

**CHAPTER CONTENTS**

- Sioux City Transit System
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Chapter 4: Transit Services focuses on the current and future state of the two primary public agencies operating within the SIMPCO MPO, Sioux City Transit System (SCTS) and Siouxland Regional Transit System (SRTS). SRTS is sub-contracted by SCTS to provide Federal Transit Authority (FTA) required paratransit services. The SIMPCO MPO reviews the goals of the transit system, examines the current conditions of the transit system, proposes safety and security improvements of the transit system, and plans for future public transit needs and projects. The data provided in this chapter is derived from transit route studies, surveys, performance measures, National Transit Database (NTD) annual reports, and operational analysis.

**SIoux CITY TRANSIT SYSTEM**

Fixed route public transit in the SIMPCO MPO planning area is provided by the SCTS. SCTS was formed in 1969 when the City of Sioux City purchased the failed Sioux City Lines, Inc. SCTS is administered by the Assistant City Manager, who reports to the City Manager. The City Council approves recommendations on policy and budgets for the Assistant City Manager and the Transit Advisory Board. Currently, SCTS employs forty-three employees, including both full-time and part-time positions.

SCTS facilities are comprised of the Martin Luther King Jr. Ground Transportation Center (MLK Center) and a separate maintenance & storage facility. The MLK Center is located on Nebraska Street between 5th Street and 6th Street. It serves as the transfer center for the SCTS, as the system allows for each bus to be there every hour at twenty-minutes after. This center is also comprised of transit administrative and dispatcher offices, the Jefferson Lines ticket office, and a parking ramp that accommodates over 400 vehicles. The center has access to the skywalk system connection to the Orpheum Theatre and Frances Building. The current SCTS bus system features 450 bus stops along ten fixed routes. There are 36 bus shelters along its fixed routes as well.



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

Map 4.1 shows the SCTS routes. There are ten routes (depicted in bright blue) that cover 4 of the 7 MPO planning area member cities: Sioux City and Sergeant Bluff, Iowa, North Sioux City, South Dakota, and South Sioux City, Nebraska. It is beneficial to examine the walking distance from transit routes, as most riders will be walking from their origin to the bus stops, and then walking again from the bus stops to their destinations. Based on walkability and livability trends, a ten minute, or ¼-mile walk is a good estimate of walking access to any location. Using this distance, the transit system’s routes were buffered by ¼-mile, to create the “walking zone” of the system, which is the light blue line on Map 4.1. Using this in combination with 2010 US Census Data, the Sioux City Transit system services ~81% of persons in the MPO planning area. When looking only at the 4 jurisdictions serviced by Sioux City Transit, 88.4% of the population living there has access to the transit routes.

**Table 4.1: Approximate number of people served by Sioux City Transit in both the MPO planning area, and the 4 cities that provide transit service.**

Area	Persons served	Total Population	Percent
MPO Planning Area	94,451	116,519	81.0%
Serviced Communities	92,626	104,788	88.4%

\*Source: 2010 US Census

Overall, based on a simple GIS overlay analysis of population and employee/places of employment counts within the ¼- mile walking access buffer; it seems that the coverage of the SCTS is adequate for the MPO planning area. The MPO planning area’s geography creates gaps between certain major employers and the Census urbanized boundary. Due to this, there will always be a percentage of the population and workforce that cannot reach their destination by transit. There have been public/private partnerships between Tyson Foods in South Sioux City, Seaboard Triumph in Sioux City, and various businesses in North Sioux City, where the businesses have provided funds for SCTS to provide service to their locations. This is a viable option for any employer that does not currently have transit access.



**SIoux CITY TRANSIT SYSTEM EXISTING CONDITIONS**

**ROUTES**

SCTS currently operates 10 fixed bus routes during peak service, and 7 additional school tripper routes under contract for the Sioux City Community School District. School transportation by SCTS reduces the amount of students, decreases the costs, and improves the efficiency for the school district’s bus fleet, benefiting all regional tax payers.



All SCTS vehicles and the Martin Luther King Jr. Ground Transportation Center meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). SCTS operates from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with no service on Sundays or six major holidays. The South Sioux City Route (#9) does not operate on Saturdays.

**FARES**

Sioux City Transit has a variable fare structure. Discounts are provided for students, residents 62 years of age and older, people with disabilities, and children (Table 4.2). Fares may be paid in cash, a paper one-ride token, weekly punch tickets (10 punches), and monthly passes. Transfers are free if used on the same trip within the same day. Transfers are requested upon initial boarding and at the MLK Center. Transfers, children under 5, and veterans with a VA documented service-connected disability with VA photo ID ride free.

**Table 4.2: SCTS Fare Structure**

TICKET TYPE	FORM	COST
<b>Tokens</b>	Single	\$1.80
	20	\$31.00
<b>Adults</b>	Cash	\$1.80
	Monthly Pass	\$48.00
	10-Ride Punch Ticket	\$18.00
<b>Youth/Student</b>	Youth Cash	\$1.55
	10-Ride Punch Ticket	\$15.50
<b>Senior Citizen/ Medicare Cardholder/ Disability</b>	Cash	\$0.90
	Monthly Pass	\$42.00
	10-Ride Punch Ticket	\$9.00

Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2020.

