# East Alabama
# Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan
# 2020 – 2023

Region 4

Prepared by
East Alabama Regional Planning
and Development Commission

Under contract with the
Alabama Association of Regional Councils and
the Alabama Department of Transportation

February 2020

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# Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan
# 2020 – 2023

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# Abstract:

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) required the development of a coordinated human service transportation plan in order to be eligible for three Federal Transit Administration programs (Section 5310 – Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities, Section 5316 – Job Access and Reverse Commute, and Section 5317 – New Freedom). The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), and subsequent Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) extended the coordinated human service transportation plan requirement for the Section 5310 program. Under MAP-21, the Section 5316 and 5317 programs were consolidated with the Section 5307, 5310, and 5311 programs. However, remaining pre-MAP-21 Section 5316 and 5317 funding must be allocated based on a coordinated human service transportation plan.

The current regulations specify that the plan must be based on input from public, private, and non-profit transportation providers; human services providers; and the general public. Required elements include (1) an assessment of available services; (2) an assessment of transportation needs; (3) strategies, activities, and/or projects to address gaps, needs, and efficiency improvements; and (4) priorities of implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility of implementation. Minimizing duplication of services in order to maximize collective transit coverage is a prime imperative.

This plan was developed by the East Alabama Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC). EARPDC used the Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the East Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) to conduct the plan development process. EARPDC is the staff for the Calhoun Area MPO and East Alabama RPO.
The 2020 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for the East Alabama Region (Coordinated Plan) is an update of the 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2015, and 2017 Coordinated Plans and replaces all previous versions.

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Plan Purpose

The purpose of this plan is (1) to determine transit gaps and coordination opportunities among public funded, human services transportation programs in east Alabama and (2) to develop strategies to address the identified gaps and coordination issues. This plan did not evaluate the internal operations of individual transit systems to determine improvement opportunities. Instead, it examined overall transit deficiencies and coordination issues for each county and the entire region. Since it is often impossible to distinguish between the specialized transit services (Section 5310, Section 5316, and Section 5317) and the more general transit services (Section 5307 – Urban Area and Section 5311 – Non-urbanized Area), this plan considers all forms of transit service regardless of funding categories. The plan will provide the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and the local entities with information to make decisions regarding the allocation of limited federal and local transit funds.

## 1.2 Laws and Regulations

The *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU), which President George W. Bush signed into law in August 2005, requires the establishment of a "locally developed, coordinated public transit – human services transportation plan" in order to be eligible for three Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs which address the needs of underserved populations: the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities program (Section 5310); the Job Access and Reverse Commute program (Section 5316); and the New Freedom program (Section 5317). The *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (MAP-21) signed into law in July 2012 and the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act* (FAST Act), signed into law in December 2015, extended the coordinated human service transportation plan requirement for the Section 5310 program. Under MAP-21, the Section 5316 and 5317 programs were consolidated with Section 5307, 5310, and 5311 programs. Remaining pre-MAP-21 Sections 5316 and 5317 funding must be allocated based on a coordinated human service transportation plan. continues that requirement. Under those Acts, the plan is to be developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public. The FTA encourages also including transportation services funded through other sources to strengthen the plan's impact. The primary purposes of the plan are to enhance transportation access, minimize duplication of federal services, and encourage the most cost-effective transportation possible.

## 1.3 Agency Participation

The ALDOT and the Alabama Association of Commissions (AARC) agreed to develop 12 regional transit coordination plans in 2020. The AARC represents the 12 regional commissions that cover every county in the state. The 12 plans coincide with the

commission districts. ALDOT agreed to fund 100 percent of the cost of the plans with pass-through Federal Transit Administration (FTA) money.

In east Alabama, the plan was developed by the East Alabama Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC), one of the 12 regional commissions. EARPDC used the Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the East Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) to conduct the plan development process. EARPDC is the staff for the Calhoun Area MPO and East Alabama RPO.

The MPO is a cooperative effort of the EARPDC, the ALDOT, the FTA, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Calhoun County, and the Cities of Jacksonville, Weaver, Anniston, Hobson City, and Oxford. Each of these entities has membership on the various MPO committees.

The RPO process brings together the ALDOT with locally elected and appointed officials from the 10 counties. The RPO policy committee consists of mayors, county commissioners, and officials from ALDOT and FHWA. The technical committee is composed of local engineers, local modal representatives, and ALDOT engineers.

## 1.4 Time Frame

This plan identifies current needs and strategies to address these needs. It does not attempt to forecast future needs and develop a related set of strategies. Based on these facts, this plan is a short-range document. Unfortunately, many of the strategies will not be implemented soon due to the lack of financial support.

The original version of this plan was adopted in 2007 and revisions were prepared in 2008, 2011, 2015, and 2017. The ALDOT has established this development cycle. The ALDOT contract requires the plan to be revised in 2020 and summary reports prepared in 2021 and 2022.

## 1.5 Development Process

The development process began in October 2019 with a review of the 2017 plan. In November 2019, the EARPDC submitted two surveys to transit providers, agencies that purchase transit service for their clients, or transit users. Some agencies are both providers and purchasers. In these cases, the agency completed both surveys. Survey examples can be found in Appendix D.

The EARPDC staff compiled the survey results in December 2019. The EARPDC staff used the survey results to update the transit needs, barriers, and strategies reports for each county. The reports and draft plan were provided to the MPO and RPO committees in January 2020.

## 1.6 Format

This plan is divided into 14 chapters and includes 5 appendices. Chapter 1.0 is the introduction and provides background information as well as the development framework. The chapter provides a basic understanding of why and how the plan was produced.

Chapters 2.0 through 11.0 are devoted to one of the 10 counties in the east Alabama region. The chapters describe the demographic characteristics, employment attributes, transit resources, transit needs, transit service barriers, and strategies to improve transit service in each county. County maps that display concentrations of elderly, disabled, and low-income peoples from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey were also included in these chapters to help identify possible service gaps and possible coordination opportunities. Census 2010 block groups were used for the base for these maps. The county chapters contain descriptions of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit services. The transit provider descriptions are divided between public/non-profit agencies and private companies. When relevant, the appropriate FTA funding information is included in the descriptions.

Chapter 12.0 summarizes the information from the county chapters to the regional level and adds needs, service barriers, and improvement strategies that cross counties. Chapter 13.0 describes possible funding sources for the identified strategies. This chapter reviews federal, state, and local options.

The appendices provide additional background information related to plan development. Appendix A includes a list of those invited to participate in the development and revision of this plan, also shown as the Transportation Services Committee/Survey Group. Appendix B lists the Calhoun Area MPO committees and Appendix C lists the East Alabama RPO committees. Appendix D includes examples of the surveys distributed. Appendix E includes any meeting items such as memorandums, agendas, and sign-in sheets.

# 2.0 CALHOUN COUNTY

## 2.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 115,527 people live in Calhoun County. This is a decrease of 3,045 (3%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 195.7 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 20% of Calhoun County residents have a disability, 16% are elderly, and 19% are below the poverty line.

Calhoun County has a land area of 605.87 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 29 miles north-to-south as well as east-to-west. The main north-south routes are is US-431, AL-21, and AL-9 whereas the main east west route is I-20.

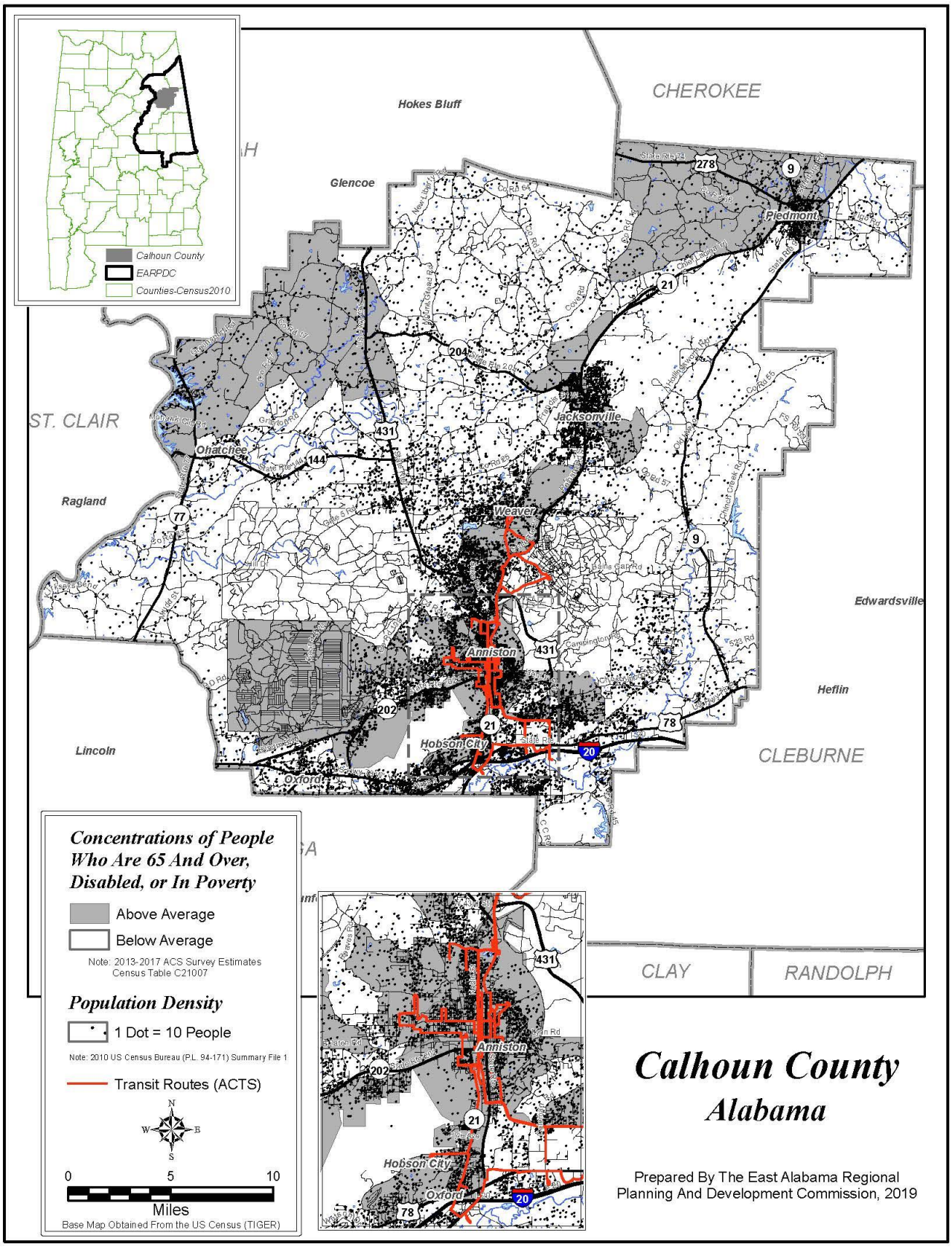
There are 3 areas of concentrated population in Calhoun County. The largest of the 3 is Anniston in the southern part of the county. The second concentration is outside the Anniston City limits in the Saks community located in the mid-southern part of the county. The third largest concentration is in Jacksonville. Figure 1 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 2.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Calhoun County had 45,972 people in the labor force in 2018. Of this number were 43,833 employed and 2,139 were unemployed. The average unemployment rate, 4.7%, was greater than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Anniston Army Depot, Honda Manufacturing, Regional Medical Center, Calhoun County Schools, and Jacksonville State University.

Based on 2013 - 2017American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 77.5% of the total employed workforce in Calhoun County live and work in the county while 19.9% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 2.7% are employed in another state.

