

Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Update
Bloomington – Monroe County Metropolitan Planning
Organization

FINAL REPORT



Prepared for Bloomington –
Monroe County Metropolitan
Planning Organization

October, 2021

Prepared by:
RLS & Associates, Inc.

3131 S. Dixie Hwy, Suite 545
Dayton, OH 45429
(937) 299-5007
rls@rlsandassoc.com





Moving Public Transportation Into the Future

Contents

Introduction	1
Overview	1
Section 5310 Program: Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities	1
Plan Development Methodology	2
Glossary of Terms.....	3
Existing Conditions.....	5
Population Projections.....	7
Older Adult Population	7
Individuals with Disabilities.....	9
Household Income and Poverty Status.....	10
Zero Vehicle Households	12
Inventory of Existing Transportation Providers and Service Gaps.....	13
Existing Transportation Resources.....	15
Needs Assessment	17
Overview	17
General Public and Stakeholder Meetings.....	17
Results of the General Public Survey	18
Modes of Transportation Used.....	18
Transportation Services Used	20
Desired Changes to Local Transportation Options	20
Difficulty Getting Needed Transportation	23
Out-of-County Destinations	24
Other Comments About Community Transportation Services.....	26
Respondent Demographics.....	26
Needs Identified in the 2012 Coordinated Plan update	28
Unmet Needs and Gaps in Service.....	28
Door-to-Door Transportation	29



Moving Public Transportation Into the Future

Frequent on Fixed Route Service	29
Human Service Agency Access to Bus Passes for Clients	29
Safe, Accessible Pathways To/From Bus Stops	30
Transportation to Destinations Outside of Monroe County	30
Travel Training	30
User-Oriented Wayfinding	30
Continuing Challenges to Coordinated Transportation	31
Implementation Plan	31
Strategies for Implementation	32
Goal 1: Increase Awareness of How to Use Available Transportation Services and Improve Wayfinding	32
Strategy 1.1: Collaborate to Offer Travel Training or Mobility Management and Improve Awareness of How to Use Existing Transportation Options	32
Strategy 1.2: Implement Wayfinding	34
Goal 2: Expand Transportation Service for Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Low-Income Individuals, and the General Public	36
Strategy 2.1: Enhance Transportation Service in the “Fringe” Area Outside City Limits	36
Strategy 2.2: Provide Door-to-Door/On-Demand Service to City of Bloomington Residents	37
Strategy 2.3: Add/Increase Weekend Service on Public Transit	38
Strategy 2.4: Enhance Rural Transit Service Connecting Outlying Communities to Bloomington	39
Goal 3: Improve Pedestrian and Wheelchair-User Access to Bus Stops and Add Stop Amenities	40
Strategy 3.1: Add Infrastructure to Bus Stops to Improve Accessibility	40
Goal 4: Increase Participation in Initiatives to Enhance Mobility	40
Strategy 4.1 Participate Actively in the Indiana Council on Specialized Transportation (INCOST) and Other Statewide Organizations	40
Strategy 4.2 Educate Local Elected Officials About Transportation Needs	41
Potential Grant Applications	43
Appendix: Outreach Documentation	A-1



POLICY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2022

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting - City of Bloomington Council Chambers (#115)

Policy Committee Present: Sarah Ryterband, Pamela Samples, Penny Githens (proxy), Jillian Kinzie, Lisa Ridge, Jason Banach, Nate Nickel (proxy), Margaret Clements, Kate Wiltz, Doug Horn, Andrew Cibor (proxy), Steve Volan, Chris Wahlman (proxy)

Staff present: Ryan Clemens, Pat Martin, Beth Rosenbarger

- I. Call to Order and Introductions
 - a. Steve Volan called the meeting to order.

- II. Approval of the Agenda*

**** Sarah Ryterband motioned for approval of the agenda. Lisa Ridge seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 11:2:0 - Approved.**

- III. Approval of the Minutes*
 - a. March 11, 2022

****Sarah Ryterband motioned for approval of the March 11, 2022 meeting minutes. Andrew Cibor seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 10:1:2 - Approved.**

- IV. Communications from the Chair
 - a. Steve Volan noted that an agenda item requested by Margaret Clements will be added to the to the April 2022 meeting.

- V. Reports from Officers and/or Committees
 - a. Technical Advisory Committee
 - (1) Nate Nickel reported that the Committee convened but failed to have an in-person quorum. The Committee shall meet again in April 2022. Discussion ensued.
 - b. Citizens Advisory Committee
 - (1) Sarah Ryterband reported the CAC met and recommended approval of the TIP Amendment on today's meeting agenda. They additionally looked forward to implementation of the Monroe County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.

- VI. Reports from the MPO Staff
 - a. INDOT FY 2022 - 2026 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Status Report
 - (1) Staff referenced a meeting packet memorandum where INDOT's Central Office Planning Team resubmitted a revised Draft FY 2022 - 2026 STIP to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on March 30th addressing comments and issues. INDOT's STIP has a May 12, 2022 target date for the federal approval. Discussion ensued.

VII. Old Business

- a. Monroe County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Update*
 - (1) Staff presented the Final Draft Report of the locally developed Monroe County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) prepared by RLS Associates. Funding to update the locally-developed CHSTP had full support from the Indiana Department of Transportation, Office of Transit (INDOT). The Plan involved active participation from local agencies that provide transportation for the general public, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. This Plan fulfills Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements for the receipt of program service funds by Rural Transit and Bloomington Transit. The staff noted the identification of Goals and Strategies set forth by the Plan, associated implementation timeframes, budgets, potential grant funding sources, and responsible parties. The staff further identified potential grant applications through an implementation key of priorities. Discussion ensued. ****Sarah Ryterband moved to adopt the Monroe County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. Kate Wiltz seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 10:3:0 - Approved.**

VIII. New Business

- a. FY 2020-2024 TIP Amendment/FY 2022-2026 TIP Amendment.*
 - (1) DES# 2200146 - North Eagleson Avenue Bridge Superstructure Replacement over the Indiana Rail Road. Chris Wahlman provided background on the proposed amendment and noted errors on the application including the structure's ownership which resides with Indiana University, not the Indiana Rail Road. Discussion ensued. ****Chris Wahlman moved to postpone consideration of the proposed amendment to a later date. Lisa Ridge seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 13:0:0 - Approved.**

IX. Public Comments on Matters Not Included on the Agenda (non-voting items)

- a. None

X. Communications from Committee Members (non-agenda/non-voting items)

- a. Sarah Ryterband noted numerous upcoming transportation webinars relevant to local urban area issues. She asked that individuals contact her for the notifications.
- b. Penny Githens noted that the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan required by the Department of Transportation should have coordination with the 2020 U.S. Census.

XI. Upcoming Meetings

- a. Policy Committee – May 13, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. (Hybrid)
- b. Technical Advisory Committee – April 27, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. (Hybrid)
- c. Citizens Advisory Committee – April 27, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. (Hybrid)

XII. Adjournment

- a. Sarah Ryterband moved to adjourn the meeting. Lisa Ridge seconded.

**Action Requested / Public comment prior to vote (limited to five minutes per speaker).*

Auxiliary aids for people with disabilities are available upon request with adequate notice. Please call 812-349-3429 or e-mail human.rights@bloomington.in.gov.

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

This plan updates the Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPPO) Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan that was developed in 2007 and updated in 2012 to fulfill the planning requirements for the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) United We Ride initiative and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the 2005 authorization of U.S. Department of Transportation funding programs. These requirements continued under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act. The SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21 Acts were effective through September 30, 2015.

On December 4, 2015, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, was signed into law as a reauthorization of surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020. The FAST Act applies new program rules to all FTA funds and authorizes transit programs for five years. 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 Federal legislation.

Funding to update this locally-developed Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan was provided by the Indiana Department of Transportation, Office of Transit (INDOT) and involved active participation from local agencies that provide transportation for the general public, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

Section 5310 Program: Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

The program most significantly impacted by the plan update is the Section 5310 Program because participation in a locally developed Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan is one of the eligibility requirements for Section 5310 Program funding.

The Section 5310 Program provides formula funding to States and urbanized areas for the purpose of assisting public and private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meet those needs. The FTA apportions Section 5310 Program funds to direct recipients based on the population within the recipient service area. For rural and small urban areas in Indiana, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is the direct recipient. As the direct recipient, INDOT solicits applications and selects Section 5310 Program recipient projects for funding through a formula-based, competitive process which is clearly explained in the INDOT Transit Section

5310 State Management Plan. In Indiana, eligible activities for Section 5310 Program funds include purchasing buses and vans, wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices.

Section 5310 Program projects are eligible to receive an 80 percent Federal share if the 20 percent local match is secured. Local match may be derived from any combination of non-U.S. Department of Transportation Federal, State, or local resources. The FAST Act also allows the use of advertisement and concessions revenue as local match. Passenger fare revenue is not eligible as local match.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

Some human service agencies transport their clients with their own vehicles, while others may also serve the general public or purchase transportation from another entity. Regardless of how services are provided, transportation providers and human service agencies are all searching for ways to economize, connect, increase productivity, and provide user-friendly access to critical services and community amenities. In an era of increasing need and demand for shared-ride and non-motorized transportation, and stable or declining revenue, organizational partnerships must be explored and cost-saving measures must be made to best serve the State's changing transportation demands. Interactive coordinated transportation planning provides the best opportunity to accomplish this objective.

According to FTA requirements, the coordinated plan must be developed and approved through a process that includes participation by older adults and individuals with disabilities. And, INDOT and FTA also encourage active participation in the planning process from representatives of public, private, and nonprofit organizations that provide or support transportation services and initiatives, and the general public. The methodology used in this plan update includes meaningful efforts to identify these stakeholders and facilitate their participation in the planning process.

The fundamental element of the planning process is the identification and assessment of existing transportation resources and local/regional unmet transportation needs and gaps in service. This was accomplished by receiving input from the stakeholders noted above through a public meeting, telephone interviews, email conversations, and completion of a public survey available both online and on paper. Social distancing protocols led to changed public engagement and outreach methods.

The coordination plan update incorporated the following planning elements:

1. Review of the previous regional coordination plan updates to develop a basis for evaluation and recommendations;
2. Evaluation of existing economic/demographic conditions in each county;
3. Conduct of a survey of the general public. It must be noted that general public survey results were intended to provide insight into the opinions of the local community. The survey also includes distribution to agencies that serve older adults and individuals with disabilities and their consumers. A statistically valid public survey for Monroe County and the State of Indiana was beyond the scope of this project.

However, U.S. Census data is provided to accompany any conclusions drawn based on general public information;

4. Conduct of three local virtual meetings for stakeholders for the purpose of soliciting input on transportation needs, service gaps, and goals, objectives and implementation strategies to meet these deficiencies;
5. Update of the inventory of existing transportation services provided by public, private and non-profit organizations;
6. Update of the summary of vehicle utilization for the purpose of determining where vehicles can be better utilized to meet transportation needs;
7. Update of the assessment of unmet transportation needs and gaps in service obtained through meetings, interviews, and surveys; and
8. Development of an updated implementation plan including current goals, strategies, responsible parties and performance measures.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Bus and Bus Facilities Grants Program (Section 5339 Program) – The Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities program makes Federal resources available to States and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities. Funding is provided through formula allocations and competitive grants. Eligible recipients include direct recipients that operate fixed route bus service or that allocate funding to fixed route bus operators; State or local governmental entities; and Federally recognized Indian tribes that operate fixed route bus service that are eligible to receive direct grants under Sections 5307 and 5311. States and direct recipients may allocate Section 5339 funding to subrecipients that are public agencies or private nonprofit organizations engaged in public transportation. For more information, see <https://www.transit.dot.gov/bus-program>.

Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) – a Federal interagency council that works to coordinate funding and provide expertise on human service transportation for three targeted populations: people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals of low income. The CCAM works at the Federal level to improve Federal coordination of transportation resources and to address barriers faced by States and local communities when coordinating transportation. The CCAM’s mission is to issue policy recommendations and implement activities that improve the availability, accessibility, and efficiency of transportation for CCAM’s targeted populations, with the vision of equal access to coordinated transportation for all Americans. Additional information is available at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/coordinating-council-access-and-mobility>.

Direct Recipient – Federal formula funds for transit are apportioned to direct recipients; for rural and small urban areas, this is the Indiana Department of Transportation. In large urban areas, a designated recipient is chosen by the governor. Direct recipients have the flexibility in how they select subrecipient projects for funding. In Indiana, their decision process is described in the State or Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Program Management Plan.

Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310 Program) – The program provides formula funding to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas – large urbanized, small urbanized, and rural. INDOT administers the Section 5310 Program for rural and small urban areas in Indiana. The Federal share is 80% for capital projects. In Indiana, the program has historically been utilized for capital program purchases. Additional information is available at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310>.

Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act – On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorizing surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020. Details about the Act are available at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/FAST>.

Indiana Department of Transportation, Office of Transit (INDOT) administers the Section 5311 program in Indiana, as well as the Section 5310 program for rural and small urban areas. The Federal share is 80% for capital projects. The Federal share is 50% for operating assistance under Section 5311.

Individuals with Disabilities – This document classifies individuals with disabilities based on the definition provided in the Americans with Disabilities Act implementing regulations, which is found in 49 CFR Part 37.3. This definition, when applied to transportation services applications, is designed to permit a functional approach to disability determination rather than a strict categorical definition. In a functional approach, the mere presence of a condition that is typically thought to be disabling gives way to consideration of an individual’s abilities to perform various life functions.

Local Matching Funds – The portion of project costs not paid with the Federal share. Non-Federal share or non-Federal funds includes the following sources of funding, or in-kind property or services, used to match the Federal assistance awarded for the Grant or Cooperative Agreement: (a) Local funds; (b) Local-in-kind property or services; (c) State funds; (d) State in-kind property or services; and, (e) Other Federal funds that are eligible, under Federal law, for use as cost-sharing or matching funds for the Underlying Agreement. For the Section 5310 Program, local match can come from other Federal (non-DOT) funds. This can allow local communities to implement programs with 100% Federal funding. One example is Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III-B. Support Services.

Public Mass Transportation Fund (PMTF) – The Indiana State Legislature established the Public Mass Transportation Fund (I.C. 8-23-3-8) to promote and develop transportation in Indiana. The funds are allocated to public transit systems on a performance-based formula. The actual funding level for 2021 was \$38.25 million. PMTF funds are restricted to a dollar-for-dollar match with Locally Derived Income and are used to support transit systems’ operations or capital needs.

Rural Transit Program (Section 5311 Program) – The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program (49 U.S.C. 5311) 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. Additional information is available at <https://www7.fta.dot.gov/rural-formula-grants-5311>.

Seniors – For the purpose of the Section 5310 Program, people who are 65 years of age and older are defined as seniors.

Subrecipient – A non-Federal entity that receives a subaward (grant funding) from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a Federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. Subrecipient programs are monitored by the direct or designated recipient for grant performance and compliance.

Transit Demand – Transit demand is a quantifiable measure of passenger transportation services and the level of usage that is likely to be generated if passenger transportation services are provided. Refer to the following website for a toolkit and more information on methods for forecasting demand in rural areas. <http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/168758.aspx>

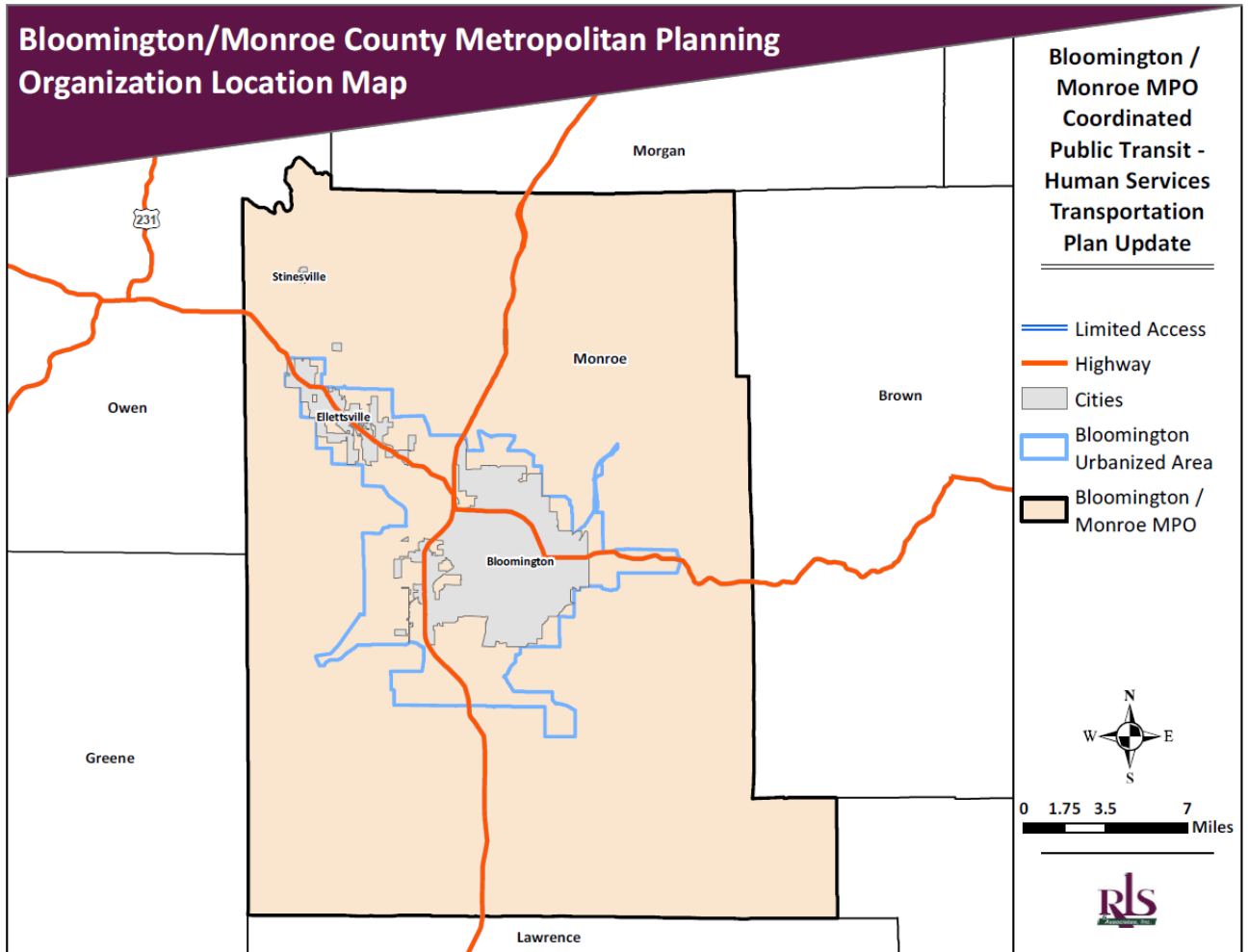
Urbanized Area Formula Grants Program (Section 5307 Program) - The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more. Eligible expenses are typically limited to capital purchases and planning, but operating assistance can be provided under certain conditions, including to systems operating fewer than 100 vehicles. Additional information is available at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/urbanized-area-formula-grants-5307>.

