Huron County

Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan

2026-2030

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
For more information about this plan please contact the Mobility Management Coordinator at 419-333-5087
Funding for the development of this plan was provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

Executive Summary 4

I. Geographic Area 7

II. Population Demographics 10

III. Assessment of Available Services 14

Inventory of Transportation Providers 14

Existing Transportation Services 15

List of Transportation Service Providers 15

Assessment of Community Support for Transit 18

Safety 18

Vehicles 18

Summary of Existing Resources 18

Local Demographic and Socio-Economic Data 20

Analysis of Demographic Data 22

General Public and Stakeholder Meetings/Focus Groups 23

Surveys 24

Challenges to Coordinated Transportation 32

Summary of Unmet Mobility Needs 33

V. Goals and Strategies 35

Developing Strategies to Address Gaps and Needs 35

Goal #1: Evaluate and Integrate Micro-transit and/or Flexible Transportation Options to Enhance County and Regional Connectivity to Improve Access and Mobility 35

Goal #2: Increase Transportation Provider Capacity to Strengthen Service Reliability and Reduce Trip Denials 37

Goal #3: Enhance Active Transportation Infrastructure and Accessibility 39

Goal #4: Strengthen and Sustain Coordinated Transportation Services 41

Goal #5: Achieve Financial Sustainability and Enhance Service Delivery Through Strategic Partnerships 42

Goal #6: Advance Sustainable Transportation Through Alternative Fuels and Infrastructure 44

Goal #7: Expand Equitable Transportation Options for Workforce Access and Community Reintegration 45
VI. Plan Adoption 48
Appendix A: List of Planning Committee Participants 50
Agency Representation 50
Appendix B: List of Annual Reviews and Plan Amendments 51
Appendix C: Definitions 52

Executive Summary

This plan is the Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Huron County. The plan was initially developed in 2016 and updated in 2021. This plan fulfills the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs (IIJ) Act, signed into law as a reauthorization of surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2026. According to requirements of the IIJ Act, locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans must be updated to reflect the changes established by the IIJ Act legislation. The IIJ Act applies new programs and rules for all Fiscal Year 2026 funds and authorizes transit programs for five (5) years.

Transportation is a critical component of the communities in Huron County. Transportation provides access to jobs, education, health care, human services and allows all community members, including older adults and people with disabilities, to live independently and engage in community life. It is the purpose of this plan for local stakeholders to work collaboratively to do the following activities:

1. Identify all community resources including
    - CLI Incorporated
    - NCAT (North Central Area Transit)
    - Services for Aging Inc.-DBA-Enrichment Centers for Huron County: Senior Express
    - Huron County Veterans Service
    - Huron County Department of Job and Family Services
    - Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities
    - Flat Rock Homes. Inc.
    - Ability Works Inc.
    - North Central EMS

2. Identify and Prioritize community transportation needs
    1. Insufficient staffing and driver shortages
    2. Lack of accessible transportation
    3. Limited early morning, evening, and weekend service
    4. No same-day, short-notice, or on-demand ride options
    5. Gaps in rural service coverage
    6. High cost of transportation
    7. Lack of fixed or deviated-fixed routes and bus shelters
    8. Inadequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
    9. Limited out-of-county transportation options
    10. Over-reliance on informal ride networks
    11. Lack of sustainable and diversified funding sources
    12. Low public awareness of transportation services
    13. Stigma or lack of public support for public transit
    14. Need for stronger coordination among transportation providers
    15. Environmental concerns and limited alternative fuel planning
    16. Physical and medical limitations affecting mobility

17. Distance, weather, and safety concerns for walking and biking
18. Unclear rules about where bicycles should operate
19. Limited bikeshare availability
20. Lack of affordable taxi or private ride services

3. Establish a clear plan for achieving shared goals

   To achieve the shared goals outlined in the Huron County Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan, a collaborative and structured implementation process will guide all efforts. Each goal is supported by actionable strategies, clear timelines, defined responsibilities, and measurable performance indicators to track progress and ensure accountability. Mobility Management will coordinate implementation efforts in partnership with North Central Area Transit (NCAT), local governments, human service agencies, employers, and regional planning partners.

   The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) will meet quarterly to monitor progress, foster collaboration, and align resources. Efforts such as targeted community outreach, pilot projects, infrastructure evaluations, driver recruitment campaigns, and advocacy initiatives will be carried out in phases, with regular assessments to guide adjustments. Diverse funding sources – including federal, state, and local – will be pursued to support vehicle purchases, service enhancements, facility upgrades, staffing, and public engagement.

   By integrating data-informed planning with inclusive community engagement and strong cross-sector partnerships, Huron County is committed to developing a resilient, accessible, and equitable transportation system that serves the needs of all residents.

Fundamental to the Coordinated 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
- The 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
- A SWOT analysis with transportation providers, social service agencies, and other local agencies
- Social media and other outreach methods

- 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
- Facilitation of a focus group of seniors to gain insight into their issues and obstacles faced when desiring public transportation services

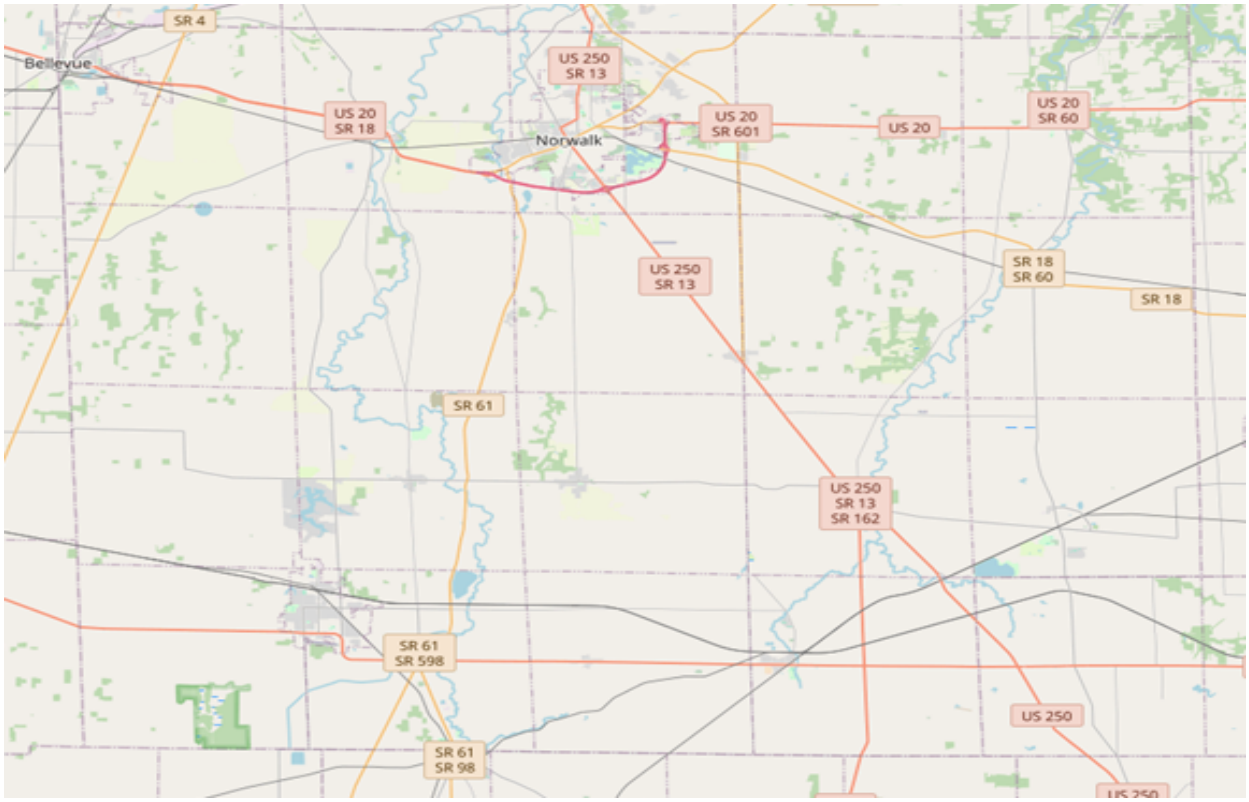
This plan was developed and adopted by Huron County's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). More information about the planning committee can be found in Appendix A.

I. Geographic Area

Huron County is located in north central Ohio. As of the 2020 census, the population was 58,565 and its county seat is Norwalk. Huron County is not part of a Metropolitan Planning Organization or a Rural Transportation Planning Organization. Huron County is designated as a rural area.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 495 square miles (1,280 km), of which 491 square miles (1,270 km) is land and 3.3 square miles (8.5 km) (0.7%) is water.

Map 1: Basic Map of Geographic Area Covered by the Plan



Below is a map [Map 2] of major trip generators within the county with the following table [Table 1], detailing the major trip generators.

Map 2: Major Trip Generators in the Geographic Area

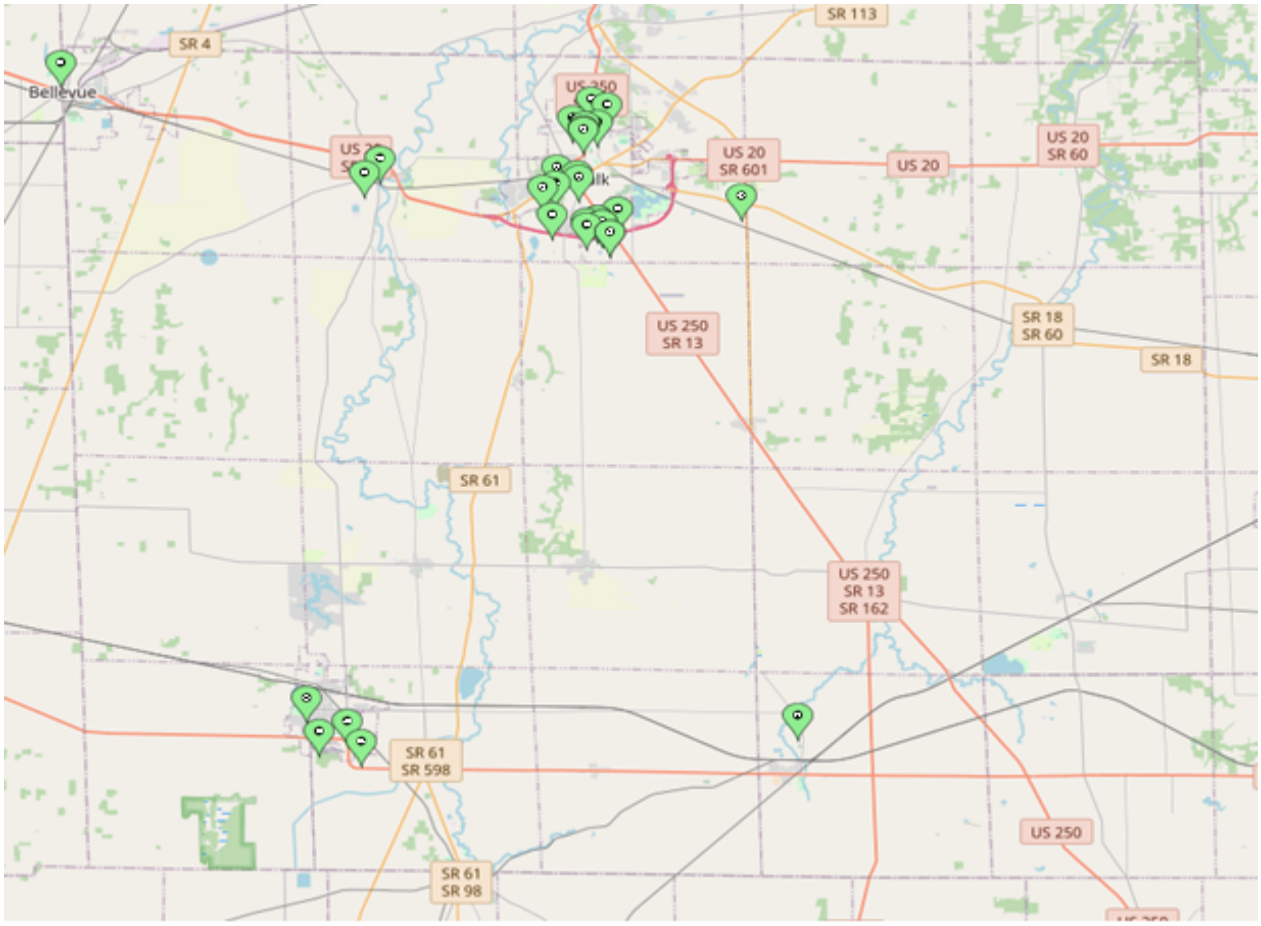


Table 1: List of Trip Generators

Healthcare	
Fisher Titus Medical Center 272 Benedict Ave., Norwalk, OH 44857	Mercy Health – Willard Hospital 1100 Neal Zick Rd., Willard, OH 44890
Government	
Huron County Commissioners 180 Milan Ave. # 7, Norwalk, OH 44857	Huron County Courthouse 2 E Main St. #202, Norwalk, OH 44857
Schools	
Bellevue High School 200 Oakland Ave., Bellevue, OH 44811	Norwalk High School 350 Shady Ln. Dr., Norwalk, OH 44857
Willard schools 1 Flashes Ave., Willard, OH 44890	New London Schools 1 Wildcat Dr., New London, OH 44851

