

HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2025

Region 10: Lee and Russell Counties



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Lee-Russell Council of Governments 2025 Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan

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This document is an update to the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan (HSCTP) that Lee-Russell Council of Governments originally published in 2006 and updated in 2008, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2020. This update is a continuation of the HSCTP process in coordination with the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and the Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS). The regional councils of Alabama, through the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC), have been contracted to ensure that local grant applications for Section 5310, Section 5311 and Section 5307 funds are included in the HSCTP.

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Updated 3/25

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Transportation within the region is provided by the Lee-Russell Public Transit (LRPT), Phenix City Express (PEX), Aright Ride Transportation, Royal Transportation and Shuttle, Cherished Moments Caring Solutions, Auburn University which operates Tiger Transit, Uber, Lyft, Yellow Cab, Ms. Sue's Taxi, Tiger Taxi, 8 Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Providers, 10 Assisted Living Facilities that transport their residents only and a variety of not-for-profit agencies that transport their clients to and from their homes to appointments.

1.2 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is (1) to determine transportation gaps and coordination opportunities among publicly funded, human services transportation programs in Lee and Russell Counties and (2) develop strategies to rectify the identified shortfalls and coordination issues. This plan examined overall transportation deficiencies and coordination issues for each county and the entire region. Lee-Russell Council of Governments prepared this Coordinated Transportation Plan on behalf and in cooperation with transportation providers and human service agencies in Lee and Russell Counties.

1.3 Laws and Regulations

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) required the development of a Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan in order to be eligible for three Federal Transit Administration programs (Section 5310 - Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities, Section 5316 - Job Access and Reverse Commute, and Section 5317 - New Freedom). These Federal Transit Administration grant programs have since expired. Under Map-21, the Section 5316 and 5317 programs were consolidated with the Section 5307, 5310, and 5311 programs.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) require that specialized transit projects be included in a locally developed, coordinated human services plan and that the plan be developed and approved through a process that includes participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, people with low income, private transportation providers, nonprofit transportation providers, human services providers and other members of the public. Required elements include (1) an assessment of available services, (2) an assessment of transportation needs, (3) strategies, activities, and/or projects to address gaps, needs, and efficiency improvements, and (4) priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility of implementation.

1.4 Agency Participation

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) and the Alabama Association of Regional Commissions (AARC) agreed to develop 12 regional transit coordination plans in 2024. The AARC represents the 12 regional commissions that cover every county in the state. The 12 plans coincide with the commission districts. ALDOT agreed to fund the cost of the plans with pass-through Federal Transit Administration (FTA) money.

In East Central Alabama, the plan was developed by Lee-Russell Council of Governments (LRCOG), one of the 12 regional commissions.

1.5 Coordinated Transportation Planning Progress and Strategies

Since the last update of the plan in 2020, Lee and Russell Counties have continued to make strides toward coordinating transportation. The Coordinated Transportation Advisory Council meets quarterly or as needed and has worked conjunctively to develop new priorities for the region.

1.6 Time Frame

As previously mentioned, this plan identifies current needs and also some strategies to address these needs. It does not attempt to forecast future needs and develop a related set of strategies. Based on these facts, this plan is a short-range document, and some strategies may not be implemented in the near future due to the lack of financial support.

The original version of this plan was adopted in 2006, and revisions were prepared in 2008, 2011, 2015, 2017, and 2020. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), the agency providing the funding, established the development cycle. The ALDOT contract requires the plan to be revised in 2025, and summary reports prepared in 2026 and 2027. Future federal regulations and ALDOT needs will determine the plan development schedule beyond 2027.

1.7 Public Involvement

A public transportation survey was developed and distributed to local agencies to share with their clients including: Lee Russell Public Transit, Phenix City Express, Christian Care Ministries, Salvation Army, United Way, East Alabama Food Bank, Food Pantry at AUMC, the 9 Agency on Aging Senior Centers, Lee and Russell County DHR, the Achievement Center, EASE, Village Friends, East Alabama Health, and the Exceptional Foundation of East Alabama. The survey was also posted on the Lee-Russell Council of Governments Facebook page, Opelika Observer Facebook page, and on the Nextdoor app. The purpose of the survey was to identify the needs of the riders, and to get their opinions of the current transportation services in the Lee and Russell County area. A second survey was developed and distributed to the transportation providers in Lee and Russell Counties. The results from the two surveys were utilized to develop this plan.

1.8 Current State of Public Transportation within Region 10

The current state of public transportation in Region 10 is one that faces many challenges to provide accessible and adequate transportation options to the citizens in Lee and Russell Counties. The following characterizes the status of public transportation in Region 10:

1. Lee and Russell counties have a significant number of citizens who can be classified as having a higher need for transportation services. These individuals include individuals with disabilities, older adults (over age 65), and persons living below the Federal Poverty Level.
2. Transportation services do not adequately meet the current transportation needs, especially in the rural areas of the region. Providers struggle daily to meet the current demand for transportation services from clients. Due to a lack of capacity and resources within the transportation system, numerous transportation requests that are received, cannot be met by the providers. This means there are individuals without transportation options for work, school, shopping, and medical visits.
3. Current funding for public transportation is not adequate to meet the identified needs of Lee and Russell Counties. Due to limited funding, transportation providers are forced to maintain inadequate service or forced to cut services
4. Operating costs for both public and private transportation systems are increasing. Additional revenues are needed to maintain and expand the current transportation services. Federal, state, and local budgets are stretched thin and are not available for injection into the system. Currently, public transit in Region 10 functions without fares. It was deemed that fares were not offsetting a significant enough portion of operating costs to justify the burden that it causes to disadvantaged riders.
5. Transportation services can only be provided at the level to which they are funded. Funding and driver retention were the most urgent issues for public transportation stakeholders that were surveyed or participated in committee discussions. Limited funding and few qualified drivers make it challenging for public transportation to adequately meet demands of the public. Lee-Russell Public Transit has implemented a new ride scheduling software which allows easier access when scheduling transportation. With this new system, the administration of public transit will be more efficient. Lee-Russell Public Transit is also actively pursuing a new parking area for the buses that are used in Russell County. This will increase vehicle efficiency and meet demand in that area of the region.

Improving transportation services in Region 10 will involve a combined effort on several fronts. Though Lee and Russell Counties have continued to improve internal operations, there are multiple changes that need to be addressed. A more detailed discussion of current needs and strategies to address these needs can be found in Section 5.

1.9 LRCOG FY2024 Transit Indicators

This section details the transit services provided by LRCOG from October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024. The Coordinated Transportation Advisory Council uses data from the previous year to identify gaps in service.

In FY24 LRPT vehicles made 61,150 trips. 6,048 of these trips included services for passengers using a wheelchair. Trips were contained within 8 counties in Alabama and Georgia, (origin and destination), with a vast majority, over 98%, were domestic within the Lee-Russell region. LRPT passengers traveled 2,004,883 miles over this period serving 62,641 passengers. The purpose of each trip is also recorded by LRCOG in 10 categories. Trips for nutrition and employment make up just under two-thirds of all trips, about 66%.

Dialysis	Medical	Education	Employment	JARC	Nutrition	Shopping	Special Trip	Other	Not Assigned
5,520	6,934	2,515	17,029	2	23,392	1,794	31	3,099	834

2.0 Lee-Russell Region

2.1 Lee and Russell County Region Geographic Information

Lee County is located in East Central Alabama and is part of the Auburn, AL Metropolitan Area. The county seat is Opelika, and the largest city is Auburn. To the north, south and west of Lee County are the Alabama counties of Chambers, Tallapoosa, Macon, and Russell. The land area is 608 square miles. In 2023 the population density per square mile in Lee County was 301.1. Lee County is bisected by Interstate 85. Lee County maintains 626 miles of paved roads and 173 miles of dirt roads, according to the Lee County Highway Index. Despite containing the largest metropolitan area in Region 10, Lee County has large portions of rural area. In those rural areas, commutes are longer and finding transportation is challenging.

Russell County is located in East Central Alabama, along the Chattahoochee River. Its county seat is Phenix City. Russell County is part of the Columbus, GA- Alabama Metropolitan Area. At the county's eastern border, is the State of Georgia. To the north, south, and west of Russell County are the Alabama counties of Lee, Macon, Bullock, and Barbour. The land area is 641 square miles. In 2023, the population density per square mile was 91.6. Russell County is bisected by US Highway 431. US Highway 280 passes through the northeastern corner of the county. The northern areas of the county have access to interstate 85 via the I-185 spur. Russell County maintains 373 miles of paved roads and 199 miles of unpaved roads.

2.2 Population and Projected Growth

In 2023, according to the US Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates, the population of the Lee-Russell Region was 241,959. Russell County is the 23rd most populous county and Lee County is 8th in Alabama. Between 2013 and 2023, the populations of the region increased by 17.2%.

The median age for the region is 34, as of 2022. The presence of Auburn University accounts for the larger than expected percent of the population between the ages of 20 and 25 in Lee County.

The major population areas of Lee County are in the cities of Auburn, Opelika, and Smiths Station. 67% of the counties' population resides in these 3 cities. 33% reside in the rural and/or unincorporated areas of the county. The major population areas of Russell County are in the northeastern area of the county, in and adjacent to the county seat, Phenix City. 64% of the county's population is located in the urban and suburban areas of the county. The remaining 36% live in the more rural areas of the county. [See Appendix A for more information.](#)

2.3 Table 1: Lee-Russell Vulnerable Populations 2023/2022 ACS 5-year Estimates

Demographics	Lee-Russell	Alabama
Total Population	241,959	5,108,468
Adults, 65+	13.2%	17.3%
Individuals with Disabilities	14.6%	16.9%
Persons in Poverty	16.8%	16.2%
Households without Vehicle Access	5.9%	5.5%
Persons with Limited English Proficiency	3.4%	2.4%

2.4 Adults Aged 65 and Older

Transportation and mobility are problematic for senior citizens, especially those who live in small urban or rural areas where public transportation options are limited. According to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), 21% of Americans over the age of 65 do not drive. According to the 2023 US Census estimates, there were 30,929 individuals over the age of 65 in Lee and Russell Counties. Using the information from AARP, more than 6,494 senior citizens in the county were in need of transportation assistance from friends, family, and providers to access necessities.

Projections from the Alabama State Data Center show the elderly population of Lee County growing from 21,085 in 2020 to 30,877 by 2030, which is a 46% increase. With Auburn and Opelika increasingly seen as desirable retirement locations, it seems certain that transportation services for senior citizens in the county, will have difficulty meeting the additional demands in the future. In Russell County, transportation providers may also struggle to meet the demands of seniors, especially in the rural areas. [See Appendix B for more information.](#)

2.5 Individuals with Disabilities

A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual. For transportation planning purposes, the mere existence of a disability is not as important as the individual's capability to perform life activities.

The 2020 United States Census included several questions pertaining to disabilities. The category labeled "outside the home disabilities," was previously the best indicator of individuals with disabilities who need public transportation or paratransit services. There are now five categories: ambulatory, self-care, cognitive, vision, hearing, and independent living difficulty. All five types of Census Designated Disabilities can indicate trouble with transportation; therefore, we will look at the total population of people with disabilities. The 2023 ACS- 5-year estimates found 35,700 persons in Lee-Russell with disabilities.

2.6 Persons and Families in Poverty

The Alabama Department of Human Resources reported that during the month of December 2024, Lee County had 131 families (317 individuals) receiving financial assistance and Russell County had 106 families (290 individuals) receiving financial assistance. In Lee County, 6,611 households received assistance from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and in Russell County, 4,221 households received SNAP benefits. Additionally, 137 individuals in Lee County and 87 individuals in Russell County qualified for the JOBS program. The JOBS program participants receive support to train for, attain, and maintain employment. The JOBS support services include childcare, job training and transportation. In order to participate in the JOBS program, individuals must qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

2.7 Households without Vehicle Access

The number of vehicles available to a housing unit is an indicator of the need for transportation services. In 2023, 5.9% of households in Lee and Russell Counties reported having no car. While this is a relatively low percentage of the households in the county, it is troubling that some of the higher concentrations of these households are in the southwestern rural area of Lee County and high concentrations in rural and urban areas of Russell County. These rural households are located a far distance from health and social services, educational facilities, shopping centers, restaurants and pharmacies. Large distance to necessities, with limited vehicle access, can overburden transportation providers and their clients.

2.8 Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

The non-native English-speaking population continues to grow in the Lee-Russell region as nearby manufacturing plants expand and other migration into the area increases. Those that are not fluent English speakers may struggle to access certain providers or programs. The Census designates individuals with limited English proficiency as people who speak English “less than very well”. While this population is still relatively small in the Lee-Russell region, 3.4%, it is anticipated to increase as Korean manufacturing continues to expand, and Latin-American migration continues.

3.0 Transit Resource Assessment

3.1 Availability of Transportation Services in Lee and Russell Counties

This section details the transportation services that are available to Lee and Russell County Citizens in 2025. The Coordinated Transportation Advisory Council considers existing transportation services and then works toward filling the gaps in transportation needs in the Lee and Russell County Region.

3.1.1 Achievement Center Easterseals Services – Demand-Response

The Achievement Center Easterseals is a private, non-profit rehabilitation facility that serves Lee, Macon, Chambers, Tallapoosa, and Russell Counties. The Achievement Center has five vans, three cars, three SUV's, two small buses, and two large buses. These vehicles provide transportation to their consumers and work center employees with intellectual, psychological, and physical disabilities to work, doctor's appointments, and work training sites each day. The Achievement Center operates Monday-Thursday from 7:30a.m. to 4:00p.m. and Friday from 7:30a.m. until 11:30a.m. There is no fee for services. Contact information: (334)745-3501

3.1.2 Arabella Health and Wellness – Demand-Response

Serve Lee and Russell Counties, as well as the surrounding areas. Transportation is provided to residents only, at no additional cost. There is one van that is wheelchair accessible. The van is available to residents whenever they have a medical appointment. For more information call (334)298-8247.

