

Huron County

Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan

2022-2026

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership

For more information about this plan please contact

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Executive Summary

This plan is the Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Huron County. The plan was initially developed in 2008 and updated in 2021. This plan fulfills the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, signed into law as a reauthorization of surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020. According to requirements of the FAST Act, locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans must be updated to reflect the changes established by the FAST Act legislation. The FAST Act applies new programs and rules for all Fiscal Year 2016 funds and authorizes transit programs for five (5) years.

Transportation is a critical component of Huron County communities and throughout rural North-Central Ohio. Transportation provides access to jobs, education, health care, and human services providers; allowing all community members, including older adults and people with disabilities, to live independently and engage in community life.

The purpose of this plan is for local stakeholders to work collaboratively together on the following activities:

1. Identify all community resources including Huron County Transit, Senior Enrichment Services, Huron County Department of Job & Family Services, Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Huron County Veteran Service; other related transportation services including the North Central Emergency Management Service, local taxi services, and private residential, medical, and transportation entities. All which provide transportation to their clientele and residential population.
2. Identify and prioritize community transportation needs such as a need for extension of service earlier and/or later in the day, provision of weekend services, achieving efficiencies through sharing of vehicles and trip purposes, acquisition of new capital expense items, including vehicles as needed, and exploration of transportation options for individuals who are battling opioid drug addiction with need to access counseling and treatment services.
3. Establish a clear plan for achieving shared goals, through such actions as the continuation of a regular meeting schedule for the Huron County Coordinated Public Service Transportation Planning committee. To expand its membership list, to monitor progress, and to reach an understanding of member responsibilities.

Fundamental to the Huron County Coordinated Public Service Transportation Plan process is the active and meaningful involvement of stakeholders. For projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program, participation in planning activities must include participation and/or representation of the following, at minimum:

- Seniors
- Individuals with disabilities
- People with low incomes

- Public, private, and non-profit transportation providers
- Human services providers
- General public

In order to ensure participation from the above groups the following stakeholder involvement activities were performed:

- A series of stakeholder planning meetings with agencies and individuals who serve target populations
- Social media outreach and attendance at community events
- Interviews with persons from these same agencies, and contact with other agencies and transportation providers within Huron county
- Completion of surveys by a sample of persons representing the disabled, seniors, and the general population, many of whom are of low income, to learn of priorities and obstacles facing any of these user groups
- Completion of an on-line survey by staff and representatives from the key transportation-related agencies mentioned above
- Facilitation of a focus group of disabled persons to gain insight into their issues and obstacles faced when desiring public transportation services

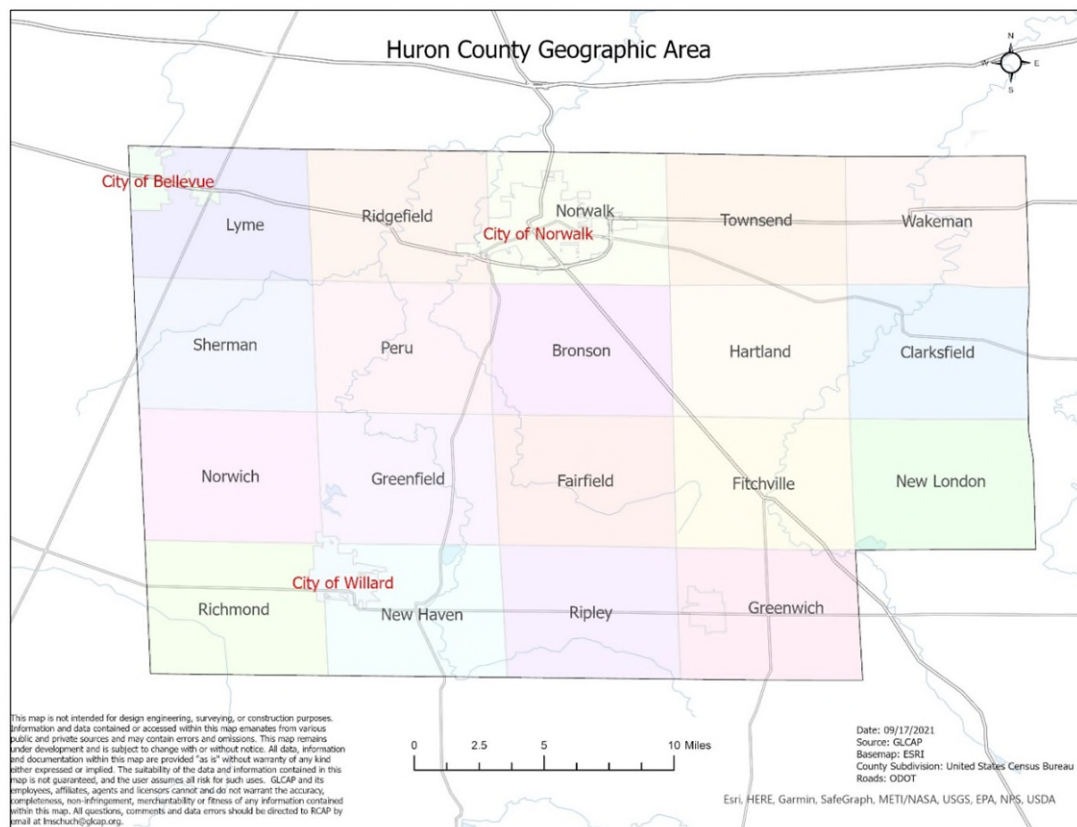
This plan was developed and adopted by the Huron County Transportation Stakeholder and Planning Committee. More information about the planning committee can be found in Appendix A.

I. Geographic Area

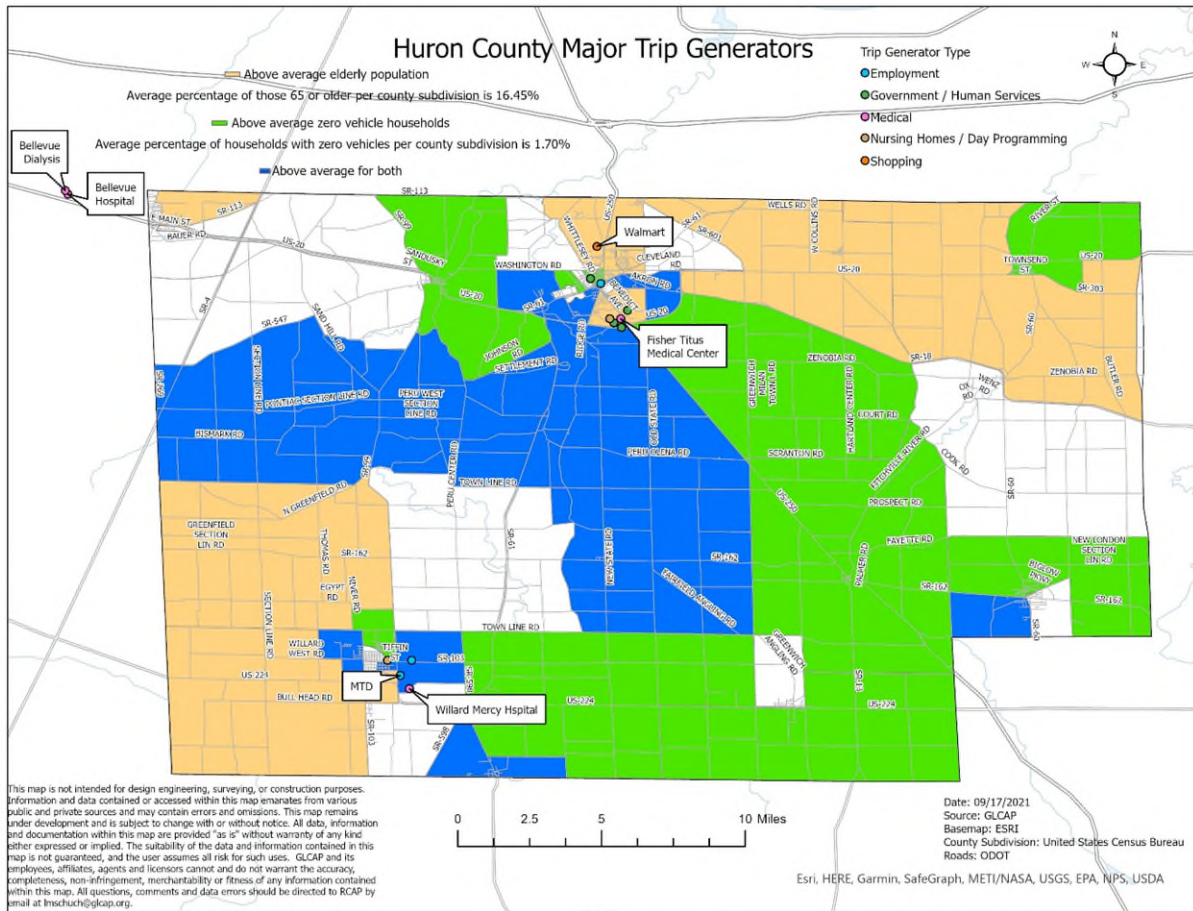
This plan covers transportation services provided to residents of Huron County, Ohio. Huron County is located in North-Central Ohio. It is bordered by Erie to the north, Lorain to the east, Crawford, Richland, and Ashland to the south, Seneca to the west, and Sandusky to the northwest. The City of Bellevue, in the northwest corner of the county, has a substantial portion in Sandusky County, with smaller portions in Erie and Seneca Counties. Other population centers in Huron County include Norwalk (the county seat and largest city, in the northeast portion of the county, the City of Willard, to the southwest, and the village of New London in the southeastern corner.

Major highways through Huron County include U.S. Route 20 (a divided highway from the west border to Norwalk, and a two-lane highway east of Norwalk through Wakeman); U.S. 224 (traveling east to west through the southern tier of the county, including Willard and Greenwich); U.S. 250 (traveling northwest to southeast, passing through Norwalk and connecting with Sandusky to the north and Ashland to the south); Ohio Route 4, (traveling north-south through the western portion of the county); Ohio 13 (co-existing with U.S. 250 through much of the county, but connecting to Mansfield to the south, and to Huron to the north); and Ohio 60 (traveling north-south through the eastern portion of Huron County, through New London and Wakeman).

Map 1: Basic map of the geographic area covered by the plan



Map 2: Major trip generators in the geographic area



Input on major trip generators was solicited from major transportation providers and users, and the information obtained led to a number of distinct clusters of destinations. These are depicted on the following map, and fall into the following general types:

- Medical offices clustered within or near the Fisher-Titus Medical Center campus on the south side of Norwalk. This campus has become a center for a large number of medical offices and specialists, including a dialysis center that generates significant need for repeat trips.
- Similarly, medical offices clustered within proximity of the Bellevue Hospital, located on the extreme western (Sandusky County) side of Bellevue, and Willard Mercy Hospital, at their new campus in southeast Willard on Neal Zick Road. Both of these areas have attracted associated medical offices, and both include dialysis centers.
- The Firelands Counseling and Recovery Services of Huron County office within the Fisher Titus campus has generated significant demand for transportation.
- A number of employers have created demand for workday transportation of employees who may also be clients and participants with programs of the Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities. These employers can appear anywhere in Huron County but are

most frequently located on Norwalk's north side along the US 250 corridor, and also in the vicinity of Perkins Township and Sandusky, to the north in Erie County. Specific employers in Erie County include the Goodwill Administrative and Distribution Service Center near downtown Sandusky, Cedar Point Amusement Park, Kalahari Water Park and Conference Center, and establishments such as Panera along Perkins Township's U.S. 250 retail and service corridor.

- Major shopping destinations include the Norwalk Wal-Mart located on Westwind Drive, west of U.S. 250, and a number of retail destinations in Perkins Township in Erie County (a typical destination in this category being the Meijer retail/grocery Store).
- Other destinations include County and governmental/social service offices, such as the Huron County Department of Job & Family Services on Shady Lane Drive, the County Courthouse and office building, and other destinations in downtown Norwalk, the Huron County Health District and other offices at the County Administration Building on Milan Avenue in Norwalk.
- Some major employers in Huron County, notably the large manufacturers in Willard (RR Donnelley, MTD, and Pepperidge Farm) have also generated public transit trips.

II. Population Demographics

Huron County is a rural and agricultural county with a small number of major population centers (Norwalk, Bellevue, and Willard), and a larger number of smaller villages throughout the county (Milan, Monroeville, Wakeman, North Fairfield, Greenwich, New London, and Plymouth). There are also nineteen townships in Huron County.

Please note that due to projections, estimations, and survey year data, that some totals may vary. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding in the tables and charts below.

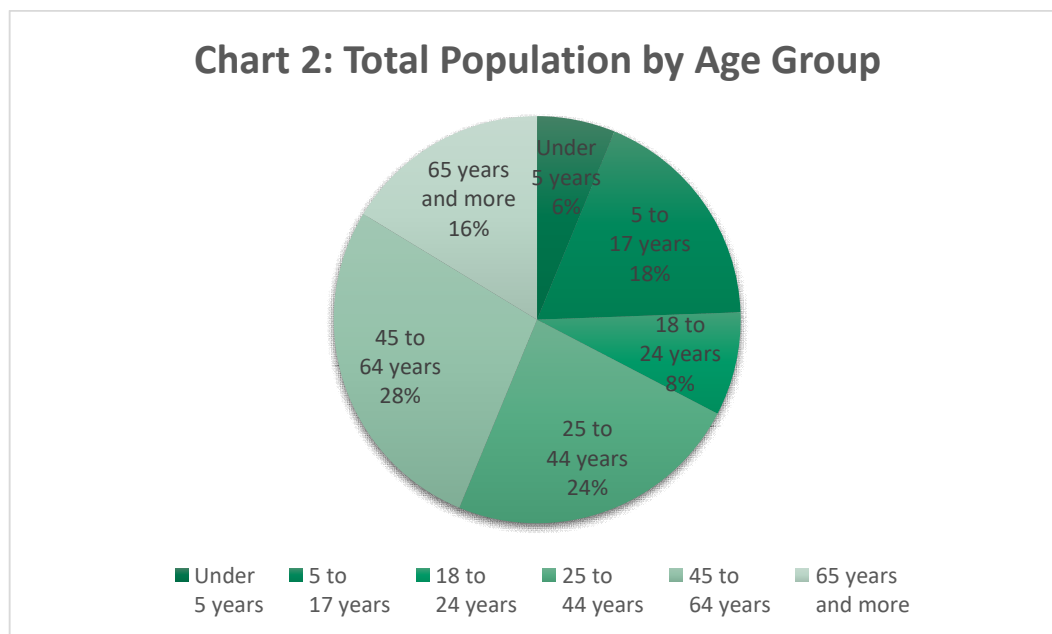
According to the Ohio Development Service Agency's Office of Research County Profile, 2020, the overall population of Huron County is declining. Huron County will lose approximately 3800 individuals over the next 20 years. Chart 1 shows the current total population and the projected population.

