

COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT- HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Columbia Area Transportation Study Organization

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Disclaimer: The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, the Federal Highway Administration or the Federal Transit Administration.

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INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan is to document the existing resources and current needs for the provision of transit services within the Columbia Metropolitan Area. Through agency coordination, the existing transportation system may be enhanced through the identification of unmet needs, service overlap, and leverage of resources. This plan describes the existing conditions in the Columbia Metro Area related to transportation services, discusses coordination of service and other alternatives for meeting needs into the future, identifies the barriers- both perceived and real- for successfully coordinating resources, and identifies areas of overlap and gaps to be addressed.

For many years public policy makers and residents of Boone County have recognized the need for increased public transportation in the Metro Area. Several studies have recognized and documented the significant unmet need for transit services. For some area residents, the need for public transportation service is a major concern as it will enable them to travel from home to work, shopping, health care facilities, and other necessary services. For these residents, the public transportation system is their link to the community.

The rural character of much of Boone County makes transportation services crucial for those members of the area who are dependent upon forms of transportation other than the private automobile. The City of Columbia acts as both a local and regional hub for shopping, health care, social services, and other services. Several agencies have been identified as providing transportation services in the greater Boone County area; however, many of these “providers” are not transportation providers in the typical sense of the word. Many of the providers are social service agencies who provide some form of transportation to their clients, such as a medical trip in a personal automobile of a case worker or vouchers for the local taxi service. Providers such as Columbia Transit and Paratransit, operating within the City of Columbia; OATS, which provides service in the rural areas of the county as well as in Columbia; and Services for Independent Living provide the greatest portion of the trips in the county; however, other agencies complete a significant number of trips as well. This Coordination Plan seeks to address ways these agencies can work together to address who will meet the needs of underserved users and geographies and how they will do it, and ways in which to address services more efficiently in areas of overlap.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN:

Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plans are maintained by Metropolitan Planning Organizations in accordance with The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The Columbia Area Transportation Study Organization (CATSO) adopted the Boone County Coordinated Transportation Services Plan in August, 2007. This plan asks new and prior stakeholders to evaluate updates, changes, and needs from the 2007 Public Transportation Human Services Coordinated Plan.

Coordinated Plans need to be in place before agencies can apply for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Sections 5310, 5316, or 5317 funding.¹ According to federal legislation in SAFETEA-LU, and carried forward in the most recent transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), projects selected for funding under the *5310 Program for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities*, the *Job Access and Reverse Commute*, and the *New Freedom programs* must be “derived from a locally developed Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan” and that the plan must be “developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public.”

CONTENTS OF THE PLAN:

This Coordinated Plan contains four components:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current providers (public, private and nonprofit) including an inventory and evaluation;
2. An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes and identification of unmet needs;
3. Strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
4. Relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies/activities identified.

The four components listed above were developed through a combination of meetings, surveys, written recommendations, and discussions with human services agencies that have an interest in transportation, the clients and users of the transportation services, and with transportation agencies such as the CATSO, the State (Missouri Department of Transportation), and Federal surface transportation agencies (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration).

SECTION I:

A. Identification/Assessment of Existing Transportation System:

The 2007 Public Transportation Human Services Coordinated Plan lists a multitude of agencies which may potentially provide transportation services. For the purpose of this plan update, with the goal of producing a more meaningful analysis of strategies and implementation priorities to address identified gaps and potential efficiency improvements, this list was

¹ These Programs are for elderly and disabled populations (FTA Section 5310), low-income individuals for transportation to and from work (FTA Section 5316) and transportation programs that go above and beyond the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (FTA Section 5317 programs).

reduced to social service agencies which provide transportation as a primary service to meet the needs of clients. Additionally, agencies which previously indicated a desire to work together and the recipients/potential recipients of federal transit funding were targeted. Daycare providers, private airport shuttles and taxi services, and other such agencies were not included in the plan update.

There were 17 social service agencies identified to survey. These agencies were asked via letter in December of 2012 to complete a survey with questions about their fleet, mission, territory, clients, and other pertinent data. Additionally, these agencies were asked 1) to identify ways in which they were working with other agencies to identify best practices or programs which could be expanded, 2) areas where additional coordination among providers would provide benefits, and 3) areas in which unmet needs, from a client or agency perspective, may exist. The results of the questions regarding coordination, service improvements and unmet needs are discussed in Section II and III of this plan. After a low response rate, less than 25%, CATSO staff followed up with the agencies via phone and email. The next two sections describe gaps and overlay among two public transit providers and the 15 human service agencies found to provide transportation that may potentially use transit funds and benefit from increased coordination.

B. Agencies Providing Public Transportation Services:

There are two agencies providing public transportation services within the CATSO Metro Area/Central Boone County region: Columbia Transit and OATS. These agencies contract and coordinate with many human services organizations to best meet the transportation needs in their respective areas. Funding constraints are typically a concern for these agencies in meeting or expanding their service territory or client needs. These agencies are described below.

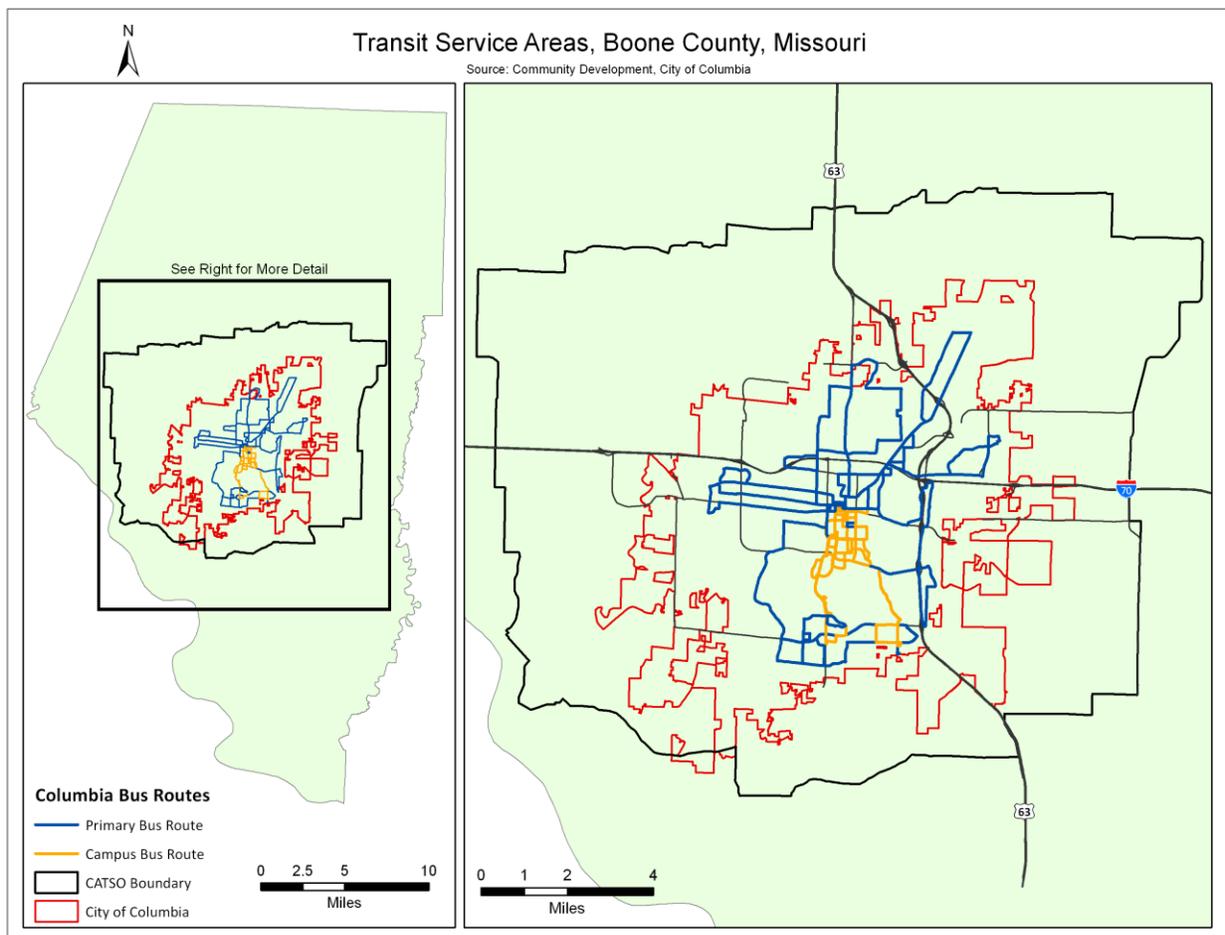
COLUMBIA TRANSIT

Columbia Transit is the general public provider in the City of Columbia. Service began nearly 50 years ago in 1965. Under the umbrella of Columbia Transit, several services are offered: fixed-route, FastCAT, Paratransit, and MU shuttle services. Columbia Transit provides over two million passenger-trips annually. Currently, Columbia Transit does not coordinate with any other transportation provider. There are 39 full-time employees involved in transit and 50 part-time employees (including seasonal employees). Columbia Transit is under the administration of the Columbia City Manager and Public Works Department.

Services:

- Fixed-Route: Fixed-route bus service within Columbia's city limits uses seven routes designated by number and color. Bus service starts at 6:25 a.m. and operates on various schedules ending anywhere between 6:30 p.m. and 1:30 a.m., with scaled-back Saturday service. No service is provided on Sunday. Fixed-route service provides over 1.1 million annual passenger-trips. Passengers currently can flag down any fixed-route bus at the end of a block for a ride, where safe to do so.

