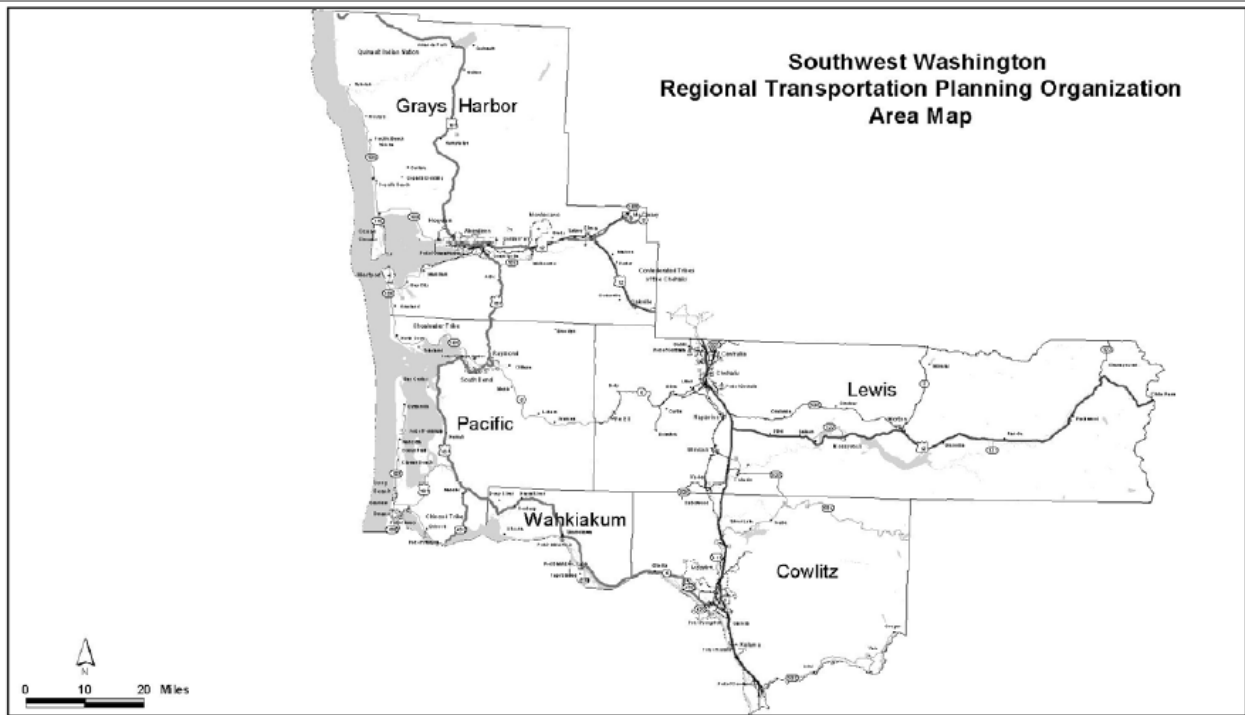


Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan



April 2007

Submitted To
Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization

Submitted by
Landsman Transportation Planning, LLC



TransWatch
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David Raphael



Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan

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Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning
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Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe

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The policies, findings, and recommendations contained in the Plan do not necessarily represent the views of the state and federal agencies identified above and do not obligate those agencies to provide funding to implement the contents of the Plan as adopted.

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Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan Table of Contents

	Page	
Chapter 1: Introduction and Background		1
Overview	1	
Introduction	2	
Eligible Funding Sources	3	
Project Goals	4	
Chapter 2: Project Methodology		6
Demographic Profile/Maps	6	
Stakeholder Involvement	6	
Document Existing Services	6	
Needs Assessment/Identify Strategies	6	
Prioritization of Service Needs/Projects	7	
Chapter 3: Unmet Needs and Strategies to Address Them		8
Cowlitz County	8	
Wahkiakum County	14	
Lewis County	20	
Pacific County	25	
Grays Harbor County	29	
Conclusion	33	
Chapter 4: Proposed Project List for FY 2007 Funding Requests		35
Appendix A: Stakeholders		
Appendix B: Example Press Release and Media Outlets		

Figures

Figure 1: Cowlitz County Trip Attractors	11
Figure 2: Cowlitz County Transit Dependent Population	12
Figure 3: Wahkiakum County Trip Attractors	17
Figure 4: Wahkiakum County Transit Dependent Population	18
Figure 5: Estimated Population in Lewis County	20
Figure 6: Lewis County Trip Attractors	23
Figure 7: Lewis County Transit Dependent Population	24
Figure 8: Pacific County Trip Attractors	27
Figure 9: Pacific County Transit Dependent Population	28
Figure 10: Grays Harbor County Population	29
Figure 11: Grays Harbor County Trip Attractors	32
Figure 12: Grays Harbor County Transit Dependent Population	33

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

This document has been developed and written to respond to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and WSDOT requirements that all transit projects funded by FTA programs to serve the transit needs of the transit dependent including elderly, disabled and low-income people be part of a coordinated transit plan. WSDOT has taken this requirement even further to include FTA 5311 projects that are submitting consolidated funding grant requests.

Overview

Findings in this report are based on demographic analysis of the study area, interviews with key stakeholders and community forums. Chapter 2 presents project methodology; Chapter 3, Unmet Needs and Strategies to Address Them; and Chapter 4, Project Ranking. The major conclusions are:

- There is a need for countywide service in both Lewis and Cowlitz Counties. Without a countywide system, many of the smaller communities receive no service at all and others only limited service. While social service organizations have done outstanding jobs to fill the gaps, they receive no sales tax funding so they must rely on grants and they are not able to meet all needs. Countywide service can become a part of existing Public Transportation Benefit Areas (PTBAs) or can be provided by establishing new ones to serve the areas not currently included.
- Many community groups and organizations are concerned about transit issues. This project brought them to the table to discuss needs and solutions. These efforts must be continued so that the transit dependent can lead active productive lives. Therefore Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council Of Governments (CWCOG) and Grays Harbor Council Of Governments (GHCOG) should establish ongoing transit committees comprised of both providers, users, and/or advocates.
- Medical transportation for the non-Medicaid eligible can be very difficult.
- Transportation in urban areas is easier than in rural areas. This is particularly true in Lewis and Cowlitz Counties where the transit serves only the major population centers of Chehalis/Centralia and Longview/Kelso. Twin Transit and the Cowlitz Urban Bus Service (CUBS) should explore options to provide service outside the boundaries of the cities they serve.
- There is a need for more lift-equipped vehicles to transport people with disabilities.
- People living in the unincorporated areas have difficulty getting to work and work related services.
- There is no central source of ride information.
- Social service and other organizations have managed to fill transit gaps by providing an array of services.

Introduction

Access to goods, services and activities is critical to the quality of life of all residents in the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SWRTPO) /Longview Kelso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) of Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Pacific and Wahkiakum Counties. This is particularly true for older adults and people with disabilities - segments of the population that will continue to increase both proportionately and in absolute numbers over the next 20 years. This is also true for people with limited incomes and without access to a working vehicle. Access to life activities is particularly important in these five counties because of their rural nature and distance between urban areas. In all but Grays Harbor County, a clear majority of people live in unincorporated areas.

Presently, there are a variety of transportation options available to the elderly and disability communities in this region. Four transit authorities provide fixed-route and paratransit services. They are Twin Transit in Lewis County, Grays Harbor Transit Authority in Grays Harbor County, Pacific Transit in Pacific County and CUBS in Cowlitz County. In addition, several human services organizations identified unmet needs and began providing transit services. These include

- Wahkiakum on the Move
- Lower Columbia Community Action Council (CAP)
- L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Highway Transit
- Cowlitz Indian Nation
- Lewis County Senior Transportation Services
- Catholic Community Services

Transit providers and human service agencies have often worked to coordinate services but barriers sometimes limit the success of these efforts. These barriers include regulatory restrictions, funding requirements and differing perceptions. For example, both Medicaid and ADA have scheduling requirements that may make it difficult to coordinate use. Additionally, some people feel uncomfortable riding with others or cannot ride with other people.

Now, with the passage of the 2005 reauthorization of the federal transportation bill, titled SAFETEA-LU, new regulations specify that it is desirable for federal monies to be coordinated and consolidated in *a process through which representatives of different agencies and client groups work together to achieve any one or all of the following goals: more cost-effective service delivery; increased capacity to serve unmet needs; improved quality of service; and, services which are more easily understood and accessed by riders.* Moreover, to give teeth to this, FTA mandates that starting in Fiscal Year 2007, projects funded through three programs included in SAFETEA-LU, including the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC, Section 5316), New Freedom

(Section 5317) and the Formula Program for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) are required to be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. SAFETEA-LU guidance issued by the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) indicates that the plan should be a *unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited income, laying out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizing services*. The three funding programs focus on the needs of transportation disadvantaged persons, or those with special transportation needs that cannot be met through traditional means (access to automobile or public transportation). For the purpose of this plan, the State of Washington statutory definition of people with special transportation needs is used: *those people, including their attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation*. While SAFETEA-LU does not require that Section 5311 funds be subject to the coordinated plan, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has established this requirement.

Eligible Funding Sources and Types of Projects

Projects funded with the four sources of grant funds are required to be selected through a competitive process, and derived from this coordinated planning effort. Many, if not all, of the suggested strategies and solutions could be structured to take advantage of available program funds. The sources of funds and examples of eligible projects are described below:

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

The purpose of the JARC program is to fund local programs that offer job access services for low-income individuals. JARC funds are distributed to states on a formula basis, depending on that state's rate of low-income population. This approach differs from previous funding cycles, when grants were awarded purely on an "earmark" basis. JARC funds will pay for up to 50% of operating funds to support the project budget, and 80% for a capital project. The remaining funds are required to be provided through local match sources. Examples of eligible JARC projects include:

- Late-night and weekend service
- Guaranteed Ride Home Programs
- Vanpools or shuttle services to improve access to employment or training sites
- Car-share or other projects to improve access to autos
- Access to child care and training

New Freedom Program

The New Freedom Program provides funding to serve persons with disabilities. Overall, the purpose of the program is to go "beyond" the minimal requirements

of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Funds are distributed to states based on that state's population of persons with disabilities. The same match requirements for JARC apply to the New Freedom Program. Examples of eligible New Freedom Program projects include:

- Expansion of paratransit service hours or service area beyond minimal requirements
- Purchase of accessible taxi or other vehicles
- Promotion of accessible ride sharing or vanpool programs
- Administration of volunteer programs
- Building curb-cuts, providing accessible bus stops
- Travel Training programs

Elderly and Disabled Program (Section 5310)

Funds for this program are allocated by formula to states for capital costs of providing services to elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Typically, vans or small buses are available to support non-profit transportation providers. A 20% local match is required.

General Public Transportation: Non-urbanized areas (Section 5311)

Federal Section 5311 funds are intended to enhance the access of people in non-urbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation. Services are available to the general public, but may also be used to support services for elderly and disabled. The match requirement is consistent with the JARC and New Freedom programs. Examples of eligible projects include:

- Wheelchair accessible passenger vehicles
- Communications equipment
- Purchase and installation of bus shelters or other amenities
- Operating Assistance

Project Goals

The Washington State Department of Transportation serves as the designated recipient for these—and other—federal funds intended for non-urbanized portions of the state, and, in turn distributes them to local entities through a competitive grant process. WSDOT is requiring that projects funded through the next funding cycle, effective July 1, 2007, be derived from a coordinated plan. The overarching goal of this planning effort, then, is to respond both to SAFETEA-LU and the State of Washington requirements for receiving these federal funds.

Additionally, an important goal for this plan is to provide an opportunity for a diverse range of stakeholders with a common interest in human service transportation to convene and collaborate on how best to provide transportation

services for these targeted populations. Specifically, the stakeholders are called upon to identify service gaps and/or barriers, strategize on solutions most appropriate to meet these needs based on local circumstances, and prioritize these needs for inclusion in the plan. Stakeholder outreach and participation is a key element to the development of this plan, and federal guidance issued by FTA specifically requires this participation, and recommends that it come from a broad base of groups and organizations involved in the coordinated planning process, including (but not limited to):

- area transportation planning agencies,
- transit riders and potential riders,
- public transportation providers,
- private transportation providers,
- non-profit transportation providers,
- human service agencies funding and/or supporting access for human services, and other government agencies that administer programs for targeted population,
- advocacy organizations,
- community-based organizations,
- elected officials, and tribal representatives

Chapter 2

Project Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology used to develop the SWRTPO Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan.

