

Lassen County Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan

2021 Update



**Prepared by the
LASSEN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**



Lassen County Coordinated Plan 2021

Prepared for

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLAN OVERVIEW

The Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan identifies transportation goals and provides strategic solutions for improved coordination of mobility throughout the Lassen County region. The primary elements of this plan include the following:



- Regional population trends and demographic information with an emphasis on transportation dependent populations;
- An inventory of existing transit services and all other transportation providers and purchasers;
- Transportation needs and gap assessment, as well as existing coordination; and
- A summary of potential strategies by priority to meet each of the intended plan goals.

METHODOLOGY

This 2021 update of the Lassen County Coordinated Plan was conducted as follows:

- *Concurrent County-Wide Transportation Planning Effort:* The Lassen County Transportation Commission began the process of updating both the Transportation Development Plan and the Active Transportation Plan concurrently with this Coordinated Plan. This combined effort allowed for a holistic approach in reviewing previous and existing transportation planning documents.
- *Transit Services, Transportation Providers, and Stakeholders Identification:* An overview of the existing transit services provided by Lassen Rural Bus (LRB) was documented in full, reflecting both pre- and current-COVID-19 conditions. A list of current transportation providers and community stakeholders were contacted directly by email and telephone, interviewed, and encouraged to participate in and share various online surveys through the Transportation Development Plan and Active Transportation Plan. A separate Transportation Service Provider Survey was also distributed to those either directly providing or supplementing transportation to various populations.
- *Public Outreach:* As described above, two different online surveys were launched concurrently to other transportation planning efforts in the county. Ads for each survey were posted in two separate publications (Susanvillestuff.com and Lassen News) in both print and digital formats.
- *Transportation Needs, Gaps, and Coordinated Efforts:* The transportation needs and gaps assessment provided the foundation to clearly identifying the location and methods in which to better serve low-income populations, seniors, and persons with disabilities throughout Lassen

County. Lassen County's Unmet Needs over the past three years were also considered in the analysis. Existing coordinated efforts establishes the basis to improve on service through new innovative strategies.

- *Summary and Prioritization of Strategies:* With the above process in mind, various transportation strategies were evaluated to meet plan goals. Each strategy was then prioritized by low, medium, and high designations.

COORDINATED STRATEGIES

High Priority Strategies

- Assist non-public transportation providers with obtaining FTA 5310 funds to purchase new vehicles.
- Allocate a small amount of funding to Lassen Senior Services to hire an accounting firm to prepare and track invoices and other grant related processes.
- Designate a Mobility Manager and/or purchase Mobility Management software. Apply for FTA 5310 funding to support this strategy.
- Approach solutions with multiple organizations in mind.

Medium/Low Priority

- Volunteer Driver/Transportation Reimbursement Program
- Create/Implement a Coordinated Marketing Plan
- Make a Concerted Effort to Include the Susanville Indian Rancheria in Transit Service Coordination

PURPOSE

Transportation is essential in serving those needing to access employment activity centers, social services, recreation, and medical care. While public transit can meet many of these needs for most, coordinated transportation analysis is specific in evaluating existing coordinated transportation programs for sensitive populations such as low-income individuals, those living with disabilities, and people over 60 years old.

Lassen County is served by a variety of geographically dispersed human service organizations, senior centers, and public transit operators. Transit funding is limited at both the state and federal level. Therefore, it is important for these small organizations to coordinate transportation services in order to maximize mobility for residents and eliminate duplication of services.

Transit planning is particularly challenging within Lassen County due to its rural, dispersed character. The county is approximately 4,720 square miles with US 395 spanning a distance of about 140 miles between the south and north border. Other major highways in the region include State Route (SR) 139, SR 44, and SR 36. The county's population is most concentrated in the community of Susanville where US 395, SR 139, and SR 36 converge in the southern portion of the county.

The primary focus of this plan is to develop and refine existing implementable strategies that increase mobility for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes. The strategies update the current Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan and involve the public transit operator Lassen Transit Services Agency (LTSA), private transportation providers, non-profit transportation providers or tribal transportation providers.

HISTORY OF COORDINATED PLANNING AND CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AGENCIES

The movement to coordinate social service agency resources and develop a plan to aid this process began in the 1970's with the Social Services Improvement Act. The Act required the development of an Action Plan, similar to the Coordinated Plan, and required the designation of a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA). The idea behind a CTSA is to designate one agency to coordinate social services and carry out intents of the Act in order to reduce overall administrative staff time and limit duplication of services. CTSAs are eligible for a separate allocation of state Transportation Development Act (TDA) Funds (Article 4.5). Lassen Senior Services is the designated CTSA for the county; however, they do not receive TDA funds through Article 4.5, rather Lassen Senior Services is contracted with LTSA, the public transit operator to provide specialized services.

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION GRANT ELIGIBILITY

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) offers a variety of discretionary and competitive grant programs to fund mass transportation. The FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program is a competitive grant which provides funding for capital and operating expenses for:

- Public transportation projects planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate, or unavailable.
- Public transportation projects that exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.
- Public transportation projects that improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance on complementary paratransit; and
- Alternatives to public transportation projects that assist seniors and individuals with disabilities with transportation.

At least 55 percent of program funds must be spent on transportation projects planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate, or unavailable. The remaining 45 percent may be used for: public transportation projects that exceed the requirements of the ADA; public transportation projects that improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance by individuals with disabilities on complementary paratransit; or alternatives to public transportation that assist seniors and individuals with disabilities. Using these funds for operating expenses requires a 50 percent local match while using these funds for capital expenses (including acquisition of public transportation services) requires a 20 percent local match.

Projects selected for FTA 5310 funding must be “included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and that the plan be “developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public.”

PLAN REQUIREMENTS

This updated plan will adhere to FTA guidance, to ensure that local programs and services in Lassen County remain eligible for FTA grant funding. The requirements of a Coordinated Plan are set forth in FTA circular 9070.1G, and include:

- An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and non-profit).

- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service.
- Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery.
- Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

These guidelines allow for the depth of the plan to be based on available resources.

FTA SECTION 5310 ENHANCED MOBILITY OF SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

This program provides formula funding to increase the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. Funds are apportioned based on each State's share of the targeted populations and are now apportioned to both non-urbanized (for all areas with population under 200,000) and large urbanized areas (over 200,000). The former New Freedom program (5317) is folded into this program. The New Freedom program provided grants for services for individuals with disabilities that went above and beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Activities eligible under New Freedom are now eligible under the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program. Projects selected for funding must be included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

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Chapter 2

EXISTING CONDITIONS, POPULATION TRENDS, AND DEMOGRAPHICS

GEOGRAPHY OF LASSEN COUNTY

Located in the northeast quadrant of California, Lassen County is composed of mountains, high desert, and fertile valleys. The major arterial highway through Lassen County is US 395, connecting the county to Alturas and Modoc County to the north and Reno, Nevada to the south. State Routes 44 and 36 also service the area, connecting Lassen County to the greater Sacramento Valley and the city of Redding. Susanville is the largest community and the county seat. It serves as the governmental, commercial, lodging, medical, educational, and tourist center of the region. The study area also includes extensive public lands for recreation, as well as attractions such as the Bizz Johnson Trail. The study area is shown in Figure 1.

Lassen County's climate is characterized by warm, dry summers and cold, moderately wet winters. Low temperatures in January average 21 degrees Fahrenheit, while the high temperatures in July average 93 degrees Fahrenheit. Annual precipitation levels range from less than 10 inches of rain in Susanville up to 45 inches of snow and rain over Fredonyer Pass.

POPULATION

Current Population

The study provides detailed demographic data broken down by Census Tract, so as to allow for a thorough understanding of population trends and locations of transit dependent persons. Estimates of the Lassen County population at the block group level were obtained from the US Census American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-year estimates. The total population of the County in 2018 is estimated to be 31,185 people, with 15,216 (48.8 percent) residing in the Susanville area. Population concentrations are shown in Table 1 and Figure 2. Most of the population is centered in and around Susanville, Janesville, and Herlong.

Historic and Projected Populations

The population of Lassen County has historically grown steadily, however, populations have begun to decline over recent decades. According to the California Department of Finance (CA DOF), Lassen County has experienced a 15.8 percent decline in population over the past ten years, as shown in Table 2. Based on the CA DOF population projections, this decline is expected to continue over the next 20 years resulting in a total decrease of 8.9 percent in population between 2020 and 2040.

While total population has continued to decline since 2010, the number of residents who are ages 65 and older has increased by 27.6 percent over the last decade. This older population is expected to continue to

grow through 2030 by another 8.6 percent. This implies that improved coordinated services are necessary to accommodate this growth in aging populations.



Census Tract	Block Group	Area Description	Total Population	Institutionalize		Total Households	Youth (10-19)		Elderly (65+)		With Disability		Below Poverty		Zero Vehicle Households	
				Yes	No		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
401	1	Bieber/Nubieber	432	56	376	276	20	5.3%	105	27.9%	46	12.2%	68	18.1%	15	5.4%
401	2	Ash Creek Wildlife Area	747	-	747	596	63	8.4%	183	24.5%	79	10.6%	31	4.1%	9	1.5%
401	3	Madeline/Termo	323	-	323	264	21	6.5%	39	12.1%	128	39.6%	76	23.5%	4	1.5%
402	1	Spaulding	905	-	905	1055	154	17.0%	187	20.7%	48	5.3%	16	1.8%	7	0.7%
402	2	Westwood	1229	-	1,229	992	85	6.9%	308	25.1%	111	9.0%	174	14.2%	34	3.4%
402	3	Norville, Lasco, Coppervale	542	-	542	431	83	15.3%	105	19.4%	96	17.7%	90	16.6%	18	4.2%
403.02	1	Lake Leavitt	1252	-	1,252	565	138	11.0%	183	14.6%	124	9.9%	106	8.5%	0	0.0%
403.02	2	South of Gold Run	1520	10	1,510	686	172	11.4%	39	2.6%	29	1.9%	70	4.6%	6	0.9%
403.02	3	North of Gold Run	1341	-	1,341	724	154	11.5%	187	13.9%	118	8.8%	44	3.3%	68	9.4%
403.03	1	Lassen CC, outskirts	1376	173	1,203	571	153	12.7%	308	25.6%	200	16.6%	175	14.5%	92	16.1%
403.03	2	E of Hall, N of Main	592	-	592	411	55	9.3%	98	16.6%	84	14.2%	55	9.3%	46	11.2%
403.03	3	W of Hall, E of Grand, N of Main	569	-	569	261	112	19.7%	174	30.6%	218	38.3%	308	54.1%	57	21.8%
403.04	1	Susanville HS	688	-	688	365	100	14.5%	334	48.5%	61	8.9%	255	37.1%	51	14.0%
403.04	2	E. of Alexander, S of Main	810	69	741	449	110	14.8%	158	21.3%	167	22.5%	220	29.7%	39	8.7%
403.05	1	Susanville Rch Prk to Eagle Lk	1559	-	1,559	809	177	11.4%	196	12.6%	170	10.9%	216	13.9%	13	1.6%
403.05	2	E of Roop, N of Main	709	-	709	269	124	17.5%	151	21.3%	196	27.6%	78	11.0%	14	5.2%
403.05	3	W of Roop, N of Hwy 36	808	-	808	415	101	12.5%	70	8.7%	152	18.8%	146	18.1%	47	11.3%
404	1	Litchfield, Standish	1094	-	1,094	632	76	6.9%	67	6.1%	110	10.1%	235	21.5%	6	0.9%
404	2	Correctional Facilities	8259	8,138	121	12	0	0.0%	214	--	1,323	--	0	--	0	--
405	1	East of Hwy 395/Janesville	1316	-	1,316	586	135	10.3%	241	18.3%	67	5.1%	36	2.7%	11	1.9%
405	2	South of Janesville	597	-	597	303	36	6.0%	95	15.9%	35	5.9%	108	18.1%	0	0.0%
405	3	Janesville	1370	-	1,370	645	96	7.0%	92	6.7%	129	9.4%	96	7.0%	15	2.3%
406	1	Millford, Wendel, Honey Lake	1002	435	567	671	34	6.0%	346	61.0%	169	29.8%	58	10.2%	0	0.0%
406	2	Herlong	1445	-	1,445	138	30	2.1%	40	2.8%	261	18.1%	16	1.1%	1	0.7%
406	3	Doyle/S. County	700	-	700	632	41	5.9%	278	39.7%	115	16.4%	256	36.6%	7	1.1%
TOTAL STUDY AREA			31,185	8,881	22,304	12,758	2,270	10.2%	4,198	18.8%	4,236	19.0%	2,933	13.2%	560	4.4%
City of Susanville			15,216	7,122	8,094	3529	932	11.5%	1,114	13.8%	1,060	13.1%	1,355	16.7%	387	11.0%

Note 1: Institutionalized population includes persons incarcerated and living in a skilled nursing facility.

