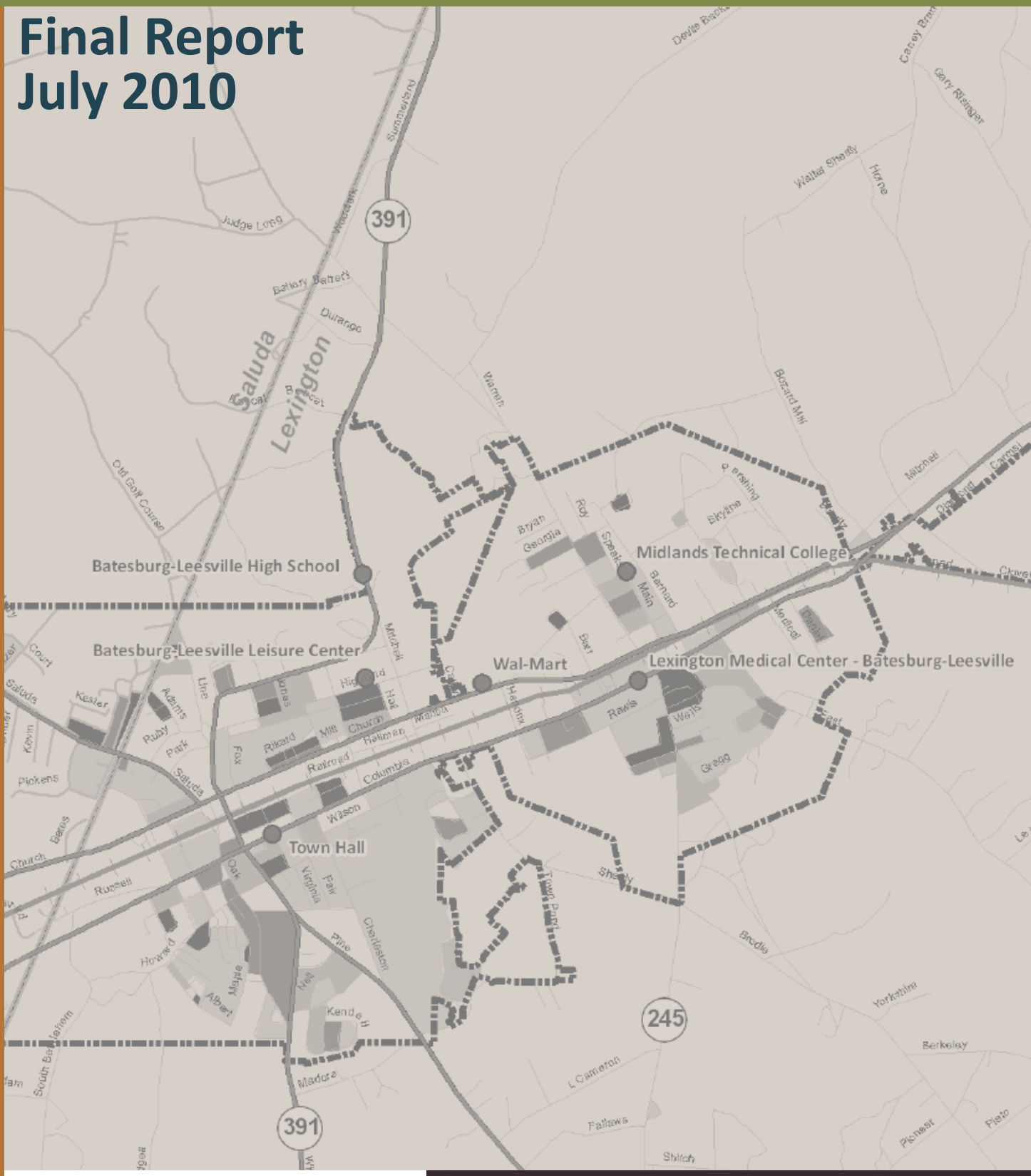
Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia Transit Feasibility Study

Final Report
July 2010



CENTRAL MIDLANDS Council of Governments

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Batesburg-Leesville/Columbia Transit Feasibility Study is being conducted to assess the need for transit service connecting the Batesburg-Leesville community with the Columbia area, as well as service within the Batesburg-Leesville area itself. The intent of the study is to consider the type and magnitude of transit needs, and to develop responsive service alternatives and strategies for meeting the needs in an effective and cost-efficient manner. This study report details the complete findings of the study through 6 as defined in the project's scope of work, specifically the following:

- Review of previous transit studies;
- Community survey results;
- Demographic analysis of the Batesburg-Leesville area;
- Investigation of transit services in peer communities;
- Input received from public involvement;
- Identification of conceptual service options;
- Consideration of local and regional transit needs;
- Viability of various service delivery options in Batesburg-Leesville;
- Administrative and operational service options; and
- Detailed definition of specific service options, including estimated costs and funding sources.

As part of this study, a specific implementation plan developed and suggested action items to achieve the plan are included.

2.0 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS TRANSIT STUDIES

As a component of the background investigation, previous relevant studies were reviewed to understand the past and present transit issues in the Central Midlands region. The following are studies completed by CMCOG and others:

- Batesburg-Leesville 2008 Comprehensive Plan;
- Central Midlands Commuter Rail Feasibility Study;
- Central Midlands Council of Governments Human Services Transportation Plan;
- Central Midlands RTA Transit Development Plan;
- Central Midlands Regional Transit Plan;
- Columbia Area Congestion Management Process Final Report;
- Central Midlands Regional Transit Plan; and
- COATS Long Range Transportation Plan.

Batesburg-Leesville 2008 Comprehensive Plan

The Batesburg-Leesville Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2008 to provide information regarding existing conditions, issues and concerns, and feasible short and long term strategies for addressing needs in Batesburg-Leesville. Goals, objectives and strategies were developed in the Land Use and Transportation elements related to future transit needs and are described below.

Land use

Goals

Use proactive land use strategies to maintain the small town character and historic integrity of the community to benefit existing residents and to attract new ones in response to regional growth pressures.

Objectives

Review and revise the zoning ordinance and map to provide an up-to-date code for the town that is consistent with the goals and objectives set forth in the comprehensive plan.

Strategies

Create development standards that encourage transit oriented development and walkability as a method of encouraging pedestrian activity and the use of public transit and/or carpooling for commuters.

Transportation

Goals

To provide a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system that allows for adequate vehicular circulation, provides bike and pedestrian accessibility, and has sufficient connectivity to a larger regional transportation network.

Objectives

- Encourage the development of alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel for residents commuting to employment nodes in the Columbia Metropolitan area.
- To provide long range planning for a local transit system that could potentially serve as a circulator bus to move people between the two commercial centers and adjacent residential areas.

Strategies

- Identify park and ride opportunities by locating sites, developing them, and marketing them for use by carpoolers and future commuter transit riders.
- Work within the regional framework by communicating with the local representative on the CMCOG Rail Transit Committee.
- Work with Lexington County representatives to discuss funding options for supporting Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) and future expansions of CMRTA services.
- Encourage the development of a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) district around a future, centrally located, park and ride/commuter rail station. The TOD district would be a mixed use area that provides housing, retail and office opportunities in a specified radius around the proposed station.

Finding: The Town's Comprehensive Plan encourages the consideration of transit opportunities as a connection to the Columbia area and within Batesburg-Leesville.

Central Midlands Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

In July 2006, CMCOG sponsored a commuter rail feasibility study for the Central Midlands region. Several corridors were assessed for their suitability for high-capacity transit, including the Batesburg-Leesville to Columbia corridor. Several technologies were analyzed including commuter rail, express

bus, and bus rapid transit (BRT). Two operating options were defined for the Batesburg-Leesville Corridor: enhanced bus and commuter rail. Details of these operating options are described as follows:

Enhanced Bus

- Batesburg-Leesville to Downtown via US 1 (alternate Gilbert stop located on US 1)
- Approximate one-way travel time of 60 minutes
- Four AM trips, two mid-day trips, four PM peak trips

Commuter Rail

- Serves six stations between Batesburg-Leesville and Downtown
- Approximate one-way travel time of 70 minutes
- Four AM trips, two mid-day trips, four PM peak trips

The commuter rail alternative evaluation yielded the following results:

- Ridership: 600 – 800 daily boardings
- Land Use: Average land use rating
- Capital cost: $91.7 million
- Annual operating and maintenance cost: $8 - $10 million
- Ease of implementation: Ranked second out of three corridors evaluated
- Public opinion: Ranked third out of three corridors evaluated
- Overall ranking: Ranked third out of three corridors evaluated

Finding: Commuter rail is not a viable near-term transit strategy, although future growth plans should consider potential commuter rail opportunities.

Central Midlands Council of Governments Human Services Transportation Plan

The CMCOG Human Services Transportation Plan was developed in 2007 in accordance with federal guidelines regarding the provision of critical transportation services to transportation disadvantaged populations. This plan allows the regional entities to receive federal funding for human services-based public transportation. The coordinated plan aims to achieve the following goals:

- Assess and document transportation needs in each region for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes;
- Inventory available services in each region and identify areas of redundancy and gaps in service;
- Identify and document restrictions on eligibility for funding;
- Identify and document short- and long-range strategies in each region to address the identified gaps in service, including mobility management strategies;
- Identify and document technological resources currently available and appropriate for coordination of transportation services;
- Identify and document coordination actions in each region to eliminate or reduce duplication in services and strategies for more efficient utilization of resources; and
- Document and prioritize implementation

The report is divided into five sections: 1) Purpose and Background; 2) Introducing the Central Midlands Region; 3) State of Coordination in the Region; 4); Coordination Strategies and Actions; and 5) Considerations for Implementation.

The main issues determined to be facing the region with respect to coordinated transportation services include:

- Offer more service (more days, hours, geographic coverage)
- Provide access to jobs and reverse commute
- Expand use of private operators in region
- Insure consistency among providers and coverage in general
- Explore mobility manager concept
- Address cost allocation among operators (major barrier to coordination)

The following table, as presented in the report, defines the proposed coordination activates that were derived from the planning process:

Gaps	**Administrative**	**Information Sharing/Capacity Management**	**Future Ops. Planning**
	Any arrangements among agencies to coordinate expenses, pool resources, change procedures, expand eligibility.	**Combining schedules, vehicle sharing, offering access to training programs, etc.**	**Service expansion, facilitating transfers between services, new service, etc.**
Rural Areas need more service - Lower Lexington, Lower Richland, Fairfield Co. - elderly needs	Marketing Programs - Public Awareness is an issue - agreements among providers to fill gaps	Mobility Manager - one stop call center - needs informed person answering	Use of technology - AVL, Scheduling, dispatch.
Reductions in Public Transit System adds pressure to Human Service Transportation System	---	---	Increase local support for RTA services esp. DART
Low Income (but above Medicaid threshold) need transportation to medical services - including elderly	Travel training/itinerary development/Bilingual	---	Utilize Volunteers - liability issue/training - support add'l good samaritan act language
Access to suburban jobs/2nd-3rd shift jobs	Voucher Program other fare subsidies	---	---
Lack of local support of funding; currently being discussed in municipalities in area	Pool purchasing programs, training, fuel, insurance, maintenance, drug test, other.	---	---
Vehicle replacement is big capital issue for any provider agency	Address issues of Jacob's Law	---	---
Late Afternoon/Return Trips are difficult to serve and experience reliability issues	---	Real - time scheduling/barrier cost allocation	---
Identifying third party providers	ID Providers - Set up contract for third party providers	---	---
Issues for non-English Speaking individuals/trips to work/basic needs	Bi-lingual dispatch	---	Service in Saluda, Newberry Co. and Lexington Co.

The report recommends four key implementation steps. These include:

1. Form a working group for the specific area.
2. Describe the desired end result.

3. Define the steps to achieve the end result.
4. Identify and take the first step.

Finding: Transit needs are apparent in rural areas of the region (such as Batesburg-Leesville); however, there is no obvious existing public transit service provider and viable operations options must be identified.

Central Midlands RTA Transit Development Plan

The Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) developed a transit development plan (TDP) in 2005 to guide the role of transit throughout the region. The TDP identified the following financial, service, capital/technology, and administrative/policy needs:

Financial

- Establish a dedicated local funding source. This need is first and foremost, and is absolutely critical to the future viability of the CMRTA system.
- Establish partnerships with local employers and businesses, through the Commuter Choice initiative or by soliciting financial support for services provided.
- Develop partnerships with potential niche markets (e.g. local colleges and universities, new Convention Center).
- Explore and implement an advertising program to generate revenue.
- Explore partnerships with advertising companies to provide additional bus shelters at high-demand locations.
- Investigate the concept of providing maintenance services for other local agencies that provide transportation services.
- Participate in efforts to secure additional funding from State and Federal sources.

Service

- Identify the overall level of service desired, in consideration of the operating costs.
- Utilize service standards to analyze the existing system and identify underperforming services.
- Examine service alternatives for low performing services, including service cuts if necessary.
- Identify and enhance services to niche markets (e.g. colleges and universities, major employers, Fort Jackson).
- Enhance services that are performing well (e.g. provide more frequent service, longer hours of operation, etc,)
- Expand service coverage in underserved areas (e.g. St. Andrews).
- Demonstrate new services in currently unserved areas with a high number of major destinations (e.g. Harbison).
- Demonstrate new service models (e.g. neighborhood circulators, late-night demand-response service, etc.).
- Develop and market services to attract new riders to transit, but do not alienate current customers. Continue to investigate high-capacity transit modes, in light of the potential availability of local, State, and Federal funding.
- Continue to develop Express routes with park-and-ride facilities in major corridors, as a precursor to potential higher-capacity transit services.

Capital/Technology

- Maintain an attractive fleet of transit vehicles that provide a positive public image for the system.
- Develop an effective Headquarters facility that will serve the needs of the system well into the future.
- Provide passenger amenities to enhance the quality of service to customers (e.g. uniform bus stop signs, shelters, etc.)
- Explore the creation of "community transit centers" to provide a focal point for more neighborhood-oriented services.
- Explore the potential need for park-and-ride facilities to be served by current and future transit services.

Administrative/Policy

- Adopt Policies and Procedures that guide administrative and operating decisions.
- Increase the level of participation from members of the Board of Directors, both at regular meetings and as part of future planning processes.
- Continue to provide training opportunities for Board members regarding transit administration, planning, and operations.
- Ensure that the CMRTA staffing level is appropriate for the level of transit service provided.

In addition to these transit needs, the TDP identified a set of short term, mid term, and long term goals:

Short Term (1 – 5 years)

- *Develop sustainable local funding sources*

Mid Term (6 – 10 years)

- *Expand service options to "choice" riders*
- *Gradually replace bus fleet*
- *Explore fixed-guideway modes, including downtown streetcar or high-capacity transit to outlying suburbs*

Long Term (11 – 20 years)

- *Expand transit service to underserved areas*
- *Implement Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to increase quality of transit system*
- *Continue planning for fixed-guideway improvements*
- *Re-evaluate coordinated transportation services with human services providers*

Finding: The future of CMRTA is defined largely by its ability to secure a dedicated funding source, particularly in Richland County. Lexington County's elected officials have shown little interest in funding transit services.

Columbia Area Congestion Management Process Final Report

The Columbia Area Congestion Management Process/Plan (CMP) Final Report was produced in 2008 for the Central Midlands Council of Governments in order to assess traffic congestion in the region and to identify mitigation processes. A CMP is federally mandated for all Metropolitan Planning Organizations with populations greater than 200,000. The CMP helps identify and qualify transportation projects for inclusion into the regional transportation plan. Approximately 330 centerline miles of roadways

throughout the CMCOG region were evaluated during this process, including segments of US Highway 1 from Pisgah Church Road to downtown Columbia.

Approximately 4 percent of the corridors evaluated in this report were found to be below the congestion threshold (LOS E and F), and 4 percent were found to be potentially congested (LOS D) for both the AM and PM peak periods. 92 percent were found to not be congested. Sections of US Highway 1 were determined to be LOS D, E, and F in both the AM and PM peak periods, especially near the intersection of South Carolina Highway 378 and US 1.

The following congestion mitigation procedures were recommended in the CMP:

Level 1) Decrease need for trip making (strategies at regional level versus corridor level)

- *Land use policies and regulations to limit growth in areas with limited infrastructure*
- *Land use policies and regulations to enhance jobs to housing balance along corridors and within sections of the region*

Level 2) Shift trips from automobiles to other modes

- *Public transit capital improvements (exclusive right-of-way, commuter express, circulator, park and ride)*
- *Public transit operational improvements (service enhancements, queue jumpers, information systems)*
- *Encourage the use of non-motorized modes (sidewalks, bicycle facilities, transit park and ride)*

Level 3) Increase HOV use

- *Parking management/fee adjustment*
- *Vanpooling programs*
- *Ride share matching services*

Level 4) Enhance operations on existing roadway facilities

- *Traffic operations improvements (intersection widening, signal coordination, traffic surveillance and control systems.*
- *Incident Management (detection and clearing of incidents)*
- *Access management (medians, signal and driveway spacing, frontage roads, interparcel connections)*

Level 5) Increase roadway capacity through additional infrastructure

- *Arterial roadway capacity (widening new roads)*

Finding: Although congestion is not an issue in Batesburg-Leesville, the provision of transit services from Batesburg-Leesville to Columbia could help to support the goal to shift some trips from automobiles to other modes.

Central Midlands Regional Transit Plan

The Central Midlands Regional Transit Plan was developed in 2008 for the South Carolina Department of Transportation. The purpose of this plan is to recommend strategies at the regional level that can be readily used by local planners at municipalities, MPO's, and transit agencies. The report defines the

public's perception of transit, the statewide vision for transit, regional transit needs, transit funding needs, and action plans to address these needs.

Public Perception of Transit

When asked what groups should be served by transit, community leaders indicated that 'those who use it to get to work' are the most important cohort to serve. Residents indicated that 'everyone' should have equal consideration when determining what groups transit service should be geared toward. When asked what funding mechanisms were preferred for financing transit, local leaders preferred a gas tax, followed by a local tax, state infrastructure bank, sales tax, and vehicle sales tax. Residents preferred reallocation of DOT funds to fund transit, followed by lottery proceeds, car sales tax, gas tax, and vehicle sales tax.

Statewide Transit Vision

Public Transit—Connecting Our Communities

Public transit, connecting people and places through multiple-passenger, land or water-based means, will contribute to the state's continued economic growth through a dedicated and sound investment approach as a viable mobility option accessible to all South Carolina residents and visitors.

Economic Growth

- Recognize and promote public transit as a key component of economic development initiatives, such as linking workers to jobs, supporting tourism, and accommodating the growth of South Carolina as a retirement destination through public / private partnerships.
- Enhance the image of public transit through a comprehensive and continuing marketing / education program that illustrates the benefits of quality transit services.

