



Federal Fiscal Years 2023-2027 Central Iowa Passenger Transportation Plan

Section 1: Introduction

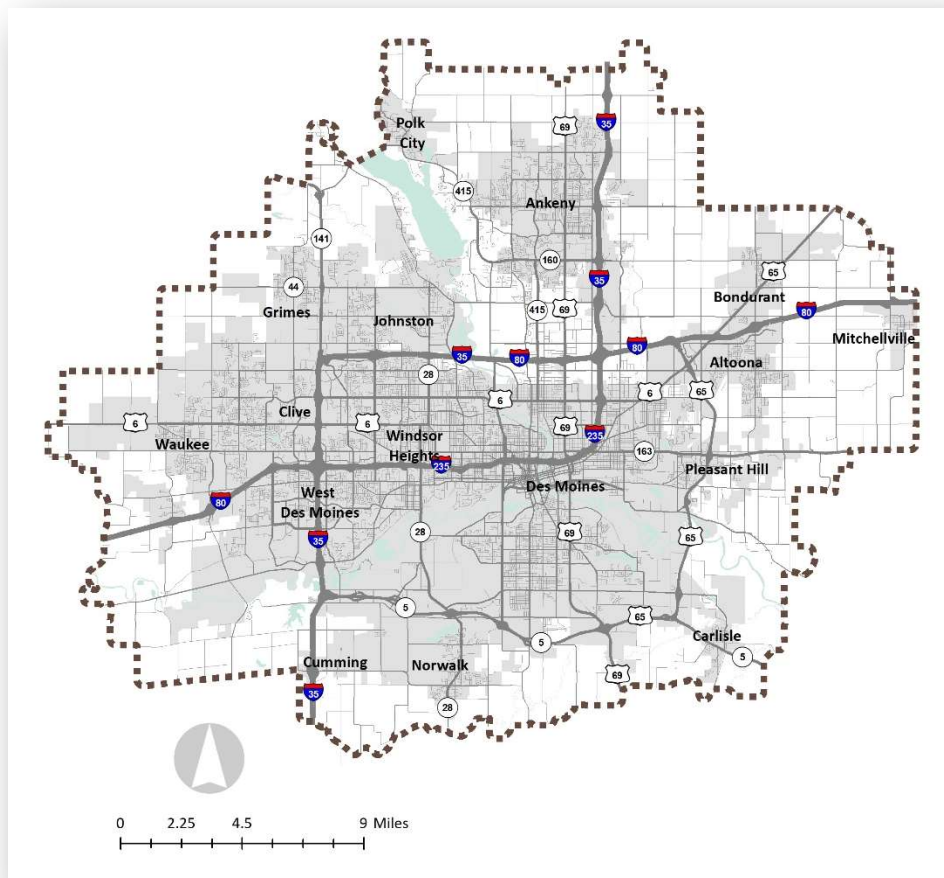
DMAMPO

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) acts as the formal transportation body for the greater Des Moines metropolitan area, carrying out the intent of 23 CFR 450. In 1983, the Governor of Iowa designated the MPO as the official MPO for the Des Moines Urbanized Area, as defined by the US Census Bureau. The MPO also functions as the Transportation Management Area, as it exceeds the population threshold of 200,000 persons established in 23 CFR 450.104. The MPO is committed to implementing a comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing multimodal transportation planning process for the greater Des Moines metropolitan area.

The MPO provides a regional forum to ensure coordination between the public and local, state, and federal agencies regarding planning issues and to prepare transportation plans and programs. The MPO develops both long- and short-range multimodal transportation plans, selects and approves projects for federal funding based on regional priorities, and develops methods to reduce traffic congestion.

MPO membership is comprised of 16 cities; DART; four associate, non-voting cities; unincorporated portions of three counties in Central Iowa; and one non-voting county. All of which encompass over 500 square miles.

Map 1: MPO Member Communities

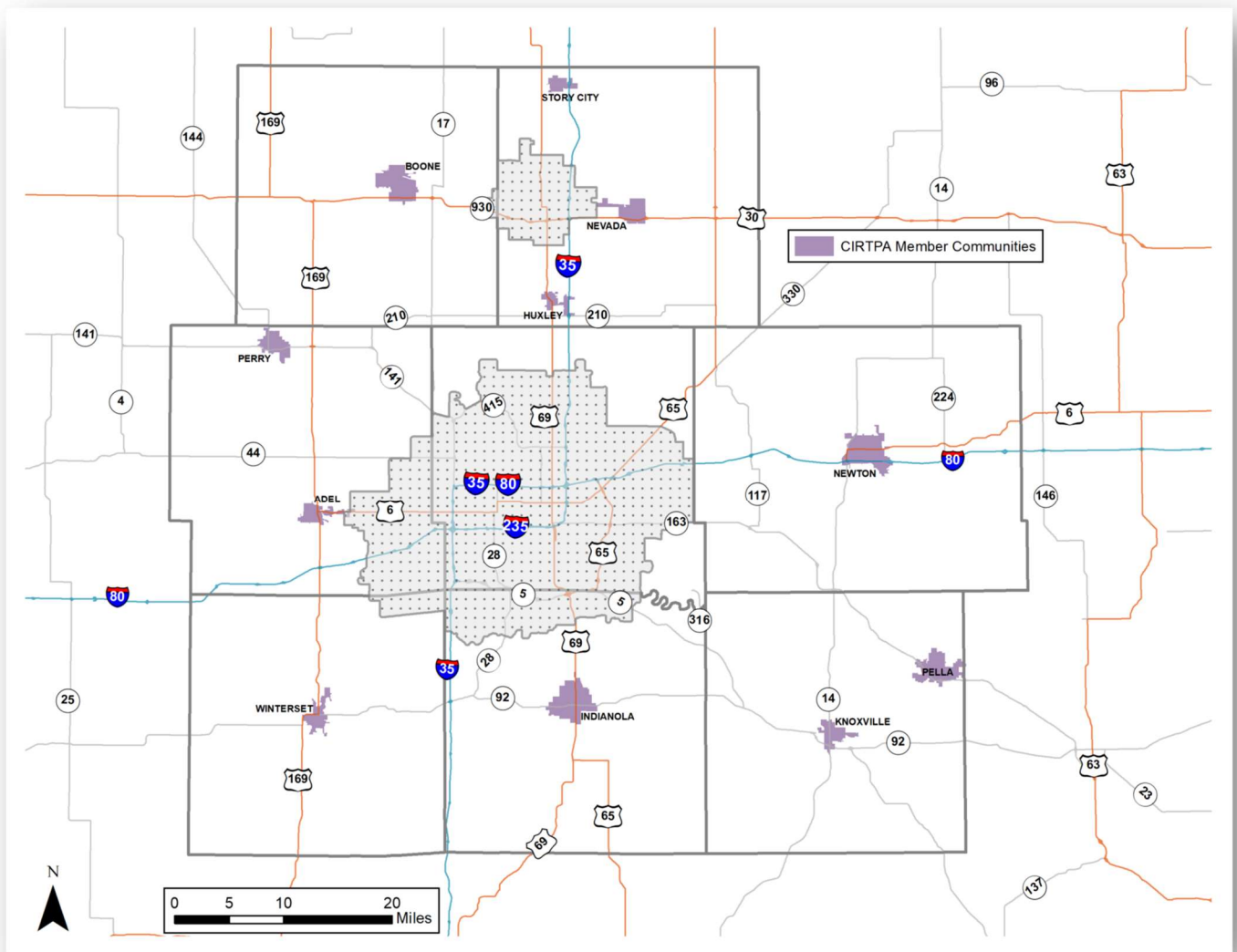


CIRTPA

The Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA) was organized in 1994 to carry out transportation planning for eight counties in Central Iowa. It serves as the designated regional transportation planning agency for the Iowa Department of Transportation's Region 11. CIRTPA coordinates regional planning and programming efforts with state and local officials.

The CIRTPA maintains an agreement with the Des Moines Area MPO for staffing support services in executing its transportation planning responsibilities. These activities must be carried out for the area to receive federal surface transportation funds, consistent with Section 450 of Title 23 of the United States Code.

Map 2: CIRTPA Member Communities



Process

Over the past several years, Greater Des Moines has emphasized regional cooperation and coordination. The region has recognized the efficiencies and the economies of scale that can be achieved by doing so across multiple areas – economic development, the food system, housing, and public transportation, to name a few.

To address public transportation at the regional level, the MPO develops a *Passenger Transportation Plan* (PTP), designed to promote joint, coordinated transportation planning programs that further the development of the local and regional public transportation systems.

The development of this Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2019 – 2023 PTP, the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Des Moines Area Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) thoroughly reviewed the FFY 2015-2019 PTP, the 2013 *Anyone, Anywhere, Any Time on Any Service Transportation Study* that inventoried existing resources, identified opportunities for agency and resource coordination, analyzed existing barriers, and proposed recommendations for the coordination of transportation services.

Additionally, a review of all TAG meeting minutes, a transportation user and provider survey, small group discussions, and interviews were conducted.

Surveys

In developing the PTP, the MPO and CIRTPA disseminated two surveys: the Transportation User Survey and the Transportation Provider Survey. The TAG and mobility coordinators reviewed both surveys. Once finalized, the surveys were distributed to over 100 agencies and organizations in Central Iowa. The surveys also were marketed on stakeholder websites, Facebook pages, and Twitter feeds. Local transit agencies distributed notice of the Transportation User Survey, and TAG members distributed paper copies of this survey to interested parties.

The participant survey received just 25 responses, and the provider survey received 7 responses. While these numbers are not what this effort had hoped for, the survey's findings do bring up many issues to be addressed in this plan and reinforce the aims of this plan.

<i>Lutheran Services of Iowa</i>	<i>United Way of Central Iowa</i>
<i>Department of the Blind</i>	<i>Iowa Department of Human Services</i>
<i>Iowa Asian Alliance</i>	<i>Iowa Workforce Development</i>
<i>USCRI</i>	<i>Wesley Life</i>
<i>Des Moines Schools</i>	<i>Iowa Department of Transportation</i>
<i>Bridges of Iowa</i>	<i>HIRTA</i>
<i>Iowa Braille</i>	<i>Joy Ride</i>
<i>DART</i>	<i>Joppa</i>
<i>Easter Seals</i>	<i>Iowa Department of the Blind</i>
<i>St. Vincent DePaul Society</i>	<i>Mercy</i>
<i>Catholic Charities</i>	<i>AmeriGroup</i>
<i>Disability Rights Iowa</i>	<i>Impact</i>
<i>Aging Resources</i>	<i>Goodwill</i>
<i>Beacon of Life</i>	<i>Community Support Advocates</i>
<i>Center for Independent Living</i>	<i>American Cancer Society</i>
<i>Primary Health Care</i>	<i>DSM MPO</i>
<i>Visiting Nurse Services</i>	<i>Iowa Heart</i>
<i>Eyerly Ball</i>	<i>Oakridge Neighborhood</i>
<i>Broadlawns</i>	<i>Unity Point</i>
<i>Crest Services</i>	<i>Veterans Administration</i>
<i>Mainstream Living</i>	<i>Passage Ways</i>
<i>Central Iowa Shelter Services</i>	<i>Mosaic</i>
<i>Candeo</i>	<i>Employee and Family Resources</i>
<i>Child Serve</i>	<i>Central Iowa Works</i>
<i>Iowa Department of Public Health</i>	<i>Progress Industries</i>
<i>Des Moines Area Religious Council</i>	<i>Link Associates</i>

Figure 1: TAG Member Organizations

Working Groups

The most recent TAG monthly meeting focused on this plan. This involved small group work sessions focused on the review of materials, the discussion of the previous PTP, and the organization, prioritization, and forward momentum of ideas proposed in the previous PTP (FFY 2015-2019). The TAG member organizations are below and minutes of this meeting is included as an appendix.

Small Group Discussions with TAG Member Organizations

The mission of the TAG is “to bring human service agencies and transportation providers together for the common objective of improving mobility options for individuals in need.” Therefore, to address the needs of these groups small group discussions were had with TAG member organizations to identify specific gaps in services from a variety of vantage points and locations within the Greater Des Moines area. Discussions were also had with staff of these organizations to understand challenges and successes they have found in passenger transportation. Due to the flexible nature of a planning document, and the room for constant improvement, these discussions will continue through this document’s life to ensure priorities, needs, and emerging issues are discussed and dealt with collaboratively.

Section 2: Inventory & Area Profile

Transportation Provider Inventory

The online [Passenger Transportation Inventory](#) showcases the numerous ground passenger transportation options in Central Iowa. While this is not comprehensive of every transportation Service, each agency operating in this space was contacted by planning staff, and the following are the responses received. With this version being online, the aim is to keep it as up-to-date as possible.

Area Profile

The CIRTPA planning area is in Central Iowa, occupying the following eight counties: Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Polk, Madison, Marion, Story, and Warren. Within the CIRTPA region lies the Des Moines Area MPO (DMAMPO), located in portions of Dallas, Polk, Madison, and Warren Counties, and the Ames MPO within Story and Boone Counties. According to the 2021 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, the eight-county region is home to more than 826,000 people, with more than 630,000 residing inside the Des Moines Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Below are tables and maps focusing on US Census Bureau demographics most related to the focal population of this plan. Those are:

- Limited-English Proficiency
- Over 65
- Persons with Disability
- Carless Households
- Non-White
- Poverty
- Single Head of Household with Children

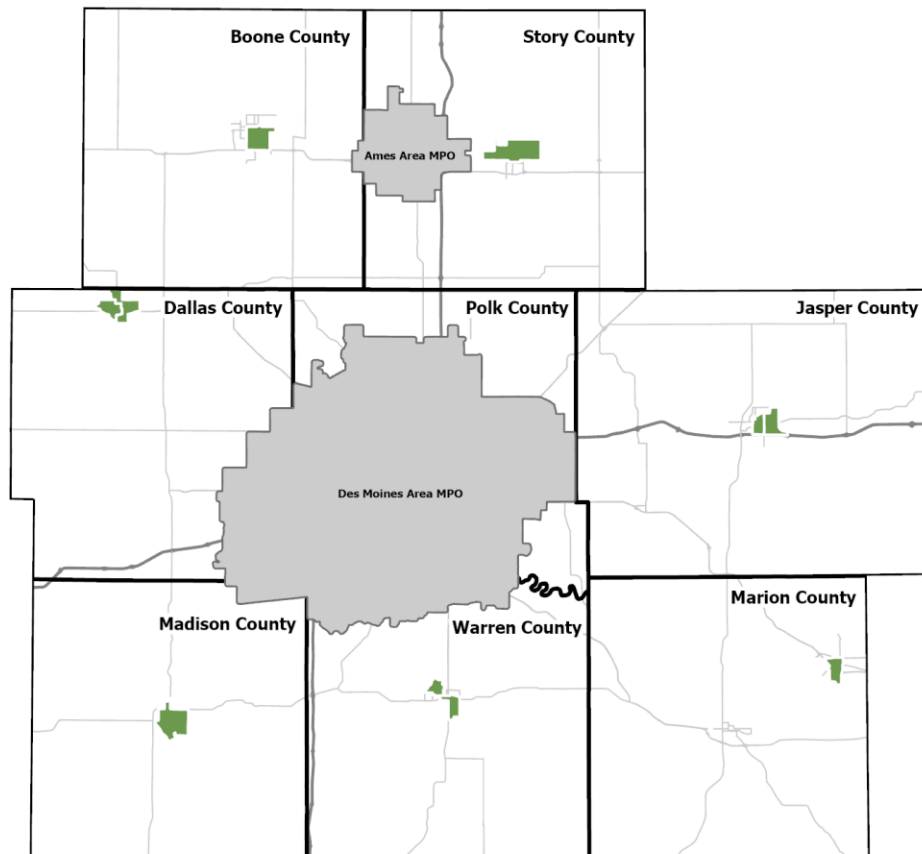
Environmental Justice

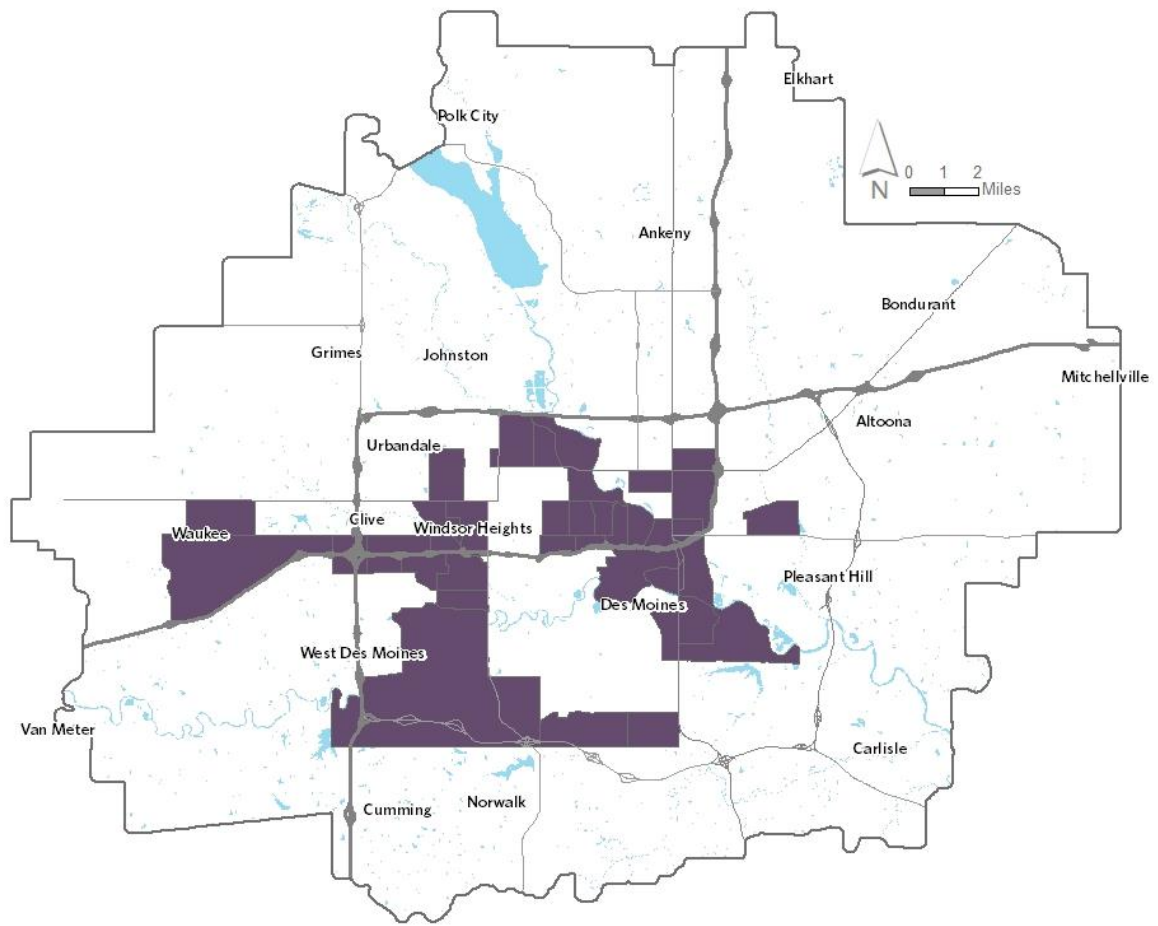
These demographics also align with the CIRTPA and DMAMPO environmental justice methodology, which has historically been used in funding and planning mechanisms at both agencies.

In 2021, the federal government introduced Justice40, which aims to analyze environmental and social justice at the national level. Since this development, DMAMPO and CIRTPA adopted the [Justice40 map](#) in funding mechanisms as of FFY 2024. However, both agencies will continue to track metrics for the degrees of disadvantage outlined in the [DMAMPO Environmental Justice report](#) and others as needed during agency planning.

Limited-English Proficiency

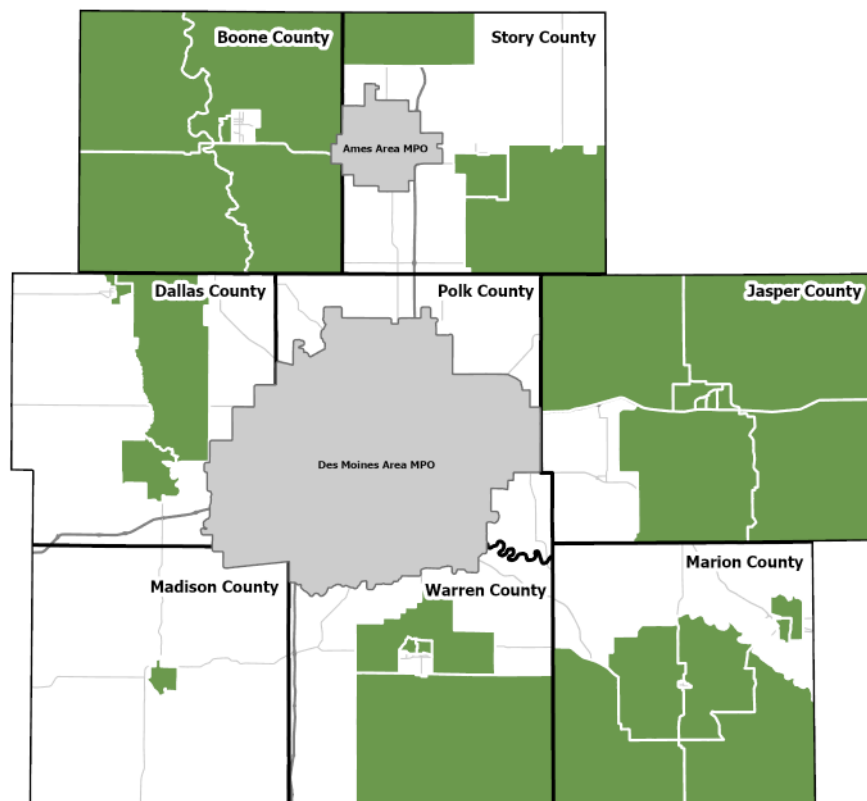
Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Total Households with Limited English Proficiency	Percent Population with LEP	Over 500 LEP Households?
Boone County	26,721	10,720	33	0.3%	N
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	724	1.9%	Y
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	200	1.4%	N
Madison County	16,414	6,309	3	0.0%	N
Marion County	33,381	13,314	106	0.8%	N
Polk County	488,871	183,753	6,093	3.1%	Y
Story County	98,106	37,219	1,178	3.1%	Y
Warren County	51,862	18,959	103	0.5%	N
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	72	26.0%	Y

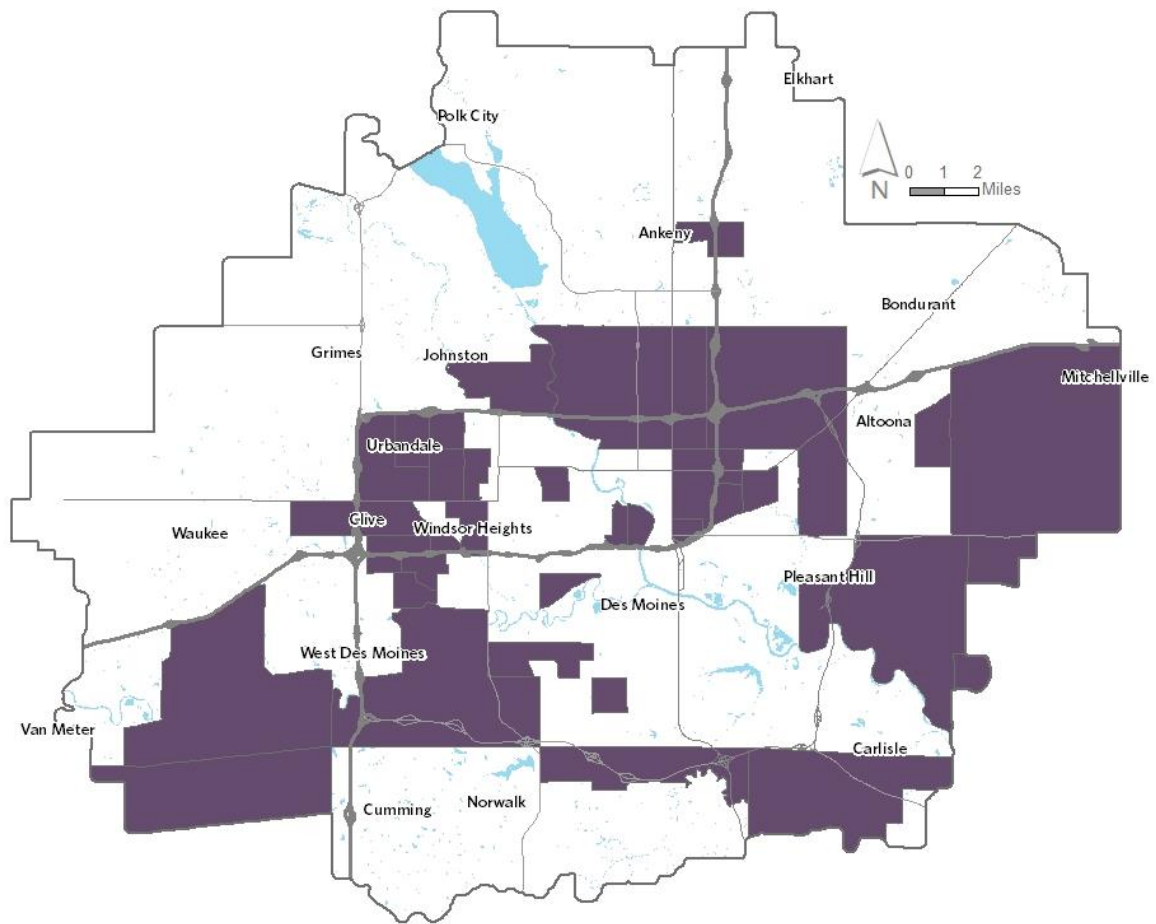




Over 65

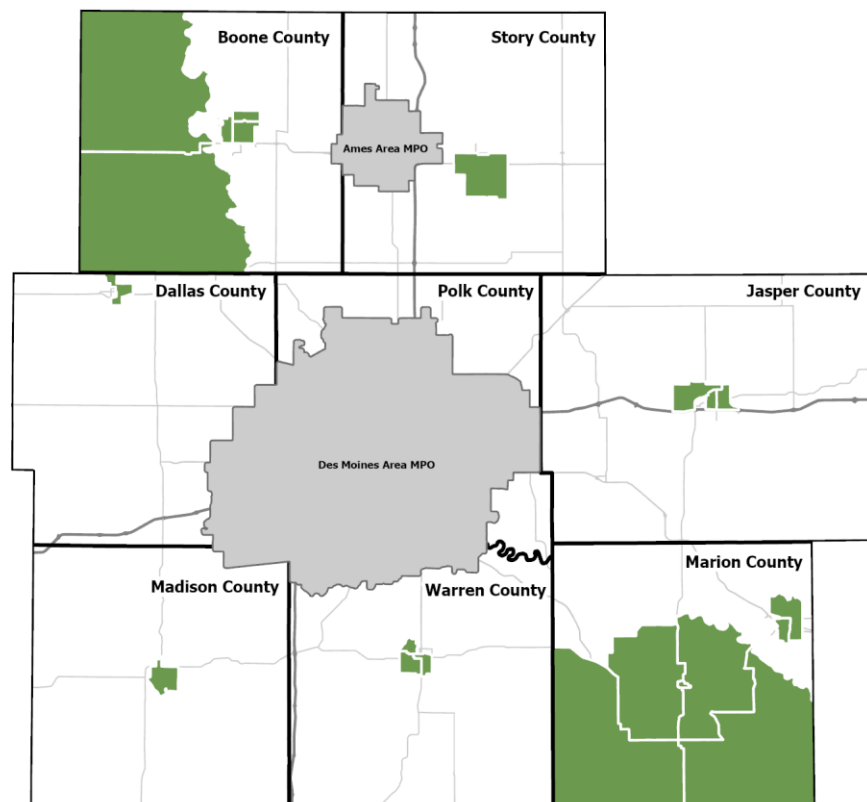
Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Number of Persons over 65	Percent of Persons over 65	Total Households with Persons over 65	Percent Households over 65
Boone County	26,721	10,720	4,872	18.2%	3,167	28.9%
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	11,362	11.8%	6,697	20.4%
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	7,039	18.7%	4,836	33.2%
Madison County	16,414	6,309	2,821	17.2%	1,800	28.5%
Marion County	33,381	13,314	5,939	17.8%	4,086	30.7%
Polk County	488,871	183,753	63,736	13.0%	42,143	22.9%
Story County	98,106	37,219	12,030	12.3%	7,379	19.8%
Warren County	51,862	18,959	8,117	15.7%	5,153	27.2%
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	95,452	13.6%	57,353	23.3%

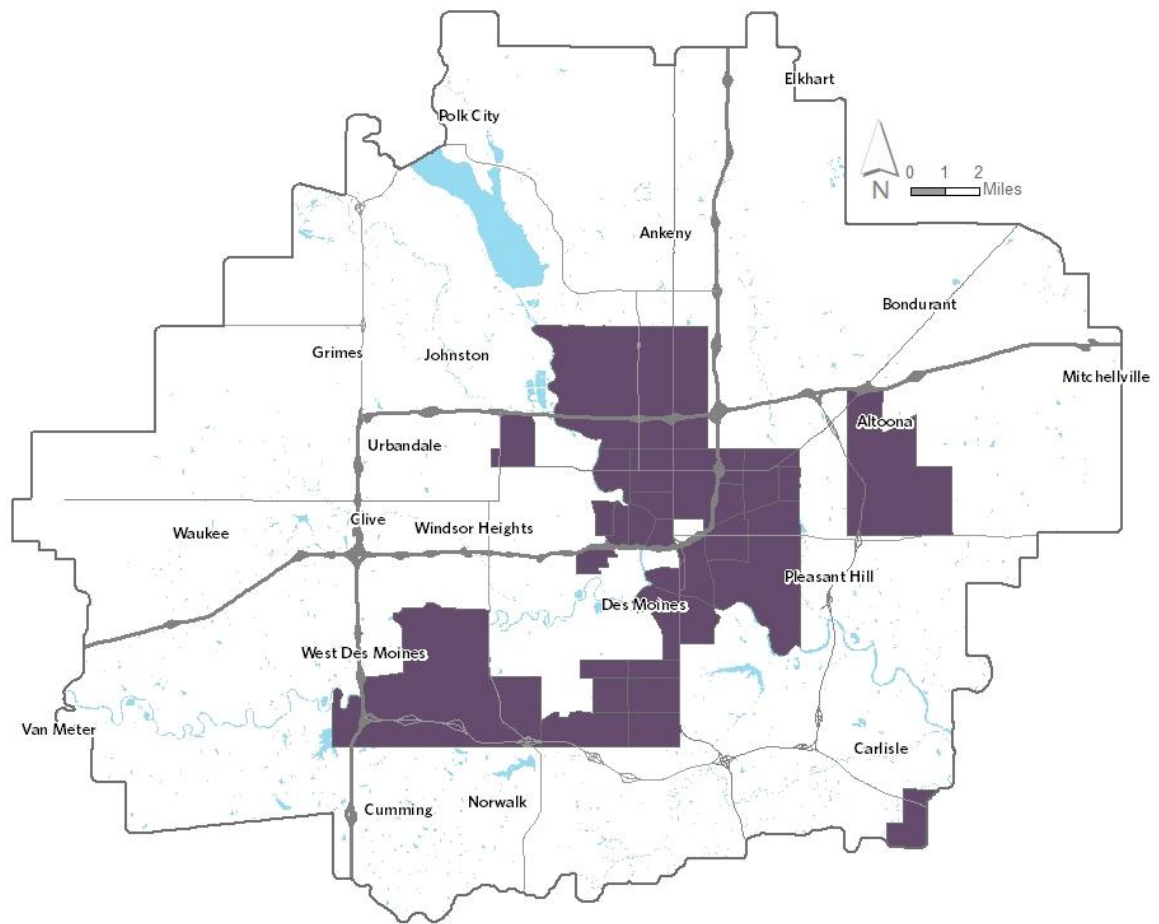




Persons with Disability

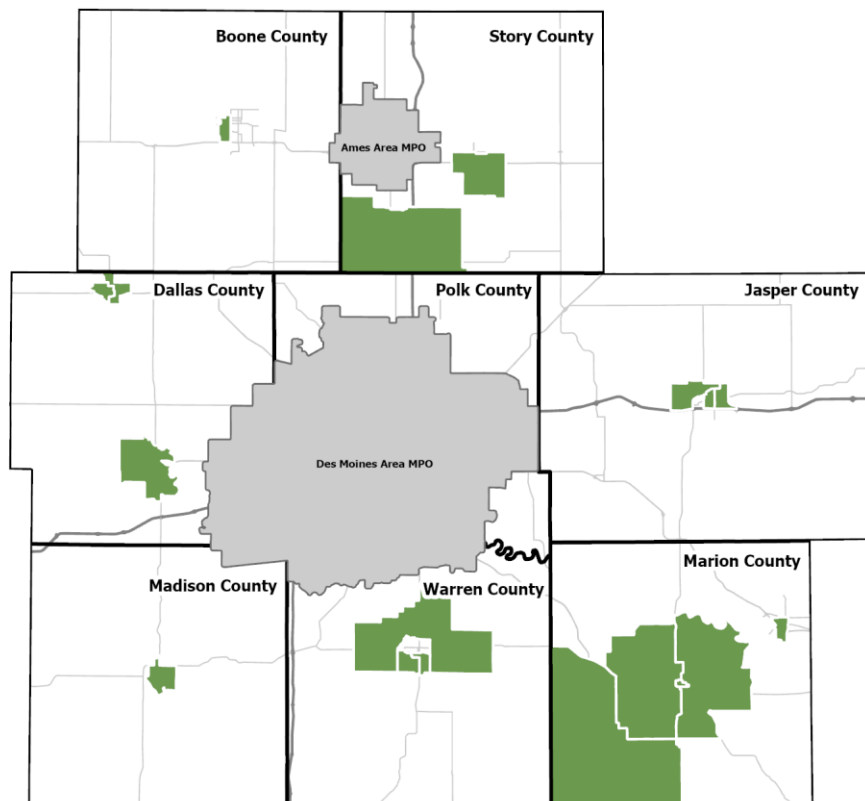
Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Total Population with Disability	Percent Population with Disability	Hearing Difficulty	Vision Difficulty	Cognitive Difficulty	Ambulatory Difficulty	Self-care difficulty	Independent Living Difficulty
Boone County	26,721	10,720	3,722	14.4%	1,305	511	1,296	1,578	526	1,068
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	6,002	7.2%	2,257	917	1,926	2,595	913	1,720
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	4,938	14.0%	1,685	626	1,784	2,336	889	1,612
Madison County	16,414	6,309	1,974	12.6%	574	213	537	985	293	469
Marion County	33,381	13,314	4,640	14.1%	1,702	568	1,679	2,267	1,012	1,403
Polk County	488,871	183,753	51,171	10.9%	13,836	8,308	3,560	23,888	8,849	15,422
Story County	98,106	37,219	7,114	7.4%	2,123	955	3,011	2,757	1,017	2,236
Warren County	51,862	18,959	5,645	11.6%	1,804	833	2,099	2,812	1,083	1,559
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	66,232	10.5%	18,996	10,519	25,121	30,879	11,317	19,502