Greenwich South Central High School 3305 Greenwich Angling Rd., Greenwich, OH 44837	Monroeville Schools 101 West St., Monroeville, OH 44847
Manufacturers	
Pepperidge Farm 3320 OH-103, Willard, OH 44890	Stanley Black and Decker Willard Plant 979 S Conwell Ave., Willard, OH 44890
Borgers Ohio Inc 400 Industrial Pkwy, Norwalk, OH 44857	Maple City Rubber 55 Newton St, Norwalk, OH 44857
Berry Global 311 Monroe St., Monroeville, OH 44847	
Recreation	
Ernsthausen Recreation Center 100 Republic St., Norwalk, OH 44857	Huron County Fair Grounds 940 Fair Rd., Norwalk, OH 44857
Summit Motorsports Park 1300 OH-18, Norwalk, OH 44857	Willard Swimming Pool 561 W Laurel St., Willard, OH 44890
Shopping	
Goodwill Willard 117 Walton St. W., Willard, OH 44890	Norwalk Korners Plaza 201 Milan Ave., Norwalk, OH 44857
Walmart Supercenter 340 Westwind Dr., Norwalk, OH 44857	Downtown Shopping District W Main St., Norwalk, Ohio 44857
Adult Day Programs	
CLI 306 South Norwalk Rd. W., Norwalk, Ohio 44857	Rem Ohio 207 Cline St., Norwalk, OH 44857
The Link 10 Stower Ln., Norwalk, OH 44857	
Human Service Agencies/Non-Profits	
Huron County Job and Family Services 185 Shady Ln. Dr., Norwalk, OH 44857	Enrichment Centers for Huron County 325 Shady Ln. Dr., Norwalk, OH 44857
Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities 306 S Norwalk Rd. W., Norwalk, OH 44857	Huron Co Health Department 28 Executive Dr., Norwalk, OH 44857
Long-term Care Facilities/Assisted Living	
The Carriage House of Fisher-Titus 175 Shady Ln. Dr., Norwalk, OH 44857	Twilight Gardens Nursing & Rehabilitation 196 W Main St., Norwalk, OH 44857

II. Population Demographics

There has been a steady, but slight decrease in Huron County's population over the last five years. According to the 2020 census, the total population of Huron County was 58,565, the population loss is seen most in the city of Norwalk, which is the county seat.

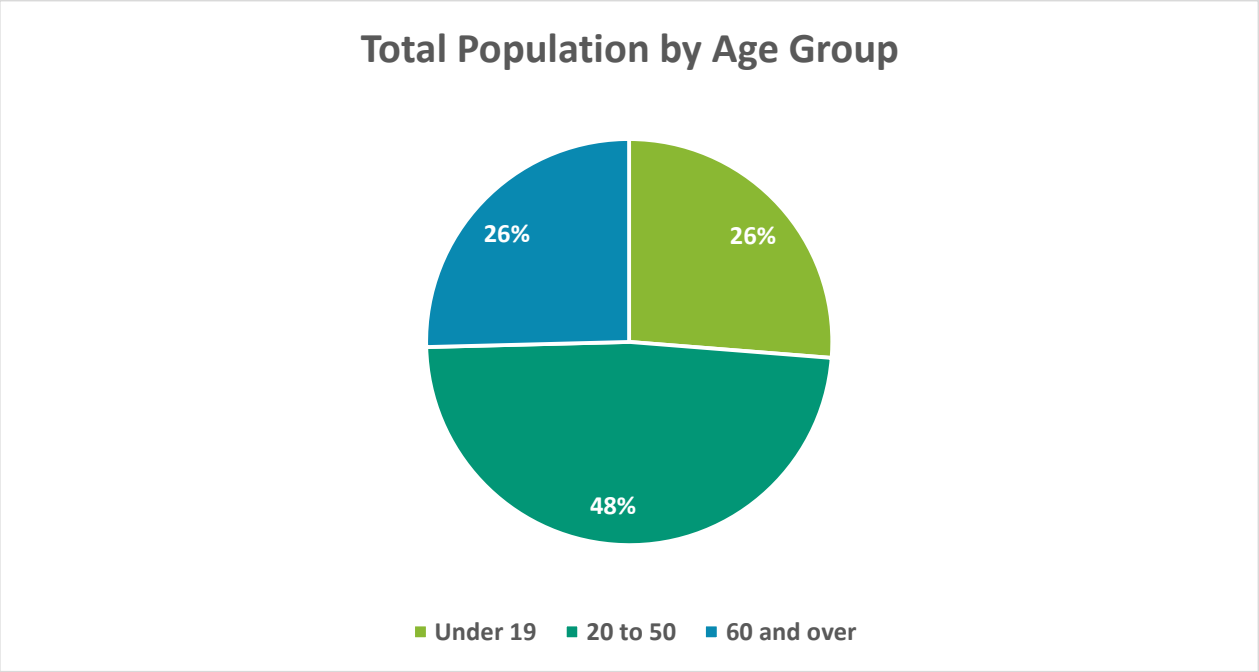
Chart 1 shows the population projections in five-year increments:

Chart 1: Total Population – Current and Projected in Five Year Increments

Year	Total Population	Male	Female	Change
2025	58,565	29,095	29,470	
2030	58,412	29,011	29,401	-141
2035	58,292	28,953	29,342	-117
2040	58,179	28,895	29,284	-116
2045	58,062	28,837	29,225	-117
2050	57,946	28,780	29,166	-115

The chart below shows the population divided into various age groups. The age group of 65+ is expected to grow over the next five years according to the US Census. There is a total of 15,329 people under the age of 19, there are 28,252 people between the ages of 20 and 59, and 14,831 aged 60 and over.

Chart 2: Total Population by Age Group



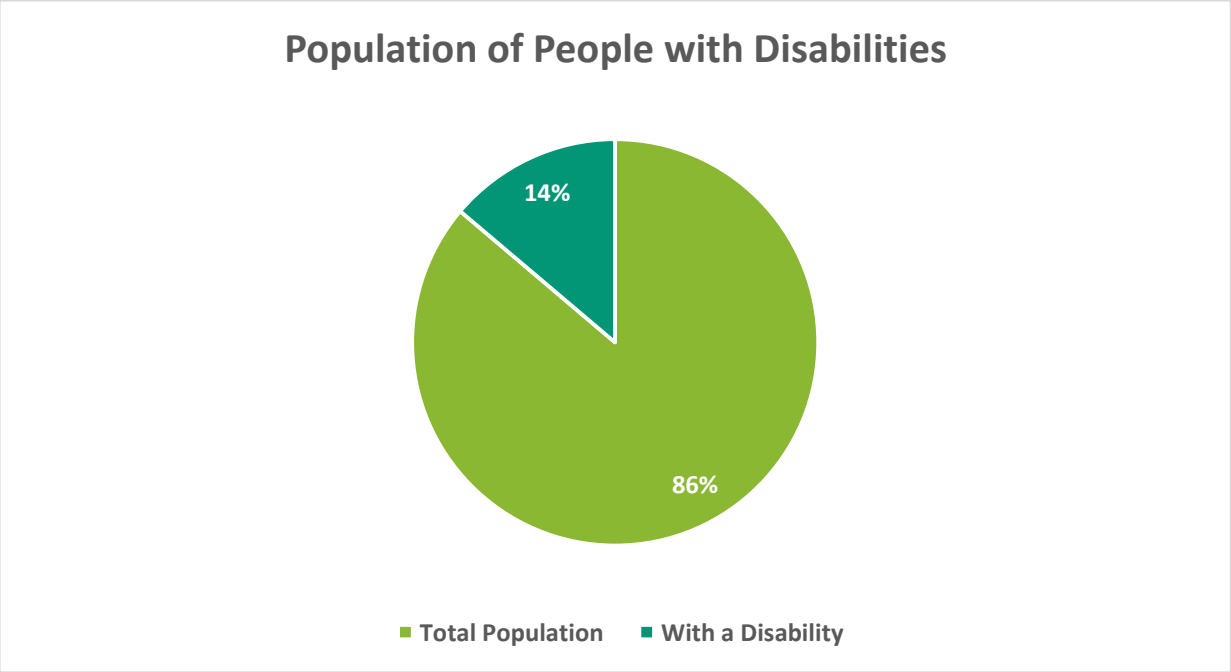
The majority of this area identifies as white (52,412), with the following groups also noted in the chart below:

Chart 3: Total Population by Race

Black or African American	605
American Indian and Alaska Native	201
Asian	221
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	14
Some Other Race	1,465
Two or More Races	3,647

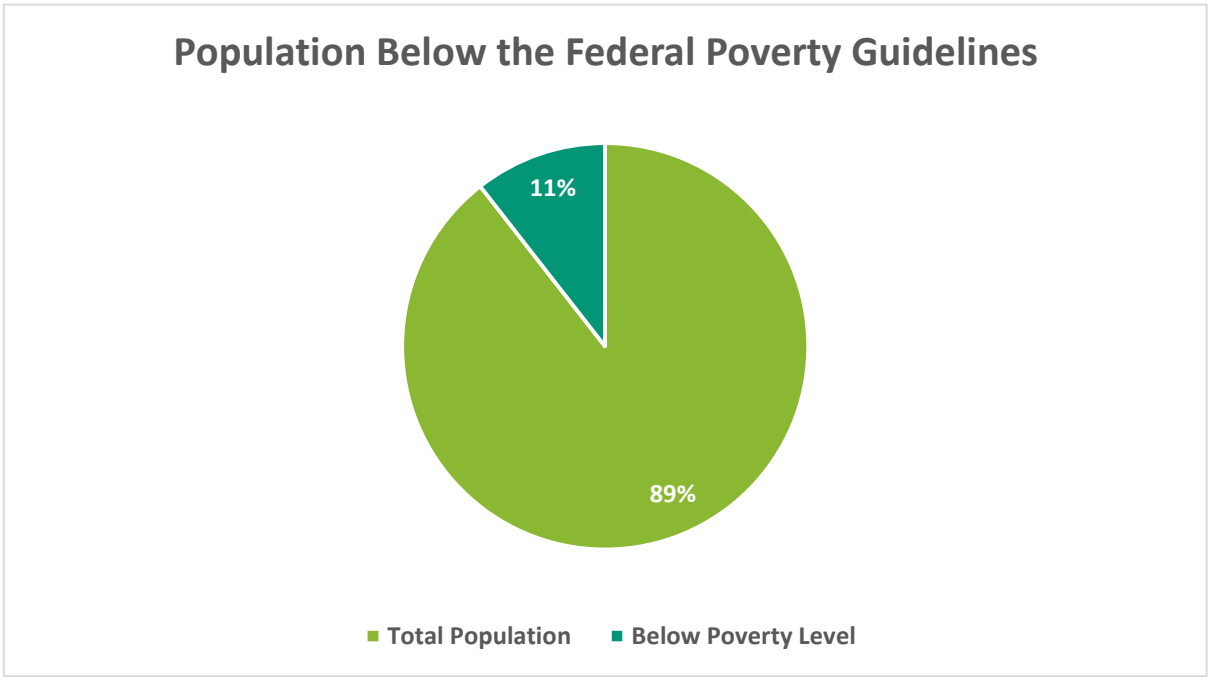
The number of people identifying as having a disability in Huron County is 9,395 or 14% of the overall population which is slightly above the national average of 13%.

Chart 4: Population of Persons with Disabilities



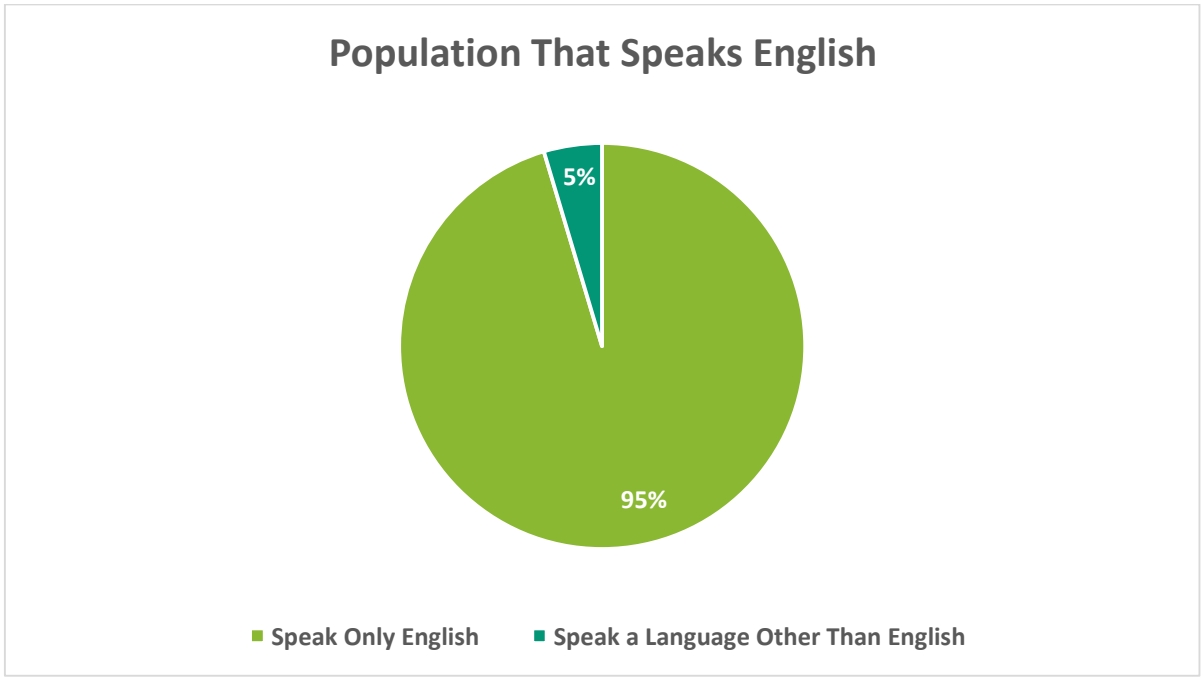
The number and percentage of people or households that have incomes below the Federal poverty level in Huron County is 6,904 people or 11%, which is on par with the national rate of 11.1%.