Demographic Profile/Maps

Using Census and other relevant demographic data, two maps for each county were developed. One set of maps shows the concentration and numbers of people who are: elderly, low-income, without a vehicle or disabled. The other set maps trip attractors such as employers with more than 100 employees, education and medical facilities and social service offices. Both maps overlay the existing transit fixed route transit services. This step clearly shows what areas in each county are underserved as well as what areas need service the most because of a high concentration of transit dependent populations and trip attractors.

Stakeholder Involvement

This planning process involved stakeholders through two sets of public meetings in each county and a series of stakeholder interviews (Appendix A presents the list of those interviewed).

To create a plan that truly reflected the transportation needs of human service agencies, the planning process sought to maximize human service agencies and community stakeholder outreach and involvement. To achieve this, a series of two meetings took place in each county. The first focused on a targeted group of community stakeholders to provide initial input on available transportation services, unmet client and customer needs, and opportunities to explore. Prior to each meeting, SWRTPO sent an invitation and request for preliminary information to stakeholders. This initial gathering of information set the stage for focused and productive meetings.

The second set of meetings were targeted at the entire community to review local and regional data findings, identified unmet transportation needs and proposed creative transportation strategies to address them. During these meetings, community members expanded on proposed strategies with the result of specific project development. Promotion of these meetings occurred via the press, email and phone calls to the growing list of stakeholders involved and requests to transportation providers to post notices on their vehicles. (Appendix B provides an example press release and a summary of all media outlets contacted).

Document Existing Transportation Services

This step involved documenting the range of public transportation services that already exist in within the five counties. These services include public fixed route and dial-a-ride (paratransit) services, vanpool services, and transportation services provided or sponsored by other social service agencies. Providers were contacted by telephone to discuss their services as well as any issues or constraints.

Needs Assessment/Identification of Strategies

An important step in completing this plan is the assessment of needs and identification of strategies to fill these gaps. This was accomplished through a two prong strategy of

telephone interviews with stakeholders and then review of strategies at the second of the two meetings held in each county.

The results of this process were remarkable. Three different agencies came forward with programs to meet needs that they were willing to sponsor and coordinate with existing service providers. These organizations are:

- Human Services Council that has teamed with Lower Columbia Community Action Council, Wahkiakum on the Move and the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council Of Governments (CWCOG) to develop a program to meet the medical and work trip needs of the transit dependent populations in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties
- Olympic Area Agency on Aging that has teamed with Grays Harbor Council Of Governments to develop a mobility manager program for elderly and disabled transit dependent people in Grays Harbor County
- United Way of Lewis County that has teamed with the SWRTPO to develop transit services in the currently unserved south and west areas of Lewis County.

Prioritization of Service Needs/Projects

Based on criteria developed through the stakeholder process, and in consultation with SWRTPO, this plan ranked the almost 30 projects that have been submitted through the WSDOT Consolidated Grant Process.

Chapter 3 Unmet Needs and Strategies to Address Them

This chapter presents the findings of the stakeholder surveys, the demographic analysis and the two public meetings held in each county. For each of the five counties it addresses:

- Existing transit services
- Unmet needs
- Analysis of demographic data
- Proposed strategies to address unmet needs
- Proposed new services

Cowlitz County

Cowlitz County covers 1,144 square miles and is home to an estimated 97,000 residents. Roughly 58 percent of those live in the incorporated cities of, Kelso (pop 12,000), Longview (pop 36,000), Kalama (pop 2,000), Castle Rock (pop 2,000) and Woodland (pop 5,000). The remaining 42 percent live in rural, unincorporated communities such as Ryderwood, Toutle, Yale, Silver Lake, Lexington, Ariel and Cougar. Most of these communities are along I-5, the major north/south route in Cowlitz County. Of the total population 13.5 percent are 65 or older, slightly higher than the Washington State average of 11.5 percent. According to the 2000 Census, about 19,000 people have disabilities.

Existing Transit Services

A range of programs provide transportation services in Cowlitz County. However, most are concentrated in the urbanized area. For the most part, therefore, transit dependent people who live outside of Longview and Kelso may still have to rely on friends and family to get where they need to go. Existing services are:

- **CUBS**-Community Urban Bus Service-provided by the Cowlitz Transportation Authority and operated by the City of Longview provides fixed route bus service within the cities of Longview and Kelso. CUBS runs five hourly loop routes from 7 AM to 7PM Monday through Friday. Three routes operate from 8 AM to 6 PM on Saturday. CUBS also provides required ADA paratransit services during the same hours and within 3/4ths of a mile of the fixed routes.
- **CAP**-Lower Columbia Community Action Council-provides two transit services. Its general public **I-5 fixed route service** connects Longview to Thurston County and Intercity Transit to the north and Clark County and C-Tran to the south, Monday through Friday. The run to the north makes four round trips daily, and serves the communities of Longview - Castle Rock - Toledo/Winlock - Centralia and Tumwater. The southern run makes three round trips weekdays to the communities of Longview - Kalama - Woodland - Salmon Creek. This service uses 12 –passenger lift-equipped vehicles and charges \$1 each way.

With funding from the Southwest Washington Area Agency on Aging, CAP also provides **demand response services for seniors** (60 and above) **within Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties**. CAP uses one wheelchair-accessible van and volunteer drivers using their own cars. Because of limited funding, seniors are eligible for only two round trips a month. With so few trips available, most riders use these trips for medical purposes if they are not Medicaid eligible.

- **Catholic Community Services (CCS)** provides demand response services for elderly and disabled people throughout the five-county planning region, including Wahkiakum County. CCS provides these services using volunteers driving their own cars. For trips in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, they also have one volunteer with a lift-equipped van. Services are available every day for 24 hours IF they have drivers available. They currently have about 20 volunteers of whom 10 will be on the road at any given time. The agency provides about 300 to 500 one-way trips a month, but cannot meet all the needs of their clients. They have many clients in Toutle and Silver Lake going to Castle Rock, but the overriding need seems to be to go to hospitals or medical appointments in Portland or Vancouver.
- **Veterans Van** provides vets with rides to medical facilities in Vancouver or Portland. It makes only one trip down and one trip back on a fixed route. The van service only handles ambulatory riders. The service just started again in July 2006 after a hiatus. It serves 75 clients using volunteer drivers who use the van and get a meal ticket. It travels through Cowlitz County. It stops at the 15th Avenue Safeway in Longview as well as in Kalama and Woodland. Most of the riders are seniors.
- **Cowlitz Indian Tribe (CIT)** operates two transportation programs. Using one small, lift-equipped, 14-passenger bus, CIT runs a **rural public transportation program**, and using a mini-van, it runs a **demand response program for the tribal elders**. The service area for both these programs includes the rural areas within Cowlitz and Lewis Counties. On a north/south axis, CIT operates between Castle Rock and just south of Chehalis, and between Morton on the east and Ryderwood to the west.
- **Medicaid Transportation:** The Human Services Council (HSC) is the regional Medicaid transportation brokerage that serves Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties. It contracts with 10 transportation providers in Cowlitz County, only half of whom also operate in Wahkiakum County. In Cowlitz County, HSC says it has enough providers to ensure that people do not get denied service. There they handle about 5,100 medical trip requests per month. Of those 60% are local, i.e. in-county, 35% of the trips go to Vancouver, and the remaining 5% go to Portland.
- **Program Specific Transportation** is offered by several organizations to serve the needs of their Abuse Prevention Center provides transportation to its clients using staff. The Monticello Retirement Home has a lift-equipped vehicle which it uses to take its residents shopping and on other recreational trips. There may be some opportunities for coordination of rides, but confidentiality, payment schedules, liability issues and rider abilities may limit this.

Analysis of Demographic Data

Figure 1: Cowlitz County Trip Attractors shows that CUBS covers most of Longview/Kelso, although fast growing areas such as Lexington just north of Longview do not have any service. The CAP I-5 service does provide connections between major communities but there is no service within any of these communities. The CIT service provides connections in the northern area of the county. However there is no service in the unincorporated areas of Cougar, Ryderwood and Toutle that are off the I-5 corridor.

Figure 2: Cowlitz County Transit Dependent Population shows concentrations of populations: with no household vehicles: that are older than 65: that are disabled: and that are living in poverty. Most of these groups are concentrated in the Longview/Kelso area, although there are concentrations in Castle Rock, Kalama and Woodland as would be expected. This map also shows that these groups are represented in the more rural areas as well.

