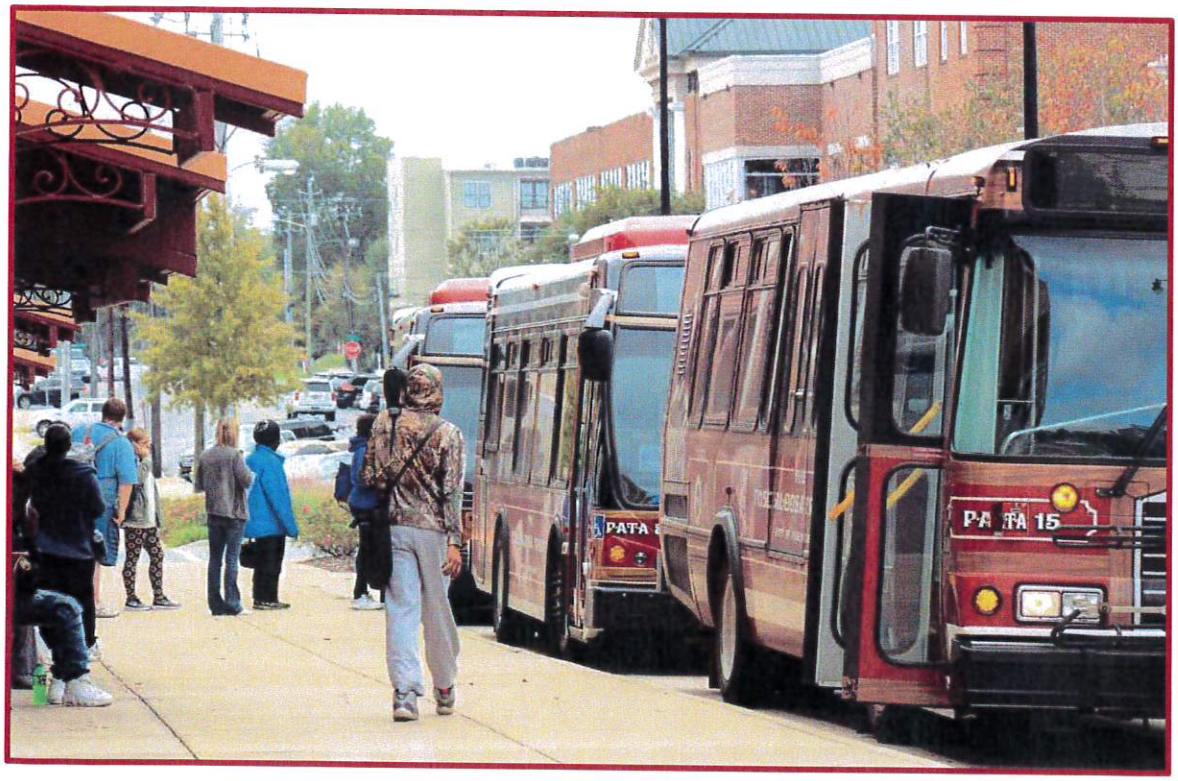
West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019



Developed by the West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC)
in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Transportation

Adopted August 9, 2019 by the West Alabama Rural Planning Organization
Adopted August 26, 2019 by the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Tuscaloosa Area
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
&
West Alabama
Rural Planning Organization (RPO)

West Alabama
Coordinated Public Transit Plan
2017

This document is posted at
http://warc.info/transportation-planning/tuscaloosa-area-mpo/documents

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Non-Voting

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Jerry C. Pow
Freddie Shoults

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County Appointments
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Faye Meharg
Municipal Appointments
Wanda Deavours
Bobbie Kemp-Driver

Greene County
County Appointments
Judy Jarvis
Jacqueline Whitehead

Municipal Appointments
Iris Sermon

Hale County
County Appointments
Willie Smith
William Thomas
Municipal Appointments
Jerry Elkins
Sandy Rowland

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County Appointments
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County Appointments
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Joan Owens
Municipal Appointments
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Prepared by the
West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC)
Staff to the RPO

Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Resolution MPO 2019-15

Adopting the
West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019

WHEREAS, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94) requires the development of a coordinated human services transportation plan in order to be eligible for Section 5310 - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program funds, and

WHEREAS, the West Alabama Rural Planning Organization and the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Transportation developed the *West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019*, and

WHEREAS, the Transit Committee, the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Technical Coordinating Committee of the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization have reviewed the plan and have passed recommendations in support of adopting the plan.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, this **26th day of August 2019**, that the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization does hereby adopt the *West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019*.

MPO Chair

Attest:

Process Coordinator

West Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO)

Resolution RPO 2019-1

Adopting the
West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019

WHEREAS, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94) requires the development of a coordinated human services transportation plan in order to be eligible for Section 5310 - Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program funds, and

WHEREAS, the West Alabama Rural Planning Organization and the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Transportation developed the *West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019*, and

WHEREAS, the Transit Committee, the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Technical Coordinating Committee of the West Alabama Rural Planning Organization have reviewed the plan and have passed recommendations in support of adopting the plan.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, this **9th day of August 2019**, that the West Alabama Rural Planning Organization does hereby adopt the *West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019*.

RPO Chairman

Attest:

Process Coordinator

West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2017

Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this plan is (1) to determine transit gaps and coordination opportunities among publicly funded, human services transportation programs in west 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 and the local entities with information to make decisions regarding the allocation of limited federal and local transit funds.

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 the subsequent Fixing America's Surface Transportation (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 for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility of implementation. Minimizing duplication of services in order to maximize collective transit coverage is a prime imperative.

The plan was developed by the West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC). WARC used the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the West Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) to conduct the plan development process. WARC is the staff for the Tuscaloosa Area MPO and the West Alabama RPO.

The following sections list the transit needs, the barriers to improving transit service, and recommended strategies that were identified during the development of this plan. The sections are divided between the seven counties in the west Alabama region. The final section covers the region as a whole.

Bibb County

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Service to rural areas of the county
- Additional public and private providers
- Service to other counties
- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)
- Reliable scheduling method
- Communication between clients and drivers
- Coordination of client trips that originate at a common community and end at common destinations
- Qualified drivers

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
    - Medical trips
    - Work trips
    - Vocational training trips
    - Shopping trips
    - Recreation trips
    - Local trips
    - Out-of-county trips

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (**High**)
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts (**High**)
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) (**High**)
  - Nights
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of county
  - Inter-county
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) (**Medium**)
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source (**High**)
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources (**High**)
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**
- Improve current transit service (Additional funding may be required) **(High)**
  - Scheduling
  - Communication between clients and drivers/providers
  - Trip coordination
  - Driver training

Fayette County

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Weekend service
- Service to rural areas of the county including Bluff, Kirkland, and Wayside
- Additional public and private providers, including a Section 5311 provider
- Service to other counties including Tuscaloosa and Walker
- Shopping service
- Newer vehicles
- More frequent service
- Recreation service
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips
  - Work trips
  - Vocational training trips
  - Shopping trips
  - Recreation trips

- Local trips
- Out-of-county trips

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
  - Operating funds
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (**High**)
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts (**High**)
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) (**High**)
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of county including Bluff, Kirkland, and Wayside
  - Inter-county
  - Shopping
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers, including a 5311 provider (Additional funding required) (**High**)
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) (**High**)
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source (**High**)
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources (**High**)
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) (**Medium**)

Greene County

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers
- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Service to rural areas of the county
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips
  - Work trips
  - Vocational training trips
  - Shopping trips
  - Recreation trips
  - Local trips
  - Out-of-county trips

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
  - Nights
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of county
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

Hale County

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers
- More frequent service
- Service for senior citizens who are less than 60 years old

- Service to Shelton State Community College (Tuscaloosa) and Wallace Community College (Selma)
- Service to large employers in Tuscaloosa
- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Service to rural areas of the county
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips
  - Work trips
  - Vocational training trips
  - Shopping trips
  - Recreation trips
  - Local trips
  - Out-of-county trips

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service (**High**)
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts (**High**)
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) (**High**)
  - Nights
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of county
  - Inter-county
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) (**Medium**)
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) (**Medium**)
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source (**High**)
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources (**High**)

- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

Lamar County

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers, including a Section 5311 provider
- Service to rural areas of the county including Kingville, Cody, Detroit, and Beaverton
- Additional service in Millport and Sulligent
- Out-of-county service including Tuscaloosa and Columbus, MS
- Shopping service
- Recreation service
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
    - Medical trips
    - Work trips
    - Vocational training trips
    - Shopping trips
    - Recreation trips
    - Local trips
    - Out-of-county trips

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
    - Operating funds
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
    - Nights

    - Weekends
    - Millport and Sulligent
    - Rural areas of county including Kingville, Cody, Detroit, and Beaverton
    - Inter-county
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers, including a 5311 provider (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

Pickens County

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service, including early morning and early evening times
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers
- Decreased call-in times
- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Service to rural areas of the county
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
    - Medical trips
    - Work trips
    - Vocational training trips
    - Shopping trips
    - Recreation trips
    - Local trips
    - Out-of-county trips

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients

- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
  - Nights
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of county
  - Additional service to reduce call-in times
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(Low)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(Medium)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

Tuscaloosa County

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Holiday service
- Decreased fixed route headways
- Additional public and private providers
- City of Northport service
- Service to rural areas of the county including Brookwood, Holt, Peterson, Vance, Lake Tuscaloosa area, Duncanville, Taylorville, and McCalla
- Out-of-county service including Jefferson County and Bibb County
- Additional service for shopping, medical appointments, recreational activities, and church
- Decreased call-in times
- Decreased wait times
- Maintaining schedules (pick-up and drop-off times) demand response service and fixed routes
- Vehicles that will accommodate larger people
- Service for senior citizens who are less than 60 years old
- Additional service from the UA campus to other areas of the community
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects, including telephone notification
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Alternative fuel options

- Additional fixed route bus stop shelters
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
    - Medical trips
    - Work trips
    - Vocational training trips
    - Shopping trips
    - Recreation trips
    - Local trips
    - Out-of-county trips

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Lack of financial support by the City of Northport
- Lack of financial support by Tuscaloosa County
- Dispersed population
- Large land area
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
    - Nights
    - Weekends
    - Holidays
    - Reduce fixed route headways
    - City of Northport
    - Rural areas of county including Brookwood, Holt, Peterson, Vance, Lake Tuscaloosa area, Duncanville, Taylorville, and McCalla,
    - Inter-county
    - Shopping, recreation, and church
    - Additional service to reduce call-times, wait times, and schedule delays
    - Additional service for senior citizens
    - Purchase or modify vehicles to accommodate larger people
    - Additional service from the UA campus to other areas of the community
    - Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**

- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Support/Establish alternative fuel options for existing and future transit providers **(Medium)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

West Alabama Region

Needs Not Currently Addressed or Only Partially Addressed

- Additional inter-county service to connect rural residents with national bus service, Amtrak service, commercial air service, jobs, medical facilities, shopping opportunities, recreation facilities, education and training opportunities; including west Alabama and out-of-region travel

Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Alabama Public Service Commission service area restrictions

Strategies

- Maintain current inter-county transit service in Bibb, Greene, Hale County **(High)**
- Add inter-county transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers, where needed (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/van pools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to modify the Alabama Public Service Commission service area restrictions **(High)**

Continuing Efforts

After the adoption of this plan the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and West Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) will monitor transit issues in the region in order to determine if this plan needs to be modified. Changes to existing transit conditions could require the addition, deletion, or re-prioritization of strategies or projects. Any necessary adjustments to the plan can be accomplished through amendments adopted

by the Policy Committees of the MPO and RPO. The joint MPO and RPO transit committee, which helped develop this plan, will meet as needed to assist in these efforts and to facilitate the implementation of the identified strategies.

The committees of the MPO and RPO will continue to meet on a regular basis. The MPO committees meet every other month and the RPO committees meet once per quarter. The Section 5307 and 5311 providers in the region are voting members on the MPO and RPO technical coordination committees. At the meetings the committees discuss various transportation issues, usually focusing on federally funded projects, including transit programs.

Based on the current ALDOT contract, this plan will be updated in fiscal year 2019. The MPO and RPO Policy Committees should adopt the update in August 2019. If the federal planning requirements continue past 2019 and funds are available, the plan will likely be revised in 2021.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is (1) to determine transit gaps and coordination opportunities among publicly funded, human services transportation programs in west 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 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) 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 the subsequent Fixing *America's Surface Transportation* (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 for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility of implementation. Minimizing duplication of services to maximize collective transit coverage is a prime imperative.

1.3 Agency Participation

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and the Alabama Association of Regional Commissions (AARC) agreed to develop 12 regional transit coordination plans in 2019. 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 west Alabama, the plan was developed by the West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC), one of the 12 regional commissions. WARC used the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the West Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) to conduct the plan development process. WARC is the staff for the Tuscaloosa Area MPO and the West Alabama RPO.

The MPO is a cooperative effort of the West Alabama Regional Commission, the Tuscaloosa County Parking & Transit Authority (TCPTA), the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the City of Tuscaloosa, the City of Northport, and Tuscaloosa County. Each of these entities has membership on the various MPO committees.

The RPO process brings together the Alabama Department of Transportation with locally elected and appointed officials from the six RPO 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. More detailed descriptions of the MPO and RPO can be found in Appendix I and J.

The MPO and RPO utilized a regional transit committee to guide the development of this plan. This committee was composed of all of the publicly funded transit providers in west Alabama, agencies that purchase transit service for their clients, and private transportation providers. In addition, the membership requirements for this committee were left open, so any interested group or individual could become a member. The transit committee membership is listed in Appendix A.

1.4 Time Frame

As previously mentioned, 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 in the near future due to the lack of financial support.

The original version of this plan was adopted in 2006 and revisions were prepared in 2008, 2011, 2015, and 2017. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), the agency providing the funding, established the development cycle. The ALDOT contract required the plan to be revised in 2019/2020 and summary reports prepared in 2021 and 2022. Future federal regulations and ALDOT needs will determine the plan development schedule beyond 2022.

1.5 Development Process

The development process began in October 2018 with a review of the 2017 plan. The WARC staff determined an initial set of changes that had taken place since 2017 and the status of any of the proposed strategies. Also, in October 2018, the WARC staff submitted three surveys to the transit committee. The surveys were written specifically for 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. The transit providers and the purchasing agencies distributed the user surveys to their clients. Survey examples can be found in Appendix C. The survey results form the basis of the current transit conditions and needs sections of this plan.

The WARC staff compiled the survey results in December 2018. The transit committee and the WARC staff used the survey results to update the transit needs, barriers, and strategies reports for each county. The reports were provided to the MPO and RPO committees in December 2018, January 2019, and February 2019.

The WARC staff presented a draft version of this plan to the transit committee in February 2019. The committee recommended that the draft plan be submitted to the MPO and RPO for initial approval. The MPO and RPO approved the plan for public review in April and May 2019, respectively. After the public review period, the plan was adopted in its final version by the MPO on August 26, 2019, and the RPO on August 9, 2019.

1.6 Public Involvement

The public was given several opportunities to participate in the development of the plan, review the plan inputs, and comment on the draft plan before its adoption. The draft plan or the inputs were discussed at the fiscal year 2019 MPO and RPO committee meetings. Copies of the plan inputs or the draft plan were available at these meetings and on the West Alabama Regional Commission website.

The MPO and RPO committee meetings are open to the public, and the public is encouraged to participate. News releases for the meetings are sent to local media contacts, special interest groups, and to anyone who requests to be on the mailing list. The special interest groups include agencies or organizations that have contact with persons with disabilities, low-income individuals, minorities, and senior citizens.

The MPO also held a public review and seven public meetings regarding the draft plan. The review extended from May 2019 until August 2019. Anyone interested in the plan had the opportunity to visit the West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC) office during this period and review the document. The public meetings were held on July 10, 16, 18, 22, 23, and 25, 2019. News releases were distributed detailing the public review and public meetings. Twenty-three people, not including MPO staff, attended the public meetings. No public comments were received. The public involvement materials are located in Appendix D.

The draft plan was placed on the WARC website on January 14, 2019 and paper copies were available at the WARC and by request. The public involvement activities associated with the plan are documented in Appendix D.

1.7 Format

This plan is divided into 11 chapters and includes 10 appendices. Chapter 1.0 is the introduction and provides background information and the development framework. The chapter provides a basic understanding of why and how the plan was produced.

Chapters 2.0 through 8.0 are devoted to one of the seven counties in the west 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. Chapter 9.0 summarizes the information from the county chapters to the regional level and adds cross-county needs, service barriers, and improvement strategies.

The county chapters (2.0 - 8.0) contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service. The transit provider descriptions are divided between public/non-profit agencies and private companies. When relevant, the appropriate Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding information is included in the descriptions.

Also, in Chapters 2.0 - 9.0, as part of the identification of geographic service gaps and possible coordination opportunities, potential high-transit use areas were mapped along with transit routes (when available) and potential transit destinations. Census 2010 block groups were used as the base for these maps. The maps display a summary of disabled, elderly, and poverty populations taken from the *2012-2016 American Community Survey*. These groups are the traditional populations that depend on transit service.

Chapter 10.0 describes possible funding sources for the identified strategies. The chapter reviews federal, state, and local options. Chapter 11.0, the final chapter, includes the plan amendment process, MPO and RPO continuing efforts, and the probable plan update schedule.