Note 2: Institutionalized Population based on 2010 Census proportion to current population.

Source: US Census American Community Survey 2014 - 2018 Five Year Estimates

Figure 2
Lassen County Total Population

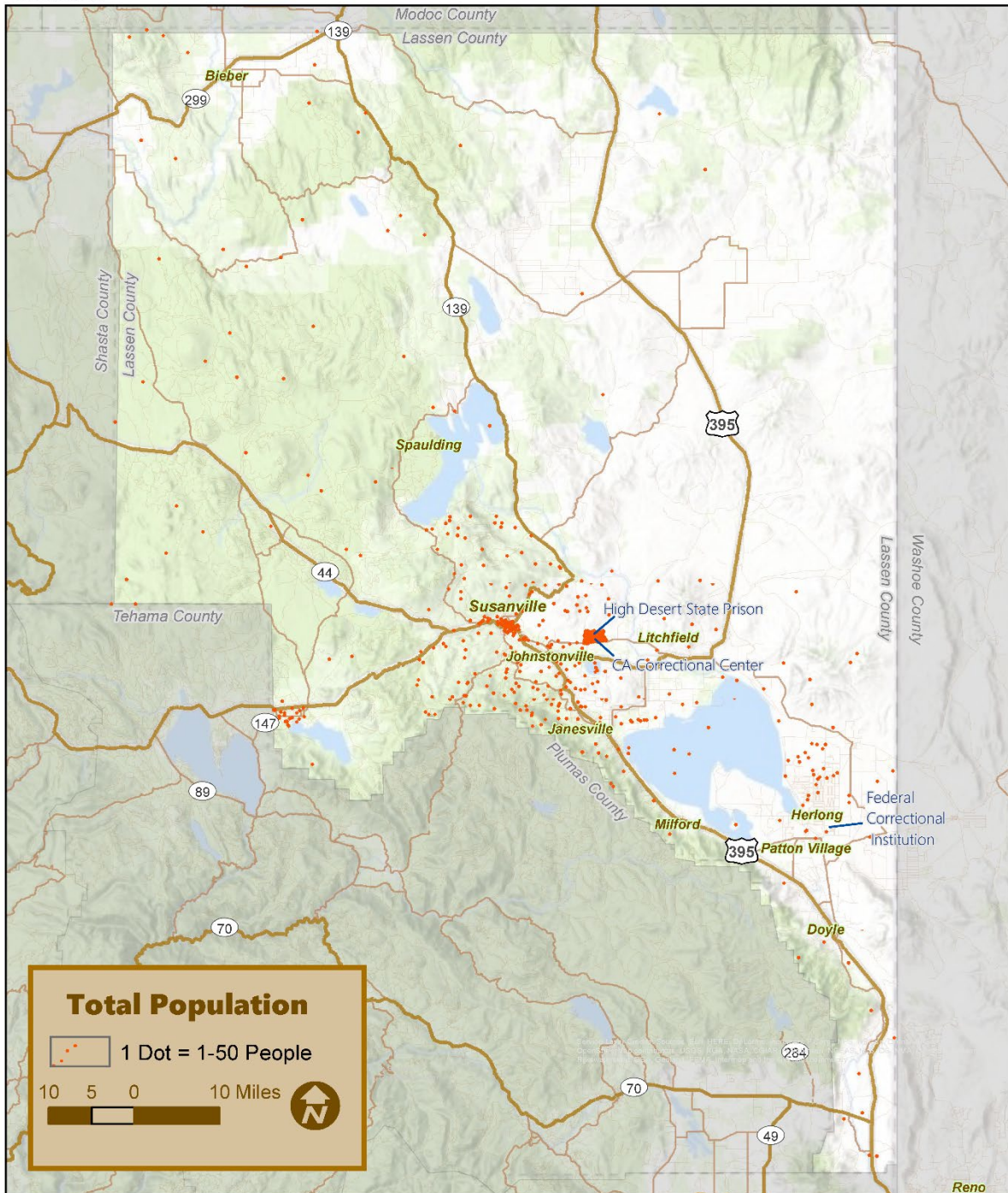


Table 2: Historical and Projected Lassen County Population

Age Groups	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Preschool (0 - 4 Years)	1,631	1,468	1,506	1,606	1,480	1,312	1,190
School Age (5 - 17 Years)	4,635	4,040	3,733	3,827	3,730	3,687	3,489
College Age (18 - 24 Years)	3,805	3,515	3,362	2,917	2,842	2,747	2,778
Working Age (25 - 64 Years)	21,253	17,761	16,651	16,678	16,105	16,002	15,802
Young Retirees (65 - 74 Years)	2,001	2,559	2,927	2,820	2,467	1,877	1,352
Mature Retirees (75 - 84 Years)	1,038	1,034	1,272	1,760	2,022	1,867	1,640
Seniors (85 + Years)	446	535	614	327	776	975	1,128
Total Population	34,809	30,912	30,065	29,935	29,422	28,467	27,379

	Total Change		Annual %
	#	%	
Growth from 2010 - 2020	-4,744	-15.8%	-3.4%
Growth from 2020 - 2030	-643	-2.1%	-0.4%
Growth from 2030 - 2430	-2,043	-6.8%	-0.5%

Source: California Department of Finance, 2020

Transit Dependent Population

Nationwide, transit system ridership is drawn largely from various groups of persons who make up what is often called the “transit dependent” population. This category includes youths, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, low-income persons, and households with no available vehicles for use. There is considerable overlap among these groups. Table 1 presents the transit dependent population by Census Tract in Lassen County from the 2018 American Community Survey (ACS) from the U.S. Census.

- The youth population (children aged 10 to 17 years of age) represents 10.2 percent of the study area population, totaling 2,270 persons. The youth population is considered to be transit dependent persons, as children of school age that travel independently may need public transit to go to/from school or after school activities. Throughout the county, the region between Susanville Ranch Park to Eagle Lake and South of Gold Run Road (177 and 172 youths, respectively). Figure 3 displays the proportion of youth population in each block group. Census tracts with the greatest proportion of youth are central Susanville (19.7 percent), northwest Susanville (17.5 percent), and Spaulding (17 percent). As a whole, the City of Susanville has a total of 932 youths (roughly 11.5 percent of the City of Susanville’s population).
- There are an estimated 4,198 senior citizens (ages 65 years and older) residing in Lassen County, comprising 18.8 percent of the total population. The proportion of elderly persons is greatest in the community near Milford, Wendel, Honey Lake, with 61 percent of their total population being persons ages 65 and older (Figure 4). Other areas with high proportions of elderly persons include the census tract including the Susanville High School (334 persons, 48.5 percent) and Doyle/South County (278 persons, 39.7 percent).

- The ACS also counts the population living below the poverty level, defined by several factors including household income and the number of dependent children. Residents living below the poverty level comprise 13.2 percent of the countywide population, compared to 11 percent statewide. As shown in Table 1 and Figure 5, the areas with the greatest percentage of population below the poverty level include the south portion of the county near the community to Doyle, the northwest area of Susanville, and the area east of Johnstonville.
- Finally, one of the strongest indicators of transit dependency is the number of households without a vehicle available. There are 560 households in Lassen County without a vehicle (4.4 percent), with particularly high proportions in the northeast and southwest parts of Susanville as shown in Table 1 and Figure 6.

There are 4,236 disabled persons in Lassen County, which comprises 19 percent of the study area population (Figure 7). The area that has the highest concentration of persons with disabilities includes the communities of Madeline and Termo (39.6 percent). In addition, the community of Herlong has the greatest number of disabled residents, 261 people.

Figure 3
Lassen County Youth Population

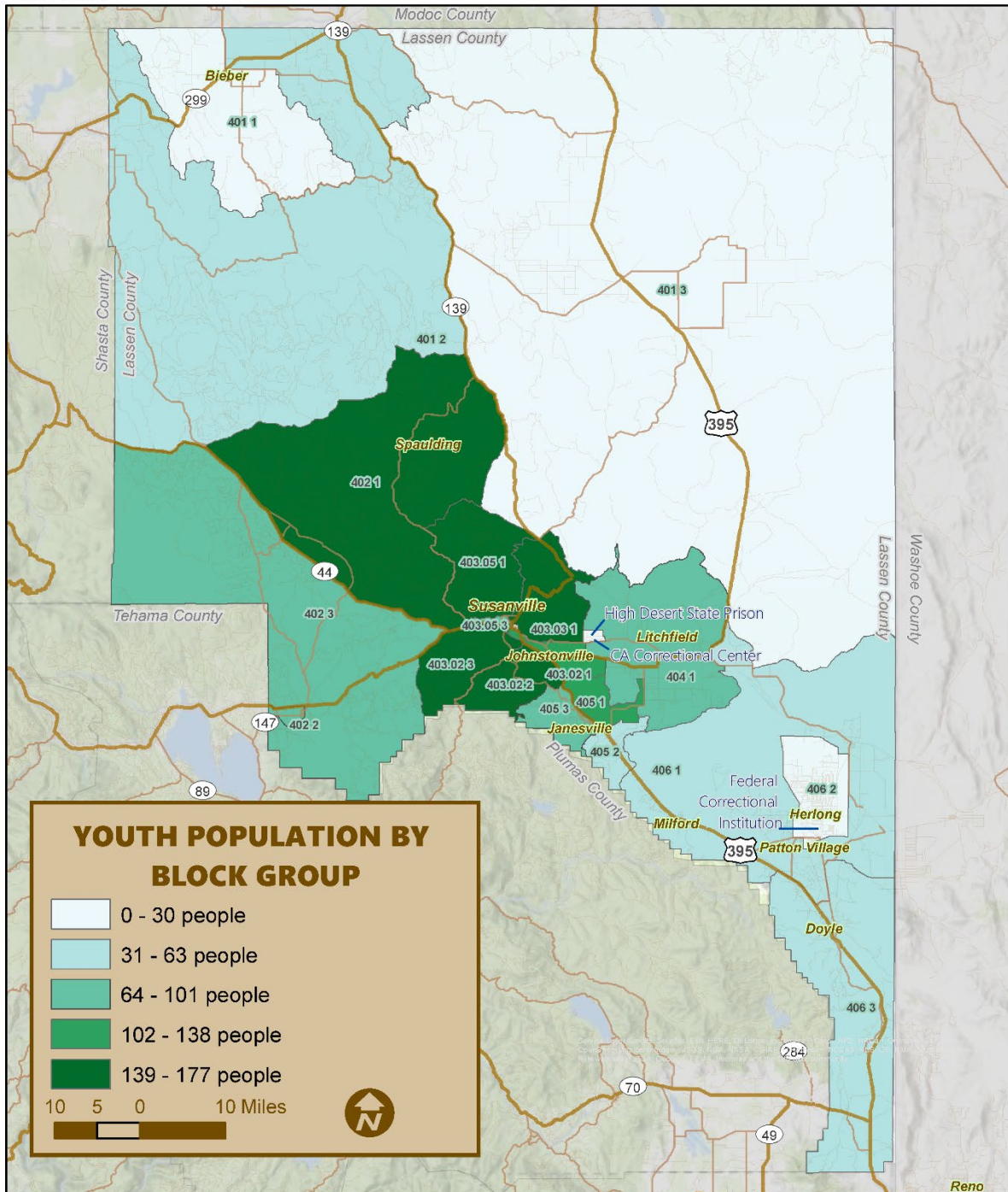


Figure 4
Lassen County Older Adults (65 and Older)

