

Chapter 2

Targeted Transportation Services in the OKI Region

2.1 Regional Overview

The geographic area covered by this plan includes Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell and Kenton Counties in Kentucky; and, Dearborn County in Indiana. All of these counties include urbanized area eligible for federal funding under Section 5310 (Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities) program described in Chapter 1. The focus of this chapter will be to summarize the transportation services available to the target populations served by these programs.

A network of providers, including both public transit providers and private nonprofit agencies, make transportation available to the target populations throughout the OKI Region. Transit agencies serve the general public and users from the target populations in every county. Private nonprofit agencies expand the availability of transportation by serving certain types of users in certain areas for certain kinds of trips, based on agency missions. Taxi services, ride-hailing apps such as Uber, Lyft, and other private providers further expand travel opportunity for the target populations. The result is that transportation services for the target populations cover a large area in the region, but the level and types of service vary greatly.

The target populations have different travel options depending on their individual needs, place of residence, and type of trip and destination. This chapter provides an inventory of the transportation service providers for them. The inventory is based upon transit provider information updated in 2020 for the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and information collected from transportation providers during the 2019 outreach efforts described in Chapter 1. While the inventory has some limitations such as some agencies did not participate in the survey, others may have been missed during outreach efforts, and still others are located outside OKI's defined eight-county planning area but may provide service to residents within it, it currently constitutes the best available information from which to develop recommendations. Nonetheless, the inventory described in this Chapter will need to be updated periodically to remain current and expanded when new agencies are identified.

The inventory includes five transit agencies and 37 private agencies operating vehicles and providing transportation services to the target populations. Appendix C includes an agency profile for each transportation service provider in the inventory. Each profile includes a map of the geographic service area involved and characteristics of the provider, including descriptions of agency missions, types of users served, types and times of services provided, user eligibility requirements, and fares. The number of monthly trips provided by each agency is also included in order to indicate their volume of service.

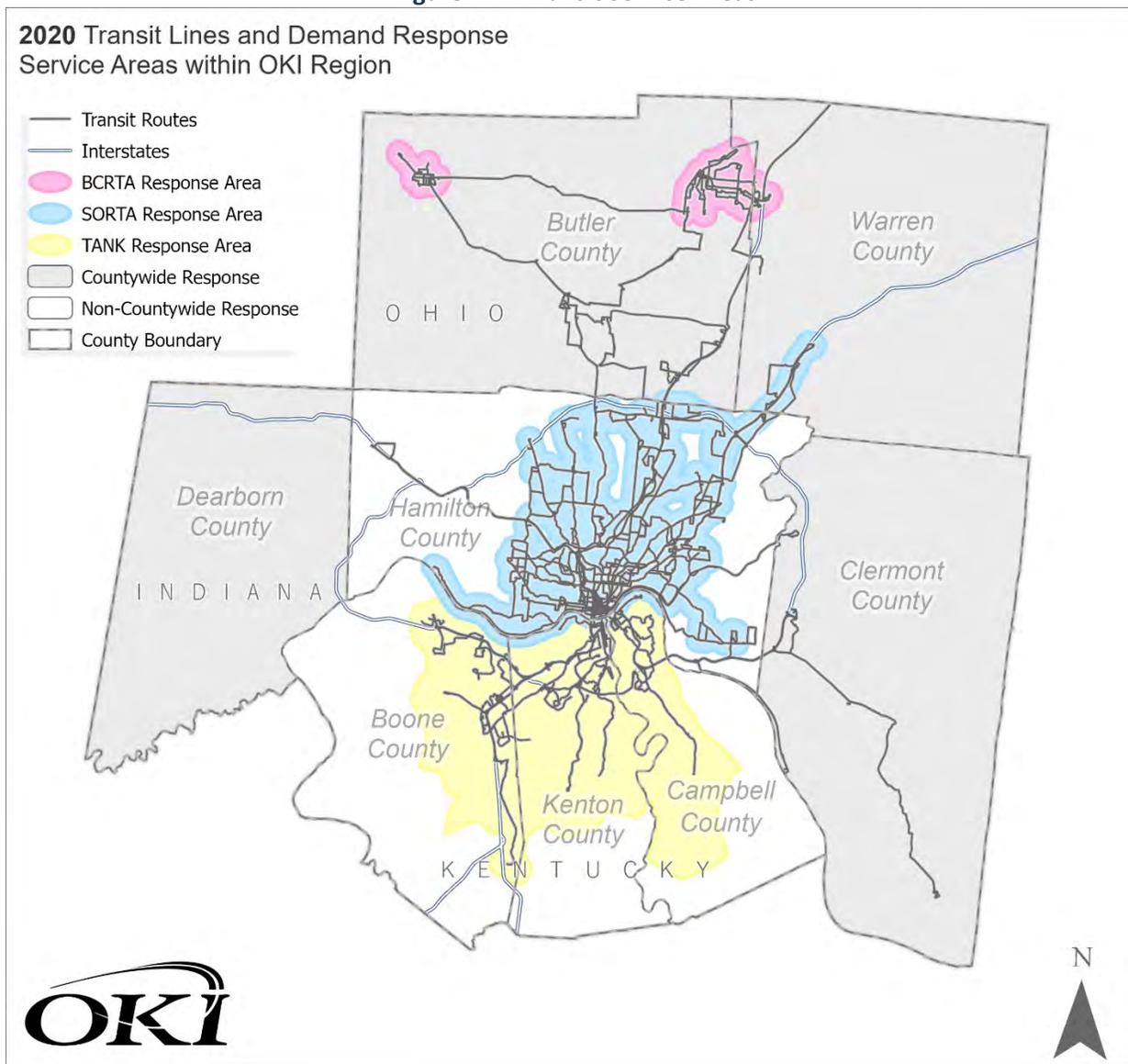
2.2 Transit Providers: Services and Service Areas