Figure 1


Calhoun County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
CHEROKEE
Hokes Bluff
Glencoe
Piedmont
Jacksonville
Ohatchee
Weaver
Anniston
Hobson City
Oxford
Ragland
ST. CLAIR
Lincoln
Edwardsville
Heflin
CLEBURNE
CLAY
RANDOLPH
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 10 People
Note: 2010 US Census Bureau (P.L. 94-171) Summary File 1
Transit Routes (ACTS)
0
5
10
Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Calhoun County
Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019

## 2.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Calhoun County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **2nd Chance, Inc.** is a supportive advocacy service to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. 2nd Chance has a regional center in Anniston that serves Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, Etowah, Randolph, and Talladega Counties. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area. They also occasionally transport clients in vehicles they own.

- **Alabama Department of Public Health/Calhoun County Health Department** provides clinical and environmental services to the general public. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Anniston Fellowship House** is a halfway house that provides long term residential drug rehab and alcohol treatment for people seeking recovery. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Anniston Housing Authority** serves low-income persons in the city of Anniston through adequate and affordable housing. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Anniston Parks and Recreation** provides transportation for mentally and physically challenged adults 18 years or older for transportation to recreational programs. They transport approximately 80 clients per week. They also provide transportation to and from its senior center for participating citizens.

- **The ARC of Calhoun/Cleburne Counties** serves individuals with ID/DD and their families through support, education, advocacy, and public awareness so they can reach their chosen goals. They work in association with Anniston Parks and Recreation Program to provide transportation to/from recreational programs for about 25 developmentally disabled adults per week. They utilize school buses for transportation for 4 weeks of summer activities for approximately 90 kids, ages 5-21 years. They also coordinate with local school systems and others for special events including: Special Olympics, summer day camps and other special events for disabled youth and adults. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Calhoun Christian Women's Job Corps** offers bible study, one-on-one mentoring, new life skills, and job readiness preparation. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.
- **Calhoun County Urban/Fixed-Route Service** is offered through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS) and contracted through Anniston Limousine, Inc. This fixed-route service is offered in the cities of Anniston, Oxford, Weaver, and Hobson City. They currently operate 9 vehicles all of which are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Calhoun County's urban/fixed-route service response operates weekdays between the hours of 6 am and 6 pm and Saturdays from 10 am until 5 pm. They transport an average of 342 people per day and 2150 weekly. Organizations can purchase bus passes for their clients.

- **Calhoun County Urban Paratransit Service** is a curb-to-curb demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS) and contracted through Anniston Limousine, Inc. This on-demand service is available for disabled residents of Anniston, Oxford, Weaver, Jacksonville, and Hobson City. They currently operate 6 vehicles all of which are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Calhoun County's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm. They transport a daily average of 48 people and 276 people weekly.

- **Calhoun County Rural Transit** operates a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This service is available for those who live outside the city limits of Oxford, Hobson City, Anniston, Weaver, Jacksonville, and Piedmont. They currently operate 4 vehicles all of which are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Calhoun County's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 6 am and 6 pm and transport an average of 10 people per day, 50 people weekly.

- **Center of Concern** offers food and clothing as well as household and utility assistance to those in need in the Anniston area. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Church of the Cross** is an agency that purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **City of Oxford/Oxford Senior Center** utilizes one wheelchair equipped van and one 14-passenger bus for participants of the Senior Citizens Center.

- **City of Piedmont** operates a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community

Transportation System (ACTS). The service area for this on-demand service includes an eight-mile radius extending from the center of Piedmont. They currently operate 1 vehicle in a 3-vehicle fleet, which are all equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Calhoun County's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 7:30 am and 3:30 pm and transport an average of 8 people per day, 40 people per week.

- **Community Action Agency** provides resource development, coordination efforts, technical assistance, and training for the impoverished in all counties in the East Alabama Region. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Constantine Head Start** is a day care center in Anniston that helps with children from 6 weeks to 5 years old. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Family Links** offers various services to families with children ages birth to 19 including counseling, parenting strategies, drug prevention and intervention, and kindergarten readiness, as well as community education. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Family Services Center of Calhoun County, Inc.** is a community-based organization that provides transportation as needed to clients who are in case management. In East Alabama the agency contracts with ACTS to provide transportation services for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Glenn Addie Community Church** assists its community with nutrition, substance abuse, childcare, planned parenthood, literacy, and medical education. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Health Services Center** is a Community Based Organization and medical clinic that provides HIV/AIDS medical care, education, and support to a fourteen-county area of East Alabama. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Help, Inc.** is an agency that purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Highland Health Systems** provides mental health services for residents of Calhoun and Cleburne counties. They operate several passenger vans each day to transport adults to various day treatment, partial hospital, extended care and children services programs. One of the vehicles is wheelchair lift equipped. The program transports approximately 200 clients per day for day treatment. The Center operates its vans throughout its various locations in both Calhoun and

Cleburne Counties providing transit for approximately 400 clients each day to and from treatment and training centers in Jacksonville, Duke School, Anniston, and Cleburne County. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **House is a Home Project** is an agency that purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Interfaith Ministries** provides assistance and serves as an advocate for individuals and families in crisis. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Jacksonville Senior Center** operates one 12-passenger wheelchair lift equipped van to and from the senior center for various senior oriented programs. Occasionally utilizes another vehicle when demand and personnel are available. Transit services are provided 8-4 pm weekdays for approximately 15 citizens each day.

- **Jacksonville State University Transit - Gamecock Express** provides transit service to Jacksonville State University for JSU students, faculty, and staff with valid JSU ID. The system operates weekdays from 7 am to 9:30 pm with limited night and summer service and is idle during university holidays, semester breaks, and weekends. This system provides 166 trips per day with 5 different routes and operates 6 buses/8 buses during peak time. There are 13 buses in the fleet and the system averages approximately 3,600 trips per month. Gamecock Express also operates game day shuttle service for selected games to reduce heavy traffic volumes around the stadium during football games.

- **Kid One Transport** is a non-profit organization that provides transportation for children under the age of 19 to needed medical care, as well as expectant mothers to prenatal care. Service is provided to Calhoun County residents traveling to Jefferson County, as well as locally.

- **Mountain View Church** purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **NHC Place/Healthcare** utilizes one 16-passenger vehicle with wheelchair lift with the assisted living facility. They transport clients for recreation and medical appointments as needed, which is usually 8-10 patients each week.

- **Opportunity Center – Easter Seal** provides transportation for disabled clients currently receiving services for Special Programs. They operate one 14-passenger van for client transportation.

- **The Opportunity Center** provides vocational development and extended employment primarily for individuals with mental, emotional, and physical

disabilities, to maximize their employment potential. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Regional Medical Center (RMC)** is the premier regional health care provider for a five-county service area in northeast Alabama. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **The Right Place** is an organization that offers programs to prevent homelessness or assist low-income persons in securing affordable housing. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Sav-a-life Crisis Pregnancy Center** offers free pregnancy testing, ultrasound, prenatal assessment, STI/STD testing for men and women, childbirth education classes, parenting classes, and fatherhood programming. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Smith Metropolitan AME Zion Church** is an agency that purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **St. Michael's Medical Clinic** is a faith-based, non-profit medical clinic that provides basic primary care to the medically uninsured population of Calhoun County. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Stringfellow Memorial Hospital** provides comprehensive acute care in-patient services, 24-hour emergency care, general and specialized surgical services, same day outpatient surgery and procedures, a full-service rehabilitation department, and diagnostic testing procedures. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **Student Veterans of America** is an agency that purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

- **United Way of East Central Alabama** provides a comprehensive network of health and human service programs for residents in Calhoun, Cleburne, and Randolph counties. In East Alabama the agency purchases fixed-route bus passes for their clients in the Calhoun County urban area.

<u>Private Systems</u>

- **10 Dollar Taxi** is a taxi service located in Anniston that also serves Oxford, Jacksonville, Birmingham, and Atlanta airport. Their business hours are 10 am to 6 pm every day.

- **AAA City Taxi and Shuttle** is a taxi service located in Anniston that also serves Oxford, Jacksonville, Birmingham, and Atlanta airport

- **Amtrak Passenger Train** has one stop in Anniston along the Crescent line. The Crescent line runs from New York, New York to New Orleans, Louisiana. The Anniston stop is not a stand-alone train station but also includes a the transfer station for the Calhoun County Urban/Fixed Route system and Greyhound bus lines.

- **Andy's City Taxi Service** is a taxi service located in Anniston that also serves Oxford, Jacksonville, Birmingham, and Atlanta airport.

- **Anniston EMS, Inc.** operates non-emergency services for non-ambulatory patients 24 hours a day, seven days a week for stretcher bound patients. This is a for-hire service available for patients located anywhere in Calhoun County with patient's choice of destination. They also provide emergency transportation, wheelchair transport for-hire, and operate a transport van for-hire for ambulatory people who need a ride to the doctor's office for regular appointments.

- **Greyhound Bus Lines** has one stop in Anniston. This stop is not at a stand-alone bus station but is housed at the Amtrak passenger train stop which is also the transfer station for the Calhoun County Urban/Fixed Route system. Tickets can only be purchased online.

- **Medical Transport of Alabama** is committed to providing quality non-emergency transportation services at affordable rates. MTA employs more than 52 full-time drivers for its 52+ vehicle fleet. MTA is able to provide a wide variety of vehicle options including wheelchair and minivans to meet specific client needs. Drivers are trained to assist non-emergency patients, from door to door instead of just from curb to curb.

## 2.4 Transit Needs

Figure 1 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly cover the center of the county following State Route 21, the northwestern portion of the county in the Ohatchee area, and the northeastern portion of the county in Piedmont. The Calhoun County Urban fixed transit system covers the area spanning State Route 21 up to the City of Weaver and the City of Piedmont has an on-demand system for its area. The Calhoun County Rural on-demand system only serves those outside the city limits of Oxford, Hobson City, Anniston, Weaver, Jacksonville, and Piedmont. Transit routes do not cover those within the city limits of Jacksonville or in the Ohatchee area.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a

list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Expand rural service to Ohatchee
- Limitations of public transit routes
    - Reliable scheduling method
    - Extended routes and stops to service more residents
- Limitations of public transit hours of operations
- Transportation service for low income persons
- Increased bag limits for those transporting groceries
- Increased stops to grocery stores

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Saturday Service
- Ability of agencies that serve low-income, elderly, or disabled persons to purchase trolley tickets for their clients

## 2.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Funding
- Scheduling of on-demand service

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 2.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (High)
- Maintain current transit coordination efforts (High)
- Compensate volunteer drivers for mileage (Medium)
- Subsidized Uber/Lyft services (Low)
- Creation of a network of drivers among faith groups (Medium)
- Expand current transit service
    - Extended service routes (Medium)
    - Additional route stops (High)
    - Extended service hours (Medium)
- Improve current transit service
    - Scheduling (Medium)
    - Trip coordination (Medium)
- Increase availability of public transportation with more vehicles (High)
- Creation of a voucher system for transportation for clients (High)
- Funding system to assist patients with fuel costs (Medium)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 3.0 CHAMBERS COUNTY

## 3.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 33,895 people live in Chambers County. This is a decrease of 320 (1%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 57.4 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 17% of Chambers County residents have a disability, 19% are elderly, and 19% are below the poverty line.

Chambers County has a land area of 596.53 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 26 miles north-to-south and 27 miles east-to-west. The main north-south route is US-431 and the main east west route is AL-50.

