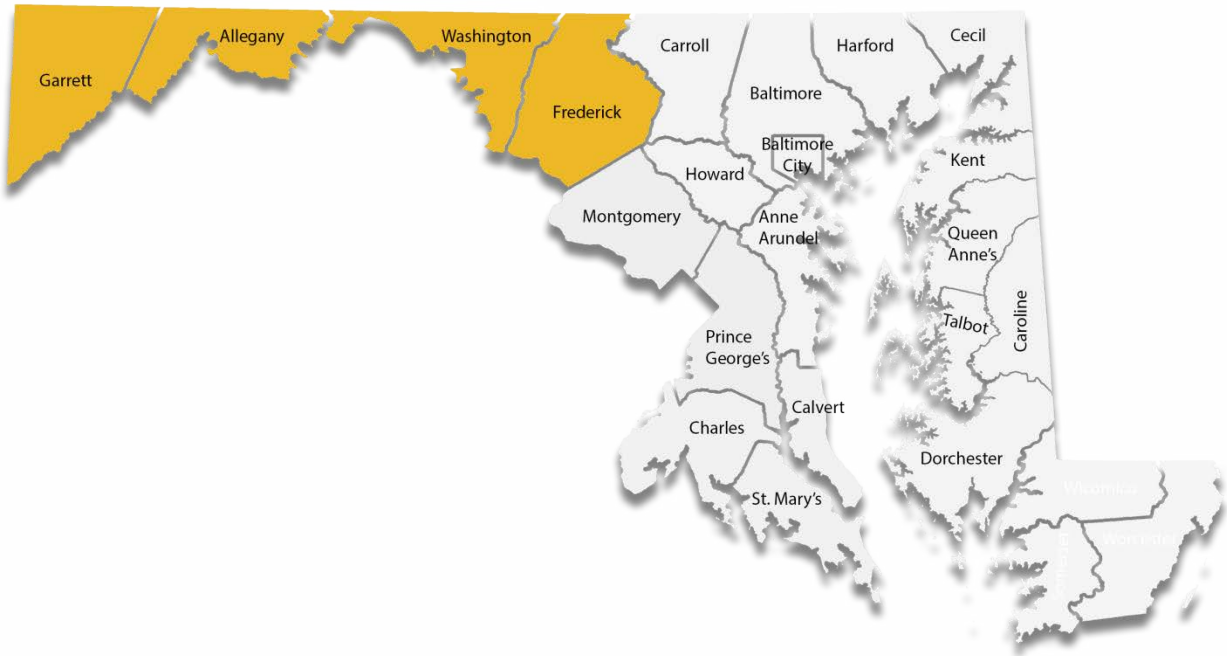# Maryland Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans

Western Maryland Region

Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington Counties

November 2019

Prepared for
Maryland Transit Administration

MDOT
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION
MARYLAND TRANSIT
ADMINISTRATION

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◆ G R O U P ◆

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The Tri-County Council for Western Maryland provided assistance throughout the development of this plan, particularly with workshop logistics and outreach efforts.

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Chapter 1: Background

Introduction

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act serves as the authorizing legislation for funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). One FTA grant program is the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program, better known as Section 5310. One of the requirements of the Section 5310 Program is that projects selected for funding must be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services `transportation plan."

In response to this requirement the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration's (MDOT MTA) Office of Local Transit Support (OLTS) that administers the state's public transit and human service funding programs, including the Section 5310 Program, led the update of regional Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans. This is the Coordinated Transportation Plan for Western Maryland that includes Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington Counties. This plan builds upon an initial version produced in 2007, and subsequently updated in 2010 and 2015. Future projects funded through the Section 5310 Program will be derived from this updated Coordinated Transportation Plan.

The coordinated transportation planning effort was not solely limited to the Section 5310 Program. As noted in the FTA guidance, while the plan is only required in communities seeking funding under the Section 5310 Program, a coordinated transportation plan should incorporate activities offered under other programs sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact. Therefore, this plan takes a broader approach

Plan Contents

Chapter 1 (this chapter) provides information on the Section 5310 Program and the planning requirements.

Chapter 2 discusses the outreach process and the involvement of regional stakeholders in the planning process.

Chapter 3 provides a review of recent plans and studies in the region that are relevant to the planning process.

Chapter 4 provides an assessment of the transportation needs in the region based on input from key stakeholders.

Chapter 5 provides an assessment of transportation needs in the region through a demographic analysis.

Chapter 6 provides an inventory of current transportation services in the region.

Chapter 7 presents strategies and potential projects to meet transportation needs as identified and prioritized by regional stakeholders.

Chapter 8 discusses proposed on-going arrangements in the region to continue the momentum from the planning process.

Chapter 9 provides the process for approval of this coordinated transportation plan.

Chapter 10 provides various resources referenced throughout this plan or helpful with efforts to improve mobility in the region.

and includes information on a variety of transportation services offered in the region. It also provides strategies and potential projects beyond those eligible for funding through the Section 5310 Program. Overall this Coordinated Transportation Plan is designed to serve as a blueprint for future discussions and efforts in the region to improve mobility, especially for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, people with lower incomes and young people with limited access to transportation.

Section 5310 Program

The Section 5310 Program 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. The program aims to improve mobility by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. In Maryland, MDOT MTA has been designated by the Governor to receive these funds, administer the program, and conduct a competitive application process.

The objectives of the Section 5310 Program in Maryland are to:

- Maximize the use of funds available to the State of Maryland;

- Distribute funds in an equitable and effective manner;

- Promote and encourage applications from a broad spectrum of interested agencies;

- Establish criteria for evaluating applications for program funds;

- Provide technical assistance to organizations through workshops and administrative assistance; and

- Coordinate Maryland's efforts to provide quality human services transportation services by working with appropriate Federal, State and local agencies, transit customers and transportation providers to develop a cooperative, coordinated, and human services transportation system.

Additional information on the Section 5310 Program is provided in the Resources Section of this plan.

Coordinated Transportation Planning Requirements

FTA guidance defines a coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan as one that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes; provides strategies for meeting those local needs; and prioritizes transportation services and projects for funding and implementation. There are four required plan elements:

(1) An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private and nonprofit).

(2) An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service.

(3) Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, and opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery.

(4) Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

Guidance from FTA on the coordinated transportation planning process is also included in the Resources Section.

Western Maryland Coordinated Public
Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

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Chapter 2: Outreach and Planning Process

Introduction

FTA guidance notes that states and communities may approach the development of a coordinated plan in different ways. This guidance also provides recommendations on the stakeholders, groups, and organizations that should be invited to participate in the coordinated planning process. MDOT MTA, in conjunction with regional planning agencies and the KFH Group, led a broad approach that incorporated the federal guidelines. This effort also built upon previous coordinated transportation planning activities to ensure the involvement of a diverse group of stakeholders in the planning process.

Regional Workshops

The primary outreach process for updating the regional coordinated transportation plans involved regional workshops that offered the opportunity to engage a variety of stakeholders, confirm transportation needs, and discuss potential strategies, projects, and services to improve regional mobility. With assistance from regional planning agencies, five workshops were scheduled across Maryland.

Recognizing that some stakeholders would have interest in multiple workshops, the marketing for the workshops was conducted through a statewide outreach effort that highlighted the workshop in the Western Maryland Shore and those in the other four regions. A statewide invitation list was developed that included various agencies and organizations familiar with transportation issues, especially in regard to older adults and people with disabilities. Collectively the invitation list was distributed to 625 stakeholders, who were also encouraged to share the invitation through their contact lists to help ensure an even broader outreach effort. In addition, press releases and flyers specific to each region were distributed to increase awareness of workshops.

Maryland Coordinated Transportation Planning Regions

Overall, the following stakeholder groups and organizations were included in outreach efforts:

- Transportation planning agencies
- Public transportation providers
- Private transportation providers
- Nonprofit transportation providers
- Past or current organizations funded under the Section 5310, JARC, and/or the New Freedom Programs
- Human service agencies funding, operating, and/or providing access to transportation services
- Existing and potential riders
- Advocacy organizations working on behalf of targeted populations
- Agencies that administer health, employment, or other support programs for targeted populations

- Nonprofit human service provider organizations that serve the targeted populations
- Job training and placement agencies
- Housing agencies
- Healthcare facilities
- Mental health agencies
- Economic development organizations
- Faith-based and community-based organizations
- Employers and representatives of the business community
- Local, state, and federal elected officials

Western Maryland Coordinated Transportation Planning Workshop

On August 13th, 2019, MDOT MTA, TCCWMD, and the KFH Group hosted a regional workshop to engage a variety of organizations at the local level that are aware of transportation issues, especially in regard to people with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes. The Western Maryland Coordinated Transportation Planning Workshop attracted 27 participants, including representatives from:

- Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission
- Allegany County Transit
- Arc of Frederick County
- Appalachian Crossroads
- Daybreak Adult Day Services
- Diakon Adult Day Services at Ravenwood
- Fredrick County Transit
- Friends Aware
- Garrett County Community Action Committee
- Garrett County Lighthouse, Inc
- Garrett Regional Medical Center
- Maryland Area Health Education Center West
- Office of Senator Chris Van Hollen
- Star Community, Inc
- The Arc of Washington County
- Tri County Council for Western Maryland

- Washington County Community Action Council
- Western MD Consortium
- Western Maryland Health System
- 2-1-1 MD

The workshop began with a discussion of the federal coordinated transportation planning requirements, the State's approach to meeting these requirements, and a review of the Section 5310 Program.

Workshop participants then broke into breakout groups to discuss unmet transportation needs in the region. Using the needs assessment included in the 2015 version of this plan, stakeholders updated transportation needs from a regional perspective to better reflect current conditions. Subsequently the revised needs assessment was discussed with the full group to allow for additional input. The results of the overall input process are reflected in the unmet transportation needs included in Chapter 4 of this plan. In their breakout groups workshop participants also discussed current transportation resources in the region, providing input on an inventory updated from the 2015 plan. They then provided important feedback and ideas on strategies and services to better assess current needs.

Workshop Follow-up

As a follow-up to the regional workshop, participants were provided a preliminary list of strategies based on the updated needs assessment. Through the use of a survey, participants were asked to prioritize the list of strategies that were discussed at the original workshop. Each person had the ability to rate each strategy as a high, medium, or low priority. The results of this survey are reflected in the potential strategies highlighted in Chapter 7 of this plan.

Maryland Coordinated Community Transportation Website

As in coordinated transportation planning efforts in 2010 and 2015, the outreach effort included the use of a "Maryland Coordinated Transportation Planning" website – http://www.kfhgroup.com/marylandcoordinatedplans/. This website included regional pages that provided access to previous Coordinated Transportation Plans for each of the five regions, highlighted the regional workshops, and were used for posting draft versions of the updated plans. The website also offered a "Feedback" page for stakeholders unable to attend a workshop through which they could provide their input on transportation needs and potentials improvements.

Chapter 3: Previous Plans and Studies

Introduction

As part of the overall needs assessment this section provides a review of recent plans in the region relating to transportation. A primary component of this review is transit development plans conducted for the LOTS in the region. This section also includes relevant information from other studies and plans on issues that impact transportation and mobility in the region.

Transit Development Plans

Allegany County

The most recent Allegany County Transit Development Plan (TDP) was completed in December, 2012, with an update scheduled for 2020. The TDP serves as guide to implementation of improvements to transit operations over the next five years. The plan based on the review of the current transportation services in the County, a needs analysis, and input of a local advisory committee, developed and analyzed a variety of alternatives. The plan is composed of two major components: a service plan and a capital plan. In addition, the plan addresses marketing and public information components.

The TDP details that Allegany County Transit (ACT) generally already provides a high level of coverage geographically. However, the plan notes that there are several potential areas for change in the service design, routes, and schedules that will help improve the service. The changes would promote greater connectivity by using through routes and timed transfers where appropriate, and by re-aligning existing services. In addition, the plan calls for greater use of marketing materials – schedules and system maps that make it easier to connect from one part of the County to another.

Initially, the service changes call for decreased funding levels, with the potential for expansion through later hours of service and increased frequency of service in the later years of the plan. The plan includes system improvements that are needed to support the development of the transit operations. These improvements include expanded marketing and promotional materials such as system maps located at key bus stops. Further, the plan recommends that in the future ACT should also provide appropriate passenger amenities, such as benches and shelters at all of the transfer locations.

Frederick County

A Frederick County Transit Development Plan (TDP) was completed in September, 2015. The recommended projects were derived through detailed evaluation of existing services, a comprehensive needs analysis including demographic data stakeholder input, an alternatives analysis, and feedback from TransIT Services of Frederick County staff.

One of the most significant features of the five-year plan is the recommendation to redesign the connector route network to increase on-time performance and adjust schedules for the convenience for riders. It notes that guidance from the MTA indicates that in the near-term funding is not likely to be available for service expansion due to the County's flat transit operating budget. As such, the plan calls for a mix of primarily cost-neutral improvements in the short-term and expansionary projects such as extended hours and increased frequency (30 minute headways) in later years. The plan suggests that TransIT Services of Frederick County begin with cost-neutral improvements, achieved by shifting resources within the network such as progressive route modifications and providing transit infrastructure improvements. It also notes that TransIT staff has mentioned that some unspent Federal Section 5307 funds that are typically carried over to the next year could be used for minor improvements.

Short, mid and long-term recommendations were offered in the service plan. These included:

Short-term Recommendations

- System-wide route adjustments
- Strengthen TransIT's role in City and County Planning
- Improved deviation policies and procedures
- Extended Transit Center Access/Hours of Operation
- Coordination with the Golden Mile Circulator
- East County Shuttle expansion
- Expanded hours/capacity on TransIT-plus
- Route 85 Shuttle redesign and expansion

Mid-term Recommendations

- Additional MTA Commuter Bus Service and Connections
- Redesign of the Route Network
- Increased Peak Service Days

Long-term Recommendations

- Increased Connector route frequency (30 minute headways)
- Implement peak hour service (15 minute headways)
- Implement Sunday service
- Extended evening hours
- Expanded service area

Garrett County

The Garrett County Transit Development Plan (TDP) is currently in a draft phase and will be completed later this year. The last plan was completed in 2013. The planning process included determining the transit needs of the community, analyzing existing transportation services and their ability to meet those needs, recommending both organizational and service initiatives aimed at improving service delivery, and meeting identified unmet needs over a five-year time frame. The

conceptual plan in the TDP provided selections and combinations from a menu of alternatives and options that were discussed with Garrett Transit Services (GTS) staff, MDOT MTA and a TDP Advisory Committee of local stakeholders.   The TDP takes into account both the need to improve services, while maintaining expenses near current funding levels, in addition to the need to expand services when funding opportunities become available.

Tentative proposed service improvements included expanded evening and weekend services. Additional considerations include automated scheduling and passenger call reminder modules to current software, expanded marketing efforts, and forming a Transit Advisory Committee.

Washington County

The 2019 Washington County Transit Development Plan (TDP) is currently in a draft final phase. The last plan was completed in 2010 and focused on transportation provided by County Commuter for the general public, minority, elderly, disabled, low-income, and school children populations in Washington County. The plan notes that for some residents, this service is their only link to work, shopping, health care facilities, and other necessary services. Also included in the TDP is an analysis of the above population segments in terms of Title VI environmental justice requirements and performance levels.

The TDP determined that on-time performance (which was voiced by riders and drivers and witnessed during field observations) is one of the major issues that the County faces. There are multiple remedies which may be applied after input from WCT staff, including:

- Interlining routes
- Changing the existing route alignment
- Modifying the existing schedule
- Adding a bus to the existing route

On-time performance can be attributed to increased traffic congestion, ridership growth and the extension of routes to serve new destinations. The previous TDP focused on restructuring the fixed route service to increase system efficiencies and the overall level of service.

County Comprehensive Plans

Allegany County

The Allegany County Comprehensive Plan includes the following elements: Housing, Transportation, Public Facilities, Mineral Resources, Sensitive Areas, Agricultural, Forestry and Non-Mineral Resources, Economic Development and Land Use. Each of these elements contains background study information, goals, objectives and recommendations. Citizens were given the opportunity to participate in the Plan development through various Public Meetings held throughout the process.

The plan notes that through numerous public meetings, research and data collection and discussions with people who have worked diligently to improve Allegany County, a picture of this area has more

clearly come into focus; the key theme of this portrait centers upon improved vitality, economic health and enhanced livability. This picture includes removal of blight and supporting infill development, economic development concentrated in or around existing municipalities, ecotourism resulting from new trail extensions and connectivity, preservation of sensitive and critical areas, investment and citizen pride in Allegany County.

The transportation section of the comprehensive plan includes the following goals:

- Encourage transportation infrastructure that enhances economic development.
- Support the development of trails and provide safe, convenient and efficient bicycle and pedestrian travel throughout the county.
- Provide an accessible, integrated and well-maintained multi-modal transportation network that provides for movement of people and goods in a safe and efficient manner.
- Coordinate land use and transportation plans in decision making to ensure that transportation facilities are compatible with planned development.
- Correct safety problems and provide for street and roadway continuity.
- Recognize and promote the economic benefit of transit-oriented development.
- Increase walkability on roadways in Allegany County.
- Improve flow of traffic patterns.
- Improve transportation networks specifically at gateways leading into communities.

Frederick County

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan sets out a vision of maintaining the distinct places of Frederick County in the context of the continuing transitions and challenges. It is organized by nine themes, one of which is "Providing Transportation Choices". This theme begins by emphasizing the need to provide for a balanced, multi-modal transportation system, departing "from previous County plans that focused solely on highways".

Transit carries a relatively low percentage of total trips in Frederick County, but the mode is growing in importance. In the community survey conducted as input to the Comprehensive Plan, resident respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the availability of public transportation (34 percent), and said that the improvement and expansion of transit options was urgently needed (51 percent). In addition to discussing local and regional transit, the Comprehensive Plan also notes the need to improve existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout Frederick County, a step that would complement parallel improvements to the transit network.

The Comprehensive Plan includes the following public transit related policies:

- Encourage mixed use transit-oriented development in growth areas
- Support expansion and improvement of local and regional multi-modal commuter options
- Support the development of rapid transit along the I-270 corridor
- Support the implementation of the goals of the 2007 TDP

It includes these action items:

- Update transit-friendly design standards for new development
- Incorporate TOD design guidelines into the zoning ordinance and development review
- Establish appropriate TOD development overlay zones
- Work with the MTA and Montgomery County to explore and coordinate scheduling improvements and stop options for MARC
- Study the feasibility of fixed, heavy rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit
- Conduct a detailed design/engineering study of the I-270 Transitway master plan alignment
- Identify locations and address specific needs for existing and future Park & Rides and intermodal transportation centers

Garrett County

In 2008, Garrett County conducted a Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted October 7, 2008. The Plan was created to serve as the policy guide and framework for future growth and development in Garrett County and defined long-term goals and objectives concerning land use, water resources, transportation, public facilities, economic development, housing, and environmental issues. The Planning Commission began their public engagement portion of the 2008 plan update in December 2016 with a Community Visioning Workshop. The update includes the Garrett County Tier Map.

The County's transportation goal is to "Plan and build a balanced, efficient transportation system to meet the mobility needs of residents and businesses and to support the County's growth as a vacation destination." The County's objectives to support this goal include:

- Promoting mobility for all by encouraging transit use.

- Providing accommodation for bicycle and walking as a means of local travel and for recreational purposes.

The Plan also highlighted other transportation concerns and priorities with the County:

- Given the importance of Lake-area tourism for the county's economy, safe and convenient access to the Lake area is a countywide priority. It is also in the County's economic interest to provide an adequate circulation network (including non-motorized transportation) within the Lake area to facilitate access to the area's growing number of commercial and recreational services.