All the transit operators in the OKI region serve both the general public and people from the target populations. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires public transit to be

accessible to passengers with disabilities. Five transit agencies operate in the planning area, and there is some level of transit service in seven of the eight counties. All transit providers offer paratransit options, including individualized rides without fixed routes or schedules, called demand response service. Three transit agencies provide both fixed route service and demand response service. The fixed route transit service covers much of the region’s central urbanized area, and three agencies operate demand response systems countywide.

Of the five transit agencies, three operate countywide in Butler, Clermont, and Warren Counties, respectively; one operates in a large portion of Hamilton County, Ohio; and one operates in portions of all three counties in Northern Kentucky. Catch-A-Ride, a private non-profit provides service in Dearborn County. The areas served by public transit are represented in Figure 2-1 and detailed in Table 2-1.

Figure: 2-1. Transit Service Areas



All of these transit agencies make trips to some destinations outside of the area where their customers originate. The Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA – more commonly referred to as “Metro”) serves Hamilton County and extends routes to limited areas in adjacent Butler, Clermont, and Warren Counties to connect riders to the Cincinnati Central Business District (CBD). The Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) operates routes to connect Northern Kentucky riders with the Cincinnati CBD. Among the four agencies that operate countywide demand response systems, the Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA) operates shuttle connectors to SORTA transit service; the Clermont Transportation Connection (CTC) operates two express routes from Clermont County to the Cincinnati CBD; Catch-A-Ride serves a total of 6 counties in southeast Indiana and offers a weekly service schedule to Greater Cincinnati destinations; and Warren County Transit Service (WCTS) provides connections to the Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority South Hub transit center near the I-75 and I-675 interchange in Montgomery County, Ohio.