Zero Vehicle Households – No vehicles available to a housing unit, according to U.S. Census data. This factor is an indicator of demand for transit services.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The BMCMPPO planning area encompasses Monroe County, including the City of Bloomington and the Town of Ellettsville. The map in Figure 1 provides a depiction of the area included in this study.

Figure 1: Location Map

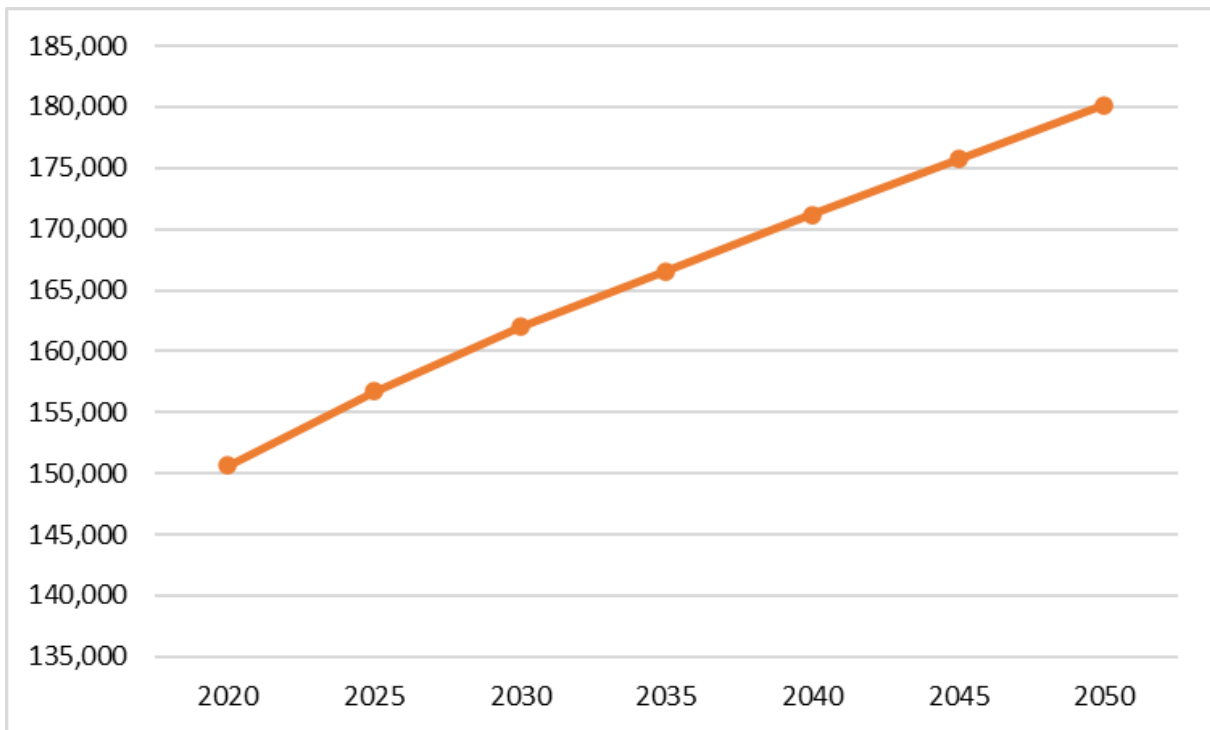


The demographics of an area are a strong indicator of demand for transportation service. Relevant demographic data was collected and is summarized in this section. The data provided in this chapter was gathered from multiple sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) Five-Year Estimates and the State of Indiana. These sources are used to ensure that the most current and accurate information is presented. As a five-year estimate, the ACS data represents a percentage based on a national sample and does not represent a direct population count.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

STATS Indiana, using data from the Indiana Business Research Center, IU Kelley School of Business projects that the Monroe County population will grow to 180,159 by 2050, an estimated gain of 19.6 percent over the population projection for 2020. Figure 2 shows the population trend between 2020 and 2050 for the county.

Figure 2: Population Growth Projection for Monroe County, 2020 – 2050



OLDER ADULT POPULATION

Older adults are most likely to use transportation services when they are unable to drive themselves or choose not to drive. This may include self-imposed limitations, including driving at night and trips to more distant destinations. Older adults also tend to be on a limited retirement income and, therefore, public or agency sponsored transportation services are a more economical alternative to owning a vehicle. For these reasons, the population of older adults in an area is an indicator of potential transit demand.

There is a trend occurring in the United States relating to the aging of the population. Increasing numbers of people born during the post-WWII “baby boom” era defined by the Census Bureau as persons born from 1946 through 1964 are over the age of 65 and are more likely to need alternatives to driving personal vehicles. Further, the Administration on Aging (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

reports that, based on a comprehensive survey of older adults, longevity is increasing and individuals in this category are younger and healthier than in all previously measured time in our history. Quality of life issues and individuals’ desire to live independently will put increasing pressure on existing transit services to provide mobility to this population. As older adults live longer and remain independent, the potential need to provide public transit is greatly increased.

Figure 3 shows the population growth projections by age group for Monroe County. The “senior” category, representing individuals aged 65 and older, will grow at a rate of 53.6 percent, compared to an average rate of 14.8 percent for all other age groups. Figure 4 displays the population density of persons over 65 years of age by block group in Monroe County.

Figure 3: Population Growth Projections by Age Group for Monroe County, 2020-2050

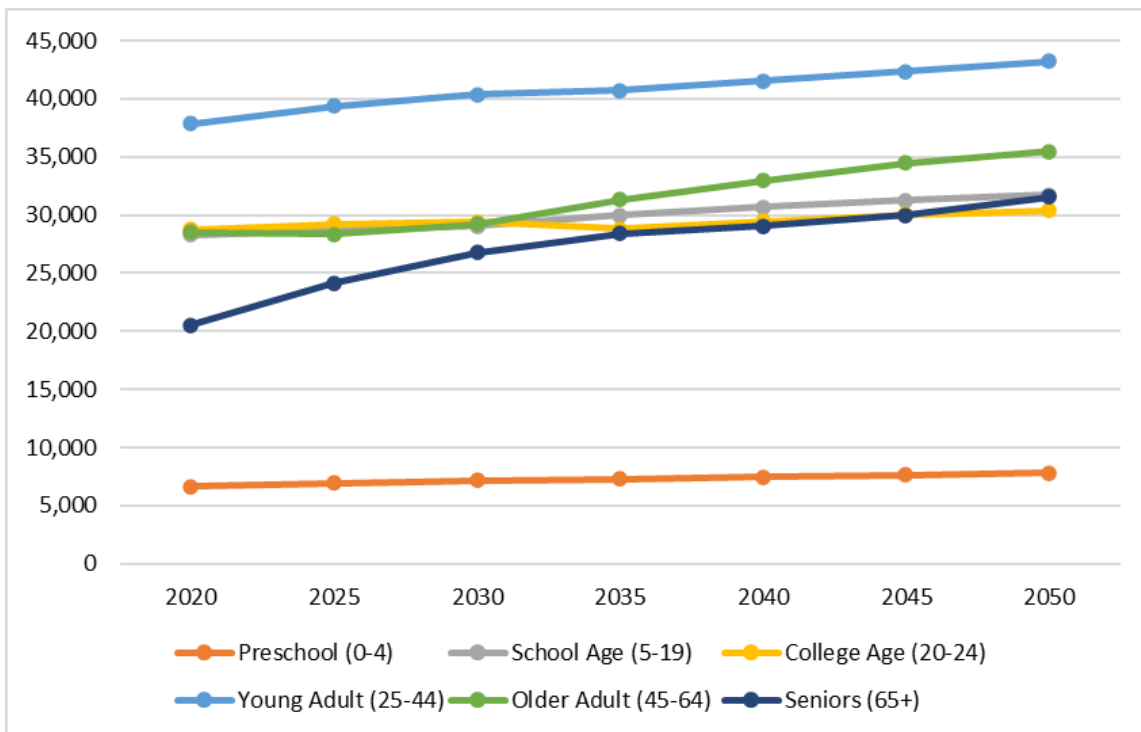
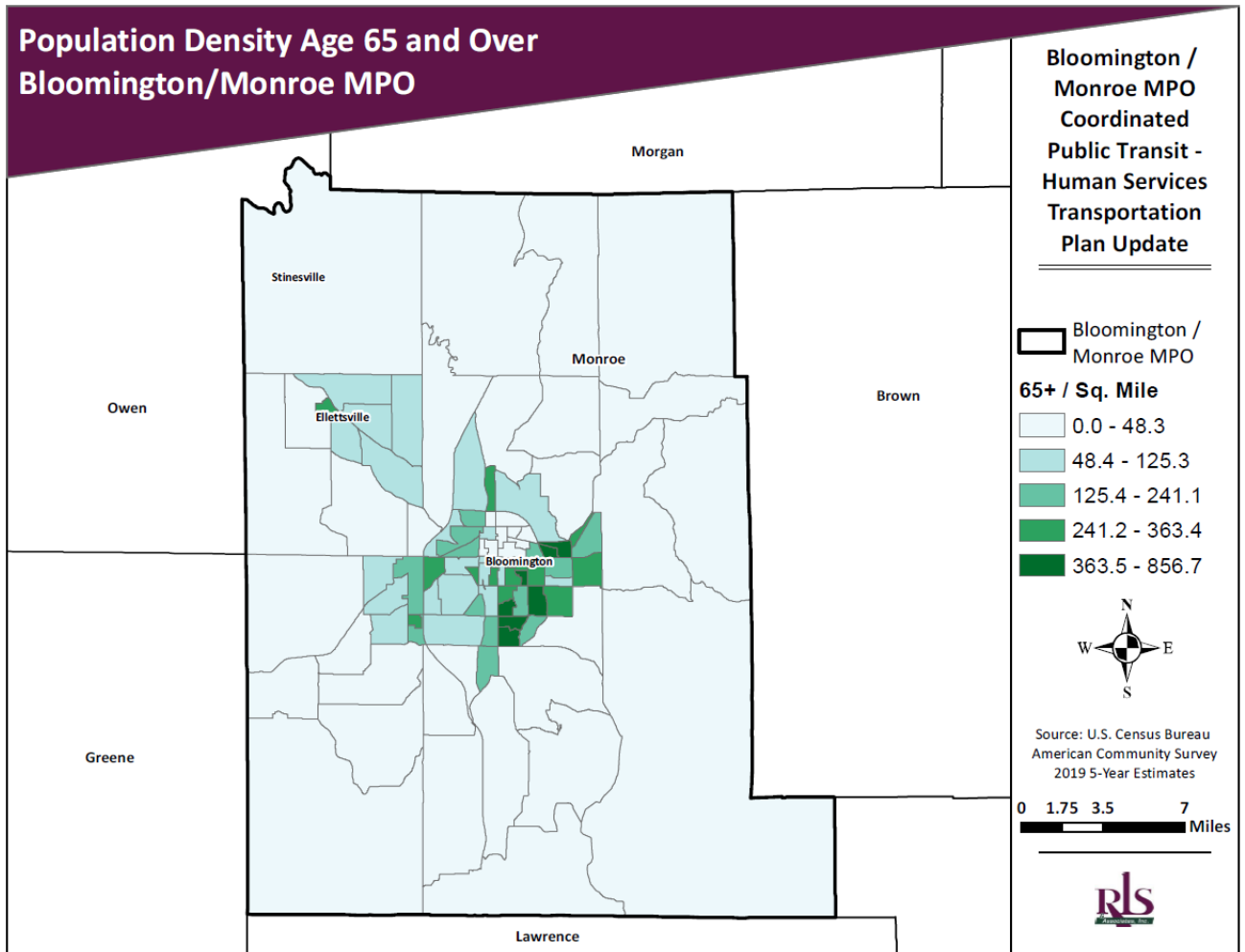


Figure 4: Older Adult Population Density



INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Enumeration of the population with disabilities in any community presents challenges. First, there is a complex and lengthy definition of a person with a disability in the Americans with Disabilities Act implementing regulations, which is found in 49 CFR Part 37.3. This definition, when applied to transportation services applications, is designed to permit a functional approach to disability determination rather than a strict categorical definition. In a functional approach, the mere presence of a condition that is typically thought to be disabling gives way to consideration of an individual’s abilities to perform various life functions. In short, an individual’s capabilities, rather than the mere presence of a medical condition, determine transportation disability.

The U.S. Census offers no method of identifying individuals as having a transportation-related disability. The best available data for Monroe County is available through the 2019 ACS Five-Year Estimates of disability for the non-institutionalized population.

Figure 5 provides a comparison of the population percentage of individuals with disabilities in Monroe County and the entire state. In Monroe County, approximately 11 percent of the population has a disability.

Figure 5: Disability Incidence



HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND POVERTY STATUS

Figure 6 illustrates the household incomes for the study area according to the 2019 ACS Five-Year Estimates. According to the survey, there are a total of 55,624 households in Monroe County. Of those households, 36.4 percent make less than \$35,000 per year. Of the households earning less than \$35,000, some 9 percent earned between \$25,000 and \$34,999. Another 16.8 percent earned between \$10,000 and \$24,999 and about 10.6 percent earned less than \$10,000 per year. The median household income for Monroe County is \$49,839 compared with \$56,303 for the state of Indiana.

Figure 6: Distribution of Household Income

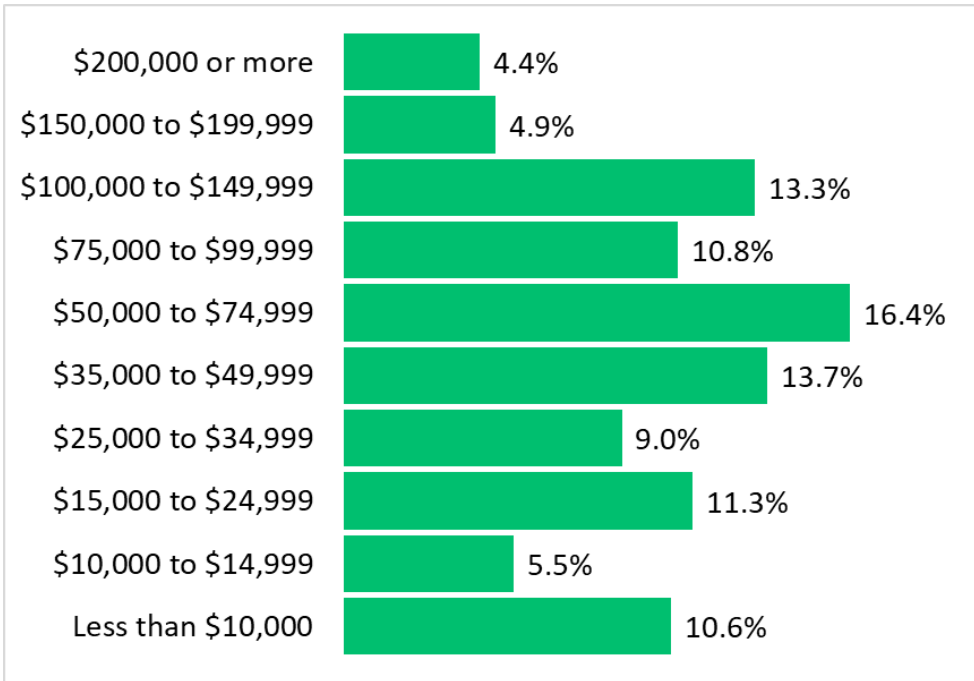


Table 1 illustrates the percentage of the population in each area that is living below the poverty level. As the Census data was reported for 2019, the poverty guideline for that year was set at an annual income of \$25,750 for a family of four. In the City of Bloomington, 24,350 individuals or 35.3 percent are in poverty. Potentially, Bloomington’s numbers were impacted by the Indiana University student population. While Monroe County has a lower rate at 21.0 percent, the City of Bloomington and Monroe County each have a higher incidence of poverty when compared with the 13.4 percent for the state of Indiana. In 2021, the poverty guideline is an annual income of \$26,500 for a family of four or \$12,880 for an individual.

