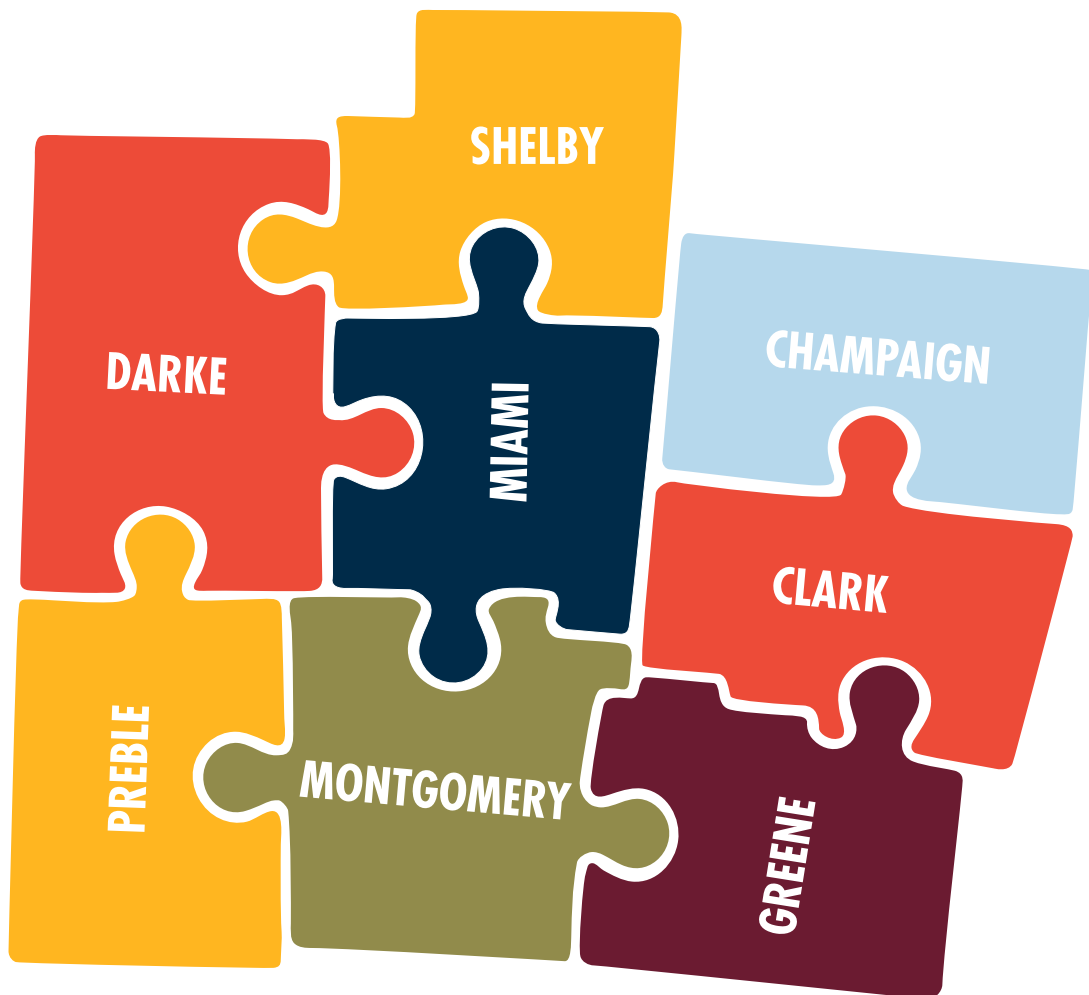


GREATER REGION

Transportation Coordination Plan

2020/2024





OHIO REGION 2:

Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby Counties



Completed by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission

For more information about this plan, please contact the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission at 937.223.6323 or www.mvrpc.org.

Funding for the development of this plan was provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation

Greater Region Transportation Coordination Plan 2020-2024

Revised Draft Report
July , 2020

Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission
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Dayton, Ohio 45402

Established in 1964, the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) promotes collaboration among communities, stakeholders, and residents to advance regional priorities. MVRPC is a forum and resource where the Board of Directors identifies priorities and develops public policy and collaborative strategies to improve quality of life throughout the Miami Valley Region. MVRPC performs various regional planning activities, including air quality, water quality, transportation, land use, research and GIS. As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), MVRPC is responsible for transportation planning in Greene, Miami and Montgomery Counties and parts of northern Warren County. However, MVRPC's new GRMI study encompasses nine (8) counties: Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby.

The document was prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation's (U.S. DOT) Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and local communities. The contents of this document reflect the views of the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, which is responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. DOT and ODOT. This document does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.