The appendices provide additional background information related to the plan development. Appendix A includes a list of transit committee members who helped prepare the plan. Appendix B lists the individuals and agencies that received news releases regarding the transit planning effort. Appendix C includes examples of the surveys that were part of the assessment process. Appendix D provides items related to the public involvement activities, such as legal ads, news releases, comments, and responses. Appendix E is a list of proposed transit projects provided by the transit agencies in west Alabama. Appendix F is a standard transportation planning acronym list. Appendix G contains a trip summary table for agencies in west Alabama. Appendix H is a list of agencies that provide transit service in west Alabama. Appendix I includes a description of the Tuscaloosa Area MPO. Appendix J is a description of the West Alabama RPO.

2.0 Bibb County

2.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 22,668 people live in Bibb County. This is a slight decrease (251) from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 36 people per square mile. According to the *2012-2016 American Community Survey* (ACS), there are 2,857 disabled people, 3,227 elderly individuals, and 2,154 people below the poverty line in the county.

Bibb County has a land area of 622 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 28 miles north-to-south and 32 miles east-to-west. Based on numbers provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation, there are 888 miles of roads in the county. The main north-south route is SR-5, and the main east-west route is US-82.

There are three areas of concentrated population in Bibb County. The largest of the three is the Brent-Centreville community in the south-central part of the county. The second concentration is the West Blocton community located in the north-central part of the county. The northern area of the county around Woodstock and along the Tuscaloosa County line is the third area of concentration. Figure 1 depicts these concentrations. These areas also contain the bulk of potential transit destinations including government offices, social service organizations, schools, medical facilities, and large employers. Figure 1 displays potential transit destinations and transit system routes. In addition, Figure 1 includes concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

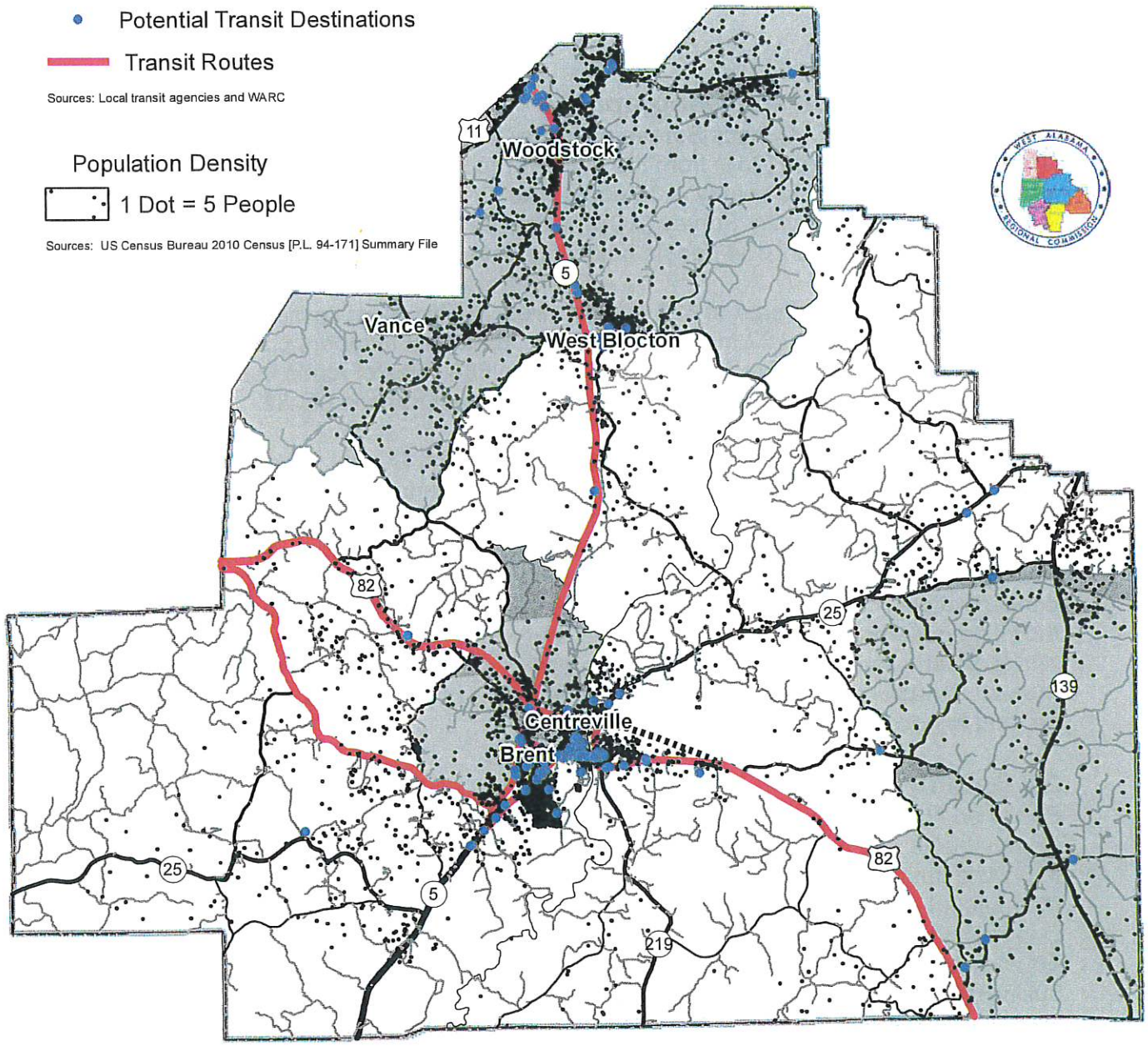
2.2 Employment

Based on figures from the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in 2017 Bibb County had 8,506 people in the labor force. Of this number 8,133 were employed and 373 were unemployed. The 2017 average unemployment rate, 4.4 percent, matched the national and state average. Major employers in the county include the Alabama Department of Corrections, Bibb County Medical Center, Bibb County Board of Education, and Burkes Mechanical. In Bibb County, there are approximately 700 businesses with 85 categorized as entry-level employers. Most of the employers, including major and entry-level employers, are located within the municipal limits.

Based on information from the *2009-2013 American Community Survey*, 48 percent of the employed workforce in Bibb County commutes out of the county to their job. Of this group, 94 percent are employed in Jefferson, Tuscaloosa, and Shelby County. Only 39 percent of the total workforce live and work in Bibb County. An additional 13 percent of the workforce commutes into Bibb County from another county.

Bibb County

Figure 1



Concentrations of People in Bibb County who are Disabled, Over 65, and in Poverty

Above Average

Below Average

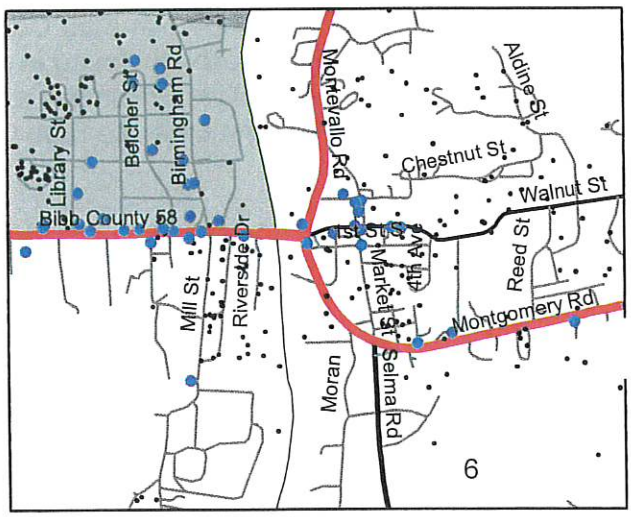
In Bibb County the average persons per block group who are over 65, disabled, and below the poverty level is 427 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012-2016, Table C21007, and WARC Calculation).

0 5 10 Miles

N

This map was produced by the West Alabama Regional Commisssion 205 333-2990, December 2018. This map is not a survey product and should not be used for conveyance.

Brent/Centreville



2.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Bibb 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 10.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Alabama Department of Human Resources**
  The 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 that agreement, ALDOT identifies and secures transportation vendors across the state, which transport eligible persons to work and work-related activities and DHR provides matching funds to reimburse ALDOT for a portion of the expense. In west Alabama, DHR contracts with the South Mobile Area Regional Transit (SMART) and HELP, Inc., to provide transportation services for its clients.

- **Alabama Department of Mental Health**
  The service area for the Alabama Department of Mental Health - Region II Community Services program includes Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County. In west Alabama the agency contracts with the ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo, the Arc of Tuscaloosa, and West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transportation service for their clients.

- **Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind**
  The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) provides transportation services to people who have vision and/or hearing loss. The AIDB has a regional center in Tuscaloosa. Their main office is in Talladega. The AIDB Center in Tuscaloosa serves Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County.

- **Alabama Kidney Foundation**
  The Alabama Kidney Foundation purchases transit service for clients in all 67 Alabama counties. Their clients are limited to kidney patients who make $1,000 or less per month. The transit service is funded by state appropriations and private contributions. The Foundation utilizes numerous transit providers throughout the state. The Foundation also reimburses client family and friends who provide transportation. The transit program operates from 5:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The Foundation is located in Birmingham, Jefferson County. The Foundation indicated that it would like to provide service to individuals who are above the $1,000 threshold but are not able to due to funding limitations. The Foundation also indicated that the lack of transit service in rural areas is a problem.

- **Alabama Medicaid Agency**
  The Alabama Medicaid Agency offers non-emergency transit service to full-covered Medicaid beneficiaries for Medicaid covered medical appointments. The agency provides Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to its clients to purchase transit service. The agency requires that public transit services be used instead of for-profit companies if the service meets the needs of its clients. However, the EBT cards can be used for reimbursement of private vehicle use. This is the most common use of the Medicaid non-emergency transportation program in Alabama. Most of the service is associated with recurring medical needs such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

  The Alabama Medicaid Agency does not contract with transit providers. The Agency does maintain a registry of licensed transit providers for its clients. Registered providers in west Alabama include HELP, Inc., Kid One, Northstar EMS, and West Alabama Public Transportation.

- **AM-Serv EMS**
  AM-Serv EMS is a private, non-profit transportation provider operating in Bibb County. The agency operates seven days a week, 24 hours a day and provides emergency and non-emergency transportation. The agency is located in Centreville and is associated with the Bibb County Medical Center.

- **Bibb County Department of Human Resources**
  The Bibb County Department of Human Resources (DHR) purchases transportation service for some of its clients. The DHR provides social services to adults and children in the county.

- **Indian Rivers Behavioral Health**
  Indian Rivers Behavioral Health (IRBH) serves mental health, substance abuse, and intellectually disabled clients by providing mental health treatment, life skills training and residential support. The agency is located in Tuscaloosa. Its service area includes Bibb, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County. The agency provides transportation to its clients on a case-by-case basis and/or assistance with accessing public transit services. Generally, client-specific transportation is provided Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. However, Indian Rivers manages numerous residential facilities where transportation service is available to those individuals 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The agency serves over 6,000 people annually.

- **West Alabama Public Transportation**
  The West Alabama Public Transportation (WAPT) agency is the largest transit provider in the State. WAPT utilizes FTA Section 5311, 5311(f), 5316, and 5317 grants to fund their service. The agency also maintains numerous contracts to provide specialized transportation to different agencies. The WAPT serves nine counties in West Alabama including Bibb, Greene, and Hale. The WAPT

Administrative office is located in Demopolis in Marengo County. There are satellite offices in Bibb, Greene, and Hale County.

WAPT has no age or income limitations, and customer charges vary. WAPT transports clients for medical/dental services, recreational activities, personal business, employment, and other services. The WAPT 5311 service operates from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., depending on scheduling Monday through Friday and provides limited weekend service.

The service has several fixed routes but also offers demand-response routes. The WAPT averages over 360,000 passenger trips per year in their nine-county service area. The WAPT fleet consists of approximately 65 vehicles with capacities ranging from seven to 30 passengers. The fleet includes 12 wheelchair lift vehicles.

In Bibb County, WAPT contracts with the Alabama Kidney Foundation and the Alabama Department of Mental Health. WAPT is also on the Alabama Medicaid Agency transportation provider registry in Bibb County.

Private Systems

- **Cahaba Medical Care Foundation**
  Cahaba Medical Care Foundation is a private company located in Centreville. The company provides gas cards and transportation vouchers to clients. The vouchers are accepted by West Alabama Public Transportation and CV Transerv.

- **CV Transerv - Bibb Medical Center**
  The CV Transerv is a non-emergency transportation service provided by the Bibb Medical Center. The company serves nursing homes, clinics, and hospital patients in the Centreville area. In addition to local service, the company also provides transportation to Tuscaloosa and Clanton for dialysis treatments. The company operates seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The company has two wheelchair accessible vans. On average, the company transports between 14 and 20 people per week.

- **RushHour Transit**
  RushHour Transit operates out of Tuscaloosa and provides service to all six counties in the west Alabama region and parts of Jefferson County. The company serves individuals, private schools, community service organizations, and employment staffing companies. The company has two transit vehicles, but currently does not offer wheelchair transportation.

- **South Mobile Area Regional Transit**
  South Mobile Area Regional Transit (SMART) is a private provider operating in Bibb County. The company provides on-demand transportation services within a 200-mile radius of the county with trips routinely made to Tuscaloosa, Shelby,

Perry, and Jefferson County. SMART operates 24 hours a day, year-round and has two wheelchair accessible buses, one regular van, and two cars. The company charges by the mile. The company is an as-needed service provider for the DCH Regional Medical Center in Tuscaloosa.

Current Coordination Efforts

- In Bibb County, current coordination efforts include utilization of existing providers and contracts. These efforts address a previously identified transit gap. In many cases, an agency that needs transportation for its clients will use an existing provider rather than start a transit system. The transit purchasing agency can simply direct its clients to the providers or can enter into a contract with the provider. These mutually beneficial arrangements allow agencies that need transportation for their clients to take advantage of existing transit services. The transit purchasing agencies save money and time by using the existing providers. The providers gain revenue to support their operations. The Bibb County providers did not identify any cases of sharing transit resources.

  Bibb County Contracts
  - Alabama Department of Human Resources contracts with South Mobile Area Regional Transit company
  - Alabama Department of Mental Health contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation
  - Alabama Kidney Foundation contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation

2.4 Transit Needs

Figure 1 displays the census block groups that have a higher than average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups roughly cover the northern third of the county, the area northwest of Centreville, and the southeast part of the county. This figure also locates possible transit destinations. As expected, most of the destinations are in the incorporated areas of Brent, Centreville, West Blocton, and Woodstock. The transit routes of West Alabama Public Transit (WAPT) are included on this figure. The WAPT routes pass through Brent, Centreville, West Blocton, and Woodstock. Transit routes do not cover many of the highlighted block groups.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and transit riders in the Fall 2018. The staff and transit committee used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In December 2018, the transit committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed
- Night service
- Weekend service
- Service to rural areas of the county
- Additional public and private providers
- Service to other counties

- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)
- Reliable scheduling method
- Communication between clients and drivers
- Coordination of client trips that originate at a common community and end at common destinations
- Qualified drivers

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
    - Medical trips
    - Work trips
    - Vocational training trips
    - Shopping trips
    - Recreation trips
    - Local trips
    - Out-of-county trips

Based on the survey responses and committee discussions there does not appear to be any duplication of service in the county.

2.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit committee and using the 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 funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

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 committee, 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 a reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
  - Nights
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of the county
  - Inter-county
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/vanpools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**
- Improve current transit service (Additional funding may be required) **(High)**
  - Scheduling
  - Communication between clients and drivers/providers
  - Trip coordination
  - Driver training

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit 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 Fayette County

3.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 16,468 people live in Fayette County. This is a decrease of 768 from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The population density of the county is 26 people per square mile. According to the *2012-2016 American Community Survey,* there are 4,271 disabled people, 3,194 elderly individuals, and 2,043 people below the poverty line in the county.

Fayette County has a land area of 628 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 27 miles north-to-south and 30 miles east-to-west. Based on numbers provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation, there are 1,150 miles of roads in the county. The main north-south routes are US-43/SR-13 and US-43/SR-171. The main east-west route is SR-18.

