Five-Year Transit System Plan for 2020-2025

Community Transit
Southwest Region

Prepared for:
United Community Action Partnership

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Acronyms

ACS	American Community Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GMTIP	Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan
GTFS	General Transit Feed Specification
LEHD	Longitudinal Employer-Households Dataset
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
M,T,W,R,F	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
MnDOT	Minnesota Department of Transportation
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MPTA	Minnesota Public Transit Association
MVLST	Motor Vehicle Lease Sales Tax
MVST	Motor Vehicle Sales Tax
NTD	National Transit Database
RDO	Regional Development Organization
TAC	Transportation Advisory Committee
TCRP	Transit Cooperative Research Program
U.S.C.	United States Code
UCAP	United Community Action Partnership
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation

Glossary

Access: The opportunity to reach a given destination within a certain timeframe or without significant physical, social, or economic barriers.

Accessible Vehicle: A public transportation vehicle that does not restrict access, is usable, and provides allocated space and/or priority seating for individuals who use mobility devices.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Americans with Disabilities Act, passed in July 1991, gave direction to local transit agencies to ensure full access to transportation for persons with disabilities.

Capital Cost: The cost of equipment and facilities required to support transportation systems, including vehicles, radios, shelters, software, etc.

Central Transfer Point: A central meeting place where routes or zonal demand-responsive buses intersect so that passengers may transfer. Routes are often timed to facilitate transferring and depart once passengers have had time to transfer. When all routes arrive and depart at the same time, the system is called a pulse system. The central transfer point simplifies transfers when there are many routes (particularly radial routes), several different modes, and/or paratransit zones. A downtown retail area is often an appropriate site for a central transfer point, as it is likely to be a popular destination, a place of traffic congestion and limited parking, and a place where riders are likely to feel safe waiting for the next bus. Strategic placement of the transfer point can attract riders to the system and may provide an opportunity for joint marketing promotions with local merchants.

Circulator: A bus that makes frequent trips around a small geographic area with numerous stops around the route. It is typically operated in a downtown area or area attracting tourists, where parking is limited, roads are congested, and trip generators are spread around the area. It may be operated all-day or only at times of peak demand, such as rush hour or lunchtime.

Commuter Bus Service: Transportation designed for daily, round-trip service, which accommodates a typical 8-hour, daytime work shift (e.g., an outbound trip arriving at an employment center by 8 a.m., with the return trip departing after 5 p.m.).

Coordination: Coordination means pooling the transportation resources and activities of several agencies. The owners of transportation assets talk to each other to find ways to mutually benefit their agencies and their customers. Coordination models can range in scope from sharing information, to sharing equipment and facilities, to integrated scheduling and dispatching of services, to the provision of services by only one transportation provider (with other former providers now purchasing services). Coordination may involve human service agencies working with each other or with public transit operations.

Dedicated Funding Source: A funding source that, by law, is available for use only to support a specific purpose and cannot be diverted to other uses (e.g., the federal gasoline tax can only be used for highway investments and, since 1983, for transit capital projects).

Demand-Responsive Service: Service to individuals that is activated based on passenger requests. Usually passengers call the scheduler or dispatcher and request rides for dates and times. A trip is scheduled for that passenger, which may be canceled by the passenger. Usually involves curb-to-curb or door-to-door service. Trips may be scheduled on an advanced reservation basis or in “real-time.” Usually smaller vehicles are used to provide demand responsive service. This type of service usually provides the highest level of service to the passenger but is the most expensive for the transit system to operate in terms of cost per trip. In rural areas with relatively high populations of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, demand-responsive service is sometimes the most appropriate type of service. Sub-options

within this service type are discussed in order of least structured to most structured, in terms of routing and scheduling.

- **Pure Demand-Responsive Service**: Drivers pick up and drop off passengers at any point in the service area, based on instructions from the dispatcher. In pure demand-responsive systems, the dispatcher combines immediate requests, reservations, and subscription service for the most efficient use of each driver's time.
- **Zonal Demand-Responsive Service**: The service area is divided into zones. Buses pick up and drop off passengers only within the assigned zone. When the drop off is in another zone, the dispatcher chooses a meeting point at the zone boundary for passenger transfer or a central transfer is used. This system ensures that a vehicle will always be within each zone when rides are requested.
- **Flexibly Routed and Scheduled Services**: Flexibly routed and scheduled services have some characteristics of both fixed route and demand-responsive services. In areas where demand for travel follows certain patterns routinely, but the demand for these patterns is not high enough to warrant a fixed route, service options such as checkpoint service, point deviation, route deviation, service routes, or subscription service might be the answer. These are all examples of flexible routing and schedules, and each may help the transit system make its demand-responsive services more efficient while still maintaining much of the flexibility of demand responsiveness.

Dial-A-Ride Service: A name that is commonly used for demand-responsive service. It is helpful in marketing the service to the community, as the meaning of "dial-a-ride" may be more self-explanatory than "demand-responsive" to someone unfamiliar with transportation terms.

Express Bus Service: Express bus service characteristics include direct service from a limited number of origins to a limited number of destinations with no intermediate stops. Typically, express bus service is fixed route/fixed schedule and is used for longer distance commuter trips. The term may also refer to a bus that makes a limited number of stops while a local bus makes many stops along the same route but as a result takes much longer.

Farebox Recovery Ratio: The percentage of operating costs covered by revenue from fares and contract revenue (total fare revenue and total contract revenue divided by the total operating cost).

Fares: Revenue from cash, tickets, and pass receipts given by passengers as payment for public transit rides.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA): An operating administration within the United States Department of Transportation that administers federal programs and provides financial assistance to public transit.

Feeder Service: Local transportation service that provides passengers with connections to a longer-distance transportation service. Like connector service, feeder service is service in which a transfer to or from another transit system, such as an intercity bus route, is the focal point or primary destination.

Fixed Route: Transportation service operated over a set route or network of routes on a regular time schedule.

Goal: A community's statement of values for what it wants to achieve.

Headway: The length of time between vehicles moving in the same direction on a route. Headways are called short if the time between vehicles is short and long if the time between them is long. When headways are short, the service is said to be operating at a high frequency; if headways are long, service is operating at a low frequency.

Intercity Bus Service: Regularly scheduled bus service for the public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not near, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available. Intercity bus service may include local and regional feeder services, if those services are designed expressly to connect to the broader intercity bus network.

MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, signed into law in July 2012. MAP-21 established surface transportation funding programs for federal fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

Measure: A basis for comparison, or a reference point against which other factors can be evaluated.

Motor Vehicle Sales Tax: A source of revenue for Minnesota public transit. The percentages of this revenue source designated for metropolitan area and Greater Minnesota transit are defined in Minn. Stat. 297B.09.

Operating Expenditures: The recurring costs of providing transit service (e.g., wages, salaries, fuel, oil, taxes, maintenance, insurance, marketing, etc.).

Operating Revenue: The total revenue earned by a transit agency through its transit operations. It includes passenger fares, advertising, and other revenues.

Paratransit Service: "Paratransit" means the transportation of passengers by motor vehicle or other means of conveyance by persons operating on a regular and continuing basis and the transportation or delivery of packages in conjunction with an operation having the transportation of passengers as its primary and predominant purpose and activity but excluding regular route transit. "Paratransit" includes transportation by car pool and commuter van, point deviation and route deviation services, shared-ride taxi service, dial-a-ride service, and other similar services.

Passenger Trip (Unlinked): Typically, one passenger trip is recorded any time a passenger boards a transportation vehicle or other conveyance used to provide transportation. “Unlinked” means that one trip is recorded each time a passenger boards a vehicle, no matter how many vehicles that passenger uses to travel from their origin to their destination.

Performance Indicator: An indicator is a metric that provides meaningful information about the condition or performance of the transportation system but is neither managed to nor used to evaluate the effectiveness of policies, strategies, or investments.

Performance Measure: A performance measure is a metric that measures progress toward a goal, outcome, or objective. This definition covers metrics used to make decisions or evaluate the effectiveness or adequacy of a policy, strategy, or investment.

Performance Target: A target is a specific performance level representing the achievement of a goal, outcome, or objective.

Point Deviation Service: A type of flexible route transit service in which fixed scheduled stops (points) are established but the vehicle may follow any route needed to pick up individuals along the way if the vehicle can make it to the fixed points on schedule. This type of service usually provides access to a broader geographic area than does fixed route service but is not as flexible in scheduling options as demand-responsive service. It is appropriate when riders change from day to day but the same few destinations are consistently in demand. Also sometimes called checkpoint service.

Public Transportation: Transportation service that is available to any person upon payment of the fare either directly, subsidized by public policy, or through some contractual arrangement, and that 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 to the ownership of the system that provides the service.

Revenue Hours: The number of transit vehicle hours when passengers are being transported. Calculated by taking the total time when a vehicle is available to the public with the expectation of carrying passengers. Excludes deadhead hours, when buses are positioning but not carrying passengers, but includes recovery/layover time.

Ridership: The total of all unlinked passenger trips including transfers.

Ridesharing: A form of transportation, other than public transit, in which more than one person shares the use of a vehicle, such as a van or car, to make a trip. Variations include carpooling or vanpooling.

Route Deviation Service: Transit buses travel along a predetermined alignment or path with scheduled time points at each terminal point and in some instances at key intermediate locations. Route deviation service is different than conventional fixed route bus service in that the vehicle may leave the route upon requests of passengers to be picked up or returned to destinations near the route. Following an off-route deviation, the vehicle typically returns to the point at which it left the route. Passengers may call in advance for route deviation or may access the system at predetermined route stops. The limited geographic area within which the vehicle may travel off the route is known as the route deviation corridor.

Section 5304 (State Transportation and Planning Program): The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that provides financial assistance to the states for purposes of planning, technical studies and assistance, demonstrations, management training, and cooperative research activities.

Section 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula Program): The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that authorizes grants to public transit systems in urban areas with populations of more than 50,000 for both capital and operating projects. Based on population and density figures, these funds are distributed directly to the transit agency from the FTA.

Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Persons with Disability): The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that provides grant funds for the purchase of accessible vehicles and related support equipment for private non-profit organizations to serve elderly and/or disabled people, public bodies that coordinate services for elderly and disabled, or any public body that certifies to the state that non-profits in the area are not readily available to carry out the services.

Section 5311 (Non-urbanized Area Formula Program): The section of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended, that authorizes grants to public transit systems in non-urbanized areas (fewer than 50,000 population). The funds initially go to the governor of each state. In Minnesota, MnDOT administers these funds.

Service Area: The geographic area that coincides with a transit system's legal operating limits (e.g., city limits, county boundary, etc.).

Service Gaps: Service gaps can occur when certain geographic segments cannot be covered by transportation services. This term can also refer to instances where service delivery is not available to a certain group of riders, or at a specific time.

Service Span: The duration of time that service is made available or operated during the service day (e.g., 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.).

Standard: A recommendation that leads or directs a course of action to achieve a certain goal. A standard is the expected outcome for the measure that will allow a service to be evaluated. There are two sets of transit standards.

- **Service design and operating standards**: Guidelines for the design of new and improved services and the operation of the transit system.
- **Service performance standards**: The evaluation of the performance of the existing transit system and of alternative service improvements using performance measures.

Total Operating Cost: The total of all operating costs incurred during the transit system calendar year, excluding expenses associated with capital grants.

Transfer: Passengers arrive on one bus and leave on another (totally separate) bus to continue their trip. The boarding of the second vehicle is counted as an unlinked passenger trip.

Transit Dependent: A description for a population or person who does not have immediate access to a private vehicle, or because of age or health reasons cannot drive and must rely on others for transportation.

Transit Subsidy: The operating costs not covered by revenue from fares or contracts.

Transit: Transportation by bus, rail, or other conveyance, either publicly or privately owned, that provides general or special service on a regular and continuing basis. The term includes fixed route and paratransit services as well as ridesharing. Also known as mass transportation, mass transit, or public transit.

Trip Denial: A trip denial occurs when a trip is requested by a passenger, but the transportation provider cannot provide the service. Trip denial may happen because capacity is not available at the requested time. For ADA paratransit, a capacity denial is specifically defined as occurring if a trip cannot be accommodated within the negotiated pick-up window. Even if a trip is provided, if it is scheduled outside the +60/-60-minute window, it is considered a denial. If the passenger refused to accept a trip offered within the +60/-60-minute pick-up window, it is considered a refusal, not a capacity denial.

Volunteers: Volunteers are persons who offer services to others but do not accept monetary or material compensation for the services that they provide. In some volunteer programs, the volunteers are reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses; for example, volunteers who drive their own cars may receive reimbursement based on miles driven for the expenses that they are assumed to have incurred, such as gasoline, repair, and insurance expenses.

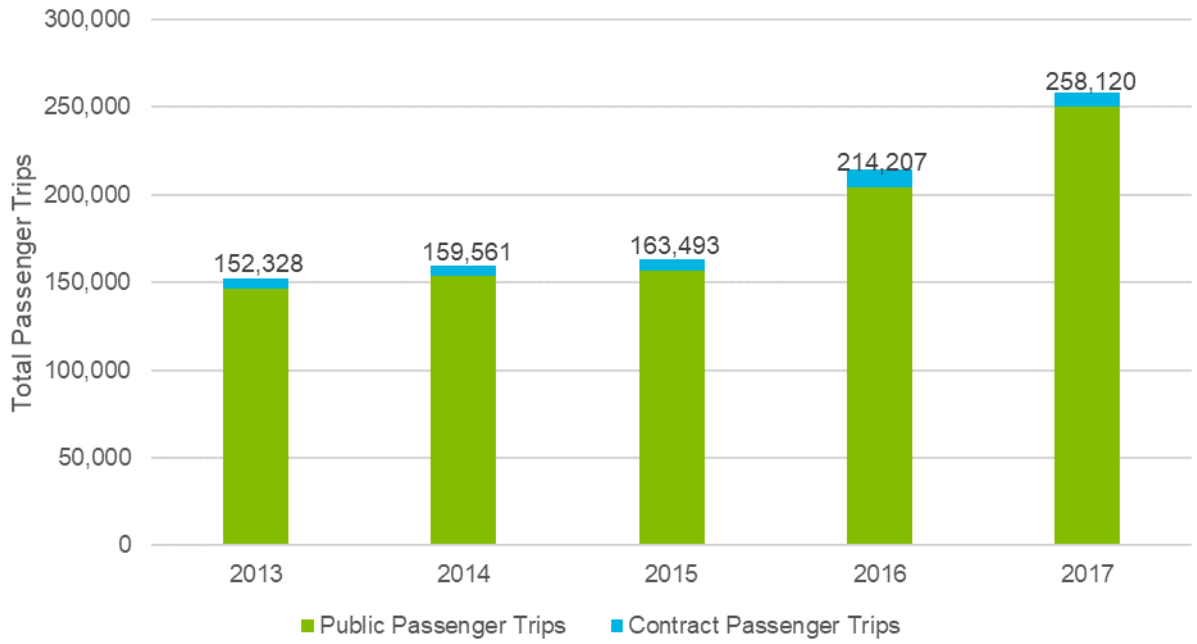
1. Executive Summary

Community Transit of United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) provides demand response and deviated route public transit service for all people throughout eight counties in Southwest Minnesota: Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock. Community Transit is operated and governed by UCAP and the UCAP Board Agency, respectively. In addition, Community Transit receives guidance from its eight Transit Advisory Committees, one for each of the counties in the service area.

Community Transit has grown considerably in recent years, having completed full mergers with Lincoln County Heartland Express and Murray County in 2016, Rock County Heartland Express in 2017, and Pipestone County Transit in 2018.

The span of service varies by service type and route, with demand response service operating on weekdays for 11 to 15 hours and on weekends for 4 to 6 hours. Deviated route service operates on weekdays for 9 to 12 hours and on weekends for 9 hours. System-wide ridership has increased by over 105,000 since 2013, as shown on Figure 1. Total passenger trips especially grew in 2016 and 2017 due to agency mergers.

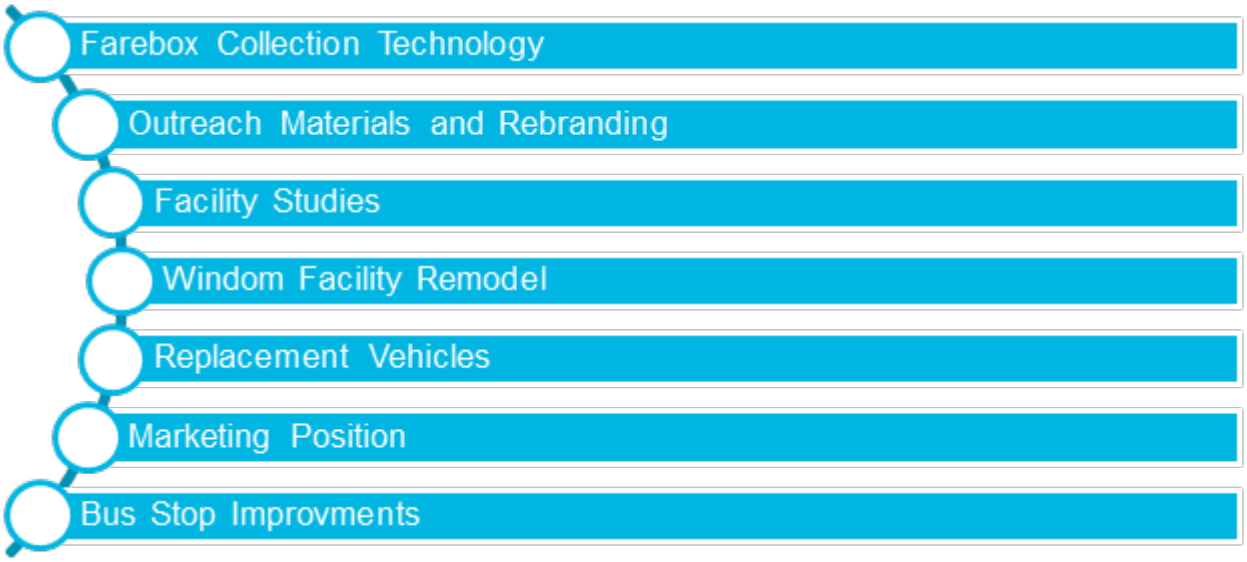
Figure 1. System-Wide Ridership (2013-2017)



The project team for the five-year transit system plan met with staff from the agency, stakeholders, and Transit Advisory Committee members three times in the fall and winter of 2018-2019 to discuss the agency's operating structure and environment, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. As a result of the meetings, agency needs were identified and prioritized for the five-year period, without fiscal constraints. This "unconstrained" needs list was developed to identify investments of all kinds that could enhance the agency's operational efficiency. Community Transit staff then prioritized needs to inform which strategic investments

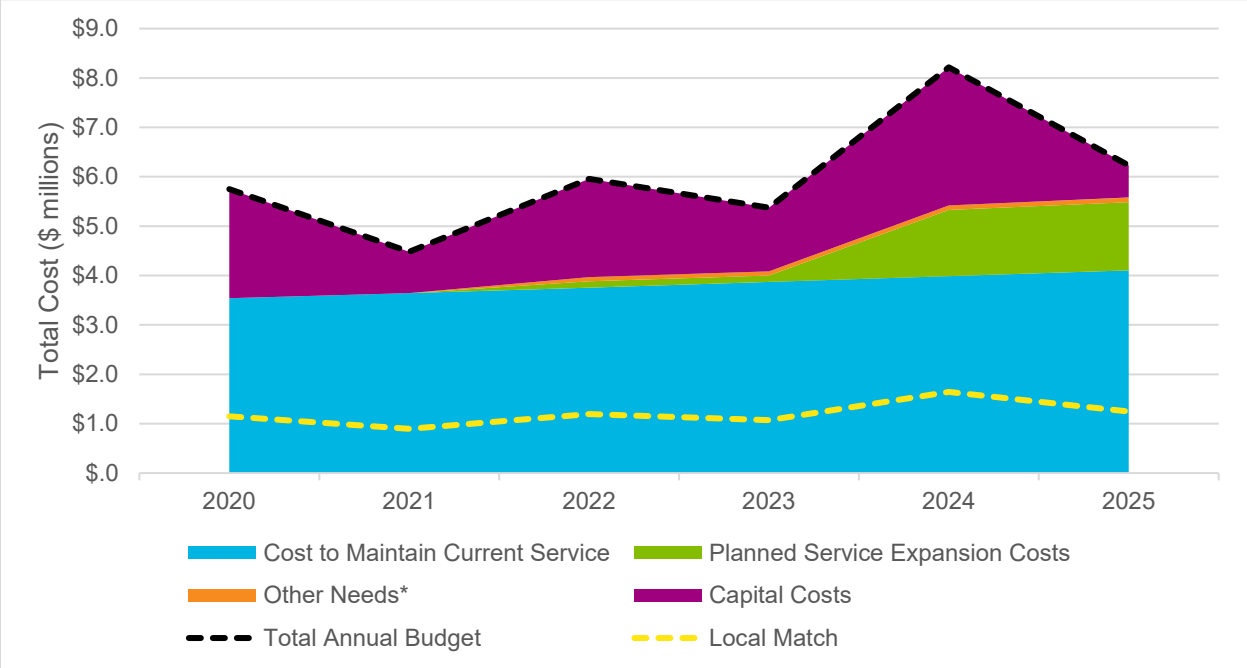
could be made to better meet the needs of the community. Figure 2 illustrates the needs designated as a high priority by Community Transit.

Figure 2. High Priority Unconstrained Needs for Community Transit



The project team developed capital and operating plans to lay out the costs of investing in improvements like service expansion, marketing materials, and improved dispatch technology between 2020 and 2025 to address the agency's needs. Figure 3 summarizes the costs of investing in these improvements, and the detailed plans are included as Appendix A.

Figure 3. 2020-2025 Plan, Local Revenue Requirements



This five-year transit system plan is intended to inform agency decisions and investments between 2020 and 2025. It is considered a "living document" and providers are encouraged to update the plan as necessary to meet changing agency and community needs.

2. Why a Five-Year System Plan?

Transit systems in Greater Minnesota have been working in a rapidly changing environment with system mergers and increased demand for service along with new policies and funding situations. Despite significant growth in the amount of service available outside of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, transit in Greater Minnesota is not always recognized or understood by local officials and residents. To address the growing need for transit service in a way that is integrated and embraced by the community, a vision for the future of each transit system is critical. Without a plan, systems are put in the position of having to react in the moment to new circumstances and operate on a year to year basis without a longer-term vision to guide annual budgets and decision making.

Transit providers and MnDOT agree that individual five-year plans will help identify system-specific priorities based on themes from the Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan (GMTIP). Five-year plans will help systems better deliver service and work toward overall goals such as:

- Improving coordination of services to meet transportation needs;
- Increasing ridership/usage across the network;
- Ensuring fiscal responsibility as a transit funding agency;
- Anticipating and planning for future funding levels to achieve service expansion;
- Articulating and communicating a vision for the transit system and the benefits it provides to the community.

Plans are intended to help systems work with local government officials, local planning agencies, transit system board members, and other organizations to prepare for these changes. Transit agencies recognize the importance of involving local officials in planning activities to continue building local support for improving transit systems, including long-term commitment of local funds to leverage state and federal dollars.

The process for developing the five-year plans is guided by a consultant Project Manager, the Office of Transit and Active Transportation (OTAT) at MnDOT, and the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA). A Project Advisory Committee consisting of Transit Directors, staff from MPOs (Metropolitan Planning Organizations) and RDOs (Regional Development Organizations), local government officials, service organization representatives, and staff from MPTA and MnDOT is providing input and identifying key issues to be addressed by the plans.

Larger transit systems routinely develop and update five-year plans as do local governments when it comes to planning for future development. The Greater Minnesota Transit System five-year plans will allow all transit service to be incorporated into the larger transportation vision for communities as they plan for new economic development and a future with an aging population.

Policies established through the Olmstead Plan and Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) require communities to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities. A statutory goal of meeting 90% of the need for transit service by 2025 in Greater Minnesota is also focusing more attention on exactly how to expand service around the state.

With a well-defined five-year plan, goals and ideas for improving transit service can be put into action with a clear blueprint for which routes to add or expand, specific hours of service to adjust, and how the funding can be identified to cover additional operating and capital expenses. The plans will also facilitate communication with the public and help raise awareness of how and where transit service is provided in the state, which will help encourage greater ridership.

The five-year plans are designed to be updated annually to meet changing needs and circumstances.

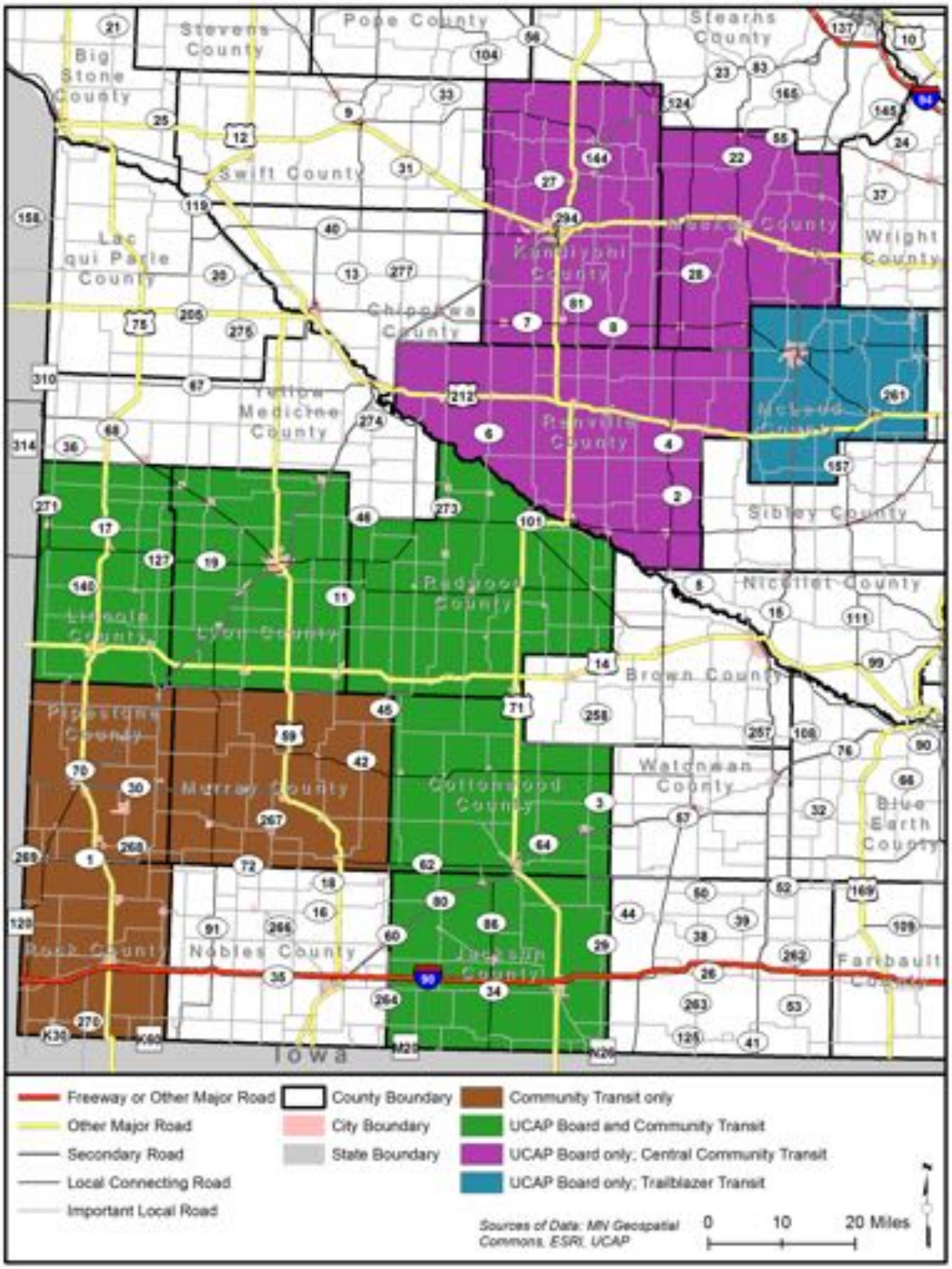
Transit service improves the livability and prosperity of communities across Greater Minnesota. The Five-Year Transit System Plan will bring all stakeholders together to develop a future vision that will guide the decisions that are made today.

3. Agency Overview

United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) exists to remove obstacles to meeting basic needs; provide opportunities and tools to escape poverty; instill hope and create pathways to eliminate poverty for future generations; connect communities to the mission of the agency for maximum impact; and improve agency capacity to accomplish its mission. To do this, the agency administers a variety of programs throughout southwest and south-central Minnesota. Community Transit is UCAPs public transit program. It covers Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood and Rock Counties, and provides supplemental services in Nobles County.

As shown on Figure 4, the Community Transit service area is in the southwestern area of the state on the South Dakota and Iowa borders, with the Minnesota River constituting the northeast border of Redwood County. The service area is about 80 miles west of Mankato, and 160 miles west of Rochester. Interstate 90 runs east-west through the southern part of the service area. State Route 23 provides connectivity between several service area municipalities, listed from south to north: Pipestone, Florence, Marshall, and Cottonwood. U.S. Route 71 facilitates connections between Jackson, Windom, Redwood Falls, and Willmar, located approximately 45 miles north.

Figure 4. Location Map



3.1 Transit Agency Background

Community Transit is overseen by UCAP, which is a community action agency formed in October 2016 as a result of the merger between Heartland Community Action Agency and Western Community Action, Inc. A concerted rebranding effort was undertaken to increase the visibility of the public transit services offered by UCAP, resulting in the Community Transit brand. This rebranding effort included buses, bus stops, public information materials, and various other materials. Community Transit expanded services from four counties to eight within two years.

The beginning of today's Community Transit can be traced back to 1990, when MnDOT awarded a grant that allowed Jackson County and Lyon County to purchase their first public transit buses. In 1997, Community Transit began a service agreement with the City of Marshall, followed by expansion of service to Redwood County in 1998 and 1999. The first deviated route in Marshall was established in 2006, using New Freedom funding. In 2013, Community Transit merged with Cottonwood County Transit. In January 2016, Community Transit merged with Lincoln County Heartland Express and began administration of Pipestone County Transit, followed by a merger with Murray County in August 2016. Community Transit began administration of Rock County Heartland Express in September 2016, with the full merger completed in January 2017. In January 2018, Community Transit completed a full merger with Pipestone County Transit.

3.2 Governance

Community Transit is operated by UCAP. The UCAP Board Agency acts as the governing body of UCAP and Community Transit. The UCAP Board Agency is comprised of three consumer representatives, three private representatives, and three county officials in the UCAP area. Pipestone, Rock, and Murray Counties do not currently have representation on the UCAP Board Agency.

Community Transit receives guidance from its Transit Advisory Committees (TAC). Each of the eight counties in the service area has a TAC. Each TAC consists of 10 to 12 members, who are involved in their respective communities. TAC members must uphold the safe, quality, and cost-efficient operations of services when making recommendations to the UCAP Board.

3.3 Mission and Goals

The overall mission of UCAP is "eliminating poverty by empowering individuals and strengthening communities." Community Transit is a key component of UCAP's strategy to work toward its mission, with the vision: "finding solutions so no one is denied a ride."

