

Coordinated Mobility Plan: Prosperity Region 6

Counties

Genesee

Huron

Lapeer

St. Clair

Sanilac

Shiawassee

Tuscola



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Prepared by
KFH Group, Inc.
Bethesda, Maryland

Acknowledgements

This plan is a component of a Veterans Transit Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) grant through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Michigan 2-1-1 and the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Office of Passenger Transportation led a statewide transportation study to identify regional gaps in mobility, particularly for people with limited transportation options such as veterans, older adults, individuals with disabilities and people with lower incomes. The result of the statewide study is ten coordinated mobility plans based geographically on Governor Snyder's Prosperity Initiative. This is the Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 6.

The statewide study built upon efforts by MDOT and Regional Planning Agencies and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to document what is known about regional transit mobility. These efforts were in response to the Governor's special message to the legislature on the topic of aging, titled "Making Michigan a Great Place to Live Well and Age Well".

Advisory Committee

The statewide transportation study was guided by the following advisory committee:

Tom Page, Michigan 2-1-1
Scott Dzurka, Michigan Association of United
Ways
Maricela Alcalá, Gryphon Place 2-1-1
Andy Brush, Michigan Dept of Transportation
Gale Capling, Clinton Area Transit System
Felicia Cross, City of Livonia
Corey Davis, Muskegon Area Transit System
Sarah Green, The Rapid
Hassan Hammoud, United Way for
Southeastern Michigan Authority
Vanessa Hansle, Ann Arbor Transportation

Clark Harder, Michigan Public Transit
Association
Donna McDowell, City of Livonia
MaLissa Schutt, Shiawassee Area
Transportation Agency
Valerie Shultz, Michigan Dept of
Transportation
Sheryl D. Thompson, Michigan Dept of Health
and Human Services
Linda Tokarski, Gryphon Place 2-1-1
Sherri Vainavicz, Heart of West Michigan
United Way

Regional Assistance

The Genesee-Lapeer-Shiawassee Region V Planning and Development Commission (GLS Region V PDC) is currently working with MDOT and contracted agencies to implement the Governor's initiative. GLS Region V PDC provided assistance throughout the development of this plan, including reviewing interim documents and helping to coordinate outreach efforts.

Input from a wide range of stakeholders was a key component in the study. Special thanks to the stakeholders who participated in a regional workshop and provided input throughout the planning process. Their input was especially beneficial in the assessment of transportation needs in the region, and in the development of potential strategies, activities and projects to improve mobility. In addition, appropriate information and pictures were obtained from the websites of some regional stakeholders.

Consultant Team

KFH Group, Inc. conducted outreach efforts, facilitated the regional workshop and led the development of this regional plan.

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Chapter 1

Background

INTRODUCTION

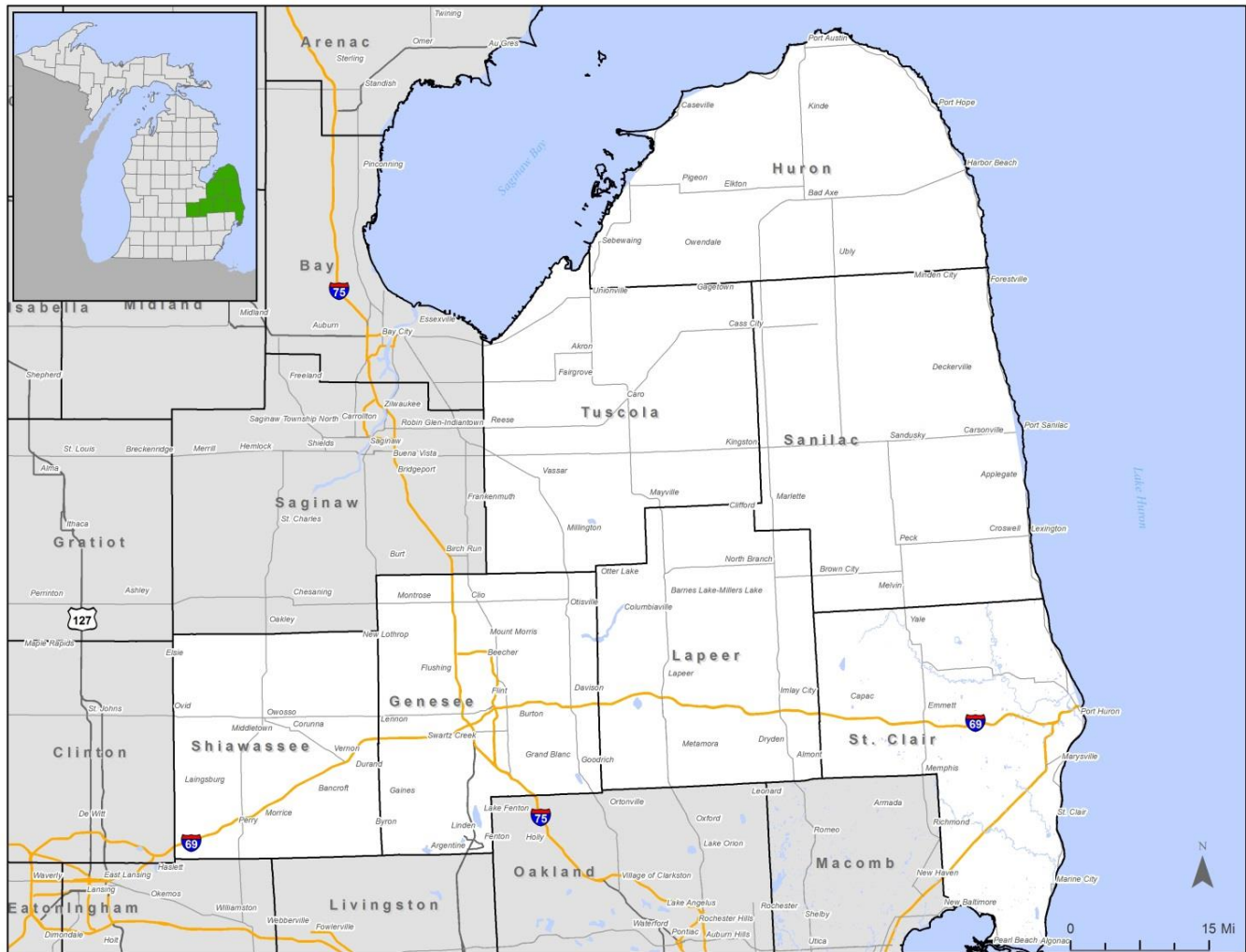
Michigan 2-1-1 is a free, confidential service that provides information and referral to transportation services, health and human services, community preparedness, and crisis information. A program of the Michigan Association of United Ways (MAUW), Michigan 2-1-1 works with eight regional 2-1-1 providers on a shared/common delivery platform to connect Michiganders with over 7,800 agencies offering over 29,000 services across the State.

With funding from a Veterans Transit Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) grant through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Michigan 2-1-1 and their partners are developing the joint capacity to provide One-Call/One-Click service to Michigan residents to assist with individual trip planning and to address transportation barriers limiting opportunities for employment, health care, recreation and other personal needs. The VTCLI grant, supplemented with state and federal funding administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Office of Passenger Transportation, involved a statewide transportation study to identify regional gaps in mobility, particularly for people with limited transportation options such as veterans, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with lower incomes. The study also involved identifying actions that can be taken by local transportation providers and Michigan 2-1-1 to increase regional mobility.

Input from a wide range of stakeholders was a key component in the study. Outreach efforts were based on Governor Snyder's Regional Prosperity Initiative that established ten regions to create a better structure for collaboration. Workshops were conducted in each region, and provided the opportunity to discuss transportation needs and to obtain input on potential strategies, projects, and services to improve regional mobility.

The result of the statewide transit study is coordinated mobility plans based geographically on the Governor's Prosperity Initiative. This is the Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 6 that includes Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, St. Clair, Sanilac, Shiawassee, and Tuscola Counties as shown in Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1: Prosperity Region 6



BUILDING UPON THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL MESSAGE ON AGING

The statewide transit study built upon efforts to document what is known about regional transit mobility. On June 2, 2014, Governor Snyder released a special message to the legislature on the topic of aging, titled "Making Michigan a Great Place to Live Well and Age Well". The message regarding access to transportation said, "Michiganders, including many older adults, need regional mobility and transit providers need to become more regionally focused. This is both an urban and rural issue".

The Governor asked MDOT to partner with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and Regional Planning Agencies (RPA) across the state to work on the issue of regional transit mobility. Subsequently, MDOT worked with MPOs and RPAs to undertake a planning effort that documented what is known about the need for regional transit mobility and the ability for customers to use current transit services for cross county or cross system trips. Information from the reports that resulted from this planning effort has been incorporated into this regional plan.

MEETING THE FEDERAL COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

In July 2012, President Obama signed into law Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) that went into effect on October 1, 2012. This legislation continued the coordinated transportation planning requirements for the Section 5310 Program administered by FTA. The purpose of the Section 5310 Program is to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services.

This Coordinated Mobility Plan is designed to meet the coordinated transportation planning requirements. Along with plans in other regions, it ensures that the entire State of Michigan is covered by plans that meet the federal requirements. Each of the plans incorporates the four required elements:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private and nonprofit).
2. An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service.
3. Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, and opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery.
4. Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

Guidance from FTA on the coordinated transportation planning process is included in Appendix A.

During the development of this plan President Obama signed the 'Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act', or the 'FAST Act'. The FAST Act serves as the authorizing legislation for future funding for Section 5310 and other FTA funding programs. While FTA has yet to issue updated guidance related to the coordinated transportation planning requirements, it appears there are no changes in the FAST Act legislation that would impact the current requirements. The implementation of the FAST Act should be monitored so that any modifications to the current requirements can be considered for future updates of this plan.

The FAST Act legislation includes a new discretionary pilot program for innovative coordinated access and mobility - open to Section 5310 recipients and subrecipients - to assist in financing innovative projects for the transportation disadvantaged that improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services. This program could include the deployment of coordination technology, or projects that create or increase access to community One-Call/One-Click Centers. The implementation of this program should be monitored for possible future funding opportunities that would support the strategies included in this plan.

A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

This plan is consistent with FTA coordinated transportation planning guidance that encourages broad efforts that incorporate activities offered under a variety of transportation programs sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact. Taking into account the VTCLI grant, efforts through the Governor's Special Message on Aging, and the Section 5310 coordinated transportation planning requirements, this plan takes a wide approach and includes information on a variety of transportation services offered in the region. It also provides strategies and potential projects beyond public transit services.

The Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 6 is designed to serve as a blueprint and practical document for future discussions and efforts in the region to improve regional mobility, especially for veterans, older adults, people with disabilities, people with lower incomes, and young people without access to transportation. However, this plan is not directly connected to any additional funding programs or sources, and does not obligate any agencies or organizations at the local, regional or state level to fund services included in the plan. Additional assessment would be needed to determine the costs and benefits prior to pursuing any of these recommendations and implementation would require re-allocation of existing financial resources.

PLAN CONTENTS

The Coordinated Mobility Plan for Prosperity Region 6 is presented in the following order:

- **Chapter 1** (this chapter) provides background information on planning process.
- **Chapter 2** discusses the outreach process and the involvement of regional stakeholders in the coordinated mobility planning process.
- **Chapter 3** provides a review of recent plans and studies in the region that are relevant to the study process or provide information on community transportation needs. This includes the results of a survey conducted by the Genesee-Lapeer-Shiawassee Region V Planning and Development Commission (GLS Region V PDC) for MDOT on what is known about the need for regional transit mobility.
- **Chapter 4** provides an assessment of the transportation needs in the region based on qualitative data (input on needs from key stakeholders).
- **Chapter 5** provides an assessment of transportation needs in the region through quantitative data (U.S. Census and American Community Survey).
- **Chapter 6** provides an inventory of current transportation services in the region.
- **Chapter 7** presents strategies and potential projects to meet transportation needs as identified and prioritized by regional stakeholders.
- **Chapter 8** discusses proposed on-going arrangements in the region to continue the momentum from the coordinated mobility planning process.

- **Chapter 9** provides the process for approval of this coordinated transportation plan.
- Various documents relevant to the planning process and noted throughout this plan are included in the appendix.

Chapter 2

Outreach and Planning Process

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses outreach efforts for the Michigan Statewide Transit Plan and the involvement of regional stakeholders in the coordinated mobility planning process. Federal coordinated transportation planning guidance served as the foundation for these outreach efforts. These guidelines encourage participation of individuals, groups, and organizations representing older adults, people with disabilities, and other populations that may have limited transportation options. Based on these guidelines, a broad approach was developed that provided the opportunity for a diverse group of organizations to be involved in the coordinated mobility planning process.

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

The primary outreach process for the Michigan Statewide Transit Study involved regional workshops that offered the opportunity to engage a variety of stakeholders, confirm transportation needs, and discuss potential strategies, projects, and services to improve regional mobility. With assistance from regional planning agencies and input from the project advisory committee, ten workshops were scheduled for September 2015 based on the Governor's Prosperity Regions.

Recognizing that some stakeholders would have interest in multiple workshops, marketing for the workshops was conducted through a statewide outreach effort that highlighted the workshop in Prosperity Region 6 and those in the other nine regions. A statewide invitation list was developed that included various agencies and organizations familiar with transportation issues, especially in regard to veterans, people with disabilities, older adults, and people with lower incomes. Collectively the invitation list was distributed to over 350 stakeholders. These stakeholders were encouraged to share the invitation to their contact lists to help ensure an even broader outreach effort. Ultimately the invitation to the regional workshops was distributed to:

- Transportation planning agencies
- Public transportation providers
- Public transit associations
- Local and regional mobility managers
- Regional 2-1-1 contact centers
- MichiVan and local rideshare offices
- Private transportation providers
- Nonprofit transportation providers
- Volunteer transportation providers

- Past or current organizations funded under the Section 5310, JARC, and/or the New Freedom Programs
- Human service agencies funding, operating, and/or providing access to transportation services
- Advocacy organizations working on behalf of targeted populations
- Agencies that administer health, employment, or other support programs for targeted populations
- Nonprofit human service provider organizations that serve the targeted populations
- Job training and placement agencies
- Housing agencies
- Healthcare facilities
- Mental health agencies
- Economic development organizations
- Faith-based and community-based organizations
- Employers and representatives of the business community
- Appropriate local or state officials and elected officials
- Policy analysts or experts

PROSPERITY REGION 6 WORKSHOP

On September 29, 2015 the workshop for Prosperity Region 6 was conducted in Flint. The agenda is included in Appendix B. The workshop attracted 47 participants including representatives from:

- Aging programs
- County Departments of Health and Human Service
- Disability service providers
- Emergency management programs
- Fitness foundations
- Health service programs and providers
- Human service agencies
- Local governments
- Local transit systems
- Michigan 2-1-1
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Planning agencies
- Private transportation providers
- Road commissions
- Workforce development agencies



The workshop began with discussion of previous work between MDOT the regional planning agencies, objectives for the study, and projected outcomes. The majority of the workshop was

focused on obtaining input from participants on the unmet transportation needs in the region. Through breakout groups, stakeholders were asked to provide input on transportation needs related to a variety of issues, including services, marketing, coordination, land use, policy changes, coordination and policies. They were encouraged to think beyond public transportation and to consider needs that could be addressed through various mobility options. The regional stakeholders also provided input on potential solutions to help meet identified needs.

The workshop began with discussion of previous work between MDOT and the regional planning agencies, objectives for the study, and projected outcomes. The majority of the workshop was focused on obtaining input from participants on the unmet transportation needs in the region. Through breakout groups stakeholders were asked to provide input on transportation needs related to a variety of issues, including services, marketing, coordination, land use, and policy changes, coordination, and policies. They were encouraged to think beyond public transportation and to consider needs that could be addressed through various mobility options. The regional stakeholders also provided input on potential solutions to help meet identified needs.

Workshop Results

During the workshop stakeholders identified the following overall needs as the most important to improve mobility in the region:

- Expanded transportation services
- Improved and expanded outreach, marketing, and education
- Improved coordination and connectivity
- Additional funding
- Capital improvements
- Greater emphasis on non-motorized transportation

These needs are detailed in Chapter 4. Additional input from regional stakeholders who attended the workshop is included in various sections of this plan. Needs and gaps identified by the group were considered in the development of potential strategies, activities, and projects that are included in Chapter 7.

ONGOING STAKEHOLDER INPUT

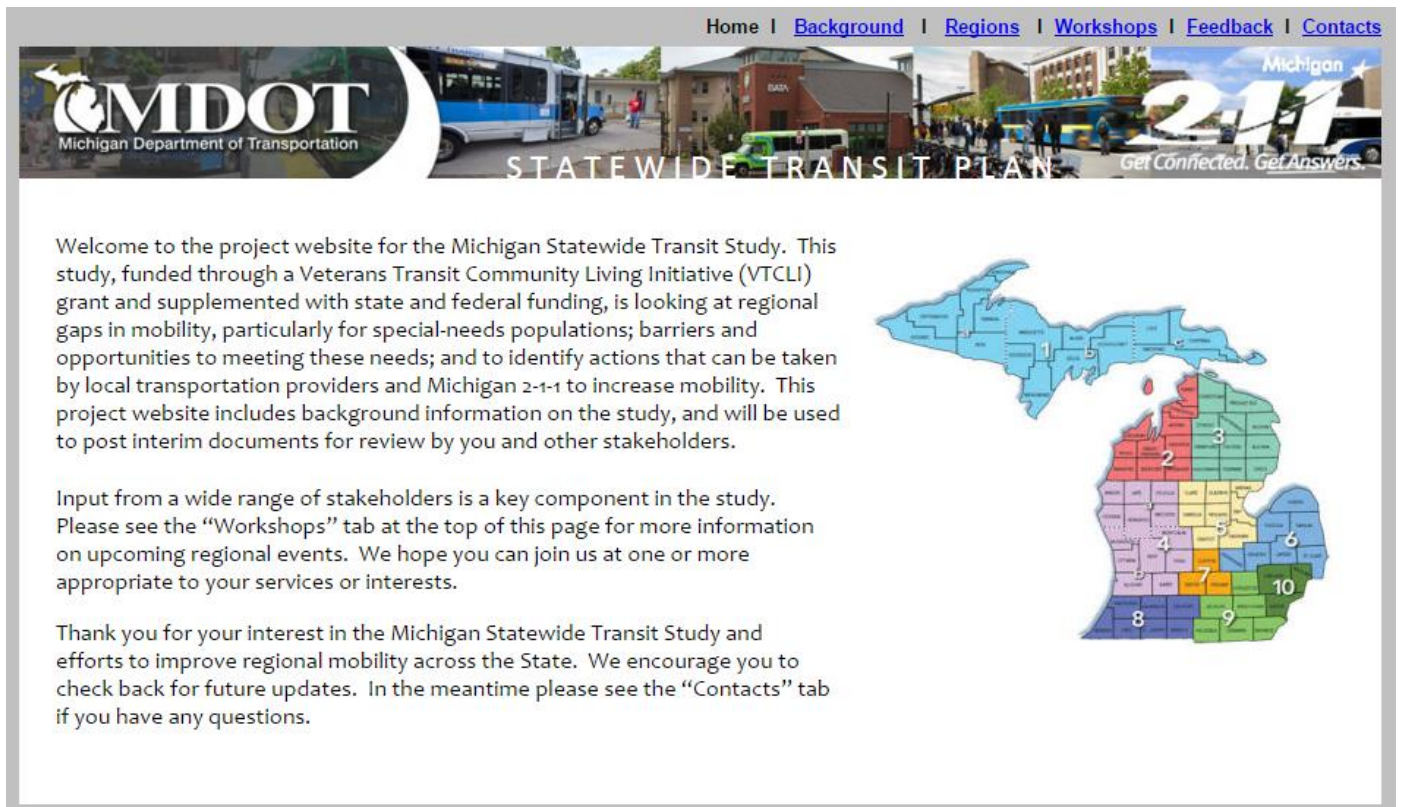
While the workshop served as the only formal gathering of regional stakeholders, they had multiple opportunities throughout the planning process to review interim documents and provide input. This ongoing involvement included:

- Reviewing and commenting on a summary of the transportation needs from the regional workshop
- Reviewing and providing input on potential strategies, activities, and projects to be included in the regional plan
- Prioritizing strategies identified as the most appropriate for improving mobility in the region
- Reviewing and providing input on a draft version of this plan

MICHIGAN STATEWIDE TRANSIT PLAN WEBSITE

To assist in outreach and planning efforts, a project website was established at <http://www.kfhgroup.com/michigan/statewidetransitplan.html>, see Figure 2-1. This website offered background information on the study and details on regional workshops. The website provided the opportunity for stakeholders to register on-line and was used to post interim documents.

