

# Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency:  
Bledsoe, Bradley, Grundy, Hamilton, Marion,  
McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, and Sequatchie  
Counties

Final Plan



Prepared for Tennessee  
Department of Transportation

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# Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

This plan updates the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP) for the counties that make up the Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA) service area, including Bledsoe, Bradley, Grundy, Hamilton (outside of the urban area), Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, and Sequatchie Counties. The plan was made possible through the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Office of Mobility and Accessible Transportation funding. The planning process involved active participation from the public and local agencies that provide transportation for the general public, older adults, and individuals with disabilities.

## PURPOSE

On December 4, 2015, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was signed into law to reauthorize surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020. The FAST Act applied new program rules to all FTA funds and authorized transit programs for five years.

On November 15, 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was enacted. The IIJA continues the policies set forth by the FAST Act and provides \$937 billion over five years from FY 2022 through 2026, including \$550 billion in new investments for all modes of transportation, including \$284 billion for the U.S. Department of Transportation, of which \$39 billion is dedicated to transit. The IIJA directs the U.S. Department of Transportation to apply the funding toward modernizing and making improvements. According to the requirements of the IIJA, locally developed CPT-HSTPs must be updated to reflect the changes established by the Act. The plans must identify the unmet transportation needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities, low-income people, and the general public. Plans must also identify a prioritized and coordinated plan for addressing the identified unmet needs and gaps.

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 an increasing need and demand for affordable shared-ride transportation and limited availability of drivers and vehicles to provide such services, organizational partnerships must be explored, and cost-saving measures must be made to serve best the State's changing transportation demands. Interactive coordinated transportation planning at the local level provides the best opportunity to accomplish this objective.

## RELEVANT FAST ACT PROGRAMS

### **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 CPT-HSTP is one of the eligibility requirements for Section 5310 Program funding.

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

In Tennessee, the program has historically been utilized for capital or “traditional” program purchases. Vehicle projects are restricted to wheelchair-accessible replacement and expansion vehicles. In 2022, TDOT expanded the list of eligible projects to include Mobility Management. Mobility Management projects led by public transit agencies (current recipients of Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 or 5311 funds) are also eligible for funding. Mobility Management projects are intended to build coordination among existing transportation service providers with the result of expanding the availability of service. Additional information about the program may be found at <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/multimodal-transportation-resources/omat/5310-program.html>.

Section 5310 Program projects can receive an 80 percent Federal share if the 20 percent local match is secured. TDOT offers 10 percent toward the local match. The remaining local match may be derived from any combination of non-U.S. Department of Transportation Federal, State, or local resources.<sup>1</sup> The IIJA also allows advertisement and concessions revenue as local matches. Passenger fare revenue is not eligible as a local match.

## PLAN DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

According to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements, the coordinated plan must be developed and approved through a process that includes the participation of older adults and individuals with disabilities. And TDOT 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 includes efforts to identify these stakeholders and facilitate their participation in the planning process.

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<sup>1</sup> Projects awarded using COVID-19 Relief funding will be funded at 100% federal share and will not require local match. All other Section 5310 requirements apply, including the requirement that all grantees are responsible for the proper use, operating costs, and maintenance of all project equipment.

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 assessment was accomplished by receiving input from the stakeholders noted above through virtual public meetings, telephone interviews, email conversations, and completing a public survey available online and printed upon request. Social Distancing protocols led to the decision to conduct virtual public engagement and outreach methods.

The CPT-HSTP incorporated the following planning elements:

1. Review of the previous regional coordination plan to develop a basis for evaluation and recommendations;
2. Evaluation of existing economic/demographic conditions in each county;
3. Survey of the general public. It must be noted that general public survey results are not statistically valid but are intended to provide insight into the opinions of the local community. The survey also includes distribution to agencies serving older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their consumers. A statistically valid public survey 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. Conduction of two virtual meetings for stakeholders and the general public to solicit input on transportation needs, service gaps, goals, objectives, and implementation strategies to meet these deficiencies;
5. Update of the inventory of existing transportation services provided by public, private, and nonprofit organizations;
6. Update of the summary of vehicle utilization to determine 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;
8. Development of an updated implementation plan including current goals, strategies, responsible parties, and performance measures, including an open stakeholder process for prioritizing the strategies and goals; and
9. Adoption of the updated coordination plan by local authorities.

## PRIOR RELEVANT STUDIES

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### SETHRA REGIONAL COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The prior CPT-HSTP was completed by Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA). Information for the plan was collected from surveys, and public participation from each county contributed to identifying new services to meet needs. The plan identified current efforts to coordinate with local stakeholders, including human service agencies, health care providers, and economic development organizations.

The high-priority needs identified during the plan were as follows:

- ◆ In-county deviated fixed route service
- ◆ Wheelchair accessible vehicles
- ◆ Travel trainer
- ◆ Scheduled work routes that were coordinated within the ten counties
- ◆ Door-to-door scheduled work routes for individuals with disabilities
- ◆ Route service to Chattanooga/Nashville
- ◆ Weekend, evening, and holiday transportation services
- ◆ Route Match software for transit

The plan did not identify goals or strategies to address the identified needs. The complete plan is available for review at: <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/multimodaltransportation/coordinated-plans/SETHRA%20Attach%20O-1%20Rural%20Human%20Services%20Coordinated%20Plan.pdf>.

### CLEVELAND URBANIZED AREA CPT-HSTP

In August 2012, the Cleveland Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization completed the CPT-HSTP for the urbanized area. The plan evaluated existing resources available through fixed route bus service in the urban area and transportation provided by other entities, including SETHRA and six nonprofit organizations.

The gaps in access to transportation services were identified as:

- ◆ Extended evening hours of service
- ◆ Better ways for riders to understand the service area boundaries for CUATS and SETHRA
- ◆ Lack of awareness of available transportation services
- ◆ Expanded service to growing areas on the edges of Cleveland
- ◆ A “look-up” tool to match riders to the appropriate service area
- ◆ Get more involved with major employers, the Chamber of Commerce, and staffing agencies
- ◆ Add transportation services to the CAB website
- ◆ Increase marketing to raise general awareness of the service available from CUATS and SETHRA
- ◆ Improve access to transit by providing infrastructures such as sidewalks, shelters, and signs

The strategies to address gaps included the following:

- ◆ Operate longer service hours to provide better service to attract working patrons.

- ◆ Develop a route that provides continuous service along Lee Highway, north and south of the city, with connections to downtown Cleveland and the transfer hub.
- ◆ Create a rideshare program to support ridesharing within the Cleveland area and ridesharing for trips to Chattanooga.

The complete plan is available at:

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/multimodaltransportation/coordinated-plans/Cleveland\\_Coordinated\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/multimodaltransportation/coordinated-plans/Cleveland_Coordinated_Plan.pdf).

**2035 JOINT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BRADLEY COUNTY, THE CITY OF CLEVELAND, AND THE CITY OF CHARLESTON**

This plan notes the importance of promoting policies that support transit and mode choice along corridors characterized by greater population density and mixed land use.

**COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR CHATTANOOGA-HAMILTON COUNTY/NORTH GEORGIA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

The original plan was approved in 2007 and most recently updated in 2016. It is being updated again in 2022.

The Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) is the designee for Section 5310 funds within the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) area. The following needs were identified for the region’s public transit and human services transportation resources:

- ◆ CARTA bus route expansion beyond Chattanooga city limits, particularly in areas with high senior, low income, and disabled populations
- ◆ Closing gaps that exist in human service transportation providers’ routes
- ◆ Expanded Mobility Management
- ◆ Better intercity transportation
- ◆ Better pedestrian access to bus stops
- ◆ Wheelchair-accessible taxis in Chattanooga

Implementation priorities for Section 5310 were identified as follows:

- ◆ Continue to support Mobility Management and coordination efforts between CARTA CARE-A-Van and SETHRA, with expansion to other agencies and areas as requested
- ◆ Extend services in areas that currently have no public transportation as feasible
- ◆ Continued support for vehicle/capital purchases by human services agencies so they can continue providing transportation for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes

The complete plan is available at:

[https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/multimodaltransportation/coordinated-plans/Chattanooga\\_Coordinated\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/tdot/multimodaltransportation/coordinated-plans/Chattanooga_Coordinated_Plan.pdf).

## TENNESSEE STATE PLAN ON AGING

The Tennessee State Plan on Aging, October 2021 through September 2025 was conducted by the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability (TCAD). The Plan on Aging and this CPT-HSTP share common themes in needs assessment results and goals. The TCAD is authorized by the Older Americans Act as the primary responsible party for the coordination of all State activities related to the Act. Activities include development of comprehensive and coordinated systems for the delivery of supportive services for older Tennesseans. The plan is available at

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/aging/images/TN%20State%20Plan%20on%20Aging%202021%20-%202025.pdf>.

The plan outlines the state-funded grants, projects, and statewide programs available to older adults. The plan also outlines the results of a statewide needs assessment conducted to inform the goals and recommendations. The statewide needs assessment involved surveys of older adults and service providers and analysis of calls to the statewide Information and Assistance line.

Seven percent of the 833 older adult survey respondents indicated that lack of transportation keeps them from being more active in their community. One third of the 231 direct service providers that participated in the study ranked transportation as the biggest unmet need for older adults. The service providers indicated that access to transportation, social support, and home and community-based services would improve the daily lives of older adults.

When service providers were asked to list the greatest barrier to improving the lives of older adults, 26 percent said that there are not enough services or organizations to address the unmet needs. While all 95 counties have public transportation, the need often exceeds capacity. More affordable, accessible, and flexible transportation services, including personalized door-through-door transportation, are needed.

Another 24 percent of service providers said that funding was the greatest barrier to addressing needs. Although Older Americans Act and other aging programs have seen increased support, funding remains a challenge. The service providers stated that in addition to limited available funding, the restrictive rules and regulations, awareness of resources, and lack of communication between provider agencies are also challenges. In addition to the noted challenges, numerous state agencies have some responsibility and funding for providing aging and disability services in addition to TCAD. These agencies provide services and each face unique challenges.

Fourteen (14) percent indicated that staffing shortages were the greatest barrier to expanding services. Staffing shortages were a more significant issue than in previous studies.

In 2019, 2.8 percent (or 2,009) of calls to the statewide Information and Assistance Line were in regard to transportation. In 2020, 1.8 percent (or 1,409) of calls were with regard to transportation.



The plan includes the objective of leveraging Older Americans Act transportation funding to expand community transportation resources. In achieving this goal, TCAD seeks to collaborate with partner agencies to bolster existing transportation infrastructure using Older Americans Act funds. Each year, TCAD will update the Statewide Transportation Map to ensure better coordination of transportation programs, mobility options, and services for the aging and disability population.

TCAD established the goal of pursuing funding, strategies, and partnerships with community-based organizations, local governments, and others to advocate and reduce gaps in services identified in the statewide needs assessment. Some of the relevant objectives set under this goal include:

- ◆ Increasing public awareness and strategies to alleviate economic insecurity among older Tennesseans.
- ◆ Promoting livable communities for older Tennesseans.
- ◆ Developing partnerships and providing awareness and training to ensure that services are provided to older individuals and adults with disabilities in underserved communities.
- ◆ Working with partners, increase public awareness and strategies to alleviate social isolation among older Tennesseans and persons with disabilities.

TCAD also established the goal of ensuring that Tennesseans have access to information about aging issues, programs, and services in order to make informed decisions about living health and independent for as long as possible and about planning for their financial futures, healthcare access, and long-term care. Some of the relevant objectives under this goal include:

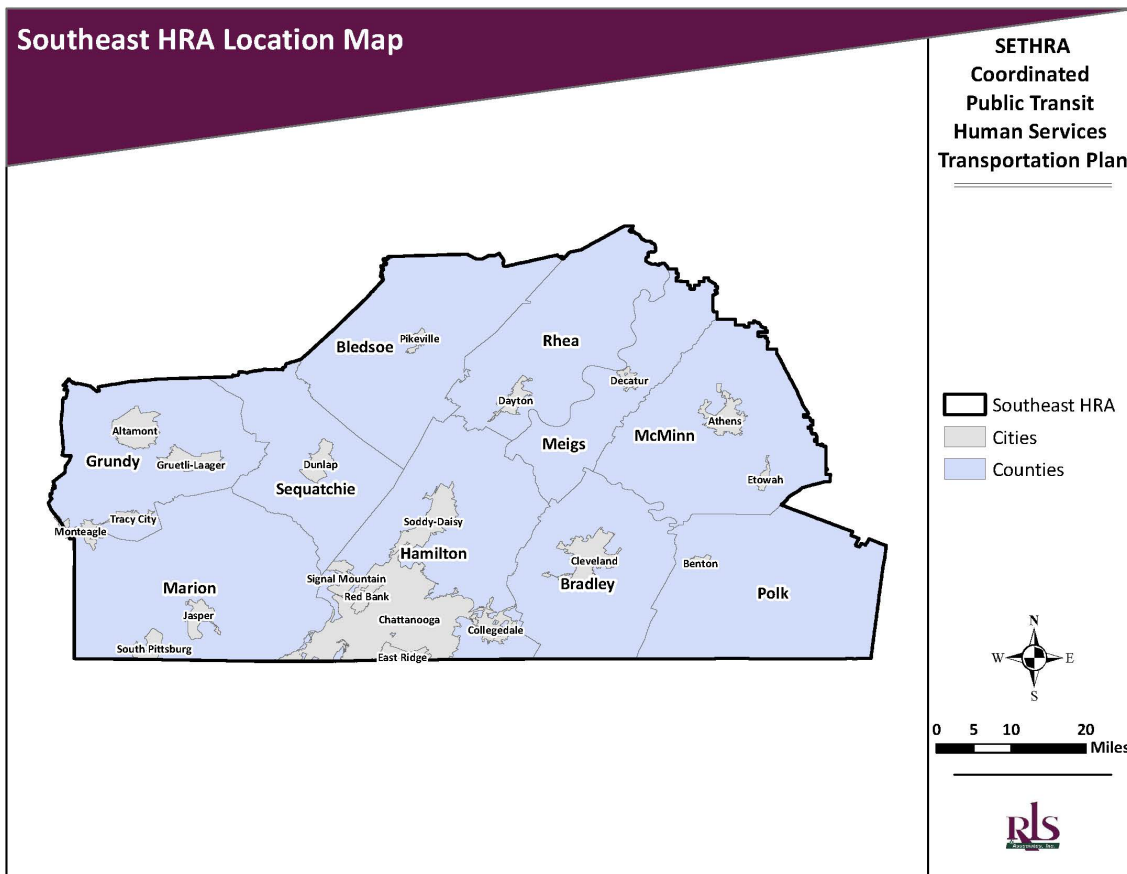
- ◆ Direct the attention of local and state key decision makers to the needs of seniors in Tennessee through increased communication and advocacy via publications and online resources.
- ◆ Oversee a resource mapping of all federal and state funding sources and funding streams as well as resources for nonprofit and other nongovernmental entities that support older adults.
- ◆ Expand the availability of relevant data for the purposes of planning, program development, and advocacy.

# Demographics

## DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Figure 1 depicts the southeast Tennessee region served by the Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA). SETHRA provides public transportation and various human services programs throughout the region. The largest cities are Chattanooga, Cleveland, and Athens. In addition to the largest cities, there are smaller cities, towns and villages, and rural areas.

**Figure 1: Location Map**

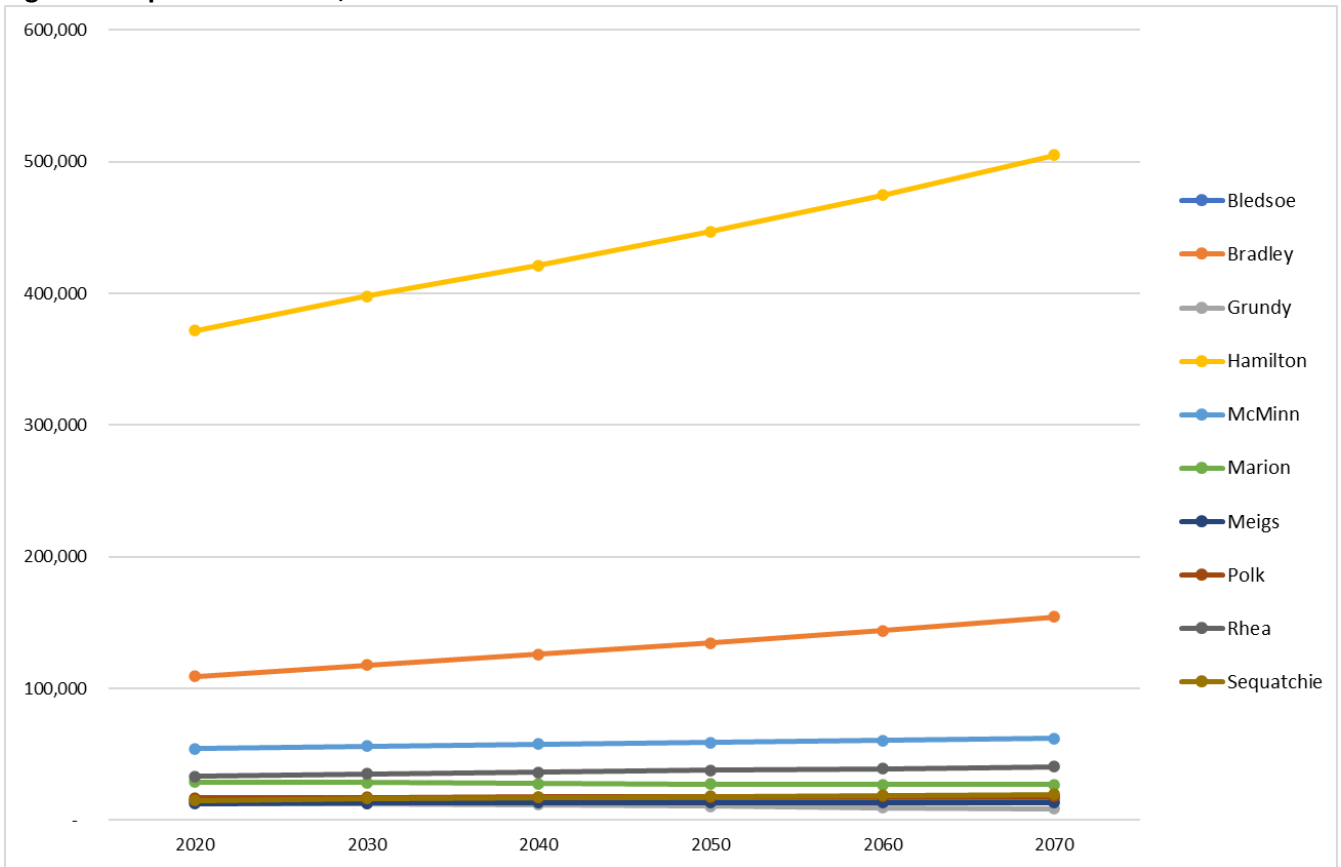


The demographics of an area are a strong indicator of demand for transportation services. Therefore, relevant demographic data was collected and is summarized in this section. The data provided in this chapter was gathered from multiple sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) Five-Year Estimates, the State of Tennessee, and the Tennessee State Boyd Center. These sources ensure that the most current and accurate information is presented. As a five-year estimate, the ACS data represent a percentage based on a national sample and does not represent a direct population count. Even though it is an estimate, the data is more current than the 2010 U.S. Census count, which was the latest available data when this report was written.

