



LEXTRAN COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN FISCAL YEAR 2024



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INTRODUCTION

The 2024 Lextran Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities and senior citizens, provides strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizes transportation services for these target populations. This plan will guide funding and service development for transportation projects supporting seniors and individuals with disabilities. This plan fulfills the requirements set forth in 49 U.S.C. Section 5310 and serves as an update to the 2022 Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, as required for designated recipients of 5310 funds.

The Fixing American's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) requires the establishment of a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. The plan analyzes gaps in transportation for identified populations and provides guidance for the use of funds from the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. Section 5310 provides funding for traditional projects such as buses, vans, wheelchair lifts, ramps, securement devices, etc., and it also offers funding for nontraditional projects that assist individuals with disabilities and seniors such as travel training, volunteer driver programs, sidewalks, and more. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act made no changes to the Section 5310 program.

According to the Kentucky State Management Plan, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet requires four items for Coordinated Plans:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit).
2. An assessment of transportation needs of individuals to be served with the funding sought, that is, persons with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes.
3. Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to improve efficiencies in service delivery.
4. Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Stakeholders

Various agencies, organizations, and individuals benefit from efficient and accessible transportation options. Adequate mobility allows transportation customers to reach services, workplaces, schools, and businesses easily, therefore, increasing quality of life and economic development. The following list is not comprehensive, but it identifies significant local and regional stakeholders.

Local and Regional Government

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) is the local governing body consolidated to include both the city of Lexington and Fayette County. Several programs housed within LFUCG are related to transportation and mobility, including community centers, youth services, disability services, and senior programs. LFUCG also manages traffic and infrastructure within Fayette County.

The Lexington Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (LAMPO) coordinates the transportation planning processes for Fayette and Jessamine counties as well as one small portion of Scott County. LAMPO works closely with local, state, and regional agencies to plan and implement multimodal transportation projects.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) provides state oversight and management of the transportation system in rural areas and along state routes in metropolitan areas of Kentucky. KYTC provides grant support through the Office of Transportation and Delivery, which seeks and implements public transit grants, and coordinates human service transportation.

The Bluegrass Area Development District (BGADD) provides support for regional planning, economic development, environmental, security, and related projects in 17 counties and 32 cities in Central Kentucky. BGADD assists with securing and administering grants within their regional area that can potentially or directly impact transportation services.

Human and Social Services

The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) provides an array of services to residents of Kentucky. CHFS consists of agencies that offer services in multiple areas, such as health, adoption, and many other assistance and support programs to individuals and families throughout the state.

Blue Grass Community Action Partnership offers multiple programs that enhance the quality of life for individuals by aiding with basic needs such as food and clothing and providing resources to aid individuals in becoming self-sufficient.

The Access Lexington Commission provides research on local problems, recommendations regarding city policies and services, assistance with ensuring legal compliance, information and referral services, and programs – all with regards to people with disabilities. The Commission also advises the Mayor and the Urban County Council on issues that pertain to individuals with disabilities.

The Senior Services Commission provides aging and disability services, programs, and activities for individuals over the age of 60 who reside in the Lexington-Fayette Urban County area. The Commission also advocates on behalf of seniors on issues that impact the senior community.

United Way of the Bluegrass represents 10 counties in Central Kentucky and aids families and individuals by addressing obstacles and barriers that hinder them from obtaining basic needs, financial stability, and educational opportunities.

The Bluegrass Area Chapter of the American Red Cross provides various types of assistance to persons in need across 28 counties in the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. The American Red Cross is not a government agency; therefore, it relies on donations of time, money, and resources from individuals in the community to relieve suffering throughout the state during times of a disaster or other events where their services are needed.

Medical Service and Institutions

University of Kentucky Healthcare (UK Healthcare) has been the top-rated hospital in Kentucky eight years in a row. UK Healthcare employs over 9,000 highly trained healthcare professionals and provides Kentuckians with comprehensive care in sophisticated and up to date medical facilities. UK Healthcare has a network of partnerships and outreach locations across the state providing convenient, quality healthcare.

Saint Joseph Hospital has two facilities in Lexington. Saint Joseph Hospital primarily serves Central and Eastern Kentucky with a full range of services, including award-winning cardiology, orthopedics, and stroke care.

Eastern State Hospital provides inpatient psychiatric treatment, specialized services for individuals who have acquired brain injuries and ancillary services including a laboratory, radiology, EKG, phlebotomy, and a pharmacy.