There are three areas of concentrated population in Fayette County. The largest of the three is the City of Fayette in the west-central part of the county. The second concentration is the Town of Berry located in the southeastern part of the county. The City of Winfield in the north-central part of the county is the third area of concentration. Figure 2 depicts these concentrations. These areas also contain the bulk of potential transit destinations including government offices, social service organizations, schools, medical facilities, and large employers. Figure 2 displays potential transit destinations and transit system routes. In addition, Figure 2 includes concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

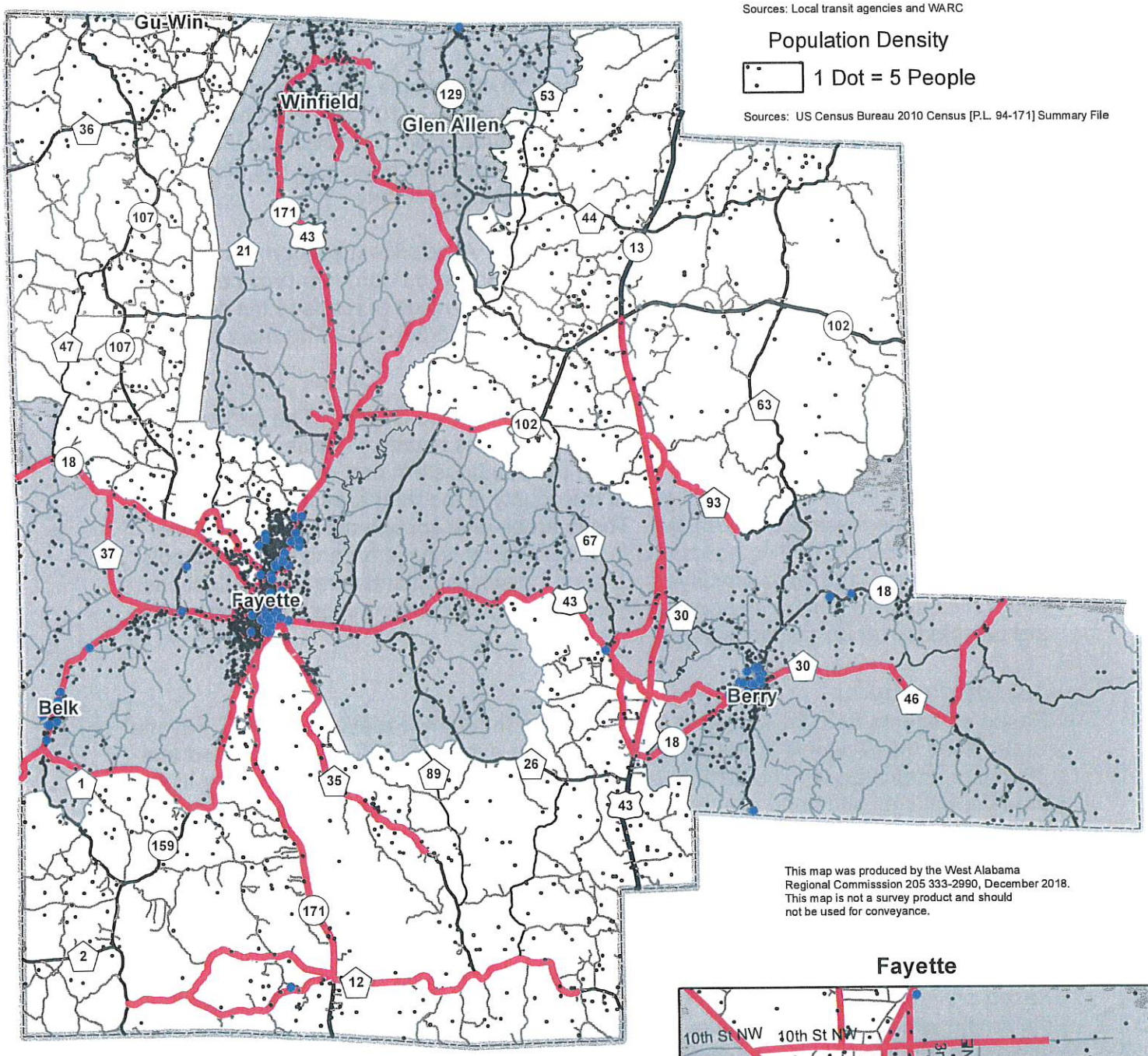
3.2 Employment

Based on figures from the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in 2017 Fayette County had 6,529 people in the labor force. Of this number 6,220 were employed and 309 were unemployed. The 2017 average unemployment rate, 4.7 percent, was higher than the national and state average of 4.4 percent. Major employers in the county include the Fayette County Medical Center, Fayette County Board of Education, Showa, Ox Bodies, Inc., Georgia-Pacific Corporation, and King Kutter, Inc. In Fayette County, there are approximately 700 businesses with 78 categorized as entry-level employers. Most of the employers, including major and entry-level employers, are located within the municipal limits.

Based on information from the *2009-2013 American Community Survey*, 38 percent of the employed workforce in Fayette County commutes out of the county to their job. Of this group, 65 percent are employed in Marion and Tuscaloosa County. Only 46 percent of the total workforce live and work in Fayette County. An additional 16 percent of the workforce commutes into Fayette County from another county.

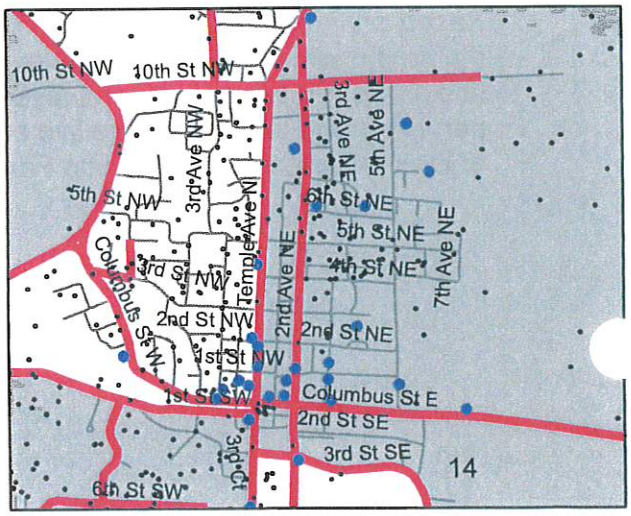
Fayette County

Figure 2



This map was produced by the West Alabama Regional Commisssion 205 333-2990, December 2018. This map is not a survey product and should not be used for conveyance.

Fayette



Concentrations of People in Fayette County who are Disabled, Over 65, and in Poverty

Above Average

Below Average

In Fayette County the average persons per block group who are over 65, disabled, and below the poverty level is 373 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012-2016, Table C21007, and WARC Calculation).

N

0 5 10 Miles

3.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section contains a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Fayette County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped 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 10. The public and non-profit transit providers in Fayette County limit service to a small section of the population, usually associated with a particular 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**
  The 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 that agreement, ALDOT identifies and secures transportation vendors across the state, which transport eligible persons to work and work-related activities and DHR provides matching funds to reimburse ALDOT for a portion of the expense. In west Alabama, DHR contracts with the South Mobile Area Regional Transit (SMART) and HELP, Inc., to provide transportation services for its clients.

- **Alabama Department of Mental Health**
  The service area for the Alabama Department of Mental Health - Region II Community Services program includes Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County. In west Alabama the agency contracts with the ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo, the Arc of Tuscaloosa, and West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transportation service for their clients.

- **Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind**
  The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) provides transportation services to people who have vision and/or hearing loss. The AIDB has a regional center in Tuscaloosa. Their main office is in Talladega. The AIDB Center in Tuscaloosa serves Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County.

- **Alabama Kidney Foundation**
  The Alabama Kidney Foundation purchases transit service for clients in all 67 Alabama counties. Their clients are limited to kidney patients who make $1,000 or less per month. The transit service is funded by state appropriations and private contributions. The Foundation utilizes numerous transit providers throughout the state. The Foundation also reimburses client family and friends who provide transportation. The transit program operates from 5:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The Foundation is located in Birmingham, Jefferson County. The Foundation indicated that it would like to provide service

to individuals who are above the $1,000 threshold but are not able to due to funding limitations. The Foundation also indicated that the lack of transit service in rural areas is a problem.

- **Alabama Medicaid Agency**
  The Alabama Medicaid Agency offers non-emergency transit service to full-covered Medicaid beneficiaries for Medicaid covered medical appointments. The agency provides Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to its clients to purchase transit service. The agency requires that public transit services be used instead of for-profit companies if the service meets the needs of its clients. However, the EBT cards can be used for reimbursement of private vehicle use. This is the most common use of the Medicaid non-emergency transportation program in Alabama. Most of the service is associated with recurring medical needs such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

  The Alabama Medicaid Agency does not contract with transit providers. The Agency does maintain a registry of licensed transit providers for its clients. Registered providers in west Alabama include HELP, Inc., Kid One, Northstar EMS, and West Alabama Public Transportation.

- **ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo Counties**
  The ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo Counties (ARCFLM) provides transit service exclusively to their clients, individuals with developmental disabilities. The program makes frequent medical trips and weekly recreational trips. The ARCFLM provides transit service Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. but also offers 24-hour availability. The ARCFLM makes regular trips to Jasper, Northport, Tuscaloosa, Winfield, Guin, Hamilton, and Birmingham. The ARCFLM drivers serve as day habilitation and residential training assistants when they are not driving. The agency indicated that insurance problems would prevent any sharing of resources. The ARCFLM office is located in the City of Fayette, and its transportation service area includes Fayette, Lamar, and Marengo County. The agency uses FTA Section 5310 grants to purchase vehicles.

- **Fayette County Aging Program**
  The Fayette County Aging Program (FCAP) has a contract with the West Alabama Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to provide transportation to the AAA clients and to transport the clients to the three AAA senior centers. The FCAP provides transit service Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Due to contractual agreements and insurance, the FCAP service is limited to its AAA clients. The agency has used FTA Section 5309 and 5310 grants to purchase vehicles. The FCAP is located in the City of Fayette, and its service area covers Fayette County.

- **Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center**
  The Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center (NWAMHC) is a comprehensive mental health program that offers adults and children outpatient services in Fayette, Lamar, Marion, Walker, and Winston Counties. NWAMHC operates day rehabilitation/day habilitation programs in Fayette and Winfield and adult mental illness residential services in Fayette and Berry. The center provides transit service exclusively to its consumers. Trips are provided for medical services, shopping, and recreation. In Fayette County, NWAMHC provides approximately 31,000 transit trips per year. NWAMHC is a non-profit agency and is located in the City of Jasper in Walker County. The center uses FTA Section 5310 grants to purchase vehicles.

- **West Alabama Area Agency on Aging**
  The West Alabama Area Agency on Aging (AAA) serves senior citizens in west Alabama. The AAA provides transportation to their centers. The AAA contracts with the Fayette County Aging Program to provide this service in Fayette County.

Private Systems

- **Fayette County Nursing Home**
  The Fayette County Nursing Home is a private company that purchases transportation service for its clients. The company currently works with Northstar EMS (Fayette EMS) for medically related transportation.

- **Generations of Vernon**
  Generations of Vernon is a private company that provides transit service to its clients. Its service area includes Fayette and Lamar County. The company has one wheelchair-accessible van and provides demand response service for medical and recreational purposes.

- **Northstar EMS**
  The Northstar EMS (Fayette EMS) provides non-emergency service to hospital patients, nursing home residents, and dialysis patients. Northstar EMS operates year-round, 24 hours a day and serves Fayette, Greene, Hale, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa Counties. The EMS has an office in the City of Fayette. The company is owned by Northstar EMS located in Northport.

- **RushHour Transit**
  RushHour Transit operates out of Tuscaloosa and provides service to all six counties in the west Alabama region and parts of Jefferson County. The company serves individuals, private schools, community service organizations, and employment staffing companies. The company has two transit vehicles, but currently does not offer wheelchair transportation.

Current Coordination Efforts

- In Fayette County, current coordination efforts include utilization of existing providers and contracts. These efforts address a previously identified transit

gap. In many cases, an agency that needs transportation for its clients will use an existing provider rather than start a transit system. The transit purchasing agency can simply direct its clients to the providers or can enter into a contract with the provider. These mutually beneficial arrangements allow agencies that need transportation for their clients to take advantage of existing transit services. The transit purchasing agencies save money and time by using the existing providers. The providers gain revenue to support their operations. The Fayette County providers did not identify any cases of sharing transit resources.

Fayette County Contracts

- Alabama Department of Mental Health contracts with the ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo
- West Alabama AAA contracts with the Fayette County Aging Program

3.4 Transit Needs

Figure 2 displays the census block groups that have a higher than average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups are generally east, north, and west of the City of Fayette, and surrounding the Towns of Berry, Glen Allen, and Winfield. This figure also locates possible transit destinations. As expected, most of the destinations are in the City of Fayette and to a lesser extent the Towns of Berry and Belk. The transit routes of the ARC of Fayette, Lamar, and Marengo, the Fayette County Aging Program, and the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center (NAMHC) are included on this figure. The routes generally cover the highlighted block groups. However, every highlighted block group is not served by every provider.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and transit riders during Fall of 2018. The staff and transit committee used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In December 2018, the transit committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Weekend service
- Service to rural areas of the county including Bluff, Kirkland, and Wayside
- Additional public and private providers, including a Section 5311 provider
- Service to other counties including Tuscaloosa and Walker
- Shopping service
- Newer vehicles
- More frequent service
- Recreation service
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips

- Work trips
- Vocational training trips
- Shopping trips
- Recreation trips
- Local trips
- Out-of-county trips

Based on the survey responses and committee discussions, there does not appear to be any duplication of service in the county.

3.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit committee and the 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 funding (local, state, federal, private)
  - Operating funds
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

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 committee, 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 a reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**

- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of the county including Bluff, Kirkland, and Wayside
  - Inter-county
  - Shopping
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers, including a 5311 provider (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/vanpools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit 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 Greene County

4.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 8,330 people live in Greene County. This is a decrease of 715 from the number reported in the 2010 Census. According to the *2012-2016 American Community Survey,* there are 1,974 disabled people, 1,508 elderly individuals, and 2,016 people below the poverty line in the county. The population density of the county is 13 people per square mile.

Greene County has a land area of 646 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 43 miles north-to-south and 27 miles east-to-west. Based on numbers provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation, there are 637 miles of roads in the county. The main north-south route is SR-14/US-43. The main east-west route is I-20/59.

There are two areas of concentrated population in Greene County. The larger of the two is the City of Eutaw in the east-central part of the county. The second concentration is the Town of Forkland located in the southern part of the county. Figure 3 depicts these concentrations. These areas also contain the bulk of potential transit destinations including government offices, social service organizations, schools, medical facilities, and large employers. Figure 3 displays potential transit destinations and transit system routes. In addition, Figure 3 includes concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

4.2 Employment

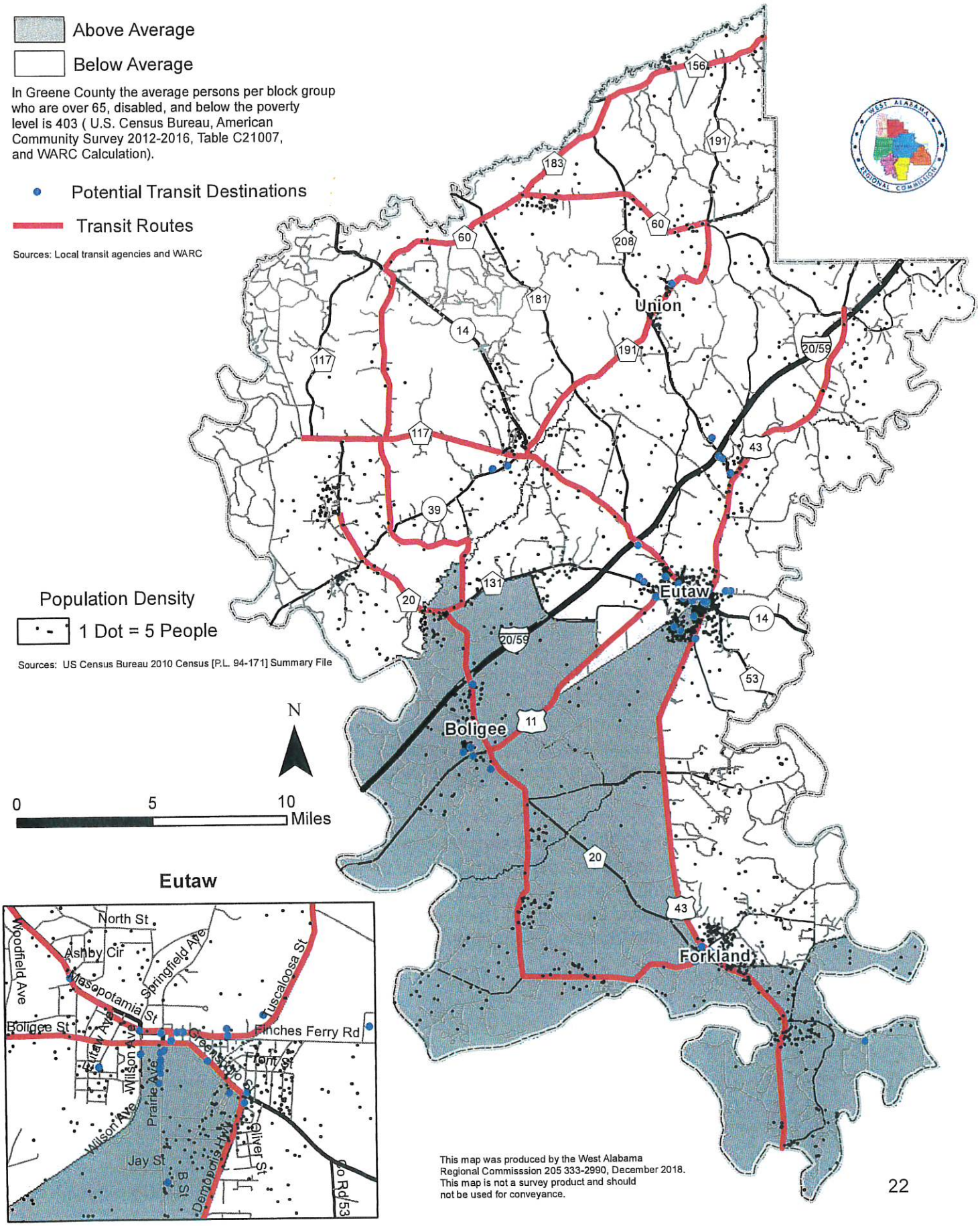
Based on figures from the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in 2017 Greene County had 2,833 people in the labor force. Of this number 2,616 were employed and 217 were unemployed. The 2017 average unemployment rate, 7.7 percent, was higher than the national and state average of 4.4 percent. Major employers in the county include the Greene County Board of Education, Southfresh Aquaculture, WestRock Company, Greene County Hospital, and Alabama Power Company. In Greene County, there are approximately 300 businesses with 44 categorized as entry-level employers. Most of the employers, including major and entry-level employers, are located within the municipal limits.

