RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont

Commuter Assistance Strategic Plan

FY 2027-2031





West Piedmont Planning District Commission

RIDE SOLUTIONS - West Piedmont

Adopted: February 26, 2026

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Chapter 1
Program Overview



Program Purpose

RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont is a regional Commuter Assistance Program serving the West Piedmont Planning District. The program promotes and provides Transportation Demand Management (TDM) services for the West Piedmont Planning District, connecting commuters and noncommuters with alternative transportation options, promoting existing assets through targeted marketing/ outreach, providing educational materials/ programming for a variety of audiences, and supporting local governments, nonprofits, and businesses looking to improve their employees' commutes.

The RIDE Solutions program was initially formed in 2001 by the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) to address poor air quality in the Roanoke Valley by encouraging the public to carpool, providing commute information, and carpool ride matching services. Since its inception, the RIDE Solutions program has evolved into an interregional TDM effort, with the New River Valley Planning District Commission partnering with RVARC in 2008 to expand the program in the New River Valley region, and the Region 2000 Local Government Council partnering with the two agencies to expand the RIDE Solutions program into the Lynchburg region. While sharing central services, each agency works to meet the specific regional needs of their communities.

First joining RIDE Solutions partnership in 2018, the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program, initially operated by the West Piedmont Workforce Investment Board (WIB), is currently administered by the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC). The WPPDC obtained its first grant from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) in 2021 to operate WPPDC's program. In addition to grant funding, DRPT also provides ridematching through the Connecting VA app

Recognizing the unique regional circumstances and needs of the West Piedmont Planning District's communities, this plan represents a significant evolution in the development of TDM services and solutions designed for the region's communities.

Program Services

RIDE Solutions West Piedmont supports and facilitates TDM services, solutions, and education, seeking to support alternatives to single occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel, helping to (1) Mitigate congestion, (2) Promote regional connectivity of

What is Transportation Demand Management?

As adopted and defined by the Department of Transportation and many state agencies across the US, TDM is a set of strategies to provide travelers with a greater choice of commute and non-commute transportation options, increasing the efficiency of our roadways and enhancing quality of life. To achieve these goals, TDM prioritizes the use of alternative transportation modes, such as:

Public Transit

Carpool/Vanpools

Walking

Biking

Micro-Transit



Transportation Alternatives

Why Options Matter for Effective Transport

While the core of transportation networks in rural areas remains Single-Occupancy Vehicles, developing regionally effective transportation alternatives is an integral part of ensuring residents can access necessary services and employment opportunities. As highlighted in a survey collected for this plan, lack of transportation options affects employers in the West Piedmont region, with businesses citing issues with employee recruitment, absenteeism, and parking issues. The availability and awareness of multiple options helps support a robust transportation system that supports local businesses, communities, and roadways.

transportation networks, (3) Reduce negative environmental impacts on air quality, noise pollution, and other factors negatively affecting quality of life, and (4) educate regional governments, employers, and the general public on alternate transportation options.

Staffing/Governance

RIDE Solutions-West Piedmont is administered by staff of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC), which serves the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; the cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the towns of Boones Mill, Gretna, Hurt, Ridgeway, Rocky Mount, and Stuart. The WPPDC is a regional governmental organization tasked with facilitating intergovernmental cooperation and developing region-wide solutions for the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; the cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the towns of Boones Mill, Chatham, Gretna, Hurt, Ridgeway, Rocky Mount, and Stuart.

The WPPDC is governed by elected officials and citizens appointed by local governments to represent their communities. The WPPDC is typically served by 21 commissioners – three each from participating jurisdictions. This group determines the policies for the organization, appoints the Executive Director, and authorizes annual budgets, including the 20% matching funds for the DRPT grant which funds the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program. The current commissioners (as of February 2026), is represented in **Table 1.1.**

The WPPDC also administers the following Transportation Organizations/Committees: **(1) The Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** and **(2) the regional Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)**.

Other Transportation Organization/ Committees

The Danville MPO, which encompasses the City of Danville and adjacent portions of Pittsylvania County administers a “Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive” planning process throughout the Danville Micropolitan Area. The TTAC provides technical expertise for transportation efforts across the region, including local plans and studies. Both of these efforts naturally intersect with the objectives of RIDE Solutions and WPPDC staff continually seek to find ways to align the program with other regional transportation plans and projects.

Figure 1.1: WPPDC Board of Commissioners

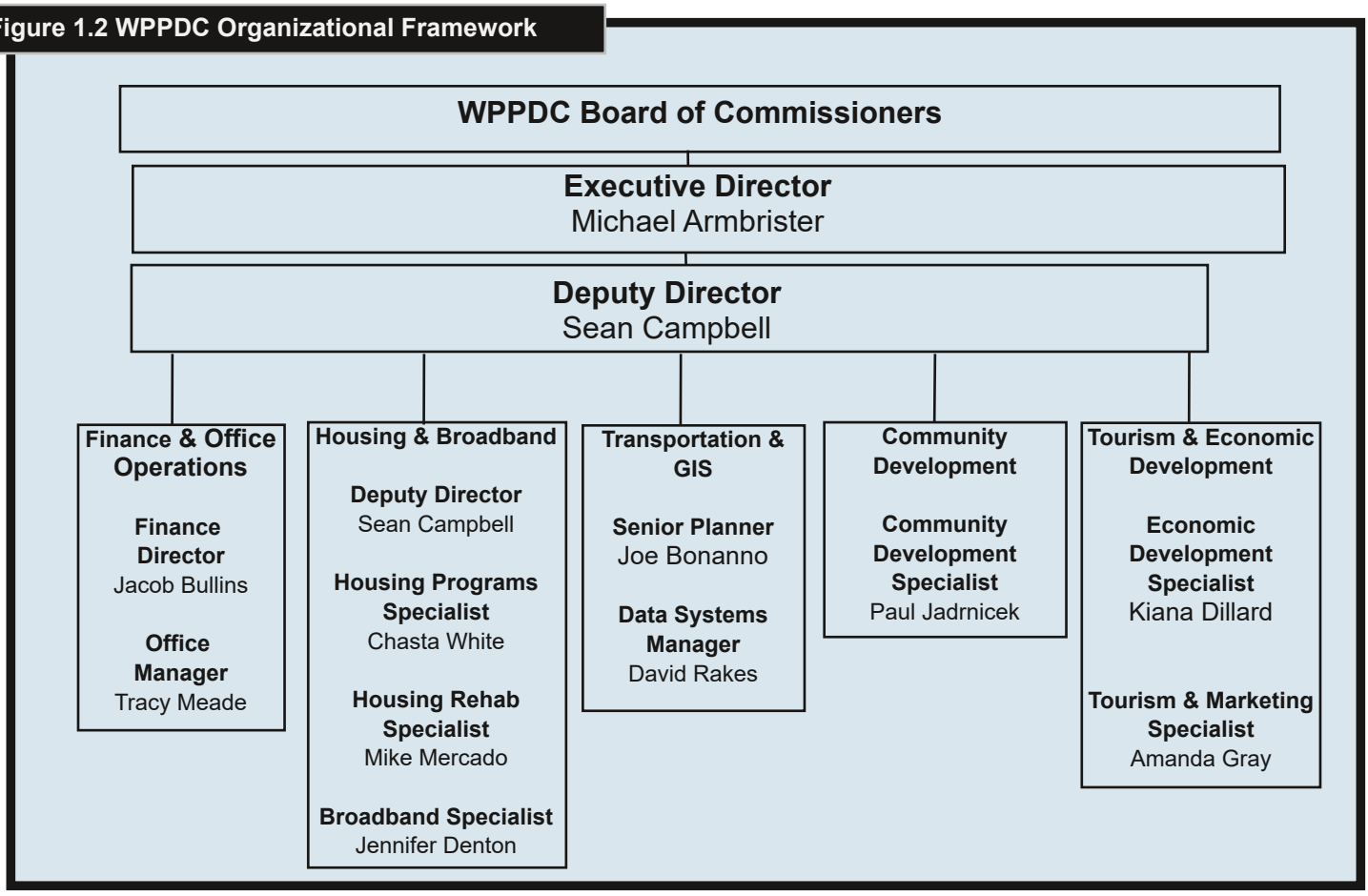
Franklin County	*Nick Mitchell* *Tim Tatum, Vice Chair* *David Rotenizer*
Henry County	*Jim Adams, Chair* *Wesley E. George, IIII* *Pam Cobler*
Patrick County	*Jerry Adams* *Jonathan Wood* *Clayton Kendrick*
Pittsylvania County	*Dillard Jones* *Kenneth Bowman* *Justin Brown*
City of Danville	*Lee Vogler* *Dr. Gary Miller* *James Turner*
City of Martinsville	*Aaron Rawls* *Kathy C. Lawson* *Joe Martin*
Town of Rocky Mount	*Lucas Tuning* *Fatemah Casey* *Ralph Casey*

About the WPPDC

RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont operates within the West Piedmont Planning District Commission's (WPPDC) footprint and all staff members are WPPDC employees, sharing the majority of responsibilities for this plan's implementation, with the bulk of staff time from its Regional Coordinator, Joe Bonanno. Other members of the RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont team include Michael Armbrister and Jacob Bullins, WPPDC's Executive Director and Finance Director, respectively.

See below for an outline of the organizational structure for the WPPDC.

Figure 1.2 WPPDC Organizational Framework



Staff Involved

Regional Coordinator: Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner is the RIDE Solutions Regional Coordinator and is responsible for the execution of the program. Joe is responsible for promotion of the program via social media and paid advertising, blog posts and updates on program-related activities/events, employer and community outreach, grant submission, and other tasks related to the day-to-day operations of the program.

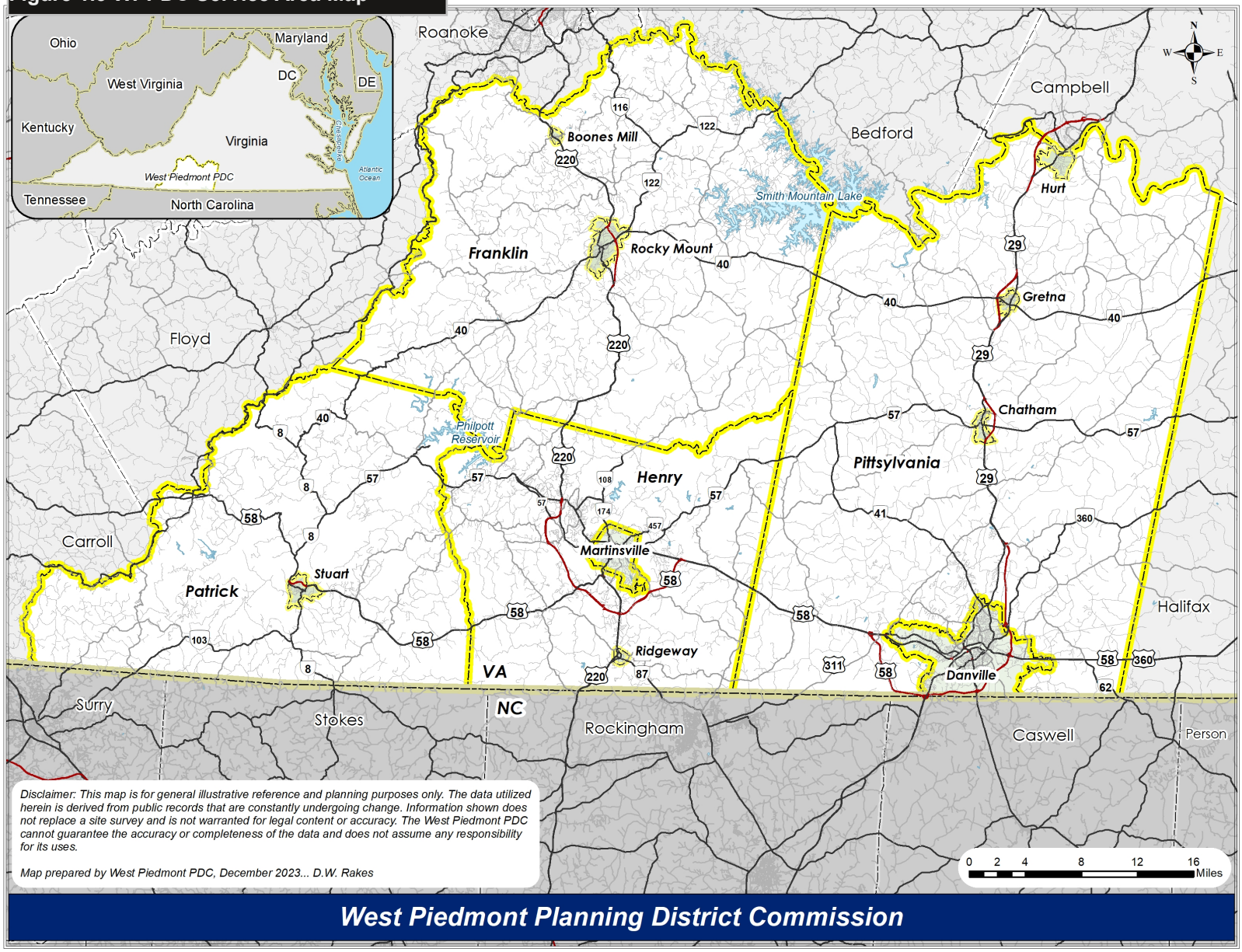
Finance Director: Jacob Bullins is responsible for overseeing and tracking the project budget, with adjacent duties including the submission of reimbursement requests to DRPT and the preparation of quarterly reports.

WPPDC Executive Director: Michael Armbrister Michael Armbrister serves as the WPPDC's Executive Director and provides organizational oversight for the program as well as providing input on program activities, marketing, and plan development.

Service Area

The service area of RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont lies within the boundaries of the West Piedmont Planning District, a predominantly rural area which covers approximately 2,587 square miles and includes the Counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania, the Cities of Danville and Martinsville, and the Town of Rocky Mount (located within Franklin County). The population of the region, based on the 2020 Census, was 239,609, representing an average of 92.6 persons per square mile. The main population and employment centers of the region include the Cities of Danville and Martinsville; the Town of Rocky Mount and Boones Mill in Franklin County; the Town of Stuart in Patrick County; the Town of Ridgeway in Henry County; the Census-Designated Places (CDPs) of Bassett and Fieldale in Henry County; and the Towns of Chatham, Gretna, and Hurt in Pittsylvania County. The main transportation arteries in the region, defined as Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS) include U.S. Route 220, U.S. Route 29, and U.S. Route 58.

Figure 1.3 WPPDC Service Area Map



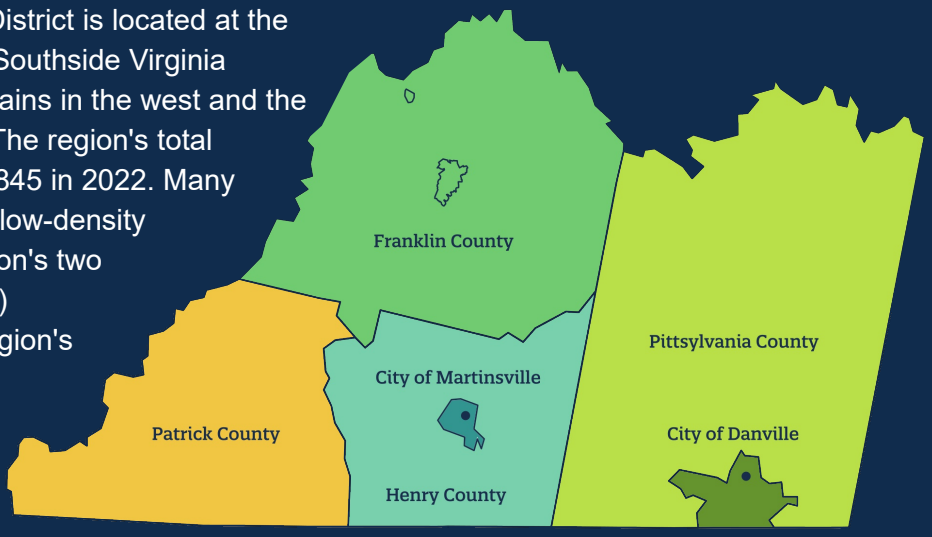
Chapter 2

Service Area Demographics and Characteristics



Regional Profile

The West Piedmont Planning District is located at the intersection of Southwest and Southside Virginia between the Blue Ridge Mountains in the west and the Piedmont Plateau in the east. The region's total estimated population was 239,845 in 2022. Many of the region's residents live in low-density rural communities with the region's two cities (Martinsville and Danville) representing just **23%** of the region's population.

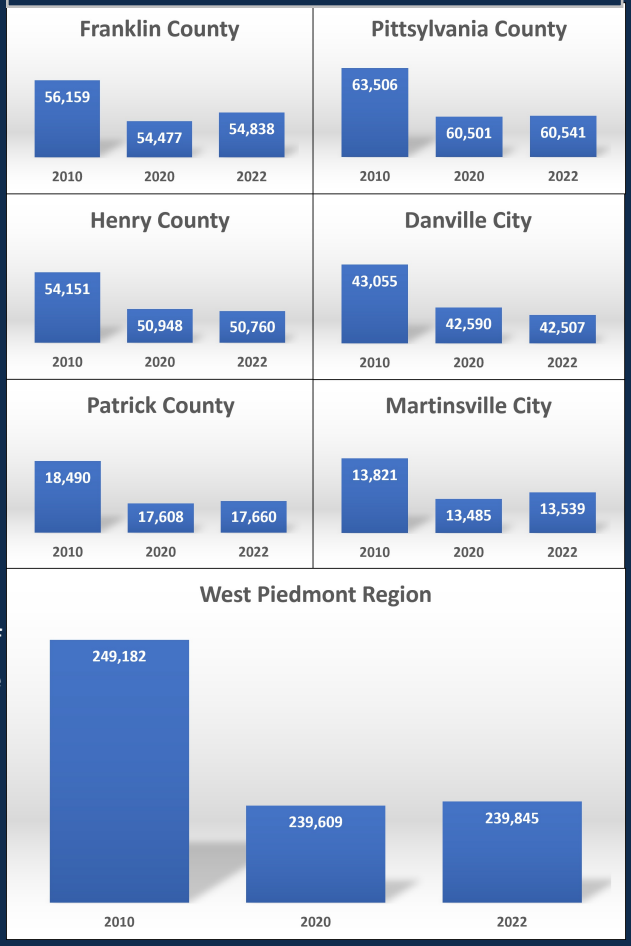


Diverse with distinctive cultural identities and backgrounds, the region has been impacted heavily by the economic downturns of the latter half of the 20th century and the departure of manufacturing industry.

Population losses have begun to stabilize from some dramatic losses over the past 30 years, but most areas are still expected to see a population decline over the next several decades, according to University of Virginia's Weldon Center for Public Service.

The one county projected to grow in total population, **Franklin County,** is projected to grow by almost 4,000 residents by 2050. The largest decrease projected is that of Henry County, which is projected to lose over 10,000 residents by 2050.

Figure 2.1: Demographic Change 2010-2022



Areas of Growth

While considering these larger trends, it is also important to consider potential growth areas within the region, particularly those with increased economic activity and greater proportions of new residents, namely in the region's two urban centers (Danville and Martinsville).

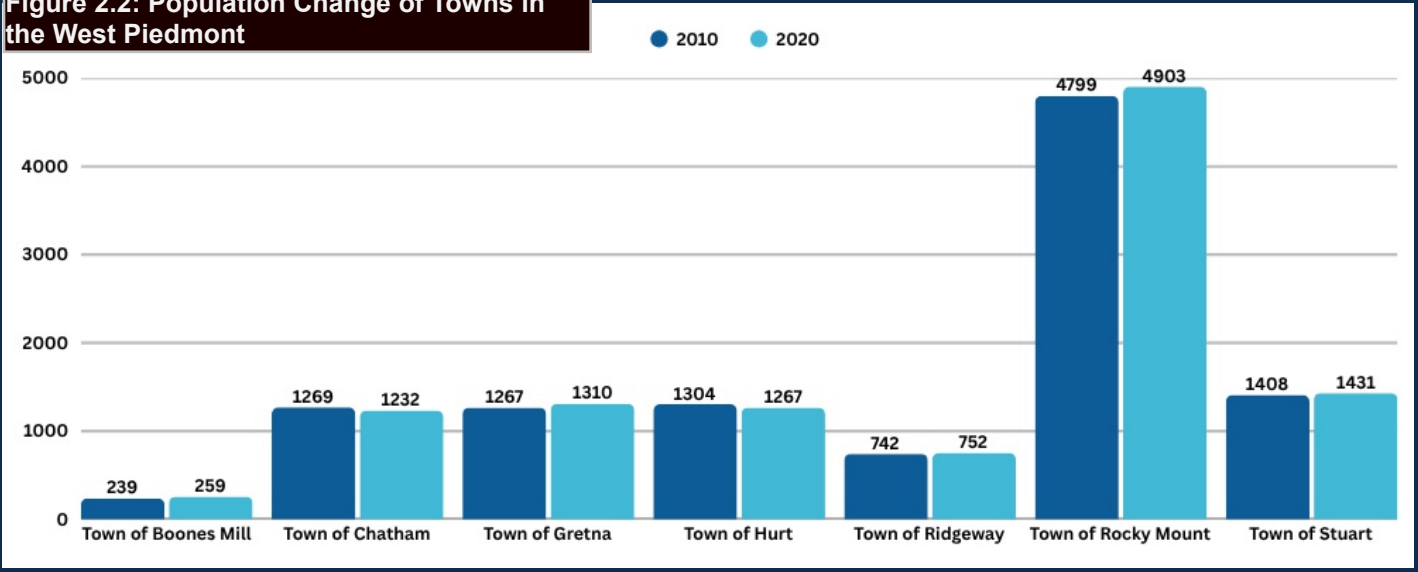
Additionally, while general trends showing decreased population for rural communities, in-migration to several rural areas has been increasing, contrasting with (and likely fueled by) the accelerating out-migration from many larger cities, driven in part by the increased number of remote workers and other transplants attracted by the region's natural resources and low cost-of-living. However, many localities experiencing this net-positive influx of newcomers are also experiencing high death rates within their older age cohorts, masking much of any gains

made.

Rural Towns

Within the West Piedmont, rural towns seem to be the areas seeing the most newcomers due to their relatively stable or increasing populations. As shown in **Figure 2.2**, four out of seven towns in the West Piedmont region saw increased growth between 2010 and 2020, with the rest seeing modest declines in that decade. These communities generally have the most concentrated development patterns compared to other

Figure 2.2: Population Change of Towns in the West Piedmont



communities in the county, with many benefiting from connected low-traffic street and sidewalk networks.

Danville

Danville, the region's largest city, and a historic center for manufacturing in the area, saw its population peak in 1990 at 53,056 and has seen a consistent population decline ever since. Efforts to bolster growth are ongoing and have netted some major successes including the grand opening of Caesars Virginia and the planned development of over 1,690 new housing units to meet the needs of a growing workforce. While currently projected to still decrease by almost 7,500 residents by 2050, there is the possibility that Danville could reverse this trend, especially considering recent migration trends suggesting a larger proportion of young professionals are reolocating to rural areas in response to housing affordability challenges in major cities.

Martinsville

Another city within the region that has seen some positive population trends is the City of Martinsville, with a median age which is falling faster than anywhere else in the Commonwealth. Additionally, from 2020 to 2024, after decades of population loss (beginning in the 1960s), Martinsville's population saw growth each of those years.

Age

The West Piedmont is a region with a relatively high proportion of residents over 65, and this proportion is projected to increase as more residents reach retirement age. In-migration of retirees from other areas (whether they are seeking a slower pace of life, more affordable housing, or other benefits of living in a rural area), could contribute even more to this increase.

Figure 2.3, Working Age Population, Ages 16 – 64, shows the population, by census tract, for that segment of the population that is generally considered to be part of the workforce – ages 16 to 64. The figure shows that the greatest numerical concentration of this cohort is located in rural areas of the region, and not necessarily within towns and cities. In fact, the most populous areas of the region with regard to the working-age population can be found in Franklin County, north of Rocky Mount, in the Collinsville area of Henry County, and in central Pittsylvania County.

Figure 2.4, Population 65 and Over by Census Tract, shows the geographic concentrations of those over 65, which is important to note considering mobility challenges and other needs related to transportation availability and access. This segment of the population is relatively widespread throughout Patrick and Pittsylvania counties, with Franklin and Henry counties represented to a lesser extent. Some of the lowest shares of this population segment is evident in the cities of Danville and Martinsville, reflecting a larger concentration of a younger age demographic in those census tracts.

Socioeconomic Factors

The West Piedmont region is an area with high rates of poverty compared to statewide averages. In the interest of understanding the ways in which socioeconomic factors intersect with transportation development, advocacy, and availability, WPPDC staff mapped out the geographic areas with the greatest concentrations of poverty in the region and households with no vehicle - shown in **Figure 2.5** and **2.6**, respectively. Outside of the two cities (Danville and Martinsville), it is worth noting that the highest concentrations of poverty were in rural areas which lack public transit access and are often isolated from employment, health facilities, and commercial centers.

Figure 2.3

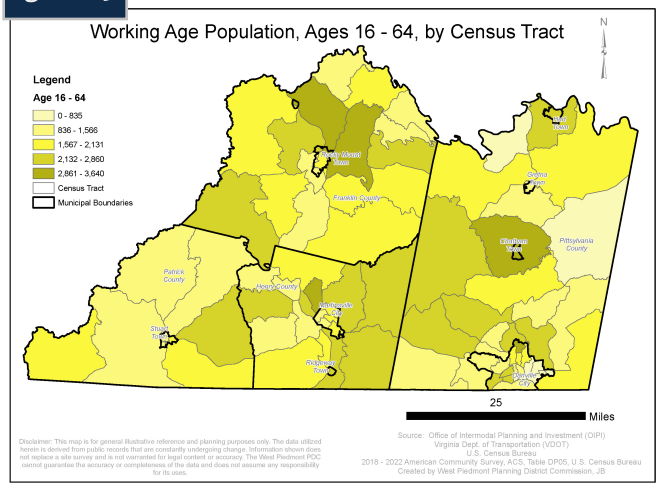


Figure 2.4

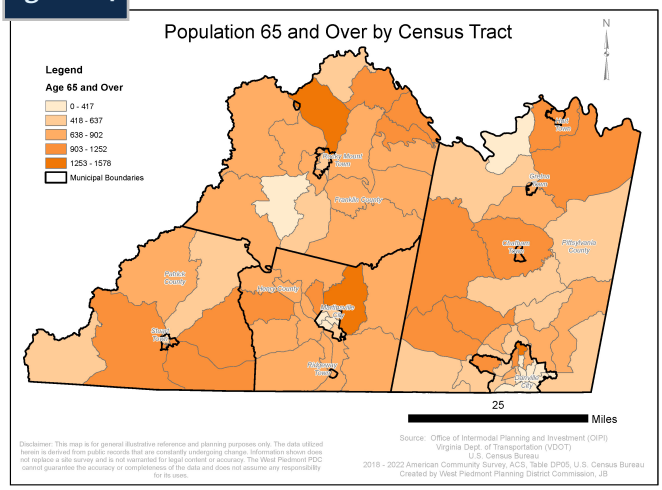


Figure 2.5

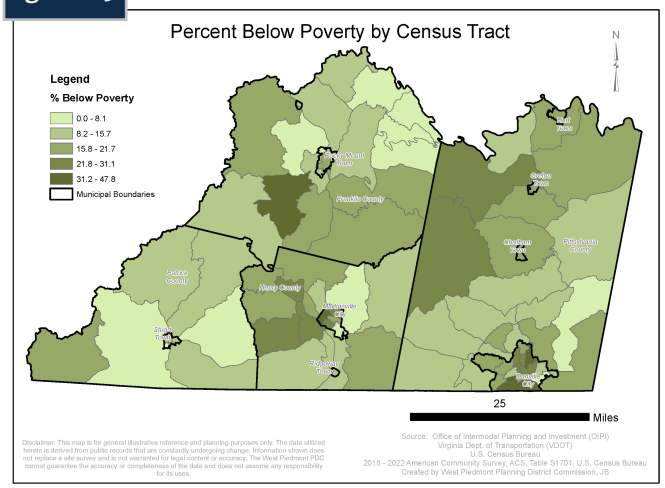


Figure 2.6

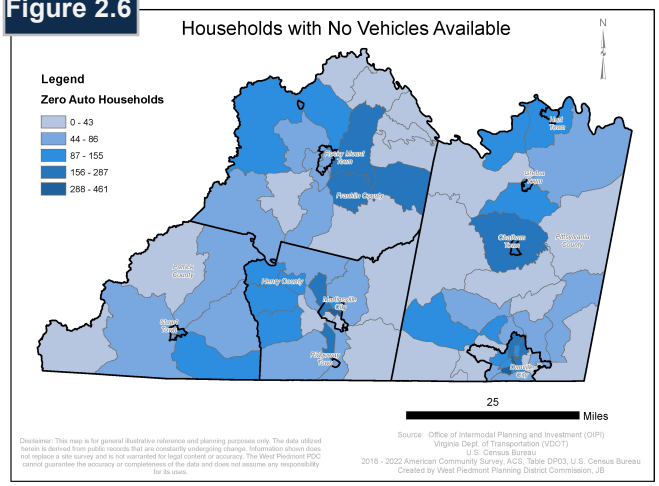
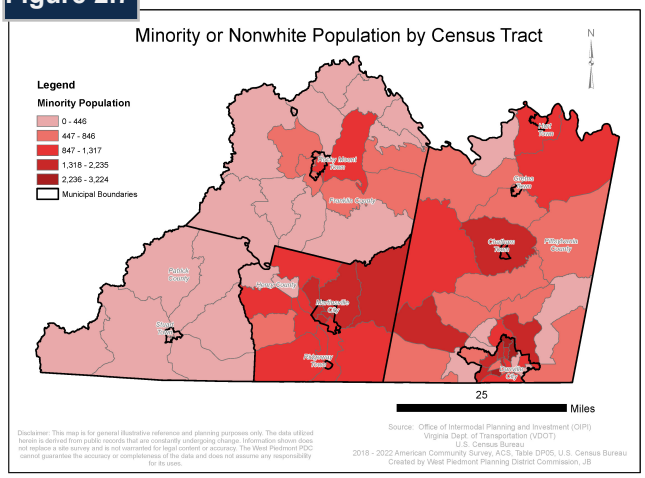


Figure 2.7



Race/Ethnicity

As a regional average, the West Piedmont region is not as diverse as state or national averages, but several areas with high rates of racial/ethnic diversity are present in the region. As national data has consistently shown, communities of color are most likely to rely on public transit and other forms of transportation besides a personal vehicle, and as a result these areas are especially important for implementing effective TDM strategies. **Figure 2.7** shows that the Cities of Danville and Martinsville and the communities that surround them represent some of the greatest shares of non-white populations in the region; public transit serves both cities as well as adjoining areas in Henry County.