Baptist Health is a tertiary care facility that is recognized for its excellence in heart care and cancer care. Additionally, the hospital's Clinical Research Center conducts groundbreaking research in both fields. Baptist Health is also one of the leading maternity centers in the state. Baptist Health offers many points of care throughout Lexington and in surrounding counties through a network of healthcare providers for patients – from Baptist Health Medical Group offices, Baptist Health Urgent Care, and Baptist Health Occupational Medicine.

Shriners Children's Hospital is a pediatric specialty care hospital in Lexington. Shriners Hospital provides services in orthopedics, physical therapy, occupational therapy, prosthetics, orthotics, care coordination/case management, social services, and inpatient/outpatient care.

The Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center provides a variety of medical services to veterans including primary care, mental health care, and specialty medical care that is tailored towards the unique needs of veterans.

The Ridge Behavioral Health System (The Ridge) is an accredited and licensed hospital facility that offers psychiatric and chemical dependency (drug and alcohol rehabilitation) services to children, adolescents, and adults. The Ridge provides outpatient care and partial hospitalization services 24 hours, seven days a week.

Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital is an inpatient rehabilitation hospital that provides both inpatient and outpatient care. Their highly trained staff also provide home health care geared toward returning patients back to their active and independent lives.

Educational Institutions

The University of Kentucky (UK) is a public land-grant university committed to enhancing lives through education, research and creative work, service, and health care. UK is Kentucky’s flagship institution, serving as a leader by promoting diversity, inclusion, economic development, and human well-being. UK has received national notoriety with multiple awards and accreditations.

Transylvania University was the first university founded in Kentucky and is now a prestigious, private liberal arts university. Transylvania University offers students a community-driven, personalized approach to a liberal arts education through 48 majors. Most students attending Transylvania University receive gift aid and graduate in four years.

Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) is one of 16 two-year institutions in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KYTCS). Established in 2005 through the consolidation of Lexington Community College and Central Kentucky Technical College, BCTC prepares students to successfully transfer to a four-year institution or to successfully enter the workforce.

Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) in Lexington serves over 40,000 students in the Lexington Metro area. FCPS has 37 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, 6 high schools, 3 technical centers, and 15 other academic and alternative programs. FCPS strives to create a collaborative community that ensures all students graduate prepared to excel in a global society.

Public Transportation Providers

Many public and private transportation providers offer services in the Central Kentucky region. While Lextran operates as the main public transit provider for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government area, human services agencies, and other transportation organizations serve important functions in the region by offering demand-response transit, transportation to medical facilities, and travel to employment for those with limited mobility. This section provides an overview of transportation services in the Central Kentucky region.

The Transit Authority of Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (Lextran) provides fixed-route service for a full fare of \$1.00 (Table 1) with discounted fares available. Lextran’s routes provide transportation to many of Lexington’s popular commercial, occupational, medical, residential, and recreational points of interest. For more information about Lextran please visit www.lextran.com.

Lextran Fare Type	Cost
Adult	\$1.00
Students/Youth (Ages 7-18)	\$0.80
Seniors (Age 62 and older)	\$0.50
Person with disabilities	\$0.50
Medicare Cardholders	\$0.50
Children 6 and younger	Free

Table 1: Lextran Fare Type



Lextran's complementary paratransit service, Wheels, is operated by RATPDev and offers door-to-door services for disabled individuals in Lexington-Fayette County. For an individual to utilize Wheels they must be unable to fully access Lextran's fixed-route system due to the nature of their disability, as determined by BLOKINETIX, a third-party evaluator. Wheels complements Lextran's fixed-route service and goes beyond the requirements set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act by offering service beyond the required ¾ mile buffer outside of the fixed-route service area, anywhere within Fayette County.

Lextran's Senior Bus program is available to seniors aged 62 years and older, for non-medical trips. Trip reservations are required to be scheduled ahead of time and for a minimum of 10 people. The Senior Bus is available Monday through Friday from 10:00 AM. to 1:00 PM. (availability is limited). Fare is \$0.50 per person.

Federated Transportation Services of the Bluegrass (FTSB) is a non-profit transportation agency that provides public transportation in five counties and also serves as the Medicaid broker to 24 counties in Kentucky, including Fayette County. As a Medicaid broker, FTSB provides transportation to and from Medicaid covered services within the rider's medical service area. FTSB's Mor'Trans service offers four deviated fixed routes in Morehead and Rowan County, a Job and Education Ride Service, and an Intercity service to Lexington and Ashland from Morehead.