Chart 1: Total Population Current and Projected for Five Years

Year	Total Population	Male	Female	Change
2020	58,740	28,910	29,830	-620
2025	57,860	28,410	29,440	-880
2030	56,950	27,910	29,040	-910
2035	56,090	27,450	28,640	-860
2040	55,510	27,150	28,330	-580

According to the Ohio Developmental Service Agency's Office of Research County Profile, 2020, 28% of population in Huron County is between the ages 45-64 years. Followed by the age group 25-44 years at 24% of the population. Chart 2 shows the total population by age group.

Chart 2: Total Population by Age Group



According to the American Community Survey, 2019, over 94% of the individuals in Huron County identify as Caucasian. Chart 3 shows the total population by single race.

Chart 3: Total Population by Race

Population by Race	Number	Percent
ACS Total Population	58,457	100.0%
White	55,328	94.6%
African-American	847	1.4%
Native American	94	0.2%
Asian	122	0.2%
Pacific Islander	3	0.0%
Other	957	1.6%
Two or More Races	1,106	1.9%
Hispanic (may be of any race)	3,764	6.4%
Total Minority	5,711	9.8%

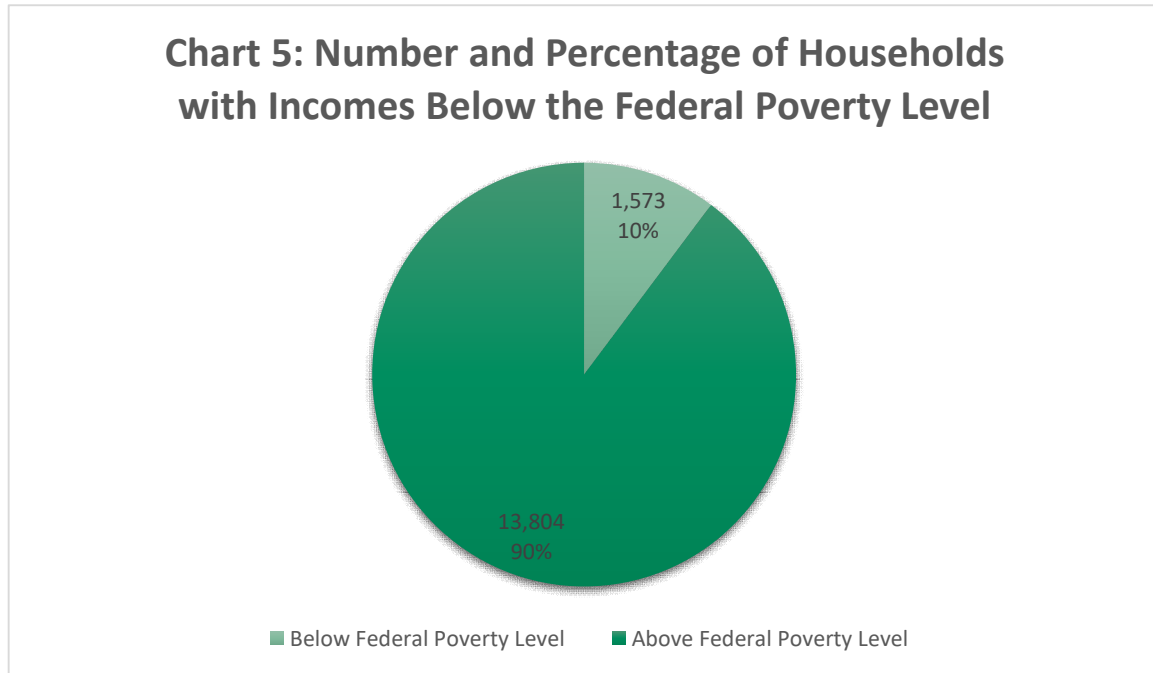
According to the American Community Survey, 2019, of the individuals aged 75 and older, over 47% identify themselves as disabled. Note, that this population is the smallest sect, yet has the highest number of reported disabled persons. Chart 4 shows the number and percentage of people with disabilities.

Chart 4: Number and Percentage of People with Disabilities

Age	Total Population	With a Disability	Percent with a Disability
Under 5 years	3,662	28	0.8%
5 to 17 years	10,529	503	4.8%
18 to 34 years	11,645	1,026	8.8%
35 to 64 years	22,588	3,398	15.0%
65 to 74 years	5,780	1,332	23.0%
75 years and over	3,572	1,704	47.7%

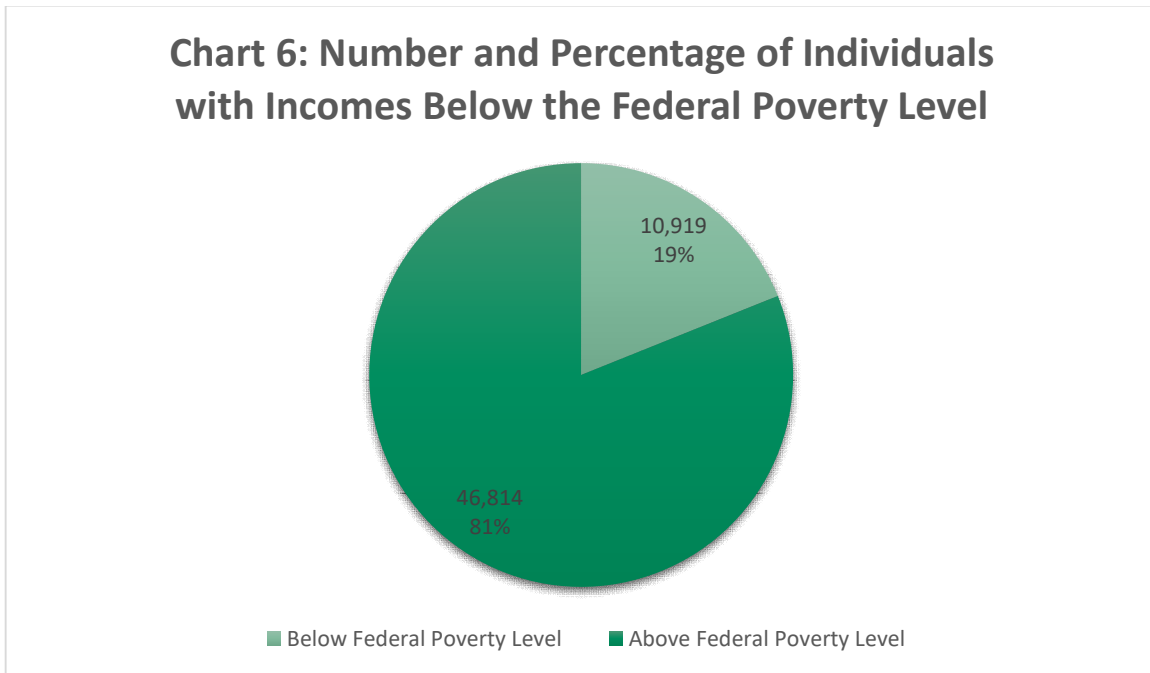
According to the Ohio Development Service Agency's Office of Research County Profile, 2020, 10% or 1,573 families live below Federal Poverty Level in Huron County. Chart 5 shows the number and percentage of households with incomes below the federal poverty line.

Chart 5: Number and Percentage of Households with Incomes Below the Federal Poverty Level



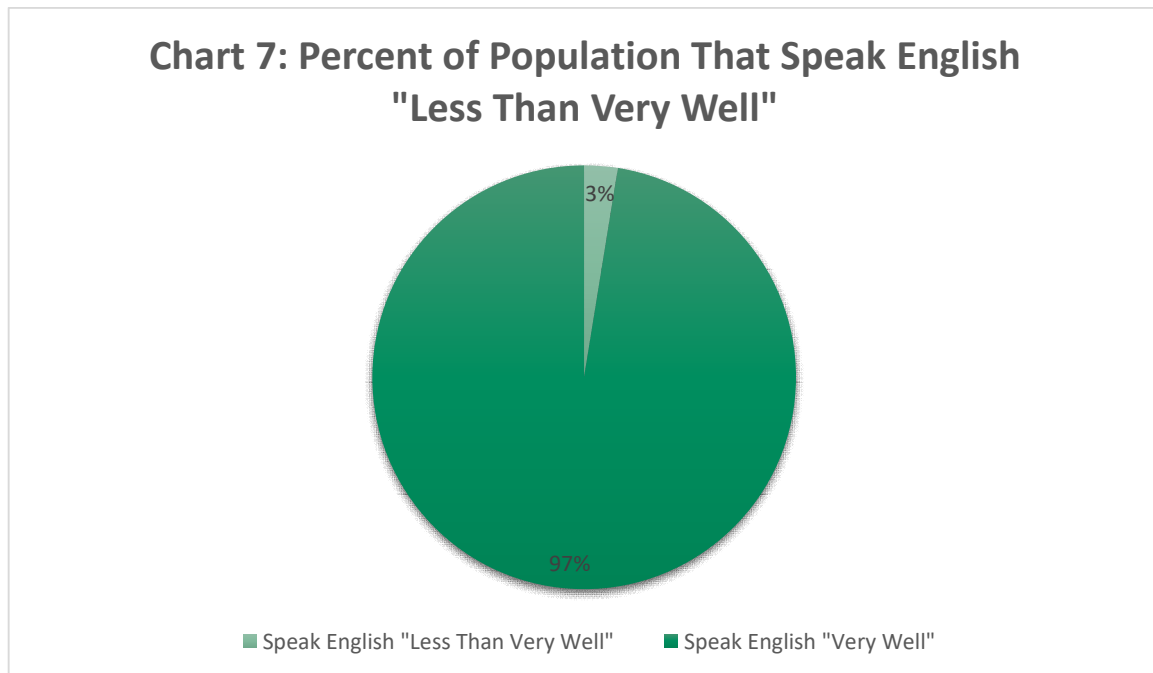
According to the Ohio Development Service Agency's Office of Research County Profile, 2020, 19% or 10,919 individuals live at or below the Federal Poverty Level in Huron County. Chart 6 shows the number and percentage of individuals with incomes below the federal poverty level.

Chart 6: Number and Percentage of Individuals with Incomes Below the Federal Poverty Level



According to the American Community Survey, 2020 estimates, 3% of individuals in Huron County speak English less than very well. This should be considered when trying to reach or communicate with those who are not English-speaking consumers. Chart 7 shows the percent of population that speaks English “Less than very well”.

Chart 7: Percent of Population That Speak English “Less Than Very Well”



III. Assessment of Available Services

The purpose of this section is to conduct an evaluation of service provider capabilities and to analyze the existing gaps and duplications of services for transportation resources in Huron County and its communities. This information helps set the stage to implement changes that will improve the network of transportation resources and services in Huron County and, importantly, across county lines.

The lead agency identified stakeholders to participate in the assessment of available services. These stakeholders included those who were represented in the current or past planning committees, as well as others who the planning committee identified as being appropriate stakeholders.

Interviews were conducted with each of the identified stakeholders. The purpose of the interview was to offer the stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the specific transportation services, gaps, needs, and priorities for their respective service areas or communities.

When applicable, information reported in the previous 2017 coordinated plan was used to supplement information gathered during this planning effort.

Inventory of Transportation Providers

This description of individual transportation providers includes organizations that subsidize transportation at the local level, administer transportation or mobility programs, directly operate vehicles, and/or arrange transportation on behalf of an individual; those which are active in this arena are described under the “Existing Transportation Services.”

Existing Transportation Services

The following information is based on tabulations from the survey and interview results. A total of 8 organizations provided information about their services.

List of Transportation Service Providers

Agency Name: Huron County Transit

Transportation Service Type: Public; demand response

Contact Information: 419.663.3340

Website: <http://huroncountytransit.net/>

Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday / Dispatch Hours 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.

Service Area: Huron County with some destinations out of county.

Eligibility Requirements: Public

Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Huron County Department of Job & Family Services rely heavily on the Huron County Transit (HCT) and, to a lesser extent, other entities, to provide needed transportation. Other destinations include employers in Erie County, as well as major employers in Willard.

Agency Name: Senior Enrichment Services: Senior Express

Transportation Service Type: demand responsive

Other Services Provided: Huron County Senior Enrichment Services provides seniors with socialization, education, nutrition (congregate meals), programming, and other experiences.

Contact Information: 419.668.8821 for reservation

Website: <http://www.sfaconnection.org>

Office hours: 8:00-4:30 weekdays, rides 7:00 to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Service Area: Huron County; medical destinations outside the county (Cleveland, Toledo, and Mansfield), are arranged with Huron county transit.

Eligibility Requirements: Age requirement of 60 or over and must be a Huron County resident. Senior express provides rides at no charge (donations are accepted) to seniors residing in the County. Rides are provided from 7:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. on weekdays, and the service expanded to offer Saturday rides from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. While the greatest proportion of rides are medically related, providing clients with rides to medical appointments including dialysis treatments now offered near all three hospitals, other major purposes include shopping and travel to hair appointments and restaurants. Medical transportation is provided to out-of-county appointments in Cleveland, Toledo, and Mansfield.

Agency Name: Huron County Veterans Service

Transportation Service Type: scheduled transportation to medical facilities: Wade Park, Parma, Sandusky, Lorain, Mansfield

Other Services Provided: financial assistance for basic needs, memorial service assistance, and retrieving military records

Contact Information: 419.668.4150

Website: <http://www.huroncountyvets.com/>

Hours: Rides typically leave 7:30 a.m.