One of the biggest demographic shifts to occur in recent years, alongside overall population losses, has been the significant growth of residents of Hispanic origin, with the proportion of this group within the total population increasing from 3.5% to 4.5% from 2010 to 2020 (an increase of over 41%), as shown in **Table 2.1**. TDM Planning, Programming, and Outreach would benefit this growing community, particularly those with limited English proficiency, especially considering data showing that they often rely on alternative forms of transportation significantly more than white Americans.

Table 2.1: Change in Hispanic Population in the West Piedmont Region 2010-2020

Jurisdiction	2010 Census		2020 Census		2010-2020 Change	
	Hispanic Population	%	Hispanic Population	%	Population Change	%
Virginia	631,825	7.9%	908,749	10.6%	276,924	43.8%
Franklin County	1,424	2.5%	1,955	3.5%	531	37.3%
Henry County	2,545	4.7%	3,301	6.5%	756	29.7%
Patrick County	444	2.4%	567	3.2%	123	27.7%
Pittsylvania County	1,332	2.1%	1,712	2.8%	380	28.5%
Danville City	1,245	2.9%	2,074	5.2%	829	66.6%
Martinsville City	552	4.0%	1,025	8.2%	473	85.7%
West Piedmont	7542	3.0j%	10,634	4.5%	3,092	41.0%

Employment Trends

Employment Concentration

To provide the best services for the region's commuter and business communities, staff gathered key data on the area's employment centers, concentration, and major industries. While many employers are spread out throughout the region, those with 50+ employees are concentrated primarily around the region's cities and rural population centers (see **Figure 2.9**).

Within the West Piedmont Planning District, the largest employment sectors are **1. Manufacturing**, **2. Health Care and Social Assistance**, and **3. Retail Trade (Figure 2.10)**. Together these sectors account for nearly 48 percent of the region's workforce. All of these sectors are categorized by varying shift start/end times compared to daytime office workers and sometimes unpredictable scheduling / need for overtime. TDM efforts should take this into consideration, ensuring that programs and services can effectively accommodate or adapt to commuter needs.

Figure 2.9

West Piedmont Region Employment Concentration, 2022

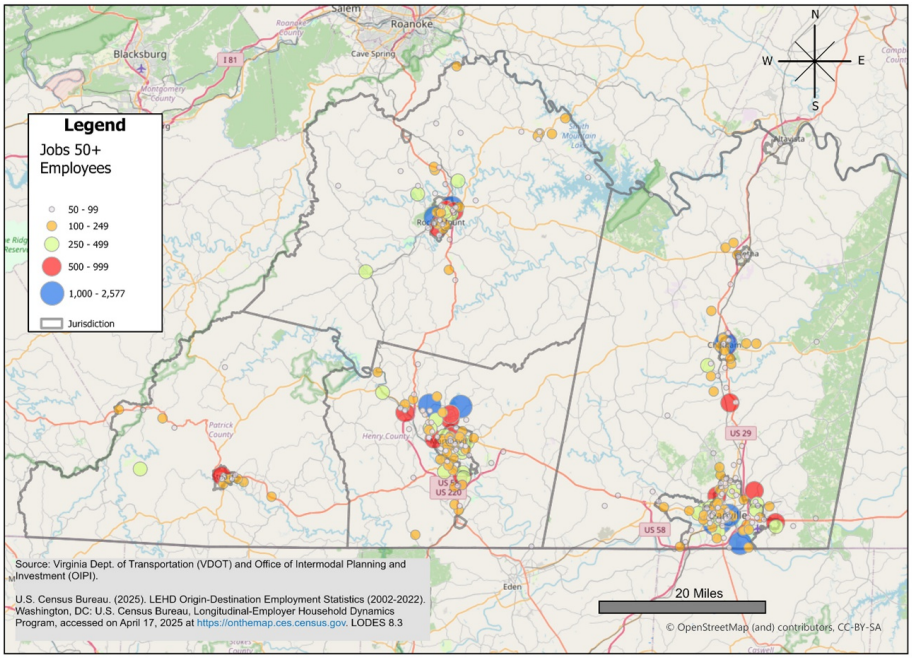


Figure 2.10

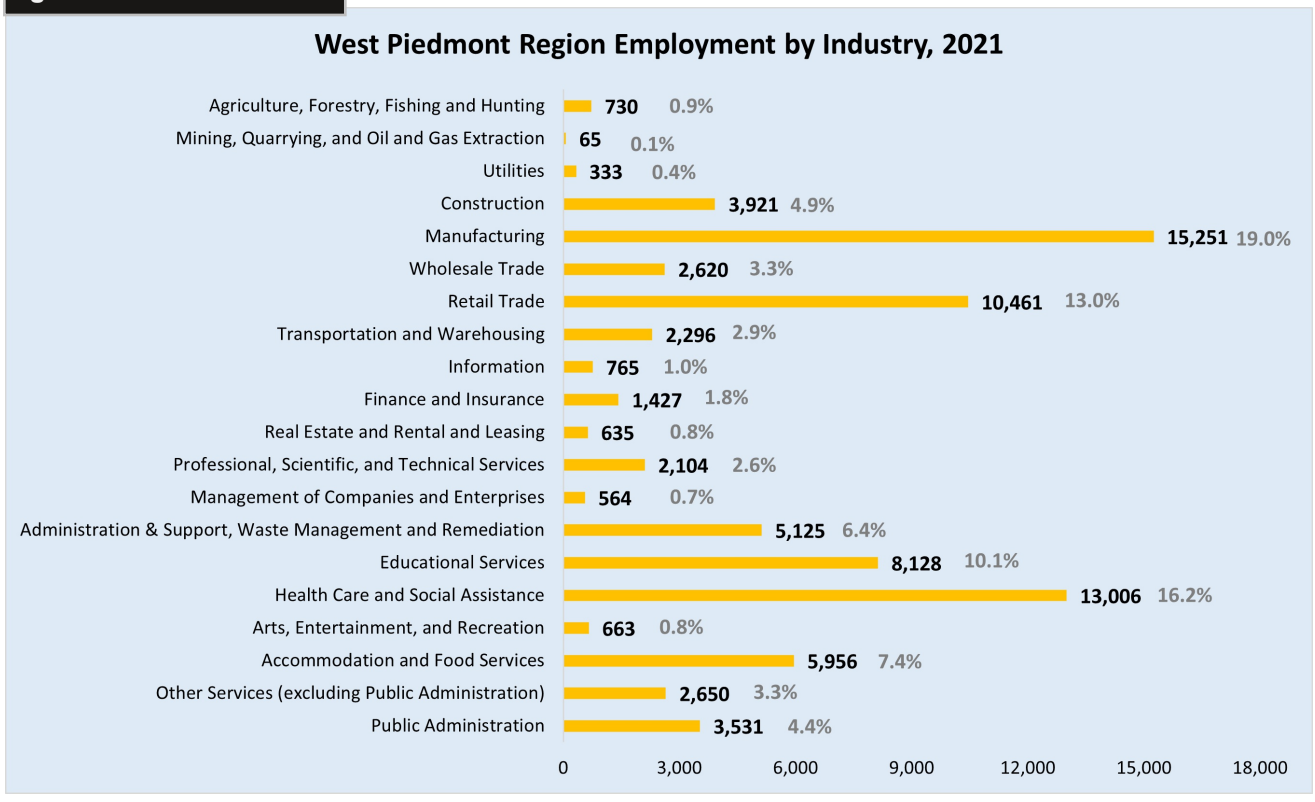
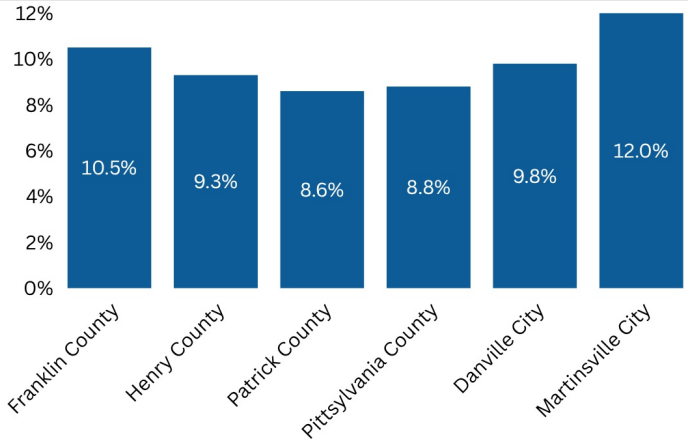


Figure 2.11: Average Annual Employment Turnover



U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). Quarterly Workforce Indicators (1990 - 2023). Washington, D.C. U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program, accessed on May 28, 2024 at https://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov. Version QWI_F VA 51 1998:3-2023:3 V4.11.1 R2024Q2 qwipu_va_20240411_1341

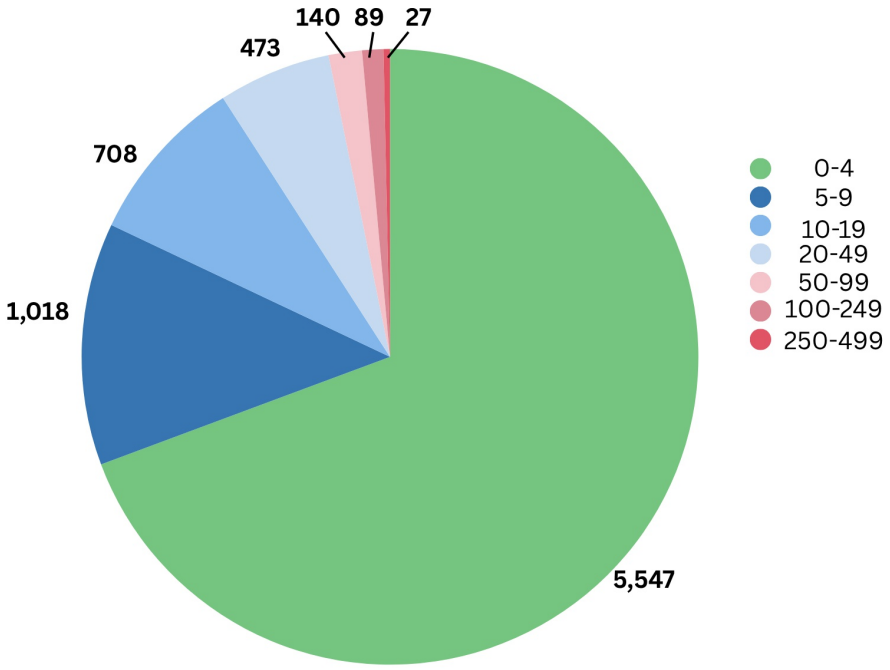
Turnover

All counties within the West Piedmont have a signficantly higher turnover rate than the statewide average (3.9%). **Figure 2.11** shows the average annual employment turnover for all industry sectors for 2022. According to the graph, the City of Martinsville experienced the highest rate of turnover, at 12.0 percent, while Franklin County experienced the second-highest rate, at 10.5 percent.

Employers by Size

Figure 2.12 presents the number and share of employers by staff size throughout the West Piedmont Planning District. The figure shows that of the 8,002 total employers classified in this graph, 5,547, or 69.3 percent, fall within the category of 0 to 4 jobs, meaning that most employers in the region employ up to four employees. The second largest category of employers is those that comprise 5 to 9 employees. This means that 82 percent of employers in the region employ fewer than ten workers.

Figure 2.12



Source: "Community Profile, West Piedmont PDC." Virginia Employment Commission Economic Information & Analysis Division. May 30, 2024. Data based on 4th Quarter 2023.

Commute Patterns

Commute Times

Region-wide average commute time (25.75 minutes) is slightly lower than the national average (26.8 minutes), but in two counties (Franklin and Patrick), commute times, on average, are over 30 minutes, with many commuters traveling an hour or more to work.

Inter-Regional In-Flow / Out-Flow

Because of the close connections many counties/ communities have to neighboring areas outside of the West Piedmont region, a large number of commuters travel outside of the region for work. An Inflow/Outflow Analysis done on survey data showed that in 2021, a total of **117,463** workers were either living or working in the West Piedmont Planning District. Of those, **56,980**, or **48.5%**, lived and worked in the region; **23,251**, or **19.8%**, commuted into the region from other areas; and **37,232**, or **31.7%**, commuted outside of the region for work, primarily to the following three areas: the **Roanoke Metropolitan Area**, **Campbell County** and **Rockingham County, North Carolina**. These findings reiterate the need for robust inter-regional dialogue and actions to support TDM efforts for the region's commuters and businesses.

Where Commuters Work

Table 2.2 shows the top 25 counties which workers residing within the West Piedmont Region commuted to in 2021, the latest year for which such data are available. While the greatest shares of workers residing in the region also worked in the region, other prominent localities to which workers in the region commuted included the City of Roanoke, Roanoke County, and Campbell County. As shown in the table, a significant number of West Piedmont residents travel outside of the region for work.

Where Commuters Live

Table 2.3 shows the breakdown of regional employment based on where the employees live. The greatest shares of workers who were employed in the region also resided in the region, but localities outside the region from which the greatest shares of workers commuted into the region included Rockingham County, North Carolina; Halifax County; Roanoke County; Roanoke City; Bedford County; and Caswell County, North Carolina.



25.75

Average commute time in the West Piedmont Planning District*

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2023

Table 2.2 Top 25 Locations of Work by Workers Residing in the Region, 2021

Work Locality	Number	%	Work Locality	Number	%
Danville City, VA	16,570	17.6%	Halifax County, VA	1,107	1.2%
Henry County, VA	12,146	12.9%	Bedford County, VA	1,045	1.1%
Franklin County, VA	10,124	10.7%	Montgomery County, VA	1,026	1.1%
Pittsylvania County, VA	8,828	9.4%	Henrico County, VA	817	0.9%
Martinsville City, VA	6,429	6.8%	Fairfax County, VA	765	0.8%
Roanoke City, VA	5,685	6.0%	Surry County, NC	748	0.8%
Patrick County, VA	2,883	3.1%	Chesterfield County, VA	631	0.7%
Roanoke County, VA	2,639	2.8%	Botetourt County, VA	562	0.6%
Campbell County, VA	2,163	2.3%	Forsyth County, NC	556	0.6%
Rockingham County, NC	1,798	1.9%	Richmond City, VA	527	0.6%
Lynchburg City, VA	1,636	1.7%	Pulaski County, VA	384	0.4%
Guilford County, NC	1,541	1.6%	Caswell County, NC	376	0.4%
Salem City, VA	1,503	1.6%	All Other Locations	11,723	12.4%

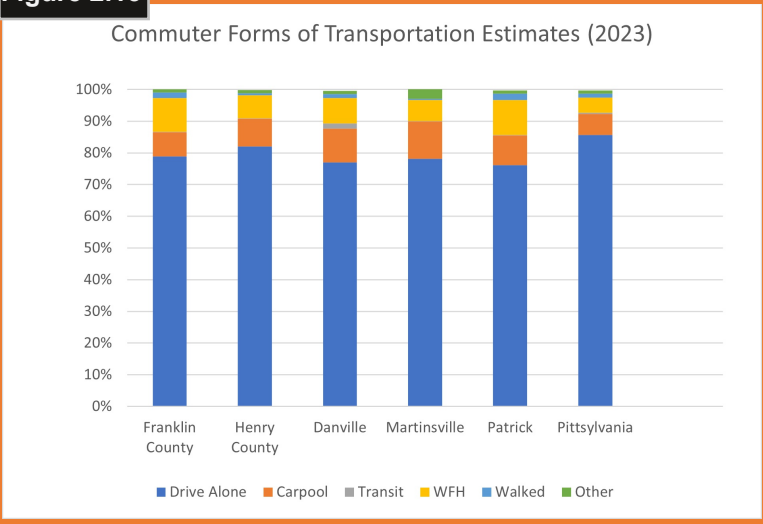
Source: U.S. Census Bereau (2024). LEHD Origin-Destiation Employment Statistics (2002-2021).

Table 2.3 Top 25 Residence Counties of Workers Commuting to the Region, 2021

Residence Locality	Number	%	Residence Locality	Number	%
Pittsylvania County, VA	15,396	19.2%	Campbell County, VA	693	0.9%
Henry County, VA	13,647	17.0%	Lynchburg City, VA	662	0.8%
Danville City, VA	10,385	12.9%	Montgomery County, VA	591	0.7%
Franklin County, VA	9,935	12.4%	Carroll County, VA	429	0.5%
Patrick County, VA	3,867	4.8%	Chesterfield County, VA	376	0.5%
Martinsville City, VA	3,750	4.7%	Botetourt County, VA	332	0.4%
Rockingham County, NC	1,911	2.4%	Henrico County, VA	304	0.4%
Halifax County, VA	1,334	1.7%	Augusta County, VA	292	0.4%
Roanoke County, VA	1,243	1.5%	Amherst County, VA	272	0.3%
Roanoke City, VA	1,233	1.5%	Floyd County, VA	271	0.3%
Bedford County, VA	1,226	1.5%	Pulaski County, VA	265	0.3%
Caswell County, NC	1,192	1.5%	Salem City, VA	265	0.3%
Guilford County, NC	695	0.9%	All Other Locations	9,665	12.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bereau (2024). LEHD Origin-Destiation Employment Statistics (2002-2021).

Figure 2.13



Source: 2023 American Community Survey (ACS)

Commuter Forms of Transportation

The main form of commuter transportation in the West Piedmont, by a wide margin, is to drive alone, as shown in **Figure 2.13**, followed by Working From Home (WFH) and carpool/vanpooling. Even in areas with public transit, there are only a small number of users, mostly concentrated in the City of Danville and Martinsville. Out of the two transit services, Danville Transit has experienced a significant decline in transit ridership for fixed-route services and increased demand for "Reserve-a-Ride" services following the COVID-19 pandemic. Another observation from this data are significant Work From Home (WFH) rates in the region.



Housing Types

Land use, and specifically housing type and density, should serve as an important part of any transportation plan, and this Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan is no exception. The location of housing and its density can dictate the types of mobility that are most feasible for a neighborhood, locality, or region.

Table 2.4 breaks down the Housing Characteristics for the West Piedmont region, reflecting its predominantly rural development. However, as previously mentioned, much of the region's population is concentrated around a few population centers, **Figure 2.14** identifies these population centers, alongside major employment centers.

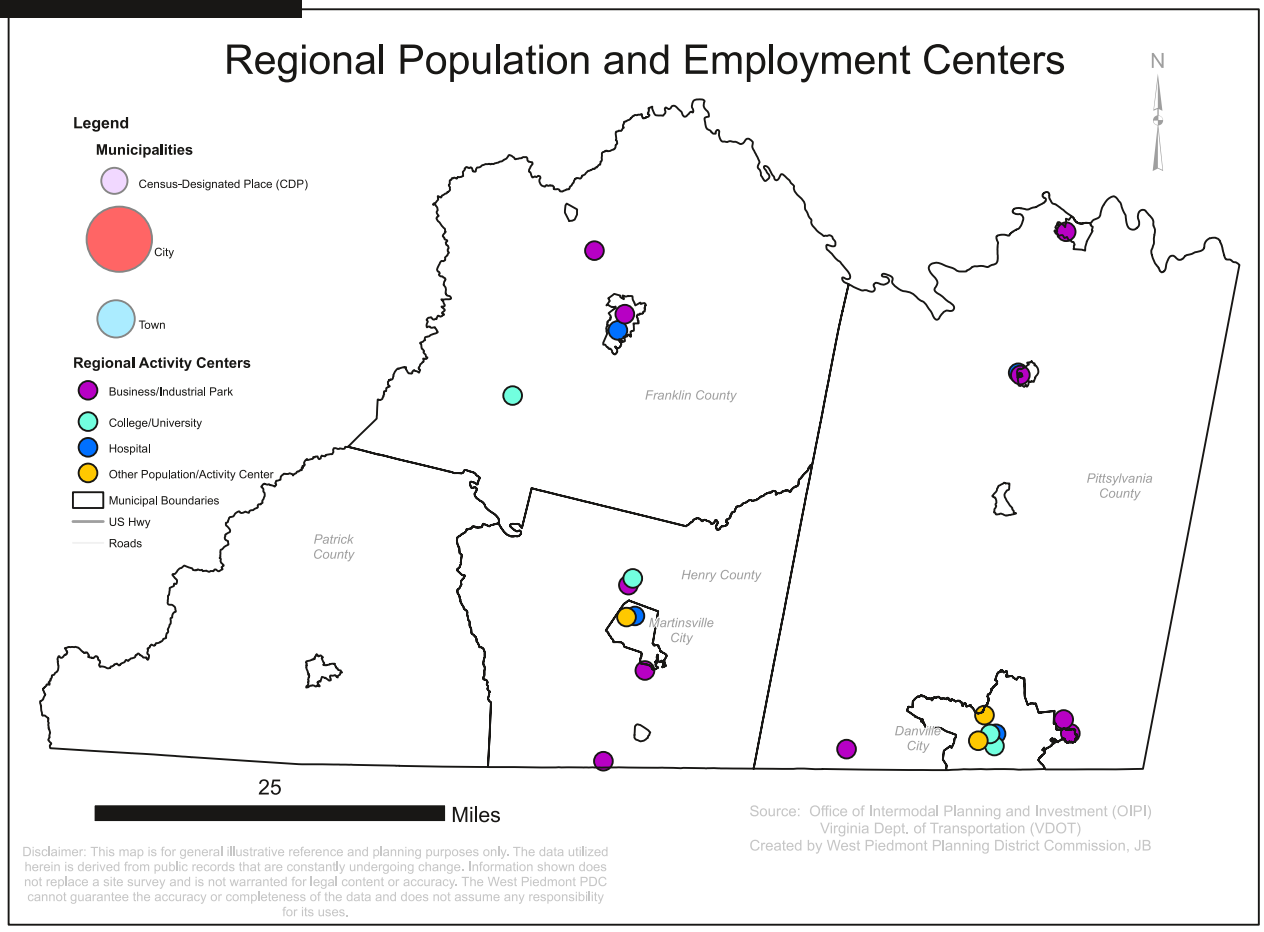
Table 2.4

Housing Characteristics of the West Piedmont Planning District

Jurisdiction	Single-Family Units	Multi-Family Units	Mobile Homes	Other	Total
Franklin County	21,358	2,029	4,868	50	28,305
Henry County	17,970	2,442	5,063	0	25,475
Patrick County	7,147	388	2,397	75	10,007
Pittsylvania County	22,817	1,111	5,552	46	29,526
City of Danville	15,503	5,919	869	0	22,291
City of Martinsville	5,131	1,774	137	0	7,042
West Piedmont	***89,926***	***13,663***	***18,886***	***171***	***122,646***

Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2.14



Transportation Services & Facilities - Public Transportation

Danville/Pittsylvania County

Danville Transit

Danville Transit is the largest transit provider in the West Piedmont Planning District, serving many locations within the City of Danville and surrounding areas via eleven fixed routes, an on-demand Reserve-A-Ride service, and a Handivan service for disabled riders.

The fixed-route service operates Monday – Saturday, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The base one-way fare for fixed routes is $1.00, though one child under the age of 12 may ride for free. Additionally, Danville Transit sells bus tokens which entitle riders to a 10 percent discount. Furthermore, senior citizens, disabled riders, and riders who are Medicare cardholders are entitled to a half-fare discount between the hours of 6 a.m. and 12 p.m. **Figure 2.15** provides an overview of Danville Transit's fixed-route network.



Figure 2.15: Danville Transit Map

Danville Transit System Map

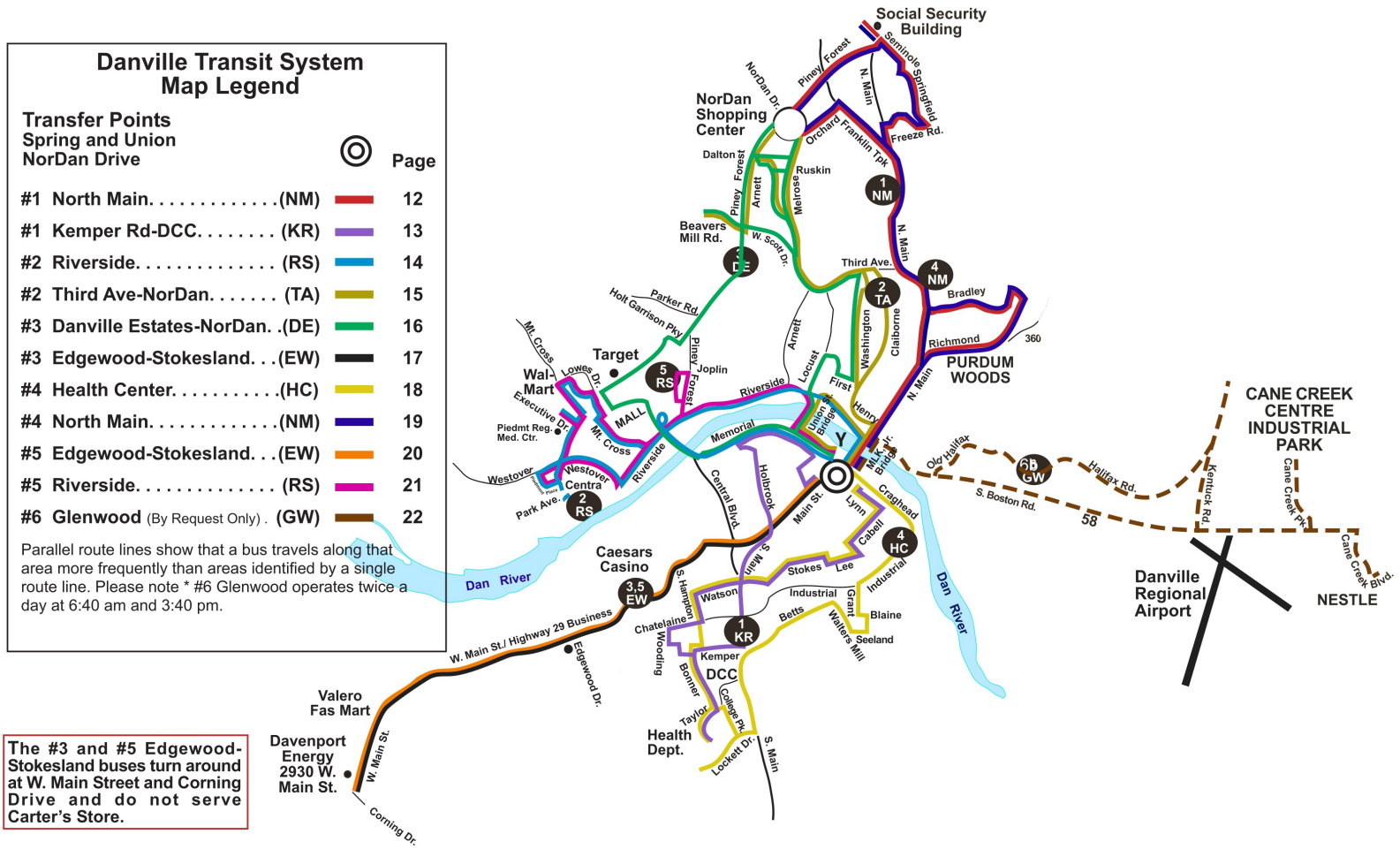
Danville Transit System Map Legend

Transfer Points
Spring and Union
NorDan Drive

		Page
#1 North Main.	(NM)	12
#1 Kemper Rd-DCC.	(KR)	13
#2 Riverside.	(RS)	14
#2 Third Ave-NorDan.	(TA)	15
#3 Danville Estates-NorDan. .	(DE)	16
#3 Edgewood-Stokesland. . .	(EW)	17
#4 Health Center.	(HC)	18
#4 North Main.	(NM)	19
#5 Edgewood-Stokesland. . .	(EW)	20
#5 Riverside.	(RS)	21
#6 Glenwood (By Request Only) .	(GW)	22

Parallel route lines show that a bus travels along that area more frequently than areas identified by a single route line. Please note * #6 Glenwood operates twice a day at 6:40 am and 3:40 pm.