Bluegrass Community Action Partnership (BGCAP) is a non-profit organization that serves nine counties in Central Kentucky with a variety of programs to aid participants with basic needs like food and clothing with the goal of moving people out of poverty and into self-sufficiency. BGCAP provides a number of different public transportation services in 11 counties. They offer accessible demand response and deviated fixed route transit service for the general public, as well as provide lifeline transportation for clients of Medicaid and other social service programs., BGCAP's Bluegrass Ride service provides fare-free public transportation from Lexington to Frankfort, Georgetown, Danville, and Nicholasville.

ITN Bluegrass is a non-profit organization that provides transportation to seniors and individuals with visual impairments in Fayette and North Jessamine Counties. This transportation service is provided seven days a week, 24 hours a day, in private automobiles with trained drivers. Drivers provide door-to-door service and help with packages.

Employment Solutions is a non-profit organization that promotes personal and economic independence. They have a transportation service that provides adults with intellectual disabilities that receive Medicaid, specifically the Supports for Community Waiver, transportation to Adult Day Training Centers. They pick up qualified individuals at their homes and transport them to centers in Fayette, Scott, Jessamine, Clark, and Montgomery counties.

Service	Service Type	Service Area	Phone
Lextran	Fixed-route transit service	Lexington-Fayette County	(859) 255-7756
Lextran Wheels	Complementary Paratransit	Lexington-Fayette County	(859) 233-3433
Lextran Senior Bus	Non-medical senior group transportation	Lexington-Fayette County	(859) 255-7756
FTSB	Medicaid transportation	Central Kentucky (5 Counties)	(859) 258-2722
FTSB BHN	Intercity on-demand transportation	Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas Counties to Lexington	(859) 258-2722
FTSB Mor'Trans	Intercity on-demand service	Morehead to Lexington; Morehead to Ashland; on-demand within Morehead	(859) 258-2722
Bluegrass RIDE (BGCAP)	Intercity on-demand service	Nicholasville to Lexington	(800) 456-6588
Frankfort Connection (BGCAP)	Intercity on-demand service	Frankfort to Lexington	(800) 456-6588
Danville Connection (BGCAP)	Intercity on-demand service	Danville to Lexington	(800) 456-6588
ITN Bluegrass	On-demand transportation for seniors and persons with visual impairments	Fayette and Jessamine Counties	(859) 252-8665
Employment Solutions	On-demand transportation for Medicaid waiver Adult Day Training Services.	Central Kentucky (5 Counties)	(859) 303-4646

Table 2: Summary of Transportation Services in Fayette County

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Analyzing demographic data is crucial to understanding the current and future needs of the populations that the Section 5310 program is intended to serve. Data from the United States Census Bureau can help uncover demographic conditions and trends in Lexington-Fayette County. This Coordinated Plan examined populations 65 or older, minority populations, household incomes, and households that include an individual with disabilities (Table 3). Block groups, which are geographical areas defined by the census that contain between 600 and 3,000 people, were analyzed for this Plan.

2022 American Community Survey for Fayette County	Total	County-Wide Percentage
Total Population	321,276	100%
Population 65 or Older	45,560	14.18%
Minority Population	90,572	28.19%
Total Households	136,104	100%
Households that include an individual with disabilities	31,954	23.48%
Households with Income Below Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months	19,966	14.67%

Table 3: 2022 American Community Survey

Age Demographics

According to the 2022 American Community Survey, 14.18 percent of the population in Fayette County is 65 or older. About 49 percent of block groups within Fayette County had greater than 14.18 percent of its population 65 or older. Block groups that have a population percentage at or beyond the county-wide average are distributed across Fayette County, including in the equine and agricultural areas outside of the urban growth boundary (Figure 1).

Minorities

Fayette County’s total population was 28.19 percent minority in 2022, and roughly 41 percent of block groups had a higher percentage minority population than county-wide. Block groups that had a higher percentage of minority population were found in the north side of the city and along Man O’ War Boulevard on the south side of the city. The area surrounding the Kentucky Horse Parks also contains a higher percentage of minority population (Figure 2).

Individuals with Disabilities

About 23.48 percent of households in Fayette County included an individual with disabilities. Roughly half of block groups had a higher percentage of households that include an individual with disabilities than the county-wide average. The largest concentration of households that include an individual with disabilities are found within New Circle Road (Figure 3). Outside of New Circle Road, block groups with a high concentration of households that include persons with disabilities can be found near the Man O’ War Boulevard corridor between Nicholasville Road and Richmond Road, as well as in the rural block groups on the eastern and northwestern sides of Fayette County.