Service Area: Clients reside in Huron County

Eligibility Requirements: U.S. military veteran or spouse

The Huron County Veterans Services Office is located on Shady Lane on Norwalk's south side, adjacent to the offices for Huron County Transit and Senior Express, which enhances the ability to coordinate rides between these agencies. When a ride is not available the Veteran can use other transportation services, such as HCT. This office exclusively serves U.S. military veterans and their spouses, with six vans and eight part time drivers. The primary purpose of travel is medical, and the office provides a daily ride to the Veterans Administration's Wade Park medical facility near Cleveland. Other common destinations include the Sandusky Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), and other VA facilities in Lorain, Mansfield, Toledo, and Ann Arbor, and even Dayton, Lima, Columbus, and Detroit.

Agency Name: Huron County Department of Job and Family Services

Transportation Service Type: No direct transportation; DJFS can provide ride vouchers or support for gas purchase for income-eligible clients, and partners with Huron County Transit.

Other Services Provided: children services, child support, family support, workforce/Ohio Means Jobs,

Contact Information: 419.668.8126

Website: <https://www.huroncountydjfs.com/>

Hours: Office: 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Service Area: Huron County

Eligibility Requirements: Based on income guidelines

Agency Name: Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Transportation Service Type: No longer provides direct transportation; but arranges for rides to employment and other purposes for clients

Other Services Provided: A range of services to help developmentally disabled adults integrate and function in society. Education, employment, events.

Contact Information: 419.668.8840

Website: <http://www.huronddd.org/>

Hours: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Monday-Friday

Service Area: Huron County

Eligibility Requirements: developmentally disabled residents of Huron County

Agency Name: Flat Rock Homes, Inc.

Transportation Service Type: demand responsive to individuals living in facilities operated by, homes operated by, and/or enrolled in programs/services offered by Flat Rock Homes, Flat Rock Care Center, Flat Rock Community Services

Other Services Provided: Flat Rock Homes, Flat Rock Care Center and Flat Rock Community Services provide services to youth and adults with disabilities, with a special focus on adults with intellectual and

developmental disabilities. Their programs include a 36-bed intermediate care facility (Seneca County); supportive living homes (Seneca, Erie, and Lorain Counties); non-medical transportation (Seneca, Sandusky, Erie, and Huron Counties); Adult Day Program (Seneca and Sandusky Counties); Vocational Training and Employment Services Programs (Seneca, Sandusky, Erie, Huron, Lorain, Ashland, Richland, Crawford, Marion, Knox, Wyandot, Morrow, Ottawa Counties and expanding).

Contact Information: 419.483.7330 ext. 1104 or 1420

Office hours: 8:00-4:30 Monday – Friday

Service Area: Any destination required by individuals enrolled in programs/services for medical, school, employment, social events, and activities. Past trips have included many out-of-county destinations as far as Cleveland, Toledo and/or Mansfield.

Eligibility Requirements: Individuals enrolled in Flat Rock's programs/services.

Website: www.flatrockhomes.org

Agency Name: Ability Works Inc.

Transportation Service Type: Transportation services are provided for Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities (DD) consumers traveling to and from the Ability Works, Inc. facility or for other community events.

Other Services Provided: Ability Works, Inc. is the provider of choice for individuals with disabilities pursuing interests in employment, recreation, leisure, and personal development.

Contact Information: 419-626-1048

Website: <http://ability-works.com/>

Hours: As needed

Service Area: Huron County

Eligibility Requirements: Disabled

Agency Name: North Central EMS

Transportation Service Type: Emergency medical care and ambulance transportation, non-emergency medical transport, mobile intensive care transportation, specialized care transportation, a mobile medical operations trailer (x-ray and Ultrasound services), and wheelchair van services.

Other Services Provided: Wheelchair transportation services are provided for residents and health care facilities, for patients who need transportation to a doctor's office, clinic, or other medical facility. Non-emergency transportation requests need to be booked in advance

Contact Information: 419.499.2515

Websites: www.fishertitus.org/north-central-ems/

Hours: 24-hour service

Service Area: Huron County

Eligibility Requirements: No requirements for emergency services, however for non-emergency services, there are documents to complete and type of insurance is a factor.

North Central is a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) providing ambulance and wheelchair van transportation in a 650 square mile service area that includes all of Erie and Huron Counties and parts of Lorain, Sandusky, Ottawa, and Seneca Counties, with EMS stations located in Milan, Norwalk, Berlin Heights, Greenwich, Vermilion, Port Clinton, Woodville, Sandusky, Green Springs, and Bellevue. Their fleet includes 26

ambulances, 9 wheelchair accessible vans, and a 26-foot trailer offering emergency medical treatment for large events. Ambulance service is available seven days a week, at any hour. Wheelchair van transportation operates on a scheduled 24-hour advanced reservation process. North Central is certified to provide Medicaid transportation.

The table below provides a summary of the characteristics of the participating transportation providers and organizations that purchase transportation on behalf of consumers.

Table 1: Organizational Characteristics

Agency Name	Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)	Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (if Yes, Who?)	Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit,)	Number of Annual One-Way Passenger Trips	Average Number Trip Denials per Week	Are Vehicles Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N) *
Huron County Transit	Yes	No	Public Non-Profit	10,513	11	No
Senior Enrichment Services	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	7,403	6	No
Huron Co. Veterans Services	Yes	On occasion	Public Non-Profit	Unknown	Unknown	VA clients only
Flat Rock Homes, Inc.	Yes	No	Non-Profit	1,829 due to COVID-19 Pandemic	0	Yes
Ability Works, Inc.	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	16,980	0	Yes

* Answering “Yes” indicates that your agency is closed door. Your agency is considered closed door if you ONLY provide transportation to your facility as a courtesy or if you ONLY serve a particular clientele that are enrolled in your agency programs (i.e., members of a sheltered workshop, or residents in a nursing home). Answering “No” indicates that your agency is open door. This means the service is open to the public or a segment of the general public defined by age, disability, or low income. For example, if an agency provides general transportation for anyone in the community who is over the age of 60, they are considered “open door”. For example, an individual who is 60 or over can request transportation to a doctor’s appointment or the grocery store regardless of their affiliation with your agency.

The participating organizations provide a wide range transportation, including demand response and on-demand (via private taxis). Five of the participating organizations provide services on weekdays, three operates transportation on Saturdays. Evening services after 6:00 p.m. are operated by three taxi businesses in Norwalk. The following table depicts the transportation service characteristics by agency. The table below provides a summary of the characteristics of the participating transportation providers and organizations that purchase transportation on behalf of consumers.

Table 2: Transportation Service Characteristics

Agency Name	Mode of Service	Days & Hours of Operation	Provides Medicaid-Eligible Trips (Y/N)	Level of Passenger Assistance Provided	Training Courses Required for Drivers
Ability Works, Inc.	Vans	Demand Response 24/7 as needed	Yes	On-Demand	ODODD training
Flat Rock Homes, Inc.	Demand response	24/7/365	Yes, ICF & Waiver	On demand	All Drivers: "Driver Safety V4" video; Additional training for DOT certified drives & must pass DOT physical & road test
Huron County Transit	Bus	M-F 7am-6pm	No	Curb to Curb	CPR/DDC4/Drive
Senior Enrichment Services	Bus	M-F 7am-4:30pm Sat 8:30am-2:30pm	No	Door to Door	CPR/DDC4/Drive
Veterans Services	Vans	Typically depart 7:30 a.m.	N/A	On-Demand	County training

Transportation-related expenses and revenues also differ by organization. Medicaid and local municipal general funds are common revenue sources for transportation operators in Huron County. The table below provides a summary of expenses and revenues for public and non-profit transportation programs.

Table 3: Transportation-Related Expenses and Revenues

Agency Name	Fare Structure	Donations Accepted (Y/N)	Number of Full-Time & Part-Time Drivers	Number of Full-Time & Part-Time Schedulers/Dispatchers	Revenue Sources (most recent Fiscal Year)	Total Annual Transportation Expenses
Ability Works, Inc.	Medicaid	No	1 FT, 8 Part Time	0	Medicaid, Local Taxes	\$94,000
Flat Rock Homes, Inc.	N/A	Yes	12 DOT certified dedicated to driving 95 FT may drive PT 26 PT may drive PT	0	Medicaid, Donations, Program/Services Revenue,	\$28,570.19 due to COVID-19 pandemic
Huron County Transit	Fare	No	1 FT 9 PT	1 FT	FTA & ODOT, Christie Lane Workshop Christie Lane Industries Fare box, Kindercasa (daycare)	\$455,599
Senior Enrichment Serv.	Donation	Yes	7 PT	1	Firelands Counseling and Recovery, City of Norwalk	\$220,784
Veterans Services	N/A	No	1 FT, 8 PT	1	1% property tax, VA	Not provided

The following table provides basic information about transportation options other than the traditional public and human services transportation. Transportation options might include bike share, ride share, intercity, or taxi services, and more.

Table 4: Alternative/ Active Transportation Options

Transportation Option	Availability	Cost	Usage	Service Area
Huron County Transit	M-F	\$3.00/ride		Huron/Erie/Out of County
GT Cab Service	Daily 24 hours	Varies w/time, distance; \$10 in town (\$9 age 62+)	Public; anyone	Norwalk and “north coast area” including to Cleveland (50-mile radius around Norwalk)
Paco’s Taxi	5a-10p M-F 9a-9p Sat-Sun	Contact Provider	Public; anyone	Huron Co.: Norwalk, Willard, Sandusky
Tijuana Taxi LLC	7a-10p M-F	\$8 in Norwalk City limits Outside Norwalk call provider for rate	Public; anyone	Huron County

The following table provides basic information about local travel training program options.

Table 5: Transportation Resources

Transportation Resource	Availability	Cost	Usage	Service Area
Hotlines (i.e. 2-1-1)	everyone	0.00	N/A	Everyone in the county
GLCAP	everyone	0.00	N/A	Everyone in the county

The following table illustrates the technology used by each transportation provider for scheduling, dispatching, and/or GPS tracking vehicles.

Table 6: Technology

Agency Name	Name of Scheduling Software	Do you have an App for Transportation (Y/N)?	Name of Dispatching Software	AVL System/ GPS (Y/N)
Huron County Transit	CTS	Yes	CTS	Yes
Senior Enrichment Services	Microsoft Excel	No	Microsoft Excel	No
Huron Co. Veterans Services	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flat Rock Homes, Inc.	N/A	No	N/A	N/A
Ability Works, Inc.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Assessment of Community Support for Transit

There is ample support for sustainable and transformative transportation services throughout the county, particularly at the county level of government. The current transportation model does not have the capacity to adequately provide the level of access to transit needed by county residents and the social service agencies that rely on contracted transportation services. Some social service agencies, with available funding for public transportation, choose to provide gas vouchers and pay premiums for out-of-county taxi services due to the limited capacity of available in-county transit service. All stakeholders conveyed a clear commitment to collaborating on a sustainable transit system that benefits the greatest possible number of Huron County residents. Similarly, county residents conveyed a need for additional transit services.

The 4GC Regional Strategic Workforce and Economic Development Strategy (2020) recommendations additional growth in the transportation (including public transportation)/logistics industry for future workforce development, retention of existing workforce, and overall economic development. This sentiment was echoed by Huron County businesses throughout the planning process. Several of Huron County's larger manufacturing businesses expressed that transportation to work was a perceived barrier that restricted their talent sourcing opportunities. At least two businesses met with a private transportation provider to discuss employer funded transportation routes.

Safety

Safety is practiced in Huron County through the provision of required courses to drivers in the Huron County Transit and Senior Express programs. Transit leadership is qualified to provide some of the training, which makes it much more accessible. County transit stakeholders and social service agencies provide relevant training to one another as needed in respective areas of expertise. For example, Huron County Transit provides wheelchair securement training to other agencies operating wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Typical topics covered in trainings for public transit drivers include policy and procedures, drug and alcohol policy and symptoms, safety and hepatitis B/blood borne pathogens, defensive driving, fire extinguisher operation, CPR and first aid, securing a wheelchair and hospital discharge, AOoA Minimum Standards and Passport code of ethics and competencies, meal route consumer guidelines, and transport of non-ambulatory clients.

The continued development of off-road bicycle paths and demarcation of on-street paths has helped improve bicycling safety. The North Coast Inland trail includes segments between Bellevue, Monroeville, Norwalk, and Wakeman, with a new connection from Wakeman westward to Lorain County. A new bicycle trail segment is being completed along West main Street US 20) on Bellevue's west side.

Vehicles

Survey/Interview participants listed a combined total of thirty-one vehicles. Approximately 52% (30 of 58) of the vehicles are wheelchair accessible. A vehicle utilization table is on Table 7. The size of HCT's fleet is not comparable to the fleet size of other counties, which limits their capacity for transportation service. The Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities fleet was not included in this analysis.

Two of the transportation providers provide at least six wheelchair accessible vehicles, while Senior Enrichment Services an entire fleet of wheelchair accessible vehicles. Currently, Huron County Veterans Office does not have a wheelchair accessible vehicle, but they contract with HCT to provide that service whenever needed. Wheelchair access is an increasingly demanded feature throughout Huron County as the population ages and needs for transportation (and new destinations such as dialysis centers and medical offices) among the wheelchair-bound population increase. As vehicles age, they require additional maintenance, may break down more often, and become costlier to operate. Vehicle replacement, based on age and condition, is vital to the overall cost effectiveness of the transportation services provided. At the time of this plans adoption, supply chain shortages pose a challenge to all transit providers. In anticipation of extended vehicle useful life (out of necessity), preventative maintenance and spare ratios will be critical to sustaining service capacity. Huron County Transit needs a fleet expansion in order to fully leverage available transportation service contract opportunities within the county.