Table 2-1. Areas Served and Trips Provided by Transit Providers

County	Transit Agency	1-way trips per month	Service Area
Butler County	Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA)	58,230	All of Butler County; City of Middletown; City of Oxford
Clermont County	Clermont Transportation Connection (CTC)	7,800	All of Clermont County; destinations also in Hamilton County
Dearborn County	Catch-A-Ride – operated by Lifetime Resources, Inc.	6,200 - 7000	Six counties in Southeast Indiana including all of Dearborn County. Other counties include, Decatur, Jefferson, Ohio, Ripley, and Switzerland
Hamilton County	Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) also known as “Metro”	114,511	Cincinnati and other urbanized areas in Hamilton Co. (primarily east of the Great Miami River); route extensions into Butler, Clermont, and Warren Counties
Warren County	Warren County Transit Service	3,500	All of Warren County; destinations also in Butler County
Northern Kentucky	Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky	9,200	Covington, Newport, and other urbanized areas in Boone, Campbell, and Kenton Counties; connections to Cincinnati CBD

Transit Fixed Route Service

As shown on Figure 2-1, fixed route service within the region is operated by the following four providers and is used by both the general public and some of the target populations with specialized transportation needs:

- **Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA)** serves within the city of Middletown, city of Oxford, and routes across in Butler County;
- **Clermont Transportation Connection (CTC)** provides three fixed routes, including a shuttle connecting Felicity and Eastgate and two express routes providing service to the Cincinnati CBD;
- **Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA)** serves much of Hamilton County; and
- **Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK)** serves parts of Boone, Campbell, and Kenton Counties in Northern Kentucky.

Transit Demand Response Service

Demand response service is offered by all seven transit providers. Demand response services are operated by BCRTA, SORTA, and TANK for people with disabilities who are unable to use their fixed route service and who are certified as eligible. SORTA operates a program called Access, which is a public shared-ride service providing origin-to-destination transportation in small buses, for people whose disabilities prevent them from riding Metro buses. TANK operates the Regional Area Mobility Program (RAMP) which is a door-to-door paratransit service available to disabled citizens who are unable to use TANK's fixed route bus service. BCRTA also provides a paratransit demand response system which is curbside-to-curbside within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of their fixed routes. Travel opportunity for those with specialized transportation needs is further expanded through SORTA's discounted fares for fixed route service for people who qualify based on age, disability, or income.

The demand response service operated by the other four transit agencies is countywide, curbside-to-curbside or door-to-door, and available to both the general public and people with specialized transportation needs. These systems are operated by:

- **Catch-A-Ride (Dearborn),**
- **Clermont Transportation Connection (CTC), and**
- **Warren County Transit Authority (WCTA)**

These three countywide demand response programs all provide additional transit services that expand transportation availability for the target populations to different degrees. Catch-A-Ride provides demand response service for six southeast Indiana counties, including Dearborn County. CTC operates an in-county shuttle service from Felicity to the Eastgate area, two express routes to the Cincinnati CBD, and provides demand response service at reduced fares for seniors and people with disabilities. WCTA provides discounted fares for demand response service for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Table 2-2 summarizes the transportation services provided by each transit agency. Appendix A contains agency profiles that provide additional detail for each transit agency.

Table 2-2. Services per Transit Provider

Transit Agency	Fixed Route Service				Demand Response Service					
	Available	Reduced Fares or Special Service based on ...			Availability of Curb-to-Curb or Door-to-Door Service					
		Age	Disability	Income	Area	General Public	Criteria for Eligibility	Reduced Fares	Weekday	Weekend
BCRTA/ Butler County Regional Transit Authority	Middletown-Hamilton-Fairfield & Middletown-Oxford interurban shuttles; Hamilton/Fairfield shopping shuttles			In ¼ mile proximity to fixed route network	•	Only for job & medical shuttles		6 AM to 6 PM; 6 AM to 11PM for job shuttle		
CTC/Clermont Transportation Connection	2 express routes into Cincinnati and the Felicity-Eastgate shuttle			Through-out county	•	•	•	5:30 AM to 6:30 PM	5:30 AM to 6:30 PM	
Catch-A-Ride – Southeast Indiana Counties	Provides point deviation service in a directional route service with limited checkpoint stops in Madison (Jefferson County) only			Through-out 6 county southeastern Indiana area	•		•	6:00 AM To 6:00 PM; 8AM to 4PM for Point Deviation		
Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA)	•	•	•	•	In ¼ mile proximity to fixed route network		•	4:11 AM to 1:45 AM	Saturdays & Sundays 4 & 5 AM to about 1:30 AM	
TANK/Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky	•	•	•	•	In designated service area encompassing entire fixed route network		•	RAMP: 5 AM to 1 AM	RAMP: Saturday Sunday	
Warren County Transit Service	•	•	•		Through-out county	•	•	•	6 AM to 6:30 PM	

