



Johnson City Urbanized Area Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Final Report



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Johnson City Urbanized Area Coordinated Public Transit- Human Services Transportation Plan

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Introduction..... | 1 |
| Overview | 1 |
| Methodology..... | 2 |
| 2. Prior Coordinated Plan | 3 |
| 3. Existing Conditions | 5 |
| Demographics | 5 |
| Overview..... | 5 |
| UZA Population | 6 |
| Older Adult Population | 7 |
| Individuals With Disabilities | 9 |
| Vehicle Ownership..... | 10 |
| Transit Propensity | 11 |
| Employment..... | 12 |
| Household Income | 14 |
| Conclusions | 15 |
| 4. Inventory of Existing Transportation Services..... | 16 |
| Overview | 16 |
| Existing Transportation Resources..... | 17 |
| General Public Transportation | 18 |
| Human Services Agency Transportation Programs..... | 20 |
| Volunteer Transportation | 24 |
| Veterans Transportation..... | 25 |
| Private Transportation Providers | 26 |
| Intercity Bus..... | 27 |
| Other Transportation Services | 27 |
| Provider Organizational Characteristics | 28 |
| Scheduling, Fares, and Fleet Information | 29 |
| 5. Needs Assessment | 32 |
| Comparative Assessment of Supply and Demand for Services | 32 |
| Key Stakeholder Interviews | 32 |
| Stakeholder and Public Meetings | 33 |
| Public Survey..... | 34 |
| Summary | 36 |
| 6. Recommendations for Coordinated Transportation..... | 38 |
| Goals | 38 |
| Goals Summary | 39 |
| Detailed Goals and Strategies..... | 44 |
| Goal 1: Establish a coordinated transportation framework..... | 44 |
| Goal 2: Ensure funding and resources continue to be available for maintaining existing transportation services | 47 |
| Goal 3: Service expansions for access to jobs and college..... | 53 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Goal 4: Transportation service expansions | 55 |
| Goal 5: Transit technology | 60 |
| Goal 6: Enhance and coordinate the transportation information and referral process | 62 |
| Goal 7: Improved information and awareness about transportation options | 64 |
| Goal 8: Enhance transportation service levels for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes | 68 |
| 7. Summary of Potential Implementation Timelines and Costs | 72 |
| | |
| Appendix A: Public Survey Results | 73 |
| Age and Mobility Limitations of Survey Respondents | 73 |
| Location of Respondents | 74 |
| Modes of Transportation | 74 |
| Gaps in Access to Transportation | 75 |
| Why Not Use Public Transit?..... | 76 |
| Why Not Ride Taxis, Uber or Lyft? | 77 |
| Riding with Friends and Family | 78 |
| Information and Referral | 78 |
| Appendix B: Glossary of Terms | 79 |

**RESOLUTION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE JOHNSON CITY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MTPO)**

**To adopt the 2022 Johnson City Urbanized Area Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services
Transportation Plan**

WHEREAS, the Johnson City MTPO took the lead to update the Coordinated Public Transit-
Human Services Transportation Plan for the Johnson City Urbanized Area; and

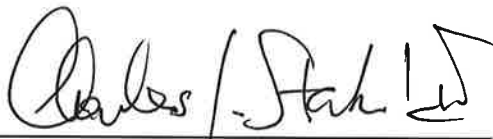
WHEREAS, the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 Program, “Enhanced Mobility for Seniors
and Individuals with Disabilities,” requires that eligible projects be included in a locally developed
Coordinated Plan that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and
people with low incomes, and strategies and priorities for meeting local needs; and

WHEREAS, local transportation service providers, human services agencies and the MPO worked
together to: 1) assess the needs of the target population, 2) evaluate available services and current
transportation providers, 3) identify gaps between current services and needs, and 4) to develop and
prioritize strategies to address identified gaps; and

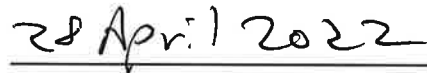
WHEREAS, the collaborative efforts of local transportation service providers, human service agencies
and the MPO culminated in the production of a revised Coordinated Plan; and

WHEREAS, Local, state and federal government officials and the public were afforded an opportunity
to comment on the aforementioned Coordinated Plan; and


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Board and Executive Staff of the Johnson
City Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization does hereby adopt the 2022 Johnson City
Urbanized Area Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.




MTPO Executive Board, Chair



Date



MTPO Executive Secretary



Date

1. Introduction

Overview

Federal transit law requires that projects selected for funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program be included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan (coordinated plan), and that the plan be developed through a process that includes participation by older adults, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers, and other members of the public utilizing transportation services. The coordinated plan identifies transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation.¹

In 2021, the U.S. Congress enacted the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) which includes funding for new transportation programs and continues funding for core programs, including the Section 5310 Program, which had previously been authorized under the Fixing Americas Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) is the designated recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Program funds for rural and small urban areas throughout Tennessee. TDOT awards Section 5310 funds to transit agencies in the Johnson City Urbanized Area (UZA) on an annual basis. As such, transit agencies utilize this Federal funding program for transit-related services that assist targeted population groups. The Johnson City Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) is responsible for updating the Coordinated Plan and programming federal funds. This report is the first technical memorandum in the Coordinated Plan Update. The plan documents the following topics:

- Existing demographic and socio-economic conditions (Chapter 3 below)
- An inventory of current transportation resources in the region (Chapter 4 below)
- An assessment of unmet transportation needs and barriers to mobility as documented through input from local stakeholders and the public survey (Chapter 5 below)
- Goals and strategies for improving the network of mobility options (to be included in the draft report)
- Prioritized goals and strategies for improving the network of options (to be included in the draft report).

The planning area for this study includes the Johnson City Urbanized Area which includes the jurisdictions of Bluff City, Elizabethton, Johnson City, Jonesborough, part of the Town of Unicoi, and parts of Carter, Sullivan, and Washington Counties.

The intent of the Coordinated Plan is to guide and support a coordinated approach for improving the network of transportation resources for older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, and the general public in a manner that maximizes the use of existing resources and

¹ <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/coordinated-public-transit-human-services-transportation-plans>

introduces new programs that will be most appropriate for addressing the needs identified by local stakeholders.

Methodology

The fundamental element of the planning process is the identification and assessment of existing transportation resources and local/regional unmet transportation needs and gaps in service. This was accomplished by receiving input from stakeholders and the general public through interviews, meetings, and surveys. The process incorporated the following planning elements:

1. Review of the previous Coordinated Plan to develop a basis for evaluation and recommendations;
2. Evaluation of existing economic/demographic conditions using U.S. Census data;
3. Conduct of an online general public survey;
4. Conduct of stakeholder interviews to human service agency staff, transit systems, and health and wellness organizations;
5. Conduct of local meetings for stakeholders and the public for the purpose of updating needs, service gaps, and developing preliminary strategies;
6. Update of the inventory of existing transportation services provided by public, private and non-profit organizations;
7. Update of the summary of service areas and eligibility to determine where and how existing services can be better used to meet transportation needs; and
8. Development of an updated implementation plan that includes current goals, strategies, responsible parties, and performance measures.

2. Prior Coordinated Plan

On March 17, 2017, the Johnson City MTPO Executive Board adopted the 2017 Johnson City Urbanized Area Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. This plan was developed following federal transportation legislation guidelines to improve the efficiency of the services offered, evaluate the system to identify gaps, and determine cost effective improvements that would result in a better transit system. Major elements of the planning process included a description of community demographics, current transportation services and areas served, outreach and involvement efforts with the public and stakeholders, an assessment of service needs and gaps, solutions and strategies in meeting identified needs, a discussion of potential revenue source options and concluded with suggested actions in advancing solutions and strategies.

The study began with a description of the community structure of the Johnson City MTPO area with a specific focus on population and community demographics within the urbanized area of Johnson City and the greater Johnson City region (comprised of Washington, Carter, Sullivan, and Unicoi Counties). Demographic data collected focused on trends in the population of older adults (age 65 and over), individuals with disabilities and persons living below the poverty line. The locations where the largest portions of these groups reside was identified by the study as well as changes in these demographic groups over time. Employment data were also analyzed to identify the change in the number of jobs and types of jobs within Washington, Carter, and Unicoi Counties from 1970 to 2045 for the employment sectors of retail, service, and manufacturing. Following the collection of demographic information, the existing transportation services in the area were inventoried to gain an understanding of current schedules, service areas, fares, routes and service design. Public transportation, including fixed route and demand response services were included in the inventory as well as human service transportation and private transportation services providers.

Stakeholder and public meetings were held at the beginning stage of the development of the plan and near the latter portion of the plan development process. To best assess the provision of public transit and human service transportation services within the four counties comprising the Johnson City region, a 17-question survey was developed and administered to participants at the first stakeholder and public meeting. Good participation occurred at these meetings with 22 individuals attending both the first and second stakeholder meetings. In both the stakeholder and public input processes, participants expressed a desire for extended service hours (nights and weekends) and more routes. In total 20 surveys were completed by 19 different organizations.

Through analysis of input by stakeholders and the public, a key theme emerged — addressing service gaps and unmet needs by expanding service areas and service hours. Three topic areas were then identified to address these gaps and needs, and within these three areas several strategies were developed. First among these topic areas were strategies associated with expansion of services within the Johnson City Urbanized Area including increased evening service hours and same-day service and increased evening service for ADA clients. The second topic area grouped strategies related to information and awareness of transit services with actions including increasing targeted outreach related to available services, increasing general public outreach and increasing coordination between providers. The third and final topic area was created for strategies not applicable to the two other groupings and primarily related to other investments that help facilitate an efficient and usable transit system. Next, the

study identified several funding sources to provide possibilities for financial support of these identified needs. Transportation services are typically funded through fares, donations, contract services, advertising, governmental funds/grants, and charitable grants. The plan also noted that additional funding opportunities or programs outside of the traditional sources may be available and suggested that such funding types should be explored for use in funding future transit investments.

The plan concluded with next steps for implementation of the strategies and tactics suggested by the public and stakeholder input process and analysis of the area conducted at the beginning of the process. It was recommended that the MTPO and the region's transportation service providers build upon the stakeholder/public collaboration and input received to cyclically review and revise the list of transportation gaps, potential strategies (including prioritization), and to discuss other possible opportunities to enhance and coordinate transportation service in the Johnson City UZA.

3. Existing Conditions

Demographics

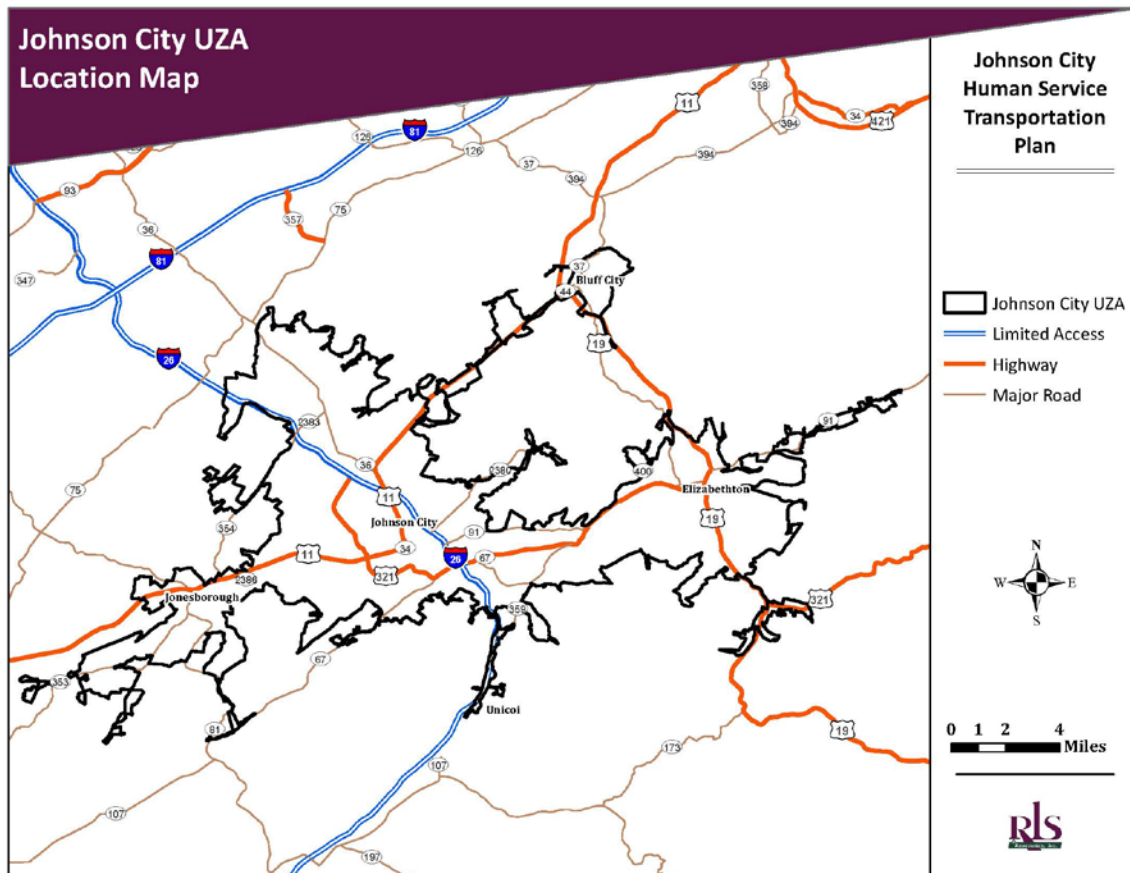
Overview

The demographic landscape of a given area can illustrate the demand for transit services in that area. For this Plan, data and information from the U.S Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2015 – 2019 Five-Year Estimates was used to conduct the demographic analysis.

The demographic factors included in this chapter were applied to the transportation needs assessment activities to support and clarify the information discovered through community outreach and survey activities.

Johnson City is located in the northeast portion of Tennessee. The Johnson City UZA spans approximately 110 square miles. It is primarily in Carter and Washington counties, but stretches into Sullivan and Unicoi counties. It includes the jurisdictions of Bluff City, Elizabethton, Johnson City, Jonesborough, and part of the Town of Unicoi. Major interstates and highways in the region include I-26, US-321, and US-11. Figure 1 shows the extent of the urbanized area and the boundaries of the study area.

Figure 1: Johnson City UZA Location Map



UZA Population

Figure 2 shows the population density of the Johnson City UZA per square mile by block group. The highest densities are seen in the urban core of Johnson City where population density ranges from 3,268 to 5,860 persons per square mile. Moderate population density also occurs within the urban core but in areas such as Elizabethton, along the SR 36 corridor to the northwest of Johnson City and to the southeast along SR 359. The population density in an area can be a key indicator of transit propensity and help to guide mode choice for providing transit service. Areas of higher density indicate there may be a need for fixed-route service utilizing larger vehicles. Where population density is lower, demand response or other on-demand transit service with smaller capacity vehicles may be warranted.

When reviewing current population statistics, it is also important to understand population projections, whether or not the area is set to grow or decline in population over the coming years. Figure 3 compares the population projections of the Johnson City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which contains the counties of Carter, Unicoi, and Washington, and Sullivan counties from 2020 thru 2070. Both Carter and Sullivan Counties are expected to see population declines, with Carter County's decline projected to be 30 percent from 2020 to 2070.

Figure 2: Johnson City UZA Population Density

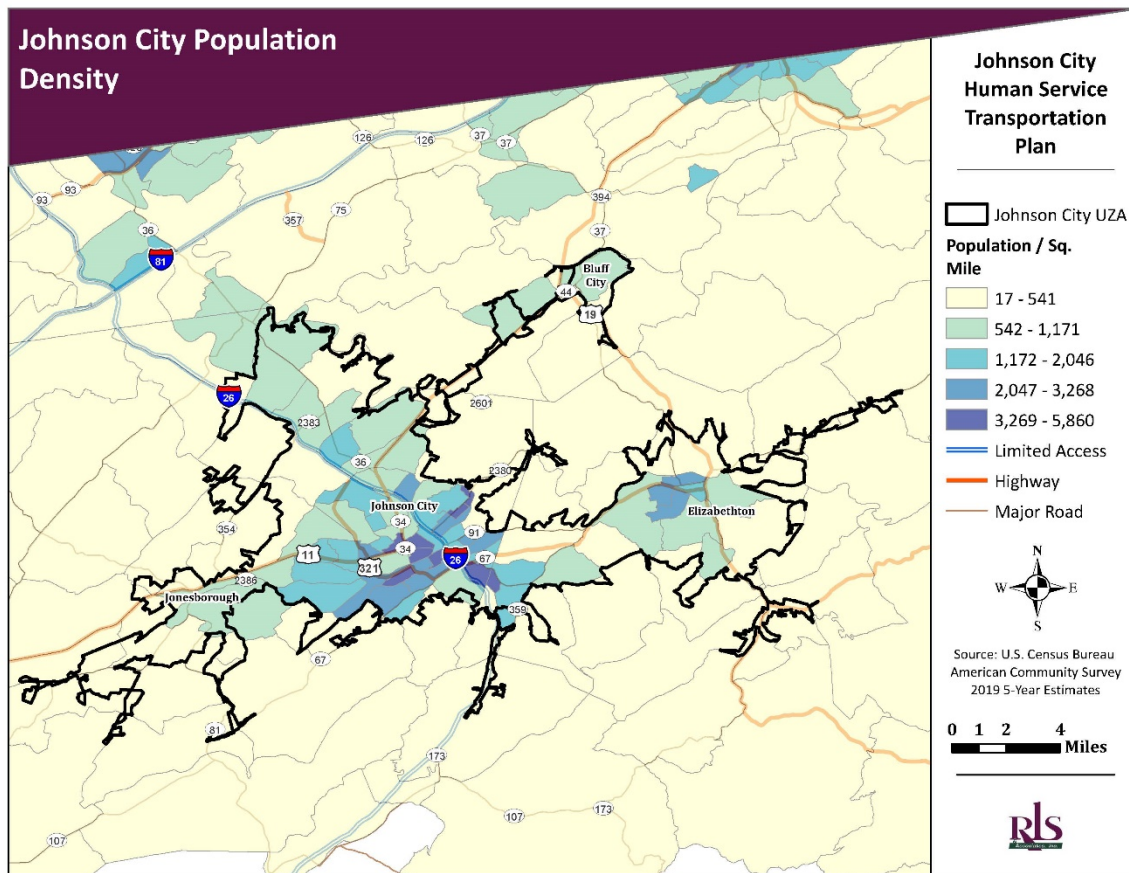
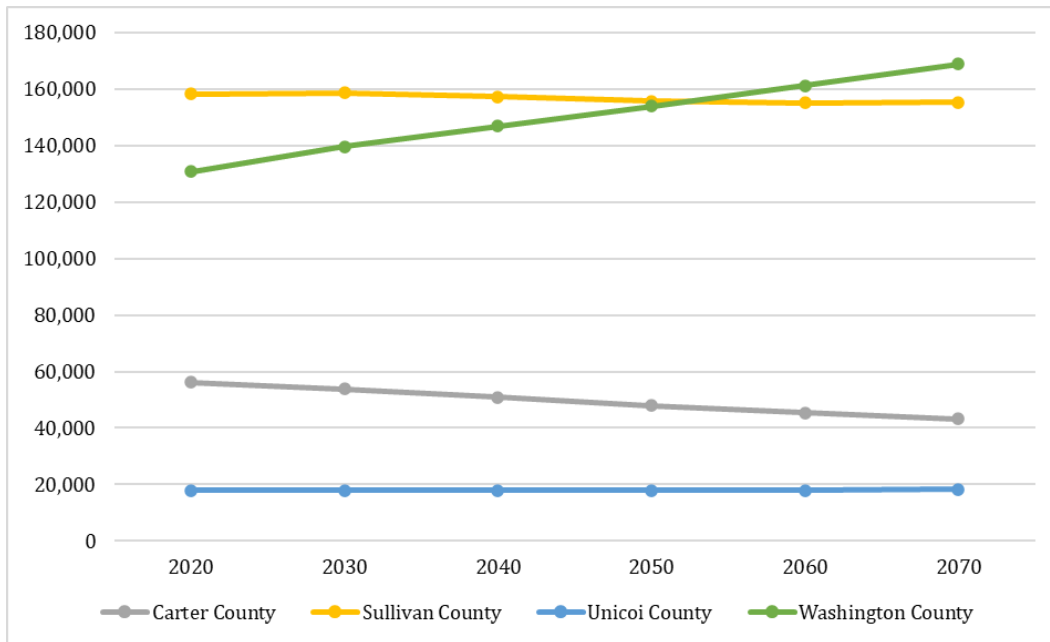


Figure 3: Population Projections (2020-2070)



Source: Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Tennessee, Knoxville – October 2019

Older Adult Population

Older adult populations may have a higher desire or dependency on transit due to living on a retirement income or the inability or aversion to driving. For these reasons, an area’s senior population is an indicator of the likelihood that transportation services will be used. With lifespan increasing across the US, and the desire of seniors to live independently, the potential need to provide transit services to this population increases.

