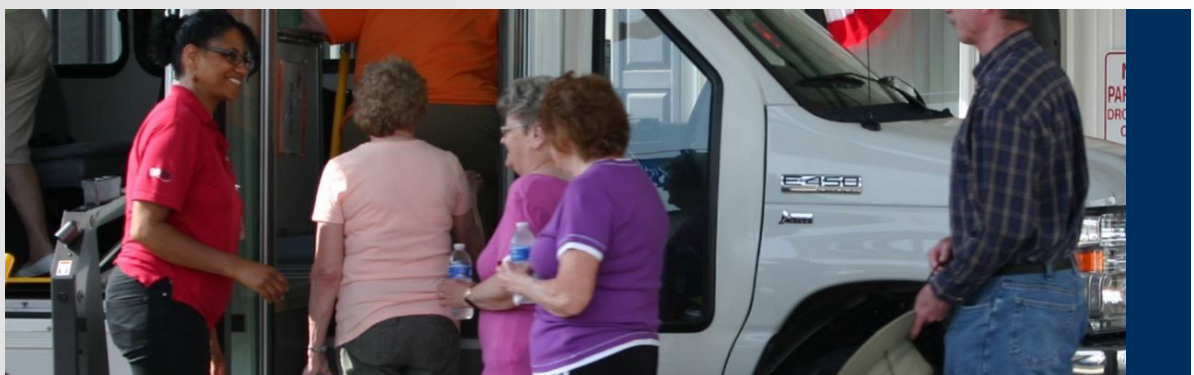


Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission

Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan Update



October 2017

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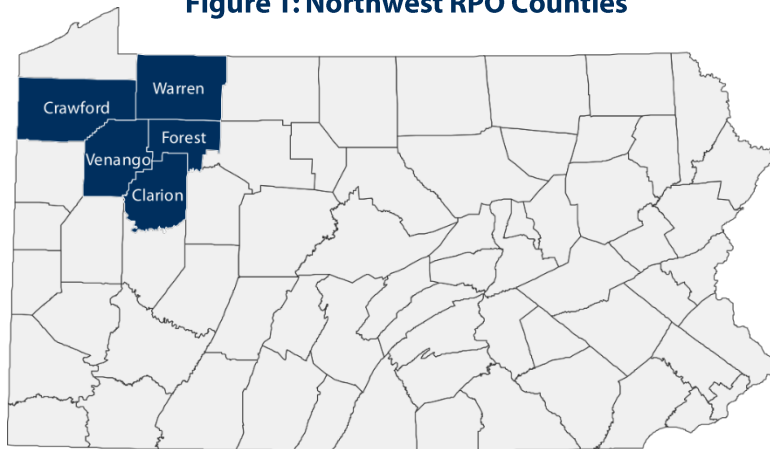
Table of Contents

Background and Coordinated Plan Requirements.....	4
History of Coordinated Plans and Current Requirements	5
Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan	6
Planning Process.....	6
Public Involvement: Human Service Agency Focus Groups	8
Public Involvement: Transportation User Listening Sessions.....	8
Public Involvement: Transportation User Surveys	9
Focus of the Northwest Coordinated Plan	10
Mobility in Northwest Pennsylvania Today.....	11
Socio-Economic Analysis of Transit-Dependent Populations: Trends and Impacts	12
Transportation Providers	34
Major Destinations in Northwest Pennsylvania.....	42
Transportation Needs, Barriers and Gaps Assessment.....	43
Needs Identified through Public Outreach	43
Transportation Barriers and Gaps Identified through Public Outreach.....	44
Transportation Barriers and Gaps Identified through GIS and Socioeconomic Analysis.....	48
Future Transportation Coordination in Northwest Pennsylvania.....	54
Strategies and Best Practices.....	54
Implementation Strategy for Improved Transportation Coordination	63
Appendix A: Coordinated Plan Outreach Documentation.....	67
Human Service Agency Focus Group Meeting Summaries.....	67
Transportation User Public Listening Session Summaries	77
Transportation User Survey Summary	84
Appendix B: Transportation Services Inventory	93
Appendix C: Top Shared-Ride Destinations by County.....	111

Background and Coordinated Plan Requirements

Established in 1967, the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission (Northwest Commission) is an Oil City-based, public, non-profit regional agency for economic and community development and a resource for transportation planning. The Northwest Commission serves as the Northwest Rural Planning Organization's (RPO) Planning Partner for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). In partnership with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of local leaders from the five-county region of Clarion, Crawford, Forest, Venango and Warren (see **Figure 1**), the RPO is responsible for developing a 20-year plan referred to as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which includes a list of transportation projects that are prioritized to meet the current and future needs of the region.

Figure 1: Northwest RPO Counties



The most recently adopted Northwest Commission LRTP recognizes that transportation planning efforts for the region must address both longstanding and emerging challenges. One such challenge is the changing composition of the region's population. While the region's total population has largely remained the same over the past 40 years, it has undoubtedly grown older. Population projections indicate that 1 in 4 residents in the Northwest region will be over the age of 65 by the year 2040.

The Northwest Commission understands the increasing need to plan for and address the mobility needs of transit dependent populations, specifically senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals. An extensive network of transportation providers and human service agencies support the regional transportation system, however, gaps in service exist due to limited resources and challenges in administering fixed route and demand response services. With the scarcity of available funding, transportation coordination can help alleviate the strain on available resources by effectively applying the assets of multiple agencies to common mobility problems.

The Northwest Commission's Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) satisfies the federal requirements enacted under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), as well as the more recently adopted Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). The Coordinated Plan identifies the needs and gaps in human service transportation for seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals in the Northwest Pennsylvania region. The Plan also serves as a guide for the use of federal funding from the *Section 5310: Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program*.

History of Coordinated Plans and Current Requirements

For over a decade, Coordinated Plans have been a crucial aspect of regional multi-modal transit planning. Coordinated Plans are completed every four to five years to identify the transportation needs of senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals; lay out long-term strategies for meeting these needs; and prioritize services to meet the needs of these target populations. Beginning in 2005 with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Congress made Coordinated Plans a condition of receiving funds for specific transportation projects. In addition to increasing funding for public transportation programs, the legislation included several specific programs that benefited programs administered by human service agencies.

Effective in May of 2007, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued final guidance regarding locally developed Coordinated Plans for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008 and beyond. SAFETEA-LU required that a locally developed Coordinated Plan be consulted for any projects receiving funding under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), or New Freedoms programs.

In 2012, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act maintained the requirement for a Coordinated Plan and consolidated several transportation programs identified under SAFETEA-LU, such as the JARC program and the New Freedoms program. This left Section 5310 as the only FTA funding program dedicated to any of the groups identified through the Coordinated Plan. Although these changes essentially eliminated the requirement that Coordinated Plans include low-income individuals in the planning process, the Northwest Commission maintains that it is nevertheless a critical part of transportation planning to serve low-income individuals through human services transportation.

More recently, the 2015 Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act continued the requirement for locally developed Coordinated Plans and left the existing Section 5310 program unchanged.

Required Elements of a Coordinated Plan

- Inventory of existing transportation services
- Assessment of transportation needs for older adults, persons with disabilities, and individuals with limited incomes
- Identification of coordination strategies to eliminate or reduce duplication in services and to improve utilization of transportation resources
- Framework for addressing identified gaps in services
- Prioritization of implementation strategies

Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan

This Coordinated Plan builds upon the *2015-40 Long Range Transportation Plan*, adopted in June 2015. The LRTP examines the various short- and long-term transportation issues to be addressed in the RPO and outlines a series of goals and objectives that provide a framework for the community to make decisions about its overall transportation system, shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Northwest Commission 2040 LRTP Goals

GOAL	
1	Support the region's economic vitality.
2	Increase transportation system safety.
3	Increase transportation system security.
4	Increase accessibility and mobility options.
5	Protect and enhance the environment.
6	Enhance the transportation system's integration and connectivity.
7	Promote efficient transportation system management and operation.
8	Give priority to system preservation.

The broad scope of the LRTP goals and objectives provides an opportunity for the Coordinated Plan to further refine implementation strategies specific to human services transportation and to help the RPO's transportation to move forward.

Planning Process

Coordinated transportation planning is intended to be a cyclical process that coincides with regular updates of the region's LRTP every four years. The previous Northwest Coordinated Plan was adopted in 2008 and while it addressed all necessary federal requirements for Section 5310 eligibility, it was not actionable and the only priorities for implementation were vehicle purchases and bus storage facility construction. This update to the Coordinated Plan includes a more robust analysis of existing conditions, available services, and barriers and gaps in the human services and public transportation network. It also incorporated significant stakeholder outreach to both human service providers and users of public transportation services. The final implementation plan was informed using the findings from the socioeconomic analysis, barriers and gaps analysis, and stakeholder engagement efforts, and it includes a comprehensive, prioritized list of strategies for the Northwest Commission and related stakeholders to address over the next four years.

Advisory Committee

To assist with the development of a regional vision for coordinated transportation and guide the overall planning process, an advisory committee was formed at the beginning of the plan update. The steering committee consisted of 21 individuals that represent a broad range of human services and public transportation interests. In the 8 month plan update timeframe, the advisory committee met on three occasions with the following objectives:

- **Meeting 1** – December 8, 2016: Overview of advisory committee roles and responsibilities and development of a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis.
- **Meeting 2** – March 30, 2017: Affirm a regional vision for coordinated transportation services in the Northwest region and identify key transportation issues and barriers.
- **Meeting 3** – June 8, 2017: Prioritize key transportation issues and barriers and develop actionable solutions to the issues that can be worked on as a region.
- **Meeting 4** – August 8, 2017: Review draft plan and implementation strategy.

Input, guidance, and active involvement from the advisory committee was critical in defining a future vision for transportation across the region and identifying an actionable list of strategies for improving mobility for all residents.



Public Involvement: Human Service Agency Focus Groups

Between March 2017 and April 2017, the Northwest Commission conducted a series of targeted focus groups with human service agency representatives throughout the RPO region. More than 50 human service agencies and transportation providers participated in these meetings, with over 70 participants:

- **Crawford County Community Council** – March 10, 2017
- **Venango County Human Services Focus Group** – March 21, 2017
- **Forest County and Warren County Human Services Focus Group** – March 21, 2017
- **Clarion County Human Services Council** – April 11, 2017

Through these focus group meetings, the Northwest Commission was able to collect valuable input about the unique transportation barriers faced by the agencies' clientele. Further, the agencies were able to discuss the challenges they experienced in administering their programs and services due to transportation. These focus group meetings were critical for developing a regional transportation inventory.

Public Involvement: Transportation User Listening Sessions

In addition to the human service agency focus groups, the Northwest Commission held listening sessions throughout the region to gather information on transportation experiences and issues from individuals who use the available transportation services. Meetings were held in each county and coordinated with local human service agencies and county planning staff to reach the greatest number of participants.

Clarion County

- Main Street Senior Center – April 26, 2017

Crawford County

- Meadville Senior Center – April 10, 2017

Forest County

- Endeavor Senior Center – April 26, 2017

Venango County

- Cranberry Mall Senior Center – April 10, 2017

Warren County

- Allegheny Community Center – April 11, 2017

The findings from the transportation user listening sessions, when reviewed with the results from the human service agency meetings, provide a more complete assessment of human services transportation from both sides of the mobility equation. Over 50 individuals participated in the transportation user listening sessions, with representation from all 5 RPO counties.



Public Involvement: Transportation User Surveys

The final approach for maximizing public involvement was the utilization of user surveys. Survey questions were developed to address the FTA required elements of the Coordinated Plan, specifically asking the respondent questions relating to transportation barriers, service participation, and potential strategies for closing service gaps. A web-based survey was deployed and heavily marketed throughout the region using graphic postcards, e-mail marketing to County Planning staff and other stakeholders, and information was presented on the Northwest Commission website.

To account for residents who may not have computer or mobile device access, or individuals who simply prefer non-digital communication channels, a paper survey was made available. The paper survey format mirrored the web-based survey to ensure consistent feedback among survey respondents. In total, 83 individuals completed the transportation user survey.

Public outreach meeting minutes and survey summaries can be found in **Appendix A: Northwest Commission Coordinated Plan Outreach Documentation.**

Focus of the Northwest Coordinated Plan

Given the remote and rural landscape that dominates the five-county RPO region, it is not surprising that the primary mode of transportation for the majority of people in the Northwest Pennsylvania region is a personal automobile. However, for many individuals, driving a car is not always an available option. For the purposes of this Coordinated Plan, the following transportation services were considered:

According to the American Community Survey (ACS) 2011 – 2015 5-Year Estimates, 79.3% of workers age 16 and older drove alone to their place of employment in the Northwest Pennsylvania RPO region.

- **Fixed route services** include any transit service in which a vehicle follows a predetermined route on a set schedule. Examples of fixed route services included buses, trolleys, light rail, and commuter rail. Three agencies in the Northwest Pennsylvania region provide fixed route services:
 - Area Transportation Authority of North Central PA (ATA)
 - Crawford Area Transportation Authority (CATA) and Venango County Transportation
 - Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC)The Senior Free Transit Program, which is funded by the Pennsylvania Lottery and administered by the PennDOT, offers free public bus transportation for senior citizens age 65 and older and a reduced fare to persons with disabilities.
- **Public shared-ride/demand response services** allow users to travel from one destination to another, either curb-to-curb or door-to-door, along a route that is not fixed. Alternatively, shared-ride vehicles travel throughout a community according to the specific requests of passengers. For eligible participants, PennDOT will reimburse 85% of all shared-ride fares; either clients or their sponsoring organization are responsible for the remaining 15%. FTA requires all fixed route operators to provide complimentary paratransit services courtesy of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if the point of origin is within $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of a fixed route.
- **Non-profit/program/volunteer services** provide transportation to eligible persons for specific trip purposes. Because transportation availability is often a vital link between individuals and critical life services (e.g. employment and healthcare), an organization may provide transportation services for disadvantaged clients to address that need, even if transportation is not the primary service the agency supports.
- **Private transportation services** are for-profit entities that include taxi cab companies, ride share services such as Uber, Lyft, and GoGoGrandparent, and private intercity bus carriers like Greyhound or Megabus.

The Coordinated Plan will focus on users and potential users of the above transportation services, with a particular emphasis on seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals.

Mobility in Northwest Pennsylvania Today

Mobility is a measure of an individual's ability to travel to a destination. For people with personal automobiles, mobility is essentially limitless with the potential to travel wherever they want, whenever they want. Unfortunately, there are many in the Northwest Region who do not have the freedom of mobility that comes from car ownership for a variety of reasons. For the purpose of this Coordinated Plan, these individuals are considered to be "transit-dependent", relying on some form of publicly available transportation service for their daily needs, whether provided by government, non-profit, or a private entity.

To better understand the needs of transit-dependent populations in the Northwest region and develop enhanced transportation services to meet those needs, a review of socioeconomic conditions must be considered. For this Coordinated Plan, the Northwest Commission identifies transit-dependent populations as individuals with a disability, low-income individuals, and seniors age 65+. The reasons for their mobility challenges are unique and varied, and specific examples include:

- Low-income individuals may not have transportation available for a return trip from the hospital for an unexpected emergency room visit
- A senior citizen, living on a fixed income, may have difficulty affording non-medical trips
- Medical patients and persons with disabilities may not be able to transport themselves or have access to a vehicle equipped to meet their mobility needs (e.g. wheelchair accommodations)

This section provides an overview of the existing state of transit-dependent populations and the transportation systems that serve them regionally, specifically reviewing:

- The most recently available socioeconomic make-up of the 5-county region, with a particular focus on senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals;
- Existing transportation services and programs available in Northwest Pennsylvania; and
- Major origins (e.g. senior housing facilities) and major destinations (e.g. hospital or shopping center).

It is worth noting that the rural, dispersed landscape of the Northwest region adds a significant barrier in administering public transportation services. Transit-dependent individuals benefit most from coordinated transportation systems and a critical first step is reviewing demographic and economic trends.

Socio-Economic Analysis of Transit-Dependent Populations: Trends and Impacts

The following list summarizes the trends and associated impacts identified through this section's data analysis and, along with input collected through the listening sessions in each region, this section provides information to support the Coordinated Plan strategies for implementation.

1. The region continues to age in place with a population that is geographically dispersed and fairly well-educated.

- **The number of older citizens in the RPO is increasing, while the number of younger citizens is decreasing.** As citizens in the region continue to age, solutions should be developed to meet a potential increase in public transportation needs. With the number of younger citizens decreasing, regional efforts should be developed to retain younger citizens and attract new citizens.
- **Citizens are geographically dispersed throughout the region.** This is an important factor to consider when planning for efficient and cost effective transportation systems as traditional public transportation options such as fixed route buses are not always financially viable.
- **The number of citizens in the RPO with at least some post-secondary education has increased.** This trend potentially demonstrates a marked increase in technical training and college education over the past decade. An educated workforce generally means better job opportunities.

2. While the region is recovering from the 2008 recession, several indicators signal economic distress.

- **The region's unemployment rate is decreasing and was nearly back to pre-recession levels by the end of 2015.** This trend suggests increased job opportunities for the region's citizens seeking employment.
- **The poverty rate in the RPO has decreased slightly, although it is still higher than the state poverty rate.** Households in poverty may not have access to reliable transportation. Strategies should be developed to ensure these households have both reliable and affordable transportation option.
- **The poverty rate for the region's households headed by females is greater than both national and state rates.** In addition, the percentage of female headed households in poverty without a high school diploma (40.1%) is much greater than all households in poverty in the region without a high school diploma (20.5%). This trend signals that education is a driving factor for poverty in female headed households. Strategies should be developed to ensure these vulnerable households have both reliable and affordable transportation options.
- **The number of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients has increased in the region.** Increases in both SSI and SNAP recipients are signs of economic distress and may signal a potential increased demand for public transportation.

3. A greater number of households are headed by seniors.

- **The number of senior headed households is increasing.** As many seniors face mobility issues, public transportation solutions to meet the changing mobility needs of older residents are required.
- **Seniors in the region have smaller median household incomes.** Smaller median household incomes mean less disposable income, requiring cost effective public transportation solutions.

4. Overall, residents experience longer travel times and travel to work alone.

- **The number of workers driving alone continues to increase.** Similarly, carpooling has decreased by from 12% in 2000 to 9.6% in 2015. Strategies to reverse this trend would be beneficial to reducing transportation costs for citizens in the region.
- **While a small percentage of workers have no access to a vehicle (3.2%), over 32% of workers have access to three or more vehicles.** While some of these vehicles may not be reliable, there could be opportunities to lend vehicles to or carpool with citizens who do not have affordable and reliable transportation to and from work.

Data Assumptions

Data are presented throughout this analysis for the RPO and, where applicable, the state, individual RPO counties, and the Northwest Local Development District (LDD) which includes the RPO counties as well as Erie, Lawrence and Mercer Counties. For this plan, the following organizational institutions are defined as:

- **Rural Planning Organization** – RPOs have a similar function as Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), but are not required under Federal law. These organizations consult and coordinate with the state and local officials in rural areas of the state on transportation planning efforts.
- **Local Development District** – Often sharing similar borders to the RPOs, LDDs are multi-county planning and development districts designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). These organizations provide a variety of services, including community and economic development, international trade, strategic planning, and more.

Data sources used to prepare this analysis include:

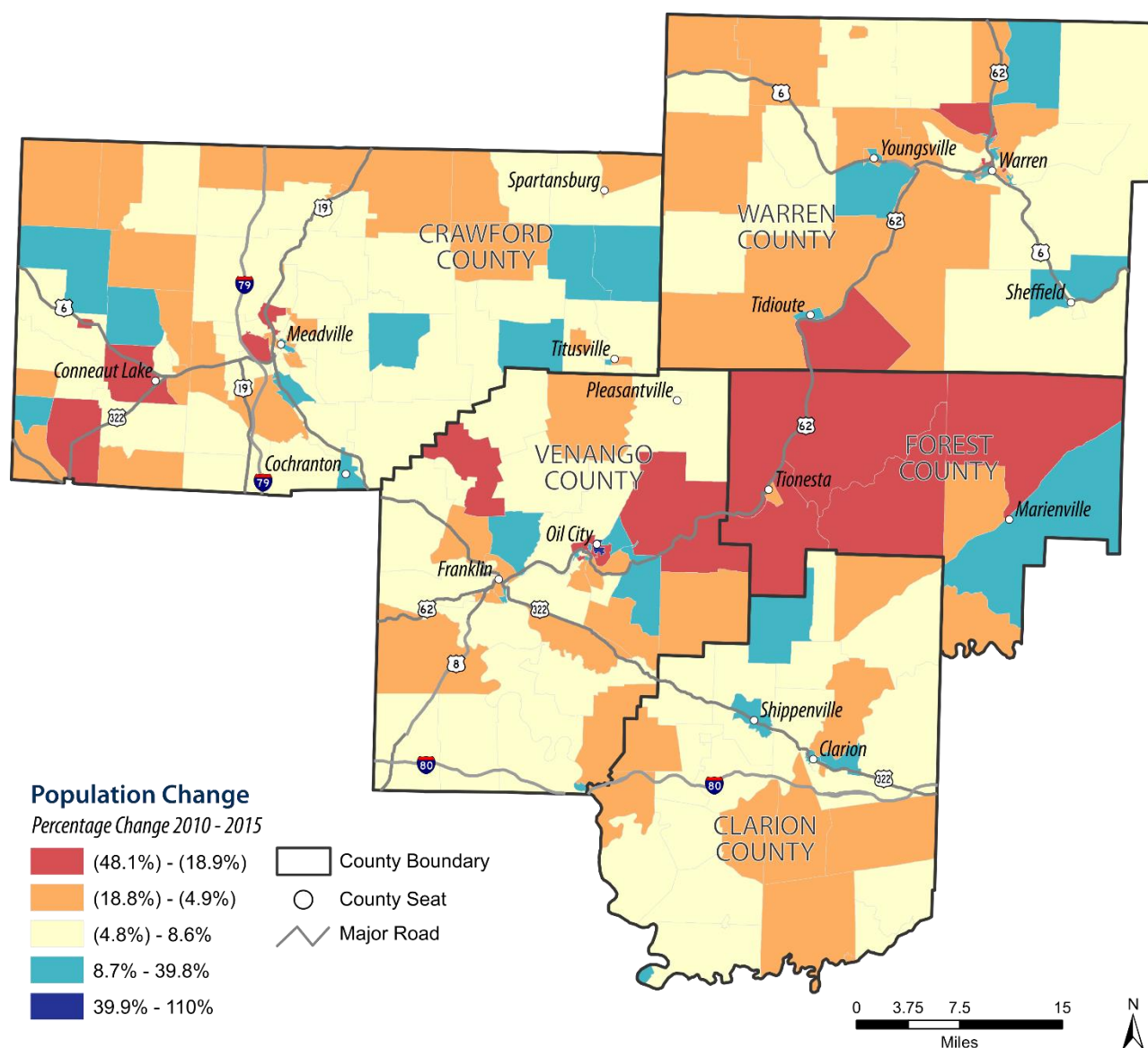
- ▶ U.S. Decennial Census, 2000
- ▶ U.S. Decennial Census, 2010
- ▶ U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates
 - With each ACS estimate, the Census Bureau reports a Margin of Error (MOE). The purpose of the MOE is to allow users of the data to measure the amount of uncertainty around each estimate.
- ▶ HUD Program Income Limits, 2015
- ▶ PA Dept. of Labor and Industry: Center for Workforce Information Analysis
- ▶ US Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator

Population Change

Population within the RPO decreased steadily between 2000 and 2010, experiencing a total loss of 2.2% in the ten year period. A notable exception is Forest County, which experienced a significant increase in total population, the only county in the RPO to experience growth in the decade. This increase can be attributed in large part to the opening of the State Correctional Institution in 2004, which relocated around 2,200 inmates to a new facility in Marienville. All counties in the RPO experienced a decline in population after 2010 (shown in **Figure 2**).

Population within the Northwest region continues to decline at a steady rate

Figure 2: Population Change in the Northwest Pennsylvania Region, 2010 - 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

This trend was greater than that of the LDD, where population decreased by approximately 2.8% between 2000 and 2015. At the state level, population increased steadily between 2000 and 2015 at a rate of 3.9%. **Table 2** provides a detailed review of population figures and percent changes for counties in the RPO and LDD, as well as for the state of Pennsylvania.

Table 2: Population Change in Northwest PA, 2000 - 2015

	2000	2010	2015	2000-10 % Change	2000-15 % Change
Clarion	41,765	39,988	39,437	-4.30%	-5.53%
Crawford	90,366	88,765	87,801	-1.80%	-3.35%
Forest	4,946	7,716	7,649	56.00%	53.28%
Venango	57,565	54,984	54,265	-4.50%	-6.36%
Warren	43,863	41,815	41,218	-4.70%	-6.61%
RPO	238,505	233,268	230,370	-2.20%	-3.88%
LDD	639,641	630,472	626,241	-1.43%	-2.82%
Pennsylvania	12,281,054	12,702,379	12,758,729	3.4%	3.89%

Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Based on historical population change, the Northwest region can anticipate the trend of depopulation to slow or even reverse in some areas. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania reported county-by-county population projections through 2040, forecasting only a 0.3% population decrease in the RPO and a more than 2% increase in the total regional population. An examination of projections by county indicate an uneven distribution of population gain, as indicated in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Population Projections by County, 2010 - 2040

	2010	2020	2030	2040	2010-20 % Change
Clarion	39,988	40,840	41,453	41,142	2.23%
Crawford	88,765	88,201	88,156	87,422	-0.63%
Forest	7,716	7,531	7,118	6,608	-2.40%
Venango	54,984	55,308	55,516	55,157	0.59%
Warren	41,815	40,605	39,459	37,535	-2.89%
RPO	233,268	232,485	231,702	227,864	-0.34%
LDD	630,472	645,330	658,892	663,739	2.36%

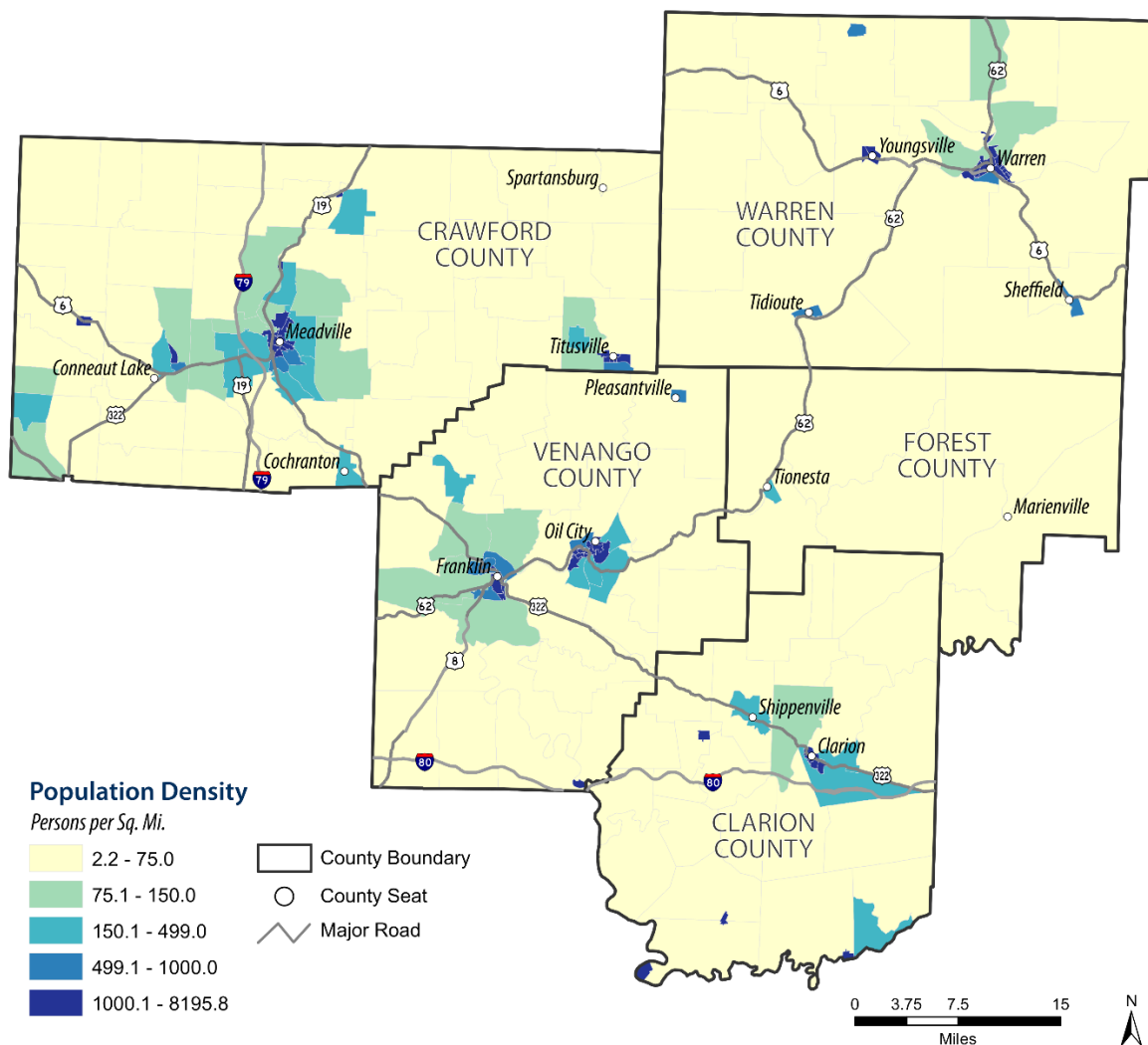
Source: US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010, Center for Rural Pennsylvania Population Projections

Population Distribution

Population is widely dispersed throughout the RPO with the majority of the region having a population density of less than 75 people per square mile, as shown in **Figure 3**. Only one area in Forest County has a population density exceeding 75 people per square mile (Tionesta, the county seat), while population density is greatest around larger communities such as Oil City, Warren, and Meadville, with densities greater than 1,000 people per square mile. Population density is an important consideration when planning for efficient and cost effective transportation systems. Because citizens are so geographically dispersed, traditional public transportation options such as fixed route buses are not always financially viable.

