SENeca COUNTY
Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan
2018-2022

Great Lakes COMMUNITY ACTION Partnership
For more information about this plan please contact Kristen Gerwin, Mobility Coordinator, at 419-333-5081 or kdgerwin@glcap.org

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Executive Summary

This plan is the Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Seneca County, Ohio. The plan was initially developed in 2016 and, because of its recent completion; it has been largely modified just to match the format of this template provided in 2017 by the Ohio Department of Transportation. Some updating has occurred in 2017.

This plan fulfills the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, signed into law as a reauthorization of surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020. According to requirements of the FAST Act, locally developed coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans must be updated to reflect the changes established by the FAST Act legislation. The FAST Act applies new programs and rules for all Fiscal Year 2016 funds and authorizes transit programs for five (5) years.

Transportation is a critical component of the communities in Seneca County. Transportation provides access to jobs, education, healthcare, human services and it allows all community members, including older adults and people with disabilities, to live independently and engage in community life. It is the purpose of this plan for local stakeholders to work collaboratively to do the following activities:

1. Identify all community resources such as: Seneca Crawford Area Transportation (SCAT), Seneca County Commission on Aging, Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Seneca County Veterans Services, Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services, and other related transportation services including local taxi services, and private residential, medical, and transportation entities, all which provide transportation to their clientele and residential population.

2. Identify and prioritize community transportation needs, such as: improving regional coordination and making it easier to cross county lines (including travel within Fostoria), a need for extension of service earlier and/or later in the day, provision of weekend services, implementing a Tiffin flex route, addressing Medicaid non-medical transportation needs, improving community awareness of available transportation resources, and improved coordination by executing memorandums of Understanding between Seneca County agencies and providers, among others.

3. Establish a clear plan for achieving shared goals, through such actions as updating and providing (on several platforms) information on available transportation resources; maintaining a process of coordinated vehicle fleet replacement; Creating a plan of action using mobility management techniques to examine the costs and duties; Identifying methods,
including best practices used elsewhere, to make crossing the county line more affordable and easier to accomplish; and Identifying and implementing strategies to make scheduling demand response more flexible.

Fundamental to the Coordinated Transportation Plan process is the active and meaningful involvement of stakeholders. For projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program, participation in planning activities must include participation and/or representation of the following, at minimum:

- Seniors;
- Individuals with disabilities;
- People with low incomes;
- Public, private and non-profit transportation providers;
- Human services providers, and;
- The general public.

In order to ensure participation from the above groups the following stakeholder involvement activities were performed

- Regular meetings of the steering committee
- Interviews with key transportation providers and associated agencies, including SCAT, Seneca DJFS, the Seneca County Board of DD and clients, the Seneca County Office on Aging, the Seneca County office of Veteran’s services, and other stakeholder entities including Tiffin and Heidelberg Universities.
- Surveys of a number of provider and user groups, including; the general public at the Seneca County Fair (166 respondents); Seneca County Governmental Officials (6); Human and Social Service Agencies (10); Multi-Unit Housing occupants/providers (9); Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services (23); Employers (Human Resource officials) (12); Passengers (42); Transportation Providers (6); and University Students (151)

This plan was developed and adopted by Seneca County’s transportation planning committee. More information about the planning committee can be found in Appendix A.
I. Geographic Area
Seneca County is located in northwestern region of Ohio. Adjacent counties include Sandusky County to the north, Huron County to the east, Crawford County to the southeast, Wyandot County to the southwest, Hancock County to the west, and Wood County to the northwest. The county seat is Tiffin. Seneca County covers 553 square miles, of which 551 square miles is land and the remaining 1.8 square miles is water. Lakes and reservoirs include: Grassy Pond, Morrison Lake, Greenwich Reservoir, Mohawk Lake, Beaver Creek Upground Reservoir, Attica Upground Reservoir, and Seneca Shores.

Seneca County has two cities, Tiffin (the county seat) and Fostoria. The largest portion of Fostoria is located in Seneca County; however parts of this city are also located in Hancock and Wood Counties. Fostoria has a population of 13,244 (2010 Census of Population). Since 2000, it has had a population loss of 7.71 percent.

Tiffin has a 2010 Census population of 17,963, with a decrease of 1.07% from the 2000 census total of 18,158. The city is the home of two universities: Heidelberg and Tiffin Universities.
There are six villages in Seneca County: Attica, Bettsville, Bloomville, New Riegel, Republic and Green Springs (partly located in both Seneca and Sandusky Counties). Nearly all, with the exception of New Riegel, experienced population losses between 2000 and 2010. The county is divided into fifteen townships: Adams, Big Spring, Bloom, Clinton, Eden, Hopewell, Jackson, Liberty, Loudon, Pleasant, Reed, Scipio, Seneca, Thompson, and Venice (see map on preceding page). Seneca County also has twenty-nine unincorporated communities or hamlets.

The county is served by two U.S. highways and twelve State highways. There are 45.48 miles of U.S. highways: U.S. 224 which bisects the county from east to west and U.S. 23 which reached from north to south along the west side of the county. There are 176.76 miles of State highways include State Routes 4, 12, 18, 19, 53, 67, 100, 101, 162, 231, 587, 590, 635 and 778. Interestingly, State Route 778 is Ohio’s shortest State Route, only extending .43 miles (less than a half of a mile). It was established in 1942 as a shortcut to connect State Route 19 and State Route 101 near Green Springs. A highway map of Seneca County is presented on the following page.

**Map 1: Basic map of the geographic area covered by the plan**

Major Trip Generators

The six top trip destinations in alphabetical order are: education, employment, medical, recreational, shopping, and social services.
**Education:** The community takes pride in education, and there are 27 public school buildings serving 8,079 students in the county. Seneca County’s public school systems employ over 500 teachers. There are two non-public schools in Seneca County, with 728 students. The following facilities are recognized trip generators:

There are two private not-for-profit universities located in Tiffin, and these are untapped trip generators. Heidelberg University is a liberal arts college with a total of 1,088 undergraduate and 231 graduate students originating from eighteen states and sixteen countries. Eighty-four percent of the students live on campus.

Tiffin University had an enrollment in the Fall Semester of 2016 of 3,350 students comprised of undergraduate, graduate, on-line and distance learning students. The University is expanding its international studies and has over 200 international students representing thirty-three nations.

Sentinel Career Center is another educational asset in Seneca County, located on the southeastern edge of Tiffin. Sentinel is “committed to providing the future workforce with essential skills to become successful citizens.” Enrollment at Sentinel is approximately 500 students.

**Employment:** Places of employment are important trip generators for Seneca County’s public transportation system. The five largest sectors, making up 67% of Seneca County’s workforce in 2013, are Manufacturing, Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services, Retail, and Accommodation and Food Services. There are two hospitals in Seneca County, Fostoria Community Hospital and Tiffin Mercy Hospital. These medical facilities and surrounding medical offices are major trip generators within the County.

**Medical Facilities:** Mercy Tiffin Hospital has served the needs of the community for more than 100 years; it was founded in 1913 by the Sisters of Mercy and is fully accredited by The Joint Commission. A new Mercy Tiffin Hospital was constructed just south of US 224 at 45 St. Lawrence Drive in Tiffin, in 2008. ProMedica Fostoria Community Hospital is located at 501 Van Buren Street in Fostoria. It is a private, nonprofit organization and is a member of ProMedica Health System. ProMedica is a locally owned, nonprofit healthcare organization. The 25 bed hospital is a full-service, acute care hospital that serves the people of Fostoria, Seneca, Wood, and Hancock counties.

**Shopping:** A major consolidation of the shopping, banking, grocery stores and dining venues in Tiffin is located on the west side of the city along or near the West Market Street (State Route 18) corridor. The downtown area, which is undergoing a recent commercial resurgence, is
home to specialty stores, restaurants, banks, and is the center for government and legal authorities for the city and county. The east side of Tiffin has restaurants, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and Heritage IGA supermarket. Other retail venues are mixed in various locations around the city. Much of the shopping and commercial activity in Fostoria is located on State Route 23 and S.R. 23 by-pass also known as Countyline Street. Fostoria Plaza is located at the north end of the city; Kmart and Great Scot Supermarket are the anchor stores for this shopping center. The downtown area, Main Street, has The Glass Heritage Gallery, a used children’s clothing store, jewelers, bookstore, dining venues, the Municipal Court House, Police and Fire Departments, and specialty stores.

**Recreation:** Even though municipal parks are not frequent trip requests, it should be noted that the cities of Fostoria and Tiffin maintain quality Park and Recreation Departments. The Seneca County Park District has grown over the last decade and maintains the following facilities and sites: Bowen Nature Preserve – 11891 E. CR 24, Republic, Ohio; Forrest Nature Preserve – 701 E. CR 6, Tiffin, Ohio; Garlo Heritage Nature Preserve – 5777 S/ SR 19, Bloomville, Ohio; Steyer Nature Preserve – 5901 N CR 33, Tiffin, Ohio; Zimmerman Nature Preserve – 680 E. SR 18, Tiffin, Ohio 44883; and Opportunity Park, 780 E. County Road 20, Tiffin, OH 44883.

**Social Services:** The Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services is the largest social services agency in the county. The agency is located at 3362 S. Twp. Rd. 151, south of US 224 in Tiffin. Referral to other agencies for assistance can be made through First Call for Help. Both Tiffin and Fostoria have social service agencies that provide many forms of help such as food pantries, sharing kitchens, clothing banks, counseling service, senior socialization activities, childcare, pre-school programs, housing, and rent/utility payment assistance for those in need. There are many related programs that are supported by the Fostoria United Way and the Tiffin-Seneca United Way.
Map 2: Major trip generators in the geographic area

Traffic generation is discussed later in this document, in the assessment of needs and gaps.
II. Population Demographics
Seneca County is a largely rural, agricultural county with two major population centers. Tiffin is the largest community, the county seat, home to two universities with resident student populations (Tiffin University and Heidelberg University), and is centrally located within the county. Fostoria, historically a manufacturing center, is located on the western county line, with substantial segments of the city located in Hancock and Wood Counties as well as Seneca. A small number of villages are located throughout the county, including Attica, Bettsville, Bloomville, Green Springs, New Riegel, and Republic. There are also fifteen townships in Seneca County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>56,030</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>28,040</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>55,050</td>
<td>27,480</td>
<td>27,570</td>
<td>-980, -1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>53,040</td>
<td>26,350</td>
<td>26,680</td>
<td>-2,010, -3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2040</td>
<td>51,560</td>
<td>25,570</td>
<td>25,590</td>
<td>-1,480, -2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ohio Development Services Agency

The Ohio Development Services Agency’s Office of Research determined in their projection that Seneca County would face a fairly steady decline in total population over the coming years. Their online projection for the county indicates a 2015 population of 56,030, with a projected decrease to 55,050 in 2020 (a loss of 980 or 1.7 percent). Further projections arrived at a population of 53,040 in 2030 and 51,560 in 2040.

Total Population by Age Group
The 2011-2015 American Community Survey counted 55,929 people in Seneca County, with 17,546 in Tiffin, 13,256 in Fostoria and 1,640 in Green Springs, the county’s largest village. The County’s breakdown by age is depicted in the following pie chart, and numbers by age group are indicated in the following table:
Table 2: Population by Age Group and Sex; Seneca County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Seneca County</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>1,570</td>
<td>1,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>3,549</td>
<td>1,911</td>
<td>1,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>3,864</td>
<td>1,995</td>
<td>1,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>3,381</td>
<td>2,236</td>
<td>1,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>4,320</td>
<td>2,240</td>
<td>2,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>3,395</td>
<td>1,517</td>
<td>1,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>3,229</td>
<td>1,693</td>
<td>1,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>3,266</td>
<td>1,772</td>
<td>1,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>1,498</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>3,507</td>
<td>1,779</td>
<td>1,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>4,101</td>
<td>2,002</td>
<td>2,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>4,046</td>
<td>2,087</td>
<td>1,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>3,832</td>
<td>1,857</td>
<td>1,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>2,643</td>
<td>1,282</td>
<td>1,361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>2,062</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>1,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>1,467</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>1,241</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 and over</td>
<td>1,404</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55,929</td>
<td>27,944</td>
<td>27,985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey, there are 8,817 persons in Seneca County aged 65 and over, representing 15.8 percent of the county’s total population. Another 3,832 are aged 60 to 64, and 4,046 are 55 to 59. There are 2,782 age 65 and over in Tiffin, and 2,329 in Fostoria (counting the entire city). The median age in Seneca County is 39.0; it is 34.1 in Tiffin and 39.6 in Fostoria.
Total Population by Race
Of the 55,929 residents counted in the 2011-2015 American Community Survey, 50,680 (94.2 percent) were Caucasian. 1,322 (2.5%) were Black/African American, 49 were American Indian and Alaska Native, 361 were Asian, 436 were of “some other race” (this is sometimes checked by Hispanics/Latinos), and 993 were of two or more races.

Hispanics and Latinos comprise 4.8 percent of the county’s population, with 2,660 counted in the Census. It should be noted that this subgroup is an ethnicity, and not a race. Tiffin had a slightly smaller proportion of Latinos (3.7%), while Fostoria is home to a significantly larger proportion (9.5%), according to the 2011-2015 ACS. Fostoria contains a greater concentration of minorities than Seneca County as a whole, with 6.2 percent African American, 4.3 percent of two or more races, and 9.5 percent Hispanic/Latino.

Table 3: Population by Race and Ethnicity, Seneca County and its Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Seneca County</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Tiffin %</th>
<th>Fostoria %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55,929</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>50,680</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic Ethnicity</td>
<td>2,660</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number and percentage of people with disabilities
The 2011-2015 American Community Survey found that 7,866 Seneca County residents, or 13.9 percent, had a disability. Of this total, 2,108 (3.8%) had a hearing disability, 878 (1.6%) had a vision difficulty, 3,056 (5.9%) had a cognitive difficulty, 3,999 (7.7%) had an ambulatory difficulty, 1,366 (2.6%) had a self-care difficulty, and 2,660 (5.5%) had an independent living
difficulty. (Note: individuals may have more than one of these disabilities). There were 2,590 (14.7%) in the City of Tiffin, and 2,399 (18.8 percent) in the City of Fostoria with a disability.

When Seneca County is broken down by age, the following table reveals a greatly increased incidence of disabilities among the more aged population.

**Table 4: Population with Disabilities (U.S. Census, American Community Survey)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total with Disability</th>
<th>Percentage with Disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>7654</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 17 years</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 34</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 64</td>
<td>3,087</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74</td>
<td>1,135</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 years and over</td>
<td>1,847</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number and percentage of households with incomes below the federal poverty level; Seneca County and Major Towns (U.S. Census)

According to the 2012-2016 ACS, 11.5 percent of all Seneca County families (14,374 families) were in poverty. Tiffin and Fostoria are the largest cities in Seneca County and they encompass many of those families living in poverty within their city limits.

**Table 5: Households Living Below the Poverty Level; Seneca County and Major Towns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Households</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Total Number of Households in Poverty</th>
<th>Percentage of Households in Poverty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seneca County</td>
<td>$48,415</td>
<td>14,374</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiffin</td>
<td>$41,037</td>
<td>3,891</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostoria</td>
<td>$35,168</td>
<td>3,340</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number and percentage of individuals with incomes below the federal poverty level

Of those 8,209 individuals in poverty throughout Seneca County, 1,020 were under the age of 5 (12.4%), 1,860 were 5 to 17 (a 22.7 % poverty rate), 4,780 were 18 to 64 (58.2% rate), and 549 were 65 and over (a 6.7% rate).

Table 6: Individuals living below the Poverty Level; Seneca County and major Towns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Seneca County</th>
<th>Tiffin</th>
<th>Fostoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>8,209 or 15.6%</td>
<td>2,685 or 17%</td>
<td>3,940 or 30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and Percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>1,020 or 12.4%</td>
<td>240 or 8.9%</td>
<td>580 or 14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 17 years</td>
<td>1,860 or 22.7%</td>
<td>458 or 17%</td>
<td>1,182 or 29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 64 years</td>
<td>4,780 or 58.2%</td>
<td>1,785 or 66.6%</td>
<td>1,998 or 51.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and over</td>
<td>549 or 6.7%</td>
<td>202 or 7.5%</td>
<td>177 or 4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication Barrier

Seneca County, like most rural counties in Ohio, does not have many individuals where language barriers are present in great numbers. However, there are some individuals within the County where language comprehension presents a problem. The following table presents the number of individuals in Seneca County where communication is a barrier.