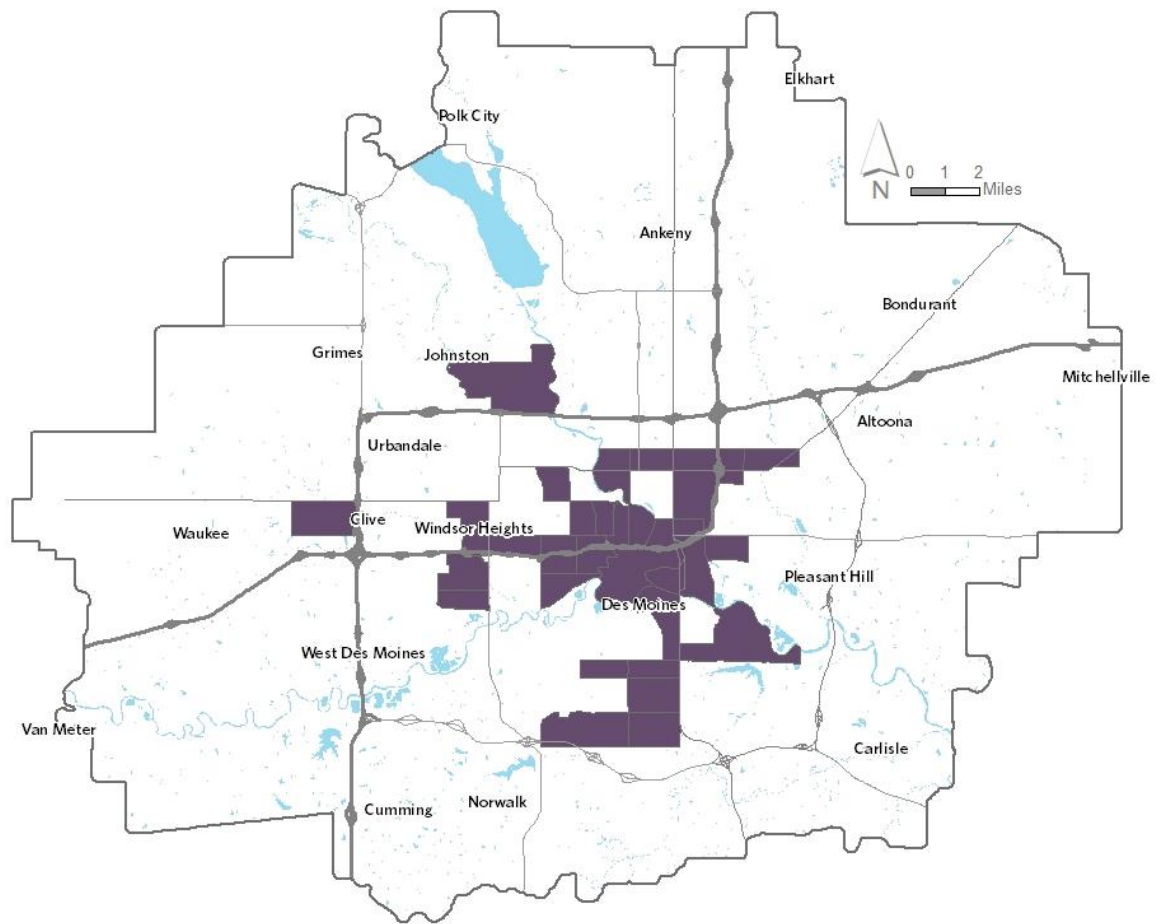




Carless Households

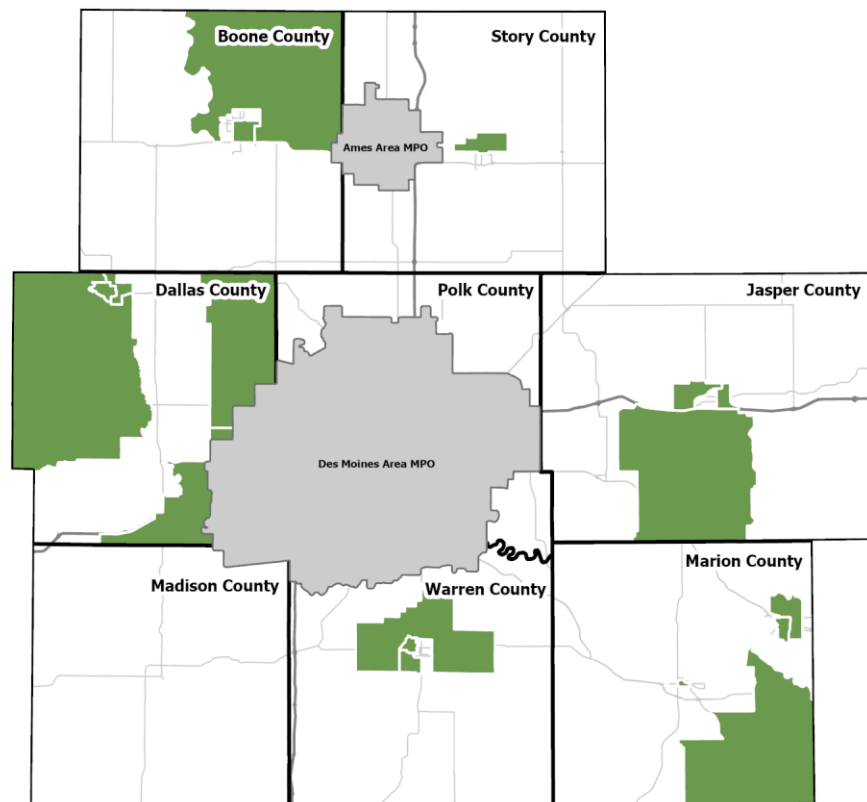
Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Total Carless Households	Percent Carless Households
Boone County	26,721	10,720	347	3.2%
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	1,059	2.8%
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	749	5.1%
Madison County	16,414	6,309	278	4.4%
Marion County	33,381	13,314	804	6.0%
Polk County	488,871	183,753	10,828	5.9%
Story County	98,106	37,219	2,287	6.1%
Warren County	51,862	18,959	683	3.6%
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	12,994	5.3%

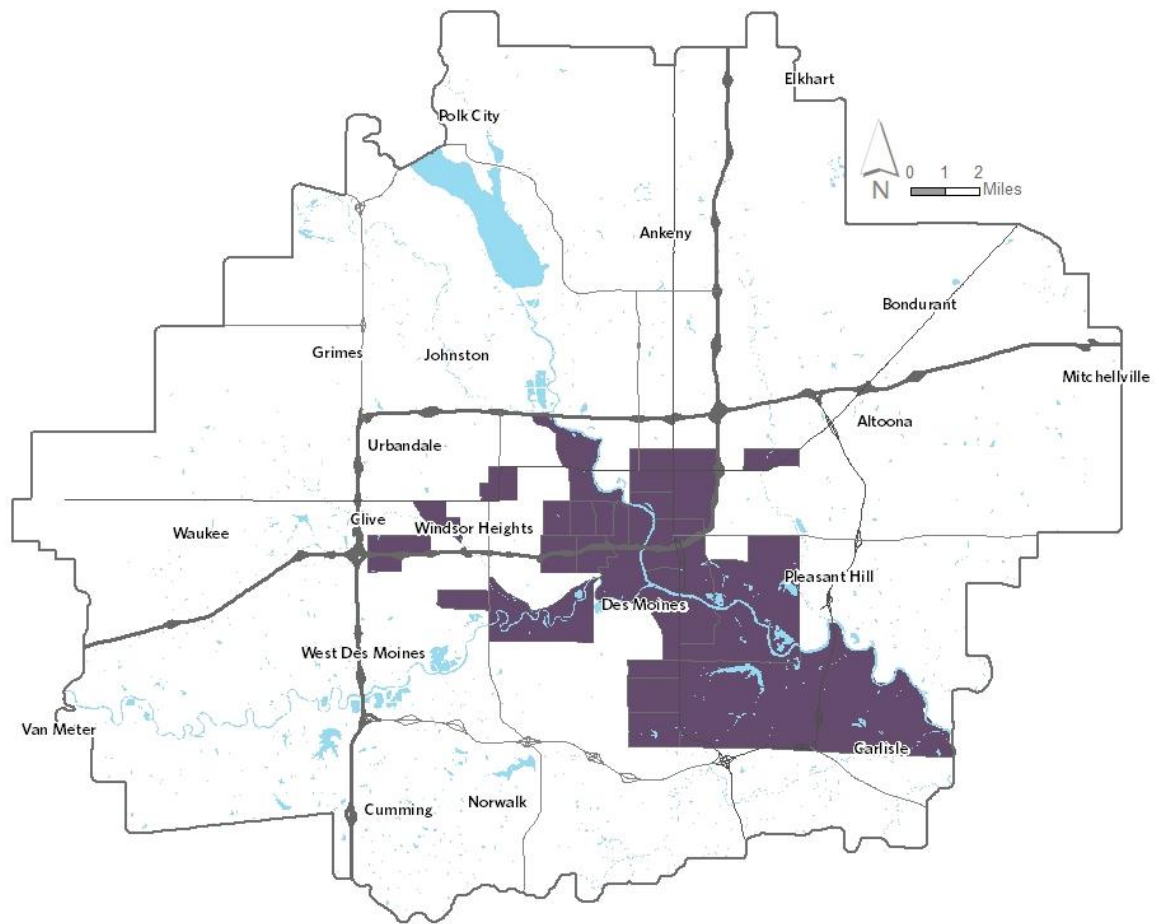




Non-White

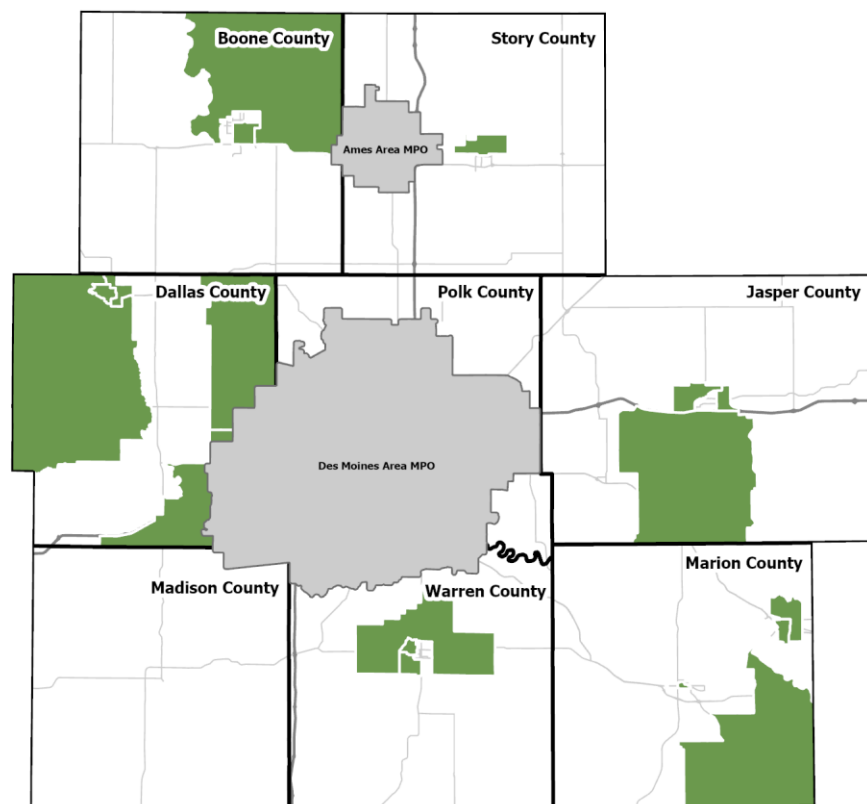
Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Total Non-white Population	Percent Non-white Population
Boone County	26,721	10,720	712	2.7%
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	7,890	8.2%
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	1,210	3.2%
Madison County	16,414	6,309	314	1.9%
Marion County	33,381	13,314	761	2.3%
Polk County	488,871	183,753	69,956	14.3%
Story County	98,106	37,219	11,286	11.5%
Warren County	51,862	18,959	1,225	2.4%
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	80,756	11.5%

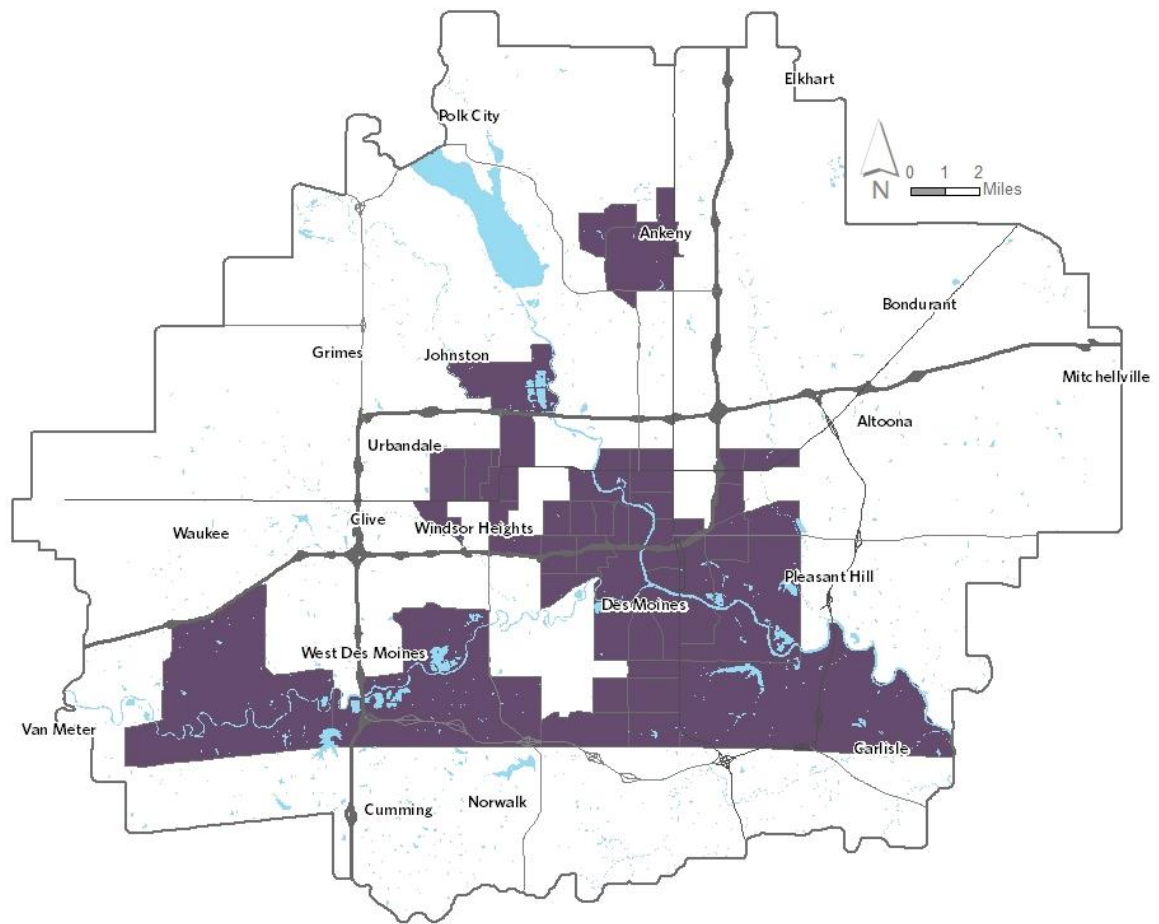




Poverty

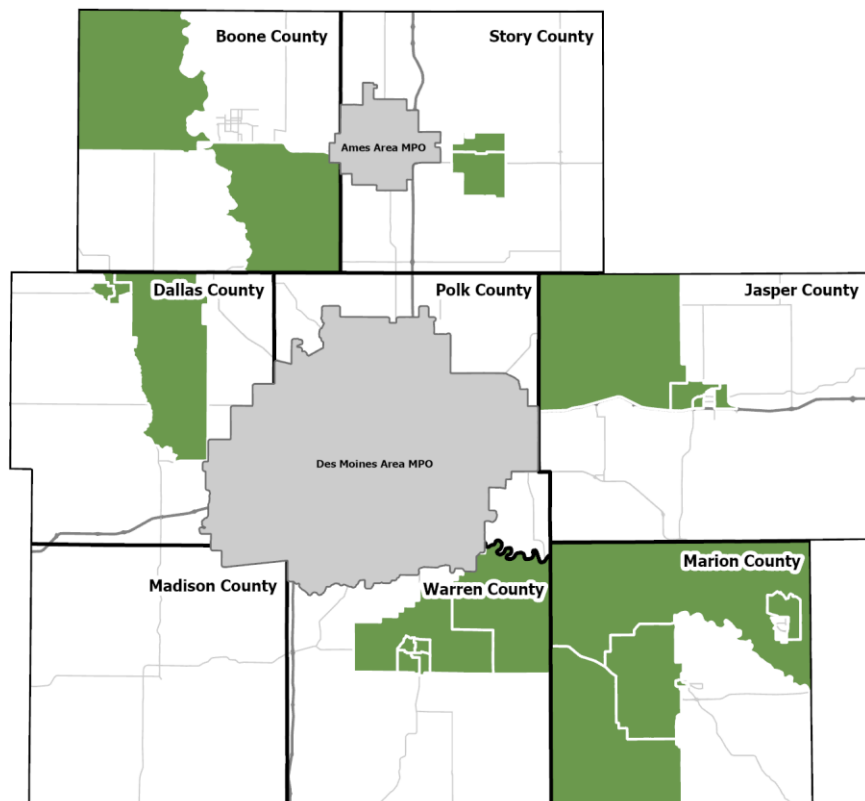
Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Total Persons in Poverty	Percent Persons in Poverty
Boone County	26,721	10,720	1,736	6.6%
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	5,467	5.7%
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	3,164	8.8%
Madison County	16,414	6,309	1,083	6.7%
Marion County	33,381	13,314	2,371	7.5%
Polk County	488,871	183,753	48,492	10.1%
Story County	98,106	37,219	16,825	19.4%
Warren County	51,862	18,959	2,974	5.9%
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	62,126	10.0%

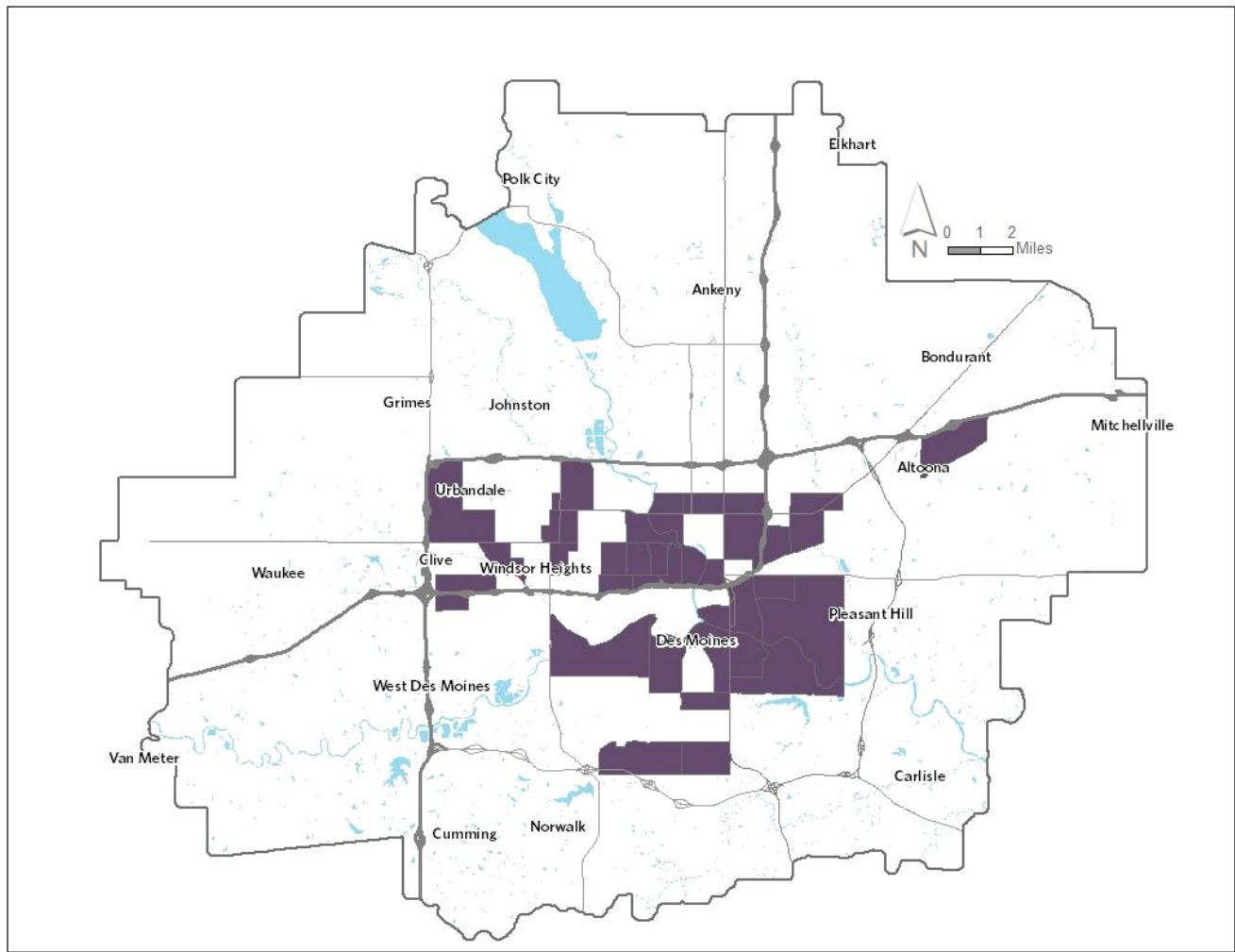




Single Head of Household with Children

Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Total Single HoH with Children	Percent Single HoH w children
Boone County	26,721	10,720	419	3.9%
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	1,672	4.4%
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	891	6.1%
Madison County	16,414	6,309	335	5.3%
Marion County	33,381	13,314	821	6.2%
Polk County	488,871	183,753	13,971	7.6%
Story County	98,106	37,219	1,189	3.2%
Warren County	51,862	18,959	1,218	6.4%
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	18,309	7.4%



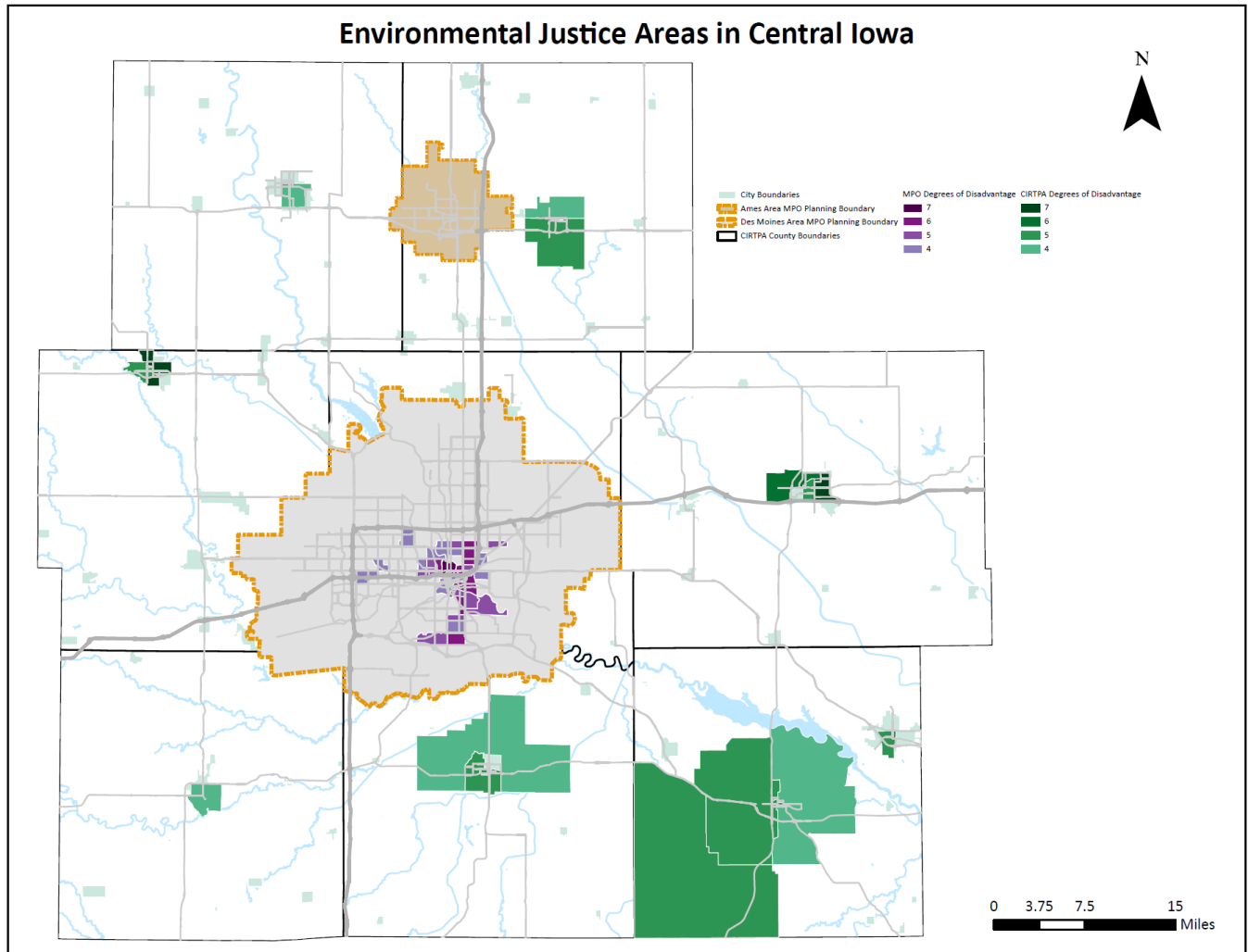


Computer & Broadband Access

Due to the prevalence of information via the internet, planning staff also will begin monitoring this data.

Jurisdiction	Total Population	Total Households	Total Households with Computer	Percent Households With Computer	Total Housholds with Broadband Subscription	Percent Households with Broadband Subscription
Boone County	26,721	10,720	9,901	82.4%	8,989	83.8%
Dallas County	96,604	37,970	518	95.9%	34,273	90.3%
Jasper County	37,686	14,548	12,972	90.3%	12,128	84.4%
Madison County	16,414	6,309	5,884	92.3%	5,433	85.2%
Marion County	33,381	13,314	12,071	91.2%	11,086	83.7%
Polk County	488,871	183,753	184,854	94.7%	172,248	88.2%
Story County	98,106	37,219	36,359	95.8%	29,246	77.1%
Warren County	51,862	18,959	18,552	95.1%	17,281	88.5%
DSM Metropolitan Statistical Area	702,036	246,304	262,740	94.5%	245,068	88.2%

Demographics Summary



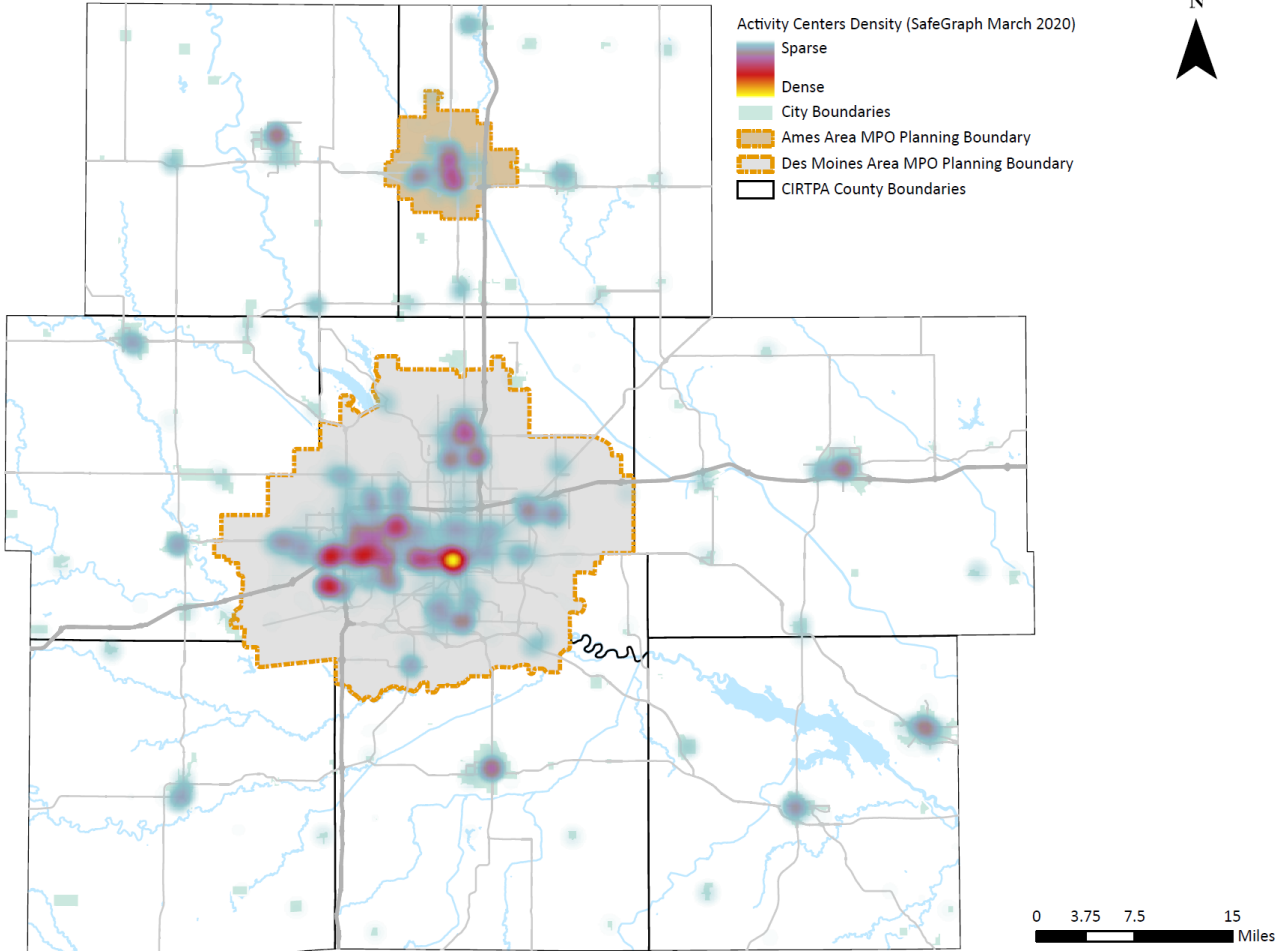
When combined, the concentration of degrees of disadvantage occur in the urban core of the Des Moines metropolitan area and the area near major cities in each CIRTPA county.

Activity Centers

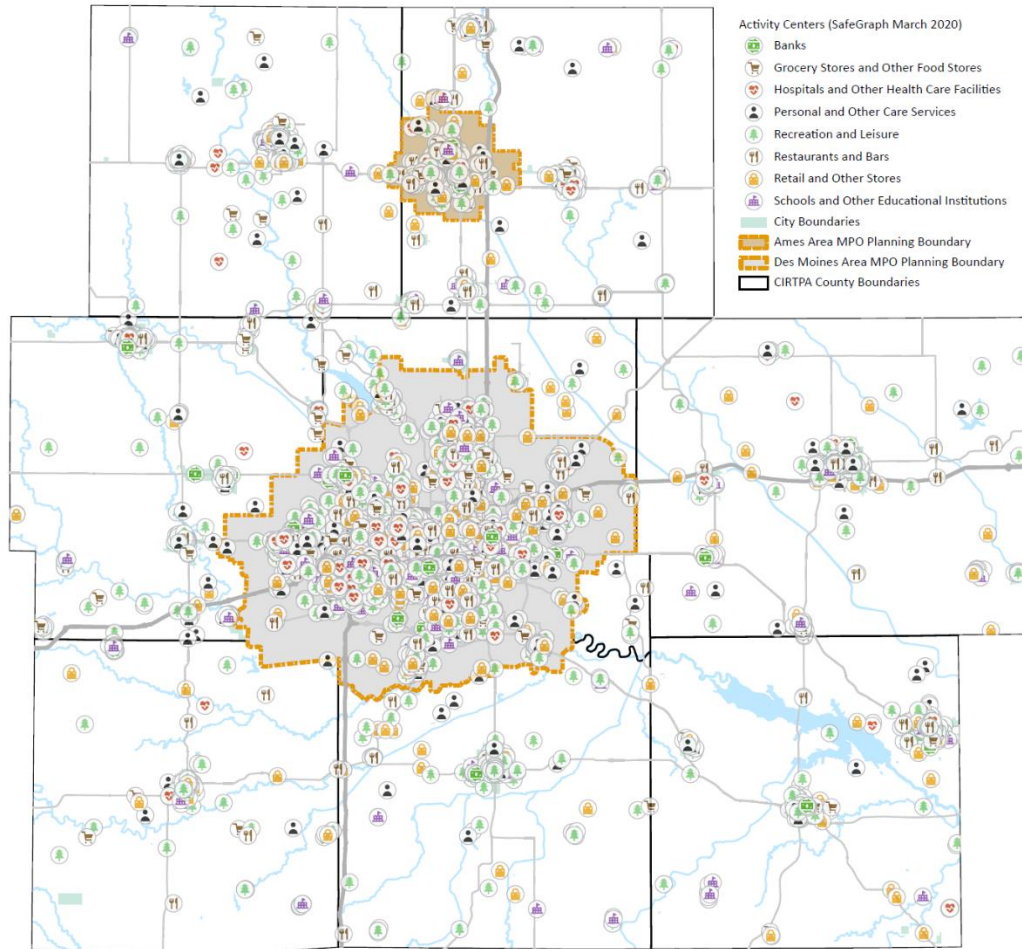
The following pages show the geographic distribution of activity centers in Central Iowa. To develop such maps, planning staff used SafeGraph 2020 data for locations of:

- Banks
- Grocery Stores & Other Food Stores
- Hospitals and Other Health Care Facilities
- Personal and Other Care Services
- Recreation and Leisure Facilities
- Restaurants and Bars
- Retail and Other Stores
- Schools and Other Educational Institutions

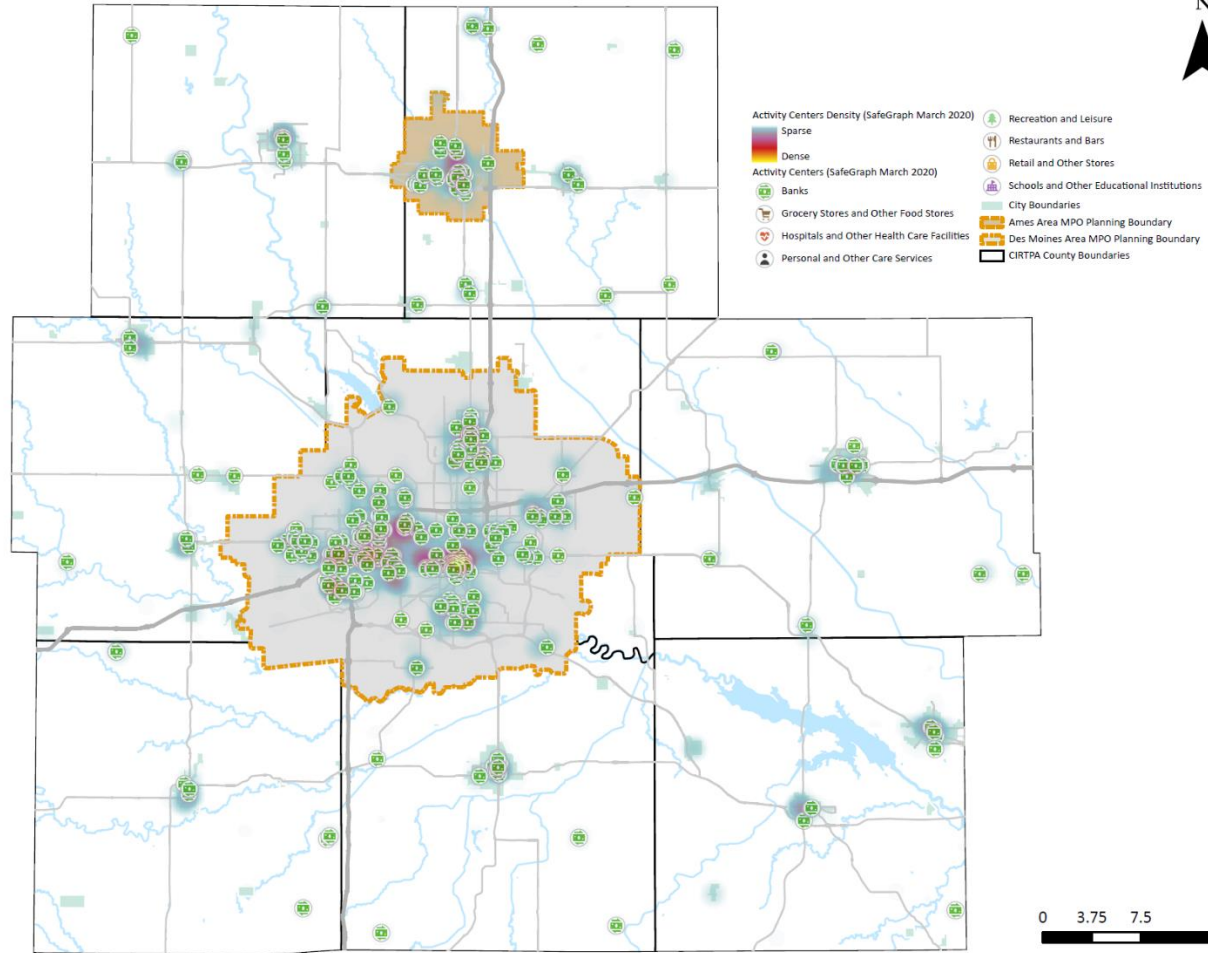
Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area



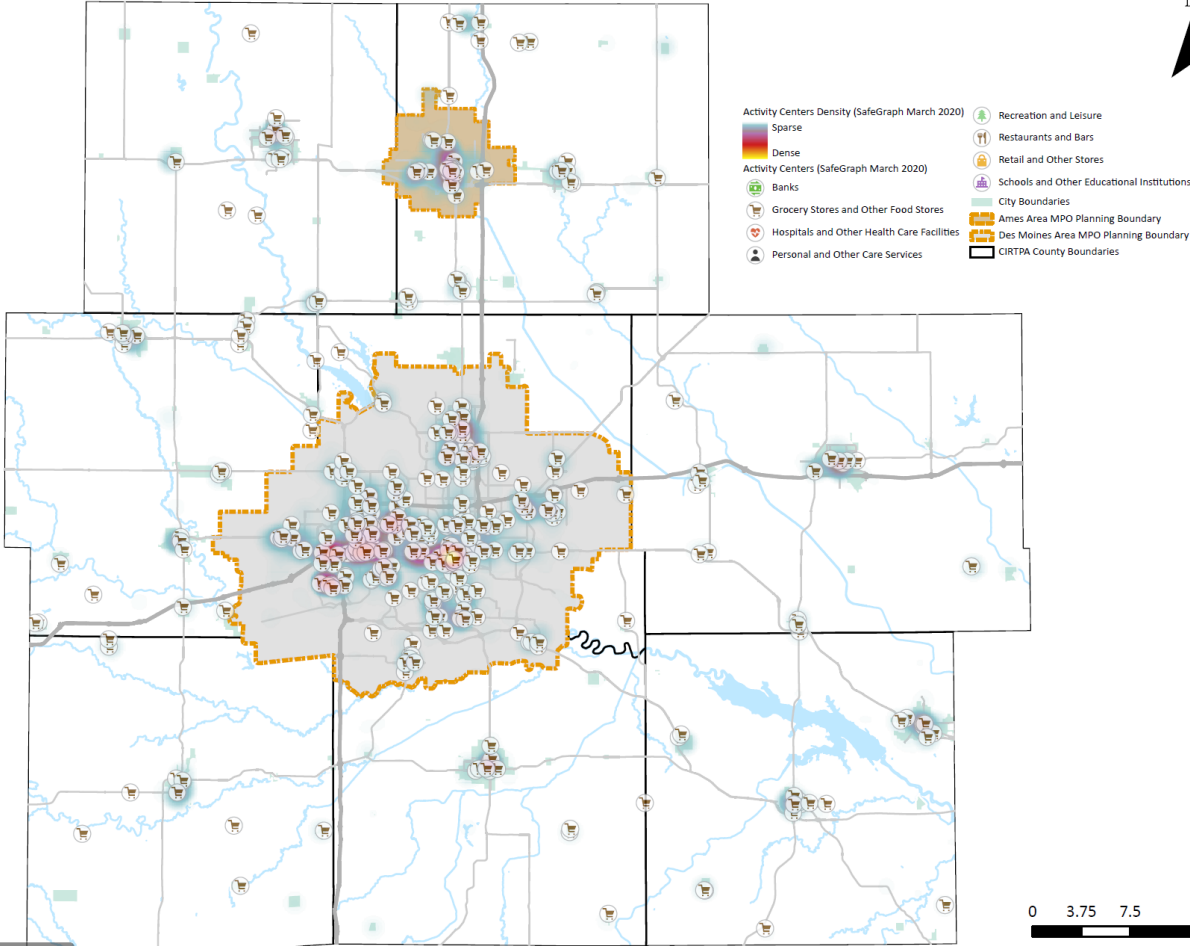
Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area



Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Banks



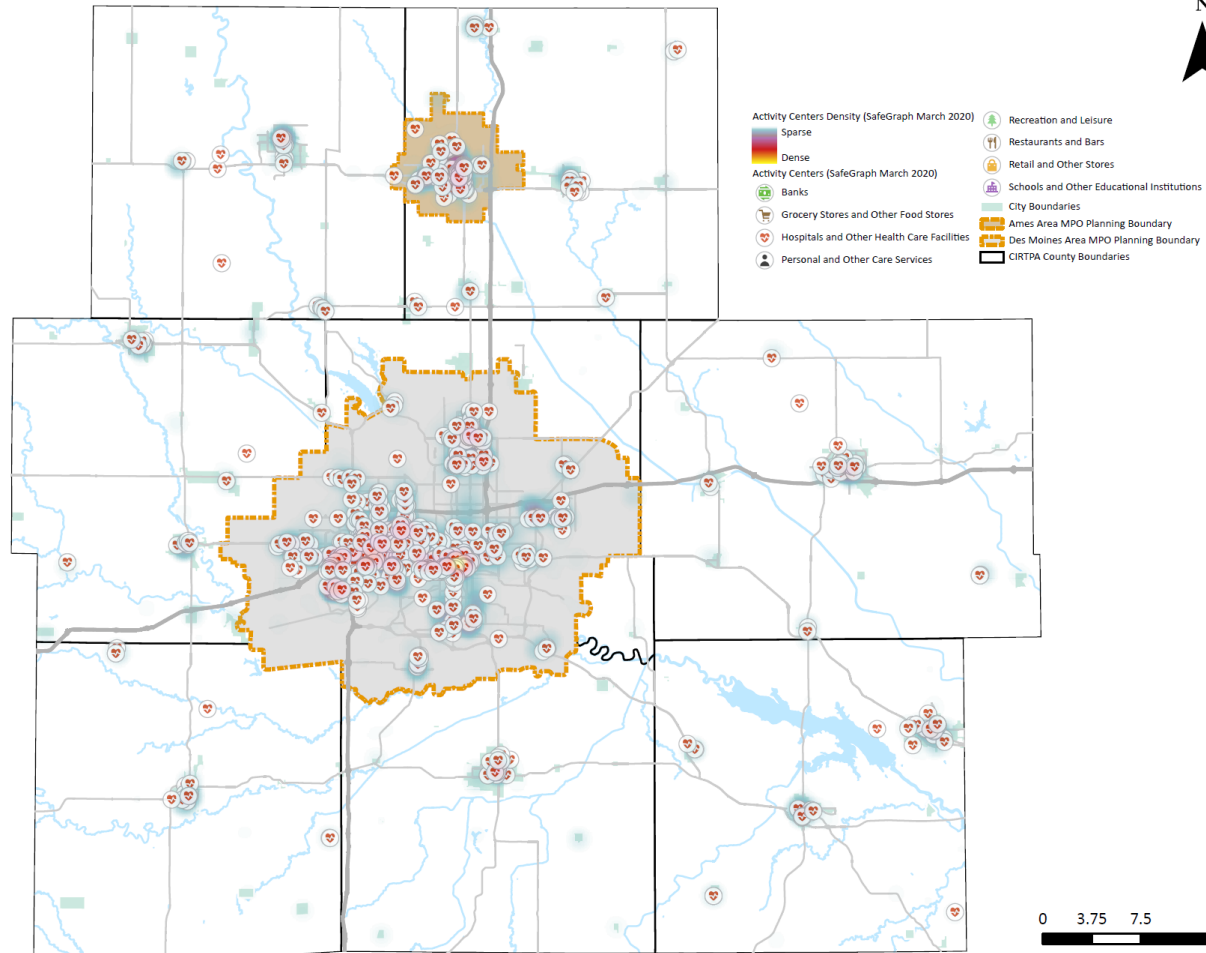
Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Grocery and Other Food Stores



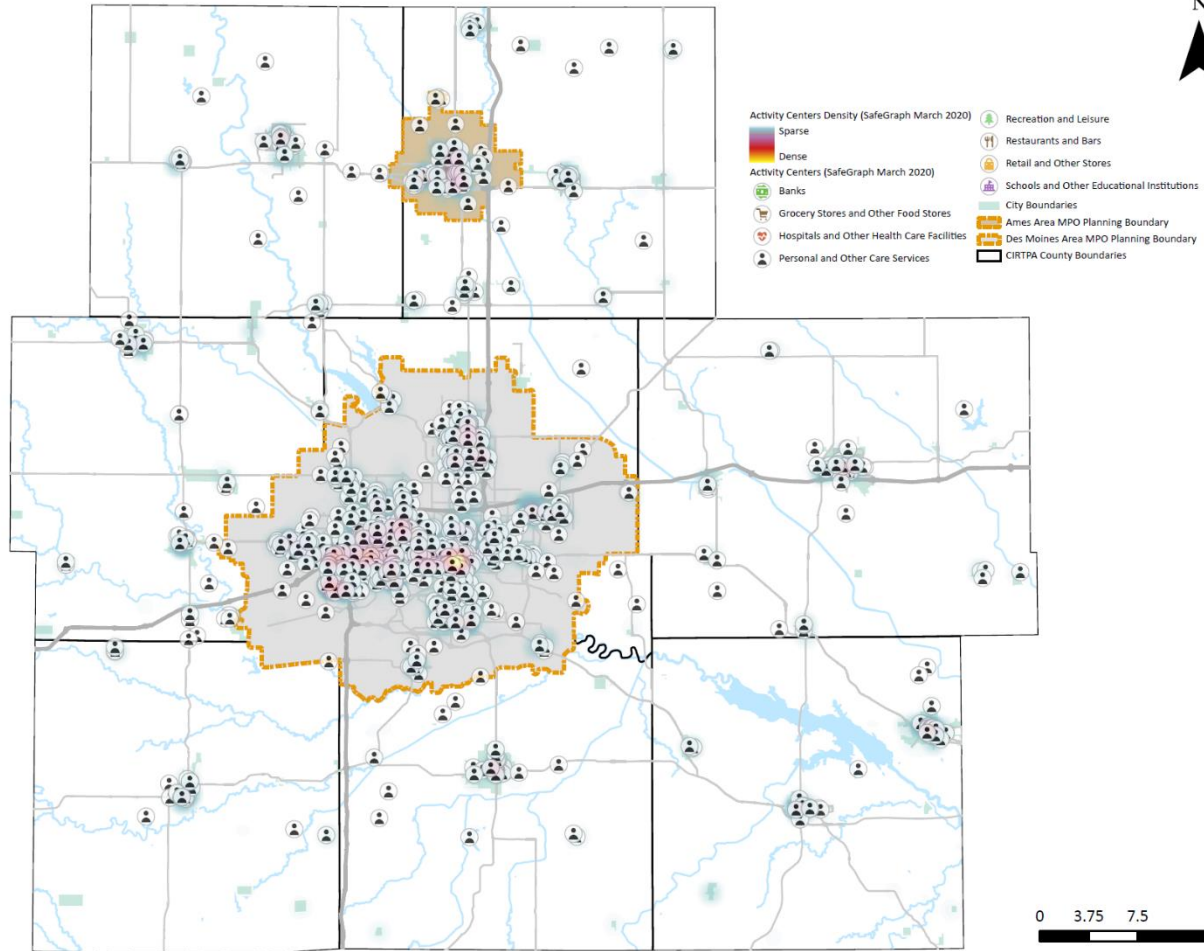
11.00 x 8.50 in

0 3.75 7.5 15 Miles

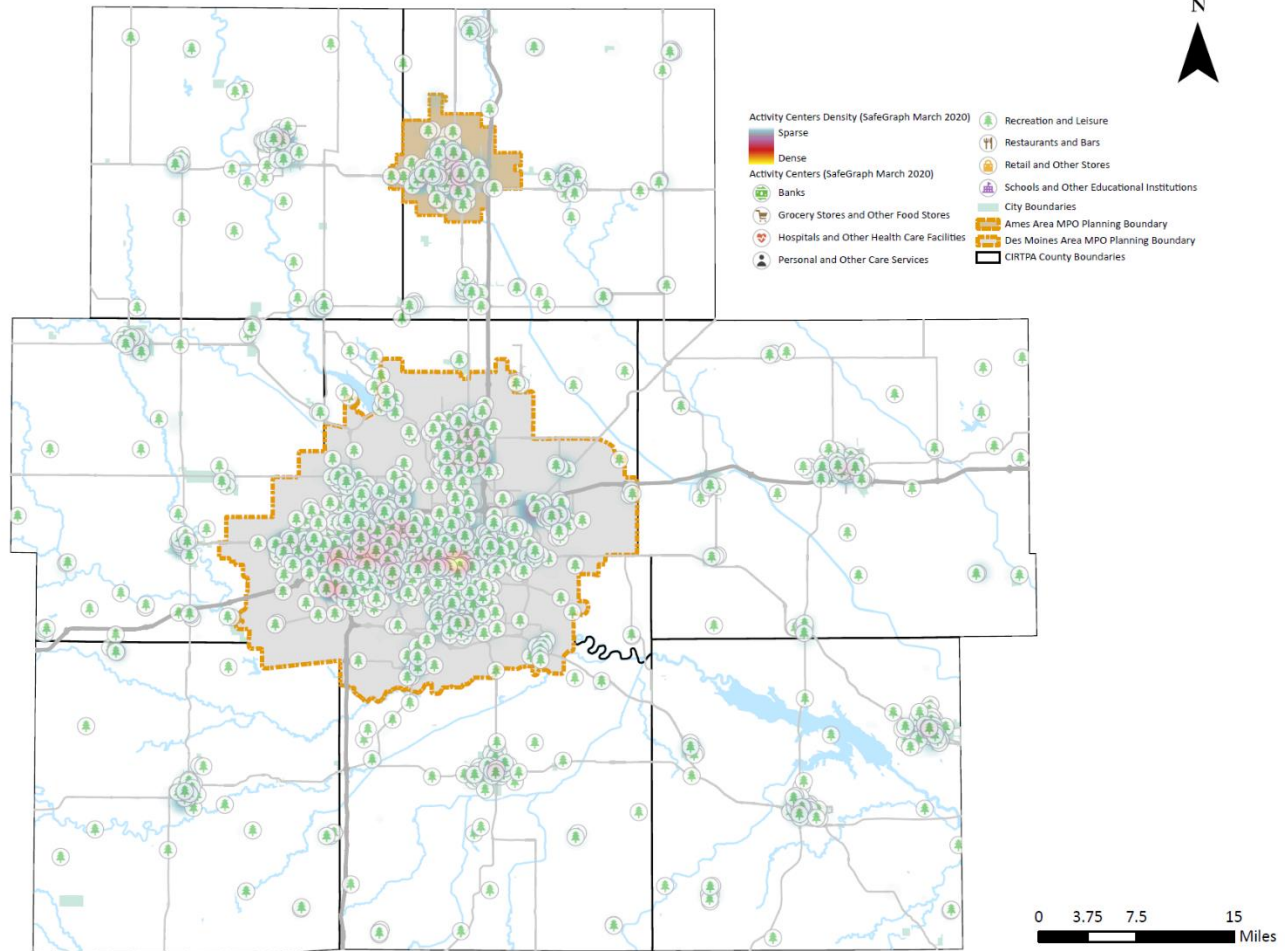
Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Hospitals and Other Health Care Facilities



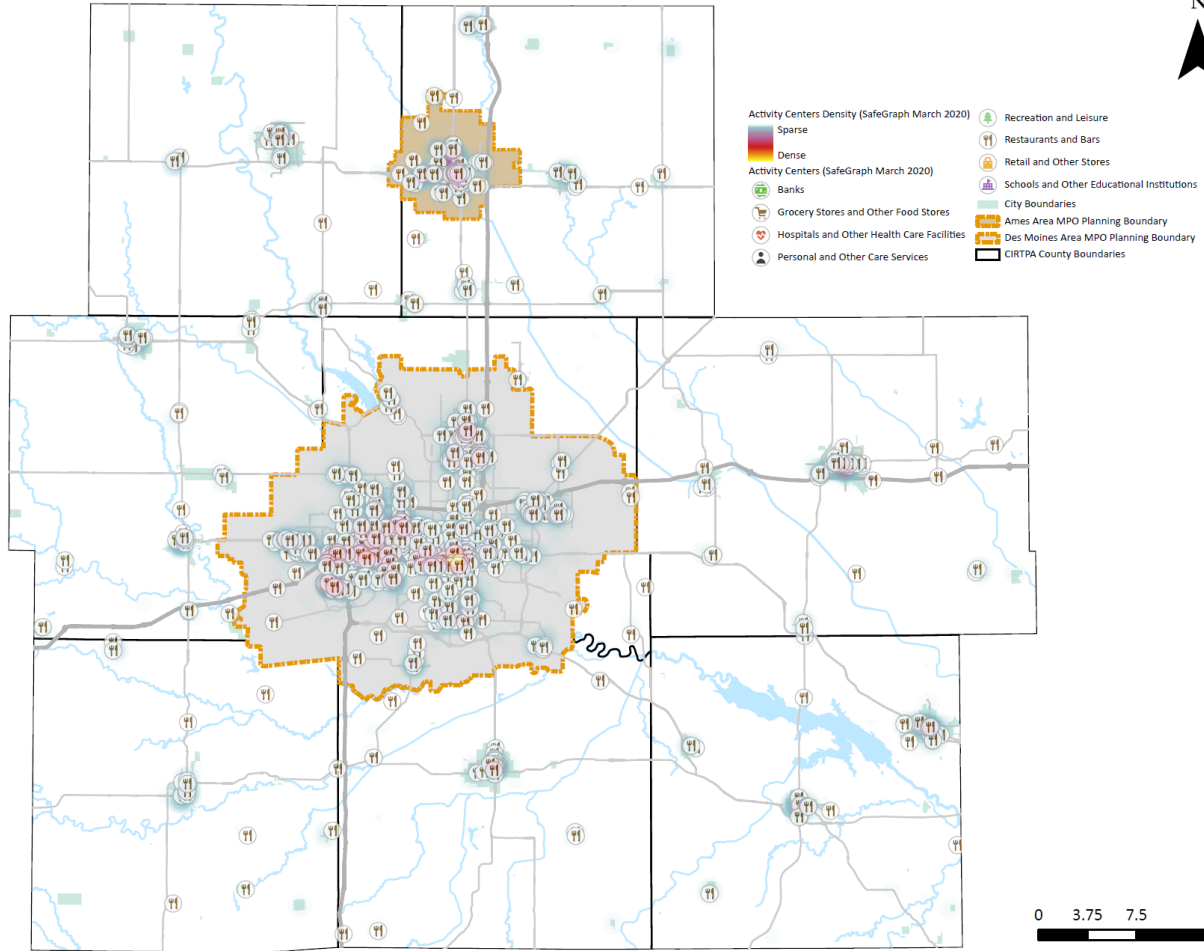
Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Personal and Other Care Services



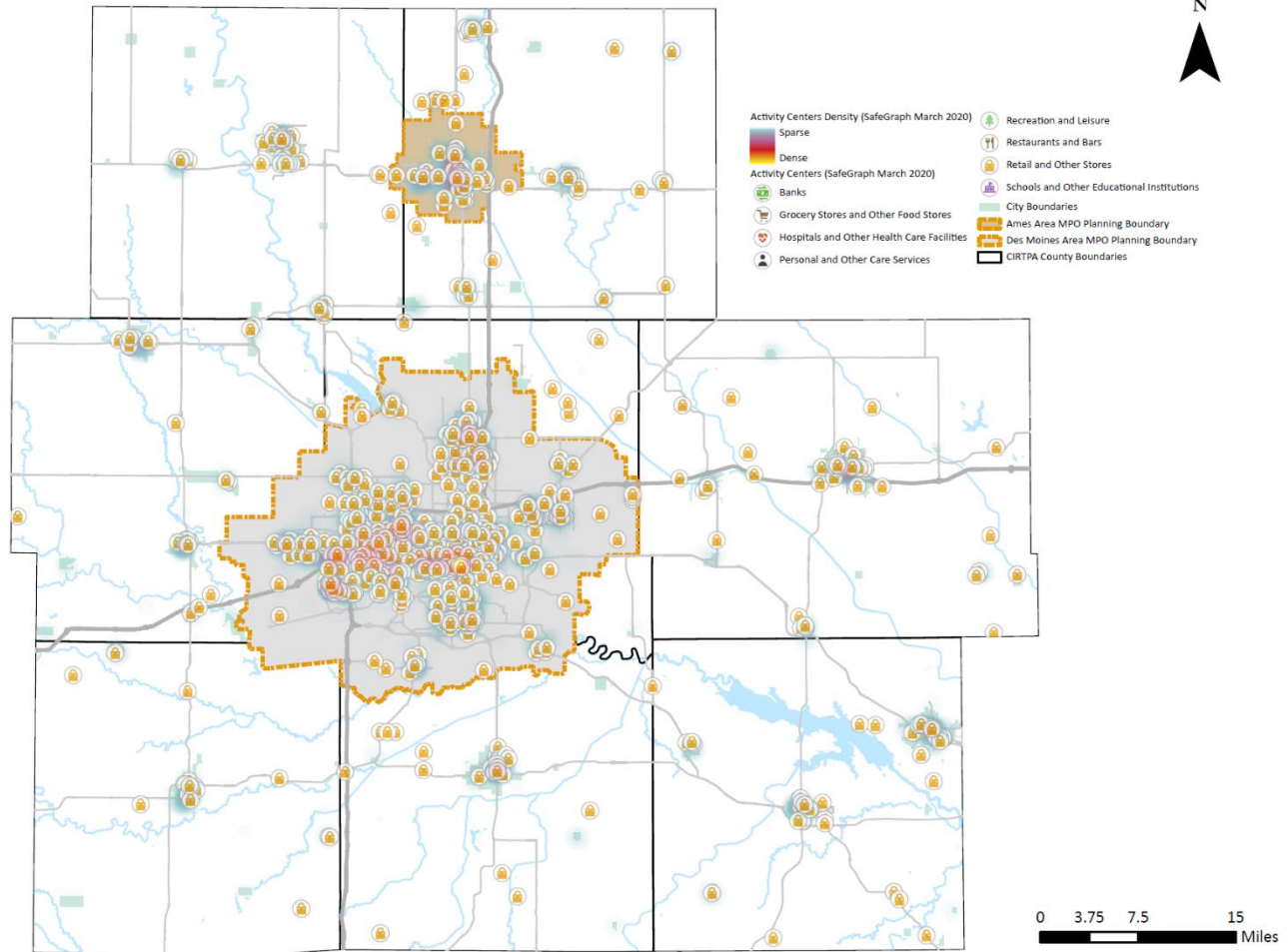
Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Recreation and Leisure



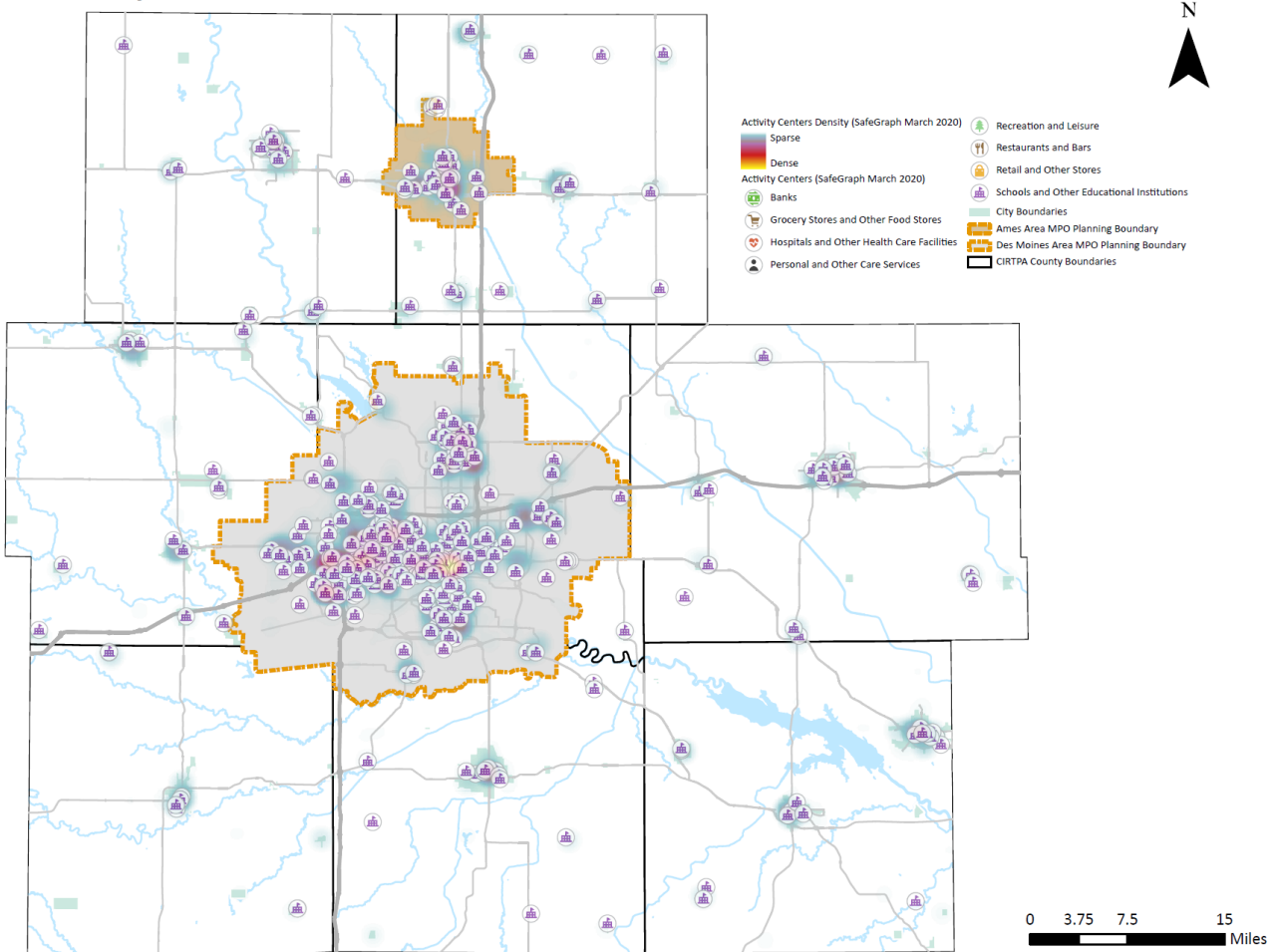
Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Restaurants and Bars



Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Retail and Other Stores



Activity Centers in the Central Iowa Area: Schools and Other Educational Institutions



Section Three: Coordination Issues

Two regional transit authorities service the DMAMPO & CIRTPA region: Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) and Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Authority (HIRTa). The following is an account of each agency since the 2018 Passenger Transportation Plan, including:

- Overview of each agency
- Future service, management, fleet, and facility needs
- Status of previously recommended priorities and strategies
- Recent work and developments affecting the agencies and coordination issues

Following these agency overviews, this section includes public input, regional outreach and initiatives that have examined mobility and coordination issues within Central Iowa, especially within this plan's focal demographic groups identified in Section Two.

Finally, this section will summarize the regional coordination issues, which will be prioritized and strategized in Section Four of this plan.

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART)

Overview

DART is the public transportation resource for the Greater Des Moines region, offering the largest network of buses in the State of Iowa and resources for those who vanpool, walk or bike. The Greater Des Moines region has changed dramatically in recent decades with a growing reputation and vision for competing nationally. The hub of DART's operations is in Downtown Des Moines, which is home to more than 80,000 employees of large and small companies as well as various federal, state, county, and local government offices.

Transportation is a critical component of a region's competitiveness - vibrant, growing communities have strong public transit systems at the heart of their infrastructure to connect citizens with jobs, education, shopping, and more. The DART Commission and staff have worked diligently to improve the regional transit system since it was formed in 2006. In October 2017, DART's governance structure was reconstituted to establish a Board of Commissioners with one representative for each of its member governments.

DART's current member governments include Altoona, Ankeny, Bondurant, Clive, Des Moines, Grimes, Johnston, Pleasant Hill, unincorporated Polk County, Urbandale, West Des Moines, and Windsor Heights.

In an average year, DART Provides nearly 4.5 million trips to transit users. Service is provided on weekdays from 4:40 a.m. to 11:39 p.m. Saturday service is operated from 5:30 a.m. to 10:41 p.m. Sunday service is operated from 6:00 a.m. to 7:29 p.m. The basic adult fare for bus service is \$1.75. A reduced fare of \$0.75 is offered to seniors aged 65 or older, Medicare cardholders, passengers with disabilities, ADA complementary paratransit customers, students, refugees, and persons on housing, food, or workforce assistance. The reduced fare is available during all hours of operation. The ADA complementary paratransit service is offered during the same hours and days as the fixed-route service. ADA paratransit service is \$3.50, with higher fares for the Express Plus and trips extending beyond the DART fixed-route service area. Furthermore, DART has the largest Rideshare program in Iowa with 28 vans operating within an 18-county area. These services are managed with one transit hub, one operations and maintenance facility, 1,780 bus stops, more than 20 Park and Ride locations, and 62 bus stop shelters.

DART does not operate services on six holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

DART is funded by a combination of local property taxes, public-private partnerships, fares, and a variety of state and federal funds, including FTA 5307, 5310, 5311, and 5339 grant programs. DART is uniquely funded when it comes to public transit agencies, relying on property taxes from its 12 member communities to cover more than 60 percent of its operating expenses.

Future Service, Management, Fleet, and Facility Needs

Future Service

In March 2022, the DART Commission unanimously adopted the [Transit Optimization Study](#), replacing the previous DART Forward 2035 plan from 2011. The study outlines a service planning vision incorporating emerging transportation products such as micro-transit, partnerships with TNCs, and potential applications for autonomous vehicles. The study included an updated assessment of the community and needs of the region and outlined strategies for meeting those needs.

Key findings from the public are:

- Service closer to home was the top requested improvement among both riders and non-riders.
- Among lower-income riders, the top requested improvement was more weekend service, and almost 70% of low-income riders said they'd ride more frequently if more routes were operating on weekends. Low-income riders also requested longer service hours and more frequent service among the top improvements that would lead them to ride more
- Of the possible new types of service, on-demand shuttles were the most popular among both riders and non-rider, and ride-hail, carshare, and vanpool the least.

Near-Term Service Goals and Associated Projects

Included are near-term service proposals that can be made with identified resources in the next 1-3 years. By reducing service on lower-performing bus routes, resources can be shifted to serve customer needs identified in the study, including innovative service delivery models.

- Provide cost-effective first/last mile connections to employment areas in NW Urbandale and Grimes
 - By creating a new Flex-Connect zone
- Provide more flexible, customer-friendly local circulation in Ankeny
 - By upgrading Ankeny On-Call with a micro-transit service
- First/last mile connections and local circulation in West Des Moines and expand service hours
 - By realigning fixed-route services in West Des Moines and creating a micro-transit service with the savings
- Improve mobility for reverse commuters seeking jobs in Altoona and Bondurant
 - By providing all-day service along Adventureland Drive

In addition, the Transit Optimization Study also identifies potential future improvements, which would require an additional investment of operating resources in the DART system that can be rolled out over time as resources become available. These potential future improvements are intended to respond to community needs that were heard through multiple rounds of public outreach and are supported by the project team's analysis.

Potential Future Service Improvements

- All-day service on Fleur Drive in Des Moines
- Local fixed route from DMACC Ankeny to Downtown Des Moines
- Mobility-on-Demand option in the Saylorville area
- Enhance existing on-call zones with same-day reservations
- Increase frequency and span of service on weekends
- More service on the busiest routes
- New micro-transit zone in Urbandale
- E 14th St crosstown route between Park Fair Mall and Southridge Mall
- Scale up service in Downtown Des Moines along with emerging markets
- Shuttle along East MLK Boulevard in Des Moines

Fleet and Facility

DART operates a fleet of 116 heavy-duty buses for fixed-route service and 34 cutaway buses for ADA complementary paratransit service. DART also operates vanpools in 18 counties in central Iowa with a fleet of 87 vans. DART has 7 battery-powered heavy-duty buses along with the remaining diesel-powered buses. Rideshare vans and administrative vehicles are primarily gasoline-powered with one administrative vehicle being fully electric. The general fleet plan is to replace vehicles at the end of life to maintain an average fleet age under the Transit Asset Management goals.

DART Operates from an Operations and Maintenance Facility at 1100 DART Way in Des Moines and has a Transit Center located at 620 Cherry Street in Des Moines.

DART's operations and maintenance facility at 1100 DART Way was built in the 1970s and is beyond its useful life. While some electric bus charging infrastructure was installed to support a pilot fleet of electric buses, the garage is undersized for electric buses, is located within a flood plain, and is landlocked amidst rapidly growing residential development.

As DART considers options for investing in repairs or upgrades to its existing operations and maintenance facility or planning a new facility, the capacity to support electric and other zero-emission vehicles should be a key consideration. For example, investment in electric buses is severely constrained in the existing facility due to the size of the storage bay doors and overall height of the storage building as well as undersized electrical service.

Bus Stop Amenities

The inclusion of bus stop amenities follows a set of evaluation criteria that takes into consideration the number of passengers boardings, number of routes served, transfer opportunities, proximity to senior and multifamily housing, growth opportunities, cost-sharing opportunities, and accessibility. Currently, 57 bus shelters are installed at various bus stop locations.

Status of Previously Recommended Priorities + Strategies

DART Service Changes

Over the five years, DART has implemented service changes to meet identified transportation needs of the community.

- Extension of the local Route 17 to Bondurant with the opening of a new Amazon facility to provide access to a major employment center.
- Pilot partnership with transportation network companies (TNCs) in Urbandale and Northwest Des Moines as a first/last mile solution connecting a residential neighborhood to key transit stations
- Launched a micro-transit zone in Ankeny called DART On Demand, an on-demand service to provide local transportation for the growing community. DART On Demand uses a mobile app where customers can book trips on-demand or pre-plan their travel up to 7-days in advance.
- Expanded fixed-route services in West Des Moines to connect major areas including Valley West Mall, University Avenue, Jordan Creek Town Center, Mills Civic Parkway, and Valley Junction
- Expanded fixed-route service to the Deer Ridge apartment community in Des Moines on SW 63rd Street to connect a major residential area geographically isolated for those without a personal vehicle.
- Deployed the first fully-battery electric propelled buses in the DART fleet to operate on fixed routes, reducing engine noise and emissions for the neighborhoods served.

Other Recent Developments

In addition to the service changes listed in previous sections, DART has also:

- Added Wi-Fi service on all DART buses
- Launch of the MyDART app, allowing customers to pay their fares with their smartphones in addition to accessing real-time bus tracking and trip planning features.
- Installed nine mobility hubs where DART shelters and BCycle stations are co-located
- Added bus shelters throughout the community, including the addition of shelters that incorporate public art in their design

Mobility Coordinator

The DART Mobility Coordinator is fully funded through a partnership between DART and the Polk County Community, Family, and Youth Services. The position is responsible for coordinating transportation resources and providing transit education to the residents of Polk County. The position also focuses on building awareness among local nonprofit leaders, service providers, and transit riders regarding the key issues that impact the effective coordination of transportation and human services within Polk County.

Below are several activities carried out by the Mobility Coordinator.

How to Ride Training

The Mobility Coordinator provides regular ongoing training to a variety of health and human service organizations across the region, as well as providing training upon request.

Training demonstrates how to plan a trip, read maps and schedules, recognize bus stops, pay fares, practice rider safety, and more. Depending on the organization or population served, training is personalized and can include classroom learning or on-the-bus demonstration. Target audiences for How to Ride trainings include educational institutes/schools, human service organizations, refugees, returning citizens, and seniors or older adults. DART also hosts a How to Ride training monthly that is open to the public and is held virtually or in-person at DART Central Station.

In addition, the Mobility Coordinator offers service overview and training to organization staff to help them coordinate issues related to transportation needs for individuals served.

Community Events and Education

Another mechanism to reach community members to provide education on DART's various services and programs by attending community events already being held. The Mobility Coordinator often attends community events that focus on serving marginalized community members or some of DART's priority audiences which could include educational institutes/schools, refugees, returning citizens, and seniors or older adults.

Event examples could be back-to-school, health fairs, job fairs, community resource events, etc.

Regional Transportation Coordination

The Mobility Coordinator participates in several regional coordination efforts and stakeholder engagement. Transportation often comes up in regional conversations, especially in the human or social services fields. DART is often invited to join stakeholder conversations in formal and informal ways. Below are a few examples of these:

- Transportation Advisory Group – Des Moines MPO
- Refugee Alliance of Central Iowa
- OpportUNITY – United Way of Central Iowa
- Polk County Decategorization
- Polk Community Partnerships for Protecting Children
- Non-Profit Forum – FUSE Des Moines
- Des Moines Public Schools Community Conversations
- Iowa Latino Providers Forum

Transit Riders Advisory Committee

The Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) is a group of 11 DART riders who advise DART staff and Commission. The committee aims to give riders a larger voice in shaping DART's operations.

Members provide feedback to staff and the Commission, make suggestions to improve service and increase the communication between riders and staff and the Commission.

The committee has representation from three Local Route riders, two Express Route riders, one RideShare rider, two Paratransit riders, and three At-Large riders representing key constituencies such as refugees, senior citizens, students, or low-income individuals.

The Mobility Coordinator currently serves as the TRAC Liaison and the primary point of contact for committee members. TRAC meets every other month and is led by an elected committee member who serves as the committee chair with staff support.

Reduced Fare Programs

DART offers a variety of populations in our community to pay half the regular bus fare and half-price bus passes to those who qualify.

Under DART's federally mandated half-fare program, individuals over 65 and individuals with a disability can qualify to ride DART half-fare. Additionally, middle and high school students, as well as refugees, throughout Polk County qualify for DART's half-fare program.

The Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) and DART have a contracted relationship that provides school transportation to eligible students who live on or near DART's fixed bus routes. This partnership provides free transportation on DART fixed routes to DMPS students when school is not in session - after 4:30 p.m., on weekends, and during school breaks.

In 2021, DART launched a Half-Fare Pilot program that expanded access to DART's reduced fares, including individuals receiving certain forms of food, housing, and workforce assistance.

The Half-Fare Pilot program was formed after years of internal conversations about how to revamp DART's reduced fare programs. The effort also considered feedback from the Central Iowa Transportation Gap Analysis, which highlighted the cost barrier to riding DART experienced by some members of the community. The pilot ran for 18 months, during which more than 550 individuals signed up and participated in the program, demonstrating to DART that there was an adequate need to move this to a permanent program as part of DART's reduced fare program.

After piloting an expansion of access to half-fare, DART launched a new Ride to Thrive program in July 2022. This program grants half-fare access to riders who qualify for assistance programs such as food assistance, housing assistance, and workforce assistance for two years with the ability to renew that benefit.

COVID-19 & DART

In March 2020, the global Coronavirus Pandemic spread throughout the State of Iowa. Over the coming year, DART would respond to the changing conditions through a series of service and operating changes. At the onset, DART moved quickly to modify services to meet the community's needs during the initial period of community spread, responding to wide-ranging impacts on commuter patterns, employee availability, and evolving public health guidance. Considering the

immense disruption to public life and services, particular transportation trends became abundantly clear; routes with high uses by essential workers and services, flexible travel patterns for employees working from home, and populations with the strongest reliance on public transit access. This section explores observations during the COVID-19 pandemic and the possible lessons we can apply to maintain essential transportation access into the future.

In response to COVID-19 and the associated impacts on workplaces, schools, and businesses, DART instituted a series of temporary service changes to respond to both the availability of operating staff and the sharp reduction in demand. Two service reductions were swiftly implemented, first on March 26, 2020, scaling back of Express trips, and on April 12, 2020, a broad Saturday service schedule on weekdays for most routes and a suspension of service on select routes. During the summer months of May through August 2020, most routes were fully restored to the normal service schedule through a series of monthly improvements.

Transit services around the United States of America overwhelmingly experienced a large decrease in ridership during the pandemic. A myriad of changes in daily life and the evolving science of how COVID-19 spreads resulted in major cleaning protocols and reduced spans of service, which impacted the choices riders made. Despite the overall changes in ridership, the following routes were the workhorses of the network. The high ridership of these routes demonstrates they are in proximity to essential workforce and essential workplaces. While these routes were modified to a Saturday service level, extra buses were operated to ensure passengers were able to maintain safe distances between themselves to reduce opportunity of community spread.

Routes With Most Activity (Over 500 Average Daily Trips During Pandemic)

- Route 3 – University Ave
- Route 7 – SW 9th St
- Route 16 – Douglas Ave
- Route 60 – University/Ingersoll

Prior to the Pandemic, ridership in 2020 was experiencing substantial growth on local routes throughout the metro, fueled by new Unlimited Access partnerships and a set of route improvements made in 2018 and 2019. However, immediately upon closures of workplaces, schools and businesses, ridership among local routes were reduced by half, and Express Route along with the downtown shuttle routes were fulfilling around 10% of the number of trips typically provided. Throughout the year, many downtown employers continued work-from-home arrangements and ridership gains are slowly building on Downtown oriented services. Overall, the most profound drop in riders were among those using employer-based passes and Des Moines Public School passes. Closed offices and classrooms greatly reduced work related trips, and likely other trips made by holders of these passes made fewer non-work trips as well.

