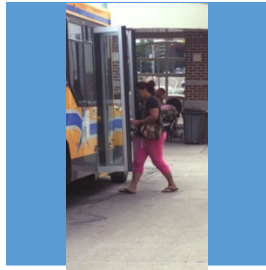




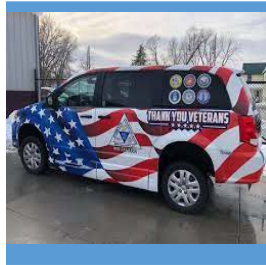
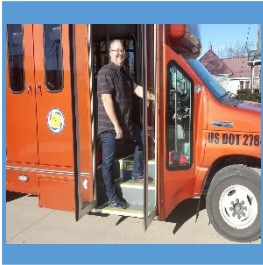
RPA 15

2023



Passenger

Transportation



Plan

April 2023

Prepared by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission  
P.O. Box 1110  
Ottumwa, IA 52501  
(641) 684-6551

This plan was prepared with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, and in part through local matching funds of the RPA member governments.

## Adopting Resolution

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE RPA 15 PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN AS THE OFFICIAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15

WHEREAS, the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission did prepare a Passenger Transportation Plan which identifies the existing passenger transportation services and the needs for REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15; and

WHEREAS, it is a requirement of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) that the transportation planning process and long-range planning be continued, and that passenger transportation be included in this process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15 adopts the RPA 15 Passenger Transportation Plan as the official transportation plan for the region.

Passed this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2023.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson  
Regional Planning Affiliation 15

## **Table of Contents**

Section One: Introduction and Process Discussion	2
Section Two: Inventory and Area Profile	5
Section Three: Coordination Issues	19
Section Four: Priorities and Strategies	25
Section Five: Funding	26
Appendix: Transit Advisory Group Minutes	31



# **Section One: Introduction and Process Discussion**

## **What is a Passenger Transportation Plan?**

The Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) is a process created by the Iowa Department of Transportation for the Regional Planning Affiliations and Metropolitan Planning Organizations that is designed to promote coordinated and joint planning for passenger transportation that improves local and regional passenger transportation systems.

The goals of the PTP are to:

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

The Passenger Transportation Plan provides an inventory of the passenger transportation services and discusses the demographic characteristics of the region. The plan discusses coordination issues within the region, including; an assessment of needs, review of previously recommended priorities and strategies, identification of any other developments affecting coordination, and input received on needs and coordination. It also proposes priorities and strategies for the next five years to address the identified needs and lead to projects. Finally, the plan provides an overview of funding sources available for improvements, discusses the funding that is achievable during the life of the plan, and identifies sources that will be sought out to make improvements. The PTP is updated every five years in order to take into account new and changing needs and priorities. This document will cover federal fiscal years 2023 to 2027. During the years between updates, a minimum of two transit advisory group (TAG) meetings will be held to continue to improve services and coordination. This enables the PTP to stay current with passenger transportation needs.

## **The Regional Planning Affiliation 15 Region**

In 1994, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act changed the way federal aid funding was allocated. The existing FAS and FAUS systems were eliminated along with specific requirements for allocations to the local or state systems, and the Surface Transportation Program was created. The STP program gave each state the discretion to determine how to allocate funds, and the Iowa Transportation Commission made the decision to allocate a significant portion for local programming through Regional

Planning Affiliations. This decision led to the formation of RPA 15 that same year. Today, the Iowa DOT delegates some transportation planning activities and the programming of certain projects receiving federal aid to the RPAs. RPA 15 provides transportation planning assistance to the following five southeast Iowa counties; Jefferson, Keokuk, Mahaska, Van Buren, and Wapello and the cities within them. The RPA involves citizens of the region in the transportation planning process. It also coordinates transportation planning efforts between these entities and with other local, state, and federal government agencies.

The PTP process was started in 2006 with a series of Mobility Action Planning Workshops that were held across the state by the Iowa Department of Transportation. The purpose of these meetings was to highlight the strengths and weakness of passenger transportation services within each area. The Iowa DOT then made each Regional Planning Affiliation or Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for passenger transportation planning process in their area which included facilitating Transit Advisory Group meetings and creating and maintaining a plan. This resulted in the 2007 Passenger Transportation Plan, or the Passenger Transportation Development Plan as it was called then. The RPA revised and updated this document in 2008, 2009, and 2010. In 2011, RPA 15 switched to the current format where the plan would be updated every five years with meeting summaries or minutes being submitted to the DOT during the four years between updates.

## **The PTP Process**

RPA 15's Passenger Transportation Plan was developed by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission following the guidance from the Iowa Department of Transportation, using input obtained from transportation providers and users, and an analysis of transportation and demographic data.

Input for the PTP was gathered through surveys, Transit Advisory Group meetings, and individual discussions. Transportation and demographic data was obtained from passenger transportation providers and the US Census Bureau.

One survey was conducted in 2020, polling health and human service providers and asking about whether the frequently discussed transportation needs were still valid for their clients. The results of this survey can be seen in figure 3.4. Information obtained through this survey was used Section three: Coordination Issues and to help develop Section four: Priorities and Strategies.

Two Transit Advisory Group meetings are held annually to continue the passenger transportation process. During years where the plan is not being updated, these meetings include discussing recent developments affecting passenger transportation planning, identifying strengths and weaknesses of existing services or performing a SWOT analysis. In years where PTP is being updated, the meetings include the gathering of information for the plan and the review of the Passenger Transportation Plan. TAG meetings were held on the following dates: February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022, a TAG meeting will be held in March or April 2023.

After the draft plan has been completed, the document was sent to the Iowa Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, and 10-15 Regional Transit Authority for review. It was also sent to the Transit Advisory Group and made available on the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission website. After review and comment, the plan was revised and presented to the RPA 15 Policy Board for approval and adoption.

## Section Two: Inventory and Area Profile

### Inventory

There are twenty-eight organizations that provide passenger transportation services within Regional Planning Affiliation 15. This includes four providers of long-distance intercity transportation, one public transit agency, one private taxicab company, seven health and human service agencies, and sixteen school districts. Figure 2.1 summarizes the services provided by the public and private transit organizations and the health and human service agencies. The information on the table includes; type of service provided, eligibility requirements for service, hours and days available, and the number and type of vehicles operated. Figure 2.4 containing information on the school districts can be found later in this section.

**Figure 2.1: Passenger Transportation Providers**

Provider	Service Type	Eligibility	Hours	Vehicles
AMTRAK	I, FR	A	AA	x
Greyhound	I, FR, T	A	AA	x
Burlington Trailways	FR, T	A	AA	35BL, 3B
Ottumwa Quick Rides	I, DR	A	AA	n
10-15 Transit	I, FR, DR, P	A, M	WD, D, E	35BL, 31VL, 38C
Jefferson Co Health Center	DR	CT, M	WD, D	2VL
ADDS	DR	CT, I	WD, D	1V
Crisis Center	DR	CT	V	n
Ottumwa Job Corps	DR	CT	WD, WE, D, E, N	14 vehicles
Ottumwa Residential Facility	DR	CT	AA	n
Penn PI & Sylvan Woods	DR	CT	WD, D	1 BL, 1V
Love INC	DR	CT, I	WD, D	n

*Key: Service Type- I=Intercity, DR=Demand Responsive, FR=Fixed Route, CT=Client Transportation, T=Charter/Tours, P=Paratransit*

*Eligibility - A=Anyone, C=Client, I=Income requirement, M=Medical requirement*

*Hours - AA=all hours, all days, WD=weekdays, WE=weekends, D=daytime, E=evening, N= night, V=varies*

*Vehicles - B-bus, BL- Bus w/lift, C-Car, V-Van, VL-Van w/lift*

Intercity rail transportation is provided by AMTRAK, which has a station in Ottumwa. AMTRAK operates the California Zephyr through the region, which runs from Chicago IL to Oakland CA, and includes stops in Omaha, Denver, and Salt Lake City. The AMTRAK station in Ottumwa is served by two passenger trains each day, an eastbound train to Chicago which stops at 9:00am, and a westbound train to Oakland which stops at 6:53pm. Connections to other AMTRAK routes can be made in Chicago and Sacramento, allowing passengers to reach any destination AMTRAK serves.

Greyhound Lines provides intercity bus transportation to cities in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Within the region, Greyhound provides service by partnering with Burlington Trailways. From the Burlington Trailways two stops within the region, passengers can travel to approximately 3,800 cities in North America that Greyhound provides service to. Greyhound also provides charter services to groups and organizations. Greyhound Lines operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The bus service operates 1,700 buses and averages over 5 billion miles per year.

Burlington Trailways provides intercity bus transportation to cities in Iowa, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Nebraska. This is provided through regularly scheduled daily stops in both Fairfield and Ottumwa as shown in figure 2.2. From both of these cities, passengers can travel to the six other states Burlington Trailways provides service to. In addition, passengers can travel to other cities across the United States by transferring to other Trailways or to Jefferson or Greyhound bus services. Burlington Trailways also provides charter services to groups and organizations as well as escorted tours for the public. Burlington Trailways operates thirty-eight buses on its routes, and thirty-five of the buses are equipped with lifts. The bus service operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and averages approximately 3.7 million miles per year.

**Figure 2.2: Burlington Trailways Daily Departure Times**

	Eastbound	Westbound
Fairfield	10:25am	3:25pm
Ottumwa	9:55am	4:05pm

*Source: Burlington Trailways*

*www.burlingtontrailways.com, Retrieved: 1/13/2023*

Ottumwa Quick Rides provides taxicab services to the City of Ottumwa, its taxis can also provide transportation to Des Moines or Iowa City from Ottumwa. Ottumwa Quick Rides provides transportation for both immediate trips, and those that are scheduled ahead of time. Service is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

10-15 Regional Transportation Authority provides service in ten counties in southeast Iowa, including the five counties that make up RPA 15. The counties served by 10-15 RTA include: Appanoose, Davis, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lucas, Mahaska, Monroe, Van Buren, Wapello, and Wayne. Service is demand responsive, with the transit vehicle taking the rider from their point of origin to their destination and back if needed. 10-15's services are available to riders Monday through Friday between the hours of 6am and 6pm and Saturday between 8am and 5pm. Service outside of this time may be

provided if a driver and vehicle are available. 10-15 RTA also works several health and human service agencies within the region to operate transportation services for clients of those organizations. The hours and amount of service provided to the health and human service agencies vary depending upon the needs of the organization and its clients. Service is provided by thirty-five buses equipped with lifts, thirty-one vans equipped with lifts, and 38 cars/SUVs.

In addition to demand response service provided throughout the 10-county region, 10-15 RTA also provides fixed route service and paratransit in both the City of Oskaloosa and Ottumwa. In Oskaloosa the service is called “Oskaloosa Rides” and consists of a single fixed route that makes a one-hour circuit through Oskaloosa and stops at shopping centers, health and human service agencies, and residential areas. Paratransit service is available for those who have a disability that may prevent them from accessing the fixed route. Oskaloosa Rides operates on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between the hours of 9am and 5pm. A map of the route is shown on as Figure 2.5.

The Fixed route and paratransit service by 10-15 in Ottumwa is called “Ottumwa Rides” includes five routes that radiate out from the center Ottumwa similar to a hub and spoke. At the central stop where all the routes intersect, passengers can transfer between routes. The five routes are shown in Figure 2.6 and serve the following areas North (residential, north side commercial, college, hospital), East-West (residential), South Residential (residential), South Commercial (south side commercial including Walmart, Quincy Place, and Church St), Airport (north side residential, airport, career campus, college). Ottumwa Rides operates Monday through Friday.