- Sidewalks are generally nonexistent in the majority of the County. While US 219 has shoulders along most of its length, most other road rights-of-way are not wide enough to allow safe use of whatever narrow shoulders exist or the addition of sidewalks.

- The County should assess the future role for a transit shuttle as a service for visitors in the McHenry area, particularly during the busy summer and winter seasons (incorporating or building on the existing Wisp shuttle) as this type of shuttle could help to reduce congestion, as well as illegal parking.

- The County should continue to evaluate the broader role of GTS in providing mobility options for other areas of the County, particularly in light of future employment opportunities and the needs of older residents

Washington County

The Transportation Element of the Washington County Comprehensive Plan establishes goals and policies for maintenance and improvement of the County's transportation system. The plan update process began in January 2015 and had an 18-month feedback and review process.

The overall goals for the transportation system included in the plan are:

- Maintain and improve the quality of the transportation system.
- Increase the efficiency of the existing transportation system.
- Promote desirable social and economic impacts from the transportation system.
- Minimize the costs to improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system.
- Minimize undesirable impacts of the transportation system.

The plan discusses local general public services, including local bus operations through the County Commuter operations that serve the highest transit need areas. The plan also discusses commuter and inter-city services available to Washington County citizens that include park-and-ride facilities, commuter bus, inter-city bus, and commercial air. In addition it notes that Washington County citizens can access the AMTRAK/MARC rail line in Martinsburg, WV; Duffields, WV; Brunswick, MD and Frederick, MD.

The plan also discusses major human service providers in Washington County, including Washington County Commission on Aging, Washington County ARC, Goodwill Industries, Homewood Retirement, Reeder's Memorial Home, Western Maryland Hospital Center, and the Washington County Human Development Council. The plan notes in order to adequately serve projected demand for human service transportation, it is recommended that human transportation services be coordinated through a transportation entity or provider. It also states that where appropriate, general public services need to be aligned to provide access to frequently visited human service and governmental sites in an effort to allow ambulatory clients to rely more on general public transit services than paratransit services. Likewise where appropriate, human service transportation services should be made open to the general public for a fee in order to provide transportation services to those living in locations where none or little public transportation service exists.

The plan notes that the need for public transportation services in the rural-agricultural areas of Washington County is associated with both program and non-program human service transportation. Future demand for these types of services is projected to exceed current service levels. It states that meeting existing and future public transportation needs in these areas is a costly task, and encourages demand-response or paratransit approach. It notes that since 87 percent of the service in the rural-agricultural areas have a destination in the Urban Growth Area a single provider structure would probably be the most efficient means of delivering these services, and encourages the development of a service coordination agency. An update of the Washington County Comprehensive Plan is now underway.

Other Plans and Studies

Allegany County

Cumberland Urbanized Area Transportation Improvement Program Projects (FY2019-2022)

The Transportation Improvement Program is managed by the Cumberland Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO). CAMPO members approve and amend the Transportation Improvement Plan in order to be eligible to receive funding for the County's transportation projects. There are twenty-three highway elements and three transit elements identified in the FY 2019 -2022 Transportation Improvement Program Projects, including operating and capital assistance for transit services provided by Allegany County.

Frederick County

Through the most recent Frederick County TDP process the following recent plans and initiatives covering broader issues and planning efforts were identified.

Bikeways and Trails Plan (2018)

Originally prepared in 1999, the updated Bikeways & Trails Plan includes priorities for shared-use path corridors accommodating all ages and abilities and on-street facilities. Projects currently in the design/construction phase include the Ballenger Creek Trail, the Rock Creek/Carroll Creek Trail, and the East Street Path. New Design Road through Ballenger Creek is also slated for on-street facilities as resurfacing occurs. Recommendations include adoption of a complete streets policy, developing a prioritization system to assist in the nomination of new project starts in the County Capital Improvements Program and to form a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee.

Golden Mile Multimodal Access Enhancement Plan (2014)

The City of Frederick has several initiatives underway to revitalize a stretch of commercial strip development on Route 40 known as the Golden Mile. This includes the Multimodal Access Enhancement Plan conducted under the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Transportation Land Use Connections (TLC) program. The plan is exploring the use of right-hand turn/bus only lanes and identifying possible locations for bus stops, bus shelters, a passenger transfer center, and bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Currently five TransIT routes serve the shopping centers of the Golden Mile and the Frederick Towne Mall/Boscov's functions as a transfer point.

Garrett County

Garret County Community Health Improvement Plan (2012 – 2015)

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) launched a State Health Improvement Process (SHIP) in 2011 to define health priorities within the state and to improve the health of all Marylanders. Through this process, Maryland hopes to extend life expectancy, improve access to health care, reduce childhood obesity, and "move the needle" on other critical health goals.

Of these objectives defined by SHIP, Garrett County is comparable to or better than the state average in 31 of the 39 objectives. Garrett County ranks worse than the State in the following eight objectives:

- Objective 33 – Youth Tobacco Use
- Objective 25 – Heart Disease Mortality
- Objective 24 – Adult Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Rate
- Objective 32 – Adult Tobacco Use
- Objective 31 – Child/Adolescent Obesity
- Objective 36 – Adults without Health Insurance
- Objective 30 – Adult Overweight/Obesity
- Objective 1 – Life Expectancy

To help address these objectives, Garrett County needed to develop a local health improvement plan. The Garrett County Health Planning Council agreed to oversee this process. Many of the goals and objectives in this plan include transportation milestones, including promoting active lifestyles through increasing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transportation to non-emergency medical appointments, employment, and senior meal sites.

2014 Garrett County Department of Social Services Annual Report

This report noted that "Wheels to Work" was one of the agency's most successful work programs, allowing working customers to purchase or fix their used vehicles with low-cost loans. During FY'14, the program placed or repaired two vehicles. Wheels-to-Work is a partnership program between Garrett County Department of Social Services and Garrett County Community Action. The report notes that unfortunately funding for this program remains reduced for SFY15. The program continues to operate with money from the loan fund, which at this time is insufficient to cover the long-term continuation of the program.

Washington County

2014 Long Range Transportation Plan

The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO) is the federal and state designated regional transportation planning body for the urbanized areas in Berkeley and Jefferson Counties in West Virginia, Washington County, Maryland and a small portion of Franklin County, Pennsylvania. The HEPMPO coordinates the federally mandated transportation planning process in the Hagerstown-Martinsburg Urbanized Area, a designation resulting from the 1990, 2000 and 2010 Census.

The HEPMPO's mission is to provide a cooperative forum for regional collaboration, planning and public decision-making for short and long-term solutions that support mobility needs, economic development, environmental sensitivities, and multimodal connectivity for a safe, secure and efficient transportation system.

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a comprehensive examination of the future transportation needs within Washington County, Maryland, and Berkeley and Jefferson Counties, West Virginia. Following the 2010 Census, a new MPO was designated for Chambersburg Pennsylvania whose planning area includes all of Franklin County. As such, the HEPMPO entered an MOU with the newly formed Franklin County MPO (FCMPO) whereby the planning and programming needs for the HEPMPO's Pennsylvania urbanized area will be handled by the FCMPO. As a result, the small portion of Franklin County consisting of Antrim Township and the Borough of Greencastle, that is officially part of the HEPMPO's federally designated MPO urbanized area, was not included in this LRTP update process.

Chapter 4: Assessment of Transportation Needs

Introduction

FTA coordinated planning guidelines require an assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. FTA notes that this assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners, or on more sophisticated data collection efforts.

The transportation needs assessment for the Western Maryland region focuses on these population groups, and also involves a broader approach that builds upon previous coordinated planning efforts. The overall transportation needs assessment involved:

- A regional workshop discussed in Chapter 2 that provided a forum for stakeholders to discuss and update the transportation needs in the 2015 version of this plan.

- The review and documentation of transportation needs from other plans and studies, discussed in Chapter 3.

- An analysis of demographic data using current information from the U.S. Census, which will be detailed in the next chapter of this plan.

This section details the results from the overall transportation needs assessment based on input from stakeholders at the regional workshop and through a public comment process. Many transportation needs are regional in nature or are evident in each county, and therefore during the workshop the group as a whole discussed the unmet regional transportation needs from the 2015 version of this plan, refining and updating the previous list during their time together. Participants also broke into groups to update the transportation needs specific to the different counties in the region.

Regional Transportation Needs

Expand Transportation Services

Many of the needs that were identified during the coordinated planning process, specifically during the Western Maryland workshop, were associated with expanding or adding services to the current regional offerings. Many workshop attendees mentioned that important unserved populations included residents who were barely above the eligibility requirements for Medicaid, SSTAP, and other subsidized transportation programs. Garrett County stakeholders mentioned that many of their client's destinations were located outside of Maryland. These needs are listed below, along with some associated comments from regional stakeholders.

Additional transportation for employment	• Additional services should be considered in newly developing industrial areas • Transportation services should be provided for second and third shift jobs
Expanded weekend and evening services	• There are very limited options for services during evening and weekend hours • Older adults and individuals with disabilities need flexibility to meet their unique transportation needs
More services for people outside of the fixed-route service area	• In Allegany, Frederick, and Washington there are not enough services for people living in the outerlying areas of each
More transportation for long-distance medical trips	• Specifically for people who do not already qualify for Medicaid
Fleixble transportation services for dialysis treatment	• Specifically for those who do not qualify for Medicaid, there are very limited options for return trips from dialysis treatments.
Additional interstate and intercounty services	• For several jurisidictions, especially Garrett, many of the most important destinations are located out-of-county or out-of-state.

Expand Outreach and Marketing

Marketing is an important way to increase ridership and awareness on the local transit systems. Oftentimes, the general public is aware of the existence of transit services, but their knowledge does not include how these services could help them. Increasing marketing activities and travel trainer programs are an effective way to both market to and educate residents who are curious or unaware about the range of transportation options in the region. Identified needs involving marketing and outreach are listed below along with related stakeholder comments:

Expand marketing of existing transportation services and educate residents on their options	•Many residents are unaware of all the different services provided in the region
Expansion of travel trainer program	•Customers and their advocates may need travel training on how to use existing transportation services

Improve Coordination between Public Transit and Human Service Providers

Several workshop attendees mentioned that the long miles traveled by public transportation providers, especially for some medical trips, puts a large financial burden on the provider. Many attendees expressed that there is a need for coordination between providers on long distance medical trips to alleviate financial burden. In addition some human service agencies noted that their vehicles are not being used during mid-day hours, and were interested in exploring opportunities to coordinate with other organizations.

These needs are listed below:

Improved coordination between providers	•Specifically for long-distance medical trips that cross county and/or state lines •This could include creating exchange points between different service providers to complete the legs of a trip • Building upon current committees or forums, broader efforts to faciliate coordination between different human service transportation providers are needed
Coordinate technologies and exchange data	•It was revealed during the workshop that some transit providers use the same transit software •Linking data could increase the region's transit coordination

Receive Additional Funding

A need consistent throughout the region is additional funding. Many transit services, especially those open to the general public, struggle to find the funding needed to expand service or create new services. The funding related needs are listed below:

Find funding sources for transportation that is open to the general public	• SSTAP and Medicaid programs are well-funded, but there is a need for funding that can be used to create services for the general public.
Explore public-private partnerships	• Public-private partnerships can provide funding that otherwise would not have been available • Analyzing partnerships in other regions could inform best practices for theses types of funding arrangements

Capital Improvements

Acquiring new vehicles that are more effective on rough terrain and are equipped with ADA compliant features is vital to the region. These needs are listed below:

Acquire vehicles that operate on difficult terrain	• This need is especially prevalent in Allegany and Garret County • Four-wheel-drive and snow chains were mentioned as needed features
Additional wheelchair accessible vehicles	• These vehicles would serve as an improvement to ADA compliance in the region

Allegany and Garrett County Transportation Needs

Allegany and Garrett County, the regions westernmost counties, have transportation needs unique to their jurisdictions. With more mountainous terrain and lower densities than Frederick and Washington County, many of their needs involve alleviating the costs associated with long-distance demand response trips. The needs for Allegany and Garrett County are listed below:

Expanded options for long-distance medical trips	• Many major medical destinations in these counties are located outside of the region (Baltimore) or outside of the state (Morgantown, WV)
Creation of a subsidy program for veterans	• This need is especially prevalent in Garrett County • Veterans Administration facilities are located very far from Garrett County, and some veterans don't qualify for other subsidized services
Mobility management services between providers	• Better coordination between trips could help transit providers coordinate between each other
Explore capital funding options for vehicles better suited for the terrain	• Four-wheel-drive vehicles and snow chains are especially needed
Create call center to improve community awareness	• A regional call-center could help direct and educate people about the different transportation services that they may qualify for
Additional operational funding opportunities	• Cost per trip is very high in the region due to the long distances demand-response vehicles must travel • Finding additional funding sources could allow transportation providers to operate at a higher level
Expanded transportation to local medical facilities	• Specifically for people who are not eligible for Medicaid-funded transportation services

Expanded seasonal transit options	• Employment transportation for people who work at Wisp, Deep Creek Lake, and Rocky Gap Resort • This need could be served by employers
Additional transit options in the outlying areas of Allegany County	• While the Cumberland area has fixed route service, outlying regions have far more limited transportation options. • There are new housing developments outside of the fixed route service area that are currently unserved
Assess the commuter population's needs	• There are currently no current services for commuter populations in either county • An assessment of these populations' commuting habits could provide valuable insight about the need for these services

Frederick County Transportation Needs

Frederick County is the most populous county in the region, and has the most transit options due to its inclusion in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area. Many of Frederick County's needs involve improving communication between agencies and developing new methods to better reach the outlying rural areas of the county. These needs are listed below:

Improved interagency communication and stakeholder identification	• Improving communication between TransIT and other local providers can help better utilize the variety of services in Frederick County • Stakeholders need to be more effectively identified to provide specialized services
Additional transit options in rural areas	• The City of Frederick has many transportation options, but there are not many services that effectively address the transportation needs of rural areas in the county.
Assessment of alternate transportation options	• This could include assessing the viability of a partnership with a technology company (i.e. Uber, Lyft, Via)
Additional transportation options for out-of-county destinations	• Baltimore and Washington, DC are frequent destinations for transportation users. • There is a lack of specialized transportation to these areas
Additional transit opportunities for shopping and social trips	• This includes providing more services that link together and allow for transfers and "trip-chaining"
Expanded volunteer programs	• These can be helpful in meeting demand for trips that cannot be effectively provided using public transit. • Finding additional funding sources could allow transportation providers to operate at a higher level.

Support for families with children and a growing elderly population	• Lower income families are looking outside the County for affordable housing. Families lack quality childcare. • Elderly persons need transportation, access to medical providers and treatment for substance use disorder.
Responding to substance use disorder	• Transportation issues are preventing access to treatment. • There is a lack of medical and mental health services for persons with SUD.

Washington County Transportation Needs

During the regional workshop, Washington County's needs were discussed. Most transportation services in the county operate in and around Hagerstown, so many of the needs involve providing transportation services to more remote areas outside of Hagerstown's urbanized area.

More wheelchair-accessible vans	• Additional access to existing fleet of accessible vans
Expanded transit availability to access employment opportunities	• Specifically on-demand services on evenings, weekends, and holidays.
Brokerage of federal/state funded projects	• Between human service providers, increase communication could help improve coordination
Additional administrative funding to support expanded operations	• Recent DDA mandate for in-community service has made administrative dollars inflexible
Additional transit options in the outlying areas of the county	• There are many transit needs outside of the current WCT service area, including Hancock, Boonsboro, and other outlying areas.
Additional marketing	• There is limited marketing in the region, especially outside of WCT's service area
Additional funding program for those who do not qualify for specific program funding	• For long-distance transportation, these riders are underserved and could use subsidies.
Additional transit services in the evenings for all trip purposes	• WCT currently closes services at 9pm • There may be a need for extended service hours
Additional transit availability for the Hopewell Road Area	• Several new distribution centers have opened there • There is a need for weekend services
Additional transit availability for dialysis trips	• Funding may be hard to come by • Services especially needed for return trip

Chapter 5: Demographic Analysis

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes historical, present, and future population characteristics in Western Maryland while performing a demographic analysis provides an analysis of future population trends in Western Maryland, as well as an analysis of the region's demographics to identify transit dependent populations. This analysis is coupled with the input from regional stakeholders documented in the preceding chapter to provide a broad transportation needs assessment. This assessment can then be used to develop strategies, projects, and services to meet identified needs and expand mobility and to generate recommendations to improve coordination within the region.

POPULATION ANALYSIS

This section examines the current population and population density within Western Maryland, and provides future population projections for the region.

Population

The 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year estimates report that Allegany County had a population of 72,591, Frederick County had a population of 246,105, Garrett County had a population of 29,516, and Washington County had a population of 149,546. Frederick County's population has increased the most since the 2010 Census. Washington County experienced a smaller population increase, while both Allegany and Garrett saw small decreases in population since the 2010 Census. Overall, the entire region has consistently grown in population since 1990.

Table 5-1: Historical Populations

County	1990	2000	2010	2017
Allegany County	74,946	74,930	75,087	72,591
Frederick County	150,208	195,277	233,385	246,105
Garrett County	28,138	29,846	30,097	29,516
Washington County	121,393	131,923	147,430	149,546
Total - Western Maryland Region	374,685	431,976	485,999	497,758

Population Density

One of the most important factors in determining the type and level of transportation services in an area is population density. Block groups with higher population density include those in Cumberland, Frederick, and Hagerstown. The population density for the entire region can be seen in Figure 5-1.

Figure 5-1: Population Density by Block Group
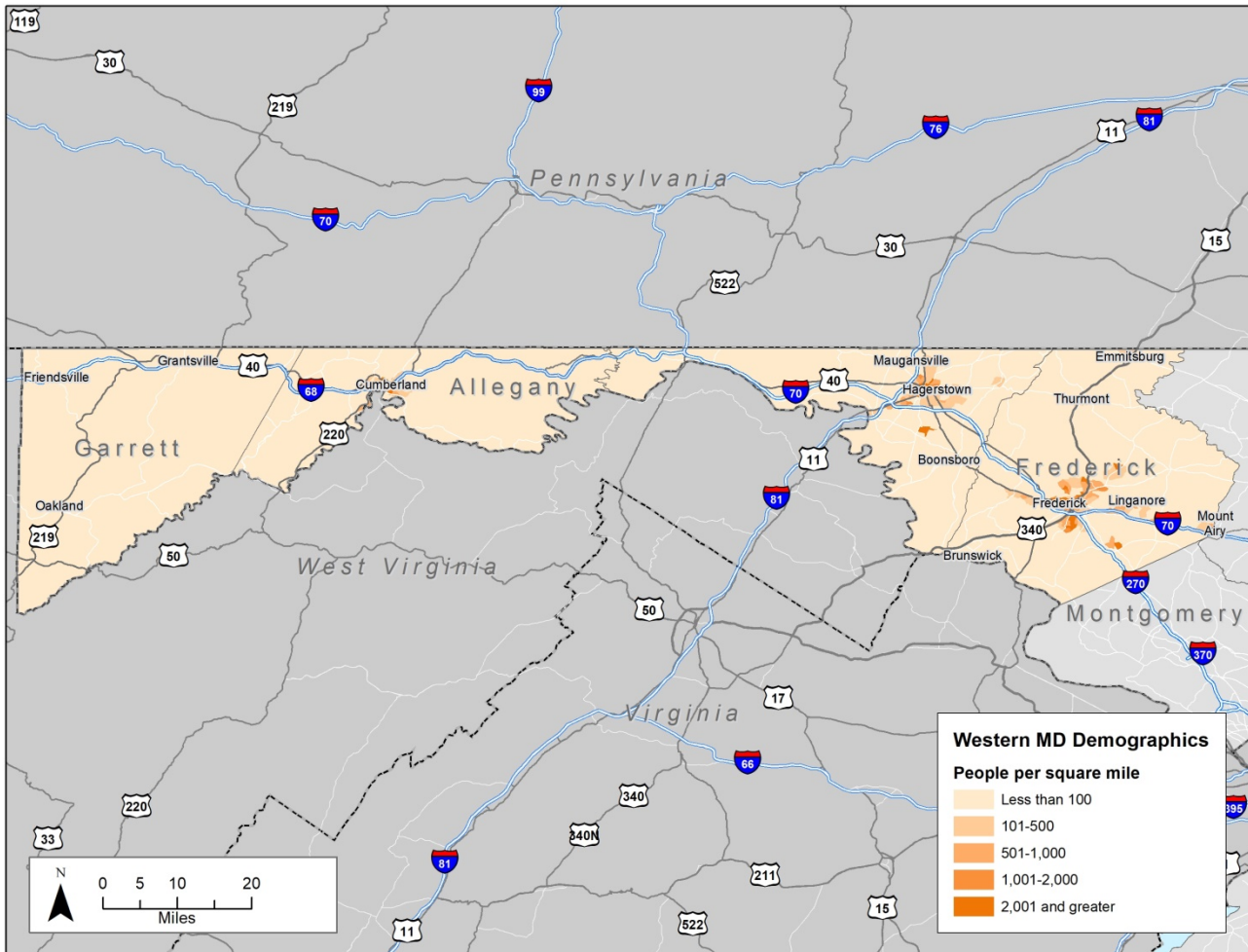
Source: United States Census Bureau

Population Forecasts

Future population forecasts for the region anticipate moderate population growth through 2045. However, this growth is not similarly distributed throughout each jurisdiction. Frederick County is projected to make up for the largest amount of growth within the region, likely due to its relative proximity to Washington, DC. Washington County is also projected to grow, though at a lower rate than Frederick. Allegany and Garrett Counties are not anticipated to experience any significant population increase or decrease through 2045.