Based on information from the *2009-2013 American Community Survey*, 37 percent of the employed workforce in Greene County commutes out of the county to their job. Of this group, 85 percent are employed in Tuscaloosa and Marengo County. Only 41 percent of the total workforce live and work in Greene County. An additional 22 percent of the workforce commutes into Greene County from another county.

Greene County

Figure 3

Concentrations of People in Greene County who are Disabled, Over 65, and in Poverty



This map was produced by the West Alabama Regional Commisssion 205 333-2990, December 2018. This map is not a survey product and should not be used for conveyance.

4.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section provides a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Greene County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped 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 10.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Alabama Department of Human Resources**
  The 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 that agreement, ALDOT identifies and secures transportation vendors across the state, which transport eligible persons to work and work-related activities and DHR provides matching funds to reimburse ALDOT for a portion of the expense. In west Alabama, DHR contracts with the South Mobile Area Regional Transit (SMART) and HELP, Inc., to provide transportation services for its clients.

- **Alabama Department of Mental Health**
  The service area for the Alabama Department of Mental Health - Region II Community Services program includes Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County. In west Alabama the agency contracts with the ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo, the Arc of Tuscaloosa, and West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transportation service for their clients.

- **Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind**
  The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) provides transportation services to people who have vision and/or hearing loss. The AIDB has a regional center in Tuscaloosa. Their main office is in Talladega. The AIDB Center in Tuscaloosa serves Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County.

- **Alabama Kidney Foundation**
  The Alabama Kidney Foundation purchases transit service for clients in all 67 Alabama counties. Their clients are limited to kidney patients who make $1,000 or less per month. The transit service is funded by state appropriations and private contributions. The Foundation utilizes numerous transit providers throughout the state. The Foundation also reimburses client family and friends who provide transportation. The transit program operates from 5:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The Foundation is located in Birmingham, Jefferson County. The Foundation indicated that it would like to provide service to individuals who are above the $1,000 threshold but are not able to due to funding limitations. The Foundation also indicated that the lack of transit service in rural areas is a problem.

- **Alabama Medicaid Agency**
  The Alabama Medicaid Agency offers non-emergency transit service to full-covered Medicaid beneficiaries for Medicaid covered medical appointments. The agency provides Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to its clients to purchase transit service. The agency requires that public transit services be used instead of for-profit companies if the service meets the needs of its clients. However, the EBT cards can be used for reimbursement of private vehicle use. This is the most common use of the Medicaid non-emergency transportation program in Alabama. Most of the service is associated with recurring medical needs such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

  The Alabama Medicaid Agency does not contract with transit providers. The Agency does maintain a registry of licensed transit providers for its clients. Registered providers in west Alabama include HELP, Inc., Kid One, Northstar EMS, and West Alabama Public Transportation.

- **Community Service Programs of West Alabama**
  The Community Service Programs of West Alabama (CSPWA) contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transportation for 90 Head Start students in Greene and Hale County. CSPWA operates Head Start programs in six of the seven west Alabama counties.

- **Greene County Commission**
  The Greene County Commission provides transit service for senior citizens to the West Alabama Area Agency on Aging (AAA) nutrition centers in Eutaw and Forkland. The service is provided through a contract with the AAA. The County has two vans that were purchased with federal funds dedicated to seniors.

- **Kid One Transport System, Inc.**
  Kid One Transport System, Inc. is a non-profit transit provider that operates in numerous Alabama counties, including Greene. Kid One provides medical trips for children, 19 and under and expectant mothers. The agency generally operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. The Kid One office is located in Birmingham in Jefferson County. Kid One has utilized Section 5310 and 5317 funds in the past.

- **West Alabama Area Agency on Aging**
  The West Alabama Area Agency on Aging (AAA) serves senior citizens in west Alabama. The AAA contracts with the Greene County Commission to provide transit service to its nutrition sites in Greene County.

- **West Alabama Mental Health Center**
  The West Alabama Mental Health Center provides mental health and substance abuse treatment. It has offices in five counties including Greene and Hale

County. It contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation to transport between 30 and 42 patients a day in these two counties.

- **West Alabama Public Transportation**
  The West Alabama Public Transportation (WAPT) agency is the largest transit provider in the State. WAPT utilizes FTA Section 5311, 5311(f), 5316, and 5317 grants to fund their service. The agency also maintains numerous contracts to provide specialized transportation to different agencies. The WAPT serves nine counties in West Alabama including Bibb, Greene, and Hale. The WAPT Administrative office is located in Demopolis in Marengo County. There are satellite offices in Bibb, Greene, and Hale County.

  WAPT has no age or income limitations, and customer charges vary. WAPT transports clients for medical/dental services, recreational activities, personal business, employment, and other services. The WAPT 5311 service operates from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., depending on scheduling Monday through Friday and provides limited weekend service.

  The service has several fixed routes but also offers demand-response routes. The WAPT averages over 360,000 passenger trips per year in their nine-county service area. The WAPT fleet consists of approximately 65 vehicles with capacities ranging from seven to 30 passengers. The fleet includes 12 wheelchair lift vehicles.

  In Greene and Hale County, the WAPT has contracts with the West Alabama Mental Health Center. These contracts do not prevent WAPT from serving other segments of the population. WAPT is also on the Alabama Medicaid Agency transportation provider registry. The intercity bus transportation is also available (connector to Greyhound Bus Stations).

Private Systems

- **E&C Taxi Service**
  E&C Taxi Service provides demand response service in Greene, Hale, Tuscaloosa, and Jefferson County. The company currently serves Medicaid clients. E&C operates Monday through Saturday from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 11:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. The company does not own a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

- **Greene County Ambulance Service**
  The Greene County Ambulance Service is located in Eutaw. In addition to emergency trips, the company provides non-emergency trips to hospitals and other medical facilities. The company requires 24-hour notice for non-emergency trips. The company does not serve wheelchair clients.

- **Greene County Nursing Home**
  The Greene County Nursing Home is a 72-bed facility located in Eutaw. The facility owns a wheelchair-accessible van and two cars that are used to transport clients to medical appointments. In addition, WAPT serves between two and five of the nursing home residents a month.

- **Greyhound Bus Line**
  The Greyhound Bus line has four stops in the West Alabama region. These stops are not stand-alone bus stations but are generally housed with small businesses. The stops and associated businesses are listed below:

  - Eutaw, gas station
  - Greensboro, gas station
  - Moundville, community center
  - Tuscaloosa, gas station

  The stops offer limited service and tickets can only be purchased at the Tuscaloosa location.

- **Northstar EMS**
  Northstar EMS serves Fayette, Greene, Hale, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, and Jefferson County. The company provides emergency and non-emergency trips. The company operates Monday through Saturday, 7:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. The company has contracts with several nursing homes and medical facilities in the area. This company does not provide wheelchair service. This company is on the Alabama Medicaid transportation provider registry.

- **RushHour Transit**
  RushHour Transit operates out of Tuscaloosa and provides service to all six counties in the west Alabama region and parts of Jefferson County. The company serves individuals, private schools, community service organizations, and employment staffing companies. The company has two transit vehicles, but currently does not offer wheelchair transportation.

Current Coordination Efforts

- In Greene County, current coordination efforts include utilization of existing providers and contracts. These efforts address a previously identified transit gap. In many cases, an agency that needs transportation for its clients will use an existing provider rather than start a transit system. The transit purchasing agency can simply direct its clients to the providers or can enter into a contract with the provider. These mutually beneficial arrangements allow agencies that need transportation for their clients to take advantage of existing transit services. The transit purchasing agencies save money and time by using the existing providers. The providers gain revenue to support their operations. The Greene County providers did not identify any cases of sharing transit resources.

Greene County Contracts

- Greene County Nursing Home contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation
- West Alabama AAA contracts with the Greene County Commission
- West Alabama Mental Health Center contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation

4.4 Transit Needs

Figure 3 displays the census block groups that have a higher than average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups generally cover the southwest part of the county, south of I-20/59 and west of US-43. This figure also locates possible transit destinations. As expected, most of the destinations are in the City of Eutaw and to a lesser extent the Towns of Boligee and Forkland. The transit routes of the West Alabama Public Transportation (WAPT) agency are included on this figure. The WAPT routes cover the bulk of the county including a large portion of the highlighted block groups.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and transit riders during Fall of 2018. The staff and transit committee used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In December 2018, the transit committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers
- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Service to rural areas of the county
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips
  - Work trips
  - Vocational training trips
  - Shopping trips
  - Recreation trips
  - Local trips
  - Out-of-county trips

Based on the survey responses and committee discussions there does not appear to be any duplication of service in the county.

4.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit committee and the 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 funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

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 committee, 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 a reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
    - Nights
    - Weekends
    - Rural areas of the county
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/vanpools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**

- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit 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 Hale County

5.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 14,812 people live in Hale County. This is a decrease of 950 from the number reported in the 2010 Census. According to the *2012-2016 American Community Survey,* there are 3,014 disabled people, 2,525 elderly individuals, and 2,636 people below the poverty line in the county. The population density of the county is 23 people per square mile.

Hale County has a land area of 644 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 36 miles north-to-south and 24 miles east-to-west. Based on numbers provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation, there are 804 miles of roads in the county. The main north-south route is SR-69. The main east-west route is SR-14.

There are three areas of concentrated population in Hale County. The largest of the three is the City of Greensboro in the south-central part of the county. The second concentration is the City of Moundville located in the northern part of the county. The Town of Akron in the west-central part of the county is the third area of concentration. Figure 4 depicts these concentrations. These areas also contain the bulk of potential transit destinations including government offices, social service organizations, schools, medical facilities, and large employers. Figure 4 displays potential transit destinations and transit system routes. In addition, Figure 4 includes concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

5.2 Employment

Based on figures from the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in 2017 Hale County had 6,007 people in the labor force. Of this number 5,653 were employed and 354 were unemployed. The 2017 average unemployment rate, 5.9 percent, was higher than the national and state average of 4.4 percent. Major employers in the county include the Hale County Board of Education, Westervelt Lumber, Heartland Catfish, HERO-BX Alabama LLC, C & S Fabrication, Inc., and Plastics, Inc. In Hale County, there are approximately 1,000 businesses with 97 categorized as entry-level employers. Most of the employers, including major and entry-level employers, are located within the municipal limits.

Based on information from the *2009-2013 American Community Survey*, 46 percent of the employed workforce in Hale County commutes out of the county to their job. Of this group, 79 percent are employed in Tuscaloosa and Marengo County. Only 43 percent of the total workforce live and work in the county. An additional 11 percent of the workforce commutes into Hale County from another county.

Hale County

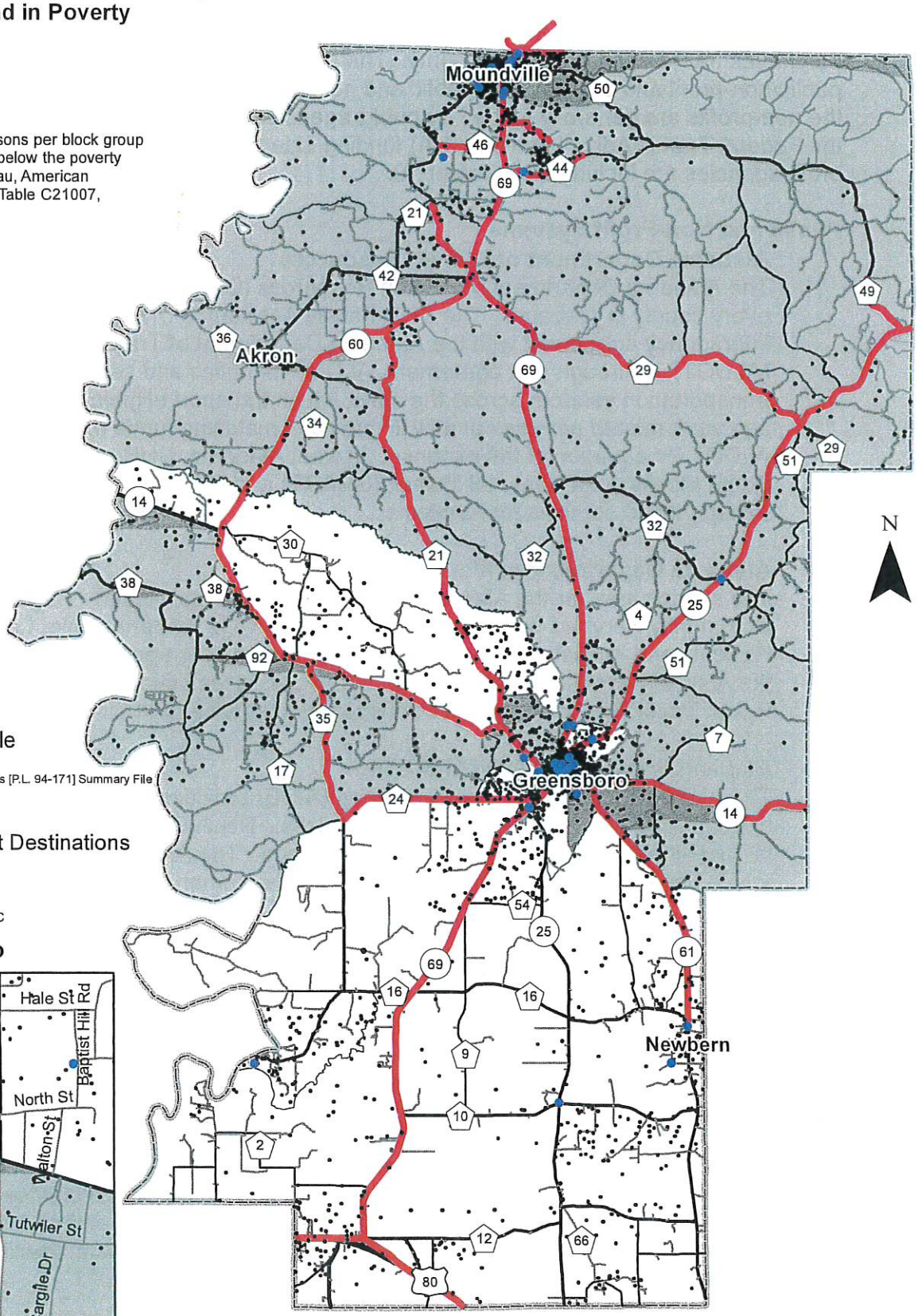
Figure 4

ncentrations of People in Hale County who are .sabled, Over 65, and in Poverty

Above Average

Below Average

In Hale County the average persons per block group who are over 65, disabled, and below the poverty level is 456 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012-2016, Table C21007, and WARC Calculation).



Population Density

1 Dot = 5 People

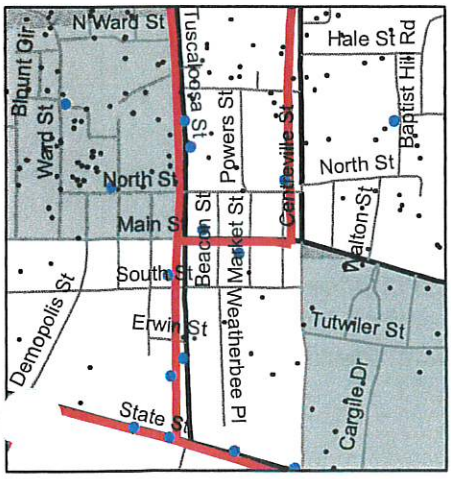
Sources: US Census Bureau 2010 Census [P.L. 94-171] Summary File

Potential Transit Destinations

Transit Routes

Sources: Local transit agencies and WARC

Greensboro



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5.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section provides a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Hale County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped 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 10.

Public and Non-Profit Systems

- **Alabama Department of Human Resources**
  The 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 that agreement, ALDOT identifies and secures transportation vendors across the state, which transport eligible persons to work and work-related activities and DHR provides matching funds to reimburse ALDOT for a portion of the expense. In west Alabama, DHR contracts with the South Mobile Area Regional Transit (SMART) and HELP, Inc., to provide transportation services for its clients.

- **Alabama Department of Mental Health**
  The service area for the Alabama Department of Mental Health - Region II Community Services program includes Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County. In west Alabama the agency contracts with the ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo, the Arc of Tuscaloosa, and West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transportation service for their clients.

- **Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind**
  The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) provides transportation services to people who have vision and/or hearing loss. The AIDB has a regional center in Tuscaloosa. Their main office is in Talladega. The AIDB Center in Tuscaloosa serves Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County.

- **Alabama Kidney Foundation**
  The Alabama Kidney Foundation purchases transit service for clients in all 67 Alabama counties. Their clients are limited to kidney patients who make $1,000 or less per month. The transit service is funded by state appropriations and private contributions. The Foundation utilizes numerous transit providers throughout the state. The Foundation also reimburses client family and friends who provide transportation. The transit program operates from 5:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The Foundation is located in Birmingham, Jefferson County. The Foundation indicated that it would like to provide service to individuals who are above the $1,000 threshold but are not able to due to funding limitations. The Foundation also indicated that the lack of transit service in rural areas is a problem.