Figure 4 shows the population density of seniors 65 years and older in the Johnson City UZA. Generally, the senior population is most dense (603 – 1,082 persons per sq mile) in the same block groups as the general population discussed above. However, the area between I-26 and US 321 shows a larger density of seniors than in other areas and compared to the general population. Conversely, there is little to no senior population density in the block group surrounding East Tennessee State University even though there is generally a high density of persons.

To get a different view of the older adult population on the UZA area, Figure 5 shows the percentage of those over the age of 65 by town compared to the UZA as a whole. While 19 percent of the UZA population is age 65 or older, that is only the case for 16 percent of the population in Johnson City. Jonesborough has the highest rate with 25 percent of their population being age 65 or older.

Figure 4: Johnson City UZA Older Adult Density

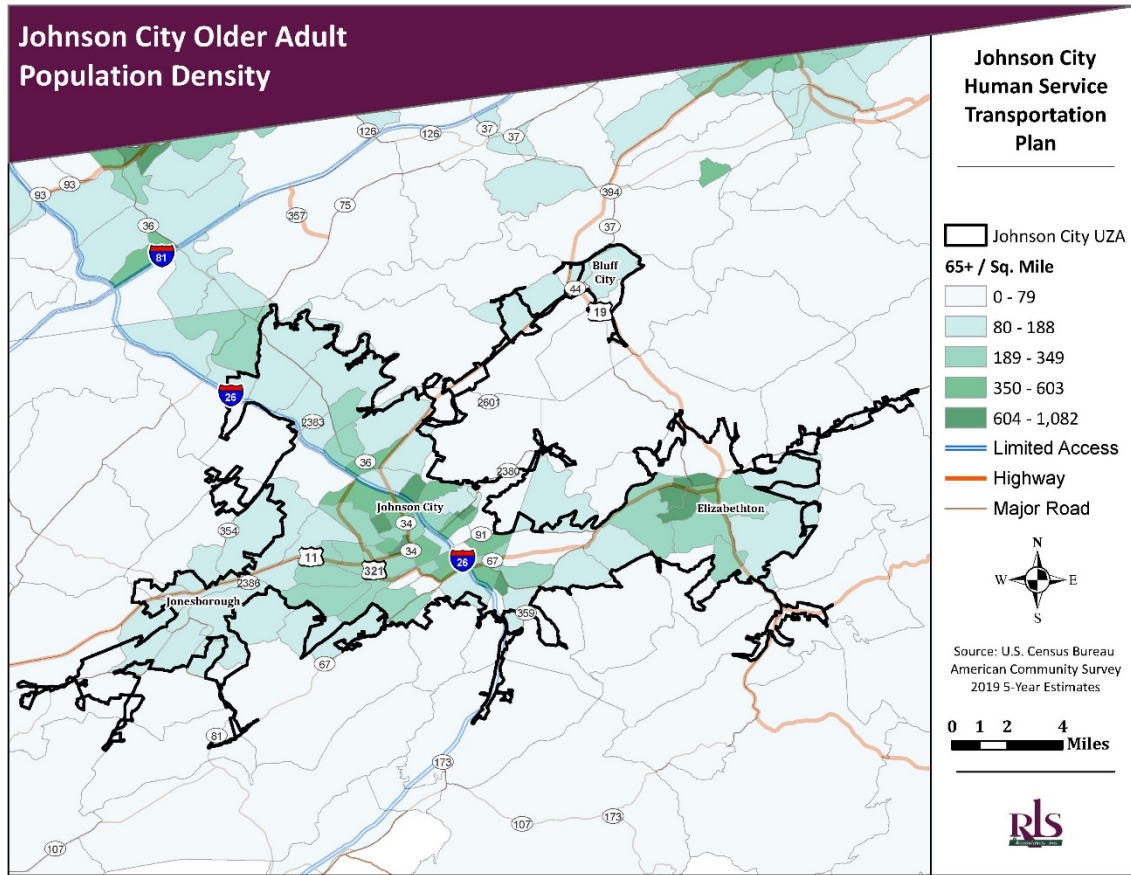
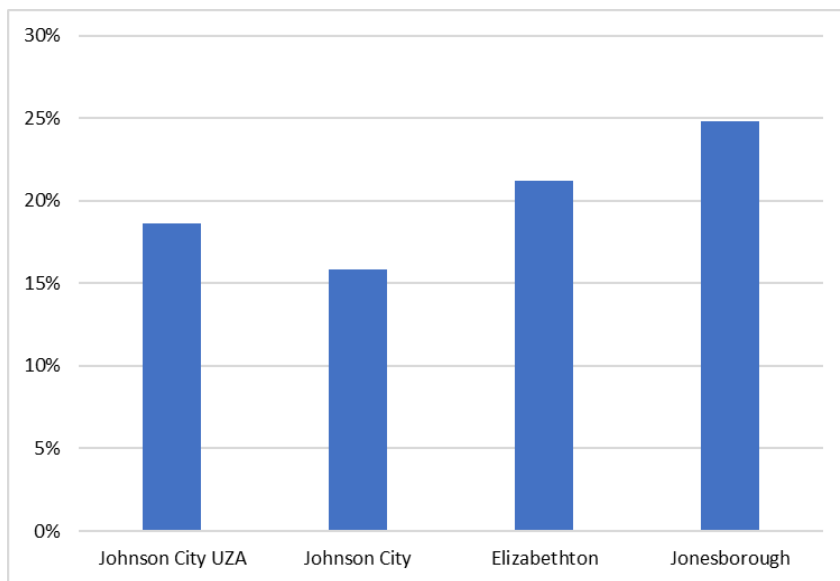


Figure 5: Older Adult Population



Individuals With Disabilities

Persons with physical disabilities that impair their ability to drive are often transit users, and it is important to include these individuals and their transportation needs in an analysis of the transit propensity for the UZA. Figure 6 and Figure 7 show the UZA and display the total and percent of the population with disabilities by block group, respectively.

As shown in Figure 6, the total number of persons with disabilities is higher in the outlying block groups around Johnson City. However, when individuals with disabilities are shown as a percentage of total population in Figure 7, four block groups in the central portion of Johnson City have 24% – 45% individuals with disabilities, the highest in the UZA. Other areas with a higher (up to 24%) rate of individuals with a disability are located in the Jonesborough area and the block group directly west of the city center.

Figure 6: Johnson City UZA Total Population with a Disability

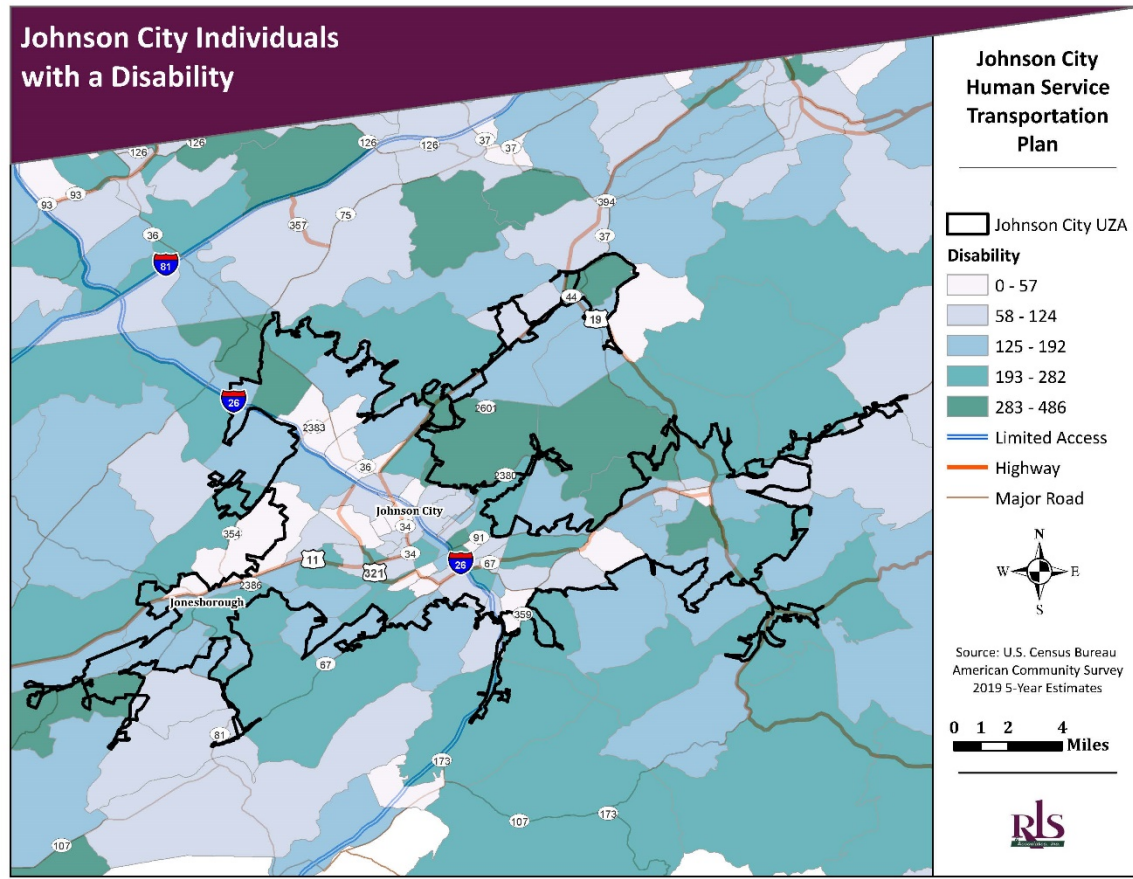
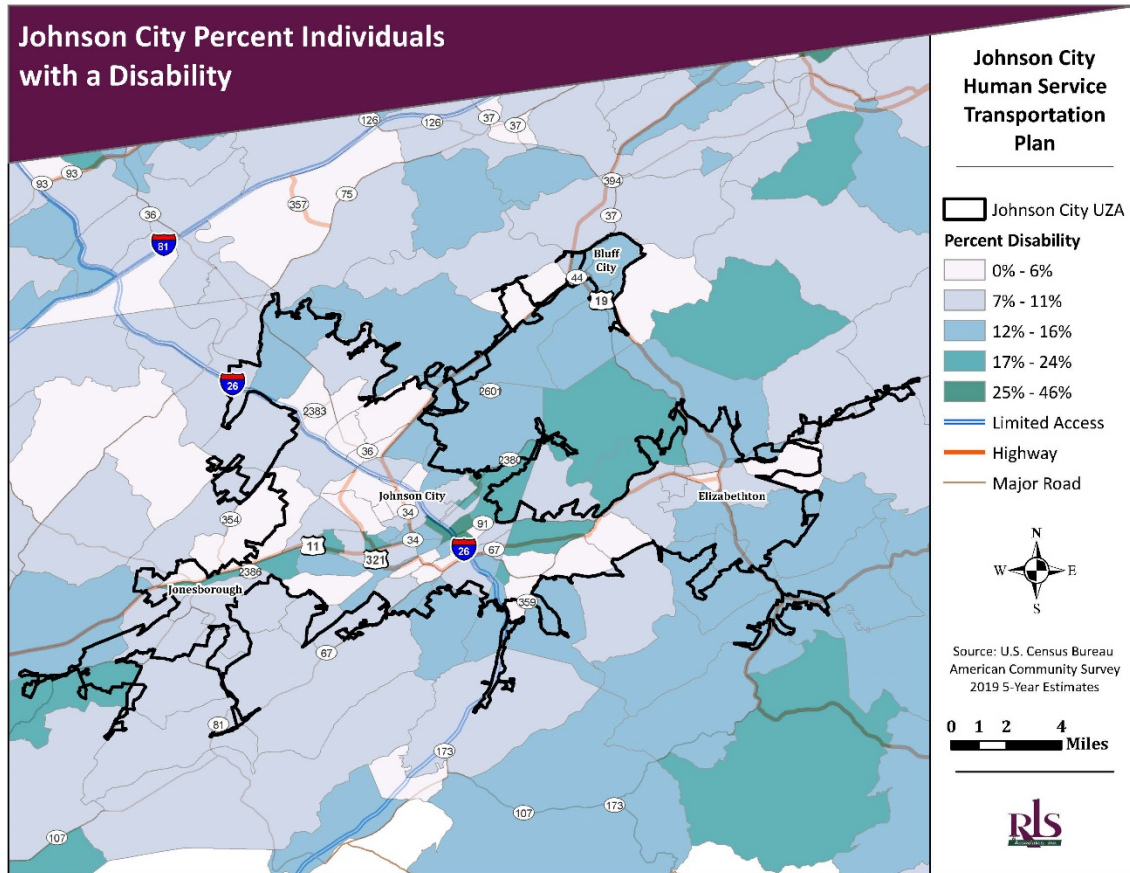


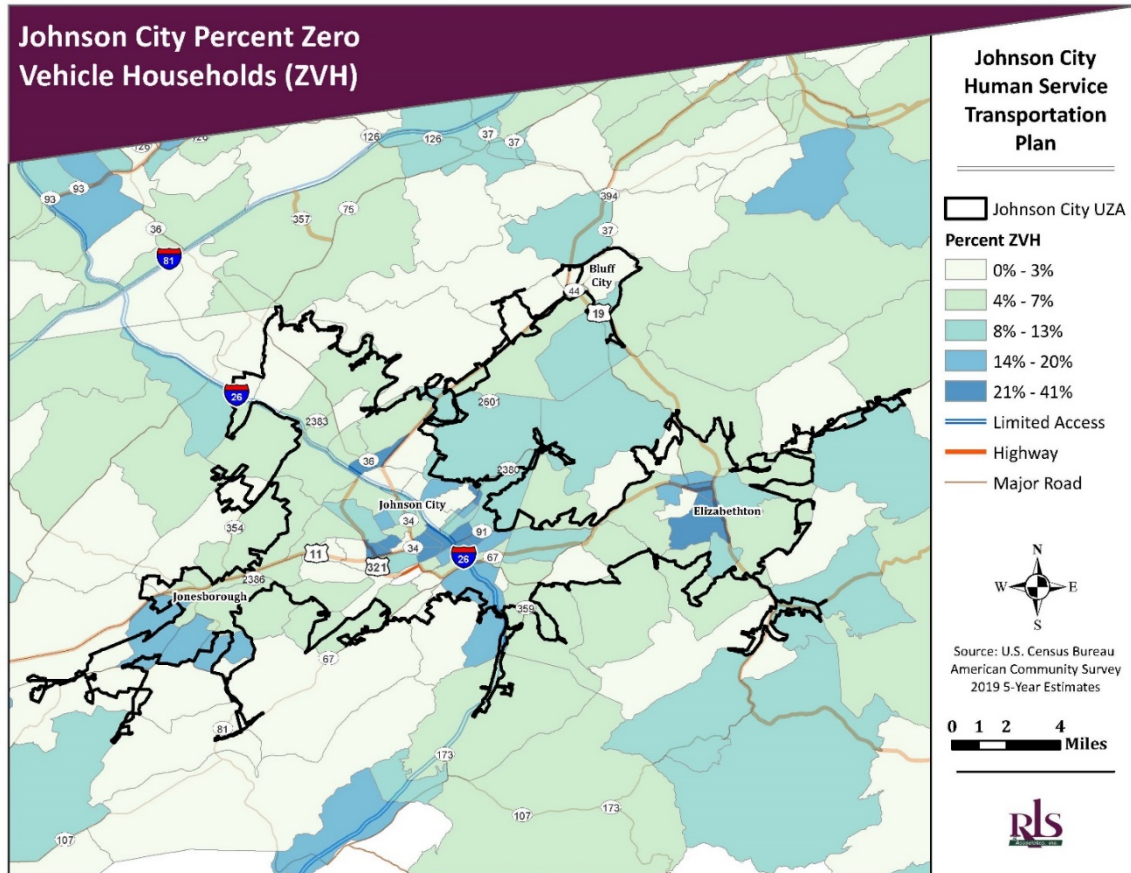
Figure 7: Johnson City UZA Percent Individuals with a Disability



Vehicle Ownership

Those without a personal vehicle available for travel often rely on transit to make trips for work, education or social purposes. Therefore, zero-vehicle households can provide insight into where transit may be the most successful. Figure 8 shows that the Johnson City UZA has several areas where zero-vehicle households make up 20 – 40 percent of the households in the area. The highest concentrations of zero-vehicle households can be found just south of Johnson City and in eastern Elizabethton.

