# MUNCIE **DELAWARE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT - HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATION PLAN**

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**Job Access** 

Health Care

Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission 2007

# PREFACE

## PUBLICATION NOTICE

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# WORK PROGRAM FULFILLMENT

The 2007 Delaware County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan Unified Planning Work Program fulfills in part Work Element Number 300 of the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission's Fiscal Year 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The purpose of Program Number 300 hereby fulfilled is to produce a document that specifies existing transit services, plans toward maintaining service, service gaps, and plans toward filling those gaps.

# DELAWARE-MUNCIE METROPOLITAN PLAN COMMISSION STAFF

Marta Moody, Executive Director

Hugh Smith, Principal Planner Pam Spoonemore, Zoning Planner Cheryl McGairk, Transportation Planner \* Fred Daniel, GIS Planner

@ Lorey Stinton, GIS Planner Carol Fisher, Office Manager Kimberly Cuthbertson, Secretary Mary Ann Gervolino, Planning Technician

\* Responsible for preparation of this report, @ Cover Design

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DELAWARE-MUNCIE METROPOLITAN PLAN COMMISSION Dave Howell..... President Lance Lillie ...... Vice-President

Gary Alexander Alison Ouirk Dave Clamme Marta Moody, Secretary

Julius Anderson Deane Rundell Michael Denton John Brooke Tom Jarvis **Bill Whitehead** John Kelley Tom DeWeese, Attorney

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David Taylor

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Jack Isenbarger

Larry King - Muncie Indiana Transit System Jack Klingensmith - Citizen Representative Marta Moody - DMMPC Executive Director Joyce Newland - Federal Highway Admin. Deane Rundell - Plan Commission Ken Schuck - Chamber of Commerce Tom Bennington - County Commissioners Thomas Kinghorn - Ball State University Represented by: Kevin Kenyon - BSU Facilities & Planning

Cheryl McGairk ..... Recording Secretary

Advisors: Mark Turner - Muncie City Engineer Dept. Michael Denton - Delaware County Engineer Hugh Smith - DMMPC Angie Moyer, County Engineering Dept.

#### TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Nada Amburn - American Electric Power David Cox - INDOT Greenfield District Michael Denton - Delaware County Engineer Mary Doherty - INDOT Planning Section Mary Gaston - MITS (Transit System) MaryAnn Gervolino - DMMPC Planner Cindy Johnson - AT&T Brian Jones - INDOT Transit Section John Kelley - Delaware Co. Surveyor Tim Kelty - Yorktown Town Manager Jim Lowe - Ball State University Fred Ludington - Parker City Michael Lynn - Delaware County Airport Diana Michener - Vectren Energy Delivery Joyce Newland - Federal Highway Admin. Larry Robinson - Chamber of Commerce Ken Roth - Trucking Representative Hugh Smith - DMMPC Planner Mark Turner - Muncie City Engineer Dept.

Cheryl McGairk ..... Recording Secretary

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES COORDINTATION PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Marilyn Carey -Delaware County Mental Health Association Fred Daniel -Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission Mary Gaston -Muncie Indiana Transit System Betty McGill -Mental Health America Marta Moody -Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission

Linda Muckway -Individuals with Disabilities Advocate Bruce Reynolds -Forest Park Senior Center Hugh Smith -Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission Mark Yaudas -LifeStream Services

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# Introduction

Spring of 2007 the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission took the lead role in initiating the development of a local Public Transit-Human Services Coordination Plan for Delaware County. The development of such a plan is necessary for the Section 5310 Elderly Individuals with Disabilities Program, Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC) and Section 5317 New Freedom Program funding programs set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) federal authorization act. Drawing on members of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) a steering committee group was formed to guide the creation of this plan. Members of the TAC and others were chosen to serve as the steering committee for this plan due to their expertise and experience with the programs and populations covered by this, as well as their strong involvement and coordination with previous transportation and transit related projects. The membership includes representatives of public and nonprofit transportation and human services providers, local jurisdictions and consumers.

In 2005, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced transit program changes authorized through SAFETEA-LU including a requirement for local areas to develop a coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan for all FTA human service transportation programs that provide funding for transportation services. Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 programs provide grant funding for local transportation services and capital projects to meet the special needs of targeted populations. The Indiana Department Of Transportation (INDOT) administers the 5310, 5316 and 5317 programs in Indiana.

The Section 5310 Elderly Individuals with Disabilities Program provides grant funding for the purchase of buses, vans and related equipment and other expenses related to providing for the transportation needs of elderly and disabled persons for whom other transportation services are either not available or are insufficient to meet those Eligible capital expenses may include buses/vans and related vehicle needs. equipment; vehicle shelters; vehicle rehabilitation; preventive maintenance and extended warranties (within specified limits); computer hardware and software; initial component installation costs; vehicle procurement, testing, inspection and acceptance costs; lease of equipment when lease is more cost effective than purchase; acquisition of transportation services under contract, lease or other arrangement; the introduction of new technology and transit related intelligent transportation systems (ITS); and new mobility management and coordination programs among public and/or human service transportation providers. Grant funds are distributed on an annual basis with an 80 percent federal and 20 percent local match. Eligible capital equipment includes cars, vans, modified vans, buses and radio communication systems. In Indiana, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) administers the 5310 Program and procures all equipment for these grants. Locally, applicants submit a joint 5310 grant application through LifeStream's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) that serves Delaware County.

The Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program is a grant fund program to help local government authorities and non-profit agencies provide welfare recipients and low-income persons with transportation to and from jobs (Job Access); and to provide transportation services that enable urban residents to journey to suburban employment locations (Reverse Commute). Grant funds can be used for capital expenses and operating costs of equipment, facilities and capital maintenance associated with providing transportation services. Costs to promote late night and weekend transit service for workers with nontraditional work schedules, the use of transit vouchers, demand-responsive service and employer-provided transportation Reverse Commute grants can be used for capital purchases, are also covered. operating and other costs associated with providing reverse commute service by bus, van, carpool or other transportation means. Eligible activities for JARC funding include late-night and weekend service; guaranteed ride home service; shuttle service; expanded fixed route public transit routes; demand responsive service; ridesharing and carpooling activities; transit related aspects of bicycling; local car loan programs that assist individuals in purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared rides; marketing promotions for JARC activities; supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs; integrating automated regional public transit and human service transportation information, scheduling and dispatch functions; and establishing regional mobility managers or transportation brokerage activities. Other costs covered include supporting administration services for GIS tools, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and deploying vehicle position-monitoring systems. Federal funds for the program are allocated by formula to States for areas with populations below 200,000 persons and to designated recipients for areas with populations of 200,000 persons and above. The formula is based on the number of eligible low-income and welfare recipients in urbanized and rural areas. The federal/local share for this program is 80/20 for capital expenses and 50/50 for operating costs and 100% federal of up to 10% of the apportionment available for planning, administration and technical assistance. Matching funds may come from any non-US Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Federal funds that include transportation as a permitted use.

The Section 5317 New Freedom Program is a formula program for public or alternative transportation services and facility improvements to meet the needs of persons with disabilities going beyond the paratransit minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Funds may be used to make system improvements that enhance accessible public transportation including, but not limited to, travel training, purchasing accessible vehicles and accessibility improvements to facilities. Examples of eligible activities for New Freedom funding include enhancing existing public transportation beyond the minimum requirements of ADA; providing "feeder" services; making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodel stations; purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, ridesharing or vanpooling programs; covering the administration and expenses of new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service agencies; supporting new volunteer driver and aide programs; and supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public and/or human service transportation providers. Federal funds

for the program are allocated by formula to States for areas with populations below 200,000 persons and to designated recipients for areas with populations of 200,000 persons and above. The formula is based on the number of individuals with disabilities in urbanized and rural areas. Sixty percent of these Federal funds will go to areas with populations of 200,000 and above. The federal/ local share for this program is 80/20 for capital expenses, 50/50 for operating expenses and 100% federal of up to 10% of the apportionment available for planning, administration and technical assistance. Matching funds may come from any non-US Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) Federal funds that include transportation as a permitted use.

SAFETEA-LU requires that projects funded under the above programs be "derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan" and that the plan be "developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public." (SAFETEA-LU)

The key elements of a coordinated plan, as described by the FTA, should include 1) an assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes; 2) an assessments of available services; 3) strategies to address gaps for target populations; 4) identification of coordination actions to eliminate or reduce duplication in services and strategies for more efficient utilization of resources; and 5) prioritization of implementation strategies. It is anticipated that the providers in Delaware County will utilize the 5310, 5316 and 5317 federal programs to continue to fund existing services and to augment and improve upon existing services.

The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Delaware County was developed utilizing a number of methods. Existing resources and studies were examined including the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Allen County from which this plan draws extensively as a model. Census demographics and locations of origins and destinations were mapped and examined. Area agencies and providers were surveyed to collect information relative to their service and clients (Appendix A). A series of public input meetings were held in various locations (Appendix B). Transportation needs surveys were also distributed to individuals, focusing on individuals from the targeted populations (Appendix A).

Success in the planning process depends on the cooperation and input of all major stakeholders. A group of providers, advocates and human service agency representatives was formed as a steering committee on March 27, 2007. A public Transportation Summit Meeting was held in the Commissioner's Courtroom April 23, 2007 to identify and discuss transportation issues in Delaware County, especially those related to the targeted populations. A follow-up meeting was held at Forest Park Senior Center June 11, 2007. Members of the steering committee were joined by other human service agencies and met twice during May to do a self-assessment of

Delaware County's transportation services using the FTA's Framework For Action tool. This helped identify areas in which transportation services need to improve. Surveys were sent out to providers to help establish an inventory of transportation resources and to human service providers to identify unmet needs of their clients. A public transportation consumer survey was distributed at the meetings and available on transit vehicles. Staff also made trips to various locations including Forest Park Senior Center, MITS Transfer Station and Hillcroft Center to collect consumer input.