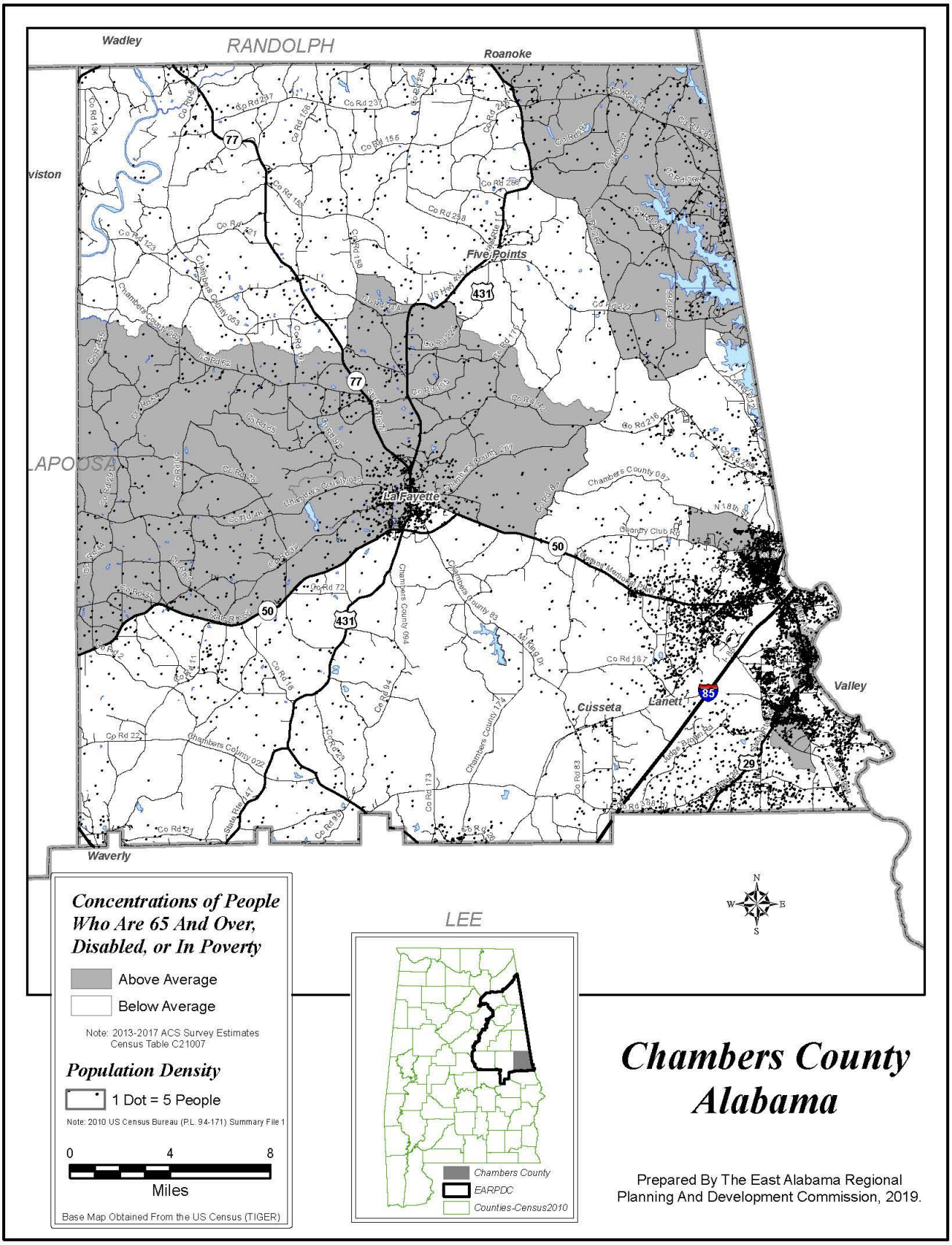
There are three areas of concentrated population in Chambers County. The largest of the three is City of Valley in the southeastern part of the county. The second concentration is the City of Lanett also located in the southeastern part of the county. The third concentration is in the City of LaFayette located in the center of the county. Figure 2 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 3.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Chambers County had 15,276 people in the labor force. Of this number were 14,679 employed and were 597 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 3.9%, matched the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include AJIN USA, Chambers County Schools, EAMC-Lanier, West Rock, and Wal-Mart.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 40.6% of the total employed workforce in Chambers County live and work in the county while 28.4% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 30.9% are employed in another state.

Figure 2


Wadley
RANDOLPH
Roanoke
Five Points
LaFayette
Waverly
Valley
Cusseta
Lanett
LEE
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 5 People
Note: 2010 US Census Bureau (P.L. 94-171) Summary File 1
0 4 8
Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Chambers County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Chambers County Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019.

## 3.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Chambers County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13. The public and non-profit transit providers in Chambers County limit service to a small section of the population, usually associated with a government or agency service program. The general population does not have a public transit option.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Circle of Care** provides limited transportation services for families, particularly children, to help make sure they receive needed medical care and other core services. They serve Chambers County and parts of Randolph and Lee Counties. Circle of Care has 3 service vehicles used for demand response Mondays through Thursdays between the hours of 8 and 5 eastern standard time. None of the vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Clients must reserve transportation the day before it is needed. An average of 2 – 3 people per day and 10 – 15 people per week are transported by Circle of Care.

- **Chambers County Senior Transportation** provides limited transportation services for the elderly in LaFayette, Lanett, and Valley. They operate three buses, all of which are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps, three days per week from 8 am to 4 pm. On average they transport 15 people per day and 60 people per week.

Private Systems

- **Uber** is a smart phone-based taxi company that provides limited service in Chambers and Tallapoosa Counties. With the Uber App, anyone can summon a driver to their location (if they are located within the service area). Riders have the option to choose the type of vehicle and payment is facilitated through the Uber Ap with charges to a debit or credit card.

- **Lyft** is a smart phone-based taxi company that provides limited service in Chambers County. With the Lyft App, anyone can summon a driver to their location (if they are located within the service area). Riders have the option to choose the type of vehicle and payment is facilitated through the Lyft Ap with charges to a debit or credit card.

## 3.4 Transit Needs

Figure 2 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly cover the center of the county to the west central portion of the county, the northeastern portion of the county in the

Fredonia area, and the southeastern portion of the county along the US Highway 29 corridor. There are no transit routes that cover any of the highlighted block groups.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Transportation services for low-income persons
- Transportation services for disabled persons
- Public transportation
- JARC transportation needs

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Limited transportation assistance for medical care

## 3.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Funding
- Infrastructure

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 3.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Municipalities fund public transportation (High)
- Creation of new non-profit organization to spearhead transportation needs (Medium)
- Creation of new for-profit organization to spearhead transportation needs (Low)
- Assistance from existing non- or for-profit organization(s) (Medium)
- More operation days (High)
- Increased service area (High)
- Increase number of vehicles in service (Medium)
- Creation of a JARC program (High)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 4.0 CHEROKEE COUNTY

## 4.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 25,885 people live in Cherokee County. This is a decrease of 104 (0.4%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 46.9 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 21% of Cherokee County residents have a disability, 21% are elderly, and 16% are below the poverty line.

Cherokee County has a land area of 553.70 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 40 miles north-to-south and 23 miles east-to-west. The main north-south routes are AL-9 and AL-68 and the main east west route is US-411.

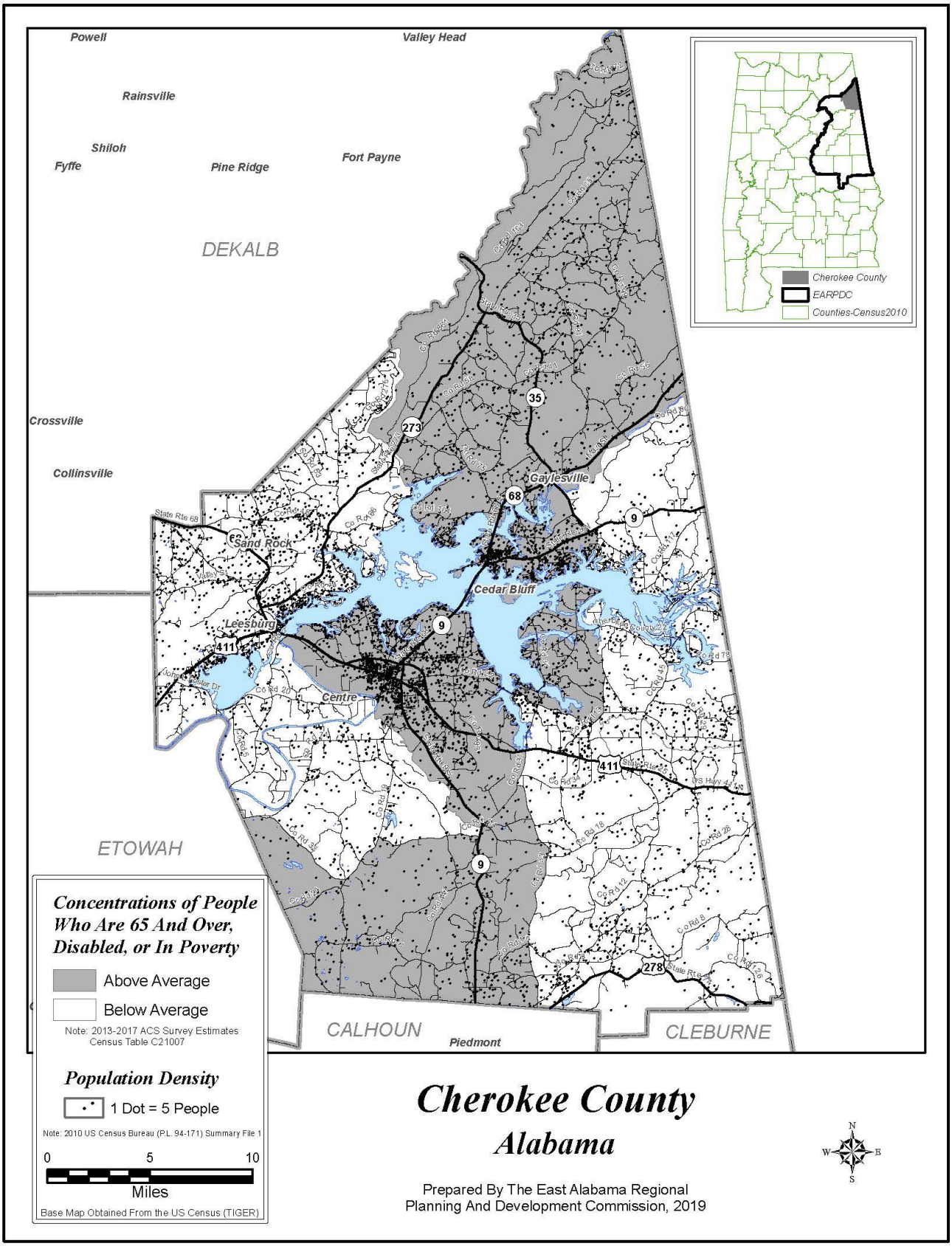
There are two areas of concentrated population in Cherokee County. The largest of the two is the City of Centre in the central part of the county. The second concentration is the Town of Cedar Bluff located in the north central part of the county. Figure 3 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 4.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Cherokee County had 11,622 people in the labor force. Of this number were 11,207 employed and were 415 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 3.6%, was less than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Cherokee County Board of Education, KTH Leesburg Products, Cherokee County Health and Rehabilitation, Wal-Mart, and American Apparel.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 49.2% of the total employed workforce in Cherokee County live and work in the county while 24.8% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 26% are employed in another state.

