Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Strategies to Improve the Mobility of Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities in Dutchess County

Dutchess County Transportation Council 2021
Disclaimer
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Dutchess County Transportation Council
85 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 107
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Phone: (845) 486-3600
Fax: (845) 486-3610
Email: dctc@dutchessny.gov
Internet: http://www.dutchessny.gov/dctc
# Table of Contents

1. **Introduction** .......................................................... 1  
   - About the DCTC ......................................................... 1  
   - Federal Transportation Law ........................................ 2  
   - Planning Guidance .................................................. 2  
   - Federal & State Guidance, Case Law & Legislation ....... 2  
   - Benefits of Coordinated Planning ............................... 4  
   - Methodology ............................................................ 5  

2. **Inventory of Transportation Services** ......................... 7  
   - Public Transportation ................................................ 7  
   - Regional Bus Service ................................................. 10  
   - Human Service Agency Transportation ...................... 11  
   - Findings .................................................................. 13  

3. **Demographics** ....................................................... 14  
   - Planning Area ........................................................... 14  
   - Older Adults – Aged 65 and Over .............................. 14  
   - People with Disabilities ............................................ 17  
   - Title VI & Environmental Justice .............................. 19  

4. **Relevant Plans & Studies** ........................................ 24  
   - DCTC Studies .......................................................... 14  
   - Non-DCTC Studies ................................................... 17  

5. **Identification of Unmet Transportation Needs, Gaps, & Duplication of Services** ........................................ 32  
   - Surveys .................................................................. 32  
   - Additional Outreach ................................................ 35  
   - Identified Transportation Needs ................................. 36  
     - Capital ................................................................. 36  
     - Operations .......................................................... 36  
     - Mobility Management .......................................... 37  
     - Policy & Education ................................................ 37  
     - Gaps in Service .................................................... 38  
     - Duplication of Services ......................................... 38  

6. **Coordinated Strategies & Priorities** ............................. 39  
   - Capital ................................................................. 39  
   - Operations ............................................................ 39  
   - Mobility Management ............................................ 39  
   - Policy & Education ................................................... 40  
   - Conclusion ............................................................. 40  

Appendix A (Surveys) ......................................................... 41
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

1. Introduction

The Dutchess County Transportation Council (DCTC) developed this Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (“Coordinated Plan”) in consultation with local human service agencies, public transportation providers, and older adults and people with disabilities. The primary goal of the Coordinated Plan is to improve local transportation services for people with disabilities and older adults (age 65 and over) by identifying their transportation needs, providing strategies for meeting those needs, and prioritizing transportation projects and services to improve their mobility. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), along with other federal agencies, considers these two population groups to be transportation-disadvantaged since they are more likely to have difficulty in providing their own transportation or accessing public transportation services. This new Coordinated Plan builds upon our previous Coordinated Plan.

About the DCTC

The Dutchess County Transportation Council (DCTC) serves as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Dutchess County. In accordance with the provisions set forth in the current federal transportation law – the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act – and 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303, the Council is tasked with carrying out a cooperative and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process in Dutchess County.

Federal transportation law requires that a U.S. Census-designated Urbanized Area be represented by an MPO, which is responsible for ensuring that federal highway and transit dollars are committed through a locally driven, comprehensive planning process. We provide a forum for state and local officials to coordinate transportation issues and reach consensus on transportation plans and funding for transportation projects. We also strive to ensure that our federally funded projects are the products of a credible planning process, meeting the goals and priorities of the metropolitan area.

DCTC Organization

The DCTC, acting as the local MPO decision-making body, is comprised of 16 voting members. Membership on the Council is based on a municipality’s urbanized area classification, with the urbanized cities and towns serving as permanent voting members and the remaining towns and villages serving on a rotating basis or as nominated by the Dutchess County Supervisors and Mayors Association.

In addition, Dutchess County, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) serve as voting members on the DCTC, while the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA), and Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, Department of Public Works, and Division of Public Transit serve as non-voting advisory members.

The DCTC is supported by a Planning Committee that reviews documents and plans prior to DCTC action. The Planning Committee...
Committee provides agency, municipal, and public input during the development of the long-range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and other DCTC products. Membership on the Planning Committee is open to all municipalities in Dutchess County.

### Federal Transportation Law

The requirement for the development of a coordinated plan stems from the 2005 federal transportation law: the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This law required that MPOs develop a coordinated plan as part of their metropolitan transportation planning activities to receive certain FTA funds. The 2012 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and current FAST Act retained the coordinated planning requirement.

### Planning Guidance

The FTA issues guidance to MPOs in developing Coordinated Plans. The FTA’s most recent guidance, FTA Circular C.9070.1G, went into effect in 2014. As per this guidance, the FTA requires four elements in a Coordinated Plan:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit);
2. An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and older adults. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts and gaps in service;
3. Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
4. Priorities for implementation based on funding (from multiple program sources), time, and the feasibility of implementing specific strategies and/or activities.

Further, the FTA stipulates that older adults, individuals with disabilities, representatives of the public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human service providers, and other members of the public participate in the development and approval of coordinated plans. Please see the methodology section at the end of this chapter for additional information on how the Coordinated Plan was developed.

### Federal & State Guidance, Case Law & Legislation

In addition to the FAST Act and FTA guidance, there are other federal, state, and local laws and initiatives that support or influence policies related to transportation services for older adults or people with disabilities that are relevant to developing the Coordinated Plan.

#### Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities to ensure that they have equal access to employment, government services,
public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation.

The FTA established regulations to ensure and implement the provisions of Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act under Title 49, Part 37 of the FTA Code of Federal Regulations. These regulations set standards to ensure that vehicles and transportation facilities are designed to be accessible to people with disabilities and include enforcement provisions for non-compliance.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was enacted to fund plans, services, and studies so that individuals with disabilities could prepare for and engage in employment to the extent of their abilities. In 1986, the Act was amended to include Section 508, which was amended in 1998 to require that Federal agencies make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities – meaning electronic information must be disseminated in a form that can be understood by all people, regardless of disability status. New York State also developed “Accessibility of Information Communication Technology Policy NYS-P08-005”, establishing its own standards for web-based information for state entities and their consultants.

Presidential Executive Order 13330 of 2004

Executive Order 13330 of 2004 established an Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) to improve mobility, employment opportunities, and access to community services for persons who are transportation-disadvantaged. The CCAM is chaired by the Secretary of Transportation and the Council is composed of the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Justice as well as the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration and the Chairperson of the National Council on Disability.

The CCAM most recently adopted the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan: Mobility for All, which details four strategic goals: Improving Access to Community through Transportation; Enhancing Cost-Effectiveness of Coordinated Transportation; Strengthening Interagency Partnerships and Collaboration with State, Local, and Industry Groups; and Demonstrating Innovative Coordinated Transportation.

Olmstead Decision

The United States Supreme Court ruled in Olmstead v L.C. 527 U.S. 581 (1999) that unjustified segregation of persons with disabilities constitutes discrimination and violates Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Court said that public entities must provide community-based services to persons with disabilities when 1) such services are appropriate; 2) the affected persons do not oppose community-based treatment; and 3) community-based services can be reasonably accommodated, taking into account the resources available to the public entity and the needs of others who are receiving disability services from the entity.
NYS Governor Cuomo Executive Order Number 84 (2012)

In November 2012, Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order Number 84, creating the Olmstead Development and Implementation Cabinet (Olmstead Cabinet), which was directed to develop a plan to integrate persons with disabilities into independent living arrangements and competitive employment, consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Olmstead v. L.C.

In 2013, the State’s Olmstead Cabinet released its Report and Recommendations of the Olmstead Cabinet, outlining strategies for State agencies to ensure that people with disabilities have the opportunity to live in the “most integrated setting” possible. In essence, the report recommends a transition from centralized support services, such as State institutions, group facilities, and sheltered workshops, to community-based residential settings (i.e. apartments) and competitive-wage employment. The Most Integrated Setting Coordinated Council (MISCC), a cross-disciplinary group of state agencies and public advocates, was established as New York State’s oversight body for work in this arena. The MISCC meets quarterly to share key strategies and recommendations and to measure the success of these programs across the State.

Benefits of Coordinated Planning

Human service agencies and their clients are directly impacted by the availability of accessible transportation. Without it, clients cannot access the services that they need. However, when it comes to transportation, these groups are rarely at the forefront of transportation policy and decision-making, as it is not their primary purpose. The coordinated planning process affords these groups the opportunity to inform policymakers, helping to ensure that the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities are heard. Input from transportation providers may reveal ways that our transportation system can be improved to increase access for older adults and people with disabilities. Such improvements could include better transit routing, optimization of existing routes, identification of locations for new service or connections to existing service, improved scheduling, or the reduction of travel times, among others.

In addition, human service agencies and transportation providers may realize cost savings through the coordination of operations, purchase or sharing of vehicles, modification of existing service routes and times, or the purchase of scheduling software to assist volunteer organizations in scheduling trips. The resulting efficiencies will not only improve transportation services for those who may not be able to provide their own transportation, but will help reduce agency costs, allowing vital funds to be spent on the important programs and services that agencies provide.

By working together, the coordinated planning process can identify strategies for improvements in services that will allow people to age in place, create or maintain independence, and continue to be engaged in our community.

FTA Grant Programs and Coordinated Planning

The development of a Coordinated Plan may also result in financial benefits. A Coordinated Plan is required in order for
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

agencies to apply for federal grants for capital purchases and operating expenses, including specially-equipped buses or vans through the FTA’s Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (§5310) Program.

The FTA Section 5310 program provides assistance to private nonprofit groups to meet the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when existing transportation services are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. This includes enhancing mobility beyond traditional public transportation and ADA complementary paratransit services. Originally, this program provided funds strictly for capital purchases; however, the FAST Act expanded the program so that a portion of the funds may be used to support operations and mobility management.

Methodology

A variety of human service agencies and transportation providers serve the needs and older adults and people with disabilities living in Dutchess County. Many of the human service agencies operate independently from one another, making it difficult for transportation planners to fully understand the scope of services available and, more importantly, not available in the area. Given the variety of services offered and locations served, reaching out to local agencies and transportation providers represents an essential first step in the coordinated planning process.

This Coordinated Plan follows the previous Plan and is organized around the four FTA planning elements outlined above. Staff reviewed a variety of other coordinated plans and websites to glean best practices related to coordinated planning and reviewed other relevant plans, reports, and initiatives to identify current gaps in transportation service and the needs of older adults and people with disabilities. Our work on the previous Coordinated Plan provided a base list of contacts that included human service agencies, transportation providers, and prior applicants to the FTA’s Section 5310 grant program. The list was reviewed and updated in 2020.