- Paratransit: Columbia Paratransit provides specialized van service for persons with disabilities and elderly who are unable to use the fixed-route bus system. Service is provided curb-to-curb within the City limits of Columbia. Riders must meet eligibility requirements and become certified riders. The one-way fare is \$2.00. Paratransit service is offered during the same hours as the fixed-route service. The service provides approximately 41,000 annual trips.
- FastCAT: FastCAT is Columbia Transit’s newest route and is geared towards student riders. There are 24 stops in a loop around campus and downtown which runs every fifteen minutes. Service days, times and amenities are expanded beyond the other service routes offered by Columbia Transit; FastCAT runs seven days a week and, until 2:30 AM Thursday through Sunday morning during the University of Missouri and Stephen’s College regular academic calendar. Free transfers and group rate discounts are available.
- MU Tigerline Service: The final service Columbia Transit provides is contract shuttle service with the University of Missouri. Service is provided with three day and three evening routes which cover the main campus and commuter parking lots. This service is operated seven days a week during the fall and spring semesters only. Over 880,000 annual trips are provided. Service is provided through student fees.



Map 1: Transit Service Areas for Columbia Metro Area

Financial

Columbia Transit is funded through a combination of FTA 5307 (urbanized) funds, FTA 5309 (discretionary) funds, a state of Missouri annual grant, a local (City of Columbia) dedicated transportation sales tax, fares, advertising and contract revenue. Total operating costs are approximately \$5.7 million dollars annually.

Facilities

Columbia Transit operates out of two facilities. The first is the *Wabash Station* located at 126 North 10th Street in Columbia. This facility is the main transfer hub for both fixed-route and Paratransit routes. It serves as the bus dispatch center and is the main administrative office of Columbia Transit. Formally the Wabash Train Station, the building celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2010. With the help of an FTA Capital grant, the facility was completely refurbished in 2007 and became the City's first LEED certified building.

The second facility is the *Grissum Building*, located at 1313 Lakeview. This is a shared maintenance and storage facility for the Public Works Department, of which Columbia Transit is a division. This facility is used to store, fuel, maintain, and clean all Columbia Transit vehicles that are maintained through the Fleet Operations Division of the Public Works Department.

Performance Measures

Columbia Transit's baseline performance measures are shown below in Table 1. The performance measures reflect the ridership, vehicle miles and hours, and cost breakdown/allocation provided by Columbia Transit.

Columbia Transit Service Summary						
Route/Service	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Vehicle Miles	Annual Vehicle Hours	Service Cost	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile
Fixed Route	1,145,596	550,710	48,809	\$3,505,395	\$3.06	\$6.36
Para-Transit	41,655	207,599	23,228	\$1,302,479	\$31.27	\$6.27
MU Shuttle	882,332	184,463	18,444	\$1,095,843	\$1.24	\$5.94
Total Service	2,069,583	1,009,775	91,049	\$5,903,717		

Table 1. Columbia Transit Service Data and Cost Allocation

Capital (Vehicles)

Columbia Transit has a fleet of 48 passenger vehicles. Table 2, as presented below, provides a listing of those vehicles including make and year.

Columbia Transit Vehicle Inventory		
Type	Year	Number of Units
Chevrolet Pick Up	2005	1
Van (no lift)	1992	1
Toyota Prius	2005	1

Diamond Cutaway	2001	1
Diamond Cutaway	2004	2
Diamond Cutaway	2006	1
Ford E450	2008	2
Ford V10	2011	2
Ford V10	2012	2
Ford Collins	1999	1
Ford Champion	2002	1
New Flyer (40')	1995	2
New Flyer (40')	2000	2
New Flyer (40')	2001	7
New Flyer (30')	2001	6
Gillig (40')	2007	2
Gillig (40')	2010	5
Gillig (40')	2011	3
Gillig (30')	2012	3
Gillig (40')	2012	3
Total Units		48

Table 2: Columbia Transit Vehicle Inventory

OATS

OATS is a private, nonprofit specialized transit provider which operates in 87 Missouri counties. Its mission is to provide reliable service for transportation disadvantaged Missourians so they can live independently in their own communities. OATS has been in operation since 1971 and provides door-to-door transportation services to individuals with little or no alternative form of transportation. In urban areas, they provide service to those 60 years and older and the disabled. In rural areas, routine service is also open to the general public.

OATS is funded by a combination of federal, state, and local funds. Government funding through contracts with various agencies covers the cost for the elderly/disabled riders, while general public riders are encouraged to pay the full suggested donation for service.

OATS provides service Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Columbia and service to other parts of central Boone County is provided on Mondays. OATS' annual ridership is approximately 33,769 one-way trips. The Boone County program costs approximately \$475,000 annually to operate.

Financial

OATS is funded through FTA grants, (Section 5309, Section 5316-JARC, Section 5317) Medicaid, Missouri Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program (MEHTAP), county government, city governments, Department of Mental Health, service contracts, and rider contributions. Suggested rider donations are \$4 round trip in city limits, \$6 round trip in the county, and \$8 round trip to adjacent counties.

Facilities

OATS has its main Mid-Missouri Regional Office in Columbia. There is covered parking for the Boone County fleet, including wash bays and a fueling station. Its central statewide office is also located in Columbia on the same site.

Performance Measures

At present, OATS operating costs are approximately \$19.30 per trip and \$23.53 per hour, a fairly efficient service by county demand-response standards.

Capital (Vehicles)

OATS has a fleet of 19 vehicles. Primarily, vehicles are modified vans and several small buses. Most vehicles are wheelchair-equipped.

OATS's bus schedule may be viewed online at: www.oatstransit.org

C. Human Service Agencies Providing Transportation:

According to survey responses, the following agencies provide transportation related services to a variety of clients. Due to program and funding restrictions, these agencies provide services only for their specific client base.

1. Job Point (formally Advent Enterprises)

Job Point provides youth services and vocational assessment, job training, and placement services to people with disabilities and the economically-disadvantaged. Job Point is a comprehensive employment center, fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Continuing education and youth mentoring support are also available.

Job Point serves northeast and central Missouri. Transportation services are provided with company-owned, grant-funded vehicles. Funding for Job Point comes through a variety of sources, including FTA 5310, the Missouri Department of Transportation, state funding, and tax credits. Trips are limited to those which are directly related to vocational needs. Job Point indicated an interest in coordination activities, particularly with Columbia Transit to provide reduced or free transportation vouchers. Job Point identified the need for a more comprehensive municipal transit system.

2. Alternative Community Training, Inc. (ACT)

Alternative Community Training, Inc. helps disabled people find employment and housing. The organization operates a 15,000-square-foot facility that hires people with and without disabilities, where employees recycle software and other electronic media. The agency estimates they provide approximately 11,000 annual trips for clients using a combination of nine vans and one car.

All of ACT's vehicles are leased or owned by ACT. The organization does not have actual direct revenue reimbursement for transportation costs, but it is included in rates received per

program. The agency spends approximately \$130,000 annually on transportation expenses. The organization expressed some interest in coordination. Funding limitations may inhibit coordination activities as trip purposes are limited to employment. Funding sources include both federal and state sources such as the Department of Mental Health, State of Missouri, and Vocational Rehabilitation funding.

3. Boone County Council on Aging, Inc. (BCCA)

Since 1973, BCCA has specialized in matching needs with resources like medical care, support groups, and housing assistance. They provide care management for seniors 55 and older with low incomes or limited local family. The BCCA does not provide transportation services except through some limited volunteers. The agency supports increased support for public transportation, which has been identified as a growing need among clients. The BCCA indicated coordination and the provision of formal transportation services was not of interest at this time.

4. Boone County Family Resources (BCFR)

Boone County Family Resources is a public agency of the county that serves individuals with developmental disabilities. BCFR provides purchased transportation to eligible clients of the agency in Columbia and some adjacent areas in Boone County. Thus, BCFR coordinates with other social service agencies (SIL), transportation providers (Columbia Transit, OATS), and cab companies. Additionally, BCFR will reimburse mileage if staff provides transportation for residential clients to go to work and doctor appointments. BCFR has 15 total vehicles (5 cars and 10 vans) which provide support to 46 clients. In the past, BCFR has shown interest in coordination activities if found to be applicable.

5. Burrell Behavioral Health

Burrell is a private, not-for-profit organization serving individuals in need of mental health services. Burrell operates out of two locations in Columbia, as well as elsewhere in central Missouri. Burrell has two active vehicles for transportation of their clientele, one 15-passenger van and one 12-passenger van. These vehicles were acquired with FTA Section 5310 grant funding. The vehicles are used to transport the agency's adult clients on group outings throughout the community, as well as to and from the agency clinics for therapy and doctor visits. The vans are also used to transport child clients to and from school or home to the clinics for visits.

6. Central Missouri Area Agency on Aging

CMAAOA provides rides through an agency contract. It is funded through a combination of federal and state funding and donations. Trips are limited only to seniors in the area. They spend approximately \$22,000 on transportation annually. CMAAOA serves all of Boone County; however, riders living on borders of other counties may be transported as well—i.e., Sturgeon to Moberly; Ashland to Jefferson City; and Centralia to Mexico. They indicated a high level of interest in coordination of transportation opportunities.

7. Central Missouri Community Action (formally Central Missouri Counties Human Development Corporation)

Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA) is a nonprofit corporation which provides a myriad of services and program oversight. They provide the following services, as well as numerous others: Head Start; Section 8 Rental Assistance; Employment and Training; Housing Development Activities; and Family Support. CMCA indicated that they provide approximately 50,000 annual trips. Trips are provided using bus passes and as cash to clients. The corporation spends approximately \$27,000 annually on transportation. The corporation is funded through a myriad of funding sources including federal and state funding, donations, grants, and MEHTAP. Trips are limited to seniors, children, and low-income residents of the county. They indicated a low level of interest in coordination of transportation resources.

8. Central Missouri Sheltered Enterprises

Central Missouri Subcontracting Enterprises (CMSE) provides meaningful, dignified employment to persons with disabilities in Missouri through the production of goods and services for the private sector. CMSE also provides advocacy and support to persons with disabilities. CMSE currently provides transportation services to 15 of their 124 employees. The remainder of employees either utilize Columbia Transit or private or residential agency transportation. CMSE provides approximately 3,750 round trips annually utilizing two agency vans and two cars for transporting employees to and from work sites. The cost for this transportation is approximately \$48,000 annually. CMSE reported being slightly interested in some coordination opportunities.

