

Champaign Transit-Human Services

Transportation Plan

By

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Project Approved:

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Date Approved:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Champaign Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan has been developed to determine how existing transportation services can be better coordinated and how new funding and other resources can be used to improve transportation services in a coordinated manner. In addition, this plan is intended to satisfy the requirements of a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan as laid out in federal law. By meeting these requirements, this plan gives Champaign County agencies access to federal funds that can be used for the following transportation purposes:

- Access to jobs for low-income individuals (Job Access Reverse Commute, or JARC)
- Vehicles or other equipment for transporting seniors or people with disabilities (Specialized Transportation)
- New transportation services for people with disabilities (New Freedom).

Plan components included gathering county transit statistical data; identifying social services agencies, and public and private transit providers; identifying stakeholders to participate in the plan process; administering an agency survey, developing a fleet inventory, and finally the development of the coordinated plan.

Currently, Champaign County has no coordinated transportation activities; however, there is interest. Transportation providers are interested in reliable streams of passengers and revenues, while social services providers see the gaps in transportation service for their clients and hope this coordination effort may be a chance to address them. These two perspectives have the potential for mutually beneficial relationships.

There is agreement among agency leaders that there are underutilized transportation assets. There are duplicated services, underserved areas and underutilized vehicles. Some transportation gaps were identified, including the following:

- Capacity gaps: trips to meet employment opportunities (both in/out-of-county), accessible vehicles, and duplication of existing service
- Service time gaps: extended evening and weekend hours
- Awareness gaps: centralized dispatching and marketing of existing services

The Coordinated Plan proposes to address transportation gaps through a variety of strategies. There are two main categories of strategies: those pertaining directly to transportation service and those that improve relationships or integration of other activities between organizations.

Service Strategies

- Provide evening and weekend transportation service

- Share vehicles
- Provide transportation service for employment

Policy Coordination Strategies

- Establish a one-stop resource for transportation information
- Conduct ongoing public outreach regarding transportation services
- Establish framework for regular communication, collaboration, and grant writing, among social service agencies and transportation providers
- Hire a mobility manager to coordinate services among agencies and other transportation providers
- Establish a framework to increase efficiencies, coordinating services and sharing resources including addressing liability, insurance, training, vehicle maintenance, and shared vehicle use procedures

The Champaign Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan provides a foundation for coordination by meeting the federal requirements and provides a structure for coordination by identifying participants who have shown their interest. This plan provides guidelines for the future construction of an improved service delivery system in an effective and efficient manner.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Champaign County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) contains all information, analyses, and findings compiled to date, an evaluation of community characteristics, a stakeholder assessment and an inventory of existing transportation services. It also provides a description of the unmet transportation needs in Champaign County as determined through various analytical methods such as human services agency and transportation provider surveys, demographic research, local meetings, and conversations with local stakeholders.

This is the Final Memorandum for the report. A series of recommendations is included in the final report that addresses current and projected unmet transportation needs for people with low incomes, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. The intent of this planning process is to create a guide for local decision-makers as they consider advances in the coordination of transportation resources within the county.

Organization and operational strategies are recommended based upon the information and feedback generated during the data analysis and community outreach activities. Community outreach activities are outlined in Section III. The Champaign County Commissioners and other plan members, identified through Letters of Commitment, are invited to review the contents of this document and provide input that will assist in the development of a financially feasible implementation timeline and milestones.

This planning process was undertaken by the Champaign County Board of Commission. This Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) document meets the requirements for the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) coordinated transportation plan as set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) guidelines.

WHY A COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN?

Transportation coordination has been occurring across the nation because the benefits of coordination are clear. According to the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility's (CCAM) United We Ride information on its website, nationally, \$700 million could be saved if transportation providers would coordinate their individual resources which are dedicated to providing transportation. This conservative estimate is based on a study conducted by the National Academy of Science's Transportation Research Board (TRB) but it highlights the fact that transportation resources (funding, people, vehicles, and services) could be more effectively utilized to provide more transportation for communities.

Transportation is a vital link to jobs, medical care, and community support services. Without it, citizens cannot be productive because they do not have reliable access to employment centers; health care becomes more expensive as citizens are admitted to hospitals with serious health problems because they were without necessary resources to travel to preventative care appointments, etc. The lack of affordable and

useable transportation options frustrates the ability of many citizens to achieve economic and personal independence. Transportation coordination can help to provide more trips for agency clients and the general public, and link them to life-supporting employment and services.

Transportation coordination, while making sense from an efficiency and resource utilization standpoint, has also become a national mandate. In February 2004, President Bush issued Executive Order #13330, requiring ten federal departments to work together to enhance transportation access, minimize duplication of federal services, and facilitate the most appropriate, cost-effective transportation allowed with existing federal resources. The Federal Transit Administration CCAM developed a national campaign entitled “United We Ride,” to help promote transportation coordination. A “United We Ride” website has been posted as a resource for any organization interested in transportation of older adults, individuals with limited incomes, and persons with disabilities. The website contains “A Framework for Action” for local communities and state governments, a coordination planning tool, along with a multitude of other coordination resources. State “United We Ride” grants have also been awarded to encourage transportation coordination planning at the state level. This locally developed HSTP for Champaign County is a result of the national United We Ride campaign and efforts for coordination that originate at the federal level and reach through to State Departments of Transportation and, finally, to local communities.

Coordinated transportation is now an eligibility requirement for the following FTA funding grant programs:

Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities (Section 5310)

This program (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides formula funding to States for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the transportation service is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. States apply for funds on behalf of local private non-profit agencies and certain public bodies. Capital projects are also eligible for funding. Most funds are used to purchase vehicles, but acquisition of transportation services under contract, lease or other arrangements and state program administration are also eligible expenses.

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program (Section 5316)

The purpose of this grant program is to develop transportation services designed to transport welfare recipients and people with low incomes to and from jobs and to develop transportation services for residents of urban centers and rural and suburban areas to suburban employment opportunities. Emphasis is placed on projects that use mass transportation services. The Job Access grant program is intended to provide new transit service to assist welfare recipients and other low-income individuals in getting to jobs, training, and child care. Reverse Commute grants are designed to develop transit services to transport workers to suburban job sites.

Eligible recipients include local governmental authorities, agencies, and non-profit entities. Eligible activities for “Job Access” grants include capital and operating costs of equipment, facilities, and associated capital maintenance items related to providing access to jobs. Also included are the costs of promoting the use of transit by workers with nontraditional work schedules, promoting the use of transit vouchers, and promoting the use of employer-provided transportation. For “Reverse Commute” grants, the following activities are eligible: operating costs, capital costs, and other costs associated with reverse commute by bus, train, carpool, vans, or other transit service.

New Freedom Program (Section 5317)

New Freedom is designed to encourage services and facility improvements to address the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The New Freedom formula grant program is also designed to expand the transportation mobility options available to individuals with disabilities beyond the requirements of the ADA. Examples of projects and activities that might be funded under the program include, but are not limited to:

- Purchasing vehicles and supporting accessible taxi, ride-sharing, and vanpooling programs.
- Providing paratransit services beyond minimum requirements (3/4 mile to either side of a fixed route), including for routes that run seasonally.
- Making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations.
- Supporting voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.
- Supporting volunteer driver and aide programs.
- Supporting mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation.