Seven health and human service agencies within the region provide transportation to their clients. These seven agencies, shown in figure 2.1 are: Jefferson County Health Center, Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services, the Ottumwa Crisis Center, Ottumwa Job Corps, Ottumwa Residential Facility, Pennsylvania Place/Sylvan Woods, , and Love Inc. Eligibility for transportation through these agencies is limited to people who are receiving services from the agency. Several of the HHS agencies also have income or medical requirements in order that must be met for their transportation services. Transportation services available from these agencies may be limited, either by the hours of operation or the number and size of vehicles, and unable to provide rides to all of their clients who may need it. As a result, these agencies may also work with or direct their clients to public providers or private taxi companies for transportation to their facilities.

As an alternative to operating their own vehicles, or contracting with a passenger transportation provider for service, some agencies provide funding assistance through various forms to individuals in need of transportation assistance. This assistance can in the form of cash, bus pass, gas voucher, or bus tickets. Figure 2.3 shows health and human service agencies that provide funding for people in need of transportation assistance and the method used.

**Figure 2.3: Agencies that Provide Transportation Assistance**

Agency	Type of funding assistance
American Homefinding Assoc	BP, GV, Cash
ADDS	BP
Crisis Center	BP
Ottumwa Housing Authority	BP
Wapello Co General Assist	GV, BT
Love INC	GV

Key: CT=Contract for service, BP=Bus Pass, GV=Gas voucher, BT=Bus Ticket, C=Cash

In addition to the organizations identified in the table 2.1, there are sixteen school districts in the region that provide transportation to their students. According to the Iowa Department of Education, these districts operate 261 buses and 141 smaller vehicles to transport students to and from school. The figure 2.4 shows the number of vehicles operated by each district that serves the five-county region. Some of the districts may have a low number of

<b>Figure 2.4: School District Transportation</b>		
School District	Buses	Smaller Vehicles
Pella	37	19
Twin Cedars	8	11
Oskaloosa	28	10
North Mahaska	10	6
Ottumwa	0	8
Tri-County	7	5
English Valleys	9	4
Sigourney	8	5
Keota	9	4
Eddyville-Blakesburg	24	9
Pekin	22	7
Cardinal	18	14
Fairfield	20	8
Washington	17	13
Van Buren	23	8
Central Lee	21	10

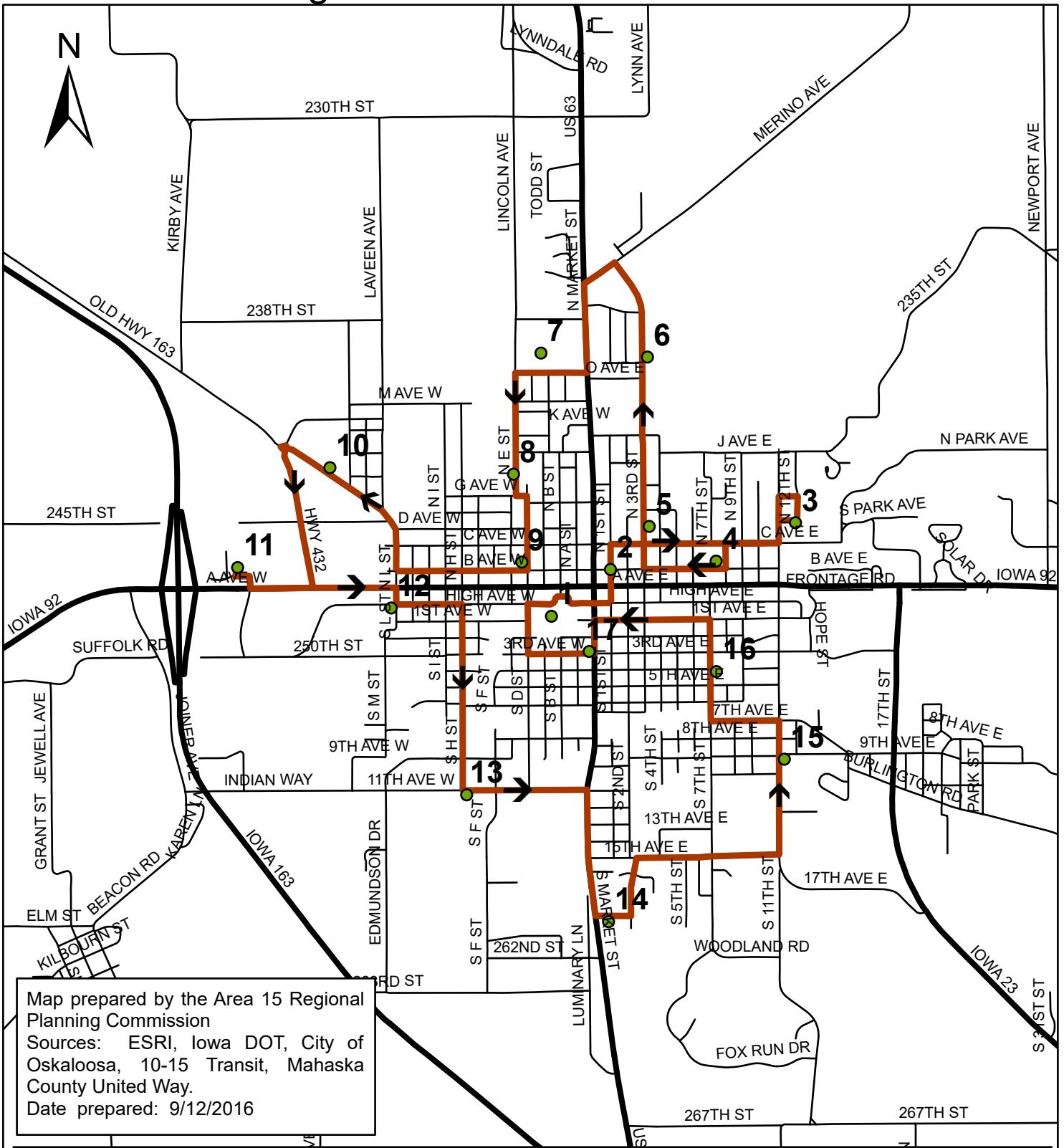
*Source: Iowa Dept of Education*

vehicles for their size, this is because they contract with another company to provide student transportation. School district vehicles are used only for the transportation of students and staff to school and school related activities.





# Figure 2.5: Oskaloosa Rides



Map prepared by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission  
 Sources: ESRI, Iowa DOT, City of Oskaloosa, 10-15 Transit, Mahaska County United Way.  
 Date prepared: 9/12/2016

**Legend**

- |   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| ● 1 - Hy-Vee/Mall                                 | ● 7 - William Penn University      | ● 13 - Edmundson Park                          |
| ● 2 - Christian Opportunity Center                | ● 8 - Christian School             | ● 14 - Southern Hills/Highland Park Apartments |
| ● 3 - Hospital                                    | ● 9 - Inglenook/Norwich Apartments | ● 15 - Shady Lodge                             |
| ● 4 - Agency on Aging                             | ● 10 - Oak Creek Village           | ● 16 - Webster                                 |
| ● 5 - YMCA  | ● 11 - Walmart                     | ● 17 - Library                                 |
| ● 6 - Middle/High School /George Daily Auditorium | ● 12 - Reserves at Ironwood        |  |



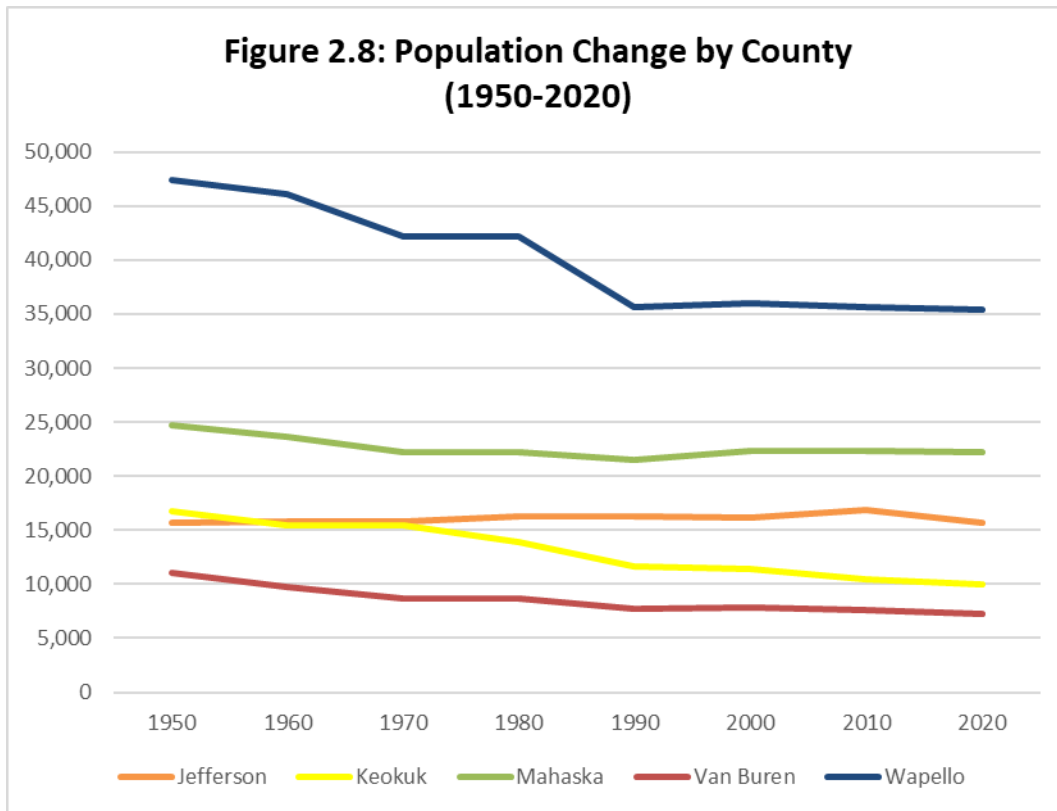
## Area Profile

**Figure 2.7**

	Iowa	RPA 15	Jefferson Co	Keokuk Co	Mahaska Co	Van Buren Co	Wapello Co
<b>Population</b>	3,190,369	90,526	15,663	10,033	22,190	7,203	35,437
<b>Percent 65 and older</b>	17.5	20	21.6	21.5	18	22.1	17.4
<b>Percent White</b>	89.9	90	86.6	95.2	92.2	96.1	79.5
<b>Percent Hispanic or Latino</b>	6.3	4	3.9	2.1	2.2	1.6	12.2
<b>Per Capita Income</b>	\$35,715	30,331	\$31,909	\$30,650	\$31,171	\$30,307	\$27,616
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	3.7	5	7.3	3.8	3.2	4.7	5.1
<b>Percent Disabled</b>	11.8	15	13.4	16.9	13.3	16.3	15.3
<b>Percent that "speaks english less than very well"</b>	3.4	1	1	0.2	0.2	0.5	2

*Source: US Census Bureau 2020 ACS*

The population of Regional Planning Affiliation 15 was 90,526 in 2020, which is a decrease of 2,404 people from the region's population in 2010. Figure 2.10 shows the change in population for counties and cities from 2010 census to 2020, Most of the region had a population decrease while Oskaloosa, Ottumwa, and some of the smaller cities in Mahaska and Keokuk counties experienced growth. This loss is the continuation of a long-term trend of population decreases that was interrupted by a slight population increase between 1990 and 2000. Figure 2.8 shows the trend in population change by county from 1950-2020. The trend is part of a larger shift in population from rural areas to suburban and urban areas. Within the RPA, all of the counties saw population decreases with Mahaska and Wapello Counties being the smallest.



The region’s decreasing population reduces the revenues available for maintaining and making improvements to public transit systems. A decline in the population results in the decrease in the tax revenue collected. The end result is local governments will have less funds to allocate to programs including public transit. Local funds are often used to match federal and state grants and the availability of local funds will impact a transit agency’s ability to obtain grant funds.

A higher percentage of the population within the region is over 65 than the state average. The counties with the largest percentage of their population over 65 are Jefferson, Keokuk, and Van Buren. The region also has a higher percentage of its population that is disabled than the State of Iowa. The counties with the highest percentage of disabled are Keokuk and Van Buren.