- **Alabama Medicaid Agency**
  The Alabama Medicaid Agency offers non-emergency transit service to full-covered Medicaid beneficiaries for Medicaid covered medical appointments. The agency provides Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to its clients to purchase transit service. The agency requires that public transit services be used instead of for-profit companies if the service meets the needs of its clients. However, the EBT cards can be used for reimbursement of private vehicle use. This is the most common use of the Medicaid non-emergency transportation program in Alabama. Most of the service is associated with recurring medical needs such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

  The Alabama Medicaid Agency does not contract with transit providers. The Agency does maintain a registry of licensed transit providers for its clients. Registered providers in west Alabama include HELP, Inc., Kid One, Northstar EMS, and West Alabama Public Transportation.

- **Community Service Programs of West Alabama**
  The Community Service Programs of West Alabama (CSPWA) contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transportation for 90 Head Start students in Greene and Hale County. CSPWA operates Head Start programs in six of the seven west Alabama counties.

- **RSVP of Tuscaloosa and Hale County**
  The RSVP of Tuscaloosa and Hale County is a senior citizen volunteer program managed by FOCUS on Senior Citizens. FOCUS provides transportation to clients to and from Moundville daily and Akron and Greensboro once a month. Those clients not living in Moundville are reimbursed for the use of their personal vehicle for up to 100 miles a day. The program transports between three and five clients twice a week in Hale County.

- **West Alabama Area Agency on Aging**
  The West Alabama Area Agency on Aging (AAA) serves senior citizens in west Alabama. The AAA contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transit service to its elderly clients in Hale County.

- **West Alabama Mental Health Center**
  The West Alabama Mental Health Center provides mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse treatment. It has offices in five counties including Greene and Hale County. It contracts with West Alabama Public Transportation to transport between 30 and 42 patients a day in these two counties.

- **West Alabama Public Transportation**
  The West Alabama Public Transportation (WAPT) agency is the largest transit provider in the State. WAPT utilizes FTA Section 5311, 5311(f), 5316, and 5317

grants to fund their service. The agency also maintains numerous contracts to provide specialized transportation to different agencies. The WAPT serves nine counties in West Alabama including Bibb, Greene, and Hale. The WAPT Administrative office is located in Demopolis in Marengo County. There are satellite offices in Bibb, Greene, and Hale County.

WAPT has no age or income limitations, and customer charges vary. WAPT transports clients for medical/dental services, recreational activities, personal business, employment, and other services. The WAPT 5311 service operates from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., depending on scheduling Monday through Friday and provides limited weekend service.

The service has several fixed routes but also offers demand-response routes. The WAPT averages over 360,000 passenger trips per year in their nine-county service area. The WAPT fleet consists of approximately 65 vehicles with capacities ranging from seven to 30 passengers. The fleet includes 12 wheelchair lift vehicles.

In Greene and Hale County, the WAPT has contracts with the West Alabama Area Agency on Aging and the West Alabama Mental Health Center. These contracts do not prevent WAPT from serving other segments of the population. WAPT is also on the Alabama Medicaid Agency transportation provider registry. The intercity bus transportation is also available (connector to Greyhound Bus Stations).

Private Systems

- **Colonial Haven Care and Rehab Center**
  The Colonial Haven Care and Rehab Center is a long-term care and rehabilitation facility located in Greensboro. Its service area includes Hale County. The company purchases transit service from the Hale County EMS and Northstar EMS. The company uses Medicaid to fund its transit purchases.

- **E&C Taxi Service**
  E&C Taxi Service provides demand response service in Greene, Hale, Tuscaloosa, and Jefferson County. The company currently serves Medicaid clients. E&C operates Monday through Saturday from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 11:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. The company does not own a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

- **Greyhound Bus Line**
  The Greyhound Bus line has four stops in the West Alabama region. These stops are not stand-alone bus stations but are generally housed with small businesses. The stops and associated businesses are listed below:

    - Eutaw, gas station
    - Greensboro, gas station

- Moundville, community center
- Tuscaloosa, gas station

The stops offer limited service and tickets can only be purchased at the Tuscaloosa location.

- **Hale County EMS**
  The Hale County EMS is an ambulance service serving Hale County. Its office is located in Greensboro. The company provides emergency and non-emergency trips for local nursing homes, hospital, and other medical facilities. The company does not serve wheelchair clients.

- **Moundville Health and Rehab**
  The Moundville Health and Rehab (MHR) office is located in Moundville. Its service area includes Hale and Tuscaloosa County. The MHR purchases transit service from private providers. The MHR uses Medicaid to fund its transit purchases.

- **Northstar EMS**
  Northstar EMS serves Fayette, Greene, Hale, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, and Jefferson County. The company provides emergency and non-emergency trips. The company operates Monday through Saturday, 7:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. The company has contracts with several nursing homes and medical facilities in the area. This company does not provide wheelchair service. This company is on the Alabama Medicaid transportation provider registry.

- **RushHour Transit**
  RushHour Transit operates out of Tuscaloosa and provides service to all six counties in the west Alabama region and parts of Jefferson County. The company serves individuals, private schools, community service organizations, and employment staffing companies. The company has two transit vehicles, but currently does not offer wheelchair transportation.

Current Coordination Efforts

- In Hale County, current coordination efforts include utilization of existing providers and contracts. These efforts address a previously identified transit gap. In many cases, an agency that needs transportation for its clients will use an existing provider rather than start a transit system. The transit purchasing agency can simply direct its clients to the providers or can enter into a contract with the provider. These mutually beneficial arrangements allow agencies that need transportation for their clients to take advantage of existing transit services. The transit purchasing agencies save money and time by using the existing providers. The providers gain revenue to support their operations. The Hale County providers did not identify any cases of sharing transit resources.

Hale County Contracts

- Colonial Haven Care and Rehabilitation Center contracts with Hale County EMS and Northstar EMS
- Moundville Health and Rehab contracts with Northstar EMS
- West Alabama AAA contracts with WAPT
- West Alabama Mental Health Center contracts with WAPT

5.4 Transit Needs

Figure 4 displays the census block groups that have a higher than average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups generally cover the northern two-thirds of the county, excluding the area northwest of Greensboro. This figure also locates possible transit destinations. As expected, most of the destinations are in the City of Greensboro and the City of Moundville and to a lesser extent the Towns of Akron and Newbern. The transit routes of the West Alabama Public Transportation (WAPT) agency are included on this figure. The WAPT routes cover a large portion of the county including some the highlighted block groups.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and transit riders during Fall of 2018. The staff and transit committee used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In December 2018, the transit committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers
- More frequent service
- Service for senior citizens who are less than 60 years old
- Service to Shelton State Community College (Tuscaloosa) and Wallace Community College (Selma)
- Service to large employers in Tuscaloosa
- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Service to rural areas of the county
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips
  - Work trips
  - Vocational training trips
  - Shopping trips
  - Recreation trips
  - Local trips

- Out-of-county trips

Based on the survey responses and committee discussions there does not appear to be any duplication of service in the county.

5.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit committee and the 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 funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

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 committee, 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 a reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
  - Nights
  - Weekends
  - Rural areas of the county
  - Inter-county

- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/vanpools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit 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 Lamar County

6.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 13,946 people live in Lamar County. This is a decrease of 618 from the number reported in the 2010 Census. According to the *2012-2016 American Community Survey,* there are 2,956 disabled people, 2,768 elderly individuals, and 2,180 people below the poverty line in the county. The population density of the county is 23 people per square mile.

Lamar County has a land area of 605 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 37 miles north-to-south and 20 miles east-to-west. Based on numbers provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation, there are 1,196 miles of roads in the county. The main north-south route is SR-17. The main east-west routes are US-278 and SR-18.

There are four areas of concentrated population in Lamar County. The largest of the three is the City of Vernon in the south-central part of the county. The second concentration is the City of Sulligent located in the north-central part of the county. The Town of Millport in the southern part of the county is the third area of concentration. The fourth area is the Town of Kennedy in the southeastern corner of the county. Figure 5 depicts these concentrations. These areas also contain the bulk of potential transit destinations including government offices, social service organizations, schools, medical facilities, and large employers. Figure 5 displays potential transit destinations and transit system routes. In addition, Figure 5 includes concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

6.2 Employment

Based on figures from the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in 2017 Lamar County had 5,703 people in the labor force. Of this number 5,462 were employed and 241 were unemployed. The 2017 average unemployment rate, 4.2 percent, was lower than the national and state average of 4.4 percent. Major employers in the county include Hyster-Yale, Marathon Equipment Corporation, Lamar County Board of Education, Generations of Vernon, Max Home, Steele Dust Recycling, and Weyerhaeuser Corporation. In Lamar County, there are approximately 500 businesses with 63 categorized as entry-level employers. Most of the employers, including major and entry-level employers, are located within the municipal limits.

Based on information from the *2009-2013 American Community Survey*, 33 percent of the employed workforce in Lamar County commutes out of the county to their job. Of this group, 38 percent are employed in Mississippi and 45 percent work in Fayette and Marion County. Only 51 percent of the total workforce live and work in the county. An additional 15 percent of the workforce commutes into Lamar County from another county.

Lamar County

Figure 5

Concentrations of People in Lamar County who are Disabled, Over 65, and in Poverty

Above Average

Below Average

In Lamar County the average persons per block group who are over 65, disabled, and below the poverty level is 351 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012-2016, Table C21007, and WARC Calculation).

Population Density

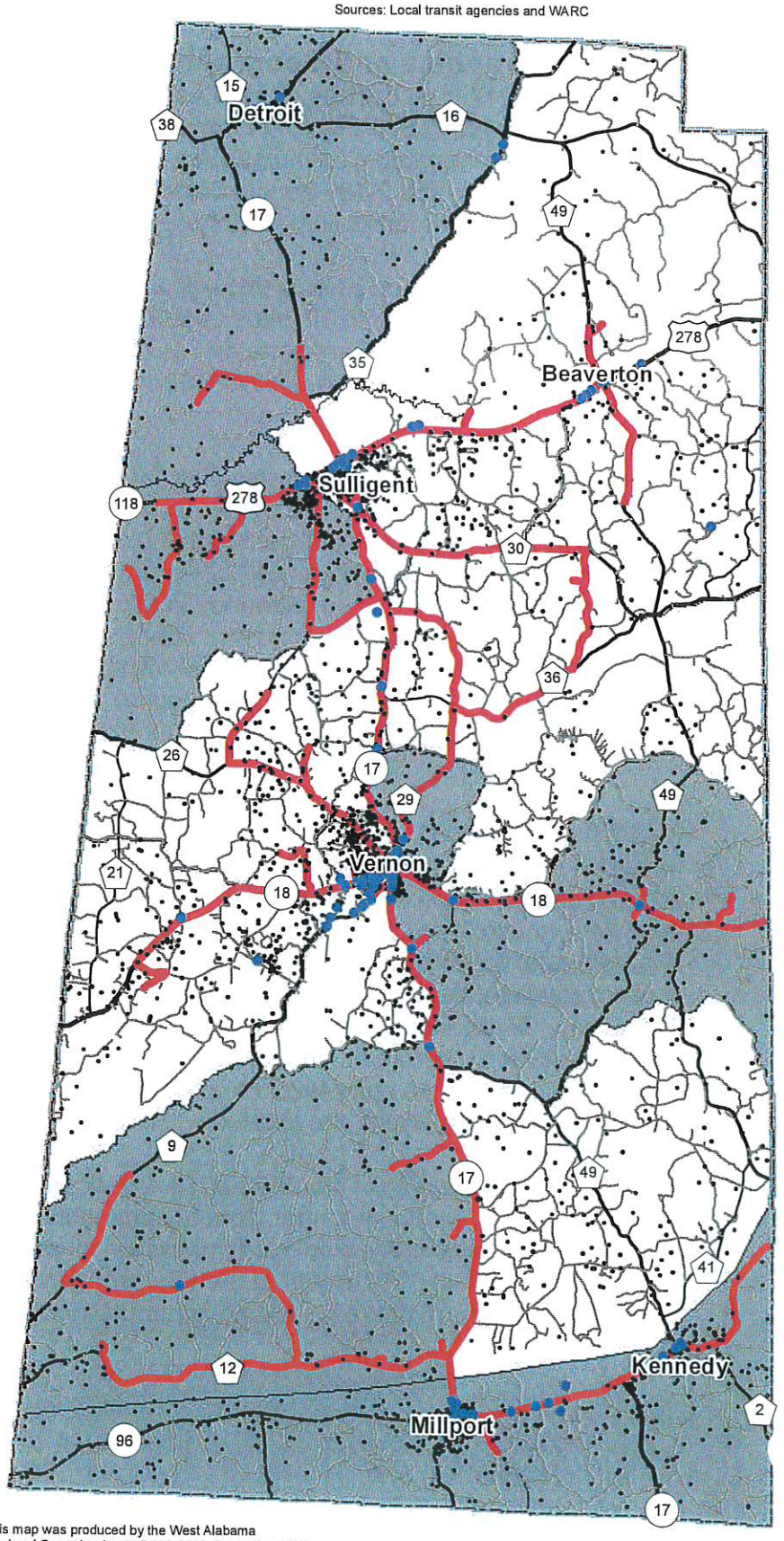
1 Dot = 5 People

Sources: US Census Bureau 2010 Census [P.L. 94-171] Summary File

Potential Transit Destinations

Transit Routes

Sources: Local transit agencies and WARC



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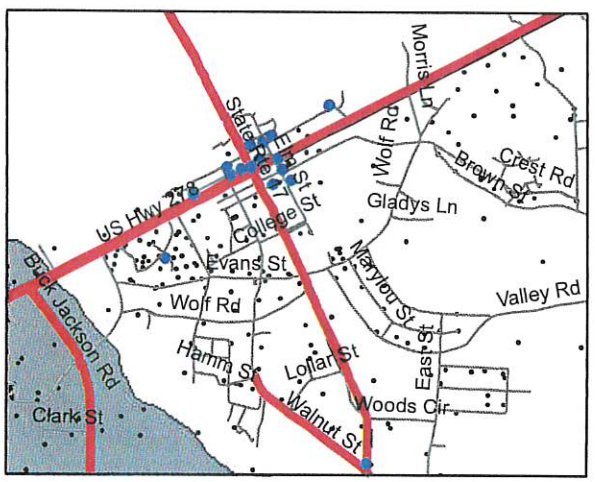
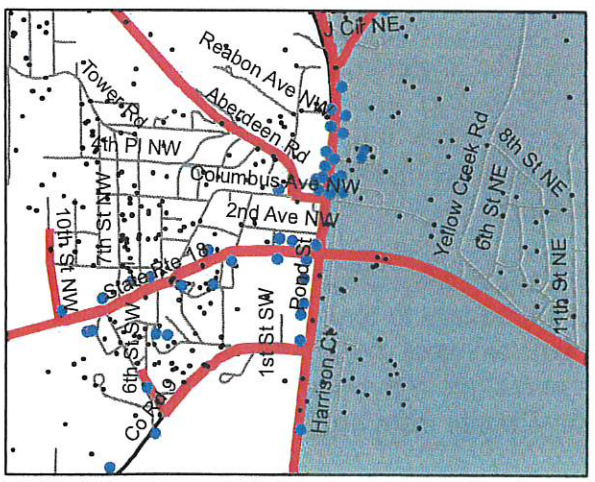


Vernon



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This map was produced by the West Alabama Regional Commisssion 205 333-2990, December 2018. This map is not a survey product and should not be used for conveyance.

6.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section provides a description of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in Lamar County. The agency descriptions are divided into public/non-profit and private. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped 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 10. The public and non-profit transit providers in Lamar County limit service to a small section of the population usually associated with a particular 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**
  The 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 that agreement, ALDOT identifies and secures transportation vendors across the state, which transport eligible persons to work and work-related activities and DHR provides matching funds to reimburse ALDOT for a portion of the expense. In west Alabama, DHR contracts with the South Mobile Area Regional Transit (SMART) and HELP, Inc., to provide transportation services for its clients.

- **Alabama Department of Mental Health**
  The service area for the Alabama Department of Mental Health - Region II Community Services program includes Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County. In west Alabama the agency contracts with the ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo, the Arc of Tuscaloosa, and West Alabama Public Transportation to provide transportation service for their clients.

- **Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind**
  The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) provides transportation services to people who have vision and/or hearing loss. The AIDB has a regional center in Tuscaloosa. Their main office is in Talladega. The AIDB Center in Tuscaloosa serves Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County.

- **Alabama Kidney Foundation**
  The Alabama Kidney Foundation purchases transit service for clients in all 67 Alabama counties. Their clients are limited to kidney patients who make $1,000 or less per month. The transit service is funded by state appropriations and private contributions. The Foundation utilizes numerous transit providers throughout the state. The Foundation also reimburses client family and friends who provide transportation. The transit program operates from 5:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The Foundation is located in Birmingham, Jefferson County. The Foundation indicated that it would like to provide service

to individuals who are above the $1,000 threshold but are not able to due to funding limitations. The Foundation also indicated that the lack of transit service in rural areas is a problem.