Figure 3


Powell
Valley Head
Rainsville
Shiloh
Fyffe
Pine Ridge
Fort Payne
DEKALB
Crossville
Collinsville
Gaylesville
Sand Rock
Cedar Bluff
Leesburg
Centre
ETOWAH
CALHOUN
Piedmont
CLEBURNE
Cherokee County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 5 People
Note: 2010 US Census Bureau (P.L. 94-171) Summary File 1
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Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Cherokee County
Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019
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## 4.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Cherokee County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Cherokee County Rural Transit** is a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This system serves all residents of Cherokee County. The only specific route this service takes is to the CED Mental Health Center in Centre. They currently have a fleet of 3 vehicles (one in operation with 2 backups) which are all equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Calhoun County's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 7 am and 3 pm. They transport an average of 9 people per day and 47 people per week.

- **AFB Diversified, LLC/dba/New Beginnings** is a residential facility for intellectually disabled persons. This agency transports clients in vehicles they own. AFB Diversified, LLC/dba/New Beginnings' main office is located in Gadsden, but they also serve portions of the Birmingham area, DeKalb County, and Cherokee County.

- **2nd Chance, Inc.** is a supportive advocacy service to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. This agency transports clients in vehicles they own. 2nd Chance has a regional center in Anniston that serves Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, Etowah, Randolph, and Talladega Counties.

Private Systems

- None found

## 4.4 Transit Needs

Figure 3 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly cover the northeastern portion in the Ringgold, Broomtown, and Gaylesville communities; central portions of Cedar Bluff and Centre; and southwestern portions of the county. Limited on-demand transit systems exist within these blocks.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Public transit service in rural areas
- Limitations of transit routes
- Service after 5 pm
- Weekend service

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Limited transportation options in the Centre area
- Limited transportation options for the county

## 4.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Funding
- Lack of qualified drivers
- Scheduling on-demand service

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 4.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (High)
- Compensate volunteer drivers for mileage (Medium)
- Subsidized Uber/Lyft services (Low)
- Creation of a network of drivers among faith groups (Medium)
- 24-hour services (Medium)
- Creation of a voucher system for transportation for clients (High)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 5.0 CLAY COUNTY

## 5.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 13,407 people live in Clay County. This is a decrease of 525 (4%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 23.1 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 17% of Clay County residents have a disability, 20% are elderly, and 19% are below the poverty line. The main north-south route is AL-9 and the main east west route is AL-77.

Clay County has a land area of 603.96 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 27 miles north-to-south and 30 miles east-to-west.

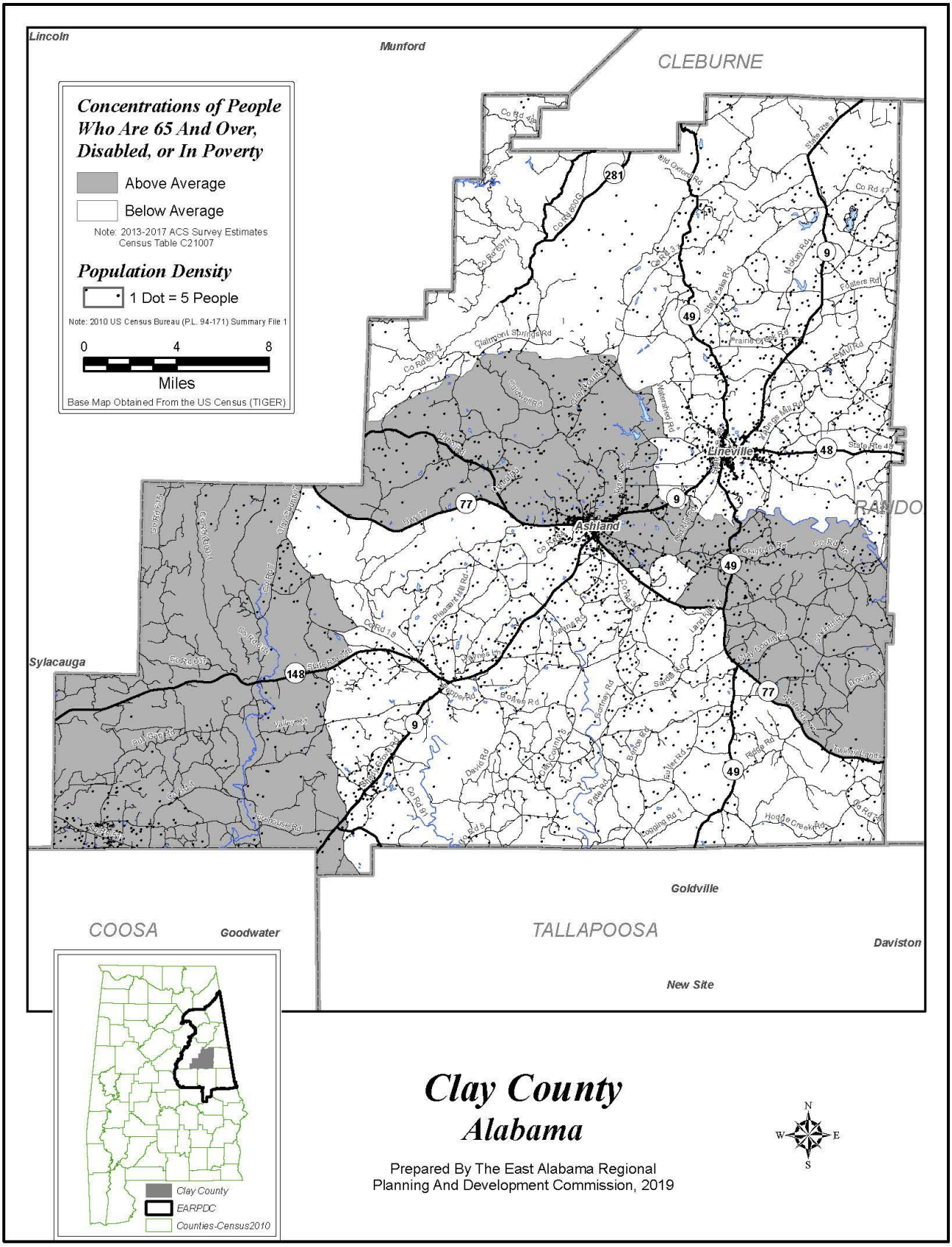
There are two areas of concentrated population in Clay County. The largest of the two is Ashland in the central part of the county. The second concentration is Lineville located in the west central part of the county. Figure 4 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 5.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Clay County had 5,963 people in the labor force. Of this number were 5,730 employed and were 233 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 3.9%, matched the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Wellborn Cabinets, Inc., Kosch Foods, Tru-Wood Cabinets, John-Co Truss Company, and Integrity Cabinets.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 61.4% of the total employed workforce in Clay County live and work in the county while 33.7% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 4.8% are employed in another state.

Figure 4


Lincoln
Munford
CLEBURNE
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 5 People
Note: 2010 US Census Bureau (P.L. 94-171) Summary File 1
0 4 8
Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Sylacauga
Ashland
Lineville
RANDO
Goldville
COOSA
Goodwater
TALLAPOOSA
Daviston
New Site
Clay County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Clay County
Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019
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## 5.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Clay County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Clay County Rural Transit** is a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This systems service area includes all of Clay County. They currently have a fleet of 2 vehicles with 1 in operation at a time. All are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Calhoun County's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 8 am and 4 pm. They transport an average of 16 people per day and 78 per week.

- **City of Lineville** contracts with another agency to provide transportation services to city residents along a fixed route that operates Monday through Friday from the hours of 8 am to 1 pm. The city has only 1 vehicle in operation and it is equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp. On average, they transport 1 person per week.

Private Systems

- None found

## 5.4 Transit Needs

Figure 4 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly bi sects the county through the center near the Ashland and Cragford areas. These block groups also include the midwestern through southeastern portion of the county. Limited on-demand transit systems exist within these blocks.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Transportation service for low income persons
- Transportation service for elderly persons
- Transportation service for disabled persons

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Low-cost transportation service operated by the County

## 5.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Funding
- Lack of ridership
- Current transportation hours of operation
- Assistance from existing non-profit organization(s)

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 5.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (High)
- Implementation of a paratransit system (High)
- Education of current transportation services (Medium)
- Extend service area and hours of current transportation services (Medium)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 6.0 CLEBURNE COUNTY

## 6.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 14,939 people live in Cleburne County. This is a decrease of 33 (0.2%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 26.7 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 23% of Cleburne County residents have a disability, 19% are elderly, and 19% are below the poverty line.

Cleburne County has a land area of 560.10 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 33 miles north-to-south and 28 miles east-to-west. The main north-south routes are AL-9 and US-78 and the main east west route is I-20.

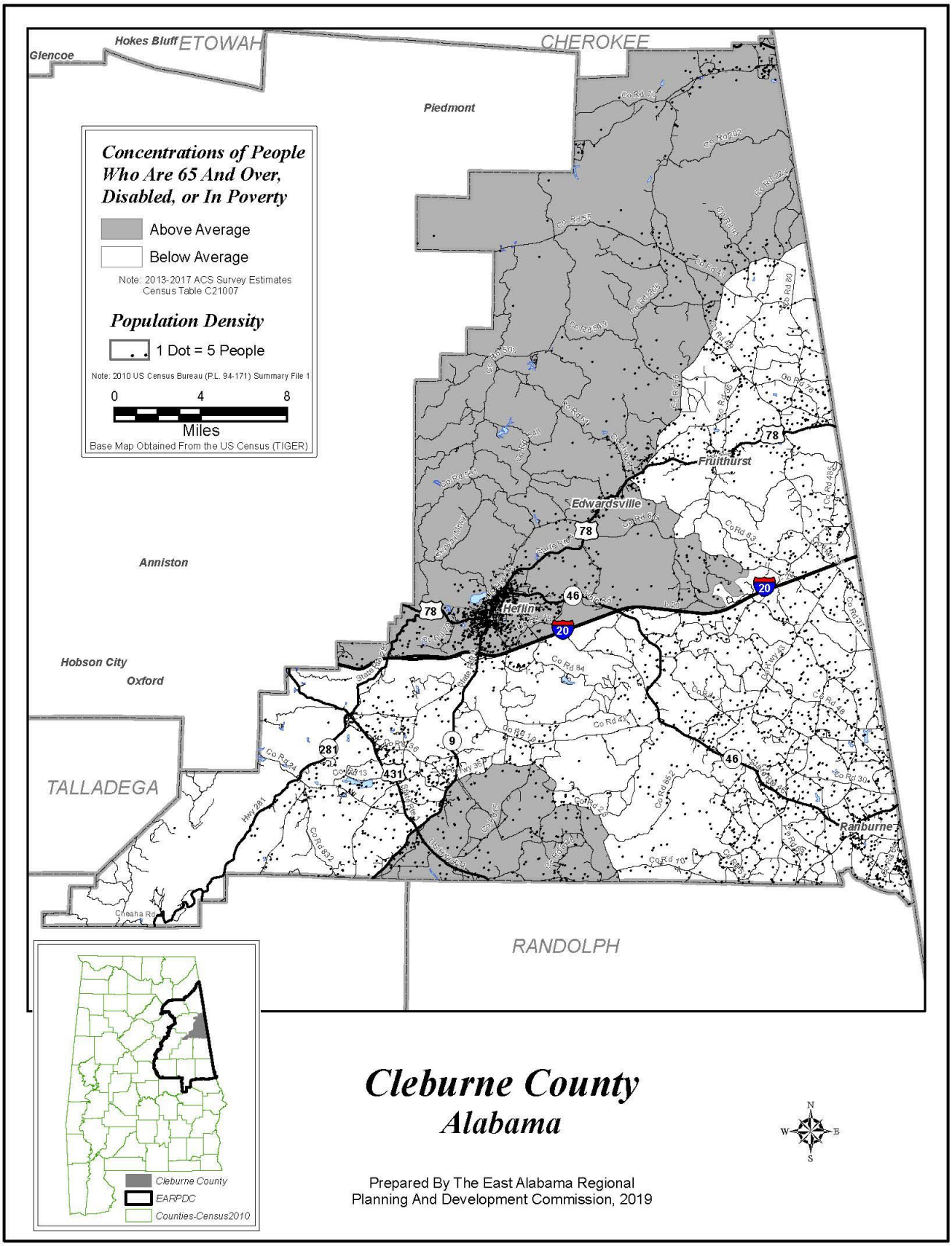
There is one area of concentrated population in Cleburne County which is the City of Heflin. Figure 5 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 6.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Cleburne County had 20,817 people in the labor force. Of this number were 19,995 employed and were 822 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 4.2%, was greater than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include L. E. Bell Construction, Cleburne County Schools, Southwire, Webb Concrete, and Cleburne County Nursing Home.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 31.7% of the total employed workforce in Cleburne County live and work in the county while 26% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 42.3% are employed in another state.