Table 6: Vehicle Utilization Table

<i>Veh #</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Vin #</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>WC Capacity</i>	<i>Days of the Week Vehicle is in Service</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>	<i>Vehicle Condition</i>	<i>Program to which Vehicle is Assigned (if applicable)</i>	<i>Service Area</i>
HURON COUNTY TRANSIT											
33	Ford	E350 High Top	2012	1FTDS3EL6CDB01704	11	0	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
34	AM	MV-1	2016	57WMD2C66GM100118	4	1	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
35	AM	MV-1	2016	57WMD2C64GM100117	4	1	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
36	Ford	Transit	2017	1FTYR2CM6HKB54456	6	1	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
37	Ford	E 350	2018	1FDEE3FSXJDC06529	6	1	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
38	Ford	E 350	2018	1FDEE3FS9JDC06523	6	1	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
39	Ford	Transit	2018	1FTYR2CM8JKB21948	9, 11	1	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
40	Ford	E 350	2019	1FDEE3FS3KDC39759	6	1	5	7am-6pm	Good	HCT	Huron Co
41	Ford	E 350	2020	1FDES6PG5LKB09385	9,11	1	5	7am-6pm	New	HCT	Huron Co
42	Ford	E 450	2020	1FDES6PG5LKB09385	9,11	1	5	7am-6pm	New	HCT	Huron Co
SENIOR ENRICHMENT SERVICES											
1	Dodge	Caravan	2010	Not provided	6	1	5 (M-F)	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
2	Dodge	Caravan	2010	Not provided	6	1	6 (M-Sa)	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co

<i>Veh #</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Vin #</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>WC Capacity</i>	<i>Days of the Week Vehicle is in Service</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>	<i>Vehicle Condition</i>	<i>Program to which Vehicle is Assigned (if applicable)</i>	<i>Service Area</i>
3	Ford	E350 LTN	2014	1FDEE3FL2GDC41146	9-11	1	5	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
4	Ford	E350 LTN	2014	1FDEE3FL4GDC41147	9-11	1	5	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
5	Ford	E350 LTN	2016	1FDEE3FL0GDC32106	6	1	5	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
6	Ford	E350 LTN	2011	1FDEE3FL0BDS17043	6	1	5	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
7	Ford	E350 LTN	2013	1FDEE3FL1DDA59529	9-11	1	5	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
8	Ford	E350 LTN	2015	1FDEE3FL1FDA19597	9-11	1	5	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
14	Ford	E350 LTN	2013	1FDEE3FL6DDA89027	9-11	1	5	7am-4:30pm	Good	SES	Huron Co
HURON COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES OFFICE											
01	Dodge	Grand Caravan	2017	JR162501	7	0	5 (M-F)	7:30 -	New	HCVSO	Huron Co
02	Ford	Taurus X	2008	MA38895	5	0	5	7:30-	Fair	HCVSO	Huron Co
03	Ford	Transit	2015	KB23101	9	0	5	7:30-	New	HCVSO	Huron Co
04	Ford	Explorer	2013	GA51289	5	0	5	7:30-	Good	HCVSO	Huron Co
05	Ford	Windstar	2006	BA55057	5	0	5	7:30-	Fair	HCVSO	Huron Co
06	Ford	Transit	2015	KA99853	12	0	5	7:30-	New	HCVSO	Huron Co
		*Veterans Services rides typically depart 7:30 a.m. and return at varying times depending on distance to destination and number and scheduling of appointments.									

<i>Veh #</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Vin #</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>WC Capacity</i>	<i>Days of the Week Vehicle is in Service</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>	<i>Vehicle Condition</i>	<i>Program to which Vehicle is Assigned (if applicable)</i>	<i>Service Area</i>
HURON COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES											
CD11 151	Ford	4DC	2011-3	1FD4FE4FS2BDB22684			24/7				Out of Service
XX-0037	Thomas	Bus	2015	4UZABRDT2FCGM4340			24/7				Out of service
	Dodge	Minivan - white	2014	2C7WDGGBG7ER220298			24/7				Out of service
CD11 144	Chrysler	TWC - red	2008	2A8HR44H18R748749			24/7				Out of service
CD11 149	Ford	4DC	2011-1	1FD4FE4FS1BDB22675			24/7				
CD11 094	Ford	25V	2007-3	1FTNE24W77DA60037			24/7				
	Dodge	Grand Caravan	2015	2C4RDGBG8FR669906			24/7				
Flat Rock Homes											
1	Dodge	Grand Caravan	2019	23C4RDGEG4KR691827	7	0	7	8am-7pm	Excellent	Care Center/Community	Seneca
2	Dodge	Grand Caravan	2019	2C4RDGE0KR690688	7	0	7	8am-7pm	Excellent	Care Center/Community	Seneca
3	Dodge	Grand Caravan	2019	23C4RDGE8K709536	7	0	7	8am-7pm	Excellent	FRCS – Employment	Various
4	Ford	Transit Van	2018	1FBZX2CM7JKA23198	12	2	7	8am-7pm	Excellent	Community	Lorain

<i>Veh #</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Vin #</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>WC Capacity</i>	<i>Days of the Week Vehicle is in Service</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>	<i>Vehicle Condition</i>	<i>Program to which Vehicle is Assigned (if applicable)</i>	<i>Service Area</i>
5	Ford	Transit Van	2020	1FBAX2C83LK59117	7	2	7	8am-7pm	Excellent	Care Center/Community	Seneca
6	Dodge	Grand Caravan 4x2	2013	3C4RDBG8DR694415	7	0	7	8am-7pm	Good	Care Center	Seneca
7	Dodge	Grand Caravan 4x2	2013	2C4RDGBG1DR699911	7	0	7	8am-7pm	Good	Care Center	Seneca
8	Dodge	Ram 2500 S	2012	3C6LD5AT3CG242389	2	0	5	8am-7pm	Good	Care Center	Seneca
9	Ford	E350 4x2 Ext.	2001	1FBSS3BL5BDA20692	10	0	5	7:30am-3:30pm	Good	Community	Huron
10	Ford	Ecoline Wagon	2011	1FBSS3BLXBDA11051	10	0	5	7:30am-3:30pm	Good	Community	Sandusky
11	Ford	Fusion SE	2009	3FAHP07169R117436	5	0	7	8am-7pm	Good	Care Center	Seneca
12	Buick	Terraza Extended Sport	2006	GADV23L06D180779	7	0	7	8am-7pm	Fair	Care Center	Seneca
Bus 1	Chevy	G30 4x2 Express	2002	1GBJG31F421191668	10	2	7	8:30am-2:30pm	Fair	Care Center	Seneca

<i>Veh #</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Vin #</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>WC Capacity</i>	<i>Days of the Week Vehicle is in Service</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>	<i>Vehicle Condition</i>	<i>Program to which Vehicle is Assigned (if applicable)</i>	<i>Service Area</i>
13	Ford	Club Wagon 4x2	1998	1FBSS31L0WHB26385	9	0	7	8:30am-2:30pm	Fair	Care Center	Seneca
Bus 2	Ford	E350 Supreme Startrans	2005	1FDWE355S35HB44766	10	2	5	8:30am-2:30pm	Fair	Community	Seneca
14	Chevy	C30 4x2 Fleet Side	1988	1GCGC34K9JE130530	N/a	N/a	N/a	Out of Service	Out of Service/ Not Repairable	Care Center	Seneca
ABILITY WORKS, INC.											
1	Ford	E350	2008	1FDEE35S89DA24938	12	2	M-F	24/7	Good	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
2	Ford	E350	2009	1FDEE35L39DA44085	8	2	M-F	24/7	Poor	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
3	Ford	E350	2009	1FDEE35L78DA44086	8	2	M-F	24/7	Poor	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
4	Ford	E350	2008	1FD3E35L78DA05750	8	2	M-F	24/7	Poor	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
5	Ford	E350	2008	1FD3E35L78DA05750	10	2	M-F	24/7	Good	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, &

<i>Veh #</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Vin #</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>WC Capacity</i>	<i>Days of the Week Vehicle is in Service</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>	<i>Vehicle Condition</i>	<i>Program to which Vehicle is Assigned (if applicable)</i>	<i>Service Area</i>
											Ottawa Counties
6	Ford	WSD	2008	1FBN31L78DB25751	10	0	M-F	24/7	Good	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
7	CHEV	Astro	2001	1GNDM19W71B101441	6	0	M-F	24/7	Good	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
8	Ford	Transit	2017	1FBU4XM9HKA68862	14,12	0,6	M-F	24/7	Excellent	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
9	Ford	Transit	2008	1FD3E35L78DA05750	14,12	0,6	M-F	24/7	Excellent	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties
10	GM	Transit	2005	1FVACWDC55HUS5362	0,2	0,2	M-F	24/7	Excellent	Ability Works	Erie, Huron, & Ottawa Counties

Summary of Existing Resources

Huron County has relatively small and compartmentalized transit programs that are aimed to serve specific demographics of the population. Huron County Transit, the public transportation provider, reports operating at capacity and is unable to fulfill expanding service demands. In the wake of Covid-19, HCT saw an increased demand for work-related transportation, which they were unable to effectively accommodate. The small fleet size and saturated capacity negatively impact HCT's ability to take on additional transportation contracts to fund future growth. Public transit agencies serving similar-sized neighboring counties typically have fleets about three times larger than Huron County.

At least one social service agency reports having funding available for transportation, but no current contract agreement with the public transit provider. Circumstances such as this represent missed opportunities to fund future growth.

IV. Assessment of Transportation Needs and Gaps

In an effort to better understand Huron County's needs, the planning committee examined research and data, as well as solicited input from the community in an effort to gather information about needs and gaps in transportation services.

The demographic and socio-economic conditions of the study area are discussed in the Demographics Chapter of this plan. The following overview is an evaluation of the gaps in service based upon geographic data as well as from the perspective of the targeted populations, transportation providers, and the general public.

GLCAP a variety of stakeholders in the area in an attempt to solicit input and request participation from any organization that could potentially be impacted by the coordinated transportation planning process. More information on how the lead agency engaged stakeholder and the general public is available upon request.

The following methods were used to assess transportation needs and gaps

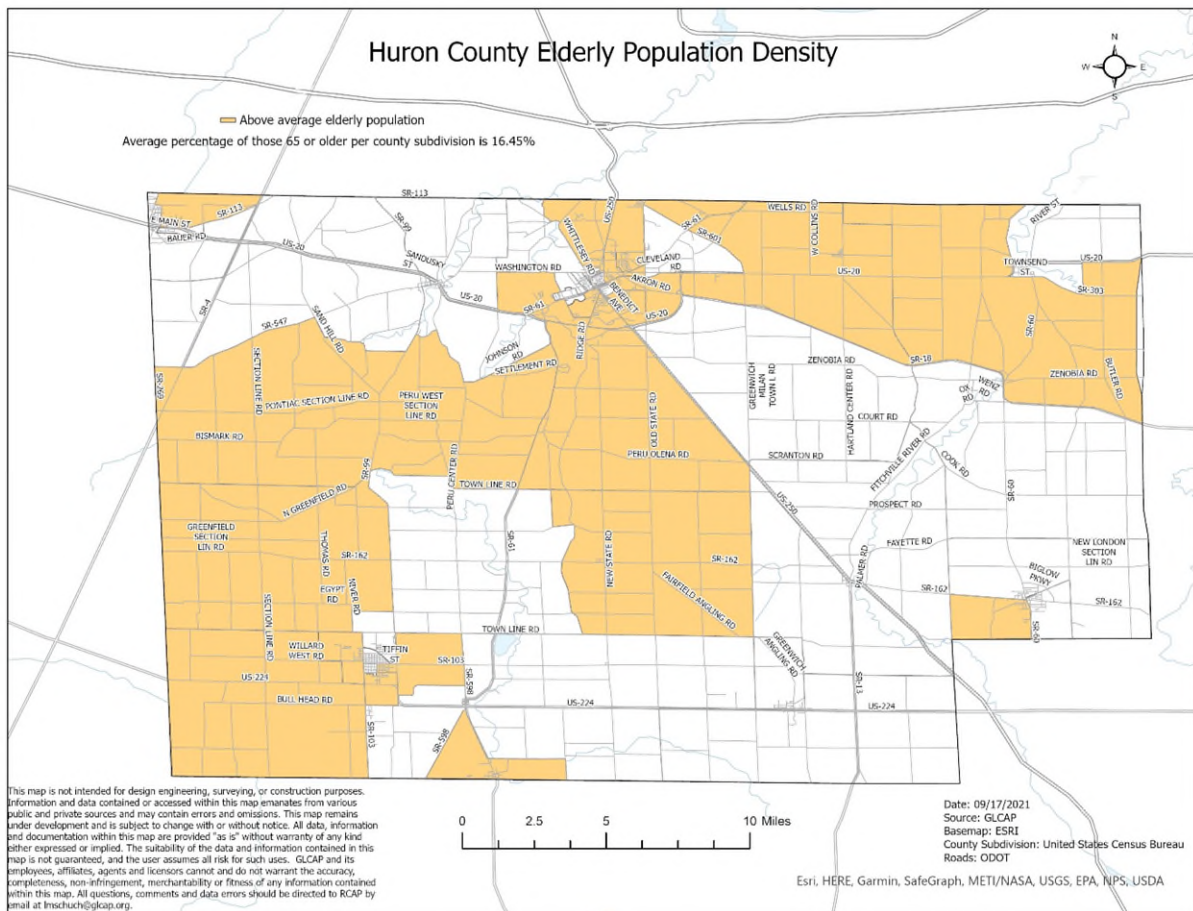
- Assessment of data and demographics (required)
- Surveys shared via paper copy, direct mail, and via web links
- Provider interviews and ride-a-longs
- Focus groups with target demographics
- Participation in working groups and meetings

Local Demographic and Socio-Economic Data

Data for each target population group were aggregated by Census Block Group for transportation analysis. The demographic and socio-economic data is valuable because a comparison of where the highest and lowest densities individuals who are most likely to need transportation live. This information can then be compared to the locations of (1) major trip generators, and (2) available transportation services.

The following exhibit illustrates the areas where the number of older adults (age 65 and older) is at or above the county average.