Citizens are geographically dispersed throughout the region—an important factor to consider when planning for efficient and cost effective transportation

Figure 3: Population Density in the Northwest Pennsylvania Region, 2015

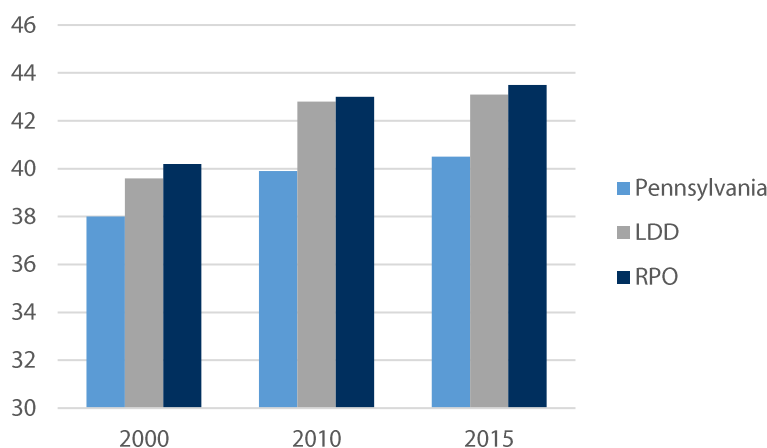


Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Age and Gender

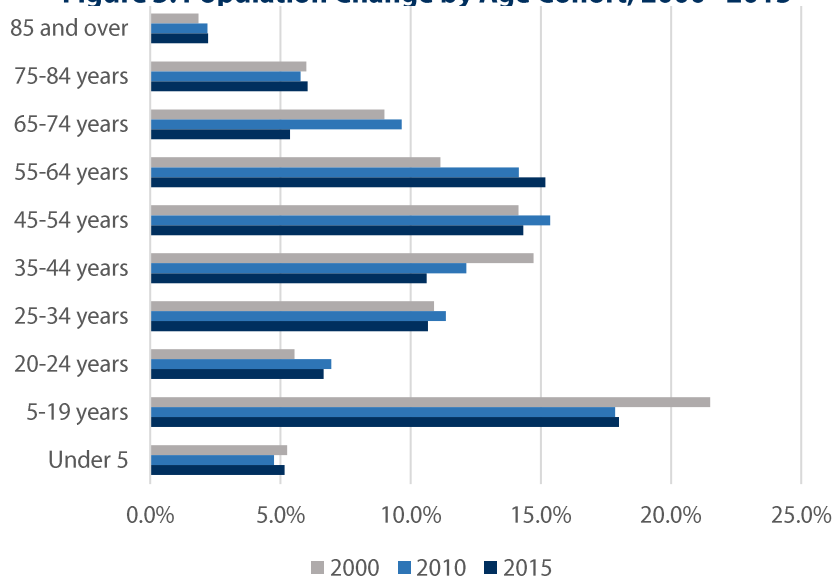
The median age of citizens in the RPO and LDD continued to exceed the median age in Pennsylvania, as shown in **Figure 4**. The median age in 2015 in the RPO was 43.5, which was roughly equal to the median age in the LDD and greater than the state median age of 40.7. The regional trend of aging in place is demonstrated in **Figure 5**, which shows the percentage of population in age cohorts from 2000 to 2015. Since 2000, the percentage of the population in the youngest cohorts (those under 20 years old) has been declining steadily, while the percentage of citizens age 55 and older has increased. In between these trends, the cohorts representing young adults (between 20 and 34 years) has been slowly increasing, although not as quickly as the older cohorts.

Figure 4: Median Age, 2000 - 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

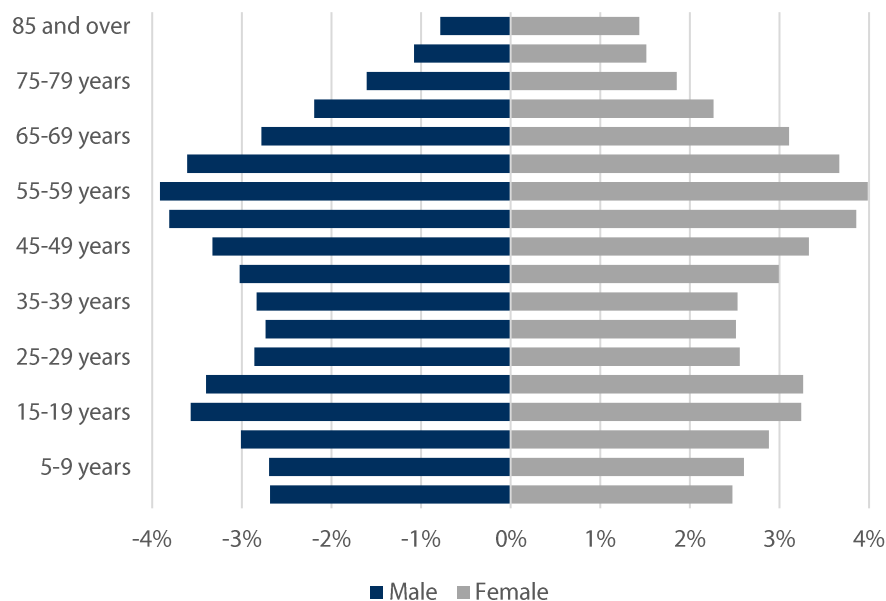
Figure 5: Population Change by Age Cohort, 2000 - 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

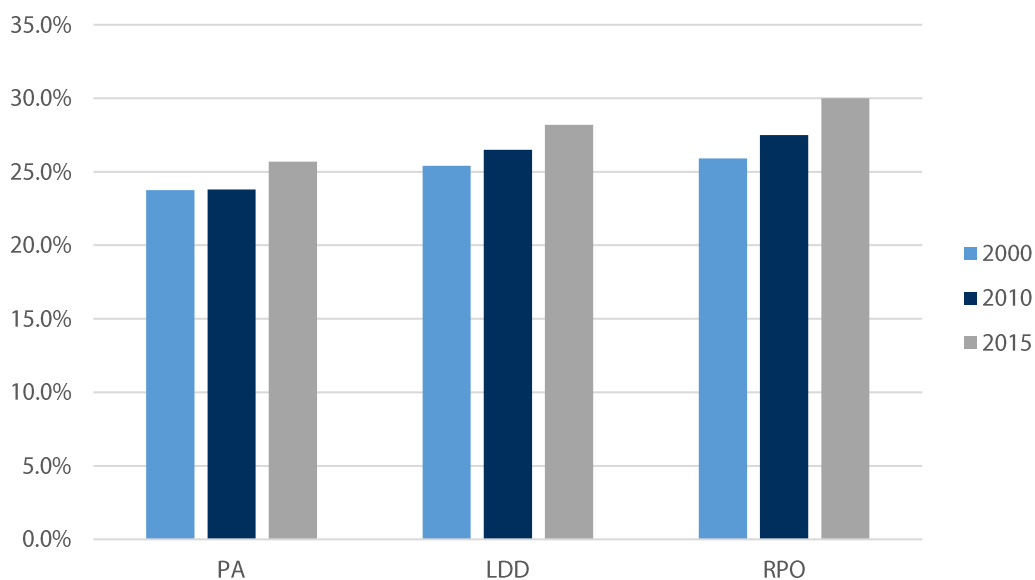
Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of recent regional population by age cohort and gender, which provides further evidence of an aging population. Additionally, the number of households headed by citizens age 65 or older is steadily increasing in the RPO from 25.9% in 2000 to 30% in 2015, shown in **Figure 7**. These percentages are consistent with the aging population in the RPO. Addressing this trend requires developing public transportation solutions to meet the changing mobility needs of older residents.

Figure 6: Population by Age Cohort, 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

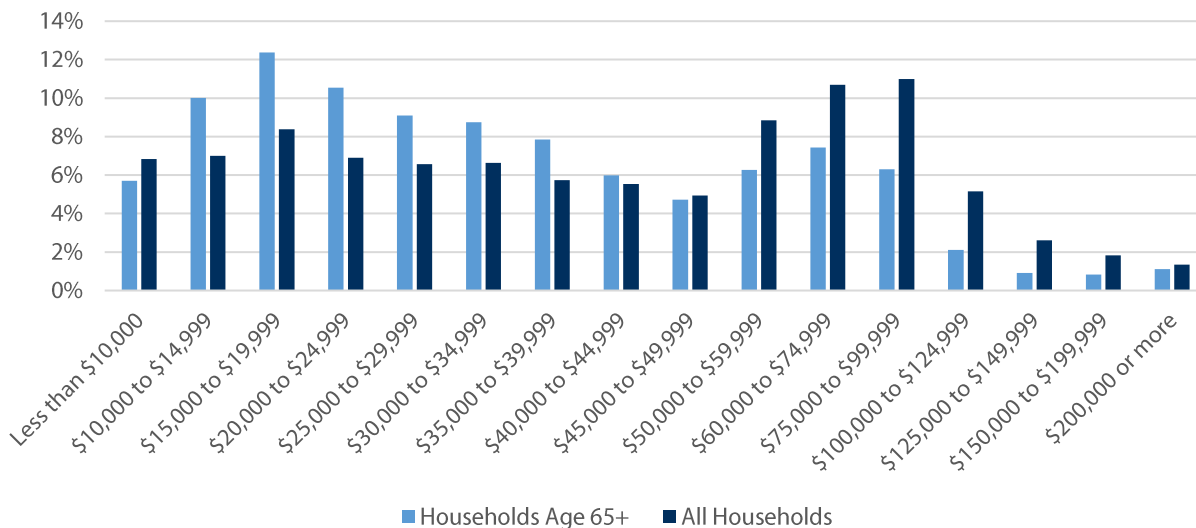
Figure 7: Households Headed by Citizens Age 65 or Older, 2000 - 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

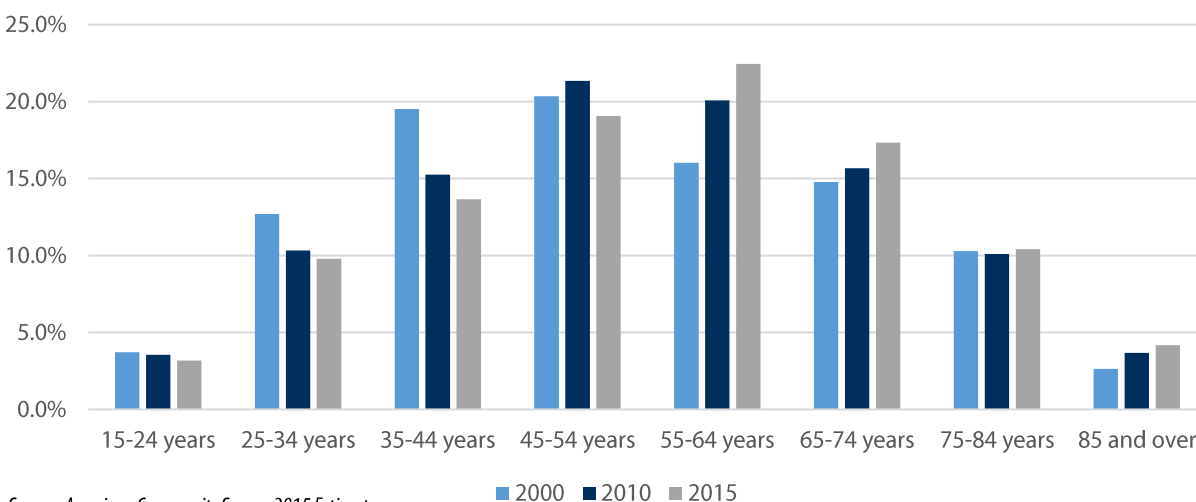
The median household income for citizens in the RPO age 65 or older is \$31,063, which is 26% less than median household income for total households in the region. A greater percentage of households headed by citizens age 65 or older tend to have household incomes that are on the lower income scale as compared to all household in the RPO, shown in **Figure 8**. Similarly, there are fewer senior headed households whose household incomes are on the higher income scale. Decreased income levels for senior citizens means less disposable income may be available for transportation.

Figure 8: Household Income for Senior-Headed Households, 2015



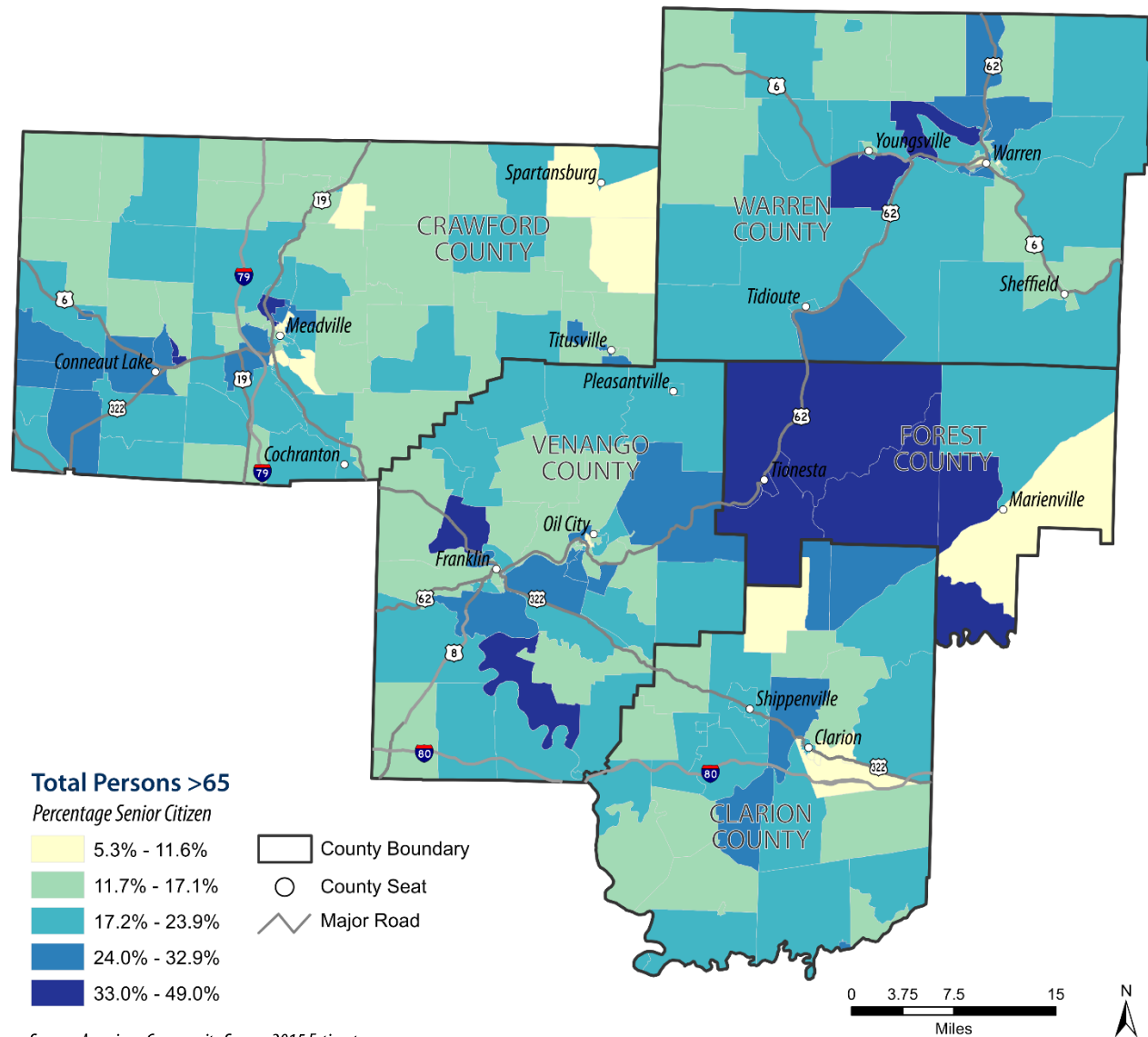
As the region continues to age, the demand for housing will change over time, as will the corresponding need for varied transportation services. **Figure 9** shows that in 2000, over 50% of households in the RPO were headed by people in their mid-20s to mid-40s. In 2013, more than 50% were headed by citizens age 55 or older. Over the next 10 years, public transportation strategies will need to consider the region's aging population.

Figure 9: Housing Demand by Age Cohort, 2000 - 2015



Illustrated in **Figure 10**, there are areas within the region where one-third to one-half of the population is age 65 or older. As citizens in the region are aging, solutions are needed to meet a potential increase in public transportation demand.

Figure 10: Percent Senior Population, 2015



Disability Status

The US Census and American Community Survey offer demographic data on reported disabilities of noninstitutionalized populations. The data includes six disability types:

- Hearing difficulty
- Vision difficulty
- Cognitive difficulty
- Ambulatory difficulty
- Self-care difficulty
- Independent living difficulty

The In 2000, approximately 20.5% of the region's civilian non-institutionalized population had a reported disability. This percentage dropped to about 17% according to ACS 2015 estimates. Forest County had the highest percentage of citizens with a disability in 2015, almost 14 percent higher than the regional average. Interestingly, reported disabilities decreased in every county but Forest in the fifteen year period. A more detailed breakdown of regional disability status can be found in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Reported Disability Status 2000 - 2015

	Clarion		Crawford		Forest		Venango		Warren		RPO	
	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015
Total civilian noninstitutionalized population	37,135	39,031	78,634	85,757	4,623	3,669	50,766	53,146	38,862	40,254	210,020	221,857
Total civilian noninstitutionalized population with disability	6,958	6,343	15,977	13,963	1,076	1,149	11,289	9,228	7,869	6,951	43,169	37,634
Percent	18.7%	16.3%	20.3%	16.3%	23.3%	31.3%	22.2%	17.4%	20.2%	17.3%	20.5%	17.0%

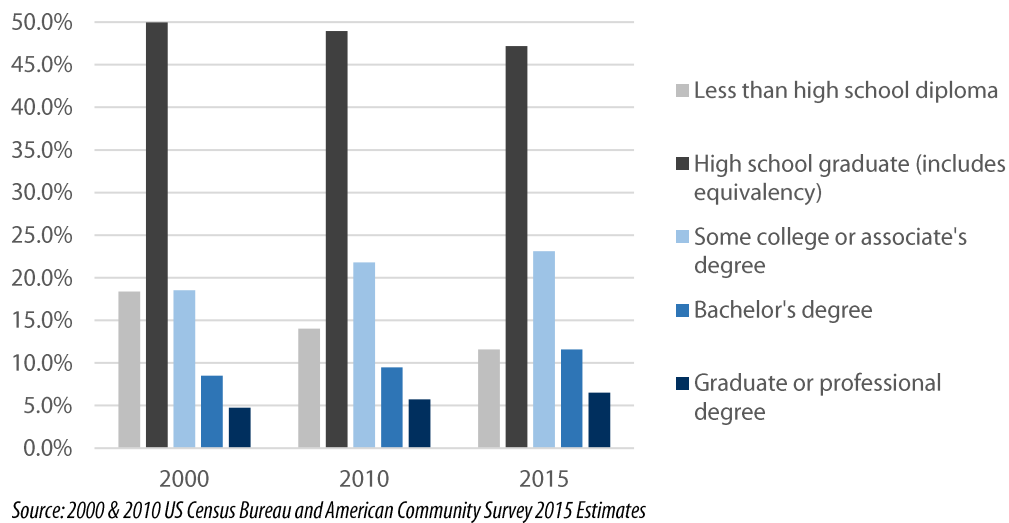
Source: US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Educational Attainment

The percentage of citizens in the RPO with at least a high school diploma continued to increase with particular growth in all categories of post-secondary education, shown in **Figure 11**. The percentage of citizens with some college or an associate's degree has increased significantly: from 18.5% to 23.1% since 2000. This trend potentially demonstrates a marked increase in technical training in the region over the past decade.

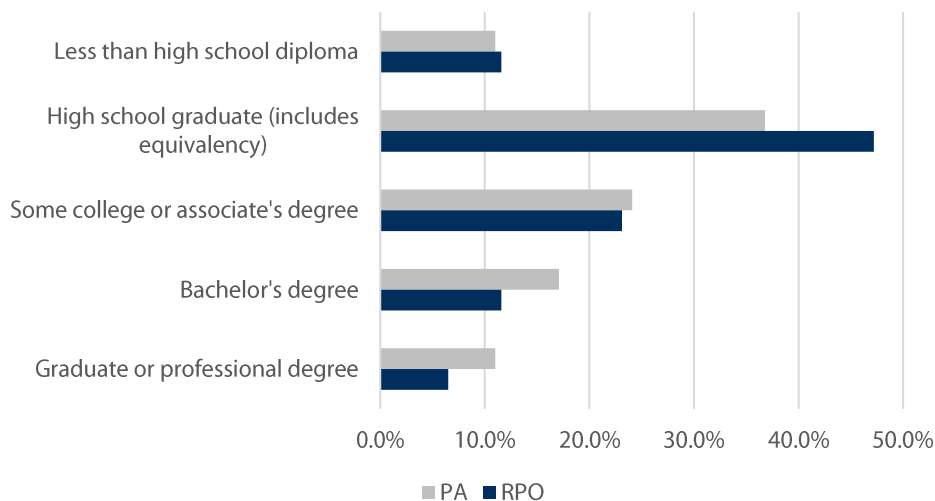
The number of citizens in the Northwest RPO region with post-secondary education has increased

Figure 11: Change in Educational Attainment in the Northwest Region, 2000 - 2015



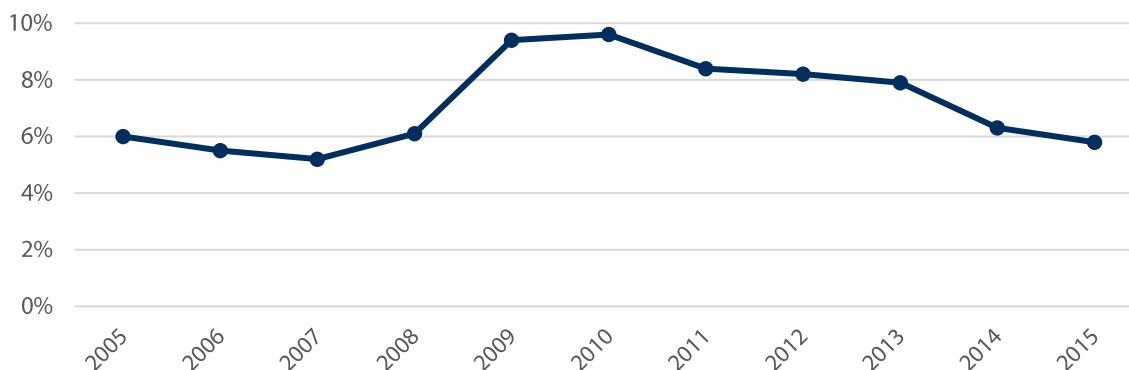
While this is an encouraging trend, the region still falls behind the state in percent of the population age 25 or older with post-secondary degrees, and high school drop-out rates are higher than the state average. **Figure 12** illustrates this change.

Figure 12: Educational Attainment, 2015



An educated workforce generally means better job opportunities, which may be reflected in the region's declining unemployment rate. The Northwest Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Area (WIA) annual unemployment rate peaked in 2010 at 9.6%. Since then, the region's unemployment rate continued to decline, as shown in **Figure 13**. By 2015, the unemployment rate was back within reach of its pre-recession level of 5.2%. The region's unemployment rate is, however, slightly higher than the state rate of 5.0%.

Figure 13: Northwest Pennsylvania WIA Annual Unemployment Rates, 2005-2015



Source: PA Department of Labor and Industry, Center for Workforce Information Analysis

Income

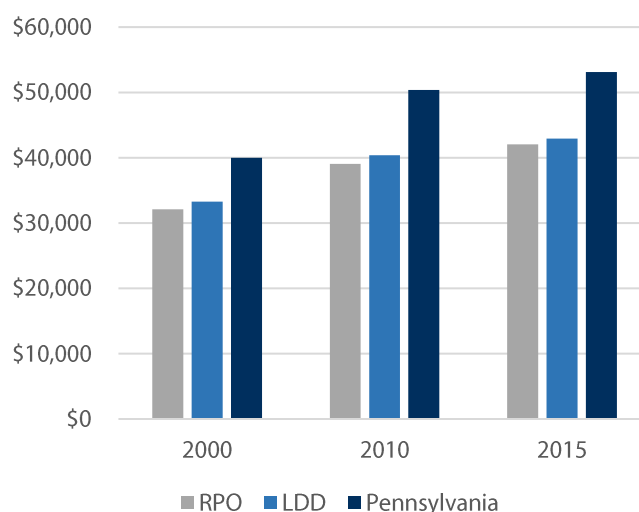
Median household income in the RPO increase by 21.6% between 2000 and 2010, from \$32,110 to \$39,040 (2010 inflation-adjusted dollars), with the increase continuing between 2010 and 2015 by around 7% (2015 inflation-adjusted dollars). Warren County has the highest median household income in the RPO at \$44,020. Overall, median household income at the state level outpaces the RPO and LDD. **Table 5** and **Figure 14** demonstrate these changes.

Table 5: Median Household Income, 2000 - 2015

	Clarion	Crawford	Forest	Venango	Warren	RPO	Pennsylvania
2000	\$30,770	\$33,560	\$27,581	\$32,257	\$36,383	\$32,110	\$39,987
2010	\$40,028	\$38,924	\$35,150	\$39,812	\$41,286	\$39,040	\$50,398
2015	\$42,536	\$44,579	\$35,533	\$43,644	\$44,020	\$42,062	\$53,115

Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

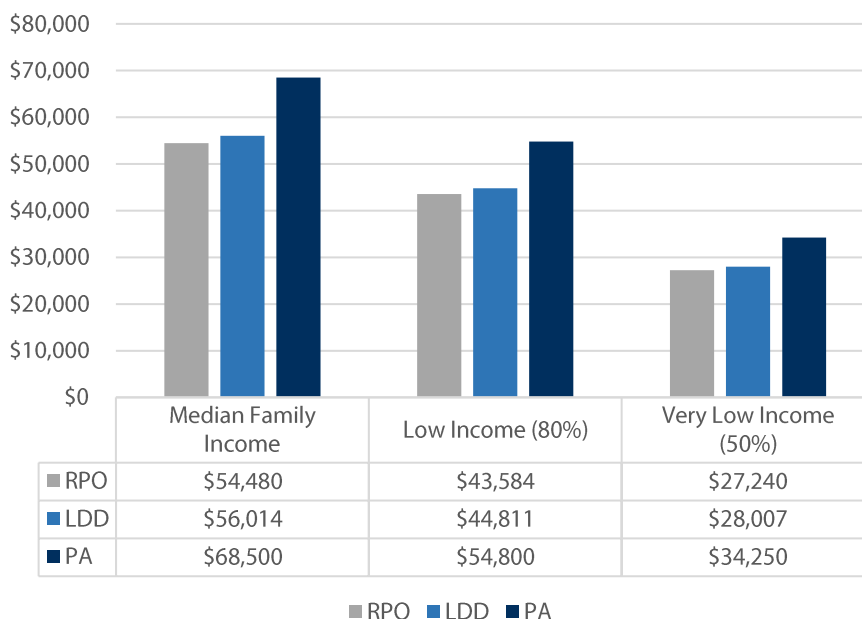
Figure 14: Median Household Income, 2000 - 2015



Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sets family income limits for its programs for “low income” and “very low income” households. Low income households are below 80% of area median household income and very low income households are 50% of area median household income. The percentages of both low income and very low income families in the RPO and LDD were greater than that of the state. Income limits in the RPO and LDD in 2015 were essentially the same, as shown in **Figure 15**.

