

2024 Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan



**For the Southeast Missouri Region
March 2024**



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Coordination Plan

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ABSTRACT:

This document contains the *Public Transit—Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan* for the Southeast Missouri Region prepared under FTA Contract with the Missouri Department of Transportation.

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1 Plan Purpose & Requirements

Each of the federal transportation program reauthorizations, SAFTEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act), MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act), FAST Act (Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act) and the BIL (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) require that federally funded mobility projects be included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The plan must be developed and approved through a process that includes seniors and people with disabilities and is coordinated to the maximum extent possible with transportation services assisted by other federal departments and agencies.

A coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes; provides strategies for meeting those local needs; and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation. Local plans may be developed on a local, regional, or statewide level. The decision as to the boundaries of the local planning areas should be made in consultation with the state and the metropolitan planning organization, where applicable. The agency leading the planning process is decided locally and does not have to be the state.

In 2007, the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) contracted with regional planning commissions and councils of governments to develop public transit-human services plans. In 2012, 2017 and 2022, MoDOT once again contracted with the regional planning organizations to complete five-year updates to the previous plans. MoDOT has a long history of working with regional planning commissions that dates to the mid-1990s. Regional planning commissions have developed transportation advisory committees and have been coordinating transportation planning at the local level for many years.

The Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plans Federal transit law requires that projects selected for funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310) be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan," and that the plan be "developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public" utilizing transportation services. These coordinated plans identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with

low incomes, provide strategies for meeting these needs and prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.

The plan must include these three areas:

- Individuals with disabilities
- Older adults
- People with low incomes

All projects funded from Section 5310 grants must be identified from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services plan (the Local Plan). The scope of the plan must address the needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those with low incomes.

Local Plans must meet the following criteria:

- An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers - public, private, and not-for-profit. The assessment should include the number of vehicles (both accessible and nonaccessible), service area, and days and times of operation.
- An assessment of the transportation needs of people with low incomes. The assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts. Gaps in service should be identified.
- Strategies and activities that would address the identified gaps in service. Applicants are urged not to include specific projects in the plan, as the plan should be based on a higher level of need. Including only strategies and activities will allow the sub-recipients to have more flexibility to meet the changing transportation needs of their riders.
- Priorities of implementation based on resources. Prioritizing strategies will allow the subrecipient to select the most important projects as funding becomes available. MoDOT recognizes that the highest priority activities may not be the projects that are implemented due to the small amount of federal funding available and/or the availability of local matching funds.
- Public Participation - Development of the plan must include an opportunity for all interested parties to participate. The planning process should include human service agencies, local governments, private and public transit providers, and potential riders as well as members of the public. There should be specific methods for outreach to low-income individuals who are not part of the human services delivery system. The Local

Plan should document how public participation was solicited, i.e., newspaper ads, public service announcements, direct mail, etc. A lack of public interest in the project will not count against the project if adequate outreach was conducted.

2 Overview of Federal Funding

On Nov. 15, 2021, Public Law 117-58 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) was signed into law. This replaced the previous 2015 transportation legislation, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), which replaced Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) which replaced SAFETEA-LU.

2.1 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

Congress establishes the funding for FTA programs through authorizing legislation that amends Chapter 53 of Title 49 of the U.S. Code. On Nov. 15, 2021, President Biden signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), reauthorizing surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2026 and provides advance appropriations for certain programs. The BIL authorizes up to \$108 billion to support federal public transportation programs, including \$91 billion in guaranteed funding - the largest federal investment in public transportation in the nation's history.

Grant Programs

1. Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310 (49 U.S.C. 5310)
 - a. Provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each state's share of the population for these two groups.
 - b. Formula funds are apportioned to direct recipients.
2. Formula Grants for Rural Areas – Section 5311 (49 U.S.C. 5311)
 - a. Provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations.
 - b. Provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program.
3. Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program – Section 5339(a) (49 U.S.C. 5339(a))

- a. Provides funding to states and transit agencies through a statutory formula to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. In addition to the formula allocation, the 5339(a) program includes two discretionary components: the Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program, and the Low or No Emissions Bus Discretionary Program.

What Has Changed?

- Increases funding to \$4 million for each state and \$1 million for each territory.
- Requires applicants for both the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities formula and competitive programs to use, to the extent possible, innovative procurement tools authorized under Section 3019 of the FAST Act. If fewer than five buses are purchased through a stand-alone procurement, the recipient must provide a written explanation to FTA of why the authorized procurement tools were not used.
- Allows an applicant to the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities competitive program who is also applying for the Low or No Emission Grants program to propose partnerships with other entities, which would then be deemed to satisfy the competitive procurement requirements under 49 U.S.C. § 5325.
- Requires that applicants submit a zero-emission fleet transition plan with their applications to both Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities and Low or No Emissions Grants competitive programs for projects related to zero-emission buses.
- Not less than 25% of Low or No Emissions Grants funding must be used for low-emission vehicles and related facilities (excluding zero emission vehicles and facilities).
- Requires that 5% of all Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities or Low or No Emissions competitive grants related to zero emission vehicles or related infrastructure be used for workforce development activities, unless the applicant certifies that less is needed to carry out their zero-emission fleet transition plan.

The legislation will expand public transit options across every state in the country, replace thousands of deficient transit vehicles, including buses, with clean, zero emission vehicles, and improve accessibility for the elderly and people with disabilities.

2.1.1 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities: Section 5310

Purpose

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law continues without changes to the Formula Grants for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program, which funds transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas.

Statutory References:

49 U.S.C. Section 5310

Eligible Recipients:

- Funding is made available to direct recipients. For rural and small urbanized areas (small UZAs), the state is the direct recipient. For large-urbanized areas (large UZAs), the governor of the state chooses a designated recipient. State or local governmental entities that operate a public transportation service are also eligible recipients.
- Subrecipients can include states or local government authorities, private nonprofit organizations, or operators of public transportation.

Features:

- Funds are allocated by formula to the states for capital costs of providing services to elderly persons and persons with disabilities.
- The federal share of eligible capital costs may not exceed 80 %, and 50 % for operating assistance. The 10 % that is eligible to fund program administrative costs including administration, planning, and technical assistance may be funded at 100 % federal share.
- Up to 10 % of funding can be used by State or local government authority for administrative expenses (including planning and technical assistance).
- As in the past, states may sub-allocate funds to private non-profit organizations and to public agencies if they are designated to provide coordinated service.

- Non-federal share can include amounts available for transportation from other federal agencies including Federal Lands Highway Program (Section 204 of Title 23).
- Coordination requirements are increased by requiring that, beginning in FY 2007, projects be on a locally developed human service transportation coordination plan. That planning process includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and the public.

Notice of Funding Opportunity:

- Grant requirements of Section 5307 apply to the extent the Secretary determines appropriate.
- Allocation is made based on the number of elderly and persons with disabilities in each state.
- This grant program helps private, public and non-profit groups in “meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs.”

States and designated recipients are direct recipients; eligible sub-recipient includes private nonprofit organizations, states or local government authorities, or operators of public transportation. Section 5310 funds are apportioned among the states by a formula which is based on the number of seniors and people with disabilities in each state according to the latest available U.S. Census data.

Eligible Activities:

1. Purchasing vehicles to support accessible taxi, ridesharing, and/or vanpooling programs. Section 5310 funds can be used to purchase and operate accessible vehicles for use in taxi, ridesharing, and/or vanpool programs provided that the vehicle meets the same requirements for lifts, ramps, and securement systems specified in 49 CFR Part 38, subpart B, at a minimum, and permits a passenger whose wheelchair can be accommodated pursuant to Part 38 to remain in his/her personal mobility device inside the vehicle.
2. Supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers. This activity is intended to

support and supplement existing transportation services by expanding the number of providers available or the number of passengers receiving transportation services. Vouchers can be used as an administrative mechanism for payment of alternative transportation services to supplement available public transportation. The Section 5310 program can provide vouchers to seniors and individuals with disabilities to purchase rides, including: (a) mileage reimbursement as part of a volunteer driver program; (b) a taxi trip; or (c) trips provided by a human service agency. Providers of transportation can then submit the voucher for reimbursement to the recipient for payment based on predetermined rates or contractual arrangements. Transit passes or vouchers for use on existing fixed-route or ADA complementary paratransit service are not eligible. Vouchers are an operational expense which requires a 50/50 (federal/local) match.