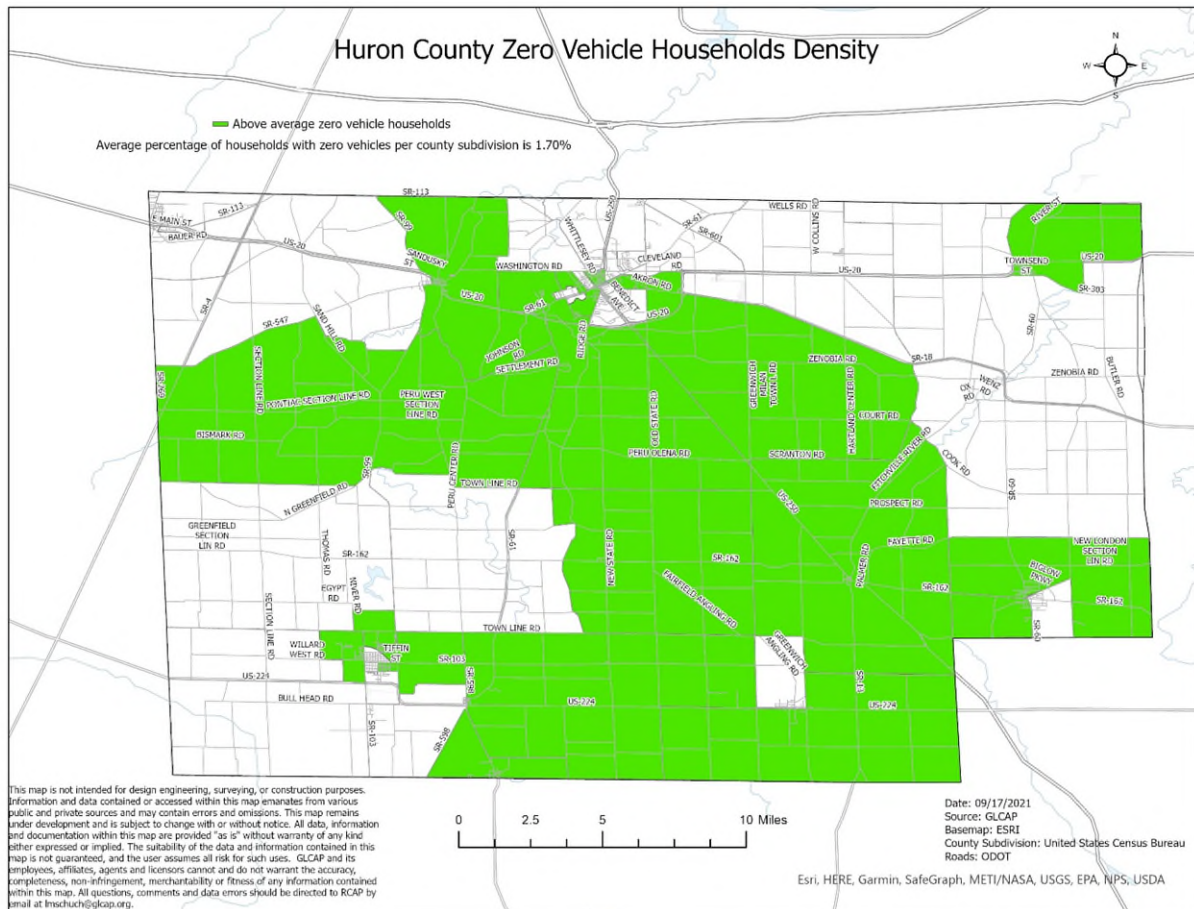
Exhibit 1: Map of Population Density of Individuals Age 65 and Older



The above map indicates the relative density or incidence of seniors aged 65 and older. This helps determine if transit planners could take these areas into consideration as locations where demand for transit may be relatively great. The map of Huron County indicates concentrations throughout, including Norwalk and the area South-Southeast to the edge of the count.

The exhibit below indicates the areas where the number of zero vehicle households. The absence of a vehicle in the household is often an indication of the need for transportation services.

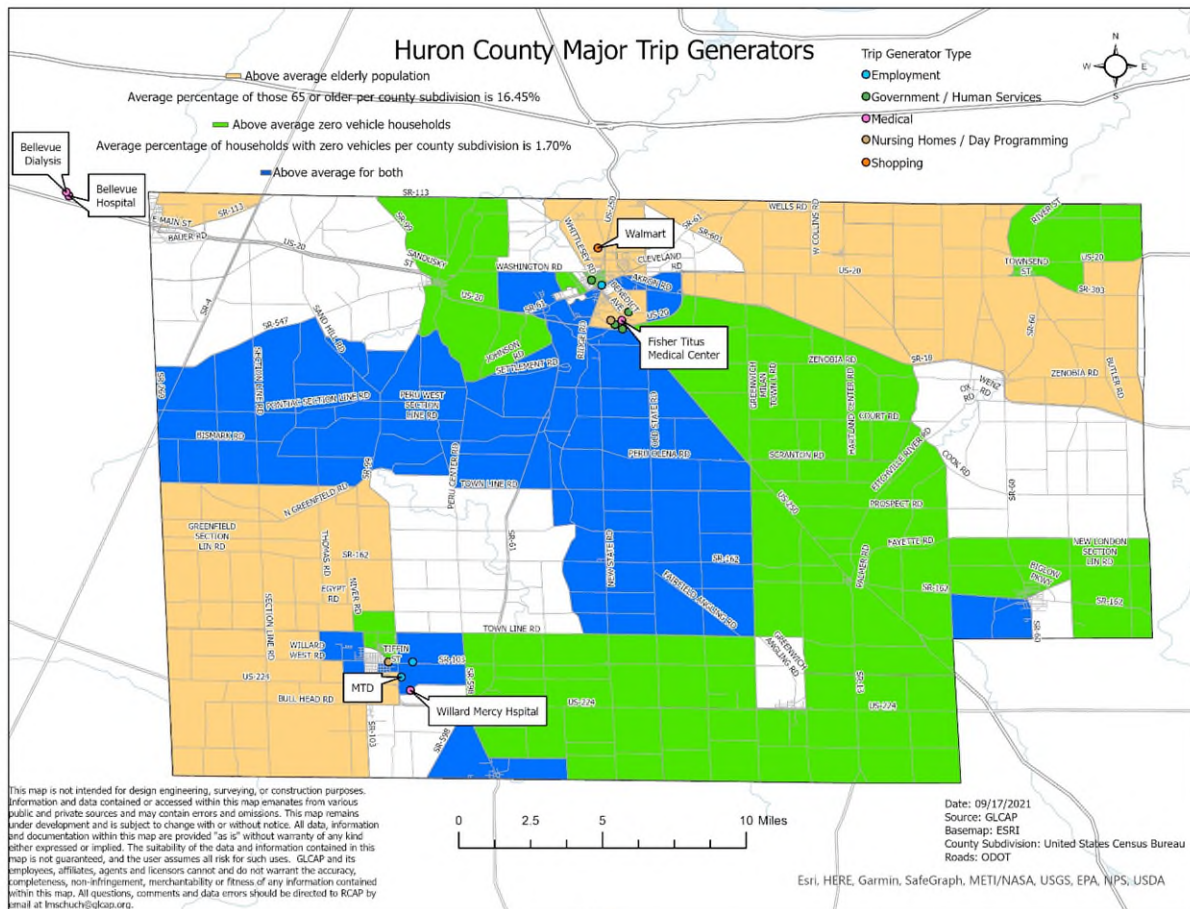
Exhibit 2: Map of Density of Zero Vehicle Households



Concentrations of homes with no vehicles are depicted, in the above map, in the Southern Norwalk and Bellevue area, and also throughout southern Huron County, with greater incidence in Willard and in the southeastern portion of the county. It should be noted that the southern portion of the county is home to an increased number of Amish and Mennonite families, who often eschew automobiles and rely on such alternatives as bicycles and horse-drawn carriages.

The next exhibit illustrates the location of the top destinations for the existing transportation providers as well as major trip generators for anyone in the area, including those who drive a personal vehicle.

Exhibit 3: Map of Major Trip Generators



Analysis of Demographic Data

The majority of Huron County has a higher-than-average population of zero vehicle households, elderly, or disabled individuals. These three demographics have a higher-than-average likelihood to need transportation services. The lack of trip generators spread throughout the county, especially in areas likely to need transit service, indicates a considerable need for transit services. Many survey respondents indicate reliance on friends and family for transportation; however, these forms of ridesharing are often on an as-needed basis and not stable enough to fully meet the needs of those requiring transportation services.

General Public and Stakeholder Meetings/Focus Groups

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership hosted and facilitated four local meetings and focus groups to discuss the unmet transportation needs and gaps in mobility and transportation. 27 people participated in the meetings. Of those, 12 self-identified as older adults and 14 self-identified as being a person with a disability. More information about what meetings were held and attendance at those meetings is available upon request.

The following are some of the recommendations voiced by the Focus Group attendees:

- Examine attracting ride hailing companies to the region such as Lift/Uber, etc.
- Encourage taxis to re-invent themselves, as residents commented that they are in bad shape and too expensive for low-income community (per survey responses).
- Explore taxi partnerships and fare subsidies to attract taxi services and lessen the passenger fare. This also may incentive services to leave the Norwalk area.
- Examine three main types of transit service for rural communities: fixed-route service; demand response service and flex-route service, asking businesses to participate if necessary.
- Utilize regional practices to allow transportation services to cross county lines.
- Provide a platform for area transportation firms to relay the issues and challenges of the industry to elected officials because of continued restrictive regulations.

During the meetings, the Great Lakes Community Action Partnership presented highlights of historical coordinated transportation in the Huron County and discussed the activities since the last Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan that have helped to address some of the unmet transportation needs and gaps in services for the area.

Following the initial presentation, the stakeholders were asked to review the gaps in transportation services and needs from the previous plan/or update and identify any gaps that were no longer valid and any new needs/gaps, which the facilitator deleted/added to/from a list. The focus of the discussion was transportation for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. However, several topics discussed also impact mobility options for the general public.

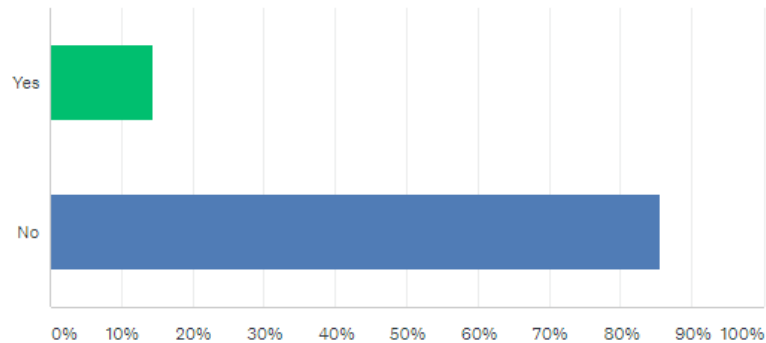
After the changes to the needs/gaps list were completed and new needs/gaps were added, each participant was asked to rank the needs/gaps using colored dots representing a high, medium, or low priority or that the remaining gap/need should be deleted.

Participants discussed more than 10 mobility issues to achieve, preserve, avoid, or eliminate through coordination during the meetings. Coordinated transportation stakeholders will consider these unmet needs when developing transportation goals and strategies, and grant applications. The exhibit at the end of this section provides a summary of the unmet mobility needs discussed during the meeting as well as the needs identified by the survey results.

Surveys

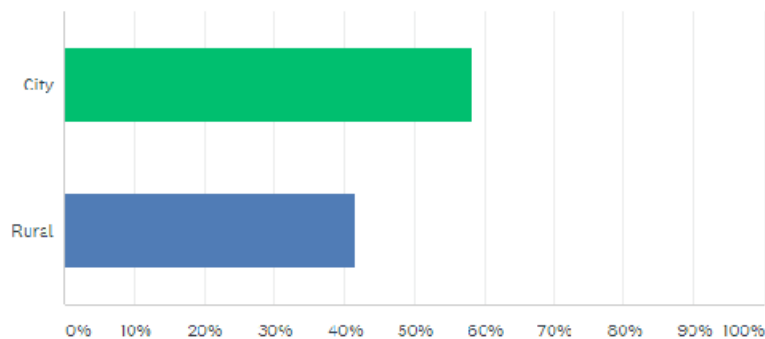
The following survey summary includes the information gained from the survey efforts that were performed. 93 surveys from the General Public completed the survey, 2% of individuals with disabilities completed the survey, and 83% of older adults completed the survey.

1. Are you a veteran?



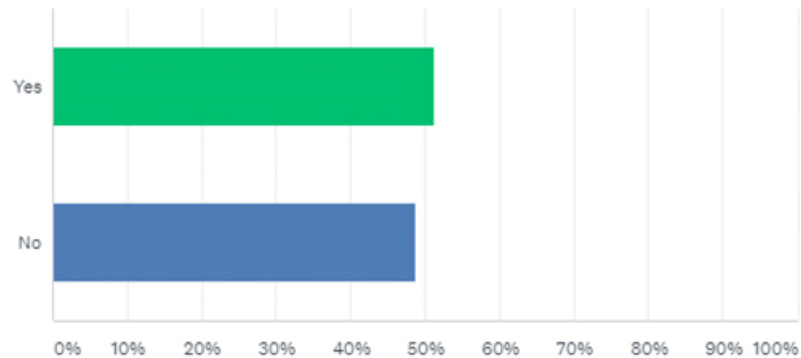
Summary: 14.47% respondents report they're veterans and 85.53% of respondents report they are not veterans.

2. Do you live in a city or rural area?



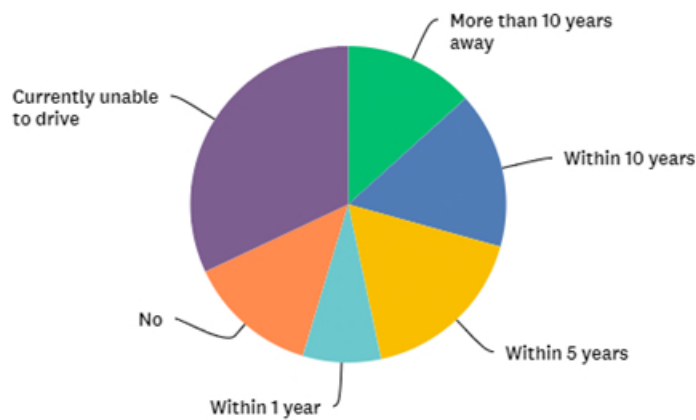
Summary: 58.44% of respondents report they live in a city and 41.56% of respondents report they live in a rural area. Rural areas tended to have more seniors and zero vehicle households, while most of the trip generators are in city limits.

3. Are you currently able to drive yourself where you need to go?



Summary: 51.35% of respondents report they can drive where they need to go and 48.65% report they are not able to drive themselves where they need to go.