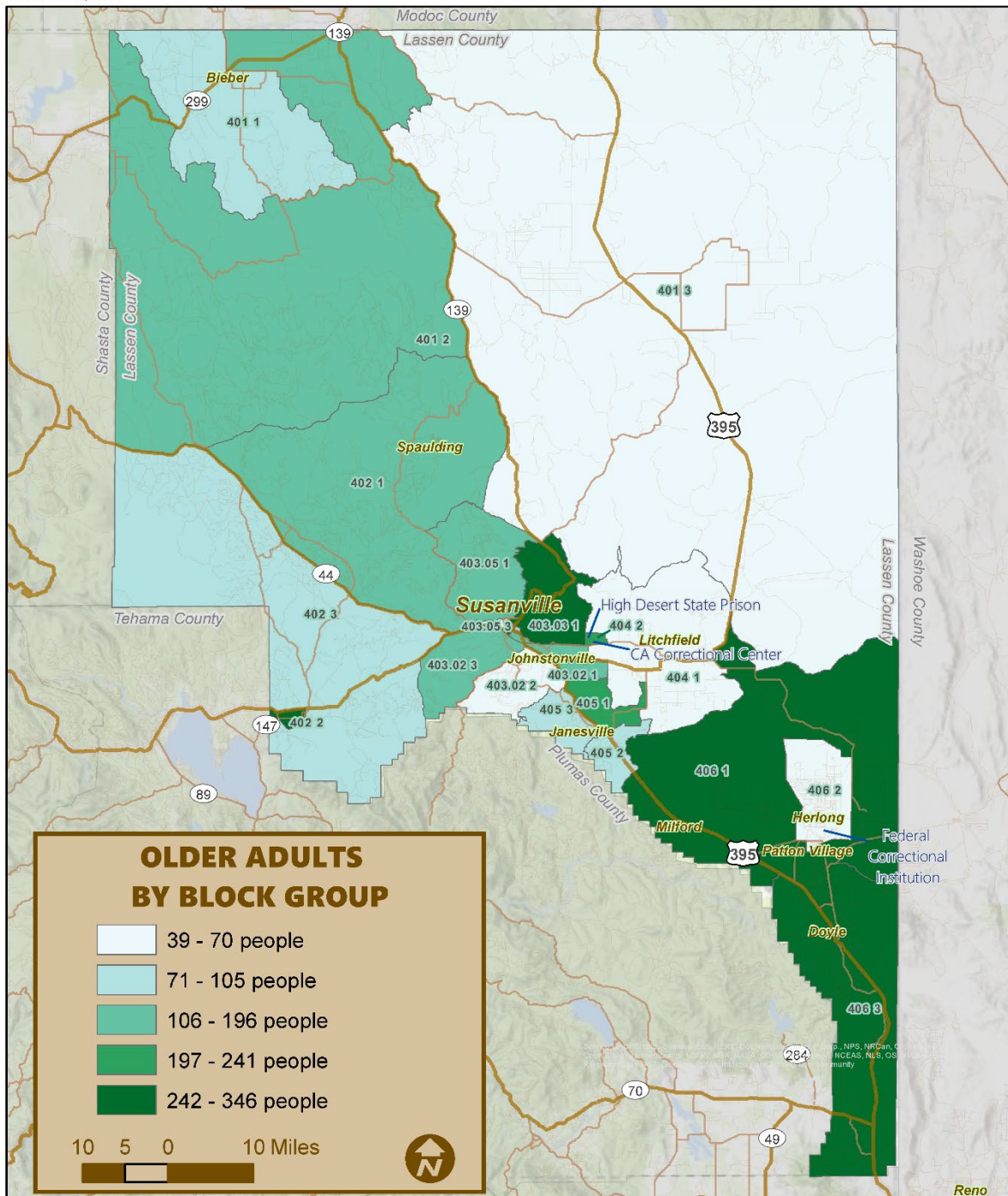


Figure 5
Lassen County Residents Living Below the Poverty Level

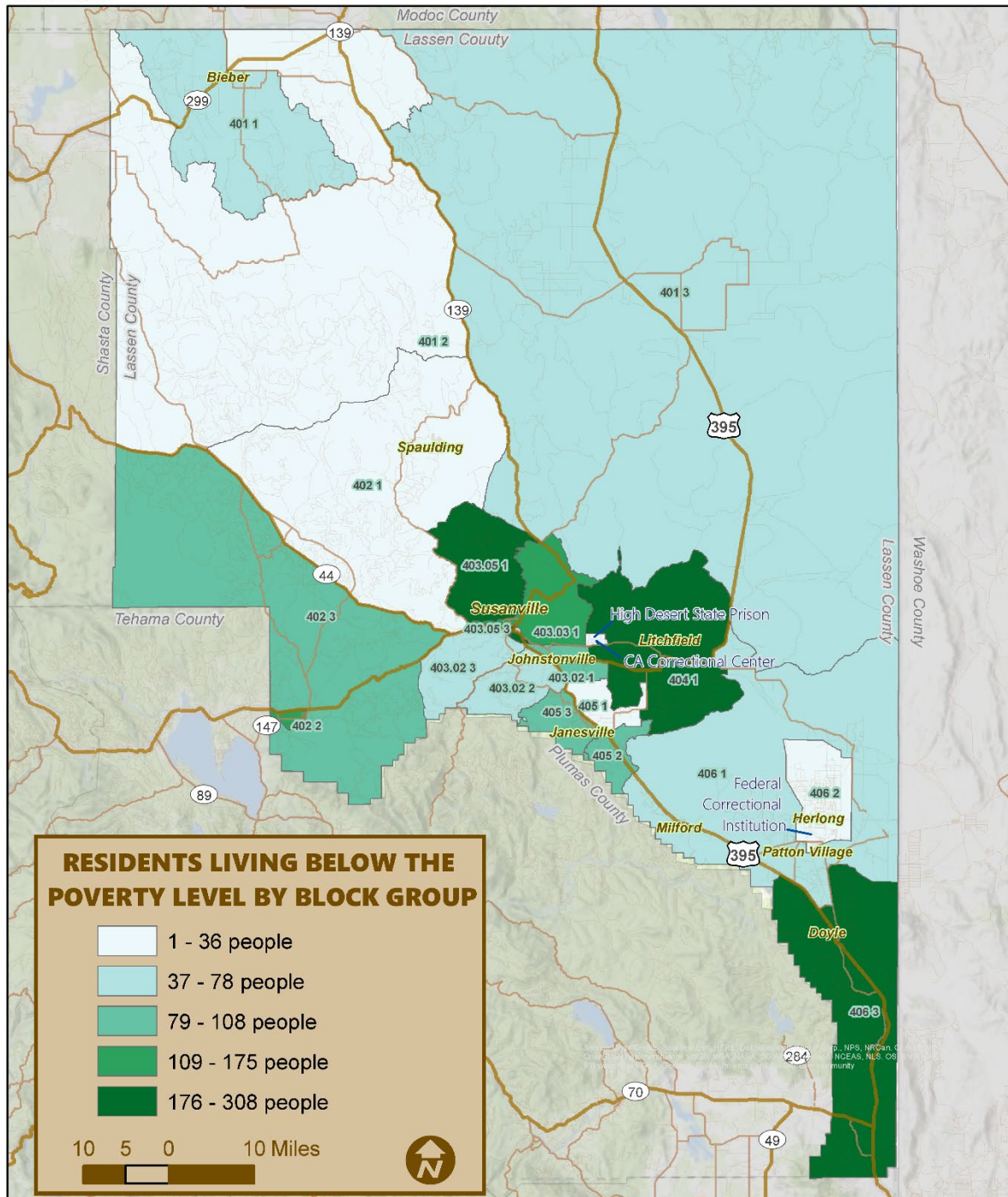


Figure 6

Lassen County Households with No Vehicles

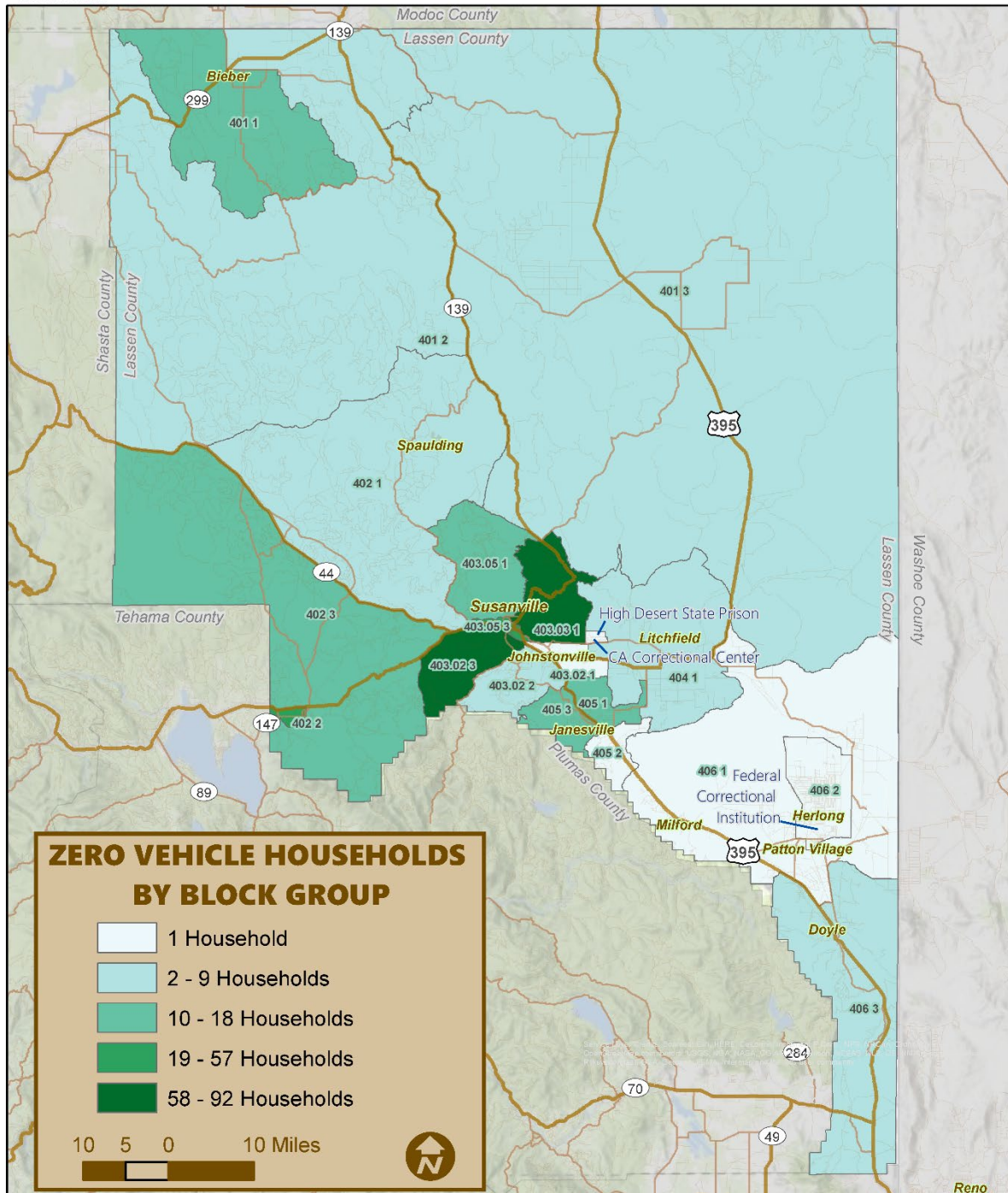
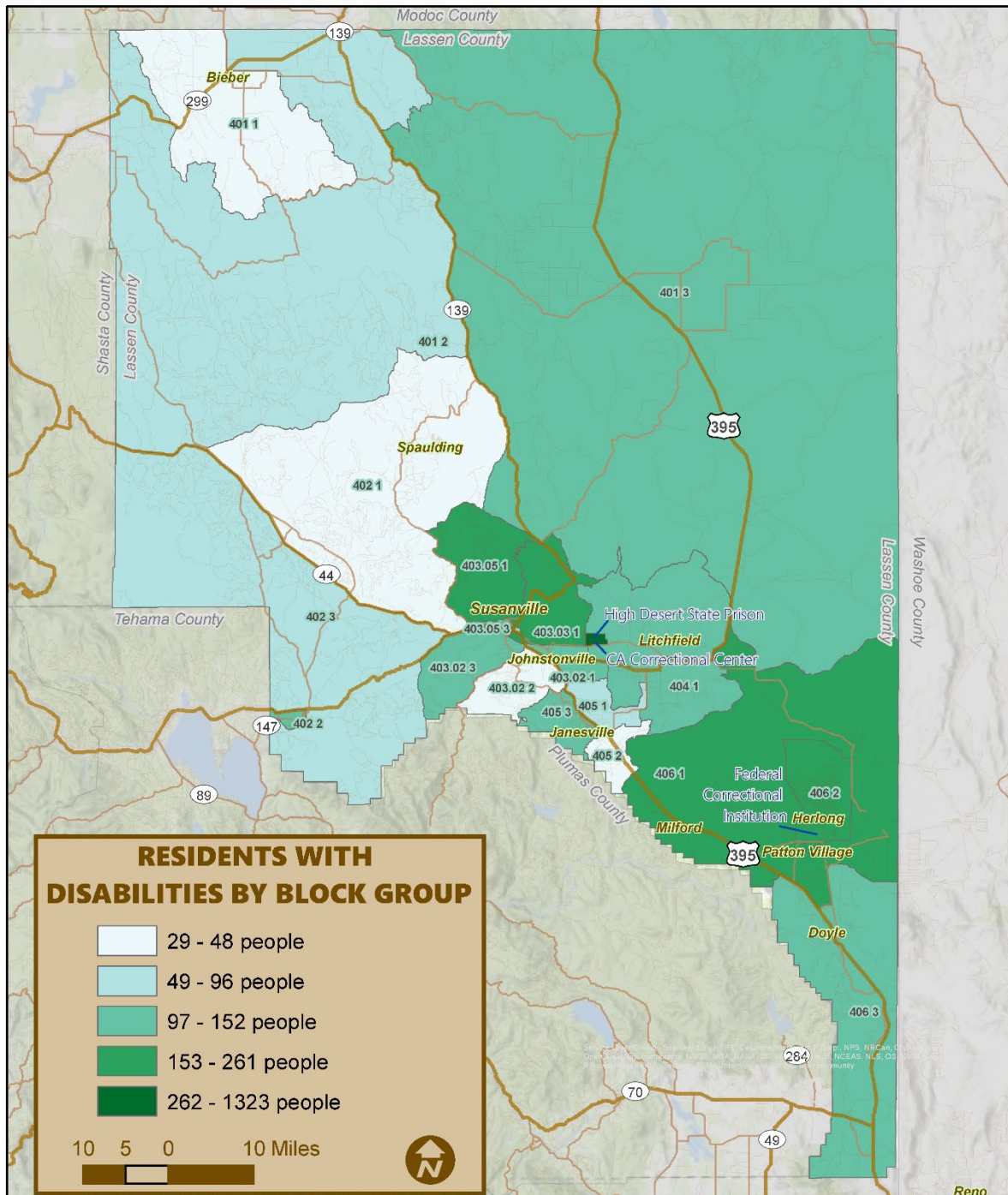