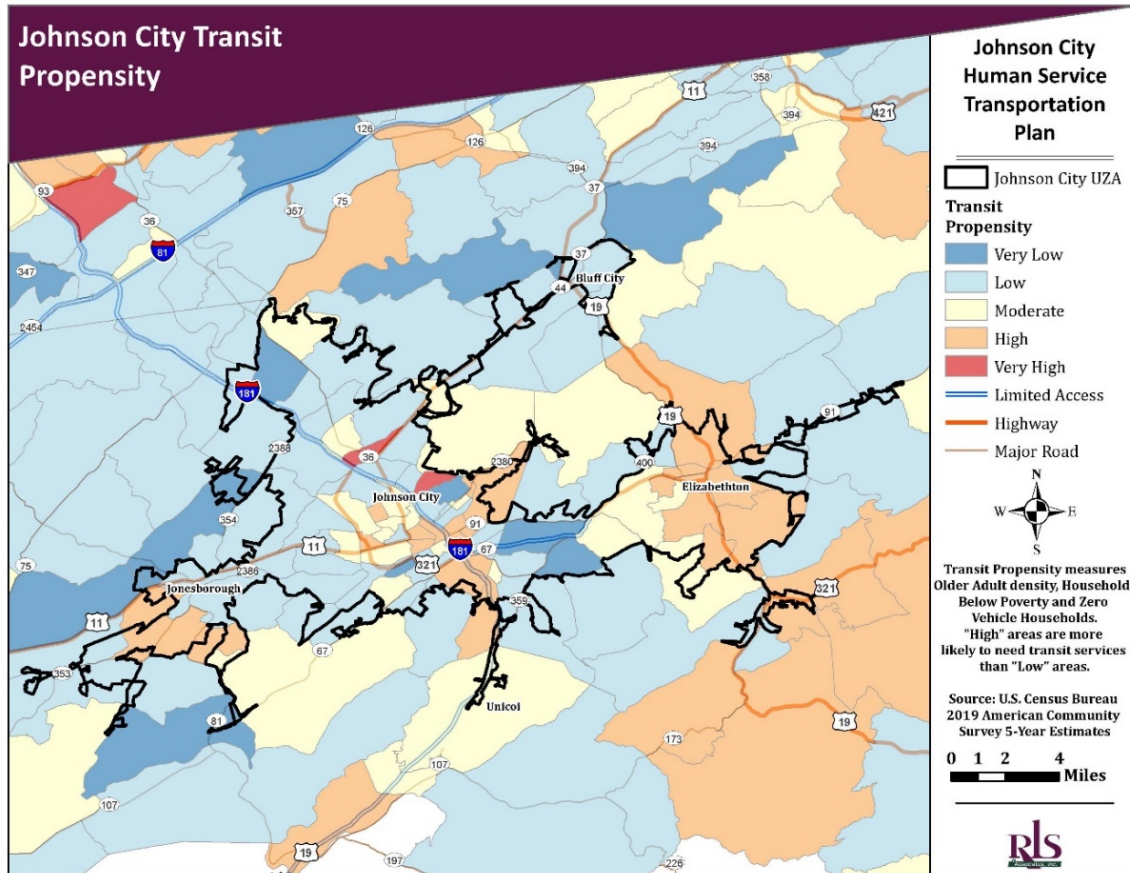
Figure 8: Johnson City UZA Zero Vehicle Households



Transit Propensity

Transit propensity combines three different demographic measurements to show block groups that are most likely to need transit services. The demographics include population age 65 and over, households in poverty, and zero-vehicle households. Figure 9 shows the block groups in red along I-26 in Johnson City are the areas that have a very high likelihood of needing transit services. Block groups in orange throughout Johnson City, Elizabethton and western Jonesborough have high likelihoods of needing transit services.

Figure 9: Transit Propensity



Employment

Figure 10 shows the location of employers within the Johnson City UZA. The data was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau 2018 LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics and shows the distribution of some 47,300 jobs in the city. Each dot represents the approximate location of an employer, and the size of the circle indicates the number of employees at that location. The largest employers are along the US-321 corridor with additional clusters along highways 34 and SR 36 to the north.

Figure 10: Total Jobs

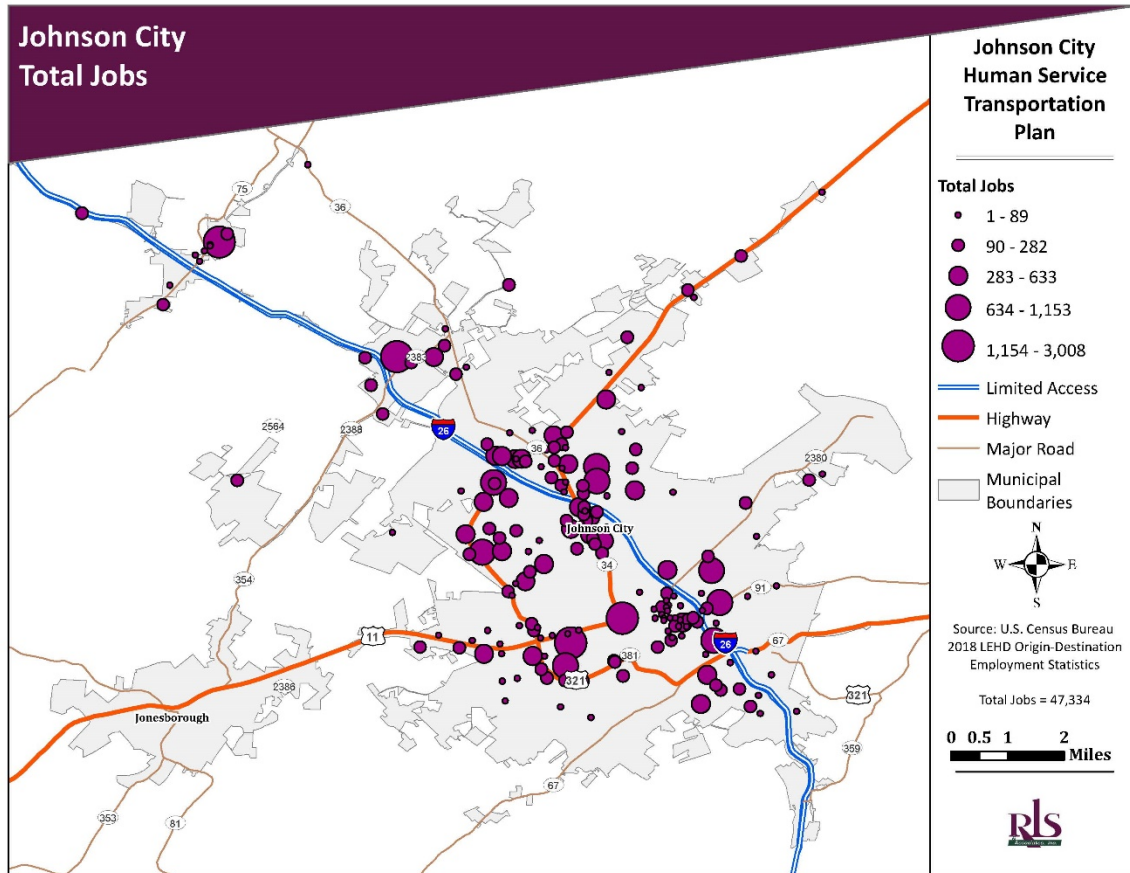
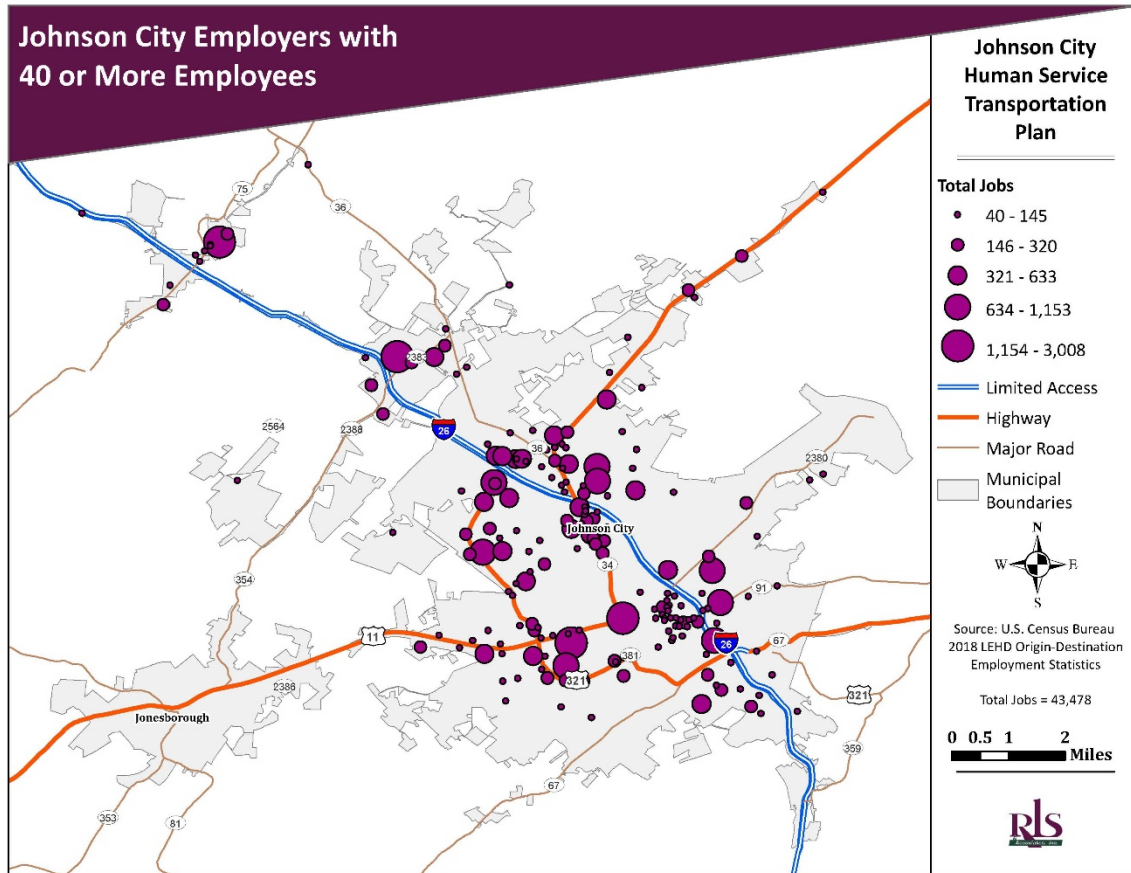


Figure 11 focuses on employers with 40 or more employees and shows a large grouping of these employers near the I-181/321 interchange. While having fewer employers shown, Figure 11 still displays approximately 43,500 jobs within the Johnson City UZA.

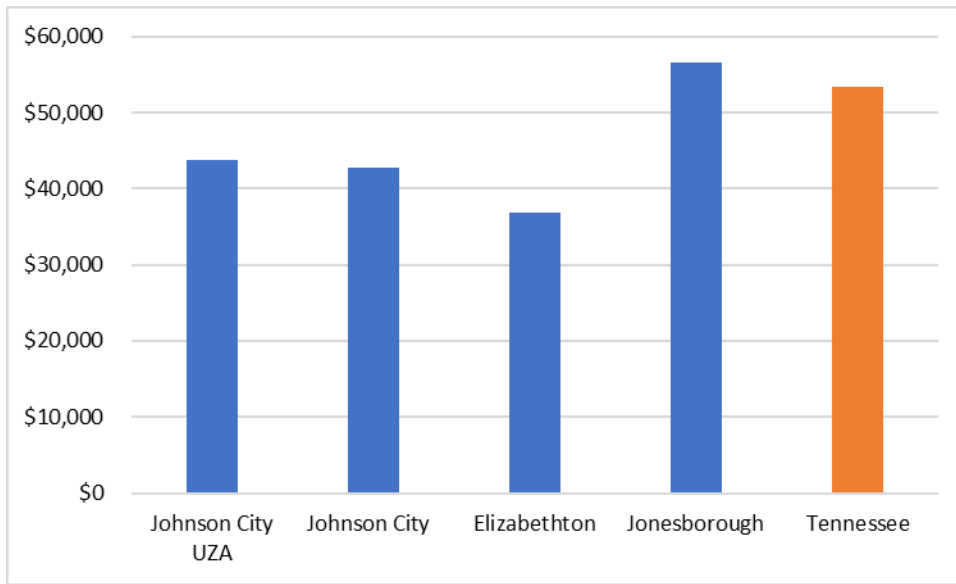
Figure 11: Johnson City Employers with 40+ Employees



Household Income

The median household incomes throughout the Johnson City UZA are shown in Table 1. In Tennessee, the median household income is estimated to be \$53,320, which ranked it 39 of the 50 states. Jonesborough is the only municipality within the Johnson City UZA with a median household income higher than Tennessee's, at \$56,550. The Johnson City UZA as a whole has a median household income almost \$10,000 lower than Tennessee, at \$43,685.

Figure 12: Median Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019 5-Year Estimates

Conclusions

Upon completion of the demographic analysis, it can be seen that the population centers within the Johnson City UZA are largely centralized within Johnson City and Elizabethton. This is particularly true with population and older adult population densities. Those same areas can also be attributed to ones that are more likely to need transit services when reviewing their Transit Propensity. The combination of all demographic information provided will be integral to the planning process.

4. Inventory of Existing Transportation Services

Overview

Providers of public and human services transportation were asked to participate in interviews and to update the transportation provider inventory. Provider agencies were also invited to participate in local stakeholder and public meetings to discuss and evaluate unmet human services transportation needs and service gaps. The meetings and interviews included a discussion of goals and strategies/projects to address unmet needs and service gaps, and promoting coordination in the delivery of transportation services to maximize the use of resources.

The inventory includes public transit services, volunteer programs, private transportation, and various human service agency programs. The provider summaries include, but are not limited to, organizations that are eligible for FTA Section 5310 program funding.

The agencies included in the inventory have experienced limited coordination with other providers, remaining focused on providing services to their agency's consumers. However, their participation in the coordinated transportation plan process is important. Participation in the plan keeps the option of coordinated use of Section 5310 Program and other federal, state, and local funding open to the agency.

Public transit agencies, those funded with FTA Section 5307 and 5311 funding, also serve these same populations of older adults and individuals with disabilities along with the general public. Johnson City Transit (JCT) serves its namesake city with fixed route transit and demand-response paratransit. The transportation system is a department of the city. Outside of the Johnson City incorporated area, NET Trans operates demand response public transit service.

There are other providers in the area that serve public populations that meet certain eligibility requirements such as veterans, people over a certain age, agency clients, and individuals eligible for non-emergency medical transportation provided through TennCare. Many of these public and non-profit agencies also receive operating funding to serve people with low incomes or qualifying disabilities, such as Title III-B of the Older Americans Act, which focuses on serving persons 60 and over, and other state funds. These programs that accept a variety of funding sources have the option to also promote mixed client riding, where people from more than one nonprofit agency are sharing rides. Some may provide mobility services, aiding individual clients to explore and master their transportation options, for a range of customer categories and trip destinations. Coordination is encouraged for human services agencies to improve transportation system efficiency and provide more options to riders while maximizing the use of existing resources.

Some taxi companies operate in the region. Private transportation network companies such as Lyft and Uber are also available in the Johnson City UZA communities, although availability is limited.

Figure 13 shows the network of transportation options by mode of service available to the local area. The Johnson City UZA is fortunate to have multiple transportation resources.

Figure 13: Existing Transportation Network in Johnson City UZA

| | ADA Paratransit or Eligibility-Required | Demand Response | Employment Transportation | Intercity Bus | Non-Emergency Medical Transportation | Volunteer | Fixed Route |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <i>Dawn of Hope</i> | ■ | | | | | | |
| <i>Day Programs</i> | ■ | | | | | | |
| <i>Faith-based Orgs.</i> | | | | | | ■ | |
| <i>Frontier Health</i> | ■ | | | | ■ | | |
| <i>Greyhound</i> | | | | ■ | | | |
| <i>J C Senior Center</i> | ■ | | | | | ■ | |
| <i>Johnson City Transit</i> | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ |
| <i>MyRide TN</i> | | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | |
| <i>NET Trans</i> | | ■ | ■ | | ■ | | |
| <i>Uber/Taxi/Lyft</i> | | ■ | | | | | |
| <i>Veterans</i> | ■ | | | | ■ | | |

Existing Transportation Resources

This section provides a description of each service available for the general public, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and non-profit/human services agency clients. Human service transportation provides rides to specific segments of the population, such as individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, or veterans. Many human service transportation agencies are non-profit organizations that provide transportation as an ancillary service to their clients only; others provide transportation to individuals who are not registered clients but meet other eligibility requirements. Some transportation providers are regional, offering service within and outside of the UZA. Transportation provider organizations are listed by category of provider:

- General public transportation
- Human services transportation
- Private transportation

This section lists each provider’s mission, transportation service type, contact information, service area, days and hours of service, and eligibility requirements.