Table of Content

- Executive Summary 11**
 - Executive Summary 13
 - The Greater Region 14
 - Goals and Strategies..... 18
 - Regional Goals..... 18
 - County Goals 18
 - Emphasis on Stakeholder Involvement..... 19
 - Challenges to Providing Coordinated Transportation..... 20
 - Acknowledgments 20
- Chapter 1: Characteristics of the Greater Region 23**
 - General Population..... 25
 - Total Population by Age Group 26
 - Senior Population..... 28
 - Total Population by Race and Ethnicity 30
 - Limited English Proficiency..... 32
 - Poverty 32
 - Individuals with Disabilities..... 34
 - Zero Car Households..... 36
 - Trip Generators 39
- Chapter 2: Overview of Available Services..... 43**
 - Overview of Available Services..... 44
 - Non-Traditional Transportation Service..... 45
 - Mobility Management 46
 - Greater Region Mobility Managers 47
 - Summary of Transportation Providers 48
 - Champaign County..... 48
 - Clark County 49
 - Darke County 49
 - Greene County(Part of MPO) 50
 - Miami County (Part of MPO) 51
 - Montgomery County (Part of MPO) 52
 - Preble County 55
 - Shelby County..... 55
 - Regional..... 56

Transit Provider by Coverage	58
Transit Provider by Agency Type	59
Transit Provider Summary	59
Chapter 3: Assessment of Transportation Needs and Gaps	61
Public Meetings and Focus Groups	64
Surveys	66
Chapter 4: Goals and Strategies	71
Challenges to Coordination	72
SWOT Analysis.....	73
Regional Needs and Potential Goals	74
Regional Goals & Strategies.....	76
County Goals & Strategies.....	82
Chapter 5: Roles, Updates and Funding Structures	89
Roles and Responsibilities	90
Participation	91
Inter-Region Partnerships	93
Plan Revision, Updates, and Amendments	95
Funding Structure	97
Chapter 6: Plan Adoption.....	99
Champaign County	100
Clark County	100
Darke County	100
MPO (Greene, Miami, Montgomery).....	100
Preble County	100
Shelby County.....	100
Appendix.....	103
Appendix A: County Trip Generators	104
Appendix B: Provider Inventory and Characteristics of Service.....	112
Appendix C: Vehicle Utilization	128
Appendix D: Summary of Unmet Needs.....	154
Appendix E: List of Planning Committee Participants	156
Appendix F: Glossary	163
Appendix G: Region Change Request.....	165
Appendix H: Resolutions.....	168

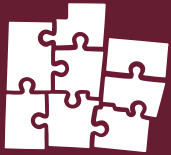
List of Figures

Figure A: ODOT HSTC Regions.....	12
Figure B: The Greater Region.....	14
Figure C: Subregion	15
Figure D: Intra-Regional Travel Movement.....	17
Figure E: Stakeholders.....	19
Figure F: Projected Percent Change in Population by County, 2016-2025	25
Figure G: Percent of Region Population by County	26
Figure H: Age Group as a Percentage of Population.....	27
Figure I: Senior Population Growth, 2015-2030	28
Figure J: Map of Population Density of Individuals Age 65 and Above.....	29
Figure K: Hispanic or Latino Origin of Ethnicity	31
Figure L: Low-to-Moderate Income Areas	33
Figure M: Percent of Region with a Disability by County	34
Figure N: Map of Population Density of Individuals with Disabilities	35
Figure O: Percent of Zero Car Households	36
Figure P: Percent of Income Spent on Personal Transportation	37
Figure Q: Map of Density of Zero Car Households	38
Figure R: Map of Major Trip Generators.....	40
Figure S: SWOT Analysis.....	74
Figure T: ODOT HSTC Regions	93
Figure U: Region 2: Trip Origins	94
Figure V: Trip Generators in Champaign County	104
Figure W: Trip Generators in Clark County	105
Figure X: Trip Generators in Darke County.....	106
Figure Y: Trip Generators in Greene County	107
Figure Z: Trip Generators in Miami County	108
Figure AA: Trip Generators in Montgomery County	109
Figure AB: Trip Generators in Preble County	110
Figure AC: Trip Generators in Shelby County.....	111
Figure AD: Number of Agencies in GRMI Council Representing Target Populations.....	162

