above.

Objectives to meet Goal #1:

1. Obtain PSC Authority.

2. Apply to Montana Department of Transportation for a 5311 Grant, which would generate up to 50% operating funds.

3. Maximize the advantages provided through current FTA and State grant programs. Seek out new grants, financial partners, and other sponsors.

4. Continue to work with city officials within Ravalli County and county officials to generate revenue, both cash and in-kind.

5. Develop contracts such as medical transportation and Head Start, and continue to coordinate with all specialized transportation providers.

6. Market services in all areas to generate new riders in expanded area and general public.

7. Re-evaluate fee structure periodically.
8. Manage RCCOA Transportation System so it operates with the available budget.

**Objectives to meet Goal #2:**

1. Expand transportation beyond the Hamilton/Corvallis areas to include all communities in Ravalli County. Schedule vehicles, drivers, and volunteers in each of the following areas:
   - Hamilton/Corvallis/Victor – currently served by existing vehicles
   - Darby/Sula – Fall of 1999 place newly acquired vehicle in Darby to serve the south end of the valley.
   - Stevensville/Florence – Fall of 2000 place newly acquired vehicle in Stevensville to serve the north end of the valley.

2. Expand time of operation to include Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a uniform fee structure, regardless of vehicle used. This is an increase of one day per week.

3. Improve and expand quality of service by monitoring operational statistics (ridership levels, satisfaction level of clientele, locations, etc) to identify changes occurring or changes that need to be made within the system.

4. Hold regularly scheduled monthly employee meetings to discuss current issues, including how to better serve clients’ needs. Conduct short-course training programs during these meetings on subjects such as client handling, driving strategies, safety, etc.

5. Reimburse mileage to volunteer drivers when using their own cars for transportation until vehicles can be obtained to cover all territories.

6. Create a schedule to include at least bi-monthly trips to Missoula, regardless of number of riders.

7. Continue to work closely with TAC as a partner in transportation.

8. Based on a five day per week operation and expansion to outlying communities, increase approximately 250 rides per month by the end of Fiscal Year 2000. Estimated increase in ridership, with implementation of expansion, is shown in **TABLE 8.1**.

**TABLE 8.1**  
**RCCOA Projected Increase in Ridership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of Rides</th>
<th>Days of Operation / Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December – 1998</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September – 1999</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December – 1999</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March – 2000</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June – 2000</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Projections based on RCCOA ridership log and plans for expansion*
Objectives to meet Goal #3:

1. Hire a Transportation Coordinator with operating funds obtained.

2. Establish a standardized schedule for cleaning and maintenance of fleet vehicles.

3. Implement vehicle expansion, upgrade and replacement program as shown in TABLE 8.2. The planned 1999 vehicle acquisition will be placed in Darby (to serve the south end of the valley) and the planned 2000 vehicle acquisition will be placed in Stevensville (to serve the north end of the valley).

4. Continue to review and clarify vehicle requirements, and monitor advances in technology for future fleet upgrades.

5. Pursue acquisition of vehicle storage facility and fuel/maintenance agreements.

6. Establish a positive public image through marketing.

7. Continue standardization through colors, logos, brochures, driver pins/hats/shirts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vehicle</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1999</td>
<td>Two 6-Passenger Vans</td>
<td>Apply for Funds</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2000</td>
<td>Two 6-Passenger Vans</td>
<td>Apply for Funds</td>
<td>$58,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2005</td>
<td>1996 Ford Mini Bus</td>
<td>Replacement</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>1998 Caravan</td>
<td>Replacement</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Apply for Montana Department of Transportation Capital Assistance Grants – 80/20.

Implementation

In order to accomplish many of the objectives of the transportation system, a strong partnership with the TAC and various local groups and government agencies will need to continue. It is recognized that the RCCOA Transportation System will need to take the initiative in implementing all of the goals and objectives listed in this chapter. Due to the relatively small size and organizational structure of RCCOA, the primary source of responsibility for these items will be the Transportation Coordinator, under the direct supervision of the RCCOA Executive Director.

As goals and objectives are implemented, the TAC will provide guidance and technical assistance. The TAC will also be instrumental in evaluating the implementation and acting in an advisory capacity to RCCOA, with a long-term focus of providing safe, reliable, affordable, and accessible transportation in Ravalli County.