

Iowa County, WI

Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan 2010-2013

August 2010

Planning Assistance by Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Meeting facilitation by LIFT and Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Iowa County
Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services
Transportation Plan

Prepared for:
Iowa County
and
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
by
Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

August 12, 2010

This plan was prepared for Iowa County at the request and under the direction of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC).

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Introduction

In 2010, Iowa County set upon the task of developing a new locally developed, coordinated, public transit-human services transportation plan (“coordinated plan”). This three year plan* seeks to identify existing transportation options available to Iowa County residents with disabilities, older adults, people with low incomes, and those who do not drive due to other needs or by choice. Further, the plan identifies needs and gaps in these offerings, and identifies goals and actions to address those gaps in service during the next three years. Ensuring an adequate system of transportation options for all residents is critical to establishing and maintaining a high quality of life in Iowa County.

Federal transit law, as amended by SAFETEA-LU, requires that projects selected for funding under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom programs be “derived



Judy Linholm from Iowa County presenting to Stakeholders at the Planning Meeting on May 25th, 2010.

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 non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by members of the public.”

According to SAFETEA-LU, a transportation coordination plan must include an assessment that identifies current available transportation service and resources, service needs for individuals with disabilities,

older adults, and people with low incomes and the gap between resources and needs to develop a prioritized transportation coordination plan with prioritized goals.

Projects competitively selected for funding from the above sources, must be derived from a coordinated plan that minimally includes the following elements at a level consistent with available resources and the complexity of the local institutional environment:

Introduction

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

While the above Federal programs require the Coordinated Plan, a number of other transit funding sources are available in Wisconsin. While not all of these programs require this “coordinated plan” this plan should prove a universal guide for program planning and further grant / funding identification and application.

** Coordinated Plans are typically required to be updated every five years. Due to a lack of attendance at the most recent plan, the County has chosen to update their plan earlier than the typical cycle. The plan will be updated again in three years, and then every five years after that.*

Federal Transit Authority funding programs

FTA 5310 – Transportation for Individuals who are Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities.

This program provides formula funding to states for capital projects to assist in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. This funding, available to public entities and private non-profit entities involved in transporting seniors and persons with disabilities, has historically been used for capital expenditures, typically for accessible vehicles.

FTA 5316 – Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC)

The JARC program provides formula funding for projects that assist individuals with low incomes and other individuals with transportation services to access jobs and employment-related activities. This program is combined with other funding sources and known as WETAP in Wisconsin.

FTA 5317- New Freedom Program

The New Freedom Program (NF) provides formula funding for new public transportation services and service alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The New Freedom program aims to provide additional tools for persons with disabilities seeking to overcome existing barriers integrating into the workforce and participating fully in society.

Planning Process

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Southwest Wisconsin, Iowa County held a public meeting on May 25, 2010 from 1-4pm at the Iowa County Courthouse, 222 N. Iowa Street in Dodgeville to develop the following Coordinated Plan in accordance with Federal and State regulations. Mailed invites (see Appendix A for an example of the invite) were sent to a broad stakeholder list of 228 people (see Appendix B). The stakeholder list was created by county staff and was representative of the broad public, private, and non-profit transportation interests in the county. The three-hour meeting was publicly posted in accordance with open meeting law (see Appendix C for the agenda) and free refreshments and lunch were provided for all attendees.

19 stakeholders attended the meeting, see Table A below for a list of these stakeholders by name and organizational affiliation or representation. The meeting was facilitated by Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and LIFT. Stakeholders were first provided background education on Coordinated Plan requirements and funding sources available for transportation in Iowa County. Iowa County staff next presented on existing providers and services in Iowa County. Attendees were invited to review and update the provider list.



Iowa County Stakeholders gathered at the Planning Meeting on May 25th, 2010.

Finally, stakeholders were asked to discuss needs and gaps in the existing transportation offerings, and to develop three year goals and actions for addressing those gaps. After the meeting, attendees were asked to complete evaluations of the meeting (see Appendix D). Most evaluations indicated a positive view of the meeting process and outcomes.

Amending the Plan

The Coordinated Plan establishes the framework for a three-year work program. Should a strategy or project, however, be identified that was not foreseen at the time of plan development, the plan can be amended through some form of stakeholder consensus process. The plan should be regularly reviewed and updated if major changes in any provision of the plan are identified. At a minimum, the plan will be updated in three years, and then every five years after that.