The per capita income level of the region is below that of the state and the unemployment rate is higher. The per capita income of RPA 15 is \$30,331 which is \$5,384 below the State of Iowa. The unemployment rate for the region is 5%, which is 1.3% higher than Iowa. Individual counties within the region have an even greater difference between their per capita incomes and unemployment rates and those of the

state. Within RPA 15, per capita income varies between \$27,616 in Wapello County and \$31,909 in Jefferson County. Unemployment rates also vary, from a low of 3.2% in Mahaska County to a high of 7.3% in Jefferson County.

To assist the elderly, disabled and low income in accessing passenger transportation services, 10-15 RTA does the following: 10-15 works with Milestones in all ten of the counties it serves. Any person over sixty can call 10-15 to request a ride and 10-15 will work them into the schedule. 10-15 RTA provides no cost transportation to veterans through coordination with the county veterans assistance offices.

The current analysis of Limited English Proficiency populations from the 2020 American Community Survey that responded to “speaks English less than well” indicates a small LEP population for the region and each county. These numbers are smaller than other previous analyses using earlier ACS data. In the 2019 ACS Jefferson County had 3% of its population identifying as “speaks English less than well”, Figure 2.7 shows 1% Jefferson County respondents identify as LEP in the 2020 ACS, a 2% decrease. Wapello County had 5.9% identify in 2019 and in the 2020 ACS only 2% as LEP. This indicates the difficulties with survey size and response rates to determine a population size.

There are 15,842 Limited English Proficient students in the sixteen school districts that serve the five counties of RPA 15. Figure 2.9 shows the districts with the largest LEP population are the ones that served larger cities, the districts that served more rural areas had fewer if any Limited English Proficient students. The Ottumwa School District, which serves the city and Wapello County, has the most LEP students. This information, along with the general LEP population information, indicates that the largest LEP population within the region is in or near Ottumwa.

There are increases in some school district’s LEP populations between this document and the 2018 PTP. These increases are likely due changes to how the Iowa Department of Education classifies limited English proficient students. Prior to 2019 students who were in the process of acquiring English proficiency were counted as Limited English Proficient, in the Spring of 2019 this changed to English Learners. Students now leave EL status when they test proficient on the English Language Proficiency Assessment.

**Figure 2.9: Limited English Proficiency by School District (2021-22)**

	Number of LEP Students	Percentage
Pella	2,333	1.1
Twin Cedars	0	0
North Mahaska	593	0
Oskaloosa	1,965	0.9
Ottumwa	4,368	22
Tri-County	194	1
English Valleys	423	0.2
Sigourney	540	0.7
Keota	292	0
Eddyville-Blakesburg	4	0.4
Pekin	632	0.5
Cardinal	944	0.3
Fairfield	64	4.3
Washington	116	7.6
Van Buren	0	0
Central Lee	0	0

*Source: Iowa Dept of Education*

In order to assist the region’s Limited English Proficient population in accessing transportation services 10-15 RTA should provide language assistance measures to persons who speak Spanish or Spanish Creole since this group reaches the 1,000 persons or 5% population threshold for Wapello County or the City of Ottumwa. To provide this assistance the transit agencies should print schedules in Spanish, have bi-lingual dispatchers and drivers who can speak English and Spanish to communicate with riders, and bi-lingual interpreter can also attend at public meetings and hearings if requested and arranged in advance.

To communicate with the region’s LEP population, 10-15 prints brochures in Spanish. It has a bilingual dispatcher who can assist with translation between Spanish and English at public hearings or public input meetings and can assist with scheduling. 10-15 also uses Language Link, which is a company that provides translation services over the phone for multiple languages to assist with scheduling. In addition, to communicate with those who are who are blind, 10-15 prints brochures in Braille.

A majority of the region’s largest employers are located around the three largest cities; Fairfield, Oskaloosa, or Ottumwa. These three cities each have a population over 5,000, with Oskaloosa and Ottumwa having populations greater than 10,000. Each of these cities is also where several large employers are clustered. The map on page 20 shows the cities by population, and then employers that have over 99 and over 350

employees. As shown on the map, the city with the largest number of large employers is Ottumwa, followed by Oskaloosa and Fairfield. There are also smaller clusters of employers in Eddyville and Keosauqua.

Health and human service agencies, hospitals and medical clinics, and stores follow a similar distribution pattern as a majority and the largest are located in the larger cities or in the county seats. Fairfield, Keosauqua, Oskaloosa, Ottumwa, and Sigourney all have hospitals located within them, meaning that for medical care beyond what can be obtained in a local clinic must be obtained in one of these cities or outside the region. Fairfield, Oskaloosa, and Ottumwa all also have multiple big box and chain stores, meaning that people travel to one of these cities within the region to shop for items that cannot be obtained in smaller local stores. The map on page 23 identifies activities that can be found in the cities in the region.

The clustering of large employers, HHS agencies, larger medical facilities, and larger stores Fairfield, Oskaloosa, and Ottumwa mean that that these cities serve as activity centers within the region. This means that the destinations for trips within the region are often located in one of the three largest cities.

# Figure 2.10: Area 15 RPC Population Change: 2010 - 2020

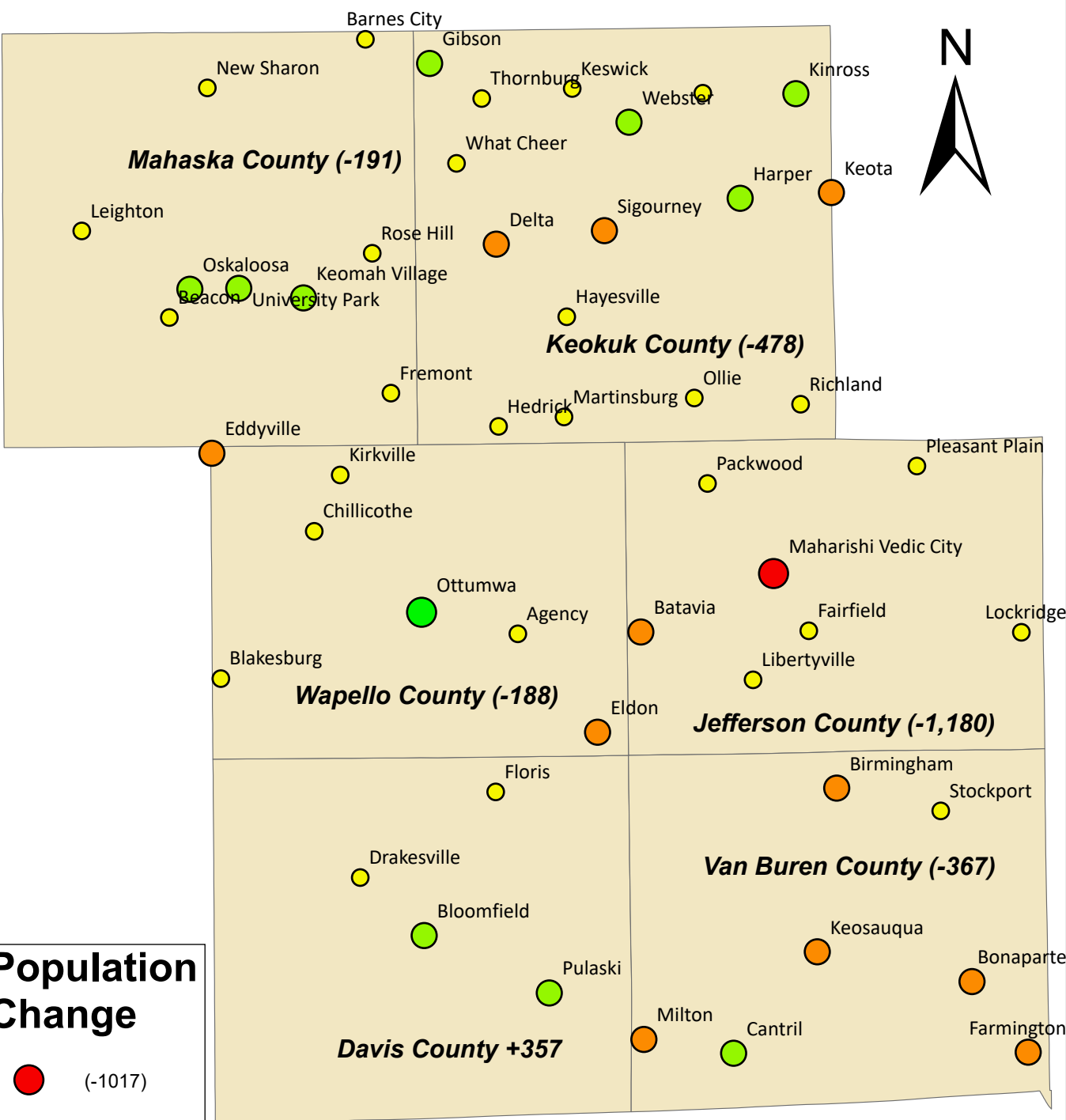
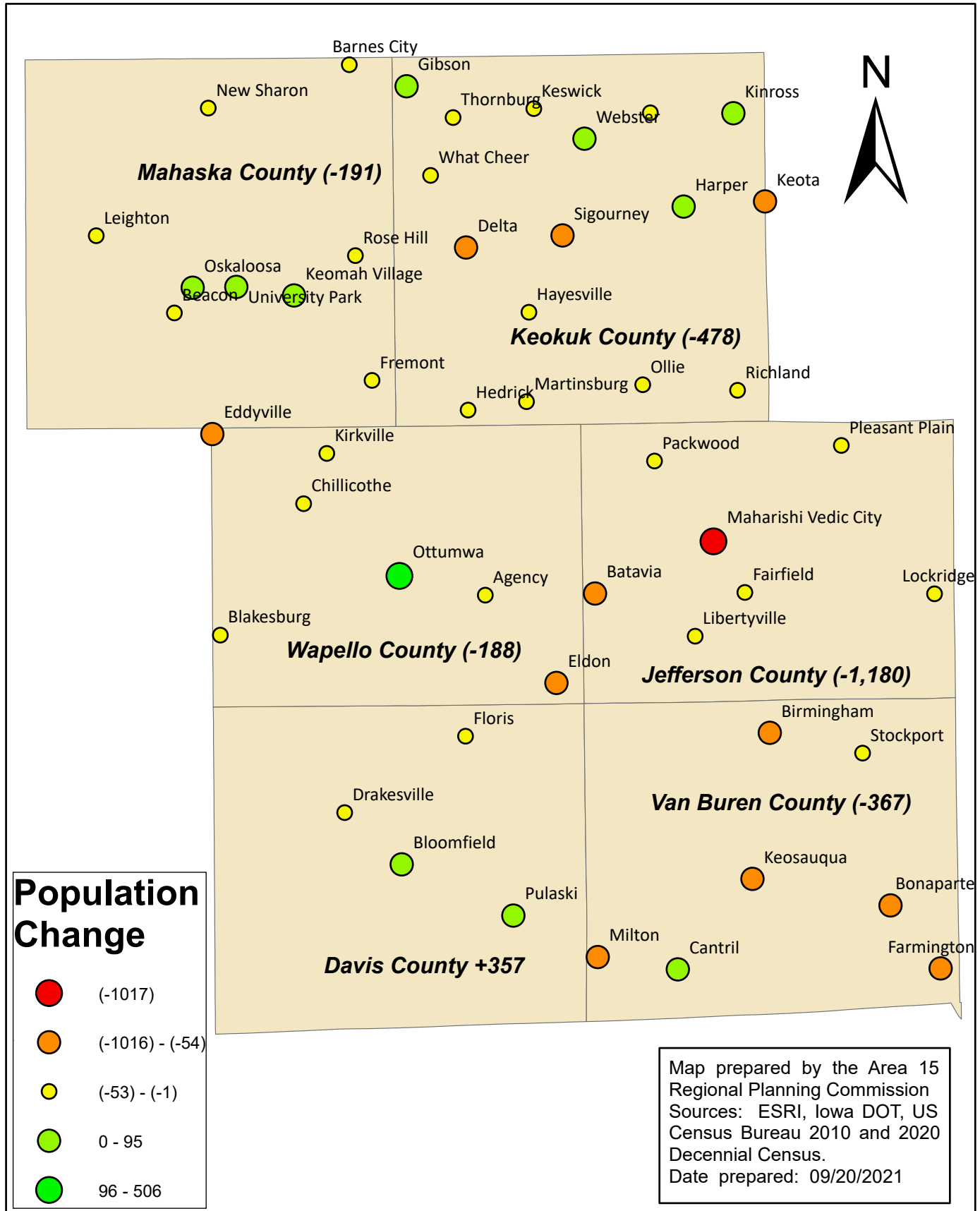