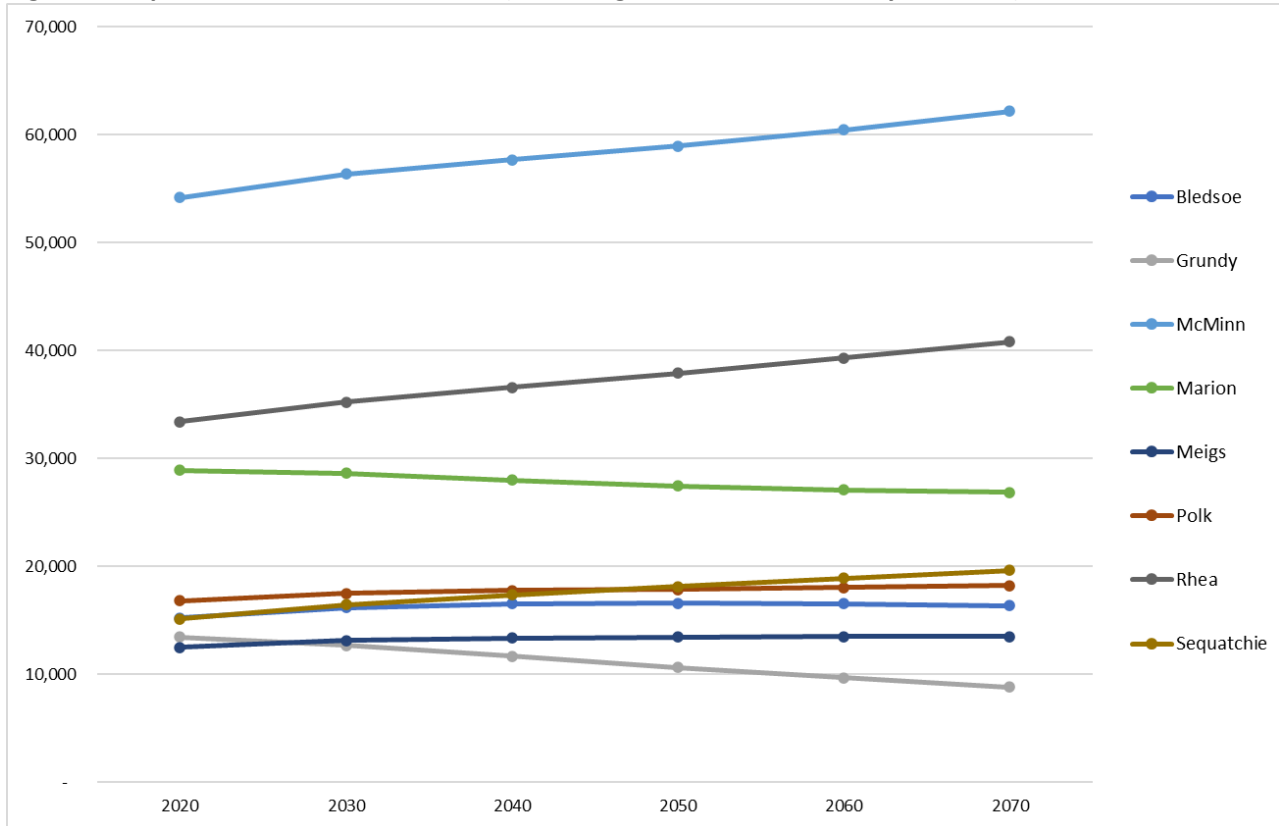
## Population Projections

The Tennessee State Data Center, using data from the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, projects that the SETHRA region's population will grow by 195,310 people between 2020 and 2070, an estimated increase of 29 percent. Figure 2 shows each county's population trends between 2020 and 2070, while figure 3 shows the same trends without Hamilton and Bradley Counties. As indicated in Figure 2, Hamilton and Bradley Counties, where the region's largest urban areas are located, are projected to experience the largest increase in population, while the other counties in the region are projected to experience smaller changes. Grundy County's population is projected to decrease while the population in each other county will increase.

**Figure 2: Population Trends, 2020 - 2070**



**Figure 3: Population Trends, 2020 - 2070 (Excluding Hamilton and Bradley Counties)**



**Older Adult Population**

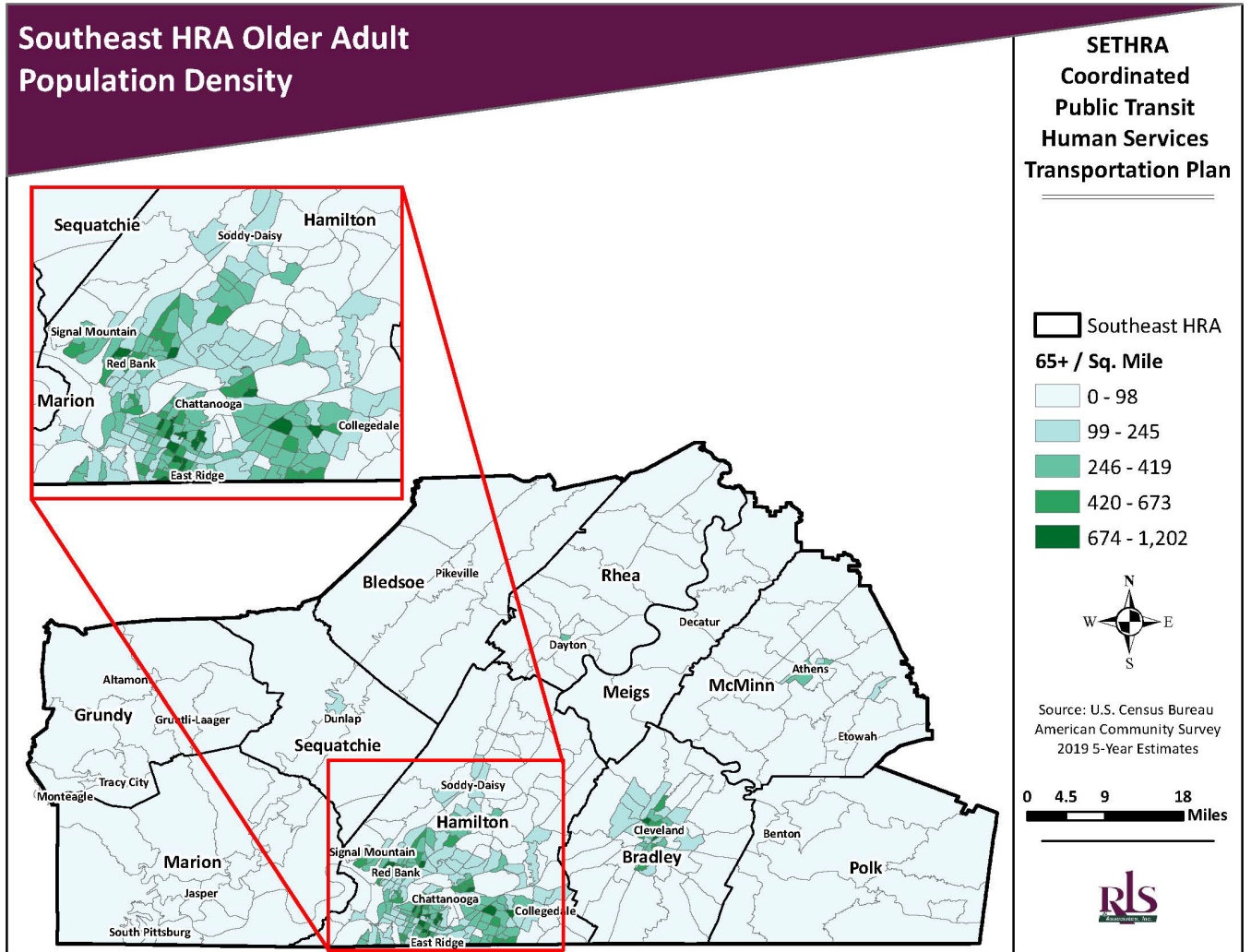
Older adults are most likely to use passenger transportation services when they cannot drive themselves or choose not to drive. This may include self-imposed limitations, including driving at night and trips to more distant destinations. Older adults also may live on a limited retirement income; therefore, 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 in the United States relating to the aging of the population. People primarily born during the post-WWII “baby boom,” era defined by the Census Bureau as persons born from 1946 through 1964 are more likely to need an alternative 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 times in our history. Quality of life issues and an individual’s desire to live independently will pressure 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.

The larger cities in the region, such as Chattanooga, Cleveland, Athens, and Red Bank, have higher densities of older adults (Figure 4) than smaller cities and rural areas. These areas, signified by the dark green shading, have upwards of 1,202 older adults living there per square mile. Higher densities of the older adult population indicate that transportation services will have more riders than areas with less density. However, it is

important to note that the demand from rural areas with lower densities also exists, but it is more widely dispersed.

**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 (49 CFR Part 37.3). When applied to transportation services, this definition permits a functional approach to disability determination rather than a strict categorical definition. In a functional approach, the mere presence of a condition 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 the SETHRA region is available through the 2019 ACS Five-Year Estimates of disability for the non-institutionalized population. Figure 5 compares the population count of individuals with disabilities in each county within the region. All counties have higher percentages of residents with disabilities than the statewide average for Tennessee (15.4 percent), except for Hamilton County (14.5 percent). When considering how to allocate transportation resources in each area, it is also important to note that Bledsoe, Grundy, and Meigs have the smallest total population. Hamilton and Bradley Counties have the highest total population.

**Figure 5: Disability Incidence by County**

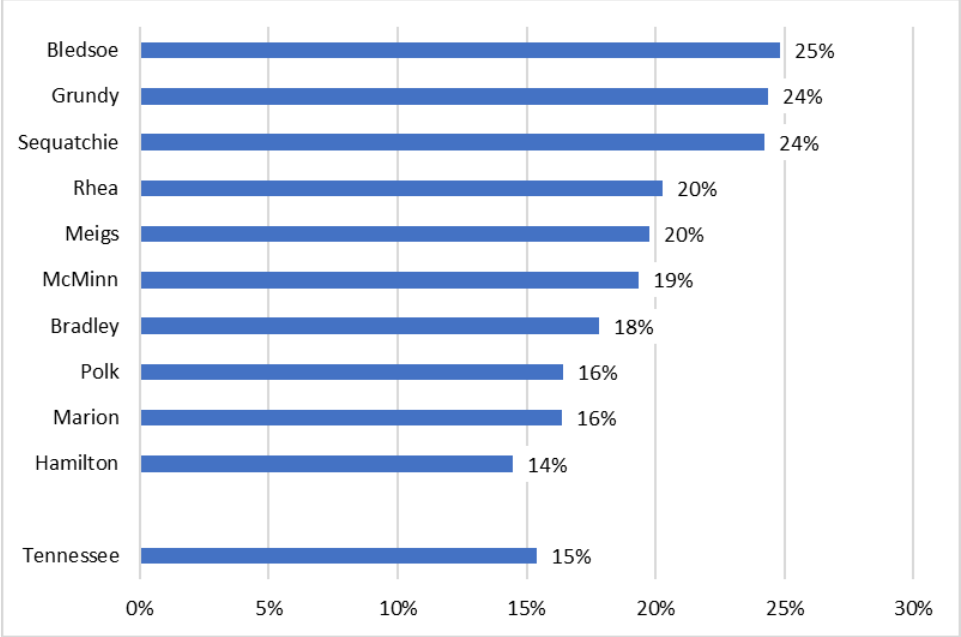
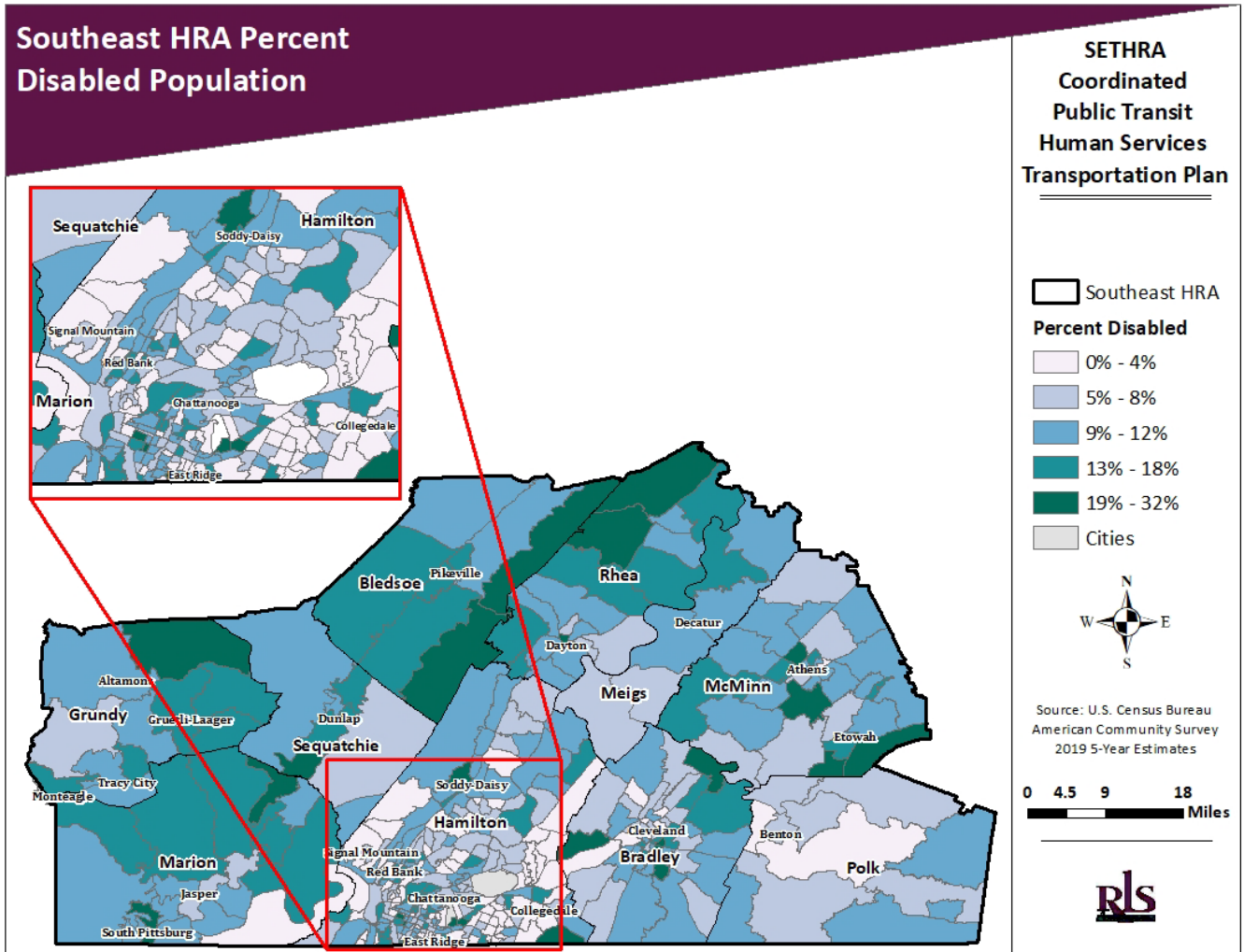


Figure 6 shows the geographic distribution of individuals with disabilities throughout the region, where it can be seen that the areas of higher density (19 – 32 percent) are concentrated more in the region's rural areas. This distribution differs from the older adult population densities, which were highest in the larger cities.

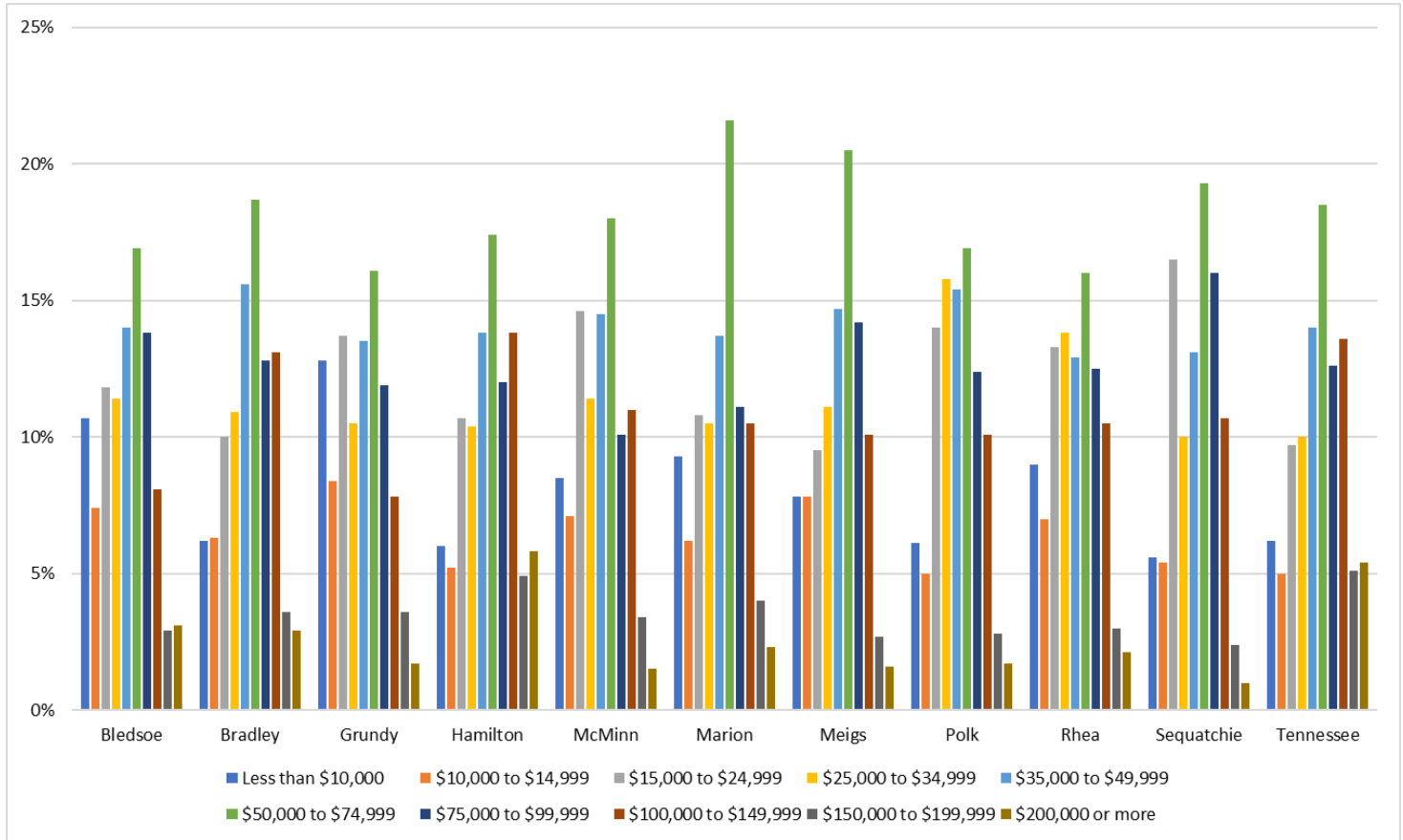
Figure 6: Disability Incidence by County



**Household Income**

About 38 percent of households in the region earn less than \$35,000 annually. Roughly 11 percent of households earned between \$25,000 and \$34,999. About 19 percent earned between \$10,000 and \$24,999, and eight percent earned less than \$10,000 yearly (Figure 7). The median household income for each area is shown in Table 1. All of the counties in the SETHRA region have median household incomes lower than that of the State of Tennessee (\$53,320), except Hamilton County at \$55,070.

