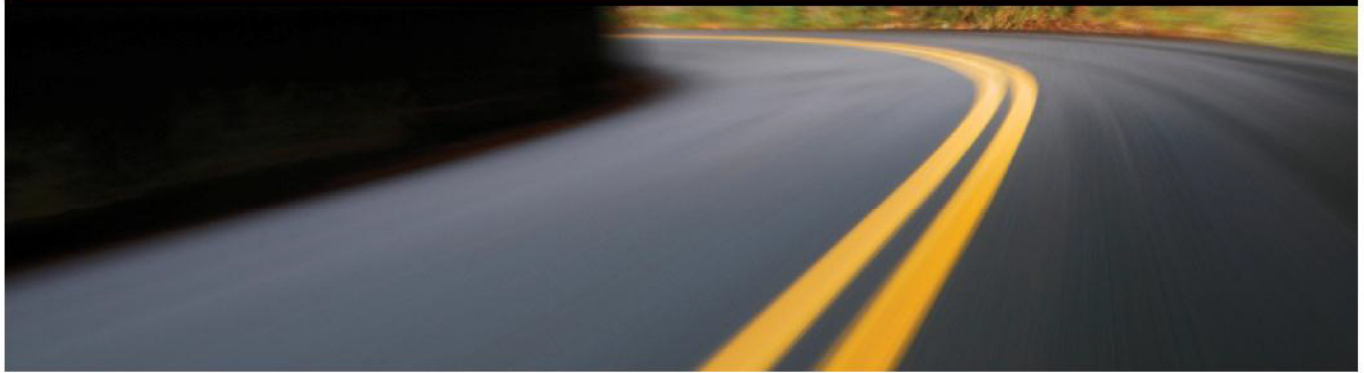


# CORRIDOR MPO

*Smarter Transportation, Better Community*



Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) 2016 - 2020 - Draft

February 2nd, 2015

## **MEMBERS:**

Cedar Rapids  
Marion  
Robins  
Hiawatha  
Fairfax  
Ely  
Linn County

CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES  
THROUGH REGIONAL PLANNING & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT





Table of Contents

<u>Section One: Introduction</u>	<u>5</u>
Process Discussion	6
<u>Section Two: Inventory and Area Profile</u>	<u>8</u>
Inventory	8
Area Profile	18
<u>Section 3: Coordination Issues</u>	<u>35</u>
Status of Fleet and Facilities	35
Status of Previously Recommended	
Priorities and Recent Developments	38
Assessment of Transportation Needs	40
<u>Section 4: Priorities and Strategies</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Section 5: Funding</u>	<u>48</u>
Overview of Available Funding Sources	48
Recommended Program of Projects	54
<u>Appendix</u>	<u>56</u>



*Table of Figures*

<i>Figure 1: Corridor MPO Member Communities</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Figure 2: CR Transit Routes</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Figure 3: CR Transit Adopted Budget 2015</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Figure 4: Corridor MPO Population Density by Census Tracts</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Figure 5: Corridor MPO Population Density 65 and Older by Census Tracts</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Figure 6: Corridor MPO Population Density Disabled Persons by Census Tracts</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Figure 7: Corridor MPO Population Density Below 100 percent Poverty by Census Tracts</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Figure 8: Corridor MPO Households Without a Vehicle per Square Mile by Census Tracts</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Figure 9: Corridor MPO Employment and Activity Centers</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Figure 10: Corridor MPO Healthy Activity Centers</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Figure 11: Most Spoken Languages (other than English) in the Corridor MPO</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Figure 12: Limited English Proficiency Speakers per Census Track</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Figure 13: Limited English Proficiency Speakers percentage of population by Census Track</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Figure 14: Limited English Proficiency Speakers per Square Mile by Census Track</i>	<i>34</i>



*Table of Tables*

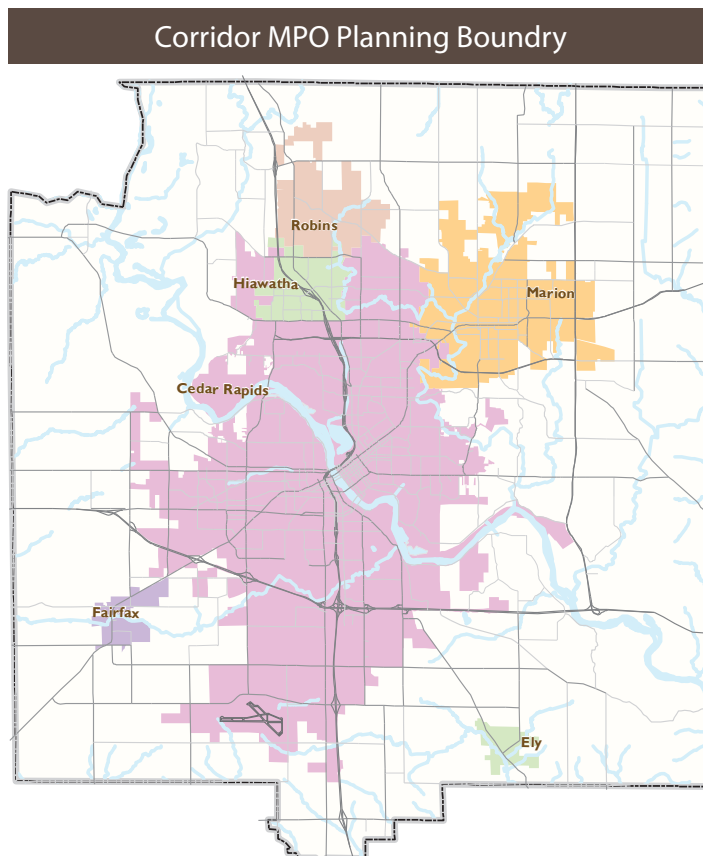
<i>Table 1 : TAG Membership</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Table 2: Population Trends 2000 - 2020</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Table 3: LEP Population of the Corridor MPO</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Table 4: CR Transit Service Intervals</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Table 5: CR Transit Level of Service</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Table 6: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2011</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Table 7: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2012</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Table 8: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2013</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Table 9: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2014</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Table 10: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2015</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Table 11 : Recommended Program of Projects</i>	<i>55</i>



### **Section One: Introduction**

Passenger and Transportation Plan's (PTP) are an Iowa creation, providing needs-based justification for passenger transportation projects, while incorporating federal requirements for coordinated planning. For the Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (Corridor MPO) the PTP serves as a resource on the existing transportation system in the Corridor MPO planning area; it is designed to promote joint, coordinated passenger transportation planning to further develop the local and regional public transit systems.

The Corridor MPO planning area (Figure 1 below) currently includes the Cities of Cedar Rapids, Marion, Robins, Hiawatha, Fairfax, Ely, and some portions of unincorporated Linn County. The PTP is intended to provide a comprehensive analysis on existing public transportation systems within the Corridor MPO's planning area. This document is often used by local private and public transportation providers, human service agencies, school districts, local organizations, government agencies, and other interested parties. The PTP documents the socio-economic profile of the planning area, inventory's existing transportation providers, analyzes unmet passenger transportation needs, forecasts available federal, state and local funding sources, and recommends a funding program for next five years.



The goals of the PTP are as follows:

1. Improve transportation services to Iowans
2. Increase passenger transportation coordination
3. Create awareness of unmet needs
4. Develop new working partnerships
5. Assist decision-makers, advocates, and consumers in understanding the range of transportation options available
6. Develop justification for future passenger transportation investments
7. Save dollars and eliminate overlapping of services

These goals were the central guide during the creation of this document.

*Figure 1: Corridor MPO Member Communities*



### *Process Discussion*

Corridor MPO understands the importance of public involvement and values public input in any of its planning activities. Corridor MPO has coordinated local passenger transportation planning with the member jurisdictions and the local transit agencies since the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991. The coordination with local Human Service agencies began in November of 2005. Corridor MPO called and individually met with representatives from various human service agencies within the area. Through these meetings, Corridor MPO staff discussed their responsibilities and desire to assist in greater coordination of transportation needs. In April of 2006, Corridor MPO hosted a public meeting and invited all the human service agencies previously contacted as well as the local municipal transportation providers, and the general public. Local staff and officials discussed services provided and plans for improvements, while others attending discussed current transportation opportunities, needs, and plans for the future.

In October of 2006, the United Way of East Central Iowa started a focus group to identify transportation areas where coordination may be effective. The United Way is connected to over 30 human service agencies in the area and can greatly simplify the coordination process. This group would later become the Transportation Advisory Group (TAG). Corridor MPO meets with the TAG quarterly to identify and discuss the needs, issues, and goals of transit users and providers across the metro. Corridor MPO staff has been involved with this group since its inception and will continue participation to improve coordination efforts throughout the area.

The TAG meets on a quarterly basis throughout the year (meeting schedules and attendance records are included in the appendix of this report). The third quarter TAG meeting was a bit different. Instead of the normal TAG meeting, the TAG held the 5th Annual Transportation Forum, on September 19th, 2014 (Agenda, attendance, and evaluation records available in the appendix). The 2014 Transportation Forum's objective was to provide quality information by inviting knowledgeable state and national speakers to discuss important issues to the TAG and to the general public. A free event with 80 attendees, the Forum brought in a wide variety of transportation and human service providers, as well as elected officials and interested members of the general public. People discussed issues ranging from health care to the state gas tax funding mechanism. But most importantly, facilitated discussion groups were convened that focused on collecting and analyzing the needs of the transit system and its riders. This is very similar to the normal functions of the TAG, however a much more diverse and wider group of individuals were brought together; discussion was in depth and extremely useful. Public data gathered from the 2014 Transportation Forum and each and every TAG meeting are crucial components of this the PTP. Feedback from the public and from transit providers comprises the substance of this report and directs future transportation improvements across the metro.

The last and final piece of the PTP process was a much needed user survey and review. A two week Passenger Transportation Survey was released via the internet and paper copies to Cedar Rapids Transit and Neighborhood Transportation Service users (Corridor MPO offered paper copies to all transit providers). The goal of this survey was to ascertain the unmet needs, difficulties, preferences, and demographics of



transit users (this survey will be analyzed later in the document). After the survey was closed, a special meeting of TAG members (see table 1 below) was called to review the preliminary results (online and most of the hard copy results). The Passenger Transportation Survey was a key part of this PTP development process and will provide transit providers solid direction for improvements within their systems based on the stated preferences of the people they serve.

**Table 1 : TAG Membership**

The PTP processed concluded with action items (discussed later in this document) that were identified by the survey review group (list of attendees available in appendix) in late January of 2015 but derived from the culmination of all the information gathered during TAG meetings, the 2014 Transportation Forum, and the passenger transportation survey.

<b>TAG Members</b>	<b>TAG Members</b>
Abbe Center for Mental Health	Goodwill Industries
Aging Services, Inc.	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
Alzheimer's Association	H.D. Youth Center
American Cancer Society	Healthy Linn Care Network
Area Ambulance	Horizons, A Family Service Alliance
Area Substance Abuse Council - Heart of Iowa	Iowa Department of Transportation
Area Substance Abuse Council - Novus Center	Iowa Workforce Development
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Jane Boyd
Boys and Girls Club	Jones County Jets
Benton County Coalition	Kirkwood - Skills to Employment
Benton County Transit	Linn County Community Services
Benton County Volunteer Transportation	Linn County General Assistance
Catherine McAuley Center	Linn County LIFTS
Cedar Rapids Transit	Linn Marr School District
Cedar Rapids Community Schools	Mercy Medical Center
Cedar Rapids Recreation Department	Neighborhood Transportation Systems
Churches United	Options of Linn County
Community Health Free Clinic	RSVP of Linn and Jones County
Conner Center for Independent Living	Southeast Linn Community Center
Corridor MPO	The Arc of East Central Iowa
Cross Roads Mission	The Heritage Area Agency on Aging
Coralville Transit	United Way of East Central Iowa
Discovery Living	Volunteer Services of Cedar County
East Central Iowa Council of Governments	Willis Dady Shelter
Empower Iowa	Witwer Senior Center
Foundation 2	YMCA
Four Oaks	Young Parents Network





## **Section Two: Inventory and Area Profile**

Public Transportation services are available throughout the Corridor MPO planning area for a variety of uses and purposes. The metro area is served most regularly by the fixed route bus service operated by Cedar Rapids Transit, and is augmented by several other programs. These include a demand responsive “door-to-door” service, para-transit service for the disabled, and many private non-profit transit services with varying operating structures. A detailed look at these services and the people they serve is best to understand the needs and next steps required to improve the metropolitan transit system.

### **• *Inventory***

A short description of existing passenger transportation operations is provided to understand the current foundations of the Corridor’s public passenger transportation network. Each provider overview will include information regarding:

- What types of services are available (fixed route, demand-response, subscription, intercity bus, etc.)
- Who is eligible for service
- Hours and days of service
- Type, number, and ADA status of vehicles in each fleet, if applicable

The Corridor MPO’s transit providers are both a mix of public and private service agencies provided various transportation solutions. Those mentioned below are in no way an exhaustive example of what is available, but rather those that chose to respond in the time provided. Transit Provider Surveys and inventory request were made to transit providers, many chose not to respond (responses received can be found in the appendix). Most of these include volunteers who assist those in need to reach medical appointments, work, school, and other life necessities. The human service agencies and local agency passenger transportation providers are meeting a great variety of passenger needs throughout the planning area.

**Cedar Rapids Transit (CR Transit)** - CR Transit operates fixed route bus service, providing conventional passenger transportation services through 14 fixed bus routes and a fixed route fleet of 30 buses that currently operate from a central at the Ground Transportation Center in downtown Cedar Rapids. Bus routes converge at the GTC at approximately the same time to allow for simple transfers to other routes.

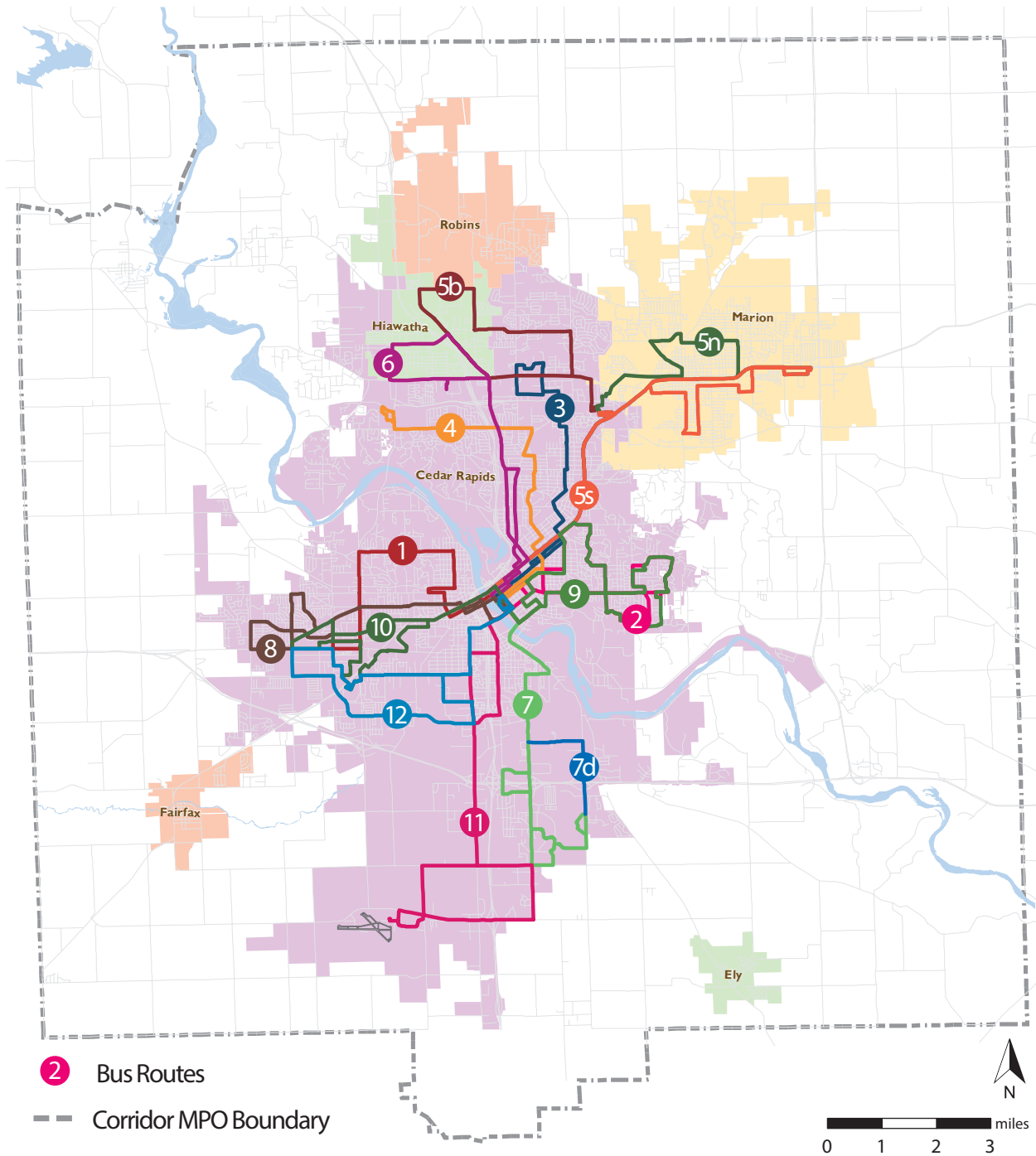
CR Transit bus service is available to the general public Monday through Friday 5:15 am to 7:00 pm; and Saturdays from 8:25 am to 5:00 pm (for route details see figure 2 on the next page). Full price fare is \$1.50, however reduced fares are available for children under five, seniors, students, the disabled, and low-income riders. Saturday service is free to all riders (promotes new ridership). All 30 vehicles are owned and operated by CR Transit and are wheelchair accessible. CR Transit currently has six full-time administrative staff, 40 full-time drivers and four part-time drivers.