Figure 2-1: Home Page of the Outreach Project Website



Chapter 3

Previous Plans and Studies

INTRODUCTION

This section provides a review of plans and studies in the region that are relevant to the study process or provide information on community transportation needs and potential solutions. It begins with a summary of the Phase 1 work completed by the Genesee-Lapeer-Shiawassee Region V Planning and Development Commission (GLS Region V PDC) for MDOT.

IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL MESSAGE ON AGING: PHASE 1

As noted in Chapter 1, MDOT partnered with MPOs and RPAs regarding the issue of regional transit mobility in support of the Governor's Special Message on Aging. The planning agencies worked with local transit agencies to document what is known about the need for regional transit mobility and the ability for customers to use current transit services for cross county or cross system trips.

In Region 6, GLS Region V PDC conducted a survey to assess what is known regarding the need for regional transit mobility and individual needs to use transit county to county. The letter and survey questions were sent to the three major transit service providers in GLS Region V. In addition to this initial survey, as noted by GLS Region V PDC in their report to MDOT, staff also contacted smaller transit providers in the region to seek input for phase one.

The GLS Region V report detailed the responses from Flint – Mass Transit Authority (MTA), Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority (GLTA), and Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency (SATA). This information included each organization's response to:

1. Their primary service area
2. What is known regarding the need (demand) for regional transit mobility
3. How existing transit services are configured and operated to facilitate trips across county or transit service area lines
4. How one of their transit users would travel to a neighboring county
5. If a list of unmet local or regional transit needs had been developed
6. If they know of other agencies that provide local or regional transit services in their area
7. The barriers to create or continue regional transit services routes

In their summary, the survey GLS Region V PDC noted the following key issues:

- Counties in the GLS Region V have varied needs when it pertains to regional transit mobility. Genesee County is primarily urban while the counties of Lapeer and Shiawassee are rural in nature. Demand response transit is used throughout the region, while the Flint urban area is a mixture of both fixed route and demand response.
- There continues to be difficulties working with neighboring counties outside of GLS Region V and their respective transit agencies. In some instances, transit users (with disabilities) are forced to transfer multiple times to their employment or medical appointments due to boundary lines. GLS Region V PDC noted that while transit agencies in their region are willing to drop off and pick up across boundary lines, many of the non-GLS Region V agencies require passengers to be transferred. They stated that this policy can result in a stressful situation for elderly or disabled transit users. GLS Region V noted difficulties for users go beyond scheduling between two or more transit providers but include physical limitations. Based on survey results, it was suggested that legislation, policy, or incentives may help encourage select agencies to work together with “seamless boundaries” for regional transit.
- The MTA discussed their interest in becoming a regional transit authority which would allow them to better serve counties in GLS Region V and beyond. The summary noted that MTA would coordinate and partner with organizations along the I-69 Corridor including local chambers of commerce, public and private transportation providers, employers and medical facilities on their transportation needs.
- The subject of funding was raised as a major concern for continued program operation and the expansion of needed services (i.e., employment, non-emergency medical transportation).
- It was suggested that transit program funding sources be changed to have similar requirements and timelines. The report noted that local funding for transit has limits to the local service area. In many communities, local business owners object to transit agencies using local funding to transport residents to other communities away from their businesses.
- Through multiple discussions and detailed information provided by each major transit agency, GLS Region V PDC stated that it is evident the counties of Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee work well together. Mobility managers and dispatchers for each agency successfully coordinate any trip requested by their users. This open communication helps this area maintain a robust, regional transit system within GLS Region V.

The GLS Region V report is included in Appendix C. This report included the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans for Genesee and Shiawassee County that are discussed later in this chapter.

COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLANS

The review of previous plans and studies involved local coordinated transportation plans. While some of these plans are several years old, they offer insight into current regional mobility needs. Common themes identified in the coordinated plans include a need for more transportation, increased hours, increased number of service areas, services for older adults and people with low incomes, and transportation to employment and healthcare. The following section provides a synopsis of key findings in these plans.

Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

The Genesee County Metropolitan Alliance (GCMA) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Genesee County. An MPO is the forum for cooperative transportation decision making for a metropolitan planning area, and members of GCMA include representatives from local units of government and local citizens. Staffing for GCMA is provided by Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission (GCMPC). GCMPC staff prepared the 2014 Coordinated Transportation Plan on behalf of the MTA in Genesee County, as the MTA is the designated recipient of the State's Specialized Services Program funds and is the supporting/coordinating agency for a number of recipients of federal Section 5310 and Section 5317 Programs.

This plan provided a summary of the outreach process, current transportation services, and current transportation needs. The plan presented a variety of strategies to meet transportation needs and gaps in services. The following strategies were identified and prioritized by local stakeholders:

1. Maintain and increase funding for services
2. Incorporation of technology
3. Outreach (to providers, elected officials, passengers, and potential passengers), publication and marketing of MTA's transportation services
4. Coordination between organizations and businesses
5. Coordination outside of Genesee County
6. Addressing safety needs and security
7. Study on where people are currently going, where they'd like to go, times and how frequently
8. Strategies for incorporating door-to-door with existing "your ride" services
9. Pocket-size directory of all community services
10. Service provider training
11. Subsidized passes/sliding fee scale

Shiawassee County Coordinated Transportation Plan

The Shiawassee County Coordinated Transportation Plan was updated in 2009. It begins with the following Mission Statement: *"To assure that the transportation needs of all Shiawassee County residents are met through coordination of public, private and non-profit partnerships and services".*

The plan includes a review of county demographics and discussion of previous transportation studies, and presents a goal for the plan based on stakeholder input:

To expand the public, private and volunteer transportation services in Shiawassee County to meet all community needs, including times, days and service area availability, while providing coordinated transportation service resources to the community.

The plan provides strategies by local stakeholders to meet this goal:

1. Develop a Single Point of Entry to Access Transportation Communication
 - identify all existing public, private and non-profit transportation providers in the county
 - identify all existing transportation service availability
 - identify all existing or potential gaps in transportation services
 - create a system of daily service provision updates for accurate dissemination to the community regarding all transportation availability
2. Create Partnerships for Transportation Funding Advocacy
 - identify all existing partnership and advocacy efforts in the county
 - develop a Public Relations Plan to promote need for community transportation, and address existing services and gaps
 - identify key members of the community to speak to the community-at-large
 - identify key members of the community to speak to public officials
3. Develop a Strategy to Improve Transportation Service Provision
 - identify specific needs for expanded hours, days, service area, and rider assistance
 - identify key stakeholder groups, including employment, low-income, senior citizens and people with disabilities
 - develop a plan to alleviate barriers in services provision through public, private and non-profit transportation services
 - identify and develop funding proposals to address immediate gaps in services
4. Develop a Sustainability Plan for Transportation Services
 - identify stakeholders to develop a long-term sustainability plan
 - develop fund development proposals and plans for operational costs
 - develop a plan to gain local support from city officials, County Board of Commissioners, and the voting public-at-large for sustainable funding
 - assure that sustainability includes public, private and non-profit services
 - develop regional partnerships

Caro Transit Authority Coordinated Transit-Human Services Plan

The Caro Transit Authority Coordinated Transit-Human Services Plan was created in 2007 in an effort to create a collaborative planning process and a community-based transportation planning program. The plan gives an overview of different services available in Tuscola County, needs of the community, stakeholder involvement, funding sources, and proposed coordination of services.

During the development of the plan, CTA conducted a stakeholder meeting in which seven issues were identified.

1. Shift workers' inability to obtain or maintain employment due to lack of available transportation.
2. Limited transportation outside of service area.
3. Impact on senior adults and individuals with disabilities.
4. Limited transportation to educational facilities.
5. Equipment concerns
6. Fare structure
7. Marketing

As a result of the issues and concerns identified at the stakeholder meeting, CTA and the Local Advisory Council and collaboration with state and local agencies organizations, guiding principals were constructed to address those concerns.

- Resourcefulness - Using different resources to create sustainable services that meet different transportation needs. Includes applying for funding such as Job Access and Reverse Commute, Section 5310, and other federal and state grants.
- Independence – Promotes transportation options that encourage independence for senior adults and others with limited resources.
- Accessibility- Provides transportation to all of Tuscola County that is open to the general public, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals.
- Efficiency - Evaluate services based on productivity and measures of cost effectiveness that exemplify good stewardship of public resource
- Interaction - Encourage open communication and discussion on resource distribution.

Huron County Transportation Coordination Plan

The Huron County Transportation Coordination Plan was completed in July 2007 by Huron Transit Corporation. Strategies and activities identified to address gaps in service in the plan were:

- Funding for 5310 buses
- Job Access Commute Reverse Commute (JARC) funding.
- Expanding service hours to include later evenings and Sunday service.
- Helping human service agencies provide limited service on weekends and later hours.

Priorities for implementation were based on time, resources, and feasibility.

- First priority - extend service hours
- Second priority - examine Saturday hours
- Third priority - open on Sundays

- Fourth priority - out of count service for jobs, health care, education, and other transportation.

Lapeer County Coordinated Public/Private Transit – Human Service Transportation Plan

The Lapeer County Coordinated Public/Private Transit- Human Service Transportation Plan contains an assessment of transportation needs, identifies gaps in service, and recommends strategies to address the gaps in service. The transportation needs assessment revealed that individuals with disabilities who live outside of Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority's (GLTA) service area have difficulties accessing transportation services and have more expensive transportation costs. The assessment pointed out that low income residents who live outside the GLTA's service area have higher transportation costs.

Gaps identified in the plan were countywide GLTA service, mobility management to provide coordinated transportation services, data collection and surveys, marketing, and Lapeer team work. The strategy presented to confront the issue of lack of countywide service was to promote advantages of jointing the Authority. In order to have coordinated transportation service throughout the area, hiring a mobility manager was suggested. To address the lack of surveys and data collection, the strategy is to create surveys and make data reports available. In terms of marketing, the strategy is to continue current marketing efforts and introduce additional materials. Lapeer Team Work is the last identified gap and recommended strategies to create training opportunities, and apply for MDOT funding for van replacement, supportive equipment and a utility vehicle.

Sanilac County Area Wide Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan

The goal of the Sanilac County Area Wide Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan is to identify transportation needs of senior adults, low income individuals, and individuals with disabilities and to develop strategies for prioritizing services, for funding and implementation incorporating activities sponsored by federal, state and local agencies.

The plan identified primary needs are transportation to work, doctors, human services, and education. Secondary transportation needs include transportation to shopping, child care, social activities, cultural events and spiritual activities. Residents of Sanilac County typically rely on their personal vehicles for transportation. For senior adults it is difficult to transition to public transit that is available when it becomes difficult for them to drive. Individuals with disabilities share similar issues. These individuals need transportation services that will allow them to keep their independence. Low income individuals need transportation to employment, training opportunities, education, medical services, childcare, and social services. The limited availability of service during evenings and weekends make it difficult for low income individuals.

In a Multi-Purpose Collaborative Body Meeting conducted in April 2007, unmet needs of the community and suggestions of meeting those needs were addressed. Gaps in services identified were:

- Limited job access service
- Lack of evening service

- Lack of weekend service
- Lack of out of county service

Possible barriers to coordination identified in the plan were:

- Resistance from those concerned about losing autonomy
- Concern over changes in funding level
- Loss of control over current funding situation
- Loss of control over the well-being of individual clients under their care

Steps to coordination noted in the plan involved the following:

- Receive approval from service providers and their staff
- Create strategies to coordinate available services
- Identify barriers to providing service
- Promote benefits of working together
- Create a funding plan
- Educate individuals on how to obtain the necessary transportation service
- Implement the plan

St. Clair County Coordinated Transportation Plan

The St. Clair County Community Employment Collaborative, St. Clair County Community Services Coordinating Body, and public community partner meetings participants agreed that limited transportation access was a serious problem for individuals with disabilities and low income residents.

Meeting participants concluded the following:

- Inability of those relying on public transportation to access employment opportunities in Macomb County.
- Limited hours of operation which impacts those who work second and third shift and weekends
- Lack of county-wide transportation that limits individuals who live outside Port Huron.

Participants decided on the following strategies to address the challenges:

- Development of a connector system to the Macomb County SMART system
- Expansion of the current fixed route system
- Development and implementation of a broker system

GENESEE THE FUTURE: MOBILITY 2040

The Genesee County 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) “GeneSEE the Future: Mobility 2040” provides policies, projects, and recommendations for Genesee County. As noted in the plan, LRTP’s must have a twenty- year horizon and the Genesee County plan is required to be updated every five years. The plan was developed over a two year period with participation from a wide variety of people from the general public, and from public and private agencies and organizations.

The plan stated that it was developed to help address the following real world issues that are faced within the county:

- How do we ensure that our kids can safely walk to school?
- How do we provide low income residents with transportation to work or to hospitals if they do not have a car?
- What resources do we need to improve the condition of our roads?
- How can we help to improve the local economy?

The plan noted that the main finding of the 2040 LRTP is that needs of the transportation system in Genesee County outweigh resources available to address the identified needs. Transit ridership is growing, 39% of the local federal-aid road system is in poor condition and 90% of bridges will need to be replaced by 2040. The LRTP noted that funding available for these improvements is only projected to increase by 2.39% a year, and in some cases is decreasing while the cost of projects is projected to increase by 4% a year.

The LRTP reported that MTA is undertaking a number of initiatives to improve the transportation system. MTA is currently examining the use of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) which will ultimately improve effectiveness, efficiency, safety, and security of transit service in Genesee County. Another initiative by MTA is reviewing and updating their System, Security, and Emergency Preparedness Plan (SSEPP) to increase security for passengers, employees, vehicles, and facilities. MTA is continuing to invest in alternative fuel which has led to the acquisition of diesel-electric hybrid buses. MTA is continuing to sponsor regional transit studies to access opportunities for regional transit such as a feasibility study along the I-75 Corridor.

Chapter 4

Assessment of Transportation Needs

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of unmet transportation needs and gaps in mobility identified by regional stakeholders at the Prosperity Region 6 workshop conducted on September 29, 2015. Results from the workshop are part of an overall transportation needs assessment that also identified transportation needs in previous plans and studies (Chapter 3) and the analysis of demographic data using current information from the U.S. Census (Chapter 5).

Various transportation needs are interrelated. The following subsections summarize issues that were noted by participants during the regional workshop.

EXPANDED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

While there are an array of transportation resources in the region, stakeholders discussed a variety of unmet needs and gaps in services in the region:

Gaps in Service

- Gaps in service need to be eliminated by creating mechanisms that help to prevent communities from opting out of coordinated transit services.
- Some customers need availability to more specialized (and curb-to-curb) services.
- It is difficult for demand response/dial-a-ride transportation providers to meet the variety of transportation needs in the region. There is a need for expanded and varied services to meet these needs.

Trip Purpose

- There is a need for expanded transportation options for non-medical trips, i.e. shopping, recreational, social and other quality of life trips.
- Employment transportation throughout the region needs to be improved, possibly with help from partnerships with the private sector.

Time Related

- Transportation services at certain time frames, i.e., weekends, and second and third shift job hours, remain limited in much of the region. There is need for expanded services that would help to improve mobility for individuals who work during late hours.
- Due to limitations of current public transit services regional trips are often long and may include multiple transfers. There is need to identify opportunities for expanded and more direct regional services.

Place/Destination

- Rural transportation options throughout the region need to be expanded.
- Greater employment transportation options are needed from rural areas to urban areas where many jobs are located.

Other

- There is a lack of transportation options for individuals who may need more customized transportation services and greater assistance to travel, especially for older adults and people with disabilities.
- There is need to expand non-motorized travel options in the region.
- Greater use of technology needs to be considered to help improve access to existing services and the provision of more efficient services.

IMPROVED AND EXPANDED OUTREACH, MARKETING AND EDUCATION

- There is a need to communicate with the various transportation resources that are available locally and regionally to members of the community and riders.
- There needs to be greater emphasis placed on educating the public on non-motorized methods of travel.
- While some parts of the region have a designated person such as a mobility manager who is responsible for knowing and disseminating information on available transportation resources, stakeholders expressed the need to build upon these efforts on a regional basis.

IMPROVED COORDINATION AND CONNECTIVITY

- There is a need for greater coordination among service providers (public, private, and human service) to eliminate boundaries and provide transportation service across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Stakeholders noted that currently there is limited coordination of trips between human service agencies and organizations. There is a need for improved communication between these agencies and to identify coordination opportunities.
- There is need to provide fixed route/scheduled service across the region that allows customers to travel without a transfer.
- There needs to be a greater emphasis on the relationship between land use planning and transportation. Land use planning should incorporate transit friendly practices.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

- There is a lack of overall funding to support the variety of transportation services that are needed in the region.
- There is a need to analyze how the region can save money and use resources more efficiently.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- In areas with fixed route services, there is a need to add and improve bus stop amenities and accessibility.
- There is a need for more buses in the region to be equipped with bicycle racks.
- The addition of alternative fueling stations.

GREATER EMPHASIS ON NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

- Current road infrastructure does not allow for safe non-motorized travel such as biking or walking. There is a need to include discussion of road improvements in efforts to improve regional mobility.
- In conjunction with capital improvements there is a need to embrace complete streets' policies that support objectives identified in community plans.

Chapter 5

Demographic Analysis

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an analysis of current and future population trends in Region 6, as well as an analysis of the demographics of population groups that often depend on transportation options beyond an automobile. Data sources for this analysis include the 2010 U.S. Census and the American Community Survey (ACS) 2009-2013 5-year estimates.

This demographic analysis, coupled with input from regional stakeholders documented in the preceding chapter and previous plans and studies discussed in Chapter 3, provides a broad transportation needs assessment. This assessment can then be used to develop strategies, projects and services to meet identified needs and expand mobility and to generate recommendations to improve coordination within the region (detailed in Chapter 7).

POPULATION PROFILE

The following section examines the current population and population density in Region 6, and discusses future population projections for the region.

Population

Table 5-1 shows the census population counts from 1990-2010. From the 1990 to the 2010 Census, Lapeer County has experienced the greatest population percent increase (18.2%). St. Clair County had the second highest population growth percent (11.97%). Genesee and Huron Counties were the only counties to experience population decline during the 1990-2010 time period. Huron County had the largest population percent decline at -5.24%.

The City of Flint has continued to see a steady loss in population over the past several decades averaging a loss of 19,000 persons per decade since 1980. At some point in the future this rate of loss should level out, however, this is hard to estimate given the consistency of population loss in the City even with significant investments made in the community over the past decade.