Figure 2.11: Comparison of City Populations to Activity Centers

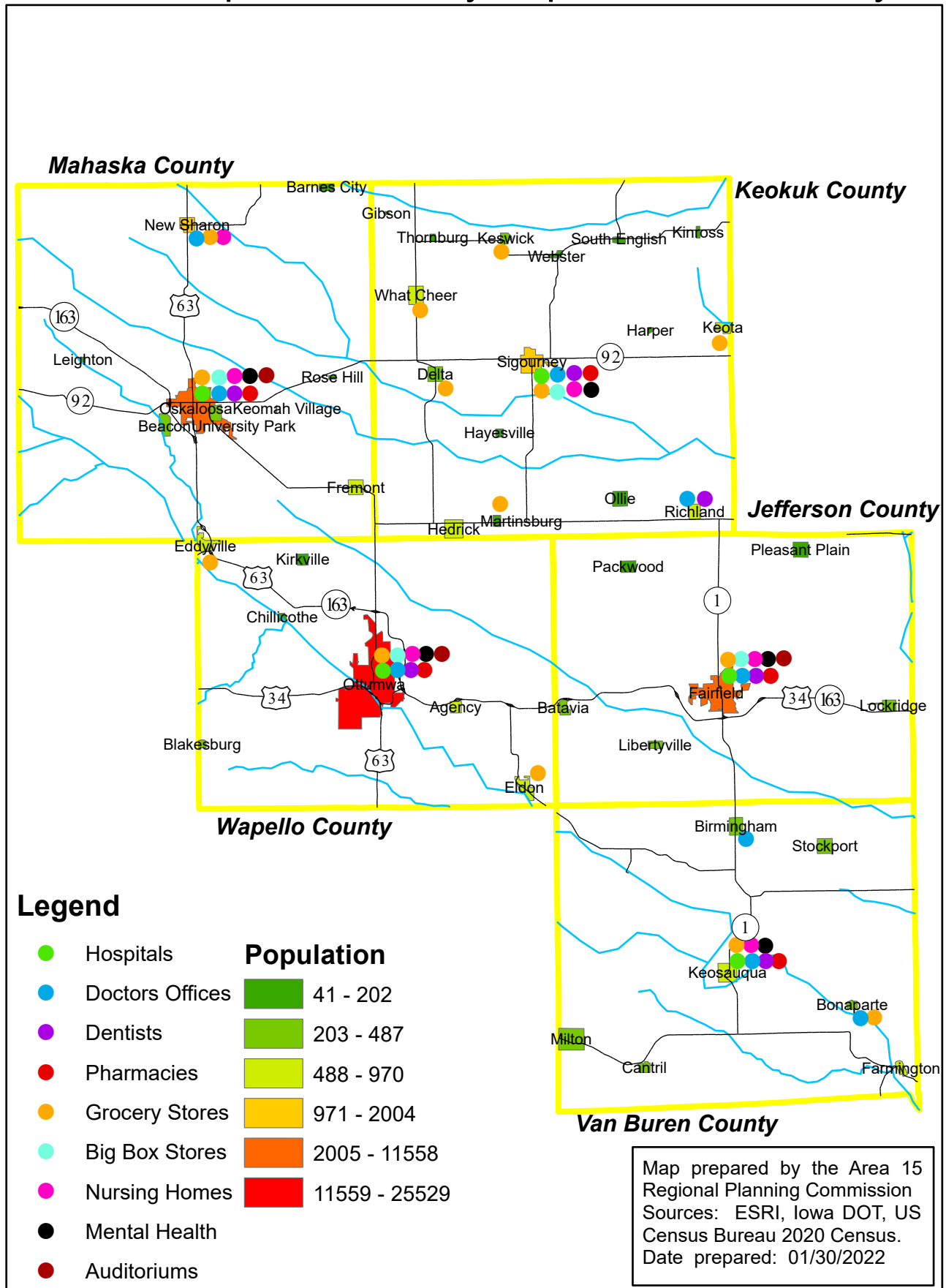
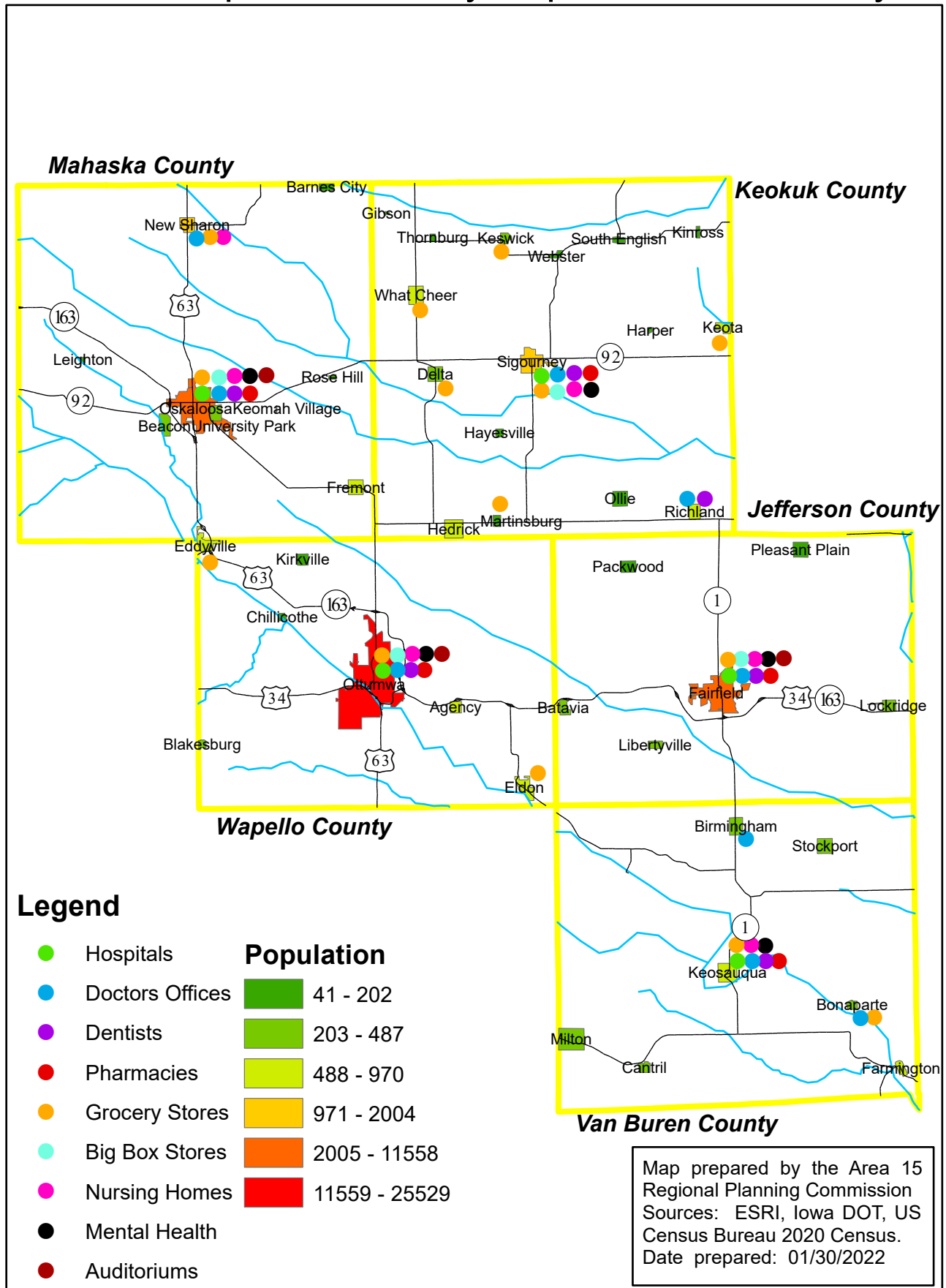


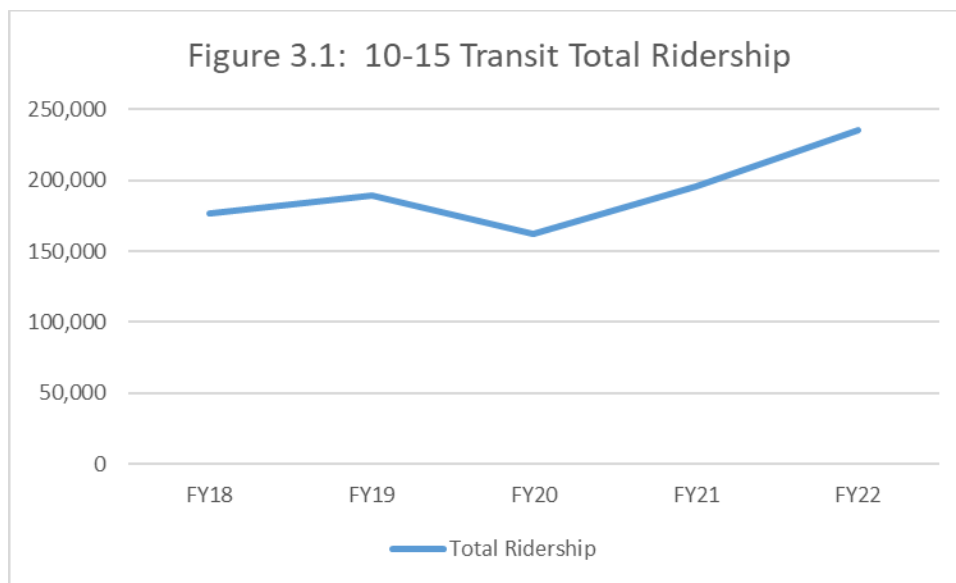
Figure 2.11: Comparison of City Populations to Activity Centers



## **Section Three: Coordination Issues**

### **Assessment of Service, Management, Fleet and Facility Needs**

10-15 RTA provides service to a ten-county region in southeastern Iowa. Over the past five years 10-15 has averaged 191,187 rides and figure 3.1 shows that ridership has increased from 176,432 in 2012 to 235,893 in 2022. Ridership decreases in 2020 due to less users of transit at the start of COVID due to businesses and being closed or limiting guests. The result of this for 10-15 was less demand for service and less revenue, the transit agency laid off 30 employees of these impacts. COVID relief funds helped 10-15 and other transit through this period and ridership turned around going 2021 into as businesses and the public adapted. As ridership was improved from COVID mitigation, 10-15's ridership also increased in 2021-2 due to the agency taking over fixed route operations in Ottumwa from Ottumwa Transit.