Figure 5


Hokes Bluff
ETOWAH
CHEROKEE
Glencoe
Piedmont
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
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8
Miles
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Fruithurst
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Anniston
Hobson City
Oxford
TALLADEGA
RANDOLPH
Ranburne
Cleburne County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Cleburne County
Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019
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## 6.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Cleburne County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Cleburne County Rural Transit** is a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This systems service area includes all of Cleburne County and will take passengers to doctor appointments or place of employment in Anniston of Calhoun County. They currently have a fleet of 2 vehicles with only 1 in operation at a time. All vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Cleburne County's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm and transport an average of 1 person per day/8 per week.

- **2nd Chance, Inc.** is a supportive advocacy service to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. This agency transports clients in vehicles they own. 2nd Chance has a regional center in Anniston that serves Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, Etowah, Randolph, and Talladega Counties.

- **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ARDS)** is a state agency that provides services to children and adults with disabilities. This agency may occasionally provide reimbursement for transportation expenses. ARDS has an office located in Gadsden and serves Etowah, Marshall, DeKalb, Cherokee, and St. Clair Counties.

Private Systems

- None found

## 6.4 Transit Needs

Figure 5 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly cover the northern to west central portions of the county. Limited on-demand transit systems exist within these blocks.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Public transit service in rural areas
- Limitations of public transit routes
- Reliable transportation for employment
- Transportation for medical services

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Limited transportation in the county
- Transportation for medical appointments and employment into Anniston (Calhoun county)

## 6.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Funding

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 6.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (High)
- Compensate volunteer drivers for mileage (Medium)
- Subsidized Uber/Lyft services (Low)
- Creation of a network of drivers among faith groups (Medium)
- Extended service routes (Medium)
- Increased services for those leaving medical facilities (Medium)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 7.0 COOSA COUNTY

## 7.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 10,955 people live in Coosa County. This is a decrease of 584 (5%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 17.7 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 22% of Coosa County residents have a disability, 21% are elderly, and 14% are below the poverty line.

Coosa County has a land area of 650.93 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 24 miles north-to-south and 29 miles east-to-west. The main north-south route is US-231 and the main east west route is AL-22.

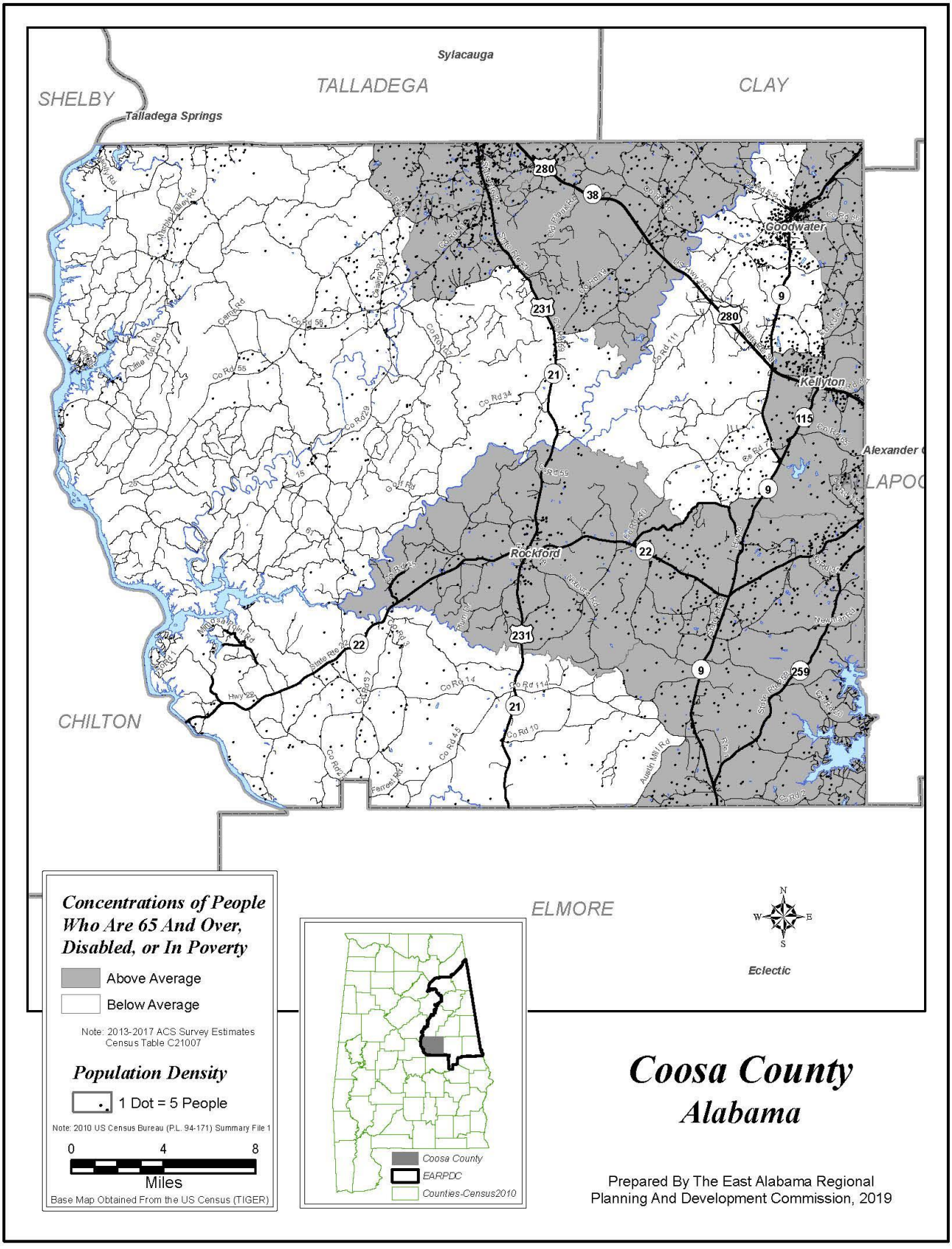
There are two areas of concentrated population in Coosa County. The largest of the two is Goodwater in the northeastern part of the county. The second concentration is south of the Sylacauga city limits located in the north central part of the county. Figure 6 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 7.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Coosa County had 4,376 people in the labor force. Of this number were 4,193 employed and were 183 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 4.2%, was greater than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Madix, Coosa County Board of Education, and AmTech.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 20% of the total employed workforce in Coosa County live and work in the county while 79.5% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 0.5% are employed in another state.

Figure 6


Sylacauga
SHELBY
TALLADEGA
CLAY
Talladega Springs
Goodwater
Kellyton
Rockford
CHILTON
ELMORE
Alexander
Eclectic
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 5 People
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Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Coosa County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Coosa County
Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019

## 7.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Coosa County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Coosa County Rural Transit** operates a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). They currently operate 1 vehicle which is equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Coosa County's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 7 am and 4:30 pm and transport an average of 3 people per day/14 weekly. With ample notice from passengers, this demand response can transport dialysis patients to Montgomery, Alexander City, Birmingham, or Tuskegee.

- **City of Goodwater** operates a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This system serves northeastern Coosa County and is available to take passengers to doctors' appointments in Alexander City, Talladega, Sylacauga, Rockford, and Birmingham with ample schedule time. They currently have a fleet of 3 vehicles, two of which are in constant operation. All vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. The city of Goodwater's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 7:30 am and 3:30 pm and transport an average of 4 people per day/22 per week.

Private Systems

- None found

## 7.4 Transit Needs

Figure 6 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups are roughly located on the eastern portion in the Kellyton and Goodwater areas; the north central area outside of the Sylacauga city limits, and center of the county in the Rockford area. On-demand transit systems exist within these blocks but is limited in fleet size and hours of operation.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- More services for disabled persons
- More services for elderly persons
- More services for low income persons
- Increased public transportation

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Low-cost transportation options for medical services outside of the service county

## 7.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Limited county resources
- Limited city resources
- Funding

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 7.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (High)
- Apply for grants/federal funding (High)
- Increase number of fleet vehicles (Medium)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of

support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 8.0 ETOWAH COUNTY

## 8.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 103,132 people live in Etowah County. This is a decrease of 1,298 (1%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 195.2 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 20% of Etowah County residents have a disability, 18% are elderly, and 18% are below the poverty line.

Etowah County has a land area of 534.99 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 25 miles north-to-south and 32 miles east-to-west. The main north-south routes are US-431 and I-59 and the main east west routes are US-431 and US-278.