Low Income

About 14.67 percent of households in Fayette County reported an income below the poverty line within the last 12 months, according to the 2022 American Community Survey. About 37 percent of

block groups had a higher percentage of low-income households than the county-wide average. Low-income households were concentrated within New Circle Road, with additional pockets near Centre Parkway, Joyland, Eastland, and the area surrounding the Kentucky Horse Park in the northern part of Fayette County (Figure 4).

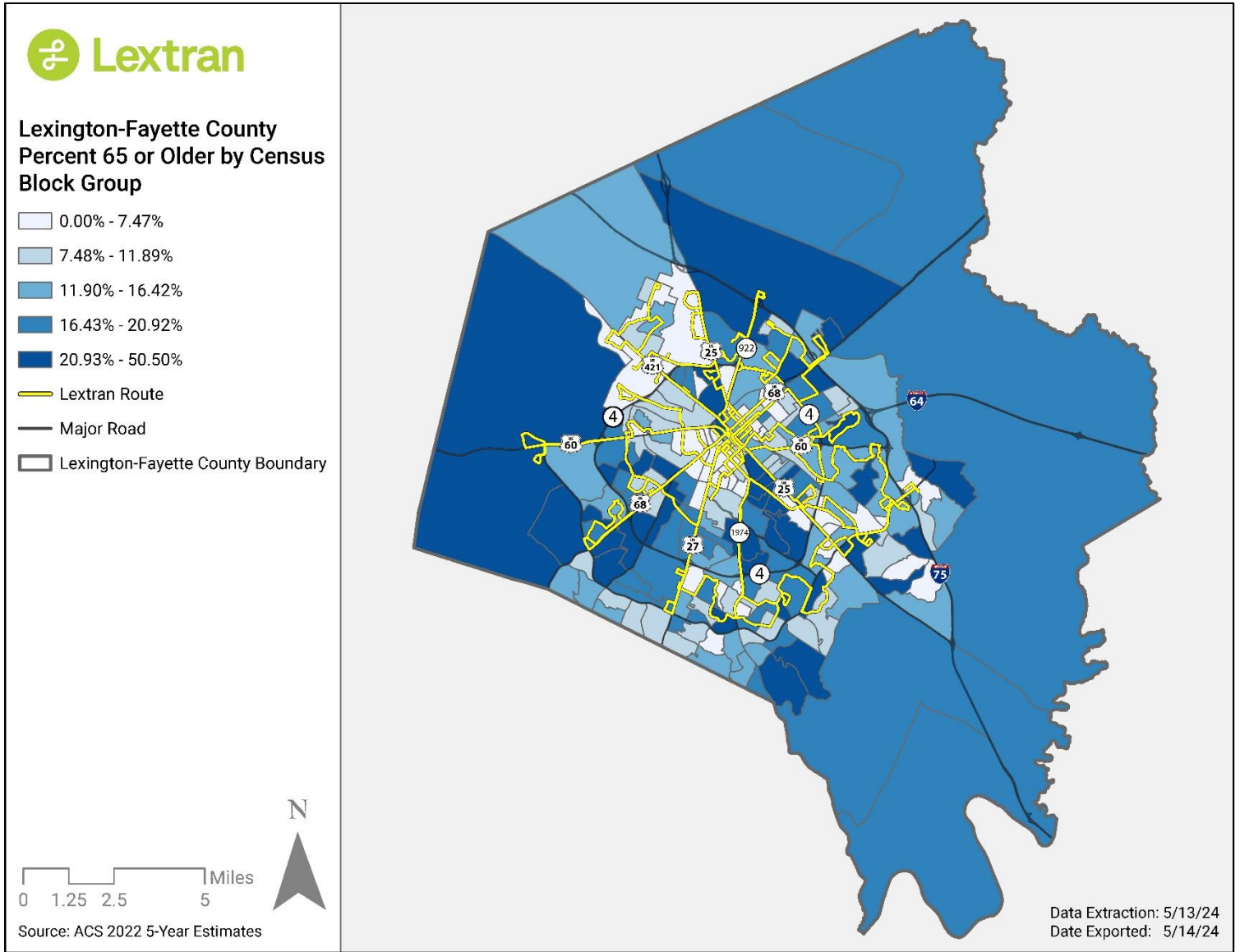


Figure 1: Lexington-Fayette County Population 65 or Older (2022 ACS)