Chart 5: Population Below the Federal Poverty Guidelines



In Huron County, the percent of population that speak English as their primary language is 95% or a total of 52,262. A total of 2,547 people, or 5%, speak a language other than English.

Chart 6: Population That Speaks English



This chart shows the various ways that individuals use to get to work, with utilizing their own vehicle as the primary mode of transportation. Working from home has increased over the last few years.

Chart 7: Means of Transportation to Work

Car, truck, or van	91.8%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.3%
Walked	1.7%
Bicycle	0.2%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	1.0%
Worked from home	4.9%

The majority of households in Huron County have at least one vehicle. The following chart shows the percentages of homes with no vehicles or one or more vehicles.

Chart 8: Number of Vehicles per Household

Vehicles Available	
No vehicle available	2.6%
1 vehicle available	16.6%
2 vehicles available	38.6%
3 or more vehicles available	42.1%

III. Assessment of Available Services

Conducting an evaluation of service provider capabilities and analyzing the existing gaps and duplications of services for transportation resources in each community, provides transportation planners with the information needed to implement changes that will improve the network of transportation resources and services in Huron County and across county lines.

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership identified stakeholders to participate in the assessment of available services. These stakeholders included those who were represented in the current or past Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), 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 coordinated plan was used to supplement information gathered during this planning effort.

Inventory of Transportation Providers

Included in this section is a list of all participating transportation providers. Descriptions of transportation providers include 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.

The participating organizations provide a wide range of transportation including demand response, on-demand, ambulette, and human service agency contracted transportation. 9 of the participating organizations provide services on weekdays. 1 agency operates transportation on Saturdays and Sundays. Evening services after 6pm are operated by 1 organization as well.

Transportation-related expenses and revenues also differ by organization. ODOT 5311 and 5310 funds, federal, state, and local grants are common revenue sources for transportation operators in Huron, County, Ohio, with local match requirements being met by local social service agencies and other contracts.

Existing Transportation Services

The following information is based on tabulations from the survey and interview results. A total of 9 organizations provided information about their services.

List of Transportation Service Providers

Agency Name: CLI Incorporated
Transportation Service Type: Transportation services are provided for Huron County Board of Developmental Disabilities (DD) consumers traveling to and from community locations.
Other Services Provided: CLI provides a comprehensive array of services to help individuals work toward their goals, such as employment, recreation, leisure, and personal development.
Contact Information: 419-706-5137
Hours: As needed
Service Area: Huron County
Eligibility Requirements: Individuals with developmental disabilities and/or referred by other agencies formally entered into CLI services.
Website: www.clisupports.com

Agency Name: NCAT (North Central Area Transit) – Formerly SCAT (Seneca Crawford Area Transit)
Transportation Service Type: Directly operates demand-response, curb-to-curb, public transportation services for the general public, including seniors and individuals with disabilities.
Other Services Provided: NCAT is a demand response service that provides ADA accessible vehicles with curb-to-curb service. Door-to-door service is available when requested.
Contact Information: 419-663-2323
Hours: M-F 5a-6p
Service Area: Huron County with connections to Seneca and Crawford counties. Limited out-of-county trips are available with 3 days' advance notice.
Eligibility Requirements: Open to the general public; services are accessible to seniors and individuals with disabilities. Individuals 60 years of age and older, those with disabilities, and veterans may qualify for discounted rates.
Website: ncatohio.org

Agency Name: Services for Aging Inc.-DBA-Enrichment Centers for Huron County: Senior Express
Transportation Service Type: Demand responsive
Other Services Provided: Enrichment Center for Huron County provides seniors with socialization, education, nutrition (congregate meals), programming, and other experiences.
Contact Information: 419-668-8821 for reservation
Office hours: 8:00-4:30 weekdays, rides 7:00 to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday
Service Area: Huron County
Eligibility Requirements: Age requirement of 60 or over and must be a Huron County resident.
Website: sfaconnection.org

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

Hours: Rides typically leave at 7:30 a.m.
Service Area: Clients residing in Huron County
Eligibility Requirements: U.S. military veteran or spouse
Website: huroncountyvets.com

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 purchases for income-eligible clients
Other Services Provided: Children Services, Child Support, Family Support, Workforce/Ohio Means Jobs,
Contact Information: 419-668-8126
Hours: Office: 8:00 a.m.-4.30 p.m., Monday-Friday
Service Area: Huron County
Eligibility Requirements: Based on income guidelines
Website: huroncountydjfs.com

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
Hours: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Monday-Friday
Service Area: Huron County
Eligibility Requirements: Developmentally disabled residents of Huron County
Website: hurondd.org

Agency Name: Flat Rock Homes Inc.
Transportation Service Type: Door-to-door, demand response to individuals with disabilities enrolled in 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. Programs include a 36-bed intermediate care facility (Seneca County); supportive living homes (Seneca, Erie, Huron and Lorain Counties); homemaker and personal care services (Seneca, Erie, Huron, and Lorain Counties); non-medical transportation (Seneca, Sandusky, Erie, and Huron Counties); Adult Day Support Program (Seneca, Sandusky, Erie, and Huron Counties).
Contact Information: 419-483-7330
Office hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday
Service Area: Any destination required by individuals enrolled 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 with disabilities who enroll in the non-medical transportation program in the primary service area of Seneca, Sandusky, Erie, Huron, and Lorain Counties.
Website: flatrockhomes.org

Agency Name: Ability Works, Inc.
Transportation Service Type: Transportation services are provided for individuals with disabilities 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
Hours: As needed
Service Area: Erie County, but will travel into Huron County
Eligibility Requirements: Disabled
Website: ability-works.com

Agency Name: North Central EMS
Transportation Service Type: Emergency medical care and ambulance transportation, non-emergency medical transportation, 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 facilities. Non-emergency transportation requests need to be booked in advance
Contact Information: 419-499-2515
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.
Websites: fishertitus.org/north-central-ems

Assessment of Community Support for Transit

Community support for public transportation in Huron County is growing, with particular interest in extending service hours, strengthening regional connections, and improving access for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income populations. Feedback collected through public engagement efforts, Transportation Advisory Committee discussions, and input from human service providers and local employers reveals a clear need for flexible, reliable, and affordable transportation options.

Safety

Enhancing transportation safety remains a key focus of planning efforts in Huron County. Stakeholders have identified concerns such as incomplete pedestrian infrastructure and limited bicycle accommodations in certain areas. This plan includes strategies such as walkability audits, the application of Complete Streets principles, and localized assessments to identify and address safety barriers for residents of all ages and abilities. In addition, maintaining high vehicle safety standards and providing comprehensive training for transportation staff—in collaboration with NCAT and Mobility Management—will support a safer, more inclusive transportation network for all Huron County residents.

Vehicles

Survey/Interview participants listed a combined total of 58 vehicles. Approximately 41% of the vehicles are wheelchair accessible. Most of the transportation providers provide at least 1 wheelchair accessible vehicle, while some organization's fleets are primarily wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Wheelchair accessible vehicles are used by older adults and individuals with disabilities to access medical appointments, employment, grocery store, and other essential destinations throughout the county. While public and nonprofit providers like NCAT and Senior Enrichment Services maintain accessible fleets, community feedback and provider reports consistently indicate high demand and unmet needs. Trip denials, advance scheduling requirements, and limited-service hours/service areas – especially in rural or low-density areas suggest that the current number of wheelchair accessible vehicles is insufficient to meet the existing demand. Around 36% of the vehicles are at least 10 years of age or older. 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.

Summary of Existing Resources

Huron County's transportation network is primarily supported by two key providers: North Central Area Transit (NCAT) and Services for Aging, Inc., which operates under the name Enrichment Centers for Huron County: Senior Express.

NCAT serves as the county's public transit provider, offering ADA-accessible curb-to-curb service throughout Huron County, with door-to-door accommodations available upon request. Open to the general public, NCAT connects residents to employment opportunities, medical care, shopping, and essential community services. This service is especially critical for individuals who do not have access to a personal vehicle or who are unable to drive due to age, disability, or financial limitations.

Senior Express focuses on meeting the transportation needs of older adults (age 60+) and individuals with disabilities, providing door-to-door transportation for medical appointments, grocery trips, and participation in senior center activities. By helping older residents maintain mobility, Senior Express supports independence, health, and social connection across the county.

Additional support comes from regional providers that operate across multiple counties and include service in Huron County, such as Ability Works and Flat Rock Homes, both of which offer transportation for individuals with disabilities receiving their services.

There are limited or no taxi and rideshare options available within the county, these services tend to be inconsistent and scarce, especially outside municipal areas and during evenings or weekends. This limited availability increases reliance on public and human-service transportation providers like NCAT and Senior Express.

Planning and coordination efforts are led by the county's Mobility Management Program, which collaborates with human service agencies, healthcare providers, employers, transportation operators, and local governments. The Huron County Transportation Advisory Committee works to identify and address service gaps, improve interagency coordination, and strengthen the overall efficiency, accessibility, and equity of the transportation system.

Together, these agencies and partners form the core of a coordinated mobility network, helping ensure that Huron County residents, particularly those with mobility barriers—can access the services and opportunities necessary for health, stability, and community participation.

IV. Assessment of Transportation Needs and Gaps

In an effort to better understand Huron County's needs, the TAC 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.

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership partnered with 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 stakeholders 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)
- A SWOT analysis/stakeholder focus group
- Surveys performed with senior centers and the general public
- A focus group involving and engaging seniors at the senior center

Local Demographic and Socio-Economic Data

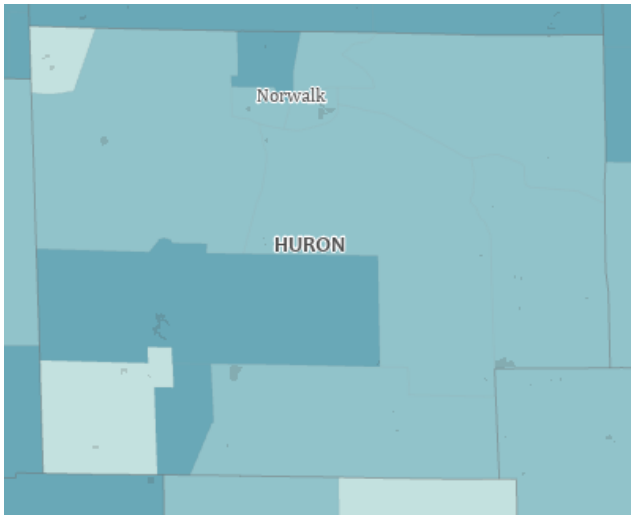
Data for each target population group was aggregated by Census Block Group for transportation analysis. The demographic and socio-economic data is valuable because it allows for a comparison of where the highest and lowest densities of individuals who are most likely to need transportation live. This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

The following table 2 and exhibit 1 illustrates the areas where the number of older adults (age 65 and older) in Huron County is at or above Ohio's average.

Table 2: Number of Older Adults (Age 65 and Older)

65-74 years	11.3%
75-84 years	4.9%
85 years and over	2.0%

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

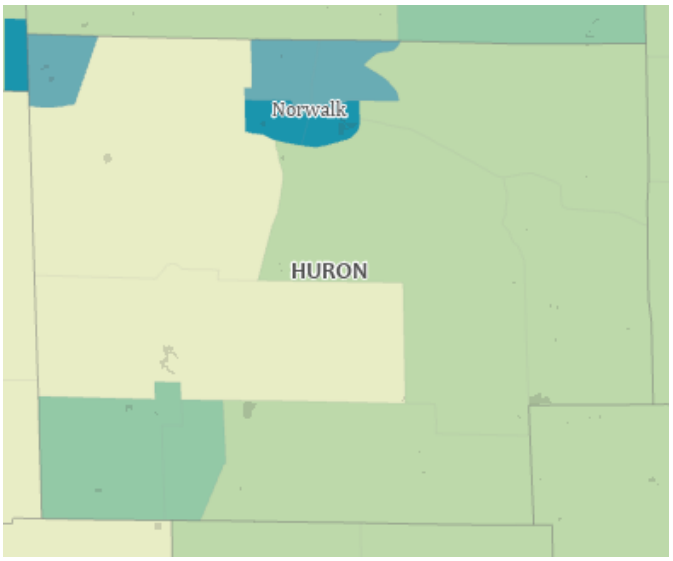


The following table 3 and exhibit 2 below indicates the areas where the number of zero vehicle households is above Ohio's average. The absence of a vehicle in the household is often an indication of the need for transportation services.