The DCTC began its outreach for the Coordinated Plan by issuing an online survey to key human service agencies in Dutchess County. This survey was based on the survey used for

![Figure 1. Transportation Surveys](image)
the previous Plan but revised according to a review of best practices from other MPOs. This survey was issued in October 2020 to agencies and transportation providers to better identify their transportation needs and confirm our understanding of priorities. To obtain the best response, agencies were encouraged to forward the survey throughout their organizations.

The DCTC also used Census data to locate concentrations of individuals with disabilities and older adults in Dutchess County and reviewed local area plans and studies to help inform the Coordinated Plan regarding transportation needs.

As part of DCTC’s long-range transportation plan, *Moving Dutchess Forward*, which was being developed concurrently with this Coordinated Plan update, a broad ‘transportation challenges’ survey was issued. The online survey was shared with all public contacts, public agencies, and the media in November 2020. The survey was available in English and Spanish.

The Dutchess County Transit Plan, which was also underway during this Coordinated Plan update, included a virtual focus group session in November 2020 to identify needs and priorities across human services agencies. County Transit also issued a public survey in March 2021 to help identify needed improvements to transit services. The survey was available online in English and Spanish. Survey forms are included in Appendix A of this report.
2. Inventory of Transportation Services

The DCTC inventoried public and not-for-profit transportation providers and human service agencies to determine the number and type of vehicles being used, service coverage areas, and how service is being provided. Private, for-hire companies and delivery services were excluded from the inventory. This inventory was conducted to better understand how and where service is being provided, identify gaps in service, and highlight possible opportunities for coordination among agencies.

Public bus operations such as Dutchess County Public Transit (DCPT) are publicly funded through federal, state, and local funding and are open and available for everyone’s use. Transportation provided by human service agencies is more specialized, with many agencies providing transportation to their clients in support of their programs. Some transportation providers, such as Friends of Seniors and North East Community Center, provide transportation as a standalone service without requiring users to have a particular affiliation with a human service agency, simply because the provision of transportation is part of their mission.

At the time of this Plan update, some regional transit and human service agencies have suspended or altered their services due to COVID. This inventory focuses on pre-COVID services.

Public Transportation

Public bus transit plays an important role in the county’s transportation system, by providing people with a transportation alternative to the private automobile. This benefits those who do not own a car and those who cannot drive, including young people, older adults, and people with disabilities, as well as those who prefer not to drive. Transit service also offers more convenient access than the private car to jobs and destinations in the New York City metro area and other transit-oriented locations. Transit enables employees and customers to access businesses, services, shopping areas, and other destinations. Lastly, transit benefits the environment, especially regional air quality, by reducing vehicle trips.

Dutchess County benefits from a diverse range of transit services, but access to these services is neither universal nor evenly distributed across the county. This unevenness is due to limited resources for the operating costs of transit, as well as insufficient population densities to support robust transit service in parts of the county, especially the east and north. Emerging on-demand transportation models like microtransit could have the potential to support underserved areas in the future.

Only one public bus provider operates in Dutchess County: the Dutchess County Division of Public Transit (DCPT). Since the previous Coordinated Plan was completed, the City of Poughkeepsie ceased its bus operation, with DCPT expanding its service to meet the City’s transit needs. DCPT operates fixed route service using a variety of ADA equipped buses, and also
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

provides ADA complimentary paratransit and Dial-A-Ride demand response services to participating communities.

Dutchess County Public Transit (DCPT)

Dutchess County operates a bus system that provides fixed route service on major road corridors, connecting higher population density areas to major activity centers in the County. The DCPT system operates thirteen fixed routes that run along major corridors such as Routes 9, 9D, 44, 52, and 55. Countywide bus routes are shown in Figure 1, with a closer look at the City of Poughkeepsie in Figure 2. More information and detailed route maps are available on the DCPT website. Live bus locations and routes are also available through DCPT’s Bus Locator website and app.

In addition to the thirteen fixed routes, DCPT operates two RailLink routes, which provide peak period bus service to the Poughkeepsie and New Hamburg train stations. These routes are designed to meet peak hour commuter trains operated by Metro-North Railroad.

DCPT also provides three non-fixed route bus services that are particularly relevant to the Coordinated Plan:

1. ADA Complementary Paratransit: mandatory complementary paratransit service for Dutchess County. This serves individuals who live within ¼ mile of a DCPT fixed route and have a disability that precludes them from riding the fixed route service. Service operates same days and times as the existing fixed route schedule and reservations must be made one day in advance. Riders must complete an ADA Paratransit Application.

2. Dial-A-Ride (DAR): demand-responsive service open to the public. Municipalities contract with the County for the service. Different services run each day depending on the area and riders must register to use the service by calling DCPT or registering online. To register, passengers must be a resident of a municipality with a current contract and the trip must originate in one of those municipalities. The 2021 cost to municipalities for Dial-A-Ride Service in Dutchess County was $230 per day, which equates to about $12,000 per year for one day of service per week. Municipalities may contract with DCPT for additional days.

Fares on the DCPT bus system vary by passenger type and fare program. As of 2021, DCPT used the following fare structure:

- Single Trip One-Way Fare: $1.75.
- Senior Citizens, Medicare Card Holders, Children (aged 5 to 12), Students, and Veterans: $0.75 per single trip.
- Monthly Commuter Pass: $45.00 - designed for individuals who commute during regular business hours.
- Monthly Ride-Anytime Pass: $62.00 - designed for frequent passengers, valid on all buses at all times.
- ADA Complementary Paratransit Service: $3.50 per bus/one way.

Dutchess County Transportation Council
Figure 2. Dutchess County Public Transit Bus Routes

Figure 3. Dutchess County Public Transit Bus Routes - Poughkeepsie

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Dutchess County Transportation Council
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

As of 2021, the DAR service operated by DCPT served six communities: City of Poughkeepsie, and towns of Poughkeepsie, East Fishkill, Fishkill, Hyde Park, and Wappinger (see Figure 3).

3. **Flex Service**: demand-responsive, curb to curb service open to the public in areas without fixed-route service and outside the ¾ mile ADA-required areas. Riders must fill out an application to use the service and reservations must be made in advance. The service is provided Monday-Friday during limited hours.

**Regional Bus Service**

Inter-county bus services are provided by a variety of public and private operators:

1. Ulster County Area Transit (UCAT) runs the Ulster-Poughkeepsie LINK bus, which provides weekday and weekend service between Rosendale, New Paltz, Highland and the Poughkeepsie Metro-North Station. UCAT can also be used to connect to Trailways service to White Plains.

2. Leprechaun Lines operates weekday commuter service between Beacon, Poughkeepsie, and Stewart Airport and between Poughkeepsie, Wappingers Falls, Fishkill, and White Plains in Westchester County. It also provides weekend service between Stewart Airport, Beacon, and New York City. Coach USA/ShortLine provides regular service between Rhinebeck, Poughkeepsie, and Fishkill in Dutchess County and New York City (via Newburgh and

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**Figure 4. Dial-A-Ride (DAR) Communities in Dutchess County**
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

northern New Jersey), as well as service between Poughkeepsie and Binghamton.

In 2020, we completed Connect Mid-Hudson, a regional transit plan for Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster counties. This was a collaborative effort that assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the existing regional transit network in the Mid-Hudson Valley, and identified opportunities to improve connections between the three counties and between the Mid-Hudson region and the New York City metro area.

3. Trailways provides regular service between Poughkeepsie and Albany, New York City, Long Island, and other destinations (via Kingston and Newburgh).

Human Service Agency Transportation

A mix of human service agencies, organizations, and transportation providers offer transportation using agency vehicles or via third-party vendors. This inventory was compiled with input from the various agencies that responded to our outreach efforts and from online resources. A description of each agency’s service and available vehicles is provided below:

1. Abilities First – This agency provides direct, indirect, and coordinated transportation services to about 1,500 people with various kinds of developmental needs. Trips for up to 250 clients are managed each day using 98 vehicles, 24 of which are wheelchair accessible. Almost all staff members at Abilities First assist with driving operations, providing trip services seven days a week across Dutchess, Ulster, and Orange counties, all at no cost to clients.

2. Anderson Center for Autism – This agency supports clients through demand-response service, recurring trips, and special event transportation. Service is carried out using a fleet of 101 vehicles, providing trips for 40 clients on a typical day. Free transportation service is carried out by Anderson Center staff and is available 24/7, but anticipated growth in trip needs could impact dedicated staffing abilities.

3. Castle Point Veterans Medical Center – The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at Castle Point is the transportation hub of this region’s transportation service for injured and ill veterans. The organization operates buses that transport veterans between U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facilities. In addition, the volunteer Disabled American Veterans (DAV) group operates a fleet of vehicles to provide free transportation to VA medical facilities. Buses are driven by paid drivers and vans are driven by volunteers who are coordinated by VA staff.

4. Cardinal Hayes Home for Children – Direct transportation service is provided to about 45 clients each day, using 37 vehicles, 21 of which are wheelchair accessible. Cardinal Hayes staff runs free trip services at set hours from Monday to Friday and on weekends and evenings as needed.

5. Community Resources and Services Center of Pawling – Transportation for residents of Pawling to the Poughkeepsie area, plus nearby Putnam County and Connecticut, is provided free of charge for medical appointments and shopping for Pawling residents. The
agency operates one vehicle and coordinates volunteers that drive their own personal vehicles.

6. **Community Senior Transportation Program** – Recreation and shopping trips are provided to residents of the towns of LaGrange and Pleasant Valley. No medical transport is provided, and the vehicle is not wheelchair accessible. Trips are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

7. **Deveraux Foundation** – This not-for-profit private agency provides direct transportation for clients to medical appointments, daily activities, and work in Dutchess, Columbia, and Ulster Counties.

8. **Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services (DCFS)** – Transportation is provided or coordinated on an as-needed, case-by-case basis for clients. Employees sometimes use their county-issued vehicles to provide transportation to clients.

9. **Dutchess ARC** – Transportation is provided to clients by two staff members. About 40 clients are served each day for a variety of trip purposes, including medical, education, employment, recreation, and others. Free transportation services are available seven days a week during typical business hours, with exceptions for special trips.

10. **Dutchess County Office for the Aging** – Transportation service to eight friendship centers throughout Dutchess County is provided free of charge using eight agency vehicles. After transporting individuals to friendship centers, the vehicles are used to deliver meals before returning to the friendship centers to bring participants home.