**Figure 7: Household Income Ranges**



**Table 1: Median Household Income**

County	Income
Bledsoe	\$ 44,122
Bradley	\$ 51,331
Grundy	\$ 40,516
Hamilton	\$ 55,070
McMinn	\$ 43,285
Marion	\$ 49,432
Meigs	\$ 49,167
Polk	\$ 43,306
Rhea	\$ 42,206
Sequatchie	\$ 49,370
Tennessee	\$ 53,320



## Poverty Status

Figure 8 illustrates the percentages of households in each county living below the poverty level. Grundy County has the highest percentage of households in poverty at 23 percent, while Hamilton County has the lowest at 12 percent, slightly lower than the State of Tennessee (14 percent).

**Figure 8: Household Poverty Status by County**

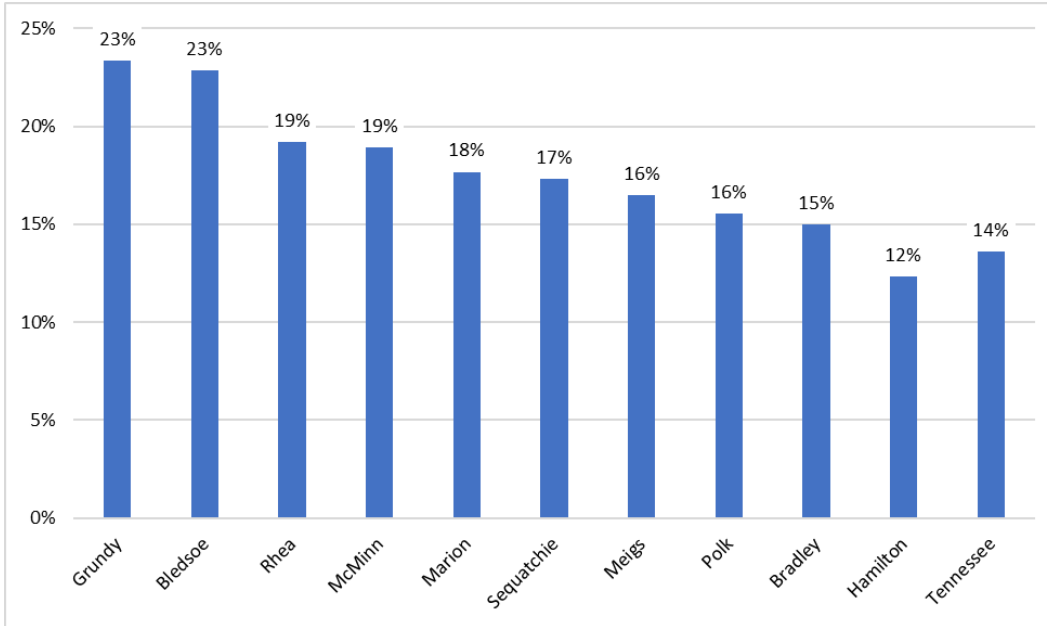
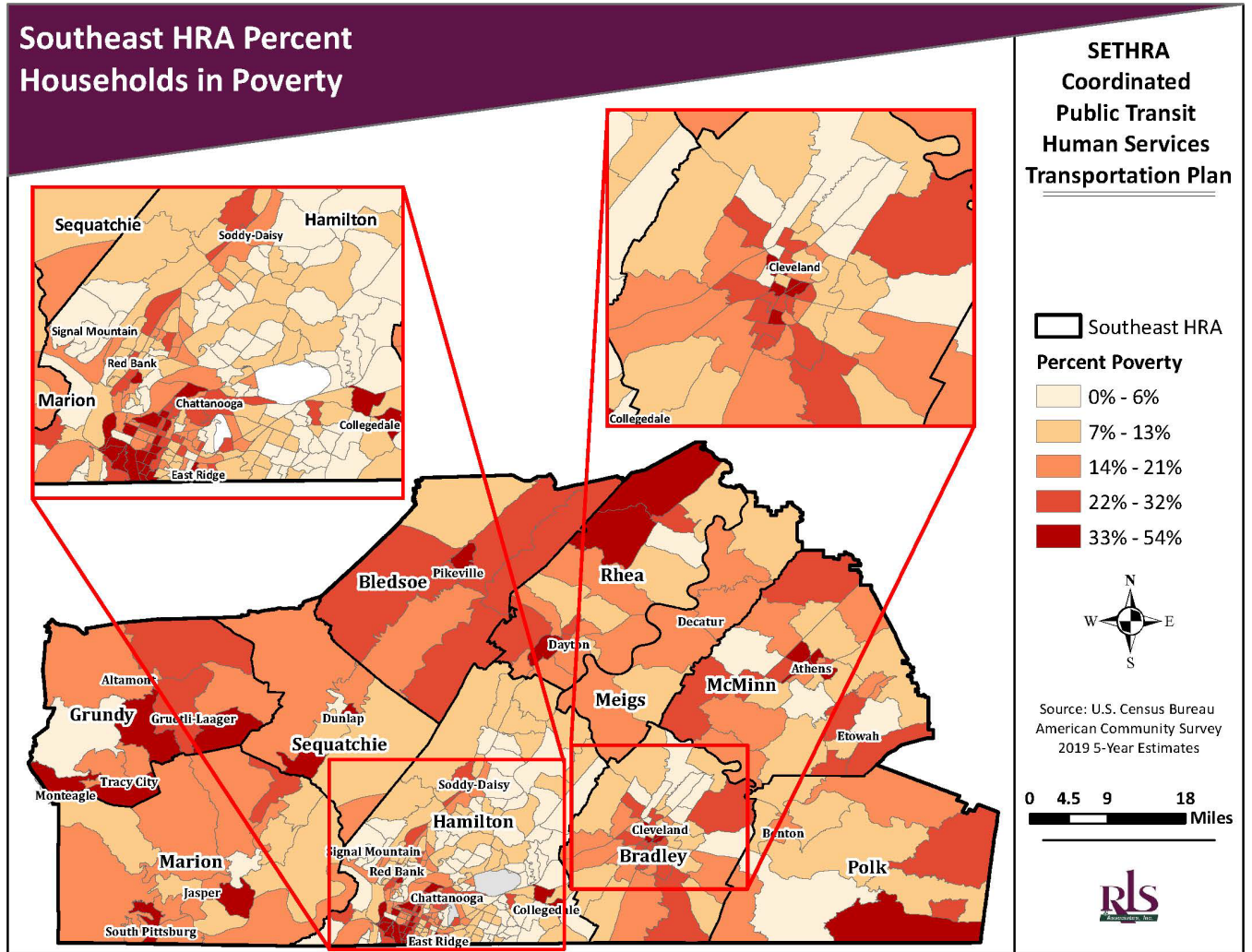


Figure 9 then shows the geographic distribution of these households. Areas with a higher density of households in poverty, which are in dark red and range from 33 to 54 percent of households in those areas, can be found in every county. These areas include, but are not limited to, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Athens, and Red Bank sections.

Figure 9: Household Poverty Status



**Zero Vehicle Households**

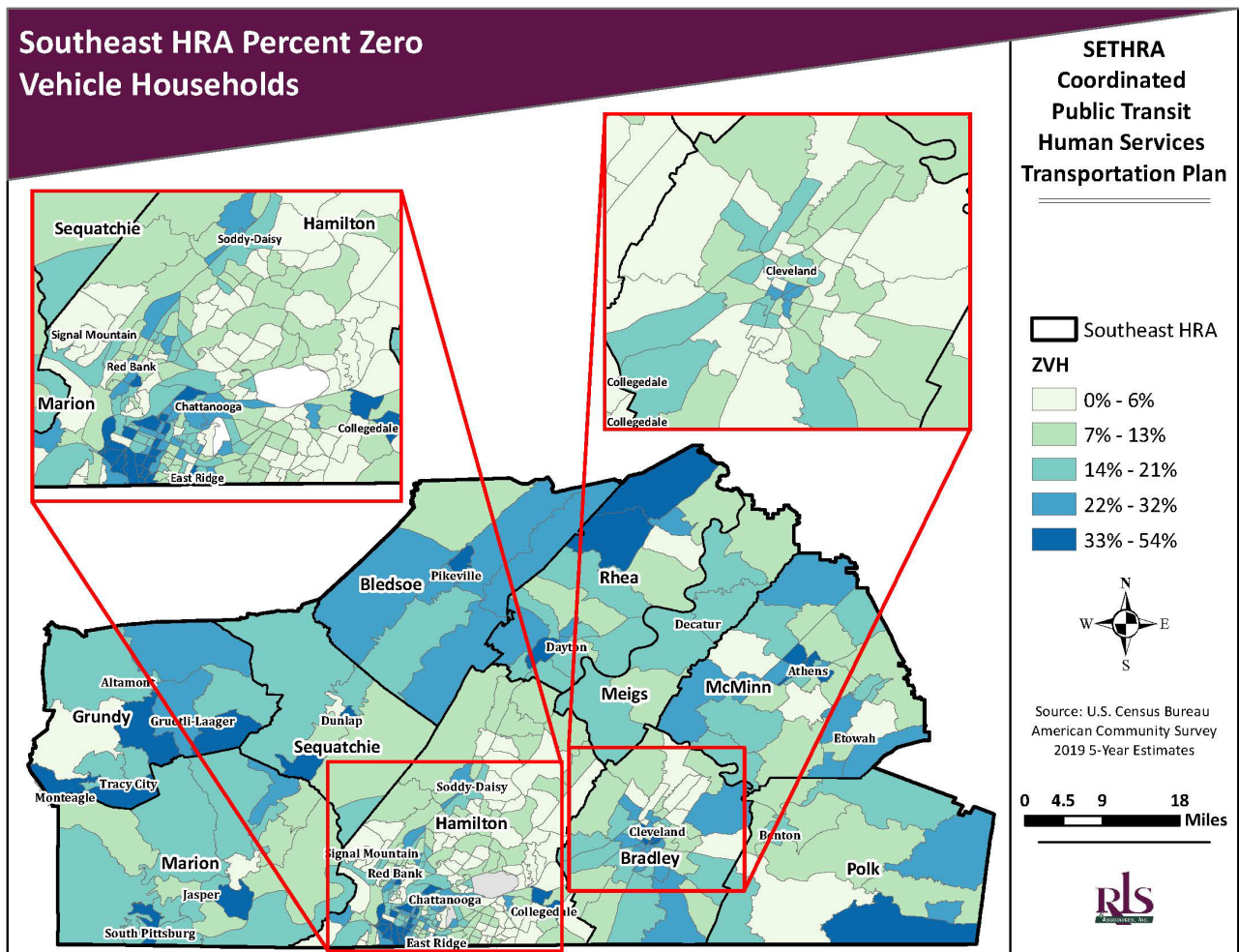
The number of vehicles available to a housing unit also is used as an indicator of demand for transit Service because in Tennessee, personal automobiles and shared-ride transportation services are the most common modes of transportation. There are 15,379 households (six percent) in the Region with no available vehicle. Table 2 lists the number and percent of zero-vehicle households per county.

**Table 2: Zero Vehicle Households by County**

County	ZVH	Households	Percent ZVH
Grundy	258	4,820	5%
Bledsoe	2,238	4,894	46%
Rhea	333	12,177	3%
McMinn	9,407	20,804	45%
Marion	1,045	11,477	9%
Sequatchie	575	5,528	10%
Meigs	276	4,938	6%
Polk	335	7,383	5%
Bradley	678	40,192	2%
Hamilton	234	145,213	0%
Tennessee	149,286	2,654,737	6%

Figure 10 shows the total percentages of households with no vehicle available by the Census block group. Several block groups, including areas in Chattanooga, Red Bank, Cleveland, Athens, and South Pittsburg, have between 33 and 54 percent of households with no vehicle available.

**Figure 10: Zero Vehicle Households**



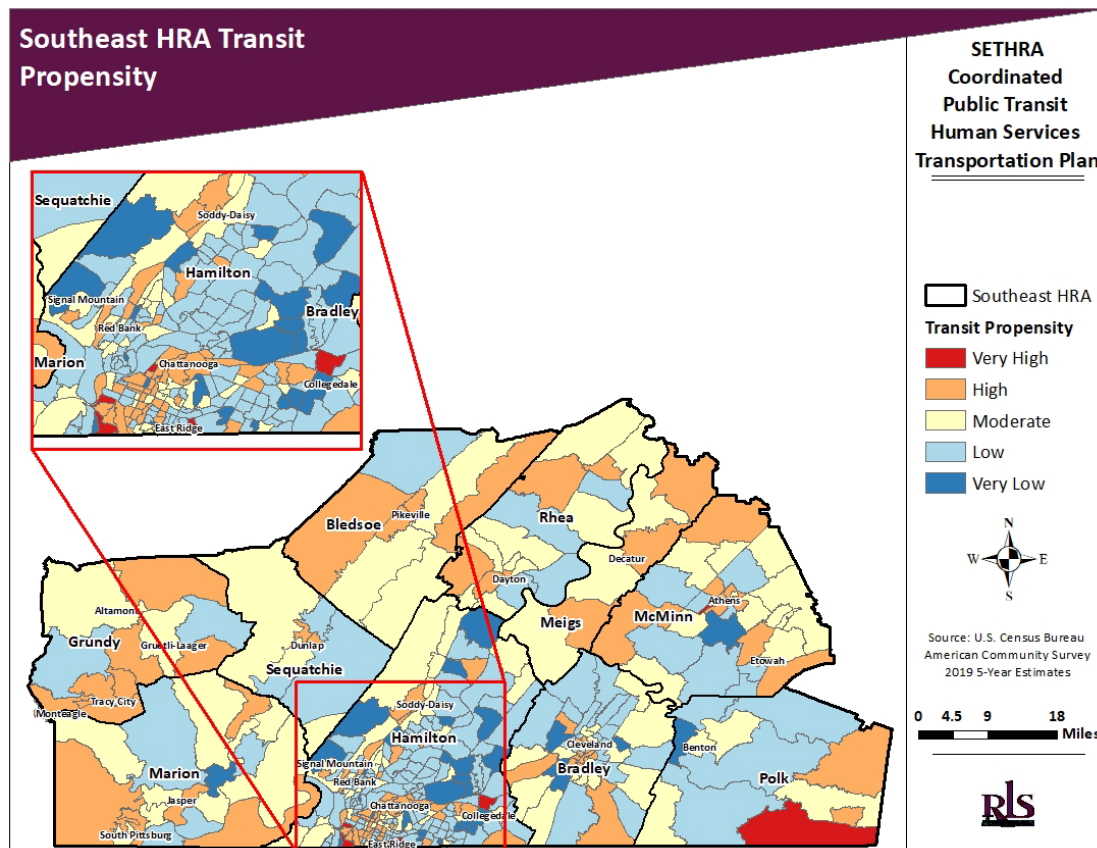
## Transit Propensity

Transit propensity is a measure of the likelihood that a local population will use transit service, if available, considering their demographic characteristics. The model was derived through research completed on transit trip generation. The result is an estimate of the relative propensity for transit per census block group.

U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates data was gathered at the block group level for the entire SETHRA region to calculate transit propensity. The data included: total population, total households, households below the poverty level, the number of persons age 60 and older, and the number of households with zero vehicles available.

Figure 11 offers a comparative depiction of transit propensity throughout the region. The areas with the darkest shading have the strongest likelihood for demand. However, it must be noted that "Very low" and "Low" values do not indicate a lack of need but a level of need that is below the mean (average) value for the study area. In fact, low and very low-demand areas are sometimes the most expensive to serve because passengers and destinations are spread far apart, and vehicles must travel longer distances with fewer riders. Figure 12 illustrates transit propensity throughout the SETHRA region.

**Figure 11: Transit Propensity**



# Providers

## TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER INVENTORY

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This chapter provides a list of public, human services agencies, and private transportation providers operating in the SETHRA region. Human service transportation programs provide rides to specific segments of the population, such as older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, or veterans. Many human service transportation programs provide transportation as an ancillary service to their clients who are participating in agency-sponsored activities. Non-emergency Transportation (NEMT) is service for medical purposes and for individuals who are eligible for transportation benefits (i.e., Medicaid-eligible).

Basic information about transportation providers serving the SETHRA region is listed below. Public transit providers are listed first, followed by the region's human services, intercity, NEMT, and veteran transportation providers. Appendix C includes each provider's mission, transportation service type, contact information, service area, days and hours of service, and eligibility requirements. Sources of this information include the Tennessee Department of Transportation, TN Commission on Aging & Disability, and individual transportation provider websites and interviews.