Table 3: Percentage of Zero Vehicle Household

No vehicle available	2.6%
1 vehicle available	16.6%
2 vehicles available	38.6%
3 vehicles available	42.1%

Exhibit 2: Map of Density of Zero Vehicle Households



Analysis of Demographic Data

Huron County, Ohio, has a population of approximately 58,565 residents as of 2025, with notable demographic characteristics that influence transportation planning. A significant portion of the population—48% or around 14,000, is aged 65 or older, indicating a growing need for transportation services that accommodate aging adults. Many of these residents require accessible and reliable transit options to maintain independence, access medical care, and engage in community activities.

The county also faces socioeconomic challenges. Median household income levels are below the state average, and certain communities experience higher rates of poverty and unemployment. This economic landscape reinforces the importance of affordable transportation solutions for low-income individuals and families who may not have access to a personal vehicle.

Additionally, the rural makeup of Huron County means that many residents live in areas with limited access to public transportation, highlighting the need for flexible, on-demand services. Individuals with disabilities represent another important demographic, requiring transportation that supports mobility aids and specialized assistance.

These demographic trends underscore the necessity of coordinated and inclusive transportation planning that prioritizes equity, accessibility, and regional connectivity to support all segments of the population.

General Public and Stakeholder Meetings/Focus Groups

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership hosted and facilitated 3 local meetings and 2 focus groups to discuss the unmet transportation needs and gaps in mobility and transportation. 80 people participated in the meetings. Of those, 29 self-identified as older adults and 9 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.

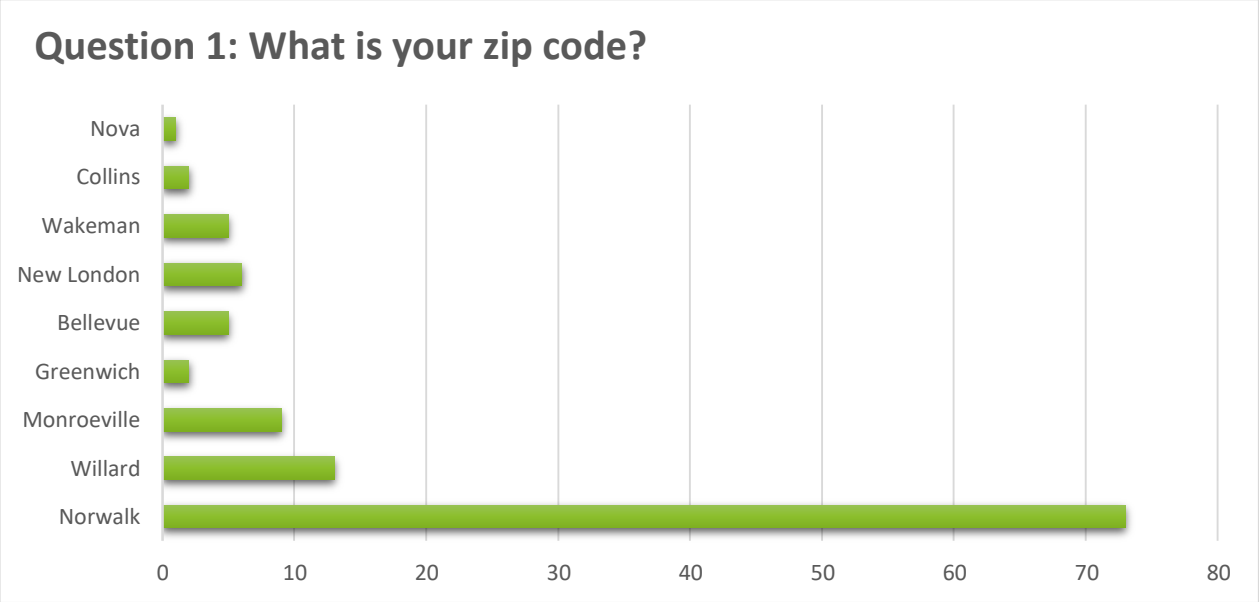
During the meeting, Great Lakes Community Action Partnership presented highlights of historical coordinated transportation in Huron County and discussed the activities since the last Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan that have helped to address some of the unmet transportation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

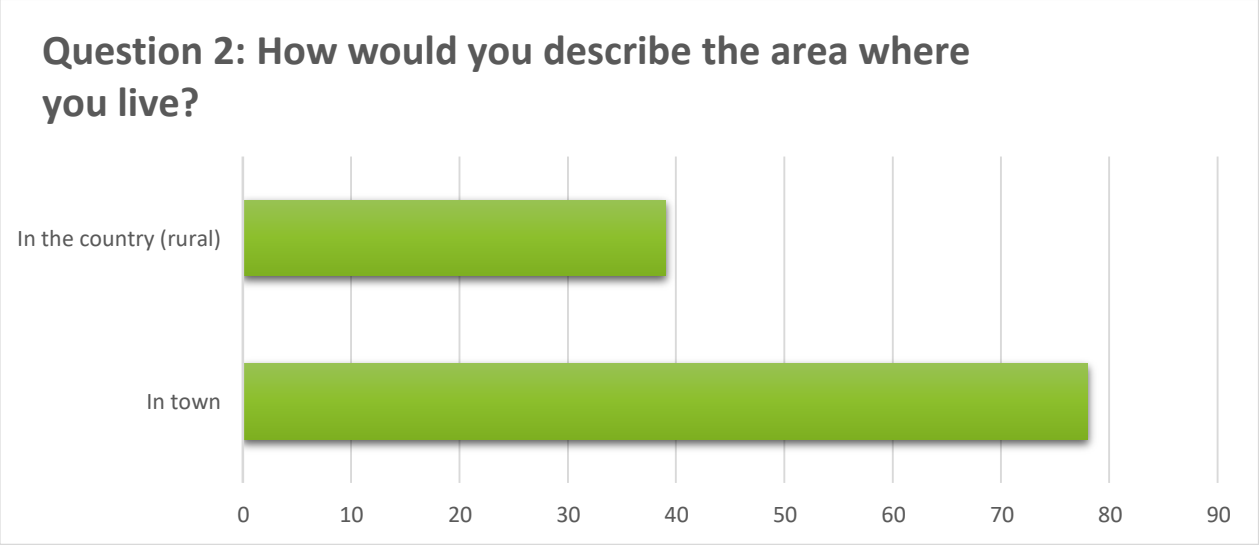
Participants discussed more than 5 mobility issues to achieve, preserve, avoid, or eliminate through coordination during the meeting[s]. Coordinated transportation stakeholders will consider these unmet needs when developing transportation goals and strategies, and grant applications. The exhibit at 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

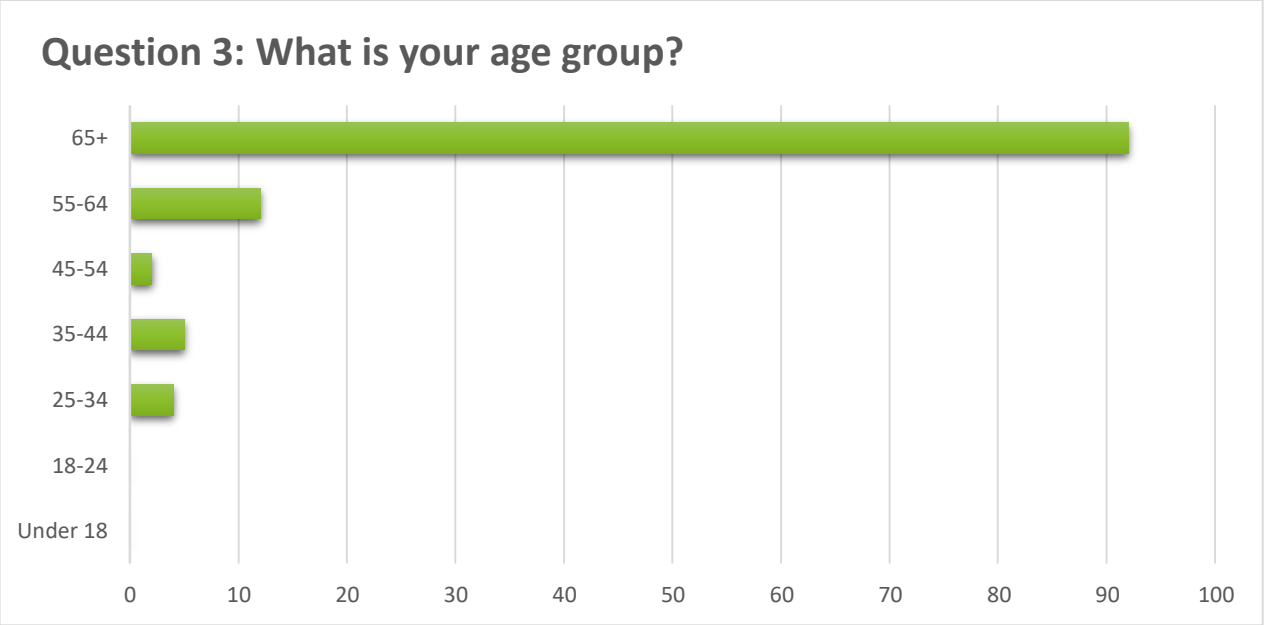
The following survey summary includes the information gained from the following surveys that were performed. A total of 118 surveys from the general public were completed with 62.35% of individuals identifying as having a disability and 80% identifying as being an older adult.



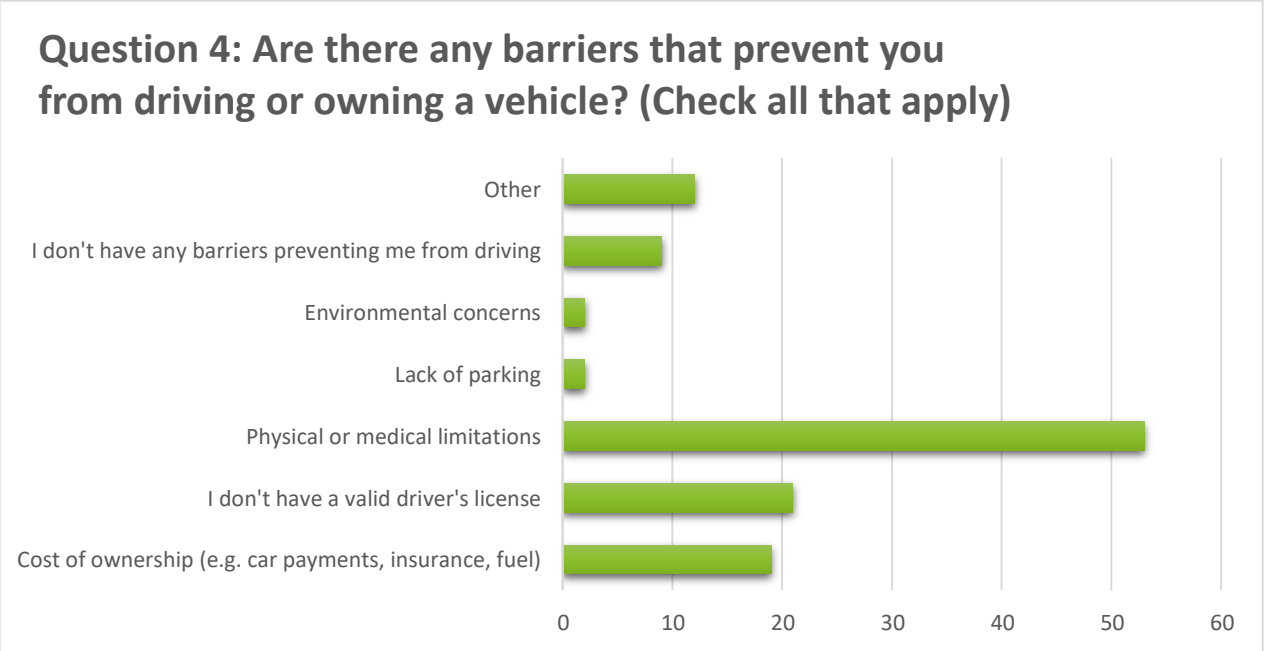
Summary: A majority of respondents from Huron County live in Norwalk (63%), the remaining respondents were from Willard (13%), Monroeville (8%), New London (5%), Wakeman and Bellevue (both at 4%), Collins and Greenwich (both at 2%), and Nova (1%).