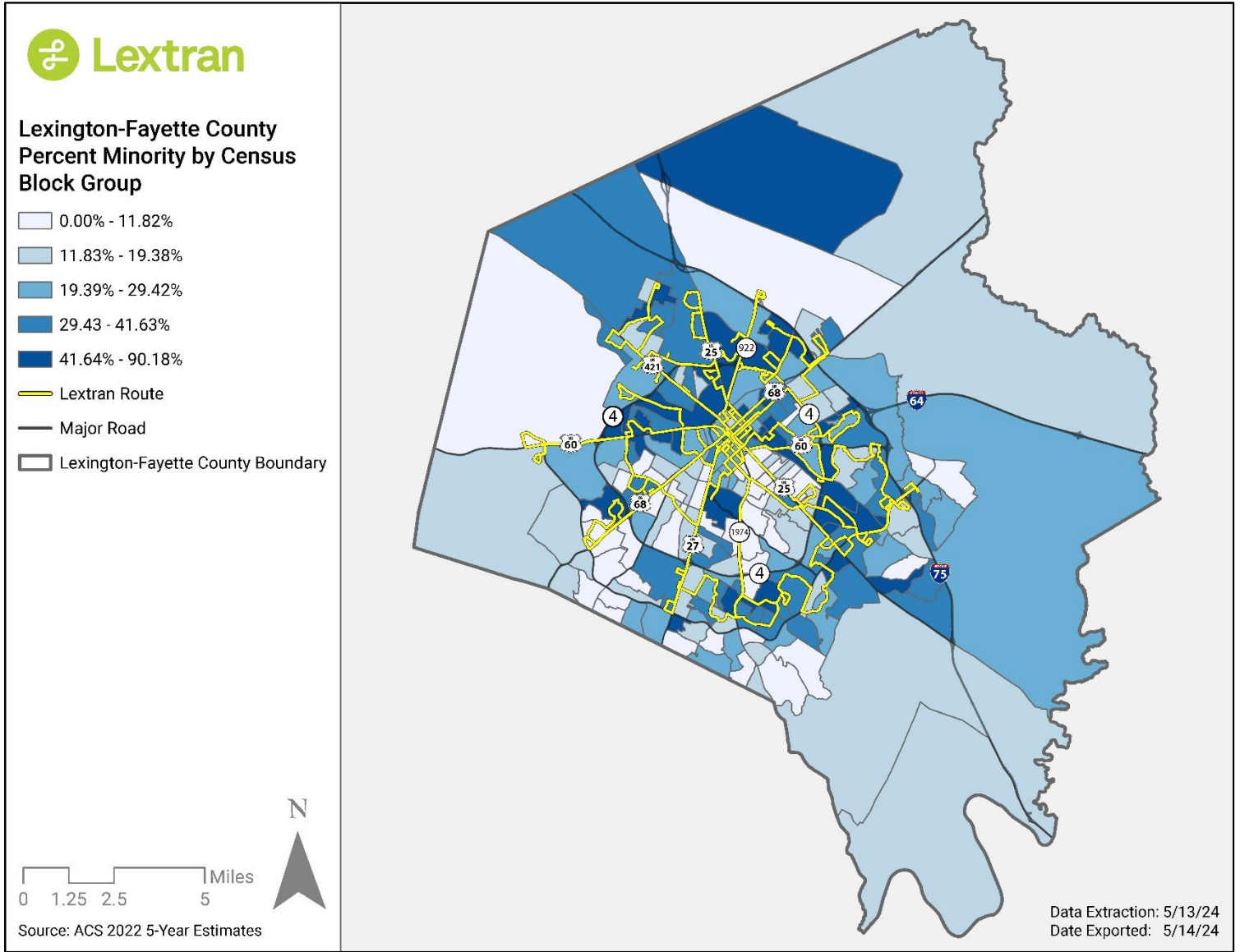


Figure 2: Lexington-Fayette County Percent Minority Population (2022 ACS)