Ridership trends in the area for most of the public transportation agencies have been relatively flat over recent years. CR Transit has seen a two percent increase in ridership in 2013 (latest available data), this





Figure 2: CR Transit Routes





increase is a positive sign, assumed to be attributed to high gas prices and lingering effects of the Great Recession. It is CR Transit's goal to see a five percent increase in 2015.

It is also CR Transit's goal to operate at \$100 cost per route hour. In 2013 operating costs were slightly above this goal at \$101. CR Transit operates conservatively at an expected \$105 cost per route hour, this budgeting approach led to a net surplus of \$663,236 for fiscal year 2013. Budgeted expenditures have since been increased to improve service with the purchase of four new heavy-duty buses for fiscal year 2015 (see figure 3 below).

**Figure 3: CR Transit Adopted Budget 2015**

	<b>FY 2013 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2014 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>FY 2015 Budget</b>	<b>Amount Change From FY 2014 Incr / (Decr)</b>	<b>%Change From FY 2014</b>
<b>Revenues</b>	11,190,440	9,094,864	10,986,538	1,891,674	20.8%
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Personal Services	3,975,161	4,150,688	4,189,727	39,039	
Discretionary	1,447,685	1,208,754	1,150,240	(58,514)	
Fleet & Facilities	1,342,566	1,436,562	1,425,334	(11,228)	
Non-Discretionary	1,832,414	1,701,104	1,672,903	(28,201)	
Capital Outlay	1,844,035	89,995	1,695,000	1,605,005	
Debt	-	183,500	183,500	-	
Transfers Out	85,342	324,261	651,569	327,308	
	10,527,204	9,094,864	10,968,272	1,873,408	20.6%
<b>Net</b>	663,236	-	18,266	18,266	

Source: City of Cedar Rapids Approved Budget 2015

Local operating revenue is generated in Cedar Rapids via a transit levy of 80.7 cents of every \$1,000 dollars of taxable property valuation for a total of \$4,586,363 in 2013. Services provided in Marion and Hiawatha are paid for out of their local general funds at \$190,000 and \$75,600 respectively. Locally generated revenue is supplemented by state and federal funding sources. State Transit Assistance provides \$500,000 annually. Federal operating dollars are provided by Urbanized Area Formula Grants (5307) at \$2,400,000 annually. Additionally, CR Transit contracts out para-transit service to Linn County LIFTS using local and federal, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) funding received every year at \$110,000.



Other changes, CR Transit plans to purchase hardware, software, set-up costs, and the first year data plan to implement a bus GPS tracking system and mobile application to be funded from operations (\$135K). This new amenity will provide users with real time bus information, including a pinpoint text-able bus location option. GPS devices will be installed on all 30 buses (summer 2015). WIFI and automatic people counting hardware may also be included. These additions, will enhance the user experience with possible increases in ridership.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Fixed Route with demand-response para-transit contracted

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Everyone

OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 5:15 am to 7:00 pm; Saturdays from 8:25 am to 5:00 pm

FLEET DETAILS: 30 Heavy-duty buses (22 in daily operation), all ADA accessible

**Neighborhood Transportation Service (NTS)** - NTS has a fleet of 12 vehicles, most of which are provided and replaced by CR Transit. In early 2014, the Corridor MPO used local obligated membership dues to purchase NTS two new mini-vans (total \$50,000). Three of these seven vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts/ramps. This service is offered as curb to curb demand responsive to provide rides to citizens of Cedar Rapids, Marion and Hiawatha from 6:30 pm to 6:00 am when the conventional fixed route bus system is not available.

NTS currently have 13 administrative staff, ten of which are volunteers, two full-time and one on a part-time basis. NTS has four full-time drivers and 4 part-time drivers serving the residents in the metro-area. All of the fleet and maintenance services to NTS are provided by Cedar Rapids Transit. Eligible rides are for trips to work, school, or life skills classes. Tickets are purchased in advance at a variety of locations throughout the area, and rides must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance of the time needed. The one-way tickets currently cost five dollars.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Those traveling for work, school, or life skills classes

OPERATING HOURS: 6:30 pm to 6:00 am, 7 days a week

FLEET DETAILS: 6 Mini-vans, 3 Full-sized Vans, and 3 Light-duty Buses (ADA accessible).

**Linn Intracounty Facilitating Transportation System (LIFTS)** - is operated by Linn County and provides rides for general public, seniors and persons with disabilities within the metro-area. Although primarily designed for riders outside the metropolitan area, CR Transit has contracted with LIFTS to provide complimentary para-transit service as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which augments CR Transit services for metro area seniors and persons with disabilities. Riders within the metro area must be 60 or older or have a disability that prevents them from riding one of the fixed route buses to be eligible for LIFTS service. All county residents outside the metro area are eligible for service. LIFTS is a demand responsive service and as such reservations must be made in advance. Rides are available the next day, but LIFTS staff prefers three to seven days advance notice.



LIFTS fleet is comprised of 18 medium-duty buses, five light-duty buses, and 1 mini-van, which all are provided by CR Transit, Linn County, and East Central Iowa Council of Governments. LIFTS currently has two full-time administrative staff, 15 full-time drivers and two part-time drivers. Costs for LIFTS service vary depending on the location and person's physical status. For one-way trips within the Metro area of Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha (seniors and disabled only), the cost is three dollars. For one-way trips outside of the Metro area, the cost is three dollars if passengers are 60 or older or have a disability and six dollars for all other passengers outside the urban area.

LIFTS is expecting to provide a Corridor Medical Shuttle providing service to Iowa City from Cedar Rapids once a week, starting in the summer of 2015. Costs have not yet been determined.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Within the metro only persons over the age of 60 or disabled. Outside the Metro, everyone is eligible

OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 6:30 am to 6:30 pm, Saturdays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

FLEET DETAILS: 18 medium-duty buses (ADA), 5 light-duty buses (ADA), and 1 mini-van

**Linn County Veterans Affairs (VA)** - The VA office offers van rides to and from the VA medical center in Iowa City. This service, paid by the Veterans Administration is provided to eligible veterans who have been referred to the Disabled American Veteran (DAV) Transportation office. Currently one van is provided by DAV to transport veterans with medical appointments. Clients must have a scheduled appointment at the VA medical center. This service is available Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. There is no cost to the user for this service. CR Transit bus passes may be made available based on need.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Medical Shuttle for scheduled appointments

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Disabled American Veterans

OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

FLEET DETAILS: 1 Light-duty bus (ADA)

**American Cancer Society** - Volunteers provide transportation for cancer patients to get to treatment and medical appointments, as available. Five working days notice is required. Patients must be ambulatory. Patient services office is open Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 6:00 pm. An after hours call National Cancer Information Center is also available; providing assistance is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Patients must be ambulatory and the cancer patient must place the request.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Volunteer demand response for scheduled medical appointments

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Cancer patients

OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

FLEET DETAILS: Volunteer personal vehicles



**Norse Transport** - Provides high quality, non-emergency wheelchair accessible transportation around the Cedar Rapids area. Every customer can expect to receive professional, courteous, dependable and safe transportation to and from their destination. Fleet of vans are equipped with the latest seven point safety restraint systems, on-board GPS, wheelchairs and oxygen system. Hours: 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, anytime by appointment.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Disabled

OPERATING HOURS: 7:00 am to 5:00 pm

FLEET DETAILS: Unknown number of vans (declined inquiry). All vehicles are ADA accessible

**The Way Shuttle Service** - The Way Shuttle provides work transportation and courier service within a 250 mile radius of Cedar Rapids, IA. Trips desired outside the metro area will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Service is oriented toward work, school, and medical trips but any trip will be considered. Normal hours are Monday through Friday, 6:00 am to 6:00 pm. However, service can be provided outside of designated hours. There is no additional charge for being outside of business hours but to ensure transportation, 24 hour notice is required. All persons are eligible at a basic rate of \$2.25 per mile.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: All (ADA accessibility is not none)

OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 6:00 am to 6:00 pm

FLEET DETAILS: Declined to state

**To The Rescue** - To The Rescue is a full service home health care company with a well-trained and caring staff available to assist a wide range of needs. Wheelchair and non-wheelchair transportation provided to individuals with any need (doctor appointments, dialysis, social occasions, group outings or any personal needs). All drivers are certified caregivers who are capable of assisting individuals before, after and during transit. Operating hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Transportation is available outside these hours by prior appointment. Costs are discussed on a per trip basis.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: All persons including disabled.

OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

FLEET DETAILS: Declined to state, but ADA accessible vehicles are available.

**Riders Club of America** - Volunteers provide transportation for any destination within the Cedar Rapids metro area, 24 hours a day 7 days a week. At least 24 hours notice for each ride request required. Riders Club operates on an annual fee structure not including per trip costs determined on a case-by-case basis. Riders must be 55 years of age or older or have a medical condition that prevents driving.



SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Persons 55 years old or older or with special medical conditions

OPERATING HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

FLEET DETAILS: Volunteer personal vehicles

**Special K Transport** - Special K focuses on wheelchair transportation, taking people to and from medical appointments, shopping, family events etc. With a fleet of 10 vehicles, all ADA accessible, Special K is generally able to maintain a less than 20 minute response time for immediate assistance trips or return trips. Driver background checks ensure the safety, integrity, and respect of clients is maintained at all times. Drivers are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Costs per trip are determined on a case-by-case basis.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Disabled

OPERATING HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

FLEET DETAILS: 8 Full-sized vans, 1 Mini-van, and 1 Light-duty bus. All are ADA accessible.

**Heritage Area Agency on Aging** - A department of Kirkwood Community College, The Heritage Area Agency on Aging plans, coordinates, and funds a system of home and community based programs and services that support the independence and dignity of the more than 60,000 older adults in East Central Iowa. Heritage also plans, funds, and advocates for services in volunteer transportation programs offered through many of their member agencies, three of which are in the Corridor MPO area. Those three volunteer programs are operated through Aging Services, Pathways, and Milestones. Volunteer rides are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. There is no fare for these rides, however users must be 60 years of age or older to participate.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Persons 60 years of age or older

OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

FLEET DETAILS: Declined to state

**Cedar Rapids Community School District** - The Cedar Rapids School District encompasses most of the urban area, with a total area of approximately 121 square miles. The district has a fleet of 116 buses and provides transportation to and from schools within the district for students living at least two miles from school. There is no direct fare structure for this service. Office hours: Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Transportation available 24 hours a day and holidays by appointment. NOTE: Information from previous PTP used. Numerous attempts to collect data were made without response.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Fixed route and demand based for school children

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Community School District students





OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm  
FLEET DETAILS: 116 buses (ADA information not provided)

**Linn-Mar School District** - The Linn-Mar School District includes the northeastern portion of the metro area including most of north Marion, northeast Cedar Rapids and rural Linn County, with a total area of 63 square miles. The district has a fleet of 55 buses and provides transportation to and from schools within the district for students living at least two miles from school. There is no direct fare structure for this service. NOTE: Information from previous PTP used. Numerous attempts to collect data were made without response.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Fixed route and demand based for school children  
WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Linn-Mar School District students  
OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm  
FLEET DETAILS: 55 buses (ADA information not provided)

**Marion Independent School District** - The Marion Independent School District includes central Marion, with a total area of four square miles. The district has a fleet of 17 vehicles with an average age of ten years old. Marion Independent provides transportation to and from schools within the district for students living at least two miles from school. There is no direct fare structure for this service. NOTE: Data reflected for Marion Independent School District is current as of January 2015.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Fixed route and demand based for school children  
WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Marion Independent School District students  
OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm  
FLEET DETAILS: 9 Heavy-duty buses, 4 Full-sized vans, 2 Mini-vans, and 2 Light-duty buses (ADA)

**College Community Schools District** - The College Community School District includes most of the area south of US Hwy 30 within the Corridor MPO planning boundary, with a total district area of 137 square miles. The district has a fleet of 47 buses and provides transportation to and from schools within the district for students living at least two miles from school. There is no direct fare structure for this service. NOTE: Information from previous PTP used. Numerous attempts to collect data were made without response.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Fixed route and demand based for school children  
WHO IS ELIGIBLE: College Community School District students  
OPERATING HOURS: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm  
FLEET DETAILS: 55 buses (ADA information not provided)

**Burlington Trailways** - Burlington Trailways operated an intercity bus service out of the GTC in downtown Cedar Rapids. After the flood of June 2008, they have moved their location to the eastern Iowa Airport. This bus service provides transportation to most major cities throughout the Midwest, and is available to the





general public. Currently, there is an inter city bus services between Iowa City and Cedar rapids open to the general public. Morning and afternoon trips to Iowa City cost \$12.50. Trips to Chicago are made three times per day, while trips to Des Moines are made once daily. All Trailways buses are ADA accessible.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Intercity bus service

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: All members of the public

OPERATING HOURS: Departure times vary by destination.

FLEET DETAILS: Declined to state. All Trailways buses are ADA accessible.

**Century Cab** - Currently, Century Cab maintains a fleet of 18 taxi cabs. The fare for the cab varies with the total miles traveled. Century Cab no longer participates in “Accessible taxi” program in partnership with Cedar Rapids Transit. Century Cab does not currently have any ADA accessible taxis.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: All members of the public

OPERATING HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

FLEET DETAILS: 18 Taxi cabs

**Yellow Cab of Cedar Rapids** - Yellow Cab operates taxi service in Cedar Rapids and Marion city limits. The fare for the first sixth of a mile is \$3.50 and \$3.00 for each mile after. Yellow Cab does not currently have any ADA accessible taxis.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: All members of the public

OPERATING HOURS: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

FLEET DETAILS: Declined to state

**Airport Shuttle** - Airport shuttle has a pool of nine vans that provide services from Eastern Iowa Airport to Cedar Rapids, Iowa City and other surrounding cities. They operate between 4:00 am to 12:00 pm and charge a fare ranging between \$10 - 35, depending on the requested destination. Airport Shuttle does not currently have any ADA accessible vans.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Intercity/Airport door-to-door demand response

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: All members of the public

OPERATING HOURS: 7 days a week, 4:00 am to 12:00 pm

FLEET DETAILS: 9 Mini-vans

**University of Iowa (U of I) Employee Vanpool Program** - The University of Iowa operates an Employee Vanpool Program which many Corridor MPO area residents use to commute. The University of Iowa Employee Vanpool is a program provided by the University of Iowa Parking and Transportation Department.



University-owned vans are provided to groups of faculty and staff to facilitate carpooling. This program offers the use of passenger vans for employees and students to ride to and from the U of I campus. One employee is designated as the driver and caretaker of the vehicle, with other employees signing up to ride. Seven to 15 University faculty and staff can ride together to and from work in a commuter van. Fees range from \$40.00 to \$172.00 per month depending on the space in the vehicle and the distance traveled. A volunteer driver rides for free in exchange for driving and being responsible for the van. The vanpool program serves 24 communities over nine counties and runs to and from the University at regular agreed upon times by the vanpool riders. Emergency rides home are provided through a separate program to those participating in the vanpool program. Currently, the program is only open to University employees. As of September 2014, the University has 68 vans in operation with five extra to use as loaners providing rides to 693 commuters with a capacity to serve 730.