A majority of 10-15's transportation is demand response or point to point, this includes Head Start, First Resources (helping people with disabilities), veterans transportation, Milestones (helping older people live independently), TMS and other medical, public transit. The two areas that see the most use or passengers is veteran transportation and Milestones. Veteran transportation started only two years ago in partnership with county veteran coordinators, last year 10-15 transported 1,084 veterans. Milestones transportation experienced a decrease in ridership between 2020-1 but recovered in 2022 as seen in figure 3.2. In addition to the demand response service, 10-15 provides fixed route service in Oskaloosa and Ottumwa. The fixed route service in Ottumwa

provided by 10-15 is a new service starting in 2021, following the termination of service by Ottumwa Transit. Figure 3.2 shows ridership on the Ottumwa fixed route has decreased over the last five years, some of this can be attributed to COVID, as ridership dropped off in 2020 when the pandemic hit. The lower counts in 2021-2 may be attributed to operational changes under 10-15 in that the shopping shuttle and demand response service pull riders away from the fixed route. Adding these numbers back to Ottumwa Rides fixed route gives a total ridership of approximately 82,000 for 2022.

**Figure 3.2 Ridership by Area**

	Ottumwa Rides	Oskey Rides	Veteran	Milestones
FY18	117,457	4,205	0	15,413
FY19	117,114	5,201	0	13,268
FY20	80,840	5,339	41	9,811
FY21	50,811	4,017	2,460	5,422
FY22	60,039	3,594	1,084	15,638

*Note: Ottumwa Rides are only for fixed route, do not include paratransit, shuttles, ODR. Ridership 2018-2020 is Ottumwa Transit.*

During the past five years revenues and expenses for 10-15 have increased, figure 3.3 shows the total expenses and revenues for the agency for 2018-2022. The increase in expenses is due to the addition of veterans transportation and Ottumwa fixed route, changes to Milestones service, and additional capital improvements for vehicle replacement and acquisition and facility improvements. Some of these changes, such as the addition of Ottumwa fixed route and revisions to Milestones have brought additional revenue. Other revenue increases have come from several rounds of COVID relief, these funds were used to: support operations, purchase COVID PPE, bring employees back to work, and provide additional pay during the pandemic.

**Figure 3.3: Expenses and Revenues for 10-15 RTA**

	Expenses	Revenues
2018	\$2,651,206	\$3,036,990
2019	\$4,623,351	\$4,571,918
2020	\$4,416,181	\$4,827,927
2021	\$7,735,453	\$7,675,667
2022	\$6,123,419	\$6,748,409

*Source: 10-15 Transit*

Like all public transit agencies replacing older and higher mileage vehicles is a priority for 10-15. The regional transit agency has been able to make use of Surface Transportation Program (now Surface Transportation Block Grant) funds from both RPA

15 and RPA 17 to purchase replacement vehicles. 10-15 has also used the AMOCO Loan program for no interest loans as local match to assist with purchasing vehicles. Both of these programs have assisted 10-15 RTA in replacing vehicles. In addition, 10-15 has also been replacing medium duty buses with light duty and light duty with mini vans in areas where ridership allows to reduce maintenance and save on fuel.

In 2021 10-15 acquired two properties in addition to their main property located at 612 S Madison Street in Ottumwa. The Madison Street property had been home to the agency's administration, maintenance, dispatch, and vehicles since 2016 but due to growth was becoming crowded. A property at 418 E Main Street was acquired and dispatch for dispatch, a second property across the street at 417 E Main was also acquired and is used as a driver break facility.

The addition of these two facilities has reduced overcrowding at Madison Street. Due to 10-15's growth and the expansion of the vehicle fleet the agency is looking considering an additional garage to shelter some vehicles when they are not in use.

During the summer of 2022 AMTRAK started improvements to the station in Ottumwa on the California Zephyr line. Exterior improvements include reconstructing the boarding platforms, raising their height for easier access to the train, restoring the platform canopy and light fixtures. New guardrails will also be installed for safety and a mobile lift to help boarding for the mobility impaired. Inside the station improvements will cover upgrading the restrooms to ADA compliance, improved ticket counter, automatic power doors, and a ADA compliant path to parking.

### **Status of Previously Recommended Priorities and Strategies**

The following priorities and strategies were identified for improving passenger transportation services in the previous Passenger Transportation Plan. A status report is given following each strategy to show whether it was implemented and the result.

1. Priority: Ensure that fixed routes are rider friendly.  
Strategies:
  - Shorten fixed routes so that they are no more than 50 minutes in length.
    - Status: Not evaluated. Look at whether routes can be shortened, or a second vehicle can be added.
  - Plan stops at high density residential areas and at large stores or major shopping areas.
    - Status: Oskaloosa fixed route is set up with stops at apartment complexes, residential areas, hospital, Walmart, Hy-Vee. Ottumwa

has multiple fixed routes servicing different areas of city, but allows transfers between routes.

- Consider using two light duty buses that are spaced out on the route by 15-30 minutes instead of one medium duty bus.
  - Status: 10-15 is in the process of “rightsizing” using light duty in place of medium duty on fixed route, minivans in place of light duty, or cars/suvs in place of minivans on demand response where appropriate. 10-15 should consider running a second vehicle on the fixed route to reduce wait times.

2. Priority: Help people get home from the hospital after a trip to the Emergency Room.

Strategies:

- Ensure that registration staff at the hospital have the dispatch numbers for public transit and taxicab services.
  - Status: Complete. Check with hospitals annually to ensure they have dispatch contact information.

3. Priority: Help people get home from work or go out to eat or to a movie in the evening/at night.

Strategies:

- Re-establish a JARC like service with several business in Ottumwa.
  - Status: Not implemented.
- Set on day during a week where transit service is available in the evening/at night to take people out to eat or to a movie.
  - Status: Not Implemented. Evaluate if funding is available and if a trial period can be implemented.

4. Priority: Provide additional transportation to medical/mental health appointments.

Strategies:

- Coordinate trips with health and human service providers for multiple patients using same vehicle/
  - Status: 10-15 has tried, but this coordination is difficult to implement as appointments change or patients cancel trips.
- Coordinate with health and human service providers taking a larger number of patients to Iowa City or Des Moines once a month using a medium duty bus.
  - Status: This has not been implemented, see the previous point about the difficulties coordinating trips with the same vehicle.

There are few opportunities for coordination within the region. The health and human service agencies have few vehicles for passenger transportation and provide service during limited hours to only their clients, as shown by figure 2.1. These agencies may also have few additional dollars to help fund a new or expanded service. Many of these agencies already rely on either the public transit agencies or the private transportation providers for passenger transportation services. In 2019 First Resources and Tenco merged and became one organization under the First Resources name, previously they had operated separately helping people with disabilities.

On July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2020 Ottumwa Transit ended operations of a fixed route service and paratransit in the City of Ottumwa. Vehicles were turned over to 10-15 and employees had the opportunity to apply for positions with 10-15. A new fixed route service with paratransit called “Ottumwa Rides” was started in the city by 10-15 serving the same areas.

### **Public Input Concerning Needs and/or Coordination Issues**

The table below was obtained from a survey of health and human service agencies in the spring of 2020. The survey asked questions about needs that had been consistently identified whether it was still a need for the agency. Figure 3.4 lists the nine needs that have been identified regularly, it also shows the agencies that responded and whether it is still a need for that agency and its clients.

Figure 3.4: Passenger Transportation Needs

Company	Current bus routes in Ottumwa are too long, need to be shorter	Transportation needs to be available after 5pm for work, dinner or entertainment	Transportation needs to be available to get people home from hospital after a trip to the ER	Additional transportation from rural areas to larger cities for medial and mental health appointments	Transportation on Saturdays and Sundays	Additional transportation to Iowa City at low cost	Flexibility in accessing the demand response service, accommodating same day trips	Transportation from substance abuse center to hospital	Brochures and handouts with current information on services and how to access
Wapello County Veterans Affairs	N/A	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need
MCAH and WIC/American Home Finding	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	N/A	Still a Need
Keokuk County Veterans Affairs Commission	N/A	N/A	N/A	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	N/A	N/A
First Resources	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need
Van Buren County Public Health	N/A	No Longer a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	No Longer a Need	No Longer a Need	No Longer a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need
Van Buren VA/GA	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need
Pennsylvania Place	Still a Need	N/A	Still a Need	N/A	Still a Need	Still a Need	N/A	N/A	N/A
Christian Opportunity Center	N/A	Still a Need (Needs a	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	N/A	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need
South Central Behavioral Health Region	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	No Longer a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	No Longer a Need	Still a Need	No Longer a Need
Milestones Area Agency on Aging	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need
Keokuk County Community Services	N/A	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need	Still a Need

In later Transit Advisory Group discussions some of these became less of a need, due to decreased demand because of COVID or because of improved service. A 2021 TAG discussion noted health and human service providers seeing a decrease in demand from clients for trips to medical especially out of area in Des Moines or Iowa City, and for trips to leisure or recreation. Demand has increased in 2022-3, as doctors and businesses have opened back up and people have been going out more, however some needs have not come back or increased as 10-15 has brought back drivers and implemented service improvements including changes to Milestones and adding

veterans transportation. In 2022 TAG group members discussed ridership for aging (Milestones) was increasing but most of the rides to medical and shopping were being provided and the new veterans transportation by 10-15 was well used and liked. The TAG also noted that there will always be some unmet needs, are during times when it is difficult to support service. Public transit is meeting a lot of the demand for passenger transportation, when 10-15 cannot provide transport, such as from a hospital late at night, agencies can use taxicab or Southern Iowa Crime Commission depending on location and patient.



## **Section Four: Priorities and Strategies**

The following priorities and strategies have been identified for improving passenger transportation services in Regional Planning Affiliation 15. These priorities are based on a review of previous Passenger Transportation Plans, Transit Advisory Group meeting minutes, and input received from passenger transportation providers and health and human service agencies. The priorities identified have been reviewed by the Transit Advisory Group to ensure a consensus on the passenger transportation needs of the region and how to address the needs.

1. Priority: Ensure that fixed routes are rider friendly.  
Strategies:
  - Shorten fixed routes so that they are no more than 50 minutes in length.
  - Use two light duty buses that are spaced out on the route by 15-30 minutes instead of one medium duty bus to reduce the wait times at bus stops.
  - Install signs along bus routes at stops to improve visibility of service and let riders know location of bus stops.
  
2. Priority: Help people get home from the hospital after a trip to the Emergency Room.  
Strategies:
  - Ensure that registration staff at the hospital have the dispatch numbers for public transit and taxicab services.
  
3. Priority: Help people get home from work or go out to eat or a movie in the evening/at night.  
Strategies:
  - Re-establish a JARC like service with several businesses in Ottumwa.
  - Establish a Friday or Saturday evening/night service in Ottumwa/Oskaloosa so people can go to Dinner or entertainment.

## **Section Five: Funding**

### **Funding Sources Available**

Funding is necessary to support current transit services and to provide expanded or new services to meet the passenger transportation needs in Regional Planning Affiliation 15. Funding for transit services comes from a variety of federal, state, and local sources outlined below.

### **Federal Transit Funding**

Section 5311 funds (Formula Grants for other than Urbanized Areas): Provides funds to public transit agencies for transit activities in rural areas and urban areas with a population less than 50,000. These funds may be used for: operations, capital improvements, planning, and Job Access and Reverse Commute service. Funding is distributed to Iowa's public transit agencies based on ridership and revenue miles. 10-15 Regional Transit Authority receives 5311 funds and uses it to support operations. 10-15's allocation for FY22 was \$2,998,623,54. 5311 funds are anticipated to continue to be available to the public transit agencies for the next five years to assist them in supporting their current operations.

Section 5339 funds (Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants): Provides funds to public transit agencies for capital projects to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and vans, and to construct bus related facilities. Approximately \$4,000,000 is received by the state each year for use by small urban (under 50,000 population) and regional transit systems. Funds must be used on replacement vehicles and is not available for expansion vehicles. Funding is awarded to public transit systems for vehicle replacement based on their vehicle's Public Transit Management System score, which takes into account the vehicle's age and miles. 10-15 Transit is eligible for 5339 funds based on the ranking of their vehicles. The amount of 5339 funds available to a public transit agency fluctuates each year based on the total amount available and the ranking of that agency's vehicles compared to other public transit agency vehicles in the state.