The #3 and #5 Edgewood-Stokesland buses turn around at W. Main Street and Corning Drive and do not serve Carter's Store.



Reserve-A-Ride

Danville Transit's Reserve-A-Ride service provides door-to-door transportation within the City of Danville and the Cane Creek Centre Industrial Park Monday – Saturday between the hours of 4 a.m. and 1:00 a.m., and fares are $4 per trip, with reservations of at least one day customarily required, though the agency recently instituted a same-day reservation policy, with some restrictions. Students are entitled to use the Reserve-A-Ride service at half-fare, with the appropriate documentation.

Handivan

Danville Transit's Handivan service is the principal means of mobility for disabled transit riders in Danville, though riders must first complete forms verifying a disability prior to use of the service. The Handivan service provides door-to-door service Monday – Saturday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., with a $2 fare. Like the fixed-route service, the Handivan permits one child under the age of 12 to ride for free. Between the hours of 4 a.m. and 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. and 1:00 a.m., when Handivan service is unavailable, Reserve-A-Ride service will accommodate disabled riders, but at $4 per ride.

Averett Cougar Express

The Averett Cougar Express serves as a free shuttle for students of Averett University, operating between Averett University's Main Campus along West Main Street and the North Campus along Mount Cross Road. The Cougar Express also provides limited service to Averett Flight Center Building located at Danville Regional Airport.

Outlook for System Improvements

As employment and population increases in and around Danville, it is likely that Danville Transit will at some point establish commuter bus service to surrounding areas. A feasibility study was spearheaded by the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) in 2016 to promote transportation options for students and residents of Southside. The recommendation called for commuter bus service between Danville and the Town of Hurt, via the U.S. 29 corridor, as well as between Danville and Halifax County, via the U.S. 58 corridor.

A second, more updated feasibility study was recently funded by the Danville – Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facilities Authority, which evaluated commuter bus routes between the City of Danville and the following locations:

- Reidsville/Greensboro, North Carolina
- Martinsville, Virginia
- Chatham/Lynchburg, Virginia
- South Boston, Virginia

More information about Danville Transit is available at https://www.danville-va.gov/508/Mass-Transit.

Triad-Danville Connector

Launched in January 2025, this intercity bus route is operated by Sunway Charters and runs daily north and southbound routes connecting **Winston Salem, NC** to **Danville, VA**, with stops in **Greensboro** and **Reidsville**. More info can be found at www.ncdot.gov/divisions/integrated-mobility/public-transit-services/Documents/triad-danville-connector.pdf.

Martinsville/Henry County

PART - Piedmont Area Regional Transit

Piedmont Area Regional Transit (PART) was formed in 2009 to serve the City of Martinsville and adjacent portions of Henry County. The service is operated by RADAR (Roanoke Area Dial-A-Ride) of Roanoke but managed jointly by the City of Martinsville and Henry County.

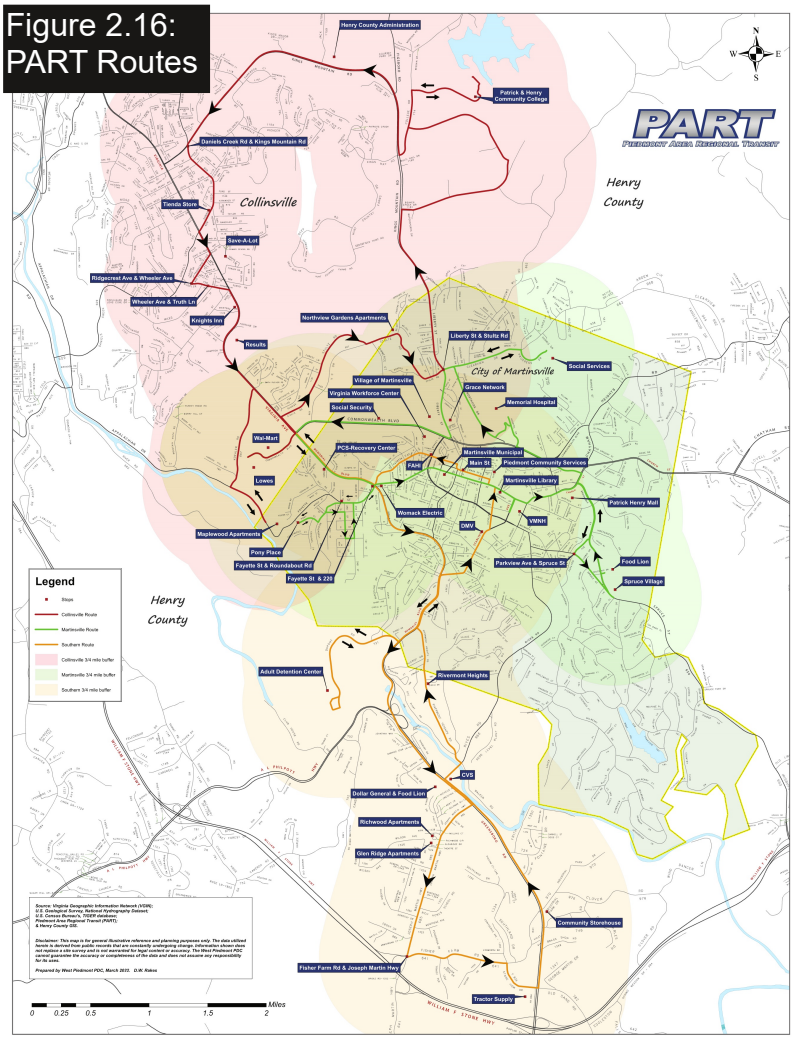
Initial service consisted of two routes on 14-seat buses. In fall 2014, service was upgraded to 20-seat buses due to an increase in ridership which was at least partially attributed to a greater share of Hispanic riders after a Spanish-language schedule was published. A third bus was acquired, and a third route added in 2017 primarily serving the U.S. Route 220 corridor south of the City of Martinsville south to Tractor Supply Co.



PART operates Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for a one-way fare of 50 cents, though that fare had been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic; it has not been determined if or when the fare may be reinstated. PART operates on a deviated fixed-route basis, meaning that a rider with a disability may request the bus to deviate from the fixed route for a maximum distance of ¾-mile with an advance notice of 24 hours. Passengers may transfer between the three buses at the Lowe's Home Improvement Center/Wal-Mart, which serves as the agency's transfer point every hour on the half-hour. Each bus can accommodate one wheelchair and up to two bicycles.

Figure 2.16 presents a map of all three routes, and additional information about PART may be obtained at either https://www.martinsville-va.gov/345/Bus-System or https://www.henrycountyva.gov/312/Bus-Routes.

Figure 2.16: PART Routes



Franklin County

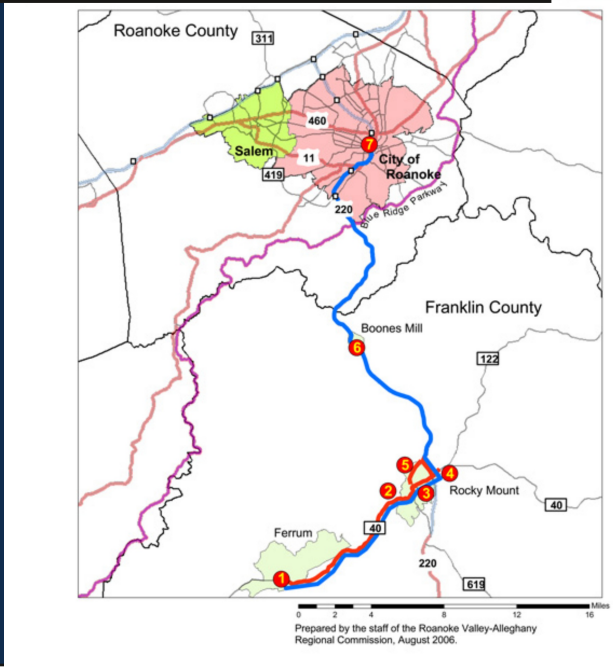
Ferrum Express

RADAR (Roanoke Area Dial-A-Ride) operates the Ferrum Express, a publicly-accessible transit service that serves Ferrum College, located in the Ferrum community of Franklin County. The service operates Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. **Figure 2.17** provides a schedule and map of the Ferrum Express.
On Thursdays and Fridays, stops include:

- **Ferrum College**
- **The Rocky Mount Farmers' Market**
- **Wal-Mart**
- **Rocky Mount Bowling Center**

On Saturdays, the route travels north to Roanoke, stopping at Roanoke Campbell Court Transportation Center.

Figure 2.17: Ferrum Express Map



Regional

Virginia Breeze

Virginia Breeze Bus Lines is an intercity bus service managed by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and operated by Megabus through a contract with DRPT.

The **Capital Connector** connects the southern areas of the the West Piedmont to the city of Richmond and Washington, D.C. Daily morning departures from Martinsville (at the Village Shopping Center of Martinsville), Danville (at the Danville Transit Transfer Center) , South Boston, Farmville, Richmond gets passengers to Union Station in Washington, D.C by 1 p.m. The return trip starts at 1:05 p.m. from Washington, D.C., and 3:30 p.m. from the City of Richmond to arrive in Martinsville by 7:05 p.m.



The **Piedmont Express** provides one northbound and one southbound trip every day. The northbound trip departs Danville's Transit Transfer Center at 8:00 a.m. and travels north along the U.S. Route 29 corridor. Stops include Altavista, Lynchburg, Amherst, Charlottesville, Culpeper, Warrenton, Gainesville, Dulles International Airport, and Union Station in Washington, D.C. More information can be obtained about the Virginia Breeze at https://virginiabreeze.drpt.virginia.gov/

Passenger Rail (Amtrak)



The West Piedmont Region is served by Amtrak's Crescent line, which operates within the eastern third of the U.S., running from New York City south to Atlanta, and then south and west to New Orleans, where the line terminates. Both northbound and southbound trains stop at the Danville Amtrak station, with the northbound train departing at 8:28 a.m. and the southbound train departing at 11:24 p.m., based on a search of Amtrak's website (www.amtrak.com) conducted on September 22, 2025.

Amtrak also serves the City of Roanoke (approximately 9 miles from the Franklin County border) with twice-daily service to Lynchburg and points north. Plans are underway to extend this service southwest to the New River Valley, which is anticipated to begin in 2027.

Transportation Services & Facilities - Carpool/Vanpools

Connecting VA

As part of DRPT's statewide ConnectingVA program, WPPDC utilizes the ConnectingVA app through the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program to enable West Piedmont commuters to find carpool, vanpool, and transit opportunities.

In addition to providing the ride matching function, the ConnectingVA app displays transit routes and schedules, generates bicycle and walking routes, and provides opportunities to enter raffles for gift cards. In addition to fixed-route bus service, ConnectingVA also provides information on Human Services and senior transportation services.
As of February 2026 there were 375 RIDE Solutions accounts in the West Piedmont Region.

In addition to fixed-route bus service, ConnectingVA also provides information on Human Services and senior services transportation.

Company Carpools/Vanpools

WPPDC is not aware of any companies with existing vanpool services, but attempts to establish vanpool services are ongoing, with WPPDC serving as the regional liaison with Enterprise Mobility, a national vanpool service provider looking to expand their reach into the area.

Connecting VA Ride Home Rewards

Designed to support those who carpool, vanpool, or use public transit, the Ride Home Rewards program provided and operated by DRPT provides peace of

mind by ensuring that participants have a reliable way to get home or to their car if parked at a park-and-ride lot, in the event of an emergency. Eligible commuters may use the Ride Home Rewards program up to six (6) times annually from their ConnectingVA account activation date, with a maximum of two (2) trips in any month, and have completed their account profile in the ConnectingVA ridematching platform. Approved reasons to use the program are unexpected illness, unscheduled overtime (no advance warning), sickness of an immediate family member (child, spouse, parent) or carpool or vanpool left early. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. By removing one of the most common barriers to ridesharing, i.e., the fear of being stranded, the ConnectingVA Ride Home Rewards program makes alternative commuting options more attractive and practical.

Qualifying commuters use the ConnectingVA app to request a Ride Home. DRPT's ConnectingVA contractor will review and approve requests, arrange for the trip by Uber, Lyft or taxi at no cost to the commuter or WPPDC.

Park & Ride Lots

The West Piedmont Planning District is currently served by ***2*** official park and ride lots, located in the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County.
The first is a 50-space facility located adjacent to U.S. Route 220 at Route 40, and while it is not served by transit, it is located at the junction of U.S. Route 220 and Route 40 and is in a prime location for future transit service. While use of the facility has not been consistently analyzed, West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) staff conducts periodic visits and evaluations.

The second is in the Summit View Business Park. This facility has approximately 111 spaces, with 2 electrical vehicle chargers.

Other "unofficial" carpool lots are scattered throughout the region. Consistent with the decrease in carpooling since the pandemic, these lots are rarely utilized to their full capacity and efforts should prioritize more utilization of these existing resources.

Tandem Bike Share

A bike share system operates in the City of Danville for the convenience and enjoyment of city residents and tourists, alike. The system is operated by

Transportation Services & Facilities - Active Transportation

Tandem Mobility and provides 25 bikes at five stations, which are located at Dan Daniel Memorial Park, Crossing at the Dan (along Craghead Street); at Main Street Plaza near the intersection of Craghead and Main Streets; near the Holiday Inn Express along the north shore of the Dan River; and near the intersection of Riverside Drive (U.S. 58 Business) and Central Boulevard, also on the north shore of the Dan River. Tandem Mobility charges the rider $3 per hour to ride. For more information visit: https://www.tandem-mobility.com/danville.



Transportation Services & Facilities - Other Transportation Providers

Table 2.5, on the following pages, presents a list of transportation service providers, both classified as human service and private, serving the West Piedmont Planning District.

Table 2.5: Alternative Transportation Providers

Provider Name	Provider Type/Characteristics	Client Type	Service Area
Neighbors Helping Neigbors	Volunteers who provide services to older residents in the Scruggs Road area of the Westlake community.	Residents age 60 and over	Franklin and Bedford counties
Centra Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (Pace)	All-inclusive elder care, which includes transportation services that transport qualifying individuals from home to a Pace center for medical and food services, as well as social opportunities.	Age 56 - 60, and 60+	Franklin County, Danville, Martinsville, Pittsylvania County, and Henry County
InnovAge Virginia Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Roanoke Valley	All-inclusive elder care, which includes transportation services that transport qualifying individuals from home to a Pace center for medical and food services, as well as social opportunities.	Age 56 - 60, and 60+	Franklin County and neighboring community, especially those located in the Roanoke Valley.
Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Need a Ride	Transportation service to the Salem VA Medical Center, and which is serviced by volunteers.	Military veterans who are ill or injured	Nationwide service
GoGoGrandparent	A partnership between companies such as DoorDash and Uber, offering concierge service for delivery of groceries, medication, doctor's visits, etc.	Age 18 and over	Nationwide service
ModivCare	Formerly known as LogistiCare, ModivCare is a provider of non-emergency transportation service.	No minimum age	Statewide
UZURV Administration	Provides "adaptive transportation network" services	No minimum age	Statewide
Aetna Better Health of Virginia	Transportation to medical appoinments for individuals without transportation, who are members of Aetna Cardinal Care.	No minimum age	Statewide
Anthem HealthKeepers Plus	The transportation benefit of Anthem Medallion Cardinal Care provides transportation services to doctor appointments, farmers' markets, pharmacies, and grocery stores.	No minimum age	Statewide
Cardinal Care Managed Care	Transportation is a service offered by Commonwealth Coordinated Care Plus, which is offered via an individual's health plan or this agency's partner.	No minimum age	Statewide
Magellan Complete Care of Virginia	Transportation to qualifying treatment services for individuals with behavioral health conditions.	No minimum age	Statewide
Optima Family Care Transportation	Transportation, among several health-related services available to medicaid recipients.	No minimum age	Statewide
United Healthcare Insurance Company	Medical-care related transportation for Cardinal Care recipients.	No minimum age	Statewide
Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (Non Emergency Cardinal Care Transportation)	Transportation to medical/health care appointments, day support, and employment programs.	No minimum age	Statewide

Solutions that Empower People, Inc. (STEP)	Transportation to congregate meals, food shopping, and medical appointments via STEP's Senior Services.	Age 56 - 60, and 60+	Franklin County, Patrick County
Franklin County Department of Social Services (TANF Transportation Expense Assistance)	Potential eligibility for assistance with transportation.	Age 18 and over	Franklin County
Lake Christian Ministries	LCM provides direct payments to transportation providers for emergency transportation needs, among other services.	Age 18 and over	Franklin County, Bedford County
American Kidney Fund	Transportation costs for trips to dialysis for qualifying individuals.	No minimum age	Nationwide service
Families of the Wounded Fund	Funds (including transportation) to caregivers and caregivers for wounded service members, who predominantly receive care at Hunter Holmes McGuire Virginia Medical Center.	Age 18 and over	Statewide
Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, Quantico Office	Emergency travel assistance	Age 18 and over	Statewide
American Cancer Society	Provides rides to and from cancer treatment for individuals unable to drive and without a ride.	No minimum age	Statewide
PORTCO, Inc.	Provides transportation to quality employment for individuals with disabilities.	Age 18 and over	Nationwide service
Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)	Through the Southern Area Agency on Aging, may provide transportation for older individuals for grocery shopping or medical trips.	No age requirement	Statewide
Henry County Parks and Recreation	Cardinal Care program for doctor's appointments, non-emergency medical needs, as well as those trips from hospitals or between such facilities.	Age 60 and over	Henry County
Henry County Department of Social Services	TANF assistance with transportation for qualifying individuals.	Age 18 and over	Henry County
Southern Area Agency on Aging (SAAA)	Transportation for older adults that is both affordable and accessible. Services include the Miles 4 Vets program, a voucher program, and the Mile 2 Volunteer driver program.	Age 18 and over	Henry County, Franklin County, Patrick County, Pittsylvania County, cities of Danville and Martinsville
Veterans Administration (VA) Veterans Transportation Program (VTP)	Program offers low-cost or no-cost transportation to veterans for treatment at their VA (Salem) facilities.	Age 18 and over	Franklin County, Henry County, Patrick County, and the City of Danville
Stepping Stones, Inc.	Transportation, as an element of a day program serving individuals with intellectual disabilities.	Age 18 and over	Henry County, City of Martinsville
Edwards Adult Day Center	Transportation to and from the Edwards Adult Day Center, which is a day center for adults with disabilities.	Age 18 and over	Henry County, City of Martinsville
ALS Association, DC/MD/VA Chapter	Individuals with ALS receive reimbursement for wheelchair vans. The program also provides reimbursement for other travel options to those who are more mobile.	Age 18 and over	Statewide

Transparent Home Care	Non-emergency medical care for a variety of medical needs such as appointments, treatments, etc.	No minimum age	Statewide
United Spinal Association Metro DC	Transportation of individuals with spinal cord injuries.	No minimum age	Statewide
Epilepsy Foundation of Virginia	This organization may be able to furnish transportation to individuals with epilepsy to enable them to travel to work, medical appointments, and other trips. Funding to purchase bicycles for more local trips may also be available.		Statewide
Patrick County Department of Social Services	TANF assistance with transportation for qualifying individuals.	Age 18 and over	Patrick County
Pittsylvania County Community Action	Non-emergency medical care and congregate meal service.	Age 60 and over	Pittsylvania County
Van's Med Tec Transport, LLC	Provider of non-emergency medical transportation.	No minimum age	Pittsylvania County, cities of Danville and Martinsville
Pittsylvania County Department of Social Services	TANF assistance with transportation for qualifying individuals.	Age 18 and over	Pittsylvania County
DTB Senior Transporting	Senior and medical transportation	No minimum age	Pittsylvania County (travels up to 50 mile radius from Lynchburg)
Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services	Provides accessible transportation to enable individuals with developmental disabilities to access the Day Services Program.	No minimum age	Pittsylvania County, City of Danville
Tendercare of Virginia	Nationawide ambulatory transport for individuals in wheelchairs and stretchers.	No minimum age	Nationwide service
Danville Division of Social Services	TANF assistance with transportation for qualifying individuals.	Age 18 and over	City of Danville
enCircle	This organization may provide transportation in certain situations for their clients who utilize their services such as group homes, day support services, etc.	No minimum age	City of Danville (and numerous other cities and counties throughout the Commonwealth)
American Medical Response	Non-emergency medical transport	No minimum age	Statewide
Martinsville Department of Social Services	TANF assistance with transportation for qualifying individuals.	Age 18 and over	City of Martinsville
Martinsville Senior Center	Services include non-emergency medical transportation for dialysis, physical therapy, and medical appointments for seniors and non-seniors who are disabled.	Generally, age 60 and over	City of Martinsville

Source: Virginia Navigator - "Your Nonprofit Guide to Aging, Disability, and Veterans' Services in Virginia." https://virginianavigator.org/. Retrieved October 2025

Pedestrian and Bicycling Activity Analysis

To establish a better understanding of bicycle/pedestrian activity in the region (separate from bicycling or walking for recreation), RIDE SOLUTIONS - West Piedmont staff conducted an analysis of popular pedestrian and bike routes to identify high activity zones.

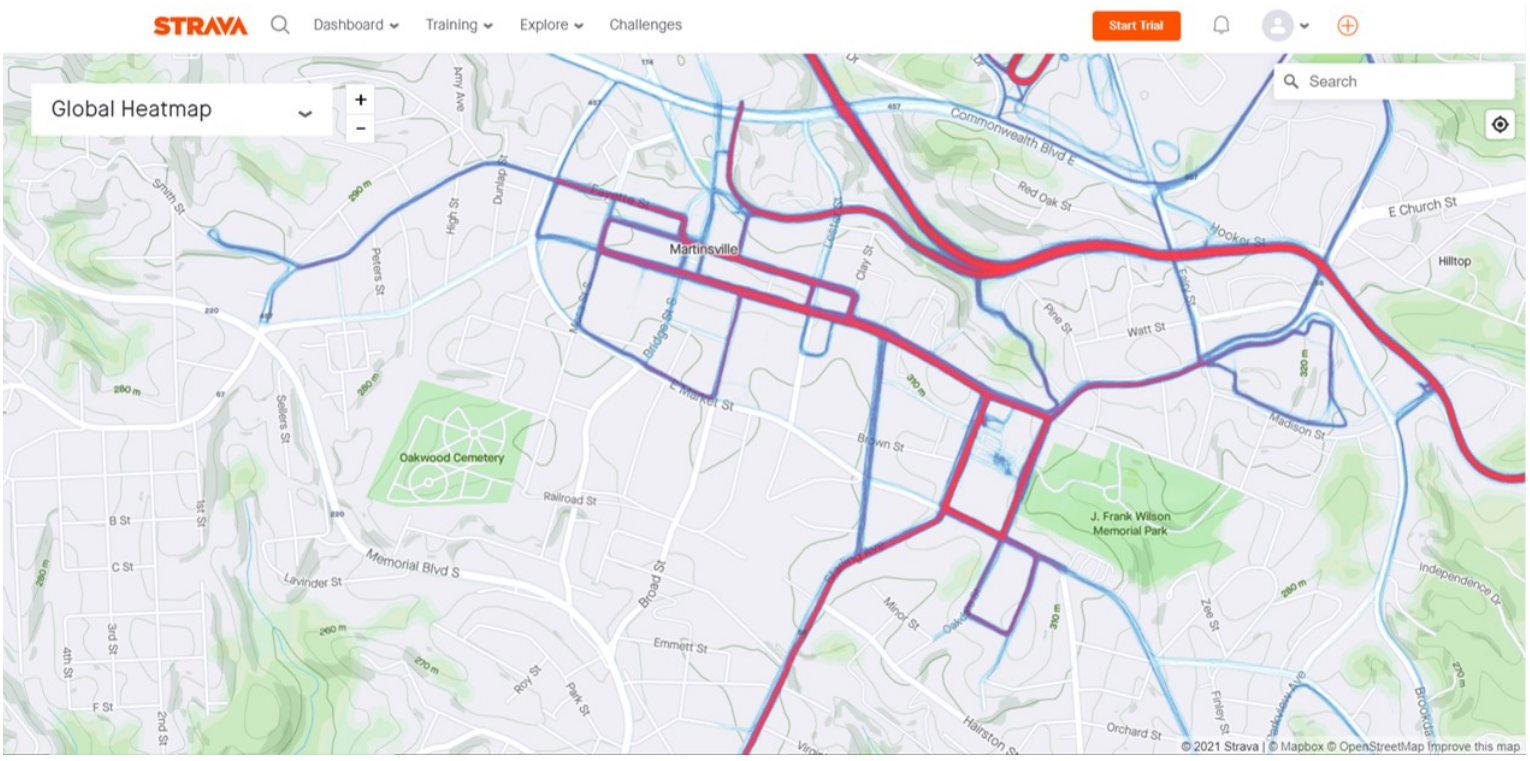
Traditionally, the best way to observe pedestrian and bicycle activity in an area has been through direct observation, however, technological advancements have enabled such activity to be quantified with a few clicks of a mouse. Multiple tools are available to do this, but one very accessible and popular tool is Strava, which is an online platform enabling individuals to track their workout and fitness progress and goals. Additionally, individuals can use the app, via their smart phones or GPS devices, to track where they walk, run, hike, bike, engage in water sports such as kayaking, and participate in winter activities such as skiing. The Strava Global Heatmap keeps track of such activity on the global level and allows users to zoom in to view activities on the local level.

While Strava does not reveal the travel patterns of all pedestrians, bicyclists, or others who engage in various forms of fitness, it can reveal where some of the most popular routes are for walking and bicycling, which can help to identify needs with regard to these activities by indicating where people feel most comfortable biking and walking. Based on these findings, RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont staff identified the following locations as high activity zones for active transportation: The City of Martinsville (including surrounding areas in Henry County), the City of Danville (including surrounding areas in Pittsylvania County), and the Town of Rocky Mount (located within Franklin County).