The mission specific to Community Transit asserts:

> "It is the Mission of the Transportation Program of United Community Action Partnership to provide safe, courteous, and dependable transportation options that connect communities and support independence."

The goals Community Transit has put in place to work toward its mission include:

- Provide and financially support transit service that fits the needs of all residents in select service areas.
- Account for all non-service hours and decrease vehicle costs per mile.
- Increase passengers per hour to five or more depending on route and service area.

- Disseminate transit information and coordinate transit services and resources whenever possible.
- Establish and continue local TACs consisting of public transit consumers, special interest groups, local officials, and business owners.

3.4 Decision-Making Process

Within the UCAP transportation program, a Community Transit Operations Administrator, Technology System Administrator, and Transportation Contracts and Statistical Reports Manager report to the Transportation Director. The Mobility Administrator for the Southwest Mobility Management Initiative also reports to the Transportation Director.[1] The UCAP Transportation Director is supported by the TACs and by the Regional Ride Council.

Decisions on changes related to service design, fares, and capital purchases are recommended to each county's TAC, which are in turn approved and sent to the UCAP Board for final action.

The organizational structure governing the UCAP transportation program is illustrated on Figure 5.

3.5 Service Area Overview

Community Transit serves eight counties in Minnesota: Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock, as shown on Figure 4. UCAP has service agreements with each county, as well as the City of Marshall. In addition, UCAP provides supplemental services in Nobles County; a deviated route travels to Worthington in Nobles County on demand.

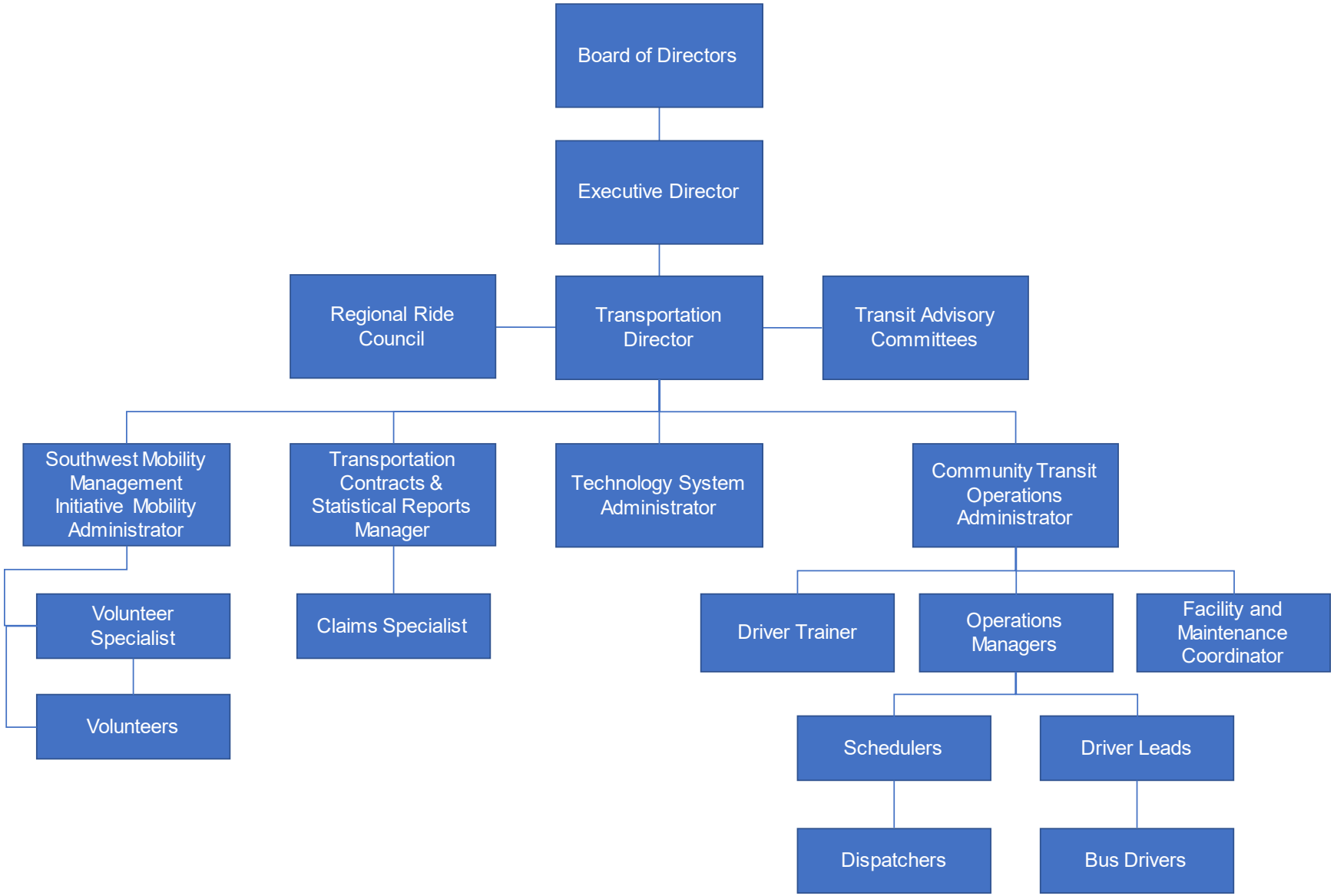
Additionally, service to locations outside of the eight-county service area is available through the Community Connection program, which provides connections to intercity transportation services (e.g., Jefferson Lines) and volunteer drivers.

This section describes existing and projected socioeconomic characteristics of the area served by Community Transit. Understanding the demographics can help explain changes in transit demand and support recommendations for changes in future transit service. Specifically, people living below the poverty level, households without vehicles, seniors, and disabled individuals typically rely on transit; changes in these demographics can provide insight into transit demand trends. The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program are the primary sources of demographic data used in this analysis and provide valuable indications of trends and projections.

As per the ACS 2016 estimates, and as shown in Table 1, the population of the Community Transit service area is 96,063 people. Out of the eight counties in the service area, Lyon County has the highest population with 25,670, followed by Redwood County with 15,578, Cottonwood County with 11,557, Jackson County with 10,163, Rock County with 9,554, Pipestone County with 9,285, Murray County with 8,463, and Lincoln County with 5,793. Table 2 through Table 9 list the demographics of the cities within each of the eight counties.

[1] The Southwest Mobility Management Initiative began in 2013 with a grant to include all nine counties in coordination efforts across the service area.

Figure 5. UCAP Transportation Program Organizational Chart



Source: UCAP/Community Transit

Table 1. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile

County/ Community	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Service Area	96,063	41,824	$52,906	12.2%	4.8%	19.6%	11.9%
Cottonwood County	11,557	5,040	$47,407	16.0%	5.4%	22.4%	14.1%
Jackson County	10,163	5,164	$55,114	9.0%	4.7%	20.1%	9.7%
Lincoln County	5,793	1,632	$49,438	11.6%	3.8%	25.0%	13.6%
Lyon County	25,670	13,531	$51,920	13.9%	5.5%	14.2%	10.2%
Murray County	8,463	2,772	$51,801	9.2%	4.3%	24.2%	13.4%
Pipestone County	9,285	4,134	$48,944	12.7%	5.3%	20.3%	12.8%
Redwood County	15,578	6,298	$48,891	11.6%	4.9%	20.8%	13.0%
Rock County	9,554	3,253	$52,835	10.7%	3.2%	20.4%	11.5%
Minnesota	5,450,868	2,557,046	$63,217	10.8%	7.0%	14.3%	10.6%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 2. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Cottonwood County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Cottonwood County		11,557	5,040	$47,407	16.0%	5.4%	22.4%	14.1%
	Bingham Lake	113	147	$46,000	17.4%	2.1%	19.5%	19.5%
	Jeffers	374	43	$41,250	17.5%	4.0%	16.0%	8.8%
	Mountain Lake	2,016	430	$45,573	15.2%	7.3%	20.9%	10.6%
	Storden	252	30	$40,313	11.5%	3.9%	22.2%	16.3%
	Westbrook	818	302	$37,132	13.2%	6.4%	35.0%	16.0%
	Windom	4,545	2,968	$35,823	23.8%	7.6%	23.0%	18.6%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 3. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Jackson County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Jackson County		10,163	5,164	$55,114	9.0%	4.7%	20.1%	9.7%
	Alpha	152	20	$75,357	8.6%	9.3%	11.2%	12.5%
	Jackson	3,258	2,885	$47,052	12.5%	6.2%	21.6%	9.1%
	Lakefield	1,619	1,404	$48,854	8.1%	6.0%	21.5%	10.7%
	Okabena	174	71	$46,250	12.1%	1.3%	10.9%	6.9%
	Wilder	42	0	$49,792	2.4%	0.0%	40.5%	16.7%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 4. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Lincoln County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Lincoln County		5,793	1,632	$49,438	11.6%	3.8%	25.0%	13.6%
	Arco	107	3	$28,750	36.8%	1.9%	21.5%	11.2%
	Hendricks	724	344	$43,646	8.7%	8.0%	34.4%	23.4%
	Ivanhoe	584	246	$38,500	14.5%	3.7%	26.7%	18.5%
	Lake Benton	693	120	$39,167	14.3%	2.3%	21.9%	13.1%
	Tyler	1,291	640	$42,303	20.7%	6.1%	27.1%	15.4%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 5. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Lyon County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Lyon County		25,670	13,531	$51,920	13.9%	5.5%	14.2%	10.2%
	Balaton	550	52	$47,969	13.8%	3.1%	26.4%	8.1%
	Cottonwood	1,252	509	$50,521	7.8%	7.2%	15.0%	9.4%
	Florence	16	1	$76,250	0.0%	0.0%	18.8%	31.3%
	Ghent	327	48	$58,750	3.1%	4.0%	11.9%	7.3%
	Lynd	503	62	$62,500	15.1%	2.2%	8.0%	5.4%
	Marshall	13,616	10,632	$44,561	19.0%	7.7%	12.3%	10.5%
	Minneota	1,380	625	$56,776	8.2%	2.0%	22.0%	8.9%
	Taunton	147	31	$26,750	14.3%	3.4%	11.6%	8.2%
	Tracy	2,139	643	$42,500	13.2%	4.9%	17.8%	17.3%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 6. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Murray County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Murray County		8,463	2,772	$51,801	9.2%	4.3%	24.2%	13.4%
	Avoca	87	6	$44,688	10.5%	0.0%	19.5%	18.4%
	Chandler	329	461	$60,250	10.0%	2.1%	15.2%	11.9%
	Currie	209	82	$40,625	7.2%	0.0%	33.5%	20.1%
	Dovray	62	7	$27,083	6.5%	5.4%	46.8%	17.7%
	Fulda	1,310	230	$42,031	10.9%	10.3%	28.3%	19.6%
	Hadley	45	25	$47,188	15.6%	0.0%	22.2%	15.6%
	Iona	128	2	$43,750	5.5%	3.2%	26.6%	9.4%
	Lake Wilson	230	50	$38,750	10.4%	0.0%	32.2%	17.0%
	Slayton	2,054	1,303	$42,596	14.5%	7.6%	28.6%	18.2%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 7. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Pipestone County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Pipestone County		9,285	4,134	$48,944	12.7%	5.3%	20.3%	12.8%
	Edgerton	1,210	543	$48,382	7.7%	4.0%	30.8%	9.7%
	Hatfield	44	20	$51,429	9.1%	5.0%	6.8%	6.8%
	Holland	164	66	$31,071	15.1%	1.2%	18.3%	15.2%
	Ihlen	47	0	$33,750	12.8%	0.0%	29.8%	34.0%
	Jasper	601	68	$38,750	11.6%	3.0%	29.1%	15.5%
	Pipestone	4,149	2,655	$42,031	18.5%	8.0%	19.0%	16.4%
	Ruthton	263	65	$34,250	14.3%	0.0%	19.0%	11.8%
	Woodstock	144	47	$33,750	29.3%	3.2%	15.3%	11.8%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 8. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Redwood County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Redwood County		15,578	6,298	$48,891	11.6%	4.9%	20.8%	13.0%
	Belview	366	104	$35,938	7.4%	15.4%	33.3%	19.0%
	Clements	168	44	$63,750	12.5%	3.0%	19.6%	14.3%
	Delhi	41	6	$26,458	22.0%	4.3%	31.7%	34.1%
	Lamberton	821	320	$46,845	11.6%	7.2%	28.9%	18.0%
	Lucan	170	48	$55,000	8.2%	0.0%	22.4%	11.8%
	Milroy	250	45	$35,625	16.0%	1.6%	19.2%	13.2%
	Morgan	917	390	$48,375	8.5%	2.9%	21.5%	9.7%
	Redwood Falls	5,086	3,343	$45,760	11.9%	6.2%	22.8%	17.7%
	Sanborn	282	69	$37,841	14.5%	14.7%	31.2%	14.2%
	Seaforth	65	0	$42,188	6.2%	0.0%	10.8%	12.3%
	Vesta	314	49	$36,500	10.2%	1.5%	19.7%	8.3%
	Wabasso	674	376	$37,625	4.1%	0.7%	23.7%	9.0%
	Walnut Grove	797	144	$32,760	37.6%	15.2%	21.6%	14.3%
	Wanda	66	20	$42,143	0.0%	0.0%	42.4%	13.6%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Table 9. Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile by Community: Rock County

County	Community (Place)	Population	Jobs	Median Household Income	% People Living Below the Poverty Level	Households without Vehicles	% Seniors	% Disabled
Rock County		9,554	3,253	$52,835	10.7%	3.2%	20.4%	11.5%
	Beaver Creek	375	36	$54,821	10.2%	0.0%	10.1%	8.0%
	Hardwick	234	60	$46,458	4.7%	1.9%	20.9%	14.1%
	Hills	728	206	$47,361	11.0%	6.6%	27.7%	17.2%
	Kenneth	68	46	$52,500	4.4%	3.3%	27.9%	16.2%
	Luverne	4,660	2,112	$49,662	14.6%	4.5%	22.9%	12.1%
	Magnolia	237	65	$41,667	5.5%	2.0%	13.5%	16.1%

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2016, LEHD 2015 Jobs

Historically, the total population of the service area has generally decreased over time. In 1960, the population of Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock Counties was 125,903, decreasing to its current estimated level (i.e., a 24% decrease over half of a century).[2] The population forecasts for the service area indicate that the future population is expected to continue to decline. According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, the total service area population is expected to decline to 87,215 by 2050 (i.e., a 9% decrease over 34 years).[3]

The proportion of seniors in the service area is over 5% higher than the proportion of seniors statewide, which will only grow as the Baby Boomer generation ages. According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, the senior population of the service area is expected to increase 9% by 2050, meaning around 24% of the service area population will be over 65 years old.[4] The increase in seniors may entail an increase in demand for senior housing and healthcare needs across the service area.

As can be seen on Figure 6, the population of the service area is concentrated in and around several municipalities, as well as along the corridors defined by Interstate 90, U.S. Routes 14, 71, 75, and 59, and State Highway 23.

Figure 7 illustrates that poverty is concentrated in southern Redwood County and areas in and around Marshall and Pipestone, with additional (but less intense) concentrations scattered throughout the service area.

Figure 8 illustrates that households with no vehicles available are concentrated in and around Marshall, and in southeastern Redwood County and central Murray County.

Figure 9 illustrates the “economic health” of the various portions of the service area, an index that is based on the average number of employers, the trend in number of employers, the adult labor participation rate, and the population change from 2010 to 2016. The portions of the service area indicating a “Very Low” economic health are located in northwestern and eastern Lincoln County, southwestern Redwood County, northwestern Pipestone County, and northeastern and southeastern Cottonwood County.

Figure 10 shows the “transit vulnerability” of the residents of the service area, an index that is based on the percentage of the population with a disability, a certain level of median household income, percentage of workers without access to a vehicle, and percentage of limited English speaking households. The only portions of the service area indicating a “Very High” transit vulnerability index are located in south-central Cottonwood County, specifically in and north of Windom.

Figure 11 illustrates that the highest density of jobs (i.e., per square mile) in the service area are concentrated in areas in and around the municipalities of Marshall, Redwood Falls, Jackson, Windom, and Pipestone.

Figure 12 illustrates where residents of the service area travel for work, with the most significant patterns apparent within Lyon County, followed by Redwood and Cottonwood Counties. On a regional scale, travel patterns from the service area trend westward toward Minnehaha County in South Dakota and eastward toward Hennepin and Blue Earth Counties. Table 10 displays the work destinations by county for each of the eight counties in the service area.

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census and Population Estimates, retrieved from Minnesota Compass demographic tool.
[3] Minnesota State Demographic Center: March 2017 Total Population Projections by County.
[4] Minnesota State Demographic Center: March 2017 Age and Sex Projections by County.