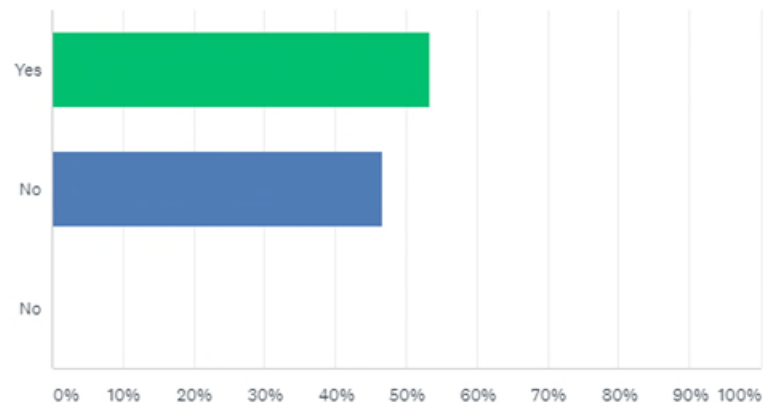
4. Do you anticipate a time when you will no longer be able to drive yourself?



Summary Data:

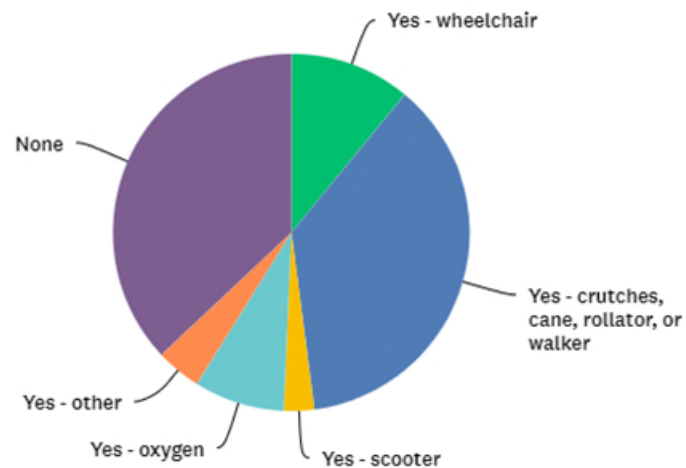
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
More than 10 years away	13.33%
Within 10 years	16.00%
Within 5 years	17.33%
Within 1 year	8.00%
No	13.33%
Currently unable to drive	32.00%

5. Do you have a disability that affects you travel?



Summary: 53.42% of respondents report they do have a disability that affects their travel and 46.58% of respondents report they do not have a disability.

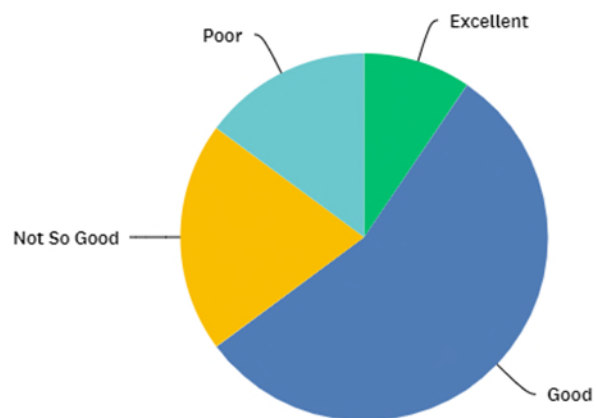
6. If yes, do you use equipment to help you?



Summary Data

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Yes - wheelchair	10.96%
▼ Yes - crutches, cane, rollator, or walker	36.99%
▼ Yes - scooter	2.74%
▼ Yes - oxygen	8.22%
▼ Yes - other	4.11%
▼ None	36.99%

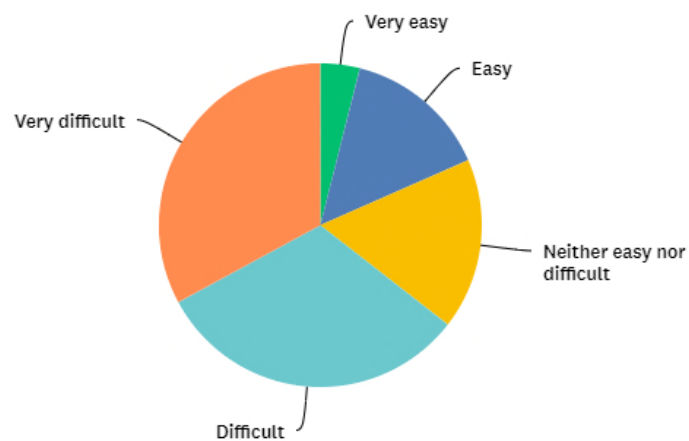
7. Other than driving yourself, how would you rate other travel options?



Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Excellent	9.46%
▼ Good	55.41%
▼ Not So Good	20.27%
▼ Poor	14.86%

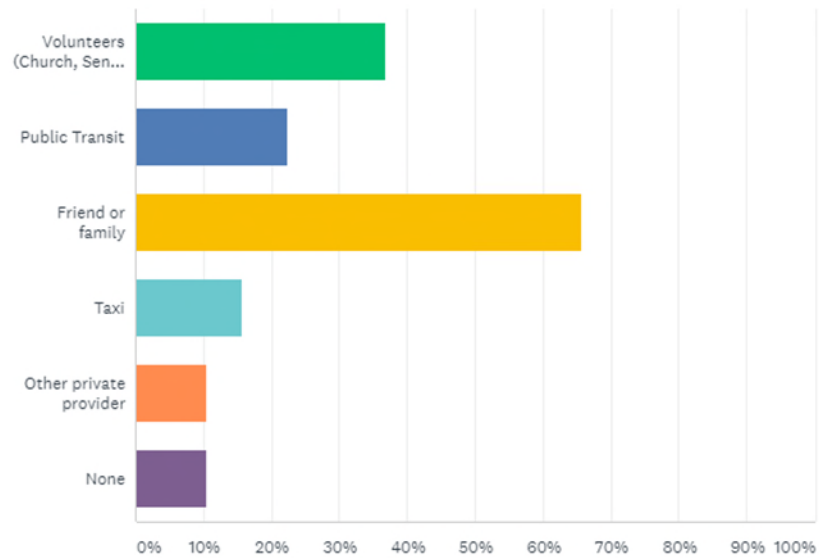
8. If you stopped driving, how hard would it be to get to where you need to go?



Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Very easy	3.95%
▼ Easy	14.47%
▼ Neither easy nor difficult	17.11%
▼ Difficult	31.58%
▼ Very difficult	32.89%

9. Other than driving yourself, what transportation service are available to you?



Summary Data:

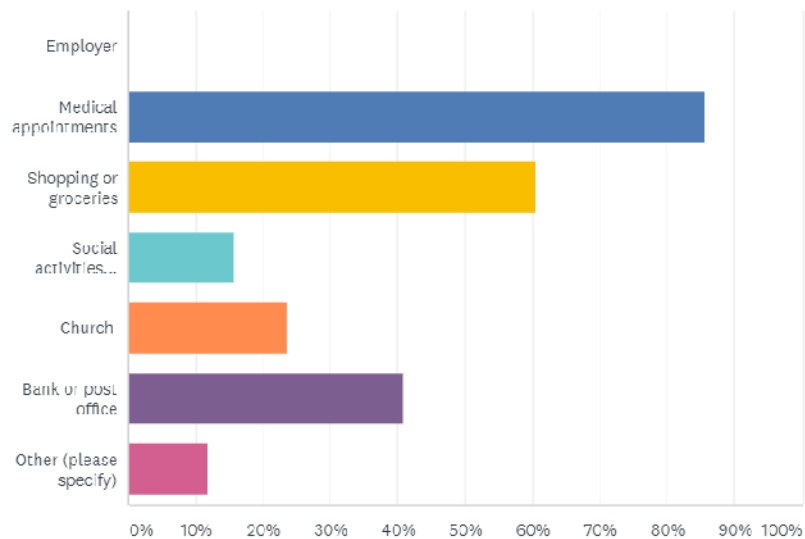
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Volunteers (Church, Senior Services)	36.84%
▼ Public Transit	22.37%
▼ Friend or family	65.79%
▼ Taxi	15.79%
▼ Other private provider	10.53%
▼ None	10.53%

10. From the list below, how often do you use the following transportation methods to get to the places you need to go to?

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
▼ Drive a vehicle	46.88%	15.63%	37.50%
▼ Ride with family or friends	38.46%	49.23%	12.31%
▼ Walk	10.34%	17.24%	72.41%
▼ Ride public transportation, like a bus or train	6.67%	18.33%	75.00%
▼ Use a taxi or cab service	0.00%	13.56%	86.44%
▼ Ride a bicycle	0.00%	8.93%	91.07%
▼ Ride with a volunteer	7.27%	27.27%	65.45%
▼ Use a ridesharing service, like Uber or Lyft	1.89%	0.00%	98.11%

Summary: Respondents report the other methods of transportation they use to get to their destination are, driving a vehicle, ride with family or friends, walking, ride public transportation like a train or a bus, using a taxi or cab service, riding a bike, ride with a volunteer, and using a ridesharing service like Uber or Lyft. The preference to ride with friends or family is the most common alternative to driving in the six counties GLCAP surveyed.

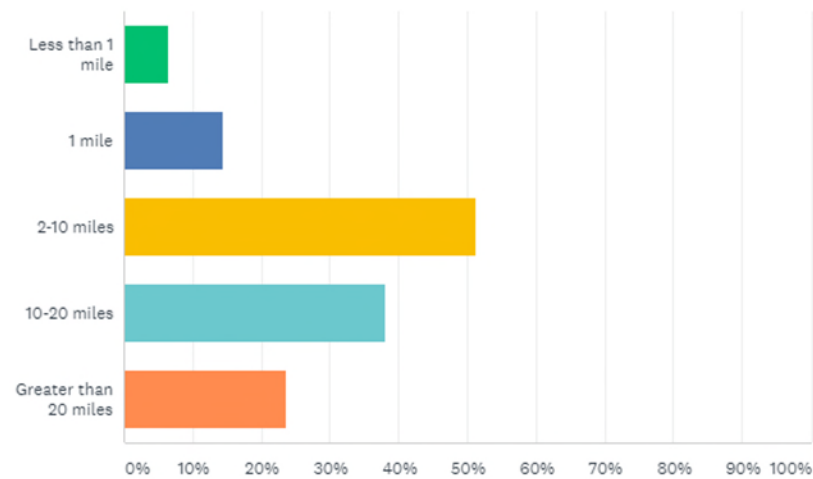
11. Which of the following are your most commonly visited destination?



Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Employer	0.00%
▼ Medical appointments	85.53%
▼ Shopping or groceries	60.53%
▼ Social activities (senior center)	15.79%
▼ Church	23.68%
▼ Bank or post office	40.79%
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 11.84%

12. How far are the places that you most often need to go? Check all that apply.



Summary Data:

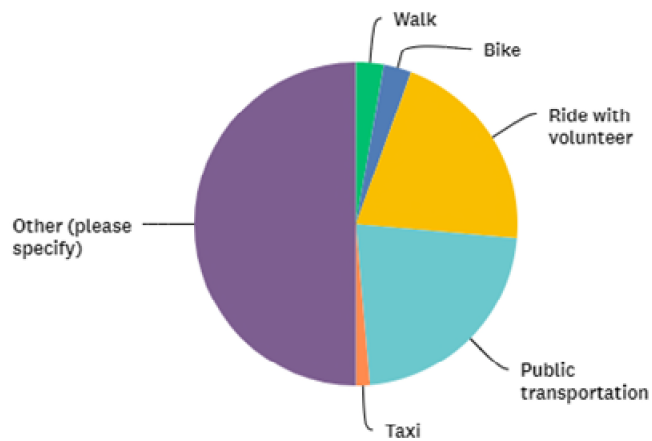
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Less than 1 mile	6.58%
▼ 1 mile	14.47%
▼ 2-10 miles	51.32%
▼ 10-20 miles	38.16%
▼ Greater than 20 miles	23.68%

13. If you were looking for information on transportation options, which would you be most likely to use?

ANSWER CHOICES ▼	RESPONSES
▼ Family, friends, or colleagues	59.46%
▼ Computer search	10.81%
▼ Telephone book	9.46%
▼ Someone living in your community	4.05%
▼ Transportation provider agency	12.16%
▼ Organization that offers services for older adults	18.92%
▼ Senior Center	33.78%
▼ Area Office on Aging	22.97%
▼ Someone at your place of worship	6.76%
▼ Organization that offers services for disabled	10.81%
▼ Aging and Disability Resource Center	6.76%
▼ Library	4.05%
▼ Center for Independent Living	0.00%
▼ A community center	0.00%
▼ Mobility Manager or Mobility Management Program	1.35%

Summary: Respondents were asked to choose an option of transportation they would be most likely to use. Respondents reported they would use family, friends or colleagues, computer search, telephone book, someone living in their community, transportation provider agency, organization that offers services for older adults, senior center, area of office on aging, someone at your place of worship, organization that offers services for disabled, aging and disability resource center, library and mobility manager or mobility management program.

15. What transportation would you be most likely to use?

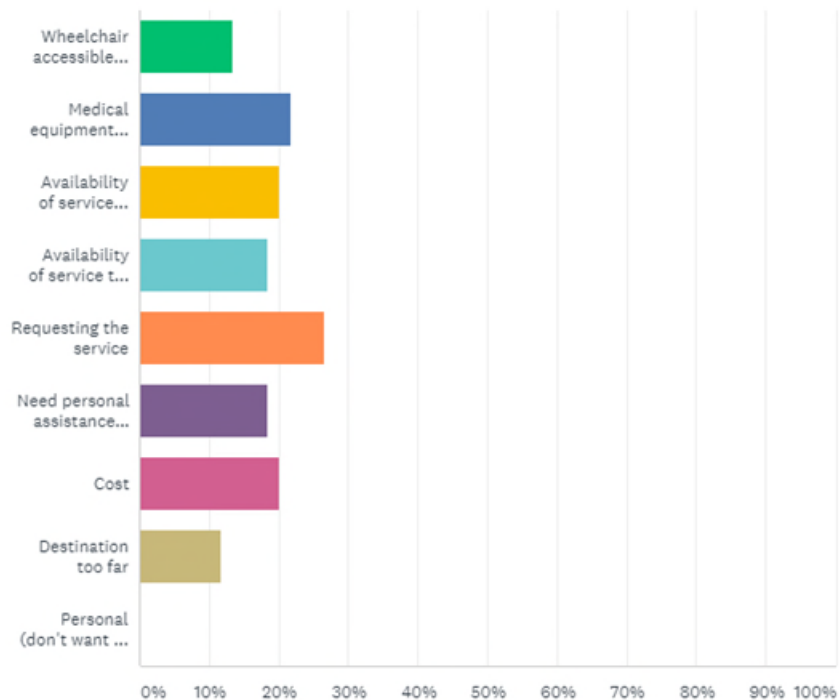


Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Walk	2.78%
▼ Bike	2.78%
▼ Ride with volunteer	20.83%
▼ Public transportation	22.22%
▼ Taxi	1.39%
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 50.00%

*The most common response specified as 'other' was friends and family (52.78%).