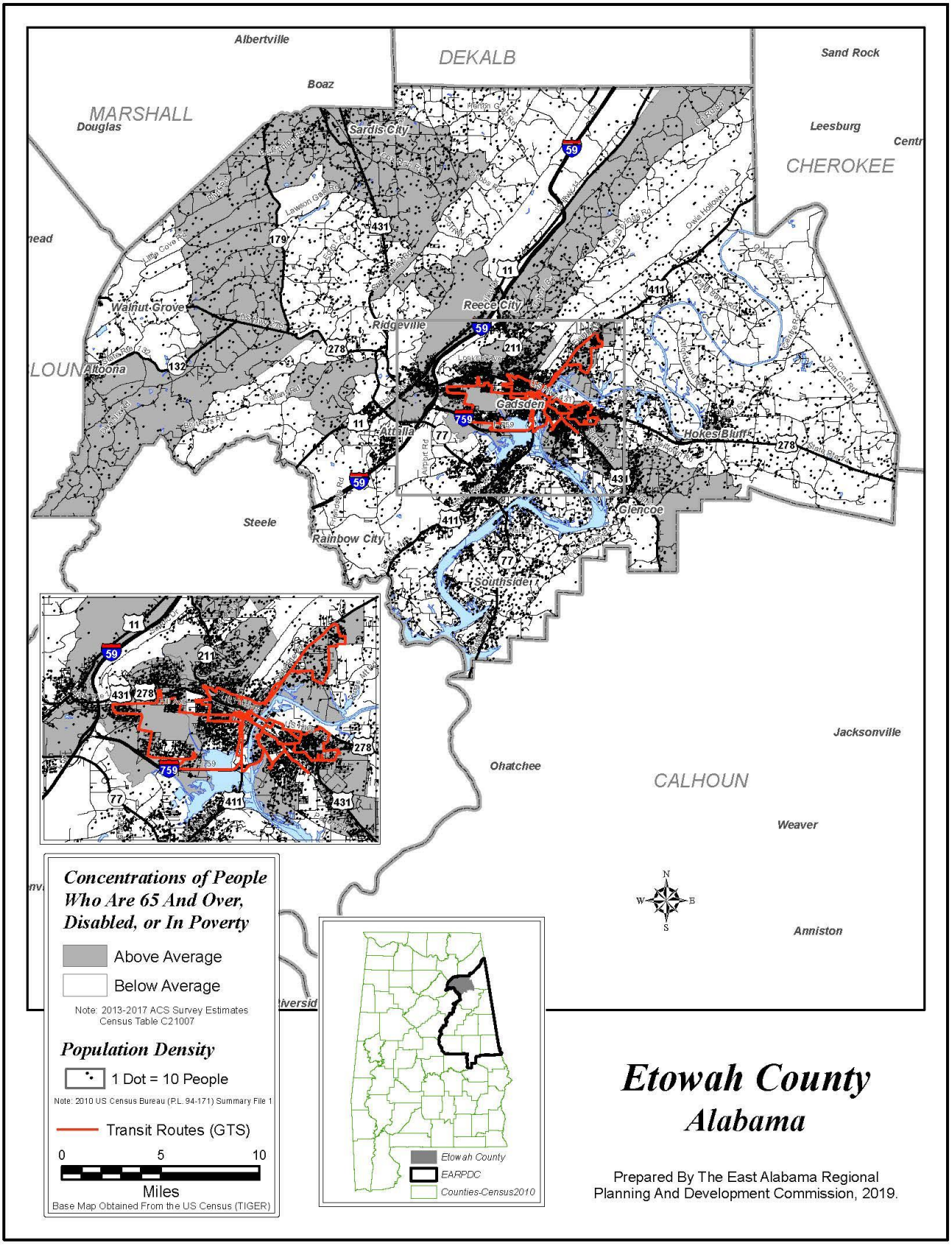
There are three areas of concentrated population in Etowah County. The largest of the three is Gadsden in the center part of the county. The second concentration is Rainbow City located in the south-central part of the county. The third largest concentration is in Glencoe which is in the southeastern part of the county. Figure 7 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 8.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Etowah County had 43,096 people in the labor force. Of this number were 41,328 employed and were 1,768 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 4.1%, was greater than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Goodyear, Etowah County Board of Education, Gadsden Regional Medical Center, Koch Foods, and Wal-Mart.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 73.3% of the total employed workforce in Etowah County live and work in the county while 25.5% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 1.2% are employed in another state.

Figure 7


Albertville
DEKALB
Sand Rock
Boaz
MARSHALL
Douglas
Sardis City
Leesburg
CHEROKEE
Walnut Grove
Reece City
Ridgeville
Altoona
Gadsden
Attalla
Hokes Bluff
Steele
Rainbow City
Glencoe
Southside
Jacksonville
Ohatchee
CALHOUN
Weaver
Anniston
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 10 People
Note: 2010 US Census Bureau (P.L. 94-171) Summary File 1
Transit Routes (GTS)
0
5
10
Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Etowah County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Etowah County
Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019.

## 8.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Etowah County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **2nd Chance, Inc.** is a supportive advocacy service to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. This agency transports clients in vehicles they own. 2nd Chance has a regional center in Anniston that serves Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, Etowah, Randolph, and Talladega Counties.

- **AFB Diversified, LLC/dba/New Beginnings** is a residential facility for intellectually disabled persons. This agency transports clients in vehicles they own. AFB Diversified, LLC/dba/New Beginnings' main office is located in Gadsden, but they also serve portions of the Birmingham area, DeKalb County, and Cherokee County.

- **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ARDS)** is a state agency that provides services to children and adults with disabilities. This agency may occasionally provide reimbursement for transportation expenses. ARDS has an office located in Gadsden and serves Etowah, Marshall, DeKalb, Cherokee, and St. Clair Counties.

- **Cherry Creek Village** is an independent living facility that purchases DART tickets for their clients.

- **Demand and Response Transportation (DART)** is a demand response service to ADA eligible persons with disabilities. This is an advance reservation shared ride public transportation facilitated through Gadsden Transportation Services. Reservations can be made weekdays from 6 am to 6 pm and on Saturday from 9 am to 2 pm.

- **Etowah Baptist Missions Center** provides a variety of services from household items to financial assistance to those in need in the Gadsden area. In East Alabama the agency purchases transportation tokens for clients in the Gadsden urban area.

- **Etowah/Dekalb/Cherokee (CED) Mental Health Board** provides public and private funded mental health and substance abuse treatment prevention services. In the East Alabama region, this agency purchases transportation tokens for clients in the Gadsden urban area and purchases DART tickets for their clients in the rural area of Etowah County.

- **Etowah County Rural Transportation** operates a demand response service through the Etowah County Commission. They currently operate 7 out of their 9 owned vehicles which are all equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Etowah County's rural transportation operates weekdays between the hours of 5:30 am and 4:30 pm. Service on Saturdays and holidays is limited to dialysis and JARC participants. The Etowah County rural transit transports an average of 39 people per day and 235 people per week.

- **Gadsden State Community College Advisement Resource Center** assists students through referrals to outside agencies for students with personal needs. In the East Alabama region this agency also purchases transportation tokens for clients in the Gadsden urban area.

- **Gadsden Trolley System** operates a fixed-route system in the city of Gadsden. This fixed-route system operates weekdays from 6 am to 6 pm and on Saturday from 9 am to 2 pm.

- **Mary G. Hardin Center for Cultural Arts** purchases transportation tokens for clients in the Gadsden urban area.

- **The Northeast Kidney Foundation** provides services to patients, family members, the general public and clinical and academic professionals throughout the Northeast. DaVita Dialysis in Rainbow City; Fresnious Kidney Care in Attalla; and Physician Choice, Gadsden Regional Medical, and DaVita Dialysis in Gadsden partner to provide DART tickets for their clients.

- **RSVP** is a national program that involves senior citizens in volunteer services within their own communities and is sponsored locally by the Etowah County Commission. RSVP currently owns 1 transportation vehicle and it is equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp. RSVP operates weekdays between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm. They transport an average of 10 people a day and 50 people per week.

Private Systems

- **Greyhound Bus Lines** has one stop in Gadsden. This stop is not at a stand-alone bus station but is housed with a small business. This location is a curbside bus stop only and tickets must be purchased online or at a full-service terminal.

- **B & L Taxi** is a taxi service located in Attala.

- **TTS Taxi Service** is a taxi service located in Gadsden that serves all of Etowah county and offers transportation services, airport shuttle services, restaurant delivery services, pharmacy pick-up and prescription drop-off services, fuel recovery service, and battery boost service. Their operation hours are from 7 am to 10 pm every day but are available 24 hours a day for emergencies.

- **Love's Taxi Service** is a taxi service located in Gadsden.

## 8.4 Transit Needs

Figure 7 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly parallel the eastern side of US Highway 11 in Reece City, US Highway 431 in Sardis City, the western side of State Route 179 and the southern portion of State Route 132 near Walnut Grove. The block groups also include the eastern portion of US-431 in the Glencoe area.  bisects the county through the center and also includes the mid-south eastern portion of the county. Limited on-demand transit systems exist within these blocks.

The Etowah County Rural on-demand system only serves those outside the city limits of in Etowah County. This is the only transit system that covers all of the census block groups.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

<u>Needs Not Currently Addressed</u>

- Increased public transit in rural areas
- Limitations of public transit routes
- Limitations of public transit hours of operation
- Service during the weekend
- Service during holidays
- Transportation to locations out of the county
- Transportation for low-income persons
- Transportation for elderly persons
- Increased transportation for disabled persons
- Increased on-demand transportation
- Increased education of transportation programs available

<u>Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service</u>

## 8.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Lack of qualified drivers
- Funding
- Scheduling of on-demand service
- Lack of demand for extended hours
- Public education of available transportation

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 8.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain existing transportation services (High)
- Relax qualifications for elderly (Medium)
- Compensate volunteer drivers for mileage (Medium)
- Subsidized Uber/Lyft services (Low)
- Creation of a network of drivers among faith groups (Medium)
- 24-hour services (Low)
- Extended hours (Medium)
- Increase service offered on the weekends (High)
- Extend service area to accommodate patients out of the county (Low)
- Creation of a voucher system for transportation for clients (Medium)
- Reduce current transportation fees (Medium)
- Increase number of fleet vehicles (High)
- Municipalities fund public transportation (High)
- County/Municipality cooperative (Medium)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 9.0 RANDOLPH COUNTY

## 9.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 22,530 people live in Randolph County. This is a decrease of 383 (2%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 35.9 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 14% of Randolph County residents have a disability, 20% are elderly, and 19% are below the poverty line.

Randolph County has a land area of 580.55 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 27 miles north-to-south and 24 miles east-to-west. The main north-south route is US-431 and the main east west route is AL-48.

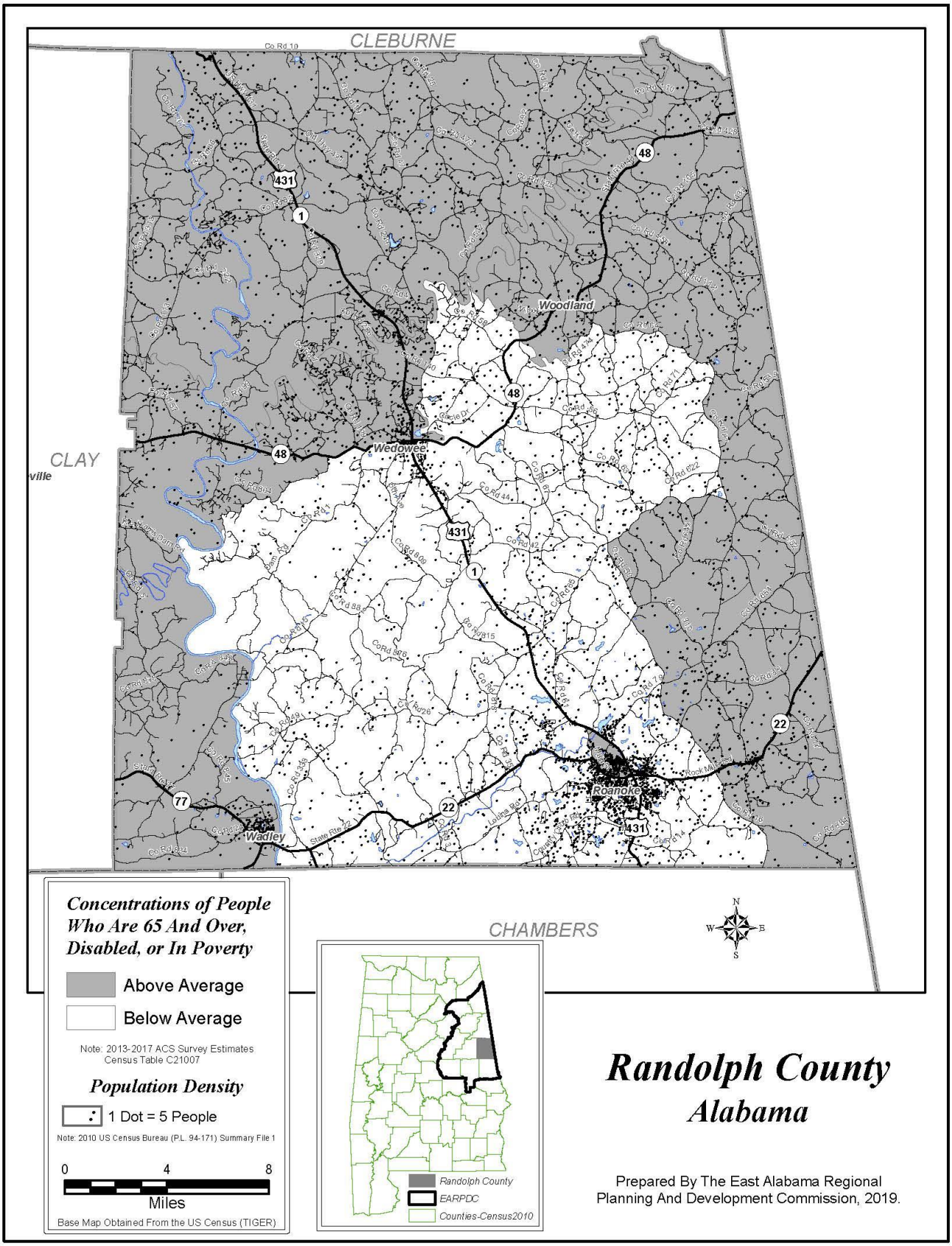
There are three areas of concentrated population in Randolph County. The largest of the three is Roanoke in the southeastern part of the county. The second concentration is Wadley located in the southwestern part of the county. The third is Wedowee located in the center of the county. Figure 8 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 9.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Randolph County had 9,538 people in the labor force. Of this number were 9,155 employed and were 383 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 4.0%, was greater than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Mohawk Industries, Randolph County Schools, Wadley Holdings, Candlewick Yarns (Dixie Company), and Traylor Retirement Community.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 58.9% of the total employed workforce in Randolph County live and work in the county while 17.1% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 24% are employed in another state.