List of Tables

Table 1: Intra-Regional Travel Movement	16
Table 2: Base and Projected Changes in Population	26
Table 3: Total Population by Age Group	27
Table 4: Total Population by Race.....	30
Table 5: Population that Speaks English “Less than Very Well”	32
Table 6: Transportation Purchasers.....	57
Table 7: Transit Provider Count by County & Coverage Area/Type.....	58
Table 8: Transit Provider Count by County & Agency Type/Funding Eligibility	59
Table 9: Public Participation and Focus Group Meetings Held in Each County.....	65
Table 10: Identified Regional Unmet Needs.....	66
Table 11: Survey Responses.....	67
Table 12: Agency Characteristics	112
Table 13: Training Courses for Drivers	114
Table 14: Transportation Related Staff Positions	116
Table 15: Transportation Expenses and Revenues.....	118
Table 16: Transportation Service Characteristics.....	120
Table 17: Technology	120
Table 18: Vehicle Maintenance and Safety.....	123
Table 19: Drug and Alcohol Testing.....	125
Table 20: Criminal Background and Motor Vehicle Record Checks	127
Table 21: Champaign County Transit System.....	128
Table 22: Downsize Farms	128
Table 23: Person Centered Services	130
Table 24: Clark County Board of Developmental Disabilities	130
Table 25: Quest Adult Services Inc.	130
Table 26: Clark County Veteran’s Office.....	132
Table 27: Goodwill Easter Seals Adult Day Services.....	132
Table 28: TAC Industries	132
Table 29: United Senior Services	134
Table 30: Springfield City Area Transit.....	134
Table 31: Safe Haven.....	136
Table 32: Greenville Transit System.....	136
Table 33: Brethren Retirement Community.....	139
Table 34: Fairborn Senior Citizen Association	139
Table 35: Xenia Adult Recreation & Services	139

Table 36: Beaver Creek Senior Center	141
Table 37: Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley	141
Table 38: Toward Independence	141
Table 39: RT Industries	142
Table 40: Sunrise Center for Adults	142
Table 41: Rec West Enrichment Center.....	142
Table 42: United Rehabilitation Services	144
Table 43: Eastway Corporation.....	144
Table 44: Lathrem Senior Center	144
Table 45: Wesley Community Center	147
Table 46: Life Enrichment Center	147
Table 47: Shelby County Public Transit	148
Table 48: S&H Products.....	148
Table 49: Preble County Council on Aging.....	150
Table 50: Miami Valley Community Action Partnership Preble County.....	152
Table 51: L&M Products	152
Table 52: Your Happy Place	152
Table 53: Unmet Needs in Champaign County	154
Table 54: Unmet Needs in Clark County	154
Table 55: Unmet Needs in Darke County.....	154
Table 56: Unmet Needs in Greene, Miami, and Montgomery Counties	155
Table 57: Unmet Needs in Preble County	155
Table 58: Unmet Needs in Shelby County	155
Table 59: Champaign County Planning Committee Participants	156
Table 60: Clark County Planning Committee Participants	157
Table 61: Darke County Planning Committee Members	157
Table 62: Miami, Montgomery, and Greene County Human Service Transportation Planning Council Members	158
Table 63: Preble County Planning Committee Members	159
Table 64: Shelby County Planning Committee Members	160
Table 65: Greater Region Council Members	160



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Greater Region Transportation Coordination Plan