Traditional Section 5310 project examples include:

- Buses and vans
- Wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices
- Transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling/routing/one-call systems
- Mobility management programs
- Acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement

Non-traditional Section 5310 project examples include:

- Travel training
- Volunteer driver programs
- Building an accessible path to a bus stop, including curb-cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features
- Improving signage, or way-finding technology
- Incremental cost of providing same day service or door-to-door service
- Purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, rides sharing and/or vanpooling programs
- Mobility management programs

Note: Under MAP-21, the program was modified to include projects eligible under the former Section 5317 New Freedom program, described as capital and operating expenses for new

public transportation services and alternatives beyond those required by the ADA, designed to assist individuals with disabilities and seniors.

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC): (Section 5316) has expired and is under FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Grants (Section 5307) and the Formula Grants for Rural Areas (Section 5311) programs.

2.1.2 Chapter 53 Section 5311 49 U.S.C. Section 5311/The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Section 30006

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), continues the Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program, which provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states and federally recognized Indian tribes to support public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. It also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program.

Statutory References:

49 U.S.C. Section 5311/IIJA Section 30006

Eligible Recipients:

- States and federally recognized Indian tribes.
- Subrecipients may include state or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service.

Eligible Activities:

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law continues the broad range of activities eligible under the formula grants for rural areas program, including:

- Planning
- Public transportation capital projects
- Operating costs of equipment and facilities for use in public transportation

- Job access and reverse commute projects
- Acquisition of public transportation services

What Has Changed?

Establishes fixed funding percentages for the Public Transportation on Indian Reservations and the Appalachian Development Public Transportation Assistance programs:

- 5% of Rural Formula (Section 5311) funding is available for the Public Transportation on Indian Reservations program. 20 % of the Public Transportation on Indian Reservations funds must be distributed on a competitive basis, while the remainder must be apportioned by formula.
- 3% of Section 5311 funding is available for the Appalachian Development Public Transportation Assistance program.

Funding:

Federal Share:

- Federal share is 80% for capital projects.
- Federal share is 50% for operating assistance.
- Federal share is 80% for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) non-fixed-route paratransit service, using up to 10% of a recipient's apportionment.

Formula Details:

Funds are apportioned to states based on a formula that includes land area, population, revenue vehicle miles, and low-income individuals in rural areas.

Other:

Tribal Transit Program and 5311 Rural Formula.

2.1.3 Grants for Buses & Bus Facilities Formula Program – 5339(a)

Provides funding to states and transit agencies through a statutory formula to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. In addition to the formula allocation, this program includes two discretionary components: The Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program and the Low or No Emissions Bus Discretionary Program.

Eligible Recipients:

Eligible Recipients include designated recipients that operate fixed route bus service or that allocate funding to fixed route bus operators; and State or local governmental entities that operate fixed route bus service that are eligible to receive direct grants under 5307 and 5311.

Subrecipients: An eligible recipient that receives a grant under the formula or discretionary programs may allocate amounts from the grant to subrecipients that are public agencies or private nonprofit organizations engaged in public transportation.

Eligible Activities:

Capital projects to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses, vans, and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities, including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities.

Statutory References:

49 U.S.C. Section 5339 / FAST Act Section 3017

3 Assessment of Needs Groups & Demographics of the SEMO Region

3.1 Demographics

The population of the Southeast Missouri Region has grown consistently over the last 50 years. During the 50 year period, the population of the Region increased 55%, growing from 140,475 in 1970, to 217,108 in 2020. The greatest growth occurred in Cape Girardeau and St. Francois Counties, the two most densely populated and urbanized counties in the Region.

Within the past decade, the region has seen 3% growth, with significant growth in Cape Girardeau County (6%) and St. Francois County (4%) off set by losses in Iron, Bollinger, and Ste. Genevieve Counties. The following table shows the population changes between 2010 and 2020.

Total Population

	Bollinger	Cape Girardeau	Iron	Madison	Perry	St. Francois	Ste. Genevieve	Total
2020	12,181	78,834	10,150	12,176	19,227	66,653	17,887	217,108
2010	12,445	74,283	10,670	12,269	18,919	64,239	18,205	211,030
Change	-264	4,551	-520	-93	308	2,414	-318	6,078
% Change	-2.1%	6.1%	-4.9%	-0.8%	1.6%	3.8%	-1.7%	2.9%

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

Population trends also show growth of the Region’s elderly population. The percentage of persons 65 and older increased in every county over the period from 2010 to 2020, as did the median age in every county. Iron, Ste. Genevieve, and Bollinger Counties saw the largest percentage growths in the 65+ population in the 10-year period, while Madison and St. Francois saw the smallest growth. As the number of persons in the 65+ age category continues to grow, it is likely the demand for public transportation and human services will also increase.

2020 Percent Population By Age Cohorts

	Bollinger		Cape Girardeau		Iron	
	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010
Under 5 years	5.1%	6.6%	5.7%	6.2%	5.4%	5.9%
Under 18 years	21.7%	-	21.3%	-	20.8%	-
18 years and over	78.3%	75.6%	78.7%	77.8%	79.2%	76.9%
65 years and over	20.0%	16.3%	16.6%	14.0%	22.3%	17.3%
Median Age	44.9	41.9	36.7	36.3	45.9	41.9

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

2020 Percent Population By Age Cohorts

	Madison		Perry		St. Francois		Ste. Genevieve	
	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010
Under 5 years	5.5%	6.6%	5.9%	6.7%	5.5%	6.1%	5.1%	5.4%
Under 18 years	23.3%	-	23.4%	-	21.0%	-	21.4%	-
18 years and over	76.7%	76.1%	76.6%	75.1%	79.0%	77.9%	78.6%	76.8%
65 years and over	18.9%	17.9%	18.5%	15.7%	16.6%	14.3%	19.6%	15.7%
Median Age	41.9	40.1	41.2	39.1	39.2	38.1	43.7	42.9

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

As of 2020, only Cape Girardeau and Perry Counties had a percentage of the population with a disability below that of the state. In Missouri, 14.4% of the noninstitutionalized population had some type of disability. As the chart below shows, Bollinger, Iron, Madison, St. Francois, and Ste. Genevieve Counties all have rates exceeding the state rate. Of those five, only Ste. Genevieve was relatively close to the state rate, while Madison County was over 10 points higher.

The trend mostly continues with persons in the region aged 75+ with disabilities. The state's rate of 75+ year olds with a disability was 47.9% in 2020. Four of the seven counties in the region have percentages of disabled persons over 75 in excess of the state average. Madison, Iron, and Bollinger Counties are significantly higher than the state's rate, with two-thirds of the 75+ population in Madison County having a disability and nearly the same rate in Iron and Bollinger.

2020 Disability Characteristics								
	Bollinger	Cape Girardeau	Iron	Madison	Perry	St. Francois	Ste. Genevieve	
Total Civilian Non-institutionalized Population	12,097	77,586	9,812	11,944	18,852	60,254	17,640	
% With A Disability	Total	22.1%	14.0%	23.8%	24.7%	13.7%	20.9%	15.4%
	Under 5	0.0%	30.0%	0.0%	2.8%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	5 to 17	7.7%	9.3%	6.6%	9.5%	2.3%	9.5%	9.1%
	18 to 34	8.0%	5.2%	16.1%	8.5%	6.8%	12.3%	10.2%
	35 to 64	23.5%	15.4%	23.3%	29.3%	15.8%	25.3%	14.9%
	65 to 74	39.6%	27.9%	42.4%	41.9%	28.3%	35.0%	19.7%
	75+	63.6%	45.4%	64.9%	66.7%	36.7%	48.1%	46.5%

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

Inadequate income is another important factor which affects the lives of many of the residents of the Region. The chart below provides information about median household income and poverty rates for each county in the region, and comparison to the state and national levels. Median household income is lower than the state median household income level in every county in the region except Ste. Genevieve County, which is approximately \$4,500 higher. In stark contrast, the median household income in Iron County, the lowest in the Region, was \$17,000 below the state income level.

