



## Mountain Line and Flagstaff Shelter Services Partnership

### *Transportation and Homeless Services Partnership in Arizona*

Mountain Line is a transit agency in northern Arizona operating a fixed route bus service on nine routes, paratransit service, vanpool, and seasonal Mountain Express service to a major ski resort. In November 2021, Mountain Line and Flagstaff Shelter Services began a pilot program under a one-time Transportation for All (TP4A) grant. The grant funded a service that aimed to increase access to transportation for older adults, people with disabilities, and people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Individuals at the shelter, as well as shelter staff helped inform the development of the project leading to a program that went from 12 rides in its first month to averaging 5-10 rides each day just one year later.

### *Partnership Planning*

- Planning took approximately 12 months.
  - Mountain Line held monthly steering meetings with stakeholders, including Flagstaff Shelter Services. They also had periodic discussions with participants at the shelter who would later use the service.
  - Needs assessments and participant interviews guided development.
  - Mountain Line and Flagstaff Shelter Services had previously worked together on a vehicle donation, which then provided a foundation for the TP4A partnership to grow upon.
  - The program will be introducing fare boxes to their fleet to allow for cross-system access with regular bus transit services.
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## *Lessons Learned*

- Build upon previous positive interactions as a foundation for a closer partnership.
- Show respect and trust your partner.
- Show up! Be true to your word and honor the commitment.
- Be patient with the process. Getting input from people with lived experience takes time, but it is vital as it allows the program to be developed to truly meet their needs.
- Put the needs of the participants first and be person-centered in your design.
- Seek underserved areas of transit to increase access and advance equity by design.

## *Formal Agreements*

The partnership operates under an agreement noted in a letter of commitment from Flagstaff Shelter Services as a requirement of the TP4A grant application process.

Funding Source	Federal	State/Local
Pilot – One-time TP4A grant through ACL	X	
Ongoing - Locally funded from sales tax percentage as part of paratransit		X

## *Additional Vital Partners*

Participant Advocates – Allow their input to inform the design and implementation of the program. They will likely recruit friends and family to get involved in the design and development process as well.

## *Contacts*

Estella Hollander, TDM-CP, Mobility Planner, Mountain Line,  
[ehollander@mountainline.az.gov](mailto:ehollander@mountainline.az.gov)

Holly Creager, Director of Programs, Flagstaff Shelter Services, Inc.,  
[holly@flagshelter.org](mailto:holly@flagshelter.org)