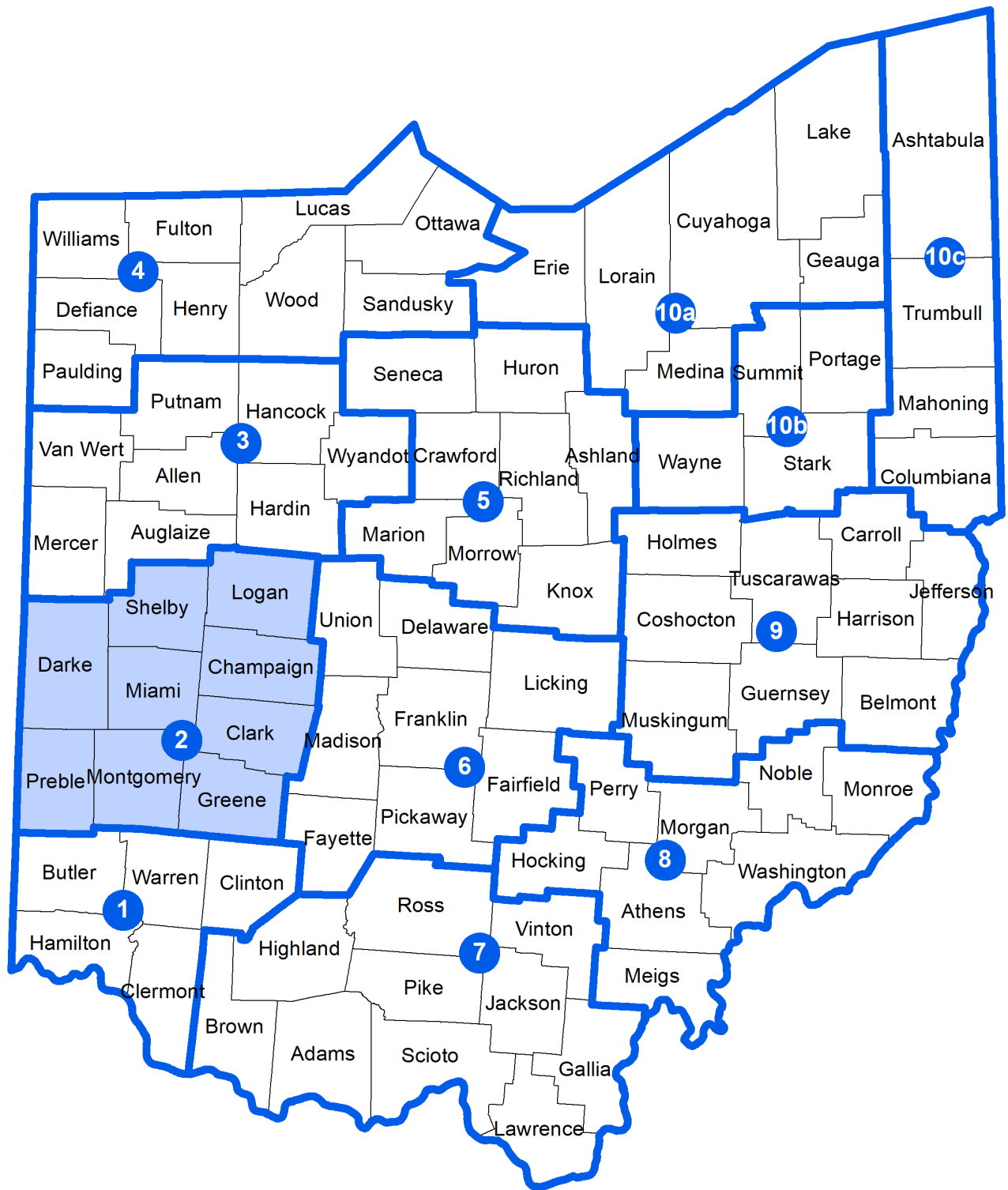


Figure A: ODOT HSTC Regions

Source: MVRPC

Executive Summary

The Greater Region Mobility Initiative (GRMI) is an effort led by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Office of Transit. The purpose of the GRMI is to improve coordination among transit providers to enhance options for non-drivers. Much of the public transportation available in Ohio is based on single county transit systems operating within defined geographic boundaries in a fragmented manner, often resulting in duplications of service while unmet needs exist within and between their service areas. ODOT researched the value of developing a regional structure for transportation services as a way to reduce the duplication and fill in gaps in services. Additionally, regionalization will facilitate more effective service delivery as well as wise stewardship of fiscal resources and enhanced mobility for the residents of Ohio.

While a variety of human service transportation and transit planning resources are available to the public, boundaries for providers are traditionally limited to the missions of those departments and offices (employers, medical facilities, social service agencies, shopping areas, senior and low income housing, etc.) and not centered on transportation patterns. ODOT examined 10 regions across the state of Ohio and found the majority of daily trips (90% or more) of residents stayed within specific boundaries. The closest overlapping boundaries of these travel patterns were the Ohio Department of Aging's Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) regions (ODOT) (**Figure A**). ODOT recognized the opportunity to bring rural and urban areas together in a new way and recommended a regional funding approach utilizing the boundaries as established by the Area Agencies on Aging. The Greater Region falls under AAA's Region 2. The region is located in west-central Ohio and consists of Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Preble and Shelby counties and includes a mix of urban, suburban, and rural populations.

The chapters in this plan will describe in further detail the characteristics of the Greater Region (Region 2), assess the Region's transportation needs and gaps, outline the goals and strategies identified to achieve regional coordination, and identify the transportation providers and services currently offered.

MVRPC will act as the Regional Coordinating Agency (RCA) on behalf of ODOT, to provide counties with the opportunity to participate in this regional approach and support their efforts to expand and enhance transit services within their communities. Additionally, MVRPC recognizes counties and providers will have varying levels of participation in the coordinated regional strategy. Minimum participation criteria will be provided within **Chapter 4: Goals and Strategies**, however resources such as funding and support will be dedicated to those who demonstrate commitment beyond the minimum participation standards. The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, as the RCA, will provide service to all counties and providers participating in the Greater Region Mobility Initiative regardless of their level of participation.

The Greater Region

The Greater Region Mobility Initiative (GRMI) plan provides an overview of the population residing within the counties which make up the Greater Region. It begins by drawing a picture, geographically, of the large-urban, small-urban and rural populations who call the Region their home (**Figure B**). Logan County was initially included within the region in the first draft of this plan, however, after examining trip generators and travel patterns in further detail it became clear Logan County’s travel patterns may be more in line with regions in Central Ohio. ODOT worked to design a process which allowed for Logan County to transition into Region 6 (**Appendix G: Region Change Request on page 165**).

In the future, if other counties determine their trip patterns align more with the Greater Region and may benefit by transferring into the region, ODOT will lead the process to authorize the county transfer. It should also be noted, due to funding structures describe below, counties included within MVRPC’s Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundaries will not be permitted to transfer outside of the Greater Region for purposes of this plan.