Figure 6. Population Density

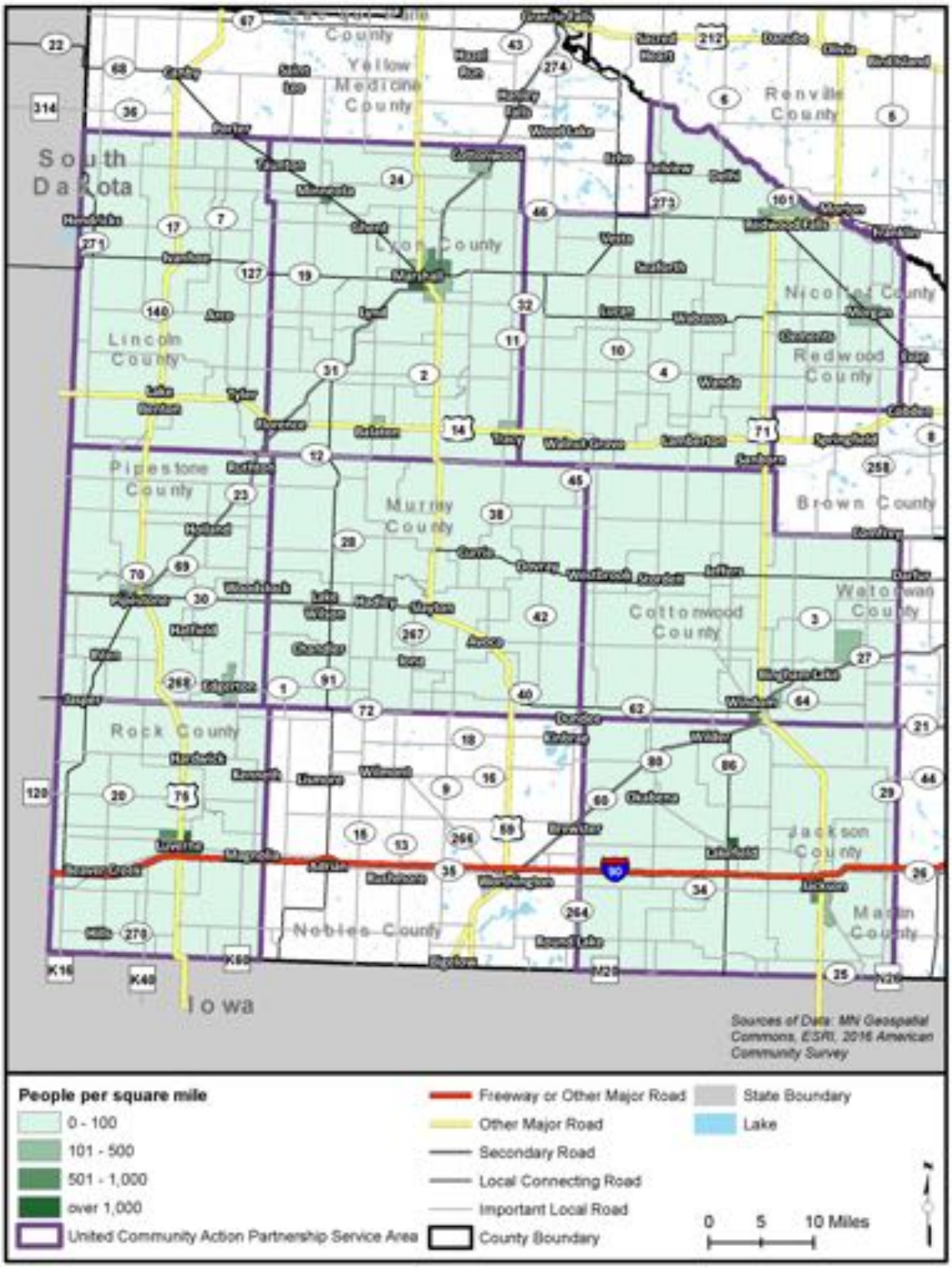


Figure 7. Persons Living Below the Poverty Level

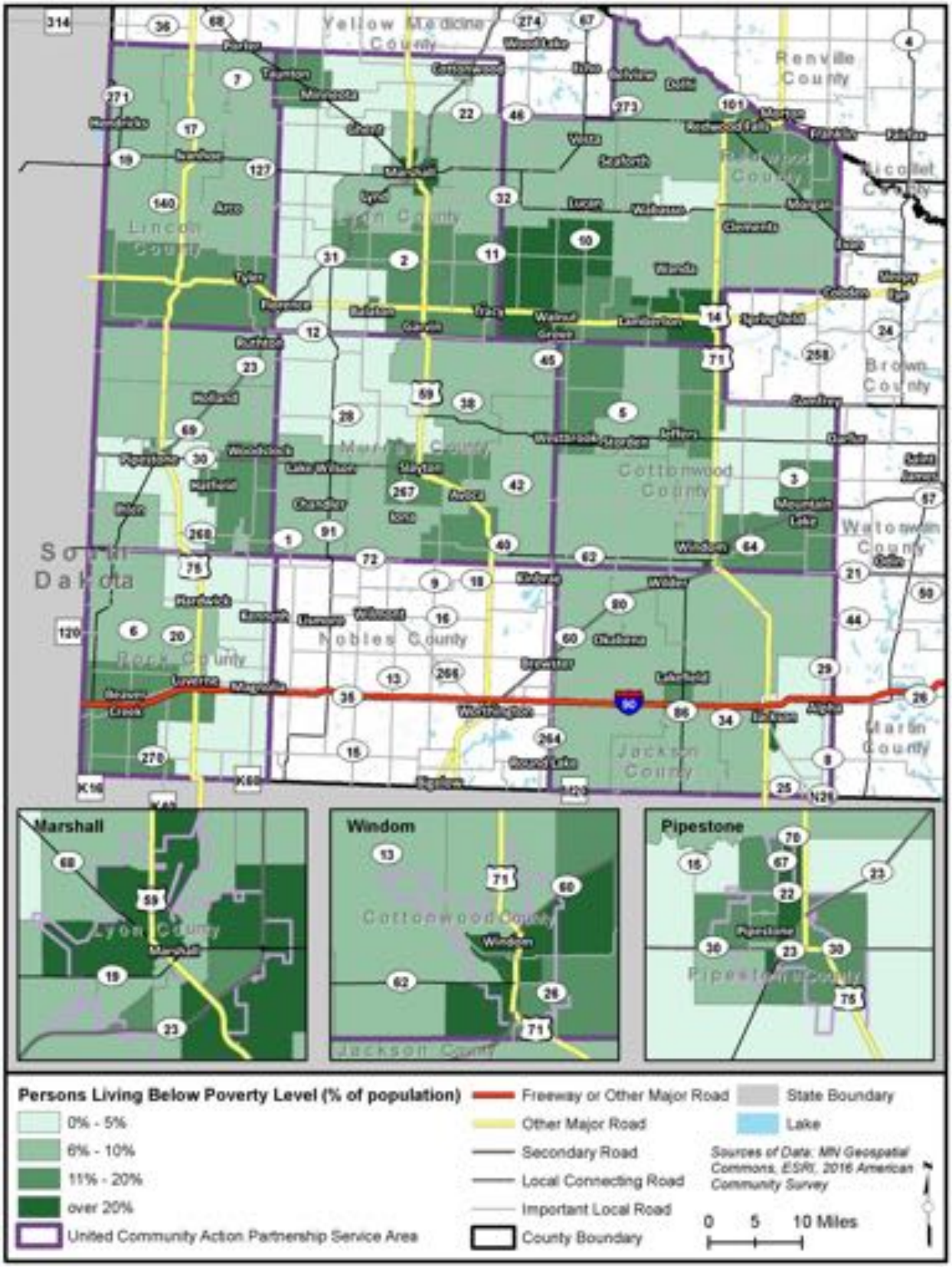


Figure 8. Zero-Vehicle Households

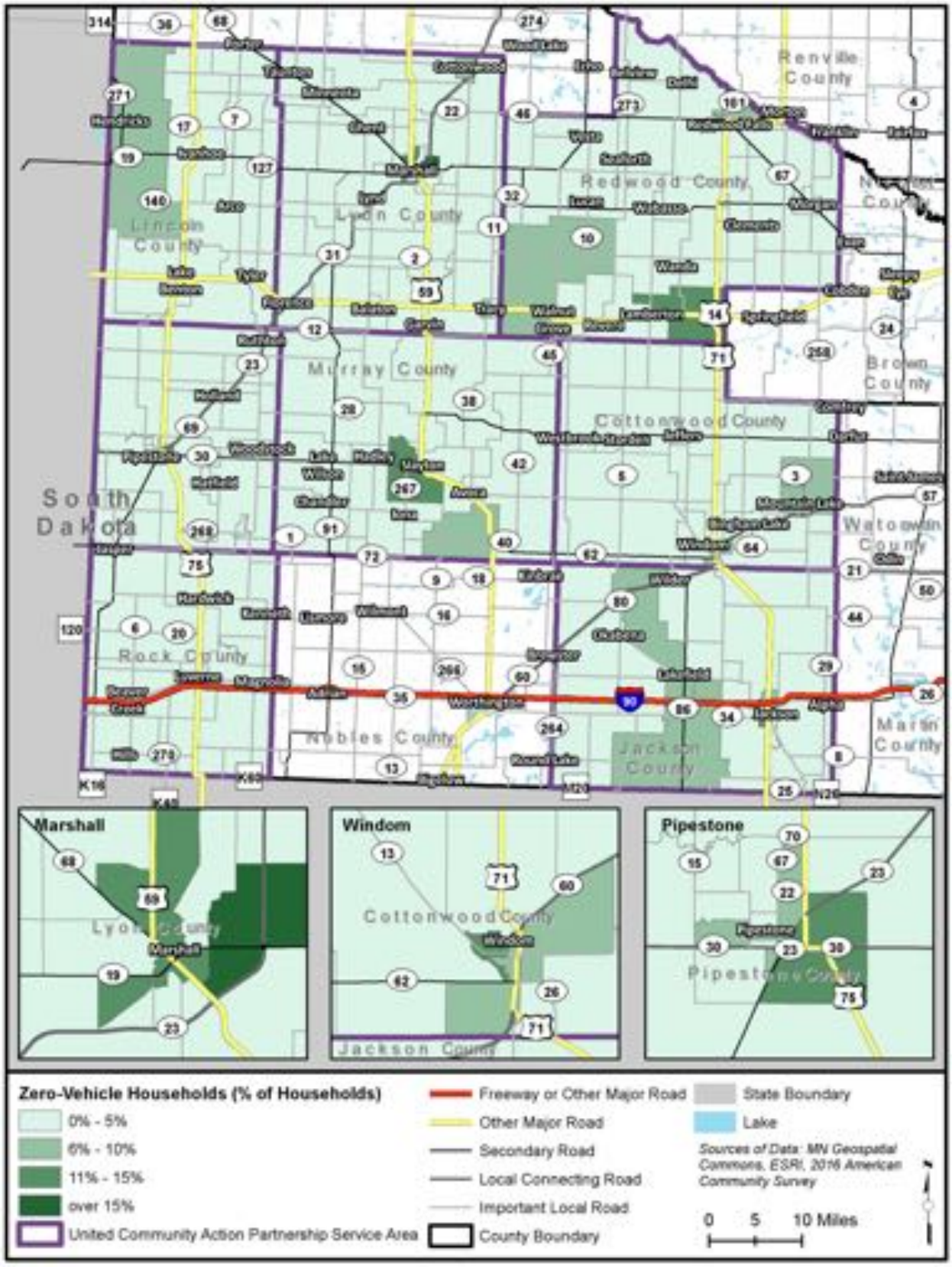


Figure 9. Economic Health Index

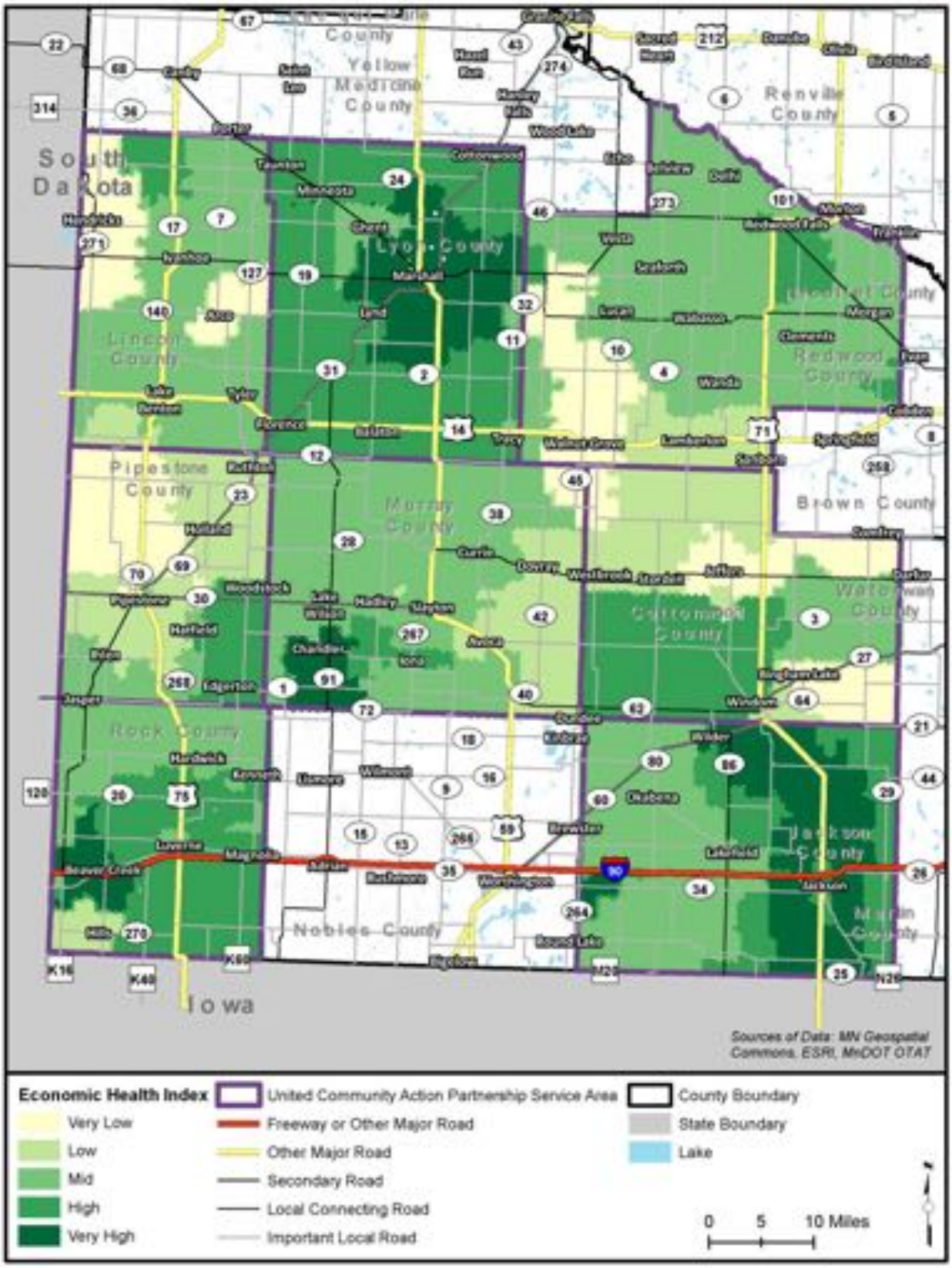


Figure 10. Transit Vulnerability Index

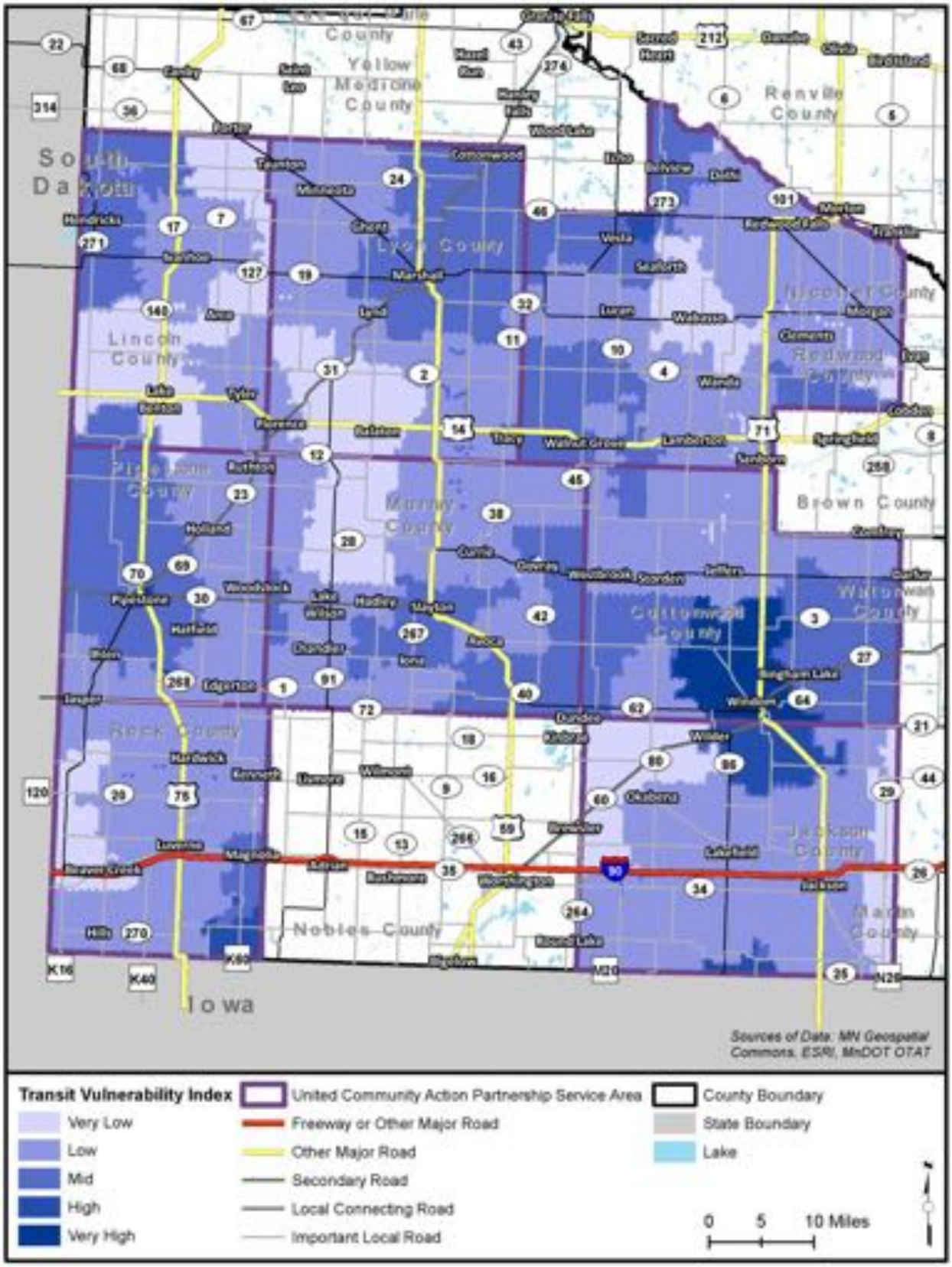


Figure 11. Job Density

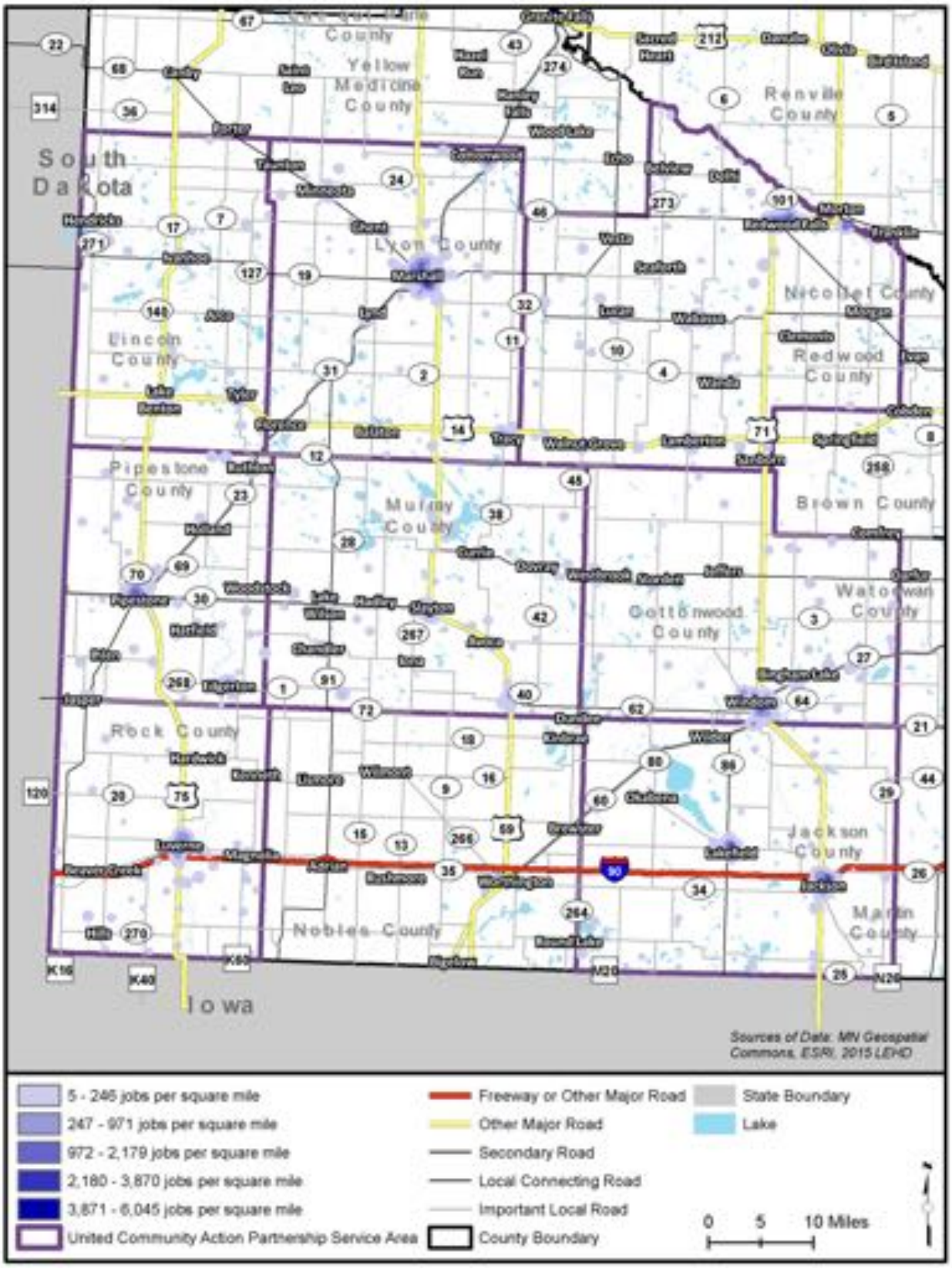


Figure 12. Primary Work Destinations for Employees Residing in the Community Transit Service Area

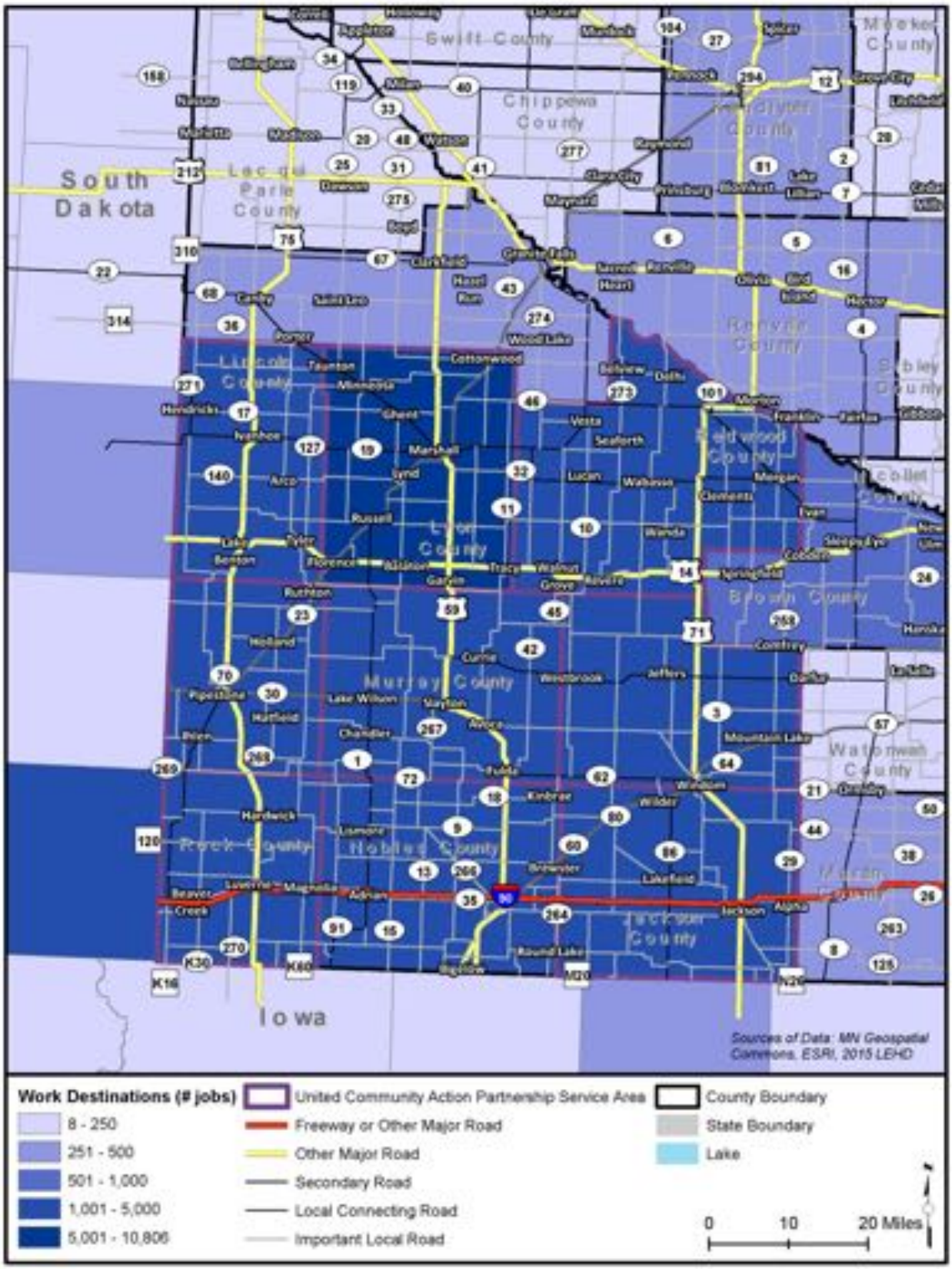


Table 10. Community Transit Service Area Travel Patterns by County

From → To ↓	Cottonwood	Jackson	Lincoln	Lyon	Murray	Pipestone	Rock	Redwood
Cottonwood	3,132	456	7	56	135	10	14	109
Jackson	456	2,424	14	148	47	22	67	13
Lincoln	7	3	951	192	24	96	1	8
Lyon	94	51	510	8,902	433	163	108	618
Murray	59	30	16	143	1,724	135	18	15
Pipestone	51	30	189	117	210	2,614	190	16
Rock	18	26	3	5	33	126	2,074	4
Redwood	200	16	8	206	62	15	13	3,988
Nobles	179	441	12	52	461	114	187	27
Blue Earth	98	114	37	200	73	37	38	108
Minnehaha (SD)	96	79	18	61	78	314	860	43
Hennepin	81	80	59	281	73	48	57	147

Figure 13 shows the major trip generators spread throughout the service area, which include Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center in Marshall; the Minnesota West Community and Technical College campuses in Marshall, Redwood Falls, Jackson, Pipestone, and Luverne; and various clinics, nursing homes, and schools throughout the service area.

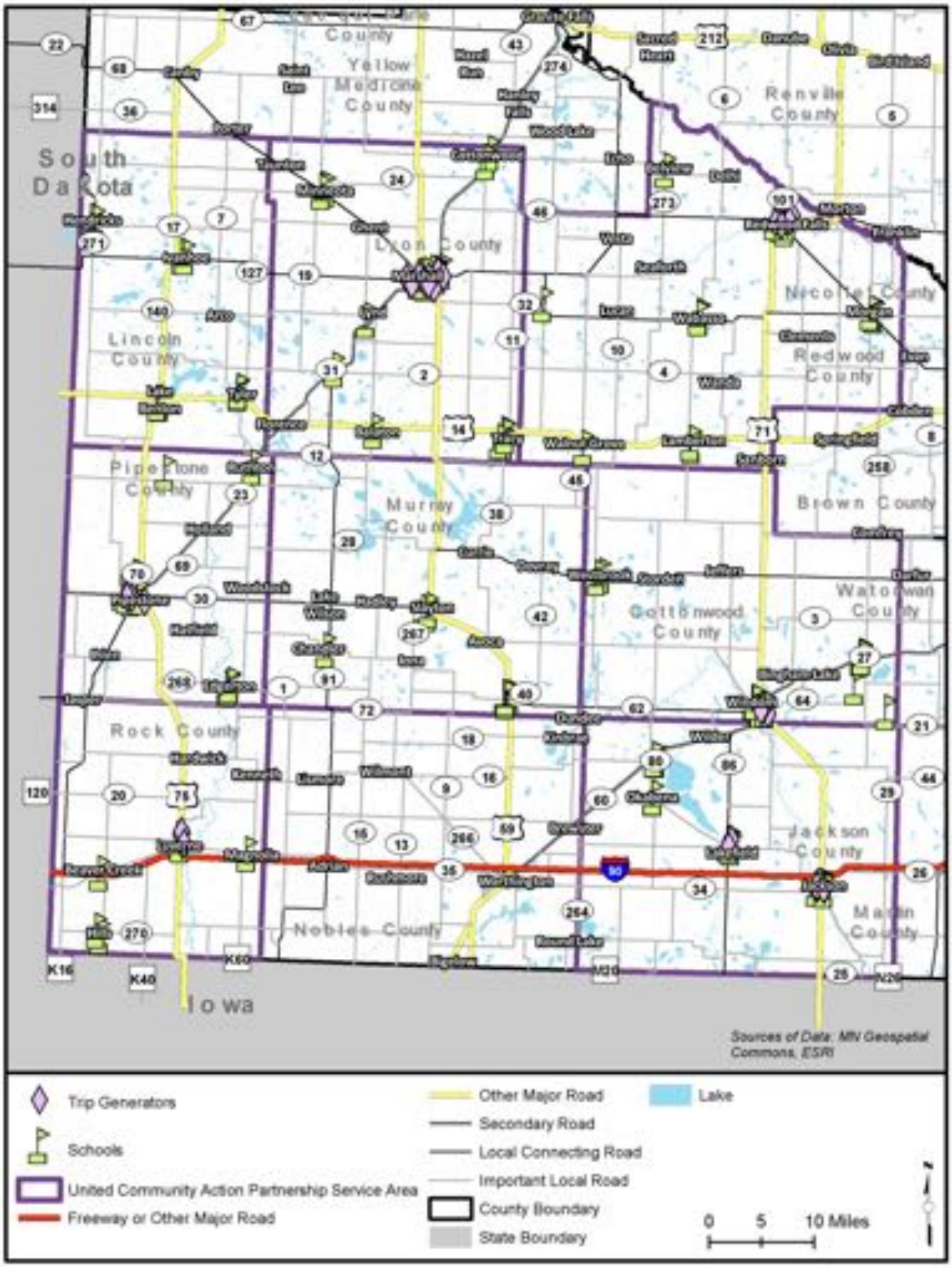
3.6 Regional Connections

On a regional scale, the UCAP program helps people use Jefferson Lines to connect with regional destinations (e.g., Brookings and Elkton in South Dakota), as well as other connections to extra-regional taxi services. There are no longer any connections with the Land-to-Air services due to lack of demand for this type of service.

Volunteer drivers also provide rides to locations outside of the eight-county service area.

Additionally, the City of Marshall and the City of Worthington have taxi operators. There are currently three frequently used taxi operators in Marshall and one in Worthington.

Figure 13. Major Trip Generators



4. Agency Transit Services

Community Transit provides both demand response and deviated route service (Figure 14). While demand response service operates throughout the eight-county service area with extended service hours in the City of Marshall, the Red and Blue Routes provide deviated route service in the City of Marshall, and the Green Route provides deviated route service in the City of Redwood Falls.

Demand response service in the eight-county service area is structured by zone. Fares are based on the mileage from pick-up location to drop-off location, with a flat “in town” fare, and zone-based fare increases by mileage from pickup location (0-7 miles, 8-15 miles, 16-30 miles, 31-40 miles). If a trip is 41 miles or more from the pick-up location, the fare becomes $50 per hour.

There is also a deviated route between Fulda and Worthington. This route and the Green Route were MnDOT pilot expansion projects. Both routes will become regular services in 2019.

The span of service for Community Transit varies by service type and route (Table 11).

Demand response service in the City of Marshall has the longest span of service, operating from 5:45 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on weekends.

In addition to weekday demand response service, Pipestone County and Rock County have limited demand response service on weekends.

Deviated route service operates hourly. The Red Route in Marshall operates from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays, and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekends. The Blue Route in Marshall operates from 8:35 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays. The Green Route in Redwood Falls operates from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays.

Figure 14. Community Transit Services

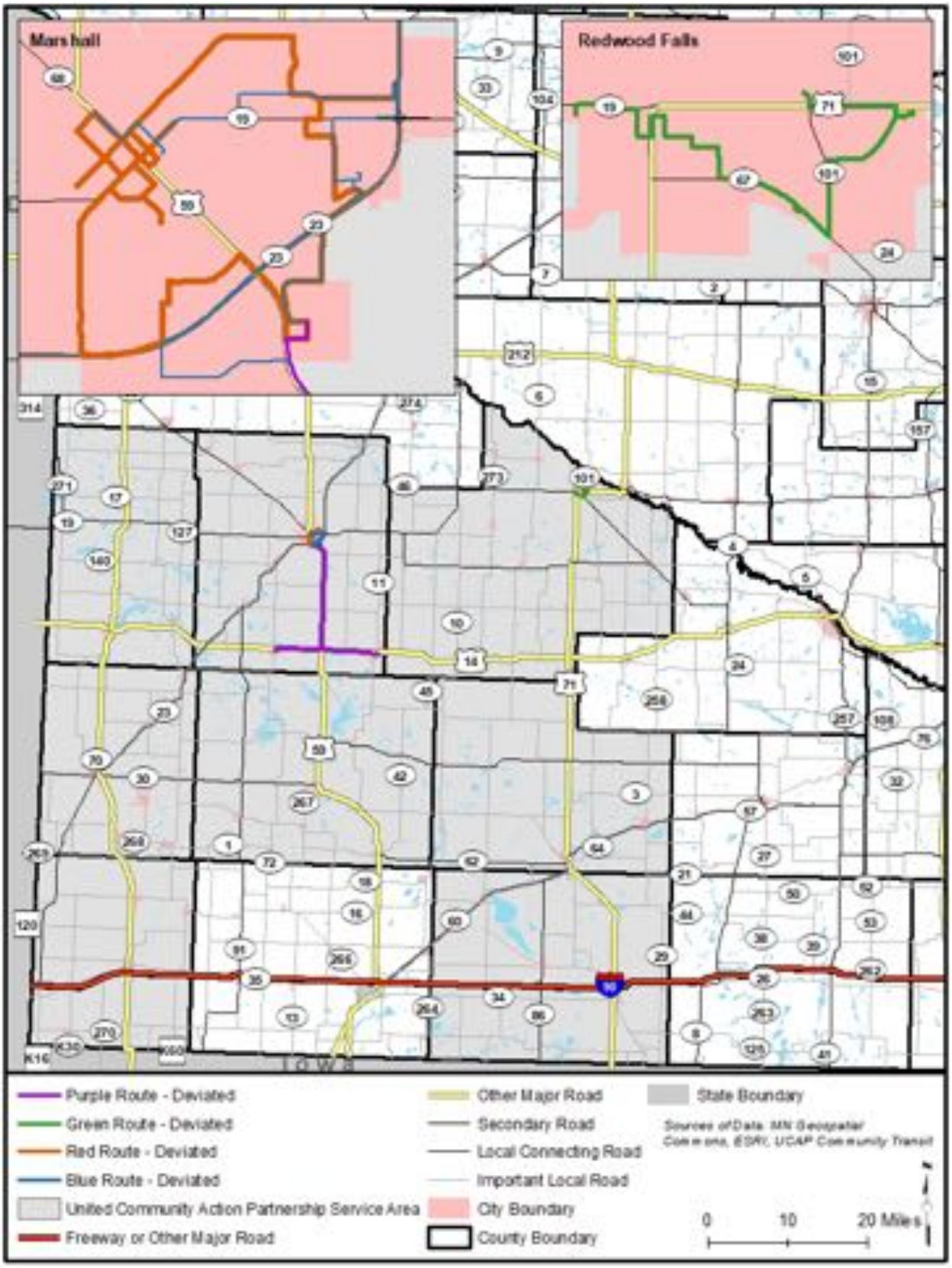


Table 11. Level of Service

Route/Service	Days of the Week	Span of Service	Frequency of Service
Demand Response: City of Marshall	M,T,W,R,F	5:45 a.m. to 9 p.m.	N/A
Demand Response: City of Marshall	Saturday and Sunday	8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	N/A
Demand Response: Cottonwood, Murray, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock Counties	M,T,W,R,F	6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.	N/A
Deviated Route: Purple Route [a]	M,T,W,R,F	6:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	3 trips daily
Demand Response: Rock County	Sunday	8 a.m. to 12 p.m.	N/A
Demand Response: Pipestone County	Saturday	9 a.m. to 3 p.m.	N/A
Demand Response: Pipestone County	Sunday	8 a.m. to 1 p.m.	N/A
Deviated Route: Red Route	M,T,W,R,F	7 a.m. to 7 p.m.	Hourly
Deviated Route: Red Route	Saturday and Sunday	10 a.m. to 7 p.m.	Hourly
Deviated Route: Blue Route	M,T,W,R,F	8:35 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.	Hourly
Deviated Route: Green Route	M,T,W,R,F	8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Hourly
Deviated Route: Fulda-Worthington	Tuesday and Thursday	7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.	On demand

Source: UCAP Community Transit

[a] This route began operating July 1, 2019 and is not included in any ridership, performance, or financial evaluations.

The operating statistics for each service type are shown in Table 12. Demand response services make up over 90% of the annual service hours and service miles provided by Community Transit, with over 66,000 annual service hours and nearly 1,129,000 service miles. Deviated route service operated over 5,800 hours in 2017 and traveled over 74,000 miles.

Table 12. 2017 Operating Statistics

Service Type	2017 Annual Hours of Service	2017 Annual Miles of Service
Demand Response Service	66,063	1,128,885
Deviated Route Service	5,846	74,317
Total	**71,909**	**1,203,202**

Source: UCAP Community Transit

4.1 Ridership

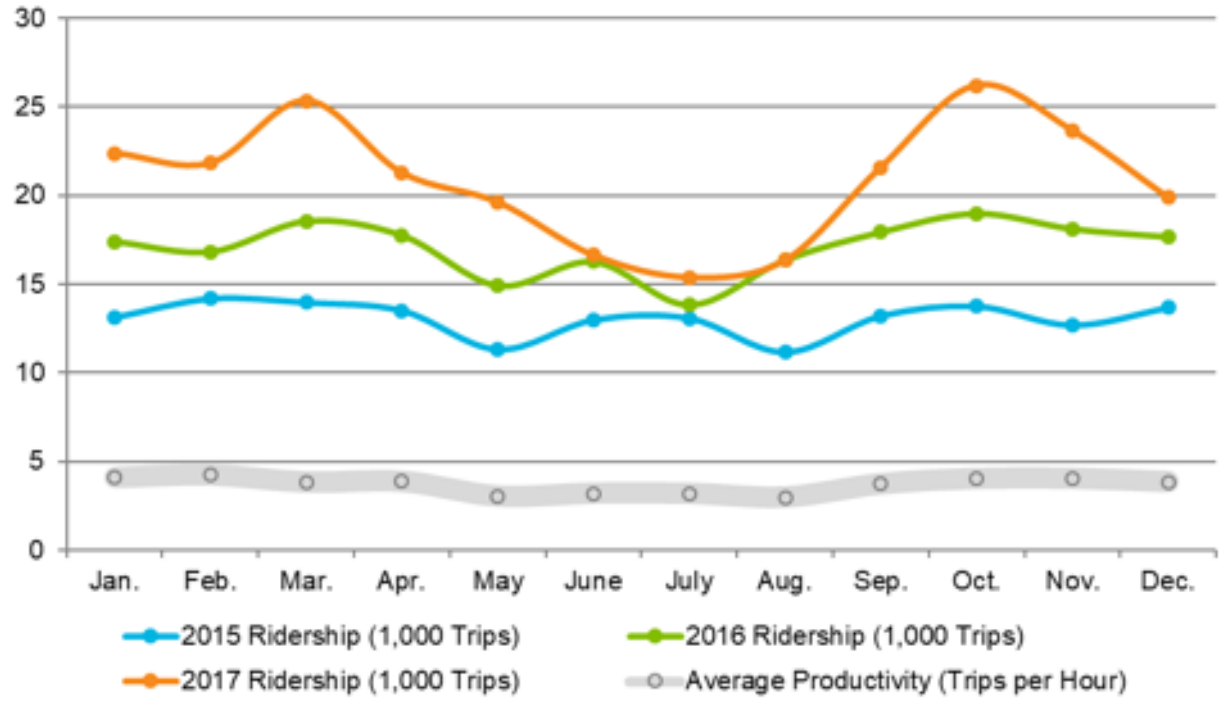
Overall, total passenger trips, comprised of both public and contract passenger trips, have increased by over 105,000 since 2013, as shown in Table 13. Public passenger trips have continually grown over time, with a significant increase from 2015 to 2016, due to the agency mergers. Contract trips have remained relatively constant, growing in 2016 due to the agency mergers, and decreasing slightly in 2017. Each year, ridership peaks in the winter and spring, drops off in the summer, and rises again in the fall, as shown on Figure 15. In terms of the average trip productivity, measured as ridership per service hour, January and February have the strongest performances.

Table 13. 2013-2017 Ridership by Route/Service

Route/Service	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Public Passenger Trips	146,286	153,438	156,581	204,461	250,113
Total Contract Passenger Trips	6,042	6,123	6,912	9,746	8,007

Source: UCAP Community Transit

Figure 15. Ridership by Month (2015-2017)



Source: UCAP Community Transit, AECOM, 2018

Based on total riders, demand response service is used more than deviated route service. Demand response service in the City of Marshall served the highest number of passengers in 2017, with 54,743, and performs best in terms of riders per month and riders per mile. Demand response service for each of the counties does not perform equally as well as Marshall's demand response service, due to the greater travel times and distances associated with the

larger service area. Out of the eight counties in the service area, demand response service is most used in Pipestone County, followed by Cottonwood and Jackson Counties.

Although the deviated routes have fewer total trips compared to demand response service, the deviated routes' riders per hour and riders per mile are relatively higher (Table 14). The most heavily used deviated route is the Red Route, with 22,265 total riders in 2017 and 5.74 riders per hour. The Blue Route had over 10,600 riders in 2017 and 5.39 riders per hour. Both the Red Route and the Blue Route exceed the agency's goal of reaching over five riders per hour.

Table 14. 2017 Ridership Performance

Route/Service	Total Riders 2017	Riders/Month	Riders/Hour	Riders/Mile
Deviated Route: Red Route	22,265	1,855.42	5.74	0.47
Deviated Route: Blue Route	10,611	884.25	5.39	0.39
Demand Response: City of Marshall	54,743	4,561.92	5.03	0.44
Demand Response: Cottonwood County	24,712	2,059.33	4.30	0.26
Demand Response: Jackson County	22,166	1,847.17	4.06	0.21
Demand Response: Lincoln County	4,074	339.50	1.13	0.05
Demand Response: Lyon County	14,292	1,191.00	2.88	0.13
Demand Response: Murray County	10,167	847.25	4.08	0.22
Demand Response: Pipestone County	31,337	2,611.42	3.58	0.31
Demand Response: Redwood County	20,844	1,737.00	4.41	0.37
Demand Response: Rock County	21,524	1,793.67	3.67	0.26
Demand Response: Volunteer	16,456	1,371.33	1.21	0.05

Source: UCAP Community Transit

4.2 Service Delivery

Community Transit operates transit service directly. Following is a list of organizations for which Community Transit provides service under a contractual arrangement:

- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services
- Southwest Health and Human Services

- UCare
- Various service agreements

Additionally, Community Transit has a volunteer driver program, where drivers are assigned when buses are not available. Volunteer drivers also provide rides to destinations outside of the eight-county service area. There are currently 80 volunteer drivers, which is significantly fewer than the 250 volunteer drivers that Community Transit has had in the past.

4.3 Users

Community Transit serves passengers of all ages and abilities. Community Transit tracks passenger demographics through the demand response dispatchers or the deviated route drivers.