General Public Transportation

| Johnson City Transit (JCT) | |
|--|--|
| Transportation Service Type | Fixed Route and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit. BUCSHOT Demand response transportation upon request Job access transportation |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | Johnson City Transit operates public transit services within Johnson City Limits. ADA paratransit service is available for eligible passengers within ¼ mile of a fixed route. BUCSHOT is transportation operated on ETSU campus. Service is open to the public with routes stopping at major destinations within the campus. Job Access transportation is a demand response service designed to serve shift workers at the area’s employers. Dial-A-Ride is a demand response service operated based upon advance reservation. The Dial-A-Ride service is not limited by trip purpose. |
| Contact Information | (423) 929-7119 / jctadmin@johnsoncitytransit.org www.johnsoncitytransit.org |
| Hours | <i>Fixed Route & ADA Paratransit:</i> 6:15 AM to 6:15 PM, Monday – Friday 8:15 AM to 5:15 PM, Saturday <i>Job Access:</i> 5:30 AM to 11:45 PM, Monday – Saturday |
| Service Area | Johnson City |
| Eligibility Requirements | Service is open to the public. ADA Paratransit service is available for individuals with disabilities who meet the eligibility requirements and operates curb-to-curb. An application must be completed and approved. The application process is described in detail at: www.johnsoncitytransit.org/paratransit.html |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Transit Technology | <p>Paraplan is the scheduling & dispatching software.</p> <p>Google Transit: JCT has partnered with Google Transit, a public transit planning feature on Google Maps. Google Transit will provide the rider with three options along with travel time.</p> <p>Next Bus Texting: Passengers can text their route and stop to get the next bus departure time. (TripSpark is the GPS software)</p> <p>Text Alerts: Passengers can enroll to get text alerts about service changes or other important JCT updates.</p> <p>JCTmyride.com for real-time bus locations and stop times</p> |
|--------------------|--|

| NET Trans (Northeast Tennessee Regional Public Transit) | |
|---|---|
| Transportation Service Type | <p>Door-to-Door, demand response transportation</p> <p>Job Access</p> <p>Families First</p> <p>Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)</p> |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | NET Trans is the non-profit transportation provider for First Tennessee Human Resource Agency. |
| Contact Information | 423-461-8233 / 1-800-528-7776 TTY (Relay) Dial 711 |
| | www.nettrans.org |
| Hours | <p>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday – Friday</p> <p>Limited service on Saturdays</p> |
| Service Area | NET Trans is a regional public transit system that provides transportation to citizens in an eight-county area, including: Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington. They also provide service to urbanized areas outside city limits for Bristol, Kingsport, and Johnson City. |
| Eligibility Requirements | General public |
| Transit Technology | Passengers can book trips online or by calling NET Trans. Trips may be scheduled and purchased online at www.nettrans.org/ride/schedule-a-ride/ |

Human Services Agency Transportation Programs

The following programs offer transportation for eligible clients and/or trip purposes.

| Dawn of Hope | |
|--|--|
| Transportation Service Type | Prior to COVID, Dawn of Hope operated transportation to clients for community outings and employment. Dawn of Hope discontinued operation of its transportation routes approximately five years ago. And, since the COVID pandemic, staffing shortages and health and safety concerns for their clients has resulted in discontinuation of transportation services for outings. Dawn of Hope would like to resume transportation service for clients and considers it an important part of their life. |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | Dawn of Hope provides a range of support services for individuals with developmental or intellectual disabilities. Services include residential and employment programs. A person-centered service approach focuses on providing opportunities to develop life skills, participate in their community, and obtain integrated employment. |
| Contact Information | 423-434-5600 |
| | www.dawnofhope.com |
| Hours | 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday – Friday |
| Service Area | Approximately 20 residential homes in the Johnson City area |
| Eligibility Requirements | Individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities |
| Transit Technology | None |

Frontier Health

| | |
|--|--|
| Transportation Service Type | Client transportation to and from individual group homes for agency clients. Transportation is operated as a door-to-door, including taking a passenger to a waiting room for a medical appointment. |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | Frontier Health provides behavioral health services including treatment for mental health, recovery, and vocational rehabilitation. Frontier Health is a private, non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization. The agency considers the health of the whole person across a full life span and provides comprehensive services for well-being at all stages of life. |
| Contact Information | 423-467-3600/ fhinfo@frontierhealth.org |
| | www.frontierhealth.org |
| Hours | Agency hours are 24-hours/day 7 days/week. Transportation is not available 24-hours a day but is available based on client needs and reservations. Generally, transportation operates 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday-Friday. |
| Service Area | Serving 12 counties throughout Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia, including the Johnson City UZA. |
| Eligibility Requirements | Agency clients needing transportation to and from group homes. |
| Transit Technology | None |

Johnson City Senior Center

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| Transportation Service Type | Transportation for older adults. Shopping routes operated Wednesdays and Fridays from specific housing areas to local shopping areas. |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | Outings are scheduled for the senior center. The Senior Center provides activities, education programs, and a congregate meal site. The Center also has a strong volunteer program with over 200 volunteers. |
| Contact Information | 423-434-6237 |
| | www.johnsoncityseniorcenter.org |

Johnson City Senior Center

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|--------------------------|---|
| Hours | Shopping routes operate on Wednesdays and Fridays in the morning and afternoon. |
| Service Area | Johnson City area (not limited to City boundaries) |
| Eligibility Requirements | Transportation is for older adults and no application process is required. |
| Transit Technology | None |

Jonesborough Senior Center

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| Transportation Service Type | Jonesborough Senior Center coordinates transportation with MyRide TN volunteer transportation services provides trips to medical appointments, pharmacies, and groceries (essential errands). |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | The center is designed to enhance the quality of life for members age 50 and older by providing a place to be active, fit and connected. |
| Contact Information | 423-753-1030 |
| | www.jonesboroughtn.org |
| Hours | Office hours: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday-Friday |
| Service Area | Town of Jonesborough |
| Eligibility Requirements | Older adults using services of the senior center |
| Transit Technology | Use MyRide TN |

TennCare Transportation

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| Transportation Service Type | Non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) for eligible individuals. TennCare |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | TennCare transportation is included in the family of services administered through most Human Resource Agencies in Tennessee. NEMT transportation services are operated through contracts with private or non-profit transit services and on public transit such as NET Trans. |
| Contact Information | 1-800-342-3145 |
| | www.tn.gov/tenncare/members-applicants/eligibility/tenncare-medicaid.html |
| Hours | 24-hours |
| Service Area | Statewide |
| Eligibility Requirements | To receive NEMT through TennCare, a person must meet income and resource limits of the program. |
| Transit Technology | Trips will be scheduled by the transportation provider that contracts with TennCare. |

Tennessee Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation

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|--|--|
| Transportation Service Type | Demand response transportation for eligible clients to assist with preparation for employment and transition services from school to work. |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | Vocational Rehabilitation is a Federal and State- funded program providing services to help individuals with disabilities enter or return to employment. |
| Contact Information | (423) 439-1000 www.tn.gov/humanservices/disability-services.html |
| Hours | Varies by contracted service provider. |
| Service Area | Varies by available contracted service provider and client needs. |
| Eligibility Requirements | Eligibility is determined through an application process. Individuals with qualifying disabilities may qualify for transportation assistance. |
| Transit Technology | Transit service is contracted to public or private transportation operators. Technology and reservation process varies by provider. |

Volunteer Transportation

FTAAAD MyRide TN

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| Transportation Service Type | Volunteer drivers provide transportation to passengers age 60 and older. Volunteers will assist passengers through the door of the origin or destination if necessary. MyRide TN is operated through First Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability Services. |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | MyRide TN is a senior-friendly volunteer transportation service available in many counties throughout Tennessee, including in the local Johnson City Urbanized Area. Volunteer drivers use their personal vehicles to carry older Tennesseans to a variety of destinations. |
| Contact Information | 423-722-5100 www.tn.gov/aging/resources/transportation-map/first-tennessee-area--northeast--transportation-services.html |

FTAAAD MyRide TN

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Hours | 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM (generally) MyRide TN in Johnson and Washington Counties do not operate evenings or weekends |
| Service Area | Johnson City (starting Spring 2022), Elizabethton, and Jonesborough. Also in the following Northeast Tennessee Counties: Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi, and Washington. |
| Eligibility Requirements | Age 60+ and unable to drive |
| Transit Technology | Assisted Rides is the program used for scheduling. A Coordinator enters information about the trip requested by a consumer into the Assisted Rides program. The drivers have an Assisted Rides app and can choose the rides they wish to take. The coordinator can track accepted rides. |

Veterans Transportation

Disabled American Veterans

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| Transportation Service Type | Demand response, shared-ride to and from medical appointments at Mountain Home Veterans Affairs Medical Center and occasionally to essential errands. Service is provided by members of the local group using a DAV vehicle. |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | The Disabled American Veterans is an organization for disabled military veterans of the United States Armed Forces that helps them and their families through various means. |
| Contact Information | 440-376-2676 www.facebook.com/Disabled-American-Veterans-Chapter-9-Washington-County-Johnson-City-TN-1536090009938238/ |
| Hours | Varies |
| Service Area | The destinations served are situation-based and decided on an individual basis. |
| Eligibility Requirements | Veteran |

Disabled American Veterans

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| Transit Technology | None |
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Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) / VA Mountain Home Health Care

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|--|---|
| Transportation Service Type | Demand response, shared-ride transportation to/from appointments at Mountain Home Veterans Affairs Medical Center |
| Other Services Provided/Agency Mission | Veterans Transportation Service is designed to ensure that all qualifying veterans have access to care through transportation. VTS provides qualified veterans with free transportation services to and from participating VA medical centers in a shared-ride van. |
| Contact Information | 423-926-1171 x 4438 |
| | www.vetride.va.gov |
| Hours | Varies |
| Service Area | Regional |
| Eligibility Requirements | Veteran |
| Transit Technology | Vet Ride: www.vetride.va.gov |

Private Transportation Providers

Private companies that provide taxi, client, or other transportation are an important part of the transportation network. These services are often offered at a higher out-of-pocket cost for the rider or the costs are covered by a third party (i.e., private insurance). Private transportation typically includes taxi services or app-based programs like Uber and Lyft. Discussion at the regional level identified:

- W.W. Taxi Company (423) 928-8316
- uRidez LLC Taxi (844) 487-4229
- Model City Taxi (423) 480-2223

App-based Ridesharing Services in the area include the following. Passenger request a ride through the mobile application, which communicates the passenger's location to the driver.

- Lyft www.lyft.com
- Uber www.uber.com

Intercity Bus

Greyhound connects Tennessee's largest communities throughout the state and to neighboring states. The Greyhound station is shared with JCT's downtown center where passengers can wait for a bus and purchase tickets. Popular destinations served by Greyhound from Johnson City include New York, Richmond, Atlanta, and Huntsville. Ticket prices are based on the destination. The bus ticketing office is open Monday through Friday between 7:30 AM and 10:00 PM with more limited hours on weekends and holidays. Hours, prices and route schedules are subject to change but current information is available on the greyhound website at www.greyhound.com/en-us/bus-station-400400.

Other Transportation Services

In addition to the services described above, there are assisted living centers, independent living communities, faith-based organizations, and small non-profit organizations that provide transportation to their eligible consumers. Generally, transportation provided by those organizations is limited to trips to and from an agency location (i.e., residential facility) or a service provided by the organization.

Provider Organizational Characteristics

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

| Agency | Directly Operates Transportation | Purchases Transportation from Another Agency | Legal Authority | Are Vehicles Only Available for Agency Clients |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Johnson City Transit | Yes | No | Public Non-Profit | Open to Public |
| NET Trans | Yes | No | Private Non-Profit | Open to Public |
| Dawn of Hope | No (but may resume post-COVID) | No | Private Non-Profit | Registered Client Only |
| Frontier Health | Yes | Yes | Private Non-Profit | Registered Client Only |
| Johnson City Senior Center | Yes | Yes | Public Non-Profit | Open to Seniors |
| Jonesborough Senior Center | No | Yes | Public Non-Profit | Open to Seniors |
| TennCare NEMT | No | Yes | State Agency Program | Registered Client Only |
| Vocational Rehabilitation | No | Yes | State Agency Program | Registered Client Only |

| Agency | Directly Operates Transportation | Purchases Transportation from Another Agency | Legal Authority | Are Vehicles Only Available for Agency Clients |
|---|----------------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| MyRide Tennessee | Yes | No | Volunteer Program | Open to Seniors |
| Disabled American Veterans | Yes | No | Public Non-Profit | Veterans |
| Mountain Home Veterans Affairs Medical Center | Yes | No, but may reimburse passengers for eligible expenses | Federal Agency Program | Veterans |

Scheduling, Fares, and Fleet Information

The following tables describe what trip purposes are allowed by each provider, the fares or donations that are paid by riders, and the process to request rides on each service.

| Agency | Trip Purposes Allowed | Fares or Donations | Ride Request Process | Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles in Fleet |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Johnson City Transit | Any | Adults: \$1.00 Senior/Disabled/ Student (Grades K-6): \$0.50 Age 5 and Under: Free ETSU Students/Staff: Free Express Pass: \$25/\$12.50 Multi-Ride Pass: \$20 | Fixed route service operates on a set schedule. No advance reservation. ADA paratransit, Job Access, and Dial-a-Ride service is scheduled in advance through the dispatcher. | Yes |
| NET Trans | Any | Mileage-based fare structure 0-2 Miles: \$2 2.1-5 Miles: \$3 5.1-10 Miles: \$4 +\$1 for each additional 10 miles 50.1 miles +: \$12 Afterhours: \$1.50 per mile Out of District: \$1.50 per mile | Request a ride by 12:00 PM the business day before the trip. Schedule by contacting the Call Center or online at nettrans.org/ride/schedule-a-ride . | Yes |
| Dawn of Hope | Appointments | None | Case Manager | Yes |
| Frontier Health | Group homes and appointments | None | Case Manager | Yes |

| Agency | Trip Purposes Allowed | Fares or Donations | Ride Request Process | Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles in Fleet |
|---|---------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Johnson City Senior Center | Grocery shopping | Donations | Routes operate on a fixed schedule Wednesdays and Fridays | Yes |
| Jonesborough Senior Center | Any trips through MyRide | \$20 annual membership and \$5 per ride | Contact MyRide Coordinator | No |
| TennCare NEMT | Eligible medical appointments | None | Varies by Provider | Yes |
| Vocational Rehabilitation | Employment-related | None | Case Manager | Yes |
| MyRide Tennessee | Any | \$6.00 | Contact MyRide Coordinator | No |
| Disabled American Veterans | Medical and essential errands | Donations accepted | Contact DAV | No |
| Mountain Home Veterans Affairs Medical Center | Mountain Home VAMC appointments | Donations accepted | Request a ride through Mountain Home or use online form | No |

5. Needs Assessment

The assessment of transportation needs for older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with low-incomes, and the general public was conducted in the four steps outlined below.

Comparative Assessment of Supply and Demand for Services

The first step was to compare the inventory of transportation services with transit needs identified through the demographic assessment. The comparative assessment evolved and was refined through the course of the key stakeholder meetings and one-on-one interviews.

The comparison of demographic indicators of demand and existing resources indicates that transportation options are available in the locations with the highest potential demand. Access to key destinations using the available resources, however, may be limited by the hours when transportation services are available. For example, available transportation options supporting shift work or service industry jobs may not be sufficient to meet needs.

Johnson City and portions of Elizabethton have block groups with the highest densities of population, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. Johnson City also has the most available transportation services. Elizabethton is outside the service area for JCT, but residents have the option of using NET Trans' demand response service.

The block groups that indicate the highest likelihood for using transportation services (Figure 9) based on the demographic analysis are located throughout the urbanized area including portions of Jonesborough, northern and eastern Johnson City, and Elizabethton. Only the areas in Johnson City have access to fixed route public transportation even though other areas exhibit the same level of likelihood. Other areas are served by demand response transportation only. Because many of the area's key destinations are located in Johnson City, demographic indicators suggest that it is likely that older adults, individuals with disabilities, and others who do not drive need access to transportation to and from Johnson City from the surrounding communities. These indicators alone are not enough to assess or measure need but they will be further explored throughout other aspects of the needs assessment.

Key Stakeholder Interviews

The second step in the needs assessment process was to interview key stakeholder organizations that serve older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. The interviews focused on organizations that provide, arrange, or fund transportation. These interviews were critical to understanding how the network of available transportation services is functioning and identifying unmet transportation needs. The Johnson City MTPO provided the foundation for the list of key stakeholders. Guidance from the MTPO was a natural step because of its role in regional transportation planning projects and its experience completing the prior Coordinated Plan.

Stakeholder interviews focused on identifying aspects of the existing transportation services for transportation-disadvantaged populations that are working and gaps in services that are creating mobility challenges. A list of organizations that participated in the interviews is provided here.

- Contact211 of Northeast Tennessee
- Dawn of Hope
- Disabled American Veterans
- East Tennessee State University (ETSU)
- First Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability – MyRide
- Frontier Health²
- Johnson City Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization
- Johnson City Senior Center
- Johnson City Transit
- Jonesborough Area Senior Center
- NET Trans (First Tennessee Human Resource Agency)
- Social Security Administration
- Tennessee Vocational Rehabilitation District Office
- Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency (UETHDA)

The participating stakeholders each described the services that they provide as well as the way clients travel when the agency is not the transportation provider. Through those conversations, stakeholders identified common gaps in the network of transportation services. The list of gaps and unmet needs is provided in the summary section of this chapter below.

Stakeholder and Public Meetings

Two stakeholder meetings and one public meeting were facilitated in Johnson City. Meetings were attended by transportation providers, organizations serving older adults and individuals with disabilities, agencies serving individuals with low incomes, and a military veteran organization. Attendance also included older adults, individuals with disabilities, and members of the general public. The transportation needs identified during the public and stakeholder meetings are included in the summary section of this chapter below.

Tell us: do you need transportation?

Where? medical? work? shopping?

When? weekdays? weekends?
business hours? overnight?

How often?

If you can't attend a meeting, please visit [surveymonkey.com/r/Johnson_City](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Johnson_City) or scan the QR code with your phone!

Join us for the upcoming Community Meeting to update the Johnson City Urbanized Area's Coordinated Transportation Plan. We are seeking public feedback. The focus of this plan is on **transportation needs** for people age 60 and older, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, and the general public.

Tuesday, December 7
3:00 PM to 5:30 PM

The meeting will be in the Training Room at the Johnson City Transit Center, 137 West Market Street, Johnson City, TN.

please use the side entrance of the building facing West Main Street

Johnson City **MTPO**
serving the jurisdictions of Bluff City, Elizabethton, Johnson City, Jonesborough, part of Union, and parts of Carter, Sullivan, and Washington Counties

² Frontier Health participated in local stakeholder meetings and also in a transportation needs assessment survey for transportation providers that was conducted by TDOT and RLS in 2020. Input about transportation needs were provided through that survey by Frontier Health, Johnson City.

The purpose of the first stakeholder meeting was to introduce the planning process to the key stakeholders and explore unmet transportation needs and gaps in services. The group discussion explored the issues behind each area of need. The group also discussed the range of existing transportation options that are working to meet many of the area's transportation needs. Seventeen stakeholders attended the first meeting.

The second stakeholder meeting occurred later in the planning process and centered around a discussion of potential coordinated transportation goals and strategies that could be implemented to address identified unmet needs and goals while continuing to preserve the existing network of services. Seventeen stakeholders attended the second meeting.

In December 2021, a public meeting was facilitated to discuss unmet transportation needs, gaps in services, and to present the goals and strategies that key stakeholders had discussed. Five individuals attended the public meeting.

Public Survey

Public input into the transportation needs assessment was gathered through an online public survey effort. The survey was advertised through local news media, social media, and postings in public places and on buses. Due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, paper survey distribution was not part of this effort. However, survey participation included an alternative to complete the survey over the phone. One hundred and twenty (120) people completed the survey between October 2021 and January 2022. A brief summary of survey feedback is provided below. Detailed public survey results are included in the Appendix.