In an effort to develop a comprehensive coordination effort for the entire state a parallel planning process by RLS and Associates, consultants for the Indiana Department of Transportation, was developing a coordination plan for the rural areas of Indiana, including those counties that did not author their own plan. A regional meeting for this state coordination plan was held in the Delaware County Commissioner's Courtroom July 26, 2007. The regional meeting was attended by several individuals involved in the development of the Delaware County Public Transit-Human Services Coordination Plan and by representatives from surrounding counties.

The plan is intended to cover strategies for the immediate future. It may be amended and improved on as more entities and individuals participate and work to improve existing transportation coordination. The Coordinated Plan is designed to cover Muncie and Delaware County. The goal of this plan is to identify the transportation service gaps within Delaware County and provide a vehicle through which those gaps can be filled using appropriate projects through the Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 programs. The Allen County <u>Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan</u> serves as a model for this plan and much of the language in this plan is taken directly from it. Like the Allen County plan, this plan is laid out in distinct steps:

- Step 1: The first step identifies the providers within Delaware County and the service they provide.
- Step 2: The second step identifies the transportation related needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes in Delaware County.
- Step 3: The third step identifies the service gaps and redundant services in Delaware County.
- Step 4: The fourth step identifies and prioritizes strategies.
- Step 5: The fifth step outlines the selection process used to select projects to be pursued.
- Step 6: The final step suggests some implementation strategies and funding sources.

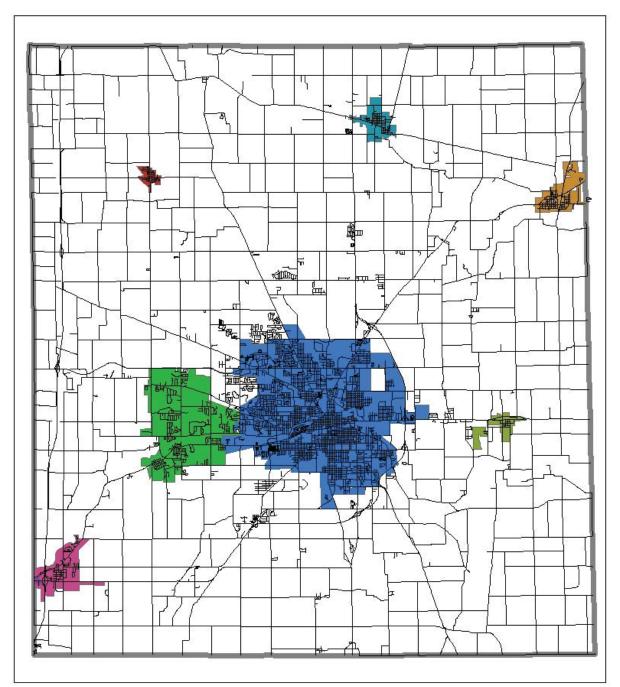
# Step 1: Identification of Providers

Delaware County residents are served by a variety of transportation services including public, human service and private transportation providers. The population of Delaware County is a combination of urban and rural patterns. There are seven incorporated communities and a number of smaller unincorporated areas in Delaware County. Map 1 illustrates Delaware County's road network and defines the boundaries of the incorporated areas. Delaware County is home to 114,879 residents by 2006 Census Bureau estimates. The highest concentrations of population are in the incorporated areas, with the City of Muncie home to 65,287 or almost 57% of the citizens of Delaware County. While the City of Muncie continues to grow in area through annexation, the population has decreased over the past three decades and is estimated to be down from 67,468 in the 2000 Census count. One result of this change is the population of Delaware County is becoming more scattered and more suburban/rural. The Town of Yorktown, west of Muncie, has grown considerably through annexation in recent years. The other towns have relatively stable Map 2 illustrates the population distribution in Delaware population numbers. County. The challenges resulting from this population pattern shows the need for coordinated and efficient transportation services. Transportation needs in Delaware County are served by two major transportation providers and a number of smaller The Muncie Indiana Transit System (MITS) operates in Muncie and the ones. LifeStream Services New InterUrban serves areas not covered by MITS. Transportation provider data was collected through interviews and a transportation provider survey.

# **Public Transportation Providers**

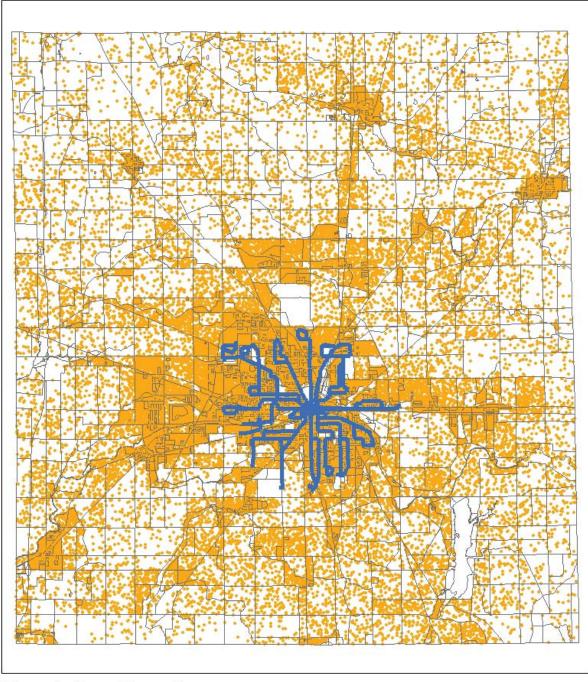
# MITS

The primary provider for the City of Muncie is the Muncie Indiana Transit System, commonly called MITS. MITS is a publicly sponsored transit agency that provides fixed route and ADA complimentary door-to-door service for people inside the City of Muncie. MITS operates fifteen fixed routes all are wheelchair accessible, and a free downtown trolley. Map 3 illustrates MITS fixed routes and their service area. The fifteen fixed routes operate out of a central transfer station. Weekday service begins at 6:00 a.m. and runs until 9:30 p.m. with variations on some routes. Saturday routes generally run from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and less frequently. Routes generally run on intervals of either 15 minutes or 30 minutes, but may be up to one-hour on Saturday routes. MITS also provides a demand response, door-to-door transportation service known as MITSPlus that helps meet the needs of certified riders with disabilities in Muncie. MITS JobConnection extends transportation services beyond the normal limits by providing pre-registered passengers with transportation between their homes and places of employment. Passenger fares are fifty cents (half price for seniors and those with disabilities) for fixed routes and \$1.00 for a one-way MITSPlus or JobConnection fare. The current fleet consists of twenty-one thirty-five foot heavy duty, diesel powered transit buses, ten thirty foot heavy duty, diesel powered transit



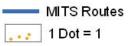
# City and Town Boundaries Delaware County

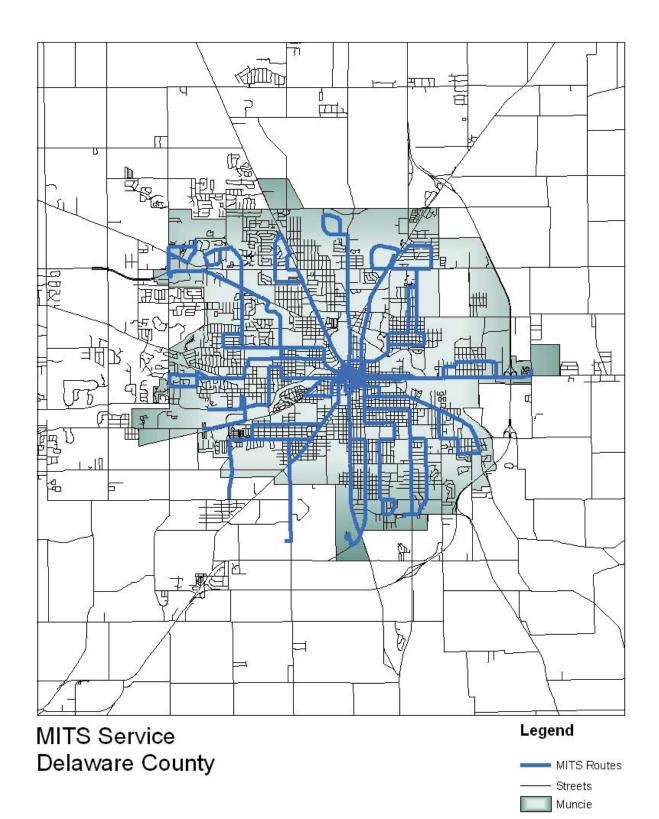




Population Density Delaware County









buses, fourteen paratransit vehicles and three rubber tired trolleys, 48 total vehicles. MITS buses made 2,062,197 trips in 2006 and traveled 1,205,952 miles. This was an increase from 2005 of 277,101 more trips and 43,949 more miles traveled.