3.1.3 Arbor Lake Health and Rehab Center and the Residences at Arbor Lake – Demand-Response

Serve Auburn, Opelika, and the surrounding areas. Transportation is provided to residents staying in the nursing home only (apartments are not included), with no additional cost. There is one van (not wheelchair accessible) and one bus (wheelchair accessible). Scheduling occurs through family or doctors as needed. For more information call (334)826-7200.

3.1.4 Aright Ride Transportation - Demand-Response

Aright Ride Transportation is a non-emergency service focused on providing professional and courteous care to those in need of transportation. They can provide transportation to clients that require assistance with all appointments. They provide flat rates, hourly rental rates, and long-distance one-way fares. The contact number is: (334)209-4848. www.arightride.com

2025 Aright Ride Transportation Fares

Service	0-10 Miles	10-20 Miles	20-30 Miles	30-40 Miles
Flat Rates	\$20	\$40	\$60	\$80

3.1.5 Auburn Assisted Living – Demand-Response

Serve Lee County and the surrounding areas. Transportation is provided to residents only, at no additional cost. There is one bus available, and it is wheelchair accessible. Residents can schedule transportation on Tuesday or Thursday for doctor appointments. There is a set schedule made by staff for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. For more information call (334)246-0822.

3.1.6 Auburn Housing Authority – Demand-Response

Transportation is provided to Auburn Housing Authority residents only and includes transportation to employment and job training, grocery shopping, the Boykin Food Pantry, doctor's appointments, the pharmacy, and youth programs. The transportation must be within the Auburn City limits. They have one (twelve passenger) van. The service is available Monday-Thursday 7:00am to 5:00pm. There is no fee for this service. Reservations need to be made 48 hours (about four days) before the ride. For more information call (334)821-2262 EXT. 230

3.1.7 Auburn University Transportation Services - Fixed-Route and Demand-Response

Auburn University Transportation Services provides transportation to Auburn University students, faculty, and staff. These services include:

Tiger Transit, Jaunt Services, University Shuttle, By Request Service and the Shopping Shuttle.

Tiger Transit – Transportation provided for Auburn students, faculty, and staff only. Operates Monday-Friday 7:00am-8:00pm during fall and spring semesters. Operates Monday-Friday 7:00am until 5:00pm during the summer semester. They offer 7 on-campus routes and 15 off-campus routes. No transit service is available on weekends, during semester breaks or during official Auburn University holidays and closings.

jAunt Services- Free transportation by appointment for Auburn University students, faculty, and staff with a medical condition that causes difficulty traveling within the central part of campus. The service is available Monday-Friday starting at 7:40am with the final appointment for the day at 4:50pm. All jAunt riders must be approved prior to scheduling transportation services by submitting medical documentation to the Office of Accessibility. Call (334)844-2096 to speak with an Accommodation Specialist.

University Shuttle- Free transportation service for Auburn University Faculty and Staff only and is not available to students. It is a courtesy van service available first-come, first-serve and provides transportation from any on-campus location to any on-campus location. It is available Monday-Friday 7:00am to 5:00pm. Riders must call (334)844-8600 when transportation is needed to schedule it.

By Request Service- Free transportation that is available to Auburn University students, faculty, and staff. It is available on a first-come, first-serve basis to and from any marked Tiger Transit bus stop and also to and from six specific Auburn University owned properties that are not on a regular Tiger Transit route. Call (334)844-8600 from 7:00am to 5:00pm Monday – Friday to schedule transportation.

Shopping Shuttle- Transportation for Auburn University students, faculty, and staff. The Shopping Shuttle departs from the Melton Student Center at 5:30pm and concludes at 9:30pm each Friday (except on Fridays when businesses are closed for a holiday). The shuttle goes to the following locations: Wal-Mart (Opelika), Kroger (Tiger Town Shopping Center), Asian Supermarket (Saugahatchee Square) and the Auburn Mall. When boarding the bus, passengers that want to be dropped off at a location other than the Melton Student Center must inform the driver at that time.

3.1.8 Cherished Moments Caring Solutions LLC's - Demand-Response

Cherished Moments Caring Solutions provides transportation solutions as part of its comprehensive support with the transportation services focusing on helping clients with essential travel. This includes medical appointments, therapy sessions, to and from work, childcare facilities, grocery shopping, and other critical errands, while ensuring comfort, reliability, and affordability. They accommodate special needs (e.g., mobility issues, neurodivergent-friendly environments). They serve Lee, Macon, Russell, Chambers, Montgomery, Tallapoosa, Muscogee County, Georgia and Troup County, Georgia. They have two (four passenger) vehicles and two (six passenger) vehicles. They can accommodate individuals with wheelchairs if the request is made at least seventy-two hours (about six days) in advance. To reserve transportation, a person must either call (334)707-3396 or email cherishedmomentscaringsolution@gmail.com

Cherished Moments Transportation Rates:

Service	0-10 Miles	20-40 Miles
One-Way	\$25	\$50
Round Trip	\$45	\$90

Subscription Based Services are also available.

3.1.9 East Alabama Services for the Elderly (EASE) - Demand-Response

EASE provides transportation for its EASEhouse residents as well as other residents of Lee and Russell Counties (subject to driver/companion availability) 62+ and people with disabilities who require personal assistance to conduct activities outside of the home. The agency provides transportation to medical appointments, grocery store, hair salon, etc. The cost for transportation is \$15 per hour for EASEhouse residents and \$17.50 per hour for other residents (2 hour minimum). The vehicles that are used for transportation are personal vehicles. A small foldable wheelchair will fit into most of the vehicles that are used for transportation. For more information call (334)826-5811.

3.1.10 **F & S Transportation - Demand-Response

F & S Transportation provides non-emergency medical transportation in Chambers, Lee and Randolph counties to medical appointments and dialysis. They may also provide transportation for personal errands (if the schedule allows it). They have one van that is wheelchair accessible and can hold up to two wheelchairs and four ambulatory passengers. They accept private pay and Medicaid. For more information or to schedule transportation, please call: (334)646-0983 at least 48 hours in advance.

3.1.11 Groome Transportation – Fixed-Route

Groome Transportation offers a Shared Ride airport shuttle service to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, to and from Auburn, Auburn University, Birmingham, Maxwell AFB, Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga., Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa. Their fleet of vehicles ranges in size from transit vans to motorcoaches. They provide reserved seats for people with ambulatory disabilities and specially designed vans with drive-on ramps for people who use a wheelchair. (Contact Groome by telephone to make accessible travel arrangements for a person with a disability).

You may make your reservations online at www.groometransportation.com/auburn or by calling the local Auburn office at: (334)821-3399.

3.1.12 **Inspirational NEMT Services Transportation – Demand-Response

Inspirational NEMT Services Transportation provides non-emergency medical transportation for Lee, Russell and Chambers counties. They operate two vehicles that are wheelchair accessible. One vehicle holds five passengers, and the other vehicle holds seven. They ask for 48-hour notice when reserving transportation. They are Medicaid Certified. If a person is on Alabama Medicaid, they must call Medicaid directly at (334)242-5000 and receive a confirmation number. For more information call: (706)987-3968.

3.1.13 Integrea Community Mental Health System – Demand-Response

Integrea Community Mental Health System is the local comprehensive provider of mental health, substance use, and developmental disabilities for the East Alabama Community. They offer a full range of clinical, therapeutic, psychiatric, crisis, residential, and community-based support services throughout Lee, Russell, Chambers, and Tallapoosa counties. The organization has a fleet of eighty-two vehicles including: thirty-three (fifteen passenger vans), two Ford Transits that are wheelchair accessible, twenty-eight (4 passenger vehicles) and nineteen (seven passenger) vehicles. The vehicles are for residential group homes and community-based consumers. Integrea does not charge a fee for the transportation of their consumers. Contact information: (334)742-2877

3.1.14 Johnson's Express, Inc. NEMT- Demand Response

Johnson's Express Inc. provides non-emergency medical transportation via wheelchair equipped and regular passenger vans to Lee (Smiths Station) and Russell counties. They have four vehicles (fifteen passenger, twelve passenger, eight passenger and a four passenger). Johnson's Express will transport clients to doctor's appointments, renal treatments, and therapy appointments. Transportation is provided 24 hours a day, Monday through Saturday. Appointments may be scheduled by calling (334)298-3957 or by submitting a request online at www.johnsonexpressinc.com. They accept private pay.

3.1.15 **Junkins Transportation – Demand-Response

Junkins Transportation provides non-emergency medical transportation to Lee, Russell, and Chambers counties as well as taking passengers from Phenix City to Columbus, Georgia for medical appointments. They have three vans including: two vans (both hold two wheelchairs and three ambulatory passengers), and one van (holds one standard wheelchair, one smaller wheelchair and three ambulatory passengers). They are Medicaid Certified and have a contract with CareCar Humana. They also accept private pay. Call (334)846-0792 to schedule transportation.

3.1.16 K3C Transportation – Demand Response

K3C Transportation is based in Montgomery and serves several counties including Macon and Lee, however, there is an extra fee for traveling to Lee County. They operate M-F from 8:00am to 6:00pm. and Saturday – Sunday 10:00am to 7:00pm. They provide non-emergency medical transportation to doctor appointments, dental appointments, dialysis and the pharmacy. Their fleet includes: four (seven passenger) minivans, three (four passenger) sedans and three wheelchair accessible vans. Trips need to be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance (an additional charge is applied for same day/last minute trips) and can be scheduled on the website: <https://k3ctransportation.com/> or by calling the office at (334)320-0575. They accept private pay with a deposit by debit/credit card and the balance being paid in cash, check or money order.

Service	
Unloaded Miles	\$1.75
Round Trip	\$25(up to 10 miles)
Each Additional Mile Over 10	\$2.50

3.1.17 KidOne – Demand-Response

Transports children 1 to 18 years of age to medical appointments. Kid One Transport is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides transportation to medical, dental, and mental health care services for children and expectant mothers who are transportation disadvantaged. They have a fleet of twenty-one vehicles serving 43 counties in north, central and east Alabama. Transportation can be scheduled up to 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) in advance. Call (800)543-7143 for more information.

3.1.18 Lakewood Assisted Living Facility – Demand-Response

Serve Lee and Russell Counties, as well as the surrounding areas. Transportation is provided to residents only. They do not have company vehicles, however, they will put out a notice to staff, if transportation is needed. Cost can range from \$0 to \$25. They do not have wheelchair accessible vehicles but have transportation company information posted in the facility that does provide transportation for those that require a wheelchair (if needed). For more information call (334)298-9002.

3.1.19 Lee-Russell Public Transit (LRPT) - Demand-Response

LRPT is operated by the Lee-Russell Council of Governments. LRPT is a curb-to-curb, demand/response, Dial-a-Ride Public Transportation Service. The service is available to the public who live in Auburn, Opelika, Lee, and Russell Counties. on a first come-first served, space-available basis. Riders do not have to “qualify” to ride. Currently, LRPT operates Monday-Friday, 6:00 am-6:00pm CT. LRPT has a fleet of thirty-one vehicles, including: nine (seven passenger) vans, three (five passenger) vans, one (ten passenger) bus, six (fourteen passenger) buses, seven (eighteen passenger) buses, two (twenty-four passenger) buses, three (twenty-eight passenger) buses. Twenty-six of the thirty-one vehicles are wheelchair accessible. There are no fares charged for transportation. Transportation may be scheduled by using the LR Rides App or by calling (334)749-9092 between the hours of 8:00 am and 2:00 pm CT Monday through Friday.

3.1.20 Lyft – Ride Hailing

Lyft is available in Auburn, Alabama and Columbus, Georgia. For more information: Lyft.com

3.1.21 Ms. Sue’s Taxi – Demand-Response

Ms. Sue’s Taxi serves Lee, Russell, and Macon counties as well as Tuskegee University. They also provide airport service to Atlanta, Montgomery, Columbus and Birmingham. Transportation is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Their fleet consists of one (seven passenger) van that is not wheelchair accessible. If a client uses a walker, it can be stored in the back of the van during transport. The cost for transportation varies depending on the destination. A person may get a price quote by texting 334-524-9164. Transportation may be scheduled by calling (334)524-9164 or by visiting the website at: www.mssuestaxi.com

3.1.22 Morningside of Auburn – Demand-Response

Serves Lee County and the surrounding areas. Transportation is provided only to residents, two times a week, at no cost. There is a charge ranging from \$25-\$30 for any additional transportation requested. Residents inform staff when transportation is needed, and it is added to a calendar. There is one bus (wheelchair accessible) and one van available. For more information call (334)887-1061.

3.1.23 **Ole Reliable Transportation – Demand-Response

Ole Reliable Transportation provides primarily non-emergency medical transportation for medical appointments, dialysis, and hospital discharge. They can also (if the schedule permits) provide trips for personal errands.

They provide regularly scheduled trips to dialysis on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.

They serve Lee, Russell, and Chambers counties. Their fleet includes: two commercial vans (they hold up to two wheelchairs each and four additional passengers) and two regular sized vans (they hold one wheelchair each and two additional passengers).

They are certified for Medicaid and workman's compensation and can also accommodate private pay. Call (334)707-4024 to schedule transportation

3.1.24 Parkwood Healthcare – Demand-Response

Serve Russell County and the surrounding areas. Transportation is provided to residents only, at no additional cost. There is one van available, and it is wheelchair accessible. Staff handle scheduling. For more information call (334)297-0237

3.1.25 Phenix City Express (PEX) - Fixed-Route/Paratransit

PEX is operated by Lee-Russell Council of Governments and provides fixed route and curb-to-curb paratransit services in Phenix City. PEX is funded by the City of Phenix City and USDOT and does not provide services outside of the city limits of Phenix City. PEX operates Monday-Friday from 8:00 am-4:00 pm EST. ADA Paratransit services are also available to all individuals with disabilities inside the city limits of Phenix City and for medical appointments in adjoining Columbus, Georgia. PEX paratransit service is an ADA compliant service that requires a physician's certification form. Contact PEX to apply at (877)743-3739.

