

Benton Franklin Council of Governments Benton Franklin Walla Walla Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan



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Introduction/Background

This coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan has been developed through the sponsorship of the Benton Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) on behalf of Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla Counties. BFCOG serves as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the three county region. Located in southeastern Washington State, the three counties cover an area of over 4,200 square miles. Benton and Franklin Counties are located at the confluence of the Snake, Yakima and Columbia Rivers. The Walla Walla county border lies just a few miles to the southeast.

On August 10, 2005, President Bush signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, commonly referred to as SAFETEA-LU. SAFETEA-LU authorized the provision of \$286.4 billion in guaranteed funding for federal surface transportation programs over six years through Fiscal year 2009, including \$52.6 billion for federal transit programs.

Starting in Fiscal Year 2007, projects funded through three programs included in SAFETEA-LU, including the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC, Section 5316), New Freedom (Section 5317) and the Formula Program for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) are required to be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. SAFETEA-LU guidance issued by the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) indicates that the plan should be a “unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited income, laying out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizing services.”¹

The three funding programs focus on the needs of transportation disadvantaged persons, or those with special transportation needs that cannot be met through traditional means (access to automobile or public transportation). For purpose of this plan, the (State of Washington) statutory definition of people with special transportation needs is used: “those people, including their attendants, who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation.”²

Project Goals

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) serves as the designated recipient for these—and other—federal funds intended for non-urbanized portions of the state, and, in turn distributes them to local entities through a competitive grant process. WSDOT is requiring that projects funded through the next funding cycle, effective July 1, 2007, be derived from a coordinated plan. The overarching goal of this planning effort, then, is to respond both to SAFETEA-LU and the State of Washington requirements for receiving these federal funds.

¹ Federal Register: March 15, 2006 (Volume 71, Number 50, page 13458)

² RCW 47.06B

Additionally, an important goal for this plan is to provide an opportunity for a diverse range of stakeholders with a common interest in human service transportation to convene and collaborate on how best to provide transportation services for these targeted populations. Specifically, the stakeholders are called upon to identify service gaps and/or barriers, strategize on solutions most appropriate to meet these needs based on local circumstances, and prioritize these needs for inclusion in the plan.

Indeed, stakeholder outreach and participation is a key element to the development of this plan, and federal guidance issued by FTA specifically requires this participation, and recommends that it come from a broad base of groups and organizations involved in the coordinated planning process, including (but not limited to): area transportation planning agencies, transit riders and potential riders, public transportation providers, private transportation providers, non-profit transportation providers, human service agencies funding and/or supporting access for human services, and other government agencies that administer programs for targeted population, advocacy organizations, community-based organizations, elected officials, and tribal representatives.³

This document is intended both to capture those local stakeholder discussions, and to establish the framework for potential future planning and coordination activities.

Federal and State Roles to Promote Human Service Transportation Coordination

Incentives to coordinate human services transportation programs are defined and elaborated upon in numerous initiatives and documents. Coordination can enhance transportation access, minimize duplication of services, and facilitate cost-effective solutions with available resources. Enhanced coordination also results in joint ownership and oversight of service delivery by both human service and transportation service agencies. The requirements of SAFETEA-LU build upon previous federal initiatives intended to enhance social service transportation coordination. Among these are:

- *Presidential Executive Order:* In February 2004, President Bush signed an Executive Order establishing an Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility to focus 10 federal agencies on the coordination agenda. It may be found at www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/02/20040224-9.html
- *A Framework for Action:* The Framework for Action is a self-assessment tool that states and communities can use to identify areas of success and highlight the actions still needed to improve the coordination of human service transportation. This tool has been developed through the United We Ride initiative sponsored by FTA, and can be found on FTA's website: www.fta.dot.gov/CCAM/www/idnex.html
- *Medicaid Transportation Initiatives:*
 - (1) Transit Passes: Federal regulations require that Medicaid eligible persons who need transportation for non-emergent medical care be provided

³ Federal Register: March 15, 2006 (Volume 71, Number 50, pages 13459-60)

transportation. For many people, the most cost-effective way to provide this transportation is with public transportation. Medicaid rules now allow the purchase of a monthly bus pass as an allowable Medicaid program expense.

(2) Medicaid brokerages: Some states, including Washington, provide transportation services for Medicaid eligible persons through a brokerage arrangement. Typically, the broker will confirm the passenger's eligibility status, arrange for the trip through an appropriate vendor, and manage the fiscal oversight for the program.

- *Previous research:* Numerous studies and reports have documented the benefits of enhanced coordination efforts among federal programs that fund or sponsor transportation for their clients.⁴

Washington State Coordination Efforts

In Washington, the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation (ACCT) is a partnership of members from the legislature, state agencies, transportation providers and consumer advocates whose mission is to direct and promote activities that efficiently use all available state and community resources for special needs transportation across the state. ACCT was created by the legislature in 1998 to facilitate coordination and eliminate cross-jurisdictional and government program barriers to transportation. ACCT is taking a lead role to work with transportation providers and planning organizations throughout the state to implement the new federal planning requirements.

Throughout the State of Washington, several local coordination groups have been established to promote coordination efforts specific to their service areas. In Walla Walla County, the Blue Mountain Coordinated Transportation Coalition is comprised of representatives of transportation brokers and providers, local government agencies, service providers and users/consumers of special needs transportation. The group meets on a regular basis, and several members participated in this planning effort.

As a means of providing more efficient, cost-effective non-emergency medical transportation, Washington converted its transportation program into a brokerage service model. The Medicaid brokerage system has been able to keep transportation costs down by coordinating transportation services with other State agencies. Nine regional brokerage agencies are contracted to provide transportation services to 13 separate regions. Washington has been successful in providing expanded and effective access to medical services and is recognized as a model for other brokerage programs across the country. Staff representatives from People-for-People, the Medicaid brokerage serving residents of Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla County, actively participated in this plan by attending Stakeholder Workshops and serving as a member of the Advisory Committee that prioritized the resulting service gaps and needs.

⁴ Examples include United States General Accounting Office (GAO) reports to Congress entitled Transportation Disadvantaged Populations, Some Coordination Efforts Among Programs Providing Transportation, but Obstacles Persist, (June 2003) and Transportation Disadvantaged Seniors—Efforts to Enhance Senior Mobility Could Benefit From Additional Guidance and Information, (August 2004).

Project Methodology

The following section of the report describes the steps undertaken to support the key findings and recommendations emerging from this plan

Demographic Profile

A demographic profile of the three-county service area was prepared using census data and other relevant planning documents.⁵ This step establishes the framework for better understanding the local characteristics of the study area, with a focus on the three population groups subject to this plan: persons with disabilities, older adults, and those of low-income status.

The demographic profile is incorporated on pages 12-15 of this report.

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement was solicited and encouraged in a number of ways, and is described in detail on page 17 of this report. Appendix A also provides documentation on public outreach convened for the project, and other correspondence relevant to the plan.

Document Existing Transportation Services

This step involves documenting the range of public transportation services that already exist in the three-county area. These services include public fixed route and dial-a-ride (paratransit) services, vanpool services, and transportation services provided or sponsored by other social service agencies. The description and corresponding maps are included on pages 19-30.

Social service transportation providers were consulted directly through an inventory process intended to identify those agencies providing or arranging for social service transportation within the service area. In some cases, follow-up telephone calls were made to these providers to seek additional information or clarification. The key findings resulting from the inventory are highlighted on page 30.

Needs Assessment

An important step in completing this plan includes the identification of service needs or gaps. The needs assessment provides the basis for recognizing where—and how—service for the three population groups needs to be improved. In some cases, maintaining and protecting existing services is identified as a service need.

The needs assessment for this plan was derived through direct consultation with stakeholders through the Stakeholder Workshops, and through a review of existing

⁵ Most notably Richland-Pasco-Kennewick Metropolitan Area Social and Economic Data Book prepared by BFCOG

documents and plans that also provide information on existing services and the need to improve them. Specific documents or reports consulted include:

- Special Transportation Needs Study: Final Report to the 2001 Washington State Legislature, conducted on behalf of the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation and the Developmental Disabilities Council, December 2000
- 2004 Ben Franklin Transit Attitude and Awareness Survey
- Customer Satisfaction Survey Results, Ben Franklin Transit, August 2006

Key findings resulting from the Needs Assessment are included on pages 33-36 of this plan.