Figure 7
Lassen County Residents with Disabilities



ECONOMIC PROFILE

Historically, the local economy of western Lassen County has been based on mining and timber. Today, retail trade and government services dominate the current economic base. Additionally, occupations are growing in the gaming industry, computer network and systems administration, adding to the diversity of the economy. There are three prisons in Lassen County which provide a significant number of jobs for residents.

Major Employers

There is a mix of industry associated with these employers, ranging from government offices to health care to grocery stores. There are three prisons in Lassen County (High Desert Prison in Susanville, California Correctional Center in Susanville, and the Federal Correctional Institute in Herlong). Other major employers in Susanville include the City of Susanville, Lassen County, Diamond Mountain Casino, Forestry and Fire Protection, Walmart, Lassen National Forest, Northeastern Rural Health Clinics, and school districts. The US Army Depot in Herlong is also a major employer. As Table 3 indicates, more than half (55.6 percent) of the county's current labor force is made up of employment in the public administration, educational, and health/social services. In April 2021, the state announced the expected closure of the California Correctional Center (CCC) outside Susanville by June 30, 2022. Approximately 1,481 incarcerated people are housed at the facility located in Leavitt and there are currently 1,080 staff. This prison closure will have a negative impact on the economy in Lassen County.

Table 3: Lassen County Employment by Industry		
Industry Type	Jobs	
	#	%
Public administration	2,944	33.5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1,945	22.1%
Retail trade	705	8.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	614	7.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	585	6.7%
Construction	587	6.7%
Professional, scientific, and waste management services	307	3.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	284	3.2%
Other services, except public administration	253	2.9%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	218	2.5%
Manufacturing	151	1.7%
Wholesale trade	102	1.2%
Information	93	1.1%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>8,788</i>
<i>Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018</i>		

Labor Force

The ACS provides insight into the employment conditions in Lassen County. The most recent data shows that the unemployment rate in Lassen County was roughly 6.1 percent in 2018. This is greater than the current statewide unemployment rate of 5.1 percent. In terms of number, this equates to 9,332 people in the labor force, 570 of which are considered unemployed. There are currently 22,304 non-institutionalized people living within the county and nearly 42 percent of the Lassen County population are likely either too young or old to be considered a part of the civilian work population. Economic restrictions resulting from the COVID -19 pandemic pushed the unemployment level in Lassen County to 7.1 percent as of February 2021.

COMMUTE PROFILE

Means of Transportation to Work

The American Community Survey's 5-Year Estimates for 2014 – 2018 include data regarding what mode of transportation workers in the County use to get to / from work. As shown in Table 4, the majority of employed residents (81.2 percent) drove alone, while 9.4 percent carpooled. Of other means of transportation to work: 3 percent walked, 5.7 percent worked at home and only 0.4 percent used public transit. In the City of Susanville, which has a greater population density, 1.9 percent use public transit and 9.9 percent walk.

Census		Drove Alone		Carpooled		Public Transit		Walked		Other		Worked At Home		Total Work Force
Tract	Description	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
401	Bieber/Nubieber, Ash Creek, Madeline, Termo	358	68.6%	3	0.6%	0	0.0%	22	4.2%	8	1.5%	131	25.1%	522
402	Westwood, Norville, Lasco, Coppervale	790	79.0%	161	16.1%	0	0.0%	9	0.9%	0	0.0%	40	4.0%	1,000
403.02	Lake Leavitt, Gold Run Valley	1,465	81.2%	155	8.6%	0	0.0%	32	1.8%	22	1.2%	132	7.3%	1,804
403.03	North Side of Susanville	710	79.1%	63	7.0%	2	0.2%	80	8.9%	0	0.0%	43	4.8%	898
403.04	South Side of Susanville	441	85.1%	38	7.3%	2	0.4%	26	5.0%	0	0.0%	11	2.1%	518
403.05	NE Susanville	1,080	86.3%	55	4.4%	28	2.2%	58	4.6%	5	0.4%	28	2.2%	1,252
404	Litchfield, Standish	312	84.8%	23	6.3%	0	0.0%	6	1.6%	0	0.0%	27	7.3%	368
405	Janesville and surrounds	1,140	91.0%	113	9.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1,253
406	Milford, Wendel, Honey Lake, Herlong, Doyle	585	67.8%	186	21.6%	0	0.0%	22	2.5%	0	0.0%	70	8.1%	863
TOTAL STUDY AREA		6,882	81.2%	797	9.4%	31	0.4%	254	3.0%	34	0.4%	481	5.7%	8,478
City of Susanville		2,574	72.5%	349	9.8%	66	1.9%	350	9.9%	59	1.7%	150	4.2%	3,548

Source: US Census ACS 2014-2018 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics

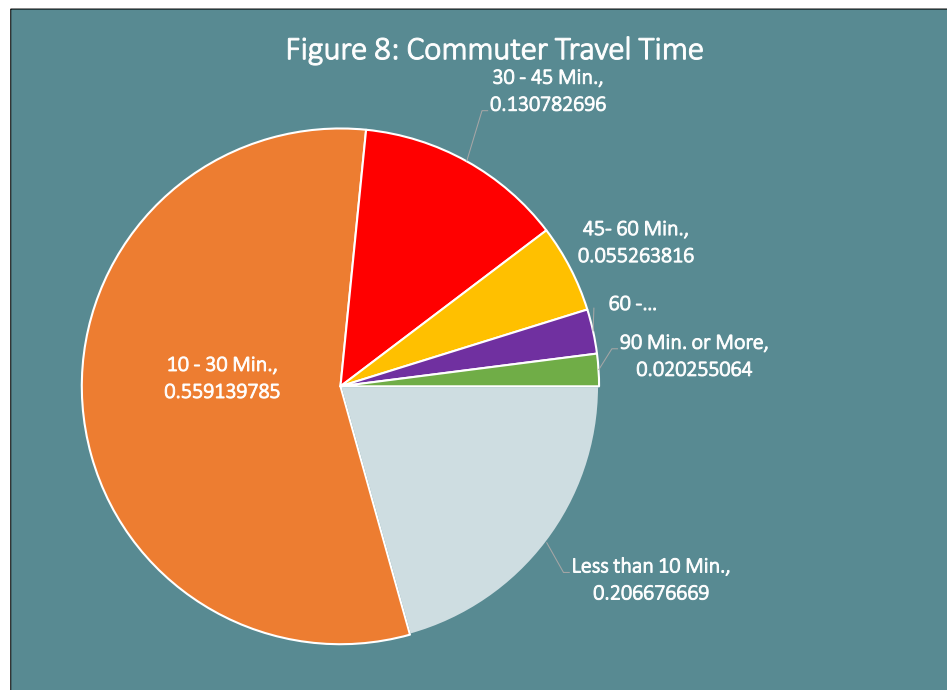
Commute Patterns

A common trip purpose for public transit trips is “work”. Therefore, a review of commute patterns is vital to an effective transit study. The U.S. Census Bureau maintains the “Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics” dataset, which provides detailed information on commute travel patterns. It should be noted that this data is collected based on permanent residence for employees and main office address for employers, so there may be inaccuracies due to where military personnel and seasonal employees identify their permanent residences and there may be differences between what the data shows and where employees actually report to work. Additionally, the data does not separate employees who work from home. Nonetheless, the data gives some useful insight regarding the general flow of commuters. Table 5 presents commute pattern data for both employed residents of Lassen County and persons travelling to Lassen County for work. Major commute pattern findings include the following:

- Around half of Lassen County employed residents work within the City of Susanville (50.1 percent or 3,804 employees). Nearby Johnstonville (2.5 percent, 191 employees) is another Lassen County community with relatively high number of jobs for Lassen County residents.
- Of the residents commuting out of the county for work, the largest number travel to Redding (143 employees or 2 percent). Other out-of-county locations include Reno and Sparks, Nevada (3.9 percent or 284 employees, cumulatively).
- Approximately 44 percent, or 3,197 employees, who work in Lassen County live in Susanville.
- As shown in Figure 8, nearly 56 percent of employed Lassen County residents’ travel time is between 10 and 30 minutes, followed by 20 percent whose travel time is less than 10 minutes.

Table 5: Lassen County Commute Patterns					
Where Lassen County Residents Work			Where Lassen County Workers Live		
Susanville	3,804	50.1%	Susanville	3,197	44.1%
Redding	228	3.0%	Johnstonville	143	2.0%
Johnstonville	191	2.5%	Redding	143	2.0%
Sacramento	154	2.0%	Reno, NV	141	1.9%
Chico	149	2.0%	Sparks, NV	130	1.8%
San Francisco	64	0.8%	Janesville	88	1.2%
Chester	62	0.8%	Westwood	88	1.2%
Medford, OR	57	0.8%	Red Bluff	65	0.9%
Westwood	51	0.7%	Cold Springs, NV	52	0.7%
Eureka	49	0.6%	Chico	51	0.7%
Red Bluff	42	0.6%	Chester	45	0.6%
Klamath Falls, OR	42	0.6%	Lake Almanor Country Club	33	0.5%
Janesville	41	0.5%	Alturas	31	0.4%
Oroville	41	0.5%	Sacramento	30	0.4%
Santa Rosa	38	0.5%	Hamilton Branch	28	0.4%
<i>All Other Locations</i>	<i>2,574</i>	<i>33.9%</i>	<i>All Other Locations</i>	<i>2,980</i>	<i>41.1%</i>
Total Workers	7,587	100%	Total Workers	7,245	100.0%

Note: **Bold font** denotes Lassen County community
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and 2017 LEHD Origin-Destination Employment



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EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Lassen County is served by the Lassen Rural Bus, which is overseen by the Lassen Transit Service Agency. In addition, the county also has a variety of human service agencies which provide transportation for clients. Appendix A presents a summary of the transportation provider inventory for Lassen County along with responses to a human service agency transportation needs survey.



LASSEN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

The Lassen County Transportation Commission (LCTC) is the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Lassen County. LCTC is responsible for the preparation of transportation plans and the management of state and federal transportation funding. The LCTC is comprised of three members of the Lassen County Board of Supervisors and three members of the City of Susanville City Council. Each year the LCTC allocates transit funding, primarily Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds to the Lassen Transit Service Agency (LTSA) for the operation of the Lassen Rural Bus System, (LRB) which is the only public transit system in the region.