Table 5-2: Population Forecasts

County	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Allegany County	75,087	72,650	74,150	74,900	75,650	75,900	76,050	76,200
Frederick County	233,385	245,600	260,800	288,700	303,600	319,350	332,150	344,150
Garrett County	30,097	29,600	30,300	30,900	31,250	31,400	31,450	31,500
Washington County	147,430	150,000	156,800	166,450	175,400	183,100	189,950	197,050
Total - Western Maryland Region	485,999	497,850	522,050	560,950	585,900	609,750	629,600	648,900

Figure 5-2: Western Maryland Population Projections
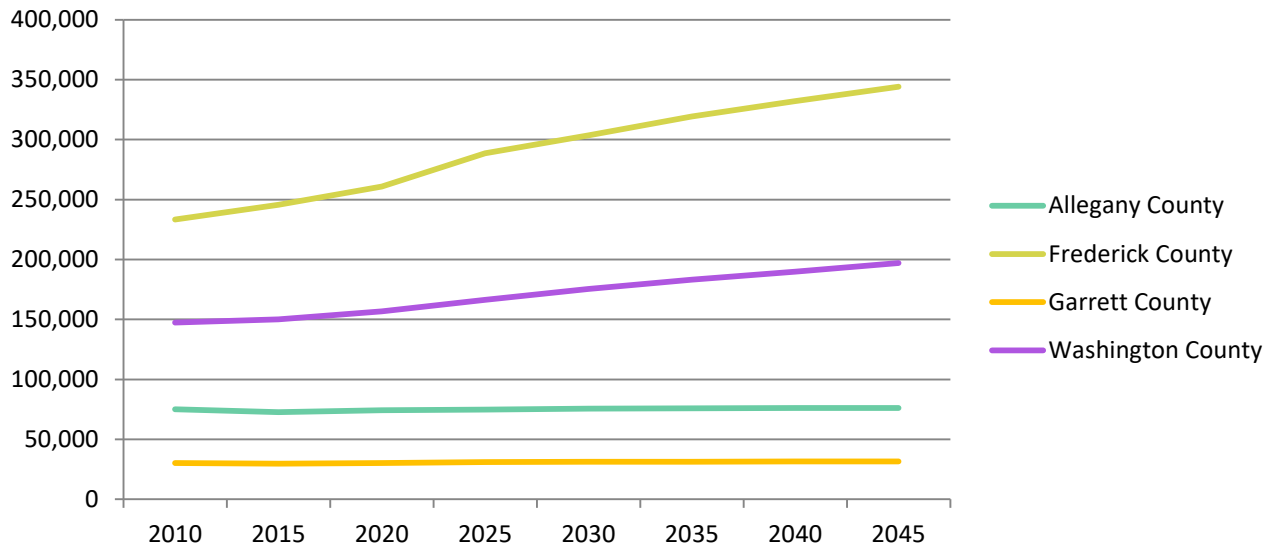
DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Public transportation needs are defined in part by identifying the location and relative size of populations that are more likely to depend on public transportation. The demographic analysis focuses on the following groups to understand where transit is most needed within the region:

- Autoless Households
- Disabled population
- Older adult (65+) population
- Youth (10-17) population
- Below poverty population

For the purpose of developing a relative process of ranking socioeconomic need, block groups are classified relative to the service area as a whole using a five-tiered scale of "very low" to "very high." A block group classified as "very low" can still have a significant number of potentially transit dependent persons; as "very low" means below the service area's average. At the other end of the spectrum, "very high" means greater than twice the service area's average. The exact specifications for each score are summarized below in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3: Relative Ranking Definitions for Transit Dependent Populations

Amount of Vulnerable Persons or Households	Score
Less than and equal to the service area's average	Very Low
Above the average and up to 1.33 times the average	Low
Above 1.33 times the average and up to 1.67 times the average	Moderate
Above 1.67 times the average and up to two times the average	High
Above two times the average	Very High

Transit Dependence Index

The Transit Dependence Index (TDI) is an aggregate measure of transportation need that uses the six transit dependent population groups outlined above to create a more comprehensive assessment of transit need in an area.

To calculate the TDI, individual block groups were ranked by the percentage of each transit dependent population using the ranking system outlined above. The respective rankings were combined and then multiplied by a population density factor. Then, the average is taken, and the TDI is ranked from "very low" to "very high".

Figure 5-3 displays the TDI for each block group in the region. Areas with "very high" transit demand are located in Cumberland, Frederick, and Hagerstown.

Figure 5-3: TDI by Block Group
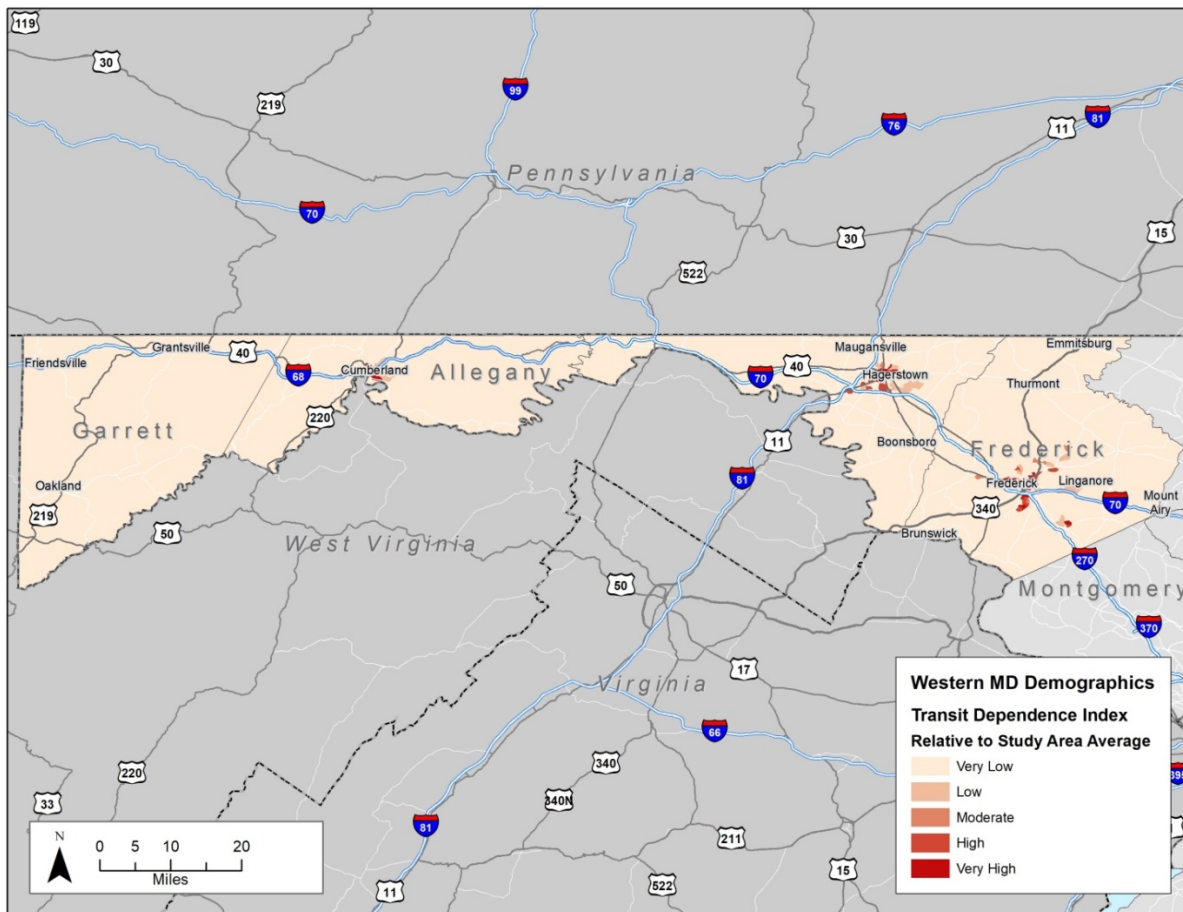
Transit Dependence Index Percentage

The Transit Dependence Index Percentage (TDIP) provides a complementary analysis to the TDI measure. The analysis is similar to the TDI, but does not include a population density factor. By removing the population density factor, the TDIP measures percentage rather than amount of vulnerability, showing areas where transit dependent populations take up a larger share of a block group's population.

As seen in Figure 5-4, the areas with the higher percentages of transit dependent persons are located in southern Frederick County, Cumberland, Frederick, and Hagerstown.

Figure 5-4: TDIP by Block Group
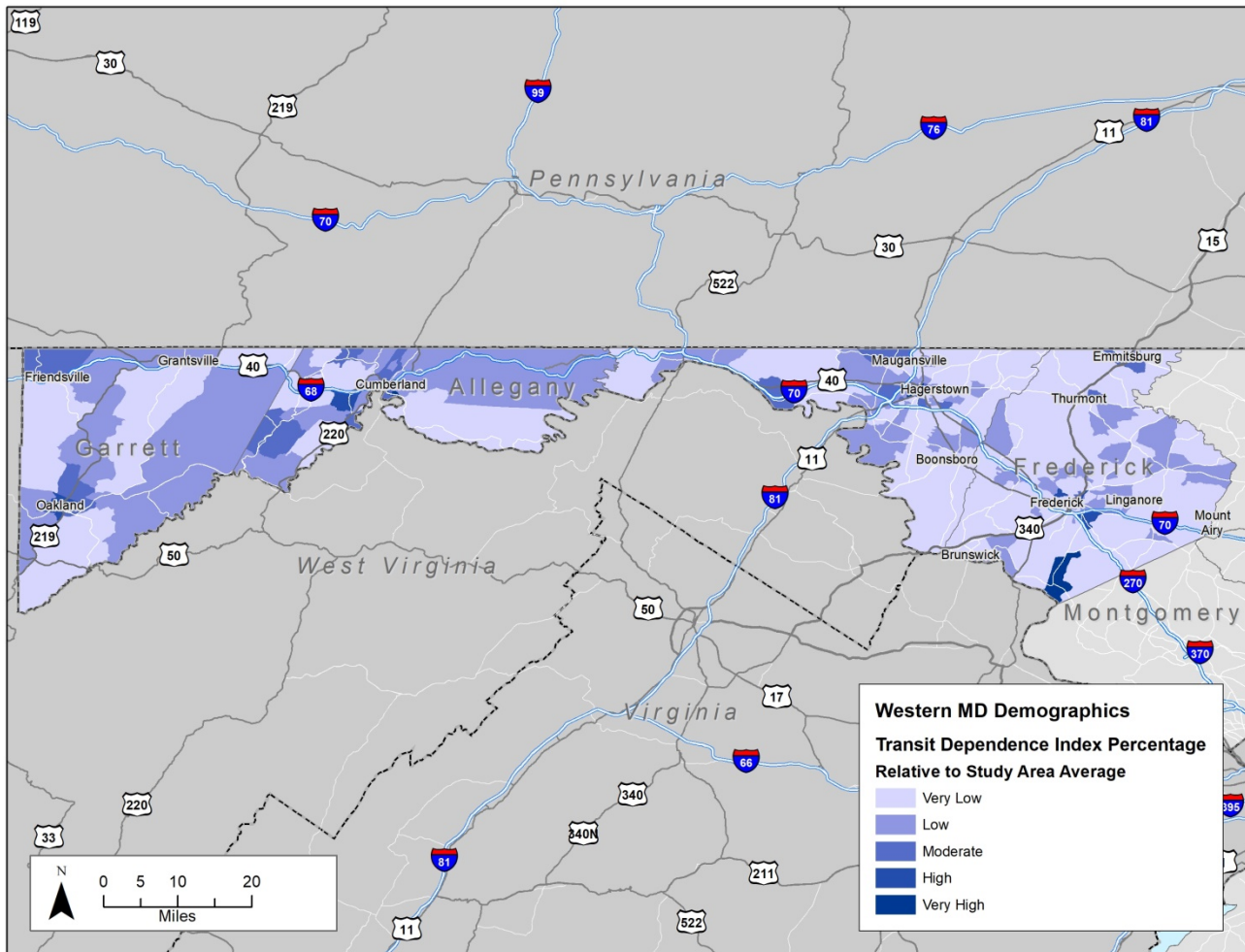
Autoless Households

Households without at least one personal vehicle are more likely to depend on the mobility offered by public transit than those households with access to a car. In Western Maryland, much of the land use is often not conducive to biking and walking, especially outside of the urbanized areas. Figure 5-5 displays the relative number of autoless households in the region. The block groups with the highest percentages of autoless households are found west of Cumberland, southern Frederick County, Frederick, Hagerstown, and Oakland.

Figure 5-5: Relative Density of Autoless Households
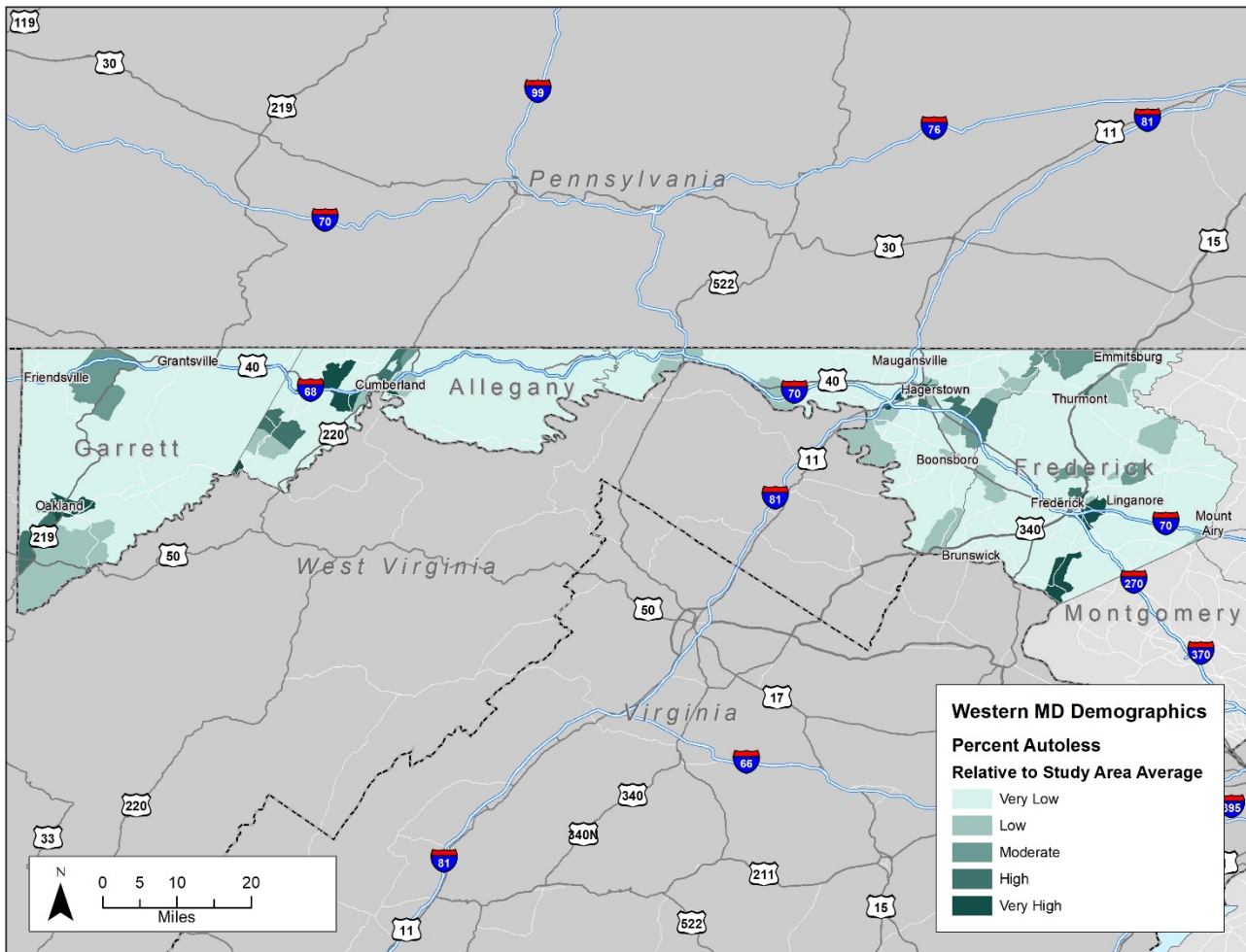
Disabled Population

Individuals with disabilities sometimes rely partially or totally on public transportation due to their circumstances. As a result, individuals with disabilities are a vital group for public transportation providers to serve. Figure 5-6 shows the region's block groups by percentage of disabled individuals. The block groups with the largest percentages are found in southern Frederick County, Hagerstown, and Oakland.

