

Chapter 5: Recommendations

COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION
PLAN

FRENCH BROAD RIVER MPO & LAND OF SKY RPO

OVERVIEW

The following recommendations were compiled from stakeholder and public input sessions that were held at each of the five counties in the region (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania).

The recommendations made and commented on at the various meetings were often very specific. This chapter has summarized and consolidated many of those recommendations as well as possible.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIP

In the last FBRMPO Coordinated Plan, many of the recommendations made were concerned with how projects would be funded and implemented. Nearly all of those strategies are still relevant, but those strategies are separated from the table of recommendations later in this chapter.

The primary agencies that will be implementing the improvements recommended in this plan will be the six transit agencies that operate in the five-county region as well as non-profit and volunteer agencies that provide more specialized transportation options throughout the region. While those agencies will likely bear the brunt of

implementation, there are opportunities for more partnerships between agencies, non-profits, businesses, and other groups in order to provide funding, more transportation options, or other

Recommended from various stakeholder and public meetings, the following agencies and groups have been recommended as potential collaborators to help improve human service transportation options:

- Major Employers
- Religious Organizations
- Volunteer Organizations
- Schools
- Grocery Stores and Farmers (to provide fresh food delivery)
- Advocacy Organizations
- Bicycle Shops

These and other potential partners can help in a number of ways. Major employers, public and private schools, and other non-profits may be able to help by providing additional funding for projects- even if it helps to provide the required local match. Other organizations may help by coordinating resources- volunteers, vehicles, and other goods and services that can help improve human services transportation efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations apply to the entire five-county region though some have been more emphasized in some counties as opposed to others (see recommendations matrix Appendix A for more information). Some recommendations emphasize the preservation of the current system and others emphasize expanding transportation service and options- even if it is unclear at the present who would implement such recommendations.

The recommendations have been broken down into five general goals:

1. **Service Improvements**- improvements that focus on improving the current system through service expansions that would likely require more funding for capital and operating expenses
2. **Targeted Outreach**- programs that would likely target a specific group(s) that may have unique transportation challenges
3. **Information and Technology**- programs that may improve the transportation system through improved marketing, communication, or operating technology

4. **Regional and Inter-Regional Efforts**- projects that would enhance cross-county, cross-jurisdictional, or inter-regional transportation
5. **Intermodal Connectivity**- projects that aim to enhance the connection between transit use and the needs of other complimentary modes (primarily bicycle and pedestrian)

These categories do not need to be strictly followed. Some projects may fit in multiple categories and may provide multiple benefits. They have been added to this chapter in order to better organize the recommendations.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

A - 1	Extend hours of service to cover nights, weekends, and holidays
A - 2	Provide short-notice on-demand trips: immediate transportation for non-emergency medical trips
A - 3	Increase the number of bus shelters and/or maintain existing shelters
A - 4	Expand transit service area
A - 5	Increase frequency on fixed routes and develop new fixed route and deviated fixed route service
A - 6	Improve transit facilities (stations and operations facilities)



TARGETED OUTREACH

B – 1	Transportation for adult facility residents for non-medical purposes	SENIORS
B – 2	Transportation for social/cultural/health/after-hours trips to prevent social isolation	
B – 3	Provide transit and pedestrian travel training for seniors and young adults	
B – 4	Improve affordability of fares for low-income and senior transit riders	LOW- INCOME
B – 5	Work out fresh food delivery arrangements with local grocery stores and/or farmers to target homebound citizens	
B – 6	Improve transportation options for low-income families	
B – 7	Target transportation to and from jobs, interviews, applications for jobs and job skill training	
B – 8	Improve transportation options for medically-underserved populations	DISABILITY
B – 9	Improve ADA Accessibility at all major transit stops and stations	
B – 10	Provide support trips for mental health and adult daycare facilities	
B – 11	Increase availability of grocery store and general retail trips	GENERAL

INFORMATION and TECHNOLOGY

C – 1	Improve ease of information access to inform riders of schedules and procedures (websites, signage, advertising, etc.)
C – 2	Develop a Regional Call Center or Point of Information
C – 3	Develop a Regional Mobility Coordinator position and support mobility coordination efforts specific to each agency/county
C – 4	Improve communications and tracking tools to make transportation systems more efficient
C – 5	Hold fare-free days to increase awareness and affordability of transit systems
C – 6	Work with major employers to provide discounted fares for employees
C – 7	Increase software interoperability between transit providers to allow easier exchange of information and scheduling of passenger trips utilizing neighboring system vehicles
C – 8	Encourage microtransit platforms and other forms of transit and shared mobility enabled through emerging technologies.