- **Alabama Medicaid Agency**
  The Alabama Medicaid Agency offers non-emergency transit service to full-covered Medicaid beneficiaries for Medicaid covered medical appointments. The agency provides Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to its clients to purchase transit service. The agency requires that public transit services be used instead of for-profit companies if the service meets the needs of its clients. However, the EBT cards can be used for reimbursement of private vehicle use. This is the most common use of the Medicaid non-emergency transportation program in Alabama. Most of the service is associated with recurring medical needs such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

  The Alabama Medicaid Agency does not contract with transit providers. The Agency does maintain a registry of licensed transit providers for its clients. Registered providers in west Alabama include HELP, Inc., Kid One, Northstar EMS, and West Alabama Public Transportation.

- **ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo Counties**
  The ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo Counties (ARCFLM) provides transit service exclusively to their clients, individuals with developmental disabilities. The program makes frequent medical trips and weekly recreational trips. The ARCFLM provides transit service Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. but also offers 24-hour availability. The ARCFLM makes regular trips to Jasper, Northport, Tuscaloosa, Winfield, Guin, Hamilton, and Birmingham. The ARCFLM drivers serve as day habilitation and residential training assistants when they are not driving. The agency indicated that insurance problems would prevent any sharing of resources. The ARCFLM office is located in the City of Fayette, and its transportation service area includes Fayette. Lamar, and Marengo County. The agency uses FTA Section 5310 grants to purchase vehicles.

- **Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center**
  The Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center (NWAMHC) is a comprehensive mental health program that offers adults and children outpatient services in Fayette, Lamar, Marion, Walker, and Winston Counties. NWAMHC operates a specialized child program in Vernon, out-patient, and day rehabilitation programs in Vernon, and two adult mental illness residential programs in Sulligent. The center provides transit service exclusively to its consumers. Trips are provided for medical services, shopping, and recreation. In Lamar County, NWAMHC provides approximately 20,000 transit trips per year. NWAMHC is a non-profit agency and is located in the City of Jasper in Walker County. The center uses FTA Section 5310 grants to purchase vehicles.

Private Systems

- **Generations of Vernon**
  Generations of Vernon is a private company that provides transit service to its clients. Its service area includes Fayette and Lamar County. The company has one wheelchair-accessible van and provides demand response service for medical and recreational purposes.

- **RushHour Transit**
  RushHour Transit operates out of Tuscaloosa and provides service to all six counties in the west Alabama region and parts of Jefferson County. The company serves individuals, private schools, community service organizations, and employment staffing companies. The company has two transit vehicles, but currently does not offer wheelchair transportation.

Current Coordination Efforts

- In Lamar County, current coordination efforts include utilization of existing providers and contracts. These efforts address a previously identified transit gap. In many cases, an agency that needs transportation for its clients will use an existing provider rather than start a transit system. The transit purchasing agency can simply direct its clients to the providers or can enter into a contract with the provider. These mutually beneficial arrangements allow agencies that need transportation for their clients to take advantage of existing transit services. The transit purchasing agencies save money and time by using the existing providers. The providers gain revenue to support their operations. The Lamar County providers did not identify any cases of sharing transit resources.

  Lamar County Contracts
  - Alabama Department of Mental Health contracts with the ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo

6.4 Transit Needs

Figure 5 displays the census block groups that have a higher than average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups generally cover the northwest corner of the county, the area west of Sulligent, the area southeast of Vernon, the area northwest of Millport, and the area south of the Luxapallila Creek. This figure also locates possible transit destinations. As expected, most of the destinations are in the Cities of Vernon, Sulligent, and Millport and to a lesser extent the Towns of Detroit, Beaverton, and Kennedy. The transit routes of the ARC of Fayette, Lamar, and Marengo, the Lamar County Aging Program, and the Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center (NAMHC) are included on this figure. The routes cover a large part of the county. However, the routes do not serve many of the highlighted block groups.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and transit riders during Fall of 2018. The staff and transit committee used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In December 2018, the transit committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers, including a Section 5311 provider
- Service to rural areas of the county including Kingville, Cody, Detroit, and Beaverton
- Additional service in Millport and Sulligent
- Out-of-county service including Tuscaloosa and Columbus, MS
- Shopping service
- Recreation service
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips
  - Work trips
  - Vocational training trips
  - Shopping trips
  - Recreation trips
  - Local trips
  - Out-of-county trips

Based on the survey responses and committee discussions there does not appear to be any duplication of service in the county.

6.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit committee and the 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 funding (local, state, federal, private)
  - Operating funds
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

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 committee, 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 a reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
    - Nights
    - Weekends
    - Millport and Sulligent
    - Rural areas of the county including Kingville, Cody, Detroit, and Beaverton
    - Inter-county
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers, including a 5311 provider (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/vanpools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(High)**
- Develop education/outreach programs (Additional funding may be required) **(Medium)**

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit 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 Pickens County

7.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 20,176 people live in Pickens County. This is an increase of 430 from the number reported in the 2010 Census. The increase is due to a new federal prison that opened outside of Aliceville in 2013. According to the *2012-2016 American Community Survey,* there are 4,511 disabled people, 3,484 elderly individuals, and 2,982 people below the poverty line in the county. The population density of the county is 23 people per square mile.

Pickens County has a land area of 882 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 38 miles north-to-south and 28 miles east-to-west. Based on numbers provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation, there are 1,136 miles of roads in the county. The main north-south route is SR-17. The main east-west route is US-82.

There are five areas of concentrated population in Pickens County. The largest of the five is the City of Aliceville in the south-central part of the county. The Town of Gordo in the west-central part of the county is the second area of concentration. The third concentration is the Town of Reform located in the north-central part of the county. The Town of Carrollton, the county seat, is the fourth largest area of concentrated population. Carrollton is located in the center of the county. The final area is located in the Town of Pickensville, west of Carrollton on the state line. Figure 6 depicts these concentrations. These areas also contain the bulk of potential transit destinations including government offices, social service organizations, schools, medical facilities, and large employers. Figure 6 displays potential transit destinations and transit system routes. In addition, Figure 6 includes concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

7.2 Employment

Based on figures from the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in 2017 Pickens County had 7,783 people in the labor force. Of this number 7,371 were employed and 412 were unemployed. The 2017 average unemployment rate, 5.3 percent, was higher than the national and state average of 4.4 percent. Major employers in the county include the Pickens County Board of Education, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Pickens County Medical Center, Lavender, Inc., and Lewis Brothers Lumber Company. In Pickens County, there are approximately 600 businesses with 75 categorized as entry-level employers. Most of the employers, including major and entry-level employers, are located within the municipal limits.

Based on information from the *2009-2013 American Community Survey*, 46 percent of the employed workforce in Pickens County commutes out of the county to their job. Of this group, 65 percent are employed in Tuscaloosa County and 28 percent work in Mississippi. Only 45 percent of the total workforce live and work in the county. An additional 9 percent of the workforce commutes into Pickens County from another county.

Pickens County

Figure 6

Concentrations of People in Pickens County who are Disabled, Over 65, and in Poverty

Above Average

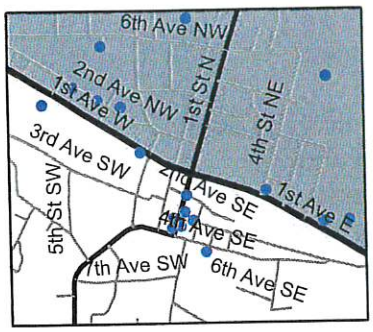
Below Average

In Pickens County the average persons per block group who are over 65, disabled, and below the poverty level is 404 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2012-2016, Table C21007, and WARC Calculation).

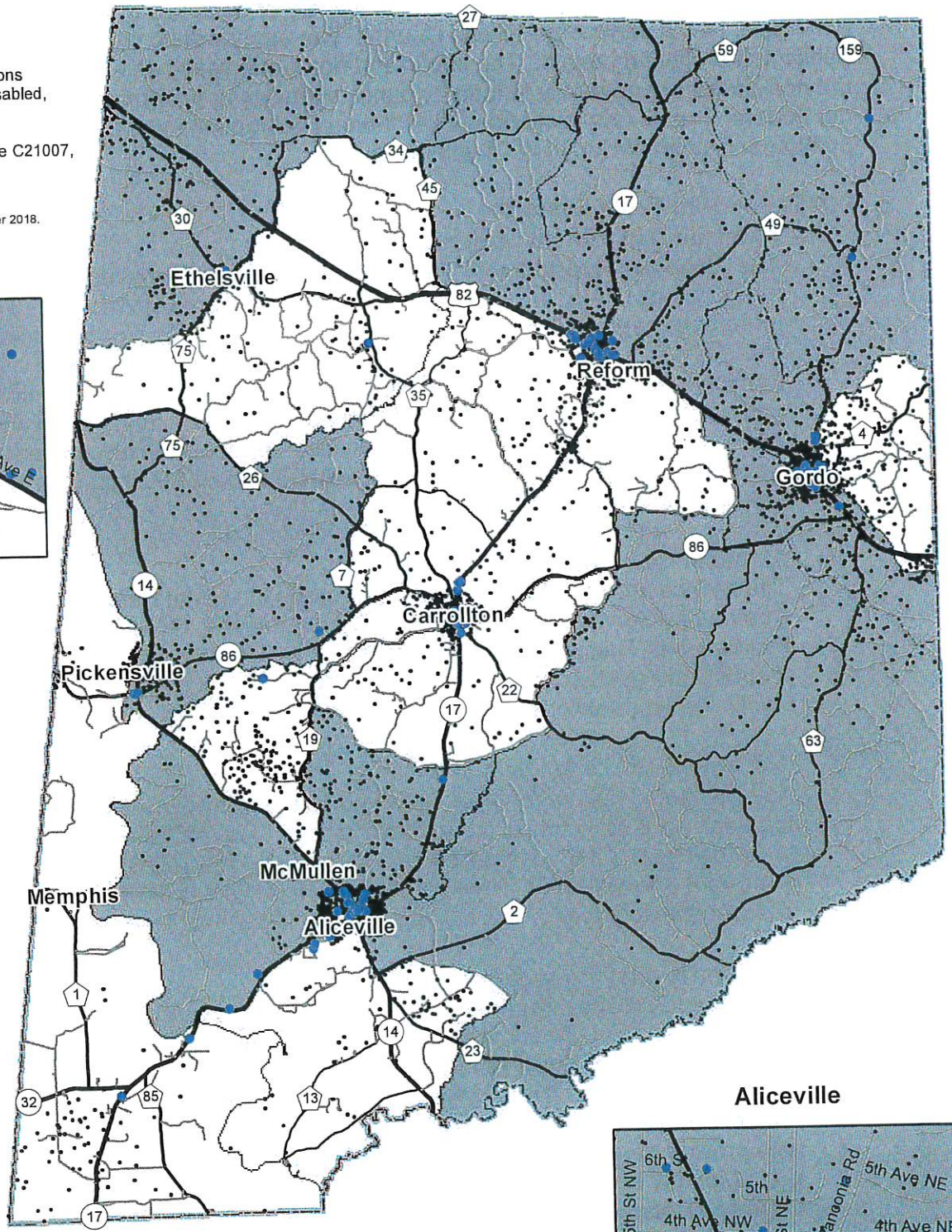
This map was produced by the West Alabama Regional Commisssion 205 333-2990, December 2018. This map is not a survey product and should not be used for conveyance.

• Potential Transit Destinations

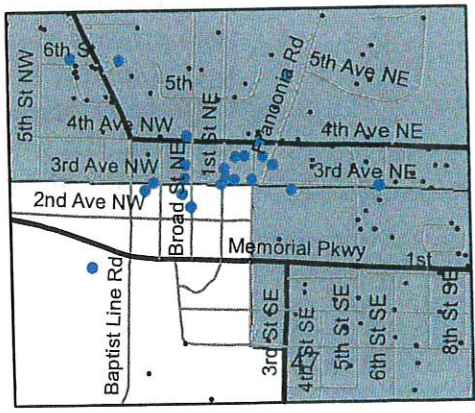
Sources: Local transit agencies and WARC



Gordo



Aliceville



Population Density

1 Dot = 5 People

Sources: US Census Bureau 2010 Census [P.L. 94-171] Summary File

0 5 10 Miles

- **Alabama Medicaid Agency**
  The Alabama Medicaid Agency offers non-emergency transit service to full-covered Medicaid beneficiaries for Medicaid covered medical appointments. The agency provides Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to its clients to purchase transit service. The agency requires that public transit services be used instead of for-profit companies if the service meets the needs of its clients. However, the EBT cards can be used for reimbursement of private vehicle use. This is the most common use of the Medicaid non-emergency transportation program in Alabama. Most of the service is associated with recurring medical needs such as dialysis and chemotherapy.

  The Alabama Medicaid Agency does not contract with transit providers. The Agency does maintain a registry of licensed transit providers for its clients. Registered providers in west Alabama include HELP, Inc., Kid One, Northstar EMS, and West Alabama Public Transportation.

- **HELP Inc.**
  HELP Inc. is the designated Section 5311 provider in Pickens County. The agency is located in Carrollton, the county seat. The agency provides transit service Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m. The agency has a fleet of five vehicles, with two being wheelchair accessible.

  HELP Inc. has a contract with the West Alabama Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to transport AAA clients to the Aliceville and Reform AAA senior centers. The contract does not prevent the agency from serving other segments of the population.

  The agency provides approximately 15,000 passenger trips per year to the general public, without age or income limitations. Transportation is provided for medical appointments, shopping, pharmacy visits, and other personal business and activities. A modest fare is charged for the service.

- **Indian Rivers Behavioral Health**
  Indian Rivers Behavioral Health (IRBH) serves mental health, substance abuse, and intellectually disabled clients by providing mental health treatment, life skills training and residential support. The agency is located in Tuscaloosa. Its service area includes Bibb, Pickens, and Tuscaloosa County. The agency provides transportation to its clients on a case-by-case basis and/or assistance with accessing public transit services. Generally, client-specific transportation is provided Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. However, Indian Rivers manages numerous residential facilities where transportation service is available to those individuals 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The agency serves over 6,000 people annually.

- **West Alabama Area Agency on Aging**
  The West Alabama Area Agency on Aging (AAA) serves senior citizens in west Alabama. The AAA provides transportation to its senior clients and provides transportation to the AAA senior centers. The AAA contracts with HELP, Inc. to provide transit service to its elderly clients in Pickens County to two of the AAA senior centers.

Private Systems

- **Arbor Woods Health and Rehab**
  The Arbor Woods Health and Rehab (AWHR) is a private nursing facility that provides and purchases transit service for its clients. The facility is located in Reform and serves 81 clients. The AWHR has one van to transport clients for medical and recreation services and also purchases service from Northstar EMS (Pickens County Ambulance Service). The AWHR uses Medicaid to fund its transit purchases.

- **Northstar EMS**
  Northstar EMS (Pickens County Ambulance Service) serves Fayette, Greene, Hale, Pickens, Tuscaloosa, and Jefferson County. The company provides emergency and non-emergency trips. The company operates Monday through Saturday, 7:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. The company has contracts with various nursing homes and medical facilities in the area. This company does not provide wheelchair service. The EMS has an office in the Town of Carrollton.

- **REACH**
  The REACH program, located in Carrollton, offers transportation to its clients. REACH is a youth alternative treatment program that is part of the Pickens County Juvenile Court.

- **RushHour Transit**
  RushHour Transit operates out of Tuscaloosa and provides service to all six counties in the west Alabama region and parts of Jefferson County. The company serves individuals, private schools, community service organizations, and employment staffing companies. The company has two transit vehicles, but currently does not offer wheelchair transportation.

Current Coordination Efforts

- In Pickens County, current coordination efforts include utilization of existing providers and contracts. These efforts address a previously identified transit gap. In many cases, an agency that needs transportation for its clients will use an existing provider rather than start a transit system. The transit purchasing agency can simply direct its clients to the providers or can enter into a contract with the provider. These mutually beneficial arrangements allow agencies that need transportation for their clients to take advantage of existing transit services. The transit purchasing agencies save money and time by using the existing

providers. The providers gain revenue to support their operations. The Pickens County providers did not identify any cases of sharing transit resources.

Pickens County Contracts

- Alabama Department of Human Resources contracts with HELP, Inc.
- Arbor Woods Health and Rehab contracts with Northstar EMS
- West Alabama AAA contracts with HELP, Inc.

7.4 Transit Needs

Figure 6 displays the census block groups that have a higher than average population of disabled, elderly, and poor. These block groups generally cover the northern quarter of the county, the area northwest of Pickensville, the area north and west of Aliceville, and the southeastern part of the county. This figure also locates possible transit destinations. As expected, most of the destinations are in the Cities of Aliceville, Reform, Gordo, Carrollton, and to a lesser extent the Towns of Pickensville, Ethelsville, and Memphis. HELP Inc. provides demand response service to all of Pickens County.

Surveys were provided to transit providers, social service organizations, and transit riders during Fall of 2018. The staff and transit committee used the survey responses to develop a list of needs in the county. In December 2018, the transit committee verified these needs.

Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Night service, including early morning and early evening times
- Weekend service
- Additional public and private providers
- Decreased call-in times
- Additional shopping service
- Additional recreation service
- Additional accessible vehicles
- Education of general public (services available, how to use, application process, operations times, costs, contact information)
- Out-of-county trips

Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday Service
  - Medical trips
  - Work trips
  - Vocational training trips
  - Shopping trips
  - Recreation trips
  - Local trips

Based on the survey responses and committee discussions there does not appear to be any duplication of service in the county.