11. **Friends of Seniors** – Transportation is provided by volunteers who use their personal vehicles to bring older individuals to medical appointments and food shopping.

Trips are coordinated by agency staff. Wheelchair service is not available, and transport is not available to individuals who require the use of oxygen tanks or specialized equipment.

12. **Gateway Community Industries** – Transportation is provided to clients using two vans and one car for a wide variety of trip types.

13. **Grace Smith House** – Transportation service for residents is provided in an agency-owned van as well as via contracted taxi service.

14. **Hudson River Housing** – Transportation service is coordinated by two staff members using six agency vehicles. Trips are available for a variety of purposes during normal weekday business hours, and on weekends as needed. About 14-20 clients are served each day. Hudson River Housing also coordinates the **VetZero Ride Program**, which provides free car rides for local veterans. The program is supported by one staff member and volunteers.

15. **In-Flight, Inc.** – Transportation is provided to approximately 90 clients each day using 35 agency-owned vehicles for medical appointments, shopping, recreational, educational, and job-related trips. Client transportation services are available during typical business hours during the week and on weekends as needed.

16. **Lutheran Care Center at Concord Village** – This not-for-profit private agency offers a variety of programs, including a residential home for older adults. Transportation is available six days a week (Monday through Saturday) for their adult day health care program and to residents of their community housing program.
17. **Mid-Hudson Addiction Recovery Centers** – This not-for-profit private agency uses six vehicles to provide client transportation for medical appointments, shopping, recreational, job-related, and educational purposes.

18. **North East Community Center (NECC)** – Transportation service is provided to residents of the villages of Millerton and Millbrook and towns of North East, Amenia, Dover, Pine Plains, and Stanford via the Care Car program. The program is staffed by volunteers who drive their own vehicles with trips being coordinated by NECC. The Care Car will bring individuals to medical, social-service, and other appointments. They primarily serve senior citizens but will transport others if a car and driver are available. Care car rides are free, but donations are accepted. In addition, NECC operates Northeast Dutchess Transit, a wheelchair accessible bus that serves the towns of Amenia, Dover, North East, Pine Plains, Stanford, and Washington.

19. **People USA** – Transportation is provided to those who are disabled, low-income, seniors, veterans, those seeking employment or education, re-entry parolees, and those pursuing counseling for those on Medicaid. The agency maintains a vehicle and purchases transportation from third party vendors.

20. **Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)** – Transportation to the Beacon Senior Friendship Center is provided by volunteers to senior residents of the City of Beacon who do not drive. Older residents may also be eligible for trips to local grocery stores once per week for one hour of shopping. RSVP is a program of Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County.

**Findings**

Where public transit bus routes exist in Dutchess County, they provide mostly reliable, curb-to-curb service. Transit routes and schedules are fixed, enabling travelers to effectively schedule trips. However, public transit is not available in all municipalities, does not operate 24 hours per day, and routes are limited on Sundays. To supplement bus service, some municipalities contract with Dial-A-Ride services to transport residents to their destinations on pre-determined days.

A wide variety of human service agencies provide transportation using many kinds of vehicles, driven by paid or volunteer drivers. They provide trips for medical appointments and shopping, and some will take passengers to recreational destinations. The strength of human service agency transportation is that there is a higher degree of flexibility in administering their programs, which means that they are better able to respond to individual needs on a case-by-case basis. However, many human service agencies require up to two weeks lead time to schedule trips to match riders with volunteer drivers, which makes them less able to respond to last minute appointments.

Although public transit drivers provide some assistance to passengers who have physical limitations, the public transit system does not have the ability to provide the specialized, door-to-door service that many of our residents need. As budgets are continually tightened, the DCTC will need to support human service agencies in their efforts to provide supportive transportation services to their clients.
3. Demographics

Planning Area

Dutchess County is located halfway between New York City and Albany, at the center of the Hudson Valley. There are 30 municipalities in Dutchess County, including the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie. Below is a summary of the DCTC’s analysis of older adults and people with disabilities in Dutchess County, and a Title VI/Environmental Justice analysis of other protected population groups.

Older Adults - Aged 65 and Over

According to the 2019 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, Dutchess County has a total population of 293,754, of which 50,176 people (about 17 percent) are age 65 and over. This represents an increase of approximately 10,000 people in that age category since the 2010 Census. Table 1 shows the percent of the population aged 65 and over by municipality, from highest to lowest (see also Figure 7).

The top five municipalities with the highest percentages of people aged 65 and over include the Town and Village of Rhinebeck, Village of Millbrook, and towns of Washington and Clinton. The towns of Milan, Stanford, North East, Pine Plains, Union Vale, Amenia, Fishkill, and Pawling, and the villages of Pawling, Red Hook, Millerton, and Fishkill also have higher-than-average percentages of older adults.

Of the top five municipalities where the percent of older adults exceeds the county average, two are villages. Of Dutchess County’s eight villages, six exceed the county average for older
adults. Villages can be popular due to their small scale and walkability, as well as a concentration of goods and services. And villages with lower-maintenance housing options such as homes on smaller lots, apartments, and townhomes make it easier for older adults to age in place.

We also looked at trends in median age. In 2019, the median age of Dutchess County’s population was 42.2 years, which was higher than the median age of New York State at 38.8 and the United States at 38.1. The county’s median age increased from 2010-2019 by two years, which was more than the State or nation. However, the median age is increasing across geographies at various rates. This is a trend we expect will continue due to the increase in life expectancy and the aging of Baby Boomers (those born 1946-1964). The Census Bureau analyzed the nation’s age structure and issued a report, *An Aging Nation: The Older Population in the United States*, that stated the nation’s older population will nearly double by 2050.

As the median age increases in the county, we expect that more people will want to downsize, moving from larger homes in suburban locations that necessitate driving to most destinations, to a village, town center, or urban environment where residents can walk to shops and appointments or take the bus or Dial-A-Ride services that are available in certain municipalities.

The Cornell Program for Applied Demographics (Cornell PAD) has projected age and population for New York State and its counties. Figure 6 shows that the Dutchess County population age 65 and over is expected to increase by about 20 percent from 2020 to 2040. According to Cornell PAD’s estimates, the share of older adults in Dutchess County is expected to be slightly higher than New York State in future years.

As people age, their need for services and transportation increases. Age and mobility issues may limit the ability of older drivers to use their personal vehicles for trips. Given that we expect an increase in our older population, we can expect to see a concurrent increase in the demand for services that allow people to age in place and remain socially engaged.

Figure 7 highlights those municipalities where the share of older adults exceeds the Dutchess County average, while Table 1 shows that as a percent of the municipal population.
Table 1. Percent Aged 65 and Over by Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>% 65 years and over (1)</th>
<th>On Public Transit Route</th>
<th>Participates in Dial-A-Ride</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhinebeck village</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhinebeck town</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millbrook village</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington town</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton town</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan town</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford town</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East town</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawling village</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Plains town</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Vale town</td>
<td>19.3% (Limited)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenia town</td>
<td>19.1% (Limited)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Hook village</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyde Park town</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishkill</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millerton village</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawling town</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishkill village</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutchess County</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Town data does not include Village data. (1) Data is an estimate with an associated Margin of Error (MOE).
People with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 defines a disability as a “physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.” According to the 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Dutchess County’s total civilian non-institutionalized population was 293,754, of which 36,290 people (12.7 percent) reported having a disability. The ACS asked respondents to self-identify disabilities including hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty.

Data from the ACS indicates that the municipalities with the highest percentage of persons with disabilities include the villages of Millerton, Millbrook, and Wappingers Falls, and the towns of Dover and Pine Plains. The City of Poughkeepsie, villages of Pawling, Rhinebeck, Red Hook, and Tivoli, and the towns of North East, Pawling, Rhinebeck, Amenia, Hyde Park, Washington, Wappinger, Clinton, and Milan also have a higher than county average share of persons with a disability. Many of the municipalities above the county average are in eastern and northern Dutchess. Of the eight villages in Dutchess County, all except Fishkill were above the county average for populations with disabilities.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015-2019, ACS 5-Year Estimates), the size of the county’s civilian non-institutionalized population between the ages of 18-64 years old was approximately 181,366 people. Of those, 17,897 people indicated they had a disability; of those, 7,036 people (about 40%) reported that they were employed, and 10,861 people (about 60%) identified themselves as unemployed or not in the labor force, compared to 36,452 people in the non-employed labor force who did not indicate a disability (see Figure 8). The fact that nearly a quarter of Dutchess County’s non-working labor force identified as having a disability could point to the possibility that these individuals want to work or volunteer, but there could be other issues that prevent them from obtaining employment, including access to transportation.

HOW THE CENSUS BUREAU CATEGORIZES DISABILITY

- **Cognitive Difficulty**: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions.
- **Ambulatory Difficulty**: Having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.
- **Independent Living Difficulty**: Because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping.

Source: ACS: Guidance for Disability Data Users

The data reflected in Table 2 and Figure 8 includes all disability types. Respondents who reported any one of the six disability types were considered to have a disability. Approximately 12.7 percent of Dutchess County residents stated that they have a disability. Figure 8 highlights those municipalities where the share of the civilian non-institutionalized municipal population with a disability exceeds the Dutchess County average.
Table 2. Percent with a Disability by Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>% with a disability (1)</th>
<th>On Public Transit Route</th>
<th>Participates in Dial-A-Ride</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Millerton village</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millbrook village</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wappingers Falls village</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dover town</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>Y (Limited)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Plains town</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East town</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawling town</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poughkeepsie city</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawling village</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhinebeck town</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhinebeck village</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenia town</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>Y (Limited)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyde Park town</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington town</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacon city</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Hook village</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wappinger town</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tivoli village</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton town</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan town</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Hook town</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Vale town</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>Y (Limited)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poughkeepsie town</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishkill town</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Valley town</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Fishkill town</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford town</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishkill village</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaGrange town</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beekman town</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Town data does not include Village data. (1) Data is an estimate with an associated Margin of Error (MOE).
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

For more information, please see the Census Bureau’s 2018 report on 2014 data, Americans With Disabilities: 2014.

COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

For appointments, getting to work, shopping, or socialization and recreational opportunities, transportation affords those physically or cognitively unable to drive a measure of independence, which is linked to a higher quality of life. Without transportation, individuals are reliant on others – usually family or other caregivers – for their transportation needs.