16. What makes using a transportation service most difficult?

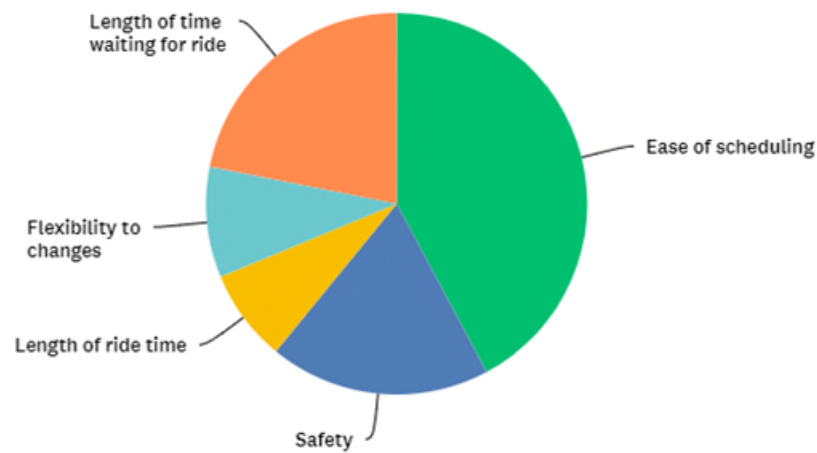


Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Wheelchair accessible vehicles	13.33%
▼ Medical equipment and/or mobility aids	21.67%
▼ Availability of service where I live	20.00%
▼ Availability of service to where I need to go	18.33%
▼ Requesting the service	26.67%
▼ Need personal assistance beyond transportation	18.33%
▼ Cost	20.00%
▼ Destination too far	11.67%
▼ Personal (don't want to be a burden)	0.00%

Summary: Calling to make a trip reservation was a consistent complaint gleaned from focus groups. Also, the pick-up windows were often cited as the source of negative experiences riding with public transit, particularly in during poor weather.

17. What is most important when using a transportation service?

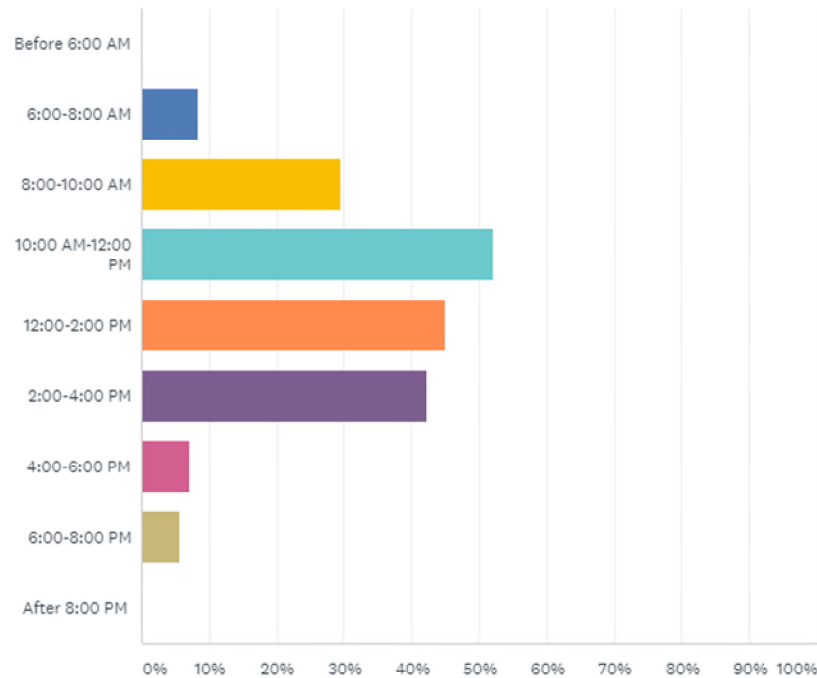


Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Ease of scheduling	42.19%
▼ Safety	18.75%
▼ Length of ride time	7.81%
▼ Flexibility to changes	9.38%
▼ Length of time waiting for ride	21.88%

Summary: In comparison to the previous question, the most important aspect of using a transportation service is also perceived as the most difficult.

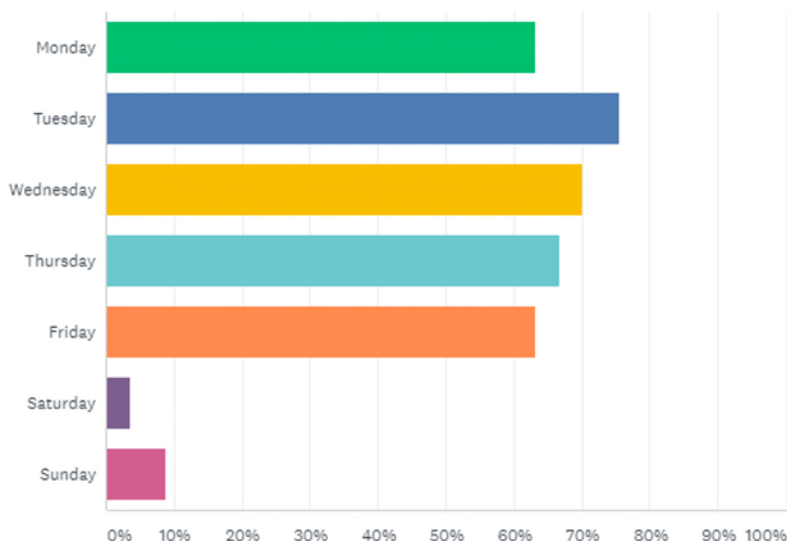
18. What hours of the day are you most likely to need transportation? Pick the two that most apply.



Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Before 6:00 AM	0.00%
6:00-8:00 AM	8.45%
8:00-10:00 AM	29.58%
10:00 AM-12:00 PM	52.11%
12:00-2:00 PM	45.07%
2:00-4:00 PM	42.25%
4:00-6:00 PM	7.04%
6:00-8:00 PM	5.63%
After 8:00 PM	0.00%

19. What days of the week are you most likely to need transportation? Check all that apply.



Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Monday	63.16%
▼ Tuesday	75.44%
▼ Wednesday	70.18%
▼ Thursday	66.67%
▼ Friday	63.16%
▼ Saturday	3.51%
▼ Sunday	8.77%

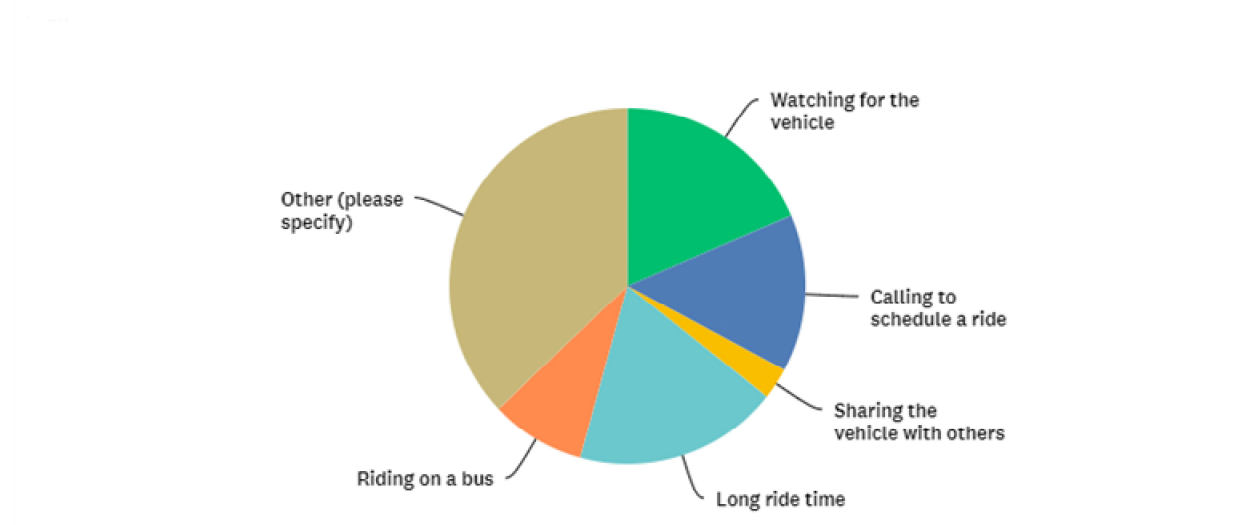
20. What is your most common destination within your county? (ie: city, town, etc.)

Summary: 33.33% of respondents indicated Norwalk was their most common destination within Huron County. Norwalk is the county seat and the location of businesses, shopping, and community resources. The other common in-county destination was Willard (11.59%). The most common trip purposes in-county were the grocery store (7.25%) and the doctor (17.39%).

21. What is your most common destination outside of your county? (i.e.: city, town, etc.)

Summary: 23.81% of respondents indicated Sandusky was their most common out-of-county destination. Perkins Township (technically south of the City of Sandusky) includes a hub of retail, dining, and employment trip generators. This follows commuter traffic patterns between Norwalk and Sandusky using the SR 250 corridor. Other out-of-county destinations included Mansfield (6.35%) and Cleveland (6.35%).

22. What would you dislike most about using a transportation service?

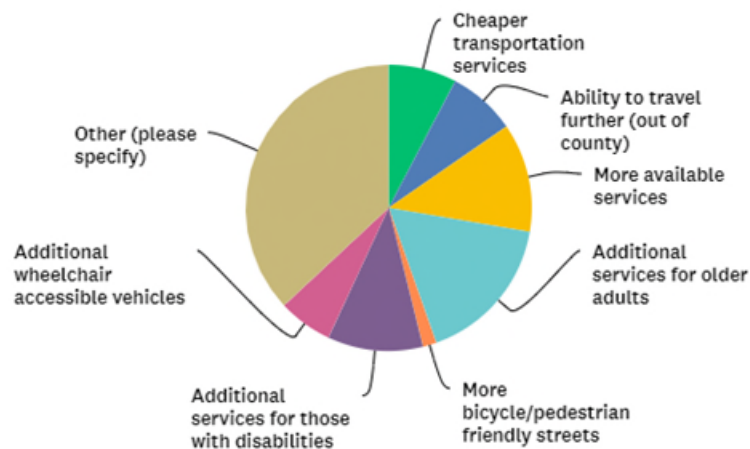


Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Watching for the vehicle	18.57%
▼ Calling to schedule a ride	14.29%
▼ Sharing the vehicle with others	2.86%
▼ Long ride time	18.57%
▼ Riding on a bus	8.57%
▼ Poor weather	0.00%
▼ Other	0.00%
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 37.14%

*Of the respondents who specified the answer of 'other,' the most common reasons cited were the length of time on the bus (34.62%) and the process for calling to schedule a ride (26.92%).

23. What would you like to see in your community that would help you get around better?



Summary Data:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Cheaper transportation services	7.69%
▼ Ability to travel further (out of county)	7.69%
▼ More available services	12.31%
▼ Additional services for older adults	16.92%
▼ More bicycle/pedestrian friendly streets	1.54%
▼ Additional services for those with disabilities	10.77%
▼ Additional wheelchair accessible vehicles	6.15%
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 36.92%

*The most common answers specified as 'other' were the ability to travel out-of-county (33.33%) and additional services for older adults (41.67%).

Challenges to Coordinated Transportation

In addition to identifying needs, the planning committee gathered information from stakeholders and used their own professional experience to identify challenges to providing coordinated transportation services. These challenges include the following:

- **Transportation Planning:** The current transit capacity is limited in its capacity to expand to meet new and arising needs. There may be alternative designated grantee arrangement that better positions a public transportation provider to meet the County's needs and expectations.
- **Hours of Operation:** Transportation challenges arising during nontraditional hours, typically after close of business in the evening, or during the weekend. Although this is a consistently mentioned unmet need for expanded service hours, night and weekend transportation can often have lower trips per hour.
- **Public Awareness:** The ongoing challenge to market the transportation system in Huron County, and to convey that while ride services are targeted to specific populations, the Transit system is open to and welcomes the public.
- **Geography/ Distance between Communities:** The need for clients to go further distances other than within the county, such as out of county doctor appointments, employment, or entertainment. This was specifically mentioned as a barrier to bring needed employees into Huron County to meet labor demands.
- **Meeting or altering rider expectations:** Client's expectations of scheduling demand service 24 hours in advance but sometimes having to ride on the transit longer than the commute would take directly arises often. Public transit is most commonly differentiated as a low-cost provider; however, when only a marginal cost difference exists, customers will likely choose the more desirable experience (i.e., short travel time).

Summary of Unmet Mobility Needs

The following table describes the identified unmet transportation needs that were identified and the method used to identify and prioritize each need. Needs are listed in order of their rank in highest to lowest priority.

Exhibit 4: Prioritized Unmet Mobility Needs

Rank	Unmet Need Description	Method Used to Identify and Rank Need
1	Limited potential for service expansion	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
2	Limited local funding streams	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
3	Inadequate access to public transit in rural areas	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
4	Small public transit fleet (limited fleet capacity)	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
5	Taxi services (on demand) are preferred but expensive (JFS and HCBDD Funding Implications)	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
6	No reliable employment transportation	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
7	Unique geography makes efficiency difficult	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
8	Negative customer experiences	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
9	Decrease complexity of transit service scheduling	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
10	Out-of-county transportation (to include for medical reasons)	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
11	Regulatory barriers (Flat Rock Survey)	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
12	Lack of local funding to bring employees into the county	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
13	Expectation is for on-demand services	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups
14	Limited nights and weekends transportation	Surveys, Focus Groups, Coordinated Transportation Stakeholder meetings, and attendance at transit-related meetings and working groups

V. Goals and Strategies

Developing Strategies to Address Gaps and Needs

Strategies for improving transportation for the Huron County should address the service gaps and user needs identified in this plan if they are to be effective. As described, the gaps and unmet needs were based on information obtained from geographic analysis, the attendees participating in the meetings, and responses to the public survey.