The percentage of the population living below the poverty level is higher than the state rate in five of the seven counties, with only Perry and Ste. Genevieve Counties faring better than the state. Of note, Iron County has over one-fifth of its population living in poverty. Without transit services, reliable transportation can be difficult for people with low income to access, which can perpetuate the problem by limiting access to jobs that could help elevate them out of poverty.

Persons in the 65+ age category who also live below the poverty level are less likely to have dependable transportation to health care and other service providers and are more likely to require public transit to access these services. In this area, the region is similar to the state rate of 65+ individuals living in poverty. Five of the seven counties are below or just above the state rate of 8.6%. Iron and Madison Counties, however, are significantly higher than the state rate, at 12.2% and 13.6% respectively.

2020 Income & Poverty

	Median Household Income	% Below Poverty	% 65+ Below Poverty
Bollinger	\$ 45,140	15.7%	8.2%
Cape Girardeau	\$ 53,776	15.8%	8.9%
Iron	\$ 40,082	22.1%	12.2%
Madison	\$ 47,984	14.0%	13.6%
Perry	\$ 56,861	9.1%	5.2%
St. Francois	\$ 46,307	16.1%	8.9%
Ste. Genevieve	\$ 61,746	10.3%	6.5%
Missouri	\$ 57,290	13.0%	8.6%
US	\$ 64,994	12.8%	9.3%

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

3.2 Travel & Commuting

Data from the 2020 ACS indicates that residents of the Southeast Missouri region are extremely mobile and take advantage of a variety of transportation options. Vehicle ownership, commuter travel patterns, and means of transportation information is included in the charts below for each of the counties in the region.

In the region, almost all households have access to at least one vehicle. In all but Bollinger and Madison Counties, at least 98% of households have one or more vehicles available. In Madison County, 2.6% of households do not have access to any vehicles, and in Iron County, 4.1% of households do not.

Commuting patterns differ significantly from county to county. In Cape Girardeau County, which serves as an economic and employment hub in the region, 85.1% of all workers commute to job sites within the county. In Bollinger County, only 37.8% of all employed residents work in the county. St. Francois and Perry Counties also have strong employment bases and have nearly three-fourths of their residents work in their counties. Transit options are critical in areas that have low-income rates and fewer employment opportunities, to help residents access jobs in other parts of the region.

2020 Vehicle Availability By Household				
	Vehicle Available In Household			
	None	1	2	3+
Bollinger	4.1%	15.7%	35.3%	44.9%
Cape Girardeau	1.7%	18.9%	43.6%	35.7%
Iron	1.3%	14.1%	35.7%	48.8%
Madison	2.6%	11.5%	35.4%	50.5%
Perry	1.7%	13.1%	42.4%	42.8%
St. Francois	1.2%	11.1%	36.8%	51.0%
Ste. Genevieve	1.0%	12.1%	37.1%	49.7%

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

2020 Work Location

	In County of Residence	Outside County of Residence	Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)
Bollinger	37.8%	62.2%	33.9
Cape Girardeau	85.1%	14.9%	20.3
Iron	49.2%	50.8%	28.6
Madison	62.4%	37.6%	27.1
Perry	73.1%	26.9%	20.5
St. Francois	73.6%	26.4%	26.2
Ste. Genevieve	52.2%	47.8%	30.6

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

When looking at means of transportation to work, over 90% of residents in each of the seven counties commute via private automobiles, either driving alone or car pooling. In Bollinger County, 91% of residents commute to work in this manner, while in Perry County, 97% of residents use a private vehicle. The remaining five counties fall in between these two rates. After private vehicle use, the next most common means of accessing work is working from home. While the rates of residents working from home ranges from 1.5% to 4.7%, in all seven counties this is the most common method of commuting after private vehicles. The use of public transportation peaks at 0.9% with Madison County.

	2020 Means of Transportation to Work						
	Drove Alone	Car Pooled	Public Transportation (excluding taxi)	Walked	Bicycle	All Other	Worked From Home
Bollinger	76.0%	14.9%	0.6%	2.8%	0.0%	1.2%	4.5%
Cape Girardeau	80.6%	11.6%	0.3%	1.6%	0.1%	1.2%	4.7%
Iron	83.9%	11.2%	0.2%	0.9%	0.0%	1.2%	2.5%
Madison	77.8%	14.7%	0.9%	0.8%	0.0%	0.9%	4.9%
Perry	88.1%	9.0%	0.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.4%	1.5%
St. Francois	82.0%	10.9%	0.2%	1.5%	0.0%	1.2%	4.2%
Ste. Genevieve	84.0%	10.6%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%	0.9%	3.9%

Source: Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

4 Overview & Methodology

A list of stakeholders was compiled using the database of stakeholders from the 2018 plan, as well as elected officials. That list had been developed using contacts of past transit grant recipients obtained from the Missouri Department of Transportation. In addition, SEMO RPC identified interested persons, agencies, and organizations, including senior citizen centers and nutrition sites, county developmentally disabled boards, sheltered workshops, special learning centers, senior citizen organization, hospitals, independent living centers, nursing homes, local elected officials, transportation advisory committee members, veterans service representatives, public transit providers, private transit providers, private industry councils, and others who were associated with transit, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income clients.

First Meeting

The first meeting was held on May 16, 2023. Emails were sent to over 100 persons and agencies. A public notice was posted on the RPC website.

A total of 8 people attended the meeting. SEMO RPC staff provided a presentation on the transit planning process and had the group to review the 2018 list of the region's existing public transit-human services transportation services and provide any updates back to staff. Additionally, participants reviewed and updated the 2018 list of public transit-human services needs in the following areas:

- Funding issues
- Gaps in service
- Coordination issues
- Education and marketing

Needs Survey

To engage the public and service providers, SEMO RPC developed surveys to collect input on transit service needs and priorities in the region. Surveys included a customer survey, transportation provider survey, and non-transportation service provider survey. SEMO RPC

posted the customer survey online on the RPC website and also provided surveys at various locations, including city halls, courthouses, libraries, and senior centers.

SEMO RPC received 229 responses from customers, two responses from transit providers and zero responses from the non-transit providers of the region.

Copies of the customer survey, transportation provider survey, and non-transportation service provider survey may be found in Appendix B.

The needs identified in the first meeting were combined with the needs identified through surveys, and a complete list of needs was compiled.

Second Meeting

The second stakeholder meeting was held on July 27, 2023. A total of six stakeholders attended the meeting. At the meeting, the needs were reviewed to ensure the list was complete. The group then prioritized the list of needs and began developing strategies to address the needs. Needs were prioritized through consensus based on stakeholder knowledge and experiences and information provided by the RPC when requested. RPC staff and the stakeholders then reviewed the prioritization list and strategies from the high priority items that were identified in the previous plan.

RPC staff continued reviewing, consolidating, and clarifying the prioritization list of needs into a final list. SEMO RPC asked the stakeholders to review the draft list of needs and provide feedback; no comments were received, and the list was considered finalized.

Third Meeting

The third stakeholder meeting was held on August 24, 2023. A total of three participants identified strategies for addressing the identified needs. The resulting list of prioritized needs and strategies are located in Chapter 6.

Draft Plan

The draft of the plan was posted on the RPC website from August 25, 2023, until September 25, 2023, and comments were solicited from all stakeholders. No comments were received.

5 Service Assessment

Transit provider survey forms were sent to all identified public transit providers in the Southeast Missouri Region, either by email or by mail, to collect similar data from each. Multiple public, private, and not-for-profit agencies operate transportation services within the Region. The survey process did not include contracted transportation services used by public school districts, nor did it include churches which operate buses for the use of their congregations.

Agencies in the Southeast Missouri Region provide a variety of public transportation services to area residents. These agencies range from public transit providers to sheltered workshops and hospitals. Below is a brief description of the services provided by each transit provider. The description is based on information from completed transit provider surveys or from publicly available information.