Martinsville/Henry County

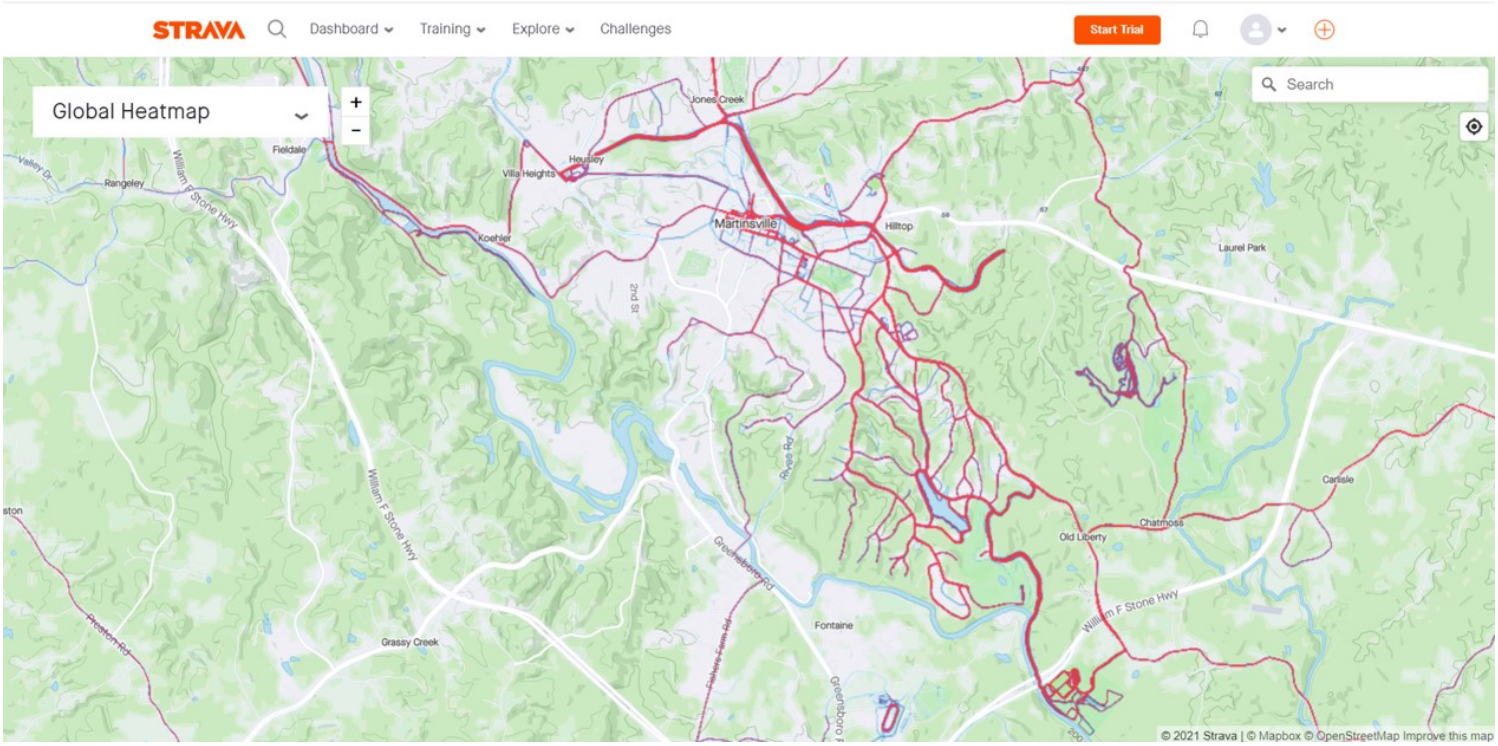
Activity - Martinsville

Strava's foot traffic heatmap for uptown Martinsville and some of the surrounding neighborhoods shows fairly heavy pedestrian activity in and around uptown, the Starling Avenue corridor, the Dick & Willie Passage Trail, and some use on other local streets such as Fayette Street



Bicycling Activity - Martinsville

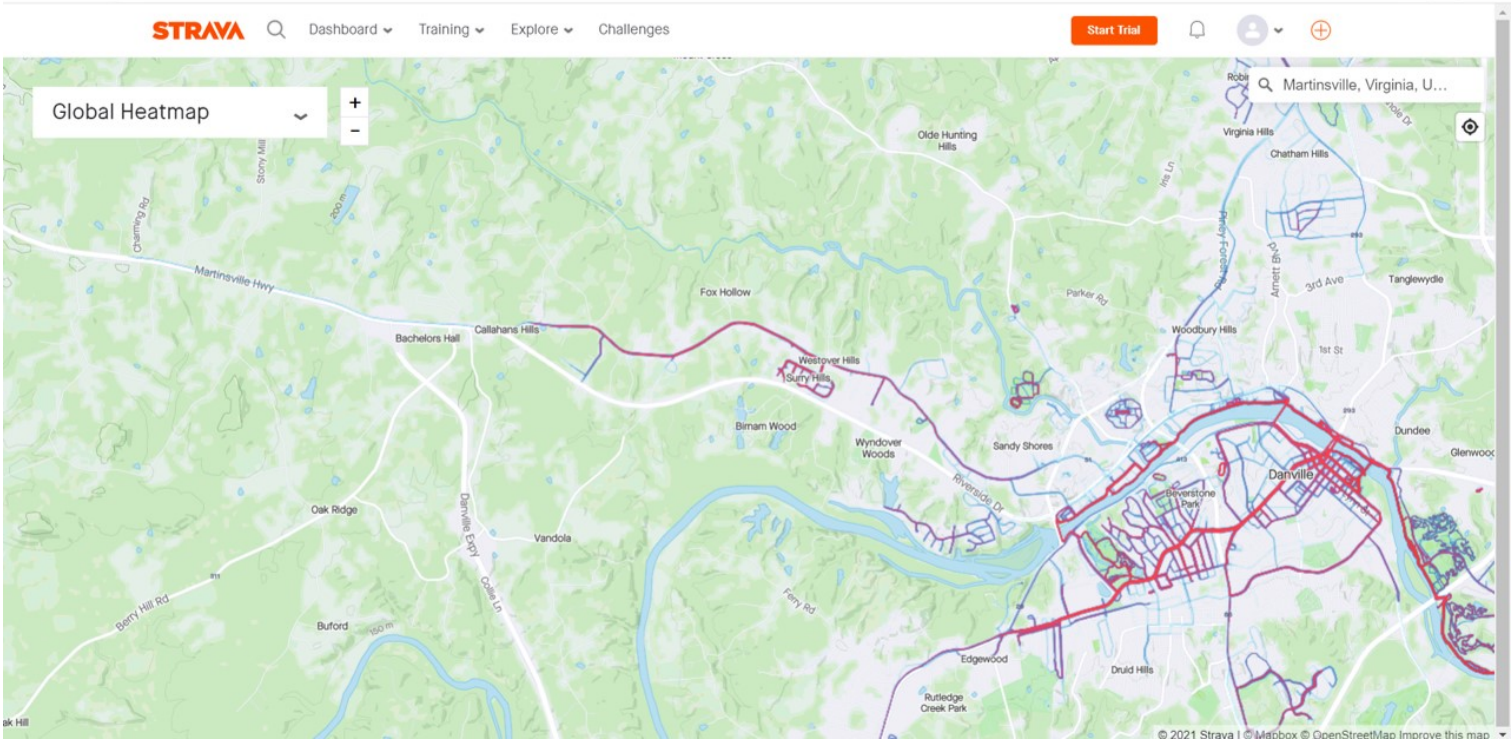
A zoomed-out version of the map shows bicycling activity in the vicinity of the City of Martinsville. Popular places to bike include uptown, the Lake Lanier area in south Martinsville, the Dick & Willie Passage Trail, and roads in the outlying area.



Danville/Pittsylvania County

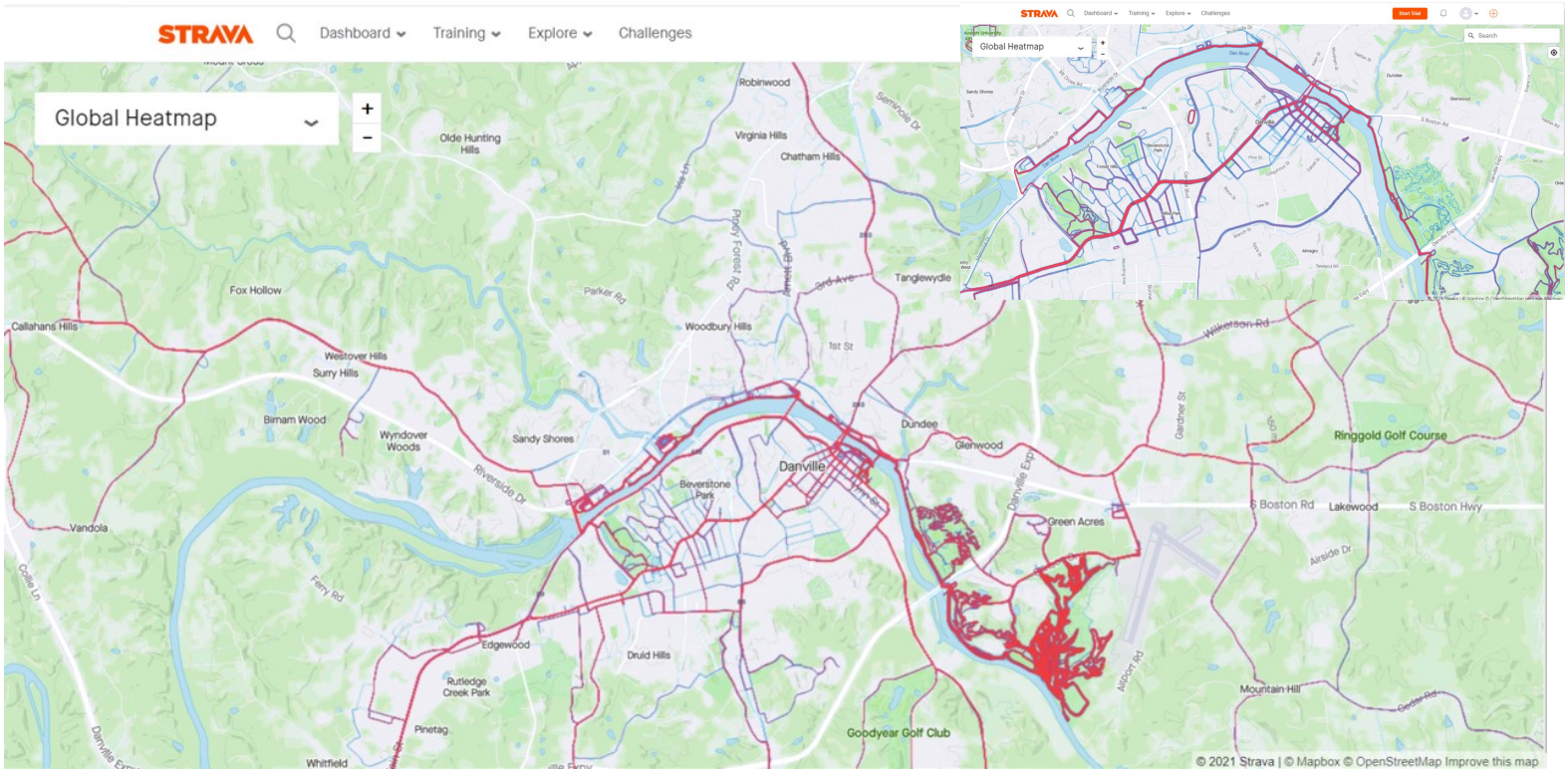
Pedestrian Activity - Danville

In the City of Danville, in terms of pedestrian activity, South and West Main Street are very popular in terms of walking and running, as are the Danville Riverwalk Trail located directly north of the Dan River, the River District just south of the river, and the Ballou Park and Averett University area on the left side of the image. Relatively little pedestrian activity was observed in north and west Danville, with the exception of Westover Drive and Piney Forest Road



Bicycling Activity - Danville

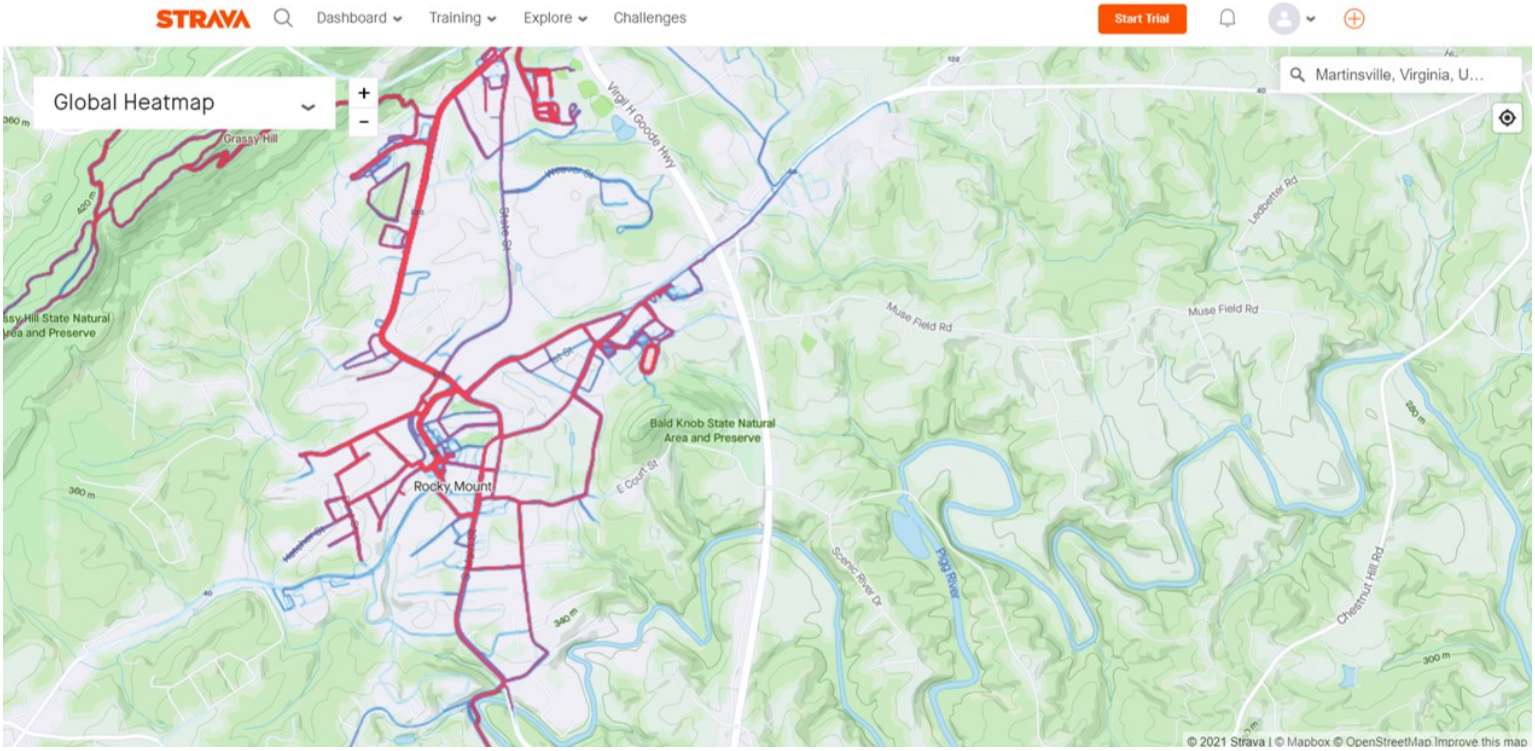
The image below shows where bicycle activity has been concentrated in and around Danville. The River District, South and West Main Street, the Danville Riverwalk Trail, Westover Drive, and the North Main Street corridor are popular bicycling routes in the city. The large cycling concentration on the southeast end of the city consists of mountain bike trails in Anglers Park and Dan Daniel Memorial Park.



Franklin County (Town of Rocky Mount)

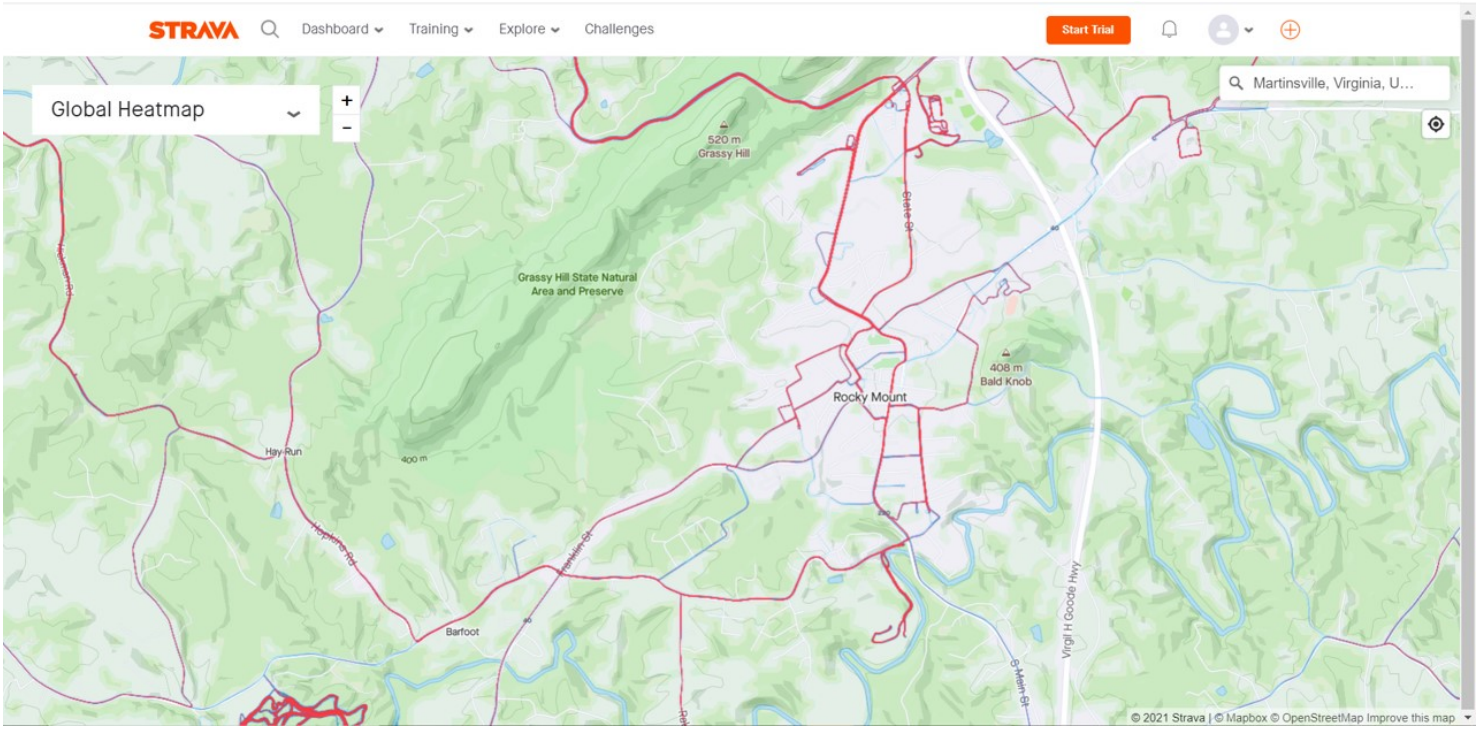
Pedestrian Activity - Town of Rocky Mount

Walking and running activity in the Town of Rocky Mount (Franklin County) appears to be heavily concentrated along North Main Street as well as Franklin Street in downtown Rocky Mount. High pedestrian activity is also evident in many of the local streets surrounding the center of town.



Bicycling Activity - Town of Rocky Mount

The map below shows that bicycling in Rocky Mount is not nearly as prevalent as walking and running, and this is at least partly due to the Town's hilly topography and lack of bike lanes and trails. However, bicycling is relatively popular along Main Street and State Street in the town. Popular routes directly outside the town include Grassy Hill Road (top of image), Franklin Street (Route 40), and Coles Creek.



Public Input Overview - Commuter & Employer Surveys

In 2024, RIDE SOLUTIONS - West Piedmont conducted two surveys, with one for commuters and another for employers. These surveys were a critical part of this planning process and provided insights through both multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

A more detailed summary of survey responses is included at the end of **Chapter 8**.

Low Interest/Awareness for Carpool/ Vanpooling

Carpooling was only moderately supported as a means of commuting. The two main reasons provided within the public survey for the tepid carpool support included respondents stating that there was no one living near them that commuted to the same area or workplace, while the convenience of solo driving was cited numerous times.

Transportation Access Impacts Employers

According to the majority of regional employers polled, employee punctuality and absenteeism were affected by transportation access. Additionally, 4 out of the 8 employers represented said that transportation "Occasionally" or "Often" had an impact on employee recruitment.

"Acording to the majority of regional employers polled, employee punctuality and absenteeism was affected by transportation access."

Most of the employers surveyed reported that at least part of their workforce was employed outside of the traditional “workday” schedule, with many operating “around the clock” to some capacity. Indeed, the West Piedmont Region is unlike many of the nation’s administrative and transactional labor markets that function primarily 8 to 5 Monday through Friday.

Desire for Local Transit

The need for transit improvements was ranked very high in the public survey, indicating that such investments would be likely to garner robust public support. Transit improvements would likely have broad public support, but activation of key demographics/stakeholders is key to supporting its development.

Survey respondents noted frequently both the difficulty of and the need for transportation alternatives like public transit, with one respondent stating that, as a job coach working in Franklin and Patrick Counties, that there is a very real need to establish some form of public transportation in those areas to support employment. Another survey respondent stated that they cannot drive due to health issues, which means they must rely on others to meet their transportation needs. Another survey respondent, while acknowledging traditional public transit investments might be unrealistic for rural counties, suggested microtransit options as a potentially more practical alternative.

Conclusions

After analyzing public input alongside the demographic findings earlier in this chapter, RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont staff have recognized the following as key takeaways/actions to be taken as part of the Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan.

> *A need to increase awareness of carpooling/vanpooling as viable transportation options, with consideration of specific employee needs (scheduling, overtime, etc.) taken into account. There is significant work to be done when it comes to fostering the development of carpool opportunities and encouraging ridesharing more generally.*

> *Finding opportunities to work with employers to encourage transportation alternatives at the workplace, including, but not limited to: establishing incentive programs, sponsoring company carpool/vanpools, and advocating for transportation investments to support their workforce and improve recruitment efforts.*

> *Activating key demographics and stakeholders as part of program actions to support robust and community-informed public transit investments.*



Chapter 3

Vision, Goals, and Objectives

Strategic Vision

Ride Solutions-West Piedmont will serve the West Piedmont's regional and local travel needs by promoting carpool, vanpool, transit, and biking travel options to residents and workers in the region, integrating Transportation Demand Management (TDM) into regional/local planning efforts, educating stakeholders on TDM projects/programs, and assisting those seeking to plan or implement TDM projects within the region.

Mission Statement

Ride Solutions – West Piedmont will contribute to a more connected and prosperous region by connecting residents and visitors to a variety of healthier and more sustainable transportation options, while saving them money and reducing vehicular trips on the region's roads.

Goals & Objectives



Over the course of preparing for this plan, CAP committee members, the WPPDC, and regional stakeholders reflected on the opportunities and challenges for transportation networks and usage within the West Piedmont region. Based on these conversations and feedback, RIDE Solutions and WPPDC staff set out a series of goals and objectives for 2027-2031. These goals and objectives, situated within the broad strategic vision of the program, are intended to be (1) Specific, (2) Actionable, and (3) Achievable. All of these goals and objectives were established with close consideration of the region's specific transportation challenges and opportunities.

GOAL #1

Expand Community Outreach and Educational Opportunities for Target Markets and Audiences

Objective 1.1 Increase targeted advertising and outreach efforts

Objective 1.2 Expand the publication and reach of the program's marketing materials through the West Piedmont region

Objective 1.3 Make materials and information accessible for more of the region's population, including speakers of other languages

GOAL #2

Engage with businesses and organizations to increase employee use of the Ride Solutions – West Piedmont program

Objective 2.1 Identify large employers (50+ employees) within the West Piedmont region

Objective 2.2 Create and distribute marketing and outreach materials to employers for whom a TDM program might be appropriate/feasible (focusing on company-sponsored or organized carpools/vanpools)

Objective 2.3 Leverage existing resources to increase the number of interactions and follow-ups with potential partners / program participants, measured in email follow-ups and telephone callbacks

Objective 2.4 Increase the number of regional businesses/organizations implementing TDM projects, including carpools/vanpools

Objective 2.5 Increase the number of West Piedmont employer-affiliated registrants in the Connecting VA app.

Objective 2.6 Explore partnership opportunities between employers and transit/micro-transit providers, serving as a liaison between the business community and transit agencies

GOAL #3

Increase awareness of available travel choices among commuters and non-commuters who travel within, out of, or into the West Piedmont Region, while promoting use of these choices.

Objective 3.1 Increase the number of views of the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont and ConnectingVA websites

Objective 3.2 Increase the effectiveness of paid marketing and social media posts (reach, views, click-throughs, etc.)

Objective 3.3 Increase new account registrations, Rideshare Inquiries, and Rideshare Matches through the Connecting VA app within the West Piedmont region

Objective 3.4 Increase the awareness and usage of existing Park-and-Ride lots within the region

Objective 3.5 Promote carpooling, vanpooling, walking, biking, and transit use within the region's two largest population centers – the cities of Danville and Martinsville, as well as in rural population centers

GOAL #4

Incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) into WPPDC's planning processes while advocating for and facilitating relevant policy changes and projects throughout the West Piedmont region

Objective 4.1 Increase awareness among local governments and other stakeholders of transportation network solutions that accommodate not only vehicles, but transit (bus), car/vanpools, bicycles, and pedestrians; all users including individuals with disabilities; and incorporate/adopt innovative approaches to transportation within and between cities, towns, and other community/ activity centers

Objective 4.2 Increase the number of regional plans which incorporate TDM provisions and information to encourage "mode shift" strategies

Objective 4.3 Build upon the successes of recent regional transit and active transportation network additions by advocating for and facilitating the development or expansion of transit networks and active transportation infrastructure

Chapter 4
Target Markets and Customers



Market Summary

With a population of nearly 240,000 and over 2,587 square miles in land area, much of the West Piedmont region is defined by its highly rural character, low-density development surrounding population centers, relatively long commute times, and a population highly dependent on SOV (Single Occupancy Vehicle) travel. The RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program must focus its efforts on strategic actions, maximizing effectiveness of the program, and long-term impacts, considering the particular challenges and opportunities the region presents.

Regional Challenges

Employment

Clusters of employment are found within and on the periphery of the region's population centers, but a major distinction of this region is the prevalence of its business and industrial parks, which have a high concentration of employers with medium-to-large workforces and are often located outside of major population centers.

Many of the industries within these business and industrial parks are involved in production and distribution, which often require employees to work a variety of shifts. The nature of this employment can be a natural fit for TDM activities, including carpooling and vanpooling.

Transportation

A major challenge throughout the region is the lack of transportation options offering alternatives to driving. Because of this, much of the program's efforts will be strategically focused on transportation options such as carpooling and vanpooling, as well as providing information on micro-transit and fixed route transit services where they exist. The program will continue to support efforts by organizations and local governments to expand transportation options within communities in the West Piedmont region, thereby promoting WPPDC's priority of increasing ridership on transit and vanpools, as well as increasing carpooling, reducing single occupant vehicle trips, vehicle miles traveled, air pollution, and fuel costs.

Opportunities

Carpooling and Vanpooling

The existence of several major employers in the region is a major opportunity for promoting transportation alternatives such as carpooling and vanpooling, which can be centered around partnerships with major employers. Large commercial zones and recently established industrial parks such as the Southern Virginia Megasite at Berry Hill (Pittsylvania County) and Summit View (Franklin County) can offer plentiful opportunities for company- sponsored carpool/vanpool programs, and WPPDC, through its RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont program, is well-positioned to help build these partnerships.

Walkable City/Town Centers

While much of the region is defined by its rurality and consequent low-density development, the region also has several town/village and urban centers which offer significant promise for active transportation networks, in addition to transit, carpool, and vanpool opportunities.

The City of Danville is one example, owing in part to its significant growth during the pre- automobile, era at a time when transportation limitations necessitated densely developed settlement patterns. Danville has also invested significantly in active transportation infrastructure, both for recreation and the mobility of its citizens. Some examples of these infrastructure investments within the region include the expansion of the Danville Riverwalk Trail which includes connections to the city's existing pedestrian network. The city also offers the most robust public transit network in the region.

Other cities/towns throughout the region offer promising opportunities for increasing trips via walking/rolling/biking, but these efforts will be centralized in Martinsville and Danville, the region's two cities.

Target Markets

1. Rural Areas

Rural areas present a unique challenge for those seeking transportation options, and while such options are fewer than in more urban and suburban areas, assets and opportunities certainly exist and can be leveraged. For commuters and residents of these communities, efforts will focus on general carpool and vanpool opportunities and outreach, though as noted earlier in this chapter, denser community centers have the potential for active transportation and transit to supplement these modes.

Activities to reach audiences in this market area will be focused on strategic outreach/advertising for feasible transportation alternatives within rural communities (which can vary significantly depending on the area), cross-sector collaborations to help establish company carpool/vanpools, and coordination with local governments to incorporate TDM into local and regional plans. The specific communities targeted are outlined in Chapters 5 and 8.

2. Cities

Within the West Piedmont region, there are two cities, Martinsville and Danville. These communities are, in many respects, markedly different from one another, but share several important attributes: both have existing transit networks, infrastructure that can support active transportation, and a relatively high concentration of both population and employment.

Outreach/advertising in and around these two communities will focus on increasing non-SOV (Single Occupancy Vehicle) trips by serving as an intermediary between vanpool providers and employers, promoting transit and carpooling, and conducting educational activities that promote the value of investing in and using multi-modal transportation infrastructure.