LASSEN TRANSIT SERVICE AGENCY

The LTSA is the institutional organization which provides public transportation services in Lassen County. Until 2001, the County of Lassen operated LRB, when a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) was signed between the County of Lassen and the City of Susanville creating the LTSA. LTSA has hired a private contractor, Paratransit Services, to perform day to day operations and maintenance functions of LRB.

LASSEN RURAL BUS

The Lassen Rural Bus (LRB) system began service in July of 1981 using two wheelchair-accessible vehicles to operate one fixed route and Dial-A-Ride service. The LRB system has since grown to a vehicle fleet of eleven, providing a Susanville City Route and a number of inter community routes which are shown in Figures 9 and 10 and described below. A Dial-a-Ride service is also provided for those meeting particular criteria.

Susanville City Route with Complementary Paratransit

Fixed route service is provided on the Susanville City Route (City Route) on one-hour headways between 7:00 AM and 6:55 PM, Monday through Friday, and from 8:00 AM to 3:52 PM on Saturday. The service area is entirely within the Susanville city limits at designated stops only (no flag stops). The route is

depicted in more detail in Figure 10. The City Route serves all the major activity centers in Susanville including Wal-Mart, the Sierra Shopping Center, the Lassen Shopping Center, the Susanville Shopping Center, Lassen Senior Services, the Lassen Banner Hospital, City/County Administrative offices, Meadowview School, Lassen High School, Lassen Community College, and the Safeway Shopping Center.

West County Route

The West County Route provides round trip service between Susanville, Westwood, Lake Almanor, and Chester (in Plumas County) three times per day during the week and twice on Saturdays. Points served on this route include Devil's Corral, Westwood, Clear Creek, and Hamilton Branch. Within Susanville, stops are scheduled at Riverside Drive, Main and Gay Street, Diamond Mountain Casino, Lassen Community College, and Wal-Mart. In addition, passengers may "flag" the bus anywhere along the route as long as it is a safe location. The route is shown in Figure 10.

The morning run leaves Susanville Wal-Mart at 5:21 AM, arriving in Westwood at 6:01 AM and Chester at 6:25 AM, and returning to Susanville at 7:26 AM. A midday trip leaves Susanville at 12:10 PM, arriving in Westwood at 1:02 PM and Chester at 1:26 PM, and returning to Lassen Community College at 2:35 PM. The evening trip leaves Susanville at 5:15 PM, arrives in Westwood at 6:07 PM and Chester at 6:31 PM, before returning to Wal-Mart at 7:39 PM. This schedule allows college students to arrive to campus on time for 8:00 AM classes. In addition, the West County Route allows for transfers to Plumas Transit with departures from Hamilton Branch in Chester at 6:42 AM and 1:43 PM, with a return to Chester at 6:19 PM.

West County Extension

This service was started in 2020 in response to an unmet transit need request. The extension serves a residential neighborhood along Richmond Road (south of Susanville), the Susanville Airport and Johnstonville, Susanville Mobile Home Park and Lassen Community College with two round trips per day. This service was discontinued in July 2021 due to low ridership.

South County Commuter and Deviated Fixed Routes

The Sierra Army Depot (SIAD) located in Herlong, located 37 miles south of the City of Susanville employs over 1,000 people, many of whom live in Susanville. The LRB South County Commuter Route provides a public transit commute option for these employees. The morning trip leaves Susanville at 5:13 AM and the evening trip leaves SIAD at 5:00 PM with stops in Johnstonville, Janesville, and Milford, as shown in Figure 9. After the morning commute run, instead of deadheading the return trip, the Commuter Route bus becomes the South County deviated fixed route between Herlong and Susanville by providing service to the communities of Doyle, Milford, and Janesville. The route may deviate up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile off the regular route. The bus departs Herlong at 6:30 AM and arrives at Lassen Community College and Northeastern Rural Health at 8:00 AM, before returning to Walmart at 8:06 AM. In the afternoon, the reverse occurs. The bus departs Susanville from the Walmart at 3:00 PM, arriving at the Herlong Fort Sage Family Resource Center at 4:35 PM. Then the bus begins the evening commuter route back to Susanville.

Figure 9
Lassen County Transit Routes

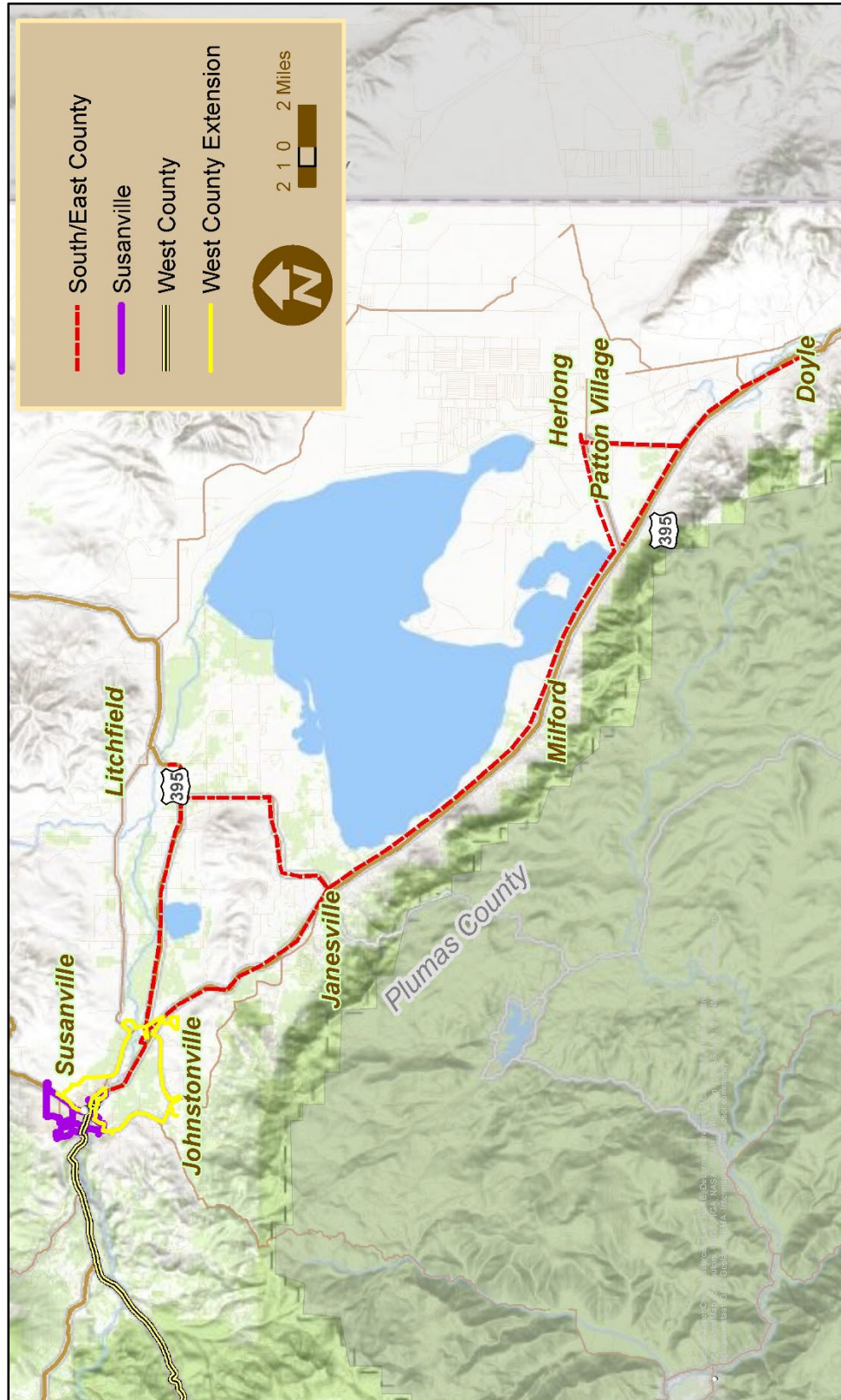
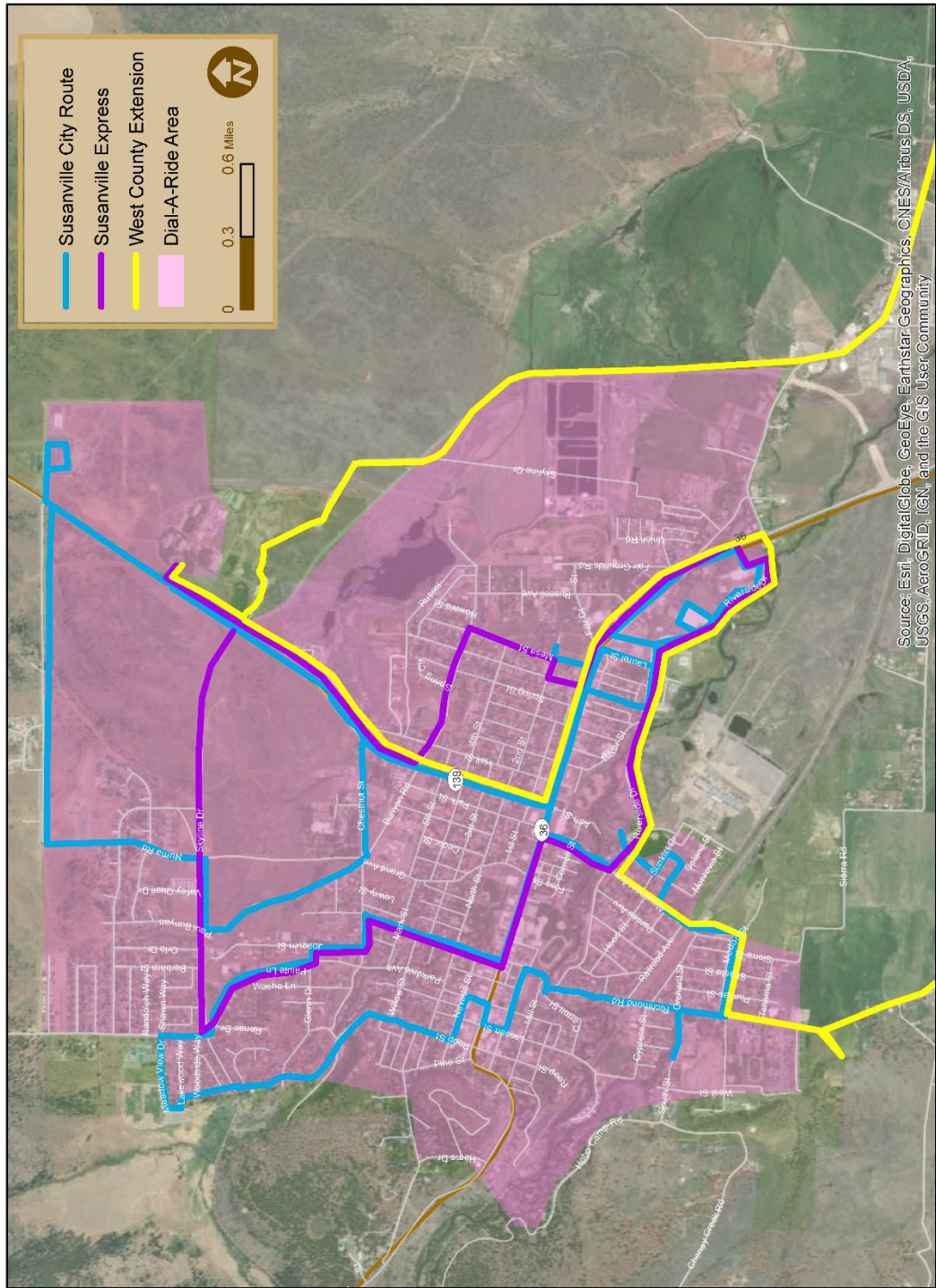


Figure 10
Susanville Route Map



East County Route

The East County Route, also shown in Figure 9, provides Friday service between Susanville and Herlong in the mornings (stopping at Standish, Litchfield, Leavitt Lake, Johnstonville) and from Susanville to Herlong in the afternoon. The morning route departs Riverside Drive (Walmart) at 8:20 AM and on to Standish (Wayside Inn) at 9:55 AM and Litchfield (Heard's Market) at 10:01 AM before returning to Lassen Community College and Riverside Drive (Walmart) at 10:38 AM and 10:45 AM, respectively. The afternoon route leaves Lassen Community College at 1:01 PM and arrives at Standish at 1:37 PM and Litchfield at 1:43 PM before returning to Riverside Drive at 3:25 PM. The East County schedule provides riders living in the southeast portion of the county with a shorter layover time in Susanville than the South County route. This route will be discontinued as of July 1, 2021, due to low ridership.