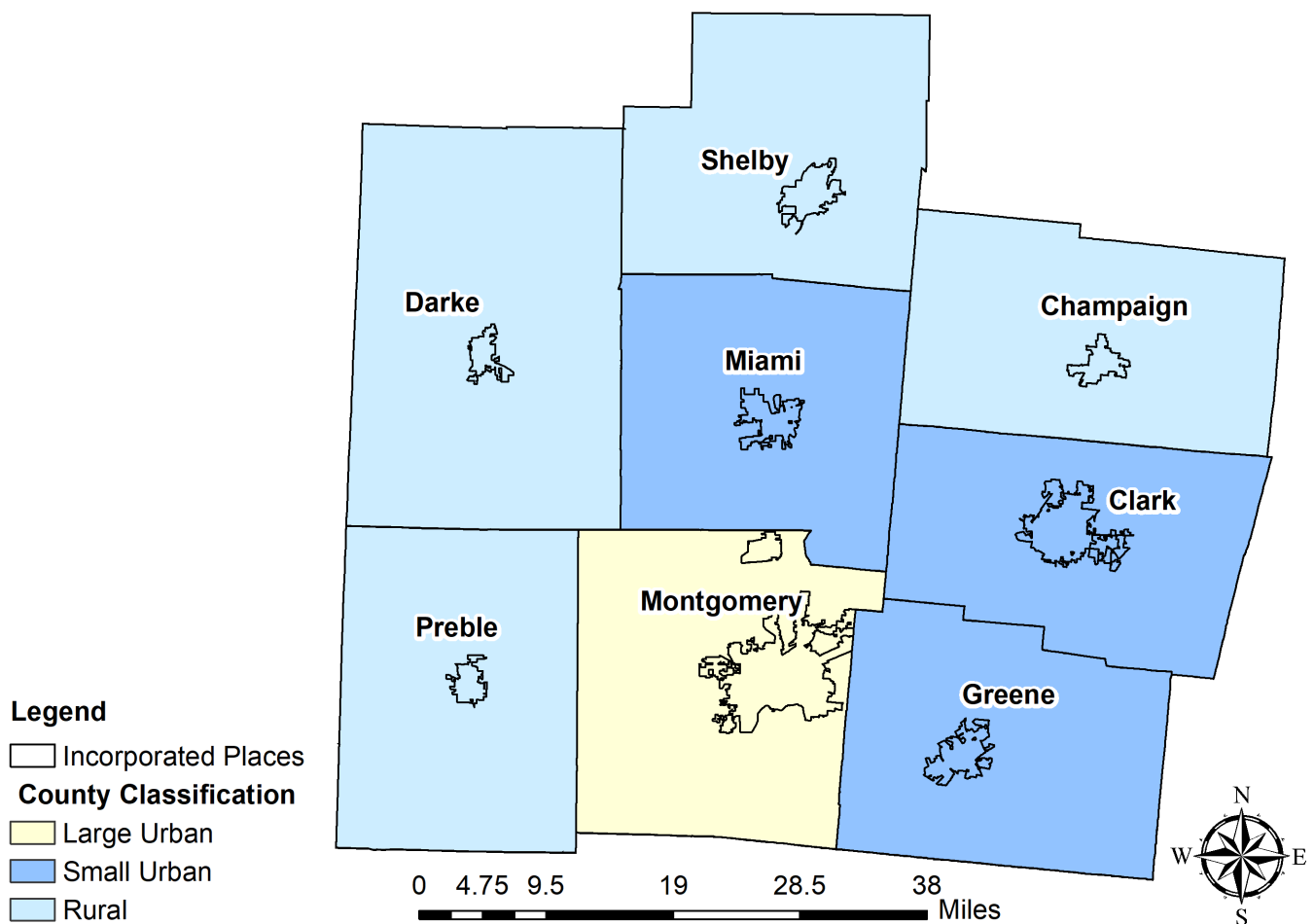


Figure B: The Greater Region

Source: MVRPC

County transit systems receive the majority of their funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant programs. These include Section 5307 funds which are available to urban transit systems and Section 5311 funds which are distributed to rural transit systems. Furthermore, FTA funding for Section 5310 grant dollars are administered by MVRPC for areas included within its MPO boundaries, and for counties outside of MVRPC’s MPO boundaries by state agencies such as the Ohio Department of Transportation.

As such, MVRPC, ODOT and the GRMI stakeholders agreed the Greater Region (Region 2) could benefit from being split into sub-regions, 2a and 2b. Sub-region 2a will consist of Preble, Darke, Shelby, Champaign and Clark counties while sub-region 2b will encompass Miami, Montgomery and Greene counties. The sub-regions will allow for a clear delineation of those counties which are funded by state FTA dollars (2a) and counties that receive FTA funding through the MPO (2b) (**Figure C**).