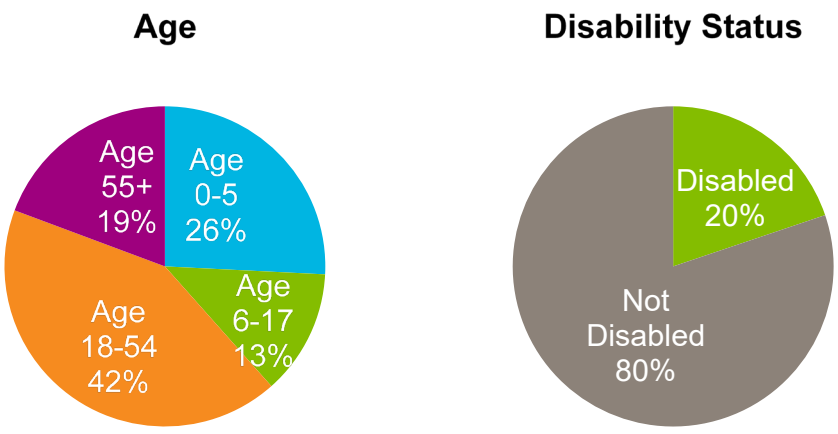
Table 15 displays the demographic breakdown of passengers served between 2014 and 2018. The specific ages and disability status of passengers in 2017 are illustrated on Figure 16. Community Transit defines disabled passengers as any individuals with disabilities regardless of age. In terms of age, Community Transit defines elderly passengers as individuals that are 55 years old or older, adults as individuals between 18 and 54 years old, students as individuals between 6 and 17 years old, and children as individuals that are 5 years old or younger.

Table 15. Passenger Demographics (2014-2018)

Year	Disabled	Elderly	Adult	Student	Children	Total Passenger Trips
2014	29,717	27,814	60,937	10,070	24,900	153,438
2015	30,633	27,507	61,324	12,330	24,787	156,581
2016	36,636	34,322	78,727	19,963	34,813	204,461
2017	49,545	38,718	84,740	25,377	51,733	250,113
2018 projections	52,855	41,304	90,400	27,072	55,189	266,820

Source: UCAP Community Transit

Figure 16. 2017 Community Transit Selected Demographic Characteristics



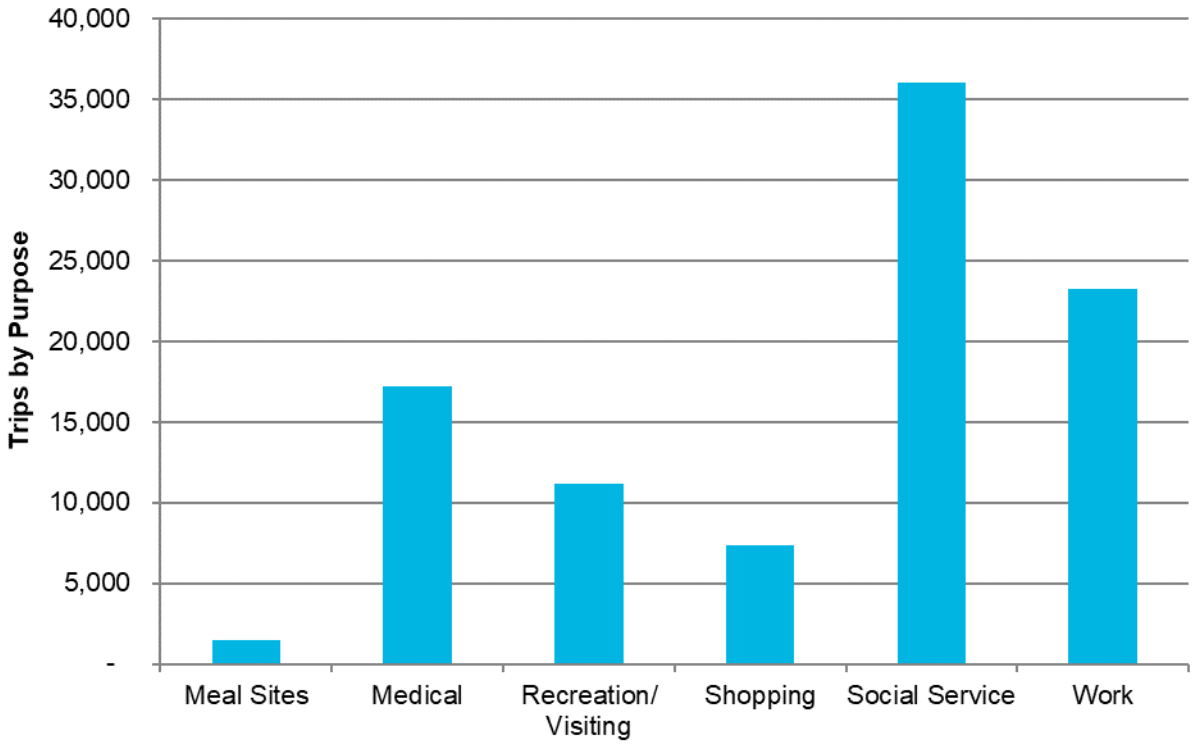
Source: UCAP Community Transit

About 20% of all passenger trips are made by disabled passengers. The total number of disabled passengers has consistently increased since 2014, growing by over 23,000 to a projected 52,855 in 2018.

By age group, most passengers are adults, making up about 42% of all passenger trips, followed by children, elderly passengers, and students. The number of passengers in all age groups has generally increased over time.

Community Transit passengers use transit service for a variety of purposes. According to data collected by Community Transit for a total of 96,455 trips between January and June 2018, social service is the most popular trip purpose, comprising 37% of trips, followed by work and medical purposes, which comprise 24% and 18% of trips, respectively. (Social service trips include destinations such as schools, government agencies, post offices, and banks.) Figure 17 displays trips by purpose for the first six months of 2018.

Figure 17. Summary of Trip Purposes (January through June 2018)



Source: UCAP Community Transit

4.4 Trip Patterns

Community Transit's demand response trips were visualized using 2018 origin-destination data to better understand trip patterns. There were approximately 145,000 one-way demand response trips taken by nearly 6,000 riders in 2018. Figure 18 illustrates the trip patterns between origins and destinations with the line thickness indicating number of trips. Thicker lines indicate more trips between the origin-destination pair, while thinner lines show fewer trips. The top 10 origin-destination pairs are summarized in Table 16. Note that the top six origin-destination pairs involve demand response trips within a single municipality (e.g., Marshall). Trips occurring within a single municipality are not depicted on Figure 18.

Figure 18. Service Area Demand Response Trip Patterns

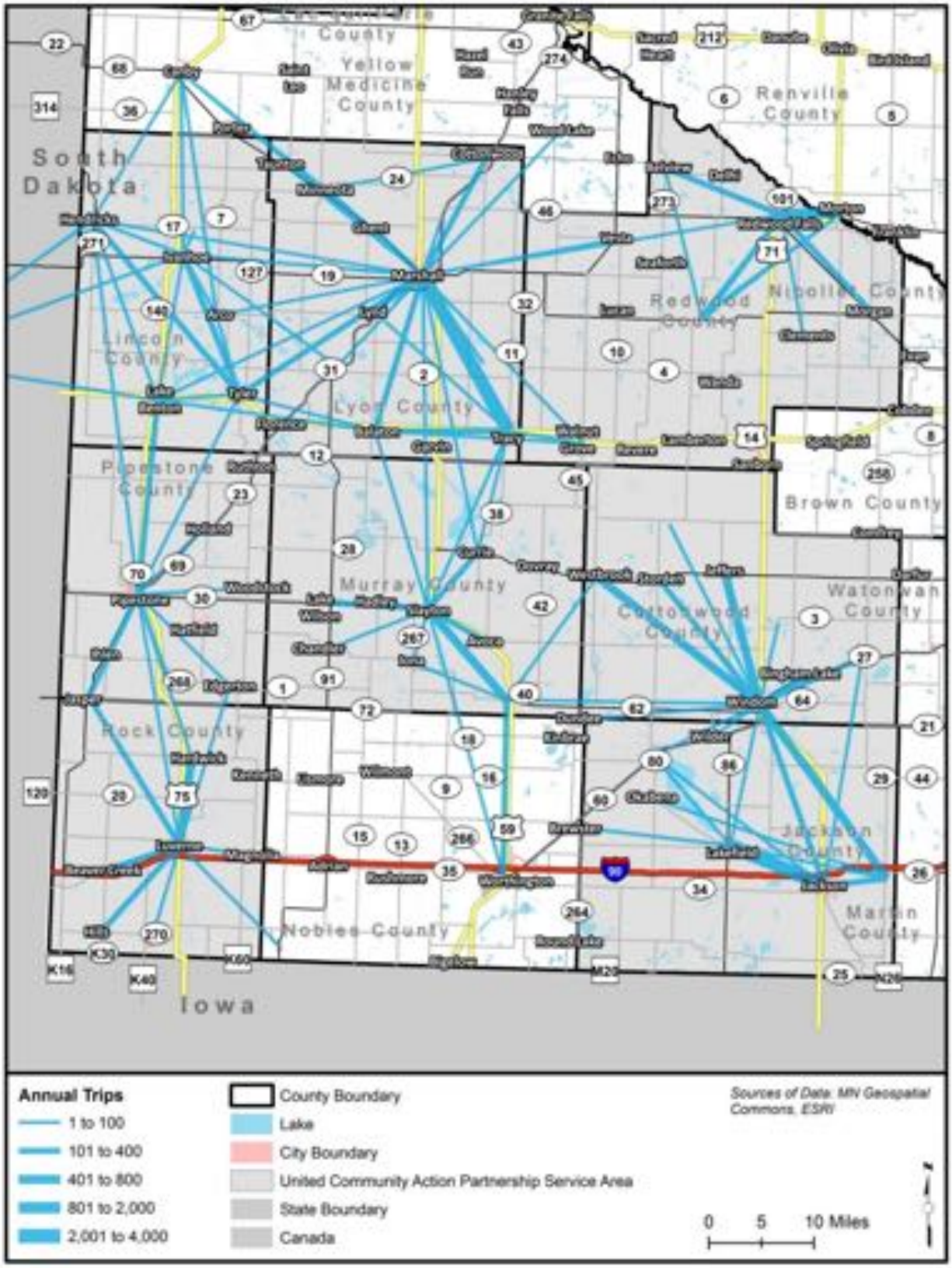


Table 16. Top Demand Response Origin-Destination Pairs (2018)

Origin	Destination	2018 Annual Riders	2018 Annual Trips
Marshall	Marshall	1,568	46,873
Windom	Windom	408	18,019
Luverne	Luverne	568	16,942
Redwood Falls	Redwood Falls	330	14,613
Jackson	Jackson	374	14,463
Slayton	Slayton	176	6,154
Tyler	Tyler	23	4,252
Tracy	Marshall	121	3,767
Pipestone	Pipestone	295	2,866
Jackson	Lakefield	163	2,836

Source: UCAP Community Transit

5. Capital

Community Transit has multiple buses and facilities where buses are stored. One maintenance coordinator on the Community Transit staff manages maintenance, which is contracted out to a third party. Community Transit uses Novus and RouteMatch software for scheduling and DriverMate software for dispatching its services.

5.1 Background

Community Transit has 43 vehicles (32 active, 1 disposed of, and 10 backups) in its fleet, all of which have a wheelchair lift and at least 40 of which have cameras (Table 17). The vehicle fleet is composed of various makes, models, and years spanning 2008 to 2019. Seating capacity ranges from 6 to 21 seats and from 2 to 8 wheelchair positions. The average vehicle mileage and age are approximately 110,000 miles and 5 years, respectively. System-wide, Community Transit has 33 signed bus stops, 3 bus shelters, and 3 benches at bus stops. The agency plans to add more rider amenities in the future, specifically 39 more bus stops, 3 more bus shelters, and 3 more benches at bus stops.

Table 17. Vehicle Fleet

Vehicle Type	Year	Count in Fleet	Fuel	Seats	Wheelchair Capacity	Amenities	Mileage (as of 12/31/18)	Disposed of	Backup	Active
Startrans Senator	2006	1	Gasoline	12	2	-	-	Y	N	N
Goshen Coach Pacer II	2008	1	Gasoline	6	2	Cameras	165,560	N	Y	N
Startrans Senator	2008	1	Gasoline	13	2	Cameras	221,197	N	Y	N
Elkhart Coach EC II	2009	2	Gasoline	20	2	Cameras	167,518; 242,756	N	Y	N
Elkhart Coach EC II	2009	2	Gasoline	13	2	Cameras	176,313; 181,077	N	Y	N
Elkhart Coach EC II	2009	1	Gasoline	20	4	Cameras	209,552	N	Y	N
Elkhart Coach EC II	2010	1	Gasoline	20	2	Cameras	214,914	N	Y	N
Elkhart Coach EC II	2011	2	Gasoline	19	2	Cameras	188,888; 233,587	N	Y	Y
Glaval Bus Titan II	2012	1	Gasoline	17	4	Cameras	113,576	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2013	1	Gasoline	21	2	Cameras	102,195	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2013	1	Biodiesel	15	4	Cameras	98,202	N	Y	N
Goshen Coach Pacer II	2013	1	Gasoline	12	2	Cameras	113,044	N	N	Y
Glaval Bus Titan II	2013	1	Gasoline	14	3	Cameras	117,395	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2013	2	Gasoline	19	2	Cameras	128,402; 143,587	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2013	2	Gasoline	21	2	Cameras	162,186; 122,047	N	N	Y
Glaval Bus Titan II	2014	1	Gasoline	14	3	Cameras	98,250	N	N	Y

Vehicle Type	Year	Count in Fleet	Fuel	Seats	Wheelchair Capacity	Amenities	Mileage (as of 12/31/18)	Disposed of	Backup	Active
Elkhart Coach EC II	2015	2	Gasoline	21	2	Cameras	83,117; 97,235	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2015	1	Gasoline	15	4	Cameras	85,603	N	N	Y
El Dorado National Aerotech	2015	1	Gasoline	15	2	Cameras	110,913	N	N	Y
Startrans Senator	2015	1	Gasoline	15	2	Cameras	140,150	N	N	Y
Glaval Bus Universal	2016	1	Gasoline	21	4	Cameras	45,389	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2016	2	Gasoline	21	2	Cameras	62,310; 76,235	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2016	1	Gasoline	15	2	Cameras	56,054	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2016	1	Gasoline	15	8	Cameras	81,303	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2017	5	Gasoline	21	2	Cameras	17,093; 29,974; 42,267; 47,609; 60,327	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2017	1	Gasoline	15	2	Cameras	48,796	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2017	1	Gasoline	15	4	Cameras	50,505	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2017	1	Gasoline	8	4	Cameras	64,018	N	N	Y
Elkhart Coach EC II	2018	2	Gasoline	21	2	Cameras	5,253; 9,981	N	N	Y
Unknown	2019	a	a	a	a	a	-	a	a	a
Unknown	2019	a	a	a	a	a	-	a	a	a
Unknown	2019	a	a	a	a	a	-	a	a	a

Source: UCAP Community Transit Capital Replacement and Active Chart, MnDOT Master Fleet Warehouse, December 2018

[a] *Data not available at this time*

While Community Transit owns or rents a total of 14 facilities; 10 have the capacity to store buses (Table 18). Following is a summary of where buses are stored and which communities the buses serve:

- Marshall Transit: 13 buses serving Marshall and Lyon Counties. Two Head Start buses are stored here when school is in session.
- Tracy Bus Garage: 1 bus serving Lyon County.
- Redwood County Bus Garage: 4 buses serving the City and County of Redwood.
- Lincoln County Bus Garage: 3 buses serving Lincoln County.
- Murray County Bus Garage: 3 buses serving Murray County.
- Cottonwood County Bus Garage: 3 buses serving Cottonwood County. This facility will also house the Head Start bus.
- Jackson County Bus Garage: 4 buses serving Jackson County. This new facility was a lease/buy arrangement with the county.
- Pipestone County Bus Garage: 5 buses serving Pipestone County (built in 1965).
- Rock County Bus Garage: 4 buses serving Rock County.

Table 18. Facilities

Facility Type	Facility Location	Facility Age	Facility Amenities	Maintenance Capabilities
Cottonwood County Bus Garage	Corner of 11th Street and 5th Avenue Windom, MN 56101	79	3 vehicle storage capacity	N/A
Jackson County Bus Garage	53053 780th Street Jackson, MN 56143	2	5 vehicle storage capacity	N/A
Jackson Dispatch Office	115 South Highway Jackson, MN 56143	34	Administrative space	N/A
Lincoln County Bus Garage	512 Division Street Ivanhoe, MN 56142	19	3 vehicle storage capacity Administrative space	N/A
Marshall Main Office	1400 South Saratoga Marshall, MN 56258	20	Administrative space	N/A
Marshall Transit	720/730 Kossuth Avenue Marshall, MN 56258	12 (west building); 10 (east building)	22 vehicle storage capacity Administrative space	N/A
Murray County Bus Garage	3048 Broadway Avenue Slayton, MN 56172	Unknown	3 vehicle storage capacity	N/A
Pipestone County Bus Garage	425 8th Avenue Southeast Pipestone, MN 56164	54	5 vehicle storage capacity	N/A

Facility Type	Facility Location	Facility Age	Facility Amenities	Maintenance Capabilities
Pipestone Dispatch Office	810 8th Avenue Pipestone, MN 56142	11	Administrative space	N/A
Redwood County Bus Garage	1111 East 2nd Street Redwood Falls, MN 56283	9 (estimate)	5 vehicle storage capacity	N/A
Redwood Office	164 East 2nd Street Redwood Falls, MN 56283	Unknown	Administrative space	N/A
Rock County Bus Garage	1110 North Blue Mound Avenue Luverne, MN 56156	10	8 vehicle storage capacity Administrative space	N/A
Slayton Office	2451 Broadway Avenue Slayton MN 56172	Unknown	Administrative space	N/A
Tracy Bus Garage	301 South Street Tracy, MN 56175	79	1 vehicle storage capacity	N/A

Source: UCAP Community Transit 3/11/19 correspondence, UCAP Community Transit Capital Template, MnDOT 5311 Facilities Master Document

In addition to bus garages, Community Transit uses four dispatch offices. Services in Cottonwood, Jackson, and Murray Counties are dispatched from Jackson; services in Lincoln, Lyon, and Redwood Counties are dispatched from Marshall; and Pipestone (added in 2018) and Rock (added in 2017) Counties are both dispatched locally from each of those counties.

Community Transit uses Novus TripSpark to schedule rides with DriverMate tablets for dispatching drivers. Pipestone County uses RouteMatch for scheduling but is transitioning to the Novus system in 2019.

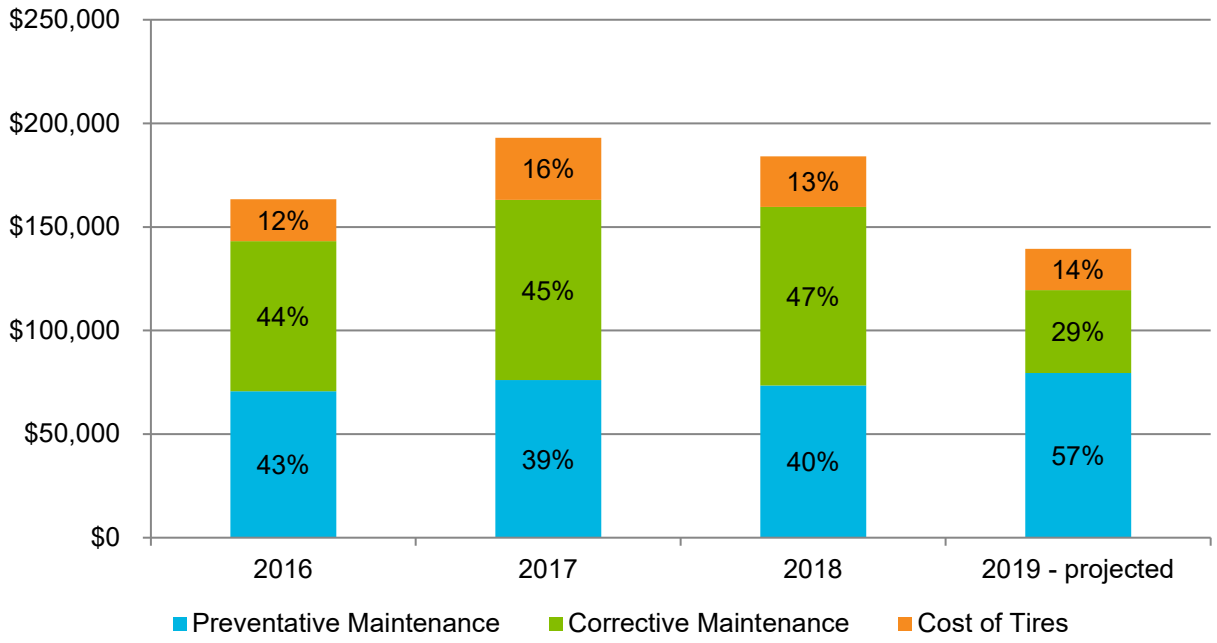
With 43 vehicles in the Community Transit fleet, the cost of maintenance can make up a substantial portion of the Community Transit budget. Community Transit has one in-house maintenance coordinator that oversees the maintenance work contracted out to a third party vendor. As shown in Table 19, annual maintenance costs have increased by 18% from 2016 to 2017. Due to funding constraints, Community Transit anticipates budgeting less toward both preventative and corrective maintenance in 2018 and 2019 (Figure 19).

Table 19. Maintenance Costs (2016-2019)

	2016	2017	2018	2019 - projected
Annual Cost of Preventative Maintenance	$70,727	$76,037	$73,427	$79,500
Annual Cost of Corrective Maintenance	$72,418	$87,015	$86,300	$40,000
Cost of Tires	$20,269	$29,963	$24,389	$20,000
Total Annual Maintenance Costs	**$163,414**	**$193,015**	**$184,116**	**$139,500**

Source: UCAP Community Transit Capital Template, UCAP 4/24/19 correspondence

Figure 19. Actual and Projected Maintenance Costs (2016-2019)



Source: UCAP Community Transit Capital Template, UCAP 4/24/19 correspondence, UCAP 8/23/19 correspondence

5.2 History

In 2017, MnDOT added a Transit Asset Management module to the BlackCat Grants Management System that facilitates streamlined communication between MnDOT and transportation providers regarding the maintenance and depreciation of assets. Additionally, MnDOT's updated 2018 *Transit Asset Management Plan* includes:

- Inventory of the number and type of capital assets
- Condition assessment of those inventoried assets for which a provider has direct capital responsibility

- Description of analytical processes or decision support tools that a provider uses to estimate capital investment needs over time and develop its investment prioritization
- Discussion of prioritization investment direction
- Plan implementation strategies and recommendations

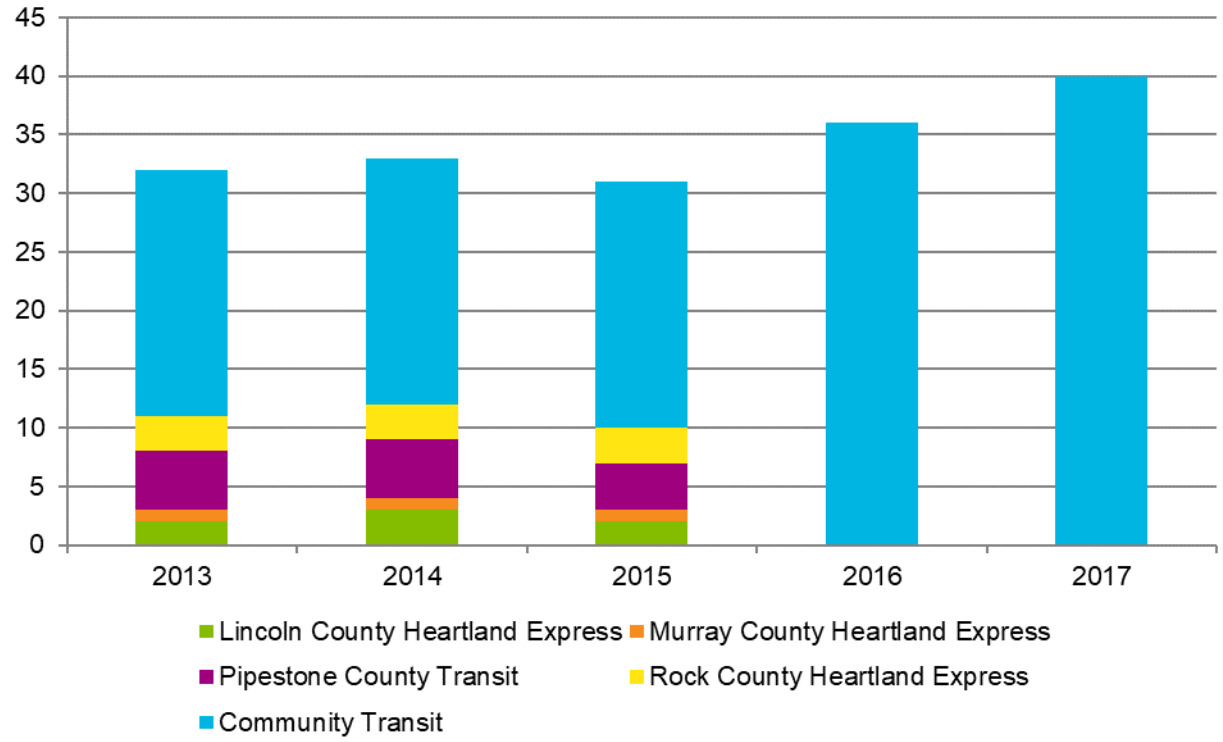
Prior to 2020, fleet assets were prioritized based on life expectancy. For this Five-Year Transit System Plan, the assets are identified for replacement based on the *Transit Asset Management Plan* submitted to FTA on October 1, 2018.

Community Transit's vehicle fleet, facilities, and technology have changed over time following a series of mergers, most recently with Lincoln County Heartland Express and Murray County Heartland Express in 2016, Rock County Heartland Express in 2017, and Pipestone County Transit in 2018. The total vehicle fleet grew from 32 vehicles in 2013 to 36 vehicles in 2016 (Figure 20). The vehicle fleet composition remained mostly the same between 2013 and 2016, with Class 400 vehicles being the dominant type. Class 400 vehicles are medium-size light-duty transit buses that range between 20 and 30 feet long. The total number of Class 400 vehicles has increased while the number of Class 300 vehicles (16 to 22 feet long) has only slightly increased, from 1 in 2013 to 2 in 2016. The Community Transit facilities are in relatively good condition. The two buildings that comprise the Marshall Transit facility were built in 2007 and 2009 and have earned a MnDOT facility condition rating of 4.0 out of 5.0. Similarly, the Lincoln County Bus Garage, built in 2000, has received a condition rating of 4.0. The Rock County Bus Garage was built in 2009 and was given a facility condition rating of 5.0. The major capital improvements between 2013 and 2016 are summarized as follows:[5]

- In 2013, Community Transit, administered by Western Community Action at the time, increased passenger safety by installing surveillance systems on all buses. Additionally, Lincoln County Heartland Express received funding to purchase a Class 400 bus.
- In 2014, Community Transit, administered by Western Community Action at the time, remodeled the dispatch and bus center in Marshall. Additionally, Pipestone County Transit worked with Nobles, Rock, and Murray Counties to implement RouteMatch software.
- In 2015, Murray County Heartland Express purchased a new Class 400 bus.
- In 2016, United Community Action Partnership was formed, and Community Transit merged with Lincoln County Heartland Express and Murray County Heartland Express and took over administration duties for Pipestone County Transit and Rock County Heartland Express.
- In 2017, Rock County Heartland Express fully merged with UCAP Community Transit.
- In 2018, Pipestone County Transit fully merged with UCAP Community Transit.

[5] Sources: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report.

Figure 20. Fleet Vehicles (2013-2017)



Sources: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report, 2018 MnDOT Transit Report

Community Transit's Capital Replacement Plan is summarized in Table 20. Community Transit's Capital Plan through 2025 includes replacement of anywhere from 3 to 6 buses in a given year. All replacement vehicles are Class 400 vehicles, which is consistent with the current make-up of the Community Transit fleet. Total capital costs vary between $273,000 and $752,000 per year (Table 20).

Table 20. Capital Plan (2019-2025)

Capital Plan	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Replacement Vehicles	7	6	3	8	5	3	6
Replacement Cost	$595,000	$528,000	$273,000	$752,000	$485,000	$300,000	$618,000

Source: UCAP 4/24/19 correspondence, MnDOT Estimated Costs Each Year for Bus Type, UCAP 8/23/19 correspondence

6. 2020-2025 Annual Needs

6.1 Needs Identification Process

To identify Community Transit's needs for the period between 2020 and 2025, the project team met with staff from the agency three times in the fall and winter of 2018-2019 to learn about and discuss the agency's operating structure and environment, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

The first two meetings were gathered information and began considering strategies and opportunities for Community Transit. Analysis and metrics were used to assess the agency's baseline conditions and performance. At the third meeting, the project team engaged with Community Transit staff to develop a comprehensive list of the agency's needs for the five-year period and to prioritize these needs according to their relative importance to the agency's operations. The needs prioritization exercise was not conducted with fiscal constraints; it was intended to determine the investments that could enhance the agency's operational efficiency and consider how it could invest strategically to better meet the needs of the community.

Agency input was the key driver for assigning priority to each need, based on agency employees' understanding of its operations and challenges. However, each need was reviewed by the project team to ensure that available data and information about the agency and its operations support these needs.

Toward the end of the FYTSP process, an online community survey was conducted to gather input on agency strategies and priorities, and to collect information on community opinion or community habits that may help to inform transit service decisions. Detailed survey information, including results, can be found in Appendix B.

6.2 List of 2020–2025 Needs

The needs identified through the prioritization activity, in order of priority, are listed in Table 21. For new or extended service, operational costs were based on anticipated hours and an hourly rate provided by Community Transit, as were vehicle unit costs.

6.3 Historical and Projected Annual Summary

While Community Transit's needs do not require a major change to the agency's structure, there are significant needs for new services and assets. Some of the most major needs include increased service and capacity on their demand response routes (which perform above the national average), replacement vehicles for their general fleet, and a better and more cohesive marketing and image campaign. This marketing need includes a marketing specialist on staff, unified system branding, and better outreach materials for limited English speaking populations in the Community Transit service area. Other service improvements and expansions that Community Transit needs are deviated fixed routes (new or expanded) in Pipestone, Marshall, and Fulda; improved dispatch and reservations; and several new facilities to house their fleet.

6.3.1 Fleet

Community Transit's most immediate fleet needs, as seen in Table 21, are four vehicles to increase their demand response capacity, and five vehicles to improve the average vehicle condition of their fleet. As new services come online in the five-year period in Pipestone and Marshall, two new buses to run these deviated fixed routes will also be required.