Identification of Strategies

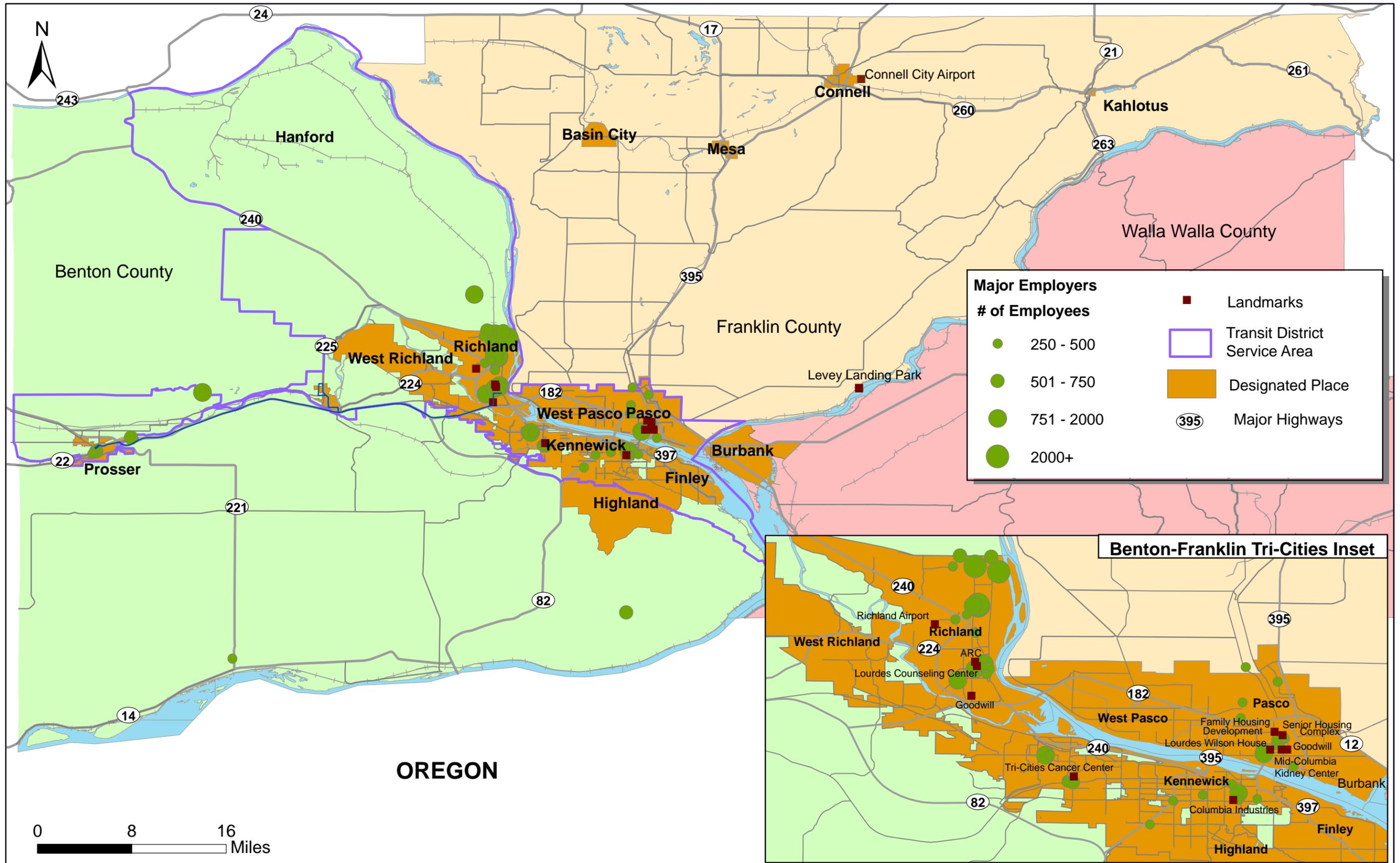
Coupled with the need to identify service gaps is the need to identify corresponding potential service strategies intended to address service deficiencies. These “strategies” differ from *specific projects* in that they may not yet be fully defined, e.g. a project sponsor isn’t identified, or project expenditures are not fully defined. The list of strategies identified through the stakeholder workshops is included on page 39 of this report.

Prioritization of Service Needs

At the direction of the Steering Committee, an ad hoc Advisory Committee comprised of transportation and human service representatives, the Medicaid broker, and staff from WSDOT was invited to (1) review proposed prioritization criteria to rank potential projects, and (2) review the list of prioritized service needs resulting from earlier steps in the process. As described later in this report, the Committee will also be called upon to apply the criteria to applications for grants solicited by WSDOT, and recommending a prioritized list of grants for the region.

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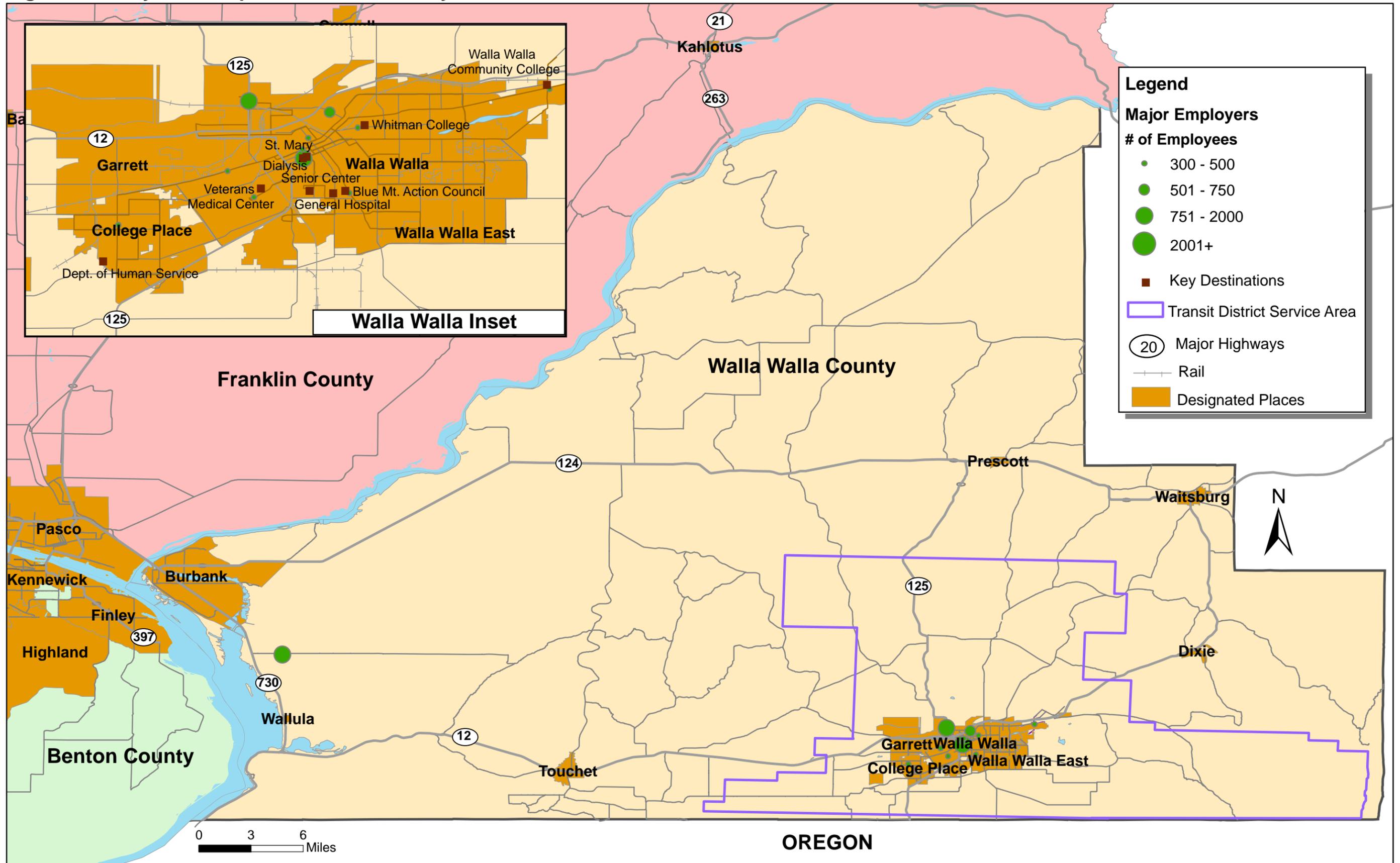
Figure 1 Study Area Map: Benton-Franklin Counties



0 8 16 Miles

OREGON

Figure 2 Study Area Map: Walla Walla County



Demographic Profile

Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla Counties are located in southeastern Washington covering over 4,200 square miles. Benton County is the most populous of the three counties with an estimated population of about 155,991 in 2004. Franklin County had a 2004 population of 59,472 and Walla Walla is the least populous of the three counties with 57,354 residents, mostly concentrated in the City of Walla Walla.

The demographic profile was prepared to document important characteristics about the region as they relate to this planning effort. In particular, the profile examines the presence and locations of older adults, persons with disabilities, and low-income persons within the region. The profile also identifies the region’s key employment sites, which are important to keep in mind when considering transportation gaps, as some gaps emerged with respect to accessing certain sites.

Population Characteristics

The following chart provides a “snapshot” of the presence of the three population groups of concern for this report within the three counties: older adults, persons with disabilities, and persons in poverty.

Figure 3 Basic Population Characteristics

Area	Total population	% of state population	% persons aged 65+	% persons w/ disability	% poverty level
Washington State	5,894,121		11.3%	18%	11%
Benton County	142,475	2.4%	10.4%	18%	10.1%
Franklin County	49,347	.08%	7.4%	21%	15.3%
Walla Walla County	55,180	.09%	14.5%	21%	14%

Older Adults

Statewide, 11.3% of Washingtonians are aged 65 and older. Within the study area, two counties report rates of older adults lower than the average (Benton and Franklin), while in Walla Walla, the percentage of seniors exceeds the statewide average.

Persons with Disabilities

The definition of “disability” varies; for this project, information cited is consistent with definitions reported in the Census 2000. The Census 2000 included two questions with a total of six subparts with which to identify people with disabilities.⁶ It should be noted that

⁶ These questions were: 18. Does this person have a physical, mental, or other health condition that has lasted for 6 or more months and which (a) limits the kind or amount of work this person can do at a job? (b) prevents this person from working at a job? 19. Because of a health condition that has lasted for 6 or more months, does this person have any difficulty—(a) going outside the home alone, for

this definition differs from that used to determine eligibility for paratransit services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To qualify for ADA paratransit services, an individual’s disability must prevent them from independently being able to use the fixed-route transit service, even if the vehicle itself is accessible to persons with disabilities (i.e. lift or ramp equipped.)