Figure 1: Cowlitz County Trip Attractors

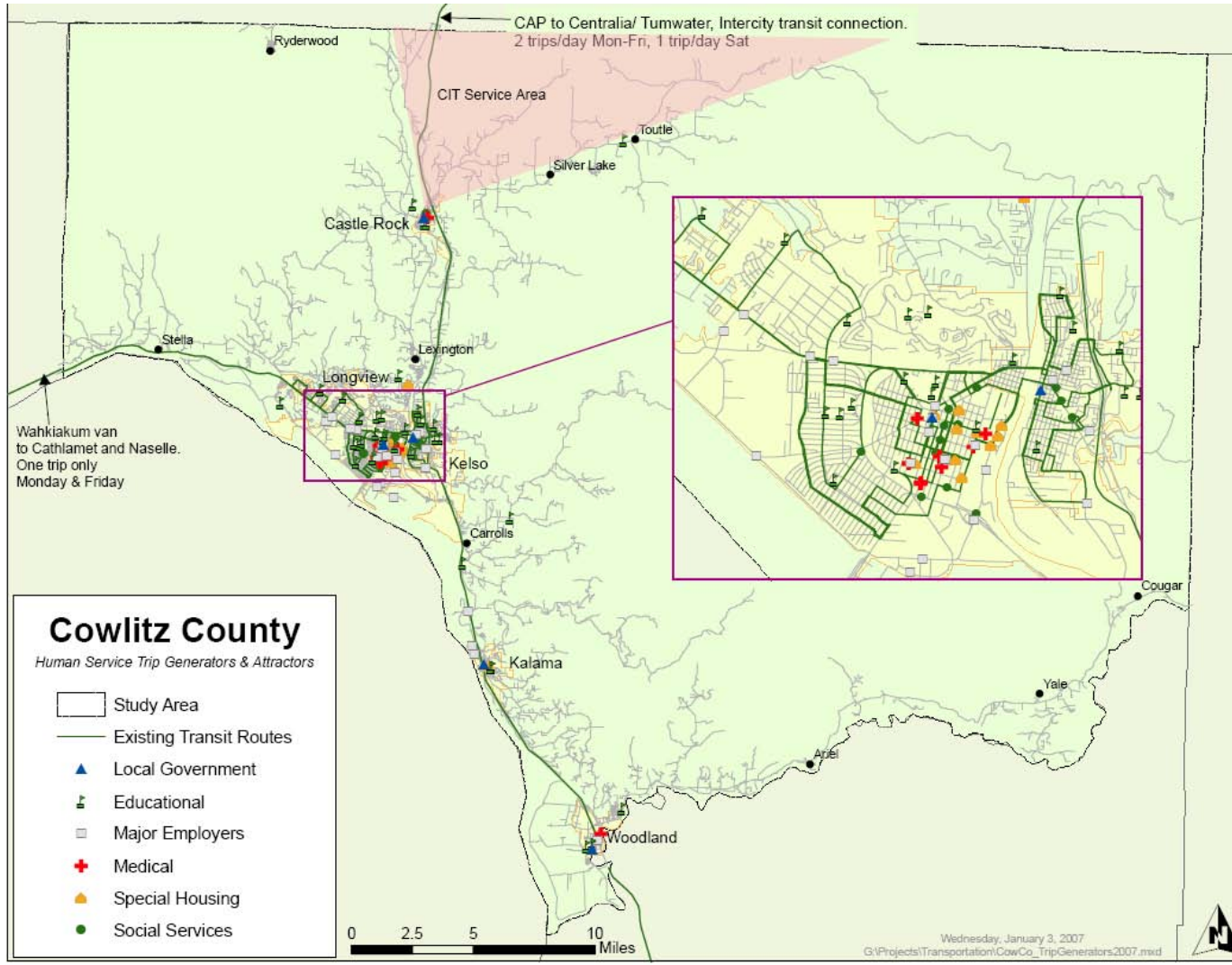
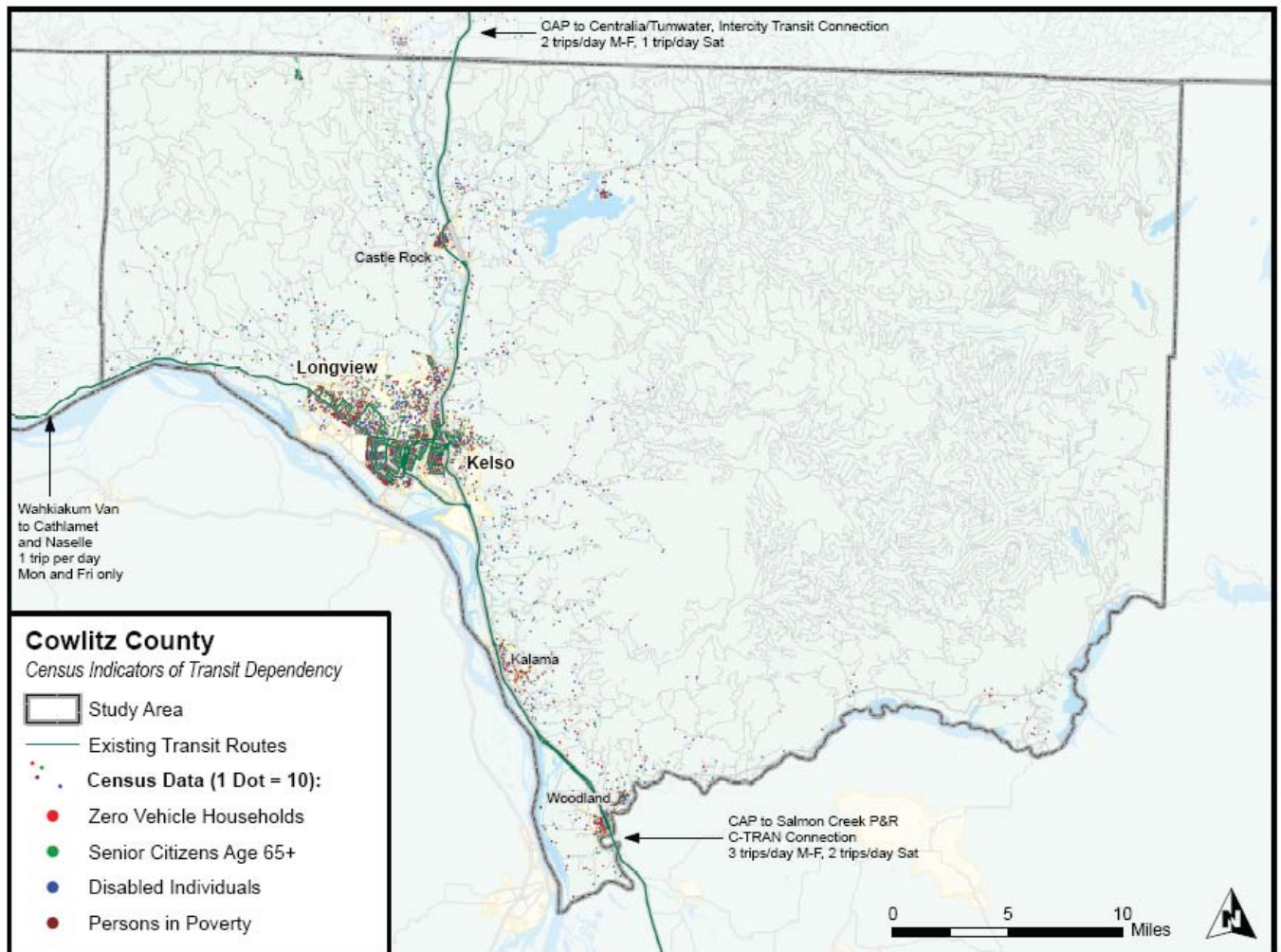


Figure 2: Cowlitz County Transit Dependent Population



Unmet Needs and Issues

Based on interviews with stakeholders and the results of the two public meetings, the following were defined as unmet needs. See Appendix A for list of stakeholders.

1. CUBS provides service only in Kelso/Longview and only during day and early evening
2. CUBS ADA service is only public transit service available to disabled riders in the entire county
3. Several programs in the county have vans to serve their clients; some of them are looking at ways they could coordinate services
4. Some programs do not seem to be aware of the Federal Transit Administration's Section 5310 program that provides vehicles for non-profit elderly and disabled transportation programs

5. Shortage of volunteers for transportation programs; one concern is training is too intensive for volunteers
6. No one central place or material lists all existing transportation services, and who is eligible
7. Difficult to coordinate ADA return times for medical trips because of uncertainty of appointment end times
8. Only general public service outside of Kelso/Longview is CAP service between Tumwater and Longview and the CIT program
9. It is very difficult to find transportation for dialysis patients who are not Medicaid eligible
10. Difficult to get to work on graveyard shifts or to areas outside CUBS service route
11. No service for unincorporated areas off the I-5 corridor
12. Difficult to find and train volunteers. Training can be onerous for both the volunteer and the trainer

Proposed Strategies to Address Unmet Needs

1. Medical transportation for the non-Medicaid population
 - a. Medical transportation program using volunteer and other drivers
 - b. Programs to encourage volunteer drivers.
2. General public transportation that expands CUBS service area to at least Lexington and industrial area; explore option of countywide service
3. Employment transportation for areas and times unserved by CUBS
 - a. Van pools
 - b. Use of taxis for employment and after CUBS hours employment and social activities
 - c. Transportation program using volunteer and other drivers
 - d. Central source of information about existing services
 - e. Coordination efforts including brokerage and materials identifying services available
4. Lack of coordination among service providers
 - a. Coordination efforts including brokerage and materials identifying services available
5. Services for disabled outside of CUBS service area
 - a. Programs to encourage volunteer drivers.
6. Expanded services for elderly
 - a. Programs to encourage volunteer drivers

Proposed New Services

As a direct result of the coordination process, the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, Human Services Council, Lower Columbia Community Action Council and Wahkiakum on The Move teamed to develop two programs to address some of the unmet needs.

- Cowlitz-Wahkiakum U-Ride
- Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Employment Transportation – JARC

The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum U-Ride project will provide transportation to life-sustaining medical appointments, such as dialysis, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments for Cowlitz and Wahkiakum County residents. It is anticipated that these treatments will

take place in the Longview area, although residents of western Wahkiakum County may use these services in Astoria, Oregon. HSC will use its extensive brokerage network to provide the service, working closely with the Lower Columbia Mobility Coalition to market and provide outreach to area agencies and providers of services. The service, as anticipated will also include trips to general destinations, such as grocery stores, nutrition sites, volunteer locations, and to visit friends and family - destinations that assist people in remaining independent in their homes.

This dial-a-ride transportation service is intended to serve individuals who are not eligible for Medicaid transportation and who do not have access to local transit. Trips would, however, be coordinated with other transportation programs operated under the HSC transportation brokerage, using its shared pool of contract vendors. For Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, HSC will be working with Lower Columbia Community Action Council and Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services to provide the dial-a-ride service for the two counties as contracted vendors.

The Human Services Council will develop a new service to provide **employment transportation services** to assist low-income individuals and families, who reside in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, with their work and work-related activities. The program will enable low-income workers and WorkFirst participants in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties to access transportation to employment sites, job interviews, training services, education, childcare, and other work-related activities, which ultimately lead to self-sufficiency.

Part of this project addresses the development of appropriate longer-term shared transportation options, (vanpools, rideshares or other grouped transportation alternatives) to transport low-income riders traveling to and from common destinations at times or locations where public transportation is not available in the project service area.

As a broker, HSC will plan for and implement the use and coordination of community transportation providers within the service area. They subcontract or have service agreements with a variety of transportation organizations and providers in both Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties. These contractors will be monitored on an on-going basis to ensure compliance with all required legal, financial and safety regulations.

Should resources become available, other potential projects include:

- Expanded connections to Lexington
- Improved coordination through the use of internet, meeting, publications, and mobility coordinator

Wahkiakum County

Wahkiakum County is the third smallest county in Washington. The estimated 2006 population is 3,900. The county seat is the town of Cathlamet, and with a population of 565, is the only incorporated community in the county. Unincorporated areas include Elochoman Valley with a population of 922, Puget Island with 798 people, Skamokawa with 519 and Grays River/Rosburg/Deep River with 1,020. Over 20 percent of the total population is 65 or older; this is almost double the state percentage. According to the 2000 Census, slightly less than 1,000 people have disabilities.

Existing Transit Services

There are several transportation programs providing transit services in Wahkiakum County. The small size of the county limits available transit services because it is expensive for out of the area providers to travel to Wahkiakum County to pick up residents.

- **Wahkiakum on the Move (WOTM)** was started and is operated by Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services. This deviated route system offers three routes:
 1. From Wahkiakum County to Naselle (Pacific County) twice daily, linking with Pacific Transit, which provides service throughout Pacific County and with connections to Aberdeen in the north, and Astoria, Oregon, to the south.
 2. Local service in the Cathlamet area, providing riders with service to local business, shopping, medical appointments, and community events on a daily basis.
 3. Monday and Friday service to the Kelso/Longview area allowing riders to access medical appointments, shopping, regional governmental agencies as well as linking with other transportation services such as CUBS.

In addition, the agency also provides door to door service for seniors and non-ambulatory riders of all ages.

WOTM has received requests for daily runs to and from the Longview/Kelso area so customers can use the system to commute to work. Another unmet need is an additional earlier run to link with Pacific Transportation in Naselle to get to Astoria. When funding and resources become available, WOTM would like to expand services to meet these needs.

- **Catholic Community Services** also provides demand response services for elderly and disabled people in Wahkiakum County. They rely on volunteer drivers using their own cars. CCS also has one volunteer with a lift-equipped van available. Services are available every day all day long IF they have drivers available. They currently have about 20 volunteers of whom 10 will be on the road at any given time.
- **Medicaid Transportation:** The Human Services Council (HSC) is the regional Medicaid transportation broker for Wahkiakum County. It has several regional providers with whom it books rides for Medicaid eligible riders. HSC has had difficulties providing rides to Medicaid clients living in Wahkiakum County because it currently has no local providers based there. WOTM plans to become a Medicaid provider and will then make providing Medicaid trips much easier in Wahkiakum County. In the meantime, HSC staff think Medicaid clients have stopped calling for rides because they cannot get them. In September and October of 2006, the broker handled a total of 346 round trips -- about 3% of the volume generated in Cowlitz County. Virtually all of the trips handled by the broker were out-of-county trips. 80% went to the Kelso/Longview area. About 7% went west to Pacific County and a half-dozen or so trips went either to Portland or Seattle.

Analysis of Demographic Data

As **Figure 3: Wahkiakum Trip Attractors** shows there are very few major trip attractors in Wahkiakum County. The few that exist are in Cathlamet. This lack of services increases the need to travel to Longview/Kelso or to Pacific County and Astoria. This can be very difficult for the transit dependent. As **Figure 4: Wahkiakum County Transit Dependent Population** shows, most of the transit dependent in the county live in Cathlamet. However Puget Island has a large number of households who may be transit dependent. The figure suggests that a sizable (for the county) number of transit dependent people live in the western part of the county, as well.