Planning Process

Keeper of the Plan

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Southwest Wisconsin, Iowa County will be the designated keeper of the Plan. Judy Lindholm, ADRC Director, will be the primary staff contact.

| Name | Organization |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Rita Harmon | ADRC Grant County |
| Diane Kliebenstein | Hodan Center |
| Angela Young | Southwest Family Care Alliance |
| Tom Schraeder | Hodan Center |
| Arnold Fritsch | Cobb Village |
| Thomas Strutt | Town of Ridgeway |
| Steve Hilgenberg | State Assembly |
| Gert Peterson | Citizen |
| Karren Zimmerman | Dodgeville City Council |
| Keith Hurlbert | Iowa Cnty Emergency Management |
| Jeff Segebrecht | SWCAP |
| Laura Crowley | ADRC Iowa County |
| Judy Lindholm | ADRC Iowa County - Director |
| Carrie Kraetz | GWAAR |
| Art Gilbertson | Country View Transportation |
| Steve McCarthy | Upland Hills Health |
| B.B. Thomas | Town of Ridgeway |
| Craig Hardy | Iowa Cnty Highway Department |
| Ken Palzkill | Dodgeville Taxi |

Present Conditions

Iowa County is a rural County, with a population of 23,833 in the 2005. Population is expected to increase by 21.7% percent to 29,013 in 2035 according to the Wisconsin Demographics Services Center. The largest community in Iowa County is the City of Dodgeville, with a population estimated at 4,560 in 2005. The County covers a land area of approximately 768 square miles.

Low income population, aging and elderly population, and disabled population are important groups to consider when planning for transportation in the County. These groups are the most likely to need access to public or assisted transportation. Transportation should be made available in the areas with a greater density of individuals meeting these demographic criteria. See Maps 1-3 in the attachments to view these groups as a percentage of the population in Iowa County. In each map, existing fixed routes are displayed in yellow so that viewers can better understand the relationship between existing transportation and potential needs for transportation.

Existing Services

A number of providers (public, private and non-profit) exist to serve Iowa County's transportation needs. The following Table B shows these providers with contact information, services offered, and funding sources used.

Iowa County is served by the ADRC Driver Escort Service and CARE-A-VAN shuttle bus, the Hodan Center, Inc., and Road Crew provides flexible, demand-response taxi service to prevent drunk driving. A summary of services provided by the Iowa County Commission on Aging follows.

Driver Escort Service is a volunteer service utilizing a corps of 18 to 28 volunteer drivers in private automobiles. Volunteer drivers are reimbursed at a rate of at least 35 cents per mile. The amount of reimbursement is computed each month and can increase based on current gas prices at the pump. The program has expanded with access to a lift-equipped van. Three of the volunteers have been trained in its use and it is available to all elderly, disabled, and veterans of Iowa County.

- **Equipment:** Driver Escorts utilize their own automobiles (preferably 4-door). The ADRC also has access to a lift-equipped van that is used by the Driver Escort Program.
- **Route:** The Driver Escort program operates on a demand response system offering door-to- door service.