The University of Iowa also provides a carpool program and matching service for faculty, staff and students. Current parking permit holders who want to share the driving with another University faculty/staff or student can exchange their parking permit for a carpool arrangement. The permit holder still retains rights to their permit and pays the permit fee, however, the people they carpool with can take turns driving in the carpool. The matching service helps people locate others interested in carpooling, however, those in the carpool coordinate with one another on ride arrangements.

SERVICES AVAILABLE: Subscription based vanpooling  
WHO IS ELIGIBLE: University employees and students  
OPERATING HOURS: Organized by vanpool members  
FLEET DETAILS: 68 Vans



- **Area Profile**

A sustainable public transportation system is dependent on the demographic profile of a community. The demographic information such as population, housing patterns, employment centers, individual travel behavior, income etc play an important role in identifying the transportation needs and a feasible transportation system for an area. The analysis of demographic profile within Corridor MPOs planning area will help understand the existing commuting pattern and forecast future transportation needs in the area. The following sections will provide an overview on the population, housing, employment, poverty, disability and vehicle occupancy in the Corridor MPO planning area.

Corridor MPO's planning area includes the Cities of Cedar Rapids, Marion, Robins, Hiawatha, Ely, Fairfax, Shueville, Swisher, Bertram, a portion of Walford and a portion of Linn County. Not all of these jurisdictions within the planning area are currently a member of Corridor MPO. The Corridor MPO members include Cedar Rapids, Marion, Robins, Hiawatha, Fairfax, Ely, and unincorporated Linn County within the planning boundary (for map see Figure 1 on page 5). The data presented in the following section will only represent the MPOs member jurisdictions.

**Population Growth and Density** - An efficient and frequent public transportation system is heavily dependent on the density of population. There is a strong correlation between population density and transit ridership. Typically, the public transit ridership increases in a linear pattern with increases in population density above 4,500 per square mile. The higher the density, higher the chances of increment in transit trips per person. For population densities of 2,000 persons per square mile, transit trips usually account for 0.08 trips per person (Dunphy & Fisher, Transportation, Congestion, and Density: New Insights," Transportation Research Record No. 1552).

**Table 2: Population Trends 2000 - 2020**

	<u>2000 Land Area per Square Mile</u>	<u>2010 Land Area per Square Mile</u>	<u>2000 Decennial Census</u>	<u>2010 Decennial Census</u>	<u>Annual Rate of Growth*</u>	<u>Estimated Population 2015</u>	<u>Estimated Population 2020</u>	<u>2000 Population Density</u>	<u>2010 Population Density</u>	<u>2020 Population Density**</u>
Cedar Rapids	63	72.25	120,563	126,323	0.94%	132,365	138,697	1,913.70	1,748	1,919.68
Marion	12	16.58	26,477	34,768	1.60%	36,671	38,425	2,206.42	2,097	2,317.56
Unincorporated Linn County In Planning Boundary	N/A	200.793	N/A	10,024	0.54%	10,462	10,962	N/A	50	54.59
Hiawatha	3.82	4.37	6,458	7,024	1.05%	7,368	7,720	1,690.58	1,607	1,766.64
Robins	3.5	5.76	1,804	3,142	5.40%	3,438	3,602	515.43	545	625.38
Fairfax	1.4	1.93	903	2,123	0.99%	2,226	2,332	645.00	1,100	1,208.33
Ely	1.4	1.4	1,149	1,776	0.27%	1,849	1,937	820.71	1,269	1,383.54
<b>Total in MPO Planning Boundary</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>309</b>		<b>185,180</b>		<b>194,378</b>	<b>203,675</b>			
*Annual Rate of Growth from Connections 2040 Transportation Model										
**Assumes Land Area Stays Constant										



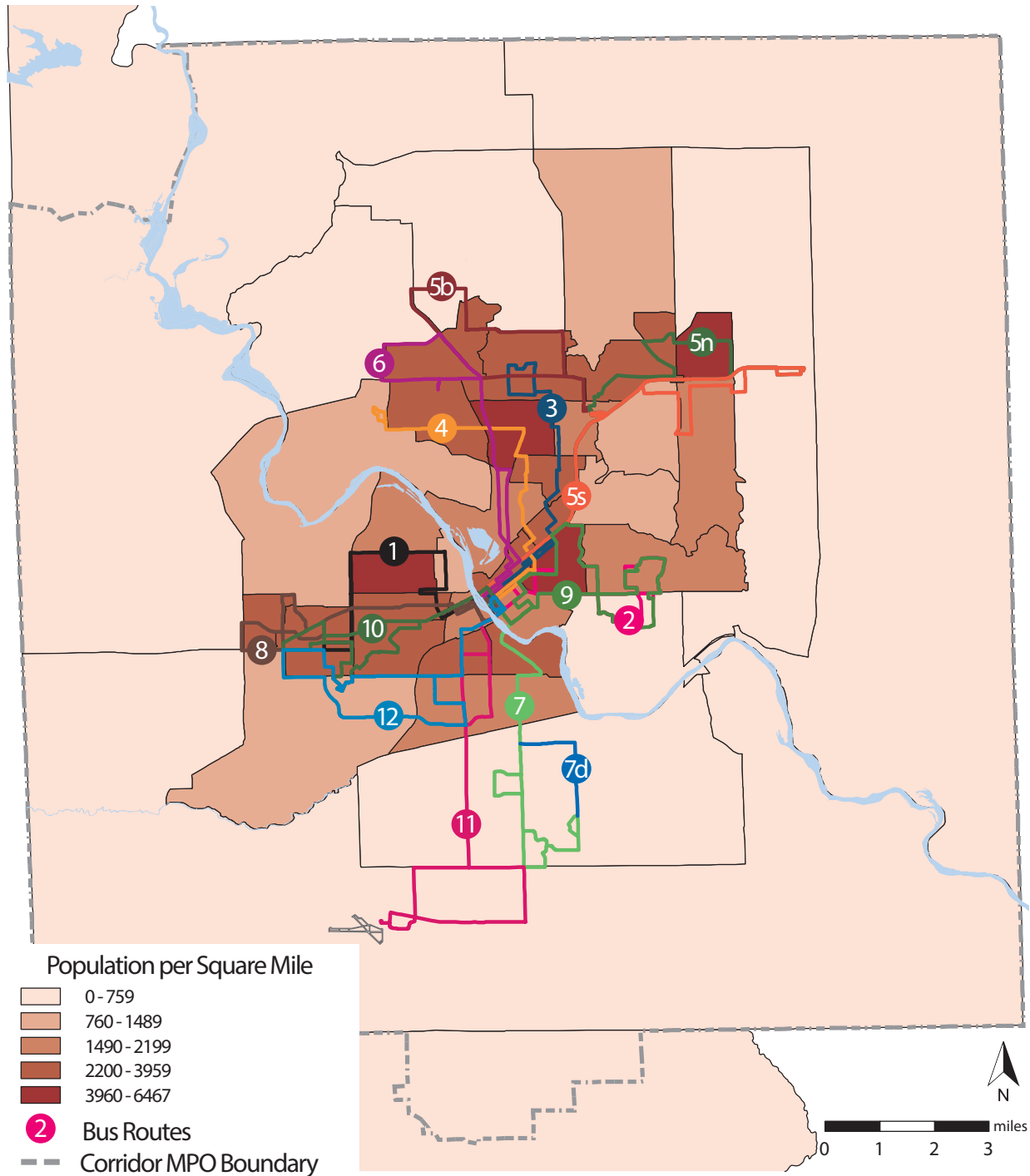
Looking at the data (Table 2 on the previous page), we will see that Cedar Rapids, Hiawatha, and Marion have some density to support public transit but with very low ridership. Looking at the population density's from 2000 to 2010 we will see that Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha density's actually decrease with increases in residency. This is a result of land annexation and a still expanding style of land use. Projections for population in 2020 are based on assumed annual rates of growth for each community as used in the Corridor MPO's Transportation model. With these increased populations, population density is projected to increase and make transit a more appealing mode of travel. However, this will require change in land use patterns that will stated desire for urban infill is present in both Marion and Cedar Rapids. Rapid growth and annexation is expected on each communities boarders. Hiawatha is not expected to see high levels of annexation in the future. Given these expected land use patterns rampant expansion of CR Transit is not expected.

While the expansion of existing transit coverage is not desired or expected, a focus on improving frequency and quality of service is likely to be successful. Figure 4 on the next page demonstrates that while the whole of the communities served by CR Transit may not reach significant population densities to support high levels of transit use, specific portions of the metro have sufficient and encouraging densities. Three metropolitan census tracts show population densities very near or greater than 4,000 people per square mile; all are currently served by transit. There is generally a high density of people along Hwy 151 that is represented in figure 4 by the 5 and 10 bus routes. Ridership is often at capacity during weekday peak travel period.

A combined approached is needed to best capitalize on the population patterns present in the metro. Land use that promotes infill development and higher intensity activities is needed to further develop and encourage population densities within the central cores' of all member communities. Additionally, a focused development of transit assets on the existing high density population areas will act to maximize overall system efficiency.



**Figure 4: Corridor MPO Population Density by Census Tracts**



Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

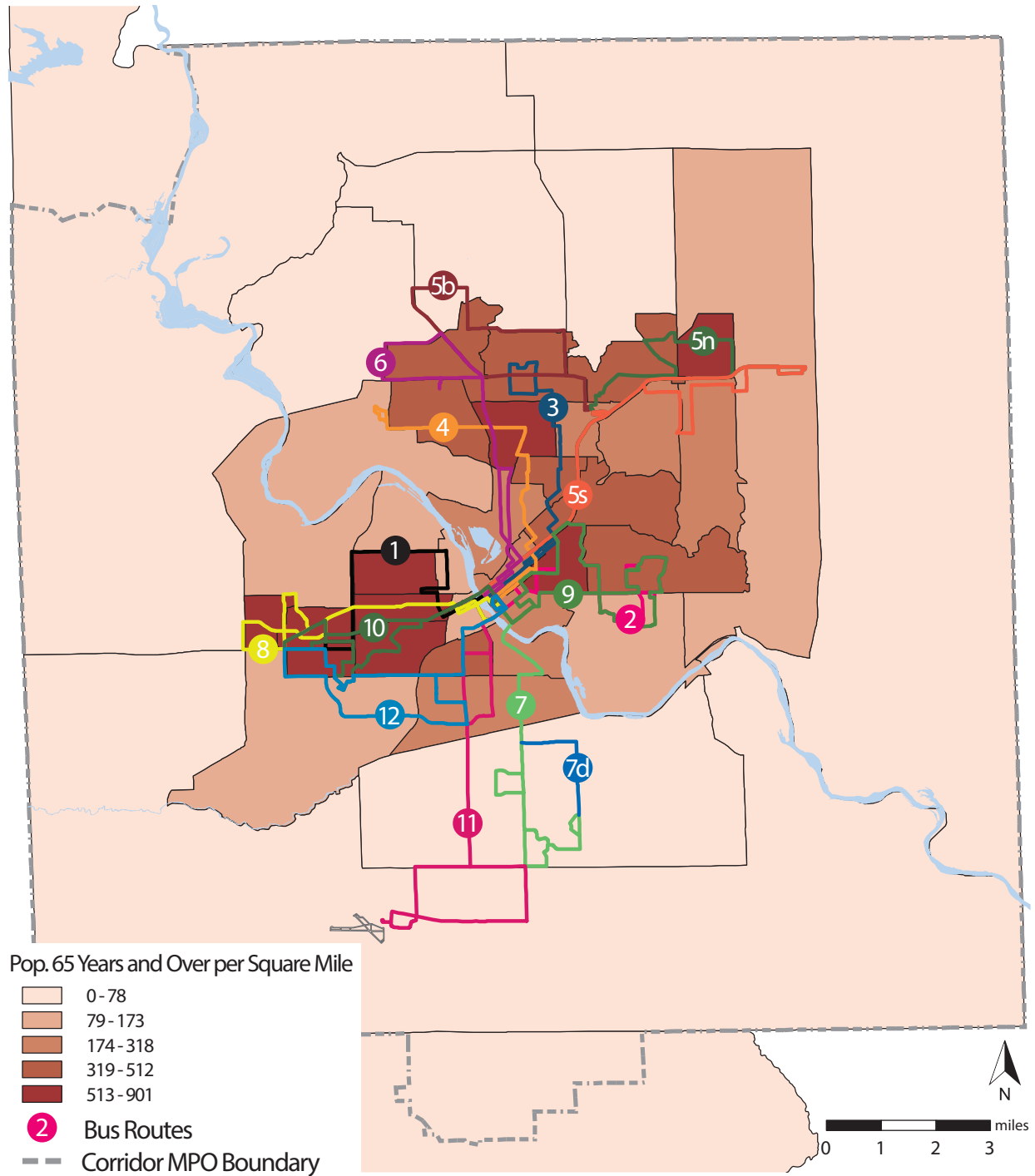


**Adults 65 years or Older** - Population density of citizens over 65 years old are similar to those of the general population across the metro, with the exception of the west side of Cedar Rapids (see figure 5 on page 22). Routes served by the number 1, 8, 10, and 12 buses show a high proportion of older residents. Older citizens are much more likely to need the service that public transportation provides. Current service coverage appears to be adequate. However, frequency of service may need to increase as these areas will continue to age, producing more dependent transit riders.

Additionally, service issues along these routes and in other high density population areas will likely foretell issues that will become important to the entire network. Americans are expected to live longer than ever before. Issues like the quality of bus stops, sidewalks, and bus shelters will likely more important in this older population clusters as physical mobility issues will require more support to adequately serve ridership.

**Existing Disabled Population** - The City of Cedar Rapids hold the highest levels of disabled persons in the metro, with pronounced concentrations occurring on the west side routes served by the number 1, 8, 10, and 12 buses (see figure 6 on page 23). There is likely a strong correlation between those over 65 years old and those with a documented disability. Current service coverage appears to be adequate. Similar to the needs of older individuals, the is disabled population will also require a greater quality of service specifically regarding bus shelters, pads, and sidewalks. If service hours are considered for expansion on specific bus routes this population may see the most benefit has the disabled population is likely to dependent on public transportation.

***Figure 5: Corridor MPO Population Density 65 and Older by Census Tracts***

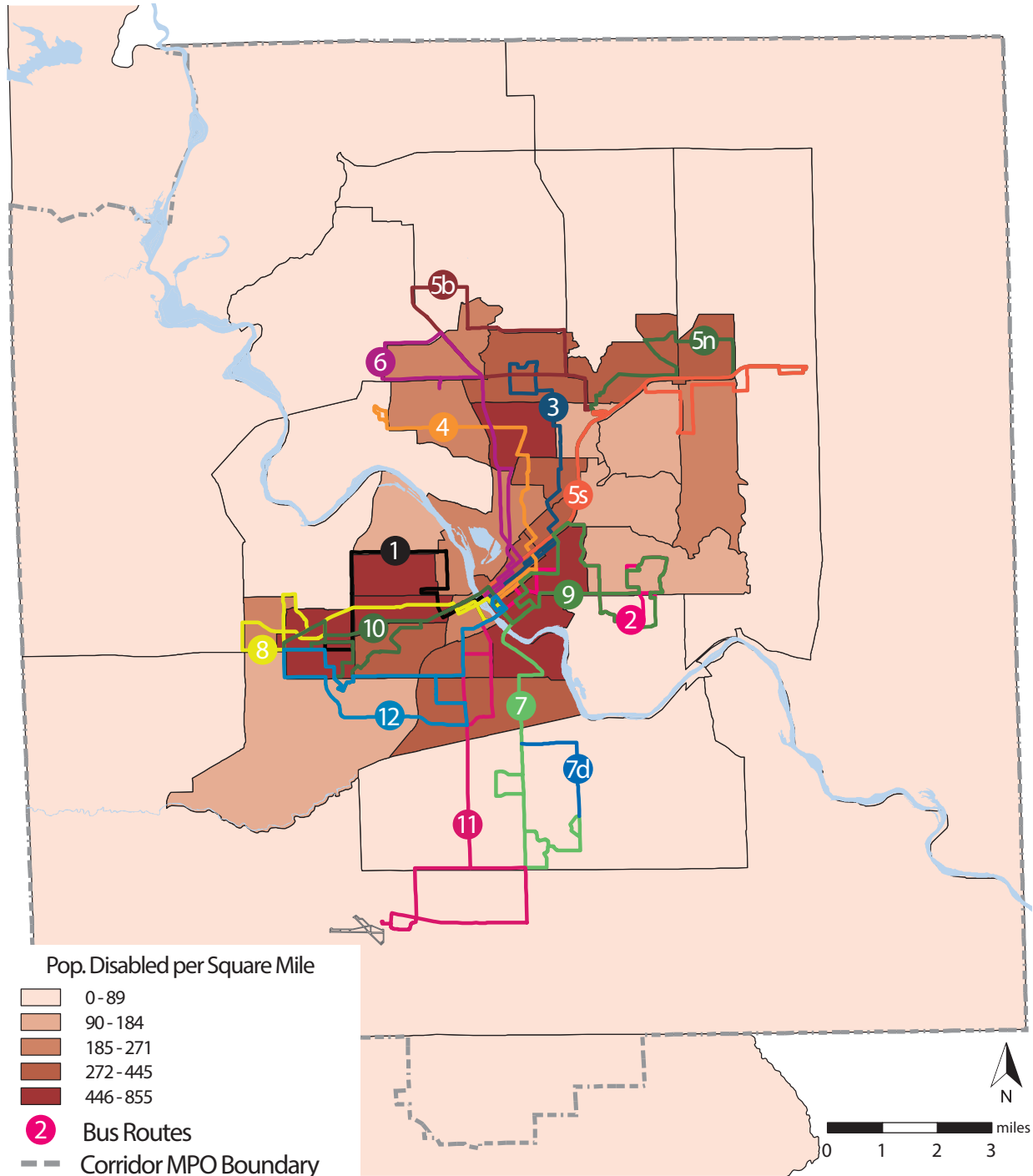


Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates





**Figure 6: Corridor MPO Population Density Disabled Persons by Census Tracts**



Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



**Workers Below 100 Percent Poverty** - The population density of those living on low incomes is slightly different than disabled and older citizens. Clustering of low income workers is occurring in Hiawatha, the northern most portions of Cedar Rapids, and in the downtown core (See figure 7 on the next page). The west side of Cedar Rapids shows some clustering as well. Citizens on the west side and down areas of Cedar Rapids have numerous routes to choose from. But could benefit from increased frequency of service.