Secondary Market

Out-of-Region Travelers/Commuters

A secondary market to consider is out-of-region travelers/commuters. As highlighted in Chapter 2, over 23,000 people commute into the region from other areas. This market should be considered when developing outreach/advertising in coordination with large employers, who may need to consider the needs/interests of out-of-region commuters alongside regional workers. Additionally, RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will explore cross-regional collaboration opportunities, focusing on the Roanoke and Piedmont Triad metropolitan areas.

Target Customers



Rural Areas

1.1. Local Commuters

Designated as commuters who have commutes of less than 10 miles within and near population centers. Because of regional variability in topography, pedestrian safety, and cultural viability of some forms of transportation, this will vary between communities, especially when advocating for bicycling and walking as part of commute and non-commute trips. Efforts will focus on bicycling, walking, and carpools through outreach and promotion of locally relevant infrastructure enhancement, policies, and projects.

1.2. Regional Commuters

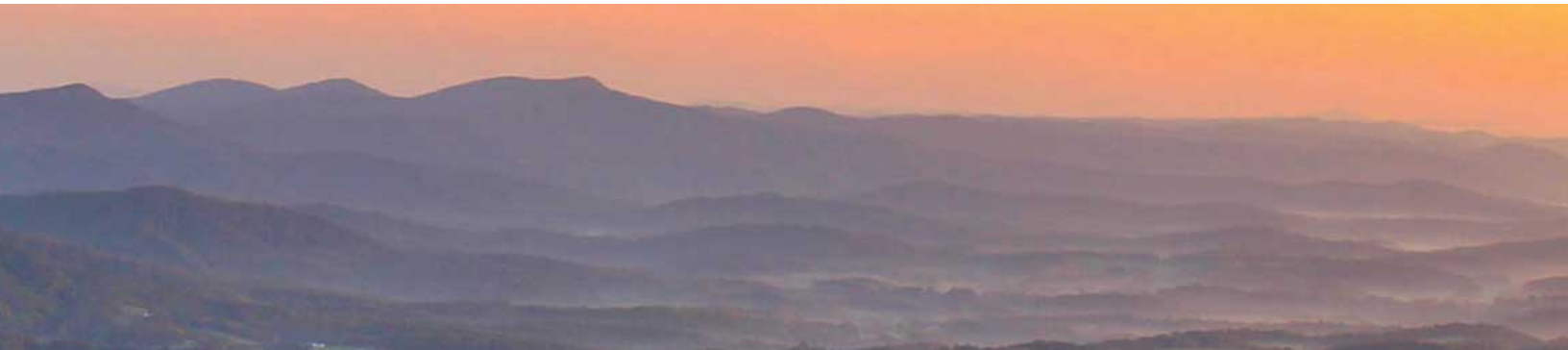
These commuters, designated as those who travel over 10 miles to work, represent a significant portion of rural commuters within the region. Outreach to these commuters will be carried out alongside outreach to major employers (see Target Audience 1.3) and focus on carpooling and vanpooling outreach.

1.3. Large Employers (50+ Employees)

Because of the relative concentration of employers comprising at least 50 employees and the feasibility of community carpools/vanpools, employer outreach will focus on large employers within rural areas. Strategies will include participation in local/regional events such as the Regional Coordinator's presence at career and resource fairs, "lunch-and-learn" presentations, advertising, and coordination between employers and transportation providers.

1.4 Those without a reliable vehicle

While residents in rural areas without access to vehicles face many similar mobility challenges as urban dwellers without access to vehicles, their alternative transportation options, such as transit, are more limited, creating significant challenges connecting residents to critical services. Strategies for reaching and activating this market will include strategic outreach and promotions to inform residents about the transit options available, the benefits of carpooling with someone that does have their own vehicle, the benefits of joining a vanpool, and the strategic promotion of biking and walking in select areas.





Cities

2.1 Local Commuters

Local commuters are designated as commuters who travel less than 10 miles to work. Outreach efforts will focus on carpools, transit use, and active transportation. Opportunities and strategies for outreach to these commuters will include participation in local events such as resource fairs, festivals, presentations for community organizations/ businesses, and targeted advertising.

2.2 Regional Commuters

Employing similar strategies to those used for Regional Commuters in rural areas, Ride Solutions - West Piedmont staff will target Regional Commuters located in cities by participating in community events such as festivals, career and resource fairs, and increasing awareness of transportation alternatives available to these “longer- distance” commuters via social media and paid advertising efforts. For select commuters, especially those with less regular or long-distance commutes, outreach will focus on the availability of services such as the Virginia Breeze or Amtrak.

2.3 Large Employers (50+ Employees)

Strategies similar to those employed in rural areas will be utilized to promote the program to large employers (those with a workforce of at least 50) located in cities (considering that many rural commuters regularly commute into larger cities for work). These outreach strategies will include the Regional Coordinator’s presence at career and resource fairs, on-site tabling events at employer sites, annual "Lunch and Learn" events, social media outreach, and paid advertising. Unlike rural areas, though, urban areas do have a variety of resources which can be leveraged in regard to promotion of TDM strategies. These include advertising opportunities through local chambers of commerce along with publications/events for other local organizations.

2.4 Those without a reliable vehicle

According to estimates from the American Community Survey, 2,530 households in Danville and 646 households in Martinsville do not have access to a vehicle. Similar to other cities in the United States, both of these communities face significant challenges to effectively serve community members, especially in terms of increasing their access to employment opportunities. Strategies for reaching and activating this market will include outreach educating and informing them of the variety of transit options available and promoting active transportation modes.

Chapter 5

CAP Operations Plan



Chapter Summary

This chapter details the services RIDE SOLUTIONS – West Piedmont will provide for the years 2027-2031, including detailed information on services provided along with an overview of staffing for the program and tools utilized.

Staffing

Currently, three staff members of the WPPDC staff the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program. The Senior Planner, Joe Bonanno, is responsible for most of the day-to-day activities of the program, which include promotion of RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont and the ConnectingVA app, presence at job and resource fairs to promote the program to employers and the general public, and employer outreach.The Finance Director, Jacob Bullins, is predominantly responsible for overseeing the program budget and submitting the financial elements of quarterly reports. The Executive Director of the WPPDC, Michael Armbrister, is also closely involved in the program, overseeing its planning and implementation, overseeing program implementation, and acting as lead signatory. It is likely that contractors will be employed to some extent in the future. For example, marketing firms are anticipated to be employed by RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont for several years over the life of this plan to assist with marketing campaigns. The services of marketing firms will be needed to perform specialized tasks such as purchasing online ads on behalf of RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont. Even though staff who are involved in the program are all full-time, they contribute a relatively small amount of time to the program. For example, up to 34 percent of Joe Bonanno's annual salary is allocated to the program. Up to 4 percent of Jacob Bullins' and Michael Armbrister's salary is currently allocated to the program.

Technology and Systems

The technology that serves as the backbone for the project is the ConnectingVA app. The app is multi-functional, having a carpool-matching component, a transit mapping and schedule element, as well as a function which generates bicycle and walking routes for commuters and other users of the program.

Another important function of the app is the component which enables registrants to log their trips, thereby obtaining their earned rewards, which primarily include opportunities to win gift cards, as well as to redeem Ride Home Rewards. The app also contains a variety of other features including Strava and Garmin to enable users to track their trips, as well as a Commute Calculator to estimate how much money commuters could save by using alternative modes of transportation. The app also includes a notification element to notify users of new developments or campaigns such as Try Transit Week and Bike Month. The app also benefits RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont, via its associated dashboard, which shows program performance, revealing to the Regional Coordinator which strategies are working and which are not.

Additional tools used by WPPDC staff to communicate with the public and stakeholders include the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont website, hosted by the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission), and WPPDC social media channels, which provide stakeholders and the public with program information and the latest developments.

Services Provided

For Commuters

The RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont program will provide several services supporting the formation of carpools, vanpools and the use of available transit services, all of which aim to facilitate the natural growth of a greater number of commuters choosing transportation modes other than Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOVs). These include ride matching services through the Connecting VA app, which help residents to readily access information about existing carpools or people looking to form carpools and vanpools, public transit (including transit route and schedule), and walking/biking opportunities. RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program staff will also offer basic technical support for users of the app, helping them get moving faster.

RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program staff will also attend tabling opportunities at community events to interface with local commuters and organizations.

For Businesses

RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will offer a variety of services to the business community and encourage this community to promote carpooling, vanpooling, and transit, utilizing the ConnectingVA app. Services will include presentations and the development of digital and hard-copy program promotional and instructional material, assistance with development of commuter assistance programs, worker/density analyses using GIS, distribution of promotional material in employee and student welcome packages, and assistance with establishing vanpools, among other services. RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont will develop marketing materials, present at “Lunch and Learn” events, analyze data, such as rideshare requests and transit ridership, and participate in outreach events such as job and and participate in outreach events such as job and resource fairs, tabling events, and on-site employee promotions.

Business Partnerships

Business Partnerships are crucial to the success of the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program, because employers can effectively promote the program and commute options to their employees. Target Businesses for these efforts are identified later in this chapter.

Efforts to foster these partnerships include:

• Maintaining regular contact with employers. In the past, RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont staff held tabling events with an area call center and major casino. The regional coordinator has also had multiple meetings with other major area employers. Through the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program WPPDC will continue to send correspondence, principally in the form of emails, to human resources and management personnel to periodically remind them of the program and its services.

• Networking via career fairs has been a significant means by which the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program has been advertised throughout the Region. This outreach method has, in fact, been instrumental in establishing initial communication with many employers in the region.

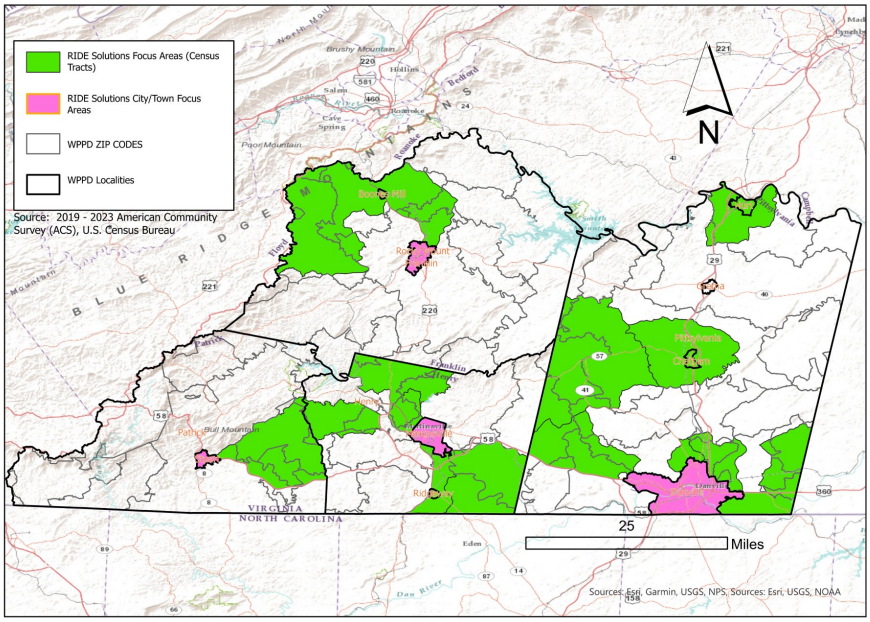
Targeted Communities

Residential Communities

RIDE Solutions has developed a map of residential areas by census tract to focus advertisement and outreach efforts, based upon research that included the population 18 – 64 (general working age) below poverty, as well as the total labor force that was above the mean (1,374) for each census tract. Please see Chapter 8 for greater detail about how the research was conducted and to see a full-size image of the following map entitled "RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont Focus Areas." The figure shows that many of the areas considered "residential" are actually rural areas of the region, typically outside of the cities and towns. The cities of Danville and Martinsville and the towns of Rocky Mount and Stuart have also been added, on the basis of their status as relatively dense centers.

Figure 5.1

RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont Focus Areas



Businesses

The RIDE Solutions Regional Coordinator considered numerous employers to approach during the FY 27 to FY 31 time frame, based on commuting patterns and prior employer engagement. One of the criteria used to select employers, noted in Chapter 3, is employers having at least 50 employees. Table 5.1 shows eight employers the Regional Coordinator plans to engage with over the five-year life of the plan.

Three criteria were generally used to select these employers:

•**First,** these employers were not previously engaged by the Regional Coordinator, or they were not engaged in any meaningful way.

•**Second,** they have or will have at least 50 employees.

•**Third,** commuting patterns played a significant role in the selection of these employers.

Table 5.1

Planned Employer Engagement, FY 2027 - FY 2031	
Carilion-Franklin Memorial Hospital	Franklin County
Ferrum College	Franklin County
King's Grant Retirement Community**	Henry County
Press Glass	Henry County
Primland Resort	Patrick County
Stuart Community Hospital	Patrick County
Microporous*	Pittsylvania County
Centra Gretna Medical Center**	Pittsylvania County

*Employer coming soon

**Employer outreach can occur along with nearby industrial parks

These employers are described in further detail over the following pages.

List of Targeted Employers

1) Carilion-Franklin Memorial Hospital, located in the Town of Rocky Mount, is a regional hospital primarily serving Franklin County, Rocky Mount, and surrounding areas. The facility, which employs approximately 250, has not had meaningful engagement from RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont, but has a promising contact who served on the working group for the development of this plan. Furthermore, the Regional Coordinator conducted a cursory commuter analysis using the U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap product, through which a polygon was drawn around the hospital. This analysis captured approximately 700 employees, though it showed that approximately 25 percent traveled at least 50 miles.

2) Ferrum College, employing approximately 280, is located in southwestern Franklin County and serves that county and surrounding areas. RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont has conducted little outreach to this institution in the past, but has a contact that may be promising. A cursory analysis of 2023 commuting patterns from the area of the college shows that most workers commuted from the north and northeast, with about 26 percent traveling at least 25 miles.

3) King's Grant Retirement Community, located in north-central Henry County, provides assisted and independent living, and a variety of therapeutic services. Little or no outreach has been conducted by RIDE Solutions -West Piedmont in the past. An OnTheMap analysis of the property and surrounding rural areas captured 248 employees, with many traveling from the west and east. Interestingly, the analysis indicated that nearly 60 employees commuted from a distance of greater than 50 miles, and that when this group of commuters was added to those commuters traveling 25 miles or more, the share of longer-distance commuters is about 34 percent. This employer is strategically situated across Kings Mountain Road from the Patriot Centre Industrial Park, so that when a "lunch and learn" event takes place, King's Grant can be included.

4) **Press Glass,** a glass manufacturer whose products are used largely in commercial and residential buildings, has, in recent years, opened a manufacturing facility in Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre, located in southern Henry County. This facility has recently undergone and expansion, and according to the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation, the company employs 250 to 500. RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont has conducted limited outreach to this company in recent years, however, we believe there is potential for development of a commuter assistance program, given that the expansion was planned to result in an increase of 335 positions. Additionally, Commonwealth Crossing is located in a rural area along the North Carolina border, with the likelihood of longer-distance commuting. No commuter data was available via OnTheMap to analyze commutes.

5) **Primland Resort**, a luxury resort located in mountainous western Patrick County, is an ideal employer to engage with due to its remote location and hospitality workforce. RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont has conducted limited outreach to Primland resort, which, according to an OnTheMap analysis employs nearly 300 staff. According to this same analysis, the majority share of the staff (49.8 percent) commute 10 to 24 miles, while just 13.2 percent commute 25 miles or more. There may be opportunities to implement ride-sharing among some of the staff. Furthermore, vanpooling could be an option to recruit potential staff who reside more than 25 miles away. The Regional Coordinator will work with Primland to, at the least, develop RIDE Solutions outreach material for new employee welcome packages.

6) **Stuart Community Hospital**, serving the Town of Stuart and, more broadly, Patrick County, recently reopened after being shuttered for eight years, according to a January 6, 2026 Cardinal News article entitled

"Stuart Community Hospital opens for emergency and inpatient care." According to the article, the hospital employs over 150, and makes employee satisfaction a priority to minimize turnover. Therefore, it would make sense that the hospital may be interested in developing a commuter assistance program and, perhaps, vanpooling, as this mode could potentially improve employee satisfaction while improving recruitment efforts.

7) Microporous, a Tennessee-based manufacturer of battery separators, is in the process of developing a manufacturing facility at the Southern Virginia Mega Site at Berry Hill, located just west of Danville, in Pittsylvania County. Once operational, Microporous is anticipated to employ more than 2,000 at the site. Given that recruitment efforts will likely expand well beyond Danville and Pittsylvania County, RIDE Solutions and ConnectingVA could serve as an excellent partner.

8) Centra Gretna Medical Center, located in Pittsylvania County, will serve as another major employer for which RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont plans to engage. This medical facility primarily serves Pittsylvania County, and while the exact number of staff is not known, a cursory OnTheMap analysis shows a total of 158 employees. This figure likely captures the medical center and, perhaps, a few peripheral jobs. This OnTheMap analysis revealed that 30 employees, or about 19 percent, commuted at least 25 miles to this location, while 128, or 81 percent commuted between 10 and 24 miles. While the majority of employees commute a short distance, it is possible that a commuter assistance program that promotes carpooling and vanpooling has the potential to improve the hospital's recruitment efforts and turnover rates. Furthermore, the **Gretna Industrial Park** is located adjacent to the medical center, and an opportunity for a joint "lunch and learn" exists. This is particularly relevant, given that an employer based in this industrial park expressed interest in the RIDE Solutions program several years ago.

Vanpool Services

There are ongoing efforts by RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont staff to bring vanpool service provider to the region. Staff will continue to work with Enterprise Mobility, and perhaps other vanpool providers, to initiate potential employer-sponsored or encouraged vanpools in the region.

The WPPDC will work with DRPT and Enterprise Mobility to approach employers to form vanpools with employees, as well as to encourage employers to sponsor vanpools and provide commuter benefits to employees that vanpool to the office. WPPDC will also reach out to other vanpool providers to encourage them to
enter the market and provide more options for the region's long distance commuting workers.

A U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap analysis was conducted to determine the distance commuters traveled, as a means to justify vanpools. The analysis produced a radar chart (see figure 5.2 "Distance/Direction Analysis, 2023") showing that most commuters traveled to thenorth and northeast for work. Table 5.2 indicates that the majority of workers residing in the region

Figure 5.2

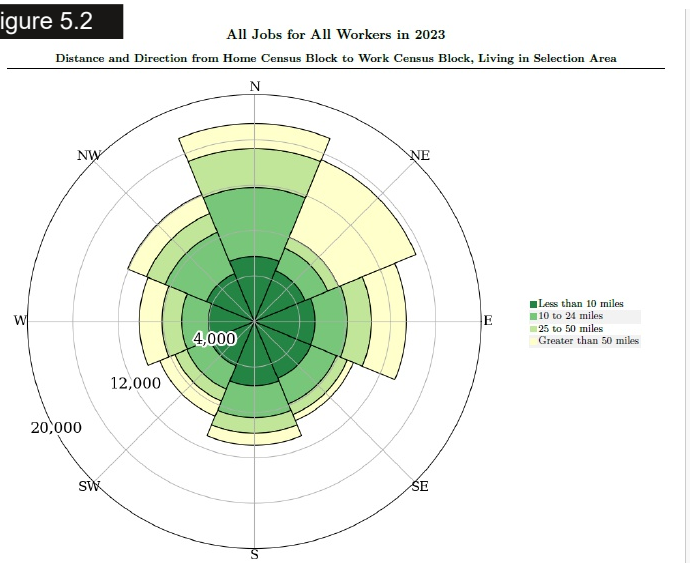


Table 5.2

Commuter Travel from West Piedmont Region		
Distance	**Total**	**Share**
Total of All Jobs	97,849	
Less than 10 Miles	39,855	40.7%
10 to 24 Miles	24,791	25.3%
25 to 50 miles	13,666	14.0%
More than 50 Miles	19,537	20.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "OnTheMap," https://onthemap.ces.census.gov, accessed on February 9, 2026

commuted less than 10 miles for work, while 20 percent, or 19,537, traveled more than 50 miles for work. When accounting for workers commuting at least 25 miles, that number and share rises to 33,203 and 33.9 percent, respectively.

Partnerships with Government/Nonprofit Organizations & Agencies

Partnerships with a variety of public and private entities are important to the success of the RIDE Solutions program, as well as to the program's consumers. In terms of partnerships with public entities, the program is directly affiliated with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) and the Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), as it is housed under the same roof as these peer organizations.

The WPPDC and MPO are uniquely positioned to promote and administer the program partly because these entities represent the same localities served by RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont. In addition, the WPPDC and MPO possess the institutional knowledge and resources to effectively promote the program. Furthermore, the WPPDC and Danville MPO maintain excellent working relationships with other relevant regional entities such as Piedmont Area Regional Transit (PART) and Danville Transit, among many others.

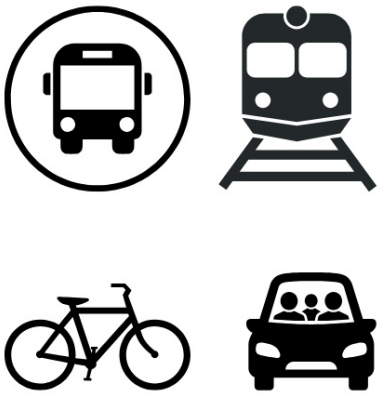
Throughout the next five years, RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont will maintain strong working relationships with government agencies and nonprofits within the region, including transit providers, human service organizations, and advocacy groups, for which mobility and accessibility intersect with client needs. These relationships can be mutually beneficial – and strengthened in at least two ways. First, RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont can work closely with these organizations to further increase ithier client bases. Second, these organizations can become partners and advocates of transportation options, RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program, and the ConnectingVA app for their clients. Entities with which RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will maintain working relationships include the following:

- **Danville Transit**
- **Piedmont Area Regional Transit (PART)**
- **Roanoke Area Dial-a-Ride (RADAR)**
- **Southern Area Agency on Aging (SAAA)**
- **Disability Rights & Resources Center (DRRC)**
- **The Harvest Foundation**
- **Danville Regional Foundation**
- **Municipal and local governments**

Table 5.3: Marketing/Outreach Plan

Name	Frequency	Description	Purpose	Marketing/Outreach Strategies
Commuter Outreach Campaign (Annual Ads / Outreach)	Ongoing	RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will provide information on transportation alternatives to a commuter-focused audience, giving them a better understanding of the different transportation options they have and how to access/organize them. These efforts will be in coordination / alignment with the DRPT's statewide Bike Month, Try Transit Week, Connecting Commuters and Connecting Communities campaigns.	Increase awareness of TDM solutions for Commuters across the West Piedmont region.	**Digital:** Social Media, Newsletters, ConnectingVA app, Online Advertisements (Social Media, Google, etc.) **Print:** Materials Developed by DRPT and RIDE Solutions **TV/Radio:** Radio Advertisements **Events:** Participation at Community Events
TDM for Business Initiative	Annually	RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will engage with businesses and partner organizations in the region to promote TDM services for employees, focusing on carpool opportunities through the ConnectingVA app and assisting to establish vanpool programs.	Increase the number of businesses actively encouraging and/ or investing in TDM- guided solutions and increase the number of employees carpooling, vanpooling, using transit, biking to work, and the use of the ConnectingVA app.	**Digital:** LinkedIn **Print:** Promotional Materials (brochures, flyers, etc.) **Events:** Participation at local business/ employer events, Hosting "Lunch and Learns"

Inter-Regional Bus Promotion	Bi-Annually	In coordination with Virginia Breeze and the NCDOT, RIDE Solutions-West Piedmont will provide periodic information about Virginia Breeze and Triad-Danville Connector routes within their area and promote their use.	Increase awareness of inter-regional bus service providers	**Digital:** Social Media, ConnectingVA app **Physical:** Distribution of materials developed by DRPT/NCDOT **Events:** Limited In-Person Outreach
Try Transit Week Outreach	August - October	Coordinating with DRPT, RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will create programming surrounding Try Transit Week, starting in 2026	Increase awareness of transit options within the West Piedmont region and promote their use to residents and visitors	**Digital:** Social Media, Blog Posts, Newsletters **Events:** Limited In-Person Outreach
Connecting Communities	October - November	Coordinating with DRPT, RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will promote the Connecting Communities program using DRPT advertisements as well as paid advertising when relevant	Increase awareness of transit as a great way for residents to explore what their communities have to offer, to shop, travel to appointments, and visit friends and relatives	Digital: Social Media, Blog Posts, Newsletters, Paid Advertisements TV/Radio: Radio Advertisements Events: Limited In-Person and Employer Outreach
Bike Month Outreach	May	RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont will coordinate with DRPT to promote bicycling as an alternative, healthy means of local travel as part of Bike Month.	Promote the value of bicycling as a commuting alternative for those living and working within West Piedmont's urban centers (Martinsville and Danville).	**Digital**: Social Media, Blog Posts, Newsletters **Events:** Limited In-Person Outreach



Operations Plan / Schedule of Activities

What follows is a comprehensive outline of general activities to take place in any given fiscal year during the life of this grant, constituting Fiscal Year (FY) 27 to FY 31. The Fiscal Year begins July 1st of a given year and ends June 30th. The plan is presented in both a Narrative and Matrix format.

The operations plan was organized around a few central strategies, which were developed to achieve the goals and objectives described earlier in this plan (see Chapter 3: Goals and Objectives). Over the next several pages is an outline of the operations plan, beginning with lists of ongoing strategies and actions, followed by a timeline of year-specific actions to be conducted over the next 5 years. See Table 5.4 for a complete matrix of strategies and actions to be implemented over the course of this plan.

Note: *Not all strategies have specific actions identified at this point, but additional actions could be added in future updates, to respond to demographic, housing, staffing, or other relevant changes related to the region or to the WPPDC.*

Outline of Strategies (Ongoing)

Goal 1: Expand Community Outreach and Educational Opportunities for Target Markets and Audiences

Strategy 1: Explore new ways to icrease targeted advertising and outreach efforts
Strategy 2: Adapt Promotional Materials Advertising Transportation Alternatives to different Target Markets / Audiences

Goal 2: Engage with businesses and organizations to increase employee use of the Ride Solutions – West Piedmont program

Strategy 1: Identify and promote the program to "stand-alone" employers such as medical facilities, industrial facilities, shopping centers, etc.
Strategy 2: Conduct a TDM for Business Initiative to engage with businesses and partner organizations in the region to promote TDM services for employees, focusing on carpool opportunities through the ConnectingVA app and assisting to establish vanpool programs
Strategy 3: Promote TDM Alternatives in the region's two largest population centers - the cities of Danville and Martinsville - along with relevant outlying population centers
Strategy 4: Serve as a liaison between the business community/employers and transit agencies, to make businesses/employers aware of transit services and resources available to them and

their staff, as well as to make employer/employee needs available to transit agencies

Goal 3: Increase awareness of available travel choices among commuters and non-commuters who travel within, out of, or into the West Piedmont Region, while promoting use of these choices

Strategy 1: Increase engagement with RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont program through targeted in-person and online outreach opportunities
Strategy 2: Promote awareness of RIDE Solutions and the ConnectingVA app through paid advertising opportunities (as outlined in the "Year-Specific Actions" section)
Strategy 3: Identify and conduct outreach activities to increase the awareness of public transit (bus) services, including system features and enhancements such as route enhancements and bike racks on buses, available throughout the region, with the ultimate goal of increasing transit ridership

Goal 4: Incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) into the planning process and in local policies while advocating for and facilitating relevant policy changes and projects throughout the West Piedmont region

Strategy 1: Encourage localities to consider all forms of mobility including private vehicles, transit (bus), carpools/vanpools, bicycles, and pedestrians, as well as all users - such as individuals with disabilities - in their plans and policies as well as within relevant grant applications
Strategy 2: Advocate for mid-to-long range commuter bus services
Strategy 3: Advocate on behalf of connecting communities via transit (bus), microtransit, and active transportation

Ongoing Actions (FY27-FY31)

Expand Community Outreach and Educational Opportunities

1.1.1 Identify new opportunities through ongoing in-person outreach through participation at local/ regional events
1.3.1 Maintain regular contact with transit directors to learn about the most recent system enhancements

TDM for Business Initiative

2.1.2 Strategize effective ways to contact each employer, then contact employers with intent of forming partnerships for them to use RIDE Solutions as a resource and to promote the ConnectingVA app among their staff.
2.2.1 Conduct targeted outreach to businesses via phone and email, connecting directly with HR directors and managers, particularly following job and resource fairs as well as "lunch and learn" outreach events.
2.2.2 Work with business/industrial parks and industrial development organizations to organize "lunch and learn" events to present the program to HR directors and other business leaders
2.2.3 Invest in social media ad buys specifically targeted to promote the RIDE Solutions program and ConnectingVA to businesses
2.3 Explore partnership opportunities between employers and transit/microtransit providers

Promote awareness of Transportation Alternatives to Commuters and Non-Commuters Through Targeted Outreach

3.1.1 Develop and share content for RIDE Solutions' online commuter outreach campaign, aligning with statewide Connecting Communities / Connecting Commuters Campaigns, utilizing DRPT generated materials where possible

3.1.2 Conduct in-person outreach at relevant community events such as resource/job airs while utilizing promotional materials and activities developed for the levant Target Markets/Audiences and from DRPT resources
3.1.4 Provide periodic information about Virginia Breeze and Triad-Danville Connector routes within the region and promote their use.