Unlimited Access and Partner Programs

DART Unlimited Access Partnerships (UAP) are annual or multi-year agreements establishing a flat, annual rate paid by organizations to streamline access for an approved population to ride all DART fixed routes for free by showing an organization ID when boarding. In some situations, a UAP could be

paired with a service extension that would extend a route or service to better serve a workplace and its needs.

Currently, DART has UAPs with various businesses and organizations, including corporations, manufacturing, education, governmental, residential, etc. In 2022, DART manages 20 of these relationships. DART's newest UAPs have been with two residential property management companies that want to offer free transit benefits to their tenants.

The benefits of transit access extend beyond the workplace to essential destinations that support employees' overall quality of life, offering access to health care, retail, recreation, education opportunities, and more.

Employer Support Program

For businesses and organizations who want to offer transit access for select individuals only, DART can provide a regular allocation of monthly bus passes, purchased on consignment, to distribute to individuals on a month-by-month basis. The organization is billed monthly for the number of passes used, while unused passes are returned to DART and credited to the organization.

RideShare (Vanpooling) Program

In addition to its bus service, DART's RideShare program offers individuals an alternative to driving alone. RideShare helps commuters locate others with like travel patterns to share rides in vanpools. DART has a fleet of vans used by groups of five to 12 commuters for trips to and from work and nearly 100 vanpools in operation. Each passenger pays one low monthly fare based on the number of passengers and total roundtrip mileage of the vanpool. RideShare also has vans with wheelchair lifts available upon request for customers with mobility devices.

RideShare currently serves an 18-county region that includes Adair, Boone, Clarke, Dallas, Decatur, Guthrie, Iowa, Jasper, Lucas, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Polk, Poweshiek, Story, Union, Warren, and Wayne counties. Additional vanpools are continually being created.

RideShare can be made available as an employee benefit when organizations enter a RideShare Partner agreement for organizations who want to cover the full or partial cost of employees accessing the RideShare van.

Climate Action Strategy

Transportation is a major source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the United States, accounting for 29 percent of 2019 GHG emissions. Public transportation plays an important role in reducing a community's transportation GHG emissions through transportation and land use efficiencies. In 2022, DART adopted a Climate Action Strategy to identify opportunities to monitor and advance the positive impact public transportation has on reducing greenhouse gases in the following ways.

- Develop an emissions inventory to document the baseline condition of greenhouse gas emissions attributable to the operations of DART.
- Document sustainability Initiatives and projects, including previous work on LEED certification, fleet electrification, mode shift, and facility planning.

- Identifies goals for DART to identify opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in facilities, fleet through transit use, and improved coordination.
- Describes specific steps staff can participate in to advance the strategy's goals.

DART Non-Rider Survey

This 2016 survey was distributed to 2,323 people across 15 zones who had not used DART services in the past year. The top three reasons survey respondents were not currently using DART are because they would prefer to drive, transit services aren't offered near their homes, and they are under the impression that public transportation takes too long.

The main factors that most likely would cause them to begin using public transportation would be if there were transit stops near their home/work, if traffic congestion increased travel times by car, and if employers offered incentives to use public transportation services. Despite over 80% of respondents indicating they feel DART is valuable to the community, only 27% of respondents would be willing to pay an additional \$80/year per household to expand and increase the efficiency of DART.

Additionally, only 12% strongly support adding a \$20 annual fee to each car's registration fee in areas serviced by DART. The top reason survey respondents would consider using public transportation would be for a work-related trip. This coincided with the hours most people were interested in using bus services: 5am-9am and 3pm-7pm.

Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Authority (HIRT A)

Overview

In 2017, HIRT A approved its 10-year strategic plan, and in 2022 updated it to include its new mission, vision, and values, as well as the accomplished and future goals.

HIRT A envisions an interconnected web of transit options bridging the distance between rural communities and cities. HIRT A will continue to improve and refine its operation and expand the frequency, availability, and destinations of its transit services. They will increase partnerships ensuring their service is complementary to other services. HIRT A continues to develop and implement innovative solutions such as rural fixed-route service where feasible, deviated routes and shuttles and expanding same-day on-demand service through its HIRT A On Demand program.

HIRT A staff is dedicated to ensuring their system is robust and able to handle a new mobile and aging society, especially as the population over 65 grows across the region.

The new strategic plan sets out 8 goals for HIRT A to strive for:

1. Service Excellence
2. Culture of Safety
3. Management and Financial Sustainability
4. Technology Innovations and Improvements
5. Community Outreach and Engagement
6. Organizational Excellence
7. Capital Investments
8. Environmental Sustainability

Future Service, Management, Fleet, and Facility Needs

While challenges, such as funding vulnerabilities and supply chain shortages, add uncertainty to the future service management, fleet, and facility expansions, HIRT A continues to work toward goals for the future of its transit system.

The strategic plan aims to ensure transit equity throughout HIRT A's 7-county region, specifically by creating more opportunities for historically disadvantaged populations, such as low-income people, students, youth, seniors, people of color, people with disabilities, and others with limited transportation options, to access and ride HIRT A. They also want to diversify modes of transportation to include, Demand Response, Paratransit, On-Demand, Vanpools, Volunteer transportation, and Deviated route service, along with right-sizing their vehicle fleet.

HIRT A continues to build upon its culture of safety, which, along with promoting a safety mentality for staff, also clearly focuses on cyber security and emergency/disaster preparedness for the organization.

HIRTA has created an EV Transition plan and will continue to work on meeting the goals of replacing vehicles with EVs when feasible to meet its goal of zero emissions by 2050.

As they focus on building their first Administrative and Maintenance facility, which they expect to be completed at the end of 2024, they will continue to seek funding opportunities to construct indoor bus parking in each of their seven counties.

In April 2022, the HIRTA board adopted a Climate Change plan to ensure the organization's commitment to making sustainability a part of its strategic objectives.

Administrative & Bus Maintenance Facility

As part of an Iowa DOT/FTA low-no bus and bus facilities grant, HIRTA was awarded \$10,800,000 for an Administrative and Bus Maintenance facility.

HIRTA anticipates this proposed facility will:

- be located along Interstate 80 in Waukee, allowing for a partnership with InterCity bus companies, Burlington Trailway, and Jefferson Lines to use the proposed facility as a transfer point.
- be climate-friendly with the aim of LEED Certification by incorporating elements such as passive lighting, stormwater management, energy conservation, and more.
- have a training center, administrative offices, call center, kitchen with a breakroom, secure restrooms for onsite collection/drug testing, and at least one quiet room to help manage staff stress.
- be fully equipped for bus maintenance and bus washing, and for a variety of bus sizes.
- have electric vehicle charging stations in the bus parking area, as well as, in staff/customer parking lot.
- have outdoor space for staff to take breaks, eat, or hold meetings.

HIRTA anticipates the facility will be completed by the end of 2024.

Fleet Needs

HIRTA has 74 vehicles in its fleet. This is more than is actively being used. However, due to the challenge of not being able to purchase vehicles due to supply shortages, the plan is to keep all current vehicles unless they are unable or too expensive to repair. HIRTA will order replacement vehicles when the market opens.

HIRTA is in the process of right-sizing vehicles, replacing mini-vans and 138-wheelbase light-duty buses with nine-passenger Transits. 158-wheelbase and 176-wheelbase light-duty buses are being analyzed to determine if they will be replaced with like-kind vehicles or down-sized.

HIRTA has been approved for two FTA 5339b grants through Iowa DOT to receive five 176-wheelbase EVs and five EV Ford Transits to replace five diesel and five gas vehicles.

HIRTA's Fleet Transition plan has a schedule to replace 67 current vehicles with electric vehicles.

Status of Previously Recommended Priorities + Strategies

Transit Service Expansion

- Implemented on-Demand HIRTA
- Received Special STA award to start Flex-Connect in the City of Perry
- Expanded hours of service - These adjustments vary by county based on need and viability
- Ended contracts with all Contracted Providers, and HIRTA provides full-direct service within their 7-county region.

Fleet Improvements

- As part of a 2021 Iowa DOT/FTA low-no grant, it will replace five 176-wheelbase buses with Electric Buses.
- As part of a 2022 Iowa DOT/FTA low-no grant, it will replace five vehicles with Electric nine-passenger vans.
- Transitioned from paper to electronic pre/post trips

Community Relations

- Received an annual award of \$75,000 to begin an AmeriCorps RSVP in Madison County.
- Received an annual award of \$75,000 to begin an AmeriCorps RSVP in Marion County.

Workforce Development

- Began working with Manpower to recruit trip scheduler/dispatch positions, yielding much better results and higher quality skilled workers.
- Hired a Bilingual Mobility Coordinator to work on the Flex-Connect project in Perry to connect with the large Latino population.

Other

- Safety Culture: Established Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)
- Developed a centralized call center where all calls come into one office location
- Implemented additional payment options for fares, including an automated fare collection app for smartphones.
- Developed Heart of Transit, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization to broaden funding opportunities.
- Implemented Fit for Duty for all new hires.
- Transitioned from paper driver manifests to tablets

Other Recent Developments

Mobility Coordinators

HIRTA has two positions that are responsible for Mobility Coordination duties.

Outreach Coordinator

This position focuses region-wide on outreach, engagement, focus groups, marketing, and special projects. This position pays special attention to increasing the mobility of elderly, low-income persons, and/or persons with disabilities in the rural counties of Central Iowa.

Recently, the Outreach Coordinator has:

- Developed a regional system of communication for human services agencies, community stakeholders, and citizens to address transportation needs within each community/county and region. This includes contacting HIRTA by phone, email, or via social media. We also have established the HIRTA Connections Coalition and regional TAG, where people can address concerns, offer solutions, and partner on consistent messaging about HIRTA and the importance of Public Transit.
- Continued community conversations to understand customer needs at all levels
- Conducted community-based research to prepare for coming changes
- Built on marketing and outreach efforts to engage more customers and stakeholders. HIRTA's outreach efforts have expanded, and its regional reach has grown exponentially.
- Worked with community providers, including veterans and medical providers, to improve coordination and mobility
- Implemented and managed HIRTA's DEI presence on their website, vehicles, and marketing

Bilingual (Spanish) Outreach Coordinator

This position focuses primarily on the City of Perry because 34% of the population is Latino and a special State Transit Assistance grant we received. This position focuses on engagement, marketing, the Flex-Connect project, and Social Determinants of Health surveys. This position pays special attention to increasing the mobility of Spanish-speaking elderly, low-income persons, and/or persons with disabilities. The first month after hiring them, the use of our language line within the call center increased by 35%.

Beyond the Bus

Transportation plays a major role in everyday life for many people, and the needs, support, and dependency reach far beyond just the bus. It involves other service providers, healthcare, the workforce, and many more. Therefore HIRTA, with financial support from Iowa DOT and Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA), hosts this event each year, addressing emerging topics.

In the past, the event has covered, Invisible Disabilities, Workforce, Inclusion, and Healthcare. Recordings of both virtual events is available on HIRTAs website. After each event, HIRTA surveys partners to uncover the topics of interest for the next year. Due to the pandemic, the event was held virtually and has consistently had over 100 people attend. This success indicates the need for this to continue in the virtual format in the future.

On-Demand – Service App

HIRTA's new on-demand transportation service was available in all seven counties in the service area in September 2022. This new feature is in addition to HIRTA's existing service and is available with the new HIRTA On Demand smartphone app. The service is a step forward towards HIRTA's vision of enhancing community livability and promoting independent lifestyles for central Iowa residents. The easy-to-use HIRTA On Demand app will allow riders more flexibility to schedule, pay, and cancel rides.

HIRTA On Demand App Highlights:

- Reserve, track, and cancel rides through the app
- Receive automated ride notification reminders the night before a reservation, when the vehicle is approaching, and when the vehicle has arrived
- Pay fare by credit card directly in the app
- Monitor the real-time location of the vehicle
- Available in English and Spanish

Mobility choice and flexibility are vital for people's quality of life in the communities in which they live, and it is up to HIRTA to use innovative technology to make that happen in their region. This new On Demand service will allow HIRTA to take people where they need to go in the most affordable and environmentally responsible way possible while maintaining the integrity of its other services.

ITS4US Complete Trip: Health Connector: An Inclusive Mobility Experience from Beginning to End

HIRTA was awarded \$1,084,257 for phase 1 of the ITS4US Complete Trip grant for the "Health Connector: An Inclusive Mobility Experience from Beginning to End" project. In 2022 HIRTA received a USDOT \$3,590,686 grant for the 2nd and 3rd phases.

The U.S. Department of Transportation launched the Complete Trip – ITS4US Deployment Program in 2021. The scope is to support seamless travel for all users across all modes, regardless of location, income, or disability.

HIRTA was one of five sites selected to begin Phase 1. The first phase is to spur Complete Trip deployments nationwide, identify needs and challenges by populations, develop and deploy mobility solutions that meet needs, measure the impact of integrated deployments, identify replicable solutions, and share lessons learned.

HIRTA's "Health Connector: An Inclusive Mobility Experience from Beginning to End" will pilot in Dallas County, with the desire to adopt regionwide. The project team's overall objective is to provide enhanced and equal access by integrating the scheduling and management of healthcare appointments and transportation, focusing on underserved communities.

Currently, the project is in the beginning stages of developing a solution allowing users to schedule and manage their appointments and transportation services at the same time. The goal is to provide enhanced access to healthcare options for all in Dallas County with a specific focus on underserved communities, including persons with disabilities, people with low income, older adults, veterans, and persons with limited-English proficiency.

HIRTA Climate Action Plan

To date, HIRTA has looked towards the Iowa Department of Transportation's Long-Range Plan – Iowa in Motion for guidance and direction. Specifically, goal area 3: Facility, Fleet, and Personnel. These strategies hone in on transit agencies' ability to: right-size bus fleets, adopt alternative fuel vehicles, increase mode shift, and invest in transit operational facilities. With the guidance of this plan and future transit innovation, HIRTA aims to clarify and move forward as a climate solution.

Emission Reduction Goals and Targets

Goal 1 – Invest in and partner to advance electrifying Central Iowa transportation modes and infrastructure.

- Invest in electrifying HIRTAs fleet;
- Invest in EV infrastructure throughout Central Iowa communities, large and small;
- Invest in EV public charging infrastructure at HIRTA facilities;
- Invest in alternative fuel, hybrid or electric non-revenue support vehicles;
- Replace 100% of fleet with alternative fuels and/or electric buses by 2050;
- Decrease total GHG emissions from transit fleet by 25% by 2030;

Goal 2 – Invest in a climate-ready multi-modal Central Facility.

- Build LEED-certified multi-modal facility that incorporates both climate action and hazard mitigation;
- Audit and invest in sustainability throughout HIRTA operations, including offices, purchasing, and infrastructure;
- Ensure future maintenance facilities accommodate zero-emission technologies;

Goal 3 – Expand HIRTA's climate solutions portfolio through education, collaboration, and innovation.

- Research and develop and workable long-range vehicle replacements plan;
- Research and build indoor bus storage facilities throughout region;
- Market and promote public transit to maximize community ridership;
- Incorporate U.S. Department of Transportation's Charging Forward: A Toolkit for Planning and Funding Rural Electric Mobility Infrastructure into HIRTA operations.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to changing climate conditions will require collective action at the local, regional, state, and federal level. It will also require innovative projects, strategic investments, policy changes, and community support consistent with climate action goals.

Over the next two years, there will be regular meetings of key staff to identify other key agencies within the HIRTA region to adjust and flex its strategy as needed and track the progress of its implementation actions. HIRTA plans to decrease emissions by 25% by 2030.

"Do you have Transportation?"

"Do You Have Transportation?" is an awareness campaign geared towards helping people get rides where they need to go. The overall goal is for people to have the forethought, "do I have

transportation?" Often when scheduling an appointment or making other plans, people don't think about whether or not they have transportation to get there.

HIRTA is working to connect with healthcare facilities within its 7-county region to bring the "Do You Have Transportation?" project to their facility's appointment setting procedures. This includes connecting patients with HIRTA, providing them with handouts & materials, and explaining why this program is beneficial.

Heart of Iowa Transit – 501(c)3

The Heart of Transit is organized to provide transportation to the general public with an emphasis on those with disabilities, special needs, the elderly, and low-income residents. It will focus on providing access to transportation for those individuals in the community that would otherwise not have convenient and affordable access to transportation, thereby enhancing the quality of life and prolonging the ability to live independently. And it may undertake such additional actions and activities as authorized by the board of directors to further the transit needs of the general public.

The establishment of Heart of Transit has benefited HIRTA in a variety of ways. The first year, it received close to \$50,000 in personal donations and foundation grants, which HIRTA would not have been able to receive without having a 501(c)3 status. HIRTA was also able to take advantage of over \$2,000 in technology savings. These funds, most importantly, help HIRTA provide transportation to those most in need and get the full cost of their ride covered through HIRTA's Adopt-a-Rider program.

Volunteer Program – RSVP

HIRTA awarded a grant to start an RSVP program in Madison and Marion counties.

The goal is to ensure a volunteer driver program in each county within our region. There are some established RSVPs in HIRTA's service area, and while they don't want to replicate what exists, they want to enhance the programs by bringing consistency in transportation options throughout the region.

A volunteer driver program will be available for people to ride on a donation basis. Volunteers will provide trips to medical appointments, the pharmacy and grocery shopping using their personal vehicles. The frequency of the transportation needed will be determined on an individual basis.

HIRTA partners with Boone County RSVP to provide volunteer transportation. They also receive funds from United Way of Central Iowa for Dallas and Warren counties to provide volunteer transportation. Jasper and Story counties have their own RSVP transportation programs, which HIRTA uses as a referral.

Nutrition and Companionship are two other components of the HIRTA volunteer program in Madison and Marion counties.

Accessible Transportation Community Initiative (ATCI)

HIRTA received funding from Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council, Iowa DOT and Central Iowa Regional Transportation and Planning Alliance (CIRTPA) for a Barriers to Transit Equity for People with Disabilities project.

HIRTA contracted with Easter Seals Project Action to facilitate this project via their Accessible Transportation Community Initiative (ATCI) process. HIRTA created a coalition of community partners, including riders, human service agencies, county and city officials, healthcare providers and many others, to work on identified key objectives (barriers/improvements). The ATCI framework is a model designed to reach a consensus from diverse stakeholders regarding the commitment and actions necessary for improving mobility.

Transportation is the connection to everything, and all people need to navigate the process to access essential services, such as medical care, groceries, employment, and visiting loved ones. If HIRTA wants healthier, more diverse, inclusive thriving communities, HIRTA must promote more equitable mobility services and financially support transit vehicles and services so HIRTA can be accessible to all users.

The final ATCI report from Easter Seals included:

- Iowa DOT has awarded (5) electric light-duty vehicles, allowing HIRTA to continue growing and diversifying its fleet while also maintaining a better environmental footprint.
- Develop and create an on-demand service like Uber or Lyft, allowing users to access a ride quickly and without a 24-hour reservation requirement.
- Develop a Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- HIRTA's Community Outreach Coordinator completed 60 hours of coursework to become a Certified Travel Training Instructor.
- HIRTA will evaluate the use of the Federal Funding Braiding Guide, developed in June 2020 by the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM). This guide defines federally funded programs that could be used as local match requirements on other federal projects.

IDEAS (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessible, Solutions) Committee

HIRTA received a 2021 Equity and Accessibility: Transportation Planning Grant through the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) to build on current planning efforts and more fully engage people of color, low-income, and other underserved, with a specific focus on people with disabilities.

Across over 4,100 square service miles, identifying and prioritizing the needs of our very diverse communities was a priority. Through surveys, focus groups, community meetings, and listening to our riders, we were able to determine the common barriers are the service days and hours and limited English proficiency to make HIRTA a more inclusive experience for all. Life operates outside of HIRTA's service hours, so it's important for its communities to access needed services and live an active, fulfilling lifestyle. People who are transit dependent and live in rural areas want spontaneous travel and want to travel in their communities like neighbors who have their own transportation.

HIRTA gathered input from older adults, people with disabilities, and marginalized populations through surveys, focus groups, and community meetings. One rider said,

"As an individual who is blind, I need reliable transportation to access every aspect of my life. I have been and will continue to be a part of HIRTA's efforts to improve transportation services

because accessible and good transportation is important to me. It is my understanding the new software is going to be more user-friendly and provide patrons with even more information. Having the ability to know where my driver is and when to expect them at my house is going to be an extremely useful feature of the new software. No more waiting out in the rain or below zero weather for a bus."

Another rider said,

"I worked with HIRTA to complete a survey, attended and participated in their community meeting, plan on participating in their focus group to identify needs, and continue the work of breaking down barriers. Inclusion is important to everyone, including people with disabilities and their quality of life. HIRTA does a great job of being inclusive and trying to do what they can to make the service better for everyone."

NADTC is offering a Phase 2 Implementation grant, which HIRTA has applied. This would include making the new App available in multiple languages, expanding service with 3rd parties (taxis, TNCs, etc.), and partnering with the public on social determinants of health surveys combined with ridership data and success stories to justify local funder support.

COVID-19 & HIRTA

Critical Issues:

COVID caused a significant decrease in ridership of public transit systems across the nation, and at the peak of COVID, ridership dropped by around 90%. It is on the rise. However, many reliable sources predict it may take up to 5-7 years before systems see pre-pandemic ridership numbers.

The federal government was generous in funding transit to keep systems operating during the pandemic, however that funding also created another issue with a rural system like HIRTA in that it gave stakeholders and other funders the illusion that transit now has all of this federal funding, and therefore no longer needs local funds for operations and/or capital purchase match funds.

Two things need to be clear:

- 1) The Federal COVID funds were to keep transit operating during the pandemic, and with so many other services shutting down, they were no longer funding transportation through contracts or fare boxes.
- 2) The Federal government did not change any of the rules on required match funds.

Therefore, HIRTA must still find a way to match 50% of their federal operating funds, 20% of their 5339 capital replacements/purchases, and 10% for 5339b (electric) capital replacements/purchases. If there are not sufficient match funds, then HIRTA is not able to use all the appropriated federal funds, and that will mean a reduction in service.

COVID inadvertently created a large supply chain issue when manufacturers reduced labor, which reduced the production of parts, chassis, fuel, raw materials, computer chips, etc. Now the federal government is giving the transit industry more funding to replace vehicles and transition to EVs and there needs to be more supply to meet demand, so manufacturers have canceled orders and are now backlogged for 3-4 years on vehicle deliveries.

According to CTAA, APTA, and AASHTO, rural, small city, paratransit, and non-emergency medical transportation providers in the U.S. have experienced cancellations of small bus contracts, price increases between 30 and 70 percent and growing wait times to receive delivery of these vehicles.

They have asked the Transportation Secretary to:

- Increase availability of chassis by encouraging manufacturers (the letter specifically mentions Ford) to set aside units for transit use and small buses.
- Streamline procurement regulations to emphasize flexibility and use the vehicle backlog nationally to determine the timeframe for these procurement process changes.
- Expand the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) proposed Buy America general nonavailability waiver for passenger vans (87 Fed. Reg. 43101) to include waiving Buy America requirements for small buses and vans when manufacturers are not able to guarantee delivery within 12 months or less of an order. Use this temporary waiver to incent manufacturers to locate production facilities in the United States.
- Offer clear guidance to FTA grantees on whether, when, and how to amend bus procurements or reprogram funds when vehicles, as specified, cannot be delivered under the terms of a procurement agreement.

Positive Effects:

- Cleaning protocols for vehicles have forever changed to keep staff and riders safer

Comparison of HIRTA's FY19 and FY22 Ridership

County	FY19 Pre-COVID		FY22 Total Ridership	FY22 Weekdays	FY 22 Nights & Weekends Paratransit-AMES	FY22 Over 65 Rdership	FY22 Disabled Ridership
Boone	33,261		7,948	7,948	NA	2,583	3,121
Dallas	31,691		5,346	5,346	NA	2,627	1,101
Jasper	47,949		10,829,	10,829,	NA	1,831	6,025
Madison	22,657		3,019	3,019	NA	1,593	834
Marion	40,717		14,944	14,944	NA	4,070	4,184
Story	46,817		21,445	19,993	1,512	1,539	5,466
Warren	42,583		6,965	6,965	NA	2,998	3,148
TOTAL	265,675		70,496	69,044	1.512	17,241	23,879

Public Input

From 2017-2022, Central Iowa has been asked for input on transportation, more specifically, public transportation, every year by collaborative research groups, transit, and public agencies, and/or academic groups.

And so, rather than exhaust the public with the same questions regarding barriers to their mobility, again this year, DMAMPO & CIRTPA staff reviewed the many research, studies, surveys, and other published products

2013 Coordinated Passenger Transportation Study

The 2013 Coordinated Passenger Transportation Study included an in-depth analysis of the existing passenger transportation system and an action plan. The study took an inventory of existing resources, identified opportunities for agency and resource coordination, analyzed existing barriers, and outlined recommendations for coordinating transportation services. The study proposes the necessary steps for improving access to transportation for populations that include individuals with disabilities, seniors, low-income and homeless, refugees, youth in transition, and non-English speaking individuals. The Coordinated Passenger Transportation Study sought public input using various methods, including focus groups, the TAG, user surveys, and provider surveys.

This document is still used as the primary direction-setting document for passenger transportation coordination work throughout the region. This update and the MPO long-range transportation plan will continue to apply these findings after analysis of existing conditions and needed adjustments.

Transportation Advisory Groups (TAG) & OpportUNITY Work Group

All CY2022 Transportation Advisory Groups and OpportUNITY Work Group meetings within this region used most of their meeting time for PTP development discussions. More information about this can be found in Section One.

Surveys

Due to the pandemic and being the largest metropolitan area in Iowa, researchers, community organizations, and transit agencies have often overwhelmed the focal populations of this plan with surveys, focus groups, and more. Therefore, there is no survey directly correlated to this plan. But rather, MPO & CIRPTA staff have utilized results from previous efforts and incorporated them into this plan and process.

Agency Conversations

In the absence of a general survey for this plan, MPO & CIRTPA staff met with partner organizations serving this plan's focal demographics. These conversations occurred with staff from agencies such as the DART, HIRTA, Veterans Administration, Aging Resources of Iowa, United Way's 211 & OpportUNITY, Boys & Girls Club, Link Associates, and more.

Those conversations were productive in highlighting coordination issues. Many of these issues are outlined below:

- Complexity of creating and running volunteer driver programs
- Reliable transportation to employment, especially across the transit agency boundaries
- Grant-funded transportation programs provide opportunities, then end, sometimes abruptly
- Staff capacity and retention at health & human services agencies issues from COVID-19 and beyond
- Federal benefits are not uniform, some assistance provides transportation services, and some are not based on enlistment agency or program
- Stigma of the veteran or returning citizen status impacts transportation, employment, quality of life
- Long-distance trips, especially those that cross transit agency boundaries, are complicated and often not completed
- New apps from transit agencies have created a learning curve some focal populations are or have struggled to adapt to
- Partner organizations feel the tension between the two regional transit agencies
- There is an appetite to explore sharing passenger vans among agencies. However, the complications of this are the major barrier
- HIRTA's disconnection in service within the Des Moines metro impacts medical appointments
- MCOs continue to be a problem
- Language barriers, cost, and anxiety of bus complexities impediments
- Major employers and housing developments do not consider bus routes or transportation in the selection of location
- Multiple trips are hard. For everyone.
- Changes in bus routes/schedules exacerbate issues.
- All agencies appreciative of mobility coordinators' outreach and education efforts
- Car-dependent communities complicate passenger transportation

These issues are discussed and summarized in the Summary portion of this section.

Iowa DOT Public Transit Long-Range Plan

The [Iowa Public Transit 2050 Long-Range Plan](#) conducts needs assessments, surveys, and a gap analysis of public transportation to address issues such as stigma, driver shortages, declining ridership, and more. The detailed plan sets goals and a timeline for addressing fleet, technological, and financial needs to improve public transportation for Iowa's growing urban population. Its goal areas include Service, Partnering, Facility, fleet, & personnel, and Funding.

Within these, some of the most applicable to this region and plan include:

Goal Area 1: Service

- Examine the effects of offering fare-free statewide bus service.
- Examine bus service hours for people who work nights and weekends.
- Prioritize funding applications for communities that improve transit service or access.
- Examine the effects of creating more urban transit services in areas that are currently covered by regional transit services.

Goal Area 2: Partnering

- Improve bus transfers between regions and counties in order to support longer and more efficient trips across the state.
- Partner with companies (such as taxis, Uber, Lyft) in order to support city bus routes and provide more transportation options.
- Improve workforce development by partnering with businesses to help employees get to work.
- Partner with non-profit organizations (such as the American Cancer Society, Veteran's Affairs, and hospitals) to help people get to their medical appointments on time.

Goal Area 3: Facility, fleet, & personnel

- Develop a rightsizing strategy for transit agency bus fleets to decrease costs and better match vehicle sizes to the number of people taking the bus.
- Save costs by encouraging transit agencies and local governments to share facilities and staff.
- Address the bus driver shortage by targeting non-traditional candidates to expand the pool of potential applicants.
- Increase training for bus drivers to better serve mobility, hearing or visually impaired riders, children, older adults, immigrant, and refugee populations.

Goal Area 4: Funding

- Decrease maintenance costs by focusing resources on replacing transit vehicles that are beyond their useful life.
- Examine alternative ways of funding public transit that do not rely only on existing federal and state sources.
- Conduct a benefit-cost analysis or economic impact study of transit services and projects in order to measure the impact and overall benefit to social welfare.

Central Iowa Transportation Analysis

Compendium Marketing conducted in-depth interviews and surveys on behalf of United Way of Central Iowa, Des Moines Community Foundation, Des Moines Area MPO, DART, Mid-Iowa Health, Capital Crossroads, and MAXimum Research to find the greatest issues with transportation in Polk, Warren, and Dallas County. Out of the 1,203 people, 52% reported that transportation is a daily problem for them.

The main concerns about DART were that routes, schedules, and access points are inconvenient to most, limiting their job options and ability to reach their destinations on time. Only 37% of respondents believe it is expensive to ride DART, the same percentage disagreed that DART is expensive. This means that people believe they are paying a fair amount for the quality of service they are receiving. Additionally, the surveys showed that most people with mental and physical disabilities are satisfied with the DART Paratransit services offered to them.

Dallas County residents are more likely to use HIRTA and have the biggest issues with the advance notice required to schedule a ride. A proposed solution would be to implement quick and easy on-demand scheduling and shorten the 20-minute pick-up and drop-off window. Most rural residents are highly dependent on cars and are unsure how DART and HIRTA operate. Warren County

residents suggested that DART expand its services out of Des Moines. As of July 2022, HIRTA has begun servicing the City of Norwalk.

Bizlab Transportation Project

DART and Compendium worked with Bizlab Solutions to undergo a design thinking framework to the complex problems identified in the Central Iowa Transportation Analysis. compile a list of mobility solutions to connect Central Iowans to accessible and reliable transportation. Working with a diverse set of partner agencies, they submitted the following ideas for consideration by the region:

- *Mobility Solutions Team* – explores creative mobility technologies and services
- *Mobility Accelerator* – explores funding opportunities and pilot programs
- *Smart Routes* – explores multi-modal trips to supplement transit with non-fixed routes
- *Never Idle* – explores deploying parked vehicles
- *MobiMe* – explores concierge app to connect multiple agencies' routes and ticketing

From this information and input, DART has started to implement and work through adopting feasible opportunities.

Additional Regional Considerations and Initiatives

Community Conversations

The [2019 Community Conversations Report](#) is based on conversations with people in Polk, Dallas, and Warren County. United Way staff listened to groups from Central Iowa Works, Warren County Welift Job Search Center, Dallas County Health Navigators, and Health Coalition regarding their concerns about health care, transportation, affordable housing, and community resources. They identified helpful community services that are greatly benefitting these counties. These include job search, training and placement services, re-entry work groups, and pop-up produce stands (Dallas County). Based on these conversations, United Way identified two areas of concern: healthcare access and finding good jobs.

Health Care Concerns: Not all health care plans include transportation, meaning those who do not qualify may not have a ride to medical appointments. There is a high demand for transportation from Warren and Dallas County to Des Moines for health care. The volunteer driver program in Dallas County could be expanded to meet the demand for health and work trips. Affordable dental and mental health is also an area of concern, as insurance does not always cover this expense.

Good Jobs: United Way and the National Fund for Workforce Solutions believe a good job should meet an employee's basic needs. Such as fair pay and benefits, a stable and predictable schedule, a clear career path, and is secure and safe for the employee. In addition to this are "higher needs" like belonging and achievement. An employee's work should be significant and fulfilling in some way related to their passions. Employees deserve a respectful workplace environment where they are held accountable and have the tools they need to be successful.

These benefits could include health care, but it is important to consider that simply because a job offers health care does not mean that every employee can afford the co-pay.

A.L.I.C.E. Report

The United Way of Iowa formed a research advisory committee to publish an analysis of ALICE populations' financial burdens. [This report](#) uses an economic viability dashboard to evaluate housing affordability, job opportunities, and community resources and put together a household survival budget based on each county's average cost of living.

A.L.I.C.E. stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed families. In 2016, 457,044 households in Iowa — 37 percent — could not afford basic needs such as housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and a smartphone.

Capital Crossroads 4 Equity Tool

Capital Crossroads, a Central Iowa strategic planning consortium, developed the [4 Equity Tool](#) in interagency collaboration through their Social Capital Work Group. The tool, created for leaders to use during decision-making to build a more equitable and inclusive region, asks these four questions.

1. Have various ethnic communities/people of color been informed, meaningfully involved, and authentically represented in these processes/decisions?
2. Is there a group that benefits more than another because of this process/decision?
3. What could be one unintended consequence of this process/decision for ethnic communities/communities of color?
4. What action will be implemented to advance equity in this process/decision?

This plan aims to ask itself these same questions.

Transportation & Health Access: Where Are We Now and Where Can We Go?

The [Transportation and Health Access Quality Improvement Toolkit](#) was created by Health Outreach Partners as a practical guide to assist health centers to reduce transportation barriers to healthcare access. The tool guide is equipped with questions to conduct a patient needs assessment survey, cost methodology to assess the financial impact of missed appointments, and clear steps for implementing and evaluating initiatives.

Ames-DSM Corridor Feasibility Study

This study was conducted by the Des Moines Area and Ames MPO in collaboration with public transit agencies and a team of consultants in 2014. This study was conducted to assess the practicality and usefulness of a public transportation service joining two major educational and employment hubs. The study found significant demand for transportation between this corridor by identifying the number of work and school trips made between Des Moines and Ames. By estimating and comparing costs for

different transit modes and considering goals from each city's Long Range Transportation Plans, planners suggested that either an express service deviated fixed route or ridesharing would be the best option for the I-35 corridor.

Here We Grow

In recent years, the Des Moines regional economy has been strong; historically, affordable housing costs have generally remained that way. The region is now in an advantageous position, with strong job growth, a reasonable cost of living, and a high and growing quality of life.

To stay ahead of economic and housing market trends that could upset this balance, the Capital Crossroads 2.0 regional strategic planning process suggested an in-depth study of workforce housing conditions. [The inquiry](#) asked whether the region's housing market and production system would be able to respond to anticipated job growth over the next two decades and do so without succumbing to the housing affordability challenges that other regions have had to confront.

That process led to three overarching priorities.

1. Increase housing near jobs.
2. Housing mix should reflect the job mix.
3. Create equitable housing opportunities.

Six strategies for action support these:

- Policy & Planning
- Land Banking
- Affordable Rehabilitation Programs
- Implementation Mechanisms
- Purchasing Affordability
- Organizational Capacity & Funding

[Here We Grow](#) builds on this momentum for workforce housing in Greater Des Moines through local and regional collaboration.

2019 Community Health Needs Assessment - Dallas County

Every three years, in conjunction with the Dallas County Hospital, the Dallas County Board of Health leads a community-wide conversation to better understand the health needs in Dallas County. The findings from [this assessment](#) are then used to create objectives and strategies to address the identified needs. This process is called the Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan (CHNA / HIP).

This assessment outlines several priorities associated with the efforts of TAG and this plan. Examples of those are:

- Physical activity: encouraging activity to improve health outcomes and protect against the onset or worsening of chronic diseases
- Transportation & Mobility: concluded communities with public transportation options, connected & functional sidewalks, and trails to desirable locations improve health outcomes.

Past and Present Barriers to Coordination

The public transportation coordination barriers presented in the FFY 2019-2023 PTP are still of concern today. They are again brought forth here in the list below to be considered in Section 4: Priorities and Solutions.

One agency coordination barriers:

- Cabs don't arrive on time
- Bus route maps confusing
- Taxis not handicapped accessible
- Paratransit must call too far in advance
- Family, and friends cannot get gas money for trips
- Schedule information not at bus stops
- Bus stops not marked and sheltered

More difficult one-agency coordination barriers:

- Having to negotiate each trip
- Medical trips needed in a short time
- Paratransit eligibility not worth effort
- How can those with dementia phone
- Mid-day lack of buses stop my use
- Person answering the phone determines whether I ride or not
- Drivers confuse me about the fares

Several agency coordination barriers:

- Trips between rural towns
- Getting help from door to curb
- Will-call trips don't work after medical appointments
- Long waits on reservation phone calls
- No phone reminders "5-minutes away" make pickups slower
- Winter eligibility different from summer
- What happens when "will-call" return trips forgotten

More difficult several-agency coordination barriers:

- Scheduling multiple stops of varied time
- No agency can handle several service payments for trips
- I can't get several kids to different schools
- Bad weather days stop information flow
- The privacy of my income shouldn't be revealed by my type of service
- Recruiting & training of volunteer drivers
- Senior centers don't know all options

Regional Central Iowa coordination barriers:

- Few options for those with disabilities
- What I've heard may not be the truth
- Few options outside Des Moines
- Senior options vary from county to county

- How get info when I'm not on Internet
- Social case workers not informed
- In the winter I need door-to-door help

Regional more-difficult Central Iowa coordination barriers:

- One place doesn't know all answers
- I can't figure out silos of services
- No transportation on weekends
- Service changes don't get to the riders
- Riders not informed of all options
- Volunteers not used as drivers, helpers
- No trips to the airport

Federal Considerations

Investing in Infrastructure and Jobs Act

In 2021, the US Congress passed the Investing in Infrastructure and Jobs Act. This passage is aims to heavily invest in projects and improvements relevant to this plan and its aim. Those include:

- Better Roads & Bridges
- Investment in Transportation
- Network of Electric Vehicle Chargers
- Resilient Infrastructure

In addition to investment areas that align with this plan's focus, the federal government expects these dollars to be held to the standards outlined in the Justice40 Initiative – which seeks to invest in disadvantaged or disinvested communities.