Present Conditions

| Service or Sponsor Name | Contact Information | Passenger Eligibility | Service Description | Hours of Service | Fleet Information | Use of Federal/State Funds |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| Department of Veterans Affairs | Respective County Veteran Service Officer DAV Department Headquarters, Green Bay, WI (920) 406-0620 | Veteran | Fixed Route | | 30 Vans | VA |
| Access Medical Transit | Craig Pipzer, N2565 Copline Rd., Monroe, WI, (608) 214-5047 | Elderly, people with disabilities, and children | Demand response (door-to-door), two-weeks notice | Mon-Sat: 6:30am-8pm | 8 vans, 3 are passenger, 5 with extra-wide lifts | Medical Assistance, Medicaid, Private Pay, Southwest Family Care Alliance |
| Freeman Transports | Doug Eck, 565 W Mineral St., Platteville, WI 53818, (608) 348-7980, doug020@centurytel.net | Non-emergency medical transportation for disabled people or people that need specialized transportation. | Demand response (door-to-door) | Mon-Fri: 6am-6pm and by special request | 3 Vans with ramps | Medicaid Fares |
| Alift Services LLC | 365 N Perry Parkway, Oregon, WI 53575, (800) 567-5438 | Anyone | Demand response (door-to-door) by driver escort | Mon-Fri: 8am-5pm | 7 vans, 5 with lifts, 2 with ramps | Medicaid Fares |
| VA Hospitals/ Dept VA | Dennis/Patti Johnson 408 S Eliza St Maquoketa, IA 52060 | Veterans and spouses of veteran's with prior approval | Demand response (door-to door) | Phone hours 9am-6pm Mon-Fri driving hours anytime | Ford Explorer-- seats 7 not wheelchair accessible | Vehicle donated by VA hospital, upkeep by private donations |
| Country View Transport | Mike Gilbertson 13013 Goodman Rd, Argyle WI 53504 | Anyone | Demand Response (door-to-door) | open | 5 vans 3 wheelchair accessible 1 passenger van, non-emergency stretcher | Medical assistance, SW Family Alliance co-pays and private pay |
| Iowa County Aging & Disability Resource Center | Judy Lindholm, 222 N Iowa St. Dodgeville, WI 53533, (608) 935-0389 | Elderly and people with disabilities. | Fixed route and special request | Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm & special requests | 2 Buses, 1 Van, 1 Lift | 85.21, 5310, Older Am. Act, Medical Assistance, Copay, Donations |
| Iowa County Road crew | (608) 574-8902 | Drinking or plan to drink; program to reduce DUI / DWI | Demand response (door-to-door) by volunteer driver escort | Fri & Sat: 7pm-2:30am | Private vehicles owned by volunteer drivers. | Private Pay & WisDOT |
| Iowa County Taxi - managed by Grant County ADRC | Rita Harmon, PO Box 383, Lancaster, WI 53813, (608) 723-6113 | Anyone | Demand response (door-to-door) | Wed & Fri: 7:30am-4pm, and special requests | 1 Van with ramp | Private Pay & local funding |

Present Conditions

| Service or Sponsor Name | Contact Information | Passenger Eligibility | Service Description | Hours of Service | Fleet Information | Use of Federal/State Funds |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| First Student Bus Service | Larry Lansing 307 N Iowa St. Dodgeville, WI 53533 608-935-5255 | | school bus, some charter | | 1 big bus is wheelchair accessible | |
| First Student Bus Service | Todd Schmitt 340 Dodge Street, Mineral Point, WI 53565 608-987-3911 | | school bus, some charter | | no wheelchair accessibility | |
| Hodan Center, Inc | Gene Dagle / Diane Kliebenstein, 941 W Fountain St., Mineral Point, WI 53565, (608) 987-3336 | Hodan Center client-employees and people who need specialized transport for non-emergency medical or other needs | Fixed Routes and demand response (door-to-door) | Buses mon-fri fixed routes 6am-9:15 and 2:30pm-6:00; vans/mini-buses mon-fri 7am-6pm; buses & vans available other times by request | 7 buses, 3 vans, 2 min-buses All vehicles have lifts | 5310; Southwest Family Care; Medical Assistance; and private pay |
| Coulee Trails | Cheryl Kletzke 126 1/2 W Jefferson St Viroqua, WI 54665 | Medicaid (disabled), All medical needs, other requests on prior approval | Demand response (door-to-door) | Based on needs | 12 vehicles, all minivans and wheelchair accessible | Medical Assistance, CMO funding, co-pays, private pay |

Present Conditions

- Reservations: A person requesting transportation calls the ADRC Office 48 hours in advance for the Driver Escort and the ADRC will accept collect calls.
- Passengers: The Driver Escort service will provide transportation to Iowa County residents who are 60 years or older and also to county residents who are disabled regardless of age.
- Revenue: Clients using the Driver Escort service are charged a fee for that service (see table).

Bus Service — The ADRC operates a mini-bus that runs on a fixed route with deviations and has days available for group trips once each week. The driver is employed and trained by the ADRC Office.