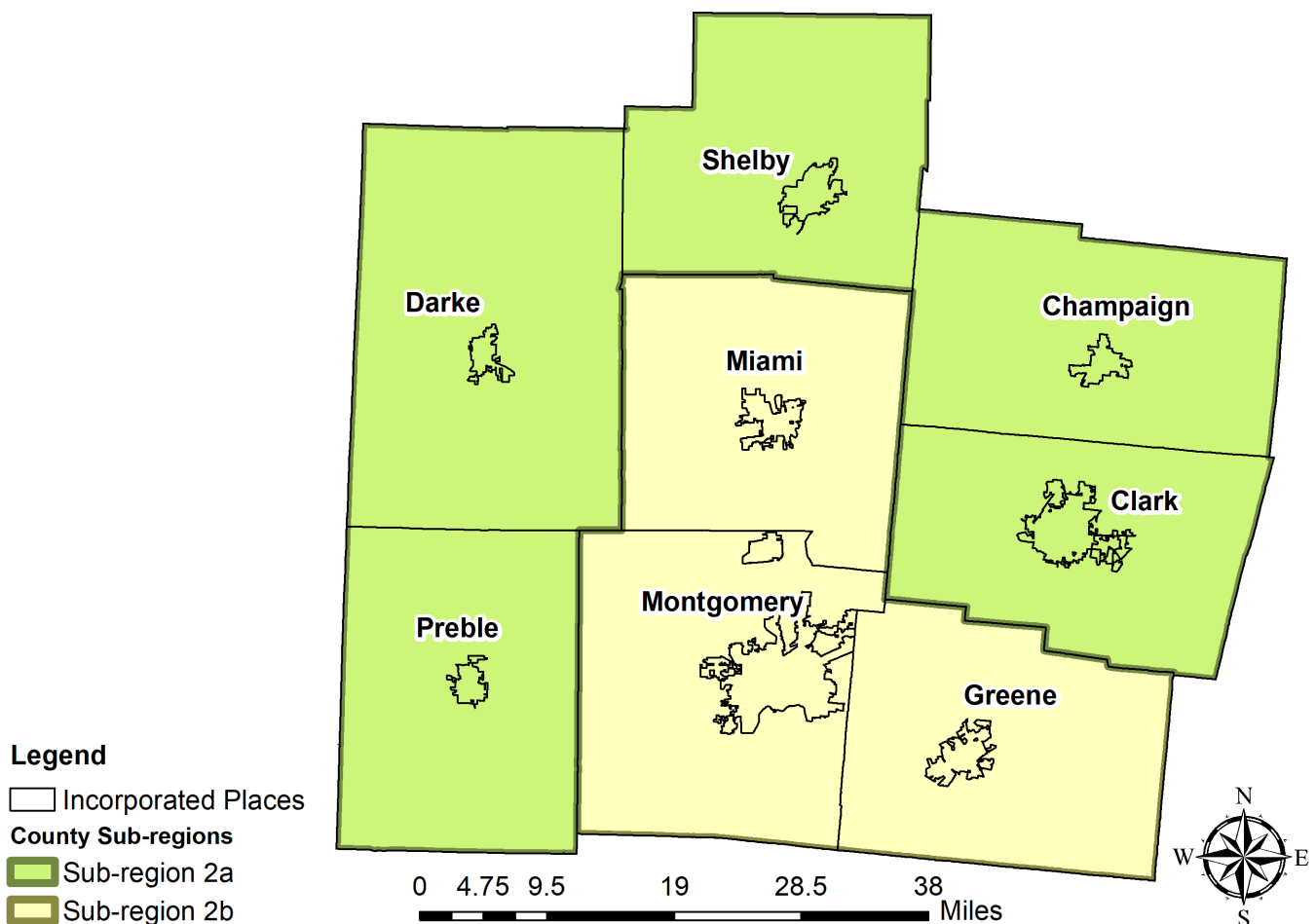


Figure C: Subregion

Source: MVRPC

Additional benefit can be had in sub-regions because of the difference in transportation challenges and needs between urban and rural communities. Rural driving distances can be a barrier to and increase the costs of providing transportation within this area. Approximately 90% of the trips taken by all individuals living in rural counties stay within the borders of their county or the region. It is generally recognized that political boundaries are invisible to the driver of a car, but very present for a rider of public transit which operates within geographic boundaries. Conversely, individuals using urban transit systems likely have less interruption in travel or transfers due to the larger number of available routes, buses and drivers. Access to technology and scheduling software is also more readily available to urban transit users and providers because of larger operating budgets and the access to multiple funding sources.