Table 1: Percent Population Below Poverty

Geography	Population	Poverty	Percent Poverty
Monroe County	146,461	30,706	21.0%
City of Bloomington	84,116	24,350	35.3%
Town of Ellettsville	6,642	832	12.7%
Indiana	6,665,703	867,996	13.4%

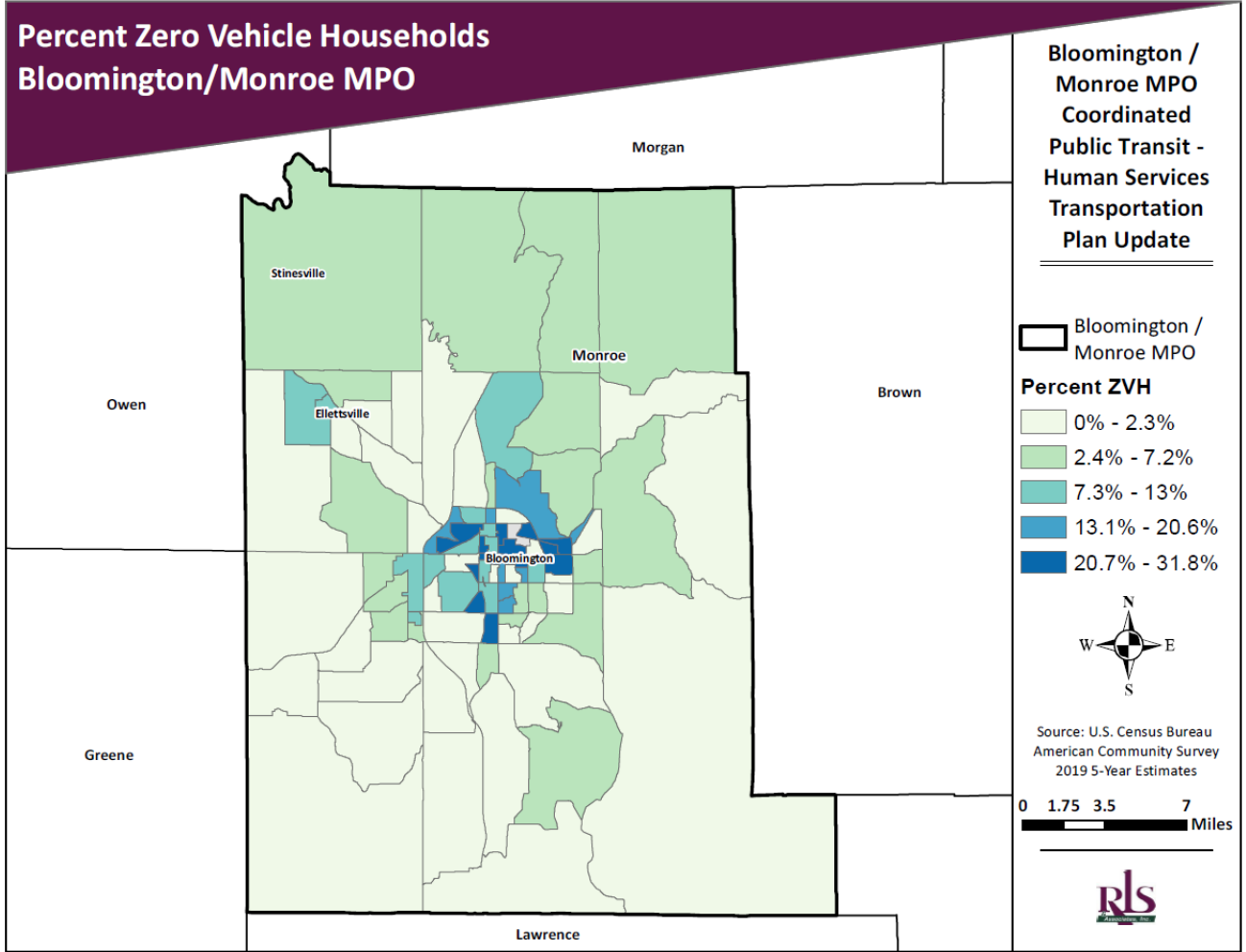
According to data from Stats Indiana, the largest percentage of jobs in Monroe County is in the health care and social assistance sector, at 15.6 percent. Manufacturing (11.7 percent), accommodation and food service (10.1 percent), and retail trade (9.7 percent) are the next largest employment sectors. Health care, social service, and retail jobs are typically low-wage sectors. The unemployment rate for Monroe County was 4.4 percent of the labor force in June 2021.

ZERO VEHICLE HOUSEHOLDS

Transportation is typically a household's second-largest expense after housing. The characteristics of the household's neighborhood or community will impact the costs of transportation. Locations that are close to services and employment will allow the household to spend less time, energy, and money on transportation, while more spread-out locations may involve higher costs and more time for transportation. The Center for Neighborhood Technology's Housing and Transportation (H+T) Index calculation for Monroe County is \$12,001 for the typical household's annual transportation spending, an average of 28 percent of household income. Combining this with the average housing expenses in the county, at 30 percent of average household income, means that the typical household spends 58 percent of income on housing and transportation. While housing alone is traditionally deemed affordable when consuming no more than 30 percent of income, the H+T Index incorporates transportation costs—usually a household's second-largest expense—to show that location-efficient places can be more livable and affordable. More information about the H+T Index can be found at <https://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>.

Figure 7 illustrates the percentage of housing units that have no available vehicle, according to the 2019 ACS Five-Year Estimates. The block groups with the darkest shading have the highest percentage of housing units with no available vehicles. These block groups are concentrated in and around Bloomington, with high percentages of zero vehicle households in several suburban areas. In the block groups with the highest densities of zero vehicle households, between 20.7 and 31.8 percent of households have no access to a vehicle.

Figure 7: Zero Vehicle Household Density



INVENTORY OF EXISTING TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS AND SERVICE GAPS

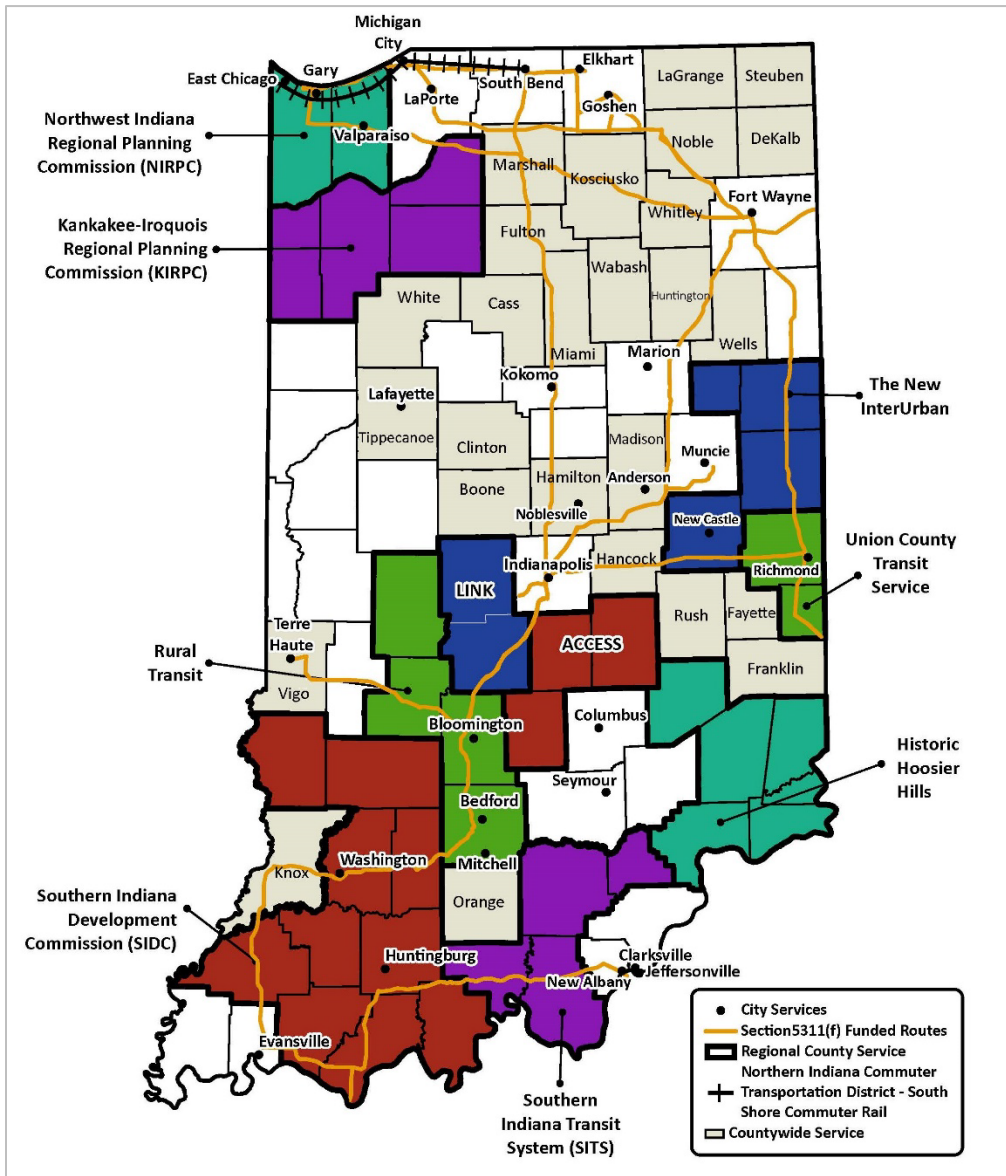
Providers of public and human service transportation were asked to participate in interviews and to share service and asset data to update the transportation provider inventory for the MPO area. Providers were also invited to participate in a virtual public meeting to evaluate unmet human service transportation needs and service gaps. The public meeting included a discussion of goals and strategies/projects to address unmet needs and service gaps, promoting coordination in the delivery of transportation services to maximize the use of resources.

An update of the inventory of provider services and vehicles was obtained through phone interviews and e-mail requests. A set of scripted questions was used for the interviews to ensure that similar information was gathered from all agencies. The provider summaries listed below include providers who serve primarily older adults and individuals with disabilities. These agencies provide transportation primarily to

their agency consumers, but may have the potential for shared services with other providers in the future. Public transit agencies, like Bloomington Transit, also serve these same populations of older adults and individuals with disabilities, within the City of Bloomington.

The map in Figure 8 shows where public transit systems are working across the state, including intercity bus connections between cities. Intercity buses in Indiana are operated by private companies, but serve a general public purpose and receive public funding for critical route connections. These routes are marked as 5311(f)-funded routes on the map legend.

Figure 8: Public Transit Systems in Indiana (2020)



Source: CY 2020 Indiana Public Transit Annual Report

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

Table 2 provides information about the study area’s public transit systems. The City of Bloomington’s transit system, Bloomington Transit, is the largest public transit operator in the MPO service area. Rural Monroe County) is served by Rural Transit, operated by Area 10 Agency on Aging. The following table provides basic information about each system. IU Campus Bus serves Indiana University. Hoosier Ride provides inter-city bus service that connects Bloomington to downtown Indianapolis, including transfers at the Greyhound bus station to destinations nationwide. Operating budget figures are for 2019.

Table 2: Public Transit Providers

	Bloomington Transit	Rural Transit	IU Campus Bus	Hoosier Ride
Location and Contact Information	130 West Grimes Lane Bloomington, IN 47403 (812) 332-5688 bloomingtontransit.com	631 West Edgewood Drive Ellettsville, IN 47429 (812) 876-1079 area10agency.org/ruraltransit/	120 W Grimes Lane Bloomington, IN 47403 (812) 855-8384 iubus.indiana.edu	4045 Park 65 Dr Indianapolis, IN 46254 800-544-2383 www.hoosieride.com
Service Area	City of Bloomington	Monroe, Lawrence, Owen, and Putnam Counties	Indiana University campus in Bloomington	Inter-city bus service throughout Indiana; includes Bloomington-Indianapolis route
Days/Hours of Service	Monday – Friday, 6 AM – 11:30 PM Saturday, 7:30 AM – 9:30 PM Sunday, 9:30 AM – 7:30 PM (BTaccess only – no fixed route service)	Monday – Friday, 6 AM – 6 PM	Monday – Friday, 7 AM – 10 PM Saturday, 9:30 AM – 9:30 PM Sunday, 12:10 PM – 6:32 PM	Schedules vary – see website
Ridership	2019: 3,197,637 2020: 1,383,895	2019: 77,174 2020: 32,227	7/1/19-6/30/20: 2,326,380 7/1/20-6/30/21: 165,842	Not reported
Fare/Donation Structure	\$1; Youth/Elderly/Disabled: \$0.50	\$3 In-County; \$6 Cross-County; \$1 Deviated Route	Fare-free	Mileage-based ticket pricing

	Bloomington Transit	Rural Transit	IU Campus Bus	Hoosier Ride
Funding Sources	FTA Section 5307, PMTF, Property and Income Taxes, Service Contracts, Advertising	FTA Section 5311, PMTF, Medicaid, Local Governments	Indiana University	FTA Section 5311(f), Ticket Revenue
Operating Budget	\$7,853,248	\$1,471,942	\$3,930,495	Not provided
Fleet by Location and Wheelchair Accessibility	53 Vehicles in Bloomington; All Wheelchair-Accessible	23 Vehicles in Monroe County; 22 Wheelchair-Accessible	29 Vehicles in Bloomington; All Wheelchair-Accessible	Not provided (Call 1-800-544-2383 48 hours before departure for accessible service)
Service Type(s)	Fixed Route; ADA Complementary Paratransit	Demand Response; Deviated Route	Fixed Route	Inter-city
Scheduling/Dispatching	HBSS/QRyde software	Manual	N/A	N/A
Trip Denials	Not tracked (no general public demand response service)	Approximately 12 per month	Not tracked (no general public demand response service)	

*2019 total represents normal ridership; 2020 ridership was heavily impacted by the COVID pandemic

The project consultant identified three providers of human service transportation Monroe County. Their contact information is provided in Table 3. In addition to these providers, the Bloomington area is served by taxis and transportation network companies (e.g., Uber and Lyft).

Table 3: Contact Information for Human Service Transportation Providers

	Be Loved Transportation, Inc.	SafeMed Transport, LLC	El Shadday and I, Inc.
Contact Information	(812) 287-2610 beloved.transportation@gmail.com	(812) 679-7273	(812) 908-2134 el.shadday812@gmail.com

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

Local human service agencies, all transportation providers serving each county, and the general public were invited to participate in the coordinated transportation plan needs assessment process. An online public survey and four virtual meetings for stakeholders and the public were used to gather input. The provider interviews described in the previous chapter supplemented the needs assessment. The following paragraphs outline transportation needs identified through public surveys and stakeholder coordinated transportation meetings.

GENERAL PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Due to pandemic-related restrictions, online input meetings were organized in lieu of in-person meetings to identify ongoing or new transportation needs. RLS & Associates facilitated two discussions at virtual meetings in March and May of 2021 to discuss unmet needs and gaps in service for older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, and the general public. A meeting of the BMCMPPO Citizens Advisory Committee was held on March 24, 2021, at 6:30 PM. Additionally, RLS conducted a virtual focus group on May 5, 2021, at 10:00 PM. Both meetings were held virtually using the Zoom and GoToMeeting platforms. Local organizations serving older adults and people with disabilities were invited to these meetings via email. Lists of attendees and meeting notes are provided in Appendix A. Organizations that were represented at the meetings are listed below:

- ◆ Alzheimer’s and Dementia Resource Center (IU Health Bloomington)
- ◆ City of Bloomington
- ◆ Indiana University
- ◆ Monroe County Probation Department
- ◆ BMCMPPO Citizens’ Advisory Committee
- ◆ BMCMPPO

◆ Centerstone

During the two meetings, the RLS facilitator presented facts about the Section 5310 program and discussed the activities since the 2012 Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan Update that have helped to address some of the unmet transportation needs and gaps in services for the area.

The meeting attendees were asked to review the gaps in transportation services and needs from the 2012 plan, to identify any gaps that were no longer valid, and any new needs/gaps. The focus of the discussions was transportation for older adults and individuals with disabilities. However, several topics discussed also impact mobility options for the general public, especially the local workforce.

An online public input survey was distributed by the BMCMPPO, Rural Transit, Bloomington Transit, and other local stakeholder organizations. Surveys were available for approximately five months. The purpose of the survey was to gather input about transportation from the general public and transportation customers.

This section provides the identified unmet transportation needs and gaps in services that were identified by meeting participants or during the public survey process. Coordinated transportation stakeholders considered these unmet needs and gaps in service when developing transportation strategies, which will form the basis of future Section 5310 grant applications.

RESULTS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEY

The following charts outline the public survey results received from individuals living in Bartholomew County. Surveys were available online, on public transit vehicles, and at various non-profits in English and Spanish. The survey was available January 2021 through May 2021. The survey instrument is provided in Appendix A.

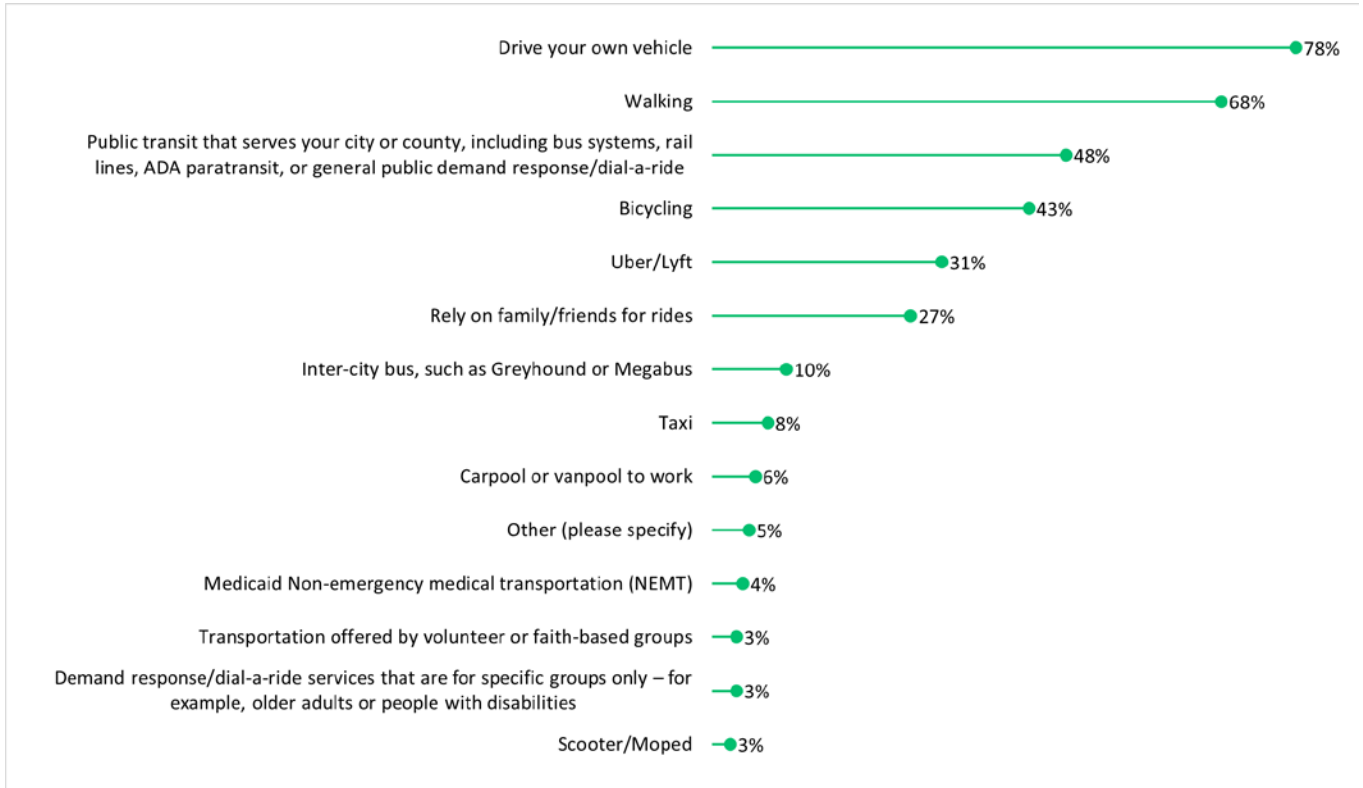
This section includes the information gained from 52 surveys from the general public. Each chart is based on the number of responses received for individual questions. If an individual skipped a question or did not provide an eligible answer, the distribution of responses for that particular question will be based on fewer than 52 surveys. The survey results are not statistically valid, but do offer insight into the unmet transportation needs and gaps in services for the general public in the county.