2.3 Agency Providers: Services and Service Areas

Social service agencies and private providers supplement the transportation provided by transit agencies. Several social service agencies cover a diverse range of transportation needs through the combined effect of individual agency services. An agency may provide specialized service to one type of user (e.g., people over age 60, people with a certain type of disability) or to the clients of one agency, or they may serve all types of users in one jurisdiction.

OKI has conducted surveys of agencies every four years since 2011; repeated in 2015 and 2019. These have helped to identify the range of transportation services provided by social service agencies. While the survey responses do not yield a completely comprehensive inventory, they do provide an indicator of the types of services available and where and when they are provided.

This plan inventories 37 agencies that provide transportation services to the targeted population. Of that total, 35 operate vehicles. Twenty-seven provide service to the elderly; twenty four provide service to individuals with disabilities; and three include service to low-income individuals as part of their mission.

Figures 2-3, 2-4, and 2-5 show the relative intensity of service to the respective target populations including elderly individuals, disabled individuals and low income individuals, representing the highest levels of service with the darkest shading and the lowest levels of service with the lightest shading.

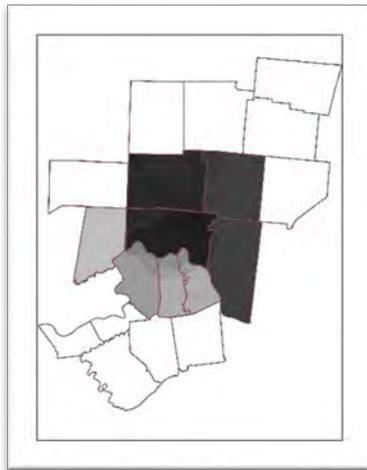


Figure 2-3 Elderly Service Intensity



Figure 2-4 Disabled Service Intensity

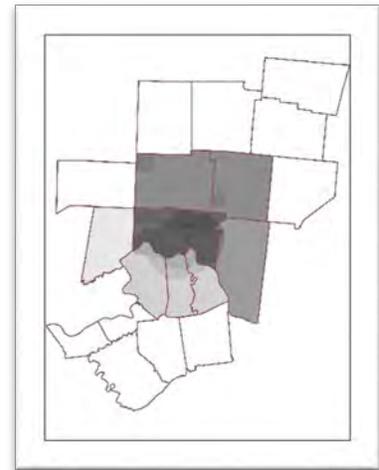
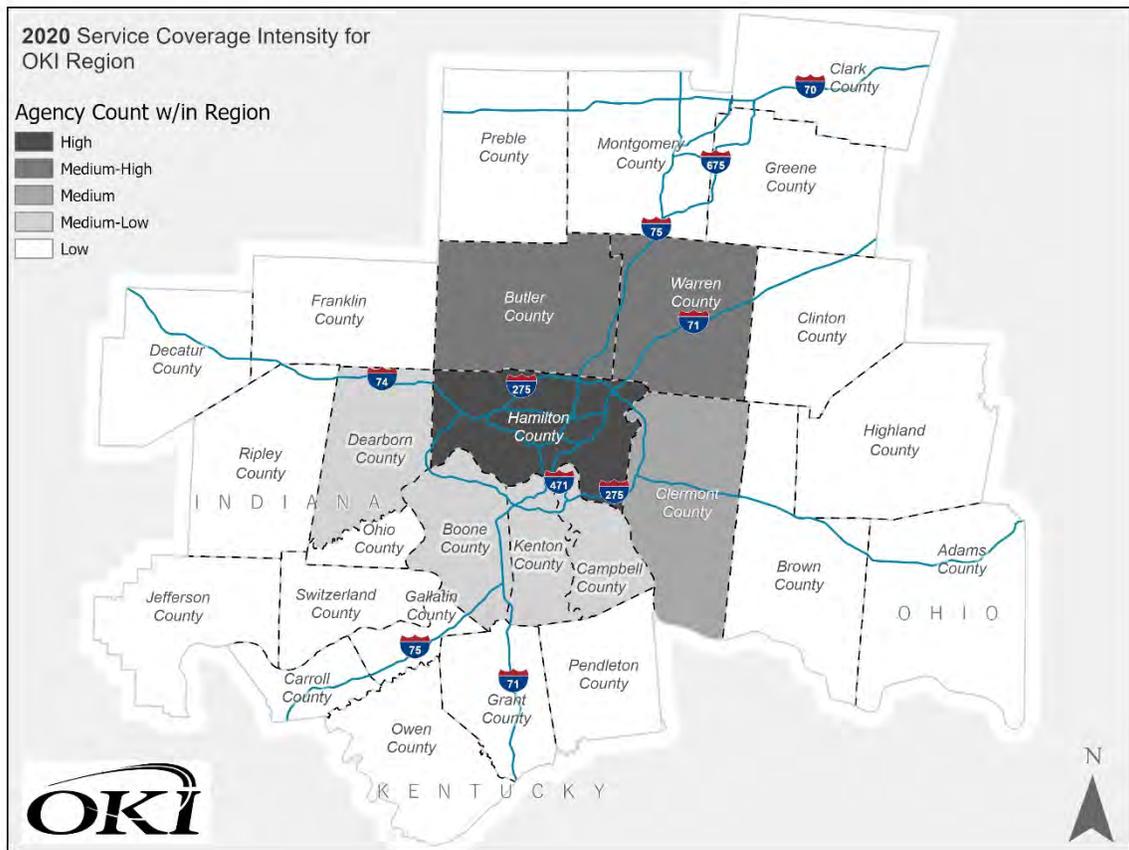