Year-Specific Actions (FY27-FY31)

FY 27
1.2.1 Adapt outreach materials for Spanish speakers
1.2.2 Adapt promotional materials for target markets
1.1.2 Update Promotional Materials for Target Markets
3.2.1 Conduct radio advertisements, as well as a newspaper or digital campaign
5.1 Review Strategic Plan and update as needed

FY 28
3.2.2 Conduct a region-wide digital ad campaign
5.1 Review Strategic Plan and update as needed

FY 29
1.2.2 Update promotional materials for target markets
2.2.1 Update promotional materials for economic development agencies and other relevant organizations
3.2.1 Conduct radio advertisements, as well as a newspaper or digital campaign
5.1 Review Strategic Plan and update as needed

FY 30
1.2.1 Adapt outreach materials for Spanish speakers
3.2.2 Conduct a region-wide digital ad campaign
5.1 Review Strategic Plan and update as needed

FY 31
1.2.2 Update promotional materials for target markets
2.1.1 Update promotional materials for economic development agencies and other relevant organizations
3.2.1 Conduct radio advertisements, as well as a newspaper or digital campaign

5.1 Update Strategic Plan

Figure 5.4: Operations Plan Matrix

		FY 27	FY 28	FY 29	FY 30	FY 31
Goal 1	**Expand Community Outreach and Educational Opportunities for Target Markets and Audiences**					
Strategy 1	Explore new ways to increase targeted advertising and outreach efforts	X	X	X	X	X
Action 1	Identify new opportunities through ongoing in-person outreach through participation at local/regional events, as well as through various forms of media and communication.	X	X	X	X	X
Strategy 2	Create or adapt promotional materials advertising transportation alternatives to different Target Markets / Audiences	X	X	X	X	X
Action 1	Adapt outreach materials for Spanish speakers	X			X	
Action 2	Update promotional materials for target markets.	X		X		X
Strategy 3	Identify outreach opportunities to increase the awareness of public transit (bus) services, including system features and enhancements such as route enhancements and bike racks on buses, available throughout the region, with the ultimate goal of increasing transit ridership.	X	X	X	X	X
Action 1	Maintain regular contact with transit directors to learn about the most recent system enhancements	X	X	X	X	X
Goal 2	**Engage with businesses and organizations to increase employee use of the Ride Solutions – West Piedmont program**					
Strategy 1	Engage with and promote the program to "stand-alone" employers identified earlier in this chapter.	X	X	X	X	X
Action 1	Update promotional materials for economic development agencies and other relevant organizations	X		X		X
Action 2	Strategize effective ways to contact each employer, then contact employers with intent of forming partnerships for them to use RIDE Solutions as a resource and to promote the ConnectingVA app among their staff.	X				
Strategy 2	Conduct an ongoing TDM for Business Initiative to engage with businesses and partner organizations in the region to promote TDM services for employees, focusing on carpool opportunities through the ConnectingVA app and assisting to establish vanpool programs.	X	X	X	X	X
Action 1	Conduct targeted outreach to businesses via phone and email, connecting directly with HR directors and managers, particularly following job and resource fairs as well as "lunch and learn" outreach events.	X	X	X	X	X
Action 2	Work with business/industrial parks and industrial development organizations to organize "lunch and learn" events to present the program to HR directors and other business leaders	X	X	X	X	X
Action 3	Conduct targeted social media outreach and invest in ad buys as part of DRPT Connects Businesses Campaign	X	X	X	X	X

Strategy 3	Serve as a liaison between the business community/employers and transit agencies, to make businesses/employers aware of transit services and resources available to them and their staff, as well as to make employer/employee needs available to transit agencies.	X	X	X	X	X
Goal 3	**Increase awareness of available travel choices among commuters and non-commuters who travel within, out of, or into the West Piedmont Region, while promoting use of these choices.**					
Strategy 1	Increase engagement with RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont and ConnectingVA programs through targeted in-person and online outreach opportunities.	X	X	X	X	X
Action 1	Develop and share content for RIDE Solutions' online Commuter Outreach Campaign, aligning with statewide Connecting Communities / Connecting Commuters Campaigns, utilizing DRPT generated materials where possible	X	X	X	X	X
Action 2	Conduct in-person outreach at relevant community events such as resource/job fairs while utilizing promotional materials and activities developed for the relevant Target Markets / Audiences and from DRPT resources.	X	X	X	X	X
Action 3	Share digital content with local, regional, and state partners for DRPT-promoted statewide events and explore in-person outreach opportunities (Try Transit Week and Bike Month).	X	X	X	X	X
Action 4	Provide periodic information about Virginia Breeze and Triad-Danville Connector routes within the region and promote their use.	X	X	X	X	X
Strategy 2	Promote awareness of RIDE Solutions and ConnectingVA through paid advertising opportunities	X	X	X	X	X
Action 1	Conduct radio advertisements, as well as a newspaper or digital campaign	X		X		X
Action 2	Conduct a region-wide digital ad campaign		X		X	
Goal 4	**Incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) into the planning process and in local policies while advocating for and facilitating relevant policy changes and projects throughout the West Piedmont region**					
Strategy 1	Encourage localities to consider all forms of mobility including private vehicles, transit (bus), carpools/vanpools, bicycles, and pedestrians, as well as all users - such as individuals with disabilities - in their plans and policies as well as within relevant grant applications.	X	X	X	X	X
Strategy 2	Advocate for mid-to-long range commuter bus services	X	X	X	X	X
Strategy 3	Advocate on behalf of connecting communities via transit (bus), microtransit, and active transportation.	X	X	X	X	X
Goal 5:	**Strategic Planning**					
Develop update to Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan.						X

Chapter 6
Financial Plan



Summary of Projected Budget

WPPDC's projected five-year financial plan for the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program is shown in Figure 6.1. The financial plan also includes additional considerations for new funding sources and organizational partnerships. Currently, the program is predominantly supported through the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Commuter Assistance Operating Grant (80%) and the WPPDC (20%). Over the course of the next five years, WPPDC will explore new funding avenues to support the evolving activities of the RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont program.

Budget Narrative

This section discusses the specifics of budget items included in Table 6.1, spanning a five-year period from FY 27 to FY 31. Budget descriptions are as follows:

•**Salaries** will fund activities associated with staff of RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont. The majority of the funding will be utilized by the Senior Planner, who serves as the program's Regional Coordinator. The major activities of the Regional Coordinator will include promotion of the ConnectingVA app, presence at job and resource fairs for the purpose of employer networking and outreach to the general public, and employer outreach. The Finance Director's primary responsibility will be to oversee finances of the program for each fiscal year, including the compilation of quarterly reports. The Community Development Specialist's background, if he is included in the program for any of the years in the life of this plan, includes academic experience with filming. He would be expected to contribute 10 to 20 hours per month to this grant for filming and subsequent editing, as a component of promoting the RIDE Solutions program, for alternative forms of transportation, as well as for the ConnectingVA app. Finally, the role of the Executive Director of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission will be to oversee the program and the staff that administer it.

•**Fringe Benefits** represent the total cost of employee benefits and include elements such as health insurance, retirement, and payroll taxes as a portion of an employee's salary.

•**Indirect Costs** are those costs that represent a percentage or factor utilized to fairly allocate overhead (indirect) costs such as utilities and administration across different projects or contracts, calculated by dividing total indirect expenses by a specific direct cost base (such as labor or total direct costs).

•The **Supplies and Materials** budget will fund any supplies deemed necessary for the successful execution of the program. Given the relatively small budget ranging from $300 to $350, this item is expected to cover minor purchases.

•The **Travel** budget will fund any travel pertinent to and for the promotion of the program. Such travel will include travel to and from job and resource fairs, employer visits to promote the program, and educational opportunities offered, which would mainly be located throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

•**Advertising and Promotional Materials** will include services intended to promote the RIDE Solutions program and the ConnectingVA app. Services may include promotional media such as radio ads, streaming (online) ads, newspaper advertising, etc.

•**Professional Services** include services provided by professional agencies that are typically not available through DRPT or the offices of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission. These services may include advertising agencies and other such entities that are equipped to effectively administer advertising services. Throughout the life of this plan, professional services such as marketing firms may be periodically

used to promote RIDE Solutions and the ConnectingVA app by working with RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont to purchase streaming slots on YouTube and similar digital platforms, as well as digital spots for "Google Banners" and media buys on similar platforms.

•**Promotional Items** include those physical items with the RIDE Solutions and possibly the ConnectingVA logos included on them. These items will be distributed principally at job and resource fairs with the purpose of promoting the RIDE Solutions (and possibly ConnectingVA) brand. These items, often informally regarded as "swag," are typically purchased on an annual basis, and will continue to be purchased annually over the life of this plan.

Table 6.1

RIDE Solutions FY 27 - FY 31 Budget Plan

Category	FY 27 (Forecast)	FY 28 (Forecast)	FY 29 (Forecast)	FY 30 (Forecast)	FY 31 (Forecast)
Salaries and Wages	$24,162	$26,166	$27,131	$27,105	$27,054
Fringe Benefits	$12,977	$14,054	$14,572	$14,558	$14,531
Indirect Costs	$10,462	$11,330	$11,748	$11,736	$11,714
Supplies and Materials	$300.00	$350.00	$350.00	$350.00	$350.00
Travel	$400.00	$400.00	$400.00	$450.00	$450.00
Advertising and Promotional Materials	$10,000.00	$6,000.00	$10,000.00	$6,500.00	$13,500.00
Professional Services	$0.00	$6,000.00	$0.00	$6,500.00	$0.00
Promotional Items	$1,100.00	$1,100.00	$1,200.00	$1,200.00	$1,300.00
Dues & Subscriptions	$600.00	$600.00	$600.00	$600.00	$600.00
Total	***$60,002***	***$66,000***	***$66,001***	***$69,000***	***$69,499***

Table 6.2

Paid Advertising Plan for Each Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 - 2031

FY 27	FY 28	FY 29	FY 30	FY 31
Advertising for FY 27 will consist of two radio campaigns (in the fall and spring) in the Danville area, as well as newspaper advertisements. No Professional Services will be required.	Advertising for FY 28 will consist of a region-wide digital campaign and is expected to require Professional Services.	Advertising for FY 29 will consist of a radio campaign, as well as either a newspaper or a digital campaign. This fiscal year's activities are not expected to require Professional Services.	Advertising for FY 30 will consist of a region-wide digital campaign and is expected to require Professional Services.	Advertising for FY 31 will consist of a radio campaign, as well as either a newspaper or a digital campaign. This fiscal year's activities are not expected to require Professional Services.

Other Sources of Funding for Program and Program Related Activities

As the program evolves, RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont will continue seeking new funding opportunities to supplement DRPT funding and grow its impact. Potential sources of new funding include both public and private sources and could provide additional funds to expand outreach efforts, marketing, and relevant community projects, as well as collaborations with community groups, local governments, and other relevant stakeholders.

Table 6.3

Funding Source	Potential Uses
VDOT: Safe Routes to School	Improve safety of walking and biking to/from school
Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles	Pedestrian Safety Awareness Programs
Local/Regional Nonprofit and Local Interest Groups (Harvest Foundation, Danville Regional Foundation, local bike clubs, etc.)	Multimodal planning efforts, small infrastructure projects, advocacy, outreach, and marketing assistance
Grant opportunities through nationwide organizations such as the League of American Bicyclists	Mini-grant opportunities to promote initiatives such as safety and alternate forms of commuting and local travel.

Chapter 7
Monitoring and Evaluation Plan



Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

A critical component of ensuring increasing effectiveness of TDM efforts through RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont is the development of effective monitoring and evaluation measures. These help RIDE Solutions staff evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make adjustments, as needed.

Evaluation Measures

For the duration of this plan, one of the main areas of emphasis is to grow the regional awareness of the program and of transportation options already available throughout the region. Several core measurables that will be evaluated year-over-year will be number of regional users in the ConnectingVA app, participants in program activities, and number of direct contacts made through community events and outreach. See Figure 7.1 on the next page for a full brekdown of data metrics used to evaluate project success.

How Data Metrics Will Be Used

The Monitoring and Evaluation element of this Strategic Plan will be paramount to ensuring the outreach activities advanced in this plan are effective. As Figure 7.1 articulates, many of the elements to be evaluated will be done so on a quarterly basis, which is consistent with many of the reporting requirements of DRPT's Commuter Assistance Operating Assistance grant, which funds the RIDE Solutions commuter assistance program.

While chapters 5 and 6 of this Strategic Plan present schedules of activities to be accomplished in each fiscal year during the life of this plan, the ongoing evaluation of metrics will be a major determining factor in identifying outreach activities in the next iteration of this Strategic Plan. Therefore, it is likely that some outreach activities will prove effective, while others may prove less effective, and hence, will be eliminated or scaled back as deemed appropriate.

Reporting Requirements

In addition to internal evaluations of data, data is also reported directly to DRPT each quarter, as is noted in Figure 7.1. These reports include tasks completed through staff time, monthly reports on ConnectingVA/Agile Mile activity (number of users signed up, trips taken, matches made, etc.). The program manager also keeps records of direct contacts with employers, community stakeholders, and community members.
Quarterly reports are prepared by the Program Manager who is also the person most directly responsible for program activities, with an additional annual report being shared with the WPPDC, Danville MPO, and other relevant agencies/organizations.

Table 7.1

Evaluation Measures / Data Points

Transit Ridership	Local Transit Providers/ ConnectingVA app	Quarterly
Virginia Breeze / Triad-Danville Connector Ridership	DRPT Staff, Danville Transit	Quarterly
Carpool Trips Recorded	Connecting VA App	Quartery
Number of New Vanpools Established	Commuter Assistance Coordinator, in consultation with vanpool representative	Bi-annually
Events Attended	Commuter Assistance Coordinator	Quarterly
Number of event participants at facilitated events	Commuter Assistance Coordinator	Quarterly
Social/Digital Media Engagement (Views & Interactions)	Program Manager/Media Marketing Agency	Quarterly
Commuters & Businesses Participating in CAP challenges/ promotions	Commuter Assistance Coordinator/ConnectingVA app	Quarterly
Bicycle Activity	Commuter Assistance Cordinator/ConnectingVA app	Quarterly

Chapter 8
Data Collected & Commuter/ Employer Surveys



To develop this plan, WPPDC utilized multiple data sources to help guide its program objectives, goals, and strategies, including external data sources, survey responses, and feedback from relevant stakeholders, including those comprising the Commuter Assistance Program Steering Committee, formed for the purpose of guiding development of this plan.

Data Sources Used to Develop This Plan

American Community Survey, Decennial Census, OntheMap, and LEHD Origin-Destination Statistics

These data sources were used primarily in Chapter 2, with respect to demographics analysis, employment data, and analysis of commuting patterns.

-**U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS)** data were used for demographic analysis in Chapter 2, particularly with respect to developing demographic maps such as poverty, the working age population, the age 65 and over population, and similar maps. ACS data were also used to establish commuting modes by locality, housing characteristics based on locality, and average employment turnover. These data provide demographic information to help us establish where and within which populations transportation needs may exist.

-**LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap product)** was utilized to develop employment concentration images and commuting patterns. This data shows where commuters reside and work, and serves as a basis for determining where transportation services are needed. In addition, the data also shows employment concentrations in the region. This data source was also utilized as part of identifying employers with which to engage over the life of this plan. Finally, this source was used, in part, to determine average annual employment turnover.

Other Sources

-The Virginia Navigator website was used to establish a list of human service-related agencies throughout the region that either specialize in or in some way provide human service-related transportation. This data is used to serve as a means by which to document the existing human service transportation for referential purposes.

-The Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement's **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages** indicates various sectors of employment throughout the region, and which are most prominent. This helps to determine the transportation modes most needed for the various employment sectors.

-**The Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service** was utilized for projected population data in Chapter 2.

-**Pathways for Planning**, a product of the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), was utilized to obtain GIS shapefiles to create thematic maps shown in Chapter 2.

Commuter Needs Surveys

In addition to the external data sources listed above, the WPPDC conducted two “Commuter Needs” Surveys, one developed for commuters and one for employers. There were 68 responses to the surveys in total, with the majority (58) for the public survey. While the results were significantly lower than anticipated, the survey provided insight, however incomplete, of the concerns and level of awareness surrounding the RIDE Solutions program and transportation alternatives within the region. The survey was extremely valuable in determining the modes of travel preferred by residents of the region, based on preference. The survey revealed to us that commuters were less inclined to carpool than we originally believed and this, in-turn, helped us to justify focusing on employers as a means to promote carpooling, as concentrations of employers and employees may render this mode most feasible.

In addition, the public survey revealed to us that the general public was more likely to support public transit, regional transit, and commuter transit than carpooling or vanpooling. This helped us to place a heavier emphasis on carpooling from the employer perspective rather than mass marketing of this mode to the general public, given that the density and critical mass of employees at one or more large workplaces would likely result in many more ConnectingVA app registrations and subsequent usage. This insight regarding greater support for transit provides us with greater initiative to promote transit during DRPT’s Try Transit Week and Connecting Communities campaigns, among potentially other RIDE Solutions or DRPT initiatives.

The Employer Survey, as small as the sample of employers was, revealed to us the likelihood that many employers in our region do not adhere to typical “8 – 5” business hours, but rather are more shift-based and irregular. This is largely due to the fact that the region is home to many manufacturing firms as well as several call centers. This revelation helped us to determine that focusing on employers for carpools and vanpools made more sense than marketing these modes to the general public.

Commuter Survey

Survey consisted of 15 Questions and was announced/shared via the following methods: Press Release Social Media Posts Handouts at events. **Please see pages 69-80 for a summary of survey answers.**

Employer Survey

This survey consisted of 18 questions and was announced/shared via the following methods: Press Release Direct Correspondence with Area Employers Chambers of Commerce Newsletter. **Please see pages 81-89 for a summary of survey answers.**

Data Used to Develop Focus Areas

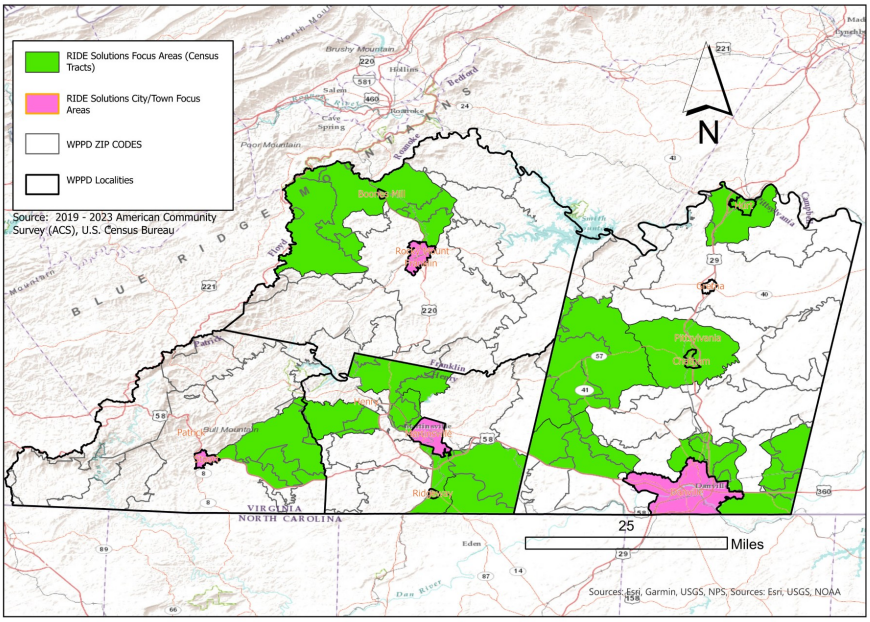
This section contains additional data which will be used as a basis to refine data presented in Chapter 2, as a means to indicate where planning efforts outlined in this plan will occur throughout the West Piedmont Region. In addition, the data in this section helped to inform priorities in Chapter 5, with respect to the types of employers to engage with. With regard to commuters, Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2, entitled "Working Age Population, Age 16 – 64, by Census Tract," was cross referenced with Table S2401 of the 2019 – 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), ("Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over') to get a clearer picture of where the working age populations reside. These two data sources show somewhat different data, but data which are related. And, while census tracts had been used as a basis for analysis in Chapter 2, zip codes are being cross-referenced, given that advertising agencies may use zip codes to target digital media buys. The data with regard to the working age population is as follows:

Focus Area - Development of Criteria

Figure 8.1 "RIDE Solutions – West Piedmont Focus Areas," incorporates additional data to identify areas within the region with greater needs more accurately. The methodologies utilized to identify these focus areas include the following:

Table 8.1

RIDE Solutions - West Piedmont Focus Areas



1) The population 18 – 64 below poverty by census tract which is above the mean of the locality within which it is located. For example, the poverty rate for Franklin County, based on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 – 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), is 11.5 percent, so if a particular census tract within the county is above 11.5 percent, that census tract would be assigned "Yes." Conversely, if the poverty rate of the said census tract was below 11.5 percent, it would be assigned "No."

2) The total labor force for each census tract in the region was also compiled, and the mean labor force (1,373.7 – rounded to 1,374) for all of these census tracts in the region was then calculated. If the total labor force for a particular census tract falls above 1,374, that census tract was assigned "Yes;" it was conversely assigned "No" if it falls below 1,374.

3) The "Select by Attributes" function of ArcGIS Pro was then utilized to select those census tracts that both included the population 18 – 64 both below poverty and above the mean for the locality, as well as the total labor force above the mean of all census tracts – in other words, both are classified as "Yes."

4) In the cities of Danville and Martinsville where census tracts are generally smaller with greater population density, there tends to be greater variability over short distances within these localities. Therefore, apart from the methodology, both cities were chosen as part of the focus areas. In addition, the towns of Rocky Mount and Stuart were chosen, given that they serve as prominent population centers within their respective counties.

Region's Top Employers

The top five employers in each of the West Piedmont Region's locality, measured by number of employees, follows in the table entitled "West Piedmont Region Top 5 Employers by Locality. This table shows that several of the employers chosen to engage with over the five years of this plan are among the largest in each of the respective localities.

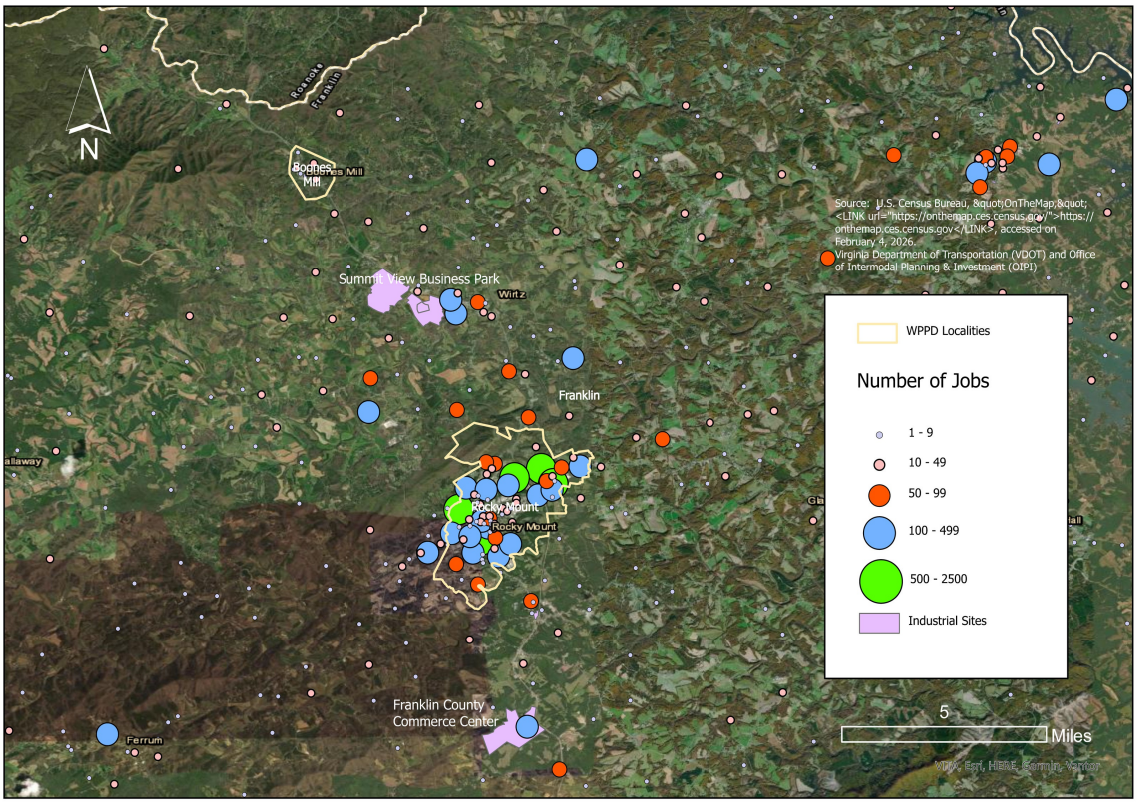
West Piedmont Region Top 5 Employers by Locality	
Franklin County	**Martinsville/Henry County**
Franklin County School Board	Eastman Chemical
Cornerstone Building Brands Service	Monogram Food Solutions
County of Franklin	Keeco (Springs Global)
Prolamina Corporation	Press Glass
Carilion-Franklin Memorial Hospital	Applied Felts
Patrick County	**Pittsylvania County**
Patrick County School Board	Pittsylvania County School Board
Primland Ltd.	Tyson Farms
County of Patrick	Unique Industries
Ten Oaks LLC	Intertape Polymer Corp.
Wal Mart	Green Rock Correctional Center
Danville City	**Martinsville City**
The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.	SOVAH Health - Martinsville
Danville City Public Schools	Martinsville City Schools
City of Danville	Piedmont Regional Community Service Board
Caesars Resort Collection LLC	Patrick Henry Nursing & Rehabilitation
SOVAH-Health Danville	Security Forces, Inc.

Source: Virginia Works Economic Information & Analytics Division, QuarterlyCensus of Employment & Wages (QCEW) Quarter 1, 2025. www.virginiaworks.com

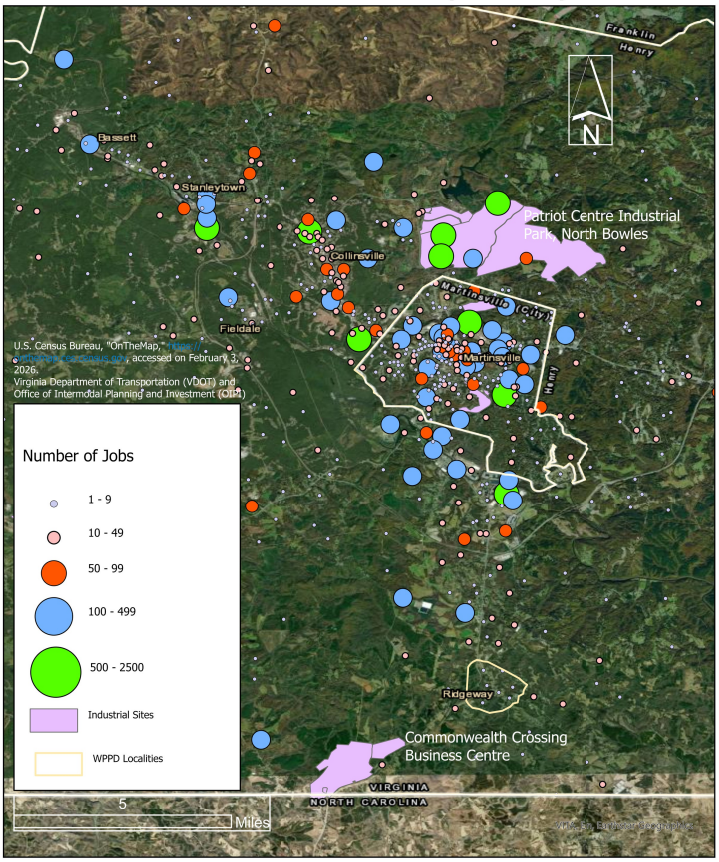
Employer Concentration - Maps

The following images consist of detailed maps illustrating the portions of the region where the greatest concentrations of employment are located; each map is generally broken out by county and city. These images not only provide a more detailed perspective of employment concentration than an overall employment map shown in Chapter 2, but were helpful in identifying emphasis areas by which to select focus employers during the life of this plan.