Modes of Transportation Used

Survey respondents were asked to report all forms of transportation they or their family have used in the past 12 months. As indicated in

Figure 9, over three quarters of the respondents (78 percent) indicated that they drove their own vehicle, and 48 percent of respondents indicated that they used public transportation. Also, 68 percent of respondents reported that they walk for transportation, while 43 percent reported that they ride a bicycle.

Figure 9: Modes of Transportation Used



Five percent of the respondents selected “Other.” Those who specified what form of transportation said that they used rental cars (1), BTaccess (1), and school bus (1).

Transportation Services Used

Respondents were asked to name any transportation services that they use. Table 4 displays the services used by the survey respondents. While this question has similar data to the “other” category of the previous question, this question was asked of all respondents. Thirty-six respondents provided the names of one or more transportation services. The results are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Transportation Services Used by Respondents

Service Name (provided by respondent)	Count
IU Campus Bus	7
BTaccess	3
Uber/Lyft/Taxi	7
Miller Transit/Greyhound	4
Bloomington Transit	25

Desired Changes to Local Transportation Options

When asked what changes could be made to the local transportation options to make using them more

appealing, the most common response was getting rides to other parts of the state (60 percent). Running fixed route service more frequently (57 percent), operating on Sundays (43 percent), picking an individual up at home (36 percent) were the next most common responses. For the most part, demand response service requires at least a day's notice; however, new technologies have allowed many public and human service transportation providers to incorporate same-day and on-demand services into their operations. Making demand response scheduling more convenient was selected by 28 percent of respondents, along with being mentioned as "Other" responses. The responses are shown in Figure 10.

"Other" responses, selected by 28 percent of respondents, allowed for write-in comments. These responses were categorized into broad categories of public transit service area expansion, walking/bicycling infrastructure, demand response/paratransit, and other. The comments were as follows:

Public Transit Service Area Expansion

- ◆ Public transit coverage.
- ◆ Increase the bus routes to outer sections of town.
- ◆ Add stops. Some places I have a long walk to get to the building I need.
- ◆ Bus routes in county, outside city limits
- ◆ Expand locations for pick up and drop off of bus services. The nearest bus stop to my area (West Side) is over half a mile away.
- ◆ Provide public transit service to surrounding neighborhoods in Monroe County beyond the bounds of Bloomington's city limits.
- ◆ The local bus system will need to expand its routes to include the new Regional Academic Health Center on the east side of town.
- ◆ Operate beyond the city bus routes.
- ◆ Provide equal access to public transit to all areas of the city. I do not get access in my community for transit services even though there is demand. We have completed similar services in the past, but all to no avail.
- ◆ Expand public transportation to my neighborhood, or at least build the sidewalk we've been requesting for over 20 years, so I can walk to my nearest bus stop and go to the grocery store instead of walking to the convenience store and eating nothing but canned and processed food.
- ◆ Service from outside the city to areas within (I live about a mile outside of City of Bloomington municipal limits, so don't have access to city transit services. I would have to walk about 2 miles to just reach a bus stop from which I could use transit to reach downtown. Not at all practical or useful.

Walking/Bicycling Infrastructure

- ◆ Extending sidewalks so that bus stops can be safely reached by pedestrians.
- ◆ Improve bicycle/pedestrian access to core amenities.
- ◆ More bike lanes and bike friendly roads throughout the county. Or more sidewalks that connect with city sidewalks.

- ◆ Require lockable bike parking options at civic, institutional, and commercial destinations throughout the community, especially in shopping areas. I hate locking my bike to a trash can!
- ◆ Sidewalks and crosswalks near all bus stops for safe departure. I live at Meadow Park Apartments, and there is a city rule that there must be a sidewalk for a crosswalk from the Short Stop bus stop across the street to Meadow Park. This is a fatal accident waiting to happen as civilians cross the busy street with no crosswalk.
- ◆ Improve pedestrian infrastructure throughout the city to make it easier to walk from one end to the other and to public transportation spots.

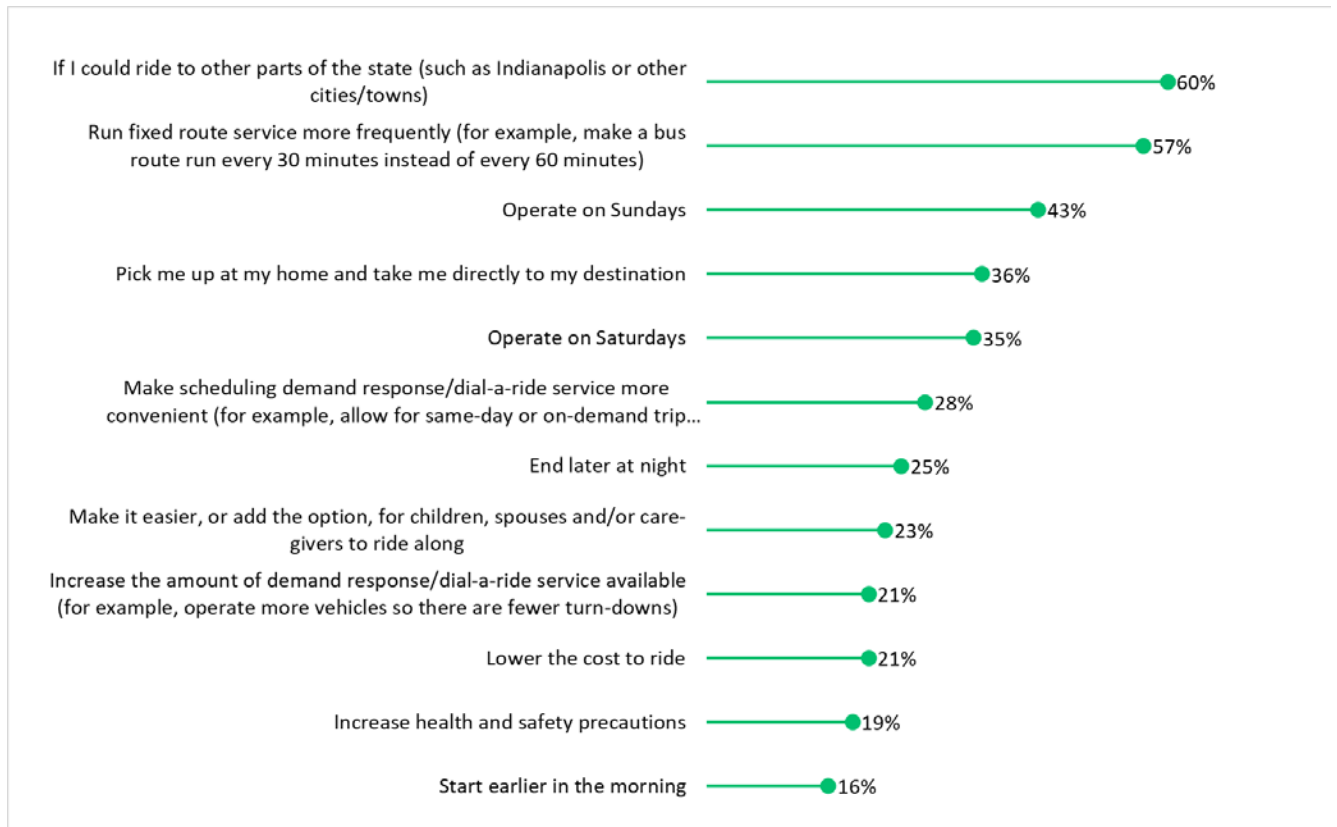
Demand Response/Paratransit

- ◆ BTaccess needs to go to Ellettsville with a full-fledged advertising and enrollment system to make it viable with enough riders. It also needs to combine somehow with Rural Transit to make travel within the county more possible.
- ◆ BTaccess same day ride online.

Other

- ◆ Regional park and rides.
- ◆ I drive my own car. Stop making all of the intersections dangerous by making the lanes smaller and the turns more difficult. We are now impeding traffic with traffic dividers, etc. which makes it more dangerous than safer.
- ◆ Have specific training and plans for providing rides for people living with dementia/cognitive impairment.
- ◆ Taxpayers already subsidize public transit too much. We don't need any additional.
- ◆ The current BT and IU Campus Bus systems are optimal for service area and frequency

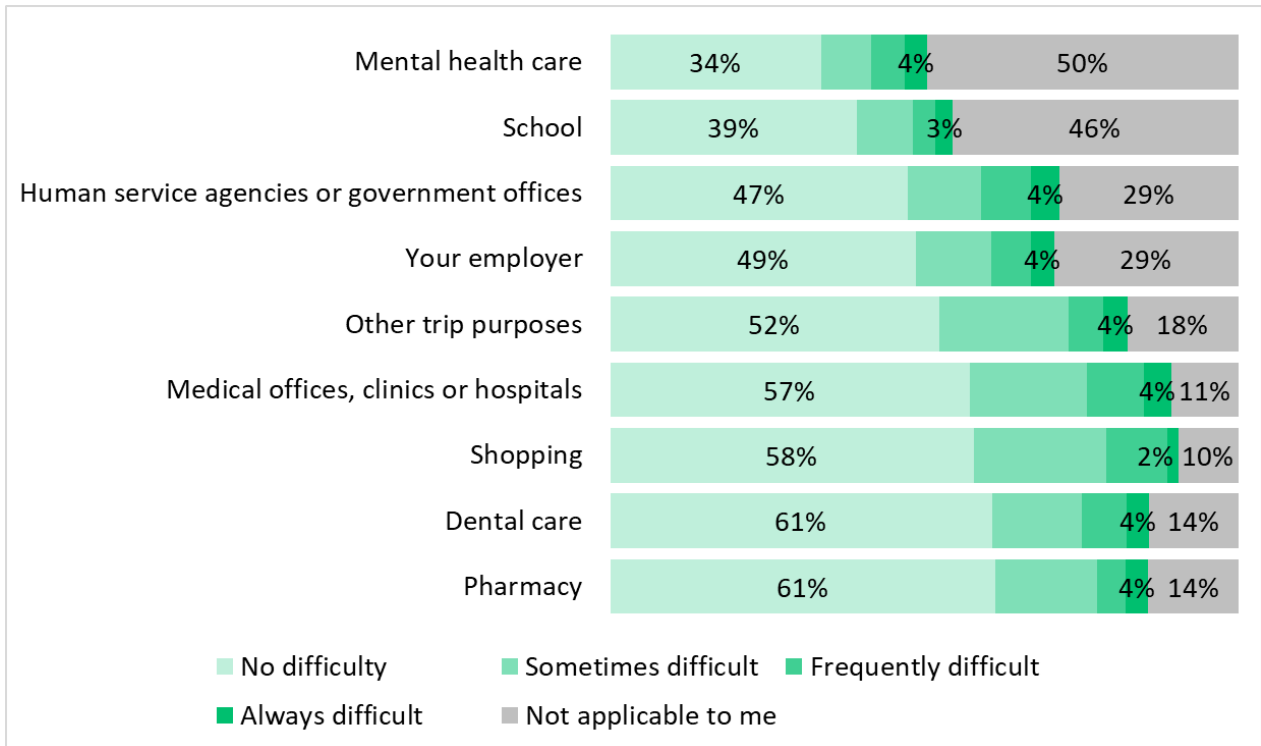
Figure 10: Changes that Would Make Transportation Options More Appealing



Difficulty Getting Needed Transportation

Respondents were asked if they have difficulty getting the transportation they need to a variety of specific types of destinations. The results are provided in Figure 11. Many respondents indicated some level of difficulty with all trip purposes referenced in the question.

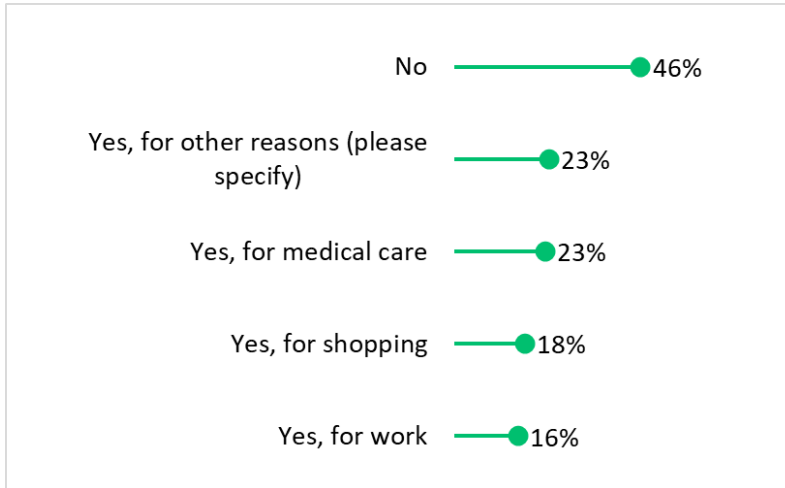
Figure 11: Difficulty with Transportation to Specific Destination Types



Out-of-County Destinations

Two questions concerned travel to out-of-county destinations. Respondents indicated whether they needed to travel outside of the county for work, medical care, shopping, or other reasons. The results are shown in Figure 12. More than half of the respondents indicated that they have out-of-county travel needs, including for work, shopping, and medical care. The specified other reasons included socializing with family or friends (12), leisure or recreation (10), and going to the Indianapolis Airport (1).

Figure 12: Need for Travel Outside of the County

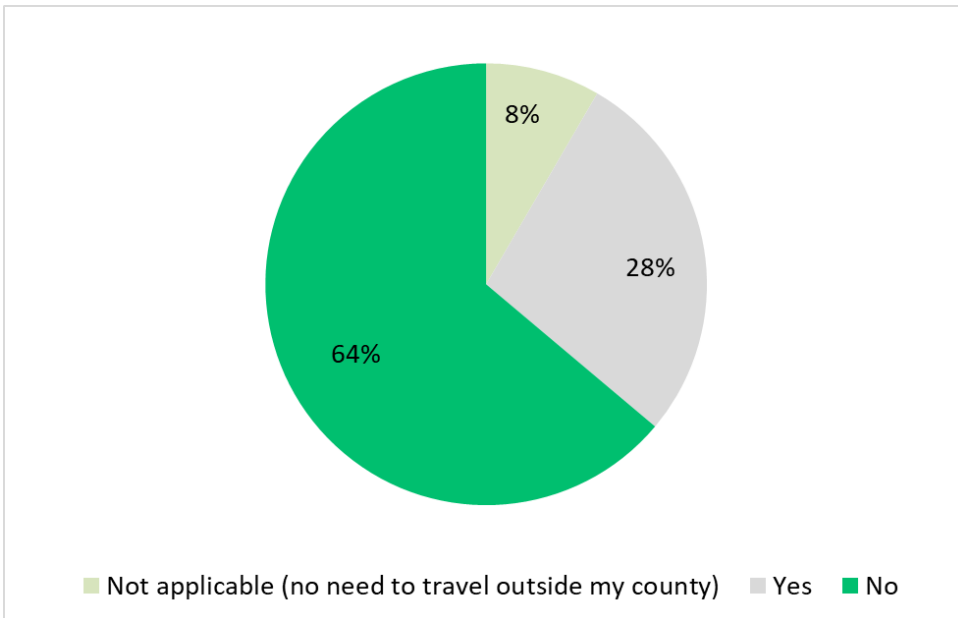


Respondents also indicated whether it was difficult to travel outside of the county (see Figure 13), and if yes, to provide more information in an open-ended response. 28 percent of respondents to this question (33 respondents) said that they have difficulty leaving the county. Their open-ended responses were:

- ◆ My doctor is in Terre Haute and I do not have a car.
- ◆ Bus service is limited on weekends limiting when I can get to and back from a car rental location. Rental costs sometimes prohibit renting during the week, when needed for a weekend. Charter bus, like Miller or Greyhound, has limited stops, takes additional time, and is not always near other transport hubs.
- ◆ I don't like to drive out of town.
- ◆ Do not have a reliable car.
- ◆ So expensive to get a ride to Indy on the occasions I need to go for medical stuff.
- ◆ Traffic around I69 construction and bypass.
- ◆ There are few ways for me to travel to Indianapolis without owning a car. I would appreciate there being more.
- ◆ Getting to the Indianapolis area has been challenging due to I-69. Have not flown anywhere for a while, but that has related issues.
- ◆ The ongoing I-69 construction hinders travel.
- ◆ I can drive. I own a car. If either of those was not true, it would be almost impossible to do this, or get transportation to any of type of destination because of the transit route nearest to my house.
- ◆ Travelling by car is stressful because my car is old so anytime I travel outside of town, I worry that it will die and my family and I will be stranded on some highway.
- ◆ The Campus Connect offered between IU Bloomington and IUPUI was an excellent and valuable service for everyone in the community - not just students and faculty. I am disappointed that it has been discontinued, as there is no other reasonable way to get to downtown Indy from Bloomington without a private car.
- ◆ I can't drive.
- ◆ Difficult to get to Indianapolis quickly without a car.
- ◆ Cost due to no Medicaid.
- ◆ There aren't very many bus lines and no AMTRAK for most places.