Title VI & Environmental Justice

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, one of our nation’s landmark achievements, and specifically Title VI, prohibits federally funded entities such as the DCTC from discriminating against people based on race, color, and national origin. Other federal laws expanded upon these nondiscrimination requirements to protect people based on gender (Title VII), age (the Age Discrimination Act of 1975), and disability (the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990). Executive Orders have broadened the scope of characteristics to include low-income and non-English speaking populations, while also compelling agencies to address Environmental Justice by identifying and preventing any disproportionately high or adverse effects of decisions on focus populations.

For DCTC’s most recent Title VI and Environmental Justice analysis done for the long-range transportation plan, Moving Dutchess Forward, the DCTC used data from the Census Bureau to locate focus populations in Dutchess County. The analysis looked at census tracts to account for high margins of error in smaller geographies like block groups, and relied on federal guidance and best practices to understand how to identify focus areas and populations. Scores were created

Dutchess County Transportation Council
Figure 10. Disability Characteristics by Age Cohort in Dutchess County

Source: ACS 5-Year 2015-2019 Estimates
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

for each tract based on how much each focus population exceeded the county average. The individual scores were then combined into a single Equity Index for each tract. See the Equity Methodology document for more information.

One challenge faced during the writing of Moving Dutchess Forward was its timing: not only due to COVID but because data from the 2020 Census was not yet available. This required using ACS estimates of focus populations. This analysis will be updated using 2020 Census data when available, which will provide greater accuracy and geographical detail on where Dutchess County’s focus populations are located.

DCTC’S NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The DCTC assures that no person conducting business with us will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of our programs or activities based on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, income or veteran status. See our Title VI Policy for more information.

Where are our focus populations?

We looked at our focus populations separately and collectively. When we looked at each separately, we found the following:

Minority & Hispanic Populations:
The highest shares of Black residents are in the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie, followed by the towns of Fishkill, Poughkeepsie, and Wappinger. For Asian residents, we find high shares in the towns of Fishkill and Wappinger. And for Hispanic residents, we find the highest shares in the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie, Village of Wappingers Falls, and the Harlem Valley.

Figure 11. Title VI & Environmental Justice Groups as a Percentage of Total County Population (2015-2019 ACS)
Older Adults & Youth: The highest shares of older adults (65 and over) are in Rhinebeck (town and village), the City of Poughkeepsie’s southside, and parts of Hyde Park and Pawling (town). We find the highest shares of youth (under 18) in parts of the City of Poughkeepsie and the towns of Poughkeepsie, Beekman, East Fishkill, and Red Hook.

METHODOLOGY

Identifying the locations of focus populations is an important step in complying with Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements. Figure 12 maps our focus populations by Equity Index at the Census Tract level. For this analysis, we assigned a score to each Census tract based on the extent to which various focus populations are overrepresented compared to the county average. Scores were calculated as follows:

- below county average = 0
- 1-5% above average = 1
- 5-10% above average = 2
- 10-20% above average = 3
- over 20% above average = 4
- insufficient data = *

We then summed the scores for each focus population to create the Equity Index. Census tracts with darker shading have a higher Equity Index, meaning a higher share of one or more focus populations.
Low-Income Populations: The highest rates of poverty are in the City of Poughkeepsie – especially the northside, where almost a third of residents live in poverty. High rates of poverty are also found in parts of Amenia, Beacon, Dover, Hyde Park, Pleasant Valley, and Wappingers Falls.

Persons with a Disability: The highest shares of persons living with a disability are in the City of Poughkeepsie and Town of Dover – each has areas where almost a quarter of residents live with a disability.

Foreign-Born & Limited English Populations: Six areas have high shares of foreign-born residents: the towns of Dover, Fishkill, North East, Poughkeepsie, and Wappinger, and the City of Poughkeepsie. Three areas have high shares of limited English proficiency households: the City of Poughkeepsie and the towns of Fishkill and Wappinger.

Females & Veterans: Neither of these groups is overrepresented in any specific area.

Where are our focus areas?

Reality tells us that these focus populations are not present in isolation: a person or household can share more than one characteristic that is part of the transportation equity story, which is why we developed an Equity Index to measure the cumulative vulnerability of these populations and to identify focus areas. When we do that, we find the following:

- Ten tracts have an Equity Index of 10 or above, about double the county average of 5.5.
- Seven of these tracts are in the City of Poughkeepsie, with the remainder in the City of Beacon, Town of Fishkill, and Village of Wappingers Falls.
- The two highest Equity Index values are 15 and 16. These tracts are both in the City of Poughkeepsie’s northside.

OUR MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

Our Equity Index allows us to look at the cumulative vulnerability of a community. We can see that four focus areas are especially vulnerable to transportation decisions: the City of Poughkeepsie (especially the northside, middle main, and southcentral areas), the Village of Wappingers Falls, the Town of Fishkill (northwest), and the City of Beacon (southwest).
4. Relevant Plans & Studies

The DCTC began work on this Coordinated Plan by reviewing relevant county and local plans, seeking to capture any planning policies and recommendations that support the goal of improving mobility for older adults and people with disabilities. Similar themes arose from these plans:

- **Demand will grow** – The need for senior transportation services will expand as people age in place.
- **Desire to expand transit options in rural areas** – Transportation services should be explored and implemented, where feasible, for villages and other centers in lower-density areas such as the Harlem Valley and Northern Dutchess.
- **Need for better marketing** – The marketing of public transit, including travel training and written or online materials, needs to be developed in a way that is accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities.
- **Desire for expanded transit hours** – Expand the operating hours and days for public transit bus services where feasible.
- **Transportation is an ongoing challenge** – There is strong interest in improving transportation services.

The DCTC referred to these themes as it developed the recommendations for this plan. These issues were also reviewed as part of the separate Dutchess County Transit Plan that was initiated in 2020 – an effort focused on improving fixed route services and exploring transit options for the county’s rural areas. Dutchess County Public Transit also conducted an analysis of bus stop accessibility. Though recommendations from both studies were not yet available for this Coordinated Plan, they will be incorporated when available.

Plans and documents from the DCTC and other entities and organizations were also studied. Those that proved most valuable in developing the Coordinated Plan included the current long-range transportation, *Moving Dutchess Forward*; the Dutchess County Office for the Aging Needs Assessment; and the Dutchess County Transit Development Plan. These documents and concepts, coupled with FTA planning guidance, helped shape the strategic direction of the Coordinated Plan. The most relevant plans are summarized below.

**DCTC Studies**

The DCTC has completed several transportation plans that address mobility issues for older adults and people with disabilities, either directly or indirectly.

**Connect Mid-Hudson Regional Transit Plan (2021)**

In 2021, the Mid-Hudson Valley Transportation Management Area (MHVTMA) which includes the MPOs of Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster Counties, completed a regional transit plan for the Mid-Hudson Valley region, titled *Connect Mid-Hudson*. The plan identified ways to better coordinate and connect existing transit systems internally, between the three study area counties, and externally, between the three-county region.
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

and the Albany and New York City metropolitan areas. The analysis covered the following issues: effectiveness of intercity coach services; opportunities for new technologies and service models such as app-based microtransit service; capital improvements to alleviate congestion or capacity constraints at park-and-rides and along transit corridors; and a review of service performance and customer satisfaction monitoring.

Regarding microtransit, the plan noted that it could potentially provide broad local coverage or serve as a first/last mile connector linking regional transit hubs with nearby destinations that are otherwise unserved or underserved. It further noted that microtransit technology can also be used to group trip requests and maximize vehicle utilization on longer regional trips. The flexibility of this service model may allow it to fill existing service gaps identified in the study area, and new gaps created by the continued suspension of some transit services in the wake of the pandemic.

Key recommendations included the following:

1. **Introduction of App-Based Microtransit Service** – to provide local mobility and regional connections where fixed route service is either not available or not effective.
2. **Creation of a Transit Ombudsman** – to serve as an advocate and point of contact for the region’s commuters, especially those who rely on publicly-subsidized but privately-operated commuter bus services.
3. **Capital Improvements** – focusing on roadway congestion hot-spots and capacity-constrained park-and-ride lots that impact the efficient operation of regional transit service in the Mid-Hudson Valley.
4. **Aggregation of Transit Service Information onto a Single Platform** – to simplify trip planning and facilitate future functionality such as mobile fare payment and microtransit integration.
5. **Adoption of a Regional Transit Funding Framework** – to create a structure for planning and dispensing the region’s unallocated Federal transit funding balance and support the service and capital improvement recommendations.

The regional transit plan included two specific microtransit recommendations for Dutchess County:

1. **Northern Dutchess County Microtransit Zone** – With ten train departures a day in each direction, the Rhinecliff Amtrak Station has the potential to be a major mobility hub, but there are no connecting transit services and parking at the station is at capacity. The plan found that the northern Dutchess communities of Rhinebeck, Red Hook, Annandale-on-Hudson, and Tivoli are served by DCPT Route C, but the route does not connect to Rhinecliff Station and the service is often irregular or infrequent. To better serve Northern Dutchess, the plan recommended a microtransit zone that would allow DCPT to truncate Route C at Rhinebeck. The shorter route could allow for greater service frequency between Rhinebeck and Poughkeepsie.

2. **Southern Poughkeepsie Microtransit Zone** – The plan recommended a microtransit zone in southern Poughkeepsie, in and around the Spackenkill and Red Oaks Mill areas. These suburban residential areas are near the IBM campus and several retail centers along the Route 9.
corridor, yet the plan found that they are not well-served by transit. To better serve these suburban communities, the plan recommended a microtransit zone to facilitate local trips for retail, employment, and connecting transit opportunities. Such a service would allow DCPT to truncate Route G at the Poughkeepsie Galleria and potentially provide greater service frequency between the Galleria and Beacon.

Long-Range Transportation Plans

As required by the FAST Act, the DCTC completes a countywide, long-range transportation plan every five years, and these plans provide a great deal of information on bus transit services.

Moving Dutchess Forward, the DCTC’s current long-range metropolitan transportation plan, analyzed trends that influence our transportation system, identified barriers to access and equity, and suggested best practices to address those trends and barriers. Relevant recommendations from the plan’s Transformative Investment discussion include the following projects and packages:

1. Transit Services for the Harlem Valley and Northern Dutchess Project – includes on-demand transit service in the Harlem Valley and Northern Dutchess, two underserved areas in the county. This builds on planning work done as part of our Connect Mid-Hudson regional transit plan and County Public Transit’s 2021 Transit Study.

