

TRANSPORTATION TOOLKIT

**Freeborn
County
2026**



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Freeborn County Public Health

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Welcome



This guide is here to help with transportation. Whether you live in Albert Lea or a smaller town, if you're a senior, a person with a disability, don't drive, or are on a fixed income, we've gathered information to make transportation easier.

Seniors **55+**

People with disabilities 

Immigrants and refugees 

Low-income households 

Youth and families 

Veterans 

People without cars or licenses 

Rural residents 

This Guide is
for Everyone,
Especially:



Why Transportation Matters for Your Health

When you can get around easily, you can:

Visit your doctor or therapist



Get groceries and meals



Access mental health, social, and spiritual support



Attend events or see loved ones



Go to work, school, or job training



Lack of transportation leads to:

Missed medical care



Social isolation



Unemployment



Stress and poor health outcomes



Transportation is a Public Health Issue



Steps to Improve Your Transportation Options

1

Know what's available

- Albert Lea has more frequent services
- Smaller towns may have limited hours or routes

2

Ask for help

- Call a caseworker, public health, or community organization
- They can help you apply, plan, or book rides

3

Learn about programs

- SMART Transit
- Volunteer drivers
- Ride-sharing or taxi support
- Insurance-covered rides
- Student Rides

4

Plan ahead

- Book early
- Ask about eligibility
- Some services fill up or don't reach remote areas



Everyday Transportation Needs

Grocery

- Arrange rides or use local transit options to shop for healthy food and household essentials.



Libraries

- Plan transportation to access books, computers, educational programs, and community resources, and WiFi.



Churches

- Schedule rides to attend services, events, or community support programs.



Community Centers

- Use available transportation to participate in classes, activities, or social programs that keep you connected.



Food Shelves/
Meals

- Use available transportation to get to food shelves or community meal programs that help you stay healthy and supported.



Workforce
Transportation

- Arrange reliable rides to and from job sites, interviews, or training opportunities to support employment and independence.



Mental Health/
Recovery

- Plan transportation for counseling, treatment, or recovery meetings to stay on track with your health and well-being.