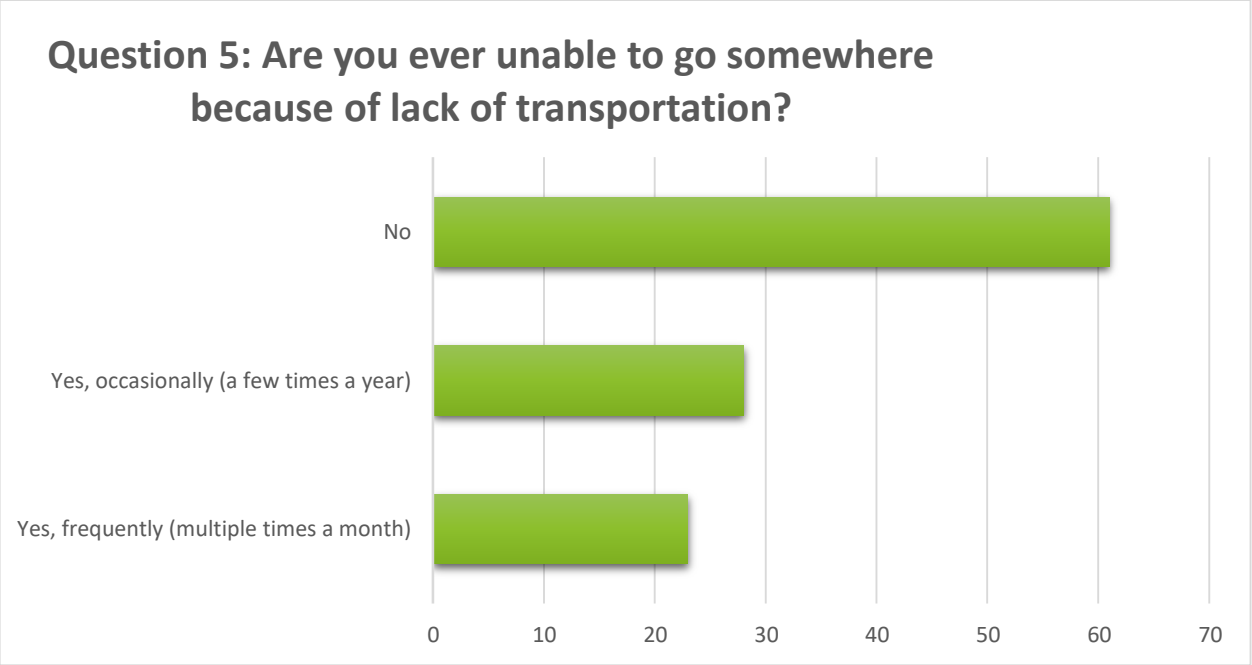
Summary: Most respondents, 66.67% live in town, while the remaining 33.33% live in the country (rural).



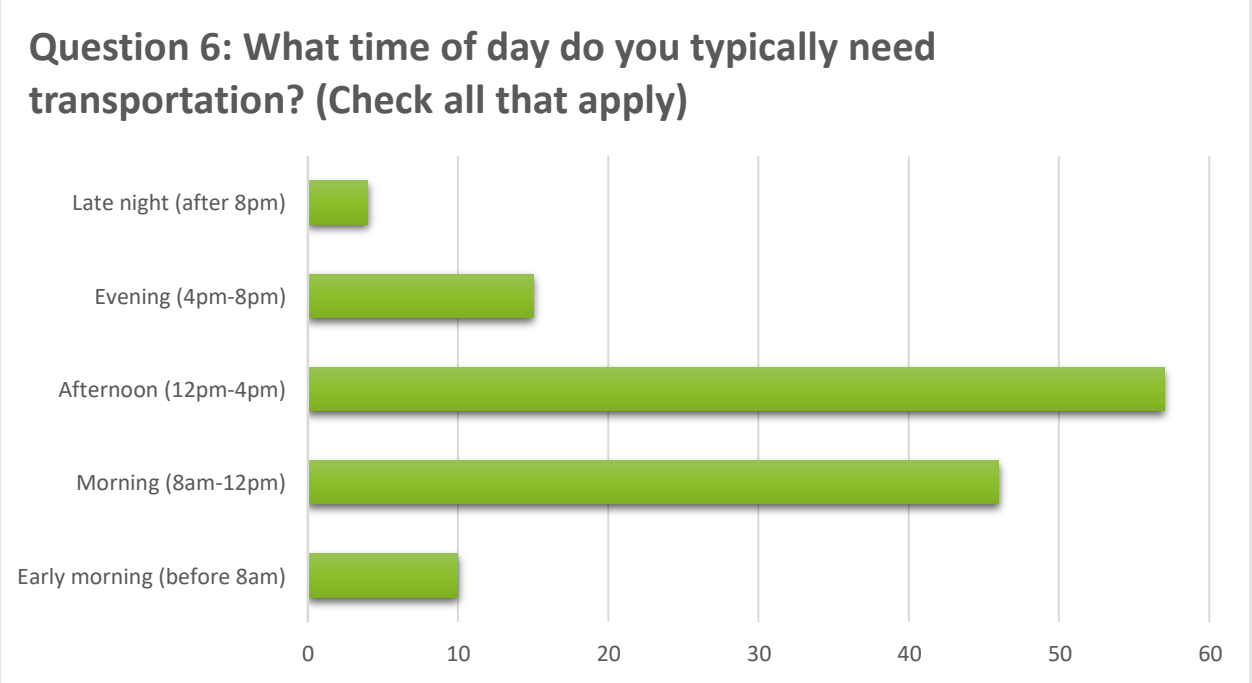
Summary: 80% of respondents were over the age of 65, 10.43% between the ages of 55-64, 1.74% between the ages of 45-55, 4.35% between the ages of 35-44, 3.48% between the ages of 25-34, 0% between the ages of 18-24, and 0% under the age of 18.



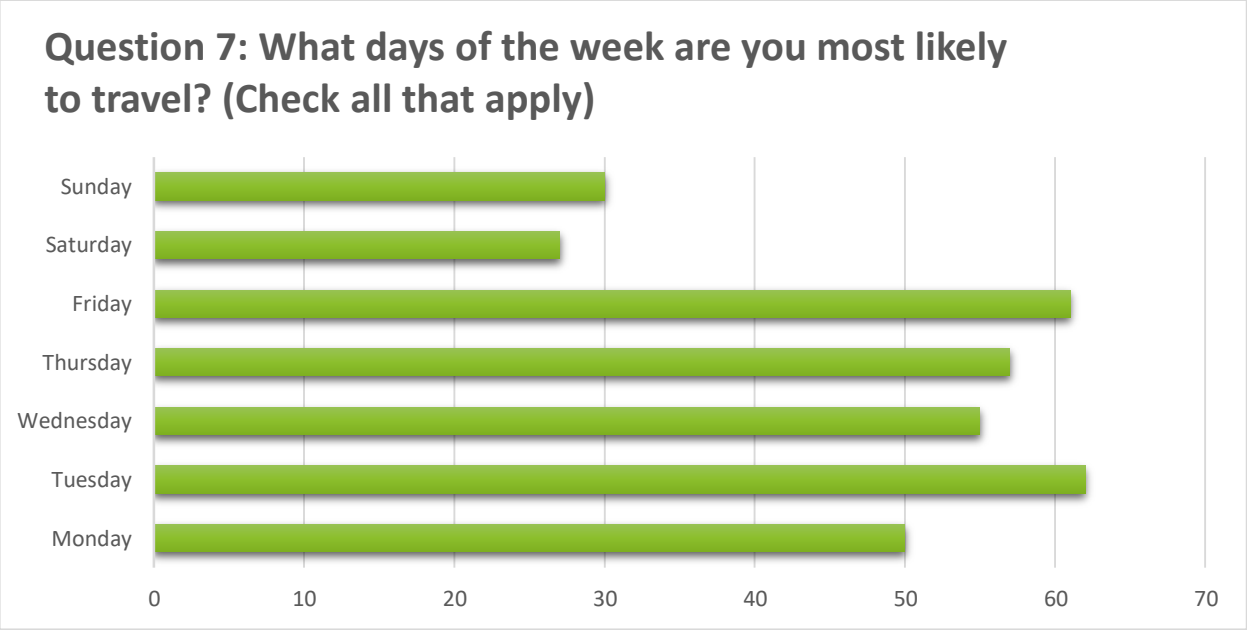
Summary: 62.35% of respondents have a physical or medical limitation that prevents them from being able to drive themselves, 24.71% do not have a valid driver's license, and 22.35% stated the cost of car ownership, while 10.59% did not have any barrier preventing them from driving.



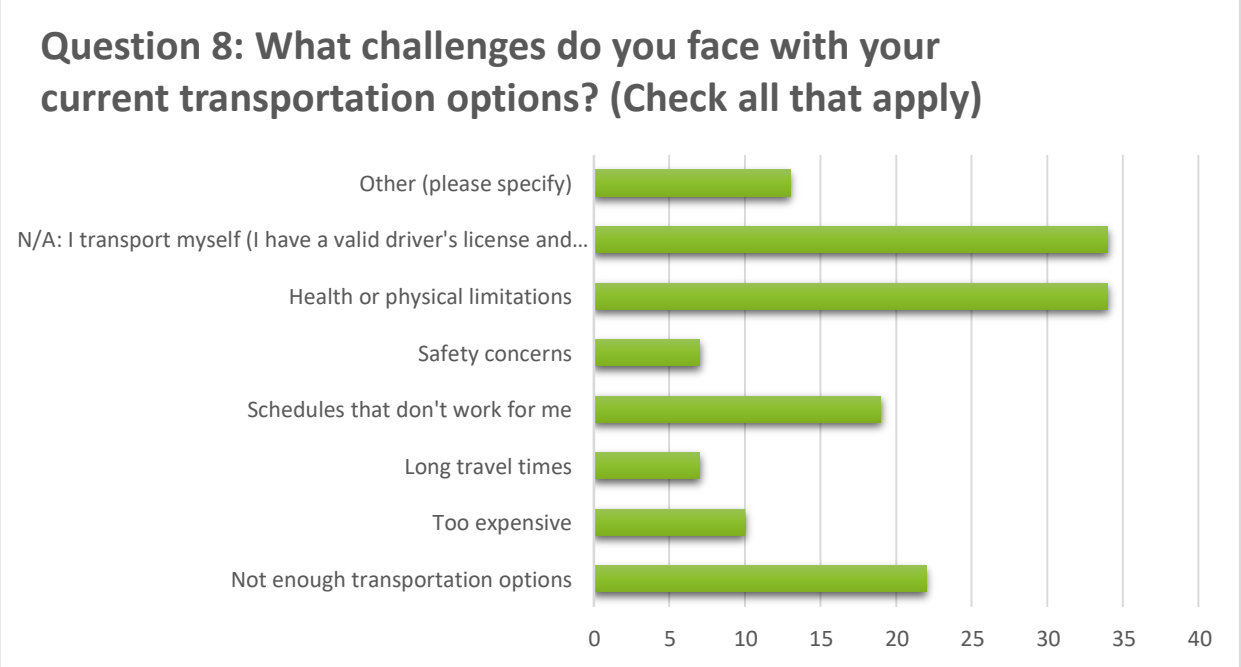
Summary: 45.54% of respondents are unable to go somewhere because of lack of transportation (25% is unable to go somewhere a few times a year, and 20.54% is unable to go somewhere multiple times a month); while the other 54.46% feel they have adequate transportation.



Summary: Early morning (before 8am) 12.66%, morning (8am-12pm) 58.23%, afternoon (12pm-4pm) 72.15%, evening (4pm-8pm) 18.99%, and late night (after 8pm) 5.06%.

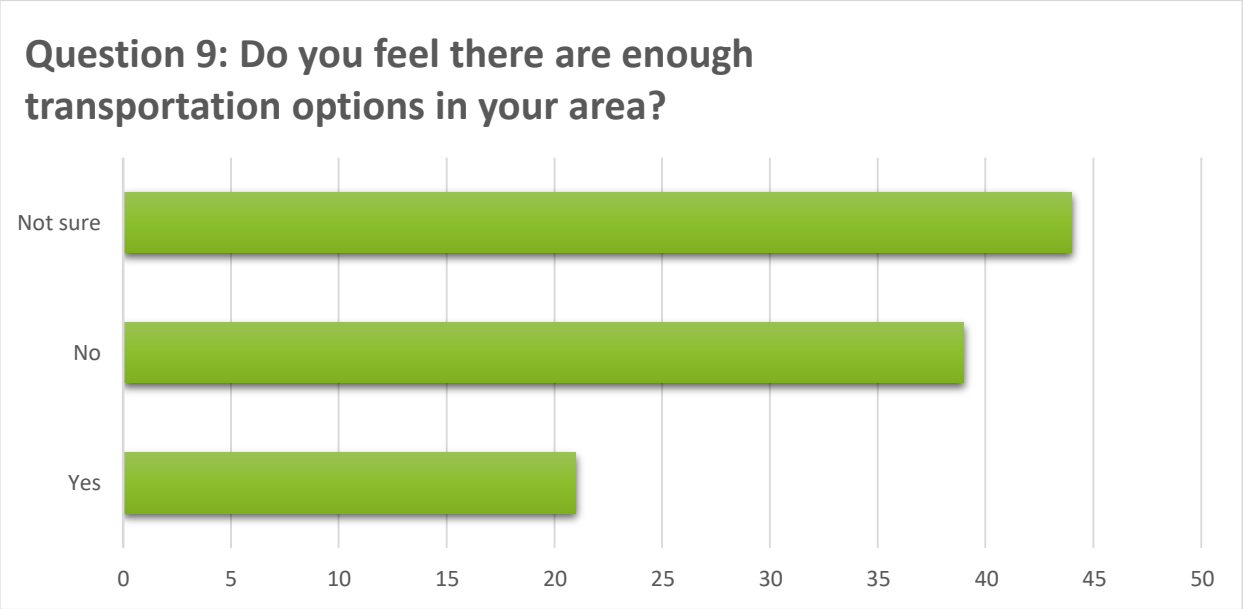


Summary: A majority of the survey respondents expressed they are most likely to travel between the days of Monday-Friday with Monday being at 59.52%, Tuesday: 73.81%, Wednesday: 65.48%, Thursday: 67.86% and Friday: 72.62%. 32.14% expressed being likely to travel on Saturdays and 35.71% on Sundays.