### LifeStream Services New InterUrban

Delaware County's second major transportation service provider, The New InterUrban is operated by LifeStream Services. LifeStream Services is the local Area Agency on Aging serving Delaware and six surrounding counties. LifeStream Services provides a number of other services in addition to transportation. LifeStream's New InterUrban is in service Mon-Fri from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Service is available to all citizens and trips can be for any reason. They coordinate with MITS to offer transportation to areas outside the City of Muncie. They have 33 vehicles, 5 are generally available for use in Delaware County, all are wheelchair accessible with a lift. Fares are \$1 for 1-5 miles, \$2 for 6-14 miles, \$5 for 15-30 miles, \$8 for over 30 miles or a \$15 monthly pass. The LifeStream New InterUrban will also take Medicaid. LifeStream's New InterUrban vehicles made 92,133 one-way trips in 2006 and traveled 1,332,738 miles. That is an increase of 4,767 trips and 355,797 miles over 2005.

# Human Service Agency Transportation Providers

# Hillcroft Center

Hillcroft Center operates vehicles providing transportation for outings and events exclusively for the use of their clients. Hillcroft has 7 vehicles, 4 are wheelchair accessible.

# Ball State University

Ball State University operates a transportation service for BSU students and faculty. Service is from 7:00 a.m. until midnight Monday through Thursday and 7:00 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Friday during the academic year. BSU operates 23 vehicles, 12 are wheelchair accessible. They traveled 178,724 miles during fiscal year 2005-06.

### Other Not-For Profits

Also, many of the not-for-profit and private nursing homes and residential care facilities own and operate vehicles to provide transportation to their clients. Several of these facilities are located outside the service area of MITS and as a result cannot be accessed by residents who are capable of riding a fixed bus route. Meridian Services is a community mental health not-for-profit that operates residential facilities and provides transportation services to their clients. Meridian Services a fleet of seven agency vehicles for the transportation of their clients only. One vehicle is wheelchair accessible.

# **Private Transportation Services**

In addition to the public transportation providers there are some small private companies that principally provide Medicaid reimbursable transit service within Delaware County and surrounding counties. These companies respond to a relatively competitive demand and have limited capacity for expansion. Without exception, private transportation services are expensive and typically not affordable for individuals that lack personal transportation.

#### Eaton EMTs

Eaton EMTs Inc. provides service throughout the county 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Their service is available for medical trips for the general public, people with disabilities and older adults. Rates are set by Medicaid and are \$20 one way for walk on and \$30 for wheelchair with assistance. There is an additional charge of \$3.00 per mile after 10 miles. Eaton EMTs operates a fleet of 19 wheelchair accessible vans and 7 sedans (medical taxis). They drove 1.2 million miles making 45,000 trips last year.

#### Community Transport Service

Community Transport Service LLC operates a door-to-door service Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on Saturdays as needed other than dialysis. They serve the general public, elderly individuals and those with disabilities. Trips are non-emergency medical and covered by Medicaid or private pay. Their fleet consists of 11 vans, 6 are wheelchair accessible.

#### Taxi Service

Delaware County currently has one taxi service. Mickey's Taxi provides 24-hour services and can respond to out-of-county demand. As a 24-hour service, taxis may be the only source of transportation for employees on second and third shifts. Mickey's Taxi does not have a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

# Step 2: Identification of Transportation Needs

According to the Census Bureau, an elderly person is defined as any individual 65 years or older. Disability is defined as persons, five years or older, who report themselves as having a long-term physical, sensory, mental or self-care disability. Also, it includes anyone 5 years or older who reported they had difficulty leaving their home because of a physical, sensory, mental or self-care disability and anyone between the ages of 16 and 64 who reported having difficulty working because of a physical, mental or emotional condition that lasted six months or more was considered disabled. For economic status, JARC states that the program is targeted to aid welfare recipients or low income individuals. However, due to the difficulty of obtaining accurate data, the Census poverty status category is used in this document. This information is readily available in the Census information. Unemployment was defined as any civilian individual aged 16 years or older who does not have a job or is not waiting to be rehired from a job from which he or she was recently laid off.

Individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes have a variety of transportation needs. Mobility has significant impact on those populations. It is key to their independence, productivity and guality of life. "Without the ability to reach jobs, healthcare and other community support services it is difficult for citizens to join the economic mainstream or to fully participate in community life." (Department of Transportation (2003) Framework for Action: Building the Fully Coordinated Human Service Transportation System, Federal Transit Administration, Washington, D.C.) The needs can be evaluated in two areas: geographic and nongeographic. The geographic distribution of these populations and the areas they wish or need to get to illustrate the areas where transportation may be required. These areas are relative to their transportation options and the service areas of the identified providers. The non-geographic needs are the reasons why and when transportation is needed. The purpose of the trip and the day and time at which it is required is a major factor, especially when it is relative to the availability of transportation options. Demographic statistics are drawn from U.S. Census Bureau Census 2000 data.

# Geographic Distribution

### Distribution of Individuals with Disabilities

According to Census 2000, there are 20,400 individuals, or 18.5% of the population, in Delaware County age 5 or older living with a disability. The 2005 American Community Survey estimate raises the percentage to 21.0%. Map 4 illustrates the distribution of individuals, age 5 or older living with disabilities. The concentrations of these individuals vary throughout the county, with the heaviest concentrations in the City of Muncie and surrounding towns. Within this disabled population are 1,396 individuals aged 5 to 15, or 8.6% of all individuals between the ages of 5 and 15. In general, due to the fact that they are under the age of 16 and cannot drive, individuals in this age group (including those without disabilities) rely mainly on



Individuals With Disabilities Delaware County





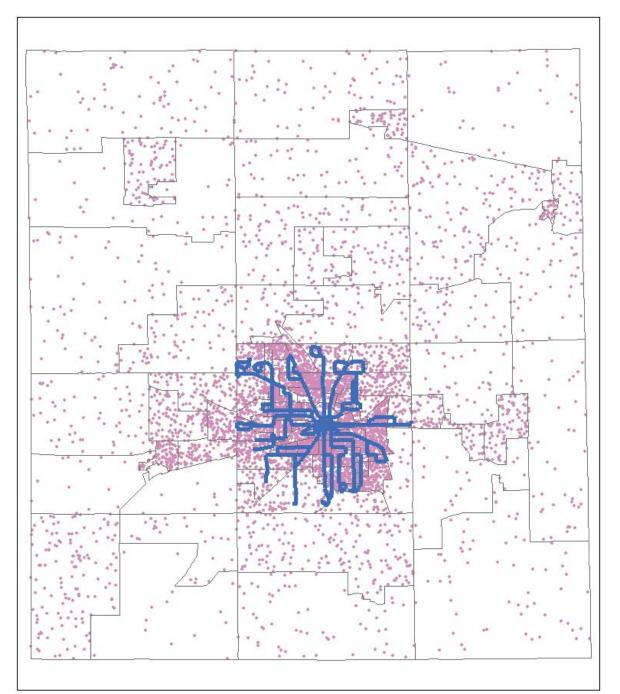
others (family and transportation providers) for their transportation needs. In addition, there are 6,652 individuals 16 and over, or 32.6% of all individuals with disabilities, with disabilities categorized as "go-outside-home". These are individuals who are unable to go outside the home alone to shop or visit a doctor's office. Map 5 illustrates the distribution of individuals with a "go-outside-home" disability.

### Distribution of Older Adults

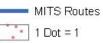
The elderly population in Delaware County has seen substantial growth over the years, increasing by more than ... between 1970 and 2000. According to the Census 2000, a total of 14,938 individuals age 65 and over are living in Delaware County. This is 12.6% of the county's total population. Map 6 illustrates the distribution of individuals age 65 and over. The largest concentrations of elderly in Delaware County are in the City of Muncie, especially in the northwest quarter and in the Town of Yorktown. There are 6,307 or 42.2% of the county's population age 65 and older who have a disability. The concentrations of these individuals vary throughout the county, with higher concentrations within the incorporated or highly populated areas of the county. Map 7 illustrates the distribution of disabled and elderly populations is concentrated in the City of Muncie and the small towns. This is illustrated in Map 8, which displays the distribution of the individuals with disabilities and the elderly combined.

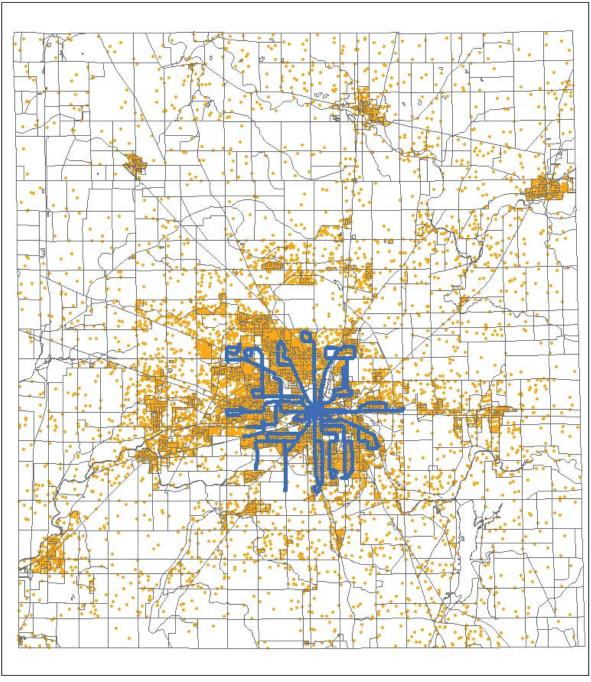
#### Distribution of Persons with Limited Incomes

Individuals with low-income and welfare recipients are found in nearly every part of Delaware County and the City of Muncie, however the areas with disproportionately high numbers of such individuals are located primarily in the City of Muncie and Union and Perry Townships. According to the Census 2000, 16,862 individuals, or 15.1% of Delaware County residents live below the poverty level. Map 9 illustrates the distribution of persons in this category. This poverty rate is higher than the national rate or Indiana's rates which are 12.4% and 9.5% respectively. The City of Muncie is home to 14,118 or 83.7% of those individuals living below the poverty level. More recent 2005 American Community Survey data suggests the number may be 24.2% of Muncie households have incomes below the poverty level. The residents in areas with higher concentrations of poverty are also less likely to have access to a reliable personal automobile. According to the Census 2000, there are 7.3% of households in Delaware County that are without personal vehicles. Map 10 illustrates the average number of vehicles per household in areas in Delaware County. The original JARC Program, a result of TEA-21, resulted in MITS' JobConnection service designed to increase mobility and access to employment centers based on poverty characteristics from which significant number of residents has benefited.