Surface Transportation Block Grant program (STBG): Funds allocated through Iowa's Regional Planning Affiliations and Metropolitan Planning Organizations typically used by cities and counties for road projects can also be used by public transit agencies for vehicle replacement.. Up to 80% reimbursement is provided, leaving a 20% local match for projects. 10-15 RTA has access to STBG funds through RPA 15 and 17. RPA 15 sets aside \$50,000 each year from its total allocation for 10-15. To be considered for funding, the transit agency must submit an application for each project. STBG funding for vehicle replacement or expansion by either public transit agency is expected to be available at a comparable level for the next five years.

Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP): Provides funds to assist in the design and implementation of training and technical assistance programs and other support services to meet the needs of transit operators in non-urbanized areas (under 50,000 population). The Iowa Department of Transportation is the recipient of these funds and mainly uses them to provide local transit agencies with training fellowships. These fellowships pay up to 100% for rural public transit systems and their planners to attend Iowa DOT sponsored seminars, and transit related courses or conferences sponsored by other groups. It may also be used to reimburse transit systems for in-house training.

### **State Transit Funding**

State Transit Assistance (STA): Provides funds to public transit agencies for operations, capital improvements, and planning. Funding is distributed to Iowa's public transit agencies based on ridership and revenue miles. 10-15 receives State Transit Assistance and uses it to support its annual operations. In FY22 10-15's allocation of STA funds was 867,588.73.. STA funds are anticipated to continue to be available to the public transit agencies for the next five years to assist them in supporting their current operations

State Transit Assistance (STA) Special Projects: The Iowa Department of Transportation sets aside \$175,000 of STA funds for special projects to improve public transit in the state. Public transit agencies may apply for funds to start up a new service that is developed in cooperation with health and human service agencies. Funds may be awarded for up to two years, which is the time it would take for the service to start being reflected in the STA and 5311 formulas.

Public Transit Infrastructure Grants (PTIG): Provides funds for vertical infrastructure improvements by public transit systems in the state. Projects can be new construction, reconstruction, or remodeling, but must have a vertical component. Projects are evaluated on their anticipated benefits to transit and their ability to be completed quickly. Participation in a project by the PTIG program is limited to 80%, and in combination with other federal funding cannot exceed that number. No individual transit system can receive more than 40% of the PTIG funds available in a year.

Capital Match Revolving Loan Fund (AMOCO Loan): Provides no interest loans to public transit systems which the transit agency can use towards the local match for a federally funded capital project. The transit agency then pays back the loaned amount over the negotiated time period. 10-15 is using this program to provide match for the replacement of several vehicles.

## **Non-transit Funding**

Older Americans Act: Provides funding for transportation services for anyone over the age of 60. Funds are provided to the Area Agencies on Aging, which may then contract with public transit agencies for service and reimburse them with money obtained through the Older Americans Act.

Headstart: Federal program that provides funds for transportation services to low income children and their families. Health and human service agencies may contract with a public transit agency for this service, and the transit agency is then reimbursed with Headstart funds.

Medicaid: Federal program that can be used to fund transportation services for individuals with disabilities. Transportation services eligible under Medicaid include providing transportation for an eligible person to a sheltered workshop or medical appointments. After completing a trip, the transportation provider submits a reimbursement request to Medicaid.

## **Local Funding:**

Passenger Revenues: Funds obtained from passengers of a transportation service. Can be paid at the time the service is used, or for a voucher, token, or pass that is purchased in advance of using the transportation service. Passenger revenues provide funds to both public and private transit agencies.

Contract Revenue: Cities, counties, health and human service agencies, and private businesses may pay a transit provider for a specific number of rides or access to rides during a block of time. Both public and private transit agencies receive contract revenue.

Advertising Revenue: Transit agencies may sell space on or inside their vehicles to businesses for advertisements to generate some additional revenue. 10-15 Transit sells space on the exterior of vehicles through an advertising agency.

Municipal Transit Levy: Cities in Iowa are able to levy up to \$0.95 per \$1,000 assessed value to raise funds that support public transit services. This includes a city directly supporting its urban transit system, or a smaller town using it to support services from their regional transit system. 10-15 does not collect levy revenues from any cities it provides service to.

**General Fund Levy:** Cities and Counties in Iowa are able to use general fund revenues to support transit services. Each of the ten counties served by 10-15 Transit provides funds to the agency to help support its operations.

**Health and Human Service Agencies:** Health and Human Service Agencies provide many forms of assistance to people, one of which is funding for transportation. This assistance can come in different forms; providing rides either directly or by contracting with another organization, providing bus passes, or gas vouchers. In the region, seven agencies contract for transportation services, four provide bus passes to their clients, and three provide gas vouchers. Information on these specific agencies can be found in figure 2.5.

**Businesses:** Businesses may provide transportation assistance to their customers or employees. This may be in the form of company vehicle pools, contracting for a service, or subsidizing a service.

**Local Foundations:** Some local foundations may provide funding to improve passenger transportation services. The Ottumwa Regional Legacy Foundation is a charitable organization that has offered grant opportunities for revitalizing Ottumwa and improving the city's infrastructure. In Keokuk County, the Community Services office coordinates the efforts of non-profit and charitable foundations in the county. Inquiries could be made to these organizations or others about the possibility of funding new transit services, including providing match for federal or state funds.

### **Anticipated Funding for FFY23-26**

It is anticipated that 10-15 RTA will receive \$856,371 in STA and \$1,552,092 in 5311 funds for operations for FY2023. These amounts are based on the total allocation to the state and the agency's 2021 ridership and revenue miles. State and federal operating assistance amounts may vary each year based on these factors. For FY24-26 it is estimated that 10-15 will receive \$700,000 in STA and \$1,350,000 in 5311 funds for each of the three years. These amounts of STA and 5311 appear lower than the previous two years, due to supplemental COVID relief transit agencies received, however the funding is in line with pre-COVID levels.

10-15 receives an annual allocation of \$50,000 STBG funds from RPA 15 and it also receives an annual allocation of funds from RPA 17 that it can use to replace vehicles. For local revenue 10-15 receives \$2,500 from each of the ten counties annually and can anticipate \$25,000 in local funds each year.

### **Funding that will be Sought for Implementation**

In addition to the anticipated funding sources mentioned previously, 10-15 RTA will seek funding from the 5339 program for bus replacement and the AMOCO loan program to assist with local match. The agency will apply for PTIG funds to construct a paint booth for vehicles, it is also considering constructing an additional vehicle storage garage. 10-15 will also work with the City of Oskaloosa and health and human service agencies in the city to promote Oskaloosa Rides and generate ridership so that the City Council will continue to support the provide financial support for the service.

## **Appendix:**

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting  
Minutes  
Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
10:00am  
Area 15 Regional Planning Commission Conference Room**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Dave Silverio – Ottumwa Transit, Christina Wolfe – Milestones AAA, Wendy Thompson – Milestones AAA, Jennifer Robbins – SCBHR, Miranda Tucker – SCBHR, Cindy Kurtz-Hopkins – First Resources, Lori Drummond – First Resources, Tami Gilliland – Keokuk Co Community Services, Cheryl Plank - Tenco

**What is passenger transportation planning and why do we do it?** It is a process to coordinate passenger transportation, and to improve local and regional systems. The planning helps to:

- Improve transportation services
- Increase coordination
- Create and awareness of unmet needs
- Develop new partnerships
- Help people understand the transportation options available
- Provide justification for future investments
- Save money and eliminate overlapping services

**What is the process?** Every five years an RPA or MPO is required to update their PTP. RPA 15 adopted a new plan in April 2018. Every year an RPA or MPO is required to hold two meetings with stakeholders and discuss passenger transportation services.

**Who provides transportation in the region?** One intercity rail line and two intercity bus services. Two public transit agencies. Two private transit providers. Ten health and human service agencies.

**Recent developments/changes affecting transportation services.**

- Oskaloosa Rides fixed route made free to riders in 2018 and continues to be free to ride in 2019.
- MCOs no longer playing for transportation for clients that require 24 hours care and live at home to go to work sites.
- HCBS settings rule will be implemented in Iowa by March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019.
- Ottumwa Transit providing free rides to veterans and their immediate families.
- Transportation for Medicare patients now being provided through LogistiCare for transportation to medical.
- Provocation services being phased out.

**Passenger transportation needs.** The following needs have been identified or affirmed:

- Current bus routes in Ottumwa re too long, need to be shorter than 50 minutes.
- Transportation after 5pm for work, dinner or entertainment.
- Transportation to get people home from hospital after trip to the ER.

- Additional transportation from rural areas to larger cities for medical and mental health appointments.
- Transportation on weekends.
- Additional no or low cost transportation to Iowa City.
- Increased flexibility in accessing demand response service.
- Transportation from substance abuse center to hospital.

**Long-Range Transportation Plan.** LRTP is updated every five years, covers all modes of transportation. Chapters are organized by mode, one focused on passenger transportation. Additional chapters on Safety, Environmental Mitigation, and Financial Capacity. Timeline: draft complete by May 2019, review and comment and plan comment period followed by plan adoption end of June.

**Passenger transportation chapter of Long-Range Transportation Plan.** Draft chapter is out to transit agencies, HHS agencies, IDOT. Summary of DOT comments:

- Good discussion of passenger transportation options needs and strategies.
- Can a regional map of passenger transportation provider locations be provided?
- Are there regular schedules for intercity bus service?
- For public transit services can operating costs and revenues be provided?
- Add the Volkswagen grant as a funding source?
- Chapter 3 Demographics noted a 10% of the population carpools. Is there a need for commuter lots?

**Next meeting.** June 2019



**Transit Advisory Group Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**10:00am**  
**Area 15 Regional Planning Commission Conference Room**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Jay Allison – 10-15 Transit, Cheryl Plank – Tenco, Miranda Tucker – SCBHR, Cathy Wilson – Christian Opportunity

**Recent developments/changes affecting transportation services.**

- The Oskaloosa Rides fixed route service is free to riders.
- MCOs no longer paying for transportation for clients who w/24 care and live at home to go to work sites.
- HCBS settings rule went into effect in Iowa in March. State is reviewing agencies and issuing corrective action notices.
- Prevocational services phased out for Oskaloosa and Pella, will be for Tenco in June.
- Ottumwa Transit providing free rides to veterans and immediate family.
- Transportatoin for Medicare patients being coordinated through Logisticare.

**Passenger transportation needs.** The following needs have been identified or affirmed:

- Current bus routes in Ottumwa re too long, need to be shorter than 50 minutes.
- Transportation after 5pm for work, dinner or entertainment. *Discussed whether improvements can be implemented in areas where there is interest and demand. Problem is finding enough demand to justify.*
- Transportation to get people home from hospital after trip to the ER. *Difficult to address need unless service is already operating, best option is to give hospitals transit and cab phone numbers.*
- Additional transportation from rural areas to larger cities for medical and mental health appointments. *Discussed whether medical trips could be grouped together. Agencies felt it was difficult to group appointments, drs offices do not want to and patients do not want to wait. 10-15 reported that a similar attempt is being tried in western counties.*
- Transportation on weekends.
- Additional no or low cost transportation to Iowa City.
- Increased flexibility in accessing demand response service. *10-15 is trying to accommodate same day trips, no guarantee 24 hours scheduling recommended.*
- Transportation from substance abuse center to hospital.
- Brochures/handouts with current information on services and how to access.

Group also discussed a new cab service in Ottumwa called “That Cab” driving small compact cars (Scions), would not be handicap accessible. Discussed Uber rates in town being well above that of public transit.

**Implementing a new service.** Steps to implement a new passenger transportation service, discussed Oskaloosa Rides as an example.

Identify the need: Mahaska Community Development and other local organizations identified need for additional public transportation and wanted a fixed route.