Eagle Lake Route

The Eagle Lake Route is a seasonal route offered on Saturdays along the west side of Eagle Lake starting and ending in Susanville. Service begins Saturday of the Memorial Day weekend, and ends on Labor Day weekend, or, weather permitting, the final Saturday of September. Service is by appointment only and require a minimum of 10 riders to make a reservation. Passengers must call by 5:00 PM the Wednesday before their planned trip. The morning route departs Susanville at 10:00 AM, arriving at the Mariner's Resort at Stone's Landing at 11:31 AM, departing at 11:35 AM to return to Susanville by 1:15 PM. The late afternoon route departs Walmart at 3:00 PM, arriving at Stone's Landing at 4:31 PM, and returning to Susanville by 6:15 PM.

Dial-A-Ride

A Dial-a-Ride (DAR) door to door demand response service is provided to qualifying individuals living within three-quarter mile of Susanville City Route bus stops, as depicted in Figure 9. To use the service, customers must be identified as seniors aged 60 years and over, or as disabled. The DAR service requires a one-day advance reservation.

OTHER REGIONAL TRANSIT/TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

In addition to LTSA there are other regional public transit services rail service and social service / non-profit specialized transportation programs.

Modoc Sage Stage Service to Reno

For many years, LTSA has contributed approximately \$30,000 annually to the Modoc Transit Agency to share the cost of intercity bus service from Alturas to Reno, Nevada with stops in Likely, Madeline, Susanville, and Doyle. Service was available on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays until a recent surge in the COVID pandemic when services were temporarily suspended. Generally, passengers must make a reservation at least one day in advance, although several walk-on stops are available on the route on a space-available basis. The bus will not run unless there is at least one confirmed reservation.

Sage Stage Reno service departs Alturas at 8:00 AM, stops in Likely at 8:20 AM, Madeline at 8:35 AM, Susanville at 9:45 AM, arriving at the Reno Airport at 11:45 AM. The return trip departs Reno at 1:30 PM, arriving in Susanville at 3:30 PM and Alturas at 5:30 PM. Intercity service to Reno was reinstated in June 2021.

Single-ride fares are offered to the general public, and discounted single-ride fares are offered for children ages 12 and under, seniors aged 60 and ADA-qualified individuals with disabilities. The fare between Alturas and Susanville is \$18.00 for general passengers, and \$13.50 discounted; from Susanville to Reno is \$22.00, discounted to \$16.50; and from Likely or Ravendale to Susanville is \$15.00, discounted to \$11.00.

This service is partially funded with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5311 Intercity Grant funds as it provides transportation to the intercity transportation such as the airport and Greyhound. Many passengers use the service to get to medical appointments in Reno. Sage Stage Reno service carried 1,358 one-way passenger-trips in FY 2018-19. This number decreased to 883 trips in FY 2019-20 (presumably because of the pandemic). Roughly 57 percent of passenger boardings in FY 2018-19 and 59 percent of boardings in FY 2019-20 were made by Lassen County residents.

Lassen Senior Services

Lassen Senior Services (LSS) provides transportation for seniors (ages 60 and older) living within Susanville to and from their lunch meal site located in Susanville. As a part of this service, trips to medical appointments, shopping, banking, and the post office is also made within Susanville. In addition, meal and other delivery services are provided to clients living in Westwood and Doyle. medical appointments, shopping, banking, the post office. Intercity services are also provided from Susanville to Reno (on alternating Tuesdays and Thursdays) with a minimum of two passengers being registered at least 48 hours in advance. Donations of \$1.00 are suggested fare for local rides, and contributions of \$25 (or \$40 per couple) are suggested for Reno trips.

LTSA contracts with LSS to provide transportation services for seniors that LRB is unable to provide. The agreement includes an annual LTSA payment of \$86,000 (with \$5,000 set aside for vehicle maintenance) for the services provided by LSS.

According to LTSA reports, Lassen Senior Services carried 3,364 one-way passenger trips in FY 2019-20 and 2,641 trips in FY 2018-19 with the funding provided by LTSA. LSS currently has seven vehicles available for use. This includes 2 nine-passenger buses, 1 wheelchair van and 3 six-passenger vans.

Lassen County Veteran's Services Office (VSO)

About four times per year, the Lassen County VSO transports veterans from Susanville to the Veteran's Medical Center in Reno. Rides must be scheduled at least one week in advance as VSO owns no vehicles and must go through the Lassen County motor pool. Drivers are volunteer AMVETS (American Veterans) with no special licensing.

Lassen County Health and Social Services

The Lassen County Health and Human Services (HHS) provides transportation, using county-owned vehicles, for social-service needs. This may include mental health, alcohol, or drug treatment as coordinated by a caseworker.

Crossroads Ministries

Crossroads Ministries is a church-affiliated non-profit organization that provides services to needy individuals who request it, including transportation. With two six-passenger vans, Crossroads serves approximately 50 to 60 passengers each week within Lassen County for medical appointments. Transportation to and from Reno is also provided approximately four times per month (about once per week). When possible, Crossroads also provides clients with LRB passes and Greyhound vouchers on occasion.

North Valley Services and Lassen Life Skills - Far Northern Regional Center

Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) provides funding to educational life skills organizations providing transportation for persons with developmental disabilities. Clients of FNRC are referred to organizations such as North Valley Services and Lassen Life Skills to receive roundtrip transportation to and from their facilities via private vehicles (buses, vans, and SUVs) Monday through Friday. In addition, unlimited trips on both the fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride are provided to clients for a set fee of \$60 per month. FNRC riders made up 19.7 percent of LRB ridership in FY 2018-19.

Mt. Lassen Motor Transit – “The Mail Truck”

Mt. Lassen Motor Transit primarily provides private charter services between Redding, Red Bluff, and Chico. In addition to these services, Mt. Lassen Motor Transit used to provide “The Mail Truck” provides transportation three days a week between Red Bluff and Susanville for \$21. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this service was decreased to Tuesdays only.

Big Valley 50 Plus

LTSA contracts with Big Valley 50 Plus (BV50Plus) to provide public transportation services to people of all ages in northern Lassen County. Roundtrip service between the Nubieber and Adin is provided on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays between 9:50 AM and 2:45 PM. The route begins at the Nubieber Post office at 9:50 AM and travels north to the Adin Supply Co. and Adin Post office around 10:45 AM, before returning to the Bieber Veterans Hall at 11:15 AM. The route then leaves the Veteran’s Hall at 1:15 PM and runs south to Nubieber Post Office at 1:35 PM before returning north to Adin Supply Co and Adin Post Office at 2:30 PM. The route then travels south and ends at the Veteran’s Hall in Bieber at 2:45 PM. Other major stops along this route include the Mountain Valleys Health Center, Big Valley Family Resource Center, and Big Valley Market.

Additionally, trips are provided leaving the Bieber Veteran's Hall at 7:00 AM to Redding on the first and third Monday, Klamath Falls on the second Monday, and Susanville on the fourth Monday of each month. General fares are \$3 for local trips and \$20-\$25 for regional trips. Reduced fares are available to children and disabled riders, and passengers 60 years and over can ride for free.

LTSA pays BV50Plus \$44,300 for their transportation services, of which \$5,000 is set aside for vehicle maintenance. BV50Plus currently owns three vehicles, however only one is currently operational with the other two needing maintenance. During FY 2018-19, BV50Plus provided 2,128 passenger trips.

Southern Cascades Community Services District

Southern Cascades Community Services District is a health care transportation provider primarily for Medicaid recipients (although they will transport the general public for a substantial fee) in Modoc, Lassen, and Siskiyou counties. Southern Cascades is based in Adin in Modoc County and is assigned rides through the transportation broker MTM. The Southern Cascades service area focuses on northern Lassen County, Modoc and Siskiyou Counties and provides transportation to a wide range of urban areas such as Reno, Chico, Sacramento, and Redding. Southern Cascades will operate 24 hours a day as needed to provide medical transportation. Southern Cascades uses the revenue from the Medicaid reimbursements to finance Emergency Medical Services for its service area. Southern Cascades does not typically provide trips within the City of Susanville. However, Southern Cascades has a vehicle based in Janesville and therefore has the ability to provide some rides between southern Lassen County and Reno. For this to happen, the passenger requesting the ride from the transportation broker, MTM, must specifically request that Southern Cascades provide the service.

Plumas County Seniors

Plumas County Seniors Transportation is operated by the Plumas County Public Health Agency. The program is funded in part by TDA funds and primarily provides transportation to/from nutrition sites in Plumas County. With 24-hour advance notice, Plumas County Seniors will also provide transportation for shopping trips and medical appointments as far as Reno, Truckee, Chico, Sacramento, and San Francisco. Plumas County Seniors is an out-of-county option for seniors living in Westwood, as pre-COVID the agency operated a bus between Chester, Westwood, and Susanville. Plumas Seniors partners with Plumas Transit to provide a weekly Reno trip available for any age to access the airport, Greyhound, Amtrak, and shopping; however, the most direct route to Reno from Quincy travels along SR 70 to Hallelujah Junction at US 395 and bypasses Susanville.

Chapter 4

UNMET NEEDS, ONLINE SURVEYS, AND COORDINATION EFFORTS

UNMET NEEDS

Federal guidelines related to coordinated planning require an assessment of needs for residents with disabilities, older adults, and low-income individuals. The needs assessment for Lassen County was developed from input obtained through the review of existing services, two separate online surveys related to the Lassen Transportation Development and Active Transportation Plans, service provider surveys and interviews, and unmet needs reports over the past three fiscal years.



Unmet Transit Needs Reports

The California TDA requires annual unmet transit needs hearings if a jurisdiction proposes to spend some Local Transportation Fund resources on streets and roads. As part of the process the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) holds an official public needs hearing each year to receive public input on transit needs in the region. Unmet needs are defined as any deficiency within any transit service under the jurisdiction of the LCTC. Requests serving a small group of individuals, or that would duplicate current service, are not considered unmet needs. Once an unmet need is identified, it must be deemed “Reasonable to Meet,” which considers factors such as potential farebox ratio, transit use, and paratransit compatibility. The following summarizes findings from unmet transit needs hearings over the past three years.

Fiscal Year 2018-19

For Lassen County, a public hearing was held on April 6th, 2017. No one from the public attended the hearing, and no public requests were made. Council members identified that the following unmet transit needs were not reasonable to meet:

- Transportation to church on Sundays
- Out of County NEMT service

Other issues that were expressed but ultimately considered not to be an unmet transit need included improvements to regional transit operator coordination and the construction of a formal bus stop at the intersection of County Road A21 and Old Town Road.

Fiscal Year 2019-20

The SSTAC meeting was held on March 22nd, 2019. The following concerns were brought up:

- There is a need for service to Reno, particularly from the prisons on Saturdays.
- Staff receive many calls for service along Richmond Road.
- Half-hourly service on the Susanville City route
- Out-of-county transportation to medical destinations

No unmet transit needs were deemed reasonable to meet.

Fiscal Year 2020-21

A public hearing was held on February 26th, 2020, where six SSTAC members (five in person, one by phone) and LCTC staff attended as well as one member of the local news media. The Unmet Transit Need Report identified that service along Richmond Road between SR 36/US 395 and the Susanville City Limits was an unmet need that is reasonable to meet. Unmet transit needs that were deemed unreasonable to meet included:

- Service to Lake Forest Area – Along Eagle Lake Road
- Add a Second City of Susanville Route to provide half-hourly service.
- Extend Dial-A-Ride Hours of Operation Until 9:00 PM

Fiscal Year 2021-22

On February 24th, 2021, the Lassen County Transportation Commission (LCTC) SSTAC met to discuss potential unmet transit needs in Lassen County. Six SSTAC members and one member of the public met virtually through Zoom. The main point of discussion was the continued and growing need for transportation to/from Reno, mainly for medical purposes. As out-of-county transportation does not fall under the LCTC definition of an unmet transit need, there were no unmet transit needs reasonable to meet this year.

ONLINE SURVEY

A total of 139 people participated in an online community survey conducted during February of 2021 to obtain a better understanding of transportation strengths and weaknesses throughout Lassen County. The survey was publicized to various stakeholders and government agency officials, in addition to being posted both digitally and print with Susanvillestuff.com and Lassen News.