Table 21. Unconstrained Needs List

Need	Priority Level	Purchase Year	Description of Need	Rationale	Estimated Cost (2019 Dollars)
Farebox Collection Technology	High	2020	Improved fareboxes on existing and new vehicles	Enables agency flexibility to accept and track fare payments	$6,000/unit[a] $300,000 for 50 units (40 vehicles in existing fleet, plus 10 future acquisitions)[a]
Development and distribution of new marketing materials (including LEP)	High	2020	New marketing campaign and materials, including Spanish translation to reach new audiences	Increase system awareness with new marketing materials and campaign during the five-year period, especially directed towards limited-English population groups	$100,000[b]
Facility Studies	High	2020	Studies for new facilities at Slayton, Windom, Redwood Falls, and Pipestone	Preliminary studies for feasibility, design, and detailed cost and capacity estimates	$500,000 total [c]
Windom Facility Remodel	High	2020	Remodel of Windom Facility	New facility for vehicle storage and/or staff to operate out of	$733,500 [d]
Replacement Vehicles	High	2021	Five additional replacement vehicles	Help maintain appropriate fleet average age and replacement cycle	$425,000
System Rebranding	High	2021	Client requested system rebranding and brand standardization	Increase visibility and awareness of service	$100,000 [e]
Marketing/ Recruiting Position	High	2022	Marketing and hiring staff member	Can improve agency visibility among the public while helping with recruitment (important for finding new drivers)	$38,000 [f]

Need	Priority Level	Purchase Year	Description of Need	Rationale	Estimated Cost (2019 Dollars)
Bus Stop Improvements	High	2022	Bus stops and shelters along Blue, Red, and Green Lines	Improve customer comfort while waiting for the bus, improve visibility of service	$12,500/unit [g] $550,000 total
Pipestone Deviated Fixed Route Service	Medium	2022	Circulator bus service of Pipestone	Increase access within Pipestone, requested by Community Transit	$85,000 for bus, $114,400 for operations Total $195,400
Purchasing "Specialist" Position	Medium	2022	Staff member with specialization in capital acquisition	Helps agency keep better track of capital needs and programs like vehicle replacement	$40,000 annual salary[h]
Luverne Remodel	Medium	2022	Remodeling of Luverne storage facility	Improve conditions for vehicle storage and/or staff safety and comfort	$500,000 [e]
Slayton Facility Remodel	Medium	2023	Remodel of Slayton facility	New facility for vehicle storage and/or staff to operate out of	$711,500 [d]
New Storage Facilities	Low	2024	Remodel of Redwood Falls and Pipestone facilities	New facility for vehicle storage and/or staff to operate out of	$1,575,000 [d]
Increased Demand Response Service	Low	2024	Four additional vehicles to increase level of service	An extra vehicle on Murray/Lyon, Rock County/Pipestone, Jackson/ Cottonwood, and Marshall demand response routes will increase service	$340,000 for four new vehicles $667,550/year in annual operations (on existing schedules) Total $1,007,550
Update Trip Planning Software	Low	2024	New software for dispatch, routing, and app development for clients to plan trips	Improved provider ability match trips with regional providers and improve customer experience	$150,000 for capital/ development, $30,000/year in fees/ maintenance [i]

Need	Priority Level	Purchase Year	Description of Need	Rationale	Estimated Cost (2019 Dollars)
Marshall Silver Line	Low	2024	New fixed route third line serving Marshall	Red and Blue Lines meander too much, reduces the number of trips they can take in a day. Silver line allows for simplification	$85,000 for new bus, $202,800 for operations Total $287,000
Red and Blue Line Simplification	Low	2024	Simplified alignments of red and blue routes	Allows Red and Blue Lines to operate on simpler alignments without reducing service coverage	$0
Fulda-Worthington Service Expansion	Low	2024	Expand Fulda hours and days to match Red and Blue Lines	More frequent and reliable service will increase appeal and ridership	$124,800
Blue Line Weekend Service	Low	2024	Provide service in Marshall on the weekends	Provides weekend coverage in Marshall	$46,800

[a] *https://www.itscosts.its.dot.gov/its/benecost.nsf/DisplayRUCByUnitCostElementUnadjusted?ReadForm&UnitCostElement=Electronic+Farebox&Subsystem=Transit+Vehicle+On-Board+(TV).*

[b] *Based on similar marketing budget predictions from other regional providers.*

[c] *Based on AECOM prices for similar projects.*

[d] *Estimated based on APTA calculator and Minnesota industrial construction cost per square foot.*

[e] *Cost estimate provided by Community Transit.*

[f] *Average mid-level marketing pay for Minnesota, scaled down to local cost of living.*

[g] *Cost estimate provided by Community Transit.*

[h] *Based on comparable administrative positions.*

[i] *Based on AECOM prices for similar projects, provider input, and the cost based on 2 user accounts and 50 vehicle licenses, http://www.gowata.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/476?fileID=975.*

As shown in Table 17, the Community Transit fleet currently includes 32 active vehicles of various makes, models, and years spanning 2011 to 2019. Nine of those vehicles currently meet the MnDOT OTAT standard for such vehicles as measured by age (five years); two of those vehicles also meet the life standard of fewer than 150,000 miles.

6.3.2 Facilities

Community Transit owns or rents 14 facilities and 10 have the capacity to store buses. The facilities range in age from 2 years old to 79 years old. One immediate facility need is bus stop

amenities along Community Transit's 44 established bus stops on the red, blue, and green fixed routes. These stops with shelters will protect customers while waiting and provide visibility and recognition of Community Transit. The second priority need is four facility studies for vehicle and staff at Slayton, Windom, Redwood Falls, and Pipestone (the studies to be completed in 2020). The facilities will be renovated in 2020 (Windom), 2023 (Slayton), and 2024 (Redwood and Pipestone Falls). There is also a request for funds to remodel the exiting Luverne facility in 2022.

6.3.3 Technology

Farebox collection technology is Community Transit's highest priority technology need, to increase their ability and flexibility in accepting and tracking fare payments. Longer term needs include a regional scheduling app to handle customer requests.

6.3.4 Other

To improve their overall visibility and best utilize the new marketing staff position, Community Transit would like general marketing funds for the development of new materials and marketing campaigns during the five year period. These materials and campaigns would include Spanish-language materials to increase awareness among limited-English communities as well. For the general population, Community Transit would like to undergo a system rebranding and standardization to improve their visibility. Longer term, Community Transit also sees the need for an on-staff purchasing specialist to improve tracking and replacement of capital assets.

7. System Performance

Performance measurement tracking establishes a consistent way to evaluate a route or service type, provides a regular opportunity to reflect on future needs and service improvements, and ensures compliance with the ADA, MnDOT's Olmstead Plan, and any other local performance expectations. For state-funded transit services, MnDOT requires performance tracking of annual ridership, baseline span of service, on-time performance, and asset management. Additionally, each provider is required to track denials based on the ADA trip denial definitions and process documentation in FTA Circular 4710.1 as well as service and performance indicators.

Due to the constraints of handling dispatch using Novus TripSpark software, certain system-level performance metrics, such as wait times, have not been tracked in an easily quantifiable way. Consistent data collection practices for these measures can be incorporated into the transition to a unified dispatch software.

Cost efficiency relates to the financial performance of the system; that is, how well each dollar of investment has translated into additional service, ridership, or revenue. Table 23 shows the cost efficiency metrics tracked by Community Transit for the system include cost per hour, cost per rider, cost per mile, and farebox recovery for 2018. These metrics are based on estimated system costs calculated from an average bus system-wide cost per revenue hour of $61.15 (2018). According to the 2017 *Rural Transit Fact Book*, the national average of cost per hour for rural transit demand response service providers is $38.83. MnDOT has set a target cost of $60 per hour or less, which Community Transit is very close to meeting. Cost per mile is higher than the national rural average, as shown in Table 22.

System-wide ridership has been generally increasing since 2013. In 2016 alone, Community Transit experienced a 31% increase in ridership (over 50,700 passenger trips) due to the agency mergers with Lincoln County Heartland Express and Murray County Heartland Express (see Section 4.1). Cost per rider is the overall cost to operate a service divided by the number of one-way trips generated. Community Transit's service costs $14.64 per bus rider.

Farebox generally measures the percentage of operating cost covered by fares and is an outcome heavily influenced by the ridership productivity of a route against its total operating cost, as well as the fare policy of the system. It is generally calculated by dividing passenger fare revenue by operating cost. Community Transit has an average farebox recovery of 13.6% for deviated routes and demand response.

Two service effectiveness indicators, passengers per mile and passengers per hour, are also summarized in Table 22. The system-wide passengers per mile and passengers per hour are slightly below the Minnesota rural transit average, and higher than the national rural transit average.

Table 22. 2018 Cost Efficiency and Service Effectiveness by Service

Route/Service	Riders/ Hour	Riders/Mile	Cost/Hour	Cost/Rider	Cost/Mile	Farebox Recovery
Deviated Routes	4.8	0.41	$58.84	$12.02	$4.90	12.6%
Demand Response: Cottonwood County	4.7	0.33	$55.95	$11.88	$3.92	16.9%
Demand Response: Jackson County	4.1	0.23	$66.63	$16.35	$3.74	13.4%
Demand Response: Lincoln County	1.9	0.08	$44.15	$23.55	$2.00	8.3%
Demand Response: Lyon County	2.7	0.12	$61.38	$22.86	$2.77	11.6%
Demand Response: Murray County	3.4	0.19	$54.93	$16.00	$3.07	12.6%
Demand Response: Pipestone County	4.2	0.34	$66.29	$15.62	$5.34	16.7%
Demand Response: Redwood County	4.2	0.36	$60.62	$14.38	$5.21	14.0%
Demand Response: Rock County	4.2	0.30	$74.70	$17.58	$5.30	13.1%
Volunteer	0.9	0.03	$53.57	$57.09	$1.24	92.6%
System-Wide (Bus Only)	**4.00**	**0.29**	**$61.15**	**$14.64**	**$4.18**	**13.6%**
National Rural Average	**2.6**	**0.15**	**$38.83**	**$14.68**	**$2.22**	**12.0%**
Minnesota Rural Average	**4.57**	**0.31**	**$60.00**	**$13.30**	**-**	**-**

Source: UCAP Community Transit 2018 Trips by Service Area, UCAP Community Transit 3/12/19 correspondence, MnDOT Chapter 7 Requirements, 2017 Rural Transit Fact Book

7.1 Historical Performance

As the Community Transit system has grown, ridership, service hours, and operating costs have generally increased. The total system-wide passenger trips have increased since 2013, with a substantial increase in 2016 due to agency mergers, and a slight decrease in 2018. Between 2013 and 2018 (i.e., the five year period preceding this plan), the agency had a net gain in ridership of about 64% (94,237 passenger trips).

As shown in Table 23, the system-wide cost per rider has increased over time, with a net increase of $3.61 from 2013 to 2018. Cost per hour has similarly increased. Farebox recovery has dropped by several percentage points since 2013, to a rate of 13.6% in 2018 (including volunteer drivers in 2018 would be 22.4%). These trends can be attributed to Community Transit's mergers in 2013 and 2016, and consolidation of transit services across an expansive service area.

Table 23. Community Transit Historical Performance (2013-2018)

Year	Riders/Hour	Riders/Mile	Cost/Hour	Cost/Rider	Cost/Mile	Farebox Recovery
2013	4.11	0.18	$45.28	$11.03	$1.93	33.6%
2014	3.95	0.18	$46.08	$11.67	$2.15	29.3%
2015	3.81	0.20	$47.39	$12.44	$2.50	28.0%
2016	4.25	0.20	$58.30	$13.71	$2.76	23.1%
2017	3.52	0.21	$47.51	$13.49	$2.84	23.4%
2018	4.00	0.29	$61.15	$14.64	$4.18	13.6%

Source: UCAP Community Transit 3/12/19 correspondence

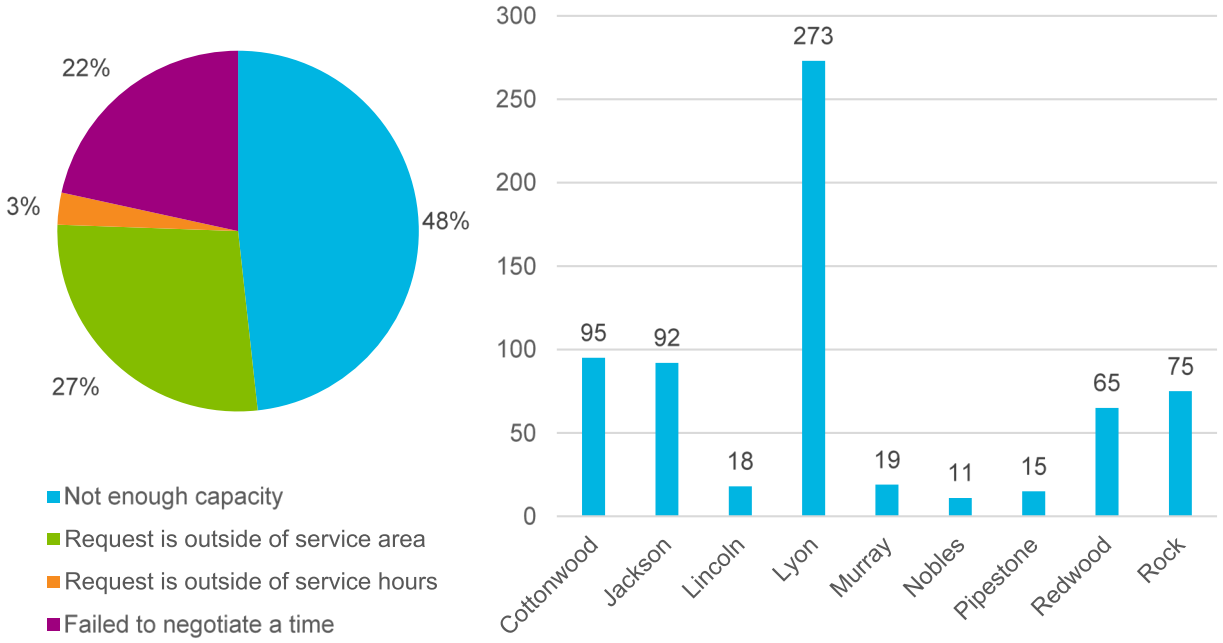
Note: Values reflect Western Community Action Partnership and UCAP Community Transit only. Values 2013-2017 include volunteer driver data, 2018 does not include volunteer driver data.

In 2017, Community Transit had 2,970 trip denials for its demand response service, largely due to lack of capacity. Other reasons for trip denials include but are not limited to lack of bus availability at the time requested, lack of wheelchair accessible bus availability, lack of driver availability, vehicle maintenance issues, and inability to pay fare due to cost or method of payment. The potential for trip denials is exacerbated by external challenges such as receiving short notice for scheduling rides, passengers' lack of desire to wait for the next scheduled ride, and inclement weather limiting driver availability. If the denials meet the ADA trip denial definitions and process in FTA Circular 4710.1 and were disproportionality among those with a disability, then a capacity constraint may exist. FTA Circular 4710.1 considers a denial to be when:

- A rider requests a next-day trip and the transit agency says it cannot provide that trip.
- A rider requests a next-day trip and the transit agency can only offer a trip that is outside of the 1-hour negotiating window. This represents a denial regardless of whether the rider accepts such an offer.
- A rider requests a round-trip and the agency can only provide one leg of the trip. If the rider does not take the offered one-way trip, both portions of the trip are denials.

The number of denials for the first quarter of 2019 was 663, of which 320 were due to capacity issues and 143 because of failed negotiation time. Figure 21 illustrates the system-wide denials by reason and the number of denials by county. As shown, lack of capacity is the reason for nearly half of the trip denials in the first three months of 2019. Lyon County had the most trip denials (263), followed by Cottonwood County (95) and Jackson County (92). These three counties have some of the highest populations in the Community Transit service area. Community Transit will continue to track trip denials to comply with ADA definitions and process and report its findings to MnDOT on an annual basis.

Figure 21. Trip Denials (January through March 2019)



Source: UCAP Community Transit 1st Quarter Denial Report

7.2 Projected Performance

Moving forward, Community Transit must develop a plan for collecting the data needed to track the performance metrics required by MnDOT and the additional measures that it selects to measure progress toward local goals and priorities. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, MnDOT requires providers to track on-time performance, trip denials, and the percentage of communities with a baseline span of service, and MnDOT has set the targets for these performance metrics. MnDOT also requires providers to track passengers per hour, cost per service hour, and cost per trip, but providers define the targets for these performance metrics. Additionally, MnDOT requires providers to select three performance metrics of their choice, for which providers define the targets. A complete list of these performance metrics and their targets is provided in Table 24.

The definitions of the performance measures that Community Transit will track are as follows:

- **On-time performance**: The percentage of trips that arrive within a specified pick-up window.
- **Trip denials**: occurs when a trip is requested by a passenger, but the transportation provider cannot provide the service. Trip denial may happen because capacity is not available at the requested time. For ADA paratransit, a capacity denial is specifically defined as occurring if a trip cannot be accommodated within the negotiated pick-up window. Even if

a trip is provided, if it is scheduled outside the +60/-60-minute window, it is considered a denial. If the passenger refused to accept a trip offered within the +60/-60-minute pick-up window, it is considered a refusal, not a capacity denial.

- **Percentage of communities with a baseline span of service**: the percentage of public transportation service areas meeting the baseline number of hours during the day when transit service is available in an area.
- **Passengers per hour**: unlinked passenger trips per revenue hour. This does not include volunteer trips.
- **Cost per service hour**: fully loaded operating cost per revenue hour. This does not include volunteer trips.
- **Cost per trip (rider):** fully loaded operating cost per unlinked passenger trip. This does not include volunteer trips.
- **Service hours per capita**: the revenue hours per total population within the service area. The population of the area is defined by what is reported by the most recent census data in the ACS.
- **Farebox recovery**: the percentage of operating costs covered by revenue from fares and contract revenue (total fare revenue and total contract revenue divided by the total operating cost).
- **Passenger complaints**: includes valid complaints made by passengers either in writing, by email, or over the phone. All complaints are considered valid until investigated.
- **Road calls:** any mechanical event (not related to an accident) that results in the loss of service or the vehicle being removed from revenue service and replaced with another vehicle.
- **Accidents**: anything that meets the National Transit Database (NTD) reporting threshold for collision and a reportable event per the most recent *Safety and Security Policy Manual* or per the FTA Post-Accident Drug and Alcohol testing regulations. The 2018 *Safety and Security Policy Manual* defines a collision as one that includes a fatality, an injury that required immediate transport was needed from the scene for medical attention, property damage exceeding $25,000, involved transit revenue roadway vehicles and the towing away of any vehicles (transit or non-transit) from the scene, or a suicide or attempted suicide that involved contact with a transit vehicle. The FTA Post-Accident Drug and Alcohol testing regulations require a test when the accident involves a fatality, any individual suffered a bodily injury and immediately received medical treatment away from the scene of the accident, any disabling damage to any vehicle involved in the accident requiring the vehicle to be towed away from the scene, or the vehicle was removed from operation.
- **Percentage of standing orders**: the percentage of daily trips on a demand response system that are regularly recurring pre-scheduled trips that must be accommodated on an ongoing basis.

Table 24. Community Transit Performance Metrics

Performance Measure	Current Baseline	Goal/Target	Frequency of Measurement
On-time performance	Not known - baseline must be established	90% on time within published pick-up window (before published time point for deviated route, 45/45 minute window for demand response)	Monthly
Trip denials	2,970, 1.11% of ridership	Transit systems must follow the ADA trip denial definitions and process.	Monthly
Percentage of communities with a baseline span of service	Not known – baseline must be established	75% of population covered by demand response service area, or within ¾ mile of fixed route service	Annually
Passengers per hour	4.76 and 3.687 for deviated route and demand response, respectively	5-8 and 4-5 for deviated route and demand response, respectively[d]	Monthly
Cost per service hour	$61.15 for system-wide average, $58.84 for deviated fixed route service	$60 or less for both deviated route and demand response	Monthly
Cost per trip	$16.04 for demand response,$12.02 for deviated route	$13-$15 for demand response, $11-12 for deviated route[b]	Monthly
Service hours per capita	0.748	0.45 or higher	Annually
Farebox recovery	12.6% and 14.1% for deviated route and demand response, respectively	10% and 13-14% for deviated route and demand response, respectively[a]	Monthly
Passenger complaints	15 or less	6 complaints / 100,000 boardings)	Annually
Road calls	120 or less	1 road call every 10,000 miles	Annually
Accidents	9 or less	1 accident every 100,000 miles	Annually
Annual ridership	250,113	252,000-255,000[c]	Annually

Source: UCAP Community Transit 2018 Trips by Service Area, UCAP Community Transit Financial Template

[a] *Nationally, in 2016, the average farebox recovery for fixed route bus services was 23.9%; for demand response service, it was 7.3%. Community Transit well exceeds the national average in the latter and is encouraged to maintain or increase that percentage. For the former, Community Transit is well below the national average. However, with increased options in the five-year plan, a possible increase in farebox recovery is possible. For more information, see https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/ntd/66011/2016-ntst.pdf.*

[b] *In 2016, the national average cost per passenger trip was $4.43 for fixed route bus service and $43.79 for demand response service. Again, Community Transit underperforms in the former and exceeds expectations in the latter. Given service increases for both modes, modest changes are recommended. For more information, see https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/ntd/66011/2016-ntst.pdf.*

[c] *Given national trends of declining ridership, maintaining or increasing current ridership is a reasonable goal for Community Transit. Community Transit increased its ridership from 2016 to 2017, indicating that increasing its ridership, especially given the extended service capacity, is a reasonable goal, despite national trends.*

[d] *For riders per revenue hour in demand response, Community Transit exceeds the national average and is expected to hold that number steady or increase it. For deviated route Community Transit is well below the national average. However, given the increase in deviated route options and amenities requested, an increase in riders per hour is a reasonable goal (https://humantransit.org/2018/02/is-microtransit-a-sensible-transit-investment.html).*

8. Operations

Community Transit operates demand service response throughout the eight-county service area, with extended service hours in the City of Marshall. Community Transit also operates deviated route service with the Red and Blue Routes in the City of Marshall, the Green Route in the City of Redwood Falls, and a deviated route between Fulda and Worthington. Community Transit has an 85-person staff including full-time and part-time drivers, managers, dispatch operators, and administrative assistants. Out-of-service area trips are also provided, primarily by a team of approximately 80 volunteer drivers.

8.1 Background

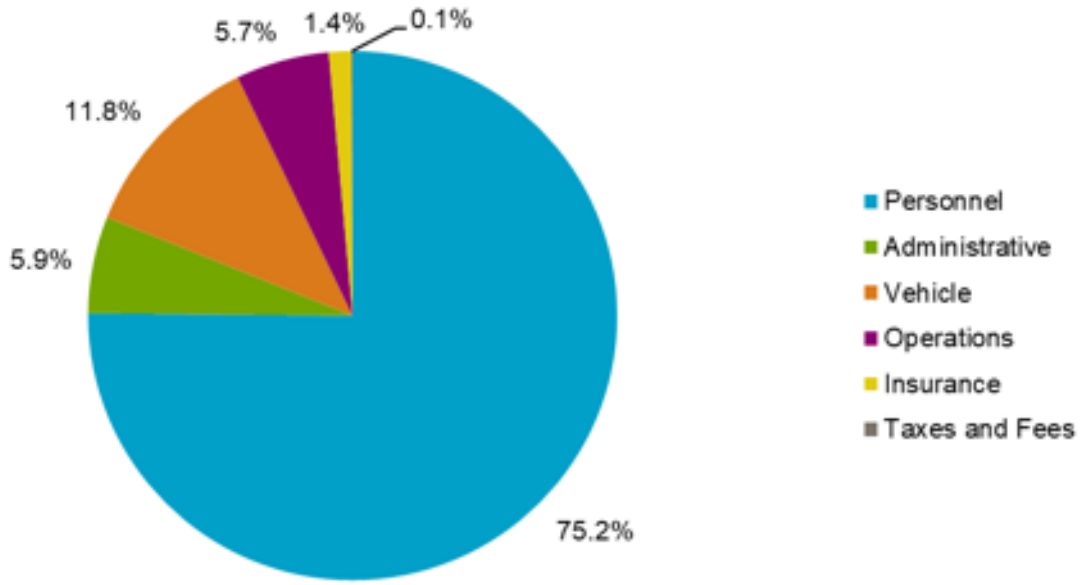
Community Transit requests operational funding from MnDOT on an annual basis. In 2018, Community Transit had an operating budget of approximately $3.3 million as shown in Table 25. These operating costs were projected to be offset by $501,400 in anticipated operating revenue and system revenues. As shown on Figure 22, personnel expenses account for about 75% of the Community Transit operating budget, which includes expenses such as salaries, wages, and fringe benefits. The second largest expense category is vehicle expenses, which is comprised of fuel, preventative and corrective maintenance, tires, and other vehicle-related costs. Administrative expenses and operations expenses are each approximately 6% of the budget. Insurance expenses and taxes and fees make up the remainder of the Community Transit operating budget.

Table 25: 2018 Operating Budget Request

Line Item	Requested Amount
Personnel	$2,527,500
Administrative	$198,645
Vehicle	$396,440
Operations	$191,915
Insurance	$46,000
Taxes and Fees	$2,500
Expenditures Sub-Total	**$3,363,000**
Operating Revenue	$501,400
Revenue Sub-Total	**$501,400**
Less Refund Amount	**($25,000)**
Total	**$2,886,600**

Source: UCAP Community Transit Operating Budget 2018

Figure 22. 2018 Budgeted Operational Expenses



Source: 2018 UCAP Community Transit Operating Budget

8.2 Historical and Projected Annual Summary

Community Transit has become a regional transit provider serving eight counties. Through mergers most recently in 2016, 2017, and 2018, Community Transit has been able to increase the span of service hours, improve transit access, and realize operating efficiencies. Below is a summary of some of the operating highlights in recent years for Community Transit (and agencies that eventually merged with Community Transit):[6]

- In 2013,
  - Community Transit, administered by Western Community Action at the time, merged with Cottonwood County Transit.
  - Additionally, Community Transit increased transportation opportunities to pre-school families living in the areas surrounding Tracy and Lakefield.
  - Lincoln County Heartland Express provided rides for the Lincoln County Fair.
  - Murray County Heartland Express had an accident-free year.
  - Pipestone County Transit served the counties of Pipestone, Rock, Nobles, and Murray with the Buffalo Ridge Route.
  - Rock County Heartland Express had an accident-free year.
- In 2014,
  - Community Transit, administered by Western Community Action at the time, increased ridership by 4% in areas with declining populations.
  - Additionally, Community Transit established a daily demand response route between the cities of Tracy and Marshall with increased ridership.
  - Murray County Heartland Express had an accident-free year.
  - Pipestone County Transit worked with Southwest Health and Human Services to improve availability of transportation during no-transit hours.
  - Rock County Heartland Express had an accident-free year.
- In 2015,
  - Community Transit, administered by Western Community Action at the time, increased weekend hours of service by adding deviated routes that run until 7 p.m.
  - Additionally, Community Transit entered into a partnership to coordinate administrative duties with Pipestone County.
  - Community Transit increased ridership by 3% over 2014.
  - Murray County Heartland Express had an accident-free year.
  - Pipestone County Transit increased ridership for students and elderly population.
- In 2016,
  - United Community Action Partnership was established following a merger with Western Community Action and Heartland Community Action.
  - Additionally, Community Transit merged with Lincoln County Heartland Express and Murray County Heartland Express.

[6] Sources: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report

— Rock County Heartland Express prepared to merge with Community Transit in 2017.

As the Community Transit system has grown, operating expenditures have increased, although the system has become more efficient. Documented and projected changes in system-wide service hours, miles, and operating costs are highlighted in Table 26. The largest increase in operating expenditures, 46.1%, occurred between 2015 and 2016, due to the merger of Community Transit and Lincoln County Heartland Express and Murray County Heartland express. Following the mergers with Lincoln and Murray Counties in 2016, revenue hours increased 47.3% and revenue miles increased by 16.7%.

Table 26. System Cost Efficiency by Year (2013-2020)[a]

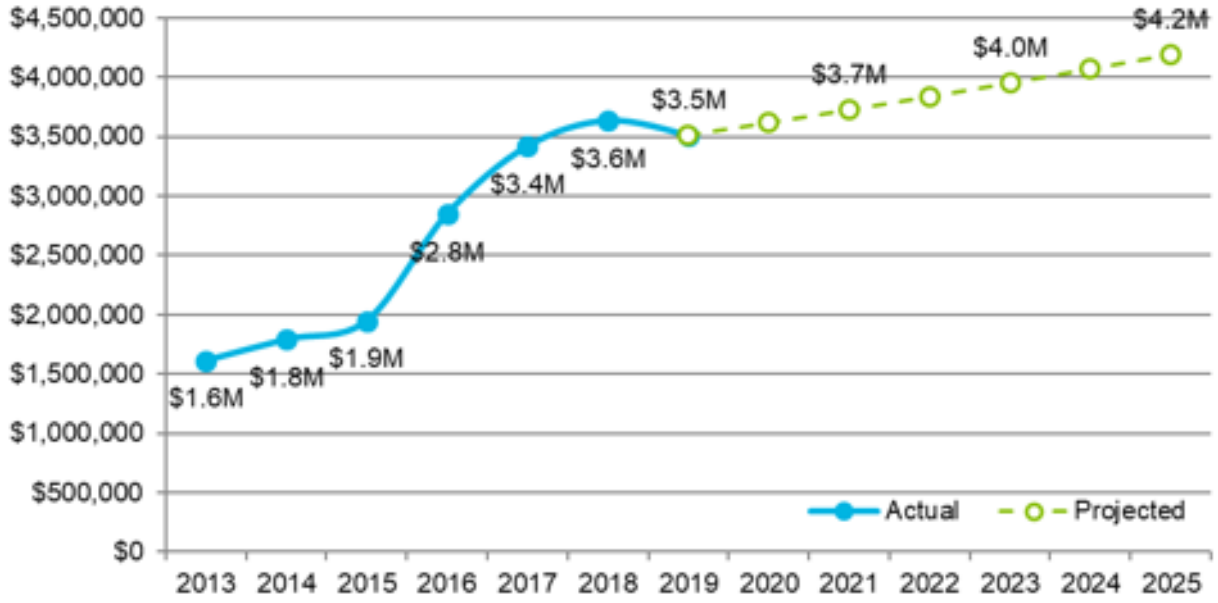
Year	Revenue Hours	Percent Change Revenue Hours	Revenue Miles	Percent Change Revenue Miles	Operating Cost	Percent Change Operating Cost
2013	35,622	-	835,853	-	$1,612,923	-
2014	38,868	9.1%	832,197	−0.4%	$1,791,209	11.1%
2015	41,119	5.8%	779,716	−6.3%	$1,948,646	8.8%
2016	48,829	18.8%	1,030,582	32.2%	$2,846,971	46.1%
2017	71,909	47.3%	1,203,202	16.7%	$3,416,341	20.0%
2018	70,218	−2.4%	1,102,131	−8.4%	$3,633,279	6.3%
2019 (projected)	69,471	−1.1%	1,014,653	−7.9%	$3,511,000	−3.4%
2020 (projected)	71,555	3.0%	1,045,093	3.0%	$3,616,330	3.0%

Source: UCAP Community Transit Financial Template Public Transit Only

[a] Values reflect Western Community Action Partnership and UCAP Community Transit only and are system-wide including volunteer services.

Historic and project operating costs are illustrated on Figure 23. Operating costs have grown by $2 million since 2013. Community Transit estimates that operating costs will increase approximately 3% annually from 2019 through 2025.

Figure 23. Actual and Projected Operating Costs by Year (2013-2025)



Source: UCAP Community Transit, Financial Template Public Transit Only

8.3 Staffing

There are a total of 87 staff working for Community Transit, of which 71% are full-time, and 29% are part-time (Table 27). Most employees, 59%, are drivers. The remaining 41% of staff are managers, dispatchers, and administrative assistants.