- ◆ Would prefer an easy and more affordable ride to the Indy Amtrak train station.
- ◆ No transportation.
- ◆ Not many options.
- ◆ Few buses, poor availability.
- ◆ Conversion of State Road 37 to Interstate 69 has totally screwed up planning for trips from Bloomington to Indianapolis for a number of years and still more years to come. I'll be lucky if I am alive when they finish the road work. But it will be great to save 15 minutes on the trip.
- ◆ There is no public transit available (train or bus) from Bloomington to Indianapolis.
- ◆ I don't have a car and get limited public transportation.
- ◆ Finding accessible transportation.

Figure 13: Is It Difficult for You to Travel Outside Your County?



Other Comments About Community Transportation Services

Finally, the survey included an open-ended question that asked if the respondent had any other comments about transportation services in their community. 66 respondents provided input. The responses are provided in Appendix A.

Respondent Demographics

Demographic questions on the survey included age group (Figure 14), physical disability status (Figure 15), and ZIP code (Figure 16).

Figure 14: Age Ranges

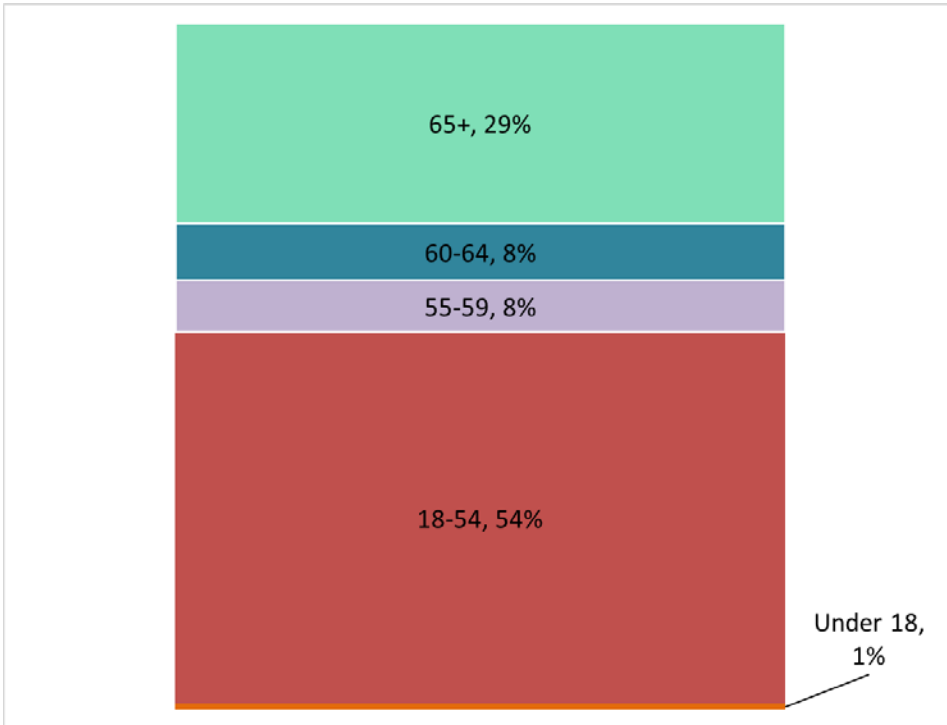


Figure 15: Disability Status that Requires a Cane, Walker, Wheelchair, or Other Device, or a Service Animal

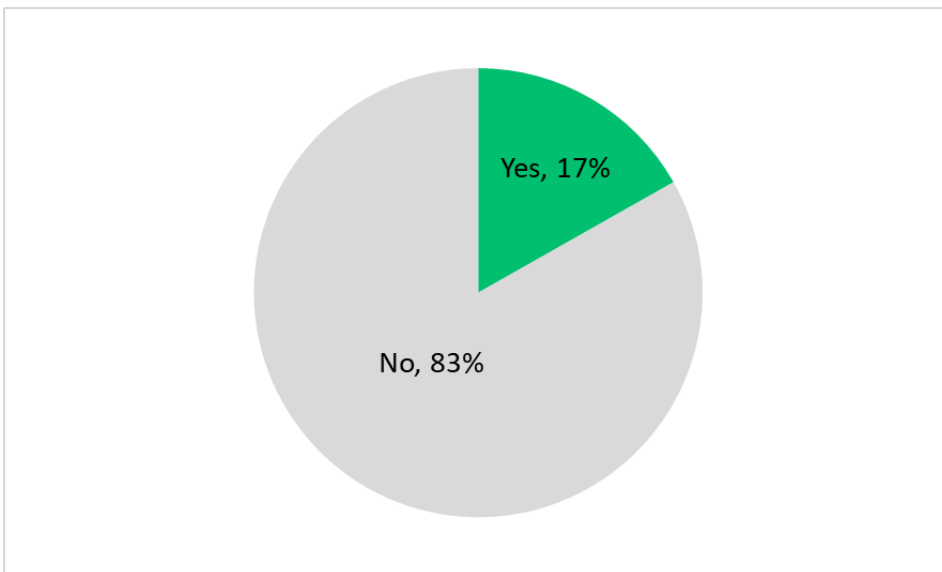
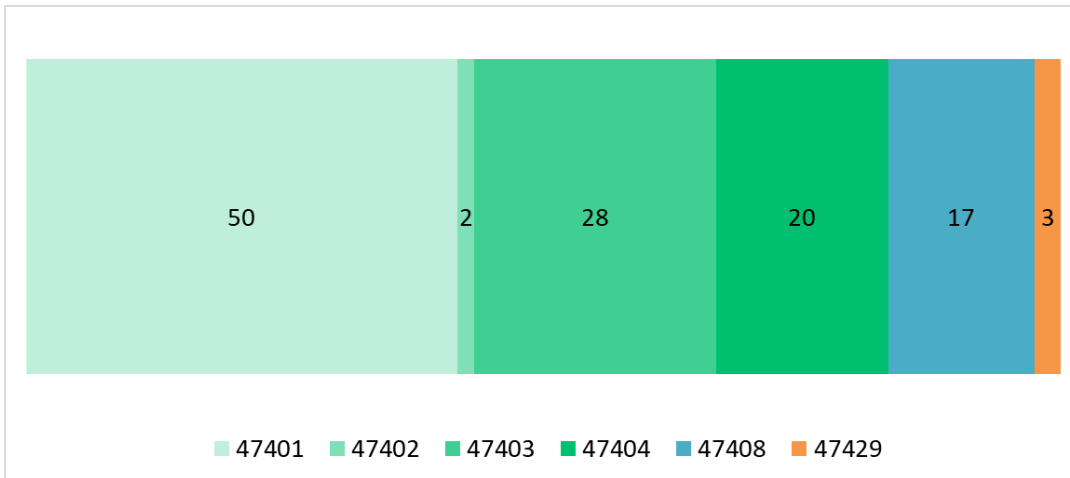


Figure 16: ZIP Code



NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE 2012 COORDINATED PLAN UPDATE

The 2012 Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan Update included a summary of unmet needs and gaps in service identified by local stakeholders, including:

- ◆ Transit operating hours after 8:00 PM and on Sundays
- ◆ Bus stop accessibility
- ◆ Annunciators on buses (so people with blindness/low vision are informed of the bus's arrival at stops)
- ◆ Paratransit operating hours
- ◆ Paratransit service area (geographical coverage)
- ◆ Same-day paratransit
- ◆ Transportation affordability
- ◆ Bicyclist/pedestrian facilities
- ◆ Transportation options education/safety education for users of all modes
- ◆ Lack of coordination between providers

Discussion at the stakeholder input meetings indicated that many of the needs identified in 2012 remain as unmet needs. The 2012 plan laid out several strategies for addressing these needs, but some these measures were not taken for one reason another; in some cases, there was no clear responsible party for implementing the strategy, and in others, funding was not available to support implementation. Bloomington Transit has installed bus stop annunciators in recent years.

UNMET NEEDS AND GAPS IN SERVICE

The unmet transportation needs and service gaps listed in Table 5 were identified through reviewing the input received in the survey, the stakeholder input meetings, the demographic analysis, and the 2012 plan. Following the table, each need or gap is explained in further detail.

Table 5: Unmet Needs and Service Gaps

Unmet Transportation Needs and Gaps in Service
Accessible Bus Stops with Improved Amenities
Bus Service Outside of Bloomington City Limits
Door-to-Door Transportation
Frequent Fixed Route Service
Human Service Agency Access to Subsidized Bus Passes
Safe, Accessible Pathways To/From Bus Stops
Same-Day and On-Demand Transportation Throughout Monroe County
Transportation Later at Night and on Weekends
Transportation to Destinations Outside of Monroe County
Travel Training
User-Oriented Wayfinding

Accessible Bus Stops with Improved Amenities

Bus stop accessibility is critical for transit customers with physical disabilities. Infrastructure such as curb cuts, sidewalks, concrete pads, shelters, and benches is important for making bus stops usable by people with mobility limitations. Bloomington Transit has recently begun to make improvements to some bus stops, but many stops remain inaccessible to people with limited mobility.

Door-to-Door Transportation

Some older adults and individuals with disabilities in Bloomington are unable to use fixed route bus service, but do not qualify for BTaccess. Stakeholders indicated that individuals with mobility limitations need services that do not involve walking long distances, transferring between vehicles, or enduring long rides. Rides are needed for shopping, errands, medical appointments, jobs, and other trips purposes.

Bus Service Outside of Bloomington City Limits

Bloomington Transit serves the City of Bloomington only. Public and stakeholder input indicated rides are throughout the county, especially in the “fringe” areas that are immediately outside of the city limits. Ivy Tech Community College is an important destination for Bloomington residents, but is not served by Bloomington Transit since it is not within city limits. Some of the area’s largest employers, such as Cook Medical, are also located outside of the city. A new library branch is being constructed in southwest Monroe County outside of the city limits.

Frequent on Fixed Route Service

More than half of survey respondents indicated that they would like fixed route service to operate more frequently. Bloomington Transit’s fixed routes typically operate on 30-minute headways. Improvements to frequency increase the convenience of public transit for customers, and can result in reduced trip times when customers must transfer between routes.

Human Service Agency Access to Bus Passes for Clients

Some governmental and nonprofit human service agencies purchase bus passes for clients. The cost to ride public transit can be a barrier for people with very low incomes. During the input meetings, some agency personnel mentioned having difficulties purchasing bus passes for their clients. A process that is more convenient for the agencies and their clients is desired.

Safe, Accessible Pathways To/From Bus Stops

Pedestrian infrastructure plays a critical role in public transportation networks. Safe, convenient, and accessible facilities such as sidewalks and crosswalks can bring passengers to bus stops and connect them with their destinations, providing “first-mile” or “last-mile” connections between transit stops and passengers’ origins and destinations.

Transportation Later at Night and on Weekends

Later evening and weekend service would benefit many customers with employment and other trip needs. Forty-three percent of survey respondents said that Sunday service was a desired change (35 percent selected Saturday service, which is already offered by Bloomington Transit; 25 percent indicated that later evening hours were needed). Potentially, Bloomington Transit could offer limited demand response service to the general public on Sundays or during the late evenings instead of operating the fixed route network. This would be a less expensive alternative for days and times when demand is lighter.

Same-Day and On-Demand Transportation Throughout Monroe County

Many survey respondents and input meeting participants said same-day and on-demand rides were important for residents of the county. Newer forms of scheduling and dispatching technology have made it easier for providers to schedule same-day and on-demand trips. Some public transit systems have partnered with taxis and transportation network companies (e.g., Uber or Lyft) to offer subsidized on-demand rides, which can increase customer satisfaction while reducing ADA complementary paratransit costs.

Transportation to Destinations Outside of Monroe County

Transportation is needed to places located outside of the county. Several individuals mentioned Indianapolis as an important destination. One survey respondent said that their doctor was located in Terre Haute. There are options for getting to Indianapolis, such as Hoosier Ride/Miller Transportation and the Indianapolis Airport Shuttle, but they are not meeting all of the need in the community.

Travel Training

Stakeholder input indicated that it can be difficult for community members to figure out how to use the county’s transportation options. Targeted training is necessary for people living with dementia/cognitive impairment.

User-Oriented Wayfinding

Providing clear and simple information like route and system maps, schedules, expected travel times, real-time arrival times, and “how to ride” information would make public transit more attractive and simpler to use. For example, bus stop signs with route maps would allow passengers to easily understand

where they could go by using particular routes. Wayfinding integrates multiple modes of transportation, including transit, walking, bicycling, and other modes. The goal of wayfinding is to make a place legible to people, so it is easy to understand how to navigate from place to place.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES TO COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION

There are numerous challenges to the coordination of human service agency and public transportation in any community or region. Some of the unmet transportation needs listed in Table 5 are unmet either because of the level of difficulty to implement strategies that will address them, or funding to support the activity is not available. While these needs remain top priority, some may take more time to implement because of the necessary steps and changes that must precede them. Additionally, some of the unmet transportation needs may be addressed before the top priority needs simply because they are easily addressed and/or they are a step that will improve the likelihood of implementing a priority improvement.

During the stakeholder meetings, participants mentioned that inadequate funding, as well as the real and perceived limitations on use of available funding resources create challenges to achieving a higher level of service or service expansions. It is also critical for individuals to actively champion the cause of improved transportation. Change requires leadership with long-term commitment and the ability to generate buy-in and support from the right players.

While there are challenges to implementing coordination among various transportation providers, services, and funding sources, it is important to note that transportation coordination is being successfully implemented throughout the country and in Indiana. Therefore, issues such as conflicting or restrictive state and Federal guidelines for the use of funding and vehicles, insurance and liability, and unique needs presented by the different populations served, to name a few, should challenge, but not stop, a coordination effort. There are many resources available to assist communities as they work together to coordinate transportation. Contact the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Office of Transit (<https://www.in.gov/indot/multimodal/transit/>) for assistance.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Stakeholders are willing to continue to work toward coordinated regional transportation services by utilizing existing resources and implementing new projects that fill the service gaps associated with employment related trips, out-of-city trips, and general quality of life for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and the general public. Local stakeholders set four coordinated transportation goals to address the unmet needs. The coordinated transportation goals are as follows:

- ◆ Goal 1: Increase Awareness of How to Use Available Transportation Services and Improve Wayfinding
- ◆ Goal 2: Expand Transportation Service for Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Low-Income Individuals, and the General Public

- ◆ Goal 3: Improve Pedestrian and Wheelchair-User Access to Bus Stops and Add Stop Amenities
- ◆ Goal 4: Increase Participation in Initiatives to Enhance Mobility

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The following strategies are needed in order to make further progress on the accepted goals. Stakeholders indicated the priority for the strategies (high, medium, or low).

The following paragraphs outline the timeframe, responsible party, and performance measure(s) for implementation of each of the above noted coordination goals and objectives. The implementation timeframes/milestones are defined as follows:

- ◆ Immediate – Activities to be addressed immediately
- ◆ Near-term – Activities to be achieved within 1 to 12 months
- ◆ Mid-term – Activities to be achieved within 13 to 24 months
- ◆ Long-term – Activities to be achieved within 2 to 4 years
- ◆ Ongoing – Activities that either have been implemented prior to this report, or will be implemented at the earliest feasible time and will require ongoing activity

Goals and implementation strategies are offered in this chapter as a guideline for leaders in the coordination effort as well as the specific parties responsible for implementation. Goals and strategies should be considered based upon the available resources for each county during the implementation time period.

GOAL 1: INCREASE AWARENESS OF HOW TO USE AVAILABLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND IMPROVE WAYFINDING

Strategy 1.1: Collaborate to Offer Travel Training or Mobility Management and Improve Awareness of How to Use Existing Transportation Options

Monroe County residents are served by multiple transportation options, including public transit operators, inter-city bus services, and non-profit and for-profit human service transportation providers. This strategy includes initiatives to involve all area transportation providers in setting up travel training and/or mobility management services so that the public understands how to use all available options. This strategy includes strengthening relationships between the transportation providers and local human service agencies. A travel training and/or mobility management program can address the objective of improving communication between public transit agencies and key stakeholders such as service providers for older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes.

Travel training is the professional practice of teaching people to travel independently on public and human service transportation. Travel training is offered one-to-one or as part of designed instruction for a group and is most often provided for older adults or for people who have cognitive or physical disabilities. The goal is not only to provide information about using transportation, but increasing

individuals' confidence and comfort level with using the available services. Bloomington Transit currently offers a travel training program for its system.

Mobility management is a transportation strategy that focuses on the customer and their needs, and meeting these needs through the coordinated use of a variety of providers. Mobility management is an evolving concept that aims to improve specialized transportation, particularly for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower incomes through a range of activities. A mobility management program looks beyond a single transportation service or solution to a “family of services” philosophy that can offer a wide range of options to meet an equally wide array of community demographics and needs.

Some examples of mobility management activities include:

- ◆ Operating transportation brokerages to coordinate service providers, funding resources, and customer needs;
- ◆ Coordinating transportation services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with low incomes;
- ◆ Supporting local partnerships that coordinate transportation services;
- ◆ Providing travel training and trip planning activities for customers;
- ◆ Developing and operating traveler call centers to coordinate travel information, manage eligibility requirements, and arrange customer travel; and
- ◆ Planning and implementing the acquisition and purchase of intelligent transportation technologies to operate a coordinated system.

Travel training and mobility management should address all transportation options in Monroe County. For example, if one agency starts a travel training program, the program should include training on using other local services, including inter-city bus services. A common concern reflected in the public survey and stakeholder meetings was transportation to Indianapolis. Bloomington is served by Hoosier Ride, which provides multiple daily schedules to the Greyhound terminal in downtown Indianapolis. Additionally, there are private services that provide trips to the Indianapolis Airport. At the airport and the Greyhound terminal, people can transfer to the Indianapolis city bus system, IndyGo, and ride to destinations throughout the city. A travel training or mobility management program can be used to familiarize people with using these options.