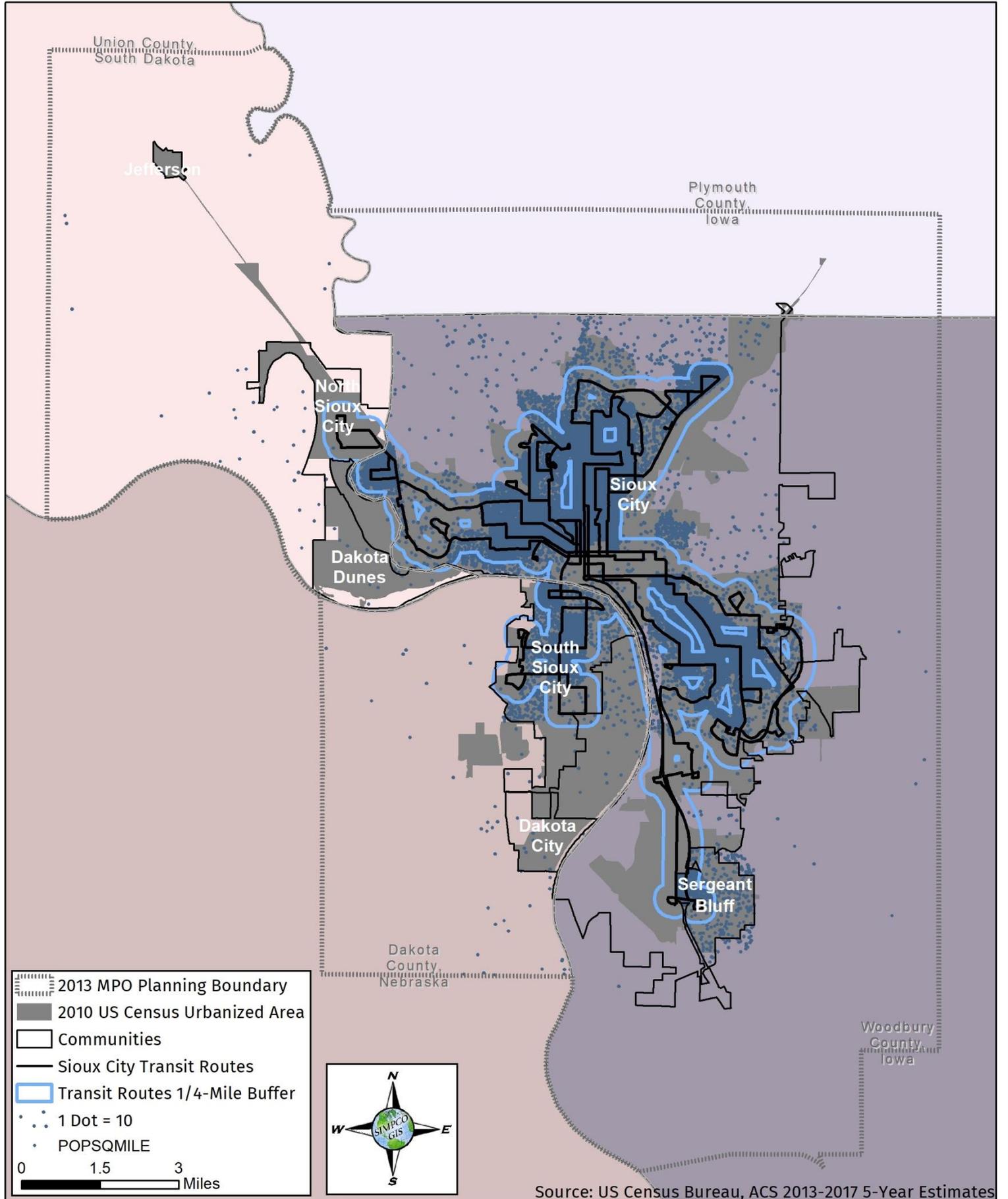


Map 4.1

**SIMPCO MPO**

**Transit Routes and 1/4-Mile Walking Buffer**

There are 10 transit routes that run through the MPO planning area. The route coverage seems to be adequate, when comparing the population density, to the routes, and the routes' 1/4-mile buffer around the routes, which indicates the walkable distance to and from the route.

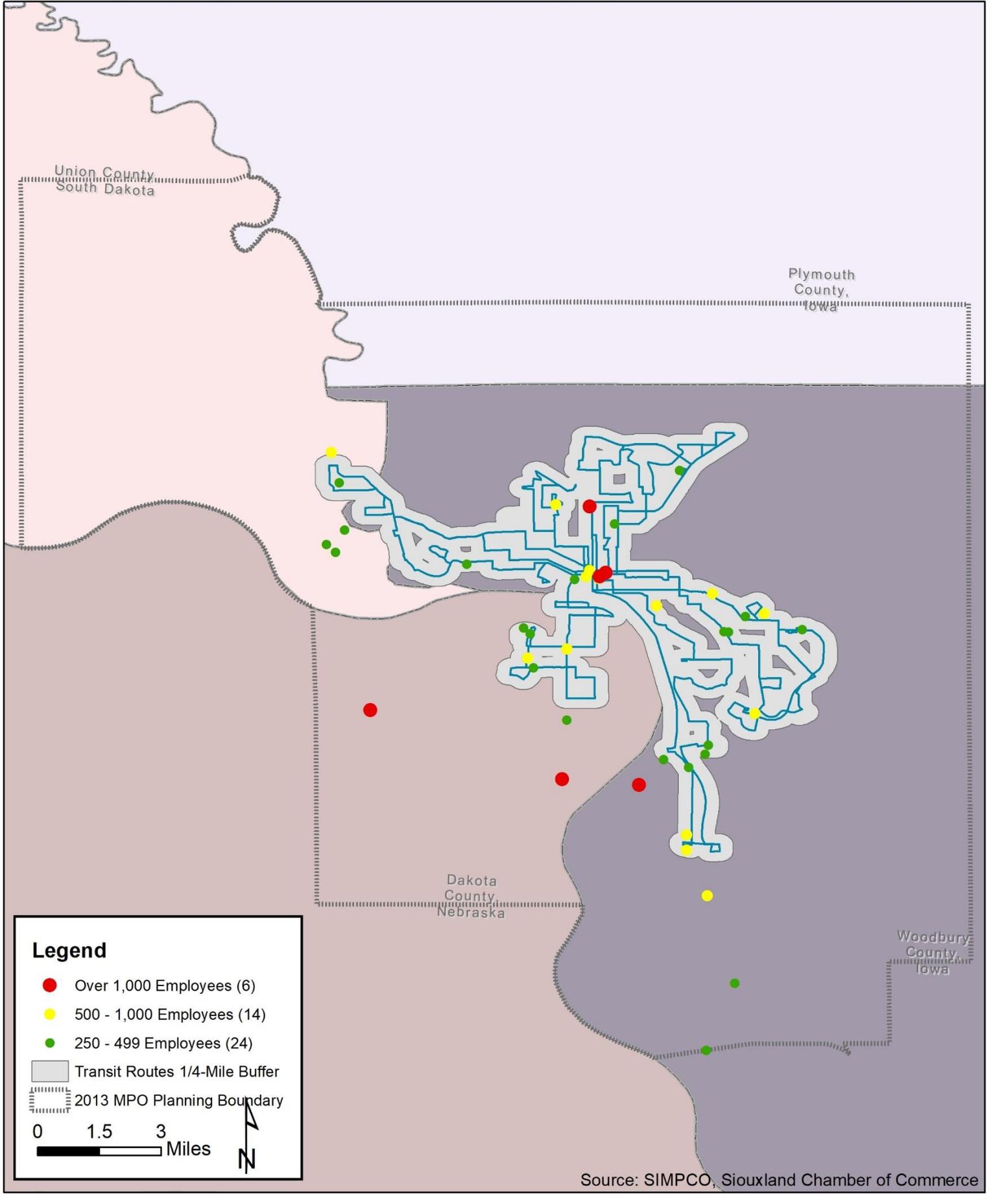


Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2013-2017 5-Year Estimates

Map 4.2

**SIMPCO MPO**

**Places of Employment with 250 or More Employees**



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

### FLEET

SCTS's fixed route fleet consists of 29 active vehicles. About one-third of SCTS's fleet, 11 vehicles, is greater than or equal to the federal replacement threshold of fourteen years/500,000 miles (Table 4.3). Previously, a portion of the bus fleet had been comprised of used buses procured from California for school tripper routes and backup. Bus replacement in Iowa must adhere to the Public Transit Management System (PTMS) which uses age, miles, and ridership to rank all Iowa public transit vehicles for capital grant funding. With the current federal capital funding appropriation for Iowa and surrounding rural states, around \$2 million, getting a bus replaced is very slow. Iowa DOT has been adding a portion of the Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program, about \$3 million per year, to the current capital funding appropriation. SCTS buses have not been funded for several years. In FY 2019, SCTS was awarded eight heavy duty replacement buses through the PTMS System and IDOT award of FTA competitive Grant funding (Section 5339 Bus & Bus Facilities Grant). Replacement vehicles will be delivered in late 2021 or 2022.