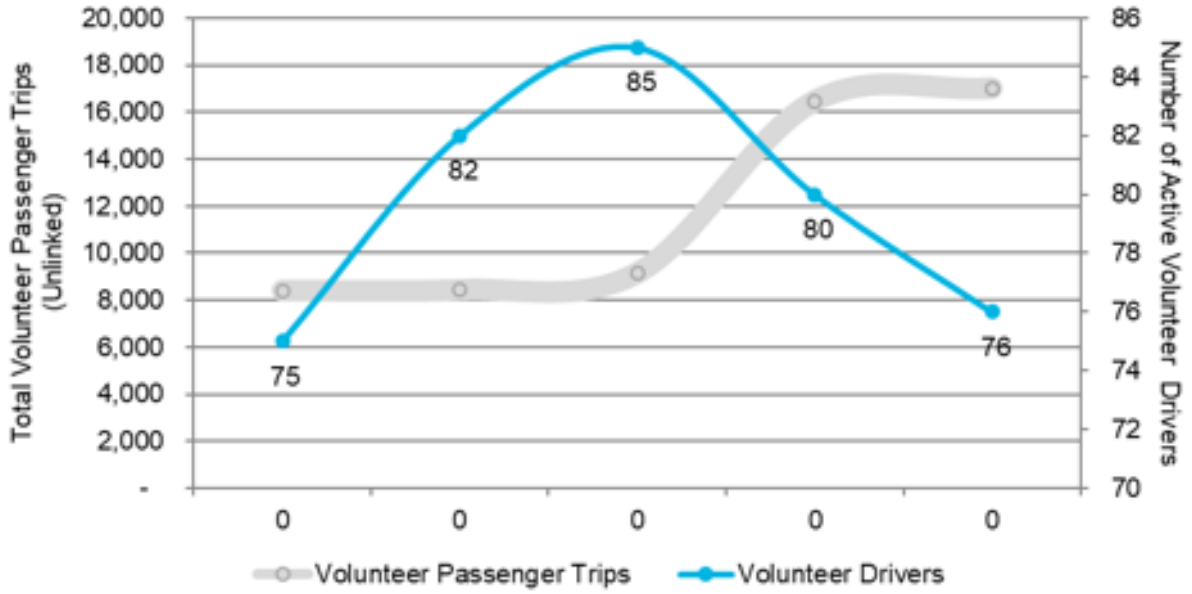
Table 27: 2018 Community Transit Staffing

Type of Staff	Management/ Supervising	Drivers	Dispatch/ Scheduling	Administrative/ Support	Maintenance	Other	Total
Full Time	8	30	5	15	0	4	62
Part Time	0	21	1	2	0	1	25
Total	**8**	**51**	**6**	**17**	**0**	**5**	**87**

Source: UCAP Community Transit Operations Template, UCAP 4/24/19 correspondence

Additionally, 80 volunteer drivers currently provide trips to Community Transit customers, generally for destinations outside of the eight-county service area, or when buses are not available. The number of volunteer drivers has declined over the past several years, as shown on Figure 24. Community Transit staff mentioned that the number of volunteer drivers was once as high as 250, meaning the agency has experienced a more significant decline in volunteer drivers than has been illustrated in recent years.

Figure 24. Community Transit Volunteer Drivers (2014-2018)



Source: UCAP Community Transit Service Data Template

8.4 2020-2025 Annual Needs

The Transportation Research Board's Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 161 outlines methods for quantifying need and forecasting demand for rural passenger transportation.[7] Appendix C contains the detailed data and worksheets used to quantify the transit need and demand for this FYTSP. Transportation need, summarized in Table 28, is defined as the total number of households without a vehicle times the mobility gap, which is the difference between the daily trip rate for rural households having one personal vehicle and rural households having no personal vehicle. Within the eight counties that comprise the Community Transit service area, there is an annual need for 1,243,100 one-way trips. Transportation needs can be met through a variety of options, including taxi service, volunteer drivers, community partners, or transit providers such as Community Transit.

In 2010, the state legislature asked MnDOT to determine the level of funding required to meet at least 80% of public transit need in Greater Minnesota by 2015, and 90% of need by 2025. The legislature set the goal but did not provide additional funding or mandate that the need must be met. The transit providers participated in developing the strategies to increase ridership in Greater Minnesota. However, the GMTIP does not include detailed direction for the transit providers as transit service is based on local needs and resources.

This FYTSP for Community Transit complements the GMTIP by identifying the need for public transit and priorities unique to the transit provider. Recommendations and investments listed in this plan were developed with input from the community, stakeholders, and transit provider staff and are opportunities to improve current transit service and expand service as appropriate.

[7] Transportation Research Board, TCRP Report 161, *Methods for Forecasting Demand and Quantifying Need for Rural Passenger Transportation: Final Workbook*, http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/168758.aspx.

Table 28. Transit Need by County

Transit Need/Mobility Gap by County	Annual Number of One-Way Trips Needed
Cottonwood County	154,400
Jackson County	100,800
Lincoln County	56,700
Lyon County	355,300
Murray County	112,100
Pipestone County	167,000
Redwood County	223,700
Rock County	73,100
Service Area Total	**1,243,100**

Source: UCAP Community Transit, 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates, AECOM 2019

TCRP-161 provides several methods for estimating categories of transit demand, provided in Table 29. General purpose rural non-program demand is based entirely on demographic factors indicating decreased mobility, including population over age 60, mobility limited population between ages 16 and 64, and population without access to a vehicle. Demand for general public rural passenger transportation is calculated based on the estimated trip need and passenger miles of service in operation. Demand for commuters from rural counties to an urban center is based on the estimated number of workers commuting from a rural county to an urban center, the distance between the rural county and the urban center, and whether the urban center is a state capital. All three estimates of demand are significantly below Community Transit's 2017 ridership of 250,113 (see Section 4.1), indicating that current services in the Community Transit service area are performing better than demographic factors and service levels would predict. Accordingly, ridership targets and revenue estimation for future service expansions should be based on demonstrated performance of the system rather than national indicators.

Table 29. Transit Demand by Service Area

Transit Demand Type	Annual Number of One-Way Trips In Demand
General Purpose Rural Non-Program Demand	66,900
General Public Rural Passenger Transportation	102,400
Commuters from Rural Counties to Urban Center (Sioux Falls, SD metropolitan area)	11,700

Source: UCAP Community Transit, 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates, LEHD 2015, AECOM 2019

8.4.1 Staffing Needs

Community Transit anticipates needing to hire more full-time and potentially more part-time drivers. To meet the service expansion needs identified in this report, Community Transit anticipates needing to hire six full-time drivers (or the labor hour equivalent of part-time drivers). This is determined from the addition of six "new" vehicles/service: an additional vehicle operating on four demand response routes, a new Pipestone route, and a new Marshall Silver route. Other service expansions should not require additional personnel, just additional labor hours. These hirings would take place with service expansions, with the first driver being recruited for the Pipestone service in 2022 and five drivers for the demand response expansion and Silver Route service in 2024.

Community Transit would benefit from the addition of a marketing/recruiting position. A marketing/recruiting staff member would aid in the visibility of Community Transit throughout its service area, including advertisements (through mediums such as newspaper and radio) and establishing partnerships with organizations likely to generate riders (medical facilities, assisted living, employment offices, etc.). For recruiting, this staff member can help ensure that adequate drivers are being interviewed, hired, trained, and certified to meet Community Transit's increasing obligations. Because demand response service expansions (and therefore drivers to operate them) are scheduled to begin in 2022, a marketing/recruiting position should start in 2022 (if not sooner) to aid in that hiring search.

Community Transit would also benefit from the addition of a purchasing "specialist," which could function as a regional position. A purchasing specialist can help Community Transit pay closer attention to its capital needs and vehicle replacement plan. This staff member can develop expertise for different types of vehicles to identify which would best serve Community Transit's needs, negotiate and keep track of capital purchases, work with MnDOT authorities for various capital grants, and oversee that the replacement plan is followed. This staff member could also be a shared resource with other Southwest Minnesota agencies to defray costs among individual providers. Community Transit identified that hiring a purchasing specialist was only a medium priority, to be filled in 2022.

8.4.2 Operations Funding Needs

This plan includes several recommended service improvements, detailed below, that will require an annual increase in operating funds for Community Transit over the period of 2020 to 2025.

Proposed service improvements include improved demand response services regionally, a new deviated fixed route in Pipestone, increased demand response service, improvements of Fulda-Worthington service, a new Silver Route, simplification of the Red and Blue Lines, and implementation of Blue Line weekend service. Costs for proposed service improvements below are for the year of implementation and include inflation.

Improve Regional Demand Response Service

To improve Community Transit's demand response service, one additional vehicle will be required for each of the four demand response zones: Murray/Lyon, Rock County/Pipestone, Jackson/Cottonwood, and Marshall. The estimated annual cost of this improvement is $774,000 in 2024, increasing to $797,000 by 2025 (assuming service hours and schedules remain constant). This would also require the purchase of four new vehicles, a $100,000 capital expense in 2024. As a weekday service, this recommendation is estimated to add 12,395 service hours per year.

New Deviated Fixed Route in Pipestone

A new deviated fixed route "loop" to serve residential areas, commercial destinations, and major employment centers around Pipestone, manned by a single vehicle. This Pipestone route would operate 8 hour service on weekdays, and 4 hour service on Saturdays. This estimated annual cost for this service would be $125,000 in 2022, increasing to $137,000 by 2025 (assuming service hours and schedules remain constant). This would also require the purchase of one new vehicle, an $87,000 capital expense in 2022. The new Pipestone service is estimated to add 2,228 service hours per year.

Improve Fulda-Worthington Service

The existing Fulda-Worthington service would be extended from running two days a week to a seven day/week service, with 8 hour service on weekdays and 4 hour service on weekends. The total annual cost of this service (including the existing two days of service) would be $145,000 in 2024, increasing to $149,000 by 2025 (assuming service hours and schedules remain constant). Because this is expanding an existing service, this should not require an additional vehicle. This recommendation is estimated to add 1,164 service hours per year.

Blue Line Weekend Service

To improve weekend service in the Marshall area, Community Transit's local serving Blue Route should establish weekend service to match what is currently provided by the Red Route. The total annual cost of this weekend service (9 hour span, Saturdays and Sundays) is $54,000 in 2024, increasing to $56,000 by 2025 (assuming service hours and schedules remain consistent). Because this is a service expansion of an existing route, an additional vehicle need is not anticipated. This recommendation is estimated to add 936 service hours per year.

New Silver Route

To help simplify and increase transit frequency and coverage in Marshall, Community Transit should start a new Silver Route service. This service would start south of Marshall Golf Club at Fairway Apartments, run up Highway 23 (past UCAP headquarters) to US 56, where it would service Marshall Middle School, Marshall Lyon County Library, and Downtown Marshall before heading up North 4th Street to serve multiple apartment complexes surrounding Marshall Cemetery. This new route would allow the Blue and Red routes to simplify their alignments and improve their service capacity. This new route would cost $235,000 in 2024, increasing to $242,000 by 2025. It would require a new vehicle (a $100,000 capital expense in 2024) and driver and would operate the same weekday and weekend hours as the Red Route. It would add 4,056 annual service hours.

Improve Red and Blue Routes in Marshall

After the implementation of the Silver line in Marshall, the Red and Blue Route alignments should be simplified to minimize overlap with the Silver Route. This simplification should improve bus runtimes and allow Community Transit to provide a more frequent service that is cost neutral.

9. Financial

The Community Transit 2018 operating costs and revenue sources are shown in Table 30 and on Figure 25. In 2018, the agency's total operating costs were about $3,633,000, with about $750,000 in farebox revenue (approximately 21% farebox recovery rate). Federal and state revenue sources provide 85% of rural transit agencies' annual operating expenses. The remaining 15% of the annual operating expenses come from local revenue sources. In 2018, Community Transit's local share was about 22%, comprised of fare revenue and other local

revenue. In 2018, the local revenue streams were able to provide the local operating share and contribute to Community Transit's reserve account.

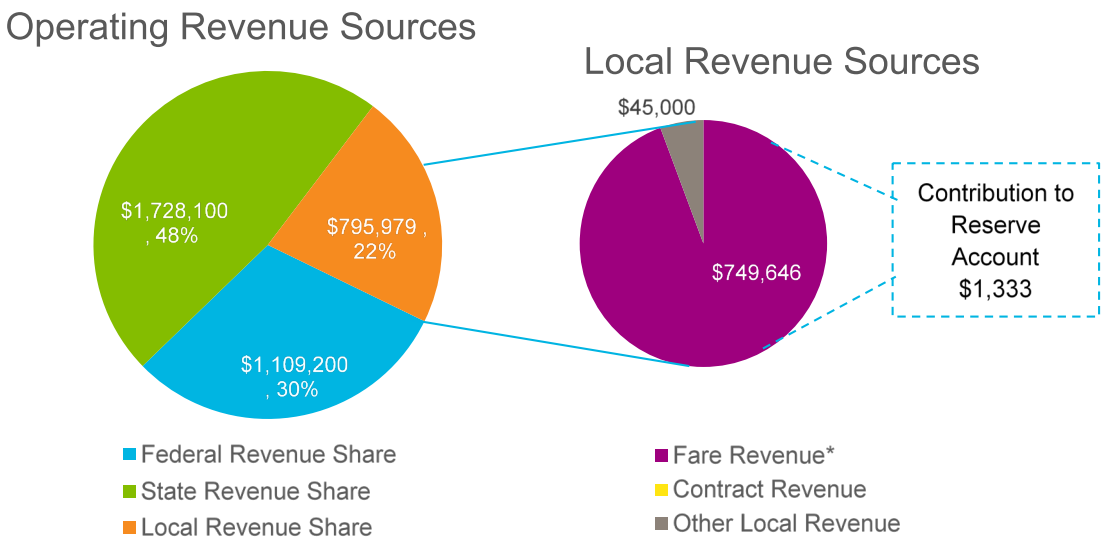
Table 30. 2018 Operating Financial Profile

Expense/Revenue Category	Amount
Operating Costs	($3,633,279)
Federal Revenue Share	$1,109,200
State Revenue Share	$1,728,100
Local Revenue Share	$795,979
Fare Revenue	$749,646
Contract Revenue	$0
Other Local Revenue	$45,000
Reserve Account[a]	($1,333)

Source: UCAP 3/12/19 and 4/24/19 correspondence

[a] A negative value associated with the reserve account represents a contribution rather than a withdrawal.

Figure 25: 2018 Operating Revenue by Source



Source: UCAP Community Transit Financial Template – Public Transit Only, UCAP 4/24/19 correspondence

Fares are an important source of revenue that offset the cost of operating transit services. Community Transit implemented a new fare structure effective January 1, 2019. Demand response service in the eight-county service area is structured by zone (Table 31). Fares are based on the mileage from pick-up location to drop-off location, with a flat "in town" fare, and zone-based fare increases by mileage from pickup location (0-7 miles, 8-17 miles, 18-32 miles,

33-45 miles). If a trip is 50 miles or more from the pick-up location, the fare becomes $50 per hour.

Table 31. Fare Structure Effective January 2019

Route/Service	Adult Fare	Reduced Fare	Other Fare	Passes
Deviated Route	$1.00	Free (age 2 and under)	—	Ride Coupon $25 In Town Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon $70
Demand Response (in town)	$2.00	$1.00 (children age 3-12) Free (age 2 and under)	$2.50[a,b]	Ride Coupon $25 In Town Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon $70
Demand Response (0-7 miles)	$2.00	—	$2.50[b]	Ride Coupon $25 County Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon $80
Demand Response (8-17 miles)	$3.00	—	$6.00[b]	Ride Coupon $25 County Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon $80
Demand Response (18-32 miles)	$4.00	—	$8.00[b]	Ride Coupon $25 County Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon $80
Demand Response (33-45 miles)	$5.00	—	$10.00[b]	Ride Coupon $25 County Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon $80
Demand Response (50+ miles)	$50.00/hour	—	—	—
Volunteer Driver	$0.60/mile ($4.00 minimum)	$0.35/mile ($2.50 minimum) for coordinated rides[c]	$0.89-$1.00/mile[b]	—

Source: UCAP Community Transit 2019 Fare Policy

[a] A $0.50 charge is added to the fare when a trip is scheduled after 4:30 p.m. prior to the day of service requested.

[b] Billed fares are higher than fares paid on-board with cash, pass, or tokens.

[c] A ride is considered "coordinated" when more than one passenger share the cost of the total driver miles.

Fares can be paid on-board using cash, passes, or tokens, and can be billed to customers for an additional charge. No shows and cancellations at the door are subject to a $5.00 charge.

Fares for rides provided by volunteer drivers can be pre-paid or paid in cash. Pre-paid fares cannot be reimbursed. A $10.00 parking fee applies at Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport for return rides.

Passes, also known as “ride coupons,” are available in the following formats:

- Ride Coupon: available for bus or volunteer drivers
- In-Town Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon: available for in town bus rides only, and are limited to two rides when requested same day as rides
- County Monthly Unlimited Ride Coupon: available for county bus rides only, and are limited to two rides when requested same day as rides

Escorts ride for free within the eight-county service area and are subject to a $10.00 fare for all other trips. An escort is considered someone who rides along for a purpose with a scheduled or pre-booked passenger while getting picked up at the same location going to the same location.

Groups of six or more passengers can ride at a discounted rate of $20.00 for round trips up to 7 miles, or $30.00 for round trips that are 7 to 50 miles. The return trip must be within 1 hour of arrival at destination unless otherwise arranged with Community Transit.

9.1 Background

Transit providers serving Greater Minnesota receive funding from several sources at the federal, state, and local levels. Specifically, transit funding is comprised of:

- Federal Transit Funding, USDOT (FTA)
- State General Fund appropriations
- State Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST)
- State Motor Vehicle Lease Sales Tax (MVLST)
- Local Share: farebox recovery, local tax levies, local contracts for service

Transit providers in Greater Minnesota generally receive federal funding through the Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Formula Program, which provides capital and operating funding for small urban and rural areas, including intercity bus transportation. MnDOT is responsible for distributing federal funds to transit providers in Greater Minnesota.

MnDOT also distributes state funding from the General Fund and Transit Assistance Fund to Greater Minnesota transit providers. Transit services have received funding from the state’s General Fund every year for decades. However, most of the state funding for Greater Minnesota transit providers comes from the Transit Assistance Fund, which receives revenue through the MVST and MVLST.

Minnesota State law requires local participation in funding public transit services in Greater Minnesota. A statutory fixed-share funding formula sets a local share of operating costs by system classification as noted in Table 32. Local revenue sources that can provide the local match include farebox recovery, local property taxes, local sales taxes, contracted route revenues, advertising revenue, or program revenue.

Table 32. Operating Transit Programs Required Local Match

Program (Recipient Classifications)	Percentage of Required Local Match
Elderly and Disabled	15%
Rural (population <2,500)	15%
Small Urban (population >2,500 and <50,000)	20%
Urbanized (population >50,000)	20%

Source: MnDOT Greater Transit Funding in Minnesota

State and federal funding for public transit should cover the remaining 80% or 85% of operating costs. The percentage of total funds spent on transit that are provided locally are higher than the mandated local share. Transit systems in Greater Minnesota often provide additional service that is not recognized in the funding formula, thus the total percentage of local funding for transit service in Greater Minnesota is more than 20%.

Refer to MnDOT's OTAT website for up to date information regarding funding.[8]

9.2 History

Historical operating expenditures for Community Transit are detailed in Table 33 and the breakdown of funding sources is illustrated on Figure 26. Total operating expenditures have increased by 112% from 2013 to 2017. This is due to the costs associated with providing transit service to a larger service area as a result of several mergers. The federal and state share of operating expenditures grew from 2013 to 2017. The local share percentage has fluctuated, increasing from 2013 to 2014, decreasing in 2015 and 2016, and increasing again in 2017. Community Transit uses local funding, farebox revenue, and local subsidies to provide the local match.

Table 33. Community Transit Operating Expenditures (2013-2017)

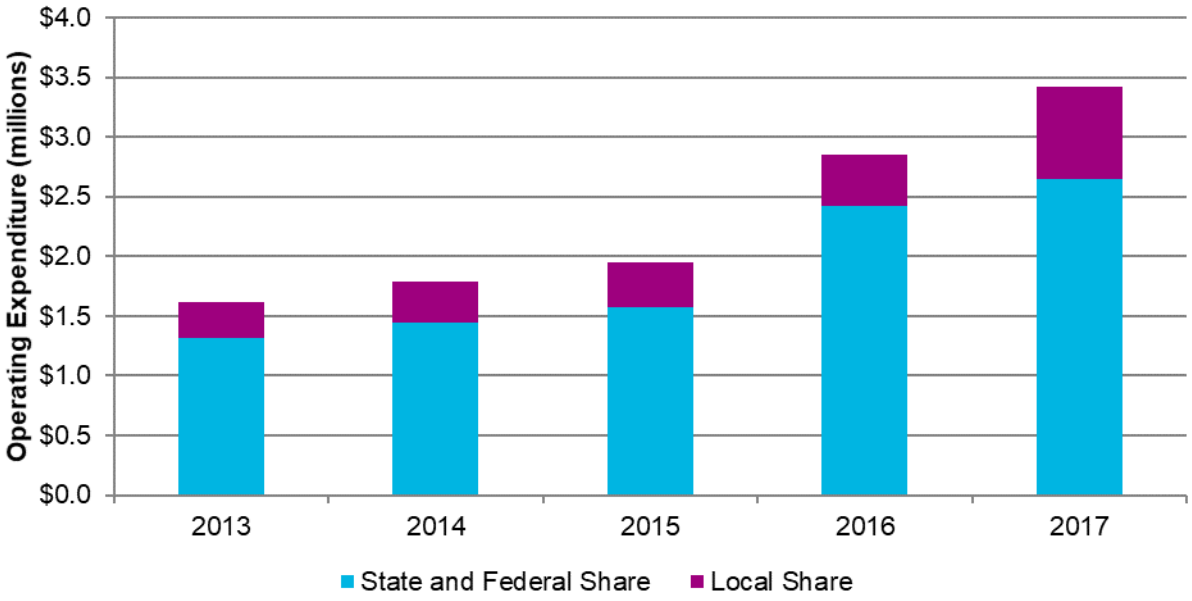
Year	Operating Expenditures	State and Federal Share	Local Share	Percentage of Local Share
2013	$1,612,924	$1,317,500	$295,424	18.32%
2014	$1,791,276	$1,445,000	$346,276	19.33%
2015	$1,948,646	$1,573,351	$375,296	19.26%
2016	$2,846,971	$2,419,926	$427,046	15.00%
2017	$3,416,341	$2,652,001	$764,341	22.37%

Sources: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report, 2018 MnDOT Transit Report

Note: Values reflect Western Community Action Partnership and UCAP Community Transit only.

[8] http://www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/.

Figure 26. Community Transit Operating Expenditure Funding Sources (2013-2017)



Source: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report, 2018 MnDOT Transit Report

Note: Values reflect Western Community Action Partnership and UCAP Community Transit only.

In terms of funding, not every county provides a local match. MnDOT provides 85% of (approved operating budget) costs, with the 15% match coming from fares as per an agreement with the counties and the City of Marshall. For the first couple of years following the 2016 merger between UCAP and Lincoln County (2017 and 2018), Lincoln County agreed to pay $25,000 toward the local match. Lincoln County is the only county contributing in 2019 in the amount of $10,000. Murray County contributed $14,000 in 2017 and $20,000 in 2018.

Capital expenditures are detailed in Table 34, and the breakdown of funding sources is illustrated on Figure 27. The major capital purchases for Community Transit include buses, technology improvements, and facility improvements. In 2013, capital expenditures totaled $499,893, by far the highest amount used for capital purchases in recent years. In 2013, prior to the formation of UCAP, Community Transit invested in surveillance systems to be installed on all buses and remodeled the dispatch and bus center in Marshall. In 2014, Pipestone County Transit worked with Nobles, Rock, and Murray Counties to implement RouteMatch software. Additionally, between 2013 and 2016, each of the agencies that merged to form UCAP's Community Transit invested in buses.

State and federal sources provide 80% of capital costs and the 20% local match comes from all the counties approved for replacement vehicles. The capital match for Redwood County replacement vehicles is split between Redwood County and the City of Redwood Falls. The capital match for Jackson County replacement vehicles is split between Jackson County and the City of Jackson.

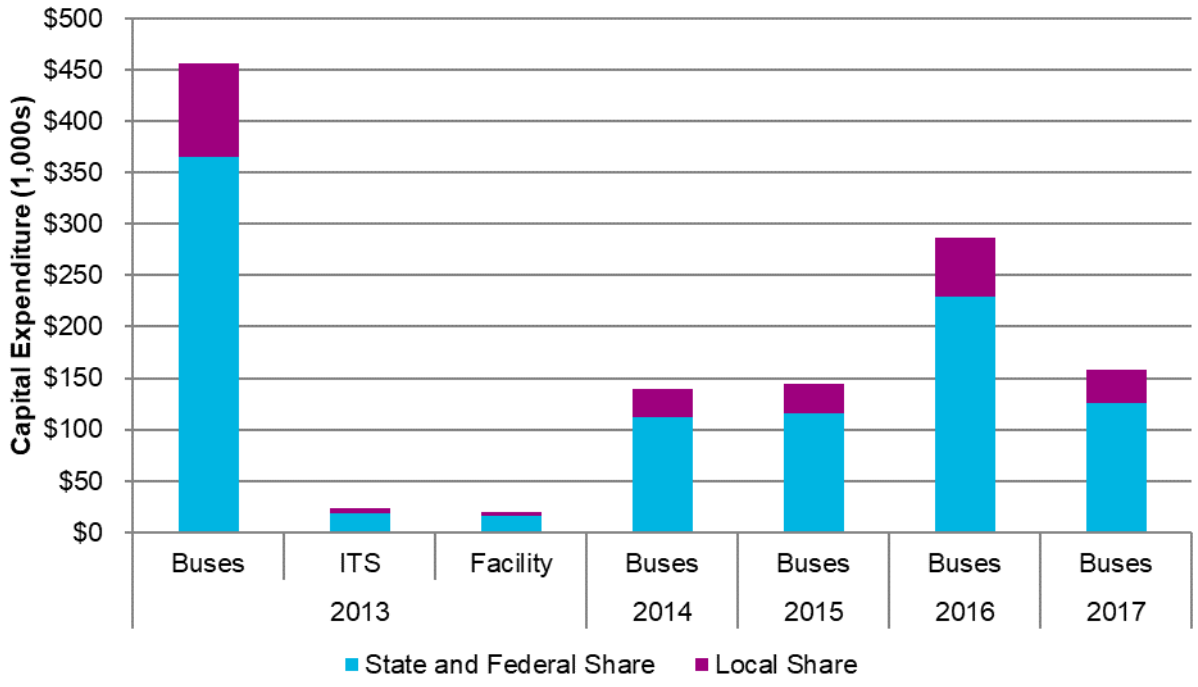
Table 34. Community Transit Capital Expenditures (2013-2017)

Year	Asset Category	Total Expenditures	State and Federal Share	Local Share
2013	Buses	$456,200	$364,960	$91,240
2013	ITS	$23,668	$18,934	$4,734
2013	Facility Improvements	$20,025	$16,020	$4,005
2014	Buses	$140,092	$112,000	$28,092
2015	Vehicle	$144,000	$115,200	$28,800
2016	Buses	$286,551	$229,240	$57,311
2017	Buses	$158,526	$126,400	$32,126

Sources: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report, 2018 MnDOT Transit Report

Note: Values reflect Western Community Action Partnership and UCAP Community Transit only.

Figure 27. Community Transit Capital Expenditure Funding Sources (2013-2017)

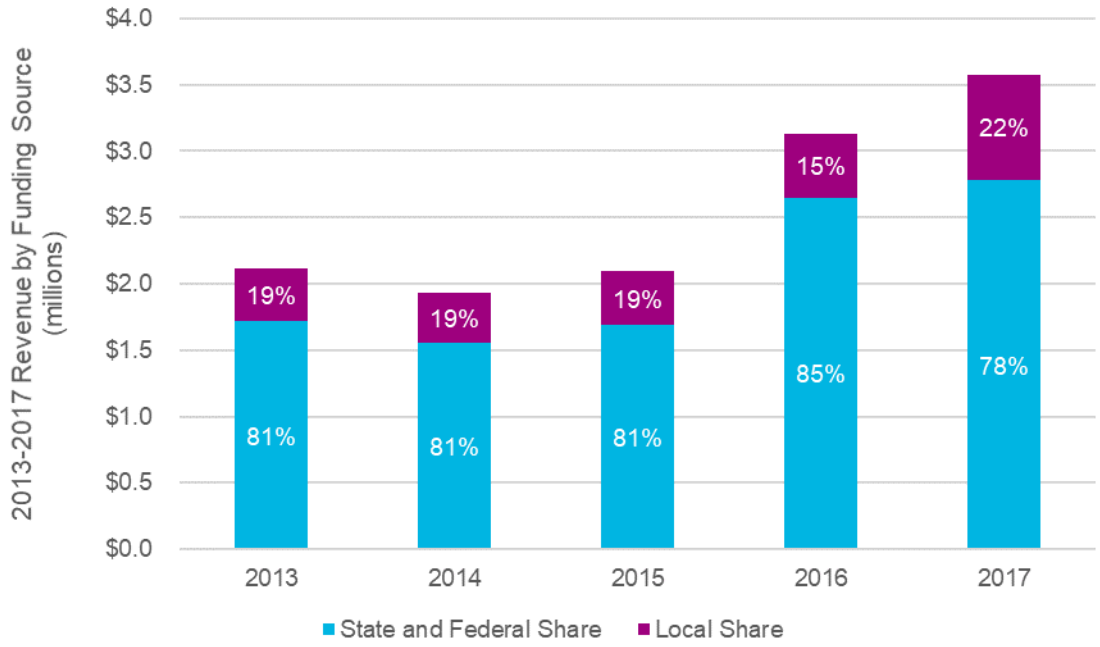


Source: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report, 2018 MnDOT Transit Report

Note: Values reflect Western Community Action Partnership and UCAP Community Transit only.

Figure 28 illustrates annual changes to the total available capital and operating revenue by revenue source. As shown, total capital and operating funding has increased considerably in recent years, due in large part to the agency's recent mergers. The most dramatic increase occurred between 2015 and 2016, with the local share growing by 20% and state and federal share growing by 57%.