Table 1: Intra-Regional Travel Movement shows the travel patterns within the Greater Region of trips per day. While the majority of residents travel within the boundaries of the county in which they live, many trips are taken to neighboring counties for residents to receive essential medical services or for employment. Clark, Greene, Miami and Preble counties take the most trips into Montgomery County. Each of these counties borders Montgomery County with it providing a substantial amount of access to employment and medical services that these rural and small urban counties may lack. Montgomery County likewise has a significant number of daily trips into Greene County. It can be assumed the majority of these trips are for employment, as Greene County houses the largest single-site employer within the State of Ohio, Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

Table 1: Intra-Regional Travel Movement

From/To	Champ.	Clark	Darke	Greene	Miami	Mont.	Preble	Shelby	Total
Champ	55,812	12,433	49	1,096	2,726	1,446	17	1,524	75,103
Clark	12,278	286,428	135	23,786	7,008	22,784	103	789	353,311
Darke	51	139	104,067	214	7,786	4,055	2,728	2,460	121,500
Greene	1,087	23,888	232	246,259	3,740	127,028	517	499	403,250
Miami	2,678	7,028	7,739	3,598	180,707	43,208	526	13,332	258,816
Mont.	1,554	22,551	3,972	127,022	42,981	1,368,463	12,444	3,823	1,582,810
Preble	18	104	2,746	501	548	12,487	62,947	54	79,405
Shelby	1,448	737	2,467	465	13,651	3,850	36	106,481	129,135
Total	74,926	353,308	121,407	402,941	259,147	1,583,321	79,318	128,962	3,013,712

Source: ODOT Office of Statewide Planning and Research

Seamless cross-county trips have been an area of discussion among transportation providers within the region. Few transit agencies offer connector routes into adjacent counties, however cost to the rider is usually high and requires a long lead time to schedule the trip with at least one bus transfer. Because of this, transit agencies have seen a low demand for this service and acknowledge improvements could be made.

While Logan County has transitioned into Region 6, it is important to note a larger portion of their population travels to Champaign and Shelby counties on a daily basis. Creating strong partnerships with counties in neighboring regions is critical in transportation planning to ensure individuals' needs are met. It is the intent that when drafting and updating the regional plan in the future, there will be strong collaboration with neighboring Regional Coordinating Agencies and counties to identify needs and gaps as well as help shape the region's goals.