Figure 8


CLEBURNE
CLAY
CHAMBERS
Woodland
Wedowee
Roanoke
Wadley
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 5 People
Note: 2010 US Census Bureau (P.L. 94-171) Summary File 1
0 4 8
Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Randolph County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Randolph County
Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019.

## 9.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Randolph County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13. The public and non-profit transit providers in Randolph County limit service to a small section of the population, usually associated with a government or agency service program. The general population does not have a public transit option.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Circle of Care** provides limited transportation services for families, particularly children, to help make sure they receive needed medical care and other core services. They serve Chambers County and parts of Randolph and Lee Counties. Circle of Care has 3 service vehicles used for demand response between the hours of 8 and 5 eastern standard time. None of the vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Clients must reserve transportation the day before it is needed. An average of 2 – 3 people per day and 10 – 15 people per week are transported by Circle of Care.

- **2nd Chance, Inc.** is a supportive advocacy service to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. This agency transports clients in vehicles they own. 2nd Chance has a regional center in Anniston that serves Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, Etowah, Randolph, and Talladega Counties.

Private Systems

- None found

## 9.4 Transit Needs

Figure 8 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly cover all but the central to southern-center portions of the county. No public transit systems exist within these blocks.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Public transportation in rural areas
- Limitations of current transit routes

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- None

## 9.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Funding
- Infrastructure

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 9.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Compensate volunteer drivers for mileage (Medium)
- Subsidized Uber/Lyft services (Low)
- Creation of a network of drivers among faith groups (Medium)
- Municipalities fund public transportation (Medium)
- Creation of new non-profit organization to spearhead transportation needs (High)
- Creation of new for-profit organization to spearhead transportation needs (Low)
- Assistance from existing non-profit organization(s) (High)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 10.0 TALLADEGA COUNTY

## 10.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 80,888 people live in Talladega County. This is a decrease of 1,403 (2%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 111.7 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 19% of Talladega County residents have a disability, 17% are elderly individuals, and 19% are below the poverty line.

Talladega County has a land area of 736.78 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 39 miles north-to-south and 24 miles east-to-west. The main north-south route is US-231 and the main east west route is US-280.

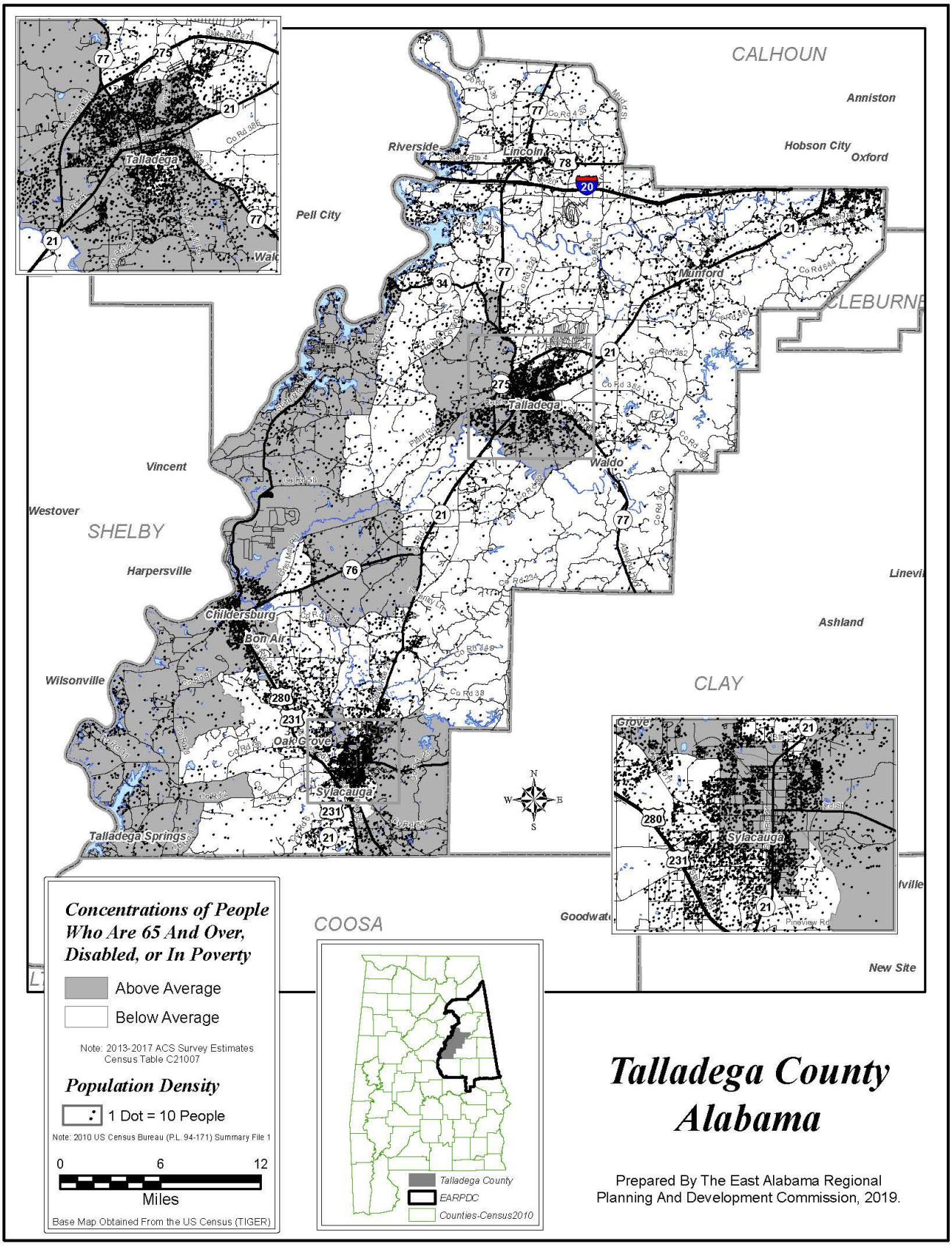
There are three areas of concentrated population in Talladega County. The largest of the three is Talladega in the center portion of the county. The second concentration is Sylacauga located in the southeastern part of the county. The third concentration is in the Childersburg/Bon Air area located in the central-western part of the county. Figure 9 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 10.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Talladega County had 34,978 people in the labor force. Of this number were 33,481 employed and were 1,497 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 4.3%, was greater than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Honda, New South Express, Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, Talladega County Board of Education, and Legacy Cabinets.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 40.6% of the total employed workforce in Talladega County live and work in the county while 28.4% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 30.9% are employed in another state.

Figure 9


CALHOUN
Anniston
Hobson City
Oxford
Riverside
Lincoln
Pell City
Munford
CLEBURNE
Talladega
Vincent
Westover
SHELBY
Waldo
Harpersville
Childersburg
Bon Air
Ashland
CLAY
Wilsonville
Oak Grove
Sylacauga
Talladega Springs
Goodwater
New Site
COOSA
Concentrations of People Who Are 65 And Over, Disabled, or In Poverty
Above Average
Below Average
Note: 2013-2017 ACS Survey Estimates Census Table C21007
Population Density
1 Dot = 10 People
Note: 2010 US Census Bureau (P.L. 94-171) Summary File 1
0
6
12
Miles
Base Map Obtained From the US Census (TIGER)
Talladega County
EARPDC
Counties-Census2010
Talladega County Alabama
Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2019.

## 10.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Talladega County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped together because the non-profits are generally funded by public agencies or governments. Descriptions of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories used by the public and non-profit agencies are included in Chapter 13. The public and non-profit transit providers in Talladega County limit service to a small section of the population, usually associated with a government or agency service program. The general population does not have a public transit option.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR)** maintains an office in every county in Alabama. The DHR Family Assistance Division has an interagency agreement with the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) through Section 5316. In East Alabama the agency contracts with ACTS to provide transportation services for their clients in Talladega County.

- **City of Childersburg** offers a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This system serves all residents of Childersburg and will travel as far as Vincent, Fayetteville, Sylacauga, and Winterboro in Talladega County. They currently have a fleet of 9 vehicles, 4 are in constant operation, and 7 are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Childersburg's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 8 am and 4 pm and transport an average of 87 people per day/428 per week.

- **City of Oak Grove** offers a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This system serves all residents of Oak Grove and operates within Talladega County from the town of Sycamore to Talladega Springs. They currently have a fleet of 3 vehicles, 2 are in constant operation and all are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Oak Grove's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm. They transport an average of 29 people per day and 145 people per week.

- **City of Sylacauga** offers a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). SAFE is the daily operator through contract with the city. This system serves all residents of Sylacauga and operates within the city limits. They currently have a fleet of 8 vehicles, 7 are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps, and 6 are in constant operation. Sylacauga's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 6 am and 6 pm. Including JARC

ridership, they transport an average of 150 people per day and 742 people per week.

- **City of Talladega** offers a demand response service through the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS). This system serves all residents of Talladega and operates within the city limits. They currently operate 2 vehicles all of which are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Talladega's demand response operates weekdays between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm and transport an average of 16 people per day/81 per week.

- **2nd Chance, Inc.** is a supportive advocacy service to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. This agency transports clients in vehicles they own. 2nd Chance has a regional center in Anniston that serves Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, Etowah, Randolph, and Talladega Counties.

Private Systems

- **Greyhound Bus Lines** has 2 stops in Talladega County. Locations are in Childersburg and Sylacauga. These locations are curbside bus stops only and tickets must be purchased online or at a full-service terminal.

- **Bc Taxi** is a taxi service located in Talladega that operates between the hours of 5:30 am and 9 pm Monday through Saturday and from 7 am to 6 am on Sundays.

## 10.4 Transit Needs

Figure 9 displays the census block groups that have above average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly cover the western, southeastern, and central portions of the county. Cities with the largest concentration of people have on-demand transit service; however, there is little to no rural service. There is also no transit system that connects the larger concentrated areas.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and local government agencies in the Fall of 2019. The staff used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In January 2020, the RPO, MPO, and transit services committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Public transit in rural areas
- Limitations of public transit routes
- Service in northern portion of the county

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Public transportation in the larger cities of the county

## 10.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed a list of barriers that prevent the needs from being addressed. These barriers are consistent across the rural counties in the region. The local agencies and governments have limited control over the barriers, which are often related to economic issues, personal choice decisions, and the nature of rural communities.