- Sixty percent of survey respondents were from Johnson City; approximately one quarter (26 percent) were from Jonesborough; nearly seven percent live in Elizabethton. The remaining 7.5 percent of respondents were from Rogersville, Piney Flats, Gray, Limestone, and Kingsport.
- Nearly 70 percent of survey respondents have regular access to a personal vehicle that they drive.
- Approximately 46 percent need a ride and do not have one.
 - The most common places people need to go but do not have a ride are grocery shopping, doctor appointments, and work.
- The most common reasons for not using JCT or NET Trans are:
 - It is too far to walk to a bus stop (35%) - JCT
 - It does not go to the location where I need to go (29%) - JCT
 - It is not available during the hours when I need a ride (22%) - Both

What are your transportation needs?

Johnson City Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) would like to learn more about how the transportation options throughout *Johnson City, Elizabethton, and Jonesborough* are used. Please take the survey by **November 30th**. The survey results will be reviewed by the MTPO and local stakeholders representing transportation providers, senior centers, individuals with disabilities, and businesses. The stakeholders will work together to create strategies that would work toward addressing transportation needs and priorities you identified over the next four to five years.

Please visit surveymonkey.com/r/Johnson_City or scan the QR code with your phone!

SCAN ME

Johnson City MTPO
serving the jurisdictions of Bluff City, Elizabethton, Johnson City, Jonesborough, part of Blount, and parts of Carter, Sullivan, and Washington Counties

- The most common reason for not using taxis, Uber or Lyft is that the cost to ride those services is too expensive (60%).
- Approximately 85 percent of survey respondents were not aware of the 211 service for information about transportation and other services.
- Approximately 53 percent of survey respondents were age 60 or older.
- Approximately 29 percent of respondents have a mobility limitation that limits their ability to walk to a bus stop and/or board a vehicle without assistance.

The following quotes provide additional insight into the transportation concerns that public survey respondents shared through the survey:

“Johnson City Transit does not cover all areas that are within the city limits of Johnson City. I believe they should extend bus services to all the parks within the city limits and extend services to Piney Flats & Gray to the portions within the Johnson City limits. It would help everyone in those areas.”

“...I also think the city should have buses running late night on the weekends to prevent drunk driving I witness tons of people getting into their cars drunk If the bus was available as an option, I think more people would use it and it could be more revenue for the city instead of going into the pockets of gig driving companies.”

“Future road construction in Johnson City should focus on sidewalks and bike lanes to reduce car traffic and improve walk ability and bike ability. The transit system needs to be expanded and have more access to all parts of the City not just limited locations. The transit system should also be affordable for the citizens of Johnson city. I think people would use the transit system more if it was marketed as a cheap and safe alternative to driving or using private taxi services. Cutting back traffic in Johnson city could greatly improve the quality of life for the citizens of Johnson City.”

“I live at the limits of the Town of Jonesborough, in an old subdivision off the Old Jonesborough Hwy (now W Walnut Street). One, there is no connection to the Johnson City transit bus stop, near the old Bakery on W Walnut, which is more than a mile away from me, too far to walk. Two, there is no place to park my car, if I could catch the bus to the university there. Three, the Kroger/Earthfare/UPS area, and ETSU are frequent destinations for me, to which I have to drive my vehicle because the transit bus doesn't connect to Jonesborough via W Walnut Street. I would very much like to see an expansion of bus connection along these lines, and would use it, as I believe others would do, too.”

“I have a family member that lives on the north side of town close to Carrol Creek on Timberlake. This area of town needs more access to the bus. There is a bus stop on Timberlake, but he would have to walk on a very busy road with no shoulders and many curves to get to the bus stop. It's unsafe.”

"I'm handicapped in a wheelchair, and using the Johnson City Transit paratransit pickup service is my only option because I can't get to a fixed route pickup location. ... I am very appreciative and thankful for the JC Transit being available, and it having both daytime and nighttime pickup hours."

Summary

The unmet needs and gaps in transportation and mobility discussed by key stakeholders and the general public through the engagement opportunities listed above are summarized in the following list.

- Individuals who need transportation are **not aware of their transportation options** in the Johnson City area.
- People need a **safe waiting area** when using transit and waiting for the bus to arrive.
- Older adults using the Johnson City Senior Center indicate to Senior Center staff that they cannot use public transit even though there is a stop near the center, because they are **unable to get to a bus stop**. In some cases, there is **not sidewalk** for them to use if they were to walk to the stop nearest their house. In other cases, the distance to the nearest stop is too far for them to walk.
- Older adults sometimes need **personal assistance** to get where they need to go. They need someone to go with them through the door of their destination. For example, individuals going to a medical appointment may need assistance all the way in to the waiting room.
- Public transit service is not equipped to provide that level of assistance.
- Seniors using the Johnson City Senior Center have requested that JCT move its stop under the Senior Center overhang (near the front door of the facility). Currently, the stop is on the sidewalk on the street leading to the Senior Center.
- NET Trans indicated that **access to jobs on weekends and evenings is a big need**. The need comes from throughout the community and people of all ages.
- Individuals recently released from jail or prison, people on probation, and individuals in recovery programs are among those who lack **transportation resources that would help them toward gainful employment and stable housing**.
- JCT's primary service hours do not support **shift work** start and end times which has been noted as a barrier to accessing work.
- Employment Transportation - JCT implemented an employment transportation shuttle service that is available upon request between 5:30 AM and 11:45 PM, Monday through Saturday. This program technically covers all three shifts for the area's largest employers.
- Federal funding for the job access transportation service has expired and new funding sources will need to be identified in order to continue.
- Human services agencies and transportation providers are experiencing **staff shortages**.
- JCT and NET Trans were experiencing a **driver shortage** at the time of the study. The shortage did not result in reduced service levels for JCT but has created more significant challenges for NET Trans. Opportunities to maximize the available pool of drivers by coordinating with NET

Trans have not been explored because NET Trans drivers do not have Commercial Drivers' Licenses.

- Human services agencies like Dawn of Hope are experiencing staff shortages which may limit the options for extracurricular activities that would normally be available to consumers.
- JCT is interested in moving to an **electronic fare payment system** for passengers, but has not done so.
- JCT uses a **software for paratransit** trip scheduling but would consider exploring other, more robust, software platforms.
- Dawn of Hope indicated that its consumers have limited transportation options now that the agency is no longer directly providing routes. Consumers would benefit from using transportation because it is an opportunity for them to connect with other people. Because of health and safety concerns related to COVID, shared-ride transportation is not provided for the clients for outings.
- Seniors living in **Woodland Apartments need a bus stop that is closer to their door**. Some also need personal assistance carrying bags to and from the vehicle to the door.
- There are **colleges and schools other than ETSU** that serve the area but students and potential students do not have transportation options to and from classes.
- Students that go to ETSU and live on campus have limited transportation options to go home for weekends.
- The amount of **advance notice** required for reservations may be a barrier for some individuals when they unexpectedly need transportation. **Same-day** trip options are needed.
- Access to **wheelchair accessible vehicles** throughout the region when a trip is needed (i.e., evenings) is limited, particularly outside of Johnson City.
- The **cost of riding** transportation on a regular basis is too high for passengers to sustain.
- Transportation options are limited where people live and need to travel to if they are **not on a bus route**.
- Vehicles ordered for NET Trans will not be delivered as expected due to **supply chain shortages**. The shortage of new and replacement vehicles for transit providers will limit capacity to improve or expand services.
- **Inflation** is placing a burden of affordability on individuals as well as the organizations that are providing transportation. Options to identify additional funding and maximize cost efficiency while still meeting transportation needs are a priority.

6. Recommendations for Coordinated Transportation

Goals

The transportation needs and gaps that are identified in previous chapters are synthesized into eight areas and presented below in terms of goals. Each area of need is supported by the input provided by the local stakeholders and general public. The stakeholders participated in a meeting to prioritize the potential strategies within each area of need. During the meeting, stakeholders ranked the top strategies within each goal. These rankings are neither final nor static, and they may change as different revenues or other factors evolve. However, they are intended as a guide to local stakeholders as they work in coordination to address the unmet transportation needs and gaps in services for the target population groups in the urbanized area. This plan is not to be interpreted as an implementation plan, as agencies will need to adopt the strategies they are able to implement as funding opportunities arise. The Coordinated Plan does serve as supporting documentation to strengthen grant applications and solicitations for funding.

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

WHAT IS A MOBILITY MANAGER?

Mobility managers serve as policy coordinators, operations service brokers, and customer travel navigators. As policy coordinators, mobility managers help communities develop coordination plans, programs, and policies, and build local partnerships. They also work to promote land-use policies that favor transit-oriented development, public transportation, and pedestrian access. As brokers, they coordinate transportation services among all customer groups, service providers, and funding agencies. And, as travel navigators, they work with human service agencies and/or workforce centers that coordinate the travel and trip planning needs of individuals who receive human service program assistance.

source: FTA. "[Mobility Management Brochure](#)."

Goals Summary

| Goal 1 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |
|---|---|------------------|---|-------------------|
| Establish a coordinated transportation framework | Create efficiencies and improve access to resources for older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, and the general public | High | Hire a mobility manager for Johnson City Transit. | \$\$ |
| | | High | Develop a robust Mobility Management program for Johnson City Transit. | \$ |
| Goal 2 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |
| Ensure funding and resources continue to be available for maintaining existing transportation services | Continue the transportation services that are effectively serving the urban area today; Seek opportunities to address driver and staff shortages; Secure fleet replacement and expansion vehicles in a timely manner; Seek opportunities to identify cost efficiencies to counter the impact of inflation | High | Fleet planning to ensure vehicles are replaced and expansion vehicles are procured in a timely manner. Prepare through coordination, if possible, for national supply chain shortages. | \$ |
| | | High | Driver recruitment efforts to support public and human service agency transportation programs. | \$ |
| | | Medium | Encourage agencies to use State Contract when possible, to maximize cost efficiency while still making transportation a priority. | \$ |
| | | Medium | Encourage agencies to hire Mobility Managers to coordinate and implement structured transfer points or regional services to efficiently and effectively address transportation needs that cross outside of the Urban Area boundaries. | \$\$ |

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Goal 2 (Continued) | | High | Identify new funding to sustain/expand JCT Job Access Program. Include funding to advertise the program. | \$\$\$ |
| Goal 3 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |
| Service Expansions for Access to Jobs and College | Expand access to employment and colleges | High | Expand the Job Access Program to include access to colleges other than ETSU (i.e., Tennessee College of Applied Technology). | \$\$\$ |
| | | High | Shared-ride, demand response or shuttle service for access to employment - designed around shift work. | \$\$\$ |
| Goal 4 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |
| Transportation Service Expansions | Connectivity between cities in the urbanized area; Passenger assistance when using fixed routes; Passenger safety; Same-day transportation options; First/last mile transportation options for fixed route transit riders | High | Explore transportation options connecting cities in the urbanized area for non-emergency medical transportation, employment, and other purposes | \$ |
| | | Medium | Directly operate or enter into contractual partnerships with private transportation services or other organizations to operate demand response transportation during evening hours. Service must meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. | \$\$\$ |
| | | Medium | Study passenger waiting areas and accessibility to the bus stops to ensure passengers can safely access and use the bus stop or shelter. Include notices to passengers on how to report sidewalks or bus stops that are not accessible. | \$\$ |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Goal 4 (continued) | | High | Seek sustainable funding to supplement the out-of-pocket cost to the passenger for on-demand/same-day transportation services provided by approved vendors. | \$\$ |
| | | High | Consider a First/Last Mile Feasibility Study to promote access to JCT for people with disabilities. Where JCT has identified significant densities of older adults and individuals with disabilities within 1/4 mile of the stop, implement first/last mile assistance or curb-to-curb service options. | \$\$ |
| Goal 5 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |
| Transit Technology | Customer service enhancements; Improved efficiency for paratransit trip scheduling | High | JCT electronic fare payment system. | \$\$\$\$ |
| | | High | JCT upgrade software for paratransit. Consider software purchase that is compatible with NET Trans in case future coordination of paratransit and regional demand response trips is desired. | \$\$\$\$ |
| Goal 6 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |

| | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Enhance and Coordinate Transportation Information and Referral Process | Coordinated promotion may streamline marketing and outreach costs for partnering agencies; Maximizes service efficiency by implementing a central point of contact and reducing duplication of information and referral | Medium | Promote Contact 211 of Northeast Tennessee as a single point of contact for information about transportation in the Urbanized Area. Utilize advertising outlets including local TV stations, newsletters, and signs at human service agencies, senior centers, transit buses, etc. | \$\$ |
| | | High | Establish policies that would allow Contact 211 of Northeast Tennessee to directly hand-off a caller to the appropriate transportation provider or call center to schedule a trip with one or multiple providers. | \$\$ |
| Goal 7 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |
| Information and Awareness (Goal 7 continued) | Improves awareness about the benefits of existing transportation services and builds support for addressing the challenges and gaps through funding or other dedicated support services | High | Educate community leaders about the benefits of transportation and available resources. | \$ |
| | | High | Develop a coordinated approach to increase public awareness about available transportation resources. | \$ |
| | | Medium | Identify a leader/champion(s) to participate in the regional coordinating council and represent the Johnson City Urbanized Area transportation needs. | \$ |
| | | High | Conduct Mobility Manager meetings to discuss challenges/needs and grant opportunities that support solutions with the agency Mobility Managers. | \$ |

| Goal 8 | Needs Addressed | Priority Ranking | Strategies | Comparative Costs |
|---|---|------------------|--|-------------------|
| Enhance transportation service levels for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes | Enhanced service levels for older adults and individuals with disabilities; Promotes independent travel through travel training; Expands volunteer driver programs that offer a higher level of service | High | Transportation Voucher Program for volunteer drivers serving veterans, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. | \$\$ |
| | | High | Identify funding to expand the MyRide Tennessee Program. | \$\$ |
| | | High | Coordinated Travel Training Program for partnering transportation providers. | \$\$ |

Detailed Goals and Strategies

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

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

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

Goal 1: Establish a coordinated transportation framework

Objectives: Conceptualize, plan, and develop operating programs that respond to and influence the demands of the transit market in Johnson City. Duties will be performed in collaboration with other organizations to provide a full range of travel options that are more effective in meeting needs and more efficient than current services.

Implementation Timeline: short-term.

Estimated Costs: Moderate. Costs involve salary and overhead costs associated with a new mobility manager position at JCT. Funding identified for the mobility manager must be sustainable.

Strategy 1.1: Hire a mobility manager for Johnson City Transit.

Once the position is approved, JCT will create a position description and essential job functions for a mobility manager. The mobility manager will become a local champion for public transit in Johnson City, engaging with public officials, administrators, employers, and other stakeholders. Their responsibilities may include leading or participating in further planning, development, and implementation of the activities included in this plan as well as additional duties.

Responsible Parties: City of Johnson City and Johnson City Transit.

Potential Funding Sources

- Mobility management is an eligible expense for FTA Section 5310 Program grant funding. Section 5310 funds require a 20% match. TDOT provides 10% of the match, reducing the local share from 20% to 10%.
- The local match can be derived from many non-US DOT federal programs or local grants and contributions. Non-profit and government agencies are eligible to apply.

Performance Measures

- Mobility manager position is approved for the city.
- Job description is created.
- JCT advertises for and hires a mobility manager.
- Mobility manager actively participates in and often leads meetings with key stakeholders including local employers and human service agencies to discuss transportation needs and solutions.

Strategy 1.2: Develop a robust mobility management program for Johnson City Transit.

Under the leadership of the new mobility manager, JCT will work cooperatively with other city departments to establish a strategic plan for the mobility management program and goals to be accomplished over a five-year horizon.

Responsible Parties: City of Johnson City and Johnson City Transit.

Potential Funding Sources

- Mobility management is an eligible expense for FTA Section 5310 Program grant funding. Section 5310 funds require a 20% local match. TDOT provides 10% of the match, reducing the local share from 20% to 10%.
- Local match can be derived from many non-US DOT federal programs or local grants and contributions. Non-profit and government agencies are eligible to apply.

Performance Measures

- Goals for the mobility management program are created with input from JCT and other city departments.
- Number of goals or milestones achieved each year.
- Needs identified through this plan and other activities are addressed incrementally.

Goal 2: Ensure funding and resources continue to be available for maintaining existing transportation services

Objectives: Create plans for procurements of vehicles and other transportation resources and, where appropriate, share procurement schedules and grant writing needs with transportation providers in the area. This will save administrative time and save costs through joint procurements and shared recruitment/training efforts. Sharing of information and processes will be especially helpful to strengthen the smaller organizations that have less administrative capacity for its transportation programs.

In the current economic conditions, many transportation providers and human service agencies are struggling with driver and staff shortages. The objective is to enhance driver recruitment efforts by sharing outreach strategies, brainstorming incentives, creating shared training programs, and seeking qualified employees.

The current funding source for the JCT Job Access Program has ended. This program fulfills an important need identified by stakeholders. Identifying revenue streams to sustain or expand the Job Access Program will allow JCT to continue providing transportation to work for employees that need access outside of JCT's normal operating hours.

Implementation Timeline: ongoing.

Estimated Costs: low to moderate. Costs involve administrative and management staff time to coordinate and plan procurements and identify funding sources.

Costs to sustain or expand the JCT Job Access program are moderate to high.

Strategy 2.1: Fleet planning to ensure vehicles are replaced and expansion vehicles are procured in a timely manner so that fleets maintain a state of good repair standard. Prepare for impacts of national supply chain shortages.

Responsible Parties: Any two or more organizations that directly operate transportation will share fleet planning schedules and procurement needs and work with other agencies that serve similar eligibility groups to seek opportunities together for potential funding sources or procurement assistance.

Potential Funding Sources

- No additional funding is needed for this strategy. Expenses will be time and labor required to coordinate fleet planning and procurement opportunities.
- Funding for vehicle replacements and expansion can be derived from a variety of sources depending on the agency applying for funds. Potential FTA programs include Sections 5310, 5311 (rural), 5307, and 5339. Other non-US DOT federal programs and local non-profit organizations may also provide funding for purchase of vehicles. TDOT provides half of the required match (for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible vehicles, this is 17%, thus 8.5% comes from TDOT).

Performance Measures

- Vehicle fleets of all participating local transportation providers are within their useful life or in good- to excellent condition.
- Vehicle maintenance costs for participating programs go down as vehicle fleet conditions improve through timely replacements.

Strategy 2.2: Driver recruitment efforts to support public and human service agency transportation programs.