**Table 4.3: Bus Fleet**

	Property ID Number	MFG. Year	Model	In Service Date	Acquisition Type		Seating Capacity	FY2019 Total Mileage	Federal Replacement Threshold
					New Used Ordered	Cost			
1	1097	2004	HD 35' Low Floor	2/6/2004	New	\$264,151	32/2	619,054	12yr / 500,000 mi.
2	1300	2004	HD 35' Low Floor	8/12/2004	New	\$266,964	32/2	609,957	12yr / 500,000 mi.
3	1301	2004	HD 35' Low Floor	8/12/2004	New	\$266,964	32/2	622,446	12yr / 500,000 mi.
4	1302	2004	HD 35' Low Floor	8/12/2004	New	\$266,964	32/2	648,716	12yr / 500,000 mi.
5	1324	2011	MD 31' Low Floor	3/11/2010	New	\$192,302	19/2	96,334	7yr / 200,000 mi.
6	1325	2011	MD 31' Low Floor	3/11/2010	New	\$192,302	19/3	95,335	7yr / 200,000 mi.
7	1326	2011	MD 31' Low Floor	10/12/2011	New	\$213,126	19/3	86,395	7yr / 200,000 mi.
8	1330	2006	35' Low Floor	6/12/2006	New	\$283,864	32/2	610,172	12yr / 500,000 mi.
9	1331	2007	35' Low Floor	7/7/2007	New	\$288,906	32/2	527,155	12yr / 500,000 mi.
10	1332	2009	35' Low Floor	6/9/2009	New	\$311,501	32/2	422,008	12yr / 500,000 mi.
11	1338	2009	35' Low Floor	6/9/2009	New	\$316,887	32/2	438,688	12yr / 500,000 mi.
12	1339	2010	35' Low Floor	8/12/2010	New	\$332,398	32/2	350,926	12yr / 500,000 mi.
13	1340	2010	35' Low Floor	8/13/2010	New	\$332,398	32/2	354,738	12yr / 500,000 mi.
14	1341	2012	40' Low Floor	8/31/2012	New	\$347,456	39/2	261,828	12yr / 500,000 mi.
15	1343	2000	40' HD - D40LF	8/27/2013	Used	\$53,500	37/2	660,837	6yr / 250,000 mi
16	1345	2000	40' HD - D40LF	8/31/2015	Used	\$58,555	37/2	713,739	6yr / 250,000 mi
17	1350	2003	HD 40' Low Floor	8/31/2015	Used	\$58,555	37/2	48,615	6yr / 250,000 mi
18	1351	2003	HD 40' Low Floor	9/1/2015	Used	\$58,555	37/2	32,675	6yr / 250,000 mi
19	1352	2005	HD 40' Low Floor	7/25/2016	Used	\$68,565	40/2	361,326	6yr / 250,000 mi
20	1353	2002	HD 40' Low Floor	7/25/2016	Used	\$68,565	40/2	118,753	6yr / 250,000 mi
21	1354	2002	HD 40' Low Floor	9/11/2017	New	\$404,703	40/2	454,155	6yr / 250,000 mi
22	1359	2017	HD 35' Low Floor	11/20/2017	New	\$404,703	40/2	70,807	12yr / 500,000 mi.
23	1360	2017	HD 35' Low Floor	11/20/2017	New	\$404,703	40/2	57,477	12yr / 500,000 mi.
24	1361	2018	MD 30' LF Enviro 200	9/17/2018	New	\$338,711	19/3	7,047	10yr / 350,000 mi.
25	1363	2018	HD 40' Low Floor	Dec. 2018	New	\$419,506	40/2	17,690	12yr / 500,000 mi.
26	1364	2018	HD 40' Low Floor	Dec. 2018	New	\$419,506	40/2	13,729	12yr / 500,000 mi.
27	1365	2018	HD 40' Low Floor	Dec. 2018	New	\$419,506	40/2	13,953	12yr / 500,000 mi.
28	1369	2019	HD 35' Low Floor	Oct. 2019	New	\$417,407	32/2	N/A	12yr / 500,000 mi.
29	1370	2019	HD 35' Low Floor	Oct. 2019	New	\$417,407	32/2	N/A	12yr / 500,000 mi.
30	1373	2020	MD 30' LF Enviro 200	11/17/2020	New	N/A	19/3	N/A	N/A
31	1374	2021	HD 35' Low Floor	Ordered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
32	1374	2021	HD 35' Low Floor	Ordered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
33	1374	2021	HD 35' Low Floor	Ordered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
34	1374	2021	HD 35' Low Floor	Ordered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
35	1374	2021	HD 35' Low Floor	Ordered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
36	1374	2021	HD 35' Low Floor	Ordered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
37	1374	2021	HD 35' Low Floor	Ordered	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

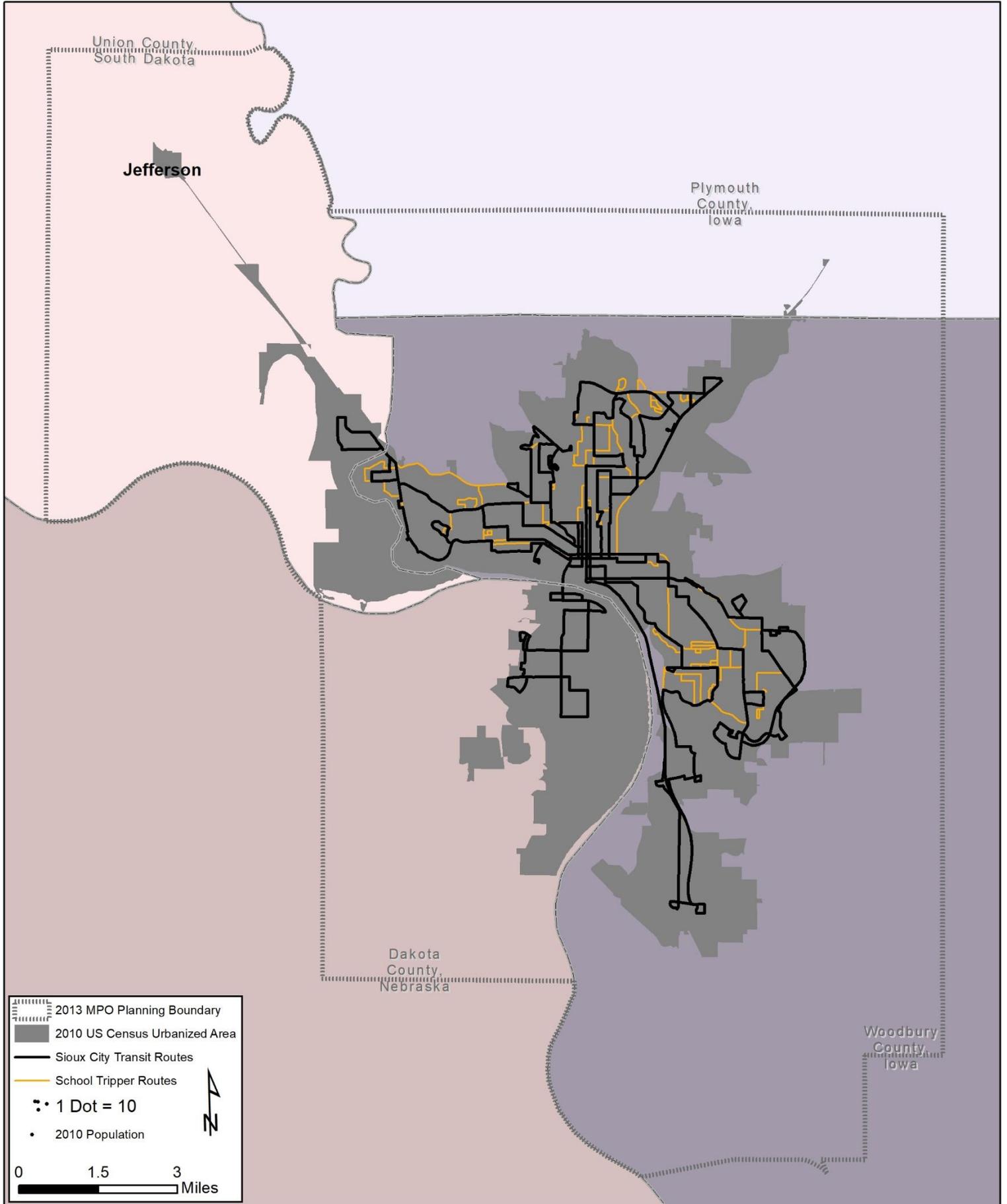
Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2019\* highlighted vehicles were reported as not active