Table 7: Non English Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Language</th>
<th>Seneca County</th>
<th>Tiffin</th>
<th>Fostoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total, speak another language</td>
<td>1,524</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Indo-European</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian and Pacific Island</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other languages</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transportation providers must be mindful of the potential communication barrier posed by any of these individuals included in Table 5.
III. Assessment of Available Services

Conducting an evaluation of service provider capabilities and analyzing the existing gaps and cases of duplication of services for transportation resources in each community provides transportation planners with the information needed to implement changes that will improve the network of transportation resources and services in Seneca County and across county lines.

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership, as lead agency in developing the 2016 plan and this 2017 revision, identified stakeholders to participate in the assessment of available services. These stakeholders included those who were represented in the current or past planning committees, as well as others who the planning committee identified as being appropriate stakeholders.

Interviews were conducted with each of the identified stakeholders. The purpose of the interview was to offer the stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the specific transportation services, gaps, needs, and priorities for their respective service areas or communities.

When applicable, information reported in the previous coordinated plan was used to supplement information gathered during this planning effort.

Inventory of Transportation Providers

Existing Transportation Services
The following information is based on tabulations from the survey and interview results. A total of 23 organizations provided information about their services.

A thorough inventory of Seneca County transportation providers was provided in the very recent 2016 Seneca County Plan. This overview of transportation and transportation resource providers included vehicle inventories whenever possible, and the information from those inventories is also included and incorporated in the following table.

**Seneca Crawford Area Transportation (SCAT)**

**Agency Name:** Seneca Crawford Area Transportation

**Transportation Service Type:** Public transportation – Demand Response

**Other Services Provided:** Non-Emergency Transportation Service (NETS) for both Seneca and Crawford Counties.

**Contact Information:** 3446 S. Twp. Rd. 151, Tiffin, Ohio 419-448-7344 or 419-937-2428

**Hours:** 5 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Service Area:** Seneca and Crawford Counties, including Metro Fostoria

**Eligibility Requirements:** Public
Seneca- Crawford Area Transportation (SCAT) is a private nonprofit organization that provides transportation in Seneca and Crawford Counties, including Metro Fostoria. It was created in 1990 by a group of community leaders, human service agencies, and citizens who were convened to address the needs of the county’s older adult population. In 1993, this committee resolved to form SCAT through the coordinated efforts of sixteen human service agencies. By 1995, SCAT became a private non-profit organization. Much of the early coordination efforts consisted of human service agencies referring individuals to SCAT for their transportation needs. SCAT continued to grow and in 2001 this coordinated transportation program became a rural transit system. It is located at 3446 S. Twp. Rd. 151, Tiffin, Ohio. The mailing address is P.O. Box 922, Tiffin, Ohio 44883. The contact numbers are 419-448-7344 or 419-937-2428.

The motto of the organization is “Public Transportation is for Everyone!” The mission is “to serve the public of Seneca and Crawford Counties, including Metro Fostoria by providing a safe, reliable, affordable, and efficient public transportation system.” The goal of SCAT is to ensure the freedom of mobility, thus enhancing the value of life for all individuals within their service area. In order to meet its goal, SCAT operates the rural transit program and also continues to administer a coordinated transportation program which is self-funded by the Allen Eiry Foundation, Fostoria United Way, Tiffin Seneca United Way, The Tiffin Charitable Foundation, Inc., fund-raising, and donations.

SCAT operates a demand response public transportation system, Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. It is a curb-to-curb, door-to-door upon request, rural, public transportation system that provides local and out-of-county trips to the public in Seneca and Crawford Counties. Passenger fares are based on destination and range from $2.00 to $5.00. Elderly and Disabled fare discounts range from $1.00 to $2.50 for eligible consumers.

**Seneca County Commission on Aging**

**Agency Name:** Seneca County Commission on Aging  
**Transportation Service Type:** curb to curb demand response transportation for seniors  
**Other Services Provided:** chore service, nutrition (home delivered and congregate), socialization  
**Contact Information:** Somerset / Tiffin Office 382 South Huron Street Tiffin, OH 44883  
Call: 419-447-5792  
Norfolk / Fostoria Office 601 Findlay Street Fostoria, OH 44830  
Call: 419-937-2961  
**Hours:** 8 am to 5 pm  
**Service Area:** Seneca County  
**Eligibility Requirements:** Seniors over the age of 60  
**Web-site:** [http://www.seneca-coa.org/](http://www.seneca-coa.org/)
Seneca County Commission on Aging is a private nonprofit organization which operates curb to curb transportation services for seniors over the age of 60, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Being a curb to curb service, it requires a twenty-four hour advance notice. The most requested destinations are for medical appointments, social gatherings, recreation, shopping, beauty appointments, banking, and specifically the IGA. The agency operates four vehicles, of which two are accessible and two are not. The four vehicles logged over a total of 75,000 miles in 2014.

The Commission on Aging is eligible for Section 5310 grants, and is funded by a Senior Levy, State Block Grant, private funds, and donations. The average donation for transportation is $2.00 to $3.00. At this time, dialysis transportation is not provided, but they do provide limited transportation to out-of-town medical appointments in Toledo, Findlay, and Columbus. Transportation is provided throughout the county; Attica and Bascom are the rural communities with the greatest demand. The number of transports provided in the populated areas of Tiffin and Fostoria is almost equally distributed. In 2014, Seneca County Commission on Aging served 115 individuals by providing them over 4,000 one-way passenger trips.

The Commission on Aging coordinates with several agencies including the County DD Board, ECI, Wyandot County Commission on Aging, and SCAT. Coordinated activities include being a “Day Hub” for DD services, where people come in for lunch using transportation. Providing and delivering meals is coordinated with ECI. Passenger assistance training is coordinated with the Wyandot Commission on Aging. It shares backup vehicles with ECI and SCAT. If the Commission on Aging cannot supply the transportation, they provide consumers with information and referral regarding other transportation services that are available. According to Commission officials, the greatest barriers to coordination of transportation are the statutory barriers to pooling funds and the unique client characteristics which include the inability to mix clients on-board vehicles because of funding regulations.

**Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities/Opportunity Center**

**Agency Name:** Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities/Opportunity Center

**Transportation Service Type:** curb to curb, door to door, for disabled

**Other Services Provided:** day treatment, job training, employment, job placement, recreation, and social activities

**Contact Information:** 780 East County Road 20, Tiffin, Ohio 44883 Call: 419.447.7521

**Hours:** 8:30 am to 3:00 pm for classes; 6:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. for transportation

**Service Area:** Seneca County and metro Fostoria area

**Eligibility Requirements:** Disabled individuals

**Web-site:** [https://www.senecadd.org/](https://www.senecadd.org/)
Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities (DD) is a public human service agency that serves Seneca County. Services provided include: transportation, day treatment, job training, employment, job placement, recreation, and social activities. Individuals must meet eligibility requirements to use the transportation services at no charge. The agency provides curb-to-curb, door-to-door services.

In 2014, Seneca County Opportunity Center and the Board of DD met the transportation needs of 210 individuals with developmental disabilities by providing 49,800 one-way passenger trips. This increased to 83,600 trips in 2016. The fleet of twenty-four vehicles (now standing at 25 vehicles) logged 371,112 miles in 2014.

The Board of DD receives funding for vehicles through ODOT 5310 Capital Grants. The transportation program is operated by funding obtained through a tax levy. This levy assists in funding the purchase of new vehicles for the School of Opportunity, which transports over 50 students to and from classes from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The buses cost approximately $100,000 and are equipped with AC, lifts, flat floors and other features needed to safely transport individuals with disabilities. Tracking and scheduling is done through Zonar GPS software and software called Travel Tracker. Drivers use two-way radios requiring an FCC license to communicate. Drivers are required to have a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) and receive extensive training. Where needed to insure passenger safety a bus aide is assigned to ride along to provide medical assistance where needed.

Coordination efforts included joint training, information and referral, and service consolidation is scheduled when able with other agencies for cost effectiveness. Obstacles to coordination are cited to include turf issues among providers, funding, and unique client characteristics, and an inability to mix clients on-board vehicles.

**Seneca County Veterans Services**

**Agency Name:** Seneca County Veterans Services

**Transportation Service Type:** Direct transportation for Veterans to medical appointments at VA facilities

**Other Services Provided:** Financial assistance program, other advocacy for veterans

**Contact Information:** 920 E. County Road 20, Tiffin OH 44883 Call: 419-447-2885

**Hours:** For medical appointments between 9 am and 3 pm

**Service Area:** Seneca County

**Eligibility Requirements:** Must be a United States military veteran

**Web-site:** [https://www.senecacountyveterans.org/](https://www.senecacountyveterans.org/)
Seneca County Veterans Services provides transportation only for Seneca County’s veterans for medical purposes to two destinations: the Toledo VA Outpatient Clinic and the DVA Medical Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan. If space allows, the agency will allow the veterans' caregivers or spouses to accompany them to their appointment. The agency has regularly scheduled runs to Toledo on Monday through Friday of each week. They ask that the veterans schedule their appointments between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Trips to Ann Arbor are scheduled on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and veterans are asked to schedule appointments for this destination between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Beginning January 1, 2020 transportation hours to Toledo Outpatient Clinic will be 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and transportation hours to Ann Arbor VAMC will be 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. If a veteran is unable to schedule their appointment to coincide with regularly scheduled trips, the agency will try to accommodate them if availability exists, but will not guarantee that transportation will be available. There is no charge for the service. Veterans are encouraged to schedule appointments within the designated hours. The as soon as the appointment has been arranged, the transport should be scheduled by calling 419-447-2885. The agency does not do emergency runs to medical appointments. It is a door-to-door service and a staff member calls with an approximate pick-up time 24 to 48 hours prior to transport.

The agency has a contract with Hart's Ambulette and Veterans Service when transports require an accessible vehicle. Staff of Seneca County Veterans Services is county employees, and the agency is governed by a board.

The agency is not allowed to partner with neighboring counties for transportation of veterans because of liability and inter-county transport regulations. The commission cannot do emergency transportation.

**Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services**

**Agency Name:** Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services (DJFS)

**Transportation Service Type:** Limited direct transportation of clients; coordination with other providers

**Other Services Provided:** Medicaid, food assistance, job training, employment services, child support, childcare assistance, children’s services, and adult protective services

**Contact Information:** 900 E C.R. 20 Tiffin, OH 44883 Call: 419-447-5011

**Hours:** 8 am – 4:30 pm (7:15 – 4:30 on Tues and Wed)

**Service Area:** Seneca County

**Eligibility Requirements:** income eligibility criteria apply for many DJFS programs
Web-site: http://djfs.co.seneca.oh.us/

The Workforce Development Administrator of the Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services located at 900 E. Co. Rd. 20, Tiffin, Ohio, completed the survey. The programs and functions of this local governmental entity are: Medicaid, food assistance, job training, employment services, child support, childcare assistance, children’s services, adult protective services, and more. The agency serves program and income-eligible residents of Seneca County.

Program participants arrive at the facility by various means, including taxis, human service transportation programs, public transportation, their own vehicles, and through rides provided by family, friends, and neighbors. All time periods from 5:00 a.m. to midnight were listed when asked when additional transportation coverage is needed. The most difficult time to find transportation is cited as weekends. There are also challenges in finding last-minute transportation for non-emergency medical appointments.

The organization participates in coordination efforts including joint use of vehicles, and information and referral. Funding is identified as the greatest obstacle to coordination of transportation. Awareness was expressed of gaps in transportation services for families and low-income individuals. The agency provides or purchases transportation for qualifying individuals in specific programs through agency employees using agency owned fleet vehicles or by purchasing services from an organized program with vehicles and staff designated specifically for transportation. The agency provided an estimated 1,500 one-way transports for approximately 600 individuals.

Agency Name: Flat Rock Homes, Inc.
Transportation Service Type: demand responsive to individuals enrolled in programs/services
Other Services Provided: Flat Rock Homes, Flat Rock Care Center and Flat Rock Community Services provides services to adults with disabilities. Our programs for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities include a 34-bed intermediate care facility (Seneca County); supportive living homes (Seneca, Erie and Lorain Counties); non-medical transportation (Seneca, Sandusky and Huron Counties); Adult Day Support Program (Seneca, Erie, Lorain, Huron, Crawford, Richland, Wyandot, Morrow and Sandusky Counties). We provide Vocational Training, Employment Services and Community Integration Programs for adults living at the Tiffin development center. Further, we provide Vocational training and Employment services to adults with disabilities (i.e. vision, hearing, mobility and mental health) through Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities program (Seneca, Sandusky, Erie, Lorain, Huron, Crawford, Richland, Wyandot and Morrow Counties).

Contact Information: 419.483.7330 ext. 1104 or 1420
Office hours: 8:00-4:30 Monday - Friday
Service Area: Any destination required by individuals enrolled in programs/services for medical, school, employment, social events and activities. Past trips have included many out-of-county destinations as far as Cleveland, Toledo and/or Mansfield.

Eligibility Requirements: Individuals enrolled in Flat Rock’s programs/services.

website: www.flatrockhomes.org

Flat Rock provides all 24/7/365 transportation needed by individuals living in a home or residential facilities owned or served by Flat Rock. Additionally, Flat Rock provides scheduled transportation as needed to individuals who are served by our Adult Day Support, Non-Medical Transportation, Community Integration, Vocational Training and Employment Services Programs who do not live in a Flat Rock owned or operated home or residential facility. Destinations may include medical appointments, school, employment, social events and other activities. All transportation services are billed to Medicaid either through the ICF per diem rate or through the waiver program for all other transportation. Tiffin City Schools pays for transportation provided for one Flat Rock student. Funds are raised by the agency to fund all needs beyond funding provided by the Medicaid program.

Tiffin City Schools

Tiffin City Schools is a public school system comprised of one Pre-K building; one K-1 building; one grade 2-3 building; one grade 4-5 building; one middle school which houses grades 6 – 8; and one high school (Tiffin Columbian) consisting of grades 9 – 12. Currently, approximately 3,500 students are enrolled at Tiffin City Schools. The Board of Tiffin City Schools furnishes transportation in compliance with State law. The transportation Supervisor for Tiffin City Schools (TCS) is Randy Conger. Due to budget constraints there is no home-to-school or school-to-home busing for students in grades 9 – 12. TCS will bus students in these grades participating in vocational programs from Columbian to Sentinel Career and Technology Center in Tiffin, and return from Sentinel back to Columbian. For the 2015-2016 School year, Tiffin City Schools will bus any student in grades K – 5 who lives half a mile or more from their assigned building. It will bus any student in grades 6 – 8 who live two or more miles from their assigned building. Tiffin City Schools’ busing system operates from 6:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. The school employs one supervisor, one mechanic, twenty contracted drivers and eighteen substitute drivers. The district has twenty-seven yellow school buses. Maintenance for the buses is mainly done in-house. TCS provides information and referrals to SCAT, neighboring school districts, and Tiffin Service Cab.
Allen Eiry Center, Inc.
Allen Eiry Center is located at 28 Hopewell Ave., Tiffin, Ohio and can be reached at 419-448-9774. It is a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to create and promote community involvement for adults who are 50 years and older with programs / activities, travel opportunities, and friendships which are socially, physically, culturally, and intellectually stimulating. Participants arrive at the center through various means:

- By driving themselves,
- Using public transportation or human service transportation programs,
- Having family, friends, or neighbors drive, or
- Through volunteers

Greater coordination among providers and more funding are initiatives needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County. Greater availability is the enhancement cited as most needed to improve transportation. The agency faces transportation related programing challenges Monday through Friday at 8:00 a.m. (beginning of the day) and again from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (peak demand time). Coordination efforts include trip sharing, information, and referral. The agency has three vehicles, 2 buses for activities, and one minivan for miscellaneous transports. The buses are used solely for travel program activities. In 2014, the agency served 446 individuals with transportation. This entity has two Ford buses (28 seats each; 2014 and 2007) and one Dodge Minivan (6 seats; 2014). There is no wheelchair accessibility.