Nationwide, about 18 percent of Americans reported a disability, which is consistent with the State of Washington. Both Franklin and Walla Walla County are slightly above (21 percent) the state average, and Benton County has the fewest number of persons who reported having a disability, at 18 percent.

Income Status

Benton County reported a slightly higher median household income in 2000, at \$47,044, than the state average of \$45,776. Franklin County had a much lower median income than Benton County at \$38,991, but that was still higher than Walla Walla County, at \$35,900. Figure 4 illustrates the total population in the three counties that are living below the Census designated federal poverty level.

Figure 4 Total Population Living Below Poverty

Area	Total population	Population for whom poverty status is determined	Population living below federal poverty level	Percentage of population living below federal poverty level
Washington	5,894,121	5,765,201	612,370	11%
Benton County	142,475	141,232	14,517	10%
Franklin County	49,347	48,307	9,280	19%
Walla Walla County	55,180	50,245	7,567	15%

Source: 2000 US Census

example, to shop or visit a doctor’s office? (b) taking care of his or her own personal needs, such as bathing, dressing, or getting around inside the home?

Specific communities within the three-county region at or above the county's poverty level, thereby representing the most impoverished communities, include:

Benton County	Percent in Poverty
Benton City	18.0%
Prosser	13.5%
Franklin County	
Pasco	23.0%
Connell	19.5%
Kahlotus	19.0%
Walla Walla County	
College Place	16.0%
Prescott	18.0%
Walla Walla	18.0%

Population Overlap

It is important to note that in some cases an individual may fall into multiple categories. For example, as people age, they are more likely to experience a disabling condition which may further limit their mobility. Statewide, nine percent of persons aged 65 and older report a disability, and about 7 percent of seniors are also living in poverty. More detailed information about the overlap of these population groups specific to the three-county area is included as Appendix B.

Population Trends

Over the next ten years, the most significant population growth is expected to occur in Franklin County, which will increase its total population by 21 percent between 2005 and 2015. Benton County's total population is expected to increase by 19 percent between 2005 and 2015, which is the same as the state average. Walla Walla is projected to experience the least overall population growth of the three counties, at 14 percent.

These projected increases in the total population are important to keep in mind as they are compared to the projected increase in the population of persons aged 65 and over for the same period of time. Over the next twenty years, each of the three county's population of persons aged 65 and over is expected to increase rapidly, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Projected Population Change for Persons aged 65 Years+

Area	2000	2005	Population Change 2000-2005	2015	Population Change 2005-2015	2025	Population Change 2015-2025
Washington	662,148	705,749	7%	990,664	40%	1,447,101	46%
Benton County	14,655	15,713	7%	21,175	35%	29,362	39%
Franklin County	4,200	4,227	1%	5,018	19%	6,749	34%
Walla Walla County	8,174	7,782	-5%	8,711	12%	10,932	25%

Source: 2000 US Census

Employment

The largest employer in the Tri-Cities area is Battelle Pacific NW National Laboratory (3850 employees), which is a US Department of Energy national laboratory connected to the Hanford Nuclear Site in Richland. In addition to Hanford, agriculture is still a leading industry.

Walla Walla County is a major medical destination for many in the region, as its largest employer St. Mary’s Medical Center (850 employees) reflects. Walla Walla also has two major educational institutions that are key employers: Whitman and Walla Walla Colleges.

Figure 6 Major Employers Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla Counties

Employer	City	Employees
Battelle Pacific NW National Laboratory	Richland	3850
ConAgra/Lamb-Weston Specialty Potato Produce	Kennewick	2000
Energy Northwest	Richland	1408
Washington State Penitentiary	Walla Walla	913
St. Mary Medical Center	Walla Walla	850
Broetje Orchards	Prescott	873; 900 seasonal
C & M Orchards Inc	Prosser	873; 900 seasonal
J.R. Simplot Company	Pasco	500
Wal-Mart	Kennewick	500
Key Technology, Inc.	Walla Walla	400

Source: Ben Franklin Council of Governments

The demographic profile is enhanced by the provision of four maps (Figures 1-2 and Figures 7-8) showing the geographic areas covered by the plan, as well as other key planning information such as locations of key activity centers, major employers, proximity of public transit, etc.

Stakeholder Participation and Public Outreach

Stakeholder involvement for this project was provided in a number of ways. First, a Steering Committee comprised of staff from BFCOG, Ben Franklin Transit, and Walla Walla Valley Transit provided policy oversight for the project. This Committee finalized the scope of work to direct the project consultant, and met on a regular basis to receive status reports, and to provide further guidance. Members of the Steering Committee also provided contact lists for the Stakeholder Workshops, and sponsored Stakeholder Workshops in two rural communities within the service area.

Two Stakeholder Workshops were convened in Kennewick and Walla Walla on July 19 and 20, 2006, respectively. A total of 64 persons were invited to the Kennewick meeting, and 86 persons to the Walla Walla meeting. Follow up calls were made to 14 stakeholders in Benton and Franklin Counties. Valley Transit staff sent out a reminder postcard a few days before the Walla Walla meeting. The meetings were held as scheduled, with 26 persons attending the Kennewick meeting and 25 persons attending the Walla Walla meeting. Attendance at both meetings included a broad range of stakeholders, who represented both social service agencies and transportation providers.

Consultant staff facilitated the meetings, which resulted in:

- Education of stakeholders on new federal requirements generated through SAFETEA-LU
- Identification of key points of origin and destination
- Identification of gaps in service
- Identification of potential solutions and strategies

In addition, two stakeholder meetings were scheduled in rural communities; July 26 in Prosser, and July 27 in Connell. No new stakeholders or other members of the public attended either of these meetings.

Two public meetings were also held on September 19 and 20, 2006 in Pasco and in Walla Walla. The purpose of the meetings was to broaden the participation in the planning effort to include members of the public, and to offer them the opportunity to confirm preliminary findings with respect to service gaps and proposed solutions.

A project Advisory Committee was also established to carry out the following tasks:

- Review and accept project prioritization criteria
- Confirm the list of prioritized unmet transportation needs
- Apply the prioritization criteria and rank grant applications submitted to WSDOT (expected to occur in December 2006)

The Advisory Committee is comprised of members of the original Steering Committee (BFCOG, Valley Transit and Ben Franklin Transit staff) as well as staff from WSDOT, and two human service staff representatives from both service areas.

Finally, the draft plan was emailed to stakeholders attending any one of the convened meetings, with an opportunity to provide comment prior to the completion of the plan.

Description of Existing Transportation Services

Benton Franklin Transit (BFT)

Ben Franklin Transit operates twenty-five bus routes that serve Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, West Richland, Prosser, and Benton City. Four routes are Inter-City and twenty-one are local routes, which do not leave their designated city. Service is provided Monday through Friday from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm and on Saturdays from 8:00 to 7:00 pm, and there is no service on holidays. Appendix C provides detailed information on routes, service hours, fares and frequency for both BFT and Valley Transit.

BFT also offers night and Sunday service in the Tri-Cities and West Richland through Trans+Plus. Trans+Plus is operated by an outside contractor and service is provided Monday through Saturday from 7 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. and on Sundays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Trans+Plus is a demand response, curb-to-curb service, which provides shared rides by advance reservation only. Reservations are taken on a first come first served basis, and capacity is limited. Service is provided within Ben Franklin Transit's boundary area, excluding the Hanford area north of Battelle Blvd., and the Prosser and Benton City areas.

Ben Franklin Transit provides demand response service from Benton City to Prosser throughout BFT's Benton City and Prosser service boundary. To schedule a trip from Benton City one day advance notice is required, and reservations can be made Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. For riders traveling from Benton City to the Tri-Cities or Prosser the demand response service can be taken to connect with any Route 170 bus stop to complete a trip to the Tri-Cities or Prosser. In Prosser, the demand response service takes a rider anywhere within the Prosser BFT Boundary or to the Stacy Street Transit Center to connect with Route 170.

Evening and Sunday Service is provided within the city limits of Prosser and Benton City, through a contract with Tri-City Taxi. The demand response, shared-ride, curb-to-curb service, is provided between 7:00 and 11:00 pm Monday through Saturday. Advance reservations are required and can be made between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. Sunday service is provided between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Advance reservations are also required for Sunday service and need to be made on Saturday or earlier between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Service is not provided between Prosser and Benton City or between Benton City and Richland.