- Equipment: The bus is a 2007 Ford Chassis mini-bus that is lift-equipped and has space for two wheelchairs with 12 passengers seated or one wheelchair and 14 passengers seated.
- Route: The bus program operates on a regular fixed route system with deviations using pickup points and destination points. Door-to-door service is allowed if a client is unable to reach the pickup point or has an appointment location that does not correspond to the destination but is within the immediate area.
- Reservations: A person requesting transportation must call the ADRC Office at 608-935-0371. Transportation should be requested at least 24 hours in advance. The ADRC does accept collect calls.
- Passengers: Bus service is targeted toward Iowa County residents who are 60 years or older and/or disabled regardless of age. Particular emphasis is placed on serving those who are most socially and economically disadvantaged. However, the general public is given the opportunity to use the bus service on a space available basis. Should seating capacity become an issue, the elderly and/or disabled receive priority.
- Revenue: People who are 60+ years of age or people with disabilities are given the opportunity to make a donation for their ride; the general public is charged a fee.

Iowa County is additionally served by the following regional transportation providers or services:

Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program (SWCAP)

The Work 'n Wheels Program provides 0% interest, auto loans, purchasing assistance and counseling to low-income persons who can prove they have the necessary income to

Present Conditions

make monthly payments. No one is excluded from the program solely due to past credit history, lack of other assets, etc. As a result, the SWCAP Work 'n Wheels program does not own any vehicles or other transportation resources.

The goal of the Work 'n Wheels Program is to provide low-income working people with the opportunity to obtain higher incomes by being able to commute to better paying jobs throughout southwestern Wisconsin. By providing zero interest rate small car loans for high quality used cars and assistance in obtaining the cars the program has shown that it is effective in increasing client personal income by \$4,800 per year. This increase is based on the participant's ability to drive to better paying jobs and potential to increase the number of hours worked.

This program also allows local employers to have access to a larger pool of workers from outside the immediate walking distance of their businesses. As a result of this program the unemployment rate will lessen and overall economic conditions will improve due to workers earning higher wages.

Head Start owns and operates 13 buses covering the 4 counties. As currently operated, their buses can only be used for transportation of children in Head Start or Early Head Start.

Head Start Eligibility: 1) Families living in Grant, Iowa, Lafayette and Richland Counties meeting federal poverty income levels of 100% or below. Some waivers of income requirements may be granted on a limited basis; 2) Families receiving benefits from the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy program are considered income eligible; 3) Children must be 3 years old by September 1 of the current year; 4) Head Start actively recruits families with special needs and disabilities.

Early Head Start Eligibility: 1) Families living in Northern Grant and Richland Counties meeting federal poverty income levels of 100% or below. Some waivers of income requirements may be granted on a limited basis; 2) Families receiving benefits from the Wisconsin Shared Child Care Subsidy program are considered income eligible; 3) Families must be expecting or have a child between 0-3 years of Age; 4) Head Start actively recruits families with special needs and disabilities.

SWCAP also houses the LIFT program, a mobility management and transportation co-

Present Conditions

ordination program overseen by the Southwestern Wisconsin Transit Team. LIFT works with existing transportation providers and partners, including county Aging Commissions, Disabled Veteran Transportation, shared ride taxi service, regional specialized medical transportation services, the WisDOT Rideshare program, the WisDOA State Van Pool, the Hodan Center, and the Southwest Opportunity Center to promote the concept of sharing resources and coordinating rides to improve service cost and coverage.

The Hodan Center Inc.

The Center provides a Community Rehabilitation Program for Adults with Disabilities. It is the mission of Hodan Center, Inc. to provide and promote opportunities for work and personal development so that persons with disabilities can achieve individual life goals. The Center provides work services, food services, and enrichment activities inhouse. Employment services are provided at various job locations in Iowa, Lafayette, and Grant counties. Adult Basic Education is offered through our Enrichment Activities department. The Center operates 6 resale/retail (Bargain Nook) stores in six counties. Beginning in August, 2010, Hodan Center will offer senior services for adults with disabilities who are over 55 years of age.

The Hodan Center owns and operates the Wisconsin Innovation Kitchen, a food service and marketing kitchen. The Wisconsin Innovation Kitchen houses all of Hodan Center's Papa Pat's Farmhouse Recipes food processing operations for canning our jams, sauces, pickles, and dry packaging of our soup mixes, cookie and muffin mixes, and dip mixes. We also have our own Farmhouse Recipes Catering operations in this new building.

To support its clients, the Center operates a transportation system that runs six bus routes in Iowa, Lafayette, and Grant counties and four wheelchair accessible vans for medical transportation needs for Medicaid and private pay users. When available, these vehicles are made available for other users.