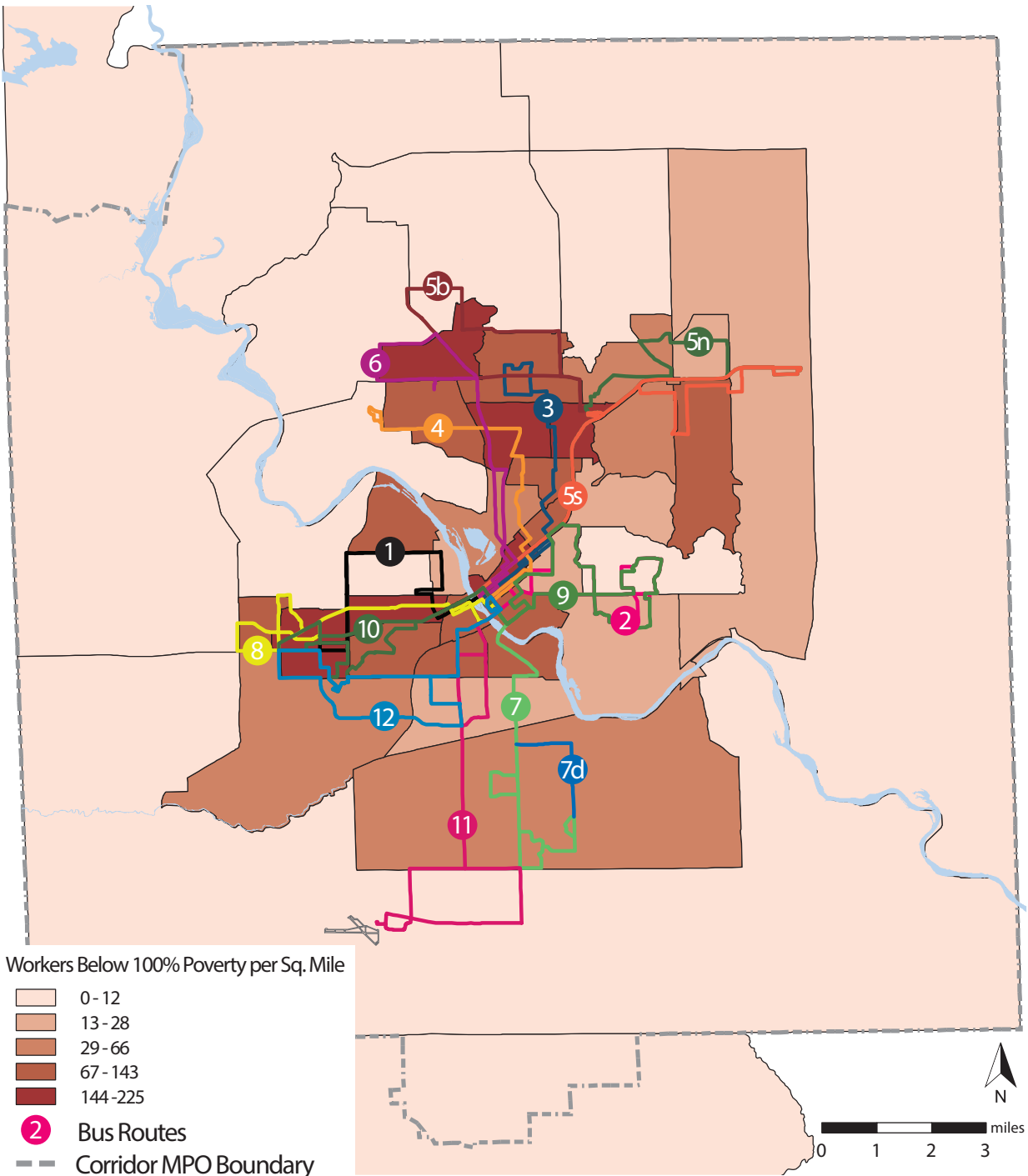
Residents on the northern portions of the metro are served at a lower frequency than any where else in the metro; routes 5N, 5S, and 5B have 90 minute headways (combining for 30 minute headways on Hwy 151 from the Ground Transfer Center (GTC) to Lindale Mall). This is especially impact to Hiawatha low income residents dependent on the 5B and 6 bus routes. Increased frequency to this northern areas is needed. A mini-hub concept at the Lindale Mall will be discussed later that would have the potential to increase headways across the metro.

**Households without a Vehicle** - Citizens without a vehicle have centralized in the Cedar Rapids downtown core (see figure 8 on page 26). This is assumed to be largely a result of land use patterns and the hub and spoke design of the CR Transit system. The GTC is located in the center of the main downtown area and the metro. All bus routes converge at this point and thus those without a motor vehicle either by choice or circumstance have clustered within a short distance to the GTC. This is viewed as a positive impact of transit on land use; frequent and dense transit service can direct land use.

However, there are assuredly other factors present. There appears to be correlation between the older population centers on the west side of Cedar Rapids and the lower income clusters on the northern portions of the metro. Citizens located in these farther reaches of the metro are not as well served by transit and are likely dependent only one specific bus route. This dependence on single routes vice the diversity of routes found in the downtown core can present a significant burden to transit users that need to make transfers to connect to other portions of the city; with most routes running 60 minute headways (some 90 minutes) a transfer can take more than an hour's time one way to reach the desired destination. Again, the concept of mini-hubs on the west side at Westdale Mall and on the north side at Lindale Mall (discussed later) could provide significant improvements for many users.



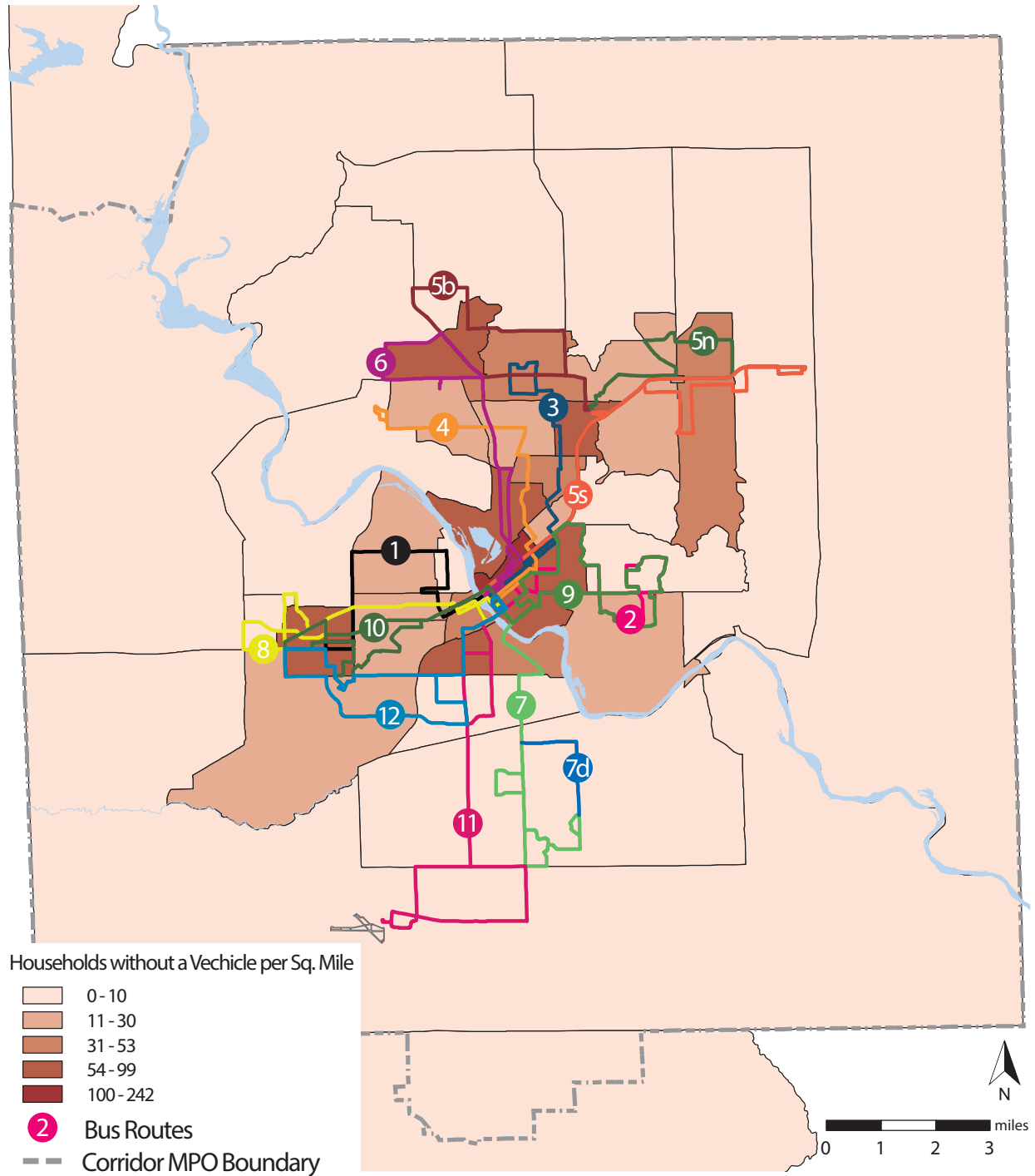
**Figure 7: Corridor MPO Population Density Below 100 percent Poverty by Census Tracts**



Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



**Figure 8: Corridor MPO Households Without a Vehicle per Square Mile by Census Tracts**



Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



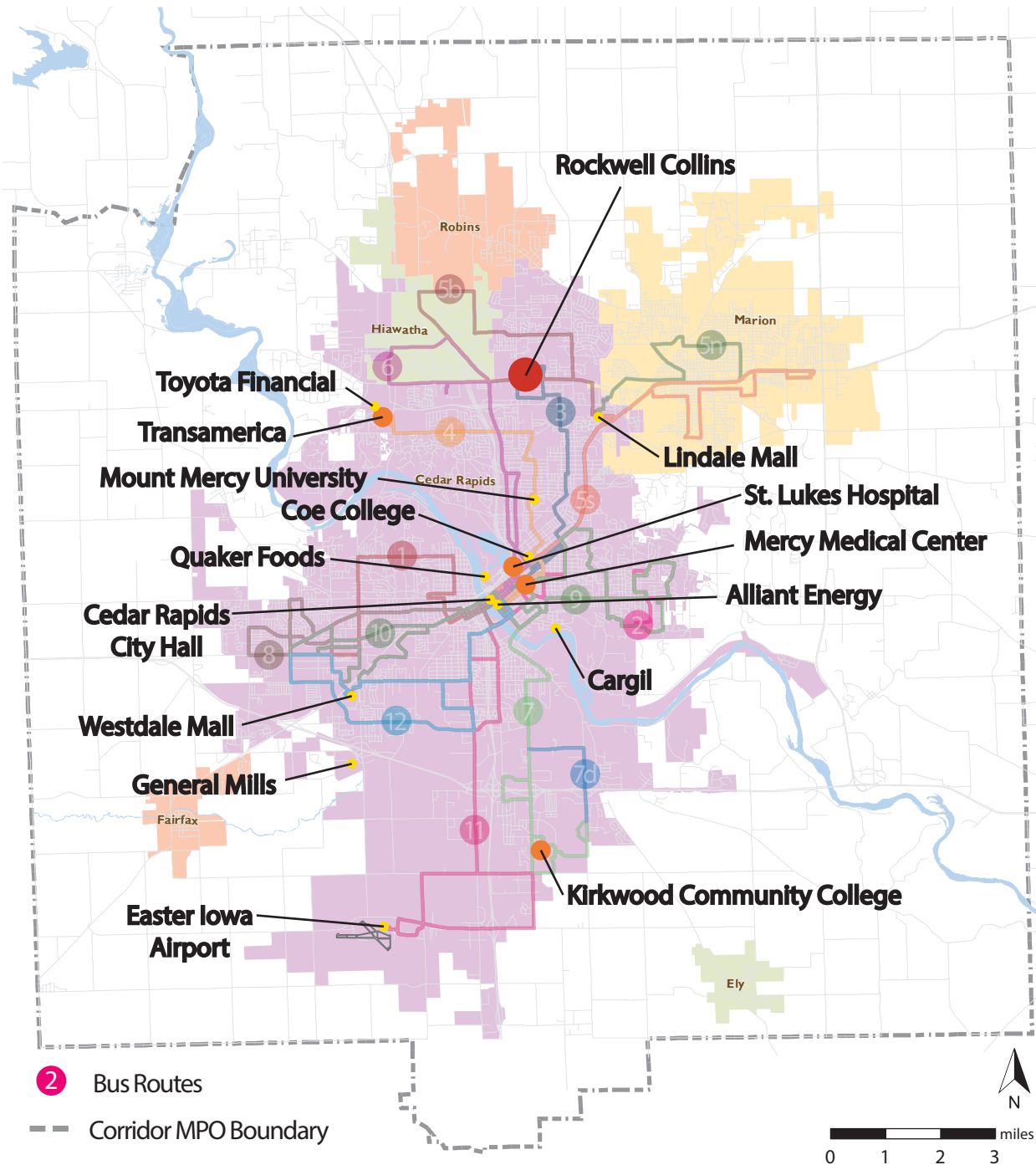
**Community Activity Centers** - It is critical that an effective public passenger transportation system get people to the places that want and need to go. As important as rider origins are so are their destinations. While all destinations are valuable, some are more crucial to everyday life. Figures 9 and 10 on pages 28 and 29 respectively, analyzed connections made to these important destinations.

Figure 9 (next page) looks at the metro's largest employers and general activity centers. Some of the regions largest employers are deliberately served by transit routes. Commuting loops are made for Rockwell Collins, the Transamerica campus, and Kirkwood community college. Serving colleges is an important demographic to provide service to as well, the metro's three largest colleges or universities are all connected with regular service. Both area malls, Lindale and Westdale are currently served and offer the potential for transfer centers given the density of transit routes converging.

Lastly, the Easter Iowa Airport is a crucial activity center to connect to. Acting as an inter-modal transfer center Easter Iowa Airport connects CR Transit, Trailways, and numerous connecting flights from across the country. Additionally, the recently completed Iowa Commuter Study indicated the Eastern Iowa Airport as an important destination for Iowa City to Cedar Rapids commuter bus service.