PEX has a fleet of twelve vehicles including: four (seven passenger) vans, one (twelve passenger) bus, two (sixteen passenger) buses, two (eighteen passenger) buses, two (twenty-four passenger) buses and one (twenty-eight passenger) bus. All twelve of the PEX vehicles are wheelchair accessible. There are no fares charged to ride PEX. Transportation can be scheduled in the LR App or by calling:(877)743-3739.

3.1.26 Royal Transportation and Shuttle - Demand-Response

Royal Transportation and Shuttle serves the needs of residents in Auburn-Opelika and surrounding areas. Royal Transportation and Shuttle offers a non-emergency service focused on providing professional and courteous care to those in need of transportation. They provide flat rates, hourly rental rates, and long-distance one-way fares. For more information call (334)524-0987

3.1.27 Summer Village at Azalea Place – Demand-Response

Serve Lee County and the surrounding areas. Transportation is for residents only, with no additional cost. There is one van available, and it is wheelchair accessible. Residents inform staff when transportation is needed. For more information call (334)501-0904.

3.1.28 Summer Village at Camellia Place – Demand-Response

Serve Lee County and the surrounding areas. Transportation is for residents only, with no additional cost. There are three buses, all of which are wheelchair accessible. Residents can be taken to doctor appointments or request other specific locations. Residents call the front desk to schedule transportation. For more information call (334)502-6008.

3.1.29 Summer Village at Magnolia Place – Demand-Response

Serve Lee County and the surrounding areas. Transportation is for residents only, with no additional cost. Residents can be transported anywhere within 30 minutes from the facility. There is one bus available (wheelchair accessible). Residents contact the concierge to set up transportation. For more information call (334)826-9857.

3.1.30 The Phoenix at Opelika – Demand-Response

Provides transportation, at no cost, to residents only on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The trips are primarily for shopping and doctor's appointments. They only travel in the Opelika and Auburn area. There is a sign-up sheet for the residents to schedule transportation. They have one car that holds three passengers and one wheelchair accessible bus that holds twelve passengers. For more information call: (334)319-9813.

3.1.31 Tiger Taxi – Demand-Response

Tiger Taxi is based in Auburn, Alabama and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Their fleet consists of eight total vehicles including: five (five passenger) cars and three (seven passenger) vans. They do not operate any handicap accessible vehicles. They have a sliding scale from \$2.00 per mile, up to \$5.00 per mile depending on the mileage. To schedule a ride, call (334)444-4444 or email auburnlimo@gmail.com. They take reservations by phone from 7:00am until 10:00pm CT.

3.1.32 Uber – Ride Hailing

Uber is available in Auburn, Opelika, and Phenix City. For more information: Uber.com

3.1.33 UPROAD - Airport Shuttle – Fixed-Route

An Airport Shuttle Service based in Auburn, Alabama that provides transportation between Auburn, Opelika, Tuskegee, and the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. They operate 24 hours, 7 days a week, including holidays. Their fleet of vehicles includes mini-vans and spacious shuttle vans. They offer a shared-ride service in which you share the ride with other travelers at a lower rate. The fares vary depending on the pickup and drop-off locations. The fare is automatically calculated when you book online or on the App.

You can book your transportation online at www.uproadshuttle.com or by calling (334)332-1961.

They offer military, student and senior (62+) discounts.

3.1.34 Village Friends – Volunteer Transportation/ Demand-Response

Village Friends is a group for 60+ seniors that reside in the Opelika and Auburn city limits. Transportation is one of the benefits of being a member of Village Friends.

Volunteers provide transportation in their personal and insured vehicles.

Transportation is provided to perform routine daily tasks including doctor appointments, grocery shopping, and to pick up library books. The volunteer driver may stay with the members during the completion of their task or pick them up later at a prearranged time.

The yearly membership dues are \$400 for an individual and \$500 for a household.

For more information call (334)209-4641 or email AOVillageSeniors@gmail.com

3.1.35 Vines Transportation – Demand-Response

Vines Transportation provides non-emergency medical transportation for individuals that are non-ambulatory. They serve Chambers County and some areas of Lee County. They have two vans that are handicap accessible and one ambulance. They accept private pay and Medicaid (with prior approval).

Call (334)864-7128 or cell (334)234-1199 to schedule transportation. **You must call three days in advance of your trip.

3.1.36 Yellow Cab – Demand-Response

Yellow Cab of Columbus, GA provides taxi service in the Columbus, GA, Fort Benning, GA and Phenix City, AL area. They provide same-day transportation, on time package delivery, courier services and distribution services within 250 miles of Columbus.

The cabs are not wheelchair accessible. The rate is \$2.00 per mile. They operate 24 hours, 7 days a week. To schedule a ride call: (706)322-1616 or go to

www.yellowcabscg.com

**** Certified for Medicaid**

4.0 Sources of Regional Transportation Funding

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Urban Area, Section 5310 Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities, and Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area programs are sources of transportation funding for human service agencies and transit programs in our area. For agencies to receive Section 5307, 5310, and 5311 grant funds, the projects they propose must be consistent with strategies and recommendations contained in this Coordinated Transportation Plan. This section details the governance, eligible activities, funding requirements, and existing sub-recipients of these programs in Lee and Russell Counties.

4.1 Section 5310 Overview

This FTA program is intended to address the transportation needs of the elderly and people with disabilities. In Alabama the funding is distributed to the Alabama Department of Transportation who then distributes the funds based on a competitive grant program. The funds are generally limited to capital purchases, which require a 20% local match. MAP-21 combined the Section 5317 (New Freedom) program with the 5310 programs.

4.1.1 Existing 5310 Transportation Programs in Lee County:

Easterseals Achievement Center

Star Wray, Executive Director star@achievement-center.org
334-745-3501 Ext. 213
Fax: 334-749-5808
510 West Thomason Circle Opelika, AL 36801-5499

Lee-Russell Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging

Lisa Sandt, Executive Director
Jeanna Thomas, AAA Director jthomas@lrcog.com
334-749-5264 ext. 247
Fax: 334-749-6582
2207 Gateway Drive
Opelika, AL 36801

4.2 Sections 5307 and 5311 Overview

Section 5307 provides funding to census designated urbanized areas with a population of 50,000 or more. These funds are intended to be used for public transit service (no qualifications are placed on riders). However, specialized transit service can be provided with these funds to address the needs of persons with disabilities that would involve rider qualifications. These funds can be used for planning, capital purchases, and operating expenses. Under the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (Map-21), job access and reverse commute projects are also eligible activities. Planning and capital projects generally require a 20% local match. Operating funds require a 50% local match.

Section 5311 provides funding for areas with a population less than 50,000. These funds are intended to be used for public transit service (no qualifications are placed on riders). In Alabama the funding is distributed to the Alabama Department of Transportation who then distributes the funds based on a competitive grant program. The funds may be used for capital purchases, operating expenses, and administrative costs. Under Map-21, job access and reverse commute projects are also eligible activities. The local matching requirements are generally 20% for capital and administrative expenses and 50% for operating expenses. Government agencies, transit operators, and non-profit agencies are eligible recipients.

4.2.1 Existing 5307/5311 Transportation Programs in Lee/Russell County:

**Lee-Russell Council of Governments Lee-Russell Public Transit
Phenix City Express**

Lisa Sandt, Executive Director

Blake Coulter, Transit Director bcoulter@lrcog.com

334-749-5264 ext. 087

Fax: 334-749-6582

2207 Gateway Drive

Opelika, AL 36801

4.3 State Funding

Alabama is the only state that does not provide any funding for transit service. State law prevents fuel taxes from being used for anything except for road maintenance or construction.

5.0 Needs Assessment, Strategies and Recommendations

The Region served by the Lee-Russell Council of Governments is in need of better coordination of transportation services and resources. As this study has identified the need for coordination among the various transportation services, it has also established a series of issues that, if resolved, would support in filling the void identified by these needs. The following sections list the transportation needs, the barriers to improving transportation services, and recommended strategies that were identified during the development of this plan.

5.1 Needs Not Currently Addressed

- Education of public (services available, how to use, application process, operation times, costs, contact information)
- Coordination of client trips that originate at a common community and end at common destinations
- Weekend and evening transportation services
- Low-cost, no-cost, or free transportation options for minors to and from afterschool jobs. Children 15 years and older may use LRPT, however, by the time they know their work schedule, they are unable to obtain transportation. Even though minors under 16 can't work after 7 PM, LRPT stops picking up at 6 PM, and therefore, they may not be able to obtain a ride home.

5.2 Needs Met or Partially Met with Current Service

- Daytime, Monday through Friday service
- Medical trips
- Work trips
- Vocational training trips
- Shopping trips
- Recreation trips
- Local trips
- Out-of-county trips
- Major Employers and 2yr/4yr colleges trips

5.3 Barriers

- Lack of funding (local, state, federal, private)
- Small client base limits opportunities for profit
- Cost of for-profit service
- Dispersed population
- Lack of available drivers

5.4 Strategies

- Expand existing transportation services by informing stakeholders about grants and other funding opportunities (Additional funding required) **(High)**
- Encourage stakeholders to publicize the need for the transportation providers that can transport during evening and weekend hours to accommodate low wage occupations by social media and through meetings **(Medium)**
- LRCOG LRPT coordinate with agencies in adjoining counties to establish transfer points for “out of region” health care facilities for aging, low-income, disabled or wounded veterans **(High)**
- LRCOG Mobility Manager will increase outreach and awareness for transportation options in the region by maintaining a current listing of transportation providers on LRCOG Website, LRCOG Social Media site and pamphlets that can be distributed to the public **(High)**
- Encourage stakeholders to advocate for the need for State funding for transit service in Alabama **(High)**
- Identify and designate potential organizations to apply for grant funding and operate Volunteer Driver Programs **(Medium)**
- LRCOG LRPT create and implement a fixed-route service between Auburn and Opelika **(High)**

6.0 Continuing Efforts

After the adoption of this plan, Region 10 will continue to monitor transit issues in the region in order to determine if this plan needs modification. Based on the current ALDOT contract, a summary report for this plan will be prepared in 2026 and 2027. If the federal planning requirements continue past 2027 and funds are available, the plan will likely be revised in 2028.

The Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan Advisory Council will continue to meet at least twice a year, with the mission of locating more transportation options for the transportation disadvantaged in Lee and Russell Counties.

Across the region, transportation providers, local agencies and the Lee-Russell Council of Governments will work persistently to address the most pressing needs to the best of our abilities.

Appendices

PREPARED BY
Lee-Russell Council of
Governments

LAST REVIEWED ON
05/05/2025

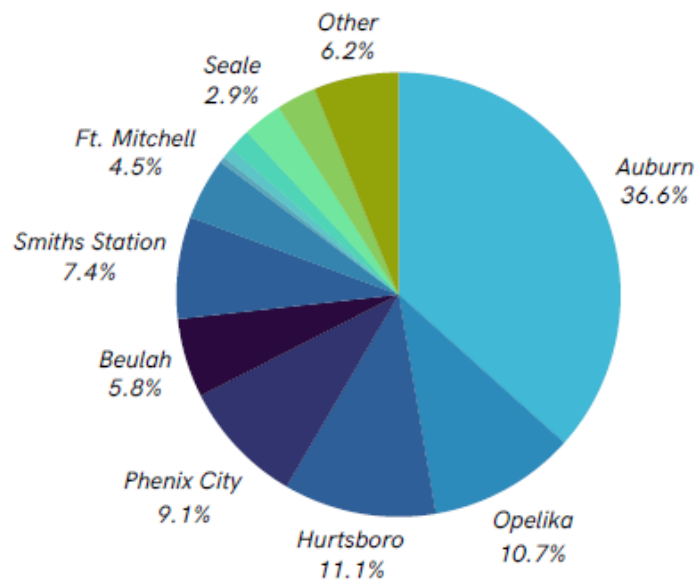
Lee-Russell Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan - Public Survey Results

Overview

This document was developed to display data gathered from the public survey for the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan for Lee and Russell Counties in Alabama