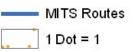
Individuals With Go-Outside-Home Disability Legend Delaware County

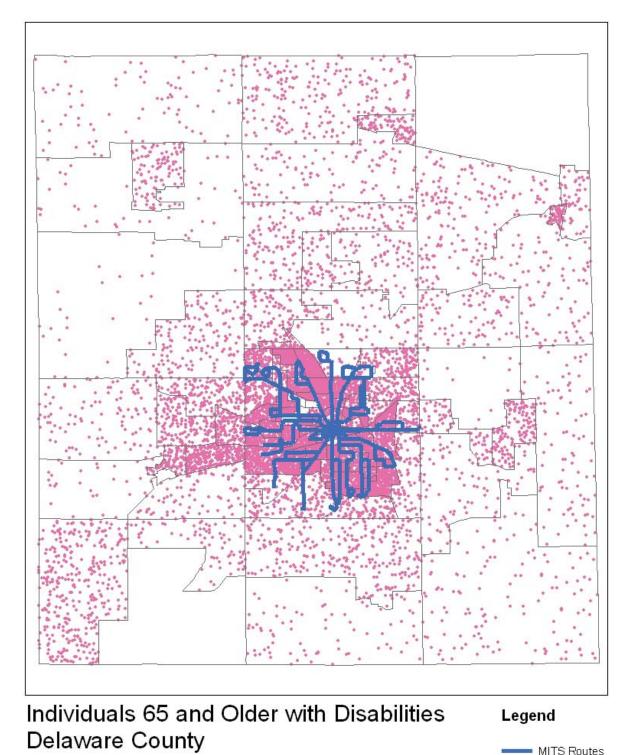




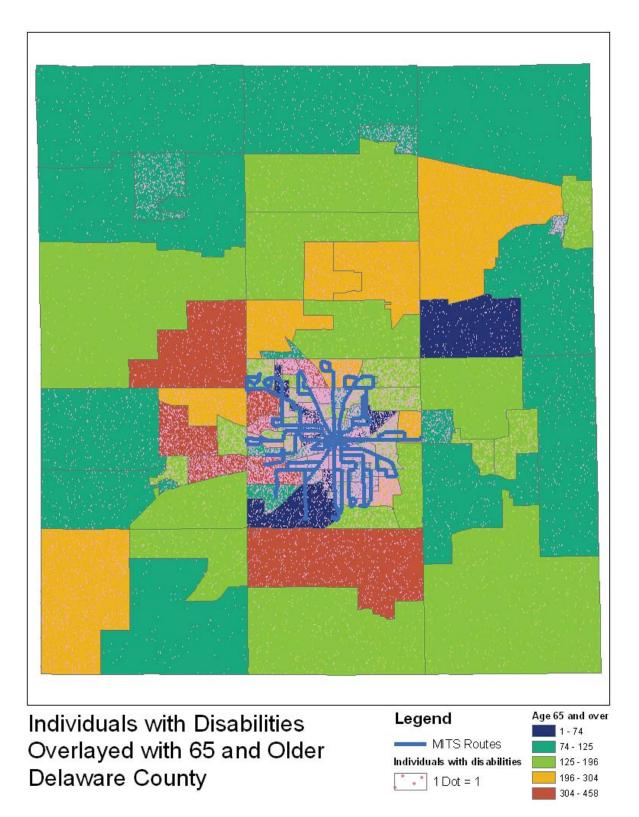
People Age 65 & Up Delaware County

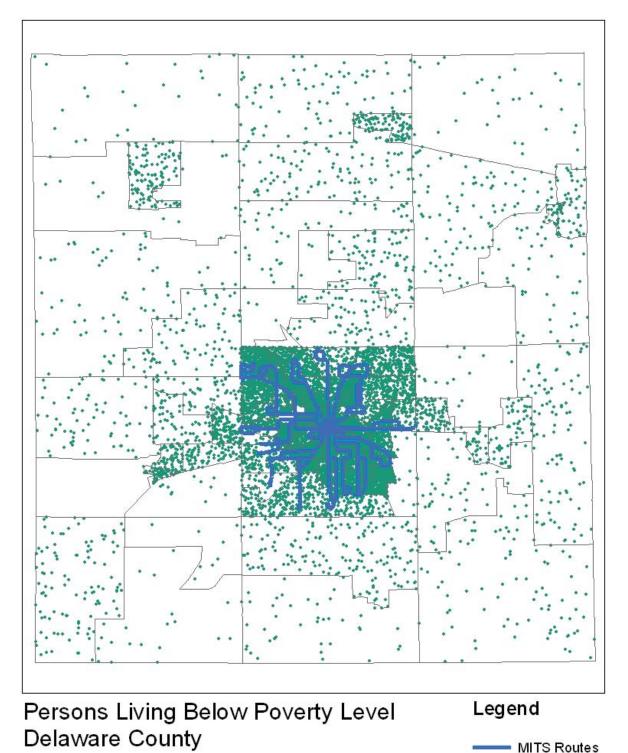




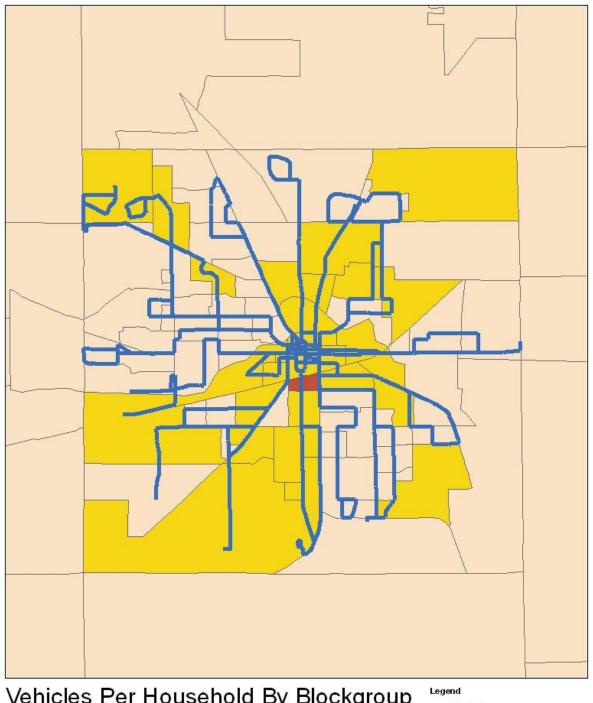


MITS Routes



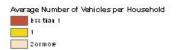


MITS Routes



Vehicles Per Household By Blockgroup Delaware County

💼 MITS Routes



### Distribution of Trip Origins and Destinations

Individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes have a variety of destinations which they need or wish to travel to and from. The most common origin of a trip for these populations (and all populations) is their residence. The most common destinations of these populations include hospitals and medical facilities, retail locations including pharmacies and groceries, social service providers, colleges and universities and locations of employment. Map 11 illustrates the location and distribution of these common destinations.

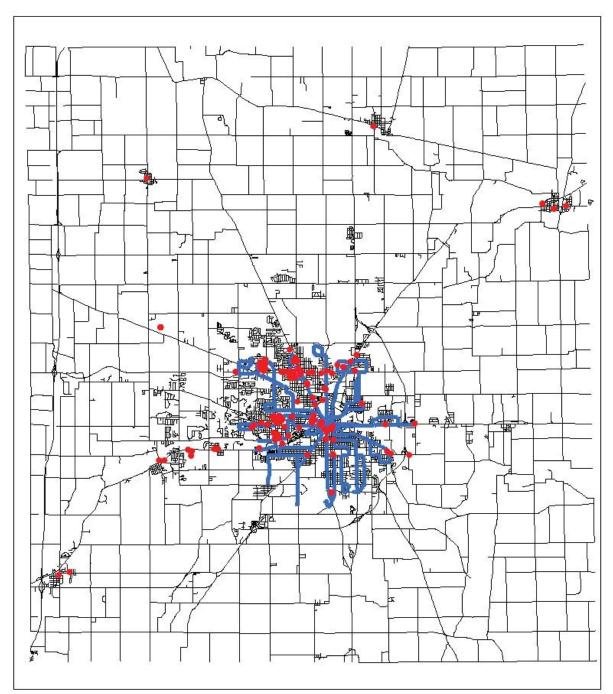
It is often common for the individuals in these targeted populations that require transportation to live in apartment communities, nursing homes, residential care facilities and assisted living centers. Map 12 illustrates the locations of apartment communities and Map 13 illustrates the location of nursing homes, residential care facilities and assisted living centers in Delaware County.