One of the prerequisites to apply for funding under the SAFETEA-LU programs is participation in the creation of a “locally developed Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.” **This HSTP is the first step for all of the organizations that participated in the plan toward satisfying the grant application requirement.** The plan should become a living document so that it may be amended as new organizations join the effort in future years.

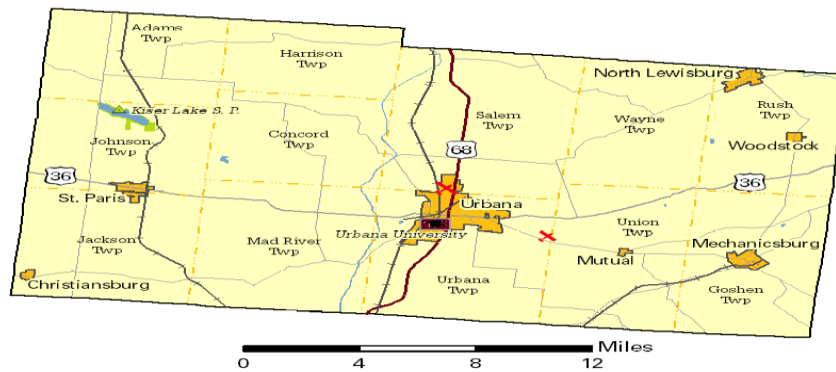
II. INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Because this plan is a component requirement for grants available through the Ohio Department of Transportation specifically targeted to the transportation needs of people with low incomes, individuals with disabilities and the elderly, it is important that demographic indicators are representative of these populations in Champaign County. Demographic information includes population and poverty statistics, age distribution, and employment indicators, among others.

Champaign County is geographically located in the west-central portion of Ohio, and is bordered by Logan County to the north; Union County to the northeast; Madison County to the southeast; Clark County to the south; Miami County to the southwest; and Shelby County to the northwest. The County, established on February 20, 1805, was formed from Franklin and Greene Counties. It is 429 square miles, and includes twelve townships including: Adams, Johnson, Jackson, Harrison, Concord, Mad River, Salem, Urbana, Wayne, Union, Rush and Goshen.

Exhibit I (map) illustrates the major roads and designated places in Champaign County. The county is served by the following major highways: State Routes 29, 36, 68, 235, 245, 296, 559 and 560.

EXHIBIT I: Champaign County Map



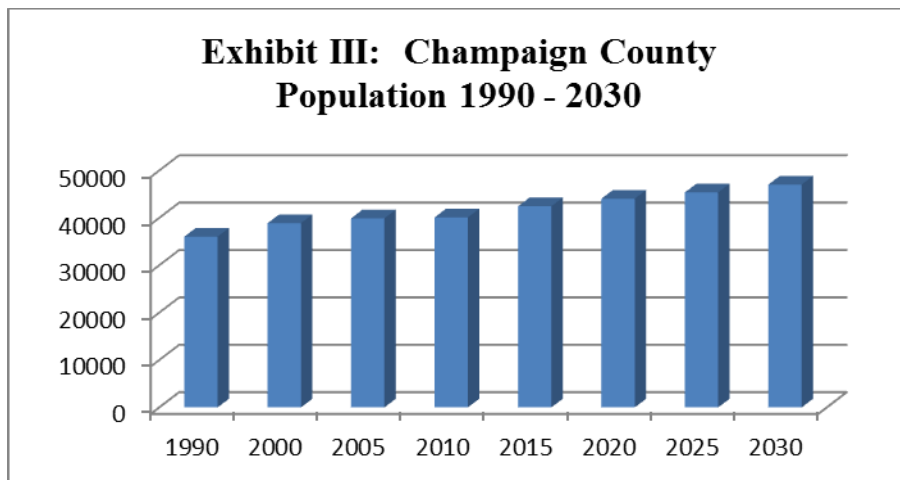
POPULATION

The population of Champaign County in 2000 was 38,890, with a 2009-estimated population of 39,713 people. The county seat and largest city is Urbana, with an estimated population of 11,384 people in 2009. The population of the county seat decreased approximately 0.2 percent between 2000 and 2009. Urbana and Mad River Townships are the next largest places in the county. Salem Township, St. Paris, and Union Township also contain significant portions of the county's population (Exhibit II).

Exhibit II: Champaign County Cities and Townships, 2009			
Largest Places	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	% of Change
Urbana City	11,613	11,384	-0.2%
Urbana Township UB	3,366	3,460	0.4%
Mad River Township	2,650	2,754	0.5%
Salem Township UB	2,296	2,440	0.7%
Village of St. Paris	1,998	1,966	-0.3%
Union Township UB	1,788	1,901	0.7%
Jackson Township UB	1,763	1,849	0.7%
Village of Mechanicsburg	1,744	1,701	-0.3%
Wayne Township	1,660	1,758	0.7%
Goshen Township UB	1,639	1,751	0.8%
TOTAL POPULATIONS	30,517	30,964	3.7%
UB: Unincorporated Balance. Source: DOD, 2009 Population Estimates			

POPULATION GROWTH

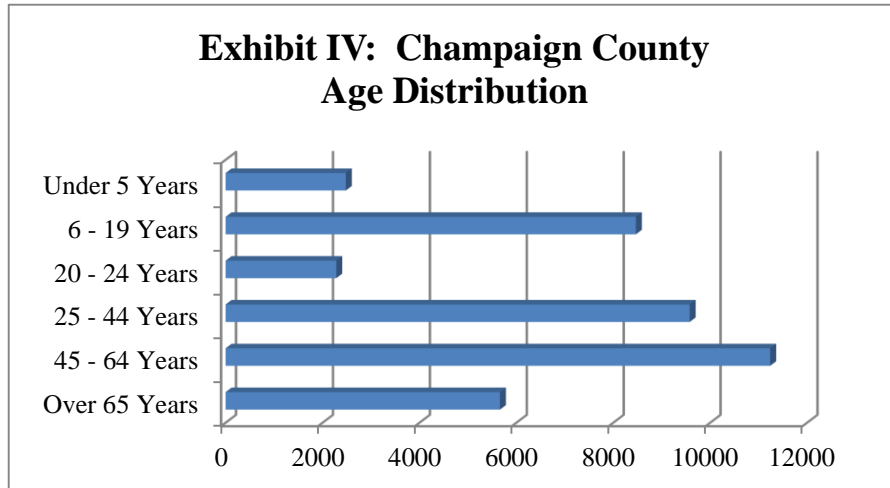
By all estimates, the population of Champaign County shows an increase. Between 2000 and 2010, it was estimated that the county population would increase by three percent. A 13.9 percent population increase is projected between 2010 and 2030 (Exhibit III).



<http://www.development.ohio.gov/research/files/s0/Champaign.pdf>

AGE DISTRIBUTION

According to the Ohio Department of Development, the largest age group in Champaign County is between the ages of 45 and 64, which constitutes 28.3 percent of the county’s population (Exhibit IV). The group between ages 25 and 44 was the second largest, constituting 24.1 percent of the population. Approximately 14.3 percent of the population is age 65 and older.