BFT Dial-A-Ride (DAR)

As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), BFT operates complementary paratransit service, which is a specialized door-to-door transportation for persons whose disability prevents them from using the regular fixed route bus service. Dial-A-Ride service operates during the same hours as BFT fixed route, Monday through Friday from 6:00 am

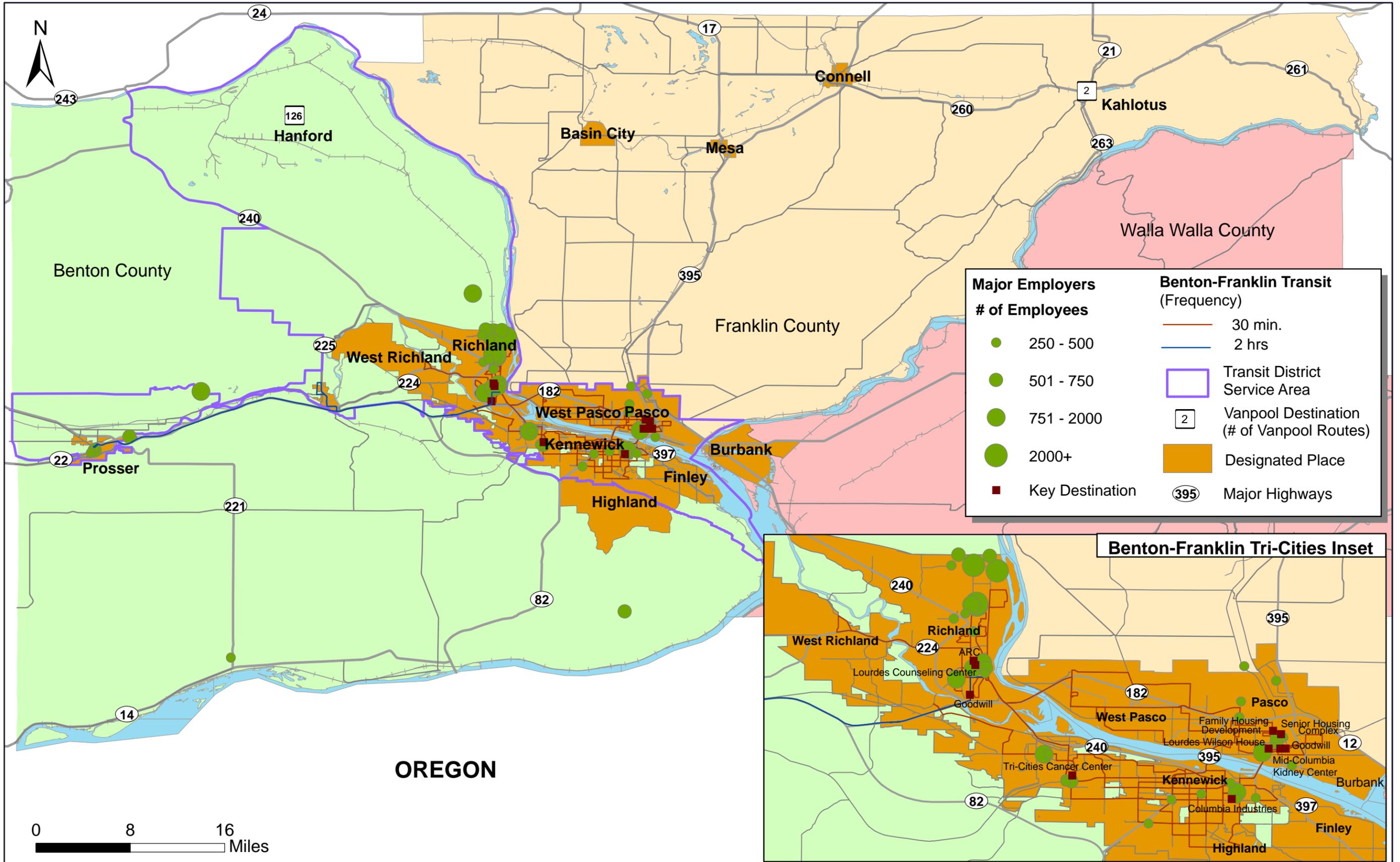
to 7:00 pm, and on Saturdays from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm. A Trans+Plus Night Service is provided Monday through Saturday from 7:00 pm to 2:30 am, and on Sundays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Ben Franklin Transit's Dial-A-Ride serves the entire Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA) boundaries see Figure 3 for more detail on DAR service area. Ben Franklin Transit restricts DAR ridership to those that are ADA eligible and unable to ride the fixed route service, and has an eligibility process to qualify for service.

BFT Vanpool Program

Ben Franklin Transit also provides vanpools for commuters traveling longer distances, as long as one end of their trip is within BFT service boundary. Ben Franklin Transit owns the vehicles and riders share the cost of the 15-passenger van payment, fuel, maintenance, and insurance through a monthly fare. The monthly fares vary depending on distance traveled and other factors, but the average BFT vanpool rider pays \$55.00 per month. Vanpool drivers are responsible for collecting the monthly fee and fueling the vehicle, and in return their fare is waived. Ben Franklin Transit currently has 178 vanpools, most of which originate in Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland. Almost three quarters of BFT's vanpools (126 vanpools) are traveling to the Hanford Nuclear Site in Richland, and the trips originate from the various cities within the service area. The second largest vanpool user is the ARC of the Tri-Cities (18 vanpools), which contracts with BFT to provide all the developmentally disabled work trips within the Tri-Cities area. Another vanpool destination is the Army Depot in Umatilla (13 vanpools), and all of those trips originate in Kennewick.

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Figure 7 Key Activity Centers and Transit Service: Benton-Franklin Counties



0 8 16 Miles

Valley Transit

Valley Transit operates seven fixed routes that provide service around the City of Walla Walla weekdays from 6:15 am to 5:45 pm Monday through Friday. Valley Transit also provides evening and Saturday service through an East/West Loop as Appendix C details. There is no Sunday or holiday service. Valley Transit has a “flagstop” system where riders are asked to flag the bus (wave at the driver) at the stop signs, and can also request service at locations that do not have bus stops by flagging the driver.

Dial-A-Ride

Dial-A-Ride is a special service which uses lift equipped vehicles to transport people with mobility limitations that prevent them from using Valley Transit's regular fixed route bus service, and for persons who are aged 70 or older. Dial-A-Ride is available during the fixed route bus service, which is Monday through Friday, from 6:15 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Evening and Saturday Service

Valley Transit is providing a new type of transportation service for the general public in Walla Walla and College Place on weekday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Two routes, the West Loop and the East Loop, depart every 45 minutes and provide convenient service to most of the cities' popular destinations. This is a route-deviation type of service, which means the schedule for each route provides enough time for the mini-bus to vary from the regular route to pick up people who live within one-quarter mile (about 3 blocks) of a bus stop, but cannot get to the route because of a mobility limitation.

Job Access

The Job Access program was developed four years ago in partnership with WorkSource, Blue Mountain Action Council, Walla Walla County Department of Human Services, DSHS, and Walla Walla Community College. The three main barriers that were identified in this region to moving people off assistance and to employment were education/training, childcare, and transportation.

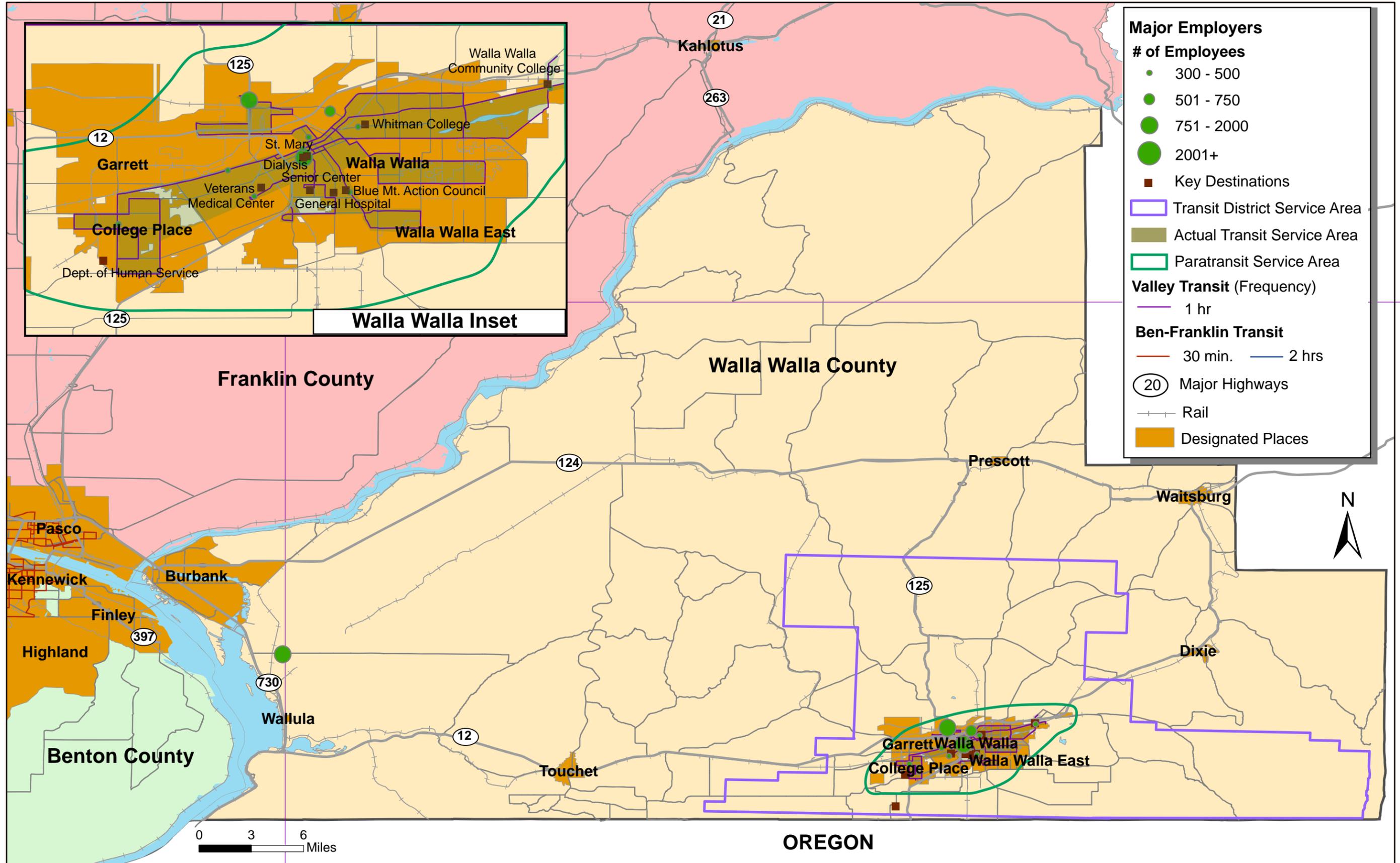
Valley Transit applied for and received a Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) grant to meet the needs of people who are being trained during traditional work commuter times and the non-traditional times of entry level workers who begin employment on swing shifts and weekends. The transportation was designed to allow JARC participants to make intermediate stops at childcare providers on the way to worksites or home to meet the need for a safe place to leave children while the parent(s) are away at work.