9. Columbia Housing Authority (CHA)

The Housing Authority of the City of Columbia, Missouri has 719 units targeted for affordable housing opportunities to low-income persons and families. CHA also administers over 1,000 Housing Choice Vouchers for Section 8 Rental Assistance, which provides rental assistance to very low-income families who rent from more than 700 private landlords located primarily within the City of Columbia, but also throughout Boone County. The Authority provides shuttle van service to clients using three vans providing approximately 18,000 annual trips. Cost for services is estimated at approximately \$18,000. They assist residents in contacting both OATS and Columbia Transit for additional transportation services. The Authority indicated that coordination activities were non-applicable to the organization.

10. New Horizons

New Horizons is a non-for-profit mental health provider in Cole and Boone County. While the agency does have a 14-passenger van to transport clients to and from the day program, most transportation is provided by staff in personal vehicles. Staff is reimbursed for mileage. As a part of their mission, New Horizons works to help clients integrate within the community. Thus, their life skills training efforts teach clients how to use public transit. New Horizons is interested in supporting increased public transit options and may be interested in any applicable coordination efforts.

11. Phoenix Programs

Phoenix Programs is a non-profit agency located in Columbia which is an outpatient substance abuse program that provides counseling for individuals, families, and groups. The agency provides transportation in the form of bus passes as well as using an agency van and two cars. They reported having an annual budget of approximately \$44,000, which is federally-funded, and provide approximately 1,000 annual trips for the homeless. They have approximately 100 clients at any one time. Some level of interest in coordination opportunities was shown by Phoenix Programs.

12. Rainbow House

Rainbow House is a non-profit child advocate agency that provides emergency shelter for abused and neglected children and families in dire needs. They accommodate approximately 200 children in the shelter annually. They are funded through the State of Missouri and donations. The agency has two vans for transportation. Annually, the agency is estimated to provide approximately 1,600 trips. Rainbow House indicated some level of interest in coordination.

13. Services for Independent Living

Services for Independent Living (SIL) is a non-profit which promotes independence for persons with disabilities. Many individuals with disabilities cannot utilize traditional transportation. SIL offers accessible transportation with door-to-door service Sunday through Friday, 8:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m. SIL has eligibility requirements for clients and charges according to the following fee schedule: \$2.00 per stop City; \$3.00 per stop Outside City Limits; \$5.00 per stop from County to County. Within the past decade, SIL has applied for Section 5310 funding.

14. Vocational Rehabilitation

This program assists individuals with physical or mental disabilities with obtaining employment. Services include vocational counseling/exploration, vocational training, medical restorative services and job placement services. Vocational Rehabilitation may provide transportation to and from these services in the form of bus passes, travel reimbursement and taxi fares for those who financially qualify. The agency provides approximately 1,750 trips annually — 550 in the form of bus passes and 1,200 trips in the form of reimbursement. The agency expends approximately \$29,000 annually on transportation for 300 individuals. Vocational Rehabilitation is required by Federal Law to access all comparable benefits and to coordinate with other transportation service providers.

15. Voluntary Action Center

Voluntary Action Center (VAC) is a nonprofit organization that provides information on available human services in the area, provides emergency assistance when local programs are unable to meet community needs, collaborates and coordinates with various local agencies, and provides volunteer coordination and training. They also provide services such as transportation, prescriptions, food, clothing, and shelter. Their service area includes all of Boone County. Funding sources include the United Way, Boone County, the City of Columbia, Boone Electric Trust, and churches in the area. VAC provides both bus passes and gas for clients; in 2012, 4,720 bus tickets were provided for work trips. They reported they provide

approximately 6,700 trips annually. They are funded through a city grant and donations. Total operating costs were reported as approximately \$5,700 annually. Some interest in coordination was indicated by VAC.

SECTION II:

A. Assessment of Transportation Needs for Individuals with Disabilities, Older Adults, and People with Low Incomes:

Baseline population data are required to model transit needs both now and into the future. Currently, there are several population factors which are used to estimate transportation needs including total population, density and growth areas, age, income, travel to work data and disability status. This data is presented below.

2000-2010 Population

The permanent population of Boone County was reported to be 162,642 persons based on the 2010 U.S. Census. The City of Columbia had 108,500 residents, and the 2010 population for the CATSO Metro area was 134,592. This represents a 28% and a 29% increase for the City and Metro Area respectively, and a 20% increase in population for the County between 2000 and 2010. While all three geographies have experienced a high level of growth over the last decade, more population growth has been seen in the City and surrounding Metro area. Public transit needs are typically higher in areas of higher population, population growth, and density.

	2000	2010	% Increase
County	135,454	162,642	20.0%
City	84,531	108,500	28.4%
CATSO Metro Area	104,093	134,592	29.3%

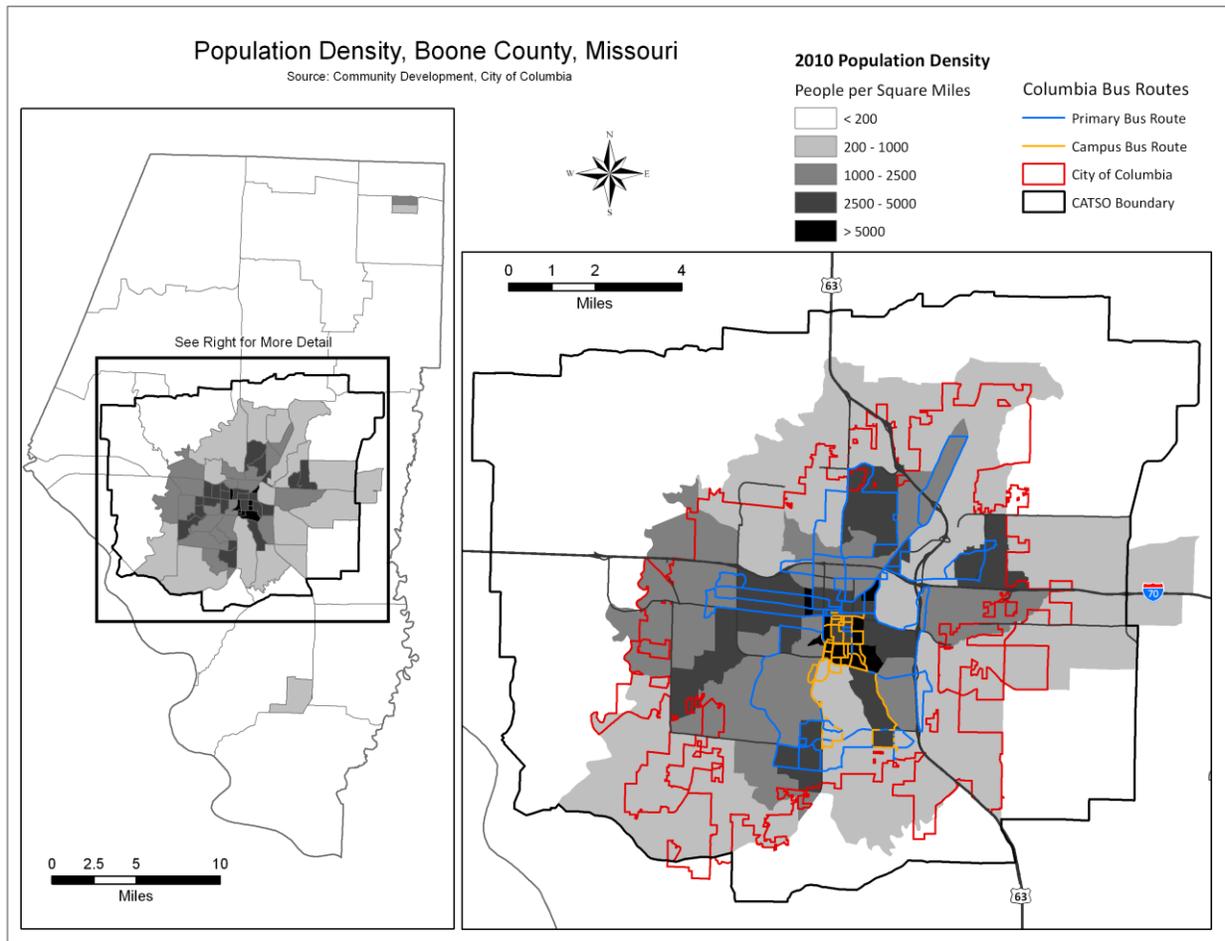
Table 3: Population of Boone County and Columbia, Missouri.

Metro Area Population Density

Areas with more people often will have a greater number of riders, although this correlation is affected by other factors as discussed below in “Transit-Dependent Population Characteristics.” Providers must consider ridership needs and density when developing service territories. Lower rider density and longer trips reduce the efficiency of transportation providers as fuel costs and travel time/miles are typically inversely related to ridership density.

As shown in Table 1: Columbia Transit Service Data and Cost Allocation (page 7), the most efficient trips (cost per trip and cost per mile), are within the MU Campus Shuttle service area which operates in a small geography with a high density of riders. Paratransit, which has the largest service territory (at a minimum, it serves out to ¾ of a mile from points on the fixed route), has a much higher cost per trip and average miles per passenger trip than the Fixed and MU Shuttle Routes. Transit route/service areas and population density is mapped below. Areas

with high density outside of service territories may indicate an unmet need for transportation services.



Map 2: Population Density of Columbia Metro Area and Transit Service Territories

Transit-Dependent Population Characteristics

Certain attributes indicate a population will be more dependent upon public transit. In general these population characteristics preclude most such individuals from driving, leaving carpooling, taxi and similar services, and public transit as the only other motorized forms of transportation available.

The four types of limitations which preclude persons from driving are: (1) physical limitations, (2) financial limitations, (3) legal limitations, and (4) self-imposed limitations.

Physical limitations may include everything from permanent disabilities such as frailty due to age, blindness, paralysis, or developmental disabilities, to temporary disabilities such as acute illnesses and head injuries. Financial limitations essentially include those persons unable to purchase or rent their own vehicle. Legal limitations refer to such limitations as persons who are too young (generally under age 16). Self-imposed limitations refer to those people who

choose not to own or drive a vehicle (some or all of the time) for reasons other than those listed in the first three categories.