Unmet Needs and Issues

1. Limited family jobs and affordable housing within Cathlamet force residents to move to rural locations that often are not easily served by transit
2. The geography of Wahkiakum County makes it difficult for transit to serve residents who do not live adjacent to SR 4
3. When SR 4 closes because of slides, alternative transportation routes are a challenge. This poses a huge threat to life-line medical services.
4. County is experiencing out-migration of working families and in-migration of retirees as well as telecommuters
5. There are limited transportation services for people needing to commute to work or get to educational opportunities
6. It is difficult for Medicaid clients to get rides because there are no providers in the County. This will improve when WOTM becomes certified
7. It is even more difficult for non-Medicaid transit dependent people to get to medical appointments
8. Existing service to Longview needs to expand from twice weekly service to a minimum of one round trip a day and more regular daily service if possible
9. Service to Naselle needs to expand so that workers can make the connection on Pacific Transit to the Astoria area
10. Transportation to social service programs is very difficult, limiting participation. Specific examples include parenting programs, the Wahkiakum County Chemical Dependency Program and mental health services.
11. There is a lack of transportation service for youths to get to after school activities.

Figure 3: Wahkiakum County Trip Attractors

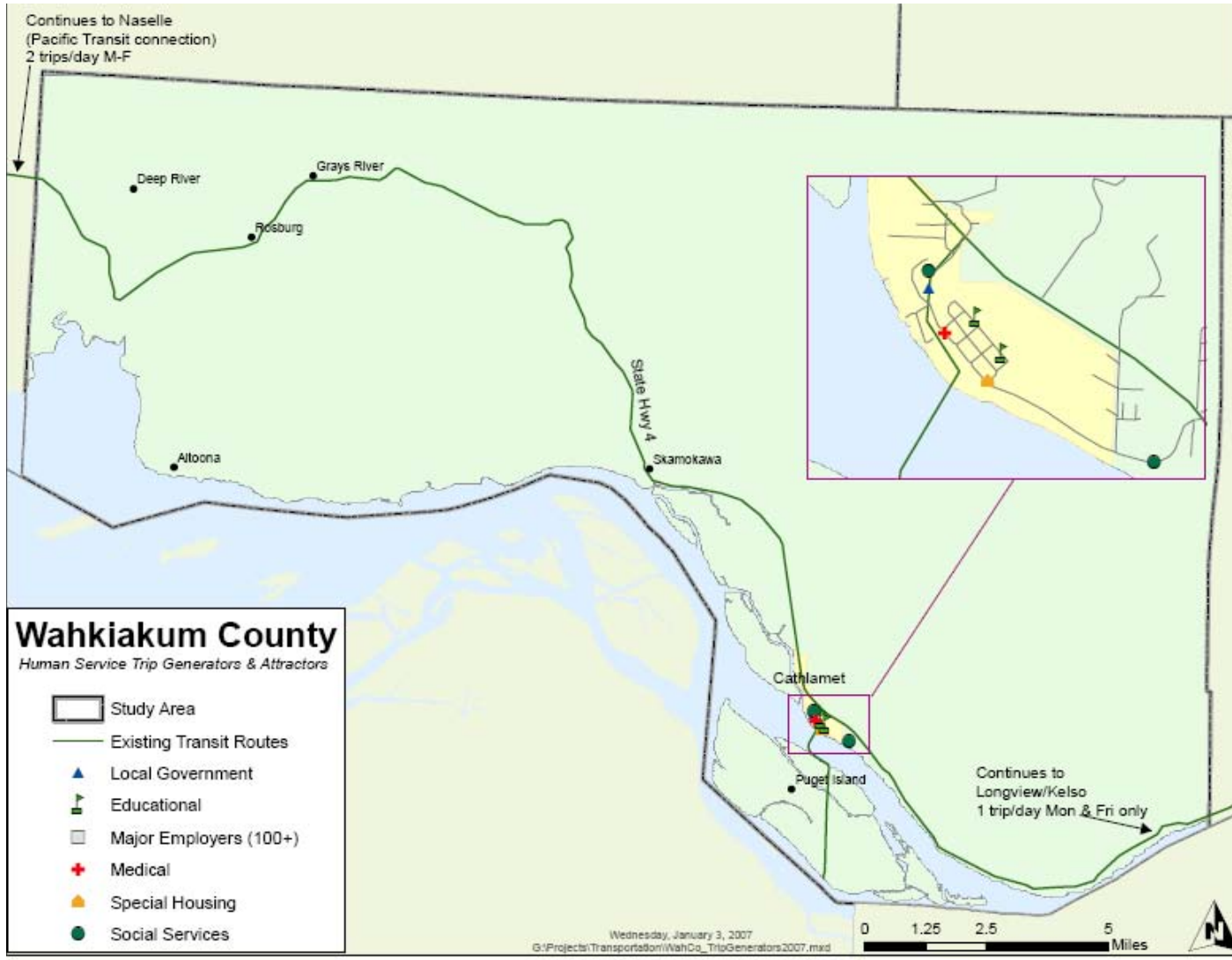
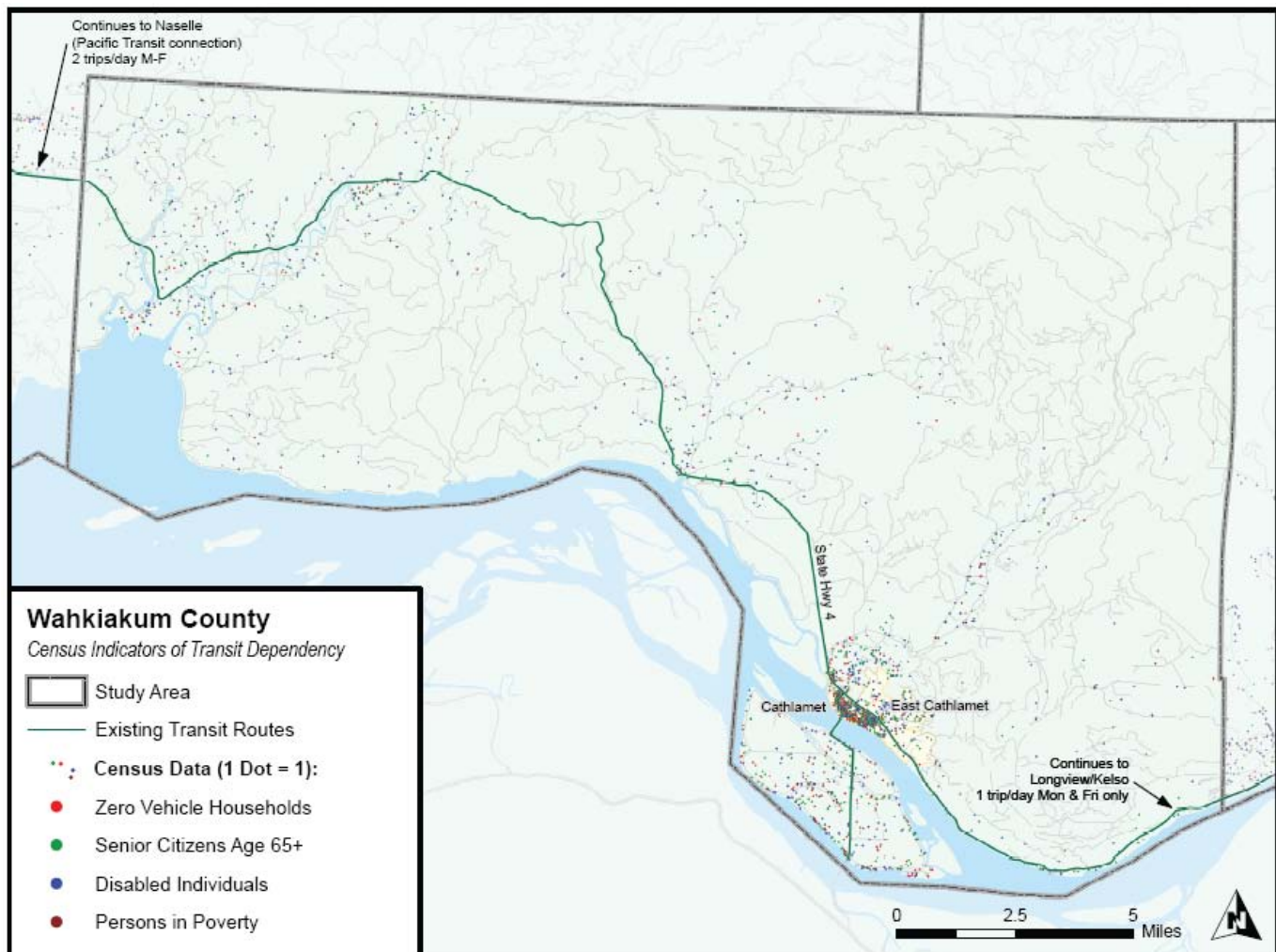


Figure 4: Wahkiakum County Transit Dependent Populations



Proposed Strategies to Address Unmet Needs

1. Daily service to and from the Longview/Kelso areas
2. Explore van pooling opportunities
3. Add additional runs to link up with Pacific Transit in Naselle for transportation to and from Astoria, Oregon and the Ilwaco/Long Beach areas.
4. Invite taxi service to operate in Wahkiakum County
5. Explore human service agency-sponsored subscription services in which human service agency would pay WOTM to provide service
6. Explore ways to better use volunteers to provide medical and employment transportation.

Proposed New Services

As a direct result of the coordination process, Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, Human Services Council, Lower Columbia Community Action and Wahkiakum on The Move came together to develop two programs to address some of the unmet needs.

- Cowlitz-Wahkiakum U-Ride
- Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Employment Transportation – JARC

The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum U-Ride project will provide transportation to life-sustaining medical appointments, such as dialysis, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments for Cowlitz and Wahkiakum county residents. It is anticipated that these treatments will take place in the Longview area, although residents of western Wahkiakum County may use these services in Astoria, Oregon. HSC will use its extensive brokerage network to provide the service, working closely with the Lower Columbia Mobility Coalition to market and provide outreach to area agencies and providers of services. The service, as anticipated will also include trips to general destinations, such as grocery stores, nutrition sites, volunteer locations, and to visit friends and family - destinations that assist people in remaining independent in their homes.

This dial-a-ride transportation service is intended to serve individuals who are not eligible for Medicaid transportation and who do not have access to local transit. Trips would, however, be coordinated with other transportation programs operated under the HSC transportation brokerage, using its shared pool of contract vendors. For Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, HSC will be working with Lower Columbia Community Action Council and Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services to provide the dial-a-ride service for the two counties as contracted vendors.

The Human Services Council will develop a new service to provide **employment transportation services** to assist low-income individuals and families, who reside in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, with their work and work-related activities. The program will enable low-income workers and WorkFirst participants in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties to access transportation to employment sites, job interviews, training services, education, childcare, and other work-related activities, which ultimately lead to self-sufficiency.

Part of this project addresses the development of appropriate longer-term shared transportation options, (vanpools, rideshares or other grouped transportation alternatives) to transport low-income riders traveling to and from common destinations at times or locations where public transportation is not available in the project service area.

As a broker, HSC will plan for and implement the use and coordination of community transportation providers within the services area. They subcontract or have service agreements with a variety of transportation organizations and providers in both Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties. These contractors will be monitored on an on-going basis to ensure compliance with all required legal, financial and safety regulations.

Should resources become available, other potential service include:

- Expand WOTM service to and from Longview/Kelso area
- Add additional run to link up with Pacific Transit in Naselle
- Develop van-pool program
- Develop Mobility Manager Program in which county wide mobility manager works with transit dependent and existing programs to find rides and helps train volunteers to provide rides.

Lewis County

Lewis County has a population of slightly less than 73,000. **Figure 5** shows the population of its incorporated areas.

Figure 5
Estimated 2006 Population in Lewis County

Centralia	15,430
Chehalis	7,025
Morton	1,127
Mossyrock	485
Napavine	1,400
Pe Ell	666
Toledo	685
Vader	615
Winlock	1,350

Approximately 2/3rds of the county residents live in unincorporated areas. Of the total population, 16 percent are 65 or older and over 15,000 people have a disability.