Getting Around Freeborn County

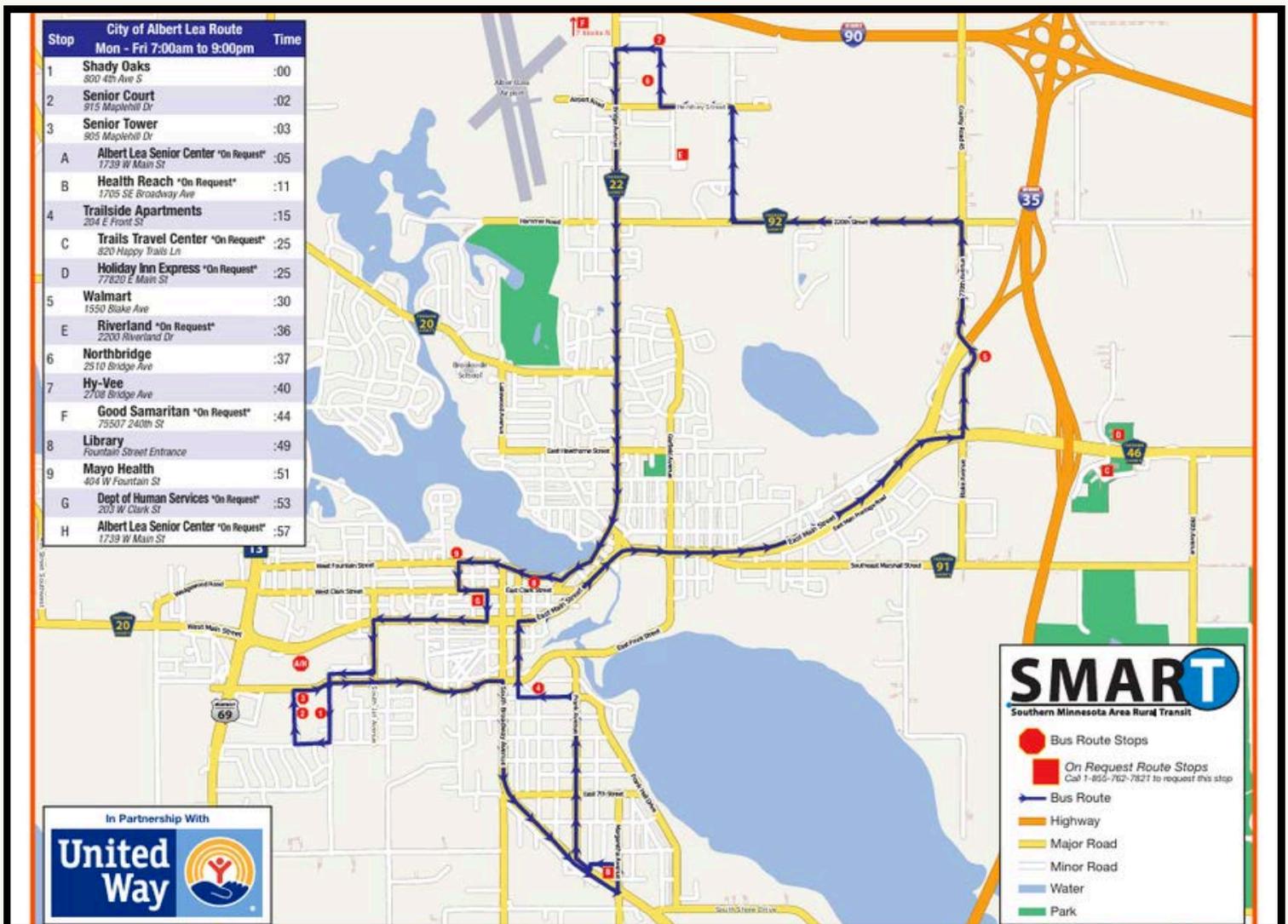
SMART Transit Overview (Southern MN Area Rural Transit)

Phone Number:
To Book Call
507-433-2379
<https://smartbusmn.org>

Office Hours:
(To schedule)
Monday through Friday
6 am - 6 pm
Saturday 9 am - 3pm

Demand Bus Hours:
Monday through Friday
5 am to 6 pm
Saturday 9 am - 1 pm
Sunday 8 am - Noon

Route



Getting Around Freeborn County

SMART Transit Information - Albert Lea to Waseca



SMART is owned and operated by CEDAR VALLEY SERVICES INC.
and is sponsored by DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SMART Shuttle Service

Service between Albert Lea and Waseca

\$4.00 per person, per trip

Rides to Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea and Waseca are FREE to all passengers. Children 5 and under ride for free with a paid adult. Veterans ride free to and from VA Clinic in Albert Lea.

Tickets may be purchased on the bus with the driver.

Reservations requested, but not required.

Thursday Shuttle Service

Departure Time from Waseca	Arrive Albert Lea	Departure Time from Albert Lea	Arrive Waseca
Upon Request*	7:45 AM	7:50 AM	8:35 AM
10:45 AM	11:30 AM	11:35 AM	12:20 PM
3:35 PM **	4:20 PM	4:25 PM	If Needed

* First departure from Waseca will not stop at Mayo Clinic Health System in Waseca unless requested no later than the day before.

** If no passengers board at Waseca at 3:35 PM the bus will not travel to Albert Lea unless requested ahead of time through dispatch.

Transportation can be scheduled with dispatch team 507-433-2379.

Locations:

Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea 404 West Fountain Street
Mayo Clinic Health System in Waseca 501 North State Street

This service is not for emergency transportation.

Call 507-433-2379 for more information or to schedule a ride!