<p>Implementation Time Frame: Mid-Term (13-24 months)</p>	<p>Staffing Implications: Travel training and mobility management are programs that can be developed by existing staff or by hiring new staff. If using existing staff, it may be necessary to add part- or full-time staff positions to absorb preexisting duties.</p>
<p>Implementation Budget: Budget is scalable depending on the size of the program; up to \$100,000 could be expended annually for this type of program, primarily on staffing.</p>	
<p>Potential Grant Funding Sources: FTA Section 5307, 5310 or 5311 grants (local match required) can be used to fund mobility management or travel training. Currently, these funds are utilized by Bloomington Transit and Rural Transit to operate service and make capital purchases.</p>	

Responsible Parties: Bloomington Transit & Rural Transit

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Travel training or mobility management program initiated
- ◆ Number of individuals assisted through new program

Strategy 1.2: Implement Wayfinding

Wayfinding integrates multiple modes of transportation, including transit, walking, bicycling, and other modes. The goal of this strategy is to make getting around Bloomington and Monroe County more legible to residents and visitors, so it is easy to understand how to navigate from place to place. Wayfinding strategies include measures such as adding maps to bus stop signs, as pictured in the bus stop sign shown in Figure 17.

Wayfinding strategies help people process information and make decisions about travel. People move through three specific interrelated processes while wayfinding:

1. Decision making. This leads to a plan of action or a decision plan to reach a given destination.
2. Decision execution. This transforms the plan of action into appropriate behavior and movement at the right place in space.
3. Information processing. This comprises environmental perception and cognition, which permits the above decision-related processes to occur. Perception is the process of obtaining information through the senses. Cognition is understanding and being able to manipulate information.

Figure 17: Metro Transit (Minneapolis, MN) Bus Stop Sign



An example of an urban wayfinding program is the Seamless Seattle Pedestrian Wayfinding Program. According to the program’s website, four pillars underpin the Seamless Seattle wayfinding strategy:

- ◆ Modal Integration: Walking information deployed in stations, stops and interchanges, and integrated digital tools, that will connect transit modes to each other and last mile walking journeys.
- ◆ Local Distinctiveness: Development of a single, agreed city-wide wayfinding standard that will provide a consistent information layer, while allowing for local content, and potentially local design distinctiveness for historic landmark neighborhoods.
- ◆ Design for All: Development of planning rules to prioritize safe and accessible walking routes, prioritization of content to support people with greater needs and system design guided by strong inclusive design principles establishing accessibility of information for all.
- ◆ Systemization: Design standards with a high degree of commonality for planning and system design, to guide deployment of all city wayfinding. Supported by a back-of-house Content Management System run by the city and/or its partners to ensure system integrity.

More information about Seamless Seattle is available at <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/projects-and-programs/programs/urban-design-program/pedestrian-wayfinding>. Seattle’s wayfinding approach is led by the City of Seattle and involves the two public transit systems that serve the metropolitan area.

<p><u>Implementation Time Frame</u>: Mid-Term (13-24 months)</p>	<p><u>Staffing Implications</u>: Staffing needs depend on the complexity of the wayfinding strategy. For a public transit provider to upgrade some bus stops signs to include maps, no new staffing would be required. A comprehensive city- or county-wide wayfinding program would require up to 100% of a full-time equivalent staff member as well as the services of a wayfinding consultant.</p>
<p><u>Implementation Budget</u>: The budget for a wayfinding program is scalable depending on complexity. For example, the cost of designing and replacing bus stops signs would depend on the number of signs to be replaced. Consulting services for a comprehensive wayfinding program should be obtained through a Request for Proposals process.</p>	
<p><u>Potential Grant Funding Sources</u>: FTA Section 5307 or 5310 grants can fund specific types of expenses incurred by a public transit system or a non-profit organization serving older adults or people with disabilities. Wayfinding costs may be eligible for support from a variety of Federal or local (governmental or private) funding sources.</p>	

Responsible Parties: City of Bloomington, Public Works Department in partnership with Bloomington Transit.

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Number of upgrades made (e.g., replaced bus stop signs or added directional signage for pedestrians)
- ◆ Increases in ridership on bus routes with new wayfinding amenities

GOAL 2: EXPAND TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FOR OLDER ADULTS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Expanded transportation services could meet a variety of the unmet needs identified in this plan. Different types of service expansions could meet needs for affordable door-to-door transportation, transportation to west side employers and Ivy Tech Community College, late evening and weekend service, and regularly scheduled service connecting rural communities to Bloomington destinations.

Strategy 2.1: Enhance Transportation Service in the “Fringe” Area Outside Bloomington City Limits

The last few decades have seen significant population growth in areas just outside Bloomington’s city limits. Bloomington is currently in the process of annexing some of these areas. Bloomington Transit operates within the city limits only. A change in state law would be required to allow the agency to operate outside city limits. Additionally, more annual revenue would be necessary to support an expansion of public transit service in the urban fringe areas.

A potential source of revenue for additional transit service is the State of Indiana’s Economic Improvement District (EID) mechanism. In the past five years, three EIDs have been formed to fund bus service in Central Indiana. EIDs involve special assessments for parcels within designated boundaries selected by participating landowners. The districts are created by petitioning a local municipality with a petition signed by 60 percent of landowners representing 60 percent of assessed value. An EID must be contiguous, but may exclude parcels. The generated funds support projects that target the EID area.

This strategy is written so that any provider could expand its service to new areas, using fixed route or demand response service, as both modes would add value for local residents. In recent years, Rural Transit has operated deviated route bus service in the West Third Street corridor, serving Ivy Tech, Cook Medical, and other destinations. This service is currently suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implementation Time Frame:

Long-Term (2-4 years)

Staffing Implications:

No additional staff would be required during the planning stages, but additional time by existing staff will be necessary. To pursue the formation of an Economic Improvement District, staff time and consulting services would be necessary. Any expanding transportation provider would have to hire drivers and other personnel.

Implementation Budget: Transportation services typically range in cost from \$45 to \$100 per vehicle service hour, depending on the type of operator and service.

Potential Grant Funding Sources: FTA Section 5307 funding can be used to operate public transit service in the urban fringe areas around Bloomington, because these areas are part of the U.S. Census-defined urbanized area. Section 5310 grants may be used for projects that support transportation that benefits older adults and people with disabilities; public transit that is supported with Section 5310 would need to be planned in cooperation with the INDOT Office of Transit.

Responsible Parties: Bloomington Transit, Rural Transit, Monroe County, City of Bloomington, and the Bloomington-Monroe County MPO would conduct initial meetings to discuss this strategy. To pursue the formation of an EID, the county or a local municipality must agree to sponsor the EID formation.

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Meetings held to discuss expanded services
- ◆ Service plan developed
- ◆ Funding secured
- ◆ General public services initiated
- ◆ Number of passenger trips provided

Strategy 2.2: Provide Door-to-Door/On-Demand Service to City of Bloomington Residents

This strategy addresses the transportation needs of Bloomington residents who are unable to use fixed route transportation, but do not qualify for BTaccess. Door-to-door transportation could be provided as an expansion of Bloomington Transit, or, a non-profit or for-profit organization could offer this service to a target population such as older adults or people with disabilities. This service could be directly operated by a transportation provider, or, a local organization could offer vouchers or subsidies that could be used with providers such as the human service transportation operators identified in Table 3. A partnership with a transportation network company like Uber or Lyft could be used as part of this strategy. Ideally, service would be available by same-day request or on-demand, to accommodate spontaneous travel needs.

Implementation Time Frame:

Long-Term (2-4 years)

Staffing Implications:

No additional staff required during the planning stages, but additional time by existing staff will be necessary for planning. To launch new transportation services, a new or existing organization would have to hire drivers and other personnel.

Implementation Budget: Demand response transportation services in most areas of Indiana typically range in cost from \$45 to \$65 per vehicle service hour. The cost of this strategy is scalable based on the amount of transportation provided.

Potential Grant Funding Sources: FTA Section 5307 or 5310 grants.

Responsible Parties: Bloomington Transit for all areas within the municipal boundary.

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Service plan developed
- ◆ Funding secured
- ◆ New transportation service or voucher/subsidy program established
- ◆ Number of passenger trips provided

Strategy 2.3: Add/Increase Weekend Service on Public Transit

Rural Transit does not currently operate on the weekends; Bloomington Transit does not operate on Sundays. Expansions of service require additional funding from Federal, state, or local sources. To reduce cost, Sunday service could be limited to demand response instead of fixed route.

Implementation Time Frame:

Long-Term (2-4 years)

Staffing Implications:

No additional staff required during the planning stages, but additional time by existing staff will be necessary for planning. To expand service, Rural Transit would have to hire additional drivers.

Implementation Budget: Transportation services typically range in cost from \$45 to \$100 per vehicle service hour, depending on the type of operator and service. The cost of this strategy is scalable based on the amount of transportation provided.

Potential Grant Funding Sources: FTA Section 5307, 5310 or 5311 grants. Section 5310 grants may be used for projects that support transportation that benefits older adults and people with disabilities; public transit that is supported with Section 5310 would need to be planned in cooperation with the INDOT Office of Transit.

Responsible Parties: Rural Transit and Bloomington Transit

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Service plan developed
- ◆ Funding secured
- ◆ Weekend transportation provided
- ◆ Number of passenger trips provided

Strategy 2.4: Enhance Rural Transit Service Connecting Outlying Communities to Bloomington

An expansion of Rural Transit in Monroe County would allow more individuals to travel to Bloomington to work, medical appointments, shopping and other destinations. With additional funding, Rural Transit could offer regularly scheduled bus service from outlying communities. Currently, Rural Transit operates demand response service only. Regularly scheduled service, potentially in the form of one or more point deviation routes, would offer consistent, guaranteed trips to rural residents. Currently, Rural Transit riders must call in advance to request rides, which are sometimes unavailable due to the system’s capacity constraints. An expansion of Rural Transit’s service would require additional funding from Federal, state, or local sources.

<p><u>Implementation Time Frame:</u> Long-Term (2-4 years)</p>	<p><u>Staffing Implications:</u> No additional staff required during the planning stages, but additional time by existing staff will be necessary for planning. To expand service, Rural Transit would have to hire additional drivers.</p>
<p><u>Implementation Budget:</u> Rural Transit’s cost per vehicle service hour in 2020 was \$44.56. The cost of this strategy is scalable based on the amount of transportation provided. The agency could start the service using only one or two vehicles at a time.</p>	
<p><u>Potential Grant Funding Sources:</u> FTA Section 5311 or 5310 grants. Section 5310 grants may be used for projects that support transportation that benefits older adults and people with disabilities; public transit that is supported with Section 5310 would need to be planned in cooperation with the INDOT Office of Transit.</p>	

Responsible Parties: Rural Transit

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Service plan developed
- ◆ Funding secured
- ◆ Additional hours of transportation provided
- ◆ Number of passenger trips provided

GOAL 3: IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND WHEELCHAIR-USER ACCESS TO BUS STOPS AND ADD STOP AMENITIES

Some Bloomington Transit stops have infrastructure and amenities such as concrete pads for standing and boarding with a wheelchair, shelters, benches, garbage cans and sidewalks providing pedestrian connectivity to nearby destinations. However, some stops have only a sign, and are located in places with poor sidewalk coverage. The City of Bloomington and Bloomington Transit have the challenge of balancing financial investment in bus stop infrastructure, within a constrained budget, and investing in bus service itself. Oftentimes, the same funding sources are used to make infrastructure improvements and to fund transit operating expenses such as labor, fuel and maintenance.

Strategy 3.1: Add Infrastructure to Bus Stops to Improve Accessibility

Bloomington Transit will improve bus stop accessibility for people with disabilities, including adding curb cuts, repairing or extending sidewalks, adding concrete pads, adding shelters, or adding benches.

<u>Implementation Time Frame:</u> Ongoing	<u>Staffing Implications:</u> Staff time to plan and coordinate bus stop improvements.
<u>Implementation Budget:</u> Budget is scalable depending on available funding.	
<u>Potential Grant Funding Sources:</u> FTA Section 5307 and 5310 grants.	

Responsible Parties: Bloomington Transit

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Number of bus stops with improved amenities
- ◆ Feet of sidewalk constructed
- ◆ Increased numbers of passenger boardings at stops with improved amenities

GOAL 4: INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE MOBILITY

Community leaders in all sectors need to be educated about the importance of public transit and human service transportation. Partnerships between transportation providers and stakeholder organizations such as healthcare providers or employers can lead to new sources of funding support for services. Goal 4 is intended to build community support for transportation in Bloomington and Monroe County.

Strategy 4.1 Participate Actively in the Indiana Council on Specialized Transportation (INCOST) and Other Statewide Organizations

INCOST is the most active statewide association for rural and specialized transportation providers. Participation is not limited to public transit systems; human service agencies may also participate. INCOST meets on a regular basis to discuss statewide policy issues and network to find solutions to common problems. The organization holds an annual conference. The Indiana Transportation Association (ITA) as another statewide transportation organization that focuses on public transit.

There are many other interest groups and advocacy organizations that discuss transportation issues and advocate for improvements. The Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities, for example, conducted a statewide study revealing that transportation is one of the top needs for their constituents, prompting new policy and program discussion. The National Federation for the Blind has similar state and local chapters. The American Planning Association organizes professionals that care deeply about filling infrastructure gaps. Health by Design advocates for increased transportation funding and built environment changes that increase accessibility and quality of life. Participation in these and other statewide networks which may lead to opportunities for new grants, pilot projects and funding partnerships.

<u>Implementation Time Frame:</u> Immediate and Ongoing	<u>Staffing Implications:</u> Staff time to provide meaningful participation in meetings.
<u>Implementation Budget:</u> Minimal expenses to participate in meetings, but significant time to provide a leadership role in outreach and advancing coordination of resources and/or services.	
<u>Potential Grant Funding Sources:</u> Not required.	

Responsible Parties: Public and human service transportation providers; Individual advocates

Performance Measures

- ◆ Number of representatives from Bloomington and Monroe County organizations who attend meetings of INCOST, ITA, and other statewide organizations
- ◆ Number of contacts with state-level policymakers about transportation needs and funding concerns

Strategy 4.2 Educate Local Elected Officials About Transportation Needs

It is critical that transportation providers and stakeholders educate County Commissioners, City Council members, and other local elected officials about the value of public transit and human service transportation. The disconnect between transit and other transportation programs (roads and bridges) can be resolved by bringing transit conversations and trainings to the notice of elected officials.

<u>Implementation Time Frame:</u> Immediate and Ongoing	<u>Staffing Implications:</u> Staff time to provide meaningful participation in meetings.
<u>Implementation Budget:</u> Minimal expenses to participate in meetings, but significant time to provide a leadership role in outreach and advancing coordination of resources and/or services.	
<u>Potential Grant Funding Sources:</u> Not required.	

Responsible Parties: Public and human service transportation providers; Individual advocates

Performance Measures:

- ◆ Number of networking and outreach activities that are used to educate local policymakers about transportation needs

POTENTIAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

The following table outlines the strategies and objectives designated to achieve the locally identified transportation goals that are intended to meet local unmet transportation needs, reduce duplication, and improve coordination of human service agency and transportation provider resources. Potential funding sources for many of these strategies include grants from the Transportation for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program (Section 5310) and the Urbanized Area Formula Grants Program (Section 5307)/Formula Grants for Rural Areas (Section 5311) programs for public transportation providers. Page numbers are provided in Table 6 for quick reference to detailed information for each objective.

All Section 5310 grant funds will be available through a competitive process. Please also note that each grant application for Section 5310 will be considered individually to determine if the proposed activities to be supported by the grant adequately meet the requirements of the intended funding program. Grant applications for strategies that do not meet the intended requirements of the FAST Act will not be awarded, regardless of the designated eligibility in this report.

The implementation timeframe for each strategy ranges from the date of this report through 2024. It is noted that a coordinated transportation working group (such as a regional coordination committee) should review this plan on an annual basis and as new coordinated transportation strategies and objectives are developed.

Table 6: Implementation Key

Goal 1: Increase Awareness of How to Use Available Transportation Services and Improve Wayfinding			
Page Number	Strategy Number	Objective/Strategy Description	Priority
32	1.1	Collaborate to Offer Travel Training or Mobility Management and Improve Awareness of How to Use Existing Transportation Options	High
34	1.2	Implement Wayfinding	High
Goal 2: Expand Transportation Service for Older Adults, People with Disabilities, Low-Income Individuals, and the General Public			
Page Number	Strategy Number	Objective/Strategy Description	Priority
36	2.1	Enhance Transportation Service in the “Fringe” Area Outside Bloomington City Limits	Medium
37	2.2	Provide Door-to-Door/On-Demand Service to City of Bloomington Residents	Medium
38	2.3	Add/Increase Weekend Service on Public Transit	Medium
39	2.4	Enhance Rural Transit Service Connecting Outlying Communities to Bloomington	High

(Table continues on following page)

Goal 3: Adopt New Technologies to Enhance Customer Service and Increase Efficiency			
Page Number	Strategy Number	Objective/Strategy Description	Priority
40	3.1	Add Infrastructure to Bus Stops to Improve Accessibility	High
Goal 4: Increase Participation in Statewide Initiatives to Enhance Mobility			
Page Number	Strategy Number	Objective/Strategy Description	Priority
40	4.1	Participate Actively in the Indiana Council on Specialized Transportation (INCOST) and Other Statewide Organizations	Medium
41	4.2	Educate Local Elected Officials About Transportation Needs	High

APPENDIX: OUTREACH DOCUMENTATION

MEETING NOTES

Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

March 24, 2021, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Conducted virtually on Zoom

Christy Campoll, RLS & Associates, provided a presentation on the coordinated planning process. She covered the context of coordinated plan and INDOT support for Section 5310 vehicle projects. A public input survey is available online. It is also available in Spanish.

One attendee commented to add Uber/Lyft to the inventory of local transportation providers as well as the IU Campus Bus.

Lew May with Bloomington Transit said that the agency has worked on routing changes. All fixed route buses now have annunciators. Regarding accessible bus stops – the city will invest as part of “recover forward” program and committed \$400,000 to improve stops. The agency has received a Section 5310 grant to improve bus stops as well.