The survey revealed very important information as to who currently uses LRB and why others do not. Responses throughout the survey echoed a theme that while many choose not to ride transit services, it is still felt to be very important for those who do. The following includes a summary of major findings from the survey:

- Most respondents have a driver's license (96.4 percent) and have a vehicle at home available for their use (93.5 percent).
- Susanville is a major destination among all types of trips (work, doctor's appointments, school, recreation, and banking). However, increased connectivity to Reno is essential to serve those who need access to doctor's appointments (nearly 40 percent) and shopping (about 20 percent).
- As with most rural transportation systems, survey recommendations were most related to increasing service areas, frequency, and hours of service. Of the nearly 86 percent of participants stating that they do not currently use LRB, about 28 percent of those respondents may consider using LRB if routes were expanded to better serve their homes.
- When considering infrastructure improvements, LRB should consider updating existing bus stops and shelters. This can be accomplished through providing bus signage, lighting, and benches.
- When considering what other types of service improvements should be considered moving forward, LRB could consider providing slightly later Dial-a-Ride service for those who have appointments running later than 5:00 PM.

EXISTING COORDINATION OF SERVICES

As an update to the previously completed plan in 2015, a brief summary of prior recommendations is discussed, followed by identified barriers and challenges to coordination within the region. As a part of the previous 2015 Coordinated Plan, the following strategies were recommended to improve transportation services.

Recommendation: Maintain, evaluate, and strengthen transportation services through expansion of services, improvement of existing services, and purchase of replacement vehicles as necessary.

Status: Ongoing. Each respective provider has operable vehicles for use and/or plans to have vehicles maintained for further use moving forward.

Recommendation: Multi-organizational approach to solutions through email list serves, cross organizational meetings, and the frequent sharing of information. The hiring of a mobility manager position was also suggested.

Status: Partially implemented. Stakeholders meet annually during unmet needs workshops. While a mobility manager position was not filled since the previous plan, the role of coordinating with other

regional service providers is generally filled by the current LTSA Transportation Planner. There is a need for greater coordination, whether through a new administrative position or mobility management application.

Recommendation: Create/implement strategies from a marketing plan/assessment through the creation of brochures, an updated website; and an automated phone service. This would aid in the frequency of unmet needs due to lack of information.

Status: Complete. An updated route schedule has been completed since the previous Plan and the LTSA website has been updated. In addition, an automated phone service implemented. The Lassen Rural Bus Facebook is kept up to date and well-managed.

Recommendation: Route modifications that better serve frequently used social services in the region.

Status: On-going. LRB currently serves a variety of local social service agencies such as Lassen Senior Services, the Employment Development Office, County Public Health Complex, and Social Security Agency. In addition, routes LRB routes serve elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and Lassen Community College. While LRB provides services to many social services in the region, passengers are unable to reach these places due to how far away they live from bus stops and routes, rather than lack of service to each of these destinations.

Recommendation: Establish a Mobility Management staff (full or part-time) position to coordinate existing services, maximize current transportation resources, maintain communication with various stakeholders, run a volunteer drive program, and provide potential riders with comprehensive service/schedule information.

Status: Not implemented.

Recommendation: Maintain and strengthen interregional transportation services and connections. While interregional transit services have been improved over recent years, passengers need additional information on how to connect to other services once reaching their destination.

Status: Ongoing. As described earlier in this plan, as well as in Appendix A, there are limited interregional services to and from Lassen County. Prior to COVID-19, the Sage Stage provided service between Susanville and Reno, Nevada on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Big Valley 50 Plus also provides service between Bieber and Redding twice a month (1st and 3rd Monday) and Klamath Falls on the 2nd Monday of every month. Lassen Senior Services provides trips to Reno from Susanville for seniors and Southern Cascades provides Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (usually for Medi-Cal recipients) for some Lassen County residents living in the more remote parts of the county. Out of county transportation (primarily for medical purposes) has repeatedly been identified as a need. Strategies to address this problem are recommended in this update of the Coordinated Plan.

Recommendation: Address duplication of services.

Status: The previous Plan noted duplicative services between Lassen Senior Services, the Sage Stage, and Susanville Indian Rancheria. Each of the services mentioned serve a slightly different need and sector of the population. Lassen Senior Services is only for seniors. The Rancheria no longer provides public transit. Sage Stage's schedule primarily works for access the airport or Greyhound. With such an expansive county as Lassen, there is a need for a variety of transportation services to meet all the needs of the residents. However, it would be beneficial for the region to have a mobility manager who could assist passengers with finding the appropriate service.

MAJOR BARRIERS TO COORDINATION

Despite good intentions, there are multiple factors which limit the various transportation providers' ability to coordinate resources and trips. Major barriers to coordination were discussed with stakeholders, current transportation staff members, and Lassen County representatives. Through these discussions, major issues include:

- One of the more significant barriers to coordination in Lassen County is the distance between communities and out of county medical/social services. The length of Lassen County spans roughly 100 miles of US 395. Most specialized medical services (located in Reno and Redding) are another 25 to 60 miles beyond the counties' borders. Trips for the transit dependent population to Reno or Redding require a full day of travel and often an overnight stay. As such, it is difficult to coordinate human service agency transportation needs as there is a vast array of destinations combined with a relatively small population.
- Some transportation clients require a high level of "hands on" assistance throughout the duration of the trip. A client with dementia or developmental disabilities for example could require some level of assistance with their trip. Coordination efficiency is limited if door to door transportation is required, particularly for longer trips.
- As shown in Appendix A, multiple human service agencies have small vehicles available to transport passengers to appointments or other critical needs. Typically, vehicle insurance or agency/county/tribal/funding source rules prohibit the use of these vehicles by other entities. The use of these vehicles for client transportation purposes is also limited by staff time available.
- Although small, the fare for using public transit services can dissuade travel by low-income college students.
- Some human service agencies are aware of the grant opportunities available to purchase vehicles for the purpose of transporting elderly and disabled clients. However, the regulations and reporting requirements attached to FTA funding vehicles and the lack of staff time to apply for a grant is a barrier to coordinating transportation.

The greatest barrier to coordination for all rural counties is lack of funding. There is simply not enough money available to meet all transportation needs for the target population through LRB or human service agencies, particularly in light of the dispersed communities and long travel distance in Lassen County. As such, the various human service agencies piece meal together trips for the most critical needs. Lack of funding/resources contributes to the limited staff time available for all agencies to pursue further coordination efforts.

DUPLICATION OF SERVICES

The primary goal of coordination is to maximize limited transportation resources by eliminating duplication of the same type of transportation services. Examples of duplication of services may include:

- Multiple agency vans providing transportation along the same route at the same time.
- Multiple volunteer driver programs which, if combined, could maximize the use of volunteers as well as administrative staff time.
- Vehicles which lay idle for a good portion of the week.
- Multiple contracts for vehicle maintenance. Through economies of scale, several agencies could potentially obtain a lower rate for maintenance.
- Eligibility requirements for program services sometimes result in duplication of services. For example, grant funding for senior services may only be used to transport seniors even if the van stops near a “non-senior” activity center.

There is not significant duplication of services in Lassen County. The only apparent overlap may exist between Dial-a-Ride service and Lassen Senior Services. However, these services differ in that LSS provides services to and from the senior center for lunch and activities while Dial-A-Ride is able to take eligible passengers to a broader range of destinations within Susanville for doctor’s appointments, shopping, and any other local outings.

GAPS IN SERVICE

As with all rural counties, Lassen County is challenged with how to better connect transit dependent residents living in remote outlying areas to services in the larger communities and out-of-county urbanized areas. Many of Lassen County’s communities are small with less than 100 people. Areas such as Milford and Doyle have a large percentage of persons who are likely transit dependent (older adults, low income, persons with disabilities etc.) It is not anticipated that the demographics of Lassen County will change significantly other than the population continuing to age in place. Therefore, there will always be a part of the transit dependent population who live far from the goods and services they require. Unfortunately, it is not anticipated that the level of public transit funding will increase to a point where LRB can provide more frequent and convenient public transit service to and from all of these areas.

CAPITAL NEEDS

Capital improvements are essential to the ongoing provision of services by any transportation provider. Previous Transportation Development Plans and Coordinated Plans have recommended LRB and LCTC consider the following capital improvements:

- Construction of a LRB Transit Center located in Susanville.
- Maintenance of existing bus stops amenities such as benches and shelters, as well as the expansion of more bus stops and shelters at key destinations such as the Lassen Senior Services Center. While there are currently benches at many stops, a simple shelter could provide additional coverage from extreme high and low temperatures in the region.
- Replacement of LRB, Lassen Senior Services and other program vehicles.
- Maintenance for service providers such as LSS, BV50Plus, and other programs.
- Reconstructing sidewalk access to and from particular bus stops for ADA.
- Upgrading the LRB maintenance facility.
- Meeting California Zero-Emission Vehicle requirements as applicable.

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Chapter 5

COORDINATED STRATEGIES

The final step in the coordinated planning process is to develop strategies to address the gaps in service and transportation needs, as identified in the previous chapters. The following coordinated strategies are based on the original coordinated strategies set forth in the 2015 Coordinated Plan, updated based on public input and current conditions to ensure that they meet current transportation needs for low income, older adults, and residents with disabilities.

These coordinated strategies are intended to provide general guidance to LCTC, LTSA, LRB, human service agencies and other local leaders. The primary goal of this document is to provide background information and demonstrate the need for transportation services that can be used for the purpose of securing grant funding and ensuring that such funding will be well used to address the specific needs of the region.

Detailed cost or ridership estimates are not provided, as it is intended these specifics will be finalized at a later stage in the development of the individual transportation services. These coordinated strategies are intentionally broad, in order to allow for flexibility for implementation, as needs and funding sources may change over time.

HIGH PRIORITY STRATEGIES

Assist non-public transportation providers with obtaining FTA 5310 funds to purchase new vehicles.

LTSA and all the transportation providers in Lassen County are limited by funding available. Non-profit agencies have the ability to tap into certain human services related grant funds while LTSA receives sales tax revenues in the form of TDA funds for public transit operations. As Lassen County is geographically large and population centers are dispersed, it is not possible for one transit operator/agency to meet all the transit needs, hence the need for coordination among these agencies. Capital expenditures such as vehicle replacement tend to be large expenditures. LTSA applies for Federal Transit Administration funding to pay for 80 percent of vehicle replacement costs. One way the LCTC could assist the non-public transit transportation providers is to assist with obtaining FTA 5310 funding. This grant source will pay for roughly 80 percent of the cost of a new vehicle for transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs.

As an example, Southern Cascades Community Services District has indicated a desire to base another vehicle in southern Lassen County which could be used to provide trips for Medicaid-eligible residents to Reno. However, the district does not have the funds to purchase another vehicle at this time. Using LCTC planning funds, LCTC could prepare the FTA 5310 grant applications on behalf of transportation providers. If successful, the transportation provider would be required to comply with federal regulations such as drug and alcohol testing and vehicle maintenance regulations.

Allocate a small amount of funding to Lassen Senior Services to hire an accounting firm to prepare and track invoices and other grant related processes.

Lassen Senior Services (LSS) provides important transportation to Lassen County seniors such as transportation to congregate meals and trips to Reno for medical appointments or shopping. LSS receives Planning and Service Area 2 Area Agency on Aging (PSA 2 AAA) funding which is a Joint Powers agency providing aging and adult services in Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity Counties. During a recent audit of LSS by PSA 2, it was discovered that LSS's record keeping was not adequate enough to determine that grants were being charged correctly. One of the areas which came under review was that LSS was using TDA funds to pay for meal deliveries. This is not typically a use of TDA funds. After extensive review, PSA 2 decided to withdraw future funding from LSS and recommend a corrective action plan which would include hiring an accounting firm to assist with record keeping and grant procedural requirements. To date, LSS has not implemented PSA 2 recommendations.

The LTSA board recently decided to continue the contract with LSS as transportation to seniors in Lassen County remains an important need. However, LTSA terminated the vehicle maintenance contract with LSS. Now, LSS will need to maintain their vehicles through private mechanics. This may increase LSS's vehicle maintenance costs but may reduce wait time for vehicle repairs. One option which could assist LSS become eligible for PSA2 funding again would be for LTSA to expand the contract with LSS to pay for administrative expenses related to public transit. With the additional funding, LSS could hire an accounting firm to prepare and track for invoices and other grant related paperwork. In the long run this would benefit LTSA as LSS would be eligible for more grant sources and could therefore provide more transportation to seniors in Lassen County. Big Valley 50 has a similar accounting process in place.