SMART es propiedad y esta operado por CEDAR VALLEY SERVICES INC.
y esta patrocinado por DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SMART Shuttle Service

Servicio entre Albert Lea y Waseca

\$4.00 por persona, por viaje

Los viajes al campus del Sistema de Salud Mayo son Gratis para todos los pasajeros. Los niños de 5 años y menores viajan gratis con un adulto que pagos Los Veteranos viajan gratis hacia y desde la Clinic VA en Albert Lea .

Los boletos se pueden comprar en el autobus con el conductor.

Se solicitan reservas, pero no son necesarias.

Servicio de Transporte los jueves

Hora de salida desde Waseca	Llegada a Albert Lea	Hora de salida desde Albert Lea	Llegada a Waseca
A solicitud*	7:45 AM	7:50 AM	8:35 AM
10:45 AM	11:30 AM	11:35 AM	12:20 PM
3:35 PM **	4:20 PM	4:25 PM	Si es necesario

* La primera salida desde Waseca no se detendra en Waseca Mayo a menos que se solicite a más tardar el día anterior.

** Si no hay pasajeros en Waseca a las 3:35 PM, el autobús no viajará a Albert Lea a menos que se solicite previamente a través de despacho.

El transporte se puede programar con el equipo de despacho 507-433-2379.

Ubicaciones:

Mayo Clinic Health System in Albert Lea 404 West Fountain Street
Mayo Clinic Health System in Waseca 501 State Street North

Este servicio no es para transporte de emergencia.

Llame al 507-433-2379 para mas informacion o para programar su viaje!



Getting Around Freeborn County

SMART Transit Information - Austin to Albert Lea



SMART is owned and operated by CEDAR VALLEY SERVICES INC
and is sponsored by DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SMART Shuttle Service

Service between Austin and Albert Lea
\$4.00 per person, per trip

Children 5 and under ride for free with a paid adult; Veterans ride free to and from VA Clinic in Albert Lea.
Tickets may be purchased on the bus with the driver or at our dispatch office in Austin.

Reservations requested, but not required.

Monday/Wednesday/Friday

Departure Time from Austin	Arrive Albert Lea	Departure Time from Albert Lea	Arrive Austin
8:45 am	9:15 am	9:30 am	10:00 am
10:00 am*	11:15 am*	3:15 pm	4:00 pm
4:15 pm	4:45 pm	5:00 pm	5:30 pm

Tuesday/Thursday

Departure Time from Austin Mayo Clinic	Arrive at Austin Shopping District **	Departure Austin Shopping District**	Arrive at Albert Lea Clinic	Departure Time from Albert Lea Mayo Clinic	Arrive at Albert Lea - Northbridge Mall***	Departure Albert Lea - Northbridge Mall***	Arrive Austin Mayo Clinic
8:40 am	8:45 am	8:50 am	9:20 am	9:30 am	9:45 am	9:50 am	10:20 am
10:30 am	10:35 am	10:40 am	11:10 am	11:20 am	11:35 am	11:40 am	12:10 pm
no trip during noon hour				no trip during noon hour			
1:40 pm	1:45 pm	1:50 pm	2:20 pm	2:30 pm	2:45 pm	2:50 pm	3:20 pm
3:30 pm	3:30 pm	3:40 pm	4:10 pm	4:20 pm	4:35 pm	4:40 pm	5:10 pm

* M/W/F 10:00 am Austin departure trip includes additional time for a second pick up location.

** Austin Shopping District location can vary depending on requested business - Please arrange pick-up and drop-off location with dispatch team (855-762-7821).

*** Northbridge Mall location - Flagpole

This service is not for emergency transportation.

Call 507-433-2379 for more information or to schedule a ride!