St. Francis Nursing Home
St. Francis Senior Ministries is a non-profit, faith-based, value-driven ministry that serves the healthcare and housing needs of older adults. The continuum of care provides opportunities as needs change without having to leave the campus. St. Francis Home currently operates a demand response transportation services for the residents of the St. Francis Campus. It consists of three vehicles. The hours of operation are Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Advance notice is required; transportation requests are pre-scheduled with the Transportation Coordinator / Driver. When the home is unable to provide a trip, they contract with SCAT for transportation services. Suggested steps to enhance public transportation in Seneca County would be to incorporate longer hours and more days of service. Expansion of accessible evening and weekend service would allow seniors to participate in enrichment activities, allow them to visit family, and to attend other social and life enriching events during these underserved time periods. The unique client characteristics have been the greatest obstacle for St. Francis to coordination of transportation.
North Central EMS

North Central EMS services include emergency medical care, non-emergency medical transport, mobile intensive care, specialized care units, a mobile medical operations trailer, and wheelchair van services. The wheelchair transportation services are provided for all local residents and healthcare facilities. The services are provided for patients that are unable to walk and need transportation to a doctor’s office, clinic, or other medical facility. Other destinations are available upon request. The fleet has vans that are equipped to accommodate both regular and large sized chairs. Non-emergency transportation requests need to be booked in advance.

North Central EMS is a private non-profit 501(c) (3) transportation company that provides ambulance and wheelchair van transportation in a 650 square mile service area that includes all of Erie and Huron Counties and parts of Lorain, Sandusky, Ottawa, and Seneca counties. Their fleet consists of 26 ambulances, 9 wheelchair accessible vans and a 26 foot trailer that offers emergency medical treatment for large events. The company addresses the need for transportation of larger sized individuals by maintaining two vehicles equipped with a ramp and winch system that can accommodate bariatric patients up to 1,100 pounds.

After wages and benefits, the next largest cost by North central EMS is for fuel; over $20,000 is spent each month on fuel, equating to a quarter of million dollars per year.

Ambulance service is available seven days a week, at any hour. Wheelchair van transportation operates on a scheduled 24-hour advanced reservation process. The service is open to the general public, but most pre-scheduled transportation involves transporting nursing home residents to medical facilities. The company is certified to provide Medicaid transportation.

The EMS headquarters are located on U.S. Route 250 in Milan, with a staffed facility just north of U.S. 20 on the west side of Bellevue. The phone number to reach the service is 419-499-2515. Their most common trip origins are the Bellevue area, Fremont, and Clyde, and their primary destinations are physicians’ offices in Bellevue and Fremont, and Clinics in Toledo and Cleveland. The operating hours for their vans are from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. They primarily transport non-emergency consumers to doctor appointments, hospitals, dialysis, and therapy.

Mercy Life Star

Mercy Life Star is an advanced ambulance service staffed by a team of highly trained paramedics who are in constant radio contact with hospital physicians and emergency care specialists. The network has one Ambulette, five air medical helicopters, and seven mobile life units. Transport services offered include: Ambulance, Ambulette, Basic and Advanced Life Support Service, Emergency and Non-emergency, Special Needs Transportation, and
Wheelchair Transportation. It is Medicare and Medicaid approved and is a 24-hour Ambulance & Ambulette Service. It contracts with area nursing homes. Charges are on a per mile basis. Life Star can be contacted at 419-245-6220.

The Status of Public Transit in Ohio data for SCAT, October 2014 (based on 2014 data) lists operating statistics for SCAT as follows: a total of 90,282 trips were provided, of which 19,505 trips were transports of elderly and disabled persons. The vehicles logged 484,942 miles and 31,259 hours of service. The total cost to operate the system was $1,096,792, of which $905,617 was for operating costs and $191,175 was for administrative costs. The system received $356,975 in Federal Assistance, $69,500 in State Assistance, and $13,257 for State Elderly and Disabled Assistance in 2014. Passenger fares accounted for $96,645 of revenues and contracts brought in another $214,892. Performance Measures included the 2014 cost per service mile of $2.22, and the average cost per trip of $16.21. The system had an operating inventory of twenty-eight vehicles. SCAT is an eligible applicant for 5310 and 5311 grant funding.

**Organizations and Agencies That Do Not Provide Transportation**

**Fish of Tiffin Food Pantry**
Fish of Tiffin Food Pantry is a volunteer organization that provides emergency food, prescriptions, utility assistance, and occasionally has funds for gas. The organization provided transportation in 2008, but no longer does. The organization uses SCAT for transportation.

**Seneca County Family and Children First Council (FCFC)**
The Seneca County Family and Children First Council is located at 201 S. Washington Street, Tiffin, Ohio and can be reached at 419-443-0981. The Council brings service providers together efficiently to increase the focus of programs on families and children. The mission of the FCFC is to achieve, through community collaboration, an effective and comprehensive system which empowers families and children to proactively affect their lives, resulting in enhanced family stability. The primary function of this local governmental agency is to collect data on family needs and to provide resources. People who are served by FCFC drive their own vehicles, have family, friends, or neighbors drive them, use the service of a taxi or other private transportation provider, or use public transportation. The Executive Director listed longer hours of service (after 5:00 p.m.) as a needed improvement for public transportation. Availability and cost are the challenges and issues the organization’s clients face in regards to transportation. Coordination efforts in which the council participates are joint grant applications and information and referral. The greatest obstacle to coordination of transportation was identified
as funding. FCFC identified low income as a sector that is underserved with transportation. The organization uses SCAT for transportation.

**Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corporation**

Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corporation is located at 19 W. Market Street, Suite C, Tiffin, Ohio. More funding was identified as being the factor most needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County. The time periods of the day that additional transportation coverage is needed were identified as from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The greatest transportation challenge for the workforce at large was identified as the need for removal of barriers to employment for people who want to be productive members of society and do not drive. Another specified need was that many college students come to the two area Universities without cars, and they need access to retail and medical destinations. Suggested enhancements to public transportation were identified as marketing both to the public and to students of the availability of services. An additional suggestion in the marketing campaign was to remove the “stigma” associated with cabs and list the service as a viable transportation option.

**Financial Assistance for Cancer Treatment (FACT)**

Financial Assistance for Cancer Treatment (known throughout the community as FACT) is a private nonprofit organization which helps Seneca County residents who have been diagnosed with cancer. The organization gives financial assistance for mileage, medication and chemotherapy. The modes of transportation most used by those served by the organization are: taxis and other private providers, public transportation, driving themselves, and family, friends and neighbors driving the cancer patient. Fund raisers and donations are what are needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County. The coordination effort this group participates in is information and referral. The organization primarily uses SCAT for transportation.

**Elmwood at The Shawhan**

Elmwood at the Shawhan is a private, for-profit assisted living facility located at 54 S. Washington Street, Tiffin, Ohio 44883. Elmwood at The Shawhan does not provide or purchase transportation services for its residents. Taxis and other private providers are the services used for transportation of the residents. The most needed enhancement to improve personal mobility in the area is identified as longer hours and more days of service. There is a need for family members of wheelchair bound residents to have accessible public transportation on holidays and weekends. Elmwood at The Shawhan primarily uses SCAT or the Commission on Aging for its resident transportation needs.
**First Call for Help**
First Call for Help is a nonprofit organization that provides information and referral service, helps with heat, utilities, and water bills, promotes volunteerism, and coordinates many events such as a school supplies program for needy students. First Call for Help does not provide transportation, and refers consumers to SCAT, the Commission on Aging, or Veterans Services. It evaluates each individual’s unique characteristics and transportation needs. Based on this assessment, the consumer is referred to the agency that can provide the needed transportation. Common transportation requests handled by First Call for Help are medical trips to Toledo, Columbus, Findlay, and Cleveland. The agency sees the need for affordable out-of-county transportation.

**CASA of Seneca, Sandusky, and Wyandot Counties**
CASA of Seneca, Sandusky, and Wyandot Counties is located at 21 Court Street, in Tiffin, Ohio and is a private nonprofit organization. It is a volunteer Guardian Ad Liten program that advocates for abused and neglected children. Volunteers act as the children’s voice in court and represent the best interests of the child, providing information to help give kids a better chance. The organization identifies more funding and personal motivation as needed elements to improve mobility in Seneca County, and believes additional transportation coverage is needed at all times of day. Information referral is the coordination effort in which the organization engages. The greatest obstacle to coordination for the agency is the unique characteristics of each client, and they identified children as a group that is underserved by transportation in the area.

**Firelands Counseling and Recovery Services**
Firelands Counseling and Recovery Services of Seneca County is located at 76 Ashwood Road, Tiffin, Ohio and can be reached at 419-448-9440. Firelands provides outpatient care with a primary focus on mental health and substance abuse treatment. Services are provided in Seneca, Wyandot, Erie, Huron, Sandusky, Lorain, and Ottawa Counties. Clients use various modes of transportation including ambulettes, taxis, public transportation, and human service transportation providers, drive themselves, or have family, friends, or neighbors drive them to the treatment center. Firelands provides or purchases transportation on behalf of their clients in the following ways:

- Use of personal vehicles of agency staff;
- Use of agency owned fleet vehicles by agency staff;
- Pre-purchase of tickets or passes from public transportation providers;
- Reimbursement of mileage paid to employees; and
Information and referral about other community transportation resources.
The most challenging time to find transportation is from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., weekends, or anytime with short notice. The coordination effort the organization participates in is information and referral. The greatest obstacles to coordination are restrictions placed on the use of the vehicles, funding, and the unique client characteristics. The needed improvement to coordination in public transit is for providers to have the ability to bill Medicaid. An enhancement to transportation would be the implementation of a fixed route or loop.
Firelands Counseling and Recovery Service has a contract agreement with SCAT for transportation.

**Fostoria Alcohol Drug Center**
The Fostoria Alcohol Drug Center is located at 222 S. Main Street, Fostoria, Ohio 44830. It is a private nonprofit organization that provides outpatient substance abuse counseling and education. Its mission is to provide education and counseling to individuals, families, companies, and the community. Participants supply their own transportation to the program. Some participants use SCAT for transportation. The office manager identified evening hours from 5:00 p.m. to midnight when additional transportation coverage is needed. Funding is the greatest obstacle to coordination.

**Good Shepherd Home**
Good Shepherd Home is a private nonprofit organization, assisting a Senior Community by providing nursing care, assisted living, senior housing, low-income senior housing, dementia care, home services, and out-patient rehab. Residents use the following modes of transportation:
- Ambulettes or stretcher services;
- Human service transportation programs;
- Public transportation (SCAT); and
- Rides from family, friends, or neighbors
Greater coordination among providers, more funding, longer hours and more days of service were cited as needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County. The expansion of service to include weekend and evening transportation coverage was identified as needed. The organization uses personal vehicles of agency staff as well as volunteers with no reimbursement, and provides information and referral about other community transportation resources.
**Geary Family YMCA**
The Geary Family YMCA is a private nonprofit located at 154 W. Center Street, Fostoria, Ohio 44830 and can be contacted at 419-435-6608. The agency’s mission is: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. The YMCA provides a place for personal wellness, socialization, and character building. Programs promote youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Participants supply their own transportation. Some participants use SCAT for transportation as well. The organization sees a need for additional transportation coverage from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and identifies the peak or highest demand times for transportation between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The specified enhancement needed to improve coordination of public transportation is funding for additional buses/vans and drivers.

**Seneca County General Health District**
Seneca County General Health District is the local governmental Health Department and is located at 71 S. Washington Street, Tiffin, Ohio; it can be reached at 419-447-3691. There is a satellite office located in Fostoria at the Fostoria Community Early Childhood & Family Center located at 801 Kirk Street, which can be reached at 419-435-4401. The primary functions of the organization are immunizations, health education, food inspections, and other health related services. The Health Commissioner stated that greater coordination among providers is needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County, and identified 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. as time periods when additional transportation coverage is needed. The challenges and issues the organization faces with regard to transportation are that some clients don’t have ways to get to their appointments or they don’t prepare for transportation in advance by making arrangements. The General Health District’s coordination efforts include information and referral. Funding is the greatest obstacle to coordination of transportation. The enhancement needed most to improve coordination in Seneca County is the need to get information about available transportation options to the general public. Groups of people who were identified as being underserved were the elderly and low income individuals. SCAT provides transportation for participants.

Seneca Crawford Area Transportation also provides transportation to the following facilities: Kiwanis, Willow Creek Apartments, Ruffing Family Care Center, Autumnwood, Eco Village, Wesley Commons in Fostoria.
Existing Transportation Services
The table below provides a summary of the characteristics of the participating transportation providers and organizations that purchase transportation on behalf of consumers.

**Table 1: Organizational Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Directly Operates Transportation (Yes/No)</th>
<th>Purchases Transportation from Another Agency (if Yes, Who?)</th>
<th>Legal Authority (Private Non-Profit, Private For-Profit, Public Non-Profit,)</th>
<th>Number of Annual One-Way Passenger Trips</th>
<th>Average Number Trip Denials per Week</th>
<th>Are Vehicles Only Available for Human Service Agency Clients (Y/N)*</th>
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<td>SCAT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes - SCAT</td>
<td>Public nonprofit</td>
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<td>Yes - SCAT</td>
<td>Public nonprofit agency</td>
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<td>Flat Rock Homes, Inc.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Answering “Yes” indicates that your agency is closed door. Your agency is considered closed door if you ONLY provide transportation to your facility as a courtesy or if you ONLY serve a particular clientele that are enrolled in your agency programs (i.e. members of a sheltered workshop, or residents in a nursing home). Answering “No” indicates that your agency is open door. This means the service is open to the public or a segment of the general public defined by age, disability, or low income. For example, if an agency provides general transportation for anyone in the community who is over the age of 60, they are considered “open door”. For example, an individual who is 60 or over can request transportation to a doctor’s appointment or the grocery store regardless of their affiliation with your agency.

The participating organizations provide a wide range of transportation including demand response and on-demand, with some planned weekly trips to outside medical destinations. All five of the participating organizations provide services on weekdays. None of the above operates transportation on Saturdays and none on Sundays. Evening service is not formally scheduled by any organization. The following table depicts the transportation service characteristics by agency.
Table 2: Transportation Service Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Mode of Service</th>
<th>Days &amp; Hours of Operation</th>
<th>Provides Medicaid-Eligible Trips (Y/N)</th>
<th>Level of Passenger Assistance Provided</th>
<th>Training Courses Required for Drivers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCAT</td>
<td>Public service</td>
<td>5 am-6 pm M-F</td>
<td>Yes, but do not bill Medicaid directly</td>
<td>On demand</td>
<td>Smith System (defensive driving), Drug and alcohol, PAT/Drive, Bloodborne, Pathogen, First Aid / EPT. Mandatory safety mtgs. every other month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. On Aging</td>
<td>Curb to curb</td>
<td>9 am-5 pm M-F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>On demand</td>
<td>First Aid, CPR, Drive, Defensive Driving, Passenger Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD Board/Opportunity Center</td>
<td>Transport clients</td>
<td>6:30a-5:15p M-F</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Fixed route/limited on-demand</td>
<td>SCOC training, First Aid CPR, Behavior management, drug and alcohol, wheelchair securement, weekly staff safety meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJFS</td>
<td>Limited on demand</td>
<td>M-F 8:00a-4:30p T&amp;W 7:15a-4:30p</td>
<td>Yes through contract w/SCAT</td>
<td>On demand</td>
<td>Smith System (defensive driving), Drug and alcohol, PAT/Drive, Bloodborne, Pathogen, First Aid / EPT. Mandatory safety mtgs. every other month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Rock Homes, Inc.</td>
<td>Transport Clients</td>
<td>24/7/365</td>
<td>Yes, some through Medicaid ICF, others billed through Medicaid Waivers.</td>
<td>On demand</td>
<td>DOT Certified Driver training, including physical and road test; Drive Smart: Cars, Vans, and Lifts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Services</td>
<td>On demand scheduled medical trips</td>
<td>M-F variable hours</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>On demand</td>
<td>OJT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transportation-related expenses and revenues also differ by organization. State (ODOT) and federal resources, as well as local contracts and local taxes earmarked for specific agencies’ activities, are common revenue sources for transportation operators in Seneca County. The table below provides a summary of expenses and revenues for public and non-profit transportation programs.
Table 3: Transportation-Related Expenses and Revenues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Fare Structure</th>
<th>Donations Accepted (Y/N)</th>
<th>Number of Full-Time &amp; Part-Time Drivers</th>
<th>Number of Full-Time &amp; Part-Time Schedulers/Dispatchers</th>
<th>Revenue Sources (most recent Fiscal Year)</th>
<th>Total Annual Transportation Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCAT</td>
<td>Zones $2.00-$5.00 out of county trips are fare based on destination</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>8 FT, 22 PT</td>
<td>4 FT, 1 PT</td>
<td>FTA, ODOT, United Way, Contracts, Donations, Fare box</td>
<td>$2,100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm. On Aging</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>2 FT, 4 PT</td>
<td>1 FT</td>
<td>Federal T III, local levy</td>
<td>$91,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD Board</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>14 FT, 8 PT</td>
<td>1 FT</td>
<td>Ohio Dept. DD (5%), Medicaid (11%), and local taxes (84%)</td>
<td>$1,272,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJFS</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Info not provided</td>
<td>Info not provided</td>
<td>Federal and state funding</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Rock Homes, Inc.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Y, Funds are raised by agency to fund all needs beyond Medicaid funding</td>
<td>11 Dedicated Drivers, 73 full time staff who drive as part of job duties, 114 part time staff.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Medicaid, Donations, programs/Services Revenue, Tiffin City Schools (for 1 student)</td>
<td>$243,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Services</td>
<td>No charge</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>2 FT, 1 PT</td>
<td>1 FT</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table provides basic information about transportation options other than the traditional public and human services transportation. Transportation options might include bike share, ride share, intercity, or taxi services, and more.