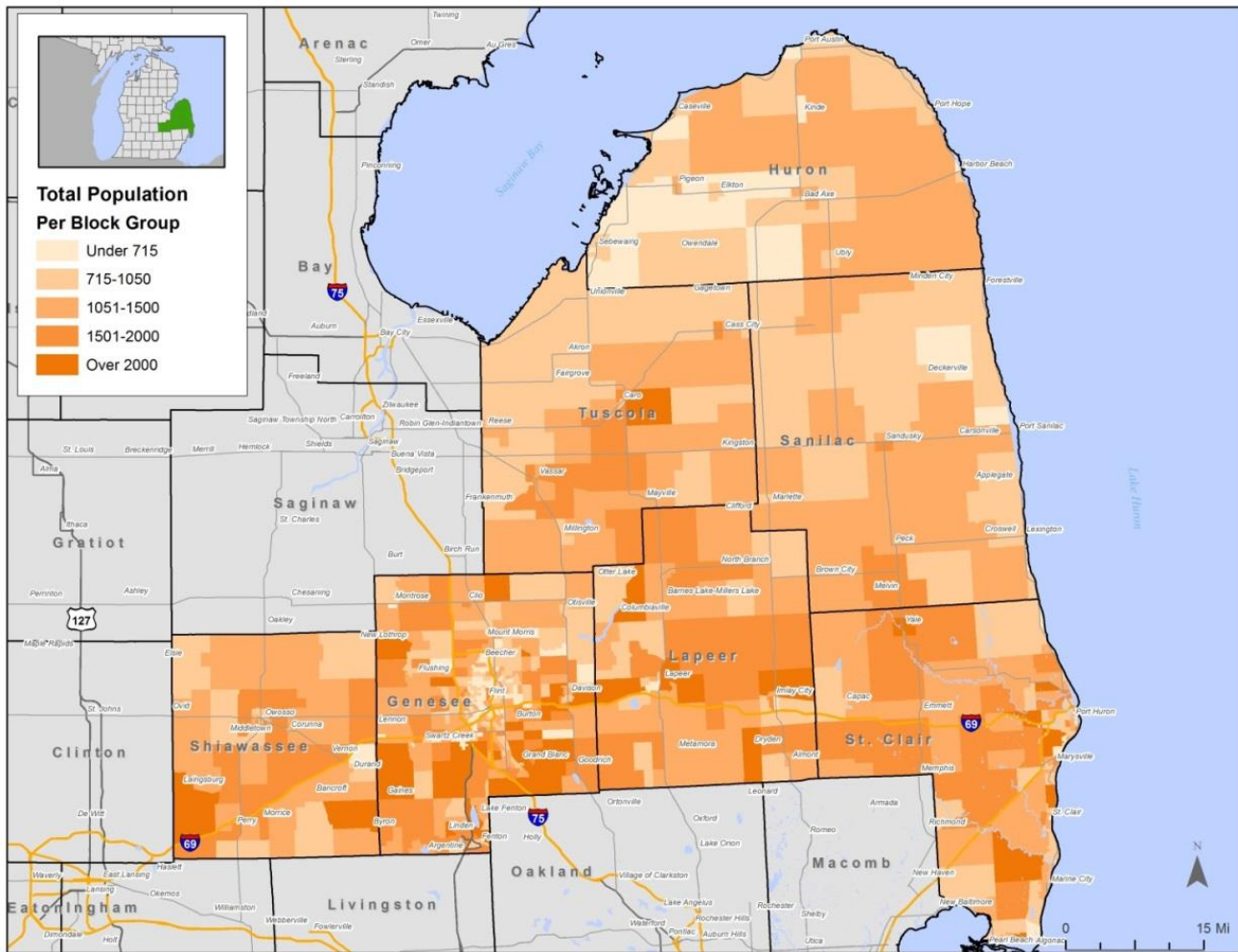
Table 5-1: Historical Populations

Place	1990 Pop.	2000 Pop.	2010 Pop.	1990-2000 % Change	2000-2010 % Change	1990-2010 % Change
Genesee	430,459	436,141	425,790	1.32%	-2.37%	-1.08%
Huron	34,951	36,079	33,118	3.23%	-8.21%	-5.24%
Lapeer	74,768	87,904	88,319	17.57%	0.47%	18.12%
Sanilac	39,928	44,547	43,114	11.57%	-3.22%	7.98%
Shiawassee	69,770	71,687	70,648	2.75%	-1.45%	1.26%
St. Clair	145,607	164,235	163,040	12.79%	-0.73%	11.97%
Tuscola	55,498	58,266	55,729	4.99%	-4.35%	0.42%

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Figure 5-1 illustrates the region's total population at the census block group level. Generally, the southern counties of the region have more census block groups with high populations

Table 5-2 features recent population estimates from the ACS. The data shows that since 2010, the population has continuously declined in every county in the region. Huron County overall has experienced the greatest population decline (-3.18%) followed by Tuscola County (-3.10). Lapeer County has seen the least amount of population decline (-.19%).

Figure 5-1: 2010 Census Population

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Table 5-2: Recent Population Trends

Place	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010-2014 % Change
Genesee	425,790	421,716	418,058	415,623	412,895	-3.03%
Huron	33,118	32,745	32,466	32,264	32,065	-3.18%
Lapeer	88,319	88,024	88,184	88,257	88,153	-0.19%
Sanilac	43,114	42,690	42,311	41,863	41,857	-2.92%
Shiawassee	70,648	69,981	69,300	68,916	68,933	-2.43%
St. Clair	163,040	161,498	160,564	160,225	160,078	-1.82%
Tuscola	55,729	55,377	54,705	54,210	54,000	-3.10%

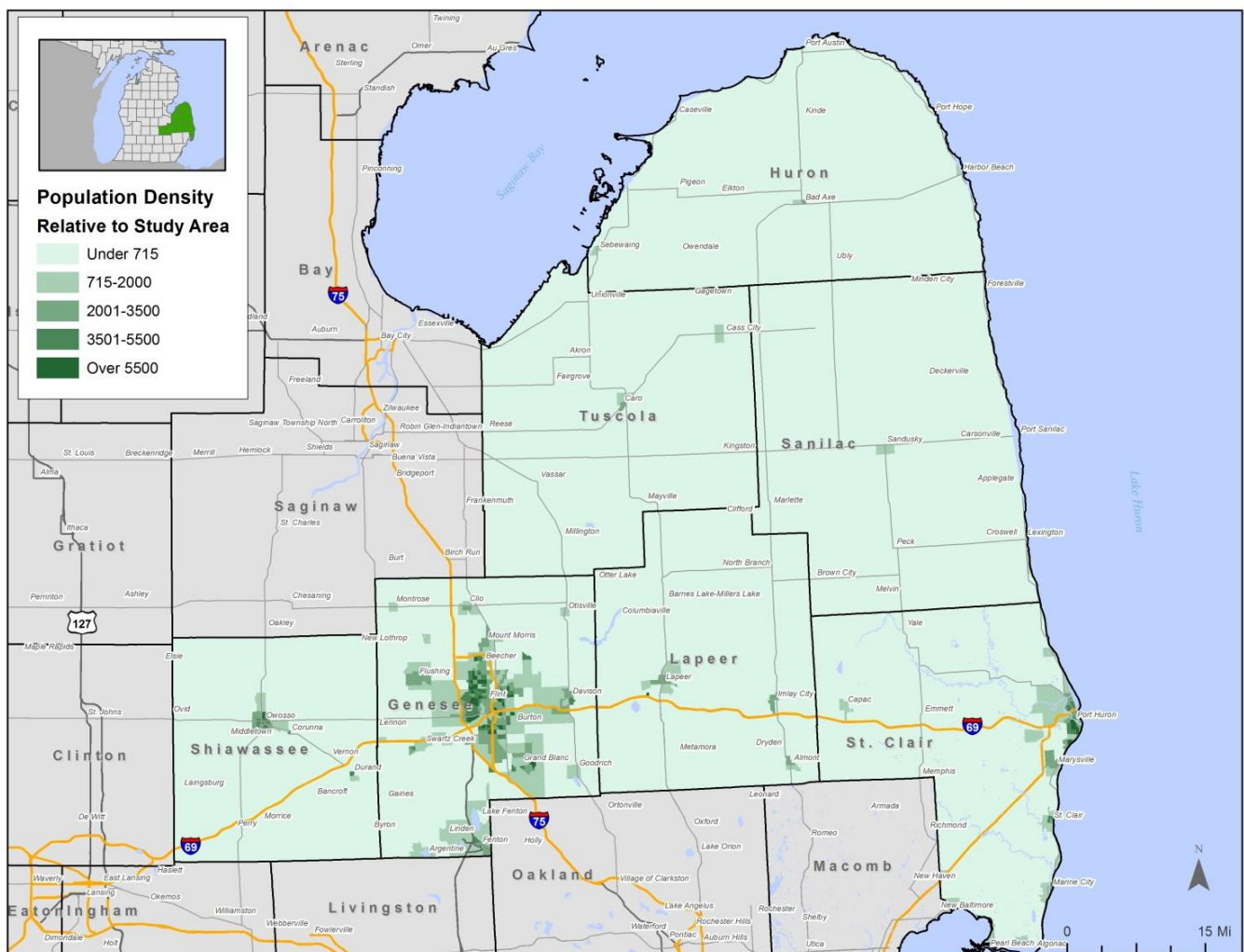
Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Population Density

One of the most important factors in determining the most appropriate transportation service in a community is population density. Population density is often used as an indicator for the type of public transit services that are feasible within a study area. Typically an area with a density of 2,000 persons per square mile will be able to sustain daily fixed route transit service. An area with a population density below 2,000 but above 1,000 persons per square mile may be a better candidate for deviated fixed route or demand response services.

Figure 5-2 shows the population density for Region 6. Overall Region 6 is not densely populated with the exception of Genesee County, specifically around Flint.

Figure 5-2: 2010 Census Population Density



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Population Forecast

Future forecasts for the region anticipate relatively no population growth. The region is expected to experience a slight population decline of 0.06 % during the period from 2014 to 2040. During this period the region is expected to decrease in population from 857,981 persons to 853,144 persons, a decrease of 4,837 persons or 0.56%. The largest population growth is expected in Tuscola County. It is anticipated that the population of Tuscola County will grow from 56,079 to 60,088 by 2040, an 11.3% increase. St. Clair County is expected to have a population increase with projections indicating an increase from 161,508 to 167,625 (4.7%). Lapeer County is expected to grow in population with projections indicating an increase from 88,153 to 91,723 (4.0%).

Conversely, the population of Genesee, Huron, Sanilac, and Shiawassee Counties are projected to decline between 2014 and 2040. The county with the largest population decline is Huron County. Projections suggest that Huron County's population will decrease from 32,065 persons to 29,150 persons (-9.07%). Table 5-3 provides the forecasted population growth for the region out to 2040.

Table 5-3: Population Forecasts

County	2014	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Genesee	412,895	411,712	407,617	404,881	403,049	401,784
Huron	32,065	30,398	29,823	29,494	29,150	28,629
Lapeer	88,153	86,863	88,067	89,911	91,400	91,723
Sanilac	41,857	39,868	39,181	38,849	38,519	38,110
Shiawassee	68,933	66,954	66,042	65,614	65,414	65,185
St. Clair	160,078	161,508	162,550	164,653	166,659	167,625
Tuscola	54,000	56,079	56,891	57,976	59,084	60,088
Total Region	857,981	853,382	850,171	851,378	853,275	853,144

Source: Institute for Research on Labor, Employment, and the Economy, University of Michigan.
Prepared for Michigan Department of Transportation, March 2012

TRANSIT DEPENDENT POPULATIONS

Public transportation needs are defined in part by identifying the relative size and location of those segments within the general population that are most likely to be dependent on transit services. This includes individuals who may not have access to a personal vehicle or are unable to drive themselves due to age or income status. The results of this demographic analysis highlight those geographic areas of the service area with the greatest need for transportation.

For the purpose of developing a relative process of ranking socioeconomic need, block groups are classified relative to the service area as a whole using a five-tiered scale of “Very Low” to “Very High.” A block group classified as “Very Low” can still have a significant number of potentially transit dependent persons; as “Very Low” means below the service area’s average. At the other end of the spectrum, “Very High” means greater than twice the service area’s average. The exact specifications for each score are summarized below in Table 5-4.

Table 5-4: Relative Ranking Definitions for Transit Dependent Populations

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

Transit Dependence Index

The need for public transportation is often derived by recognizing the size and location of segments of the population most dependent on transit services. Transit dependency can be a result of many factors. Some of these include no access to a personal vehicle, a disability that prevents a person from operating a personal vehicle, age, and income. Establishing the location of transit dependent populations aid in the evaluation of the current population while identifying potential gaps in transit services.

The Transit Dependence Index (TDI) is an aggregate measure displaying relative concentrations of transit dependent populations. Five factors make up the TDI calculation including: population density, autoless households, elderly populations (age 65 and over), youth populations (ages 10-17), and below poverty populations.

In addition to population density, the factors above represent specific socioeconomic characteristics of Region 6 residents. For each factor, individual block groups were classified according to the frequency of the vulnerable population relative to the county average. The factors were then put into the TDI equation to determine the relative transit dependence of each block group.

The relative classification system utilizes averages in ranking populations. For example, areas with less than the average transit dependent population fall into the “Very Low” classification, where areas that are more than twice the average will be classified as “Very High.” The classifications “Low, Moderate,

and High” all fall between the average and twice the average. These classifications are divided into thirds.

Figure 5-3 displays the TDI rankings for Region 6. According to the TDI, the area identified as having the most transit need with respect to density is in Genesee County.

Figure 5-3: Transit Dependence Index Density

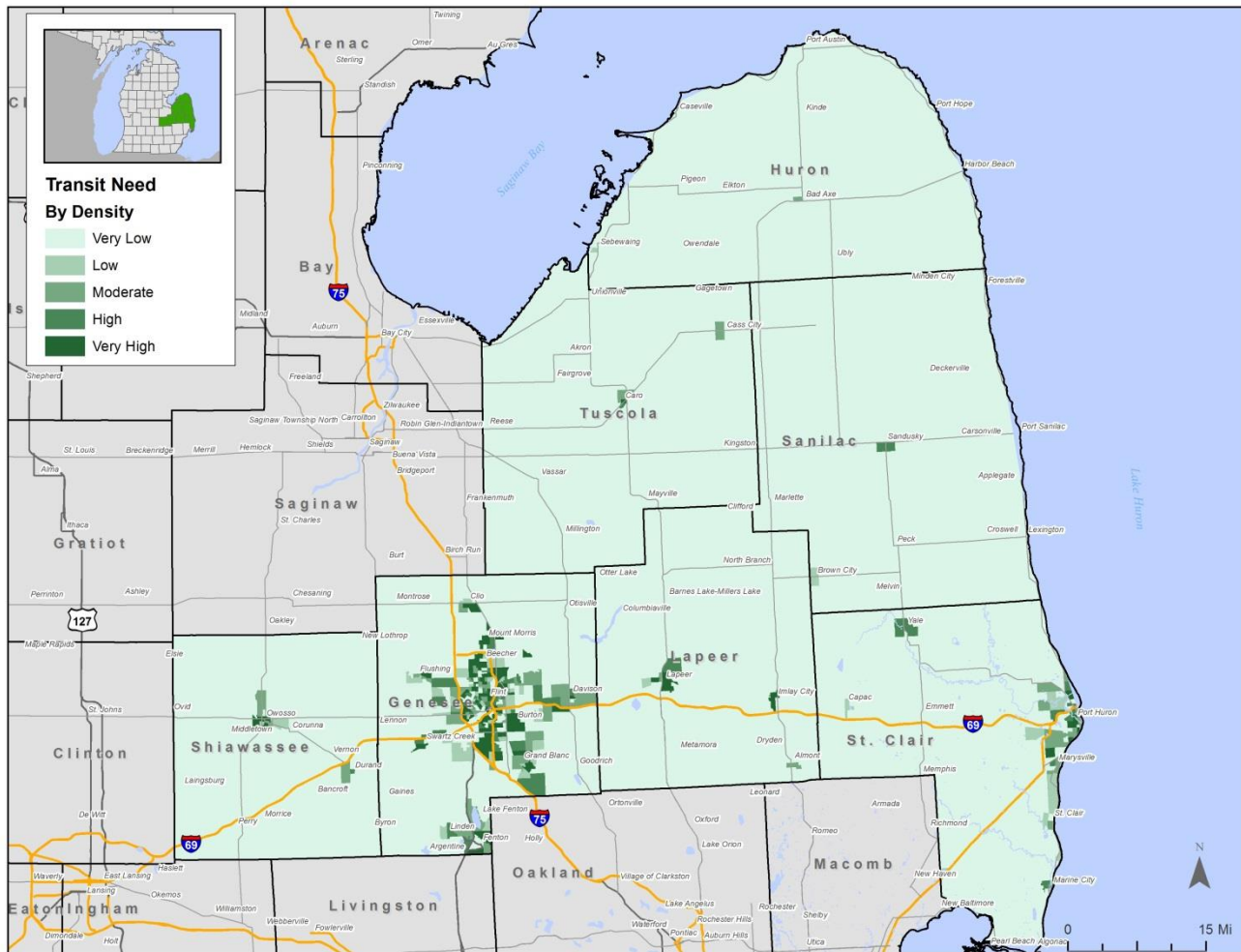
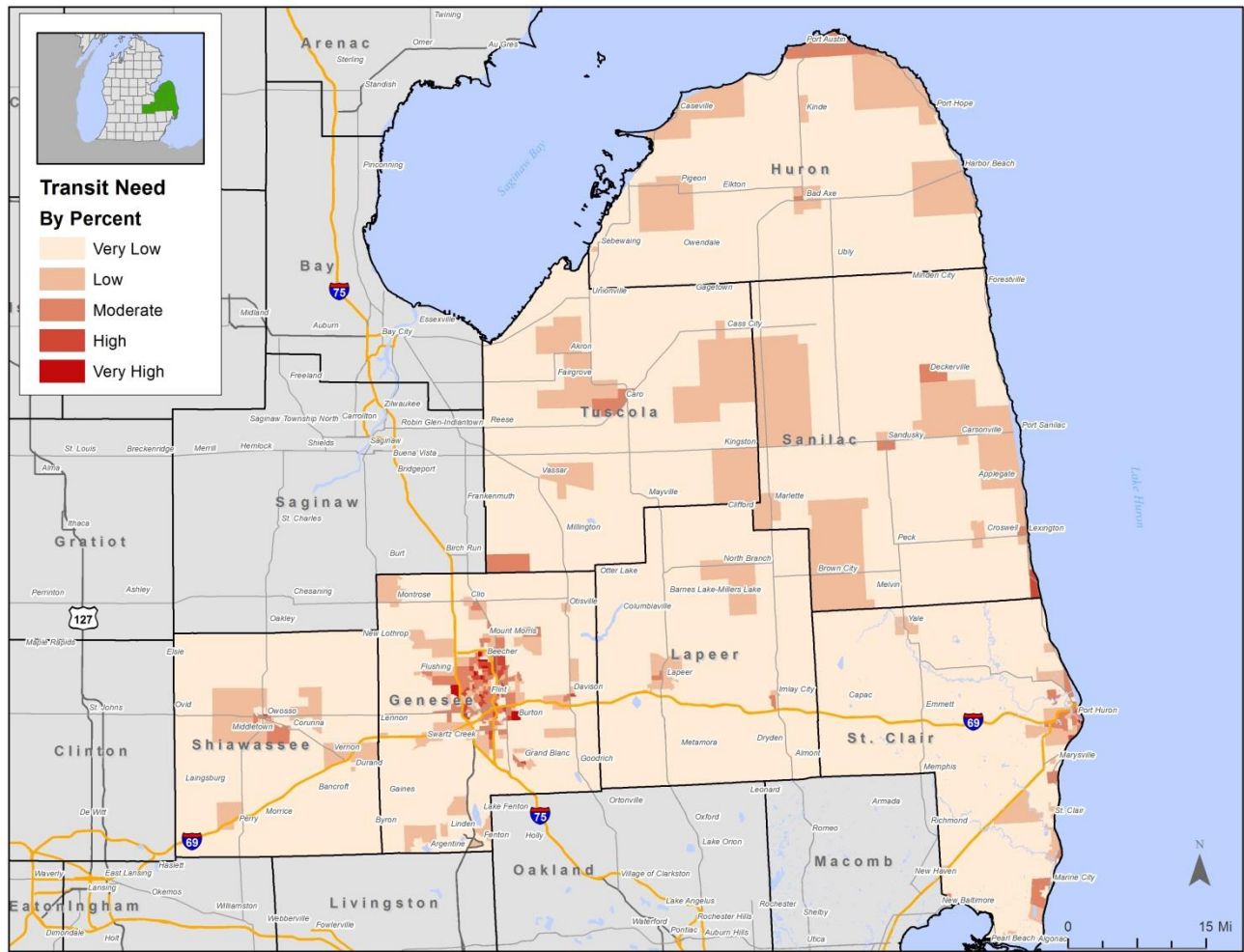


Figure 5-4, highest transit need based on percent is located in Genesee County. The remainder of the region has very low or low transit need in respect to percent.