Getting Around Freeborn County

Taxi Services

Vern's Ride Service
507-320-8690

- Hours: 6 am - 7 pm
- Cost: Ride in town one way \$20
- Insurance: Medica and South Country
- *Out of town call for request

Lea Taxi
507-318-6323

- Hours:
 - Monday through Thursday 6 am to 10 pm
 - Friday through Saturday 6 am to 2 am
 - Sunday 7 am to 10 pm
- Cost: Call for Price

FairRyde
612-806-2646

- Website: <https://fairryde.com/>
- Hours: 24/7
- Non-emergency medical
- Cost: \$ 3 per mile in town
- Over 30 miles \$ 5 per mile one way
- 24 hours in advance to schedule a ride
- Wheelchair accessible in town \$62



Getting Around Freeborn County

Volunteer Driver Programs

Freeborn County Veteran's
Services 507-377-5184

For Veteran's Only

- Website:
<https://www.co.freeborn.mn.us/140/Veterans-Services>
- We offer Free rides to the Minneapolis VA 3 days a week.
- All appointments must be before 12 pm each day.
- Rides are offered Tuesday, Wednesday, and Fridays (must live in the Freeborn County).
- Riders need to meet at the Highway Department just before 6 am.
- Van leaves at 6 am and returns when the last appointment is completed.
- Riders must be able to get in and out of van on their own.
- Pick up/ Drop off at other locations other than the Highway Dept. are evaluated on a case by case basis.



Getting Around Freeborn County

Medical Ride Services

Grace Transportation
507-369-5370

- Website: <https://gracehomehealthcaresm.com>
- Hours: 4 am to finished with appointments
- Insurance:
 - South Country
 - U Care
 - MA (needs to have special transportation coverage and need to be certified wheelchair disabled)
- Call to schedule at least 24 hours advance

Care A Van
800-528-7622 Option 3

- Website: <https://www.semcac.org/transportation/careavan/>
- Hours: Monday through Friday
8 am to 4:30 pm

Insurances

- Blue Plus, U Care, MEDICA call customer service number on the back of your insurance card.



Getting Around Freeborn County

Student Ride Services

SMART Bus
507-433-2379

- **Office Hours (To schedule your ride) Monday through Friday 6 am - 6 pm Saturday 9 am - 3pm**
- **Demand Bus Hours Monday through Friday 5 am - 6 pm Saturday 9 am - 1 pm Sunday 8 am - Noon**
- **Website: <https://smartbusmn.org/>**

Albert Lea Bus Company
507-373-1467

- **Website: <https://albertleabuscompany.com>**
- **For Students to and from school.**
- **District Eligibility Rules: K-5 students must be 1 mile or more away (home address) from their school of attendance. 6-12 students must be 2 miles or more away (home address) from their school of attendance.**
- **Private contracts are available if your student doesn't meet the eligibility.**



Getting Around Freeborn County

More Services

Freeborn County Public Health

- Address: 411 S Broadway Albert Lea, MN
- Website: <https://www.co.freeborn.mn.us/>
- Call: 507-377-5100

Car Repair Program

- Website: <https://www.semcac.org/car-repair-program/>
- Phone Number: 507-373-1329

MN 211

- Website: <https://211unitedway.org/>
- Phone Number: 800-543-7709 Or Text your Zip Code to 898-211



Getting Around Freeborn County

Getting Your Driver's License

You will need the following documents to apply for a driver's license. A written test and driving test may also be required. For more information contact or visit the driver's license center at 507-377-5126 or 411 S. Broadway Albert Lea, MN 56007

Any document in a language other than English must be accompanied by a translation and translation attestation.

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS:

- Unexpired international passport (foreign or domestic).
- Unexpired consular identification document from any jurisdiction that bears a photograph of the applicant.
- Certified record of birth from any jurisdiction (foreign or domestic) including:
 - State issued birth certificate
 - Foreign birth certificate
 - Certificate of Birth Abroad (FS-545, DS-1350)
 - Consular Report of Birth Abroad (FS-240)
- Certified adoption certificate issued by any jurisdiction (foreign or domestic) that includes the applicant's full name and date of birth.
- Unexpired Tribal Identification Card with security features.
- One of the following unexpired documents issued by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service or its predecessors:
 - Certificate of Naturalization (Form N-550, N-570, N-578)
 - Certificate of Citizenship (Form N-560, N-561, N-645)
 - United States Citizen Identification card (Form I-179 or I-197)
 - Permanent Resident or Resident Alien card (Form I-551 or I-151)
 - Employment authorization document with photograph (Form I-688, I-688A, I-688B, or I-766)
 - Northern Mariana card (Form I-873)
 - American Indian card (Form I-872)
 - Re-entry Permit/Refugee Travel Document (I-571)
- Unexpired identification card issued by the United States Department of Defense for active duty, reserve or retired personnel. Also known as:
 - Geneva Conventions Identification Card
 - Common Access Card (DD Form 2)
- Canadian naturalization certificate.