Barriers

- Funding

The challenge of the transit agencies and local governments is to find ways around these barriers. The funding to address every need will never be available. The economics of providing transit service to a small number of dispersed clients will never appeal to a for-profit business. Innovative ideas will be required if the needs are to be met.

## 10.6 Strategies to Address Needs and Barriers

The staff, working with the transit services committee and survey responses, developed the following strategies. Several of the proposals are related to maintaining the current level of service. These were included because the existing services are addressing gaps that previously existed. The strategies are general so as not to preclude any future projects. Many of the strategies indicate that additional funding will be required for implementation. In some cases, the additional funding could be reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (High)
- Compensate volunteer drivers for mileage (Medium)
- Subsidized Uber/Lyft services (Low)
- Creation of a network of drivers among faith groups (Medium)
- Add more buses to current transportation fleet (High)
- Increased options for rural citizens (High)
- Expansion of service into the northern end of the county (High)

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit services committee. The priority is based on available resources, time, and feasibility. The priority assigned does not have a direct correlation to the amount of support or the amount of need. It merely reflects the existing reality based on the ranking criteria. If circumstances change, a low or medium priority strategy could be implemented before one that was ranked as a high priority.

# 11.0 TALLAPOOSA COUNTY

## 11.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 40,756 people live in Tallapoosa County. This is a decrease of 860 (2%) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 58.1 people per square mile. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS), 17.3% of Tallapoosa County residents have a disability, 20% are elderly, and 21% are below the poverty line.

Tallapoosa County has a land area of 716.52 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 42 miles north-to-south and 24 miles east-to-west. The main north-south route is AL-49 and the main east west route is US-280.

There are three areas of concentrated population in Tallapoosa County. The largest of the three is Alexander City in the west-central part of the county. The second concentration is Dadeville located in the central part of the county. The third is Tallassee located in the southern most portion of the county. Figure 10 depicts these concentrations along with concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

## 11.2 Employment

The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations estimates Tallapoosa County had 17,772 people in the labor force. Of this number were 17,028 employed and were 744 were unemployed. The 2018 average unemployment rate, 4.2%, was greater than the national and state averages. Major employers in the county include Russell Corporation, Prime Healthcare, Russell Medical Center, Tallapoosa County Board of Education, and Alexander City Schools.

Based on 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 65.2% of the total employed workforce in Tallapoosa County live and work in the county while 32.5% of the employed are employed in another county. The remaining 2.3% are employed in another state.

Figure 10

AGENDA

# RPO District Meetings

of the
East Alabama Rural Planning Organization

January 09, 2020
**11:30 a.m.**

1. Call to Order
   a. Introductions

2. Old Business
   a. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
   b. Other Old Business

3. New Business
   I. Hearing from Persons Having Business with and/or Reports for Committee
   J. Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan
   K. Motions and Resolutions
   L. Appointment Forms
   M. RPO Transportation Needs Forms
   N. Other New Business
   O. Open Discussion and Announcements
      a. Public Participation
      b. Safety Concerns
4. Adjourn

## SIGN-IN SHEET

**Northern District Policy and Technical Committees**

of the

East Alabama Rural Planning Organization

January 09, 2020 11:30 AM

| NAME | ORGANIZATION | EMAIL ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|
| Libby Messick | EARC - Calhoun MPO | |
| Lisa Smith | Gadsden Regional Medical Center | Lisa_Smith@gadsdenregional.com |
| [illegible] | Cherokee County | CCHDKW@TDS.Net |
| Corey Chard | Cherokee County | cchdcc@tds.net |
| Rodney Ellis | ALDOT | ellisro@dot.state.al.us |
| Seth Burkett | ALDOT | burkets@dot.state.al.us |
| Curtis Vincent | ALDOT N.R. | vincencr@dot.state.al.us |
| Robin Rhoden | ALDOT | rhodenr@dot.state.al.us |
| Tim Ramsey | Et. Co. Commission | tramsey@etowahcounty.org |
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# AGENDA

Transit Advisory Board (TAB)
3rd Floor Conference Room of the
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission
Tuesday January 14, 2020
9:00 a.m.

I. Invocation

II. Roll Call and Sign In

III. Review and Approval of TAB Minutes December 10, 2019

IV. Communications from City Council

V. Standing Reports
   a. Operations Report from Anniston Limousine—Kathy Adams
   b. Maintenance Report from Cobb Automotive—Rob Turley
   c. Fixed-Route Reports from Shane Christian—EARPDC
   d. Demand Response Reports from Shane Christian—EARPDC
   e. TBA

VI. Old Business
   a. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
   b. TBA

VII. New Business
   a. Draft Paratransit Plan 2020 – Heath Compton
   b. Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Plan – Libby Messick
   c. TBA

VIII. Guest Speakers

IX. Adjourn

X. Paratransit Advisory Committee

**SIGN-IN SHEET**

Transit Advisory Board
3rd Floor Conference Room
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission
Tuesday January 14, 2020
9:00 am

| NAME | ADDRESS/AFFILIATION |
|---|---|
| Richard Turner | |
| Heath Compton | EARPDC |
| Rob Turley | COBB |
| JOHNNIE GAMBLE | EARPDC |
| Willie Thomas | Auburn City |
| Shaw Christian | EARPDC |
| Kathy Adams | Anniston Star |
| Jennifer Watson | County Commission |
| Mike Wood | Weaver |
| Aaron Sexton | Oxford |

# AGENDA

## CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

of the
CALHOUN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)

**January 15, 2020**
10:00 am

1. Call to Order

2. Introductions

3. Old Business
   a. Review and approval of CAC minutes from November 20, 2019
   b. Review December 2019 Administrative Modifications and Resolutions
   c. TBA

4. New Business
   a. Review FY 20-23 TIP Update and November Administrative Modifications
   b. Resolution 796: Adoption and Support of New Statewide Safety Performance Management (PM1) Targets
   c. Resolution 797: FY 2020-2023 STIP/TIP Amendments
   d. Status report of ALDOT projects (handout)
   e. Safety Observations
   f. East Alabama Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan 2020 – 2023 review
   g. TBA

5. Other Business
   A. CAC Vacancies
   B. Anniston Express and ADA Para-Transit Ridership
   C. Next CAC Meeting – March 18, 2020
   D. TBA

6. Adjourn

## SIGN-IN SHEET

**Citizens Advisory Committee of the Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Conference Room
January 15, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

| Name | Phone Number | Email Address |
|---|---|---|
| Libby Messick | | |
| TL Thomas | | |
| Millie Darnell | 256-453-0388 | muntand60@yahoo.com |
| Dennis Reaves | | |
| CHRIS GANN | 256-237-4657 | cgann@calhouncounty.org |
| Mike Kimbrough | | |
| Joe Smith | 256-499-8002 | |
| Richard Lindblom | 256-435-9582 | richard.lindblom88@gmail.com |
| Tim Huddleston | 256-282-1566 | tim@huddleston.com |
| Theo Shaw | 256.347-5555 | doresmar1@aol.com |
| David Thompson | 256.782.5455 | dthompson@jsu.edu |

## SIGN-IN SHEET

**Citizens Advisory Committee of the Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Conference Room
January 15, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

| Name | Phone Number | Email Address |
|---|---|---|
| James Jenkins | 256-831-4665 | jamesjenkins_2000@yahoo.com |
| Lem Burrell | 256 831 3859 | lburrell@cableone.net |
| Darryl League | 256 236-2812 | DRLeague1@gmail.com |
| Jamie Etheredge | 256. 996. 0878 | |
| Buford Parker | 256 831 3981 | |
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AGENDA
for the
# Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
**January 16, 2020**
10:00 a.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Verification of Quorum

III. Recognition of Guests

IV. Old Business
- A. Review and approve minutes from December 19, 2019
- B. TBA

V. New Business
- A. Review FY 20-23 TIP Spreadsheet and Administrative Modifications
- B. Resolution 796: Adoption and Support of New Statewide Safety Performance Management (PM1) Targets
- C. Resolution 797: FY 2020-2023 STIP/TIP Amendments
- D. CAC Appointments
- E. Safety Observations
- F. East Alabama Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan 2020 – 2023 review
- G. TBA

VI. Other Business
- A. Status Report on Other Local Projects from ALDOT
- B. Report on Urban Fixed Route and ADA Handicapped Transit Systems
- C. Comments or Issues from Member Jurisdictions or Attendees
- D. TBA

VII. Next MPO Meeting – Thursday, February 20, 2020

VIII. Adjourn

**Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Conference Room
January 16, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

| NAME | ORGANIZATION | EMAIL ADDRESS & PHONE NO. | Email Notices? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Libby Messick | EARPDC | | |
| Miller Parnell | | | |
| Jeff Clendenning | Weaver | | |
| Wayne Willis | City of Weaver | | |
| Joe Means | SAIN Assoc. | | |
| Michael Hosch | Calhoun Co. | | |
| Matt Hawes | CDG Engineers | | |
| Fred M Denney | Oxford | | |
| David Thompson | J.S.U. | | |
| Scott Maseda | ALDOT | | |
| Shane Brown | ALDOT | | |

## SIGN-IN SHEET

**Calhoun Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**

East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Conference Room
January 16, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

| NAME | ORGANIZATION | EMAIL ADDRESS & PHONE NO. | Email Notices? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mitchell Boggs | ALDOT | boggsm@dot.state.al.us | |
| JAY JENKINS | COA | | |
| Steven Corley | ALDOT | | |
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AGENDA

# RPO District Meetings

of the

East Alabama Rural Planning Organization

January 16, 2020

**11:00 a.m.**

5. Call to Order
   a. Introductions

6. Old Business
   a. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
   b. Other Old Business

7. New Business
   P. Hearing from Persons Having Business with and/or Reports for Committee
   Q. Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan
   R. Motions and Resolutions
   S. Appointment Forms
   T. RPO Transportation Needs Forms
   U. Other New Business
   V. Open Discussion and Announcements
      a. Public Participation
      b. Safety Concerns
8. Adjourn

## SIGN-IN SHEET

**Central District Policy and Technical Committees**

of the
East Alabama Rural Planning Organization
January 16, 2019 11:00 AM

| NAME | ORGANIZATION | EMAIL ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|
| Alison Cleveland | Cleburne Co. Nursing Home | acleveland@ccnh.us |
| STEVE BASWELL | TOWN OF OHATCHEE | |
| Jerry Parris | Jacksonville | |
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AGENDA

# RPO District Meetings

of the
East Alabama Rural Planning Organization

January 23, 2020
**10:00 a.m.**

9. Call to Order
   a. Introductions

10. Old Business
    a. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
    b. Other Old Business

11. New Business
    W. Hearing from Persons Having Business with and/or Reports for Committee
    X. Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan
    Y. Motions and Resolutions
    Z. Appointment Forms
    AA. RPO Transportation Needs Forms
    BB. Other New Business
    CC. Open Discussion and Announcements
        a. Public Participation
        b. Safety Concerns
12. Adjourn

## SIGN-IN SHEET

**Southern District Policy and Technical Committees**

of the
East Alabama Rural Planning Organization
January 23, 2019 10:00 AM

| NAME | ORGANIZATION | EMAIL ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|
| Teresa Smith | ALDOT | tmsmitht@dot.state.al.us |
| Autumn White | Coosa County DHR | autumn.white@dhr.alabama.gov |
| Jonathan Hoston | Circle of Care | jherstone@thecircleacres.com |
| Mick McKenzie | A.R.I.S.E | Michael.mckenzie@aniseteamportation.com |
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