Figure 28. Change in Total Available Capital and Operating Revenue by Source (2013-2017)



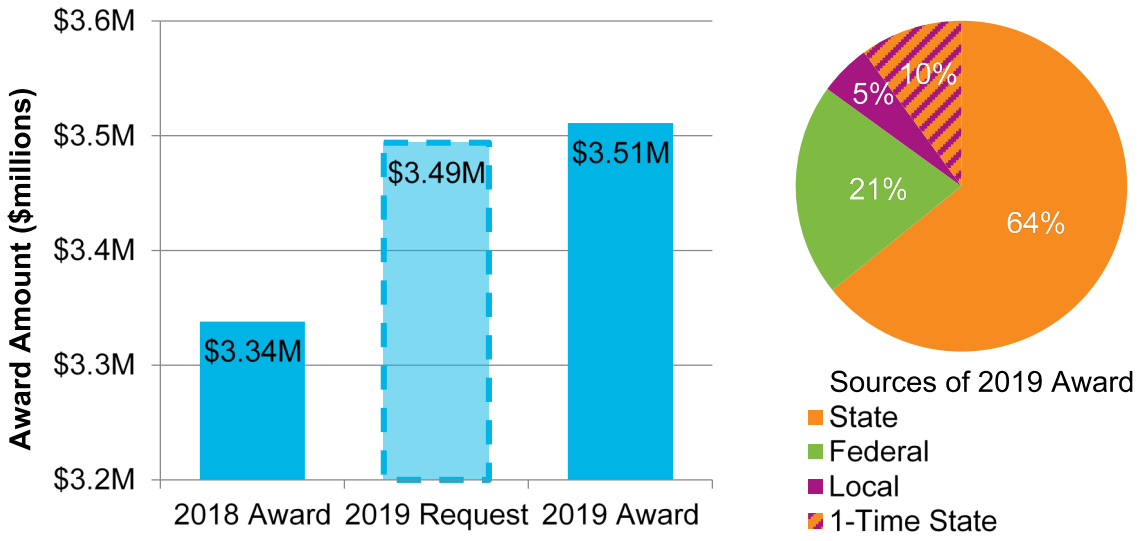
Sources: 2014 MnDOT Transit Report, 2015 MnDOT Transit Report, 2016 MnDOT Transit Report, 2017 MnDOT Transit Report, 2018 MnDOT Transit Report

Note: Values reflect Western Community Action Partnership and UCAP Community Transit only.

9.3 Budgeted Revenue

Community Transit has historically relied upon grants from federal, state, and local sources to operate. Figure 29 illustrates requested and granted funds from 2018 to 2019. The 2019 grant award is significantly more (by $17,000) than the amount requested by Community Transit and represents a 5% increase from the 2018 award. Additionally, MnDOT has approved a one-time across-the-board 10% reduction in the local share required for Greater Minnesota Transit providers' 2019 Public Transit Operating Grant. This means that the local share for Community Transit has been reduced from 15% to 5% for 2019 only.

Figure 29. Grant Requests and Awards (2018-2019)

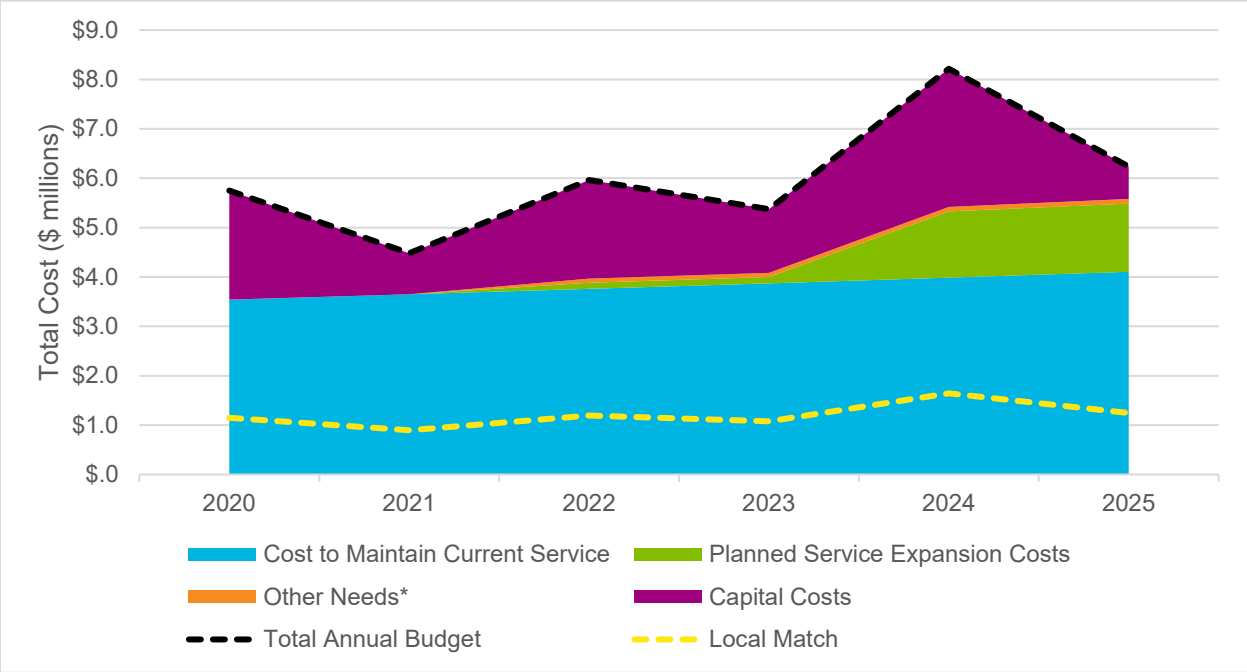


Source: MnDOT 2019 Transit Grant Requests and Awards Compared to 2018 Grant Awards

9.4 2020-2025 Needs vs. Projected Revenue

Capital and operating plans for 2020 through 2025 are included in Appendix A. The combined capital and operating expenses are summarized on Figure 30. As shown, costs to maintain current service, planned service expansion costs, and other needs are expected to increase steadily each year, with the implementation of additional administrative staff positions in 2020 and 2022. Increased demand response service will be implemented in 2020, new deviated fixed route service in Pipestone will be implemented in 2022, and Marshall Silver Line, Blue Line Weekend, and Fulda-Worthington service expansion will be implemented in 2024. Vehicle expansion and facility improvements in 2020 and 2024 increase capital costs relative to other years. Local match (20%) would increase from approximately $1,150,000 in 2020 to $1,643,000 in 2024 and decline to approximately $1,247,000 in 2025.

Figure 30. 2020-2025 Plan, Local Revenue Requirements



Source: Capital and Operating Templates for 2020-2025 (Appendix A)

**Other needs are non-capital and non-service costs, which include the annually recurring costs for an additional marketing/recruiting position and purchasing "specialist" position.*

10. Agency Strategic Direction

The five-year planning process for all the rural transit service providers (FTA Section 5311) in Greater Minnesota, the first of its kind, has identified and quantified the transit services being operated around the state, which vary greatly in size and scope, and identified potential areas for improvement, expansion, and regional coordination. The provision of transit service is subject to many federal and state guidelines, which may impact how improvements, expansion, and coordination recommendations are implemented. This section describes both overarching areas of potential improvement and opportunities identified across the state as well as those specific to Community Transit in addition to local, state, and federal requirements.

10.1 Requirements

The provision of transit service is subject to many local, state, and federal guidelines.

10.1.1 Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

FTA Section 5311 provides formula-based grants to support rural areas for transit capital, planning, and operating assistance[9]. Guidance on the grant, requirements, compliance, and application process is available online[10] and through MnDOT OTAT[11].

[9] https://www.transit.dot.gov/rural-formula-grants-5311.
[10] https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/fta-circulars/formula-grants-rural-areas-program-guidance-and-application.
[11] https://www.dot.state.mn.us/transit/.

FTA is a major funder of rural transit service in Greater Minnesota. MnDOT operates as the primary recipient of FTA Section 5311 funds. As such, all Greater Minnesota transit service providers (sub-recipients) receiving FTA Section 5311 funds, through MnDOT as the recipient, must comply with FTA regulations. FTA regulations pertain, but are not limited to, major topic areas, including training, safety, maintenance, service, and procurement. Any contracted service by transit agencies, including taxi services, must also comply with FTA requirements.

Community Transit is not aware of any issues related to FTA compliance.

FTA also requires compliance with the ADA, Olmstead Plan, and Title VI, described in more detail below.

10.1.2 Olmstead Plan

In 1999, the Supreme Court affirmed that mental illness is a type of disability, that individuals with disabilities, including those with mental illness, have a right to live in their communities as opposed to forcing institutionalization, and are covered by the ADA in *Olmstead vs. L.C and E.W.*[12] The State of Minnesota is one of the more progressive states in instituting a specific Olmstead Plan. Minnesota's Olmstead Plan was updated most recently in March 2018.[13]

For transit providers in Greater Minnesota, the Olmstead Plan requires that people with disabilities, including those with mental illness, are covered by the same requirements of the ADA (discussed in Section 10.1.4). It means that the level of transit service available to the general public (the span of service, frequency of service, and service area coverage) is also available to people with disabilities, including mental illness. It also means that social and human service agencies and public transit agencies should coordinate as much as possible to provide service to individuals with disabilities.

Community Transit's demand response and deviated route services are available to all persons with disabilities, including mental illness, at no additional fee. Continued and enhanced coordination with local human services agencies is a recommended component of the marketing and public education action plan discussed in Section 11.2.

10.1.3 Title VI

FTA requires recipients and sub-recipients to comply with U.S. Department of Transportation Title VI regulations, based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI requirements for transit services are generally related to supplying language access to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP)[14]. In Greater Minnesota, MnDOT is the primary recipient of FTA funds, so all the Section 5311 transit service providers are sub-recipients. Thus, MnDOT has the primary responsibility for Title VI compliance. MnDOT may request information related to Title VI compliance, including language assistance plans or activities, public participation plans or activities including language access, etc., from the transit service providers as needed.

In Greater Minnesota, with primarily deviated fixed route and demand response service, Title VI responsibilities pertain to identifying communities with LEP and providing materials and outreach in appropriate languages.

Community Transit has not noted a demand for materials in other languages. Based on 2017 ACS data, about 2.5% of the population in the service area reports LEP, compared to approximately 5% statewide. The majority of the LEP population in the service area is fluent in

[12] https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/527/581/.
[13] https://www.dhs.state.mn.us/olmstead/.
[14] https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/FTA_Title_VI_FINAL.pdf.

Spanish or Asian and/or Pacific Island language groups, but some of the LEP population in the service area speaks other languages as well. Developing targeted outreach and marketing materials for these language groups is included in the marketing and public education action plan discussed in Section 11.2.

10.1.4 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA is designed to prohibit discrimination based on disability. In terms of FTA and the provision of transit service, the ADA is structured to ensure equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities.[15] ADA requirements apply to facilities, vehicles, equipment, bus stops, level of service, fares, and provision of service.

In Greater Minnesota, with most service provided via deviated fixed route or demand response, most service-related requirements (i.e., complementary paratransit service associated with fixed route service) are inherently met by mode. Any contracted service by transit agencies, including taxi services, must also comply with FTA and ADA requirements.

MnDOT defines the types of vehicles that are available for service provision in Greater Minnesota. All the vehicles on the list are ADA compliant. Any new facilities or bus stops must be constructed to be ADA compliant. All transit service providers must complete required training.

Service provision-related equivalencies include the following for demand response service:

- The response time, fares, geographic area of service, hours and days of service, trip purpose restrictions, and availability of information and reservations capability must be the same for all riders, including those with disabilities.
- With regard to capacity denials (denials within the existing service parameters in the above bullet), denials are allowed for demand response service, as long as the frequency of denials is the same as the frequency for riders without disabilities.
- Any priority given to persons with disabilities or higher levels of service is a local decision.
- Requirements for demand response service are different than those required for ADA complementary paratransit associated with fixed route service.

Service provision-related practices include the following for deviated fixed route service:

- Advertise route deviation policies, including distance and availability.
- Establish a reasonable service area in which deviations are permitted (e.g., ¾ mile).
- Establish reasonable limits on numbers of deviations per trip to ensure that the fixed route portion of the service can operate on time.
- Apply reasonable surcharges for deviations (e.g., deviation surcharges no more than twice the base fare).

All Community Transit's vehicles are ADA compliant. Any future investments in capital items such as bus shelters, additional vehicles, and new or remodeled facilities, will be inclusive of ADA requirements.

15 https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/Final_FTA_ADA_Circular_C_4710.1.pdf.

10.1.5 Agency

MnDOT is responsible for making sure each provider (sub-recipient) complies with FTA Section 5311 requirements. MnDOT also has additional requirements for the transit service providers, including:

- Service data for National Transit Database (NTD)
  - Monthly and annually
  - By mode
- Grant management
- Fleet inventory
- Denials
  - Capacity
  - Unmet Need
- On-time performance (pickup window)
- Percentage of communities with baseline span of service
- Performance metrics
  - Passengers per hour
  - Cost per service hour
  - Cost per trip
  - Passenger Type
  - Trip Type
  - Percentage of standing orders
  - Service hours per capita

  Farebox recovery
  - Passenger complaints
  - Road calls per 10,000 miles
  - Accidents per 100,000 miles

MnDOT reports annual NTD statistics and created and maintains the *Transit Asset Management Plan* for all FTA Section 5311 transit service providers.

10.2 Opportunities

In discussing opportunities with transit service providers throughout Greater Minnesota, several overarching opportunities were identified. They are discussed in Section 10.2.1. Opportunities specific to Community Transit are discussed in Section 10.2.2.

10.2.1 Southwest Region

The Southwest Region encompasses 22 counties in southwestern Minnesota, between the Twin Cities Metropolitan area, the border with Iowa to the south, and with South Dakota to the west (Figure 31). Across the Southwest Region, several themes emerged related to the following opportunities:

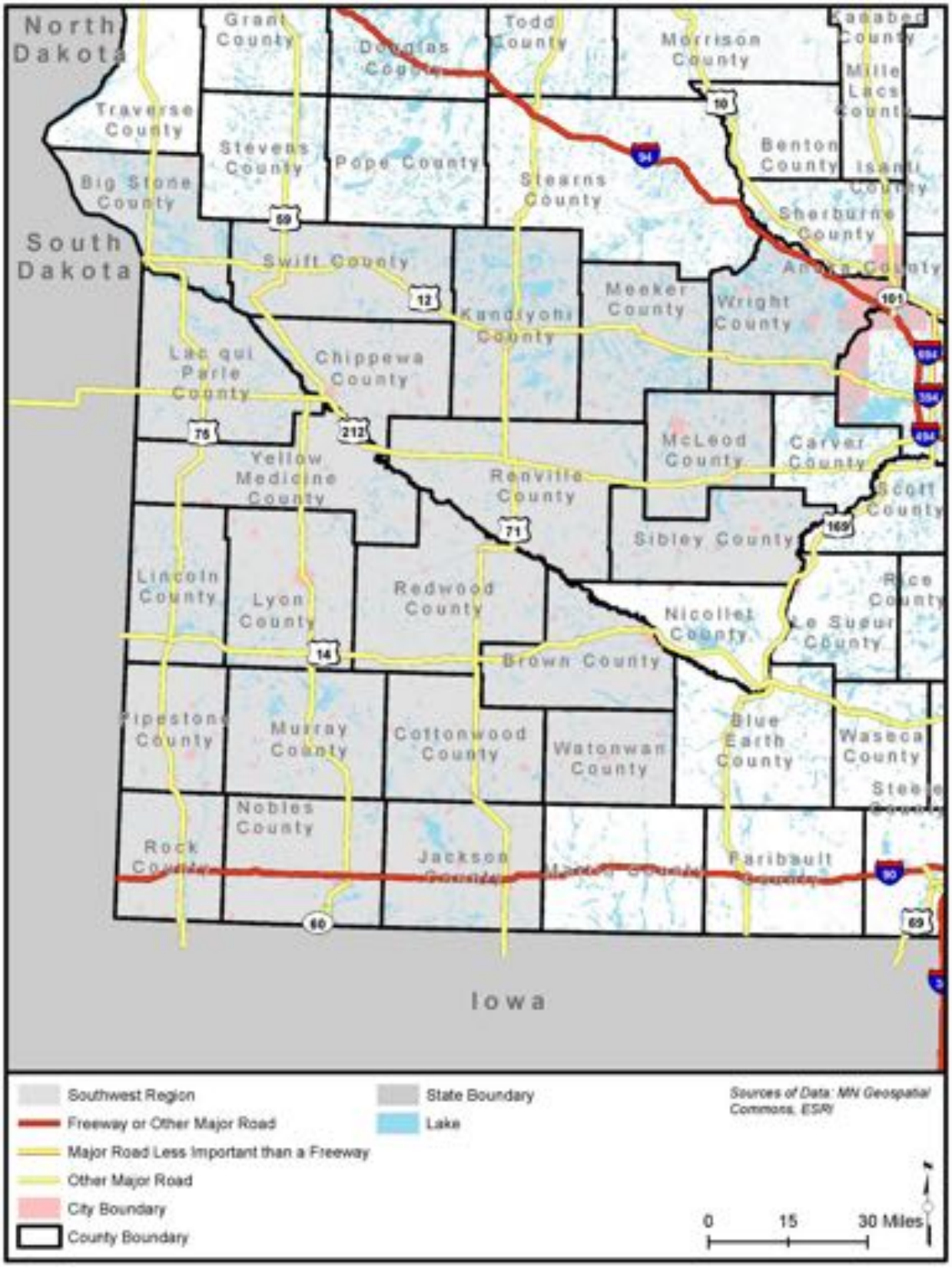
- Regional coordination
- Marketing
- Mobility management
- Data standardization and tracking
- Transit manager handbook
- Succession planning
- Technology
- Online trip planner/Apps/GTFS
- Bulk procurement

Regional connections for employment, medical appointments, socialization, and other trip purposes have been identified by many transit service providers as both a need and a challenge to operate. Many of the longer distance trips are not being completed by public transit but rather by volunteer drivers. Some providers do provide regional services into metropolitan areas or into neighboring counties. As the volunteer driver pools decrease over time, identifying a public transit solution to regional connectivity will be vital. One effort to fill regional transportation gaps is already underway. The Minnesota Departments of Transportation and Human Services, in collaboration with other state agencies, are working with the Metropolitan Council, and other local governments and organizations, to create regional transportation coordinating councils as appropriate throughout Minnesota. Coordination between transportation providers and service agencies has been a goal and strategy to fill transportation gaps, provide more service with the same or fewer resources, streamline access to transportation, and provide customers more options of where and when to travel.

Getting the word out about the services that are available and how to use the transit service are themes that emerged from every transit service provider in Greater Minnesota. Developing marketing plans and getting out into the community is very time-consuming. Many providers could use additional staff for marketing activities, either a full-time staff position, or a shared regional staff position. Another solution may be to hire individuals in a mobility management role or train schedulers to all serve a mobility management role. Mobility managers are well versed in all types of transportation services in a community and work with customers to identify the best program for that customer. Mobility managers also work with community organizations, human service agencies, major employers, and others to get the word out about transit services and how to use them, including providing travel training for potential riders in some cases. UCAP already has as Mobility Manager under their Transportation Program, as indicated in the organizational chart in Section 3.4.

Data collection, organization, and reporting varies greatly from transit service provider to transit service provider. This inconsistency comes from different modes, different operating models, different types and level of technology, among other reasons. MnDOT has the opportunity through this five-year transit system planning process to identify and incorporate data standards, definitions, and tracking procedures. These could be documented in a Transit Manager’s Handbook, something that would be helpful to guide transit managers in planning, operating, and reporting transit services. Staff turnover and the need for succession were mentioned by several transit agencies, both from the perspective of new staff and older staff nearing retirement age. A Transit Manager’s Handbook would be helpful in both cases.

Figure 31. Southwest Region



Technology also varies greatly from provider to provider; sometimes because of the size of the organization, sometimes because of technical support, sometimes because of staff size. New technology is becoming available and more affordable by the day. Transit service providers and MnDOT have many opportunities to increase the efficiency of service provision and improve customer service through investment in technology. Two primary opportunities came up with regard to technology with many providers:

- Increase awareness of the service and ability to understand how the service works by developing and publishing general transit feed specifications for flexible service (GTFS-Flex) for each transit service provider. This would enable anyone using Google Maps or Apple Maps or other mainstream online trip planners to see a transit service provider's service area or routes, hours of operation, and trip reservation procedure when they enter in an origin and a destination. It would automatically show whether transit service was available and how to use it.
- Save money, connect adjacent systems, and build regional connectivity and collaboration through bulk procurement of technology, especially scheduling/dispatching software.

10.2.2 Community Transit

Opportunities identified specific to Community Transit included:

- Increase regional connections by expanding routes across county borders
- New regional service to Sioux Falls, South Dakota
- Addition of/improvements to fixed route service
- Investment in new maintenance, storage, and training facilities
- Continued development of a unified image and branding
- Enhanced bus shelter amenities for deviated route service
- Improved coordination between the volunteer driver program and regional medical trips, including the medical centers
- Investment in improved dispatch software
- Development of targeted outreach strategies and marketing materials to reach more potential transit riders

10.3 Risks/Challenges

As with opportunities, risks and challenges were also identified. Risks and challenges are summarized in this section in terms of themes throughout Greater Minnesota (Section 10.3.1) and specific to Community Transit (Section 10.3.2).

10.3.1 Southwest Region

Potential risk and challenge themes identified across the Southwest Region (Figure 31) included:

- Funding
  - Longevity and dependability
  - Local match
  - Contracts

  - Performance-based
- Staffing
  - Drivers
  - Professional staff
- Fleet
  - Vehicles, number of wheelchair positions
  - Expansion
  - Replacement
  - Fleet classification/spare ratio
- Data collection/data tracking
- Performance tracking

Funding is a frequently cited concern in Greater Minnesota. Concerns are related to the longevity and dependability of state and federal funding; use of tax revenue for local match vs. fare and contract revenue; contracts, including multi-year contracts; and any future performance-based requirements for funding. Historically, some transit service providers have been conservative about instituting new services because of perceived performance pitfalls and longevity of funding. Moving forward focusing on improvement and expansion of service and the opportunities identified in the previous section, funding dependability, diversification, and documentation will be important.

Several providers mentioned difficulty in finding, hiring, and retaining drivers – both professional drivers and volunteer drivers. Training drivers and supporting drivers while working towards a commercial driver's license is also a challenge and can be costly. Additionally, finding qualified staff to fill roles associated with operations, management, dispatching/scheduling, marketing, technology, etc., can be challenging in rural areas. Generally, people with higher technical skills live and work in metropolitan areas, where there are generally more opportunities for high skilled labor than in rural areas. [16] The labor pool is much smaller in a rural area.

Other potential challenges focus on fleet. Some transit service providers operate in rural areas with high proportions of disabled riders. As such, some require vehicles with more than two wheelchair positions. Diversifying vehicles available for use in Greater Minnesota may be required to implement some of the solutions identified in the five-year transit system plans and to realize the opportunities described in the previous section. Other areas for concern regarding fleet include being able to expand the fleet based on unmet needs; replacing vehicles that have higher-than average maintenance costs even if they have not exceeded their useful life; policies for classifying fleet and using retired fleet in service or as spares; and maintaining an appropriate spare ratio. Several transit service providers reported service reductions due to an ineffective spare ratio or the inability to expand the fleet.

Finally, potential challenges exist with regard to data collection, data tracking, and performance tracking. As mentioned in the previous section, an opportunity exists to standardize data collection, reporting, and tracking. This is an ambitious goal due to the variety of scheduling software that is being used, the lack of any software in some cases, and the variety of operating

[16] "Workforce Skills across the Urban-Rural Hierarchy." Federal Reserve Bank of New York Staff Report. February 2012. https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/staff_reports/sr552.pdf.

models that exist. To realize some of the opportunities, some level of standardization would be required.

10.3.2 Community Transit

Potential risks and challenges identified by Community Transit included:

- Local match
- Staffing
- Projected shortage of volunteer drivers
- Policies
- Performance
- Data Tracking

11. Increasing Transit Use for Agency

The goal set forth by state legislature is to understand what level of funding it would take to meet 90% of the transportation needs in Greater Minnesota by 2025. Therefore, the primary assumption in the development of the five-year transit system plans is that transit agencies need to expand and grow ridership. Strategies to improve transit services and increase ridership were described in detail in previous chapters. Another crucial element to increasing ridership and growing transit mode share in an area is a comprehensive marketing and education strategy. Ridership will not increase if the community does not know that the service exists or how to use it.

Section 11.1 describes the elements of a comprehensive marketing and education program that could help Community Transit grow ridership and community awareness. Section 11.2 describes an action plan for growing ridership and community awareness.

11.1 Marketing

Complementing the recommendations previously described in this five-year transit system plan, continuous marketing and education on the transit services available and how they work are crucial to the success of the transit program and to entwining the service into the fabric of the community. Some goals for marketing and education could include:

- Increase awareness, understanding, and utilization of the transit service by residents, employees, and visitors
- Promote transit service as both a fiscally responsible and green choice
- Position Community Transit as *the* bus service in the region

Possible strategies to achieve these goals include:

- Update website
  - Embed an online trip planner or link to an online trip planner
  - Add a ‘Where’s my Bus’ option to the website
- Develop a social media presence
  - Post/update regularly
  - Advertise changes

  - Profile riders
  - Introduce new programs
  - Announce weather delays or cancellations
  - Promote the benefits of transit service
- Consider smartphone apps
  - Develop general transit feed specification (GTFS) so that provider services show up as an option in common mapping apps (e.g., Google Maps, Apple Maps) and/or online trip planners. GTFS-Flex is the appropriate specification for deviated fixed route or demand response service
  - Add a 'Where's my Bus' option to the website or a separate app so that customers can track their rides
  - Allow customers to request trips/negotiate trips with schedulers
- Increase exposure to the Southwest Mobility Management Initiative (see organizational chart in Section 3.4)
- Mobility managers should strive to:
  - Educate on all services/programs available in the service area and beyond
  - Train to negotiate and make connections until the customer has a viable option to meet their request/need
  - Develop a unified image and brand for the Community Transit service
  - Increase outreach efforts to reach potential transit users
- Need to reach those that may not use transit today, but will rely on it in future
- Need to reach senior citizens that are not aware of Community Transit's services at all

11.2 Action Plan

A marketing and education strategy for Community Transit should be based on input from existing riders and the larger community. Based on discussions with Community Transit, stakeholder outreach, and survey results, the following ideas were identified:

- Present workshops at senior centers, human service providers, and youth groups to educate on how the service works
- Develop plan to address projected shortage of volunteer drivers
- Enhanced coordination with local human service agencies on marketing campaigns
- Enhanced coordination between volunteer driver programs, regional medical trips, and the medical centers themselves
- Target outreach efforts and marketing materials for Spanish and Asian-Pacific Island language groups
- Carry out "Phase 2" (i.e., completion) of rebranding efforts
- Continue advertising services on the radio

Other possible strategies include:

- Put together a marketing campaign that ‘speaks’ to potential customers – identify local advocates who have positive stories to share about their use of Community Transit bus service. Some examples may include:
  - Provide an example of a rider who used to spend X on commuting costs, but riding the bus to commute only costs Y, a savings of % percent annually
  - Work with local senior groups to identify benefits to seniors in longevity and quality of life when mobility options are available that allow them to get out of their homes and attend events, run errands, and make it to medical appointments
- Include a ‘Benefits of Transit Service’ section on the website and brochures
  - Use national research statistics on the benefits of transit service
  - Identify different themes to capture the attention of different audiences and strategically utilize the themes in materials publicized with community partners and on Community Transit materials
  - For mainstream materials, periodically focus on different themes to capture different audiences and re-engage others
  - Benefit themes may include: economic development, aging in place, reduction in air pollution, technology, community building, access to education and employment opportunities, quality of life for seniors and disabled persons, reduction in dependence on personal vehicles, mobility options for people living in rural areas, attraction of international tourists who will only visit destinations that do not require the use of personal vehicles, etc.