Agencies will work together to create driver recruitment tools. Typically, advertising for driver positions also raises the consumers’ awareness of the agencies’ resources. Local agencies may create connections with local economic development and training programs to funnel good candidates into their driving programs. For larger vehicles, the transit agency or human service agency may partner with driving schools to create bus practicums that bring drivers through their programs as part of CDL training.

Responsible Parties: Any two or more organizations that employ drivers for their transportation programs will work with economic development and workforce programs.

Potential Funding Sources

- Local grants may be available. Otherwise, agencies and transit providers will use existing funds.

Performance Measures

- “Drivers Wanted” media campaign produced and launched.
- New, regular, and ongoing engagement with job-training programs.
- Create a shared bus driver practicum for CDL training.
- Creative incentive packages are established, and open positions are filled.

Strategy 2.3: Encourage agencies to use state contracts or joint purchasing contracts to maximize cost efficiency while still making transportation a priority.

Public transit agencies are purchasing vehicles and certain supplies on state contracts, which creates cost efficiencies for all parties. However, because only those identified in the contract are allowed, the types of vehicles that can be purchased may be limited. Other local governments in the UZA and local agencies should explore the possibility of joint purchases or purchases under state contracts, where permitted. Bulk purchases are likely to result in cost savings and potentially save administrative time for individual agencies that would otherwise conduct separate procurement activities for similar products.

Responsible Parties: Any two or more organizations will share fleet and capital purchase planning schedules and other procurement needs to determine opportunities for joint procurements.

Potential Funding Sources

- Existing agency funding sources apply and no new funding sources are necessary.

Performance Measures

- Agencies explore the potential to conduct joint procurements of major purchases such as vehicles and tires.
- Joint purchases result in overall cost savings.
- Local agencies purchase from State contract.

Strategy 2.4: Encourage agencies to hire mobility managers to coordinate and implement structured transfer points or regional services to efficiently and effectively address transportation needs that cross outside of the UZA boundaries.

Agency-based mobility managers will work with JCT (once it has hired its mobility manager) and NET Trans mobility managers to develop strategies for service connections. They will coordinate to develop services that address the identified transportation needs and gaps in services within the UZA as well as gaps in access to services and destinations in the surrounding area.

Responsible Parties: Non-profit and government agencies operating services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. Also, Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) has a mobility management program at participating VA medical centers. James H. Quillen VAMC coordinates transportation with the Disabled American Veterans and county Veterans Affairs directors to provide transportation and should be included in local mobility management activities.

Potential Funding Sources

- Mobility management is an eligible expense for FTA Section 5310 Program grant funding. Section 5310 funds require a 20% local match. Local match can be derived from many non-US DOT federal programs or local grants and contributions. Non-profit and government agencies are eligible to apply.

Performance Measures

- Agencies apply for funding and hire a mobility manager.
- The job description for area mobility managers includes some common functions to encourage multiple agencies to coordinate and communicate.
- Mobility managers lead the UZA through realization of the goals outlined in the Coordinated Plan.
- Mobility managers within the UZA meet regularly to discuss and plan for local transportation challenges.
 - New programs or services are implemented to address identified needs or riders and service providers.

Strategy 2.5: Identify new funding to sustain/expand JCT’s Job Access Program. Include funding to advertise the program.

JCT’s Job Access Program bridges the transportation gap between low-income individuals and people with disabilities and their places of employment or employment-related activities. The Job Access Program is currently funded through the FTA Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC), which was repealed in 2013. Projects meeting these objectives are now eligible under the FTA Section 5307 Program, but those funds are currently dedicated to other functions of JCT’s operations. Through the CARES Act, JCT has applied funding to continue its Job Access Program. However, when those one-time funds are depleted, additional funding will be necessary to continue the program.

Currently, the JCT Job Access Program operates as a demand response, curb-to-curb transportation within the corporate boundaries of Johnson City. It is a supplemental service to JCT’s fixed route bus service, and is provided with small buses or vans. Reservations must be made at least two days in advance of the trip. Service is available from 5:30 AM until midnight, Monday through Saturday. The fare is \$2.50 per one-way trip.

Job access was identified as a significant need in the UZA. The Job Access Program offers a strong core service to help connect people with jobs in Johnson City. Additional local funding must be identified to sustain and/or expand the program.

Responsible Parties: JCT’s mobility manager will work with vocational rehabilitation, local employers, and non-profit programs that focus on improving access to employment and seek grants or local contracts and contributions that would help sustain the Job Access Program.

Potential Funding Sources

- Local employers benefiting from the service.
- Grants from non-US DOT federal programs that support workforce development and other employment programs.
- Grants or contributions from non-profit or local government programs, potentially including courts and corrections.

Performance Measures

- Goals for sustaining the Job Access Program are clarified and established (i.e., hours of service, performance measures).
- Funding is secured to sustain the program.
- Funding is secured to expand the program.
- Number of trips provided per hour of operation achieve pre-determined performance goals.
 - Cost per trip achieves or exceeds pre-determined performance goals.

Goal 3: Service expansions for access to jobs and college

Objectives: Expand access to employment and education opportunities through appropriate service options. The level and mode of service will depend upon the level and nature of demand. For example, some solutions may justify fixed route operations (buses operating on a fixed schedule and path), while other services are more appropriate for smaller groups and can be scheduled as needed. Offer a family of service options with flexibility to meet a variety of transportation needs.

Needs Addressed: Expand access to employment and colleges.

Implementation Timeline: mid-term.

Estimated Costs: moderate to high.

Strategy 3.1: Expand the Job Access Program to include access to colleges other than ETSU (e.g., Tennessee College of Applied Technology).

The Johnson City UZA is home to several quality colleges. Transit service is currently available on the ETSU campus, but other colleges may not have access to public transit at times that suit their class schedules. Transit service to support access to local colleges, such as the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)³, which provides technical education and industry training, supports the long-term goal of building the local workforce.

Responsible Parties: Transportation providers serving the Elizabethton area should coordinate a meeting with TCAT to discuss class schedules and suggest a survey of students to determine potential transportation needs. These providers could potentially meet with local school districts to determine if transportation is a barrier to students who would otherwise attend college. Potential parties include Johnson City Transit, NET Trans, or non-profit and private operators.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5307 funding could be applied toward this service expansion if additional funds are available.
- Contributions from participating colleges.
- Grants or contributions from local programs with a mission for workforce or employment development.
 - Student fees or passenger fares

Performance Measures

- Study to estimate potential demand is conducted.
- Transportation providers, mobility managers, and other interested key stakeholders meet with college administrators to discuss potential service agreements.
- Service is initiated within two years.
 - Number of trips provided per hour and mile meets pre-determined performance standards set by the operator or funder(s).

³ TCAT’s current campus is in Elizabethton but there are plans to add an additional campus in Johnson City.

Strategy 3.2: Implement shared-ride, demand response or shuttle service for access to employment-designed around shift work.

Similar to the JCT Job Access Program, this strategy is suggested if the Job Access Program cannot be sustained, or to expand upon the services currently offered under that program. Shared ride, demand response or shuttle services operate on an as-needed basis and can be designed to serve specific geographic areas where demand exists.

Responsible Parties: Agencies with a mission to improve access to employment, and local employers. Parties could include programs within the UZA or regional programs.

Potential Funding Sources

- Local funding from grants and contributions supported by agencies with a mission to improve access to employment.
- Employers benefiting from the transportation service.
 - Agency contracts to reimburse the provider for transportation provided for their clients.

Performance Measures

- Number of trips provided.
- Number of people served.
- Number of employers served by the program.
 - Riders are able to obtain and sustain gainful employment and independence.

Goal 4: Transportation service expansions

Objectives: Build upon the network of transportation options that exists today to provide a range of services that addresses the gaps in services and prepares for future demand.

Needs Addressed: Connectivity between cities in the urbanized area. Passenger assistance when using fixed routes. Passenger safety. Same-day transportation options. First/last mile transportation options for fixed route transit riders.

Implementation Timeline: mid-term to long-term.

Estimated Costs: moderate to high.

Strategy 4.1: Explore transportation options connecting cities in the UZA for non-emergency medical transportation, employment, and other purposes.

Conduct a needs assessment and feasibility study to prepare an estimate of demand and necessary funding levels.

Responsible Parties: Mobility managers will work with public, private, non-profit, and volunteer transportation services.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5307 funding or many local funds that are eligible for planning.

Performance Measures

- Needs assessment and feasibility study is completed.
- If needs are identified, develop alternatives for service delivery, include coordinated transportation options with multiple providers.

Strategy 4.2: Directly operate or enter into contractual partnerships with private transportation services or other organizations to operate demand response transportation during evening hours. Service must meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

NET Trans currently operates demand response transportation services outside of Johnson City and between local communities. Human service agencies, private taxi and on-demand operators, and MyRide Tennessee also provide transportation in the area. However, service options during evenings and weekends are limited, particularly for individuals who need a wheelchair-accessible vehicle. Local stakeholders should explore opportunities to establish transportation options in the UZA that operate during evenings and on weekends.

Responsible Parties: Mobility managers will work with public, private, non-profit, and volunteer transportation services.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5307 or 5310 program-eligible.
- Local grants or contracts with agencies, medical facilities, or employers.

Performance Measures

- Service provider is identified and service parameters (hours of operation, days of service, mode of service, eligibility, etc.) are determined.
- Number of trips provided meets pre-determined performance measures.
- Cost per trip and/or hour meets pre-determined performance measures.

Strategy 4.3: Study passenger waiting areas and accessibility to the bus stops to ensure passengers can safely access and use the bus stop or shelter. Establish a process for passengers to report barriers to access.

Conduct or update the inventory of bus stops and shelters to include sidewalk access to the stop or waiting area. Develop a formal notice to passengers about how to report to the city, sidewalks or bus stops that are not accessible (temporarily or permanently). If possible, through TripSpark or Google Transit, include notices about broken sidewalks or missing sidewalks at or near bus stops along the route. Also, if possible, identify stops that offer shelters or benches.

Responsible Parties: Johnson City Transit.

Potential Funding Sources

- Existing funding sources for planning.

Performance Measures

- Inventory of bus stops and shelters is updated or expanded to include documented sidewalk conditions.
- A formal notice to JCT passengers is posted on vehicles and the website explaining how to report accessibility issues such as broken or missing sidewalks.
- Database of broken sidewalks or other barriers that limit access to bus stops for individuals with disabilities is developed and maintained. Information is made available to transit users through TripSpark or other established methods.

Strategy 4.4: Seek sustainable funding to supplement the out-of-pocket cost to the passenger for on-demand/same-day transportation services provided by approved vendors.

On-demand or same-day transportation services typically cost significantly more for passengers compared to public transit service that requires a reservation or operates on a fixed schedule. However, such on-demand, private transportation service offered by taxis or app-based services like Uber or Lyft are sometimes the only option available for last minute travel needs or trips taken when public and human service agency operators are not open.

It is possible that the level of demand for same-day services from a single agency (i.e., vocational rehabilitation) may not be sufficient to attract an interested vendor. However, if multiple agencies in the area are seeking same-day service options for their consumers, a joint procurement for services may yield more interest. Explore opportunities to enter into an agreement with a private or non-profit transportation operator through proper procurement to offer subsidized fares for on-demand services. Trips may be limited to a specific geographic area or available for certain eligibility groups such as older adults, veterans, individuals participating in certain agency programs, or individuals with disabilities. Eligibility limitations must meet requirements set by the funding sources.

Responsible Parties: Agencies serving individuals with limited incomes.

Potential Funding Sources

- Local government funds, agency contributions, and other grants can be combined to support the program.

Performance Measures

- Demand is evaluated and determined to be sufficient.
- Funding is identified.
 - Procurement for services is secured and includes a capped amount of fares to be paid by the lead agencies per trip. For example, agencies may agree to pay the first \$5 of the trip and the passenger is responsible for the remainder.

Strategy 4.5: Consider a first/last mile feasibility study to promote access to JCT for people with disabilities.

Where significant population densities of individuals with disabilities are identified within ¼ mile of a bus stop, implement a first/last mile assistance or curb-to-curb service option. Advertise the new service options with targeted outreach in the areas where service will be available. First/last mile service for individuals with disabilities could be offered as a door-to-door service above and beyond the ADA requirements.

Responsible Parties: Johnson City Transit

Potential Funding Sources

- Service above and beyond ADA paratransit service requirements, such as door-to-door, would not be eligible for a Section 5310 grant. Therefore, funds would need to be derived from other FTA Section 5307 funds or provided by local sources or eligible non-US DOT federal funds.
 - Potential pilot-program funding may be available through FTA.

Performance Measures

- First/last mile service feasibility study is conducted.
- If determined feasible, grant applications are submitted and funding secured.
 - Number of individuals served by the new program meets predetermined performance measures.

Goal 5: Transit technology

Objectives: Improve customer service and create administrative efficiencies through application of transit technology.

Needs Addressed: Customer service enhancements. Improved efficiency for paratransit trip scheduling.

Implementation Timeline: short-term.

Estimated Costs: moderate to high.

Strategy 5.1: JCT will implement an electronic fare payment system.

JCT will continue its efforts to identify the most appropriate electronic fare payment system to meet its goals. Rollout of the system will include passenger and staff training materials, videos, and demonstrations.

Responsible Parties: Johnson City Transit.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5307 Program.

Performance Measures

- Electronic fare payment system is identified and procured.
- Passenger and driver training program is developed and implemented.
- Customer satisfaction ratings are high (per rider survey results).
- Reduced administrative burden related to fare reconciliation.
- Reduce security issues in handling cash fares.

Strategy 5.2: JCT will upgrade software for paratransit. Consider software purchase that is compatible with NET Trans in case future coordination of paratransit and regional demand response trips is desired.

JCT will upgrade its scheduling software for paratransit. During the process JCT may consider purchasing software that is compatible (through bridging software or otherwise) with NET Trans in case future coordination of paratransit and regional demand response trips is desired.

Responsible Parties: Johnson City Transit.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5307 Program.

Performance Measures

- Software Request for Proposals is prepared and advertised.
- Software vendor is selected.
- Program implemented and staff trained.
- JCT realizes measurable improvements in paratransit scheduling and dispatching.

Goal 6: Enhance and coordinate the transportation information and referral process

Objectives: Improve public awareness of transportation options and assist people who are in need of a ride.

Needs Addressed: Coordinated promotion of Contact 211 of Northeast Tennessee may streamline marketing and outreach costs for partnering agencies. Maximizes service efficiency by implementing a central point of contact and reducing duplication of information and referral.

Implementation Timeline: short-term.

Estimated Costs: low to moderate.

Strategy 6.1: Significantly increase promotion efforts of Contact 211 of Northeast Tennessee across the region and emphasize that it provides information about transportation in the UZA.

Contact 211 of Northeast Tennessee (Contact 211) is a single contact point for information about a broad variety of services including transportation. Contact 211 is able to provide information and referrals to the appropriate transportation service depending on the eligibility and needs of the caller. Responses to the public survey indicated that *85 percent of the respondents were not aware of the transportation information through Contact 211*. It is possible that Contact 211 is recognized as a source of information for community resources, but not necessarily for transportation services.

Consideration should be given to promoting Contact 211 as a source of information for all public, private, and human service agency transportation services. No change would be made to the call center, but the transportation resource would be promoted with an emphasis only on transportation information and services. A separate phone number could be added (possibly a toll-free number) along with 2-1-1 as a number to be called. This strategy is relatively low cost to implement. It would require development of a new brand for the transportation services and then promotion of the call center service, but there would be little cost for changes to the call center itself. This would require continued marketing and promotion with associated costs for materials and the promotion. Use advertising outlets including local TV stations, newsletters, and signs at human service agencies, senior centers, transit buses, etc.

Responsible Parties: Contact 211 with support from all participating transportation providers and mobility managers.

Potential Funding Sources

- Local funding sources that support Contact 211, and potential one-time contributions from participating agencies to support the development of a new brand.

Performance Measures

- Transportation information and referral is emphasized in advertising materials and shared with the public.
- Number of media outlets where new brand is shared.
- Awareness of Contact 211 services increases (as measured in local surveys).
- Number of calls for transportation information received by Contact 211 each year.

Strategy 6.2: Establish policies and procedures that would allow Contact 211 of Northeast Tennessee to directly hand-off a caller to the appropriate transportation provider or call center to schedule a trip with one or multiple providers.

For some individuals, making multiple calls to find a ride after receiving information from Contact 211 will be so overwhelming that they will give up. When they stop looking for the ride, the result may be a missed appointment, work shift, class, or necessary trip to the grocery or pharmacy.

As a second phase to strategy 6.1, this strategy involves Contact 211 making the call to the potential transportation providers and directly handing off the caller to them so that the trip can be scheduled. This strategy requires additional time for the Contact 211 call taker and prearranged agreements with participating transportation providers who will be answering the calls. It is a higher level of coordination, but the benefit to the caller is significant.

Responsible Parties: Contact 211, with support from all participating transportation providers and mobility managers.

Potential Funding Sources

- Local funding sources that support Contact 211, and contributions from participating agencies to support the service provided by Contact 211.

Performance Measures

- Number of calls for transportation information received by Contact 211 each year that are successfully handed-off to a provider.
- Number of trips provided that were connected through Contact 211 compared to the number of new riders served in previous years.
- Customer satisfaction results are high (based on customer surveys).

Goal 7: Improved information and awareness about transportation options

Objectives: Improve public and key stakeholder awareness about the available public and agency transportation services and the important benefit they provide to the community.

Needs Addressed: Improve awareness about the benefits of existing transportation services and build support for addressing the challenges and gaps through funding or other dedicated support services.

Implementation Timeline: ongoing.

Estimated Costs: low.

Strategy 7.1: Educate community leaders about the benefits of transportation and available resources.

Create and maintain a Ride Guide with basic information about all public, private, and non-profit transportation resources. The Ride Guide will include eligibility requirements, service area, modes of service, accessibility, hours/days of operation, and contact information for scheduling a trip.

Transportation providers are responsible for providing updated information whenever service aspects change.

The Ride Guide can be a printed resource but should also be available online. The site will be hosted by a lead agency such as Contact 211. Links to the online Ride Guide will be included on partner organization websites.

Responsible Parties: Contact 211, with support from all participating transportation providers and mobility managers.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5310 program funds may be used to develop the Ride Guide as part of a mobility management program and completed as a mobility manager job function.
- Local match may be derived from local sources or eligible non-US DOT federal programs.

Performance Measures

- Lead agency is identified and funding is secured.
- Transportation providers and mobility managers contribute data for the guide.
- Ride Guide is published in print and online, and distributed throughout the community.
- Ride Guide is provided to local businesses, medical facilities, government agencies, schools, residential facilities, and others.