Figure 5-6: Individuals with Disabilities by Block Group
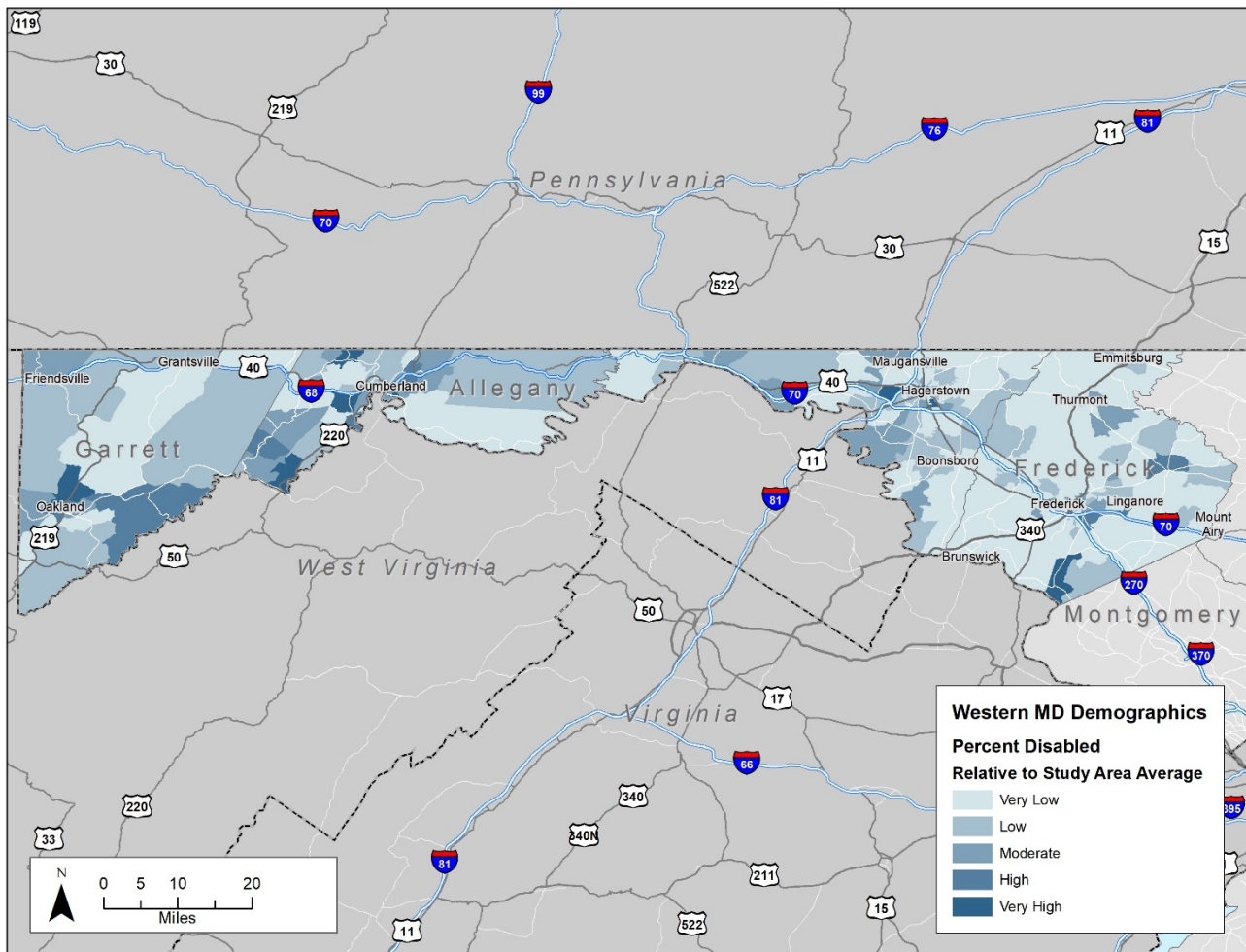
Older Adult (65+) Populations

Individuals 65 years and older may scale back their use of personal vehicles as they age leading to a greater reliance on public transportation compared to those in other age brackets. Older adults often make up a large amount of demand-response ridership for transit providers. Older adults represent an above average percentage of many regional block groups, especially in Allegany and Garrett. Figure 5-7 shows the relative number of senior adults in the region.

Figure 5-7: Older Adults by Block Group
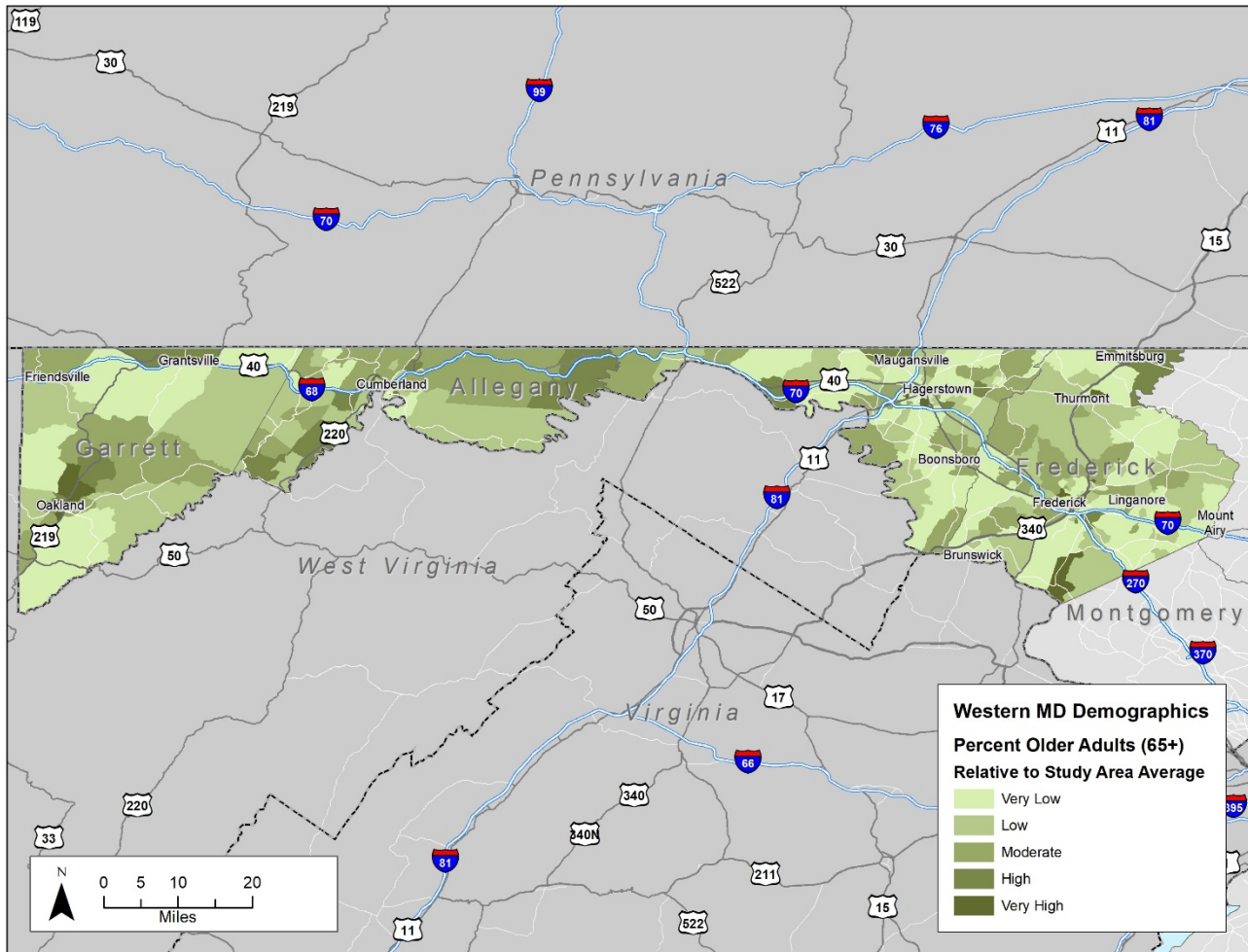
Youth Populations

Youths, individuals between 10 and 17 years old, either cannot drive or have limited access to a vehicle, appreciate the mobility offered by public transportation. Areas with a "very high" classification of youth are located west of Hagerstown, Linganore, and Oakland. Figure 5-7 displays the percentage of youths by block groups.

Figure 5-8: Percentage Youth by Block Group
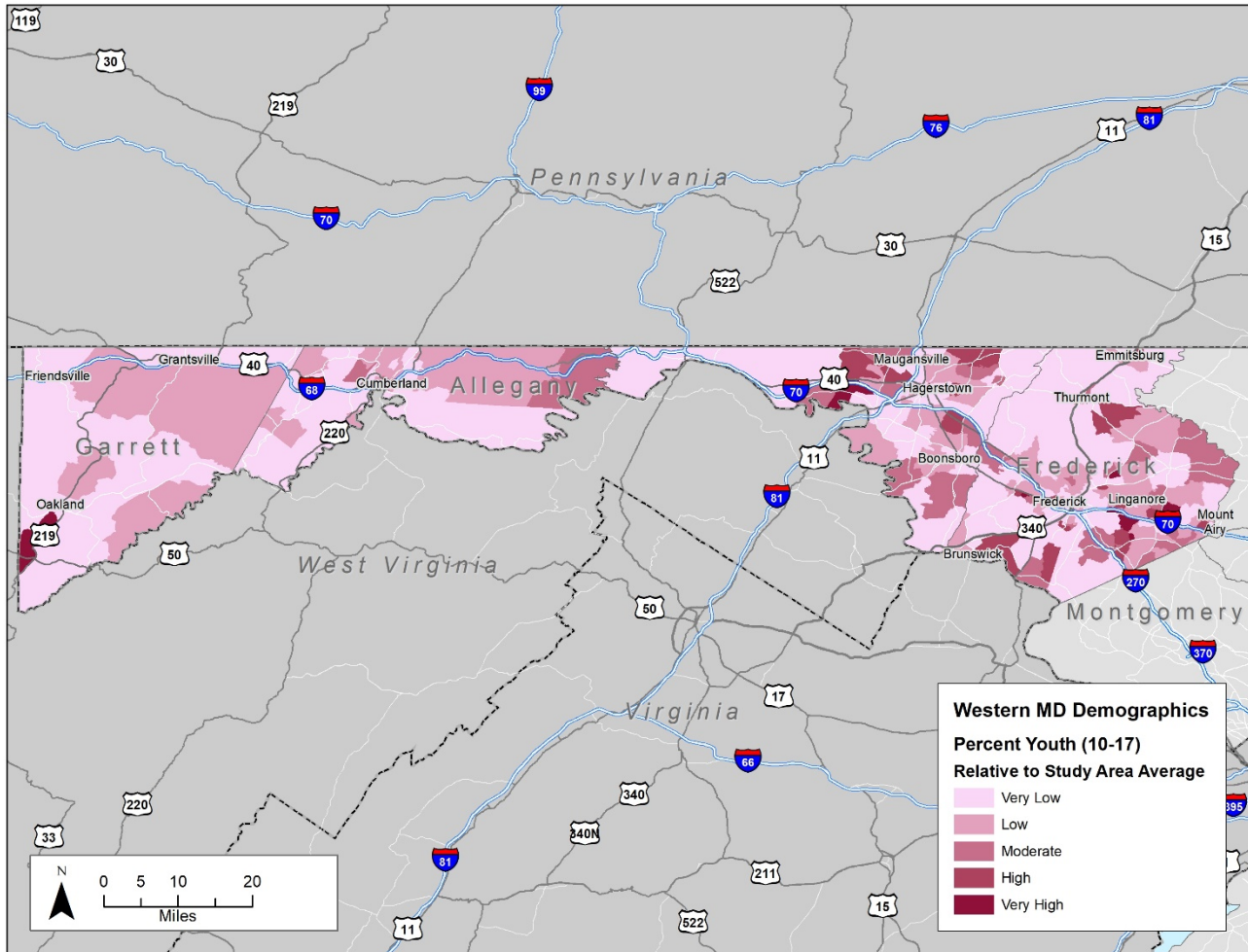
Below Poverty Populations

Below poverty individuals face financial hardships that make owning and maintaining a personal vehicle difficult, thus making them more likely to depend on public transportation. Figure 5-8 displays block groups by the percentage of below poverty individuals living in them. Block groups with above average below poverty populations are scattered throughout the region, especially in Allegany and Garrett.

Figure 5-9: Relative Density of Below Poverty Populations
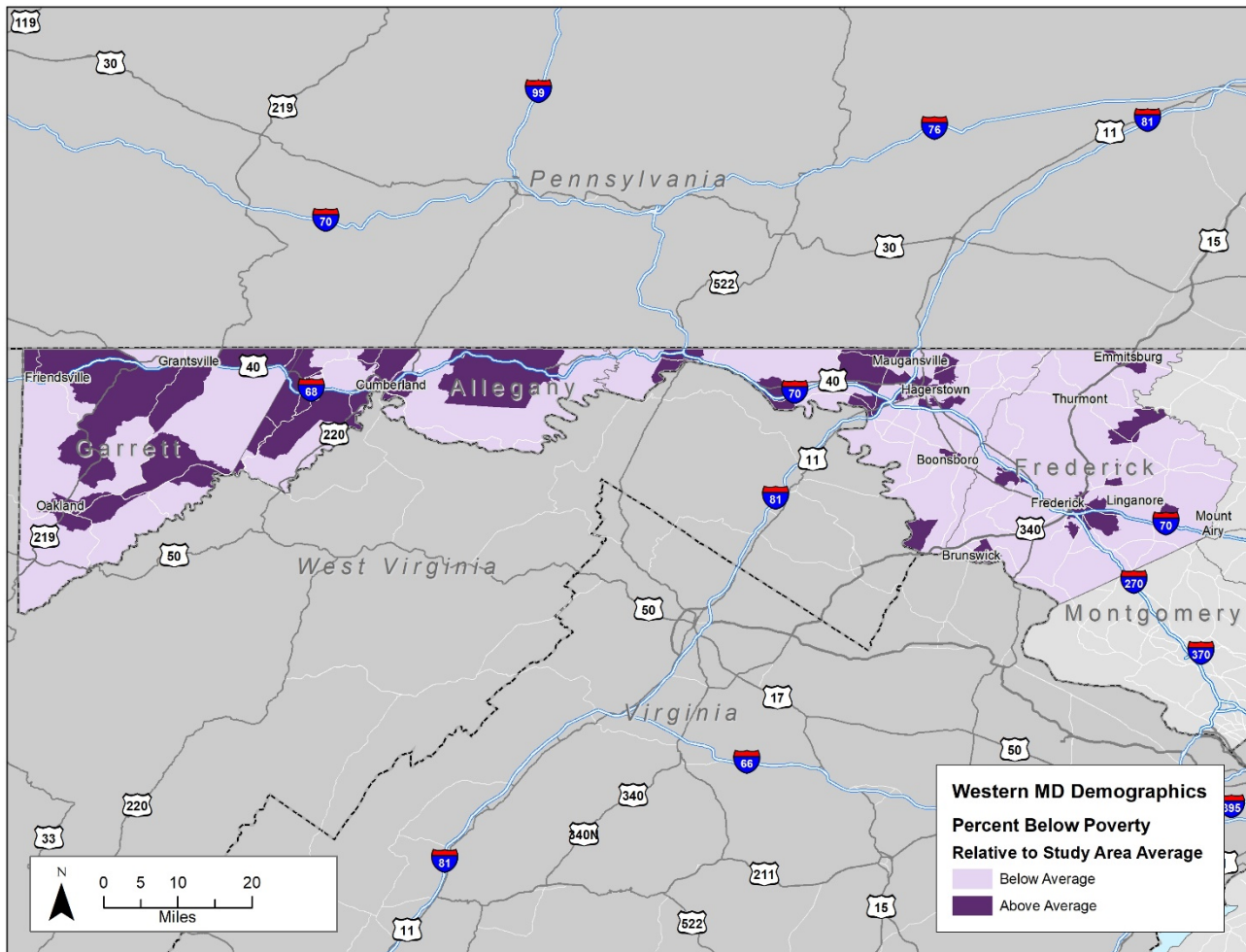
LAND-USE PROFILE

Identifying major land-uses in the region complements the demographic analysis by indicating where transit services may be most needed. Major land-uses are identified as origins, from which a concentrated transit demand is generated, and destinations, to which both transit dependent persons and choice riders are attracted. They include educational facilities, major employers, governmental and non-profit agencies, high-density housing complexes, major shopping destinations, and medical facilities. This section will also detail the commuting patterns and top employment destinations of area residents. Major trip generators in the region are portrayed in Figure 5-10.

Figure 5-10: Major Trip Generators
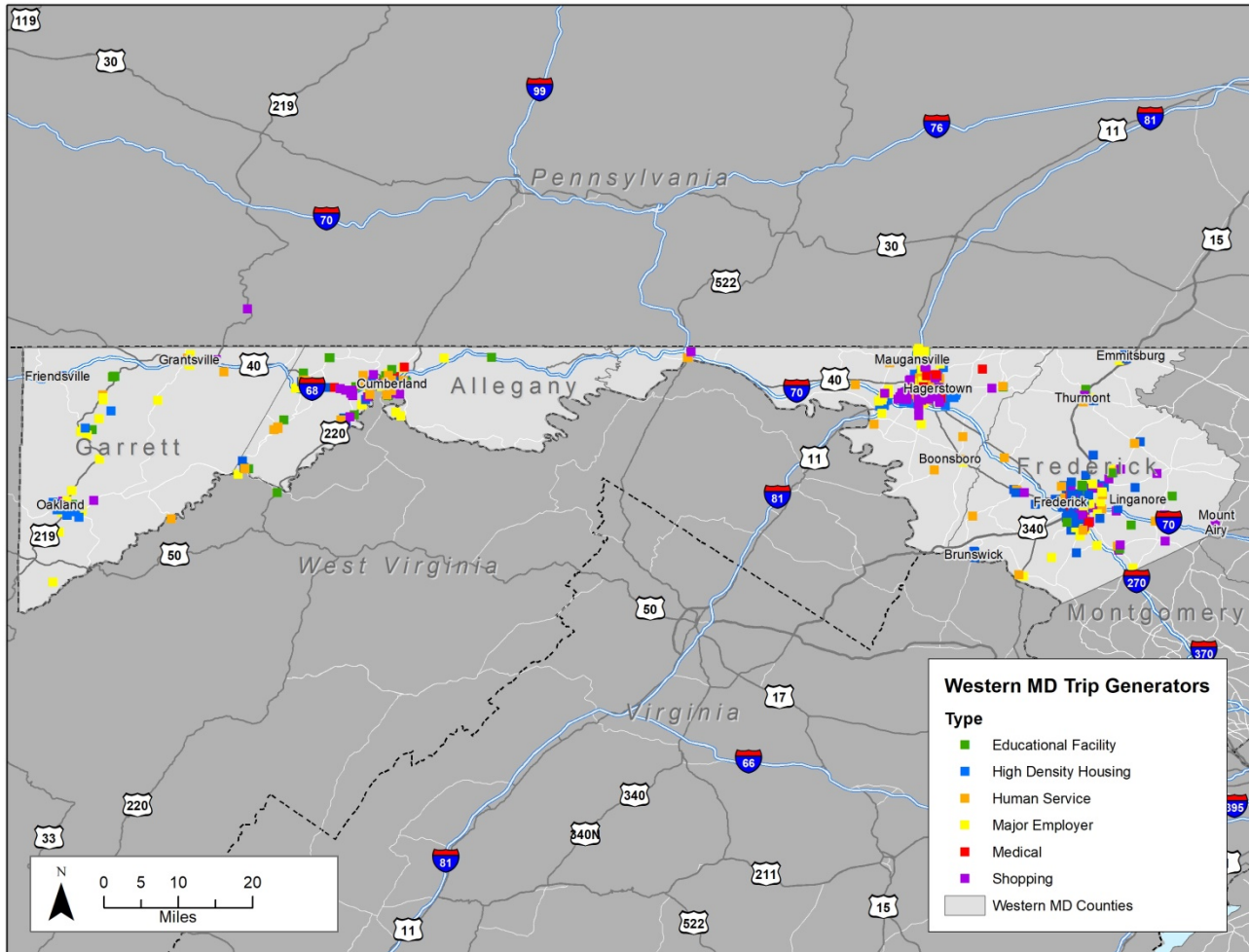
Travel Patterns

In addition to considering the region's major employers, it is also important to take into account the commuting patterns of residents and workers. As displayed in Table 5-5, place of work varies greatly by county, with many Frederick County residents commute outside of the county. The majority of residents in all three counties drive alone to work. The second most frequently used method is carpooling. Public transportation garners approximately two to four percent in the four counties.