Figure 15: HUD Low and Very Low Income Limits, 2015



Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

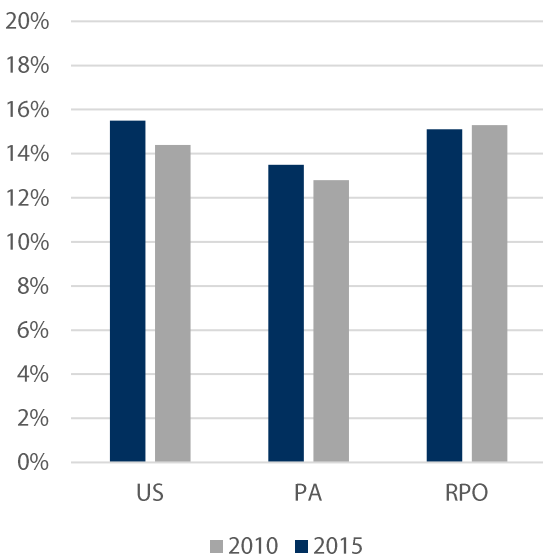
Poverty and Economic Stress Indicators

The rate of citizens living below poverty continued to exceed the state rate. Since 2010, the poverty rate in the RPO decreased slightly from 15.3% to 15.1% in 2015. During the same time period, the poverty rate at the state level increased from 12.8% to 13.5%, while the national rate increased from 14.4% to 15.5%. Changes in regional, state, and national poverty rates from 2010 to 2015 are shown in **Figure 17**.

Of note, the poverty status for families in the RPO headed by females is similar to the national rate (although still higher than the state levels). The percentage of households in poverty headed by females is more than three times that of other families in poverty, as shown in **Figure 16**. While the rate of all households in poverty in the RPO is roughly between the state and national rates, the percent of female headed households in poverty in the RPO (31.4%) exceeds both the state and national rates of 29.1% and 30.9% respectively. Additional coordination strategies may need to be developed to ensure adequate transportation is available to assist these households.

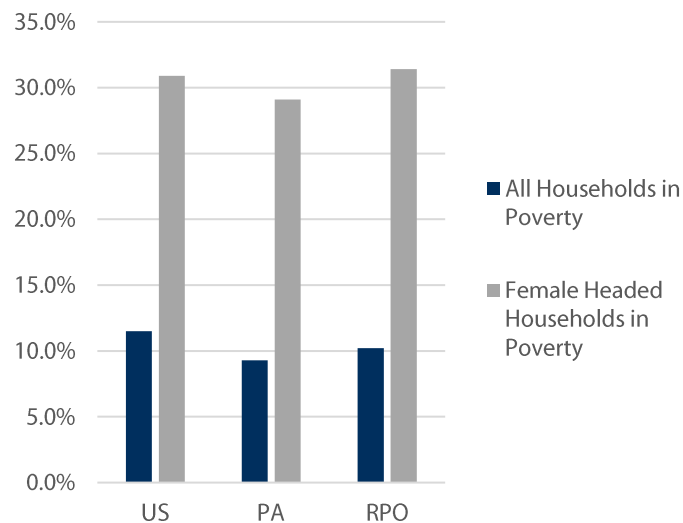
While households in poverty headed by individuals without a high school diploma at the national and state levels were 29.1% and 25.6% respectively, the rate was only 20.5% in the Northwest region. For female headed households without a high school diploma, these rates increased to 50.2% at the national level, 49.6% at the state level, and 40.1% regionally (see **Figure 18**). This trend suggests education as a driving factor for poverty in female headed-households in the RPO.

Figure 17: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months, 2010 - 2015



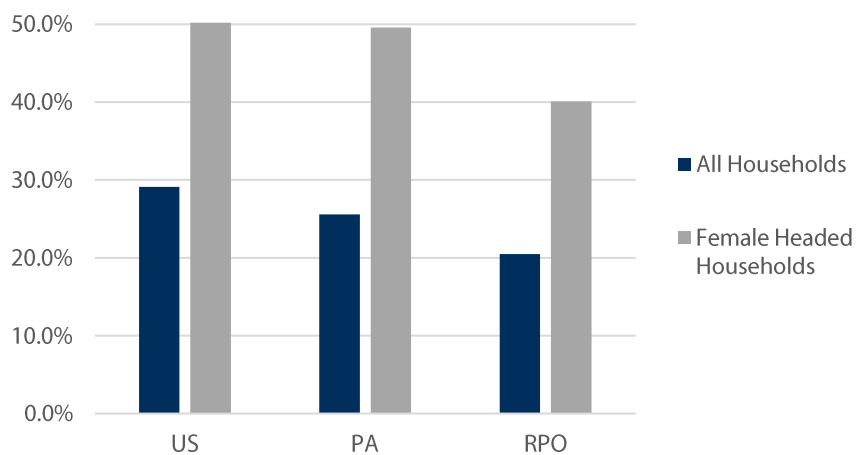
Source: 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Figure 16: Female-Headed Households in Poverty, 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

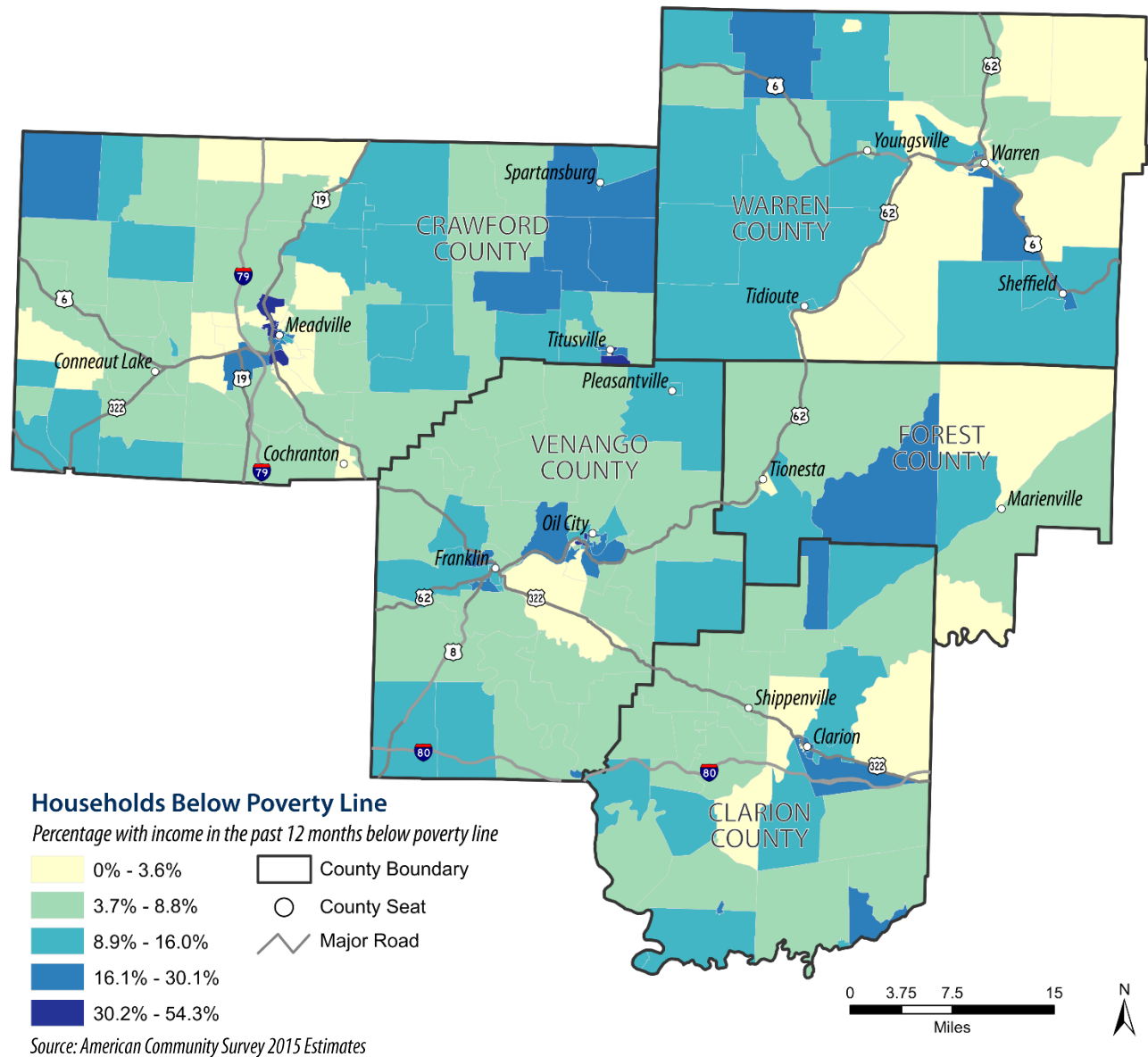
Figure 18: Households in Poverty with No High School Diploma, 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Shown in **Figure 19**, higher concentrations of households living below the poverty line exist both in denser, more populated boroughs and in townships located farther away from larger population centers.

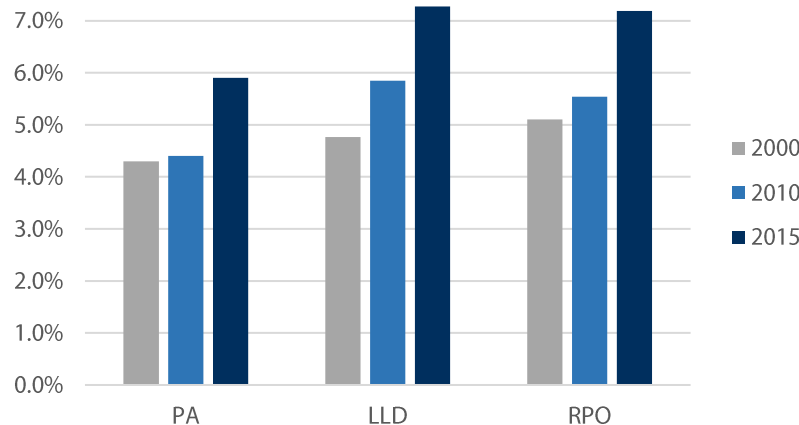
Figure 19: Household Poverty Status, 2015



Supplemental Security Income

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) helps elderly, blind, and disabled citizens who have little or no income and provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Increases in SSI recipients may signal a potential increased demand for public transportation. The number of SSI recipients has increased not only in the RPO counties, but also in LDD counties and the state, as shown in **Figure 20**. The RPO experienced a 40.9% increase in the number of SSI recipients between 2000 and 2015.

Figure 20: Supplemental Security Income, 2000 - 2015

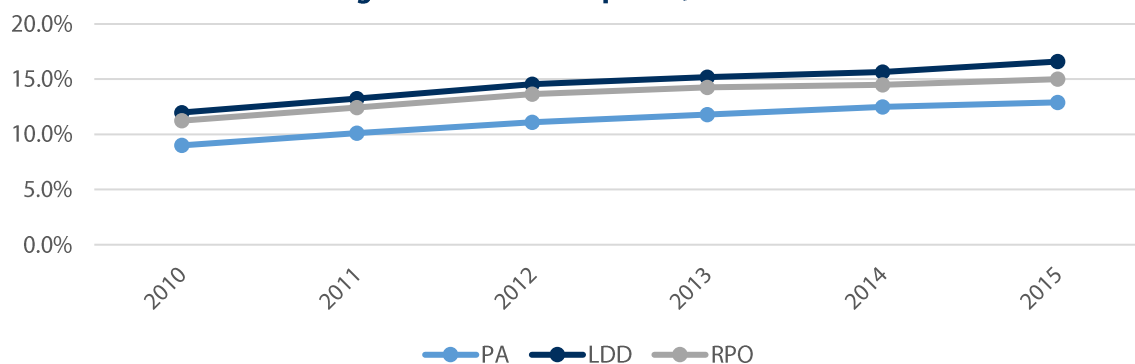


Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Assistance

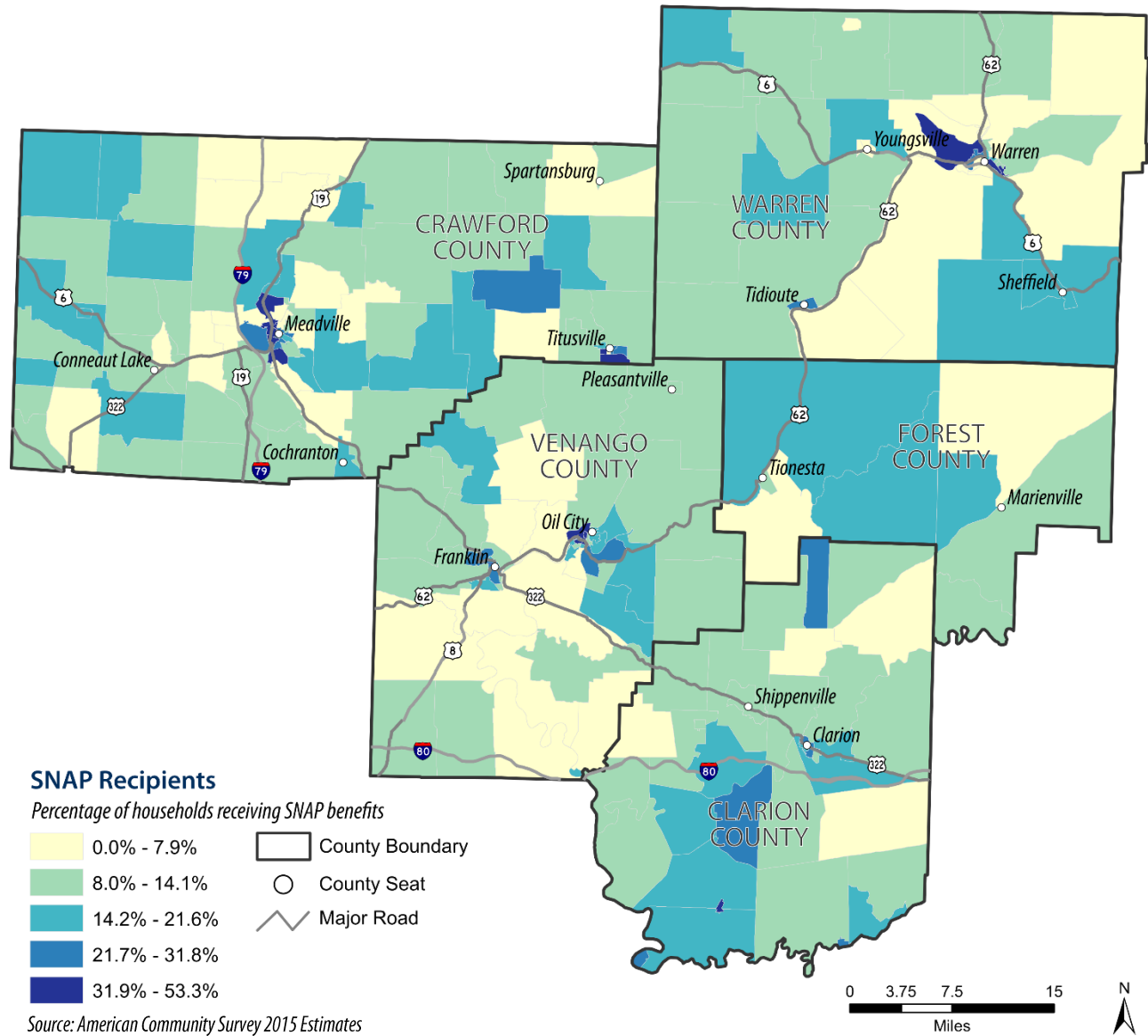
Increased need for food stamps is an economic stress indicator. The number of participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has increased in the RPO, the LDD and in Pennsylvania over the past several years (shown in **Figure 21**). This trend is consistent with the nation as well, and although some of the increase can be attributed in part to changes in eligibility requirements, the 29.5% increase in SNAP recipients in the region cannot be entirely attributed to policy changes. The highest concentrations of SNAP recipients in the region are more likely to exist within a borough, illustrated in **Figure 22**.

Figure 21: SNAP Recipients, 2010 - 2015



Source: 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Figure 22: SNAP Recipients in Northwest Pennsylvania, 2015

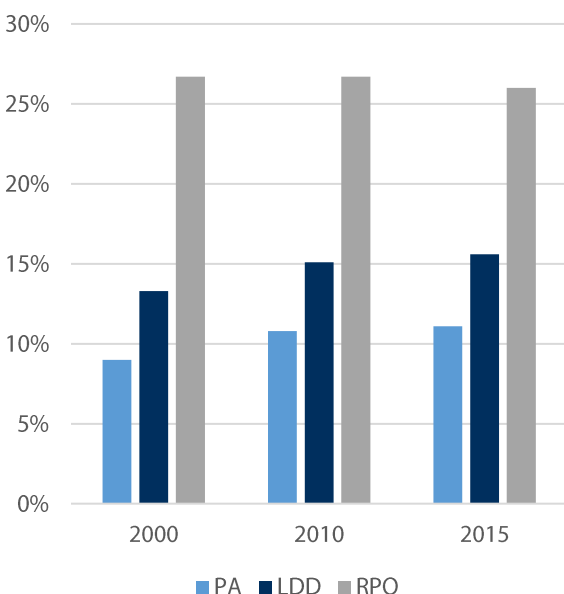


Housing

Owner occupied homes are by far the most common type of housing tenure in the RPO, LDD, and the state. The vacancy rate for the RPO in 2015, shown in **Figure 24**, was 26.0% of all houses and apartments, significantly higher than both the state at 11.1% and the LDD at 15.6%. The vacancy rate in the RPO has decreased slightly since 2000, as illustrated in Figure 20. Increasing vacancy rates puts a stress on the economic well-being of a community by decreasing the amount of local spending generated by a household, potentially declining real estate taxes in the event of an abandoned vacant property, future blight conditions, and a possible decrease in property values in the long term. However, vacant housing units could represent a mix of both year-round and seasonal homes. This may account for the high rate of vacancy in Forest County, where more than 75% of housing units are vacant but where the Allegheny National Forest and Cook Forest State Park draw hundreds of thousands of visitors per year. **Figure 23** shows housing vacancy percentages across the RPO, LDD, and Pennsylvania.

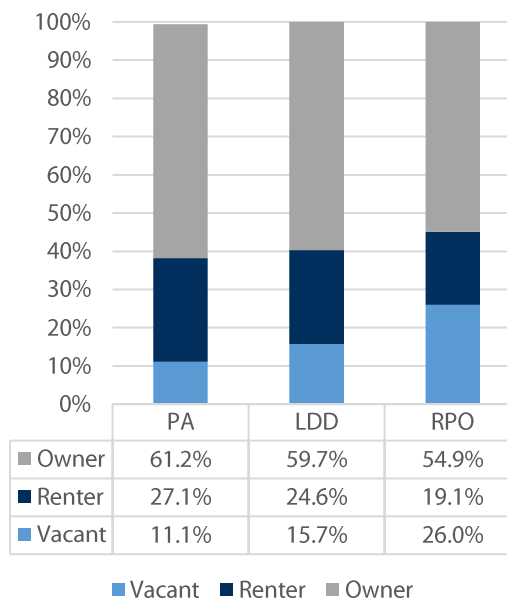
The number of households in the RPO headed by a citizen age 65 or older is increasing

Figure 24: Housing Vacancy Rates, 2000 - 2015



Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Figure 23: Housing Tenure, 2015

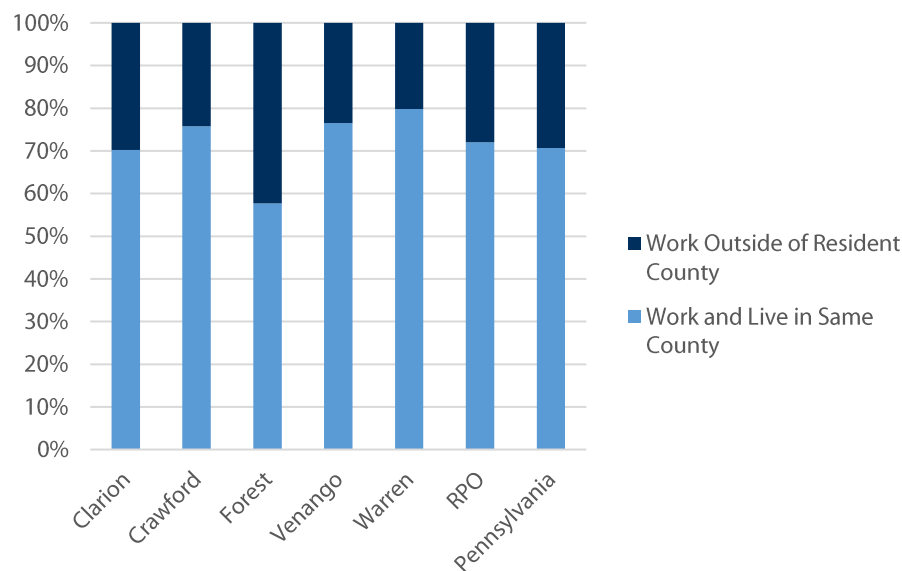


Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Workplace Commuting

According to the ACS 2015 Estimates, approximately 70% of citizens in the RPO live and work in the same county, with Warren County having the highest rate (79.8%) and Forest County having the lowest (57.7%), as shown in **Figure 25**. This number is a decrease from 2000, when 73.5% of RPO residents lived and worked in the same county. Targeted business attraction strategies combined with workforce training could help minimize out-of-county commuting, which could in turn help citizens reduce their transportation cost by decreasing the amount of time they travel to work.

Figure 25: Commuting Patterns for the Northwest RPO



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

While most residents in the RPO commute within their resident counties, the number of workers who drive to work alone is rising. Nearly 80% of workers age 16 or older who live in the RPO drove to work alone. This number increased while carpooling and public transportation both decreased. **Table 6** reflects this change.

Table 6: Means of Traveling to Work for Workers Age 16 or Older in the RPO

	2000	2010	2015
Drove alone to work	77.6%	79.0%	79.8%
Carpooled to work	12.0%	10.6%	9.6%
Took public transportation to work	0.6%	0.4%	0.3%
Worked at home	3.5%	3.4%	3.8%

Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Given that the RPO serves a rural region where residences and businesses are widely dispersed and public transportation services are not readily available, the percentage of workers who use public transportation to get to and from work is very small. Since 2000, the number of workers using public transportation has decreased by half. Both LDD and statewide public transportation rates have been increasing slightly and are currently 0.8% and 5.5%, respectively. While the percentage of workers carpooling has decreased in the RPO, it is currently greater than both the state (8.8%) and the LDD (9.2%). Since homes and businesses are dispersed throughout the RPO, this carpooling statistic is to be expected. The increased use of carpooling strategies could be explored as part of the Coordinated Plan. **Table 7** provides an overview of means of traveling to work in the RPO region, the LDD region, and across the state.

Table 7: Means of Traveling to Work for Workers Age 16 or Older in the RPO, LDD, and State, 2015

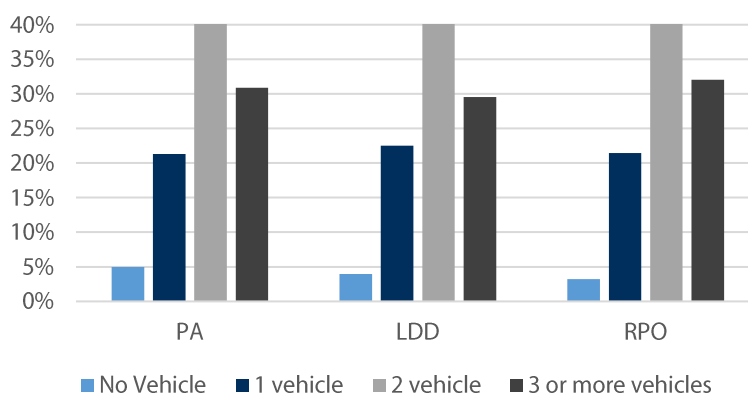
	RPO	LDD	Pennsylvania
Drove alone to work	79.8%	80.6%	76.6%
Carpooled to work	9.6%	9.2%	8.8%
Took public transportation to work	0.3%	0.8%	5.5%
Worked at home	3.8%	4.0%	3.9%

Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Vehicle Availability

A small percentage of workers in the RPO (3.2%) had no access to a vehicle in 2015. While this percentage is smaller than the state, there are still an estimated 3,732 workers in the region without access to a vehicle. Conversely, 32% of workers in the RPO have access to 3 or more vehicles, slightly higher than the state rate of 30.9%, shown in **Figure 26**.

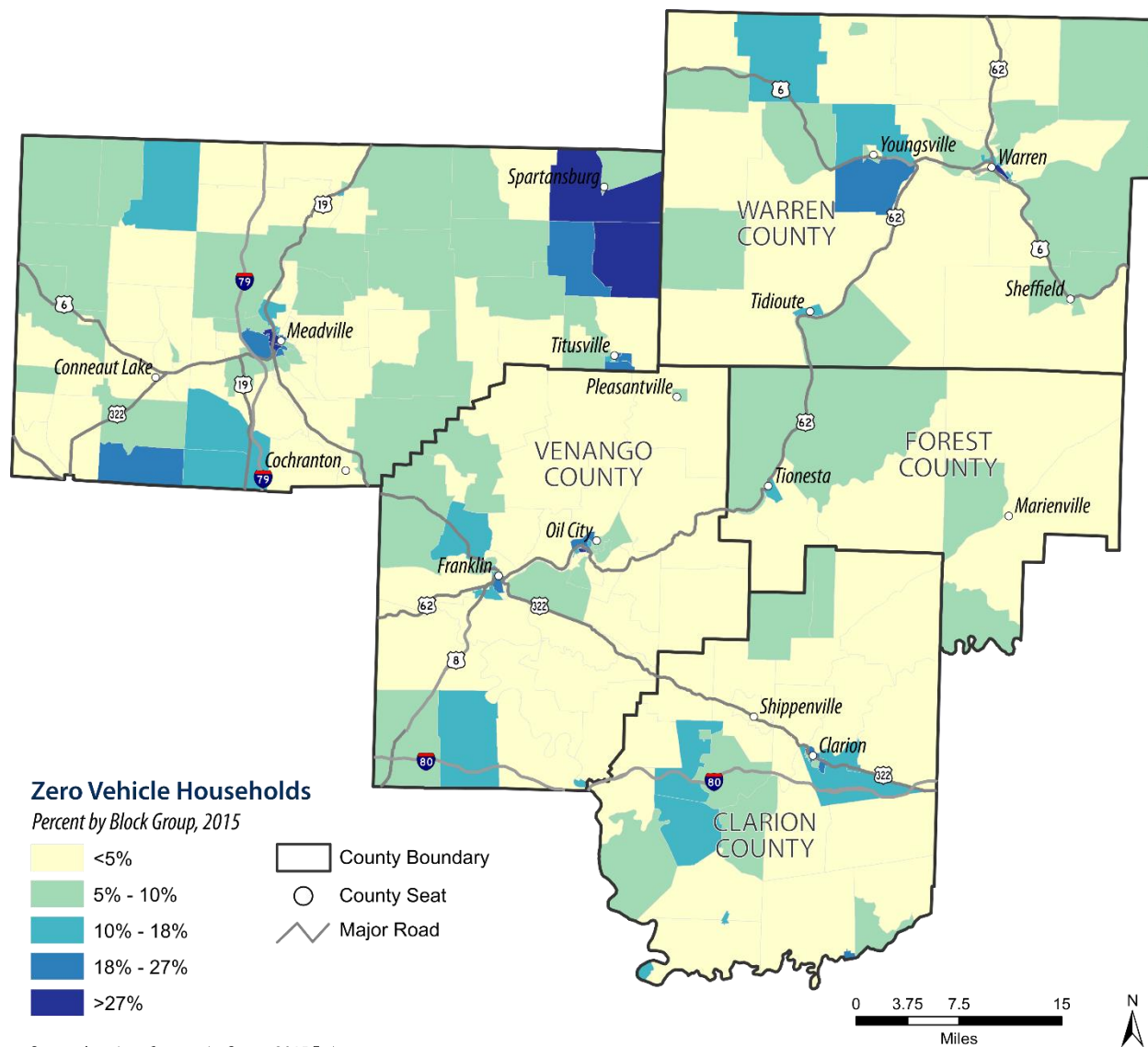
Figure 26: Number of Vehicles Available to Workers Age 16 or Older, 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

While regionally, the majority of households have access to one or more vehicles, there are still small concentrations where vehicle availability is a concern. In northeastern Crawford County, there are many Amish settlements in the Spartansburg area. This explains the notable concentration in zero vehicle households, shown in **Figure 27**.