Figure 5-4: Transit Dependence Index Percentage

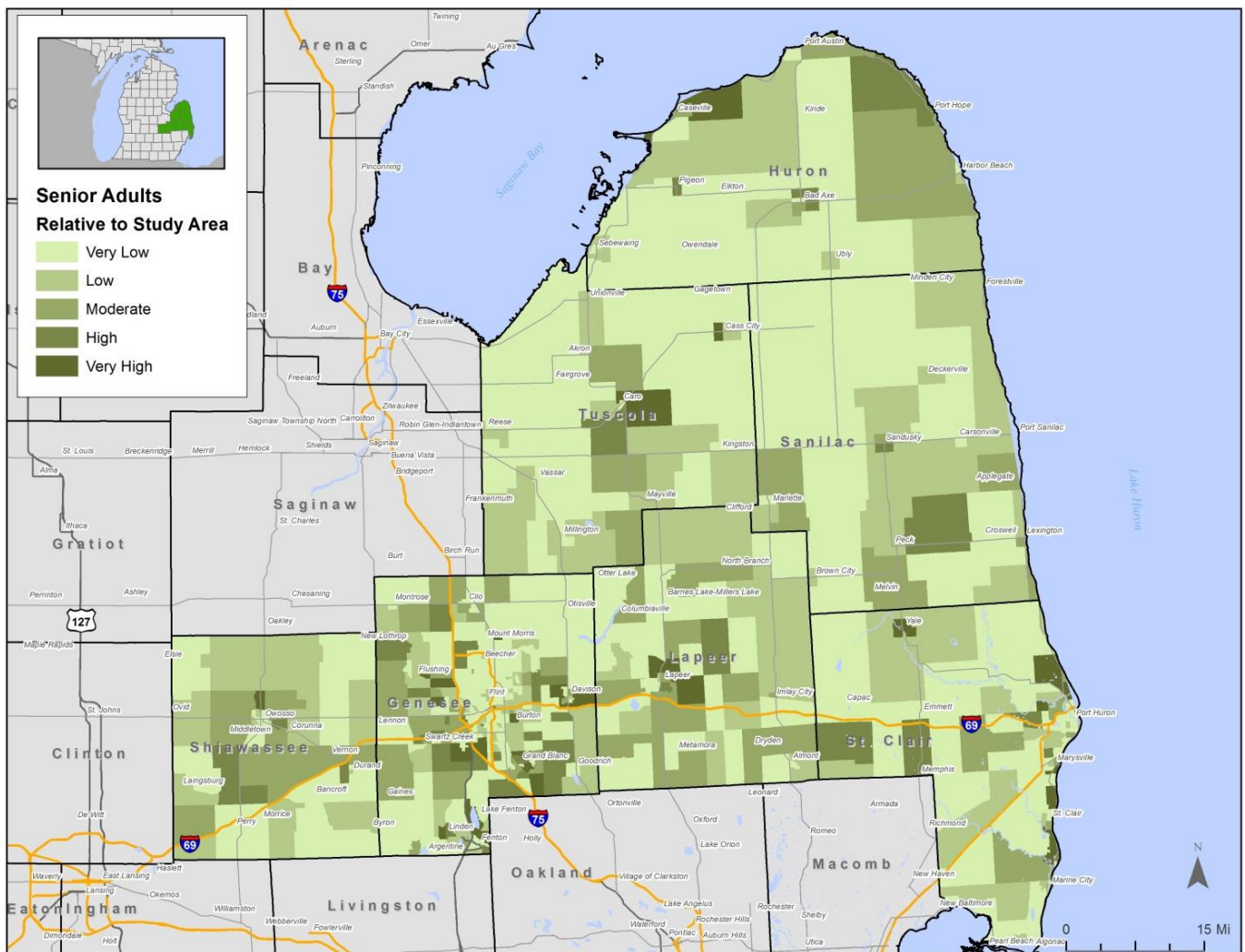


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Senior Adult Population

One of the socioeconomic group analyzed by the TDI and TDIP indices is the senior adult population, individuals age 65 years and older. Adults in this age group may begin to decrease their use of a personal vehicle and rely more heavily on public transit. Figure 5-5 shows the relative concentration of seniors in Region 6. Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Tuscola, Shiawassee and St. Clair Counties are of block groups that contain “Very High” senior populations.

Figure 5-5: Distribution of the Senior Adult Population (Aged 65 and Above)

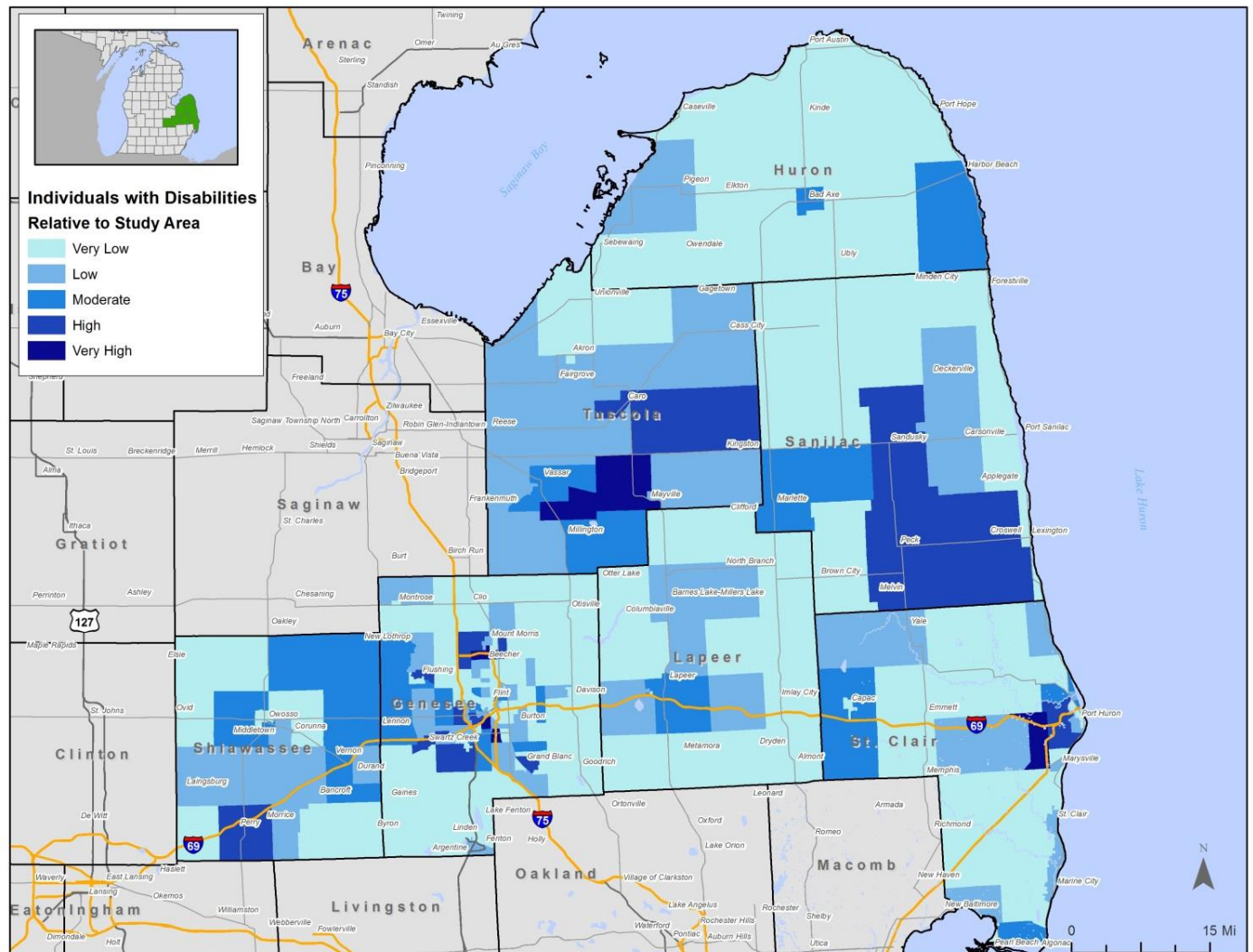


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Individuals with Disabilities

Figure 5-6 illustrates individuals with disabilities in Region 6. The American Community Survey was used to obtain data for the disabled population. It is important to note that this data is only provided at the census tract level. Persons who have disabilities that prevent them or make it more difficult to own and operate a personal vehicle often rely on public transit for their transportation needs. Counties in Region 6 with “Very High” concentrations of individuals with disabilities are St. Clair, Tuscola, and Genesee.

Figure 5-6: Distribution of Individuals with Disabilities

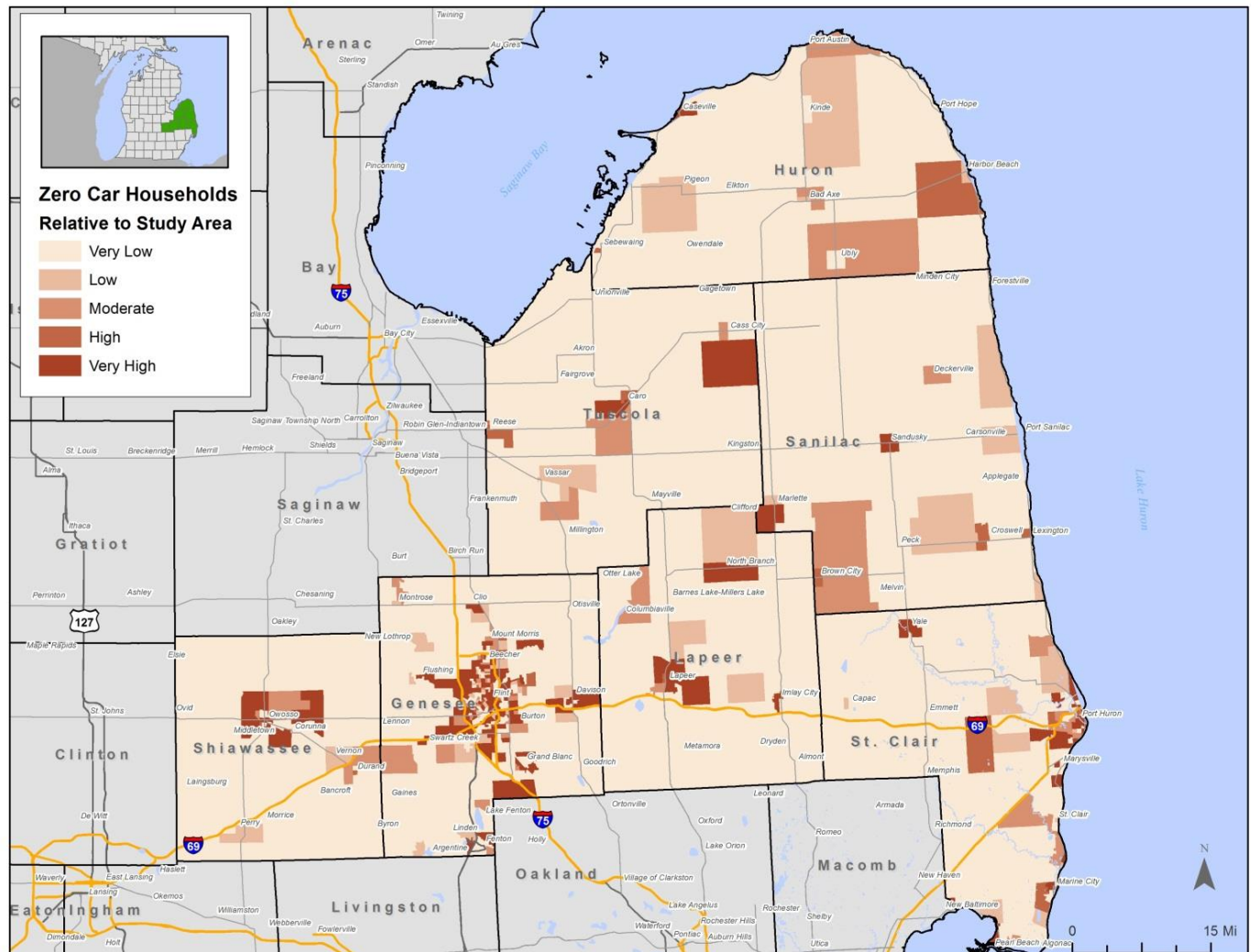


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Zero Car Households

Households without at least one personal vehicle are more likely to depend on the mobility offered by public transit. Although autoless households are reflected in both the TDI and TDIP measures, displaying this segment of the population separately is important since most land uses in Region 6 are at distances too far for non-motorized travel. Figure 5-7 displays the relative number of autoless households. Genesee County contains the most block groups in the region with “Very High” concentrations of households without a vehicle. Tuscola and St. Clair Counties also have block groups with “Very High” concentrations of autoless households.

Figure 5-7: Zero Car Household Distribution

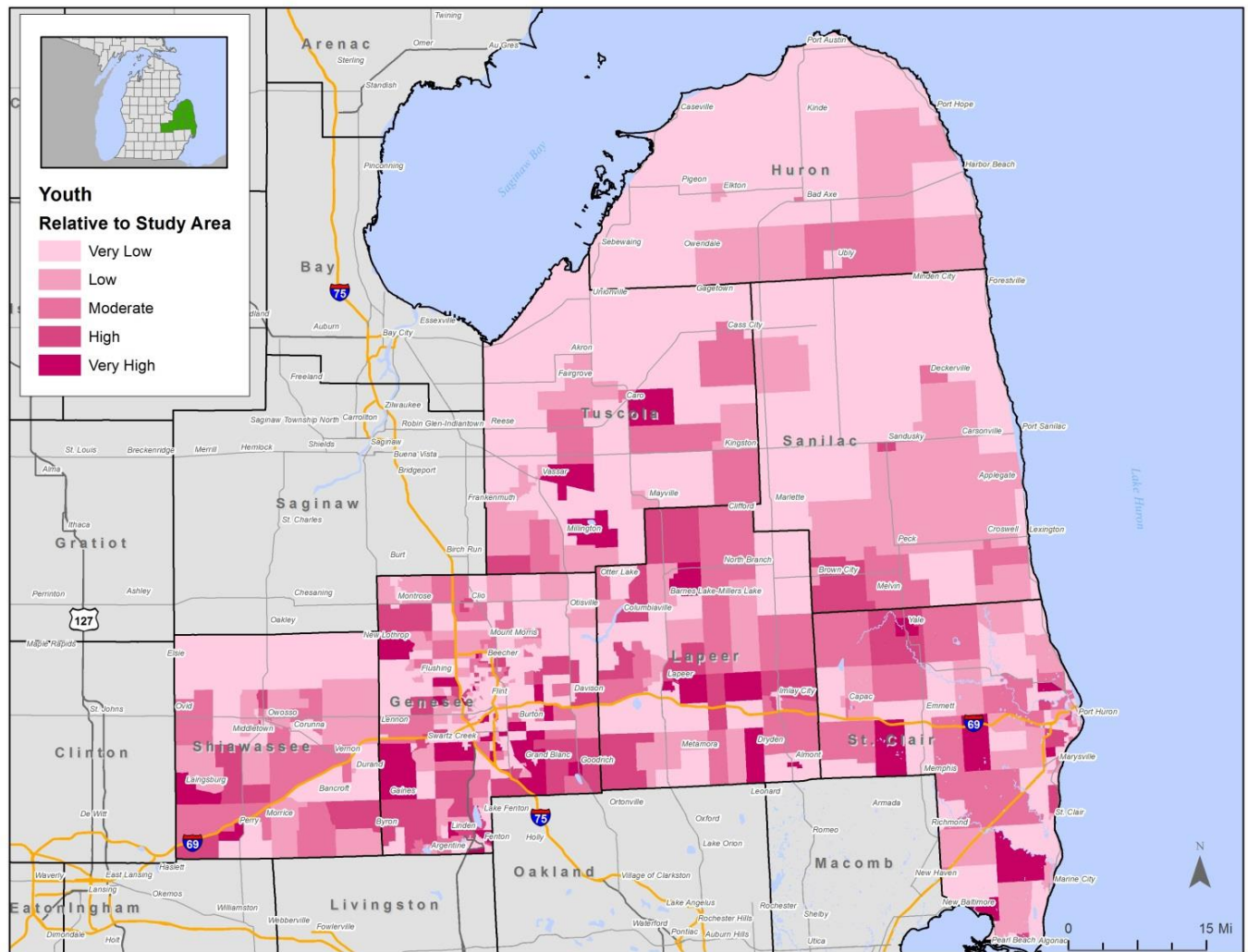


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Youth Population

The youth population is often used as an identifier of transit dependent population. Youths aged 10 to 17 either cannot drive or are just beginning to drive and often do not have a personal automobile assessable to them. For this population, public transit is often the means that offers mobility. Figure 5-8 illustrates the concentrations of youth populations relative to the study area. St Clair, Genesee, Tuscola, Lapeer, and Shiawassee Counties contain block groups with very high or high youth populations.