Cape County Transit Authority: Cape County Transit Authority operates a public transit system which serves all of Cape Girardeau County. In addition to the general public, the Transit Authority serves the elderly and non-elderly (both disabled and non-disabled), low-income residents, youth and the general public. The Authority provides both fixed-route and demand-response services. It also provides contract demand-response transit service. Cape County Transit operates seven days a week, 52 weeks a year and is available 24 hours a day. Cape County Transit Authority operates 26 vans and three buses and had an approximately \$1.3 million operating budget in 2012.

Operating needs include mini-buses, wheelchair vans, new routes for the fixed bus route, and new bus shelters. Major transportation needs include extending the fixed bus route to all of Cape Girardeau County, additional mini-buses, additional wheelchair vans, and a new facility with a garage.

Community Counseling Center: The Community Counseling Center is a private, non-profit human service agency which serves clients from Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Perry and Ste. Genevieve Counties. The agency provides both fixed-route and demand-response service. The Counseling Center provides transit service Monday through Saturday, 52 weeks a year from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Counseling Center operates one seven-passenger van and seven 15-passenger vans with an annual average age of four years. The agency has an annual operating budget of approximately \$7.2 million.

Hoover Center–Senior Adult Programs: The Hoover Center, located on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University, operates the Senior Alive Adult Day Care Program which provides supportive programming during the daytime hours to well and frail senior adults aged 60 and older. The goals of the program are to increase independence and self-reliance, assist senior adults in remaining in their homes, prevent premature institutionalization, and increase resource accessibility. The Center provides transportation to and from the Center for residents of Cape Girardeau and transportation to various community locations including banks, city hall, grocery stores, and fitness classes.

The Senior Alive Adult Day Program provides transportation services beginning with early morning pick-up at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 3:30 p.m. with delivery to the senior's home within the Cape Girardeau city limits. The program operates Monday through Friday, year-round.

L.I.F.E., Inc.: L.I.F.E., Inc., is a private, non-profit human service agency which serves clients with disabilities in Madison, St. Francois and Ste. Genevieve Counties. The agency provides peer support, assistance in purchasing needed equipment, hiring and managing personal care attendants, and other professional services. L.I.F.E provides transportation services for the elderly non-disabled, elderly disabled and the non-elderly disabled. L.I.F.E. also coordinates rides with SMTS for clients. Transit service is provided regularly Monday through Friday, 51 weeks per year.

Madison County Council for Developmentally Disabled, Inc. (MCCDD): MCCDD, Inc., is a not-for-profit government entity which serves the needs of non-elderly disabled persons in Madison County. The agency provides transportation for individuals with disabilities to health care, shopping and other necessary services. MCCDD provides transportation services on Sunday, Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

My Camp, Inc.: My Camp, Inc., is a private, non-profit human service agency located in Uniontown, Missouri (Perry County), which serves non-elderly mentally/physically disabled persons. The camp provides a day program which allows older and younger adults with many types of developmental disabilities to be active in the community and socialize with their peers.

Activities include day trips, shopping, art activities, playing games, exercise and movies. The program is available to anyone with MR/DD diagnoses with service from the Sikeston Regional Care Center. My Camp operates a van route from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. and from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

New Bourbon Regional Port Authority: The New Bourbon Regional Port Authority is a non-profit subdivision of state government serving Ste. Genevieve and Perry Counties. The Port Authority owns and operates the Ste. Genevieve–Modoc Ferry which provides transportation over the Mississippi River between southeast Missouri and southern Illinois. The Ste. Genevieve–Modoc Ferry provides transportation for the general public. The Port Authority contracts with the Ste. Genevieve–Modoc Ferry Company for the daily operation of the ferry service.

The Ste. Genevieve–Modoc Ferry provides transit services from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. The ferry operates year-round except when river conditions make ferry operation unsafe or when the ferry is down for service. The Ste. Genevieve–Modoc ferry operates one tow boat and barge which are inspected annually by the United States Coast Guard.

Ozark Shuttle Service: Ozark Shuttle Service, headquartered in Farmington, provides shuttle service from Farmington to the Greyhound Bus Station and Lambert-St. Louis International Airport in St. Louis, with other stops along the way. The company, which has been in operation since 1989, also provides transportation for visitors from St. Louis to Missouri Department of Corrections facilities located in Farmington, Bonne Terre and Potosi.

Perry County Memorial Hospital: Perry County Memorial Hospital is a non-profit human service provider which also provides transportation. The hospital primarily serves residents of Perry County. Clients include elderly non-disabled, elderly disabled, non-elderly mentally or physically disabled, low-income, youth and the general public. The hospital provides demand-response and route-deviation transportation, as well as transportation for discharged patients as needed. Transportation is provided from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, 52 weeks per year. Peak volume is from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Perry County Sheltered Workshop: Perry County Sheltered Workshop, Inc. (PCSW) is a private not-for-profit agency which serves the needs of disabled persons in Perry County and serves an

average of 49 persons weekly. The agency provides transportation for individuals with disabilities to and from work. The van routes operate Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. PCSW also provides transportation to and from community events, shopping, and dining during community integration activities provided by Perry County Services, Inc.

RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program): RSVP is a private non-profit human service agency which has provided senior volunteer services since 1973. RSVP provides transportation services to various work stations for its senior volunteers, age 55 and older, in Cape Girardeau, New Madrid, Pemiscot and Scott Counties. Volunteers include non-disabled and disabled persons. The agency does not provide contract transit service, nor does it contract out its transportation services. Currently, RSVP does not coordinate with any other transit providers.

Southeast Missouri Transportation Service, Inc. (SMTS): SMTS is a private, non-profit transportation provider and public transit system which serves 21 counties in southeast Missouri. These include Bollinger, Carter, Crawford, Dent, Howell, Iron, Madison, New Madrid, Oregon, Pemiscot, Perry, Phelps, Reynolds, Ripley, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Shannon, Texas, Wayne and Washington Counties. For purposes of completing the transportation provider survey, SMTS provided information for the full 21-county area. SMTS counties in the Southeast Missouri Region represent 45%-50% of all totals.

SMTS provides transportation services to elderly non-disabled, elderly disabled, non-elderly mentally or physically disabled, low-income, youth, and the general public. SMTS provides both fixed-route and demand-response service and route deviation, and provides both fixed-route and demand-response contract transit service. The agency does not contract out any transportation services. Coordination activity includes a loaned vehicle to Cape County Transit, operating the Bluff Area Transit in Poplar Bluff, and participation in regional and statewide meetings with other transit providers. SMTS provides regular transit service seven days a week, 52 weeks per year. The service operates from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Southeast Missouri State University Shuttle Service: The SEMO shuttle service is a public transit system which serves the main University campus and other locations owned by the University. The shuttle service serves the general public, including elderly non-disabled, elderly disabled, non-elderly mentally or physically disabled, low-income, and youth. The University does not provide contract transit service, nor does it contract out any transportation services.

The shuttle service has stops shared by the Cape County Transit Authority fixed-route system. The shuttle service operates seven days a week, 35 weeks per year. Peak periods are from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.

Ste. Genevieve County Sheltered Workshop, Inc. (dba Ste. Genevieve Industries): Ste. Genevieve Industries is a private, non-profit transportation and human services provider that serves the City of Ste. Genevieve, all of Ste. Genevieve County, and the northern tip of Perry County. Ste. Genevieve Industries is a sheltered workshop with special conditions that are considered when addressing transportation needs for its employees.

All passengers are physically or mentally handicapped and special care is given to ensure that all clients are safely inside their place of residence before departing a stop. Drivers have to be aware of special needs for clients that have seizure disorders. On request from the guardian, clients are switched from one route to another to satisfy their transportation needs due to changes in the caregiver's schedule, often on short notice. Because of strict medication schedules for some clients, time frames on routes are adhered to as closely as possible. Work hours require all clients to be ready for production at 8:00 a.m. Ending work times vary by individual. Normal departure times are 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ste. Genevieve Industries provides transportation for elderly disabled and non-elderly physically or mentally disabled persons. The agency does not provide contract transit service, nor does it contract out any transportation services. Ste. Genevieve Industries provides regular transit service Monday through Friday, 52 weeks per year.

United Enterprises: United Enterprises is a non-profit sheltered workshop that provides services and employment to disabled individuals. United Enterprises offers transportation services for its disabled employees.