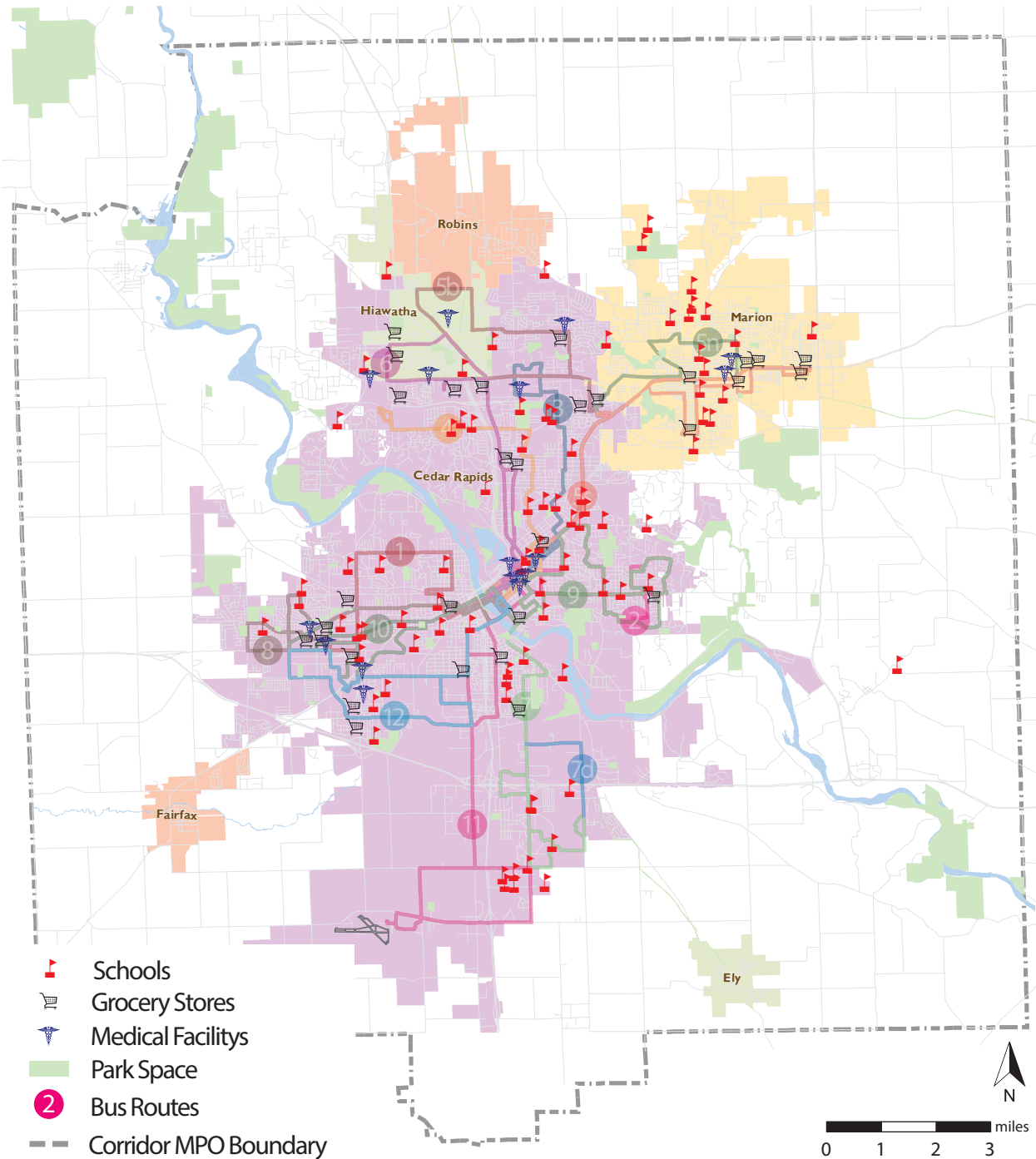
Figure 10 (page 29) looks at some of the most important destinations needed for healthy living: schools, grocery stores, medical facilities, and green park space. The importance of parks and schools to physical, mental, and social health cannot be understated. CR Transit makes special effort to provide connects to nearly every school and grocery store. Lastly, for many transit users connections to medical facilities can often mean the difference between strong health and costly and painful untreated conditions. Ensure connections to these facilities is important to CR Transit and nearly all important connections are made. However, connecting to the facility is not enough to provide meaningful opportunities to all riders. Increase the frequency, hours, and days of operations is also very important. If it takes an inordinate amount of time to reach these healthy destinations may users will not choose to make the connection.

***Figure 9: Corridor MPO Employment and Activity Centers***





**Figure 10: Corridor MPO Healthy Activity Centers**







**Limited English Proficiency Speakers** - The United States Census defines limited English proficiency (LEP) speakers as those that do not speak English at least very well. Understanding the needs of this group is important as many non-English speakers are new members of the community who may be very isolated, unable to operate a motor vehicle, or of lower income. For these reasons three figures on the next few pages are presented: LEP speakers (figure 12, page 32), LEP speakers by percentage of the population (figure 13, page 33), and LEP speakers as function of land area (figure 14, page 34).

Additionally, LEP speakers are further analyzed by figure 11 and table 3 on the next page, Most Spoken Languages (other than English) in the Corridor MPO. This data indicates which languages need the most support. Lastly, table XX indicates the total percentage of LEP speakers as of the American Community Survey 2012 - 2008 5 year estimate.

Analyzing this data from both the perspective of percentage of LEP speakers and from the understanding of the density of LEP speakers per square mile is important. When looking at the total LEP individuals in a given census tract and the percentages of LEP speakers it becomes apparent that most are living in the northern portions of the metro. High percentages exist in northern Cedar Rapids, Hiawatha, Robins, and the eastern and northern portions of Linn County. Non-native speakers are likely drawn to the large employers (see figure xx, page xx) located near these areas, like Rockwell Collins, Trans American, and Skyworks.

When viewed from a density perspective greater clarity can be found. The northern portions of Cedar Rapids, Hiawatha, and Robins still show a large concentration of LEP speakers. However, when density is considered the core of Marion and the western side of Cedar Rapids now indicate high concentrations while the northern and eastern portions of Linn County do not indicate the presence of LEP persons. This suggests that Marion area may have a greater incidence of LEP speakers than indicated. LEP speakers are likely living farther east in the more rural areas near Marion but maybe not in Marion itself.

It is not clear why LEP speakers have a higher than expected concentration in the west side of Cedar Rapids; inquiry is required.

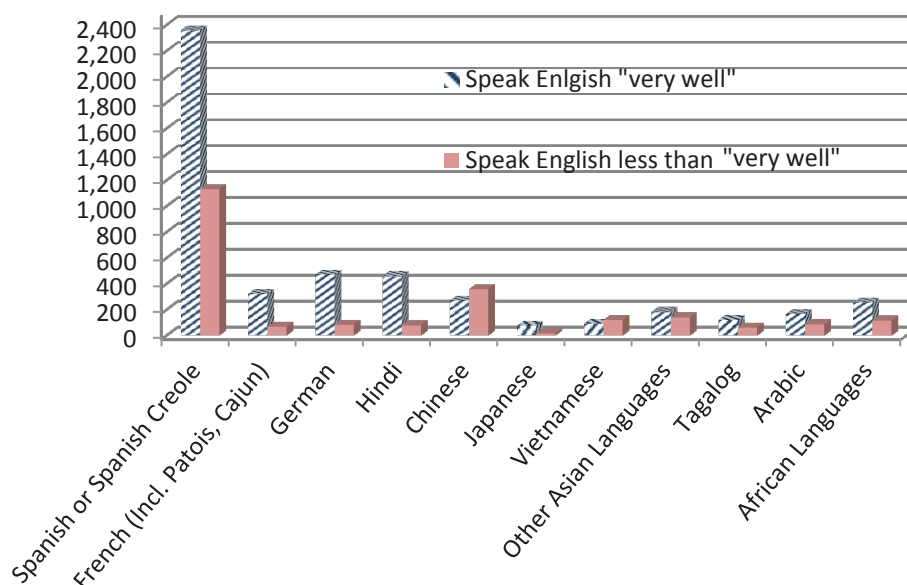
These data indicate that while the Corridor MPO's planning area does not have a high total number of LEP speakers they are clustering in the more rural northern portions of the metro. Transit service in this area exists but frequency is less with less route options. Given these operations LEP speakers may best be served by a less centralized transit system with the possibility of a mini-hub transfer center at Lindale Mall being supportive. Additionally, language support is most needed toward the northern areas of the metro, any resources toward that end would best be allocated on the bus routes serving Hiawatha, Marion, and northern Cedar Rapids.

**Table 3: LEP Population of the Corridor MPO**

	Cedar Rapids	Marion	Hiawatha	Robins	Fairfax	Shueyville	Swisher	Palo	Bertram	Walford	Ely	All Linn County
Total Population	118,424	32,417	6,470	2,744	1,674	432	793	726	448	1,495	1,481	197,787
Speaking English Only	111,603	30,997	6,111	2,609	1,632	416	788	722	432	1,467	1,441	188,226
Speaking Another Language and Speak English Less Than "Very Well" - LEP	2,300	401	141	66	12	12	4	3	7	3	4	3,270
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) %	1.9%	1.2%	2.2%	2.4%	.7%	2.8%	.5%	.4%	1.6%	.2%	.3%	1.7%

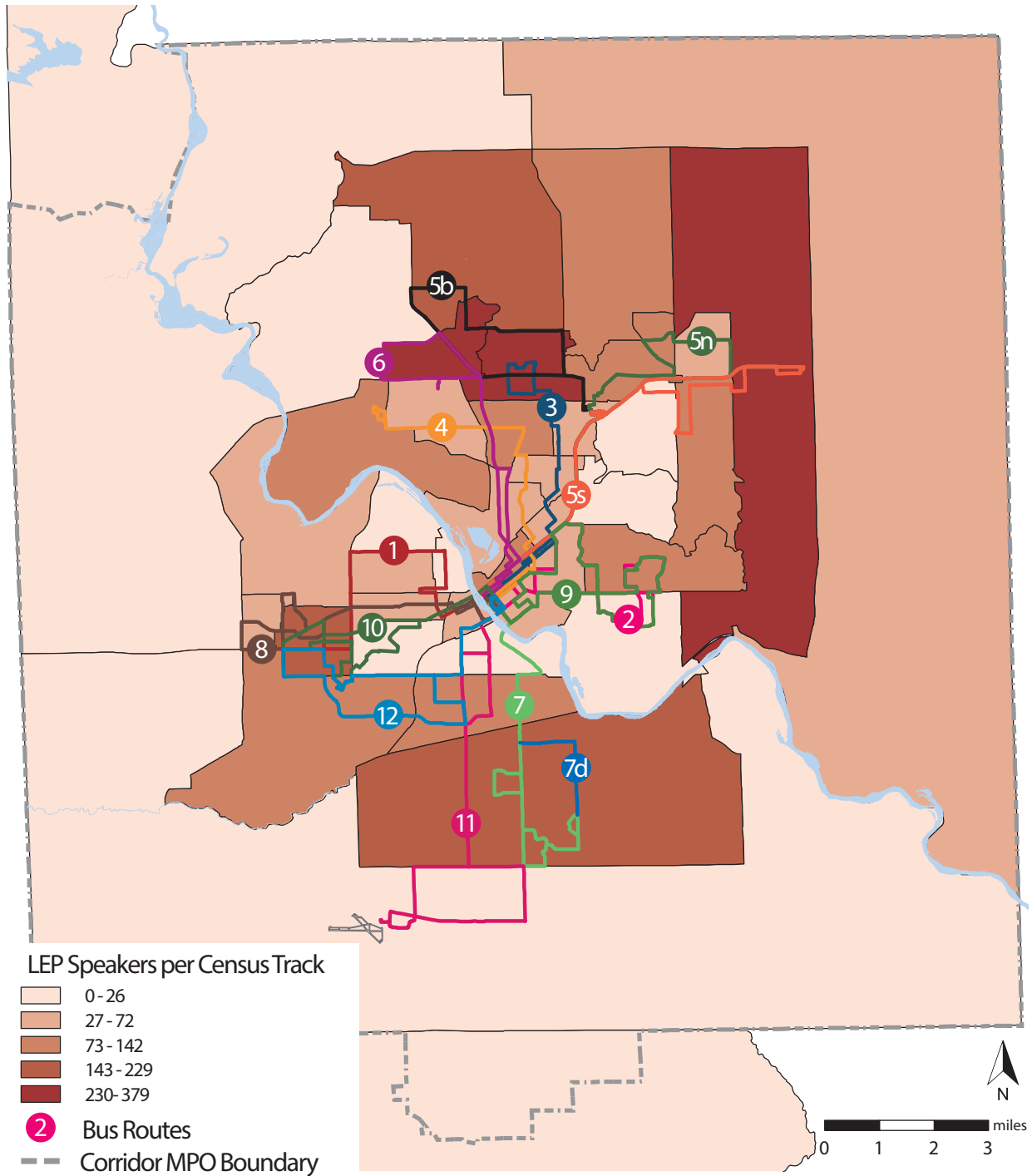
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