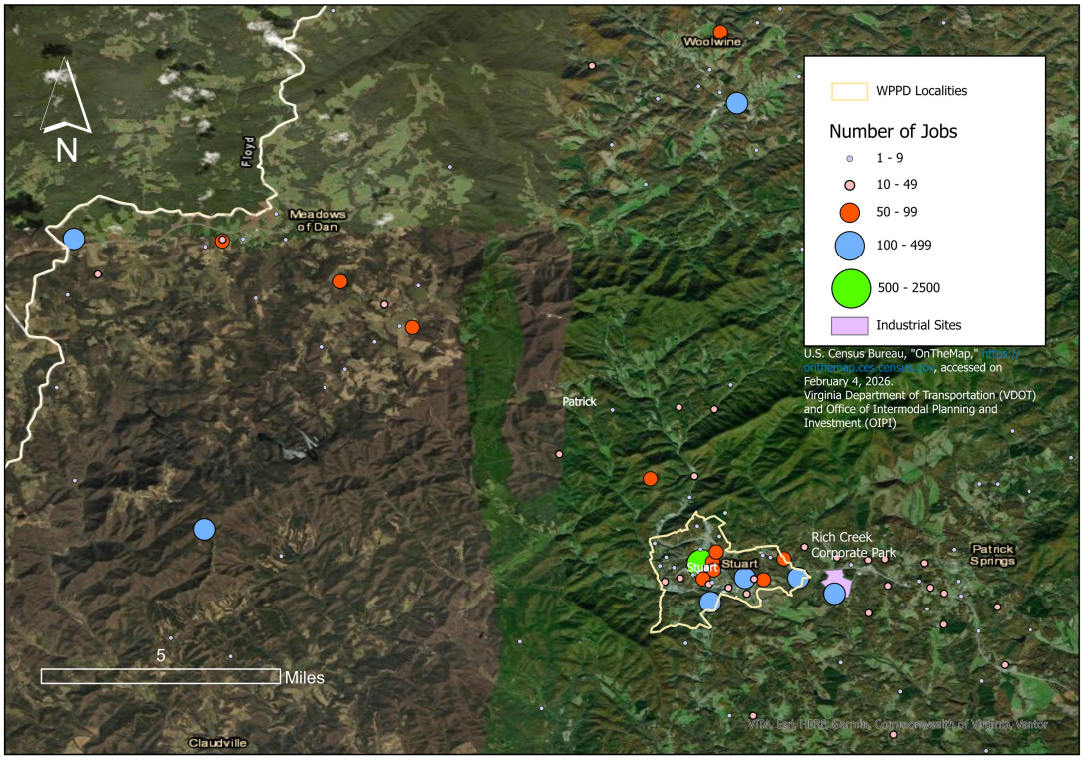
2023 General Employment and Job Sites in Franklin County



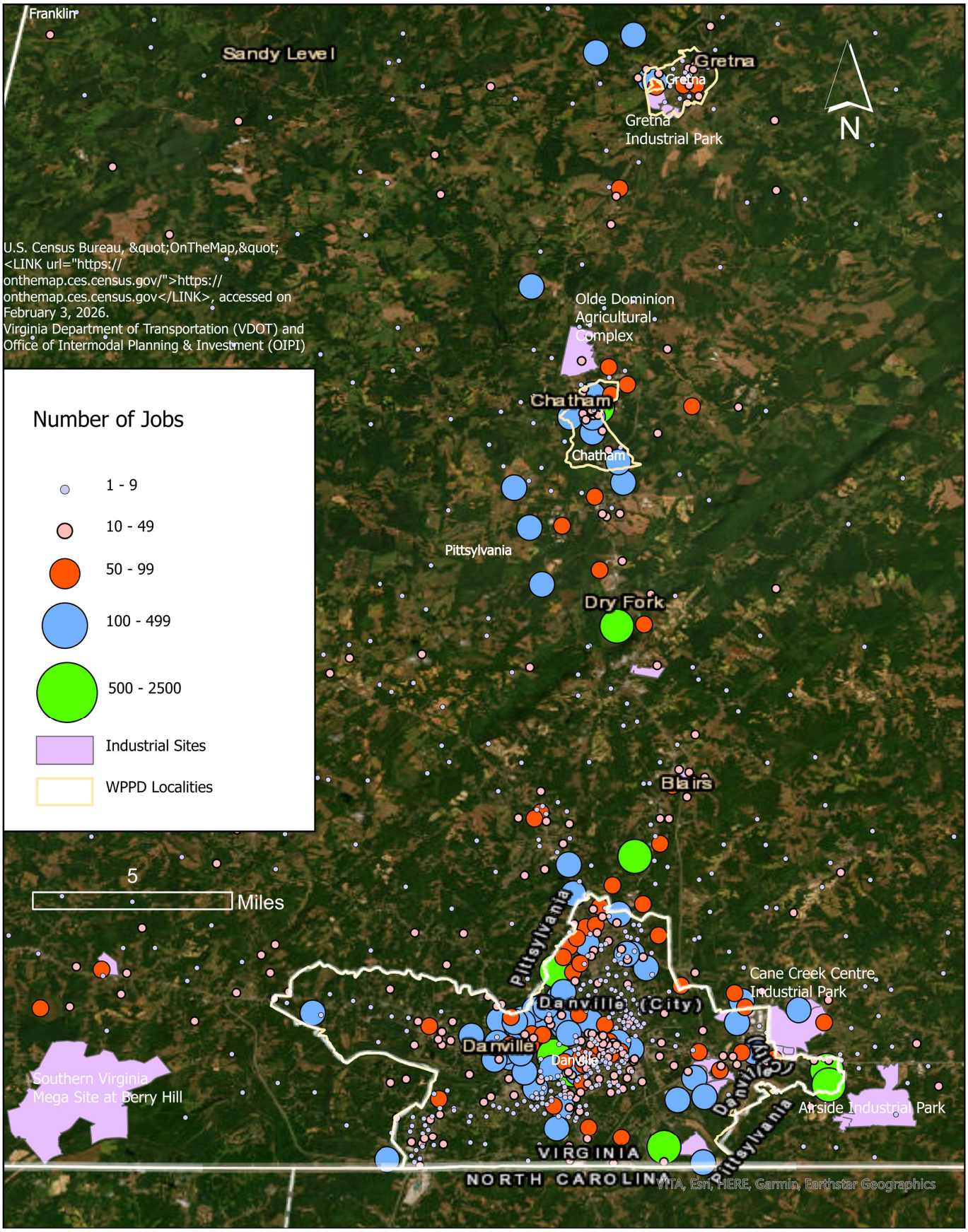
2023 General Employment and Job Sites in Martinsville and Henry County



2023 General Employment and Job Sites in Patrick County



2023 General Employment and Job Sites in City of Danville and Pittsylvania County



Other Data/Figures Referenced

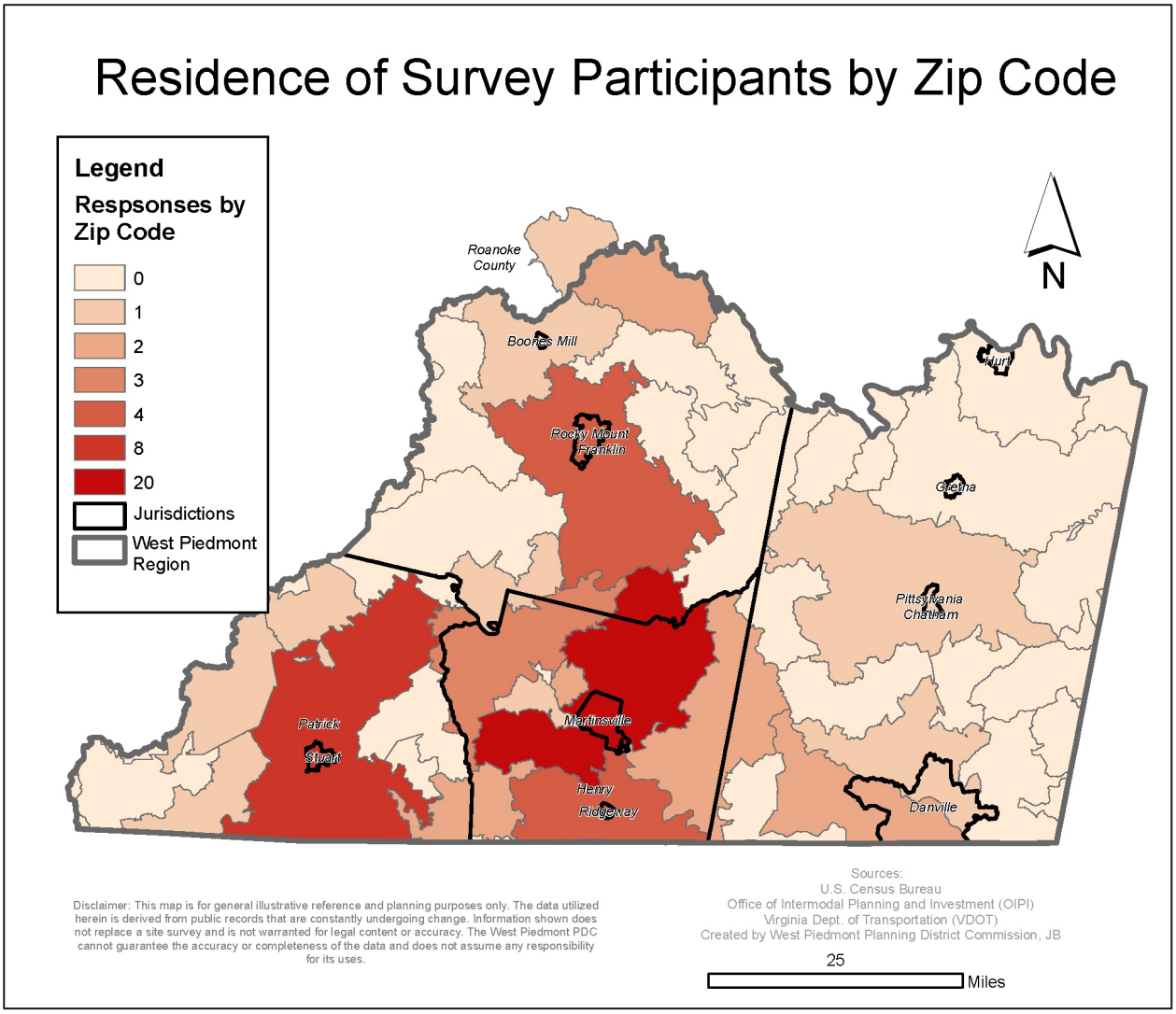
Figure 2.3, in Chapter 2, entitled “Working Age Population, Ages 16 – 64, by Census Tract,” shows the census tracts comprising the greatest numbers of population of working age can be found to the east and north of the City of Martinsville, to the east and north of the Town of Rocky Mount, to the northwest of the City of Danville, the tract encompassing the Town of Chatham and west to the county line, and the census tract that envelops the Town of Hurt.
The share of population below poverty, according to **Figure 2.5** in Chapter 2, shows that the greatest concentrations of poverty can be found in and just west of the city of Martinsville, in the city of Danville, on the western side of Pittsylvania County, and immediately southwest of the Town of Rocky Mount. Some overlap is evident in the Focus Area Map, particularly in more rural areas outside the large population centers.

Figure 2.6, located in Chapter 2 and entitled “Households with No Vehicle Available,” shows census tracts comprising the greatest shares of zero-vehicle households can be found in and around the City of Martinsville; in sections of and west of the City of Danville; in and around the Towns of Chatham, Hurt, and Gretna; and throughout a large swath of Franklin County, particularly east of the Town of Rocky Mount. Cross-referencing this figure with the Focus Area Map indicates a good deal of overlap, with the exception of areas east of the Town of Rocky Mount.

Tables 2.2 and **2.3**, within Chapter 2, provide a snapshot of where workers residing in the region commuted to for work in 2021, and where workers employed in the region resided that year, based on the U.S. Census Bureau’s OnTheMap data. This information provides a good general overview of the localities workers resided in and were employed in but may not be as useful in arriving at solid conclusions or justifying recommendations within this plan. With the goal of justifying the establishment of vanpools for employers within the region while also viewing commuting patterns in greater detail, a more detailed and targeted approach was employed for this section utilizing 2023 OnTheMap data, which is not only more recent, but is most certainly more detached from the effects of the Covid pandemic, which had an impact on employment at the time. To confirm this anecdotal information, a cursory review of overall commuting patterns within and outside the region, using 2023 data – similar to that which was conducted using 2021 data, indicated similar home and work destinations and numbers, though these figures were slightly depressed in 2021, almost certainly owing to the pandemic.

Commuter Survey Overview

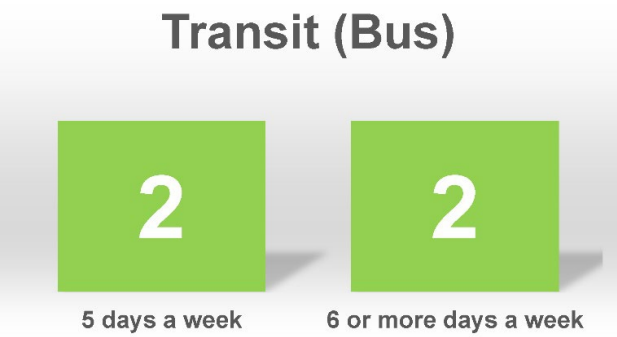
Q1: What is the zip code where you live?



Q2: How many days a week, in a typical work week, do you use the following transportation modes for your commute to work, or do you telework (work from home)? As an example, if you drive alone 3 days a week, select "3 days a week" next to "I drive alone," and if you carpool 2 days a week, select "2 days a week" next to "I carpool."













Q3: If you only travel to work by driving alone, please tell us why.

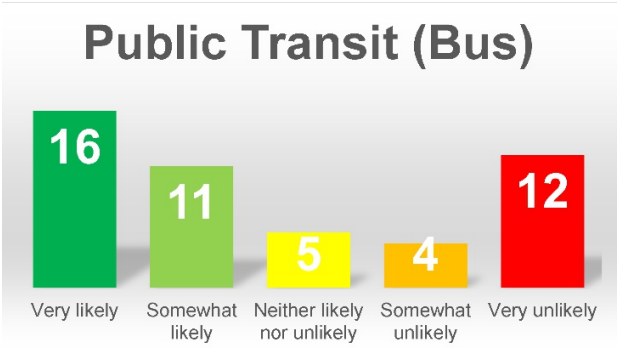
There are no other options
Time, cost, distance, and convenience
I only work in office one day per week and don't have neighbors who work near me, or the same schedule. Also, I take my child to school the one day I work in office.
I am retired but can't drive because of seizures and have to depend on someone to take me wherever I go. We have to get rides to the grocery store and doctors appointments and most of then are in Mount Airy and Winston Salem .
No one near me works at the office
There are no other employees of the same agency that live near me. Public transportation is not close to where I live.
No one to carpool with in my area going to work location.
Because I can and want to drive to work alone.
Due to fluctuation in hours and the need to travel to multiple office locations.
I drive 16 miles a day round trip to work and I live in a rural area.
I live in the county. The only option is driving by myself. No one is going to the locations that I am going at the time I am going there. If there was an option to get on a bus at Figsboro and take the bus to Walmart would be great. It would be even better if there was a hopper that would just make rounds to for example : Lowes, Walmart, Ollie's/Roses, Aldi, Kroger, Chick-fil-A, walgreens, dollar tree, and back to Lowe's. And then maybe you could transfer to another hopper over near Rural-King that would do a circle around there. Maybe even stop at the Restaurants. A Hopper for downtown and Collinsville would be good. The hopper busses would have to have plenty of room for people to carry their groceries and shopping, Maybe even like the airplane shuttles that have extra shelf for people to put large luggage. If I didn't have to drive all the way to town to get to town, I wouldn't. If I didn't have to drive my own car with one passenger all over town when I get there, I wouldn't.
I'm the only one in my family that goes the way I go to work.
easy commute and variable hours of work.
short distance to travel
Because my only means of transportation as my job is out of the city limits plus I have to pick up children after work.
I do not have the need to ride with someone
I own a car, have to drive from all three job sites un a given week.
I live close to my agency and I am fortunate to have a vehicle
There is no one else that lives close by that works in same place.
I live within 2 miles from home to work.
There is no one else in my neighborhood with the same schedule.
I have a young child to drop off and pick up from daycare every day.
no one else near me works near me
It's the most convenient way to travel.
Convenience & preference
There is no one I know going the same place at the same hours.
The only transportation that I have to get there.
Some days, I have to be at work at 8 am, some days at 9 am.
I have reliable transportation and carpooling is not an option based on my schedule and location

I am a Job Coach and see many different clients at many different worksites throughout the day. Our clients need public transportation in Stuart, Patrick and Franklin Counties!!!
I have my own transportation
I work in town and no one else near me goes that short of a distance with the same hours.
There are no ride options available here in Patrick county.
No one else is heading my direction at the time I go to work.
I live 35 minutes away from work and have no other option.
It's just me, no reason to carpool
Unless Microtransit was provided other modes of public transportation are not realistic for my area.
I drive long distances.
I live 2 miles from my office and on a farm outside of town
I often work beyond the typical 8-5 day
Don't live far from work and I also need my car to visit clients
I have different hours so i drive by myself

Q4: Please indicate how open you would be to trying the following modes of transportation for your commute to work.



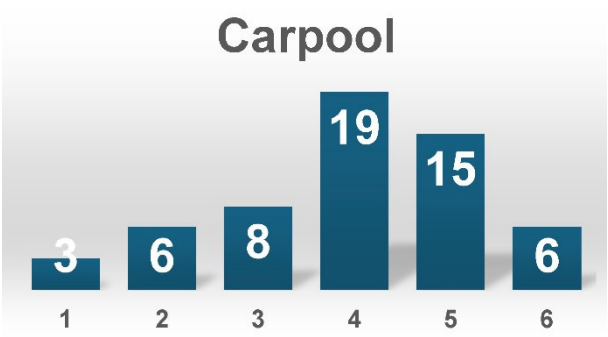


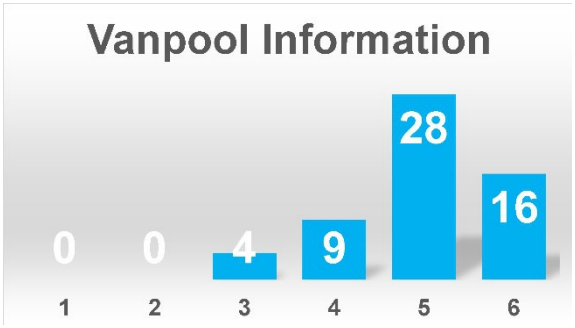


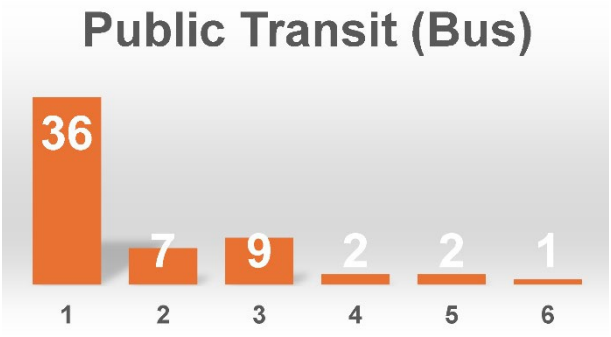


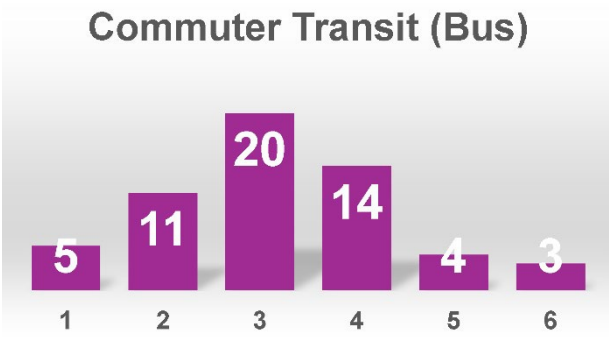


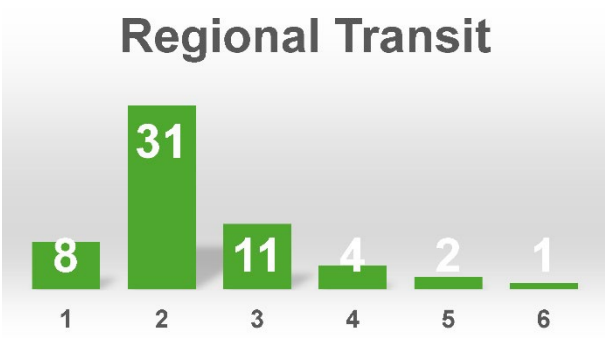
Q5: What transportation changes would you like to see take place in our region? Please use the up/down arrows next to each choice to rank from most important to you (the top, or #1 choice) to least important to you (to bottom, or #6 choice).

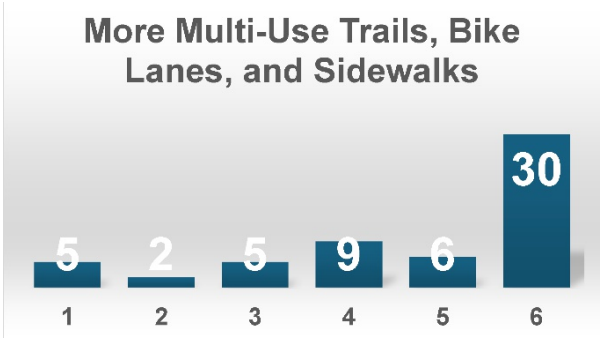




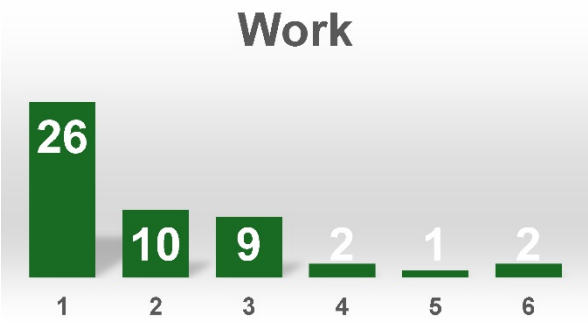


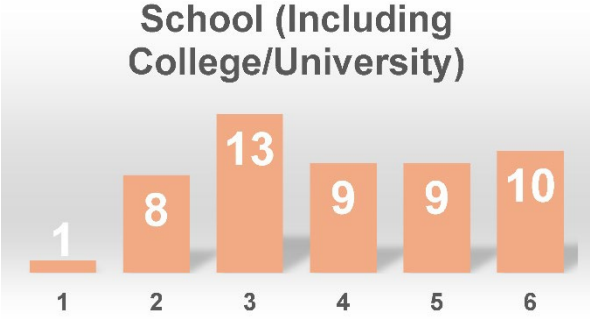


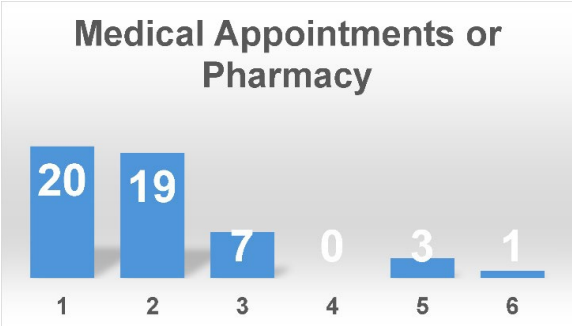




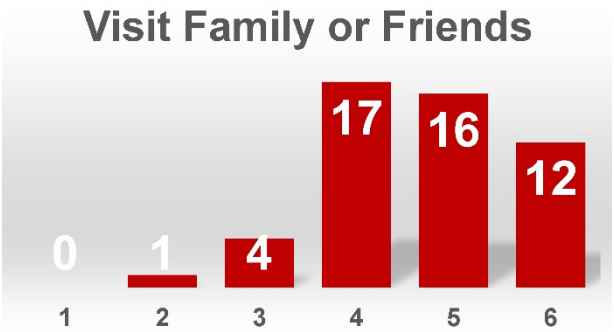
Q6: To what destinations would you like to see more transportation options which may include public transit (bus), carpool, vanpool, or infrastructure to support bicycling or walking (trails, sidewalks, etc.)? Please use the up/down arrows next to each choice to rank from most important to you (the top, or #1 choice) to least important to you (the bottom, or #6 choice).





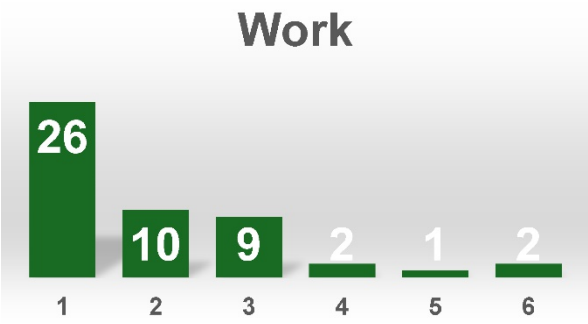


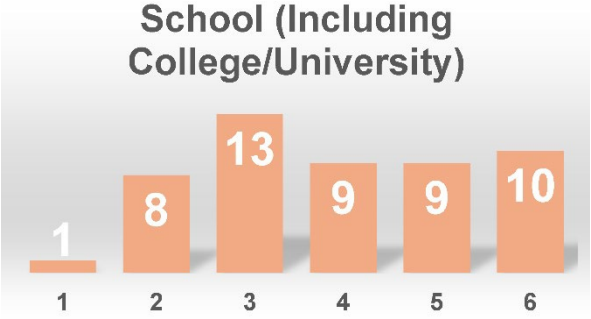


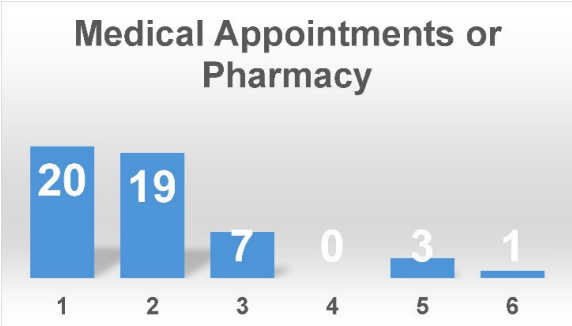




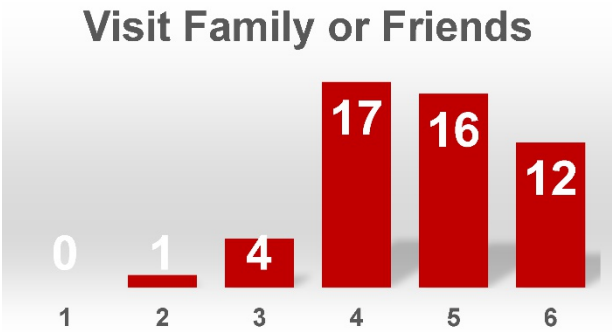
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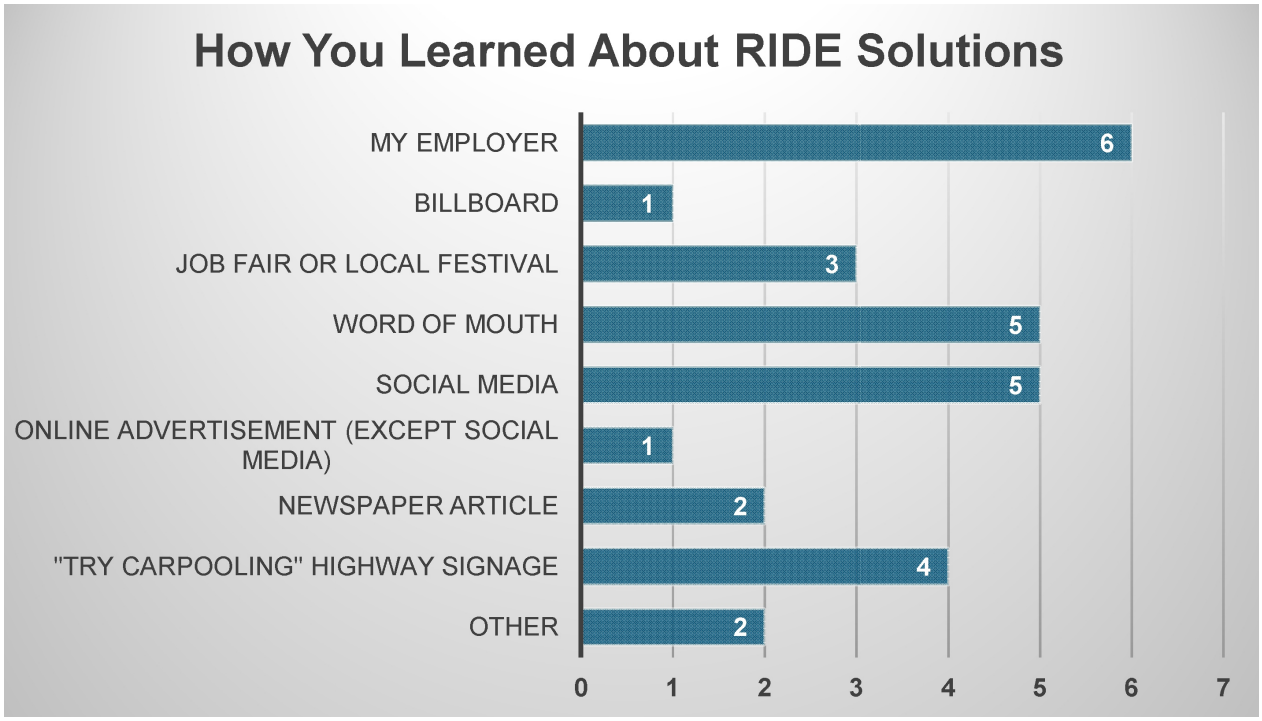




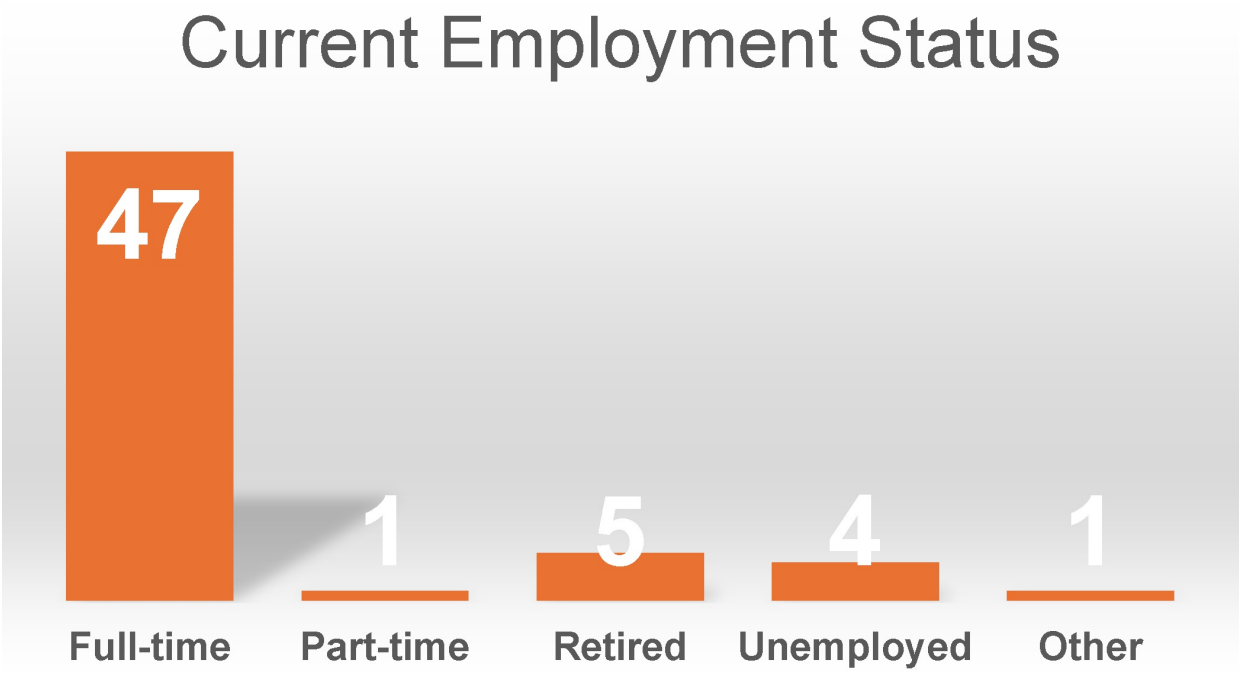
Q8: What questions offered by RIDE Solutions do you know of, or can you recall?