2. Bus Service Improvements Package – includes operating and capital needs to maintain bus service, such as basic maintenance, repairs, and bus replacements. It also includes new or improved bus service, such as more frequent service in core areas, additional service during off-peak times (such as evenings or weekends) where needed, and alternatives to fixed route service in lower-density areas. Other investments that improve the bus system, such as passenger counting equipment, real-time information, and updated schedules are also included. This package could also fund programs coordinated with human service agencies and volunteer programs as outlined in our Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

3. Walking and Bicycling Improvements Package – includes sidewalk repairs and replacements, new sidewalks, improved crossings, shoulders or sidewalks on bridges, wider shoulders and bike lanes on State, County, and local roads. It includes work to implement the County’s upcoming ADA transition plan, which will address access to County facilities, roads, and the bus system, including improvements at County bus stops such as shelters, sidewalks, and ramps. It also supports the continuation of the County’s Universal Accessibility program, which seeks to improve walking and bicycling access on County roads, and implementing recommendations from Walk Bike Dutchess and our local pedestrian plans.
**Dutchess County Transit Development Plan**

The DCTC completed a [2009 Transit Development Plan (TDP)](#) for Dutchess County that still has relevant findings for our current system. Several recommendations were made to improve the efficiency of local bus operations. The TDP relied on quantitative and qualitative measures to evaluate the transit systems, including a diagnostics analysis of all routes to measure performance and productivity.

The study was managed by an Advisory Committee made up of members from organizations with an interest in public transit. The committee included human service agencies such as the Dutchess County Office for the Aging and Taconic Resources for Independence, Inc. – a private, non-profit advocacy group for persons with disabilities.

The TDP also relied on extensive stakeholder outreach to gather input on how to improve service. Of this outreach work, the discussions held with stakeholder groups, specifically Community Organizations, Dutchess County Agencies, and Medical/Health Care Providers, relate most to this Coordinated Plan. Through these discussions, stakeholders raised important concerns about current transit service and the state of transportation for older adults and people with disabilities:

1. Schedules were difficult to understand and use, especially for persons with cognitive disabilities, older adults, and the sight-impaired.

2. Because schedules were so complex, people with disabilities and older adults are intimidated by the bus systems. Some clients were also afraid of being stranded.

3. Service was too limited in geographic coverage, hours of operations, and frequency of service for people to rely on them for all their transportation needs.

4. Rural areas such as the Harlem Valley, with growing shares of older adults, were underserved by the DCPT.

5. Service did not respond to non-traditional work schedules. Agencies reported that their clients turned down jobs due to limited service; being retail oriented, these jobs were predominately located along Route 9 from Poughkeepsie south to Fishkill.

6. Drivers did not announce stops. This is not only a concern for sight-impaired passengers but for all passengers since many locations do not have street signs.

7. The Dial-A-Ride program should be expanded.

8. The bus systems should better serve recreational areas to improve people’s quality of life.

9. Medical providers noted that the availability of public transportation reduces the transportation costs of social service programs. Some must rely on private taxis, which are expensive and sometimes unreliable.

10. Clients could not make an ADA paratransit reservation three days in advance, due to last-minute or unexpected medical appointments.

11. Many stops were not marked, nor lighted at night, which lowered people’s sense of safety and security; flag stops were also unreliable.
The TDP also included a survey of passengers, which allowed existing passengers to comment on transit service. The survey also gathered information about age, income, employment status, and trip purpose. Relevant findings included the following:

1. Senior citizens (65 years old and above) accounted for only four percent of DCPT passengers, well below their proportion of the county’s total population.
2. Passengers tended to have lower income, with almost 30 percent of passengers having annual incomes below $15,000.
3. Many passengers used the system to commute to work (55 percent).
4. Many passengers were dependent on transit: over 44 percent of passengers had no vehicle; only 44 percent of passengers had a driver’s license.
5. Few passengers paid the discounted fare for persons with disabilities, only three percent.
6. Passengers wanted more frequent service, more weekend service, and longer service hours.

The TDP’s final recommendations are listed below under service and capital recommendations:

**Service Recommendations:**
1. Reduce DCPT bus routes from thirty to six.
2. Expand curb-to-curb service (paratransit/Flex Service) and coordinate with Dial-A-Ride.
3. Revise hours of operation for DCPT.
4. Add Saturday, Sunday, and Weekend Service on some routes.
5. Add more fixed routes as funding becomes available (e.g. Route G: Harlem Valley via Route 22; Route J: Cross-County North).
6. Develop better marketing material.

**Capital Recommendations:**
1. Expand the revenue fleet by purchasing additional vehicles.
2. Provide consistent maintenance for bus stop locations and signs.
3. Install bus shelters at major transit stops throughout the service area.
4. Monitor and identify the need for more park-and-ride lots.

The TDP noted that transit providers cannot control land use. Municipalities, as decision-making bodies, can have a positive impact on transit by requiring walking infrastructure and transit connections for new development.

**Previous DCTC Coordinated Plans**

The DCTC’s previous Coordinated Plans identified two distinct service areas within the county: the communities along the Hudson River with direct transportation to many services and medical facilities along Route 9, and the rural northern and eastern areas of the county, with more complex connections and greater terrain differences. Previous plans also identified the need for larger capacity vehicles for urban areas and smaller vehicles for rural. Additional recommendations were as follows:
1. Replace agency vehicles with excessive wear and tear.
2. Provide additional vehicles to human service agencies to meet growing needs.
3. Explore the feasibility of allowing DCPT vehicles to operate outside the county.
4. Provide travel training to those persons not familiar with the DCPT bus system.
5. Expand the marketing of bus services, particularly toward people with disabilities, older adults, and low-income residents as increasing the use of existing services could help alleviate the demands placed on human service agencies.
6. Give priority considerations to the cities of Beacon and Poughkeepsie as well as the Village of Wappingers Falls due to their concentration of older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income populations.
7. Improve connections between high-density residential areas and employment centers.

Non-DCTC Studies

Several non-DCTC studies that address the mobility of older adults and people with disabilities have been completed in the past decade.

Dutchess County Office of Aging Needs Assessment

The Dutchess County Office for the Aging (OFA) conducted a needs assessment in 2015 as part of its own strategic planning work, with three main goals:

1. Assess the conditions of older adults that may limit their ability to remain in or return to their homes and to participate in family and community life.
2. Quantify the extent of the needs of older adults in Dutchess County for supportive services, nutrition services, legal services, and senior centers.
3. Identify unique needs of minority groups, those over age 75, and those who are older and of low income.

OFA’s needs assessment relied on input from a variety of surveys and other sources: Senior Survey, Key Informant Survey, Caregiver Survey, requested information log from Dutchess NY Connects Intakes, Public Hearings, Dutchess County Community Health Report, National Unmet Needs for Services Data, Outcomes and Client Satisfaction Data, Advisory Board, and directed surveys to target populations. These sources revealed the following issues:
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

1. Senior Survey (all seniors): 356 of 2,100 people who answered the survey (16 percent) said that transportation (for medical, shopping, recreational, etc.) for seniors is a “problem” in the county.
2. Key Informant Surveys: 82 percent of those who worked with seniors ranked transportation as the number one problem.
3. Dutchess County Community Health Survey: approximately 47 percent of those aged 60-74, and 51 percent of those 75 and over, indicated “Unsafe driving/roads” as one of their top four concerns.
4. Public Hearings: the greatest concerns, as expressed by participants, were related to unmet transportation needs and the needs for senior center activities.

In addition, the assessment referred to the federal government’s General Accountability Office (GAO) Health and Retirement Study, which looked at meal services, home-based care, and transportation services (all of which require transportation) and found:

1. 21 percent of individuals over the age of 65 were likely to need transportation services, and of the agencies that provided transportation services, an estimated 26 percent struggled to meet all transportation requests.
2. Nine percent of an estimated 17.6 million low-income older adults received meals services (with the GAO suggesting the need could be even greater).
3. Approximately 29 percent of all older adults experienced difficulties with daily activities, indicating that some form of home-based care might be warranted.

OFA’s Needs Assessment concluded that transportation was one of the most important areas of unmet needs for seniors in Dutchess County.

Northeast Dutchess County Transit Feasibility Study

The Foundation for Community Health commissioned and funded a 2010 Feasibility Study to analyze the transportation needs of eastern Dutchess County residents. The study focused on destinations of those living in the Harlem Valley and revealed that residents frequent many destinations in central Dutchess, the Harlem Valley, and Connecticut, in addition to medical and shopping hubs, such as Poughkeepsie. The study recommended the fixed route service, supplemented by a point-deviated service that allowed a greater distance and more time to access individuals who lived beyond the standard ¾ mile limit.

Recommendations included three options for a Flex Service including Fixed Route, Point-Deviated Route, and Demand Response alternatives. The final recommended route for Dutchess County Flex Service included a mixture of fixed route and point-deviated service, where buses would run a fixed route but would be allowed a greater distance and more time to access individuals who lived beyond the federally mandated three-quarter-mile limit.

In addition, the study suggested that changes in the DCPT bus schedule would not be enough and that a new independent operator should establish service. The new service would address the needs that the County’s Flex Service could not
accommodate. These recommendations consisted of demand-response, town day services, and a regional shopping shuttle service. The Task Force recommended that a fixed route and point-deviated route would be the most preferred alternative.

**Senior Transportation Services in Dutchess County**

The Center for Governmental Research was commissioned to study senior transportation in Dutchess County to assess the current demand for transportation service, estimate projected demand, and identify options for addressing demand. The 2007 study recommended the promotion of available services through awareness and education, exploring innovative partnerships to enhance funding and other resources, exploring partnerships with neighboring counties, and expanding the ability to recruit and manage volunteers. Overall, the report determined that there are many opportunities for Dutchess County to enhance and expand senior transportation services to meet the needs of a growing senior population with limited access to services.
5. Identification of Unmet Transportation Needs, Gaps, and Duplication of Services

There are a wide variety of needs and gaps related to transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities, but most can fit into one of four general categories: capital, operations, mobility management, and policy/education. These categories allow us to better organize issues into possible projects and strategies.

A need could be the identification of a specific location where service is needed but doesn’t currently exist, or it could be that more vehicles are necessary to take people where they need to go. A need might also take the form of better technology such as scheduling software to route buses more efficiently, or a maintenance contract that allows multiple agencies to realize cost savings through shared services. The Coordinated Planning process is designed to identify these needs and prioritize strategies to provide better service.

