



Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

November 2022



A plan for how transit agencies, human service agencies, and other transportation providers can work together to improve transportation for individuals with mobility challenges due to age, income, or ability.

Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
and Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (WWVMPO/SRTPO)
A Resolution Adopting the
2023–2026 Coordinated Public Transportation - Human Services Transportation Plan

RESOLUTION NO. 21-2022

WHEREAS, the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization and Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (WWVMPO/SRTPO) is the federal-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization and state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization for the Walla Walla Valley region, and has the responsibility for coordinated transportation planning and programming for each organization; and

WHEREAS, the WWVMPO/SRTPO is responsible for developing the Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP) for the region; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the CPT-HSTP is to improve transportation services for seniors, young people, individuals with lower incomes, people with disabilities, and others who depend on public transportation services; and

WHEREAS, the region's CPT-HSTP was prepared in compliance with Title 49, United States Code, Section 5310 and the regulations of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); and

WHEREAS, select FTA programs require projects to be derived from a locally developed CPT-HSTP; and

WHEREAS, the WWVMPO/SRTPO completed the development of the CPT-HSTP in close collaboration with its Human Services Transportation Coalition (HSTC), which includes representation from citizens, as well as public transportation providers, human service agencies, and other agencies or non-profit entities who provide or coordinate transportation on behalf of their clients or the community at large; and

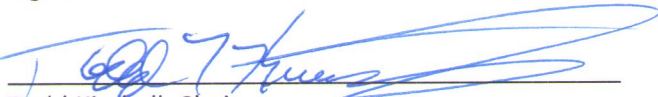
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the WWVMPO/SRTPO Policy Board adopts the 2023-2026 Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2023-2026 Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan be submitted to the Oregon and Washington State Departments of Transportation.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 2nd of November 2022.

Signed:

Attested:

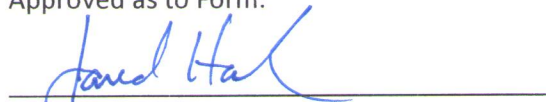


Todd Kimball, Chair
WWVMPO/SRTPO Policy Board



Andres Gomez, Executive Director
WWVMPO/SRTPO

Approved as to Form:



Jared Hawkins
WWVMPO/SRTPO Legal Counsel

FINAL

2022 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Walla Walla, Washington

Prepared For:

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November 2022



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Transportation is a critical part of our daily lives - it connects us to places such as school, work, services, and social activities. For individuals with mobility limitations due to age, disabilities, income, or other factors, transportation can be a major barrier to accessing these services.

The Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization and Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization's (WWVMPO/SRTPO) Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) Update identifies needs, projects, and funding options to improve service for transportation disadvantaged populations with the goals of:

- » Continuing to expand the efficiency and effectiveness of transportation services available to populations of all abilities and means.
- » Providing more travel training, information assistance and referral services for special needs populations through user-friendly and accessible educational tools.
- » Planning for enhanced transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities to improve the efficiency, accessibility, safety, and quality of first and last mile trips.
- » Seeking long-term stable funding sources to sustain service levels and affordable transportation options for people with special needs.
- » Expanding on regional coordination and collaboration efforts between transit providers, non-profits, and government agencies.
- » Securing and retaining a more robust and highly trained workforce.

Key projects are organized around addressing the following needs:

- » **Spatial/Temporal/Operational.** There are limited transportation options on weekends and evenings, in less populous rural communities, and for regional medical travel.
- » **Infrastructure/Accessibility.** Infrastructure gaps (i.e., no sidewalks, poor quality sidewalks, missing ADA ramps) are barriers for people trying to access a fixed-route transit stop.
- » **Awareness.** Language and cultural barriers prevent some people from fully accessing transportation options. Additionally, information technologies can be difficult for many users.
- » **Workforce.** Providers are having difficulty retaining and attracting new bus drivers even with hiring incentives and increased benefits.

The Coordinated Plan was developed in collaboration with transit users, the public, human service agencies, transportation providers, and public officials. It establishes the regional agencies' eligibility for federal funding opportunities and is a guide for government decisionmakers and community leaders to implement policies, programs, and services to help meet the transportation needs of older adults, people with disabilities, and communities with low incomes. Efforts to sustain successes and facilitate progress toward meeting the unmet needs and gaps in transportation services will require ongoing collaboration and coordinated planning between all agencies and transportation providers. When transportation services are coordinated, providers can be more efficient, services are improved, and mobility for all residents is enhanced.



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- » Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended
- » Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended

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Notificación de ADA

La Organización Metropolitana de Planificación del Valle de Walla Walla y La Organización Sub-Regional de Planificación de Transporte (WVMPPO/SRTPO) está comprometida de proveer acceso equitativo en sus programas, servicios, y actividades para personas con discapacidades. La legislación de derechos civiles requiere que individuos calificados con discapacidades no sean, basados exclusivamente en sus discapacidades, excluidos de participar en, negados de los beneficios de, o sujetos a discriminación bajo cualquier programa, servicio, o actividad de la WVMPPO/SRTPO, de acuerdo con:

- » La Ley sobre Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (ADA) de 1990, según enmendada
- » Las Secciones 504 y 508 de la Ley de Rehabilitación de 1973, según enmendada

Es la política de la WVMPPO/SRTPO que, cuando vista en su totalidad, servicios, programas, instalaciones, y comunicaciones proveídas directamente por la agencia, o por un proveedor de servicio contratado por la agencia, sean fácilmente accesibles y usables por individuos con discapacidades. Esto se logra por medio de mantener una página Web que cumple con la ADA; tener eventos en lugares accesibles; y proveer los materiales del programa en formatos alternativos bajo solicitud.



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If you require translation services to read this document, please notify Andres Gomez at (509) 876-8002 as soon as possible. Note that document translation may take 5-15 business days depending on the length of the document.

Notificación de Título VI al Público

WWVMPO/SRTPO notifica al público que es la política de la Organización asegurar un estricto cumplimiento con Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, la Ley de Restauración de Derechos Civiles de 1987, y otros estatutos y regulaciones relacionados con los mismos en todos los programas y actividades. El Título VI exige que ninguna persona sea excluida de participar en, negada los beneficios de, o sujeta a discriminación, basándose en su raza, color, género, u origen nacional bajo cualquier programa de Ayuda Federal para Autopistas u otra actividad para la cual WWVMPO/SRTPO reciba ayuda financiera Federal. Cualquier persona que haya sido ofendida por prácticas discriminatorias ilegales bajo el Título VI tiene el derecho de presentar una queja formal con WWVMPO/SRTPO. Cualquier queja de este tipo debe ser realizada por escrito y presentada al Coordinador del Título VI de WWVMPO/SRTPO dentro de un periodo de ciento ochenta (180) días después de dicho hecho discriminatorio. Los Formularios de Queja de Discriminación del Título VI pueden ser obtenidos en la Oficina de WWVMPO/SRTPO, en el siguiente sitio Web <http://wwvmppo.org/plans--programs.html> sin costo alguno para quien presenta la queja, por llamar a Andres Gomez at (509) 876-8002.

Si necesita servicios de traducción para leer este documento, por favor notifique a Andrés Gómez al (509) 876-8002 lo antes posible. Tenga en cuenta que la traducción de documentos puede tardar entre 5 y 15 días hábiles, dependiendo de la extensión del documento



PLAN OVERVIEW

To improve the mobility needs of seniors, people with disabilities, those with low incomes, and others with special transportation needs, the 2022 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) sets regional priorities for transportation investments and initiatives for human services and public transit coordination. It also serves as a federally required update to the 2019 Coordinated Plan.

The Coordinated Plan must be in place at the regional level for transportation service providers to have access to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding from 49 United States Code (U.S.C.) 5310, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities. The required elements of a coordinated plan are:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and non-profit).
2. An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. 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.
3. Strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery.
4. Relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies/activities identified.

The Coordinated Plan is also required to be eligible for funding under the Washington State Department of Transportation’s (WSDOT) Consolidated Grant Program and the Oregon State Special Transportation Fund (STF) Program funds. WSDOT requires MPOs/RTPOs to prepare plans every four years in collaboration with stakeholders, service providers, public transportation users and others.



Who are People with Special Transportation Needs?

People who are unable to transport themselves due to their age, income, or ability.

- » Seniors (age 65 and up)
- » Veterans
- » People with disabilities
- » People with low incomes
- » People with limited English proficiency
- » Students experiencing homelessness (21 and under)
- » Households without a car
- » Youth
- » Others unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation



COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

Stakeholder outreach and participation was a key element to the update of the Coordinated Plan. The public input—combined with the demographic profiles and transportation service provider information—identified the opportunities for coordination and investment. Input was gathered through regular meetings with a Project Management Team, a user survey (in Spanish and English), a virtual open house and live presentation, and in-person and phone interviews between March and June 2022.



Project Management Team

A Project Management Team met twice a month throughout the plan development to guide the Coordinated Plan. It included representatives from WVMPPO/SRTPO and the Human Services Transportation Coalition (HSTC). Members of the WVMPPO/SRTPO include:

- » City of Walla Walla
- » City of College Place
- » City of Milton-Freewater
- » City of Prescott
- » City of Waitsburg
- » The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)
- » Valley Transit
- » Port of Walla Walla
- » Walla Walla County
- » Umatilla County
- » Washington State Department of Transportation, South Central Region
- » Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 5

Participants in the HSTC include people representing human service providers that directly provide transportation to clients or coordinate transportation on behalf of the community, including:

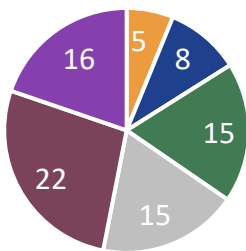
- » Blue Zones Project
- » Columbia County Public Transit
- » Valley Transit
- » Valley Transit Passenger Representative
- » Kayak Public Transit
- » Ben Franklin Transit
- » Providence – St. Mary Medical Center
- » WSDOT
- » ODOT



User Survey

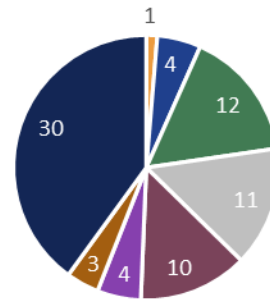
The user survey was available online and also administered in person on Valley Transit buses by representatives of Valley Transit. A total of 98 surveys were returned representing the following populations.

Age



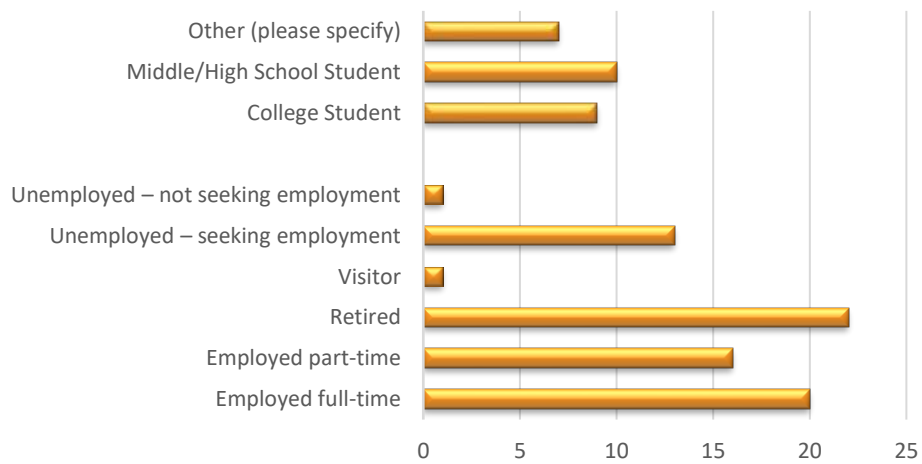
■ 17 or under
 ■ 18-22
 ■ 23-34
 ■ 35-49
 ■ 50-64
 ■ 65+

Income



■ \$100,000 or more
 ■ \$14,999 or under
 ■ \$14,999 or under
 ■ \$15,000-\$29,999
 ■ \$30,000-\$49,999
 ■ \$50,000-\$74,999
 ■ \$75,000-\$99,999
 ■ Prefer not to say

Employment Status





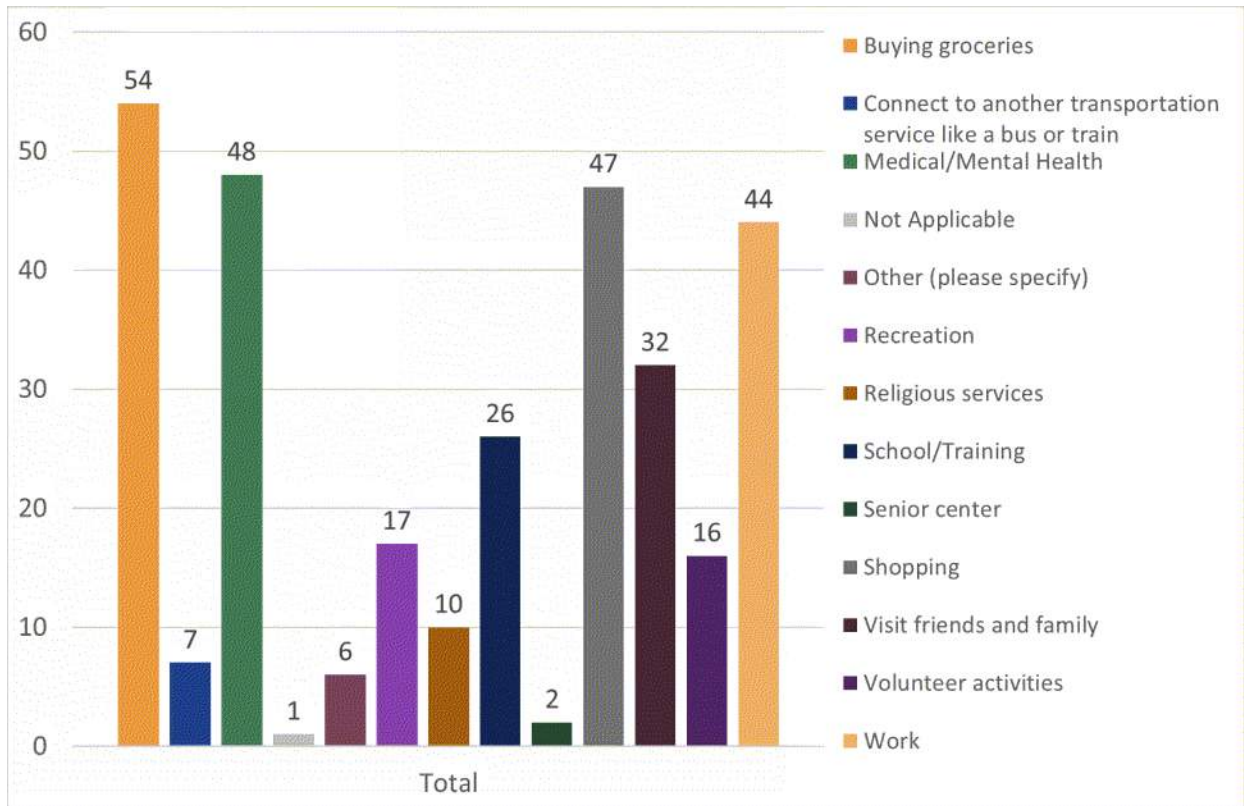
Key findings from the survey are:

- » Most respondents reported riding Valley Transit four to eight times a week and they indicated that they rode the bus more often prior to COVID-19.
- » The top trip purpose: 1) buying groceries, 2) accessing medical/mental health services, 3) shopping, and 4) going to work.
- » The top barriers: 1) Lack of evening service, 2) lack of weekend service, 3) confusing bus routes/schedules, and 4) the bus doesn't run where I need it.
- » Service priorities: 1) Buses running later at night, 2) weekend service, and 3) more frequent service

Other comments included the need for fewer transfers, advance notice of route changes in cases of road construction, difficulty using a walker to board, and better timing for Valley Transit's Job Access service.

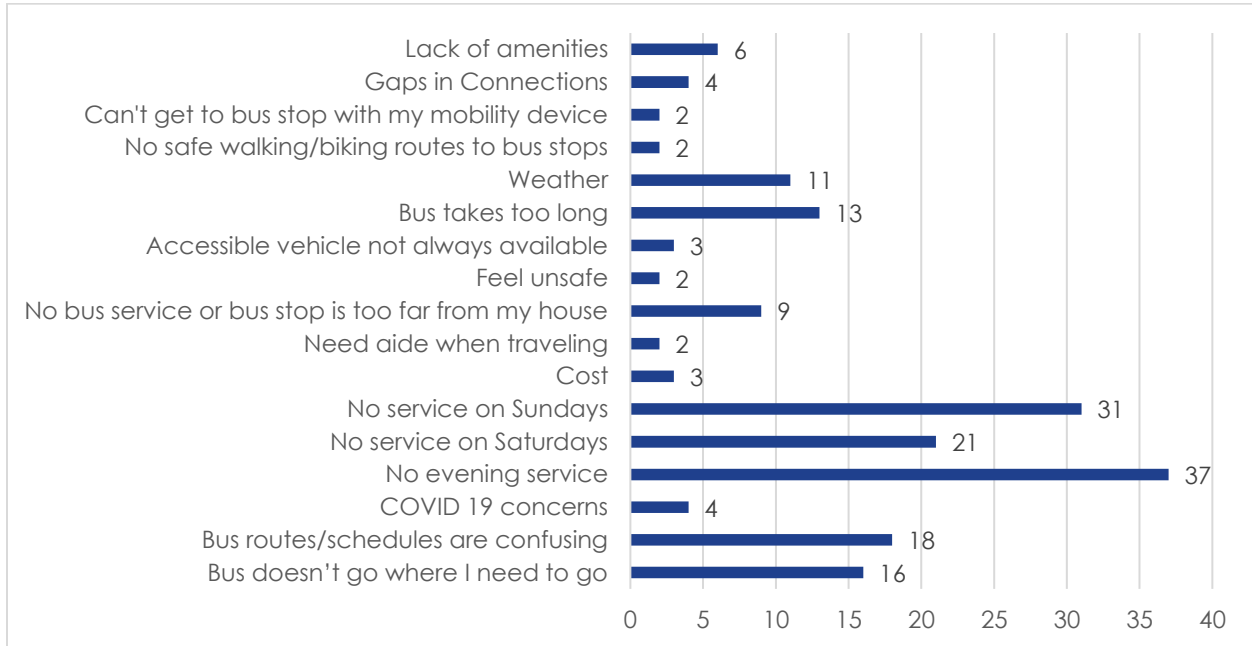
The 2022 user survey results were compared to survey results in the 2019 plan. In 2019, 105 surveys were returned. The trip purpose remained the same with work/school, healthcare, and groceries rating as the highest. In 2019, top barriers included no service near place of residence, the bus trip takes too long, and service doesn't run where needed. Service priorities included evening service, more frequent service, and weekend service.

Trip Purpose

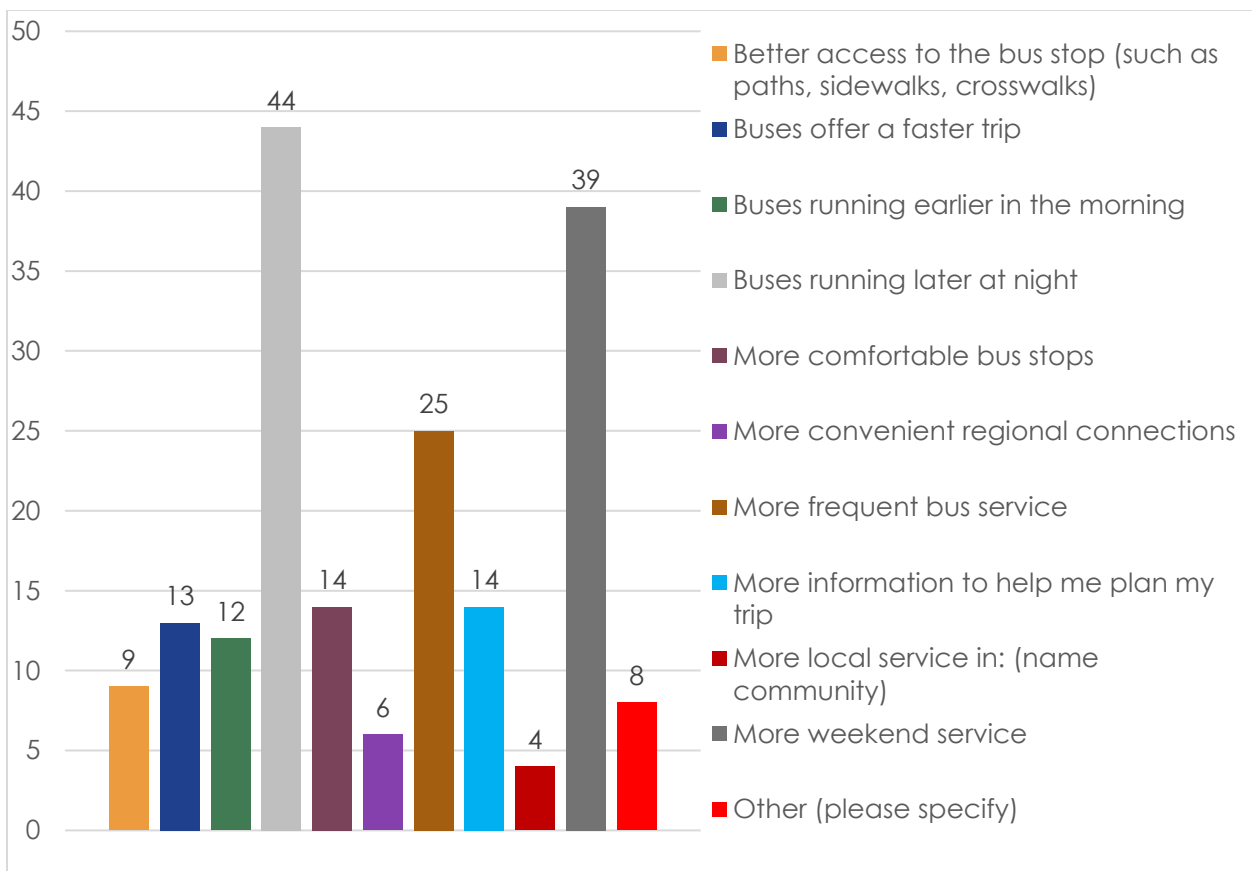




Top Barriers to Riding Transit



Service Priorities





Interviews/Small Group Meetings

Interviews/small group meetings were conducted with representatives from the following:

- » Riders at the Valley Transit Transfer Center (4 students, 7 seniors – 3 identified as disabled)
- » Walla Walla Valley Disability Network Meeting (10 attendees with a Spanish interpreter available)
- » YMCA of Walla Walla (1)
- » Walla Walla 2020 Transportation Committee (1)
- » The Health Center - Representing Hispanic Community interests (1)
- » Community Council (1)



Key takeaways are summarized below with potential strategies to address them as provided by the participants.





Interview/Small Group Meeting Key Take-aways	
Barriers	Potential Solutions
Inclusion and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology training on how to use transit apps (iTransitNW) • Continuing to improve upon iTransitNW such as displaying tracking information on display screens at more major stops in the region. • Travel Training – Event targeted to specific user groups • Provide easy to read and welcoming signs with clear instructions, schedules, and fees. Include Disability Network and Hispanic community in development of materials. • Provide transit education at new student orientations • Use social media expert to improve messaging/communication
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve visibility of bus stop signs. Consider reflectivity, colors, symbology • Audio announcements to alert hearing impaired riders • Test website and transit apps with underserved communities to enhance accessibility
Bus Stop Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate bus stop locations at key destinations to review distances to safe street crossings • Increase number of stops along high ridership routes to reduce walking distances
Sidewalks and paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair existing facilities • Complete missing connections • Add bike lockers
Flag Stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and communicate what makes a “safe stop”
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve lighting at bus stops • Increase driver education to improve experience for English as a Second Language riders and disabled riders
Service Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated timetable for all service providers to facilitate transfers between providers • Evening and weekend service • Improve alignment of Grapeline/Greyhound schedule • More efficient regional service to Seattle, Spokane, Tri-Cities and from Dayton to Spokane • Evaluate areas of population growth for potential service - Plaza Way area (Springhill, Vista View) and south of Walla Walla High school (Triple Creek, Tablerock) • Explore opportunities to coordinate with schools to provide transportation



REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization and Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (WVMPPO/SRTPO) is the federally designated and state-recognized agency responsible for coordinating transportation planning activities and investments in accordance with federal surface transportation law and state statutes on growth management. Straddling the Oregon and Washington state line, the planning area is made up of most of Walla Walla County (WA) and portions of Umatilla County (OR).

The region's economic center is the urbanized area, which includes the cities of College Place (WA), Milton-Freewater (OR), and Walla Walla (WA), encompassing approximately 36 square miles. Rural activity centers are located within the cities of Prescott and Waitsburg, and a small number of unincorporated settlements, such as Dixie, Lowden, Touchet, and Wallula provide further concentrations of residential and commercial activity. Close economic ties connect the Walla Walla Valley to the Tri-Cities area of Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland, as well as the community of Burbank, where transportation planning activities are undertaken by the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCG). The eastern portion of the Walla Walla Valley also has economic ties to Dayton, located in neighboring Columbia County, where transportation planning activities are carried out by the Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO).

Relevant Plans

The following section describes relevant plans and policies adopted by WVMPPO/SRTPO that provide the framework for this update. Key themes from the plans include the need for improved transit access and mobility for seniors, young people, individuals with lower incomes, people with disabilities, and others who depend on public transportation services.



2019-2022 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

The 2019 Coordinated Plan is focused on improving transportation services for vulnerable populations by enhancing access, minimizing duplication of services, encouraging cost-effective coordination, and highlighting priority needs that require additional attention. The project team is working towards updating this plan. Mobility strategies recommended by the plan are summarized below and will be evaluated as part of this update.