A common destination affecting the targeted populations, specifically those with limited incomes, are the locations of employment opportunities. Map 14 illustrates the locations with high employment opportunities in Delaware County. Like most mid-west communities, Muncie and Delaware County has a strong and growing service industry component and jobs in this sector are the most easily attained by people with low skills and training who are trying to make the transition from welfare to work. The hospital, hotels, retail centers, universities and office parks are located in minor concentrations throughout the city. The forecast for future job growth suggests that trends in job location will continue. Many manufacturing jobs have left central cities and are locating in fringe areas. The majority of these jobs are not entry level, however. While central-city opportunities for brownfield redevelopment will likely present themselves and may produce job growth or reinforce employment stability, it is likely that the majority of growth will occur where land is available to build new state-of-the-art facilities in close proximity to a highway or airport.

# Non-Geographic Needs

Transportation is needed by individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes for a variety of purposes and to a variety of destinations. The primary reason however is that reliable transportation enhances their quality of life. It creates a sense of independence and allows an individual the opportunity to access the places and services that they require. This is true no matter what population group they are in. Individuals require transportation to get to medical appointments, work, school, shopping, various government and social services, church and recreational and social activities.

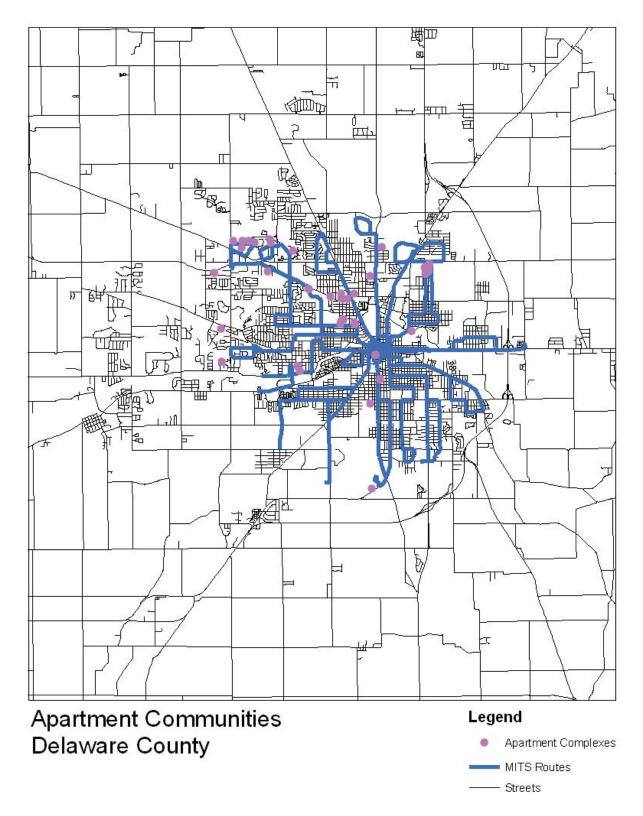
Identification of the transportation needs for the targeted populations was accomplished in several ways. Existing resources and studies were consulted such as Action, Inc.'s <u>Assessment for Community Solutions 2005</u>. Interviews and discussions were conducted with providers and area agencies that serve the targeted populations.



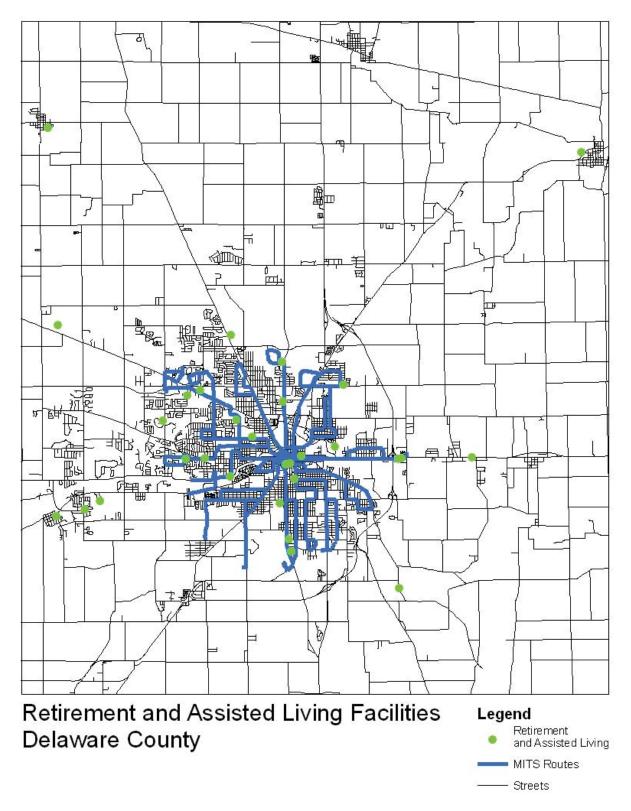


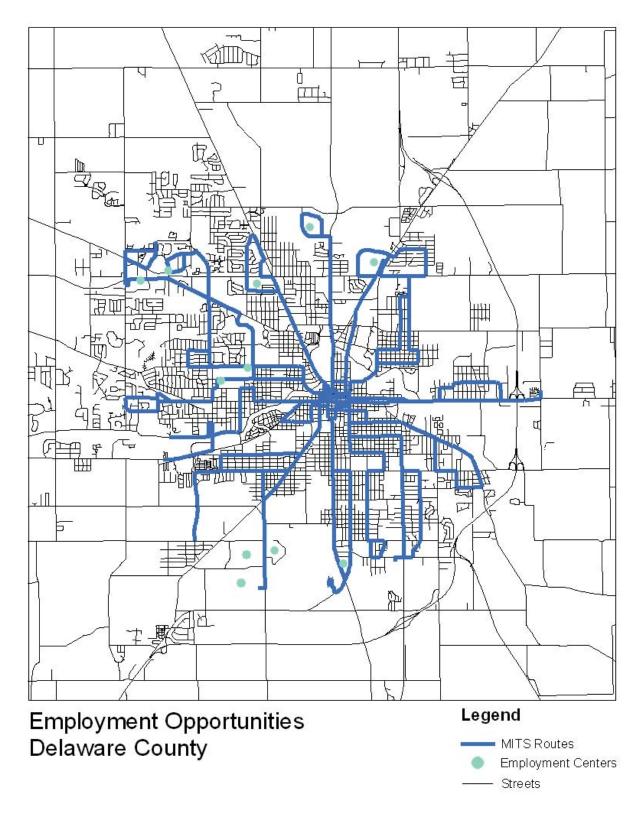














A transportation needs survey was also conducted focusing on individuals from the targeted populations. The survey was distributed to clients from Mental Health America, Forest Park Senior Center and Hillcroft Center as well as to riders on MITS and LifeStream Services New InterUrban vehicles. 118 consumer surveys were completed and returned.

Two very important reasons for needing transportation in Delaware County are for accessing medical related services and to access employment. This is true for all three of the targeted populations. According to the area human service providers, medical related trips are requested most often. According to employment agencies, reliable and adequate transportation is crucial to a person attaining and maintaining employment. The day and time at which transportation is needed is also a major factor. Someone will always need transportation on any given day at any given time. However, it is important to define when it is typically needed. The destination of the trip is a significant indicator as to when transportation may be needed.

Trip Purpose	Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
Medical	6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. exceptions are	Hours vary	N/A
appointments and	dialysis and after hour discharges		
services			
Non-stretcher-	7 days a week at varying times		
bound medical			
emergencies			
Employment	Days, hours and shifts dependent on the industry		
Shopping	7 days a week at varying times		
Government and	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	N/A	N/A
Social Services			
Church	Activities at varying times		Majority
Social and	Evenings	Anytime	Anytime
recreational			
activities			

# Days and Times Transportation is Typically Needed

# Framework For Action

As part of the assessment of needs process, a group of representatives from the transportation providers, human service agencies and transportation consumers were invited to take part in an exercise using the FTA's <u>Framework For Action</u> self assessment tool. The tool is divided into five sections: Making Things Happen By Working Together, Taking Stock of Community Needs and Moving Forward, Putting Customers First, Adapting Funding for Greater Mobility and Moving People Efficiently. Each section contains a number of questions to help the community assess how well they are accomplishing those aspects of a fully coordinated transportation system. Each question and section can be answered with one of the following: Needs To Begin, Needs Substantial Action, Needs Some Action or Done Well. The group answered the questions by consensus and determined that answers fell between Needs To Begin and Needs Substantial Action.

Areas identified as Needing To Begin included articulating a vision for the coordinated delivery of transportation services through the adoption of a strategic plan setting realistic goals to improve coordination partially by linking human services coordination to other transportation plans such as the <u>Transportation Plan</u>. A seemless payment system, possibly automated, that would support user-friendly services and the systematic tracking of financial data across programs was discussed as a possible future goal. A centralized dispatch system is another service that could potentially benefit consumers and providers alike.

Needing Substantial Action were the inventory process identifying duplication of services and underused resources, the documentation of transportation needs of the targeted populations, an assessment of technology use in transportation systems and the potential for improvement, and the gathering of customer ideas and concerns. Other areas in which the group suggested improvement were travel training and consumer education and other user-friendly and accessible information sources.

The group felt that although some progress was being made to bring together transportation providers, human services agencies and consumers through this planning process, a more permanent framework for coordination should be established. A permanent Coordination Committee was suggested, one that covers the entire community and will have strong relationships with neighboring communities.