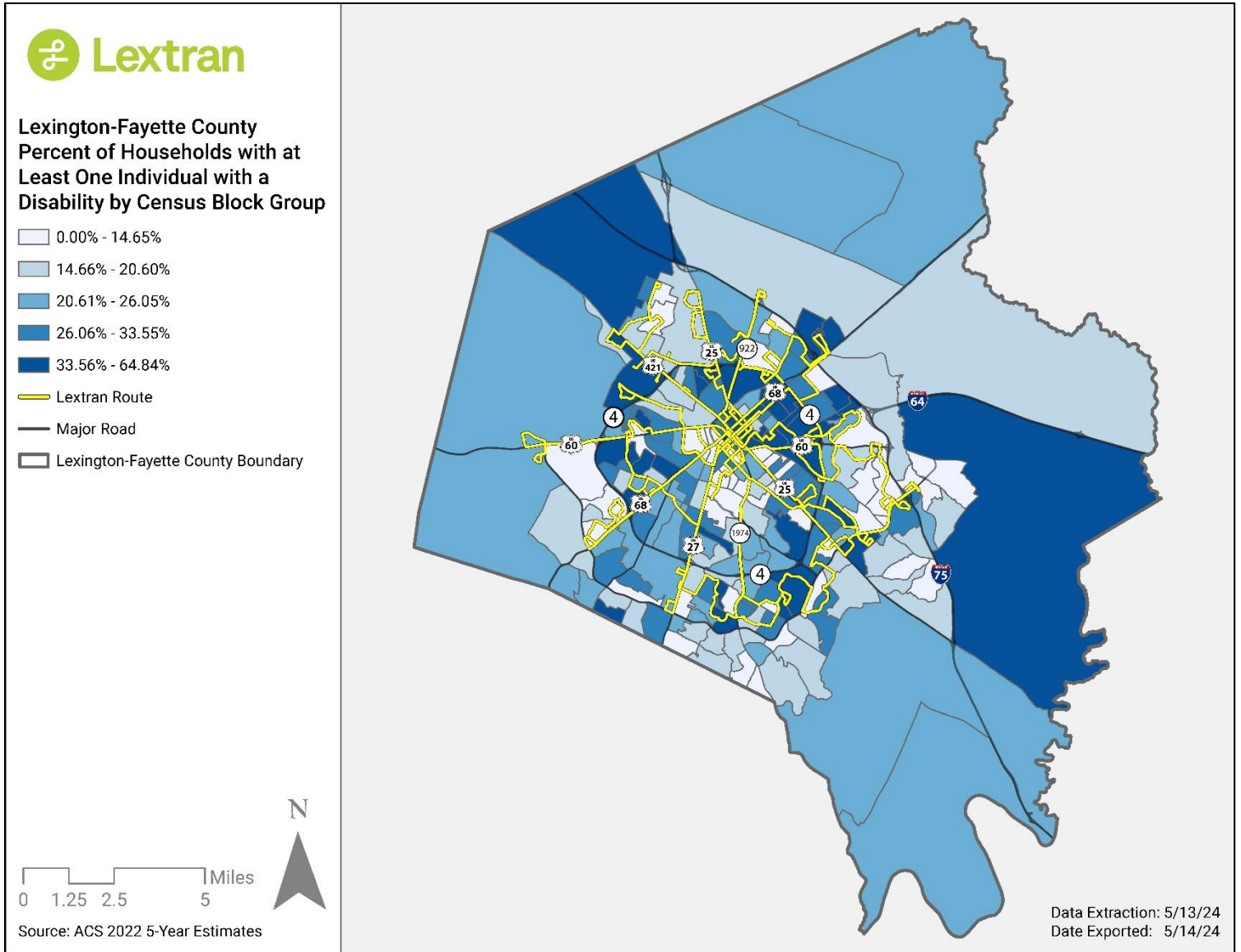


Figure 3: Lexington-Fayette County Households Including an Individual with Disabilities (2022 ACS)