Sound Investment Approach

- Ensure stewardship of public transit investments through a defined oversight program.
- Increase dedicated state public transit funding to $35 million annually by 2030.
- Make public transit reasonable and affordable by encouraging more local investment and promoting coordinated land use / transportation planning at the local level.
- Utilize an incremental approach to new public transit investments that recognizes funding constraints and the need to maintain existing services.

Viability of Transit

- Provide quality, affordable public transit services using safe, clean, comfortable, reliable, and well-maintained vehicles.
- Increase statewide public transit ridership by 5% annually through 2030.
- Utilize different modes of public transit including bus, rail, vanpool / carpool, ferry, and other appropriate technologies, corresponding to the level of demand.

Accessibility to All

- Provide an appropriate level of public transit in all 46 South Carolina counties by 2020 that supports intermodal connectivity.
- Develop and implement a coordinated interagency human services transportation delivery network.

Regional Transit Needs

Transit need in the region was estimated at 3.7 million one-way trips in 2005, of which 2.7 million trips, or 73%, were actually provided. 1.1 million of these trips are rural-based, while 2.6 million are urban. By 2030, it is estimated that transit demand will exceed 5.2 million trips annually. Of these trips, 1.3 million are expected to be derived from rural demand, and 3.9 million are expected to be urban.

Transit Funding Needs

Based on the needs analysis, the region will need approximately $24 million by 2030 to meet the regional demand for transit services. The plan proposes a wide variety of new funding mechanisms to fill the funding gap, including vehicle registration fees, gas taxes, vehicle sales tax, and sales tax, among others.

Transit Action Plans

Several main action items were presented to enhance transit in the region. These include:

- Close the gap between funding needs and available funding levels
- Improve efforts to leverage federal dollars
- Allow greater flexibility for local jurisdictions to generate funds
- Increase state funding for transit
- Engage non-traditional partners
- Increase coordination among providers
- Expand transit service
- Coordinate land use and transportation decisions
- Upgrade passenger rail service

Finding: Although the subject plan does not include specific operational strategies, it supports the need for general transit investment throughout the region and state.

COATS Long Range Transportation Plan

The Columbia Area Transportation Study (COATS) updated the region's long range transportation plan (LRTP) in 2008. While Batesburg-Leesville is outside of the COATS planning area, part of the potential transit corridor studied as part of this plan lies within the region. The Year 2035 LRTP provides a long-range analysis of the transportation needs of the CMCOG region though the identification of needed projects as well as cost feasible projects. Transit is recognized as a part of this plan, and major recommendations are offered to "encourage land development and travel patterns that support higher utilization of mass transit", "provide high quality transit services, within the system's financial constraints", and "facilitate regional commuter rail service".

The LRTP also includes findings of the *Central Midlands Commuter Rail Feasibility Study* that identifies the Batesburg-Leesville corridor as a potential commuter rail corridor, but notes that "the estimated patronage for the Batesburg-Leesville line falls far below that of the peer systems".

Finding: Transit is recognized as a notable component of the future regional transportation network, but viable options in the foreseeable future for transit in the Batesburg-Leesville corridor preclude rail-based technologies.

3.0 ANALYSIS OF TRANSIT NEEDS

Several different approaches were used to understand local needs for transit. A combination of the subjective and objective data was used to assess the specific needs of the Batesburg-Leesville, specifically the following:

- Community survey;
- Demographic analysis;
- Peer communities; and
- Public and stakeholder workshop.

3.1 Community Survey

Purpose of Survey

To receive input specifically from Batesburg-Leesville residents, a survey was developed and distributed to the community. The goal of the survey was to reach as many community members as possible, to learn their thoughts regarding the need for transit service, as well as specific desired origins and destinations, trip purposes, times of travel, and other travel characteristics.

The survey tool was not intended to represent a scientifically unbiased sample of the Town's population; rather, the intent was to raise awareness of this planning process and reach people who are interested in and have a need for transit service.

It is important to note that the survey tool was just one component to assess needs. The survey results will support the decision-making process; however, recognizing the limitations and inherent biases of surveys, they are not intended as the sole source of data.

The survey was made available in printed as well as electronic forms:

Printed hard copy

- Printed survey was one sheet, printed front and back.
- English and Spanish versions were available.

Electronic (web-based) survey

- A web-based survey was available using the "Survey Monkey" web service.
- The web-based survey was an alternative tool for business and community leaders (as well as general citizens) that use electronic communications. It was recognized that many local residents may not regularly use web-based communications; thus, this was not a primary means of survey distribution.

Drop Box Locations

Drop boxes were placed at strategic locations throughout Batesburg-Leesville for people to submit the hard copy surveys. A stack of surveys (in English and Spanish) accompanied the drop boxes. Specific locations included the following:

- Bi-Lo Grocery Store on West Columbia Avenue
- Batesburg-Leesville Town Hall on West Columbia Avenue

- Wiz's Eatery on West Church Street
- Batesburg-Leesville Public Library on Armory Street
- Batesburg-Leesville Leisure Center on Highland Avenue
- Mitchell Printing & Graphics on W. Railroad Avenue
- Peebles on West Columbia Avenue
- Walgreens Pharmacy on West Columbia Avenue
- Midlands Technical College (Batesburg-Leesville) on College Street
- Lexington Medical Center (Batesburg-Leesville) on East Columbia Avenue

The representatives of these establishments were very supportive of this study effort in allowing the drop boxes to be placed at their location. Drop boxes were available from November 25, 2009 until January 14, 2010.

Ms. Rita Crapps, a member of the Town Council and Project Steering Committee, also supported the survey effort by actively distributing the survey to members of the community. Ms. Crapps distributed and collected hard copy surveys from members of the community at the following locations:

- Generations Assisted Living Facility
- St. Matthews CME Church
- St. John's CME Church
- Wesley Chapel CME Church
- St. Marks Baptist Church
- Friendship Missionary Baptist Church
- Olive Branch Baptist Church
- Mount Zion Baptist Church

Web-Based Survey

A web-based survey was advertised in addition to the hard-copy version. Local organizations with a web presence were contacted and asked to include a link to the survey from their home pages. The web-based survey link was posted by the following organizations:

- Town of Batesburg-Leesville
- Batesburg-Leesville Chamber of Commerce (E-News)
- Central Midlands Council of Governments
- Lexington School District 3 (Staff Email)

The consultant team and CMCOG are not responsible for further linkages beyond those that were initiated by the project sponsor (CMCOG) and the consultant.

Survey Instrument

Copies of the surveys (in English and Spanish) that were distributed are shown on the following pages. The electronic version replicated the questions posed in the written version.

English Version of the Survey

Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG)
Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia Transit Feasibility Study

TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

The Central Midlands Council of Governments is studying public transportation needs in Batesburg-Leesville. Public transportation could include buses or vans taking people places in Batesburg-Leesville, and also between Batesburg-Leesville and Columbia. We would like to know what you think about the need for public transportation. ***Thank you!***

1. **What is your age?**
   - ◯ Under 18
   - ◯ 18 to 25
   - ◯ 26 to 35
   - ◯ 36 to 49
   - ◯ 50 to 65
   - ◯ Over 65

2. **What is your employment status *(check all that apply)*?**
   - ☐ Full-time
   - ☐ Part-time
   - ☐ Work at home
   - ☐ Retired
   - ☐ Student
   - ☐ Unemployed
   - ☐ Disabled
   - ☐ Other _____

3. **Which of the following types of transportation do you typically use *(check all that apply)*?**
   - ☐ Drive alone
   - ☐ Ride with someone
   - ☐ School bus
   - ☐ Bicycle
   - ☐ Walk
   - ☐ Other _____

4. **Do you have access to a vehicle (car, truck and/or motorcycle) for your own personal use?**
   - ◯ Yes, I own it
   - ◯ Yes, I borrow it
   - ◯ No

5. **Have you ever used public transportation (bus, van and/or train)?**
   - ☐ Yes, in Columbia
   - ☐ Yes, elsewhere
   - ☐ No, never

6. **Do you think there is a need for public transportation service in this area *(check all that apply)*?**
   - ☐ Yes, locally within Batesburg-Leesville
   - ☐ Yes, between Batesburg-Leesville and Columbia
   - ☐ Yes, somewhere else _____
   - ☐ Maybe
   - ☐ Not at all
   - ☐ Don't know

7. **What would encourage you to use public transportation *(check all that apply)*?**
   - ☐ Public transportation is more affordable than driving.
   - ☐ Public transportation is faster than driving.
   - ☐ Public transportation picks me up and drops me off in front of my home.
   - ☐ Public transportation is easy to use.
   - ☐ None of the above
   - ☐ Other _____

8. **How often would you use public transportation *(check one)*?**
   - ◯ Every day
   - ◯ A few times a week
   - ◯ Once or twice a month
   - ◯ I would not use public transportation

(OVER, PLEASE)

Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG)
Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia Transit Feasibility Study

TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

9. Which days of the week would you typically use public transportation *(check all that apply)*?

- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday
- ☐ Saturday
- ☐ Sunday
- ☐ I would not use public transportation

10. What time of day would you use public transportation *(check all that apply)*?

- ☐ Before 6 AM
- ☐ 6 AM to 10 AM
- ☐ 10 AM to 2 PM
- ☐ 2 PM to 6 PM
- ☐ After 6 PM
- ☐ I would not use public transportation

11. For what type of trips would you use public transportation *(check all that apply)*?

- ☐ Work
- ☐ Medical
- ☐ Recreation
- ☐ School
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Other _____

12. Where would you go if public transportation were available *(check all that apply)*?

- ☐ within Batesburg-Leesville
- ☐ Aiken
- ☐ Cayce
- ☐ Columbia
- ☐ Gilbert
- ☐ Lexington
- ☐ Saluda
- ☐ West Columbia
- ☐ Other _____

13. Do you think it is a good idea to use local tax dollars to help pay for public transportation?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Maybe
- ◯ Don't know

14. Where do you live?*(required)* City/Town _____ Zip Code _____

15. Where do you work? City/Town _____ Zip Code _____

16. What specific places within or outside of Batesburg-Leesville do you travel regularly (for example, Wal-Mart, local grocery stores, local doctor's offices, Midlands Tech, etc.)?

17. Please list any additional questions, comments and suggestions:

Spanish Version of the Survey

Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG)
Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia Transito Posible de Estudio

EXAMEN DE TRANSPORTE

El Consejo Central Midlands esta estudiando transporte publico necesitado en Batesburg-Leesville. El Transporte Publico incluye omnibuses o autobuses tomando publico en lugares en Batesburg-Leesville y también entre Batesburg-Leesville y Columbia. Quisieramos saber que usted piensa de la necesidad del transporte publico. ***¡Muchas gracias!***

1. ¿Cuál es su edad?

- ○ Menos de 18
- ○ 18 a 25
- ○ 26 a 35
- ○ 36 a 49
- ○ 50 a 65
- ○ Mas de 65

2. ¿Cual es su estado de empleo *(indique cuales)*?

- ○ Todo el tiempo
- ○ Parte del tiempo
- ○ Trabajo en la casa
- ○ Retirado
- ○ Estudiante
- ○ Desempleo
- ○ Incapacitado
- ○ Otros _____

3. ¿Cual de estos transportes usted viaja más frequente *(indique cuales)*?

- ○ Maneja solo
- ○ Viaja con alguien
- ○ Omnibus del colegio
- ○ Bicicleta
- ○ Camina
- ○ Otros _____

4. ¿Tienes acceso a vehiculos(auto, camion, y/o bicicleta) para el uso personal?

- ○ Sí, you soy dueno
- ○ Sí, me lo prestan
- ○ No

5. ¿Ha usted usado alguna vez el transporte publico (omnibus, van y/o tren)

- ○ Sí, en Columbia
- ○ Sí, donde quiera
- ○ Nunca sevicio de omnibus

6. ¿Cree usted la necesidad de transporte publico en esta seccion *(indique cuales)*?

- ○ Sí, local dentro Batesburg-Leesville
- ○ Sí, entre Batesburg-Leesville y Columbia
- ○ Sí, en cualquier otro lugar _____
- ○ Quizas
- ○ Nada de esto
- ○ Yo no se

7. ¿Que lo motiva a usted el uso publico de transporte *(indique cuales)*?

- ○ Transporte publico es más barato.
- ○ Transporte publico es mas rapido que manejar.
- ○ Transporte publico me lleva y me deja en el frente de mi casa
- ○ Transporte publico es facil de usar.
- ○ Ninguno de los indicados
- ○ Otros _____

8. ¿Que frecuente usted usaria la transportacion publica? *(indique uno)*?

- ○ Cada día
- ○ Algunas veces en la semana
- ○ Una o dos veces al mes
- ○ Yo no usaria el transporte publico

(MIRE A LA PAGINA SIGUIENTE)

Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG)
Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia Transito Posible de Estudio

EXAMEN DE TRANSPORTE

9. **¿Que días de la semana más frecuente usaria el transporte publico *(indique cuales)*?**
   - ○ Lunes
   - ○ Martes
   - ○ Miercoles
   - ○ Jueves
   - ○ Viernes
   - ○ Sábado
   - ○ Domingo
   - ○ Yo no uso este transporte

10. **¿A que hora del día usted usaria el transporte publico *(indique cuales)*?**
   - ○ Antes de 6 AM
   - ○ 6 AM a 10 AM
   - ○ 10 AM a 2 PM
   - ○ 2 PM a 6 PM
   - ○ Despues de 6 PM
   - ○ Yo no uso el transporte publico

11. **¿Que clase de viajes usted usaria el transporte publico *(indique cuales)*?**
   - ○ Trabajo
   - ○ Medico
   - ○ Recreacíon
   - ○ Colegio
   - ○ Compras
   - ○ Otros _____

12. **¿Adonde iria usted si el transporte publico es disponible *(indique cuales)*?**
   - ○ en Batesburg-Leesville
   - ○ Aiken
   - ○ Cayce
   - ○ Columbia
   - ○ Gilbert
   - ○ Lexington
   - ○ Saluda
   - ○ West Columbia
   - ○ Otros _____

13. **¿Cree usted es una buena idea el uso de dolares de impuesto para ayudar pagar el transporte publico?**
   - ○ Sí
   - ○ No
   - ○ Quizas
   - ○ Yo no se

14. **¿Donde usted reside?*(requerido)*** Ciudad/Local _____ Area Postal #_____

15. **¿Donde usted trabaja?** Ciudad/Local _____ Area Postal # _____

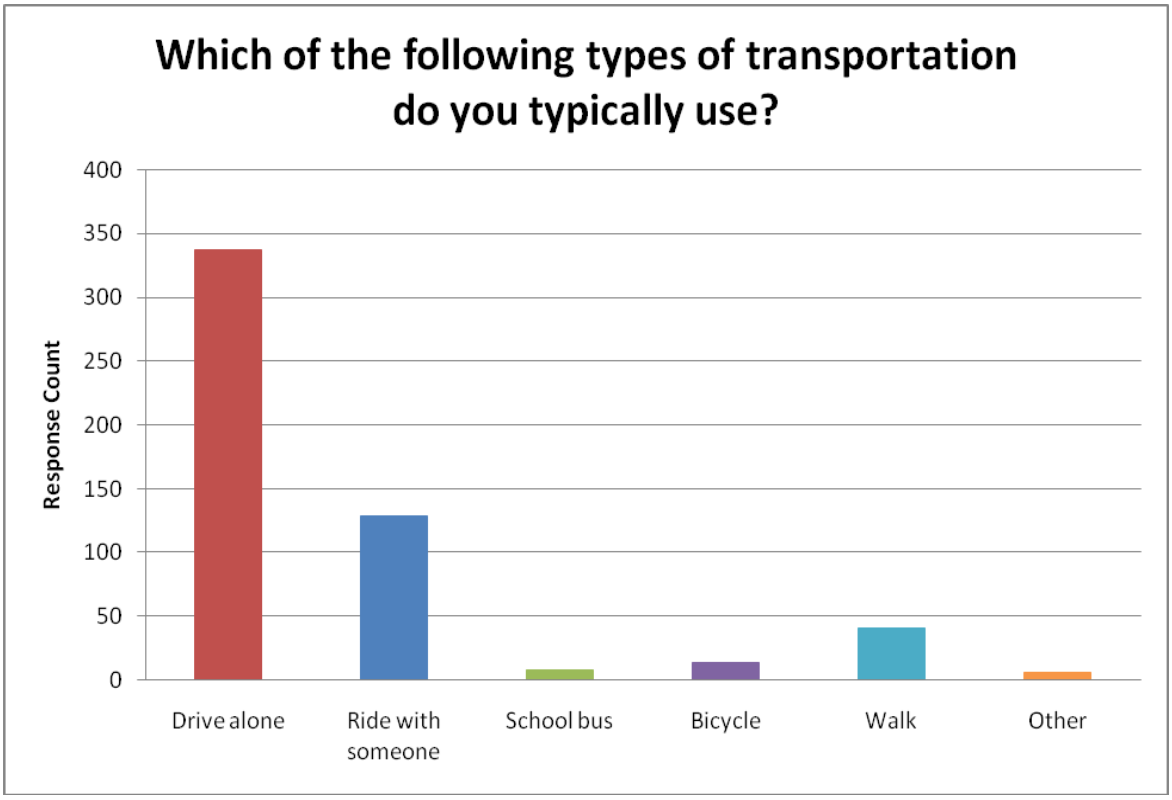
16. **¿Que lugares especificos dentro o afuera de Batesburg-Leesville usted viaja regularmente (por ejemplo, Wal-Mart, tiendas, locales de alimentos, local de la oficina del doctor, Midlands Tech, etc.)?** _____

17. **Por favor, tiene usted preguntas, comentarios y sugerencias:**
_____

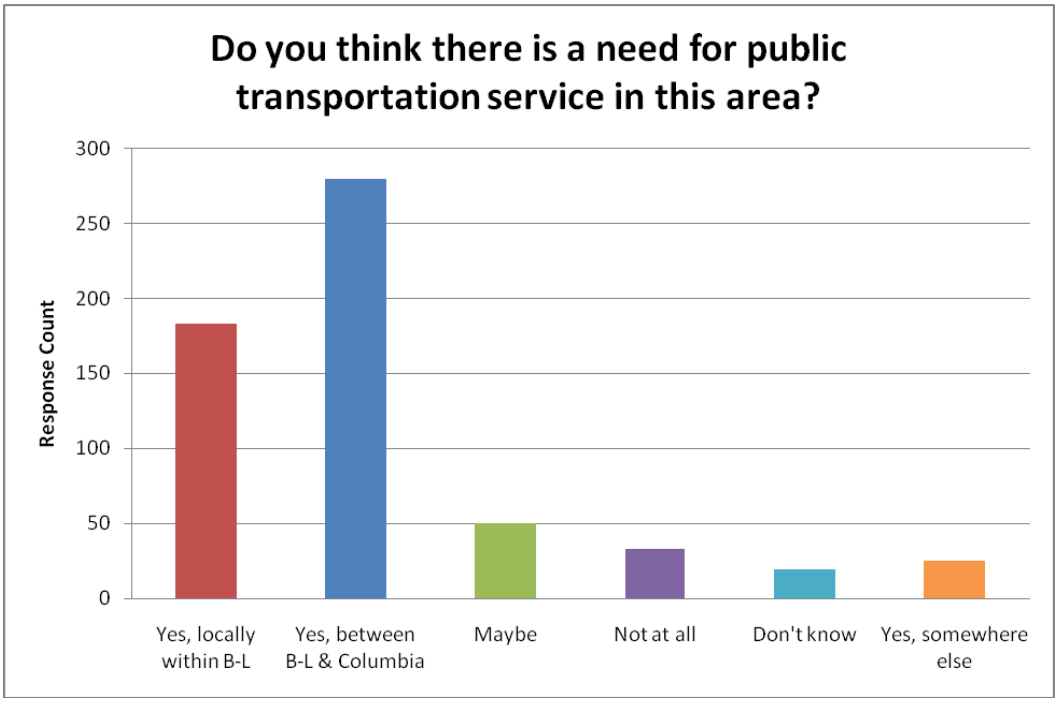
Survey Results

The Batesburg-Leesville Transportation Survey was taken by 419 individuals. A total of 248 written surveys were completed, and 171 web-based surveys were submitted. Highlights of the survey are provided as follows, and full results are shown in Appendix A. Note that for many of the questions, multiple responses were allowed from the survey participants, thus explaining why the total number of responses is greater than the number of surveys completed.