Needs and Gaps

Based upon their experience and perceptions, as well as information presented at the planning meeting (such as the existing providers, services, and demographic information outlined above), meeting participants identified the following gaps and needs in the current transportation system within Iowa County:

- Need for information – who to call and when, detailed information about how to use the shuttle service
- Need to raise people’s awareness about the services available
- Providers do not always know who is out there (who needs rides, when and how)
- Need for more information sharing
- Need more funding for marketing and advertising
- Need to bridge gap between user and non-user perceptions
- Need for transportation to work for people with disabilities
- Need transportation availability and access for those who need assistance to appointments (when taxi and other services are not available or in range)
- Need to improve transportation options for those with motorized assisted transportation during bad weather
- Need increased service on weekends and weeknights
- Need to improve and replace vehicle fleet – need to have access to capital funds
- Need more funding to pay for drivers
- Need to lower passenger costs for special trips
- Need more volunteer drivers
- Need transportation to SW Tech for classes
- Need improved transportation to employment
- Need to provide transportation for rural households with transportation needs
- Need to better coordinate information and provide a single point resource
- Need for more information sharing

Goals and Actions

The following strategies establish the framework for a three-year work program from 2010 through 2013. The listed strategies and actions were identified by meeting participants and county staff to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to improve efficiencies in service delivery.

The strategies are ranked by consensus of the participants at the stakeholder meeting based on resources from multiple program sources, time, and feasibility for implementing the strategies or actions identified.

Some of the strategies listed here ultimately may not be implemented within the three-year timeframe due to changing conditions (political, fiscal, etc). Uncompleted strategies and actions should be rolled into the next five-year plan, as appropriate.

Iowa County 3-year Transportation Coordination Strategies, 2010-2013

Goal 1: Increase consumer awareness of available transportation services.

- Improve on existing single-point resource (the LIFT 800-number) for transportation services
- Promote existing transportation service in the following formats: Refrigerator magnet, distribute a card with contact information on it
- Promote existing transportation services in the following venues, when possible: Phone book (less priority), information provided at dr. offices, Shopping News, talk with county social workers, increase electronic media usage (e.g. start a listserv, county webpages, text message list, craigs list),
- Seek more funding for marketing of transportation services.
- Explore instituting a travel buddy program that offers free ride to those who introduce new persons to the public transit.
- Explore providing transportation training for users
- Develop a single-point online map of fixed routes in the southwest region with dates, times and usability information.
- Explore the adoption of an annual week or day to bring attention to Transit