Job Access is a reservation-based transportation service providing rides to and from work and activities that are necessary in order to work.

During calendar year 2005, a total of 86,205 (16% of the total system ridership) JARC funded were provided either on the fixed route, the Job Access or through the dial-a-ride. Program.

Ongoing collaboration with human services agencies is achieved through an informal evaluation of the program through the Blue Mountain Coordinated Transportation Coalition.

Figure 8 Key Activity Centers and Transit Service: Walla Walla County



Major Employers

of Employees

- 300 - 500
- 501 - 750
- 751 - 2000
- 2001+

■ Key Destinations

□ Transit District Service Area

■ Actual Transit Service Area

□ Paratransit Service Area

Valley Transit (Frequency)

— 1 hr

Ben-Franklin Transit

— 30 min. — 2 hrs

⊙ Major Highways

— Rail

■ Designated Places

Other Public Transportation

Columbia County Transportation

Columbia County Public Transportation (CCPT) provides transportation service between Dayton and Walla Walla for medical and dental appointments. One-day advance notice is required for the service.

Milton- Freewater Bus

This intercity bus service is provided Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7:50 am to 5:00 pm between Walla Walla and Milton-Freewater.

Greyhound

Greyhound service is available in Pasco, with morning, afternoon and evening service to Spokane, Yakima or elsewhere along the Greyhound route. In 2004, service was discontinued between Walla Walla and any of cities in Benton or Franklin Counties.

Amtrak

Amtrak provides bus service between the three counties to connect passengers with the nearest rail service, as there is no line within the study area.

Other Human Service Transportation Providers

A variety of programs offer transportation service in addition to those provided by the two public transit providers. Very few are solely transportation providers, with most offering transportation in conjunction with other social service or volunteer programs. These other providers range from for-profit companies to non-profit organization and state government agencies. Some programs directly provide transportation while others sponsor transportation by contracting with, or buying passes/tickets for, other providers. Those that provide transportation utilize paid drivers, agency staff and/or program volunteers to transport passengers.

The following provides a summary of human service transportation providers in Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla Counties, organized by general clientele they serve.

Seniors

SE Aging and Long Term Care contracts with local taxi companies to provide medical trips for unpaid caregivers in Walla Walla. This service is used infrequently.

Volunteer Chore Services provides various medical and personal trips for low-income seniors and disabled individuals using program vehicles and volunteer drivers.

Senior Companion Program provides various medical and personal trips for seniors using program vehicles and volunteer drivers.

Walla Walla RSVP reimburses volunteer drivers to assist seniors traveling to senior center and for personal trips.

Helpline provides emergency social services in Walla Walla County including transportation for relocation and medical appointments. Helpline provides tickets/pass on other providers.

Developmentally Disabled

ARC of Tri-Cities operates a BFT van fleet for work and human service agency trips for ARC, Columbia Industries, Adult Day Services and Goodwill program participants

Client-Based

Walla Walla VA provides medical trips using program vehicles and primarily volunteer drivers to facilities throughout the Northwest.

State of Washington Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) directly provides medical as well as work/school trips for clients of program (primarily long distance trips).

State of Washington Department of Social and Human Services (DSHS) sponsors work and school trips for disabled clients in their program. Within DSHS, the Children's Administration provides rides to clients, primarily with agency staff driving the clients.

State of Washington Employment Security Department sponsors transportation individuals (primarily without disabilities) to aid in obtaining employment.

Medical

A+ Transportation NW, Inc. and Appointment Keepers Transportation System specialize in medical transportation. These companies are also part of a six-county Medicaid transportation brokerage administered by People for People in Yakima. The brokerage processes individual Medicaid trip requests and identifies the best available provider to complete the trip.

Key Findings: Provider Inventory

An inventory of transportation providers was created as part of this study. Staff from public transit and human service programs were surveyed to identify key characteristics of any transportation service they provide or sponsor. Respondents were solicited via email and telephone contact and were asked to fill the web-based survey on-line.

A total of 21 agencies were identified as potential human service transportation providers, meaning that they provide or subsidize transportation for the elderly, for persons with disabilities, or for low-income persons. Such services may be provided directly by that organization, arranged through a contractual arrangement, or by subsidizing the cost of transportation for their clients. These organizations were invited to participate in an on-line survey intended to gather basic service characteristics, such as the population served, description of transportation services supported or provided, number of trips provided on an annual basis, sources and amounts of funding to support transportation, etc. The survey instrument and survey summary results are included as Appendix D.

Human service transportation providers depend on a variety of funding sources including those dedicated for senior, individuals with disabilities or family support programs. Some funding programs are narrow in scope and limit the population to which they can offer rides and/or the number of trip purposes they can fulfill. This study included a provider inventory that attempted to identify applicable funding sources and any constraints associated with them.

The following table identifies a number of key program characteristics ascertained from the inventory along with the set of respondents applicable to each. In general, dedicated public transportation is limited to larger urban areas served by the Benton-Franklin and Walla Walla Public Transportation Benefit Areas. Overlaid on top of these districts are various programs serving special needs populations across the counties. The human service providers responding to the survey primarily provide work- and medical-based trips. In addition, Senior Life Resources is dedicated to nutrition programs in Benton and Franklin Counties while Walla Walla RSVP makes half of its trips to the senior center.

Figure 9 Provider Inventory Key Characteristics

Characteristic	Applicable Programs
Service to all of Benton and Franklin Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Chore Services
Service to Tri-Cities area only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Franklin Transit • Arc of Tri-Cities (work and human service agency trips only) • Senior Life Resources (meals)
Service to all of Walla Walla County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpline • Walla Walla RSVP • Appointment Keepers Transportation System
Service to City of Walla Walla only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley Transit
Service to entire region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Washington DCFS • State of Washington DSHS • State of Washington ESDt • Veterans Administration • Senior Companion Program
Weekend Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Franklin Transit (Saturdays and Sundays) • Valley Transit • State of Washington DCFS • Volunteer Chore Services (Saturdays) • Appointment Keepers Transportation System
Limited day service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Richland (excursion trips)
Service for general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Franklin Transit • Valley Transit
Service for disabled only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arc of Tri-Cities (work trips only) • Volunteer Chore Services (low income seniors and disabled) • Valley Transit and BFT Dial-a-Ride Programs
Service for seniors only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Life Resources (meals) • City of Richland (excursion trips) • Senior Companion Program • Walla Walla RSVP (primarily seniors) • Volunteer Chore Services (low income seniors and disabled)
Service for other programs - clients only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Washington DCFS • Veterans Administration • Helpline • Valley Transit Job Access Program
Identified capacity constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Chore Services • Senior Companion Program • State of Washington DSHS – Children’s Administration
Washington State transportation grant recipient (state and federal grant program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley Transit

Many of the programs servicing client-based programs do not specify hour of operations as they attempt to meet any special needs of clients as they come up, including those on weekends and in the evenings. Similarly, volunteer-driver based programs often do not specify a span of service as they attempt to match driver availability to rider needs.

Only programs that depend on volunteer drivers, and one public agency that depends on staff to drive clients, cite capacity concerns. When asked about other issues, many of the human service providers mention limited public transportation availability as limiting their programs and/or requiring them to provide more transportation serve than they would like to. Many of the respondents list limited funding as a problem.

Key Findings: Service Gaps and Unmet Transportation Needs

Service gaps and unmet transportation needs were identified through a series of workshops convened in July 2006, which provided an interactive opportunity for a variety of key stakeholders to offer their insight as to service gaps and barriers preventing full mobility for populations subject to this planning effort. The preliminary findings were then reviewed and confirmed in a second set of public meetings held in September 2006. In some cases, further discussion led to combining or eliminating some issues originally raised, or in new ones added.

The following documents were also consulted to develop the Needs Assessment:

- Special Transportation Needs Study: Final Report to the 2001 Washington State Legislature, conducted on behalf of the Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation and the Developmental Disabilities Council, December 2000
- 2004 Ben Franklin Transit Attitude and Awareness Survey
- Customer Satisfaction Survey Results, Ben Franklin Transit, August 2006

An unmet transportation need is defined as follows:

- Continuation of current services that would not otherwise operate without grant funds
- New service established to meet an identified need
- Extension or expansion of current services to meet an identified need

Transportation needs and gaps were identified in all three definition areas, and generally fall into the following categories:

Need to maintain current levels of service

As indicated above, one definition of an “unmet transportation need” is the recognition that current services that rely on grant funding would be at risk should the funding not continue. This is especially true for Valley Transit, where about 17% of the operating budget is generated through the state’s competitive grant program. In particular, the Job Access program, which provides trips for low-income persons to access job or training activities, would be at risk.