None	STEP
Bus service	none
Part Bus	car pool
This is the first time I have heard of RIDE Solutions.	None in my area.. but we need more
Carpooling	None
none	none
Not sure	none
Never heard of it	Maybe city bus?
None	
I wasn't aware of RIDE Solutions until I received this survey.	
Emergency Ride Service, Carpool Finder	
The bus	
Is this the Bike Barn? I rented a bike a few times.	
North martinsville bus	
Car pooling	
none	
Radar	
Not sure cause I have none near me to pick me up or drop off from my house that I'm aware of; need more family friendly options transportation such as vehicles that can hold family of 6 and with car seat options	
N/A	
I believe they offer ride share amognst peers, but there is no security to the process, there is no screening process so you know you are safe to get into that car.	
not knowledgeable about many	
None	
None	
No e	
Bus	
The PART Bus	
carpool	
None	
Multiple stops in Martinsville	
I can only recall the transit that is operating now.	
none	
The only public transportation I know of are Danville and Roanoke cities.	
None in Rocky Mount unfortunately	
There are services in larger communities but none in our rural area. Where there are services, they are limited to circular tracts.	
None	

Q9: If you are aware of the RIDE Solutions program and the services we offer, how did you hear about the program?



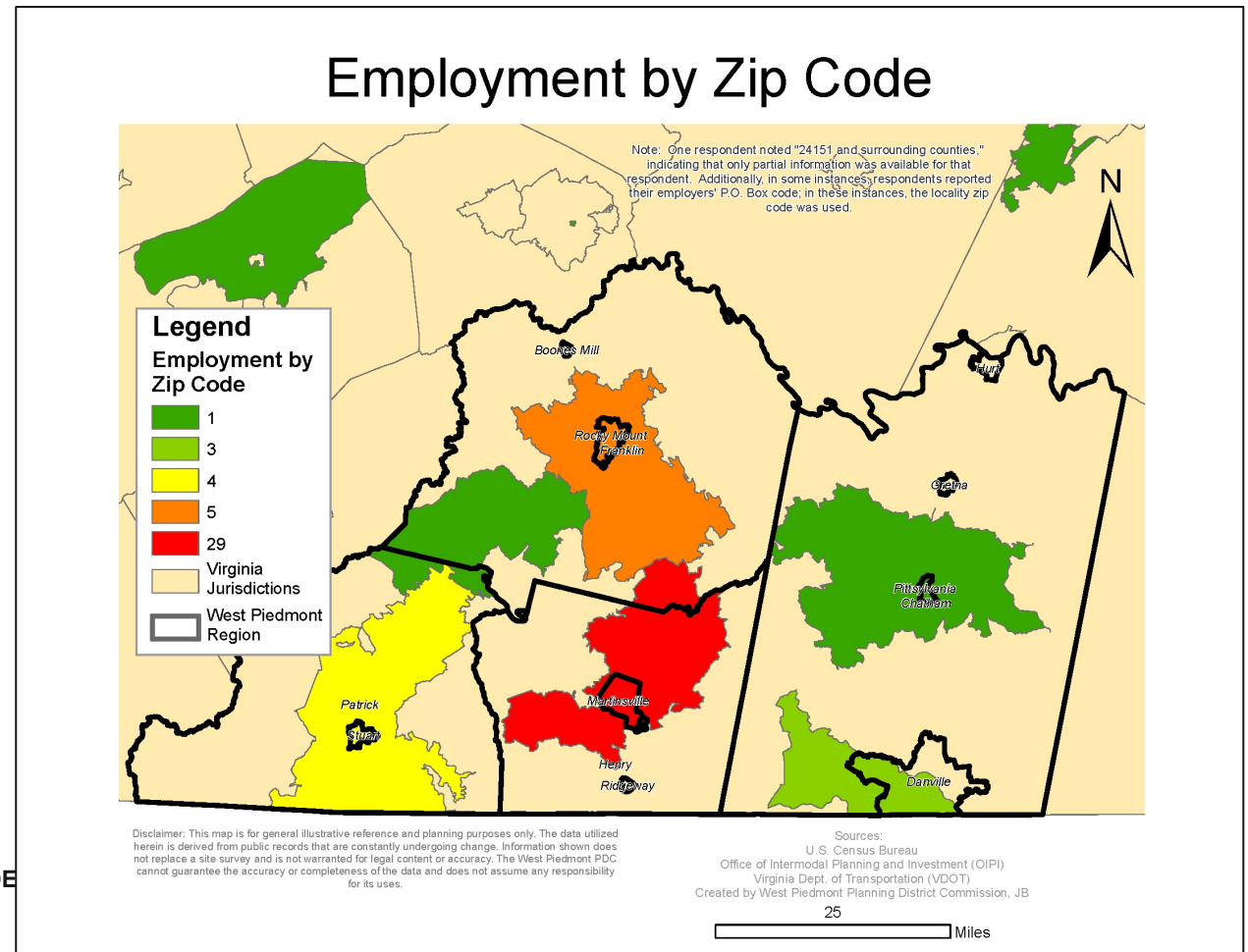
Q10: What is your current employment status?



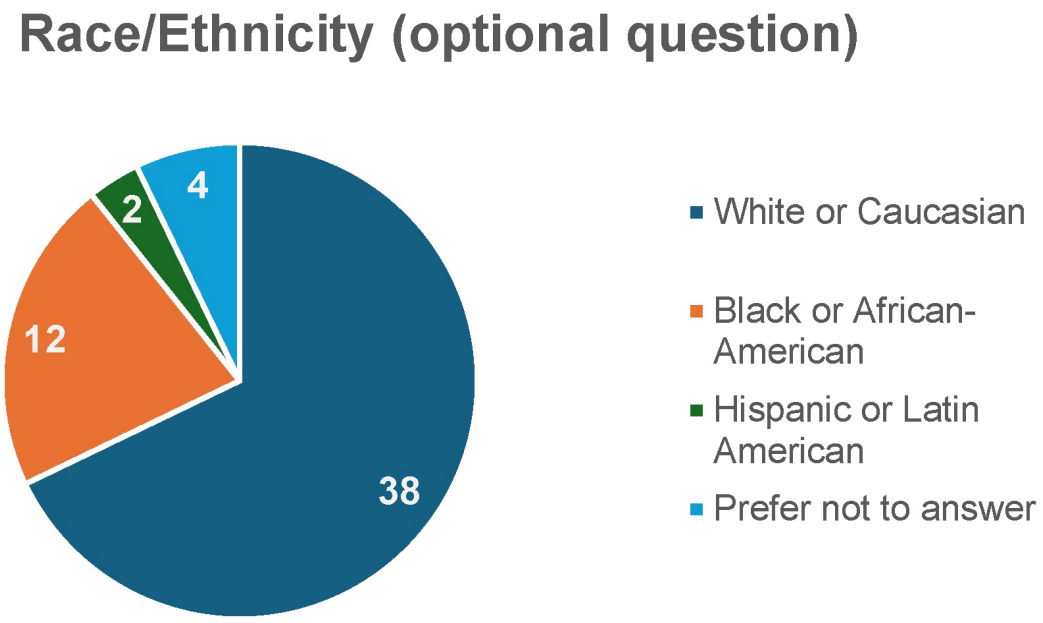
Q11: If employed, what is the name of your employer? (Optional)

Henry-Martinsville Department of Social Services
STEP, Inc.
Autos by nelson
Groups Recover Together
Employed
Piedmont Community Services
Piedmont Community SErvices
Martinsville Henry County Department of Social Services
DRS
VDH
Genworth Financial
WPPDC
Henry County Public Schools
United Way, MHC Partners for Children
Career Support Systems Inc.
Goodwill
Walmart
Ross IES
Workforce
Town of Chatham
Averett University

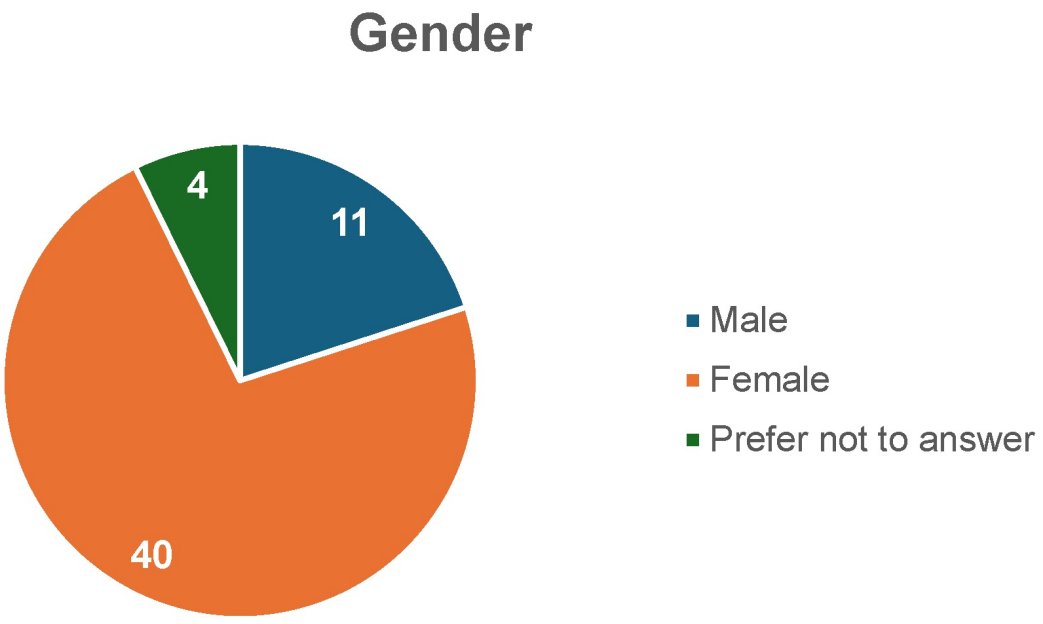
Q12: If employed, what is the zip code of your employer?



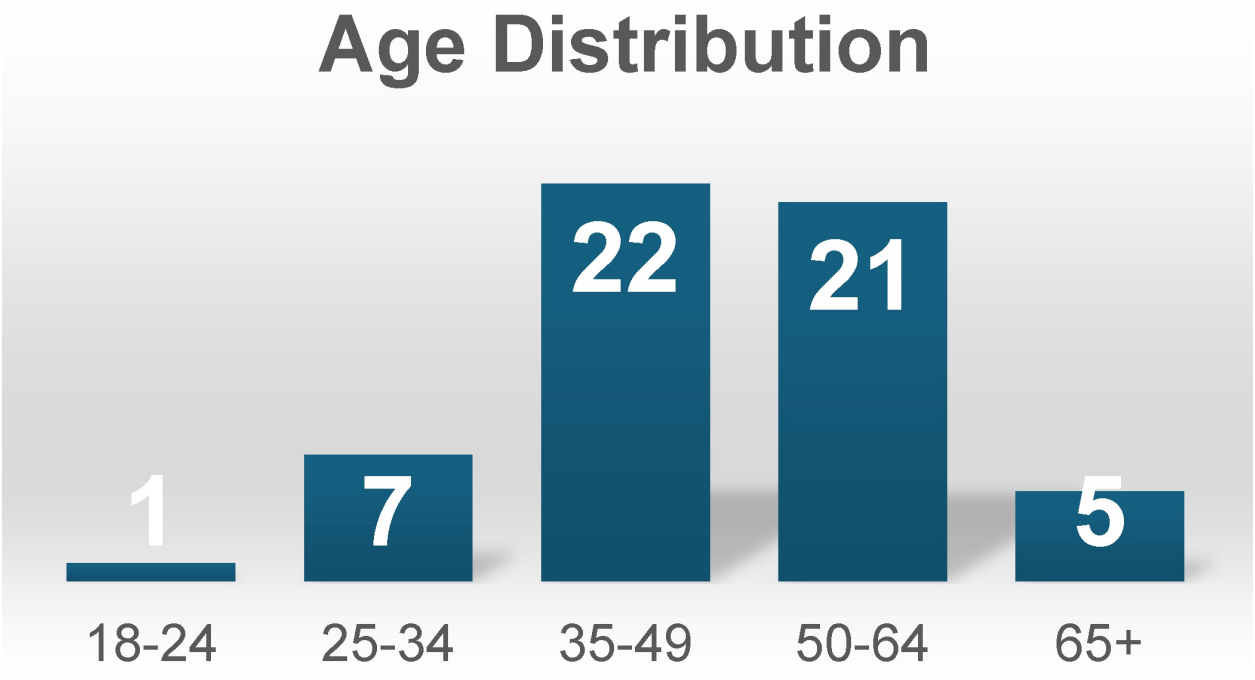
Q13: What race/ethnicity do you primarily identify with? (Optional)



Q14: What is your gender? (Optional)



Q15: What is your age? (Optional)



Employer Survey Overview

The purpose of this employer survey was to determine in what ways and to what extent transportation availability affected employee availability. A total of ten employers took the survey, but two were subsequently eliminated because they were located outside of the West Piedmont Planning District (the Region); since this plan encompasses the Region, staff decided it was best to include only those employers located within the Region.

Questions 1 – 4 identify the employers that participated in the survey, with information for each employer listed consistent among all four questions.

Q1: What is the name and/or type of your business or organization?

1) Cornerstone Building Brands (Plygem Windows)
2) Hotel
3) Danville Transit System
4) local government administration
5) FCDSS
6) Fiber Extrusion
7) Connect Health + Wellness (Federally Qualified Health Center)
8) EPL America, LLC

Q2: What industry would your business or organization be best described as?

1) Manufacturing/Production
2) Hospitality
3) Other (Transportation provider)
4) Government
5) Government
6) Manufacturing/Production
7) Health Care (FQHC)
8) Manufacturing/Production

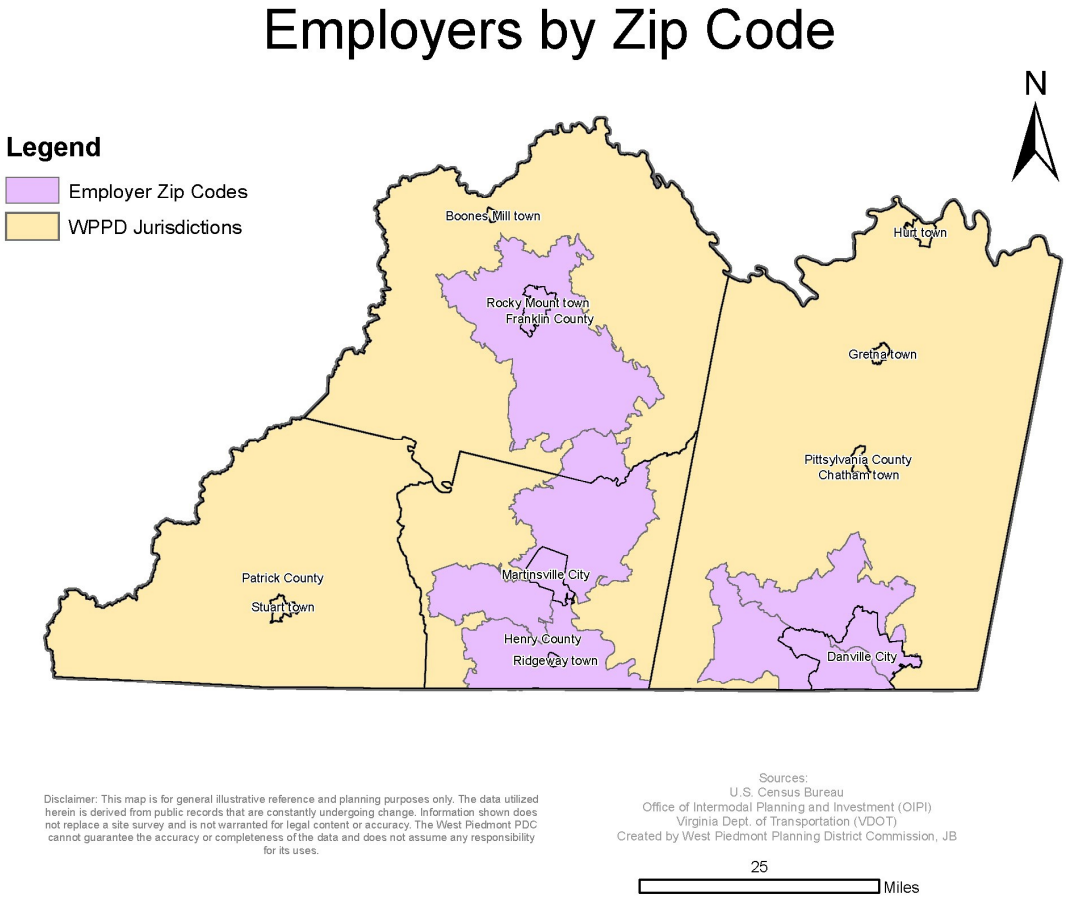
Q3: What is your company/organization website?

1) Cornerstonebuildingbrands.com
2)
3) www.danvilletransit.com
4) henrycountyva.gov
5)
6) www.drakeextrrusion.com
7) Connecthealthva.org
8) EPLGlobal.com

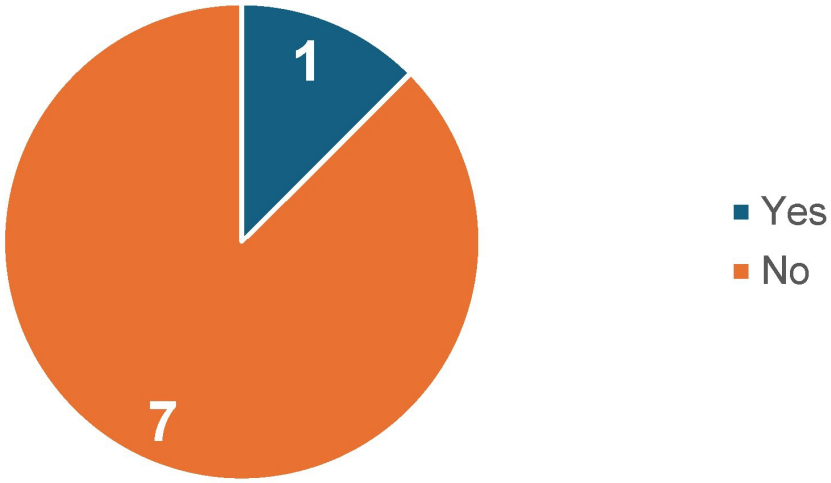
Q4: How many people does your business or organization employ?

1) 1,200
2) 17
3) 50+
4) 400
5) 87
6) 220
7) 67
8) 320

Q5: What is the zip code of your business or organization?



Q6: If transit (bus service) is available at or near your business or organization, do you offer employees monthly pre-tax transit (bus) benefits?



Asked "If yes, how much per month," one respondent replied that "bus service is not available."

Q7: If transit (bus service) is available at or near your business or organization, do you offer employees a direct monthly transit (bus) benefit?

All responses were "No." Asked "If yes, how much per month," one respondent replied that "bus service is not available."

Q8: Does your business or organization offer employees a monthly pre-tax vanpool* benefit? *A vanpool is a common, long-distance commute option used by employees having similar commute routes who travel to the same worksite, and which typically consists of 5 to 15 employees.

All responses were "No." One respondent added that "vanpool not available."

Q9: Does your business or organization offer employees a monthly direct vanpool* benefit?

All responses were “No.”

Q10: If your business or organization offers telework as an option for employees, how many days per week (on average) is it allowed?

Six of eight respondents indicated that “My business or organization does not permit teleworking, or employees are unable to telework.” Two other respondents left this question blank.

Q11: If your business or organization does not permit telework, please tell us why.

Telework is only available for office roles. Productions roles require work using machinery onsite.
Employees are generally expected to be at work, however, exceptions are made when practical. We generally don't offer it because most of our workforce is not office work. It is difficult to dig ditches or attend to prisoners while working from home. In job function where it could be practical, it is very limited because of a small workforce doesn't allow for adequate coverage for walk-up appointments.
Teleworking is offered to the Benefits division and they telework 5 days a week. We do not have office space to bring them back into the office. Others in the office may be able to telework 1 day a week if they are in the Services division and get permission from their supervisor to document from home.
Is an option for traveling sales people only.
We provide direct patient care which makes it difficult to have employees teleworking. We do allow this for a few positions within our organization.
The majority of our employees who would need public transportation are working on the shop floor running a machine. Office staff have flexibility to WFH as needed since the bulk of their jobs are on the computer.

Q12: What are the normal business hours of your business or organization?

24/7 days, nights, weekend, and rotational shifts
24/7
4:00 am until 1:00 am, 21 hours per day
8am 5pm, but we have many 24 hours responsibilities
office 8-5 mon - fri, production 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Admin office, M-F 8am to 5pm, Dental M-F 8am to 5pm, Primary care M-F 7am to 7pm
24/7

Q13: Does your business or organization operate on a shift basis? If yes, please select all that apply.

The choices were:

- 1st shift - typically 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- 2nd shift - typically 4 p.m. – midnight
- 3rd shift - typically midnight - 8 a.m.
- No, only one shift
- Other (please specify)

For this question, all respondents selected “Other (please specify).” The responses are shown in the following table.

M-F 6am to 6pm Su-Th 6pm to 6am F-Su 6am to 6pm 2,2,3 rotation 7am to 7pm 2,2,3 rotation 7pm to 7am M-F 8am to 5pm
1st shift 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. 2nd shift 3 p.m. - 11 p.m. 3rd shift 11 p.m. - 7 a.m. breakfast 5:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. housekeeping - 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 pm
4 am until 11:30 am, noon until 6:30 pm, 4:30 pm until 1:00 am
Shifts vary by department and function. We have the typical day shift, 12 and 24 hr shifts, 2nd shifts, etc.
830am to 430pm
12 hour rotating swing shift
We have 8 hour, 9 hour and 12 hour shifts between the hours of 6:45am - 7:15pm
7am-7pm and 7pm-7am 3 days one week and 4 days the next. 4 shifts so the plant runs 24/7

Q14: Does your business or organization offer free employee parking?

For this question, all respondents selected “Yes.”

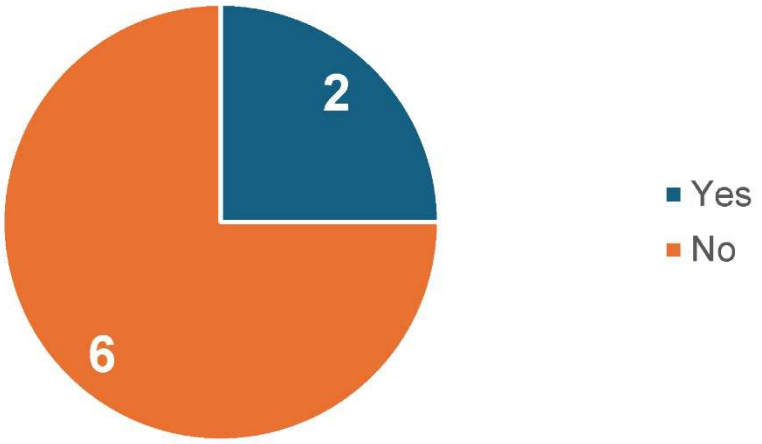
Q15: Does your business or organization encourage employees to carpool, vanpool, or use public transit (bus) to get to work? If so, how? If not, why?

Yes. Ride-share programs and word of mouth. We work with a local refugee program that will take cars and vans from their housing to the plant for work.
we do encourage employees to carpool but it is their choice
No, public transit is not offered in many locations where employees reside
no
No. We are rural and our workers live in various areas of the county or other counties.
not available
We don’t encourage this however we do not discourage it either
This is a good idea.

Q16: Does your business or organization encourage employees to bicycle to work (For example, perhaps by providing bike parking areas, lockers, or showers)? If so, how? If not, why?

Yes. Bicycle can be stored at fence. No formal bike parking but can be added.
Lockers are provided, a bike rack is also provided
no
No. Rural area.
We haven’t but fully believe everyone should be free to make their own choices on whether they walk, ride a bike, carpool, drive , ride share, use public or private transportation.
No, does not seem to be safe. We are located off 58E which does not seem suitable for bike riding.

Q17: Are you familiar with the RIDE Solutions program and the services it provides?



A follow-up to this question asks, "If you or your employees have used RIDE Solutions in the past, please explain how and why." Three responses that were recorded include: "No," "N/A," and "I am aware of the reserve a ride program. Wish it served the county and that it ran on Sundays."

Q18: To what extent does transportation access affect the following employee-related operations of your business or organization?

The selections include the following factors:

- Employee absenteeism
- Employee punctuality (being on time)
- Employee retention
- Employee recruitment
- My business or organization struggles with a shortage of employee parking

The survey evaluated each of the preceding factors based on the following selections:

- Never
- Rarely (perhaps a few times a year)
- Occasionally (at least once or twice a month)
- Often (at least once a week)
- Always