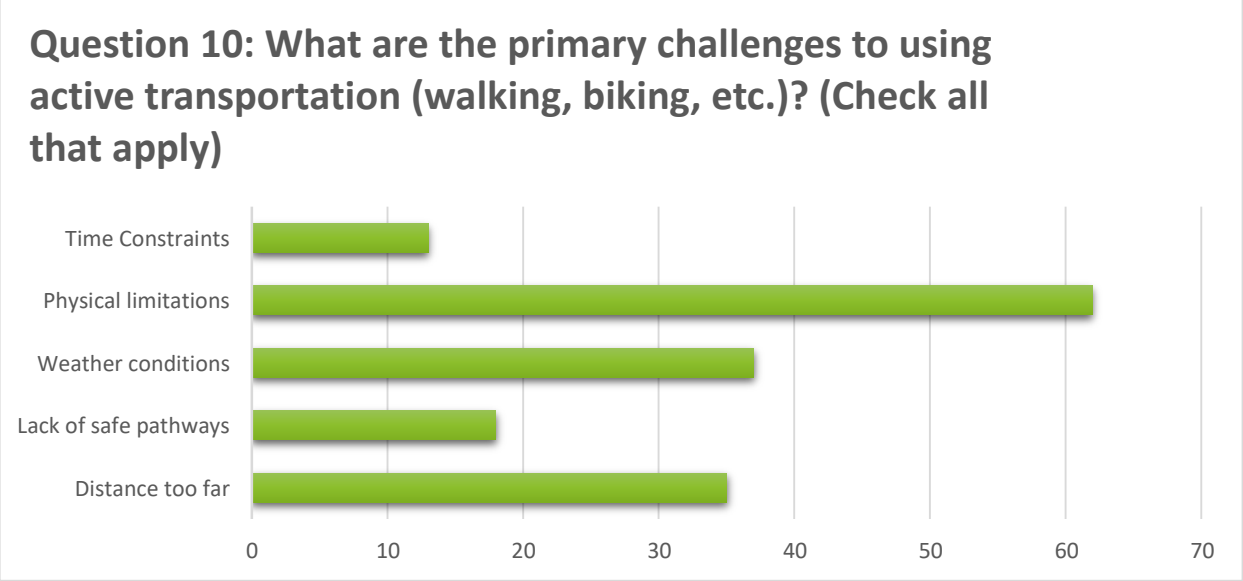


Summary: 36.96% of respondents stated that they didn't face challenges due to transporting themselves. The remaining cited the following challenges they face with current transportation options: health or physical limitations: 36.96%, not enough transportation options: 23.91%, schedules that don't

work for them: 20.65%, too expensive: 10.87%, safety concerns: 7.61%, long travel times: 7.61%. 14.13% cited “other” reasons with most specifying that if they do not feel well, they won’t drive that day; they only feel comfortable driving locally or in town; or that their children/spouse drive them.



Summary: 37.50% feel there are not enough transportation options, 20.19% feel there are enough options, and 42.31% stated they are not sure.



Summary: Distance too far: 42.17%, lack of safe pathways: 21.69%, weather conditions: 44.58%, physical limitations: 74.70%, time constraints: 15.66%

Question #11: How would having access to reliable transportation impact your daily life?	
1	“As my MS progresses, I will need more help getting to appointments.”
2	“It would make my medical needs and occasional personal needs easier to get. My aid cannot transport me and can only go get meds or personal needs one time a week.”
3	“Being legally blind, I can't drive. My transportation was my mother but in August, 2024 she passed. My Aunt comes from Tiro to take me to my eye appointments in Mansfield. I ask my neighbors for rides to buy groceries.”
4	“Round trips, yes, it would be nice to have a way to go to save a lot in Willard, OH and to Aldi's in Norwalk, OH (haven't been since it rebuilt/reopened). I'm slow. Need time to look around. Stores are always changing things around. Hard to find what you need or want.”
5	“n/a”
6	“Make it better and get me where I need to go.”
7	“I have family that takes care of my transportation.”
8	“If takes to places I have to go to. I don't drive and I can't walk distance.”
9	“Able to get out and go places - shopping grocery - drug store, daily living, church”
10	“I would need it if for some reason I couldn't drive.”
11	“Go more places”
12	“Would help tremendously with doctor's appointments.”
13	“I could go to the store without asking my family!”
14	“Probably right now not at all, but as I get older, I may need reliable transportation.”
15	“able to go to appointments, groceries”
16	“would make a huge difference”
17	“would work ok if needed”
18	“would make appointments easier to keep”
19	“would not have to rely on others”
20	“someone to take me”
21	“If I can't find a friend to take me, then I can't go.”
22	“make it easier on my family”
23	“easier to get somewhere”
24	“senior center trips, store, doctors”
25	“take me to Walmart”
26	“Planning doctor appointments”
27	“It would be very good”
28	“Makes more easy for doc's appoint. and bad weather days. Plus for assistance.”
29	“n/a”
30	“I am unable to walk more than a short distance so my family helps.”
31	“no change”
32	“I wouldn't cancel most doctor appointments.”
33	“I would be able to extend my personal need when I have no gas in my vehicle”
34	“It would remove a lot of stress from my life and make daily schedules simpler”
35	“I'm a shut in without transportation”

36	“Being confined to a wheelchair and cannot stand on my own does not enable me to travel outside my home in a comfortable situation. When I was discharged from the hospital, I had trouble getting home.”
37	“greatly”
38	“I would like to call you in the am and I will be flexible that day”
39	“could go out more”
40	“Better”
41	“Better”
42	“No Impact to me”
43	“would not depend on sister”
44	“helpful when family cannot take me”
45	“future peace of mind”
46	“IMMENSELY! I'm no longer able to drive and I have a 15yr daughter I can longer take her places or even get to my physical therapy appts.”
47	“N/A as I have my own vehicle. However, many in my community (Wakeman) do not and rely on others to take them to out of town appointments and errands. Having reliable transportation would allow them greater independence.”
48	“I can't get to work and my social opportunities are very limited”
49	“More reliable access to Dr. appointments in Sandusky.”
50	“Rural setting i live in is primarily going to stay car dependent, but continued encouragement of local multimodal options should continue to be promoted to reduce overall roadway miles per vehicle.”
51	“It would be wonderful for both senior citizens and disabled people.”
52	“x”
53	“I only get to go once a month to go pay bills got a niece to take me and pay her gas and take her out to eat. Then doctor appointments with my insurance rides or Mercy van to Willard hospital for blood or testing or to Fisher Titus appointments. Other than these, there is no transportation. I walk to pay bills at the gas station. I would like to go to Sandusky, OH sometimes or Mansfield, OH but there is no way to go.”

Summary: This was an open-ended question which received 53 responses with most responses stating that it would be easier to go to appointments, run errands, have social visits, and gain independence.

Question #12: Do you have specific suggestions for improving transportation in your area?

1	“Taxi”
2	“It would be great to have a reliable form of bus transportation with a lift for my power wheelchair. God Bless You!”
3	“A minivan that transfers people or a van with a lift on it, as I can't climb steps easily. I have to be extra careful. If minivan I prefer to sit in the front cause of my back and legs can't climb up in the side steps most of the time I use my big rollator and I can't load or unload it for doctor appointments. It keeps me steady. I do can use my cane if in a car or just going to get my nails

	only. I have a bad back 3 disk deteriorated in it so I use my rollator when I walk to Drug Mart or Dollar General to get stuff I need, but it is ruff on me or my niece once a month."
4	"no"
5	"No, I'm satisfied."
6	"More daily opportunities - not sure of time schedule when getting out - dr appointments, shopping, etc. eating out - time schedule more open and challenging with schedule personal - at it from all sides."
7	"no"
8	"I live in an over 55 community and I don't see the van here very often - perhaps do flyers to be sure people know about the available transportation."
9	"additional transportation company"
10	"taxi service"
11	"too pricey"
12	"more help with physically impaired"
13	"being able to schedule a day in advance not just 24 hours before"
14	"taxi expenses less senior transportation more access quicker"
15	"NO"
16	"n/a"
17	"No."
18	"no"
19	"Hopefully there are transportation as needed for doctors appts when needed for same day."
20	"More smaller vehicles rather than buses."
21	"non"
22	"No, our roads are terrible. If your say so can work on fix our roads."
23	"They need a bus that runs frequently with a bus stop like bigger cities have."
24	"NO"
25	"If possible it would be amazing to have transit open at least Saturday or Sunday..also opened later than 5 on week days"
26	"It would be great if there was a daily visit by public transit to Wakeman which could transport people to Norwalk, Oberlin, Vermilion so that they could schedule regular appointments/activities."
27	"No, other than it would be great if there were scheduled routes early in the morning and late in the evening so that I could plan accordingly."
28	"We need a service that includes Erie County."
29	"Support NCAT through expanded funding."
30	"For low income people, it would be great if free transportation was available 24 hours a day when a person needs to be either in this county or another one for something that is necessary."
31	"x"
32	"Better funding"

Summary: This was an open-ended question which received 32 responses ranging from on-demand taxi wants, to after 5pm transportation, ease of scheduling, and pedestrian infrastructure. There were also stating that they had no specific suggestions or nothing to improve upon.

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:

- **Limited Transportation Coverage:** Huron County is largely rural, with many residents living in areas that are not easily accessible. This results in gaps in service coverage, especially in outlying areas where demand may be lower but still significant for key groups like seniors and low-income residents.
- **Inadequate Service Hours:** Current transportation services, including those provided by TRIPS, have limited operating hours, making it difficult for residents who need transportation during evenings, weekends, and non-traditional hours to access services. This affects people working night shifts, those needing to attend medical appointments, and individuals who require transportation for other time-sensitive needs.
- **Shortage of Transportation Drivers and Providers:** There is a significant shortage of qualified transportation drivers in Huron County, which limits the capacity to expand services or extend operating hours. Additionally, the county lacks sufficient transportation providers, with very few taxi services and ridesharing options available. This shortage makes it challenging to meet the growing demand for flexible, on-demand transportation, particularly for residents who do not have access to private vehicles.
- **Lack of Coordination Among Providers:** Although multiple transportation providers are available in the county, there is insufficient coordination between them. This lack of collaboration can result in duplicated services in some areas and unmet needs in others. A more integrated system could ensure that resources are used more efficiently and that service gaps are identified and addressed.
- **Limited Funding and Resources:** Securing funding for transportation services remains a challenge, with many programs reliant on grants and local match. While federal and state funding, such as the Section 5310 program, is available, the funding may not always be sufficient to cover growing transportation needs. Additionally, there is a need for investment in fleet upgrades and the maintenance of accessible vehicles.
- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Huron County's aging infrastructure, including narrow streets and outdated utilities, limits the development of more extensive transportation routes. Many areas lack adequate pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks and crosswalks, creating challenges for people with mobility issues and increasing the potential for accidents.
- **Public Awareness and Engagement:** While there is a demonstrated need for transportation services, some residents are unaware of existing resources or are unsure of how to access them. Effective marketing and public outreach are needed to increase awareness of available services and to better educate the public on how to utilize them.

These challenges highlight the need for comprehensive planning, expanded funding, and better coordination to create a transportation system that meets the needs of all residents in Huron County.