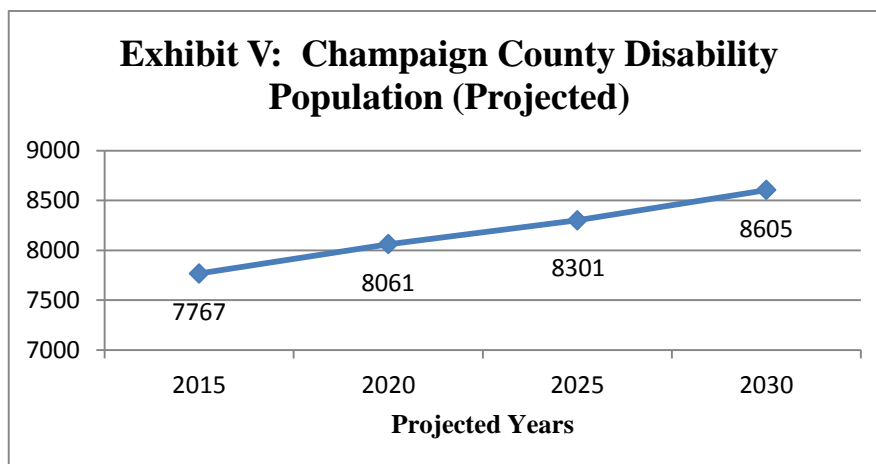


http://www.development.ohio.gov/research/Reports_In_Population_and_Housing-Population_estimates.htm

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

There are no known existing data sources that enumerate the existing disabled population and project the growth or decline of this population into the future for Champaign County. Generally, the overall population is projected and then some assessment of the future incidence rates of various disabilities is used to generate an estimate of the disabled population. The Ohio Department of Development projects the population of Champaign County to increase to 42,440 in 2015, to 44,050 in 2020, to 45,360 in 2025, and to 47,020 in 2030. Statistical data compiled in a report “Disability Status: 2000” issued in March of 2003 shows the disability status of the civilian noninstitutionalized population in Ohio to be 18.3 percent.

Applying the prevalence of disability of 18.3 percent to the population projections for Champaign County shows an increase in the disability population as seen in Exhibit V below.

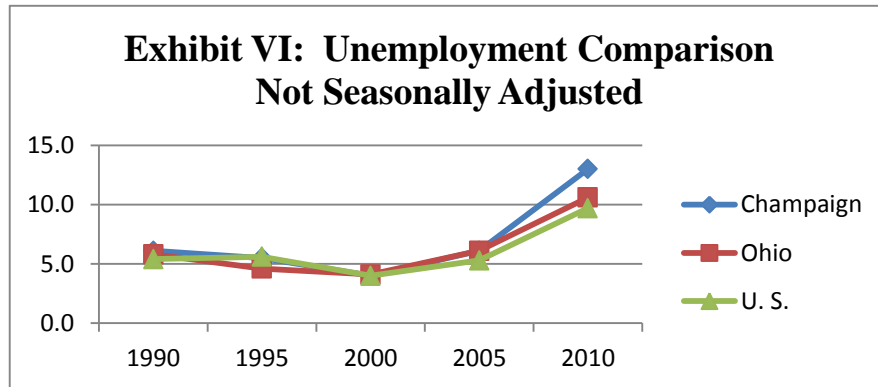


A comprehensive survey completed by the Administration on Aging (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services) reports that longevity is increasing and younger seniors are healthier than in all previously measured time in history. Quality of life issues and an individual's desire to live independently will put increasing pressure on existing transit services to provide mobility to this population. This has great significance on the potential need to provide public transit and complementary paratransit services as this population is estimated to account for 20 percent of the total U. S. population by 2030.

INDUSTRY AND LABOR FORCE

UNEMPLOYMENT

According to the Ohio Department of Development, the civilian labor force in Champaign County was made up of approximately 20,000 individuals in 2010. The U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics reports an unemployment rate of 13 percent. Exhibit VI illustrates a comparison of unemployment rates in Champaign County, the State of Ohio, and the United States between 1990 and 2010. As depicted, unemployment in Champaign County shows an increase beyond that of the state and federal levels since 2005.



Source: U. S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics

EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Manufacturing accounts for the county's largest industry, followed by health care

EXHIBIT VII: Champaign County Industry Based on North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	
Manufacturing	
Health Care and Social Assistance	
Retail Trade	
Accommodation and Food Services	
Administrative and Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services	
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2007 Economic Census	

and social assistance, and the retail trades (Exhibit VII). There are differences between the information reported in this paragraph and the following paragraph identifying employers. Not all companies are recognized and/or report using the North American Industry Classification System.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

According to the Champaign County Department of Economic Development, the top ten employers of Champaign County are identified in the chart below. The majority of the large employers are found in and around Urbana.

Exhibit VIII: Champaign County Employers	
Employer	# of Employees
KTH Parts Industries, St. Paris	829
Honeywell, Inc., Urbana	600
Rittal, Urbana	575
Champaign County, Urbana	382
ORBIS, Urbana	300
*Wal-Mart, Urbana	277
Graham Schools, St. Paris	269
Urbana University, Urbana	253
Urbana City Schools, Urbana	245
Johnson Welded Manufacturing, Urbana	200
Mercy Hospital/McAuley, Urbana	190
*Some employees included in this count may be part-time.	

ECONOMIC PROFILE

HOUSEHOLD INCOME MEASURES

Exhibit IX illustrates the per capita personal income for Champaign County, the State of Ohio, and the United States from 2004 through 2008. The information provided indicates that Champaign County's per capital personal income is less than the State of Ohio and less than that of the United States. Although the per capita income is increasing, based on census information from 2008, an estimated 11.8 percent, or 4,686, live below the poverty level.

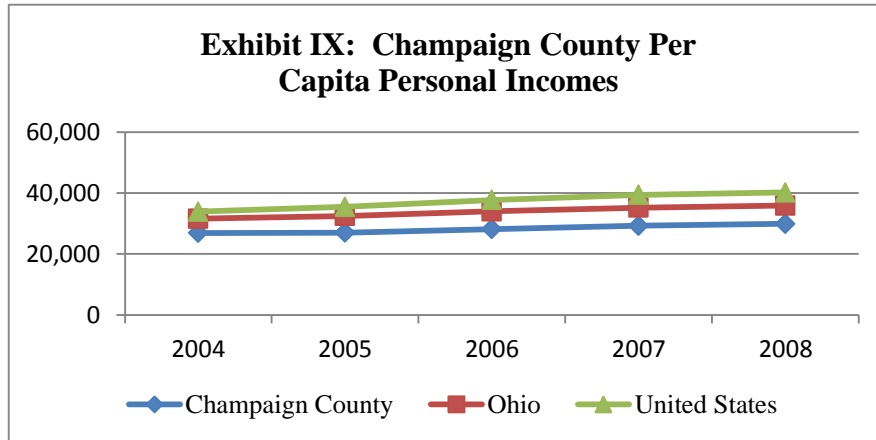
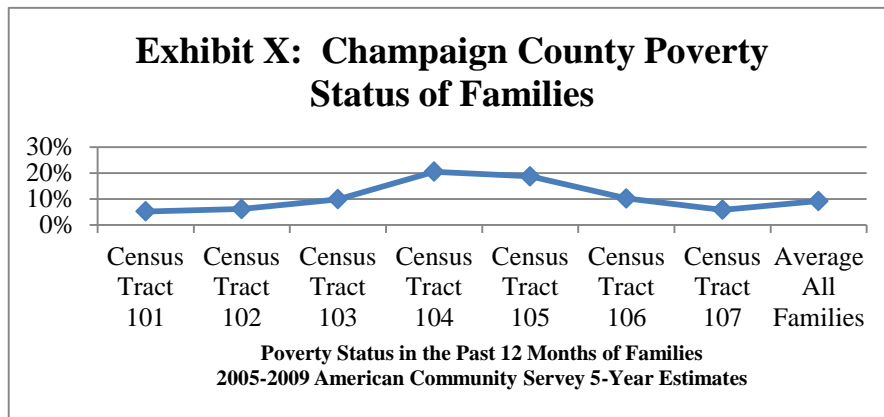