Existing Services

- **Catholic Community Services** uses volunteers using their own cars to provide rides in northern Lewis County and southern Thurston County for senior citizens. Currently, they have about 5 volunteer drivers in Lewis County. Most of the trips are to medical appointments or for errands. They mostly provide trips within the county because their volunteers do not like to make long trips. There is a great need for rides in the western part of the county, in Pe Ell and nearby communities because no public transit serves this area. CCS would like to provide more rides if they could find and train more drivers.
- **L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Highway Transit (LMHT)** is a private transportation program operated by the White Pass Community Services Coalition (WPCSC). LMHT provides three transportation services:

- Rural, fixed route, intercity bus service from Packwood to Centralia/Chehalis via Hwy 12 communities of Randle, Glenoma, Morton, Mossyrock, Silver Creek, Salkum, Ethel, and Hwy 508 community of Onalaska
- Fixed-route, intercity bus service from Morton through east Lewis County community of Mineral, and southeast Pierce County communities Elbe, Eatonville, with terminus at Pierce Transit's Elk Plain Wal-Mart stop Both fixed route services operate weekdays from 3:40 AM to 8:40 PM
- Rural dial-a-ride service for the elderly and disabled between the eastern Lewis County communities of Mineral, Morton, Glenoma, Randle, and Packwood. The dial-a-ride service operates only on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

LMHT operates seven vehicles including two 24-passenger buses; two new 14-passenger buses; and three older small buses. All vehicles are accessible with wheelchair lifts. While LHMT transports people for a wide variety of purposes, there are a large number of riders going to Centralia Community College, many of whom are unemployed timber workers who are in vocational training programs.

Lewis County Senior Transportation Program provides Dial-a-Ride service anywhere in the county for seniors and operates a scheduled medical and shopping shuttle to downtown Chehalis for residents in Pe Ell one day a week. General hours of service are from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Special Saturday service can be arranged for certain life-sustaining trip purposes, such as dialysis treatment. This service uses only paid drivers and provides about 13,000 trips a year, including roughly 6,000 Medicaid-funded trips. This program is interested in expanding its services in the southern part of the county, which is currently unserved.

Twin Transit is a public transportation system operated by the Lewis County PBTA. Twin Transit provides five deviated routes and paratransit services to passengers within the Cities of Centralia and Chehalis, Washington. While the transit agency recently won a sales tax increase, it continues to confine its services to the urbanized area for financial reasons.

- **CAP**-Lower Columbia Community Action Council-provides general public **I-5 fixed route service that** connects Lewis County residents with Thurston County and Intercity Transit to the north, and with Clark County and C-Tran to the south. The intercity service operates Monday through Friday. The run to the north makes four round trips, and serves the communities of Centralia and Tumwater. The southern run makes three round trips weekdays to the communities of Toledo/Winlock – Castle Rock - Longview - Kalama - Woodland and Salmon Creek. CAP uses 12 – passenger lift-equipped vehicles and charges \$1 each way.
- **Cowlitz Indian Tribe** operates two transportation programs. Using one small, lift-equipped, 14-passenger bus, CIT runs a **rural public transportation program**, and using a mini-van, it runs a **demand response program for the tribal elders**. The service area for both these programs includes the rural areas within Cowlitz and

Lewis Counties. On a north/south axis, CIT operates between Castle Rock and just south of Chehalis, and between Morton on the east and Ryderwood to the west.

- **Medicaid Transportation:** Paratransit Services is the regional Medicaid transportation brokerage that serves Lewis County. It contracts with 16 regional transportation providers, including several taxi and cabulance companies and other private providers. The broker does not currently contract with Twin Transit or any of the public transportation systems in this region. However, it does purchase transit bus tickets and passes on behalf of its Medicaid clients.

During the three-month period ending July 31, 2006, about 5,000 medical trips originated in Lewis County. About one-quarter of all Medicaid trips originating in the County (over 1,200 trips) were out-of-county trips -- mainly to Olympia, but also some to Seattle, Tacoma and Longview. Over 50% of the medical trips originating in the eastern portion of the county come into the Chehalis/Centralia area.

Analysis of Demographic Data

Figure 6: Lewis County Trip Attractors shows that most of the trip attractors are in the Centralia/Chehalis area, although there are some in Winlock and Morton. This map clearly shows that the western part of the county, in the Pe Ell area, has no transit services and very few services. This increases the need for transit services so that people can have access to important life activities. The southern part of the county, including the communities of Winlock, Vader, Napavine and Toledo, has limited service as well.

Figure 7: Lewis County Transit Dependent Population indicates that transit dependent populations live throughout the county although they are focused in Centralia and Chehalis. However the Winlock and Vader area also have concentrations of transit dependent populations.

Unmet Needs and Issues

1. United Way of Lewis County completed a county wide needs assessment that ranked the lack of transportation as one of the main problems in the county
2. No public transportation to or in western Lewis County. Very limited dial-a-ride service to southern Lewis County and portions of Hwy. 12 west of Mossyrock to I-5 and west of Cinebar on Hwy. 508. No dial-a-ride service west of Chehalis on Hwy. 6 to Pe Ell.
3. Access to medical care for the non-Medicaid population, especially for those under-60 years of age
4. No public transportation options between eastern Lewis County and Yakima along the Hwy. 12 corridor
5. Morton Hospital has difficulty getting transportation for their patients, especially for discharges
6. No central source of information about available transit services & funding resources
7. Lack of countywide transportation coordinating body
8. There is a need for out of county connections, especially medical trips to Olympia
9. There is no transit service in or to Toledo

Figure 6: Lewis County Trip Attractors

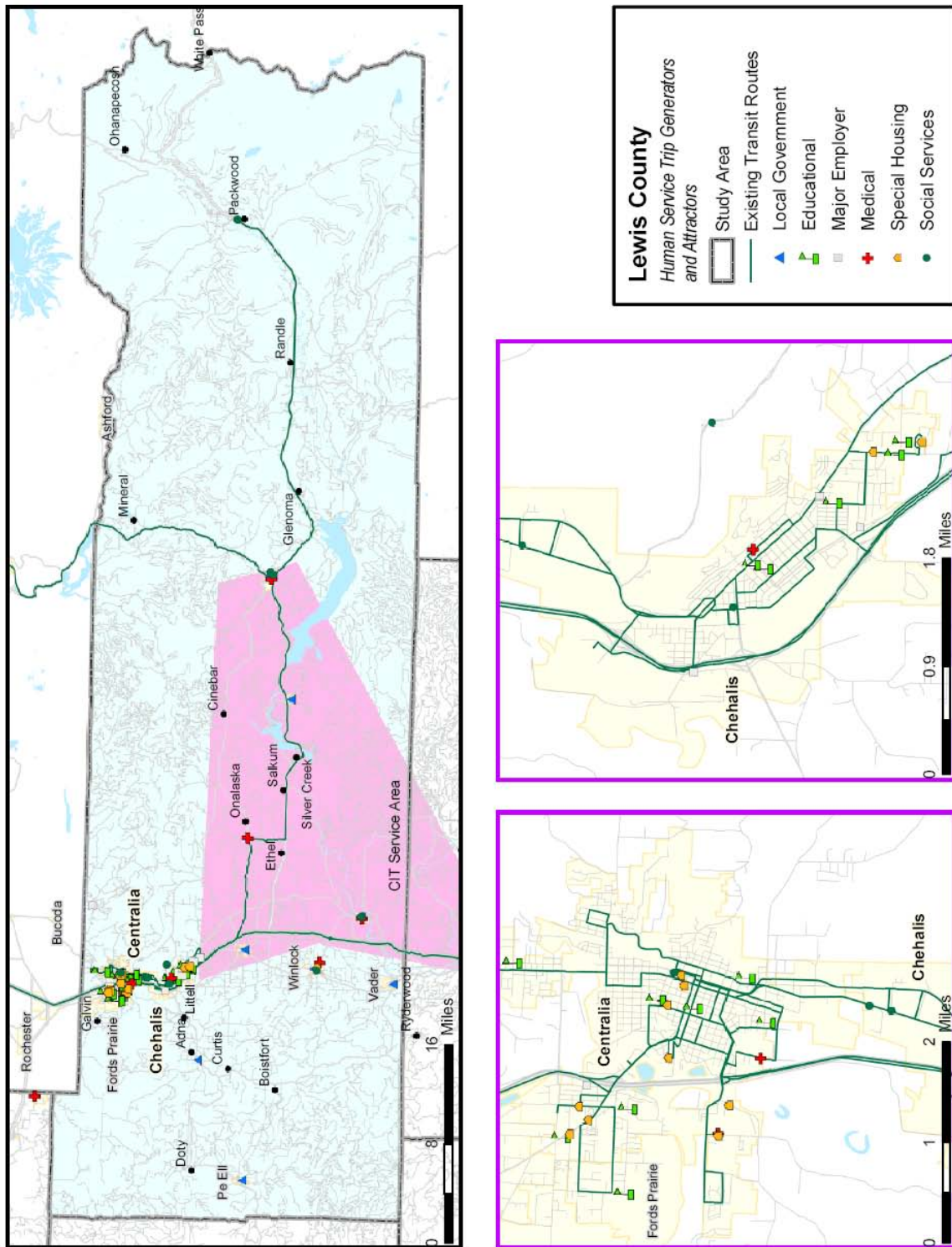
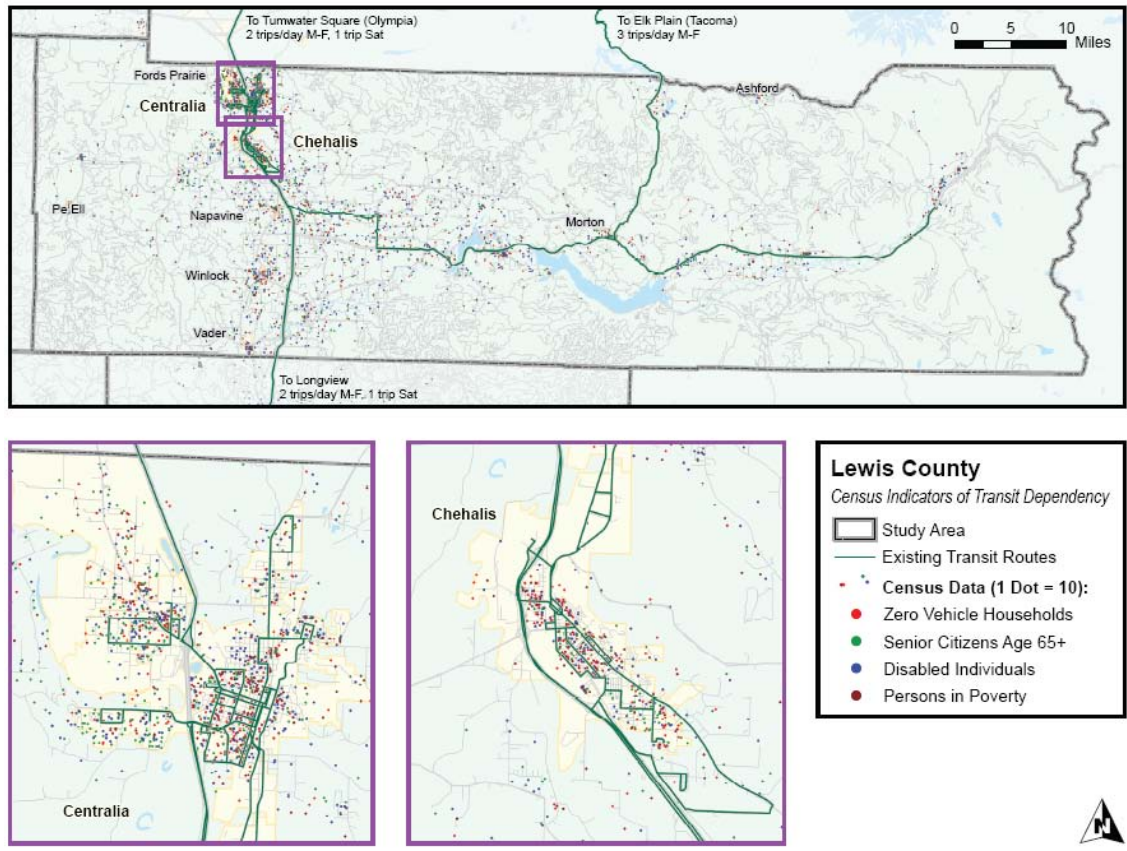