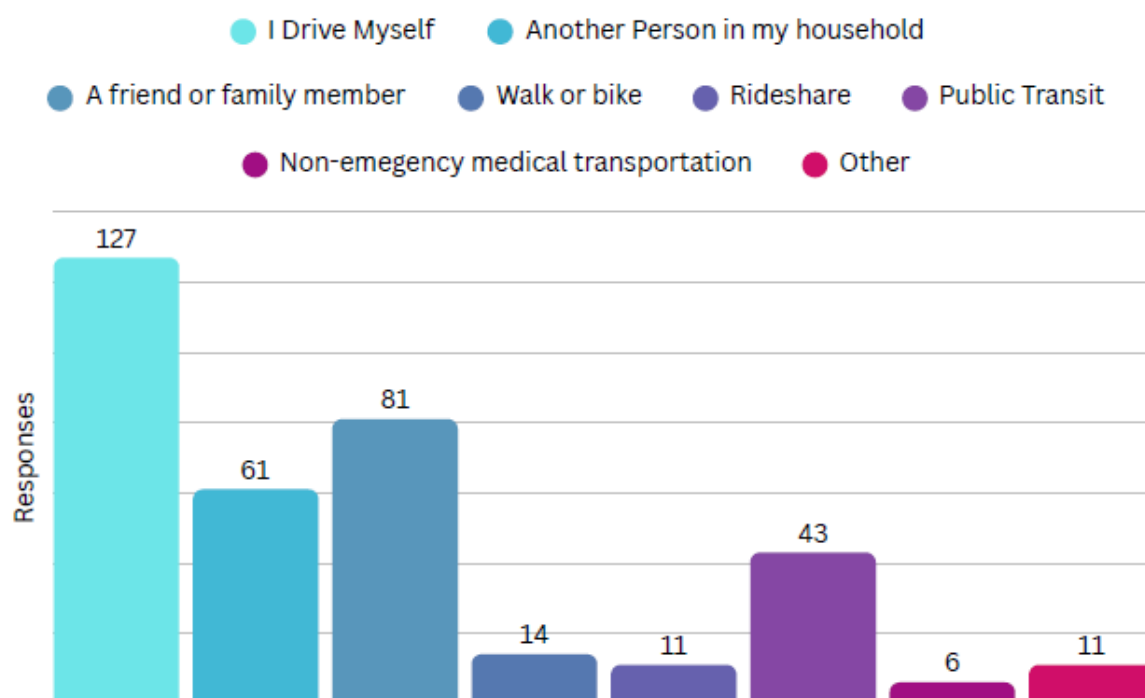
Location

Please select your place of residence



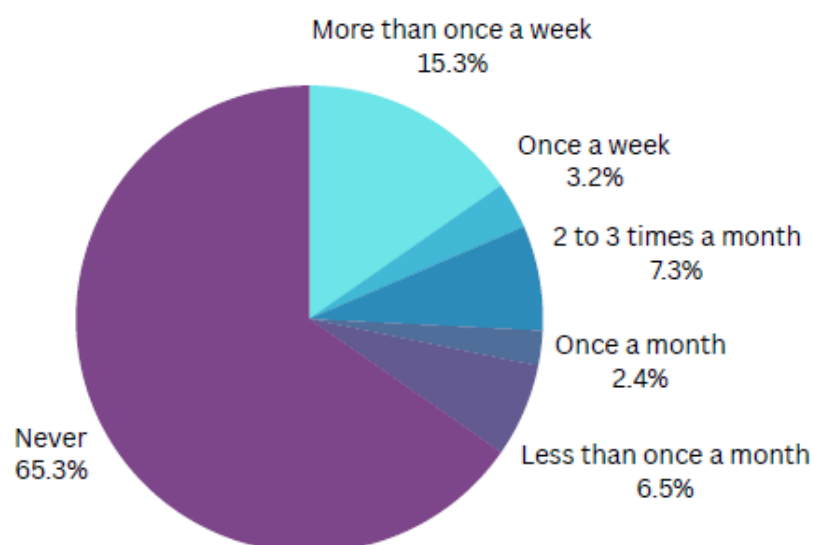
Transportation

How do you get to the places you need to go?



Public Transit

How often do you use public transit or community/medical transportation services?



Public Transit

If you do not use public or non-emergency medical transportation, why not?

Prefer driving my own vehicle	42.72%	91
Not familiar with local transportation services	21.6%	46
Routes are not convenient for where I go	15.49%	33
Family/Friends drive me	26.76%	57
Do not like riding on public transportation or other services	2.82%	6
Schedules of transportation services are not convenient for my schedule	18.78%	40
I use rideshare services when I don't want to drive	0.47%	1
Cost of services	4.23%	9
I can walk/bike to my destination	1.41%	3
It is not covered by my insurance	5.63%	12
Other	9.86%	21

Transportation Barriers

If you experience obstacles driving yourself, what are they?

No difficulties	34.43%	84
Unreliable personal vehicle	7.38%	18
Cost of fuel	8.61%	21
Don't have a driver's license/insurance	15.57%	38
Disability or other limitation that restricts driving	24.59%	60
Don't like driving at night	20.9%	51
Don't like driving at any time	6.56%	16
Do not own a vehicle	19.26%	47
Friends/Family not always available to drive me	22.13%	54
Other	2.87%	7

Transportation Barriers

If you experience obstacles with transportation services, what are they?

No difficulties	26.92%	63
Inconveneint transit schedules or routes	17.09%	40
No public transportation service available for me	14.53%	34
Cost of Uber/Lyft	10.26%	24
No Uber/Lyft drivers available near me	3.42%	8
Transportation services do not cross county lines	5.56%	13
Transportation services do not cross state lines	4.27%	10
Difficulty scheduling transportation services	17.09%	40
Do not use transportation services	36.32%	85
Other	8.97%	21

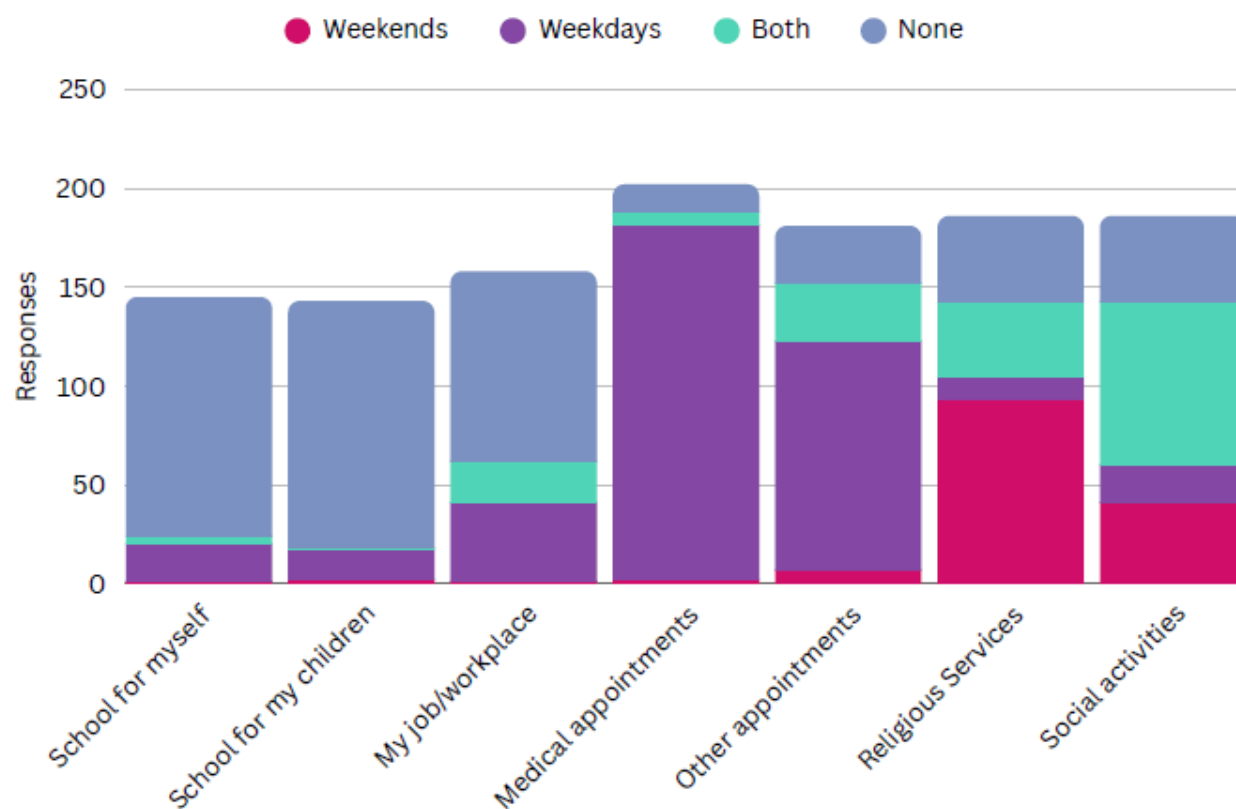
Transportation Barriers

If you experience transportation obstacles, how do they affect you?

Limits my ability to get to work	14.48%	32
Limits my ability to shop for food	24.43%	54
Limits my ability to shop for other needs	23.08%	51
Can't go to the bank, library, or other errands	28.51%	63
Limits my ability to go to school	5.43%	12
Limits my ability to take my children to school or other locations	2.71%	6
Skip or don't schedule medical appointments	20.81%	46
Skip or don't schedule appointments like haircuts	13.12%	29
Can't attend church or other religious services	14.48%	32
Can't go to social outings	16.74%	37
Can't go to places in another county	13.57%	30
Isolation, I fell trapped, alone, or sad	16.74%	37
Do not have transportation obstacles	44.8%	99
Other	5.43%	12

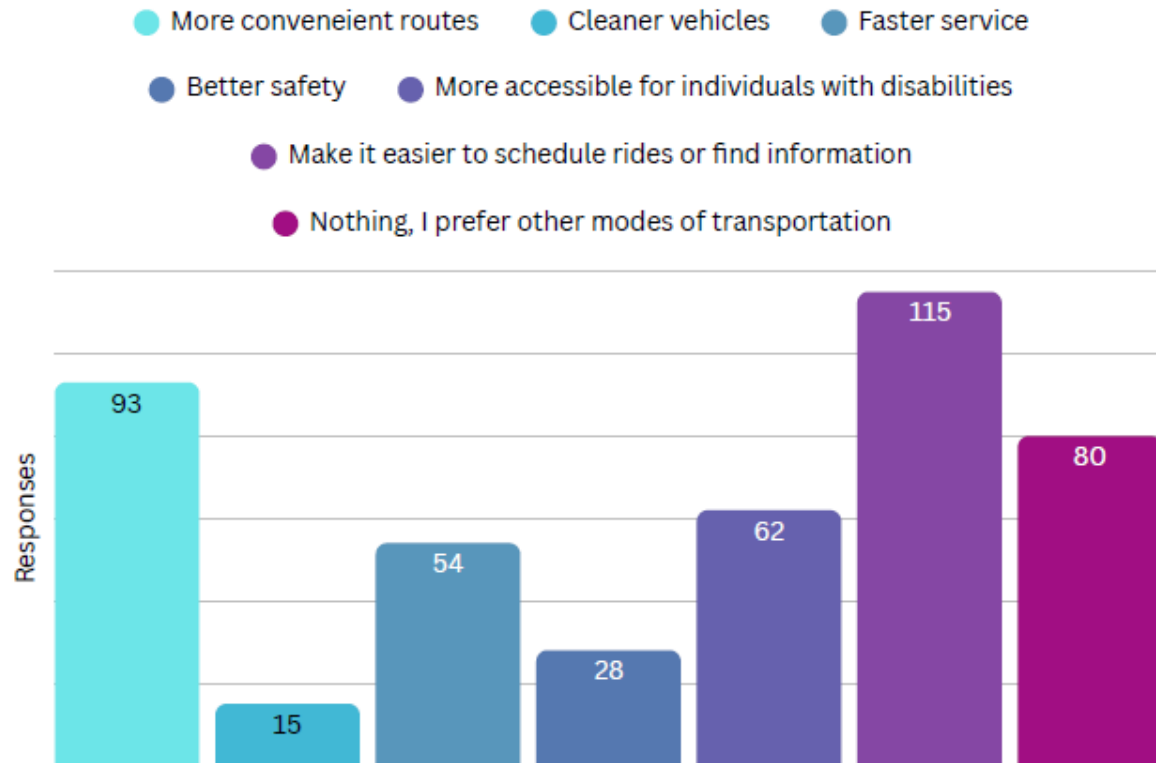
Transportation Patterns

When do you visit the following places?



Public Transit

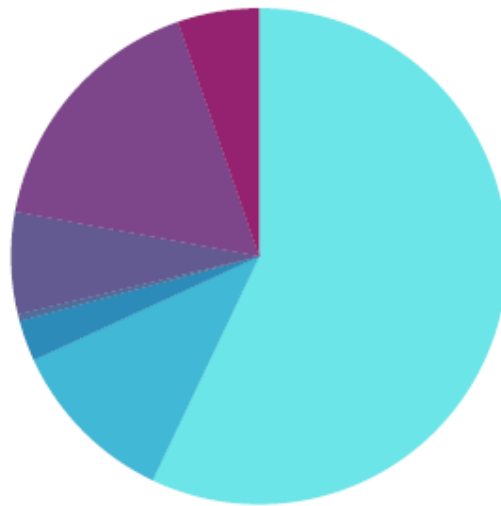
What would encourage you to use public transit more often?



Transportation Options

What is the most Important factor when choosing a mode of transportation?