Numerous funding programs came out of this legislation. USDOT grants in this package can be identified and accessed [here](#).

Conclusion

Coordination Issues

Transit Agencies Coordination Issues

Two transit agencies offer services within the DMAMPO & CIRTPA planning area – DART & HIRTA. DART's primary service is fixed-route, and HIRTA's is on-demand.

Both agencies:

- provide safe, accessible, and affordable services to their populations;
- seek to broaden their services, outreach, engagement, and operations to meet their client's needs;
- have needs for new and/or updated facilities to continue to adapt and improve services;
- are exploring services outside their primary service approach;
- are impacted by and deal with Managed Care Organization (MCO) changes;
- seek to advance fleet right-sizing and explore opportunities for alternative fuels, including EVs;
- seek to diversify income portfolios due to tight transit funding and high service expectations;
- have created outreach and engagement staff positions to bridge mobility gaps and engage new riders;
- have good working relationships with many communities and organizations within their service regions;

However, coordination issues are found within and between the two agencies and their service networks. These can be summarized into the following statements:

- Changes to routes, frequency, and service times create confusion and complications for assisting agencies and riders.
- Lack of connection between two agency service routes and locations reduces regional mobility and is apparent to partner organizations.
- New ticketing platforms and apps create confusion at both agencies.
- Grant-funded programs and services sometimes end abruptly, leaving unintended mobility gaps.
- Neither agency productively coordinates with the other during their planning and development of services in Central Iowa.

This final bullet is the most impactful regional passenger transportation coordination issue in Central Iowa. This has roots in many issues, but the most substantial is explored in the next section.

Tangled by Jurisdiction

The combined DMAMPO & CIRTPA planning area encompasses 8 counties: Boone, Story, Jasper, Polk, Dallas, Madison, Warren, and Marion. This region is the Iowa Department of Transportation's Regional Planning Area #11, minus Ames Area MPO (AAMPO). However,

Due to the Des Moines metro's growth and grey areas in agency jurisdiction, there are inevitably gaps and coordination issues among agencies.

In 2019, HIRTA, DART, IADOT, and DMAMPO/CIRTPA staff met with the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) to discuss regional agency contentions; where does one agency end and one begin in a growing metropolitan area and ill-defined service area boundaries set in regulation?

The synopsis below is based on communications from CTAA staff.

DMAMPO

The [DMAMPO Metropolitan Planning Area \(MPA\)](#) includes portions of Polk, Dallas, Warren, and Madison counties. DMAMPO government membership gives Polk, Dallas, and Warren County and 16 cities full voting rights and advisory non-voting membership to Madison County due to the less than 1500 people living in Madison County's portion of DMAMPO's MPA.

CIRTPA

The [CIRTPA Regional Transportation Planning Area \(RTPA\)](#) includes Boone, Jasper, and Marion Counties and portions of Dallas, Madison, Polk, Story, and Warren Counties not included as part of the DMAMPO or the AAMPO. Members of the CIRTPA include the eight counties noted above and ten cities: Adel, Boone, Indianola, Knoxville, Nevada, Newton, Pella, Perry, Story City, and Winterset.

DART

DART is established under Chapter 28M, Iowa Code. Its service area encompasses unincorporated Polk County and those cities elected to participate in the DART transit district. Municipal participation in DART hinges on an agreement to collect a dedicated property tax under Section 384.12(10), Iowa Code.

Currently, the municipalities participating in DART and holding seats on the DART board are the cities of Altoona, Ankeny, Bondurant, Clive, Des Moines, Grimes, Johnston, Pleasant Hill, Urbandale, West Des Moines, and Windsor Heights. Other municipalities that collect the DART property tax are the cities of Alleman (a rural municipality in Polk County) and Granger (a rural municipality primarily in Dallas County).

In short, then, the DART tax levy area consists of all Polk County (both rural and urban, and both incorporated and unincorporated), plus those portions of Clive, Granger, Grimes, Urbandale, and West Des Moines that are within Dallas County.

HIRTA

The Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) is established through an Iowa Code Chapter 28E joint powers agreement with the seven counties (Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Story, and Warren) that - along with Polk County - makeup Iowa Department of Transportation's Regional Planning Area #11.

This is in keeping with Iowa Code Chapter 324A, which provides for county-by-county participation in regional transit systems having service areas aligned with the state's regional planning area boundaries (unless a county and Iowa DOT specifically agree to something different than the state's RPA boundaries in specific instances).

Although HIRTA is considered a rural transit agency, its service area includes the entirety of the Ames UZA (located within Story County). Additionally, Dallas and Warren's counties include both urbanized and nonurbanized portions. However, HIRTA does not provide local transit service within the Ames

UZA, aside from some services provided under contract to CyRide, and thus not funded through HIRTA's rural transit program budget.

Like Iowa's other regional transit systems, HIRTA relies on local governments to help support its fiscal needs. Still, the Iowa code does not give HIRTA or its constituent counties the authority to levy property taxes dedicated to generating revenue for HIRTA's capital or operating needs (under the current Iowa code, this taxing authority is available only to regional transit districts centered on and including either Polk or Linn counties).

FTA Section 5307 Funding

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) allocates formula-based funds to urbanized areas through its Section 5307 program. These allocations are determined annually based on an urbanized area's population, population density, and transit service data (primarily vehicle revenue miles) reported to FTA's National Transit Database. Guidance on allocating and distributing these funds is included in [FTA's Section 5307 program management circular](#).

When FTA performs its annual calculations of formula funding apportionments and allocations, it will make a single apportionment to each urbanized area with over 200,000 population, including Des Moines. There is to be a "designated recipient" for each UZA; this recipient is to be named by the state's governor, with concurrence by the public transportation providers in that UZA and with a certification from the MPO for that UZA. These designations remain in force unless or until a governor makes a different designation.

FTA's preference is that every UZA has only one designated recipient for Section 5307 funds. Still, there often are instances in which a single UZA may have more than one public transit provider that should receive some Section 5307 assistance. In some circumstances, state and local interests may find it necessary to have multiple "direct recipients" of Section 5307 funding, with the area's Section 5307 apportionment allocated among these providers according to the terms of a "split letter" filed with and accepted by FTA; FTA also acknowledges there may be instances in which an UZA might have more than one designated recipient. In other circumstances, state and local interests may find it more suitable to arrange a sub-recipient relationship between the designated recipient and the other public transit providers in that UZA. Federal The details of these arrangements, and FTA's requirements, are set forth in Section II of the FTA Section 5307 program management circular.

It appears that DART is the sole designated recipient of the Des Moines area's Section 5307 funds and that there are no sub-recipients.

Some limitations on Section 5307 funds may warrant consideration in this discussion. One consideration is that these funds are not to be used on projects that are not for the purpose of providing urban public transit, which means that DART cannot use its Section 5307 dollars for projects in the nonurbanized portions of its service area unless they have some clear nexus to transit in the urbanized area itself. Because DART operates more than 100 vehicles in maximum service, its Section 5307 funds cannot be used to assist with DART's operating expenses (aside from the possibility of using up to 10 percent of Des Moines' Section 5307 allocation to help cover ADA complementary paratransit operating costs at an 80 percent federal share, and the possibility of using some of Des Moines' Section 5307 allocation to cover the operating costs of eligible job access and reverse commute projects at a 50 percent federal share, as detailed within Section IV of the FTA Section 5307 program management circular).

NOTE: In the federal fiscal year 2019, the Des Moines UZA received a Section 5307 apportionment of \$6,500,006. Out of that amount, an estimated \$1,628,810 - or 25% of Des Moines' Section 5307 apportionment - was derived from population factors, regardless of how much of the urbanized area's population is in DART's service area.

FTA Section 5311 Funding

Iowa DOT receives formula-based funding from FTA to assist with public transit in the state's rural areas. FTA allocates these funds based on the rural population, rural land area, and rural low-income population, and a small portion of these funds are allocated based on rural transit vehicle revenue miles. FTA does not dictate how states allocate the Section 5311 funds they receive as long as they are managed according to a Section 5311 State Management Plan and complies with statutory requirements and program management guidelines. These procedures and requirements are set forth in the [FTA Section 5311 program management circular](#).

Iowa DOT uses administrative formulas to allocate its Section 5311 funds among 16 designated regional transit providers and 7 small city transit systems located in nonurbanized municipalities with populations between 20,000 and 50,000 (Iowa DOT also allocates Section 5307 funds to transit providers in the state's 6 urbanized areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000, but that funding and the programmatic stream is not central to this particular discussion). The state's practice is to fund only one regional transit system in each state-designated regional planning area. HIRTA is the designated regional transit provider for Iowa's Regional Planning Area 11, except that Polk County is not included in the HIRTA service area.

Section 5311 funding can be used for many types of purposes and projects. Still, it must benefit rural public transit, which could - potentially - include projects or activities connecting rural and urban origins and destinations. The key consideration is that Section 5311 funds cannot be used wholly within an urbanized area for projects or activities. For instance, HIRTA cannot use the Section 5311 funds it receives for projects or activities wholly within the Ames UZA, nor for those projects or activities wholly within the urbanized portions of Dallas or Warren counties, even though those counties are part of the state's defined service area for HIRTA.

NOTE: Iowa DOT receives Section 5311 funding largely based on the entire state's relative share of the rural population, rural land area, and rural low-income population, regardless of whether any rural area is served by public transit. Therefore, even though there is no Section 5311 subrecipient in Polk County, that county's nonurbanized population generated an estimated \$115,852 of Iowa's Section 5311 funding in FY 2019, not including funds generated based on Polk County's rural land area or its rural low-income population.

Exploring the Intersection

CTAA posed some questions for all four agencies to consider, but which have no clear answers, including:

1. How do we address the provision of transit in those urbanized areas that are in Dallas or Warren counties but that don't pay a property tax in support of DART?
2. DART doesn't receive any Section 5311 funding but receives property tax receipts from the nonurbanized portions of Polk County and one municipality in the nonurbanized portion of

Dallas County. How are these areas to receive the rural transit services for which they pay dedicated property taxes to DART?

3. Can DART provide public transit services, whether traditional public transit, vanpools, or other forms of transit, in those urban or rural areas that do not levy a DART regional transit district property tax?

4. Am I correct in assuming that HIRTA cannot provide public transit services that both begin and end in the nonurbanized portions of Polk County, and is there documentation to support our collective understanding that Polk County is not part of the HIRTA service area?

5. Am I also correct in assuming that HIRTA is not currently funded to provide public transit services that begin and end wholly within urbanized areas, whether these areas are in Dallas County, Warren County, or elsewhere in regional planning area #11?

6. Finally, did HIRTA provide documented concurrence when the state of Iowa named DART as the Des Moines area's Section 5307 designated recipient, as required by FTA?

Due to this discussion taking place in December 2019 and the world entering the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, this issue and these questions have not been picked up again by the four Central Iowa agencies, IADOT, or CTAA. And so, these questions have not been answered, and this topic and discussion are still on the burner of regional necessities.

External Coordination Issues

Other coordination issues found in the planning process are summarized in the following statements:

- There is a need for better volunteer-driver program recruitment and execution
- There is a continued negative stigma of transit riders and ridership
- Managed Care Organization (MCO) changes don't only complicate things for the transit providers, health and human service agencies also are feeling this pinch
- Staff capacity and retention affect most TAG member organizations
- Land use and development patterns in Central Iowa makes passenger transportation more difficult to access and provide
- Unreliable mobility impacts housing, education, employment, medical, legal, and personal outcomes
- Passenger transportation prioritizes many of the human basics, but there are gaps in services to community building and personal self-fulfillment opportunities. This leads to isolation among already vulnerable populations.
- Weather issues (extreme temperatures and storms) complicate access and safety of passengers due to a lack of facilities throughout service areas and region.
- Federal benefits are not uniform, and benefits are based on agency, classification, etc., making serving groups extremely complicated.
- Passenger vans are hard to come by, hard to maintain, and hard to coordinate for smaller partner agencies. There is an appetite to explore sharing passenger van sharing and the barriers that would entail.
- Language barriers are a problem for limited-English speaking passengers, inside and outside transit.

Section Four: Priorities & Solutions

Goal

To ensure equitable access to passenger transportation for Central Iowans.

Priority Issues & Solutions

Section Three outlined the numerous agency and coordination issues throughout Central Iowa; the following were determined to be priorities and actionable. Each is paired with solutions and action partners identified during the planning process.

Priority Issue: Need to Maintain, Adapt, & Expand Service

Passenger transportation in Central Iowa is integral to many. Used not only to fulfill basic needs but also to connect with their community and enrich their lives, passenger transportation providers and programs need to ensure service is not reduced but, instead, maintained, adapted, and expanded to enable and ensure full mobility of all Central Iowans.

Solution #1:

Maintain open communication and collaboration between TAGs and transit providers to ensure the needs of PTP focal populations are fulfilled.

Action Partners: Full TAG Membership

All TAG members will need to participate in this solution.

Solution #2:

Support sustainable actions and funding at HIRTA and DART; including facility, fleet, personnel, scheduling, and programming.

Action Partners: Full TAG Membership

All TAG members will need to participate in this solution.

Solution #3:

Evaluate first- and last-mile amenities to ensure passengers and trips are safe and accessible, including sidewalks, shelters, shade, snow removal, etc.

Action Partners: Full TAG Membership

All TAG members will need to participate in this mobility solution in some capacity. For many, it will require an open flow of information to inform the contents. For others, it may require extra staff time to help develop the platforms.

Solution #4:

Continue to support innovative changes that improve passenger transportation.

Action Partners: Full TAG Membership

All TAG members will need to participate in this solution.

Priority Issue: Passenger Transportation Information Unclear & Inaccessible

Central Iowa has many passenger transportation options from transit and partner agencies; however, this web of opportunities can hinder passengers as the information is disconnected.

Solution #1: Transportation Opportunity Platforms

The greatest need for passengers is an accessible and up-to-date resource, available in multiple languages and formats, to use when seeking transportation options.

Action Partners: Full TAG Membership

All TAG members will need to participate in this mobility solution in some capacity. For many, it will require an open flow of information to inform the contents. For others, it may require extra staff time to help develop the platforms.

Solution #2: Explore opportunities to connect transit agency apps

It was identified during the planning process that both Central Iowa transit agencies are now using the same app provider and that passengers, especially in the rural areas of the region, would greatly benefit from having both agencies' information under one application.

Action Partners: DART & HIRTA

This solution will need to be led by the transit agencies and their app developer.

Solution #3: Engage external agencies in platform dissemination

To ensure region-wide adoption of the transportation opportunity platforms, TAG members identified several outlets to plug this resource into, including health systems, educational institutions, translation services, and social work agencies, to ensure untapped points of contact are well informed.

Action Partners: Full TAG Membership

Engagement by all TAG members will be necessary to increase awareness and adoption.

Priority Issue: External Impacts on Passengers & Mobility

As outlined in Section Three, transportation impacts social, health, education, employment, and other outcomes. However, on the flip side, mobility is influenced by and asked to adapt to external forces beyond agency control, such as COVID-19, development & land use, and weather. While the below solutions aim to address current externalities, they are outlined with the understanding that these will continue to evolve as externalities arise.

Solution #1: Engage with Managed Care Organizations

Changes to managed care organizations and the Medicaid program in the state have impacted transit and partner agencies' ability to offer and/or fulfill transportation needs associated with medical care. At present, DART is in communication with MCOs in Iowa.

Action Partners: Interested TAG Members

DART, HIRTA, and other partner agencies with the most at stake will continue to lead these discussions and report to and engage TAG members when necessary.

Solution #2: Explore Opportunities to Sustain Volunteer Driver and Van-Sharing Programs

Multiple agencies noted difficulty affording, managing, and sustaining transportation programs independently. For some, the issue is rooted in regulatory impacts on the ability to recruit and retain volunteer drivers to fulfill their needs. For others,

Action Partners: Interested TAG Members

All TAG members will be included in these discussions.

Solution #3: Engage with Transit Future Work Group

The Greater Des Moines Partnership engages with major employers across Central Iowa about transit through their Transit Future Work Group. A better connection between TAG and the work group could help align employers' and employees' transportation needs and outcomes.

Action Partners: DMAMPO & DART staff

DMAMPO and DART staff should lead the coordination between these two groups.

Solution #4: Ensure Sustainable Passenger Transportation Funding

Transit funding has historically been underfunded, and in 2020 COVID-19 increased the financial constraints. Both impact transit agencies and the populations they serve, and TAG members will continue to advocate for increased transit funding.

Action Partners: Full TAG Membership

Each TAG member will be asked for a different level of involvement in this solution.

Priority Issue: Ensure Regional Cooperation and Collaboration

As outlined throughout this document, there are disconnects among agencies in Central Iowa. The following solutions are offered to bridge communication and coordination gaps.

Solution #1: Mobility Coordination

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, HIRTA, DART, DMAMPO/CIRTPA, and United Way of Central Iowa staff met to collaborate on mobility issues and TAG agendas. However, with changes in staff and workloads, these have fallen off in regularity. This solution proposes that these mobility coordinator meetings resume and the mobility coordinators lead the TAG agenda development process.

Action Partners: DMAMPO, CIRTPA, DART, & HIRTA

Staff from each regional agency is requested to participate.

Solution #2: TAG Collaboration

A sequel solution to the above is the collaboration between TAGs. The region is required to have two TAG meetings annually. However, each, at present, meets individually quarterly. This solution proposes that the TAGs meet individually in Q2 & Q4 and collectively in Q1 & Q3.

Action Partners: DMAMPO, CIRTPA, DART, & HIRTA

Staff from each regional agency is requested to participate.

Solution #3: Collaborate on Transit Funding Grants and Programs

The Invest in Infrastructure and Jobs Act of 2021 includes numerous opportunities for transportation funding, especially for collaborative multi-modal projects. These grant programs are a prime opportunity for Central Iowa transit and regional planning agencies to establish a more collaborative working relationship while improving Central Iowa mobility outcomes.

Action Partners: DMAMPO, CIRTPA, DART, & HIRTA

Staff from each regional agency is requested to participate as needed.

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS
Facility and fleet upgrades at transit agencies
Transportation Information Hub
Connecting/combining transit apps
Beyond the Bus
Micromobility Pilots & Permanent Programs
MCO & Volunteer Driver Work Groups
Do you have transportation?

5310 Funded Projects

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR	AGENCY	FUNDING AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY AREA ADDRESSED
2023	DART	\$225,000	Contracted Demand Response Services	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2023	DART	\$363,500	1 Light Duty Paratransit Bus + 1 partial Light Duty Paratransit Bus - Replacements	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2024	DART	\$229,500	Contracted Demand Response Services	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2024	DART	\$370,800	1 Light Duty Paratransit Bus + 1 partial Light Duty Paratransit Bus - Replacements	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2025	DART	\$234,100	Contracted Demand Response Services	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2025	DART	\$378,250	1 Light Duty Paratransit Bus + 1 partial Light Duty Paratransit Bus - Replacements	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2026	DART	\$238,800	Contracted Demand Response Services	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2026	DART	\$385,800	1 Light Duty Paratransit Bus + 1 partial Light Duty Paratransit Bus - Replacements	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2027	DART	\$243,500	Contracted Demand Response Services	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services
2027	DART	\$393,500	1 Light Duty Paratransit Bus + 1 partial Light Duty Paratransit Bus - Replacements	Need to maintain, adapt, and expand existing services

Table 6: 5310 Funded Projects for FFY 2023-2027

Section 5: Funding

Public transportation providers such as DART and HIRTA receive funding from various sources, including federal, state, and local governments; contracts with human service agencies and local companies; tax revenue; advertising revenue; and passenger fare revenue.

Federal and State Funding Sources

Federal and state funding account for many of all capital purchases and, as a result, is critical to success. General funding sources available to DART and HIRTA include:

Metropolitan Planning Program (Section 5303): FTA provides funding for this program to the state based on its urbanized area populations. The funds support transportation planning projects in urbanized areas with more than 50,000 residents.

Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Transportation Planning Program (Section 5304): These funds come to the state based on population and are used to support transportation planning projects in non-urbanized areas.

Urbanized Area Formula Grant Program (Section 5307): FTA provides transit operating, planning, and capital assistance funds directly to local recipients in urbanized areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000, based on population and density figures, plus transit performance factors for larger areas. Local recipients for whom the Des Moines Area MPO programs projects must apply directly to the FTA.

Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310): Funding is provided through this program to increase mobility for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Part of the funding is administered along with the non-Urbanized funding; another is allocated among urbanized transit systems.

Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program (Section 5311): This program provides capital and operating assistance for rural and small urban transit systems with populations of less than 50,000. Fifteen percent of these funds are allocated to Intercity Bus projects. A portion of the funding also is allocated to support rural transit planning.

Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) (Section 5311(b)(3)): This program is a source of funding used to assist in the design and implementation of training and technical assistance projects and other support services tailored to meet the needs of transit operators in non-urbanized areas. States, local governments, and providers of rural transit services are eligible recipients.

Intercity Bus Assistance Program (Section 5311(f)): These funds support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network to connect non-urbanized areas and the larger regional or national system of intercity bus service to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in non-urbanized areas.

Buses and Bus Facilities Grants Program (Section 5339): This program funds States and designated recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment to construct bus-related facilities. \$1.1 billion was allocated in FY22 to help transit agencies purchase or lease low or no-emission vehicles.

Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP): The ICAAP program funds projects that maximize emission reductions through traffic flow improvements, reduced vehicle miles of travel, and reduced single-occupancy vehicle trips. Transit projects can be submitted for ICAAP funds, but these requests must be related to

congestion reduction and air quality improvements. Project applications may be submitted by cities, counties, public transit agencies, and state and federal agencies. Private nonprofit organizations must have a public agency as a co-sponsor. Deadline: October 1st

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG): Surface Transportation Block Grant funds are allocated to states, cities and transit agencies through the MPO. These funds can be used for projects on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program: This funding is provided to State and local governments for projects that reduce congestion and improve air quality in areas that do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) Grant Program: This program supports projects that protect human health and improve air quality by reducing harmful emissions from diesel engines. It includes grants and rebates.

State Transit Assistance (STA) Programs: All public transit systems are eligible for funding. These funds can be used by the public transit system for operating, capital, or planning expenses related to the provision of open-to-the-public passenger transportation.

STA Formula Grant: These funds can be used by the public transit system for operating, capital, or planning expenses related to providing open-to-the-public passenger transportation.

STA Training Fellowship Program: The STA fellowship program focuses on training costs for Iowa's large urban transit systems and metropolitan planning organizations that are not eligible for RTAP.

STA Special Projects: Funding for these projects can include grants to individual systems to support transit services developed with human service agencies or statewide projects to improve public transit through technical training for transit systems or planning agency personnel, statewide marketing campaigns, etc.

Deadline: October 1st

Public Transit Infrastructure Grants (PTIG): This program funds the vertical infrastructure needs of transit systems with state dollars. Projects can involve new construction, reconstruction, or remodeling but must include a vertical component in qualifying.

Capital Match Loan Program (AMOCO Loans): This program intends to increase the inherent energy conservation benefits of public transit by expediting the implementation of transit capital projects. All public transit systems are eligible for a revolving loan under this program.

Volkswagen Settlement Environmental Mitigation Trust Program: EPA awarded each state DNR a settlement for falsifying emission reports – Iowa will receive \$21M over 10 years and is administered by Iowa DOT. Most of the funds are geared toward school buses/freight/ferries, but transit qualifies in 2 of the categories, “transit bus” and upgrades to existing zero-emission light-duty vehicles.

Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) – to replace diesel vehicles with alternative fuels. Similar to VW Program, monies go through DNR and are administered by Iowa DOT. It has evolved since it started and appears to be matching funds or working in tandem with the VW program.

Non-DOT Funding Sources

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Career Link Program – Employment Transportation: Funds awarded through this program provide transportation for individuals to travel to job activities or education opportunities. Funding is provided through local government to non-profit transportation service providers.

National Center for Mobility Management: The Community Mobility Design Challenge is a three-part grant that supports communities in designing and testing innovative transportation services. The initial application should address the personal well-being of community members who face transportation barriers to achieving their economic, health, and social goals, as opposed to a proposed solution. Nonprofit organizations and government agencies that can receive federal funding are encouraged to apply for this competitive grant.

Deadline: July 15th, 2022

Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development: \$13 million in competitive grant funds are available to existing FTA grantees with transit projects that examine ways to improve economic development within the private sector, ridership, foster multimodal connectivity, and accessibility, and enable mixed-use development near transit stations. ***Deadline: July 25th, 2022***

The National Center for Applied Transit Technology: This organization helps rural, small-urban, and tribal transportation providers develop practical resources for technological solutions and innovations. Transit organizations can apply for a Strategic Technology Technical Assistance Team or use N-CATT's free online resources to host a technology summit.

Municipal Transit Levy: Iowa law authorizes municipalities to levy up to 95 cents per \$1,000 of assessed taxable property to support the cost of a public transit system. Most of Iowa's larger communities levy for support of their urban transit systems. Several smaller communities use this authority to generate funding used to support services contracted from their designated regional transit system. Exhibit 5 shows which communities are using the levy authority and how much is being generated.

Regional Transit Levy: In 2005, the Iowa legislature authorized counties with populations exceeding 175,000 can form regional transit districts to support area-wide public transit services. A commission appointed from the governing bodies of participating counties and municipalities manages and administers the regional transit district. Once formed, adjacent counties can become part of the district, and municipalities in nonparticipating adjacent counties can join. The district can levy up to 95 cents per \$1,000 of the assessed value of all taxable property in a district. Unlike the provisions in the municipal levy, a regional transit district can set differing levy rates across its territory. While both Linn and Polk Counties have the population to form a regional transit district, as of March 2011, only Polk County has chosen to form a district, including several municipalities from adjacent nonparticipating counties. Exhibit 6 shows which communities participate, their respective tax rates, and the total funds generated.

General Fund Levy: The cost of supporting transit services is an eligible use of general fund revenues for all Iowa governments and is the primary funding source to support transit for counties that don't have the option or choose not to use the transit levy. The levy is limited to three and three-eighths cents per thousand dollars of assessed value.

Trust and Agency Levy: The Trust and Agency Levy can be used by cities and counties to support employee benefit plans. As such, it can help support the cost of a city-operated transit system.

Other Local Funds: Transit agencies receive other funding, particularly local funding, in a variety of ways, including fare revenue from passengers, revenue through contracts with other agencies, and other sources (such as advertising, interest income, local taxes, sale of vehicles and equipment, etc.).

Passenger Revenues: Fees paid by the passengers are one of the most common sources of local support. This can include monies collected onboard the transit vehicle (usually called "farebox receipts"), prepaid fares from the sale of passes or tickets, or fares billed to the passenger after the fact. FTA requires that all passenger revenues be subtracted from the total cost of operating transit service to identify a net operating cost before eligibility for federal financial support of operations can be calculated.

Contract Revenue: Human service agencies, local communities, and private businesses are often willing to pay a part or all of the cost for certain rides provided as part of the open-to-public transit operation. Such subsidies are contract revenues and can count toward the required local match on federal projects.

Advertising Revenues: The sale of onboard advertising or advertising space in brochures, etc., can provide additional revenues to the transit program.

Student Fees: Mandatory student fees established by a college or university are like a tax levy in that all members of the specific community contribute. For example, Iowa State University's Cyride is partially funded by the \$44 student fee.

US Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration: The US DOT provides several competitive grant opportunities, including AIM, BUILD, and Capital Investment (5309). These programs have the potential to improve passenger transportation in central Iowa. However, these are competitive programs, and there is no guarantee of receiving these funds.

United Way: United Way advances the common good by creating opportunities for a better life for all. The organization focuses on education, income, and health and works to help connect those in need of transportation resources to improve their lives.

Medicaid: Medicaid provides health coverage to Americans, including eligible low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults, and people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered through multiple brokers under Iowa's Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCOs).

Homeland Security: The Department of Homeland Security, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, provides several grants related to transportation, including in the categories of preparedness to enhance the capacity of responders to prevent, respond to, and recover from incidents; pre-disaster mitigation; and hazard mitigation. Initial Application Deadline: May 30th

Older Americans Act: In January 2003, the Administration on Aging (AoA) entered a memorandum of understanding with the Federal Transit Administration. Consequently, AoA is now a key partner in promoting the coordination of transportation across programs and agencies. Older Americans Act guarantees have the option to use Title III B funds to meet the match requirements for programs administered by the Federal Transit Administration. As a result, the Aging Network has additional opportunities to meet local transportation needs better and further United We Ride's goals, including providing more rides for less, facilitating access to services, and improving customer satisfaction.

Head Start: The Head Start Act requires each Head Start Agency to provide transportation to assist families with children in the program. The Act provides funding for the program and requires agencies to "make reasonable attempts" to coordinate with other human service providers to improve transportation services for children.

Current TIP Transit Funding

The following tables outline the current TIP transit funding for DART (FFY 2023-2026) & HIRTA (FFY 2023-2026). It should be noted that the current TIP (at the time of this drafting) only runs through 2026. Therefore, there will be additions in the coming years to HIRTA's figures, and DART's figures could change with time and TIP updates during this plan's lifetime.

Table 1: DART's Federal Funding Sources for FY 2023 – 2026

Federal-Aid Funding Sources	2023		2024		2025		2026	
	Total	Federal Aid	Total	Federal Aid	Total	Federal Aid	Total	Federal Aid
5307	\$12,035,375	\$9,628,300	\$6,731,250	\$5,385,000	\$7,392,500	\$5,914,000	\$5,950,100	\$4,760,080
5310	\$112,500	\$90,000	\$152,500	\$122,000	\$168,750	\$135,000	\$168,750	\$135,000
5307, 5310	\$1,353,929	\$1,144,190	\$1,288,489	\$1,047,616	\$1,343,864	\$1,093,141	\$1,543,999	\$1,314,547
5307, 5304	\$61,250	\$49,000	\$70,000	\$56,000	\$40,000	\$32,000	\$40,000	\$32,000
5307, 5339	\$15,000,000	\$12,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$800,000	\$250,000	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$200,000
5307, 5339, STP	\$4,765,738	\$3,817,407	\$4,241,252	\$3,520,377	\$4,410,902	\$3,661,767	\$3,932,005	\$3,252,954
5311	\$26,786	\$13,393	\$27,322	\$13,661	\$27,870	\$13,393	\$27,870	\$13,935
ICAAP	\$782,295	\$625,835	\$697,745	\$558,195	\$1,096,365	\$877,091	\$0	\$0
STBG	\$2,027,200	\$1,410,200	\$2,038,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,693,750	\$1,355,000	\$1,625,000	\$1,300,000
Total	\$36,165,073	\$28,778,325	\$16,246,558	\$12,902,849	\$16,424,001	\$13,281,392	\$13,537,724	\$11,008,516

Table 2: DART's State Funding Sources for FY 2023 – 2026

State-Aid Funding Sources	2023		2024		2025		2026	
	Total	State Aid	Total	State Aid	Total	State Aid	Total	State Aid
PTIG	\$1,217,310	\$500,000	\$325,000	\$0	\$215,000	\$0	\$215,000	\$0
STA	\$2,389,994	\$1,911,995	\$2,389,994	\$1,950,235	\$2,437,794	\$1,950,235	\$2,029,025	\$2,536,281
Total	\$3,607,304	\$2,411,995	\$2,714,994	\$1,950,235	\$2,652,794	\$1,950,235	\$2,244,025	\$2,536,281

Table 3: HIRTA's Federal Funding Sources for FY 2023 – 2026

Federal-Aid Funding Sources	2023		2024		2025		2026	
	Total Cost	Federal Aid	Total Cost	Federal Aid	Total Cost	Federal Aid	Total Cost	Federal Aid
5311	\$890,089	\$890,089	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5339	\$13,159,359	\$10,559,906	\$1,189,744	\$1,011,281	\$646,560	\$549,576	\$2,545,182	\$2,163,404
STP	\$0	\$0	\$67,451	\$57,333	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
PTIG	\$4,200,000	\$3,360,000	\$4,200,000	\$3,360,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals	\$18,249,448	\$14,809,995	\$5,457,195	\$4,428,614	\$646,560	\$549,576	\$2,545,182	\$2,163,404

Table 4: HIRTA's State Funding Sources for FY 2023 – 2026

State-Aid Funding Sources	2023		2024		2025		2026	
	Total Cost	State Aid	Total Cost	State Aid	Total Cost	State Aid	Total Cost	State Aid
5311	\$593,879	\$593,879	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Totals	\$593,879	\$593,879	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0



Federal Fiscal Years 2023-2027 Central Iowa Passenger Transportation Plan: APPENDIX

Central Iowa Transportation Analysis

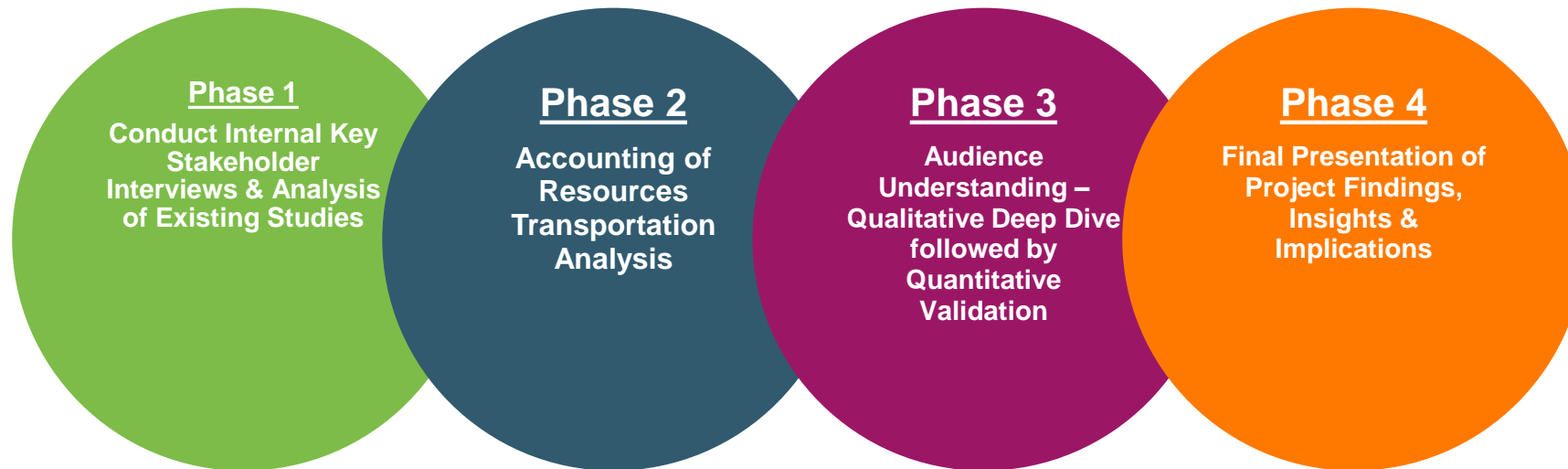


compendium

marketing insights with a twist

Commissioned by Des Moines Area MPO, UWCI, Community Foundation of Greater DSM, DART, GDMP, Capital Crossroads, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation

Overall Transportation Project Approach





Phase 3

AUDIENCE UNDERSTANDING

**Step
1**

**Qualitative
In-depth
Understanding**

**Step
2**

**Quantitative
Validation**

Target audience
transportation
related:

- Priorities, habits & practices
- Barriers, met & unmet needs





Those In Need of Transportation



Single Moms



**Physically or
Mentally Disabled**



**Refugees/
New Iowans**



Seniors



A.L.I.C.E.



Rural Residents



Kids



Returning Citizens





Step 1 – Approach Details

GROUP DISCUSSION/IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Mental Disabilities

3 Participants

High School Students

6 participants

Middle School Students

6 Participants

Returning Citizens

5 Participants



Senior Citizens

3 Participants

Physical Disabilities

3 Participants

New Iowans – Latino

2 Participants

New Iowans – African

2 Participants

Single Moms

3 Participants

ALICE

3 Participants

Rural – Warren County

2 Participants

Rural – Dallas County

2 Participants

Profile information related to specific study participants is for internal communication use only and is not to be shared outside of the Partner Group team members.



A.L.I.C.E.

Current Transportation

DART bus, taxi, and Uber regularly. Also, shares her sister's car, and counts on Joyride for health care needs.

Challenges

Money is always an issue. Having three kids—two still in car seats—creates challenges with Uber and taxis. Also, transportation reliability, safety, and timing.

Ideal Transportation Solution

Owning a car—would make life easier, provide freedom and independence.

*Money is the biggest issue. I rely on family.
Even the bus is very expensive.*



Jill



Taking the bus with three kids is really hard. High school students on the bus are not good role models. They are rowdy, cuss a lot. I don't like my young kids to see this behavior.

It's very hard to drop off kids and get to work on time with the bus. The bus is sometimes late. If I drove to work in my own vehicle it would be 5 minutes; on the bus, it's an hour.



Senior Citizen

Current Transportation

Recently purchased a car and loves being self-reliant. She doesn't leave the South side. At times, she relies on her son and friends for rides. She used to take the bus to work.

Challenges

Expenses are a concern.

Ideal Transportation Solution

Her car. *If I didn't have a car, I would ride the bus.*

I love the freedom of having a car. I don't want to depend on other people.