Goals and Actions

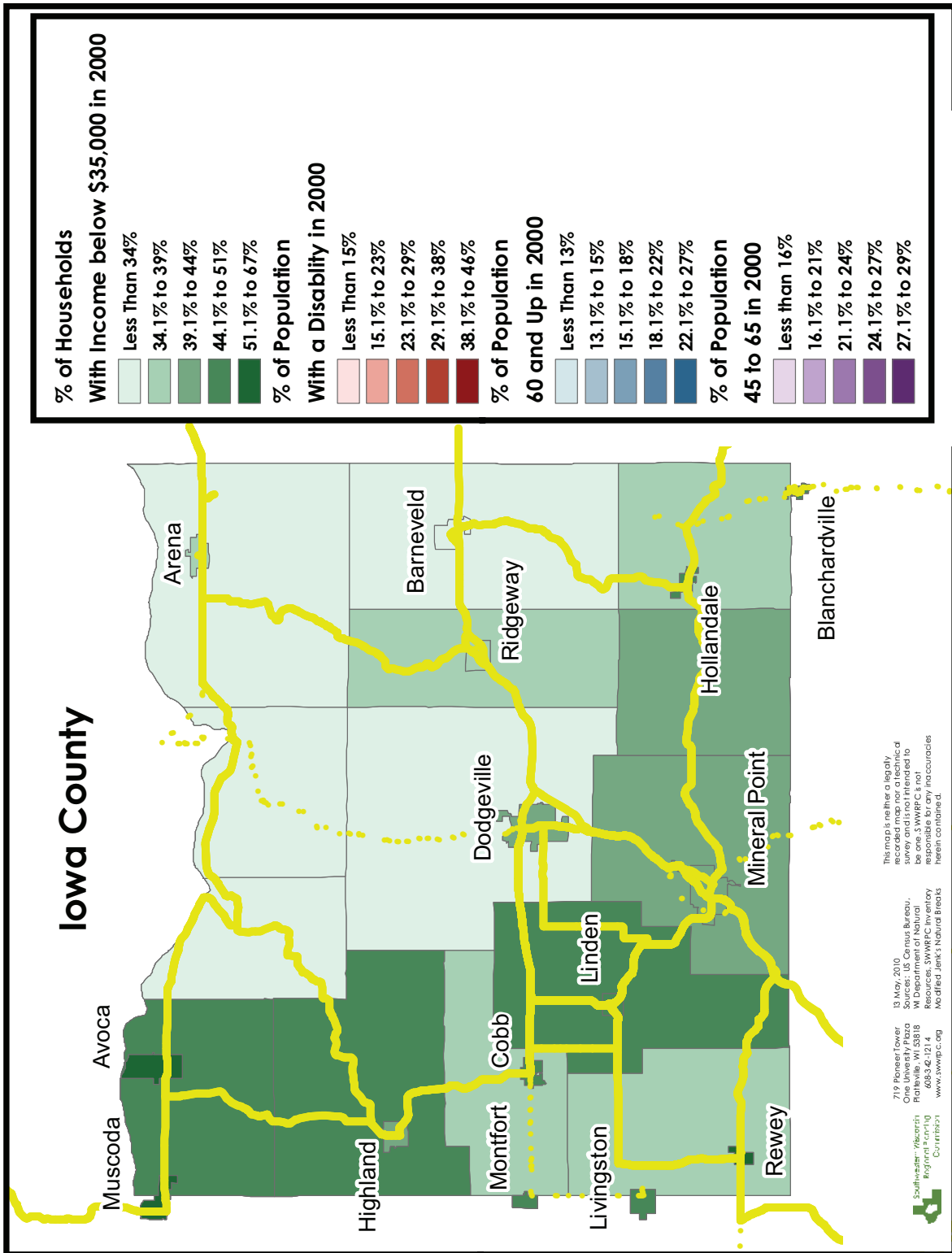
Goal 2: Develop/expand/continue transportation services.

- Explore alternate methods of transportation (e.g. rideshares, corridor routes)
- Provide increased service on weekends and weeknights
- Provide more volunteer drivers
- Find more funding to pay drivers
- Lower passenger costs for special trips
- Provide increased access to on-call, special rides
- Strive to provide increased transportation options to SW Technical College for classes
- Strive to provide increased transportation to employment
- Try to accommodate transportation needs of rural households
- Improve transit punctuality / reliability for appointment times
- Seek access to capital funds to improve and replace vehicle fleet