### **Public Transit – Open to the general public**

Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA) – SETHRA Region  
Chattanooga Area Regional Transit Authority (CARTA) - City of Chattanooga  
Cleveland Urban Area Transit System (CUATS) – City of Cleveland  
McMinn County Fixed Route – Athens City

### **Human Service Agencies and/or Senior Services – Open to a segment of the population based on eligibility criteria**

CARTA Care-A-Van - City of Chattanooga  
Special Transit Services (STS) – City of Chattanooga and Red Bank  
Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga – Greater Chattanooga area  
Life Bridges, Inc. –  
Skills Training and Rehabilitation Services (STARS) –  
CUATS Demand Response – City of Cleveland  
MyRide TN Southeast – Hamilton and Bradley Counties  
AIM Center – City of Chattanooga  
St. Alexius Outreach Ministries – Specific housing sites in Chattanooga  
Alexian Brothers (PACE) –  
Bledsoe County Senior Center – Bledsoe County  
Whitewell Senior Center – Whitewell County

### **Intercity Transportation Services**

Greyhound - Chattanooga  
Bike Chattanooga Bicycle Transit System - Chattanooga

Taxi Service  
Uber/Lyft

### **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)**

Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency – SETHRA Region  
Amara Home Care, Inc. – City of Chattanooga  
Howard Transportation – SETHRA Region  
Tennessee Carriers – Statewide  
White Oak Transportation – Greater Tennessee Area

### **Veterans Transportation**

Chattanooga VA Clinic – Regional VA Hospitals

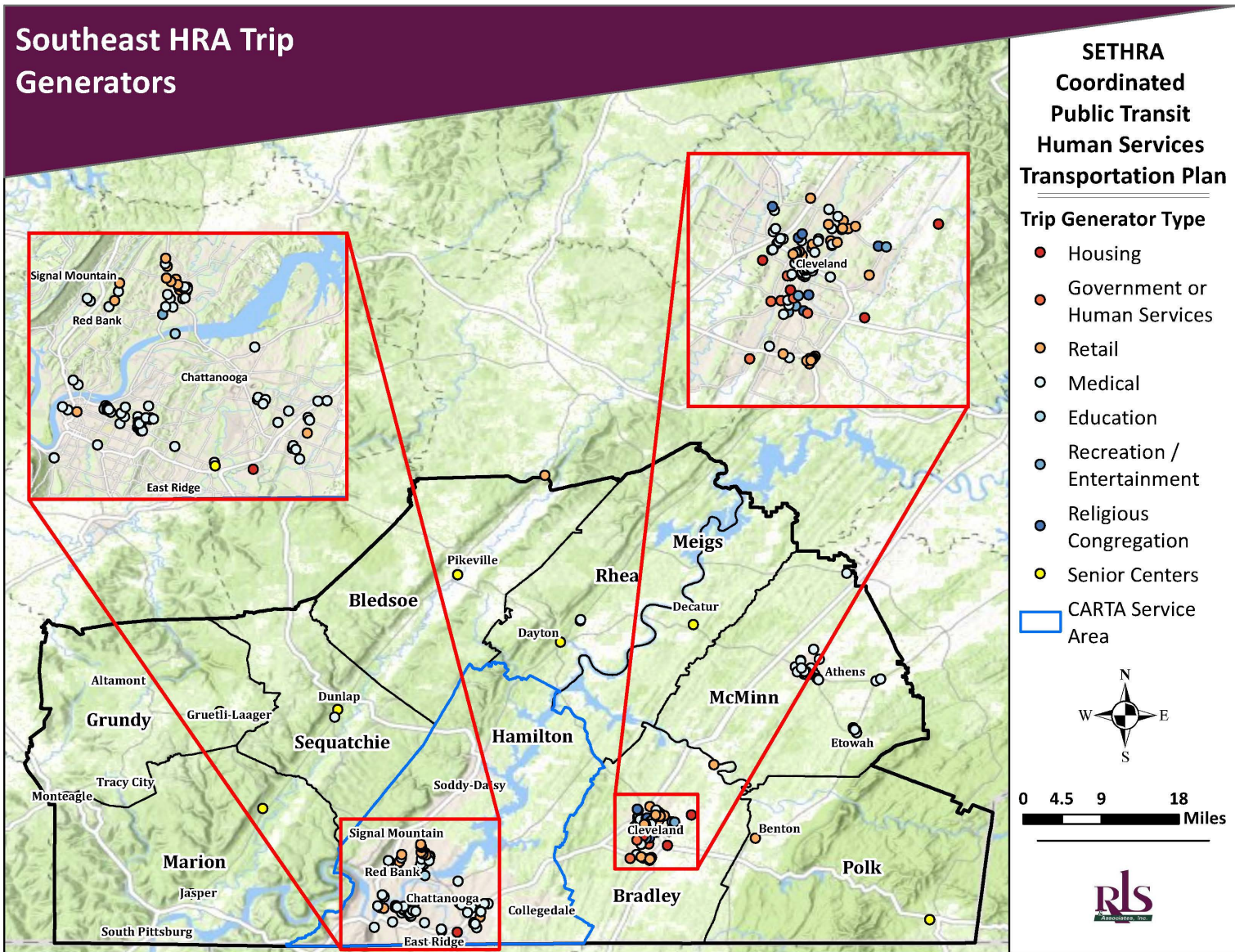
### **Major Trip Generators**

Major trip generators are destinations frequently served by public, human service agencies, and/or senior transportation providers, such as medical facilities, nutrition sites, apartment complexes, senior centers, employers, shopping facilities, and recreation venues. Each transportation provider and human service agency that participated in the coordinated transportation plan was asked to provide a list of the top destinations it serves or is requested to serve. The consulting team conducted additional research to identify key destinations in the area. Figure 12 depicts the location of major trip generators throughout the region. The map illustrates that most trip generators are located in the Chattanooga and Cleveland areas. Several trip generator groupings are also in Athens and Etowah. Throughout the more rural areas in the region, major trip generators are less common and usually in each county's towns.

It is important to understand that while many major trip generators are located in these towns and cities, the individuals needing a ride to and from those destinations often do not live within walking distance and need transportation to access them. Transportation providers are challenged by providing effective and efficient transportation to a large service area with a relatively low population density. Therefore, individuals that live beyond the public transit bus route service areas may have less access to public, private, or human service agency transportation options.

In addition, the hours of operation for rural transportation services are sometimes not as extensive as those of shopping centers, employers, or other major destinations. Furthermore, rural transportation providers may not cross jurisdictional lines (i.e., county boundaries). Limited hours and service area boundaries further limit a person's access to major destinations. Therefore, access to services is limited both geographically and temporally. The table in Figure 13 outlines the hours of operation for the public and human service agency transportation providers.

Figure 12: Trip Generators







**ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The tables below summarize the characteristics of the participating transportation providers. The rightmost column describes whether the provider is “open door” or “closed door.” Providers operate “closed door” service if transportation is provided to agency clients only. If transportation is open to the public or a segment of the population (such as any older adults within the service area) without the requirement that the individual be an agency client, then the service is “open door.”

Agency	Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)	Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (If Yes, Who?)	Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit)	Vehicles Are Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N) *
<b>Regional or Multi-County</b>				
Chattanooga VA Clinic	Yes	No	Public Non-Profit	Yes, veterans only
Howard Transportation	Yes	No	Private For-Profit	Yes, clients only
MyRide TN Southeast	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	No, public that meets eligibility requirements can ride
Southeast TN Human Resource Agency	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	No public that meets eligibility requirements can ride

Agency	Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)	Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (If Yes, Who?)	Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit)	Vehicles Are Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N) *
<b>Hamilton County</b>				
AIM Center	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	Yes
Alexian Brothers – PACE	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	Yes
Amara Home Care, Inc.	Yes	No	Private For-Profit	Yes
Chattanooga Area Regional Transit Authority	Yes	No	Public Non-Profit	No

Agency	Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)	Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (If Yes, Who?)	Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit)	Vehicles Are Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N) *
CARTA Care-A-Van	Yes	No	Public Non-Profit	No
Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	Yes
St. Alexius Outreach Ministries	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	Yes
White Oak Transportation	Yes	No	Private For-Profit	Yes

Agency	Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)	Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (If Yes, Who?)	Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit)	Vehicles Are Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N) *
<b>Bledsoe County</b>				
Bledsoe County Senior Center	Yes	No	Public Non-Profit	Yes

Agency	Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)	Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (If Yes, Who?)	Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit)	Vehicles Are Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N) *
<b>Bradley County</b>				
Cleveland Urban Area Transit System	Yes	No	Public Non-Profit	No
CUATS Demand Response	Yes	No	Public Non-Profit	No

Agency	Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)	Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (If Yes, Who?)	Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit)	Vehicles Are Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N) *
McMinn County				
McMinn County - SETHRA	Yes	No	Private Non-Profit	No

A summary of provider hours of operation, fleet, and budget characteristics is provided in the appendix.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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The assessment of unmet transportation needs for older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, and the general public was conducted through a four-step process outlined below.

### COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The inventory and operating characteristics of transportation services available in each county and throughout the region were compared with transit needs identified through the demographic assessment. The comparative assessment was then refined through stakeholder interviews.

The demographic indicators of demand for transportation include population density, age, household income, zero vehicle households, and the population of individuals with disabilities. Locations that rank highest among the indicators are likely to have higher potential demand for transportation services.

Hamilton and Bradley Counties are projected to experience the most population growth. Much of the projected growth is centered around the urban areas in each of these counties. Bledsoe and Rhea are projected to experience the most population growth among the other counties in the region.

Bledsoe and McMinn Counties have the highest percentage of households with no available vehicle. McMinn also has the third most households in the region (after Hamilton and Bradley Counties).

- ◆ In Bledsoe County, the area around Pikesville has the highest density of zero-vehicle households.
- ◆ In McMinn County, the Athens area has the highest density of zero-vehicle households. There are areas with similar densities of zero vehicle households in all counties.
- ◆ In Marion County, the Jasper and South Pittsburg areas have the highest densities of zero vehicle households.
- ◆ The southwest portion of Sequatchie County has the highest density of zero-vehicle households.
- ◆ South Polk County has high densities of zero-vehicle households.
- ◆ Monteagle, Tracy City, and Central Grundy County have high densities of zero vehicle households in Grundy County.
- ◆ Areas of Chattanooga urbanized area also have high densities of zero vehicle households.

High poverty areas are located similar to zero vehicle household densities, but the high-density areas are less concentrated. In addition to the above-noted areas, the Dayton area and northern block groups in Rhea County have high densities of households living below poverty.

There are moderately high densities of individuals with disabilities in all counties. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 25 percent of the population in Bledsoe, Grundy, and Sequatchie Counties have a disability. Tennessee has a disability incidence of 15 percent statewide.

Finally, the areas with high densities of older adults in the region are more likely to occur in the densely populated areas of Chattanooga (Hamilton), Cleveland (Bradley), Athens (McMinn), Dunlap (Sequatchie), and Dayton (Rhea).

Key destinations such as medical offices, hospitals, and employers generate demand for transportation services. Key destinations generate demand during their hours of operation. Therefore, it is important to compare where transportation services are available and when they operate. For example, transportation options supporting shift work may not be available in certain areas.

Throughout the region, major trip generators are highly concentrated in the larger communities of Chattanooga and Cleveland. Likely, local rural residents often travel to the larger communities in their counties or neighboring counties for employment, medical appointments, shopping, and human services.

## **KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

Stakeholders for the plan include agencies that provide transportation in and around the county. Stakeholder interviews included phone calls, emails, and an online survey conducted as part of the statewide Mobility Strategic Plan (2021). A list of organizations included in the interviews is provided here.

Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA)  
Cleveland Urban Area Transit System (CUATS) – City of Cleveland  
Special Transit Services (STS)  
Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga  
Life Bridges, Inc.  
Skills Training and Rehabilitation Services (STARS)  
CUATS Demand Response  
MyRide TN Southeast – Hamilton and Bradley Counties  
AIM Center  
St. Alexius Outreach Ministries  
Howard Transportation  
Chattanooga VA Clinic

The participating stakeholders each described the services they provide and the way clients travel when the agency is not the transportation provider. Stakeholders identified the network of existing services and the process people use to schedule rides. Unmet needs are included in the summary section of this chapter.

## **STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Two virtual meetings were facilitated with stakeholders from the study area. Meetings were attended by transportation providers, organizations serving older adults and individuals with disabilities, and agencies serving people with low incomes. The first meeting (April 2023) was open to participation from interested riders and clients of the stakeholder organizations. The general public and all stakeholders were invited to attend the second meeting (September 2023).

The transportation needs identified during the public and stakeholder meetings are included in the summary section of this chapter.

The purpose of the first stakeholder meeting was to introduce the planning process and explore unmet transportation needs and gaps in services. The group discussion focused on goals from the previous Coordinated Plan and progress toward reaching those goals. The group also discussed the range of existing transportation options available in the area.

The second meeting was facilitated to discuss potential coordinated transportation goals and strategies that could be implemented to address the identified unmet needs. The participants were invited to assign priorities to the suggested goals and strategies. Those priorities are reflected in this plan.

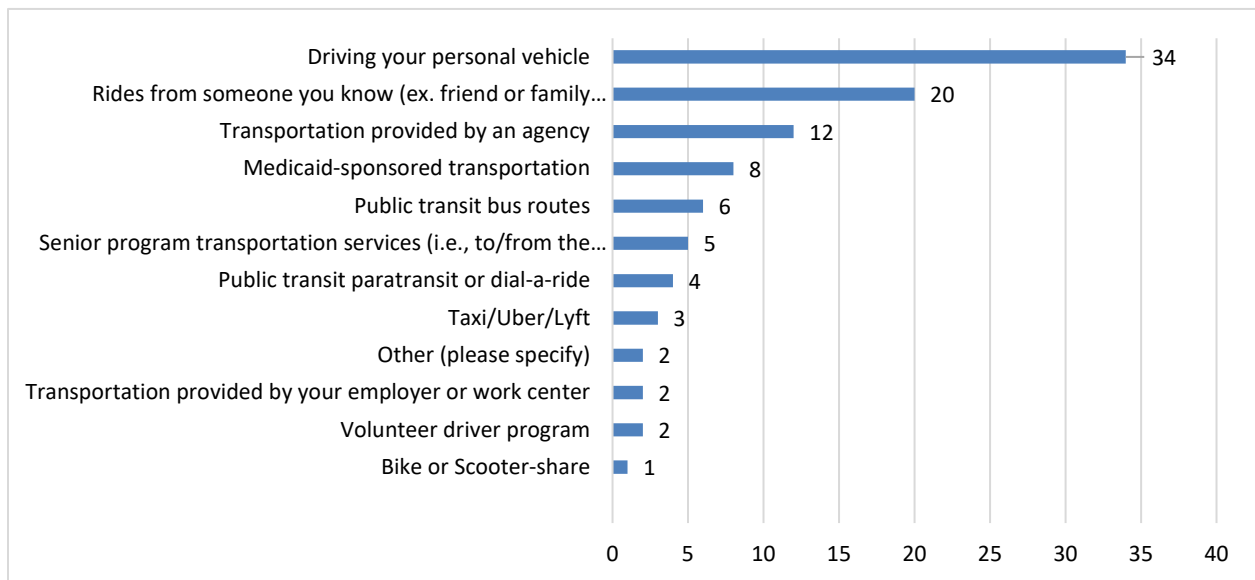
**PUBLIC SURVEY**

Two public surveys were included in the needs assessment. The first was conducted as part of the statewide Mobility Strategic Plan process in 2021. The second survey was conducted during the summary of 2022. The public surveys were advertised in local newspapers and on the project websites. Local stakeholders were invited to post a flyer announcing the surveys for their clients, guests, and peer agencies. Surveys were available in English and Spanish languages. Paper distribution of the survey was offered upon request, and no requests were received. Summaries of the survey results are provided below.

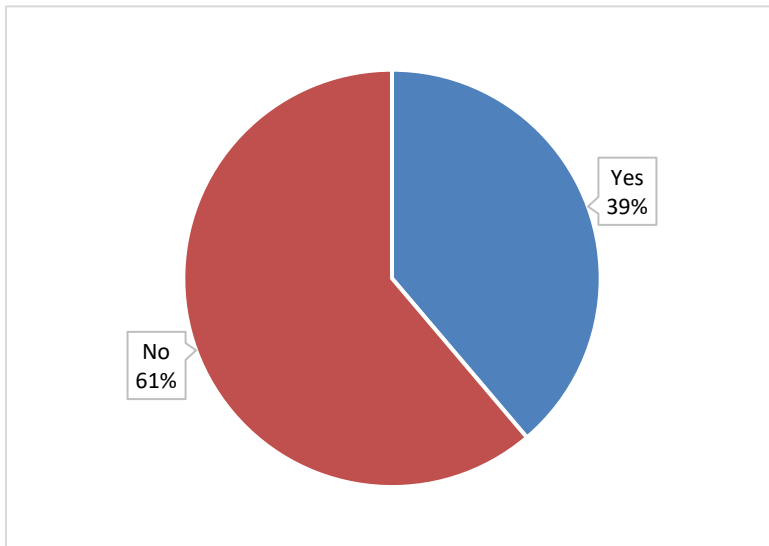
**2021 Public Survey Results**

Responses were generated from twenty-seven zip codes in the region. The highest number of responses came from zip codes included in Sewanee, Rockwood and Spencer.

Thirty-four respondents drive a personal vehicle as their primary mode of transportation. Riding with a friend or family member was the second most common mode of transportation. Other respondents indicated that they use transportation provided by an agency, Medicaid-sponsored transportation, public buses, or other modes of service.



Twenty-six (or 39%) of the survey respondents stated they do not have a ride when they need one. The trip purposes where people needed a ride but did not have one included medical appointments, work, and essential errands like grocery shopping, banking, or haircuts.



### ***Survey Respondent Demographics***

Fifteen respondents were age 65 years or older. Twenty respondents indicated having a mobility limitation that limits their ability to walk to a bus stop and/or board a vehicle without assistance.

### **2022 Public Survey Results**

The public survey was open for 90 days in the summer of 2022. Despite the wide distribution effort, the response rate was very low; there were seven responses. A summary of responses is provided below:

- ◆ There were four responses from McMinn County and one from Sequatchie, Bledsoe, and Polk Counties. One person did not identify the county where they live.
- ◆ Six of eight respondents drive their personal vehicle as their primary mode of transportation. The remaining respondents use SETHRA or ride with a family member or friend.
- ◆ Five survey respondents indicate that they usually travel outside the county where they live for medical treatments and appointments.
- ◆ Four respondents indicated that the costs of insurance, gasoline, or car maintenance sometimes leads them not to have access to reliable transportation.
- ◆ Survey respondents were between the ages of 35 and 59.
- ◆ Three respondents indicated having a disability that requires them to use a mobility device such as a cane, walker, or wheelchair.

## SUMMARY

While transportation is available throughout the region and the providers are doing a good job of working within the available resources to meet needs, some gaps in access to service have been identified. These gaps do not mean that the existing services are failing. Rather, they indicate that the existing transportation services provide an important resource but that the need, in some areas, exceeds the capacity of the current transit network. The following bullet points list the unmet needs that were identified through the planning process.