Christy said that next steps include keeping the survey open for the next month. RLS will conduct a focus group for human service providers, local older adults and people with disabilities. They are looking at having a plan to adopt in August this year. Lew May said that Bloomington Transit would like to discuss goals and strategies when they are drafted.

Bloomington-Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

March 24, 2021, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Conducted virtually on Zoom

Christy Campoll and Laura Brown of RLS & Associate attended the regular meeting of the Bloomington MPO CAC. RLS provided an overview of the coordinated transportation plan update and some of the preliminary public survey responses collected to date. A brief presentation was also provided about the current demographic assessment which reveal the densities of zero vehicle households, older adults. The areas where there are higher densities of older adults and zero vehicle households are different.

Discussion

- Transportation Providers – Any one missing?
 - What about the nursing homes that have vehicles? Meadow Wood has a large bus and a small bus and both are wheelchair accessible. One or two other nursing homes have vehicles as well.

- What about the apartment complexes that have disabled residents and a vehicle? If they provide transportation for their other tenants, do they have an accessible vehicle too?
 - Could we push the apartment complexes/apartment association to ask about making their transportation accessible?
 - We should look further afield to see if other agencies or private companies are trying to accommodate transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities.
 - Stonebelt is another transportation provider that operates transportation for their clients. Not sure if they have their own vehicles.
- Christy provided a review of the 2012 strategies
- Christy asked about transportation needs and if they have changed
 - If you are not at the BT downtown transportation center, you don't know where the bus is going. There are not maps on **bus stop signs** so that you can know what you are able to access from that stop if you don't have access to a phone.
 - "I have a neighbor that does not drive. In order to go grocery shopping she calls a taxi. It costs about \$18 to \$20 for the round trip to the grocery store. That has been an issue for her." (Quote from David)
 - With COVID there has been an opening up of new home delivery of groceries but still it is expensive.
 - How do we reach out to older adults that no longer drive and make sure they have access to grocery stores, bank, and day to day errands. BT would take too long. Neighbor is only 2 blocks from BT bus stop but it would take a transfer to get to her shopping area... it is too much with groceries.
 - Question about volunteer transportation networks. Are there networks set up in other communities? Christy provided some examples.
 - Transportation between the City and County. It applies to people who may live in the city and need to go into the "city fringe." There is an expansion of jobs in the perimeter of the city but they are not served by BT.
 - People with disabilities who are very capable of working cannot really get to the jobs unless BT Access can get them on a regular schedule and on time.
 - We need to make the objectives more reachable so that BT and others can take action.
 - "As citizens it is up to us to make some noise because everyone matters." (Quote from Sarah)
 - People out in the county can't really use the transit system we have here because they can't get into the city.
 - How do we address the gap in the 'fringe areas' around the city where people have moved because housing is more affordable. People living in those areas need to have a vehicle to get to work.
 - What is your perception of Monroe County's Rural Transit
 - It is extremely limited service.
 - There are parts of the county that could be served (Curry – on the way out – a trailer park) and Rural Transit doesn't get near that area.

- The service will go to Spencer but you can't stop anywhere along the line on the north side of the city. You have to make special accommodations if you are riding and want to go to those areas.
 - Looking at Spring of 2022 to implement route changes on Bloomington Transit.
 - Public library is going to open a southern branch. Getting older adults to that area, since it is not within the city, will be a challenge. Getting people to the library will be a challenge. It will be a challenge even for people who are already in the southern part of the county may not have access to the new library.
- Christy provided a wrap-up and let them know about next steps in the planning process and noted that we will reconvening to review what has been captured in the draft plan. Plan adoption is projected for August.

Focus Group for Human Services Providers and Advocates

May 5, 2021

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Conducted virtually on Zoom

Attendance:

1. Michelle Hahn, Indiana University
2. Patrick Martin, Bloomington-Monroe Co MPO
3. Ryan Clemens, Bloomington-Monroe Co MPO
4. Jamie Zoss, Monroe County Probation Department
5. Dayna Thompson, Alzheimer's and Dementia Research Center at IU Health
6. Greg Clark, Centerstone
7. Michael Shermis, City of Bloomington

Facilitator was Christy Campoll, RLS; Assistant: Laura Brown, RLS. Christy provided an overview of the coordinated HSTP and its purpose. Christy updated them on the current public survey and the responses to date. Michael (City of Bloomington) requested that we resend the survey announcement to him. Jamie also wanted the survey. RLS will resend it to everyone on the call.

- Needs identified in the survey so far
 - Out of county transportation
 - Increasing point-to-point service opportunities
 - Increasing frequency on fixed route bus service
 - Ability to ride BT Access same-day
 - Speeding up the rides on public transit routes
 - Same-day service from providers who can transport larger wheelchairs
 - Regular feeder services to connect in to BT from outside its service area
 - Access to medical transportation
- Open discussion to the meeting participants about transportation challenges
 - Challenge has been the ability for clients to purchase bus passes. As an organization, they would collect money from clients and then go down and buy the passes for the people and then pass them out. Client must now have the ability to go down and get the bus pass and

then hold on to the pass for a period of time without losing it. Clients tend to lose the pass or the money.

- (Dayna) Current systems seem to be complicated for someone living with dementia. It is complex to figure out how to understand bus schedules. They tend to use demand response service because it is easier to understand. But DR service can be expensive. Also, there doesn't seem to be any on demand option outside of medical.
- (Michael) Works with people with disabilities. There are people who are frustrated by the requirement to give 24-hour advance notice for BT Access. Also, power wheelchair users have had issues getting stuck and not being able to get an accessible ride.
 - Training on how to use scheduling apps has been helpful. Train the trainer. The City did this as a grant but the program has expired.
 - (Jaime) Her clients also tend to lose things and they are not really good at planning ahead for getting to where they need to be on time. If they miss a medical appointment, it is hard to get back into the schedule.
 - She doesn't have a lot of people who use Uber/Lyft because it is not affordable. If there was a way for her clients to get a pass, they could use it. But she doesn't think they have a reliable way to pay for it.
 - (Michelle) Health care providers are charging now if you miss an appointment. This is even more of a challenge to people with low incomes. Reliability of transportation is important.
 - She did not say that the existing services are unreliable. But the problem is more because there is not a bus stop near the medical appointment or the trip on public transit would take a long time. For example, she might take Uber instead of public transit to a medical appointment because public transit does not go close enough to where the medical offices are located. Even if the offices are located within the city, sometimes they are far from a bus stop. (Ex. Hospice, audiologists, etc. in a medical complex)
 - Question – How do we define transportation for the purpose of this plan?
 - We do include pedestrian issues (ex. Improving access to bus stops)
 - (Ryan) Extending service later at night could be a big success because it would help people go out for social and recreation. Doing anything after 5:00 or 6:00 is a big challenge because of limited transportation options.
 - Many people do not have access to smart phones or they do not have the knowledge necessary to use it if there were a smart phone app for transportation.
 - There is a need to travel within Monroe County as well as getting outside of Monroe County. For example, the FSSA building (on South Curry Pike – south of Third Street) is on the bus route but it doesn't go all the way to the building. People have to walk a long distance to go through the giant parking lot because the FSSA building is in the County and not the City. Ivy Tech is also not on the bus line.
 - There has also been some concern about not being able to get to the kidney doctor.
 - People living in Bloomington know about Rural Transit but they are less familiar with using it because it is a county service. Most people who live in the city focus on

- traveling in the city --- people in the county are more aware of Rural Transit because they need to travel outside the city or to/from the city.
 - People in Bloomington may not really be aware of the services offered by Rural Transit.
- If there is funding what would be first priority strategies
 - (Patrick) Discussed microtransit service that was attempted in the southwest portion of the city. BT held back on the option because of COVID but it is still something that they will implement once COVID situation is over.
 - (Michael) Solutions are mostly around pedestrian issues except for the need for accessibility at bus stops. Bus stops are being upgraded now. There are some stops that are problematic that are not on the list. More curb cuts are needed because there are so many sidewalks that do not have access for wheelchairs or can be dangerous for anyone walking or using a wheelchair.
 - A public version of Uber would be a great solution because it would improve the competition and provide access to people. For example, if private companies had more competition with a better option, it might drive the private companies to do better.
- What organizations should be involved in solutions?
 - Public transit providers
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Health care organizations (IU Health, IU Health Foundation, Bloomington Hospital Auxiliary, providers) in Bloomington
 - BT has a quarterly meeting that anyone can attend to discuss transportation-related issues. It is focused a little on people with disabilities but others also attend and other issues are discussed.
- Christy covered next steps in the planning process
 - Draft goals and strategies for the coordinated plan update
 - Reconvene to priorities the strategies (either through a call or email)
 - Plan will be adopted in August of this year by the MPO
 - Ongoing – the plans primarily exist as a reference for funding applications for Section 5310. But they are also a reference for local committees and planners to implement the goals locally.

General Public Survey Instrument

2020 INDIANA PUBLIC & HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS SURVEY

Please complete this survey about your transportation needs and preferences. This information will be used in your local area's Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan. For more information please contact RLS & Associates at (937) 299-5007. Thank you!

1. What forms of transportation do you use? Select all that apply.

- Public transit that serves your city or county, including bus systems, rail lines, ADA paratransit, or general public demand response/dial-a-ride
- Rely on family/friends for rides
- Carpool or vanpool to work
- Medicaid Non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT)
- Uber/Lyft
- Demand response/dial-a-ride services that are for specific groups only – for example, older adults or people with disabilities (this excludes ADA complementary paratransit provided by public transit systems)
- Taxi
- Inter-city bus, such as Greyhound or Megabus
- Transportation offered by volunteer or faith-based groups
- Drive your own vehicle
- Other (please specify) _____

2. If you use any transportation services, such as public transit or demand response/dial-a-ride, please tell us the name(s) of the services you use:

Name of Service 1: _____
Name of Service 2: _____
Name of Service 3: _____

3. What changes could be made to your local transportation options to make using them more appealing to you?

- If I could ride to other parts of the state (such as Indianapolis or other cities/towns)
- Lower the cost to ride
- Start earlier in the morning
- End later at night
- Operate on Saturdays
- Operate on Sundays
- Pick me up at my home and take me directly to my destination
- Increase health and safety precautions
- Run fixed route service more frequently (for example, make a bus route run every 30 minutes instead of every 60 minutes)
- Increase the amount of demand response/dial-a-ride service available (for example, operate more vehicles so there are fewer turn-downs for trip requests)
- Make scheduling demand response/dial-a-ride service more convenient (for example, allow for same-day or on-demand trip requests)
- Make it easier, or add the option, for children, spouses and/or caregivers to ride along

Other (please specify) _____

4. Do you have difficulty getting the transportation you need to any of the following types of destinations?

	No difficulty	Sometimes difficult	Frequently difficult	Always difficult	Not applicable to me
Your employer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical offices, clinics or hospitals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dental care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pharmacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human service agencies or government offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other trip purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Do you need to travel to destinations outside of your county for work, medical care, shopping, or other reasons?

- No
- Yes, for work
- Yes, for medical care
- Yes, for shopping
- Yes, for other reasons (please specify) _____

6. Is it difficult for you to travel outside of your county? If yes, please indicate what makes it difficult.

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable (No need to travel outside my county)

If yes, please provide more information: _____

7. What is your age group?

- Under 18
- 18-54
- 55-59
- 60-64
- 65+

8. Do you have a disability which requires you to use a cane, walker, wheelchair, and/or another device, or a service animal, to help you get around?

- Yes
- No

9. What county do you live in? _____

10. What is your ZIP code? _____

11. Do you have other comments about transportation services in your community?



Moving Public Transportation
Into the Future

Coordinated Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Plan 2021 Update

**TRANSPORTATION FOR OLDER ADULTS,
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES, PEOPLE WITH
LOW INCOMES, & GENERAL PUBLIC**

MARCH 2021



Agenda

- ◆ Project Overview/Section 5310 Program
- ◆ Needs Assessment Information
- ◆ 2012 Coordinated Plan
- ◆ Discussion
 - Unmet Needs and Gaps in Service
 - Potential Solutions
- ◆ Next Steps



What Is A Coordinated Plan?

- ◆ Identifies Unmet Transportation Needs and Gaps in Service in the Community
- ◆ Prioritizes Goals and Strategies to address Unmet Needs
- ◆ Identifies Opportunities for Collaboration and Coordination of Services
- ◆ Must be Locally Developed and Adopted



Section 5310 Funding

- ◆ Projects Must Be Included in the Coordinated Plan
- ◆ Enhanced Mobility for Older adults and Individuals with Disabilities
 - 49 U.S.C. Section 5310
- ◆ Funds Support Capital Needs of Non-Profit Organizations and/or Public Transit Systems



5310 Small Urban Funding

- ◆ Non-Profit Organizations (first priority)
 - Vehicles to Meet Needs of Older Adults and People with Disabilities
- ◆ Public Transit Systems
 - Vehicles for ADA Complementary Paratransit or New Public Transportation Services and Alternatives Beyond Those Required by the ADA, Designed to Assist Older Adults and People with Disabilities



Transportation Public Survey

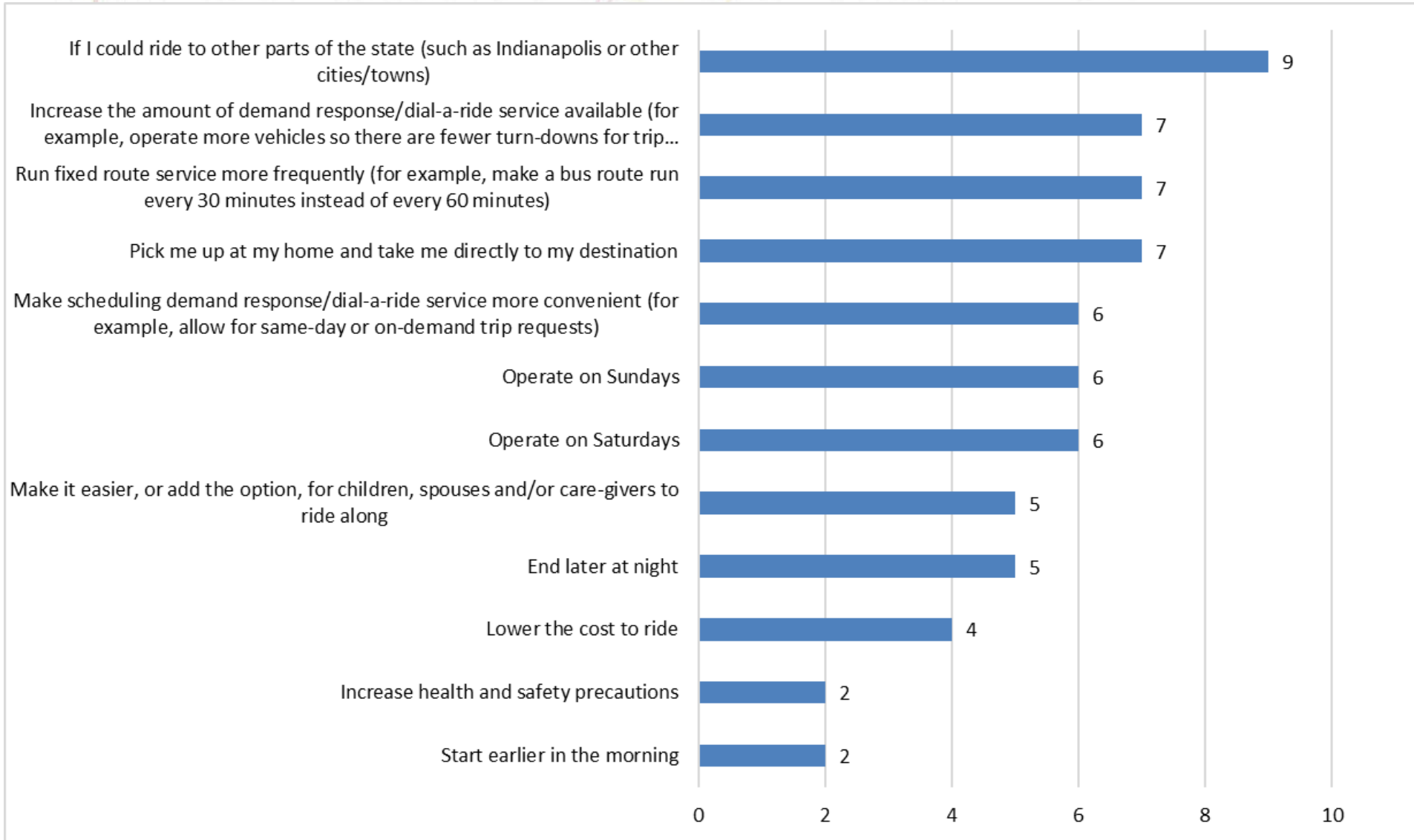
AVAILABLE NOW

- ◆ We Need to Hear from You and Your Neighbors, Consumers, and Friends

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Indiana_Transportation

- Spanish Version Available
- Print and Large Print Available

What Changes Could Be Made?





Comments/Suggestions

- ◆ “BT access same day ride online”
- ◆ “Service from outside the city to areas within”
- ◆ “Existing public transit routes take too long.”
- ◆ “Need same day services. Need providers who can transport large power wheelchairs especially to other counties like Lawrence, Johnson, Morgan, Marion, Vigo.”