Unserved or underserved areas

In all three counties, persons who live or work outside the transit agency’s core service area can’t easily access public transit. In particular, a number of service gaps specific to the agricultural industry were identified, including:

- Need to improve or expand upon transportation for trips that are job-related, especially for the food processing industry located in Richland, East Kennewick, North Pasco, Wallula, and Burbank.
- Service is needed between Pasco and Broetje Orchards.
- Need for services to Farm Homes in College Place
- Need to provide vanpools and/or improved services to wineries in Touchet
- Need for enhanced service in College Place

Likewise, the need was frequently expressed for expanded service for inter-county trips, or service between communities within a county. The following service gaps were identified:

- Service between Tri-Cities and Connell
- Service to and from Tri-Cities and Basin City, Mesa, Kahloutus, Burbank, Finley, Highland, Red Mountain, Prosser, Benton City, Garrett
- Service between Walla Walla and Prescott, Touchet, College Place, Dixie, Waitsburg, Dayton, East Dayton, Milton-Freewater
- Service to and from Asotin, Garfield and Whitman Counties
- Service between Tri-Cities and Walla Walla
- Needs were also expressed for service to be provided to outside the immediate region for specialized medical services, especially to Portland, Seattle, Spokane, and Yakima.

Lack of availability

Currently, public transit services are available in Walla Walla County from 6:15 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. Monday through Friday, from 12:15 to 6:10 p.m. on Saturdays, and not at all on Sundays. Transit services within the Ben Franklin Transit service area are available until 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and not at all on Sundays.⁷ The need for more expanded public transit service was a concern also voiced by stakeholders in both counties, and also emerged as an issue in the Ben Franklin customer satisfaction survey recently conducted.

Specifically, the need was expressed for more extensive service in the evening, because many entry level positions (for example, those in the hospitality industry) require employees to work during non-traditional hours. Students working or taking evening classes, or clients of social service programs needing to attend substance abuse or other required programs could also use service later in the evening. The need for weekend service was widely expressed in both meetings, especially for recreational or shopping trips.

⁷ Ben Franklin Transit's Trans+ Plus Night Services has limited capacity and can only be used in the evening Monday through Saturday from 7 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. It is not available in Prosser or Benton City.

Additional medical trips are also needed for those who are not Medicaid eligible, and so cannot make use of the Medicaid brokerage system.

Paratransit doesn't always meet needs for persons with disabilities

Several program staff working with programs for persons with disabilities explained that the local Dial-a-Ride programs are not always a feasible option for their clients. Frail elderly people can not always manage the length of time on the vehicle, or have needs that can not always be scheduled in advance. Some persons with disabilities may also need a level of care, such as an escort or personal care attendant, that is not available through the public paratransit programs.⁸

Lack of awareness of available services

Some stakeholders indicated the need for better information about the transit services and programs. Some people also expressed confusion in understanding how to access transit or paratransit programs, since multiple operators have different telephone numbers and operating procedures. The need was also expressed for more simplified or streamlined fare instruments.

Language or cultural barriers may also play a part in the lack of awareness of available services, as evidenced by responses of Hispanic bus riders of BFT in the recently conducted survey of BFT customers. Only 12% of Hispanic customers reported access to the internet, compared to 62% of other customers, and none reported visiting the BFT website, compared to 25% of other customers.

Affordability

The cost of transportation, whether using a private automobile, public transportation, or a social agency operated vehicle, emerged as a key issue. The escalating cost of fuel has been a contributing factor because the increased cost limits the mobility—and therefore opportunities to access better employment, educational or medical facilities—even for those who do have cars. This is especially true for those individuals or families who have moved to outlying areas for more affordable housing, but which has had a negative impact on their access to transportation.

Currently, persons needing medical transportation who are not Medicaid eligible use a private-for-profit service, and the cost to access this service is expensive.

In order for members of the public and other stakeholders to prioritize service gaps within their respective service areas, a summary of unmet needs was organized by area as follows:

⁸ About half of social service agencies contacted through the Ben Franklin Customer Satisfaction Survey indicated they have staff available to provide such assistance.

Unmet Transportation Needs: Benton and Franklin Counties

- Service between Tri-Cities, Burbank and Walla Walla
- Medical trips to Portland, Seattle, Spokane, Yakima
- Service to food processing industries in Tri-Cities area
- Service between Pasco and Broetje Orchards
- Service between Tri-Cities and Connell
- Service between Tri-Cities and other outlying areas
- Later service for Ben Franklin Transit in evenings
- More extensive weekend service for Ben Franklin Transit
- Extended paratransit hours for BFT
- Need to simplify fare instruments
- Transit information is not easily available
- Cost of transit is difficult for low-income people
- Cost of medical transportation high for persons who are not Medicaid eligible
- Personal care assistance on paratransit
- More flexible scheduling on paratransit
- Paratransit service outside BFT service area (added at Pasco public meeting)

Unmet Transportation Needs: Walla Walla County

- Maintain existing services provided by Valley Transit
- Service between Walla Walla and Asotin, Garfield, Whitman Counties
- Vanpools to wineries in Touchet
- Service between Walla Walla and outlying areas
- Later service in evenings for Valley Transit
- Lack of service in parts of College Place
- More extensive weekend service for Valley Transit
- Personal care assistance on paratransit
- Need to simplify fare instruments
- Transit information is not easily available
- Cost of medical transportation is high for persons not Medicaid eligible
- Cost of transit is difficult for low-income persons

As a next step, participants at the two public meetings were asked to:

- Confirm or elaborate upon the list of unmet transit needs
- Eliminate those that were found to be met with existing resources
- Eliminate duplicative needs/gaps
- Add new gaps not previously identified
- Participate in an exercise to prioritize the list of unmet needs in order to determine those needs most crucial to be addressed within the two transit agency service areas.

Based on the outcomes of these discussions, BFCOG staff developed a listing of prioritized unmet transportation needs for Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla Counties. This list was discussed and slightly modified at a September 22 meeting of the Project Advisory Committee (see pages 17-18). The prioritized listing of transportation needs is as follows:

Prioritized Unmet Transportation Needs: Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla Counties

High Priority

- Protect and maintain funding for existing Valley Transit services
- Service between Tri-Cities, Burbank and Walla Walla
- Paratransit outside Ben Franklin Transit current boundary
- Ben Franklin Transit - Need for travel training for some trips
- Service between Walla Walla and Milton-Freewater (interstate service), Wallula and outlying areas

Medium Priority

- Ben Franklin Transit - Insufficient transit information
- Ben Franklin Transit - More flexible scheduling on paratransit
- Ben Franklin Transit - Need to simplify fare instruments
- Vanpools in Valley Transit service area
- More extensive weekend service for Valley Transit
- Medical trips to Portland, Seattle, Spokane and Yakima
- Ben Franklin Transit and Valley Transit - Personal care assistance on paratransit
- Paratransit outside Valley Transit current boundary

Low Priority

- Service between Walla Walla, Asotin, Garfield and Whitman Counties
- Medical trips to Portland, Seattle, Spokane and Yakima
- Lack of service in some parts of College Place
- Later service in evenings for Valley Transit
- Extended paratransit hours for Valley Transit
- Personal care assistance on paratransit
- More flexible scheduling on paratransit
- Fare instruments can be complicated
- Transit information not easily available
- Cost of medical transportation for persons not Medicaid eligible
- Cost of transit is difficult for low income people
- Paratransit outside service area
- More extensive weekend service for Ben Franklin Transit
- Extended paratransit hours for Ben Franklin Transit
- Cost of transit is difficult for low income people
- Protect and maintain funding for existing Ben Franklin Transit services
- Service to food processing industry in Tri-Cities area
- Service between Pasco and Broetje Orchards
- Service between Tri-Cities and Connell
- Service between Tri-Cities and other outlying areas
- Later service in evenings for Ben Franklin Transit
- More extensive weekend service for Ben Franklin Transit
- Extended paratransit hours for Ben Franklin Transit
- Cost of transit is difficult for low income people

Key Findings:

Potential Strategies/Solutions

A number of potential strategies or solutions to address the unmet needs were identified through consultation with stakeholders, as indicated below. Although many perceived gaps relate to improving the fixed route transit services, the solutions needed to address those gaps could be provided through other means, such as vanpools, taxi voucher programs, etc. The strategies identified by the stakeholders include the following:

- Expand service (bus or taxi voucher) into rural/outlying areas
- Provide medical trips on Sunday (currently only available through for-profit agency)
- Simplify fare instruments
- Provide reduced fare for low-income persons
- Provide vouchers or bus tickets to social service agencies serving low-income persons
- Establish a One-Stop Call center, or clearinghouse for scheduling paratransit trips
- Provide more individualized service for those who need it (escort, door-through-door, etc.)
- Provide same-day paratransit service
- Improve or expand transportation for trips for jobs in the food processing industry located in Richland, East Kennewick, North Pasco, Wallula, Burbank
- Provide service between Pasco and Broetje Orchards
- Expand availability of taxi hours
- Provide additional recreational, cultural and social trips for persons with disabilities
- Provide enhanced service in College Place
- Improve signage and transit information by installing local kiosks
- Provide Sunday bus and dial-a-ride service (Valley Transit)
- Provide shuttles to and from various nursing homes and churches
- Expand local bus service to social service agency serving mentally ill
- Provide feeder service from rural areas to mainline transit
- Provide additional evening bus service
- Provide vanpools to wineries in Touchet
- Provide subsidies for persons needing medical services through Appointment Keepers

Funding sources/description of types of projects that can be funded

As mentioned previously, four sources of federal funds are subject to this plan, and projects funded with those grant funds are required to be selected through a competitive process, and derived from this coordinated planning effort. Many, if not all, of the suggested strategies and solutions could be structured to take advantage of available program funds. The sources of funds and examples of eligible projects are described below:

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

The purpose of the JARC program is to fund local programs that offer job access services for low-income individuals. JARC funds are distributed to states on a formula basis, depending on that state's rate of low-income population. This approach differs from previous funding cycles, when grants were awarded purely on an "earmark" basis. JARC funds will pay for up to 50% of operating funds to support the project budget, and 80% for a capital project. The remaining funds are required to be provided through local match sources.