Figure 2-5 Low Income Service Intensity

Figure 2-6 compiles the service area of all 37 social service and private agency providers in the current inventory. As would be expected, the highest concentration of service opportunity is in the central portion of the region. There are also high concentrations in a few Butler County vicinities and in northwest Warren County.

Figure 2-6 Social Service Agency Coverage Intensity



In general, fewer options exist for trips to school (provided by about 10% of the agencies) and job training destinations (provided by about 20% of the agencies), while greater options exist for trips to the grocery (provided by 60% of the agencies) and medical-related trips (provided by over 70% of the agencies). Trips for social activities (provided by 60% of the agencies) and life maintenance (provided by 50% of the agencies) were also options from many of the agencies. More detail about the types of trips provided can be found in Appendix A.

2.4 County Profiles of Transportation Services for the Target Populations

Table 2-3. Services per County

Area	Total Agencies	Elderly	Individuals with Disabilities	Low Income
Butler County	14	10	6	1
Clermont County	11	8	6	1
Hamilton County	20	16	10	2
Warren County	11	7	5	0
Northern Kentucky	9	5	6	0
Dearborn County	3	3	2	1

Table 2-3 shows the total number of agencies in each OKI county operating transportation services for the target populations and the number providing this service for each type of user. Overall, low-income users have the fewest specialized options. The number of specialized options for other types of users varies from county to county. More detail is provided in Appendix A.

Butler County has 14 agencies operating transportation services for the target populations, with ten of those providing service for elderly individuals. Six agencies

operate transportation services for individuals with disabilities and one for low income individuals.

Clermont County has 11 agencies operating transportation services for the target populations, with six of those providing service to individuals with disabilities.

Hamilton County, with 20 agencies operating transportation services for the target populations, has the highest number of such agencies of any county in the planning area. Sixteen of these agencies operate specialized transportation services for the elderly, ten operate transportation services for the individuals with disabilities and two for low-income individuals.

Warren County has 11 agencies operating transportation services for the target populations. Seven operate transportation services for the elderly, five operate transportation services for the individuals with disabilities.