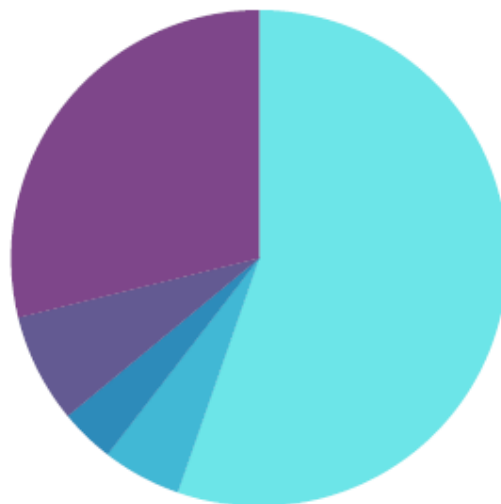
- Convenience
- Cost
- Speed
- Environmental Impact
- Comfort
- Safety
- Other



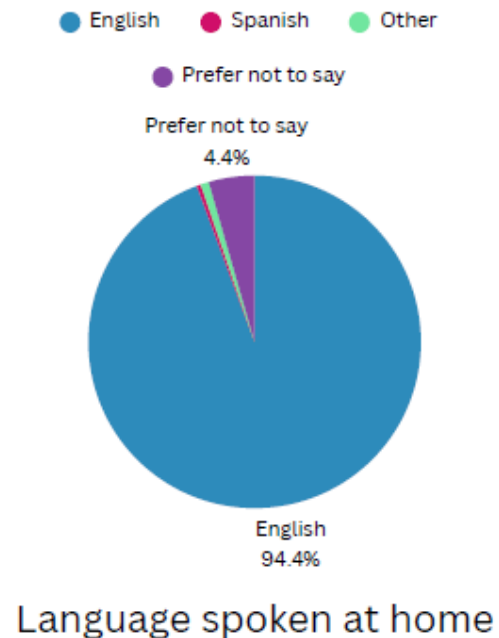
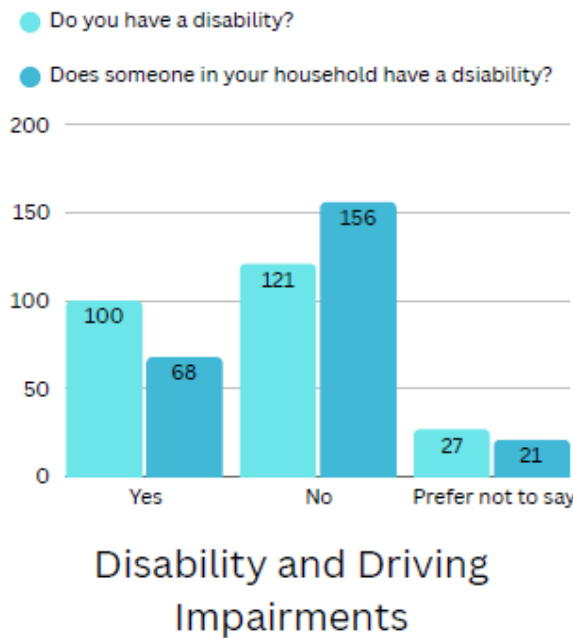
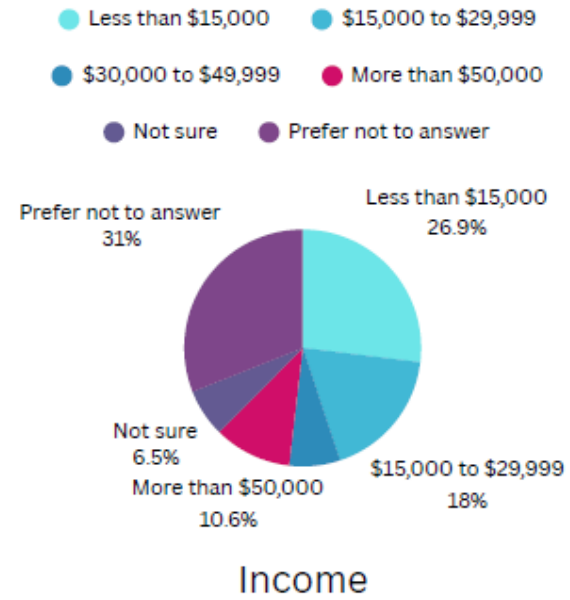
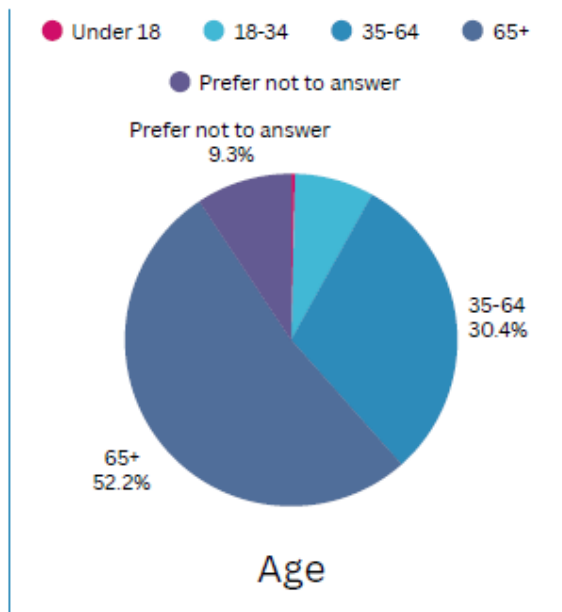
Transportation Improvements

Which improvements to regional transportation would you prioritize?

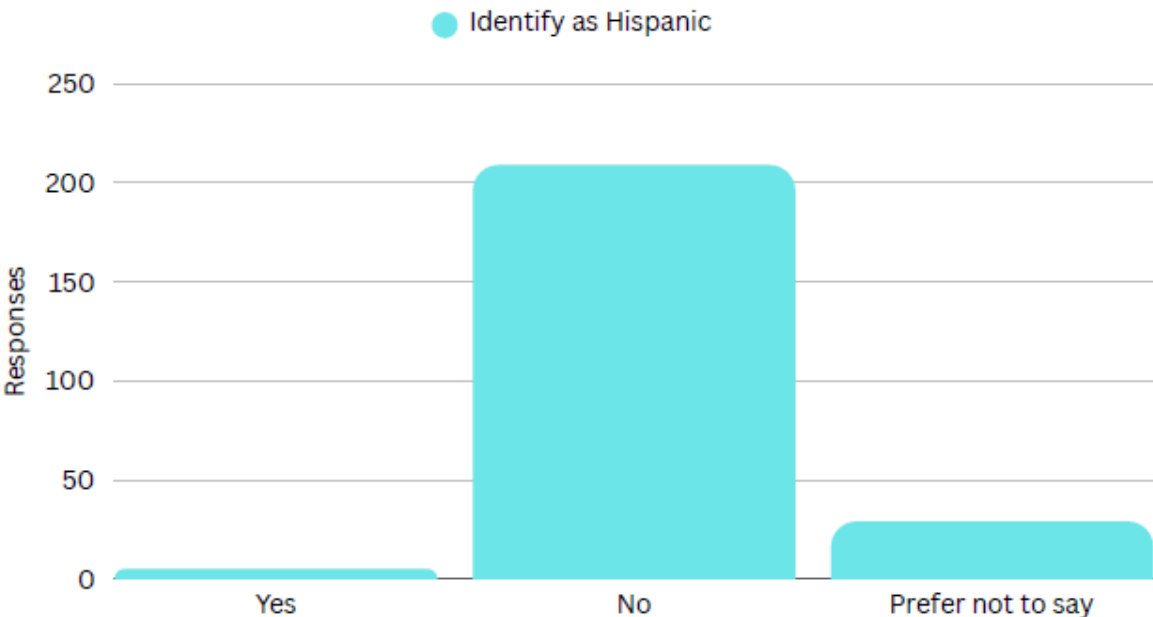
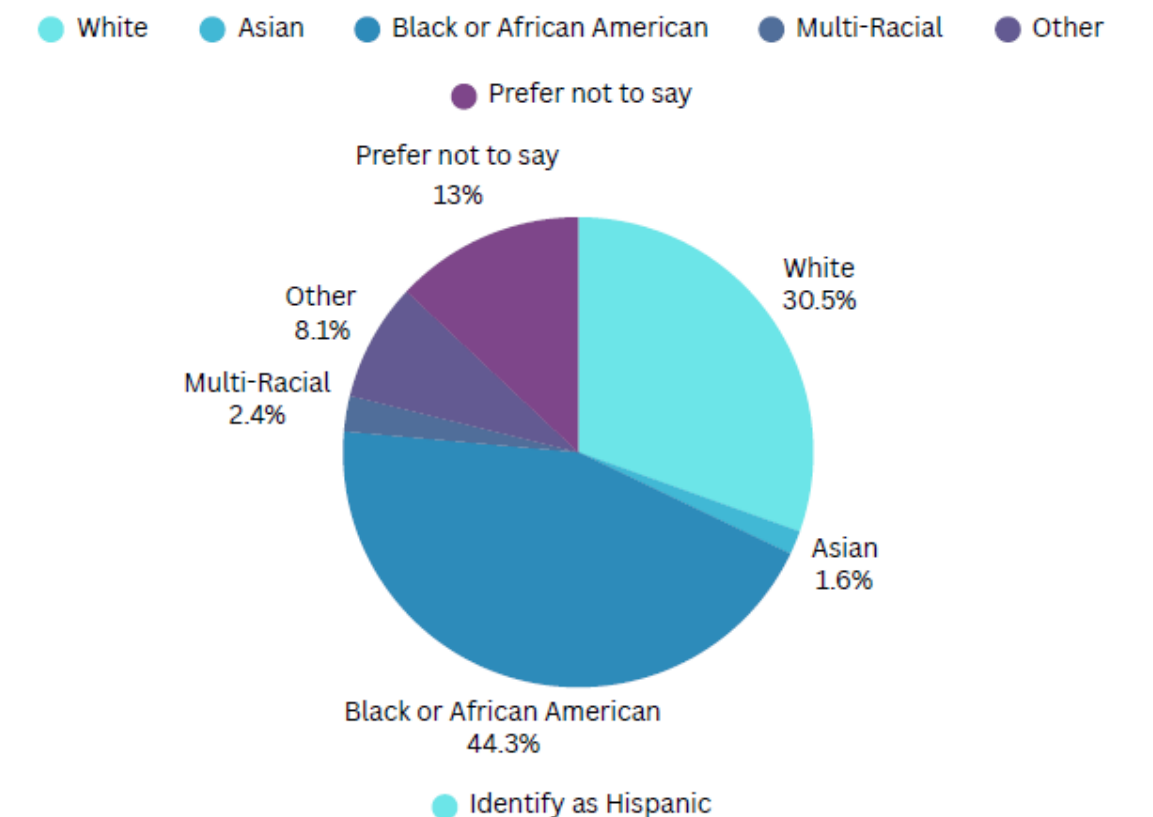
- Expanded public transit
- Bike lanes and walking paths
- Rideshare incentives or carpool programs
- Traffic congestion relief
- Other



Demographics



Demographics



Appendix B: Transportation Provider Survey

PREPARED BY

Lee-Russell Council of Governments

LAST REVIEWED ON

05/06/2025

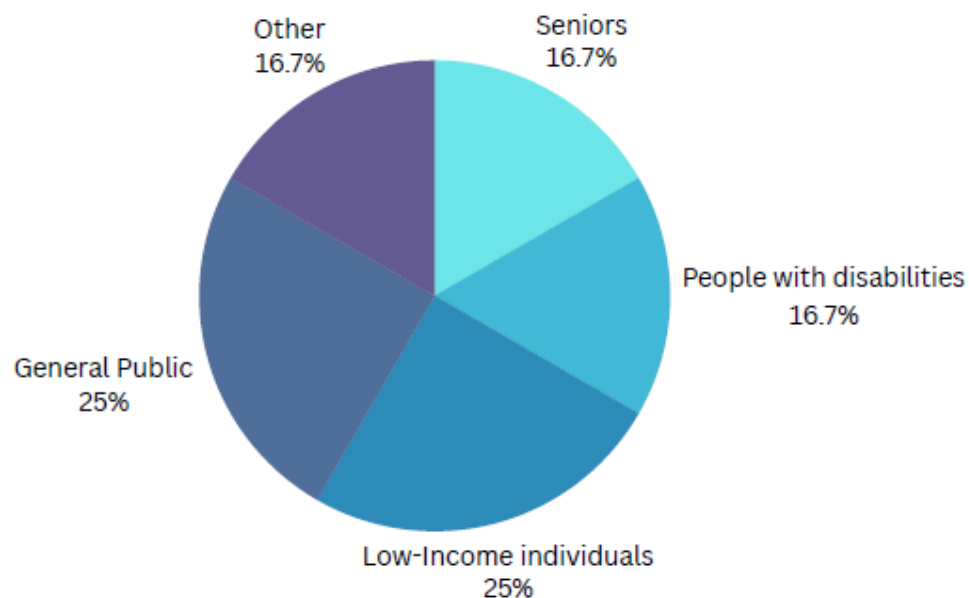
Lee-Russell Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan - Provider Survey Results

Overview

This document was developed to display data gathered from the provider survey for the Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan for Lee and Russell Counties in Alabama. This survey data was gathered from 12 participants representing organizations that provide transportation in the region.

Population

What population does your organization primarily serve?



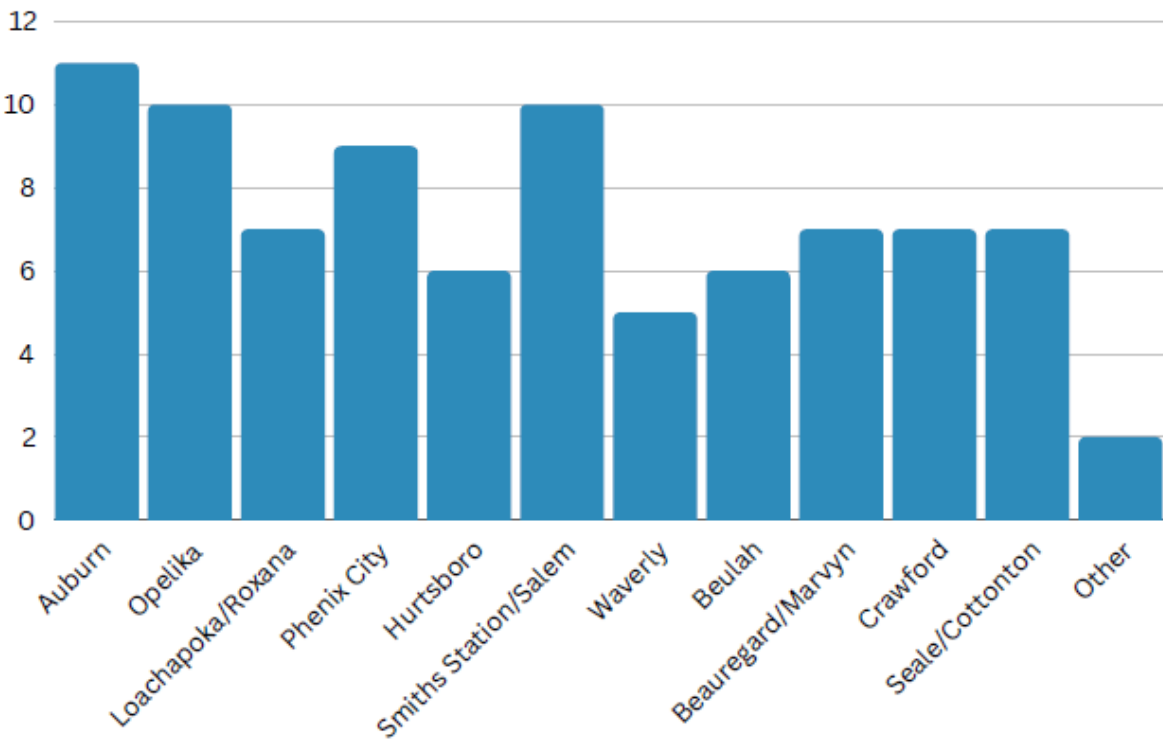
Population

Do you serve riders with limited English proficiency (LEP)?