Jane



My car payment uses the money I had for groceries, so I use the food bank now. I have subsidized groceries delivered.

(To ride the bus again, since she carries oxygen) I would need to study the bus schedule to keep the wait down. Time is very important to me. I would definitely not want to transfer buses.



New lowan + Single Mom

Current Transportation

Does not have a car and depends on Medicaid transportation, occasional rides from friends, and taxis.

Challenges

No bus stops in her area. Doesn't have a job. No help financially because she is not a permanent resident. Lives on the Medicaid and Social Security from her daughter.

Ideal Transportation Solution

A car.

I feel frustrated because I can't work to pay for a car. If I could work, I could earn money to buy a car. But I can't because there isn't a nurse for my daughter.



M a r y



My daughters have Medicaid, and from that I use Medicaid transportation, but it's only for doctor and therapy visits.

I'm always tight on money. This is the majority of my problem and so I'm trapped here in my house. Social life? I don't have one. I can't. I don't have transportation. So, I have to pay (a taxi) about 25 dollars going and returning.



Returning Citizen

Current Transportation

A motorcycle, but it is too cold right now to drive it. He gets rides from a friend and takes the bus.

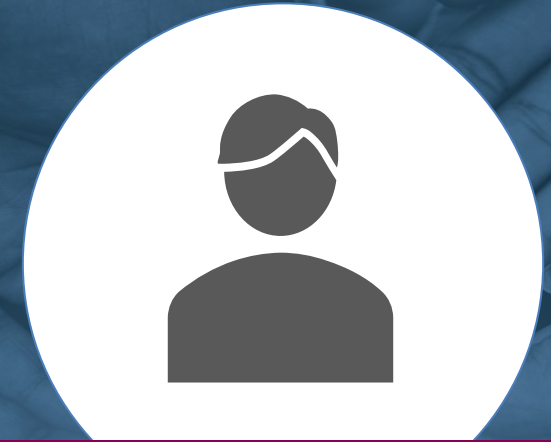
Challenges

Difficult to get a driver's license and oftentimes need a credit card for ride service.

Ideal Solution

A car – *The goal, as an adult male, is I want to drive my own car.*

Those out of prison reoffend because they drive without a license. The cycle continues.



A n d r e w

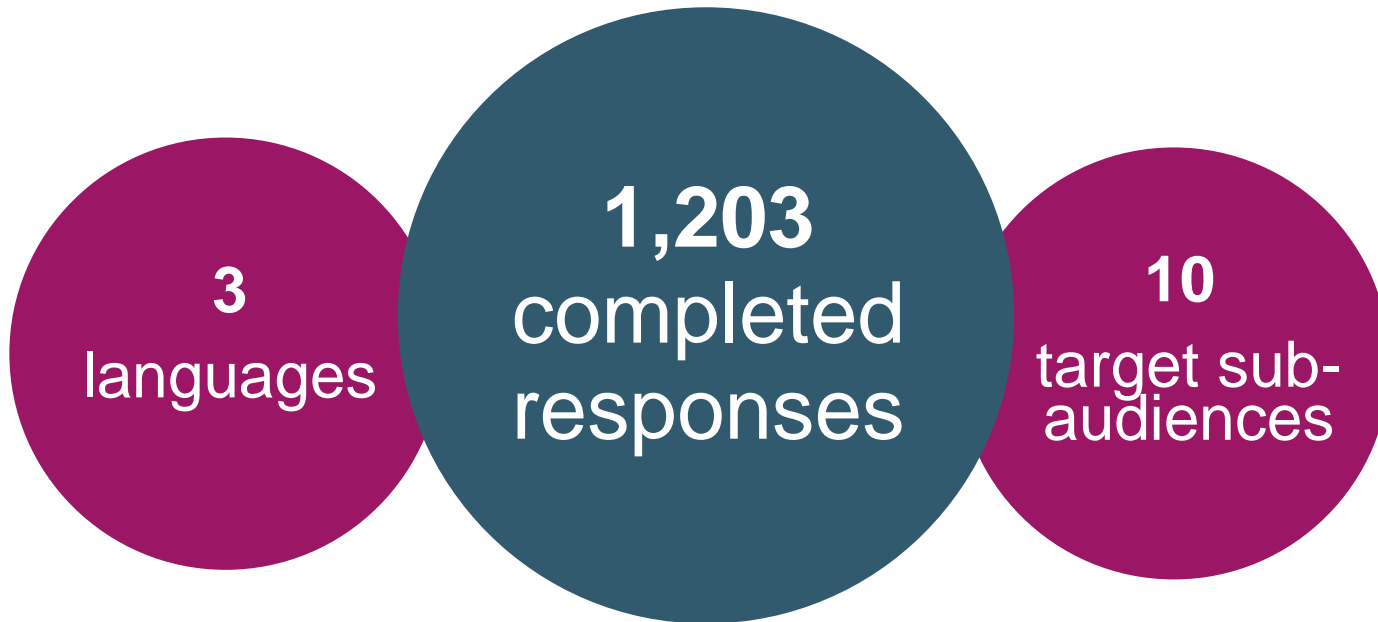
I passed up two jobs because buses don't run there. I would have to walk two to three miles in winter. These were good jobs but not on a bus route.

DART class is mandatory before you can leave (prison). Class tells you what you need to know to ride the bus, but they should show you how to get your license back instead. You learn how to ride the bus in junior high.



Step 2 – Approach Details

ONLINE & TELEPHONE STUDY



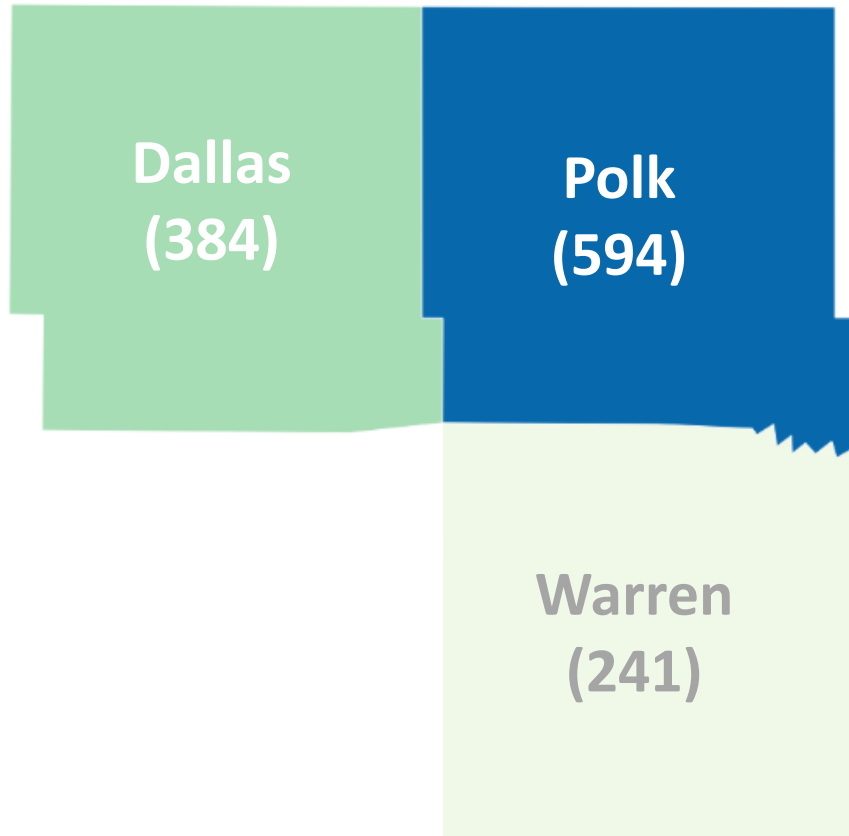
To Assess

- Transportation barriers
- Transportation methods used and purposes
- Extent of challenges for specific transportation methods
- Suggested solutions for transportation challenges
- Similarities and differences between target populations (ALICE vs. single mothers vs. elderly, etc.)



Step 2 – Audience Details

ONLINE & TELEPHONE STUDY

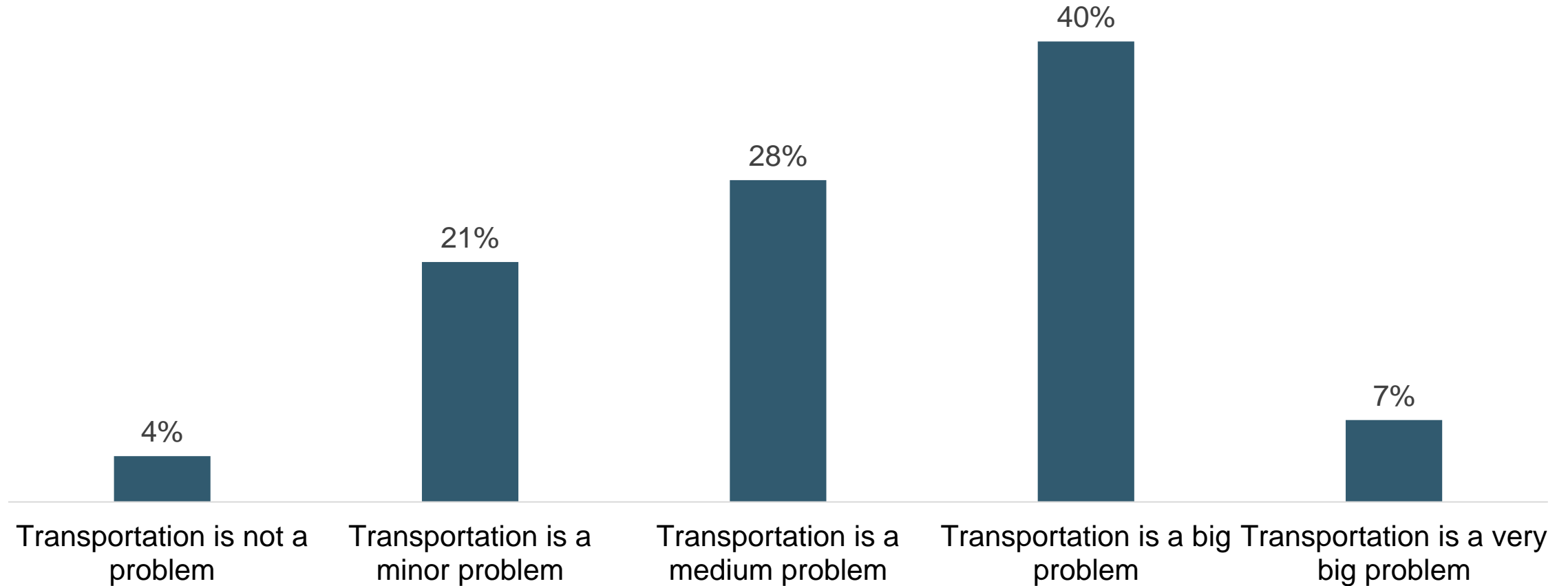


Audience	Completed Responses
Survey Mode:	
Online (English)	1,031
Online (Spanish)	80
Online (Swahili)	1
Telephone	91
Senior Citizens	68
New Iowans	43
Single Mothers	67
ALICE	616
Returning Citizens	16
Physically Disabled	218
Mentally Disabled	111



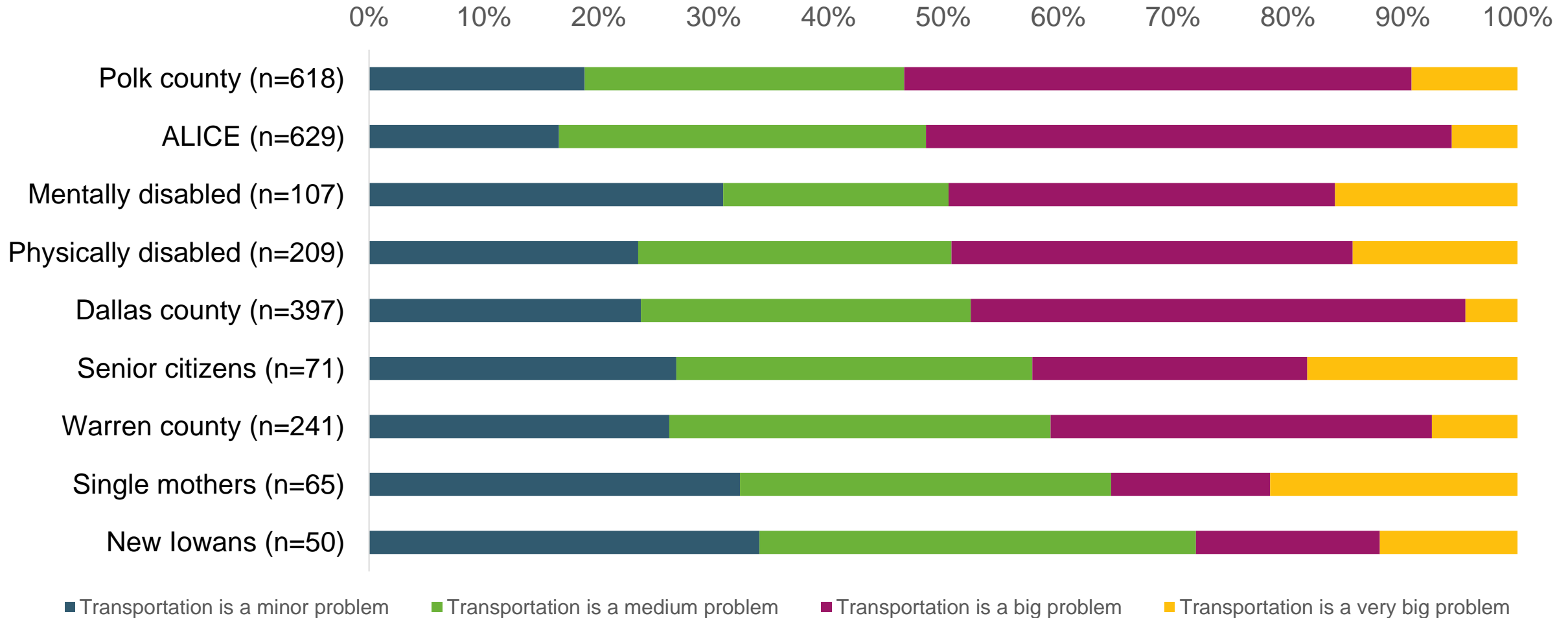
Step 2 – Transportation Challenge

Almost all indicate transportation is a problem to varying degrees, with nearly half saying transportation is a big or very big problem.





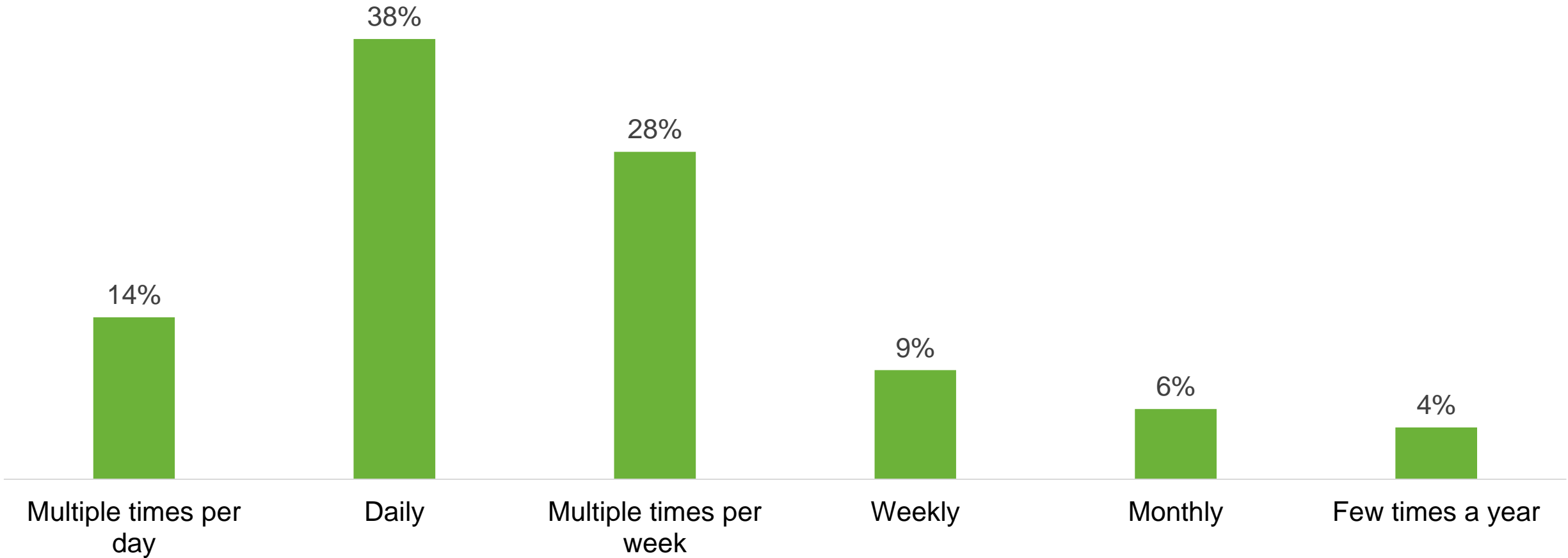
Step 2 – Transportation Challenge





Step 2 – Frequency of Problems

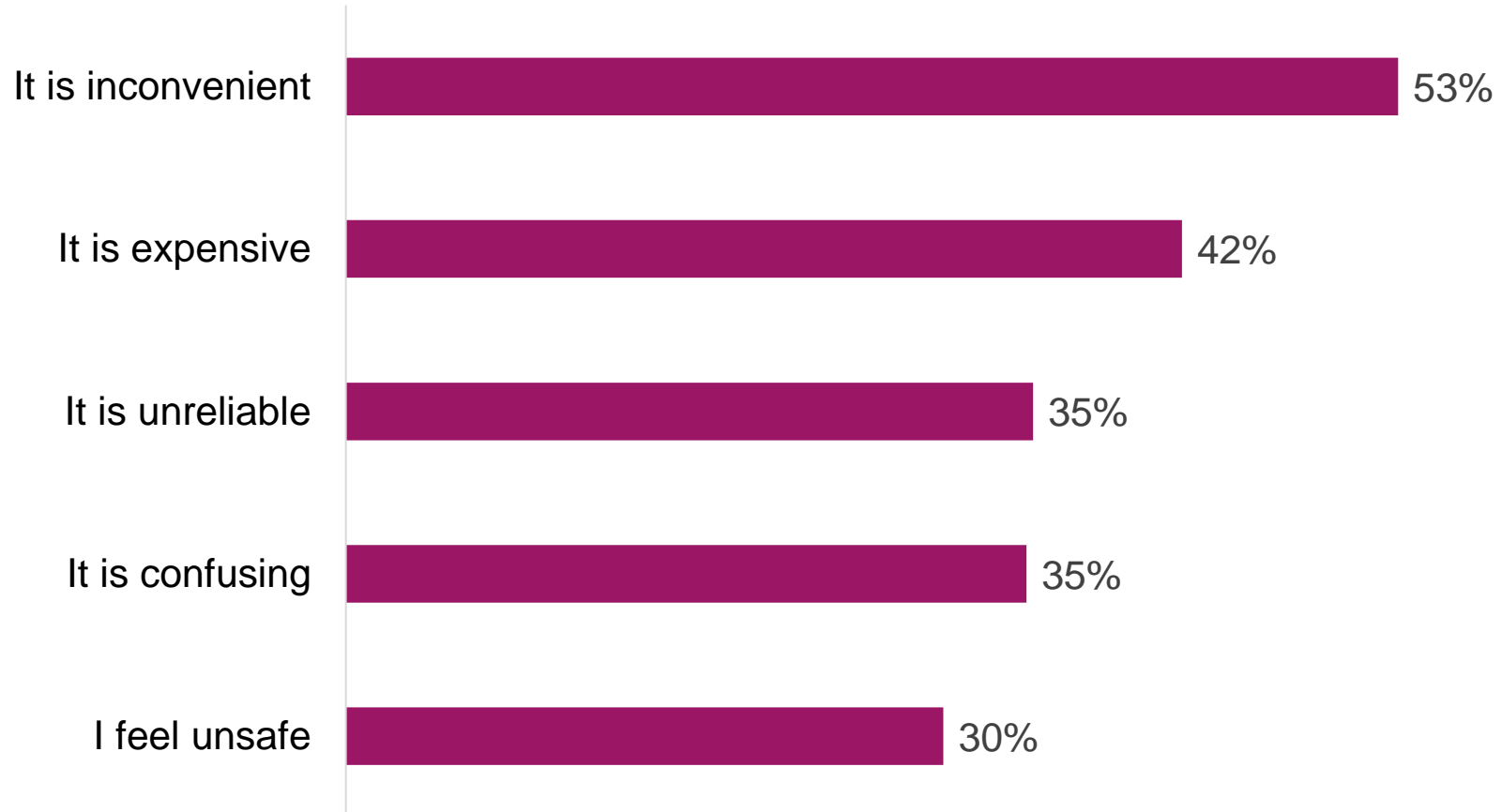
Transportation is at least a daily problem for over one-half of all audiences.





Step 2 – Transportation Barriers

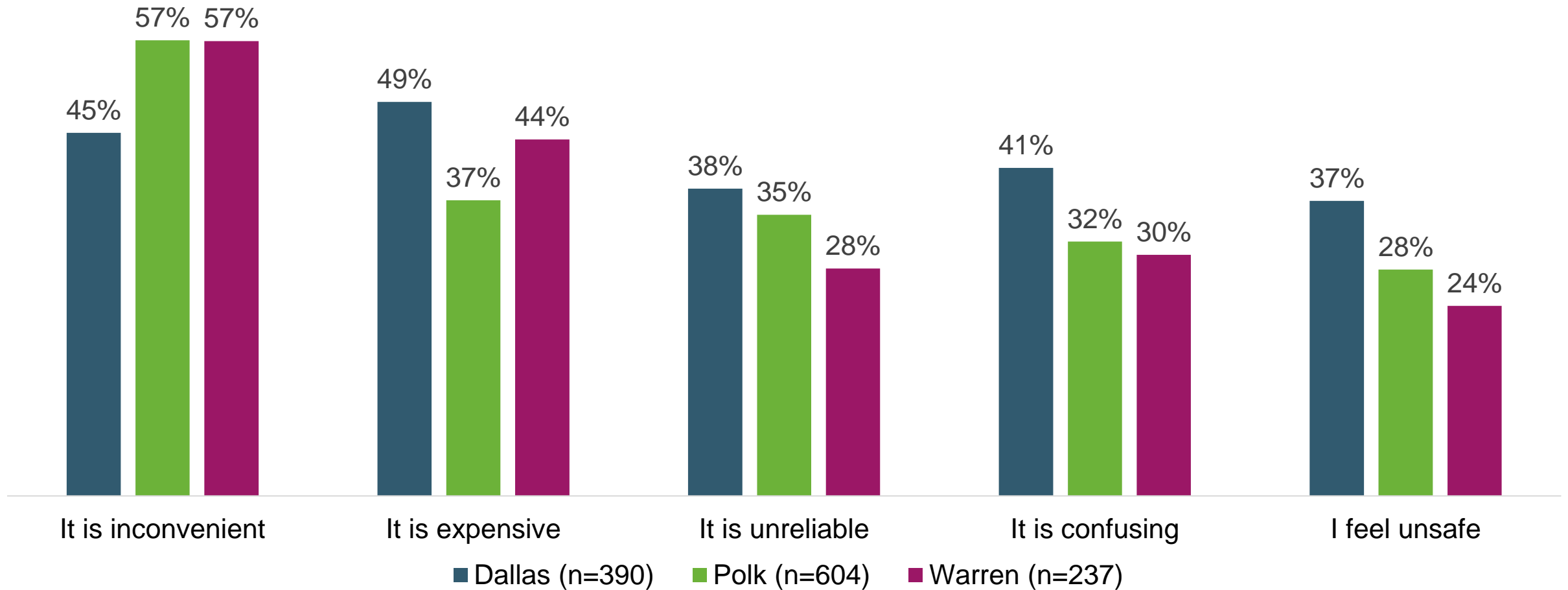
Inconvenience & Cost are the top barriers.





Step 2 –Transportation Barriers

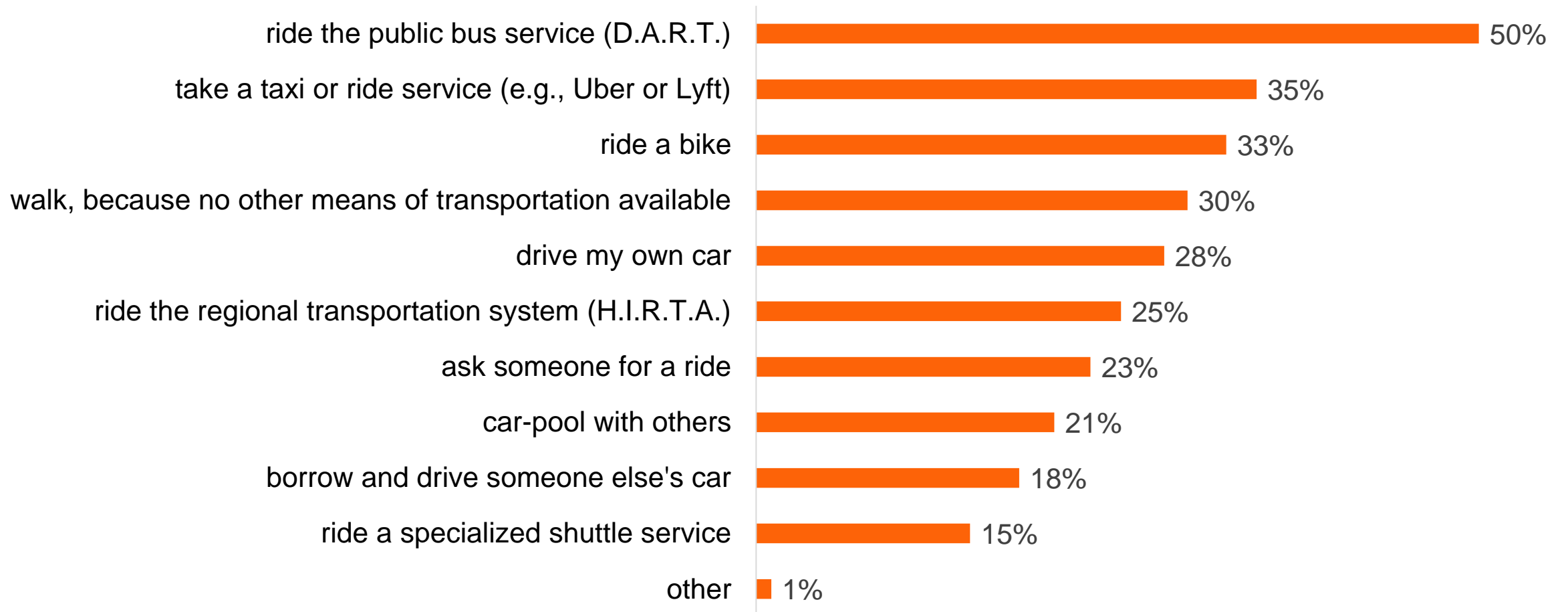
Dallas County residents overall have more issues with transportation than others.





Step 2 – Transportation Methods

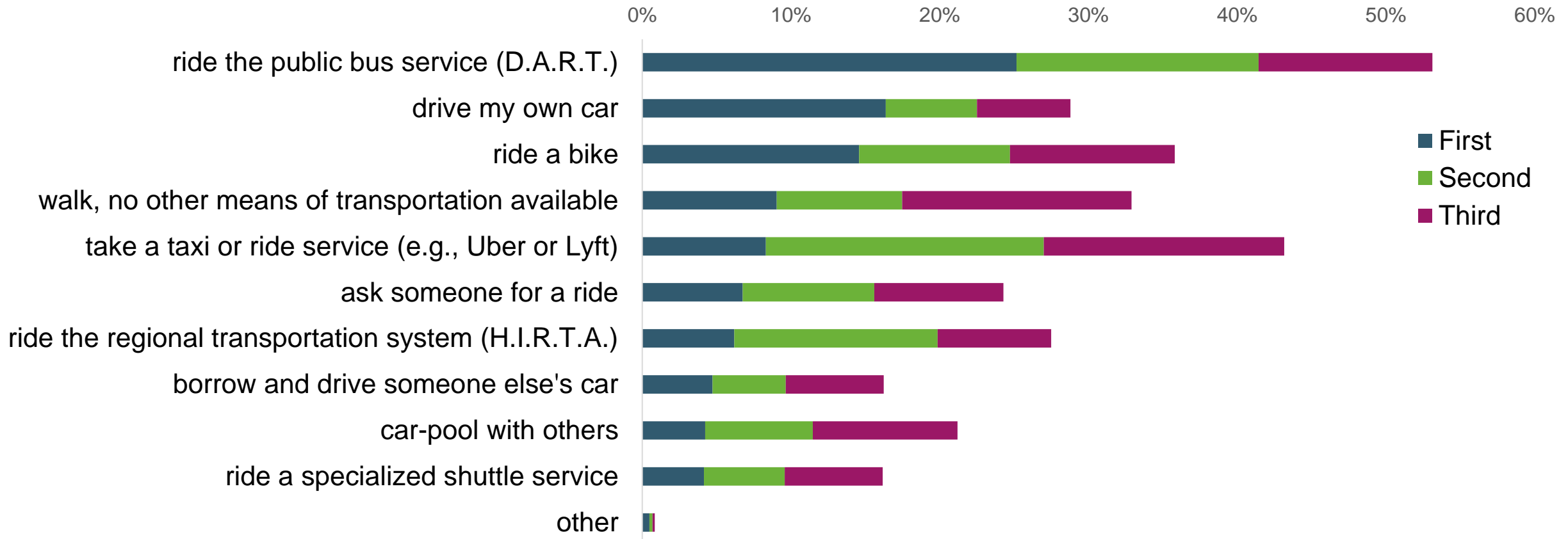
D.A.R.T. was used by one-half of all respondents.





Step 2 – Most Frequent Methods

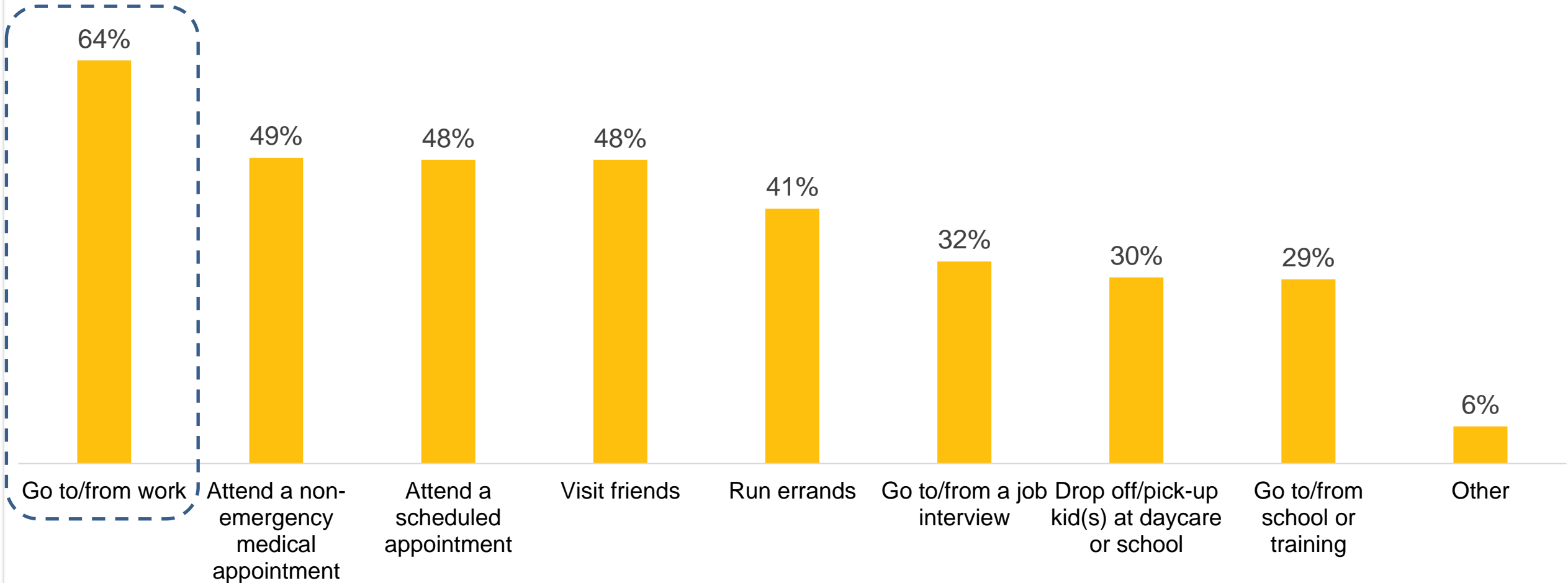
Taking D.A.R.T. is the most frequent; Taxis & Ride Services are used as secondary or tertiary means of transportation.





Step 2 – Reasons for Using D.A.R.T.

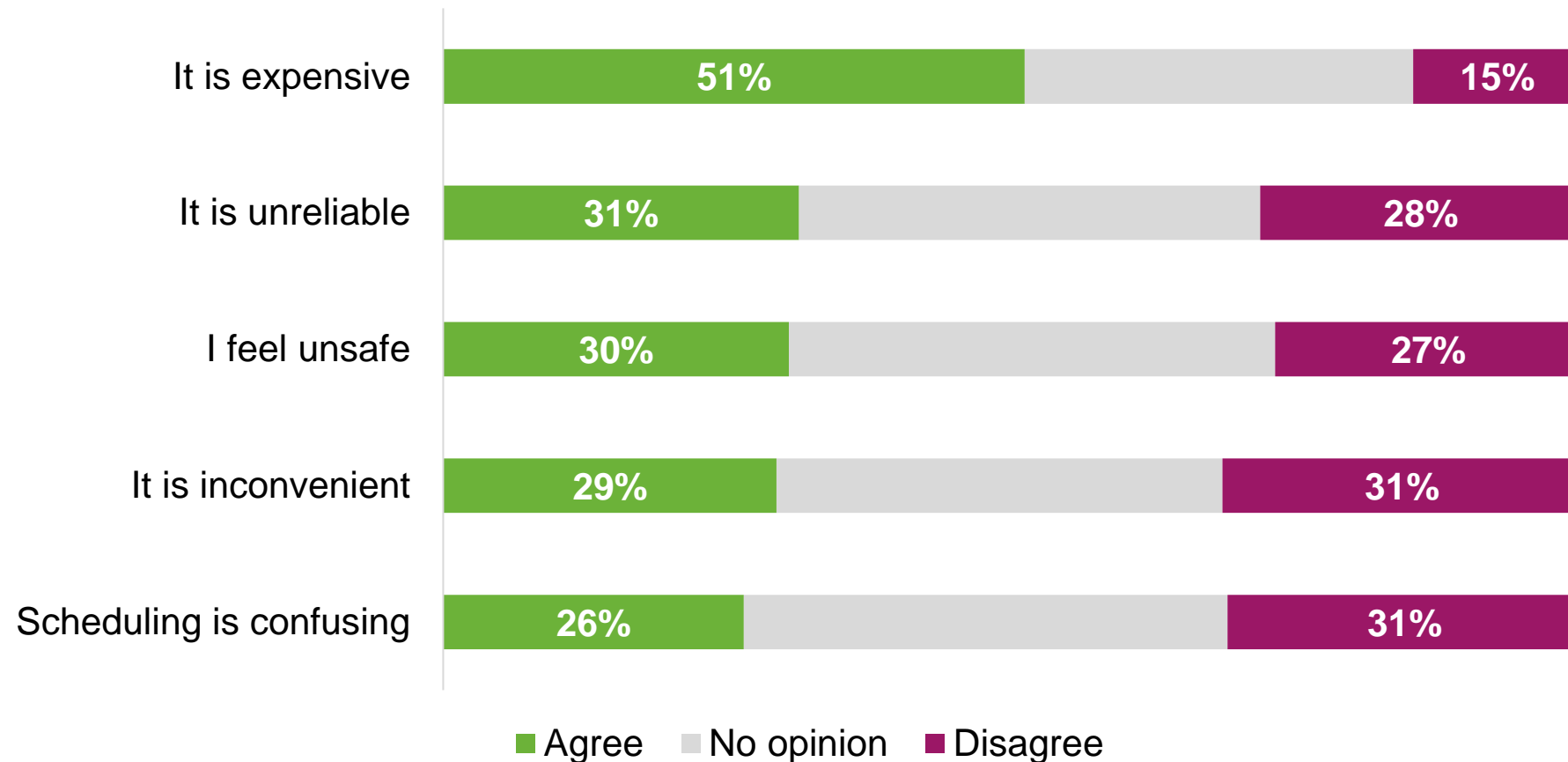
Going to and from work is the primary reason.





Step 2 – Taking a Taxi or Ride Service

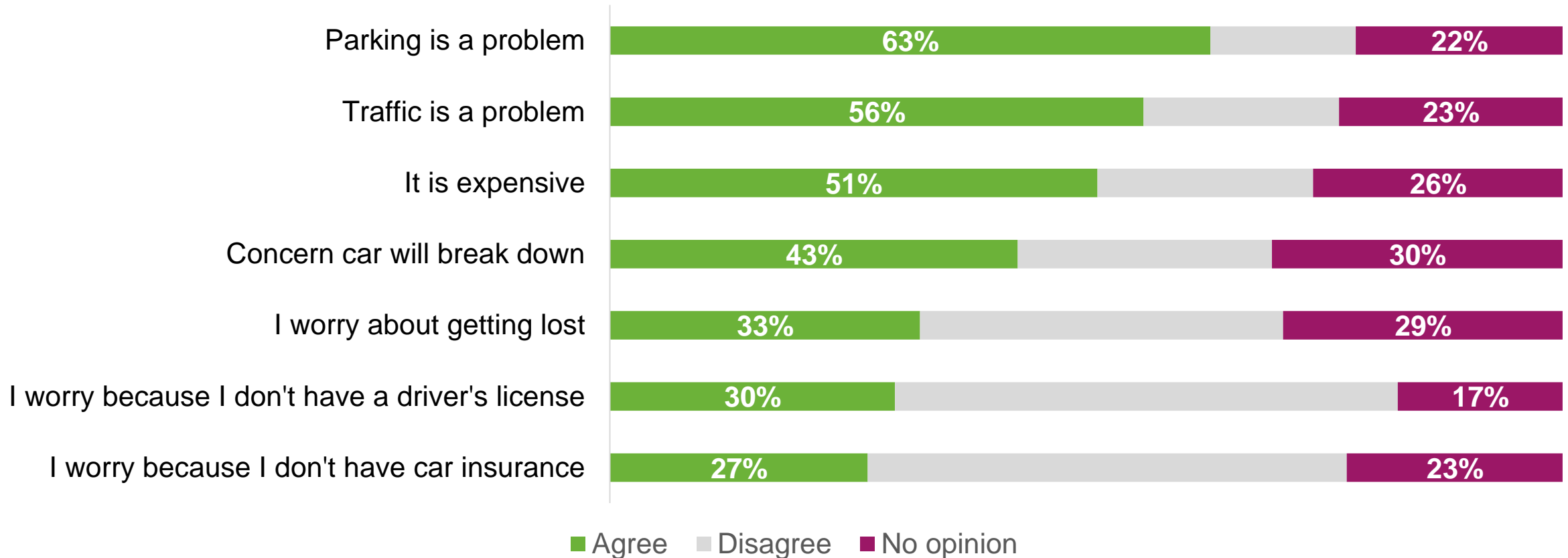
Expense is a barrier.





Step 2 – Driving Their Own Car

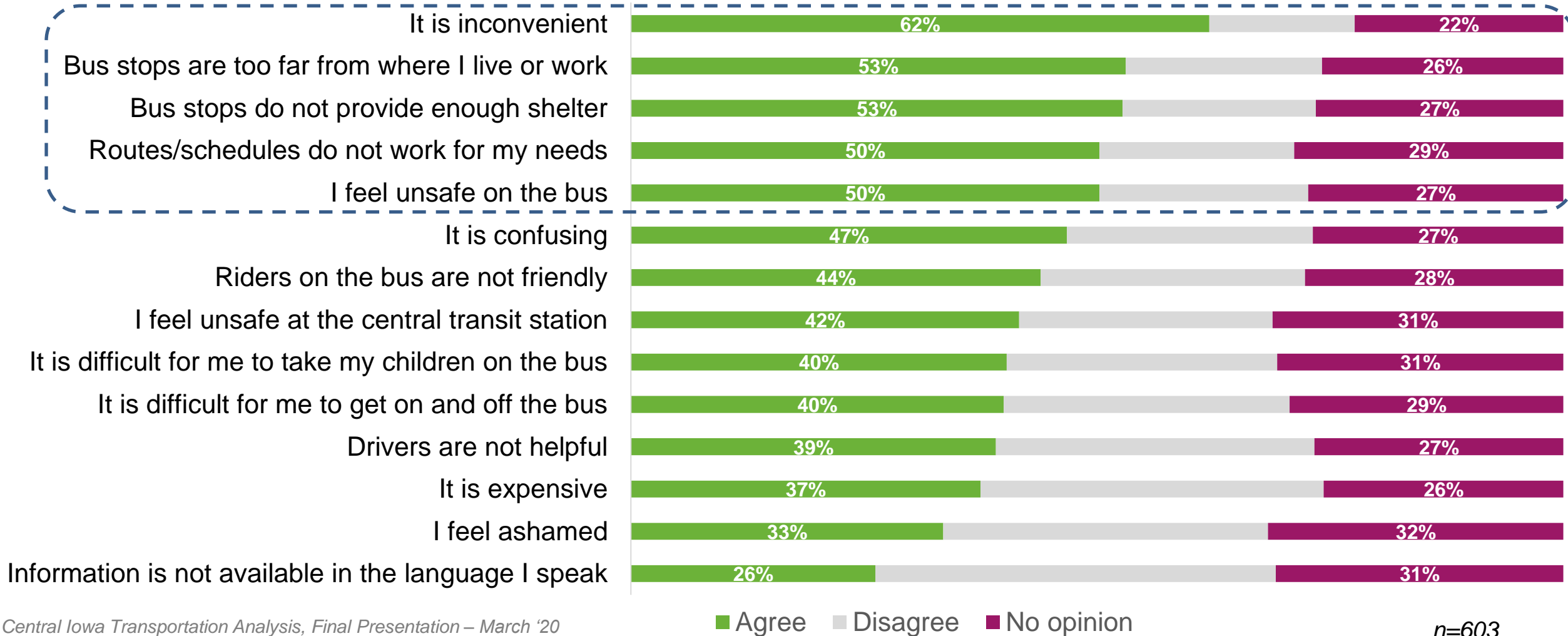
Parking, Traffic & Expense are the top 3 barriers.





Step 2 – Experiences with D.A.R.T.

Top issues are focused on convenience, shelter & safety





Step 2 – Experiences with H.I.R.T.A.

Too much advance notice required in order to schedule a ride



Sometimes vehicles are behind schedule



It is expensive



Scheduling is confusing



I feel a loss of control



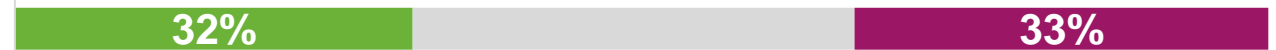
It is inconvenient



Drivers are not helpful



Difficult for me to get on and off

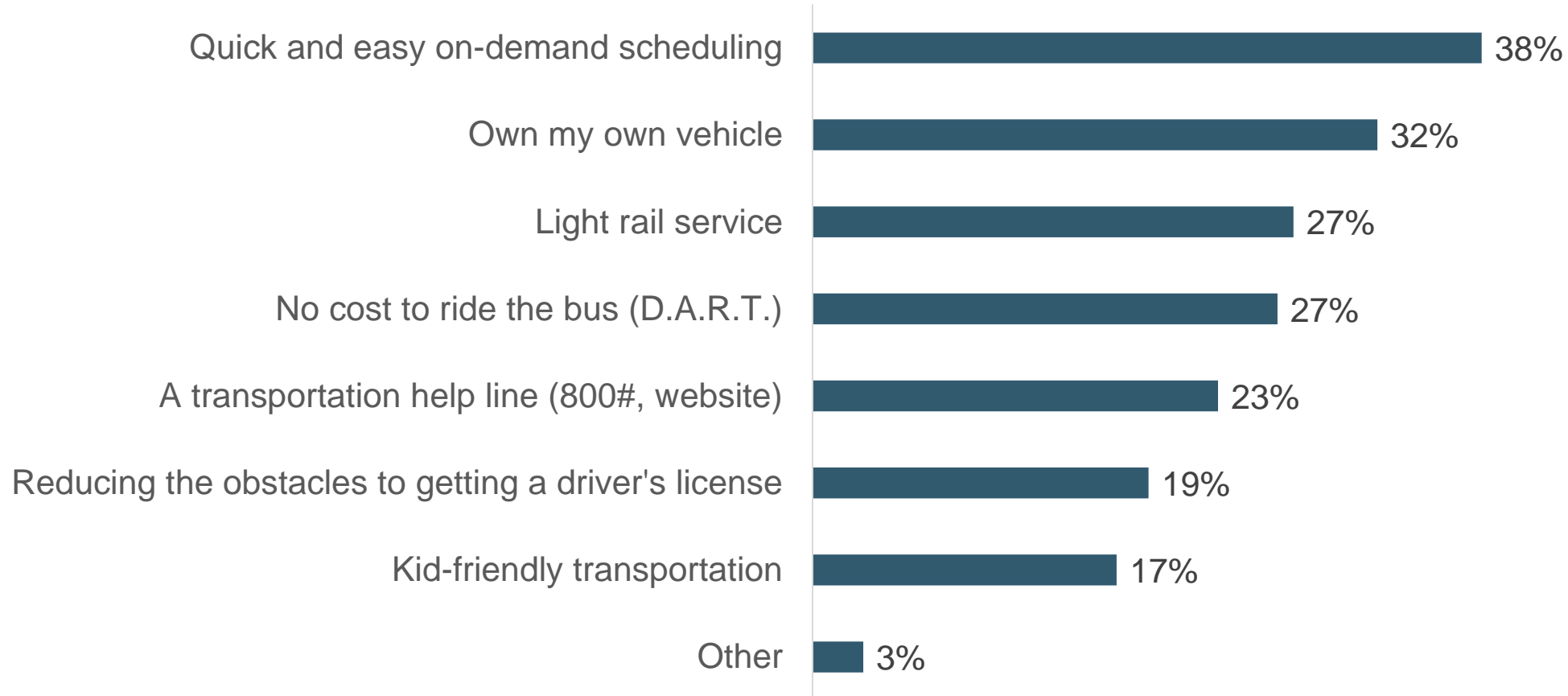


■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ No opinion



Step 2 – Potential Solutions

Convenient, on-demand scheduling solves transportation problems.



- Free bus access and a transportation help line would be impactful for about one in four people



Next Steps

Idea Lab

- Core group of 7 members from different facets of our community
- 7 sessions
 - 2 sessions include end users or those who work closely with end users daily
- Design Thinking sessions engaged 27 members of our community to yield 109 ideas & 13 initial themes in 240 minutes.
 - Public and private solutions
- Ideas from this process will be presented to the community in the coming months.



Questions?

Luke Lynch
OpportUNITY Director
United Way of Central Iowa
Luke.lynch@unitedwaydm.org
515-360-0232



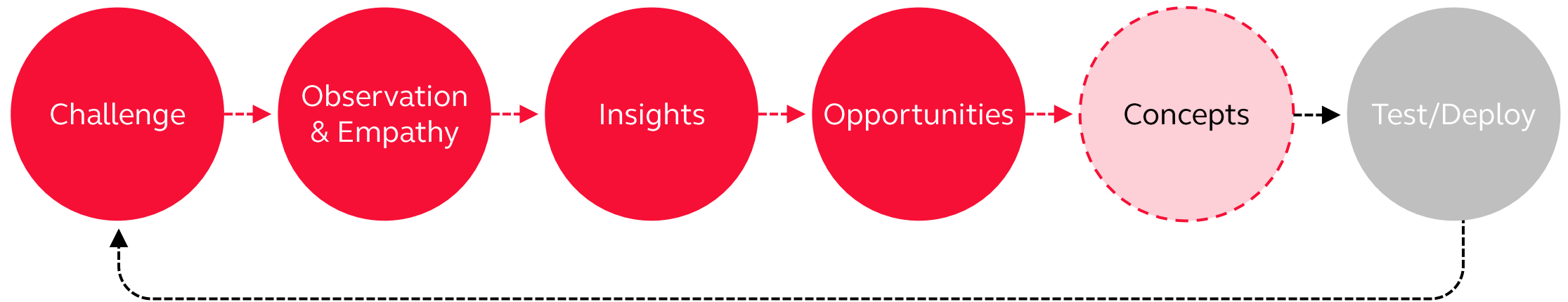
TRANSPORTATION

project.



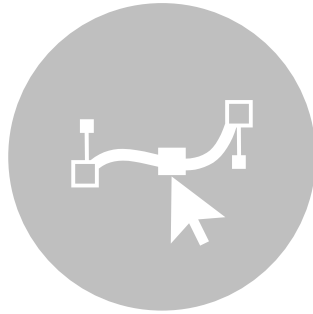
www.bizlab.solutions

OUR journey



CREATIVE

collaboration



DESIGN TEAM

Luke Lynch
Catlin Curry
Amber Ramirez
Tray Wade
Steve Whitty
Jeff Reed
Jeff Rader
Carlos Rojas



EXPERT CONTRIBUTORS



DESIGN CONTRIBUTORS

Corey Morrison, Emily Heid, Nathan Simpson, Kerri True-Funk, Emily Mendez, Jennifer Meier, Joy Esposito, Monserrat Iniguez., Stephanie Moris, Sailu Timbo, Boaz Nkingi, Tobi Parks, Emmanuel Smith, Larry Young, Darby Taylor, Leslie Taft, Cindy Winn, Brianne Emunah, Soneeta Magna-Dutcher, Julianna Dubin, Brian Dennis, Erica Tulk, Kyra Hawley, Kristin Littlejohn, Joy Greer, Carrie Kruse, Allison Van Pelt, Mark Movic, Dan Rader



CHALLENGE

evolution

V 1.0

create a transportation system for central lowans that is affordable, convenient, clean and reliable.



V 2.0

connect central lowans to their individual needs, by identifying, expanding and enabling convenient, diverse and viable transportation solutions, through strategic collaboration.

V 4.2

create mobility solutions that connect central lowans to their individual needs and accelerate their path towards financial independence.



TARGET AUDIENCE

meet: **ANITA**

Single mom of a
2, 3 & 10 year olds,
currently lives
with her sister and
is making ends
meet as she
searches for that
job that can
accommodate her
reality.

CURRENT TRANSPORTATION

DART bus, taxi, and Uber regularly.
Also, shares her sister's car, and counts
on Joyride for health care needs.

CHALLENGES

Money is always an issue. Having three
kids -two still in car seats- creates
challenges with Uber and taxis. Also,
transportation reliability, safety, and
timing.

IDEAL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION

Owning a car would make life easier,
provide freedom and independence.

recontextualizing POVERTY

the absence of material wealth is closely linked to the absence of other forms of capital

HUMAN CAPITAL

One's level of education, skills, and experiences

SOCIAL CAPITAL

One's network of interpersonal connections and relationships

WELLNESS CAPITAL

One's physical and mental well-being



RETHINKING

transportation needs

PREFERENCES

ISLE OR WINDOW

It's not about the logistics of travel or how to interact with the system, but rather about understanding and accounting for the comfort and convenience requirements defined by the destination.

PEOPLE ARE NOT TAKING
A BUS RIDE, THEY ARE
GOING TO GET
GROCERIES

INFORMATION

EXIT ROW = MORE LEG ROOM

People **need to learn** about routes, schedules and how to engage with the service. People are **naturally curious** around alternatives that help them upgrade their transportation options that effectively remove mobility barriers.

PEOPLE ALREADY KNOW
HOW TO RIDE THE BUS, THEY
WANT TO LEARN HOW THEY
CAN STOP RIDING IT

INCENTIVES

MILES TOWARDS ...

People spend a significant portion of their days navigating public transportation. The motivation lies in minimizing the time spent on figuring out mobility. Time is valued as the next best thing after money.

PEOPLE DON'T NECESSARILY
NEED THREE CAR SEATS IN A
BUS, THEY COULD ALSO USE
A BABYSITTER

DESTINATION

WELCOME HOME/ENJOY YOUR STAY

Relevancy of the transportation experience is not achieved by getting someone from point A to point B, its achieved by empowering what happens next.

PEOPLE'S DESTINATIONS
ARE DEFINED BY
MEANINGFUL GOALS, NOT BY
A PHYSICAL ADDRESS



DESIGN

principles

Behavioral construct that acts as a multiplier force to the effectiveness of the program or initiative.



WAY-FORWARD NUDGES

Help people derive maximum benefit from resources and services that are available to them and enable financial independence.



CUT THE OTHER COSTS

Eliminate hassles and complexity that contribute to unintentional burden on people's, time and mental energy.



CREATE SLACK

Help build an adequate cushion of time, money, attention, and other critical resources to help address those unforgiving conditions.



REFRAME AND EMPOWER

Reduce stigma and promote people's autonomy and dignity and help them do more of what they want to do and less of what they don't.



FROM

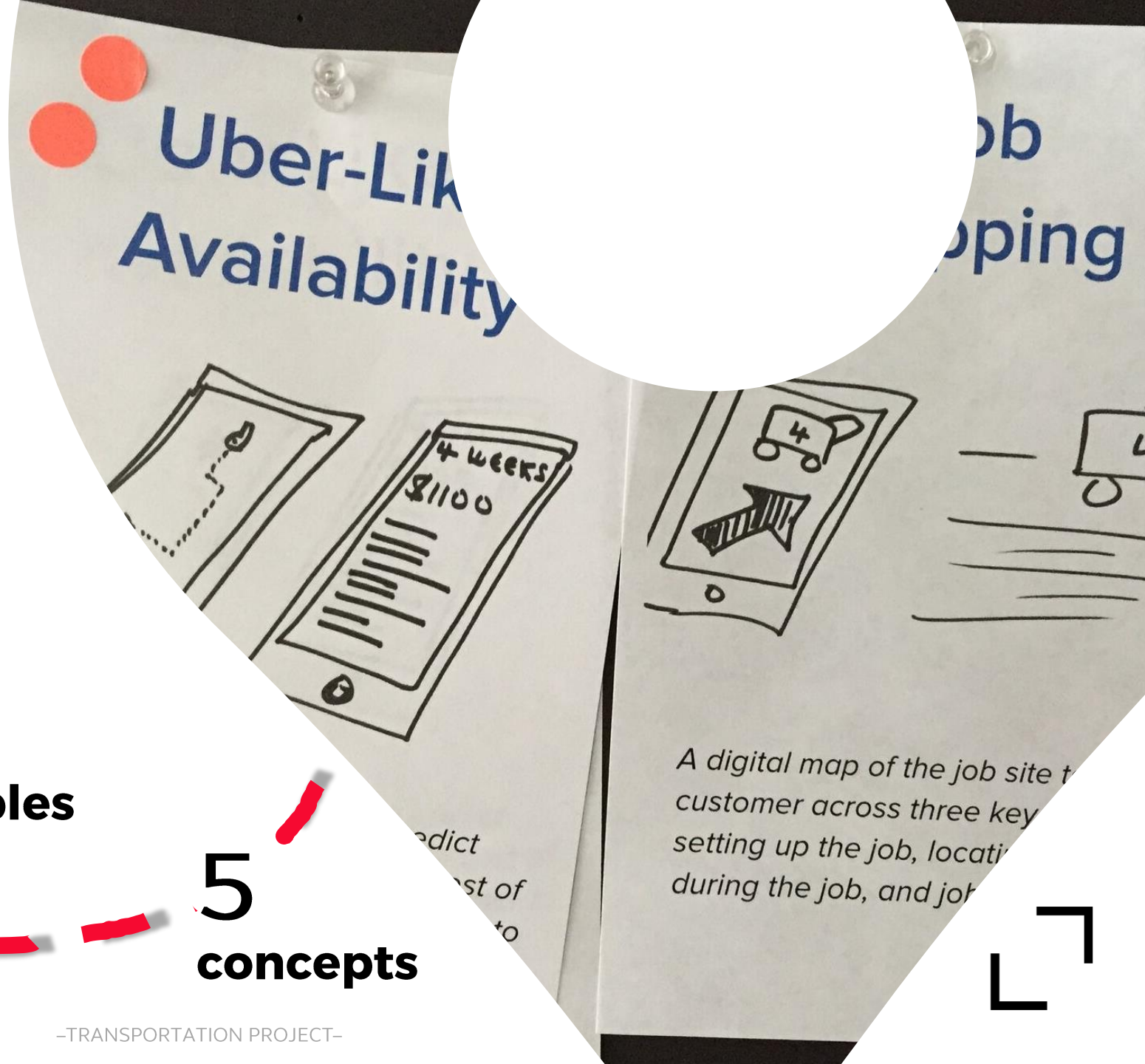
ideas to concepts

109 ideas

13 themes

4 design principles

5 concepts



KEY INGREDIENTS

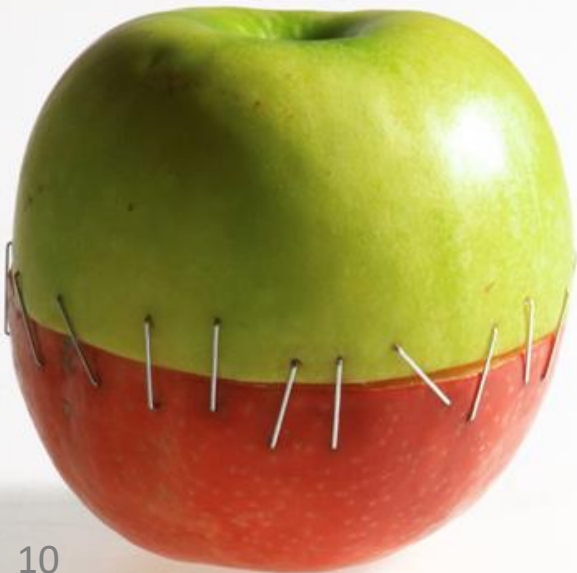
for social impact concept development



OWNERSHIP STRATEGY FUNDING TEAM PARTNERSHIPS MODEL



Build-out categories that effectively evolve the resolution and effectiveness of the concept.



Mobility Solutions Team



CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Group of hyper-focused individuals that explore innovative mobility technologies and services that could improve transportation options



Mobility Solutions Team



- Use the current Design Team to continue heading the initiative
- Work with United Way to aggregate all other groups and connect information

- A local Non-Profit/Organization houses the Mobility Solutions team.
- Partners are lined up to participate in the work with the newly founded team.
- Investment from the Non-Profit/Organization is used to tackle challenges specifically focused on Transportation
- A long-term strategy is built to avoid false starts and consolidate groups/resources

- A privately organized group is form that is hyper-focused on solving transportation.
- This group would be privately funded and potential investment from Non-Profits/Organizations that have a vested interest would be welcomed.
- This would potentially be a stand-alone business with a mission solely on solving this challenge.

Mobility Solutions Team

LAND-MINES

- Some of the current groups are political or industry
- Users we are talking about today are not being talked about in the current groups
- Have groups that meet around issues and passions, but they are missing a person or organization to run it through
- A lot of these groups are truly volunteered
- Need time from an entity to help them move forward
- Putting a group together that proves the community is not paying for the need of transportation
- Avoid the "we worked really hard and all we did was form a community"
- Funding options get denied and don't want to change taxes or revenue streams in how we fund these groups
- Someone has to own it or fund it
- Goes back to the elected leadership
- Already groups meeting to have these conversation, would this just be seen as "another group"?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Seeking out information to the audiences that they serve
- Expand the "team" - grassroots effort. Community advocates, civic leaders, anchor institutions like colleges and universities
- NPO Meets a couple times a year - Brings human services
- Mobility Coalition Group - Dart, NPO, United Way
- GDMP (Transit Future Work Group)
- Potential options around including the DOT
- Community Based organizations should be at the table
- Community Citizens for Impact Group has power to impact
- Taking the bottoms up Approach
- Through the lens of the user
- Scheduling is an issue, different shifts,
- Bringing in the employers to the table for solving this
- Employer Councils
- Kansas City went to a faire free system and are getting federal funding to expand service and routes



Mobility Accelerator

CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Source, incentivize, and advance ideas that can effectively help eliminate transportation barriers for low-income households.

Let the best idea win.



Mobility Accelerator



- Continue to test internal ideas that were generated from this design sprint.
- Move these ideas further down the road of concept development for United Way and Community Foundation.

- Build a dedicated group to work on idea sourcing, both internally and externally.
- Team would build concepts and test prototypes in the community.
- Funding done through United Way and Community Foundation

- Team to oversee the running of the accelerator and be the innovation arm of Social Impact in Iowa.
- Build infrastructure to create the funnel of the Incubator and Accelerator.
- Work with Non-profits and community partners to move insights from Idea to investable solutions.
- Funding would move to private equity to further sustainability.

Mobility Accelerator

LAND-MINES

- Have organizations to put in initial funding but need a better sustainability plan on how to continue funding
- Funding Transportation is not a money maker
- Dental Clinic provides transportation to kids
- Funding, Funding, Funding
- I think there are several companies (through their foundations) that would fund transportation initiatives like this. The problem with grant funding is the continuity. We could get some good ideas going...but where would the funding come from to maintain the programs. (This is always the problem with private grant funding.)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- A lot of philanthropy organizations often get their investments siloed into housing and food.
- Getting clearer in the messaging about how transportation effects everything
- This is something that MCO's could be paying for
- Private organizations that are getting funding already should have some skin in the game.
- Need to communicate ROI better
- Connect with Next Level Ventures?
- Tech Stars?
- We are missing an innovation capability
- Investment from Ag or Ev in solving for funding from these companies
- Causes that are tied into government entities
- A requirement needs to be that they perpetuate funding on their own and not reliant on it



Smart Routes

CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

A multi-modal solution that supplements existing public transit with non-fixed route transit modes.



Smart Routes

TODAY



- Partner two metro organizations that would be open to sharing the revenues of 1 ticket/pass purchased for both transportation solutions
- Build pilot program of testers that can use multiple options of transportation for research.

NEAR FUTURE



- Create a stand-alone website the allowed for all smart route information to be housed.
- Connect with small group of Non-Profits/Organizations to provide this service to the people they serve.
- Test on “Most Used” Routes in the metro.
- Fund through a collective as an initiative for the Metro

FUTURE



- Roll out ticket sharing to all organizations that have a transportation solution.
- Create App solution that ties all the transportation solutions together
- Build more infrastructure around the logistics
- Privately funded opportunity



Smart Routes

LAND-MINES

- Language Barriers
- Reliability and usability of the system
- The challenge is in the system of policy, zoning, funding,
- Ownership - Who manages it, who deals with it?
- Needs to account for all personas - Disability, Health, etc.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Let's go to Kansas City
- Multi-model bus pass that covers, bus, bike, uber, etc.
- Work with Community Groups & Bike Club in Des Moines



Never idle

CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Deploy “parked” vehicles (when not in service) for on-demand rides and delivery services.



—TRANSPORTATION PROJECT—

Never idle

TODAY



- Find a small group of people invested in the transportation solution.
- Deploy pilot program with this group and follow usage of cars with individuals that could “ride along”

NEAR FUTURE



- Implement with a Non-Profit/Organization that serves those affected by the transportation gap.
- Create a website/marketing materials to market the service
- Drivers would be left alone to use the service
- Expand logistic resource needs: insurance, car tracking software, etc.
- Pilot program funded locally

FUTURE



- Include Non-profits/Organizations. Schools, churches, and For-Profit companies that utilize large parking structures in the metro.
- Build an app that connects users with potential transportation options.
- Build more infrastructure around the logistics
- Privately funded opportunity

Never idle

LAND-MINES

- All comes back to funding
- Liability
- Most individuals making the trips via uber, lyft, etc. are not getting paid what they need to make it a long-term career

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Some way to leverage people in the community already
- No show rates at Everystep - Can you leverage people already that are out in the community
- Bringing Vaccines, Groceries, SNAP, Food, to the clients
- Look at VaxiTaxi Concept



mobIME

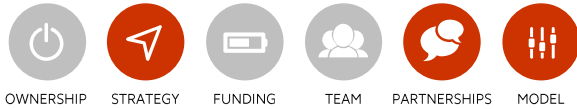
CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

an APP that is an aggregator for existing transportation solutions; a concierge that maximizes transportation benefits; and a guide towards a preferred mode of transportation.



mobIME

TODAY



- Leverage 211 and create a new page called the MobiMe project
- Roll this out to current non-profits/organizations the leverage 211
- Collect all transportation solutions that the metro has

NEAR FUTURE



- Build a stand-alone site that houses only MobiMe information
- This would be non-profit/organization facing as well as public facing
- Include API's to other transportation options in Des Moines
- Integrate more mapping features that can actually build a route
- Potentially find local dollars to build this version

FUTURE



- Create an App that can be downloaded and used
- All audiences would have access to this
- App would integrate with location services, transportation options, and additional resources
- Potentially this is privately funded and operated.



mobIME

LAND-MINES

- API's into other software
- Risk would be around pushing people from Dart
- Depends on how big this gets
- Taking business away from Dart
- Visual and hearing challenges?
- Accessible to all languages
- Accessible to those without tech/phones

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- This seems like something that could be funded and coming together in smaller steps
- One side is paying for the other (general public pays for qualified users that can access it)
- Understand how many people in poverty have phones
- incorporate with 211.org or 211 App



MORE CONCEPTS

to consider

Improve the existing Public Transit system

the public transit system is an essential component, and the current system works for some, but it can be improved via more access points, desirability, cost (subsidized or free), etc.

Holistic urban design and transportation system planning

this is essential to reduce or eliminate the need for transportation, or to optimize the current solutions

Provide "Enablers"

a system of certain "enablers" (data sharing, solution aggregator, concierge, etc.) of transportation/mobility would be essential to help lower income people to better engage with and benefit from existing transportation solutions

"On demand" capabilities

these capabilities (on demand vehicles, rides, delivery of services, etc.) would be very valuable to this population, especially those with unique needs.





NEXT STEPS



ONE MORE ITERATION

to build a strategic framework that advances social impact

**Mobility
Solutions
Team**



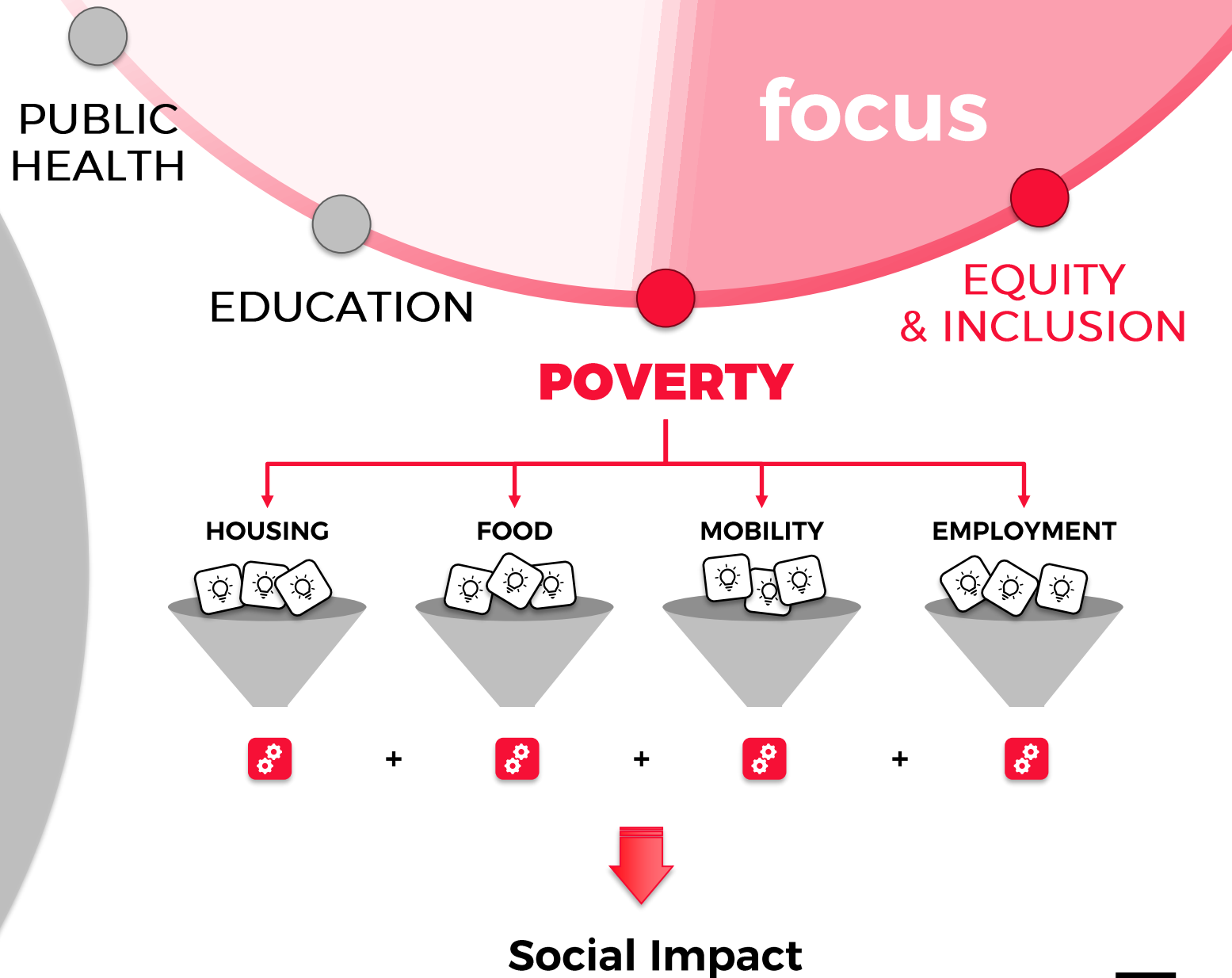
**Social
Impact
Accelerator**



Social Impact Accelerator

CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

Build a process that supports a community of future-oriented changemakers that come together across sectors to create shared visions for our collective futures and innovation to achieve systemic change.



ADOPTING

a strategic model

Design Principles

The guardrails to building optimal solutions—quick, memorable recipes that will help keep further iterations consistent. These principles describe the most important elements of the solution and give integrity and form to what you're designing

Co-create concepts with the target audience, SME's and community leaders

The goal is to build a portfolio of experiments that effectively get closer to social impact innovation

Demo Day / Investor Engagement

A day to focus the attention of the Impact Investor community on the social impact startups/revamps through hosting a series of investments pitches from the social impact startups/organizations to Impact Investors.

Goal is to create a Minimum Viable Product/Service that can effectively deliver value

Create a road map that allows for self-sustainability and replicability

Buildout the right resources that effectively deliver an optimal solution

FEEDBACK
\$500 - \$1k
Insight funding

5x5's
\$5K | 5 people | 5 weeks
Concept funding

MVP
\$25K - \$50K
Funding Level 1

BLUEPRINT
\$50K - \$150K
Funding Level 2

INFRASTRUCTURE
\$150K - \$350K
Funding Level 3

IDEA SOURCING
internal external



Concept Development

Prototyping

Proof of Impact

Scalability

Deployment

INCUBATOR

ACCELERATOR

OPTIMAL SOLUTION



Thank You!