Strategy 7.2: Develop a coordinated approach to increase public awareness about available transportation resources.

Create a presentation and short summary describing the available network of transportation options in the UZA. Include testimonials from riders about the importance of public and agency transportation programs in their lives. Include links to resources for additional information about how to use available services or how to get involved as a driver or volunteer.

Provide the presentation at local engagements such as events at senior centers, new family orientations for schools and human service agencies, apartment complexes, nursing homes. Seek opportunities to present information at local veterans organization gatherings, Lions Club meetings, or other similar events where there are opportunities to share the information with potential riders and introduce opportunities for local organizations to become involved as supporters.

Responsible Parties: Mobility managers and transportation providers.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5310 program funds may be used to develop the presentation and summary document as part of a mobility management program.
 - Local match may be derived from local sources or eligible non-US DOT federal programs.

Performance Measures

- Lead agency to develop the materials is identified and funding is secured.
- Transportation providers and mobility managers contribute to development of materials.
- Number of local engagements where the presentation is given to inform the audience.
- New local funders identified through additional outreach and education efforts.

Strategy 7.3: Identify leaders or champions to participate in the regional coordinating council and represent the Johnson City UZA transportation needs.

The Tennessee Office of Mobility and Accessible Transportation (OMAT) Strategic Plan calls for incremental development of regional coordinating councils. The council structure and responsibilities have not yet been identified, but are likely to be complete in 2022. When the council is established for the northeast Tennessee region, one or more representatives from the Johnson City UZA transportation programs should actively participate. It is likely that the regional council will discuss grant-making opportunities to address multiple unmet transportation needs. Such a focus may result in identification of new funding sources for the providers serving the UZA.

Responsible Parties: Mobility managers.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5310 program funds may be used to compensate for time spent participating in council meetings as part of the mobility management effort.
 - 20% local match may be derived from local sources or eligible non-US DOT federal programs.

Performance Measures

- Mobility managers actively participate in regional coordinating council meetings.
- New grant opportunities to support implementation of goals and strategies are identified and shared with transportation stakeholders and potential applicants.
- Better awareness of successful coordinated transportation initiatives across the state.

Strategy 7.4: Conduct mobility manager meetings to share challenges/needs and grant opportunities that support solutions with the agency mobility managers.

The JCT mobility manager and other agency mobility managers from within the UZA and across the region could meet periodically (schedule to be determined) to discuss opportunities and challenges they are experiencing as they work toward successful strategies that reduce the identified gaps and unmet transportation needs.

Responsible Parties: mobility managers.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5310 program funds could be requested to compensate for time spent participating in council meetings as part of the mobility management effort.
 - 20% local match may be derived from local sources or eligible non-US DOT federal programs.

Performance Measures

- Mobility managers actively participate in quarterly meetings and share information about successes, challenges, and goals.
- Number of strategies that are appropriately replicated in different parts of the region.

Goal 8: Enhance transportation service levels for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes

Objectives: Improve access to existing mobility options and continue to enhance those services to meet the needs of riders and potential riders.

Needs Addressed: Enhanced service levels for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Promote independent travel through travel training. Expand volunteer driver programs that offer a higher level of service.

Implementation Timeline: long-term.

Estimated Costs: moderate.

Strategy 8.1: Transportation voucher program for volunteer drivers serving veterans, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes.

Voucher programs provide reimbursement of a portion of trip costs for riders to pay volunteer drivers or to help cover the costs of a paid driver service (i.e., taxi, Uber, Lyft). The volunteers may be friends, neighbors, and family members who provide a needed trip. The ability to pay for a needed service gives the rider, whether an older adult, individual with disability, or person with low income, the dignity and independence to schedule their own travel and not feel that they are a burden on friends or family.

The sponsor of the voucher program may establish parameters such as the passenger having no other options for transportation during the required time or their location. The voucher payments are typically capped each month to prevent fraud.

Some voucher programs are also used with taxi companies or private providers to defray the full cost of a trip. The My Freedom Voucher Program organized and operated by CICOA Aging and In-Home Solutions in Indianapolis (www.cicoa.org) is an example. The Utah Transit Authority (UTA) funds a voucher program in Davis and Weber Counties that is structured in a unique way to incorporate volunteer driver services. For UTA's program, qualified individuals who need a ride are permitted to identify their own driver and the driver will receive a voucher (reimbursement) for a portion of the trip cost (up to a capped amount). Under the UTA voucher program structure, the individual who needs the ride has the freedom to find a trusted friend or family member to provide their trip. UTA has also developed technology to help with the back-end administration of the program.



A feasibility study could examine the use of vouchers or volunteer transportation as a means of providing transportation where transit ridership would be too low to sustain frequent service.

Responsible Parties: public or non-profit agency.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5310 program funds may be used to support mobility manager time to develop the program. Section 5310 funds are not eligible to support the vouchers or administration of the voucher program, according to TDOT requirements.
- Funding may be derived from local sources or eligible non-US DOT federal programs. Partnering agencies could contribute minor amounts of funding and the combination of funds would be significant enough to provide or subsidize rides. A combination of multiple local program funding sources could minimize the financial impact on any single agency.

Performance Measures

- Number of individuals served through the program.
- Number of vouchers provided to support trips that may not have otherwise been possible.
- Administrative cost of the program does not exceed predetermined performance goals.

Strategy 8.2: Identify funding to expand the MyRide program.

MyRide Tennessee is a successful and valuable volunteer driver program for older adults. In the Johnson City UZA, the programs are operated out of the senior center. The program is sustained through federal, state and local contributions. The volunteer driver often provides door-through-door transportation service for riders. This higher level of assistance is necessary and was recognized as an unmet need throughout the community.

Responsible Parties: MyRide Tennessee.

Potential Funding Sources

- Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability, and local programs.
 - Passenger contributions.

Performance Measures

- Continued funding is secured for MyRide Tennessee to sustain services.
- Other agencies serving older adults assist with grant writing or identification of potential revenue sources for program expansion in the UZA.

Strategy 8.3: Coordinated travel training program for partnering transportation providers.

Establish a coordinated travel training program for the UZA that is designed specifically for using public and agency transportation services offered throughout the area. It may range from instruction for completing applications and scheduling trips with volunteer driver programs to training on how to ride local routes, private taxis, or public demand response services. With a variety of modes available, travel training will expand beyond the existing individual travel training programs offered by JCT or other individual agencies by coordinating training materials and sharing information about multiple service providers.

Responsible Parties: mobility managers and transportation providers.

Potential Funding Sources

- FTA Section 5310 funding provides up to 80% of the cost for a mobility manager to create a travel training program. The remaining 20% matching funds can be derived from a combination of non-FTA federal dollars (e.g., Department of Health and Human Services, Aging, Title III-B of the Older Americans Act) and local funds or grants.

Performance Measures

- Number of people receiving travel training.
- Increase in ridership for programs that implement the coordinated travel training.
- Increase in customer satisfaction with their local transportation options.

7. Summary of Potential Implementation Timelines and Costs

The following table outlines the potential timeline for implementation of recommended goals. It is noted that actual implementation will depend upon funding cycles, staffing levels, and available funding for individual strategies.

Summary of Implementation Timelines and Costs

| Goals | Estimated Costs | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Goal 1: Establish a coordinated transportation framework. | \$ to \$\$ | Planning Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | | |
| Goal 2: Ensure funding and resources continue to be available for maintaining existing transportation services. | \$ to \$\$\$ | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus |
| Goal 3: Service expansions for access to jobs and college. | \$\$\$ | Planning Focus | Planning Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | | |
| Goal 4: Transportation service expansions. | \$ to \$\$\$ | | Planning Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Planning Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus |
| Goal 5: Transit technology improvements. | \$\$\$\$ | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | | | |
| Goal 6: Enhance and coordinate transportation information and referral process. | \$\$ | Planning Focus | Planning Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus |
| Goal 7: Information and awareness about existing transportation services and the benefits of those services. | \$ | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus |
| Goal 8: Enhance transportation service levels for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. | \$\$ | Planning Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Implementation/Operation Focus | Planning Focus |

Planning Focus: 

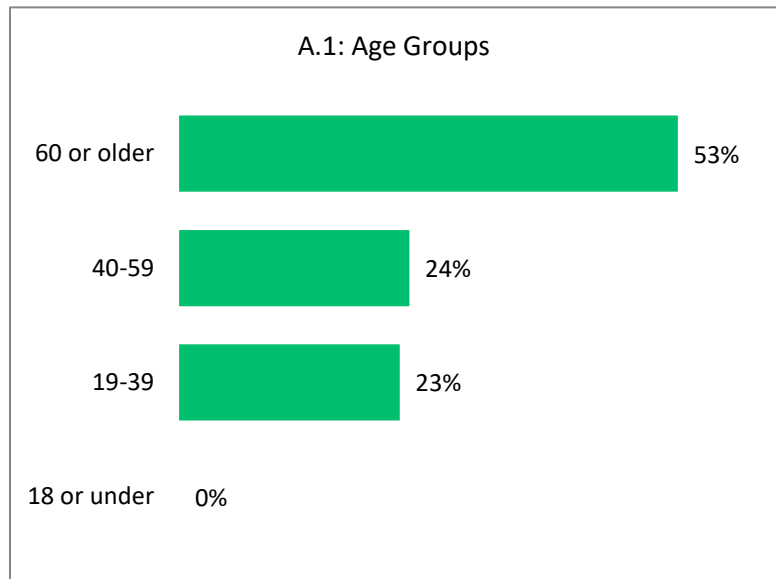
Implementation/Operation Focus: 

Appendix A: Public Survey Results

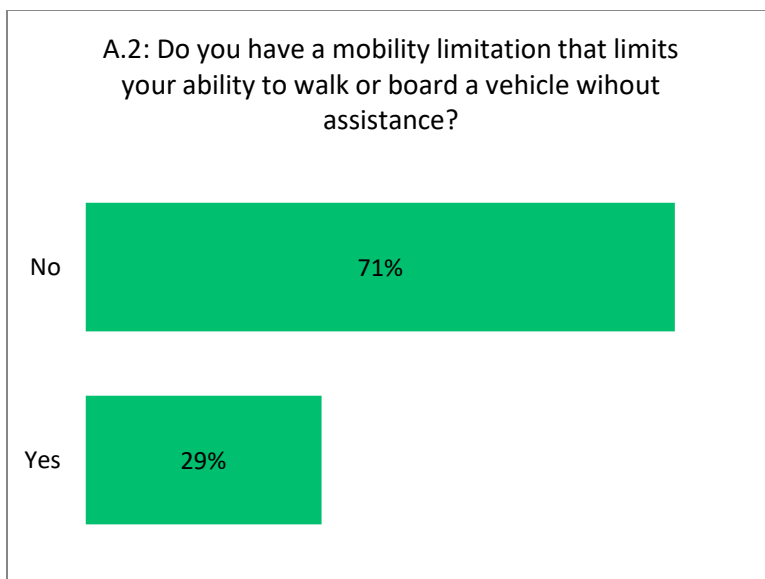
The following charts and paragraphs outline the results of the public survey about transportation needs and gaps in services. The survey was distributed October 2021 through mid-January 2022. The results are based on 120 completed surveys collected online. Surveys were announced at local meetings, in news media, social media, and postings on transit vehicles. Stakeholder organizations were also encouraged to share the survey with their consumers and peer agencies.

Age and Mobility Limitations of Survey Respondents

The intent of the survey is to understand transportation needs of the general public. The primary purpose of the coordinated plan, however, is to focus on transportation for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. Therefore, Chart A.1 illustrates the age groups of the respondents and the percentage of respondents who reported having a mobility limitation. More than half (53 percent) of respondents were age 60 or older. (n=120)

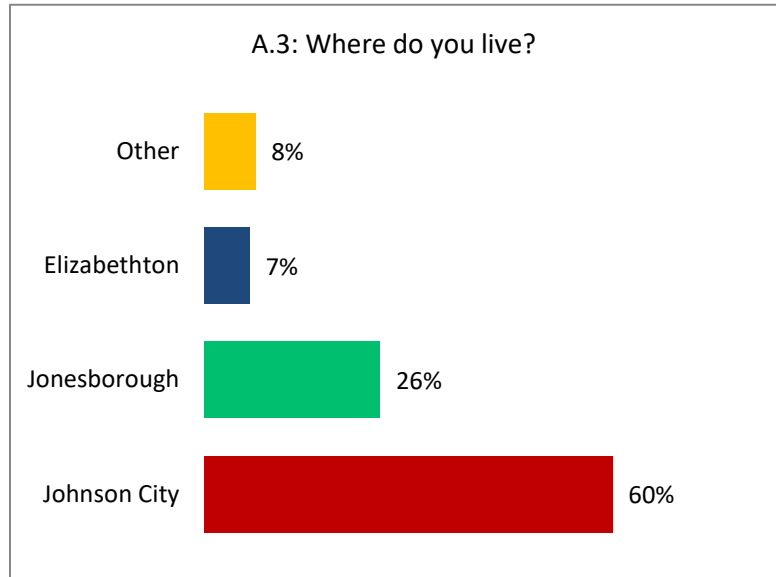


The number of individuals that reported having a mobility limitation that impacts their ability to walk or access a vehicle without assistance is indicated in Chart A.2. (n=120)



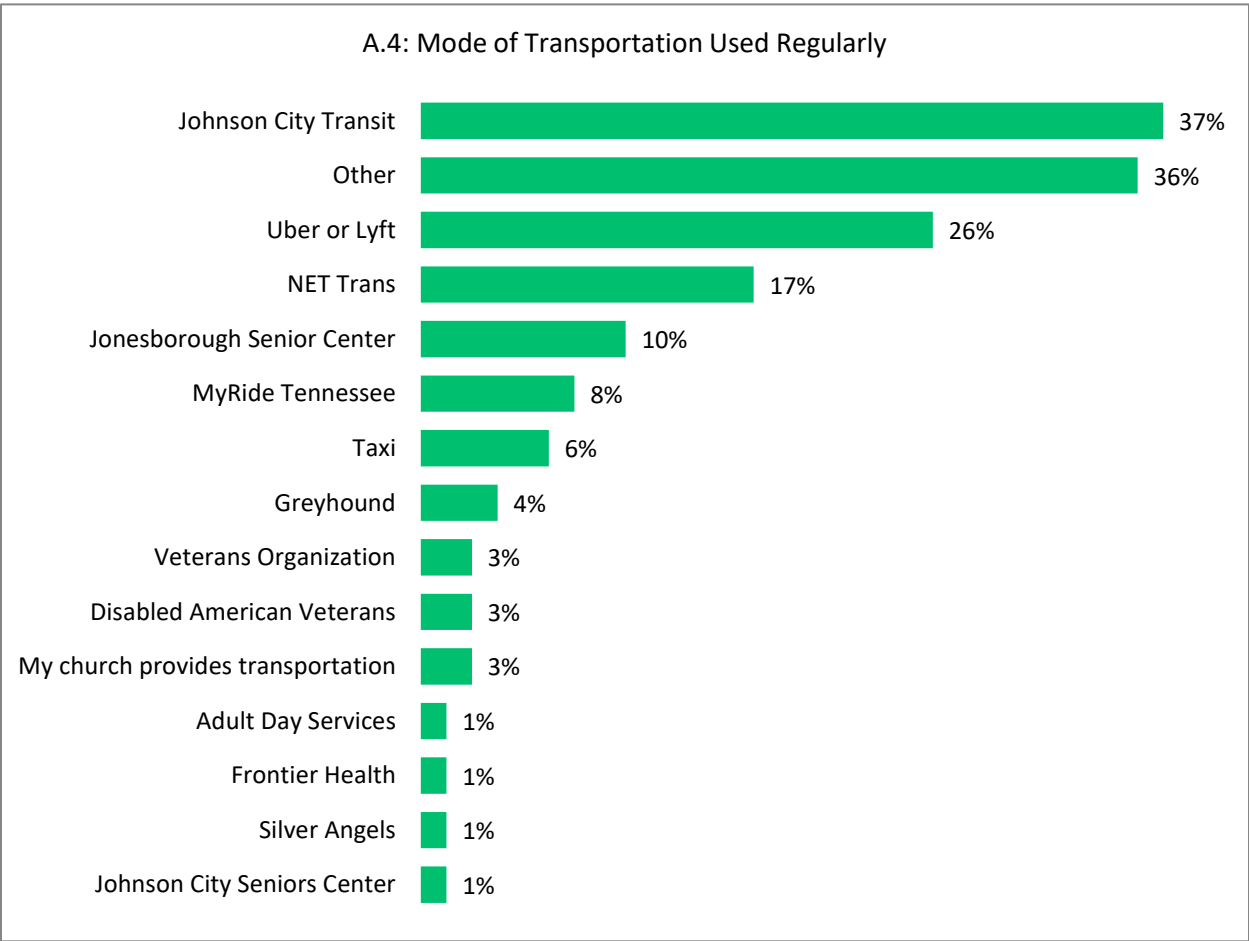
Location of Respondents

Survey respondents were invited to list the town or city where they live or the community, they live closest to. Chart A.3 illustrates that 60 percent of survey respondents live in Johnson City. Approximately 26 percent live in Jonesborough, and seven percent live in Elizabethton. The remaining eight percent of respondents live in communities throughout the area. Some of the communities included in the “other” category are in Johnson City. (n=120)



Modes of Transportation

Approximately 68 percent of the survey respondents have regular access to a personal vehicle that they drive. Other modes of transportation used by the survey respondents included Johnson City Transit (37 percent), Uber or Lyft (26 percent), NET Trans (17 percent), and several other options. Respondents were invited to select all of the providers that they use on a regular basis. Most of the respondents who selected “other” indicated that they drive a personal vehicle. (n=78)



Gaps in Access to Transportation

When asked where they need to go but do not have a ride, respondents listed six common trip purposes. Respondents were invited to provide multiple purposes. (n = 46)