Exhibit X illustrates the percentage of total families in each census tract that are below the poverty level. The high percentage census tracts are located in Tracts 104 with 20.5 percent and 105 with 18.7 percent of families living below the poverty line. Tract 104 represents the northwest quadrant of Urbana and extends north to State Route 296; and Tract 105 represents the northeast quadrant of Urbana, extending north to Dellinger Road. The average of total families living below the poverty line in Champaign County is 9.2 percent.



MAJOR TRIP GENERATORS

The term “trip generator” is used to describe locations where concentrations of people are likely to live or travel to meet their shopping, childcare, and health care needs. The following paragraphs outline some of these likely residences and destinations in and out of Champaign County.

Health Care and Pharmacy Facilities

There are two medical facilities in Champaign County: Mercy Memorial Hospital and Midwest Dialysis Center; and there are three medical facilities in neighboring Clark County: Community Mercy Hospital, Springfield Regional Cancer Center and Ohio Valley Medical Center. Additionally, there are four primary pharmacies within the city

limits of Urbana, including: The Medicine Shoppe, CVS Pharmacy, Kroger Pharmacy and Wal-Mart Pharmacy.

Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Facilities

Living facilities represent a location where individuals will travel to and from. There are five facilities in Urbana, and several more throughout the county. They are Brookdale-Sterling House, Heartland of Urbana, Hearth & Home, Mercy McAuley Center and Vancrest of Urbana. Additionally, life care communities include Rotary Manor and South Pointe Village.

Government Agency Facilities

Government agency facilities are also considered to be major trip generators. Examples of government agencies include Champaign Government Building (property taxes and dog licenses), Champaign County Jobs & Family Services for many social services, and the Champaign County Health Department for the vaccine clinic.

Hotels and Food Facilities

Hotels and restaurants represent trip generators for customers and also for employees of the establishments. The majority of these locations are in Urbana along Scioto Street (US Hwy. 36/29).

Quality of Life Facilities

Retail businesses represent another valuable trip generator. Wal-Mart and Kroger represent retail establishments identified as major trip generators.

SUMMARY

This section included statistical information specifically related to the target populations of the disabled, the elderly, and the low income. Champaign County statistics show a continued growth in population, particularly those aged 45 and over. The groups ages 45-64 and ages 65 and over, combined, account for 42.6 percent of the projected population. Growth is also projected in the disability community.

Low income statistics indicate that unemployment is higher in Champaign County than in the state and/or the U S. It also experiences a high rate of poverty and lower personal incomes than the state and/or the U. S.

These statistics indicate ongoing challenges for service providers in all areas, including healthcare, childcare, employment, education, recreation, and the demand for transportation.

III. COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS

In an attempt to solicit input and request participation from organizations that could potentially be impacted by the coordinated transportation planning process, a core group of individuals was identified to assist in outreach efforts.

A summary of the outreach efforts and results is provided below. Summaries include a description of local outreach activities completed for this plan, and transportation services provided by each organization. Financial information contained in the summaries is preliminary as most responses were limited in scope to indicating funding sources.

Eligibility status for SAFETEA-LU grant funds is dependent upon the operating status of each organization, i.e., private nonprofit, private for profit, and public transit system. Eligibility status determinations are based upon Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) requirements. The following types of organizations are eligible recipients:

- Public entities providing public transit service;
- Private, non-profit entities designated by county commissioners to provide public transit service; and,
- Public entities that are recipients of the Ohio Coordination Program.

Organizations that do not qualify as applicants under the above noted requirements may partner, or contract, with an eligible applicant to achieve the coordination goals, but may not directly submit the application.

Vehicle utilization and financial information is necessary prior to implementation of most of the strategies discussed in Section V. The table at the end of this chapter provides vehicle utilization information from participating organizations that were able to provide the data. Some additional vehicle utilization data and more detailed budget information may be necessary prior to implementation of select coordination strategies.

March 2011 Preliminary Plan Coordination

A core group of individuals, including Champaign Transit System staff and board members began discussions related to a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. A survey document was constructed and reviewed; and stakeholders were identified into a draft list. Stakeholder surveys were e-mailed or mailed on April 11th and included a detailed cover letter that outlined plan participation, the reason for invitation, provided information regarding the public meeting, and requested participation by completing the survey instrument. A Project Kick-off public notice was placed in the Urbana Daily Citizen on April 11, April 13 and April 18. A listing of stakeholders is included in the Appendix.

April 25, 2011 – Project Kick-off Meeting

A local kick-off meeting for the Champaign Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan was held on April 25, 2011 in Urbana, Ohio. Members of the public and agency stakeholders were invited to participate. The meeting was held at Champaign

Residential Services, Inc. in Urbana, a widely accessible location. The meeting was at 6:30 p.m. No interpreter was available, nor was one necessary.

The following individuals attended the project kick-off meeting:

- Josh Gearhardt, Ohio Department of Transportation
- David Walker, Ohio Department of Transportation
- Bob Corbett, Champaign County Commissioner
- Gary Ledford, Champaign Transit System
- Mike Halpin, Champaign County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- Barbara Faulkner, Lawnview Industries, Inc.
- Barb Keller, Champaign Residential Services, Inc.
- Susan Bailey-Evans, Champaign County Jobs & Family Services
- Larry Lokai, Urbana City Council
- Trann Porter, Tri-County Community Action Center
- Mary Wells, Tri-County Community Action Center
- Bob Dean, Champaign County Senior Citizen Center
- Stepheni Holbrook, Tri-County Community Action Center
- Bob Custer, Downsize Farms Ltd.
- Elizabeth Wagner

Proceedings included an introduction of members in attendance, a presentation by ODOT regarding grant eligibility and requirements; a review of the purpose of the plan; a project timeline; and a discussion regarding assessing needs and identifying project goals and strategies.

April 26, 2011-Needs Assessment and Goals/Strategies

An e-mail was sent to stakeholders requesting that five transportation needs and five goals/strategies be identified. Identification of the needs and goals/strategies were due on Friday, April 29, 2011 so that a list could be compiled for prioritization. These goals and objectives will eventually assist with selecting the appropriate strategies to address gaps in service, duplication of service, and other coordination issues that were identified through community involvement activities, analysis of the existing services, and community demographics.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF AREA TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

As noted, a comprehensive survey was sent to human services agencies and other organizations that have an interest in transportation service in the Champaign County area. The intent of the survey was to gain a comprehensive picture of the area's existing transportation services.