7.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit committee and the 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 funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Training required to manage some clients
- Aides required for some clients
- Drivers sometimes serve as social workers and are not available to drive for other agencies

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 committee, 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 a reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current transit service **(High)**
- Maintain current transit contracts and coordination efforts **(High)**
- Expand current transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
    - Nights
    - Weekends
    - Rural areas of the county
    - Additional service to reduce call-in times
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers (Additional funding required) **(Low)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/vanpools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**

8.0 Tuscaloosa County

8.1 Demographics and Geography

Based on a 2017 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, 207,811 people live in Tuscaloosa County. This is an increase of 13,149 from the number reported in the 2010 Census. According to the *2012-2016 American Community Survey,* there are 21,886 disabled people, 23,118 elderly individuals, and 25,013 people below the poverty line in the county. The population density of the county is 157 people per square mile.

Tuscaloosa County has a land area of 1,325 square miles. At its widest section, the county is 42 miles north-to-south and 45 miles east-to-west. Based on numbers provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation, there are 2,493 miles of roads in the county. The main north-south routes are US-43 and SR-69. The main east-west routes are I-20/59 and US-82.

In Tuscaloosa County, most of the population is concentrated in and around the Cities of Tuscaloosa and Northport. These cities are located in the central part of the county. The towns of Lake View, Brookwood, Vance, and Coaling in the eastern part of the county have smaller concentrations of population. The Town of Coker, west of Northport, also has a small concentration of population. Figures 7 and 8 depict these concentrations. These areas also contain the bulk of potential transit destinations including government offices, social service organizations, schools, medical facilities, and large employers. Figures 7 and 8 display potential transit destinations and transit system routes. In addition, Figures 7 and 8 includes concentrations of people who are disabled, over 65, and in poverty.

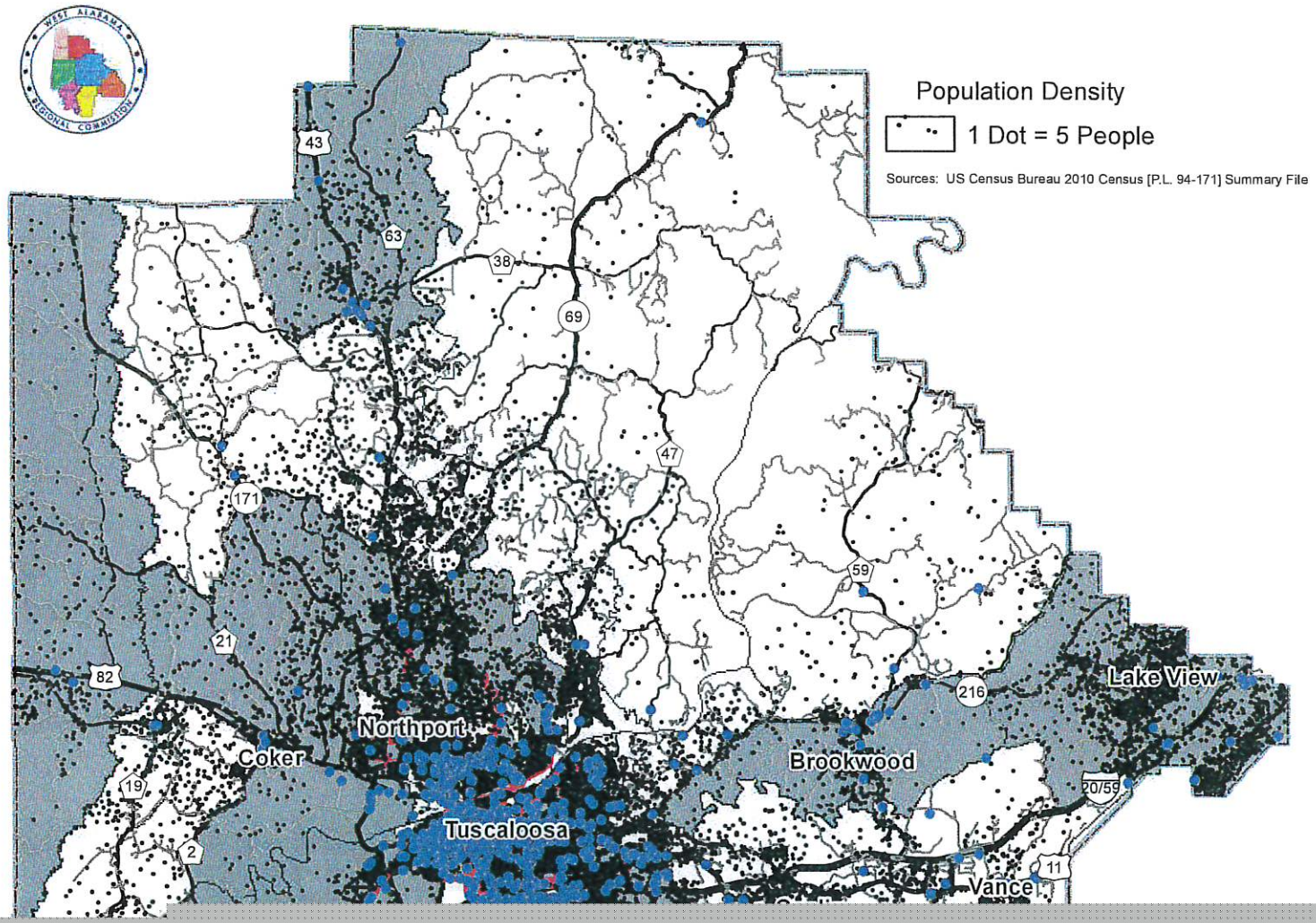
8.2 Employment

Based on figures from the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in 2017 Tuscaloosa County had 99,237 people in the labor force. Of this number 95,127 were employed and 4,110 were unemployed. The 2017 average unemployment rate, 4.1 percent, was lower than the national and state average of 4.4 percent. Major employers in the county include the University of Alabama, DCH Regional Medical Center, Mercedes-Benz US International, Inc., Tuscaloosa County Board of Education, BF Goodrich Tire Manufacturing, Walter Energy, Tuscaloosa City Board of Education, Phifer Wire Products, and Veterans Administration Hospital. In Tuscaloosa County, there are hundreds of businesses that are considered entry-level employers. Most of the employers, including major and entry-level employers, are located within the municipal limits.

Based on information from the *2009-2013 American Community Survey*, 8 percent of the employed workforce in Tuscaloosa County commutes out of the county to their job. Of this group, 59 percent are employed in Jefferson County. The majority of the total workforce, 77 percent, lives and works in Tuscaloosa County. An additional 15 percent of the workforce commutes into Tuscaloosa County from another county.

Tuscaloosa County

Figure 7



9.3 Transit Resource Assessment

This section includes a list of each agency or company that provides or purchases transit service in West Alabama County. The lists are divided into private-for-profit and public or non-profit. The public and non-profit agencies were grouped 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 10.

Private For-Profit Companies that Provide or Purchase Transit Service in West Alabama

Agency Name	Type of Transit Agency	West Alabama Counties Served
A1 Taxi Service	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Ambassador Limousine Service	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Arbor Woods Health and Rehab	Provider & Purchaser	Pickens
Cahaba Medical Care Foundation	Purchaser	Bibb
Colonial Haven Care and Rehabilitation Center	Purchaser	Hale
Crown Limousine	Provider	Tuscaloosa
CV Transerv	Provider	Bibb
Dunn's Taxi	Provider	Tuscaloosa
E&C Taxi Service - Formerly E&C Transport	Provider	Greene, Hale, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Fayette County Nursing Home	Purchaser	Fayette
Generations of Vernon	Provider	Fayette, Lamar
Greene County Ambulance Service	Provider	Greene
Greene County Nursing Home/Medical Center	Provider & Purchaser	Greene
Greyhound Bus Lines	Provider	Greene, Hale, Tuscaloosa
Hale County EMS	Provider	Hale
Lee's Taxi	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Life Care Ambulance	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Lyft	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Moundville Health and Rehab	Purchaser	Hale, Tuscaloosa
Northstar EMS	Provider	Fayette, Greene, Hale, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Radio Cab	Provider	Tuscaloosa
REACH	Purchaser	Pickens
RushHour Transit	Provider	Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Scuttle Shuttle	Provider	Tuscaloosa
South Mobile Area Regional Transit (SMART)	Provider	Bibb, Tuscaloosa
Sterling Limo, Formerly Alabama Sterling Limo-Cab	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Tuscaloosa Charter Service	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Uber	Provider	Tuscaloosa

Public Agencies and Non-Profit Companies that Provide or Purchase Transit Service in West Alabama

Agency Name	Type of Transit Agency	West Alabama Counties Served
Alabama Department of Human Resources	Purchaser	Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Alabama Department of Mental Health, Region II Community Services	Purchaser	Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind (Tuscaloosa Regional Center)	Provider & Purchaser	Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Alabama Kidney Foundation	Provider	Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Alabama Medicaid Agency	Purchaser	Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Am-Serv	Provider	Bibb
ARC of Fayette/Lamar/Marengo, Inc.	Provider	Fayette, Lamar
ARC of Tuscaloosa County	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Arts n' Autism	Provider & Purchaser	Tuscaloosa
Bibb County Department of Human Resources	Purchaser	Bibb
Community Service Programs of West Alabama	Purchaser	Greene, Hale
Crossing Points (University of Alabama)	Provider	Tuscaloosa
DCH Medical Center	Purchaser	Tuscaloosa
Eagles Wings	Provider & Purchaser	Tuscaloosa
Easter Seals West Alabama	Provider & Purchaser	Tuscaloosa
Fayette County Aging	Provider	Fayette
FOCUS on Senior Citizens of Tuscaloosa County	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Greene County Commission (Senior Centers)	Provider	Greene
HELP Inc.	Provider	Pickens
Indian Rivers Mental Health	Provider & Purchaser	Bibb, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
Kid One Transport System, Inc.	Provider	Greene, Tuscaloosa
Northwest Alabama Mental Health Center	Provider	Fayette, Lamar
RSVP of Tuscaloosa and Hale County (FOCUS)	Provider	Hale, Tuscaloosa
Tuscaloosa County Parking & Transit Authority	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Tuscaloosa County Parks and Recreation	Provider	Tuscaloosa
United Cerebral Palsy of West Alabama	Provider	Tuscaloosa
University of Alabama	Provider	Tuscaloosa
Veterans Administration Medical Center (Tuscaloosa)	Provider	Tuscaloosa
West Alabama Area Agency on Aging	Purchaser	Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens, Tuscaloosa
West Alabama Mental Health Center	Purchaser	Greene, Hale
West Alabama Public Transportation (West Alabama Health Services, Inc.)	Provider	Bibb, Greene, Hale
Whatley Health Services, Inc.	Provider	Tuscaloosa

Please see the appropriate county chapter for a description of the agencies.

Current Coordination Efforts

- Currently, there are no regional coordination efforts in west Alabama.

9.4 Transit Needs

In west Alabama, there are limited inter-county transportation options. A reliable method to transport people from the rural west Alabama counties to Tuscaloosa, Birmingham, Selma, Meridian, Mississippi, or other economic hubs is needed. This is especially true in Fayette, Lamar, and Pickens County. The hub communities offer national travel options (air, rail, and bus), employment opportunities, medical facilities, educational institutions, shopping, and recreation. Rural residents have to travel to these hubs for at least some of their needs.

West Alabama Public Transportation provides service from Bibb to Tuscaloosa and from Greene and Hale to the Selma. However, the other rural counties do not have access to a similar service. A public or private service could address this need.

The Greyhound Bus Line operates four stops in the West Alabama region (Greene, Hale, and Tuscaloosa County) and has facilities in Birmingham and Selma. Amtrak has stations in Tuscaloosa, Birmingham, and Meridian, Mississippi. The closest commercial air service is located in Birmingham, Meridian, and Columbus, Mississippi.

Some of the transit gaps reviewed in the previous chapters could be addressed by eliminating or reducing the Alabama Public Service Commission regulation that prevents publicly funded systems from picking up riders in counties they pass through because they are not the designated transit provider for that county. Many of the rural transit providers transport their clients to appointments in larger communities such as Tuscaloosa. This regulation denies transit service to potential clients that live in un-served areas of counties, such as rural Tuscaloosa County. If this rule could be changed some of the identified transit gaps could be addressed.

<u>Needs Not Currently Addressed or Only Partially Addressed</u>

- Additional inter-county service to connect rural residents with national bus service, Amtrak service, commercial air service, jobs, medical facilities, shopping opportunities, recreation facilities, education, and training opportunities; including west Alabama and out-of-region travel

9.5 Transit Service Barriers

The staff, working with the transit committee and the 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 funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profits
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Alabama Public Service Commission service area restrictions

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 committee, 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 a reallocation of existing funds or programs. New funding streams may not always be needed.

Strategies

- Maintain current inter-county transit service in Bibb, Greene, Hale County **(High)**
- Add inter-county transit service (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Support/Establish additional transportation providers, where needed (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support/Establish alternate transit options where transit service is not available or cost prohibitive, such as car/vanpools and transportation stipends (Additional funding required) **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to establish a state transit funding source **(High)**
- Support efforts to combine and/or leverage funding sources **(Medium)**
- Support efforts to modify the Alabama Public Service Commission service area restrictions **(High)**

The list of strategies includes an implementation priority (High, Medium, Low) assigned by the transit 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 Funding Opportunities

This chapter provides a basic description of common transit funding programs. These programs provide most of the transit funding in west Alabama and are likely to be the prime sources for future transit service. Each program and sub-program feature a unique set of restrictions that hinder cooperation and coordination. However, without the programs very few, if any, public transit options would be available.

10.1 Federal

Administration on Aging Congregate Nutrition Services

- The Administration on Aging Congregate Nutrition Services is restricted to elderly individuals. Locally, it is administered by the Area Agency on Aging Department at the West Alabama Regional Commission. The program provides transit service to local nutrition centers.

Federal Transit Administration

Relevant Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories are listed below with a brief description.

- **Section 5307 (Urban Area)**
  This FTA program provides funding to census designated urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more. These funds are intended to be used for general public transit service (no qualifications are placed on riders). However, specialized transit service can be provided with these funds to address the needs of persons with disabilities that would involve rider qualifications.

  These funds can be used for planning, capital purchases, and operating expenses. Under the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (Map-21), job access and reverse commute projects are also eligible activities. Planning and capital projects generally require a 20 percent local match. Operating funds require a 50 percent local match.

  There is only one urbanized area in west Alabama. It encompasses the Cities of Northport and Tuscaloosa. The Section 5307 funds that are dedicated to the Tuscaloosa Urbanized Area are distributed by the Federal Transit Administration directly to the Tuscaloosa County Parking and Transit Authority, the designated recipient.

- **Section 5310 (Formula Grants for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities)**
  This FTA program is intended to address the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. In Alabama, the funding is distributed to the Alabama Department of Transportation who then distributes the funds based on a competitive grant program. The funds are generally limited to capital purchases, which require a 20 percent local match. MAP-21 combined the

Section 5317 (New Freedom) program with the 5310 program. Eligible 5317-type projects now can be funded with this program.

- **Section 5311 (Non-urbanized Area)**
  This FTA program provides funding for areas with a population fewer than 50,000. These funds are intended to be used for general public transit service (no qualifications are placed on riders). In Alabama, the funding is distributed to the Alabama Department of Transportation who then distributes the funds based on a competitive grant program.

  The funds may be used for capital purchases, operating expenses, and administrative costs. Under Map-21, job access and reverse commute projects are also eligible activities. The local matching requirements are generally 20 percent for capital and administrative expenses and 50 percent for operating expenses. Government agencies, transit operators, and non-profit agencies are eligible recipients.

- **Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute)**
  Under MAP-21 this program was combined with the 5307 and 5311 programs. However, Alabama has not used all of the funds made available under the previous transportation bill. The program will remain open until the remaining funds are exhausted.

  The purpose of this FTA program is to provide job-related transportation services to welfare recipients, low-income individuals, and reverse commuters. In Alabama, the funding is distributed to the Alabama Department of Department of Transportation (ALDOT) who then distributes the funds based on a competitive grant program. Eligible program charges include planning, capital purchases, operating expenses, and administrative costs. The local matching requirements are generally 20 percent for planning, 20 percent for capital projects, and 50 percent for operating expenses.

- **Section 5317 (New Freedom)**
  Under MAP-21 this program was combined with the 5310 program. However, Alabama has not used all of the funds made available under the previous transportation bill. The program will remain open until the remaining funds are exhausted.

  The purpose of this FTA program is to provide additional transportation options to persons with disabilities. In Alabama, the funding is distributed to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) who then distributes the funds based on a competitive grant program. The funds may be used for planning, capital purchases, operating expenses, and administrative costs. The local matching requirements are generally 20 percent for planning, 20 percent for capital projects, and 50 percent for operating expenses.

- **Section 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities)**
  The 5339 program provides capital funding for new and replacement buses, related equipment, and facilities. The funds are limited to capital purchases and generally require a 20 percent local match. Designated recipients, sub-recipients, and states are eligible for these funds. This program had previously been labeled Section 5309.

Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program

- The Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program is limited to full-covered Medicaid beneficiaries. Transit service is restricted to Medicaid covered medical appointments. The program is managed by the Alabama Medicaid Agency. Clients use Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards to retrieve funds. The program allows the use of public or private transportation options.

Medicaid Waiver Program

- The Medicaid Waiver Program is limited to non-institutionalized individuals three and older who have been diagnosed with intellectual disabilities or with related conditions. The program is focused on providing personal care transportation, day habilitation service, and residential habilitation service. This program is managed by the by the Alabama Medicaid Agency.