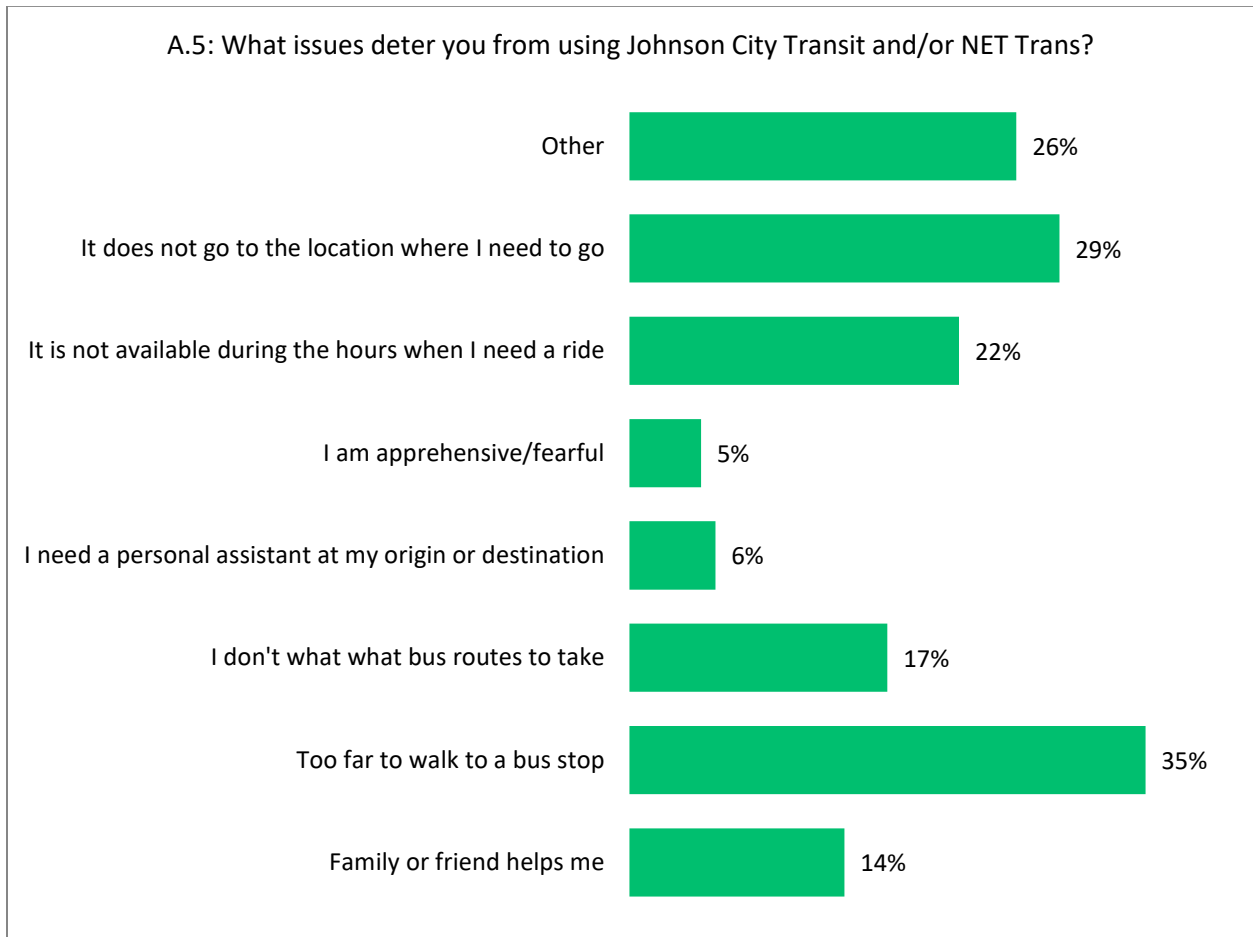
- Medical/Doctor = 35%
- Grocery Store/Shopping = 30%
- Work/Office = 22%
- Johnson City = 11%
- Pharmacy = 7%
- Church = 7%

Respondents were asked what days of the week and times of the day they most often need a ride and do not have one. The responses were consistent across all weekdays. No individual days stood out as having higher unmet need, however, the percentages indicate a slightly higher potential demand on weekdays compared to weekends. (n = 46)

Likewise, the times of the day when trips are needed were primarily between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Only two out of 39 responses were for evening hours after 6:00 PM. However, there were

Why Not Use Public Transit?

Respondents were asked what issues deter them from using Johnson City Transit or NET Trans. This question is important because it helps the transit providers understand what changes they may need to make to make service more user friendly to non-riders. The most common response was that the bus stop is too far of a walk (35 percent) or that the transit does not go to the location where they need to go (29 percent). (n=104)



Approximately 26 percent of respondents answered “other” and wrote in the following specific reasons for not using public transit:

- I need the bus transit system to operate later because of my job.
- There is not safe walking space to and from bus stops and bus stops are also unappealing (i.e., no rain cover, nowhere to stand).
- I don't know the bus routes and there is no map showing where the routes go.
- Some of the drivers are rude and argue with you about stops.
- It is too long to wait between buses.
- It takes too long to go where I need to go.
- Service is not available after 6:00 PM.
- The monthly pass is too expensive for my budget at present. Also, it is made out of paper and will not be replaced if damaged or lost.

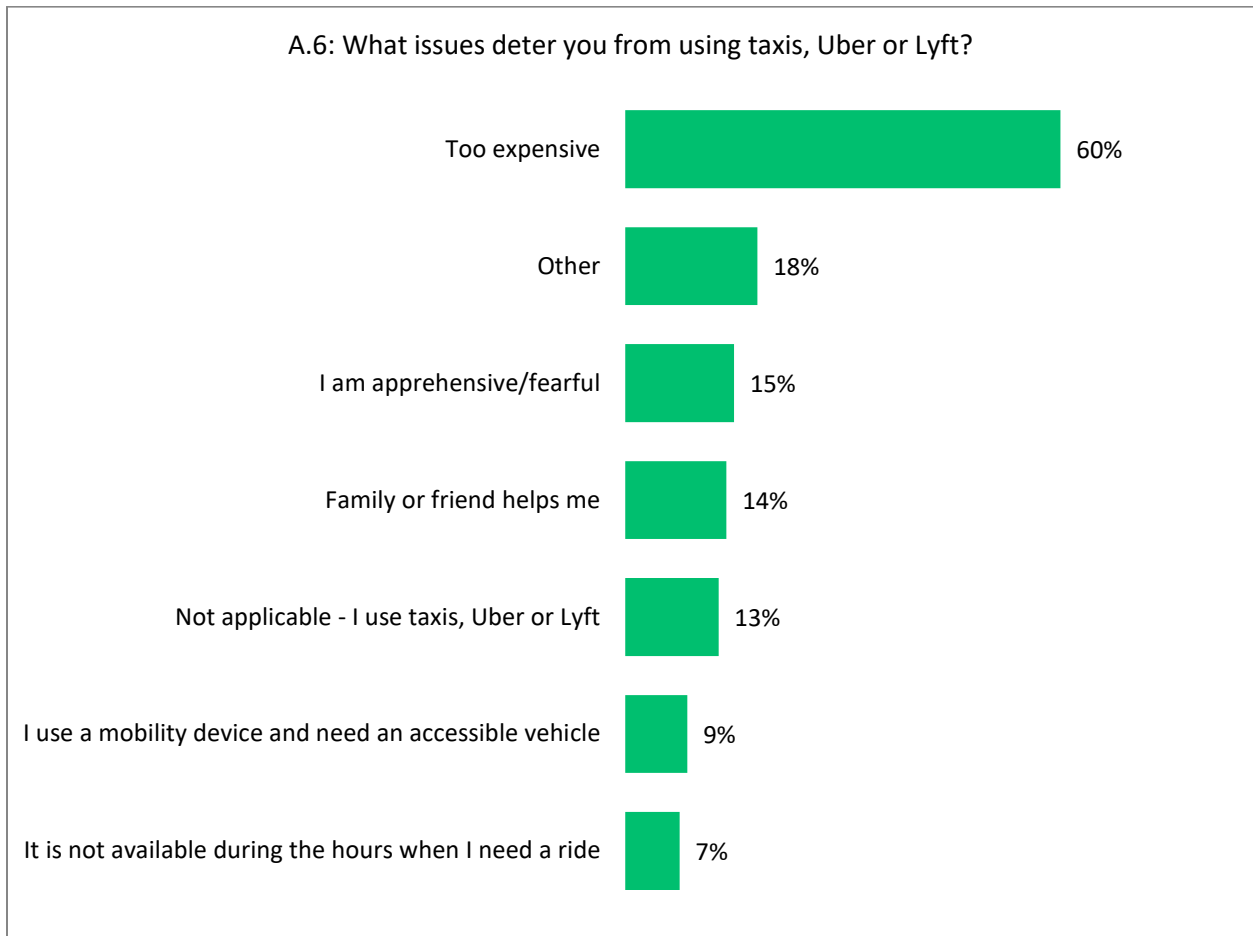
- The buses do not run during weekends or after 5:45 PM in the evening, which could affect my work schedule.
- There is no Johnson City Transit bus service in Jonesborough.
- I don't know anything about public transit.
- Transit does not come into Jonesborough.

Why Not Ride Taxis, Uber or Lyft?

Private transportation services that operate on demand (trips requested are provided within a short window of time and on the same day) provide a valuable service for anyone needing a ride. The out-of-pocket cost is typically higher than the passenger fare on public transit, but the trip is also more direct from origin to destination. Vehicles operated by private companies are typically available throughout evenings and during early mornings, however, the vehicles are usually not wheelchair accessible. Therefore, passengers using a mobility device may not have the option of riding a taxi, Uber or Lyft.

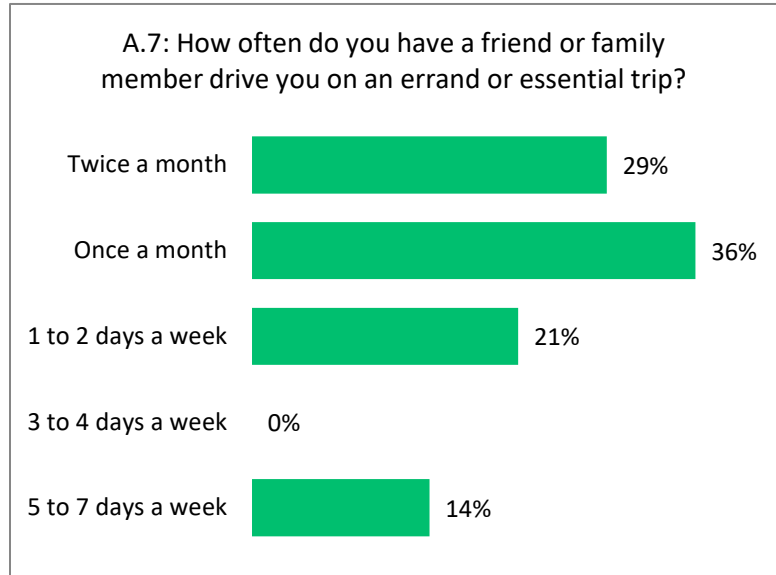
Survey respondents provided the following reasons or deterrents to using private transportation services operated by taxis, Uber or Lyft. (n=94)

Taxi, Uber and Lyft rides are too expensive for most of the respondents to this question. Other reasons listed by the respondents include not having a smart phone or computer access and there not being a taxi or Uber/Lyft service available where they live.



Riding with Friends and Family

Friends and family provide an important part of the transportation network for many people, especially those who do not drive. This important resource is highly valuable but is not always available when needed. Also, providing a necessary ride on a regular basis can become a significant responsibility for friends and family members who are also juggling their own transportation for work and all other trip purposes. For this reason, it is important to understand how often people rely on their friends and family for a ride.



Other transportation options to supplement the rides from friends and family will help to improve independence. (n=14)

The response rate to this question was low. However, those who responded indicated that they rely on friends and family once (36%) or twice a month (29%). Some also indicated needing rides as often as five to seven days a week.

Information and Referral

Contact 211 of Northeast Tennessee, Inc. provides information and referral to local organizations that provide basic needs such as transportation, food, clothing, and shelter. Contact 211 maintains a database of organizations within the eight-county service area that offer various services and resources to the community. It functions as a central call center, a single number, people can call for information about a variety of programs and services. Anyone can call 2-1-1 (423-246-2273) between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM, Monday through Friday to receive information. Additional information is also available by email at info@contact211netn.org.

Approximately 85 percent of survey respondents indicated that they were not aware of the 2-1-1 service for information about transportation or other services. (n=103)

Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

Direct Recipient – Federal formula funds for transit are apportioned to direct recipients; for rural and small urban areas, this is the Tennessee Department of Transportation. In large urban areas, a designated recipient is chosen by the governor. Direct recipients have the flexibility in how they select subrecipient projects for funding. In Tennessee, their decision process is described in the State or Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Program Management Plan.

Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act – On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorizing surface transportation programs at the U.S. Department of Transportation through September 2021. Details about the Act related to transit and public transportation are available at www.transit.dot.gov/FAST.

H+T Index – The Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index provides nationwide data on the cost of housing and transportation at the neighborhood level in an effort to explore sustainability and affordability through location efficiency. The information is available at <https://htaindex.cnt.org/>.

Human Services Agency (HSA) – Government/public and nonprofit agencies that provide social assistance programs (from healthcare to food and shelter to employment) designed to contribute to the welfare and happiness of communities by delivering a broad range of support to individuals and families. In many communities, transportation is one of the services provided to agency clients, or to a broader segment of the general public.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, is the legislation that reauthorizes surface transportation programs for Fiscal Years 2022 through 2026 and provides advance appropriations for certain programs. The legislation will advance public transportation in America’s communities through four key priorities: Safety; Modernization; Climate; and Equity. FTA program fact sheets under the law are available at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/fta-program-fact-sheets-under-bipartisan-infrastructure-law>.

Individuals with Disabilities – This document classifies individuals with disabilities based on the definition provided in the Americans with Disabilities Act implementing regulations, which is found in 49 CFR Part 37.3. This definition, when applied to transportation services applications, is designed to permit a functional approach to disability determination rather than a strict categorical definition. In a functional approach, the mere presence of a condition that is typically thought to be disabling gives way to consideration of an individual’s abilities to perform various life functions.

Local Matching Funds – The portion of project costs not paid with the Federal share. Non-Federal share or non-Federal funds include the following sources of funding, or in-kind property or services, used to match the Federal assistance awarded for the Grant or Cooperative Agreement: (a) Local funds; (b) Local in-kind property or services; (c) State funds; (d) State in-kind property or services, and (e) Other Federal funds that are eligible, under Federal law, for use as cost-sharing or matching funds for the Underlying Agreement. For the Section 5310 Program, local match can come from other Federal (non-DOT) sources that are eligible under the laws and regulation governing that funding. This processing of matching Federal funds with Federal funds can allow local communities to implement programs with 100 percent Federal funding. One example of Federal funding that can be used to match FTA Section 5310 grants is Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III-B Support Services.

Medicaid Funded Transportation – Medicaid services low-income populations and individuals with disabilities, and relies primarily on state funding. Medicaid generally pays for eligible non-emergency medical trips (NEMT) for patients who can walk, use a wheelchair, or require a stretcher or ambulance. State Medicaid programs also qualify people who are eligible for waivers (waiving the admission into an institution or nursing facility), also called home and community-based services, that include transportation as a supportive service.

Older Adults – For the purposes of the Section 5310 Program, people who are 65 years of age and older are defined as older adults or seniors.

Older Americans Act, Title III-B funding - The Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020 reauthorizes programs for FY 2020 through FY 2024 and is considered to be a major vehicle for the organization and delivery of social and nutrition services to this group and their caregivers. The purpose of Title III of the OAA is to encourage and assist state and local agencies in the development of comprehensive and coordinated in-home and community based long-term services for older adults (age 60 and older). The 2006 reauthorization contained specific requirements for States and area agencies to develop and implement comprehensive and coordinated systems for home and community-based services, including transportation, and explicitly allowed grantees to use Title III-B funds to meet the match requirements of FTA programs for the transport of seniors and caregivers who are escorting seniors.

Public Transportation - Transportation service that is available to any person upon payment of the fare and which cannot be reserved for the private or exclusive use of one individual or group. "Public" in this sense refers to the access to the service, not the ownership of the system providing the service. Public transportation service must be open door. Public transportation must provide shared rides on a regular basis. Shared ride means two or more passengers in the same vehicle who are otherwise not traveling together. Every trip does not have to be a shared ride but the general nature of the service must include shared rides.

Section 5307; Urban Transit Program - The FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Funding program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Additional information may be found at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/urbanized-area-formula-grants-5307>.

Section 5310; Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & People with Disabilities Program – Also known as the Specialized Transportation or Section 5310 program makes Federal resources available to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Transportation services are supported in all areas – large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural (under 50,000). The Tennessee Department of Transportation, Office of Transit (TNDOT) administers the Section 5310 Program in Tennessee for small urban and rural areas. The Federal share is 80 percent for capital projects. Currently, TDOT offers 10% toward the local match. The remaining 10% matching funds must come from local sources. Local match may be derived from other non-U.S. Department of Transportation funding programs under which transportation is an eligible expense. In Tennessee, the program has historically been utilized for capital program purchases. In 2022, TDOT expanded the list of eligible projects to include mobility management. Additional information about the Federal program may be found at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310>.

Section 5311; Rural Transit Program – The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to States to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Additional information is available at www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/grant-programs/formula-grants-rural-areas-5311. The Tennessee Department of Transportation administers the Section 5311 program in Tennessee.

Section 5311(f): Intercity Bus Program – The Intercity Bus Program (49 U.S.C. 5311(f)) supports the connection between nonurbanized areas and larger regional or national system of intercity bus service. It supports services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in nonurbanized areas. The Program supports infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance and capital investment in facilities. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) encourages States to use the funding to support the above noted objectives as well as priorities determined by States.

Section 5339; Bus and Bus Facilities Grants Program – The Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities program makes Federal resources available to States and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities. Funding is provided through formula allocations and competitive grants. Eligible recipients include direct recipients that operate fixed route bus service or that allocate funding to fixed route bus operators; State or local governmental entities; and federally recognized Indian tribes that operate fixed route bus service that are eligible to receive direct grants under Sections 5307 and 5311. Subrecipients may allocate amounts from the grant to subrecipients that are public agencies or private nonprofit organizations engaged in public transportation. Additional information is available at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/bus-program>.

Subrecipient - A non-Federal entity that receives a sub-award (grant funding) from another entity to carry out part of a Federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. Subrecipient programs are monitored by the direct or designated recipient for grant performance and compliance.

Urbanized Area (UZA) - As of the 2010 Census, an urbanized area comprises a densely settled core of census tracts and/or census blocks that meet minimum population density requirements, along with adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settled territory with the densely settled core. To qualify as an urban area, the territory identified according to criteria must encompass at least 2,500 people, at least 1,500 of which reside outside institutional group quarters. The Census Bureau identifies areas as follows:

Urbanized Areas (UAs) of 50,000 or more people; **Small Urban Areas** contain between 50,000 and 200,000 people, while **Large Urban Areas** have more than 200,000 people.

Urban Clusters (UCs) of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people.

“Rural” encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area.

Zero Vehicle Households – No vehicles available to a housing unit, according to U.S. Census data. This factor is an indicator of demand for transit services.