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 3: Prioritized Unmet Mobility Needs

Rank	Unmet Need Description	Method Used to Identify and Rank Need
1	Insufficient staffing and driver shortages	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
2	Lack of accessible transportation	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
3	Limited early morning, evening, and weekend service	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
4	No same-day, short-notice, or on-demand ride options	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
5	Gaps in rural service coverage	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
6	High cost of transportation	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
7	Lack of fixed or deviated-fixed routes and bus shelters	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
8	Inadequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
9	Limited out-of-county transportation options	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
10	Over-reliance on informal ride networks	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
11	Lack of sustainable and diversified funding sources	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
12	Low public awareness of transportation services	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
13	Stigma or lack of public support for public transit	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
14	Need for stronger coordination among transportation providers	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
15	Environmental concerns and limited alternative fuel planning	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
16	Physical and medical limitations affecting mobility	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
17	Distance, weather, and safety concerns for walking and biking	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
18	Unclear rules about where bicycles should operate	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups

19	Limited bikeshare availability	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups
20	Lack of affordable taxi or private ride services	TAC meetings, SWOT, surveys & focus groups

V. Goals and Strategies

Developing Strategies to Address Gaps and Needs

Strategies for improving transportation for 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 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 20 of the identified primary gaps and needs.

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

Goal #1: Evaluate and Integrate Micro-transit and/or Flexible Transportation Options to Enhance County and Regional Connectivity to Improve Access and Mobility

Description: Evaluate, pilot, and coordinate flexible transportation service models such as micro-transit, on-demand, and deviated-fixed routes to improve mobility for older adults, individuals with disabilities, rural residents, and workers with non-traditional hours to support expanding regional connections to healthcare and employment destinations through inter-county coordination and initiatives.

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Limited early morning, evening, and weekend service
- No same-day, short-notice, or on-demand ride options
- Gaps in rural service coverage
- Limited out-of-county transportation options
- Lack of fixed or deviated-fixed routes and bus shelters
- Need for stronger coordination among transportation providers
- Over-reliance on informal ride networks
- High cost of transportation

Strategy 1.1: Conduct a countywide transportation needs assessment and feasibility study focused on flexible service models

Strategy 1.2: Pilot a micro-transit or flexible on-demand service in a priority area within the county

Strategy 1.3: Engage key stakeholders to co-design services and build support

Strategy 1.4: Support the addition of a GoBus intercity transit stop in Norwalk to enhance statewide connectivity

Strategy 1.5: Identify and map underserved areas and common out-of-county trip destinations, and develop service agreements or pilot solutions (e.g., transit hubs) to improve access to high-demand out-of-county destinations

Strategy 1.6: Promote available transportation options through partnerships with social service and healthcare agencies

Strategy 1.7: Launch targeted education, outreach, and travel training initiatives to ensure residents understand and can access all transportation options

Strategy 1.8: Pursue funding to support planning, implementation, and continuation of pilot and regional services

Timeline for Implementation: plan duration

Action Steps:

- Use survey data, GIS mapping, and trip logs to identify high-demand areas and service gaps.
- Partner with a consultant or planning staff to evaluate service options like on-demand or deviated-fixed routes.
- Design and implement a pilot project that focuses on addressing rural access or workforce mobility.
- Monitor ridership, adjust service design, and document lessons learned.
- Collaborate with GoBus, municipalities, and ODOT to determine and implement a Norwalk stop.
- Coordinate with adjacent counties' transit providers to explore joint planning and scheduling solutions.
- Develop agreements with hospitals, dialysis centers, and clinics for reliable transportation to medical appointments.
- Design and distribute user-friendly outreach materials and conduct travel training workshops.
- Apply for funding through ODOT, federal grants, and partnerships with local employers or philanthropic foundations.

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: NCAT, Mobility Management

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: ODOT, social service agencies, healthcare providers

Resources Needed: Staff time, GIS, scheduling software, vehicles, outreach and marketing materials, funding for studies and operations

Potential Cost Range: $200,000-$500,000

Potential Funding Sources: ODOT, Workforce Mobility Partnership Program, local

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Planning and Feasibility
    a. Target: Complete a flexible service feasibility study within 2 years
    b. Target: Identify at least two service scenarios (e.g., on-demand, deviated-fixed) with estimated costs and service zones
2. Measure: Pilot Service Implementation
    a. Target: Launch a flexible or regional pilot service by 2030
    b. Target: Provide at least 100 one-way passenger trips in the first 6 months of the pilot
3. Measure: Regional Connectivity and Coordination
    a. Target: Secure implementation of a GoBus stop in Norwalk within 2 years
    b. Target: Establish at least one service agreement or formal coordination plan with a contiguous county provider

Goal #2: Increase Transportation Provider Capacity to Strengthen Service Reliability and Reduce Trip Denials

Description: Support NCAT and other county transportation providers in building capacity through improved driver recruitment and retention, enhanced workforce practices, expanded accessible vehicle resources, and access to training programs to better meet community transportation needs.

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Insufficient staffing and driver shortages
- Lack of accessible transportation
- High cost of transportation
- Physical and medical limitations affecting mobility
- Over-reliance on informal ride networks
- Lack of sustainable and diversified funding sources

Strategy 2.1: Assist providers in evaluating and recommending adjustments to driver wages, benefits, and job structures to improve recruitment and retention outcomes

Strategy 2.2: Lead or support a coordinated driver recruitment campaign targeting retirees, second-career individuals, and under-employed workers across Huron County

Strategy 2.3: Facilitate opportunities for providers to share resources or jointly apply for funding to expand accessible vehicle fleets and maintenance capabilities

Strategy 2.4: Assist providers with access to training programs for drivers and maintenance staff to enhance service quality and vehicle uptime

Timeline for Implementation: duration of plan

Action Steps:

- Conduct surveys or interviews with providers to identify current recruitment and retention challenges and promising practices
- Coordinate and promote a countywide driver recruitment campaign via community partners and media
- Work with providers to review and compare driver compensation and job structures, and develop recommendations
- Identify and assist providers with funding applications for vehicle acquisition or maintenance support
- Research and connect providers with relevant training programs for drivers and vehicle maintenance staff

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: Mobility Management, NCAT, local transportation providers

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: ODOT, community workforce agencies, local government, transit peer networks

Resources Needed: Staff time, marketing materials, outreach support, grant application assistance, training coordination

Potential Cost Range: $50,000–$150,000Potential Funding Sources:

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Driver Recruitment and Retention
    a. Target: Increase the number of qualified drivers available to providers by 10% within 2 years
    b. Target: Reduce driver turnover rates among county transportation providers by 15% within 3 years
2. Measure: Vehicle and Equipment Accessibility
    a. Target: Ensure at least 80% of transportation providers operate accessible vehicles suited to diverse rider needs within 3 years
    b. Target: Secure funding or partnerships to upgrade or maintain at least 5 vehicles annually to improve fleet reliability
3. Measure: Provider Training and Support
    a. Target: Conduct at least four training sessions annually on CPR/First Aid, passenger assistance, and safety best practices for transportation providers

b. Target: Achieve a 10% reduction in trip denials related to driver availability or capability within 12 months after training sessions

Goal #3: Enhance Active Transportation Infrastructure and Accessibility

Description: Improve infrastructure and environmental conditions that support walking, biking, and the use of mobility devices, especially for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income residents—by identifying gaps in sidewalks and crossings, promoting Safe Routes to Age in Place, and supporting local jurisdictions in exploring age- and ability-friendly infrastructure improvements.

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Inadequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
- Distance, weather, and safety concerns for walking and biking
- Physical and medical limitations affecting mobility
- Unclear rules about where bicycles should operate
- Limited bikeshare availability
- Environmental concerns and limited alternative fuel planning

Strategy 3.1: Conduct walk audits and identify priority pedestrian infrastructure improvements in rural communities, village centers, and unincorporated areas

Strategy 3.2: Explore feasibility of local jurisdictions adopting Complete Streets policies or incorporating age-friendly design principles into future road and sidewalk improvements

Strategy 3.3: Develop and promote Safe Routes to Age in Place plans in collaboration with health and aging services organizations

Strategy 3.4: Promote use of adaptive mobility equipment such as senior tricycles or walkers through targeted programs and create safe activity loops

Strategy 3.5: Identify funding opportunities and support local applications for infrastructure grants focused on sidewalk and pedestrian safety

Strategy 3.6: Conduct community engagement and education to build awareness of walkable design benefits and promote behavior change

Timeline for Implementation: duration of plan

Action Steps:

- Conduct walk audits or assessments with community partners in key population centers to identify priority sidewalk and crossing needs.
- Use GIS mapping and survey data to highlight areas with high concentrations of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income residents to guide infrastructure planning.
- Partner with local jurisdictions to explore the feasibility of adopting Complete Streets policies, including hosting informational meetings and reviewing model policies.

- Work with the Huron County Health Department and aging services network to develop and promote Safe Routes to Age in Place plans.
- Coordinate with planning agencies or consultants to design and cost out improvements to identified infrastructure gaps.
- Promote and support the distribution of adaptive mobility devices (e.g., senior tricycles) and create accessible activity routes where feasible.
- Apply for infrastructure funding from programs like ODOT's Active Transportation Program, Safe Streets for All, or Ohio Department of Health grants.
- Host community engagement events (e.g., walk/bike days, town hall sessions) to raise awareness of the health and connectivity benefits of walkable, age-friendly communities.

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: Mobility Management, Huron County Health Department

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: Local governments, Huron County Engineer, Senior Enrichment Services, local bicycle and pedestrian coalitions, regional planning agencies, hospitals/clinics

Resources Needed: Staff time, GIS mapping tools, community volunteers, adaptive devices, printed materials, grant writing support

Potential Cost Range: $10,000–$300,000

Potential Funding Sources: ODOT Active Transportation Program, Ohio Department of Health (CHC grants), Safe Streets for All, AARP Community Challenge, local funds

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Walkability Planning and Assessment
    a. Target: Conduct at least two walk audits or infrastructure assessments in underserved areas within two years
    b. Target: Identify and map at least five high-need pedestrian improvement zones using GIS data
2. Measure: Safe Routes to Age in Place Implementation
    a. Target: Develop and promote Safe Routes to Age in Place plans in at least two Huron County communities by 2027
    b. Target: Distribute at least 10 adaptive mobility devices (e.g., senior tricycles) to support local mobility
3. Measure: Community Engagement and Education
    a. Target: Host or participate in at least three educational or engagement events focused on walkability and aging in place
    b. Target: Reach at least 100 residents through outreach and promotional efforts related to active transportation

Goal #4: Strengthen and Sustain Coordinated Transportation Services

Description: Support a coordinated and sustainable transportation network in Huron County by expanding public awareness, leveraging funding for accessible vehicles and services, and enhancing inter-agency collaboration.

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Lack of sustainable and diversified funding sources
- Low public awareness of transportation services
- Stigma or lack of public support for public transit
- Need for stronger coordination among transportation providers
- Lack of accessible transportation
- Over-reliance on informal ride networks

Strategy 4.1: Support the ongoing use and expansion of 5310 funding to acquire accessible vehicles, transportation operations, and programming

Strategy 4.2: Strengthen collaboration between agencies to improve service coordination and reduce duplication

Strategy 4.3: Develop and implement a marketing and public awareness campaign to promote all transportation services and resources

Strategy 4.4: Advocate for sustainable transportation funding at the local, state, and federal levels

Strategy 4.5: Preserve mobility management services to support planning, coordination, and public education across the transportation network

Timeline for Implementation: ongoing

Action Steps:

- Conduct an annual assessment of 5310 applications and needs
- Identify shared coordination opportunities among local transportation providers and agencies
- Host quarterly Transportation Advisory Committee meetings and work groups to advance Huron County's Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan
- Design a communications strategy to promote transportation services across all audiences
- Develop and distribute marketing materials (e.g., Getting Around Huron County Guides, social media content, flyers)
- Participate annually in Ohio Loves Transit Week and other awareness events to promote to advocate for rural/small urban transportation
- Meet with local and state officials to advocate for transportation investment and policy support
- Maintain and secure Section 5310 funding to support vehicle replacement, service continuity, and mobility management programming

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: Mobility Management

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: Senior Enrichment Services, CLI, Huron Bounty Board of DD, Huron County JFS, County Commissioners, non-profit/governmental agencies, social service agencies

Resources Needed: operational funding, vehicles, staff time, coordination/collaboration, communications/outreach materials, meeting space

Potential Cost Range: $250,000

Potential Funding Sources: Section 5310 ODOT Funding, community foundations, local government match and in-kind contributions

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Increase awareness and utilization of transportation services
    a. Target: Develop an annual Getting Around Guide that lists the transportation providers in Huron County
    b. Target: Distribute 250 Getting Around Guides throughout the county annually
2. Measure: Support accessible transportation through effective use of 5310 resources
    a. Target: Maintain 100% operational readiness of 5310 -funded vehicles
    b. Target: Submit at least 2 5310 grant applications annually
3. Measure: Maintain mobility management services
    a. Target: Sustain a full-time Mobility Manager position annually
    b. Target: Convene 4 Transportation Advisory Committee meetings
4. Measure: Advocate for ongoing transportation funding and awareness
    a. Target: Participate in Ohio Loves Transit each year
    b. Target: Meet with local and state policymakers about transit priorities at least once per year
    c. Target: Publish or present one advocacy-related update or success story annually

Goal #5: Achieve Financial Sustainability and Enhance Service Delivery Through Strategic Partnerships

Description: Secure and diversify funding sources while building strong partnerships with employers, healthcare providers, and community organizations to support the maintenance, expansion, and reliability of transportation services by exploring to conduct a comprehensive study to assess the economic impact of transit services and integrate workforce transportation needs to strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable, cost-effective transportation options.