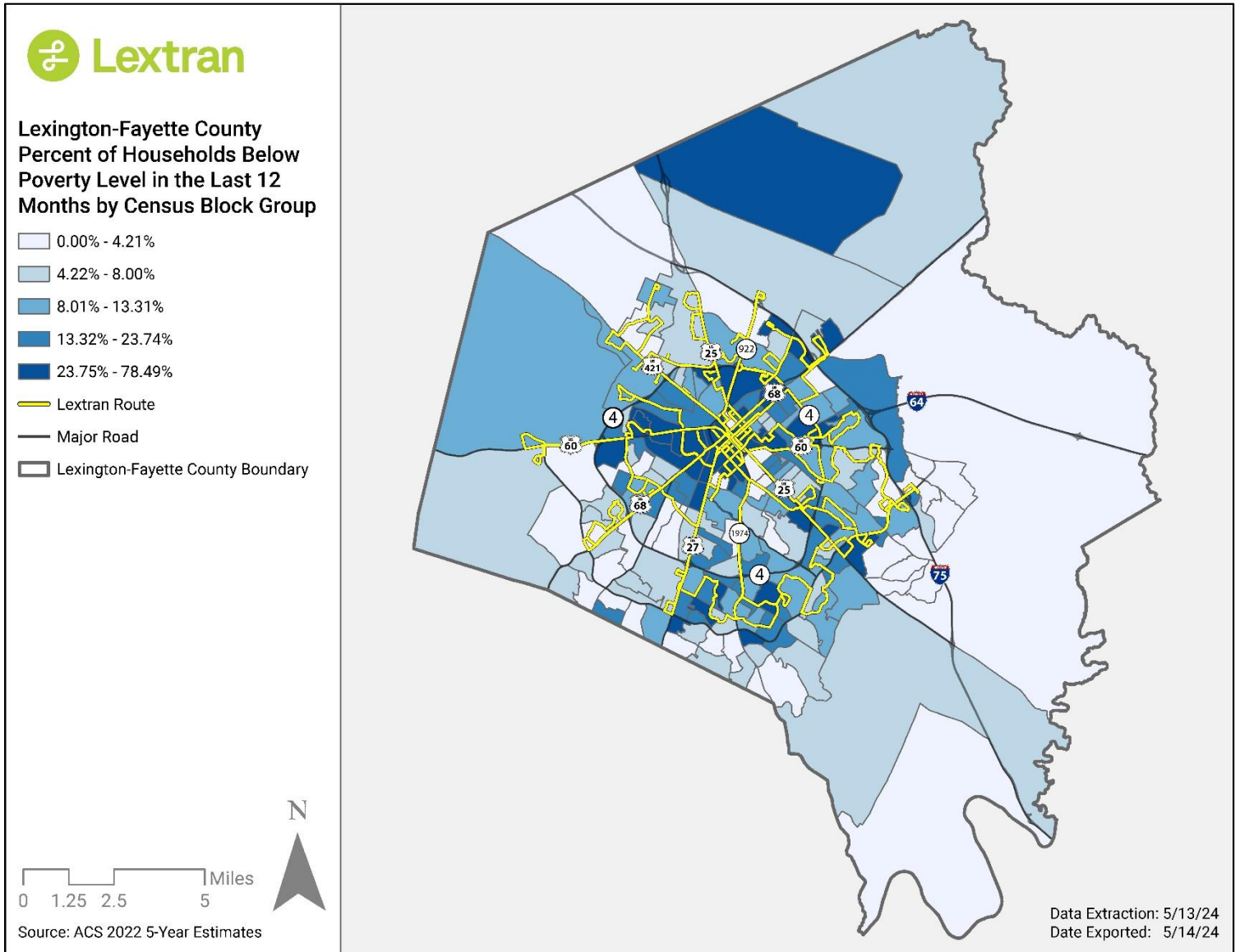


Figure 4: Lexington-Fayette County Households with Income Below Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months (2022 ACS)

IDENTIFIED GAPS

Needs for the region, to better serve seniors and individuals with disabilities, were identified from analyzing existing conditions, demographics, and public input. The needs identified are categorized into four themes: Technology, Infrastructure, Operator Training and Education, and Regional Transportation.

Theme 1: Operator Retention, Training, and Education

Across the board, agencies that provide transportation have faced driver shortages throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. While numbers are improving, there is still a concern regarding operator retention.

Part of this issue is that during the Covid-19 pandemic, average daily trips for transportation providers plummeted. Issues such as stay-at-home orders and other safety measures that were put in place by state and local governments as well as employers, kept many customers at home or generally wary of using public transportation. As conditions in the public health sphere have improved, ridership has begun to increase, but is not yet at pre-pandemic levels.

Along with ridership being down, there is a labor shortage that is occurring nationwide. Public transportation historically has a high turnover rate, but the pandemic has exasperated this problem. Many providers have had to do things such as create more financial incentives, hold more job fairs, and spend more money on advertising in order to get the word out in the community that they are hiring. Service cuts have been implemented because of these labor shortages.

Members of the public expressed concern about driver sensitivity and training in terms of the way that some customers with disabilities are treated when using public transportation. Customers with disabilities face a number of unique challenges when using public transportation. Some customers have wheelchairs that are unable to be properly accommodated by every bus in use. Other customers have vision impairments and rely on stop announcements from the PA system aboard the buses as well as announcements made by drivers so that they can orient themselves to their location to ensure that they exit at the correct stop. Every disability is unique and requires drivers to have both knowledge and sensitivity when interacting with customers.

Theme 2: Infrastructure

Another issue identified was accessibility for wheelchairs and other mobility devices throughout different areas of Lexington. The areas that both public transportation users and public transportation providers deemed to be the most in need of change are medical facilities and grocery stores.