**Figure 11: Most Spoken Languages (other than English) in the Corridor MPO**



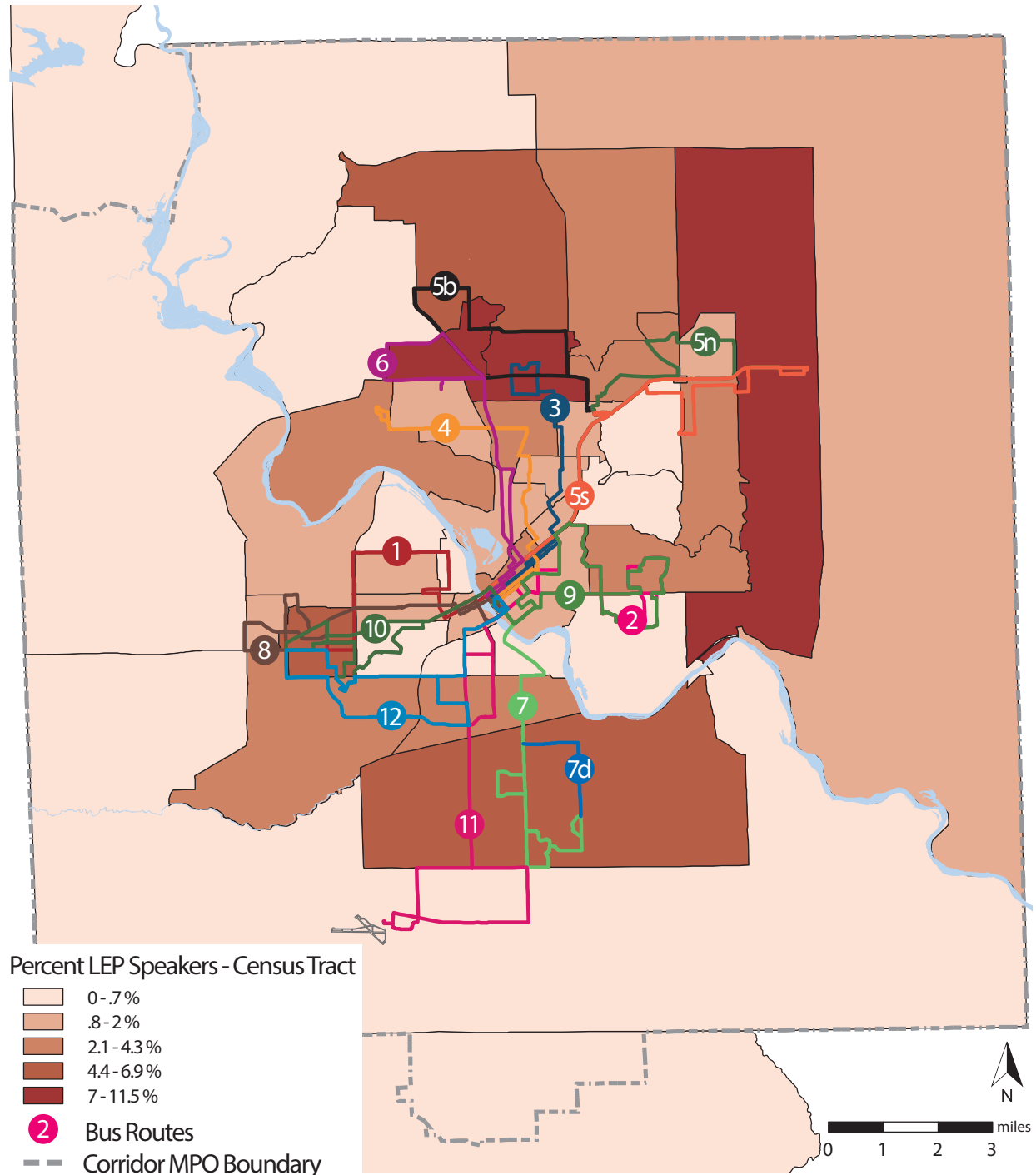


**Figure 12: Limited English Proficiency Speakers per Census Tract**



Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

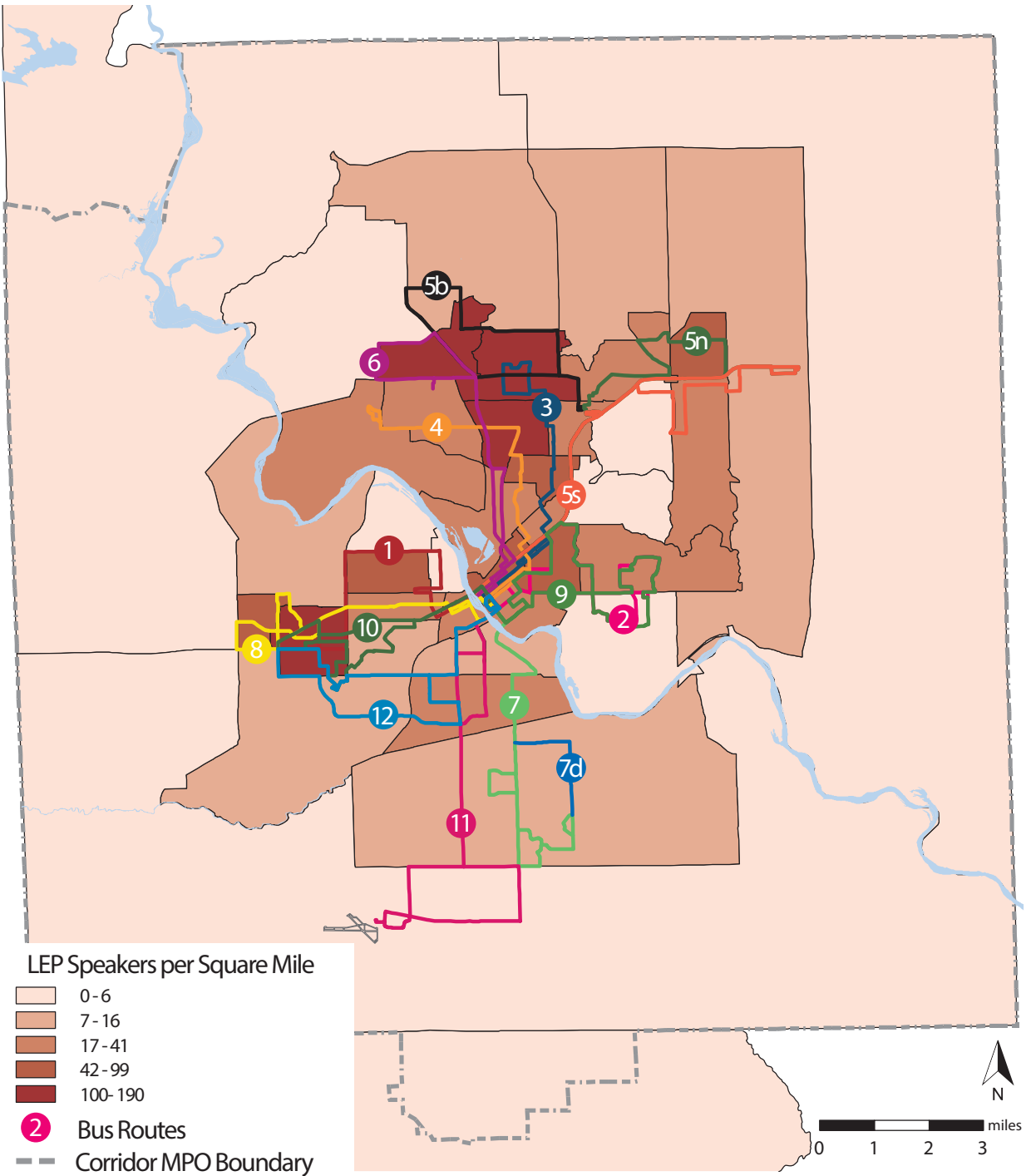
**Figure 13: Limited English Proficiency Speakers percentage of population by Census Tract**



Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



**Figure 14: Limited English Proficiency Speakers per Square Mile by Census Tract**



Source: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



### **Section 3: Coordination Issues**

A coordinated approach to transportation planning fulfills many of the goals of this PTP while also ensuring an efficient and responsive public transportation system that meets the needs of all of its users. Crucial to effective coordination is a knowledge of what we have accomplished and what we need to move towards. Additionally, a review of the resources currently available and the projects currently underway allows us to better plan our actions, priorities, and identify the best strategies to achieve them.

- ***Status of Fleet and Facilities***

In order to identify areas for investment and the improvement of service a current knowledge of the condition of hard assets needs to be known.

**CR Transit** - Cedar Rapids' local fixed route service provider has significantly lowered the average age of its fleet. CR Transit purchased 18 new buses from 2010 through 2013 reducing the average age of the bus fleet from 20.4 years to 7.6 years bringing the fleet back within national standards. However, new heavy-duty buses are still required to keep the fleet running and lower or maintain maintenance costs. The remaining 12 operating buses are reaching their recommended useful life and will soon need to be replaced. In two years 8 existing buses will need replacement and in five years 8 more. CR Transit plans to purchase four new heavy duty buses in 2015 for \$1.6M, of which \$1.3M will be funded by a federal grant (5339) and \$283K from operations. CR Transit has a fleet of 30 heavy-duty buses (all ADA accessible) with 22 operating on a normal day (see appendix for reported inventory).

CR Transit in 2014 selected a service provider, RideSystems, to install and operate a ride scheduling and information delivery smart-phone application and online service. This new amenity will provide users will real time bus information, including a pinpoint text-able bus location option. GPS devices will be installed on all 30 buses (summer 2015). WIFI and automatic people counting hardware may also be included. These additions, will enhance the user experience with possible increases in ridership.

In 2014 CR Transit saw the opening of both the new Ground Transportation Center (GTC) in downtown Cedar Rapids and the new bus garage located in the northwest quadrant of Cedar Rapids. The previous GTC, which housed CRT and NTS and served as central transfer hub, sustained severe damage during the flood of June 2008. Until the opening of the new GTC in early 2014, Cedar Rapids Transit was operating from a temporary facility located at a "Park and Ride" lot in downtown Cedar Rapids. The Bus Garage and Maintenance Facility also sustained heavy flood damage and needed to be replaced. Both the new GTC and bus garage serve as administrative offices for CR Transit. Both of these new facilities should serve CR Transit well in the future.

However, CR Transit understands the need to keep improving and to better serve its customers. Currently bus transfers are only made at the GTC, the main hub of the system. Improving the ability of riders to make low or no cost transfers is important to improve the efficiency and appeal of the whole system. For these



reasons it is desired to construct or renovate space to provide transfer centers to act as mini-hubs at both of the metro's large shopping centers: Westdale and Lindale Malls.

Lastly, CR Transit has recognized the need to improve the condition of its bus stops, by the addition of 18 new passenger shelters since 2012. While this is a significant improvement more needs to be done. Many stops are not connected to sidewalks or do not have the a solid bus pad from which to operate and safely accommodate riders. These improvements and the addition of more bus shelters and benches are important.

Regarding the service level of the fleet, a look at the headways for each existing route (table 3 below) and an analysis of the transit level of service (LOS) indicates that there is a need for transit improvement to better serve the metro (table 5 next page).

**LIFTS** - Like CR Transit LIFTS is also in need of new vehicles. LIFTS operates a fleet of 24 vehicles: 1 Mini-van, 5 light-duty buses (all ADA accessible), and 18 medium-duty buses (all ADA accessible). Of these vehicles the average age is 9.5 years. LIFTS has a great need for replacement vehicles, with 18 of their 24 vehicles needing replacement now and 23 needing replacement in just two years (details located in the appendix). CR Transit in partnership with LIFTS will purchase one light-duty bus in 2015.

Currently, LIFTS has full service facilities for maintenance, administration, and vehicle parking but has the desire to build a new indoor garage for bus storage in harsh weather conditions.

**NTS** - The last major transit provider in the metro also has a similar need for replacement vehicles. NTS operates a fleet of 6 mini-vans, 3 full-size vans, and 3 light-duty buses (all ADA accessible). Of these 12 vehicles 5 need immediate replacement, 5 need replacement in 2 years, and all will need to be replace within 5 years.

**Table 4: CR Transit Service Intervals**

<b>30 MINUTE INTERVAL</b>	<b>60 MINUTE INTERVAL</b>	<b>70 MINUTE INTERVAL</b>
Route 5B	Route 1	Route 10
Route 5N	Route 2	Route 11
Route 5S	Route 3	
	Route 4	
	Route 6	
	Route 7	
	Route 8	
	Route 9	
	Route 12	

NTS would also like to provide GPS integration on their vehicles for better operating purposes with the possibility of a ride planning application or integration with CR Transit's upcoming service. Additionally, security cameras are desired for the fleet to increase passenger safety.





*Table 5: CR Transit Level of Service*

Level of Service (LOS)	Assessment Categories	Comments
D – F (30 – 60 min)	Service Frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service unattractive to choice riders</li> <li>• Service available during hour</li> <li>• Service unattractive to all riders</li> </ul>
D (12 – 13 hrs)	Hours of Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daytime service provided</li> </ul>
A – D (0 – 1.25)	Load Factor (Passenger/Seat)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No passenger need sit next to another</li> <li>• Passengers can choose where to sit</li> <li>• All passengers can sit</li> <li>• Comfortable standee load for vehicle design</li> </ul>
C – F (15 – 60 min)	Travel Time Difference Bus vs. Auto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tolerable for choice riders</li> <li>• Round trip at least an hour longer by transit</li> <li>• Tedious for all riders</li> <li>• Unacceptable for most riders</li> </ul>
B (80 -90 %)	Service Coverage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most major origins and destinations served</li> </ul>

**Special K Transport** - This private non-profit service provider has a fleet of 10 vehicles: 1 mini-van, 8 full-size vans, and 1 light-duty bus. Like most transit providers in the metro, Special K also needs vehicle replacement: 1 vehicle immediately, 3 in 2 years and all 10 in 5 years (details available in appendix).

These four transit providers (CR Transit, LIFTS, and NTS) cover the vast majority of all transit vehicles and facilities in the metro. Inventory requests were made to numerous other private transit providers; all declined to provide data.



- **Status of Previously Recommended Priorities and Recent Developments**

**Hire a New Mobility Manager** - In FY 2012 Cedar Rapids Transit applied for the New Freedom Grant to support the hiring of the Mobility Manager position in the metro-area. However, the lack of local match/funds resulted in a hold. The TAG and its Executive Committee worked to redefine the roles and responsibilities of this position and define strategies for the sustainability of this position.. An application for New Freedom Grants was re-submitted in FY 2013, leading to the hire of Terry Bergen as Regional Mobility Manager with funding for the position through FY 2014.

New Freedom funding was secured through the Iowa Department of Transportation, with a local match from the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation, to hire a mobility manager. The position was filled and the Mobility Manager began work in August 2012. Funding appears to be in place through calendar year 2014. So far the Mobility Manager has coordinated a “Lunch & Learn” session on the topic of MAP-21 legislation, developed a new local transportation website ([www.365ride.org](http://www.365ride.org)), launched a companion telephone assistance line (365-RIDE or 365-7433) and secured funding for a medical shuttle service between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City to serve IowaCare patients, veterans and the general public. With this position filled, the TAG looks forward to beginning work on previously identified needs and improved coordination between transportation stakeholders.

Continued funding for the position is in jeopardy with the loss of the New Freedom funding stream. The mobility manager position remains for FY 2015 with funding from Linn County. Future funding is will require approval from the Linn County Board of Supervisors or the identification of other sources.

**Reorganize the Transportation Advisory Group (TAG)** - The Human Services and Transportation Advisory Group (HSTAG) was renamed to Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) to make the advisory group more inclusive and not just focus on Human Service Agencies. An Executive Committee made up of major transportation providers, planning agency, and human service providers was created to oversee the TAG, with several sub-committees. The TAG remains a strong and engaged group collecting public input and identifying solutions to transportation problems.

**Create “Ride Planning Tool” for Cedar Rapids Transit** - CR Transit in 2014 selected a service provider, RideSystems, to install and operate a ride scheduling and information delivery smart-phone application and online service. This new amenity will provide users will real time bus information, including a pinpoint text-able bus location option. GPS devices will be installed on all 30 buses (summer 2015). WIFI and automatic people counting hardware may also be included. These additions, will enhance the user experience with possible increases in ridership.

**Change Bus Schedule format used by Cedar Rapids Transit** - Ongoing effort. TAG has identified a format they would like the bus schedules to be printed on. TAG Executive Committee will work with Cedar Rapids Transit to establish new scheduled formats. The new schedules will be in color and include an overall system map with individual routes and their schedules in a large foldable glossy paper.



**Organize “Lunch and Learn” event for the stakeholders** - Lunch and learns continue to be an ongoing activity conducted by the Mobility Manager.

**Organize Annual Transportation Forum** - TAG held the 5th Annual Transportation Forum, on September 19th, 2014 (Agenda, attendance, and evaluation records available in the appendix). The 2014 Transportation Forum’s objective was to provide quality information by inviting knowledgeable state and national speakers to discuss important issues to the TAG and to the general public. A free event with 80 attendees, the Forum brought in a wide variety of transportation and human service providers, as well as elected officials and interested members of the general public. People discussed issues ranging from health care to the state gas tax funding mechanism. But most importantly, facilitated discussion groups were convened that focused on collecting and analyzing the needs of the transit system and its riders.

**The Iowa Commuter Transportation Study** - The Iowa legislature directed the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) “to conduct a study to identify administrative needs, projected demand, necessary capital and operating costs, and public transit service structures including park and ride lots, employer or public vanpool programs, and traditional fixed-route transit. The goal of this study was to identify the existing and future commuter needs in the Interstate 380 (I-380) corridor and determine the viability of various commuter transportation improvements to address those needs. The results of the study were encouraging and promising. Commuting between the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City metropolitan areas is significant. As There are over 7,500 commuters traveling between the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City metropolitan areas and most of these commuters are traveling during the peak periods using I-380. The additionally was a very positive interest in some sort of commuter service from citizens as indicated by DOT survey data. Nearly 70 percent of respondents stated that they would use a public bus for their commute, indicating significant support for transit and other forms of ridesharing.

The next steps in the process development of a true commuter service have begun with the convening of a commuter service steering committee consisting of government and elected officials, transit providers, and community groups. For more information on the Iowa Commuter Transportation Study go to: [http://www.iowadot.gov/commuterstudy/pdfs/ITC\\_ReportWithAppendices.pdf](http://www.iowadot.gov/commuterstudy/pdfs/ITC_ReportWithAppendices.pdf)

**365ride.org Website and 365-RIDE Telephone Assistance Line** - November 2012 a new website ([www.365ride.org](http://www.365ride.org)), was launched to provide information about transportation providers in the region, share news regarding transportation services and provide a way for citizens to reach out for ride assistance. The telephone service provides the same features, for persons without internet access or who need to speak with someone directly about their needs.

**Corridor Medical Shuttle** - On January 29, 2013 the Corridor Medical Shuttle began service. The shuttle provides twice weekly service University of Iowa Hospital and the Veterans Hospital in Iowa City. The service is designed primarily for IowaCare patients and non-ambulatory veterans needing transportation to these facilities, but also serves the general public.



Funding for this service has been removed and in June of 2014 all service was discontinued. However, demand still exists, with numerous calls made weekly inquiring about travel to Iowa City for medical service. It is the intention of Linn County LIFTS to resume operation of the medical shuttle in the summer of 2015 on a once per week basis.

**The Coalition to Augment the Bus System (CABS)** - program provided rides via taxi when bus service is not available. Accessible transportation is augmented by a “roll-out” taxi program which was done through a partnership with CRT and a local taxi company. With the loss of New Freedom (5317) federal funding the CABS system was not able to continue service. There is no current plan to return to CABS operation.

- *Assessment of Transportation Needs*

The PTP documents the transportation needs in the metro-area through consultation with TAG members, Corridor MPO staff observation of existing transportation services, and information received from the general public. Most recently (early January 2015) the Corridor MPO conducted a Passenger Transportation Survey of the public. This survey was available both online and in hard copy form. Data returns were better than expected with a total of 424 survey responses, 267 online and 157 hand written. The information received from the survey has been and will be extremely valuable to future transportation planning in the Corridor Metropolitan Area. Evaluating the previous needs and comparing them to the data collected now is important to consider when identifying actions items and making future funding decisions.

**Previous Needs Identified from 2011 to 2014** - A review of the last four years of PTP identified needs will demonstrate that many of the needs stated from year to year are the same or very similar. The next three pages (tables 6 to 9) display the needs recorded in each year since the last major PTP update.