The twelve organizations that responded to the stakeholder survey are listed below. Of those responding to the survey, six agencies were identified as transportation providers while the remainder either did not need transportation services or transportation was contracted out to other entities. Respondents included the following organizations:

Urbana Champaign County Senior Citizen's Center
The Caring Kitchen
United Way of Clark, Champaign & Madison Counties
Sterling House of Urbana
Champaign County Department of Jobs & Family Services
Downsize Farm Ltd.
Champaign County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Champaign Transit System
Stepping Stones Outreach Ministries
Champaign Residential Services, Inc.
Tri-County Community Action
First Transit

The following organizations were identified as being transportation providers:

Champaign Transit System (CTS)

Champaign Transit System is a publicly sponsored transit system that serves Champaign County. Everyone is eligible to use the transportation service and riders do not have to pre-qualify.

The system directly operates a public transportation service that is demand responsive. Champaign Transit System operates a fleet of 12 vehicles, and provides door-to-door service, which allows drivers to assist passengers to the entrance of their origin or destination. CTS operates countywide and within a 50-mile radius of Urbana for medical appointments.

Passengers must make a 24-hour advance reservation, although some same day options are available. For out-of-county travel, a two-day advance reservation is required. Additionally, some assigned routes are in operation. Office hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday with a van running each day beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m. The fares for CTS are \$2.00 for rides in Urbana (\$1.00 for the elderly and disabled populations). There are graduated fares for trips outside the city limits. A total of 32,160 passenger trips were reported for the most recent fiscal year.

Champaign Transit System is currently funded via ODOT's Division of Public Transit and receives federal funds through the rural transit capital and operating grants (FTA Section 5311). It also receives Title IIIB, Title V, Title XX, Passport and fare revenues. CTS also receives funding through ODOT's Ohio Elderly and Disabled Transit Fare Assistance Program which provides reduced fares for individuals with disabilities and older adults. The total operating budget, including revenue and expenditures is indicated below.

Champaign Transit System - Departmental Budgets 2007-2011					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 (Est.)
Revenue	\$ 549,201	\$ 432,062	\$ 416,013	\$ 446,276	\$ 456,262
Expenditures	\$ 378,685	\$ 390,713	\$ 386,528	\$ 465,484	\$ 477,308

The individual at CTS that completed the survey on behalf of the system indicated that public transit provides the most useful personal mobility option in the service area. He indicated that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of passengers using wheelchairs. In his words, the increase has gone from “three-four a week to three-four a day.” Barriers to coordination which were identified in the survey included federal regulations, funding and local turf issues.

The agency indicated that its governing board perceives there to be real and tangible benefits to be realized if local organizations work together to better coordinate the delivery of services.

Champaign Residential Services, Inc. (CRSI)

Champaign Residential Services, Inc. is a private nonprofit organization that provides support services to individuals with disabilities in residential settings. It also operates an adult habilitation day program.

CRSI provides on-demand transportation to its clients for the purposes of day services, medical appointments, shopping, and recreational opportunities using a combination of agency vehicles and its staff’s personal vehicles (with a mileage reimbursement provision). They have a fleet of 31 vehicles, including passenger vans and handicapped- accessible minivans and converted 15-passenger vans. Transportation is provided on weekdays, weekends and holidays. A total of 23,520 passenger trips were reported for the most recent fiscal year.

CRSI reported its transportation expenses for the preceding fiscal year in the amount of \$114,275. It receives federal funding through the Intermediate Care Facility for Developmental Disabled program and state funding through the Medicaid Waiver program.

The individual at CRSI that completed the survey on behalf of the organization indicated that the most significant barriers to coordination included funding, agencies not wanting to share vehicles, liability, cost of maintenance and insurance, and various agency rules/regulations. CRSI indicated its willingness to explore options for coordinating by sharing its vehicles during down times.

Sterling House of Urbana

Sterling House is a private corporation that provides assisted living residential facilities. It provides transportation service to its clients on weekdays (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and some Saturday service for specific outings. Sterling House provided

transportation service to 25 residents in the most recent 12-month period at a cost of \$3,240. Most trips are generated for the purposes of medical and health maintenance appointments, as well as, recreation events. Residents also utilize the services of Champaign Transit System. The individual completing the survey indicated that later evening and weekend services are needed.

Champaign County Board of Developmental Disabilities (CCBDD)

The Champaign County Board of Developmental Disabilities is a local governmental unit which provides an adult habilitation day program. CCBDD contracts with First Transit for five countywide routes and two local routes to VanCrest Nursing Home for the purpose of transporting clients to and from its site.

Transportation is provided to its clients Monday through Friday, with morning routes beginning at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 9:30 a.m. and afternoon routes beginning at 3:00 p.m. and ending at 5:00 p.m. CCBDD also contracts with Champaign Transit System for a route to St. Paris.

CCBDD reported its contracted transportation expenses for CY2010: it paid Champaign Transit System \$27,316 for the designated fixed route to St. Paris and paid First Transit \$426,823 for countywide service. It reported 25,606 one-way trips. CCBDD receives federal funding through the Medicaid Waiver program.

Additionally, CCBDD has a fleet of seven vehicles including minivans and handicapped-accessible 9-passenger vans and converted vans. These vehicles are used for client trips operating from 9:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m.

Downsize Farms, Ltd.

Downsize Farms, Ltd. is a private for profit organization which provides an adult habilitation day program Monday through Thursday of each week. It provides curb-to-curb countywide client-only transportation trips to and from its program. It utilizes a fleet of three 10-15 passenger shuttle buses. For the most recent 12-month period Downsize Farms, Ltd. provided 5,400 trips to 20 individuals. It receives federal funding through the Medicaid waiver program.

The representative from Downsize Farms, Ltd. completing the survey cited liability issues as a barrier to coordinated transportation.

Champaign County Department of Jobs & Family Services (CDJFS)

Champaign County Department of Jobs & Family Services is a governmental unit providing public social services to the county. It provides a variety of services, including protective services, job training and employment services, income assistance, and other social services programs. Its transportation services are limited to protective cases and non-emergency transportation assistance for Medicaid recipients through the Newly

Eligible Transition (NET) program. CDJFS contracts with Champaign Transit System and Quality Care Transportation for many of these trips. It receives federal funding through Title XX and non-emergency Medicaid.

CDJFS has a fleet of five vehicles including one sedan, one four wheel drive vehicle and two minivans. The representative completing the survey noted its satisfaction with CTS, specifically related to attempts to always accommodate the client. CDJFS identified barriers to coordinated transportation include liability, funding and regulation issues. CDJFS would be willing to share vehicles when they are not in use.

First Transit

First Transit is a private transportation company providing specialized transportation services countywide. Currently, it provides contract services to Champaign County Board of Developmental Disabilities. It utilizes seven vehicles including four converted 15-passenger vans and three large (white) buses that have a five-person wheelchair capacity per vehicle.

First Transit is a willing participant to coordination and would be willing to share the following services: client referral, emergency back-up services and the provision of transportation to additional agencies, which could include extended hours and service on weekends and holidays.

IV. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Determining the transportation needs for Champaign County is an integral part of the coordination plan. Survey information was utilized to determine the unmet needs for transportation services. The following list provides the priority needs identified by participating organizations.