If the name on your primary and secondary documents do not match your current legal name, you must also present proof of your legal name change(s).

- Acceptable proof consists of certified marriage certificates, certified divorce decrees or other certified court orders.
- Your name change documents need to show a clear link between your primary and secondary documents and what will be listed on your card.



Getting Around Freeborn County

Getting Your Driver's License

SECONDARY DOCUMENTS:

- Issued by the Social Security Administration:
 - A Social Security card
 - A Supplemental Security Income award statement issued no more than 12 months before the application
- Issued by the United States Department of State:
 - A Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status (Form DS-2019)
- Issued by the United States Department of Homeland Security:
 - Employment authorization document (Form I-688, I-688A, I-688B, or I-766)
 - A Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status (Form I-20)
 - A Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival approval notice (Form I-821D)
 - Notice of Action (I-797) or Proof of Submission of Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal (Form I-589)
- Issued by a (foreign or domestic) government jurisdiction:
 - Driver's License, Identification Card, or Permit, with photograph, expired five years or less
 - Certified marriage certificate
 - Certified Court Order containing name and date of birth
 - Certified copy of a divorce decree or dissolution of marriage that specifies the applicant's name or name change
- School Records:
 - A copy of a transcript containing the applicant's full legal name and date of birth certified by the issuing secondary or postsecondary school
 - A current secondary school student identification card with the student's name, a photograph or electronically produced image of the student, and the student's date of birth or unique student identification number
 - A foreign jurisdiction's official high school, college, or university transcript that includes the applicant's date of birth and a photograph of the applicant at the age the record was issued
 - A foreign jurisdiction's high school, college, or university student identification card with a certified transcript from the school
- Issued by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration:
 - A current pilot's license
- Issued by the Department of Defense:
 - A Common Access Card or Identification and Privilege Card (Form DD-1173), for dependents of active duty personnel
 - A Certificate of Release or Discharge (Form DD-214)
- Issued by a United States Police Department or by a United States County Sheriff's Office:
 - Unexpired permit to carry a firearm or concealed weapon, bearing a color photo of the applicant
- Issued by Minnesota Unemployment Insurance:
 - A benefit statement.
- Issued by the Internal Revenue Service:
 - A document with an individual taxpayer identification number
- Issued by Minnesota Driver and Vehicle Services:
 - A Certificate of title for a motor vehicle.
- Issued by the Department of Corrections or Federal Bureau of Prisons:
 - Valid identification card containing the applicant's full name, date of birth, and photograph
- Minnesota property tax statement or a proposed Minnesota property tax notice.
- A filed property deed or title for the applicant's residence.
- Mortgage documents for the applicant's residence.
- Issued by a current United States or Canadian government jurisdiction:
 - Employee photo identification card
- Military orders that are still in effect at the time of application with Form DD-2058.
- A Selective Service card.
- A valid identification card for health benefits or an assistance or social services program.
- Canadian social insurance card.
- A foreign jurisdiction's federal electoral card issued on or after January 1, 1991, that contains the applicant's photograph.



DVS
Driver &
Vehicle Services

*It is required to at least carry minimum car insurance in the state of MN.



Coping with Transportation Barriers

1

You miss your ride

- Contact your transportation provider or program as soon as possible to reschedule or arrange another option.

2

You have no phone/internet

- Visit the Public Health office, library (internet only) or community center for assistance in scheduling transportation

3

You're isolated or homebound

- Reach out to local agencies that offer home-visit services or driver programs for essential trips.