Figure 5-8: Distribution of the Youth Population (Aged 10 to 17)



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

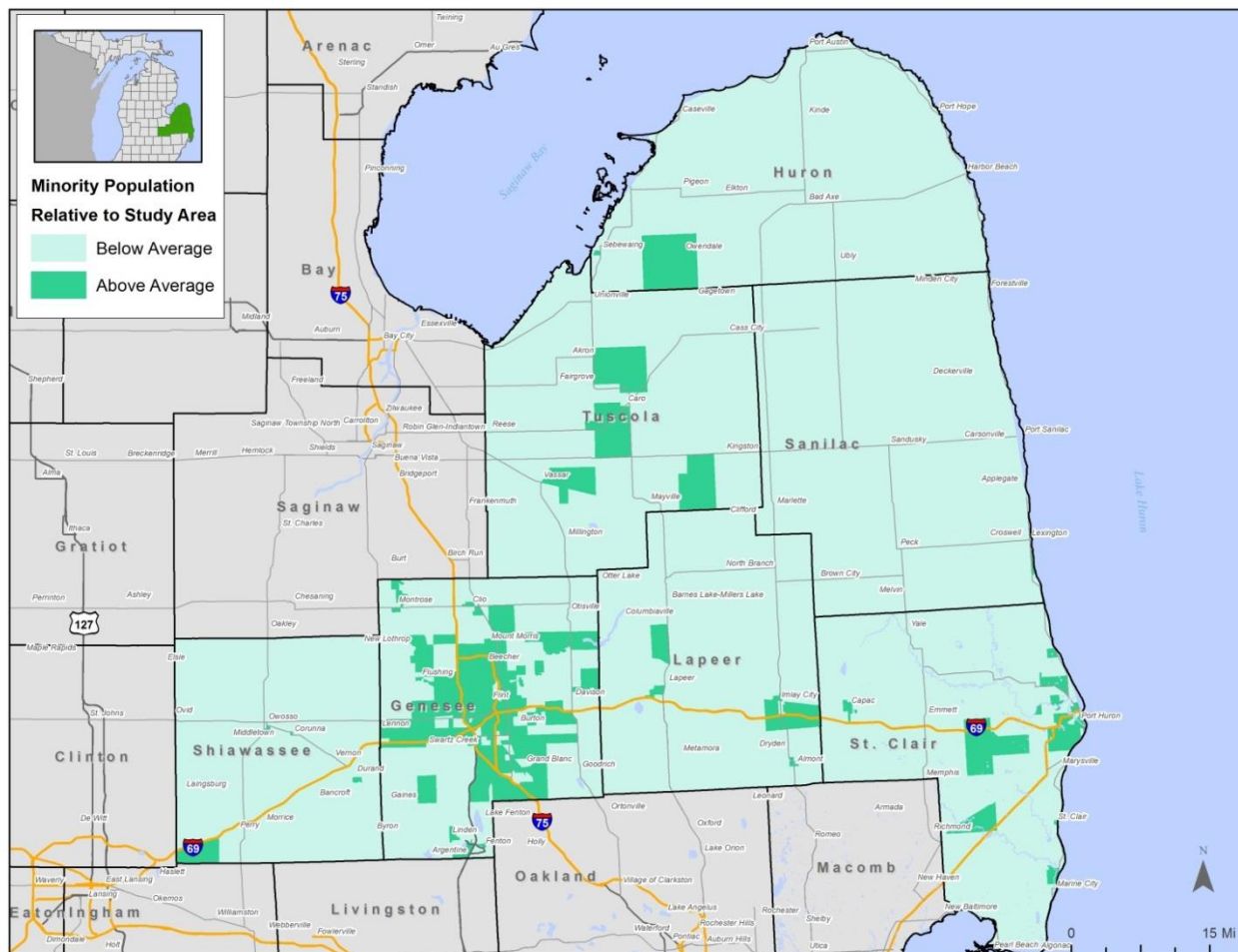
TITLE VI DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal subsidies. This includes agencies providing federally funded public transportation. The following section examines the minority and below poverty level populations in Region 6.

Minority Population

It is important to ensure that areas with an above average percentage of racial and/or ethnic minorities are not negatively impacted by any proposed alterations to existing public transportation services. In Region 6 the average concentration of minority population is 7.62%. Figure 5-9 illustrates the concentration of minority populations and if that concentration is above or below the study areas average. Genesee County has the highest concentration of minority populations in the region. Huron, Tuscola, Shiawassee, Lapeer, and St. Clair Counties all have block groups that contain above average concentrations of minority populations.

Figure 5-9: Distribution of the Minority Population

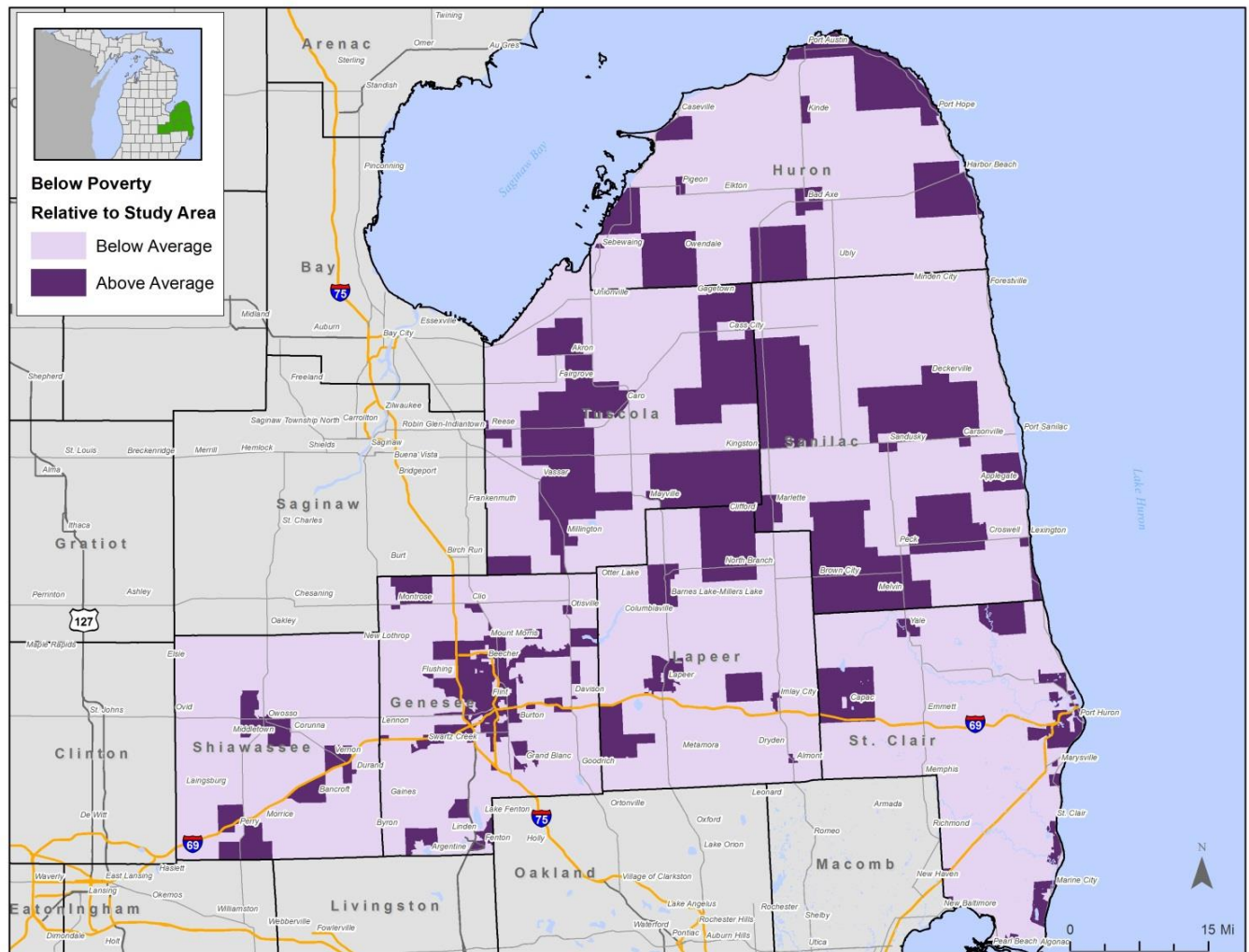


Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Below Poverty Level population

The second group included in the Title VI analysis represents those individuals who earn less than the federal poverty level. This segment of the populations may find it a financial burden to own and maintain a personal vehicle, thus relying on public transit as their primary means of transportation. In Region 6, the average of individuals living below the federal poverty level is 15.6%. Figure 5-10 depicts where the concentration of the population above or below the average relative to the study are located.

Figure 5-10: Distribution of Individuals Living Below the Poverty Level



Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey

Limited-English Proficiency

In addition to providing public transportation for a diversity of socioeconomic groups, it is also important to serve and disseminate information to those of different linguistic backgrounds. As shown in Table 5-3 Region 6 residents predominately speak English. Arenac, Bay, Gratiot, and Saginaw Counties next most prevalent language spoken other than English is Spanish. However, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, and Midland Counties the next most prevalent language spoken besides English are Indo-European Languages. Of those households in the County where a non-English language is spoken, most are also able to speak English “Very Well” or “Well”.

Table 5-5: Limited English Proficiency for Region 6

County	Genesee		Huron		Lapeer		St. Clair	
Population (5yrs and older)	392,761		30,993		83,805		152,380	
Languages Spoken	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	378,784	96.4%	30,103	97.1%	80,285	95.8%	146,498	96.1%
Speak Non-English	13,977	3.6%	890	2.9%	3,520	4.2%	5,882	3.9%
Spanish	4,583	1.2%	306	1.0%	2,193	2.6%	3,061	2.0%
Indo-European languages	4,622	1.2%	462	1.5%	954	1.1%	1,959	1.3%
Asian/Pacific languages	1,914	0.5%	95	0.3%	339	0.4%	374	0.2%
Other	2,858	0.7%	27	0.1%	34	0.0%	488	0.3%
Ability to Speak English:	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
"Very Well"	12,207	3.1%	841	2.71%	2,978	3.6%	5,284	3.5%
Less than "Very Well"	1,770	0.5%	49	0.16%	532	0.6%	608	0.4%

County	Sanilac		Shiawassee		Tuscola	
Population (5yrs and older)	39,987		65,886		51,985	
Languages Spoken	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	38,386	96.0%	64,471	97.9%	50,417	97.0%
Speak Non-English	1,601	4.0%	1,415	2.1%	1,568	3.0%
Spanish	575	1.4%	730	1.1%	760	1.5%
Indo-European languages	934	2.3%	416	0.6%	643	1.2%
Asian/Pacific languages	50	0.1%	116	0.2%	98	0.2%
Other	42	0.1%	153	0.2%	67	0.1%
Ability to Speak English:	#	%	#	%	#	%
"Very Well"	1,471	3.7%	1,336	2.0%	1,420	2.7%
Less than "Very Well"	130	0.3%	79	0.1%	148	0.3%

Source: American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2009-2013), Table B16004.

Identifying regional trip generators serves to complement the previous demographic analysis by indicating where transit services may be most needed. Trip generators attract transit demand and include common origins and destinations. Examples include higher level educational facilities, major employers, regional medical facilities, and Veteran Affairs Medical Centers and Clinics. Figure 5-11 provides a map of the regional trip generators in Region 6. The trip generator categories are briefly detailed below.

[illegible]

Educational Facilities

Many of the individuals that comprise the school age population are unable to afford or operate their own personal vehicle; therefore, it may be assumed that this segment of the population is one that is reliant upon public transportation. Additionally, many faculty and staff members are associated with these institutions as a place of employment. Colleges and Universities that are located in Region 6 include; Baker College, Kettering University, Mott Community College, University of Michigan-Flint, and St. Clair County Community College.

Major Employers

This section examines the top regional employers in Region 6; employers included in this category were those that employ 500 or more workers. Providing transit services to major employment locations is advantageous to both the employee, as the individual is provided with direct access to their occupation and subsequent source of income, and the employer, as this entity will have assurance that their current or potential workforce will have diverse options of accessing the destination. Some of the larger major employers in Region 6 are Hurley Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center, General Motors, and Diplomat Pharmacy. There are also major employment locations neighboring Region 6 (i.e. Great Lakes Crossing, Oakland County).

Major Medical Facilities

Major medical facilities, classified as regional and general hospitals, represent a significant destination for users of public transportation. Older adults and persons with disabilities often rely more heavily upon the services offered by medical facilities than other population segments. Since older adults and persons with disabilities represent a large faction of the transit dependent population, it is imperative that these facilities are made accessible through public transit services. The major medical facilities in Region 6 include Genesys Regional Medical Center, Great Lakes Cancer Institute, Hurley Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center, Huron Medical Center, Scheurer Hospital, Lapeer Regional Medical Center, Deckerville Community Hospital, Marlette Regional Hospital, McKenzie Memorial Hospital, Memorial Healthcare Center, Port Huron Hospital, Saint Joseph Mercy Hospital, St. John River District Hospital, Caro Community Hospital, Hills & Dales General Hospital, and the Caro Center.

Veteran Affairs Medical Facilities

The Department of Veterans Affairs oversees a network of medical centers and smaller community based outpatient clinics. Locating transportation to these facilities can be a major barrier for veterans who rely on healthcare that these facilities provide. Region 6 is home to Bad Axe Community Based Outpatient Center, Flint Community Based Outpatient Center, and Yale VA Outpatient Clinic.

Local Trip Generators

In addition to the major regional trip generators it is also important to identify the communities containing local trip generators. Local trip generators attract transit demand and include common origins and destinations, like colleges and universities, multi-unit housing, non- profit and

governmental agencies, major employers, medical facilities, and shopping centers. Table 5-6 provides an overview of these major destinations at a county-by-county level.

Table 5-6: Local Trip Generators

Trip Generators	College/ University	High Density Housing	Human Service Agency	Major Employer	Medical Facility	Shopping Destinations
Genesee County						
Flint	X	X	X	X	X	X
Grand Blanc		X			X	X
Huron County						
Bad Axe		X			X	
Caseville		X				
Harbor Beach				X		
Lapeer County						
Lapeer				X	X	
St Clair County						
Port Huron	X	X		X	X	X
Sanilac County						
Marlette					X	
Sandusky				X	X	
Shiawassee County						
Owosso	X			X	X	
Tuscola County						
Cass City					X	
Caro				X	X	

Employment Travel Patterns

It is beneficial to account for commuting patterns of residents intra- and inter-regionally. Table 5-7 presents results of the Census Bureau's Journey to Work data which provides location of employment (in county vs. out of county and in state vs. out of state) and means of transportation to work. Residents of Genesee County typically work in their county of residence (74.2%). Huron County residents also work in their county of residence (86.3%); as does St. Clair (62.7%) and Sanilac (65.5%) counties. In Lapeer, Shiawassee, and Tuscola Counties there is an even amount of residents who work in and out of their county of residence.

In Region 6, the primary means of travel to work is by personal vehicle in which the person drives alone. Public Transportation is used the most in Genesee County (1.2%). Tuscola County has the least percent

of residents that use public transportation to travel to work (0%). Carpooling to work is the second most dominant means to travel to work in Region 6.

Table 5-7: Journey to Work Patterns

County	Genesee		Huron		Lapeer		St. Clair	
Workers 16 Years and Older	154,516		13,470		35,886		66,763	
Location of Employment	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
In State of Residence	153,410	99.3%	13,406	99.5%	35,573	99.1%	66,188	99.1%
In County of Residence	114,671	74.2%	11,619	86.3%	16,328	45.5%	41,866	62.7%
Outside County of Residence	38,739	25.1%	1,787	13.3%	16,245	45.3%	24,322	36.4%
Outside State of Residence	1,106	0.7%	64	0.5%	313	0.9%	575	0.9%
Means of Transportation to Work	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Car, Truck, or Van - drove alone	131,482	85.1%	10,945	81.3%	30,250	84.3%	54,383	81.5%
Car, Truck, or Van - carpooled	13,787	8.9%	1,273	9.5%	3,228	9.0%	8,221	12.3%
Public Transportation	1,796	1.2%	62	0.5%	281	0.8%	457	0.7%
Walked	1,850	1.2%	492	3.7%	402	1.1%	1,066	1.6%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, other	1,139	0.7%	144	1.1%	255	0.7%	715	1.1%
Worked at Home	4,462	2.9%	554	4.1%	1,470	4.1%	1,921	2.9%
County	Sanilac		Shiawassee		Tuscola			
Workers 16 Years and Older	16,518		28,953		22,052			
Location of Employment	#	%	#	%	#	%		
In State of Residence	16,389	99.2%	28,766	99.4%	21,885	99.2%		
In County of Residence	10,818	65.5%	14,183	49.0%	10,881	49.3%		
Outside County of Residence	5,571	33.7%	14,583	50.4%	11,004	49.9%		
Outside State of Residence	129	0.8%	187	0.6%	167	0.8%		
County	Sanilac		Shiawassee		Tuscola			
Means of Transportation to Work	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Car, Truck, or Van - drove alone	12,733	77.1%	23,930	82.7%	18,230	82.7%		
Car, Truck, or Van - carpooled	1,431	8.7%	2,739	9.5%	2,404	10.9%		
Public Transportation	161	1.0%	79	0.3%	3	0.0%		
Walked	741	4.5%	761	2.6%	469	2.1%		
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, other	149	0.9%	311	1.1%	215	1.0%		
Worked at Home	1,303	7.9%	1,133	3.9%	731	3.3%		

Source: American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2010-2014), Table B08130.

Another source of data that provides an understanding of employee travel patterns is the Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) dataset. Table 5-8 provides the results of this analysis for Region 6. The table shows the top five employment destinations for county residents.

Table 5-8: Top Five Employment Destinations for County Residents

Genesee County			Huron County		
Place	#	%	Place	#	%
Flint	13,568	10.1%	Bad Axe	779	6.6%
Burton	5,985	4.4%	Harbor Beach	444	3.7%
Fenton	1,975	1.5%	Pigeon Village	353	3.0%
Detroit	1,932	1.4%	Sebewaing Village	327	2.7%
Flushing	1,808	1.3%	Elkton Village	215	1.8%
All Other	109,332	81.2%	All Other	9,773	82.2%
Lapeer County			St. Clair County		
Place	#	%	Place	#	%
Lapeer	1,058	5.8%	Port Huron	5,685	13.4%
Imlay City	438	2.4%	Marysville	2,256	5.3%
Flint	305	1.7%	St. Clair County	1,108	2.6%
Almont Village	178	1.0%	Marine City	670	1.6%
Burton	177	1.0%	Algonac	493	1.2%
All Other	16,201	88.3%	All Other	32,180	75.9%
Sanilac County			Shiawassee County		
Place	#	%	Place	#	%
Sandusky	547	5.3%	Owosso	2,506	16.1%
Croswell	335	3.2%	Corunna	543	3.5%
Marlette	284	2.8%	Durand	333	2.1%
Deckerville	151	1.5%	Flint	159	1.0%
Lexington	139	1.3%	Perry	157	1.0%
All Other	8,866	85.9%	All Other	11,891	76.3%
Tuscola County					
Place	#	%			
Caro	718	6.9%			
Cass City Village	297	2.9%			
Vassar	285	2.7%			
Reese Village	126	1.2%			
Bay City	103	1.0%			
All Other	8,890	85.3%			

Source: Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2013.

Chapter 6

Current Transportation Services and Resources

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a review of the variety of public transit, human service transportation, private transportation services, non-motorized transportation services, and other transportation services that are provided in Region 6. The process to identify transportation resources available in the region included:

- Using information from previous planning efforts (discussed in Chapter 3)
- Obtaining input from regional stakeholders through the coordinated mobility planning workshop
- Reviewing reports produced by MDOT
- Conducting on-line research and obtaining appropriate information on current transportation services.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

The seven counties in Prosperity Region 6 are served by the following public transit systems:

- Genesee County (Flint Mass Transportation Authority – aka., Flint MTA)
- Huron County (Huron Transit Corporation also known as Thumb Area Transit; TAT)
- Lapeer County (Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority, GLTA)
- Sanilac County (Sanilac Transportation, STC)
- Shiawassee County (Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency, SATA)
- St. Clair County (Blue Water Area Transit)
- Tuscola County (Caro Area Transit Authority, Caro Thumbbody Express)

The following section provides an overview, a summary and operating and performance data for each public transit system.

Flint Mass Transportation Authority (Flint MTA or MTA)

Flint MTA is a public mass transportation operator based in Flint, Michigan serving primarily Genesee County. It serves the six surrounding counties of Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, Saginaw, and Lapeer. MTA offers general public transportation and demand response service. Service hours are 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday; and 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for fixed routes and 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for demand response on Sundays. Below are fares for MTA.