- » Formation of a collaborative workgroup consisting of public and private transportation providers, human services agencies, and non-profit entities, which could be jointly led by the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health, the WVMPPO/SRTPO, and other interested champions for special needs transportation within the region
- » Creating a centralized resource directory to assemble and disseminate information on available public, non-profit, and private sector transportation – print and online media in English & Spanish
- » Improving multi-agency planning through mobile apps and online ticketing



- » Creating a provider portal to assist medical and human services providers in finding transportation for their clients
- » Designating a regional mobility manager to deliver coordinated transportation services and travel training, particularly to new and special needs customers
- » Retaining all public transportation services
- » Improving sidewalk and bike route connectivity to bus stops
- » Implementing higher frequency (three daily round trips to the Tri-Cities), expanded services, weekend services (entertainment-related trips), and shared, flexible-schedule rural feeder shuttles
- » Reviewing the transit routes (Valley Transit and Milton-Freewater Public Transportation) in the region to identify gaps based on recent growth and changes in transit generators
- » Aligning transit schedules (arrival and departure times) for improved connectivity and efficiency of providers
- » Creating a process for fare integration and seamless transfers
- » Aligning arrival and departure timings with other public transportation services
- » Increasing frequency to more than three daily round trips to the Tri-Cities
- » Considering additional services on weekends for entertainment-related trips
- » Offering lower fares



Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization 2045 Plan

The vision of the plan is to “enhance the safety, connectivity, and condition of our transportation system, and provide mobility for all users - to enrich quality of life and to be consistent with community character.” The 2045 plan lists policies and recommended actions to guide future regional transportation efforts in the region which include:

- » Improving accessibility and walking, biking, and rolling connectivity at bus stops
- » Adding relevant policy, action, and project recommendations to the 2045 Plan after the completion of Valley Transit’s Comprehensive Operational Analysis¹
- » Supporting Milton-Freewater Public Transportation in its effort to conduct a comprehensive assessment of its system
- » Continuing special transportation needs advocacy and outreach among local and regional councils and committees
- » Assisting public transit providers with the implementation of multi-agency collective marketing, trip planning, and mobility management
- » Assisting public transit providers with the implementation of limited shuttle service to identified transit deserts

¹ “Valley Transit completed a Comprehensive Operational Analysis in March 2021, which studied Valley Transit services and intermodal linkages. The recent changes in Valley Transit’s service area are attributed to community growth, the relocation of existing ride-generators, and new major ride-generators, all of which have placed a greater emphasis on improving the provider’s operational efficiency and effectiveness through informed system redesign.”



- » Supporting WSDOT in its effort to improve intercity public transit connectivity and assist in promoting the Grape Line service

The plan emphasizes a universal policy to “consider safety and access for pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, transit vehicles and riders, motorists, emergency responders, freight haulers, and residents of all ages and abilities in every planning and project decision.” The plan also identifies “rural areas and communities” outside of the urbanized area, such as Lowden, Prescott, Touchet, and Vista Hermosa as transit deserts, as they do not have access to either regular fixed-route or demand-response service. Without further public transit investments in these transit deserts, older adults wishing to “age in place” in the rural communities of the region will face significant mobility challenges.”



Walla Walla Valley Rural Mobility Strategic Plan

This plan provided guidance to WWVMPO/SRTPO in its collaboration role with partner agencies and transportation service providers to meet current service needs and close existing gaps. The plan identifies eleven strategies:

- » Coordinated transit marketing (near-term, high priority)
- » Support transit technology (near-term², high priority)
- » Regional mobility management and coordination (near-term, high priority)
- » Centralized transportation information portal (medium-term³, high priority)
- » Fare coordination (medium-term, medium priority)
- » Dayton-Walla Walla deviated fixed-route (near-term, high priority)
- » Prescott-Walla Walla demand-response or limited shuttle (medium-term, medium priority)
- » Tri Cities-Burbank-Vista Hermosa demand-response or limited shuttle (medium-term, medium priority)
- » Expand span of service for local transit (medium-term, high priority)
- » Vanpool marketing and outreach (near to medium-term, low priority)
- » Grape Line marketing and bus stop improvements (medium-term, low priority)

² Near-Term: 1-2 years

³ Medium-Term: 3-5 years



COVID-19

This Coordinated Plan was developed during the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, which first began in the spring of 2020. Stay-at-home orders during the height of the pandemic limited travel to essential trips only, such as grocery shopping, urgent healthcare and social services, and travel to jobs that were deemed essential and could not be moved to remote work. Even as stay-at-home orders were relaxed, service was reduced due to social distancing requirements on vehicles. Transit providers responded to this crisis through multiple methods, including schedule changes, special shuttles, free fare service, and even food delivery programs.

The overall impact has resulted in a loss of riders, service hours and, often, reduced efficiencies. Service still has not returned to pre-COVID levels. This is in part due to workforce shortages, specifically drivers.

The long-term implications have yet to be fully understood, and as the pandemic continues with waves of new variants and a continuing vaccine rollout, the public transit response will need to continue to adapt.

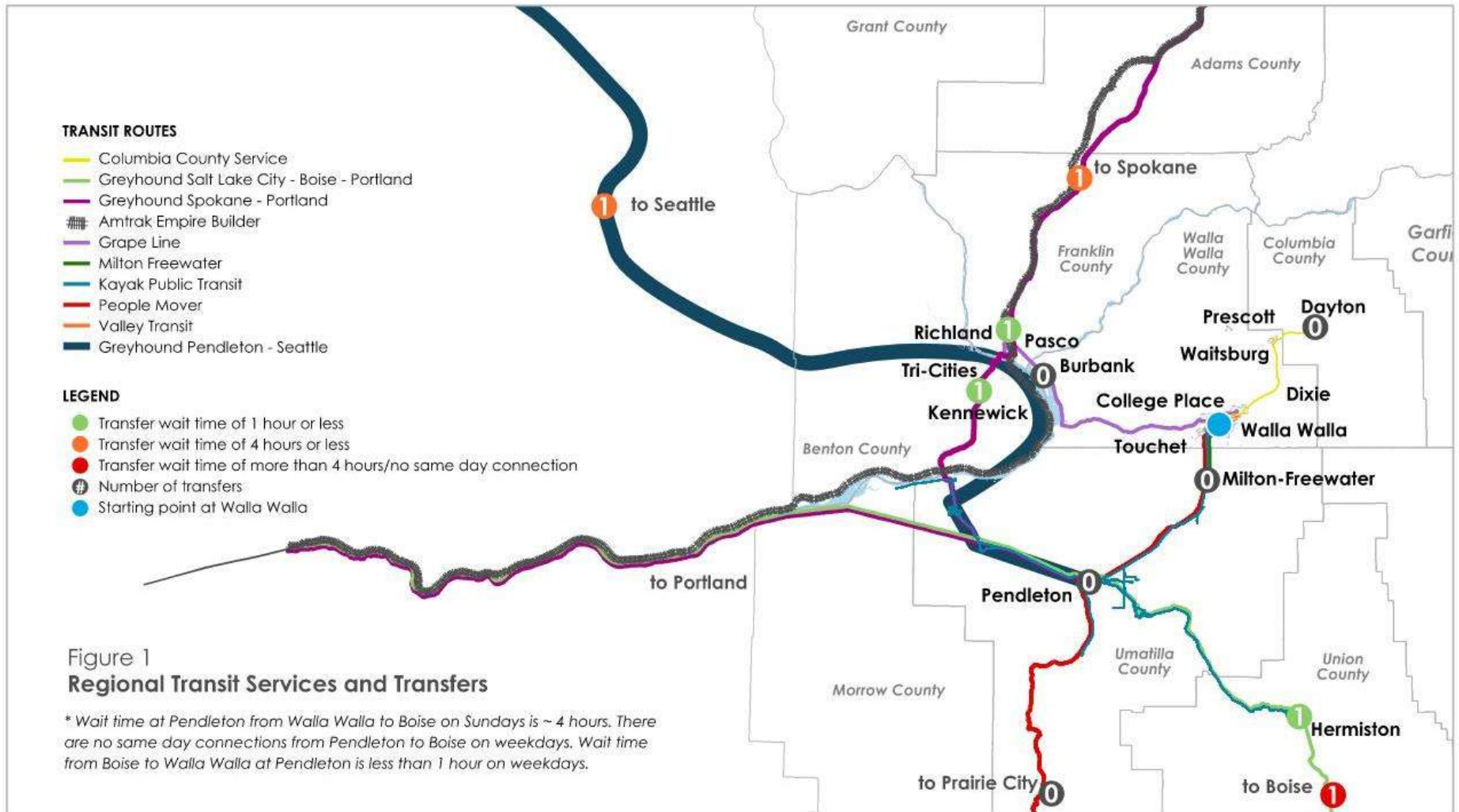


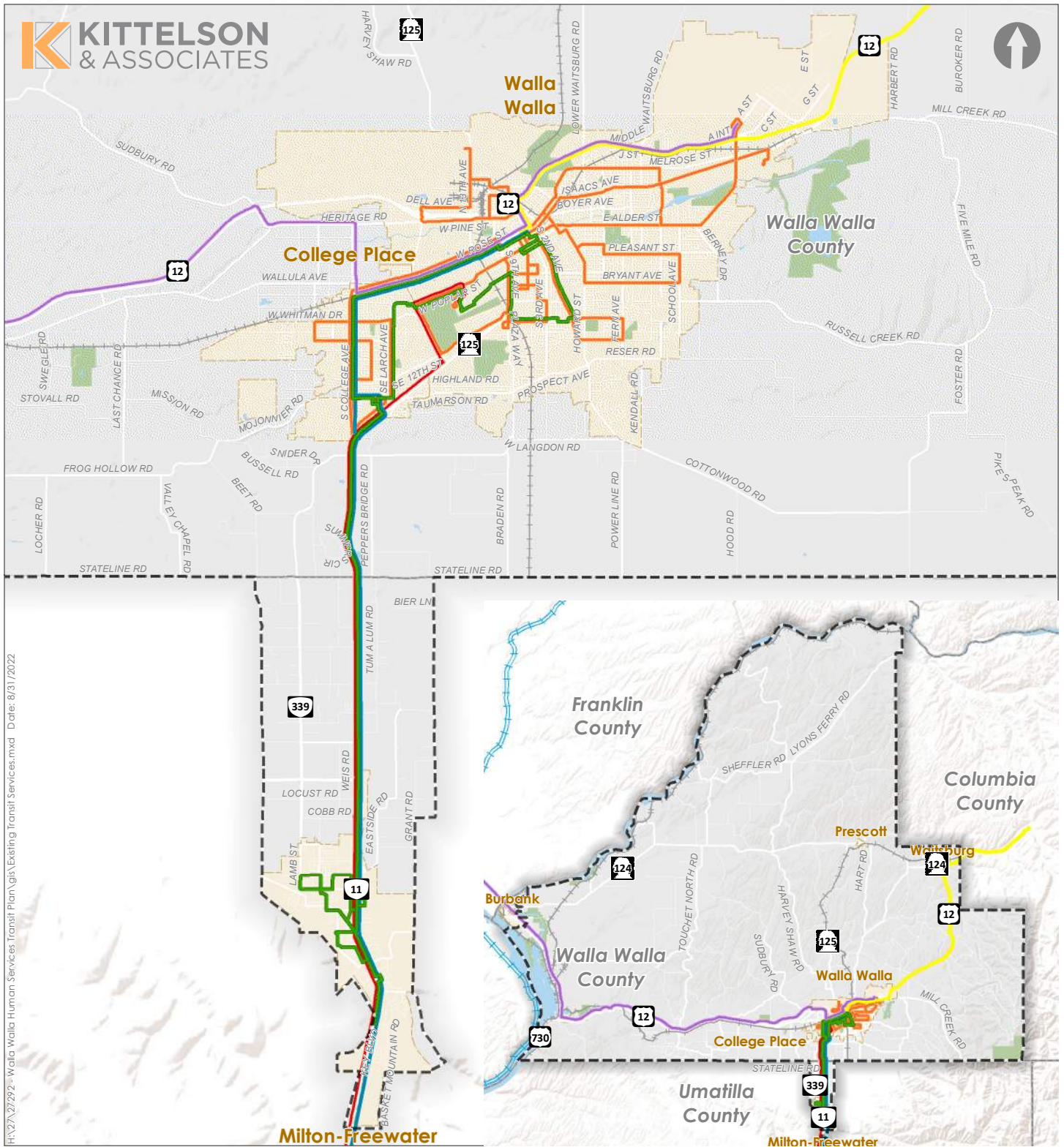


TRANSIT SERVICES



This chapter summarizes the transportation services that are currently available. Inventories developed for the 2019 Coordinated Plan served as a starting point and updated information was provided by transportation providers and stakeholders and internet research. Figure 1 shows the regional transit services and Figure 2 is a localized service map for the WWVMPO. Table 1 summarizes each WWVMPO transportation provider by the provider type (public or private), type(s) of service, operating hours, and general service areas.





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- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Amtrak Empire Builder | Columbia County Service | MPO Boundary |
| Grape Line | Valley Transit | County Boundaries |
| Milton Freewater | Railroads | UGBs Outline |
| Kayak Public Transit | | |
| People Mover | | |



Figure 2
Existing Transit Services
in the Study Region



Table 1. Existing Transit Services

Transportation Provider	Provider Type	Service Type	Operating Hours	Service Area
Valley Transit/ Valley Transit Plus	Municipal Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fixed-Route » Dial-A-Ride (Paratransit) » Deviated Fixed-Route » Rideshare » Intercity 	<p>Fixed-Route (7 routes), Dial-A-Ride: Monday through Friday from 6:15 AM to 5:45 PM.</p> <p>Deviated Fixed-Route (FLEX Route – 2 loops): Monday through Friday from 5:50 PM to 9:10 PM; Saturday from 10:45 AM to 6:10 PM</p> <p>Connector (extension of services to areas of Walla Walla and College Place): Monday through Friday from 5:45 PM to 8:40 PM; Saturday from 10:45 AM to 6:10 PM</p> <p>Job Access (reservation-based): Daily from 5:00 AM to 11:30 PM</p>	<p>Walla Walla, College Place, and nearby areas in Walla Walla County</p> <p>Valley Transit deviates to Walla Walla Regional Airport on request</p>
Columbia County Public Transportation	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Dial-A-Ride » Vanpool 	<p>Dial-A-Ride: Monday through Saturday, 5 AM to 6:30 PM</p> <p>Vanpool: One current, Pomeroy to Lower Granite Dam Monday through Thursday</p>	<p>Columbia County (Dayton, Waitsburg, Dixie, Walla Walla, Starbuck)</p> <p>Vanpool: One current, Pomeroy to Lower Granite Dam</p>
Grant County People Mover (Oregon)	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Dial-A-Ride 	Tuesdays, 5 AM to 8 AM	Prairie City to Walla Walla with stops in John Day, Mt. Vernon, Long Creek, Dale, Ukiah, Pilot Rock, Pendleton, Milton-Freewater
Grape Line	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fixed-Route 	3 trips each direction, 7 days a week from 6:15 AM to 10:25 PM	Walla Walla to Pasco with stops in College Place, Wallula and Burbank
Milton-Freewater Bus	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fixed-Route » Dial-A-Ride 	Fixed-Route: 3 trips each direction, Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 3:39 PM	Fixed-Route: Milton-Freewater to Walla Walla with stops in College Place and Mission. Connections with Grape Line can be made at the Valley Transit Transfer Center



Transportation Provider	Provider Type	Service Type	Operating Hours	Service Area
			Dial-a-ride: Monday through Saturday from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM	Dial-a-ride: Within 5-mile radius of the Milton-Freewater City Hall
Kayak Public Transit	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fixed-Route » Intercity » ADA Paratransit 	<p>Fixed-Route: 3 routes, Monday through Friday from 5:03 AM to 6:52 PM</p> <p>Intercity: 4 routes, 2 routes provide service Monday through Friday from 5:10 AM to 7:13 PM; 2 routes provide service Monday through Saturday from 4:31 PM to 7:15 PM</p>	<p>La Grande, Hermiston, Irrigon, Pendleton, Mission, Weston, Athena, Milton-Freewater, and Walla Walla</p> <p>Whistler Commuter service provides connections between Pendleton and Walla Walla with stops in Milton-Freewater, Mission, Athena, Weston, and College Place</p>
Ben Franklin Transit	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fixed-Route » Dial-A-Ride » On-Demand Rideshare 	<p>Fixed-Route, Dial-A-Ride: Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM; Saturday from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM; Sunday from 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM</p> <p>On-Demand Rideshare (CONNECT): Monday through Friday from 5:45 AM to 10:15 PM; Saturday from 6:45 AM to 10:15 PM; Sunday from 7:45 AM to 6:45 PM</p> <p>General Dial-a-Ride: Monday through Friday from 6AM to 8:15 PM</p>	<p>Fixed-Route and Dial-A-Ride: Serves communities in the western areas of the county throughout the Tri-Cities region</p> <p>CONNECT Zones: Central Kennewick and Finley, Columbia Center and South Richland, West Pasco, East Pasco, West Richland and Badger Mountain, Central Richland</p> <p>General Dial-a-Ride: Prosser, Benton City, Finley, and Tri-Cities</p>
Greyhound	Public – Subsidized Private Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fixed-Route 	Salt Lake City – Boise – Portland stops in Pendleton near 3:30 PM in the eastbound direction and near 12:30 PM in the westbound direction.	Salt Lake City – Boise – Portland with stops in Portland, Hood River, The Dalles, Stanfield, Pendleton



Transportation Provider	Provider Type	Service Type	Operating Hours	Service Area
			Portland – Spokane stops in Pasco near 2:30 PM in the eastbound direction and near 1:30 PM in the westbound direction	Portland – Spokane with stops in Hood River, The Dalles, Stanfield, Pendleton, Pasco.
			Stanfield – Seattle stops in Pasco near 4:00 PM in the northbound direction and near 11:50 AM in the southbound direction	Stanfield – Seattle with stops in Pasco, Sunnyside, Yakima, Ellensburg
Amtrak	Public – Subsidized Private Company	» Fixed-Route (Train)	Pasco stop is currently served near 9 PM in the eastbound direction and near 5:30 AM in the westbound direction. Amtrak’s website currently shows most days of the week served, though not all.	Amtrak Empire Builder provides service between Portland and Spokane with stops in Vancouver (WA), Bingen-White Salmon, Wishram, and Pasco
People for People	Non-Profit – Medicaid and CHIP Customers	» Dial-A-Ride (Non-emergency medical transportation)	Varies	Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Franklin, Kittitas, Okanogan, Yakima, Walla Walla counties
Transportation Solutions	Private – Medicaid and Medicare Only	» Dial-A-Ride (Non-emergency medical transportation)	Varies	Walla Walla, The Dalles, La Grande, Pendleton, Hermiston, Clarkston/Lewiston, Baker City, and Coeur d’Alene areas
Latitude Transport	Private – Medicaid and Medicare Only	» Dial-A-Ride (Non-emergency medical transportation)	Varies	Walla Walla, Hermiston, Pendleton, and the Tri-Cities area



Provider Surveys and Interviews

Provider surveys were distributed in March 2022 to seek input on transportation needs and challenges. The surveys included questions about rider characteristics and needs, operating statistics, vehicle inventory, client type, trip costs, and ways to enhance coordination and collaboration. Follow-up interviews with the individual providers were also conducted to expand on the survey responses. The team received completed surveys and conducted interviews with:

- » Valley Transit
- » Columbia County Public Transportation
- » Grant County People Mover (Oregon)
- » Greyhound
- » Kayak Public Transit, which currently provides the Milton-Freewater Bus via contract



The information was used to inform the inventory of transportation services and strategies. Key takeaways from the interviews include:

- » Service was reduced during COVID and still has not returned to pre-COVID levels. This is in part due to workforce shortages, specifically drivers. Attracting and training drivers will continue to be a major challenge in the foreseeable future.
- » Many services are not directly accessible by transit for those who are medically fragile/ mobility challenged. Direct rides, without multiple transfers, are needed.
- » Valley Transit currently pulses and interlines its own services at its downtown Transfer Center. Connecting providers try to align their schedules to this timepoint; however, the Grape Line service isn't able to always line up well.
- » Reliance on federal funding will continue in the future, however, there may be more opportunities to leverage discretionary grant funding.
- » There is a potential loss of federal funding for Valley Transit as they may get reclassified as a rural transit provider due to the status of the WWVMO changing. The reclassification would result in loss of urbanized area formula grants, an impact of about \$1.2 million to Valley Transit's budget. Valley Transit and its partners may need to pursue other funding opportunities to continue to provide services and make capital improvements.
 - » The reason for the reclassification is because an MPO is required to represent an urbanized areas (UZAs) with a population over 50,000, as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Walla Walla may lose its federal status as a metropolitan statistical area and may be downgraded to a "micropolitan," a population of less than 50,000. Full impacts to the WWVMO are still unknown at this time.



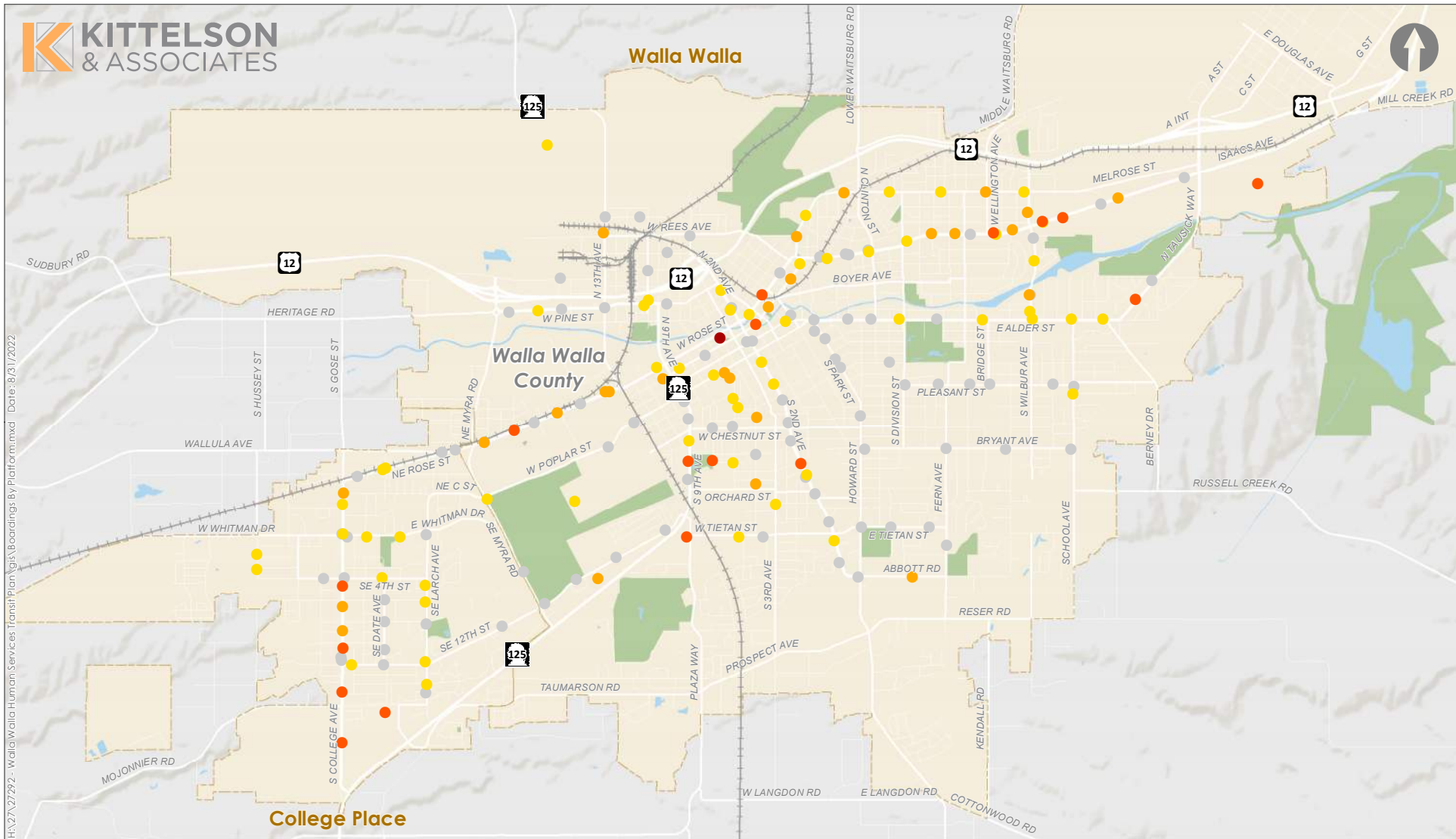
- » Regional services, such as Greyhound, have processes in place that make shifting stops and schedules difficult, especially in rural areas that are caught “in the middle” of long-distance runs.
- » Many Umatilla and Grant County community members rely on regional services to get to Walla Walla and the Tri-Cities.

Attachment A includes the full survey results and interview summaries.