Based on the marketing and education priorities identified for Community Transit, the following are steps towards implementing a new or improved marketing strategy:

- Hire a media specialist
- Present workshops at senior centers, human service providers, youth groups to educate on how the service works
- Carry out Phase 2 (i.e., completion) of rebranding efforts
- Develop coordination plan for volunteer driver program, regional trips, and medical centers

Appendix A Capital and Operating Plans for 2020-2025

Five Year Capital Plan

	UCAP														
Line Number	Line Item Name	2019 Budget	Inflation Factor (3% / year)	2020	2020 (local match)	2021	2021 (local match)	2022	2022 (local match)	2023	2023 (local match)	2024	2024 (local match)	2025	2025 (local match)
1711	Vehicle Cost	$ -		$ 528,000	$ 105,600	$ 728,000	$ 145,600	$ 846,000	$ 169,200	$ 485,000	$ 97,000	$ 800,000	$ 160,000	$ 618,000	$ 123,600
1712	Farebox(es)	$ -		$ 309,000	$ 61,800		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1713	AVL/MDT	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1714	Camera(s)	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1715	Logos	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1716	Radio (Communication Equipment)	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1717	Other Bus Related Equipment	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1720	Lift, Ramp Expenses, etc.	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1730	Radio Equipment Expenses	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1740	Fare Box Expenses	$ -			$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
1750	Other Capital Expenses	$ -		$ 103,000	$ 20,600	$ 106,090	$ 21,218		$ -		$ -	$ 173,891	$ 34,778	$ 35,822	$ 7,164
1760	Facility Purchase and/or Construction Cost	$ -		$ 1,270,505	$ 254,101		$ -	$ 1,147,363	$ 229,473	$ 800,800	$ 160,160	$ 1,825,857	$ 365,171		$ -
	Total Capital Budget	**$ -**		**$ 2,210,505**	**$ 442,101**	**$ 834,090**	**$ 166,818**	**$ 1,993,363**	**$ 398,673**	**$ 1,285,800**	**$ 257,160**	**$ 2,799,748**	**$ 559,950**	**$ 653,822**	**$ 130,764**
Capital	Total 1711 - 1740 (only)	$ -	$ -	$ 837,000	$ 167,400	$ 728,000	$ 145,600	$ 846,000	$ 169,200	$ 485,000	$ 97,000	$ 800,000	$ 160,000	$ 618,000	$ 123,600

Operations PLANNING - UCAP summary table

		2018	2020	2020	2021	2021	2022	2022	2023	2023	2024	2024	2025	2025
			total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share
		$	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%
Status Quo (Maintain)		$ 3,338,000.00	$ 3,541,284.20	$ 708,256.84	$ 3,647,522.73	$ 729,504.55	$ 3,756,948.41	$ 751,389.68	$ 3,869,656.86	$ 773,931.37	$ 3,985,746.57	$ 797,149.31	$ 4,105,318.96	$ 821,063.79

	Implementation Y	2018	2020	2020	2021	2021	2022	2022	2023	2023	2024	2024	2025	2025
			total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share	total cost	local share
		$	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%	plus 3%	20%
Expand/Grow				$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -		$ -
Marketing / Recruiting Position	2022	$ 38,000.00	$ 39,140.00	$ 7,828.00	$ 40,314.20	$ 8,062.84	$ 41,523.63	$ 8,304.73	$ 42,769.33	$ 8,553.87	$ 44,052.41	$ 8,810.48	$ 45,373.99	$ 9,074.80
Pipestone Deviated Fixed Route Service	2022	$ 114,400.00	$ 117,832.00	$ 23,566.40	$ 121,366.96	$ 24,273.39	$ 125,007.97	$ 25,001.59	$ 128,758.21	$ 25,751.64	$ 132,620.95	$ 26,524.19	$ 136,599.58	$ 27,319.92
Purchasing "Specialist" Position	2022	$ 40,000.00	$ 41,200.00	$ 8,240.00	$ 42,436.00	$ 8,487.20	$ 43,709.08	$ 8,741.82	$ 45,020.35	$ 9,004.07	$ 46,370.96	$ 9,274.19	$ 47,762.09	$ 9,552.42
Increased Demand Response Service	2024	$ 667,500.00	$ 687,525.00	$ 137,505.00	$ 708,150.75	$ 141,630.15	$ 729,395.27	$ 145,879.05	$ 751,277.13	$ 150,255.43	$ 773,815.44	$ 154,763.09	$ 797,029.91	$ 159,405.98
Marshall Silver Line	2024	$ 202,800.00	$ 208,884.00	$ 41,776.80	$ 215,150.52	$ 43,030.10	$ 221,605.04	$ 44,321.01	$ 228,253.19	$ 45,650.64	$ 235,100.78	$ 47,020.16	$ 242,153.81	$ 48,430.76
Red/Blue Line Simplication	2024	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Fulda-Worthington Service Expasnion	2024	$ 124,800.00	$ 128,544.00	$ 25,708.80	$ 132,400.32	$ 26,480.06	$ 136,372.33	$ 27,274.47	$ 140,463.50	$ 28,092.70	$ 144,677.40	$ 28,935.48	$ 149,017.73	$ 29,803.55
Blue Line Weekend Service	2024	$ 46,800.00	$ 48,204.00	$ 9,640.80	$ 49,650.12	$ 9,930.02	$ 51,139.62	$ 10,227.92	$ 52,673.81	$ 10,534.76	$ 54,254.03	$ 10,850.81	$ 55,881.65	$ 11,176.33
			$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
			$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
			$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
			$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
			$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
			$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
			$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Expansion/Growth Cost		**$ 1,234,300.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 210,240.67**	**$ 42,048.13**	**$ 216,547.90**	**$ 43,309.58**	**$ 1,430,891.99**	**$ 286,178.40**	**$ 1,473,818.75**	**$ 294,763.75**
NEW TOTAL BUDGET	-	-	**$ 3,541,284.20**	**$ 708,256.84**	**$ 3,647,522.73**	**$ 729,504.55**	**$ 3,967,189.08**	**$ 793,437.82**	**$ 4,086,204.76**	**$ 817,240.95**	**$ 5,416,638.56**	**$ 1,083,327.71**	**$ 5,579,137.71**	**$ 1,115,827.54**

Five Year Transit Sytem Plan -- Operating Budget																			
Provider	UCAP																		
Line Item	Operating Expenses	2018 Budget	2018 (local match)	2019 Projected	Cost Factor	Inflation Factor (3% / year)	2020	2020 (local match)	2021	2021 (local match)	2022	2022 (local match)	2023	2023 (local match)	2024	2024 (local match)	2025	2025 (local match)	
1010	Admin, Management & Supervisory Salaries	$385,500.00	$ 77,100.00	$ 397,065.00	Fixed	3%	$ 408,976.95	$ 81,795.39	$ 421,246.26	$ 84,249.25	$ 433,883.65	$ 86,776.73	$ 446,900.16	$ 89,380.03	$ 460,307.16	$ 92,061.43	$ 474,116.38	$ 94,823.28	
1020	Operator's Wages	$1,164,500.00	$ 232,900.00	$ 1,199,435.00	$ / Hour	3%	$ 1,235,418.05	$ 247,083.61	$ 1,272,480.59	$ 254,496.12	$ 1,310,655.01	$ 262,131.00	$ 1,349,974.66	$ 269,994.93	$ 1,390,473.90	$ 278,094.78	$ 1,432,188.12	$ 286,437.62	
1030	Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Wages	$0.00	$ -	$ -	$ / Mile	3%	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
1040	General Office Support Wages	$132,000.00	$ 26,400.00	$ 135,960.00	Fixed	3%	$ 140,038.80	$ 28,007.76	$ 144,239.96	$ 28,847.99	$ 148,567.16	$ 29,713.43	$ 153,024.18	$ 30,604.84	$ 157,614.90	$ 31,522.98	$ 162,343.35	$ 32,468.67	
1050	Operations Support Wages	$340,000.00	$ 68,000.00	$ 350,200.00	Fixed	3%	$ 360,706.00	$ 72,141.20	$ 371,527.18	$ 74,305.44	$ 382,673.00	$ 76,534.60	$ 394,153.19	$ 78,830.64	$ 405,977.78	$ 81,195.56	$ 418,157.11	$ 83,631.42	
1060	Fringe Benefits	$505,500.00	$ 101,100.00	$ 520,665.00	variable	3%	$ 536,284.95	$ 107,256.99	$ 552,373.50	$ 110,474.70	$ 568,944.70	$ 113,788.94	$ 586,013.04	$ 117,202.61	$ 603,593.44	$ 120,718.69	$ 621,701.24	$ 124,340.25	
Personnel Services	Total 1000 (1010 - 1060)	$ 2,527,500.00	$ 505,500.00	$ 2,603,325.00			$ 2,681,424.75	$ 536,284.95	$ 2,761,867.49	$ 552,373.50	$ 2,844,723.52	$ 568,944.70	$ 2,930,065.22	$ 586,013.04	$ 3,017,967.18	$ 603,593.44	$ 3,108,506.19	$ 621,701.24	
1110	Management Fees	$0.00	$ -	$ -	Variable	3%	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
1120	Drug and Alcohol Testing and Administration Fee Expenses	$2,000.00	$ 400.00	$ 2,060.00	Variable	3%	$ 2,121.80	$ 424.36	$ 2,185.45	$ 437.09	$ 2,251.02	$ 450.20	$ 2,318.55	$ 463.71	$ 2,388.10	$ 477.62	$ 2,459.75	$ 491.95	
1130	Advertising, Marketing and Promotional Charges	$5,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 5,150.00	Variable	3%	$ 5,304.50	$ 1,060.90	$ 5,463.64	$ 1,092.73	$ 5,627.54	$ 1,125.51	$ 5,796.37	$ 1,159.27	$ 5,970.26	$ 1,194.05	$ 6,149.37	$ 1,229.87	
1140	Legal, Auditing, and Other Professional Fees	$40,500.00	$ 8,100.00	$ 41,715.00	Variable	3%	$ 42,966.45	$ 8,593.29	$ 44,255.44	$ 8,851.09	$ 45,583.11	$ 9,116.62	$ 46,950.60	$ 9,390.12	$ 48,359.12	$ 9,671.82	$ 49,809.89	$ 9,961.98	
1150	Staff Development Costs	$16,000.00	$ 3,200.00	$ 16,480.00	Variable	3%	$ 16,974.40	$ 3,394.88	$ 17,483.63	$ 3,496.73	$ 18,008.14	$ 3,601.63	$ 18,548.39	$ 3,709.68	$ 19,104.84	$ 3,820.97	$ 19,677.98	$ 3,935.60	
1160	Office Supplies	$22,500.00	$ 4,500.00	$ 23,175.00	Variable	3%	$ 23,870.25	$ 4,774.05	$ 24,586.36	$ 4,917.27	$ 25,323.95	$ 5,064.79	$ 26,083.67	$ 5,216.73	$ 26,866.18	$ 5,373.24	$ 27,672.16	$ 5,534.43	
1170	Leases and Rentals - Administrative Facilities	$32,900.00	$ 6,580.00	$ 33,887.00	Variable	3%	$ 34,903.61	$ 6,980.72	$ 35,950.72	$ 7,190.14	$ 37,029.24	$ 7,405.85	$ 38,140.12	$ 7,628.02	$ 39,284.32	$ 7,856.86	$ 40,462.85	$ 8,092.57	
1180	Utilities	$50,500.00	$ 10,100.00	$ 52,015.00	Variable	3%	$ 53,575.45	$ 10,715.09	$ 55,182.71	$ 11,036.54	$ 56,838.19	$ 11,367.64	$ 58,543.34	$ 11,708.67	$ 60,299.64	$ 12,059.93	$ 62,108.63	$ 12,421.73	
1190	Other Direct Administrative Charges	$29,245.00	$ 5,849.00	$ 30,122.35	Variable	3%	$ 31,026.02	$ 6,205.20	$ 31,956.80	$ 6,391.36	$ 32,915.51	$ 6,583.10	$ 33,902.97	$ 6,780.59	$ 34,920.06	$ 6,984.01	$ 35,967.66	$ 7,193.53	
Administrative Charges	Total 1100 (1110 - 1190)	$ 198,645.00	$ 39,729.00	$ 204,604.35	Variable		$ 210,742.48	$ 42,148.50	$ 217,064.75	$ 43,412.95	$ 223,576.70	$ 44,715.34	$ 230,284.00	$ 46,056.80	$ 237,192.52	$ 47,438.50	$ 244,308.29	$ 48,861.66	
1210	Fuel	$265,440.00	$ 53,088.00	$ 273,403.20	$/mile	3%	$ 281,605.30	$ 56,321.06	$ 290,053.45	$ 58,010.69	$ 298,755.06	$ 59,751.01	$ 307,717.71	$ 61,543.54	$ 316,949.24	$ 63,389.85	$ 326,457.72	$ 65,291.54	
1220	Preventive Maintenance (PM) Labor, Parts and Material Expenses (Vehicles)	$60,000.00	$ 12,000.00	$ 61,800.00	$ / Mile	3%	$ 63,654.00	$ 12,730.80	$ 65,563.62	$ 13,112.72	$ 67,530.53	$ 13,506.11	$ 69,556.44	$ 13,911.29	$ 71,643.14	$ 14,328.63	$ 73,792.43	$ 14,758.49	
1230	Corrective Maintenance (CM) Labor, Parts and Materials Expense (Vehicles)	$40,000.00	$ 8,000.00	$ 41,200.00	$ / Mile	3%	$ 42,436.00	$ 8,487.20	$ 43,709.08	$ 8,741.82	$ 45,020.35	$ 9,004.07	$ 46,370.96	$ 9,274.19	$ 47,762.09	$ 9,552.42	$ 49,194.95	$ 9,838.99	
1240	Tires	$10,500.00	$ 2,100.00	$ 10,815.00	$ / Mile	3%	$ 11,139.45	$ 2,227.89	$ 11,473.63	$ 2,294.73	$ 11,817.84	$ 2,363.57	$ 12,172.38	$ 2,434.48	$ 12,537.55	$ 2,507.51	$ 12,913.68	$ 2,582.74	
1250	Other Vehicle Charges	$20,500.00	$ 4,100.00	$ 21,115.00	$ / Mile	3%	$ 21,748.45	$ 4,349.69	$ 22,400.90	$ 4,480.18	$ 23,072.93	$ 4,614.59	$ 23,765.12	$ 4,753.02	$ 24,478.07	$ 4,895.61	$ 25,212.41	$ 5,042.48	
Vehicle Charges	Total 1200 (1210 - 1250)	$ 396,440.00	$ 79,288.00	$ 408,333.20			$ 420,583.20	$ 84,116.64	$ 433,200.69	$ 86,640.14	$ 446,196.71	$ 89,239.34	$ 459,582.61	$ 91,916.52	$ 473,370.09	$ 94,674.02	$ 487,571.20	$ 97,514.24	
1310	Purchase of Service	$0.00	$ -	$ -	$ / Hour	3%	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
1330	Mileage Reimbursement for Public Transit Service	$135,000.00	$ 27,000.00	$ 139,050.00	Fixed	3%	$ 143,221.50	$ 28,644.30	$ 147,518.15	$ 29,503.63	$ 151,943.69	$ 30,388.74	$ 156,502.00	$ 31,300.40	$ 161,197.06	$ 32,239.41	$ 166,032.97	$ 33,206.59	
1340	Repair and Maintenance of Other Property	$14,500.00	$ 2,900.00	$ 14,935.00	Variable	3%	$ 15,383.05	$ 3,076.61	$ 15,844.54	$ 3,168.91	$ 16,319.88	$ 3,263.98	$ 16,809.47	$ 3,361.89	$ 17,313.76	$ 3,462.75	$ 17,833.17	$ 3,566.63	
1350	Leases and Rentals of Facilities or Equipment	$37,000.00	$ 7,400.00	$ 38,110.00	Variable	3%	$ 39,253.30	$ 7,850.66	$ 40,430.90	$ 8,086.18	$ 41,643.83	$ 8,328.77	$ 42,893.14	$ 8,578.63	$ 44,179.93	$ 8,835.99	$ 45,505.33	$ 9,101.07	
1360	Other Operations Charges	$5,415.00	$ 1,083.00	$ 5,577.45	$ / Hour	3%	$ 5,744.77	$ 1,148.95	$ 5,917.12	$ 1,183.42	$ 6,094.63	$ 1,218.93	$ 6,277.47	$ 1,255.49	$ 6,465.79	$ 1,293.16	$ 6,659.77	$ 1,331.95	
Operation Charges	Total 1300 (1310 - 1360)	$ 191,915.00	$ 38,383.00	$ 197,672.45		3%	$ 203,602.62	$ 40,720.52	$ 209,710.70	$ 41,942.14	$ 216,002.02	$ 43,200.40	$ 222,482.08	$ 44,496.42	$ 229,156.55	$ 45,831.31	$ 236,031.24	$ 47,206.25	
1410	Public Liability and Property Damage on Vehicles	$41,000.00	$ 8,200.00	$ 42,230.00	Fixed	3%	$ 43,496.90	$ 8,699.38	$ 44,801.81	$ 8,960.36	$ 46,145.86	$ 9,229.17	$ 47,530.24	$ 9,506.05	$ 48,956.14	$ 9,791.23	$ 50,424.83	$ 10,084.97	
1420	Public Liability and Property Damage - Other than on Vehicles	$5,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 5,150.00	Fixed	3%	$ 5,304.50	$ 1,060.90	$ 5,463.64	$ 1,092.73	$ 5,627.54	$ 1,125.51	$ 5,796.37	$ 1,159.27	$ 5,970.26	$ 1,194.05	$ 6,149.37	$ 1,229.87	
Operation Charges	Total 1400 (1410 - 1420)	$ 46,000.00	$ 9,200.00	$ 47,380.00			$ 48,801.40	$ 9,760.28	$ 50,265.44	$ 10,053.09	$ 51,773.41	$ 10,354.68	$ 53,326.61	$ 10,665.32	$ 54,926.41	$ 10,985.28	$ 56,574.20	$ 11,314.84	
1510	Vehicle Registration and Permit Fees	$2,500.00	$ 500.00	$ 2,575.00	Fixed	3%	$ 2,652.25	$ 530.45	$ 2,731.82	$ 546.36	$ 2,813.77	$ 562.75	$ 2,898.19	$ 579.64	$ 2,985.13	$ 597.03	$ 3,074.68	$ 614.94	
1520	Federal Fuel and Lubricant Taxes and Excise Taxes on Tires	$0.00	$ -	$ -	Fixed	3%	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
1540	Other Taxes and Fees	$0.00	$ -	$ -	Fixed	3%	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Taxes and Fees	Total 1500 (1510 - 1540)	$ 2,500.00	$ 500.00	$ 2,575.00			$ 2,652.25	$ 530.45	$ 2,731.82	$ 546.36	$ 2,813.77	$ 562.75	$ 2,898.19	$ 579.64	$ 2,985.13	$ 597.03	$ 3,074.68	$ 614.94	
1594	Fuel Tax Refunds	($25,000.00)	$ (5,000.00)	$ (25,750.00)	Fixed	3%	$ (26,522.50)	$ (5,304.50)	$ (27,318.18)	$ (5,463.64)	$ (28,137.72)	$ (5,627.54)	$ (28,981.85)	$ (5,796.37)	$ (29,851.31)	$ (5,970.26)	$ (30,746.85)	$ (6,149.37)	
1596	Insurance Reimbursement		$ -	$ -	Fixed	3%	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET	$ 3,338,000.00	$ 667,600.00	$ 3,438,140.00			$ 3,541,284.20	$ 708,256.84	$ 3,647,522.73	$ 729,504.55	$ 3,756,948.41	$ 751,389.68	$ 3,869,656.86	$ 773,931.37	$ 3,985,746.57	$ 797,149.31	$ 4,105,318.96	$ 821,063.79	

Appendix B Community Survey Results

Survey questions were prepared in consultation with Community Transit. The online survey opened on June 3, 2019 and was available through June 21, 2019. The survey was open to all individuals who live, work, or visit the Community Transit service area regardless of current bus usage. Individuals where asked about their knowledge of and usage of the system and, based on the response, were directed to the appropriate set of questions. All were then asked to provide any additional comments. Responses were received from 136 individuals.

1. Have you heard about Community Transit?

Question was asked of all survey takers; there were 136 respondents.

- Yes – 132 (97%)
- No – 4 (3%)

2. How did you hear about Community Transit?

Question was asked of only those who responded *yes* in question 1; there were 127 respondents and multiple responses were allowed.

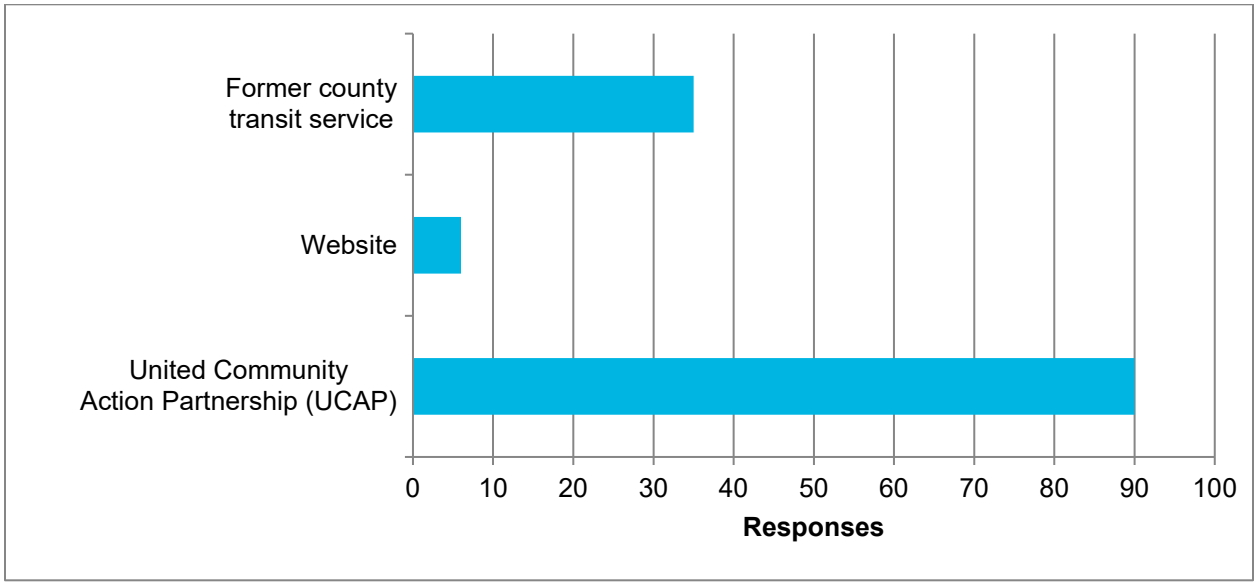


Figure 32. How Individuals Heard About Community Transit

3. Do you use Community Transit?

Question was asked of only those who responded *yes* in question; there were 127 respondents.

- Yes – 51 (40%)
- No – 76 (60%)

4. What area of transit service do you live closest to?

Question was asked of only those who responded *yes* in question 1; there were 122 respondents.

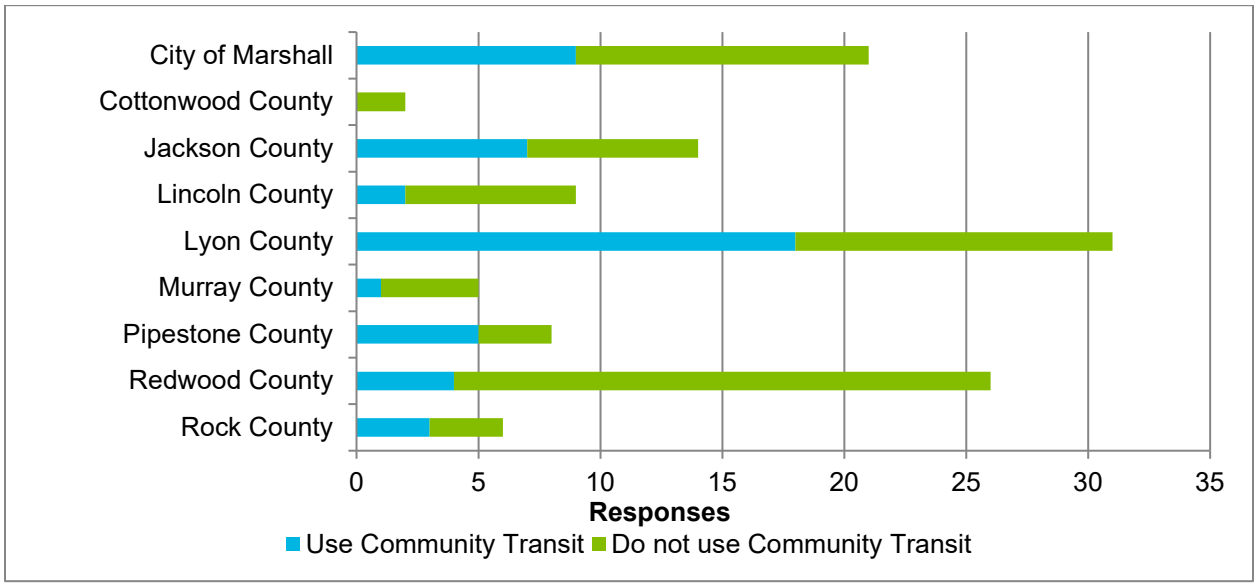


Figure 33. Where Respondents are From Based on Usage

5. Would you use a Smartphone app to schedule rides if one were available?

Question was asked of only those who responded *yes* in question 1 and have used Community Transit; there were 51 respondents.

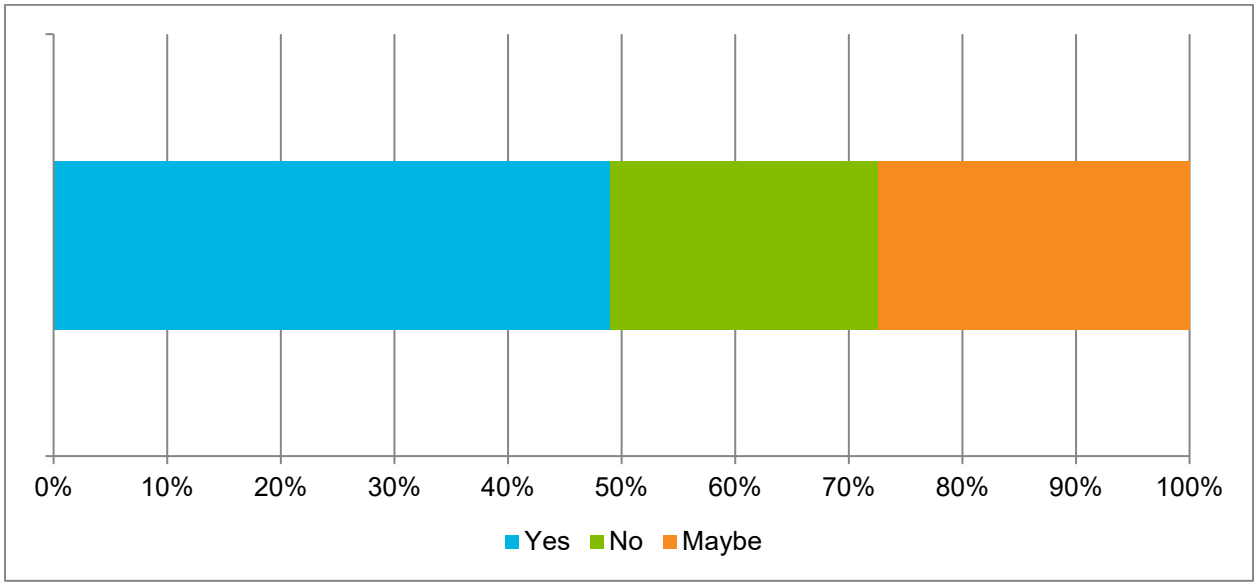


Figure 34. Smartphone App Usage to Schedule Rides

6. Do you think there is a need to expand Community Transits existing weekend services?

Question was asked of only those who responded *yes* in question 1 and have used Community Transit; there were 50 respondents.

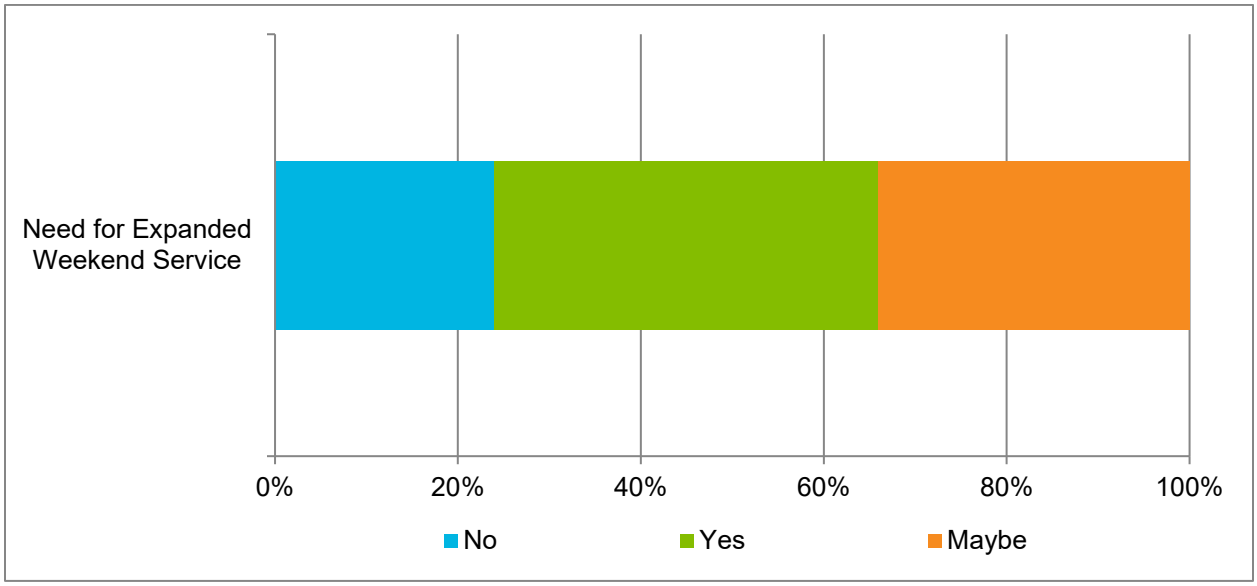


Figure 35. Potential Use of Smartphone app for Scheduling

7. Which of the following services better fit your travel needs?

Question was asked of only those who responded *yes* in question 1 and have used Community Transit; there were 51 respondents.

- Scheduled service along a route (fixed route service) – 10 (20%)
- Call ahead door-to-door (demand response or dial-a-ride) service – 41 (80%)

8. Do you have any suggestions for improved public transportation in Lincoln, Lyon, Redwood, Pipestone, Murray, Cottonwood, Jackson, and Rock Counties?

Question was asked of all survey takers, and was open-ended. There were 30 respondents; below are the comments verbatim:

- Perseverance: educating us Seniors takes a long time.
- Wonderful asset for the entire County, and area. Keep expanding the availability. People in the smaller towns really need this!
- More buses in Redwood County!!!!
- For services like this, for some of the questions it would help to have more nuanced choices, rather than simply A, B, or C.. In some cases, the answer is a both-and rather than an either-or. Otherwise, more hours available on weekends and weekdays/weekend evenings would be an improvement, as well as more availability options on Sunday morning. I know a couple people who have had consistent struggles with getting either to or from or both to and from church on Sunday morning. This past weekend, one of these people had called in

her ride during the week and was all set to board for church, when she was told that there was no ride home available for her, so she couldnt go.

- Equitable service available in all counties and cities.
- Jackson: Weekend service for church - Alternative shopping shuttle: WalMart
- Yes, longer hours during the day as there are late medical appointments, children stay late from school. Possible Saturday transit as we already have Sunday.
- You provide a very good, much needed and utilized service! Would be nice to expand into Nobles county for Dr. appointments.
- Extended hours after 5pm. More buses. Buses with more handicapped access. Geri Chairs, larger wheelchairs.
- Train all drivers to hook up a wheelchair EXACTLY the same way and review video footage to make sure this is done properly
- If services were available in the weekends at least til about mid afternoon that would help I believe for those that have errands later in the day, on the dial a ride. Would like my technology to be useful with transit as well, for example: apps that will let me know where the bus will be next, notifications if running late or early, apps that I can send to transit to let know I will be there (especially helpful on high call times) at a certain stop. Apps are running technology now a days and would be great to use cards on the bus when I dont have cash or pass/tokens. Maybe instead of guessing what stop the driver will be at next, they can start verbally announcing where they are going. This would help for elderly that have hard time hearing or seeing and dont ride bus as often.
- Need more and simplified communication focused on older adults in Lincoln Co. They do not seem to understand what options they have for transportation and the costs.
- Workforce transit would be great!
- More buses and drivers
- Longer hours of operation for people who work different shifts Another bus for Sunday mornings to get to church
- no but we do need it in Hutchinson, MN
- Maybe partial day service on saturdays to shop and do other activities I can only do on weekends.
- Hours on Green Route in Redwood County, specifically Redwood Falls, need to be increased to run from 7am to 7pm, at minimum. Not all "regular" transportation needs happen between the hours of 8-5.
- More bus availability for Lincoln and Redwood counties :)
- Add a route stop at the corner of Walnut St and Oak St in Redwood Falls to accommodate people living in the two apartment complexes there.
- More bus stop/shelter improvements in the City of Marshall along the regular routes.
- Another Sunday Bus for Church/ other reasons
- Secure more money for rural MN since Metro areas get the lions share of public dollars
- expand the service
- More buses/days for the Murray County to Worthington route. We have found that the current Tues & Thurs is sometimes filled up.

- Additional access to the western part of Lincoln County
- It would be nice if their could be more open times to get a ride instead of just scheduled times.
- Longer hours/days
- Your runtime hours do not run early/late enough.
- Please have route in Redwood Falls stop at Food Shelf and Human Services.

Appendix C Transit Need and Demand Analysis (TCRP 161)

Transportation need/ Mobility Gap in each County	the annual number of trips (1-way) needed because no access to a vehicle.
Cottonwood	154,400
Jackson	100,800
Lincoln	56,700
Lyon	355,300
Murray	112,100
Pipestone	167,000
Redwood	223,700
Rock	73,100
Total Need for service area	**1,243,100**

Demand for Public Transit (tab "3. Demand)	Demand only occurs in places where public transit service already exists.
Cottonwood	8,800
Jackson	6,900
Lincoln	4,400
Lyon	14,400
Murray	6,900
Pipestone	7,100
Redwood	11,800
Rock	6,600
Total Demand for public transit in service area	**66,900**
Total Demand for public transit in service area	**102,400**

Commuters from Rural Counties to Urban Centers (Sioux Falls, SD metro area)	Demand only occurs in places where public transit service already exists.
Cottonwood	0
Jackson	0
Lincoln	0
Lyon	0
Murray	0
Pipestone	2,000
Redwood	0
Rock	9,700
Total Demand for public transit in service area	**11,700**

Target Ridership = ½ mobility gap * 90%	MnDOT Ridership Target
2020 ridership target	368,998
2021 ridership target	405,898
2022 ridership target	446,488
2023 ridership target	491,136
2024 ridership target	540,250
2025 ridership target	559,395