**SIMPCO MPO**

**Transit and School Tripper Routes**

There are 8 school tripper transit routes that run in Sioux City, supplementing the Sioux City Community Schools District's school bus routes.

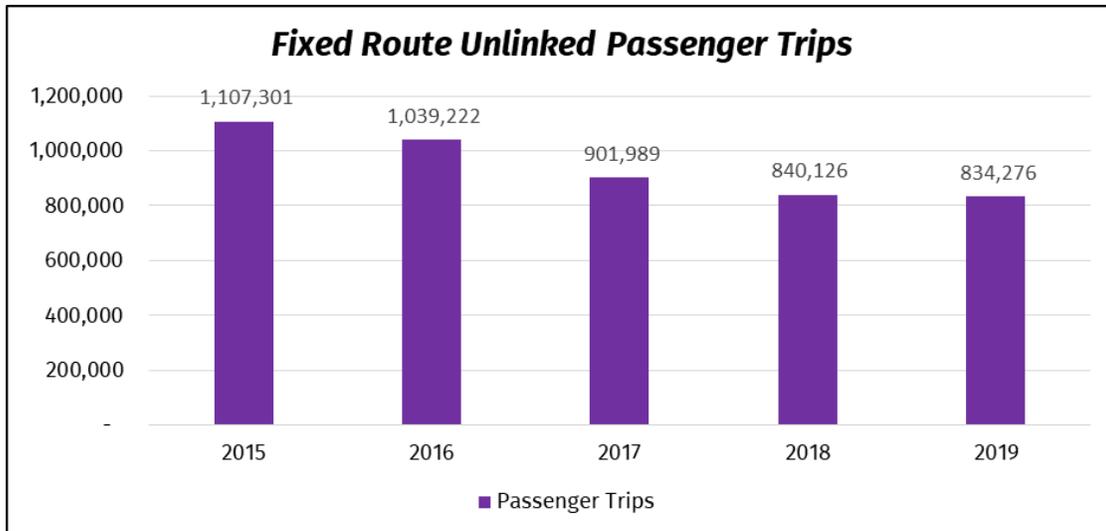


## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

### RIDERSHIP

Currently, there are 10 fixed routes with 7 additional buses serving school Tripper Routes based on the same fixed routes. As shown in the chart 4.1, there has been a significant decrease of passenger trips from 2017-2019. This is due to fewer school contracts for student riders, changing economic conditions where bus routes either do not serve business locations, or businesses have laid off workers. Some decline arose because of Uber and Lyft ridesharing services. In addition, there have been increases in car registrations which allow people more freedom compared to public transit. These trends predate the COVID-19 Virus Pandemic, but COVID-19 will impact passenger trips in 2020.

**Chart 4.1: SCTS Unlinked Passenger Trips**



Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2019

### REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

Revenues and expenditures for operations include general administration, vehicle, equipment & facility maintenance, MLK Center & parking ramp, and the paratransit services. Table 4.4 gives a revenue summary of the FY 2019 for Sioux City Transit System. Vehicle operation represented the largest portion of the operating expense at 58% followed with paratransit at 20.1%.

**Table 4.4: FY 2019 Revenue & Expenditure Summary**

REVENUES			EXPENDITURES		
Revenue Source	Amount	% of Budget	Department	Amount	% of Budget
Total Fixed Route Income	\$1,339,124	25.5%	Administration	\$288,647	5.3%
Paratransit Revenues	\$160,691	3.1%	Operation	\$3,170,110	58.0%
IDOT Operating Subsidy	\$355,356	6.8%	Maintenance	\$623,905	11.4%
Transit Property Tax Levy	\$1,813,764	34.6%	MLK Center	\$276,524	5.1%
Federal Operating Grant	\$1,573,836	30.0%	Paratransit	\$1,095,837	20.1%
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,503,462</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,464,178</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Federal Capital Grant	\$48,757	0.9%			
State Capital Grant	\$0	0.0%			
<b>Total Capital Revenue</b>	<b>\$48,757</b>	<b>0.9%</b>			

Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2019



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Diversity index

Map 4.4 shows the Diversity Index of the MPO planning area. The diversity index shows the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different racial or ethnic groups. The index ranges from 0 (no diversity) to 100 (complete diversity). Diversity in the U.S. population is increasing, and the score for the entire United States was 64 in 2018. Local diversity scores revealed that Dakota City and South Sioux City have the greatest amount of diversity. SCTS seems to be providing adequate service to areas with the greatest diversity amongst MPO planning area.



Poverty Ratio

Map 4.5 shows the poverty ratio (households above to households below) for the MPO planning area. The poverty ratio dataset compares the number of households living above the poverty line to the number of households living below. Based on this dataset, Sioux City has a significant number of Census block groups with a low ratio (Less than 7:1) of households living above to households living below the poverty line. Nearly the entire network of SCTS's routes cover census block groups with a low ratio.

Population 65 Years or Older

Map 4.6 shows the population distribution of persons who are 65 years of age and older. Based on this dataset, major concentrations of residents 65 years of age and older reside in the Morningside and Northside neighborhoods of Sioux City. There are quite a few assisted living facilities in these census block groups, which could be contributing to this pattern. SCTS does appear to be providing adequate to the Morningside and Northside neighborhood as well as other areas with major concentrations in the MPO planning area, including the west side neighborhoods of Sioux City.