Based on information gathered throughout the planning process, Great Lakes Community Action Partnership, Mobility Management, developed the following strategies to address the gaps and unmet transportation needs. Priority levels are assigned by considering the primary funding sources that could be available to support plan implementation compared to the importance of meeting this unmet need expressed by the public and stakeholders. Not all strategies are activities specifically eligible for funding under the existing programs, nor is it guaranteed that sufficient funding will be available to achieve every strategy identified. In addition, the local stakeholders will need to provide support and commit to pursuing the strategies if they are to be accomplished. Nonetheless, these strategies have been tailored to four primary gaps and needs.

Below is an outline describing the prioritized strategies to address each of the identified unmet transportation needs and gaps in services.

Goal #1: Develop a strategic plan/vision for public transportation in Huron County

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Limited potential for service expansion
- Limited local funding streams
- Inadequate access to public transit in rural areas
- Small public transit fleet
- Decrease complexity of transit service scheduling
- Out-of-county transportation (to include for medical reasons)
- Regulatory barriers (ICF)
- Limited nights and weekends transportation

Strategy 1.1:

Draft strategic plan/vision for Huron County Transit and explore designated grantee changes in Huron County

Strategy 1.2:

Explore inter-county relationships for demand response services that addresses target demographic transportation access and late night and weekend transportation

Strategy 1.3:

Work toward sustainable funding models to maximize transportation funding for Huron County residents through de-conflicted contract transportation

Strategy 1.4:

Leverage additional funding opportunities to expand service to specialized populations and fill in geographic and demographic service gaps.

Timeline for Implementation: Duration of the plan implementation

Action Steps:

- Secure funding and draft requirements for consulting agreement to assist in plan development
- Identify local stakeholders and interested parties to provide input/feedback
- Explore feasibility of county or regional transit board/authority
- Increase stakeholder group to maximize access to 5310 eligible participants and collaboration partners

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation:

- Huron County Commissioners
- Huron County Transit/Enrichment Centers of Huron County
- Huron County Transit Planning Stakeholder Group

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation:

- ODOT Office of Transit
- Huron County JFS
- GLCAP – Mobility Management

Resources Needed:

- Staff time
- Consulting for long term plan creation
- ODOT technical assistance
- Potential building/office space

Potential Cost Range: \$3,000 - \$12,000

Potential Funding Sources: Local municipalities, ODOT, FTA, Private foundations

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Number of county level coordination meetings
 - a. Target: Minimum of four meetings annually
2. Measure: Obtain county-level support for long term plan
 - a. Target: Gain County Commissioners support and at least two municipal governments
 - b. Target: Gain support from directors of JFS, HCBDD, and Enrichment Center of Huron County
3. Measure: Develop operational plan for reorganization of transit service
 - a. Target: Identify new designated grantee
 - b. Target: Obtain technical assistance to reorganize transit service
 - c. Target: Begin services under new service design

Goal #2: Expand access to transit in rural areas

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Limited potential for service expansion
- Limited local funding streams
- Inadequate access to public transit in rural areas
- Taxi services are preferred but not cost effective
- Small public transit fleet
- No reliable employment transportation
- Decrease complexity of transit service scheduling
- Out-of-county transportation (to include for medical reasons)
- Limited nights and weekends transportation

Strategy 2.1:

Explore services from private providers for employment transportation and work with willing employers to facilitate employment transportation programs

Strategy 2.2:

Develop or incorporate plan for HCT to expand fleet

Strategy 2.3:

Encourage and support 5310 joint-use funding projects

Strategy 2.4:

Collaborate with varied transit providers to maximize social service agency transit budgets

Strategy 2.5:

Explore connection services between Erie and Huron counties, using the Route 250 corridor, and partner with Erie County transit providers for travel into the City of Sandusky

Strategy 2.6:

Target Norwalk and Willard areas for a transportation unmet needs assessment

Timeline for Implementation: Duration of the plan implementation

Action Steps:

- Present area businesses with information about private provider services for employment transportation
- Assess feasibility of capital replacement account for HCT
- Develop relationships between HCT and 5310 eligible agencies for vehicle leasing agreements
- Develop standard transportation scheduling procedures for contracted customers
- Score and rank 5310 funding projects according to county-wide need

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation:

- Huron County Commissioners
- Huron County Transit/Enrichment Centers of Huron County
- Huron County Transit Planning Stakeholder Group
- GLCAP – Mobility Management

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation:

- ODOT Office of Transit
- Huron County JFS
- GLCAP – Mobility Management
- Huron County Economic Development
- Huron County social service agencies

Resources Needed:

- Staff time
- Capital funding
- Operating and maintenance funds

Potential Cost Range: \$5,000 – \$10,000

Potential Funding Sources: Local municipalities, ODOT, FTA, Social service agency contracts

Performance Measures/Targets:

Measure: Number of vehicles in HCT fleet

- Target: Increase total fleet size by 10% annually
- Target: Establish at least one new 5310/5311 lease or shared use relationship

Measure: Identify opportunities to fund expanded fleet

- Target: Establish a Capital Replacement/Working Capital Account
- Target: Increase contracted transportation funding by 10% to reallocate general fund contributions to capital

Measure: Number of denials

- Target: Reduce denials as a percentage of trips by 5%

Goal #3: Improve rider experience

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Inadequate access to public transit in rural areas
- Taxi services (on demand) are preferred but expensive
- No reliable employment transportation
- Unique geography makes efficiency difficult
- Negative customer experiences

- Decrease complexity of transit service scheduling
- Out-of-county transportation (to include for medical reasons)
- Expectation is for on-demand services
- Limited nights and weekends transportation

Strategy 3.1:

Increase awareness of alternative transportation services that best fits the passenger need

Strategy 3.2:

Increase accessibility of non-motorized, healthy, alternative forms of transportation

Strategy 3.3:

Offer simplified or condensed brochure, rider guide, and getting around guide for passengers

Strategy 3.4:

Offer and implement travel training services for individuals with difficulty or hesitancy using available transit services.

Strategy 3.5:

Use available technology to provide convenience/transparency to customer experience

Timeline for Implementation: Duration of the plan implementation

Action Steps:

- Develop feedback systems for customer experiences
- Share operational reporting with stakeholder group
- Increase public participants in stakeholder group
- Encourage best practices in customer service
- Refer passengers to travel training to develop confidence using available resources

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation:

- GLCAP Mobility Management
- Huron County Transit Grantee

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation:

- Huron County social service agencies
- Huron County transit planning stake holder group
- Huron County Commissioner

Resources Needed:

- Tacking system and coordination for providers
- Staff time

Potential Cost Range: \$4,000 - \$8,000

Potential Funding Sources: ODOT, FTA, Social service agency contracts

Performance Measures/Targets:

Measure: Track transit related complaints

- Target: Develop tracking system for customer complaints
- Target: Trend analysis complaints and reduce total complaints by 10% by end of planning period

Measure: Number of no-shows/late cancels affecting service and capacity constraints

- Target: Reduce by no-shows by 10%
- Target: Reduce late cancels by 10%

Measure: Expand survey collections and compare satisfaction survey results

- Target: Get at least 300 survey responses in next survey iteration

Goal #4: Improve transportation access for specialized populations

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Inadequate access to public transit in rural areas
- Taxi services (on demand) are preferred but expensive
- No reliable employment transportation
- Unique geography makes efficiency difficult
- Negative customer experiences
- Decrease complexity of transit service scheduling
- Out-of-county transportation (to include for medical reasons)
- Expectation is for on-demand services
- Limited nights and weekends transportation

Strategy 4.1:

Assess opportunities for pilot projects for specialized populations (Elderly disabled, low income, economic development)

Strategy 4.2:

Explore connection services between Erie and Huron counties, using the Route 250 corridor

Strategy 4.3:

Present private businesses with private sector transportation options (i.e., employment transportation and carpooling)

Strategy 4.4:

Continue to support 5310 projects for unique and high demands that cannot be met by 5311 providers

Strategy 4.5:

Implement employment programs that reduce the transportation barrier and are geared toward underserved populations

Timeline for Implementation: Duration of the plan implementation

Action Steps:

- Review best practices for successful inter-county partnerships in neighboring counties
- Present and market GoOhio Commute to Huron County residents and businesses
- Discuss 5310 projects and funding as a stakeholder group, and score/vote on projects to support
- Deconflict transportation provider efforts for specialized populations

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation:

- GLCAP Mobility Management
- Huron County Transit Grantee

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation:

- Huron County social service agencies
- Huron County transit planning stake holder group
- Huron County Commissioners

Resources Needed:

- Coordination among stakeholders
- Staff time
- Centralized tracking procedures

Potential Cost Range: \$131,000 - \$262,000 (Connector service: 4 – 8 service hours, 5 days per week)

Potential Funding Sources: ODOT, FTA, Social service agency contracts

Performance Measures/Targets:

Measure: Stakeholder group participation

- Target: Add at least three participants to the stake holder group that either identifies as or represents elderly, disabled, and low-income populations

Measure: Maximize resource coordination through referral services

- Target: Refer 25 trip denials to Mobility Management for alternative providers

Measure: Educate riders on transit service operations and expectations

- Target: Conduct 5 travel trainings for potential riders
- Target: Give 3 community-based transportation presentations

VI. Plan Adoption

This plan was developed with the input of older adults, individuals with disabilities, members of the general public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services providers.

The input of these sources was gathered through discussion at meetings, surveys conducted during meetings or on-line, face-to-face interviews, discussion with individual riders, and by other means. Other local, state, and national surveys and plans were read and reviewed for relevant data.

Results from user surveys, interviews, development plans, data collections and other methods were used to compile a list of needs that had emerged. The Planning Committee was surveyed on-line via *Survey Monkey* to prioritize these needs.

The above actions were consolidated into the current document. Goals were developed to address the highest priorities and gaps indicated by the information gathered.

The draft plan was distributed to the Transportation Stakeholder and Planning Committee and feedback requested. Several members provided proposed changes prior to a scheduled committee meeting to review the Draft. The plan was further discussed, modified, and adopted during a scheduled meeting of the Transportation Stakeholder and Planning Committee on October 12, 2021. A public hearing was held October 27, 2021, with the plan provided and open for public comment. A resolution to adopt this plan was passed by the Huron County Commissioners on November 18, 2021.

Appendix A: List of Planning Committee Participants

The planning committee consists of representation from local agencies as well as participation of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and members of the general public. More information about the planning committee is available upon request by contacting

Agency Representation

Name	Agency
DeMar Moore, Jim Roth	Ability Works
John Schwartz	CLI Inc.
Heather Horowitz	Huron County Economic Development
Karen Kilgo, Margaret Larkin-Downing	Flat Rock Homes, Inc.
Allyn Schnellinger, Julie Tyler, Kari Smith	Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Harry Brady, Skip Wilde, Terry Boose	Huron County Commissioners
Heather Carman, Lenora Minor	Huron County Job and Family Services
Steve Beal	Huron County Senior Enrichment Services
Carlos Vasquez	Huron County Transit (HCT)
Matthew Raymond, Stephanie Dauch	Huron County Veterans Service Office
Pat Krause	Norwalk Area United Fund
Sarah Ross	Norwalk Economic Development Corporation

In addition to participants listed above, the planning committee also included representation of older adults, people with disabilities, and members of the general public. In addition to hosting a planning committee, Great Lakes Community Action Partnership and other planning committee members also conducted a wide variety of activities designed to increase involvement of community stakeholders in identifying community resources, addressing community needs, and setting goals and priorities. More information about the efforts that occurred is available upon request. To request additional information please contact:

Mobility Management Coordinator

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership

419-334-5016

Appendix B: List of Annual Reviews and Plan Amendments

It is required that this plan be reviewed by the planning committee annually. For more information on when the next annual review will occur, how to be involved in the annual review process or to request information on how to make changes or corrections to this plan between annual reviews, please contact:

Mobility Management Coordinator

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership

419-334-5016

Annual Review

Provide a brief description of any annual reviews that have occurred, including a summary of the review meeting and a brief summary of any changes were made.

Amendment

If the plan has been amended between annual reviews, include that information here.

Appendix C: Definitions

There are several terms used throughout the plan that may be unique to transportation providers or human service agencies. The terms are defined here for reference.

Coordination – Collaborative efforts toward understanding and meeting the mobility needs in the most appropriate, cost effective, and responsive manner.

FAST Act – Congress established the funding for Federal Transit Administration programs through authorizing legislation that amends Chapter 53 of Title 49 of the U.S. Code. On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorizing surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020.

Gaps in Service – A break in the continuity of available transportation resources such as a break between hours of operation or a break between two or more geographic areas.

Lead Agency – The organization responsible for facilitating outreach; composing a plan that meets the requirements of current Federal and State legislation; maintaining documentation from the planning process and making it available upon request; and leading stakeholders through annual reviews, amendments, and updates of the plan. The Lead Agency also is responsible for submitting the adopted Coordinated Plan and all amendments or updates to participating stakeholders and ODOT.

Planning Committee – (indicate if the planning committee has another formal name) The Planning Committee is composed of key community stakeholders. The Planning Committee members agree to actively participate in the planning process and act as the plan advisory and adopting entity.

Ridership – The total number of passengers who boarded transportation vehicles are counted each time they board a vehicle.

Section 5310 Program – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides Federal formula funding for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. The program aims to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options.

Section 5311 Program – The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000 where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Subrecipients may include state or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service.

Section 5307 Program – The Urbanized Area Formula Grants program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes federal resources available to urbanized areas and to governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more.

Transportation – Transportation is broadly defined to include traditional transit, human service agency services, on-demand (taxi-like) services, bicycle and pedestrian programs and amenities.

Unmet Transportation Needs – Transportation that is wanted or desired but is not currently available.