100% serve riders with LEP

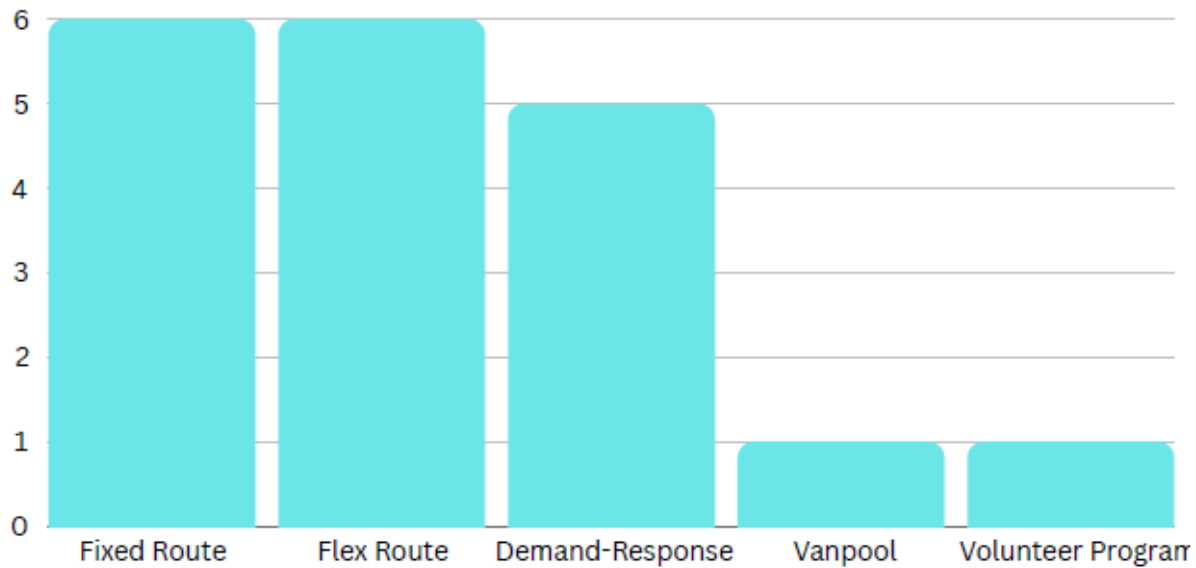
Service Area

Please identify what areas you serve



Type of Service

What type of transportation service do you provide?



Eligibility

If you are a medical transportation provider to you accept medicaid?

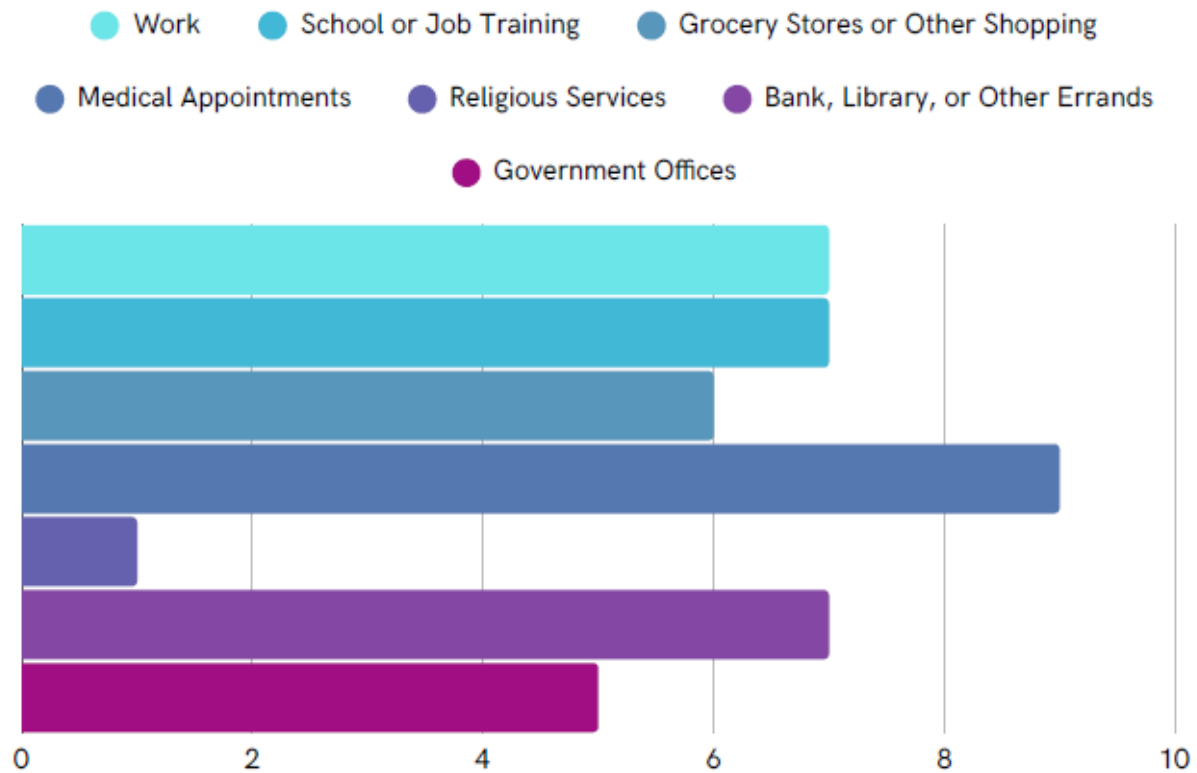
Only **25%** of medical transportation providers accepted Medicaid

Providers cited paperwork and timely payment issues as reasons they do not accept Medicaid

50% of providers have eligibility requirements to access their services

Destinations

Please identify locations frequently traveled to by your clients



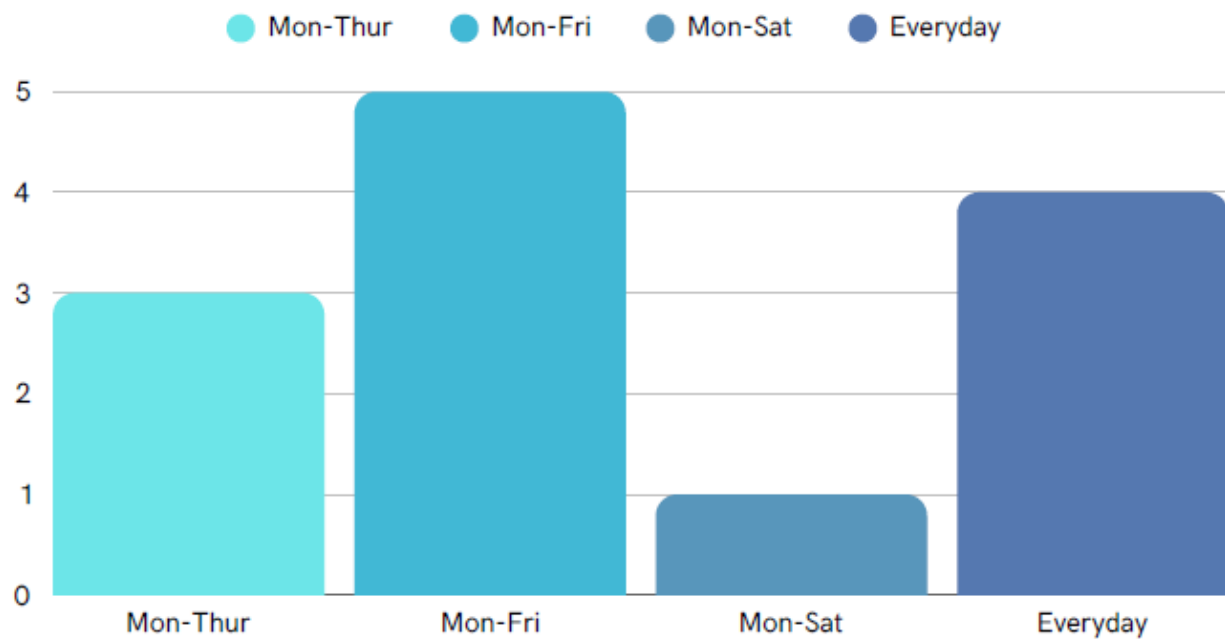
Schedule

What are your hours of service?

Service hours vary heavily.
Earliest to open: 4:00am
Latest to close: 6:30pm

Schedule

What days is service available?



Support

What type of resources or support would help your organization improve or expand service?

- Resources on medicaid coverage
- Collaboration with other organizations
- Funding to serve rural residents
- Grant opportunities to purchase more vehicles
- Additional vans and drivers
- Grant Funding!
- Understanding of demand outside of service area
- Partnerships and networking
- Staff
- CDL Drivers
- Marketing assistance

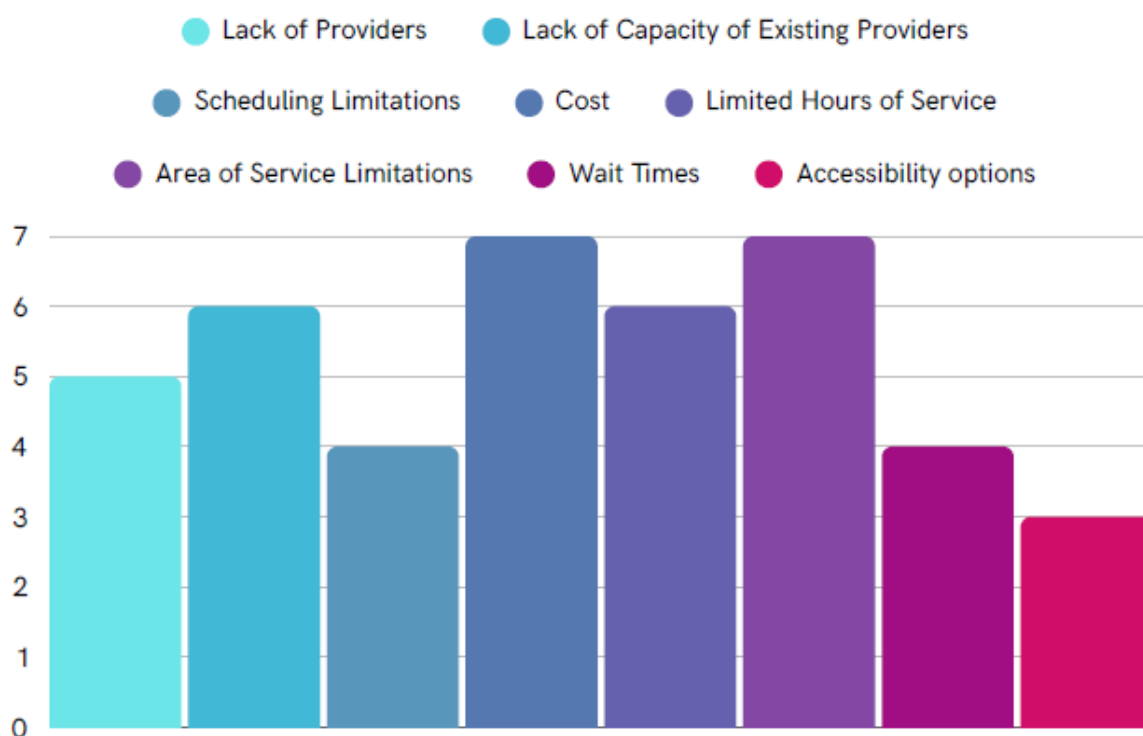
Transportation Gaps

Are there areas where transportation is unavailable or inadequate?

- Rural/unincorporated Lee County
- Outside Auburn-Opelika
- Marvyn
- Crawford
- Northern Lee County
- The entirety of Lee, Russell, and Chambers Counties

Transportation Barriers

What are the biggest transportation challenges faced by your clients?