# Step 3: Identification of Service Gaps and Redundant Service

Individuals who lack personal transportation in Muncie and Delaware County have access to a number of transportation providers. Still there remain a number of barriers that complicate efforts of individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes to access the transportation that they require. These barriers generally fall into one of the following categories: service area; service schedules; trip coordination; and consumer information. The Federal Government has made it a clear priority for local organizations to improve transportation coordination for low income, elderly and disabled populations in order to remove the barriers between those individuals and the services necessary to help them maintain productive and independent lives. Efforts to improve social services and employment opportunities have been hindered by the lack of effective coordination between transportation providers, employers and human service program providers.

# Service Gaps

#### Service Area

#### Public Transit/MITS:

Many desired destinations are outside current routes and continued development in fringe areas is a challenge.

Human Service and Private Providers:

Serve the entire county, but are constrained by limited budgets, trip limitations, client limitations, and limited capacities. Coordination issues are encountered when crossing jurisdictional boundaries and there is a lack of regional transportation options for trips around the state

MITS routes are designed to provide a cost effective transit service to many Retail and commercial development, medical destinations within Muncie. development and employment centers continue to develop beyond the reach of their current service area. MITS routes can be adjusted to serve new destinations, but these adjustments will likely result in compromises in the current services or significant increases in cost. The City of Muncie is expanding through annexation and destinations continue to grow outside the current service area while financial funding becomes more challenging to obtain. The fact that taxing authority confines the service area to the City of Muncie boundary and some areas immediately adjacent to the city is an additional constraint. This limitation prevents MITS from providing transportation service to destination centers outside Muncie, much less Delaware County. The City of Muncie has experienced negative growth while areas in Mount Pleasant and Hamilton Townships are increasing in population. Accessibility to transit routes is impaired in some areas by sidewalk conditions. Much like other areas of the state, the fundamental disconnect is that while many transit riders can get to a bus, that bus will not always get them where they need to go, or at the times they need to

travel. The reverse also happens with many potential transit riders who live outside the reach of MITS.

LifeStream Services New InterUrban provides transportation service to those Delaware County residents outside the service area of MITS. The LifeStream New InterUrban and MITS cooperate to transfer riders from one service to the other in an effort to extend services across city boundaries. In Delaware County it is therefore possible, with prior arrangements, to secure public transit from rural origins to urban destinations and the reverse. The task of providing transportation service to the entire County outside Muncie is a challenge requiring organization and planning. LifeStream Services operating The New InterUrban, is an area not-for-profit with a variety of missions, one is providing transportation services. The service they provide is limited by their ability to find the funding that is needed to provide the requested services. They also only operate demand response service in Delaware County, so service may be needed in certain areas of the county more than others, but if the trip is not requested, it cannot be provided. Many of the other providers only serve specific clientele and provide specific trip types, which limits their capabilities to provide transportation to others who do not fall into the categories they serve.

The transportation consumer surveys identified a number of service gaps including:

- Requests to extend bus service to Meijer and Menards, BMV on McGalliard, the Indianapolis Airport, and Prairie Creek Reservoir for special events
- Requests to extend hours to include Saturday evenings, Sundays and holidays
- Requests to reduce the 45 minute window for MITSPlus
- Requests for a wheelchair accessible taxi service and a taxi voucher system to make it more affordable
- Also requested were improvements to websites and brochures, more MITS shelters, rider training and a call center where information on all services could be obtained

At the public meetings, additional concerns were brought forward including:

- No affordable, non-medical transportation available from 6:15 Saturday evening until Monday morning.
- No affordable service after 9:15 p.m. on weekdays
- Need for better communication through media and internet
- Need to work together and coordinate efforts
- Need for simplification
- Another concern was the uncertain future of JobConnection/JARC

#### Service Schedules

Public Transit/MITS has no service between 5:30 p.m. and 7:45 a.m. for some fixed routes, between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. for other routes Monday through Friday and no Saturday service after 6:00 p.m. on most routes. No Sunday routes. MITSPlus

demand response is not available to those pre-qualified individuals between 9:15 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and not available after 6:15 p.m. on Saturday. There is no MITSPlus service on Sunday.

JobConnection supplements MITS service by providing early morning service from 5:30 a.m. until 7:00 a.m. and late evening service between 6:00 p.m. and 12:30 a.m. Monday through Friday for those who are pre-qualified.

LifeStream Services/The New InterUrban offers no service between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and no weekend service.

Other Human Service and Private Providers (excluding taxi service) are limited by serving a limited clientele and/or offer limited trip types.

The times at which the individuals in the targeted populations need transportation vary and are dependent upon their destination. Presently, a physically able individual without personal transportation relies on MITS bus service, including JobConnection, the LifeStream New InterUrban or Mickey's Taxi to get to and from work. For individuals entering the workforce at an entry-level wage, cab service comes at an unreasonable expense leaving one of the transit options as the service of choice.

The lack of late night and weekend hours is a significant gap for transit in Muncie and Delaware County. Busses are not available between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and stop running shortly after 6:00 p.m. Saturday evening, with service resuming at 6:00 a.m. the following Monday morning. There is no service on Sunday. There are many service industry jobs that require off-peak work schedules Monday through Friday and on the weekend. Current transit service does not effectively meet the demand of employees with such irregular work schedules. Manufacturing, warehousing and distribution firms often have need of employees to work a second or Second shift employees cannot get MITS or LifeStream Services New third shift. InterUrban ride home from work and third-shift workers cannot get a ride to work. As long as transit service can only take an individual one-way, it will not be an effective means of transportation for these employees. JobConnection is an effort to fill some of these gaps for the individuals who qualify to use this service. JobConnection adds Monday through Friday early morning demand response service starting at 5:30 a.m. and late evening service until 12:30 a.m. to supplement other transit options. There is still no service between 12:30 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. during the week and JobConnection does not operate on weekends. As long as this segment of the workforce that relies on public transit for transportation to and from work has limited access to jobs for which they are gualified, they will have a significant disadvantage when competing for employment. The frequency of service also creates difficulties in reaching employment and appointments. MITS operates on 15 and 30 minute frequencies on weekdays and 30 and 60 minute frequencies on Saturday. The 60 minute frequencies place a burden on rider as they try to make it to appointments and work on time.

The lack of late night and weekend hours is also a gap for the other providers within Delaware County. The human service providers typically do not provide service between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday. The exception is limited to medical services. Weekend service is typically not available. The private providers, with the exception of taxi service, typically do not provide non-medical service. In addition, as mentioned in the discussion on the service area, many of these providers are limited in the service they can provide due to client and trip limitations. The only option for service during these periods is taxi service, which due to cost is not a very viable option for individuals in the targeted populations.

#### Trip coordination

People often need to coordinate trips to multiple destinations such as childcare and work. Fixed-route transit service may be an effective way for riders to get to a single destination within the MITS service area, but when trips get too complicated, the service loses its effectiveness. Many individuals need a service that will get their children to affordable childcare and then transport them to a job.

#### Consumer Information

Individuals that lack personal transportation and the caseworkers assisting them suffer from insufficient transportation provider information. Information for some of the area transit service providers is available through phone calls, their websites and brochures. However, many agencies and individuals are unaware of the transportation services that exist in Delaware County. As medical and employment centers continue to develop in areas further from the targeted populations that rely on alternatives to personal transportation to get to services and employment opportunities, the need to access information about multiple service providers is increasingly important.

Limited familiarity with using transportation services effectively may be a gap that always exists. This includes learning where to catch a bus and how much transit time to incorporate into a trip so that riders can get to work on time. Improving the educational outreach about local transit services will empower individuals from the targeted populations to make the most efficient use of resources, thereby minimizing the barrier.

#### Redundant Service

The transportation providers in Delaware County have a strong sense of coordination and work together to provide efficient and unduplicated service. Even though the transportation providers typically serve the same populations and provide the same type of trips, the trips are provided to connect to an adjacent service area and provider, therefore the service is not redundant. There is a strong history of cooperative agreements between several of the providers and human service agencies. Representatives from human service agencies and transportation providers attend MITS meetings and quarterly TAC meetings hosted through LifeStream Services to discuss and coordinate transportation issues within Muncie and Delaware County. Currently there is no committee that brings both major service providers together with human service agency representatives, government officials and consumers on a regular basis.

# Step 4: Identification and Prioritization of Strategies

In fulfillment of the requirement by the Federal Government to create a locally developed, coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan, the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission as the local lead in this planning effort, with the assistance of local transportation and human service organizations and concerned citizens, has established the following strategies which will be the basis for future Sections 5310, 5316 and 5317 eligible projects and allocations which must be considered to be derived from and consistent with this Coordinated Plan.

The general goal is to create transportation strategies that complement our existing transit services while minimizing existing transportation barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities, older adults and persons with limited incomes from the desired destinations and services they need and wish to reach. Strategies are applicable to all Programs and individually categorized by Program: Section 5310 Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities Program, 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute Program and 5317 New Freedom Program.