6 Transit Needs Assessment

A concerted effort was made to encourage public input in the planning process. Stakeholder meetings were held across the region to help facilitate public attendance and a non-transportation survey form was distributed to public service providers in the region. In addition to detailed information about the mission and services of each public service provider, respondents were asked to identify what they perceived to be transportation problems experienced by their clients and to identify “gaps” in transit services.

A customer survey form was used to collect information from public transit customers and the general public. This survey was available online and as hardcopies at various locations in the region. The staff of each provider was asked to encourage their customers to complete and return the survey.

The customer surveys were distributed through transportation providers, Division of Family Support offices, nutrition centers, East Missouri Action Agency offices and other service providers in all seven counties of the Region. To take full advantage of the information obtained through the customer survey process, and to better analyze the information, data from survey respondents was entered into a database. The results of all customer surveys are summarized below.

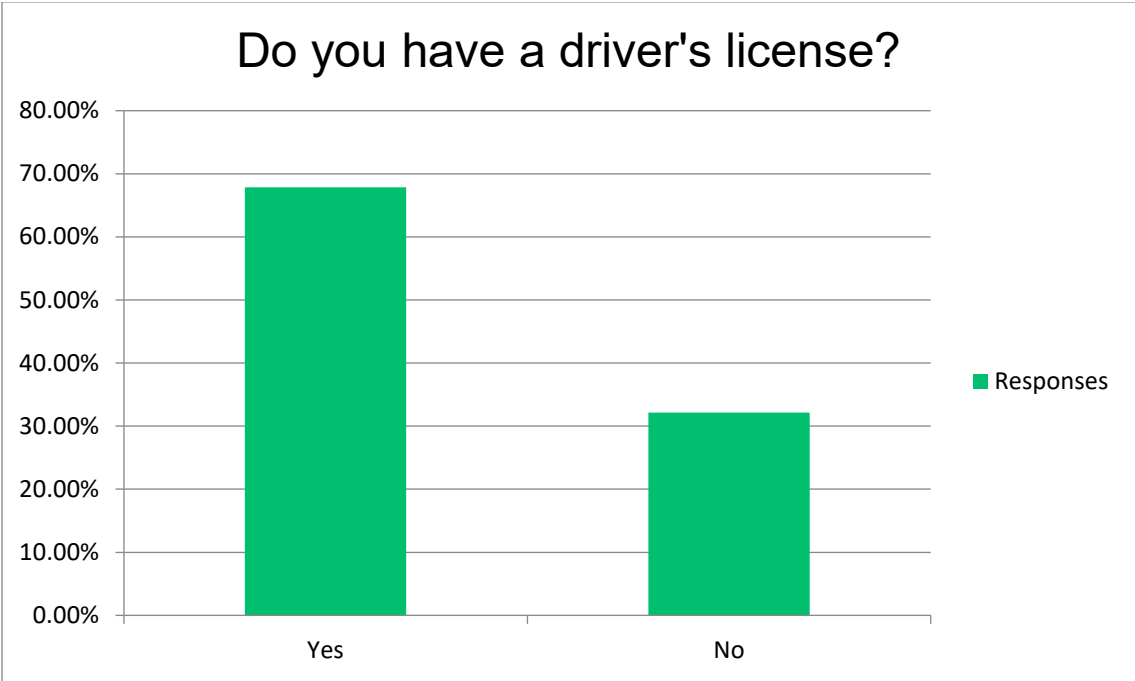
The customer survey found that 68% of respondents had a driver’s license and that 65% of respondents were able to drive. When describing their occupation, 41% of respondents were retired and 18% were homemakers.

Unlike the ACS data discussed above, nearly 30% of respondents indicated that they currently use public transit services for transportation, and 25% indicated that they use transportation provided by a service agency. (Note that the answers to this question total over 100% as respondents could select multiple options.) This significantly higher rate of transit use reported in the survey is likely due to the people most interested in completing the survey being those who use transit services. This does highlight the fact that while transit users make up a small percentage of the total population of the region, these services are very important for this group.

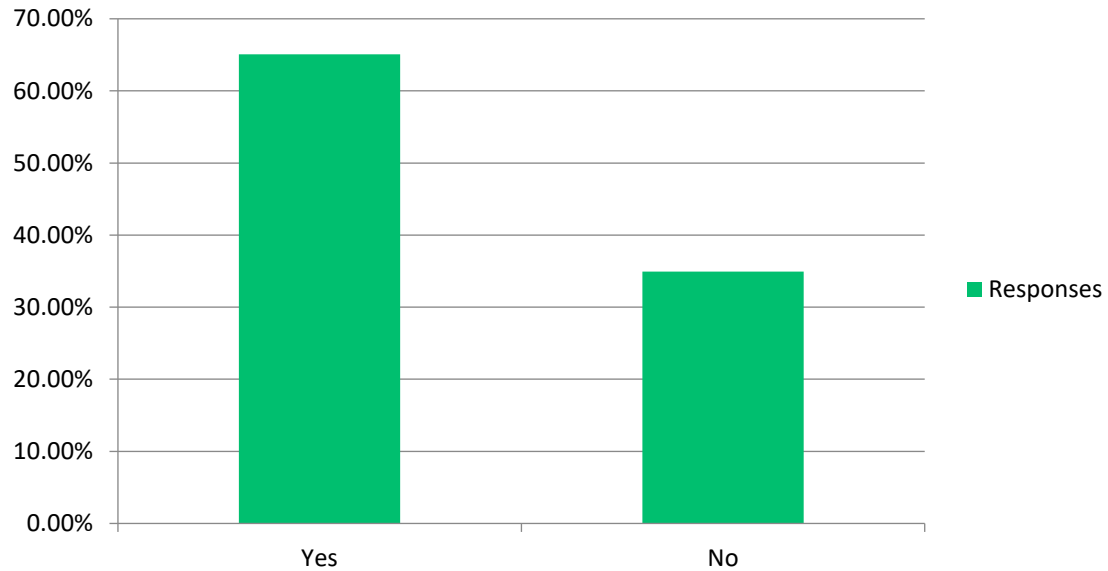
It has been experienced in other similar surveys that respondents can be confused as to exactly how to classify their means of transportation in the previous question. To address this potential confusion, the survey also simply asks respondents if they use public transit services. For this question, 43% of respondents indicated they do use public transit services.

Respondents were also asked for what reasons they use public transit services. The top three reasons were Doctor/Dentist/Therapist (61%), Other Medical Care (57%), and Shopping (41%). Child Care was selected by less than 1% of respondents, which is not surprising given that most respondents were senior citizens. One in five respondents indicated they use public transit to commute to work.

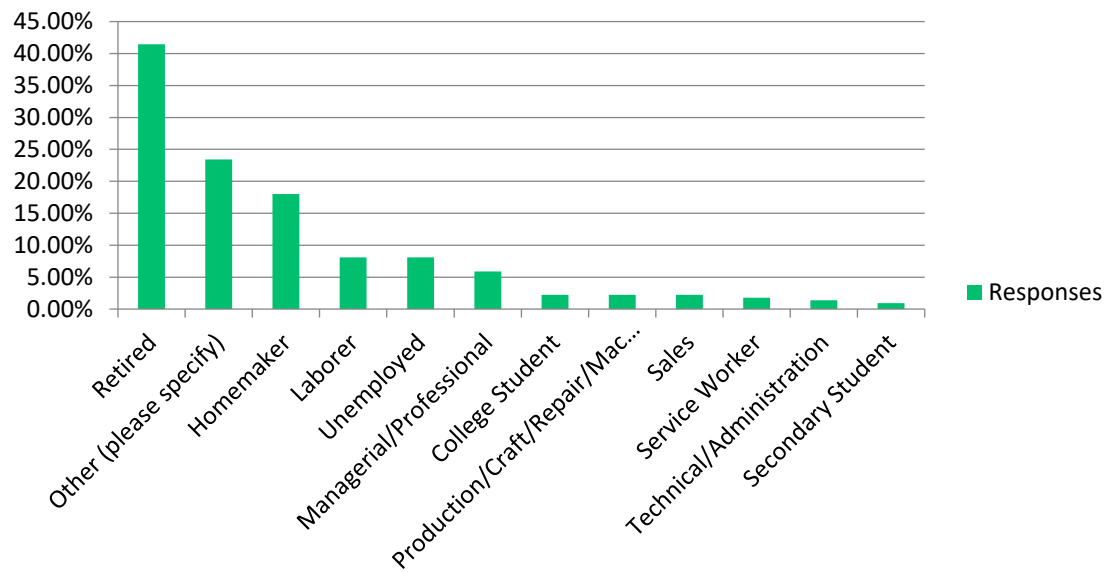
Respondents were also given a list of general changes that could be made to public transit and were asked to indicate how important each of those changes were to them. By far the most important change was a guaranteed ride home, followed by a stop close to home, increased weekend service, more flexibility in scheduling rides, and increased service hours. The least important changes were employers paying a part of the fee, and more attractive buses. The low importance of having employers pay a part of the fee can be attributed to the high amount of retirees and homemakers who responded to the survey. Of the listed changes, all five of the top five most important changes would require additional vehicles and drivers or additional hours of operation, all of which would require additional funding to implement.