Figure 27: Percent of Households with Zero Vehicles

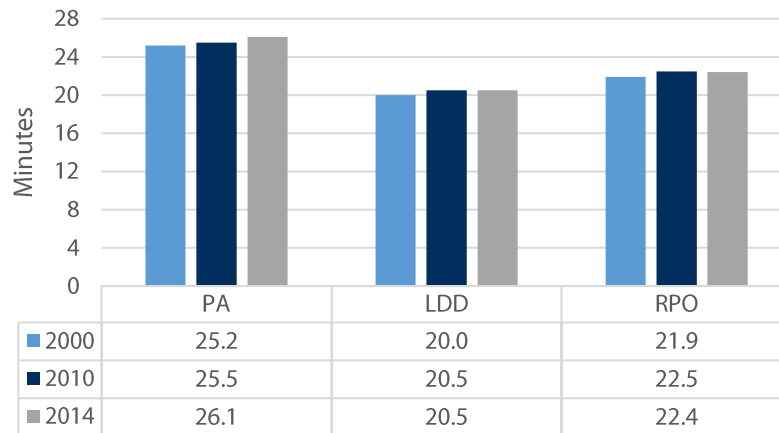


Source: American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Travel Time to Work

The mean travel time to work in the RPO has increased marginally since 2000. It is shorter than the state average of 26.1 minutes, but is 2 minutes longer than the LDD average, as shown in **Figure 28**.

Figure 28: Mean Travel Time to Work for Workers Age 16 or Older, 2000 - 2015



Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census Bureau and American Community Survey 2015 Estimates

Transportation Providers

The transportation programs and services included in the Northwest Pennsylvania transportation inventory fall into one of three categories: public, non-profit, and private. A brief description of each provider type is outlined below, followed by a list of individual providers identified during the plan update. A detailed inventory of all known transportation programs and services in the Northwest Pennsylvania region can be found in **Appendix B: Transportation Providers in Northwest Pennsylvania**.

Public Transportation Providers: Service Areas and Services

Public transportation includes fixed-route services and shared-ride, demand response services. Public transportation providers in the five-county region serve both the general public and individuals with more specialized transportation needs. In total, four fixed route transit agencies (**Table 8**) operate in the Northwest planning area and provide some level of transit service in all but Forest County. Shown in Figure 29, the existing fixed route transit services are predominately concentrated around the region's urban clusters, which is usually the county seat.

Table 8: Fixed Route Transit Providers in Northwest Pennsylvania

Fixed-Route Transit Provider	County Served	FY15-16	
		Total Passengers	Senior Passengers
Area Transportation Authority of North Central PA (ATA)	Clarion	411,202	28,071
Crawford Area Transit Authority (CATA)	Crawford	236,740	37,975
Venango County Transportation Office (VCTO)	Venango	54,485	11,558
Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC)	Warren	63,875	8,427

Source: Pennsylvania dotGrants FY2015-26

Shared-ride, demand response services are primarily available for seniors, persons with disabilities, and Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) participants. These services are a critical link in the transportation system, especially when fixed route transportation is not available or a viable option. For some demand response services, users must meet certain eligibility requirements according to specific funding program guidelines to qualify for reduced or free fares. The inventory includes 5 demand response service providers, shown in **Table 9**. Unlike fixed route transit systems, which are limited to serving areas defined by a static bus route, shared-ride system service areas are based on county boundaries.

Table 9: Existing Shared-Ride Services in Northwest Pennsylvania

Shared-Ride Transit Provider	County Service Area	FY15-16				
		ADA Paratransit Trips	Senior Citizen Lottery Trips	PwD Trips	Other Shared-Ride Trips	Total Shared-Ride Trips
Clarion County Transportation	Clarion	0	10,208	81	10,998	21,287
Crawford Area Transportation Authority (CATA)	Crawford	4,746	39,481	4,555	7,004	55,786
Forest County Transportation	Forest	0	10,596	1,234	1,743	13,573
Venango County Transportation	Venango	0	15,830	0	24,292	40,122
Warren County Transit Authority (TAWC)	Warren	950	29,286	975	4,846	36,057

Source: Pennsylvania dotGrants FY2015-26



Non-Profit, Program/Volunteer Transportation Providers

Program/volunteer transportation providers include a broad range of services and programs that are designed to meet client-specific needs and are not necessarily open to the general public. Many of these services are provided by either human service agencies or private providers contracted through human service agencies and are intended to supplement the public and private transportation system.

When the Northwest Commission met with human service councils and focus groups throughout the six-county region, they were asked to identify the range of transportation services available outside of the fixed route and shared-ride service providers. The following list of non-profit, program/volunteer transportation providers was identified, with a more detailed inventory available in **Appendix B**:

- The Arc of Crawford County
- The Arc of Venango County
- Bethesda Children's Home
- Clarion, Forest, and Venango County Road to Recovery
- Clarion County Transportation Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)
- Crawford County Human Services
- Crawford County Road to Recovery
- Family Service & Children's Aid Society of Venango County
- First Christian Church
- Forest County Transportation MATP
- Hand in Hand Christian Counseling
- Helpmates, Inc. Home Care Agency
- Hermitage House
- Keystone Blind Association
- Meadville Medical Center (Community Health Services)
- Mustard Seed Missions
- Primary Health Network
- St. John's Church
- Turning Point Treatment Center
- Vallonia Industries (sheltered workshop provider)
- Venango County Association for the Blind
- Venango County Senior Volunteer Program (formerly Venango County RSVP)
- Venango Ride Program (administered by Venango County Human Services)
- Venango Training and Development Center, Inc. (sheltered workshop provider)
- Warren County Children and Youth Services
- Warren County Disabled American Veterans
- Yolanda G. Barco Oncology Center

Private Transportation Providers

In addition to public transportation and program/volunteer providers, private transportation services can be used to provide mobility options for seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Often times, private transportation services come at a higher price, which may be a burden for those with fixed or inconsistent income. The following private transportation providers offer service in the Northwest Pennsylvania region:

- Choice Cab Co.
- Clarion County Taxi
- GoGoGrandparent
- Lyft
- Metro Taxi
- TJ's Taxi
- Uber
- Zipcar



Zipcar at Allegheny College in Meadville, PA
Photo courtesy of Allegheny College

Cost of Transportation Services in Northwest Pennsylvania

Total transportation costs by service vary significantly by the provider and the type of service. **Table 10** on the following page summarizes the cost of services by provider identified in previous sections. It is important to clarify that many services are subsidized by various state and federal programs. Generally, the following programs reduce the cost of transportation for eligible participants:

- **PennDOT Senior Citizen Lottery Program** – This program offers free transportation on fixed route systems for persons age 65 and older, and covers 85% of the full public fare for shared-ride services, requiring the rider or a third-party sponsor to pay for the remaining 15%.
- **PennDOT Persons with Disabilities Program (PwD)** – The PwD Program covers 85% of the full fare for shared-ride transportation for persons with a disability ages 18 to 64.
- **Pennsylvania Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)** – MATP is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) and provides free medical transportation to those receiving Medical Assistance.
- **Pennsylvania Welfare to Work Program (W2W)** – This is a transition program administered by PennDOT to fund various transportation costs to provide access to jobs and child care.
- **Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Sponsorships** – Many AAAs cover the 15% required copay for eligible shared-ride trips, often for trips that involve a senior citizen center.

Table 10: Summary of Transportation Costs in Northwest Pennsylvania

Provider Type	Provider	Programs Operated	Full One-Way Fare	Reduced Fare Options
Public Transportation	Area Transportation Authority of North Central Pennsylvania (<i>Clarion Mall Loop and Clarion Campus Loop</i>)	Fixed route	General Public (12-64 years): \$1.25 Children (5-11 years): \$0.65	<i>Free bus passes available through the Senior Free Transit Program and to Clarion University students.</i>
Public Transportation	Area Transportation Authority of North Central Pennsylvania (Call A Bus: Clarion County)	Shared-ride	Clarion County Shared-Ride:	Clarion County Senior Free Transit Reduced Fare: \$2.00 - \$7.00 <i>Discounted trips available through MATP, PwD Program, and ADA Paratransit Program</i>
Public Transportation	Crawford Area Transportation Authority & Venango County Transportation	Fixed route	Meadville/Titusville: \$1.25 Saegertown Zone 2: \$2.50 Venango: \$1.50 Youth (6-17 years): \$0.75	<i>Free bus passes available through the Human Service Development Fund and Senior Free Transit Program</i>
Public Transportation	Crawford Area Transportation Authority & Venango County Transportation	Shared-ride	Crawford County Shared-Ride: \$13.30 - \$46.65 Venango County Shared-Ride: \$10.00 - \$25.00	Crawford County Senior Free Transit Reduced Fare: \$2.00 - \$7.00 Venango County Senior Free Transit Reduced Fare: \$1.50 - \$3.75 <i>Discounted trips available through MATP, PwD Program, and ADA Paratransit Program</i>
Public Transportation	Forest County Transportation	Shared-ride	Forest County Shared-Ride:	Forest County Senior Free Transit Reduced Fare: \$2.00 - \$7.00 <i>Discounted trips available through MATP and PwD Program</i>

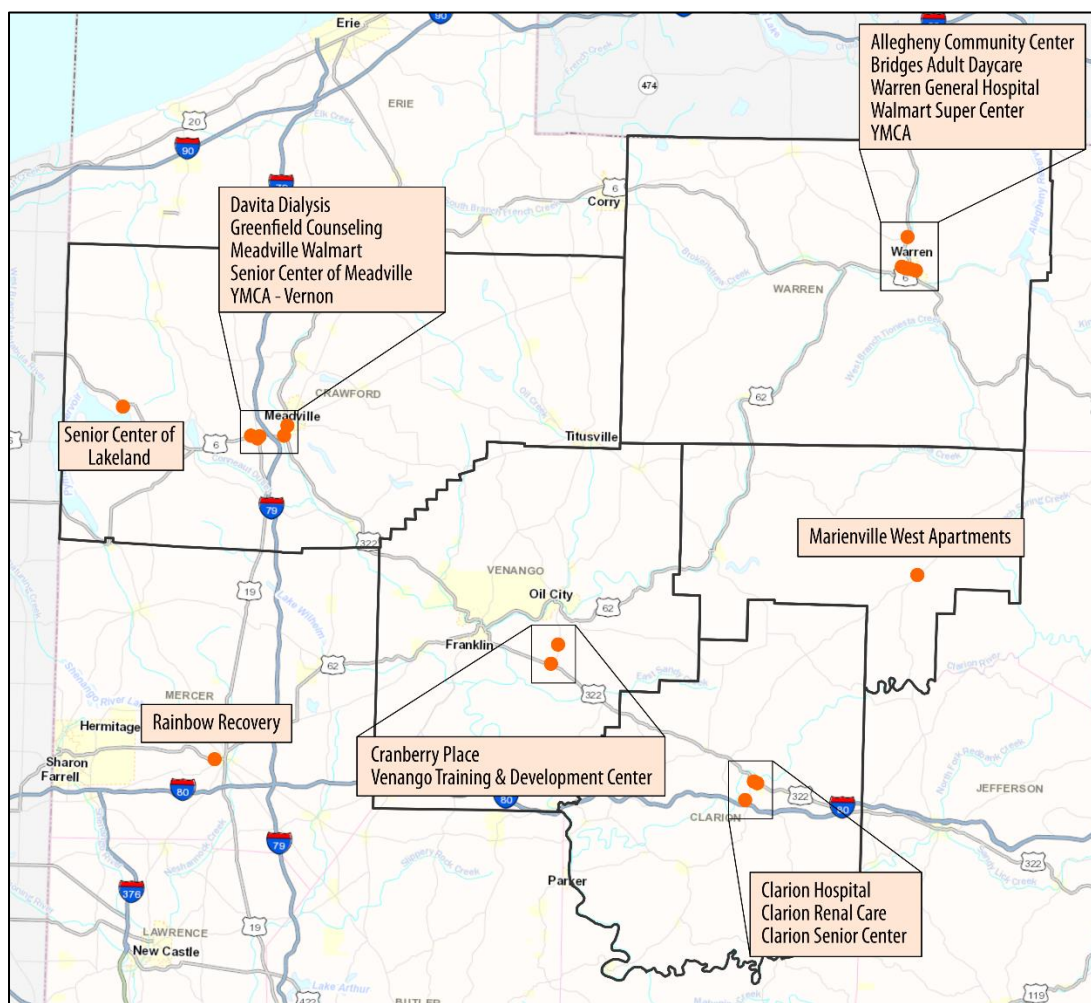
Provider Type	Provider	Programs Operated	Full One-Way Fare	Reduced Fare Options
Public Transportation	Transit Authority of Warren County	Fixed route	General Public: \$1.00 Children (6-12 years): \$0.50	Forest County Senior Free Transit: \$2.00 - \$7.00 <i>Free bus passes available through the Senior Free Transit Program</i>
Public Transportation	Transit Authority of Warren County	Shared-ride	Warren County Shared-Ride:	Warren County Senior Free Transit Reduced Fare: \$2.00 - \$7.00 <i>Discounted trips available through MATP, PwD Program, and ADA Paratransit Program</i>
Non-Profit Program / Volunteer	Varies by Program			
Private	Varies by Provider			

Major Destinations in Northwest Pennsylvania

Individuals who rely on transportation options outside of a personal automobile still need access to critical life-sustaining destinations. It is important to have reliable options in place so these transportation users are able to access their places of work, school, medical appointments, recreational activities, and more. The reasons people travel are varied and it is not feasible to identify every single trip or destination. For the purposes of this Coordinated Plan, only major destinations are included in this needs assessment. These destinations include senior centers, medical facilities, employment or training centers, community centers, and shopping centers.

Using readily available shared-ride data exported from EcoLane, a software program used by all public transportation providers in the RPO region as of September 2016, the Northwest Commission was able to map the top regional destinations based on the frequency of trips. **Figure 30** below illustrates the top 20 trip destinations completed by individuals using various shared-ride programs. **Appendix C** provides the top 10 trip destinations by county in the Northwest Pennsylvania region.

Figure 30: Top 20 Shared-Ride Destinations (September 2016 - April 2017)



Source: EcoLane

Transportation Needs, Barriers and Gaps Assessment

An important requirement of the Coordinated Plan is the identification of critical transportation needs, barriers and gaps in the existing regional transportation system, particularly as they effect seniors and persons with disabilities. The following sections provide an overview of frequently mentioned transportation needs that emerged from the transportation user listening sessions and public survey and should be reviewed alongside the major transportation barriers and gaps that were also identified throughout the plan update.

Needs Identified through Public Outreach

Transportation needs vary significantly from person to person and are influenced by a variety of factors, including home and work locations, family obligations, and medical appointments. However, at a minimum all residents within the Northwest Pennsylvania region should be able to have their basic needs met without substantial cost or time burden. Through public outreach meetings with human service agency professionals, transportation providers, and transit users, the following transportation needs were brought forth as critically important:

- Increased frequency, span of service, and reliability of fixed route services
- Increased service coverage to rural areas and small towns and between counties
- Better, more convenient travel choices to bigger areas like Erie and Pittsburgh
- Decreased wait and ride times for shared ride services
- Improved convenience of scheduling rides and allowing for increased linking of trips
- Increased transportation options for people not currently eligible for subsidized transportation
- Expanded travel times for medical transportation service and increased eligibility
- Decreased price of shared ride and long distance services
- Improved vehicle and stop comfort, safety, and ease of access
- Improved publicity and communication of services available and service alerts

Transportation Barriers and Gaps Identified through Public Outreach

A significant portion of the Coordinated Plan update included identifying transportation barriers and gaps throughout the region. Based on various stakeholder engagement efforts, key transportation issues can be categorized into one of the following eight categories:

1. Transportation Program Rules and Regulations
2. Shared-Ride Program Inefficiencies
3. Non-Medical Trips
4. Access to Rural Areas Outside of Major Service Centers
5. Service Availability and Cost
6. Reliable Transportation Access for Young, Low-Income Families and Workers
7. Connections to and Comfort of Bus Stops
8. Communication between Transportation Provider and Transportation User

This section provides an overview of each transportation gap in detail and provides specific examples of where and how these barriers are occurring.

Transportation Program Rules and Regulations

Programs exist to address specific transportation needs, however the rules and regulations often inhibit mobility for those who don't qualify or don't understand how to access those services. The Northwest Commission heard from various stakeholders, including both human service professionals and transportation users, that the rules and regulations associated with human service programs were either not flexible in terms of how services were provided or confusing in terms of determining eligibility. Specific issues include:

- Program qualifications can be limiting for clients.
- PennDOT does not allow a 3rd party sponsor for Persons with Disability trips.
- For transportation providers, PennDOT limits 5310 funding to vehicle purchases.
- Crossing county lines can be a barrier. For example, people in the Spartansburg area of Crawford County will find a ride to Corry instead of using CATA or program transportation to get to Meadville because the trip is much shorter, despite being in Erie County.
- There is a safety and confidentiality issue with child welfare services providing trips through volunteers (e.g. there is necessary paperwork that must be filled out to use a volunteer vehicle, the agency can't combine trips with multiple clients, etc.)
- Trips to the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) office do not qualify as a medical trip.

Shared-Ride Program Inefficiencies

The most recurring transportation program mentioned throughout the Coordinated Plan update was the Pennsylvania Shared-Ride Program. Various program inefficiencies exist and while the state and partnering agencies are working to address these inefficiencies, barriers related to the Shared-Ride Program still present a mobility challenge to transit-dependent individuals.

- One-day advance reservation for the shared-ride program is a barrier, especially for last-minute appointments or follow-up tasks like stopping at the pharmacy to pick up a prescription.
- Requirements of each destination being one “trip” reduces the incentive to make multiple stops during one outing.
- There is a perception by some that the new statewide scheduling software (EcoLane) has resulted in longer wait-times and inefficient drop-offs and pick-ups (e.g. in Venango County, it was mentioned that 8 seniors live on the same street and one bus will pick up 4 of them, then a few minutes later another bus will pick up the other 4, even though they are all going to the same place). This has reportedly improved over time.

Non-Medical Trips

In addition to challenges caused by program rules and regulations, transportation users often indicated they had more difficulty making non-medical trips. Access to quality healthcare is crucial for physical wellness, but there are other factors to consider for overall quality of life. Transportation to jobs, shopping, nutritious food, and leisure/recreation activities is lacking across the region.

- Long trips to get groceries is a challenge and limits what food options are available.
- Recreation and entertainment trips are difficult because of scheduling (e.g., the senior center in Titusville has issues scheduling big group trips and people end up driving themselves or carpooling; there is not a critical mass of interested people to necessitate a bus trip).
- Fixed-route services are limited to a few shopping centers (e.g. malls in Cranberry or DuBois).

Access to Rural Areas Outside of Major Service Centers

For a geographically large region like Northwest Pennsylvania, it is not cost-effective to operate fixed-route transportation services in areas with very low population density. The rural, mountainous character of the Northwest region was a very common theme identified in each RPO county. Specific issues of access to and from rural areas outside of major service centers include:

- The region is predominately rural and the population is dispersed (people do not live close to services).
- The regional topography is mountainous and densely forested and can limit transportation access.
- CATA has service in Titusville that does not connect to anywhere.
- Warren is the largest population center in the county; anywhere outside of Warren is a challenge and buses are limited in where they can go.

Service Availability and Cost

The cost of transportation services to transportation users, even when heavily subsidized, can still be a barrier to those living on irregular or fixed incomes. Similarly, the cost of providing transportation services can limit the extent and quality of service available. During outreach meetings, the following barriers and gaps related to service availability and cost were brought forth:

- The span of many services is limiting; traveling anywhere before 7 AM and after 5 PM or on weekends can be difficult.
- Returning from the hospital after an emergency is an issue, especially during non-peak hours.
 - Similarly, Warren General only provides out-patient dialysis. Often, patients are referred to doctors in Erie for in-patient dialysis. Some individuals will take an ambulance to Erie for in-patient dialysis and will have a hard time finding a way home afterwards.
- The County Assistance Offices have clients participate in different programs and people from more remote parts of the region cannot make it without using a round-trip taxi, which is very expensive.
- The average cost of a shared-ride fare for a one-way trip is between \$2 and \$7 and this may not be affordable on a fixed income.

Reliable Transportation Access for Young, Low-Income Families and Workers

Without a personal vehicle it is difficult to find reliable and affordable transportation to work or educational opportunities, especially for younger individuals with families. Program policies limit agencies' ability to meet the needs of low-income individuals because most exist to accommodate seniors and persons with disabilities. Common issues related to this barrier include:

- Findings from the socioeconomic analysis indicate a disproportionate number of low-income female heads of household in the region.
- When low-income families are transporting children, it can be difficult to accommodate their car seats.
- A lot of low-income housing is located farther away from stores and services.
- Younger parents have a difficult time getting their children to day care or head start while working a full time job; dropping off kids, going to work all day, then picking kids up is not feasible without a personal vehicle.
- Transportation options for low-income, younger people (e.g. those who do not meet the program requirements for senior or PwD programs) cause people to “fall through the cracks”
- Some young workers work second shift and they really need transportation during that time; some have had to turn down accepting a second shift job because they live too far away and have no reliable way to get from home to work and back.

Connections to and Comfort of Bus Stops

For those living near fixed route transit systems, it can be a challenge to access bus stops due to obstructions in the pedestrian network. The following barriers were identified with respect to connections to and comfort of bus stops:

- Many bus stops are not covered and people have to stand in the rain and snow while waiting for their bus.
- There is a lack of sidewalks connecting to bus stops.
- There is a lack of bus shelters at high-activity stops.
- In the winter, snow plowing will occur near transit stops and make getting on the bus much more challenging.

Communication between Transportation Provider and Transportation User

It was noted on occasion that lines of communication between transit users and transit agencies were not always available or reliable. This lack of communication creates uncertainty among users and can make it difficult to have confidence in using a transportation service regularly. Issues related to a communication and information gap include:

- If a trip has been canceled, it isn't always communicated to the passengers.
- Potential transit users are unsure how to apply for the shared-ride program and begin scheduling trips or taking free fixed-route trips.

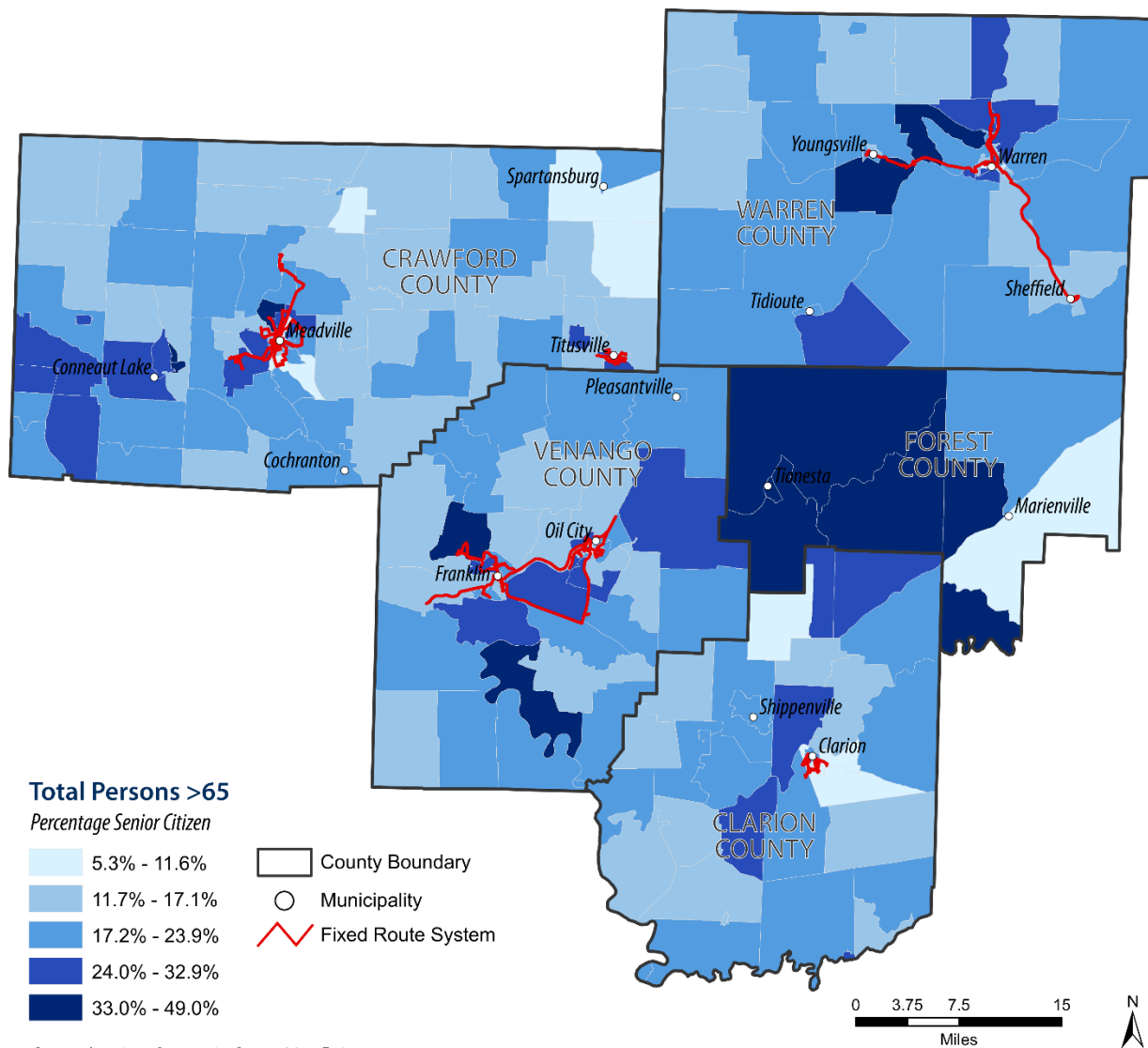
Transportation Barriers and Gaps Identified through GIS and Socioeconomic Analysis

In addition to transportation barriers brought forth from discussions with human service agencies, transportation providers, and users of transportation services, readily available demographic and geospatial data was used to identify additional service gaps. The following sections review socioeconomic indicators that are linked to greater instances of transit usage, with existing fixed route transportation networks overlaid to provide spatial context.

Senior Citizen Gaps

Like many regions across the state, Northwest Pennsylvania is experiencing an aging population. Addressing this trend requires developing public transportation solutions to meet the changing mobility needs of older residents. Shown in **Figure 31**, there are areas of the region where one third of the population is age 65 or older. Forest County is the most notable example of this trend, where 5 out of 7 Census Block Groups have a senior population at or above 33%. In Crawford County, there are higher concentrations of senior citizens located in Conneaut Lake and west to the Ohio Border. Senior populations appear to be better served in Venango and Warren Counties, with the exception of communities located south of Franklin along the Allegheny River.