4

Language Barriers

- Ask for translation or interpreter services when booking transportation or communicating with service providers.



Cultural and Language Specific Resources

Interpreters / Scheduling

- Call the customer service number on the back of your insurance card to get help with transportation/scheduling. Ask for help in your language or for a language interpreter.

Resources

- Freeborn County Community Health Worker.
- If you are on managed care plan (U Care, Medica, Blue Plus) call your case worker to get assistance.



Know Your Rights

1

ADA
Transportation

- Under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals with disabilities have the right to accessible public transportation and reasonable accommodations for their needs.

2

Minnesota
Human Rights
Act

- This law protects people from discrimination in transportation services based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or other protected characteristics.

3

Discrimination

- It is illegal for any transportation provider to deny service, treat someone unfairly, or refuse reasonable accommodations because of who they are or their disability.



Who Can Help You Navigate It All

Case Managers/ Social Workers

- Can help you understand your rights, file complaints, and access transportation programs.

Community Health Workers

- Offer guidance and help connect you with transportation and support services.

Public Health

- Can assist with referrals, accessibility needs, and advocacy for fair services.

Community Advocates

- Provide support, translations, and help ensure your concerns are heard and addressed.



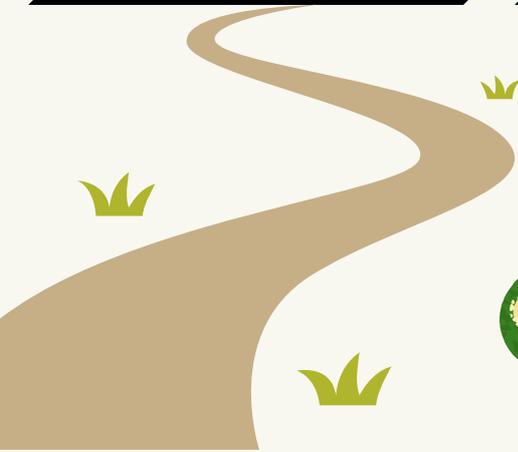
Active Transportation

Ways to Get Around Freeborn County

Walking/Biking Paths

Parks

Rent A Bike



- Walking paths provide healthy, low-cost way to travel short distances while staying physically active.

- Parks often connect to walking or biking trails that make transportation easier.

- Bike rentals offer inexpensive way to travel to work, school, or errands.

- Choose well-lit, maintained paths and always follow pedestrian signals for safety.

- Use parks as gathering points for events, recreation, or public transit spots.

- Biking helps reduce traffic, pollution, and fuel costs.



Safety in Transportation

Safe Practices for Freeborn County Residents



Bike Safety

- Wear a helmet every time you ride.
- Check your bike before riding.
- Follow the rules
- Be seen, wear bright
- Pay attention



Vehicle Safety

- Wear your seatbelt.
- Avoid distractions.
- Maintain your vehicle.
- Follow speed Limits
- Never drive under the influence.



Bus Safety

- Arrive Early
- Wait Safely
- Use Handrails
- Stay Seated
- Be Alert Around Buses



Pedestrian Safety

- Use Crosswalks
- Obey Signals
- Stay Visible
- Avoid Distractions
- Look Both Ways



Motorbike Safety

- Wear Protective Gear
- Be Visible
- Follow Traffic Laws
- Check Your Bike
- Stay Focused and Sober



Car Seat Safety

- Use the Right Seat
- Install Correctly
- Rear-Facing First
- Check Placement
- Inspect Regularly



Directory For Transportation

Albert Lea Bus Company	507-373-1467
Care-A-Van	800-528-7622 Option 3
Car Repair Program	507-373-1329
FairRyde	612-806-2646
Freeborn County Public Health	507-377-5100
Freeborn County Veteran Services	507-377-5184
Grace Transportation	507-369-5370
Lea Taxi.....	507-318-6323
MN 211	800-543-7709
SMART Bus	507-433-2379
Vern's Taxi Service.....	507-320-8690