Valley Transit Boarding and Alighting Patterns

As the main transit provider, Valley Transit provided 2021 boarding data for Valley Transit Fixed-Routes and boarding/alighting data for 2021 dial-a-ride services. Figure 3, 4 and 5 illustrate the origin and destination concentrations for fixed-routes and dial-a-ride services in Walla Walla and College Place. Key findings include:

- » There is a high concentration of boarding (origins) on the fixed-route services along Issacs Avenue in northeastern Walla Walla; Main Street and Alder Street in central Walla Walla; Rose Street towards the west; 9th Avenue and 2nd Avenue in southern Walla Walla; and along College Avenue in College Place.
- » Dial-a-ride boardings and alightings are distributed evenly throughout Walla Walla and College Place.
- » The highest number of boardings in 2021 were recorded at:
 - » Fresenius Kidney Care Qci, Walla Walla located between Rose Street and Poplar Street (135 Avery Street)
 - » Walmart Supercenter, College Place (1700 SE Meadowbrook Boulevard)
 - » Brookdale Senior Living, Walla Walla located between along Dalles Military Road (1460 Dalles Military Road)
- » The highest number of alightings in 2021 were recorded at:
 - » Fresenius Kidney Care Qci, Walla Walla located between Rose Street and Poplar Street (135 Avery Street)
 - » Brookdale Senior Living, Walla Walla located between along Dalles Military Road (1460 Dalles Military Road)
 - » Providence St. Mary Medical Center located just south of Poplar Street (401 W Poplar Street)



Boardings by Platform

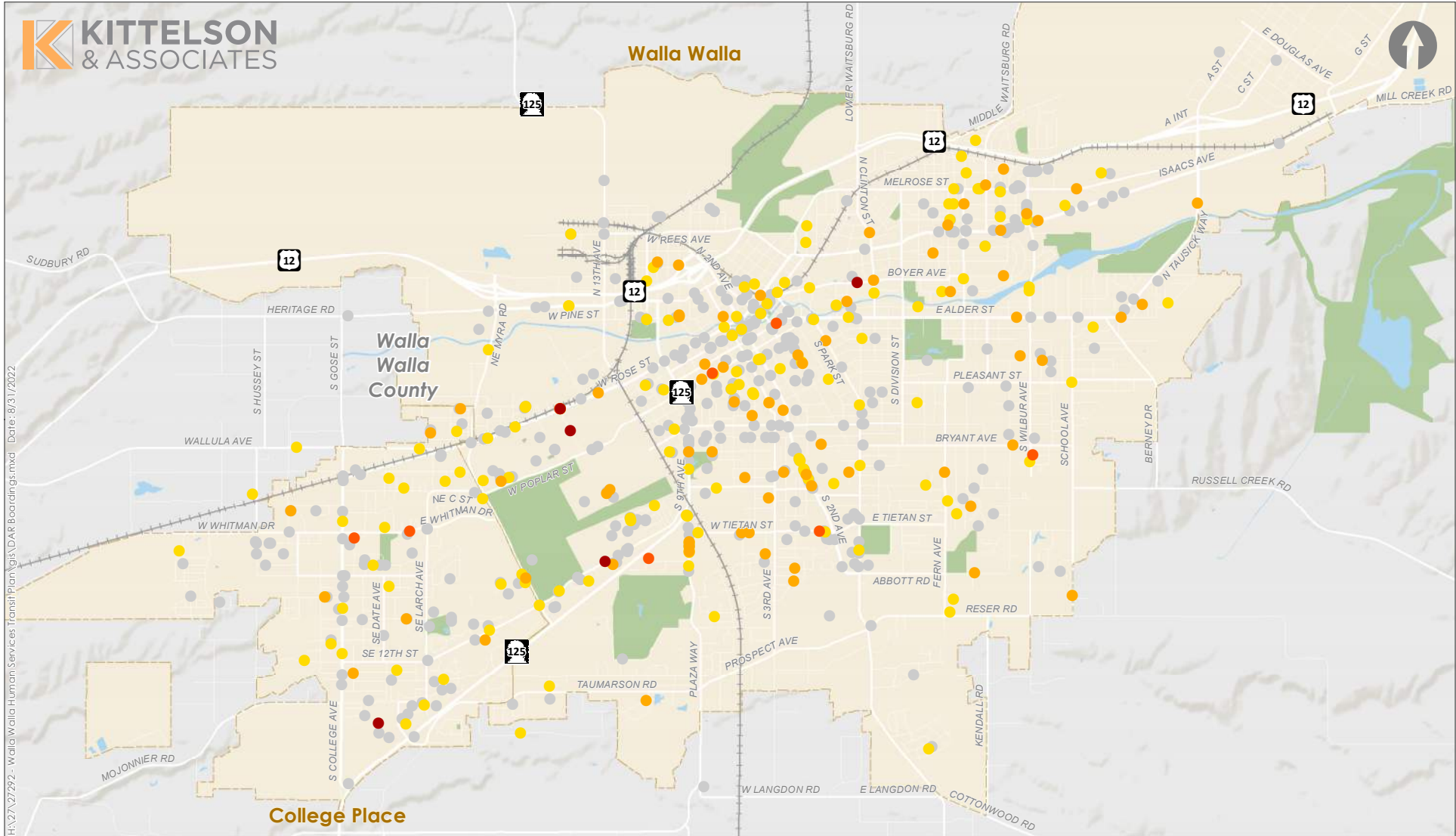
- 3 - 100 Annual Boardings
- 101 - 300 Annual Boardings
- 301 - 1,000 Annual Boardings
- 1,001 - 10,000 Annual Boardings
- 10,001 - 47,330 Annual Boardings
- ⊞ MPO Boundary
- ⊞ County Boundaries
- ⊞ UGBs
- ⊞ Parks
- ⊞ Railroads

Figure 3

**Valley Transit Fixed-Route Boarding Patterns – Origins
Walla Walla, WA**



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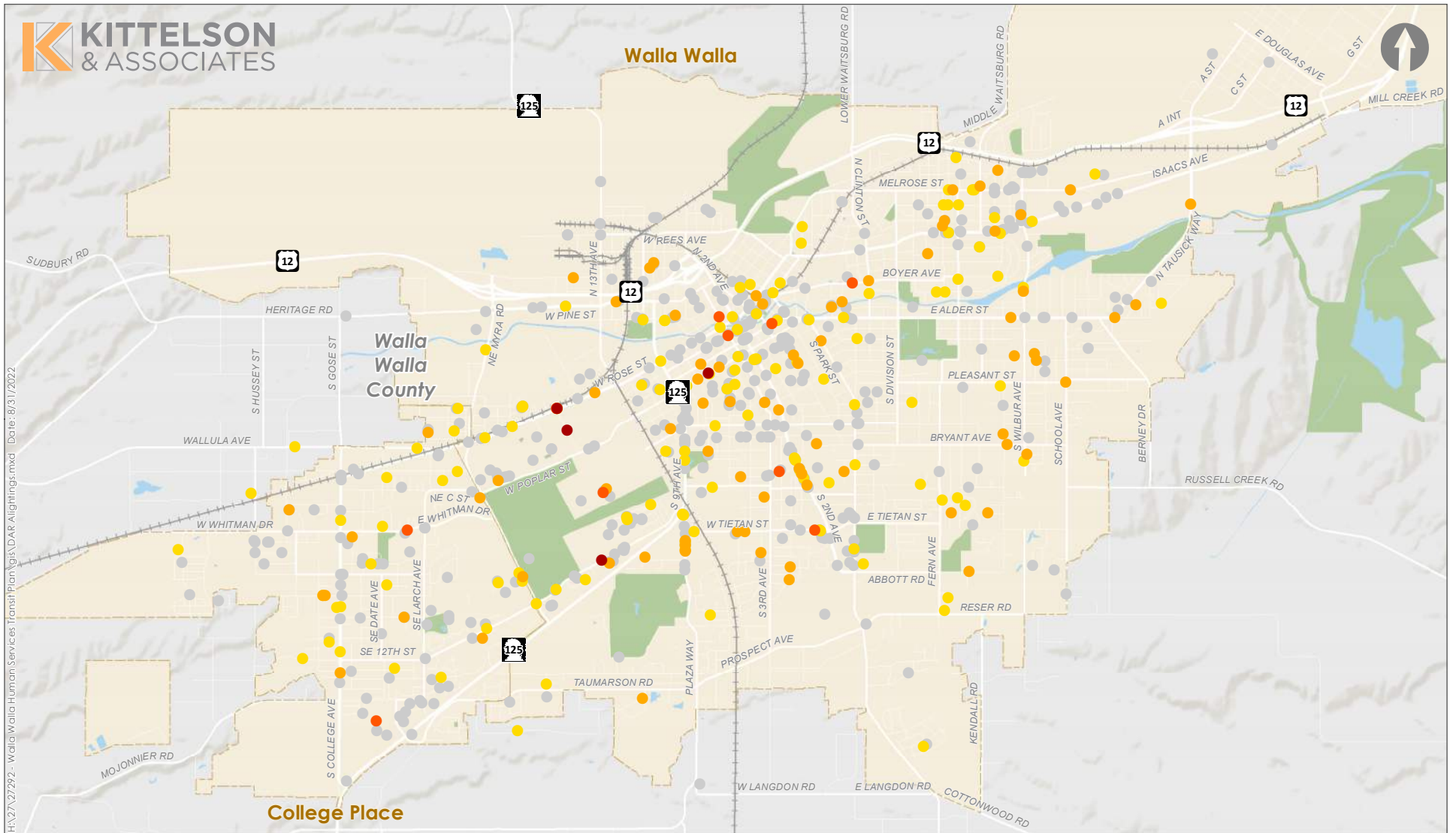


Dial-A-Ride Boardings

- 0 - 10
- 11 - 50
- 51 - 300
- 301 - 500
- 501 - 1493
- ⬜ MPO Boundary
- ⬜ County Boundaries
- ⬜ UGBs
- ⬜ Parks
- ⬜ Railroads

Figure 4
Valley Transit Dial-A-Ride Boarding Patterns – Origins
Walla Walla, WA





Dial-A-Ride Alightings

- 0 - 10
- 11 - 50
- 51 - 300
- 301 - 500
- 501 - 1394
- ⊞ MPO Boundary
- ⊞ County Boundaries
- ⊞ UGBs
- ⊞ Parks
- ⊞ Railroads

Figure 5
Valley Transit Dial-A-Ride Alighting Patterns – Destinations
Walla Walla, WA



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SOCIOECONOMICS

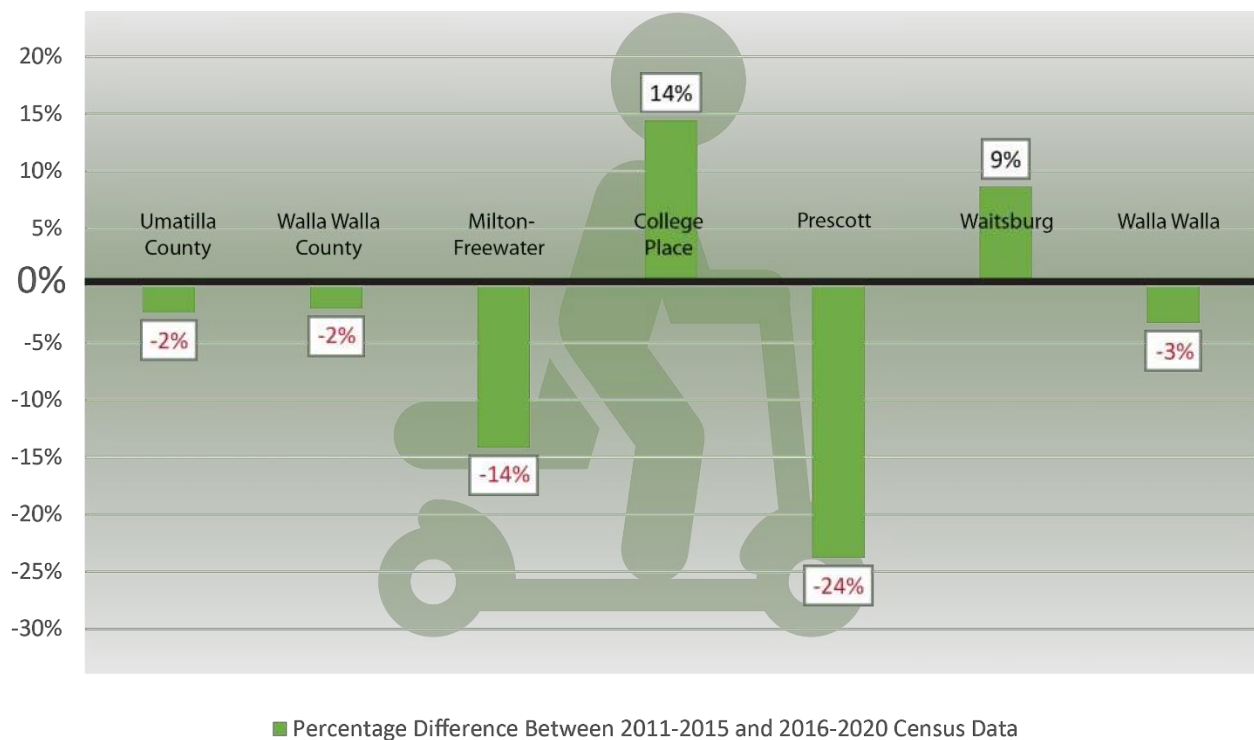
The objective of the analysis is to identify the areas of greatest need and where large numbers of the target populations live in Umatilla County, Walla Walla County, Milton-Freewater, College Place, Prescott, Waitsburg, and Walla Walla by comparing 2011–2015 and 2016–2020 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) data.

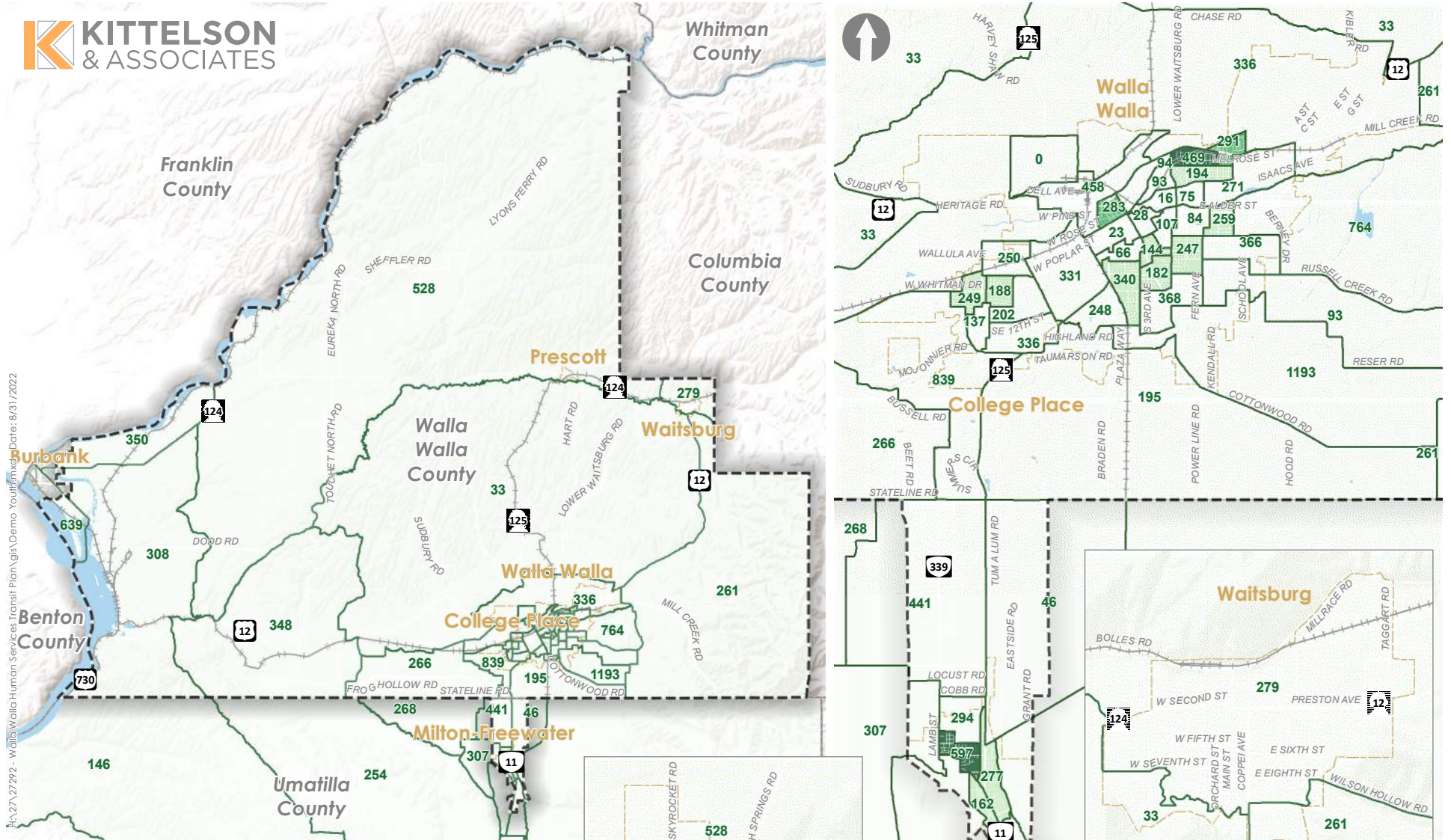
Youth

It is important to recognize the limited mobility options for children. In most cases, they are limited to rides from parents, public transit, school buses, walking, or biking. Since school bus rides are only available for students living outside a one-mile walking distance or more from their school, there is an increased need for investments into active transportations improvements, such as walking, biking, and programs such as Safe Routes to School to improve safety.

The percentage of children under the age of 18 mostly decreased over the five-year period. Although there are jurisdictions where an increase is shown, the varying distribution in the region is evident and can be seen in Figure 6. As shown in Figure 7 there is a higher concentration of youth population to the north, east and south of Walla Walla, central College Place and central Milton-Freewater.

Figure 6. Percentage Difference for Youth Population (Under 18 Years)





People Under Age 18 per Acre by Block Group

- 0 - 1
- >1 - 2
- >2 - 3
- Greater than 3
- MPO Boundary
- UGB
- County Boundaries

Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5 Year Table B01001

Figure 7
**Youth Population
Walla Walla, WA**



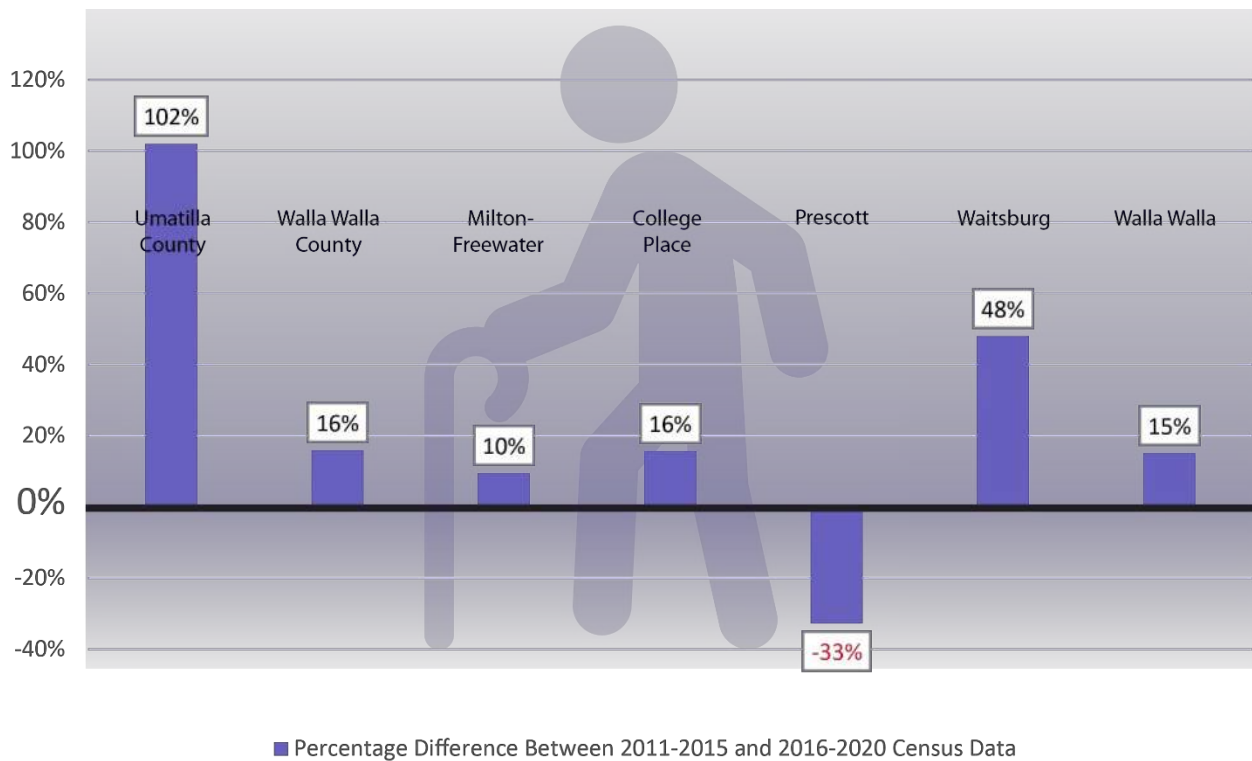


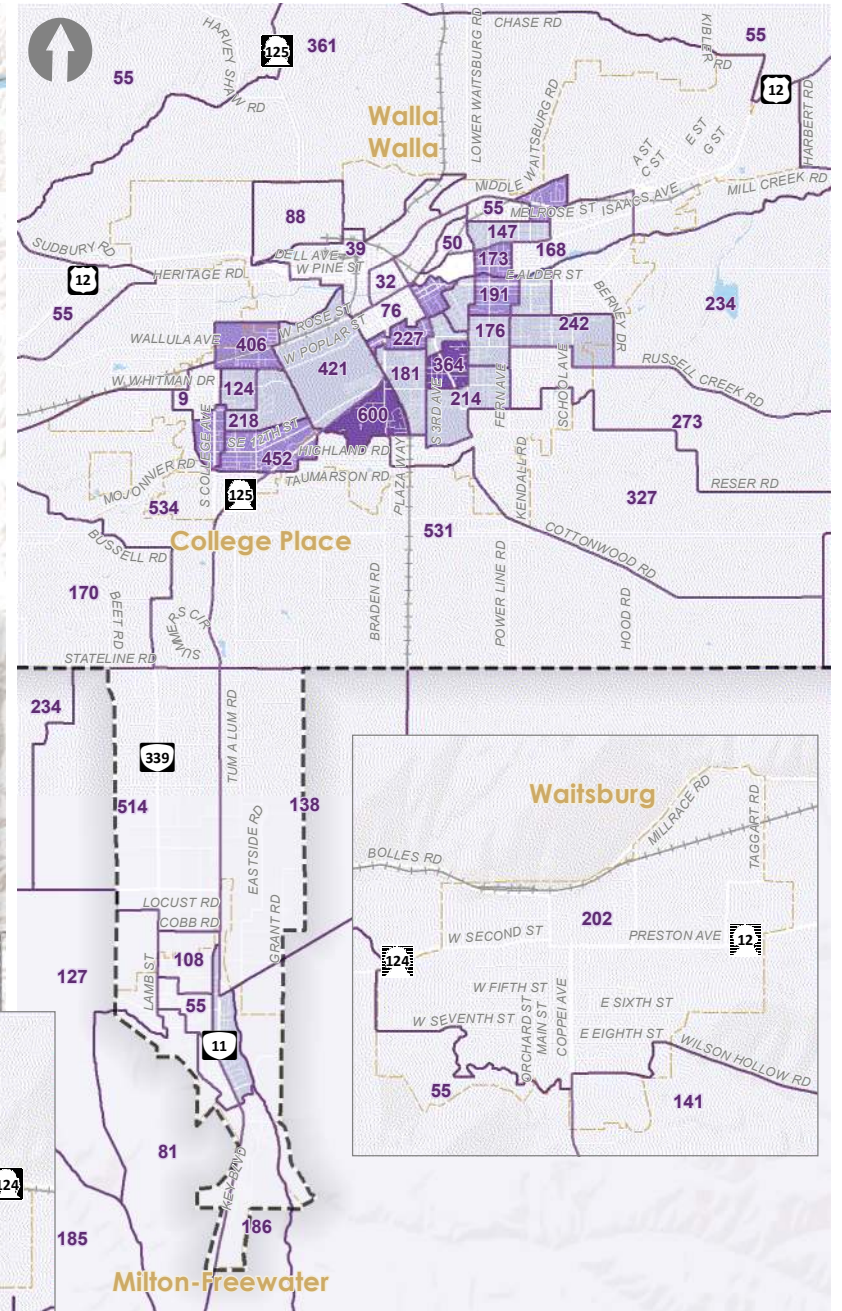
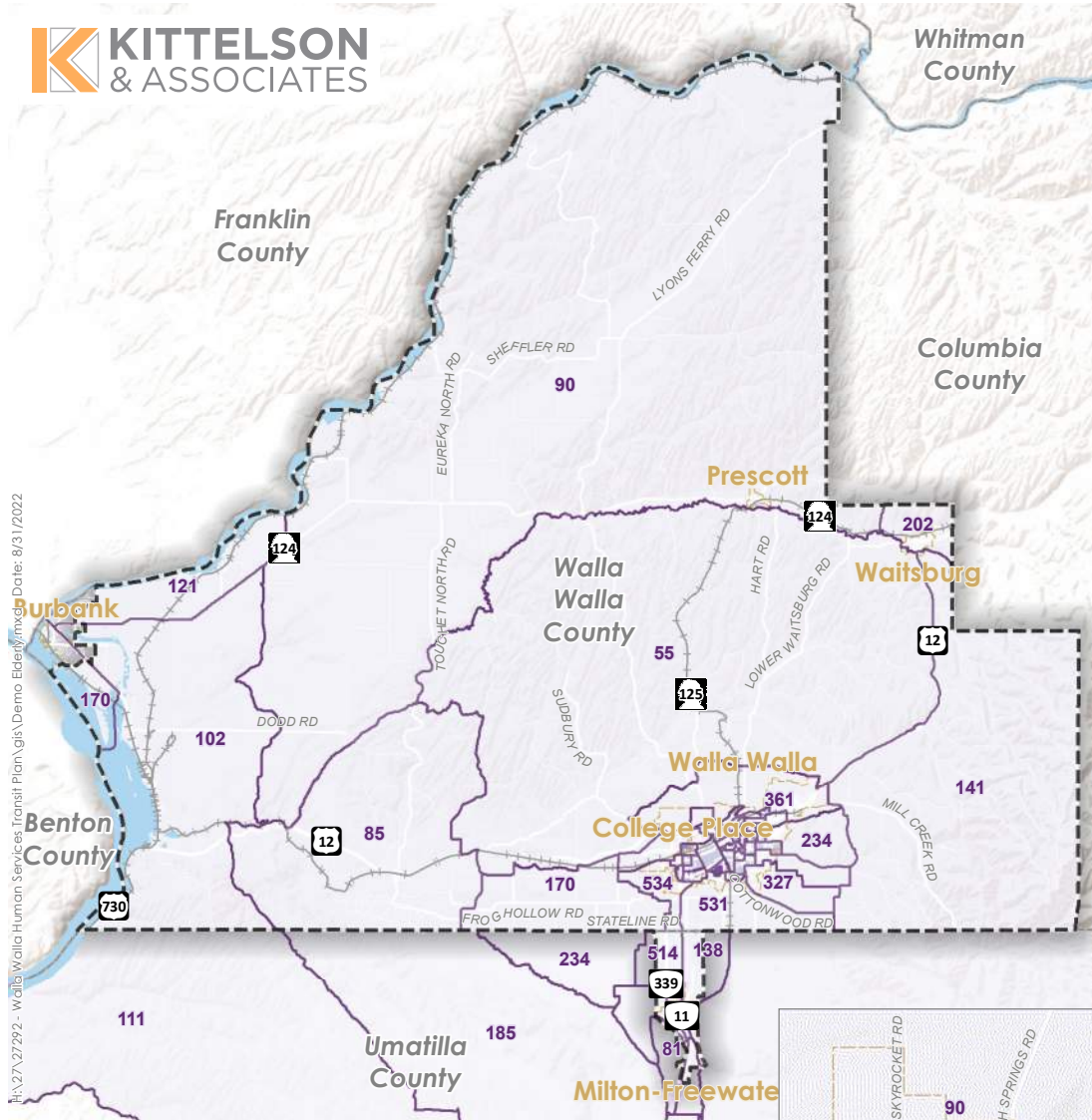
OLDER ADULTS

The first “baby boomers” turned 65 years old in 2011, contributing to an increase in this population cohort. In general, older adults are more likely to use public transportation than the general population, as it becomes more difficult to drive or to maintain their own car on a fixed income. To increase the mobility options, there is an increased need for investments into transportation alternatives that do not require private vehicles. This is easier in more urbanized areas; however, for older adults who wish to “age in place” in rural areas, they are faced with significant mobility challenges.