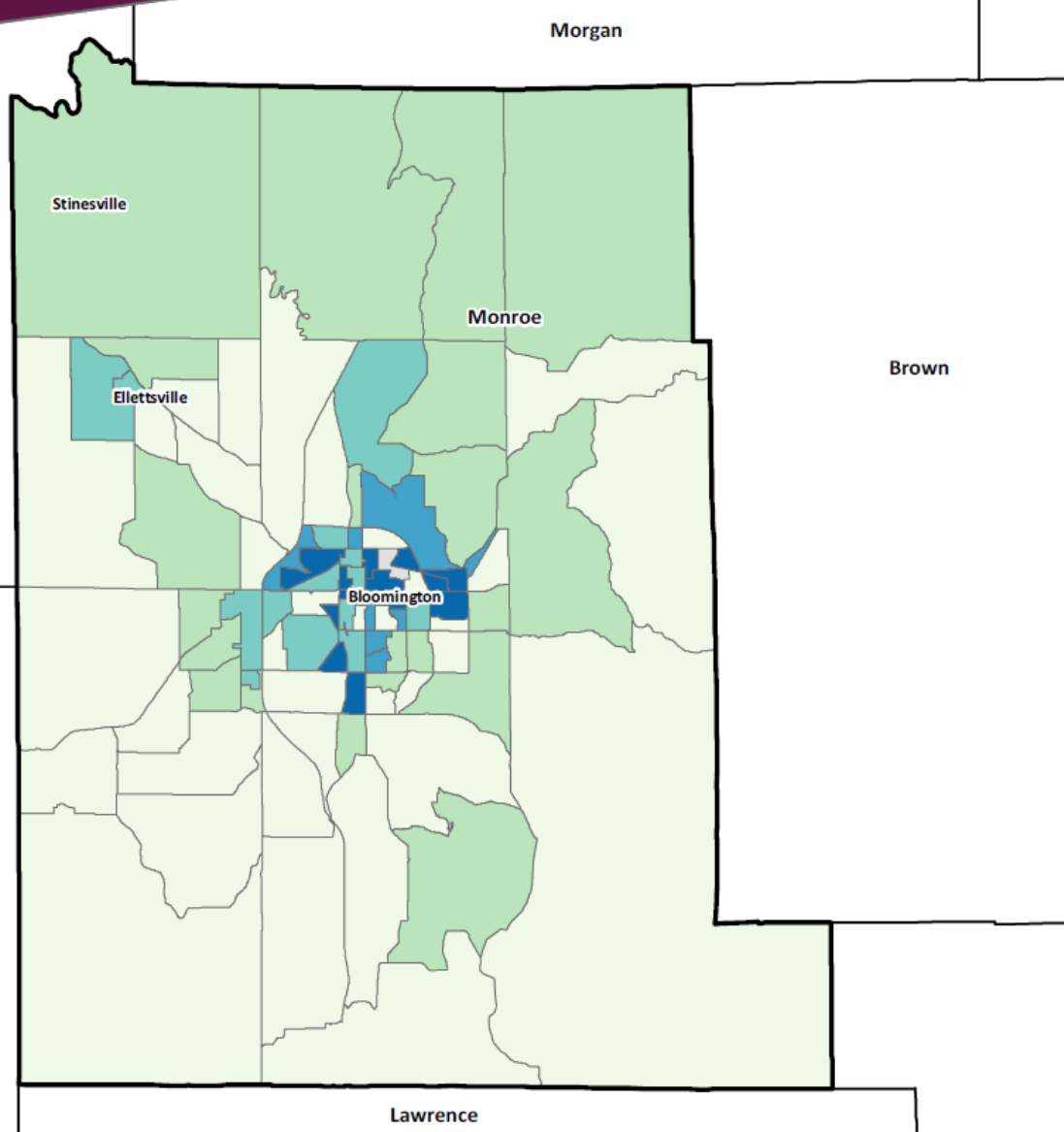



Comments/Suggestions






- ◆ “Regular transit services to BT connections would be helpful.”
- ◆ “More options for medical transportation would be helpful for patients I work with”
- ◆ “Expand BTown access to outside of Bloomington city limits”

Percent Zero Vehicle Households Bloomington/Monroe MPO

**Bloomington /
Monroe MPO
Coordinated
Public Transit -
Human Services
Transportation
Plan Update**

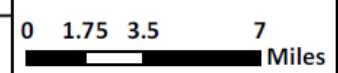


 Bloomington /
Monroe MPO

- Percent ZVH**
-  0% - 2.3%
 -  2.4% - 7.2%
 -  7.3% - 13%
 -  13.1% - 20.6%
 -  20.7% - 31.8%

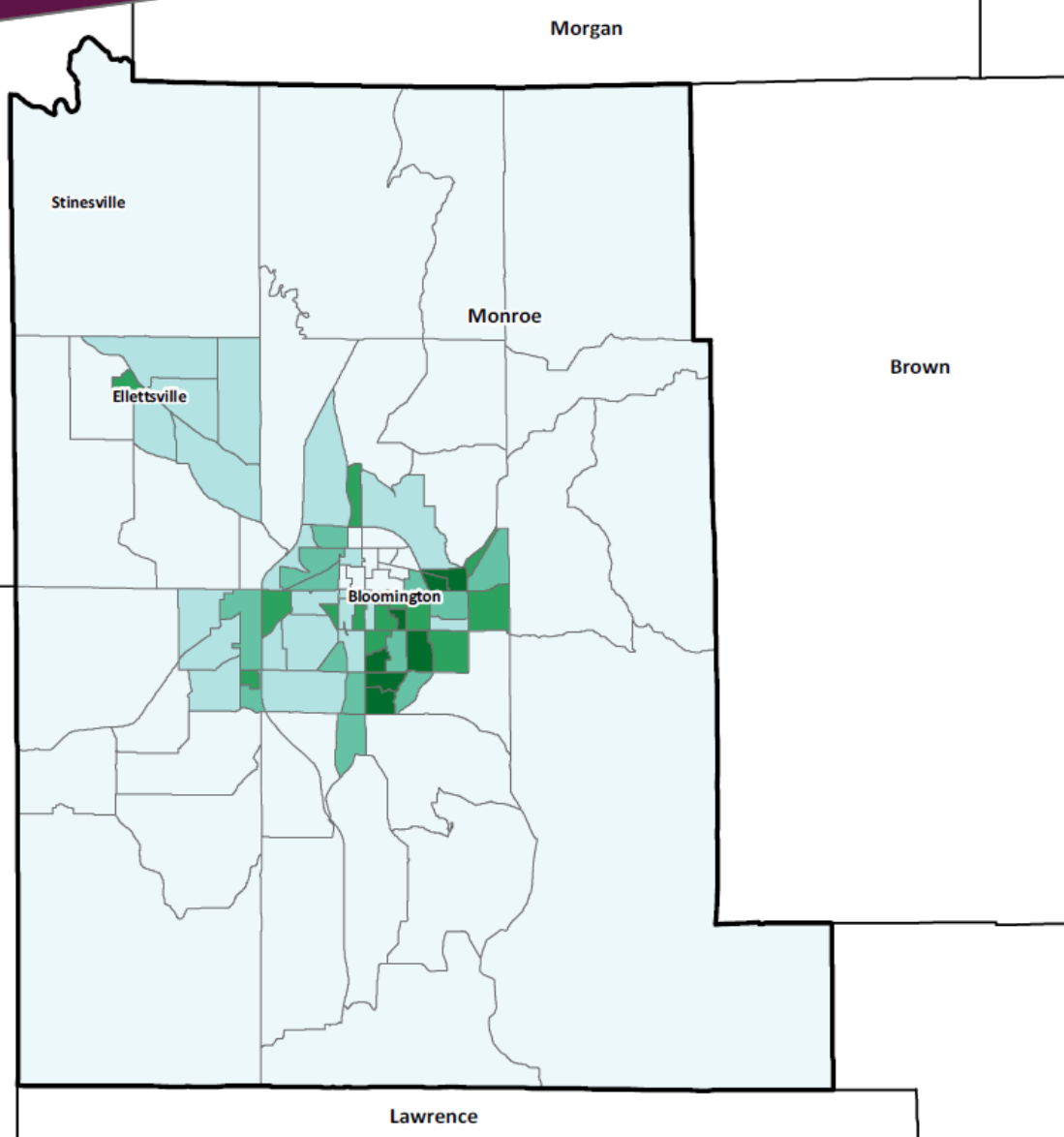



Source: U.S. Census Bureau
American Community Survey
2019 5-Year Estimates



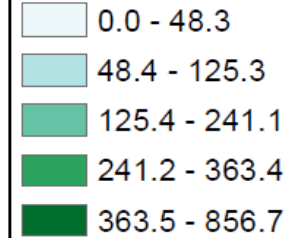
Population Density Age 65 and Over Bloomington/Monroe MPO

Bloomington /
Monroe MPO
Coordinated
Public Transit -
Human Services
Transportation
Plan Update

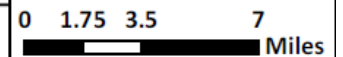


 Bloomington /
Monroe MPO

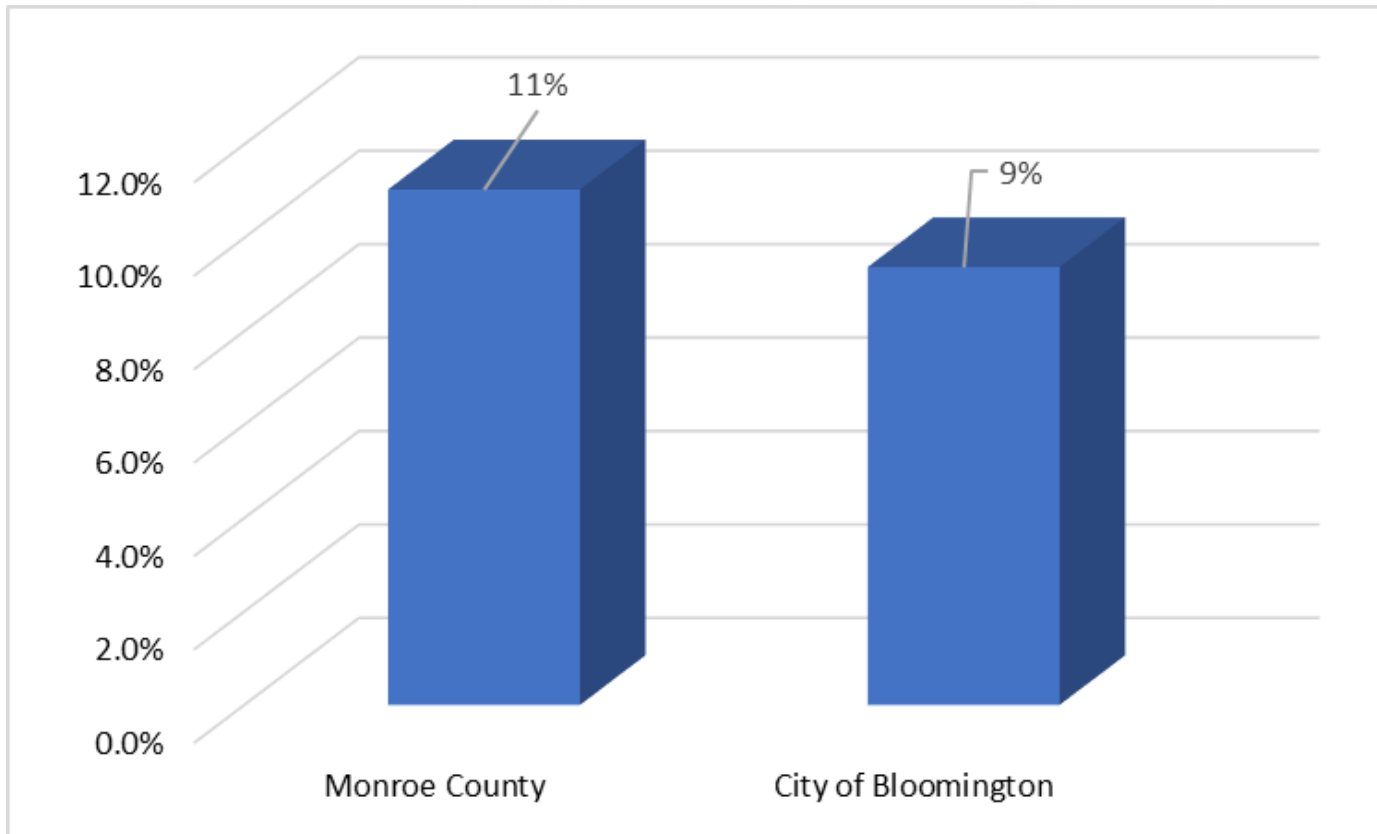
65+ / Sq. Mile



Source: U.S. Census Bureau
American Community Survey
2019 5-Year Estimates



Individuals with Disabilities





Transportation Providers

- ◆ Providers include ALL Public, Private, Non-Profit, Volunteer, Government, and Human Service Agency Programs
 - Participation is Not Limited to Organizations that Serve Older Adults and Individuals with Disabilities
 - Every Part of the Network of Services is Important



Transportation Providers

- ◆ Bloomington Transit
- ◆ Rural Transit
- ◆ IU Campus Bus
- ◆ Beloved Transportation
- ◆ SafeMed
- ◆ El Shadday Incorporated
- ◆ Uber/Lyft

Who Are We Missing?



Mobility Needs - 2012

- ◆ Transit Operating Hours after 8pm/on Sundays
- ◆ Bus Stop Accessibility/Annunciators on Buses
- ◆ Paratransit Operating Hours/Coverage
- ◆ Same-day Paratransit
- ◆ Transportation Affordability
 - Bike/Pedestrian Facilities
- ◆ Transportation Options Education/Safety Education for Users of All Modes
- ◆ Lack of Coordination Between Providers



2012 Strategies

- ◆ Acquire Accessible Vehicles
- ◆ Ensure Information is Available
- ◆ Voucher System for Older Adults/People with Disabilities
- ◆ Volunteer Transportation Network
- ◆ Encourage Mobility Management and Coordination
- ◆ Develop a Transportation Guide for Older Adults and People with Disabilities



2012 Strategies

- ◆ Extend BT Access Hours to 11pm/Sundays
- ◆ Extend BT Access to City Limits
- ◆ Same-day BT Access
- ◆ Grant Funding for Organizations Serving Older Adults/People with Disabilities including Rural Transit and Accessible Taxi Providers
- ◆ Travel Training
- ◆ Accessible Bus Stops
- ◆ Annunciators

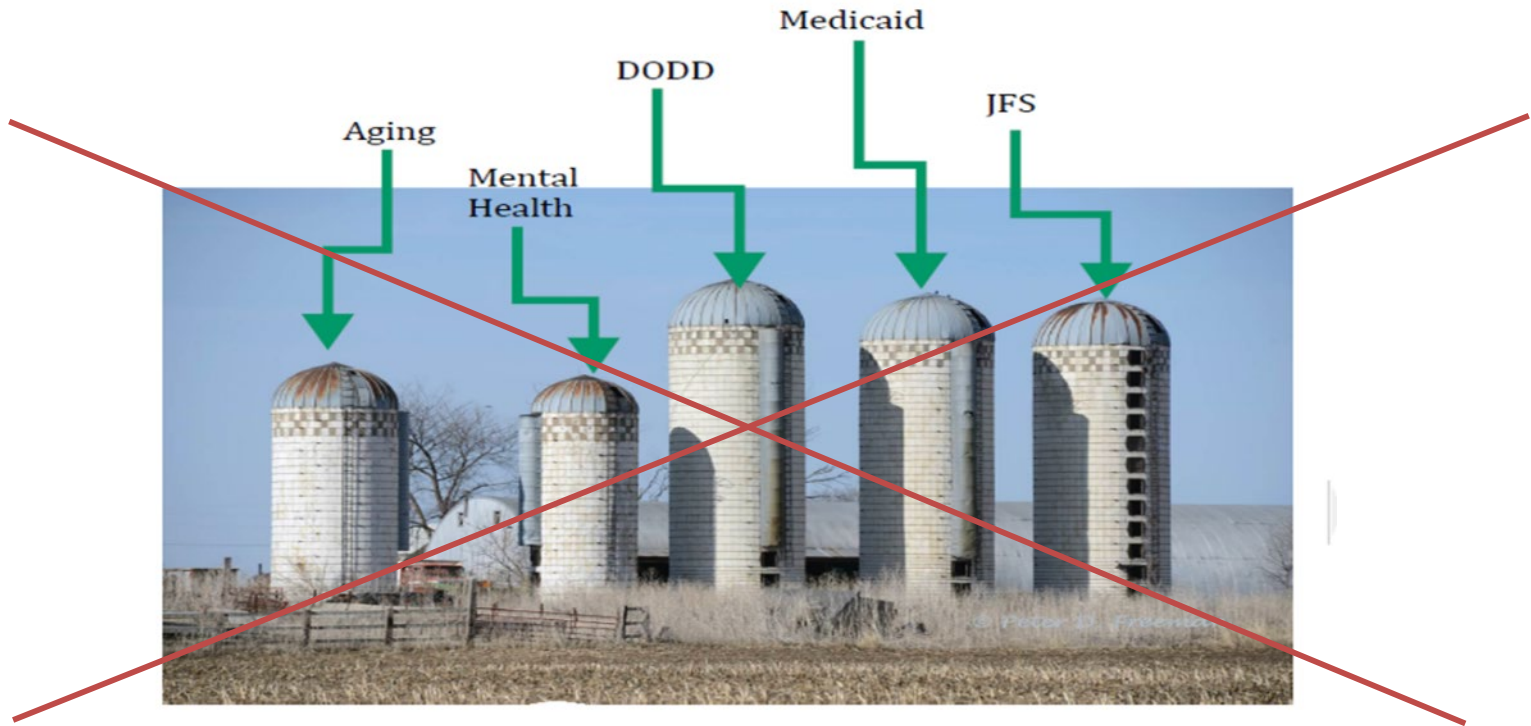


What is Mobility Management?

- ◆ Evolving Concept that Aims to Improve Specialized Transportation, Particularly for Veterans, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, and Individuals with Lower Incomes
- ◆ Looks Beyond a Single Transportation Service or Solution to a “Family of Services”
Philosophy that Can Offer a Wide Range of Services and Options

Person-Centered Mobility

- ◆ Mobility Management Places the Person and their Mobility Experience at the Center





Discussion

- ◆ Have Transportation Needs in the Community Changed?
- ◆ What Strategies Could Help Meet Needs?
- ◆ What Plans are on the Horizon?
- ◆ Would More Coordination Help?



Next Steps

- ◆ Continue the Needs Assessment and Analysis
 - Gather Survey Input
 - Document Existing Services/Gaps
 - Conduct focus group for older adults, people with disabilities, and human service agencies
- ◆ Develop Draft Coordinated Plan Goals & Strategies
- ◆ Reconvene for Review/Prioritize Goals and Strategies
- ◆ Plan Adoption (August 2021)



We appreciate your participation!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!