



Waupaca County Economic Development Corp.

2022 Workforce Innovation Grant

Waupaca County has been known as a transportation desert with limited taxi services, no mobile supported rideshares such as Uber or Lyft and no public transportation bus system. A person with limited means, or with no driver's license would have a hard time finding transportation to start a job and sustain a job. Employers have felt the results of the lack of transportation with limited applicants for job openings, and worker turn-over, especially for the newly hired workers.

The Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation Grant would provide a workforce transportation "Mobility-as-a-service" system for Waupaca County. Using Feonix-Mobility Rising technology to deliver a phone/Internet/Mobile call center and managed by "Make-the-ride-happen" administration to coordinate the existing transportation providers and a new provider to fill the gaps throughout the more rural areas.

Year 1-3: Grant Funding for Ramping Up Service

The first three years would ramp up the technology, hire call center personnel, hire additional eight drivers, lease four vehicles, and coordinate with existing providers for a total cost of \$3,300,067. This would provide 24/7 access for workers to get transportation to get to a Waupaca County business on any shift. The WCEDC Board and partners would review the performance of the transportation system monthly to make any adjustments to meet goals.

Throughout the first three years, a Sustainability Committee of WCEDC would meet to determine the best approach to work with Waupaca County municipalities, communities, employers, and the State to put a strategy to continue the transportation system in the County.

Year 4: Maintenance and Sustainability

Starting year four, the goal would be to apply for Department of Transportation funding to support a portion of the transportation system and utilize the strategy created by the Sustainability Committee. The estimated cost to maintain the system each year is \$950,725. With the use of Department of Transportation funding the local matching cost would be reduced to \$299,383.

If we do not receive the Workforce Innovation Grant in 2022, the local community, business, and non-profit leaders will look to other funding sources. This grant has allowed the County to identify a continuing problem that many employers are facing, and strategically create a potential solution that can be used for writing additional grant applications.

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