1. Central (or “One Stop”) dispatching and/or coordination
2. Increased hours of services (weekend and extended evening hours)
3. More responsive service to employment opportunities (both in/out of county)
4. Better coordination of existing resources
5. Reduction of duplication of transportation services
6. Reduction of duplication of training
7. More accessible vehicles
8. Adequate funding for affordable countywide passenger fares
9. More opportunity to schedule same-day service to meet the expected transportation needs for city & county residents
10. Marketing of services
11. Survey employees from local employers to determine the level of employment needs and whether the employees would use transit as a means to travel to and from work
12. More door-to-door service with ability to have pre-scheduled, standard service (for example, to get someone to/from a job each day). Current service hours are not typically structured to effectively support employment opportunities
13. On-time performance in order for passengers to arrive on time
14. Coordination to share agencies vehicles
15. Additional out-of-county service to Dayton, Columbus, etc
16. Explore funding, liability insurance issues, fair shared cost issues, and restrictions on use of vehicles

ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGES TO COORDINATING TRANSPORTATION

There are always numerous challenges to the coordination of human service transportation. Results of the stakeholder surveys indicated the following challenges to coordination:

1. Adequate funding
2. Liability issues
3. Reluctance of area transportation providers to coordinate
4. Lack of communication and organization
5. Limiting rules and regulations, both federal and state
6. Potential increase in cost of liability insurance and maintenance
7. Agencies protective of their vehicles and hesitant to share
8. Stigma issues relating to agency consumer populations
9. Restricted boundaries of service areas
10. Restrictions on use of vehicles

There is agreement among agency leaders that there are gaps in existing transportation services. There are underutilized transportation assets, duplicated services, underserved areas and underutilized vehicles.

These transportation gaps fall into the following categories:

- Capacity gaps: trips to meet employment opportunities (both in/out-of-county), accessible vehicles, and duplication of existing service
- Service time gaps: extended evening and weekend hours
- Awareness gaps: centralized dispatching and marketing of existing services

Gaps in service are the result of the ways in which transportation services are currently provided. Champaign Transit System operates throughout the week during normal business hours, leaving a service gap for the general public for evening, weekend, and holiday hours. Additionally, these service hours are not structured to effectively support employment opportunities. First Transit, a contract service provider, runs morning and afternoon routes, with a fleet of vehicles that could be utilized to meet gaps in service by making their accessible vehicles available and meeting the need for extended evening, weekend, and holiday hours. Downsize Farms, Ltd., Champaign Residential Services, Inc., and the Champaign County Board of Developmental Disabilities run routes throughout Urbana and countywide, which generates a gap by duplicating service. These agencies also have vehicle fleets which are accessible and could be utilized for extended evening, weekend, and holiday hours.

Because transportation use and service are siloed, limited service becomes a gap. Currently, centralized dispatching (One Stop) is impossible, which contributes to an awareness gap. The need for marketing of existing service, also an awareness gap, is necessary.

Affordability presents a gap in service. Additional funding, or a reallocation of current resources is necessary in order to reduce some fares.

Because stakeholder surveys were targeted to agencies, there is additional information that is needed in this plan, including (1) focus group interviews with representatives of the disability, senior, and low income communities; and (2) the identification of employers to survey/interview to see if public transportation would be utilized by employees. These interviews may provide additional information about service gaps.

While there are challenges to implementing coordination among varied transportation providers, services, and funding sources, it is important to note that transportation coordination is being successfully implemented throughout the country, including in Ohio. Therefore, issues such as conflicting or restrictive State and Federal guidelines for the use of funding and vehicles, insurance and liability, and unique needs

presented by the different populations served, to name a few, should challenge, but not stop, a coordination effort. There are many resources available to assist communities as they work together to coordinate transportation. FTA's Framework for Action and ODOT's Handbook for Coordinating Transportation Services and A Guide for Implementing Coordinated Transportation Systems are just a few examples. FTA's Framework for Action is available at www.unitedweride.gov, while the ODOT publications are available at www.dot.state.oh.us/ptrans; click on Coordination.

**V. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND
IMPLEMENTATION
STRATEGIES/
ALTERNATIVES**

This section presents the goals for the Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Champaign County. Based on stakeholder input, the following priorities were identified:

1. Establish framework for regular communication and collaboration, grant writing, among social service agencies and transportation providers.
 - a. Determine lead agency or persons to coordinate efforts (may be various people from agencies willing to coordinate at first).
 - b. Include regular inter-agency meetings to discuss difficulties, brainstorming ways around them, idea sharing, etc.
 - c. Establish a framework to increase efficiencies, coordinating services and sharing resources including addressing liability, insurance, training, vehicle maintenance, and shared vehicle use procedures.
2. Seek grants/funding to address needs and achieve goals.
 - a. Promote the use of employer/employee tax benefits.
3. Increase the number of hours of available transportation (evenings and weekends).
 - a. Establish a core of drivers that could use various agency vehicles to assist with transportation needs.
 - b. Coordinate and consolidate dispatching and scheduling services.
 - c. Hire mobility manager to coordinate services among agencies and other transportation providers.
4. Educate Champaign County residents regarding more coordinated transportation opportunities and more affordable transportation options (marketing).

Based on these transportation goals the following strategies should be considered as options from which to choose.

Strategy A – Hire a Mobility Manager to coordinate transportation services among social service agencies and transportation providers within Champaign County and to surrounding areas.

Activity A.1 – Job description and hiring

Implementation

1. Secure agreement among local agencies and transportation providers.
2. Develop a job description for the Mobility Manager position.
3. Advertise, interview, and hire a qualified person for this position.

Timeframe	Near-Term
Priority	High
Cost	Salary/Benefits for Mobility Manager (est. \$40,000-\$50,000)

Fund Sources	Grants and/or local funds
Capital Requirements	Possible office supplies, furniture, computer, software, and other items needed
Ridership Implications	Possible increase in ridership due to more efficient use of resources
Performance Measures	Decrease in number of trip denials, increase in number of trips per hour/day and number of out-of-county trips

Activity A.2 – Memorandums/contracts with transportation providers

Implementation

Develop Memorandum of Understanding/Contracts (MOU’s) with area transportation providers. The MOU would outline specific coordination that would occur. Transportation providers would share trips schedules.

Timeframe	Near-Term
Priority	High
Cost	Staff hours needed to prepare and negotiate MOU’s. Possible attorney fees.
Staffing Implications	Unknown
Capital Requirements	Unknown
Ridership Implications	Increased ridership through shared scheduling
Performance Measures	Number of MOU’s/contracts developed, number of shared schedules, dollars saved in bulk purchases, number of shared rides and number of new destinations served.

Strategy B – Coordinate and consolidate dispatching and scheduling services

Activity B.1 – Develop centralized telephone number for transportation information and referral services

Implementation

Purchase toll-free services and advertise the toll-free phone number to transportation partners and to the public.