The percentage of older adults has increased in all the jurisdictions except Prescott in the Walla Walla Valley region (Figure 8). There is a higher concentration of senior population in Walla Walla and College Place (Figure 9).

Figure 8. Percentage Difference for Senior Population





Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5 Year Table B01001

Figure 9
Senior Population
Walla Walla, WA



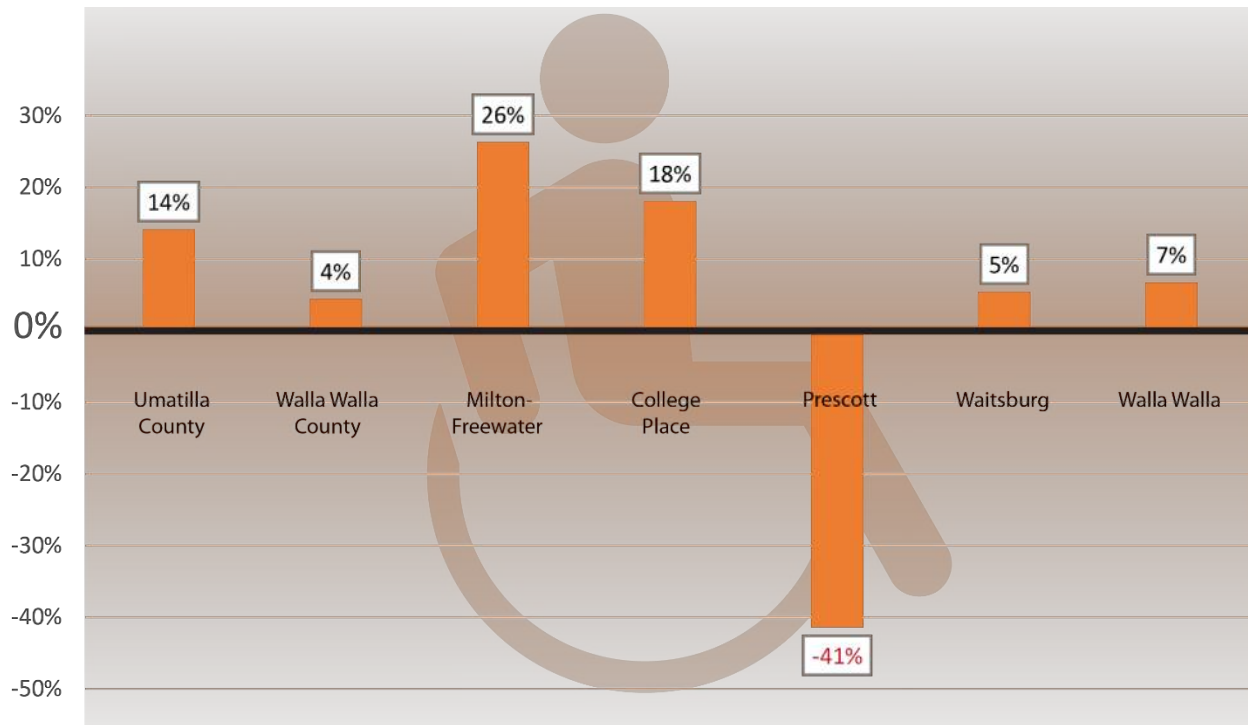


POPULATIONS WITH DISABILITIES

Individuals with a disability may experience mobility challenges that affect their access to education, recreation, employment opportunities, and essential services. Additionally, limited mobility options may lead to social isolation. As a result, they are hindered from achieving and maintaining a high quality of life.

Although a decrease is shown in Prescott, the percentage of individuals with disabilities mostly increased in the rest of the region over the five-year period (Figure 10). There is a high concentration of populations with disabilities spread across Walla Walla, College Place and central Milton-Freewater (Figure 11).

Figure 10. Percentage Difference for Populations with Disabilities



■ Percentage Difference Between 2011-2015 and 2016-2020 Census Data

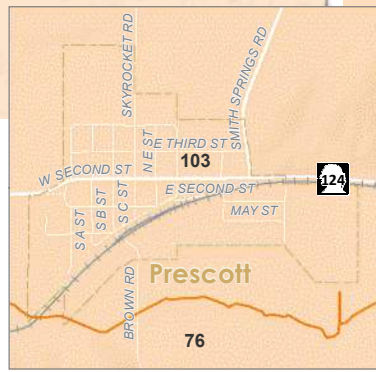
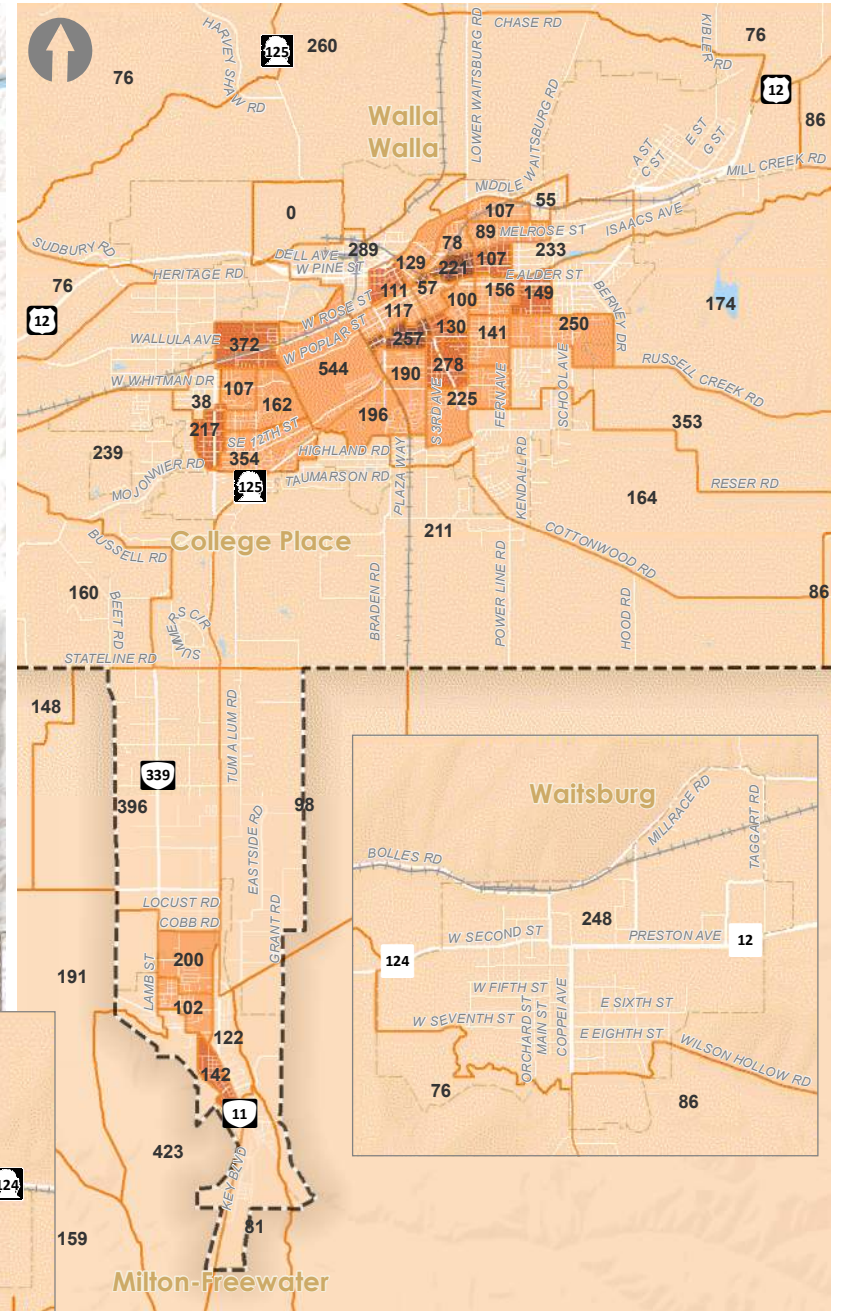
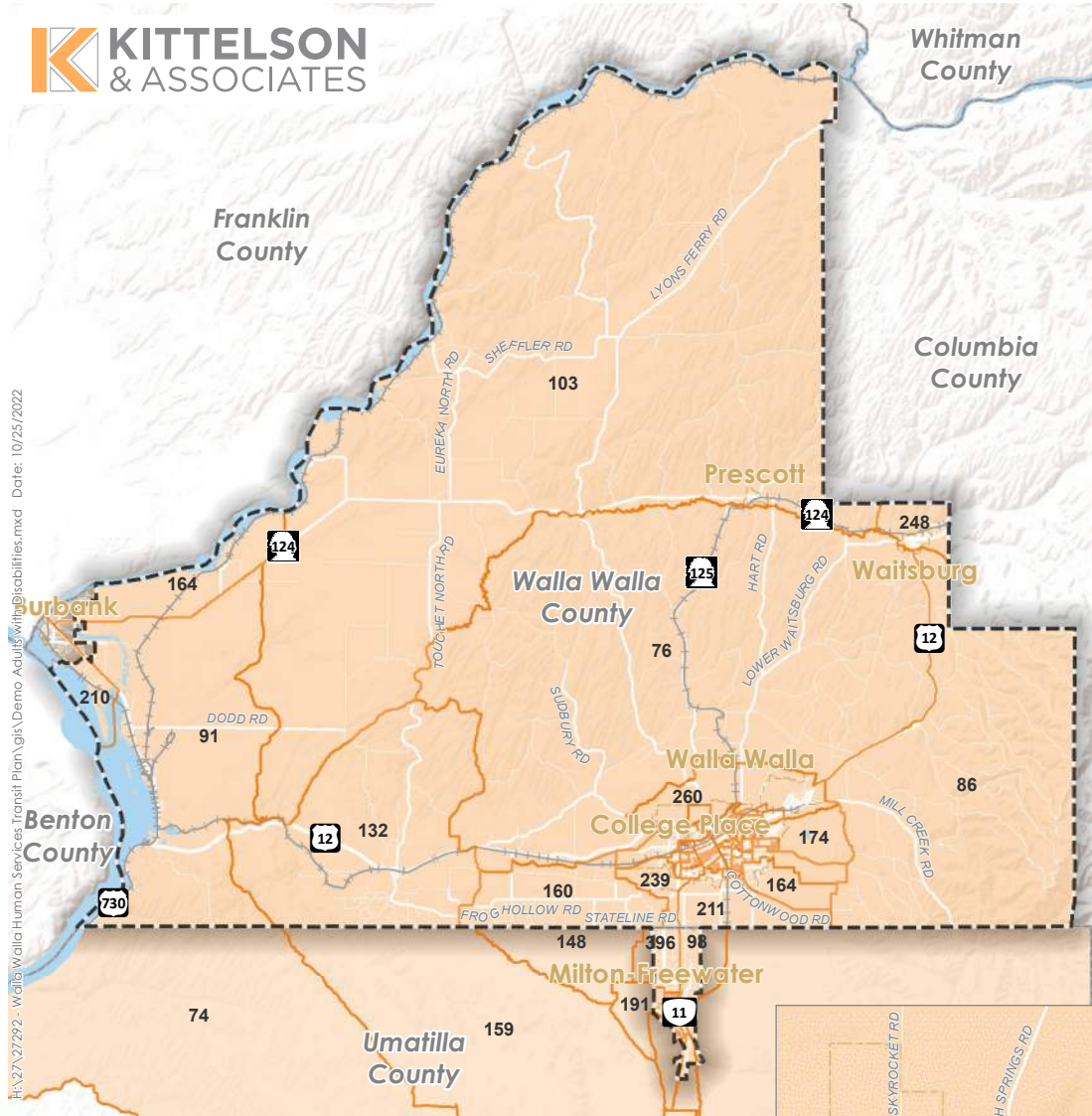


Figure 11
**Population with Disabilities
Walla Walla, WA**

Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5 Year Table C21007

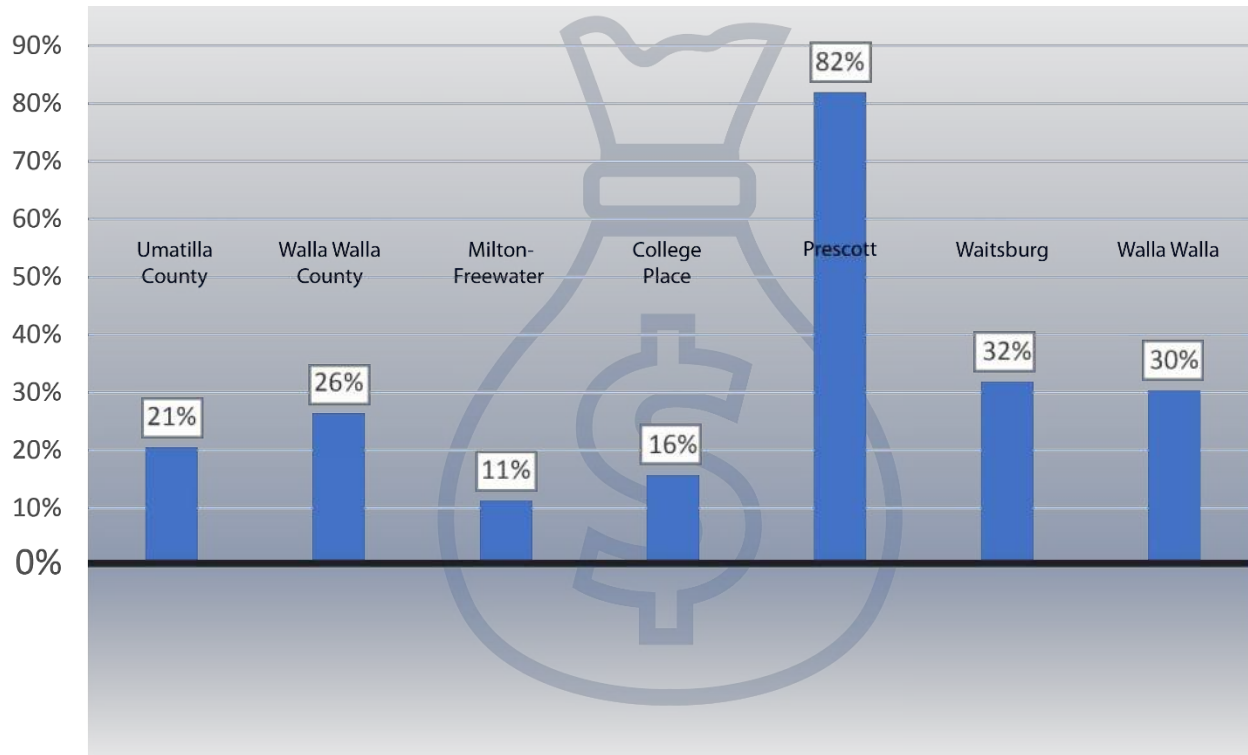




HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The federal poverty threshold is calculated by the size of the household and is adjusted annually. In 2021 the threshold for an individual was \$12,880 in annual earnings and \$26,500 for a household of four.⁴ The median household income has increased overall with the lowest in Milton-Freewater. The median household income increased by 82% in Prescott during this timeframe (Figure 12).

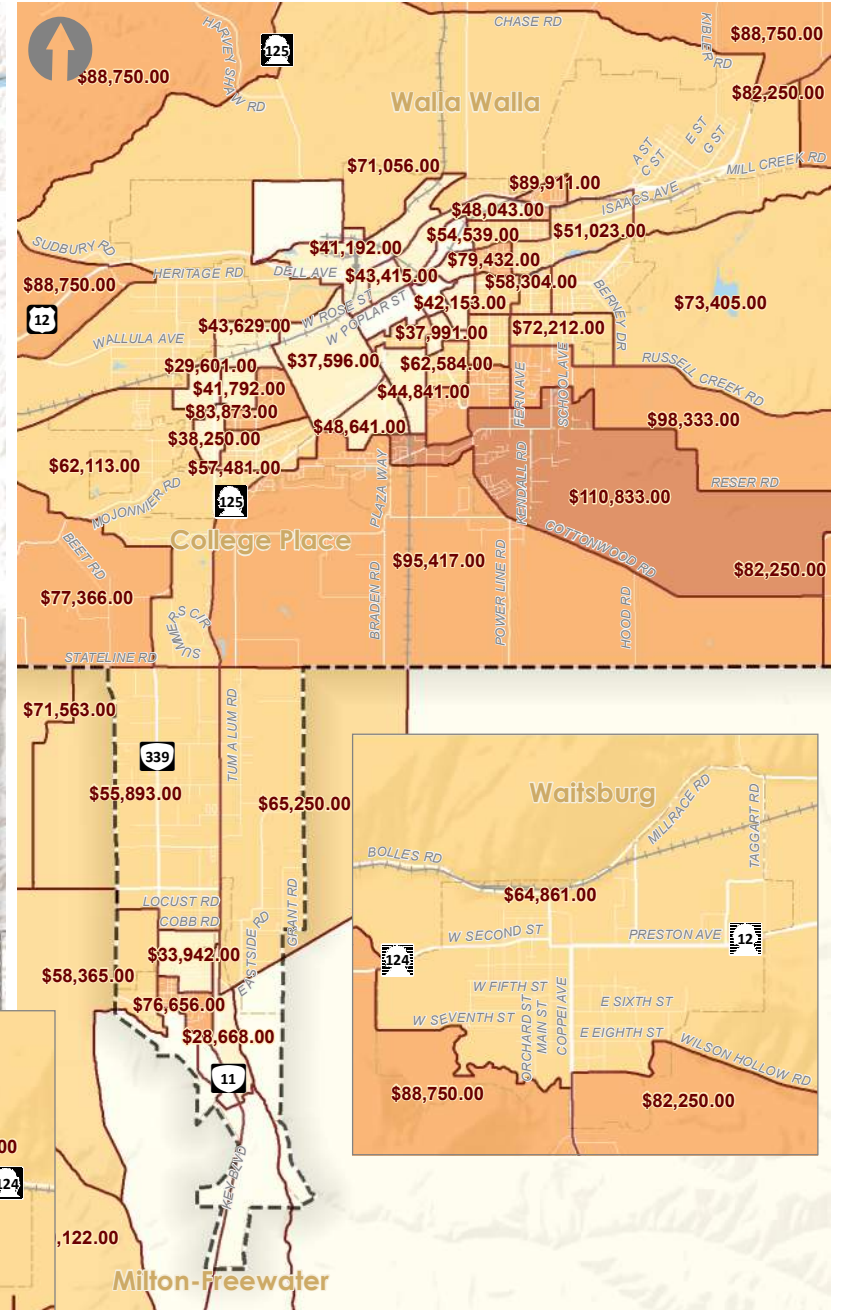
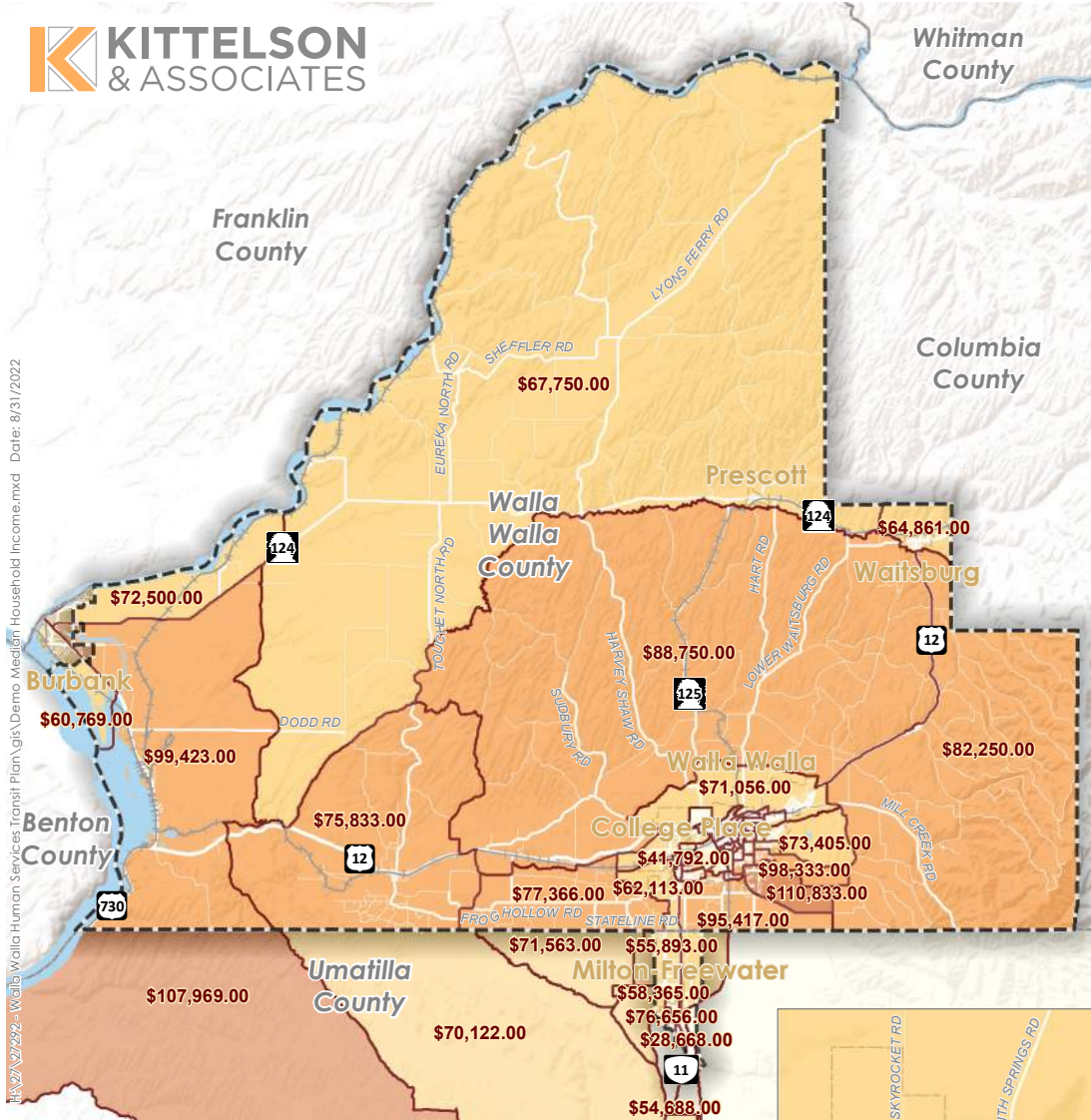
Figure 12. Percentage Difference Median Household Income











■ Percentage Difference Between 2011-2015 and 2016-2020 Census Data

Figure 13 illustrates median household income by block group. Median household income is lower in central Walla Walla and Milton-Freewater. The outskirts of the cities (southeastern parts of Walla Walla) have a higher median income.

⁴ <https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/federal-poverty-level-fpl/>



Median Household Income by Block Group

-  \$0.00 - \$25,000.00
 -  \$25,000.01 - \$50,000.00
 -  \$50,000.01 - \$75,000.00
 -  \$75,000.01 - \$100,000.00
 -  \$100,000.01 - \$110,833.00
-  MPO Boundary
 -  UGB
 -  County Boundaries

Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5 Year Table B19013

Figure 13
**Median Household Income
Walla Walla, WA**





HOUSEHOLD BELOW POVERTY

The U.S. Census Bureau measures poverty by looking at the ratio between a household’s income and the household’s poverty threshold, called the Ratio of Income to Poverty. Households with an Income to Poverty Ratio below 1 are eligible for federal assistance programs; however, households with a ratio between 1 and 2 still experience the impacts of poverty and may be eligible for other benefits.

As shown in Figure 14, the number of households below the poverty level have reduced significantly. Prescott experienced the biggest reduction in number of households below the poverty level (62%) compared to other areas, whereas College Place experienced the smallest reduction (13%).