Need(s) Being Addressed:

Lack of sustainable and diversified funding sources

- Insufficient staffing and driver shortages
- Limited early morning, evening, and weekend service

- High cost of transportation
- Over-reliance on informal ride networks
- Need for stronger coordination among transportation providers
- Limited out-of-county transportation options
- Low public awareness of transportation services
- Stigma or lack of public support for public transit

Strategy 5.1: Identify and pursue diverse funding opportunities—including federal, state, local, private, and philanthropic sources—to support operations, vehicle maintenance, and service expansion

Strategy 5.2: Develop partnerships with local employers, healthcare providers, and community organizations to contract services and leverage state and federal funding opportunities

Strategy 5.3: Explore conducting a Comprehensive Transportation Study to assess the overall economic impact of transit services in Huron County

Strategy 5.4: Integrate workforce transportation considerations into transit planning to better connect residents with employment opportunities and support local economic growth

Strategy 5.5: Advocate for increased local government investment in transportation, emphasizing the importance of funding for vehicle upkeep and service reliability

Strategy 5.6: Explore innovative cost-saving and revenue-generating models such as shared maintenance facilities, bulk purchasing agreements, fare integration, advertising, or subscription services to improve financial sustainability

Timeline for Implementation: duration of plan

Action Steps:

- Research and apply for applicable funding programs at multiple levels
- Convene stakeholder working groups including employers, healthcare providers, and community partners
- Initiate and oversee a transportation economic impact study with academic or consulting partners
- Collect data on workforce transit needs and collaborate with employers on solutions
- Engage local governments for increased transportation budget support
- Evaluate opportunities for shared services, bulk purchasing, and alternative revenue streams

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: NCAT, Mobility Management

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: ODOT, Huron County Growth Partnership, Local Governments, Employers, Healthcare Providers, Community Organizations

Resources Needed: Staff time, funding for studies and outreach, partnership coordination, marketing materials, data collection and analysis tools

Potential Cost Range: $150,000–$400,000

Potential Funding Sources: ODOT grants, Workforce Mobility Partnership Program, federal grants (e.g., 5310, 5311) local government contributions, private partnerships, foundations

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Funding and Partnership Development
    a. Target: Establish at least two formal partnerships with employers, healthcare providers, or community organizations within 2 years
    b. Target: Increase external funding secured for transit services by 20% within 3 years
2. Measure: Service Contracting and Resource Sharing
    a. Target: Secure contracts with at least three partners to provide or support transit services within 3 years
    b. Target: Increase partner-contracted services by 15% within 3 years to expand coordinated funding and resource sharing
3. Measure: Economic Impact and Workforce Integration
    a. Target: Complete a comprehensive transportation economic impact study within 3 years
    b. Target: Develop and implement at least two workforce transportation initiatives informed by study findings within 4 years

Goal #6: Advance Sustainable Transportation Through Alternative Fuels and Infrastructure

Description: Support long-term sustainability and modernization of Huron County's transportation system by advancing the use of alternative fuels, investing in supportive infrastructure, and engaging the community in forward-looking energy and transportation planning.

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Environmental concerns and limited alternative fuel planning
- Lack of sustainable and diversified funding sources
- Inadequate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
- Low public awareness of transportation services
- Stigma or lack of public support for public transit

Strategy 6.1: Support NCAT's electric vehicle transition efforts funded by state and federal grants

Strategy 6.2: Explore additional alternative fuel sources (e.g., propane, CNG) for long-term fleet diversification

Strategy 6.3: Increase community and stakeholder awareness of sustainable transportation technologies and infrastructure

Timeline for Implementation: duration of plan

Action Steps:

- Engage with NCAT on progress of electric vehicle implementation and performance
- Collaborate with utility companies, Clean Fuels Ohio, ODOT, and local governments
- Identify high-priority locations for public or agency-accessible EV charging stations
- Apply for state, federal, and private-sector funding to support infrastructure and vehicle replacement
- Create education materials to Increase understanding of alternative fuel benefits

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: NCAT

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: Mobility Management, ODOT, Clean Fuels Ohio

Resources Needed: EV infrastructure planning and installation support, education/outreach materials, capital funding

Potential Cost Range: N/a

Potential Funding Sources: Low-No Emission Grant, ODOT

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Support NCAT's electric vehicle transition
    a. Target: Deploy at least 1 electric vehicles within 4 years
    b. Target: Achieve 100% EV training completion for NCAT operations staff
    c. Target: Track and report comparative fuel and maintenance costs annually
2. Measure: Expand infrastructure readiness
    a. Target: Identify at least 3 priority charging or fueling locations
    b. Target: Complete an infrastructure upgrade by year 3
3. Measure: Increase public and stakeholder awareness
    a. Target: Publish infrastructure updates in at least 1 TAC per year
    b. Target: Produce at least 1 press release on NCAT's electric vehicle progress with educational information

Goal #7: Expand Equitable Transportation Options for Workforce Access and Community Reintegration

Description: Evaluate and address the mobility needs of individuals with transportation barriers related to employment and reintegration, particularly people experiencing homelessness, returning citizens (formerly incarcerated), and low-income residents by emphasizing scalable solutions such as micro-transit, flexible shuttles, and targeted transportation programs that improve access to jobs, training, and essential services.

Need(s) Being Addressed:

- Lack of accessible transportation

- Limited early morning, evening, and weekend service
- No same-day, short-notice, or on-demand ride options
- High cost of transportation
- Lack of fixed or deviated-fixed routes and bus shelters
- Over-reliance on informal ride networks
- Lack of affordable taxi or private ride services

Strategy 7.1: Assess workforce and reintegration transportation needs in collaboration with employers, human service agencies, and reentry programs

Strategy 7.2: Align transportation with workforce development initiatives

Strategy 7.3: Partner with reentry and homeless services to ensure individuals have access to transportation for court appointments, job interviews, medical care, and essential services

Strategy 7.4: Explore fare assistance or mobility voucher programs to offer transportation subsidies for low-income workers and individuals transitioning out of homelessness or incarceration

Strategy 7.5: Apply for workforce development funding to support transportation initiatives

Strategy 7.6: Develop micro-transit or flexible transportation solutions to connect residents to employment corridors and industrial parks

Timeline for Implementation: plan duration

Action Steps:

- Convene a working group of workforce, transportation, and reentry partners
- Identify high-priority employment corridors and underserved populations
- Design and pilot fare assistance or voucher programs
- Develop service models for flexible transportation (e.g., micro-transit/on-demand)
- Apply for grants related to workforce development, mobility innovation, and reintegration support
- Launch pilot services and evaluate performance

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: Mobility Management, NCAT

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: ODOT, Huron County JFS, Huron County Growth Partnership

Resources Needed: Staff time, vehicles, operating funding, fare assistance funding, transportation planning/outreach, marketing

Potential Cost Range: $10,000-$250,000

Potential Funding Sources: ODOT, JFS, local foundations, employer contributions

Performance Measures/Targets:

1. Measure: Number of individuals with transportation access through new programs
    a. Target: 100 individuals served in the first pilot year
    b. Target: 15% annual increase in ridership among reentry or low-income workers
2. Measure: Number of employers, workforce, and reentry programs partnering on transportation solutions
    a. Target: 3 partnerships in the first year
    b. Target: Increase partnership engagement by 25% over planning period
3. Measure: Number of mobility vouchers or fare assistance recipients
    a. Target: 10 unique individuals assisted in first year of program
    b. Target: 90% of voucher users report increased access to jobs, services, or court appointments

VI. Plan Adoption

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJ) requires that the plan development process must include older adults, individuals with disabilities, members of the general public, and representatives from public, private and non-profit transportation, and human services providers but does not mandate the body or organization that must adopt the plan. However, the Section 5310 program specifies that individuals who adopt the plan must include individuals who were involved in the planning process. Therefore, ODOT has taken the step of requiring that the local Transportation Advisory Committee that was developed at the onset of the planning process will have the responsibility of plan adoption and approving future amendments of the plan.

In accordance with the requirements set forth by the IIJ Act and ODOT, the Huron County Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan included a designated public comment period to allow for stakeholder and community input prior to plan adoption. A draft of the Coordinated Plan was made available upon request for review by stakeholders and the general public prior to a community meeting held on May 15, 2025, at Huron County Job and Family Services, with the option to attend virtually to ensure accessibility. Specific outreach efforts were made to engage older adults, individuals with disabilities, and representatives from public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers.

Outreach and notification efforts included the following:

- A public notice posted on April 9, 2025, announcing the opportunity to request, review, and comment on the draft plan throughout the month of May.
- Social media promotion on April 10, 2025, to broaden awareness and reach additional community members.
- Calendar invitations sent on April 9, 2025, to private, non-profit, and human services providers involved in the planning process.
- An email reminder sent on May 14, 2025, to ensure that key stakeholders had the opportunity to attend and provide final feedback at the public meeting.

All outreach and engagement efforts were documented and will be maintained by GLCAP.

Comments were received from April 10th-May 31st, 2025. Stakeholders requested improved clarity and inclusivity within the plan. Mary Habig with North Central Area Transit (NCAT), requested to specifically call out micro-transit, transportation for workforce, and to include transportation for prison reform. Carol Wheeler, with Norwalk United Fund, recommended the plan to include transportation for low-income or homeless individuals trying to re-enter the workforce. Discussion followed regarding transportation for workforce, re-entry, and reform with the TAC deciding to include an additional goal that focuses on those transportation efforts.

Following the public comment period, GLCAP reviewed all feedback and incorporated relevant revisions into the final Coordinated Plan.

The draft plan was distributed electronically via email to all Planning Committee members, with hard copies available upon request to ensure efficient and equitable access.

The Coordinated Plan was formally presented to the Planning Committee during a public meeting held on May 15, 2025, at Huron County Job and Family Services, with a virtual participation option also available. The meeting was open to the public and promoted through previously established outreach channels used throughout the planning process. A total of 9 members attended, including 8 in person and 1 virtually.

A motion to adopt the plan, allowing for any formatting or insignificant changes to be made afterward, was introduced by Mary Habig and seconded by Carol Wheeler. The Planning Committee voted unanimously in favor of adoption.

Following the incorporation of feedback from the public comment period, the lead agency prepared the final draft of the Huron County Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan. The updated version of the plan, along with documentation of all comments received and the corresponding responses or revisions, was shared with the Planning Committee on June 26, 2025. No significant edits or objections were received from the Planning Committee following the distribution of the final draft. As a result, the plan advanced to the final adoption stage without requiring an additional stakeholder review.

To meet state requirements for rural and small urban counties, GLCAP presented the Coordinated Plan to the Huron County Board of Commissioners on June 3, 2025, to ensure appropriate local authority was informed and involved in the final adoption process.

The Final Coordinated Plan was then submitted to the Special Project Manager within the Office of Transit at ODOT for a final review. Once the review was complete with any corrections, a Plan Adoption Page was distributed to each Planning Committee member for signature, confirming both their involvement in the planning process and their approval of the final plan. The signed adoption page will be submitted to ODOT alongside the final plan and made available to all stakeholders, including via publication on the Great Lakes Community Action Partnership’s website.

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 GLCAP.

Agency Representation

Name	Agency
Angie Smith	City of Norwalk
John Schwartz	CLI
Jodi Hunter	Enrichment Centers for Huron County
Steve Beal	Enrichment Centers for Huron County
Karen Kilgo	Flat Rock Homes, Inc.
Margaret (Meg) Larkin-Downing	Flat Rock Homes, Inc.
Bri Mantz	Goodwill of Erie, Huron, Ottawa and Sandusky Counties
Cyndi Johnson	Goodwill of Erie, Huron, Ottawa and Sandusky Counties
Courtney Curtis	Great Lakes Community Action Partnership (GLCAP)
Jim Oliver	Great Lakes Community Action Partnership (GLCAP)
Mindy Birkholz	Great Lakes Community Action Partnership (GLCAP)
David White	Greater Sandusky Partnership
Kari Smith	Huron County Board of DD
Harry Brady	Huron County Commissioner
Andrea Welfle	Huron County Growth Partnership
Sydney Raifsnider	Huron County Health Department
Lenora Minor	Huron County Job and Family Services
Carol Wheeler	Norwalk Area United Fund
Mary Habig	North Central Area Transit (NCAT)
Patricia Ezell	North Central Area Transit (NCAT)

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:

Jim Oliver
Mobility Management Coordinator
Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
419-333-5087
jaoliver@glcap.org

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:

Jim Oliver
Mobility Management Coordinator
Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
419-333-5087
jaoliver@glcap.org

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.

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.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, signed into law on November 15, 2021, authorizes significant funding to improve the nation's transportation infrastructure, including public transit. The IIJA provides $550 billion in new investments over five years, with a focus on modernizing infrastructure, enhancing safety, and expanding access to reliable and affordable transportation options. Specifically, it includes funding for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to improve transit systems, support the transition to electric buses, enhance transit safety, and promote equitable access to transportation services across rural and urban communities.

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.