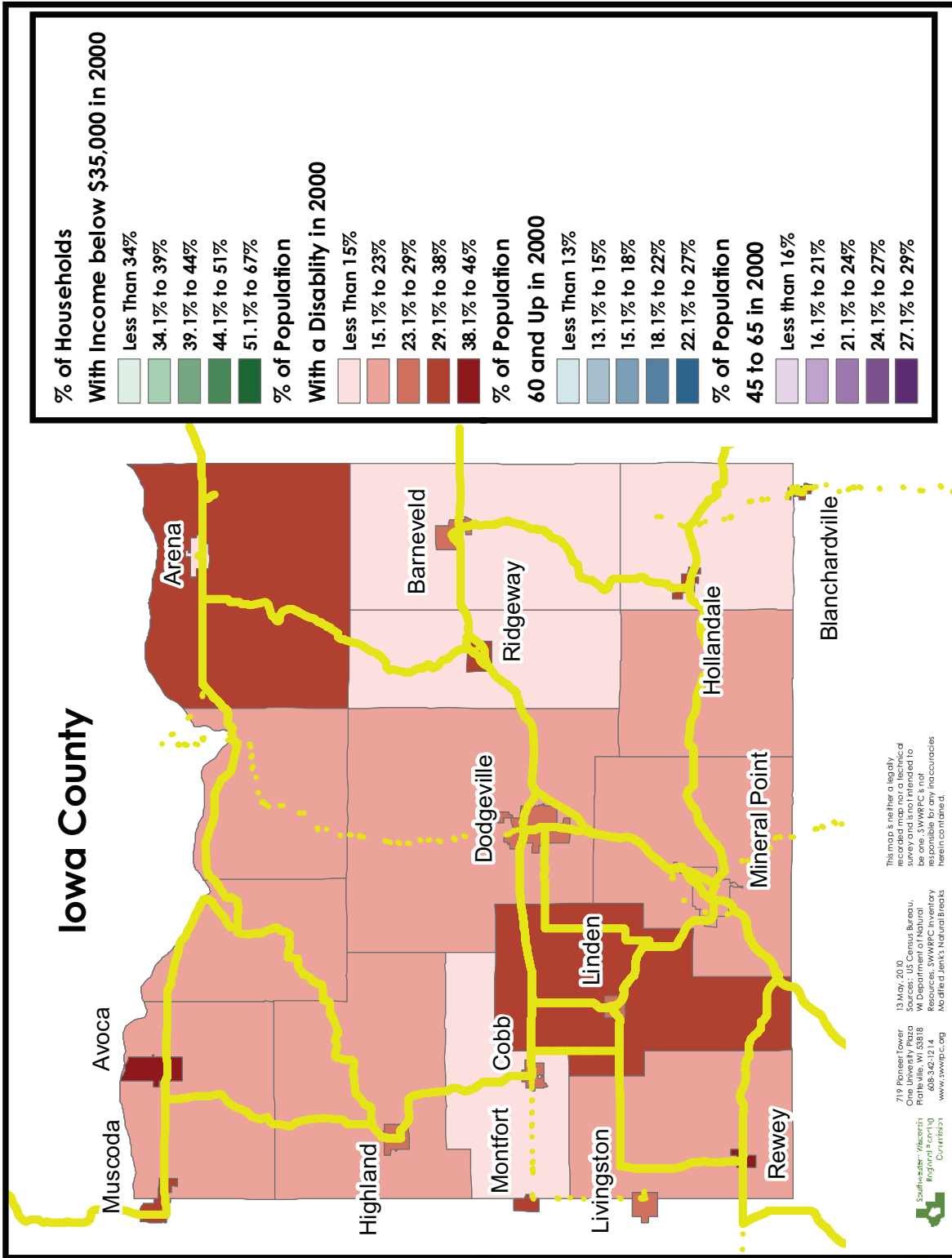
Goal 3: Coordinate & consolidate transportation services and resources.

- Improve on existing single-point resource (the LIFT 800-number) for transportation services in Southwestern Wisconsin
- Develop a provider information network – possibly an email listserve
- Create an annual forum or meeting to bring providers & users together for more conversation
- Continue to participate in Southwest WI Transit Team