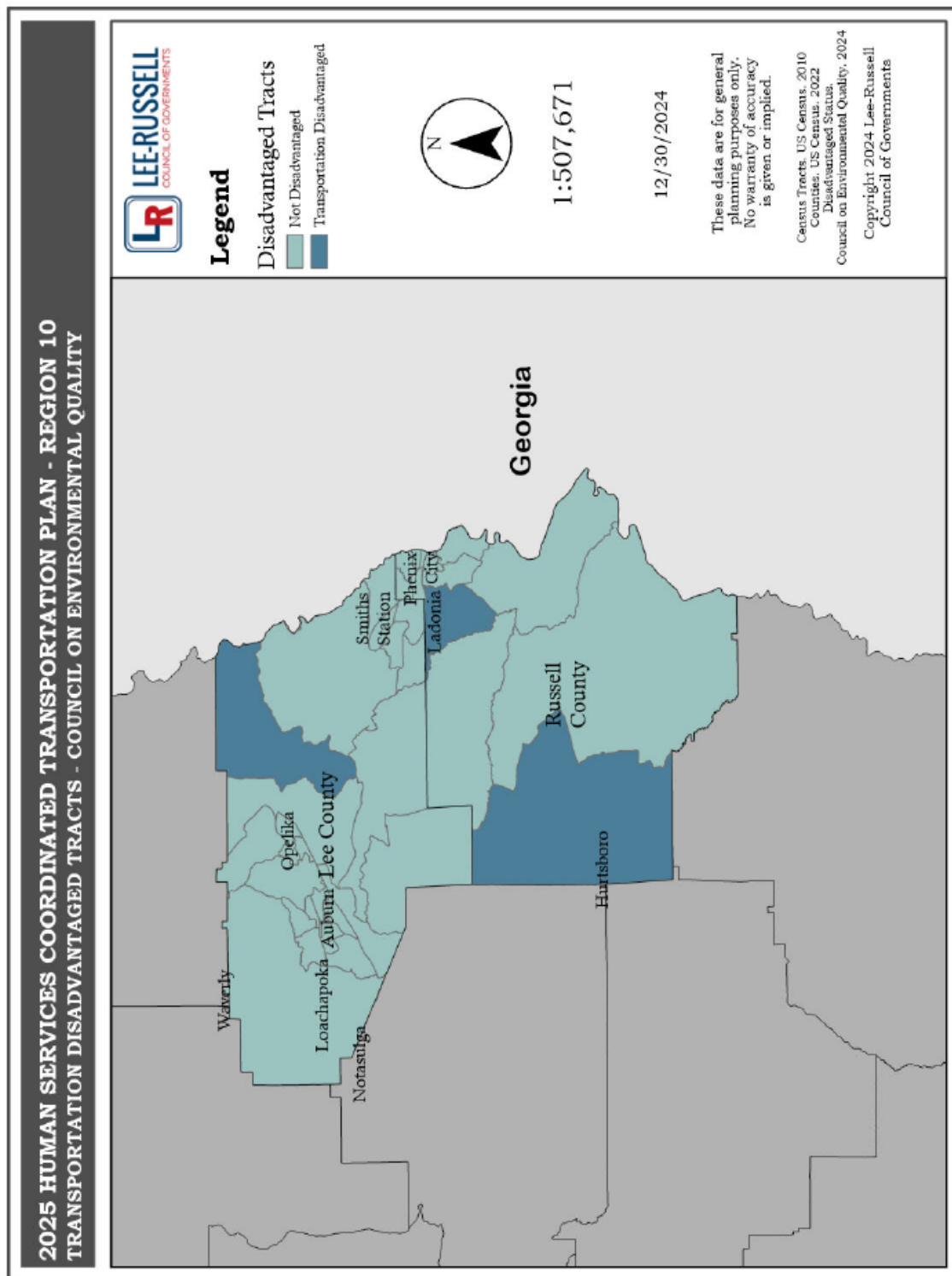


Collaboration

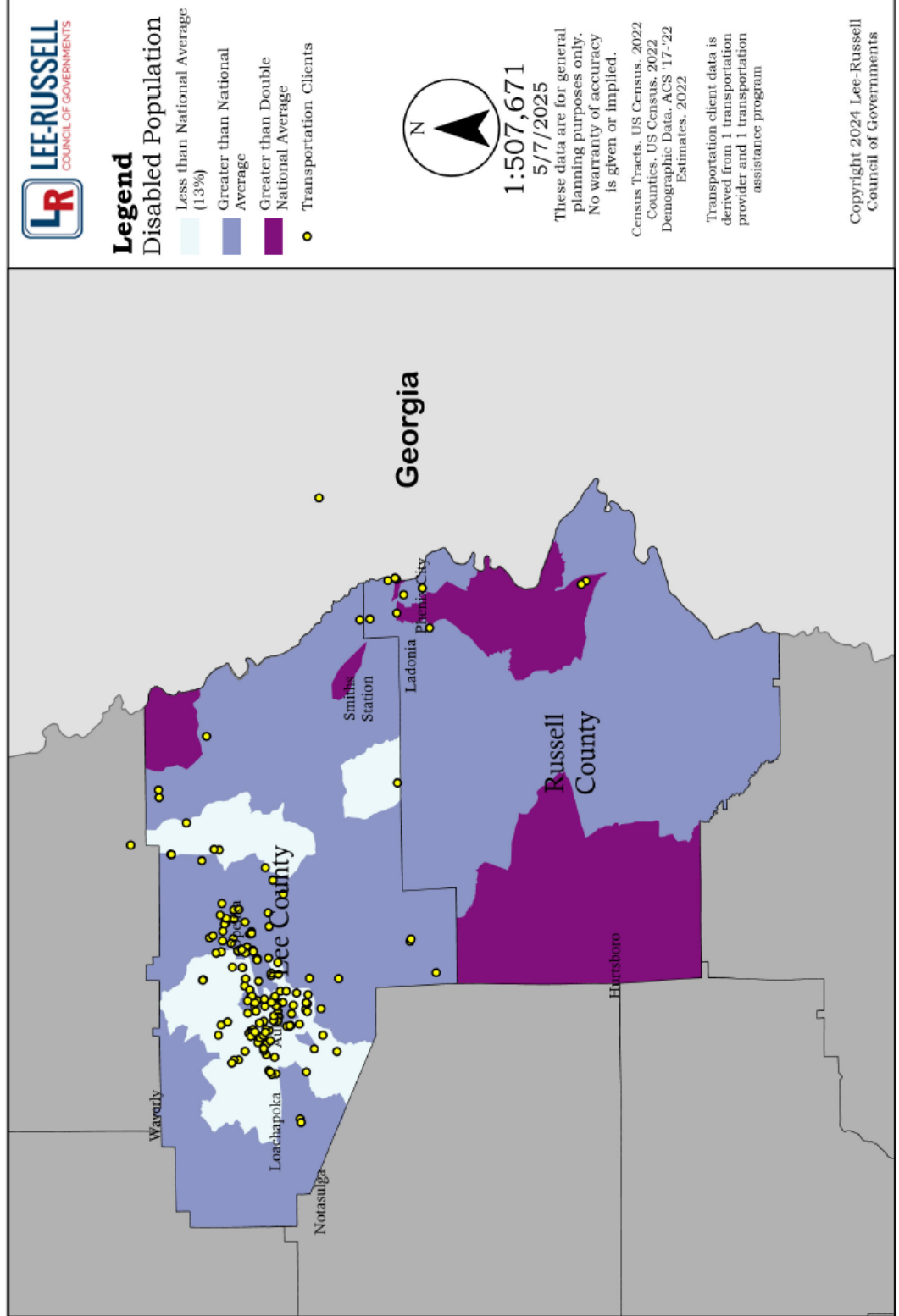
Do you collaborate with any other agencies to provide service?

5/12 providers actively collaborate with others to provide service

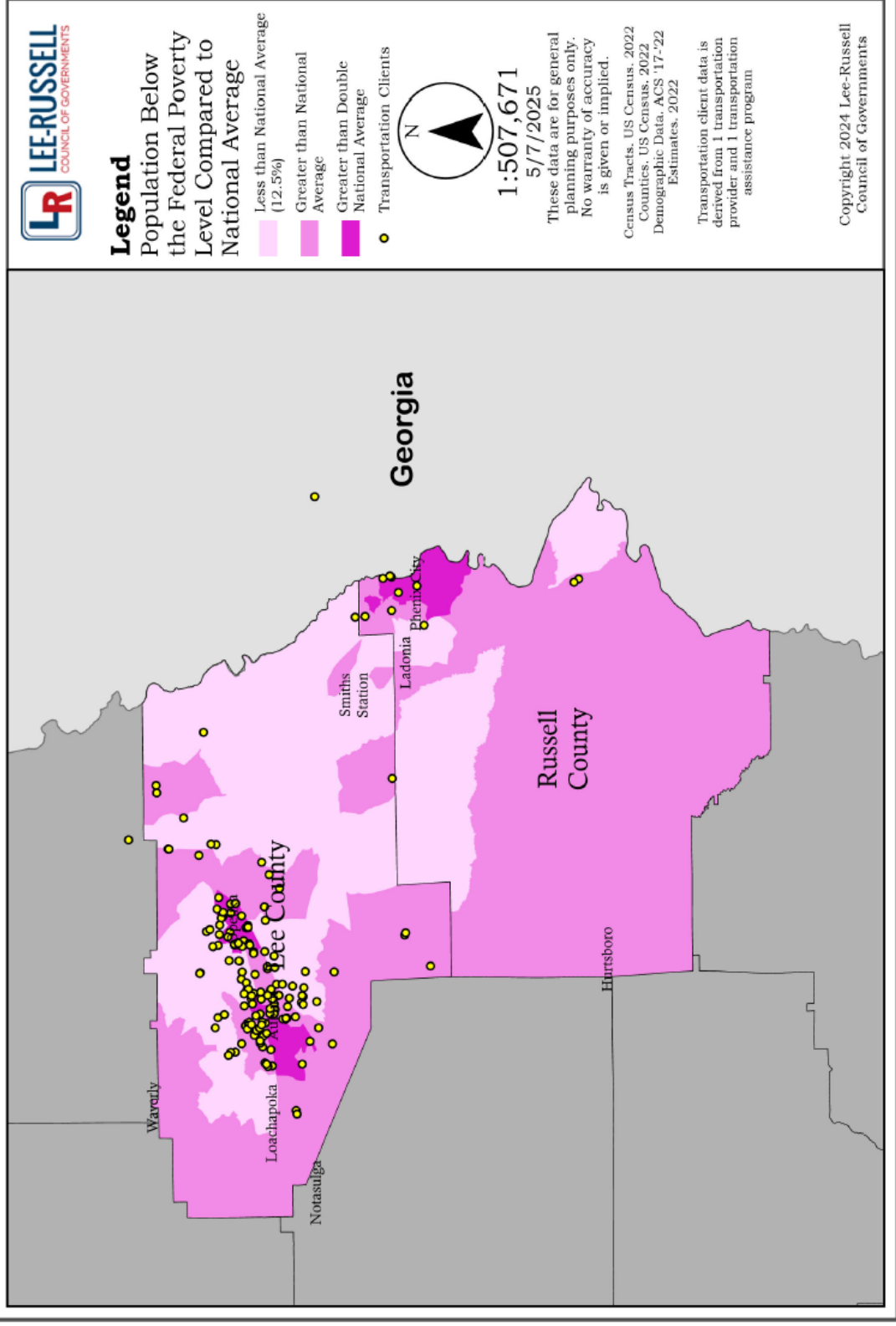
Appendix C: Transportation Vulnerability Indicator Maps



2025 HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN - REGION 10 TRACTS WITH A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES



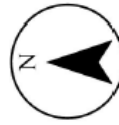
2025 HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN - REGION 10 TRACTS WITH A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF INDIVIDUALS BELOW THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE



2025 HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN - REGION 10 TRACTS WITH A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF SENIORS (65+)



- Legend**
- Senior Population**
- Less than National Average (17.7%)
 - Greater Than National Average
 - Average
 - Transportation Clients



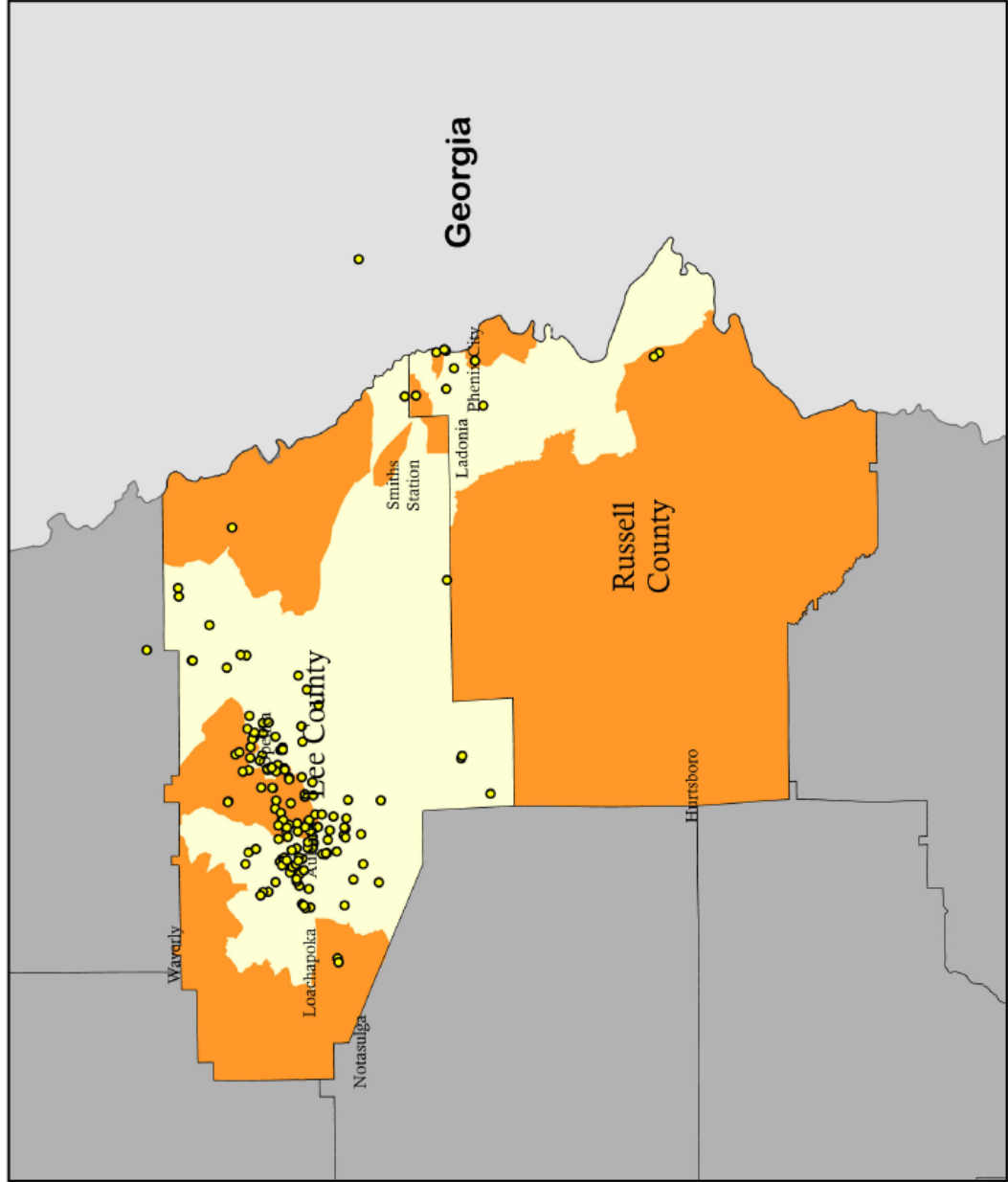
1:507,671
5/7/2025

These data are for general planning purposes only. No warranty of accuracy is given or implied.