Many agencies provide transportation services in Dutchess County, and thus, there are many separate systems. These systems provide transportation in several ways, including public fixed route systems, demand-response, paratransit, not-for-profit specialized service, and volunteer driver programs. Trips may be provided for a variety of reasons including medical appointments, shopping, recreation, or social purposes.

To identify transportation needs and inform the plan, the DCTC used a variety of surveys and meetings to elicit input from human service agencies, transportation providers, and the public.

Surveys

Between the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, the DCTC coordinated two transportation surveys. The DCTC worked with the Dutchess County Think Differently team to identify relevant agencies for input on this Coordinated Plan, and a survey was emailed to those human service agencies and transportation providers. Agencies were asked to coordinate the distribution of surveys throughout their organization. A second survey was issued for DCTC’s long-range transportation plan, Moving Dutchess Forward. This survey was open to the public. County Public Transit (DCPT) also issued a public survey in early 2021 as part of community engagement efforts for their Transit Plan update. Appendix A includes copies of the survey forms.

DCTC Human Service Agency Survey

The DCTC received 13 responses from human service agencies and transportation providers. All responding agencies classified themselves as “Not-For-Profit, Private Agencies.” Some agencies that had separate locations or divisions provided separate responses. The responses revealed the following takeaways:

1. Most agencies indicated that they provide transportation directly to clients, using their own vehicles. Of the agencies that do not provide transportation services, all but one
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

either assisted clients with trip coordination or referred their clients to DCPT.

2. Almost all agencies that provide transportation used a demand response model, with some also using fixed routes and client-arranged recurring trips (e.g. dialysis).

3. Despite vehicle fleet sizes, the number of wheelchair-accessible vehicles is low, with less than 25 percent of vehicles reported as wheelchair accessible.

4. No agencies were willing to coordinate trip dispatching with another agency. Concerns about insurance and liability and meeting specialized client needs were cited as the main barriers to trip coordination.

5. Some agencies reported that they were not aware of the 5310 funding program.

6. Lack of available or frequent DCPT service in areas outside of urban centers was a major concern.

Agencies consistently pointed out the need for better, more frequent, convenient, and accessible public transportation, especially for people who have difficulty with or are unable to walk, and in more rural areas. For older adults and people with disabilities, challenges in accessing transportation are exacerbated by winter weather, poor sidewalk or bus stop shelter conditions, and more generally, distance. Many agencies also reported the need for more agency vehicles and drivers, indicating that increased funding could allow them to provide better transportation through more employees, more vehicles, or service contracts. Most agencies also indicated that their transportation needs have grown over the past five years.

DCTC Public Survey

As part of its public outreach for the long-range Transportation Plan, Moving Dutchess Forward, the DCTC issued a public survey to gather information about residents’ transportation and mobility barriers. Multiple open-ended questions in this survey afforded the opportunity for older adults, people with disabilities, and advocates to share their personal challenges and concerns about transportation. Select quotes from open-ended responses are included in this section. In total, 364 survey responses were received from 33 (out of 34) Dutchess County zip codes. Key takeaways included the following:

1. In general, people who do not drive for most of their daily trips face the most difficulty in getting around Dutchess County.

2. The combined challenges of “no access to public transportation” and “limited transit routes or schedules” ranked as the top transportation challenge for access to various destinations.

3. The third most common transportation priority cited by respondents was “improved public transit service.”

Respondents expressed other concerns, including: it is difficult or dangerous to walk to some bus stops; seniors need door-to-door or on-demand service; they would use public transit if the routes were more convenient and

“Currently, we are retired but able to drive to appointments, social gatherings, and entertainment. But this may not be true as we continue to age.”
frequent; there are limited or sometimes no public transportation options for people with disabilities, especially developmental disabilities; and there is limited access to recreational locations by public transportation.

Some public bus users indicated that there was reliable service within the City of Poughkeepsie and Beacon, but many respondents cited limited, infrequent, or inaccessible transportation options in more rural areas of the county. Many respondents indicated that more frequent buses and more bus routes in general would make their daily travel more convenient.

Only about 25 respondents indicated that they ride the bus for most of their daily trips. Despite the low number of survey respondents who often use the bus, frequent and accessible public transportation was consistently identified as a top challenge and high priority across the survey.

In the future, it could be useful to collect demographic data like age and disability to quantify some of the challenges of older adults and people with disabilities with public transportation. Future Coordinated Plan efforts could include a survey targeted to the clients of human service agencies.

**Dutchess County Public Transit (DCPT) Public Survey**

As part of public outreach for their ongoing Transit Study, which was underway during the development of this plan, DCPT issued a public survey to help understand rider characteristics of various public and private transportation services in Dutchess County. The main target audience was people who used or still use fixed route service, ADA, Dial-a-Ride, or Flex before or since the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey also sought input from riders of other public on-demand transportation services including those provided by OFA, North East Community Center, Pawling Resource Center, etc.

There were four main goals of the survey: to understand customer satisfaction for service overall and different elements of service; measure attitudes about travel experiences; gauge use of and interest in technology such as app-based trip booking platforms; and obtain suggestions for improvement. In total, 404 responses were received. Relevant takeaways include the following:

1. Nearly 40 percent of respondents indicated that they currently use or have used DCPT bus services. Of those who use the bus, 90 percent of people indicated that they have walked to get to a bus stop. The top
difficulties for people when accessing bus stops were long distances and missing or damaged sidewalks.

2. Of people who ride the bus, about half have used the DCPT Bus Locator app. More than half of people who use the app indicated that they use it every time they ride the bus, and almost 75 percent of users rated the app’s usefulness as ‘Excellent’ or ‘Good’. The main reason cited by those who do not use the app was that they did not know about it.

3. 6 survey respondents indicated that they use DCPT ADA Paratransit. Of these, all use it at least monthly, and most indicated that they can usually schedule their desired trips.

4. 8 survey respondents indicated that they use DCPT Dial-A-Ride. Of these, half use the service at least weekly, and half indicated that they can usually schedule their desired trips.

5. Nearly half of survey respondents that did not typically use DCPT fixed route bus service indicated that they would be more likely to do so if service information was easier to find and/or if bus service was more frequent.

Some respondents (numbers indicated) also used other transportation services that are inventoried this Coordinated Plan, including Dutchess County Office for Aging vans/buses (2), North East Community Center vans (2), and Friends of Seniors volunteer transportation (5).

Regarding DCPT ADA Paratransit and Dial-A-Ride, respondents echoed similar remarks. Scheduling rides can be difficult due to limited hours for both services, especially with last-minute changes to medical and other appointments. Expanded service hours and clearer rules were suggested as ways to improve these services.

Other common suggestions included expanding routes, service hours, and frequency; increasing accessibility; improving the reliability of the DCPT Bus Locator app; improving payment options; and making schedules easier to read.

**Additional Outreach**

Though the surveys and meetings proved very helpful in gathering input, not every agency or client could be reached or had the ability to fill out the form, which is why staff engaged in other outreach efforts for the Coordinated Plan. In some cases, staff conducted phone interviews.

**DCPT Accessibility Meeting**

In November 2020, DCPT held a targeted focus group with members of the Dutchess Access Committee as part of its ongoing Transit Plan. The project team discussed the interrelationship between transportation and accessibility, gaining considerable insights into the travel needs of seniors and persons with disabilities in the county. The group also discussed ongoing challenges and preferences for potential improvements: make schedules easier to read; improve dangerous conditions at drop off locations, including weather and topographical hazards; improve the reliability and accessibility options of the DCPT Bus Locator app; improve reliability of bus schedules and stops; implement consistent
(verbal) announcements of stops for people with hearing difficulties; and expand scheduling service hours.

Public Meetings, Printed Materials, Comment Form, and Phone

Public outreach efforts of DCTC’s long-range transportation plan, Moving Dutchess Forward, coincided with the development of the Coordinated Plan, providing opportunities for members of the public to talk to us about their transportation challenges. DCTC staff held two public meetings for Moving Dutchess Forward, providing opportunities for the public to ask questions and make comments. Posters and other printed materials were distributed on buses, posted at libraries and other public spaces, and emailed to municipalities to request feedback on transportation challenges.

One comment related to services for people with disabilities was received through Moving Dutchess Forward’s email comment form. A comment phone line was also set up so that members of the public could reach out by phone.

Identified Transportation Needs

Based on the information received through public outreach, several issues were identified relating to various groups’ ability to use or access the transportation system. Needs are grouped by category: capital, operations, mobility management, policy/education, and service gaps and duplication.

Capital

1. **New Vehicles** – The rise in the number of older adults will result in increased demand for transportation, which will require additional buses, vans, personal vehicles (volunteers), and specialized vehicles with wheelchair access and the ability to transport those using oxygen.
2. **Replacement Vehicles** – As vehicles wear out, they will need to be replaced to maintain a reliable fleet.
3. **Bus Shelters** – To facilitate the use of public transportation by older adults and people with disabilities, it would be helpful to have more shelters at bus stops. Shelters should be accessible and have seating to protect users from the weather and to provide a place to rest while waiting for the bus.
4. **Sidewalks** – Connections between a person’s home and bus stop may not be accessible for walking, especially for people with disabilities. The construction of new sidewalks and the repair and upgrade of existing sidewalks will help facilitate access to public transit.

Operations

1. **Off-Peak, Night, and Weekend Service** – For many clients, public transit during off-hours is limited or non-existent. That means that although clients may have a ride to their destination (if along a bus route), they may not have return service to get home afterward. This could affect their decision to even attempt the trip in the first place.
2. **Provision of Service in Rural Areas** – Dutchess County is very diverse, with urban centers and smaller villages and hamlets amid suburban and rural land. The distance
between destinations and small population centers in outlying areas affects the ability to provide cost-effective public transit, especially in eastern and northern Dutchess. In addition, even when transportation service can be secured, clients experience long trips.

3. **Advance Notification Requirements & Scheduled Pick-Up Times** – Many demand-response services require up to two weeks’ notice to schedule a trip. For regular medical appointments, this is not as much of a concern, but when it comes to unscheduled appointments due to an emergency or illness, it becomes a major inconvenience. In addition, while drop-off for medical appointments can be made relatively easily, delays at the appointment can disrupt the return service, resulting in scheduling difficulties and additional wait times. To add to the difficulty of scheduling, some municipalities only contract for service once per week. This method of transportation does not work for clients who need more frequent service, such as those on dialysis.

4. **Funding** – Funding is needed to reimburse volunteer drivers for mileage costs. Currently, volunteer driver programs offer very flexible accommodations, with some services even providing door-through-door service to their clients.