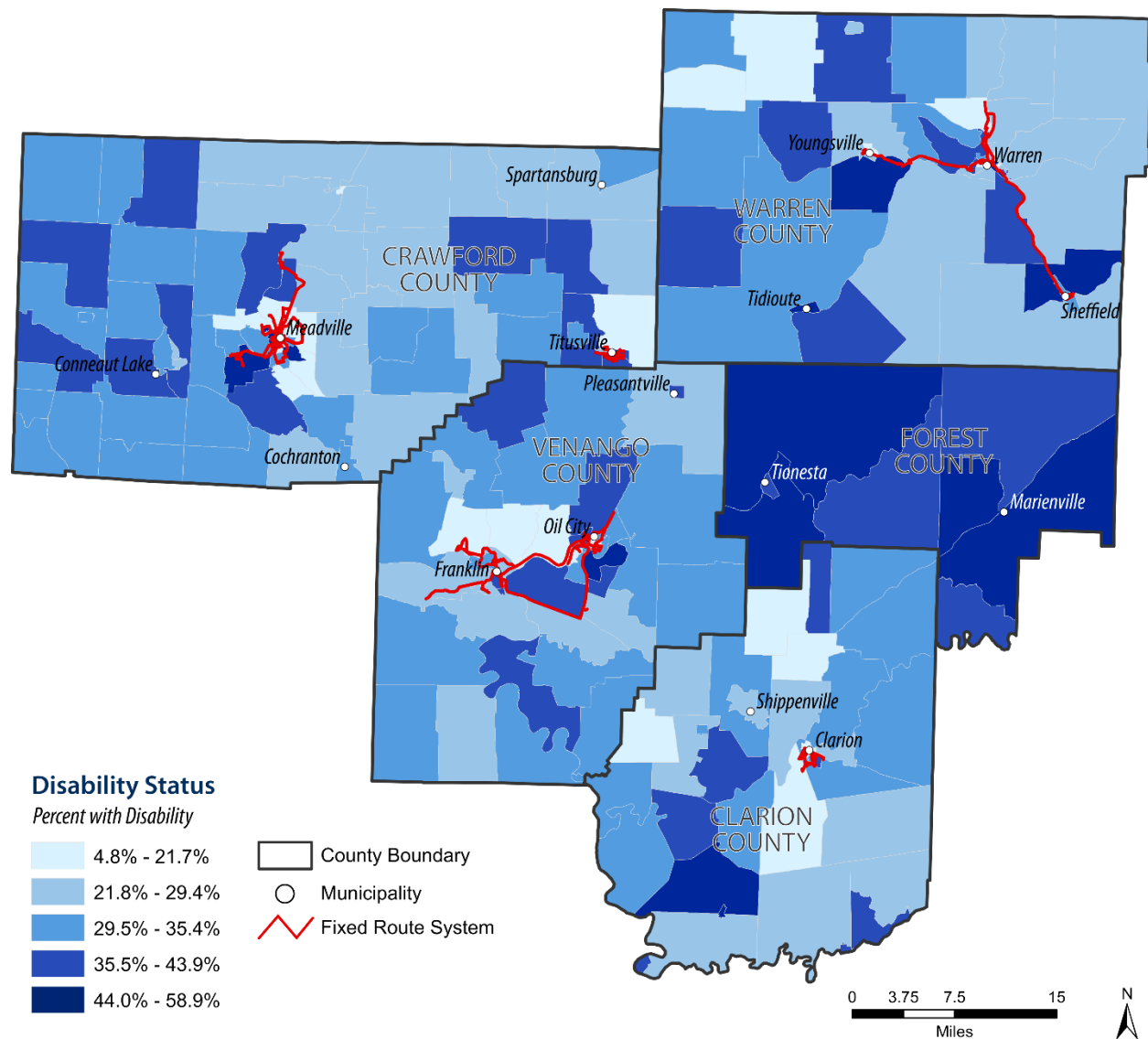
Figure 31: Fixed Route Service Gaps among Senior Citizens



Persons with Disability Gaps

Persons with disabilities require more specialized transportation options. Forest County has the highest rates of reported disability statuses regionally. The other counties demonstrated less concentrated areas of disability status, shown in **Figure 32**.

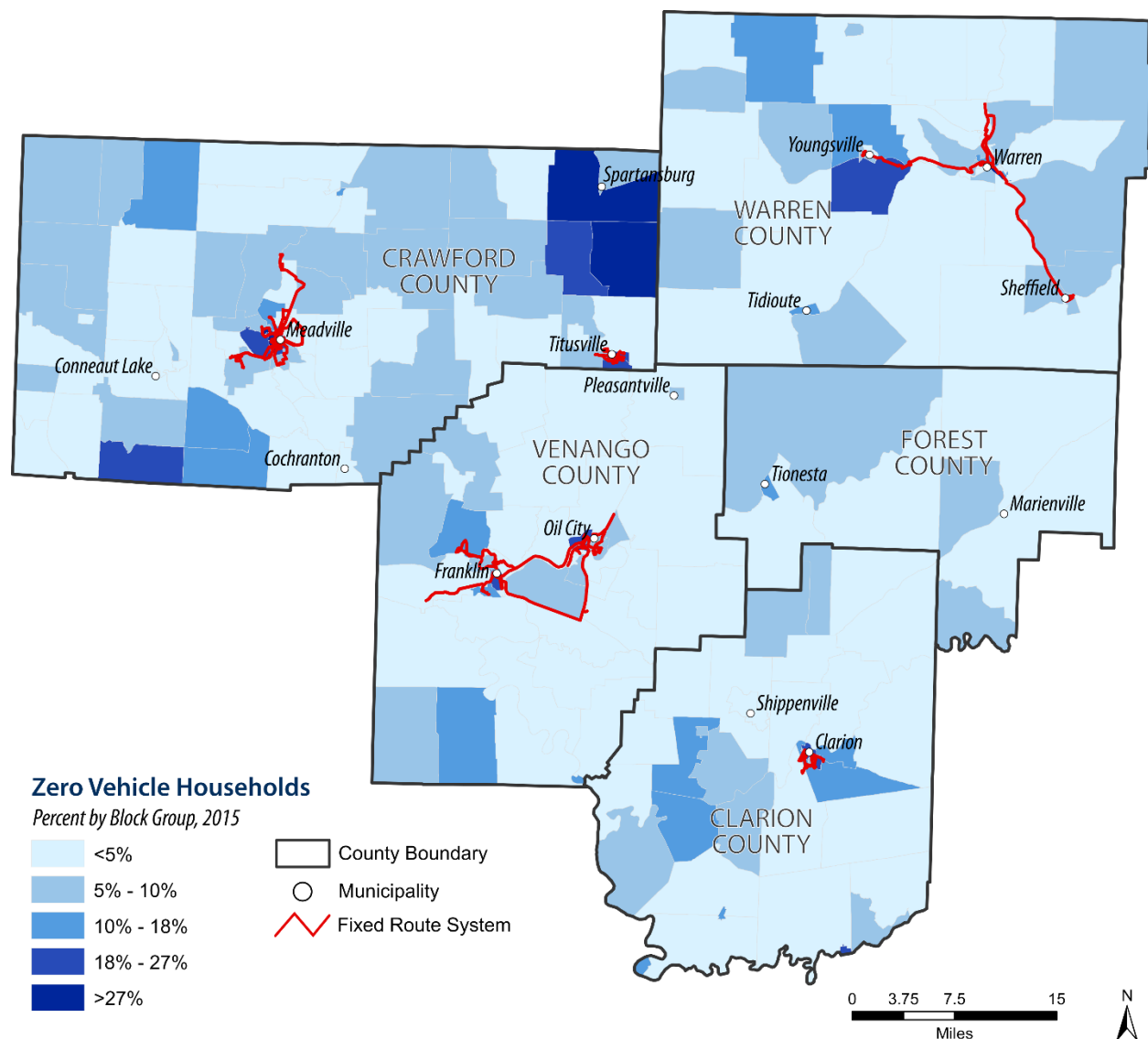
Figure 32: Fixed Route Service Gaps among Persons with Disabilities



Zero Car Household Gaps

The region experiences higher levels of vehicle availability, shown in **Figure 33**. Northeast Crawford County is the exception, which is largely due to the number of Amish settlements. Other areas with higher instances of zero car households can be found in denser boroughs, like Meadville and Oil City, which are served by fixed-route transportation systems.

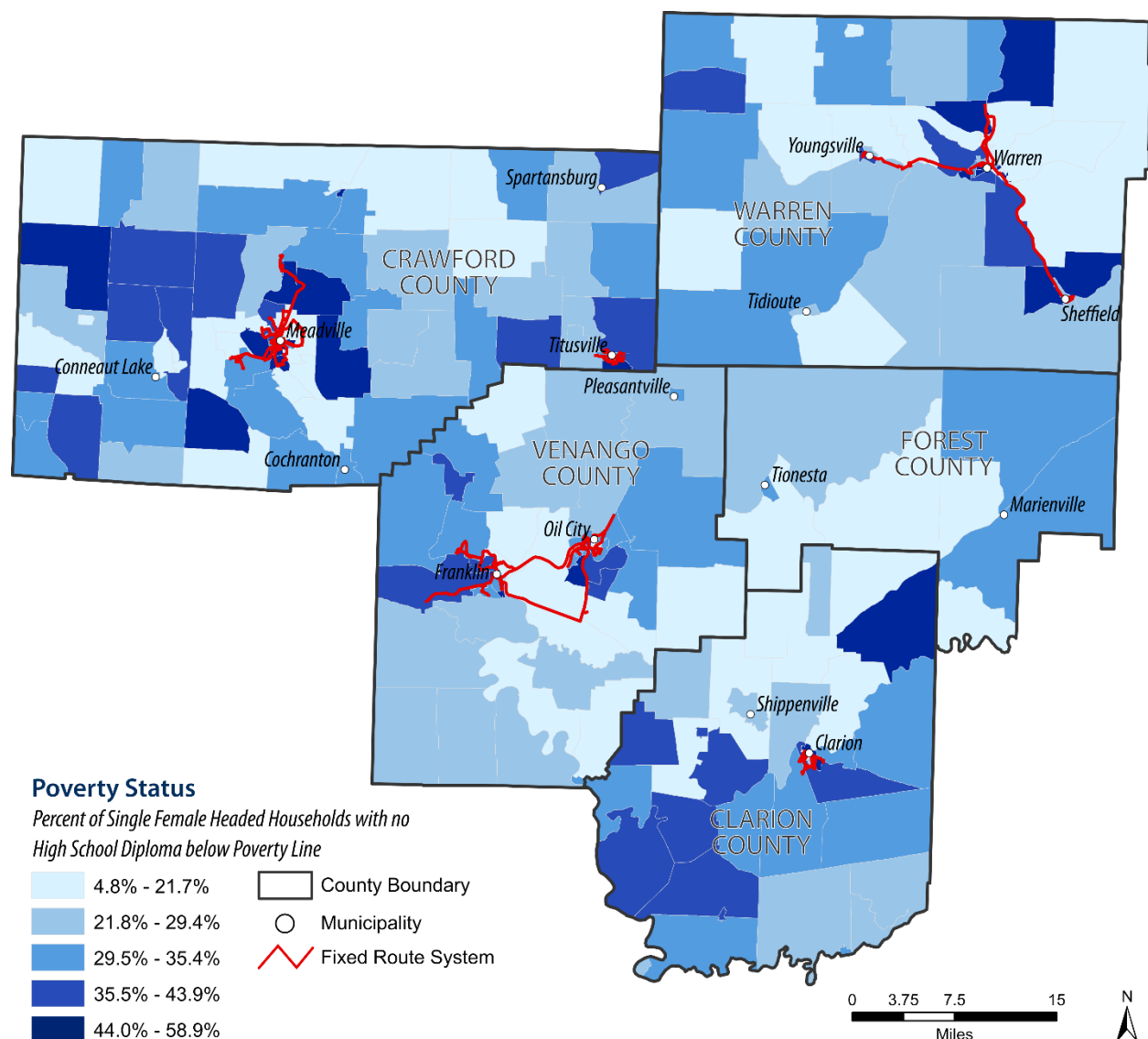
Figure 33: Fixed Route Service Gaps among Zero Car Households



Single Female Headed Households in Poverty Gaps

Findings from Socioeconomic Profile indicate a significant transportation barrier for single female headed households in poverty, particularly for those without a high school diploma. In Northwest Pennsylvania, 20.5% of households live below poverty line and are without a high school diploma. This figure increases dramatically for female headed households without a high school diploma, at 50.2% (which is greater than the national and state rates). **Figure 34** depicts the percentage of households headed by a female that live below the poverty line without a high school diploma. Identifying strategies to improve mobility for this group should be a priority for the region going forward.

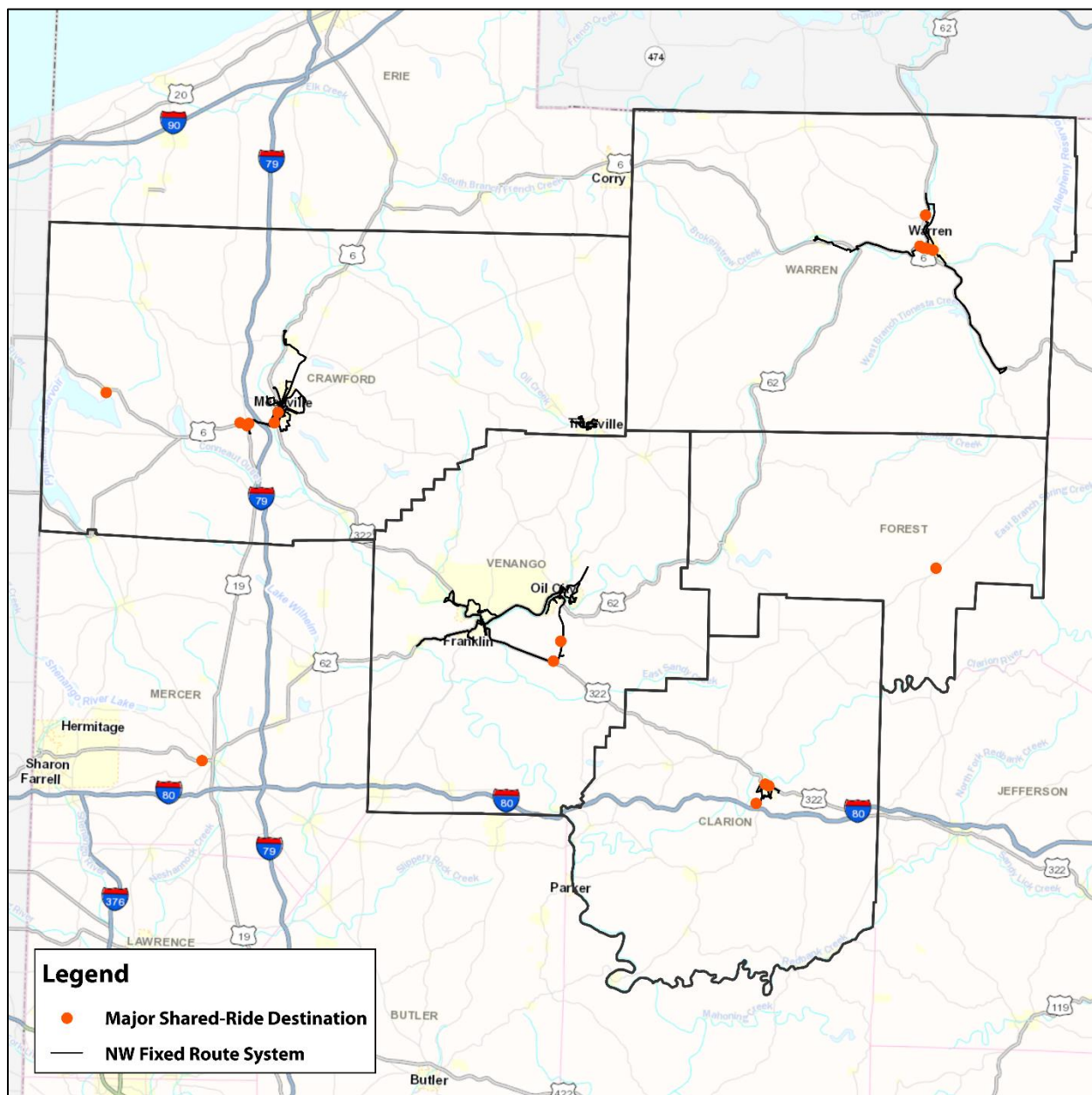
Figure 34: Fixed Route Service Gaps among Single Female Headed Households with No High School Diploma



Transportation Gaps among Existing Fixed Route Service and Regional Destinations

Many of the region's top trip destinations are located near fixed route transit systems. While medical trips may require more specialized transportation (e.g. dialysis patients may not feel comfortable taking a fixed route bus to and from treatment), two of the region's top non-medical destinations could potentially be served by new fixed route service or regularly scheduled paratransit to accommodate those individuals. Shown in **Figure 35**, the Senior Center of Lakelands in eastern Crawford County and the Marienville West Apartments in western Forest County are two notable transportation gaps in the Northwest Region.

Figure 35: Transportation Gaps among Top Shared-Ride Destinations



Source: EcoLane

Future Transportation Coordination in Northwest Pennsylvania

This section outlines the Northwest Commission's approach for moving forward with coordinated transportation planning in the Northwest Pennsylvania region. As the designated RPO, the Northwest Commission is responsible for developing and updating the Coordinated Plan. To ensure the recommendations of the plan are implementable, they must also convene a dedicated group of human service agency and transportation stakeholders to begin working on action items for improved service delivery and mobility.

The process must be an ongoing effort that is maintained and coordinated by the Northwest Commission, with implementation action items assigned to and carried out through the collaboration and resource sharing of the region's transportation providers, human service agencies, elected officials, and transit users. The Coordinated Plan is intended to be a living document that can be used to identify potential projects that help overcome critical barriers to coordinated transportation. To guide the update of the Coordinated Plan and future coordination efforts, the plan Advisory Committee developed a vision statement, shown below.

A Vision for Coordinated Transportation

An accessible, affordable, and informative community transportation network that provides measureable improvements for regional mobility for all residents.

Strategies and Best Practices

Practical strategies and coordination best practices have been identified to address the barriers and gaps that were brought forth during the planning process. These potential solutions were developed based on suggestions received in the outreach process and noteworthy practices that exist in similarly situated regions. Some of the strategies presented on the following pages address multiple transportation gaps while others are more localized. These strategies and best practices are intended to be a resource for the Northwest Commission and its human service and transportation provider stakeholders to reference as they work towards eliminating transportation barriers.

Transportation Program Rules and Regulations: Programs exist to address specific transportation needs, however the rules and regulations often inhibit mobility for those who don't qualify or don't understand how to access those services.

Regional Strategies

Convene transportation providers and human service agency professionals on a regular basis to improve communication and understanding of program rules, regulations, and availability.

Develop a one page overview for the general public and a flow chart of program eligibility.

Identify onerous and/or complex funding regulations to work with legislators and funding partners.

Initiate interagency agreement with County Assistance offices, CareerLink offices, and other agencies related to workforce development to provide transportation for job interviews and other same-day needs.

Create targeted marketing campaign to encourage seniors and persons with disabilities to ride transit (e.g. "free ride days", merchant sponsorships, organized field trips, etc.)

Identify funding to hire a regional mobility manager responsible for identifying and collaborating with the disparate providers in region to improve accessibility for transit users.

Investigate ability to deploy same-day service through the shared-ride program.

Sub-regional Strategies

Identify insurance options that allow TAWC and other transportation providers in Warren County to cross state lines.

Best Practices for Consideration:

- The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission administers a program called the *Alliance for Transportation Working in Communities (ATWIC, or The Alliance)* that meets on a regular basis to advocate for human services transportation and implement projects derived from the regional Coordinated Transportation Plan. The Alliance is a coalition of stakeholders with a strong interest in improving transportation access in the region. More information about ATWIC can be found at <https://www.atwic.org>.
- The findings related to streamlined rules and regulations identified from PennDOT's shared-ride pilot program and Rides to Wellness program should be reviewed as a best practice.
- Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) created a *ONE CALL – ONE CLICK Transportation Services Toolkit* in response to communities seeking more consumer-friendly mobility enhancement solutions. Using this toolkit, the Lane Transit District in Oregon initiated a one call service center and included an eligibility flow chart for human services transportation.

Shared-Ride Program Inefficiencies: The most recurring transportation program mentioned throughout the planning process was the Pennsylvania Shared-Ride, MATP, and PwD Programs. Various program inefficiencies exist .

Regional Strategies

Work with program regulators and providers to identify ways to encourage efficient “linked-trips”, rather than multiple one-way trips.

Create a plan for an “on call” transportation program to handle urgent trips that cannot be scheduled one day in advance.

Provide more education and training to clients regarding trip cancellations.

Partner with agencies at the state level to implement interactive voice response (IVR) to verify trips will be complete.

Use available EcoLane data to investigate potential areas of service (e.g. identify frequently visited non-emergency medical facilities, coordinate those routine trips to focus resources).

Best Practices for Consideration:

- The Central Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, based in York County, Pennsylvania, initiated a program titled 3P Ride, which seeks to increase hours and days of service available to adults with developmental disabilities and physical disabilities, as well as senior citizens. The program involves transit users in the planning and implementation of transit projects and seeks to better understand the needs and barriers experienced by those individuals.
- The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority launched a pilot program called *RideKC Freedom On-Demand* to address shared-ride program inefficiencies barriers like 24 hour advance scheduling and 30-minute waiting windows. The program includes an app that allows users to schedule trips on demand with no advance reservation required.

<p>Non-Medical Trips: Medical trips are prioritized through multiple funding programs. Transportation for employment, shopping, food access, and leisure/recreation activities is lacking.</p>
<p>Regional Strategies</p>
<p>Develop a volunteer network of drivers for social, recreational, and/or leisure trips.</p>
<p>Develop a legal framework to encourage volunteer transportation networks.</p>
<p>Educate shared-ride providers on the regulations regarding group trips and encourage their use.</p>
<p>Coordinate with senior centers and retirement communities to market existing group trips to potential users.</p>
<p>Identify opportunities to piggyback on existing trips being taken by outside groups (e.g. group shopping trips initiated by a senior center).</p>
<p>Develop a designated “grocery day” for food shopping trips to encourage efficiency and develop critical mass.</p>
<p>Sub-regional Strategies</p>
<p>For Crawford and Venango counties, determine the need and feasibility of regular (e.g. monthly, quarterly, etc.) group shopping trips to destinations in Erie.</p>

Best Practices for Consideration:

- Independent Transportation Network (ITN) is a national non-profit transportation system that was created to accommodate the needs of seniors and the visually impaired. It is membership based and offers a variety of transportation services, including a volunteer program where individuals provide rides in exchange for banking future miles as a commodity. ITN *Lehigh Valley* recently launched in the Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton Pennsylvania region.
- Ride Connections, based in Portland, Oregon, is a non-profit transportation organization that seeks to meet the needs of senior citizens and persons with disabilities by coordinating various transportation services provided by local human service agencies and volunteers through a variety of programs, including:
 - Shared Vehicle Program – offers vehicles to individuals, agencies, or groups when they are not in use, particularly on evenings and weekends.
 - Ride Together Mileage Reimbursement Program – riders are able to recruit their own drivers who are reimbursed through the program.
- The National Volunteer Transportation Center published a *Volunteer Driver Recruitment and Retention Experience and Practice Handbook* that outlines strategies and practices for volunteer driver programs.

Access to Rural Areas Outside of Major Service Centers: Rural areas with low population density are not easily served by public transportation and services are often clustered in higher-density urban centers.

Regional Strategies

Explore the use of smaller vehicles to lower operating cost and increase service to areas where demand exists.

Identify programs and service providers that are more efficient in providing out of county trips.

Determine the cost to benefit ratio of using an instate provider at a farther distance or an out-of-state provider that is close.

Create a fixed route/shared-ride “hub” to better connect rural areas to existing fixed route systems.

For all shared ride program providers, continue investment in state of good repair replacement projects for paratransit fleets.

Sub-regional Strategies

Determine feasibility of fixed-route transit service between Meadville and Titusville in Crawford County.

For CATA in Crawford and Venango counties, assess “life line” service options for paratransit delivery in both counties to ensure a minimum of 1 day per week service to all rural areas outside of the major service centers.

Best Practices for Consideration:

- Liberty Mobility Now, Inc. (Liberty) is a low-cost ride hailing service that specializes in rural and small urban mobility. Liberty provides smart phone technology designed to work in rural areas for individuals requesting trips, as well as a call center for those who want to visit in-person to set up an account or book a trip.
- The Winnipeg Transit System provides a demand-responsive connector service called DART that has four zones with established drop-off locations that operate in off-peak hours. Passengers living within the designated zones can request a ride that will drop them off at the nearest fixed-route transfer point.

Service Availability and Cost: Transportation services are costly to provide and dependent on public subsidies for operations which impacts the quantity, quality, and affordability of the services that exist.

Regional Strategies

Investigate and implement a pilot project for expanded service hours.

Identify partnerships and opportunities for increased human service transportation coordination (e.g. joint vehicle procurement and maintenance, vehicle sharing, cost sharing arrangements, etc.)

Initiate a volunteer driver program, including training and recruitment of drivers.

Utilize special group trips to meet demand outside of advertised service.

Sub-regional Strategies

Determine possibility of fare collection system overhaul for ATA (e.g. include daily bus passes, discounted attendant passes, etc.)

Best Practices for Consideration:

- DARTS is a non-profit agency based in Dakota County, Minnesota and they operate a Vehicle Maintenance Service program that maintains vehicles for 90 different organizations. The service is available to organizations located throughout the region that operate specialized vehicles and allows participating organizations to decrease their operating costs and improve vehicle safety for riders.
- Community Health Services, Inc., based in Meadville, PA, administers a Volunteer Driver Program to transport individuals to and from medical appointments. Volunteers apply for the program, have a background check, and are trained to drive patients. To-date in 2017, the Volunteer Driver Program has 21 participating volunteers who have contributed 22,414 hours of service and have traveled over 430,000 miles transporting patients. Funding for the volunteer service comes from a variety of sources, including MATP, the United Way, the Crawford County Drug & Alcohol Executive Commission, and the local hospital.

Reliable Transportation for Young, Low-Income Families and Workers: Without a personal vehicle, it is difficult to find reliable and affordable transportation. Program policies limit agencies' ability to meet the needs of low-income individuals.

Regional Strategies

Advocate to change program regulations to allow for a lower fare for qualified low-income individuals.

Implement the findings from the *2017 Northwest Commission Rideshare Feasibility Study* to better connect young workers to employment centers via rideshare opportunities.

Educate transportation providers on the need for car seat utilization in vehicles.

Identify human service agencies and/or community groups that have available transportation resources to improve accessibility for low-income families, particularly families with a female head-of-household.

Develop programs to subsidize vehicular travel for a defined period of time (e.g., mileage reimbursement, car purchasing program, etc.)

Investigate feasibility of route guarantee options for larger employers to subsidize bus service for 2nd shifts.

Sub-regional Strategies

Explore the feasibility of a co-county workplace accessibility project where residents from intercity Erie reverse-commute to manufacturing and service jobs in Warren County (e.g., Ellwood Group, Inc.).

Identify options for increased transportation services for students at Laurel Technical Institute (LTI) Meadville.

Best Practices for Consideration:

- Venango County Human Services administers The Ride program, which provides transportation to Venango County residents who do not have a vehicle or are unable to provide their own transportation for employment, post high school education, community service, medical appointments, etc. Individuals requesting these services must have an open case within Venango County Human Services and are not eligible for any other Venango County Transportation program.
- Rural Rides Program in Minnesota is a program that assists low-wage earners commuting long distances across rural areas by providing rideshare matching, volunteer driver services, and individualized transportation planning. The program employs an in-house transportation representative to work one-on-one with job seekers and prospective employers.

Connections to and Comfort of Bus Stops: For those living near fixed route transit systems, it can be a challenge to access bus stops due to lack of sidewalks and ADA accessible curb ramps. Lack of bus shelters was another common issue identified.

Regional Strategies

Identify pedestrian infrastructure improvements in the vicinity of transit stops.

Conduct targeted enforcement efforts to improve pedestrian safety near transit stops.

Increase priority of bus stop snow clearing within existing municipal budgets.

Promote volunteer/community service efforts to remove snow from sidewalks and bus stops.

Establish an “Adopt-a-Stop” program for local businesses and organizations to clear snow and ice at nearby bus stops.

Sub-regional Strategies

Conduct bus stop and shelter analysis for ATA, CATA, and TAWC fixed-route systems to determine most utilized stops and priority areas of investment.

Adjust policies to include courtesy or flag stops for people with disabilities using fixed-route transit.

Best Practices for Consideration:

- The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) developed Bus Stop Design Guidelines to provide municipalities and other local partners with a consistent set of strategies for designing fixed-route transit stops. The design guidelines included in the report are based on a review of standards and best practices applied nationally.
- Cambridge, Massachusetts has an aggressive snow removal enforcement campaign with multiple webpages, mobile applications, and phone hotlines to support residents in snow clearing and reporting dangerous and icy pathways.