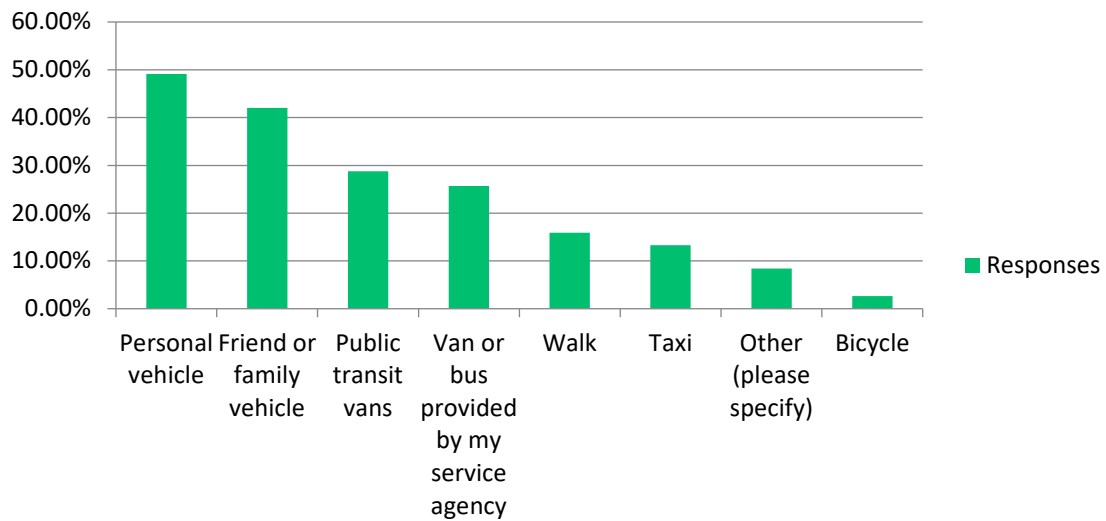
Are you able to drive?



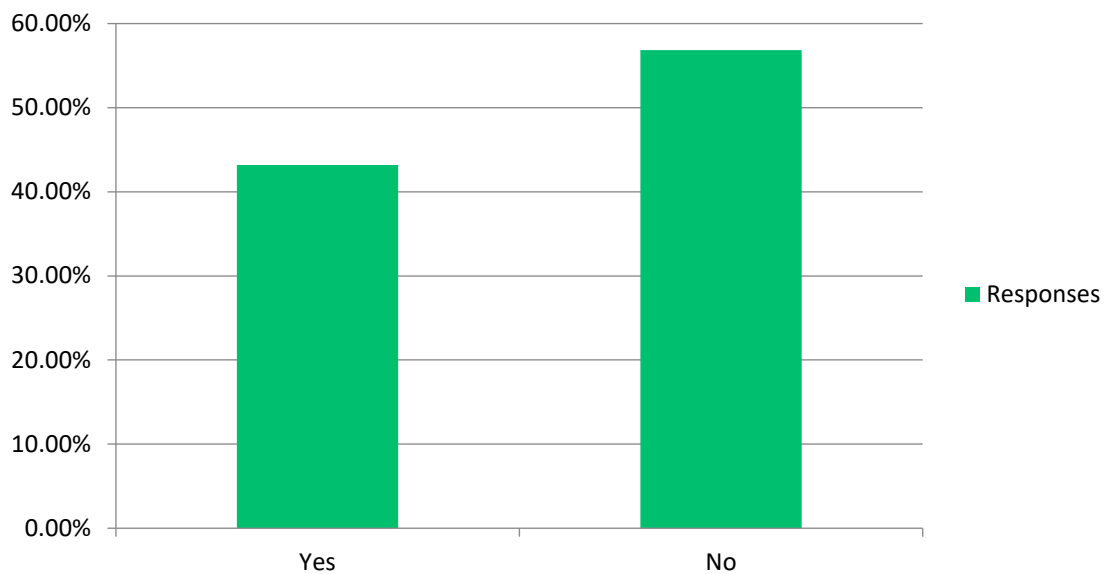
What is your Occupation?



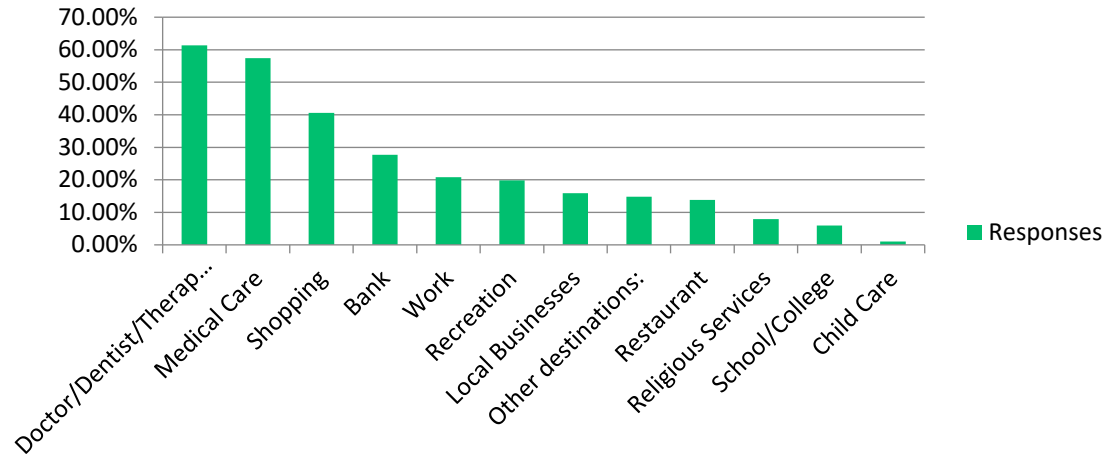
What means of transportation do you use at this time? Check all that apply