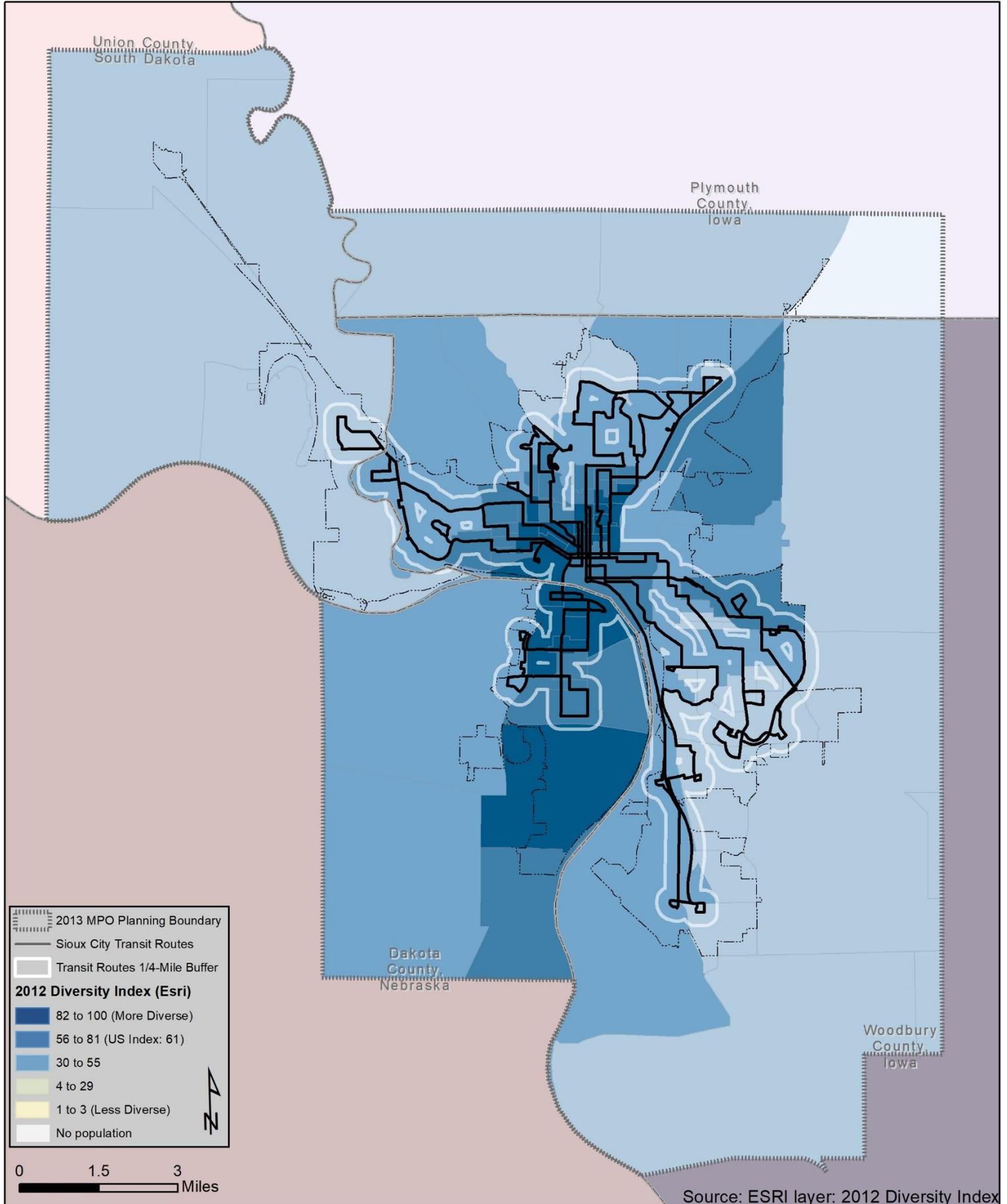
Population's Median Age

Map 4.7 shows the population's median age distribution. This map is important because of the national and even global trend of an increased desire to have the option of using public transit instead of a personal vehicle, particularly for persons between 18 and 65 years of age. SCTS appears to be doing well in providing adequate service to all age groups, especially areas with a median age younger than 35 and older than 43 years old.



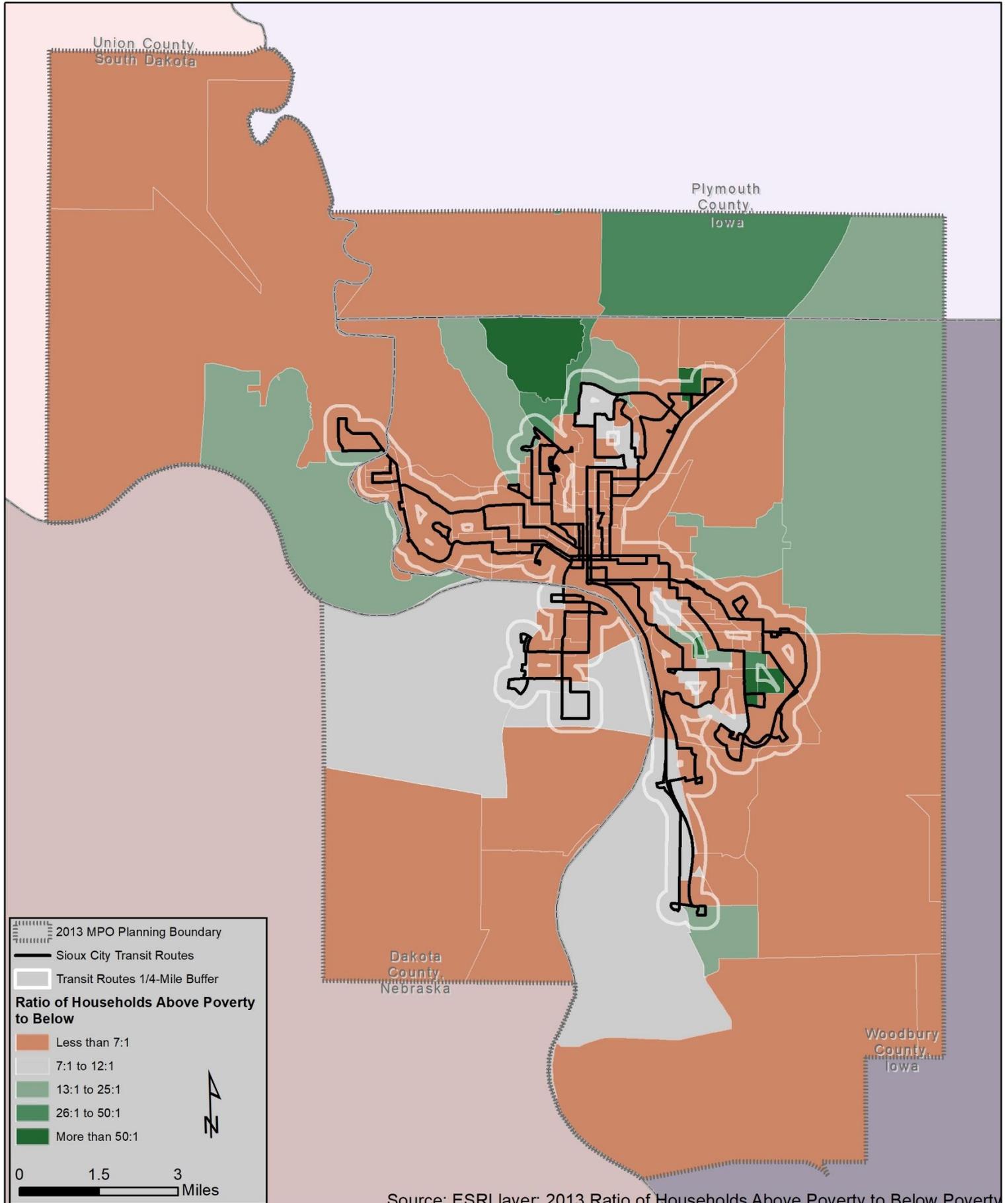
# SIMPCO MPO Diversity Index

This map summarizes racial and ethnic diversity in the United States in 2018. The Diversity Index shows the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different race or ethnic groups. The index ranges from 0 (no diversity) to 100 (complete diversity). The diversity score for the state of Iowa was 31 and 64 for the entire United States in 2018.