Communication between Transportation Provider and Transportation User: It was noted that lines of communication between transit users and transit agencies were not always available.

Regional Strategies

Investigate potential use of social media sites for communicating transportation changes to users.

Develop a one-stop shop (potentially an app or web-based service) for trip scheduling and/or identifying other transportation resources.

Create a catalog of transportation resources to be distributed to caseworkers and human service agencies.

Initiate comprehensive transit marketing and education campaign to inform potential users of service availability (e.g. widely distribute materials at frequently visited locations, work with transit providers to conduct training events, etc.).

Sub-regional Strategies

For all fixed-route providers, initiate a “communications inventory” to determine all mediums used to communicate with customers (e.g. route schedules, website, social media, etc.) and identify any communication gaps.

Best Practices for Consideration:

- The Transit Cooperative Research Program published a whitepaper titled *Use of Social Media in Public Transportation: A Synthesis of Transit Practice* that contains results from transit agency surveys on social media and case study examples. The case studies are intended to explore communication issues raised in the survey in more detail and provide additional commentary on successful practices, challenges, and lessons learned.

Implementation Strategy for Improved Transportation Coordination

Through the identification of transportation issues and critical mobility barriers, the *Northwest Commission Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan* establishes areas where improvements may be made to improve the level of transportation coordination throughout the region. The issues identified are broadly defined to allow for flexibility in implementation as new technologies and challenges emerge. Similarly, the strategies and best practices outlined in the previous section provide the Northwest Commission and its partners with a compendium of action items and resources to consider for future mobility improvements.

The most immediate transportation coordination need for the Northwest region is an active, informed coalition of stakeholders willing to work on a prioritized list of improvements over the next five years. The formation of this regional coalition is the crux of the Coordinated Plan implementation strategy. By gathering human service professionals, transportation providers, and transit users on a regular basis, the region can begin to work on the elimination of transportation barriers affecting senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals. The following section outlines recommendations for forming and maintaining a regional partnership dedicated to improving transportation coordination.

Establishing Partnerships in Northwest Pennsylvania

Coordinated and convened by the Northwest Commission, the proposed regional coalition is tasked with diligently working toward attaining the defined vision of “*an accessible, affordable, and informative community transportation network that provides measureable improvements for regional mobility for all residents.*” The regional coalition should be comprised of human service agency representatives, transportation providers and advocates, economic and workforce development entities, healthcare providers, government agencies, and individuals who use public transportation. Once stakeholders have agreed to participate, the group should aim to meet on a regular basis (e.g. quarterly or semi-annually) to discuss transportation accessibility, serve as a resource for advocacy through education and information sharing, and continue to facilitate the coordinated transportation planning process.

An essential first task for the regional coalition is developing a more targeted, prioritized list of action items to work on over the next five years. **Table 11** depicts an example implementation matrix that can be modified to include mutually agreed-upon strategies set forth by the coalition. To guide implementation, each strategy or action is assigned a “Timeframe for Implementation” based on the level of coordination required and available resources needed to complete the action. Targets are set for each implementation strategy or action by including a “Measure” of performance and a “Benchmark” indicator of success. Finally, each strategy is assigned a “Lead Entity” and “Partner(s)” to ensure ownership of the strategy and facilitate coordination between key stakeholders.

Table 11: Example Implementation Matrix

Transportation Program Rules and Regulations: Programs exist to address specific transportation needs, however the rules and regulations often inhibit mobility for those who don't qualify or don't understand how to access those services.					
Implementation Strategy	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Performance Tracking		Timeframe for Implementation <i>Short - <1 year</i> <i>Medium - 2 - 3 years</i> <i>Long - 4 - 5 years</i>
			Measure	Benchmark	
Using the Coordinated Transportation Plan Transportation Services Inventory, develop an overview of existing services and flow-chart of eligibility requirements.	Northwest Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Service Councils Public and Private Transportation Providers 	Distribution of developed materials	Full dissemination through regional human service councils	Short
Identify list of onerous and/or complex funding regulations (e.g. PennDOT limits 5310 funding to vehicle purchases) to market to legislators and funding partners.	Northwest Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public, Private, and Non-Profit Transportation Providers 	Create list	List created and disseminated to legislators and funding partners	Short
Establish a central, comprehensive resource for transportation service information for the Northwest Pennsylvania Region.	Northwest Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Service Councils Public and Private Transportation Providers 	Number of locations needed to determine service information	One	Long

With the support of the Northwest Commission, this regional entity can serve as the working group responsible for implementing the federally-mandated Coordinated Transportation Plan. The planning process should be an ongoing, collaborative effort that strives to positively impact the barriers to coordinated transportation. To that end, the Northwest Commission will continue the momentum gained through this Coordinated Transportation Plan update to build partnerships between agencies, advocates, decision makers, and transportation users. Once established, the regional coalition will meet at regular intervals throughout the region with the explicit goal of advancing specific improvements that enhance coordinated transportation.

Appendix A: Coordinated Plan Outreach Documentation

Human Service Agency Focus Group Meeting Summaries

March 10, 2017: Crawford County Community Council

- Number of Agencies Represented: 15
- Number of Individuals Participating: 18

What transportation resources are available in Crawford County?

- CATA
- Arc of Crawford (they have vans that are wheelchair accessible and use for medical transportation if a person qualifies)
- For drug and alcohol, people have private vehicles that they use to transport clients
- Walk
- Drug and alcohol program provides gift cards for gas
- Community Health Services is MATP provider for Crawford County
- Crawford County Human Services provides direct transportation (they have a fleet of vehicles and part time drivers and also give out bus passes.) Tend to be used as a last resort for appointments.
- Taxi
- Uber
- Women's Services have volunteer drivers
- Hermitage House and Bethesda
- Family/friends/neighbors
- Meadville Ambulance transports people for medical appointments.

What major destinations do people have a hard time getting to in Crawford County?

- Those who come from rural areas with no bus service – Spartansburg, Pleasantville, Townville, Centerville, everywhere that isn't Meadville. Meadville is the center and if you aren't there, it's more difficult.
- Titusville to Meadville is a big barrier.
- Even in town (Meadville), the bus routes can only go so far and the agency sites aren't accessible. In the winter it's problematic – with strollers, lack of sidewalks, etc.
- Specialty medical appointments outside of Crawford are difficult (e.g. to Erie or Pittsburgh)

What are the major transportation barriers facing your clients?

- Bus times/schedules are a barrier.
- For some people with disabilities, it's tough to get out of the house.

- Safety and confidentiality issue (From a child welfare standpoint – you can’t easily send someone off in a volunteers car, can’t combine trips with multiple clients, etc.)
- Safety issue for drug and alcohol agencies – there might be paraphernalia leftover (e.g., there are routine vehicle checks to make sure there aren’t any cans or syringes, etc.)
- Scheduling issue – if someone’s on probation and they have a window of time to travel and they can’t make a trip on the bus within that window. Same goes for medical transportation.
- With senior transportation, the length of time (even just to go to grocery or to a doctor’s appointment) can be a barrier. This also affects what they can buy (e.g. milk, ice cream, or even just the weight of the bags).
- CATA bus scheduling “windows” are a barrier – they recently implemented new software for scheduling, the day before the next day is planned out. As the day starts progressing and people cancel/no show or a bus gets to a destination earlier and has to wait, it has a ripple effect on the entire day.
- CATA works with a lot of nursing homes and people think they’re taxis. The reality is, CATA is trying to integrate a lot of different services.
- Friendliness or congeniality of drivers – how the driver interacts with people who are in their vehicles (especially if there is previous trauma).
- Mileage caps – employees and/or volunteers have to get approval to go the extra distance for trips.
- Transportation doesn’t take individuals to the door.
- Bus isn’t always reliable and on-time (example, bus arrived 20 minutes early for Crawford County READ program).
- CATA bus round trip from Cochranton (without subsidy) is expensive.

Are there any potential solutions to the aforementioned transportation barriers?

- An app (one-stop shop) for trip scheduling and of transportation services available
- Talk to bus drivers to get an idea of issues
- Connection between Titusville and Meadville – talking to health care providers that have a desire to get people between two providers. CATA could assess Titusville to Meadville connection – are there issues that necessitate this?

March 20, 2017: Venango County Human Services Agency Focus Group

- Number of Agencies Represented: 13
- Number of Individuals Participating: 20

What transportation resources are available in Venango County?

- Venango Bus
- Older adult program has a volunteer program for out of county medical trips
- MATP – provided by CATA
- Community Ambulance
- The Ride Program – has helped people get to employment when Venango Bus isn't running or if the location isn't near a bus route. It's a stop-gap and transportation of last resort. Typically, it's used for people who can't get home from work. It's typically done in collaboration with Hand in hand Christian Counseling. The program does have the ability to engage volunteers from Mustard Seed Mission. Also, the Retired Senior Volunteer program helps out. Program is very popular and the majority of trips are employment related. It's about \$10K/month to fund this program. Funded through HS block grant and it is at risk due to departmental changes that will leave less discretionary funds. It's a very successful program but it is definitely at risk. It was grown out of years of people telling them they couldn't get where they needed to go. It's the same type of program as Care Cab, which is run by the hospitals (e.g. people arrive by an ambulance or they can find a way to the ER, but they can't get home, therefore they use the Care Cab)
- Community Services of VC has a funding source (through a church program) that provides medical gas cards for people who need assistance in getting to medical appointments.
- Shared Ride – provided by CATA. For VCHS, shared ride is the way PWD get to different day programs.
- Sheltered workshops – there was discussion about making a “hub”, but there has been pushback and probably won't be as big of an issue.
- Children Youth Services has a needs-based budget supplies
- A LOT of staff transport
- Program specific transportation (employees provide it with agency vehicles – most of which is contracted through HS). UCIP
 - VCHS does a needs assessment and housing, employment, and transportation are always critical needs.
 - ARC
 - Home health aids
 - VTDC – sheltered work program (CATA does workshop transportation), Fairweather lodge

- Family Services CAS
- Regional Counseling Center provides transportation
- The Pointe – mental health center
- Turning Point – substance abuse rehab center
- Association for the Blind has transportation
- United Way
- Veterans Program through DAV
- Cancer Society
- CYS – as needed, people are transported
- Go Go Grandparent

What major destinations do people have a hard time getting to in Venango County?

- There's a personal care home (Sugar Valley Lodge in Polk) located far away from services – people come in for appointments and day programs. Shared ride will take them at certain times but that group is limited in when they can travel.
- Venango Bus only goes between Oil City and Franklin
- Cooperstown area is a gap
- Emlenton and Clintonville
- Pleasantville – people from there come to VCHS, even though they're really close to Titusville (which is out of county)
- Titusville and Pleasantville is an issue for Crawford and Venango Counties

What are the major transportation barriers facing your clients?

- After hours transportation
- When families are transporting children, it's difficult (need car seats)
- HSAs are limited in the amount of funding they receive.
- Limits on groceries
- Very rural – with children and families, a lot of low income housing is farther away from stores and services (many families with children will walk on the 15th street hill because they need to go to the store).
- Venango Bus doesn't run on Sunday
- Time constraints with the bus (both fixed route and shared ride)
- Shared ride bus scheduling
- If you need medical transportation and your kid gets sick at weird hours, you can't use the bus.
- Some families may need to run errands and they have to spend half the day on the bus trying to get where they need to go.
- Same day transportation is a big issue.

- Say a child has a medical appointment in Pittsburgh, the healthcare facility drives when their appointments are and the bus system isn't accommodating of that.
- Limited options for older youth (they're old enough to connect with services without a parent but they can't ride certain services without a parent because they're under 18)
- Difficult to provide transportation to people who aren't affiliated with
- Food pantries – transportation comes to them at certain times. It's difficult for people to access them based on times. It requires a lot of planning.
- Out of county trips – you can only take MATP out of county but regular transportation to non-medical you have to stay in county.
- Bus stops are not covered and people have to stand out in the elements.
- CATA occasionally changes their bus schedule and it isn't well publicized? HSAs aren't always aware of the specific changes.
- Reading the Venango Bus schedules used to be a big barrier but their new brochures are much easier to read.
- Usually when route changes happen, it's within Oil City and Franklin (not in the outskirts)
- Venango used to have a flag stop system but that isn't the case anymore
- Connections to bus stops – walking
- If someone needs to make multiple stops (e.g. mom drops off kid, then goes to work – the bus doesn't run frequently enough)
- If you're on a MA trip, you can't make multiple trips (e.g. you come into town for a medical appointment, then want to go to Bingo, the funding pot is different).
- Case by case issues with CATA and they are really good at helping out (especially with pick up and drop off times)
- Walking issue – lack of sidewalks.
- Program eligibility is definitely an issue.

What would the most critical issues be?

- After hours trips
- Ride times – specifically, the Go Bus
- Providing transportation to rural areas and outlying areas of the urban centers. Some people live a fair distance from the route and the topography adds to the barrier.
- Crossing county lines (Titusville and Pleasantville)

Are there any potential solutions to the aforementioned transportation barriers?

- One regional transportation provider to allow for cross county transportation – it's moving towards this direction (merging of CATA and Venango Bus)
- Smaller vehicles (the county is so rural, might be useful to have a program closer to The Ride program)
- Bus covers
- PennDOT Connects – identifying side projects for ongoing projects

March 20, 2017: Forest and Warren Counties Human Services Agency Focus Group

- Number of Agencies Represented: 16
- Number of Individuals Participating: 18

What transportation resources are available for the people you serve in Forest and Warren Counties?

- Beacon Light Agency van and recovery assistance (psych assistance)
 - Health support recovery systems has 3 vans
 - Shopping, banking, moving, medical – all of these trips are covered.
- TAWC – MATP
- Forest County Transportation – there's not a lot in Forest County, so they take people to the Walmart in Titusville, etc. You have to qualify in some way for this service.
- CYS transports clients to dental and doctor appointment – they go to Pittsburgh and Erie for these appointments. They also provide gas cards for people to visit family members who can't afford it.
- Case management drug and alcohol provides very limited transportation – e.g. will drive someone to Jamestown to get social security card so they can get a job.
- Walkers, bikers
- Family members who drive them places
- Veterans Affairs Office transports veterans to the clinic and hospital in Erie
- CAO has service for people in TANF – they provide mileage reimburse for job searches
- Warren Taxi
- Uber
- Bolinger has a bus contract with service from Youngsville and Sheffield to their facility. They have their own fleet that transports people to volunteer opportunities.
- Group homes often have their own vans.
- Experience Inc. contracts with TAWC to do shared ride program. They also have in-home providers and the aids can transport clients (it's limited, but still available)
- Peer support has the ability to take clients to activities (mental health and drug and alcohol)
- Salvation Army sometimes provides gas vouchers (don't provide direct transportation due to insurance liabilities)
- Head start – but doesn't provide transportation in Forest County due to cost
- Nursing Homes provide transportation to residents. Personal care homes use TAWC bus.

What major destinations do people have a hard time getting to in Venango County?

- Spartansburg
- Spring Creek
- Titusville
- Bear Lake

What are the major transportation barriers facing your clients?

- Warren is the biggest population center – anywhere outside of Warren is a challenge. Buses are limited in where they can go.
- Bus hours of service are limiting (stops running in late evening – a lot of jobs are shift work and bus doesn't run on Sundays)
- CAO has clients who have to participate in different programs and people from that part of the county can't make it (Titusville, Spring Creek, Bear Lake, etc.). A round-trip taxi from there to Warren could easily cost \$100. The other side of the county doesn't seem to run into this.
- Transportation to work – people don't have reliable transportation for this. When it comes to getting a job, this can be a barrier.
- Diploma program was moved to the morning to accommodate the bus schedule – this still wasn't a fix. Some of the kids are able to get a bus but they're still late. Then they have to leave early to get to their jobs. Classes at the career center are from 5 – 8 or 6 – 9 and they are the best vocational type of education for getting a job. People can get there but they can't get home.
- There is a gap in the bus schedule – it takes 2 hours to get from Youngsville to North Warren. Sheffield is more of a straight trip.
- Forest County – unless you qualify, there is nothing else available. If there is a family that wants to go to school in the evening, District is very large. Parents have to traverse the county and it's challenging to get involvement in evening activity. It's hard to get people to initial appointments (E.g. mental health services for students – usually they meet in Warren for initial intake). Weather doesn't help with this due to their road network.
- People fall in between the gaps – there have been people who have a family member who needs to go to Pittsburgh for the cancer center. If the Cancer Center can't make arrangements, then it becomes an issue. A lot of specialists are in Erie, Pittsburgh, Jamestown, Buffalo.
- For MATP, you can only go into counties that touch Warren County. At one point, they could go to Pittsburgh, but not anymore.
- A lot of people who qualify for service don't take advantage of services. Stats for # of families who receive TANF, there are a large number that qualify but don't get them. A

- lot of that is pride, but there is also the difficulty in accessing services. Some people have stopped looking for a job bc they just can't get to it.
- Mental health crisis transportation is seriously lacking – they're either going on an ambulance if it's available or with a constable??
 - Funding program – diploma program used to get students gas cards but the funding has been cut short.
 - With veterans, they don't have ambulance (they won't transport them) – this is an issue.
 - If a person doesn't have an aid to help them get on the bus, then they can't take the bus (aid might be a senior center)
 - If a person can't get their kid to daycare, then they can't go to headstart. Making multiple trips for working parents (dropping kids off, then going to work – bus schedules aren't conducive)
 - Warren has mental health summer based programs (continuity of mental health services) – transportation is a huge issue
 - Any employers in particular that you try to send people to? 2nd chance employers (Worley, Interelectic in Warren, Blair in Irvin, Targeted).
 - There could be a need for TAWC to go into NYS for shopping (not medical, due to insurance complexities) or for social security cards in Jamestown.
 - Medical assistance treatment – some doctors will prescribe without therapy and they're located in Clarion/Spartansburg. Somebody who would be looking for meds for drug/alcohol withdrawal – you can't just get medication without therapy (bc you can sell it). HS has received calls about this.
 - Very high no-show rate for Primary Health Network– can also be an issue if they want a referral and have a follow up appointment and they didn't get their initial medical service
 - Looking for funding for Provide the Ride from Primary Health Network (research more – it's in Clarion) – if they're a primary care patient, they can transport to their location. There is a 5 mile transport buffer, which won't be as effective in Warren/Forest. Would it help if doctors could schedule appointments? Yes.
 - Warren General only provides out-patient dialysis (and they refer people out because they don't provide specialty services), they have to go to Erie for in-patient dialysis. It takes a lot of organization and coordination for completing these trips. Some take an ambulance to ER and have to find a way home from Erie.
 - In Sugar Grove area, have to deal with the Amish. They don't drive. Some people are Amish taxis – they provide rides to their Amish neighbors for a fee.
 - Cost of owning a car

What would the most critical issues be?

- Non-peak hours – limitations on fixed route and shared ride providers schedules
- Access to rural areas
- Transportation to employment and adult education

Are there any potential solutions to the aforementioned transportation barriers?

- Kathy Dahlkemper said it would be interesting to explore a co-county project where we take intercity folks who moved from Erie to Corry/Union City, and bus them to Warren for jobs (Worley, Blair, Targeted, National Forge – all have mentioned the need for workers).

Transportation User Public Listening Session Summaries

April 10, 2017: Meadville Senior Center, Crawford County

- Number of Individuals Participating: 26

What transportation resources are available to you in Crawford County?

CATA

- Metro Taxi
- Lyft and Uber
- Walk
- Med Bus (MATP)
- Family/friends
- Bicycling
- Nursing Home
- First Christian
- St. Johns
- DAV
- Drive themselves
- Community Ambulance

What major destinations do you have a hard time getting to in Crawford County?

- Cotton Road area (new LTI campus in Meadville)
- Titusville, in general
- Seasonal events (e.g. fairs, etc.)
- Events and recreational opportunities in Erie (e.g. Presque Isle)
- Pittsburgh
- Saegertown/Woodcock
- The Academy Theater in Meadville
- Mill Creek Mall in Erie

What are the major transportation barriers facing your clients?

- Same day trips
- Multiple stops on the shared-ride vehicle
- Connections from bus stop to restaurants
- Cost of shared ride fare - \$2 to \$7 per one-way trip is not affordable on SSI
- Access in winter months (snow piles near transit stops)
- Transportation options outside of Meadville

- Transportation options for low-income, younger people (don't meet requirements for 65+ or PwD), "fall through the cracks"
- Saturday/Sunday transportation and holidays
- Lack of ramps and usage of ramps
- Wheelchair/walker access on buses
- Non-peak hours of service (e.g. a 5 a.m. trip to the doctor at Vernon Medical Facility)
- Limited choice of provider with medical trips
- Affordability of shared-ride
- Shared-ride wait times (scheduling)

Are there any potential solutions/opportunities for improvement for the aforementioned transportation barriers?

- Student transportation for LTI
- Catalog of transportation resources (brochure for caseworkers, human service providers, etc.)
- Offer more affordable service to Erie (e.g. Mill Creek Mall)

April 10, 2017: Cranberry Mall Senior Center, Venango County

- Number of Individuals Participating: 26

What transportation resources are available to you in Venango County?

- VCTO

What major destinations do you have a hard time getting to in Venango County?

- Medical trips to Pittsburgh and Erie
- Out of town trips
- Cooperstown

What are the major transportation barriers facing your clients?

- VCTO is difficult to contact after 9:30 am
- Pick-up scheduling and wait times
- Communication between transportation provider and riders (e.g. a canceled trip isn't relayed to passengers)
- Unsure about how to schedule a trip and access shared-ride
- Not sure what other transportation services are available
- Cost of shared-ride fare is not affordable
- Length of trips
- Efficiency of shared-ride scheduling is a big issue; specifically, 8 people live in the same general area on the same street, one bus will come and pick up 4 of them, and 2 minutes later another bus will pick up the remaining 4. It doesn't make sense.
- Crossing county lines
- There is no transportation to the Fire Hall Senior Center – will need to follow up on this

April 11, 2017: Allegheny Community Center, Warren County

- Number of Individuals Participating: 4

What major destinations do you have a hard time getting to in Warren County?

- Pittsburgh – TAWC is currently working with Buffalo Transit on service as needed (they are able to cross county lines)
- New York State – specifically, Buffalo, Jamestown, and Cleveland
- MATP to adjacent counties (not including New York State)
- Sugar Grove

What are the major transportation barriers in Warren County?

- Ecolane isn't scheduling trips efficiently
- Pick-up and drop-offs within the half hour window
- Rural nature of Warren County, especially in winter months (the eastern and western parts of the county are the most challenging)
- Cost isn't really a barrier for now (TAWC is about to increase fares)
- TAWC isn't able to transport people to the WIC office (it's not a medical trip), but fixed-route service does go there
- Access to education might be an issue, but TAWC isn't getting any calls regarding it. Most colleges are so far away.
- A regional community college is in the works – the closest option is in Jamestown
- There have been a few complaints about the comfort of buses on long trips
- Snow piles are problematic with fixed-route stops
- There aren't many bus shelters in Warren County

Are there any potential solutions/opportunities for improvement for the aforementioned transportation barriers?

- Look into different types of insurance to make crossing the state line easier for shopping trips
- TAWC study on bus shelters/signage

April 26, 2017: Main Street Senior Center, Clarion County

- Number of Individuals Participating: 23

Who provides transportation to you in Clarion County?

- ATA/CAT
- County Transportation
- Choice Cab – Wallacetown
- Clarion County Cab
- Contracted providers
- Friends/family
- Churches
- Primary Health Network

What major destinations do you have a hard time getting to in Clarion County?

- Entertainment, particularly in Erie
- Senior Center on Fridays
- Drop-in centers
- Church
- Shopping Trips (Walmart, Aldi, K-mart, Comet)
- Strattanville
- Drakes Crossing (apartment complex)

What are the major transportation barriers?

- No bus shelters
- No Sunday service
- Limited taxi service hours
- No bus to senior center on Fridays
- No transportation from the ER after hours
- Limited information on schedules
- No weekend shared ride service
- No Uber available
- No attendant passes
- Farebox payment system isn't good
- No bus passes on ATA
- Lack of transportation to grocery stores
- Cost of taxi service
- Transportation to malls other than Butler, Cranberry or DuBois
- Understanding program requirements (e.g. how to access free senior trips)

Are there any potential solutions/opportunities for improvement for the aforementioned transportation barriers?

- Fare collection overhaul on ATA (allow for daily passes)
- Bus shelter study

April 26, 2017: Endeavor Senior Center, Forest County

- Number of Individuals Participating: 7

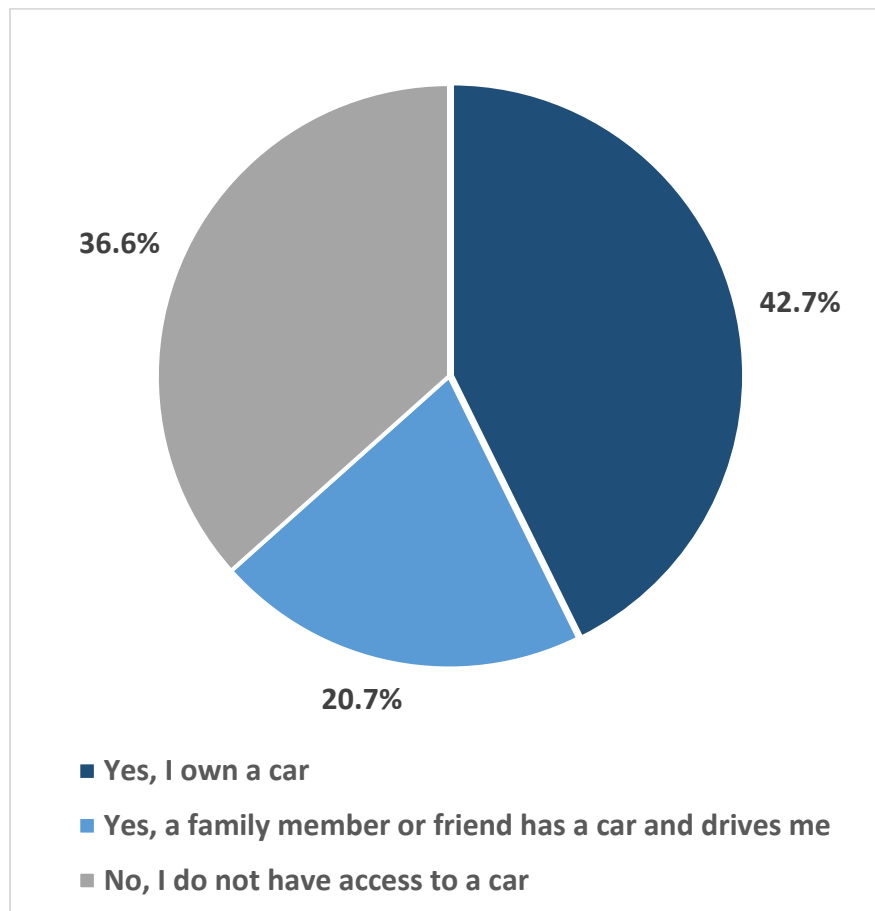
What are the major transportation barriers you encounter?