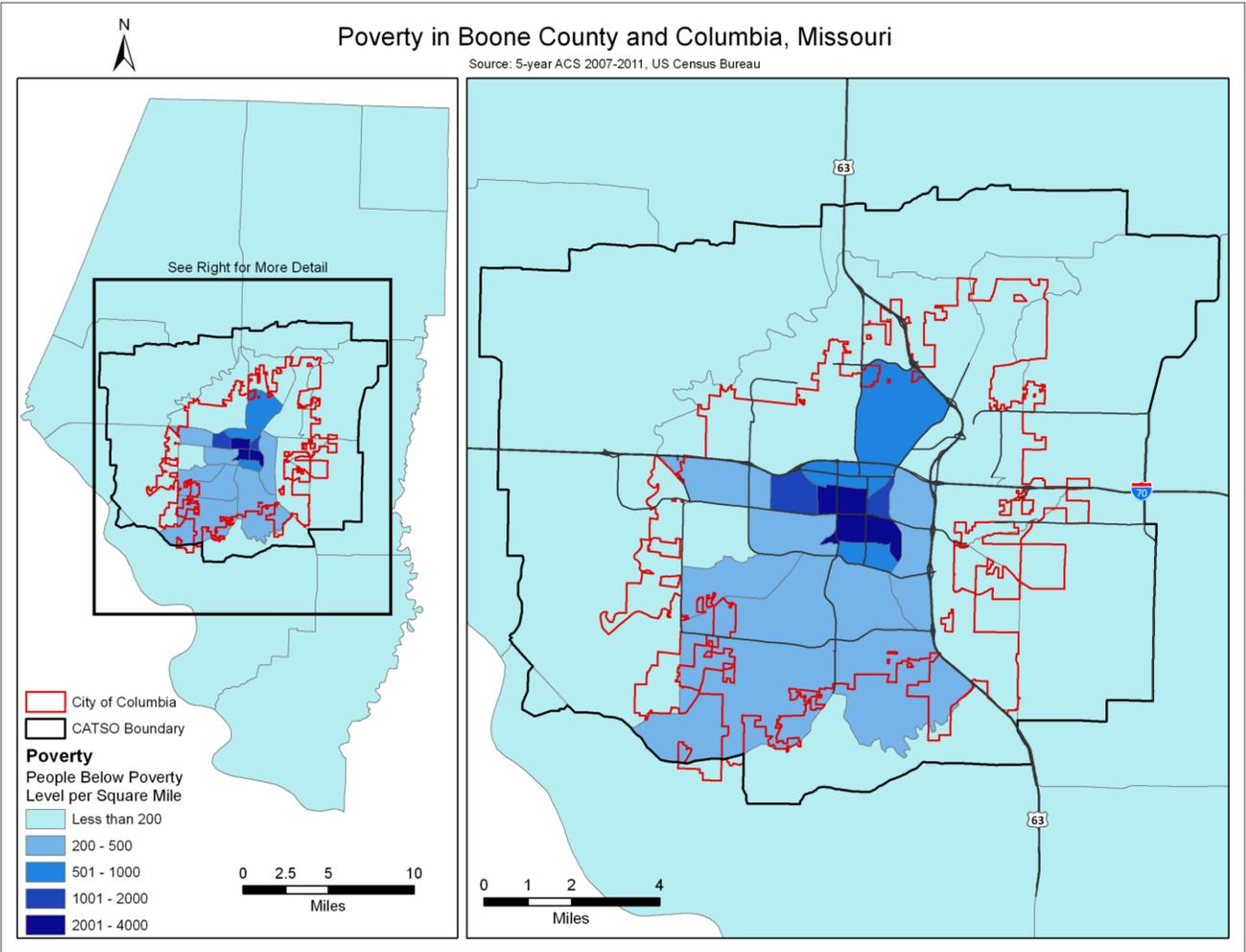
The US Census is generally capable of providing information about the first three categories of limitation. The fourth category of limitation is currently recognized as representing a relatively small proportion of transit ridership.

The first category of citizens more dependent on transit is those with physical limitations. Table 4 shows the U.S. Census data for people with disabilities in Boone County and the City of Columbia. The County has a higher percentage of people with disabilities than the City, with about 10.2% of Boone County residents having disabilities compared about 9.5% of the City of Columbia residents. Of the people with disabilities in Boone County, over one-third live outside the City limits. Because rural areas of the county are much lower in population density than the City and further from services, reaching these people is a challenge to transit providers. People with disabilities often need reliable transportation to medical facilities in addition to services for basic living, such as groceries, banking, and other needs.

Area	With a Disability	No Disability	Percent Disabled
Boone County	15,599	137,819	10.2%
Columbia city	9,392	89,892	9.5%
Boone County not including Columbia	6,207	47,927	11%

Table 4: Citizens with disabilities in Boone County and Columbia, Missouri.
Source: American Community Survey, 3-year (2009-2011), US Census Bureau

To study the second indicator – financial limitations – an analysis of Census data on poverty, available at the Census Tract level, was undertaken. As can be seen in Map 3, Boone County’s impoverished population is most concentrated in the central part of the City of Columbia. Some of the areas with the highest rates of poverty are near the University of Missouri, which may be a result of the City’s large student population. Even so, poverty does exist in the community, and access to reliable transportation could help some people escape it by providing access to jobs, education and other opportunities.



Map 3: Poverty in Boone County and Columbia, Missouri
Source: 5-year American Community Survey 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau

Age also contributes to people relying on public transportation. Most persons under the age of 16 are not legally able to drive (limitation 3), and the elderly have a higher probability of losing their ability to drive as they age (limitation 1). As can be seen in Figure 1, Boone County’s largest age cohort by far is between 20 and 24, the age of most college undergraduates. College students have a good potential for using public transit, because they may not own a car; however, they are also often fit enough to bike or walk to campus and may not feel that the transit times matches their varied schedules. The population pyramid also shows the baby boom generation (people born between 1946 and 1964) who were between the ages of 47 and 65 in 2011. The baby boom generation is a large group of people who will start encountering limitations to mobility associated older age in the next decades. Boone County area transit providers need to be prepared for this “silver tsunami.”

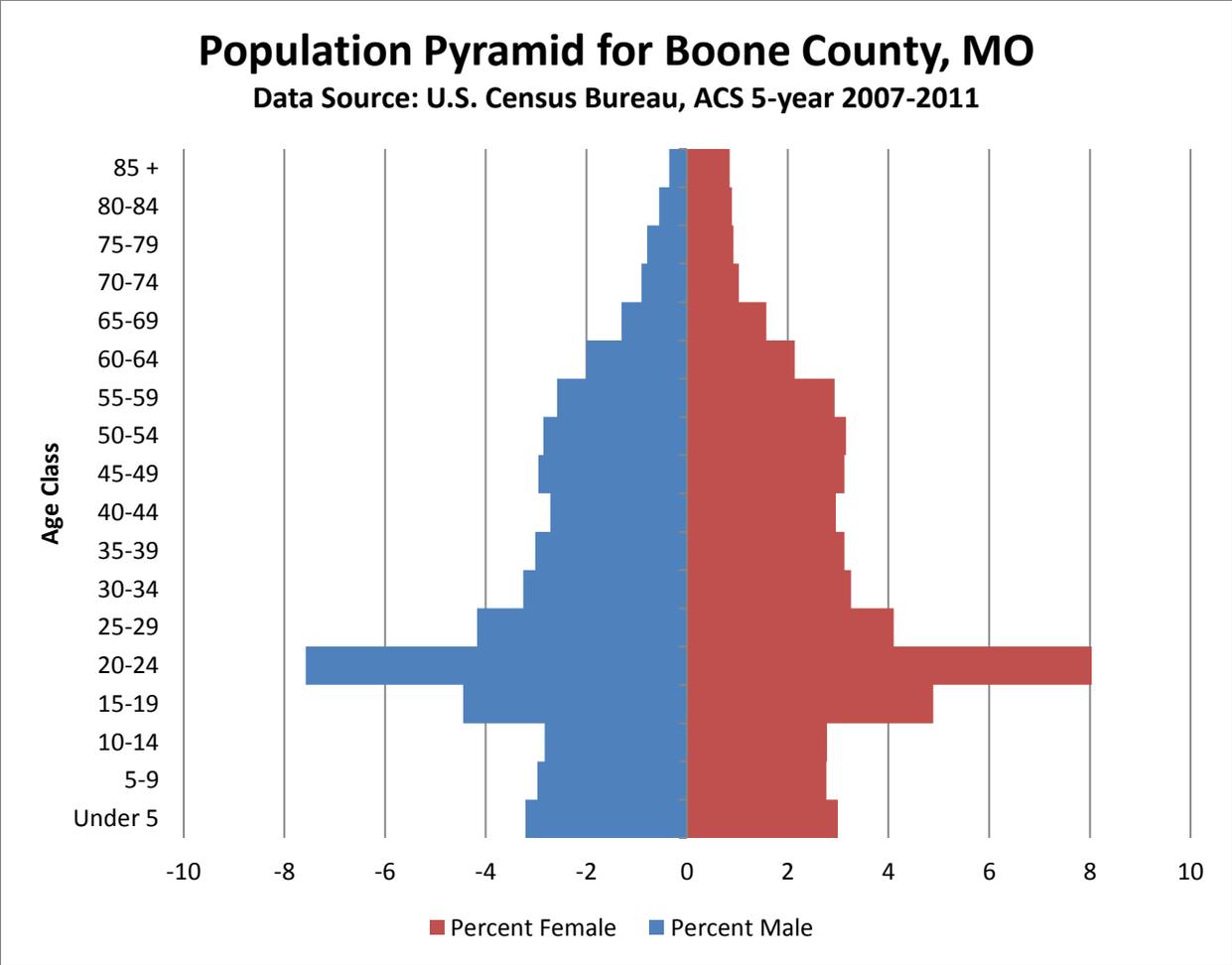


Figure 1: Population Pyramid for Boone County, Missouri
 Source: 5-year American Community Survey 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau

The final type of citizens whom may be dependent upon transit are those with self-imposed limitations. As mentioned previously, this category probably represents a small proportion of transit ridership. The U.S. Census does not track people’s reasons for using transit instead of driving; however, it does collect data on number of cars per household and travel-to-work mode. These data include the people who put self-imposed limitations on their mobility, as well as those that may fit under the other three limitation categories.