- ◆ The population is projected to increase in urban and rural areas, with the most concentrated growth occurring in Chattanooga and Cleveland. Population growth typically puts additional demand on public transportation and human services programs which will need to expand and/or coordinate to address needs.
- ◆ The transportation needs identified in the previous Coordinated Plan for the SETHRA region are still valid today.
- ◆ Many people travel or need to travel outside their county of residence for medical treatments. Many of the appointments are in Chattanooga or Athens.
- ◆ People may not be aware that transportation options are available to them. Getting the word out is an ongoing challenge.
- ◆ There are real or perceived gaps in available transportation services between urban and rural areas. In many cases, transportation may be available, but the people who need rides across the suburban area do not know what services are available.
- ◆ One of the biggest transportation demands is wheelchair-accessible vehicles to transport people to dialysis and other life-sustaining appointments. The existing transportation services are not able to meet the demand for providing wheelchair-accessible trips at a time when the rider needs them. They can often provide the trip if the rider has a flexible schedule.
- ◆ Access to jobs is important for employers and employees. Most jobs are within the county of residence but may require shift work that begins or ends outside public transportation hours of operation. Also, public transportation services in rural areas may not be robust enough to meet the demand for daily demand-response work trips and the demand for medical transportation and other trip needs.
- ◆ Volunteer drivers are needed to support the expansion of programs using volunteers.
- ◆ Human services agencies and transportation providers are experiencing staff and volunteer shortages. Staff shortages create more significant challenges for transportation providers.
- ◆ Travel training to educate and inform the public about transportation options and how to use them.
- ◆ Software for scheduling demand-response trips could help providers to improve efficiency and save administrative time.
- ◆ Coordination between rural and urban public transportation providers addresses gaps in transportation access for trips that cross into and out of the CARTS service area.
- ◆ Transportation options are limited for people who do not live on a bus route.



- ◆ Inflation is burdening affordability on individuals and the organizations that are providing transportation. Options to identify additional funding and maximize cost efficiency while still meeting transportation needs are a priority.
- ◆ Vehicle supply chain shortages may be temporary but they are limiting providers' capacity to improve or expand services.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION

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### GOALS

The unmet transportation needs and gaps that are identified in the previous chapters are synthesized into four areas and presented below in terms of goals. Each area of need is supported by the input provided by the local stakeholders and general public. Stakeholders participated in a meeting or scored the goals through an online polling activity to prioritize them. During the prioritizing exercise, stakeholders ranked the top strategies within each goal. These rankings are not static, and they may change as different revenues or other factors evolve. However, they are intended as a guide to local stakeholders as the work in coordination to address the unmet needs and gaps in services for the target population groups.

This plan is not to be interpreted as an implementation plan, as agencies will need to adopt the strategies as they are able to implement and as funding opportunities are identified. The plan serves as supporting documentation to strengthen grant applications and solicitations for funding.

The goals, areas of need, strategies, and comparative costs associated with implementing each strategy are summarized below. The priority ranking of strategies given by the local stakeholders is also noted. The priorities indicate which strategies the stakeholders feel are the most important to achieve. Priorities do not necessarily reflect the order in which strategies will be implemented.

**Goals Summary**

Goal 1	Needs Addressed	Priority Ranking	Strategies	Comparative Costs
<p><b>Establish a structure for regional collaboration that advances our efforts to improve access to transportation for everyone</b></p>	<p>All needs identified in the plan will be addressed through these strategies. Planning transportation services and actively engaging with local stakeholders who can identify funding, strategies, and partners will enable service to address needs</p>	Medium	1.1 Establish and actively engage a Regional Transportation Advisory Board.	\$
		High	1.2 Mobility Managers champion advancements in coordinated transportation across the region.	\$\$
		High	1.3 Improve transportation information available through 211 and TN Pathfinder.	\$
Goal 2	Needs Addressed	Priority Ranking	Strategies	Comparative Costs
<p><b>Recruit and train more drivers, including volunteer drivers</b></p>	<p>Travel across multiple counties; dialysis transportation; access to jobs; travel between rural and urban areas; additional capacity during staffing/vehicle shortages</p>	Medium	2.1 Create a coordinated approach to recruit drivers for public, senior, and human services transportation in all counties.	\$
		Medium	2.2 Create volunteer transportation program working groups and focus on consistent volunteer service standards, training, customer service, and vehicle safety standards.	\$
		Medium	2.3 Develop a volunteer and veterans transportation driver training program.	\$\$

<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	<b>Priority Ranking</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Comparative Costs</b>
<b>Coordinate outreach and travel training for rural transportation</b>	Build awareness or understanding of how to use transportation	Medium	3.1 Establish a rural Travel Training program.	\$\$
		Medium	3.2 “Trip Sheets” – Develop handouts that offer passengers easy transportation guidance.	\$\$
<b>Goal 4</b>	<b>Needs Addressed</b>	<b>Priority Ranking</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Comparative Costs</b>
<b>Maintain existing transportation services for human service agency clients and the general public</b>	All needs are addressed within this goal	High	4.1 Replace and maintain vehicles through FTA/TDOT funding and local sources.	\$\$\$
		High	4.2 Expand transportation service for new hours, days, and geographic area zones.	\$\$\$\$
		Medium	4.3 Develop a protocol for shared-ride, long-distance trips between local providers.	\$\$
		Medium	4.4 Add same-day and on-demand service capacity.	\$\$\$\$

The following pages provide a more detailed description of the goals and strategies. Each strategy includes a description of potential funding sources, important funding measures, parties responsible for leading or participating in implementation, and a suggested implementation timeline.

Implementation timelines are dependent on revenue streams and capacity of the responsible parties. Some top priorities may require more time to develop and plan and lower priorities may be implementable in a short timeline. For this reason, suggested implementation timelines are included in the descriptions following. The timelines for implementation are categories as follows:

- ◆ Ongoing — A strategy that is ongoing or repeats annually and does not have a specific start or end date.
- ◆ Short-Term — A strategy that could have any level of priority and can be implemented within 12 months to 18 months.
- ◆ Mid-Term — A strategy that could have any level of priority and may require multiple steps for implementation. Mid-Term strategies are targeted for implementation in 18 months to two years.
- ◆ Long-Term — A strategy that could have any level of priority and may require multiple steps and additional funding to implement and sustain. Long-Term strategies are targeted for implementation within two to four years, or longer.

**GOAL #1: ESTABLISH A STRUCTURE FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATION THAT ADVANCES OUR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION FOR EVERYONE**

**Strategy 1.1: Establish and Actively Engage a Regional Transportation Advisory Board**

The basic framework for Regional Transportation Advisory Board was initiated with the implementation of the Office of Mobility and Accessible Transportation’s (OMAT’s) Strategic Plan. Under this recommended strategy, the HRA region will establish a Transportation Advisory Board with regional representatives. It is recommended that your Board will act as a regional Mobility Manager(s).

The Regional Transportation Advisory Board will consist of representatives of public, private, human service agencies, aging and disability services, veterans’ services, senior center, and intercity bus transportation providers. Other members of the Board should include organizations representing riders and potential riders, such as economic development offices, parks and recreation organizations, chambers of commerce, hospitals, nonprofit organizations, county and/or other local government officials, and major employers.

Membership, roles, and responsibilities on the Board should be defined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** SETHRA and OMAT will work together to develop the structure. Other local partners will participate in the Board.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Travel patterns compared to the locations of major trip generators (e.g., hospitals, industrial parks/major employers, residential areas, senior centers, recreation) are analyzed within the region to understand how the communities within the county are connected.
- ◆ The Regional Transportation Advisory Board is established with Memoranda of Understanding (MOU).
- ◆ Members of the Regional Council support the Mobility Manager by implementing Strategy 1.1 and Goals 2 through 4. Mobility Managers will lead the effort with advice from the Regional Councils and report to the OMAT on a regular basis.
- ◆ The number of trips provided within and outside the region within the limits of existing resources (vehicles, drivers, funding) increases each year.
- ◆ The number of trips coordinated through passenger transfers, park-and-rides, or referrals increases yearly.
- ◆ Needs identified in the CPT-HSTP are addressed, or progress toward addressing those needs is demonstrated.

**Implementation Timeframe:** One year.

**Implementation Budget:** Minimal additional funding is required to support teleconferencing and travel expenses for the Board members and Mobility Manager.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** Organization and coordination of Regional Transportation Advisory Boards are eligible mobility management activities and could be partially funded through the Section 5310 program if mobility management is a supported activity. In-kind contributions of time and expenses by participating agencies are an eligible local match for a portion of the Section 5310 program grant funding.

**Strategy 1.2: Mobility Managers Champion Advancements in Coordinated Transportation Across the Region**

The Regional Mobility Manager will report to the local hiring agency (SETHRA) and provide regular updates to the OMAT. The Mobility Manager’s duties will include advancing goals and strategies prioritized in the locally developed CPT-HSTP, facilitating the Regional Transportation Advisory Board, and coordinating with all organizations that serve older adults, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with low incomes. The Mobility Manager will develop programs to enhance access to transportation services and work toward strengthening the comprehensive transportation planning effort that is part of local and regional housing, economic development, and infrastructure plans for the entire region.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** SETHRA and OMAT will work together to develop the Mobility Manager job description, reporting requirements, and duties.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Needs identified in the CPT-HSTP are addressed, or progress toward addressing those needs is demonstrated.
- ◆ The number of trips per hour and/or mile provided by participating agencies increases.

- ◆ Cost and trip-sharing agreements between agencies are achieved.
- ◆ Travel training programs for various transportation options are developed.
- ◆ The number of participants in travel training programs each year.
- ◆ The number of outreach/engagements where transportation or travel training information was shared with potential riders.
- ◆ Develop balanced representation on the Transportation Advisory Board across the region and different focus areas (planning, local governments, seniors, individuals with disabilities, housing, healthcare, economic development, volunteers, veterans, and more).
- ◆ Facilitate Regional Transportation Advisory Board meetings.

**Implementation Timeframe:** One year.

**Implementation Budget:** Annual estimated salary of \$55,000 to \$75,000 plus office space and associated indirect costs.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** The cost of a Mobility Manager is an eligible mobility management activity and could be funded through the Section 5310 program. In-kind contributions of time and expenses by participating agencies are an eligible local match for a portion of the Section 5310 program grant funding.

**Strategy 1.3: Improve Transportation Information Available through 211 and TN Pathfinder**

Rural transportation providers struggle to make their services known to individuals needing transportation. In nearly all Tennessee rural communities, there appear to be misperceptions about eligibility (e.g., “That bus is only for seniors and not for me.”), service hours, and service area. This problem is common across rural America and a challenge to overcome. Yet, it is one of the most important challenges to address. This strategy is recommended approaches to overcome misinformation or lack of information about the region's public transportation services.

Tennessee 211 is a centralized location for information about a range of available community resources, including transportation. Yet, the information about transportation services available in the 211 directory is extremely limited. For example, SETHRA is listed only as a rural transportation service for most counties in the region for older adults and individuals with disabilities. It is not listed as a rideshare or bus program.

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder is a director of services, community calendar and trainings for the disability community (Tnpathfinder.org). It is hosted by Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities and partners with TN Council on Developmental Disabilities. Individuals can search for information about transportation options and other resources or call and talk with a representative who will help connect them with available services.

A Mobility Manager would work with 211, TN Pathfinder, and the public, private, volunteer, and human service agency transportation providers to develop a standardized service inventory form that will be used to update 211 and TN Pathfinder. Transportation providers will update the information, and the Mobility Manager will ensure it is accurately provided to 211 and TN Pathfinder. The Mobility Manager will

periodically check with transportation providers about updates. Transportation providers must also take the initiative to keep the Mobility Manager updated when changes to service occur.

The information available through 211 and TN Pathfinder should be standardized and should include, at a minimum:

- ◆ Name of the organization.
- ◆ Service area.
- ◆ Eligibility.
- ◆ Fare/Cost to ride.
- ◆ Link to an application for service.
- ◆ Phone number to contact the transportation provider and schedule a trip.
- ◆ The web address for the transportation services and vital documents about the services offered.
- ◆ Vehicle accessibility status.

***Option:*** If the information necessary for transportation services is too robust and deemed inappropriate for 211 and TN Pathfinder, a new resource directory system for people looking for transportation services could be created. If the stand-alone resource is strictly available online, it can be created and maintained by the Mobility Manager and hosted on the provider, Regional Transportation Advisory Board, and agency or government websites. An example of such a resource is the Miami Valley Ride Finder ([www.miamivalleyridefinder.org](http://www.miamivalleyridefinder.org)) site, which is maintained by the Regional Mobility Manager and Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Miami Valley in Dayton, Ohio.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** Public, human service agency, private, and nonprofit transportation providers (including agencies that purchase tickets or rides on behalf of eligible clients) and Mobility Manager.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Updated and maintained 211 and TN Pathfinder directories of information.
- ◆ The number of transportation riders who learn about a provider from 211 or TN Pathfinder and call to schedule a ride or get additional information.
- ◆ The number of state agency and local government websites that list 211 and TN Pathfinder as a resource for information about transportation services.

**Implementation Timeframe:** One year.

**Implementation Budget:** Minimal expense for collecting the information and maintaining it.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** Updating the directory information is an activity that could be completed by the Mobility Manager and therefore partially funded through the Section 5310 program. Additional local match would be provided and shared by participating transportation providers, SETHRA, and/or other grants and funding resources such as the Older Americans Act. The 211 directory is funded by the United Way.

## **GOAL #2: RECRUIT AND TRAIN MORE DRIVERS, INCLUDING VOLUNTEER DRIVERS**

The driver and volunteer shortage that occurred after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic has persisted nationwide and is impacting the ability of transportation programs to meet demand. This goal focuses on recruiting and training more drivers.

### **Strategy 2.1: Create a Coordinated Approach to Recruit Drivers for Public, Senior, and Human Services Transportation in All Counties.**

The Mobility Manager or another designated leader will form a regional driver recruitment committee of public and human services or transportation program managers with volunteer and senior transportation services representation. The committee will develop a regional recruitment plan.

The committee will inventory providers to understand driver pay scales, qualification requirements, and agency hiring procedures. It will advertise positions through a collaborative recruitment campaign once per quarter.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** Managers and/or supervisors from public, human service agencies, private and nonprofit transportation providers and the Mobility Manager will coordinate activities and develop a standardized approach. Partnerships with Chambers of Commerce or non-profit organizations that focus on job development will be advantageous.

#### **Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Partnerships are developed and the group works together to develop coordinated recruitment tools. The partnerships can be between two agencies or all agencies.
- ◆ Number of shared recruitment activities developed and executed each year.
- ◆ Number of drivers recruited by all participants using the regional recruitment plan.
- ◆ Quality of driver applications received.
- ◆ Overall staff time spent on recruitment is reduced but recruitment activity levels increase or remain stable.

**Implementation Timeframe:** One year.

**Implementation Budget:** \$2,000 to \$10,000 depending upon the approach to recruitment and time dedicated to enhancing the driver recruitment efforts.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** Existing budgets for program administration will be shared to cover labor expenses involved with meeting and planning efforts. Direct expenses for printing and advertising will be included in existing budgets. If local policies allow, transportation providers could sell advertising space on vehicles or at stops (if applicable) to businesses in order to offset the cost of improved recruitment efforts.



### **Strategy 2.2: Create Volunteer Transportation Working Groups**

The Mobility Manager or another designated party will create a working group with the managers of each volunteer driver and veteran transportation program to discuss the challenges of providing volunteer transportation in their service areas (i.e., volunteer driver vehicle conditions, driver training/skills, recruitment challenges, etc.), goals for their programs, eligibility requirements, operating procedures, and potential challenges to addressing the gaps and unmet transportation needs in their service areas. Once the opportunities and challenges are shared, the Mobility Manager or other designee will work with the group to identify limitations and opportunities for success through coordination.

**Counties Included:** All counties in each region.

**Responsible Parties:** Mobility Manger and organizations with volunteer driver programs.

#### **Performance Measures:**

- ◆ The Mobility Manager identifies participant organizations throughout the region to include the organizations listed in this plan. Each participant is invited to join the working group. This group may be a subset of the Regional Transportation Advisory Board.
- ◆ Working group members identify new opportunities to strengthen volunteer transportation services.

**Implementation Timeframe:** Immediate and ongoing.

**Implementation Budget:** Participants in the working group will have minimal travel and labor expenses associated with meeting participation.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** No additional funding sources are identified specifically for the working group. However, administrative portions of individual agency budgets will be used for meeting participation and strategy implementation expenses. The Mobility Manager is funded through the FTA Section 5310 program (80%), TDOT, and local dollars.

### **Strategy 2.3: Develop a Volunteer and Veteran's Transportation Driver Training Program**

The committee (identified in Strategy 2.1) will develop a training program that satisfies the requirements of the individual participating organizations. The insurance provider's request will be included to reduce the policy price if an approved organization provides joint training. Often, insurance companies will reduce the price of insurance policies for individual drivers or organizations if the driver participates in a Defensive Driving Course or similar program. Volunteer driver training programs could be offered through local organizations such as RSVP or national programs such as the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) National Volunteer Transportation Center.

**Counties Included:** All volunteer driver programs.

**Responsible Parties:** All volunteer driver programs.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Additional volunteer drivers are recruited and become active program participants.
- ◆ Drivers participate in required training, and safety improves.
- ◆ Insurance costs are reduced as a result of the Volunteer Driver Training Program.

**Implementation Timeframe:** One to two years.

**Implementation Budget:** Training costs vary based on the scope of the training program and the provider.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** Existing financial resources that support volunteer driver programs will be used. Supplemental or matching funds could be derived from the organizations that benefit from the volunteer driver program, such as the Southeast Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability, employers, Veterans Services, and medical offices or treatment facilities that are common destinations for the passengers.

**GOAL #3: COORDINATE OUTREACH AND TRAVEL TRAINING FOR RURAL TRANSPORTATION**

The following strategies are suggested approaches to overcome fear or lack of information available about public transportation services in Tennessee’s rural communities.

**Strategy 3.1: Establish Rural Travel Training Program**

This travel training program is designed specifically to use rural communities' transportation services. It may range from instruction for completing applications and scheduling trips with volunteer driver programs to training on how to ride fixed routes, private taxis, or public demand response services. With various modes available, travel training will expand beyond the traditional public transit fixed routes.

Travel training will be provided by the mobility manager or a qualified representative trained by the mobility manager and all participating transportation providers.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** Mobility Manager and local transportation providers.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ The number of people receiving travel training in each county.
- ◆ Increase in ridership on public or other transportation services following travel training.
- ◆ Increase in customers reporting satisfaction with knowing how to use transportation.