10.2 State

Alabama is one of a few states that do not provide any funding for transit service. State law prevents fuel taxes from being used for anything except for road maintenance or construction. In addition, the bulk of the state general funds are earmarked for specific programs.

10.3 Local

The funding supplied by the local sources is generally used to match the federal grants reviewed in this chapter. Of the 44 local governments in the west Alabama region only four support transit service in their community. In many cases, the local transit providers could not survive without the social service contracts.

- **Fayette County Commission**
  The Fayette County Commission provides local matching funds to the Fayette County Aging Program.

- **Greene County Commission**
  The Greene County Commission provides local matching funds and in-kind services to provide transportation to the Greene County AAA nutrition centers.

- **Pickens County Commission**
  The Pickens County commission provides local matching funds to HELP, Inc.

- **City of Tuscaloosa**
  The City of Tuscaloosa provides local matching funds to the Tuscaloosa County Parking and Transit Authority. The City also provides funds to numerous non-profits that provide transit service.

- **United Way of West Alabama**
  The United Way of West Alabama provides funds to the ARC of Tuscaloosa County, Arts 'n Autism, Easter Seals West Alabama, FOCUS on Senior Citizens, and United Cerebral Palsy of West Alabama. In some cases, the funds may not be used for transportation services.

- **University of Alabama**
  The University of Alabama uses student fees to operate the campus transit system, Crimson Ride. In the past, student fees have also been used to match FTA Section 5309 Capital Grants. The grants were used to build parking decks and bus stops. The University also provides matching funds to the Tuscaloosa County Parking and Transit Authority for the University Shuttle route.

- **Contracts with Social Service Agencies**
  Many of the transit providers in the region maintain contracts with social service agencies. The contracts ensure that the clients of the social service agency are provided transportation. The contracts also eliminate the need for the social service agency to develop or expand a transit program. In addition, the arrangement provides a local match for federal grants that are utilized by the transit provider.

11.0 Continuing Efforts

After the adoption of this plan, the Tuscaloosa Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and West Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) will monitor transit issues in the region to determine if this plan needs to be modified. Changes to existing transit conditions could require the addition, deletion, or re-prioritization of strategies or projects. Any necessary adjustments to the plan can be accomplished through amendments adopted by the Policy Committees of the MPO and RPO. The joint MPO and RPO transit committee, which helped develop this plan, will meet as needed to assist in these efforts and to facilitate the implementation of the identified strategies.

The committees of the MPO and RPO will continue to meet on a regular basis. The MPO committees meet every other month, and the RPO committees meet once per quarter. The Section 5307 and 5311 providers in the region are voting members on the MPO and RPO technical coordination committees. At the meetings the committees discuss various transportation issues, usually focusing on federally funded projects, including transit programs.

Based on the current ALDOT contract, a summary report for this plan will be prepared in 2021 and 2022. If the federal planning requirements continue past 2022 and funds are available, the plan will likely be revised in 2023.

West Alabama Coordinated Public Transit Plan 2019

Appendices

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Developed by the West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC)
in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Transportation

August 2019

Appendix A

West Alabama Transit Committee Membership List

West Alabama Transit Committee - Condensed List

Name

Ability Alliance of West Alabama
Alabama Community Care
Alabama Cooperative Extension - Bibb County
Alabama Department of Human Resources
Alabama Department of Mental Health - Montgomery
Alabama Department of Mental Health - Reg II
Alabama Department of Public Health
Alabama Department of Public Health
Alabama Department of Public Health
Alabama Department of Public Health - Selma
Alabama Department of Senior Services
Alabama Department of Transportation
Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind
Alabama Kidney Foundation
Alabama Medicaid Agency
Alabama Medicaid Agency
Alabama State Children's Rehab Services
Alabama Vocational Rehab
Am-Serv EMS
ARC of Fayette/Lamar /Marengo
Arc of Tuscaloosa County
ARC of Tuscaloosa, The
Arts 'n Autism
Bibb County Department of Human Resources
Brent-Centreville Senior Center
Bryce Hospital
Cahaba Medical Care
Cahaba Valley Health Services
Community Service Programs
Crimson Ride - University of Alabama Transit
Department of Human Resources
Eagles Wings
Easter Seals West Alabama
Fayette County Aging
Fayette Department of Human Resources
Fayette EMS - Northstar
Fayette Medical Center (Ambulance)
Federal Highway Administration - Alabama Division
Federal Transit Administration - Atlanta Region
FOCUS on Senior Citizens
Good Samaritan Clinic
Governor's Policy Office
Greene County Ambulance Service

Greene Department of Human Resources
Greensboro Tours
Hale County Department of Human Resources
Hale County EMS
HELP, Inc.
HERO
Indian Rivers Mental Health Center
Kid One
Lamar County Aging
Lamar County Department of Human Resources
Northstar Paramedic Service
Northwest Al Mental Health Center
Office of Primary Care and Rural Health
PARA - Tuscaloosa County
Pickens County Ambulance - Northstar
Pickens County Department of Human Resources
RushHour Transit
Shelton State Community College
Tuscaloosa City BOE Transportation
Tuscaloosa County Department of Human Resources
Tuscaloosa County Parking and Transit Authority
Tuscaloosa Parks and Recreation Authority
Tuscaloosa Veterans Affairs Medical Center
United Cerebral Palsy of West Alabama
United Way of West Alabama
University of Alabama Civil Engineering
VA Medical Center - Tuscaloosa

Appendix B

West Alabama Transit Plan News Release List

Transit Plan News Release - Condensed List

Group	Name
Environmental Groups	ADEM
Environmental Groups	Alabama Conservation & Natural Resources
Environmental Groups	Alabama Environmental Council
Environmental Groups	Alabama Wildlife & Fisheries
Environmental Groups	Friends of Hurricane Creek
Environmental Groups	Friends of the Arboretum
Environmental Groups	Laurie Johns
Environmental Groups	Oakmulgee Ranger District
Environmental Groups	Sierra Club - West Alabama
Low Income Groups	Alabama Medicaid Agency
Low Income Groups	Aliceville Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Berry Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Bibb County Department of Human Resources
Low Income Groups	Bibb County Health Department
Low Income Groups	Bibb Medical Center
Low Income Groups	Big Brothers-Big Sisters
Low Income Groups	Boys & Girls Club of West Alabama
Low Income Groups	Brent Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Canterbury Manor
Low Income Groups	Carrollton Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Catholic Social Services of West Alabama
Low Income Groups	Christian Ministries
Low Income Groups	Community Services Program of West Alabama
Low Income Groups	Community Soup Bowl
Low Income Groups	Compassion Coalition
Low Income Groups	CSP Head Start of Fayette
Low Income Groups	CSP Village
Low Income Groups	Elizabeth Baptist Church - Project Care
Low Income Groups	Eutaw Elderly Village
Low Income Groups	Family Counseling Services
Low Income Groups	Fayette County Health Department
Low Income Groups	Fayette County Nursing Home
Low Income Groups	Fayette Department of Human Resources
Low Income Groups	Fayette Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Gordo Gardens
Low Income Groups	Gordo Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Greene County Health Department
Low Income Groups	Greene County Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Greene Department of Human Resources
Low Income Groups	Greensboro Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Habitat for Humanity Tuscaloosa
Low Income Groups	Hale County Department of Human Resources
Low Income Groups	Hale County Health Department
Low Income Groups	Head Start - CSP
Low Income Groups	HERO
Low Income Groups	Hillcreek Apartments
Low Income Groups	Kennedy Housing
Low Income Groups	Lamar County Department of Human Resources
Low Income Groups	Lamar County Health Council
Low Income Groups	Lamar County Health Department
Low Income Groups	Lamar Head Start
Low Income Groups	Lamar Home Health, Public Health

Low Income Groups	Lawrence Properties
Low Income Groups	Legal Services Corp of Alabama
Low Income Groups	Magnolia Village
Low Income Groups	Millport Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Northport Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Pickens County Department of Human Resources
Low Income Groups	Pickens County Health Department
Low Income Groups	Presbyterian Apartments
Low Income Groups	Reform Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Salvation Army
Low Income Groups	Sulligent Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Temporary Emergency Services
Low Income Groups	Tuscaloosa Children's Center
Low Income Groups	Tuscaloosa County Department of Human Resources
Low Income Groups	Tuscaloosa County Health Department
Low Income Groups	Tuscaloosa Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Tuscaloosa One Place
Low Income Groups	Vernon Housing Authority
Low Income Groups	Volunteers of America
Low Income Groups	West Alabama Food Bank
Low Income Groups	West Hill Apartments
Low Income Groups	Yester Oaks Apartments
Low Income Groups	YMCA
Media Groups	42 News
Media Groups	ABC 33/40
Media Groups	APR News
Media Groups	Centreville Press
Media Groups	Clear Channel Radio
Media Groups	Commercial Dispatch
Media Groups	Cumulus Broadcasting, Inc.
Media Groups	Greene County Democrat
Media Groups	Greene County Independent
Media Groups	Greensboro Watchman
Media Groups	Lamar Democrat
Media Groups	Lamar Leader
Media Groups	Moody Radio
Media Groups	Moundville Times
Media Groups	NBC 13
Media Groups	Northport Gazette
Media Groups	Pickens County Herald
Media Groups	The Tuscaloosa News
Media Groups	Times Record
Media Groups	Tuscaloosa News
Media Groups	WBRC-Fox6
Media Groups	WCBI-Channel 4
Media Groups	West Alabama Gazette
Media Groups	WJEC/WVSA
Media Groups	WLDX
Media Groups	WQZZ
Media Groups	WTBC Radio
Media Groups	WTUG, WTSK, WVEI, WANZ
Media Groups	WTWG
Media Groups	WVUA TV
Minority Groups	NAACP
Minority Groups	Stillman College

Minority Groups	West Alabama Sickle Cell
Miscellaneous	Alabama Department Of Commerce
Miscellaneous	Alabama Department of Transportation - West Central Region
Miscellaneous	Alabama Historical Commission
Miscellaneous	Aliceville Public Library
Miscellaneous	Andrea J. Pickrell
Miscellaneous	Andrew Somers
Miscellaneous	Bob Portera
Miscellaneous	Bobby Kemp - GMC
Miscellaneous	Brent-Centreville Library
Miscellaneous	Brian Hynniman
Miscellaneous	Carrollton Public Library
Miscellaneous	Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama
Miscellaneous	Chris Crawford
Miscellaneous	Cornelia Sanders
Miscellaneous	Crimson Ride - U of A
Miscellaneous	Danna Mills
Miscellaneous	Donny Jones
Miscellaneous	Fayette County BOE Transportation
Miscellaneous	Fayette County Memorial Library
Miscellaneous	Garcia A. Long
Miscellaneous	Gary Mosley
Miscellaneous	Hale County Bus Shop
Miscellaneous	Hale County Public Library
Miscellaneous	Heather McNutt
Miscellaneous	James C. Poole, Jr. Memorial Library
Miscellaneous	Jesse Chambless
Miscellaneous	Ken Faught - Crimson Realty
Miscellaneous	Kennedy Public Library
Miscellaneous	Kirk Mills
Miscellaneous	Lacey Ezekiel - Bhate
Miscellaneous	Lamar Co BOE Transportation
Miscellaneous	Mamie McClary
Miscellaneous	Mary Wallace Cobb Memorial Library
Miscellaneous	Mike and Chenoa Clardy
Miscellaneous	Millport Public Library
Miscellaneous	Moundville Public Library
Miscellaneous	Nicole Bohannon
Miscellaneous	Pickens County Cooperative Library
Miscellaneous	Reform Public Library
Miscellaneous	Ruth Holliman Public Library - Gordo
Miscellaneous	Sam Wilson
Miscellaneous	Scott Tillman
Miscellaneous	Sulligent Public Library
Miscellaneous	Tony Moore
Miscellaneous	Tony W. Harris
Miscellaneous	Tuscaloosa County IDA
Miscellaneous	Tuscaloosa County Preservation Society
Miscellaneous	Tuscaloosa County Road Improvement Commission
Miscellaneous	Upward Bound - UWA
Miscellaneous	Wesley Bumpers
Miscellaneous	West Blocton Library
Miscellaneous	Woodstock Community Library
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Adriana Dunn
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Alyce M. Spruell

MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Anne Wynn
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Ashley Nevin
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Ashton Greer
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Bill Herz
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Blake Deason
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Bobby Johnson
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Brian Gurney
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Celia O'Kelley
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Chris Weaver
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Christine Bassett
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Christopher D'Esposito
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Dorothy Peacock
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Eric Courchesne
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Erin Wiggins
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	FOCUS/Foster Grandparent
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Harold Stowell
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Heike Schad
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Jamey Clements
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Jason Capley
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Jeffrey Hayes
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Justin Ahalt
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Malia Duggan
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Michelle Montgomery
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Paula Marques
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Pixie Hicks
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Randolph Fowler
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Rob Quinney
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Robert P. Hoggle
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Robert Zach Thomas
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Ronnie Kelley
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Ronnie Sanders
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Russell Timkovich
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Sam Rombokas
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Stephen Middleton
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Tim Leopard
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	William Adams
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Xabier Granja
MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee	Zachary Heard
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	A. D. Christian
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Charlene Wilkinson
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	David Hartin
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	David Kemp
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Glenn Griffin
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Jill Hannah
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Jimmie Cain
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Jimmy Hamner
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Joe Robinson
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	John Myers
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Joyce Clements
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Judy Jarvis
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Lenny Fulmer
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Leon Tucker
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Lew Drumond
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Marvin Cherry
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Max Snyder

MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Robert Green
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Thomas Peters
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Tommy Nix
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Willis Reynolds
MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Wyman Turner
MPO Policy Committee	D. E. Phillips Jr.
MPO Policy Committee	Dennis Stripling
MPO Policy Committee	Donna Aaron
MPO Policy Committee	James D. Brown
MPO Policy Committee	Mark D. Bartlett
MPO Policy Committee	Rob Robertson
MPO Policy Committee	Walt Maddox
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Alton Hyche
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Ashley Crites
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Brad Darden
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Caroline Sandel
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Doug Behm
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Farrington Snipes
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Gary Averett, Mayor of Coaling
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Gerald Burton
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Jeff Powell
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Jeremy Jones
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	John Powell Webb
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Katherine Holloway
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Keith Mahaffey
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Marty Hamner
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Michael Hora
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Nicole T Spivey
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Northport Planning Commission
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Paul Calhoun
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Randy R. Stroup
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Russell Lawrence
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Scott Anders
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Sonya R. Baker
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Stephen Hysaw
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Steven D. Anderson
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Toni M. Arrington
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Tuscaloosa County Sheriff Dept
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Tuscaloosa Planning Commission Chairman
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	University of Alabama
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Vontra Giles
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Wendy Shelby
MPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Yvette G. Taylor
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Ability Alliance of West Alabama
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Alabama Children's Rehab Services
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Alabama Dept of Mental Health - Reg II
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Alabama Head Injury Foundation
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Alabama Vocational Rehab
Persons with Disabilities Groups	American Red Cross
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Arc of Tuscaloosa County
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Arts 'n Autism
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Bryce Hospital
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Easter Seals West Alabama

Persons with Disabilities Groups	Indian Rivers Mental Health Center
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Resources for Independence
Persons with Disabilities Groups	Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center
Persons with Disabilities Groups	United Cerebral Palsy of West Alabama
Persons with Disabilities Groups	United Way of Central Alabama
Persons with Disabilities Groups	United Way of West Alabama
Persons with Disabilities Groups	West Alabama Mental Health Center
Private Enterprise Committee	Dunn's Taxi
Private Enterprise Committee	Michael Hamilton
Private Enterprise Committee	Sterling Limo
Private Enterprise Committee	Tuscaloosa Charter Service
Private Enterprise Committee	Tuscaloosa City Schools
Private Enterprise Committee	Tuscaloosa County Schools
Private Enterprise Committee	Tuscaloosa PARA
Private Transportation Providers	Ambassador Limousine Service, Inc.
Private Transportation Providers	Crown Limousine Service
Private Transportation Providers	Grand Taxi
Private Transportation Providers	Greyhound Bus Lines
Private Transportation Providers	Northstar Paramedic Service
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Al Elbert
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Allen Dunavant
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Bobbie Kemp-Driver
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Brenda Burke
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Freddie Shoults
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Iris Sermon
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Jerry Elkins
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Jerry Pow
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Joan Owens
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Joanne Craighead
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	John Downs
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Lane Gilliam
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Marva Gipson
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Rusty Tate
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Sandy Rowland
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Wayne Christian
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	William Thomas
RPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee	Willie Smith
RPO Policy Committee	Arthur Crawford
RPO Policy Committee	Bobbie White
RPO Policy Committee	Craig Patterson
RPO Policy Committee	Jeff Long
RPO Policy Committee	Mark Gray
RPO Policy Committee	Mike Freeman
RPO Policy Committee	Ray Nelson
RPO Policy Committee	Raymond Steele
RPO Policy Committee	Sammy Holdsambeck
RPO Policy Committee	Stanley Allred
RPO Policy Committee	Tennyson Smith
RPO Policy Committee	Tony Lester
RPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Bobby Armstead
RPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Brian Latham
RPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Chris Bedwell
RPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Chris Howell
RPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Clint Terry
RPO Technical Coordinating Committee	Debbie Handley