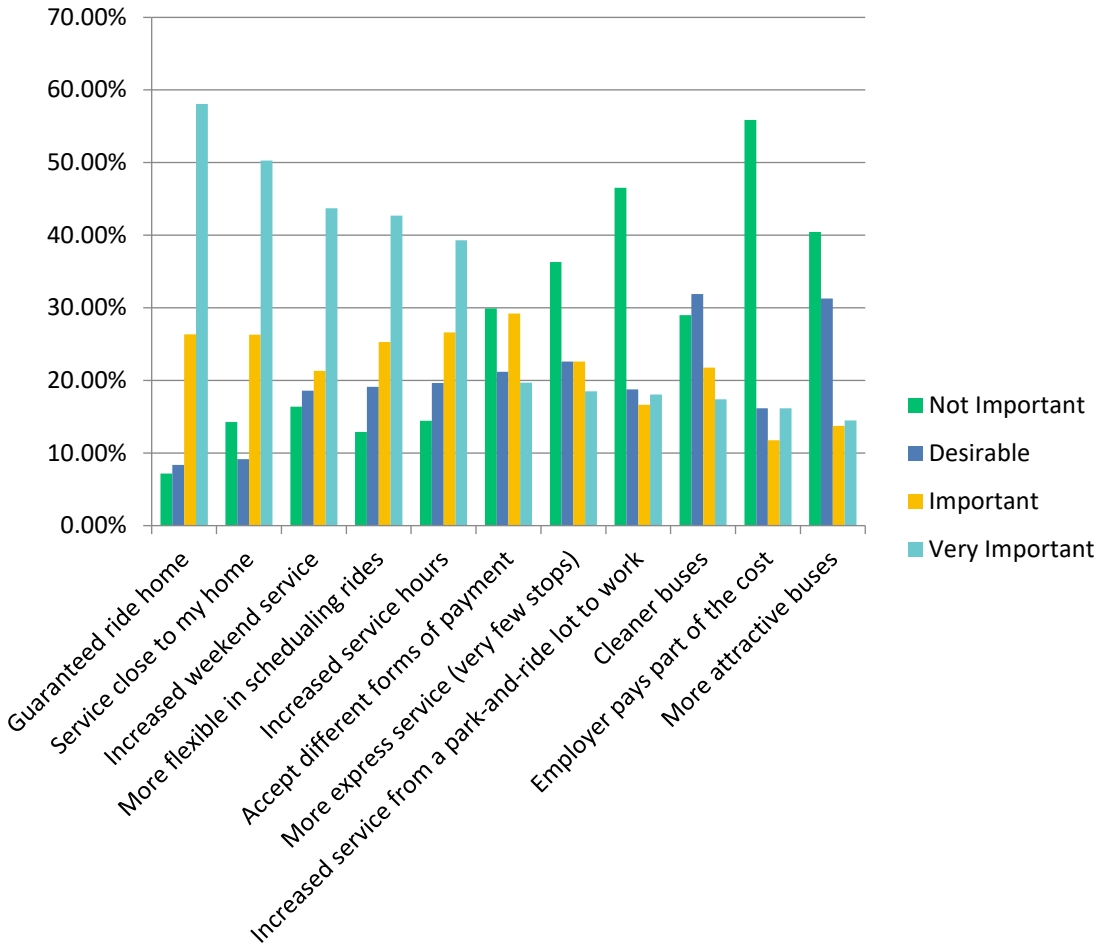
Do you use public transit services?



If you answered YES to Question 9, for what reasons do you use public transit services?



What changes could be made in public transit services that would allow you to use the service for the first time or to use the service more often?



7 Prioritized Needs & Strategies

Based on the stakeholder meetings, discussions with transit providers and non-transit human service providers, and input from surveys of public transit providers, non-transit human service providers, and public transit or human services customers, the following strategies and activities were identified and prioritized as High, Medium, or Low.

High Priority

- Explore options and seek the funding necessary to extend weekend general public transit service throughout the Region. Currently, there is limited public transportation available on weekends.
- Work to secure the funding necessary to provide additional public transportation services during evening hours.
- Explore options for providing expanded public transportation for non-entitled residents of the Region. Many communities in the Region have a need for taxi service.
- Work to secure additional funding to expand commute to work transportation for residents who work in other communities.
- Continue to seek funding to replace vehicles as they reach the end of their useful lifespan.
- Continue to seek the necessary funding to add additional vehicles to meet the needs of the public.
- Work to secure funding to provide additional handicapped equipped vehicles.
- Continue to seek funding to replace vehicles as they reach the end of their useful lifespan.
- Continue to seek the necessary funding to add additional vehicles to meet the needs of the public.
- Work to secure funding to provide additional handicapped equipped vehicles.
- Continue efforts to identify the needs of the public, especially target populations of individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited income.

Medium Priority

- Begin planning to accommodate a growing population of aging residents and an increased number of “baby boomers” with more demanding expectations.
- Consider the formation of a permanent partnership of transit and human service providers to coordinate regional transit planning and project development.
- Ensure that customer information and facilities are designed to accommodate those with disabilities.
- Explore sources of additional funding which can be used to provide additional public transit service to meet recreational needs (i.e., trips to other communities for concerts or other events and out-of-town day trips).
- Continue producing and updating schedules and information for customers.
- Promote inexpensive ways to alert the public (all ages, all populations) of transportation service availability.
- Coordinate with service providers to educate and familiarize potential new riders of service availability.
- Ensure that drivers are sensitive to the needs of those with disabilities—provide driver training.

Low Priority

- Work to better inform federal and state legislators about transit needs to encourage more substantial financial support.
- Consider establishing partnerships that can enter into joint venture grant applications.
- Inform organizations about funding opportunities, such as JARC and the New Freedom Program, and encourage organizations to apply for these programs to help fill gaps/needs in service.
- Improve efforts to disseminate information about available public transit services in the Region.
- Consider the development of a single website with current information about all transit provider services in the Region (type of service, days and hours of operation, pick-up points, etc.).

8 Correlation to State Long Range Transportation Plan

In developing its 2018 State Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Missouri Department of Transportation provided draft information for the proposed funding of all transportation needs. The complete LRTP was completed during the latter part of fiscal year 2018.

Multimodal Funded Needs

Multimodal refers to non - highway modes of transportation including transit, aviation, railroads and waterways. The majority of transportation revenue is constitutionally required to be spent on state roads and bridges, leaving limited funds to support these services and facilities. Unlike roads and bridges, the state does not own the multimodal facilities, but instead administers the funding and provides oversight for multimodal investments. Many of the multimodal entities receive local tax revenue and direct federal funding, which are not included in these amounts.

From 2018-2045, MoDOT anticipates administering annual investments for multimodal averaging \$106 million. The following chart illustrates the distribution of the total anticipated investments for each of the non-highway modes of transportation.

Exhibit

MoDOT administers transit programs that invest an average of \$27 million annually. Transit funds support operating costs and bus purchases for transit agencies across the state.

Missouri has dedicated state taxes on aviation fuel to fund improvements to public use airports.

MoDOT also administers federal aviation funding to improve airfield pavement conditions and lighting systems, to eliminate obstructions and for expansion projects. Aviation investments are expected to average \$47 million annually.

MoDOT administers rail programs averaging \$12 million per year. These funds are used to support two programs - the Amtrak passenger rail service between St. Louis and Kansas City,

and safety improvements at railroad crossings. The Amtrak funding is from Missouri's General Revenue Fund and safety improvements are funded from a combination of federal and state sources.

Waterways funding averages \$12 million annually and provides operating and capital assistance to Missouri's river ports and ferry boat operators. MoDOT also administers a \$1 million freight enhancement program that provides assistance to public, private or not-for-profit entities for non-highway capital projects that improve the efficient flow of freight in Missouri.

Multimodal Unfunded Needs

Missouri's four transportation goals were identified in the 2014 plan through extensive public input. These four goals have been confirmed in this 2018 public engagement process with the addition of a fifth, new goal.

- Take care of the transportation system and services we enjoy today
- Keep all travelers safe, no matter the mode of transportation
- Give Missourians better transportation choices
- Invest in projects that spur economic growth and create jobs
- Improve reliability and reduce congestion on Missouri's transportation system

Given the current funding resources, most of the anticipated revenue will address maintaining and preserving the existing system in the current condition. Working with planning partners and stakeholders across the state, these needs and projects have been categorized into groupings of unfunded, high-priority transportation needs.

Buckets Exhibit

Many Missourians depend on non-highway modes of transportation; however, the state currently invests very little money towards those needs. Multimodal investments can improve economic development, safety and provide improved mobility and access to opportunities for all Missourians and businesses. Missouri's transit systems, railroads, waterways, airports and bicycle/pedestrian facilities could begin seeing much needed improvements with an annual investment of \$80 million.

Multimodal Transportation

Transit and Intercity Bus

Public transportation are those shared passenger services that are used by the public as an alternative to driving, and in some cases, owning a personal vehicle. There are a variety of public transit methods in Missouri, including buses, vans, light rail and streetcars. Larger cities in Missouri offer the public a wider variety of public transit options with greater frequency. Smaller communities and rural areas in the state tend to rely more on less frequently scheduled trips or on-demand services that are scheduled in advance.

MoDOT's Transit Section provides financial and technical assistance to public transit and specialized mobility providers statewide. MoDOT administers state and federal programs related to public transportation and specific transit programs for agencies serving senior citizens and/or persons with disabilities.