Form a focus group: created a group that included local organizations, 10-15 transit, Area 15 Regional Planning, City of Oskaloosa that met monthly.

Determine the level of demand/use: had a community survey that included information on anticipated use.

Have a champion: Amy Langdon of Mahaska County United way was the driver to get service.

Discuss alternatives: group discussed 10-15 providing additional demand response service.

Develop service parameters: developed route, stops, days and times of operation.

Discuss funding: 10-15 applied for and was awarded STA special projects funding, local businesses and organizations provided money to help start, and a fare was charged initially.

Do a trial run if possible: group did a test run with a bus before service was scheduled to start.

Monitor after implementation met several times after to discuss use.

**Funding for starting a new service.** Some funding sources that may be used by public transit agencies for a new service.

- STA Special Projects: can be used for starting a new service in cooperation with HHS organizations. May be awarded for up to two years. Up to 80% the first year and 50% the second year.
- Funds from other organizations and businesses: can serve as a match for a grant or to subsidize operating costs to the transit agency.
- STBG: Purchasing a new vehicle. Can provide up to 80% funding.
- Capital Match Revolving Loan: No interest loans that may be used for local match for a vehicle purchase.

**Next meeting.** January 2020

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**Monday, March 23rd, 2020**  
**10:30am**  
**Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Holly Berg – RPA 15, Terry Bradley – Wapello Co Veterans Affairs, Cindy Meiners MCAH/WCIC American Home Finding, Keith Blair – Keokuk Co Veterans Affairs, Cindy Kurtz-Hopkins – First Resources, Lindee Thomas – Van Buren Co Public Health, Kathy Saltzgaver – Van Buren Co Veterans Affairs/General Assistance, Virginia VanderLinden – Pennsylvania Place, Kim Koellner – Christian Opportunity Center, Miranda Tucker - South Central Behavioral Health Region, Wendy Thompson - Milestones Area Agency on Aging, Tami Gilliland – Keokuk Co Community Services.

This meeting was held as a phone/web meeting due to the spread of COVID-19 and guidelines by the CDC and IDPH.

Topics discussed at meeting were:

- If agencies contracted for service with public transit providers.
- Whether previously identified agency/passenger needs were still valid.
- Recent developments affecting use of passenger transportation services.
- If organizations had concerns about if Ottumwa Transit were to reduce service or dissolve, or if 10-15 were to cease operating in the city.

**Contracted service.**

Wapello Co Veterans Affairs, Keokuk Co Veterans Affairs and First Resources contract with both 10-15 and Ottumwa Transit.

Pennsylvania Place contracts with Ottumwa Transit.

Christian Opportunity Center has contracts with 10-15 and HIRTA.

Milestones contracts with 10-15.

Keokuk Co Community Services contracts with First Resources that allows it to use its contract with 10-15.

**Review of Previously identified needs.**

- Bus routes in Ottumwa are too long and need to be shorter.  
Wapello Co Vet Affairs – N/A, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – N/A, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – N/A, Van Buren VA/GA – N/A, Pennsylvania PI – S, Christian Opportunity Ctr – N/A, South Central Behavioral – S, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – N/A.
- Transportation need to be available after 5pm for work, dinner or entertainment.
- Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – N/A, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – N, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – N/A, Christian Opportunity Ctr – S, South Central Behavioral – S, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.
- Transportation needs to be available to get people home from the hospital after a trip to the ER.
- Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – N/A, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – S, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – S, Christian Opportunity Ctr – S, South Central Behavioral – S, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.

- Additional transportation from the rural areas to larger cities for medical and mental health appointments.
- Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – S, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – S, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – N/A, Christian Opportunity Ctr – S, South Central Behavioral – N, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.
- Transportation on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – S, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – N, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – S, Christian Opportunity Ctr – S, South Central Behavioral – S, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.
- Additional transportation to Iowa City at low cost.
- Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – S, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – N, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – S, Christian Opportunity Ctr – N/A, South Central Behavioral – S, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.
- Flexibility in accessing the demand response service, accommodating same day trips.
- Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – S, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – N, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – N/A, Christian Opportunity Ctr – S, South Central Behavioral – N, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.
- Transportation from substance abuse center to hospital.
- Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – N/A, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – N/A, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – S, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – N/A, Christian Opportunity Ctr – S, South Central Behavioral – S, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.
- Brochures and handouts with information on current services and how to access.  
Wapello Co Vet Affairs – S, MCAH – S, Keokuk Co Vet Affairs – N/A, First Resources – S, Van Buren Co Public Health – S, Van Buren VA/GA – S, Pennsylvania PI – N/A, Christian Opportunity Ctr – S, South Central Behavioral – N, Milestones – S, Keokuk Co Comm Svcs – S.

Key – S = still a need, N = no longer a need, N/A = not applicable

**Recent developments affecting use.** The following needs have been identified or affirmed:

- Wapello Veteran Affairs, MCAH, and Pennsylvania Place are using transportation services less or not using transportation due to COVID-19 as people are going out less.
- Keokuk Veteran Affairs is seeing emergency medical services cancelled or rescheduled. Some may be due to COVID-19.
- South Central Behavioral is concerned if 10-15 stops doing city to city trips, particularly from Ottumwa to other cities.

**Concerns about Ottumwa Transit/10-15 Transit in Ottumwa.**

MCAH, First Resources, Pennsylvania Place, South Central Behavioral and Milestones have concerns about losing a transportation option. Worried this would impact people without their own transportation getting to appointments or the grocery store and lead to not being able to access services and result in isolation. Although current need for transportation is less as people are staying home due to COVID-19.

**Next meeting.** Late May/Early June 2020

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting  
Minutes  
Thursday, June 16th, 2020  
2:00pm  
Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Kim Koellner – Christian Opportunity Center, Amanda Schlotterback – Christian Opportunity Center, Jennifer Robbins - South Central Behavioral Health Region, Wendy Thompson - Milestones Area Agency on Aging, Angelina Tomow – Milestones – Area Agency on Aging, Jodi Renner – Keokuk County Health Center..

This meeting was held as a phone/web meeting due to the spread of COVID-19 and guidelines by the CDC and IDPH.

Topics discussed at meeting were:

- Review of previously identified passenger transportation needs and if they were still a need to agencies.
- Discussion of not previously identified passenger needs.
- Impacts of COVID-19 on passenger transportation.
- Ottumwa Transit / 10-15 Transition.
- Other items of interest.

**Previously identified Transportation Needs and if it is still a need based on survey at March meeting.**

**Review of Previously identified needs.**

- Bus routes in Ottumwa are too long and need to be shorter: 4 out of 11 agencies said this was still a need.
- Transportation need to be available after 5pm for work, dinner or entertainment: 8 out of 11 agencies said this was still a need.
- Transportation needs to be available to get people home from the hospital after a trip to the ER. 10 out of 11 agencies said this was still a need.
- Additional transportation from the rural areas to larger cities for medical and mental health appointments. 9 out of 11 agencies said this was still a need.
- Additional transportation to Iowa City at low cost. 9 of 11 agencies said this was still a need.
- Flexibility in accessing the demand response service, accommodating same day trips: 8 of 11 agencies said this was still a need.
- Transportation from substance abuse center to hospital: 8 of 11 agencies said this was still a need.
- Brochures and handouts with information on current services and how to access: 8 of 11 agencies said this was still a need.

**Discussion of transportation needs not previously identified.**

- Christian Opportunity Center discussed difficulties getting service from other transportation providers in Marion County. Asked if this was service within the county or to the county, response was this was within the county.
- Also discussed need for transportation after 5pm in Mahaska County.

## **Impacts of COVID-19 on passenger transportation**

- Impacts on Public Transit:
  - Ridership has decreased significantly resulting in decreased revenue and layoffs.
  - CARES act funds have help offset lost revenue, used for operations costs. Allowed 10-15 to call back many drivers.
  - Operations have remained the same.
- Response measures taken by public transit:
  - Supplying masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and disinfectant spray to vehicles.
  - Driver will wear mask if requested and masks are available for passengers.
  - Vehicles are cleaned more often.
  - 25 vehicles have barriers between drivers and passenger.
- Impacts on health and human service agencies/response:
  - Christian Opportunity Center is limiting exposure of staff and clients into the community, day program is not making trips to Walmart, keeping program in facility.
  - When using own vehicles they are subject to more cleaning, all staff clients wear masks and are subject to temperature checks, use social distancing.
  - Milestones uses 10-15.

## **Ottumwa Transit / 10-15 Transition**

- Public Transit in Ottumwa transitioned to 10-15 on June 30<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- There have been no changes to hours of operation or routes.
- Rates in the city have been lowered by \$0.50 per ride; 3 day passes by \$1.00, monthly passes by \$5.00.
- Vehicles in Ottumwa will be re-labeled by the end of July to Ottumwa Rides.
- Questions regarding transition:
  - South Central Behavioral Health asked about bus passes it had from Ottumwa Transit whether they were still valid and about contract/agreement it had with Ottumwa Transit. Responded that passes were likely still valid but suggested checking with 10-15 also to check regarding the contract/agreement.

## **Other Questions**

There were no other questions

**Next meeting.** Winter 2020/2021

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 18th, 2021**  
**2:00pm**  
**Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Cindy Kurtz-Hopkins – First Resources, Kim Koellner – Christian Opportunity Center, Ray Chambers – Jefferson Co Veterans Affairs, Terry Bradley - Wapello Co Veterans Affairs, Tami Gilliland – Keokuk Co Community Services, Lindee Thomas – Van Buren Co Public Health, Kathy Saltzgaver – Van Buren Co VA/GA, Keith Blair – Keokuk Co Veterans Affairs, Ona Miller-Robertson – American Home Finding

This meeting was held as a phone/web meeting due to the spread of COVID-19 and guidelines by the CDC and IDPH.

**Topic of the meeting was how COVID-19 was impacting trips**, whether demand was less, same, or higher. Discussed five types of trips:

- Trips to medical and mental health appointments in SE Iowa.
- Trips to medical or mental health appointments in Des Moines or Iowa City.
- Trips from a substance abuse center to a hospital.
- Trips for shopping, such as to Walmart, Hy-Vee or similar.
- Trips for recreation such as to a park or other similar opportunity.

**Trips for medical and mental health in SE Iowa.** In General trips for medical appointment had decreased at the start of COVID in the Spring of 2020 due to clinics canceling or postponing appointments. The numbers of trips have in with COVID numbers being lower and the vaccine becoming available.

- First Resources is experiencing less demand.
- Christian Opportunity Center, Jefferson Co VA, Van Buren Co Public Health, and American Home Finding are seeing more demand, but the demand has been met. Christian Opportunity receives service from 10-15 and HIRTA, and American home Finding from 10-15. 10-15 has been providing increasing transportation for veterans.
- Keokuk Co Comm Services, Van Buren Co Public Health, and Keokuk Co VA demand is remaining the same.
- Van Buren Co VA/GA demand has increased, but the increase has been met.
- American Home Finding is seeing more demand and having difficulty meeting the increase.

**Trips for medical and mental health in Des Moines or Iowa City.** Same as previous, non-essential medical appointments were reduced in 2020 with COVID decreasing the number of trips. This sudden decrease in demand and reduced revenue resulted in transit laying off drivers, 10-15 was able to bring back some of the drivers with the CARES act funding, but still needs additional drivers to meet the increasing demand.

- First Resources is experiencing less demand.

- Christian Opportunity Center, Keokuk Comm Services, Van Buren Co Public Health, Keokuk Co VA are experiencing the same level of demand.
- Van Buren Co VA/GA is experiencing higher demand, but the increase has been met.
- American Home Finding is seeing more demand and having difficulty meeting the increase. One issue is that sometimes 10-15 may not have a vehicle/driver available certain times/days particularly for longer out of town/county trips. 10-15 looking into more vehicles/drivers to meet the need.