The Northern Kentucky counties of Boone, Campbell and Kenton have nine agencies operating transportation services for the target populations. Five agencies serving Northern Kentucky provide transportation service to the elderly and six to individuals with disabilities. Dearborn County has the fewest number of agencies providing specialized transportation service in the region with six. Five of these provide service to the elderly and four to individuals with disabilities. Table 2-4 shows the time periods when specialized service is available in each OKI county. All of the agencies offer some service during business hours, generally between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., but these hours vary greatly depending on the provider. More detail is provided in the Appendix A.

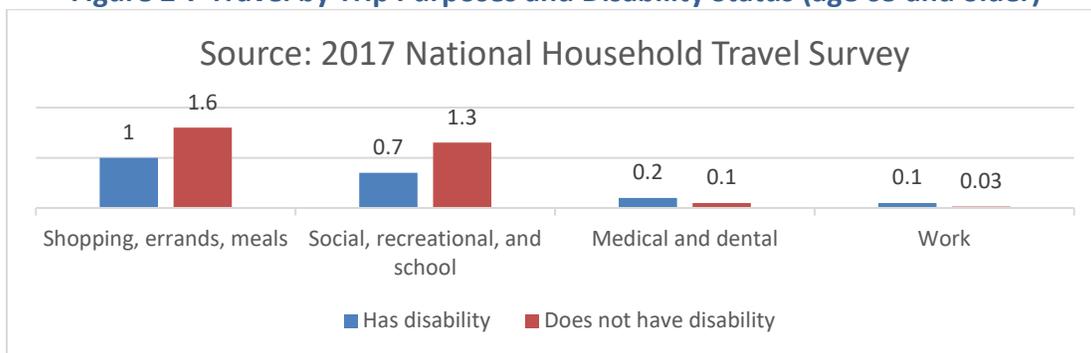
Table 2-4. Service Times per County

Area	Service Times Available			
	Weekdays	24/7	Evening (after 6:00PM)	Weekend
Butler County	6	1	1	2
Clermont County	3	0	1	0
Hamilton County	16	0	1	3
Warren County	2	0	0	0
Northern Kentucky	4	1	1	1
Dearborn County	1	0	0	0

Travel Patterns of Targeted Population

According to Travel Patterns of American Adults with Disabilities, a 2018 report published by the US Department of Transportation, people with disabilities average 2.6 trips per day compared with 3.6 trips per day by people without disabilities. People 65 and older with disabilities make an average of 2.1 trips per day versus 3.5 trips for people of the same age without disabilities. The majority of trips are for shopping/errands/meals and social/recreational/school, as seen in Figure 2.7. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the number of people age 65 or older in the labor force will increase from 9.3 million in 2016 to 14.6 million in 2026. This increase reflects growth in the population age 65 and older as well as growth in the labor force participation rates. Although work trips reflect the smallest portion this is expected to increase in the future.

Figure 2-7 Travel by Trip Purposes and Disability Status (age 65 and older)