Urban Transit

For funding purposes, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), classifies urban systems as those serving areas of 50,000 or more. In Missouri, there are nine urban areas with local transportation systems that include the following:

St. Joseph: "Go St. Joe" operates eight fixed routes within the city limits of St. Joseph, Missouri and Elwood, Kansas. Curb-to-curb route deviations are available on a scheduled or walk-on basis for all users, regardless of ability. Services are offered Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm and Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:10 pm. In 2022, annual ridership was 266,377 down from 414,098 in 2016.

Kansas City: The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) operates a variety of public transit options. The Metro (which has recently been rebranded RideKC) operates 68 bus routes with two bus rapid transit routes. In 2016, the ridership was 14.5 million trips and in 2022, ridership was 8,894,636. The KC Streetcar, a free service operated by the Kansas City Streetcar Authority, is a two-mile long route with 16 stops. In 2022, ridership for the KC Streetcar decreased from 1.4 million in 2016 to 1.3 million in 2022. Ride KC Freedom offers two types of services via minibuses or sedans, ADA paratransit and non-ADA demand response.

Joplin: The City of Joplin began operating a demand response transit system known as Metro Area Public Transit System (MAPS) in 1997. In late 2007, the Sunshine Lamp Trolley was added in response to increased service needs. The trolley operates on a deviated fixed route system. The Sunshine Lamp Trolley hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. Paratransit and limited mobility services are also offered through MAPS. Combined ridership of MAPS and the Sunshine Lamp Trolley was 134,784 in 2016 compared with 79,383 in 2022.

Springfield: City Utilities Transit operates bus service in Springfield. There are 12-day routes, seven Saturday and evening routes, and four Sunday and holiday routes. Service is offered from 6 am to 11:10 pm. City Utilities Transit also offers Access Express as an origin-to-destination service for certified riders who are unable to use the regular fixed route bus due to a disability or health condition. Riders must be pre-approved for this service. Combined ridership in 2016 was over 1.5 million for both fixed-route and paratransit service compared with 887,303 in 2022.

Columbia: Transit services in Columbia are offered through COMO Connect. Columbia has 7 bus routes that follow a fixed course and schedule. Operating hours are Monday through Friday from 6:25 a.m. to 6:40 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 6:40 p.m. There is no service on Sundays. COMO Connect has routes that service all four public high schools and students ride free. There is also the Tiger Line which is the University of Missouri at Columbia's free shuttle service and serves special routes for football games. This service provides over 880,000 annual trips. Paratransit is provided through scheduled origin to destination service for qualified individuals. Columbia Paratransit provides approximately 41,000 annual trips. Combined transit ridership was a little more than 1.3 million in 2016 compared with 525,816 in 2022.

St. Louis: Metro is the St. Louis transit service provider. MetroBus operates 59 routes on the Missouri side of the metropolitan area. Service is offered seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. MetroLink operates light rail service with two lines running parallel to one another. The blue MetroLink line operates between the Shrewsbury - Lansdowne I-44 and Forest Park - DeBaliviere stations in Missouri. The red MetroLink line operates between St. Louis Lambert Airport and Shiloh-Scott MetroLink Stations. Call-A-Ride provides on-demand, curb to curb services for those that qualify for paratransit. Annual transit ridership in urbanized St. Louis was approximately 37.9 million in 2016. In 2012, ridership was slightly higher at 40.4 million trips.

Jefferson City: The JEFFTRAN bus system in Jefferson City offers weekday fixed route services along with Handi-Wheels, an origin-to-destination transit service for special needs populations. From 6:40 am to 6:00 pm. JEFFTRAN operates six routes and three tripper routes. Handi-Wheels is a paratransit service which operates during regular business hours and is an origin to destination service offered anywhere within the city limits. Riders must apply based on disability or limited mobility. Based on the 2017 Update to the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization 2013-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Handi-Wheels reports 1,930 ADA qualified passengers with daily transport of as many as 300 riders. Transit ridership in Jefferson City was 253,895 in 2016 and slightly down to 250,535 in 2022.

Cape Girardeau: The Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority offers fixed bus route services Monday through Friday from 8:00 am. To 4:00 p.m. and closed on holidays. On-Demand Cab service hours are also offered Monday through Thursday from 5:00 a.m. to Midnight and from Friday at 5:00 a.m. until Sunday at 2:00 p.m. Transit ridership in Cape Girardeau was 110,877 in 2016 and slightly down to 90,086 in 2022.

Rural Transit

Missouri's nonurban areas, which include rural areas and small communities of less than 50,000 people, are served by numerous public transportation systems. OATS, Inc. serves 87 Missouri counties, including four Meramec counties, via demand-response service providing door-to-door transportation. OATS provided 824,591 trips in 2021.

Southeast Missouri Transportation Service (SMTS) provides Rural Public Transportation on a scheduled bases in 21 Missouri counties, including Crawford, Dent, Phelps, and Washington which are in the MRPC service area. door-to-door transportation to anyone in 20 Missouri counties, including four Meramec counties. In addition, there are 25 other city, county, and not-for-profit service providers plus two university systems within the SMTS service area.

Public transportation is available throughout the state but, depending on the county, service may be limited in days and hours of operation. State and local social service programs also offer transit services for riders with financial or physical needs. Assistance can include cash reimbursements, contracts with service providers or agency-operated transportation services. Services offered vary and include local buses, intercity bus services and paratransit. The rural transit program is instrumental in providing needed transportation to citizens across Missouri.

Without this service, many citizens would not have a ride to work, a medical appointment or to shop.

Intercity Bus

Intercity bus provides public transportation between smaller towns and communities as well as with larger urban areas that offer additional services. There are several intercity bus providers that operate in Missouri: Burlington Trailways, Greyhound, Jefferson Lines, OATS, and SMTS. OATS and SMTS serve 87 and 20 counties respectively.

Missouri has extensive public transportation coverage across the state through providers such as OATS. Founded in 1971, OATS is now one of the largest systems of its kind in the country. In 2021, 824,591 trips were provided. These private intercity bus companies help reduce congestion, pollution, and energy consumption throughout the state.

Public Transit

Less than 2% of Missourians use public transit for commuting compared to the national average of 5%. A well-functioning public transit system is vital to those segments of the population who do not have an automobile and rely on public transportation to get to work, school, shopping, or other locations. The latest ACS data for Missouri reported 6.6% of the households in the state have no automobile available.

After averaging 59.1 million transit passengers statewide in 2016, ridership in Missouri dropped to 30 million in 2022. Ridership fell by 50% in urban areas, which compose 95% of the total number of passenger trips. Transit trips with rural carriers dropped by almost 2%.

Interest in public transit across the entire state is likely to increase over the next 20 years. The increasing population in urbanized areas, added number of citizens over 65 years of age, and desire of younger travelers to have transportation options, are indicators that ridership gains are possible. Citizens in rural areas, particularly the increasing number of citizens over 65 years of age and those living at or below the poverty line, will have interest in expanded public transit availability.

9 Plan Approval, Adoption, & Implementation

The stakeholders were provided a draft of the 2023 Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan, and their suggestions were incorporated into the document. Once the document was accepted by MoDOT, the SEMO RPC Transportation Advisory Committee voted to officially adopt this plan as the region's local transit plan.

While the work of the TAC has primarily been related to roads and bridges, there has been a growing emphasis at the state level to include other modes of transportation, including public transit, in the need's identification and prioritization process. A recent statewide Investment Priorities process included other modes of transportation, including transit, ports, airports, and rail.

It is recommended that the public transit providers and referral agencies continue to be involved with local TACs and, in turn, regional planning commissions, to facilitate implementation.

Most recommended strategies in the coordination plan could benefit from a grassroots effort. The majority of residents are unaware of the issues facing public transit, such as limited schedules and funding and the lack of a coordinated effort between providers. Increased awareness begins with educating citizens, including the TAC members, on issues and encouraging their involvement in implementing strategies that will solve the problems.

The highest-priority need in the coordination plan – funding – is something that is facing all modes of transportation. Public transit strategies need to be presented along with road and bridge strategies, if it is to be considered part of Missouri's total transportation infrastructure.

10 Appendices