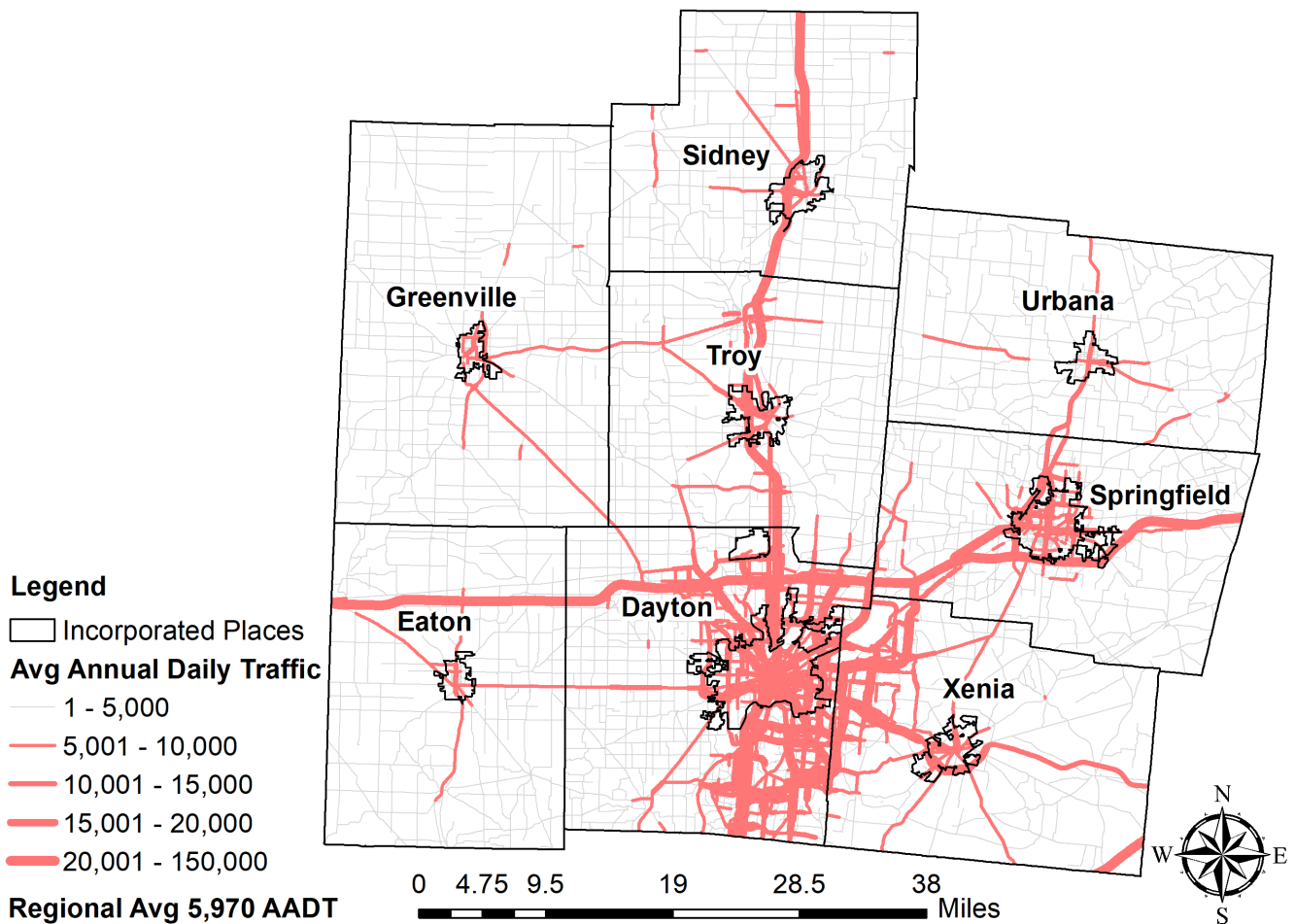


Figure D: Intra-Regional Travel Movement

Source: ODOT Office of Statewide Planning and Research

Goals and Strategies

The goals and strategies have been established to guide the GRMI Council and transportation providers in developing projects to address the identified challenges and unmet needs. It was determined the best approach to implementing these goals would be to divide them into a regional and local approach. The regional goals focus on projects which will have an impact across counties in sub-regions 2a and 2b, while local goals may only impact one or two counties at a time.

Regional Goals

Goal 1: Enhance Regional Coordination

Strategy 1.1 Coordination of county line transfers

Strategy 1.2 Explore options for employment transportation

Strategy 1.3 Explore opportunities for Non-Medical transportation

Strategy 1.4 Explore possibilities for regionalized Non-Emergency Medical transportation (NEMT) brokerage

Strategy 1.5 Coordination of Professional Driver Standards

Goal 2: Increase awareness/knowledge of available transportation options

Strategy 2.1 Expand the specialized mobility transportation tools to include transit provider information for all counties with the region and inter-region partners.

County Goals

Goal 1: Expand current transportation services in county to meet public needs

Strategy 1.1 Expand transit hours and include same day service

Strategy 1.2 Explore technology opportunities that will allow for scheduling of shared rides between transportation providers

Strategy 1.3 Coordinate cross agency driver employment opportunities

Goal 2: Seek additional funding opportunities

Strategy 2.1 Identify opportunities that can promote affordability for passengers

Goal 3: Increase awareness of available transportation options

Strategy 3.1 Participate in meetings which address mobility challenges and solutions

Strategy 3.2 Provide Travel Training presentations on availability mobility options at social and civic events and offer driver training opportunities



Figure E: Stakeholders

Source: MVRPC

Emphasis on Stakeholder Involvement

The broad geography of the Region creates a need for and challenge of engagement. Public and stakeholder involvement is critical to the development of an effective plan. MVRPC employed extensive outreach efforts across the region and used several methods to gather input on the challenges, opportunities, and strengths of transportation options. Stakeholders for the GRMI Plan were identified as transportation providers, local planning agencies, passengers and advocates, human services partners, economic development organizations, faith-based and community-based organizations, business community representatives, appropriate local or state officials and elected officials, with MVRPC staff acting the role of policy analyst experts. Public participation meetings, focus groups, and surveys were used as tools by each county to identify and assess the unmet transportation needs and gaps in service. MVRPC built on the structure created by the individual county plans and hosted additional input and review meetings for the development of this plan.

The ultimate goal is that the GRMI regional plan will eliminate the need for future individual county transit coordination plans and MVRPC will work with GRMI stakeholders to review and update the GRMI plan on a regular basis. Additional information regarding that process will be outlined in ***Chapter 5: Roles, Updates & Funding Structure***.

Challenges to Providing Coordinated Transportation

This plan also presents the prioritized unmet transportation needs of the Greater Region. These needs range from increasing services hours, public awareness of services, and additional resources such as access to funding and additional drivers. Because funding comes not only from ODOT and FTA, but through health and human services agencies, job and family services and veterans' services making it difficult to align insurance, rider policies, and trip prices. This can limit agencies in transporting clients from other areas or services without possible interruptions or service being unavailable. The Greater Regional Mobility Initiative aims to work collaboratively to identify goals and strategies to overcome these challenges.

Acknowledgments

MVRPC staff would like to recognize the valuable contributions of the following groups to the creation and implementation of this GRMI Plan and pilot project:

- **Staff at ODOT Office of Transit**
- **Mobility Managers within the Region**
- **Transit Providers within the Region**
- **Health and Human Services Agencies in Region**
- **The Greater Region Mobility Initiative Council, particularly the members that gave extra time and assistance with the plan development**