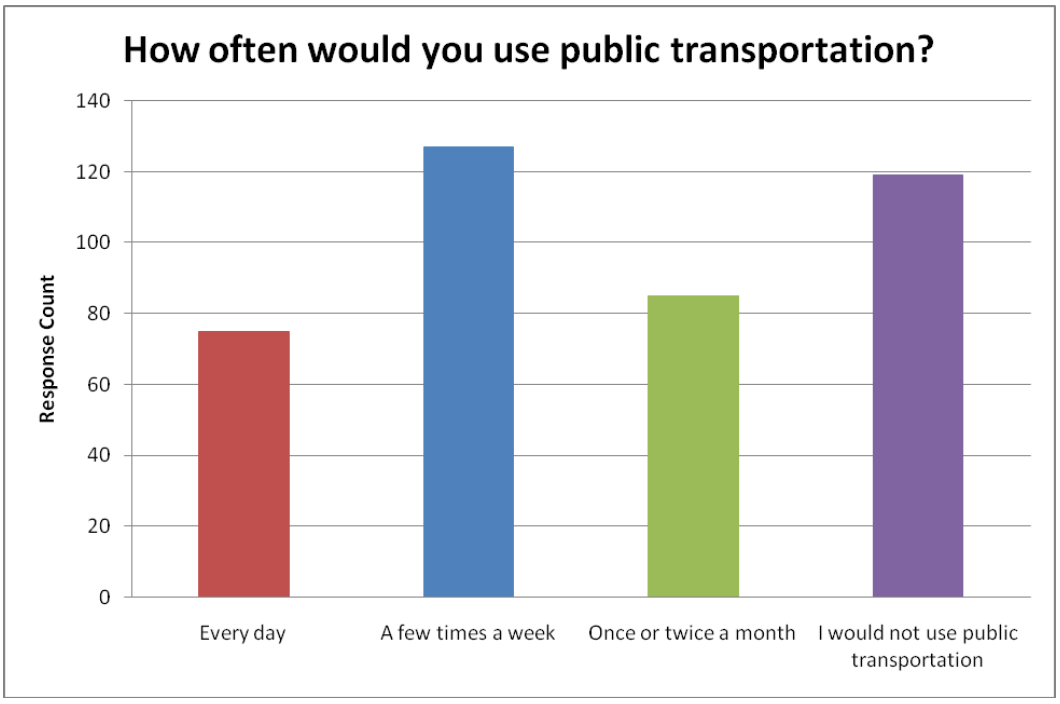
The survey asked, "Which of the following types of transportation do you typically use?" A graph showing the response count data is below. A large majority of individuals responded that they drive alone. The second largest group of responses came from individuals that ride with someone.



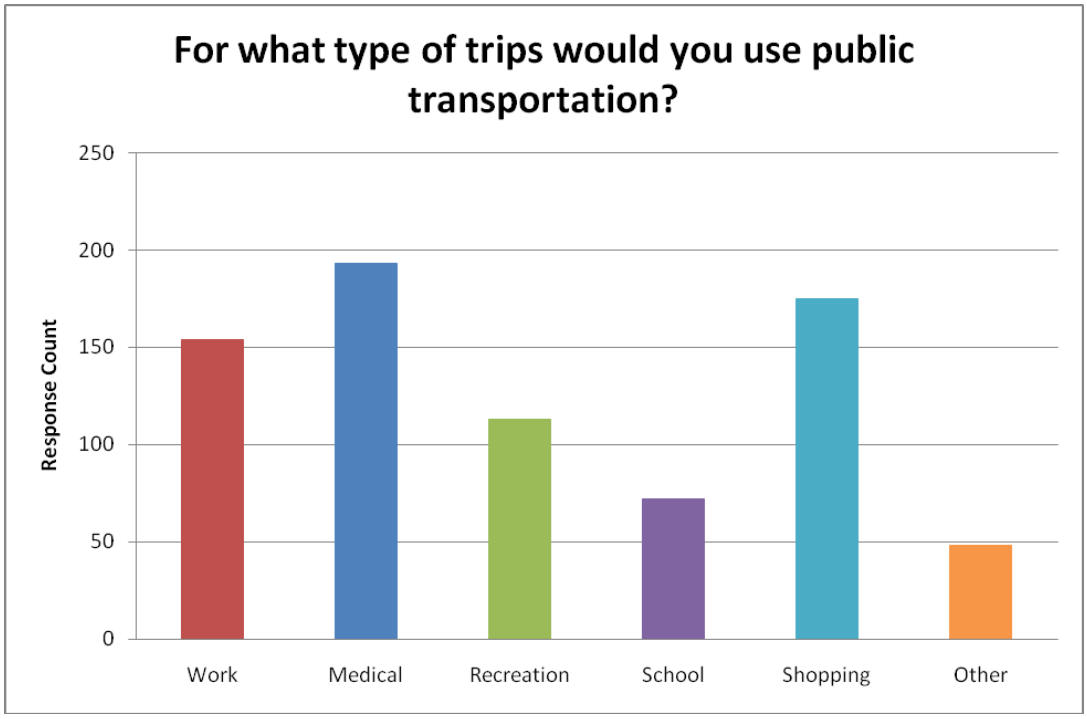
The survey asked, "Do you think there is a need for public transportation service in this area?" A graph showing the response count data is below. The largest response was from individuals that think that transit service is needed and that it should travel to/from Batesburg-Leesville to Columbia. The second largest group of responses was from individuals that think that transit service is needed and that it should travel only locally around Batesburg-Leesville.



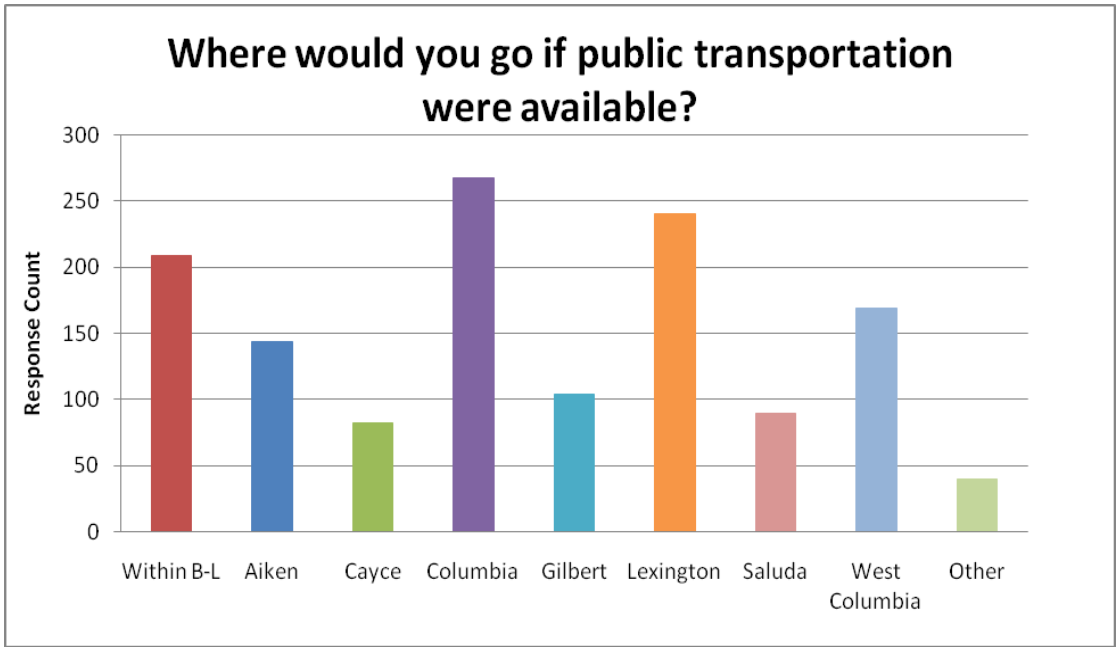
The survey asked, "How often would you use public transportation?" A graph showing the response count data is below. The largest response was from people who would use public transportation a few times a week. Smaller percentages of respondents indicated that they would use public transportation more or less frequently. The second largest group of responses was from people who state that they would not use public transportation.



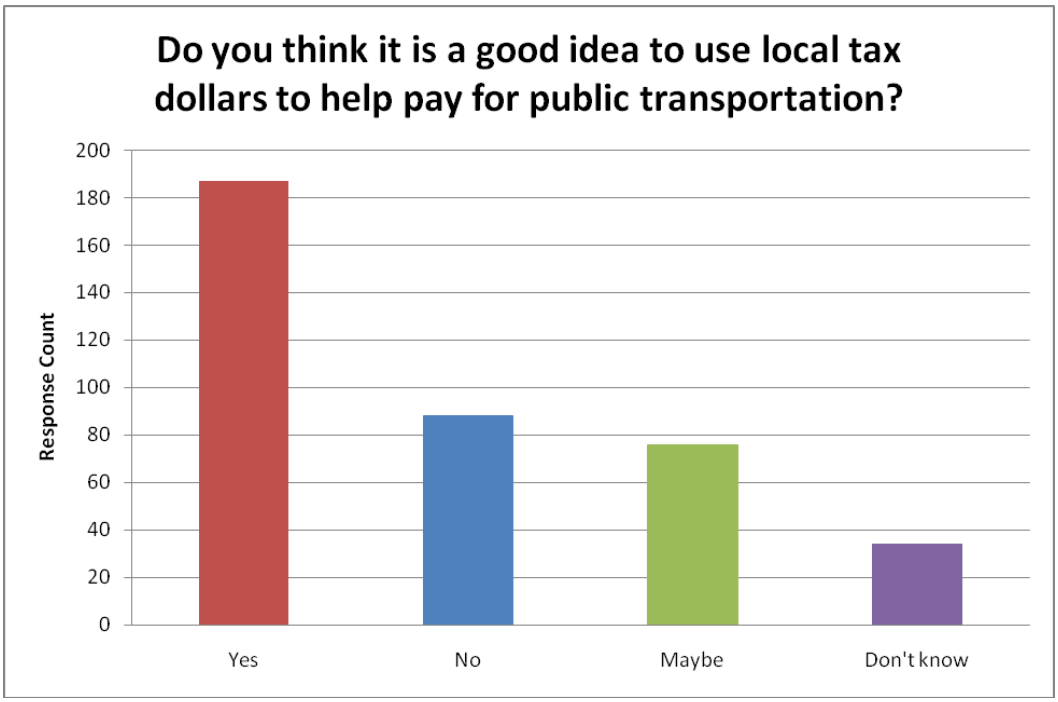
The survey asked, "For what type of trips would you use public transportation?" A graph showing the response count data is below. Medical and shopping trips were the with the greatest frequency trip purposes.



The survey asked, "Where would you go if public transportation were available?" A graph showing the response count data is below. The greatest number of responses was from people who would use public transportation to travel to Columbia, Lexington, or locally around Batesburg-Leesville.



The survey asked, "Do you think it is a good idea to use local tax dollars to help pay for public transportation?" A graph showing the response count data is below. Roughly half of the responses were from people who thought it was a good idea. One quarter of the responders thought it was not a good idea. As a reminder, the survey is not a scientifically-unbiased sample of the entire Batesburg-Leesville community; therefore, the responses to this question do not necessarily indicate the general community's receptivity to spending local tax dollars on public transportation.



3.2 Demographic Analysis

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Batesburg-Leesville were mapped to identify potential transit markets. The following demographic characteristics were examined, as indicators of the populations most likely to use transit services (particularly in a rural setting):

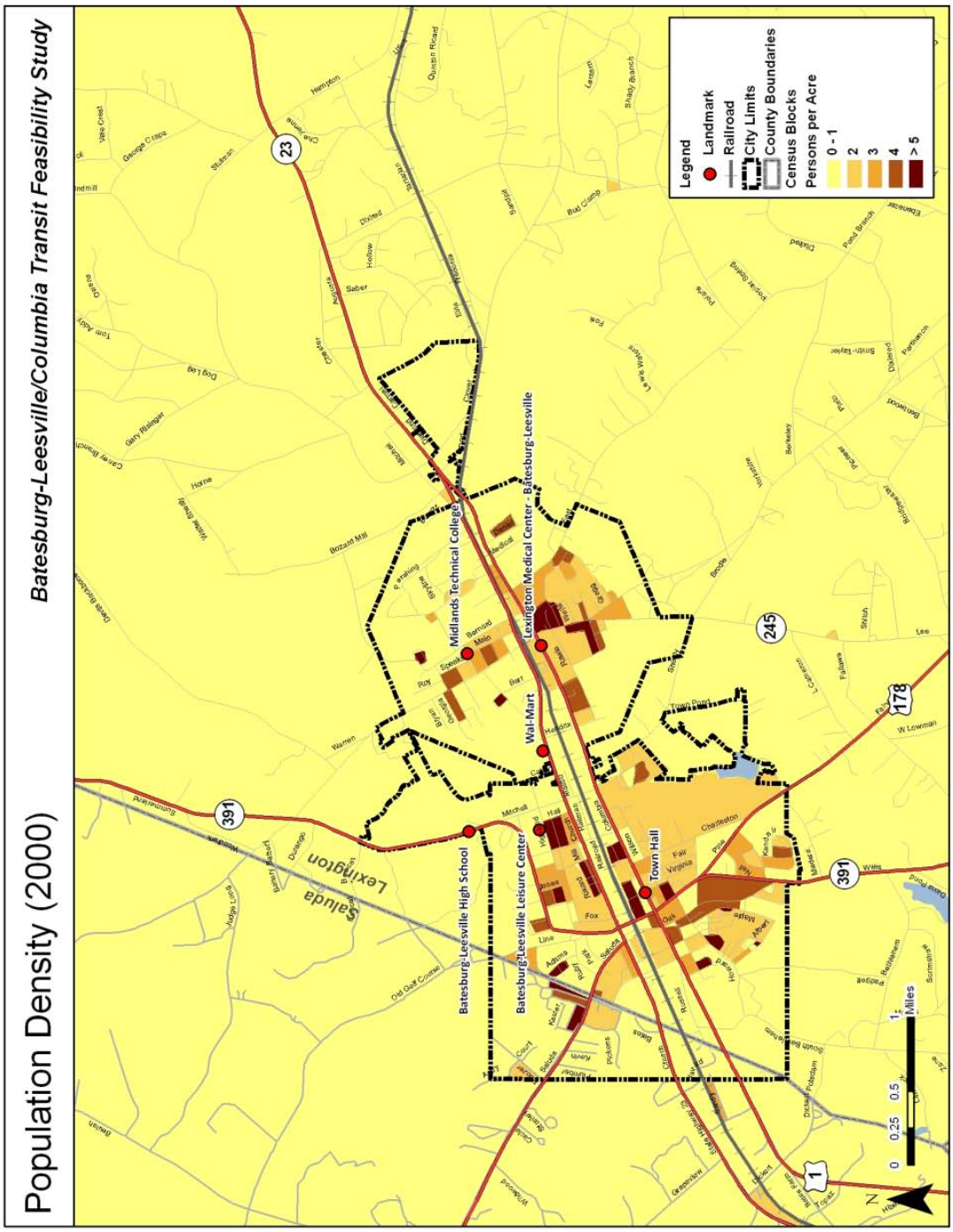
- Overall population
- Elderly population
- Minority population
- Low-income households
- Zero automobile ownership households

In general, many of the demographic characteristics are consistent with those typically experienced in a small-town setting. Overall population densities are low, which helps to focus the discussion on transit options that are appropriate in low-density settings. The data used is from Census 2000, which is now ten years old, shows the housing patterns of the area have largely remained unchanged due to the modest growth rates of the community.