**Implementation Timeframe:** Ongoing.

**Implementation Budget:** Travel training can be provided by the Mobility Manager or another trained employee. The training function will be part of the person’s job duties. Travel training will include printed

materials, how-to videos, and labor costs for the skilled Mobility Manager/Trainer. Travel training budgets can range from \$500 to \$10,000 per year, depending on the scope.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** FTA Section 5310 funding provides up to 80% of the cost for a Mobility Manager to provide a travel training program. TDOT may provide up to 10% of the local match. The remaining 10% matching funds can be derived from non-FTA Federal dollars (e.g., Department of Health and Human Services, Aging, Title III-B of the Older Americans Act) and local funds or grants.

**Strategy 3.2: “Trip Sheets” Develop Handouts that Offer Passengers Easy Transportation Guidance**

Engagement with passengers might improve if passengers who participate in the travel training program are given a cheat sheet for maps and schedules of transportation providers in their service area or are offered “Trip Sheet” cards that explain how to travel between common destinations. Mobility Managers would create and print cards explaining each transit trip step. The passengers can keep the “Trip Sheets” with them as they travel to and from their destinations.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** Mobility Managers, senior centers, nonprofit and human service agencies. Other locations that distribute “Trip Sheets,” such as libraries, housing agencies, temporary employment agencies, or government offices, could also contribute to the development of “Trip Sheets.”

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ The number of requests for information about how to get to a common destination satisfied with a “Trip Sheet.”
- ◆ Increase in ridership each year (presumably because new riders feel confident that they know how to travel from origin to destination).
- ◆ The number of “Trip Sheets” printed and distributed increases each quarter.

**Implementation Timeframe:** Immediate and ongoing.

**Implementation Budget:** Printing costs for a single “Trip Sheet” could range from \$1.00 per sheet to \$3.00 per sheet. The number of sheets printed will be based upon demand. Distribution will be completed by the Mobility Managers to the local agencies and organizations that are providing the “Trip Sheets” to customers.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** FTA Section 5310 funding provides up to 80% of the cost for a Mobility Manager to provide travel training, including the development of “Trip Ticks.” The remaining 20% matching funds may be derived from TDOT and non-FTA Federal dollars (e.g., Department of Health and Human Services, Aging, Title III-B of the Older Americans Act) and local funds or grants.

**GOAL #4: MAINTAIN EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY CLIENTS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

**Strategy 4.1: Replace and Maintain Vehicles through FTA/TDOT Funding and Local Sources**

Transportation is a vital link between transit disadvantaged individuals and health care, nutrition, employment, and good quality of life in each county and community. Maintaining services and appropriate capacity is critical for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income people in the community. The FTA grant programs managed by TDOT provide the best leverage of local matching dollars in acquiring and maintaining a fleet of accessible vehicles.

The needs assessment indicated that while providers work to meet demand, riders sometimes cannot get a ride when needed.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** Representatives from each Section 5311 and Section 5310 recipient organizations.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Tally of vehicles applied for and received in the region.
- ◆ Percentage of the fleet in the region accessible to individuals with disabilities.

**Implementation Timeframe:** Immediate and ongoing.

**Implementation Budget:** Varies based on agency needs.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** FTA Section 5310 funding provides up to 80% of the cost for a vehicle used primarily for service to individuals with disabilities and older adults. Other Federal and local funding sources apply for public vehicles. It is advantageous to demonstrate coordinated use of vehicles when applying for FTA grant funding.

**Strategy 4.2: Expand Transportation Service for New Hours, Days, and New Geographic Areas Zones**

There is a need to increase the level of service in certain areas or certain times of the day (i.e., evenings and weekends) so that public transportation becomes a viable alternative for commuters, including those who need to stop at a childcare facility and attend appointments in addition to their normal workday. This need creates a challenging quality of life situation for people who do not have access to a vehicle or choose not to drive.

Although they meet the basic needs of many who need access to medical appointments, shopping, or agency programs, transit services that only operate from early morning to late afternoon make evening/weekend work shifts and recreational activities out of reach for those who rely on transit.

Evening service was discussed as a desired improvement. Once staffing shortages are overcome, transportation providers are encouraged to consider expanding their hours and days of service to facilitate access to evening employment opportunities for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes.

Capacity needs to be expanded to allow drivers to cover long distances and cross county lines, as that takes a vehicle out of service for local shared rides. This need may be accomplished by meeting neighboring services to transfer passengers; by one agency providing a rural-to-urban leg of the trip and another agency providing the urban-to-rural leg; by extending service boundaries with zoned fares; or by creating a volunteer or premium service that operates outside of typical hours and areas.

**Counties Included:** All counties, especially for trips to and from the Chattanooga and Cleveland areas.

**Responsible Parties:** Public transportation providers.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ New hours and days of service provided.
- ◆ Transfer points established.
- ◆ Services expanded across county lines.
- ◆ Ridership on expanded service.

**Implementation Timeframe:** Ongoing.

**Implementation Budget:** Varies based on agency needs.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** Service would need to be supported by appropriate revenue from grants or contributions from employers and medical facilities that benefit from expanded hours/days of operation. Public transportation is also eligible to continue receiving FTA funding for operating and capital costs.

**Strategy 4.3: Develop a protocol for shared-ride long-distance trips between the local providers**

The providers should meet to discuss the possibility of establishing transfer points to coordinate passenger travel. The providers may also formalize funding arrangements between services, where one leg of a shared trip is provided by one agency and the second agency provides the return leg. This strategy would be a step forward in the effort to meet the demand for employment and out-of-county medical trips.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** Public transportation providers, human service agencies, and all participating transportation agencies in the Region.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Transfer points established.
- ◆ Services expanded across county lines.

- ◆ Memorandum of Understanding or Cost Sharing agreements developed.
- ◆ Ridership on expanded service.

**Implementation Timeframe:** Ongoing.

**Implementation Budget:** To be determined based on chosen service alternatives. Long-distance trips are necessary but the cost per passenger and hour is high because of driver time and associated vehicle operating costs (i.e., fuel, insurance, maintenance). Shared rides with clients from multiple organizations or areas, when possible, will help improve cost efficiency.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** Contracts between partnering agencies if sharing services. Additional funding for transfer points may not be needed if an existing facility (i.e., store, church, etc.) will allow shared use of its location. Permission from the existing facility owner must be requested and secured in advance. Always consider passenger safety when planning a transfer location. Distance-based fares should be considered.

**Strategy 4.4: Adding Same-Day and On-Demand Service Capacity**

Same-day and on-demand transportation would be a beneficial service to individual communities. Providers have multiple options to provide same-day or on-demand service, although all would require new and additional funding to support the higher level of service.

- ◆ Providers may contract with taxis and private providers to provide same-day service.
- ◆ Providers could evaluate when vehicles are under-utilized, such as during off-peak hours, and advertise the availability of same-day/on-demand rides to fill in the downtime.
- ◆ Adopting upgraded scheduling and dispatching technology could simplify the process of scheduling same-day or on-demand trips.

**Counties Included:** All counties.

**Responsible Parties:** Representatives from each Section 5311 and Section 5310 recipient organization.

**Performance Measures:**

- ◆ Study conducted to estimate demand and develop service area zones
- ◆ Increase in same-day or on-demand trips
- ◆ Reduction in trip denials in off-peak hours

**Implementation Timeframe:** Ongoing.

**Implementation Budget:** To be determined based on chosen service alternatives and provider costs.

**Potential Grant Funding Sources:** Section 5311 and local matching funds. Potential local revenue sources such as local governments, private employers, and hospitals/clinics that benefit from the expansion are potential partners to assist with local revenue.

## APPENDIX A: PROVIDER SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS SUMMARY

Basic information about the transportation providers is provided below. Transportation providers are listed by the county where they operate transportation services within the SETHRA region. It is noted that the providers that operate regional or multi-county services are all summarized under the first category and not repeated under the individual counties. This section lists each provider’s mission, transportation service type, contact information, service area, days and hours of service, and eligibility requirements.

### Regional or Multi-County Service

Southeast TN Human Resource Agency (SETHRA)	
Transportation Service Type	Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation, Corrections, Elderly Support, Employment & Education, Housing & Energy, Meals & Medicine, Representative Payee, SETHRA CASA, Youth Programs
Contact Information	Bledsoe: 423.447.2444 Grundy: 931.592.8260 McMinn: 423.745.8095 Polk-Benton: 423.338.2335 Rhea: 423.775.4010 Bradley: 423.478.3053 Marion: 423.942.5946 Meigs: 423.334.3305 Polk-Ducktown: 423.496.2644 Sequatchie: 423.949.2191
Hours	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday - Friday
Service Area	Bledsoe, Bradley, Grundy, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, Sequatchie Counties
Eligibility Requirements	General Public
Website	<a href="https://www.sethratransit.org/">https://www.sethratransit.org/</a>

<b>MyRide TN Southeast</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation
Contact Information	523-424-4201
Hours	8:15 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday - Friday
Service Area	Hamilton and Bradley Counties
Eligibility Requirements	Senior Citizens 60 and older
Website	<a href="https://www.myridetnse.org/">https://www.myridetnse.org/</a>

<b>Howard Transportation</b>	
Transportation Service Type	NEMT
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Medical Transportation
Contact Information	423-228-5088
Hours	7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday – Friday
Service Area	Eastern Tennessee with service to Knoxville and Nashville
Eligibility Requirements	Anyone needing transportation to medical appointments



**Hamilton County**

<b>AIM Center</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Agency Programs – Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Employment and Housing programs.
Contact Information	423-624-4800
Hours	8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday - Friday
Service Area	City of Chattanooga
Eligibility Requirements	Individuals with Disabilities (Clients Only)
Website	<a href="https://www.aimcenterinc.org/">https://www.aimcenterinc.org/</a>

<b>Alexian Brothers – PACE</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Agency Programs – Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Housing Services, Day Center Services, In/Out-Patient Services
Contact Information	723-781-1794
Hours	6:30 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday - Friday
Service Area	Hamilton County
Eligibility Requirements	PACE and all Live at Home program members
Website	<a href="https://www.ascensionliving.org/find-a-community/ascension-living-alexian-pace">https://www.ascensionliving.org/find-a-community/ascension-living-alexian-pace</a>

<b>Amara Home Care, Inc.</b>	
Transportation Service Type	NEMT
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Medical Transportation
Contact Information	423-756-2411
Hours	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday-Friday
Service Area	City of Chattanooga
Eligibility Requirements	Older adults – Clients Only
Website	<a href="https://amaracare.com/transportation/">https://amaracare.com/transportation/</a>

<b>Chattanooga Area Regional Transit Authority (CARTA)</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Public Transit – Fixed Route
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation
Contact Information	423-629-1473
Hours	5:00 AM – 12:00 AM, Monday – Saturday; 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM, Sunday
Service Area	City of Chattanooga
Eligibility Requirements	General Public
Website	<a href="http://www.gocarta.org">www.gocarta.org</a>

CARTA Care-A-Van	
Transportation Service Type	Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation only
Contact Information	423-698-9038                      423-698-8418 TDD
Hours	4:40 AM – 12:45 AM, Monday – Friday; 5:30 AM – 12:45, Saturday; 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM, Sunday
Service Area	City of Chattanooga
Eligibility Requirements	Persons who are unable to ride CARTA’s fixed route system due to a disabling condition. The person must apply for this service, provide medical certification of a disabling condition, and be approved for this service.
Website	<a href="http://www.gocarta.org">www.gocarta.org</a>

Chattanooga VA Clinic	
Transportation Service Type	Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Medical Appointments for eligible veterans
Contact Information	423-893-6500 x27200
Hours	7:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday, Van hours can vary
Service Area	Hamilton County with service to VA hospitals in Nashville and Murfreesboro
Eligibility Requirements	Veterans in the Chattanooga area, including those from North Georgia
Website	<a href="https://www.va.gov/tennessee-valley-health-care/locations/chattanooga-va-clinic/">https://www.va.gov/tennessee-valley-health-care/locations/chattanooga-va-clinic/</a>

<b>Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Agency Programs – Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation, Social Service Management, Healthcare Assistance, Education
Contact Information	423-493-0270
Hours	8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday - Friday
Service Area	Greater Chattanooga area
Eligibility Requirements	Jewish Federation members
Website	<a href="https://www.jewishchattanooga.com/van-drivers/">https://www.jewishchattanooga.com/van-drivers/</a>

<b>St. Alexius Outreach Ministries</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Agency Programs – Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	To alleviate isolation and loneliness through friendship and supportive services. Mobile food deliveries, senior shopping
Contact Information	423-755-3446
Hours	8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday - Friday
Service Area	Hamilton County
Eligibility Requirements	Seniors living in USDA-defined food desert
Website	<a href="https://www.stalexiusoutreach.org/">https://www.stalexiusoutreach.org/</a>

White Oak Transportation	
Transportation Service Type	NEMT
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Medical Transportation
Contact Information	423-498-4999
Hours	7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday - Friday
Service Area	Greater Chattanooga area
Eligibility Requirements	Anyone needing non-emergency medical transportation
Website	<a href="https://www.whiteoaktransportation.com/">https://www.whiteoaktransportation.com/</a>

**Bledsoe County**

Bledsoe County Senior Center	
Transportation Service Type	Agency Programs – Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Senior Programs
Contact Information	423-447-6111
Hours	9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday
Service Area	Bledsoe County
Eligibility Requirements	Program Participants
Website	<a href="https://www.pikeville-bledsoe.com">https://www.pikeville-bledsoe.com</a>

**Bradley County**

<b>Cleveland Urban Area Transit System (CUATS)</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Public Transit – Fixed Route
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation
Contact Information	423-478-1396
Hours	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday
Service Area	City of Cleveland
Eligibility Requirements	General Public
Website	<a href="https://www.sethratransit.org/about-cuats">https://www.sethratransit.org/about-cuats</a>

<b>CUATS Demand Response</b>	
Transportation Service Type	Demand Response
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation only
Contact Information	423-478-1396
Hours	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday
Service Area	City of Cleveland
Eligibility Requirements	Medical conditions prohibiting access to the fixed routes The destination is not available on the fixed route system
Website	<a href="https://www.sethratransit.org/about-cuats">https://www.sethratransit.org/about-cuats</a>

**McMinn County**

McMinn County - SETHRA	
Transportation Service Type	Public Transit – Fixed route
Other Services Provided/Agency Mission	Transportation, Corrections, Elderly Support, Employment & Education, Housing & Energy, Meals & Medicine, Representative Payee, SETHRA CASA, Youth Programs
Contact Information	423-745-8095
Hours	8:00 AM to 2:45 PM, Monday through Friday
Service Area	City of Athens
Eligibility Requirements	General Public
Website	<a href="https://www.sethratransit.org/routes">https://www.sethratransit.org/routes</a>

**FLEET, SERVICE, AND BUDGET CHARACTERISTICS**

The following table provides data describing each transportation provider's basic fleet, staffing, and financial characteristics.

Agency	Accessible Vehicles?	Number of Vehicles in Total Fleet	Annual Expenses
Southeast TN Human Resource Agency	Yes (88)	102	\$3,833,161

Agency	Accessible Vehicles?	Number of Vehicles in Total Fleet	Annual Expenses
Chattanooga Area Regional Transit Authority	Yes	88	\$2,563,546
CARTA Care-A-Van	Yes	17	\$2,563,546

Agency	Accessible Vehicles?	Number of Vehicles in Total Fleet	Annual Expenses
St. Alexius Outreach Ministries	Yes	2	\$3,000

Agency	Accessible Vehicles?	Number of Vehicles in Total Fleet	Annual Expenses
Cleveland Urban Area Transit	Yes	10	\$715,677
CUAT Demand Response	Yes	9	\$689,943

### TRIP SCHEDULING, FARES, AND RIDERSHIP INFORMATION

The following tables describe what trip purposes are allowed by each provider, the fares or donations paid by riders, and the process to request rides on each service (if applicable). Most agencies provided annual ridership. Some information was not available from nonprofit or private transportation operators.

Agency	Trip Purposes Allowed	Fares or Donations	Ride Request Process
<b>Regional (multi-county) Transportation</b>			
Southeast TN Human Resource Agency	General Public demand response transportation	In-County: \$1.00 per stop  To Neighboring Counties: \$3.00 each way  To Chattanooga: \$5.00 each way	<b>Bledsoe:</b> 423.447.2444 <b>Bradley:</b> 423.478.3053 <b>Grundy:</b> 931.592.8260 <b>Marion:</b> 423.942.5946 <b>McMinn:</b> 423.745.8095 <b>Meigs:</b> 423.334.3305 <b>Polk-Benton:</b> 423.338.2335 <b>Polk-Ducktown:</b> 423.496.2644 <b>Rhea:</b> 423.775.4010 <b>Sequatchie:</b> 423.949.2191



Agency	Trip Purposes Allowed	Fares or Donations	Ride Request Process
<b>Regional (multi-county) Transportation</b>			
Howard Transportation	Transportation to medical appointments		423-228-5088
MyRide TN Southeast	Trips for older adults ages 60 and over	The yearly fee is \$25 per rider. Each ride is \$3-5 per round trip (cost varies per county)	423-424-4201

Agency	Trip Purposes Allowed	Fares or Donations	Ride Request Process	Annual One-Way Passenger Trips	Estimated Annual Service Hours	Estimated Productivity (Trips per Service Hour)
<b>Hamilton County</b>						
AIM Center	AIM Center programs	Part of program fees	423-624-4800	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Alexian Brothers – PACE	Medical appointments, essential services	Part of program fees	723-781-1794	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Amara Home Care, Inc.	Medical Appointments, grocery stores, church, etc.		423-756-2411	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Chattanooga Area Regional Transit Authority	General public fixed route in Chattanooga	\$ .75 for Seniors 65+ and Persons with Disabilities (with CARTA Special Fare ID Card) \$1.50 without ID	423- 629-1473	1,766,095 (2020)	158,323 (2020)	11.16 (2020)

Agency	Trip Purposes Allowed	Fares or Donations	Ride Request Process	Annual One-Way Passenger Trips	Estimated Annual Service Hours	Estimated Productivity (Trips per Service Hour)
		Medicare card, photo ID, or MD paperwork <a href="http://www.gocarta.org">www.gocarta.org</a>				
CARTA Care-A-Van	Persons who are unable to ride CARTA's fixed route system due to a disabling condition	\$2.50 each way (\$5.00 round trip)  No charge for Personal Care Attendant	423-698-9038  423-698-8418  TDD	56,064 (2020)	33,101 (2020)	1.69 (2020)
Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga	Jewish Federation Events or daytime appointments	Free to Federation members	Call 423-493-0270 and ask for Social Services Dept.	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
St. Alexius Outreach Ministries	Senior grocery trips	Free	To be determined	3,000 (2019)	1,300	2.31
White Oak Transportation	NEMT trips	Depends on distance	423-498-4999	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available

Agency	Trip Purposes Allowed	Fares or Donations	Ride Request Process
Bledsoe County			
Bledsoe County Senior Center	Senior center/senior center activities	Free	423-447-6111

Agency	Trip Purposes Allowed	Fares or Donations	Ride Request Process	Annual One-Way Passenger Trips	Estimated Annual Service Hours	Estimated Productivity (Trips per Service Hour)
<b>Bradley County</b>						
Cleveland Urban Area Transit System	General public fixed route in Cleveland	-Full fare with transfer: \$1.00 -Seniors (65+) with transfer: \$0.50 -Disabled with transfer: \$0.50 -Students (with I.D.) with transfer: \$0.75 -Children (age four and under): FREE	423-478-1396	91,038 (2020)	16,185 (2020)	5.63 (2020)
CUATS Demand Response	Medical Conditions Prohibiting Access, The Destination is Not Available on the Fixed Route System	Information not available	423-478-1396	10,875 (2020)	14,300 (2020)	.76 (2020)



# Coordinated Transportation Plan

Transportation for Older Adults, Individuals with Disabilities, People with Low Incomes, & General Public

April 28, 2022



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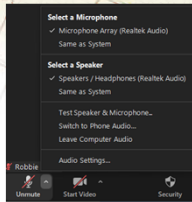
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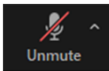
## Welcome!