Table 4: Alternative/ Active Transportation Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation Option</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Service Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Cab 419/447-3232</td>
<td>Any time 24/7</td>
<td>$6.00 one way in town</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Tiffin/Seneca area – will drive to destinations out of county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hart’s Ambulette 419/332-3911</td>
<td>7a-6p every day</td>
<td>Varies with need</td>
<td>Wheelchair, medical, private transport</td>
<td>Seneca, Sandusky, Erie, Wood Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North central EMS</td>
<td>Any time 24/7</td>
<td>Varies with need</td>
<td>Emergency and non-emergency medical, wheelchair van, specialized care</td>
<td>Erie and Huron; parts of Seneca, Lorain, Sandusky, Ottawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Life Star 419/245-6220</td>
<td>Any time 24/7</td>
<td>Varies with need</td>
<td>Ambulance, special needs, wheelchair.</td>
<td>Tiffin and surrounding area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following table provides basic information about local travel training program options.

**Table 5: Transportation Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation Resource</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Service Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCAT</td>
<td>M-F 5am – 6pm</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>On Demand</td>
<td>Seneca and Crawford Counties, including Metro Fostoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD Board/Opportunity Center</td>
<td>For enrolled individuals through habilitation courses</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Upon demand</td>
<td>Seneca County/Metro Fostoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Point ESC</td>
<td>School Days</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>School transportation for up to 3 students</td>
<td>Seneca County to Erie County / Perkins Township</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Services</td>
<td>M-F for veterans</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Scheduled VA appointments</td>
<td>Transport to VA in Toledo and Ann Arbor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table illustrates the technology used by each transportation provider for scheduling, dispatching, and/or GPS tracking vehicles.

**Table 6: Technology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Name of Scheduling Software</th>
<th>Do you have an App for Transportation (Y/N)?</th>
<th>Name of Dispatching Software</th>
<th>AVL System/ GPS (Y/N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCAT</td>
<td>Ecolane</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ecolane</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD Board/Opportunity Center</td>
<td>Currently Travel Tracker for day trips</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Zonar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission on Aging</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Rock Homes, Inc.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Services</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment of Community Support for Transit

Community support for transit was demonstrated through the tabulation of a variety of surveys provided to the public, to riders, and to needs groups who use transit, including those claiming a disability and seniors throughout the county. The survey results indicated a significant interest in public transit as an option, as well as other available modes and sources of transportation, as described later in the survey summary.

Safety

Safety is practiced in Seneca County among their transportation providers through drivers’ completion of required courses relating to safety and associated topics.

Typical topics covered in trainings for public transit drivers include: policy and procedures, drug and alcohol policy and symptoms, safety and hepatitis B/blood borne pathogens, defensive driving, fire extinguisher operation, CPR and first aid, securing a wheelchair and hospital discharge, AOOA Minimum Standards and Passport code of ethics and competencies, meal route consumer guidelines, and transport of non-ambulatory clients. Providers strive to maintain positive safety records.

Vehicles

Survey/Interview participants listed a combined total of 69 vehicles. Approximately 73 percent of the vehicles are wheelchair accessible. A vehicle utilization table is provided at the end of this chapter (Table 6).

Transportation providers provide wheelchair accessible vehicles, and some organizations have an entire fleet of wheelchair accessible vehicles. Among agencies that do not have wheelchair accessible vehicles, such as the Veterans Services office currently, they contract with SCAT to provide any needed such transportation. As vehicles age, they require additional maintenance, may break down more often, and become costlier to operate. Vehicle replacement, based on age and condition, is vital to the overall cost effectiveness of the transportation services provided.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Veh #</th>
<th>Make</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Vin #</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>WC Capacity</th>
<th>Days of the Week Vehicle is in Service</th>
<th>Service Hours</th>
<th>Vehicle Condition</th>
<th>Program to which Vehicle is Assigned</th>
<th>Service Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>002</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>CES</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4DRBUAAN98B</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>M-F</td>
<td>6:30a-5:30p</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SCOC</td>
<td>Seneca Co/metro Fostoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>CE</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4DRBUAANOC</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>M-F</td>
<td>6:30a-5:30p</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SCOC</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>4DRBUPWN3K</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>M-F</td>
<td>6:30a-5:30p</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>006</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4DRBUAANOC</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>M-F</td>
<td>6:30a-5:30p</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SCOC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>007</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>3800</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1HVBBAA21H</td>
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<tr>
<td>009</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>3800</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1HVBBAA72H</td>
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<tr>
<td>010</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>3800</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1HVBBAA83H</td>
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<tr>
<td>011</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>CES</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4DRBUAAN96B</td>
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<td>CES</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make</td>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>VIN</td>
<td>Seats</td>
<td>Days</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Driver</td>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>013</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>CE SB</td>
<td>2006</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>2011</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Dodge</td>
<td>Gd. Caravan</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1DBHH44H08B</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>M-F</td>
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<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td></td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1FDEE3FS8GDC</td>
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<td>M-F</td>
<td>6:30a-5:30p</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SCOC</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Dodge</td>
<td>Gd. Caravan</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1D8HN44H28B</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>M-F</td>
<td>6:30a-5:30p</td>
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<td>SCOC</td>
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<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>Bu</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4DRXWSKKOFH</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>M-F</td>
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<td>SCOC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>NMOKS98N4A</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>1FDEE3FS1GDC</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Seneca-Crawford Area Transportation (SCAT)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Make</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>VIN</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Driver</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1FDEEFS7KDC52741</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>SCAT</td>
<td>Seneca &amp; Crawford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>Seneca &amp; Crawford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Bus</td>
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<td>SCAT</td>
<td>Seneca &amp; Crawford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Vehicle Type</td>
<td>License Plate</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Days of Operation</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>SCAT</td>
<td>Route Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Ford Bus</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>M-F</td>
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<td>Seneca &amp; Crawford</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>Ford Bus</td>
<td>JFDEE3FSXDDA62842</td>
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<td>M-F</td>
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<td>Seneca &amp; Crawford</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Dodge Van</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M-F</td>
<td>5:00 a-6:00p</td>
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<td>Seneca &amp; Crawford</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>5:00 a-6:00p</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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**Seneca County Commission on Aging**

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**Seneca County Veterans Services**

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Summary of Existing Resources

As noted in the previous table, Seneca County’s primary transportation providers have a variety of vehicle types, to serve the varied purposes of the transportation network, from transporting a single person in a wheelchair to a medical appointment, to moving a large number of people from one community to another. Agencies typically stagger the age of the components of their fleets, in order to maintain an affordable program of fleet replacement, year to year. Using this practice, there is nearly always a need to replace at least one or two vehicles that are the oldest or have the largest number of miles operated.
IV. Assessment of Transportation Needs and Gaps

In an effort to better understand Seneca County’s needs, the planning committee examined research and data, as well as solicited input from the community in an effort to gather information about needs and gaps in transportation services.

The demographic and socio-economic conditions of the study area are discussed in the Demographics Chapter of this plan. The following overview is an evaluation of the gaps in service based upon geographic data as well as from the perspective of the targeted populations, transportation providers, and the general public.

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership surveyed a variety of stakeholders in the area in an attempt to solicit input and request participation from any organization that could potentially be impacted by the coordinated transportation planning process. More information on how the lead agency engaged stakeholders and the general public is available upon request.

The following methods were used to assess transportation needs and gaps

- Assessment of data and demographics, as required and appropriate.
- A series of surveys, which included the general public (at the Seneca County Fair), county governmental officials, human and social service agencies, multi-unit housing, Seneca County DJFS, employers, ride-along passengers, transportation providers, and university students.
- A focus group involving and engaging developmentally disabled persons at the Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities offices.
Local Demographic and Socio-Economic Data

Data for each target population group were aggregated by Census Block Group for transportation analysis. The demographic and socio-economic data is valuable because a comparison of where the highest and lowest densities individuals who are most likely to need transportation live. This information can then be compared to the locations of (1) major trip generators, and (2) available transportation services.

The following Map 3 illustrates the areas where the number of older adults (age 65 and older) is at or above the Seneca County average as established by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The following map (next page) indicates by color shade the relative density of older persons aged 65 or more. As may be suspected, the greatest concentrations of older persons in the county exist within the largest urbanized areas of Tiffin and Fostoria, which provides them greatest access to medical and other services, governmental entities, and shopping and services

Map #3: Population Density of Individuals Age 65 and Older
The exhibit (Map #4) below indicates the areas where the incidence of zero vehicle households is above Seneca County’s average. The absence of a vehicle in the household is often an indication of the need for transportation services.

Map #4: Density of Zero Vehicle Households
The next exhibit (map #5, on the following page) illustrates the location of the top destinations for the existing transportation providers as well as major trip generators for anyone in the area, including those who drive a personal vehicle. Included within these locations are:

- Medical facilities (largely centered around the hospitals in Tiffin and Fostoria);
- Social service offices (downtown or on the south side of Tiffin, and some in central Fostoria);
- Educational centers: six K-12 school systems, one parochial system, two universities in Tiffin (Heidelberg and Tiffin Universities) and Sentinel Career Center east of Tiffin;
- Concentrations of high-volume retail centers (including Tiffin’s SR 18 West corridor extending to Wal Mart, Countyline Street on Fostoria’s north side, the Fostoria Kroger store, and downtown Tiffin and Fostoria); and
- Major manufacturing employers such as Ameriwood Industries, Mennel Milling, Church and Dwight, national Machinery, Toledo Molding and Die, and Webster Industries.

**Map #5: Major Trip Generators**
Analysis of Demographic Data

A variety of demographic data was presented and analyzed earlier in this document in section II, and the previous four pages provided further data with regard to potential geographic clusters of specific needs (elderly population, households without cars) and transportation generators.

General Public and Stakeholder Meetings/Focus Groups

Great Lakes Community Action Partnership and its Mobility Management Coordinator hosted and facilitated a series of meetings in 2016 to complete the initial transportation plan, and conducted two more meetings in 2017 to explain and update the plan, and gain approval of the revised, newly formatted 2017 version of the plan. Additionally, three forums/focus groups were held with seniors and disabled persons to discuss the unmet transportation needs and gaps in mobility and transportation. A steering committee of five local people plus the GLCAP Mobility Manager participated in steering committee meetings. Their work was augmented by the three focus group meetings, interviews with seven community leaders associated with transportation, and 509 surveys completed in 2016 by low income persons, university students, governmental officials, human and social service agencies, multi-unit housing managers, human resource officials from manufacturers and other employers, transportation providers, seniors (including homebound), current riders, and members of the general public. More information about what meetings were held and attendance at those meetings is available upon request.

During the meeting, Great Lakes Community Action Partnership personnel presented highlights of past coordinated transportation in Seneca County, and discussed the activities since the last Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan that have helped to address some of the unmet transportation needs and gaps in services for the area.

Following the initial presentation, the stakeholders were asked to review the gaps in transportation services and needs from the previous plan or update and identify any gaps that were no longer valid as well as any new needs or gaps that the facilitator deleted from or added
to a list. The focus of the discussion was transportation for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. However, several topics discussed also impact mobility options for the general public.

After the changes to the needs/gaps list were completed and new needs/gaps were added, each participant was asked to rank the needs/gaps using colored dots representing a high, medium, or low priority or that the remaining gap/need should be deleted.

Participants discussed more than 20 mobility issues to achieve, preserve, avoid, or eliminate through coordination during the meeting. Coordinated transportation stakeholders will consider these unmet needs when developing transportation goals and strategies, and grant applications. The exhibit at the end of this section provides a summary of the unmet mobility needs discussed during the meeting as well as the needs identified by the survey results. Needs/gaps were prioritized using a Survey Monkey online survey.

**Surveys**
The following survey summary includes the information gained from the following surveys that were performed (see the list of surveys, below). Participation of seniors, disabled and low income persons is noted and quantified, when possible, within the narrative which follows. This narrative includes the discussion of survey results from the 2015-2016 planning process.

There were nine surveys tools developed:

1. General Public and target populations – Seneca County Fair – (166 respondents)
2. Seneca County Governmental Officials (6)
3. Human and Social Service Agencies (10)
4. Multi-Unit Housing (9 )
5. Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services (23)
6. Employer (Human Resource) (12)
7. Passenger (42)
8. Transportation Providers (6)
9. University Students (151)

Surveys also were conducted via telephone, email, and in person.
- 425 surveys were collected
- 9 one-on-one meetings were conducted
Every effort was made to gather responses from people or representatives of different populations from the cities, villages, and all the townships in Seneca County.

Survey 1: General Public – 2015 Seneca County Fair

The 2015 Seneca County Fair was a great location to collect general public input on public transportation. It would enable input from people who reside in all 15 townships, the 2 cities, people of varying ages, and who represent all sectors of population. There were 166 surveys collected at the Seneca County Fair between July 27 and August 2, 2015. The first graph demonstrates the demographics of the survey participants’ residency.

The graph below charts the age of the participants. The disproportionately high representation in the 65+ age group is attributed to Senior Day at the Fair.
Seneca County veterans represent 8.3% of the population per the 2010 U.S. Census. The proportion of participants in the fair survey who were veterans was 14 percent. The higher ratio of veteran survey participants in relationship with the general population can be attributed to the fact that the fair honors veterans with a reduced entry fee on the first day of the event. Other demographics of the survey population are:

- 29% - were disabled;
- 51% - were low income;
- 50% - had used public transportation;
- 26% - used a mobility devise such as a cane, walker, wheel chair, etc.;
- 42% - found it hard to rely on family or friends to take them to appointments;
- 23% - had canceled medical, pharmacy, hairdressers, or other appointments due to lack of transportation; and
- 29% - of those who used public transportation could not get a ride when they needed it.

Sixty percent (60%) of the general public survey participants stated there is a need for additional or improved public transportation in Seneca County. Half (50%) of the respondents had used public transportation. The modes of transportation most frequently used by the respondents were as follows: 47% drove themselves, 27% rode with family or friends, 1% walked, 19% used public transportation, and 15% traveled by another mode of transportation.