REGIONAL and INTER-REGIONAL EFFORTS

D – 1	Improve coordination and collaboration between transit agencies for greater efficiencies with cross-county trips
D – 2	Develop training materials for transit agencies to train employees on transit options throughout the region; start and/or expand training for passengers to explain how to utilize the transit services and make a transfer
D – 3	Develop vanpools and express bus routes to connect to the major job centers in our region
D – 4	Establish coach bus service to/from cities outside the region (Charlotte, Salisbury, Knoxville, etc.)

D - 5	Continue funding existing voucher and volunteer driver programs and set-up additional voucher and volunteer driver programs to address areas with service gaps
D - 6	Expand and/or maintain service across multiple jurisdictions (Asheville to Black Mountain, Hendersonville to Fletcher, etc.)
D - 7	Increase or enhance park and ride lots around the region, especially along key commute corridors

INTERMODAL CONNECTIVITY

E - 1	Increase and/or improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure connecting to bus stops and stations
E - 2	Study areas with pedestrian and bicycle safety issues
E - 3	Improve roadway crossings for pedestrians near bus stops
E - 4	Improve bicycle accommodations on-bus and near bus shelters

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNTY

BUNCOMBE COUNTY TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (A-1) Extend hours of service to cover nights, weekends, and holidays
2. (B-2) Expand transportation for social/cultural/health/after-hours trips to prevent social isolation
3. (E-3) Improve roadway crossings for pedestrians near bus stops
4. (B-7) Target transportation to and from jobs, interviews, applications for jobs and job skill training
5. (C-1) Improve ease of information access to inform riders of schedules and procedures (websites, signage, advertising, etc).

Groups to Focus On: Seniors, Low-Income, Limited English Proficiency, Zero Vehicle Households

HAYWOOD COUNTY TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (A-1) Extend hours of service to cover nights, weekends, and holidays
2. (A-2) Provide short-notice on-demand trips: immediate transportation for non-emergency medical trips
3. (B-11) Increase availability of grocery store and general retail trips
4. (B-8) Improve transportation options for medically-underserved populations
5. (D-6) Expand and/or maintain service across multiple jurisdictions (Waynesville to Asheville, Canton to Asheville) with strategies including but not limited to setting up a new deviated fixed route service

Groups to Focus On: Seniors, Individuals with a Disability, Veterans

HENDERSON COUNTY TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (B-4) Improve affordability of fares for low-income and senior transit riders
2. (A-1) Extend hours of service to cover nights, weekends, and holidays
3. (A-5) Increase frequency on fixed routes or develop new fixed and deviated fixed route service
4. (B-7) Target transportation to and from jobs, interviews, applications for jobs and job skill training
5. (E-3) Improve roadway crossings for pedestrians near bus stops

Groups to Focus On: Seniors, Low Income, Low English Proficiency, Zero Vehicle Households, Individuals with a Disability

MADISON COUNTY TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (A-4) Expand transit service area
2. (A-1) Extend hours of service to cover nights, weekends, and holidays
3. (B-2) Transportation for social/cultural/health/after-hours trips to prevent social isolation
4. (B-1) Transportation for adult facility residents for non-medical purposes
5. (B-8) Improve transportation options for medically-underserved populations

Groups to Focus on: Seniors, Individuals with a Disability, Low-Income

TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (D-6) Expand and/or maintain service across multiple jurisdictions (Asheville to Black Mountain, Hendersonville to Fletcher, etc.)
2. (B-7) Target transportation to and from jobs, interviews, applications for jobs and job skill training
3. (A-1) Extend hours of service to cover nights, weekends, and holidays
4. (D-1) Improve coordination and collaboration between transit agencies for greater efficiencies with cross-county trips
5. (A-5) Develop new fixed route and deviated fixed route service

Groups to Focus on: Seniors, Veterans, Individuals with a Disability