About .5% of Boone County commuters get to work using public transportation (Figure 2). This is a very small percentage, but it only takes commuters into account. It does not include people who are too young to work, retired people, and people whose disability makes them unable to have a job, all candidates for transit usage.

2010 Boone County Travel-to-Work Mode Split

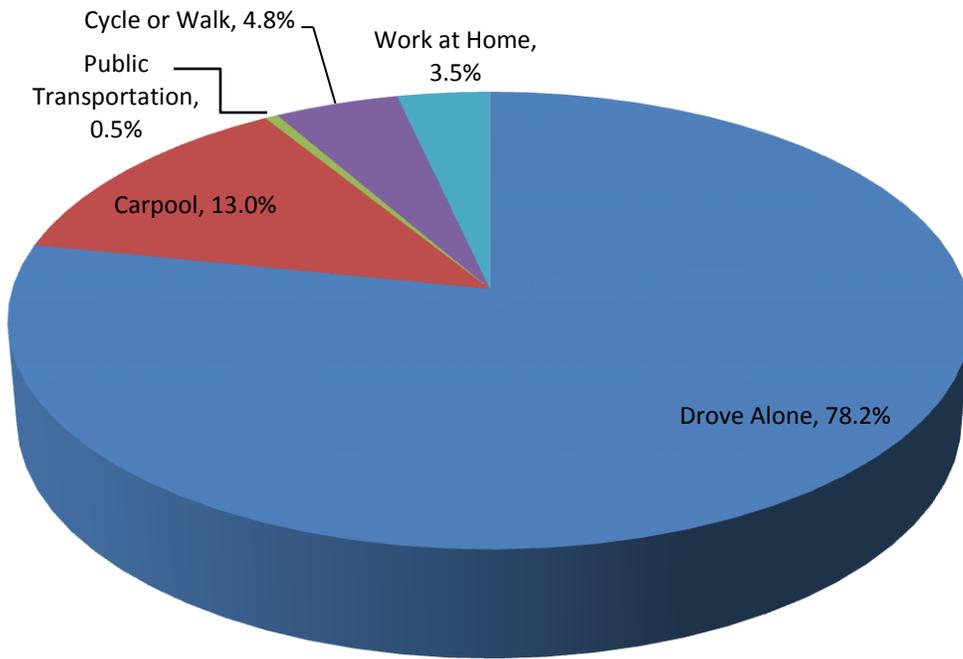


Figure 2: 2010 Boone County Travel-to-Work Mode Split
Source: 2010 U.S. Census

The number of vehicles per household is another Census data item that shows potential transit users. While many people do not have vehicles for financial reasons, some may choose not to have a vehicle for personal reasons. Table 5 shows the vehicles per household for Boone County, and Table 6 displays how many vehicles transit-riders own. As predicted, the majority of people who use public transportation do not have a vehicle available, followed by those who only have one vehicle in their household (Table 6). Oddly, 15% of people who use public transportation have 3 vehicles or more; note that the Census does not record the quality of the vehicle.

Number of Vehicles	Households	Percent of Total
No Vehicles	1,919	2%
One Vehicle	16,323	20%
Two Vehicles	37,695	47%
Three or more Vehicles	24,629	31%
Total	80,566	100%

Table 5: Vehicle Ownership in Boone County
Source: 5-year American Community Survey 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau

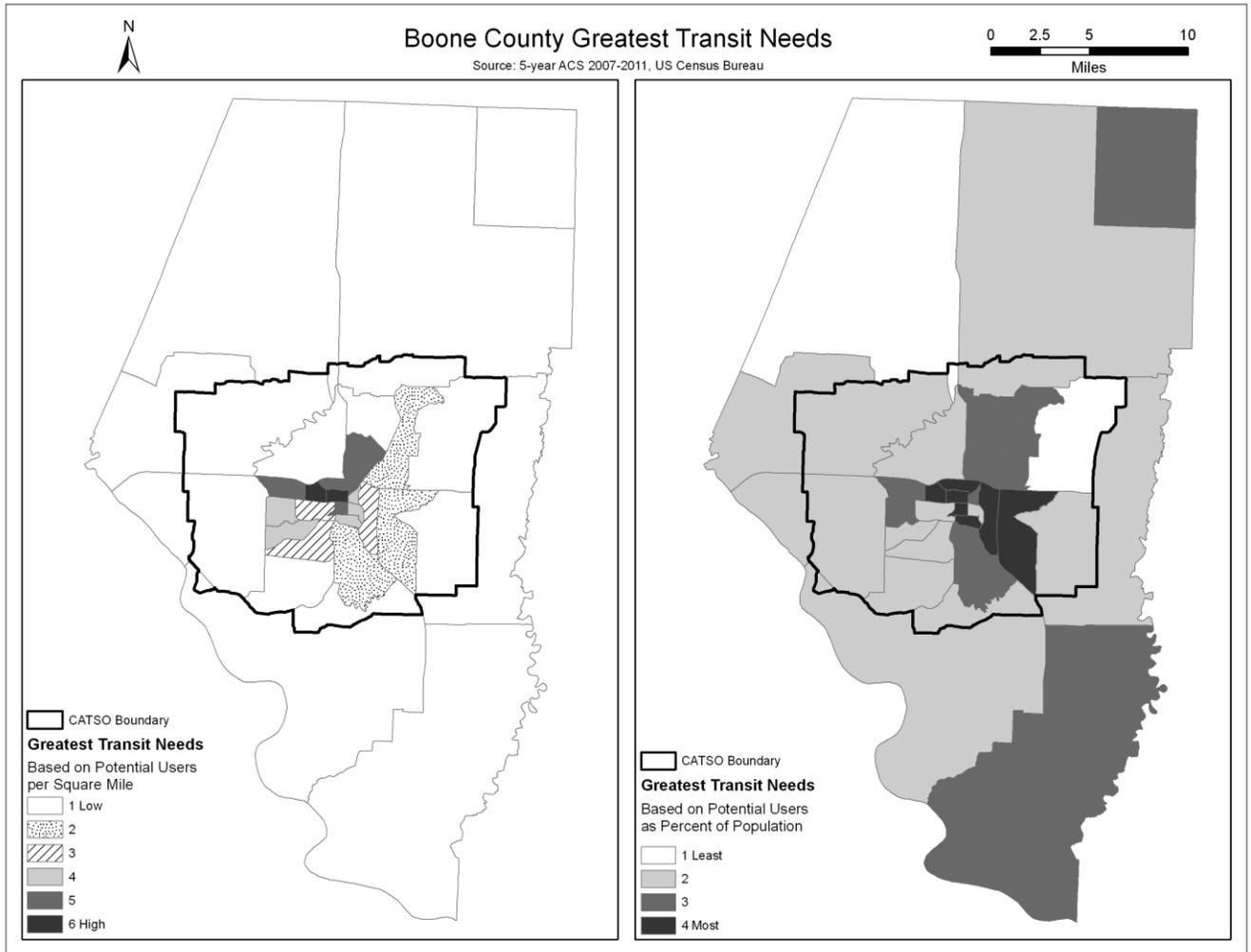
Public Transportation Use By Car Ownership		
	Riders	Percent
No vehicle available	183	45%
1 vehicle available	126	31%
2 vehicles available	36	9%
3 or more vehicles available	60	15%
Total Public Transportation Users	405	100%

Table 6: Public Transportation by Car Ownership
Source: 5-year American Community Survey 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau

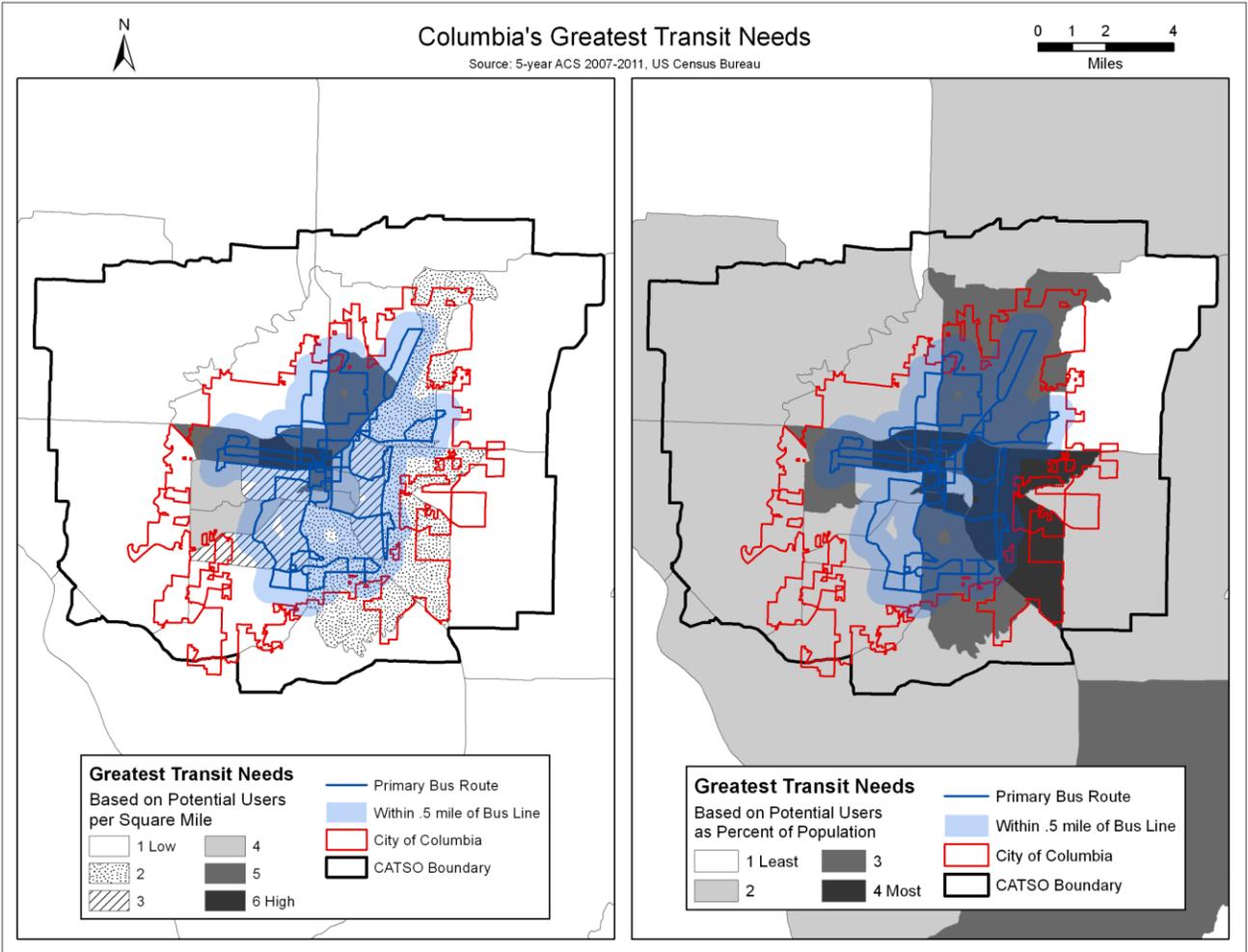
An assessment of greatest transit need should account for as many potential users a possible. Maps 4 and 5 show the Boone County Census tracts weighted by greatest transit need. Categories used in ranking were people living in poverty, people over age 65, people under age 17, households with no vehicles, and commuters using public transportation. For their privacy, people with disabilities are only tracked at the City and County level; because the CATSO and City boundaries do not align with census tracts, they were not included in this analysis.