There were a total 31 identified needs from 2011 until 2014. In order to focus the evaluation process, these 31 items were summarized into two lists of ten needs. One list applicable to “general transportation needs” and another list relevant to CR Transit specifically. Corridor MPO staff then evaluated the two lists against current input received from the TAG meetings, the general public, and the professional input of transit providers. Refinements were made and one notable addition was added: providing free WIFI on CR Transit buses. This addition was made to better understand the desire from the public for this service currently being considered.

These two lists of ten were included in the Passenger Transportation Survey and respondents were asked to rank each one. Initially, they would be ranking each one in order from 1 to 10 with 1 indicating their most important need. In survey testing this proved to be a difficult task and concern was raised that these questions might be skipped by survey respondents. For this reason, each list of needs was further divided into four separate questions with respondents ranking on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being their number one need. These questions became the focal point of the Passenger Transportation Survey. Open ended follow up



**Transportation Needs Identified in 2011**

	<b>Need Identified</b>	<b>Source of Identification</b>
1	Need to improve transportation to medical and dental appointments	Public Input Meeting, PTP Survey, Coalition Meetings and Transportation Meetings, Transit Providers
2	Need to improve transportation to low-income workers	Transportation Meetings, Coalition Meetings, PTP Survey
3	Need more marketing and communication of transportation information	Transportation Meetings, PTP Survey, Coalition Meetings, Transit Providers
4	Need to maintain and expand services in the rural areas and cross county trips (more trips during operating hours and need for evening hours)	PTP Survey, Coalition Meetings, Transportation Meetings, Transit Providers
5	Need to improve transportation to the elderly	PTP Survey, Transportation Meetings, Coalition Meetings
6	Need to improve transportation to the disabled	Transportation Meetings, PTP Survey,
7	Need more outreach, education and travel training in rural counties	PTP Survey, Coalition Meetings, Transportation Meetings
8	Need for more transportation to grocery shopping and errands	PTP Survey, Coalition Meetings, Transportation Meetings
9	Need to improve efficiency of existing transit services and safety	Public Input Meetings
10	Need to make the transportation more affordable	Public Input Meeting, PTP Survey, Coalition Meetings

*Table 6: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2011*



### Transportation Needs Identified in 2012

	Need Identified	Source of Identification
1	Need to provide better transportation connections between home, childcare and work	Transportation Advisory Group (TAG)
2	Need to reduce the bus headways, they are too long and have impact on health, work and overall quality of life	
3	Need to improve accessibility to the bus stops/shelters	
4	Need to maintain Bus shelters and pads, especially during winter.	
5	Need to provide after-hours accessible taxi service.	
6	Need to create and maintain Jumpstart program to help people in need to ride the transit system	
7	Need coordination between all public transportation providers on the field, a call center would help.	

Table 7: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2012

### Transportation Needs Identified in 2013

	Need Identified	Source of Identification
1	Need to explore options for after-hours service needs, beyond the services provided by Cedar Rapids Transit	Transportation Advisory Group (TAG)
2	Need to create a mechanism to support transportation scheduling for special appointments (Iowa Care, VA etc.)	
3	Need to improve accessibility to the bus stops/shelters, connect bus stops with sidewalks.	
4	Need better coordination between all public transportation providers and volunteer transportation providers.	
5	Need to create a Ride Planning Tool	
6	Need to increase Marketing and Outreach activities to promote transit ridership, capitalize on Blue Zone Projects	
7	Need to explore transit opportunities between the Cedar Rapids Iowa City Corridor	
8	Need to provide door-to-door services to elderly or those in need	

Table 8: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2013





### Transportation Needs Identified in 2014

	Need Identified	Source of Identification
1	Need for non-emergency medical transportation services	Transportation Advisory Group (TAG)
2	Ensure access to work outside the metro area	
3	Transporting low-income youth to and from before school, after school, and summer school programs. (non-school-can't use school bus)	
4	Family friendly transportation to assist parents access programming for themselves and for their children	
5	Transporting youth to weekend programs who are too young to use the bus alone.	
6	Ensure comfortable and safe ride on buses	

Table 9: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2014

questions and questions designed to identify transportation difficulties were also asked. These were asked in an effort to allow respondents to identify their own needs if they did not fit with those already asked (Complete survey questions and aggregated answers are provided in the appendix).

**Needs as identified in the 2015 Passenger Transportation Survey** - Results from the survey (table 10 on page 45) confirmed many existing assumptions of need while also bringing greater clarity to what issues are more important to citizens. Needs inputted into the survey were all derived from previous TAG meetings, the 2014 Transportation Forum, and the experience of transportation providers and planners.

The most impactful lesson from the survey was the desire for improved bus stops. Both improving the connection to the bus stop (lowering the distance to bus stops from the origin or destination) and improving the quality of the bus stop itself were major points of emphasis by survey respondents. The quality of the bus stop was a none issue but largely not seen as the most important issue. Survey data (questions 5 and 14 in the appendix) both indicated that this was a major issue, scoring as the number one need out all twenty presented needs and the number one and two challenges to using transportation. Write in questions also indicated that more shelters, connecting sidewalks, winter maintenance, and general upkeep of shelters were of key importance to respondents.

The next most important issue to respondents was the need to improve service within the urban areas. This was indicated in question 11 directly, but also through write-in responses as well. Many respondents requested better service specifically on the 5 routes, that often experience full capacity buses. However, expanded service has meant much more than more buses on route. Respondents indicated that the hardest destinations to reach were those that constituted evening activities (question 7 and 15). When analyzing write-in data, longer service hours and Sunday service were all suggested in detail numerous times.

The specific question of WIFI on CR Transit buses did not score well, ranking as the lowest need of all twenty posed to respondents.





Initial indications show some significant differences between respondents online and those turning in hard copies. Hard copies were available in the GTC (CR Transit) and on all NTS buses (Hard copies were offered to all transit providers). Demographic data for these groups was different from those responding online. With online respondent typically using transit less and having higher incomes. Specific issues were also of differing importance. Lower fares was not very important to online respondents but generally important to hard copy respondents. However, many similarities still existed, specifically when it came to expanding service hours, Sunday service, and above all with both groups improving the condition of bus stops in the metro.

Limitations to this survey are present and will be further investigated. Demographic data as not yet been evaluated to find differences between modes, cities, disability, age, or between CR Transit and NTS hard copy respondents. Significant and useful findings are expected. Further limitations lie in some of the questions not asked, specifically questions involving employment and unemployment. It became clear through analyzing the write-in questions and discussions with TAG members that these types of questions and demographic breakdowns would be helpful. Lastly, while a large number of potential choice transit users are believed to have been reached they were not asked why they weren't using transit now and why they might choose to use it in the future.

Additionally, greater outreach to specific groups is necessary. Data from non-English speaking groups, senior groups, disabled groups, and youth groups, needs to be more directly solicited. These groups are not likely to have been exposed to the online or CR Transit and NTS hard copy surveys. Often these are the groups that most need transit. Future surveys are planned on a biannual basis that will improve on the quality of the 2015 Passenger Transportation Survey.

The City of Robins is dis-proportionally, represented in the data. This was investigated by Corridor MPO staff and no reason to invalidate the data was identified. Internet Service Provider (ISP) addresses were different amongst respondents as well as actual responses including names, phone numbers, and email addresses when provided. However, reasons for the higher than average response from this community are not known.

While much improvement can be made regarding data collection, overall the survey has gone farther to collect and analyze the needs of users than previous attempts. It should be noted that when action items and priorities were evaluated this survey data is only one piece of that evaluation. Human service and transportation providers provide invaluable information and experience; lessons learned from listening to and serving the public on a daily basis.

In short, all the needs listed from 2011 until 2014 are still relevant and important for consideration. Priority ranks were generated by the survey respondents to assist in action item selection and priority in order to better understand the public need. However, these priority ranks do not mean that lower ranking or unranked issues are not important or should not be considered during the planning process. Please consider all identified needs as valid.



Table 10: Corridor MPO Transportation Needs Identified in 2015

<u>General Transportation Need Identified Question 1</u>	<u>Average Importance to Respondents (5 is Highest Score Possible)</u>	<u>First Place Votes</u>
Increase frequency of service in urban areas	3.71	104
Provide a transit planning/scheduling service for all transit options	3.02	43
Provide more service in rural areas	2.95	60
Increase marketing, education, and outreach regarding transit options	2.78	36
Lower the cost of transit	2.55	43
<u>General Transportation Need Identified Question 2</u>		
Improve service to low-income workers	3.31	78
Improve service to the elderly	3.22	55
Improve service to the disabled	3.04	52
Improve service to medical facilities/appointments	2.98	42
Improve service to students (K-12 and college)	2.45	38
<u>CR Transit Need Identified Question 1</u>		
Improving condition of bus stops (shelters and pads)	3.74	96
Providing a ride planning computer/phone app or service	3.25	77
Lowering fares	3.08	62
Providing more comfortable bus interiors	2.53	16
Providing free WIFI	2.41	25
<u>CR Transit Need Identified Question 2</u>		
Longer evening/night service	3.52	88
More bus routes	3.18	57
Sunday service	2.91	51
Shorter time between buses (buses visit each stop more often)	2.88	51
More bus stops	2.52	20



#### **Section 4: Priorities and Strategies**

Based on the knowledge, experience, and public input generated by the PTP process, specific investment strategies for the next five years have been identified. Members of TAG and the survey review group meet to identify action items and a funding schedule (discussed in the next section) for future investments with the hope of fulfilling some of the needs identified since 2011. Note, investments mean more than just dollars and cents. The investments proposed involve capital, labor, and policy change. The action items listed below are associated with target dates and in some cases responsible parties. It is the goal of this document to not only identify what needs to be done but act as a catalysts for an improved public transportation system.

**Metro Transit Study** – The need for a comprehensive transit study has been discussed for some time. A meaning look at how to expanded service both from a cost neutral and an expanded funding framework is required. Important questions regarding the concept of mini-hubs, free transfers, expanded service hours, and the possibility of a regional transit authority are needed. Transit study analysis needs to include a look at all transit options available in the metro including para-transit.

NEEDS ADDRESSED: All needs should be addressed and considered in the study evaluation process.

TIME FRAME: As soon as possible, likely to receive funding in federal fiscal year 2016.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S): Corridor MPO and CR Transit.

**Improved Accommodations at Bus Stops** - Most bus stops in Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha need to be improved either through the addition of complete bus shelters or by bus pads with connections to the existing sidewalks. Many areas of the metro do not have complete sidewalk networks leading to the lack of quality facilities at bus stops. An evaluation of all bus stops in the metro is needed to identify priority stops and the quality of the stops. From there, prioritized infrastructure improvements will be needed from MPO member communities and CR Transit. Particular consideration to winter maintenance is also required. Many improvements will occur as new road projects develop, as Cedar Rapids adopted a Complete Streets Policy in July of 2014. The new policy will require sidewalk improvements to occur with any road work.

NEEDS ADDRESSED: Improved conditions of bus stops and improved service to all transit users.

TIME FRAME: On-going. Prioritized list of stops with improvement required by the Summer of 2016.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S): City's of Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha, CR Transit, and Corridor MPO.

**Better Marketing of Services Available** - A better job of creating awareness of current services (all transit options, Special K Transport, NTS, CR Transit, etc.) is needed to better reach out to existing and choice riders. Advertising via email, social media, workforce outreach, unemployment benefits, community services, municipal utilities bill, and conventional media is needed. Utilizing internal marketing experts, funding should be devoted to materials, education, and execution.

NEEDS ADDRESSED: Increase marketing, education, and outreach regarding transit options and improve service to all transit users.

TIME FRAME: Begin plan creation May 2015, execute Fall 2015.



RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S): City of Cedar Rapids communications department, Mobility Manager, CR Transit, non-profit transportation providers (NTS, LIFTS, etc.)

**Transit Application and Planning Service** - Online software provides information on bus locations in real time to assist ridership in planning transit. Additionally, data gathering will be included to better plan and evaluate the CR Transit network. Consider para-transit and after hours integration, as well as the possibility for user survey data collection to further improve responsiveness to users.

NEEDS ADDRESSED: Provide a transit planning/scheduling service for all transit options, provide a ride planning computer/phone application or service, provide free WIFI, and improved service to all user groups.  
TIME FRAME: Launch Summer of 2015. Survey data collection should be discussed with provider in February of 2015. Discuss integration with other service providers in Spring of 2016.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S): CR Transit, Corridor MPO, LIFTS, and NTS.

**Follow-up on Corridor Commuter Transit Study** – Create steering committee and work with interested parties in plan creation, funding identification, and delegation of management responsibility.

NEEDS ADDRESSED: Provide more bus routes and improve service to all user groups.

TIME FRAME: Create plan by winter of 2015. Secure funding in federal fiscal year 2021.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S): CR Transit, Mobility Manager, NTS, Corridor MPO, Commuter Transit Study Steering Committee.

**Increase Community Outreach and Provide More Travel Training** – Increase frequency of lunch and learns, increase outreach to demographic groups not currently reached by existing methods, gather data to improve the existing public and private transportation network, while providing information on current services and how best to utilize them.

NEEDS ADDRESSED: Increase marketing, education, and outreach regarding transit options and improve service to all user groups.

TIME FRAME: Create plan by spring of 2015, begin outreach by fall of 2015.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S): Mobility Manager and Corridor MPO.

**Free Pass Program for Para-transit** – The concept of providing a free or discounted CR Transit pass to LIFTS and NTS customers should be considered to shift usage away from higher cost, door-to-door providers to the existing lower cost CR Transit system.

NEEDS ADDRESSED: Increase marketing, education, and outreach regarding transit options, lower the cost of transit, improve service to all user groups.

TIME FRAME: Create plan summer of 2015, implement plan spring 2016.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY(S): CR Transit, Mobility Manager, NTS, and LIFTS.



### **Section 5: Funding**

Most of the previously discussed action items and facility and fleet needs will require funding for improvement to be made. Below is a brief overview of funding opportunities available for transit improvements. Following this overview, a chart with suggested projects and indicated fleet and facility needs requiring funding in the next 5 years (2016 to 2020) is provided. Projects have funding sources listed that are eligible for the given project. Items list in purple are believed to be reasonably achievable within the life of the plan, additionally, the anticipated source of funding for that project will also be listed in purple.

#### **• Overview of Available Funding Sources**

**Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)** - The most recent federal transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (commonly referred to as MAP-21) was signed into law on July 6, 2012. MAP-21 provides federal funding for FY2013 and FY2014. The largest change affecting human services transportation providers is the elimination of Section 5316 (Job Access/Reverse Commute or JARC) and Section 5317 (New Freedoms) funding streams. These programs have been utilized by area transportation providers to provide alternative transportation services to underfunded entities.

Elimination of JARC and New Freedom Funding had a significant impact on several local transportation programs:

- Neighborhood Transportation Services (NTS) lost funding for its JARC program after October 31, 2013. With no available funding stream to continue operations, the organization is taking in new clients on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, NTS no longer offers a discount fare for low income workers.
- The Cabs to Augment the Bus System (CABS) program relied on funding through the New Freedom program to provide additional services to disadvantaged residents. With this loss of federal funding the CABS system was not able to continue overing service. There is no current plan to return to CABS operation.

In July of 2014, MAP-21 was extended until May 31st, of 2015. Congress continues to draft a new transportation funding bill to replace MAP-21. Additionally, the possibility of another extension remains as an option.

**Metropolitan Transportation Planning (Section 5303)** - This is a FTA program to support planning activities in metropolitan areas on an 80% federal, 20% non-federal basis. By law, the state is the direct recipient of the funding. In Iowa, these funds are administered by the Iowa DOT's Office of Systems Planning and are distributed to each of the state's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Annual allocations of 5303 funds are based on a formula that guarantees each MPO an amount of funds equal to what they received in 1992, plus a share of the additional funds proportionate to their share of the statewide metropolitan population total. The 5303 funds are administered jointly with Metropolitan Planning "PL" funds available through the Federal Highway Administration as part of a Consolidated Planning Grant. The



5303 and PL funds can support any MPO costs related to intermodal transportation planning activities for the urbanized area.

**Urbanized Area Formula Grants (Section 5307)** - This is a federal program for support of urban transit systems serving communities with more than 50,000 in population. In all urbanized areas, 5307 funds can be used for capital improvements, including preventive maintenance activities, or planning activities on an 80% federal, 20% non-federal basis. Purchase and installation of special equipment or features required by the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Clean Air Act Amendments, and certain bicycle accommodation projects are eligible for 90% federal assistance. Transit systems may use up to 10 percent of their total 5307 funds to pay for ADA para-transit costs on an 80% federal, 20% non-federal basis.