### Strategies Applicable to All Programs and Providers:

- Improve communication at all levels including the establishment of a Delaware County Transportation Coordination Committee
- Identify new revenue sources to increase operating budgets necessary to expand and maintain services and fleets (grant research sub-committee)
- Single point scheduling for all providers
- Simplify payment system (i.e. voucher system)

### Section 5310 Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities Program Strategies:

- Maintain existing service fleets
- Maintain and increase coordination and efficiency between all transportation providers
- Expand existing service fleets
- Increase public awareness of available services and programs offered by providers that are available to the elderly and individuals with disabilities

### Section 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute Program Strategies:

- Provide transportation within and in particular outside of the current service areas and schedules (early morning, late nights and weekends)
- Identify new revenue sources necessary to continue current services and fleets
- Facilitate RFP process to locate new provider to take over services (if needed)
- Facilitate multiple destination trips (such as to day-care and job) from a single service provider

• Inform the public about transportation services available in the community and train them to use the services to get to work, job training and childcare as efficiently as possible

### Section 5317 New Freedom Program Strategies:

- Provide transportation within and outside current service schedules including extending service to cover after school activities, evenings, weekends and holidays
- Provide transportation above and beyond existing complementary paratransit service including 24-hour non-emergency service
- Provide transportation outside current service areas (including service to Indianapolis and Marion VA Hospital)

# Step 5: Project Selection Process

All eligible Section 5310, 5316, and 5317 applicants' potential projects will be reviewed by the Delaware County Transit TAC (5310) or the Delaware County Transit Coordination Committee (5316 and 5317). The LifeStream New InterUrban's TAC is currently used as the Delaware County Transit TAC because it is the only group that has the necessary organizations represented or invited for representation. The Delaware County Transit Coordination Committee (DCTCC) is a new group selected to consider ways of maintaining the needed transit services, avoiding gaps in existing transit services, and promoting transit service coordination. The DCTCC will include at a minimum representation from the LifeStream New InterUrban, Muncie Indiana Transit System (MITS), an organization for employment services (Work-One), a human services organization, an individuals with disabilities advocate, an elderly advocate, and organizations involved in obtaining the local match for proposed projects.

### Section 5310 Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities Program

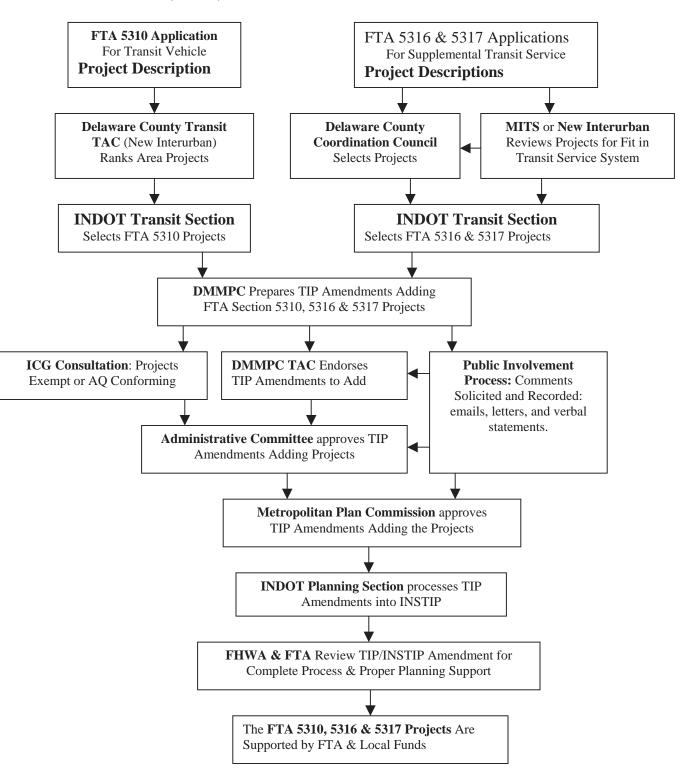
All eligible Section 5310 grant applicants for vehicles for service within Delaware County must submit their projects to the DC Transit TAC for review. The vehicle purchase requests must address strategies identified in this plan. The vehicle request evaluation process was developed in accordance with the Indiana Department of Transportation's (INDOT) request to prioritize applications within the MPO service area. The evaluation process is modeled on criteria used by INDOT to evaluate grant proposals. The evaluation process uses Transit TAC members to rate each vehicle request for service reliability, service coordination, vehicle utilization, and replacement versus expansion vehicles. The point ratings for each vehicle request will be totaled and each vehicle request project will be ranked according to the totals. In the event of a tie the Transit TAC members will vote to establish the ranking of the tied projects. The Transit TAC will approve the prioritizations and that information will be included with project applications and submitted by the sponsoring agencies to INDOT. The Transit TAC will forward the Delaware County projects and priorities to the DMMPC's Technical Advisory Committee and Administrative Committee for their approval for the projects to be added to the TIP. All federal-aid transportation projects within Delaware County must be included in the TIP as per air quality conformity requirements and due to the Muncie Metropolitan Planning Area being expanded effective 8/8/2007 to include all of Delaware County, except the Daleville Area. The Anderson Metropolitan Planning Area includes the Daleville Area, so the Madison County Council of Governments (MCCOG) is responsible for transportation planning efforts there and for providing the MCCOG TIP Daleville Area project information that will be displayed in the Delaware Muncie TIP.

### Section 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute Program

All eligible Section 5316 applicants will submit their projects to the DCTCC for review. The projects must address the strategies identified in this plan. The review process will include a ranking of projects awarding points for reliability, service area, number of trips, and the cost per trip and mile. The point rankings will be totaled for each project to determine priority. The DCTCC will approve the projects for submittal. All applicants will submit their applications to the DCTCC and MITS for simultaneous and parallel approval. As the designated recipient, MITS will process the selected application(s) for INDOT/Federal Transit Authority (FTA) approval on behalf of the applicants. The projects will be submitted to the DMMPC's Technical Advisory Committee and Administrative Committee for their approval for the projects to be added to the TIP.

### Section 5317 New Freedom Program

All eligible Section 5317 applicants will submit their projects to the DCTCC for review. The projects must address the strategies identified in this plan. The review process will include a ranking of projects awarding points for reliability, service area, number of trips, and the cost per trip and mile. The point rankings will be totaled for each project to determine priority. The DCTCC will approve the projects for submittal. All applicants will submit their applications to the DCTCC and MITS or LifeStream New InterUrban for simultaneous and parallel approval. As the designated recipient, MITS or LifeStream New InterUrban will process the selected application(s) for INDOT/Federal Transit Authority (FTA) approval on behalf of the applicants. The projects will be submitted to the DMMPC's Technical Advisory Committee and Administrative Committee for their approval for the projects to be added to the TIP.



### FTA 5310, 5316, & 5317 PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS

## Step 6: Implementation

### **Needs and Strategies**

In fulfillment of the requirement by the Federal Government to create a locally developed, coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan, the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission as the local lead in this planning effort, with the assistance of local transportation and human service organizations and concerned citizens, has established the following Needs and Strategies which will be the basis for future Sections 5310, 5316 and 5317 eligible projects and allocations which must be considered to be derived from and consistent with this Coordinated Plan.

### Overall

Need:

Improve coordination and communication Identify new sources of revenue to fund services Simplify service use for consumers

Strategy:

Form a Delaware County Transportation Coordination Committee (DCTCC) Form a grant research committee as part of the DCTCC Investigate single point scheduling and voucher systems

### **Elderly Individuals Needs and Strategies**

Need:

Decrease service denials, extend hours and shorten waiting times Increase public awareness of services

Strategy:

Purchase new vehicles, hire additional staff to expand services Collaborate with human service agencies and medical providers to inform seniors

### Low Income Needs and Strategies

Need:

After hours service for employment and school functions Identify new revenue sources and possibly new provider to continue service Increase awareness and use of service, coordination and efficiency Multiple destination trips (work and daycare) Improve employer and human service agency support for service

Strategy:

Explore viability of ride share, voucher and other options

Create solutions through DCTCC with broad community support Collaborate with human service agencies to identify need and make best use of resources Facilitate multiple destination trips

Coordinate with employers and human service agencies making referrals

### Individuals with Disabilities Needs and Strategies

Need:

Expand services to include accessible, affordable 24 hour and weekend service Provide regional and state-wide transportation options for trips outside county

Strategy:

Explore funding through DCTCC to facilitate 24-hour and weekend service Encourage coordination with providers in neighboring counties

### Funding

With expansion of service being a common theme of the various needs and strategies, the challenge for the new Delaware County Transportation Coordination Committee is to be cognizant of rising taxes and the resultant burden on local taxpayers while seeking solutions to serve the needs identified throughout this plan. The Committee's charge should extend to development of visionary solutions that are truly a coordination effort aimed at reducing costs, reducing duplications and filling the service gaps.

### **Potential Funding Sources**

Several communities fund their local paratransit transportation services through a mix of public dollars and local grant makers. As an example, Allen County is funding their Community Transportation Network program partially with grants from local foundations and grant makers including: The Community Foundation of Fort Wayne, The English-Bonter-Mitchell Foundation, The Foellinger Foundation, The Lincoln Financial Foundation, The Raker Foundation Inc., and The Wilson Family Foundation. The development and use of public-private partnerships, such as taxi voucher systems, has the potential for filling some gaps and benefiting local entrepreneurs.

Local Delaware County foundations and grant makers that potentially may be interested include:

Ball Brothers Foundation George and Frances Ball Foundation Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Foundation, Inc. The J. Robert and Joanne N. Baur Foundation, Inc. The BMH Foundation, Inc. The Community Foundation of Muncie and Delaware County, Inc. First Merchants Corporation Contributions Program William G. and Joan E. Frazier Foundation N.G. Gilbert Foundation Kakatu Inc. The Maxon Charitable Foundation, Inc. Mutual Federal Savings Bank Charitable Foundation, Inc. Psi Iota Xi Charities, Inc. Sherman and Marjorie Zeigler Foundation, Inc.

Funding for transportation or disability projects has been received in at least one community through The Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc., The UPS Foundation, The Central Indiana Community Foundation, and The Gannett Foundation. Grant makers on the national level that report transportation projects as one of their principle interests are few in number. The LogistiCare Foundation Inc. is a nationwide grant maker that funds transportation projects.