Two maps were made for both the County and City to highlight different transportation needs and challenges. The left hand map show areas with the highest density of current/potential transit users. Predictably, the densest areas of the County (central Columbia) tend to have the densest populations of people who need transit. These areas seem to be well served by existing bus lines, based on the half mile buffer displayed in Map 5 (half a mile is typically considered “walkable”). The right hand map shows areas with a higher percent of the population needing transit.

Some areas in Boone County, outside of Columbia, have a fairly high percent of the population that may need public transportation, but the population density is very sparse. According to disability data from the Census (Table 4), areas of Boone County outside of Columbia also include one third of its population with disabilities. Providing services to this rural population will continue to be a challenge to area transit providers.



Map 4: Boone County's Greatest Transit needs
Source: 5-year American Community Survey 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau, and Community Development, City of Columbia, Missouri



Map 5: Columbia Greatest Transit needs
Source: 5-year American Community Survey 2007-2011, U.S. Census Bureau, and Community Development Department, City of Columbia, Missouri

B. Identification of Unmet Transportation Needs for Population of Consideration:

Unmet transportation needs, gaps, and overlaps were identified through surveys of riders, agencies, and data analysis comparing transit needs with service territories as described in the preceding section. The results are described below.

Ridership Identified Unmet Transportation Needs, Gaps, and Overlaps

Riders were surveyed to identify unmet transportation needs and gaps. Overlaps in service were less easily identified by riders. Surveys targeted current Columbia Transit Riders (including Paratransit), University of Missouri riders and student potential riders, and the community at large.

The first survey was conducted in April and May of 2011 as part of an “Analysis of the Public Transportation System” study jointly undertaken by Columbia Transit, the Departments of

Health and Human Services of Boone County and Columbia, and the PedNet Coalition (a non-profit non-motorized advocacy agency). This survey addressed service deficiencies and also yielded data about ridership demographics. For this survey, 907 participants completed online and paper surveys. Surveys were distributed on all 15 routes and to Paratransit riders as well.

The findings were that the overall rating of Columbia Transit, and its reliability, was good. The majority of riders rode daily for work trips. Demographically, most riders were between the ages of 25 and 40, and income levels were low; the majority of riders indicated an annual income of less than \$9,999. When asked the greatest needs for system improvement, riders identified the need for longer service hours and larger service areas as the top needs. When asked how hours of operation should be increased, later evening weekday services was identified as the most pressing need. The results of the survey are shown below in Figure 3.

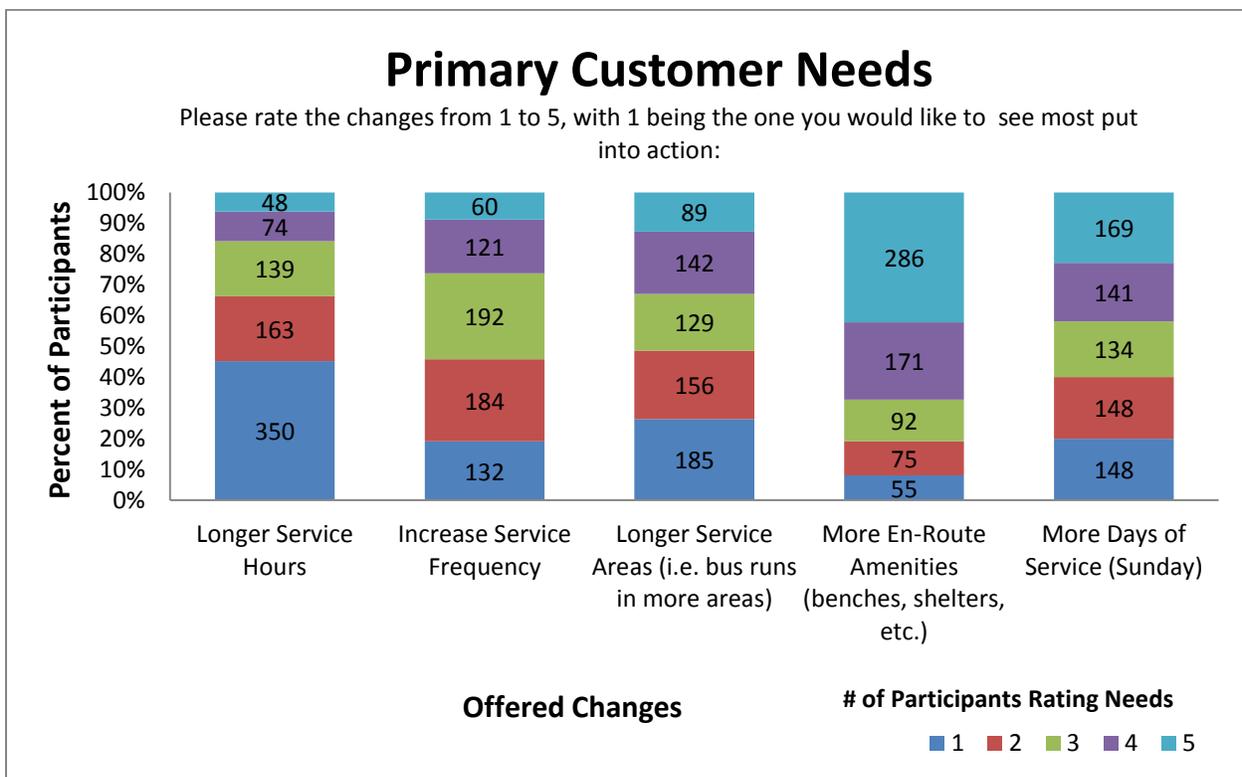


Figure 3: Primary Customer Needs Identified by Transit Riders, 2011

Between January and August of 2012, the University of Missouri surveyed students and employees to identify unmet transportation needs and the potential for system improvements. The results of this study yielded several areas where needs could be better met. The executive summary lists five points of desired improvement, as presented below:

Defined outcomes desired by the University of Missouri students:

- 1) Add GPS on buses with passenger information technology.
- 2) Establish process where the City of Columbia (Columbia Transit) and the University of Missouri can co-develop transportation solutions to better meet students' needs.

- 3) Route Additions and Adjustments
 - a) Appropriately optimize University provided transit service to meet students' needs:
 - i) Expand service further into the community adjacent to campus, add later service, and reallocate underutilized current service.
 - ii) Implement a shopping/retail shuttle for students on and near campus.
- 4) Significantly improve transit marketing, website information, social media communications, and provide the ability for students to provide interactive feedback to transit operators.
- 5) Clarify and redefine the relationship between the University of Missouri and Columbia Transit to ensure that service quality and control, training, and contract terms are optimized to meet both current and future transit needs of the MU student body.

Additionally, four "Community Conversations about Transit" were held in the spring of 2012. These conversations were hosted by City of Columbia Council members and included nearly 200 participants throughout the community including riders, stakeholders and policy makers. Special efforts were made to engage and involve members of the community with special transportation needs, such as people with disabilities, students, and lower income individuals. Through a voting process at the end of each meeting, participants voted on dozens of ideas that had emerged through input exercises. An analysis of the public input yielded three recommendations to address service issues. These recommendations are further discussed in Section IV of this plan, *Prioritization of Strategies for Implementation*. The common issues which emerged from the four Community Conversation meetings included a lack of information on how to ride the bus, a lack of financial stability, a need for adequate funding for expanded service times and geographies, and lack of coordination and planning among stakeholder jurisdictions/potential stakeholder jurisdictions and employers.

Provider Assessment of Transportation Needs/Gaps in Service

Through written letters and online and phone surveys in December of 2012 and January of 2013, the public transportation providers and social service agencies providing transportation services were asked to identify ways in which they were working with other agencies and areas where additional coordination would provide benefits. They were also asked to describe information about their agency and clients and areas where unmet needs may exist. These agencies were then asked to propose strategies and comment upon the prioritized strategies. The results of the questions updated the 2007 Plan's recommendation regarding coordination, service improvements, and unmet needs.

The questions asked of providers are listed below in Figure 4, followed by an analysis of unmet transportation needs and gaps in service that were identified by the responses. Section IV of this plan addresses ways in which these needs and gaps may be addressed by coordination and other potential strategies for community-wide improvement.