### A few Zoom Tips:

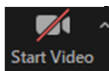
Test or change your audio and video by clicking the ^ next to the Mute/Unmute button and selecting 'Audio Settings...'



This button shows you are muted. When you want to speak click here to unmute.



This button is your webcam. Click it if you want us to see you.



This button lets you see and type into the 'Chat' function.



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## Agenda

- ◆ Introductions
- ◆ Project Overview
- ◆ Discussion
  - Do You Need A Ride Sometimes and Not have One?
  - How Can We Solve Unmet Transportation Needs?
  - What Are Your Goals for Addressing Needs?
  - What Transportation Projects Are on the Horizon?

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## Introductions

- ◆ Please share a little about yourself!
  - What is your name?
  - Are you representing an organization today?

*Say Hello!*

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC

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## Coordinated Plan Update

- ◆ Current Planning Area Counties
  - Bledsoe
  - Bradley
  - Grundy
  - Hamilton (outside Urban area)
  - Marion
  - McMinn
  - Meigs
  - Polk
  - Rhea
  - Sequatchie




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## What Is A Coordinated Plan?

- ◆ Identifies Unmet Transportation Needs
- ◆ Prioritizes Goals and Strategies
- ◆ Outlines Opportunities for Collaboration
- ◆ Developed with a Local Focus including the Entire Region
- ◆ Adopted Locally

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### Section 5310 Funding

#### Projects in Grant Applications Must Be Included in the Coordinated Plan

- ◆ *Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (49 U.S.C. Section 5310)*
- ◆ Provides Formula Funding to Improve Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
  - Removing Barriers to Transportation Service
  - Expanding Mobility Options

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### Section 5310 Funding

- ◆ Federal Share for Capital Projects this Year = **100%**
- ◆ Normal Federal Share for Capital Projects = **80%**
  - 10% Local match can come from other Federal (non-DOT) funds
  - TDOT provides 10% of the local match (after this year)

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### Section 5310 Funding

- ◆ Eligible Capital Grant Activities in TN
  - Vehicle Purchases
    - Eligible Entities include Non-Profit Organizations
  - Mobility Manager
    - Eligible Entities include Section 5311 and 5307 Subrecipients
    - Leads or Coordinates Efforts to Address Identified Unmet Transportation Needs and Challenges
    - Coordinates with Local and State Agencies

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### Other Potential Funding Sources

- ◆ “Fund Braiding:” Federal funds from one grant program can be used to fulfill the local match requirements of another Federal grant
  - Allowable for more than 67 Federal programs
  - Potentially as many as 130 Federal programs provide funding for human service transportation
  - Not available between all Federal programs. Consult the Federal Fund Braiding Guide: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/ccam/about/coordinating-council-access-and-mobility-ccam-federal-fund>

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### Transportation Public Survey

**AVAILABLE in MAY 2022!!**

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

<https://www.tnmobilityplans.com/>

- Language Translation Available
- Print and Large Print Available

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### Needs Assessment

- ◆ Demographic and Socio-Economic Conditions
  - U.S. Census Data
  - Older Adults
  - Individuals with Disabilities
  - People with Low Incomes
  - Zero Vehicle Households

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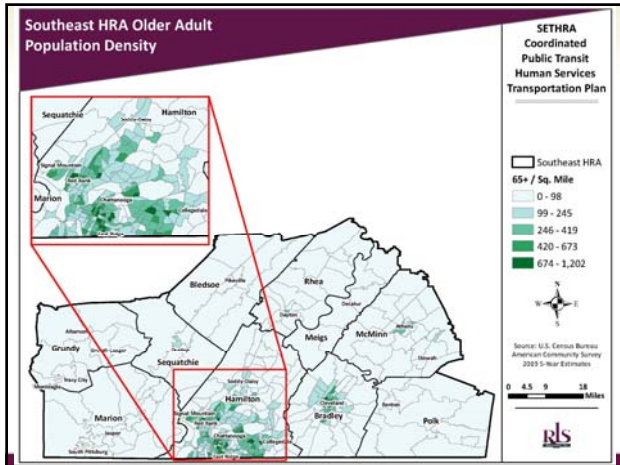
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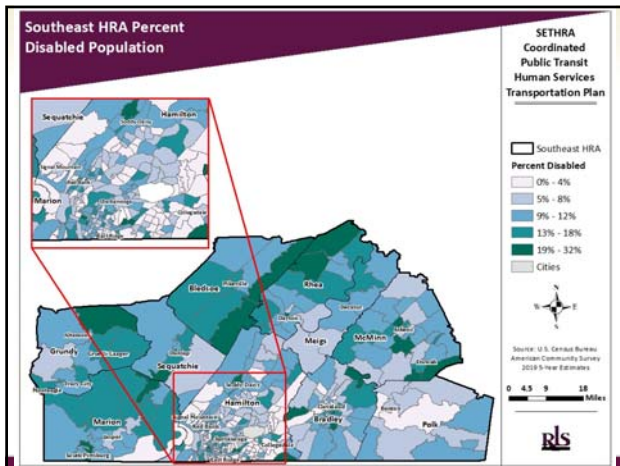
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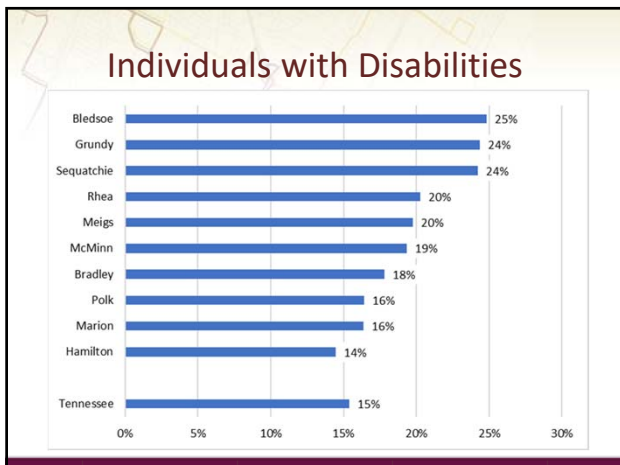
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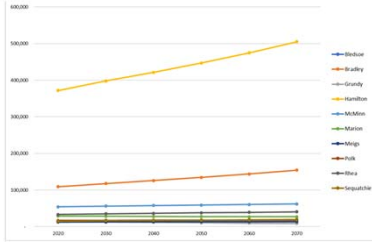
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### Population Projections



- ◆ Region Population will grow by 195,310 people by 2070
- ◆ Hamilton and Bradley Counties have Largest Increase
- ◆ Grundy County is projected to Decrease

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### Do You Need A Ride?

#### What Transportation Needs do You or A Friend/Family Member Have?

- Shopping Trips?
- Employment Access?
- Medical-Related Trips?
- Access to Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles?
- Information about Transportation Services?
- Other?

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### Discussion

- What Are Your Goals for Addressing Unmet Needs?
- What are Some of the Challenges You Face in Meeting these Goals?

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### Transportation Options

- ◆ 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

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### Transportation Providers

- ◆ Public Transit
- ◆ Human Service Agencies or Senior Services
- ◆ Intercity Transportation Services
- ◆ Private Transportation
- ◆ Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

### Who Are We Missing?

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### Provider Inventory

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| ◆ Cleveland Urban Area Transit System | ◆ Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga    |
| ◆ CARTA (urban area)                  | ◆ Life Bridges, Inc.                          |
| ◆ McMinn County                       | ◆ Skills Training and Rehabilitation Services |
| ◆ MyRide TN Southeast                 | ◆ CUATS Demand Response (Cleveland)           |
| ◆ SETHRA                              | ◆ AIM Center                                  |
| ◆ CARTA Care-A-Van                    | ◆ St. Alexius Outreach Ministries             |
| ◆ Special Transit Services            | ◆ Alexian Brothers                            |
| ◆ Bledsoe Co. Senior Center           | ◆ Chattanooga VA Clinic                       |
| ◆ Howard Transportation               |   |
| ◆ White Oak Transportation            |   |

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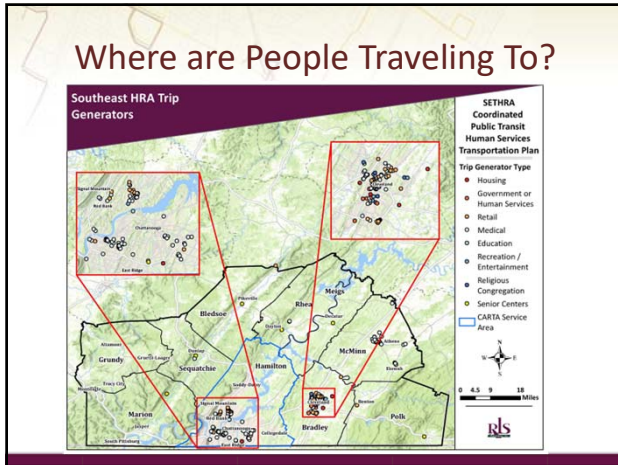
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### Discussion

- ◆ What plans and projects are on your horizon, or should be included in the plan?

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### Next Steps

- ◆ Continue the Needs Assessment and Analysis
  - Existing services inventory
  - Geographic and temporal gaps
  - Barriers
  - Vehicle availability
- ◆ Public Survey (May 2022)
- ◆ Develop Draft Coordinated Plan Goals & Strategies
- ◆ Prioritize Goals and Strategies
- ◆ Ongoing Work Toward Implementation

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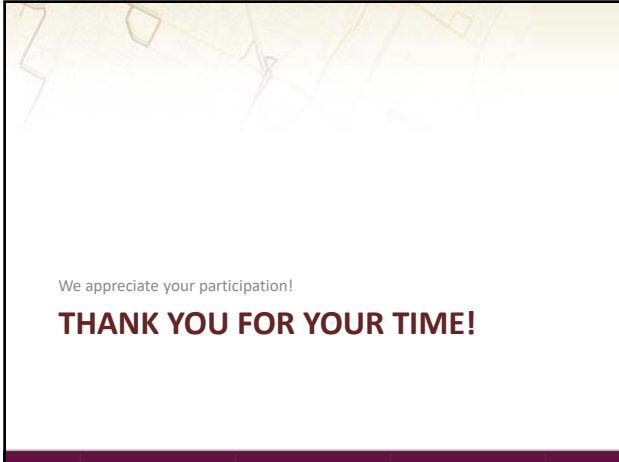
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**TDOT**  
**South East**  
**Stakeholder Public Meeting Notes**  
**April 28, 2022**  
**8:30 AM CT**

In Attendance: Laura Brown, RLS & Associates, Inc  
Cheryl Farley, Sethra, Transit Administrator  
Emily Duchac, TDOT  
Jeannette Bloomfield, TDOT  
Chris Kleehammer, Sethra  
Samantha Deal, TDOT  
Mary Cookston, SETHRA  
Cindy Campbell, My Ride Tenn Southeast  
Kaitlyn McClanahan, TDOT  
Jamie Smith,  
Brooklyn Doss, Ray County Senior Center

1. Coordinated Transit Plan Review
  - a. ID transportation needs, prioritize goals and strategies (4-5 years), outline opportunities for collaboration, develop a local focus including entire region at all levels: city, county, region, Adopted locally
  - b. Purpose is to meet the Section 5310 Grant Application; projects must meet one of the needs in the Plan
    - i. FTA, TDOT
    - ii. Federal share / local share
    - iii. Grant activities in TN – vehicle purchases and mobility manager
    - iv. Federal fund braiding – website on [transit.dot.gov](http://transit.dot.gov) – regulations and programs table
      1. Hoping to share some new ideas on funding and provide examples on what could be done for the future
      2. *Have been looking at setting up Zones “certain trips on certain days/times” would like to start July 1. Looking for funding to go with that. Run out of regular rural transit office, in all 9 counties. Setting up days and times to go into Chattanooga, Knoxville, etc. Grouping more clients.*
  - c. Public Survey – [www.tnmobilityplans.com](http://www.tnmobilityplans.com) – coming in May 2022, online and paper copy, QR code – if any stakeholders have feedback on what needs to be in survey, this public meeting an important place to do so
    - i. How are people using the services, what needs are being fulfilled
    - ii. What needs are not being met, Times/days/etc.
  - d. Needs Assessment Discussion
    - i. Older adults, higher density 65+, Chattanooga and Cleveland
    - ii. Disabled population, higher density in the more rural areas
    - iii. Households in poverty
    - iv. Zero Vehicle Households, helps bring the message to those who don’t struggle with this issue

- v. In the report, we put together all of these needs to determine where highest need is coming from
  - vi. Population Projections, 2020-2070
    - 1. Most growth in urban areas
    - 2. 195,000 people in growth
    - 3. Grundy may decrease in pop
    - 4. *No big projects mentioned that would affect population growth*
2. Needs in Previous Plan
- a. Are these still needs?
    - i. *I think they are*
  - b. Are there things that were done to address them?
    - i. *Mobility manager, focused on rides to jobs but with the pandemic lost too many drivers, 10-12 short still*
  - c. Work Routes that crossed county lines?
    - i. *Most work in the same county, so not really focused there*
  - d. Requests for trips outside of county?
    - i. *A Lot of people who leave county, for work most people stay in county, trips to Athens from a farther county even being short drivers. Lots of medical trips out of county.*
    - ii. Do you go out of county every day?
      - 1. Yes.
    - iii. Have you considered going out of county with the zones?
      - 1. *Yes, are trying to section them to where we can go to these other places that haven't been possible because we go to Chattanooga every day.*
    - iv. *TPA meeting is coming up soon, will send Jaime and Cheryl*
  - e. Is there a travel trainer?
    - i. *Jaime is trying to help with that*
  - f. Something that you want to have Jamie have that as a part of her roll or have someone else added?
    - i. *Travel trainer that would work with driver trainers*
  - g. Cindy, do you have a travel trainer?
    - i. *Not a specific person, her and college student, Cindy trains drivers and student trains riders.*
  - h. What is the process of letting people know about my ride?
    - i. *Advertise on newspapers and radio, billboard in redbank. Looking into more billboards, looking for people who are commuting*
    - ii. *Harder time finding volunteers, who we have are great, I get riders by advertising for drivers. More advert for drivers she gets more riders.*
    - iii. *Myride is in senior directory that is given out in many different places*
    - i. If you had to say what the biggest need is?
      - i. *We do mostly medical appointments, procedures and dialysis, people who are wheelchair bound and get calls every week for those people who need that and they can't transport wheelchair clients or people to dialysis.*
      - ii. *Even though there is service in the inner city for that, there just isn't enough of it. People say they have a hard time getting on the schedule, everyone's schedule is very tight for services available in area*
3. Do you need a ride?
- a. Medical appointments from meeting conversation



- b. Employment demand coming from within the county
- c. Are there other systems providing seniors?
  - i. *Brooklyn- we have our own bus but if they need more specific trips we help them get into contact with Sethra*
- d. Are there particular things people come and ask for?
  - i. *Most seniors don't seem to have a large need for that, we do have a partnership with Sethra where is the senior eats lunch at the center, sethra will take the senior to and from the center for free*
- 4. Particular Goals in Mind?
  - a. Listed past goals
  - b. No Comments from stakeholders
  - c. Will give ideas for consideration and for feedback
  - d. *Mentioned expanding McMinn and Sesquatchie, since she's started, they have opened up in other places, don't see pushing into other areas until what they have is more stable. Trying to get the word out about needing volunteers. Always ways to rethink how to do what they do.*
  - e. Did the zones inspire by shortages?
    - i. *Just because it makes more sense, did it on a smaller scale in the past, they would do Chatanooga 3 days a week, 10-2. Got away from that but it does work better and is more efficient. It just works. Restricted on what they can do in Hamilton County, can't pick up or drop off in urban areas. Use GIS map.*
  - f. When you get a request for a trip in the pick up and drop off in urban area
    - i. *Carta caravan could do it. Mary Lynn could come but she is director of Cleveland urban.*
  - g. Route Match Software, state is trying to do software are you apart of that?
    - i. *Hopefully be a part of the state's software*
    - ii. *We have software that can do route but it's not something that we do right now, "assisted rides"*
- 5. Transportation Providers
  - a. Who is missing?
- 6. Where are people traveling to?
  - a. Trip Generators
- 7. Discussion
- 8. Next Steps
  - a. Provide public survey
  - b. Developing goals and strategies
    - i. Will have another meeting to go over that

SETHRA Coordinated Public Transit-  
Human Services Transportation  
Plan

September 13, 2022

Prepared by: RLS & Associates, Inc.