Figure 14. Households Below Poverty level

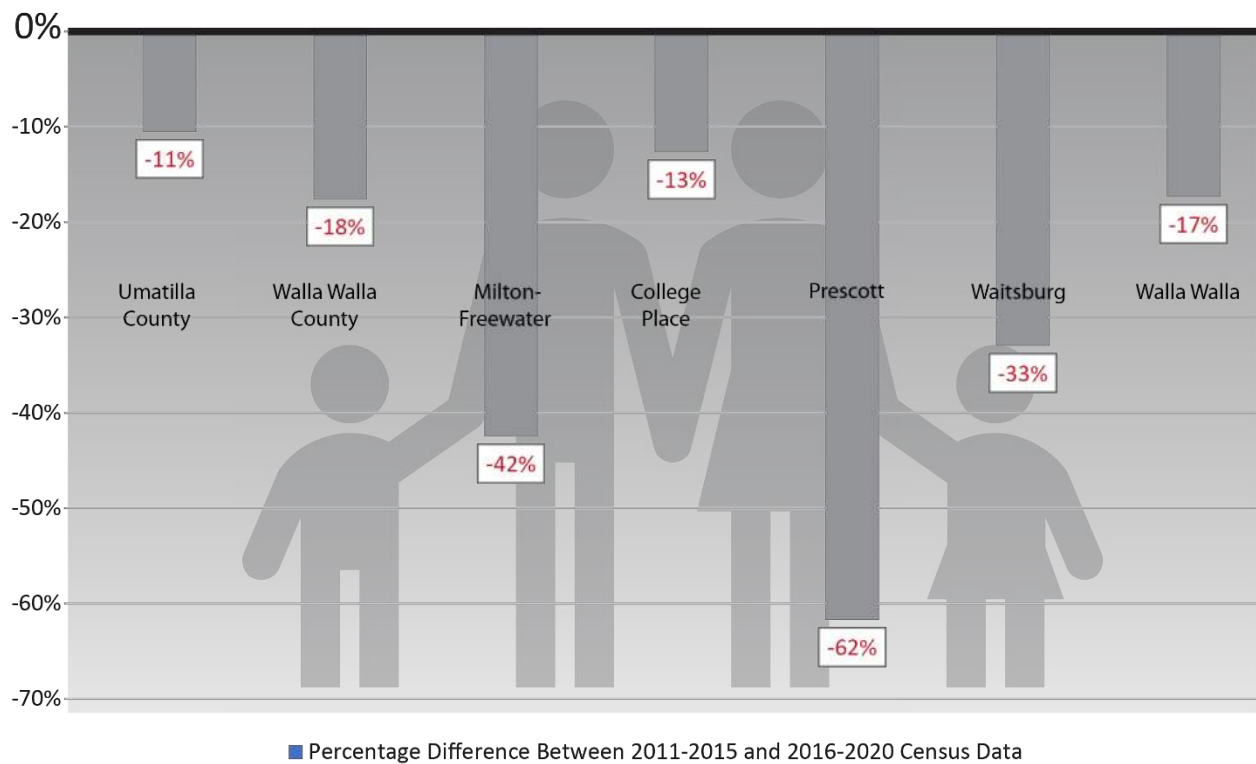
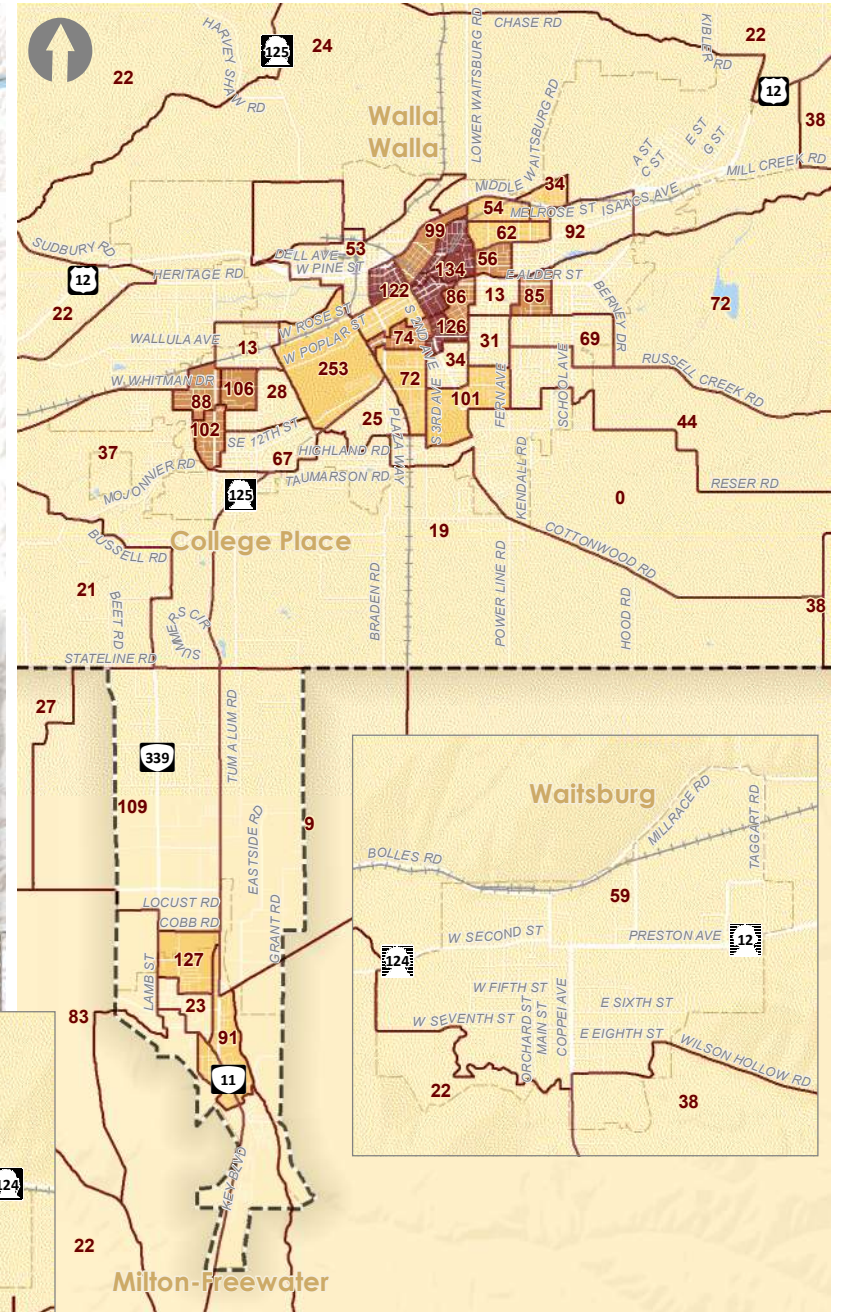
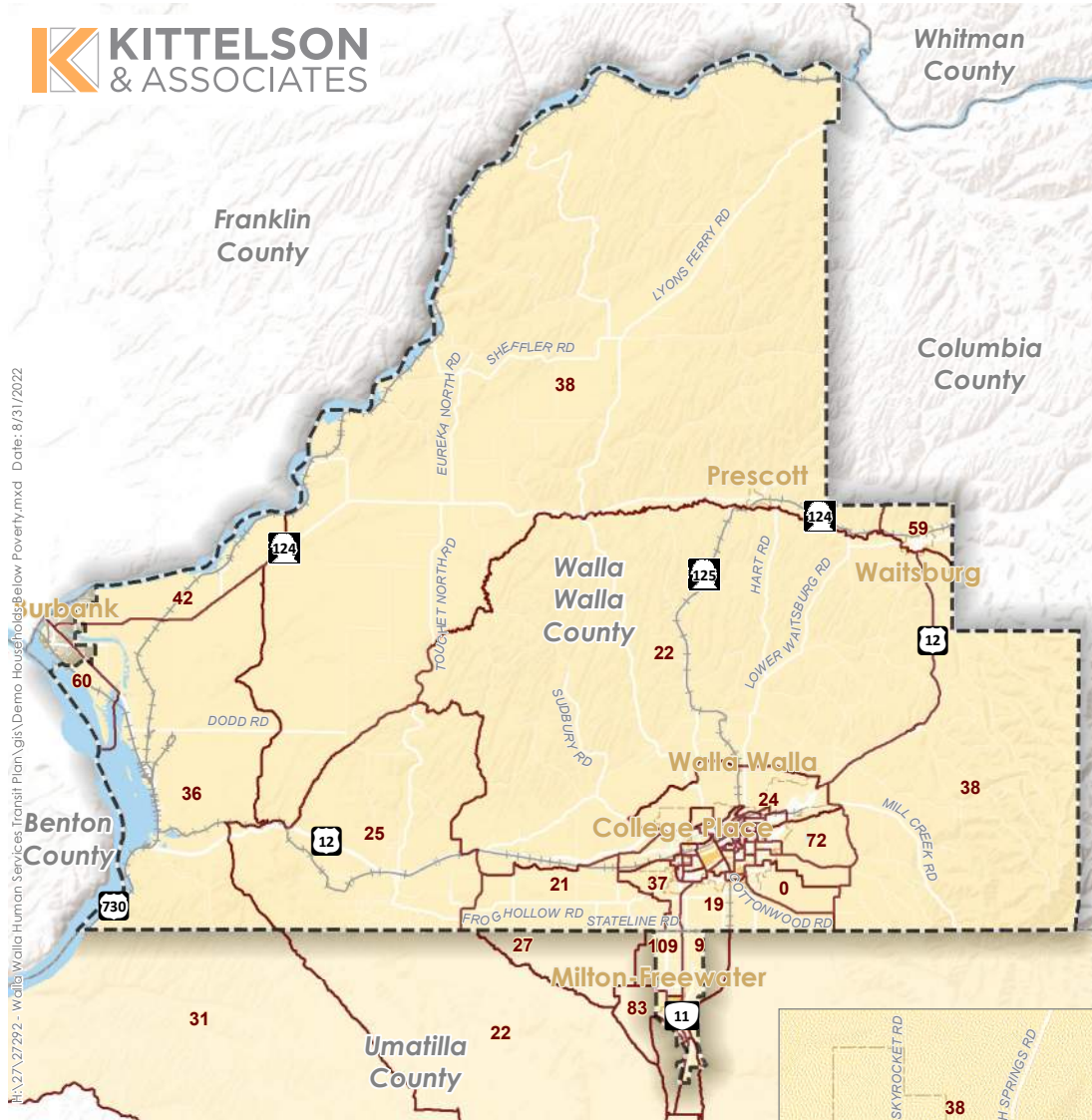


Figure 15 illustrates households below poverty per acre by block group. There is a high concentration of households below poverty level in many parts Walla Walla.



Households Below Poverty per Acre by Block Group

- 0 - 0.25
- 0.26 - 0.5
- 0.51 - 1
- 1.01 - 1.47
- MPO Boundary
- UGB
- County Boundaries

Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5 Year Table B17017

Figure 15

**Households Below Poverty Level
Walla Walla, WA**



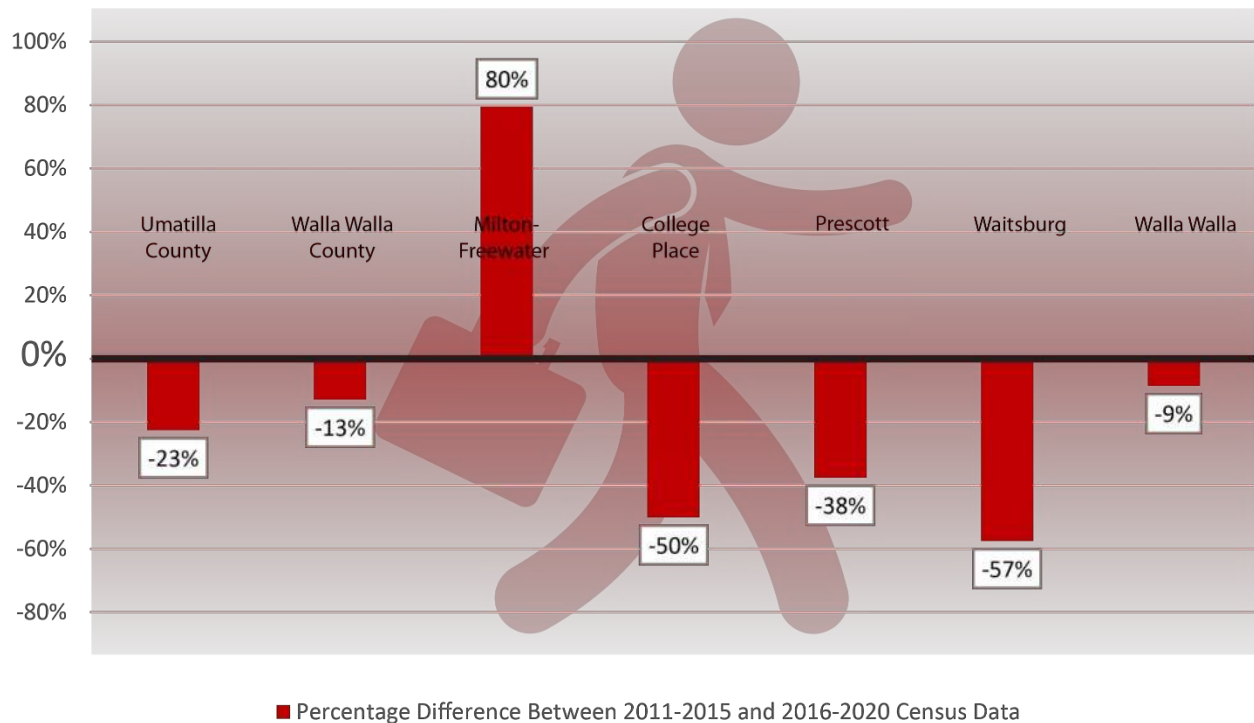


ZERO VEHICLE HOUSEHOLDS

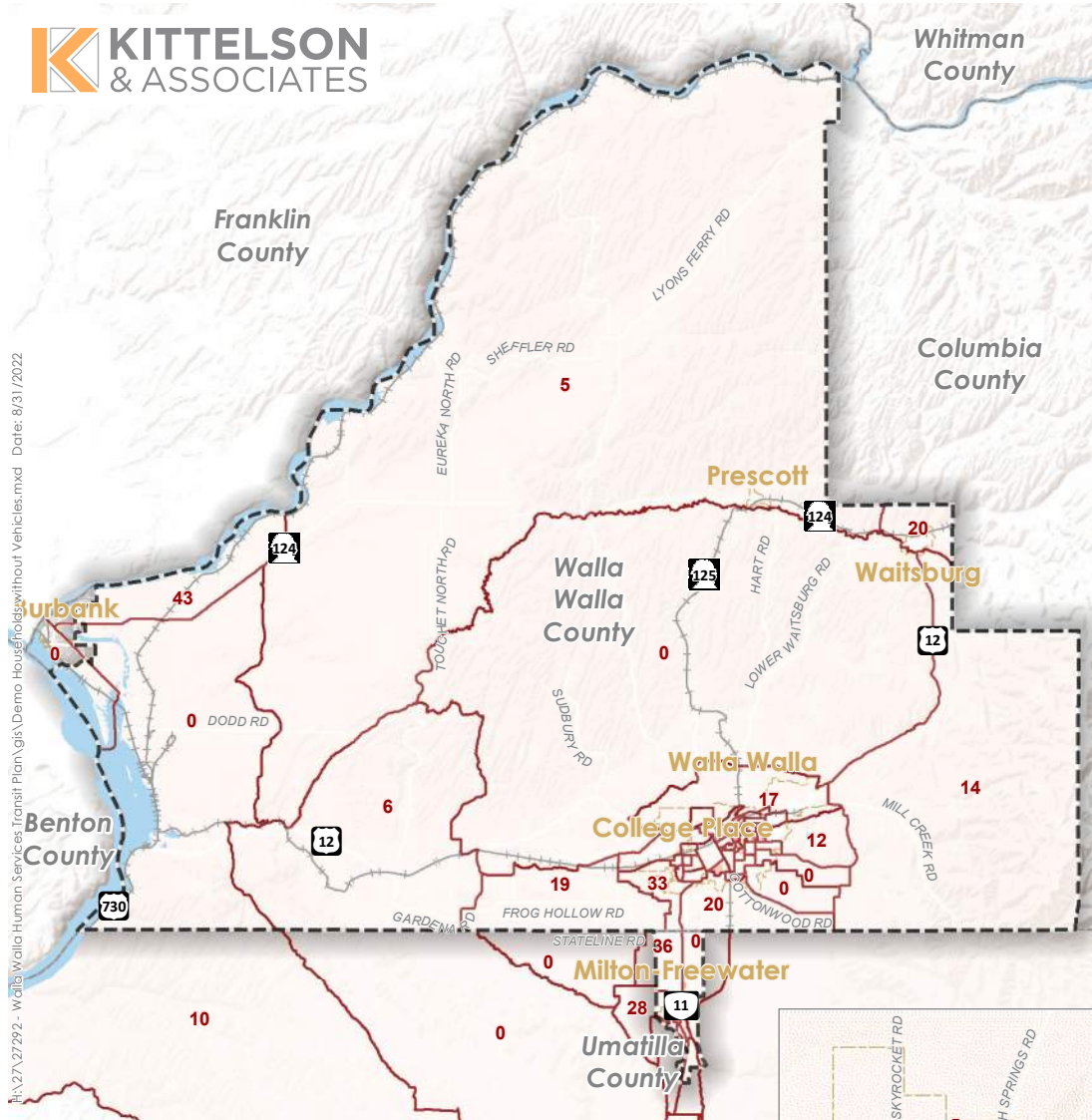
There is a significant decline in number of households with no vehicles compared to previous years except in Milton-Freewater.

Owning and maintaining a private vehicle can put a tremendous strain on a household’s income. Therefore, the spatial distribution of car ownership throughout the Walla Walla Valley region should be considered when evaluating transportation needs and making investment decisions. Employment opportunities can be limited without reliable transportation options. Transit-dependent employees who live outside urban areas and must commute in the early morning, late night, or on the weekend are also at a disadvantage due to limited transit service.

Figure 16. Percentage Difference for Populations with No Vehicles



There is a high concentration of households with no vehicles in central Walla Walla and central Milton-Freewater (Figure 17).



Households without Vehicles per Acre by Block Group

- 0.00 - 0.25
- 0.26 - 0.5
- 0.51 - 1
- 1.01 - 1.5
- MPO Boundary
- UGB
- County Boundaries

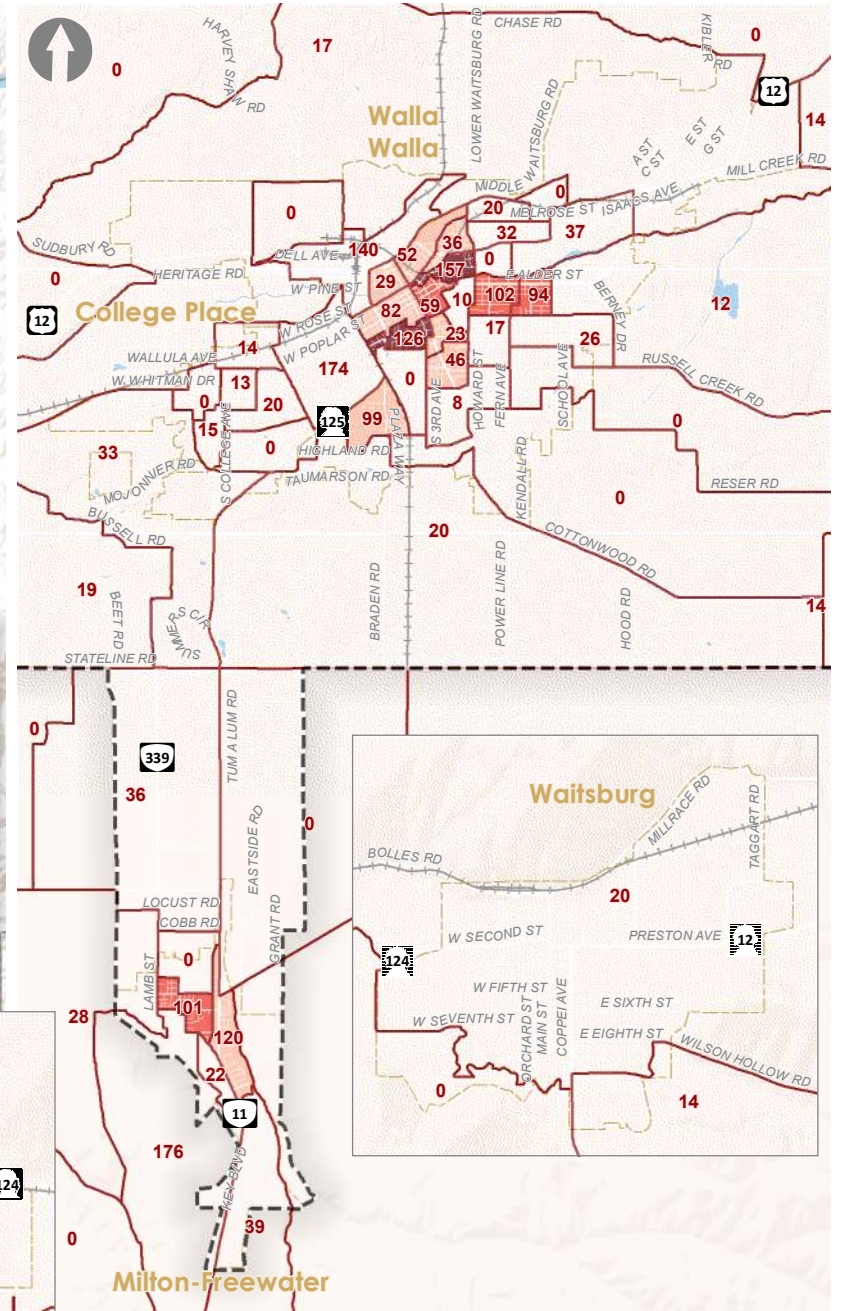
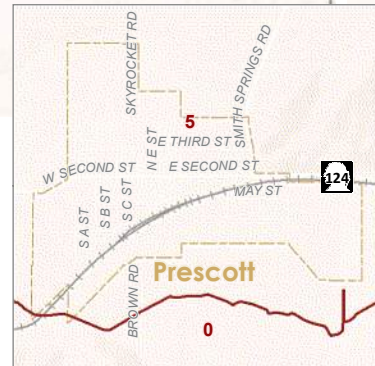


Figure 17

**Zero-Vehicle Households
Walla Walla, WA**

Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5 Year Table B25044





LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) either do not speak English well or do not speak English at all. Although LEP is not directly related to age, disability, or income effects on mobility, there are still substantial challenges in gaining access to education, recreation, employment, and essential services. Language barriers tend to result in lower-wage jobs and difficulty in accessing information and resources regarding existing transportation options. This underutilization of information and resources should be considered when making investment decisions.

Although there is a jurisdiction where a decrease is shown, there is an evident increase in all other jurisdictions (Figure 18). Households with LEP reduced by 31% in Prescott; however, there is an increase in other areas.

Figure 18. Percentage Difference for Households with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