Table 5-5: Journey to Work Travel Patterns

Place of Residence	Allegany Co.		Frederick Co.		Washington Co.		Garrett Co.	
Workers 16 years and older	28,108		128,717		66,237		13,738	
Location of Workplace								
In State of Residence	25,315	90%	115,504	90%	58,454	88%	11,792	86%
In County of Residence	23,808	85%	74,500	58%	43,869	66%	10,241	75%
Outside County of Residence	1,507	5%	41,004	32%	14,585	22%	1,551	11%
Outside State of Residence	2,793	10%	13,213	10%	7,783	12%	1,946	14%
Means of Transportation to Work								
Car, Truck, or Van - drove alone	23,181	82%	100,528	78%	53,491	81%	10,928	80%
Car, Truck, or Van - carpooled	2,725	10%	12,303	10%	6,479	10%	1,361	10%
Public Transportation	148	1%	3,738	3%	955	1%	82	1%
Walked	1,234	4%	2,706	2%	1420	1%	504	2%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, other	338	1%	1,565	1%	731	1%	83	1%
Worked at Home	482	2%	7,877	6%	3,161	5%	780	6%

Source: American Community Survey

Another source of data that provides an understanding of employee travel patterns is the United States Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) dataset. LEHD draws upon federal and state administrative data from the Census, surveys, and administrative records. Table 5-6 shows the top five employment destinations for the residents of Allegany, Garrett, Washington and Frederick counties.

Table 5-6: Top Five Work Destinations by Percentage of Resident Workers

Allegany Residents		Garrett Residents		Washington Residents		Frederick Residents	
Destination	%	Destination	%	Destination	%	Destination	%
Cumberland	29%	Oakland	19%	Hagerstown	19%	Frederick	21%
Frostburg	7%	Cumberland	4%	Frederick	6%	Ballenger Creek	7%
La Vale	4%	Grantsville	3%	Robinwood	4%	Rockville	5%
Cresaptown	4%	Mountain Lake Park	3%	Fountainhead-Orchard Hills	3%	Gaithersburg	4%
Keyser	2%	Baltimore	2%	Halfway	3%	Washington, DC	3%

Source: United States Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application, LEHD Origin- Destination Data

Chapter 6: Current Transportation Services and Resources

Introduction

A variety of public transit, human service transportation, and private transportation services are provided in the Western Maryland region. This section documents and describes the transportation programs and services identified. The process to identify the various transportation resources available in the region included:

- Using information from the previous coordinated transportation plan for the region.

- Reviewing information from the most recent Transit Development Plans (TDPs) conducted in the region.

- Collecting basic descriptive and operational data from regional workshop participants through the registration process.

- Obtaining input from regional stakeholders through the coordinated planning process.

- Using information and data from previous reports, including the Transportation Association of Maryland's 2017 Annual Report and Membership Directory.

- Following up as needed with transportation program staff where needed to fill gaps in information.

Public Transit

There are several public transportation services in the Western Maryland region. The section contains basic information regarding each of the public transit services in the region. This information is broken out by county, though some services operate in multiple jurisdictions.

Allegany County

Allegany County Transit **(ACT)**

ACT provides both fixed route and demand responsive transit services. Allegany County Transit serves the Cumberland, Maryland area operating a fixed route bus system and Alltrans, a demand response and ADA Paratransit in Allegany County, Maryland.

The fixed routes bus system operates seven routes Monday through Friday between the hours of 5:50 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., though not all routes operate during these hours. Additional information on these routes is included in Figure 6-1. All routes originate in Downtown Cumberland and offer service to LaVale, Frostburg, Frostburg State University Campus, Midland, Lonaconing, Barton, Westernport and Cresaptown. Allegany County Transit operates the Alltrans, a demand response service for senior citizens and the ADA paratransit for persons with disabilities who are unable to ride fixed route transit system.

Alltrans is curb-to-curb demand response service for senior citizens. Medical trips are prioritized, and other trips are provided on a space-available basis. Passenger trips will be coordinated to serve as many people as possible and to use our vehicles in the most efficient manner.

ADA Paratransit service is provided only to persons with disabilities that prevent them from using fixed-route transit system and is available only within ¾ of a mile from ACT fixed routes. ADA Paratransit service is provided during the same days and hours as the fixed-route bus services. Trip purposes are unrestricted and can range from work, shopping, medical appointments, and recreation. Eligible customers can call between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, at least one (1) business day before their appointment time (reservations are accepted up to 14 days in advance). Hearing-impaired customers can use the Maryland Relay System, 711, to contact Alltrans to schedule a trip. The fare is a flat rate, $3.00 each way, personal care attendants will not be charged. Ridership statistics for Alltrans and the Fixed Routes are in the table below.

Frostburg State University Bus Service

Allegany County Transit also provides transportation to Frostburg State University Students, Facility, and the general public, when FSU is in session with the FSU Shuttle. The FSU Shuttle is a fixed route shuttle operating Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Saturdays 10:00am to 6:00pm and is available to the general public. Evening FSU service operates Monday through Friday 2:30 p.m.to 10:30 p.m. which connects campus to the Country Club Malls. This service is free to current FSU Students with a student ID.

A description of all Allegany fixed routes is provided in Table 6-1 and a map of Allegany Transit service is illustrated in Figure 6-1.

Table 6-1: Allegany County Transit Fixed Routes

Route	Days of Operation	Hours of Operation	Route Summary
Silver Line-Morning Service	Monday through Friday	5:50 am - 2:30 pm	A combination of routes-Downtown to WHMS Hospital & ACM and Downtown to Country Club Mall
Red Line	Monday through Friday	7:30 am - 4:00 pm	Loop 1 –Downtown to WHMS Hospital & ACM Loop 2 – Downtown to Virginia Ave.
Green Line	Monday through Friday	7:30 am - 4:00 pm	Loop 1- (Former Red Line 2) - Downtown to Naves Cross Rd Loop 2- (Former Green Line) – Downtown to LaVale
Blue Line	Monday through Friday	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	Loop 1- Downtown to South Cumberland Loop 2 - Downtown to WHMS Hospital & ACM
Gold Line	Monday through Friday	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	From Downtown Cumberland to Country Club Mall and Frostburg.
Purple Line	Tuesday and Friday	8:00 am - 4:00 pm	From Downtown Cumberland to LaVale, Lonaconing and Westport
Yellow Line-Evening Service	Monday through Friday	3:50 pm - 8:00 pm	A combination of routes- Downtown to WHMS Hospital & ACM; Downtown to Country Club Mall express; Downtown to South Cumberland; Downtown to CC Mall & Frostburg

Figure 6-1: Map of Allegany County Transit Fixed Route Service
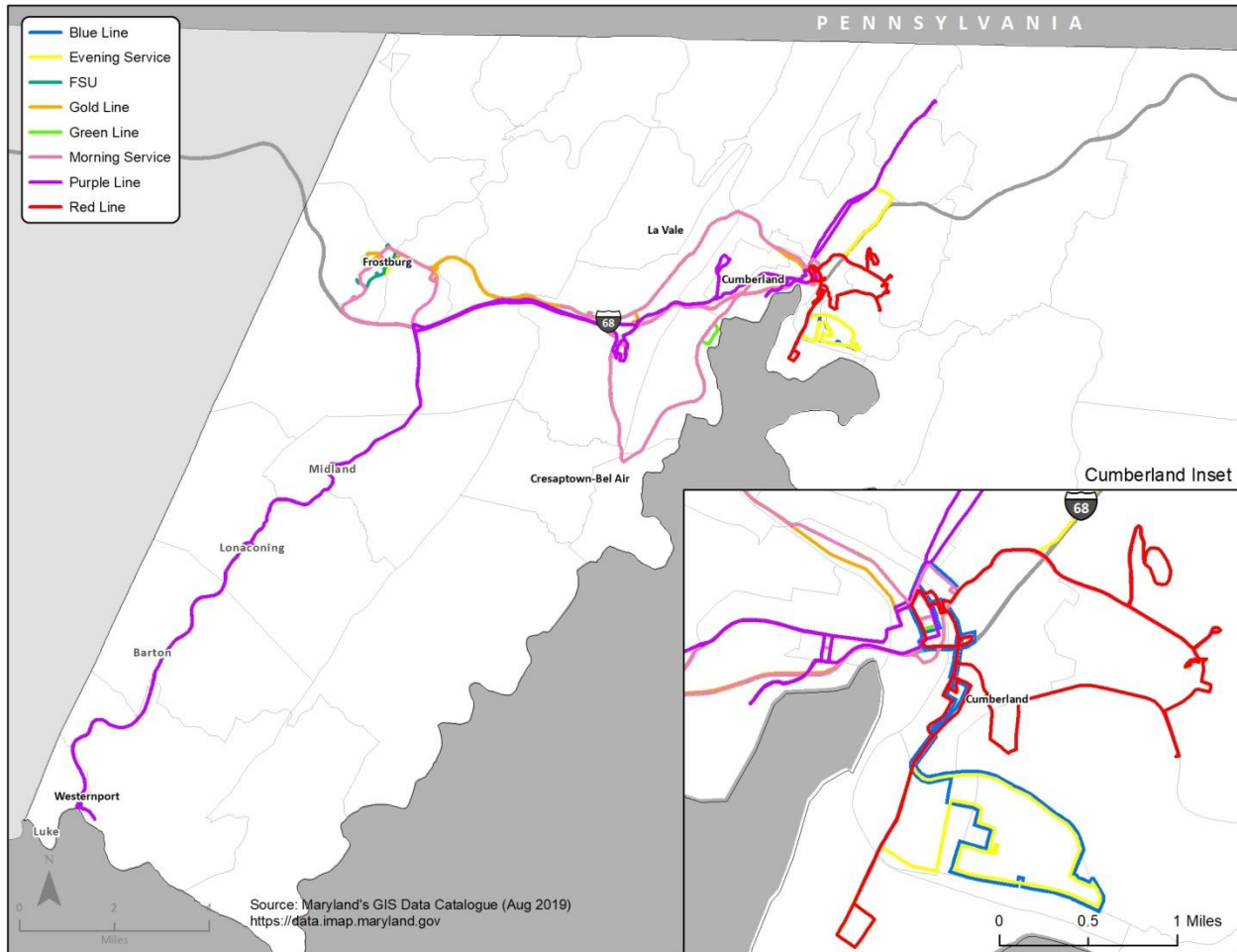
Potomac Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)

PVTA regular bus service operates deviated fixed routes throughout Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral and Pendleton Counties in West Virginia, with service extending into Allegany County. Base fare for fixed-route service is $1.25, with $0.07 per mile additional after the first five miles. Children between six and twelve, those over 62, and persons with disabilities pay half fare. Children under six are free. Route deviation up to three fourths of a mile from all regular routes is available on weekdays between 5:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Riders must make a reservation for route deviation no later than the end of the business day prior to the day of travel. There is a special service fee for deviated service; passengers are charged twice the regular fare less any discounts. PVTA also provides demand-response non-emergency medical transportation throughout its service area with no eligibility restrictions.

PVTA's fixed routes connecting to Allegany County include the following:

- Keyser-Cumberland: Two round trips per weekday from Keyser, WV to Country Club Mall via McCoole, Rawlings, and Cresaptown MD

- Romney-Cumberland commuter service : Two round trips every Thursday from Romney, WV to Country Club Mall via Ridgeley WV

- Cumberland – Pilgrim's Pride (Moorefield): One inbound and two outbound trips from Cumberland to Pilgrim's Pride, WV operated Sunday through Thursday.

- Keyser- Piedmont: Four round trips per weekday from Keyser, WV to Piedmont, WV via Westernport.

Frederick County

TransIT Services of Frederick County

TransIT provides public transit with ADA complementary services six days a week from Monday to Saturday and TransIT-plus paratransit five days a week. There are nine fixed-routes known as Connector routes. Six of these Connector routes provide deviated fixed-route service Monday through Friday. Service begins between 5:30 a.m. and ends by 9:45 p.m. on weekdays, and operates between 7:30 a.m. and 9:35 p.m. on Saturdays. As of July 1, 2014, the one-way general public fare for TransIT is $1.50. Riders may also purchase a ten-trip ticket ($13.00), twenty-trip ticket ($25.00), or a monthly pass ($50.00). Seniors (60+) and individuals with disabilities pay reduced fares ($0.75 one-way), and youth/students are also eligible for reduced cost trip tickets and passes. Transfers are free for all riders within an hour.

TransIT Connector Routes include the following:

- #10 Mall-to-Mall Connector: This is a deviated fixed route.
- #20 FSK Mall Connector: This is a deviated fixed route
- #40 The Route 40 Connector
- #50 Fredericktowne Mall Connector via Prospect Boulevard
- #51 Fredericktowne Mall Connector via 7th Street
- #60 FCC Connector via East Street: This is a deviated fixed route.
- #61 Frederick Community College Connector via Taney Avenue: This is a deviated fixed route.
- #65 Walkersville Connector: This is a deviated fixed route.
- #80 North-West Connector: This is a deviated fixed route.

There are six fixed-route commuter shuttles that provide weekday service to areas beyond the Frederick urbanized area, employment destinations, and to MARC stations. The level of service varies among the shuttle routes, depending upon the primary commute demand. These routes are:

- Brunswick / Jefferson Shuttle
- East Frederick Shuttle
- Emmitsburg / Thurmont Shuttle

- Meet-the-MARC Shuttle
- North Frederick Shuttle
- Route 85 Shuttle

A map of all TransIT routes is illustrated in Figure 6-2.

TransIT operates ADA paratransit service for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the Connector routes. This service complements the Connector service and is comparable in terms of service hours and service area.

TransIT also operates the TransIT-Plus program for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. TransIT-Plus is a demand-responsive paratransit service that operates between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

MARC Service

Frederick County residents are served by four MARC commuter rail stations along the Brunswick line: Point of Rocks, Brunswick, Monocacy, and Frederick. Commuter service is provided Monday through Friday, with nine morning trains serving Frederick County stations and ten afternoon trains. The fares vary by distance traveled and there are multi-trip discounts available.

Figure 6-2: Map of TransIT Routes
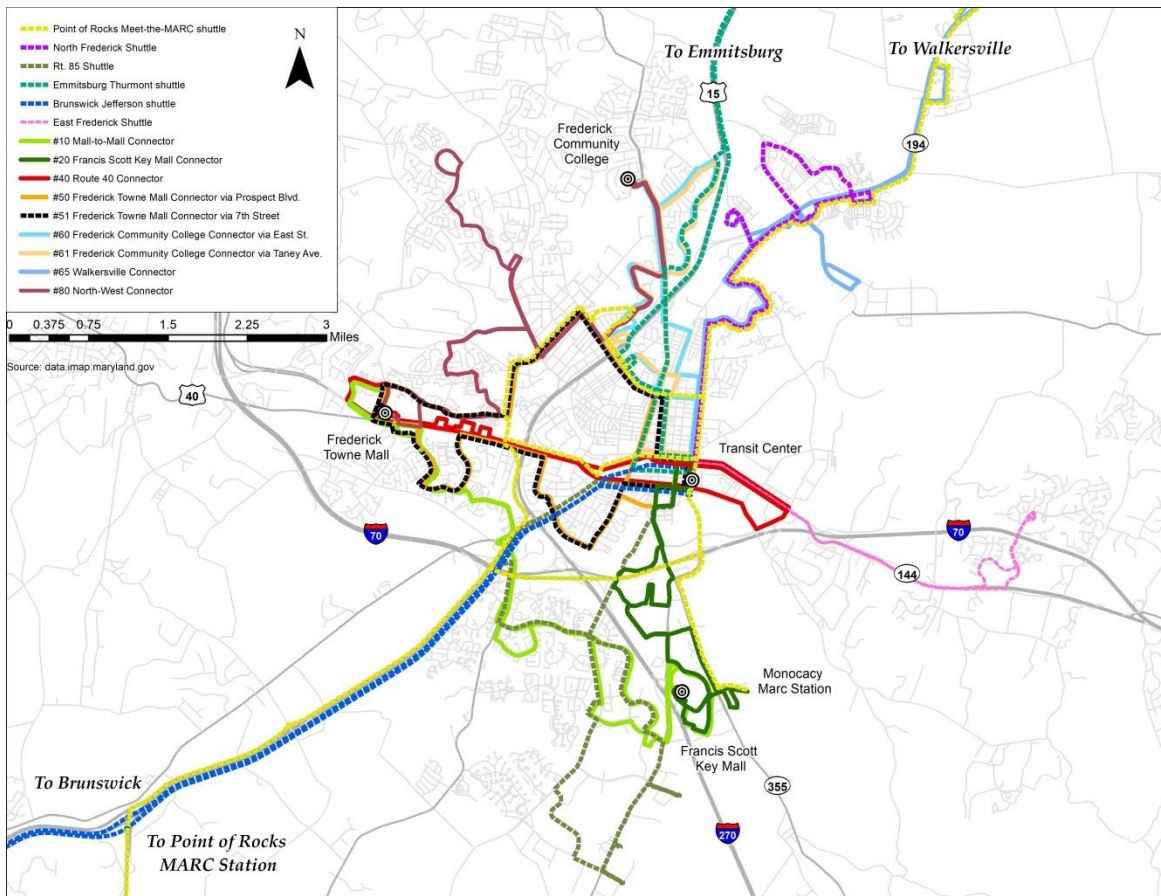
MDOT MTA Commuter Bus

- The MDOT MTA 505 commuter bus operates along its route between Hagerstown, Maryland via the Myersville Park & Ride lot and the Shady Grove Metro Station/Rock Spring Business Park. The route currently makes eight southbound a.m. trips and ten northbound p.m. trips each weekday.

- The MDOT MTA 515 commuter bus operates along its route between Downtown Frederick and the Shady Grove Metro Station/Rock Spring Business Park. The route currently makes thirteen southbound a.m. trips and sixteen northbound p.m. trips each weekday and serves three stops in Frederick County: the Downtown Frederick MARC Station, the Monocacy MARC Station and the Urbana Park & Ride. Beginning November 1st, 2019 the 515 will alternate trip origins between North Frederick Park-&-Ride and Downtown Frederick.

- The MDOT MTA 204 commuter bus operates between the Monocacy MARC Station and the University of Maryland/College Park Metro Station via the Intercounty Connector. The route provides five morning trips and six afternoon trips. Intermediate stops include the Urbana P&R, Gaithersburg Park & Ride, Georgia Avenue Park & Ride, FDA in White Oak and University of Maryland, College Park.

Garrett County

Garrett Transit Service (GTS)

GTS is a department of the Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc., providing general public transportation services in Garrett County. GTS operates a countywide demand-responsive and subscription service.

GTS is a shared-ride, door-to-door service, available to all Garrett County residents. Transportation services are demand-response through which customers call GTS in advance to schedule their rides. GTS operates Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Customers are instructed to call by 2:00 p.m. the day before for local trips, and at least three days in advance for trips outside the local area. GTS accepts reservations up to 30 days in advance, and customers may request standing reservations for recurring trips.

Beyond public transit services GTS also provides non-Emergency Medical Assistance Transportation through a contract with through the Garrett County Health Department. This transportation is designed for Medicaid recipients who have no other means of getting to their medical appointments. GTS also operates Head Start transportation and delivers Meals on Wheels.

GTS provides non-emergency medical transportation to medical appointments and other appointments for qualified recipients residing in Garrett County. Medical transportation is available Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. To use GTS's medical transportation, the following eligibility requirements are stated:

- Must have a current Maryland Medical Assistance card
- Must be a resident of Garrett County
- Must not be riding due to an emergency
- Must not have own transportation or a friend or relative able to provide transportation

Riders must call the dispatcher between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to schedule transportation. Transportation arrangements for local appointments should be made prior to 2:00 pm the business day before the appointment and at least 3 business days in advance for out of town appointments.