**SIMPCO MPO**

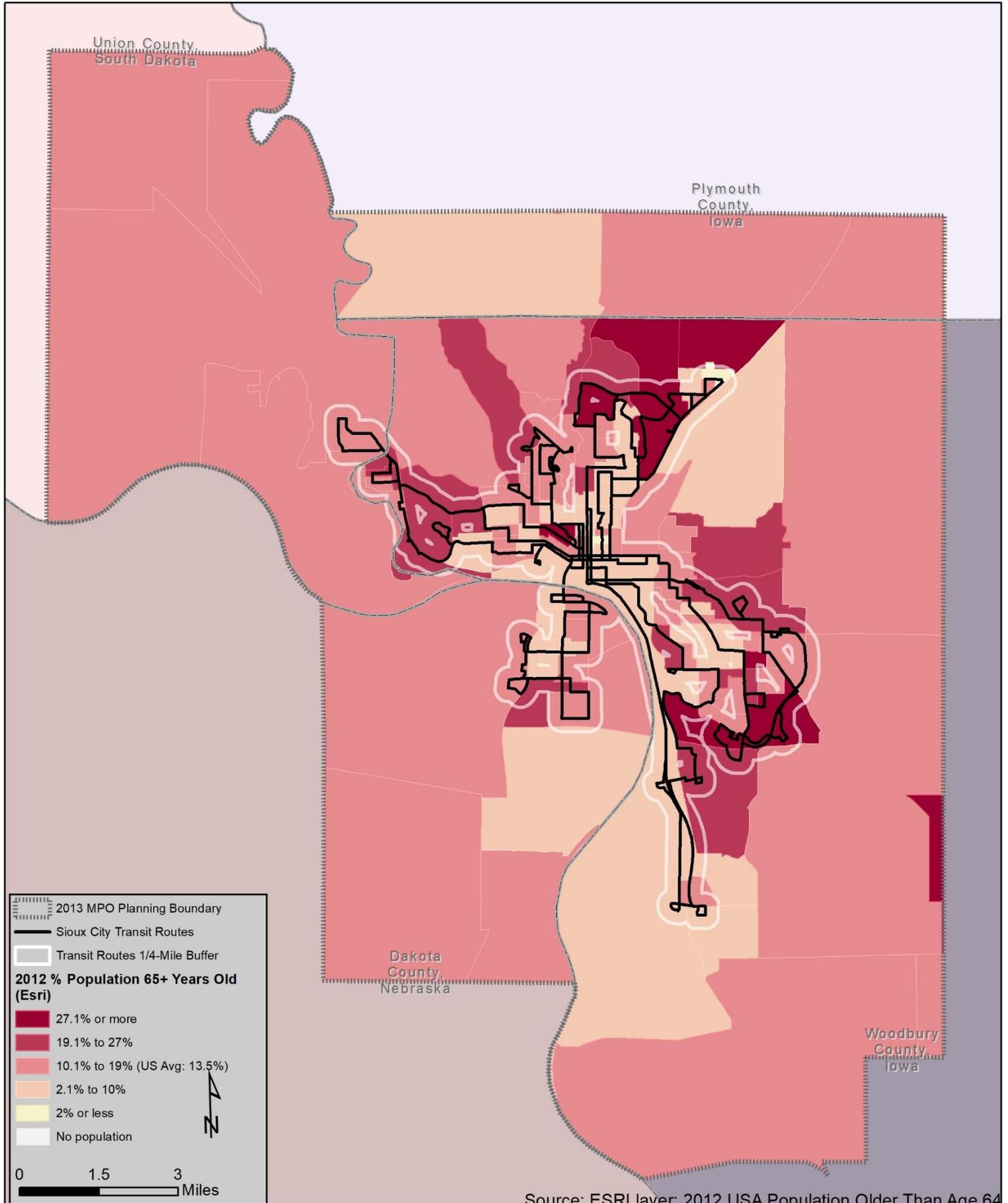
**Ratio of Households Above Poverty to Below Poverty**