Of the 50% who used public transportation, 29% reported that there were times they could not get a ride through this mode of transportation. The overall satisfaction with the days of the week the rural public transit system operated in the county was: 24% very satisfied, 40% satisfied, 20% average, 11% were dissatisfied, and 3% were very dissatisfied.
The participants who used public transportation claimed their overall satisfaction with the total amount of time their trip took was: 18% very satisfied, 54% satisfied, 16% average, 9% dissatisfied, and 2% very dissatisfied.

The overall satisfaction with the ease of scheduling a ride was: 16% very satisfied, 51% satisfied, 24% average, 3% dissatisfied, and 5% very dissatisfied.

The margin of satisfaction was lower when the users of public transportation were asked their overall satisfaction with how far in advance the ride has to be scheduled: 12% were very satisfied, 48% satisfied, 25% average, 10% dissatisfied, and 5% very dissatisfied.

The satisfaction with the value of the service for the fare paid was: 29% very satisfied, 47% satisfied, 13% average, 5% dissatisfied, and 5% very dissatisfied. This result indicated a relatively high degree of satisfaction.

Comments received about specific positive aspects of the service included:

- It is helpful for people that need rides
- I think it is a great service
- Lady driver was so kind and cheerful
- Cheap (2 mentions)
- The driver stays with consumer for the entire duration
- Everything is great
- Friendly drivers (5)
- It is there for those who need it
- Availability, friendliness of scheduler
- Most everything
- Service was good when using it
- Was grateful for safe ride home New Year’s Eve. Otherwise would have been cold walk home.
- Getting people home safe!
- They are there on time
- Allows people to get from place to place who otherwise would not be able to
- Excellent for Fostoria area within city limits
- Very reliable
- The fact it exists and tries to improve
- Very useful service
- Nice service for county
- I can get where I need to be
• Wonderful service; keep it up
• Good thing for the community
• Happy with service

Comments regarding suggested improvements to the service included:

• Better communication – I’m completely unaware of services offered
• Volunteer driving program would better fit my needs
• Let public know that anyone can use SCAT and the price
• Open evening hours (5)
• The fare is too expensive (2). Need a program that offers free service based on income.
• Time does not work for people going to work and school
• Need more transportation options
• Need transportation to School of Opportunity events – like dances – transportation is not available to go home after 9:00 p.m.
• Offer Saturday transportation (7)
• Overbooking / Scheduling – availability
• Pickup closer to time requested
• More services in outlying area
• Concern for dialysis transportation
• Was told service didn’t run before 6 a.m. a few years ago when had to use the service.
• During the school hours there are less available rides

• Service for weekends, more flexible service, if possible pick up before 5 a.m.
• I was at hospital and being picked up. I did not realize my bus was here. I thought it was a Coldwell Banker bus because of the big sign on the back of the bus. Driver left without me.
• Let you add on stops while you are in town. When you come from the doctor’s and need to pick up medicine, don’t make you go back to Bloomville and pay another $10 to pick up the medicine. I don’t have the time and money.
• More children’s car seats
• Patients who are unable to get to appointments because they do not have cash to pay for transport.
• It is easier and better to get service in Tiffin than in Bloomville. Daughter-in law needed transportation from Bloomville to work in Tiffin. Was not always available.
• Could not get a ride – less than 48 hour notice
• Better response to senior needs
As a summary of the comments, consumers wanted dependable and reliable service to all parts of the county. They did not want to be left at an out-of-county appointment if they had health issues and the appointment ran long. They wanted the availability of transportation in the evening and on Saturday.

**Governmental Officials’ Surveys**

Sixty surveys were sent to the Seneca County Commissioners, Mayors of the cities and villages, and Township Trustees. Ten surveys were returned (6%). The officials were asked what transportation challenges were being faced in Seneca County. Most noted the need for adequate transportation for elderly, veterans, disabled, and those with low incomes to medical appointments, work, and school. Only one representative responded that there were no transportation challenges.

Question two of the survey was: “What is most needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County?” The majority of the responses cited involved offering longer hours, more days of service (Saturday), and the loosening of eligibility restrictions. Also cited was the need for greater coordination among providers and for more funding.

The majority of officials stated that there are gaps in transportation service where certain groups are not served or are underserved. The demographic groups that were identified as having the greatest gap in service are families, the elderly, disabled, and individuals with low incomes. Tiffin is the home of two universities with over 2,500 students. A gap in transportation services for students – primarily college students in the area, was noted.

Not one of the officials identified any duplication of services or inefficient use of existing services in their community.

They were asked which of the modes of transportation are most useful in their community. The two options most cited were volunteers and families, friends, and neighbors. The second most cited option was human service transportation programs. Public transportation (vans, buses, trains, etc.) was only cited once.

When asked which time period transportation coverage is needed in their community, fifty percent (50%) of the officials checked all the time periods from 5:00 a.m. to midnight.

One commissioner addressed the need for volunteers to man the county’s EMS departments. Medical destinations were listed as the top travel destination by every official answering the question. Other transportation destinations listed were groceries and work.
Methods cited to improve the coordination of public transportation and human services transportation in Seneca County included finding people for the EMS system 24/7, communication, more information dissemination (letting people know what services are available) including outlining areas of the county.

**Human Service and Social Services Agencies**

In an effort to identify social service agencies which also provide transportation, sixty surveys were sent out to social service organizations and transportation providers. A total of fifteen surveys or 25% of the pool was returned. Ten of the surveys were from agencies that did not provide transportation; their data is reflected in this section. The data from the five agencies that provided transportation is represented in Transportation Provider section. Of the total survey pool of sixty, ten (16%) were human service and social services agencies who did not provide transportation. Of these, 80% were private nonprofit organizations and 20% were local government (the Seneca Industrial & Economic Development Corporation and the Seneca County General Health District).

The primary services of the responding organizations included:

- Community Development
- Cancer patients resource center
- Family advocates
- Adult daycare for people with Alzheimer’s and dementia
- Advocates for abused and neglected children in juvenile court
- Personal wellness, socialization, and character building services
- Education and counseling to individuals, families, companies and the community
- Mental Health Counseling Services
- Health Department – Immunization, health education, and food inspections

The organizations were asked, “Which of the modes of transportation listed below are the most useful transportation options in your service area?” Responses were as follows:

- 78% - Supply own transportation
- 67% - Transportation provided by families, friends, and neighbors
- 56% - Taxis and other private providers
- 11% - Other

- 56% - Human service transportation programs
- 33% - Public Transportation
- 11% - Volunteers
- 11% - Ambulette or stretcher

When asked, “What is most needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County?” The two most cited answers were more funding and longer hours of service. Also cited was greater
coordination among providers, loosening of eligibility restrictions, and lower fares on existing
services. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents cited fundraiser, donations, and personal
motivation.

When asked to check all the time periods of the day that additional transportation coverage is
needed.

- 70% of the respondents checked the 5:00 p.m. to 7:59 p.m. time period
- 50% checked the 8:00 a.m. to 10:59 a.m. and the 8:00 p.m. to 9:59 p.m. time periods
- 40% checked the 5:00 a.m. to 7:59 a.m. time period
- 30% checked the 1:00 p.m. to 2:59 p.m. and the 3:00 p.m. to 4:59 p.m. time periods
- 20% checked the 11:00 a.m. to 12:59 p.m. and the 10:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. time
  periods

No time period received less than 20%. The conclusion from the respondents representing
transportation challenged populations is that there is a need for expanded services.

The agency representatives thought the peak or highest demand time for transportation to
work or school was from 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for return
from school and work.

The responses varied for “What is the most difficult time to find transportation?” Answers
included:

- 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
- After 5:00 p.m.
- Evening hours
- Weekend

Top travel destinations for their clients included medical appointments (both locally and out-of-
county), school, work, and court. Out-of-county destinations for their clients included
appointments in Findlay, Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, Upper Sandusky, and Bowling Green.

The need for transportation coordination activities that the agencies had participated in was
limited. Information and referral about transportation was listed by 80% of the respondents.
One agency participated in three activities: joint use of vehicles, trip sharing, and driver sharing.
One other agency participated in joint grant application funding. One additional agency was
interested in coordination with shared vehicle maintenance.

Funding was the greatest obstacle to coordination of transportation cited by the agencies.
Other obstacles included restrictions placed on the use of vehicles, unique client characteristics,
and the inability to mix clients on board vehicles.
Improvements suggested for the coordination of public transit in Seneca County were:

1. Market to the public (especially students) of the availability of services, and market to remove the stigma associated with the use of taxi cabs
2. More funding for additional buses, vans, and drivers
3. Providers should be able to bill Medicaid
4. Fixed routes with pick-up at least in the downtown areas

When asked if the agency representatives were aware of gaps in transportation services where certain groups were not served or underserved, children, people with low incomes, college students, and workers that do not drive were the population groups identified.

Sixty percent (60%) of the social service organizations directly provide, purchase, operate or arrange transportation:

- 30% - agency staff used personal vehicles
- 30% - agency staff used agency owned fleet vehicles
- 30% - provided reimbursement of mileage or auto expenses paid to employees, clients, families, or volunteers
- 20% - pre-purchase tickets, tokens, or passes for other modes of transit
- 20% - volunteers with no reimbursement
- 10% - organized program with vehicles and staff designated specifically for transportation

Challenges and issues the organizations faced in regards to transportation included availability, cost, and transportation for youth summer programs. One commented that the families they worked with often lack motivation or the ability to schedule or coordinate transportation. Some clients did not have ways to get to their appointment or they did not prepare for emergencies in advance to arrange for transportation. One of the respondents stated, “I personally don’t drive – to and from appointments during day – very challenging – for workforce at large – some don’t drive – need to and from work, College Students w/o cars do not have access to retail and hospital.” Two representatives did not have challenges, and stated that most of their clients provided their own transportation and they were happy with the available services.

**Multi-Unit Housing Surveys**
Many elderly, people with disabilities, and those with low incomes live in multi-unit or congregate housing units. In order to access the transportation needs, gaps in service, and duplication of transportation services, a survey was developed and mailed to managers of
nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and subsidized elderly and low-income housing developments. Twenty-three housing surveys were mailed; nine surveys or 39% were returned. Most of the responding housing representatives were not-for-profit organizations (78%), while 22% were for profit. The breakdown of the respondents and type of housing represented: 33% were skilled nursing facilities, 27% were elderly low-income housing, 20% were low-income family housing, and 20% were elderly assisted living facilities. Responding facilities were home to over 1,100 elderly, disabled, or low-income people.

When asked what is most needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County, the most cited enhancement was more days of service. They wanted Saturday service to be reinstated by SCAT. There were four ways of improving service that tied for second place: (1) greater coordination among providers, (2) more funding, (3) lower fares on existing services, and (4) loosening of eligibility restrictions. Several respondents’ note in the margin beside the choice of loosening of restrictions included, “less lead time” and “SCAT not requiring 48 hour advance notice for scheduling”.

When asked to check all the time periods of the day that additional transportation coverage is needed, the times ranged in three hour intervals from 5:00 a.m. to midnight. The respondents were divided:

- 43% listed all times. It is interesting that all the respondents who checked “All listed times” were representatives of low-income families.
- The 5:00 a.m. to 7:59 a.m. time range was checked by 29% of the respondents. The respondents checking this time range represented low-income housing for both families and age 55+ elderly and disabled. The specific population transportation needs would most likely focus on transport to work, school, and dialysis.
- The 8:00 a.m. to 10:59 a.m. time range was checked by 14% of the respondents. These respondents represented low-income elderly, and the transportation need would focus on medical appointment transportation.
- The 11:00 a.m. to 12:59 p.m. time range was also check by 14% of the respondents. Again, this group represented low-income elderly, and the transportation need would focus on medical appointment transportation.
- The 1:00 p.m. to 2:59 p.m. time range was checked by 43% of the respondents. Noted in the margin by two respondents was “2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. – SCAT busy with school kids” and “Additional coverage needed due to SCAT picking up school kids.” The respondents checking this time represented low-income seniors and nursing home patients. The transportation need at this time would be to and from afternoon medical appointments.
• The 3:00 p.m. to 4:59 p.m. range was checked by 43% of the respondents. The respondents checking this time frame represented low income senior and family housing, and the transportation needs would be work and medical transport.
• The 5:00 p.m. to 7:59 p.m. range was checked by 29% of the respondents, who represented nursing homes. The transportation need would be medical and possibly getting staff to and from work.
• The 8:00 p.m. to 9:59 p.m. timeframe was not checked by any of the respondents. No one noted a need for additional transportation at this time of the day.
• The 10:00 p.m. to 11:59 was checked by 14% of the respondents, who represented low-income family housing. The transportation need at this time would be to and from work.

The next question was: “What is the peak or highest demand time for transportation?” Eighty-seven percent (87%) listed mornings or after 5:00 a.m. Others listed weekdays, midmorning, and early afternoon.

Respondents were asked to answer by filling in the blank for the question, “What is the most difficult time to find transportation?” The two most cited difficult times to find transportation were “short notice appointments” and “Saturday and weekends.” Each of these answers was noted by 43% of the respondents. The next two most cited options were “wheel chair transportation for out-of-town appointments” and “afternoon and 3rd shift transportation.” Each of these transportation challenges was noted by 14% of the respondents.

“What are the challenges and issues your organization faces with regard to transportation?” was the following question, and it also required “fill in the blank” responses. Patterns emerged with the answers based on the population represented. The family low-income housing units cited transportation challenges for employment, getting children to school, medical appointments, and grocery shopping. Skilled nursing and elderly low-income housing providers cited the need for more wheelchair transportation options, especially for out-of-town medical appointments. It became apparent that the skilled nursing is limited with low-cost transportation options for their patients needing medical transportation. Especially noted was the need for low-cost, out-of-town service for wheelchair bound patients.

Question 12 asked the respondents to name the three top travel destinations for those whom they serve. The top listed destination with a total of 58% was medical; this was further broken down with 66% of the medical appointments being within the county and 33% out-of-county. This was followed by 23% for shopping, such as grocery, department, banking and beauty/barber shops. Employment received 12%, followed by 8 percent citing school as a top destination.
When the respondents were asked if they were aware of gaps in transportation services where certain groups were not served or were underserved, the following groups were named as facing the greatest service gap:

- 33% - families
- 33% - low-income
- 22% - children
- 11% - elderly

Other groups that were listed, but which no one selected, were veterans and disabled.

When asked the fill-in-the-bank question “What enhancements are most needed to improve public transportation in their service area?” The answers were:

- Greater coordination
- More availability
- Lower prices to serve low-income families
- Weekend service (2)
- Transportation after 5:00 p.m.
- More funding
- Less lead time for scheduling appointments

Forty-four percent of the multi-unit housing managers purchased transportation on behalf of their clients/residents from other transportation providers including SCAT. The manner, in which the organizations provided, purchased, operated or arranged transportation follow:

- 39% provide information and referral about other community transportation services
- 22% enlist volunteers with no reimbursement
- 11% use personal vehicles of agency staff
- 11% have agency employees use agency owned fleet vehicles
- 11% organized program with vehicles and staff designated specifically for transportation
- 6% other and cited a Mercy LifeStar agreement
The organizations that provided transportation gave additional insight:

- Transportation was provided based on their available resources and that the funding for the service.
- Agencies that provided transportation with agency employees and vehicles experienced certain times of the day where they reach full capacity and cannot meet transportation requests.
- Autumnwood Care Center noted that they are not in the transportation business and only serve their patients as a last resort before emergency transportation, when no other options are available.

The respondents were to list any suggestions, issues, concerns, or additional comments that can help in developing an efficient transportation model and coordinated projects. The majority of the comments in this area were from low-income family representatives. Their responses were best summarized by this respondent’s quote: “The clients we serve do not have money to pay for transportation in some instances, and the limited amount of vehicles that can transport seems to be an issue. There is a need for income based transportation.” One of the skilled nursing facility administrators stated: “Our patients are not always comfortable with young adults / children, and sometimes very uncomfortable physically when traveling, and wait times are longer than anticipated for a trip.”

The final question on the survey was: in your opinion, what do you believe is the greatest obstacle(s) to coordination of transportation in your service area? Comments included:

- “Getting seniors to be on time and plan ahead”
- “Public not knowing all avenues and pricing available to them”
- “Need and weekends”
- “Funding to have enough resources (vans, drivers, and support staff) to serve everyone’s needs and wants for transportation. Demand is growing in all areas, but we are most concerned about adequate wheelchair transportation.”

Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services Survey

Surveys were distributed at the Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services to obtain information from individuals utilizing social services. Twenty-three (23) surveys were completed. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the participants were female. Two of the participants were female veterans, who were both looking for financial assistance and employment. The two veterans represent 8% of the survey participants and closely align with the 8.3% of the
County’s veteran population - there are 4,720 veterans in Seneca County. Eight-seven percent of the participants were from Tiffin, and there was one each from Bloomville, Fostoria, and Sycamore. Only one person used a mobility device, two were veterans, and twenty-one (91%) considered themselves low-income.

The people who completed the Seneca County Job and Family Services survey came to the facility for the following reasons: 33% for financial assistance, 22% for Ohio Means Jobs, 7% for resources, 7% for health care, 7% for child support, and the remaining 22% for other reasons.

Sixty-four percent drove their personal vehicle to SCDJFS, while 20% had a family member drive them, 4% had a friend, and 12% walked to the facility. It should be noted that Seneca County Job and Family Services is located at 3362 S. Twp. Rd. 151, Tiffin, roughly 3.5 miles from the center of town, in a somewhat remote location, and three people or 12% of the participants walked to the facility.

A slightly larger margin of participants (52%) had used public transportation than those who had not (48%). The reason cited by the participants who had not used public transportation before, was that they have always had a vehicle accessible to them. Several participants stated transportation was too expensive and they needed help. One person who commented that SCAT was too expensive; they had traveled from Bloomville (the fee is $5.00 each way for their transportation between Bloomville and SCDJFS).

The participants were asked how often they needed a ride from someone else; a slight majority (52%) cited that they never or very seldom needed a ride from someone else, while 26% stated...
they needed a ride every day, 13% checked two times per week, four percent checked once a month and the remaining four percent checked other than listed.

Thirty-five percent of the participants did not have access to a vehicle, while 65% did have access. Twenty-six percent of the participants stated that there have been times when they could not get a ride from public transportation. The survey demonstrates the need for affordable public transportation for individuals with low-incomes.

**Employer (Human Resource) Survey**

Seneca County employers in attendance at a September 15, 2015 meeting of the Seneca County Human Resource Association completed a survey with questions concerning transportation. Twelve surveys were completed: from the Tiffin-Seneca United Way (3 employees), St. Francis convent (30), City of Tiffin (152), Community Hospice Care (17), National Machinery Corporation (500), Tiffin-Seneca Child Care Center (14), Calvert Catholic Schools (75), Ballreich’s (60), ICP Inc. (175), PT Services (50), AFS (150), and Arnold Vending (80). This sample of employers in the area represented a good mix of private sector manufacturers, local government, and nonprofit entities.

The human resource officials were asked about the number of employees they represented, and to estimate their employment by shift. Respondents represented a total of 1,306 employees, of which approximately 1,009 (77.3 percent) worked a first shift, 122 (9.3 percent) worked a second shift, and 174 (13.3 percent) worked third shift. The vast majority worked during the traditional first shift. Significantly smaller groups worked those shifts that are more difficult to cover with public transportation.

Human Resource officials were also asked to estimate the percentage of their employees living in specific geographic areas. The percentage living in Tiffin ranged from 50 percent (at ICP) to 90 percent (St. Francis, Community Hospice Care, and Tiffin-Seneca Child Care). The average percentage living in Tiffin was 76 percent. Only four estimated any employees lived in Fostoria, and percentages ranged only from five to ten percent. Nearly all employers (except St. Francis) estimated they had some employees living elsewhere in Seneca County, in smaller villages or rural townships. These percentages ranged from five to thirty-three, and including St. Francis with zero, the average for balance of county was 14.8. Six employers included some employees living outside the county altogether, and these percentages ranged from five (PT Services) to 25 (ICP). These numbers indicate a heavy concentration of employees within the City of Tiffin, with another significant but notably lesser number living outside the City limits in smaller local jurisdictions.
All twelve employers were aware that public transportation is available in Seneca County, but only five believed that their employees were aware of this service, six felt that many were aware, and one claimed that only a few are aware.

Responses varied greatly with regard to a multiple choice question, in which the employers were asked how to best describe the importance of Seneca County’s transportation system. One claimed it was “an essential service for some employees”. Three felt it was “a potentially useful service for employees in certain circumstances, and another three said it was “a potentially useful service for routine commuting for some employees”. The greatest number, four, selected “a marginally important service”, one said “a service with limited usefulness because of its limitations”, and identified “cost” as one such limitation. Finally, one respondent additionally wrote that it was an “important service but not for my employees”.

An additional question asked, “How important is the need for reliable transportation to work?” Of the selections offered, one selected: “I am aware of a significant number of cases where employees missed work due to a lack of transportation. Production was impacted.” Another five selected; “I am aware of a limited number of cases where employees missed work. Marginal impact on production.” The remaining six checked “I am not aware of any case where lack of transportation has kept an employee from work.” One employee additionally wrote: “Working with people who are unemployed.”

It appears that public transportation was relied upon infrequently among a segment of the population, but it could be of great importance on the relatively rare instance when it was used.

Individual comments received on surveys included these:

- Most of our individuals have vehicles.
- Employees rarely use SCAT; however, many hospice patients/family could use or could benefit from SCAT.
- Longer times i.e. 6-6 Saturdays. We have foreign visitors that need transportation. The loop is a good idea.
- It would be nice if we (employers) could provide employees with information on the program – a flier to post, pamphlets, prices, etc.
- Off subject to the survey – The loop is important - many international students and international employees in our community.
Passenger Surveys

Seneca County Agency Transportation (SCAT) conducted a passenger survey in November 2014. There were 42 surveys collected. The results of the survey questions follow:

- **First question:** How many times a month do you ride SCAT?
  - 29% (12) of the respondents used the service one to six times per month
  - 26% (11) of the respondents used the service seven to twelve times per month
  - 45% (19) of the respondents used the service more than twelve times per month

- **Please rate your Call-Takers/Dispatcher experience when booking your rides; with 10 being the highest and 0 the lowest rating for helpfulness; with 10 being the highest and 0 being the lowest:**
  - 71% (30) of the respondents gave the highest rating of 10
  - 12% (4) of the respondents gave the second highest rating of 9
  - 10% (4) of the respondents gave a rating of 8
  - 5% (2) of the respondents gave a rating of 7
  - 2% (1) of the respondents gave a rating of 6

- The respondents were then asked to rate the Call-Takers/Dispatchers on being courteous/pleasant:
  - 79% (33) of the respondents gave the highest rating of 10
  - 12% (4) of the respondents gave the second highest rating of 9
  - 2% (2) of the respondents gave a rating of 8
  - 7% (3) did not rate the dispatchers on being courteous and pleasant

Comments were solicited about the Call Takers/Dispatchers’ performance. The comments were very positive stating this staff was very pleasant, accommodating, and helpful.

- The next section of the survey rates the driver(s) on being helpfulness and courteous; with 10 being the highest and 0 the lowest rating. The driver(s) received high marks for their helpfulness:
  - 88% (37) of the respondents gave the highest rating of 10
  - 7% (3) of the respondents gave the second highest rating of 9
  - 2% (1) of the respondents gave a rating of 8
  - 2% (1) of the respondents gave a rating of 7

- The driver(s) also received high marks for being courteous and pleasant:
  - 90% (38) of the respondents gave the highest rating of 10
  - 5% (2) of the respondents gave the second highest rating of 9
  - 2% (1) of the respondents gave a rating of 8
2% (1) of the respondents gave a rating of 6

Comments about the drivers solicited on the survey were very complimentary and positive. Some of the comments included; “All drivers have been great” and “Always friendly and nice.” One respondent stated that they are all good conversationalists and my drive to and from home/work is always on time.

- When asked if the consumer felt safe riding with SCAT, forty of the respondents stated they did, and two stated sometimes.

Comments in this section stated, “Drivers always make sure that we are buckled in, and they are very good drivers” and “All drivers so far have been safe cautious drivers.”

- The next question on the survey asked if the consumer would recommend SCAT to others. There were 42 respondents and only one responded no; all others would recommend the service.
- The final question on the survey inquired where the respondent lived. Ninety-three percent of the respondents lived in one of the two major population centers within the service area: 60% lived in Tiffin and 33% lived in Fostoria. One of the respondents was from Republic and two listed “other”.

Transportation Provider Survey

Governmental and Non-profit Providers

In an effort to identify social service agencies which also provide transportation, sixty inclusive surveys were sent out to Social Service organizations and transportation providers. A total of fifteen surveys or 25% of the pool were returned. Ten of the surveys were from agencies that did not provide transportation and this data is reflected in Section VI., the Human Service and Social Services Agencies. The data from the five agencies that provided transportation is represented in this section. Five respondents (8%) of the total survey pool of sixty completed the provider portion of the survey.

Of the transportation providers who completed the survey, 66% were non-profit and 33% were governmental entities. All consumers of their services also used multiple transportation options, such as human service transportation programs, public transportation, taxis, volunteers, families, friends, and neighbors. Eighty percent of the Agency Provider Survey participants had eligibility requirements restricting those persons who could be provided transportation. Some of the agency restrictions included: Medicaid eligibility, case
management, employment, age, DD eligibility, and residence in Seneca County or Metro Fostoria. The organization’s targeted demographics were those with low incomes, people with disabilities, elderly, and general public.

When the providers were asked what was most needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County, two answers were cited by sixty percent (60%) of the survey participants: more funding and longer hours of service. The next most frequent answer at 40% was more days of service. Other areas for improving the county’s personal mobility were greater coordination among providers, lower fares on existing services, and loosening of eligibility restrictions; each of these were cited by 20% of the participants.

Eight percent of the respondents cited 5:00 a.m. to 7:59 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 7:59 p.m. as the two primary periods of the day when additional transportation coverage was needed. This was followed by sixty percent (60%) for the three consecutive periods from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The need for additional coverage can be observed when no three hour time period was selected by less than 40% of the providers. The peak or highest demand time for transportation ranged from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The most difficult time to find transportation was at school start and dismissal times and weekends. The challenges and issues the organizations faced with regard to transportation included funding, vehicles, and fuel.

All the organization representatives listed that the coordination activities that they participated in was information and referral. Two organizations participated in joint training and joint use of vehicles. The following options were selected once by separate organizations: shared backup vehicles, trip sharing, service consolidation, and joint grant application.

Funding was listed as the major obstacle for coordination of transportation in the service area by 80% of the participants. Twenty percent (20%) cited statutory barriers to pooling funds and unique client characteristics/inability to mix clients on board as a barrier to coordination. No one noted: restrictions placed on the use of vehicles or liability/insurance concerns as an obstacle to coordination of transportation.

Funding was the most cited enhancement needed to improve the coordination of public transportation. The major funding source for all the agencies were local tax dollars, federal grant and service funding. Driver pay increase also reducing statutory and funding restrictions were listed as enhancements to improve coordination efforts. Families and low-income individuals were the demographic group to be underserved by transportation in Seneca County.
All of the transportation providers used paid employees who drove agency owned vehicles. Sixty percent (60%) of the organizations were a program with vehicles and staff designed specifically for transportation. The use of pre-purchased tickets, tokens, or passes for use on another mode of transportation was an addition option that 40% of the organizations provided for their clients. Another method of arranging transportation was reimbursement of mileage to employees, clients, client’s families, or volunteers.

Consumers can access agencies transportation services by calling to schedule a trip. Some of the organizations require a 24 or 48 hour advance notice. All providers list the days of operation as Monday through Friday. No Saturday or weekend service was listed as being available by the governmental and non-profit agencies. The hours of service varied slightly, but fell within the 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. time frame.

The organizations were also asked to note the times of the day when they met capacity limits or could not meet transportation requests. The times listed for meeting capacity were from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The time most noted for not being able to meet transportation requests was after 5:00 p.m.

**University Surveys**

Collection of data often leads to additional surveys. This was the case when surveying college students. The results from the Governmental Survey addressed a probable gap in transportation services for students at the two universities located in Tiffin: Heidelberg University and Tiffin University. It was decided to first collect surveys on October 9, 2015 at Heidelberg University, and the results of that survey follow. Although it was planned to collect surveys at both universities, the results from the Heidelberg survey produced the alteration of survey questions, and addressed the need to collect additional data on the transportation needs of college students. Surveys were collected at Tiffin University on October 22, 2015.

**Heidelberg University**

There were sixty-six (66) surveys collected at Heidelberg University on October 9, 2015. The surveys were broken into two parts: one for residential students, and the other for commuters. All of the students who completed the survey were residents on campus.

- Sixty-six percent (66%) of the survey participants would be interested in a public transportation service on campus.
- Sixty-one percent (61%) of the participants had a vehicle on campus, while 39% did not.
Eighty-three (83%) percent were able to get to the places they wanted to go and 17% percent could not.

Sixty-four percent (64%) of all the participants would like access to the airport, train or bus station.

The participants were asked if they could not get to places they wanted to go, what places would they like access to? Even though only seventeen percent (17%) of the participants had stated that they were unable to get to places they wanted to go, thirty-two (32%) of the total respondents answered this question. All of the respondents to this question would like access to a department store / grocery store. Sixty-two percent of the respondents would like to be able to go downtown. Thirty-eight percent would like access to medical care, specifically Urgent Care. Another five percent checked “other” and named access to banking.

Half of the participants gave suggestions for improvement in meeting the transportation needs of resident students, including:

- 60% suggested public transit including a fixed route shuttle service;
- 27% wanted greater availability of public transportation, including transportation linking to the airport, train station, and bus terminal;
- 10% would like a local map that marks location of popular venues;
- 10% would like better communication with students concerning what services are available.

The participants noted that parking on campus was an issue.

**Tiffin University**

There were eight-four (84) surveys collected on October 22, 2015 at Tiffin University. Survey collection was in Gilmore Student Center in the common area across from the dining hall. The student survey questions were adjusted and not divided between commuter and resident student so that more data could be collected.

- Eight-five percent (85%) of the participants were resident students, and the remaining fifteen percent (15%) of the students commuted to school.
- Seventy-six percent (76%) of the students would be interested in public transportation service with pick-up on campus.
- Eight percent (8%) had missed class because lack of transportation.
- Seventy-six percent (76%) would use public transportation to get to the airport, train station, or bus terminal.
- Sixty-five percent (65%) of the participants had a vehicle on campus.
Of the students who had a vehicle on campus, sixty-seven percent (67%) stated they would use public transportation;

Of the twenty-nine students who did not have a vehicle on campus, ninety-three percent (93%) stated they would use public transportation.

Eight-three percent (83%) were able to get to the places they wanted to go and seventeen percent (17%) could not (note: this answer had the same percentage breakdown as Heidelberg).

Fifty-two percent (52%) of the participants found parking their vehicle challenging and forty-eight percent (48%) did not.

Eleven percent (11%) of the participants who found parking challenging had missed class because of this issue.

The majority of the students supported a shuttle stop on campus. When asked how often the shuttle should run, the responses were: 49% every half hour, 34% every 15 minutes, and 18% every hour.

Suggestions for improvement in meeting the transportation needs of students included:

- A bus schedule similar to that of a bigger city with a route and stops
- Create a shuttle
- Transportation to bigger cities like Findlay and Toledo
- Transportation for campus is a good idea
- There has to be enough students wanting transportation for it to work
- A bus system would be good
- A shuttle that goes to both college campuses
- Keep the cost low
- Students could get bicycles since the campus is very small
- Store shuttle service is a great idea
- More parking, maybe separate commuter and on-campus resident parking
- Communicate transportation options
- Shuttles to airports during holidays

One respondent commented that “Tiffin is too small for public transportation.” This statement demonstrates the need for communication of the availability of already established public transportation.

Those students who stated that they were not able to get to places they wanted to go were given four choices: Department/Grocery stores, downtown, medical appointments and other. Twenty-eight students answered this question. The results follow:
• Eight-nine percent (89%) of the participants would like to be able to go to a department store or grocery.
• The second most requested destination was the downtown area; this was desired by 46% of the participants.
• Thirty-six percent (36%) of the students wanted access for medical appointments.