Provider Assessment Survey

1. Which of the following best describes your agency type?

- Private for-profit
- Private, not-for profit
- State or Federal
- Local/Municipal

2. Which of the following populations do you represent/serve?

- Elderly
- Disabled
- Low-income
- Youth
- Veterans
- General Public
- Penal or parolees
- Pursuing Counseling/substance abuse
- Seeking Employment/Education
- All

3. Does your agency charge a fare for providing services? If so, please indicate the fare rate in the comment box. If not, please continue on to the next question.

4. Which of the following best describes how your agency provides transportation services for your clients?

- Operate own transportation service
- Purchase third party transportation services from other provider
- Provide contract transportation services for other agencies
- Reimburse clients for transportation services provided by others
- Coordinate volunteers who provide services with private vehicles

5. Does your agency coordinate with any other transportation providers? Coordination does not have to happen by contract. If so, please describe briefly the nature of the coordination and the providers you work with. If not, please continue on to the next question.

6. What type(s) of vehicle does your agency use to provide transportation service?

- Van
- Specially- Equipped Vehicle
- Bus
- Automobile
- Other - e.g. Taxi
- Not Applicable

7. Which of the following activities is your agency responsible for that may benefit from improved coordination?

- Coordinating use of vehicles/vehicle scheduling
- Shared responsibility for vehicle maintenance
- Centralized dispatching

- Identifying/pursuing opportunities for funding
- Grant administration/management
- Shared use of office space or garage facilities
- Shared operations/general planning
- Agency would not benefit
- Other - Includes childcare services health & wellness being services, and N/A

8. After reviewing the current plan, is there any information regarding your agency which should be updated? Examples may be your mission/clients served, size/type of your fleet/operation area, etc. If so, please provide the information in the box below.

9. Please, if applicable, describe any achievements your agency has made in the last five years which should be included in the plan as a model for other transportation agencies. Also, if there are ways in which your agency has benefited from cooperation and coordination with other agencies, please describe below.

10. After reviewing the current plan, do you have comments on areas of the plan which can be improved upon in some way, or is there data that you think would be helpful to include in the plan? Do you have suggestions for additional areas in which you see opportunities for increased cooperation, coordination and leverage among transportation providers? If so, please describe in the box below.

11. Do you have data or other needs which the Columbia Area Transportation Study Organization, as the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization, may provide assistance? If so, please describe your agency needs in the box below, and provide your contact information so that we may contact you.

Figure 4: Transportation Provider Assessment Survey
 Completed via online and phone surveys December, 2012 through January, 2013

Analysis of Unmet Transportation Needs and Services Based Upon Provider Responses

System-wide unmet or underserved needs were identified as follows:

1. Expanded transportation coverage outside the City of Columbia Boundary
2. Expanded public transit routes within the City of Columbia Boundary
3. Expanded service days and times
4. Additional funding for social service agencies' clients to ride public transportation at a free or reduced cost
5. Additional funds for capital investment and transportation service operation
6. Coordinated programs of transportation providers, employers, and human service agencies

Agency representatives who responded expressed the transportation needs and gaps in service on behalf of their agency and clients. The needs and gaps in services have been discussed by the representatives as being high priorities they wish to see improve. The following are the areas agencies discussed as being major needs that produce gaps in their services.

Demand and Coverage (needs #1-3)

As indicated by rider surveys and agency surveys, there is a clear need for extended hours of transportation services including late nights and weekends. As indicated in the 2007 Plan

update, and supported by phone surveys with agencies, agency participants have communicated that their clients have employment, medical, shopping or recreation needs which are often unmet by the current public transit service territories and route schedules.

Coordination and Funding (Needs #4-6)

Agency representatives have expressed a need for more coordination and communication between transportation providers, human service agencies, and employers. Agencies generally agree that additional funding is needed for expanded service operations. The social service agencies directed this response, for the most part, to additional funding for Columbia Transit and Paratransit so that routes and service areas could be expanded to better meet needs. Additionally, many social service agencies requested additional coordination with Columbia Transit and Paratransit to fund/expand free and reduced cost fares. Funding is an ongoing concern for capital and operation costs for the agencies providing public transportation as a primary activity (Columbia Transit and OATS) or as one of many primary activities (SIL). Other suggested areas of coordination were training, specifically customer training for employees and a call center for transit options and services.

SECTION III:

A. Strategies and/or Activities to Address Identified Gaps and Achieve Efficiencies in Service Delivery:

The third component to the coordinated transportation plan is to identify potential strategies for addressing the needs, gaps, and overlaps in existing services identified through Census and other data analysis, ridership surveys, and provider surveys. As the issues and deficiencies identified through these three sources are not mutually exclusive, they are addressed comprehensively through the strategies/activities described below. Many have been carried forward from the 2007 Plan, and several have been revised or newly proposed.

Strategies identified to address the needs within the CATSO boundary are as follows:

1. Expand Columbia Transit Service Area in Columbia

Expanding the Columbia Transit service area was the second most highly ranked improvement identified in the rider surveys. A larger service area will allow existing riders more destinations, and would expand transportation options to a larger population of potential riders. However, as is the case with all transit agencies, Columbia Transit is tasked with providing transit service with levels of funding incapable of supporting services to meet all transit demand. Therefore, it will be difficult for Columbia Transit to take on service expansions without first identifying new sources of revenue to cover the costs of adding service.

2. Expand Columbia Transit Service to Include Boone County

Columbia Transit, as a City transit system, currently limits its operations to destinations within the City of Columbia. By expanding the service area of Columbia Transit to include all of Boone County, it would be possible to create a county-wide transit system.

Increasing its service area to include Boone County would represent a major service expansion. The ability to serve the remainder of the County would require the development of a general demand-response or flex-route service for the outlying County.

The cost of Columbia Transit introducing countywide demand-response service is considerable. A rural transit demand estimate (2007; 2012 estimate not available) predicted the County would generate up to 131,000 rural transit trips. Approximately 59,000 of these trips are estimated to be non-program trips, which includes trips taken by seniors, persons with disabilities, and the general public. The remaining 72,000 trips are estimated to be program trips, or trips associated with specific programs or services. If Columbia Transit covered all of these trips at their current (2012) Para-Transit operating costs, it would cost the agency between \$3 and \$4 million. This estimate is the upper bounds of possible ridership and cost increases. The actual costs would likely be lower since Columbia Transit would likely not capture 100 percent of the estimated demand and other transportation services already serve some of these trips. Columbia Transit could further reduce this cost by contracting out its Paratransit service to OATS, which operates rural Paratransit service at a lower cost (\$19.30 per trip). To meet the estimated rural transit demand, Columbia Transit would incur capital costs associated with the purchase of additional Paratransit vehicles. The high estimated costs associated with expanding Columbia Transit's service to cover all of Boone County makes this improvement unlikely in the near future, especially since transportation providers are already serving rural Boone County. The need for more extensive and integrated Paratransit service in the outlying county could also be met through better coordination, which has the ability to increase the capacity of existing service and make transferring between services easier. This is an additional strategy discussed in this section. Sharing the responsibility for providing and funding the service across multiple agencies will also make service improvements more palatable.

3. Extend Columbia Transit's Hours and Days of Operation

Expanding the existing transit hours and days of operation (to include Sundays) was highly desired by riders according to the ridership surveys (see Figure 3). Additionally, many social service providers described this as a need they have identified for their clients. Expanding Columbia Transit's evening service and introducing Sunday service would provide greater transportation choices, especially for residents with nontraditional work schedules. Similar to expanding the service area, expanding Columbia Transit's hours of operation would increase its cost of operation. Operating Paratransit service during expanded hours would further increase the cost of operating evening and weekday service. However, new expansions in hours and days of operation may be done incrementally and experimentally; those routes generating enough demand to minimize marginal cost increases may be found easier to implement. According to the ridership surveys, later evening weekday services was the most desired if additional service hours were added.

4. Create a One-Stop Information Webpage to Match Transportation Needs with Providers

The development and maintenance of a directory of human service agencies and transportation providers, including federal, state, and local government contacts that incorporates transportation into their activities, will assist those with transportation needs to find an applicable agency. It will also allow agencies to refer clients with unmet needs. The website could include information about services, transportation capabilities and resources. It should recognize Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and be compatible with assistive technology and other ADA needs. This will be a first step towards addressing the need for a call center to match needs with potential service providers, as mentioned in the social service provider survey results.

5. Promote Education and Information Sharing Between Agencies and Providers

Another strategy is to improve the understanding or “awareness” of what the transportation service providers do for their clients by health and human service agencies, clients and the public. The idea could be an educational effort which would include identification of the agencies and their services, giving a more detailed summary of transportation options available. This may be done in conjunction with strategy #4 (strategy #4 focuses on assisting and educating persons with transportation needs and strategy #5 focuses on providers) as a website may dually provide information to users and providers. Additional information sharing options are discussed in Section IV.

6. Improve Coordination among Transportation Providers and Social Service Agencies

Coordination of services may reduce costs and redundant services, leverage resources (financial, human, technological, facilities and fleet), and allow for efficiency through critical mass. The final strategy to address unmet needs is to develop better coordination among transportation providers and social service agencies through a mobility management concept. This goal of this strategy is to optimize all transportation resources in the community to improve specialized transportation for the elderly, disabled, low-income and others through a range of activities. Coordination, communication and expanded partnerships form the basis of the mobility management concept, as described on the next page.