Overall Population Density

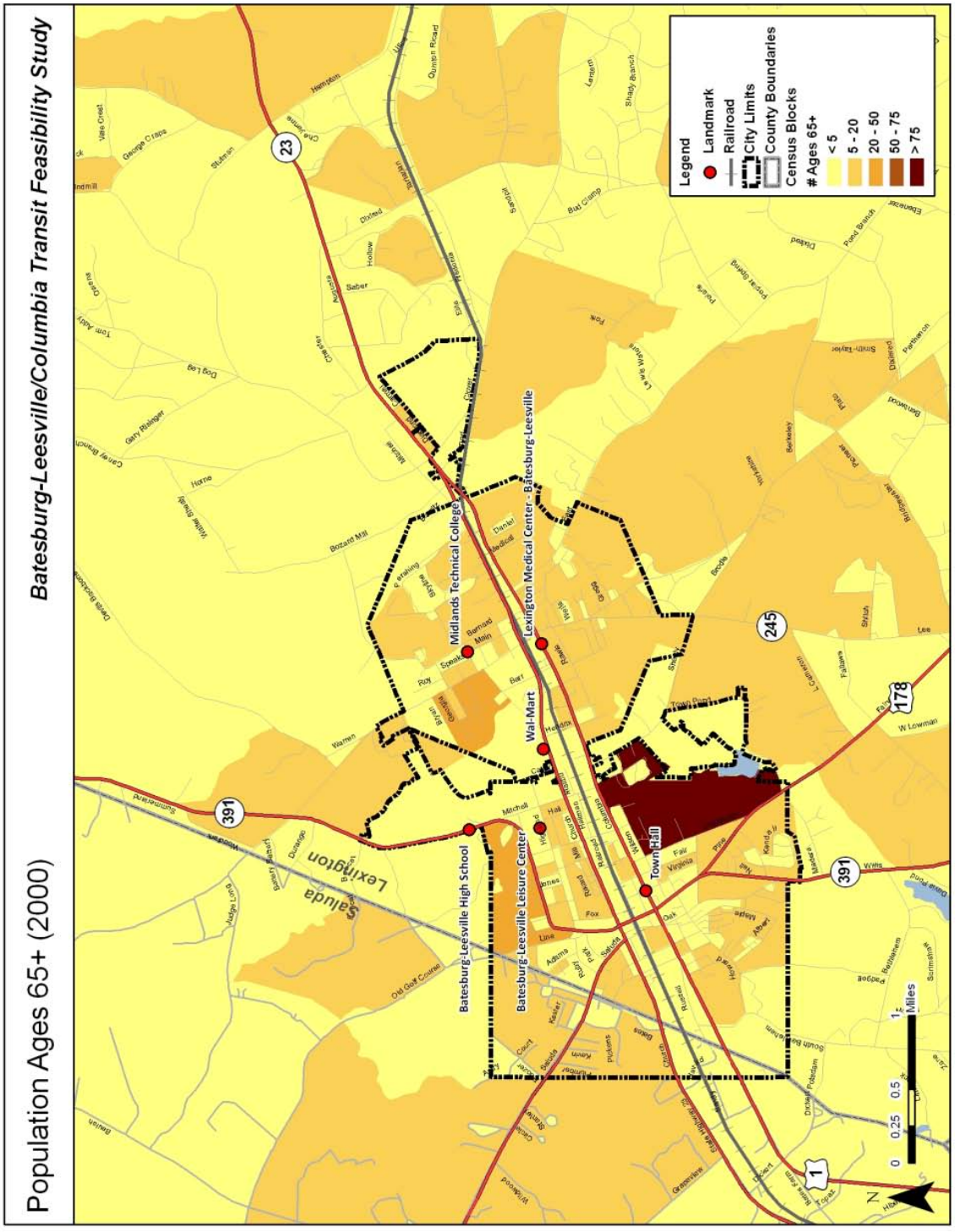
The following areas in Batesburg-Leesville appear to have the highest population density:

- The area around the Lexington Medical Center - Batesburg-Leesville
- The area around the Batesburg-Leesville Leisure Center
- The area south of Town Hall
- The area around the Saluda/Lexington County Line north of Highway 178



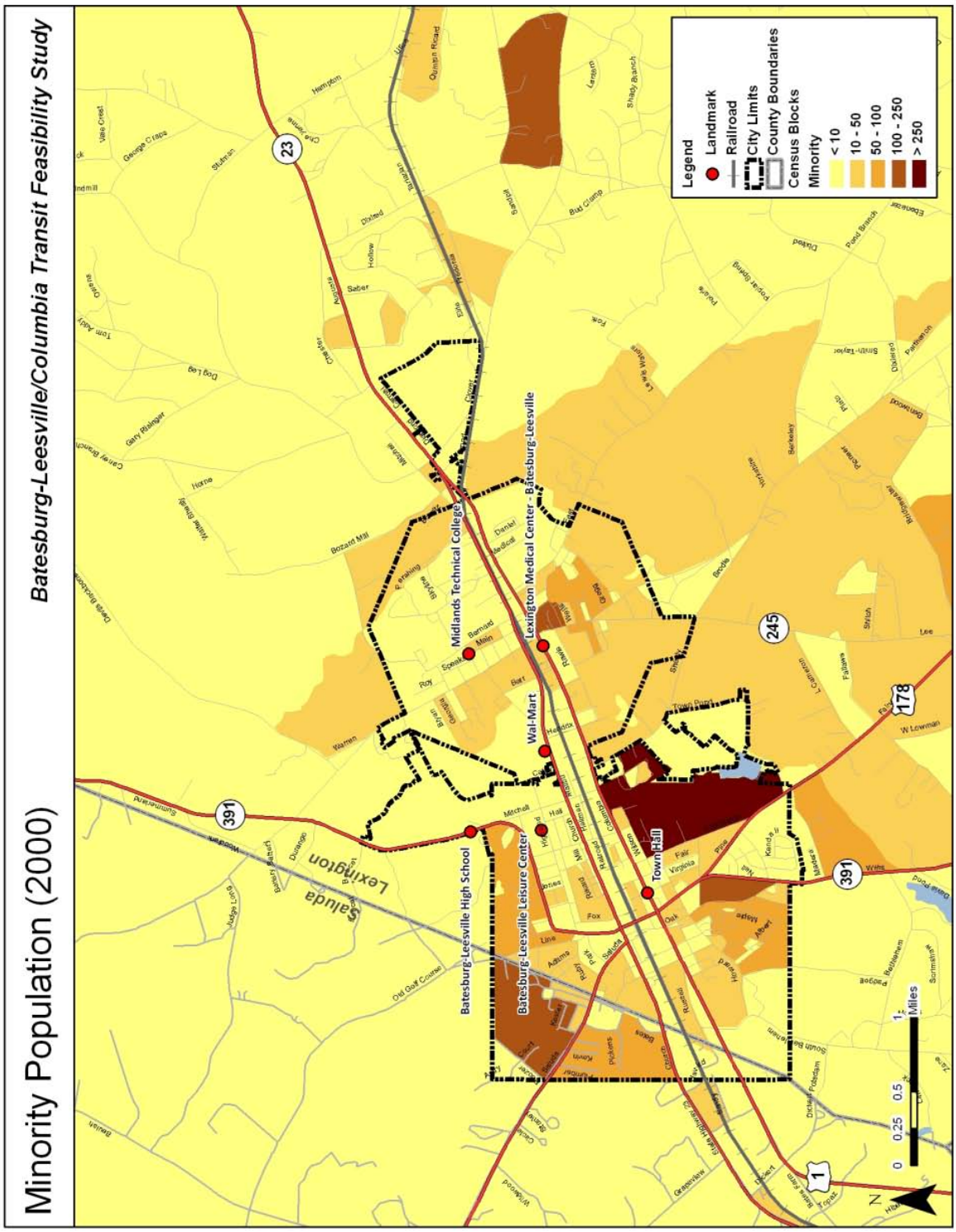
Elderly Population

Many older residents do not drive, and are largely reliant on alternative means of mobility. An illustration was created to show the population of elderly (number of people age 65 years and older). Based on the map, the area in Batesburg-Leesville that appears to have the greatest number of elderly people is west of Shealy Road and south of Wilson Street.



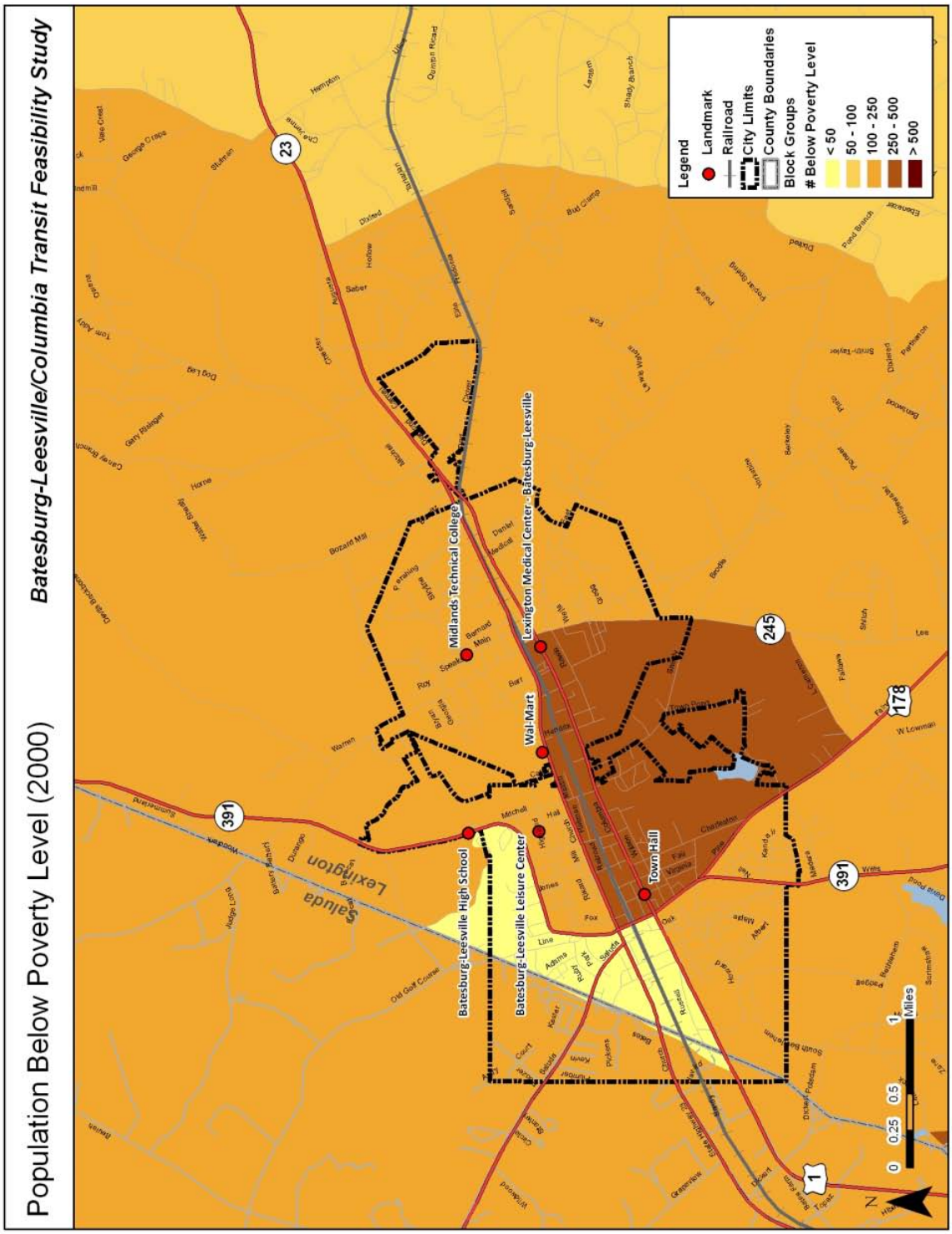
Minority Population

The following map illustrates the number of minority residents. Based on the map, the area in Batesburg-Leesville that appears to have the greatest number of minority residents is south of Columbia Avenue, east of Highway 178 and west of Lee Street.



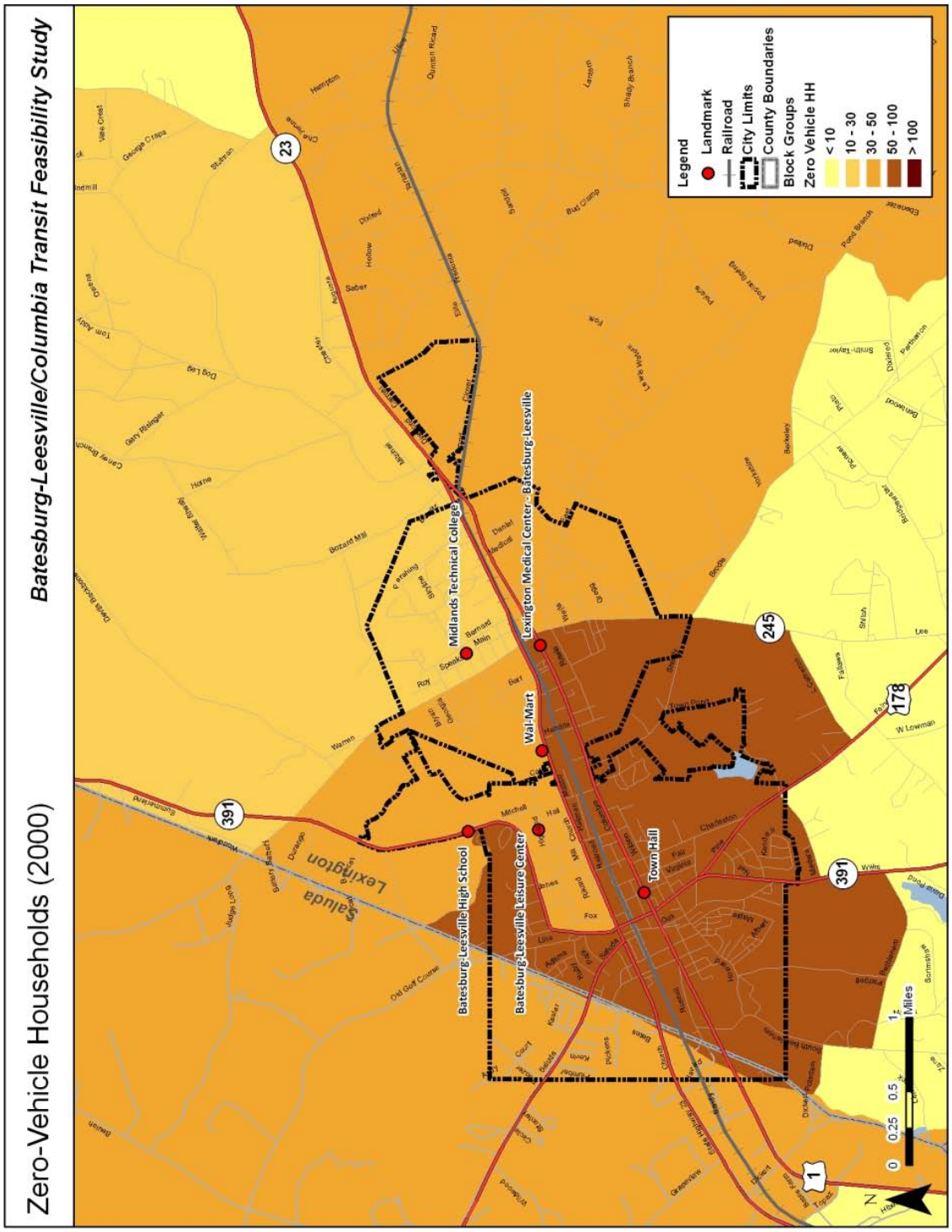
Below Poverty Level

The number of people living below the poverty level was illustrated to identify populations who may lack transportation options. In general, the majority of low-income people live in the central area of town, east of Highway 178 and west of Lee Street.



Automobile Ownership

Individuals that do not own automobiles rely heavily on borrowing automobiles from others or paying for taxi services. Households with zero-vehicle ownership are shown in the map below. In general, most households with zero automobile ownership are located west of Lee Street and south of W. Columbia Avenue.



3.3 Peer Analysis

It is not appropriate to make gross assumptions regarding transit need in Batesburg-Leesville based on experience in other areas. Although a peer review is appropriate to see how comparable services operate, needs must be determined for each specific project. Communities across South Carolina and North Carolina operate various transportation services. These services can range from local demand response service to a regional commuter express bus, and funding for services come from a variety of sources. The peer analysis summaries below are useful to gain additional insight regarding the types of transit services that have worked well in similar situations elsewhere, recognizing that each situation is unique. Lessons learned from these peer systems may be applicable to the situation in Batesburg-Leesville.

Allendale County Scooter – Allendale County, SC

The Allendale County Scooter provides community transportation services serving the entire County with demand response service. Scooter offers connections to the Palmetto Breeze fixed route services. Funding is provided by County, State, Federal, and private contributions. Fares are also collected. The service's brochure is included below, as is a synopsis of the Scooter service as provided by the Palmetto Breeze transit system (the administrator of the service).

Getting Started

1. Reservations should be made through your Human Service Agency 24 hours in advance of your trip.
2. Transportation to all destinations will require a ticket.
3. Have your ticket ready when you board the vehicle.
4. Tickets are $1.50 each way to travel within a 10-mile area. As you cross any 10 mile point, you will be required to provide the driver with another ticket. The driver will let you know how many tickets you must provide.

Just a Reminder

We want to make sure your trip and that of your fellow passengers is safe, comfortable and on time. Thank you for carefully following the passenger rules. We will be happy to provide additional copies of the rules upon request.

More Riding Tips

- No children under the age of 16 can ride without an adult.
- Children must be in a child safety seat as required by law.
- To ensure that everyone reaches their destinations on time, drivers cannot wait more than 3 minutes to pick up a passenger.
- Please be sure to cancel your reservation if you are unable to make a trip. After three no-shows, it will be necessary to suspend your service for a period of 6 months.

Please Note

Our drivers are trained in vehicle operation, customer assistance, CPR, first aid and sensitivity training to better address the needs of all our customers.

Operating Hours

Hours of operation vary with each route and are provided on the service schedule for each route. With the exception of dialysis patients, service will not be available on weekends or the following holidays:

New Years Day
Martin Luther King Day
Memorial Day
July Fourth
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve Day
Christmas Day

Customer Service and Your Safety are our Priorities!

We want to be sure your trip is as safe and comfortable as possible. Please direct any questions or suggestions to the mobility manager by calling 803-584-3470 / Toll free 866-230-4397, or in writing to: Allendale County Scooter, P.O. Box 531, Allendale, SC 29810.

Most Allendale County Scooter vehicles are accessible to people with disabilities. When making a reservation, please specify if you will require a wheelchair lift or other assistance.

How was the Scooter Formed?

- A group of dedicated community leaders met monthly for a year to offer solutions to the lack of transportation options
- Committee members reviewed past studies and recommendations
- Turf issues were put aside for the betterment of the community
- Amount of money already being spent on transportation services in the county was determined

Challenges Faced

- Lack of transportation a major contributor to medical and employment problems in the county
- Low economic development
- No major industry in county, few employment opportunities, unemployment rate approximately 10%
- Per capita income is the lowest in South Carolina (2000 census)
- Third highest poverty rate for individuals in South Carolina
- Highest rate of poverty for families in South Carolina at 28.4%.
- Limited access to medical care
- Allendale County ranks 17th in the state for diabetes, 3rd for heart related problems and 6th for breast cancer

Time for Action

- Community leaders examined barriers and myths to transportation coordination
- Discussed insurance liability issues
- Reviewed sharing of vehicle and passengers
- Examined and sought funding sources
- Determined that coordination of vehicles was possible
- Success was achieved through cooperation and sharing of resources

System Structure

- Share existing vehicles; agencies “sell their empty seats” to the general public; no vehicles are owned by the LRTA currently
- Mobility Manager is locally based to coordinate all general public trips
- Members of general public call toll free number for trip matching
- Fare is $1.50 per 10 miles traveled for general public
- All passengers purchase tickets through Mobility Manager or other ticket outlet, no driver handles cash
- Transit provider is reimbursed at established rate - $0.70 per passenger mile currently
- Drivers deviate a few miles off of regular route to accommodate general public

Funding Sources

The Scooter received funding from:

- SC State University Transportation Center
- Sisters of Charity
- Allendale County Government – plus in-kind contribution
- Allendale Alive
- SC Department of Transportation, Division of Mass Transit
- Lower Savannah COG

Scooter Start-Up

- A professional transit marketing firm was brought in to develop logo, name, marketing materials and provide public relations
- "Test run" was conducted in May 2004
- News articles promote the Scooter and clarify public transit is not a taxi service
- Official kick-off was held in July 2004 with community and state leaders present
- There is even a Scooter mascot

Bamberg County Handy Ride – Bamberg County, SC

Handy Ride, much like Scooter but started in May 2006, is a demand response rural transportation service. Arranging the rides is the responsibility of a Mobility Manager, who matches requests to available seats on the County's local human service vehicles. Connections with Palmetto Breeze buses headed to Hilton Head are offered, in addition to transports to Columbia, Charleston, and Sumter. Funding is provided by County, State, Federal, and private contributions. Fares are also collected.

Camden/Lugoff SMART RIDE – Santee Wateree Regional Transit Authority (SWRTA)
Newberry SMART RIDE – Newberry County Council on Aging

Newberry's program, started in 2004 and previously operated by Central Midlands RTA, provides commuter service in the morning and afternoon between Newberry, Little Mountain, Chapin, and downtown Columbia. Two trips into Columbia are operated in the peak morning commute hours, and two return trips are operated in the afternoon. A similar route connecting Camden and Lugoff to downtown Columbia is operated by SWRTA, with a similar level of service. Funding is provided largely by SCDOT and passenger fares.

Palmetto Breeze – Lowcountry Region, SC

Six counties in the Lowcountry of South Carolina are served by fixed routes operating between local towns with Hilton Head as the final destination city. Seven day a week service operates from 4:30 am to 8:00 pm to accommodate passengers' work schedules. Palmetto Breeze offers connections with other rural providers, such as the Scooter, Handy Ride, and the Daufuskie Island Ferry. Funding: Counties, State, Federal, advertising, and fares.

Trident Rideshare – Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties, SC

This is a free and convenient web-based service that connects commuters looking to ride transit, share cars, bicycles, taxi, or walking trips in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties. An interested participant develops a 'profile', registering personal data (name, means of contact) and trip request information (specific days of travel, origin, destination, etc.) on the computer. From the database, 'matches' may occur and the participant is notified. Emails can then be exchanged between interested parties. Funding is provided by BCDCOG.

Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System (GITS) – Gates County, NC

This Community Transportation Program operates several vanpools, funded through Federal Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) dollars with subsidies from private sector employers and fares from the riders. Vanpools travel out of Gates County to Smithfield, Virginia to pork packing plants. Service is normally for 2nd and 3rd shift workers on weekdays and on weekends when GITS does not operate.

NCDOT Vanpool Operations

The Public Transit Division of NC Department of Transportation contracts its vanpool operations to 2 Plus, Inc., a private, non-profit corporation that assists in establishing vanpools and organizing formal ridesharing programs. NCDOT-PTD provides capital funds for the purchase of the equipment (15-passenger vans). Based upon formal agreements executed with major employers, 2 Plus, Inc. then trains the vehicle operators; establishes the route based upon participants' origins and final destinations; and is responsible for collection of operating funds.

3.4 Public and Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder Workshop

A Stakeholder Workshop was held on Wednesday, March 24, 2010 at the Batesburg-Leesville Leisure Center. Data from the surveys and peer review was presented and summarized to generate a composite picture of transit needs. Key community leaders were asked to create their own service scenarios based on the stated needs. These suggestions will be considered during the creation of a set of service options for more in-depth analysis.

The list of stakeholders invited to the workshop was created cooperatively, and included key community leaders, in addition to representatives of CMCOG and the consultant team:

- Pansy Buzhardt
- Stephen Cain
- Rita Crapps
- Judy Turner Fox
- Patricia G. Jones
- Cora A. Lester
- Melinda C. Mathias
- John M. Mitchell
- Marian Nanney
- Joan Taylor
- David Williams
- Jim Frierson (SCDOT)
- Roland Bart (CMCOG)
- Reginald Simmons (CMCOG)
- Gregory Sprouse (CMCOG)
- Marcus Arnold (Consultant)
- Rebecca Cherry (Consultant)
- Brett Wallace (Consultant)

Key discussion points from the stakeholder workshop are highlighted below:

Survey Results

- Concerns were raised about where the survey link has been posted. Reginald Simmons recognized that the survey results are only one part of the story. Mr. Simmons said that the workshop is yet another method of evaluating transit, and the survey was not intended to offend anyone.
- Brett Wallace explained that transit takes many forms and fashions. Many people think that transit is only a big bus; it's not. The purpose of the stakeholder workshop is to come up with the best way – economically, effective – to meet the transportation needs of the community.
- Mr. Wallace summarized the survey results.
- The survey asked, "Where would you go if public transit were available?" A majority of people responded that they want to go to Columbia. The second largest group of people responded that they want to go to Lexington. The third largest group of people responded that they want to travel within Batesburg-Leesville.
- The stakeholders discussed that people may need to go to Aiken. There will be new construction at the Savannah River Plant in the coming years – almost 1,700 construction workers expected.
- Stakeholders asked if anyone responded that they would want to use transit to go to Newberry. Only one person responded regarding a need for travel to Newberry.

Summaries of Stakeholders' Ideas on Transit

- Transit could potentially provide service to address a variety of needs:
  - Many families of school-age students don't participate in activities due to lack of transportation.
  - Medical appointments (children especially) to Lexington and Columbia.
  - Mental health services and dental services are often located outside of the community.
  - Special needs students' parents don't always have transportation available.
  - Seniors are now living beyond the driving age. Some seniors are begging rides or paying for "unofficial" taxis. Seniors need to travel:
    - To doctor appointments
    - Within Batesburg-Leesville or to travel to Lexington and Columbia for medical, shopping, etc.
    - To stay involved and interactive (facilitates the social aspects of life)
- The primary focus should be on the single individuals who have no other alternative or option.
- Mr. Wallace asked how people without automobiles are traveling to their destinations now. Stakeholders reported that people pay high fees for "unofficial" taxis (no taxi in town or Lexington, but does have a Hispanic taxi service in Saluda); call around for rides; call somebody that they know who has a vehicle).
- Melinda Mathias responded that DHEC is interested in the development of vanpools and thereby reducing the miles traveled that pollute the air. There is the issue of Batesburg-Leesville possibly being incorporated into the area that is non-attainment for air quality. A transportation option is needed to reduce miles traveled.
- Midlands Technical College may need connections from the local campus to other campuses, but the magnitude of this need may be limited currently
- A small amount of service could be provided in the beginning to demonstrate the need for transit ("start small").
- Various options for transit service types were discussed:
  - Start with Demand-Response service and use trip data to determine specific transit needs. Needs could range from after hours, disabled, and senior
  - Local circulator providing service around town with the option to deviate from fixed route. This option was analyzed a few years ago, but it was cost-prohibitive at the time
  - Commuter rail is a long-range consideration
- Stakeholders were asked what type of service would suit this community. The responses varied:
  - SmartRide for work/able-bodied (need to identify park-and-ride location and to partner with industry)
  - Stakeholder suggestion that a demand-response service is needed.
  - Stakeholder suggestion that possibly a circulator driving around the town, with some deviations from the fixed route. This type of service was considered in Batesburg-Leesville several years ago, but the cost was deemed to be too expensive.
  - Mr. Simmons said that there seems to be a need for a blend of a SmartRide program with a demand-response service.

Funding

- Stakeholders varied on their willingness to consider the use of local tax monies for transit. Some stakeholders stated that they would not support increased taxes for transit, and offered alternatives such as the pursuit of grants. Other stakeholders said that they would support a fee or some taxation, stating that the Town must be willing to put up some money to support it.
- Implications of taxes covering people outside of Town limits should be considered.

Steering Committee Meetings

Steering committee meetings were held on September 9, 2009 and April 29, 2010 at the Batesburg-Leesville Leisure Center. The meeting notes from the steering committees meetings are included in Appendix B. The list of committee members invited to these meetings included key community leaders, in addition to representatives of CMCOG and the consultant team:

- Stephen Cain (Batesburg-Leesville Town Council)
- David Williams (Batesburg-Leesville Town Council)
- Rita Crapps (Batesburg-Leesville Town Council)
- Todd O'Dell (Batesburg-Leesville Town Council)
- Michael Monroe (SCDHEC)
- Melinda C. Mathias (SCDHEC)
- Jim Mitchell (Batesburg-Leesville Chamber of Commerce)
- Barbara Reeder (Gilbert Town Council)
- Gregory Sprouse (CMCOG)
- Reginald Simmons (CMCOG)
- Roland Bart (CMCOG)
- Doug Frate (SCDOT)
- Roy Tolson (SCDOT)
- Joan Taylor (Batesburg-Leesville Town Manager)
- Marcus Arnold (Consultant)
- Rebecca Cherry (Consultant)
- Brett Wallace (Consultant)
- Claire Brinkley (Consultant)

Public Forum

The community was invited to a Public Forum on the evening of Thursday, April 29, 2010 at the Batesburg-Leesville Lifelong Learning Center. The public was given the opportunity to comment on the need for public transportation services in the area. No comments were received at this meeting. The presentation is included in Appendix C.

3.5 Summary of Needs

As demonstrated by the material presented earlier, there are a variety of transit needs in Batesburg-Leesville, such as:

- Seniors are now living beyond the driving age. Seniors need to travel to doctor appointments; within Batesburg-Leesville or to travel to Lexington and Columbia for medical appointments, shopping, etc.; and to stay involved and interactive.
- Many families of school-age students don't participate in activities due to lack of transportation.
- Transportation to medical appointments (children especially) to Lexington and Columbia is needed.
- Mental health services and dental services are often located outside of the community.
- Many of the demographic characteristics are consistent with those typically experienced in a small-town setting. Overall population densities are low, which helps to focus the discussion on transit options that are appropriate in low-density settings.

4.0 SERVICE DESIGN OPTIONS

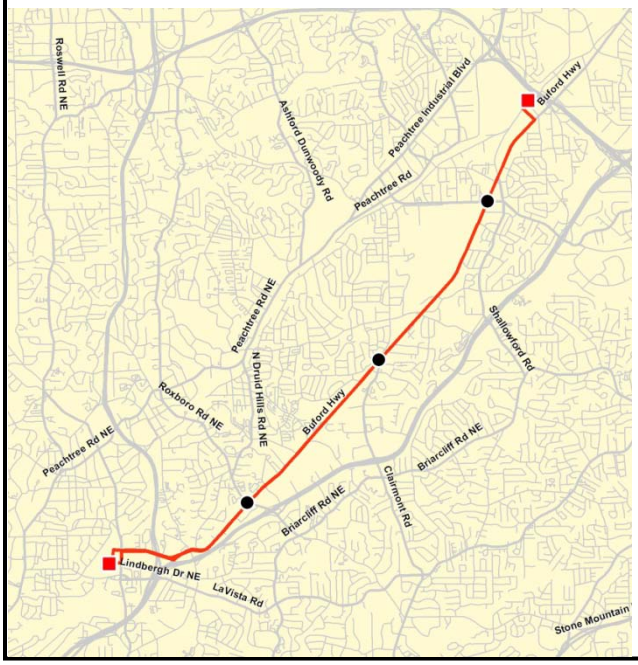
Transit services can be provided in a wide variety of forms. The general descriptions provided below illustrate the various types of transit options that could be viable in Batesburg-Leesville. More specific service options tailored to the specific conditions in Batesburg-Leesville follow later in this section.

4.1 Conceptual Service Options

Fixed Route

Fixed route is considered the most common type of bus service. Buses travel on pre-defined routes and regular schedules that serve specified bus stops and/or transfer centers. Fixed route service is commonly operated in more populated areas with central business districts, major activity centers and trip generators, but is also applied in rural areas. Fixed route is considered the most predictable type of bus system for users to understand. Fixed route service using federal funds is required by law to be paired with complementary paratransit service for individuals who can not access the fixed route system due to disability.

Fixed Route – Buses operate on fixed route alignments and regular schedules.



Fixed-route

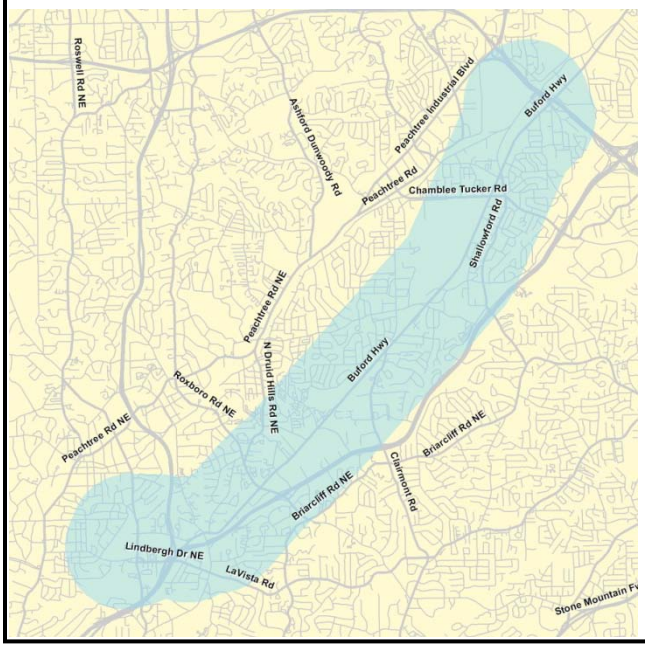
Route Terminus

Scheduled Bus Stop

Demand Response

Demand response service is designed to be more flexible than fixed route and flex route (see below) services. This service does not run on a fixed schedule or route, but provides door-to-door and curbside service. Passengers must reserve a time and location in advance to be picked up and dropped off. Paratransit service is a demand response option for elderly and disabled passengers with mobility issues. Paratransit customers must register and meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements in order to use the service. Demand response service can be made available to everyone, not just individuals who meet ADA requirements.

Demand Response – Buses provide door-to-door and curbside service by request.



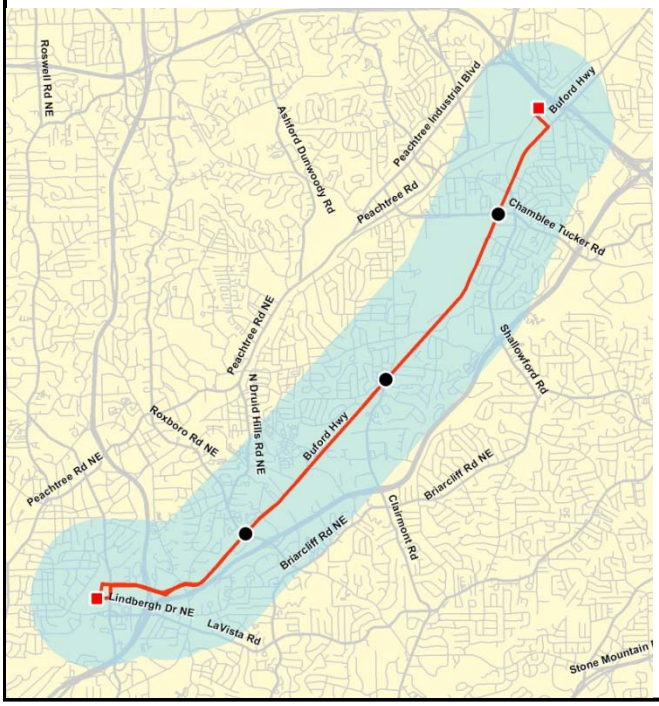
Demand Response Area

Flex Route

Buses operate on fixed route alignments and regular schedules like fixed route buses, but a flex route bus may leave its route to pick up or drop off passengers at locations within pre-defined limits, outside of the route. The routes are scheduled to allow time for buses to deviate from the route to provide door-to-door or curbside service when requested. This service works best in areas where buses do not experience much delay from traffic congestion during the peak hours and can stay on schedule. The deviation limits, including frequency and distance from route, are established in order for passengers to understand. Flex routes often require advanced reservations for off-route pickups. Flex route is operated using one of the following six service types:

- Route Deviation
- Point Deviation
- Demand-Response Connector
- Request Stops
- Flexible Route Segments
- Zone Route

Route Deviation – Buses operate on fixed route alignments and regular schedules, but deviate at specific points to serve demand response area.



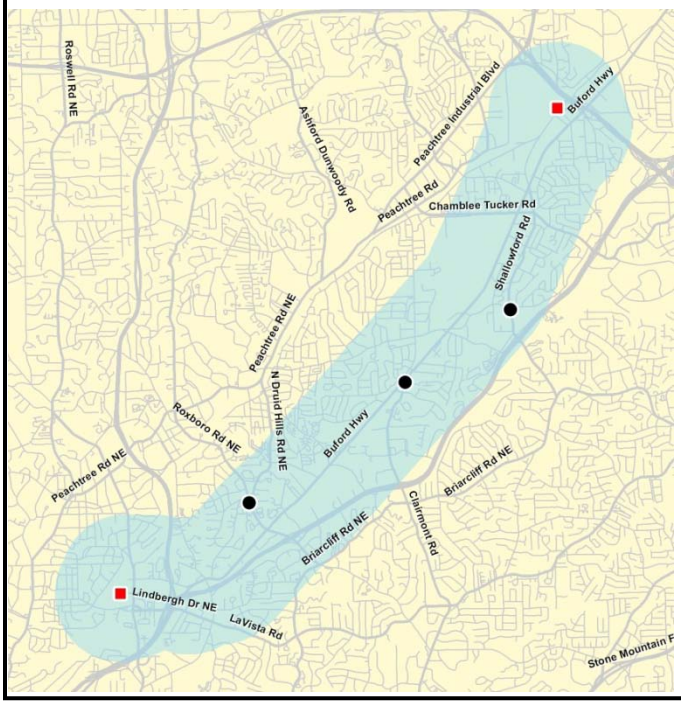
Fixed-route

Demand Response Area

Route Terminus

Scheduled Bus Stop

Point Deviation – Buses serve demand response area based on requests and a limited number of stops without a defined fixed route between stops.

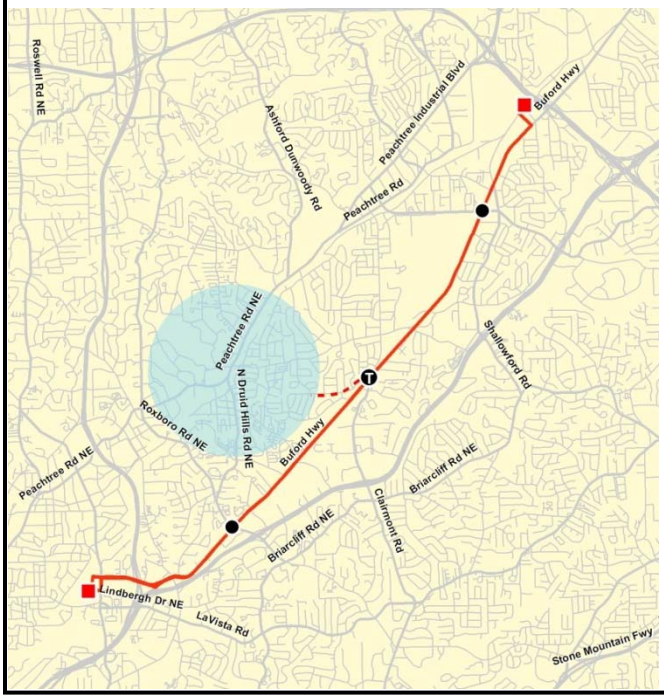


Demand Response Area

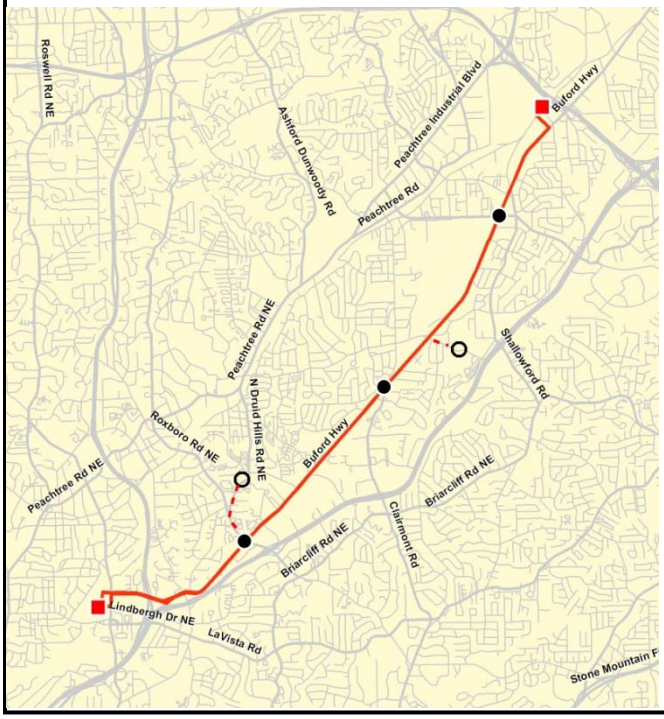
Route Terminus

Scheduled Bus Stop

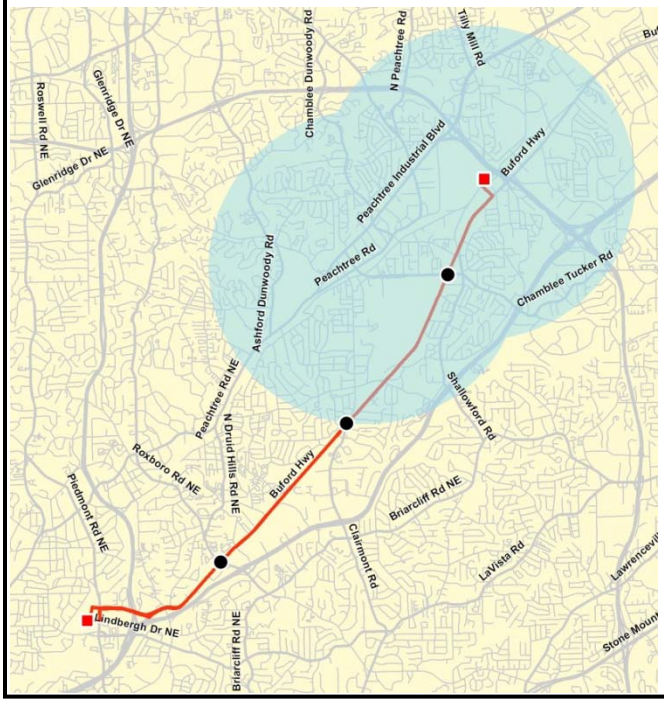
Demand-Response Connector – Buses serve demand response area with one or more schedule transfer points along fixed-routes.



Request Stops – Buses operate on fixed route alignments and regular schedules, but also provide a limited number of defined bus stops near the route.



Flexible-Route Segments – Buses operate similar to fixed route service, yet change to demand-response operation for an established segment of the route.



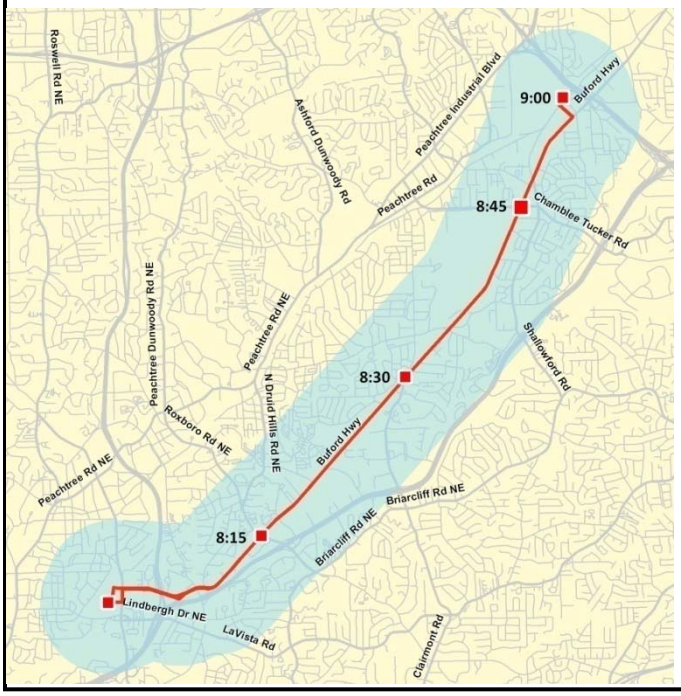
Fixed-route

Demand Response Area

Route Terminus

Scheduled Bus Stop

Zone Route – Buses operate similar to demand response along a fixed route with established times at one or more points.



Fixed-route

Demand Response Area

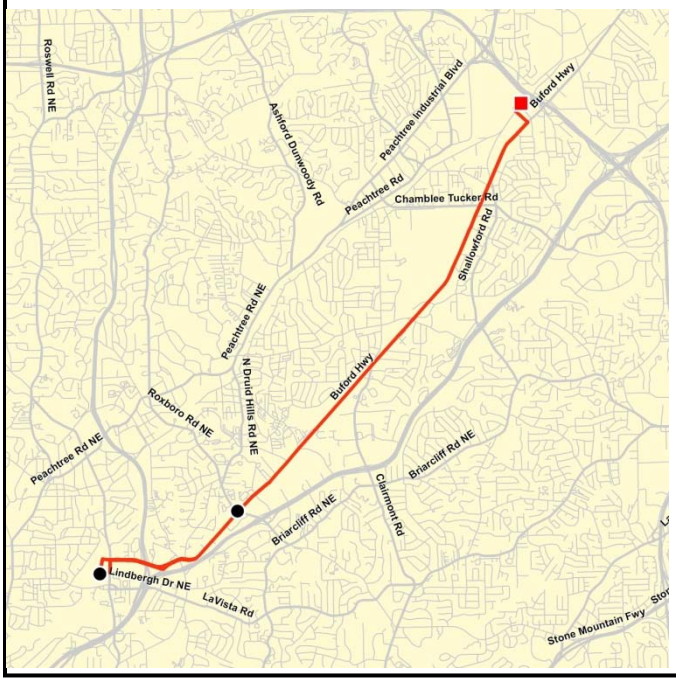
Route Terminus

9:00 **Time Point**

Vanpool

A vanpool includes a group of people (7 to 15 riders) who use a van to commute together on a daily basis. People participating in a vanpool will share the cost of the van and all other expenses to operate. The group will typically designate a primary driver with alternate drivers, basic route, schedule and pick-up/drop-off locations. Vanpool is commonly operated to serve a group of people commuting from a common location to a common destination or area, such as a business, office park, medical center, shopping center and other major destinations. Riders using the service will often meet at a central pick up like a park and ride facility or parking lot at a shopping center. Vanpools are considered more cost effective than traveling alone in a car and can lower the cost to operate by obtaining funding through participating companies, public agencies, public-private partnerships, as well as through Federal tax incentives.

Vanpool – Vans operate on fixed route alignments and regular schedules with designated pick-up/drop-off locations.



Transit Service Alternative Matrix

Service Type	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Best Applications	Examples
Fixed Route	• Fixed route and schedule	• Most predictable route and schedule • Lowest cost to provide service	• Requires complementary ADA paratransit service	• Medium to large sized cities and suburban areas with higher population densities	• Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) • Charleston Area Rapid Transit Authority (CARTA) • Greenlink (Greenville, SC) • Florence Transit System/PDRTA (Florence, SC)
Demand Response	• Door-to-door and curbside service • Includes ADA paratransit service	• Offers the highest level of service to all potential passengers	• Most expensive service to operate • Requires advanced reservations for all • Demand may be too high to serve efficiently	• Rural areas • Complementary ADA paratransit service for fixed route systems	• CMRTA DART (Dial-A-Ride-Transit) • Tel-A-Ride (Charleston, SC) • Greenville Area Paratransit (GAP) • Allendale County Scooter • Bamberg County Handy Ride
Flex Route	• Follows a fixed route, but deviates to pickup and drop off passengers • Typically requires advanced reservations for deviated service	• Provides an option between fixed route service or door-to-door service	• Difficulty with remaining on schedule • More difficult for passengers to understand	• Suburban and rural areas	• TriCounty Link (outside of Charleston, SC) • Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) • Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority • Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) • Lil Easy (New Orleans Regional Transit Authority)
Vanpool	• Fixed route and schedule with designate pick-up and drop-off locations	• Cost savings over driving a car • Funding available through businesses and Federal tax incentives	• Maintaining participation due to changes to travel patterns and needs • Insurance liability	• Suburban, urban and rural areas • Longer distance commuting trips (15+ miles) to major employment destinations	• Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority (PDRTA – Florence, SC) • North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Vanpool • Commuter Service of North Florida (Tallahassee, FL)

4.2 Consideration of Local and Regional Transit Needs

An important consideration is the relative importance between transit needs at a local level (within Batesburg-Leesville), and transit needs at a regional level (between Batesburg-Leesville and Columbia). Although the survey respondents indicated a desire for transit service at both levels, a higher priority should be placed on regional transportation between Batesburg-Leesville and the Columbia area (including Lexington). Survey respondents noted a stronger need for regional service, and the stakeholder group shared the same thought. According to the community input, transit service oriented to destinations within the Batesburg-Leesville community is desirable, but there is a stronger need for regional service.

In the service delivery options discussed in subsequent sections of this document, transit options for both "regional connections" and "local connections" are discussed.

4.3 Viability of Service Delivery Options

A series of conceptual service options was described in Technical Memorandum #1. These service options, including variations of fixed route and demand-response service designs, are reflective of the various types of transit options that could be viable in Batesburg-Leesville. To build upon the previous discussion, the section below provides an assessment of which service delivery options are most appropriate in the Batesburg-Leesville/Columbia study area. The following service options are considered:

Regional Connections

- Informal carpool – This strategy focuses on encouraging ridesharing using personal vehicles. Though no formalized service operation is associated with this option, programs could be established to help match potential carpoolers who have similar transportation needs.

- Demand-response – This transit option provides service that is tailored to the specific travel needs of residents on a trip-by-trip basis, as opposed to traveling along a defined route at defined times. The goal of demand-response service is to group trips as much as possible to operate efficiently; thus, service parameters are established to define when and where service is available. Demand-response service is not taxi service, because of the emphasis on grouping trips.

- Organized vanpool – With this strategy, formalized vanpools are established and administered by a separate entity. Typically, vans are purchased using public and/or private funds, and an operating entity assumes responsibility for marketing the service, establishing specific vanpool rosters, training vehicle operators (who participate in the vanpool), maintaining the vans, and collecting fares from participants.

- Commuter bus – This option focuses on establishing a dedicated transit route between Batesburg-Leesville and destinations in the Columbia area, operating along a fixed route at regularly-scheduled times. The route would likely serve a central park-and-ride location in Batesburg-Leesville, instead of circulating around the town to pick up passengers. Similar services in the region connect Newberry and Camden with Columbia; this experience provides

precedence for success. However, Newberry and Camden have higher populations than Batesburg-Leesville, and thus have a larger market of potential riders than Batesburg-Leesville.

Local Connections

- Demand-response – This type of service operates similarly at both the local and regional levels. Passengers are grouped together based on their specific travel needs, without a fixed route or schedule.

- Flexroute – Service options categorized as "flexroute" include some elements of demand-response service and some elements of fixed-route service. These service designs can include a deviated fixed route, in which the transit vehicle travels along a regular route, but is allowed to make deviations within a specified area to allow for more service coverage. One of the challenges with flexroute service is educating the public on how to use the service, since it can be more complex than traditional fixed-route service.

- Fixed route – This service is the traditional service encountered in urban area, in which buses travel along defined routes according to a fixed schedule. Though this service is easy to understand from the passengers' perspective, it is efficient only in areas that have a fairly significant concentration of residents and employees within close proximity of the route.

Each of these options was assessed with regard to its appropriateness in the Batesburg-Leesville area over both the short-term (within the next 2-3 years) and the long-term (3-5 years or longer). With regard to regional connections, informal carpooling is already occurring, and opportunities to initiate new programs to help match prospective carpoolers are viable in the near term. Additionally, demand response service is also viable in the near term, particularly if existing agency resources can be utilized in an expanded role (this concept is discussed in more detail later in this document). Organized vanpools and commuter bus options could also be viable in the coming years, although these strategies will require more administrative time and financial commitments (particularly in the case of commuter bus service).

Locally (within Batesburg-Leesville), viable service options focus on demand-response service in the short term, with a possibility for flexroute service as a longer term initiative. The low population density of Batesburg-Leesville restricts the opportunities to establish fixed-route service in the town.

The table below summarizes the applicability of each service delivery option to the study area conditions, as well as the short-term and long-term viability of each option. Specific service design scenarios incorporating these options are fully described in subsequent sections of this document.

	Service Design	Applicability to Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia	Viability	
			Short term	Long term
Regional connections	Informal carpool	Though not a formalized service, carpools are already commonly used and are appropriate in all settings (urban and rural), including low-density areas like Batesburg-Leesville.	●	●
	Demand-response	Demand-response service is appropriate in lower-density settings like Batesburg-Leesville, especially on a regional basis when origins and destinations are highly dispersed.	●	●
	Organized vanpool	Vanpools can be used in areas where there is significant commute traffic, but origins and destinations are dispersed or there is not enough demand to support a fixed route. Vanpools can be used to demonstrate the need for future dedicated transit routes, and may be a good means of providing service to employment centers such as the industrial area along I-20 in Lexington and downtown Columbia.	◐	●
	Commuter bus	Fixed transit routes require a minimum level of ridership to be justifiable; passenger destinations must be close in proximity to maintain efficiency and attract riders. Such a service could work for Batesburg-Leesville, modeled on the existing SmartRide routes that serve Camden and Newberry.	◐	●
Local connections	Demand-response	Demand-response service provides the most flexibility for low-density areas like Batesburg-Leesville, especially without established ridership patterns. The challenge with demand-response service is matching the capacity (in terms of available vehicles) to the potential demand for service.	◐	●
	Flexroute	Flexroute solutions are appropriate when an established demand is present and regular ridership occurs in predictable patterns, but there is not enough demand to support fixed route service. This type of service structure is difficult to establish without known ridership patterns, but flexroute service is a logical "next step" for Batesburg-Leesville if demand begins to outweigh the ability to effectively serve needs with demand-response service.	○	◐
	Fixed route	The low population density of Batesburg-Leesville restricts the ability of fixed route service to operate efficiently. Fixed route service is more effective in more urban settings with higher concentrations of population and employment along established corridors. Because fixed routes capture ridership from a smaller geographic area than demand-response or flexroute services, it would be difficult to establish an efficient fixed route in Batesburg-Leesville that captures sufficient ridership to justify the investment in the service.	○	○

● Good viability
◐ Fair viability
○ Poor viability

5.0 ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL OPTIONS

Potential transit service must be considered not only in terms of the service design, but also the options for creating a viable governance and administrative structure. For any formalized type of operation, some sort of organizational structure is needed to govern, administer, and operate the system. Varying roles for transit administration and operation can be handled by a wide range of organizations, including the following:

- Governmental entities, including municipalities, counties, and states;
- Transit authorities (functioning as an independent entity);
- Non-profit organizations;
- For-profit companies; and
- Human service agencies.

In some cases, a governmental entity (including a transit authority) administers and directly operates transit service; in other instances, a governmental entity assumes responsibility for administration and contracts with a private company for the day-to-day operations of the system. Examples of the functions performed by each of these types of organizations are provided below.

Governmental Entities

In many cases, cities or towns directly operate transit service, with the transit system typically functioning as a city department or division, with the City Council serving as the governing body. The transit service in Anderson, SC functions in this manner.

Regional Councils of Governments can also participate in transit administration, though few are involved in actual day-to-day operations. The Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG), through its Regional Transportation Management Association (RTMA), provides administration services for the Allendale County Scooter and the Bamberg County Handy Ride systems. See http://lscog.org/common/content.asp?PAGE=367 for more information.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) awarded funding to LSCOG in 2000 for a pilot project in Allendale County. Recognizing that the State was funding only the pilot project, a LSCOG staff member was appointed as the focal person to oversee the system's financials, including emphasis on securing grant monies to sustain the system beyond the initial demonstration period. A Mobility Manager books citizens' reservations. Another staff person oversees the actual contract service provider (the Lowcountry Regional Transit Authority / Palmetto Breeze Transit). Palmetto Breeze Transit was the logical operator of the service, because of its understanding and experience providing coordinated public transportation services in neighboring rural counties. The system adheres to all Federal and State compliance matters, including bus driver employment and certification, training, and operating standards.

As another example, the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) performed grants administration services for the former Columbia Transit System operated by SCANA, prior to the establishment of the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA).

Transit Authorities

Many transit systems are administered and/or operated by Regional Transit Authorities (RTA's), which in South Carolina are governmental entities established by statute to provide transit services in a designated area. The RTA's are governed by a Board of Directors comprised of appointees from each of the member jurisdictions. In some cases, the RTA administers the system and contracts with a private company for the day-to-day operations; in other cases, the RTA administers and directly operates the transit service.

The Central Midlands RTA serves portions of Lexington County. Although CMRTA does not operate service in Batesburg-Leesville, the Town of Batesburg-Leesville is represented on the CMRTA Board of Directors as an advisory member.

Private, Non-Profit Organizations

It is not unusual for private, non-profit agencies to offer transit services that are open to the public. Often, private, non-profit human service agencies provide transportation options to the general public as an extension of their core human service mission.

Another example is private, non-profit companies that administer vanpool programs (typically under contract to a governmental entity). 2Plus, Inc. is one company that provides these types of services.

For-Profit Companies

Often, governmental entities prefer not to directly operate transit services, and instead contract day-to-day operations to a private company. The governmental entity continues to administer and manage the system, but vehicle operators, mechanics, supervisors, and other support personnel are employed by a private operations company. CMRTA is an example of a transit system that contracts with a private company (Veolia Transportation) for operations. Taxi companies are another example of for-profit, private companies that operate services.

Human Service Agencies

In some rural areas, human service agencies provide general public transit services in addition to transportation services geared specifically to the clients of the agency. This type of service is often provided to meet transit needs in areas where there is no stand-alone transit agency and the local governments do not want to get into the transit business themselves.

The Newberry County Council on Aging (NCCOA) is an example of a human service agency that also provides transit services for the general public. The agency had been contracted for many years to provide Medicaid transportation for clients of health and human service agencies, but expanded its services several years ago when the agency became a designated recipient of federal funds dedicated to providing rural transit services for the general public. In addition to accommodating general public passengers for demand-response trips on its agency vehicles, the agency also operates the SmartRide service connecting Newberry and Columbia (using three 32-passenger buses funded through SCDOT's Vehicle Acquisition Program).

5.1 Potential Administrative and Operational Options

Based on the framework of organizations described above, several specific options are available for transit administration and operations in Batesburg-Leesville:

- CMRTA;
- Town of Batesburg-Leesville;
- Local human service agencies;
- CMCOG;
- LSCOG; or
- Private Providers.

The following table highlights some of the key considerations regarding the viability of each organization as an administrative or operational entity, as well as the key advantages and disadvantages of each option. Further discussion is provided in conjunction with the presentation of service options later in this document.

Organization	Applicability to Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia	Viability	
		Administration	Operations
CMRTA	CMRTA has previously worked with the Town to discuss transit opportunities. However, CMRTA service in Lexington County is currently planned to be suspended unless the County elects to begin making financial contributions to system operations. CMRTA previously operated commuter-based service between Newberry and Columbia (similar to what could be operated between Batesburg-Leesville and Columbia), but that service is now operated by the Newberry County Council on Aging. The distance between Columbia and Batesburg-Leesville increases CMRTA's operating costs to bring vehicles back and forth to Batesburg-Leesville on a daily basis.	Advantages • Proven expertise in transit administration. • Batesburg-Leesville already participates on the CMRTA Board as an advisory member. Disadvantages • The pending discontinuation of service in Lexington County may impact its ability to serve Batesburg-Leesville.	Advantages • Transit infrastructure (vehicles, operators, maintenance facilities) is readily available. Disadvantages • Significant distance from operations base in Columbia increases operating costs.
Town of Batesburg-Leesville	Local governments in smaller towns typically do not like to "grow government" by adding staff for new initiatives. The small existing staff size and lack of experience with transit management limits the availability of staff to perform significant on-going administrative functions related to the transit system.	Advantages • Maintains close local control. Disadvantages • New staff would need to be hired and trained to perform administration duties.	Advantages • Maintains close local control. Disadvantages • New staff would need to be hired and trained to perform operations duties.

Organization	Applicability to Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia	Viability	
		Administration	Operations
CMCOG	As the regional Council of Governments and in consideration of the available staff expertise in grants administration, CMCOG is a logical entity to assist in the administration of any future transit services. However, CMCOG does not operate any transit services.	Advantages • Expertise in administration is available. • CMCOG serves the geographic area covered by the potential transit service. Disadvantages • New staff may be required to administer new services.	CMCOG does not directly operate transit service; an appropriate agency / company would be needed for day-to-day operations.
LSCOG	Although the Lower Savannah COG does not directly serve the Batesburg-Leesville area, its geographic coverage extends close to the service area and the agency has demonstrated its expertise in administering rural transit services in its region. The agency has also developed Mobility Management resources which could potentially be applied to new services in the Batesburg-Leesville area. It has successfully developed relationships with other entities (human service agencies and RTA's) for transit operations in its six-county service area.	Advantages • Expertise in administration is available. • LSCOG has established the Rural Trans. Management Association and successfully administers rural transit services in its region. Disadvantages • Lexington County is not within LSCOG's defined geographic boundaries.	LSCOG does not directly operate transit service; an appropriate agency / company would be needed for day-to-day operations.

Organization	Applicability to Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia	Viability	
		Administration	Operations
Local human service agency	Although local human service agencies do not currently offer general public transportation services, their wealth of existing infrastructure (including available vehicles and roster of vehicle operators) is ideally suited to provide expanded transit services to local residents in addition to those who are directly using the agency's programs. Many human service agencies (such as Newberry County Council on Aging) offer general public transit services (using separate funding sources for general public transportation) as a complement to their specific agency mission. Obviously, any potential partner agencies would need to be receptive to expanding their transportation program.	Advantages • Existing agency staff resources may already be available to handle most administration duties. • Agencies already deal with transportation issues, reducing the learning curve. Disadvantages • Agencies may not be interested (for a variety of reasons) in expanding their role to provide general public transportation services. A number of logistical details must be discussed.	Advantages • Existing transit infrastructure could be utilized. • Agency staff already has transportation expertise. Disadvantages • Agencies may not be interested (for a variety of reasons) in expanding their role to provide general public transportation services. A number of logistical details must be discussed.
Private Providers	If a transit program receiving federal funding assistance is in place, private providers can certainly function as operators of the system. However, they must meet stringent federal requirements regarding safety, training, drug and alcohol testing, and other requirements. Many small, locally-based operations are not interested in being subject to the federal regulations, and it may be difficult to attract a proven, established private provider in the industry because of the limited transit market in Batesburg-Leesville.	Advantages • Qualified private providers can offer some administrative services depending on the transit services provided. Disadvantages • A public agency must still have oversight of the system, to assure good stewardship of public funds.	Advantages • Private providers could be a viable option if no other operators are interested in participating. Disadvantages • Identifying qualified private providers willing to establish a local presence for a relatively small transit market may be difficult.

6.0 SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

To provide a range of transit implementation options, four service phases are defined based on the level of financial investment and resources that would be required to implement each option. All four implementation phases are reasonable from the standpoint of addressing the stated transit needs to varying degrees; however, it is prudent to consider the costs associated with each option.

The phases are comprised of transit services that address both regional transit needs and local transit needs. Services can be added as resources and funds become available. The specific services included in each phase are based on the general strategies highlighted earlier in this document. The services are summarized in the following table, and more detailed information about each phase is provided after the synopsis.

Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
• Partner with existing human service agencies to provide demand-response transportation using their resources and drivers. • Promote carpools on an informal basis to be championed by local advocate, town staff or CMCOG.	• Build on existing agency resources to provide local and regional general public demand-response transportation with a dedicated van. • Establish more formalized resources to encourage carpools.	• Build on existing agency resources to provide local and regional general public demand-response transportation with a dedicated minibus. • Initiate structured vanpool service.	• Build on existing agency resources to provide local flex route service and regional demand-response transportation with two dedicated buses. • Initiate commuter bus service to Columbia.

Phase I

Service Description

Two key elements comprise Phase I:

1. **Partnering with existing human service agencies to provide demand-response transportation using their resources and drivers; and**
2. **Promote carpools on an informal basis to be championed by local advocate, Town staff or CMCOG.**

The first component of this phase is based on the establishment of a formal relationship with an area human service agency to provide general public transportation using capacity on its unused vans to provide general public service. The concept of this strategy is to use the operational capabilities of an agency that already transports their clients to agency programs, while not negatively impacting the agency's existing services. In effect, the agency would operate new service for the general public much like the existing service, but specific general public needs would be accommodated during "off-peak" times when equipment is not in use or when seats are available on existing trips. With this strategy, human service agency vans would continue to be operated by agency employees (or volunteer drivers if used by the agency).

With this strategy, demand-response transportation service would be available when the agency could accommodate the trip. No weekend service is anticipated. Customers would make a reservation for a trip, typically at least 24 hours in advance of the desired travel time. The service could provide connections to regional destinations in Columbia and Lexington, as well as local destinations within Batesburg-Leesville. However, specific days may be reserved for trips to Columbia or Lexington, and passengers would be asked to make their plans (e.g. medical appointments) according to the days in which regional service is offered.

A similar operating concept is used by the "Allendale County Scooter" and the "Bamberg County Handy Ride" programs, in which a general public service with its own identity is established, but uses existing agency vehicles that provide other transportation services as well. With this strategy, agency staff should be compensated for their time in scheduling and operating general public trips. First and foremost, discussions should be initiated to determine the willingness of local human service agencies to partner in such an endeavor.

Agencies will have a number of concerns that will need to be addressed, including the potential impacts to their customers, the reservations and scheduling process, liability concerns, and cost and revenue sharing. Although close coordination and lengthy discussion is needed, all of these issues are resolvable. Coordination efforts across the Central Midlands region have been discussed in the past, and more conversations are needed to determine the willingness of agencies to collaborate on this project. Potential agencies to contact for discussion include the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission and the Babcock Center, both of which have vehicles out posted in Batesburg-Leesville.

The second part of this phase is to promote carpooling on an informal basis and encourage residents to consider carpooling as an option for transportation. The effort could be championed by a local advocate of transit or Town staff. CMCOG could also play a key role by creating and distributing materials, and by making presentations to Chamber of Commerce, local churches, and social clubs about the benefits of carpooling.

Potential Administrative / Operational Structure

The general public transit program would be administered by CMCOG, with a local human service agency operating the service, unless another potential provider(s) emerges during continued discussions. The Town would provide local support, particularly in marketing the transit service and carpool options to the community. Assistance from other specialists at CMCOG may be needed for system administration tasks such as grant writing, compliance reviews, and required reporting.

Projected Capital and Operating Costs

	Item Description	Projected Cost
Capital Costs	**TOTAL**	**$0**
Annual Operating Costs	Demand-response service operations cost[1]	$24,000
	TOTAL	**$24,000**

[1] Calculated based on an estimated operations cost of $1.85 per vehicle mile, operating for 50 miles per day on weekdays only. Administration and marketing duties to be performed by existing CMCOG and Town Staff.

Phase II

Service Description

Two key elements comprise Phase II:

1. **Building on existing agency resources to provide local and regional general public demand-response transportation with a dedicated van; and**
2. **Developing more formalized resources to encourage the development of carpools.**

This phase builds on the relationship with an area human service agency established in Phase I to provide general public transportation using a newly purchased van dedicated solely to providing general public service. The concept of this strategy is to use the operational capabilities of an agency that already transports its clients to agency programs, while not burdening the agency with additional demand on its vehicles by offering additional vehicle capacity dedicated the general public.

With this strategy, demand-response transportation service would be available generally from around 6 AM until 6 PM on weekdays. No weekend service is anticipated. Customers would make a reservation for a trip, typically at least 24 hours in advance of the desired travel time. The service could provide connections to regional destinations in Columbia and Lexington, as well as local destinations. However, specific days may be reserved for trips to Columbia or Lexington, and passengers would be asked to make their plans (e.g. medical appointments) according to the days in which regional service is offered. Agency staff would be responsible for scheduling the trips in an efficient manner to ensure vehicle capacity is effectively utilized.

This service would be provided using a wheelchair lift-equipped van, which typically has a maximum capacity of 10 passengers (reduced capacity when wheelchair passengers are on board). This type of vehicle is typical of the new vehicles being purchased by most human service agencies.

The second part of this phase includes advancing the encouragement of carpools. This strategy consists of building on earlier promotions using programmatic elements to help match area residents who may have similar travel needs. An existing staff member at CMCOG could be assigned to serve as the focal point of this effort and this Ride-Share Coordinator would be responsible for establishing and maintaining a database of interested carpoolers, creating a web-based carpool matching system, answering inquiries from interested carpoolers, and other marketing strategies.

Potential Administrative / Operational Structure

Like Phase I, this phase would be administered by CMCOG with support from the Town, with a local human service agency operating the service, unless another potential provider(s) emerges during continued discussions. Assistance from other specialists at CMCOG may be needed for system administration tasks such as grant writing, compliance reviews, and required reporting. South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) would be responsible for purchasing the vehicle. The "Ride-

Share Coordinator", an existing staff member at CMCOG, would be responsible for the carpool encouragement program.

Projected Capital and Operating Costs

	Item Description	Projected Cost
Capital Costs	One high-top lift-equipped van	$40,000
	TOTAL	**$40,000**
Annual Operating Costs	Ride-Share Coordinator Compensation[2]	$20,000
	Demand-response service operations cost[3]	$48,000
	TOTAL	**$68,000**

Phase III

Service Description

Two key elements comprise Phase III:

1. **Building on existing agency resources to provide local and regional general public demand-response transportation with a dedicated minibus;**
2. **Initiating a formalized vanpool program focused on commute trips to Lexington and Columbia.**

The first component of this phase is the same as those discussed under the previous phases, with the exception of the purchase of a larger minibus to replace the lift-equipped van. The lift-equipped van will reach the end of its useful life roughly five years after being purchased and should be replaced. This phase provides for demand-response transportation service to be operated by a local human service agency and to be administered by a "Mobility Manager", the duties of which are discussed in more detail below.

With this strategy, demand-response transportation service would be available generally from around 6 AM until 6 PM on weekdays. No weekend service is anticipated. Customers would make a reservation for a trip, typically at least 24 hours in advance of the desired travel time. The service could provide connections to regional destinations in Columbia and Lexington, as well as local destinations. However, specific days may be reserved for trips to Columbia or Lexington, and passengers would be asked to make their plans (e.g. medical appointments) according to the days in which regional service is offered. The Mobility Manager would be responsible for scheduling the trips in an efficient manner to ensure vehicle capacity is effectively utilized.

[2] Part-time salary and benefits for position at CMCOG.
[3] Calculated based on an estimated operations cost of $1.85 per vehicle mile, operating for 100 miles per day on weekdays only.

This service would be provided using a 22-ft minibus, which typically has a maximum capacity of 15 passengers (reduced capacity when wheelchair passengers are on board). This vehicle is larger than the vehicle included in the previous phase. In addition to having a greater seating capacity, this vehicle also portrays a more customer-friendly image. Standard lift-equipped vans can be saddled with the stigma of being the "elderly and disabled van", whereas a minibus looks more like a true transit vehicle and is more aesthetically pleasing. However, this type of vehicle is more expensive than a standard lift-equipped van.

The second component consists of the establishment of an organized vanpool program. Depending on demand, a fleet of vans would be purchased and the Mobility Manager would assume the responsibilities of administering the program. It is anticipated that two vans may be needed initially for this service. The vanpool program is not intended to replace the demand-response transportation service; rather, the vanpool program is geared specifically to groups of commuters that have the same schedule every day and work in generally the same area. Potential vanpool destinations include downtown Columbia, the industrial park near I-20 in Lexington, and other regional employment centers. The demand-response transportation service would still be needed for medical appointments, shopping trips, and other daily travel needs.

Potential Administrative / Operational Structure

This phase would be administered by a "Mobility Manager", which would be an established or newly-created part-time position that could be housed at the Central Midlands Council of Governments or another appropriate agency. In effect, this position would be an expansion of duties previously performed by the "Ride-Share Coordinator" in Phase II. LSCOG already has a similar position in place for its service area. This person would be responsible for the carpool encouragement program, vanpool administration, and the scheduling process for demand-response trips using the newly purchased minibus (in close coordination with the operating agency). In fact, there may be opportunities for the Mobility Manager to provide similar services for other portions of the Central Midlands region. The concept of a Mobility Manager has been explored in the recent *CMCOG Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan*. A local human service agency would operate the service, unless another potential provider(s) emerges during continued discussions. Although the Mobility Manager would be responsible for daily oversight of the transit program, assistance from other specialists at CMCOG may be needed for system administration tasks such as grant writing, compliance reviews, and required reporting.

Projected Capital and Operating Costs

	Item Description	Projected Cost
Capital Costs	One 22' minibus	$70,000
	Two vans for vanpool service ($30,000 each)	$60,000
	TOTAL	**$130,000**
Annual Operating Costs	Mobility Manager salary and benefits[4]	$35,000
	Demand-response service operations cost[5]	$48,000
	Vanpool operations cost[6]	$40,000
	TOTAL	**$123,000**

Phase IV

Service Description

Two key elements comprise Phase IV:

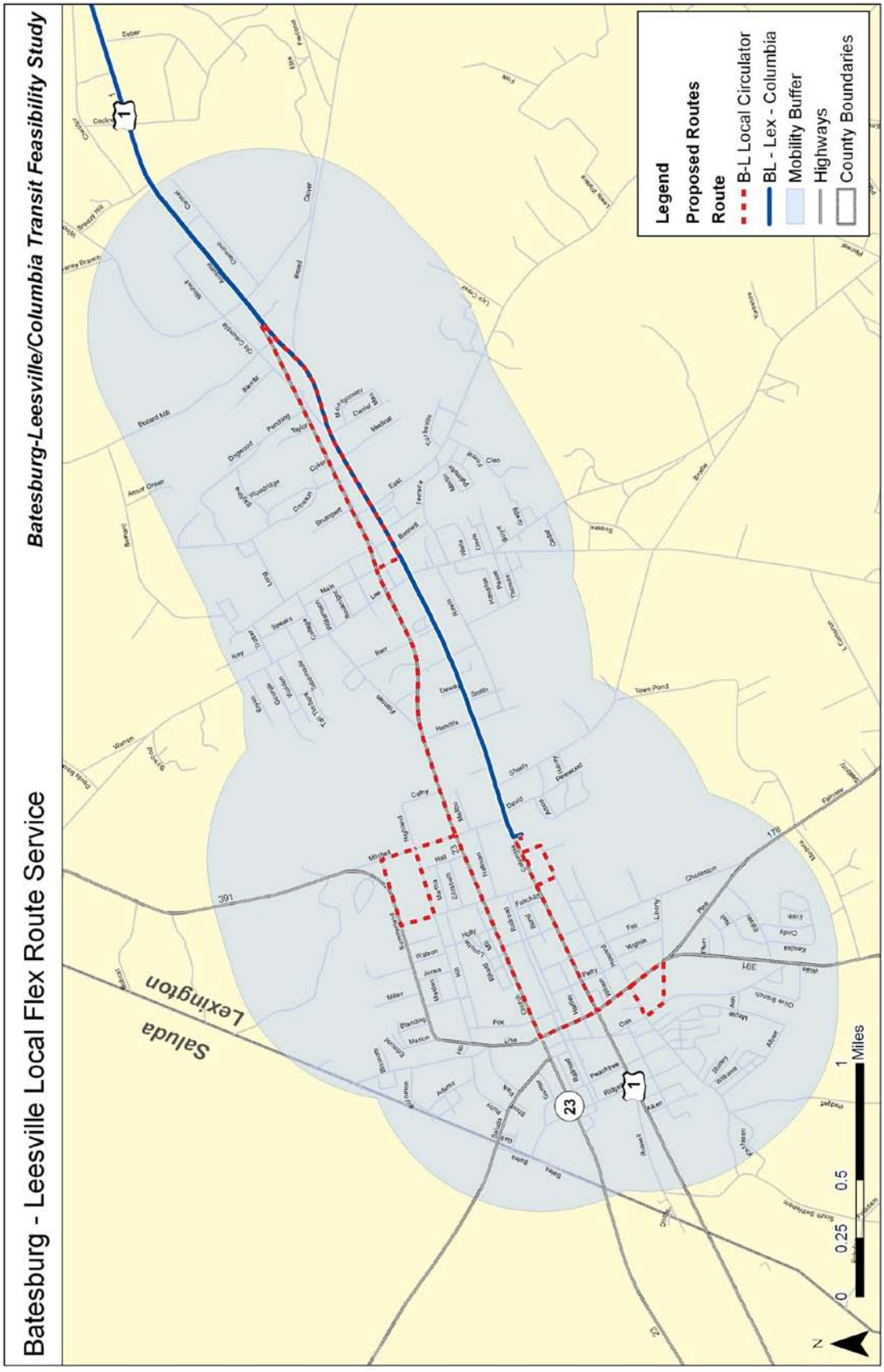
1. **Building on existing agency resources to provide local and regional general public demand-response transportation with a dedicated large minibus;**
2. **Initiating a commuter express bus service between Batesburg-Leesville and Columbia.**

The first component of this phase is similar to those discussed under earlier phases and provides for flex route transportation service to be administered by a Mobility Manager and operated by a local human service agency. Unlike the true demand-response service described in the earlier phases, this service would operate as a deviated fixed route, in which a defined route is followed, but deviations within close proximity (3/4 mile) of the route are allowed.

