

# Transit System Management Performance Audit of the Madison Metro Transit System

## **Paratransit Service**

On-street supervision is critical to successful operations, customer satisfaction, and safety. Road supervisors do cover both fixed route and paratransit operations, yet Metro Plus currently relies more on the monitoring of performance data than on-street monitoring of its services in terms of ride checks and performance evaluation. Although budget limitations have been cited as the reason for reducing supervision since 2005, a greater emphasis should be placed on regular, on-street supervision of both directly-operated and contracted paratransit operations to conduct ride checks and verify service issues highlighted through regular data reporting.

Previous FTA recommendations have noted the need for greater documentation of customer service calls to customers that may also be used to verify eligibility for ADA paratransit services. To date, Metro Plus does not explicitly call customers for the purpose of eligibility verification. While customer service calls are placed to gather feedback, greater effort should be made to use these calls as additional verification of eligibility rolls and they should be documented accordingly.

Sections of the City of Madison website (and other public information materials) should feature the universal handicap icon for better visibility and customer association.

Metro Plus Paratransit is not currently tracking the outcomes of registered customer complaints. For both customer service (i.e., providing responses to customers and following through on corrective actions) and internal monitoring of the effectiveness of complaint responses, Metro Plus should track these outcomes in the same database used to track and assign incoming complaints.

As identified in the previous audit, increased travel training can help Metro encourage more ADA paratransit riders to use the fixed route bus system. The current Paratransit Schedule Coordinator has received training from the National Transit Institute to assist with eligibility certification and conduct more in-person reviews. Additional consideration should be given to providing travel training or seeking a qualified organization in the Madison area that can perform this service.

The recommendations listed above include all the recommendations developed as part of this performance audit. While numerous recommendations were developed, overall, the audit found Metro Transit to be a very efficient and effective organization. Further information on the functional area review, and the details of the rationale for the above recommendations, are contained in the functional area review sections of this report.