Map 4.6

**SIMPCO MPO**

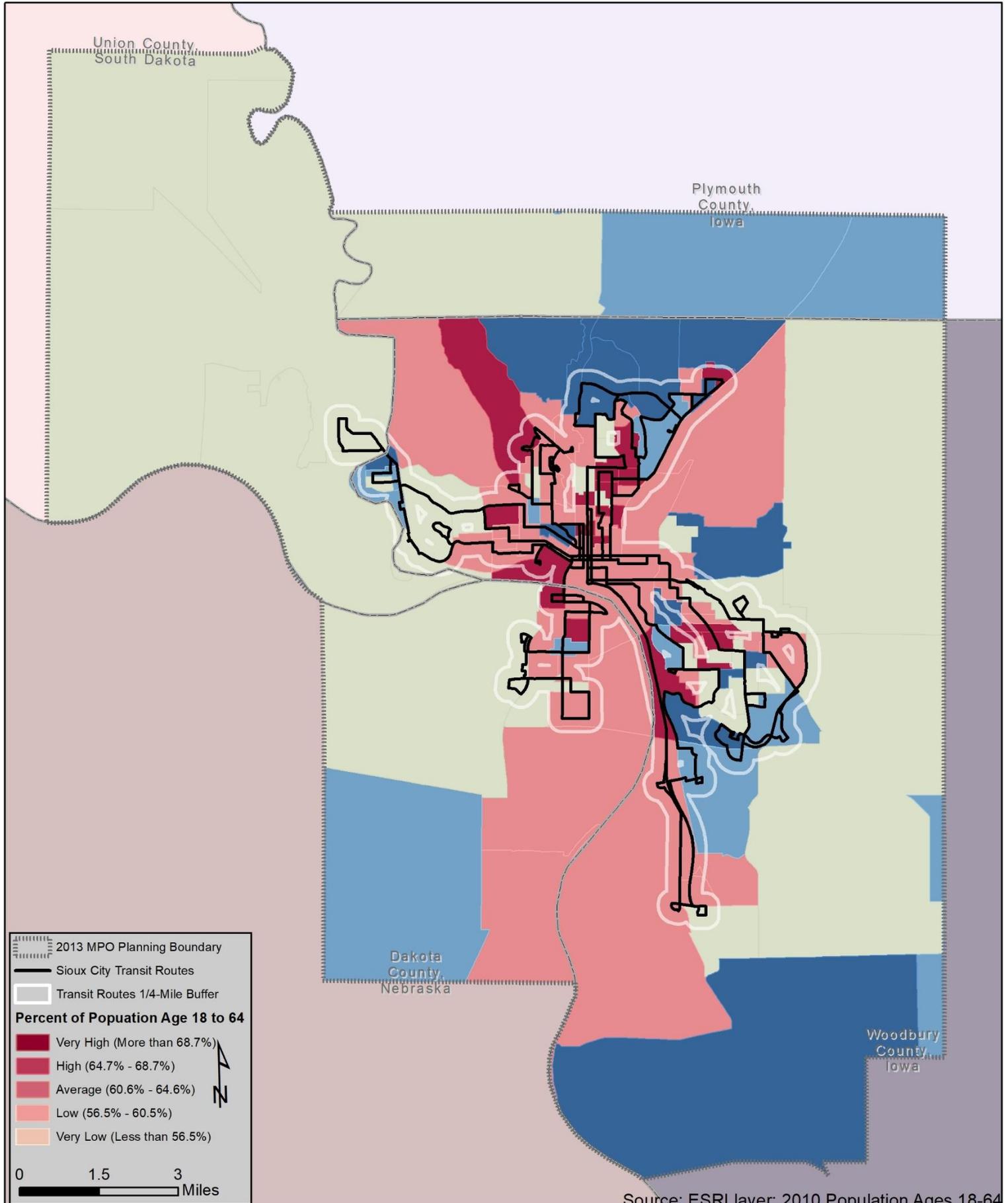
**Population Older Than 64**



Map 4.7

# SIMPCO MPO

## Population Ages 18-64

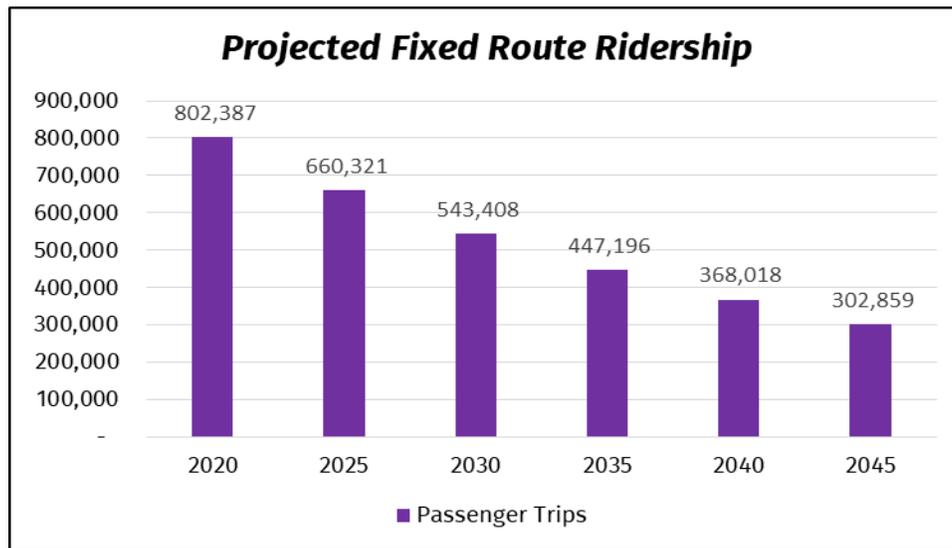


SIoux CITY TRANSIT SYSTEM FUTURE CONDITIONS

PROJECTED RIDERSHIP

Based on past ridership experience, route configurations, funding resources, population statistics, and economic dynamics, future public transit ridership may decrease from three to four percentage points per year. Growth is problematic due to declining federal and state grant support, an aging vehicle fleet that is very expensive to maintain, and an aging but static population. Assuming no dramatic economic change, or more specifically, sectors in the Siouxland economy that impact people who must use public transit for mobility, or work commute, then ridership will continue to slowly decline. The changes in retail buying will eliminate brick & mortar stores & their jobs. When public transit cannot meet the timeframe necessary for work shifts, then people find alternative modes of transportation. This happens with packing house jobs. SCTS has not been able to fund fixed route changes for agreeable operating hours to accommodate a business work shift that might significantly increase ridership.

Chart 4.2: Projected Fixed Route Ridership



Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2019

PROGRAMMED PROJECTS

Any plan to further expand the bus network and/or the operating hours on selected fixed routes are constrained by funding. The expansion would require additional funding, including collaborative private sector funding, that is not readily available for transit. South Sioux City has expressed a desire to expand its current route and/or add a route to the Tyson plant. SCTS did a feasibility study of the expansion and concluded that adding a new bus route and bus is not financially feasible at the moment, and SCTS does not have enough buses to do so. The additional geographic distance and time to expand the route for a Tyson stop would have to stay within the one-hour maximum requirement of the current hub and spoke system. Other existing bus stops would have to be removed around South Sioux City in order to make up for the distance and time it would take to go to Tyson.



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

SCTS currently participates in Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) meetings and activities, which include Transit Training Day. Continued support in TAG and its activities, will help SCTS learn and address mobility challenges throughout the SIMPCO MPO.

SCTS has evaluated compressed natural gas (CNG) in comparison to diesel as an interim fuel step to the probable evolution of battery electric energy. It was determined that CNG conversion would not be cost-effective, and unattainable without considerable collaboration among and between other public and private entities who would want to convert. There is no CNG infrastructure to distribute it to City facilities. The operating expenses for additional CNG safety compliance and personnel would rise prohibitively as well. The LRTP for SCTS's fleet energy is a piecemeal transition to electric.



SCTS is committed to a transition to electric buses for the fleet. Pricing on electric buses (approximately double the cost of diesel-powered buses) preclude the investment in not only the vehicle, but also the maintenance and storage facility including retrofitting maintenance service bays, new equipment, mechanic training, charging stations, and collaboration with Mid-America Energy to supply the building with the needed additional electricity. The primary benefit of using electric buses is environmental, as they release no



Green House Gases. There is, however, no sector of the service in Iowa under a mandatory clean air attainment directive. ***An additional cautionary determinant is that the current use of electric buses empirically documents that battery electric vehicles cannot hold the required electric charge in cold weather which adversely impacts completing routes on time.*** Running out of electrical charge is an expensive proposition with service interruption, maintenance, and public opinion about dependability and reliability

to use the system. The use of Battery Electric Buses would likely result in a new route schedule to be instituted to accommodate the constraints of the vehicle range.

The City is actively seeking federal and state grant funding to build a new Transit Maintenance & Storage Facility on Hawkeye Drive within the next five years. The facility design includes provisions for electric buses. Transit is working with FTA Region VII staff to implement the project. A major capital grant proposal was submitted for the FY 2019 Section 5339 program but was not funded.



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

### PROJECTED REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

SCTS's projected operating expenses from 2018 to 2021 are displayed in Table 4.5 and 4.6. The long range estimates assume that compared to previous years, there will be a significant decrease in route structure, economic impact will alter ridership, and federal and state grant funding and local real estate tax support for transit will decline. SCTS still administers the New Freedoms program, though the program no longer has any federal funding, private funding has been raised to keep this program.