DESIGN DETAILS

a.k.a appendix

FEEDBACK MATRIX



Transportation Project Concepts

Key Understandings

Note: our human centered design thinking process stresses understanding drivers of human behavior and how that should shape the solutions we develop. models 2) literacy 3) share 4) give 5) give 6) earn 7) special circumstances 8) volunteer 9) employee benefit 10) partnership 11) policy change 12) government 13) The concepts and ideas on this chart represent ideas generated during our ideation sessions supplemented by additional research- both within the transportation field. A next step will be to apply filters for Concept Desirability, Feasibility and Viability

Uniqueness	Potential Impact
Better Sameness	Low
New to us/incremental	Medium
New to us/Step change	High
	Transformational

Adoptability Rating

Work Group Themes	Concept Theme	Concept Category	Concept Ideas	Concept Idea Detail/Examples	Resources	Idea Ranking (see key above)		BN	TW	CC	AR	LL
Share, Special Circumstances	Expand available types/modes of transportation	Encourage Bike Usage	For those who are able, encourage people to use bikes to meet transportation needs	put bike share bikes along trails, DSM bike collective	DSM bike collective	Better Sameness	Low					
		Utilize Innovative Vehicles	New types of vehicles that are less expensive, easier on the environment	E Bikes		New to us/incremental	Low					
			Micro mobility category of vehicles	skateboards, mopeds, etc		New to us/incremental	Low					
			EV of tomorrow-new EV vehicle types	multi-purpose EV chassis		New to us/Step change	Medium					
		Better Public Transit	Improvements in public transit in order to provide more options	more bus routes serving underserved areas, light rail, etc.	DART	Better Sameness	Transformational	5	4	5		5
		Multi-modal Solutions	Multimodal transportation system that uses Advanced Transit-Oriented Developments, express bus service, first/last mile supplemental modes, etc. to expand on existing transit and passenger rail services. Building a cost-effective, rapid, and financially self-sufficient multimodal system.	scooters at bus stops to get to next stop		New to us/Step change	Transformational					
								5		4	4	3
		Car Share fleets	Develop an inventory of vehicles that can be shared. May include part time usage of excess assets by owners	utilize vehicles cars not currently utilized from rental car companies, retirement communities, school buses, Zip Car, etc.	Meals on Wheels, retirement homes	Better Sameness	High					
						4	5			4		
	Special Circumstances	Increase transportation related options for those with special needs	Autonomous Cabs for the Blind, expanded DART services, ride on demand , options for riders with kids, rural needs and options	IRIS, Hop/skip/driver , Go Go (senior option)	Better Sameness	Medium						
									5	4	3	5



Transportation Project Concepts

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Adoptability Rating

Work Group Themes	Concept Theme	Concept Category	Concept Ideas	Concept Idea Detail/Examples	Resources	Idea Ranking (see key above)		BN	TW	CC	AR	LL
Share, Earn, Volunteer	Expand access to transportation options	Reduce Barriers/Burdens associated with Car Ownership	Assist with cost of ownership	gas vouchers, low interest loans		Better Sameness	Low					
		Vehicle Earn	Set up system where people can earn a car	matched car savings programs, forced savings programs/Car Savings Accounts, low interest loans, give car then earn it (Habitat for Humanity concept for cars), earn a car by sweat equity (volunteering, etc.)	Iowa Able low interest loan program	New to us/incremental	Medium				4	4
		Vehicle Give	Gve a car to an individual in a low income community and pay them to be a transportation resource for the community			New to us/incremental	High	5				
			Provide cars to low income households	out of service government vehicles, SNAP for car ownership	Aspen Hub report	New to us/incremental	Medium					
		Vehicle Share	Person to person car/bike, etc. sharing			Better Sameness	Low					
		Rideshare	Matching people who need a ride with someone going there already	can be person to person, company facilitated (vanpool), rideshare hub in downtown parking garage	DART Rideshare	Better Sameness	Low					
			Company provided ride sharing	company provided buses give rides to work		New to us/incremental	High					
		Transportation on Demand	Ride on demand service	Hop, Skip, Drive		New to us/incremental	Medium		5		5	5
		Provided by volunteers (Volunteer)	Volunteers who provide rides (either on demand or pre-arranged)	American cancer society volunteers gives rides to cancer patients, volunteer driver group accesbile via app, off duty school bus drivers		Better Sameness	Medium					4
		Public transit	Ways to make existing public transit more accessible, affordable, desirable	DART passes, transportation stipend, heaters at bus stops, make it cool to ride the bus		Better Sameness	Transformational		4	4	5	5
		Free or subsidized transportation	Provide free public transportation (similar to free libraries) or subsidies	SNAP for transportation costs, partner with car rental/ride share companies for low cost rentals, transportation subsidy as employee benefit, cities subsidize costs		Better Sameness	Medium		5	5	5	5

Transportation Project Concepts

Key Understandings

Note: our human centered design thinking process stresses understanding drivers of human behavior and how that should shape the solutions we develop. models 2) literacy 3) share 4) give 5) give 6) earn 7) special circumstances 8) volunteer 9) employee benefit 10) partnership 11) policy change 12) government 13)

The concepts and ideas on this chart represent ideas generated during our ideation sessions supplemented by additional research- both within the transportation field. A next step will be to apply filters for Concept Desirability, Feasibility and Viability

Uniqueness	Potential Impact
Better Sameness	Low
New to us/incremental	Medium
New to us/Step change	High
	Transformational

Adoptability Rating

Work Group Themes	Concept Theme	Concept Category	Concept Ideas	Concept Idea Detail/Examples Resources	Idea Ranking (see key above)	BN	TW	CC	AR	LL		
Share, Aggregator, Literacy	Establish Facilitators/Enablers of Transportation Solutions	Aggregator (Aggregator)	Entity that keeps an inventory of all transportation resources and options for non-profits to access		211	New to us/incremental	Transformational					
		Transportation "Concierge" or broker	Mechanism (could be an app, calculator, persons, etc.) that receives/understands individual transportation requests and identifies the optimal solution among available alternatives	Navigator apps, transportation concierge, trip planner for specific life needs (getting to work, doctor, etc.)	DART, 211	New to us/Step change	High		5	5	5	5
		Ride tracking system	Tracking system that allows for managing rides. would allow for "system learning" over time	similar to tracking of packaging. UBER ride tracking		New to us/Step change	Transformational	5	5	5	5	
		Apply commercial package delivery management systems to this problem	Implement a system similar to that used by major shipping companies to manage the provision of rides (people as packages)	use Fed Ex/UPS/Amazon shipping systems	Amazon, Ed Ex, UPS, XPO/Logistics	New to us/Step change	Transformational					
		Institute ride data sharing	Have non-profits share data on rides provided so we can learn how to optimize ride provisioning			Better Sameness	Medium	5		5	5	
		Financial Literacy Training	Provides people the financial knowledge, methods and tools to help pay for their transportation needs	make sure transportation is included in existing financial literacy programs, offering financial coaching, financial wellness program for vehicle savings	Iowa Able, EKDC, WIOA/AJC program	Better Sameness	Medium	5				3



Transportation Project Concepts

Key Understandings

Note: our human centered design thinking process stresses understanding drivers of human behavior and how that should shape the solutions we develop. models 2) literacy 3) share 4) give 5) give 6) earn 7) special circumstances 8) volunteer 9) employee benefit 10) partnership 11) policy change 12) government 13) The concepts and ideas on this chart represent ideas generated during our ideation sessions supplemented by additional research- both within the transportation field. A next step will be to apply filters for Concept Desirability, Feasibility and Viability

Uniqueness	Potential Impact
Better Sameness	Low
New to us/incremental	Medium
New to us/Step change	High

Transformational

Adoptability Rating

Work Group Themes	Concept Theme	Concept Category	Concept Ideas	Concept Idea Detail/Examples Resources	Idea Ranking (see key above)	BN	TW	CC	AR	LL
Government, Infrastructure	Improved Transportation System Design (Infrastructure)	Bespoke Transportation System Design	Transportation Task Force (not just bus provider) meets with cities to design tailored solution for their city (which may include changes in both transportation systems and urban design)	DART works with City of Grimes...."In the meantime, DART will continue to work with Grimes officials to determine how they can serve their transportation needs in the future, Hockman said".	Better Sameness	4	4	4	4	4
		Greater use of Trail System	Consider the trail system to be part of our public transit system	utilize trail from downtown to Gray's Lake for recreation access, autonomous bike share bikes on the trail	New to us/incremental	3				
		Mobility Center	Central location for multiple transportation options including public, car or bike sharing, ride sharing, etc.		New to us/Step change		3	4	4	4
Policy Change, Government, Infrastructure	Transportation Need Avoidance Strategies	Delivery Services	Services that eliminate the need for audience mobility by bringing physical services to the audience	Meals on Wheels, pharmacy or nurses deliver drugs, grocery store delivers groceries, etc.	Better Sameness		4	3		4
			Services that eliminate the need for audience mobility by delivering third party services to the audience	delivery of prescription to pharmacy	New to us/incremental					
		Urban Design	Minimize the spatial mismatch of jobs and residences (spatial barriers). Make transportation needs a key element of urban design. Walkability to transit option, bike friendly, etc.	Transit Oriented Development (TOD)- a coordinated development of land use and transit investment near a transit station, multi tenant business locations near affordable housing locations	New to us/Step change					
			Virtual Service delivery	Minimize transportation needs by providing access to services virtually	Better Sameness		2	4	4	3
		Remote Work	Encourage more work to be done remotely where possible to eliminate commuting needs	video doctor visits, etc	New to us/incremental					4

The following are Concept Solutions that are foundational to the above Concept Solutions

Transportation Project Concepts

Key Understandings

Note: our human centered design thinking process stresses understanding drivers of human behavior and how that should shape the solutions we develop. models 2) literacy 3) share 4) give 5) give 6) earn 7) special circumstances 8) volunteer 9) employee benefit 10) partnership 11) policy change 12) government 13) The concepts and ideas on this chart represent ideas generated during our ideation sessions supplemented by additional research- both within the transportation field. A next step will be to apply filters for Concept Desirability, Feasibility and Viability

Uniqueness	Potential Impact
Better Sameness	Low
New to us/incremental	Medium
New to us/Step change	High
	Transformational

Work Group Themes	Concept Theme	Concept Category	Concept Ideas	Concept Idea Detail/Examples Resources	Idea Ranking (see key above)
Partnerships	Enabling Partnerships (Partnerships)	Partnerships	Partnerships with transportation suppliers, employers (corporate collaboration)	Lyft offering rides to 60m low income riders, employers offering transportation subsidy as an employee benefit, employers reexamining whether job really requires a car, transportation accessibility training for employers	Better Sameness Medium
Government, Policy Change	Transportation Solution Leadership and Governance (Government, Policy Change)	Coalitions for Equitable Transportation Access	"Collective impact" mechanisms/programs, which build a common agenda among stakeholders who commit to shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support within a dedicated organization.....U. Note: City of Des Moines just set up a more informal version of this for Food Insecurity.	we envision regional Coalitions for Equitable Transportation Access (CETAs) that would unite stakeholders to meet all these goals. Each CETA would include representatives from a broad range of key stakeholders The coalition would aim to provide low-income families better access to opportunity through a mix of transportation strategies.	Urban Institute New to us/incremental Transformational
		Reducing barriers to driving	Reduce the barriers that exist to an individual's ability to own/drive a car	reduce the complexity and requirements for licensing, transit friendly pricing of insurance, asset limits for owners of certain vehicles, etc.)	New to us/incremental Medium
Life Hacks	Life Hacks	Life Hacks	"Workarounds" that people develop to solve their transportation challenges. Identify and share these with a broader audience.	individual who got food from food bank in order to save money for car, parent gets a red wagon to haul kids and items	Better Sameness Medium

SESSION 1: insights

Getting Acquainted



Personas Page 1

1. A.L.I.C.E (Asset Limited Income Constricted Employed)

- Goal was to own a car
- Car ownership had its own problems (Expensive)
- Demographic Representation Before COVID 22%, After COVID 33%
- Money is the biggest issue in this persona.

2. Single Mom

- Walks everywhere
- Bus is confusing and overwhelming
- Counts on others for rides
- Pays people to give her a ride
- Always confined to the house and would do more with her kids if she had her own transportation.
- Cars don't operate on friendship or love.



Personas Page 2

3. New Iowan + Single Mom

- Does not have a car
- Depends on Medicaid
- Occasional rides from friends and taxis
- No bus stops in her area
- Does not have a job
- Speaks primarily Spanish
- Always tight on money
- No social life

4. Returning Citizen

- Current transportation is a motorcycle, too cold to drive.
- Difficult to get driver's license and talked about needs for a credit card for ride services
- Car is a goal for them
- Tempted to drive without licenses
- Emotional barrier (too proud) of being driven to a job interview by son.
- Prison Education program around licenses



Personas Page 3

5. Senior Citizen

- Recently purchased a car and loves being self-reliant
- Expenses are a concern
- Uses her grocery money for a car and had the groceries subsidized by the food pantry
- Would drive to her funeral



Insights Page 1

- People are looking for independence not transportation
- Shame is a common Denominator Emotion
- Rethink the "adult bus experience"
- Will remote working change the challenge
- Solving for transportation but not just to go to work
- Stress of depending on others
- Embracing Workarounds (Car vs Food)
- Correlative Data on both spectrums (Outcomes to car ownership vs Outcomes of needing car ownership)
- Acculturation vs Assimilation - Women that are single, Prisoners being released, First generation, License Status/Aquisition
- Some form of translation - (tech, language, city understanding)
- Path to Financial Literacy
- Will remote working make a greater divide
- Convenience vs Expense relationship (Including risk like driving without a license)
- What is the turning point? Early adopters will learn new processes/technologies, but most people will wait until a practice is common to learn
- Employers, schools, doctors, etc all have a reason to want transportation to be better, but it isn't their core mission. Should it be?
- Individuals need the ability to choose a transportation solution that is going to work for them depending on their day and/or their circumstances. Not every solution should or needs to be the same.



Insights Page 2

- Transportation is complex and the challenges are both individual and universal
- Desire to be independent and not rely on others
- Calling out the cycle of poverty
- The feeling of less than
- We don't have a public transit culture
- Challenges are complex and individual
- Solutions must be simple
- Is there something beyond public transit or ride share?
- Importance of solving for emotional hurdles
- 75% say its a problem
- Stigma cant be around that this solution is for poor people
- Change how the community views public transit
- Cost to the family Unit
- Consensus on how and where people will work
- Business community - Large employers and others



SESSION 2: hopes, fears, sacred cows

Building Empathy & Trust



Hopes Page 1

Jeff Reed

1. We can actually make a change even if incremental
2. We better understand who we serve outside of just numbers
3. Identify new ways of leveraging the system
4. Connect more verticals within transportation to solve for this
5. We have fun
6. Have ah-ha moments the create change

Amber

1. Have one option that shows all the ideas around transportation (Hacks)
2. Get people where they want to go when they want to go (independence)
3. That people use the solution

Boaz

1. Its not from getting from point A to Point B so find out the middle
2. Find ways that we can all have access to public transportation, identify how we can get to that point.
3. We all get to know each other and be able to help our customers and eliminate the duplication of services.
4. Any other places (State, city, county) doing better with public transportation.



Hopes Page 2

Tobi

1. Build a sustainable system that people will want to use.
2. Alleviate the pain points from people that need access to transportation
3. To lower the number of vehicles on the road and reduce environmental impacts of citizens driving vehicles.
4. The process results in actions that positively change people's lives

Catlin

1. Elevate the role that transportation has in our community and how it addresses systemic issues around poverty
2. Identify ways to lessen the transportation barriers
3. Improve the public perception of transportation and the willingness for the community to invest in these systems.

Jeff Rader

1. Bringing together the right groups for a sustainable solution
2. Change the mindset around public transportation



Hopes Page 3

Steve

1. Manage the complexity
2. Come up with some measures of success
3. Develop some actionable plans so that things actually happen
4. Find innovative solutions
5. The value of Design Thinking

Carlos

1. It serves the true needs of those who we are designing for
2. It has adoption and deploys true impact
3. Changes the local culture around public transportation
4. It rethinks transportation (not just going from point A to point B)
5. Gets a diverse contribution of thought
6. Deploys action of strategic decision makers
7. Enables synergy that create positive experiences and solutions that go together (eliminate the shame factor)



Fears Page 1

Jeff Reed

1. Action is not taken
2. People lose sight of who they are solving the issue for
3. If a new true need for transportation is uncovered and not supported by the community/stakeholders

Tobi

1. Nothing comes of our process
2. [L] [SEP] We implement a great solution but the public doesn't buy-in
- [L] [SEP] 3. People have negative reactions to access to public transportation (public transport lines running more regularly from city to suburbs)
4. [L] [SEP] We're not able to adequately fund the project
5. [L] [SEP] Only half measures on implemented and though partially positive, leaders feel "good enough" is sufficient.

Amber

1. We don't have the right group to move the idea forward
2. Losing funding for the solutions that come out of this
3. Driving might still be seen as the easier option



Fears Page 2

Catlin

1. Caught up in the complexity of the problem and get stuck
2. Wont get buy in from our local elected officials (Dart - Public Funding)
3. Accidentally leave someone out of the solution
4. Unintended consequences from solutions that we create

Carlos

1. Get scared of the effort required and shoot for the easiest solution
2. Lack of resources and infrastructure
3. Wrong context
4. Not paying attention to key stakeholders

Boaz

1. People will not be willing to step out of their comfort zone to talk about these issue
2. This project will be time consuming and people will give up and lose interest
3. How inclusive is this project going to be and do we find everyone to have a voice in this?
4. Done with them, not for them.



Fears Page 3

Luke

1. Changing the mindset that we can't do something to prevail
2. Changing the mindset that this doesn't affect me
3. Eliminating the thought that this doesn't happen in "my backyard"
4. Agencies, governments, non-profits are not collaborating

Jeff Rader

1. We fail to truly understand audiences and their needs, and create a solution that doesn't work or isn't embraced
2. we produce good solution, which never gets acted on
3. we under-think or overthink this
4. we fail to take opportunity to go big

Steve

1. buried by complexity
2. dependencies on other factors out of our control (more mass transit needs)
3. solving transportation isn't enough (poverty "neutralizes" transportation solution)
4. do we have enough time (it's a big problem)?



Sacred Cows Page 1

Jeff Reed

1. We always keep those that we are solving for/serving at the forefront through empathy and creative collaboration. We solve this with people, not for people.
2. Our solution allows for scaled growth in the communities both near and far so that we can measure the effectiveness of the solution.

Amber

1. Whatever we decide as a solution needs to be affordable, convenient, and remember the families in this.

Catlin

1. Convenience
2. Think about the shame factor
3. Whatever solutions are identified need to encapsulate the entire region not just the metro
4. Collaboration is going to be key to the success

Jeff Rader

1. Create something that can be built on over time.
3. Have the "I love it"
4. Be an enabler of the solution



Sacred Cows Page 2

Luke

1. Serves those in need
2. Collaboration

Boaz

1. Public Voice - (community collaboration)
2. Funding

Steve

1. We will place too much emphasis on
2. Ask the audience members to make adjustments
3. Not having a hesitancy of to ask for needs
4. Prioritize audiences over others

Carlos

1. Eliminate or minimize the shame factor
2. Solve for the triggering need
3. Solution should not be a transaction but an experience.



SESSION 3 how might we....

Framing the challenge



Version 1.0

HMW..... unite transportation services in central Iowa to get the most bang for our buck.

HMW.....provide transportation to all central Iowa residents that address core living needs (work, food, school, healthcare).

HMW.....remove transportation as a barrier for income restricted central Iowans so they have effective transportation options allowing them to meet their basic living needs.

HMW.....change the stigma of public transportation to get broad buy in from the public?

HMW.....build a solution that is top of mind for ALL that need access which in turn eliminates the stigma around who uses it or needs it.

HMW.....End the stigma associated with public transportation

HMW.....create a transportation system for central Iowans that is affordable, convenient, clean and reliable

HMW.....Serve those most in need.

HMW..... serve the disadvantaged population by providing effective transit solutions that align with their path towards living a successful life.

HMW..... foster better collaboration of transportation resources across our region?



Version 2.0

- 1.1 HMW..... unite our resources through collaboration to identify, expand on, and enable transportation solutions for central lowans that is accessible, affordable, convenient, clean and reliable that connect people to their essential needs.
- 1.2 HMW..... identify, expand on, and enable transportation resources that create an accessible, affordable, convenient, clean and reliable solution through collaboration and connect central lowans to their essential needs.
- 1.3 HMW..... identify, expand on, and enable transportation resources that create an accessible, affordable, convenient, clean and reliable solution through collaboration that reinforces a positive cultural mindset and connects central lowans to their essential needs.
- 1.4 HMW..... identify, expand on, and enable a viable transportation resources that create an accessible, affordable, convenient, clean and reliable solution through collaboration that reinforces a positive cultural mindset and connects central lowans to their essential needs.
- 1.5 HMW.....connect central lowans to their essential needs, by identifying, expanding and enabling convenient and viable transportation solutions, through strategic collaboration.
- 1.6 HMW.....connect central lowans to their wants and needs, by identifying, expanding and enabling convenient, diverse and viable transportation solutions, through strategic collaboration.
- 2.0 HMW.....connect central lowans to their individual needs, by identifying, expanding and enabling convenient, diverse and viable transportation solutions, through strategic collaboration.



SESSION 4: ideation

designing the possibilities



Ideation Day Agenda

Session Date and Times

- December 2nd, 2020
- Session #1 – 9am to 11am
 - Design Team
 - Core Team
 - Collaborators
- Session #2 – 1pm to 3pm
 - Design Team
 - End Users

Recruiting

- Each Core Team Member recruit 3-4 contributors for session #1
- Each Core Team Member recruit 3-4 End Users for session #2

Notes

- Contributors do not need to be subject matter experts, they need to be able to dream and be good collaborators
- End Users need to have an understanding of the issue at hand



Potential ideas for design - Session 1

1. What if we created an app for the ALICE population that was a take off of a ride sharing app.
2. Car ownership program
3. Biden fleet transition plan to electric hybrids
4. Federal agencies follow government property management rules – sell cars or give to nonprofits
5. Nonprofits create program for distribution (sale / lease) to individuals (Aspen Hubs Report discussion/precedent); program developed may parallel something similar to SNAP
6. Affordable Car Ownership Programs.
7. WIOA Adult Program
8. Match savings programs that her employer or a credit union could offer to help her with a savings plan?
9. Language/technology barriers may be an issue for apps as well
10. Sweat equity towards car/home ownership – volunteerism, community engagement to earn a vehicle
11. Incentive program for employers and educational systems to provide access to transportation.
12. For individuals under 250%
13. Carpool
14. Provide vehicles
15. Donated from public/gov and private sectors
16. Gas voucher
17. DART pass
18. Financial Literacy around savings towards a car.
19. Special circumstance Transportation- Prebooked based on need. Organized and also sponsored by multiple - industries.
20. Create a financial wellness program to help people save for a vehicle?
21. Employees can hold back cash to help towards purchase of a car. Work with select dealers (have surplus cars to use?).
22. Recognize privilege. Not everyone has technology access, smart phone.
23. Access Polk Co./EKDC Financial Empowerment Center financial coaching for assistance with bill paying, credit reports, and savings. Asset building—save for a vehicle. Offer free passes for folks who access coaching programs, attend appointments, etc.
24. More employment partners (service industries where many earning low wages work) with DART for reduced fare/free passes. DMACC students can get a free pass.
25. Neighborhood accessibility: sidewalk safety/walkability to bus stops.
26. financial coaching is free to all, no income guidelines required. Anyone can work with a coach--BTW, all certified financial coaches.



Potential ideas for design - Session 1

28. Go Go (Senior Citizen Safety option) - <https://gogograndparent.com/>
29. School Bus driver collaboration with non-profits w/ vehicles (volunteer program)
30. Iowa Able Foundation does financial coaching that could be a collaboration for financial coaching piece (non-profit in Ames)
31. Central repository of ALL transportation options and a navigator that people can call to figure out a route (kind of like the Primary Healthcare Housing solution)
32. Set up a volunteer drivers group where people can call to get a ride (maybe an app like Uber)
33. Add comforts to the current system – heaters at the bus stops? Electric scooters to get to the next spot?
34. Partner with car rental agencies to help individuals rent a car at a lower (free?) price
35. System where individual can get a car and make payments towards it that will eventually allow them to own the car
36. Transportation specifically designed for moms with kids:
37. Something like an Uber moms/uber kids/ Lyft fams/DART family
38. Costs supported by employers as a benefit to employees, like the DART pass some employers offer.
39. Some programs that exist in other places:
40. <https://www.hopskipdrive.com/families/>
41. <https://www.gosafr.com/blog/a-women-friendly-version-of-uber-is-here/> ^P_{SEP}
42. School busses
43. Naming rights
44. Frequent traveler
45. Car rental companies
46. Car Savings Accounts
47. Retiree rides
48. Bringing the jobs to the people: co-location facilities where multiple large employers build and share physical locations near where people live, so they can go into work without having to travel long distances.
49. Bringing people to the jobs: by repurposing into affordable housing certain real estate that is now in over-supply because, for example, work from home is so mainstream and people increasingly shop online.
50. Fare free transit system (offset by additional alternate revenue streams/prop tax formula adjustments/sales tax/etc) eliminates cost barriers, some perceptual barriers.
51. additional last mile options (on demand public transit options/expansions for last mile) based on need



Potential ideas for design - Session 1

- 52. Mobility Centers that include bike share and car sharing options, specifically in areas that in the outreaches of our community where current transit doesn't reach. This could help facilitate first mile, last mile solutions to connect to transit to finish their commute. Sharing programs that includes cost effective measures for the ALICE population. One Stop, One Click transportation call center or website that pulls together all the communities transportation resources.
- 53. If cities want to keep building, they way they are – they should subsidize the transportation. People typically don't choose how their city was planned; they just have to deal with the consequences.
- 54. The cities and region nearly require a car, and it is assumed they automatically have 1000s of dollars to afford one – yet give large subsidies to businesses to continue the sprawl and transportation is one of the last things considered in development
- 55. eliminate reason for transportation
- 56. transportation stipend
- 57. use trails for transportation (electric bikes)
- 58. Following up on Daniel's point. For individuals who are seeking education, training and employment; there is assistance via the WIOA program. Each local area will have policies regarding how the assistance functions. But a starting point would be contacting your local American Job Centers (AJCs). There is a listing of the AJC on the IWD website: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/>
- 59. Truly livable and walkable neighborhoods and include access to someone's basic needs of housing, food access, childcare/school and that are adjacent to transportation options that connect neighborhoods to the urban centers. Economic develop and land use needs to include funding transportation options or access.
- 60. If we are going to think outside the box.... no roads, no parking garages/spaces....<https://images.app.goo.gl/brfghPYb63b8tZ5o6>
- 61. IEDA's block grants might be a funding option for a project. I know they have a rural focus for some of their funding, but I'm not sure if that is part of their block grants.
- 62. Tech for everyone
- 63. Our car
- 64. Gofundme
- 65. Free public self-driving pods that you order. They pick you up where you are and take you where you want to go.
- 66. Transportation Accessibility Training and roundtables with service providers and employers to find local solutions
- 67. Why do we need 1 car per family, person, etc.
- 68. Moving jobs remote to eliminate the need for travel



Potential ideas for design - Session 2

- 69. Can we use XPO/Logistics Companies and an Analogous option for solutions?
- 70. Educational or employment opportunities/programs that could lead to an increase in financial stability
- 71. Iowa Able-Low cost interest loan options for help with purchasing a vehicle
- 72. Programs that could allow for saving money to purchase a car
- 73. Using insurance for transportation
- 74. How long does it take her to get to a bus stop? Look at other access points in the area
- 75. Preplanning for planning a route and calling about when routes will have a bus coming
- 76. Made aware of how to preplan their trip
- 77. Did not see her utilizing Dart as a main form of transportation
- 78. Would see them using Uber more
- 79. Got a parent a wagon to get the kids and all of their items to and from
- 80. Rent Cars by the hour/check out the car - Active in Illinois (ZipCar)
- 81. Mobility Centers that allow for sharing of multiple resources (Bikes, Cars, etc.)
- 82. The Extra Mile
- 83. Get rid of the MCO's
- 84. How do we address potential challenges by bringing the resources to them.
- 85. What are people traveling for?
- 86. Looking at rural needs and options
- 87. Need to view transportation
- 88. Employer Paid Transportation options
- 89. Health insurance provided options for transportation coverage
- 90. Need a caregiver for Transportation
- 91. Options in Delaware around an aggregator (211 isn't close to what it could be and is very passive)
- 92. Could 211 be a starting point for entire aggregation model?
- 93. School buses have down time and maybe could be used?



Potential ideas for design - Session 2

- 94. Eat Greater Des Moines has partnered with Wesley Life-Meals on Wheels to help pick up and deliver food rescue. I believe they have also partnered with a local brewery that has a few vans that sit idle for large periods of time.
- 95. Missing category would be social pressures: There are job descriptions that read as "must have a car" to work there which puts people that want to or can use public transportation.
- 96. Are job postings inclusive of those without a car? Is it necessary to have a vehicle? Like the ban the box discussion.
- 97. The people that we have talked about are not only money poor, but time poor. They need to budget their energy very carefully.
- 98. Language barriers are a consideration.
- 99. Micro Transit
- 100.<https://www.iowarideshare.org/Public/Home.aspx>
- 101.Need to look at multiple solutions that fit into multiple audiences
- 102.H.O.P.E. Acronym - How did she solve for barriers that she had? We would provide transportation for someone when they find a job and then she can work until they car is paid for and then re-owns it. Habitat for humanity concept for cars.
- 103.Is there a way to expand the service for those that need the little extra in the link or Dart area around handicapped.
- 104A light rail system.
- 105.Rideshare, transportation hub in a parking ramp downtown
- 106.Could you partner with Amazon?
- 107.How do we identify the path to to more jobs (when someone has 0 jobs, 1 job, 2, jobs, etc.)
- 108.Property Taxes be more equitable from the larger companies (ie, amazon, google, FB)
- 109.You don't look to the arsonist to give solutions on putting out the fire

109 Ideas in 240 minutes



SESSION 5: the download

consuming the insights



The initial themes

#1 ---> Aggregator Models

#2 ---> Literacy

#3 ---> Share

#4 ---> Give

#5 ---> Earn

#6 ---> Special Circumstances

#7 ---> Infrastructure

#8 ---> Volunteer

#9 ---> Employee Benefit

#10 ---> Partnership

#11 ---> Policy Change

#12 ---> Government

#13 ---> Status

KEY INSIGHT

We can not tie this to one persona based on the conversation



Earn

- I read her story, and that she feels her ideal situation is to own a private car for her children. So I wonder how we could help her achieve the goal she wants for herself. Are there match savings programs that her employer or a credit union could offer to help her with a savings plan?
- Incentive program for (DEEP DIVE?) employers and educational systems to provide access to transportation.
 - For individuals under 250%
 - Car pool
 - Provide vehicles
 - Donated from public/gov and private sectors
 - Gas voucher
 - DART pass
- Employees can hold back cash to help towards purchase of a car
- System where individual can get a car and make payments towards it that will eventually allow them to own the car
- Frequent traveler
- Car Savings Accounts
- Educational or employment opportunities/programs that could lead to an increase in financial stability (Literacy)
- Iowa Able-Low cost interest loan options for help with purchasing a vehicle
- We would provide transportation for someone when they find a job and then she can work until their car is paid for and then re-owns it. Habitat for humanity concept for cars.

Give

- Transportation stipend
- Car rental companies
- Car ownership program
 - Biden fleet transition plan to electric hybrids
 - Federal agencies follow government property management rules – sell cars or give to nonprofits
 - Nonprofits create program for distribution (sale / lease) to individuals (Aspen Hubs Report discussion/precedent);
 - program developed may parallel something like SNAP
- Sweat equity towards car/home ownership – volunteerism, community engagement to earn a vehicle\
- Fare free transit system (offset by additional alternate revenue streams/prop tax formula adjustments/sales tax/etc) eliminates cost barriers, some perceptual barriers., additional last mile options (on demand public transit options/expansions for last mile) based on need (Policy/Government)
- Employer Paid Transportation options (Benefit)
- Health insurance provided options for transportation coverage (Benefit)



Share

- School busses (Partner)
- Set up a volunteer drivers group where people can call to get a ride (maybe an app like Uber) (Volunteer)
- School Bus driver collaboration with non-profits w/ vehicles (volunteer program) (Partner)
- Retiree rides (Volunteer)
- Partner with car rental agencies to help individuals rent a car at a lower (free?)
- Would see them using Uber more
- Rent Cars by the hour/check out the car - Active in Illinois (ZipCar)
- Rideshare, transportation hub in a parking ramp downtown
- School buses have down time and maybe could be used?

Infrastructure

- Add comforts to the current system – heaters at the bus stops? Electric scooters to get to the next spot? (Optimizing)
- Neighborhood accessibility: sidewalk safety/walkability to bus stops. \
- If cities want to keep building they way they are – they should subsidize the transportation. People typically don't choose how their city was planned, they just have to deal with the consequences.
- The cities and region nearly require a car, and it is assumed they automatically have 1000s of dollars to afford one – yet give large subsidies to businesses to continue the sprawl and transportation is one of the last things considered in development. (Policy)
- Bringing people to the jobs: by repurposing into affordable housing certain real estate that is now in over-supply because, for example, work from home is so mainstream and people increasingly shop online. (Transportation Elimination)
- Bringing the jobs to the people: co-location facilities where multiple large employers build and share physical locations near where people live, so they can go into work without having to travel long distances. (Transportation Elimination)
- How long does it take her to get to a bus stop? Look at other access points in the area
- Truly livable and walkable neighborhoods and include access to someone's basic needs of housing, food access, childcare/school and that are adjacent to transportation options that connect neighborhoods to the urban centers. Economic develop and land use needs to include funding transportation options or access.
- Moving jobs remote to eliminate the need for travel
- Is there a way to expand the service for those that need the little extra in the link or Dart area around handicapped.
- Are job postings inclusive of those without a car? Is it really necessary to have a vehicle? Similar to the ban the box discussion.
- Missing category would be social pressures: There are job descriptions that read as "must have a car" to work there which puts people that want to or can use public transportation.



Literacy

- Iowa Able Foundation does financial coaching that could be a collaboration for financial coaching piece (non-profit in Ames)
- financial coaching is free to all, no income guidelines required. Anyone can work with a coach--BTW, all certified financial coaches.
<https://www.empowermoney.org/book>
- Access Polk Co./EKDC Financial Empowerment Center financial coaching for assistance with bill paying, credit reports, and savings. Asset building—save for a vehicle. Offer free passes for folks who access coaching programs, attend appointments, etc.
- Create a financial wellness program to help people save for a vehicle?
- Preplanning for planning a route and calling about when routes will have a bus coming
- Made aware of how to preplan their trip
- Transportation Accessibility Training and roundtables with service providers and employers to find local solutions
- For individuals who are seeking education, training and employment; there is assistance via the WIOA program. Each local area will have policies regarding how the assistance functions. But a starting point would be contacting your local American Job Centers (AJCs). There is a listing of the AJC on the IWD website: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/>



Aggregators

- What if we created an app for the ALICE population that was a take off of a ride sharing app?
 - You would have to qualify for the app service (income? Family situation?)
 - The App would be used exclusively for certain life circumstances:
 - To and from work
 - To and from school
 - To and from groceries
 - To and from bank
 - To vote
 - Doctors appointments
 - The App then reached out to providers for fleet or transportation options
 - Non-profits could offer it
 - Dart?
 - Partner with Uber and/or Lyft for reduced rates
 - Issues?
 - Payer source, who pays for it?, MCO's? State?
 - Volume? Would there be enough need for it to be a business case for DART or a non-profit to offer the service? Too much need?
- Central repository of ALL transportation options and a navigator that people can call to figure out a route (kind of like the Primary Healthcare Housing solution)
- use trails for transportation (electric bikes)
- Mobility Centers that include bike share and car sharing options, specifically in areas that in the outreaches of our community where current transit doesn't reach. This could help facilitate first mile, last mile solutions to connect to transit to finish their commute. Sharing programs that includes cost effective measures for the ALICE population. One Stop, One Click transportation call center or website that pulls together all the communities transportation resources.
- Micro Transit
 - <https://www.iowarideshare.org/Public/Home.aspx>
- Options in Delaware around an aggregator (211 isnt close to what it could be and is very passive)



Special Circumstances

- Special circumstance Transportation- Prebooked based on need.
- Transportation specifically designed for moms with kids (**Employee Benefit**)
 - Something like an Uber moms/uber kids/ Lyft fams/DART family
 - Costs supported by employers as a benefit to employees, like the DART pass some employers offer.
 - Some programs that exist in other places:
 - <https://www.hopskipdrive.com/families/>
 - <https://www.gosafr.com/blog/a-women-friendly-version-of-uber-is-here/>
- Go Go (Senior Citizen Safety option) - <https://gogograndparent.com/>
- Got a parent a wagon to get the kids and all of their items to and from

Partnerships

- More employment partners (service industries where many earning low wages work) with DART for reduced fare/free passes. DMACC students can get a free pass.
- Can we use XPO/Logistics Companies and an Analogous option for solutions?
- Could you partner with Amazon?
- Eat Greater Des Moines has partnered with Wesley Life-Meals on Wheels to help pick up and deliver food rescue. I believe they have also partnered with a local brewery that has a few vans that sit idle for large periods of time.

Awareness

- Looking at rural needs and options
- Need to view transportation
- Need a recreogo for Transportation

Life Hacks

- IMPORTANT CONVESATION TO DEEP DIVE ON



Potential Design Principles

1. Literacy
2. Technology
3. Language Inclusive
4. Recognize privilege. Not everyone has technology access, smart phone
5. Funding
 1. Naming rights
 2. IEDA's block grants might be a funding option for a project. I know they have a rural focus for some of their funding
6. Need to look at multiple solutions that fit into multiple audiences
7. The people that we have talked about are not only money poor, but time poor. They need to budget their energy very carefully.
8. How does transportation become a community amenity?

BIGGEST INSIGHT

We can not tie this to one persona based on the conversation.

SESSION 6: the feedback

Concept feedback for stakeholders



Concept #1 – Mobility Solution Group

To make this happen today:

- We need the ownership of this group to happen
- Funding
- Who runs it
- Define who is part of this - What are the strategic partnerships, human services, end users

Landmines

- Some of the current groups are political or industry
- Users we are talking about today are not being talked about in the current groups
- Have groups that meet around issues and passions, but they are missing a person or organization to run it through
- A lot of these groups are truly volunteered
- Need time from an entity to help them move forward
- Putting a group together that proves the community is not paying for the need of transportation
- Avoid the "we worked really hard and all we did was form a community"
- Funding options get denied and don't want to change taxes or revenue streams in how we fund these groups
- Someone has to own it or fund it
- Goes back to the elected leadership
- Already groups meeting to have these conversation, would this just be seen as "another group"?



Concept #1 - Mobility Solution Group

Recommendations

- Seeking out information to the audiences that they serve
- Expand the "team" - grassroots effort. Community advocates, civic leaders, anchor institutions like colleges and universities
- NPO Meets a couple times a year - Brings human services
- Mobility Coalition Group - Dart, NPO, United Way
- GDMP (Transit Future Work Group)
- Potential options around including the DOT
- Community Based organizations should be at the table - Community Citizens for Impact Group has power to impact
- Taking the bottoms up Approach - Through the lens of the user
- Scheduling is an issue, different shifts,
- Bringing in the employers to the table for solving this
- Employer Councils
- Kansas City went to a fare free system and are getting federal funding to expand service and routes



Concept #2 – Mobility Accelerator

To make this happen today:

- Community Foundation would be a great organization
- Match Donors and Ideas to causes

Landmines

- Have organizations to put in initial funding but need a better sustainability plan on how to continue funding
- Funding Transportation is not a money maker
- Dental Clinic provides transportation to kids
- Funding, Funding, Funding
- I think there are several companies (through their foundations) that would fund transportation initiatives like this. The problem with grant funding is the continuity. We could get some good ideas going...but where would the funding come from to maintain the programs. (This is always the problem with private grant funding.)



Concept #2 – Mobility Accelerator

Recommendations

- A lot of philanthropy organizations often get their investments siloed into housing and food.
- Getting clearer in the messaging about how transportation effects everything
- This is something that MCO's could be paying for
- Private organizations that are getting funding already should have some skin in the game.
- Need to communicate ROI better
- Connect with Next Level Ventures?
- Tech Stars?
- We are missing an innovation capability
- Investment from Ag or Ev in solving for funding from these companies
- Causes that are tied into government entities
- A requirement needs to be that they perpetuate funding on their own and not reliant on it



Concept #3 – Multi-Model

To make this happen today:

- Funding
- Match Donors and Ideas to causes

Landmines

- Language Barriers
- Reliability and usability of the system
- The challenge is in the system of policy, zoning, funding,
- Ownership - Who manages it, who deals with it?
- Needs to account for all personas - Disability, Health, etc.

Recommendations

- Lets go to Kansas City
- Multi- model bus pass that covers, bus, bike, uber, etc.
- Work with Community Groups & Bike Club in Des Moines



Concept #4 – Never Idle

To make this happen today:

- Small sample group of drivers
- Connect with a Non-profit and those they serve

Landmines

- All comes back to funding
- Liability
- Most individuals making the trips via uber, lyft, etc are not getting paid what they need to make it a long-term career

Recommendations

- Some way to leverage people in the community already
- No show rates at Everystep - Can you leverage people already that are out in the community
- Bringing Vaccines, Groceries, SNAP, Food, to the clients
- Look at VaxiTaxi Concept



Concept #5 – MobiMe

To make this happen today:

- Spreadsheet or guide
- Website

Landmines

- API's into other software
- Risk would be around pushing people from Dart
- depends on how big this gets
- Taking business away from Dart
- Visual and hearing challenges?
- Accessible to all languages
- Accessible to those without tech/phones

Recommendations

- This seems like something that could be funded and coming together in smaller steps
- One side is paying for the other (general public pays for qualified users that can access it)
- Understand how many people in poverty have phones
- incorporate with 211.org or 211 App



**WE FALL IN LOVE
WITH THE CHALLENGE
NOT THE SOLUTION.**