Washington County

Washington County Transit

The Washington County Transit Department (WCT) operates all public transit in Washington County. WCT operates fixed urban routes that originate in Hagerstown and offer service to Funkstown, Halfway, Long Meadow, Maugansville, Robinwood, Smithsburg and Williamsport. All WCT programs produced an annual ridership of about 516,000 riders in 2018. WCT provides fixed route bus service primarily within the urbanized area of Washington County. Service is available Monday through Friday, 6:00 AM – 9:45 PM and Saturday, 7:45 a.m. – 9:45 p.m. Service is not available on Sunday and some major holidays. The system operates nine interlined routes:

- Valley Mall
- Long Meadow
- Robinwood
- Smithsburg
- Funkstown
- West End
- Williamsport
- Maugansville
- Premium Outlet

The fixed route schedules begin at various times in the early morning and generally run every hour until the evening. Morning express service is provided for Valley Mall. A night run is provided for Valley Mall and Long Meadow. A map of all bus routes is provided in the figure 6-3.

WCT provides specialized curb-to-curb transportation for eligible persons with disabilities who are not able to access regular fixed-route transit service. The paratransit service area includes any trip origination and destination within three-quarters of a mile on either side of the fixed-route transportation system. Full service is available on weekdays from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 7:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Modified evening service is also available. Trip requests may be made until the close of business the day prior to the trip, but no more than 14 days in advance, and are on a first-come/first-served basis. There is no restriction or priority on a trip purpose. The current fare is $2 per trip.

Figure 6-3: All bus routes in Washington County
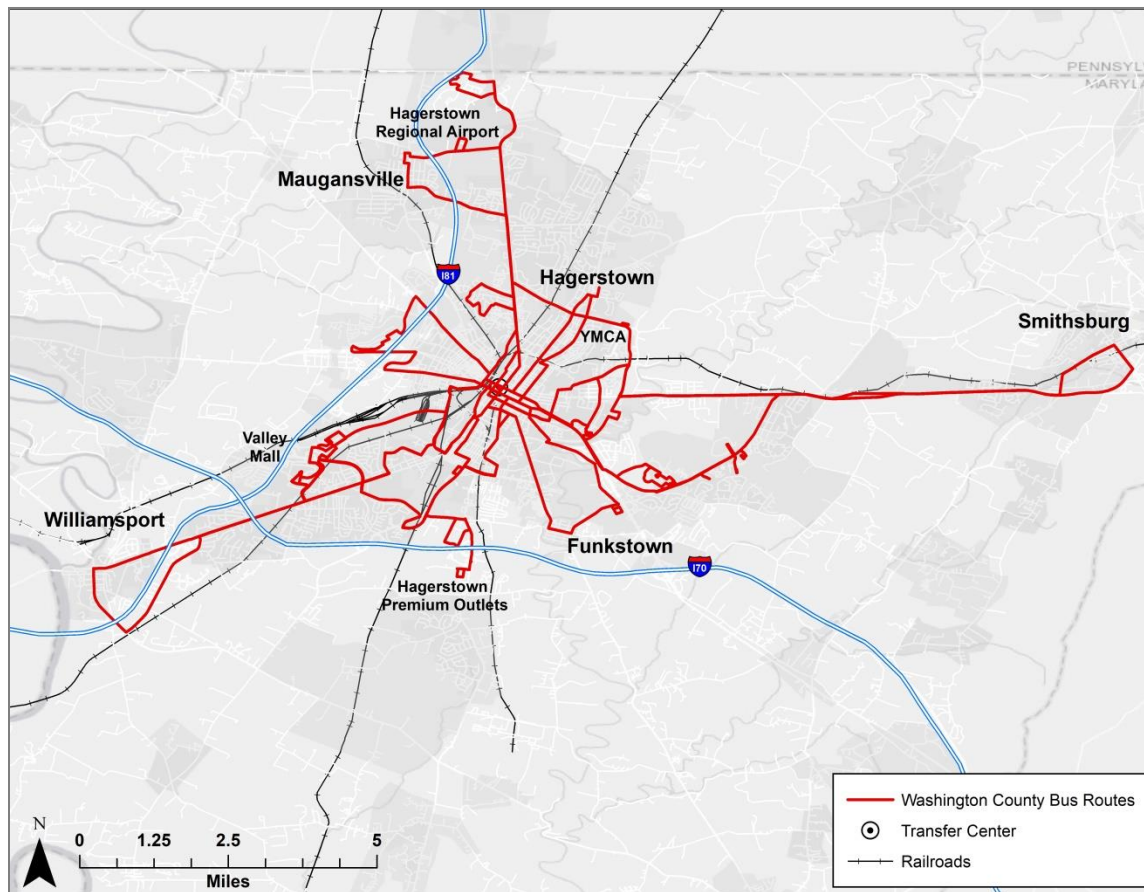
WCT also provides Ride Assist, a transportation program developed to assist seniors and persons with disabilities in meeting their transportation needs. The program uses outside contractors to provide general purpose transportation for eligible individuals who cannot use the WCT buses. Trips can be for any purpose (shopping, medical appointments, religious activities, and education). Reduced fares are available based on eligibility. The application process and determination of eligibility is handled by County Transit.

WCT also operates an employment transportation assistance shuttle in partnership with the Washington County Department of Social Services. The JOBS service provides eligible riders with transportation to and from work and childcare facilities.

Commuter Bus Service – MDOT MTA 505 Line (Hagerstown-Frederick-Rock Spring Business Park)

The MTA offers one commuter bus running to and from Hagerstown. The MTA 505 commuter bus operates along its route between Hagerstown, Maryland via the Myersville Park & Ride lot and the Shady Grove Metro Station/Rock Spring Business Park. The route currently makes eight southbound a.m. trips and ten northbound p.m. trips each weekday (three trips to Rock Springs in

the morning and four trips from Rock Springs in the afternoon). The entire trip takes approximately ninety minutes each way at a fare of $7.00 for a one-way ticket. Other options, such as monthly passes, are available for frequent commuters. It is important to note that this service makes it relatively easy for Washington County residents to commute via transit to Washington, D.C., but not to Baltimore.

Non-Profit and Human Service Transportation Providers

Human service and non-profit agencies offer a range of critical services to residents of the region. Various specialized transportation programs are offered by these agencies. This transportation is typically provided only to agency clients and for specific trip purpose, generally either medical or to access agency locations, including providing and/or purchasing transportation for clients. The following section provides an overview of those that provide or purchase transportation. In some cases it includes input from these agencies on the transportation needs of their clients that was obtained during the TDP process.

Section 5310 Recipients

- Allegany County (HRDC) Human Resources Development, Allegany County
- Appalachian Parent Association, Garrett County
- The ARC of Washington County, Inc., Washington County
- Daybreak Adult Day Services, Inc., Frederick County
- Diakon Child, Family & Community Ministries, Washington County
- Easter Seals Serving DC, MD, VA (Hagerstown), Washington County
- Friends Aware, Allegany County
- Goodwill Industries Inc. of Hagerstown (Horizon), Washington County
- Star Community, Inc., Frederick & Washington Counties
- Unified Community Connections, Inc., Allegany, Frederick, Garrett & Washington Counties
- Washington County Community Action Council, Inc., Frederick & Washington Counties
- Washington County Human Development Council, Inc., Frederick & Washington Counties
- Way Station, Frederick, Howard, Washington, Carroll

Other Non-profit and Human Service Providers

Allegany County

- Abilities Network
- Allegany County Department of Social Services
- Allegany County Health Department- MA Transportation
- Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission (HRDC)
- Archway Station, Inc.
- Blind Industries & Services of Maryland (BISM)

- Devlin Manor Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
- Express Medical Transport of Allegany County
- Frostburg Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
- Kensington Assisted Living
- Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)
- Mental Health System's Office (MHSO), Allegany County Health Department
- Moran Manor Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
- Ray of Hope, Inc.
- The Arc of Frederick county
- The Council For Exceptional Children And Adults
- YMCA Family Center Cumberland

Frederick County

- Carroll County Veteran's Transportation Shuttle
- Daybreak Adult Day Services
- Frederick Community Action Agency
- Community Living
- Partners in Care (PIC)
- Family Partnership
- Goodwill Industries of the Monocacy Valley
- Human Development Council, Frederick
- Scott Key Center
- Senior Service Division, Frederick County
- The Arc of Frederick county

Garrett County

- Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc.
- Garrett County Department of Social Services
- Garrett County Health Department- MA Transportation
- Garrett County Lighthouse, Inc.
- Garrett Regional Medical Center
- Mountain Laurel Medical Center
- The Arc of Frederick county
- Thomas B. Finan Center
- United Cerebral Palsy of Central Maryland

Washington County

- Diakon Adult Day Services at Ravenwood
- Horizon Goodwill Industries of Hagerstown
- Human Development Council, Hagerstown

Western Maryland Coordinated Public
Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan
6-11

MDOT
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION.
MARYLAND TRANSIT
ADMINISTRATION

- Star Community, Inc.
- Unified Community Connections, Inc.
- Washington County Department of Social Services
- Washington County Health Department
- Washington County Mental Health Authority

Private Transportation Providers

Allegany County

Taxi Service

The following taxi services also operate within Allegany County:

- Queen City Taxi
- Yellow Cab Company
- Crown Taxi in Cumberland
- Morgan Taxi
- Frostburg Taxi in Frostburg.

All operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

BayRunner Shuttle

BayRunner Shuttle operates intercity bus service connecting Grantsville, Frostburg, Cumberland, Hancock, Hagerstown, and Frederick to Baltimore-Washington International Airport and the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal. Two round trips occur daily except for Saturday, when one round trip occurs. Stops in Allegany County include Allegany College and the Cumberland Amtrak Station.

Private Charter Service

Bollman Charter Service and Schrock Travel are Pennsylvania and Virginia based companies respectively. They operate tour, day trips and charter services in different states including, Cumberland, MD. They provide deluxe motor coach transportation and can also arrange hotel accommodations, meals, attractions and sightseeing.

Rocky Gap Shuttle

Rocky Gap casino operates a free shuttle service daily from downtown Cumberland at the Ramada Inn to the resort. The shuttle runs every hour between the top of the hour and ten after and is open to general public. Other Private providers within Allegany County include:

- Allegany Ambulance Service

- Allegany Limousine
- Butler Ambulance Service
- Valley Medical Transport
- WestMar Tours and Travel
- VIP Limousine

Amtrak

Amtrak's Capitol Limited Line (Washington, D.C. to Chicago, IL) offers intercity service, stopping in downtown Cumberland. There is one westbound and one eastbound train daily. Amtrak passenger service aboard the Capitol Limited is available to and from the Cumberland station at East Harrison and Queen City Streets. The Capitol Limited travels from Washington D.C. to Chicago daily. Connections can be made to other Amtrak lines serving the East Coast and the Western States.

Frederick County

Taxi Service

Taxi service is available in Frederick County, primarily from companies located in the City of Frederick. These include:

- Frederick City Cab
- Gordon's Transportation
- Henry's airport service
- Taxi Fiesta
- Yellow Cab
- Bowie Taxi.

Regular taxi trips are cost-prohibitive for many residents. A taxi voucher program called TAP is available to the eligible users of TransIT plus program to receive an allotment of taxi fare per month.

Intercity Bus - Greyhound

Greyhound Lines provides intercity bus service to Frederick County at downtown Frederick MARC stations. Currently, Greyhound operates one route through Frederick:

- Washington - Cleveland - Detroit – Chicago Route: There are total three trips from Frederick per day westbound to Cleveland via Pittsburgh, one of them ends in Chicago and another one ends in Detroit.

BayRunner Shuttle

BayRunner Shuttle operates intercity bus service connecting Frederick to the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and the Baltimore Greyhound Bus terminal. There are nine trips daily in both

directions from Frederick Transit Center to BWI Airport & Rail Station daily. Stops include Frederick Airport and Greyhound Baltimore downtown bus station.

Garrett County

BayRunner Shuttle

BayRunner Shuttle operates intercity bus service connecting Grantsville, Frostburg, Cumberland, Hancock, Hagerstown, and Frederick to Baltimore-Washington International Airport and the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal. Daily trips depart Grantsville at 8:30 a.m. and arrive at the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal at 12:20 p.m. and at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and Rail Station at 12:40 p.m. Another trip operates daily except for Saturday, and departs Grantsville at 4:30 p.m. and arrives at the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal at 8:20 p.m. and at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and Rail Station at 8:40 p.m. Fares for the BayRunner Shuttle are based on the number in the traveling party. Current one-way fares are $70 for one passenger, $113 for two passengers, $149 for three passengers, and $25 for each additional passenger. Reservations are recommended but not required, and riders can either call or reserve their trip online.

Washington County

The following private transportation operators are registered to conduct business in Washington County:

- All American Ambulance Transport
- Bonnies Transportation
- Downtown Sedan
- Easy Transport
- Grab A Ride
- Hagerstown Airport Shuttle & Car Service
- Route 63 Sedan

BayRunner Shuttle

BayRunner Shuttle operates intercity bus service connecting Grantsville, Frostburg, Cumberland, Hancock, Hagerstown, and Frederick to Baltimore-Washington International Airport and the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal. Daily trips depart Hagerstown at 10:40 a.m. and arrive at the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal at 12:20 p.m. and at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and Rail Station at 12:40 p.m. Another trip operates daily except for Saturday, and departs Grantsville at 6:40 p.m. and arrives at the Baltimore Greyhound Bus Terminal at 8:20 p.m. and at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and Rail Station at 8:40 p.m.

Commuter Assistance

Frederick TransIT offers a menu of commuter services with the goal of promoting alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips and their associated environmental and congestion-related impacts. TransIT assists new and existing vanpool/carpools in finding riders, offers incentives for alternative commuting, and provides resources on other commuting options like rideshare (e.g., NuRide, ERideshare). Frederick County also participates in MWCOG's Commuter Connections program. Commuter Connections includes car and vanpool matching services and a free Guaranteed Ride Home program.

Commuter assistance also comes in the form of park and ride lots. Ten Maryland State Highway Administration facilities are located in Frederick County, seven of which are served either by TransIT or by the MTA commuter bus. A new Park & Ride lot has opened along Monocacy Boulevard near Route 15 in North Frederick. It has 400 car parking spaces and will be served by transit starting in November 2019. The park and ride will offer free parking and will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chapter 7: Prioritized Strategies

Introduction

A key element required in the coordinated transportation plan involves strategies, activities, and/or projects that address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery. As noted in the FTA coordinated transportation planning guidance, priorities based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities must be identified.

This section provides a prioritized list of strategies for the Western Maryland Region based on local stakeholder review and input. This list built upon the ones included in the previous coordinated plan, and were initially updated to reflect needs identified by the group at the regional workshop discussed in Chapter 2. The updated list of strategies was then distributed to workshop participants in the form of an online survey to be prioritized. Regional stakeholders agreed that this list would be grouped by strategies that were higher priorities, ones that were a medium priority, and strategies that were a lower priority.

Goals / Strategies

The development of potential strategies considered overall goals for maintaining and improving mobility in the region. While many of the strategies are interrelated, for consideration by regional stakeholders the proposed strategies were grouped by these goals. The prioritized list with a description of each potential strategy is provided in the next section.

Maintain Existing Services

- Continue to support capital projects that are planned, designed, and carried out to meet the specific needs of the general population.

- Maintain services that are effectively meeting identified transportation needs in the region.

- Acquire vehicles more suitable for remote areas of the region.

Ensure Customers are Aware of Existing Transportation Options

- Establish or expand travel training programs for new and prospective riders.

- Administer trainings for human service agency staff, medical facility personnel, and others on the use and availability of transportation services.

- Establish public outreach events where local public, medical, and non-profit transportation providers can educate members of the public and local policymakers.

Expand Public Transportation Options in the Region

- Advocate for recommendations to improve public transportation identified through detailed transit development plans conducted in the region.

- In more urbanized areas within the region, create services that could appeal to all residents, even those with a choice to drive

Expand specialized transportation services for people who are unable to use or access public transit services

- Identify and mitigate barriers in effort to provide additional trips through current human services transportation network.

Consider a Broader Variety of Transportation Services That Target Specific Needs Identified Through the Coordinated Transportation Planning Process

- Establish and maintain an inter-agency ridesharing program for long distance medical trips
- Explore public-private partnerships with private ridesharing companies (i.e. Uber, Lyft, Via)
- Consider and implement vehicle repair programs.
- Use volunteers to provide more specialized and one-to-one transportation services.

Secure Additional Funding and Resources to Support Community Transportation Services

- Develop additional partnerships and identify new funding sources to support public transit and human service transportation, including with local businesses and municipalities

- Advocate for additional funding to support public transit and human service transportation through outreach towards community and regional leaders and policymakers.

Expand Access to Employment Opportunities in the Region

- Provide additional transportation options to access second and third shift jobs.

- Provide targeted shuttle services to access employment opportunities, potentially provided in partnership with private ridesharing companies.

Improve Coordination and Connectivity between Transportation Providers in the Region

- Improve coordination of services among providers through mobility management activities

- Link compatible software programs used by different regional transportation providers to share data and allow for trip coordination.

- Create online forum where different transportation providers to collaborate and share ideas, best practices, concerns, and other materials pertinent to regional transportation.

High Priorities

Maintain Services That are Effectively Meeting Identified Transportation Needs in the Region

While maintaining the current capital infrastructure is vital to meeting community transportation needs, financial resources are needed to operate vehicles and continue services at the current level. This strategy involves providing operating funds to support existing public transit services and human services transportation that are effectively meeting mobility needs identified in the region, especially those serving older adults and individuals with disabilities.

The MTA has established performance standards for the Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) as a tool to monitor effectiveness and efficiency. These performance standards are derived from a compilation of sources that include industry research, industry experience, and peer reviews. The performance standards include:

- Operating Cost Per Hour
- Operating Cost Per Mile
- Operating Cost Per Passenger Trip
- Farebox Recovery
- Passenger Trips Per Mile
- Passenger Trips Per Hour

Through this strategy there would be support for public transit services operated by the LOTS that are meeting these standards. It also allows for opportunities to identify existing services that are important to the community, but that could be improved through modifications or technical assistance. This strategy would also enable the LOTS and regional stakeholders to establish public transit service baselines to help determine if additional funding is warranted.

Transportation provided through human service agencies is more specialized, and therefore is not monitored through these performance measures. Agencies that would like to evaluate their transportation programs to ensure that financial resources are being used effectively can utilize *Transportation by the Numbers*, a resource available through the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC). This tool provides human service organizations with ways to more easily identify expenses, revenues and performance outcomes so that they can make more informed decisions about their future in the transportation business. This tool is available through the NADTC website at https://www.nadtc.org/resources-publications/transportation-by-the-numbers. Regional stakeholders also noted the need for greater use of metrics in the assessment of current transportation services.

Improve Coordination of Services among Providers through Mobility Management Activities

During the planning workshop stakeholders noted the need for improved coordination, especially of long-distance trips. There is already some coordination in the region, and recipients of funding through the Section 5310 Program are required to coordinate with other federally assisted programs and services in order to make the most efficient use of Federal resources. This is an ongoing issue since, for the most part, each agency and organization operates transportation independently of others in the region. In addition, there are MTA commuter bus services in some parts of the region that need to be coordinated with local transit services and other transportation providers.

This strategy calls for greater coordination of services and financial resources in an effort to use available funding as effectively as possible. The reality is the demand for public and human services transportation in the region will continue to surpass resources, so it is vital that wheelchair accessible vans in the community are fully utilized, long distance trips that travel through multiple counties in the region are consolidated when possible, and training and vehicle maintenance are coordinated. Mobility management activities, tailored specifically to meet the region's needs, can be implemented. Similar to previous strategies this means the region would need to identify an agency or organization with the organizational structure and the willingness to assume the lead role, the ability to secure funding to support these activities, and the ability to coordinate and implement the program.

Regional stakeholders noted during the planning workshop that the addition of a state-level supervisory body over coordinated services is a missing component that would further support this strategy. This strategy would encourage the State, seen as an "official" agency who oversees the funding, to link current and future funding initiatives to on-going local agency coordination and consistency with this plan. It would also provide the opportunity to build upon the State Coordinating Committee for Human Services Transportation that has been in place in various structures.