Priority	Medium to High
Timeframe	Near-Term
Cost	Cost of toll-free number and advertising
Staffing Implications	Possible reduction of dispatching/scheduling staff needed countywide
Capital Requirements	Possible phone lines, hardware, software, and installation cost
Ridership Implications	Potential increase of ridership due to improved access and information

Performance Measures Toll-free number installed and number of calls received

Activity B.2 – Utilize dispatching software to allow all providers to share trip information

Implementation

Evaluate, purchase, and install selected software; and purchase and install high-speed connection for transportation partners

Priority	Medium to High
Timeframe	Mid-Term
Cost	Cost of software, hardware, and high-speed connections. Cost of software service and support
Staffing Implications	Unknown
Capital Requirements	Software, hardware, and related costs
Ridership Implications	Possible increase in ridership as transportation system and services become more efficient
Performance Measures	Number of trips shared

Activity B.3 – Coordinate long-distance trips

Implementation

Trips to Columbus, Dayton, Springfield and other out-of-county locations may be shared among in-county transportation providers and providers in nearby counties. This would include trips requiring an early morning departure time. Transportation for regular trips could be rotated.

Priority	Medium to High
Timeframe	Near-Term
Cost	Staff time
Staffing Implications	Drivers who would normally be doing long distance trips could become available locally to do other trips.
Capital Requirements	Unknown. County vehicle inventory could be utilized.
Ridership Implications	Potential increase in ridership due to increased scheduled trips and to increased availability of vehicles locally
Performance Measures	Number of long-distance trips coordinated, increased number of trips to surrounding cities and out-of-county destinations, number of new riders, number of new agency contracts and number of new coordinated project partners

Strategy C – Coordinate and consolidate maintenance services for coordinated transportation partners

Activity C.1 – Uniform preventative maintenance standards

Implementation

Establish uniform preventative maintenance standards for all vehicles. Maintenance standards should meet requirements for vehicles purchased under federal programs.

Priority	Medium
Timeframe	Near-Term
Cost	Staff time to implement
Staffing Implications	Unknown
Capital Requirements	Unknown
Ridership Implications	Unknown
Performance Measures	Preventative maintenance performed on-time and reduction of maintenance costs

Activity C.2a – Purchase maintenance equipment and hire additional maintenance staff

Implementation

Hire additional maintenance staff and purchase equipment to perform maintenance functions for other Champaign County transportation providers.

Priority	Medium
Timeframe	Mid-Term
Cost	Cost of additional staff and equipment (possibly to be supported through grants)
Staffing Implications	Additional mechanics would be hired
Capital Requirements	Cost of maintenance equipment and related items
Ridership Implications	Possible improvement of services due to vehicles being repaired with less down time
Performance Measures	Number of preventative maintenance activities performed on-time and reduced repair turn-around time

Activity C.2b – Provide maintenance services through a private contractor

Implementation

Same as Activity C.2a (above), except maintenance functions for Champaign County transportation providers would be provided by a private contractor. The contractor could be selected through an RFP process conducted every three years.

Priority	Medium
Timeframe	Mid-Term
Cost	Cost of contract services, contract preparation, legal services

Staffing Implications	Unknown
Capital Requirements	Unknown
Ridership Implications	Possible improvement of services due to vehicles being repaired with less down time
Performance Measures	Number of preventative maintenance activities performed on-time and reduced repair turn-around time

Strategy D – Coordinate and standardize driver training requirements

This strategy would ensure that drivers for all participating agencies would have uniform training. Training levels would be set to meet State and Federal requirements. By doing this, a minimum level of service quality would be maintained throughout the county.

Activity D.1 – Establish mandatory training requirements

Implementation

Develop a list of training topics to meet regulatory requirements and to improve driver skills. Examples include:

- OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens
- Passenger sensitivity training
- Customer service
- Securing wheelchairs
- Defensive driving
- Accident/Incident procedures
- Vehicle evacuation procedures
- First Aid/CPR
- Pre-trip and post-trip inspection procedures
- Safety and security
- Substance abuse awareness
- Radio and/or cell phone procedures
- HIPAA training
- Mental health issues awareness

Develop a list of hiring requirements for drivers. Examples include:

- Minimum age
- Minimum years driving experience
- Possession of proper driver’s license
- No criminal record: BCI and annual abstract requirement
- Meet certain physical requirements
- Mechanic certifications
- Ability to read maps
- Driving test
- Written skills test

Priority	Medium to High
Timeframe	Near-Term
Cost	Staffing, training, and document preparation costs
Staffing Implications	Staff hours for training
Capital Requirements	None known at this time
Ridership Implications	Better quality service to riders
Performance Measures	All staff trained, decreased number of complaints about staff, number of incidents/accidents handled correctly, number of correct pre-trip/post-trip inspections, reduced insurance costs

Activity D.2 – Scheduled training

Implementation

Develop a training schedule so all transportation providers may provide uniform training for new hires and existing employees

Priority	Medium to High
Timeframe	Near-Term
Cost	Staff time and related costs needed to coordinate training
Staffing Implications	None known at this time
Capital Requirements	None known at this time
Ridership Implications	Better quality service to riders
Performance Measures	All training sessions completed/number of staff trained

Strategy E – Standardize policies and procedures

Standardize policies and procedures to ensure consistency among transportation providers to provide consistent service to the public.

Implementation

Develop a list of policies and procedures that may be uniformly used by county transportation providers. ODOT has a model policy that may be used as a guide. Compliance with Federal regulations, such as ADA, should be considered. A suggested list includes: no-shows, cancellations, accident/incident procedures, vehicle evacuation procedures, seatbelt use, car seat use, inclement weather and ADA-related policies

Priority	Medium to High
Timeframe	Near-term
Cost	Staff time needed to coordinate, printed materials, media, and other related costs
Staffing Implications	Staff time needed to coordinate
Capital Requirements	Possible costs to support training
Ridership Implications	Potential improved service

Performance Measures Policies and procedures developed

Strategy F – Collaborative grant writing efforts

Implementation

Stakeholders work collaboratively and share grant writing expertise to maximize grant funding opportunities.

Priority	High
Timeframe	Near-term
Staffing Implications	Staff time involved
Capital Requirements	None known at this time
Ridership Implications	Potential increase in services
Performance Measures	Number of grants submitted/total grant dollars awarded

Strategy G – Regular communication and coordination among social service agencies, transportation providers, and the general public

Activity G.1 – Develop a transit advisory committee

Implementation

A Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) would be formed (or current committee could be reorganized), consisting of local social service agencies and transportation providers, and would schedule, coordinate, and facilitate regular meetings by the committee to discuss and resolve transportation issues.

Priority	High
Timeframe	Near-Term (formation) and Continuous (meetings)
Cost	Staff time, copying, media, and related costs
Staffing Implications	Staff time involved preparing meeting agendas and attending meetings
Capital Requirements	None known at this time
Ridership Implications	Potential increase in ridership as service efficiency is improved
Performance Measures	TAC established/reorganized/TAC meetings occur regularly/number of issues identified and resolved

Activity G.2 – Education program for ridership and general public

Implementation

1. Determine information gaps for social service agency clients and the general public about the use of transportation in Champaign County and surrounding areas.

2. Develop education and marketing activities to inform riders and the general public about public transportation services and sources of government funding for trips (if available).
3. Develop information resources to assist riders with disabilities.
4. Inform riders and the general public on an ongoing basis about new programs and services as they become available.