- The cost of shared-ride trips to places that are far away
- Scheduling of return shared-ride trips can be a barrier (getting stuck at a place, waiting on a return bus)
- Long grocery trips
- Many people drive themselves to the doctors office because they don't want to wait for a bus
- Qualifying for transportation if you are between the ages of 60 to 65
- Same-day trips, especially if you want to stop somewhere en route on a different trip you have scheduled (e.g. you scheduled a trip for grocery shopping and the bus goes by the bank, but it won't let you stop at the bank even though it's on the way)
- Getting on vans that don't have a step-up is a challenge for older and overweight passengers
- The smaller vans aren't very comfortable
- Rural backroads are uneven and difficult for buses to travel on
- Crossing county lines
- Efficiencies of shared-ride trips (could be an EcoLane issue)
- There needs to be more scheduling coordination
- WARREN COUNTY
 - Recreation/entertainment trips are difficult because of scheduling. The senior center in Tidioute has issues scheduling big group trips and people end up driving themselves or carpooling.
 - People are more likely to carpool/drive instead of taking the bus
 - There is a lack of people/critical mass to necessitate a bus trip to the senior center

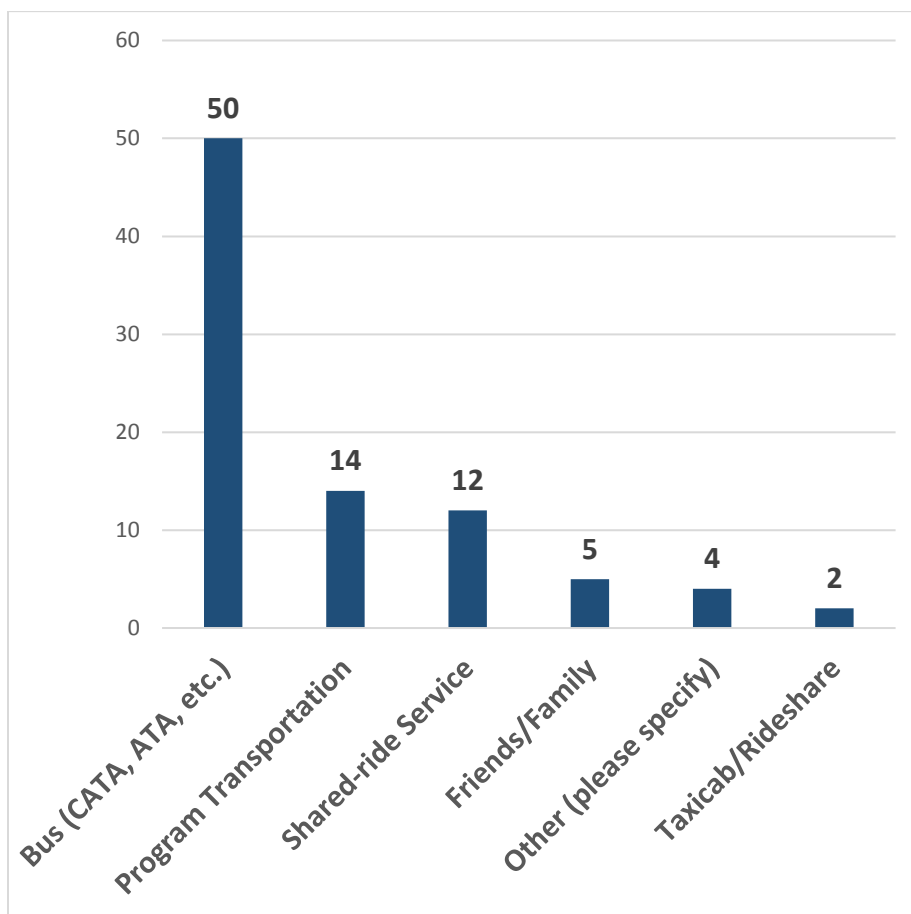
Transportation User Survey Summary

A web-based survey was deployed and heavily marketed throughout the region using graphic postcards, e-mail marketing to County Planning staff and other stakeholders, and information was presented on the Northwest Commission website. To account for residents who may not have computer or mobile device access, or individuals who simply prefer non-digital communication channels, a paper survey was made available. The paper survey format mirrored the web-based survey to ensure consistent feedback among survey respondents. In total, 83 individuals completed the transportation user survey.

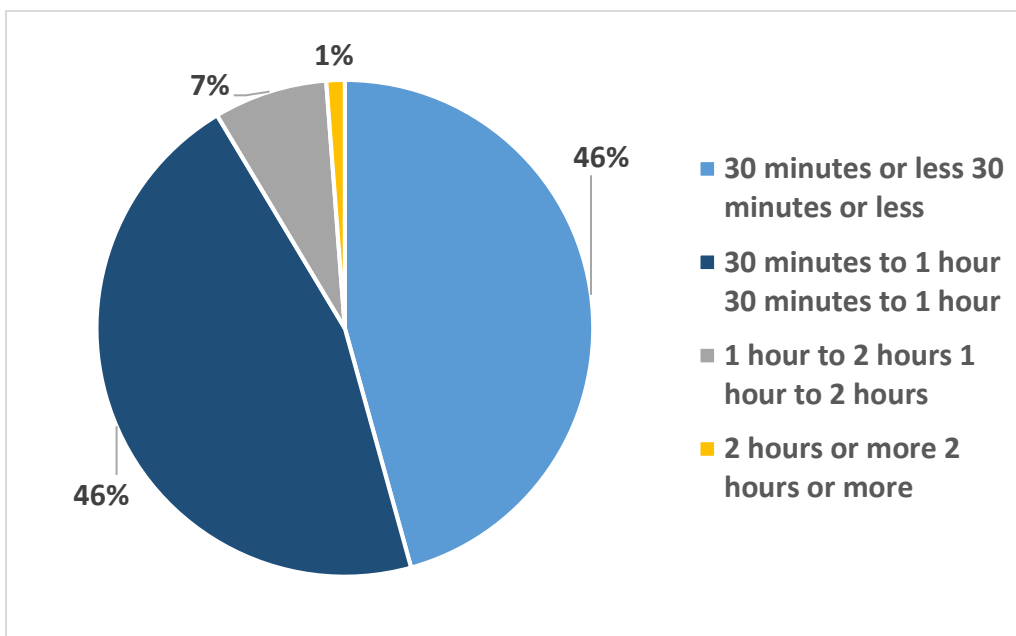
1) Do you have access to a car?



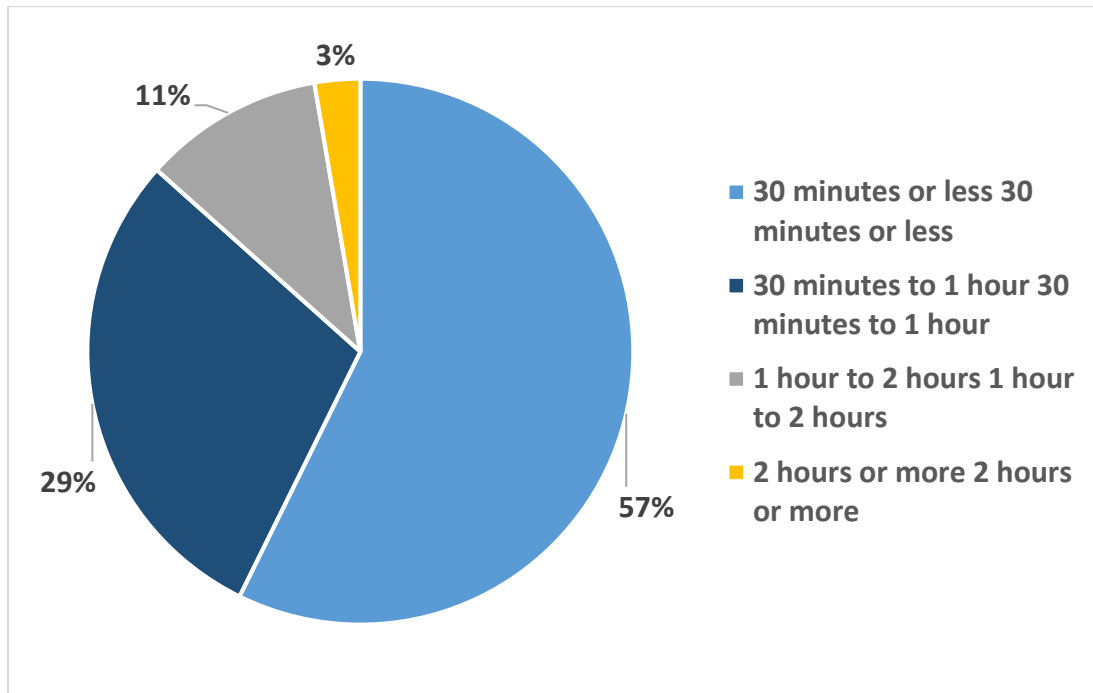
2) What transportation services do you use?



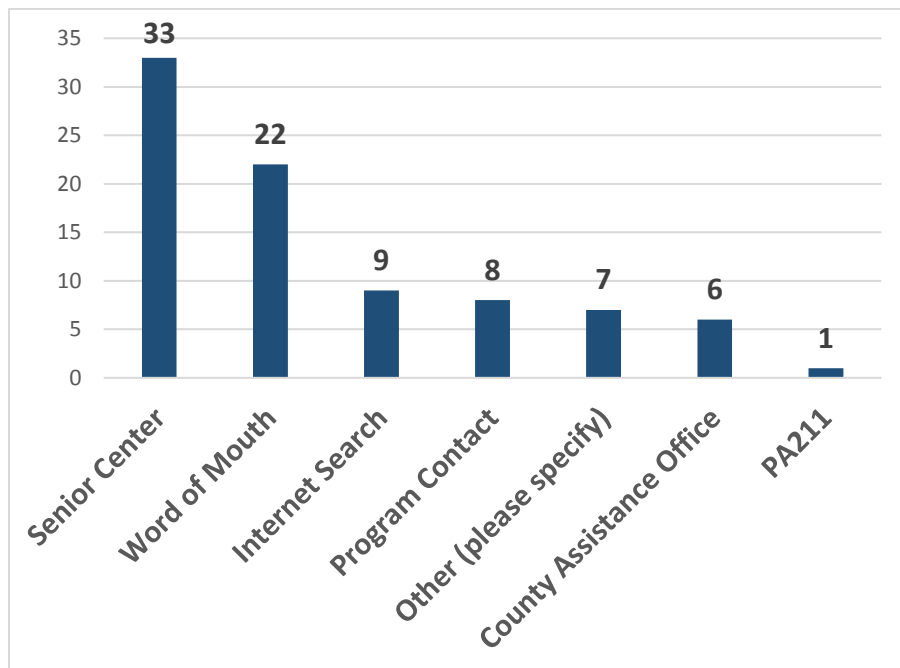
3) When you travel, how long does it typically take you to get to your destination?



4) How long do you wait for transportation when returning home?



5) How do you find transportation services available to you?



6) What government services do you participate in?

Answer Options	Response Count
Medical Assistance (Medicaid/Medicare)	37
Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)	23
Area Agency on Aging (AAA)	18
Housing Assistance (HUD)	12
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	9
CareerLink or other employment program	6
Childcare Subsidy (CCIS)	1
VA	1
Head Start	0
Total Response:	107

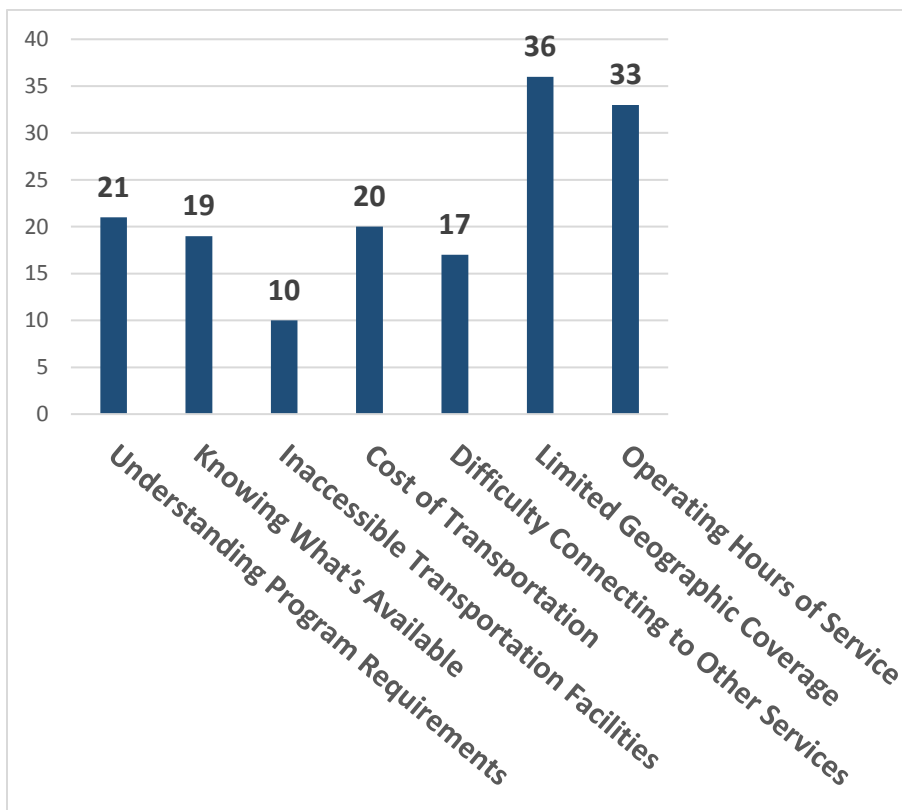
7) What are the top 3 destinations you want to go but can't?



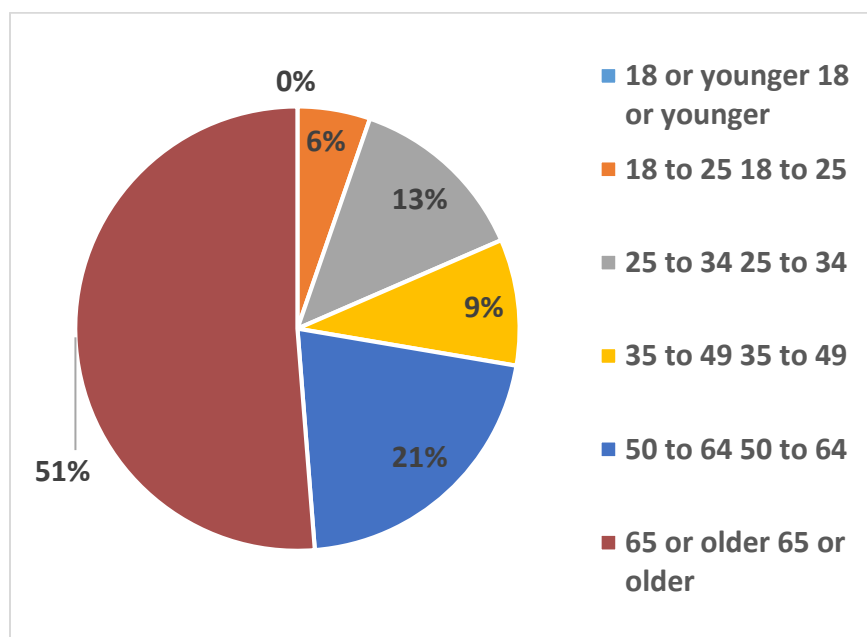
8) How would you improve transportation services?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Weekend Service	17.6%
Expand Weekday service hours	8.1%
Service to Neighboring Counties	8.1%
Improved OTP/Lower Wait Times	6.8%
Lower Fares	6.8%
More Routes	6.8%
Service to Cotton Rd. (LTI & Salvation Army)	6.8%
Expand shared ride service to everyone	5.4%
New Buses	5.4%
Service between Oil City and Titusville	5.4%
Easier to understand schedules and maps	4.1%
Service to Pleasantville	4.1%
Improve sidewalks/last mile commute	2.7%
More friendly staff	2.7%
Service between Oil City and Meadville	2.7%
Extend Meadville Blue & Green Routes	1.4%
Kids Ride Free	1.4%
Less Bus Stops/Speed up service	1.4%
More bus shelters	1.4%
Reimburse public for offering shared rides	1.4%

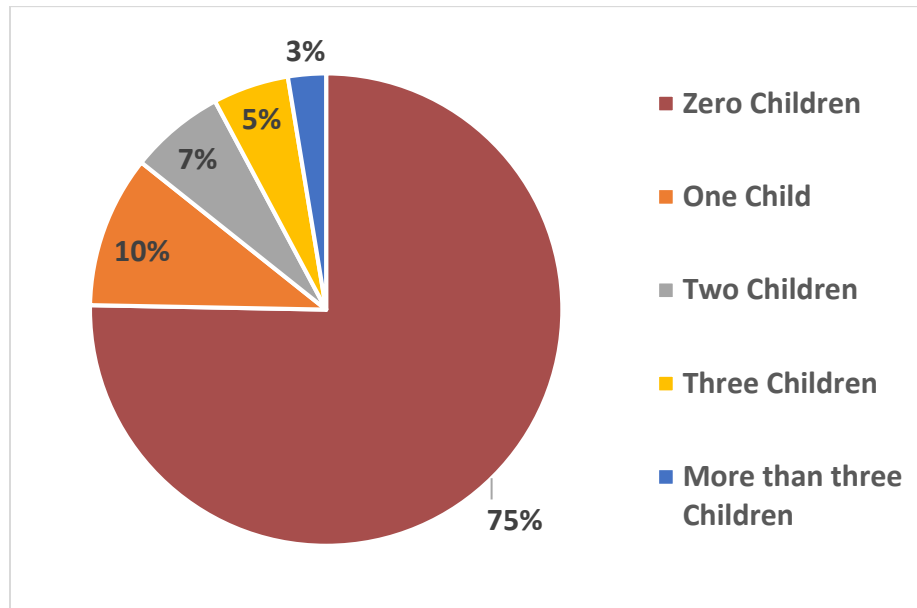
9) Based on your experiences, please tell us which of the following challenges you have encountered in using transportation services. (Check all that apply)



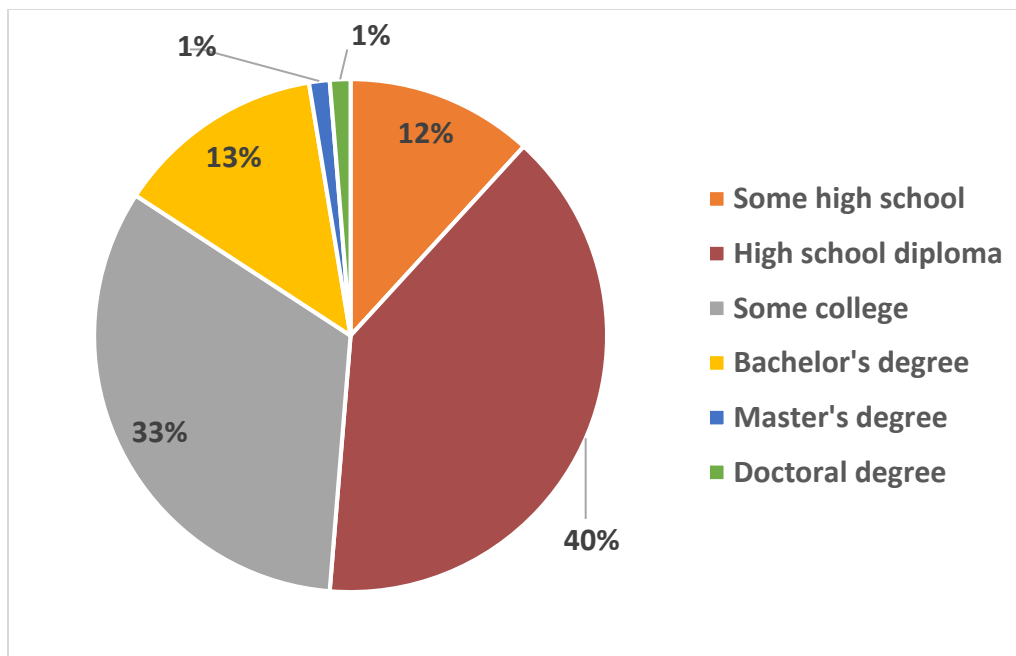
10) What is your age?



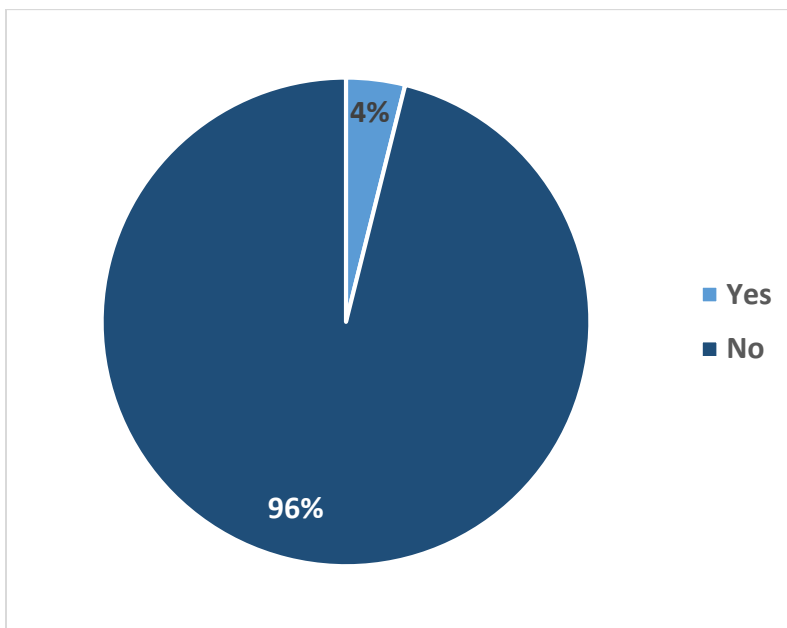
11) How many children under 18 live with you?



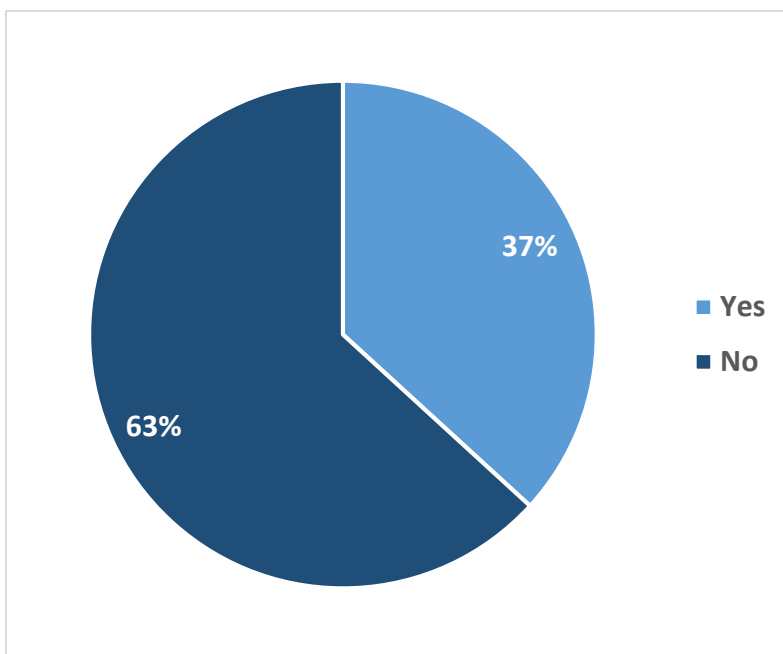
12) What is your highest level of education?



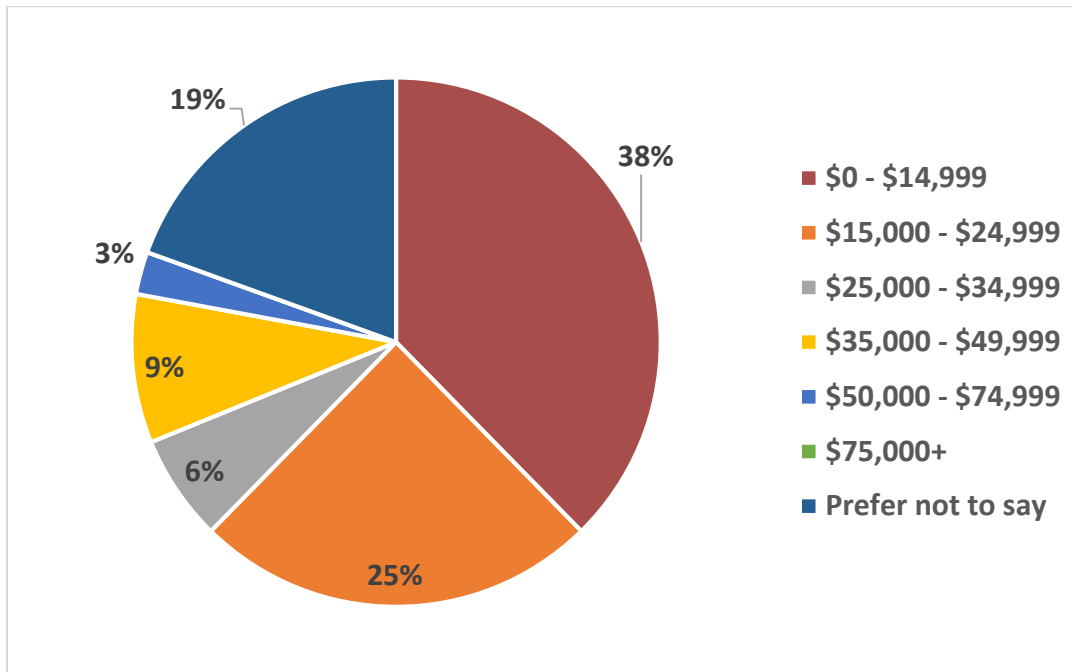
13) Are you a military veteran?



14) Do you have any type of disability?



15) What is your annual household income?



Appendix B: Transportation Services Inventory

The following table contains information about transportation providers and programs available in the Northwest Pennsylvania region. The inventory was compiled throughout the coordinated plan update and represents the most up-to-date list of specialized transportation services for seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals.