Examples of eligible JARC projects include:

- Late-night and weekend service
- Guaranteed Ride Home Programs
- Vanpools or shuttle services to improve access to employment or training sites
- Car-share or other projects to improve access to autos
- Access to child care and training

New Freedom Program

The New Freedom Program provides funding to serve persons with disabilities. Overall, the purpose of the program is to go "beyond" the minimal requirements of the ADA. Funds are distributed to states based on that state's population of persons with disabilities. The same match requirements as for JARC apply for the New Freedom Program.

Examples of eligible New Freedom Program projects include:

- Expansion of paratransit service hours or service area beyond minimal requirements
- Purchase of accessible taxi or other vehicles
- Promotion of accessible ride sharing or vanpool programs
- Administration of volunteer programs
- Building curb-cuts, providing accessible bus stops
- Travel Training programs

Elderly and Disabled Program (Section 5310)

Funds for this program are again allocated by formula to states for capital costs of providing services to elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Typically, vans or small buses are available to support non-profit transportation providers. A 20% local match is required.

General Public Transportation: Non-urbanized areas (Section 5311)

SAFETEA-LU does not require that Section 5311 funds be subject to the coordinated plan; however, WSDOT has established this requirement. Federal Section 5311 funds are intended to enhance the access of people in non-urbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation. Services are available to the general public, but may also be used to support services for elderly and disabled. The match requirement is consistent with the JARC and New Freedom programs.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- Wheelchair accessible passenger vehicles
- Communications equipment
- Purchase and installation of bus shelters or other amenities
- Operating Assistance

Next Steps/Washington State Consolidated Grant Program

The following table illustrates the projected levels of funding for these four programs through Washington State’s Consolidated Grant Program over the next three years. Actual future funding is subject to annual Congressional appropriations.

Figure 10 State of Washington Funding Sources/Amounts

Fund Source	2007	2008	2009
JARC	2,613,574	2,831,372	2,985,645
New Freedom	1,638,596	1,770,089	1,871,237
Elderly/Disabled Section 5310	2,211,542	2,401,029	2,524,195
Non-urbanized Section 5311	8,326,580	9,005,759	9,518,815
TOTAL	\$14,790,272	\$16,008,249	\$16,899,892

Grants for the upcoming funding cycle will be determined according to the following schedule and process:

Figure 11 State of Washington Consolidated Grant Program Timeframe

Activity	Timeframe
Completion/adoption of Benton-Franklin-Walla Walla Coordinated Plan	November 2006
WSDOT issues Call for Projects for Consolidated Grant Program	November 2006
Project Advisory Committee reviews and ranks applications submitted from 3 county area	December 2006
Applications due to WSDOT accompanied with prioritized local rankings ⁹	January 2007
WSDOT selects projects and assigns appropriate fund source	Spring 2007

Adoption of this plan will be considered by the BFCOG Policy Board in November. In December (or 2-3 weeks prior to the deadline established by WSDOT for submittal of applications), the Project Advisory Committee will review all applications to be submitted to WSDOT and rank them by applying prioritization criteria already agreed upon by the Committee.

⁹ Recent guidance from WSDOT staff indicates that regional rankings may consist of “categories” A, B,C and D to represent high, medium, low and not recommended, with up to four projects in each category.

Prioritization Criteria

1. Project meets documented need

The project should directly address transportation gaps or barriers identified through the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. The project should clearly state the overall program goals and objectives, and demonstrate how it will meet a specified need. Specifically, scorers should consider whether the project:

- Provides service in geographic area with limited transportation options
- Serves geographic area where the greatest number of people need a service
- Improves the mobility of clientele subject to state and federal funding sources (i.e. low-income, elderly, persons with disabilities)
- Provides a level of service not currently provided with existing resources
- Preserves and protects existing services

WEIGHT: 60%

2. Project is cost effective

The application should indicate how many trips (or other units of service) will be provided with the new funds. For capital projects, applicant must provide a solid rationale for requesting the funds, and describe that no other sources of funds are available for this purpose. The project application should provide a clearly defined budget, indicating project expenditures and revenues, including required matching funds, if any. Specifically, scorers should consider whether it:

- Services the maximum number of people for the least money
- Results in efficient use of available resources
- Maximizes use of funds for direct service
- Has the potential to be sustained beyond the grant period

WEIGHT: 20%

3. Project Oversight/Coordination

Applicants should provide a well-defined service operations plan and describe implementation steps and timelines for carrying out the plan. Project sponsors should demonstrate their institutional capability to carry out the service as described. Applicants should describe their ability to coordinate with other community transportation and/or social service resources. Project sponsors should identify project stakeholders, and how they will keep stakeholders involved and informed about the project activities. Specifically, scorers should consider whether the project:

- If applicable, builds on and supports existing services and does not duplicate services
- Involves participation of local human service and transportation stakeholders
- Demonstrates institutional and fiscal capacity to carry out the project
- Leverages funding from various partnerships (i.e. local match, if required)

WEIGHT: 20%

Conclusion/Next Steps

This report was completed to fulfill federal planning requirements established through the passage of SAFETEA-LU in August 2005. Initial guidance regarding the development of such plans was published by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in the Federal Register on March 15, 2006. Subsequently, additional guidance was published on September 6, 2006¹⁰ which clarifies FTA's expectations for the coordinated plan as follows:

"FTA proposes that a coordinated plan includes the following elements:

- (a) An assessment of available services that identifies current providers (public, private, and nonprofit);
- (b) An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes. This assessment may be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service;
- (c) Strategies and/or activities to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
- (d) Relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies/activities identified."

This plan fulfills those expectations, and also serves as documentation of local efforts to identify and prioritize transportation service gaps, and to suggest potential solutions and strategies. Potential funding to implement these strategies will be forthcoming in the upcoming competitive grant process sponsored by WSDOT, whereby numerous grants throughout the state will be awarded as authorized through SAFETEA-LU, as well as other local state funds dedicated to the program.

A Call for Projects to solicit such projects is expected to be issued by WSDOT in November, with applications due to the state in January 2007. Each region is also expected to accompany the applications with a ranked order of projects deemed most important to address the identified needs. Responsibility for this task has been delegated to the local Project Steering Committee, which will meet in December to apply the agreed upon criteria and reach consensus on the overall ranking to be submitted to the State.

Project participants may choose to build upon the stakeholder collaboration developed through this planning process to periodically review and revise the list of project gaps and potential strategies, and to discuss other opportunities to enhance service coordination throughout the region. At a minimum, because the State's funding cycle is repeated every on a biennial basis, those findings will need to be revisited in two years.

¹⁰ Federal Register, September 6, 2006, Volume 1, Number 172, page 52617

APPENDIX A

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

APPENDIX B

Persons with Disabilities & Persons 65 & Over with Disability

Place	Total Population*	Total Population with a Disability	Percentage of Population w/ disability	Total Population 65 and over w/disability	Percentage of persons 65 and over w/disability
Washington	5,395,395	1,197,765	22%	487,214	9%
Benton County	131,108	23,730	18%	6,082	5%
Franklin County	43,695	9,107	21%	1,722	4%
Walla Walla County	49,024	10,292	21%	3,609	7%
Basin City CDP	719	287	40%	12	2%
Benton City city	2,343	449	19%	107	5%
Burbank CDP	3,160	619	20%	80	3%
College Place city	7,122	1,486	21%	579	8%
Connell city	2,175	431	20%	91	4%
Dixie CDP	210	35	17%	20	10%
Finley CDP	5,261	1,348	26%	250	5%
Garrett CDP	899	230	26%	98	11%
Highland CDP	3,053	517	17%	118	4%
Kahlotus city	239	67	28%	9	4%
Kennewick city	50,030	9,194	18%	2,301	5%
Mesa city	381	93	24%	13	3%
Pasco city	28,210	6,573	23%	1,186	4%
Prescott town	279	82	29%	14	5%
Prosser city	4,256	786	18%	215	5%
Richland city	36,045	5,814	16%	1,881	5%
Touchet CDP	369	70	19%	21	6%
Waitsburg city	1,147	243	21%	102	9%
Walla Walla Ccity	25,520	5,720	22%	2,039	8%
Walla Walla East CDP	2,236	461	21%	243	11%
Wallula CDP	209	47	22%	19	9%
West Pasco CDP	4,518	725	16%	209	5%
West Richland city	7,777	1,198	15%	198	3%