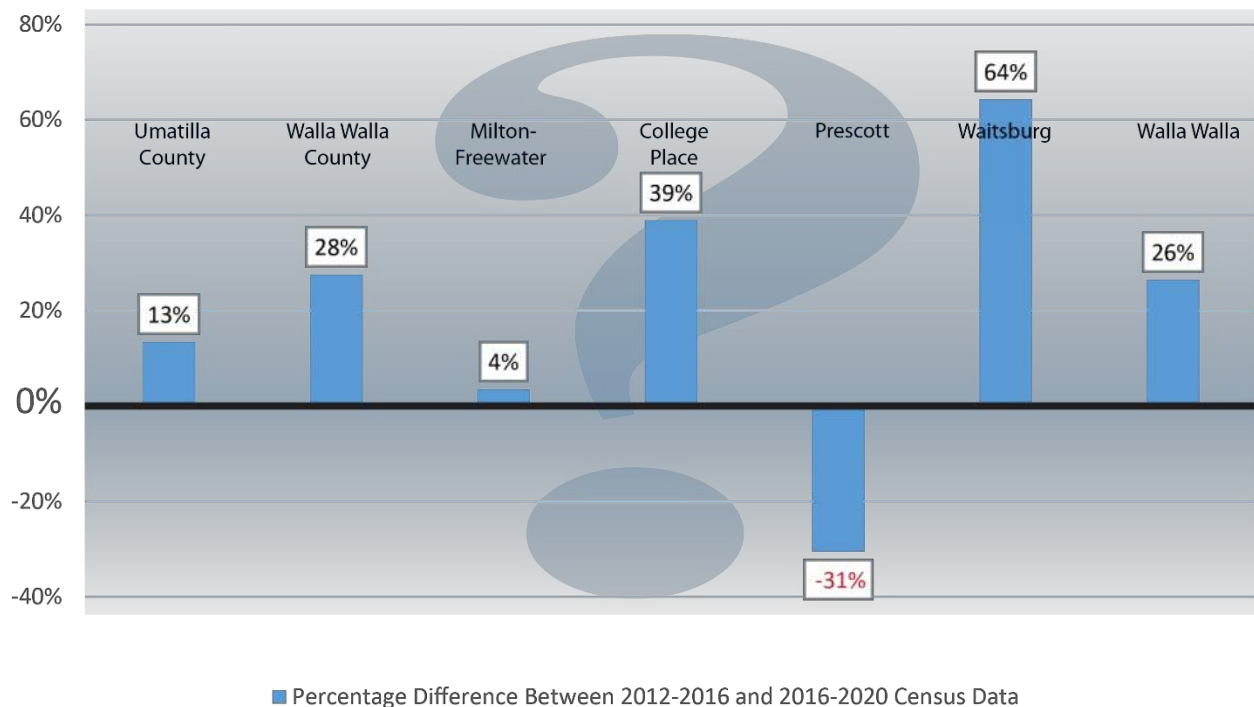
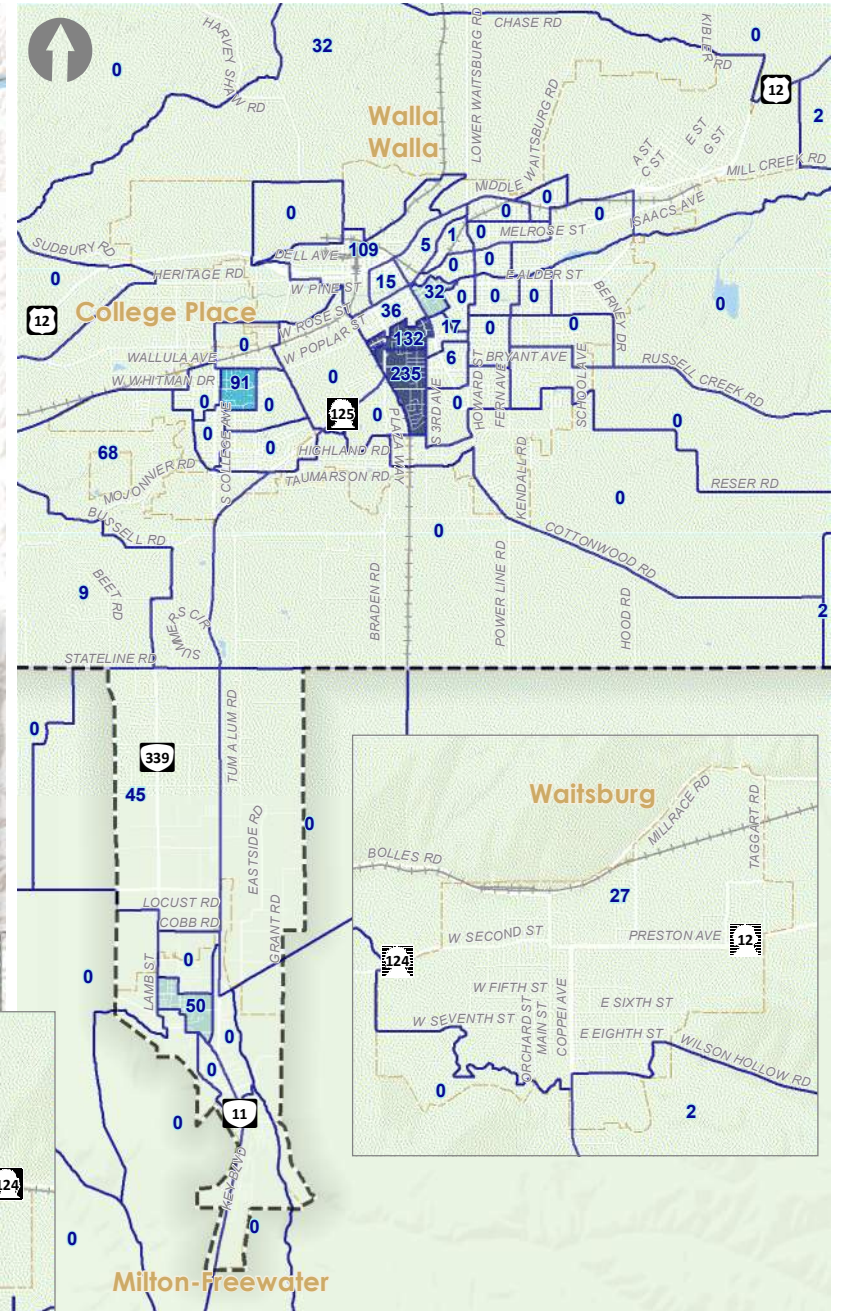
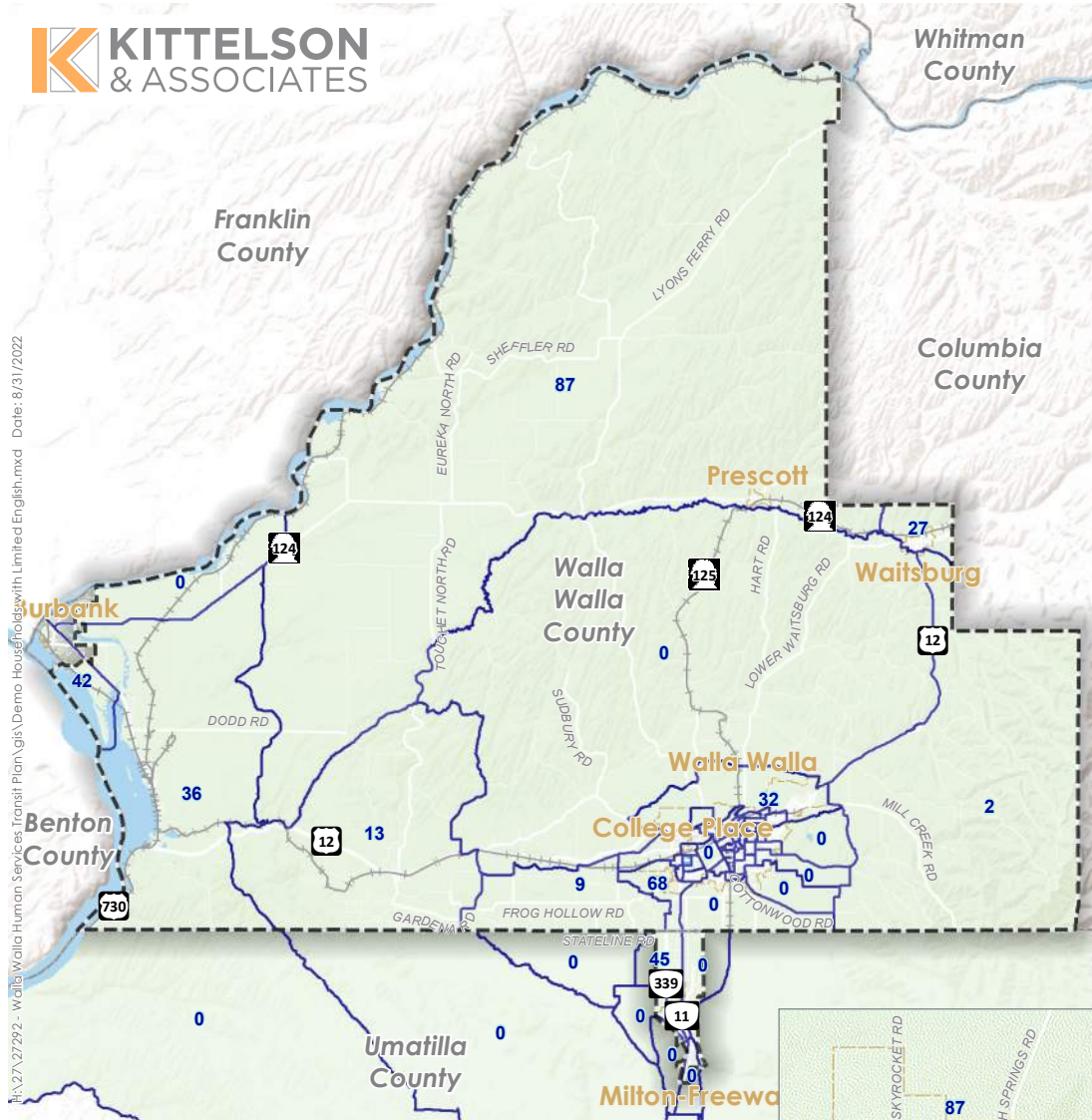


Figure 19 illustrates populations with LEP per acre by block group. There are high concentrations of households with LEP in southern and central Walla Walla, central College Place, and northern Milton-Freewater.



Households with Limited English per Acre by Block Group

- | | | | |
|--|-------------|--|-------------------|
| | 0.00 - 0.25 | | MPO Boundary |
| | 0.26 - 0.5 | | UGB |
| | 0.51 - 0.75 | | County Boundaries |
| | 0.76 - 1.08 | | |

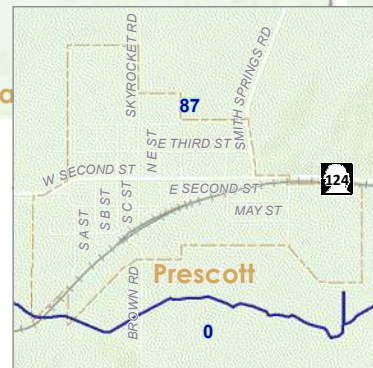


Figure 19
**Populations with Limited English Proficiency
 Walla Walla, WA**

Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5 Year Table C16002



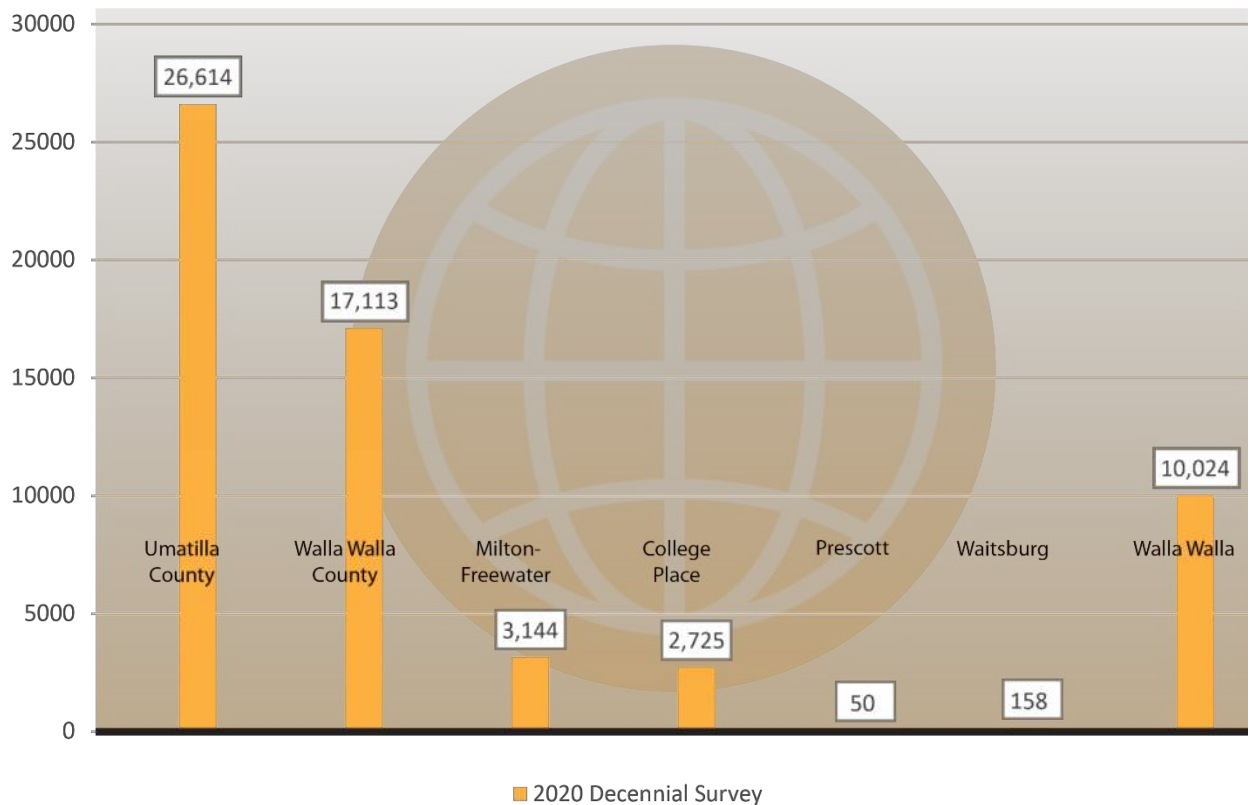


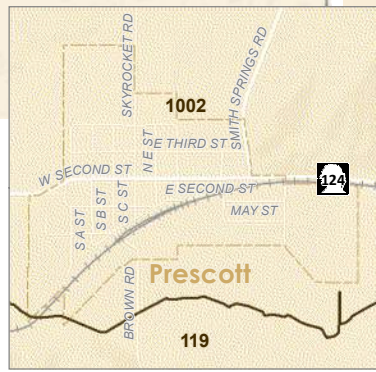
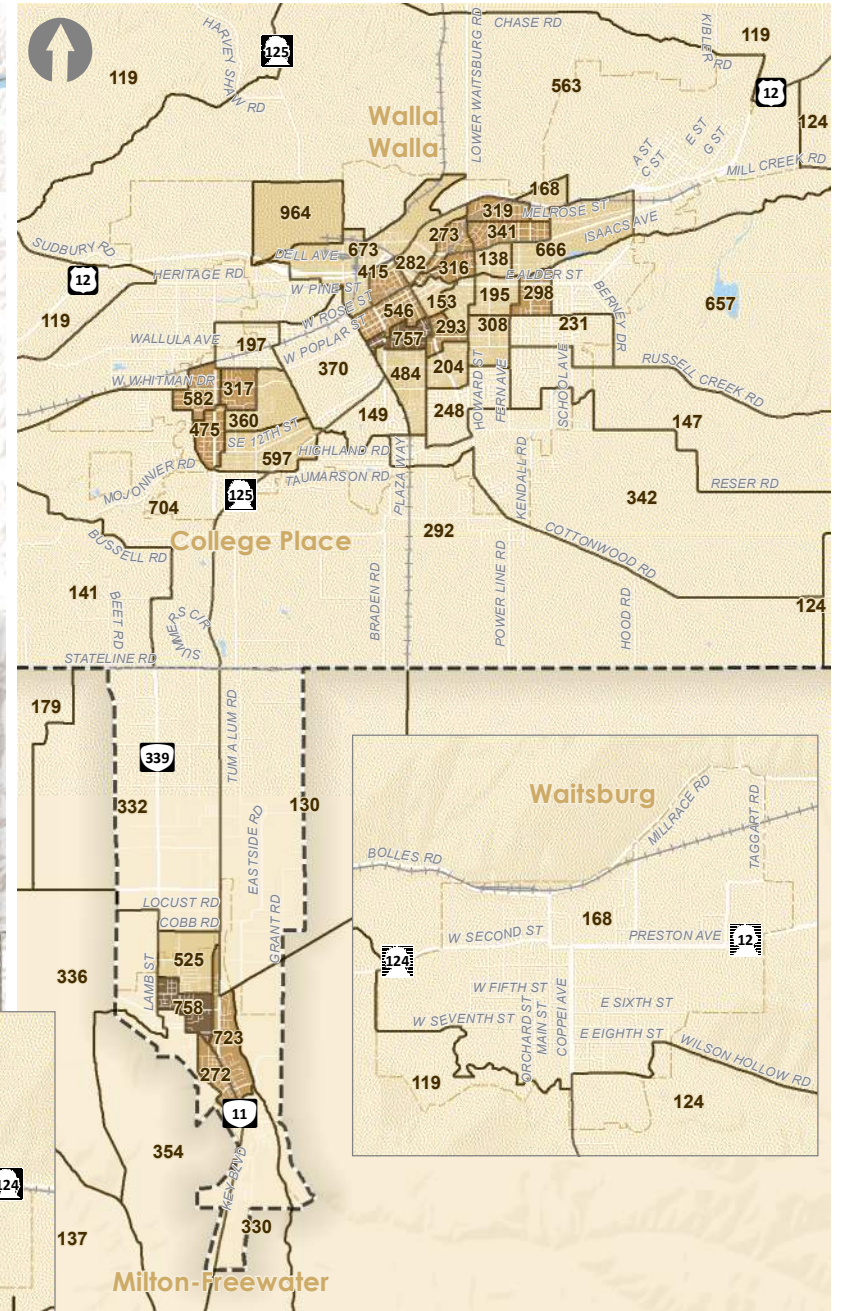
MINORITY

People of a racial minority, who are non-white and/or Hispanic, typically live in neighborhoods with limited transportation options. Therefore, paying attention to the spatial distribution of this population group throughout the Walla Walla Valley region should be considered when evaluating transportation needs and implementing transit services. Figure 20 shows minority populations in 2020 (Decennial Survey). The varying distribution in minority population can be seen in Figure 21.

Minorities make up about 33% of each city’s total populations; however, Walla Walla County (excluding the cities of Walla Walla and College Place) has a much higher percentage of minorities.

Figure 20. Minority Populations





Non-White People per Acre by Block Group

- 0 - 1
- >1 - 2
- >2 - 4
- >4 - 6.2
- MPO Boundary
- UGB
- County Boundaries

Source: 2020 Decennial Survey Table P1 Race

Figure 21
**Minority Populations
Walla Walla, WA**





Origins and Destinations

Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) employment data is a product of the Census Bureau, which provides valuable information about where workers live and work. Queries can be made for many employment variables including place of work, place of residence, work industry, and commute distance. One of the most helpful visualization tools available from LEHD is the web-based On-The-Map feature. This tool provides a means to look at jobs based on home location or work locations. This data set is generated based on administrative records; therefore, some work locations may be over- or underrepresented.

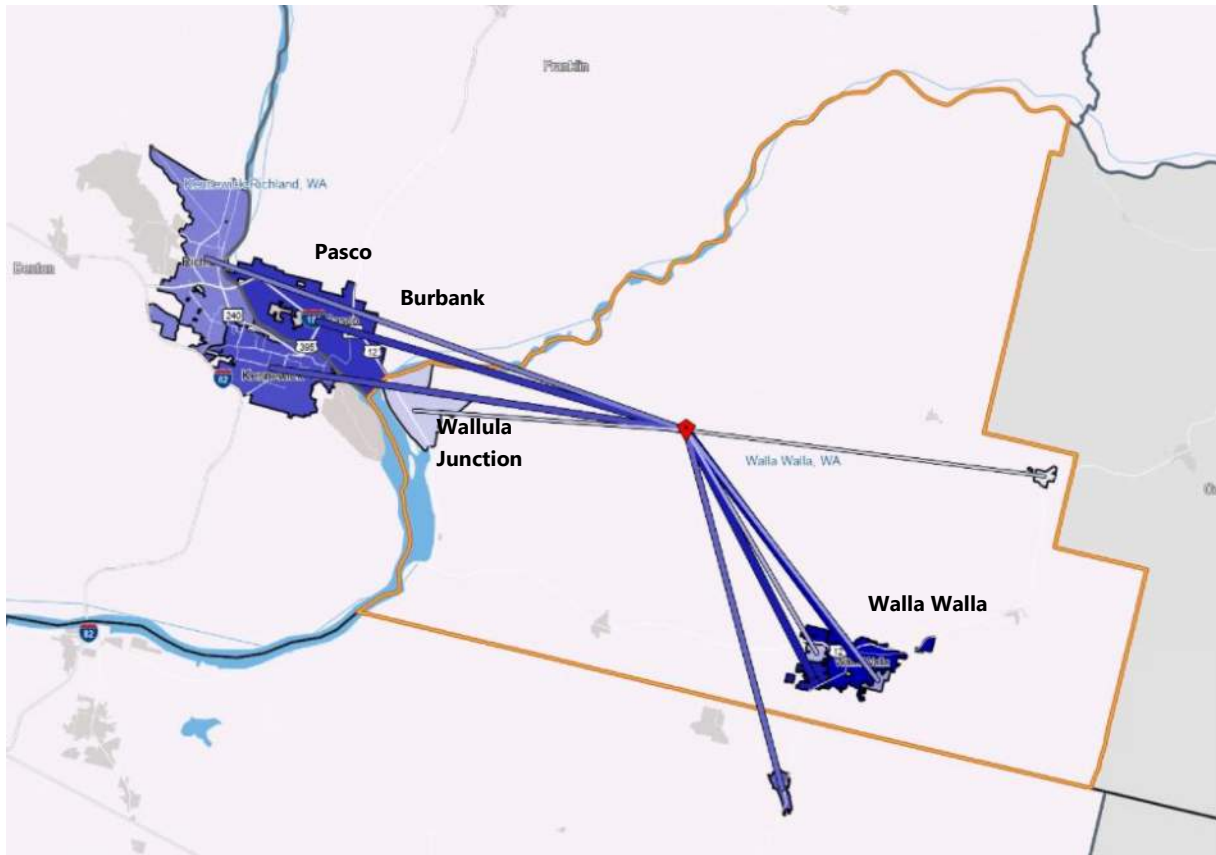
Using this data, the following key employment characteristics within Walla Walla were identified and should be considered when evaluating the transit system.

- » There are 7,243 workers and 22,297 jobs in the Walla Walla.
- » Approximately 48 percent of Walla Walla residents also work in Walla Walla.
- » Beyond those who work within Walla Walla, College Place, Pasco, and Kennewick are the most common cities in which Walla Walla residents work.
- » Approximately 20 percent of Walla Walla residents commute greater than 50 miles to work.

Figure 22 shows where Walla Walla residents work, with the thick lines representing greater density of workers commuting to their respective places.



Figure 22. Work Location of Walla Walla Workers



Source: 2019 LEHD On-The-Map Analysis; Note that the origin point is autogenerated from the geographical center of each location.

Table 2 shows the largest share of Walla Walla residents also work in Walla Walla (48.4 percent).

Table 2. Work Location – Walla Walla Residents

Work Location	Places	Share
All Places	22,297	100.0%
Walla Walla, WA	10,789	48.4%
College Place, WA	1,235	5.5%
Pasco, WA	787	3.5%
Kennewick, WA	688	3.1%
Spokane, WA	591	2.7%
Richland, WA	432	1.9%
Spokane Valley, WA	287	1.3%
Milton-Freewater, WA	285	1.3%
Burbank CDP, WA	254	1.1%
Seattle, WA	224	1.0%



All Other Locations	6,725	30.2%
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Source: 2019 LEHD

Table 3 shows the distance the Walla Walla residents commute.

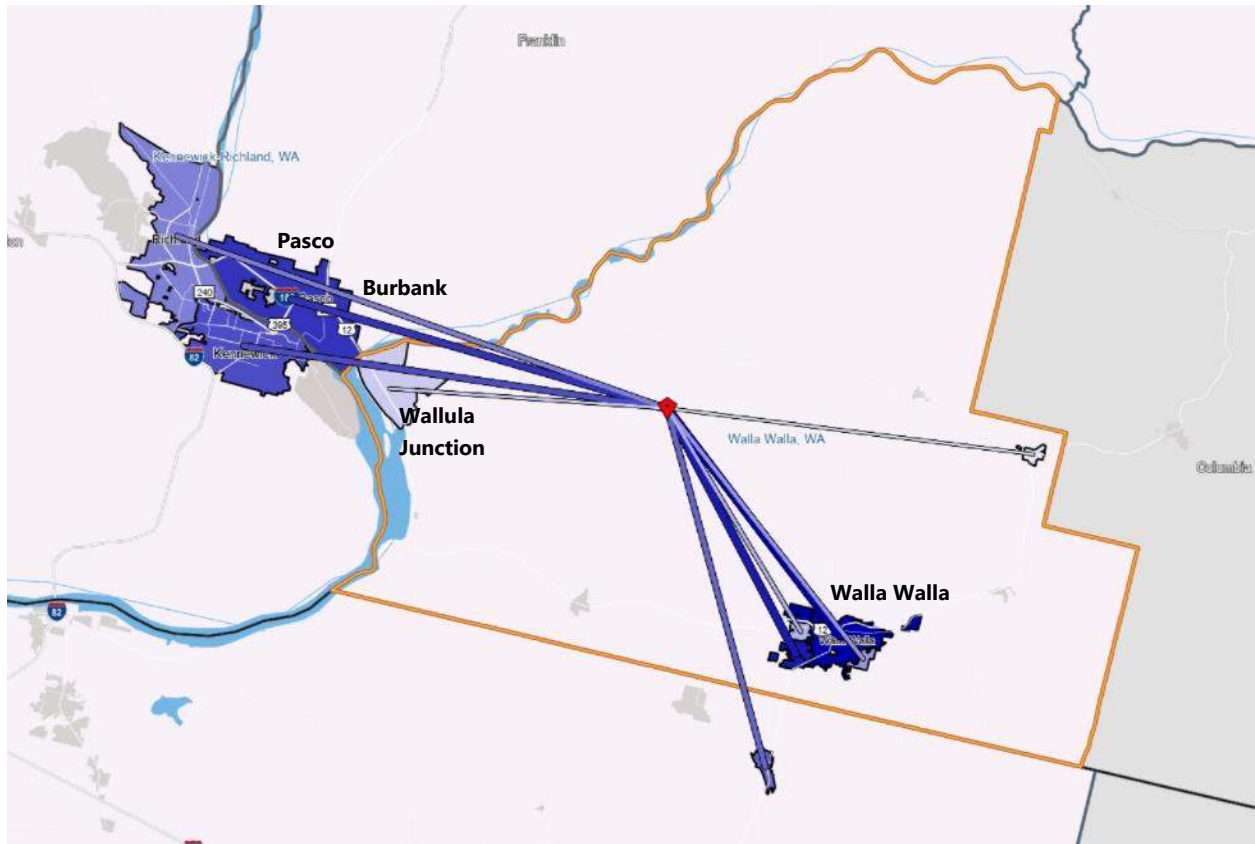
Table 3. Distance Home to Work

Distance Home to Work	Count	Share
Total Jobs	22,297	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	13,647	61.2%
10 to 24 miles	1,849	8.3%
25 to 50 miles	2,342	10.5%
Greater than 50 miles	4,459	20.0%

Source: 2019 LEHD

Figure 23 and Table 4 illustrate where Walla Walla workers live, summarized at a place/city level. Approximately 31.3 percent of Walla Walla workers also live within Walla Walla.

Figure 23. Home Location of Walla Walla Workers



Source: 2019 LEHD On-The-Map Analysis. Note that the origin point is autogenerated from the geographical center of each location.