Multiple Counties Served by One Agency

Agency or Program	Counties Served	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Clarion, Forest, and Venango County Road to Recovery	Clarion County Forest County Venango County	Contract Volunteer (American Cancer Society): Provides ambulatory cancer patients living in the tri-county area with ground transportation to and from cancer-related medical appointments. Patients call ahead (preferably 4 or more business days in advance) to request transportation, and rides are dependent on volunteer driver availability.	Rides provided as volunteers are available	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation
Helpmates, Inc. Home Care Agency	Crawford County	Contract Volunteer: Provides personal care and home support for elderly citizens, with services that include transportation. The Agency is a Certified Provider for the PA Department of Aging Waiver and Options Program that financially assists community members over age 60 who wish to continue living in their homes. The Agency has offices in Clarion, Meadville, and Warren.	Rides provided by request for any date and time	Rate of services for "privately" paying consumers varies by county. Local AAA's may refer their clients, and Aging Waiver Programs and VA Benefits for Veterans may cover the cost where applicable.	Program Transportation
Venango County Association for the Blind	Clarion County Forest County Venango County	Contract Volunteer: The Venango County Association for the Blind provides transportation and human guide services to medical appointments and shopping for residents in the tri-county area with vision loss.	Rides provided as volunteers are available	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation

Agency or Program	Counties Served	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
GoGoGrandparent	Clarion County Crawford County Forest County Venango County Warren County	Rideshare Reservation Service: Reserves rideshare rides on services like Uber for seniors and monitors those rides for their family. It provides a phone number for reservations so no smartphone or data plan is necessary. Text alerts are sent to family members at the beginning and end of rides.	24/7 monitoring, rideshare hours depend on rideshare services.	Arrangement and oversight fee: \$0.19 per minute of monitoring	Private
Lyft	Crawford County Venango County	Rideshare Service: Rideshare network that connects users' transportation requests to available drivers who use their personal cars. The service requires access to a smartphone with data to arrange and pay for rides. The company location that services the RPO is located in Erie, PA (serves most of Crawford and part of Venango Counties)	24/7 service based on availability of drivers. Trip requests are typically accommodated between 5 and 30 minutes before pickup but can be scheduled up to 7 days in advance.	Base fare \$1:30, plus \$0.20 per minute and \$1.10 per mile (\$4.90 minimum fare). \$1.70 service fee, up to \$1.25 higher for scheduled rides. Riders may pay higher rates under "prime time" pricing levels during periods of high demand. 1% of trip cost PA surcharge.	Private
Uber	Clarion County Crawford County Forest County Venango County Warren County	Rideshare Service: Uber is a rideshare network that connects users' transportation requests to available drivers who use their personal cars. The service requires access to a smartphone with data to arrange and pay for rides. The company locations that service the RPO are located in Erie, PA (serves Crawford, Forest, Venango, and Warren Counties), and DuBois, PA (serves Clarion County).	24/7 service based on availability of drivers. Trip requests are typically accommodated between 5 and 30 minutes before pickup. Ride requests within the RPO cannot be scheduled days in advance.	Base fare \$1.30, plus \$0.20 per minute and \$1.05 per mile (\$6.25 minimum fare). Booking fee of \$1.35. Riders may pay higher rates under "surge" pricing levels during periods of high demand. 1% of trip cost PA surcharge.	Private
Zipcar	Crawford County (<i>Allegheny College & Clarion University</i>)	Car-Share Service: Provides 1-2 vehicles at these 2 locations for flexible self-service rentals. The service is aimed at college students (students receive a discounted membership price and vehicles are located in campus parking lots), but community members may also purchase Zipcar memberships and access the vehicles from campus.	24/7 self-service, drivers must reserve time slots in advance	\$7.50-\$8.50 per hour, \$69 per day base rate Mon-Thurs; \$8.50-\$9.50 per hour, \$77 per day base rate Fri-Sun. Requires annual membership (\$15 for students, \$70 for community members).	Private

Transportation Services in Clarion County

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Clarion Area Transit (CAT)/ Area Transportation Authority of North Central PA (ATA)	Fixed Route Services: CAT provides 2 bus loops in Clarion County, the Clarion Mall Loop and the Clarion Campus Loop. The Campus Loop does not operate during Clarion University's holiday breaks or semester breaks.	Hours of Operation are 8:20 a.m. to 8:15 p.m, Monday to Thursday; 8:20 a.m. to 10:15 p.m., Friday and Saturday	Fares for either Mall Loop or Campus Loop: \$1.25 for riders aged 12-64 years, \$0.65 for children aged 5-11 years, and free for senior citizens (65+), Clarion University students, and children under 5 years.	Public
Clarion County Transportation	Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP): Clarion County Transportation is the MATP provider for residents of Clarion County. The MATP transports consumers to medical appointments, day programming, and senior centers. Riders are typically senior citizens and low-income individuals who are already enrolled with a county-funded agency.	Hours of Operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation
Primary Health Network	Program Transportation: Clarion Community Health Center provides transportation to its patients without restrictions on who can ride, although the van does not have a lift and therefore cannot carry wheelchairs. The service will also transport children of a patient to their school. It operates in a 15 mile radius around the Health center, comprising Clarion, Venango, and Jefferson Counties.	Available before and after any appointment	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation
Choice Cab Co	Taxi Service: Choice Cab Co. is based in Clarion, PA. Wheelchair accessible transportation is available.	Hours of Operation are 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday	Metered pricing	Private
Clarion County Taxi	Taxi Service: Clarion County Taxi is based in Shippensburg, PA	Hours of Operation are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 pm Monday through Saturday	Metered pricing	Private

Transportation Services in Crawford County

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Crawford Area Transportation Authority (CATA) (partner: Venango County Transportation Authority)	Fixed Route and Shared Ride Program: CATA, in partnership with the Venango County Transportation Authority, operates transportation services that include fixed routes and shared-ride services. The fixed route services cover 10 routes, including a seasonal route to the Crawford County Fair and The Loop for Allegheny College Students. Shared-ride services require at least 2 days advance notice and are available to the general public as well as consumers enrolled in CATA's Senior Free Transit Program or the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Program. The latter two programs can be applied to through CATA. Consumers of low income or disability may also be referred by a social service agency for free bus passes for fixed routes through the Human Service Development Fund program.	Fixed Route: 7:00 a.m. to 9:55 p.m., Monday through Friday; 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday Shared-Ride: 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.	Fixed Route: Fare is \$1.25 one-way, with a \$0.70 fare for children aged 6-17, \$0.50 for children aged 5 or under (up to 3 young children's fares can be waived in the company of a paid adult), and free fare for University of Pittsburgh students and consumers aged 65 years or older. Allegheny College Students ride The Loop free of charge, while all other riders pay the standard fixed route fares. Shared Ride: Sliding scale based on number of miles traveled (between \$13.30 and \$46.65 one-way). Seniors aged 65 or older and persons with disabilities receive reduced rates (between \$2.00 and \$7.00). Seniors may ride from their home to the nearest senior center for \$0.50 one-way as part of a partnership between CATA and Active Aging. Depending on age, household income, and disability, consumers may qualify for free or reduced fare.	Public
Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type

The Arc of Crawford County	The Arc uses staff cars for transportation of clients in their program services. They can be used for transportation to places including medical appointments, shopping, or recreation usually within Crawford County if a person qualifies.	When necessary and staff is available.	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation
Bethesda Children's Home	Bethesda has volunteer drivers that provide transportation with a fleet of vehicles. They transport the children at the home to medical appointments any distance away.	Anytime	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation
Community Health Services	Community Health Services is the MATP provider for residents of Crawford County. The MATP transports consumers to medical appointments in Crawford, Erie, Venango, Warren, and Mercer Counties. Consumers may either ride in an MATP vehicle, or if they have access to a vehicle they may receive mileage reimbursement. Meadville Medical Center also provides additional service to those who do not qualify for MATP through small grants from United Way and the Crawford County Drug and Alcohol Executive Commission.	Office hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., other times as needed.	Free for those enrolled in MAPT	Program Transportation
Crawford County Human Services	CCHS provides direct transportation for their clients with a fleet of vehicles and part time drivers. This option is typically used for Children and Youth Services and as a last resort for appointments. They are working on a more comprehensive, county-wide system. They also give out bus passes.	As needed when there is no other option	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation
Crawford County Road to Recovery	Contract Volunteer (American Cancer Society): Road to Recovery provides ambulatory cancer patients living in Crawford County with ground transportation to and from cancer-related medical appointments. Patients call ahead (preferably 4 or more business days in advance) to request transportation, and rides are dependent on volunteer driver availability.	Rides provided as volunteers are available	Free to those who qualify	Program Transportation
First Christian Church	First Christian Church provides medical transportation with volunteer drivers and bus service to and from the church on Sundays.	Medical: when needed and volunteers are available Bus: before and after church	Free for church members	Program Transportation

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Keystone Blind Association	The Keystone Blind Association provides transportation services for consumers with vision loss and who meet loose household income requirements. Escorts are provided for driving consumers to the grocery, medical appointments, the bank, the post office, and personal needs shopping. Drivers meet clients at the door and assist them during shopping trips as needed.	7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday; accommodations usually made for appointments outside that window	Free within Crawford County, donations accepted for out-of-county trips	Program Transportation
Vallonia Industries	Sheltered Workshop Provider: Vallonia Industries provides transportation to and from their offices for its clients provided by staff members.	Hours of Operation are 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Other hours and days by appointment.	Free	Program Transportation
Yolanda G. Barco Oncology Center	Meadville Oncology Center provides service to oncology patients who do not qualify for MATP within Crawford County. The center owns the vehicle used.	Office hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., other times as needed.	Free for those who are eligible, donations accepted	Program Transportation
Meadville Area Ambulance Services, LLC	MAAS has provided emergency and non-emergency services to the citizens of Crawford County since 1958. MAAS is a full service ambulance service providing medical taxi, wheelchair, ALS/BLS emergency and non-emergency transportation.	24/7/365	Membership-based service	Private
Metro Taxi in Meadville	Taxi service available in Meadville and Crawford County.	24/7	Metered pricing	Private
TJ's Taxi	Taxi service based in Titusville, PA. Emergency service appointments are available.	Hours of Operation are 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Other hours and days by appointment.	Metered pricing	Private

Transportation Services in Forest County

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Forest County Transportation	Forest County Transportation provides shared-ride transportation within the county and the surrounding area to County residents.	Rides provided as volunteers are available.	Persons with disabilities and citizens age 65 and over pay about 15% of the general public fare	Program Transportation

Transportation Services in Venango County

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Venango County Transportation Office (VCTA) (partner: Crawford Area Transportation Authority)	Venango County operates numerous transportation services including fixed routes, shared-ride, and exclusive services. The fixed route services cover 3 routes, primarily between Franklin and Oil City. Shared-ride services require at least 2 days advance notice and are available to the general public as well as Agency Sponsored Passengers. Transportation is limited to Venango County, with some exceptions to neighboring counties for medical trips. Exclusive services are individualized trips to accommodate medical transportation that cannot be covered by either Shared Ride or Fixed Route Services.	<p>Fixed Route: 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays.</p> <p>Shared-Ride: 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.</p>	<p>Fixed Route: Fare is \$1.50 with reduced/free fares for children and free fare for consumers aged 65 years or older.</p> <p>Shared-Ride: Sliding scale based on number of miles traveled (between \$10 and \$25). Seniors aged 65 and older receive reduced rates with age verification in VCTO's files (between \$1.50 and \$3.75); transportation to Creekside and Scrubgrass Senior Centers is free. Depending on age, household income, and disability, consumers may qualify for free or reduced fare.</p>	Public

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Family Service & Children's Aid Society of Venango County	Program Transportation: FSCAS provides transportation to its clients with its own fleet of vehicles in Venango, Clarion, and Eastern Crawford Counties. Transportation includes taking Oil City High School students to community service activities, picking up and dropping off drug and alcohol program clients for group sessions, and taking clients of other programs to appointments, housing, shopping, and meetings; for some programs as far as Erie and Pittsburgh.	Drug and alcohol groups: Mondays and Wednesdays 9a.m. to 12p.m., Fridays 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. School groups: during the school day Other groups: at appointment times or during staff work hours	Free	Program Transportation
Hand in Hand Christian Counseling	Contract Volunteer (for Venango Ride Program): Hand in Hand is a community counseling service whose services include after-hours transportation for working residents. The services cater to those who work during non-traditional business hours when or where the Venango County bus does not run. Referrals are made through the Venango County CSS Office.	Rides are scheduled in advance based on the rider's schedule	Subject to Venango Ride Program fees	Program Transportation
Mustard Seed Missions	Contract Volunteer (for Venango Ride Program): Mustard Seed Missions is a cooperative effort between numerous churches in Venango County and the VCHS. As part of the Venango Ride Program, Mustard Seed Missions provides rides specifically for medical appointments outside the county for individuals currently receiving (or who are eligible for) services through the VCHS.	Rides provided as volunteers are available	Subject to Venango Ride Program fees	Program Transportation
Turning Point Treatment Center	Turning Point has vehicles used to pick up new admittees from their houses, take home patients who complete their program, discharge patients to other facilities, transport patients to the emergency room and for procedures like blood work, and pick up and drop off outpatients and intensive outpatients. Transportation is provided within Venango County for outpatients and within about a four hour radius in Pennsylvania and Ohio for inpatients.	Available daylight hours and at night when necessary	Free for patients	Program Transportation

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Venango County Association for the Blind	The Association for the Blind provides transportation to their clients for essential services including medical appointments, bank or grocery trips, and legal or social services.	Office hours: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., additional times as needed if absolutely necessary	Included in services for clients (spouse, etc. included), non-clients (visually impaired or over the financial limit) pay \$5.00 per hour with a \$20 maximum	Program Transportation
Venango County Senior Volunteer Program (formerly Venango County RSVP)	Contract Volunteer (for Venango Ride Program): RSVP is a volunteer organization for Venango County residents age 55 and up. Their services include transporting seniors to out-of-county medical appointments, typically to Pittsburgh, Erie, Greenville, Grove City, and Titusville. Riders are referred to RSVP by the Venango Area Agency on Aging (a department of the VCHS).	Rides provided as volunteers are available. No overnight trips	Subject to Venango Ride Program fees	Program Transportation
Venango Ride Program (Venango County Human Services)	Contract Volunteer (through Venango County Human Services): Venango Ride provides transportation to Venango County residents who lack a personal or borrowed vehicle for transportation for employment, post high school education, medical appointments, etc. Individuals requesting access to the Ride Program must already have an open case with the VCHS, but consumers must not otherwise be eligible for any Venango County Transportation Program. Riders are referred to the program by Human Services staff, and reassessment of eligibility must be conducted every 6 months. Ride requests are referred to Mustard Seed Missions, Hand in Hand, or RSVP to provide volunteer drivers. Vehicles cannot accommodate wheelchairs or riders with life support equipment.	Rides provided as volunteers are available	For ongoing needs, the first 2 months of transportation are free. After 2 months, riders must purchase a ride pass, either a pass for 10 1-way rides for \$13.50, or a monthly unlimited pass for \$42.	Program Transportation

Venango Training and Development Center, Inc.	Sheltered Workshop Provider: Venango Training and Development Center transports their clients between programs and to other locations on rare occasions. They will transport clients to Venango, Clarion, Forest, Crawford, Clearfield, and Jefferson Counties for programs usually during the day or early evening.	When needed	Free	Program Transportation
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Transportation Services in Warren County

Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Transit Authority of Warren County (TAWC)	Fixed Route Services, Shared Ride Program, Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP): TAWC provides many transportation services, including fixed route, shared-ride, and MATP services. Fixed route buses travel 3 routes across the county--the Sheffield Route, the Youngsville Route, and the North/South Route. Shared-ride services transport county residents throughout the County for medical appointments, shopping, visits, etc. Consumers must call ahead by at least one business day to reserve a seat, and specific trip reservations should be made 1-2 weeks in advance. The buses for shared ride services are wheelchair-accessible. MATP transportation services are available for consumers with verified need (as determined by the PA Department of Public Welfare). Services can be provided directly or through mileage reimbursement.	Fixed Route: 4:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday. Shared Ride: Weekdays	Fixed Route: Bus fare is \$1 for most, \$0.50 for children 6-12 years old, and riders under 6 or over 65 ride free. Shared-Ride: Varies	Public
Bollinger Enterprises	Bollinger Enterprises provides employment and life skills training to individuals with disabilities. It provides two bus shuttle services for their clients to their production facility in Warren, PA from Youngsville and Sheffield into Forest County. During the day, seven vans are available for transport of clients to programs and volunteering opportunities.	Morning and evening weekday commutes, vans during the day as needed	Free for clients	Program Transportation

Disabled American Veterans, Warren County	DAV transports veterans who have medical appointments within the VA system with volunteer drivers. It serves Warren County veterans going to any VA hospital in the region, including Pittsburgh, Erie, Buffalo, and Cleveland.	When drivers are available, appointments farther away should be during the day (example: between 9 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. for appointments in Erie)	Free	Program Transportation
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Agency or Program	Service or Program Description	Availability	Cost	Service Type
Sight Center of Western PA	The Sight Center provides transportation and escort services to essential locations (medical appointments, grocery store, etc.) for qualified participants with vision loss. Case workers determine qualification and refer individuals to the appropriate services.	Monday through Thursday, 8a.m. to 4 p.m., earlier or later if necessary for appointment	Based on income	Program Transportation
Warren County Children and Youth Services	CYS has three aides who drive clients to necessary appointments including court-ordered, medical, and therapy. The program serves clients from the agency from Warren County but will transport to places including Pittsburgh and Erie.	8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, other times if necessary	Free	Program Transportation
Warren County Road to Recovery	Contract Volunteer (American Cancer Society): Road to Recovery provides ambulatory cancer patients living in Warren County with ground transportation to and from cancer-related medical appointments. Patients call ahead (preferably 4 or more business days in advance) to request transportation, and rides are dependent on volunteer driver availability.	Rides provided as volunteers are available	Free	Program Transportation

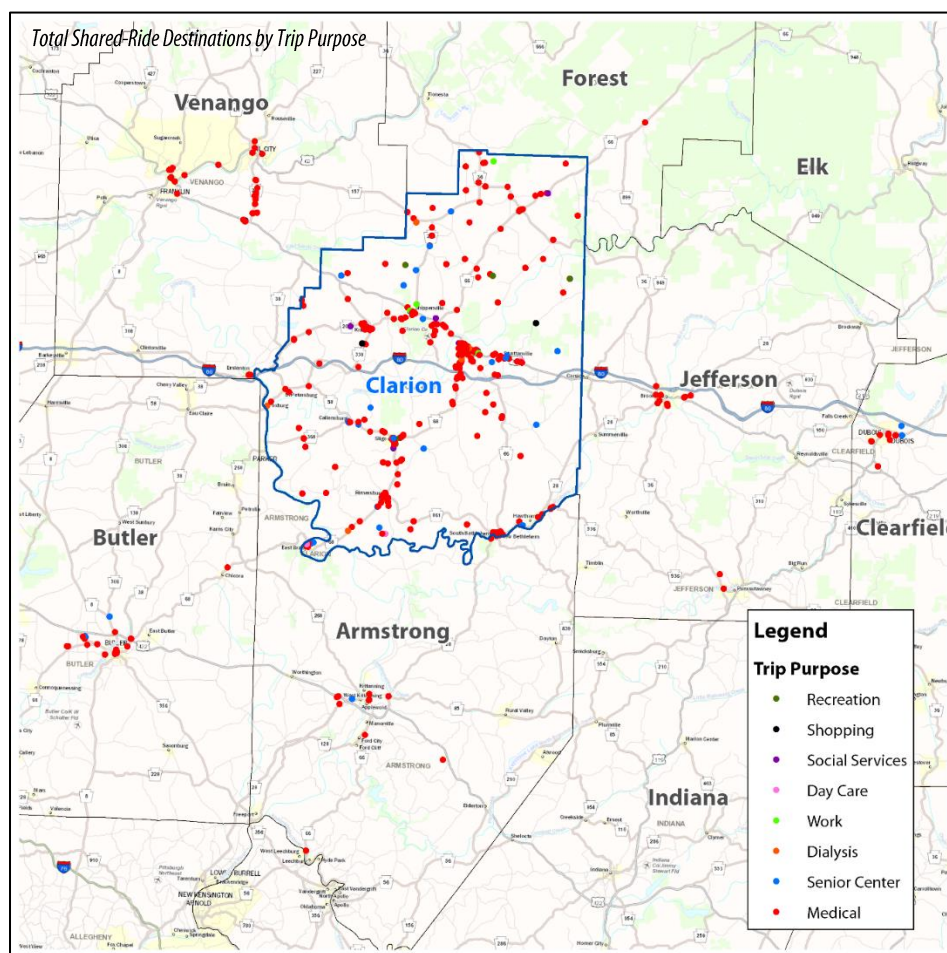
Warren Taxi Co.	Warren Taxi Co. is based in Warren, PA, and provides trips to and from locations including Warren General Hospital, shopping locations, Jamestown and Erie airports, and places of work. The company provides transportation within a 50 mile radius of Warren County.	Hours of Operation are 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday	Metered pricing	Private
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Appendix C: Top Shared-Ride Destinations by County

Using shared-ride trip data from September 2016 to April 2016, top destinations were identified by RPO county.

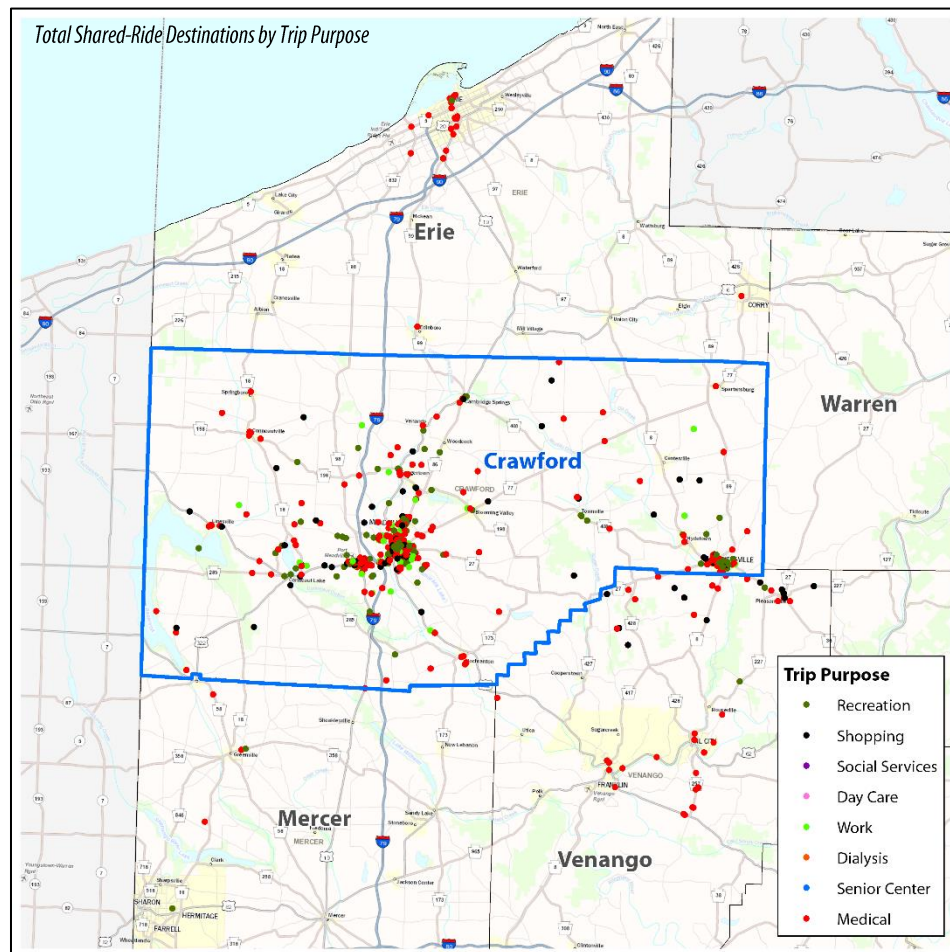
Clarion County

Top 10 Drop-Off Locations	# of Trips
1. Clarion Hospital	919
2. Clarion Senior Center	613
3. VNA Extended Care - Adult Daily Living Center	343
4. Family Psychological	336
5. Rimersburg Senior Center	312
6. Old Hospital	304
7. Anderson Building	279
8. Dialysis Clinic, Inc. of Clarion	215
9. Clarion CenClear	214
10. UPMC Clarion	186



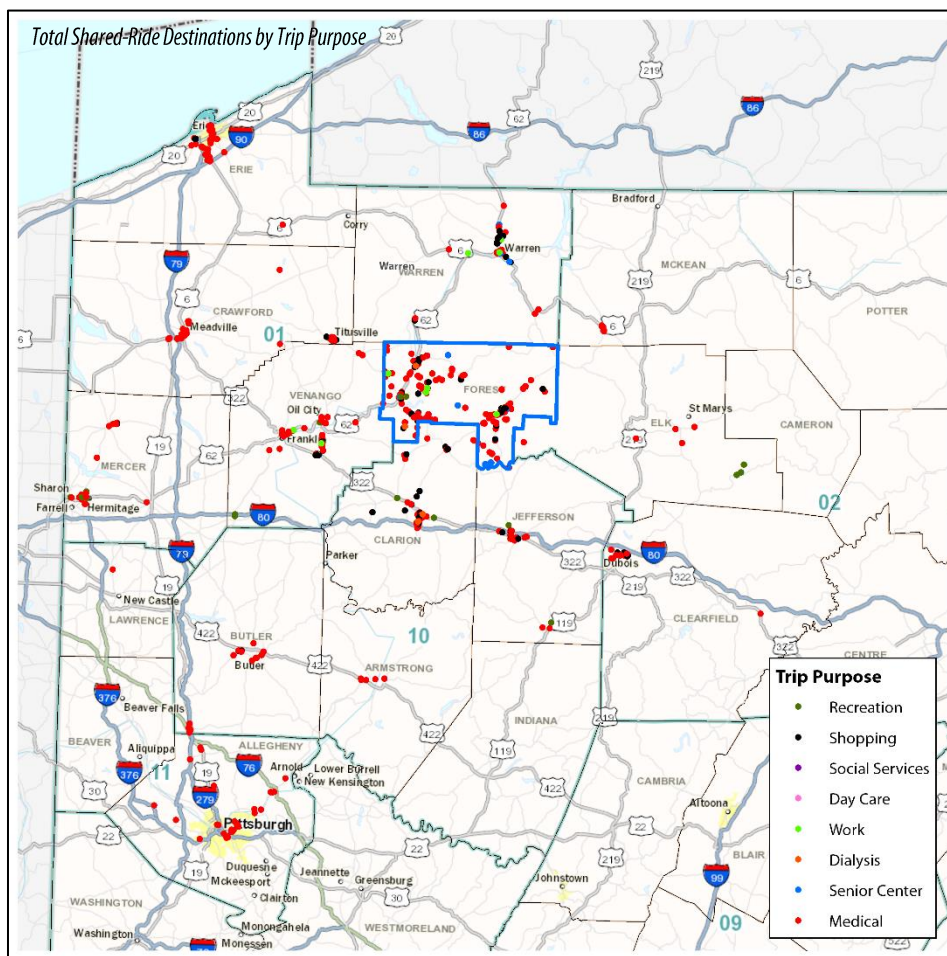
Crawford County

Top 10 Drop-Off Locations	# of Trips
1. Davita Dialysis	1,398
2. Senior Center of Meadville	991
3. Greenfield Counselling	984
4. Senior Center of Lakeland	633
5. Meadville Walmart	596
6. Senior Center of Cambridge Springs	520
7. YMCA Vernon	509
8. Meadville Medical Liberty	387
9. Southwoods Assisted Living	323
10. Senior Center of Titusville	319



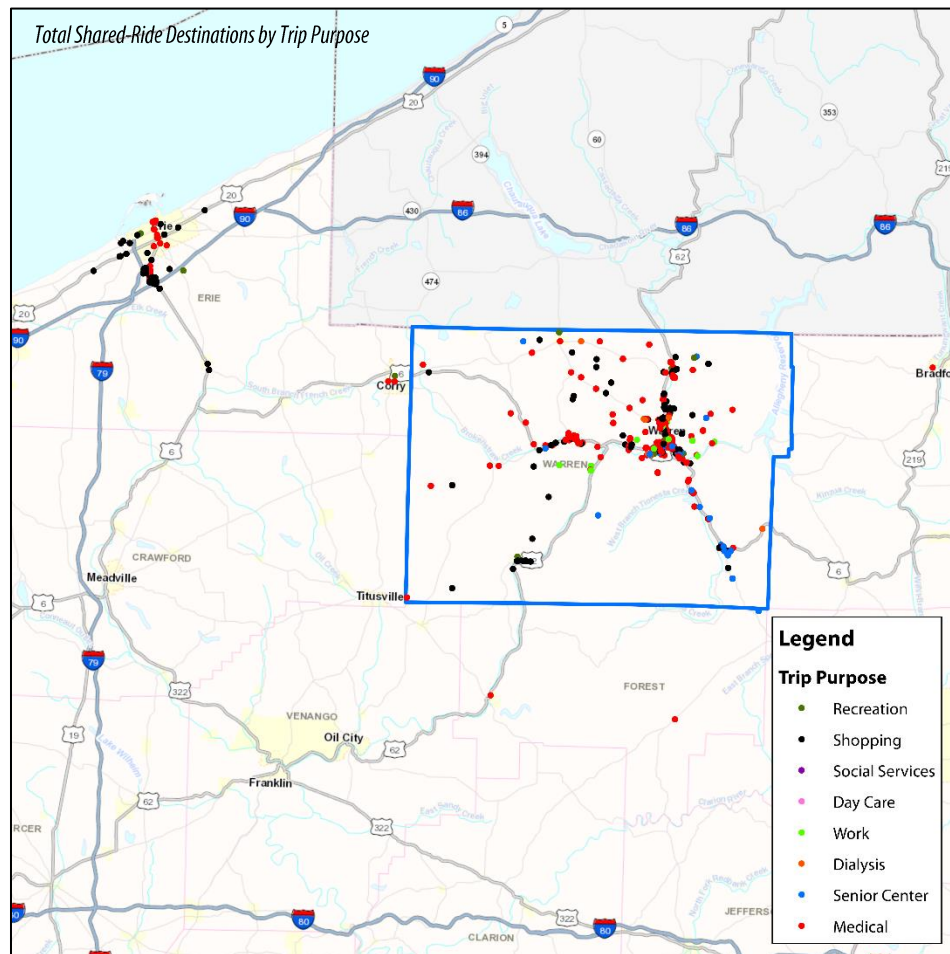
Forest County

Top 10 Drop-Off Locations	# of Trips
1. Marienville West Apartments	612
2. Post Office Marienville	355
3. Greenfield Counseling	247
4. Walmart Clarion	182
5. Senior Center of Endeavor	159
6. Clarion Health Complex	152
7. Cranberry Mall	150
8. Dollar General Marienville	138
9. Senior Center of Maca	119
10. Comet Clarion	118



Warren County

Top 10 Drop-Off Locations	# of Trips
1. Bridges Adult Daycare	892
2. Allegheny Community Center	712
3. Walmart Super Center – Warren	608
4. Dialysis – Warren General Hospital	593
5. YMCA – Warren	501
6. Lakeshore Community Services	424
7. Sheffield Senior Center	390
8. Warren General Hospital	386
9. Mill Creek Mall	356
10. Cambridge Warren Assisted Living	283



Venango County

Top 10 Drop-Off Locations	# of Trips
1. Venango County Training & Development Center	3,232
2. Cranberry Place	1,516
3. Rainbow Recovery	1,008
4. Greenfield Counseling	789
5. Clarion Renal Care	480
6. Oil City Dialysis Center	464
7. Regional Counseling – Oil City	438
8. Scrubgrass Senior Center	409
9. Sugar Valley Lodge	358
10. Tracy Jo's Adult Day Care	321