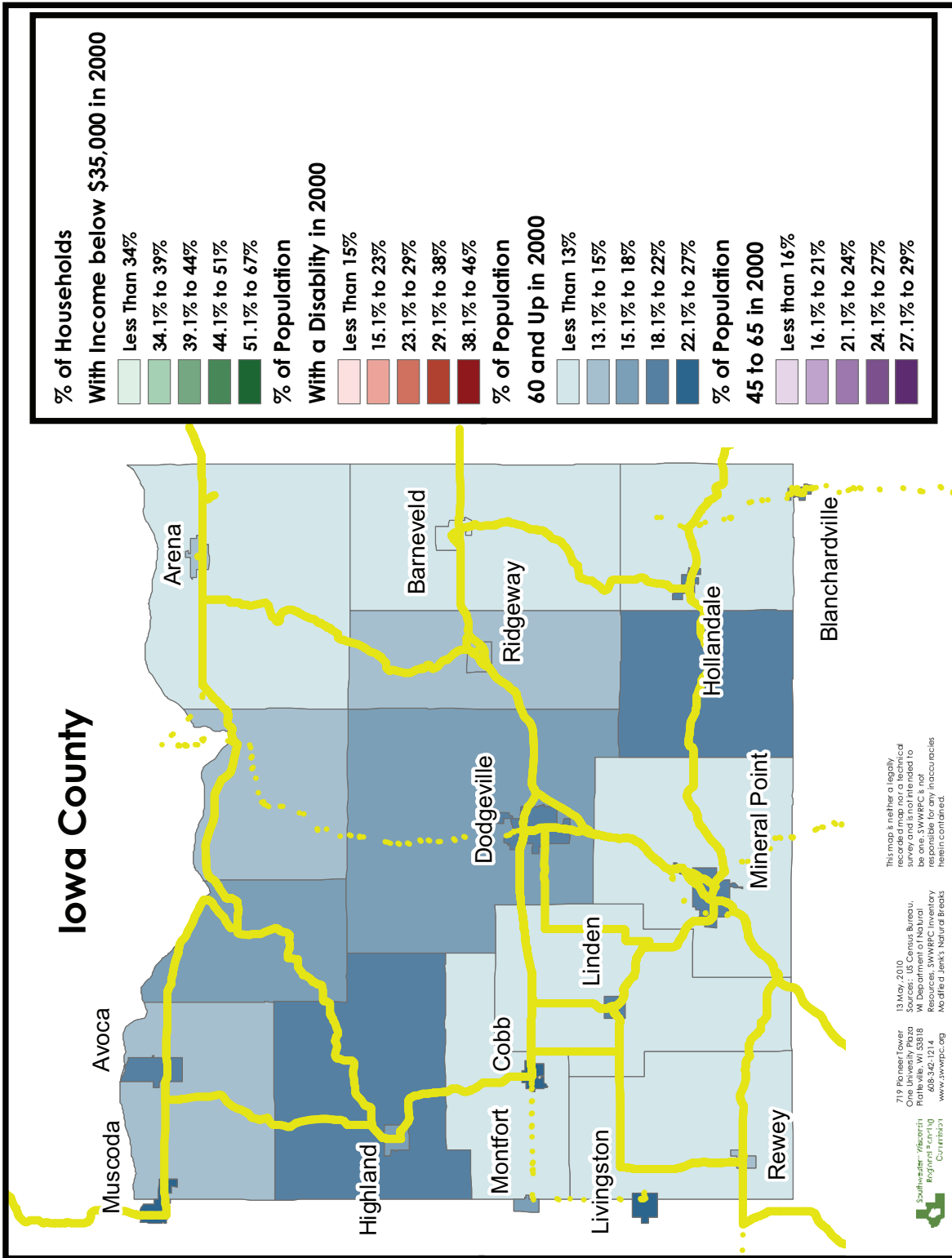
Map 1: Low-Income Population



Map 2: Disabled Population



Map 3: Elderly Population



Appendix A: Meeting Invite

Iowa County Wisconsin

You are invited!

Save the date: Tuesday, May 25th, 2010



Tell us about your public transportation needs.

Join Iowa County for an afternoon of planning public transportation in your community. Learn about what public transportation is currently available and let us know what you would like to see new or different.



What: Public Coordinated Transportation Planning Meeting

Who: Anyone who uses, provides or is interested in public transportation availability in Iowa County.

When: Tuesday, May 25th, 2010. 1pm-4pm.

Where:* Iowa County Courthouse, 222 N. Iowa St., Dodgeville, WI



Please call 877-798-5438 to RSVP by May 14th

Please let us know at time of RSVP if you would like FREE transportation to the event, or if you will need any other special accommodations. If you are unable to RSVP we still welcome your attendance.

FREE refreshments and transportation provided!

** If you work with, or use, transit in more than one county please call the number above to learn about meeting dates in other SW Wisconsin counties.*

Assessments of transportation needs and gaps gathered at these planning meetings will develop the Coordinated Transportation Plan for each of the five counties in SW Wisconsin (Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, and Richland). The plans will influence transportation decisions in your community and the use of State and Federal funds through 2013.

This public forum is hosted by the area Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Commission's on Aging, SW Wisconsin Community Action Program, SW Opportunities Center, Hodan Center, SW WI Regional Planning Commission and WI Department of Transportation.

Appendix B: Stakeholder Invite List

See Following Pages

AGENDA
**2010 Locally Developed Coordinated Public
Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan**
Iowa County

5/25/10
1-4pm

Location

Iowa County Courthouse
222 N. Iowa Street
Dodgeville

----- Agenda -----

Welcome & Agenda Review

2010 Coordination Meeting Overview

- SAFETEA-LU and WisDOT Plan Requirements
- State and Federal Grant Programs

County Presentation – transit availability in Iowa County

County Assessment and Strategies Development

- Needs and Gap Assessment
- Strategies and Action Plan

Develop Prioritized Action Plan

Feedback, Suggestions, Comments

Appendix D: Meeting Evaluations

See Following Pages