Table 4. Home Location – Walla Walla Workers

Work Location	County	Share
All Places	25,941	100.0%
Walla Walla, WA	8,128	31.3%
College Place, WA	2,237	8.6%
Pasco, WA	2,052	7.9%
Kennewick, WA	1,595	6.1%
Spokane, WA	884	3.4%
Richland, WA	576	2.2%
Spokane Valley, WA	485	1.9%
Milton-Freewater, WA	437	1.7%
Burbank CDP, WA	371	1.4%
Seattle, WA	300	1.2%
All Other Locations	8,876	34.2%

Source: 2019 LEHD

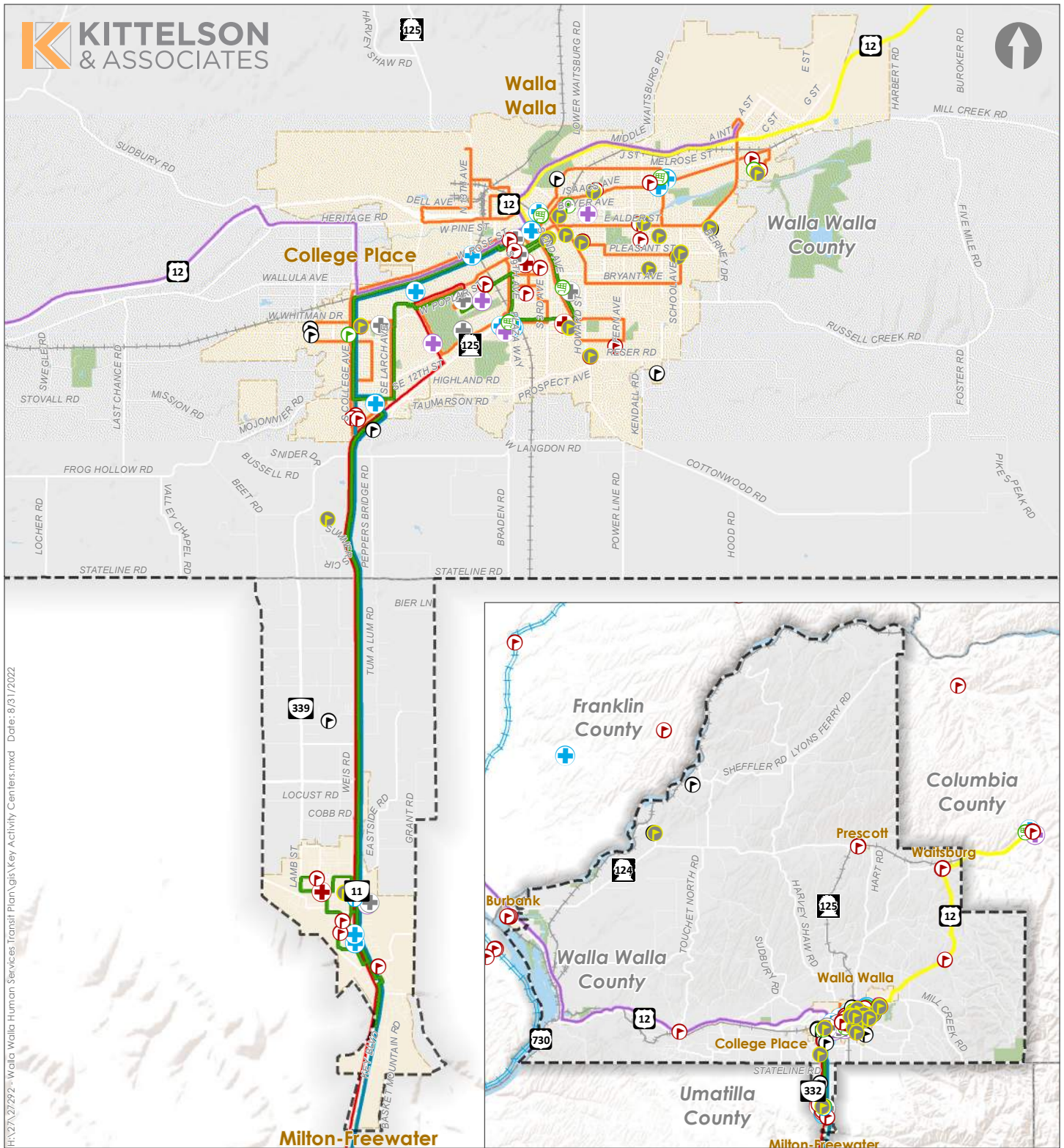


KEY ACTIVITY CENTERS AND TRANSIT DESTINATIONS

Common transit destinations reflect the places people tend to travel via transit and are shown in Figure 24. These include:

- » Public housing buildings,
- » Education services such as schools,
- » Grocery stores and supermarkets, and
- » Hospitals, urgent care facilities, pharmacies, and nursing homes.

Most key destinations are served by existing transit routes. Unserved areas include educational institutions and childcare centers in south of Walla Walla and south of College Place, a private school located near Reser Road, south of Walla Walla, and public schools in Waitsburg and Prescott.



H:\27\27292 - Walla Walla Human Services Transit Plan\GIS\Key Activity Centers.mxd Date: 8/31/2022

- Child Care Center
- Colleges University
- Supplemental College
- Private School
- Public School
- Supermarket
- Public Housing Building
- + Urgent Care Facility
- + Nursing Home
- + Pharmacy
- + Health Facility

Figure 24
**Key Activity Centers
 in the Study Region**





EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION

The ability to evacuate the general population and people with special needs is critical during an emergency. This section provides information regarding the types of emergencies the WWVMPO/SRTPO anticipates, the existing coordination strategies, an evaluation based on interviews with emergency partners, and revised coordination strategies for the responsible agencies.

Existing Plans

The 2019 Coordinated Plan identified two key guiding documents for emergency management – county-level plans for Walla Walla and Umatilla.

Walla Walla County – Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan⁵. The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) for Walla Walla County was most recently updated in August 2017. The Walla Walla County Emergency Management (WWCEM) team provides mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery planning for major disaster events and facilitates forums with emergency responders to exchange information and improve plans. The CEMP is separated into Emergency Support Functions (ESF) according to the implementation aspect of the plan. ESF #1 addresses the role of transportation in an emergency. Support agencies include:

- » Blue Mountain Humane Society
- » Emergency Medical Services
- » Fire Services
- » Law Enforcement
- » Public Works Departments
- » Transportation Providers

Valley Transit has been designated as the Transportation Coordinator and the contact for the WWCEM Team to assist with the coordination of evacuation services. In addition to their fleet of vehicles that are available to assist with emergency evacuation services, other potential passenger transportation providers include public school buses and taxis.

Umatilla County – Emergency Operations Plan⁶. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for Umatilla County was updated in January 2012. The plan outlines a coordinated, integrated response with maximum use of all resources, to mitigate the effects of any natural or other disaster. Similar to the Walla Walla County CEMP, Umatilla County EOP's ESF #1 addresses the role of transportation resources during an emergency. The County Public Works Department has been selected as a primary agency, along with the County Emergency Management Department, to coordinate transportation resources and identify emergency routes. The Oregon Department of Transportation has been identified as the single supporting agency.

⁵ https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/document_center/comprehensive%20plan/ESF01-TRANSPORTATION.pdf

⁶ https://www.co.umatilla.or.us/fileadmin/user_upload/BCC/Codes/35.pdf



Coordination Strategies

The primary emergency services are shown in Figure 25 and include:

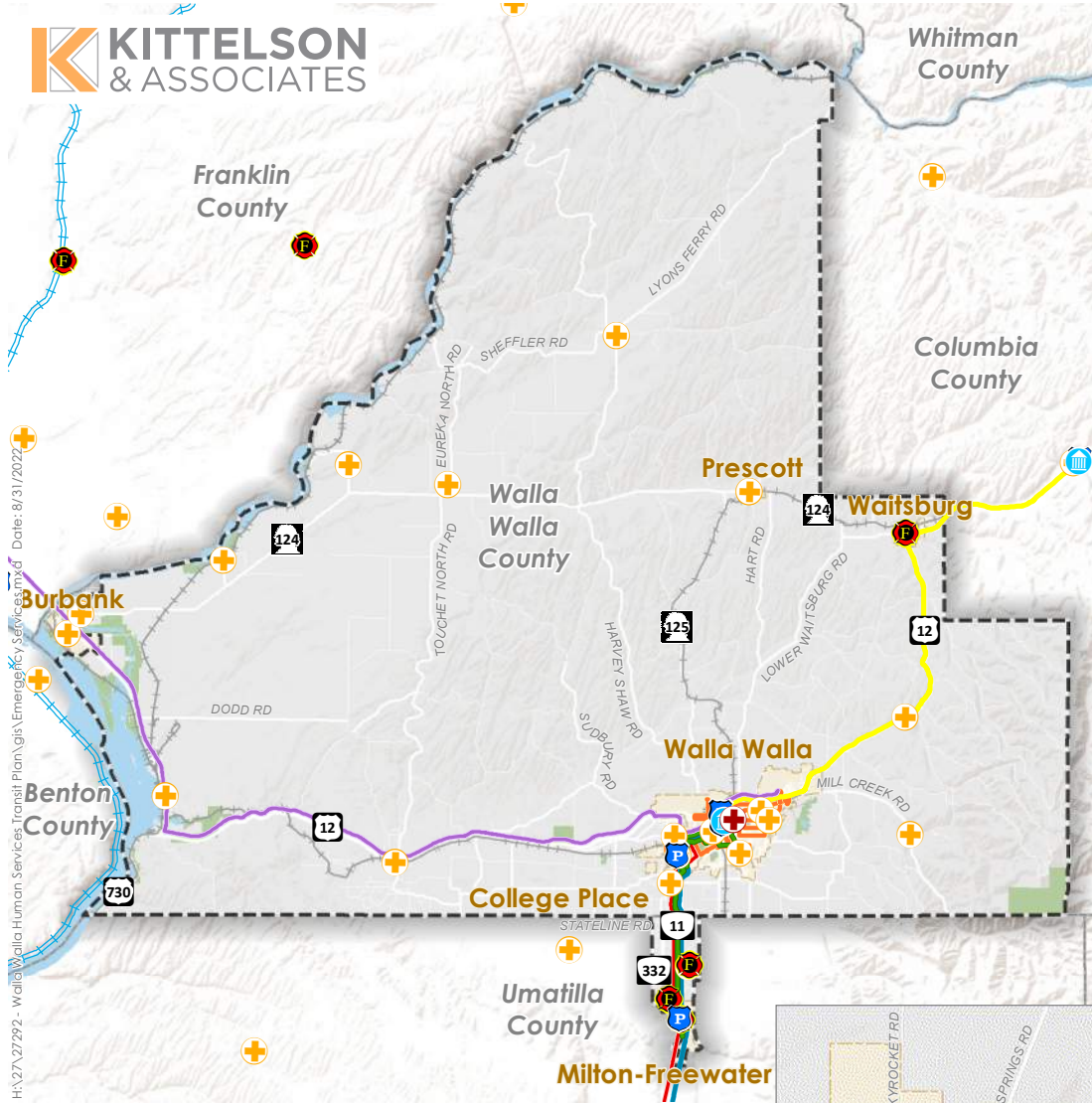
- » American Red Cross
- » Local Emergency Operations Center
- » Local Law Enforcement
- » Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- » Fire

Interviews were conducted with personnel to assess the relevancy of the prior plans and to gather new information (especially lessons learned from the COVID-19 response) that should be considered in emergency management coordination. Key findings include:

- » Communication before and during emergencies is critical. Specifically, having up-to-date contact information, knowing who is in charge and where people need to be, and understanding the needs of different emergency response partners.
- » Practicing for emergencies through tabletops, drills, and other discussions is important. Focused training opportunities, such as workshops two to three times per year, may help maximize participation.

Full details can be found in Attachment B: Emergency Management Interview Summaries.

Table 5 shows emergency stages and typical coordination and preparation strategies that transportation providers can undertake. This table was enhanced and expanded based on the coordination with emergency management personnel.



- American Red Cross
- Local Emergency Operations Center
- Local Law Enforcement
- Fire Station
- EMS Station
- Fire & EMS Station

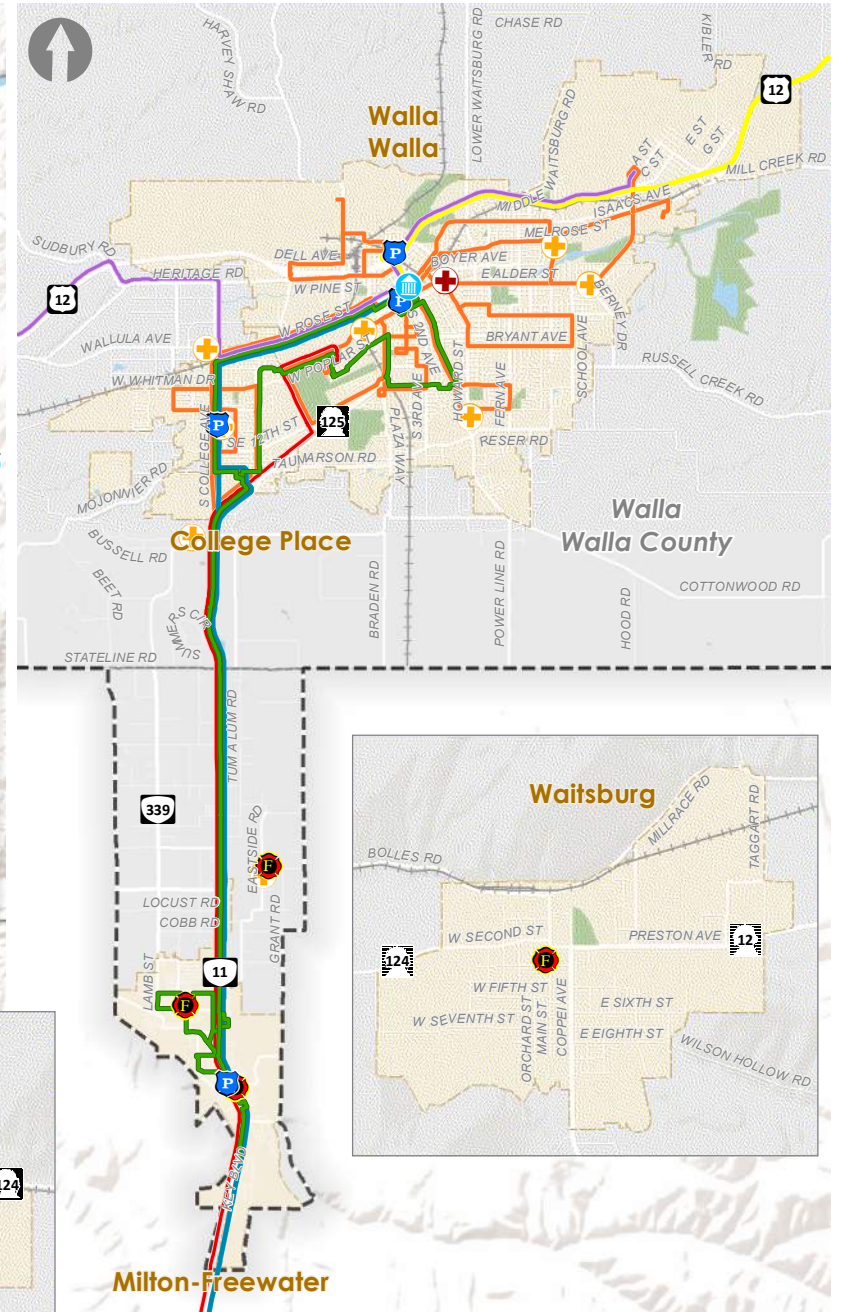


Figure 25
Emergency Services
in the Study Area





Table 5. Emergency Management Activities for Transportation Providers

Emergency Stage	Activities and Role of Transportation Providers
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provide training to transit agency and partner staff to diminish likelihood, severity of incidences.
Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identify emergency evacuation and alternate routes and prioritize maintenance on these facilities. Determine optimal traffic flow and movement priority from residences to highways » Plan for and identify high-hazard areas and numbers of potential evacuees, including the number of people requiring transportation to reception areas (including special needs populations).
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Coordinate transportation needs for special populations. » Confirm and manage locations of staging areas and pick-up points for evacuees requiring public transportation. » Coordinate transportation services, equipment, and personnel using emergency routes. » Provide guidance on commuting arrangements for essential workers during the evacuation period. » Propose locations of roadblocks and patrols for evacuation movement. » Provide patrols and safety measures in the evacuated area and for reassignment of personnel during the evacuation period.
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provide transportation for those seeking follow-up health, economic, or other support. » Monitor changes to land use and infrastructure to determine long-term service changes.



UNMET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND GAPS

Need and gaps in the special needs transportation network from the data and stakeholder outreach have been summarized and organized into six categories: spatial, temporal, institutional, infrastructure, awareness, and funding. Although all mobility needs and gaps are important, the emerging needs and gaps highlighted represent special needs transportation mobility issues that the region should focus attention on in the coming years. These emerging needs and gaps are not presented in any priority order. Figure 26 illustrates the regional and local gaps in the system.

Spatial Gaps

The most common transportation related issue cited by stakeholders was the limited availability of transportation services in less populous rural communities and for regional medical travel. Typically, operational costs and poor economies of scale impose considerable limitations on the level of transit service that can feasibly be provided in more remote rural locations, leaving people in these communities with limited access to transit.

Regional Route Connectivity. Regional trips, particularly to Seattle, Spokane, and the Tri Cities, are common for medical and work purposes, and require multiple transfers and long waits. The late arrival and early departure in Seattle require two overnight stays for a one-day visit. Long trips are especially challenging for transit dependent parents and caregivers traveling with infants and small children, low-income residents, youth, and people with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities. Below are example outbound trips based on the current schedule:

» **Walla Walla to Seattle**

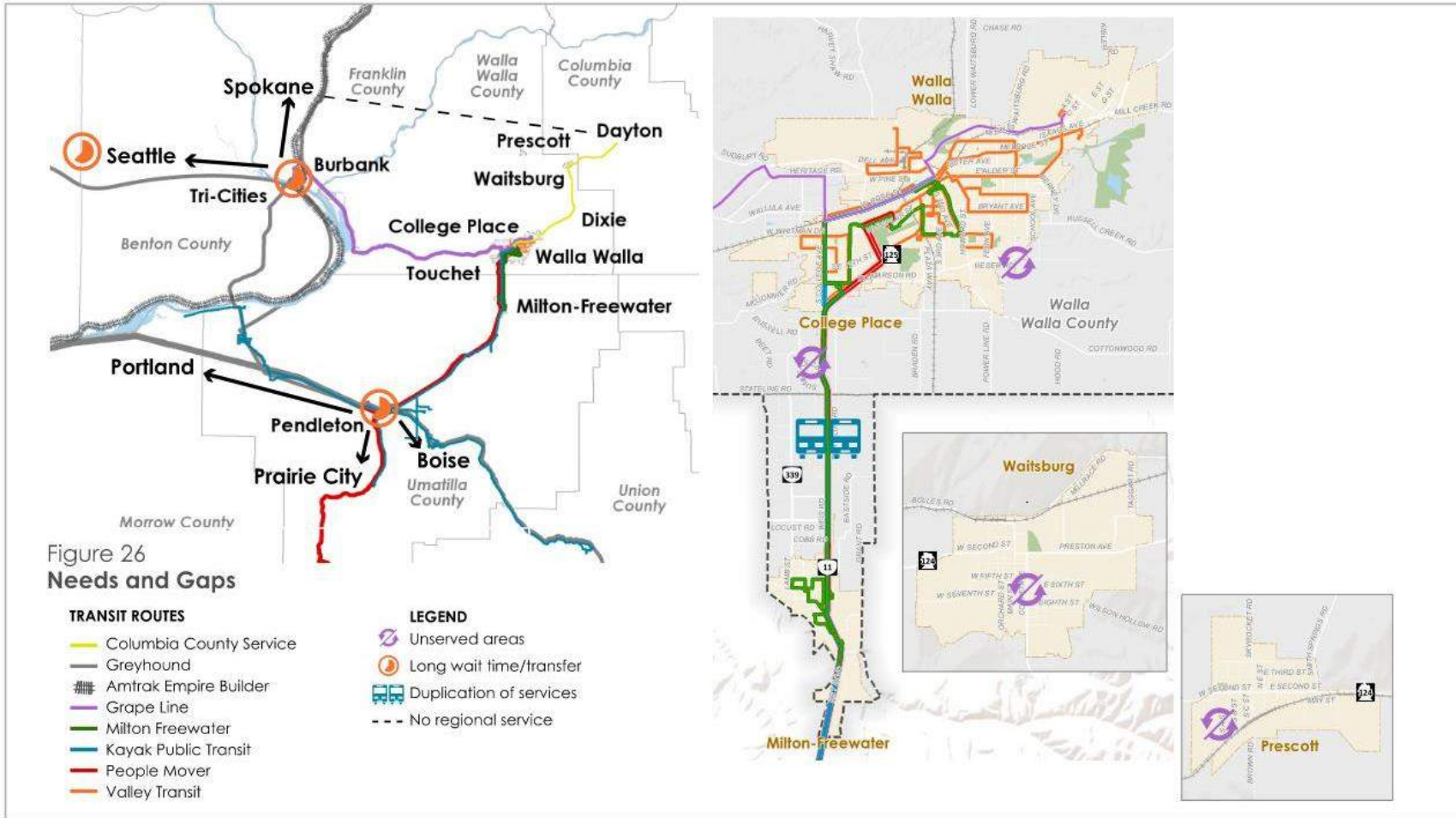
- » 11:45 AM -Depart Walla Walla to Pasco via Grapeline (bus originates in Stanfield)
- » 1:10 PM - Arrive in Pasco
- » 4:00 PM – Depart Pasco to Seattle via Greyhound
- » 8:40 PM – Arrive in Seattle

» **Walla Walla to Spokane**

- » 11:45 AM -Depart Walla Walla to Pasco via Grapeline (bus originates in Stanfield)
- » 1:10 PM - Arrive in Pasco
- » 2:30 PM – Depart Pasco via Greyhound
- » 4:55 PM – Arrive in Spokane



Figure 26. Spatial Gaps





» *Walla Walla to Tri-Cities*

- » Grape Line provides roundtrip services three times a day from Walla Walla (6:25 AM, 11:55 AM, 5:25 PM) to Pasco (7:40 AM, 1:10 PM, 6:40 PM).
- » Ben Franklin Transit provides service with 15-minute headways from the Pasco 22nd Avenue Transit Center to the Tri-Cities region (Metro Route 1 and 3).

» *Walla Walla to Boise, ID*

- » Greyhound provides service between Portland and Boise (arrival 10:15 PM) with a 3:25 PM stop in Pendleton, Oregon.
- » Kayak Public Transit's Whistler serves Walla Walla and Pendleton.
 - From Walla Walla, the bus arrives in Pendleton at 7:48 PM on weekdays and at 6:50 PM on Sundays. This requires an overnight stay to take the 3:25 PM Greyhound to Boise.
 - On Saturday, the Whistler departs at 10:40 AM and arrives in Pendleton at 12:10 PM.
- » The Greyhound service back to Walla Walla arrives in Pendleton at 12:40 PM. The Whistler service back to Walla Walla departs at 1:28 PM.
- » The Greyhound station is a 28-minute walk (1.4 miles) from the Whistler stop at Pendleton City Hall.

» *Dayton to Spokane*

- » There is no direct service from Dayton to Spokane. Riders must request Columbia County Public Transportation Dial-A-Ride services from Dayton to Walla Walla (available 5:00 AM - 6:30 PM).
- » From Walla Walla, riders continue to Pasco via Grapeline and onto Spokane via Greyhound.

Areas of New Growth. There are several new areas of growth in Walla Walla that are not served by Valley Transit and the mobility needs of special needs populations are not being met. Examples provided by stakeholders included Plaza Way area (Springhill, Vista View) and south of Walla Walla Walla High school (Triple Creek, Tablerock).

Inconsistent Access to Food and Social Services. There is a need to provide better transportation services connecting rural areas to urban areas where jobs and services, in particular grocery stores, are concentrated.

Temporal Gaps

Transit schedules do not always align with the schedules or travel needs of residents, as noted in the regional travel challenges. Additionally, since COVID-19, evening and weekend service has decreased significantly in a large part due to a lack of drivers. Without evening and weekend service, people on alternative work schedules and those who rely on transit for social interactions, religious services and to participate in the community events cannot get to their destinations.



Institutional Gaps

Institutional gaps are caused by the rules, regulations and requirements that govern the provision of transportation services. This results in transportation service that can be confusing, inefficient (through duplications, among other things) and disconnected for customers.

- » Several agencies provide services on the corridor between Walla Walla and Milton Freewater including the Walla Walla Whistler, City of Milton-Freewater service, and Grant County People Mover. Examining the timing and connections of these services may help to meet future demand and maximize efficiencies of trips by minimizing any overlap of services.
- » Cross-county trips are difficult due to a lack of coordination among service providers. Transportation providers and brokers use different scheduling, dispatching and reporting software, making information sharing difficult.
- » Riders must plan trips in advance and cannot be spontaneous about travel. For example, Valley Transit Dial-A-Ride demand is exceeding capacity. This is in part because of costs of private transportation solutions, lack of accessible vehicles for alternative transportation providers, and poor first/last mile connections that would allow some people to walk, roll, or bike to a fixed-route stop.

Infrastructure Gaps

Infrastructure gaps can take the form of a major roadway acting as a barrier to accessing daily necessities, a lack of sidewalks connecting to a fixed-route transit stop or intersections not meeting ADA standards.

- » First and last mile sidewalks and/or pathways are missing, not accessible, or are in poor condition.
- » Some fixed-route transit facilities and bus stops are without accessible walkways and safe crossings. Pedestrian crossing times at signalized intersections are not long enough for seniors, children, and individuals with mobility impairments.
- » Not all stops have benches and shelters.
- » Bus stop signage is difficult to locate for the visually impaired.

Awareness Gaps

Language and cultural barriers prevent diverse riders and clients from fully accessing transportation options.

- » Traveler information technologies are too advanced or are too difficult to acquire for some users and some do not work well for visually impaired users.
- » There is a need for more travel training, information assistance and referral services for available mobility options, especially rural farm/agricultural workers, people who speak English as a Second Language, and for people with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

Workforce Gaps

Labor shortages are resulting in reduced transit service, including evening and Sunday service. Walla Walla providers are having difficulty retaining and attracting new bus drivers even with hiring incentives and increased benefits.



Sustainable Funding Sources

The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides funding for transit over the next five years, but local governments will have to develop strategies to meet federal requirements as they reshape their systems around post-pandemic travel patterns to maintain a sustainable business model. There is also a potential loss of federal funding for Valley Transit as they may get reclassified as a rural transit provider which would result in loss of urbanized area formula grants, an impact of about \$1.2 million to Valley Transit's budget. Therefore, there may be a gap in funding sources which will need to be met.



TECHNOLOGY

Information and technology services can improve the existing ridership experience, attract new ridership by improving ease of transit use, and provide information to transit agencies to help plan and operate transit service in the future.

Since the completion of the last plan update, Valley Transit has implemented a regional trip planning resource called iTransitNW⁷. It is a real-time passenger information system that is focused on southeast Washington and northeast Oregon. Transit systems in the region included in the app are Valley Transit, Milton-Freewater Public Transportation, Grape Line, Columbia County Public Transportation, Kayak Public Transit, Grant County People Mover, and Ben Franklin Transit. Depending on the transit service a passenger uses, arrival times and service alerts are available through mobile applications (Valley Transit App, Grant County App, Token Transit App, Kayak Public Transit App, City of Pendleton Transit App). The web-based version of iTransitNW has a live map, a trip planner, and a search engine for bus arrival times. This technology improves the efficiency and convenience for existing and future transit riders. On the back end, agencies are adopting tablets on-board that can help count passengers, including senior populations, people with disabilities, wheelchair users specifically, and bicycle loading/unloading, and assist with other activities such as dispatching and vehicle tracking. Seeking ways to improve both back-end management, data tracking and front-end customer benefits will be critical to improving user experiences and data collection for transit providers.

Presented below is a high-level introduction to potential technology improvements. Implemented technologies should include the concept of Universal Design. Universal Design aims to ensure that all mobility services and technologies are accessible to all users, regardless of age, income, ability, race/ethnicity, or other demographic characteristics

Data Standardization. It is beneficial for transit agencies in the region to continue to promote interoperability so mobility data flows freely and securely between systems, between operators, and between providers and the riding public. This allows transit agencies and other mobility service providers and transportation system managers to provide better service, improve the customer experience, and build systems that are equitable and sustainable. It also helps with comparing datasets across agencies for benchmarking and other purposes without manual manipulation. For example, General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) and GTFS-Flex technology data platform is consistent across agencies and hence can easily be integrated with Google Maps.