Service would be available generally from around 10 AM until 3 PM on weekdays. No weekend service is anticipated. This service would be provided by two small buses that would also be used to operate the express bus service during the commute hours.

The potential flex route alignment is shown graphically on the following page (including areas in which deviations would be allowed). This route is conceptual in nature; future study would define a final route alignment in detail.

[4] Part-time salary and benefits for position at CMCOG.
[5] Calculated based on an estimated operations cost of $1.85 per vehicle mile, operating for 100 miles per day on weekdays only.
[6] Calculated based on estimated operations cost of $0.98 per vehicle mile (taken from Santee Wateree RTA vanpool data), with two vanpools each operating for 80 round trip miles on weekdays.


Batesburg - Leesville Local Flex Route Service
Batesburg-Leesville/Columbia Transit Feasibility Study
Legend
Proposed Routes
Route
B-L Local Circulator
BL - Lex - Columbia
Mobility Buffer
Highways
County Boundaries
Saluda
Lexington
Miles
0
0.25
0.5
1
N

The second component is the initiation of commuter-oriented express bus service between Batesburg-Leesville and Columbia. This service would be similar to the "SmartRide" service that connects Newberry and Camden to Columbia. Two morning trips per day would serve commuters from the Batesburg-Leesville area bound for Columbia, and two return trips would occur in the afternoon. No midday or weekend service would be provided. Service would be provided by two small buses that would also be used to operate the local flex route service during the midday (the minibus purchased in Phase III will have expended its useful life by this time). The commuter express bus service would most likely be operated by the same agency that operates the demand-response transportation service. A conceptual route for the express bus service is shown on the following page. The bus would serve Lexington as well as West Columbia en route to Columbia. More detailed study of potential route options would be needed in the future, especially with regard to congestion concerns on US 378 in Lexington.

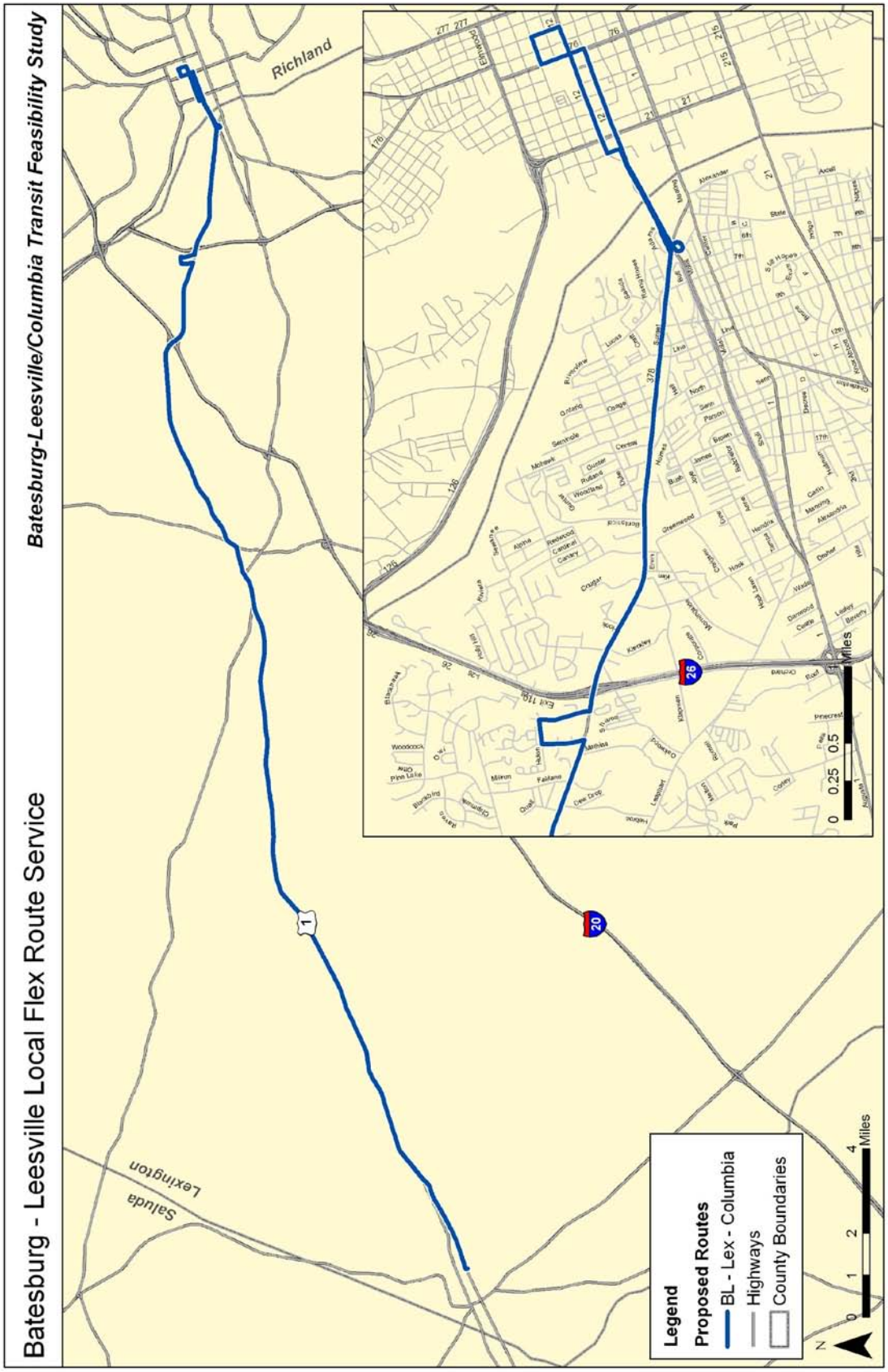
Potential Administrative / Operational Structure

Like the other phases, this service option would be administered by a "Mobility Manager", a full-time position that could be housed at the Central Midlands Council of Governments or another appropriate agency (this position represents an expansion of duties form the part-time Mobility Manager position established in Phase III). This position would be responsible for the carpool encouragement program, the scheduling process for demand-response trips (in close coordination with the operating agency), flex route administration, and management of express service. A local human service agency would operate the demand-response and commuter express services, unless another potential provider(s) emerges during continued discussions.

Projected Capital and Operating Costs

	Item Description	Projected Cost
Capital Costs	Two small buses ($90,000 each)	$180,000
	TOTAL	**$180,000**
Annual Operating Costs	Mobility Manager salary and benefits[7]	$57,000
	Demand-response service operations cost[8]	$48,000
	Flex Route service operations cost[9]	$48,000
	Commuter express bus operations cost[10]	$104,000
	TOTAL	**$257,000**

[7] Full-time salary and benefits for position at CMCOG.
[8] Calculated based on an estimated operations cost of $1.85 per vehicle mile, operating for 100 miles per day on weekdays only.
[9] Calculated based on an estimated operations cost of $1.85 per vehicle mile, operating for 100 miles per day on weekdays only.
[10] Calculated based on estimated operations cost of $40 per vehicle hour (taken from SCDOT FY09 Public Transportation Performance Report), with two buses each operating for five service hours on weekdays.


Batesburg - Leesville Local Flex Route Service
Batesburg-Leesville/Columbia Transit Feasibility Study
Richland
Lexington
Saluda
Legend
Proposed Routes
BL - Lex - Columbia
Highways
County Boundaries
0 1 2 4 Miles
N
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

7.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SERVICE

The projected costs for each phase of the service delivery plan are summarized below.

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
Capital Costs	$0	$40,000	$130,000	$180,000
Annual Operating Costs	$24,000	$68,000	$123,000	$257,000

7.1 Potential Funding Sources

Potential funding sources include passenger fares, as well as assistance from federal, state, and local governments. Passenger fares can cover some operational expenses, but stakeholders should understand that fares are usually insufficient to cover all of a transit agency's operating expenses. Even in the largest transit systems in the country, fares do not cover all of the costs of operations. Monies from other sources are also needed. Possible funding sources, in addition to passenger fares, include the following:

- Federal and state transit assistance programs (see descriptions in table below);
- Other public and private grant opportunities;
- Contributions from businesses and other private sector partners;
- Advertising revenues; and
- Direct assistance from local governments;

Primary Federal and State Funding Programs are summarized in the table below. This list is not intended to be inclusive of all potential transit funding opportunities, but these items comprise the major funding programs that could be viable sources for transit in the Batesburg-Leesville / Columbia corridor.

Funding Program	Program Purpose	Eligible Activities
FTA Section 5309 (Bus and Bus Discretionary)	Funding for capital projects distributed on a discretionary (earmark) basis	Capital purchases including vehicles, equipment, and facilities. Generally, a 20% local match is required.
FTA Section 5310 (Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance)	Funding for capital projects to support transportation for elderly persons and persons with disabilities	Capital purchases including vans and equipment to assist elderly and disabled populations with needed transportation. Mobility Management is an eligible capital expense. Generally, a 20% local match is required.
FTA Section 5311 (Nonurbanized Area Formula Funding)	Transit funding for rural and nonurbanized areas	Capital, operating, and administrative projects in rural areas; 20% local match required for capital assistance and 50% local match required for operating assistance.

Funding Program	Program Purpose	Eligible Activities
FTA Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute Program)	To address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment.	Capital planning and operating expenses for projects that transport low income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to employment, and for reverse commute projects. 20% local match required for capital assistance and 50% local match required for operating assistance.
FTA Section 5317 (New Freedom Program)	To reduce barriers to transportation services and expand the transportation mobility options available to people with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act	Capital and operating expenses for new public transportation services and new public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), that are designed to assist individuals with disabilities. 20% local match required for capital assistance and 50% local match required for operating assistance.
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program	Funding for surface transportation and other related projects that contribute to air quality improvements and reduce congestion (area must be designated as a "non-compliance" or "maintenance" area by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Batesburg-Leesville currently does not meet this designation, but may in the future.	To establish new or expanded transportation projects or programs that reduce emissions, including capital investments in transportation infrastructure, congestion relief efforts, or other capital projects. Transit operations projects can be funded for a period not to exceed three years. Typically, a local share of 20% is used, but 100% federal share can be used.
State Mass Transit Fund (SMTF)	An allocation of proceeds from ¼ of 1 cent from the state Motor Fuel User Fee dedicated to supporting mass transit.	Typically distributed to state transit systems for use as matching funds toward federal grants; however, these funds may be used for operations as well.

As stated above, passenger fares will provide some revenue, but most funding will need to be identified from other sources. Of the Federal and State programs listed above, those that are potentially the most viable include the following:

- Section 5310 (Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program);
- Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute Program); and
- Section 5317 (New Freedom Program).

These programs distribute funds to projects that are consistent with the framework in a regional human services transportation coordination plan, and such a plan was completed by CMCOG for the Central Midlands region in 2007. This plan recommended a Mobility Management concept as a potential need in the region, consistent with the concepts discussed in this document for Batesburg-Leesville. Additionally, Section 5311 (Nonurbanized Area Formula Funding) would also be viable. Like the other federal sources, the availability of these funds, distributed by SCDOT, depends on the amount of funding available from the Federal Transit Administration. Although a comprehensive six-year federal

transportation authorization bill is still being debated, transit is poised to receive an increased level of emphasis (and thus, funding) in the coming years.

Even if federal funds from one or more of the above programs are secured, a local match (typically 20% for capital needs and 50% for operating needs) must be identified. State Mass Transit Fund monies generated from the State motor fuel user fee could be available for this purpose, but the proceeds from this funding source are projected to remain stagnant over the coming years. Unless additional funds are identified for this program, it may be difficult to secure funds for new transit initiatives such as those being discussed in Batesburg-Leesville.

Other potential sources of local match include contributions from private grants, businesses, advertising, and local government. Grants may be able to provide some funding, but available grants from foundations are very competitive, and staff to apply for the grants would need to be designated. Additionally, it is difficult to rely on grants for recurring operational expenses, because grants would need to be received on an on-going basis. Private businesses may be willing to contribute, particularly in the case of vanpools for which the particular company is receiving a direct benefit in terms of employee access to work. Advertising revenue is another option; however, the market for advertising revenue (from ads placed on the vehicles) is likely to be limited in Batesburg-Leesville.

In addition to these other local sources, contributions from local governments are a common source of support for transit operations. Lexington County has clearly stated its lack of desire to fund transit operations, but the Town of Batesburg-Leesville needs to consider its willingness to contribute to the required local matching funds.

7.2 Possible Funding Scenario

The table below outlines a possible funding scenario for each phase, to illustrate the potential requirements for contributions from federal, state, and local sources. An assumed fare revenue is included to offset a portion of the operating costs. The funding allocations are subject to change based on the availability of monies from each of these sources.

	Phase I		Phase II		Phase III		Phase IV	
	Projected Cost	Funding Source	Projected Cost	Funding Source	Projected Cost	Funding Source	Projected Cost	Funding Source
Capital Costs	$0	Federal (80%)	$32,000	Federal (80%)	$104,000	Federal (80%)	$144,000	Federal (80%)
	$0	State / Local (20%)	$8,000	State / Local (20%)	$26,000	State / Local (20%)	$36,000	State / Local (20%)
	$0		**$40,000**		**$130,000**		**$180,000**	
Annual Operating Costs	$1,680	Fares (7%)	$4,760	Fares (7%)	$8,610	Fares (7%)	$17,990	Fares (7%)
	$11,160	Federal (50% of remainder)	$31,620	Federal (50% of remainder)	$57,195	Federal (50% of remainder)	$119,505	Federal (50% of remainder)
	$11,160	State / Local (50% of remainder)	$31,620	State / Local (50% of remainder)	$57,195	State / Local (50% of remainder)	$119,505	State / Local (50% of remainder)
	$24,000		**$68,000**		**$123,000**		**$257,000**	

8.0 TIMELINE FOR SERVICE SCENARIOS

Implementation Summary

Phase	Task	Action Items	Timeframe	Responsible Party
I	Promote carpools on an informal basis	Talk to residents at Chamber of Commerce, local churches, and social clubs about the benefits of carpooling	0 - 3 months (on-going)	Local advocate, Town Staff and CMCOG
I	Partner with existing human service agencies to provide demand-response transportation using their resources and volunteer drivers.	Discuss operational and administration approaches with potential agency partners	0 - 6 months	Town Staff, CMCOG, or other stakeholders as identified
		Secure funding source for operational cost	0 - 6 months	Town Staff and CMCOG
		Establish formal written agreement with agency	6 - 9 months	Town staff
		Determine scheduling process for demand-response trips using their resources and drivers	6 - 9 months	Agency
		Initiate demand-response general public transportation service	12 months	Town Staff, CMCOG, and Agency
II	Establish resources to encourage informal carpools.	Identify Ride-Share Coordinator at CMCOG	Year 2	CMCOG
		- Establish a database of interested carpoolers; - Create a web-based carpool matching system; - Answering inquiries from interested carpoolers; and - Develop marketing strategies	Year 2	Ride-Share Coordinator
II	Build on existing agency resources to provide local and regional general public demand-response transportation with a dedicated van.	Secure funding source for capital and operational cost	Year 2	Town Staff and CMCOG
		Purchase a wheelchair lift-equipped van, with the capacity of 10 passengers	Year 2 (delivery in Year 3)	SCDOT
		Determine scheduling process for demand-response trips using the newly purchased van	Year 3	Agency

Phase	Task	Action Items	Timeframe	Responsible Party
III	Identify a Mobility Manager	- Establish a part-time position that could be housed at the Central Midlands Council of Governments or another appropriate agency; and - Secure funding source for the positions salary and benefits	Year 4	CMCOG
III	Initiate structured vanpool service.	Secure funding source for capital and operational cost	Year 4	Mobility Manager and CMCOG
		Purchase two vans, with the capacity of 12-15 passengers	Year 5	SCDOT
III	Build on existing agency resources to provide local and regional general public demand-response transportation with a dedicated minibus.	Secure funding source for capital and operational cost	Year 6	Mobility Manager and CMCOG
		Purchase a 22-ft minibus, which typically has a maximum capacity of 15 passengers (replacement vehicle for the van previously purchased in Phase II)	Year 7	SCDOT
IV	Expand position of Mobility Manager to full-time status	Expand duties of Mobility Manager, perhaps on a regional basis	Year 8	CMCOG
IV	Initiate commuter bus service to Columbia.	Secure funding source for capital and operational cost	Year 9	Mobility Manager and CMCOG
		Purchase two small buses (replacement vehicle for the previously purchased vanpool vans in Phase III)	Year 10	SCDOT
IV	Build on existing agency resources to provide local flex route service and regional demand-response transportation with a dedicated minibus.	Operate service using the two small buses purchased for the commuter bus service	Year 10	Mobility Manager