Other requested destinations were work, Chipotle’s in Findlay, Cinemark, other cities, seeing friends, and home. The students also requested transportation to airports and train stations during the holiday breaks.

One-On-One Meetings

**Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services**

Twenty-three surveys were collected from people who were looking for assistance from Seneca County Department of Job and Family Services. This was one avenue to access the need of individuals with low-income. An overview from an administrative view of transportation needs of people in Seneca County Kathy Oliver, Director and Bob Anderson, Assistant Director of Seneca County Job and Family Services were interviewed on September 14, 2015.

The three priorities cited for public transportation enhancements were:

1. Expanded hours for employment access for 2nd and 3rd shift workers
2. Reduce SCAT’s 24 hour in advance booking time
3. Implementation of set routes (a flexed loop...Wal-Mart, SCDJFS, Hospital, etc.)

They also set a wish list for enhancement of public transportation in Seneca County.

1. Ability for staff to book trips with SCAT online, through the use of a web based scheduling software.
2. Reduce the amount of time for the 24 hour book in advance contract time
3. Help improve transportation across bordering county lines

They noted that the Rural Public Transportation system, SCAT, does a good job with community events.

**Seneca Crawford Area Transportation**

The major uses of Seneca- Crawford Area Transportation (SCAT) rural transportation service is (1) medical, dialysis, chemo transportation, (2) education & employment—school kids, jobs after school, some college drop offs, mostly preschool, and (3) grocery, shopping, Wal-Mart, Kroger, and beauty shops. Mary Habig, the Executive Director of SCAT stated that there was low demand for Saturday service. There is a need for more money for more services. The
agency is maxed out at peak periods, usually 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and in the afternoon from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. If the agency received more funding, they would need more drivers, vehicles, and dispatchers. There is a desire in the community for a flexed route that would encompass the campus to downtown, Wal-Mart, and doctor’s offices. This would be especially useful for the international students at Tiffin University and Heidelberg University. If a flex route is federally grant funded, the local share would possibly be available from the city, Universities and employers.

There is the perception that college kids and elderly don’t necessarily want to ride together. Other issues identified were the need for rides for employees, she noted that sometimes employees lose their license and need a ride to work.

**Seneca County Commission on Aging**

Seneca County Commission on Aging Director, Bryan Glover, describes the agency’s transportation services, which operates Monday through Friday as a curb to curb service. The top destinations are for medical, social, recreation, shopping, beauty shop, and grocery. There are gaps in weekend services. Seniors are pretty much finished traveling by 6:00 p.m. because they have completed their doctor’s appointments and shopping. Many seniors feel that SCAT is for the younger user such as students, Head Start, etc. This can keep seniors from considering it as a transportation option.

**Service Cab, William Omlor, Owner**

Service cab is a private, for-profit, family owned taxi service which has been in business for over forty-five years. The present owner, William Omlor, has been involved in the business since he was a child. He puts his heart and soul into providing a quality service, with well-maintained equipment, and friendly drivers. He believes the negative stigma once associated with the company has been erased because of the high standard he has set for the business. His peak demand for service is Friday and Saturday nights. Service cab has a slogan, “No DUI in one of these.”

When asked, “What is most needed to improve personal mobility in Seneca County?” he answered, “For people to have greater knowledge of what services are offered and the true costs of transportation.” One of his greatest challenges is having people understand that he cannot operate for the $1 or $2 fares charged by SCAT. It costs SCAT far more than the $1 and $2 dollars they charge to provide the trip, but they are subsidized by tax dollars, and he is a tax payer, who is trying to operate a cab company with the pressures of wages, insurance and unstable fuel costs; he cannot charge less than $6 per trip. People do not realize the true cost of operating their own vehicle: fuel, insurance, maintenance, license, and the cost of the vehicle. As a transportation provider there are the added costs of wages, employer taxes, etc.
Seneca County Commissioner, Holly Stacy (Former)

Commissioner Holly Stacy, Seneca County Commissioner, identified the community’s desire for a loop configuration for Tiffin. The hours need to be conducive to need and demand. The interest has evolved because of two populations: the college students and the aging population.

Parking as an issue, the new proposed Justice Center may provide an incentive to use public transit if an on-demand loop is established. There is demand for transportation in outlying areas of the county. The 48 hour notice is a pretty standard requirement for scheduling a transport and the system can squeeze people in if rides are available. The primary clients of public transportation are seniors, low-income, and people with disabilities.

Dean of Student Affairs, Heidelberg University, Dustin Brentlinger

Dustin Brentlinger stated, “Transit is crucial to get to basic services – medical rides to hospital, shopping runs (Wal-Mart).” Also, needed is transportation out of the city especially at key times such as school breaks. The international student population is 50 at Heidelberg and over 200 at Tiffin University. Enterprise Rental is breaking into college business with rent-a-car, the principle of this concept is for a friend to drive you to airport, and then return the car to the rental agency. The Uber model may work in this instance. He hopes that a loop can be developed. The loop is not needed in the morning because the students are in class. He hopes the loop will run from noon till 8:00 p.m. or 9:00 p.m. He also noted a serious parking problem on campus. At any time there are a maximum of 16 parking spaces open.

Seneca County Board of DD - Seneca County Opportunity Center

Ron Davison, Director of Transportation at the Seneca County Opportunity Center, began the interview by describing the Board of Developmental Disabilities’ transportation program. There are 210 people, including 50 students, who are served by their transportation services. The agency coordinates and contracts with SCAT. The agency contracts with SCAT when they do not have capacity for people who need transportation to the center’s programs and also for transportation of preschoolers to the Early Intervention Program because they have the proper car seats. Coordination efforts include joint training, shared of back-up vehicles, and use of the wash bay.

“Gaps in services is evident in evenings for community employment, nobody does the late hour shift.” Ron Davison reported, “There is a need for transportation home from events such as sporting events, dances, shows, or movies ending at 10:00 p.m.” He also saw deficiencies in transportation outside of town, and added there is always some demand for Saturday transportation, and Sunday for church. Another gap is SCAT is booked until 8:00 a.m., but first shifts often start at 7:00 a.m. He thinks the proposed loop in Tiffin, which is now under consideration and study, can help address some gaps in service.

Issues encountered with coordination efforts include liability and insurance concerns, turf issues among providers, and billing and accounting issues. Funding is the greatest obstacle to coordinated transportation. The most needed enhancement to improve the coordination of
public transportation in Seneca County is expanded service hours, including evenings and weekends.

**Seneca County Veterans Services**

On September 15, 2015, Matt Prenzlin, Investigator / CVSO, Seneca County Veterans Services met with GLCAP representatives and described their services. The agency only serves veterans who reside in Seneca County. Caregiver spouses are allowed to accompany the veterans. The vehicles are wheelchair accessible. If the need for accessible transportation arose, the agency would contract with SCAT. The transportation service is staffed by one full-time Transportation Coordinator and two part-time drivers.

Coordination efforts include information referral and SCAT allows them to wash their large vehicle at the Transit Facility’s wash bay. They are not allowed to partner with neighboring counties for transportation because of liability. They cannot do emergency transportation. There is a need for transportation to non-VA, out-of-county medical destinations.

**Allen Eiry Center, Inc.**

Diane Culver, Executive Director, began by describing the center’s transportation program. The service runs Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. depending on staffing, and for special senior events. The greatest obstacle to coordination of transportation is funding. Greater availability is needed to improve the coordination of public transportation in Seneca County. There are times when seniors cannot get a ride to programs during school start and end times. The need for transportation for school students is understood. There is concern about the remaining population who need transportation at the same time.

**Community Development Transportation Initiatives**

Seneca Industrial and Economic Development Corp. (SIEDC) is a private, non-profit corporation dedicated to driving positive economic, downtown, and community development in Tiffin and Seneca County. Through the Main Street comprehensive revitalization program, transportation initiatives are being explored. The SIEDC Downtown Summit was held May 6, 2015 at Heidelberg.

Transportation initiatives were discussed and studies are being conducted. One of the focus areas is transportation. Methods to enhance transportation in Tiffin are currently being discussed. Complete transportation systems including integrate parking, bike lanes, sidewalks, and traffic patterns that create safe, vibrant corridors. A feasibility study is being conducted by Heidelberg University students in association with the downtown revitalization effort to explore the creation of a fixed route loop. A link to SIEDC / Seneca Success blog is [https://senecasuccess.wordpress.com/tag/town-and-gown/](https://senecasuccess.wordpress.com/tag/town-and-gown/). Information about the process and initiatives are contained on the blog.
Summary

To summarize, data was collected to be representative of the entire population of Seneca County. Emphasis was placed on obtaining information for transportation challenged populations: the elderly, people with disabilities, low income, and veterans. Transportation was recognized as a primary need. Individuals who used public transportation or not, the majority saw great importance in having dependable, reliable, accessible, and low-cost public transportation that serves all parts of the county. They saw a need to get people, especially seniors, to out-of-county medical appointments with the guarantee of a return trip if the appointment ran long. A loop was visualized as an innovative transportation option that would help drive the community economically and also be a tool to better serve the population with affordable, timely, effective transportation.

The participants of surveys and one-on-one discussions were generally satisfied with the public transportation that is presently being offered. Participants did not see any duplication of services or inefficient use of resources. The overall consensus of community input was that there is a need for expanded and improved coordinated, public transportation in Seneca County.

The college students desired a local map that marks locations of popular venues and lists transportation options with contact information. The map could be a valuable marketing tool if a loop is created; it would designate pick-up / drop-off locations and times. Funding is a major issue in creating the loop.

Many transportation improvements and enhancements were cited. Combined survey and interview results identify the transportation needs for Seneca County is listed below in order of frequency:
✓ A loop connecting the downtown, shopping, medical destinations, SCJFS, and the two universities;
✓ Expanded Saturday, Sunday, and evening transportation services;
✓ Expanded accessible, affordable, out-of-county transportation, especially for medical appointments;
✓ Less lead time for scheduling appointments;
✓ Communication and distribution of information on all available transportation options;
✓ Additional transportation during peak hours of demand - 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
✓ More funding;
✓ Transportation to bus terminals, airports, and rail stations during the universities’ winter and spring breaks;
✓ Lower – income based fares;
✓ Greater coordination of resources;
✓ Volunteers to man the EMS departments;
✓ Remove stigma associated with use of taxi cab;
✓ Public education on the total cost of transportation (subsidized vs. unsubsidized).

The major obstacle to implementing transportation enhancements, improvements, and the coordination of transportation by the social service agencies and providers is funding. Other obstacles included restrictions placed on the use of vehicles, unique client characteristics, and the inability to mix clients on board vehicles.
Challenges to Coordinated Transportation

In addition to identifying needs, the planning committee gathered information from stakeholders and used their own professional experience to identify challenges to providing coordinated transportation services. These challenges include the following: improving regional coordination and making it easier to cross county lines (including travel within Fostoria), a need for extension of service earlier and/or later in the day, provision of weekend services, implementing a Tiffin flex route, addressing Medicaid non-medical transportation needs, improving community awareness of available transportation resources, and improved coordination by executing memorandums of Understanding between Seneca County agencies and providers, among others.
Summary of Unmet Mobility Needs
The following table describes the identified unmet transportation needs that were identified and the method used to identify and prioritize each need. Needs are listed in order of their rank in highest to lowest priority.

*Red indicates a shift in unmet needs description; See Annual Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Unmet Need Description</th>
<th>Method Used to Identify and Rank Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regional coordination; make crossing county lines more seamless (easier) and less expensive.</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>New legislation in Seneca Co. affecting Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation. Public would like updated information on how this will affect services.</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Implement the Tiffin Flex Route</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Expand public transportation on weekends and during evening hours</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Develop a smart phone application for scheduling public transportation</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Transportation options for the City of Fostoria</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Improve community awareness of available transportation resources in Seneca County</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lack of transportation for grocery shopping, Pharmacy, to employment options</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Offer travel trainings to educate community members on how to use schedule and ride public transportation for the first time</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Offer the Passenger Care Attendant Program to provide door through door service</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Explore MOU’s between Seneca County agencies</td>
<td>Internet survey, other surveys, and interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Goals and Strategies
Developing Strategies to Address Gaps and Needs

Strategies for improving transportation in Seneca County should address the service gaps and user needs identified in this plan, if they are to be effective. As described, the gaps and unmet needs were based on information obtained from geographic analysis, the attendees participating in the meetings, and responses to the public survey.

Based on information gathered throughout the planning process, Great Lakes Community Action Partnership developed the following strategies to address the gaps and unmet transportation needs. Priority levels are assigned by considering the primary funding sources that could be available to support plan implementation compared to the importance of meeting this unmet need expressed by the public and stakeholders. Not all strategies are activities specifically eligible for funding under the existing programs, nor is it guaranteed that sufficient funding will be available to achieve every strategy identified. In addition, the local stakeholders will need to provide support and commit to pursuing the strategies if they are to be accomplished. Nonetheless, these strategies have been tailored to six of the identified primary gaps and needs.

Below is an outline describing the prioritized strategies to address each of the identified unmet transportation needs and gaps in service. The timeline was established by the Seneca County Planning Committee:

**Immediate:** Within 6 months  
**Medium:** Within 1 year  
**Long Term:** Within 3 years  
**Completed**  
**Continuing and ongoing**
Goal #1: Regionalization Coordination

Need(s) Being Addressed: Make crossing a county line more “seamless”. Consider the creation of connections and transfers. Make travel outside Seneca County less expensive.

Strategy 1.1: Work with adjoining transit providers to coordinate services in the most efficient and cost effective way.

Timeline for Implementation: Medium

Action steps associated with the strategy for achieving the goal:

• Identify methods, including best practices used elsewhere, to make crossing the county line more affordable and easier to accomplish

• Continue discussions of a minimum fare rate and schedule of services for transportation

• Consider connections and transfers for out-of-county and near border hubs to make crossing county lines easier and more affordable. – Continuing and ongoing

• Expand on the City of Bellevue discussions with SCAT, TRIPS, First Transit, Huron County Trans, Senior Express, and OCTA, to best serve that community and its surrounding multi-county area – MOU created fall 2019

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: Mobility Manager, SCAT, and Planning Committee

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: Local jurisdictions, political leaders, non-profits, all public, private and human service agency transportation providers, planning organizations, and stakeholder committee members that participate in the planning effort

Resources Needed: Staff time, contract services with adjoining transit systems, vehicles, and matching software to coordinate services

Potential Cost Range: $80,000-$120,000 (It is intended that each county within the consortium will contribute a like amount to the overall regional Mobility Management effort)

Potential Funding Sources: Local jurisdictions, human service agencies, transit systems, 5310 ODOT and CSBG, possible other grants

Performance Measures/Targets:

• Conversations with adjoining transit providers to see where coordinated services would be feasible and creation of a MOU documenting the relationship

• Creation of a plan showing the feasibility of crossing county lines and how much this effort would cost to implement
• Consideration and analysis of the feasibility and expense of transfer hubs with adjoining counties.

**Goal #2: Improve Customer Service**

**Need(s) Being Addressed:** More transportation options are needed to serve a variety of Seneca County clients during evening hours and weekends.

**Strategy 2.1:** Offer transportation services on weekends, holidays, and evenings.

**Timeline for Implementation:** Long Term

**Action steps associated with the strategy for achieving the goal:**

- Implement a Deviated Fixed Route System by SCAT for City of Tiffin – Continuing
- Set up a responsive comment/feedback system – Completed
- Identify and implement strategies to make scheduling demand response more flexible
- Ensure that all vehicles are accessible to all users – Continuing and ongoing
- Research impact and costs associated with extending evening and weekend service
- Explore acquiring an app for customers to schedule trips on public transportation

**Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation:** SCAT, private taxi providers, transportation providers

**Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation:** Mobility Manager and local human service agencies

**Resources Needed:** Staff time, bus shelters, contract services with adjoining transit systems, vehicles, and matching software to coordinate services.