**Trips from a substance abuse center to a hospital.**

- Demand is less for First Resources.
- Demand is the same for Christian Opportunity Center, Keokuk Comm Services, Van Buren Co Public Health, Keokuk Co Veteran Affairs.
- For American Home Finding, demand has increased, and it is having difficulty meeting the increase.

**Trips for shopping, such as to Walmart or Hy-Vee.**

- Demand is the same for First Resources, Keokuk Comm Services, Van Buren Co Public Health.
- Demand is higher but the increased need met for Jefferson Co VA, Van Buren Co VA/GA.
- American Home Finding is seeing increased demand and having difficulty meeting the need.

**Trips for recreation such as a park.** In General, many organizations stopped or limited travel for clients when COVID started, ending trips to workshops or recreation. Instead, organizations started providing opportunities in-house. Some organizations are starting to provide those trips again.

- First resources, Van Buren Co Public Health, and Keokuk Co VA are seeing less demand.
- Christian Opportunity Center, Keokuk Co Comm Services are seeing the same level.
- Van Buren Co VA/GA and American Home Finding have seen an increase in demand, but the demand has been met.

**Next meeting.** May/June 2021



**Transit Advisory Group Meeting  
Minutes  
Thursday, June 17th, 2021  
2:00pm  
Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Jay Allison – 10-15 Transit, Kim Koellner – Christian Opportunity Center, Ray Chambers – Jefferson Co Veterans Affairs, Terry Bradley - Wapello Co Veterans Affairs, Lindee Thomas – Van Buren Co Public Health, Keith Blair – Keokuk Co Veterans Affairs, Jodi Renner – Keokuk County Health Center, Wendy Thompson - Milestones Area Agency on Aging

This meeting was held as a phone/web meeting due to the spread of COVID-19 and guidelines by the CDC.

**Topic of the meeting was veteran’s transportation.**

- Need for low/no cost transportation for medical had been identified.
- 10-15 started providing no-cost transportation to veterans in 2020, seeing increased demand in 2021.
- Needing additional drivers, funding to sustain.

**10-15 Transit transportation for veterans.**

- No cost trips anywhere 10-15 provides service. Destinations inside the region or outside such as Des Moines, Iowa City.
- Wapello and Keokuk Co Veteran offices use 10-15 exclusively, Van Buren referring to it more.
- County VA organizations prefer using 10-15’s service to maintaining their own vehicles and volunteers.
- 10-15 will need additional drivers if demand continues to come back and if demand for veteran transportation grows. Is looking at hiring additional drivers in several counties.
- 10-15 says it has provided \$26,000 in free rides to veterans from January through April. Needs funds to help continued service.
  - 10-15 considering fundraising.
  - Asked if County VA organizations could provide support. Orgs said they would get back.
  - Ask area United Way organizations.

**Next meeting.** Winter 2021/2022

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022**  
**10:00am**  
**Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Ray Chambers – Jefferson Co Veterans Affairs, Lindee Thomas – Van Buren Co Public Health, Heather Maize - Milestones Area Agency on Aging, Miranda Tucker – South Central Behavior Health Region, Michella Friesen – United Way of Mahaska County, Clay Courtney - AHFA

**Need for transportation over the last 6 months, has remained the same, increased, or decreased?**

- Miranda (SCBHR) Org serves Appanoose, Davis, Wapello, Mahaska Co. demand stayed the same. Needs transportation from home to crisis unit and back. Time of these trips is sporadic, cannot be predicted.
- Ray (Jefferson Co) need increased as DAV transport out of Ottumwa no longer running to Iowa City, stopped winter 21/22.
- Heather (Milestones) org serves 17 counties including all of RPA. Demand has increased for medical (occupational health or physical therapy), home health and to run errands. Demand for trips is during the day, all weeklong.
- Clay (AHFA) Org Six Foster Grandparent Volunteers use the fixed route and paratransit in Ottumwa, demand has remained the same.

**Where are clients/transportation users wanting to go? Local/ DM/IC? Medical, shopping, entertainment?**

- Ray (Jefferson Co) transportation from Jefferson Co to Ottumwa clinic and to Iowa City for medical appointments. Some trips may also be for shopping.
- Lindee (Van Buren Co) transportation from Van Buren Co is local around Keosauqua, to Iowa City VA, to Ottumwa VA, for medical and a few trips for shopping. Weekday daytime trips.
- Michella (United Way Mahaska Co) uses of the fixed route in Oskaloosa (Oskaloosa Rides) are going to hospital/doctor, grocery store or Walmart. Route runs MWF 9-5, later into the evening until 6pm would be beneficial help people get home from work.
- Clay (AHFA) Volunteers use transit to go to volunteer areas: schools, YMCA, WIC office, AHFA youth shelter.

**Are most of the trips requested being met? Most client needs met?**

- Miranda (SCHBR) While there will always be some unmet need, most demand is being met and most by 10-15. When 10-15 cannot transport, such as from hospital, SCHBR will use Southern Iowa Crime Commission Transport.
- Heather (Milestones) while most trips are able to be met, 10-15 is good about providing service, there are gaps in Milestones service area. Not enough transportation providers, limited taxi, no uber/lyft. If these services are available they may not be able to transport mobility impaired. Also more costly. RSVP, which provides volunteer drivers and vehicles is an option but limited.

**Any type of trip having difficulty making, or finding transportation for?**

- Lindee (Van Buren Co) trips with less than 24 hours notice.
- Michella (United Way Mahaska Co) On days Oskaloosa Rides not running people have to call 10-15 and use demand response, use taxi, or not make trip. Community of University Park is not on the bus route and residents have to walk 10 minutes to access.
- Clay (AHFA) None of the volunteers drive so having access to public transit allows people to maintain mobility. One has expressed frustration at transportation not being available later in the day “afternoon/evening”. Public transit is not available on weekends and is tricky for these people if they do not have transportation lined up through other means.

**General Comments.**

- Miranda (SCHBR) Good relationship with 10-15.
- Ray (Jefferson Co) users happy with service.
- Lindee (Van Buren Co) 10-15 a good asset.
- Michella (United Way of Mahaska Co) without bus people would not be able to go places.

**Next meeting.** June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting  
Minutes  
Thursday, June 16th, 2022  
10:00am  
Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Jay Allison – 10-15, Ray Chambers – Jefferson Co Veterans Affairs, Rachel Fisher – Wapello County Veterans Affairs, Heather Maize - Milestones Area Agency on Aging, Miranda Tucker – South Central Behavior Health Region,

**Aging Transportation**

- Jay (10-15) aging transportation redesigned this year, previous years counties/areas had been assigned blocked of time now it is flexible. Coordinated with Milestones, organization accepts and reviews applications for service. Milestones also assists with funding.
- Heather (Milestones) Demand has increased this year, people using for medical and for shopping, such as HyVee and Walmart.
- Jay (10-15) demand for service has been higher than 10-15 and Milestones anticipated and budgeted for. 10-15 is continuing to provide service and will work with Milestones on a revised budget for next year.
- Within the RPA 15 region, the number of aging passengers almost doubled in the last year, 917 passengers in May 2022 compared to 487 in May 2021.

Aging Transportation in RPA 15		
	May-22	May-21
Jefferson	329	171
Keokuk	54	6
Mahaska	92	80
Van Buren	72	62
Wapello	370	168
<b>Total</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>487</b>
<i>Passengers per month</i>		

**Veteran Transportation**

- Jay (10-15) has been providing more transportation for Veterans this year with counties deciding to use 10-15 rather than provide service on their own.
- Ray (Jefferson Co) DAV stopped providing service at beginning of year,
- Rachel (Wapello Co) 10-15 service is highly used by veterans to get to medical appointments, Ray (Jefferson Co) agreed.
- Jay (10-15) 10-15 Board asked for monthly report on riders and amount transit spends on Veteran Transportation.

Veteran Transportation in RPA 15		
	Riders	Amount Spent
Jefferson	16	\$3,456.97
Keokuk	14	\$1,490.70
Mahaska	7	\$1,782.80
Van Buren	8	\$5,310.20
Wapello	96	\$13,191.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>\$25,232.17</b>

*Numbers and amount are for 2022 through June*

**Next meeting.** Fall 2022

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**10:00am**  
**Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Cindy Kurtz-Hopkins – First Resources, Rachel Fisher – Wapello County Veterans Affairs, Heather Maize - Milestones Area Agency on Aging, Miranda Tucker – South Central Behavior Health Region, Michella Friesen – Mahaska Co United Way, Kathy Saltzgaver – Van Buren County Veterans Affairs

The TAG started discussing passenger transportation service and needs in general.

- Michella (United Way Mahaska Co) service in Oskaloosa is good, people are happy with the Oskaloosa rides would like service extended later into the evening 6 or 7pm.
- Kathy (Van Buren County Veterans Affairs) positive feedback about 10-15 easy for clients to use service.
- Miranda (South Central Behavior Health Region) transit does a good job when agencies/people call in needing rides. The few times transit is unable to provide trips for a client home from doctor or hospital there are other options.
- The consensus among the TAG was passenger transportation services have been improving, more people are able to get out and to appointments, the store, see family.

The TAG then discussed Veteran and Milestones transportation as these services have increased ridership.

- new veteran transportation service and milestones service is receiving high demand high use, 10-15 is seeing more trips than the funding allocated to these by the counties, Milestones.  
*Note: Previously each county had a block of time allocated, now Milestones clients can call in request rides during any 10-15 hours.* This change has made service more flexible increased ridership.
- Group discussed could be provided from counties, Milestones. Milestones did increase funding last year, unknown if agency is able to again this year.

The TAG also discussed providing information to users about services. Group felt that a lot of information was websites and also available in brochures which is good.

- Cindy (First Resources) transit is a lifeline for those who don't have other options, however not everyone may be aware of transit services, suggested advertising on radio and/or tv.

**Next meeting.** March or April 2023

**Transit Advisory Group Meeting**

**Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022**  
**10:00am**  
**Phone/web meeting**

Participating: Chris Kukla – RPA 15, Jay Allison – 10-15 Transit, Kim Koellner – Christian Opportunity Center, Lindee Thomas – Van Buren Co Public Health, Miranda Tucker – South Central Behavior Health Region, Michella Friesen – Mahaska Co United Way

Review of the draft Passenger Transportation Plan.

- Chris (RPA 15) provided an overview of the draft PTP document, explained the requirements, contents of document.
- Asked if there were any comments on the draft plan by those there. Had not received any comments from TAG members, organizations before the meeting.
- Jay (10-15 Transit), Michella (Mahaska Co United Way) draft plan provided good overview of existing conditions, services, needs.
- Chris discussed the comments received from Iowa DOT: including impacts of COVID, fixed route ridership
  - Group discussed impacts of COVID pandemic on passenger transportation.
    - Kim (Christian Opportunity Center) at the beginning of the pandemic there was less demand for transportation to services and medical appointments as places took precautions Clinics cancelled and postponed appointments. After 8-12 months demand returned people needed to go to appointments, but much of this demand was met.
    - Miranda (SCBHR) demand increased for substance abuse during period when offices were closed in early months of quarantine.
    - Jay ridership decreased as a result of COVID, 10-15 had to lay off 30 employees during the early part of pandemic. 10-15 was able to rehire all the laid off employees due to COVID aid funds and ridership numbers returning.
  - Group discussed fixed route ridership.
    - discussed Oskaloosa Rides numbers, noting how numbers have generally held between 4 and 5k.
    - Michella Oskaloosa Rides is well liked, people are happy with the service. There is demand for extending the service past 5pm to 6 or 7pm for people who work later into the evening, or to go to the store after work.
    - Miranda fixed routes in Ottumwa and Oskaloosa are important in helping those who don't have other options get to jobs, stores, appointments and should be supported.
    - group discussed Ottumwa Rides numbers, decreasing with pandemic and change from Ottumwa to 10-15.

The TAG supported approval of the PTP by the RPA with changes to the document to address Iowa DOT's comments.

**Next meeting.** October 2023