Figure 7: Lewis County Transit Dependent Population



Strategies to Address Unmet Needs

1. Expand public transit services countywide. Implement transit service in the southern and western parts of the county
2. Form consortium to explore options for funding patient transport. (To include Morton General & Providence Centralia Hospitals, Twin Transit, Paratransit Services, Lewis Mountain Hwy. Transit (LMHT), WSDOT, Catholic Community Services & Lewis Co. Senior Transportation Program)
3. Work with United Way of Lewis County to provide new transit services in underserved parts of county
4. Expand scheduled service between Centralia/Chehalis & Olympia (Twin Transit to coordinate with Paratransit Services, Lower Columbia CAP and Intercity Transit)
5. Establish scheduled service between Centralia/Chehalis and Aberdeen. (Twin Transit to coordinate with Paratransit Services & Grays Harbor Transit.)
6. Increase access to Centralia Community College & work sites
7. Create countywide mobility manager to improve information dissemination, volunteer recruitment and coordination of existing transit services
8. Establish travel training program for transit dependent population

Proposed New Services

As a direct result of the coordination process, the United Way of Lewis County, and SWRTPO teamed to develop a program for transportation services for the western and southern part of Lewis County. The United Way of Lewis County has just completed a survey showing that lack of transportation services is a major problem in the county, so they were eager to do something to help resolve the problem. The proposed program consists of three parts (and three grants):

- Planning and development of transit services in south and west Lewis County
- Transit services in south and west Lewis County and connecting to Twin Transit
- Capital request for mini bus for transit services in south and west Lewis County and connecting to Twin Transit

This project would provide general public transit service to the communities of Pe Ell, Winlock, Napavine, Toledo and Vader and to the smaller unincorporated communities, as well as connections to Twin Transit and the intercity transit network. Currently there are very few medical or other basic services in the area. For example, there is no senior center or hospital in this part of the county, so people must travel to Chehalis or other areas in the region for medical and basic life needs. If they cannot or do not drive, they must rely on friends and relatives when available.

Should other resources become available, other potential projects include:

- Demand response to provide medical trips for the non-Medicaid population
- Expanded services for seniors/disabled throughout the county
- Mobility Manager Program that will train volunteers and connect services and riders
- Expanded time and frequency for existing service in Chehalis/Centralia and eastern parts of the county

Pacific County

In 2006, Pacific County had an estimated population of approximately 22,000. The county seat is in South Bend with a population of 1,800. Its largest city is Raymond with a population of approximately 3,000. The county has two other cities--Ilwaco with a population of 1,000 and Long Beach--population 1,500. About 2/3rds of the residents live in incorporated areas. Of the total population, over 22 percent are 65 or older; this is double the state percentage. The county has 5,400 people with disabilities.

Existing Services

- **Pacific Transit** serves the north and south Pacific County communities of, Bay Center, Chinook, Ilwaco, Long Beach, Nahcotta, Naselle, Ocean Park, Oysterville, South Bend, Surfside, Raymond, and Astoria Oregon. The public transit system has five routes, two of which, Raymond to South Bend and Ilwaco to Oysterville, run frequently throughout the day. Its other three routes connect Pacific County to other, larger population centers in Grays Harbor County and in Oregon.
- **Catholic Community Services** provides dial-a-ride service to senior citizens in Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties. This program relies on volunteers using their own cars to transport clients. Currently, they have 10 volunteer drivers available to

serve both counties. They do not have a lift-equipped vehicle so they can only transport ambulatory riders. CCS tries to meet the need for long distance medical trips. Usually, that means taking ambulatory patients to medical facilities in Olympia, Tacoma, Portland and Seattle.

- **Coastal Community Action Program** provides two transportation services in Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties. They provide demand response service for seniors and for cancer patients. They provide about 500 trips a year. Hours of service are 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday thru Friday. Saturday trips can be scheduled for special needs. Coastal CAP's paratransit program relies on volunteers using their own cars to transport clients. The agency also has one van that is used for trips to radiology labs in Olympia. None of the individual or agency vehicles are lift-equipped, so they can only transport ambulatory passengers. Currently, the agency has 20 volunteer drivers available to serve Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties. About 40 percent of trips are for Pacific County residents.

Coastal CAP has also run a program to transport people to work and job related training. The agency purchased four, used, accessible vehicles for the JARC program. However, the program ran out of funds about 15 months after it started, and three of the four vehicles continue to sit idle today. Initially, the community action agency planned to use volunteer drivers, but were unable to make this work within FTA guidelines. This demand response employment program provided about 250 one way trips a month. The most common destinations were from Aberdeen out to Westport; Raymond into Aberdeen and east Grays Harbor County to Aberdeen. The program was available 24 hours a day to meet the needs of shift workers.

Medicaid: Paratransit Services is the Medicaid transportation brokerage for Pacific County. It has several providers with whom it books medical rides for county residents. However, it does not contract with Pacific Transit, although it does purchase transit bus tickets on behalf of its Medicaid clients.

During the three-month period ending July 31, 2006, about 850 Medicaid trips originated in Pacific County. Almost 50 percent of the trips that originate in the northern part of the county go to Aberdeen. Similarly, about 40 percent of the trips originating in the southern part of the county go to Oregon, either Astoria or Portland.

Analysis of Demographic Data

Figure 8: Pacific County Trip Attractors shows the rural, spread-out nature of Pacific County. The county wide transit system serves most of the population centers and provides connections to larger cities in other counties. There are few major trip attractors in Pacific County and most of them are on transit routes. **Figure 9: Pacific County Transit Dependent Population** shows that the major concentrations of transit dependent people are in Raymond and on the Long Beach Peninsula where there is bus service.

Figure 8: Pacific County Trip Attractors

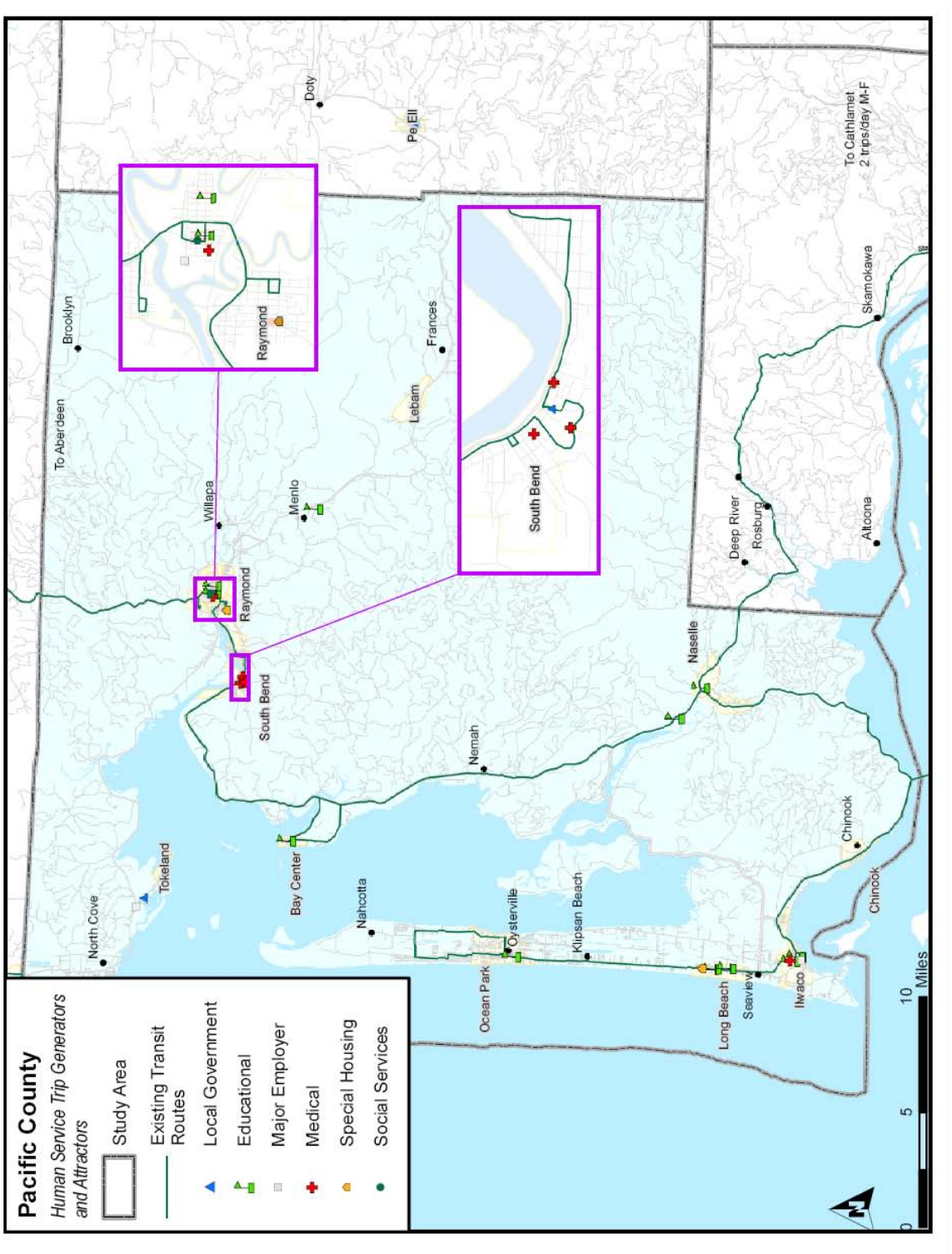
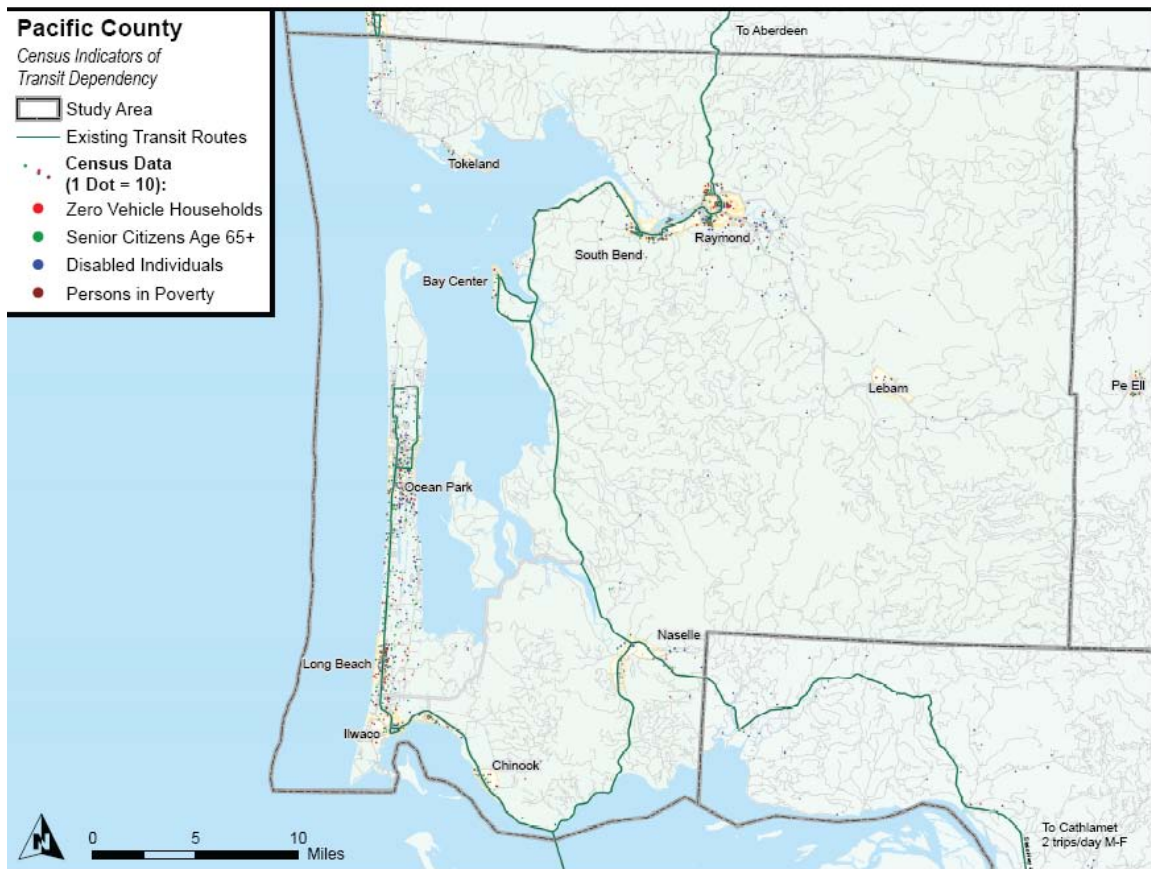