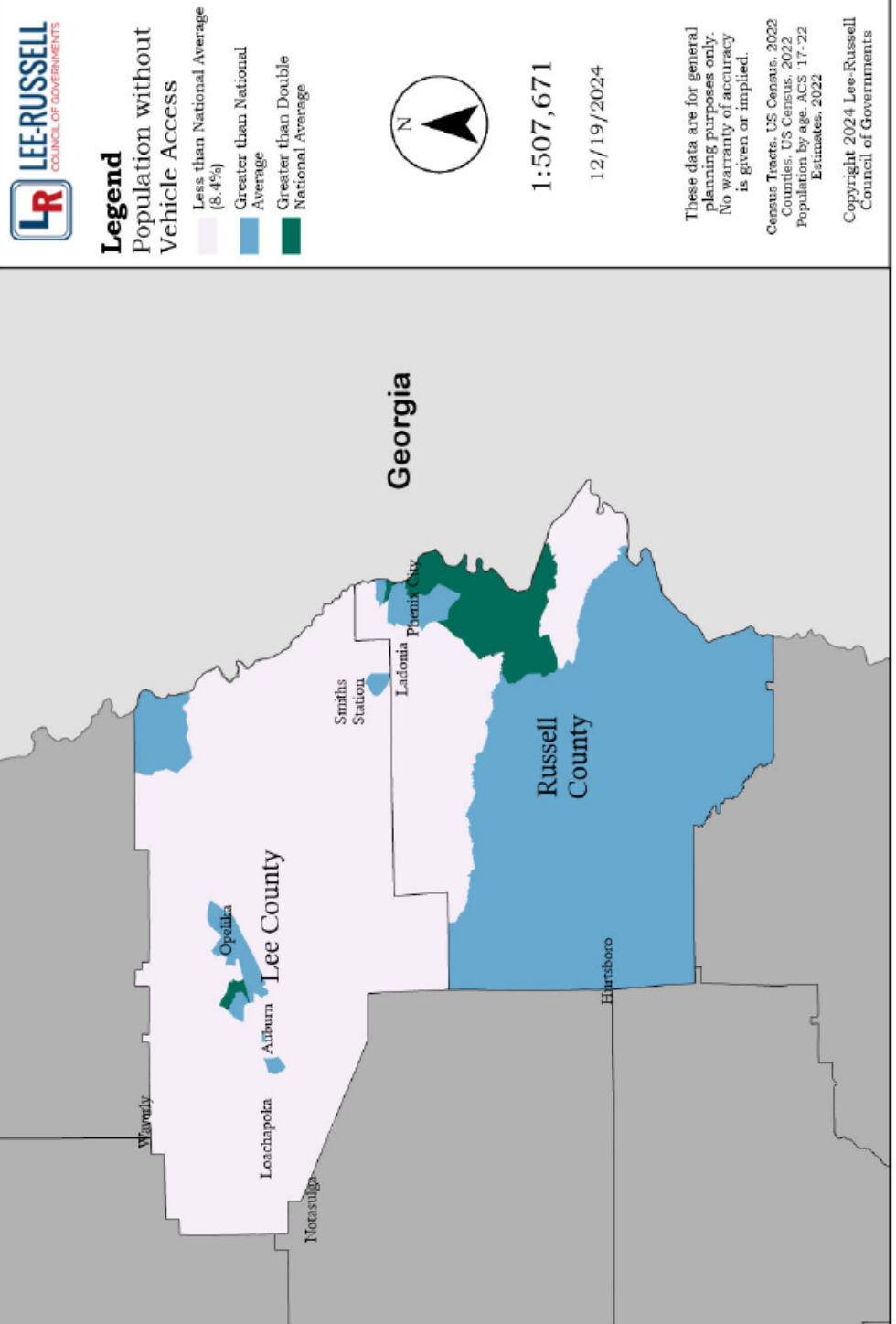
Census Tracts, US Census, 2022
Counties, US Census, 2022
Demographic Data, ACS '17-'22
Estimates, 2022

Transportation client data is derived from 1 transportation provider and 1 transportation assistance program

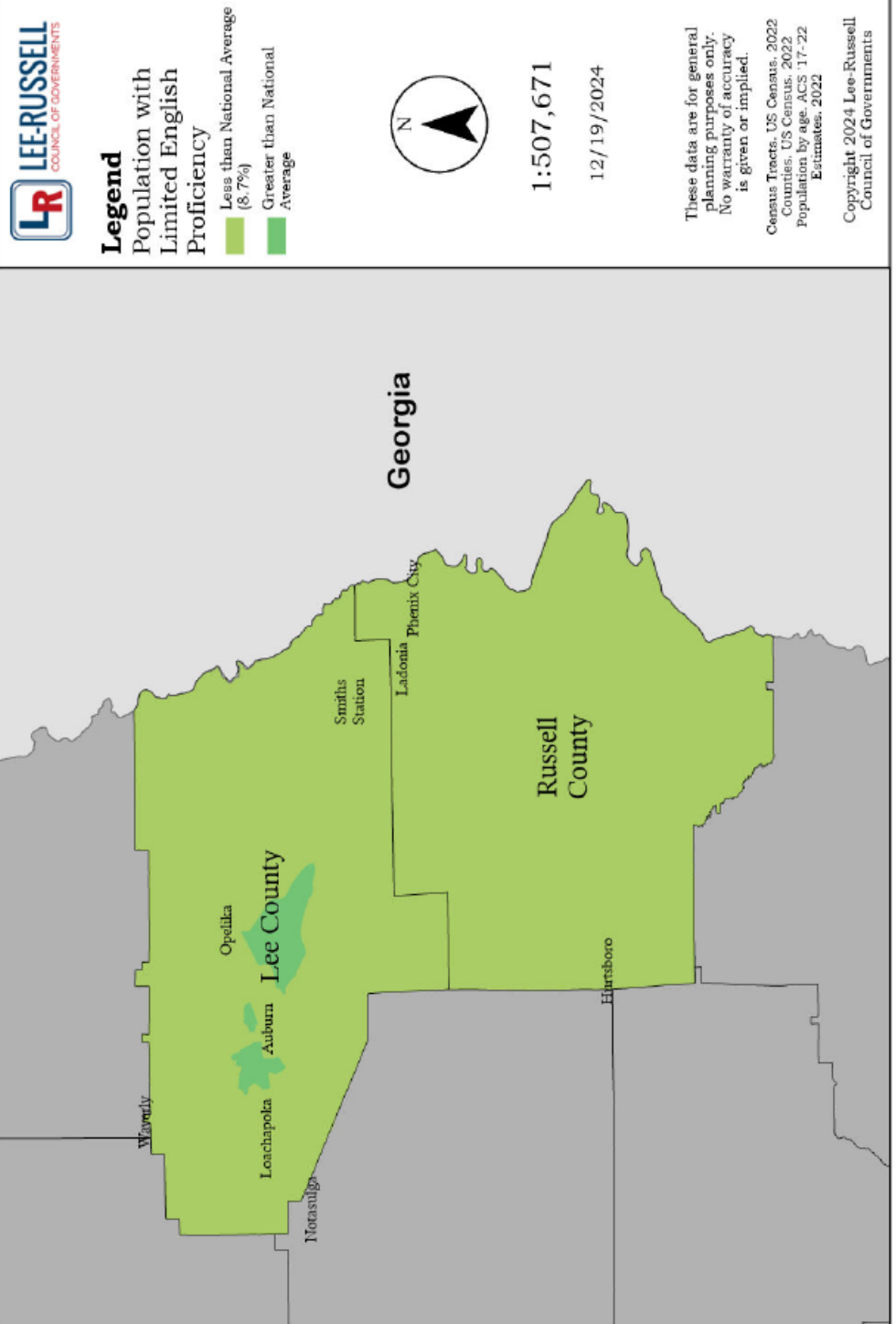
Copyright 2024 Lee-Russell Council of Governments



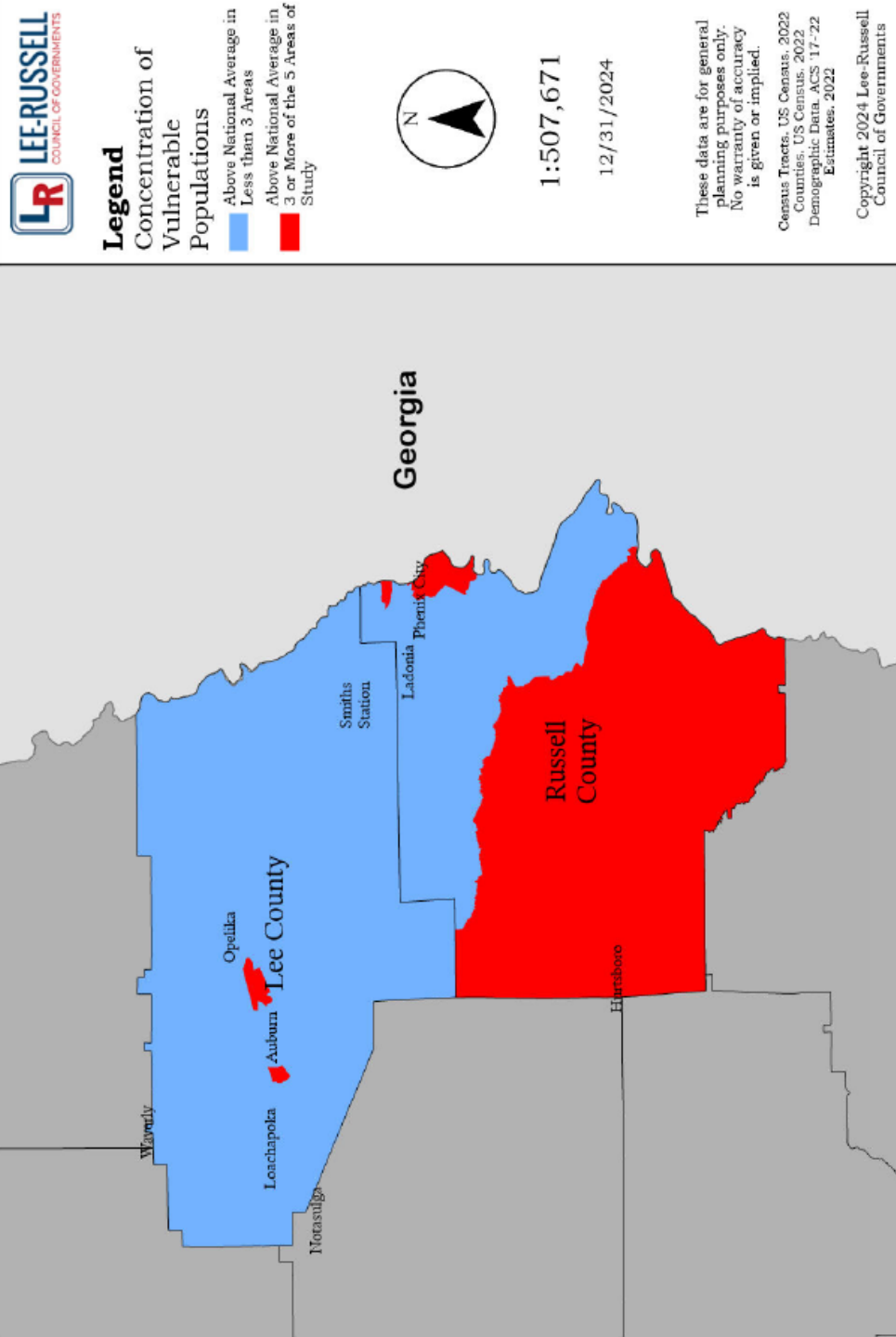
2025 HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN - REGION 10
PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITHOUT ACCESS TO A VEHICLE



2025 HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN - REGION 10
PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION THAT SPEAKS ENGLISH LESS THAN VERY WELL



2025 HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN - REGION 10 TRACTS WITH A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS



Appendix D: Survey Distribution Process

In order to gather information about transportation needs in the region, Lee-Russell Council of Governments surveyed riders of Lee-Russell Public Transit, and Phenix City Express. The survey was also distributed to local agencies to share with their clients including Christian Care Ministries, Salvation Army, United Way, East Alabama Food Bank, EASE, AUMC Food Pantry, senior citizens from Lee and Russell County that attend the 9 senior centers, and the public. Lee-Russell Council of Governments approach to survey distribution and stakeholder engagement combined convenience and purposive sampling of the public. These are all forms of non-probability sampling and were selected because they significantly lowered cost barriers and time constraints for data collection. Convenience sampling involved social media posts and website links which allowed anyone who found the survey to participate. LRCOG also distributed surveys to a predetermined list of key stakeholders and participants of relevant programs. LRCOG will identify and confirm issues from survey data and will then target the distribution of surveys to those who have an interest in said issues for the future. Secondary data was collected from informal stakeholder conversations and committee meetings meant to identify points of interest or concern with the state of transportation in our region and brainstorm strategies.

LRCOG also created a survey designed for service providers in the region. This survey will provide a summary of the transportation services provided and it shows gaps in transportation capacity. This survey was circulated through emailing and calling service providers.