Continue to Support Capital Projects that are Planned, Designed, and Carried Out to Meet the Specific Needs of the General Population

Maintaining and building upon current capital infrastructure is crucial to expanding mobility options for all people. Before the region can consider efforts for improving mobility for these population

groups it is critical to ensure that the current foundation of services remains in place through a sufficient capital network.

This strategy involves acquisition of replacement buses or vans, vehicle rehabilitation or overhaul, and other appropriate vehicle equipment improvements that support the current capital infrastructure in the region, especially for non-profit organizations that provide human services transportation. It also includes preventative maintenance, an eligible (capital) expense through the Section 5310 Program. With limited capital funding to replace buses it is essential that current vehicles are maintained and remain safe and operable beyond the typical useful life criteria.

Advocate for Additional Funding to Support Public Transit and Human Service Transportation

Coupled with the need to develop additional partnerships is a stronger advocacy campaign that highlights the impact public transportation and human-services transportation have on residents of the region, and how they are vital components of the community transportation infrastructure. This strategy involves a regional and unified effort to inform elected officials, local and national decision makers and the general public on the dire need for additional funding to support current services. Taking this a step further, greater funding to expand transportation options would be necessary, especially since additional administrative resources are often overlooked when operational expansion is discussed.

This advocacy campaign could be part of a national movement to stress the importance of community and public transit in the surface transportation reauthorization debate in Washington, D.C. The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) have developed a variety of resources that can be used in advocacy efforts with local offices of House and Senate members, local media and state and local elected officials.

Develop Additional Partnerships and Identify New Funding Sources to Support Public Transit and Human Service Transportation

During the regional workshop, local stakeholders noted that there is currently a lack of overall funding to support the variety of transportation services that are needed in the region. In addition, the demand for public transit, human services transportation, and specialized transportation services continues to grow daily. One of the key obstacles the transportation industry faces is how to pay for additional services.

This strategy would involve identifying partnerships opportunities to leverage additional funding to support public-transit and human-services transportation in the region. It would include meeting multiple unmet needs and issues by tackling non-traditional sources of funding. Hospitals, supermarkets, and retailers who want the business of the region's riders may be willing to pay for part of the cost of transporting those riders to their sites. This approach is applicable to both medical and retail establishments already served, as well as to new businesses. While this plan helps to document the need for these additional services, some may need to be further quantified. It might

also be necessary to document unmet needs and gaps in service as part of educating elected officials and potential funders.

Identify and Mitigate Barriers in Effort to Provide Additional Trips through Current Human Services Transportation Network, Especially for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

The expansion of current human service transportation programs operated in the region is a logical strategy for improving mobility, especially for older adults and people with disabilities. This strategy would meet multiple unmet needs and issues identified by regional stakeholders, including providing mobility for people who live beyond fixed route public transit services and people who live in the more remote areas of the region, while taking advantage of existing organizational structures. This strategy would also support door-to-door transportation needed by customers who need assistance to travel safely and an escort from a departure point, into and out of a transport vehicle and to the door of their destination.

Operating costs – driver salaries, fuel and vehicle maintenance – would be the primary expense for expanding demand-response services by human service agencies, though additional vehicles may be necessary for providing expanded same-day and door-to-door transportation services.

Establish and Maintain an Interagency Ridesharing Program for Long Distance Medical Trips

Regional stakeholders expressed the need for transportation services that serve long-distance medical trips, particularly for people who are not eligible for Medicaid funded transportation. In the more urban regions of the State, commuter-oriented ridesharing programs have been active for many years. One such example is the Commuter Connections program, in which Frederick County TransIT participates.

This strategy uses a commuter-oriented model as a basis for developing a ride-sharing program for long distance medical trips. A database of potential drivers and riders could be kept with a central "mobility manager," who would match the trip needs with the available participating drivers. The riders would share the expenses with the drivers on a per-mile basis (i.e., similar to mileage reimbursement).

The ridesharing strategy could be a cost-effective way to provide long-distance medical trips without sending a human service or public-transit vehicle out of the region for a day. However, it will require an agency or organization in the region with the organizational structure and the willingness to assume the lead role and the ability to coordinate and implement the program.

Link Compatible Software Programs Used by Different Regional Transportation Providers to Share Data and Allow for Trip Coordination

During the regional workshop, it was revealed that several providers in the region were using the same software provider to collect data and plan transportation services. Many software providers have options to share data between agencies, which could lead to greater coordination between public transportation entities and private non-profit or human service providers. This strategy supports linking software in an effort to consolidate services and exchange data that could help coordinate trips so that one agency does the first leg of a long-distance trip and other providers pick the passenger up and complete the rest of the trip.

This strategy would benefit and ease the establishment of an interagency ridesharing by increasing coordination between providers.

Create Online Forum Where Different Transportation Providers Could Collaborate and Share Ideas, Best Practices, Concerns, and Other Materials Pertinent to Regional Transportation

Western Maryland is a large region with harsher winters and terrain that is less forgiving than the rest of the state. At times, this can make in-person meetings between different transportation providers difficult. This strategy supports efforts to create an online forum where different transportation stakeholders can coordinate and share ideas, best practices, concerns and other materials. This forum would create a constant and consistent space for communication that would not require inordinate travel for stakeholders on the outer edges of the region.

Provide Additional Transportation Options to Access Second and Third Shift Jobs

One of the regional transportation needs identified in the needs assessment is for expanded transportation options to support access to second and third-shift jobs. Many lower-income people who are starting new jobs are offered the least attractive work schedule, as seniority is typically a factor in choosing work schedules. There are some distribution-related jobs that only have work for people during the second and third shifts. These schedules pose enormous transportation barriers for low-income workers who live in the rural and small-urban communities of Western Maryland.

While there are transit services in each county, only one, the Hopewell Express in Hagerstown, operates past 10:00pm. The Washington County Community Action Council (CAC) also provides weekend services on Saturday and Sunday for employees. Urbanized areas in Western Maryland without extended service hours may find extending the hours of fixed route transit services appropriate to accommodate these trips based on current TDPs, there is typically insufficient demand to warrant increased service hours. These are critical transportation needs that if not met, negatively impact economic development in the region and increase unemployment rates.

This strategy calls for support of a variety of possible options to meet second and third shift transportation needs. These include a rideshare program (using a similar model to the one for long-distance trips discussed in a later strategy. It would require an agency or organization with the structure and willingness to assume the lead role. An additional option is to encourage the implementation of expanded taxi services that are designed to meet the one-to-one travel needs

typically associated with second and third shift jobs. This support can include taxi-voucher programs that help offset the customer fare but ensure that taxi operators receive a sufficient amount so that providing transportation remains profitable.

Administer Trainings for Human Service Agency Staff, Medical Facility Personnel, and Others on the Use and Availability of Transportation Services

During the regional workshop, participants believed that oftentimes staff at different agencies were unaware of the transportation services available to their clients. This strategy supports the implementation and administration of transportation trainings for these employees. These trainings could be helpful marketing, outreach, and education tools, especially for healthcare and social service providers. People who consistently rely on social programs and/or need regular medical care are likely to rely on public or human service transportation. If providers of these services are not well educated on the variety of transportation options in the region, it can be difficult to see their clients. Hosting trainings or information session for these individuals, as well as the general public, could increase the community awareness of these services.

Advocate for Recommendations to Improve Public Transportation Identified Through Detailed Transit Development Plans Conducted in the Region

A transit development plan (TDP) is a short-range transit planning process that is conducted by transit systems on a periodic basis. The TDP planning process builds on or formulates the county's or region's goals and objectives for transit, reviews and assesses current transit services, identifies unmet transit needs, and develops an appropriate course of action to address the objectives in the short-range future, typically a five-year horizon. This TDP then serves as a guide for public transportation, providing a roadmap for implementing service and/or organizational changes, improvements, and/or potential expansions. A Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of local stakeholders, guides the development of the TDP.

The MTA requires the LOTS in Maryland to conduct a TDP every five to six years. The LOTS use their TDP as a basis for preparing their Annual Transportation Plans (ATPs) that serve as their Annual Grant Applications for transit funding. The following TDPs have been completed in the Western Maryland region:

- Allegany County: December, 2012
- Frederick County: May, 2015
- Garrett County: Completed February, 2013, update ongoing
- Washington County: January, 2010, update ongoing

This strategy calls for support of service recommendations included in each TDP. Detailed in each plan, these recommendations respond to a variety of the transportation needs expressed by regional

stakeholders such as improving access to work locations and employment opportunities. The individual TDPs include projected costs and a proposed timeline for implementing service improvements that involve:

- Increased frequency of existing services
- Extended evening hours
- Weekend service expansions
- System-wide efficiency improvements
- Expanded mobility management services

Provide Targeted Shuttle Services to Access Employment Opportunities, Potentially Provided in Partnership with Private Ridesharing Companies

In Western Maryland there are industrial parks that have significant numbers of entry-level jobs. There are also resort employment opportunities in Garrett County in the Deep Creek Lake area and in Allegany County at Rocky Gap. These concentrated job opportunities can sometimes provide central employment destinations that could potentially be served via targeted shuttle services. Locating a critical mass of workers is the key for this strategy to be effective. This strategy may provide a mechanism for employer partnerships, as well as partnerships with ridesharing companies like Uber, Lyft, and Via.

Medium Priorities

Acquire Vehicles More Suitable for Remote Areas of the Region

Regional stakeholders expressed the need to acquire vehicles that can operate over difficult terrains, especially in Allegany and Garrett Counties. Four-wheel vehicles are needed to operate public transit and human service transportation providers in the more remote and mountainous areas of Western Maryland. Particularly, there are many roads and long driveways that are gravel and hard to navigate with a typical paratransit vehicle. The feeling was that it would be better and safer for these vehicles if the providers had access to a few four-wheel drive paratransit vehicles to be used in the more remote areas. The Western counties experience more snow than other areas of the State, and some trips, such as dialysis, must still be provided in bad weather.

Establish Public Outreach Events Where Local Public, Medical, and Non-profit Transportation Providers Can Educate Members of the Public and Local Policymakers

Regional stakeholders expressed the need for expanded marketing of existing transportation services and education of residents in the region on their travel options. They noted that some customers may need travel training on how to use existing transportation services.

It is vital that customers, especially older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes, are familiar and confident with available transportation services. This strategy involves expanded outreach programs to ensure people helping others with their transportation issues are aware of mobility options in the region. This strategy involves a regional transportation day at a community center where regional providers can teach members of the public about available services in the region. Additional efforts include travel training programs to help individuals use available public transit services.

Establish or Expand Travel Training Programs for New and Prospective Riders

Many potential customers are unaware of how to use the variety of transportation options within the region. This strategy supports the establishment or expansion of travel training programs to help these individuals transition to using transportation. Travel training is offered in some form throughout the region, but many people who may benefit from it do not know that exists. This strategy supports marketing campaigns for existing travel training programs to increase their use and visibility throughout the region.

Consider and Implement Vehicle Repair Programs

In the more rural areas of Western Maryland, it is fairly typical that a low-income person will have a car available for their use, but it may be inoperable. With the long trip distances and dispersed population, sometimes a repaired automobile is the most cost-effective way to provide a person with access to employment opportunities and to community services.

While the FTA funding programs do not allow funds to be used for vehicle repair, this strategy calls for the consideration and implementation of programs that are funded through donations and other resources to enable car ownership. A possible model or partnership is with Vehicles for Change Inc. (VFC), a car ownership and technical training program that empowers families with financial challenges to achieve economic and personal independence.

Use Volunteers to Provide More Specialized and One-To-One Transportation Services

A variety of transportation services are needed to meet the mobility needs of older adults and people with disabilities. Some of the needs identified by regional stakeholders are better handled through more specialized services beyond those typically provided through general public transit services. In addition, the rural nature and the geographic makeup of the region are not always conducive for shared-ride services. The implementation of a volunteer driver program would offer transportation options that are difficult to meet through public transit and human service agency transportation and

provide a more personal and one-to-one transportation service for customers who may require additional assistance. Fortunately, there are numerous examples of successful volunteer driver programs in Maryland and throughout the country that can be used as models to design a volunteer-driver program for the region.

In More Urbanized Areas within the Region, Create Services That Could Appeal to All Residents, Even Those with a Choice to Drive

In and around Western Maryland's urban areas (Cumberland, Frederick, and Hagerstown), transportation services are often used by people who have no other option. This strategy supports transportation services, marketing campaigns, and studies that identify the transit desires of community members who can drive. Increasing choice riders increases ridership, revenues, and community awareness of transportation services offered within the community. This strategy also supports studies looking into the creation of a micro-transit service in partnership with a technology company like Uber, Lyft, or Via.

Lower Priorities

Explore Private-Public Partnerships with Different Ride-Sharing Companies (i.e. Uber, Lyft, Via, etc.)

Several stakeholders expressed interest in the creation of a regional micro-transit or ride-sharing service through a public-private partnership could provide an expedited service that would allow for on-demand transportation for people who have difficulties accessing the public transit network. These services can help alleviate the regional need for providing spontaneous trips by not requiring the customer to schedule to ride at least 24 hours in advance.

Though these services could help satisfy an important need in the region, there are accessibility and equity issues associated with these kinds of services. Accessibility-wise, this depends on the vehicles being used for the service. Some public-private partnerships do not necessarily require vehicles to be equipped with ADA accessible ramps and lifts. Equity-wise, most of these services require an internet-enabled smart phone to schedule a ride. This requirement is difficult for low-income individuals and individuals in areas with limited broadband access.

Most existing micro-transit services are pilot programs in the preliminary stages. Montgomery County, in association with Via, is operating the Ride On Flex Service, which provides on-demand mobility options in specific "geo-fenced" zones. While Montgomery County is highly urbanized in comparison to the Western Maryland, best practices from Ride On Flex and other similar services could be incorporated into a service within the region.

Chapter 8: Ongoing Arrangements

A required step in the local application process for Section 5310 Program funds is to submit part of the application to the appropriate Regional Coordinating Body for endorsement. These Regional Coordinating Bodies are responsible for reviewing local applications before they are submitted to MDOT MTA, and endorsing only those applications that are derived from/included in the current regional coordinated transportation plan. In Western Maryland the TCCWMD serves as the Regional Coordinating Body for this effort.

The development of the Western Maryland Coordinated Transportation Plan has also provided a framework for future regional coordinated planning activities, and has resulted in a new partnership between MDOT MTA and TCCWMD. The Council provides technical assistance to applicants applying for transportation related grants and is responsible for determining that projects requesting funds are consistent with the regionally adopted long-range transportation plan.

Other regional coordination actvties conducted by TCCWMD include:

- Participating in Allegany County Transportation Advisory Committee meetings and serving on the Washington County Transportation Advisory Committee.
- Attending appropriate regional meetings and the annual statewide Transportation Association of Maryland (TAM) conference.
- Providing information on the region's unmet transportation needs and issues.
- Assisting in the coordination of transportation services among the various providers in the region.
- Participating in future updates of the *Western Maryland Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.*

Chapter 9: Plan Adoption Process

Stakeholders from the Western Maryland Region who participated in the coordinated transportation planning process had the opportunity to review a preliminary version of this plan. Their input was incorporated into this final draft plan that was endorsed by the TCCWMD. A copy of the resolution is provided in Appendix A.

Chapter 10: Resources

This section provides various resources referenced throughout the plan or helpful with efforts to improve mobility in Western Maryland. It includes:

- Section 5310 Program information

- FTA guidance for the development of a coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan

- A list of website links to a variety of national technical assistance centers and other organizations that can help with implementation the strategies and projects identified in this plan

SECTION 5310 PROGRAM INFORMATION

The purpose of the Section 5310 Program is to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services.

Funding

Funds through the Section 5310 Program are apportioned for urbanized and rural areas based on the number of seniors and individuals with disabilities, with sixty percent of the funds apportioned to designated recipients in urbanized areas of 200,000 persons or more, twenty percent to states for use in urbanized areas of fewer than 200,000 persons, and twenty percent to states for use in rural areas. The federal share is eighty percent for capital projects and fifty percent for operating grants.

All of the local share must come from sources other than Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) funds. Some examples of non-DOT federal funds are the Community Development Block Grant and the Appalachian Regional Commission funds. Examples of other sources for local match monies that may be used for any or all of the local share include local appropriations, dedicated tax revenues, private donations, revenue from human service contracts, and net income generated from advertising and concessions.

Eligible Subrecipients

Eligible applicants for Section 5310 funds in Maryland are private non-profit corporations that submit either:

- A copy of the Articles of Incorporation filed with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation, or

- A copy of the determination from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service documenting their organization's private, non-profit status.

Although the Federal Section 5310 Program provides that a recipient may allocate funds to a state or local government authority under certain circumstances, the State of Maryland has determined that these public bodies will not be eligible to apply for Section 5310 funds for the following reasons:

- The limited funding available through the Section 5310 program is not adequate to meet the equipment needs of the non-profit organizations now eligible for funding. Approximately fifty percent of those applying each year actually receive funding.

- Non-profit organizations have extremely limited financial resources and few grant programs. Public bodies have access to expanded resources and broader access to grant programs.

Eligible Project Expenses

All awarded Section 5310 projects are required to be derived from a regional Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. In addition to being within a project derived from or included in the applicable regional plan, Section 5310 project funding eligibility is limited to the following types of project expenses.

Eligible Capital Expenses

In accordance with FTA guidance, at least fifty-five percent of Section 5310 funds must be utilized for public transportation capital projects that are planned, designed, and carried out to meet the specific needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Eligible capital expenses that meet this fifty-five percent requirement involve the following:

Rolling stock and related activities for Section 5310-funded vehicles:

- Acquisition of expansion or replacement buses or vans, and related procurement, testing, inspection, and acceptance costs
- Vehicle rehabilitation or overhaul
- Preventative maintenance
- Radios and communication equipment
- Vehicle wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices

Support equipment for Section 5310 Program:

- Computer hardware and software
- Transit-related Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Dispatch systems

Support for mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation. Mobility management activities may include:

- Promotion, enhancement, and facilitation of access to transportation services, including the integration and coordination of services for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and low-income individuals
- Support for short-term management activities to plan and implement coordinated services
- Support of state and local coordination policy bodies and councils
- Operation of transportation brokerages to coordinate providers, funding agencies, and passengers

- Provision of coordination services, including employer-oriented transportation management organizations' and human service organizations' customer-oriented travel navigator systems and neighborhood travel coordination activities such as coordinating individualized travel training and trip planning activities for customers

- Development and operation of one-stop transportation traveler call centers to coordinate transportation information on all travel modes and to manage eligibility requirements and arrangements for customers among supporting programs

- Operational planning for the acquisition of intelligent transportation technologies to help plan and operate coordinated systems inclusive of geographic information systems (GIS) mapping, global positioning system technology, coordinated vehicle scheduling, dispatching and monitoring technologies, as well as technologies to track costs and billing in a coordinated system, and single smart customer payment systems. (Acquisition of technology is also eligible as a standalone capital expense)

Other Eligible Capital and Operating Expenses

Up to forty-five percent of a rural, small urbanized area or large urbanized area's annual apportionment may be utilized for the following:

- Public transportation projects (capital only) planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate, or unavailable

- Public transportation projects (capital and operating) that exceed the requirements of ADA

- Public transportation projects (capital and operating) that improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance by individuals with disabilities on ADA-complementary paratransit service

- Alternatives to public transportation (capital and operating) that assist seniors and individuals with disabilities with transportation

Section 5310 Program Application Process

More information on the Section 5310 program application process, as well as information on other programs administered by MDOT MTA, can be found at:
http://www.taminc.org/Office-of-Local-Transit-Support

COORDINATED PLANNING GUIDANCE

1. The Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

Federal transit law, as amended by MAP-21, requires that projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program 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." The experiences gained from the efforts of the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), and specifically the United We Ride (UWR) initiative, provide a useful starting point for the development and implementation of the local public transit-human services transportation plan required under the Section 5310 program.