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) on Mobility Management:

- Many transit agencies are embracing the concept of ‘**mobility management**’, which is a strategic approach to service coordination and customer service that is becoming a worldwide trend in the public transportation sector.
- When implemented, mobility management will move transit agencies away from their roles as fixed-route service operators, and toward collaboration with other transportation providers. The idea behind this approach is to create a full range of well synchronized mobility services within a community.
- Mobility management starts with the creation of partnerships among transportation providers in a particular region, so as to expand the range of viable options that communities have for transportation. Communication is also a critical component of mobility management, as the general public must be made aware of these options.
- With the mobility management approach, transit resources are efficiently coordinated, enabling customers to make better decisions, as well as improved customer service.

www.apta.com

Figure 5: The American Public Transportation Association Definition of Mobility Management

SECTION IV:

A. Prioritization of Strategies for Implementation:

The fourth component of a coordinated plan is to prioritize the strategies for funding and implementation. This Plan has identified potential coordination strategies for the CATSO Metro Area and Boone County. Coordination strategies for the Mid-Missouri region are discussed in part B of this section, *Mid-Missouri Regional Planning and Prioritization*, as presented below. Selection of specific strategies will depend to a large extent on which agencies are interested and willing to participate. For example, sharing of vehicles and joint purchasing could occur among two or more smaller transportation providers while development of a one-call center for all transportation services will require the participation of Columbia Transit and OATS. As the partnerships are formed, many of the coordination strategies will be identified by the nature of the particular partnership. It will be important to determine priorities for implementing the various coordination strategies. Some may be implemented easily with little or no cost, while others may require a significant investment of time, resources, and funds. Some strategies may require incremental steps to implement the full strategy. As an example, consolidation of services may require initial steps of cooperation before consolidation can be achieved.

With prioritization of potential new strategies to address unmet needs, it is also important to focus upon existing coordination activities which may be supported or expanded. There are a number of coordination activities which are currently taking place in Boone County. These have been identified in the description of each agency which is involved in providing transportation service to the community and are summarized briefly below. One example of existing coordination is the Medicaid brokerage. LogistiCare serves as the statewide Medicaid broker.

Several transportation providers are used in Boone County to provide the service including OATS and local taxis. Columbia Transit operates the campus shuttles under a contract with the University of Missouri. Columbia Transit and the University are discussing the possibility of open access on Columbia Transit for University students via student fees; additionally the FastCAT route has been developed in partnership with student housing providers and the University. Several social service agencies purchase bus passes on Columbia Transit or have contracts with OATS, a consolidated rural transportation provider, to provide transportation to their clients. These examples of existing coordination activities illustrate many of the coordination efforts that have already been undertaken in Boone County; they may be used as examples for additional partnerships or as places where additional support may efficiently improve the transportation system.

The Community Conversation about Transit, convened by and for transit stakeholders, policy makers and riders in the spring of 2012 (as discussed in Section 2), prioritizes three recommendations to address unmet transportation needs. The recommendations are broken down by time-frame and resources which are helpful prioritization tools:

- Recommendation #1 (short-term strategy): Develop more user-friendly information on how to use the bus system;
- Recommendation #2 (medium-term strategy): Explore and advance multiple different potential funding sources for ensuring the financial stability of transit services; and
- Recommendation #3 (long-term strategy): Launch a high-level, multi-jurisdictional transit planning process that includes the City of Columbia, University of Missouri, Columbia Public Schools, Chamber of Commerce, and major employers.

By organizing the six strategies identified to meet the CATSO Metro Area's unmet needs around the three Community Conversation recommendations presented above, a prioritization based upon time frame and complexity is possible. As described in Section III of this plan, the six strategies are:

1. Expand Columbia Transit Service Area in Columbia
2. Expand Columbia Transit Service to Include Boone County
3. Extend Columbia Transit's Hours and Days of Operation
4. Create a One-Stop Information Webpage to Match Transportation Needs with Providers
5. Promote Education and Information Sharing Between Agencies and Providers
6. Improve Coordination among Transportation Providers and Social Service Agencies

This initial prioritized list analyzes and explores the three recommendations and six strategies listed above by time frame: short, medium and long. This prioritization should be considered a starting point for future discussions on service coordination in the CATSO area. A final prioritization of strategies should be based on input from local agencies, City and County representatives, and the general public including individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes.

- The regional transportation system will provide enhanced customer service and efficiency through unified information services including (short-term):

- A shared educational/one-stop website to match users with services and to educate providers about the providers themselves so they may understand the service capacity of other agencies. This website may be created or maintained by CATSO or a collection of transportation providers or social service agencies. It may also include shared schedules/maps and an interactive service directory to guide users or agencies through question to match needs with providers. Information on “how to ride” transit (i.e. how to read bus routes, how and if you need to arrange for a ride, how to pay, how to clarify disability-related needs, etc.) will also be provided through pictures, videos, text and other tools. This information may also be provided in brochure (including Braille and languages mandated by Title VI) format as well.
 - A joint email listserv whereby agencies can communicate with one another regarding funding opportunities, events, agency changes and other important news items.
 - Scheduled transportation provider “town hall” style meetings where agencies can meet and greet, share information, and establish relationships whereby additional coordination opportunities may be identified.
 - Public participation in regional transportation planning and evaluation of transit service routes and times will be encouraged by providers and policy makers.
- The regional transportation system will ensure the financial stability of the system itself and also provide services which fit the financial needs of users (medium-term):
 - Agencies and providers will seek options to procure equipment with federal funding so as to leverage local funding and keep costs as low as possible to citizens; operation and maintenance funding will also be pursued as appropriate.
 - Agencies and providers will seek grants and other funding for reduced and free fares.
 - Columbia Transit will evaluate opportunities for route expansion, both in terms of hours/days of operation and service territory with information about marginal costs of service, unmet needs, and financial opportunities.
 - CATSO will encourage analysis of the transit impacts and opportunities related to transportation projects funded at the local, state and federal level.
 - Agencies will work together to leverage resources and reduce redundancies.
 - All parties will encourage strong community support of transit funding, services and transit supportive development and encourage participation by the local chamber of commerce and major employers in the development and implementation of public transportation plans and programs.
- Providers, agencies and CATSO will encourage regional-level transit planning and coordination to create a Mobility Management system (long-term):
 - Agencies and providers will develop fare/transfer/pass agreements between one another to maximize the accessibility and affordability to users.
 - CATSO may establish routine reviews of progress toward achieving implementation of this Coordination Plan through the Unified Planning Work Program,

Transportation Improvement Program, and Long-Range Transportation Plan development and update cycles.

- Opportunities for greater coordination will be explored, particularly in the areas of joint dispatch, route planning, marketing and technology, customer service, grant writing, fleet/facility/employee sharing and other administrative, technical, and practical needs.
- Columbia Transit and other providers and agencies will monitor the existing system to maximize efficiencies and improve coordination of regional services.
- The region will explore opportunities for the creation of dedicated sources of funding to implement a regional transit system

B. Mid-Missouri Regional Planning and Prioritization

This plan discusses coordination strategies for the CATSO Metro Area. The Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission (MMRPC) is charged with maintaining a Public Transit Human Services Coordination Plan for the six-county Mid-Missouri Region (Boone, Callaway, Cole, Cooper, Howard, and Moniteau counties). While MMRPC is not responsible for transportation planning for the CATSO Metro Area, the Metro Area is located within Boone County, offering opportunities for regional cooperation and coordinated transportation planning.

The MMRPC Public Transit Human Services Coordination Plan was adopted in August 2008; an updated plan is anticipated by August 2013. The 2008 MMRPC Plan for Mid-Missouri references the 2007 CATSO/Boone County Plan strategies. Building upon the long-term strategy prioritization category listed above in Section IV A, *Providers, agencies and CATSO will encourage regional-level transit planning and coordination to create a Mobility Management system*, it is appropriate for local providers, agencies and CATSO to work towards the achievement of the three strategies prioritized in the 2008 MMRPC Plan, and those developed in the 2013 Plan update.

The 2008 MMRPC Public Transit Human Services Coordination Plan for Mid-Missouri lists prioritized strategies on page 5-1 as presented below:

1. Secure funding necessary to sustain current system capabilities, including sufficient levels of qualified staff and equipment. This strategy should also include staff training so that PT-HST providers meet necessary qualifications. Moreover, the strategy should seek to provide higher pay standards to attract and retain qualified and competent staff.
2. Enhance and expand current system capabilities, including equipment upgrades, increased staffing, broader coverage areas and hours of operation, and public education, including the development of a directory of human service agencies. Educational efforts also include attempts to make public transit organizations aware of the services available, how these organizations complement one another and how routes could be improved to avoid overlapping coverage.
3. Secure funding for additional services and programs. Such funding would be utilized not only in the purchasing of new equipment, but for additional activities such as: increasing staff

capacity of organizations; increasing hours of operation, promoting actions, programs, and financial support that remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

These three strategies are complementary to the strategies presented in this Plan. CATSO will participate in the 2013 MMRPC Plan update and will encourage local transportation providers and social service agencies to participate as well.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS ON COORDINATION:

SAFETEA-LU includes a requirement that any funding for projects under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 program, the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program, and the New Freedom program must be based on a local coordinated transportation plan. Some of the human services transportation providers in Boone County may be eligible for funding under the Section 5310 program while some of the enhanced services discussed in this chapter may be eligible for funding under the JARC or New Freedom program. Without support of a local coordinated transportation plan, these activities will not be eligible for funding under these specific federal programs.

CONCLUSION:

Coordination can be a difficult process, especially in its initial stages. There are valid reasons for each agency to exercise caution. Coordinating with other agencies has the potential to jeopardize the service each agency provides, leaving their customers and constituents stranded. Maintaining the status quo may not be the most efficient use of transportation resources across the county, but at least each agency knows what to expect. Despite the perceived risks associated with coordination, there are also substantial benefits associated with it, both for riders and agencies. Riders can benefit from a unified system that can provide integrated and possibly increased service. Agencies can improve their efficiency and costs by reducing the duplication of service and administration. In some areas coordination has enabled agencies to serve the same number of trips with fewer vehicles. In Boone County, since unmet transit demand appears high, it will be possible to increase capacity and serve more trips with the same amount of resources.

Few if any Boone County service providers are ready for extensive coordination activities, but most, including Columbia Transit and OATS, are at least interested in exploring more basic coordination efforts. As agencies develop relationships and become more familiar with one another's services, they may become willing to try more advanced levels of coordination. Building from the foundation laid by the basic coordination of joint information services (both to the public and between one another, as described in the short-term strategies), it may be possible for the agencies to develop into a fully coordinated countywide system as described by the mobility management concept. With each step toward a more coordinated system, the service available in the county stands to improve, providing better service to riders.