Table 6-1: Flint MTA Fares

Category	Fare
Primary and Peak Period Fixed Route Fares	
General Public	\$1.75
ADA Certified	\$0.85
Reduced Fair	\$0.85
Transfer	\$0.10
Regional Route	
All Passengers	\$3.00
Demand Response	
General Public	\$3.50
ADA Certified	\$2.25
Reduced Fare	\$2.25

Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority (GLTA)

GLTA is a demand-response transit system that provides transportation to the city of Lapeer and the townships of Elba, Lapeer, Mayfield, Deerfield, and Oregon. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. GLTA does not operate on Sundays. Below are the fares for GLTA.



Table 6-2: Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority Fares

Category	Fare
Regular	\$3.00
Senior Citizen (60+)	\$1.50
Mobility Disabled	\$1.50
Student (4-18)	\$2.00
Children 4 & under	Free with an adult

Huron Transit Corporation

The Huron Transit Corporation, known as TAT (Thumb Area Transit) was established in 1981 to service the residents of Huron County. TAT is a nonprofit corporation operated by the county of Huron and managed by a transit director. TAT offers public transit service throughout Huron County, serves five area school districts, and operates in a demand response mode. Below are the fares for TAT. Half fare rates are available for seniors age 60 and up, youth age 18 and under and individuals with disabilities.

Table 6-3: Huron Transit Corporation Fares

Category	Fare
0-3 Miles	\$2.00
3-10 Miles	\$2.50
10-15 Miles	\$3.50
15-20 Miles	\$4.50
20-25 Miles	\$5.00
25 + Miles	\$ 5.50

Sanilac Transportation (STC)

STC is a public transportation system that offers curb-to-curb transportation to Sanilac County, Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. STC makes trips to Port Huron once a month.



Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency (SATA)

Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency (SATA) began operations in January 2000 and serves residents of Shiawassee County. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Fares start at \$1.50.

Blue Water Area Transit

The Blue Water Area Transit system provides regularly-scheduled bus service to the City of Port Huron, Marysville and Fort Gratiot Township, as well as a demand response service in Fort Gratiot, Burtchville and Port Huron Townships. Hours of operations are Monday through Thursday 5:15 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Friday 5:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and Saturday 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning. There is a Shopper Shuttle that operates Monday through Friday 9:55 a.m. to 8:35 p.m. and Saturday 10:35 a.m. to 8:35 p.m. The public transit system is operated by Blue Water Area Transportation Commission, an independent public agency, with support from state, federal and local governments. Fares for Blue Water Area Transit are listed below.



Table 6-4: Blue Water Area Transit Fares

Category	Fare
Regular Bus Fare	\$0.80
Children (ages 6 to 17)	\$0.65
Children (age 5 and under accompanied by adult)	Free
Senior Citizens (60 & up), persons with disabilities, persons with valid Medicare Cards	\$0.40

Caro Area Transit Authority (Caro Thumbody Express)

Caro Thumbody Express (CTE) is a public transportation system that provides service to Almer and Indianfields Townships and the City of Caro. CTE provides limited service to Cass City, Mayville, and Vassar. The service runs Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CTE fares are listed below.



Table 6-5: Caro Thumbody Express Fares

Category	Fare
Adults	\$3.00
Seniors (age 60+)	\$1.50
Individuals with Disabilities	\$1.50
Youth (ages 5-17)	\$2.00
Children (under 5)	Free when accompanied by an adult

Regional Overview

Table 6-6 provides a summary of public transit services in Region 6. Table 6-7 provides operating data and performance data for public transit services in the region. As indicated in this table, in 2014 public transit systems in Region 6:

- Provided 7,687,804 passenger trips
- Travelled over 12 million miles
- Operated over 754,992 revenue hours

Also indicated in Table 6-7, funding for public transit services was provided through federal, state, and local funding, as well as through passenger fares.

Table 6-6: Public Transit Services in Region 6

System	Service Overview	Primary Service Area	Service Hours	Regional Services/ Connectivity
Flint Mass Transportation Authority (Flint MTA or MTA)	Fixed Routes	Flint Mass Transportation Authority (Flint MTA or MTA)	Monday – Friday 6:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. Fixed Route Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 7:0 p.m. Your Ride Sunday 7:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Troy, Michigan Auburn Hills, Michigan Lapeer, Michigan Brighton, Michigan Saginaw, Michigan Great Lakes Crossing Outlets Imley City Howell
Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority (GLTA)	Demand Response	The cities of Lapeer, Mayfield, Oregon, Deerfield, and Elba, and Lapeer County	Monday - Friday 6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Provides service to Genesee Valley Mall and Great Lakes Crossing Outlets
Huron Transit Corporation	Door-to-door Demand Response Service	Huron County	Monday – Friday 5:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. Saturday 8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.	
Sanilac Transportation (STC)	Curb-to curb Demand Response service	Sanilac County	Monday –Friday 6:00 a.m. -6:00 p.m. Saturday 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	
Shiawassee Area Transportation System (SATA)	Demand Response	Shiawassee County	Monday - Friday, 6:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.	

System	Service Overview	Primary Service Area	Service Hours	Regional Services/ Connectivity
Blue Water Area Transit	Fixed Routes and Dial-a-Ride Demand Response Service)	<u>Fixed Route</u> City of Port Huron and Fort Gratiot <u>Dial-a-Ride</u> Burtchville Township Port Huron Township City of Marysville City of Port Huron Fort Gratiot Township	Monday – Thursday 5:15 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. Friday 5:15 a.m. - 3:00 a.m. Saturday 8:15 a.m. - 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning	Transfers to the SMART system
Caro Area Transit Authority (Caro Thumbbody Express)	Demand response	Almer, Indianfields, Caro. Limited service to Cass City, Mayville, and Vassar	Monday Friday 6:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	

Table 6-7: Public Transit Operating and Performance Data – 2014

Provider	Total Passengers	Total Eligible Expenses	Total Miles	Total Vehicle Hours	Federal Revenues	State Revenues	Local Revenues	Farebox Revenues
Flint Mass Transportation Authority	5,465,394	\$20,497,349	6,782,121	407,446	\$4,740,611	\$7,376,404	\$7,603,704	\$5,313,478
Huron Transit Corporation,	340,747	\$2,673,036	1,258,784	60,529	\$432,190	\$1,050,503	\$385,521	\$817,521
Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority	173,021	\$2,283,061	709,066	42,406	\$338,773	\$897,243	\$264,926	\$576,291
Sanilac Transportation	123,453	\$1,363,088	471,870	23,564	\$221,043	\$535,694	\$7,851	\$577,584
Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency	96,007	\$1,041,481	394,703	23,311	\$174,077	\$409,302	\$220,198	\$254,183
Blue Water Area Transit	1,408,739	\$10,287,000	2,649,943	175,025	\$2,604,788	\$4,042,791	\$1,082,648	\$3,392,639
Caro Area Transit Authority	80,443	\$919,554	224,856	22,711	\$147,645	\$361,385	\$207,100	\$147,729
Region Total	7,687,804	39,064,569	12,491,343	754,992	8,659,127	14,673,322	9,771,948	11,079,425

Sources: MDOT: Michigan Public Transit Facts

NON-PROFIT AND HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Several government and non-profit agencies provide transportation services to qualified individuals using their services.

Genesee County

Family Service Agency of Mid-Michigan/ Foster Grandparent Program- Offers fixed route service Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Genesee County to foster grandparents, individuals age 55 and up, and low-income individuals. This service is free to clients of the program.

Jewish Community Services – Jewish Community Services offers a program, Highway to Health that provides transportation to residents of Genesee County for medical appointments outside of the county such as Ann Arbor, Lansing, Saginaw, and the Detroit area. Participation requires an intake process with a social worker and fees are based on income. Local transportation is also available for medical appointments, errands, and shopping through the Congregate Meal Program.

Love INC. - A faith based organization that coordinates assistance for families in need. Volunteers provide transportation assistance to residents of Genesee County.

Salvation Army- Participants of the Pathway of Hope Program through the Salvation Army are able to receive bus passes.

Additional transportation providers include:

- Senior Companion Program
- Visually Impaired Center
- Brennan Senior Center
- Eastside Senior Center
- Montrose Senior Center
- Heart of Senior Citizens Kraphol (Clio)
- Vocational Independence Program
- Your Ride Plus (MTA)

Huron County

Huron County Medical Care Facility - Provides transportation to and from facility sponsored events, doctor appointments, etc.

Region VII Area Agency on Aging- A regional planning, advocacy, and administrative agency that provides transportation for seniors to stores, doctor appointments, and community facilities.

Human Development Commission- Transportation provided for persons age 60 and over in Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties to transport older persons to and from community facilities such as doctor appointments, the pharmacy, or the hospital to receive services.

Lapeer County

Department of Senior Activities- Through various programs offers seniors age 60 and up assistance to maintain independent lifestyles and remain in their homes. Transportation is offered through the Department of Senior Activities.

Freedom Road Transportation- A non-profit organization that provides transportation through their volunteer driver program to low income individuals, people with disabilities, senior adults, and former prisoners re-entering low income individuals. Most destinations are to and from medical facilities, employment, worship services, and Grocery stores.

Valley Area Agency on Aging- A regional planning, advocacy, and administrative agency that provides transportation for seniors to stores, doctor appointments, and community facilities.

Sanilac County

Human Development Commission- Transportation provided for persons age 60 and over in Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties to transport older persons to/from community facilities such as doctor appointments, the pharmacy, or the hospital to receive services.

Region VII Area Agency on Aging- A regional planning, advocacy, and administrative agency that provides transportation for seniors to stores, doctor appointments, and community

Human Development Commission- Transportation provided for persons age 60 and over in Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties to transport older persons to/from community facilities such as doctor appointments, the pharmacy, or the hospital to receive services.

Shiawassee County

Valley Area Agency on Aging- A regional planning, advocacy, and administrative agency that provides transportation for seniors to stores, doctor appointments, and community facilities.

St. Clair County

The Area Agency on Aging 1-B Central Office- Provide information and assistance on thousands of services and resources available for seniors (60+), persons with disabilities and family caregivers in the Southeastern Michigan counties of Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw. Areas of assistance include housing options, eligibility and availability of government funded long term care programs, transportation, personal care, respite care, and legal services.

Council on Aging- The Council on Aging provides door to door pick-up and return transportation service for seniors and the disabled throughout St. Clair County. Transportation is prioritized with medical appointments given first priority for service followed by requests for transportation for shopping, senior center visits, business, private or public agency appointments and visiting.

Tuscola County

Human Development Commission- Transportation provided for persons age 60 and over in Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties to transport older persons to/from community facilities such as doctor appointments, the pharmacy, or the hospital to receive services.

SECTION 5310 PROGRAM RECIPIENTS

Specialized transportation services are provided in Region 6 through Section 5310 Program funding. Table 6-3 provides an overview of Section 5310 Program recipients who provided transportation services through this funding in FY2015.

Table 6-3: Section 5310 Program Funded Services

Organization	Counties Served
Court Street Village Management Corp	Genesee
Growth and Opportunity, Inc.	Lapeer, Sanilac
Healthsource Saginaw, Inc.	Bay, Midland, Saginaw, Tuscola
Heart of Senior Citizens Service	Genesee
Huron Transit Corporation	Huron
Lapeer Team Work, Inc.	Lapeer
Mass Transportation Authority	Genesee
Sanilac Transportation Corporation	Sanilac
Vocational Independence Program Transportation	Genesee

PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Intercity Bus Routes

Multiple Indian Trail Routes travel through the region. Genesee and Shiawassee Counties are the primary destinations in the region. Flint, Michigan serves as a connection between Indian Trail routes and Amtrak. These routes are the following:

Route 1482: Chicago-Kalamazoo-Flint-St. Ignace
Route 1483: Kalamazoo-Lansing-Owosso-Flint
Route 1485: Detroit-Flint-Bay City- St. Ignace
Route 1486: Grand Rapids-Benton Harbor-Chicago
Route 1487: Grand Rapids-Kalamazoo
Route 1488: East Lansing-Alanson- St. Ignace
Route 1489: St. Ignace- Sault Ste. Marie-Ironwood
Route 1492: Bay City-Flint-Pontiac-Southfield-Detroit

Taxis

The following are taxi companies that serve the region.

- Best Cab Company
- Eric's Taxi Service
- Veterans Transport Service
- Hey Taxi
- International Cab & Shuttle
- Aty Taxi
- LA Taxi
- Acme Cab Company
- Port Huron Cab
- Blue Water City Cab

FERRY SERVICE

Blue Water Ferry, Ltd- Blue Water Ferry, Ltd operates Monday through Sunday from 6:55 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. The route is from Marine City, Michigan to Sombra, Ontario (Canada). It accommodates passengers, automobiles, commercial trucks and bicycles.

Champion Auto Ferry- Champion's Auto Ferry runs from Algonac to Harsens Island. The ferry runs 24 hours a day Monday through Sunday year round. During the summer the ferry operates 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. continuously and from 12:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. every 20 minutes. Champion Auto Ferry carries passengers, automobiles, commercial trucks, and bicycles.

Russel Island Ferry Service- Russel Island Ferry Service runs from Algonac, Michigan to Russel Island. It carries passengers and bicycles.

Walpole-Algonac Ferry Line, Ltd- Walpole-Algonac Ferry Line operates between Algonac, Michigan to Walpole Island, Canada. From Algonac, the first ferry departure is at 7:00 a.m. From Walpole Island the first ferry departs at 6:50 a.m. The ferry runs every 15 to 20 minutes crossing the St. Clair River every 10 to 15 minutes. The Walpole-Algonac Ferry carries passengers, automobiles, and bicycles.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Amtrak

Amtrak operates three intercity passenger routes in Michigan. The Blue Water Route operates throughout the region stopping in Durand, Shiawassee County; Flint, Genesee; Lapeer, Lapeer County; and Port Huron, St. Clair County. Amtrak's Thruway Motorcoach Connections service also travels through Owosso, Shiawassee County; and Flint, Genesee County.

NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

- The Tip of The Thumb Heritage Water Trail is a 103 mile water trail on Lake Huron. White Rock Park is the beginning of the southern portion of the trail and it terminates at the city of Lexington. The northern section of the trail starts at White Rock Park and goes around the thumb area of Michigan ending at the Quanicassee River public access site.
- The Flint River Trail extends 15 miles along the Flint River through the City of Flint and a portion of the Genesee Recreation Area. Genesee County in total contains over 83 miles of non-motorized pathway and was most recently included on the route of Michigan's Iron Belle Trail.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Huron County Memorial Airport: Located one mile south of Bad Axe, Michigan. It is owned by Huron County. It is categorized as a general aviation airport.

Bishop International Airport: Bishop International Airport is located in Flint, Michigan and is the third busiest airport in Michigan. The airport is served by Southwest Airlines, Delta Air Lines, United Airlines, and American Airlines.

Chapter 7

Prioritized Strategies

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a prioritized list of strategies for Region 6 based on regional stakeholder review and input. The process for development of these strategies involved:

- Development of potential strategies, activities and projects to help to address identified gaps between current transportation services and unmet needs, expand regional mobility, and achieve greater efficiencies in service delivery. These preliminary strategies, activities and projects were based on:
 - Input from regional stakeholders during the September 2015 workshop
 - Strategies from the Phase 1 report produced by Genesee-Lapeer-Shiawassee Region V Planning and Development Commission (GLS Region V PDC) for MDOT
 - Recommendations included in recent plans and studies, including the Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan and Shiawassee County Coordinated Transportation Plan.
- Incorporating comments from regional stakeholders on the preliminary list of possible strategies, activities and projects.
- Prioritization of potential strategies through an on-line survey. At the September 2015 workshop, participants agreed to this process, and that results would be used to develop a list grouping strategies by priorities (high, medium and low).

While many transportation issues in the region are interrelated, the proposed strategies, activities and projects that were considered by regional stakeholders responded to the following overall goals:

- Maintain existing transportation services
- Expand and improve local transit services
- Expand regional transportation services
- Improve coordination of public, private and human services transportation
- Ensure customers are aware of existing transportation services
- Consider a variety of transportation services to expand and improve mobility
- Increase funding to provide expanded transportation services
- Incorporate land use in community transportation efforts
- Utilize technology to provide safe, effective and customer friendly services

HIGH PRIORITIES

Continue to Support Services that are Effectively Meeting Identified Transportation Needs in the Region

While consideration of expanded transportation services is vital to meeting community needs, financial resources are needed to operate vehicles and continue services at the current level. This strategy involves providing operating funds to support existing public transit services and human services transportation that are effectively meeting mobility needs identified in the region, especially those serving older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with lower incomes, and veterans. This strategy includes continuing to seek grants to supplement costs, a top strategy in the Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. It is consistent with a strategy in the Shiawassee County Coordinated Transportation Plan for sustaining transportation services through fund development proposals and plans.

This strategy should be coupled with evaluation of public transit services in the region. This ongoing process would include a review of existing transit services with a major focus on system routes and performance of transportation services. This ongoing assessment assures that public transit systems in the region are responding to possible changing demographics in their communities and operating service that is most effective and economical. This service planning process should be supplemented with input through appropriate rider, employer, and public surveys; feedback from stakeholders agencies and organizations; and input from staff including drivers and dispatchers on the frontline of services.

As a follow-up to a previous statewide training on providing cost effective transit services a resource is available to support ongoing service planning efforts. This resource is available through --

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/TransitServicePlanningGuideAndResourcesForMDO_T_409438_7.pdf

Transportation provided through human service agencies is more specialized, and therefore not monitored through these performance measures. There are tools available that agencies can use to evaluate their transportation programs and ensure that financial resources are being used effectively. An example would be for human service agencies to utilize Easter Seals Project Action's *Transportation by the Numbers* tool which provides human service organizations with ways to more easily identify expenses, revenues and performance outcomes. This allows agencies to make more informed decisions about their future in the transportation business.

Improve Coordination of Services among Providers through Mobility Management and Other Activities

While there are continuous efforts in the region to coordinate transportation services, the need to maintain and expand these efforts is ongoing. This strategy calls for continued and expanded coordination between public transit, human services transportation, and private transportation services operating in the region. This strategy could incorporate coordination needs identified in previous plans, i.e., the need to incorporate door-to-door services with existing curb-to-curb "Your Ride" services as noted in the Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services

Transportation Plan. It would build upon the proposed ongoing committee discussed in Chapter 8 of this plan.

Support Expanded Transit Services that Meet Identified Needs or Recommendations Identified Through Detailed Transit Plans

While the need to expand regional mobility is a key component of the planning process, it is important not to lose sight of the need to identify local transit needs and implement improvements when feasible. This strategy calls for support of services that meet identified local need. For instance, there are areas of Shiawassee County that are not served by the current bus system.

This strategy supports recommendations included in any local transit plans developed in the region. These detailed plans serve as a guide for public transportation, providing a roadmap for implementing service and/or organizational changes, improvements, and/or potential expansions. Detailed in these plans, service recommendations respond to a variety of transportation needs expressed by local stakeholders. The individual plans include projected costs and a proposed timeline for implementing service improvements.

Implement Regional Services Identified as High Priority

Building upon the previous strategy, this supports implementation of regional services that meet unmet needs identified through planning efforts. Some identified regional services include those between Genesee County and VA hospitals in Ann Arbor and Saginaw and between Genesee County and Ann Arbor, Birch Run, Brighton and the Genesys campus. Additional regional service considerations include Auburn Hills, Great Lakes Crossing, Troy, Delphi Plant, and Howell.

The proposed regional committee discussed in Chapter 8 could serve as the forum for detailed discussions on the prioritization of these regional services, service planning (i.e., hours and days of service, and stop locations), and potential funding plan. Decisions would need to be made if regional services would include a consortium of operators to provide service in a regional corridor or the designation of one entity to provide service.