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### Zoom Interactions

- ◆ Mute/Unmute
  - Please Keep Your Microphone “Muted”
  - Unmute Whenever You Want To Talk
- ◆ Chat
  - Please Enter Your Name and Email Address in the Chat
  - We will be Using the Chat Feature for Comments (Click on “Show Conversation”)
- ◆ Live Polling Options

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### Agenda

-  Needs Assessment Review
-  Overview of Potential Funding Sources
-  Discuss and Prioritize Potential Strategies
-  Next Steps

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Needs Assessment  
**INVENTORY OF EXISTING SERVICES**

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**Transportation Providers**

- ◆ Multiple Modes of Transit Options
- ◆ Different Eligibility Requirements
- ◆ Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles
- ◆ Various Daily Operating Hours
- ◆ Public Transit
  - ◆ Open to the Public
- ◆ Human Services Agencies and Senior Services
  - ◆ Limited Eligibility
- ◆ Intercity Transportation
  - ◆ Open to the Public
- ◆ Non-Emergency Medical
  - ◆ Based on Eligibility or Private Pay
- ◆ Veterans
  - ◆ Limited Eligibility
- ◆ Volunteers
  - ◆ Limited Eligibility

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	8:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00	0:00
Regional or Multi-County																						
Howard Transportation	Weekdays																					
MySide TN Southeast	Weekdays																					
Southeast TN Human Resource Agency	Weekdays																					
Meibohm County																						
Birdsore County Senior Center	Weekdays																					
Howard Transportation	Weekdays																					
Southeast TN Human Resource Agency	Weekdays																					
Bradley County																						
Cleveland Urban Area Transit System	Weekdays																					
CUATS Demand Response	Weekdays																					
Howard Transportation	Weekdays																					
Life Bridges, Inc	Weekdays																					
MySide TN Southeast	Weekdays																					
Grundy County																						
Howard Transportation	Weekdays																					
Southeast TN Human Resource Agency	Weekdays																					
Hamilton County																						
AAU Center	Weekdays																					
Alisan Brothers - PACE	Weekdays																					
Amara Home Care, Inc.	Weekdays																					
Chattanooga Area Regional Transit Authority	Weekdays and Weekends																					
CASTA Care-A-Van	Weekdays and Weekends																					
Chattanooga VA Clinic	Weekdays																					
Howard Transportation	Weekdays																					
Jewish Federation of Greater Chattanooga	Monday - Thursday																					
St. Alexius Outreach Ministries	Weekdays																					
Metra On Transportation	Weekdays																					
MySide TN Southeast	Weekdays																					
Eligible Riders Only																						
General Public Service																						

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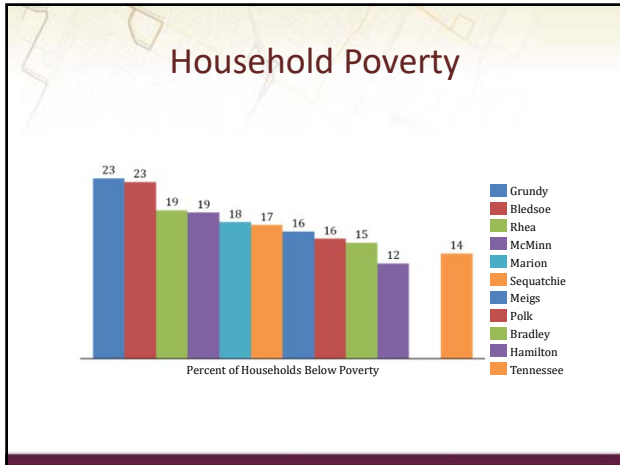
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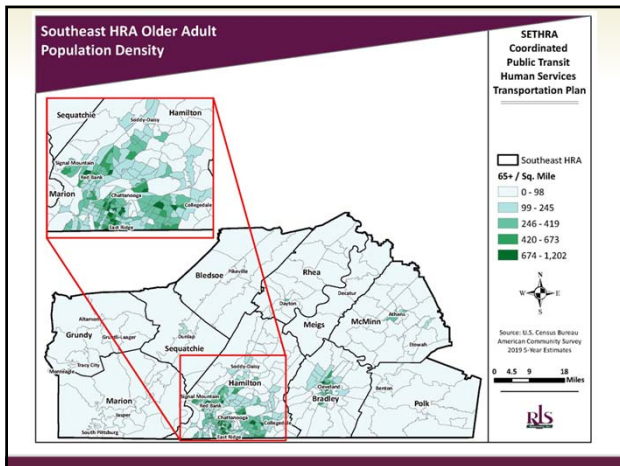
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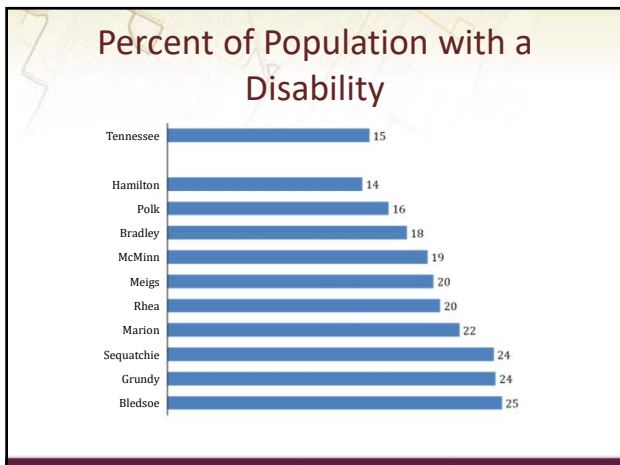
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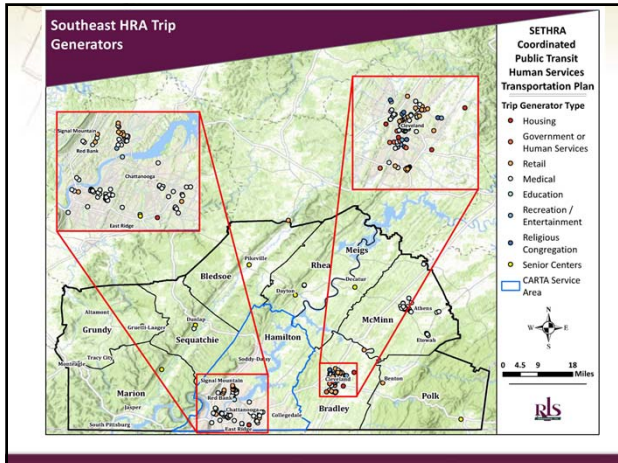
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### Summary of Needs

- ◆ Travel Across Multiple Counties
- ◆ Build Awareness or Understanding of How to Use Transportation
- ◆ Availability of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles
- ◆ Availability of Dialysis Transportation
- ◆ Access to Jobs
- ◆ Gaps Between Rural and Urban Areas
- ◆ Staffing/Driver Shortages
- ◆ Vehicle Supply Chain Shortages

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Identifying and Prioritizing

## GOALS & STRATEGIES FOR POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

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### Potential Funding Sources Overview

- ◆ FTA Section 5310 Program: *Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities*
  - Federal Share for capital projects = 80%
  - Local match can come from other Federal (non-DOT) funds
  - TDOT may provide up to 10% of the capital match
- ◆ Eligible **Capital** Grant Activities in Tennessee
  - Vehicle purchases
  - Mobility Manager

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### Potential Funding Sources Overview

- ◆ Potential Local Match
  - **Fund Braiding:** Federal funds from one grant program can be used to fulfill the local match requirements of another Federal grant
    - Allowable for more than 70 Federal programs
    - Potentially as many as 130 Federal programs provide funding for human service transportation
  - Not available between all Federal programs. Consult the Federal Fund Braiding Guide: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/ccam/about/coordinating-council-access-and-mobility-ccam-federal-fund>

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### Discussion about Goal & Strategies

- ◆ Polling Activity
  - After Discussing Each Strategy – Rate as a:
    - High Priority
    - Medium Priority
    - Low Priority

- ◆ Evaluation Criteria
  - Community Impact
    - Addresses Needs
    - Range of Benefits
  - Financial
    - Estimated Costs
    - Potential Availability of Funding
  - Implementation
    - Timeframe
    - Challenges
    - Possibilities

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## Goal 1 – Actively Coordinate Regional Transportation Issues

### Strategy 1.1: Establish and Actively Engage a Regional Transportation Advisory Board

- ◆ \$ (Low Cost)
- ◆ Potential Funding Sources
  - FTA Section 5310 (80%) for Mobility Management
  - Local Match (10% State and 10% Local)
- ◆ Advantages
  - Transportation Issues are Represented in State and Regional Planning Discussions
  - Influence Policy and Funding
  - Support Local and Regional Solutions
- ◆ Challenges
  - Administrative/Oversight Burden
  - Duties Need to be Defined
  - Membership Needs to be Defined

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## Goal 1 – Actively Coordinate Regional Transportation Issues

### Strategy 1.2: Mobility Managers Champion Advancements in Coordinated Transportation Across the Region

- ◆ \$\$ (Moderate Cost)
- ◆ Potential Funding Sources
  - FTA Section 5310 (80%) for Mobility Management
  - Local Match (10% State and 10% Local)
- ◆ Advantages
  - Champion(s) for Transportation
  - Focus on Identifying Solutions to Top Priority Needs
  - Lead the Regional Transportation Advisory Board
- ◆ Challenges
  - Requires Sustained Funding
  - Duties Must Include Regional Coordination
  - Avoid becoming Single Agency Focused

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## Goal 1 – Actively Coordinate Regional Transportation Issues

### Strategy 1.3: Improve Transportation Information Available Through 211 and TN Disability Pathfinder

- ◆ \$
- ◆ Potential Funding Sources
  - FTA Section 5310 (80%) for Mobility Management
  - Local Match (10% State and 10% Local)
- ◆ Advantages
  - Helpful to New and Potential Riders
  - Uses Existing Resource
  - Informs 211, Pathfinder, and Other Agencies of Transportation Options
- ◆ Challenges
  - Administrative Time: Requires Updating Information and Providing Data

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## Goal 2 – Recruit & Train More Drivers, Including Volunteers

### **Strategy 2.1: Create a Coordinated Approach to Recruit Drivers for Public, Senior and Human Services Transportation in All Counties**

- ◆ \$
- ◆ Potential Funding Sources
  - Existing Transportation and Agency Program Budgets
- ◆ Advantages
  - All Providers Benefit
  - Potential to Share Drivers
  - Reduces Duplication in Recruitment Efforts & Reaches More People
  - Regional Recruitment Plan
- ◆ Challenges
  - Requires Communication between Agencies
  - May Require Standardization of Some Driver Requirements/Pay Scales

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## Goal 2 – Recruit & Train More Drivers, Including Volunteers

### **Strategy 2.2: Create Volunteer Transportation Working Group(s)**

- ◆ \$
- ◆ Potential Funding Sources
  - Existing Transportation and Agency Program Budgets
  - Mobility Management Function (Section 5310)
- ◆ Advantages
  - Working Group Members Identify New Opportunities to Strengthen Volunteer Services
  - Potential to Strengthen Local and State-wide Recognition
  - Potential to Streamline Volunteer Program Administration
- ◆ Challenges
  - Administrative Time
  - Competing Priorities for Volunteer Time

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## Goal 2 – Recruit & Train More Drivers, Including Volunteers

### **Strategy 2.3: Develop a Volunteer and Veteran's Transportation Driver Training Program**

- ◆ \$\$
- ◆ Potential Funding Sources
  - Existing Transportation and Agency Program Budgets
  - Mobility Management Function (Section 5310)
  - Veterans Transportation
- ◆ Advantages
  - Builds Network of Available Volunteers
  - Standardizes Volunteer Driver Customer Service and Training
  - Could Help Reduce Insurance Costs for Some Programs
- ◆ Challenges
  - Competing Priorities for Volunteer Time
  - Could Make Volunteers Less Likely to Apply

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### Goal 3 – Coordinate Outreach & Travel Training for Rural Transportation

#### Strategy 3.1: Establish a Rural Travel Training Program

- ◆ \$\$
- ◆ Potential Funding
  - Existing Transportation and Agency Program Budgets
  - Mobility Management Function (Section 5310)
- ◆ Advantages
  - Reduces Fear of Transportation
  - Informs People about Eligibility Requirements
  - Increases Ridership
- ◆ Challenges
  - Requires Dedicated Trainers Who Can Relate to Others

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### Goal 3 – Coordinate Outreach & Travel Training for Rural Transportation

#### Strategy 3.2: Develop “Trip Sheets” or Handouts that Offer Passengers Easy Transportation Guidance

- ◆ \$\$
- ◆ Potential Funding
  - Existing Transportation and Agency Program Budgets
  - Mobility Management Function (Section 5310)
- ◆ Advantages
  - Reduces Fear of Transportation
  - Informs People about Eligibility Requirements
  - Increases Ridership
- ◆ Challenges
  - Requires Input from Multiple Transportation Service Providers to Ensure Complete Information
  - Requires Distribution

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### Goal 4 – Maintain & Expand Existing Transportation Services

#### Strategy 4.1: Replace and Maintain Vehicles through FTA/TDOT funding and Local Sources

- ◆ \$\$\$
- ◆ Potential Funding
  - TDOT/FTA
  - Aging Programs
- ◆ Advantages
  - Replacing Vehicles on Schedule Helps Control Maintenance Costs
  - Maintaining or Expanding Capacity Meets Needs of Riders
- ◆ Challenges
  - Supply Chain Shortages
  - Reporting Requirements for Federally Funded Vehicles

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## Goal 4 – Maintain & Expand Existing Transportation Services

### Strategy 4.2: Expand Transportation Service for New Hours, Days, and New Geographic Area Zones

- ◆ \$\$\$
- ◆ Potential Funding
  - TDOT/FTA
  - Aging Programs
  - Employer Contributions
  - Medical Contributions
- ◆ Advantages
  - Addresses Identified Challenges & Needs
  - Develops Transportation Along with Population Growth
- ◆ Challenges
  - Requires Additional Drivers
  - Requires Additional Funding

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## Goal 4 – Maintain & Expand Existing Transportation Services

### Strategy 4.3: Develop a Protocol for Shared-Ride Long Distance Trips

- ◆ \$\$
- ◆ Potential Funding
  - TDOT/FTA
  - Aging Programs
  - Employer Contributions
  - Medical Contributions
- ◆ Advantages
  - Economical Service Option for Providers
  - Allow Providers to Keep Vehicles In-County
- ◆ Challenges
  - Requires Schedule Coordination
  - Requires Cost-Sharing Agreements between Agencies

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## Goal 4 – Maintain & Expand Existing Transportation Services

### Strategy 4.4: Adding Same-Day and On-Demand Service Capacity in Zones

- ◆ \$\$\$\$
- ◆ Potential Funding
  - TDOT/FTA
  - Local Government Contributions
  - Medical Offices
- ◆ Advantages
  - Addresses Short-Notice Transportation Needs
  - Option for Short-Distance, Local Trips
- ◆ Challenges
  - Requires Additional Funding, Vehicles and Drivers (or Contractor Options)
  - Necessary to Estimate Demand
  - Scheduling Technology May be Needed

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Final Plan

## NEXT STEPS

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## Net Steps

- ◆ Refine Goals and Strategies
- ◆ Revise Draft Report
- ◆ Adopt Final Report

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## Thank You!

Questions?

Laura Brown, Project Manager  
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SETHRA Coordinated Public Transit  
Human Services Transportation Plan Meeting  
September 13, 2022

Attendees:

- Matt Bowman, Cleveland Urban Area Transit, Administrative Assistant, Cleveland, TN  
[mbowman@sethra.us](mailto:mbowman@sethra.us)
- Diane Hutsell, Executive Director, McMinn Senior Activity Center
- Cheryl Farley, SETHRA [cfarley@sethra.us](mailto:cfarley@sethra.us)
- Emily Duchac, TDOT Office of Mobility and Accessible Transportation [Emily.duchac@tn.gov](mailto:Emily.duchac@tn.gov)
- Jeannette Bloomfield, TDOT [Jeannette.Bloomfield@tn.gov](mailto:Jeannette.Bloomfield@tn.gov)
- Kaitlyn McClanahan, TDOT
- Debbie Hindman: [dhindman@sethra.us](mailto:dhindman@sethra.us)

Meeting Notes:

1. Inventory of Existing services was presented
  - a. Older adults, people with disabilities
  - b. Types of services
  - c. Options to finance the trips, services
  - d. Eligibility and hours of service
  - e. Temporal gaps of service
2. 4-year plan
3. County population is expected to increase across the region
4. Household poverty, limited access to vehicle access or funding
5. Opportunities for areas with population density across the region
6. Population with disability
7. Public survey – small amount and responses will be noted
  - a. Notes from individual conversations, statewide meetings
  - b. Summary of needs slides
  - c. Driver's shortages, raised wages, but still have not had a major influx
  - d. Buses, non-transit vans, extended contracts through 2025 and the refurbishment conversation has been brought up to them as well
8. Goals/Strategies
  - a. Reason for the plans – directly connected to the 5310 programs; required as part of the grant funding with the FTA
  - b. Regional coordination efforts
  - c. 80% federal share for capital projects, TDOT provides up to 10% match, vehicle purchases and Mobility Management
  - d. Fund Braiding; requirements and ability to see eligibility needs
9. Polling questions
  - a. Goal 1
    - i. 1.1: regional transportation advisory board; represent the variety of organizations that provide transportation – veterans, HRAs, disability needs, economic development, government officials; people that are not daily transportation workers
      1. Voted medium priority

- ii. 1.2: Mobility Management: facilitate the board, make it a useful agenda, group of people to make a regional impact; job posting open
          - 1. Voted high priority
            - a. **Priority** for creation of routes, making sure efficiency is there, get out with the public to offer face time and expansion of service when it's allowable, networking/connections, understand how service works
        - iii. 1.3: Improve information through 211 and TN Disability Pathfinder; keeping information up to date in directories
          - a. High priority
  - b. Goal 2
    - iv. 2.1 Recruit and train more drivers, continue to focus on the gap, but working together is the angle we're taking for this action item. Recruit drivers through a training program or more appealing, sharing drivers
      - 1. Media priority
    - v. 2.2 Volunteer transportation groups
      - 1. Tied priority level 3 ways
    - vi. 2.3 standardized volunteers and veteran transportation driver training program
      - 1. 50/50 low and high
  - c. Goal 3
    - vii. 3.1 Rural travel training program
      - 1. Medium priority
    - viii. 3.2 Develop trip sheets/handouts for easy access guide
      - 1. Medium priority
  - d. Goal 4
    - ix. 4.1 replace/maintain vehicle through FTA/TDOT and local sources
      - 1. High priority
    - x. 4.2 Expand transportation to new hours, days, geographic area zones
      - 1. High prior
    - xi. 4.3 Develop a protocol for shared-ride long distance trips
      - 1. Medium to low priority
    - xii. 4.4 adding same day or on-demand service in zones
      - 1. Discussion on software being added or developed to service planning to hopefully make it more accessible
      - 2. Tied 3 ways for priority
10. Next steps
- a. Refine goals and strategies
  - b. Revise draft
  - c. Adopt a final report