**Potential Cost Range:** $240,000 - $360,000

**Potential Funding Sources:** Local jurisdictions, SCAT, Seneca County Commissioners, Seneca County Regional Planning, 5310 ODOT, CSBG, and possible other grants

**Performance Measures/Targets:**

- Action steps taken to ensure that scheduling processes are efficient
- Encouragement and support for Travel Training when necessary to take the fear out of using public transportation for the first time
- Increased service hours, days and destinations for transportation users.
- Improved relationships with medical facilities to deliver optimal and responsive services
Goal #3: Improve Efficiencies and Minimize Duplication

Need(s) Being Addressed: There is a need to strive consistently for more timely pickup and delivery of clients. Increase service to various destinations including stores, pharmacies and employers.

Strategy 3.1: Collaborate with other agencies to improve efficiencies through shared training and resources. Minimize redundant trips outside county by multiple providers.

Timeline for Implementation: Medium

Action steps associated with the strategy for achieving the goal:

- Require cultural diversity training as well as the required safety and service training for all drivers (especially those working with seniors and individuals with disabilities)
- Improve communication between local human service agencies, public and private transportation providers, schools, businesses, dialysis centers, and local hospital.
- Finalize plan and implement the deviated fixed route in Tiffin — Continuing and ongoing

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: Seneca County Planning Committee, SCAT, health and human service transportation providers

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: Mobility Manager, Local jurisdictions, Seneca County Regional Planning Commission, political leaders, non-profits, planning organizations, and stakeholder committee members that participate in the planning effort

Resources Needed: Staff time, political leaders, stakeholder committee

Potential Cost Range: $50,000-70,000

Potential Funding Sources: Local jurisdictions, human service agencies, transit systems, and 5310 ODOT grant, CSBG, and other grants

Performance Measures/Targets:

- Conversations with adjoining transit providers to see where coordinated services would be feasible, with a MOU created documenting the relationship
- Collaboration with other agencies to improve efficiencies through shared training and resources
- Exploration of “swipe card” payment technology and cell phone applications for public transportation — Continuing and ongoing
Goal #4: Marketing

Need(s) Being Addressed: Residents in Seneca County are not aware of all mobility options that are available in their county, including the new Deviated Fixed Route in the City of Tiffin that is currently being developed by both SCAT (Seneca-Crawford Area Transportation) and the Seneca Regional Planning Commission. Travel Trainings, Passenger Care Assistants and the Mobility Management program in general.

Strategy 4.1: Educate Seneca County Residents on all mobility options that are available within the county.

Timeline for Implementation: Immediate

Action steps associated with the strategy for achieving the goal:

- Update transportation provider list for the county that displays agency contact information, services provided, service area, number of vehicles available, cost for one way trip, eligibility, and comparison; include information on the Deviated Fixed Route for the City of Tiffin – Completed

- Provide easy access to information through various means and social media – Continuing and ongoing

- Distribute SCAT information to the public – Continuing and ongoing

- Meet with entities and organizations that have current and potential transportation users – Continuing and ongoing

- Eliminate the stigma that public transportation is only for the disadvantaged – Continuing and ongoing

- Generate a list of all transportation services in Seneca County - Completed

- Distribute Seneca County Transit Brochures – Completed; Continuing and ongoing

- Utilize social media and any emerging platforms for information dissemination – Continuing and ongoing

- Have Seneca County Transportation information updated on the Mobility Website - Completed

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: Mobility Manager

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: SCAT, Seneca Regional Planning Commission, private taxis, and all local human service agencies

Resources Needed: Staff time, transit agency coordination, brochures and other marketing materials
**Potential Cost Range:** $8,000 - $16,000

**Potential Funding Sources:** 5310 ODOT Grant, CSBG, Seneca County Commissioners, SCAT, Seneca County Department of Job & Family Services, and other grant opportunities

**Performance Measures/Targets:**

- Seneca County Transportation List is updated by June 30, 2018 - **Completed**
- Mobility Management Website is updated by June 30, 2018; then continuously updated as needed – **Completed 11/1/2018**
- All Seneca County marketing materials are distributed in key locations by June 30, 2018 – **Completed 11/1/2018**

**Goal #5: Communication and Coordination**

**Need(s) Being Addressed:** Increase the transit service area and better penetrate the Seneca County market (focusing on those who are seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low income).

**Strategy 5.1:** *Develop and expand existing partnerships with public and private human service agencies and transportation agencies. Keep public updated on information regarding Medicaid transportation rules.*

**Timeline for Implementation:** Medium

**Action steps associated with the strategy for achieving the goal:**

- Develop and expand partnerships with local schools to possibly provide Safe Routes to School for that specific school district – **Continuing and ongoing.**
- Maintain the ongoing partnership with the Veterans Service Commission of Seneca County, through the existing Memorandum of Understanding – **Continuing and ongoing**
- Reach out and partner with dialysis centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and other medical facilities in Tiffin, Fostoria, and elsewhere if satellite offices exist in smaller communities
- Reduce duplicated transportation services where feasible
- Keep the SCAT Website updated – **Continuing and ongoing**
- Maintain the mobility management website – **Continuing and ongoing**

**Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation:** Plan Steering Committee
Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: Mobility Manager, local jurisdictions, political leaders, non-profits, all public, private and human service agency transportation providers, planning organizations, and stakeholder committee members that participate in the planning effort

Resources Needed: Mobility manager, political leaders, stakeholder members, and operational funds

Potential Cost Range: $120,000-160,000

Potential Funding Sources: Local jurisdictions, human service agencies, transit systems, 5310 ODOT, CSBG

Performance Measures/Targets:

- Conversations held with adjoining transit providers to see where coordinated services would be feasible and a MOU is executed documenting the relationship – Continuing and ongoing

- Implement Ecolane as the scheduling software for SCAT - Completed

- Expand the number of new partnerships established to provide services for residents.

Goal #6: Capital Needs

Need(s) Being Addressed: Acquisition of improved communication equipment, maintenance of a process of fleet updates and replacements, provision of marked, safe, secure shelters for emerging deviated fixed route, and continued exploration of options to upgrade transportation software.

Strategy 6.1: Explore upgrades to public transportation software to provide a more efficient service for riders of Seneca Crawford Area Transportation, develop bus shelters for deviated fixed route, and provide vehicles to Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Opportunity Center) SCAT, and other providers when need is demonstrated.

Timeline for Implementation: Immediate and ongoing

Action steps associated with the strategy for achieving the goal:

- Implement Ecolane as a transportation software for SCAT and others as appropriate – Completed

- Create a process of fleet vehicle replacements and updates for Seneca County Board of DD, SCAT, Commission on Aging, Flat Rock and/or others as identified; assist with specific needs and requests identified, including. - Continuing and ongoing
• The needs of the Seneca County Board of DD for three replacement vehicles costing a total range of $150 to $175,000.

• Construct or purchase bus shelters for the Deviated Fixed Route for the City of Tiffin. Currently, a feasibility study is being conducted by RLS Consulting for a Flex-Route for the City of Tiffin. This study includes route design and costs. They will determine where the stops will be and which stops will need a shelter. – Continuing and ongoing

• Support Seneca County Board of DD, Flat Rock Homes, Inc., SCAT, Seneca County Commission on Aging, and others, as appropriate and necessary, in applying for replacement vehicles – Continuing and ongoing

Parties Responsible for Leading Implementation: SCAT, Seneca County Board of DD, and other transportation providers

Parties Responsible for Supporting Implementation: Mobility Manager, Seneca County Planning Committee, Seneca Regional Planning Commission, and all local human service agencies

Resources Needed: Capital/operational funding, staff time, transit agency coordination, Ecolane Training, architect, bus shelters, and contract services

Potential Cost Range: $1,500,000

Potential Funding Sources: 5310 ODOT Grant, CSBG, Seneca County Transit, Area Office on Aging, Seneca County Department of Job & Family Services, and other grant opportunities.

Performance Measures/Targets:

• Transition Seneca County Planning Committee to a Stakeholder Group, that meets at least once per quarter. – Continuing and ongoing

• Ecolane will be implemented by SCAT as its transportation software. - Completed

• Apply for supplemental funding for the system as recommended each year by transit partners – Continuing and ongoing

• Apply for vehicle replacement each year by transit partners – Continuing and ongoing
VI. Plan Adoption

The Seneca County plan was initially adopted by the steering/planning committee, as well as the Board of Commissioners, and submitted to the Ohio Department of Transportation in 2016. Following the creation of a new template for county plans the 2016 plan was revised to fit the new template, and new data on demographics and transportation and service entities was incorporated in the new document. The goals and objectives were similarly revised, including the listing of capital needs that is now reflective of the entities’ needs in 2017, and included in the document. In addition to a series of meetings held in 2015-2016 to shape the initial document, two additional meetings of the steering committee were held in 2017 to provide an overview of the revision process, and then to approve the revised plan as a committee. This latter meeting was held in December 2017.
Appendix A: List of Planning Committee Participants

The planning committee consists of representation from local agencies as well as participation of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and members of the general public. More information about the planning committee is available upon request by contacting

Agency Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holly Stacey (Former Commissioner)</td>
<td>Seneca County Board of Commissioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Habig, Executive Director</td>
<td>Seneca Crawford Area Transportation (SCAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Davidson, Transportation Supervisor</td>
<td>Seneca County DD Board/Opportunity Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanda Digby, Program Coordinator</td>
<td>Seneca County Commission on Aging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heidi Brickner, County Resident</td>
<td>Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charlene Watkins, Executive Director</td>
<td>Seneca Regional Planning Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Kilgo, President &amp; Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Flat Rock Homes, Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kristen Gerwin, Mobility Manager</td>
<td>Great Lakes Community Action Partnership</td>
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</table>

In addition to participants listed above, the planning committee also incorporated representation of older adults, people with disabilities, and members of the general public. In addition to hosting a planning committee, Great Lakes Community Action Partnership and other planning committee members also conducted a wide variety of activities designed to increase involvement of community stakeholders in identifying community resources, addressing community needs, and setting goals and priorities. More information about the efforts that occurred is available upon request. To request additional information please contact:

Kristen Gerwin, Mobility Manager
Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
419-333-5081
kdgerwin@GLCAP.org
Appendix B: List of Annual Reviews and Plan Amendments

It is required that this plan be reviewed by the planning committee annually.

Annual Review:

The Annual Review of the Seneca County Coordinated Transportation plan occurred in October 2019. The purpose of the Annual review is to amend the 2017 Seneca County Coordinated Transportation Plan, keeping the plan current and in a state of motion. The Agency Characteristics Tables, Fleet Vehicle Inventory and Goals and Strategies sections of the plan were updated by stakeholders and county agencies during the Annual Review process.

Seneca County Coordinated Transportation Plan Annual Review 2019

At its meeting on October 21, 2019 the Seneca county Transportation stakeholder and planning committee reviewed the Coordinated Public and Human Services Transportation Plan in its entirety and have approved the following amendments. Revisions were open to comments from committee members for more than 60 days. All comments and approvals are on file.

- Organization Characteristic Charts; Pgs. 14-31
- Fleet Vehicle Information Inventory Tables; Pgs. 34-39
- Goals & Strategies; Pgs. 76-83

Goal #1: Regional Coordination

Strategy 1.1: Work with adjoining transit providers to coordinate services in the most efficient and cost effective way.

Seneca Crawford Area Transportation is currently providing 114,444 one way trips per year. SCAT applied for additional FY 2020 5311 program funds in order to provide transportation services in the entire Fostoria metropolitan area. This area is located in three counties; Seneca, Wood and Hancock. Additionally, if additional funds are received by SCAT, they will offer expanded services around Willard in Huron County as well. The additional State funds will be used as local match dollars, to make rides affordable for residents across county lines.

Goal #2: Improve Customer Service

Strategy 2.1: Offer transportation services on weekends, holidays, and evenings.

The Deviated Fixed route for the city of Tiffin is in its final planning stages. The expected kick-off date is July 2020. SCAT currently does not have the financial means and other resources needed to offer transportation services on weekends, holidays, and evenings in its demand response
service. When the deviated Fixed Route begins operation it will operate in downtown Tiffin in the evenings and on weekends for residents. SCAT completed installation of Ecolane as its scheduling software in December 2018. Like other transportation providers who use Ecolane SCAT is waiting for them to unveil an App for customers, so they can schedule rides, pay for fares, etc. (CTS has this App available currently).

**Goal #4: Marketing**

**Strategy 4.1:** Educate Seneca County Residents on all mobility options that are available within the county.

All action steps and performance measures / targets in Goal #4 are either completed or are continuing and ongoing. Mobility Management staff and staff at SCAT continue to educate the county residents about all services available in Seneca County. Getting around Guides are being reprinted, the Mobility Management webpage for Seneca County on the GLCAP website is current and updated bi-weekly. Staff is conducting Travel trainings for residents and conducting presentations at agencies on available services.

**Goal #5: Communication and Coordination**

**Strategy 5.1:** Develop and expand existing partnerships with public and private human service agencies and transportation agencies. Keep public updated on information regarding Medicaid transportation rules.

Two new connections have been made with Autumnwood Care Center (Nursing Home) and with The Willows in Tiffin (An Independent Living facility). Both facilities will be incorporated into the Seneca County Coordinated Transportation plan. SCAT also continues to provide contract services with Seneca County Department of Job & family Services and for Seneca County Board of DD.

**Goal #6: Capital Needs**

**Strategy 6.1:** Explore upgrades to public transportation software to provide a more efficient service for riders of Seneca Crawford Area Transportation, develop bus shelters for deviated fixed route, and provide vehicles to Seneca County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Opportunity Center) SCAT, and other providers when need is demonstrated.

The Deviated Fixed Route service plan is in its final planning stages. All action steps and performance measures / targets are either completed or are continuing and ongoing. SCAT continues to apply for 5311 program funds annually. The eligible 5310 providers continue to apply for program funds from ODOT annually, in order to replace old and poor condition vehicles in their fleets.
For more information on when the next annual review will occur, how to be involved in the annual review process or to request information on how to make changes or corrections to this plan between annual reviews, please contact:

Kristen Gerwin, Mobility Manager
Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
419-333-5081
kdgerwin@glcap.org
Appendix C: Definitions

There are several terms used throughout the plan that may be unique to transportation providers or human service agencies. The terms are defined here for reference.

**Coordination** – Collaborative efforts toward understanding and meeting the mobility needs in the most appropriate, cost effective, and responsive manner.

**FAST Act** – Congress established the funding for Federal Transit Administration programs through authorizing legislation that amends Chapter 53 of Title 49 of the U.S. Code. On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, reauthorizing surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2020.

**Gaps in Service** – A break in the continuity of available transportation resources such as a break between hours of operation or a break between two or more geographic areas.

**Lead Agency** – The organization responsible for facilitating outreach; composing a plan that meets the requirements of current Federal and State legislation; maintaining documentation from the planning process and making it available upon request; and leading stakeholders through annual reviews, amendments, and updates of the plan. The Lead Agency also is responsible for submitting the adopted Coordinated Plan and all amendments or updates to participating stakeholders and ODOT.

**Planning Committee** – (indicate if the planning committee has another formal name) The Planning Committee is composed of key community stakeholders. The Planning Committee members agree to actively participate in the planning process and act as the plan advisory and adopting entity.

**Ridership** – The total number of passengers who boarded transportation vehicles are counted each time they board a vehicle.

**Section 5310 Program** – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides Federal formula funding for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. The program aims to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options.

**Section 5311 Program** – The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000 where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their
destinations. The program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program. Sub recipients may include state or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service.

**Section 5307 Program** – The Urbanized Area Formula Grants program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes federal resources available to urbanized areas and to governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more.

**TIGER Grants** - The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the U.S. Department of Transportation to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Since 2009, Congress has dedicated nearly $5.1 billion for eight rounds of TIGER to fund projects that have a significant impact on the Nation, a region or a metropolitan area. ODOT was awarded $6.839 million in federal dollars to improve the communications, scheduling and dispatching of more than 30 rural transit operators located in Ohio, among other uses. These funds were awarded by the 2015 TIGER VII competitive grant program. – Completed 12/21/2018.

**Transportation** – Transportation is broadly defined to include traditional transit, human service agency services, on-demand (taxi-like) services, bicycle and pedestrian programs and amenities.

**Unmet Transportation Needs** – Transportation that is wanted or desired but is not currently available.