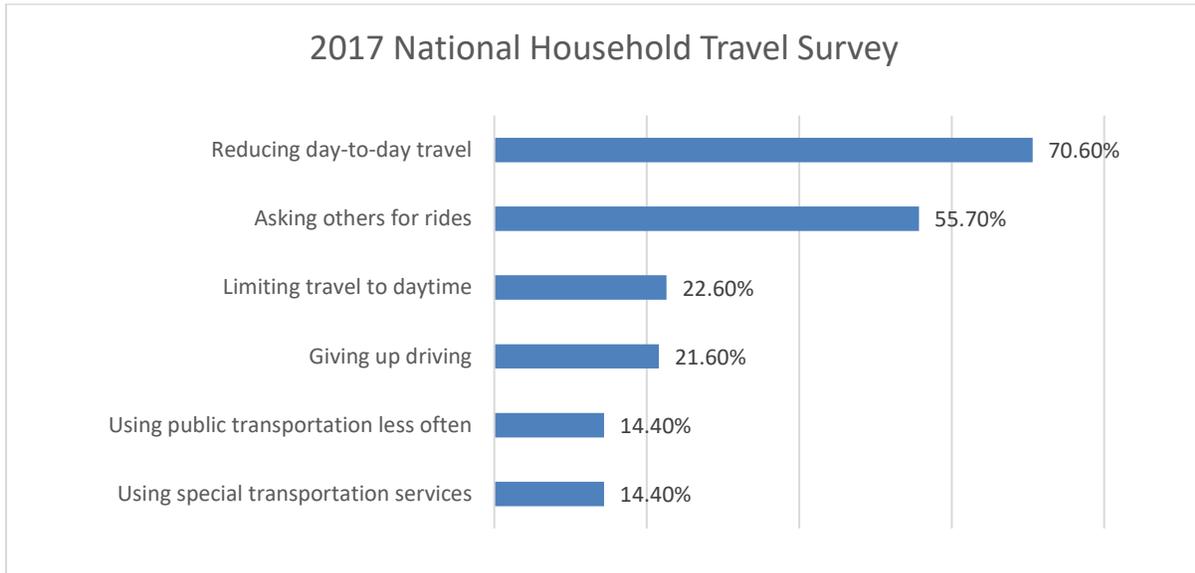


Compensating for Transportation Limitations

The 2017 National Household Travel Survey reports people age 18 to 64 with disabilities use a range of strategies to compensate for their transportation limitations. See Figure 2.8. The NHTS goes on to suggest that technology may help people with disability related transportation

limitations by offering substitutes for trips such as working remotely or shopping online; by connecting people to paratransit and ride-hailing services; and autonomous vehicle (AV) and other assistive technologies may someday help people travel who previously could not drive.

Figure 2-8 Compensating Strategies for People with Travel-Limiting Disabilities (age 18-64)



Service Provider Restrictions

Program restrictions sometimes create significant barriers for more prevalent specialized transportation service, as shared by some service providers during the March 2016 public meeting described in Chapter 3.

Specific requirements for each provider and person with contact with a Department of Developmental Disabilities client include maintaining an “individual service plan” for each client, completing 8 hours of training, receive training specific to each client, annual continuing education requirements, general liability insurance coverage, among other necessary qualifications.

Medicaid Transportation

Medicaid reimburses eligible recipients a certain amount per mile for medical related transportation through the Non-Emergency Transportation Program (NET). Rates for reimbursement varies based on requirements of the trip, as administered by county Departments of Job and Family Services. The reimbursement is claimed based on the eligibility of the recipient and the purpose of the trip. There seems to be the ability to transport others in the same vehicle and even to combine with non-eligible destinations in the same journey. The Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services’ website states approval of a trip is required at least 5 days prior and provides for options such as bus tokens, accessible vans, ambulettes, taxi fare vouchers, gas cards, etc. Both Ohio and Kentucky make use of a waiver in the federal Medicaid guidelines designed to allow Medicaid eligible individuals with disabilities or chronic conditions

to remain in their homes by covering home care services, adult day care, and expanded transportation for non-medical trips.

Vehicle Sharing Limitations

Issues preventing vehicle sharing between agencies primarily stem from restrictions placed on an agency from non-transportation related funding sources and/or insurance requirements. Vehicle and maintenance funding through the Federal 5310 program allows vehicle sharing between agencies, so long as the stated goals of the funding (serving elderly and disabled population needs) are being met.

There are model examples, however, in the OKI region for getting past the hurdles of vehicle sharing through formal contracting arrangements between agencies. One example of this has been the arrangement between Clermont Senior Services and CTC, whereby CTC provided stop-gap service to Clermont Senior Services during times of high demand.

Limitations Crossing County or State Lines

A unique challenge in the OKI region when compared to most other metropolitan regions in the nation, is the fact OKI spans three states. With regards to Medicaid reimbursement for travel outside one's county or state of residence, such travel is only approved on a case-by-case basis if equivalent treatment cannot be received within the subject county or state. This can result in someone in Northern Kentucky being transported to Lexington for a procedure that could be obtained in Cincinnati. For instance, a resident of northern Kentucky may use his or her Medicaid to pay for a procedure on the Ohio side of the river, but would not be able to claim reimbursement for travel if the same procedure were available elsewhere in Kentucky, even as far away as Lexington or Louisville.