### Potential Federal Funding to address needs

In addition to grants, match money for 5316 and 5317 Projects can come from non-DOT Federal funds that list transportation as a permitted use. The Evansville <u>2007</u> <u>Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan</u> listed twenty-five Federal programs identified as being significantly involved in providing transportation services to their recipients. They are:

### Department of Education:

Vocational Rehabilitation Grants 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

### Department of Health and Human Services:

Grants for Supportive Services and Senior Centers Head Start Medicaid Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Community Health Centers HIV Care Grants Social Services Block Grants State Children's Health Insurance Program

### Department of Labor:

Senior Community Service Employment Program Workforce Investment Act Adult Services Program Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker Program Workforce Investment Act Youth Activities Job Corps

### Department of Transportation:

Capital Investment Grants Urbanized Area Formula Program Non-urbanized Area Formula Program Capital Assistance Program Elderly and disabled Persons Job Access and Reverse Commute Program New Freedom Initiative Capital and Training Assistance for Over the Road Bus Accessibility

### Department of Agriculture:

Food Stamp Employment and Training Program

### **Department of Housing and Urban Development:** Community Development Block Grant Supportive Housing Program

### Department of Veterans Affairs:

Veterans Medical Care

### Appendix A

### PUBLIC TRANSIT CONSUMER SURVEY

Please answer the following questions here and on the back page. Return completed form to The Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission, 100 W. Main St. Rm. 206, Muncie IN 47305

What specific problems do you have trying to get a ride to where you want to go?

Are there services you need to help you travel in the community that you do not think are available right now?

Do you need bus service, or other transportation services at times you cannot get them now? If so, when?

What type of bus or vehicle do you need? For instance, do you need to be able to use a wheelchair?

Do you have problems with the way you must pay for any bus or other transportation service right now?

Is it hard to figure out what kinds of buses or other transportation services are available when you need them?

How would you like to contact us if you have concerns or ideas? By phone, mail, web site, email or other?

Do you have any written materials that help you understand how to get bus service or other transportation? What are they?

Do you need help learning how to use the bus or other transportation services in our community?

Have you used the web site to help you figure out how to use the bus services and other types of transportation in our community?

What other ways would you like to have available to learn about the bus and other transportation methods in our community? For instance, newspaper, magazines, bus advertisements, television, radio, brochure mailed to your home? (Choose from the options listed above or add your own suggestions)

### **Transportation Provider Survey**

The following data is needed to complete the local Public Transit-Human Services Coordination Plan. Please return to The Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission, 100 W. Main St. Rm. 206, Muncie, IN 47305. If additional space is needed please feel free to attach additional documents/pages.

Organization:

Contact name:

Mailing address:

Phone number:

Type of transportation service provided (i.e. fixed rout, door-to-door, etc.)

If fixed route what are the routes and trip frequencies?

Days and times service is available:

Population served (i.e. general public, people with disabilities, elderly, etc.)

Types of trips (i.e. medical, grocery shopping, etc.)

Passenger fares:

Number and types of vehicles in fleet (are they handicap accessible?)

Miles traveled in 2005, 2006:

Number of one-way trips 2005, 2006:

### HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY SURVEY

The Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission is assisting in the creation of a local Public Transit-Human Services Coordination Plan to explore the transportation needs of Delaware County residents with a special interest in the needs of elderly individuals, the mobility challenged and economically disadvantaged populations. The development of such a plan is necessary for the Section 5310, 5316 and 5317 funding programs set forth in the SAFETEA-LU federal authorization act. Fact-finding and information gathering is essential in identifying the needs and developing strategies to meet those needs. The success of this planning process depends on the cooperation and input of all major stakeholders so we are inviting you to partner with us. Please answer the following questions and return completed form to The Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission, 100 W. Main St. Rm. 206, Muncie IN 47305

As a human service agency what do you see as the central issues in providing transportation to those with special needs in our community?

What specific transportation services do your clients lack?

With regard to transportation needs, what conditions or services would assist you in better serving your clients' needs?

One of the keys to getting things done is working together. What obstacles do you experience or foresee in coordinating efforts with other agencies regarding transportation for your clients?

# Appendix B

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Transportation Summit Meeting April 23, 2007

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# Transportation Summit Meeting April 23, 2007

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# Plan Commission Office August 21, 2007

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### COORDINATION PLAN STAKEHOLDERS

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Medicaid Marilyn Scales- Director 333 S Madison St PO Box 1528 Muncie IN 47308-1528 747-7750 288-6114-fax Vocational Rehabilitation Cheryl A. Hofherr- Area Supervisor Suite 130 201 E Charles St Muncie IN 47305 282-9863 282-1714-fax **Community Action** Robert Schmidt-Executive Director Sue Peden-Director of Operations Barbara Ledsinger 400 N High St Suite 210 PO Box 268 Muncie IN 47308 Muncie- 289-2313 289-1192-fax Del.Co.- 289-0943 289-6018-fax Area Agency on Aging-Lifestream Services Inc. Kenneth D. Adkins- President/CEO Mark Yaudas 1701 S Pilgrim Dr PO Box 308 Yorktown IN 47396-0308 759-1121 759-0060-fax Muncie Indiana Transit System/MPTC J. B. Black Larry King Mary Gaston 1300 Seymor St Muncie IN 47302 282-2762 Forest Park Senior Citizens' Center Bruce Reynolds 2517 W 8<sup>th</sup> St Muncie IN 47302 289-0844

Service Advocates Linda Muckway 3927 N Everett Rd Apt A Muncie IN 47304 289-0291 Dena Polston 1211 S Shipley Muncie IN 47302 254-8644 - Muncie Eye Center Erin Bland 3617 Chadam Ln Apt B-1 Muncie IN 47304 Jody Courtney 3107 N Elgin Apt 1 Muncie IN 47303 Jennifer Miles 808 W Riverside Apt 103 Muncie IN 47304 Jennifer Milharcic 1610 W Purdue Muncie IN 47304 Jill Ballock 1304 Bunch Blvd Apt 32 Muncie IN 47303 **Tona Snoeberger** 4772 W Woods Edge Ln Muncie IN 47304 Van Wells PO Box 946 Muncie In 47308 Hal Roepke 4806 W University Ave Muncie IN 47304 Shaila Gupta 1208 N Grove Ct Muncie IN 47304 Dee Ann Hart 1601 S Blaine St Muncie IN 47302 282-7257

CSDC-Little Red Door **Cheryl Mathews** 401 W Jackson St Muncie IN 47305 Delaware County Mental Health Association Marilyn Carey 4501 N Wheeling Ave 2-214 Muncie IN 47304 289-0844 282-1986 Mental Health America Betty McGill 413 S Liberty St Muncie IN 47305 288-1924 WorkOne Center Barbara Street Michelle Bush **Charles Court Building** 201 E Charles St Suite 140 Muncie IN 47305 289-1861 741-5853-fax Christian Ministries of Delaware County Marie Evans- Executive Director PO Box 1088 Muncie IN 47308 288-0601 282-4522-fax Teamwork For Quality Living Molly Flodder PO Box 468 Muncie IN 47308 747-7158 751-3573-fax Open Door Linda Shepard Andrea Whigum 905 S Walnut St Muncie IN 47302 286-7000 213-2760-fax **CMHS-** Meridian Services 240 N Tillotson Ave Muncie IN 47304 765-288-1928

Isanogel Center 7601 W Isanogel Rd Muncie IN 47304 288-1073 288-3103-fax Mickey's Taxi Anthony Perkins 2704 S Walnut St Muncie IN 47302 747-1040 Hillcroft Center Clint Bolser -President/CEO 114 E Streeter Ave Muncie IN 47303 284-4166 Eaton EMTS Mike Foster 103 W Indiana Ave PO Box 414 Eaton IN 47338 396-9483 Community Transport PO Box 105 Winchester IN 47394 765-584-6040 Other providers Bill Davy 8213 W Weller Yorktown IN 47396 759-8996 Iry Hogan-Pastor New Kingdom Builders 924 N Macedonia Ave Muncie IN 47303 228-1471 Partners For Community Impact Allison Bell Imel-Managing Director 225 N High St Suite 2A PO Box 592 Muncie IN 47308 286-2005 286-7111-fax

United Way Of Delaware County Gary Chenault-President & CEO 500 N Walnut St PO Box 968 Muncie IN 47308 288-5586 288-5588-fax

A Better Way

Teresa Hinds 806 W Jackson St PO Box 734 Muncie IN 47308 747-9107

Ball State University

Kevin Kenyon-Associate Vice President Facilities Planning & Management 285-8988 Sue Weller-Director Facilities Business Services & Transportation 285-2813 Facilities Planning & Management Ball State University Muncie IN 47306

INDOT- Planning and Production- Transit Larry Buckel -Section Manager Indiana Department Of Transportation 100 N Senate 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Indianapolis IN 46204 317-232-5292

> Brian Jones -Program Manager Indiana Department of Transportation 100 N Senate 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Indianapolis IN 46204 317-232-1493

> Jason Casteel- Transit Planner Indiana Department of Transportation 100 N Senate Ave RM 955 Indianapolis IN 46204 317-234-5161

Delaware\_Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission Marta Moody-Executive Director Hugh Smith Fred Daniel

100 W Main St Rm 206 Muncie IN 47305 747-7740 747-7744-fax Delaware County Commissioners John Brooke-President 100 W Main St Muncie IN 47305

City Of Muncie Dan Canan-Mayor 300 N High St Muncie IN 47305 765-747-4845