Fare Payment Options. Transit agencies in the region do not currently provide mobile ticketing for their services and require exact fare for trips or passes. While new fare payment systems add convenience and simplify the boarding process for many riders, they also create challenges in human services transportation. For example, transportation providers typically charge an up-front fee to purchase a card. This upfront fee may be cost-prohibitive. Additionally, while smartphone fare payment does not require a card, it does require a smartphone and reliable internet connection. Again, these types of systems may be

⁷ <https://www.itransitnw.com/rtt/public/?locale=en>



cost-prohibitive for people with low incomes and unbanked populations (people who do not have debit or credit cards). In rural areas of the state, people with special transportation needs often transfer between service providers. New fare payment systems make these transfers easier, but they have limitations if the providers use different systems. Transit agencies in the region should explore mobile ticketing fares and reciprocity with connecting systems in the region.

Wi-Fi Access on Buses. Wi-Fi access on buses provide passengers the ability to check trip planning tools and know exactly where they need to get on and off the bus through the transit agencies website or trip planning mobile app. Additionally, it can improve a rider’s experience by providing opportunities to view entertainment or work while traveling. Based on conversations with Valley Transit, the existing bus Wi-Fi systems have a 37-gigabit speed which currently is used by iTransitNW and for other software needs. Transit agencies should evaluate the costs and benefits of Wi-Fi access on buses.

Real-Time Vehicle Arrival Information. Real time information systems are programs, typically smartphone applications, which provide up-to-date transit information to riders; however, without internet access, real-time information systems can be hard for riders to use. Most real-time information systems provide updates on bus location, expected pickup times and any delays on the route. Real-time information helps improve the ridership experience by reducing passenger wait times, providing confidence that a bus has not been missed, and creating a more informed and comfortable rider. This information can be made accessible via transit agencies’ websites, smartphones, and through “push” technologies such as text messages. ODOT and WSDOT encourage providers to buy systems that support GTFS-Realtime (GTFS-rt), allowing for up-to-date information on vehicle arrival to be pushed through the tools. Currently, there is a need for more robust messaging and providing a real-time tracking system that shows all buses operating in the region.

Automatic Passenger Counters. Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs) automatically count and log the numbers of people on buses as they get on and off at each stop or station. When used on larger systems, APCs help improve reporting and analysis of use patterns by using boarding and alighting data at stop locations, helping to prioritize bus stop improvements. Accuracy of APCs on small systems can cause error discrepancies larger than allowed by the National Transit Database reporting requirements and manual counts are still required. At this time, manual counts are still the most effective methodology; however, the implementation of APC’s should be considered in the future.



STRATEGIES & PROJECTS

The primary purpose of this Coordinated Plan is to provide guidance for making future funding decisions and project selections throughout the WWVMPO/SRTPO planning area. According to federal requirements, projects selected for specific kinds of federal funding (which could be programs, activities, or physical projects intended to address the gaps or needs identified in the Coordinated Plan) must be included in the Coordinated Plan to be eligible. "Inclusion" in the Coordinated Plan need not be by specific reference; rather, consistency with the priorities for investment defined in this chapter should, in most cases, confer the necessary funding eligibility.

Understanding there are limits to funding availability and eligibility requirements, the prioritization of projects considered the following.

Cost: Ordered of magnitude estimated cost to frame the scale of implementation.



Greater than \$75,000 Annually



25,000 to \$75,000 Annually



Less than \$25,000 Annually

Level of Effort. Considers whether the strategy can be implemented quickly and with little complication.



High: Outside of WWVMPO service area, infrastructure, staffing, and other resources are significantly limited



Moderate: Some infrastructure, staff, and other resources are in-place, but more will need to be obtained



Minimal: Infrastructure, staff, and other resources are already in-place

Sustains Existing Services: Considers continuity and strengthening of existing programs/services over funding requests for new programs.



Introduces new service



Expansion of existing service



Enhances existing service

Goals

Goals center around improving mobility for all, equity, safety, and efficiency of the system. All strategies and projects align with one or more goals.

- » **Continue expanding the efficiency and effectiveness of transportation services available to populations of all abilities and means.**
- » **Provide more travel training, information assistance and referral services for special needs populations through user-friendly and accessible educational tools.**
- » **Plan for enhanced transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities to improve the efficiency, accessibility, safety, and quality of first and last mile trips.**
- » **Seek long-term stable funding sources to sustain service levels and affordable transportation options for people with special needs.**
- » **Continue expanding on regional coordination and collaboration efforts between transit providers, non-profits, and government agencies.**
- » **Secure and retain a more robust and highly trained workforce.**



Based on the ranking and conversations with the Project Management Team, strategies and projects were ranked as follows and they are presented in Table 6.

- » High Priority. Keep the momentum and implement in the near-term (years 1 through 3)
- » Medium Priority. Implement the basics in the mid-term (years 2 through 4)
- » Low Priority. Require more advanced planning and resources, implement in the long- term (4 years and beyond)

The years overlap, recognizing they may use different sources of funding

Table 6. Strategies and Projects

Strategy/Project	Scoring			Priority
	Cost	Ease of Implementation	Existing Service	
Spatial/Temporal/Operational Strategies				
Hold regular coordination meetings with all regional providers to address existing and forecasted needs at a regional level.				High
Continue on-going vehicle maintenance and replacement for public transit and non-profit entities that support services including accessibility features and equipment for vehicles such as lifts and ramps.				High
Improve regional transportation options.				
» Work with regional transit agencies to improve alignment of schedules and locations of bus transfer stops to better accommodate cross-county trips. For example, Grape Line to Greyhound transfers.				Medium
» Improve service for medically underserved populations to Seattle, Spokane, and the Tri-Cities.				Medium
» Explore demand for new service options between Dayton and Spokane.				Low
» Explore designation of Columbia County’s Dayton-Walla Walla route as a traditional fixed-route or deviated fixed route service, with a published route, schedule, and deviation zone.				Low
» Provide limited shared ride service between Prescott and Walla Walla.				Low
Increase transit frequencies in core areas and target expansion of service.				
» Explore expanding services to provide better connectivity for people who have limited access to grocery delivery, grocery stores, and food pantries.				Medium
» Support Fixed-Route Service improvements including route changes, improved bus stop locations and schedule changes to increase ridership and reduce burdens on Demand-Response routes.				High



Strategy/Project	Scoring			Priority
	Cost	Ease of Implementation	Existing Service	
» Improve access to jobs, education and services used by target group members by supporting core areas’ mobility improvements and a high level of service.				Medium
» Consider shared use of social service and medical service transportation and public/paratransit vehicles between agencies to expand capacity.				Low
» Explore special event buses for public events to increase access to recreational opportunities				Low
Continued improvement in efficiency and effectiveness to enable riders to be able to count on effective service.				
» Increase service and transportation options during late, weekend and holiday hours.				High
» Examine the timing and connections of all transportation services, including airport and train connections, to help meet existing and future demand and reduce duplication.				High
Explore opportunities to coordinate with schools and other non-profit organizations to provide transportation.				Low
Promote sustainable and zero/low-emission transportation options.				High
Infrastructure/Accessibility Strategies				
Evaluate bus stop locations at key destinations to review distances to safe street crossings and identify and prioritize bus stop relocation projects.				High
» Inventory ADA and pedestrian access to bus stops and prioritize a project list, for example curb extensions, curb ramps, transit shelters, and signage.				Medium
» Leverage GIS tools to map ADA accessible routes.				Low
» Evaluate existing flag stop activity to determine if permanent stops should be added.				High
Improve safety and security at transit stops by assessing and implementing projects for improved lighting and bus stop visibility.				High
Enhance access to stops along high ridership routes by evaluating and improving walking and biking directness.				Medium
Improve crossing safety and advocate for roadway improvements via improvements such as accessible pedestrian signals at high ridership intersections, enhanced crossings, lane reallocation, and rapid rectangular flashing beacons (either Polara INX or IDX) at uncontrolled or mid-block crossings to improve first mile/last mile routes to public transit.				High
Improve wayfinding and navigation signage enhancements for people with disabilities.				High



Strategy/Project	Scoring			Priority
	Cost	Ease of Implementation	Existing Service	
Identify and implement bicycle storage improvements at key stops and on buses; consider ways mobile applications can alert riders to the availability of bike storage in real-time.				Medium
Support local land use initiatives to increase more compact development patterns, mixed use neighborhoods and higher densities to increase walking, bicycling and transit use. Encourage transit- oriented development, complete streets and streetscape standards to encourage greening of corridors for shading and aesthetics, safer walking and biking environments, and other supportive improvements.				High
Awareness Strategies				
Develop bilingual and ADA accessible welcoming signs, bus ridership instructions, schedules, and fares.				High
Train customer service representatives and case workers on how to educate the public to ride on Fixed-Route Transit.				High
Establish mobile training programs by working with social service agencies and transportation providers to travel to different sites (e.g. senior centers, community centers, medical centers, schools/universities/colleges, non-profits, places of employment) to offer hands-on travel training and technology training to include trip routing, finding the nearest bus stop, a free demo ride on a city bus, and training on how to maneuver a mobility device onto a vehicle.				Medium
Use social media experts to improve messaging/communication.				Medium
Expand and enhance rideshare marketing to grow participation at large employers.				Low
Develop travel training program for public, including how to read bus schedules, what services are appropriate for what trips, how to use flag stops, and more.				Medium
Workforce Strategies				
Increase driver pool through pay, benefits, recognition, training, and other incentives.				High
Support programs for vehicle maintenance training for traditional and alternative fuel vehicles by partnering with universities, colleges, and private industries.				Medium
Increase driver education to improve experience for English as a second language riders and disabled riders.				High
Enhance and expand volunteer driver programs.				Low
Funding Strategies				
Continue to leverage local funds to support state and federal funds matching requirements.				High



Strategy/Project	Scoring			Priority
	Cost	Ease of Implementation	Existing Service	
Seek ways to share trips across funding pools (5307, 5310, 5311, VHRTH, etc.) while maintaining separate ride records.				High
Help agencies obtain funding for various mobility studies to find solutions to access and mobility challenges and implement transit-supportive street improvements through local, state, and federal funding sources.				High
Technology Strategies				
Maximize the use of technology to improve service and customer experience.				
» Evaluate the costs and benefits of providing publicly accessible Wi-Fi access on buses to improve accessibility to transit apps and enhance customer experience.				Low
» Improve functionality of website and transit apps to enhance accessibility.				High
» Include pre-recorded messages on buses in different languages.				Medium
» Continue to expand real-time vehicle arrival information including using GTFS-Realtime enabled systems to allow for up-to-date information on vehicle arrival to be pushed through the tools via text messages/notifications.				High
» Develop single contact/app/site for regionwide trip planning, scheduling, and payment.				Low
» Develop centralized directory of transportation information (printed and electronic) including integrated timetables for all fixed route providers and an agency-based one call/one click “trip planners” and other tools to support destination-specific travel by target group members. Seek means of regional and statewide efforts to support data consistency standards, such as GTFS, and promote support for quick trip-planning app updates.				High
» Implement fare integration and electronic fare payment options consistently for all transit services in the region.				Low
» Mobile app for real-time pedestrian trip planning and data collection to display and share accessibility information and accessible routes would assist older adult pedestrians and people with disabilities. Work with counties, cities, and the states to support this technology and data consistency.				Low



FUNDING

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides financial assistance to states through a number of programs to develop new transit systems and improve, maintain, and operate existing systems, typically administered by WSDOT and/or ODOT. WSDOT and ODOT also provide additional funding to support public transportation. Eligible recipients for grants include:

- » Private for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, including shared-use mobility providers, technology system suppliers and integrators, automated vehicle technology providers, property managers and developers, and others
- » Private operators of transportation services, such as employee shuttle services, airport connector services, university transportation systems, or parking and tolling or airports authorities
- » Other operators of public transportation, including public transportation agencies, State/local government DOTs, and Federally recognized Indian tribes State or local government entities, including multi-jurisdictional partnerships,
- » State or local government entities, including multi-jurisdictional partnerships, and organizations, such as a Metropolitan Planning Organization
- » Other organizations including research consortia or not-for-profit industry organizations, and institutions of higher education



Table 7. Funding Sources

Description	Eligible Activities	Match
WSDOT Grants Note: WSDOT administers the Consolidated Grant Program. This program is supported by state and federal funding and is awarded through a competitive process.		
Paratransit/Special Needs and Rural Mobility Competitive	Assist nonprofits to sustain and expand transportation services to people with disabilities, including seniors and children and assist tribes, nonprofits and transit agencies to sustain and expand public transportation services to rural areas of the state. Funds can also be used to purchase vehicles and equipment to support these public transportation services	
First/Last Mile Connections	Use strategies to improve first- and last-mile connections for people to access public transportation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Coordination of shuttles, ride-hailing, vanpool, vanshipare, carpool, bike-share, paratransit, and demand-response options with public transportation services » Bicycle lockers » Pavement striping » Transit-pass subsidies and incentives » Marketing and public education » Parking management 	
Green Transportation Capital	Capital projects and related expenditures that reduce the carbon intensity of the Washington transportation system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Electrification of vehicle fleets, including battery and fuel cell operated electric vehicles » Updating or modifying facilities for fleet electrification and/or hydrogen refueling infrastructure » Necessary upgrades to electrical transmission and distribution systems » Construction of charging and fueling stations 	20%
Move Ahead Washington	\$3 billion for public transportation over the next 16 years. Will add support to existing programs and lead to the development of new programs including State Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program and Tribal Transit Mobility Grant Program	
Transit Coordination	Provides financial assistance for coordinated transit-related projects. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Integrating marketing efforts » Aligning fare structures » Integrating service planning » Coordinating long-range planning, including capital projects planning and implementation » Integrating other administrative functions and internal business processes, as appropriate » Integrating certain customer-focused tools and initiatives 	10%
Paratransit/Special Needs and Rural Mobility Formula	Sustain and expand services to people with disabilities, seniors children and people living in rural areas. Can be applied for independently (not part of WSDOT consolidate grant program)	



Description	Eligible Activities	Match
<p>Regional Mobility</p>	<p>Improve connectivity between counties and regional population centers as well as to reduce transportation delay. This program includes four eligible project types:</p> <p>Vehicle and equipment purchases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Passenger service vehicles » Charging equipment for electric vehicles » Communications equipment » Computer hardware, software, and data systems » Multimodal enhancements (e.g., bicycle racks) » Security equipment <p>Capital construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Passenger transfer centers. » Bus-only or high-occupancy vehicle lanes. » Bus shelters, platforms, and stations. » Transit access improvements. » Transit signal priority, queue jumps, and bypasses. » Park and ride lots and facilities. <p>Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » New, expanded or more frequent bus routes, express service or feeder service » New service providing community connections or transportation corridors serving multiple communities <p>Transportation demand management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Programs that enhance commute trip reduction programs (e.g., incentives; transit passes) » Programs that encourage a mode shift to high-efficiency modes (e.g., transit, walking, biking) » Outreach to employers to increase the use of teleworking » First- and last-mile connections programs (e.g., vanpool expansion) » Other transportation demand management strategies and concepts at WSDOT’s Transportation Systems Management and Operations website 	<p>20%</p>
<p>Rural Transportation Assistance Program</p>	<p>WSDOT’s Public Transportation Division provides resources for training and technical assistance to rural transportation providers through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Researching and answering specific subject matter questions » Interpreting policy guidelines and providing policy templates » Providing on-site or virtual presentations on a variety of topics and issues 	



Description	Eligible Activities	Match
Transit Support Grant	Support operating and capital expenses of transit agencies	0%
Transportation Demand Management Grant	Commuter trip reduction grants are for local jurisdictions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and keep the busiest commuter routes flowing. Local jurisdictions work with employers, who develop and manage their own programs based on locally adopted goals	
Travel Washington Intercity Bus	Intercity bus service connecting rural communities to major transportation hubs and urban centers, filling gaps in the public transportation network and making travel more accessible, reliable and convenient. Helps to develop policies and identify projects to support a network of transportation services to link rural towns and communities in Washington to the national intercity bus system.	
Vanpool Investment Program	Support vanpool programs at transit agencies to expand vanpool fleets, replace aging vans and provide incentives to employers to increase vanpool ridership. The funding allows transit agencies to purchase vans with alternative fuel types, including low-emission plug-in hybrids and zero-emission all-electric vans	0%
Pedestrian & Bicycle Program and Safe Routes to School	<p>Improve the transportation system to enhance safety and mobility for people/students who choose to walk or bike.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Pedestrian/bicyclist safety and/or mobility infrastructure improvements (typically, also includes preliminary engineering, and right of way). For safe routes funding - within 2 miles of a school. » Development/Design-Only projects that will result in a ready to construct pedestrian or bicyclist improvement project (may include community outreach and/or tactical urbanism). For safe routes funding - within 2 miles of a school 	0%
Oregon Grants		
State Special Transportation Funds (STF)	Funds may be used for any purpose directly-related to public transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities. Funds may be used for any purpose directly related to transportation services, including transit operations, capital equipment, planning, travel training and other transit-related purposes	
Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF)	Public transportation purposes that support the effective planning, deployment, operation, and administration of public transportation programs including creation of new systems and services with origins, destinations or stops in Oregon; maintenance or continuation of systems and services, under certain circumstances; and planning for and development of a Local Plan or future STIF Plan to improve public transportation service	0%
ODOT Safe Routes to School Grant Program	Eligible projects include safety improvements that positively affect the ability of children to walk and bicycle to school. Projects must be within a public road right-of-way, consistent with jurisdictional plans, supported by the school or school district, within a one-mile radius of a school, and able to be constructed within five years of the application. Project examples include sidewalks, median refuge islands, rapid flashing beacons, etc. The minimum funding request is \$60,000, and the maximum is \$2 million	
Rural Transportation Equity Program	<p>This one-off ODOT funding opportunity seeks to support rural communities in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identifying and engaging underserved communities in rural areas to provide transportation options like biking, walking, and public transportation to access to critical services and destinations » Building capacity within local governments to maintain relationships and connections to underserved communities » Matching communities' needs with outside funding opportunities (i.e., Federal, State programs and resources) through strategic investment planning 	



Description	Eligible Activities	Match
Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Program	Bridges gaps and resolves barriers between Oregon's veterans living in rural areas and the healthcare benefits they've earned. Operations, contract purchased services, mobility management, and planning	
Transportation Options Program	<p>Discretionary grant program including initiatives such as Innovative Mobility Grants, which ODOT is currently determining a framework for, and Immediate Opportunity Grants of \$5,000 or less for qualified activities. Examples of eligible activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Transportation focused community events such as Open Streets, Bike Rodeos, etc. » Activities to engage historically underserved communities in active or multimodal transportation outreach or education » Purchase of bike racks, helmets, locks, etc. associated with bike and pedestrian safety outreach 	
<p>Federal/IJA</p> <p>Since the last update, the federal government has transitioned from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, as enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which authorizes up to \$108 billion for public transportation – the largest federal investment in public transportation in the nation's history. The legislation reauthorizes surface transportation programs for FY 2022-2026 and provides advance appropriations for certain programs.</p>		
Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310	<p>Traditional Section 5310 project examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » buses and vans » wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices » transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling/routing/one-call systems » mobility management programs » acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement <p>Nontraditional Section 5310 project examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » travel training » volunteer driver programs » building an accessible path to a bus stop, including curb-cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features » improving signage, or way-finding technology » incremental cost of providing same day service or door-to-door service » purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, rides sharing and/or vanpooling programs <p>mobility management programs</p>	
Formula Grants for Rural Areas - 5311	Planning, capital, operating, job access and reverse commute projects, and the acquisition of public transportation services	



Description	Eligible Activities	Match
Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program - 5339(a)	Capital projects to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses, vans, and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities, including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities	
FTA 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants	<p>Eligible activities include: planning, engineering, design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement, overhaul and rebuilding of buses, crime prevention and security equipment and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. In addition, associated transit improvements and certain expenses associated with mobility management programs are eligible under the program. All preventive maintenance and some ADA complementary paratransit service costs are considered capital costs.</p> <p>*An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. For urbanized areas with populations less than 200,000, operating assistance is an eligible expense</p>	20%
Metropolitan & Statewide Planning and NonMetropolitan Transportation Planning - 5303, 5304, 5305	<p>For State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and MPOs; however, through coordination can pursue walking, biking and other infrastructure improvements in support of transit.</p> <p>Funds are available for planning activities that (A) support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency; (B) increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users; (C) increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users; (D) increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight; (E) protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns; (F) enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight; (G) promote efficient system management and operation; and (H) emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system</p>	
Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) with Transportation Alternative Set-Aside	<p>WSDOT allocates STBG funds to MPO's and County Lead Agencies for prioritizing and selecting projects to best address State and local transportation needs including smaller scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities (non-profit entities eligible to apply for TA).</p>	
Safet Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)	<p>Available to MPOs, federally recognized tribes. SS4A funds may be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develop a comprehensive safety action plan » Conduct planning, design, and development activities for projects and strategies identified in a comprehensive safety action plan » Carry out projects and strategies identified in a comprehensive safety action plan 	



Description	Eligible Activities	Match
Carbon Reduction Program	Projects that support the reduction of transportation emissions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » a public transportation project » a project or strategy designed to support congestion pricing, shifting transportation demand to nonpeak hours or other transportation modes, increasing vehicle occupancy rates, or otherwise reducing demand for roads, including electronic toll collection, and travel demand management strategies and programs » efforts to reduce the environmental and community impacts of freight movement » a project that supports deployment of alternative fuel vehicles, including– » acquisition, installation, or operation of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure or hydrogen, natural gas, or propane vehicle fueling infrastructure » purchase or lease of zero-emission construction equipment and vehicles 	
Low or No Emission Bus Grant Program	Funding for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses as well as acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities	
American Rescue Plan of 2021 – Available until September 30, 2024.	Competitive Grant Funding can be used for transit route restoration planning that is designed to increase ridership following the COVID-19 pandemic, reduce travel times and make adjustments to increase the quality or frequency of transit service for low-income riders and those in disadvantaged neighborhoods or communities who may need increased service to get to jobs, shopping and health care	0%
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) –	Competitive Grant (Formally BUILD and TIGER Transportation Grants) Surface transportation projects of local and/or regional significance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital: Public transportation projects and public road and non-motorized projects that are not otherwise eligible • Planning: Environmental analysis, equity analysis, community engagement, feasibility studies, and other pre-construction activities—of eligible surface transportation capital projects 	20%
Capital Investment Grants - 5309	Competitive Grant Funds transit capital investments, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars and bus rapid transit. Federal transit law requires transit agencies seeking CIG funding to complete a series of steps over several years	
Human Resources & Training - 5314 (b)	Formula FTA may make grants or enter into contracts for human resource and workforce development programs as they apply to public transportation activities. Such programs may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Employment training » An outreach program to increase minority and female employment in public transportation activities » Research on public transportation personnel and training needs » Training and assistance for minority business opportunities 	



Description	Eligible Activities	Match
Other Funding		
Medicaid	Medicaid transportation brokers help meet the NEMT needs of Medicaid recipients throughout Washington. Medicaid transportation brokers are funded primarily using federal Medicaid funding. Medicaid is a federal program that pays for the basic health services of people with low income, as well as for long-term care for seniors and people with disabilities	
Federal social service agency programs	There are over 100 federal programs that provide funding for human services transportation, specifically for people with disabilities, the elderly and people with low incomes	



The following IIJA grants that have been closed but may receive additional funding in future years.

- » **FTA’s Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM) Initiative.** All activities leading to the development and testing of innovative mobility, such as planning and developing business models, obtaining equipment and service, acquiring or developing software and hardware interfaces to implement the project, operating or implementing the new service model, and evaluating project results.
- » **Areas of Persistent Poverty Program.** Planning studies or financial plans to improve transit services in areas experiencing long-term economic distress.
- » **Bus Exportable Power Systems (BEPS).** Enables public transportation agencies, communities, and states to access resilient and flexible power options through hybrid electric bus fleet vehicles during major power disruptions. (address a need for generating power immediately after natural disasters by transforming hybrid electric and fuel cell buses into mobile power generators). All activities and efforts leading to the development of interoperable BEPS standards.
- » **Enhancing Mobility Innovation.** All activities leading to the development and/or testing of innovative mobility project efforts.
 - » Projects that develop novel operational concepts and/or demonstrate innovations that improve mobility and enhance the rider experience, focused on innovative service delivery models, creative financing, novel partnerships, and integrated payment solutions, or other innovative solutions. May include all activities leading to uncovering the next iteration of promising technologies, practices and strategies that accelerate innovations in mobility for transit, including, but not limited to, technology scanning and feasibility analysis, stakeholder engagement and outreach, planning, acquiring essential equipment or services, project implementation, modeling forecast of climate and equity impacts of proposed novel concepts and evaluating project results.
 - » Projects that develop software to facilitate demand-response public transportation that dispatches transit vehicles through riders’ mobile devices or other means. May include establishing user needs; defining system requirements; development, validation and verification of the software; modeling and simulation; and/or pilot implementation, with a software solution.



LOOKING FORWARD

Transportation services play a key role in the Walla Walla Valley area, connecting its residents and visitors to the places they need to go locally and regionally. The plan for the future involves building on and increasing coordination work among providers, expanding services, expanding resources for drivers, and improving public awareness of transportation options and impact.

While this document provides prioritized strategies and examples of how these would specifically be implemented, the recommendations are a snapshot in time and should adjust to meet the changing needs of the region. As the age and makeup of the region's population changes, the WWVMPO/SRTPO and service providers will work to meet ongoing and new needs. WWVMPO/SRTPO will continue to encourage regional coordination on pandemic response and recovery and monitor the impacts of COVID-19 on the region's transportation services for people with special transportation needs.

Most imminently, this document can serve as preparation for funding cycles, including Section 5310 and STIF plans, to begin implementing recommendations and enhancing transportation services.

Federal transportation legislation requires that the Coordinated Mobility Plan be updated every four years. The next plan update will occur in 2026.