Establish or Expand Programs That Train Customers, Human Service Agency Staff, Medical Facility Personnel, and Others in the Use and Availability of Transportation Services

It is vital that customers, caseworkers, agency staff and medical facility personnel that work with older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes are familiar and confident with available transportation services. This strategy involves expanded outreach programs to ensure people helping others with their transportation issues are aware of mobility options in the region.

It is consistent with the strategy in the Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan that called for outreach to providers, elected officials, passengers, and potential passengers; publication and marketing of MTA transportation services; and development of a pocket size directory of community services that provided transit customers with information they need to know to reduce wait times. It builds upon a strategy in the

Shiawassee County Coordinated Transportation Plan to develop a central point of access for information on available transportation services, one that led to the establishment of a mobility manager at SATA.

This strategy can involve additional efforts to support use of current transportation resources, including travel training programs to help individuals use available public transit services.

Continue to Support Capital Projects that are Planned, Designed, and Carried Out to Meet Identified Needs

Maintaining and building upon current capital infrastructure is crucial to expanding mobility options, especially for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, and people with lower incomes. Before the region can consider efforts for improving mobility for these population groups, it is critical to ensure that the current foundation of services remains in place through a sufficient capital network.

This strategy involves acquisition of replacement buses or vans, vehicle rehabilitation or overhaul, and other appropriate vehicle equipment improvements that support the current capital infrastructure in the region, especially for non-profit organizations that provide demand response human services transportation. With limited capital funding to replace buses, it is essential that current vehicles are maintained and remain safe and operable beyond the typical useful life criteria.

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

Regional stakeholders noted the need for a stronger and ongoing advocacy campaign that highlights the impact that public transportation and human-services transportation has on residents of the region, and how it is a vital component of the community transportation infrastructure. In the GLS Region V PDC report for MDOT, Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority (GLTA) reported that the largest obstacle to implementing regional services was a lack of funding and that current funding was just enough to provide local services. Transit systems in the region noted that local millages hinder implementation of regional routes, as residents, decision makers, and the business community may not support services that are taxed locally but are regional in nature.

This strategy involves a regional and unified effort to inform elected officials, local and national decision makers, and the general public on the dire need for additional funding to support current services, especially regional services that meet identified needs. Coordinated along with efforts by transit associations at the state level, it involves education on the fact that funding plans can be established that take into account local sources and ensure all parties are getting a good business deal. This strategy is consistent with a strategy in the Shiawassee County Coordinated Transportation Plan that called for creating partnerships for transportation funding advocacy.

This advocacy campaign could be part of a national movement to stress the importance of community and public transit in the surface transportation reauthorization debate in

Washington, D.C. The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) have developed a variety of resources that can be used in advocacy efforts with local offices of House and Senate members, local media, and state and local elected officials.

MEDIUM PRIORITIES

Use Current Human-Services Transportation Services to Provide Additional Trips, Especially for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

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

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

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

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

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

This strategy involves continuing to seek grants to fund current and expanded transportation services in the region. For instance, the Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan noted the need to continue seeking grants to cover costs of subsidized passes and provide a sliding fee scale for services. Through this coordinated

transportation plan, the region is more prepared for additional funding programs that may arise through federal and state levels, particularly those that target needs identified by regional stakeholders and included in this plan.

Incorporate Technology in the Provision of Transportation Services

One of the strategies included in the Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan was the incorporation of technology. This strategy supports efforts to ensure rapidly advancing technologies are included in efforts to provide safer and more convenient transportation services. As noted in the Genesee County plan these technology efforts can include additional information at bus stops and shelters, on-board cameras and wi-fi services, and smartphone applications.

Other opportunities include more efficient dial-a-ride services using appropriate scheduling technology. In rural areas where scheduled services are not feasible, the assessment of appropriate technology to improve coordination of trips can be considered.

Establish Ridesharing Program for Long Distance Medical Trips

Regional stakeholders expressed the need for transportation services that serve long-distance medical trips, particularly for people who are not eligible for Medicaid funded transportation. This strategy uses a commuter-oriented model as a basis for developing a ride-sharing program for long distance medical trips. A database of potential drivers and riders could be kept with a central “mobility manager,” who would match the trip needs with the available participating drivers. The riders would share the expenses with the drivers on a per-mile basis (i.e., similar to mileage reimbursement).

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

Consider Alternative Transit Service Designs

Providing transit services can be challenging and costly, though there are number of approaches that can be taken to improve service at a lower cost. Where appropriate, transit operators in the more rural areas of the region should seek to employ options that are less expensive to operate than dial-a-ride services.

The options for consideration include establish fixed schedule service in more remote areas. Fixed schedule service sets specific schedules for when the vehicle is going to be in a particular community and going to a specific community (usually where medical and shopping services are located). This may be daily service, weekly or even once a month depending on the level of demand. Passengers can be picked up at the door, an intersection or a designated bus stop according to the posted schedule. The purpose of this approach is to group trips which yields a lower cost per trip and thereby makes this service far more cost effective than paratransit. This approach can also be combined with human service transportation programs that serve these

areas. Depending on the schedule and route structure there may be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) implications to consider when implementing scheduled services.

This strategy can appropriately incorporate the strategy in the Genesee County Coordinated Transportation Plan that called for surveys of health and human service agencies to obtain additional information on where people in the area are going and where they would like to go, times, and how frequently.

LOWER PRIORITIES

Developing a Mentoring Program between Transit Systems and Human Service Transportation Programs

Mentoring programs are a form of coordination where the human service agency operates its own vehicles and transit systems can help ensure safe, dependable and quality transportation even when not operating the service. In these scenarios transit systems are typically mentors and human service agencies are mentored. Mentors can offer driver and dispatcher training, maintenance support, insurance and other operating support or advice without the “institutional” threat of consolidation. This strategy can involve service provider training noted as one of the strategies in the Genesee County Coordinated Transportation Plan.

Improve Coordination to Address Safety Needs and Security

In addition to coordination between different transportation providers, it is critical there is coordination with emergency management and other important community agencies. This strategy incorporates one from the Genesee County Coordinated Transportation Plan that calls for further communication and sharing of information between transportation providers and police, fire and school systems in the area.

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

A variety of transportation services are needed to meet the mobility needs of older adults and people with disabilities. Some of the needs identified by regional stakeholders are better handled through more specialized services beyond those typically provided through general public transit services. In addition the rural nature and the geographic makeup of the region are not always conducive for shared-ride services. For instance, in Shiawassee County, SATA has implemented a primarily volunteer-based program that helps to fill service gaps in the County.

The expansion of volunteer driver programs would offer transportation options that are difficult to meet through public transit and human service agency transportation, and provide a more personal and one-to-one transportation service for customers who may require additional assistance. Fortunately, there are numerous examples of successful volunteer driver programs throughout the country that can be used as models to design a volunteer-driver program for the region.

Improve Connectivity between Land Use Planning and Community Transportation Services

Regional stakeholders also expressed the need to improve connectivity between land use and future development with transportation services. Decisions where to place popular destinations has tremendous impact on the ability of public transit providers to serve these locations, and therefore it is vital that transportation providers are involved at the outset of the development process. This strategy supports efforts that ensure public transit and other transportation providers are at the table and can provide their input on parking lot design, shelter placement, and other land use considerations.

This strategy supports efforts to incorporate biking, pedestrian access, and other non-motorized activities discussed in the previous one into the community transportation network and the planning process.

Consider and Implement Vehicle Repair Programs

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

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

Implement Complete Streets Policies to Enable Non-Motorized Transportation and Facilitate Connections with Current Transit Services

Regional stakeholders expressed the need for greater use of non-motorized transportation and policies that support these travel options. This includes Complete Streets policies that enable greater use of non-motorized transportation as a means of mobility, and involves additional bike racks, bike parking facilities, multi-modal connections between transit and non-motorized transportation, bike and pedestrian trails, and dedicated bike lanes.

This strategy supports efforts to assess pedestrian and bike access, including access to bus stops and multi-modal centers. These assessments provide information that can be used to prioritize improvements that increase safety for people who choose to bike, walk and/or use transit, enable more residents to access current bus stops, and help connect all modes of transportation in the region.

Chapter 8

Ongoing Arrangements

During the regional workshop stakeholders noted the need for expanded regional transit services that cross county lines. In their report to MDOT GLS Region V noted that there continues to be challenges for the three systems in Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee Counties in working with transits systems in adjacent jurisdictions. The result is customers needing to transfer multiple times to reach their destinations. The report suggested that legislation, policy changes, or incentives may be needed to ensure that transit systems in the region are effectively working together to provide regional transit services. The report also noted the Mass Transportation Authority's (MTA) interest in possibly becoming a regional authority, thereby allowing the provision of coordinated and connected services through one organization.

While this plan serves as the foundation for improved regional services, it is evident that more detailed discussions are needed. For instance, the MTA becoming a regional system has potential to provide more efficient and effective regional mobility, and would involve detailed discussions between elected officials and key decision makers in multiple jurisdictions to be implemented. In addition, a strategy in the Genesee County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan noted the need for regular meetings to coordinate transit outside the county.

This strategy calls for a more formal structure to assess regional transit opportunities, identify possible service improvements, and gain consensus on implementation of services (i.e., who would operate, how costs and funding would be allocated). A consideration is a formal regional coordinating committee that would provide an ongoing forum for members to:

- Discuss improved connections between existing transit providers. While there is some connectivity between systems in the region additional connections can be discussed and implemented as appropriate.
- Consider, plan, and implement cross county services. While some jurisdictions in the region are working together to implement services that transport customers across county lines or enable transfers between services, regional stakeholders noted need for additional cross-county services that meet rural community demands and support economic development.
- Discuss and establish priorities for public transit services in the region.
- Review and discuss strategies for coordinating transit services with other regions in Michigan to help expand mobility options.
- Identify potential funding sources and partnerships to support expanded regional services.
- Lead updates of this regional mobility plan.

Chapter 9: Adoption Process

As discussed in Chapter 1, this coordinated mobility plan is designed to meet federal coordinated transportation planning requirements. Guidance in these requirements state that the lead agency in consultation with planning participants should identify the process for approving and adopting the plan.

The consensus in Region 6 was that stakeholders who participated in the development of this plan, and who had the opportunity to provide input and review interim portions, would serve in the adoption capacity. Through the course of the planning process these regional stakeholders had the opportunity to:

- Review and comment on identified transportation needs in the region.
- Review and provide input on potential strategies, activities, and projects to be included in the regional plan.
- Prioritize strategies identified as the most appropriate for improving mobility in the region.
- Review and provide input on the draft version of this plan.
- Approve a final version of this plan.

Appendix A: Coordinated Planning Guidance

COORDINATED PLANNING

1. The Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

Federal transit law, as amended by MAP-21, requires that projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program be “included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and that the plan be “developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public.” The experiences gained from the efforts of the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM), and specifically the United We Ride (UWR) initiative, provide a useful starting point for the development and implementation of the local public transit-human services transportation plan required under the Section 5310 program.

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

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

Overview

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

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

under other programs sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact.

Required Elements

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

- An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit)
- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service
- Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery
- Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified

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

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

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

This type of planning is also an eligible activity under four other FTA programs—the Metropolitan Planning (Section 5303), Statewide Planning (Section 5304), Formula Grants for Rural Areas (Section 5311), and Urbanized Area Formula (Section 5307) programs—all of

which may be used to supplement the limited (10 percent) planning and administration funding under this program. Other resources may also be available from other entities to fund coordinated planning activities. All “planning” activities undertaken in urbanized areas, regardless of the funding source, must be included in the Unified Planning Work Program of the applicable MPO.

Tools and Strategies for Developing a Coordinated Plan

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

- **Community planning session.** A community may choose to conduct a local planning session with a diverse group of stakeholders in the community. This session would be intended to identify needs based on personal and professional experiences, identify strategies to address the needs, and set priorities based on time, resources, and feasibility for implementation. This process can be done in one meeting or over several sessions with the same group. It is often helpful to identify a facilitator to lead this process. Also, as a means to leverage limited resources and to ensure broad exposure, this could be conducted in cooperation, or coordination, with the applicable metropolitan or statewide planning process.
- **Self-assessment tool.** *The Framework for Action: Building the Fully Coordinated Transportation System*, developed by FTA and available at www.unitedweride.gov, helps stakeholders realize a shared perspective and build a roadmap for moving forward together. The self-assessment tool focuses on a series of core elements that are represented in categories of simple diagnostic questions to help groups in states and communities assess their progress toward transportation coordination based on standards of excellence. There is also a *Facilitator’s Guide* that offers detailed advice on how to choose an existing group or construct an ad hoc group. In addition, it describes how to develop elements of a plan, such as identifying the needs of targeted populations, assessing gaps and duplication in services, and developing strategies to meet needs and coordinate services.
- **Focus groups.** A community could choose to conduct a series of focus groups within communities that provides opportunity for greater input from a greater number of representatives, including transportation agencies, human service providers, and passengers. This information can be used to inform the needs analysis in the community. Focus groups also create an opportunity to begin an ongoing dialogue with community representatives on key issues, strategies, and plans for implementation.
- **Survey.** The community may choose to conduct a survey to evaluate the unmet transportation needs within a community and/or available resources. Surveys can be

conducted through mail, e-mail, or in-person interviews. Survey design should consider sampling, data collection strategies, analysis, and projected return rates. Surveys should be designed taking accessibility considerations into account, including alternative formats, access to the Internet, literacy levels, and limited English proficiency.

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

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

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

Adequate Outreach to Allow for Participation

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

Participants in the Planning Process

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

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

Transportation Partners

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

Passengers and Advocates

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

Human Service Partners

- Agencies that administer health, employment, or other support programs for targeted populations. Examples of such agencies include but are not limited to

departments of social/human services, employment one-stop services, vocational rehabilitation, workforce investment boards, Medicaid, community action programs (CAP), Agency on Aging (AoA), Developmental Disability Council, community services board

- Nonprofit human service provider organizations that serve the targeted populations
- Job training and placement agencies
- Housing agencies
- Healthcare facilities
- Mental health agencies

Other

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

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

Levels of Participation

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

In addition, federal, state, regional, and local policy makers, providers, and advocates should consistently engage in outreach efforts that enhance the coordinated process because it is important that all stakeholders identify the opportunities that are available in building a coordinated system. To increase participation at the local levels from human service partners, state department of transportation offices are encouraged to work with their partner agencies at the state level to provide information to their constituencies about the importance of partnering with human service transportation programs and the opportunities that are available through building a coordinated system.

Adoption of a Plan

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

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

4. Relationship to Other Transportation Planning Processes

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

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

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

In some areas, where the coordinated plan or project selection is not completed in a time frame that coincides with the development of the TIP/STIP, the TIP/STIP amendment processes will need to be utilized to include selected projects in the TIP/STIP before FTA grant award.

The lead agency developing the coordinated plan should communicate with the relevant MPOs, state departments of transportation or regional planning agencies at an early stage in plan development. States with coordination programs may wish to incorporate the needs and strategies identified in local coordinated plans into statewide coordination plans.

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

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

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

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

Cycle and Duration of the Coordinated Plan

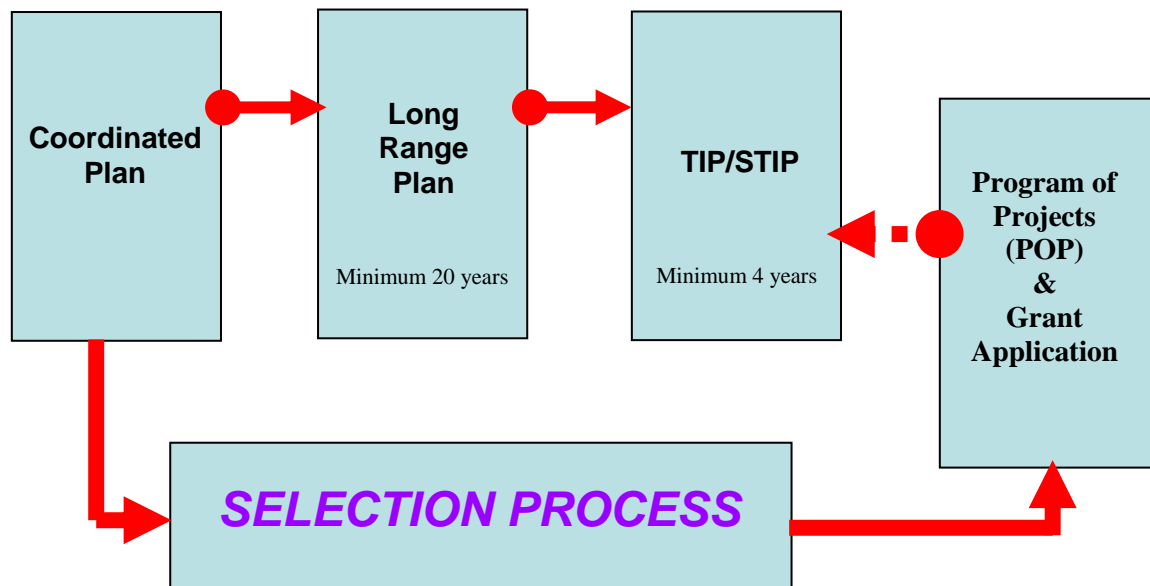
At a minimum, the coordinated plan should follow the update cycles for metropolitan transportation plans (MTPs) (i.e., four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and five years in air quality attainment areas). States, MPOs, designated recipients, and public agencies that administer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

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

Recipients of Section 5307 and Section 5311 assistance are the “public transit” in the public transit-human services transportation plan and their participation is assumed and expected.

Further, 49 U.S.C. 5307(b)(5), as amended by MAP-21, requires that, “Each recipient of a grant shall ensure that the proposed program of projects (POP) provides for the coordination of public transportation services ... with transportation services assisted from other United States Government sources.” In addition, 49 U.S.C. 5311(b)(2)(C)(ii) requires the Secretary of DOT to determine that a state’s Section 5311 projects “provide the maximum feasible coordination of public transportation service ... with transportation service assisted by other federal sources.” Finally, under the Section 5311 program, states are required to expend 15 percent of the amount available to support intercity bus service. FTA expects the coordinated planning process in rural areas to take into account human service needs that require intercity transportation.

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



Appendix B

Michigan Statewide Transit Study

Workshop: Region 6



**Michigan Statewide Transit Study Workshop
Prosperity Region #6
September 29, 2015**

**Mass Transportation Authority (MTA)
Robert J. Foy Administration and Training Facility
1401 South Dort Highway
Flint, MI 48503**

Agenda

<i>Registration</i>	<i>12:30-1:00</i>
<i>Welcome / Background</i>	<i>1:00-1:15</i>
<i>What We Know:</i>	<i>1:15-2:00</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Transportation Needs</i>- <i>Transportation Resources</i>	
<i>Looking Ahead: Possible Service Improvements</i>	<i>2:00-2:30</i>
<i>Break / Assemble into Breakout Groups</i>	<i>2:30-2:45</i>
<i>Roundtable Discussions: What are the Priorities?</i>	<i>2:45-3:15</i>
<i>Reports from Groups</i>	<i>3:15-3:45</i>
<i>Next Steps and Wrap-up</i>	<i>3:45-4:00</i>

Appendix C

Regional Transit Mobility: Phase One – GLS Region V



Regional Transit Mobility: Phase One – GLS Region V

April 2015



Overview

On June 2, 2014, Governor Snyder released a special message to the legislature on the topic of aging, titled “Making Michigan a Great Place to Live Well and Age Well.” The special message included the following regarding access to transportation: “Michiganders, including many older adults, need regional mobility and transit providers to become more regionally focused. This is both an urban and rural issue.” In that message, the Governor asked the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to partner with metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) and regional planning agencies (RPA) to work on the issue of regional transit mobility. The regional aspect of the initiative is defined by the Governor’s Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI) Regions.