Providers that administer paratransit services have observed that areas outside of many medical facilities in Lexington are often overcrowded and do not have appropriate accommodations for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Many customers use paratransit to get to and from medical appointments. Drivers have difficulty loading or unloading customers in safe areas due to crowding as well as general limited sidewalk space in some areas of Downtown Lexington.

Furthermore, areas such as grocery stores or other big-chain stores (Walmart, Target, etc.) do not have appropriate infrastructure to accommodate seniors and individuals with disabilities. Oftentimes there is a lack of sidewalks with curb ramps that allow for wheelchair access. Sometimes, the curb ramps are placed in inconvenient locations not directly adjacent to the entry of the store which then requires that anyone needing to utilize such accommodations must go out of their way to do so. Other times, accessibility features are so poorly designed (such as steep ramps) that they create additional hurdles for those individuals the features are intended to aid.

Theme 3: Technology

Lextran has an app for mobile devices called myStop that is a real-time information and trip planning application that is supported by Lextran's CAD/AVL system. The app provides customers with the ability to find fixed-route bus locations, upcoming stop departure times and locations, set stop reminders, and plan trips. Real time information on the app includes things such as the bus number, the physical location of the bus, onboard passenger count, late/early/on-time status, the route and direction of the last stop served, and upcoming departures for all stops on each route. In terms of accessibility, there is an accessibility mode on the mobile app and a text only mode available on the desktop app.

Participants in the public meetings expressed concerns that the myStop app does not include paratransit options nor does it allow users to be able to see what type of bus is coming to their bus stop to ensure that their mobility device will be permitted on the bus (i.e., some wheelchairs may fit

on some buses and not others). Wheels has an app called Mobility by Ecolane that does provide the user with some specifics on the types of buses, however, that feature is limited.

There was also a concern expressed that seniors are not comfortable with using technology such as mobile apps to plan public transportation trips and that this might inhibit or discourage them from utilizing public transportation on a regular basis. Some bus stop signs have QR codes that customers can scan with their phones to get information, but participants conveyed that many seniors do not understand how this type of technology works.

Participants also expressed that there is a lack of variety in accessibility features in public transportation. Two examples from the public meeting include placing Braille on bus stop signs and including an audio feature on bus stops that tell the customer exactly where they are located and what route that stop serves.

Theme 4: Regional Transportation

The lack of reliable regional transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities was a recurring discussion. Lexington serves as a medical hub for several surrounding counties in Central Kentucky as well as many communities in Eastern Kentucky but there is a lack of reliable transportation available. On-demand services such as Lyft and Uber can be utilized but when coming in from a surrounding county, can also be expensive. The lack of on-demand transportation for individuals with disabilities and seniors was a recurring theme throughout all the discussions, but especially in terms of regional transportation.

5310 FUNDING AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310 program (49 U.S.C. Section 5310) provides formula funding to states for the purpose of assisting private or designated public nonprofit agencies in meeting the transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each state's share of the population for these two groups. As the designated recipient for FTA funding, Lextran administers the Section 5310 program. The program's goal is to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas.

Eligible projects include both “traditional” capital investment and “non-traditional” investment beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for Section 5310 funding, a project must meet the federal requirements detailed below.

- The project serves seniors and/or individuals with disabilities.
- The project is planned, designed, and carried out to meet the specific needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. It is not sufficient that seniors and individuals with disabilities are merely included (are assumed to be included) among the people who will benefit from the project.
- The project sponsor qualifies as a sub-recipient under Section 5310.
- The project qualifies for Section 5310 funding under FTA guidelines.
- The project is non-duplicative.
- The project identifies one or more local funding sources and substantiates that the source(s) are committed to providing the necessary local match for the project.
- The project addresses at least one of the strategies identified in the Coordinated Plan.

Eligible Activities

Section 5310 funds are available for capital and operating expenses aimed at improving transportation services to better meet the specific needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Section 5310(b) requires that, of the amounts apportioned to states and designated recipients, not less than 55 percent shall be available for traditional Section 5310 projects (public transportation capital projects planned, designed, and carried out to meet the specific needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, unavailable, or inappropriate.) However, recipients may use more than 55 percent of their apportionment for traditional projects.

Eligible sub-recipients can carry out these projects. Eligible sub-recipients include private non-profit organizations; or a state or local government authority that 1) receives approval from a state to coordinate services for seniors and individuals with disabilities, or 2) confirms that the area does not have any non-profit organizations who provide the service.