Each area over 200,000 in population receives its own 5307 allocation directly from FTA. The allocations are based partially on population and population density, and partially on performance factors, including passenger miles of service provided. Within each of these larger urbanized areas, at least one percent of the 5307 funds must be set aside for transit enhancement activities. Within each area, the MPO is responsible for programming the funds as part of the Transportation Improvement Program.

**Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310)** - This is a federal program for support of transit services serving elderly and disabled persons. These funds are allocated to Iowa on the basis of the number of persons who are elderly or have disabilities within the state compared to other states. By law, the state is the direct recipient of the funding. Public agencies responsible for coordinating human service transportation are eligible, as are private not-for-profit agencies. Because Iowa requires the designated public transit systems to coordinate all publicly-funded passenger transportation services, Iowa distributes these funds to the public transit agencies. The funds may be used for the cost of contracted operations, equipment and passenger or vehicle shelters on an 80% federal, and 20% non-federal basis. Facilities other than passenger or vehicle shelters are not eligible.

CR Transit expects to receive \$110,000 in 5310 funding in fiscal years 2015 through 2017 and \$120,000 in years 2018 to 2020. This money will be used to with local transit levy funding to contract para-transit service from Linn County LIFTS.

**Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants (Section 5339)** - These funds can finance capital projects to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. In Iowa, approximately \$1,250,000 is received annually to be spent in small urban (less than 50,000 population) and regional transit systems and receives individual allocations for each large urban transit system serving populations between 50,000 and 200,000. The large urban funds are pooled since individual allocations would not allow for bus purchases on an annual basis. All funds are spent on vehicle replacements rather than on expansion vehicles or bus-related facilities and are distributed utilizing the vehicle rankings of the Public Transit Management System (PTMS). Transit systems serving populations of more than 200,000 receive direct allocations from the Federal Transit Administration and are not included in the statewide





distribution through PTMS.

**Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP)** - This program is one of the five core funding programs of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that can be flexed between highways, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian uses. Nationally, the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) program is intended to fund transportation projects to assist metropolitan areas in violation of Clean Air Act standards. In those states with areas in violation, most or all CMAQ monies must be spent in the affected areas for projects conforming to a state air quality implementation plan. Because Iowa does not have any area in violation of transportation-related federal clean air standards, the state receives a minimum allocation of CMAQ funding that can be used anywhere in the state for any purpose for which STP funds can be used on the same 80% federal, 20% non-federal basis.

In Iowa, funds are programmed for highway or transit projects through a statewide application process based on the project's anticipated air quality or congestion relief benefits. Applications are due the first business day of October for projects to begin the following federal fiscal year. Project selections are determined in February. When ICAAP funds are programmed for transit projects, funding is transferred from FHWA to FTA for administration through statewide grant under either the 5307 or 5311 programs depending on whether the projects are in urbanized or non-urbanized areas.

**Surface Transportation Program (STP)** - This is another of FHWA's core programs. These funds come to the state based on a number of factors including Vehicle Miles of Travel, Highway Lane Miles and the Number and Size of Bridges. The funds can be used for roadway, transit capital projects, pedestrian and bikeway projects, or inter-modal planning projects on an 80% federal, 20% local basis. In Iowa, a portion of these funds are programmed by local governments acting through metropolitan or regional planning agencies. Nearly all of Iowa RPAs and some MPOs fund a portion of their inter-modal transportation planning activities from STP funds. Most transit systems have also been successful in receiving STP funding from their local MPO or RPA. When programmed for transit or planning projects, these funds are transferred from FHWA to FTA for administration, either through a direct 5307 grant for large urban transit systems, through a statewide 5311 grant for small urban or regional systems, or through the statewide consolidated planning grant for planning projects. OPT administers the statewide grant for individual small urban and regional transit systems. The Office of Systems Planning administers the planning grant.

**Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)** - States receive these formula grants, know as TANF, to provide cash assistance, work opportunities, and necessary support services for needy families with children. States may choose to spend some of their TANF funds on transportation and related services needed by program beneficiaries.

**Community Service Block Grant** - Under this family of programs, states and tribes receive funding to provide a broad range of services for low-income persons. Most of the funds in this set of programs are awarded as formula-based grants to states, which pass them on to the local community services programs.





An important component of these community services programs is the Job Opportunities for low income individuals (JOLI) program through discretionary grants are awarded to local non-profits who are creating employment and business opportunities for welfare recipients and other low income persons. Transportation services similar to NTS are commonly provided i both the block grant and JOLI programs.

**State Transit Assistance (STA)** - All public transit systems are eligible for funding under the STA program, which began in 1976. Since 1984, STA funding is has been derived from a dedicated portion (currently 1/20th) of the first four cents of the state “use tax” imposed on the sale of motor vehicles and accessory equipment. STA funds are provided to support public transit services and may be used for either operating or capital projects.

**STA Formula Program** - The majority of the state transit assistance funds received in a fiscal year is distributed to individual transit systems on the basis of a formula using performance statistics from the most recent available year. Each month, the dollars received in the fund during the prior month are allocated to the transit agencies. These funds can be used by the public transit system for operating, capital or planning expenses related to the provision of open-to-the-public passenger transportation.

The STA formula funds are first split between urban and regional systems on the basis of total revenue miles of service provided by each group. The funds are then split among individual systems in each category, 50 percent on the basis of locally determined income (LDI), 25 percent on the basis of rides per dollar of expense, and 25 percent on the basis of revenue miles per dollar of expenditure. OPT calculates LDI by subtracting FTA and STA formula funds from the system’s operating expenses.

**STA Special Projects** - Each year up to \$300,000 of the total STA funds are set aside to fund “special projects.” These can include grants to individual systems to support transit services which are developed in conjunction with human service agencies, or statewide projects to improve public transit in Iowa through such means as technical training for transit system or planning agency personnel, statewide marketing campaigns, etc.

**STA Coordination Special Projects** - The projects are considered an “immediate opportunity” program by the Iowa DOT, meaning that these funds can be applied for at any time of the year as an opportunity arises, provided that funding is still available. Projects are intended to assist with start-up of new services that have been identified as needs by health, employment or human service agencies participating in the Passenger Transportation Development Planning process. Most projects will fall within the \$5,000-\$25,000 range. Projects shall be for no more than one year, but a second year of funding can be applied for separately. Priority is given to projects which include a contribution from human service agencies as well.

**Public Transit Infrastructure Grant (PTIG)** - In 2006, the Iowa Legislature established a new program to fund some of the vertical infrastructure needs of Iowa’s transit systems. Applications are accepted as



part of the annual Consolidated Transit Funding Applications. Projects can involve new construction, reconstruction or remodeling, but must include a vertical component to qualify. They are evaluated based on the anticipated benefits to transit, as well as the ability to have projects completed quickly. The infrastructure program participation in the cost of transit-related elements of a facility project is limited to 80% and cannot, in combination with federal funding, exceed that number. Also no single system can receive more than 40% of the available infrastructure funding in a given year.

**Capital Match Revolving Loan Fund (AMOCO Loan)** - The capital match revolving loan fund was created by the Iowa Legislature in the early 1980's with funds from Iowa's share of the federal government's petroleum overcharge settlement against the American Oil Company (Amoco.) The loan program is subject to an intergovernmental agreement between the Iowa DOT and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). All public transit systems are eligible for loans under this program. The intent of the program is to increase the inherent energy conservation benefits of public transit by expediting the implementation of transit capital projects.

The program allows "no interest" loans to transit systems, which the transit system uses towards the required local match on a federally-funded capital project, paying it back over a negotiated time period as local funds become available. The loan can be used to temporarily fund the entire local match on capital equipment projects or 50% of the required non-federal match on facility projects. Loan recipients may be required to report project energy savings annually to OPT until the loan is repaid. A project is eligible if it is a transit capital project that is approved for federal funding. The project should be targeted at energy savings.

**Municipal Transit Levy** - Iowa law authorizes municipalities to levy up to 95 cents per \$1,000 assessed property valuation to support the cost of a public transit system. Most of Iowa's larger communities levy for support of their urban transit systems. CR Transit currently received a municipal transit levy of approximately 80 cents. Marion and Hiawatha do not utilize the transit levy but instead use general funds to compensate CR Transit for service.

**Regional Transit Levy** - In 2005, the Iowa legislature authorized Iowa's two largest counties to form special taxing districts, under the control of the county, for support of area-wide public transit services. Once formed, adjacent counties can become part of the district, or municipalities in nonparticipating adjacent counties can join. The district can levy up to the 95 cents per \$1,000 assessed valuation; but, unlike the provisions in the municipal levy, the regional transit districts can set differing levy rates across their territory. As of July 2007, only Polk County has chosen to form a district, and has, so far, limited its geographic coverage to just their county. Nearly all municipalities within the county have opted to participate.

**General Fund Levy** - The cost of supporting transit services is an eligible use of general fund revenues for all Iowa governments and is the primary source of funding to support transit for counties who don't have the option of a transit levy, as well as for cities which chose not to use the transit levy. advertising revenue of \$52,000.



**United Way Community Enhancement Grants** - Community Enhancement Grants are investments United Way makes into a specific community or to help with an emerging need. Open to any nonprofit agency meeting the criteria of the grant – not just United Way partner agencies – these one-time grants give nonprofits the opportunity to start a new program, enhance an area of service or purchase needed equipment and supplies. Community Enhancement Grants are another way United Way makes our region a better place for all of us.

**Local Foundations (Hall-Perrine)** - Local foundations can also be good sources for funding as transit improvements provide direct and measurable improvements on the local community. Foundations like Hall-Perrine dedicated to improving the quality of life for people of Linn County, Iowa, by responding to changing social, economic and cultural needs, are excellent examples where local dollars help local citizens.

**Environmental Foundations (Rockwell Collins Green Communities Grant)** - Grants focus on improving the environment may be another source of revenue for large to small projects. Rockwell Collins offers an annual Green Communities Grant that aims to make communities that Rockwell Collins calls home more sustainable and health places to live. Smaller improvements like bus shelter to larger facilities like transfer centers are natural fits for environmentally focused funding opportunities.

**Technical Assistance (Easter Seals Project Action)** - Sometimes what is needed for a project is technical know-who. This can be purchased from consultants but can also come in the form of a grant or community service. Easter Seals Project Action is a federally funded training and technical assistance center cooperative agreement between Easter Seals, Inc. and the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration. ESPA holds training events, gives tailored technical assistance, leads outreach initiatives, partners with many other national organizations, and directs small research efforts to further its mission to promote universal access to transportation for people with disabilities and beyond. Grants of this nature should not be overlooked.

**Community Involvement** - Sometimes the technical assistance or financial support needed for a project can be found within one's own neighborhood. Reaching out to local experts, volunteer groups, or college students can provide the much needed labor, expertise, or general support a project needs for success. Partnerships with local Universities, Colleges, or Schools can be beneficial to both parties.

**Crowd Funding** - Smaller to medium sized projects, like bus shelters or vehicles could be funded with a successful crowd funding campaign to raise revenue in smaller contributions from a larger number of sources. Successful public funding projects have been completed through websites like neighbor.ly and citizinvestor.com. These service are completely free to governments and non-profits and have the potential to engage and educate the public while raising funding for important projects.



- *Recommended Program of Projects*

All recommended projects that require funding in the next 5 years (2016 to 2020) are provided on the chart on the next page (table 11). Fiscal year 2015 is provided for reference for the currently budgeted projects. Projects have funding sources listed that are eligible for the given project, as well as estimated costs per unit and per year of expenditure. Items list in **purple** are believed to be reasonably achievable within the life of the plan given existing funding anticipated for each fiscal year. Additionally, the most likely source of funding for an expected project will also be listed in **purple**.

Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) funding for all years of the PTP will be spent toward contracting para-transit service with Linn County LIFTS. All \$110,000 that CR Transit receives annually will be put toward para-transit service from LIFTS, funding to this amount will not exceed the maximum 80 percent federal cost share.

Table 11 : Recommended Program of Projects

<u>Transportation Provider</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Funding Required to Address Action Item</u>	<u>Estimated Unit Cost</u>	<u>Potential Source(s)</u>	<u>Existing Funding FY15</u>	<u>Proposed Funding FY16</u>	<u>Proposed Funding FY17</u>	<u>Proposed Funding FY18</u>	<u>Proposed Funding FY19</u>	<u>Proposed Funding FY20</u>
Corridor MPO	Planning Funds	Planning	No	\$ 45,000.00	5303	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
Corridor MPO	Transit Study	Planning	Yes - Metro Transit Study	\$ 100,000.00	5303, PL	\$ -	\$ 100,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
CR Transit	Heavy Duty Bus (35-39 ft.) Diesel Low Floor	Capital	No	\$ 419,000.00	5339, Local Transit Levy	\$1,676,000 (4 buses)	\$1,676,000 (4 buses)	\$1,676,000 (4 buses)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
CR Transit	Transfer Center Westdale	Capital	No	\$ 7,000,000.00	STA, 5307, ICAAP, STP, PTIG, Local Transit Levy, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,000,000.00	\$ -
CR Transit	Transfer Center Lindale	Capital	No	\$ 7,000,000.00	STA, 5307, ICAAP, STP, PTIG, Local Transit Levy, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,000,000.00
CR Transit	General Operation, Administration and Maintenance	Operations	Yes - Better Marketing of Services, Follow-up on Corridor Commuter Transit Study, Increase Community Outreach, Free Pass Program for Para-transit	\$ 8,900,000.00	STA, 5307, Local Transit Levy	\$ 8,900,000.00	\$ 8,900,000.00	\$ 8,900,000.00	\$ 8,900,000.00	\$ 8,900,000.00	\$ 8,900,000.00
CR Transit	One percent of STP devoted to Transit Capital Equipment	Capital	No	\$ 40,000.00	STP	\$ 39,390.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
CR Transit	Bus Shelters	Capital	Yes - Improved Accomodations at Bus Stops	\$12,500	STA, PTIG, 5307, Local Transit Levy, STP, Crowd Funding, Private (United Way Etc.)	\$12,500 (1 shelter)	\$50,000 (4 shelters)	\$50,000 (4 shelters)	\$50,000 (4 shelters)	\$50,000 (4 shelters)	\$50,000 (4 shelters)
CR Transit	Transit App	Capital	Yes - Transit Application and Planning Service	\$135,000	Local Transit Levy	\$ 135,000.00	\$40,000 (Operations)	\$40,000 (Operations)	\$40,000 (Operations)	\$40,000 (Operations)	\$40,000 (Operations)
CR Transit/Linn County LIFTS	Contracted ADA Para-transit Service	Operations	No	\$ 110,000.00	5310	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
CR Transit/Linn County LIFTS	Medium Duty Bus (to 28 ft.) Diesel	Capital	No	\$ 162,000.00	5339, STP, ICAAP, Local Transit Levy, Crowd Funding, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ -	\$648,000 (4 buses)	\$648,000 (4 buses)	\$648,000 (4 buses)	\$486,000 (3 buses)	\$486,000 (3 buses)
CR Transit/Linn County LIFTS	Light Duty Bus	Capital	No	\$ 90,000.00	5339, STP, ICAAP, Local Transit Levy, Crowd Funding, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ 90,000 (1 bus)	\$ 90,000 (1 bus)	\$ 90,000 (1 bus)	\$ 90,000 (1 bus)	\$ 90,000 (1 bus)	\$ -
CR Transit/NTS	Full Size Van	Capital	No	\$ 50,000.00	5339, STP, ICAAP, Local Transit Levy, Crowd Funding, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ -	\$ 150,000 (3 vans)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Linn County LIFTS	Indoor Garage for Bus Storage	Capital	No	\$ 3,500,000.00	ICAAP, STP, PTIG, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,500,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
Mobility Manager	Mobility Manager Position Continuation	Capital	Yes - All Action Plan Items Require Support from Mobility Manager	\$ 60,000.00	20% Local Match (80/20% split with DOT), 5303, PL, Crowd Funding, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
NTS	GPS and Text Integration	Capital	No	\$ 50,000.00	JOLI, ICAAP, STP, Crowd Funding, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ -	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
NTS	Security Cameras	Capital	No	\$ 20,000.00	JOLI, ICAAP, STP, Crowd Funding, Private (United Way, Etc.)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -





## **Appendix**

### **1. TAG Meeting and Transportation Forum Minutes**

### **2. Passenger Transportation User Survey Results**

### **3. Passenger Transportation Provider Survey Results**