Source: 2000 US Census

Population 65 and Over Living Below Poverty

Area	Total population 65 and over	Population 65 and over for whom poverty status is determined	Population 65 and over living below federal poverty level	Percentage 65 and over living below federal poverty level	Population 65 and over at or above federal poverty level	Percentage 65 and over living at or above federal poverty level
Washington	662,162	639,648	47,967	7%	591,681	93%
Benton County	14,662	14,394	994	7%	13,400	93%
Franklin County	4,157	4,040	310	7%	3,730	92%
Walla Walla County	8,116	7,883	645	8%	7,238	92%
Basin City CDP	41	0	0	0%	41	100%
Benton City city	201	201	4	2%	197	98%
Burbank CDP	206	0	0	0%	206	100%
College Place city	1,322	1,194	91	7%	1,103	92%
Connell city	177	177	17	10%	160	90%
Dixie CDP	51	0	0	0%	51	100%
Finley CDP	509	509	43	8%	466	92%
Garrett CDP	186	186	10	5%	176	95%
Highland CDP	244	244	2	1%	242	99%
Kahlotus city	17	0	0	0%	17	100%
Kennewick city	5,395	5,235	455	8%	4,780	91%
Mesa city	18	0	0	0%	18	100%
Pasco city	2,660	2,543	243	9%	2,300	90%
Prescott town	29	29	3	10%	26	90%
Prosser city	573	538	14	2%	524	97%
Richland city	5,066	5,012	283	6%	4,729	94%
Touchet CDP	37	37	10	27%	27	73%
Waitsburg city	209	209	21	10%	188	90%
Walla Walla city	4,492	4,421	464	10%	3,957	90%
Walla Walla East CDP	451	417	11	2%	406	97%
Wallula CDP	38	0	0	0%	38	100%
West Pasco CDP	632	632	13	2%	619	98%
West Richland city	509	509	34	7%	475	93%

Source: 2000 US Census

*Federal Poverty standards as defined by US Census

APPENDIX C

Ben Franklin Transit Fixed Route Service

Route	Major Stops	Service Hours	Frequency
Route 20- Richland Local	Knight Street Transit Center/Williams & Wright	M-F 6:15 am-7:05 pm Sat 8:15 am 6:35 pm	30 Peak 60 Midday 60 (Saturday)
Route 23- Richland Local	Knight Street Transit Center/Stevens Center/Newcomer & Pike	M-F 6:15 am-7:08 pm Sat 8:45am -7:08 pm	30 Peak 60 Midday 60 (Saturday)
Route 24- Richland Local	Knight Street Transit Center/Catskill & Stevens	M-F 6:15 am- 7:06 pm Sat 8:45am -7:06 pm	30 Peak 60 Midday 60 (Saturday)
Route 26- Richland Local	Knight Street Transit Center/WSU Tri-Cities/ Spengler & Davison	M-F 6:15 am- 7:07 pm Sat 8:15am -6:37 pm	30 Weekdays 60 Saturday
Route 39- Richland Local	Knight Street Transit Center/Three Rivers Transit Center	M-F 5:40 am- 7:03 pm Sat 8:15am-7:03	30 Weekdays 60 Saturday
Route 42- Kennewick Local	Three Rivers Transit Center/Dayton Transfer Point	M-F 6:00am- 6:45 pm Sat 8:00am -6:45 pm	30 Weekdays 60 Saturday
Route 45- Kennewick Local	Huntington Transit Center/Dayton Transfer Point	M-F 6:00am- 6:50 pm Sat 8:00am -6:20 pm	30 Weekdays 60 Saturday
Route 46- Kennewick Local	Huntington Transit Center/Dayton Transfer Point	M-F 6:00am- 6:52 pm Sat 8:00am -6:52 pm	30 Peak 60 Midday 60 Saturday
Route 47- Kennewick Local	Huntington Transit Center/Dayton Transfer Point	M-F 6:00am- 6:48 pm Sat 8:00am -6:48 pm	30 Peak 60 Midday 60 Saturday
Route 48- Kennewick Local	Dayton Transfer Point/Three Rivers Transit Center	M-F 6:00am- 6:48 pm Sat 8:00am -6:48 pm	30 Peak 60 Midday 60 Saturday
Route 49- Kennewick Local	Huntington Transit Center/Dayton Transfer Point	M-F 6:00am- 6:51 pm Sat 8:00am -6:51 pm	30 Peak 60 Midday 60 Saturday
Route 50- Kennewick Local	Three Rivers Transit Center/Tapteal Loop Shuttle	M-F 6:00am- 6:47 pm Sat 8:00am -6:47 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday
Route 52- Kennewick Local	Three Rivers Transit Center/Colonade Loop Shuttle	M-F 6:00am- 6:49 pm Sat 8:00am -6:49 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday
Route 55- Kennewick Local (Summer Only)	Columbia Park Shuttle - Three Rivers Transit Center/Dayton Transfer Point via Playground of Dreams	M-F 8:00am- 6:22 pm Sat 8:30am -6:48 pm	60 Weekdays 60 Saturday
Rte	Major Stops	Service Hours	Frequency
Route 60- Pasco Local	22nd Avenue Transit Center/7th & Marie	M-F 6:15 am- 7:10 pm Sat 8:29 am -7:10 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday

Route	Major Stops	Service Hours	Frequency
Route 62- Pasco Local	22nd Avenue Transit Center/5th & Columbia	M-F 6:15 am- 7:10 pm Sat 8:29 am -7:10 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday
Route 64 - Pasco Local	22nd Avenue Transit Center/Alton & Elm	M-F 6:15 am- 7:06 pm Sat 8:15 am -7:06 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday
Route 65- Pasco Local	22nd Avenue Transit Center/Elm & Lewis	M-F 6:15 am- 7:09 pm Sat 8:15 am -7:09 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday
Route 66- Pasco Local	22nd Avenue Transit Center/Road 88	M-F 6:15 am- 7:12 pm Sat 8:15 am -7:12 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday
Route 67- Pasco Local	22nd Avenue Transit Center/Desert Plateau	M-F 6:15 am- 7:05 pm Sat 8:15 am-7:00 pm	30 Weekdays 60 Saturday
Route 120- Inter City	West Richland/Richland/Kennewick/Pasco	M-F 5:58 am- 7:15 pm Sat 7:58 am-7:00 pm	30 Weekdays 30 Saturday
Route 160 - Inter City	Pasco/Richland	M-F 6:00 am- 7:05 pm Sat 8:15 am -7:00 pm	30 Weekdays 60 Saturday
Route 170 - Inter City	Prosser/Benton City/Tri-Cities	M-F 5:37 am- 8:52 pm Sat 7:37am -8:52 pm	120 Weekdays 120 Saturday
Route 225 - Inter City	Pasco/Richland	M-F 6:15 am- 7:09 pm Sat 8:45 am -7:09 pm	30 Weekdays 60 Saturday

Source: <http://www.bft.org/routes/>

Ben Franklin Fare Structure

The adult fare for Ben Franklin Transit Fixed route is \$0.85, the youth fare (high school age and under) is \$0.55, seniors (age 60 and over) and children five and under ride for free when accompanied by an adult. A reduced fare of \$0.35 is available for persons with disabilities. A 10-Ride Ticket book is available for \$4.00 for adults, and \$2.00 for Youth and persons with disabilities. A monthly pass is also available for \$14.75 for adults and \$7.50 for youth and persons with disabilities. An All Day Pass (Any Age) is available for \$2.25. A Summer Youth Pass is available for \$15.00. College Students pay the same adult fare (\$0.85) and 10-Ride Ticket (\$4.00), but receive a discounted monthly pass (\$10.75) than the regular adult monthly pass (\$14.75). The fare for the Dial-A-Ride service is \$0.85 per trip. A rider can also purchase a 10-Ride Ticket book for \$4.00, or a monthly pass for \$14.75.

Valley Transit Fixed Route Service

Route	Major Stops	Service Hours	Frequency
Route 1-Mainline	TC- WWCC-Walmart	M-F 6:15 am-5:45 pm	30 minutes
East Loop Evenings/Saturday	TC- WWCC-TC	M-F 5:45 - 9:10 pm Sat 12:15 – 6:10 pm	45 minutes 45 minutes
West Loop Evenings/ Saturday	Transfer Center- Walmart-TC	M-F 5:45 -8:40 pm Sat 12:15-6:10 pm	45 minutes 45 minutes
Route 2- College Place Circulator	Walmart- 4 th College- Walmart	M-F 6:33 am- 5:27 pm	30 minutes
Route 3- 2 nd Ave/ WA-Hi	TC-WA-HI-TC	M-F 6:15 am- 5:45 pm	30 minutes
Route 4- Melrose/Alder	TC- K-Mart-TC	M-F 6:15 am- 5:45 pm	30 minutes
Route 5- Fairgrounds	TC-Plaza Shop- TC	M-F 6:15 am-5:45 pm	30 minutes
Route 7- Pleasant St Loop	TC-School & Pleasant-TC	M-F 6:45 am-5:15 pm	60 minutes
Route 9- Pine Street Loop	TC- State Pen-TC	M-F 6:15am -5:45 pm	60 minutes

Valley Transit Fare Structure

The cash fare for Valley Transit is \$0.50, and children under 5 ride free when accompanied by an adult. Ticket booklets for ten one-way trips can be purchased in \$5.00 increments, and a monthly pass is also available for \$20.00. Transfers are free between routes. Valley Transit also provides Job Access transportation on for those that are eligible on a pre-scheduled basis.

APPENDIX D

SOCIAL SERVICE TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER INVENTORY SUMMARY RESULTS AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT