

Section Eight: Strategies to Address Identified Needs & Gaps in Service

Below is a list of strategies that help address the identified needs and/or gaps in services. However, these strategies are not supposed to represent a final collection and it is hoped that additional ideas surface as the coordination and collaboration processes continue. As an adopted study, this list does not represent an agreed upon list of projects or service to be funded by local government. Collectively, this list exceeds available financial resources.

1. Provide additional, affordable, and accessible service.
 - Expand CAC, KAT, and ETHRA services.
 - Provide a mix of transit services and vehicle types that can provide a more efficient transportation service.
 - Provide enough demand response transit service so it can be used for more than just medical trips.
 - Make sure services are affordable to the passenger.
 - Provide shorter wait times for return trips on demand response transportation.
 - Provide same day service reservations for demand response trips.
 - Examine ways to coordinate transfers between the demand response services and the KAT fixed route system.
 - Provide transportation to many of the industrial parks where more skilled and higher paying jobs are located.
 - Provide later service and very early morning service so workers can take a variety of shifts.
 - Provide additional transportation services targeting employment opportunities to areas where higher concentrations of low-income or subsidized housing is located.
 - Provide a twenty-four-hour emergency transportation service to accommodate persons who have an unexpected disruption in their usual mode of travel.
 - Provide capital funding to human services transportation providers and non-profits to help purchase vehicles (mini-buses and vans) to support transporting their clients.
 - Provide operating funding to human service transportation agencies or non-profits to create and support volunteer assisted driver programs.
 - Provide operating funding to human service transportation agencies or non-profits that develop specialized services targeting the needs of seniors, people who are disabled, and people of low-incomes.
 - Explore ways to develop public/private sector partnerships that could fill the gaps in accessible transportation services, complement existing services, and assist in the development of new forms/designs of mobility options.
 - Explore ways to expand the use of private transportation options to provide additional capacity. This could include, but is not limited to, subsidy vouchers or contracts to help provide first mile-last miles transportation to connect with public transit.
 - Explore ways to introduce wheelchair accessible taxis, Ubers, Lyfts, or other private transportation options.

2. Educate citizens about the availability of transit services.
 - Create a centralized source of information that can be accessed by one phone number.
 - Create Transportation Services in Knoxville Urban Area website.
 - Help transit agencies implement new technology including smartphone apps to help make accessing information or rides easier.
 - Help prepare more standard information, including a variety of print information, in accessible formats since not all seniors, people with disabilities, and people of low-income have access to smartphones or the internet.
 - Expand on KAT's Ride to Wellness program or use it as a model to create additional educational programs for potential riders, medical staff, and counselors about the availability of transit services.
 - Establish a regional program that would help educate new riders about area transit options, policies, and the intricacies of riding them.
 - Have case managers who would work one-on-one with passengers to help them arrange or understand how to use transit services.
 - Have escorts or travel trainers who, for a limited time, will personally accompany a passenger to help them better understand how to use transit services.
3. Create greater access to transit by providing infrastructure and amenities such as sidewalks, shelters, signs, and bike facilities.
 - Inform local, state, and federal representatives about the need to provide additional infrastructure such as, sidewalks, bike lanes, shelters, and signs to allow more access to transit.
 - Advocate stronger development requirements to include sidewalks and, if appropriate, transit amenities and bike lanes along new roads and developments to promote pedestrian and bike travel and easier connections to transit.
4. Coordinate and increase efficiency.
 - Add or share technology to help create a more conducive coordination environment.
 - Increase efficiency of transportation agencies staff through training and technology to better handle passenger needs.
 - Prepare a study that examines ways to improve coordination among the region's transit services.
 - Encourage additional training to transit providers to assist with better understanding and to be more sensitive of passengers – especially seniors and people with disabilities. Create a regional training program.