Many states have established UWR plans that may form a foundation for a coordinated plan that includes the required elements outlined in this chapter and meets the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 5310. In addition, many states and designated recipients may have coordinated plans established under SAFETEA-LU, and those plans may be updated to account for new stakeholders, eligibility, and MAP-21 requirements. FTA maintains flexibility in how projects appear in the coordination plan. Projects may be identified as strategies, activities, and/or specific projects addressing an identified service gap or transportation coordination objective articulated and prioritized within the plan.

2. Development of the Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan

Overview

A locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan ("coordinated plan") identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes; provides strategies for meeting those local needs; and prioritizes transportation services and projects 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, designated recipient, and the MPO, where applicable. The agency leading the planning process is decided locally and does not have to be the state or designated recipient.

In UZAs where there are multiple designated recipients, there may be multiple plans and each designated recipient will be responsible for the selection of projects in the designated recipient's area. A coordinated plan should maximize the programs' collective coverage by minimizing duplication of services. Further, a coordinated plan must be developed through a process that includes participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human service transportation providers, and other members of the public. While the plan is only required in communities seeking funding under the Section 5310

program, a coordinated plan should incorporate activities offered under other programs sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact.

Required Elements

Projects selected for funding shall be included in a coordinated plan that minimally includes the following elements at a level consistent with available resources and the complexity of the local institutional environment:

- An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit)

- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service

- Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery

- Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified

Local Flexibility in the Development of a Local Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

The decision for determining which agency has the lead for the development and coordination of the planning process should be made at the state, regional, and local levels. FTA recognizes the importance of local flexibility in developing plans for human service transportation. Therefore, the lead agency for the coordinated planning process may be different from the state or the agency that will serve as the designated recipient for the Section 5310 program. Further, FTA recognizes that many communities have conducted assessments of transportation needs and resources regarding individuals with disabilities and seniors. FTA also recognizes that some communities have taken steps to develop a comprehensive, coordinated human service transportation plan either independently or through United We Ride efforts. FTA supports communities building on existing assessments, plans, and action items. As new federal requirements must be met, communities may need to modify their plans or processes as necessary to meet these requirements. FTA encourages communities to consider inclusion of new partners, new outreach strategies, and new activities related to the targeted programs and populations.

Plans will vary based on the availability of resources and the existence of populations served under these programs. A rural community may develop its plans based on perceived needs emerging from the collaboration of the planning partners, whereas a large urbanized community may use existing data sources to conduct a more formal analysis to define service gaps and identify strategies for addressing the gaps.

This type of planning is also an eligible activity under four other FTA programs—the Metropolitan Planning (Section 5303), Statewide Planning (Section 5304), Formula Grants for Rural Areas

(Section 5311), and Urbanized Area Formula (Section 5307) programs—all of which may be used to supplement the limited (10 percent) planning and administration funding under this program. Other resources may also be available from other entities to fund coordinated planning activities. All "planning" activities undertaken in urbanized areas, regardless of the funding source, must be included in the Unified Planning Work Program of the applicable MPO.

Tools and Strategies for Developing a Coordinated Plan

States and communities may approach the development of a coordinated plan in different ways. The amount of available time, staff, funding, and other resources should be considered when deciding on specific approaches. Regardless of the method chosen, seniors; individuals with disabilities; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers; and other members of the public must be involved in the development and approval of the coordinated plan. The following is a list of potential strategies for consideration:

- **Community planning session.** A community may choose to conduct a local planning session with a diverse group of stakeholders in the community. This session would be intended to identify needs based on personal and professional experiences, identify strategies to address the needs, and set priorities based on time, resources, and feasibility for implementation. This process can be done in one meeting or over several sessions with the same group. It is often helpful to identify a facilitator to lead this process. Also, as a means to leverage limited resources and to ensure broad exposure, this could be conducted in cooperation, or coordination, with the applicable metropolitan or statewide planning process.

- **Self-assessment tool.** *The Framework for Action: Building the Fully Coordinated Transportation System*, developed by FTA and available at www.unitedweride.gov, helps stakeholders realize a shared perspective and build a roadmap for moving forward together. The self-assessment tool focuses on a series of core elements that are represented in categories of simple diagnostic questions to help groups in states and communities assess their progress toward transportation coordination based on standards of excellence. There is also a *Facilitator's Guide* that offers detailed advice on how to choose an existing group or construct an ad hoc group. In addition, it describes how to develop elements of a plan, such as identifying the needs of targeted populations, assessing gaps and duplication in services, and developing strategies to meet needs and coordinate services.

- **Focus groups.** A community could choose to conduct a series of focus groups within communities that provides opportunity for greater input from a greater number of representatives, including transportation agencies, human service providers, and passengers. This information can be used to inform the needs analysis in the community. Focus groups also create an opportunity to begin an ongoing dialogue with community representatives on key issues, strategies, and plans for implementation.

- **Survey.** The community may choose to conduct a survey to evaluate the unmet transportation needs within a community and/or available resources. Surveys can be conducted through mail, e-mail, or in-person interviews. Survey design should consider sampling, data collection strategies, analysis, and projected return rates. Surveys should be

designed taking accessibility considerations into account, including alternative formats, access to the Internet, literacy levels, and limited English proficiency.

- **Detailed study and analysis.** A community may decide to conduct a complex analysis using inventories, interviews, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, and other types of research strategies. A decision to conduct this type of analysis should take into account the amount of time and funding resources available, and communities should consider leveraging state and MPO resources for these undertakings.

3. Participation in the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Planning Process

Recipients shall certify that the coordinated plan was 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. Note that the required participants include not only transportation providers but also providers of human services, and members of the public who can provide insights into local transportation needs. It is important that stakeholders be included in the development, approval, and implementation of the local coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan. A planning process in which stakeholders provide their opinions but have no assurance that those opinions will be considered in the outcome does not meet the requirement of "participation." Explicit consideration and response should be provided to public input received during the development of the coordinated plan. Stakeholders should have reasonable opportunities to be actively involved in the decision-making process at key decision points, including, but not limited to, development and approval of the proposed coordinated plan document. The following possible strategies facilitate appropriate inclusion:

Adequate Outreach to Allow for Participation

- Outreach strategies and potential participants will vary from area to area. Potential outreach strategies could include notices or flyers in centers of community activity, newspaper or radio announcements, e-mail lists, website postings, and invitation letters to other government agencies, transportation providers, human services providers, and advocacy groups. Conveners should note that not all potential participants have access to the Internet and they should not rely exclusively on electronic communications. It is useful to allow many ways to participate, including in-person testimony, mail, e-mail, and teleconference. Any public meetings regarding the plan should be held in a location and time where accessible transportation services can be made available and adequately advertised to the general public using techniques such as those listed above. Additionally, interpreters for individuals with hearing impairments and English as a second language and accessible formats (e.g., large print, Braille, electronic versions) should be provided as required by law.

Participants in the Planning Process

Metropolitan and statewide planning under 49 U.S.C. 5303 and 5304 require consultation with an expansive list of stakeholders. There is significant overlap between the lists of stakeholders identified under those provisions (e.g., private providers of transportation, representatives of transit users, and representatives of individuals with disabilities) and the organizations that should be involved in preparation of the coordinated plan.

The projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program must be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan" that was "developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by other members of the public." The requirement for developing the local public transit-human services transportation plan is intended to improve services for people with disabilities and seniors. Therefore, individuals, groups, and organizations representing these target populations should be invited to participate in the coordinated planning process. Consideration should be given to including groups and organizations in the coordinated planning process if present in the community. Examples of these types of groups are listed below.

Transportation Partners

- Area transportation planning agencies, including MPOs, councils of government (COGs), rural planning organizations (RPOs), regional councils, associations of governments, state departments of transportation, and local governments
- Public transportation providers, including ADA paratransit providers and agencies administering the projects funded under FTA urbanized and rural programs
- Private transportation providers, including private transportation brokers, taxi operators, vanpool providers, school transportation operators, and intercity bus operators
- Nonprofit transportation providers, including volunteer programs
- Past or current organizations funded under the Section 5310, JARC, and/or the New Freedom programs
- Human service agencies funding, operating, and/or providing access to transportation services

Passengers and Advocates

- Existing and potential riders, including both general and targeted population passengers (individuals with disabilities and seniors)
- Protection and advocacy organizations
- Representatives from independent living centers
- Advocacy organizations working on behalf of targeted populations

Human Service Partners

- Agencies that administer health, employment, or other support programs for targeted populations. Examples of such agencies include but are not limited to departments of social/human services, employment one-stop services, vocational rehabilitation, workforce investment boards, Medicaid, community action programs (CAP), Agency on Aging (AoA), Developmental Disability Council, community services board
- Nonprofit human service provider organizations that serve the targeted populations
- Job training and placement agencies
- Housing agencies
- Healthcare facilities
- Mental health agencies

Other

- Security and emergency management agencies
- Tribes and tribal representatives
- Economic development organizations
- Faith-based and community-based organizations
- Representatives of the business community (e.g., employers)
- Appropriate local or state officials and elected officials
- School districts
- Policy analysts or experts

Note: Participation in the planning process will not bar providers (public or private) from bidding to provide services identified in the coordinated planning process. This planning process differs from the project selection process, and it differs from the development and issuance of a request for proposal (RFP) as described in the common grant rule (49 CFR part 18 and part 19).

Levels of Participation

The suggested list of participants above does not limit participation by other groups, nor require participation by every group listed. Communities will have different types of participants depending on population and size of community, geographic location, and services provided at the local level. FTA expects that planning participants will have an active role in the development, approval, adoption, and implementation of the plan. Participation may remain low even though a good faith effort is made by the lead agency to involve passengers; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers; and others. The lead agency convening the coordinated planning process should document the efforts it utilized, such as those suggested above, to solicit involvement.

In addition, federal, state, regional, and local policy makers, providers, and advocates should consistently engage in outreach efforts that enhance the coordinated process because it is important that all stakeholders identify the opportunities that are available in building a coordinated system. To increase participation at the local levels from human service partners, state department of

transportation offices are encouraged to work with their partner agencies at the state level to provide information to their constituencies about the importance of partnering with human service transportation programs and the opportunities that are available through building a coordinated system.

Adoption of a Plan

As a part of the local coordinated planning process, the lead agency in consultation with participants should identify the process for approving and adopting the plan, and this process must include participation by stakeholders identified in the law: seniors; individuals with disabilities; representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers; and other members of the public. A strategy for adopting the plan could also be included in the state's SMP and the designated recipient's PMP, further described in Chapter VII.

FTA will not formally review and approve coordinated plans. The recipient's grant application (see Appendix A) will document the plan from which each project listed is included, including the lead agency, the date of adoption of the plan, or other appropriate identifying information. This may be done by citing the section of the plan or page references from which the project is included.

4. Relationship to Other Transportation Planning Processes

Relationship between the Coordinated Planning Process and the Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Planning Processes

The coordinated plan may either be developed separately from the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes and then incorporated into the broader plans, or be developed as a part of the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes. If the coordinated plan is not prepared within the broader process, the lead agency for the coordinated plan should ensure coordination and consistency between the coordinated planning process and metropolitan or statewide planning processes. For example, planning assumptions should not be inconsistent.

Projects identified in the coordinated planning process and selected for FTA funding must be incorporated into both the TIP and STIP in UZAs with populations of 50,000 or more; and incorporated into the STIP for rural areas under 50,000 in population. Depending on the projects resulting from the coordinated planning and selection process, a single line item on the TIP/STIP for capital or operating projects may be sufficient. However, given the expanded project and subrecipient eligibility under MAP-21, a designated recipient and state may need to consider more detailed programming, such as categorizing the projects based on the types of projects (capital or operating) and/or types of subrecipients, e.g., nonprofit, public entity, etc.

In some areas, where the coordinated plan or project selection is not completed in a time frame that coincides with the development of the TIP/STIP, the TIP/STIP amendment processes will need to be utilized to include selected projects in the TIP/STIP before FTA grant award.
The lead agency developing the coordinated plan should communicate with the relevant MPOs, state departments of transportation or regional planning agencies at an early stage in plan

development. States with coordination programs may wish to incorporate the needs and strategies identified in local coordinated plans into statewide coordination plans.

Depending upon the structure established by local decision makers, the coordinated planning process may or may not become an integral part of the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes. State and local officials should consider the fundamental differences in scope, time horizon, and level of detail between the coordinated planning process and the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning processes. However, there are important areas of overlap between the planning processes, as well. Areas of overlap represent opportunities for sharing and leveraging resources between the planning processes for such activities as: (1) needs assessments based on the distribution of targeted populations and locations of employment centers, employment-related activities, community services and activities, medical centers, housing, and other destinations; (2) inventories of transportation providers/resources, levels of utilization, duplication of service, and unused capacity; (3) gap analysis; (4) any eligibility restrictions; and (5) opportunities for increased coordination of transportation services. Local communities may choose the method for developing plans that best fits their needs and circumstances.

Relationship between the Requirement for Public Participation in the Coordinated Plan and the Requirement for Public Participation in Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Planning

Title 49 U.S.C. 5303(i)(6) and 5304(f)(3), as amended by MAP-21, require MPOs and states to engage interested parties in preparing transportation plans, TIPs, and STIPs. "Interested parties" include, among others, affected public agencies, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, and representatives of individuals with disabilities.

MPOs and/or states may work with the lead agency developing the coordinated plan to coordinate schedules, agendas, and strategies of the coordinated planning process with metropolitan and statewide planning in order to minimize additional costs and avoid duplication of efforts. MPOs and states must still provide opportunities for participation when planning for transportation related activities beyond the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

Cycle and Duration of the Coordinated Plan

At a minimum, the coordinated plan should follow the update cycles for metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs) (i.e., four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and five years in air quality attainment areas). States, MPOs, designated recipients, and public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation should set up a cycle that is conducive to and coordinated with the metropolitan and statewide planning processes to ensure that selected projects are included in the TIP and STIP and to receive funds in a timely manner.

Role of Transportation Providers that Receive FTA Funding Under the Urbanized and Rural Area Formula Grant Programs in the Coordinated Planning Process.

Recipients of Section 5307 and Section 5311 assistance are the "public transit" in the public transit-human services transportation plan and their participation is assumed and expected. Further, 49 U.S.C. 5307(b)(5), as amended by MAP-21, requires that, "Each recipient of a grant shall ensure that

the proposed program of projects (POP) provides for the coordination of public transportation services … with transportation services assisted from other United States Government sources." In addition, 49 U.S.C. 5311(b)(2)(C)(ii) requires the Secretary of DOT to determine that a state's Section 5311 projects "provide the maximum feasible coordination of public transportation service … with transportation service assisted by other federal sources." Finally, under the Section 5311 program, states are required to expend 15 percent of the amount available to support intercity bus service. FTA expects the coordinated planning process in rural areas to take into account human service needs that require intercity transportation.

The schematic below illustrates the relationship between the coordinated plan and the metropolitan and statewide planning processes.
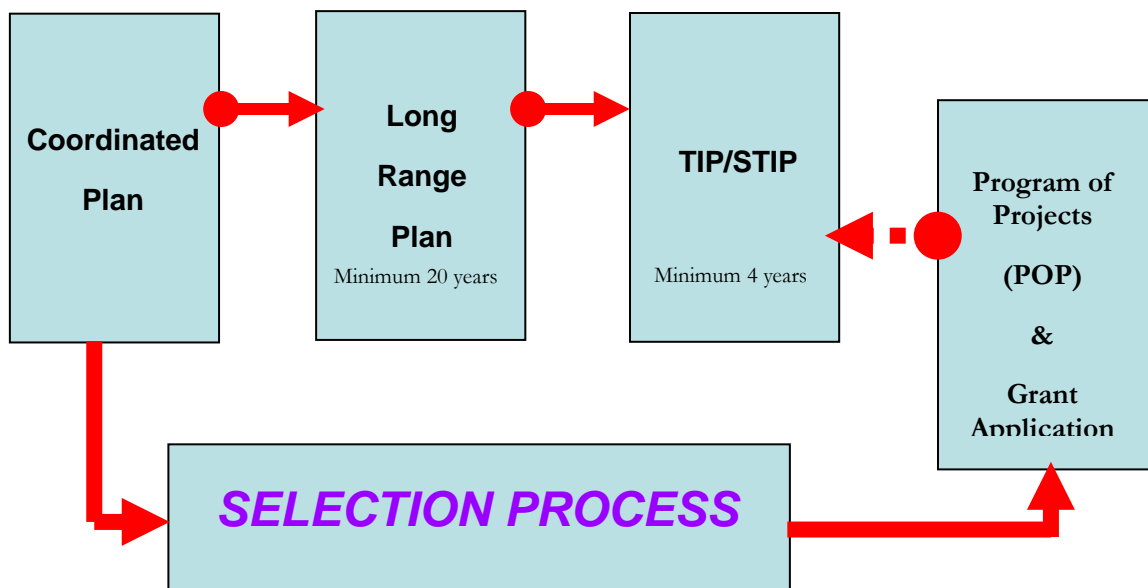
HELPFUL WEBSITES

- American Public Transportation Association (APTA):
  - www.apta.com

- Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA):
  - www.ctaa.org

- Easterseals:
  - http://www.easterseals.com

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA):
  - http://www.fta.dot.gov

- National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC):
  - www.natdc.org

- National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP):
  - http://www.trb.org/NCHRP/NCHRP.aspx

- National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP):
  - http://www.nationalrtap.org

- National Volunteer Transportation Center:
  - http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=3767&z=132

- Shared-Use Mobility Center:
  - https://sharedusemobilitycenter.org

- Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association (TLPA):
  - http://www.tlpa.org

- Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP):
  - http://www.apta.com/resources/tcrp/Pages/default.aspx

- Transit Planning For All:
  - http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=326

Appendix A

Tri-County Council for Western Maryland

Resolution to Endorse the Western Maryland Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Tri County Council
For Western Maryland

One Technology Drive
Suite 1000
Frostburg, Maryland 21532
Phone (301) 689-1300
Fax (301) 689-1313
www.tccwmd.org

TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL FOR WESTERN MARYLAND

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PROGRAM

RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE THE WESTERN MARYLAND COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland (TCCWMD) is the Regional Coordinating Body for the Western Maryland region, encompassing the counties of Garrett, Allegany, Washington, and rural Frederick; and

WHEREAS, the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, as the Regional Coordinating Body, has responsibility under the provisions of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) legislation for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Western Maryland area; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transit Administration, a division of the U.S. Department of Transportation, requires that under the MAP-21 legislation the establishment of a locally developed, coordinated public transit - human services transportation plan for funding through the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) Program; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Transit Administration requires the plan to be developed by a process that includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of human services transportation coordination is to improve transportation services for persons with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with lower incomes by ensuring that communities coordinate transportation resources provided through multiple federal programs. This coordination serves to enhance transportation access, minimize duplication of services, and facilitate the most appropriate cost-effective transportation possible with available resources; and

WHEREAS, the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration, coordinating with the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, engaged in a public outreach effort and identified eligible programs and activities as the basis for the Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan to maximize service to eligible clients; and

WHEREAS, the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland's endorsement of this Plan is contingent upon apportioned funds for the Section 5310 program to serve the needs of the targeted population; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland Executive Board hereby endorse the Western Maryland Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Western Maryland Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan be forwarded to the Cumberland Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and the Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization for inclusion in their metropolitan transportation planning processes.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland as the Regional Coordinating Body for the Western Maryland region approved the aforementioned resolution at its November 22, 2019 meeting.

Leanne Mazer
Executive Director, TCCWMD

11/22/19

Date

Commissioner Jacob Shade
Chairman, TCCWMD

11/22/19

Date