The Genesee-Lapeer-Shiawassee Region V Planning and Development Commission (GLS Region V PDC), as the RPA for GLS Region V, is currently working with MDOT and will work with contracted agencies to implement the Governor’s initiative.

To begin the first of three phases, staff asked each major transit agency in GLS Region V to provide detailed answers to help assess and document the need and the ability of individuals to make use of local transit services for trips that cross county lines and/or transit service areas. This report assesses the current knowledge of regional transit issues in Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties which are represented by the GLS Region V PDC.

Survey

In order to assess what is known regarding the need for regional transit mobility and the individual needs to use transit county to county, a survey was conducted. The letter and survey questions sent to the three major transit service providers in GLS Region V are attached in Appendix A. In addition to this initial survey, staff contacted smaller transit providers in GLS Region V to seek their input for phase one (see *Appendix B*). The following are responses to the survey from each county.

Responses

GENESEE COUNTY

FLINT - MASS TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MTA)

1. *Please define your primary service area:*

- a. The Mass Transportation Authority is the countywide transportation provider for Flint and Genesee County, Michigan. The MTA also serves six surrounding counties (Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, Shiawassee, Saginaw and Lapeer) through its regional services. The MTA family of

services includes fourteen primary fixed routes operating seven days a week; peak period routes that augment the primary routes at high demand times; regional service taking Genesee County residents to work places in other counties; and countywide paratransit services. MTA also provides Your Ride Demand Response transit services throughout Genesee County for the elderly, elderly disabled, mentally disabled and for those passengers who do not have access to the fixed route services.

- b. *Are there any special routes or circumstances when regional transit service is provided outside of the service area:*

Flint and Genesee County, Michigan have undergone a myriad of changes in past decades. What was once a stronghold for automotive enterprise and home to a dozen General Motors facilities employing thousands of workers is now a county where health care and social assistance agencies provide more jobs than transportation and manufacturing. In the past decade, the Flint metropolitan area has lost over 45,000 jobs. Residents of Genesee County are less financially stable, with many living at or below the poverty level, and are looking for transportation alternatives.

Residents of Genesee County are forced to seek job opportunities outside the county. MTA's regional service makes that possible by providing access to outside employment centers at an affordable cost. On a daily basis the MTA provides work-related transportation services on 19 different routes that operate on nearly a 24-hour a day basis. MTA has inter-local agreements with the transit agencies in six counties that surround Genesee County. These allow MTA to provide commuter service for workers to any location within 50 miles of downtown Flint, MI.

MTA currently provides regional transportation to Pinnacle Foods in Lapeer, Great Lakes Crossing in Auburn Hills, Delphi in Troy & Brighton, Morleys, and the VA Hospital in Saginaw. The regional routes also connect with SMART in Ann Arbor, the suburban Detroit public transportation system at the Great Lakes Crossing in Auburn Hills. Service between Genesee County and Oakland County, to the Auburn Hills area, operates every hour of the day (17 hours per day) seven (7) days per week. SMART then connects with DDOT, providing a means of travel throughout metropolitan Detroit. The maps, routes and schedules can be found at the MTA website (www.mtaflint.org).

2. *What is known regarding the need (demand) for regional transit mobility in the area?*

- a. The demand for regional transportation services is growing rapidly. The MTA anticipates more regional routes into Lapeer and Shiawassee Counties to accommodate manufacturing growth and seasonal work. Meijer has many farms and warehouses along the I-69 corridor west from the Flint area into Lansing. They are looking to hire workers, with a special focus on workers with disabilities. They are also looking to hire much of their workforce from the Flint area which will necessitate public transportation services.

The MTA also anticipates additional routes into Lapeer County to accommodate seasonal increases at Pinnacle Foods. The MTA is also looking to add a regional route to the Birch Run Outlet Stores to accommodate the workforce that reside in Flint and work in Birch Run. Additional regional service may include routes to Ann Arbor, specifically to the VA Hospital.

The MTA has been providing Regional Service to the six (6) adjoining counties since 1997. The use of public transportation to access jobs in other communities continues to grow at a substantial rate. On a daily basis, the MTA provides 3,500 one-way trips per day to support work related regional transportation so that individuals can access jobs in other communities. Reverse commute is now taking place with individuals in other communities that travel to Genesee County or through Genesee County for work-related transportation as far away as Saginaw on a daily basis.

3. *How is existing transit services configured and operated to facilitate trips across county or transit service area lines?*

- a. *Scheduling:*

The Mass Transportation Authority uses a combination of fixed routes and demand response Your-Ride services to provide full access to individuals that require transportation to work. The existing transit service is operated locally out of the MTA Administration and Operations facility located at 1401 S. Dort Hwy, Flint, MI and the MTA Transfer Center in downtown Flint. MTA is seeking to become a regional authority, providing a regional hub to encompass several surrounding counties, including Lapeer,

Shiawassee, Saginaw, Genesee, Tuscola, Sanilac, Huron, Livingston and Oakland counties.

b. Hours of operation:

The services begin at 4:30 a.m. and operate throughout the day and end at 1:00 a.m. The scheduling for local Your-Ride demand response transit service within Genesee County is handled through dispatch. All fixed routes depart from the downtown Transfer Center and have a time schedule that runs on the half hour from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Sunday.

Scheduling for regional transit service is with specific times and locations for arrivals and departures depending on the destination. Most of the regional route times are set according to working shifts to accommodate the workers as well as the employers. All regional routes depart from the Transfer Center in downtown Flint.

c. Agreements:

MTA has inter-local agreements with the Greater Lapeer Area Transit, Shiawassee Area Transit, SMART, DDOT, Saginaw, Oakland, and Livingston County Transit agencies. This makes it possible to take individuals across service boundaries to provide direct access to jobs. Copies of the inter-local agreements are available if needed.

4. How would one of your transit users travel to a neighboring county?

- a. A passenger could travel to another county by taking a regional route that is closest to their destination. Passengers can also transfer to the local transit service after crossing county lines.

The MTA has the most extensive regional transit system in the State of Michigan and currently the services are financially constrained, but as additional equipment and funds are available the service will be expanded to provide additional trips as far away as Lansing and into the Detroit area.

5. Has a list of unmet local transit needs been developed? Regional transit needs?

a. Are there strategies on how to meet those needs?

The Genesee County Coordinated Plan was recently updated in 2014. Through a workshop, the plan was able to identify a list of unmet needs, strategies to address those needs, and priorities for implementation. The MTA is currently conducting Strategic Planning for the next ten years, FY 2016 to 2026. In meeting with several local and regional groups, the MTA is identifying unmet transit needs as well as identifying future transit needs. Some of the needs identified include but are not limited to:

- Increased services to Veterans, both locally within Genesee County and regionally to provide transit service to the Ann Arbor VA Hospital and the Saginaw VA Hospital
- Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
- Additional bus stops
- Expanded regional transit service to include routes to Birch Run, Ann Arbor, Brighton and the Genesys campus
- Extended hours of operation
- Expanded transit service to include Hill Rd. Corridor
- Handicap accessible bus shelters

b. Can the needs be prioritized?

The initial results of MTA's Strategic Plan calls for the expansion of local and regional transit service to meet all the needs identified. The Genesee County Coordinated Plan has previously prioritized the unmet needs / gaps in service.

c. Can the needs be categorized?

The coordination with additional transit services and future inter-local agreements will allow the MTA to expand both fixed route and Your-Ride demand response transit services. The Genesee County Coordinated Plan has previously categorized the unmet needs / gaps in service.

d. Have you conducted any surveys to identify those gaps?

The MTA plans to survey several targeted groups for feedback and suggestions for serving unmet needs and expanding transit services, including veterans groups, clients using Mott Children's Health Center,

and passengers at the Transfer Center. The Genesee County Coordinated Plan update process in 2014 included a survey to identify available transit providers to help solve identified gaps in service.

6. *Do you know of any other agencies that provide local / regional transit services in your area?*

- a. The MTA provides the most extensive regional transit service in the state. There are several programs that provide transit services to their client population. The senior centers include: Montrose Senior Center, Eastside Senior Center, Foster Grandparent Program/Family Service Agency, Senior Companion Program/Family Service Agency, Visually Impaired Center/Family Service Agency, Vocational Independence Program, and Heart of Senior Citizens Center. The MTA also contracts with Jewish Community Services (JCS) to provide the Highway to Health program that allows individuals in our community to access trips to Henry Ford Hospital, U of M Ann Arbor and to the Veterans Hospital in Saginaw.

7. *What are the barriers to create/continue regional transit routes?*

- a. Obvious barriers to continuing and expanding regional transit routes include funding for operations, coordination, as well as expanding the bus fleet. Coordinating with surrounding local transit agencies will be vital to providing regional services.

The MTA is financially constrained within the available funds that come to their agency through the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and other job funds that the agency receives through the State of Michigan. The financial constraint does not allow the MTA to address all of the needs that exist today and there is a need for additional equipment. It is anticipated that the current need for regional service to access jobs throughout other communities is approximately 10,000 individual passengers per day.

LAPEER COUNTY

GREATER LAPEER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (GLTA)

1. *Please define your primary service area:*

- a. The authority of GLTA consists of the City of Lapeer, townships of: Deerfield, Elba, Mayfield, Lapeer and Oregon.
- b. *Are there any special routes or circumstances when regional transit service is provided outside of the service area:*

By statute GLTA has jurisdiction for the entire county. Lapeer County residents not in service area (*outside of GLTA authority*) receive transit services at a higher rate. With inter-local agreements with Genesee County and Oakland County; GLTA will take residents into those areas for shopping and medical appointments.

2. *What is known regarding the need (demand) for regional transit mobility in the area?*

- a. Regional transit is solely demand response in Lapeer County. Currently there is a need for daily service into Genesee County for employment and education. GLTA conducted a pilot fixed route service in early 2014 to determine the demand for regular service into Genesee County; however this service failed due to lack of ridership and cost per passenger. GLTA indicated there are no current discussions on a fixed route service.

3. *How is existing transit services configured and operated to facilitate trips across county or transit service area lines?*

a. *Scheduling:*

Locally and cross county transit is demand response only.

b. *Hours of operation:*

The hours of operation are 6:00 am – 8:00 pm.

c. *Agreements:*

The GLTA has an inter-local agreement with the MTA in Genesee County and with SMART in Oakland County (*See Appendix B*). Dispatchers with GLTA will take regular transit users to the Davison Your Ride center in Genesee County and schedule their transfer ahead of time. Elderly and

medical-purpose transit users will be given round-trip services. Service into Oakland County is only offered to the Great Lakes Crossing Mall.

The GLTA does not have agreements with St. Clair, Macomb, Sanilac or Tuscola counties.

4. *How would one of your transit users travel to a neighboring county?*

- a. Residents in GLTA's service area requesting to travel into Genesee County could be taken directly to their destination or to MTA's Davison Transit Center depending on their need. Residents in GLTA's service area requesting to travel in Oakland County beyond Great Lakes Crossing would have access to the SMART system at that location.

5. *Has a list of unmet local transit needs been developed? Regional transit needs?*

- a. GLTA has not conducted a needs assessment for regional travel.

6. *Do you know of any other agencies that provide local / regional transit services in your area?*

- a. When the Red Cross discontinued their Med-A-Ride program in Lapeer County, the Community House of Hope Church took it over. The church provides medical transportation to residents of Lapeer County into Saginaw, Genesee, Washtenaw, Oakland, Wayne and beyond. To GLTA's knowledge, this service is free or paid for by donations.

7. *What are the barriers to create/continue regional transit routes?*

- a. The largest obstacle for GLTA is funding as the current resources available provide just enough for basic local needs. With a large proportion of Lapeer County's population residing in rural areas, a fixed route service continues to be unattainable. Another barrier may be GLTA's current executive boards approach on servicing the municipalities that are not a part of the authority. Because the residents of the authority pay into a millage, the board may be reluctant to take those resources out of the service area. Another may be the business community. GLTA has received negative comments from the business community that by taking residents to shop outside the county, GLTA services are perceived to be taking business away from local businesses.

SHIAWASSEE COUNTY

SHIAWASSEE AREA TRANSPORTATION AGENCY (SATA)

1. *Please define your primary service area:*

- a. SATA provides Dial-a-Ride (Demand Response) services to all of Shiawassee County, however the Cities of Owosso and Corunna and the Townships of Caledonia and Owosso are the primary service area. Other areas of the County are served by Dial-a-Ride when available. The Transportation Solutions Division (TSD), a division of SATA, is for any trip outside of Shiawassee County. TSD services are primarily volunteer-based, dependent upon availability of volunteer vehicles.
- b. *Are there any special routes or circumstances when regional transit service is provided outside of the service area?*

The Transportation Solutions Division is divided into two tiers. The 1st tier is for persons with disabilities and seniors of Shiawassee County. The 2nd tier is coordination with other transit providers for the general public of Shiawassee County (*those that do not qualify for direct services*). The primary trip purpose is medical; however, TSD services are open to any purpose upon the availability of a driver.

2. *What is known regarding the need (demand) for regional transit mobility in the area?*

- a. TSD has been in existence since October 2008 and in the six years of operations, they have provided nearly 20,000 one-way trips. Ninety-two percent (92%) of those trips have been to out-of-county destinations (Genesee, Ingham, Clinton, Livingston, Roscommon, and Saginaw). Services are used primarily for medical trips but there continues to be a need for employment transportation to these out-of-county destinations.

There is a significant need for increased regional coordination; however, nothing formal has been developed. Even though TSD services have been successful at meeting the need of out-of-county medical transportation, there is still a need for employment transportation to out-of-county destinations.

3. *How is existing transit services configured and operated to facilitate trips across county or transit service area lines?*

- a. *Scheduling:*

Scheduling is demand response for both Dial-a-Ride and TSD services. Trips across county lines are provided through TSD. Local services are provided by TSD only when the Dial-a-Ride service is unavailable (e.g. late night, weekends, non-participating areas (any area not in the Cities of Corunna or Owosso or Townships of Caledonia or Owosso)).

b. Hours of operation:

The Dial-a-Ride service operates Monday through Friday. Services are offered in the Cities of Owosso & Corunna, Caledonia Township & Owosso Township areas from 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. All other areas in Shiawassee County are offered transit services from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with no regularly scheduled service on weekends or holidays.

TSD services are available 24/7, 365 days a year upon availability of a driver (volunteer-based).

c. Agreements:

SATA has inter-local agreements with each of the six surrounding counties' transit providers: Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA), Mass Transportation Authority (MTA), Clinton Area Transit System, Livingston Essential Transportation Services, Roscommon County Transportation Authority (RCTA), and the Saginaw Transit Authority Regional Services (STARS).

4. How would one of your transit users travel to a neighboring county?

- a. A transit rider would use services provided by TSD. Transit riders can connect to another transit agency; however it can be difficult for mobility managers to coordinate with neighboring transit providers to have their vehicle there at the same time. SATA has recently had difficulty with transporting workers with disabilities into CATA's jurisdiction. This experience for these transit users can become stressful and confusing.

Barriers also exist with rural residents of Shiawassee County being comfortable or able to navigate the fixed-route systems once they enter neighboring urban communities such as Genesee or Ingham Counties.

5. Has a list of unmet local transit needs been developed? Regional transit needs?

- a. *Are there strategies on how to meet those needs?*

The Shiawassee County Coordination Plan (2009) briefly mentions in their 4th strategy "Develop a Sustainable Plan for Transportation Services" to develop regional partnerships. The Mobility Manager for SATA stated there will be a significant update to the plan in 2015 and broadened definition of regional partnerships.

The strategies for regional transportation include two focus areas: (1) Continuing to develop and expand coordination with neighboring transit providers; (2) Neighbors helping neighbors through continued support of the volunteer driver program of TSD, creation of a faith-based network of volunteers, and a rideshare website to access the 50% of the population that now commutes out of county for employment.

b. Can the needs be prioritized?

The needs have been prioritized informally based on the experience of SATA's Mobility Manager. Employment is the primary need for regional transportation. Locally, it is having a robust county-wide system to include areas of Shiawassee County that are not served by the Dial-a-ride bus system. The entire county needs to have service with the same hours and same fees, regardless of address within Shiawassee County.

c. Can the needs be categorized?

The needs may be categorized during the 2015 update of the Shiawassee County Coordinated Transportation Plan. It was suggested that another method to categorize transit needs would be "Neighbors helping Neighbors" programs that do not rely on public transportation providers but connect people to one another (such as a rideshare website or volunteer driver program).

d. Have you conducted any surveys to identify those gaps?

Surveys were completed with the Coordination Plan in 2009.

6. Do you know of any other agencies that provide local / regional transit services in your area?

- a. Indian Trails, 989-725-5105; Shiawassee County Disabled American Veterans (DAV) van, Jerilyn Strein 989-743-2231; Memorial Healthcare Radiation Shuttle, Jamie Arndt 989-729-4085; Shiawassee County Department of Human Services non-emergency medical transportation, Dan Carly 989-725-3270; Informally an inventory is being done by the

Mobility Manager of church vehicles and those churches that are interested in being part of a faith based network of transportation providers, both church vehicles and volunteers.

7. *What are the barriers to create/continue regional transit routes?*

a. *Funding:*

Adequate funding is the major barrier to continue current and create new regional transit routes.

b. *Gap in service:*

Connecting regionally with neighboring communities is difficult because SATA does not have county-wide Dial-a-Ride service. Participating municipalities are in the center of the county leaving much of the North, West, and South areas with little to no transportation service.

c. *Other:*

Education for rural residents on how to use a fixed-route transportation system once SATA transit vehicles get them into neighboring urban communities is a major barrier. Furthermore, each county should have one person designated to know what transportation services are available and also be the contact person for other counties to connect with for regional transportation coordination.

GLS Region V Summary

The counties in the GLS Region V have varied needs when it pertains to regional transit mobility. Genesee County is primarily urban while the counties of Lapeer and Shiawassee are rural in nature. Demand response transit is used throughout the region, while the Flint urban area is a mixture of both fixed route and demand response.

During a follow-up meeting with the three major transit agencies, it was found that there continues to be difficulties working with neighboring counties outside of GLS Region V and their respective transit agencies. In some instances, transit users (*with disabilities*) are forced to transfer multiple times to their employment or medical appointments due to boundary lines. GLS transit agencies are willing to drop off and pick up across boundary lines; however many of the non-GLS Region V agencies require passengers to be transferred. This policy can result in a stressful situation for elderly or disabled transit users. Difficulties for the users reach beyond scheduling between two or more transit providers but include any physical limitations. It was suggested that legislation, policy, or incentives may help encourage these select agencies to work together with “seamless boundaries” for regional transit.

The Mass Transportation Authority also discussed their interest in becoming a regional transit authority, which would allow them to better serve the counties in GLS Region V and beyond. MTA would coordinate and partner with organizations along the I-69 Corridor including local chambers of commerce, public and private transportation providers, employers and medical facilities on their transportation needs.

The subject of funding was also raised as a major concern for continued program operation and the expansion of needed services (i.e. employment, non-emergency medical transportation).

It was suggested that the various transit program funding sources be changed to have similar requirements and timelines. Local funding for transit has limits to the local service area. In many communities, local business owners object to transit agencies using local funding to transport residents to other communities away from their businesses.

Through the multiple discussions and the detailed information provided by each major transit agency, it is evident the counties of Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee work well together. The mobility managers and dispatchers for each agency successfully coordinate any trip requested by their users. This open communication helps this area maintain a robust, regional transit system within GLS Region V.