**Mobility Management**

1. **Volunteer and Paid Drivers** – Human service agencies, transportation providers, and their clients have voiced concerns that more drivers are needed. Insurance requirements and company policies may require driver candidates to possess Commercial Driver Licenses, perform stressful physical tests, and undergo drug monitoring. These requirements can hinder potential drivers from applying for a driver position.

2. **Central Dispatching** – Staff from DCPT and the County’s transit management company revealed that the DCPT office receives many inquiries, such as how to get from an origin to a destination in-county, and how to travel using public transit out-of-county. In addition, 511NY, a service of the New York State Department of Transportation, routes any users who request to speak with an operator to DCPT. Additional mobility management staff may be necessary.

3. **DCPT Bus Locator app** – People who use DCPT bus service indicated that the bus locator app is not always reliable for following live bus locations and could have more accessibility options. Difficulty understanding schedules and unreliable location data reduce rider confidence.

**Policy & Education**

1. **Travel Training** – Unlike larger cities where a significant portion of the population is familiar and comfortable with using public transportation, Dutchess County is still a very auto-dependent county. Residents may not feel comfortable attempting to use transit because they may be stranded if they misinterpret schedules, or because they are unfamiliar with the system and the “rules” of riding a bus.

2. **Deinstitutionalization** – Integration of clients into apartments and competitive work environments and out of group homes, larger residential facilities, and day habilitation programs is expected to continue. This could...
result in shifting the responsibility of transportation to family members and local governments.

3. **Liability** – Human service agencies are not necessarily opposed to sharing vehicles and rides. However, the insurance and legal industry has raised questions of responsibility and liability which results in a lack of collaboration.

4. **Medicaid Identification** – Some clients must carry Medicaid identification with them to receive transportation services. Parents and guardians may be hesitant to give original documents to family members with disabilities out of fear that the documents will be lost or stolen, which results in public transportation not being used.

5. **Restriction of buses and vans turning around in residential driveways** – Buses and vans are not authorized to turn around in or back down driveways. Those with mobility issues or who otherwise cannot walk to the end of their driveway are limited from accessing transportation services, even if transportation is available.

6. **Assistance for those with mobility issues** – DCPT permits no more than four shopping bags per bus rider; often, there is no help getting on or off a bus for people carrying packages.

**Gaps in Service**

In addition to the above transportation needs, the Coordinated Plan identified two gaps in existing transportation services:

1. **Limited hours and days of service** – Currently, there is no overnight service after buses stop running. Passengers who take a bus to work may not be able to return home if their shift ends after 11:00 p.m. In addition, many routes do not offer Sunday hours.

2. **Limited routes** – Bus transportation is limited to major transportation corridors, with limited access on County and local roads.

**Duplication of Services**

Our review of existing transportation services did not reveal any direct duplication in service. While there are volunteer driver programs and public transportation systems that cover the same geographic areas, they do not provide the same service. In fact, agencies and individuals have cited capacity issues: a need for more drivers, more service/vehicles, and more frequent service – indicating that more service is needed.
6. Coordinated Strategies and Priorities

This Coordinated Plan recommends ways for human service agencies, transportation providers, and public transit operators to address the transportation needs outlined in Chapter 5. As applicable, this Coordinated Plan incorporates strategies and recommendations from the previous plan.

**Capital**

1. Purchase new vehicles to expand capacity, with a preference for vehicles with wheelchair lifts and space.
2. Purchase replacement vehicles to maintain existing capacity across human service agencies and public operators.
3. Fund preventative maintenance activities such as replacement of worn brakes and tires, oil changes, wheelchair lifts, and heating/cooling systems.
4. Purchase and install bus stop shelters on fixed routes to expand transit access and improve accessibility at existing shelters where feasible.
5. Construct additional sidewalks and ADA-accessible ramps or other necessary equipment to facilitate the use of public transit at key destinations and activity centers.
6. Purchase automated announcer systems for buses to aid in communicating next stop information.

**Operations**

1. Implement recommendations of DCPT’s 2021 Transit Study, including service and route modifications to increase system efficiency and increase ridership, and options for lower-density areas.
2. Support transportation services to specialized medical care for patients who require frequent treatment.
3. Explore fuel reimbursement for volunteer drivers with priority for trips that are outside of bus routes or provide feeder or door-to-door service.
4. Support operational cost-saving measures by human service agencies and transportation providers such as group insurance and centralized vehicle maintenance and investigate insurance options and agreements needed to share vehicles and trips among human service agencies.
5. Recruit paid and volunteer drivers for human service agencies.

**Mobility Management**

1. Employ a transit ombudsman for the three-county area (Dutchess, Ulster, Orange) to assist riders with scheduling transportation, accessing various services, and riding transit, and to act as a central dispatch office.
2. Purchase scheduling software for interested human service agencies to coordinate trips between clients and volunteer drivers.
3. Increase the marketing of transportation services by public transit agencies and human service agencies.
4. Investigate the provision for group discounts/shared rides for human service agency clients that use taxis or ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft.
5. Continue to upgrade and promote DCPT’s Bus Locator app to assist riders in accessing transit schedules and planning trips.
6. Consider adding app-based scheduling for DCPT’s demand-response services.

Policy and Education

1. Support travel training for clients of human service agencies.
2. Notify human service agencies of FTA Section 5310 funding opportunities.
3. Assist individuals who have Limited English Proficiency in accessing transportation services.
4. Ensure that public transit information (both printed materials and online information) is accessible to people with disabilities and older adults.

Conclusion

Human service agencies play a critical role in providing transportation to their clients. Often, this service bridges a gap that public bus service simply cannot fill. These services allow people to age in place and provide a safe way for people with special needs to reach their destinations.

The DCTC expects to see an increase in the need for specialized transportation services in the future due to the aging of our population and, for some of our community members with disabilities, a move from centralized housing and work locations to independent living and competitive jobs. We will continue to exchange ideas with human service agencies and transportation providers to better understand local transportation needs and offer solutions.
Appendix A
(Surveys)
This survey will inform our new Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Dutchess County. The Coordinated Plan, required every five years under federal law, will help us identify the transportation needs of agencies that provide services to the elderly and disabled in our county. For additional background, please see our 2015 Coordinated Plan.

Your response to this survey will serve as a critical element in our new Coordinated Plan. It will also enable us to secure federal funding to support your agency's mobility needs. We ask that responses be provided by October 16, 2020.

Answers will not be shared with any other agency, except as part of aggregate and anonymous data reports and analyses.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact us at (845) 486-3600 or at dctc@dutchessny.gov.

* 1. Please provide your organization's contact information.

- Organization Title
- Name of Contact
- Street Address
- City/Town
- State
- Zip Code
- Phone Number
- Email

* 2. Which of the following best describes your agency?

- Not-for-profit, private agency
- Local public agency
- Local government
- Other (please specify)

[Box to input other details]
3. Which of the following populations do you represent or serve (check all that apply)?

- [ ] Disabled
- [ ] Children (ages 12 and under)
- [ ] Adolescents (ages 13-17)
- [ ] Adults (ages 18-64)
- [ ] Seniors (ages 65+)
- [ ] Veterans
- [ ] Other (please specify)

4. Which statement below best describes how your agency provides transportation services to your clients (choose at least one).

- [ ] Agency that provides transportation using agency-owned vehicles
- [ ] Agency that provides transportation but does not have agency-owned vehicles
- [ ] Agency that does not provide transportation
- [ ] Transportation service provider
- [ ] Specialty transportation service provider for human service agencies ONLY
- [ ] Coordinator/mobility manager for transportation services

5. Does your agency charge a fare for providing transportation?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] Yes, but clients or agency are reimbursed by federal or state sources
- [ ] No
- [ ] No, but donations are accepted

6. Which of the following best describes how your agency provides transportation for your clients?

- [ ] Direct transportation using agency vehicles
- [ ] Purchase transportation services from a third party provider
- [ ] Provide contract transportation services for other agencies
- [ ] Reimburse clients for transportation services provided by others (including taxies and Uber/Lyft)
- [ ] Coordinate volunteers who provide services with private vehicles
- [ ] Other (please specify)

7. Please indicate the type of transportation services your organization either directly provides or purchases (check all that apply)

- [ ] Fixed Route (defined routes and fixed schedules)
- [ ] Special Events (specific transportation to special events)
- [ ] Demand Response (consumer requests services when needed)
- [ ] We do not provide transportation
- [ ] Recurring Trips (consumer-specific, recurring patterns)
8. In a typical week, how many one-way passenger trips did you provide, purchase, or coordinate:

Total Passenger Trips: 

Number of Weekday (Mon-Fri) Trips 

Number of Weekend (Sat-Sun) Trips 

Number of trips for Non-ambulatory Clients 

9. How many clients do you serve on a typical day?

Weekday (Mon-Fri) 

Weekend (Sat-Sun) 

10. If applicable, what is your agency's annual budget to provide transportation services for your clients (in dollars)? 

11. If you have vehicles, please indicate how many of each vehicle type your agency uses to provide transportation service?

Bus (16 or more passengers) 

Passenger Van 

Passenger Car 

Total Vehicles 

12. In what counties does your service operate?

- [ ] Dutchess 
- [ ] Orange 
- [ ] Ulster 
- [ ] Columbia 
- [ ] Putnam 
- [ ] Westchester 
- [ ] Rockland 
- [ ] Outside State 

13. What unmet transportation needs is your AGENCY anticipating or currently experiencing? 


14. What unmet transportation needs are your CLIENTS experiencing?

15. What types of trips does your agency provide or coordinate?
   - Medical
   - Shopping
   - Work
   - Medical
   - Educational
   - Recreational
   - All of the above
   - Other (please specify)

16. Please describe specific gaps in service where service is needed, but does not currently exist.

17. Please describe areas where service is duplicated.

18. If funding was not an issue, how would your agency's transportation services be different than today?

19. Does your agency coordinate with any other transportation providers? Coordination does not have to happen by contract.
   - Yes
   - No
   - If yes, please describe

20. Would your agency be willing to collaborate with another agency to use the same vehicles for transportation services?
   - Yes
   - No
21. Do you employ a full-time mobility manager or dispatcher?
   - Yes
   - No

* 22. Has your agency received federal funding from the Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) program since 2015?
   - Yes
   - No
   - If Yes, what was this funding used for?
     
     [Textbox]
Moving Dutchess Forward: Transportation Challenges Survey

We want to hear about the challenges you face getting around Dutchess County. Your input will help us plan for the future of transportation in Dutchess County.

1. What are some of the things you like best about living in your community?

2. How do you typically get around for most of your daily trips? Please select all that apply.
   - Drive
   - Walk
   - Bicycle
   - Ride Bus
   - Ride Train
   - Other (please specify)
3. Please check the boxes below that best describe the transportation challenges you face when accessing each destination. If you do not access a certain destination, please leave the row for that destination blank.

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>School/College</th>
<th>Grocery Stores/Supermarkets</th>
<th>Pharmacies/Clinics/Hospitals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Limited transit routes or schedules</td>
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<td>Congestion/traffic issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal safety concerns</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other transportation challenge(s)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Please check the boxes below that best describe the transportation challenges you face when accessing each destination. If you do not access a certain destination, please leave the row for that destination blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Community Resources (Community Centers, Libraries, City/Town/Village Halls, Post Office, etc)</th>
<th>Parks and Trails</th>
<th>Other Destination(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No access to public transportation</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited transit routes or schedules</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of sidewalks/crosswalks/safe walking routes</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of safe bicycling routes</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion/traffic issues</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of a vehicle/unable to drive</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too far/takes too long to reach with options available</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of accessibility (for wheelchairs, strollers, persons with disabilities (etc)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of the roads</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety concerns</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other transportation challenge(s)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. If you selected "Other Destination(s)" above, please describe the destination:

6. If you selected "Other Transportation Challenge(s)" above, please describe the challenge:

7. Do you have additional thoughts on transportation challenges? If so, please share them here:

8. Which of the following transportation challenges affect your daily life the most? Please select all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation Challenges</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No access to public transportation</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited transit routes or schedules</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of sidewalks/crosswalks/safe walking routes</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion/traffic issues</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of a vehicle/unable to drive</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too far/takes too long to get to common destinations</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of accessibility (for wheelchairs, strollers, persons with disabilities, etc)</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of the roads</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety concerns</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Do you have friends or family who experience transportation challenges? If so, please describe:
10. What are your top transportation priorities for your community? Please select up to three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More transportation options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved public transit service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of the roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal safety concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to basic needs (food, educational, medical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get around easily (school, shopping, childcare, appointments, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better walking routes/access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better bicycling routes/access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved accessibility (for wheelchairs, strollers, persons with disabilities, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. How has your access to destinations improved in recent years?

- Improved
- No change
- Declined

12. What would make your daily travels more convenient?

13. What is your ZIP code?

14. We are interested in hearing more about your experiences getting around Dutchess County. If you are willing to be contacted to share your transportation story, please enter your email address below.

15. Enter your email below to receive project updates and be entered in the drawing.
Thank you for participating in our survey!
(Haga clic aquí para ver la versión en español)

This is an effort organized by Dutchess County and is designed to help improve and strengthen existing public transportation services. We appreciate your willingness to answer our questions. We expect it will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Note: We are interested in learning about how you traveled before the COVID-19 pandemic and/or how you travel today. Even if you are not currently using any public transportation services, we are still interested in your input. Please consider your answers assuming you will use public transportation in the future.

Provide your email at the end of the survey for a chance to win one of four $25 Visa gift cards!
* 1. Please check which of the following transportation services you used in 2019 or currently use in Dutchess County:

- [ ] Dutchess County Public Transit (DCPT) bus (Routes A-P and Rail Links)
- [ ] DCPT Dial-a-Ride
- [ ] DCPT ADA Paratransit
- [ ] DCPT Flex
- [ ] Metro North trains
- [ ] Coach USA
- [ ] Leisure Line
- [ ] Dutchess County Office for Aging vans/buses
- [ ] North East Community Center vans
- [ ] Friends of Seniors volunteer transportation
- [ ] Pawling Resource Center vans
- [ ] Taxi
- [ ] Lyft/Uber
- [ ] Other (type in answer)

- [ ] None of the above
These questions are for riders of DCPT Bus Routes A-P and RailLinks

* 2. What are the main reasons you use this service? *(Please select all that apply)*

- [ ] I don't drive
- [ ] I don't have access to a car
- [ ] It is the least expensive option
- [ ] I prefer to leave my car at home
- [ ] Other (type in answer)
- [ ] None of the above

* 3. How do you typically get to bus stops? *Choose all that apply*

- [ ] Walk
- [ ] Ride a bike
- [ ] Get a ride from family/friends
- [ ] Take a taxi
- [ ] Take Lyft/Uber
- [ ] Transfer from Metro North train
- [ ] Other and/or transfer from other transit provider (type in answer)
- [ ] None of the above

* 4. What challenges do you have getting to/from bus stops? *Choose all that apply*

- [ ] Long distance to get to bus stop
- [ ] Not enough street lighting
- [ ] Sidewalks are missing or in poor condition
- [ ] Not enough crosswalks or traffic lights to cross streets safely
- [ ] Do not feel safe or secure while traveling to the bus stop
- [ ] Inadequate or missing bike lanes
- [ ] Hills/terrain make the trip difficult
- [ ] No challenges getting to/from bus stops
- [ ] Other (type in answer)
5. Please provide any comments about DCPT bus service
DCPT offers riders a smartphone app, the DCPT Bus Locator, to plan your bus trip and track your bus.

* 6. Do you use the DCPT Bus Locator app?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
7. How often do you use the DCPT Bus Locator app?
   - [ ] Every time I want to ride the bus
   - [ ] Sometimes when I want to ride the bus
   - [ ] Rarely/never

8. How do you plan your travel when you are **not** using the DCPT Bus Locator app? Choose all that apply.
   - [ ] Consult paper schedules
   - [ ] Consult online schedules
   - [ ] Consult 511 NY
   - [ ] Consult Google trip planner
   - [ ] Call DCPT office
   - [ ] Wait for the bus to arrive
   - [ ] Not applicable
   - [ ] Other (please specify)
   - [ ] None of the above

9. Please rate the usefulness of the DCPT Bus Locator app:
   - [ ] Excellent
   - [ ] Good
   - [ ] Fair
   - [ ] Poor

10. Please provide any additional comments about the DCPT Bus Locator app
* 11. Please tell us why you do not use the DCPT Bus Locator app

- I don't have a smartphone
- I don't like using apps
- I did not know about it
- It is not reliable
- Other (please specify)

- None of the above

12. Please provide any additional comments about the DCPT Bus Locator app
Dutchess County Public Transit operates an ADA complementary paratransit service for qualified individuals for travel within the DCPT service area. ADA service is available to eligible individuals who live within three-quarters of a mile of a regularly scheduled bus route and who cannot use the regular fixed route service. The service is available on the days and during the hours that the fixed route operates.

* 13. How often do/did you ride DCPT ADA Paratransit?
   - Daily
   - At least weekly
   - Monthly
   - Rarely
   - None of the above

* 14. Do/did you ever transfer between ADA Paratransit and the DCPT fixed route bus service?
   - Yes
   - No

* 15. Tell us about your ability to schedule a trip on ADA Paratransit
   - I can/could only get the trips I want when I reserve far in advance
   - I can/could usually get the trips I want
   - I often cannot/could not get the trip I want
   - None of the above

16. Please provide any additional comments about the ADA Paratransit service
DCPT Dial-A-Ride is an advance reservations service operating weekdays in Poughkeepsie (City and Town), Hyde Park, Fishkill, East Fishkill, and Wappinger.

* 17. How often do/did you ride DCPT Dial-A-Ride?
   - Daily
   - At least weekly
   - Monthly
   - Rarely
   - None of the above

* 18. Do/did you ever transfer between Dial-a-Ride and the DCPT fixed route bus?
   - Yes
   - No

* 19. Tell us about your ability to schedule a trip on Dial-A-Ride
   - I can/could only get the trips I want when I reserve far in advance
   - I can/could usually get the trips I want
   - I often cannot/could not get the trip I want
   - None of the above

20. Please provide any additional comments about the Dial-A-Ride service
21. As someone who has used Lyft or Uber, have you ever used Lyft or Uber instead of taking transit?

- Yes
- No
* 22. Why have you used Lyft or Uber instead of taking transit? Choose all that apply

- [ ] Train or bus stop is too far from my destination
- [ ] Transit service doesn’t run during the times when I need to travel
- [ ] Transit service doesn’t run frequently enough to fit my schedule
- [ ] It takes too long to make the trip using transit
- [ ] I do not feel safe using Public Transit due to COVID-19
- [ ] Other (please specify)

- [ ] None of the above
23. Where in Dutchess County do you think buses or vans should go that they do not go today?
24. If you do not typically use DCPT fixed route bus service, what would make you more likely to use any of them in the future? **Select up to three**

- □ Increase frequency so buses come more often
- □ Shelters at bus stops
- □ Make service operate for more hours of the day
- □ Add new service (Please check “Other” below and indicate where to add new service in comment space)
- □ Redesign bus routes so they are more direct
- □ Remove closely spaced bus stops along the route so that buses travel faster
- □ Make service easier to understand
- □ Better coordinate connections to other services such as Coach USA, Metro North, Leisure Line, etc.
- □ Make it easier to find information about service
- □ Other (please specify)

□
25. After a Covid-19 vaccine has been widely distributed, how do you expect your travel patterns to change? * 

Choose all that apply

- I will use transit more
- I will use transit about the same
- Not sure
- Other (please specify)  
  
- None of the above
26. Please provide any additional comments about public transportation services in Dutchess County
The remaining few questions are about your experience with computers and smartphones as well as about your background.

* 27. Please indicate which of the following you have (Check all that apply):

- Personal computer
- Smartphone
- Tablet
- None of the above

28. If you have one, do you use your personal computer or smartphone/tablet to purchase goods or services?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

* 29. What is your home zip code?

* 30. Do you have a private vehicle in your household?

- Yes
- No
* 31. If you have a private vehicle in your household, do you drive?
   - Yes
   - No
* 32. Do you identify as
   - Female
   - Male
   - Other
   - Prefer not to answer

* 33. What is your age?
   - 17 or younger
   - 18-29 years old
   - 30-49 years old
   - 50-64 years old
   - 65 – 84 years old
   - 85 years old or older
   - Prefer not to answer

* 34. Are you a veteran?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Prefer not to answer

* 35. Do you have a disability or health condition that significantly affects your ability to travel?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Prefer not to answer
36. How do you identify your race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply)

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin
☐ Middle Eastern or North African
☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
☐ White or Caucasian
☐ Prefer not to answer
☐ Other (please specify)

37. Please provide your email for a chance to win a $25 Visa gift card. Note: we will not use your email address for any other purposes.