Figure 9: Pacific County Transit Dependent Population



Unmet needs and Issues

1. Level and frequency of public transit services in all parts of the county need to be increased.
2. Regional employment transportation efforts need to be expanded and improved by greater coordination with Pacific Transit and Grays Harbor Transit.
3. Lack of specialized medical services and higher educational facilities within this rural county creates challenge to get residents to out-of-county destinations.
4. Expanded services for out-of-county connections, especially medical trips to Aberdeen & Astoria, Oregon
5. Access to jobs (especially in the southern part of county, and for Shoalwater Bay Tribal members), and to job training (Grays Harbor Community College in Aberdeen) needs to be expanded
6. Lack of public transit service to & from Tokeland and Shoalwater Bay Reservation
7. Medical trips for non-Medicaid and under-60 populations particularly access to pre-natal care
8. No central source of information about available transit services & funding resources

9. Lack of accessible vehicles. For example, CCS & Coastal CAP only transport ambulatory riders
10. Lack of local taxi providers

Proposed Strategies to Address Unmet Needs

1. Increase frequency of scheduled service to Aberdeen & Olympia
2. Expand scheduled service to Astoria and Portland
3. Expand employment transportation in Pacific County, especially to work sites in the Long Beach area, & runs to Community College in Aberdeen
4. Establish regular service between Tokeland, Raymond & Aberdeen
5. Form consortium to explore options for funding patient transport. (To include Ocean Beach & Willapa Harbor Hospitals, Pacific Transit, Paratransit Services, WSDOT, Catholic Community Services, Coastal CAP, county health dept., DSHS & Olympic AAA)
6. Create countywide mobility manager to improve information dissemination, volunteer recruitment, advocacy and coordination of existing transit services
7. Purchase accessible vehicles that could be leased to local agencies by Pacific Transit or other centralized conduit

Proposed New Services

- Establish a mobility manager program that will train volunteers and help connect transit dependent to available services
- Develop a program to provide rides to non-Medicaid clients for medical appointments
- Expand options for disabled riders through the purchase of lift-equipped vehicles

Grays Harbor County

Grays Harbor County has an estimated population of slightly greater than 70,000 people. **Figure 10** shows the estimated populations for incorporated communities.

Figure 10
Grays Harbor Population for Incorporated Communities

Aberdeen	16,470
Cosmopolis	1,635
Elma	3,100
Hoquiam	8,845
McCleary	1,540
Montesano	3,550
Oakville	710
Ocean Shores	4,605
Westport	2,325

A little more than 1/3 of the county residents live in unincorporated areas. Of the total population, slightly less than 15 percent are 65 or older. Approximately 15,000 people have disabilities.

Existing Providers

- **Grays Harbor Transit Authority (GHTA)** provides fixed route, county wide ADA, commuter and vanpool services. In addition to several routes serving Aberdeen and Hoquiam, GHTA goes from Aberdeen to Quinalt and to Ocean Shores and to

Grayland. It travels from Hoquiam to Olympia, Monday through Friday. It also has four vanpools to serve commuters.

- **Catholic Community Services** provides dial-a-ride service to senior citizens in Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties. This program relies on volunteers using their own cars to transport clients. Currently, they have 10 volunteer drivers available to serve Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties. They do not have a lift-equipped vehicle so they can only transport ambulatory riders. CCS tries to meet the need for long distance medical trips. Usually, that means taking ambulatory patients to medical facilities in Olympia, Tacoma, Portland and Seattle.
- **Coastal Community Action Program** provides two transportation services in Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties. They provide demand response service for seniors and for cancer patients. They provide about 500 trips a year. Hours of service are 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday thru Friday. Saturday trips can be scheduled for special needs. Coastal CAP's paratransit program relies on volunteers using their own cars to transport clients. The agency also has one van that is used for trips to radiology labs in Olympia. None of the individual or agency vehicles are lift-equipped, so they can only transport ambulatory passengers. Currently, the agency has 20 volunteer drivers available to serve Pacific and Grays Harbor Counties. About 60 percent of trips are for Grays Harbor County residents.

Coastal CAP has also run a program to transport people to work and job related training. The agency purchased four, used, accessible vehicles for the JARC program. However, the program ran out of funds about 15 months after it started, and three of the four vehicles continue to sit idle today. Initially, the community action agency planned to use volunteer drivers but were unable to make this work within FTA guidelines. This demand response employment program provided about 250 one way trips a month. The most common destinations were from Aberdeen out to Westport; Raymond into Aberdeen and east Grays Harbor County to Aberdeen. The program was available 24 hours a day to meet the needs of shift workers.

- **Medicaid:** Paratransit Services is the regional Medicaid transportation broker for Grays Harbor County. It has several providers with whom it books medical rides for county residents. However, it does not contract with the Grays Harbor Transit Authority, although it does purchase transit bus tickets and passes on behalf of its Medicaid clients.

During the three-month period ending July 31, 2006, almost 6,000 medical trips originated in Grays Harbor County. About half of the Grays Harbor County trips originated in Aberdeen (2,500), and another 1,100 in nearby Hoquiam. Out-of-county trips accounted for about one-third of all trips originating in the county's three largest communities -- Aberdeen, Hoquiam and Elma -- and about one-quarter of all trips countywide. The most common destinations were as follows (in descending order): Olympia, Seattle, Tacoma and Pacific County, with a smattering of trips to Bremerton, Chehalis, Mason and Clallam Counties. The vast majority of in-county trips were made to the Aberdeen/Hoquiam urbanized area.

Analysis of Demographic Data

Figure 11: Grays Harbor County Trip Attractors shows that most of the county trip attractors are on one of the county wide transit routes; this service serves almost all communities in the county. **Figure 12: Grays Harbor County Transit Dependent Population** shows that transit dependent populations are concentrated in Aberdeen and Hoquiam. There are also concentrations of transit dependent people in Ocean Shores, Westport and less so in Central Park and Satsop.

Unmet Needs and Issues

1. Medical transportation for the non-Medicaid population
2. Better connections on and to the Quinault Indian Tribe
3. Employment transportation
4. Better coordination among providers and education about services-GHTA stated that many transit problems could be solved if its services were better used

Strategies to Address Unmet Needs

1. Increase number of volunteer drivers
2. Mobility Manager Program to attract and train drivers
3. Explore ways to provide better service to Quinault Indian Tribe
4. Expand vanpool program
5. Start up JARC program again
6. Better coordination and education about services using Mobility Manager Program

New Programs

As a direct result of this coordination process, Grays Harbor Council of Governments and Olympic Area Agency on Aging decided to develop a program to meet some of the unmet needs defined in the process. They determined that while there are a range of both public and private non-profit transit providers to serve elderly and disabled people, a lack of coordination limits efficiency and bundling rides. Not all of those who need services can find them and there are not enough volunteers to meet the needs. Therefore this project will meet the need of ensuring transportation for elderly and disabled people and the strategy of coordinating services to improve efficiency. The agencies plan to submit a grant application to the WSDOT Consolidated Grant Process for a:

- Mobility Coordinator Position for Grays Harbor COG

Should resources become available other potential new programs for Grays Harbor County include:

- Improve transportation services for the Quinault Indian Tribe.

Figure 12: Grays Harbor County Transit Dependent Population



Conclusion

Most people and many transit dependent people in the five county area live in rural areas. This is true in each of the counties except Grays Harbor County which has more people living in incorporated areas than unincorporated ones. Providing fixed route transit services is very difficult to do in rural areas and therefore many people have difficulty getting where they need to go. However, two overriding conclusions became clear as a result of this project.

- There is a need for county wide service in both Lewis and Cowlitz Counties. Without a countywide system, many of the smaller communities receive no service at all and others only limited service. While social service organizations have done outstanding jobs to fill the gaps, they receive no sales tax funding so must rely on grants and they are not able to meet all needs. County wide service can become a part of existing PTBAs or can be provided through establishing new ones to serve the areas not currently included.

- Many community groups and organizations are concerned about transit issues. This project brought them to the table to discuss needs and solutions. These efforts must be continued so that the transit dependent can lead active productive lives. Therefore Cowlitz-Wahkiakum COG and Grays Harbor COG should establish ongoing transit committees made up of both providers and users or advocates/

While each county has unique characteristics, other issues emerged as common in all of them:

- Medical transportation for the non-Medicaid eligible can be very difficult
- Transportation in urban areas is easier than in rural areas. This is particularly true in Lewis and Cowlitz Counties where the transit services just serve the major population centers of Chehalis/Centralia and Longview/Kelso. Twin Transit and CUBS should explore options to provide service outside the boundaries of the cities they serve.
- There is a need for more lift-equipped vehicles to transport people with disabilities
- People living in the unincorporated areas have difficulty getting to work and work related services
- There is no central source of ride information
- Social service and other organizations have managed to fill transit gaps by providing an array of services

As a result of this planning process, several organizations have stepped forward to address the unmet transportation needs of the transit dependent.

- In Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, Human Services Coalition has teamed with CWCOG, CAP and Wahkiakum on the Move to develop and seek funding for two programs; one which will provide medical transportation for the non-Medicaid eligible and another that will provide rides to people reentering the job market.
- In Lewis County, United Way of Lewis County recently identified lack of transportation as a major problem in the County. Therefore, they took a leadership role in seeking funding to plan and implement a transit service that will serve the unserved west and south parts of the county.
- In Grays Harbor County, Olympic Area Agency on Aging has teamed with Grays Harbor Council of Governments to design and seek funding for a mobility coordinator program that will be housed in the COG and will help organize rides for elderly and disabled people.

CHAPTER 4

PROPOSED PROJECT LIST FOR FY 2007 FUNDING REQUESTS

Due to recent federal mandates, transportation for human services must now be coordinated across the region. The State of Washington is using its statewide system of Regional Transportation Planning Organizations to identify and prioritize the projects submitted by transit agencies, non-profits and tribes to the State for funding through its Consolidated Transit Grant process. The ranked list of prioritized projects then compete for funding on a statewide basis. Local rankings are a percentage of the total points available for each project.

WSDOT has required that no more than four projects be included in each rank of A through C, and that D projects include all the remaining projects. This has been very difficult for **the five-county** SWRTPO to do because it includes five counties that have submitted almost 30 projects. To rank these projects SWRTPO developed a ranking strategy, listed below in descending order of importance.

- Top priority: Existing projects meeting community needs
- Level 2 priority: Projects providing lifeline service to currently unserved geographic areas with transit dependent population
- Level 3 priority: Projects coordinating services to increase use or improve efficiency of existing services
- Level 4 priority: Projects that expand existing services
- Level 5 priority: Projects that upgrade quality of existing service

Equitable geographic distribution was also considered in the ranking of the projects.

The following tables represent the list of projects as priorities for the fiscal 2007-2009 funding cycle. The projects are shown in groups of A through D. The A projects are the highest priority, D the least. Listing within the groups is random -- projects are not ranked within the groups.

This ranking system has proven very difficult for SWRTPO because it has five counties. Providers in the SWRTPO area have submitted requests for project funding with 11 requests for funding for continuation of existing services that provide well used and much needed services. Therefore these projects had to extend into the C category. The SWRTPO made the decision to give higher ranking to the non-profit existing services that did not have as many sources of funding on which to rely.

There are five new services proposed; all of which came out as unmet needs during the development of this plan. These are worthy projects that SWRTPO supports. Because of the grading system, however, these projects had to be ranked as C or D projects. This does not reflect their true importance.

Ranking	Project	Provider	Category	Type	Description
A	Wahkiakum on the Move	Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services Department	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Fixed and deviated route services, within the county and links to Pacific and Cowlitz Counties and the intercity transit system
A	Connecting the I-5 Corridor: (Project #1) Vancouver to Longview Providing daily (Monday-Saturday) public transportation between Vancouver and Longview	Lower Columbia Community Action	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Fixed route service to people living in rural areas of Southwest Washington along the I-5 corridor, linking them to the C-TRAN system (Clark County) and the CUBS Transit system (Longview/Kelso), as well as to connections with Greyhound and Amtrak in Kelso.
A	Rural Community Connections (RCC) – Project A Weekday fixed-route, deviated, public transportation bus service connecting eastern Lewis County rural communities of Packwood, Randle, Glenoma, Morton, Mossyrock, Silvercreek, Salkum, Ethel, Onalaska, Centralia, and Chehalis with connections into Greyhound, Amtrak, Twin Transit and CAPS	White Pass Community Services Coalition d.b.a. L.E.W.I.S. Mt. Hwy. Transit	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Fixed-route (deviated for ADA) general-public, rural, intercity bus service in Lewis County from Packwood to Centralia/Chehalis. RCC Project-A is commonly know as the “Hwy. 12 Route”
A	Operating: Continuation of Existing Tribal Transit Services	Cowlitz Indian Tribe	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Demand response service provides on-call pick up for elderly and disabled riders within service area; available to the Tribal and general community

Ranking	Project	Provider	Category	Type	Description
B	Sustain current levels of service in the North and South beach areas of Grays Harbor County	Grays Harbor Transit Authority	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Preserve fixed route service operating seven days per week from 5:00a.m. to 10:00p.m. providing service to the North and South beach areas of Grays Harbor County.
B	To provide public transportation including fixed route and Dial-A-Ride services to citizens of Pacific County, and providing Intercity connections to Aberdeen, WA and Astoria, Oregon	Pacific Transit	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Operate five fixed routes, Monday through Friday from 5:30am to 7:30pm, and one fixed route and one deviated route on Saturdays, 10:00am through 6:00pm. Operate Dial-A-Ride services during the same hours as the fixed route.
B	Paratransit and route deviated service maintenance funding for special needs public.	Lewis Public Transportation Benefit Area dba Twin Transit	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Provide Dial-A-Ride and route deviation services to special needs passengers within the Lewis Public Transportation Benefit Area, encompassing the Cities of Centralia and Chehalis Washington.
B	Rural Community Connections – Project B: Weekday fixed-route deviated transportation bus service between rural Lewis and Pierce County communities of Morton, Mineral, Elbe, Eatonville, Barney’s Corner, Kopowsin Corners and Elk Plain-Wal*Mart Expansion to Saturday service with timed connections with Pierce Transit at Elk Plain and extended service to Ashford/Mount Rainier National Park.	White Pass Community Services Coalition d.b.a. L.E.W.I.S. Mtn. Hwy. Transit	Continuation of existing services	Operating	Weekday service and two trips on Saturday on its current fixed-route, general-public, rural, intercity bus service linking the rural communities of Morton Mineral, Elbe, Eatonville and Elk Plain

Ranking	Project	Provider	Category	Type	Description
C	Sustain current level of service in the Quinault area of Grays Harbor County	Grays Harbor Transit Authority	Continuation of Existing Services	Operating	Fixed route service seven days per week from 5:00a.m. to 8:00p.m. Service to the Quinault area of Grays Harbor County.
C	Driven to Opportunity	Coastal Community Action Program	Continuation of Existing Services	Operating	Transportation for low-income, TANF, and underemployed individuals during off-transit hours and in off-transit grid situations. With 4 existing vans, will provide transportation services for at least 400 individuals per month for 24 months
C	Connecting the I-5 Corridor: (Project #2) Longview to Tumwater/Olympia Providing daily (Monday-Saturday) public transportation between Longview and the Tumwater/Olympia area	Lower Columbia Community Action Council	Continuation of Existing Services	Operating	Fixed route service in rural areas of Southwest Washington along the I-5 corridor, linking to CUBS, Twin Transit and LEWIS Mountain Highway Transit, and InterCity Transit (Thurston County)
C	Transit services in south and west Lewis County and connecting to Twin Transit	United Way of Lewis County	New Service	Operating	New transit service serving the communities of Pe Ell, Adna, Winlock, Douty, Napavine, Toledo and Vader and to connect the communities to Twin Transit and the intercity transit system in year two of the funding cycle.

Ranking	Project	Provider	Category	Type	Description
D	Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Employment Transportation - JARC	Human Services Council	New Service	Operating	New service to provide employment transportation services to assist low-income individuals and families, who reside in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, with their work and work-related activities
D	Rural Community Connections – Project C Provide enhance weekday dial-a-ride, door to door, Paratransit- shuttle service within and between the rural communities of Morton, Glenoma, Randle, Packwood, Mossyrock, Cinebar and Mineral. This service would also provide on-call night and weekend service for non-Medicaid medical patients needing transportation to and from the Morton Hospital.	White Pass Community Services Coalition d.b.a. L.E.W.I.S. Mtn. Hwy. Transit	New Service	Operating	Expand L.M.H.T.'s current two day a week Paratransit/Special Needs, dial-a-ride, door-to-door shuttle service in eastern Lewis County to Monday through Friday 8AM 5-PM weekday service
D	Operating: Expansion of Existing Tribal Transit service to Provide Non Emergency Medical Transportation	Cowlitz Indian Tribe	New Service	Operating	Full time driver and partial funding for an Operations Manager and Dispatcher. It prioritizes transportation for Non-Emergency Life-Sustaining Medical needs.
D	Cowlitz and Wahkiakum U-Ride	Human Services Council	New Service	Operating	Provide transportation to life-sustaining medical appointments, such as dialysis, chemotherapy, and radiation treatments for Cowlitz and Wahkiakum county residents
D	Planning and development of transit services in south and west Lewis County	United Way of Lewis County	New Service	Planning and Development	Plan and develop transit services for west and south Lewis County; determine types of service to meet needs and ways to continue service
D	Mobility Coordinator Position for Grays Harbor Council of Governments	Grays Harbor Council of Governments	New Service	Mobility Management	Coordination and more efficient use of available public and private resources

					dedicated to transportation for citizens with special needs
D	Expansion of Fleet for Rural Public Transportation Service connecting I-5 Corridor in SW Washington	Lower Columbia Community Action Council	Fleet Expansion	Capital	Continue providing Monday-Saturday rural public transportation service to residents living along the I-5 corridor in Clark and Cowlitz counties
D	Capital assistance to purchase a low floor van with manual wheelchair ramp for paratransit services.	Lewis Public Transportation Benefit Area dba Twin Transit	Fleet Expansion	Capital	Paratransit van will serve approximately 50% of the paratransit ridership involved in single passenger trips. The current 25 ft. cutaway bus will serve the balance of the paratransit ridership to include multiple passenger scheduled trips primarily for the purpose of disabled work access.
D	Capital assistance to purchase a 29 ft. cutaway minibus to accommodate increasing ridership on Route 12 that serves the Chehalis Port and Chehalis residential areas	Lewis Public Transportation Benefit Area dba Twin Transit	Fleet Expansion	Capital	Bus acquisition will resolve the needs in serving increasing ridership on Route 12 that serves the Port of Chehalis and City of Chehalis residential areas
D	Capital assistance to purchase a 30 ft. low floor bus to replace a similar unit purchased in 1989.	Lewis Public Transportation Benefit Area dba Twin Transit	Fleet Replacement	Capital	Replace a 1989 Orion Coach used in route-deviated intercity service between Chehalis and Centralia, Washington
D	Capital: Expansion of Existing Tribal Transit Service to Provide Non-emergency Medical Transportation.	Cowlitz Indian Tribe	Fleet Expansion	Capital	Adding a new vehicle prioritizes transportation for Non-Emergency Life-Sustaining Medical needs.
D	Capital Grant Request: Cowlitz U-Ride Transportation Project	Lower Columbia Community Action Council	Fleet Expansion	Capital	The Human Service Council's (HSC) U-Ride project will provide transportation to life-sustaining medical appointments. CAP has agreed to provide an ADA-modified minivan, which will be used by residents to access medical services.

D	Capital Grant Request: Wahkiakum Employment Transportation – JARC Wahkiakum U-Ride Transportation Project	Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services Department	Fleet Expansion	Capital	Provide an additional ADA-modified minivan to supplement the county's current Wahkiakum on the Move fleet. The minivan is needed to provide flexible transportation services of employment and medical-related transportation services.
D	Capital Grant Request: Cowlitz Employment Transportation - JARC	Lower Columbia Community Action Council	Fleet Expansion	Capital	Enable low-income workers and WorkFirst recipients in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties to access transportation to employment sites, job interviews, training services, education, childcare, and other work-related activities.
D	Capital request for mini bus for transit services in south and west Lewis County and connecting to Twin Transit	United Way of Lewis County	Fleet Expansion	Capital	Transit services in the west and south parts of Lewis County.
D	Purchase and Install Video Surveillance Equipment on 30 Busses and 25 Paratransit Vans	Grays Harbor Transit Authority	Mobility Management	Capital	Enable GHATA to offer a safer ride by providing an added layer of security for passengers and drivers.

Appendix A

COWLITZ CO. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- CAP
- CUBS
- Catholic Community Services
- Cowlitz County Health Department
- Disability Resources of SW Washington
- Family Health Center
- Longview Goodwill Center
- Monticello Park Retirement and Assisted Living
- PeaceHealth Dialysis Center
- Youth and Family Link
- Worksource Washington
- Veterans Van
- Department of Human Services
- Center for Independent Living
- DAPC-Drug rehab

GRAYS HARBOR CO. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- Olympic Area on Aging-Planning and Local Services
- Housing Authority
- Workforce Center
- Coastal Cap –JARC and Senior Services RSVP
- Quinault Tribe-Senior Services and Planning
- Grays Harbor Transit

LEWIS COUNTY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- Catholic Community Services
- Centralia College
- Providence Centralia Hospital
- Community Action Council of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties
- Cowlitz Indian Tribe
- Lewis County Senior Transportation
- Lewis County Social Services
- LMT Area Agency on Aging
- Morningside Rehabilitation Program
- Morton General Hospital
- Lewis County Senior Services
- Twin Transit
- White Pass Community Services Coalition (Lewis Mountain Hwy Transit)
- WorkSource of Lewis County

PACIFIC COUNTY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- Catholic Community Services
- Coastal Community Action Program
- Department of Social and Health Services
- Ocean Beach Hospital
- Olympic Area Agency on Aging
- Pacific Transit
- Paratransit Services
- Pacific Co. Health & Human Services Department
- Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe
- Willapa Harbor Hospital
- Willapa Counseling Center
- WorkSource Pacific County

WAHKIAKUM COUNTY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- Wahkiakum on the Move
- County Commission
- Mayor of Cathlamet
- St. James Family Center
- Columbia View Care Center
- Lower Columbia Economic Development Council
- Wahkiakum School District
- CAP – Lower Columbia Community Action Council
- Human Services Council – Brokerage

**Southwest Washington
Regional Transportation Planning Organization**

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments
Administration Annex
207 Fourth Avenue, North
Kelso, Washington 98626-4195

PHONE: (360) 577-3041
FAX: (360) 425-7760
E-MAIL: cwcog@cw cog.org
Website: <http://www.cwcog.org/>

**A Community Invitation to Discuss Transit
& Other Transportation Services**

In an ongoing effort to enhance transportation services to Wahkiakum County communities, the Southwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization, in partnership with local regional, and state human service organizations, has developed a draft collaborative transportation plan for community review.

On **Monday, December 11th, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. in the River Street Building, River Street Room, 25 River Street in Cathlamet**, community members are invited to an open house to review the local and regional data findings, give input on your community's identified unmet transportation needs and hear about the proposed creative strategies to address them.

For more information, please contact Rosemary Siipola, rsiipola@cw cog.org, or Amy Hamlin, ahamlin@cw cog.org, or by phone at (360) 577-3041.