Designate a Mobility Manager and/or purchase Mobility Management software. Apply for FTA 5310 funding to support this strategy.

There are multiple transit operators addressing different niches of transportation throughout Lassen County. For the most part these services do not duplicate each other but residents of Lassen County could be better served by increased coordination between all these services. Many residents may simply be unaware of all the services available. At the very least, one staff member at LTSA should be designated as a point of contact for all the transportation providers listed in Appendix A. This could be a separate position (Mobility Manager) or an existing person. This person will also be the point of contact for transit passengers. The name, title, phone number and email should be displayed on marketing materials. The Mobility Manager should continually reach out to the various transportation providers to keep abreast of service changes so that he/she can provide potential passengers with the most up to date service/schedule information.

If a new position is established, the Mobility Manager the job description could include:

- Increase efficiency of existing transportation services through evaluative methods.
- Improve traveler information on all available transportation services.
- Provide marketing and outreach through printed information, a website, telephone, and in person.
- Provide trip planning and travel navigation assistance.

- Oversight and implementation of a transportation voucher program/ volunteer driver program (discussed below).
- Provide vehicles and drivers for scheduling of special group transportation.
- Coordinate transportation activities with different organizations and agencies.
- Coordinate a volunteer driver program.
- Participate in and assist to convene coordination meetings/workshops.
- Apply for grants.
- Organize travel training.
- Organize workshops on different topics related to transportation, including vehicle maintenance.
- Coordinate medical transportation providers with long-term care facilities.

Another option would be focus coordination through technology. This could be some type of shared Computer-Aided Dispatch software between all agencies or simply using a cloud application such as Google Docs/Sheets to log trips.

Mobility management is considered a capital expense under the FTA 5310 program. As per FTA: “Mobility management techniques may enhance transportation access for populations beyond those served by one agency or organization within a community. For example, a nonprofit agency could receive Section 5310 funding to support the administrative costs of sharing services it provides to its own clientele with other seniors and/or individuals with disabilities and coordinate usage of vehicles with other nonprofits, but not the operating costs of service. Mobility management is intended to build coordination among existing public transportation providers and other transportation service providers with the result of expanding the availability of service.”

Multi-organizational approach to solutions

This strategy calls for maintaining and establishing collaboration between various stakeholders (i.e., community development, health and human services, other government agencies, educational institutions, non-profits, economic development, and private businesses) inside and outside the county to come up with solutions to transportation and other related issues by sharing information and resources, applying for funding, and working together to coordinate resources and services. This can be done by the creation of an email list serv, holding the SSTAC meeting twice a year, or inviting each other to existing meetings to help each other stay updated on resources and services, other activities to improve coordination and mobility. This strategy also encourages continued and increased efforts by transit stakeholders to work with community-based organizations and other agencies directly to get the word out about events and to solicit feedback about different issues and projects. If the general public cannot attend meetings, stakeholders from community-based organizations and other agencies who work with the public can provide valuable input as they are maybe more familiar with the issues their clients/ community members face.

This strategy can also be folded into the mobility management position.

Medium/Low Priority

Volunteer Driver/Transportation Reimbursement Program

Lassen County could benefit from a volunteer driver program if sufficient advocacy for such a program can be developed. Volunteer driver programs can be useful in serving rural areas and small urban areas where budgets will not allow all areas to be served, or where demand is so low and infrequent that regular service is not warranted. There are multiple approaches generally used for such programs and many handbooks and resources describing how to start programs. In general, there are several approaches, such as:

1. True Volunteer Programs, where the driver provides transportation to passengers using their own vehicle with no or nominal reimbursement.
2. Driver Reimbursement Programs, where the passenger selects a driver of their choosing (either someone known to the passenger or someone from a list provided by the program), and the driver is reimbursed at a per-mile rate using their own vehicle.
3. Supported Volunteer programs, where volunteer drivers are recruited and/or vehicles are provided by a public or non-profit entity.

Relying strictly on volunteers to provide transportation as a community service using their own resources is a difficult task. The primary challenge is the need to continually recruit volunteers as burnout is high. This type of program has the most success in small, tight-knit communities with a strong advocate for the program. This type of grass-roots volunteer program requires a local advocate to organize and launch such an effort. LTSA's role would be secondary to the organizer's and would primarily be to publicize such a program and serve as an informational source to potential volunteers and passengers in need.

Driver reimbursement programs are often used by transit agencies or social programs to "fill in the gap" of transportation needs, particularly in rural areas, in post-transit hours, or for specific populations (such as seniors, homeless or others with high transit needs). Such programs are sometimes supported by Area Agencies on Aging, Social Service programs, or hospitals. The support can be offered in terms of financial (on a per-mile basis) and coordination. One of the advantages of a driver reimbursement program is that it tends to limit the liability of the sponsoring agency as the agency has no say in assigning specific individual drivers to a passenger trip.

Finally, some volunteer driver programs are more substantial and may include donated vehicles, ongoing financial support, and/or paid administrative support. Funding sources may come through CTSA funding, FTA 5310 grants, private donations, or other specialized grants. Sometimes a transit agency will donate a vehicle to a volunteer program.

One of the more well-known programs is the Independent Living Partnership: Transportation Reimbursement and Information Project (TRIP) program in Riverside County. This program sells software

to organizations wishing to start similar programs. TRIP boasts over 115,000 trips provided annually, with \$950,000 of funds to support mileage reimbursement and administration of the program.

Closer to home, Tuolumne County has partnered with local non-profit organizations to provide a reimbursement program called the Tuolumne Trip Program. The program is designed to serve residents who require extra assistance and therefore are unable to use the fixed route or DAR services. Eligible users are responsible for finding and paying their own volunteer driver. TCTA only provides reimbursement for the trip and therefore the program requires little in the way of administrative costs. The Tuolumne Trip Program is advertised through social service agencies and the TCTA Executive Director approves each users' eligibility. TCTA provides up to \$10,000 in LTF funding for the reimbursements. In FY 2018-19 a total of 270 trips were provided with an average cost per trip provided of \$24.67.

For Lassen County, any of these approaches would be reasonable and helpful, but the driver reimbursement program is most appropriate for Lassen County. A driver reimbursement program could be useful for providing transportation to Reno, transportation to Susanville from the outlying communities of Janesville, Standish, or Doyle or transportation for those who are not eligible for Lassen Senior Services Transportation or Southern Cascades Transportation.

Create/Implement a Coordinated Marketing Plan

This strategy calls for the creation/implementation of a marketing plan about different transportation services offered along with other relevant information like eligibility criteria and available social services. Marketing and outreach can also take shape through improved communication between various stakeholders; stakeholders can help distribute information and stay updated with the latest information that can be passed on to their community members. Gaps in knowledge about services lead to perceived unmet needs and can be a barrier to mobility. Brochures; an improved, updated, and user-friendly website; and an automated phone service or reservation system could help improve outreach and marketing. This could be a job duty of the Mobility Manager position.

Make a Concerted Effort to Include the Susanville Indian Rancheria in Transit Service Coordination

Until recently, the Susanville Indian Rancheria (SIR) provided transportation to Reno, Red Bluff and Redding. The tribe terminated the public transit program indefinitely in 2020. Even though the tribe may no longer be a transportation provider, it is still important to coordinate with the organization so as to meet the mobility needs of Rancheria residents. Special efforts should be made to invite SIR staff to SSTAC and LTSA meetings.

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Appendix A
TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER INVENTORY

Appendix A: Transportation Provider Inventory									
Transportation Provider			Contact Information/ Reservations/	General Service Information (Days/Hours)		Eligibility	Fare	Number of Vehicles	Passenger Trips
Lassen Rural Bus	Fixed Route	Routes and schedules are posted on the LRB Website	Monday through Fridays between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM Saturdays between 8:00 AM and 6:30 PM	Monday through Friday 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM and Saturdays between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM within the city limits of Susanville.	Anyone is eligible	General Fare: \$3 - \$5 Reduced Fare: \$1.50 - \$2.50 Monthly Passes: \$20 - \$90	11 Buses (Three 40-passenger and eight 24 passenger)	58,940 one-way passenger trips in FY 2019-20	
	Dial a Ride	Routes and schedules are posted on the LRB Website	Monday through Friday 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM and Saturdays between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM within the city limits of Susanville.	ADA eligibility	\$1.75 per trip.			15,750 one-way passenger trips in FY 2019-20	
Sage Stage Service to Reno Modoc Transit Agency	Regional Intercity Transit	Online Reservations: https://sagestage.com/get-tickets/ Or call (530) 233-6410 24 hours in advance	Provides one daily service leaving Alturas at 8:00 AM, arriving in Susanville at 9:45 AM, and arriving at the Reno Airport at 11:45 AM. The return trip departs Reno at 1:30 PM, arriving in Susanville at 3:30 PM, and arriving at Alturas at 5:30 PM.	Anyone is eligible	The fare between Alturas and Susanville is \$18.00 for general passengers, and \$13.50 discounted; from Susanville to Reno is \$22.00, discounted to \$16.50; and from Likely or Ravendale to Susanville is \$15.00, discounted to \$11.00.			1,358 one-way passenger-trips in FY 2018-19	
Lassen Senior Services	Transportation for Senior Lunch	Call (530) 257-2113	Lunch meals within Monday Tuesday Thursday Friday	Those who are ages 60 and older.	Donations of \$1.00 are suggested fare for local rides, and contributions of \$25 (or \$40 per couple) are suggested for Reno trips.	2 nine-passenger buses, 1 wheelchair van, and 3 six-passenger vans.		3,364 one-way passenger trips in FY 2019-20 and 2,641 trips in FY 2018-19	
Big Valley 50 Plus	Local Service	Call (530) 294-5745 for reservations	Provides local service between Nubieber and Adin between 9:50 AM and 2:45 PM on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays Provides out of town service leaving Bieber Veterans Hall at 7:00 PM to Redding (1st and 3rd Monday), Klamath Falls (2nd Monday), and Susanville (4th Mondays)	Anyone is eligible	General/Local Trips: \$3 Regional: \$20-\$25 <i>*Reduced fares are available for children and disabled persons. Persons ages 60 and older are not obligated to pay fare.</i>	3 nine-passenger vans. (1 in operation and 2 need maintenance)		Ridership for FY 2018-19 was 2,128	

Appendix A: Transportation Provider Inventory (2 of 2)

Mt. Lassen Motor Transit & Mail Truck	Private Provider	Call (530) 529-2722 for reservations	Mt. Lassen Motor Transit - Provides private, charter services for large groups such as tours, school field trips, and sporting events. The Mail Truck - Currently provides weekly Tuesday service between Red Bluff and Susanville.	Anyone is eligible	Mt. Lassen Motor Transit - Costs are dependent on length of trip and number of passengers. The Mail Truck - \$21	1 five passenger pick up truck	Ridership for FY 2018-19 was possibly between 50 to 70 passengers per year.
Far Northern Regional Center/Lassen Life Skills	Private Provider	(530) 257-5516	Provides private transportation to/from the Lassen Life Skills facility for clients of Far Northern Regional Center. Service is provided Monday-Friday.	Developmental Disabilities ages 18 and older.	Free	2 SUVs and Two 8-person vans.	Ridership is about 1,500 passengers per year and about 260 round trips between Chester and Susanville
Far Northern Regional Center/North Valley Services	Private Provider	(530) 257-3217	Provides private transportation to/from the North Valley Services facility for clients of Far Northern Regional Center. Service is provided Monday-Friday.	Developmental Disabilities ages 18 and older.	Free	Two 21 passenger buses and 1 SUV	Ridership is about 17,100 passengers per year over about 260 round trips between Herlong and Susanville annually.
Crossroads Ministry	Non profit Provider	(530) 251-0701	Transit services are provided mostly within Lassen County about 3 to 5 times per week. Weekly trips to Reno are also made.	Anyone is eligible	No Fare	2 Nine-passenger buses	Serves approximately 50 people per week.
Southern Cascades	Community Services District	(530) 299 3110	Health Transport Services provides rides generally for Medicaid recipients to medical appointments for Modoc, Lassen and Siskiyou County residents	Anyone is eligible but generally for Medicaid recipients	Depends on distance travelled	NA	NA
Plumas Seniors	Public Transit	(530) 283-3546	Transportation to/from nutrition sites in Plumas County. Transportation for shopping trips and medical appointments as far as Reno, Truckee, Chico, Sacramento, and San Francisco	Seniors and general public for weekly Reno trip	NA	NA	11,000 trips annually

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