Priority	Medium to High
Timeframe	Near-Term
Cost	Staff time needed to implement and coordinate. Supplies, technology, and materials needed to support activity.
Staffing Implications	Staff time needed
Capital Requirements	None known at this time
Ridership Implications	Potential increased ridership
Performance Measures	Number of education efforts launched, changes in ridership following education efforts and increased number of riders with disabilities

Strategy H – Extended hours of service

Activity H.1 – Weekend and holiday transportation

Implementation

Provide weekend service on Saturdays for hours determined by transportation partners, such as 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Service may be offered on specified holidays, as well. Passengers would be required to schedule trips in advance to allow time to coordinate drivers.

Priority	Medium
Timeframe	Mid-Term
Cost	To be determined.
Staffing Implications	Additional driver and a dispatcher may be needed to cover Saturday and holiday service
Capital Requirements	Additional vehicles may be purchased if needed. May be supported with grant funds and local match. Utilize vehicles from transportation partners that are not in use during these timeframes.
Ridership Implications	Increased ridership due to availability of extended service
Performance Measures	Number of weekend/holiday trips

Activity H.2 – Evening service and special trips

Implementation

Use one or more vehicles to provide short trips to movie theaters, evening shopping, and local events. This service could be used by the Urbana Champaign County Senior Center, Lawnview Industries and other social service agencies depending on vacant seats.

Priority	Medium
Timeframe	Mid-Term
Cost	To be determined
Staffing Implications	One or more drivers needed. Possible additional dispatchers and/or support staff needed.
Capital Requirements	Possible vehicle purchase. May be supported with grant funds and local match. Utilize vehicles from transportation partners that are not in use during these timeframes.
Ridership Implications	Increase in ridership for older adults and adults with disabilities
Performance Measures	Number of evening events served, number of riders

Activity H.3 – Transportation for 2nd and 3rd shift employment

Implementation

Use a vehicle for work-related routes targeted for employment trips only. Trips may be made during 2nd and 3rd shift hours within the county and to work sites in neighboring counties.

Priority	Medium
Timeframe	Mid-Term
Cost	To be determined. May involve the purchase of vehicle(s)
Staffing Implications	One or more drivers needed to cover each shift for a specified period (week, month, etc.). Participating transportation providers may share the burden of providing a driver
Capital Requirements	Purchase of vehicle(s), possibly supported by grant funds
Ridership Implications	Increase in ridership based on regular trips for employment
Performance Measures	Number of employment trips

Strategy I – Promote the use of employer/employee tax benefits for the payment of transportation costs

Implementation

The Federal Government offers income tax incentives for employers who subsidize public transportation for employees and for employees who use public transportation to travel to work. Area employers can be contacted and informed about tax incentives to promote the use of this service.

Priority	Medium
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Timeframe	Long-Term
Cost	Staff time and marketing materials
Staffing Implications	None known at this time
Capital Requirements	None known at this time
Ridership Implications	Potential increase in work-related trips
Performance Measures	Number of employers/employees using tax incentives

The planning horizon for this plan is four years. The implementation timeframes listed above are near term (present – 2012); mid-term 2-3 years (or 2012-2013); and long term 3-4 years (or 2013-2014). Actions that should occur throughout the planning horizon are listed as continuous.

**VI. ADOPTION AND
APPROVAL OF PLAN**

The public comment period for this plan was 14 days with a two-week notice period prior to a public hearing opportunity. The notice of public hearing was posted in the locally distributed newspaper and a copy of such notice is included in the Appendix.

The Champaign County Commissioners were invited to review and accept the Champaign Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

Signatures of approval are provided below.

Name Date

Name Date

Name Date

APPENDIX

List of Stakeholders

Notice of Public Hearing (Posted on April 11, 12 and 18, 2010)

Survey Instrument Cover Letter

Survey Instrument

Public Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Champaign Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Kick-Off Meeting Handout

Ohio Department of Transportation Handout (PowerPoint)

Vehicle Inventory

ACRONYMS

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

CCBDD: Champaign County Board of Developmental Disabilities

CRSI: Champaign Residential Services, Inc.

CTS: Champaign Transit System

FTA: Federal Transit Administration

HSTP: Human Services Transportation Plan

JARC: Job Access Reverse Commute

ODOT: Ohio Department of Transportation

SAFETEA-LU: Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation, Equity Act: A Legacy for Users

TRB: Transportation Research Board

REFERENCES

Champaign County Department of Economic Development

“Expanding Your Market: Customers with Disabilities Mean Business.” Facts about Americans with Disabilities. U. S. Department of Justice, Disability Rights Division. Web: May 15, 2011. <http://www.ada.gov/busstat.htm>

“Head Start Transportation Fact Sheet.” United We Ride. Web: May 7, 2011. www.unitedweride.gov

“It’s Time to Coordinate.” Collaboration Mobility Management Shared Use. West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Public Transit, 2006. Web: April 2011. http://www.rlsandassoc.com/userdata/publication/publication_4ca3437a2a71d.pdf

“Logan County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.” December 4, 2008. Web: April 2011. <http://www.tricountycls.com/Logan%20County%20Public%20Transit-Human%20Services%20Transportation%20Plan-FINAL.pdf>

Ohio Department of Development

“Shelby County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.” Final Report, March 25, 2008. Web: April 2011. <http://www.sidneyoh.com/spt/SPT/Shelby%20Final%20Report.pdf>

U. S. Bureau of the Census

Waldrop, Judith and Sharon M. Stern. “Disability Status: 2000.” Census 2000 Brief. March 2003. Web: May 15, 2011. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-17.pdf>

Sections of this document were copied from the following public documents: Logan County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan and Shelby County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. Sections of this document were copied from public document “It’s Time to Coordinate” with the permission of the West Virginia Department of Transportation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Update the plan as soon as possible with additional information.

Because of the short timeframe that I have had to work with, there is some additional information that is needed, including (1) focus group interviews with representatives of the disability, senior, and low income communities; and (2) the identification of employers to survey/interview to see if public transportation would be utilized by employees.

Establish a framework for the continuation of the Champaign Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

One of the concerns voiced by Larry Lokai, Urbana City Councilman, at the public meeting was related to identifying a “lead agency” to move forward with plan development. It is my recommendation that any organization that wishes to participate be included. Letters of commitment should be distributed to the organizations that have shown interest in improving transportation services, requiring a signature, which commits them to the process of performing the necessary steps for the completion of an ODOT grant application for funding for CY13.

Develop a comprehensive strategy/plan to complete a CY13 grant application.

The Champaign Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan should be adopted by all of the agencies that signed a letter of commitment, which confirms their interest in further development of coordination opportunities and participation in a continuing planning process.

Best Practice: Greene County

In the Transit Cooperative Research Program, Report 101: Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services, the Greene County Public Transit System (CATS) is identified in Chapter 8: Successful, Insightful, Coordinated Transportation Services in Rural Communities. According to Rich Schultz, Executive Director, CATS is contracted by the Greene County Board of Developmental Disabilities and the Greene County Department of Jobs & Family Services for most of their routes. The vehicles are owned, insured, and fueled by Greene County and route scheduling is maintained, as well; however, every five years the contract is bid for the route operations and maintenance.

Because the stakeholder organizations that have maintained involvement in this plan process are similar to those having been identified by Greene County, their model may be one to follow. It is my recommendation that this agency be visited to better understand its structure.