**Table 4.5: Projected Fixed Route Expenditures**

EXPENDITURES:	FY18 Actual	FY19 Actual	FY20 Approved Budget	FY21 Approved Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Transit Administration	\$249,936	\$288,650	\$284,202	\$262,771	\$21,431	7.5%
Transit Operations	\$3,232,341	\$3,170,109	\$3,335,635	\$3,352,025	\$16,390	0.5%
Transit Maintenance	\$338,522	\$623,904	\$800,834	\$803,226	\$2,392	0.3%
MLK Building	\$194,231	\$224,810	\$211,371	\$221,609	\$10,238	4.8%
Paratransit	\$740,733	\$1,025,031	\$1,060,613	\$1,232,404	\$171,791	16.2%
New Freedom	\$11,857	\$9,155	\$10,375	\$10,375	-	0.0%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,767,620</b>	<b>\$5,341,659</b>	<b>\$5,703,030</b>	<b>\$5,882,410</b>	<b>\$179,380</b>	<b>3.1%</b>

Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2020

**Table 4.6: Projected Operating Revenues**

Revenues:	FY18 Actual	FY19 Actual	FY20 Proposed Budget	FY21 Proposed Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Charges for Services	\$1,241,749	\$1,283,915	\$1,337,500	\$1,320,284	\$17,216	1.3%
Contributions	\$1,457	\$20,638	\$8,000	\$8,000	-	0.0%
Federal Gov. Oper. Grants	\$1,584,013	\$1,573,836	\$1,800,000	\$1,700,000	\$100,000	5.6%
Local Gov. Payments	\$93,723	\$105,852	\$101,539	\$101,539	-	0.0%
Miscellaneous	\$933	\$1,426	\$500	\$500	-	0.0%
Refunds and Reimb.	\$40,325	\$24,943	\$10,610	\$8,910	\$1,700	16.0%
Rentals and Leases	\$56,526	\$79,936	\$76,308	\$76,765	\$457	0.6%
State Gov. Operating Grants	\$325,918	\$354,405	\$365,000	\$358,000	\$7,000	1.9%
Property Taxes	\$1,391,976	\$1,896,708	\$2,003,573	\$2,308,412	\$304,839	15.2%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$4,767,620</b>	<b>\$5,341,659</b>	<b>\$5,703,030</b>	<b>\$5,882,410</b>	<b>\$179,380</b>	<b>3.1%</b>

Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2020

COVID-19 Virus Pandemic will impact ridership and revenues for many months to come. Post Pandemic ridership changes are hard to predict. If a reliable or cheaper means to a destination arose out of necessity, it is hard to change back. As the smaller ridership trend continues, service will be cut back and result in fewer operating hours, fewer days, fewer routes, and employment layoffs, etc.



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

### BUS REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

**Figure 4.1: SIMPCO MPO Transit Funding Table**

#### MPO-29 / SIMPCO (3 Projects)

Fund	Sponsor	Transit # Expense Class Project Type	Desc / Add Ons / Addnl Info		FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
PTIG, 5307	Sioux City	5688 Operations Other	MLK Structural Rehabilitation, concrete sealing, and concrete repairs	<b>Total</b>	75,000			
				<b>FA</b>				
				<b>SA</b>	60,000			
STA, 5307	Sioux City	5812 Operations Other	Governor's apportionment for 5307 from IA, NE, & SD plus Iowa STA	<b>Total</b>	3,761,249			
				<b>FA</b>	1,694,749			
				<b>SA</b>	371,751			
5310	Sioux City	5817 Operations Other	Projects & Svc Exceeding ADA Requirements, Saturday SSC Demand Response Rides	<b>Total</b>	10,000			
				<b>FA</b>	5,000			
				<b>SA</b>				

Source: TPMS

### PARATRANSIT / SRTS

Paratransit service is provided to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Individuals who cannot use the fixed-route bus services may use this parallel service. The paratransit service is contracted through the Siouxland Regional Transit System (SRTS). Eligibility for paratransit services is obtained through an evaluation of the applicant's ability to use the fixed route system, and by certification of a physician. The application process is administered by SCTS.

Expanded transportation services through SCTS's New Freedom Nights & Weekends Program give eligible riders greater access to mobility, an enriched quality of life, and increased options for affordable transportation outside of normal public transit hours of operation. The eligible rider may purchase a discounted voucher for a one-way ride costing \$7.00. Passengers may contact participating vendors directly to arrange a ride. Participating vendors include Care-A-Van, Siouxland Taxi, Action Taxi, and EZ Cabs Inc.

### PARATRANSIT / SRTS EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### FLEET

There are thirteen paratransit vehicles. As of November 2020, there are no paratransit vehicles beyond either the age or federal mileage replacement thresholds (Table 4.7). Paratransit vehicles are replaced using the IDOT PTMS. SCTS may utilize the federal operating grant (Section 5307) for heavy duty or for cutaway van vehicles. Section 5310 funding may be used to acquire cutaway vans for the demand response service as need arises from a larger Age demographic group requiring greater mobility.



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

**Table 4.7: Paratransit Vehicles**

	Property ID Number	MFG. Year	Model	In Service Date	Acquisition		Seating Capacity	FY 2019 Total Mileage	Federal Replacement Threshold
					New Used	Cost			
1	1347	2013	Glaval - Universal Titan II	10/25/2013	NEW	\$74,159	14 / 2	123,805	4yr / 100,000 mi.
2	1348	2013	Glaval - Universal Titan II	10/25/2013	NEW	\$74,159	14 / 2	153,601	4yr / 100,000 mi.
3	1349	2017	Glaval - Universal Titan II	5/22/2017	NEW	\$73,379	12 / 3	140,430	4yr / 100,000 mi.
4	1355	2017	Glaval - Universal Titan II	6/8/2017	NEW	\$73,379	12 / 3	51,668	4yr / 100,000 mi.
5	1356	2017	Glaval - Universal Titan II	6/28/2017	NEW	\$73,379	12 / 3	71,452	4yr / 100,000 mi.
6	1357	2017	Glaval - Universal Titan II	6/28/2017	NEW	\$73,379	12 / 3	51,814	4yr / 100,000 mi.
7	1358	2018	Glaval - Universal Titan II	8/31/2018	NEW	\$72,333	12 / 3	59,157	4yr / 100,000 mi.
8	1362	2018	Glaval - Universal Titan II	12/3/2018	NEW	\$72,333	14 / 3	17,227	5yr / 150,000 mi.
9	1366	2018	Glaval - Universal Titan II	12/3/2018	NEW	\$72,333	14 / 3	11,059	5yr / 150,000 mi.
10	1367	2018	Glaval - Universal Titan II	12/3/2018	NEW	\$72,333	14 / 3	12,443	5yr / 150,000 mi.
11	1368	2018	Glaval - Universal Titan II	12/3/2018	NEW	\$72,333	14 / 3	13,159	5yr / 150,000 mi.
12	1371	2019	El Dorado Aerotech	3/29/2019	NEW	\$72,549	14 / 3	652	5yr / 150,000 mi.
13	1372	2020	El Dorado Aerotech	3/24/2020	NEW	\$72,487	14 / 3		5yr / 150,000 mi.
14	1381	2021	El Dorado Aerotech	Ordered					

Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2019

### SERVICE AREA

The service area for both fixed routes and paratransit demand response services includes the corporate limits of following municipalities within the SIMPCO MPO: **North Sioux City, Sergeant Bluff, Sioux City, and South Sioux City.**

While many paratransit services have a ¾-mile limitation on either side of a fixed route, SCTS's paratransit service does not. SCTS paratransit does not go into Dakota Dunes, South Dakota but there is a SRTS vehicle that runs from the MLK Center to the Dakota Dunes. This SRTS service assists those who need to get to the multiple medical offices and facilities that are located in the South Dakota community.



### FARES

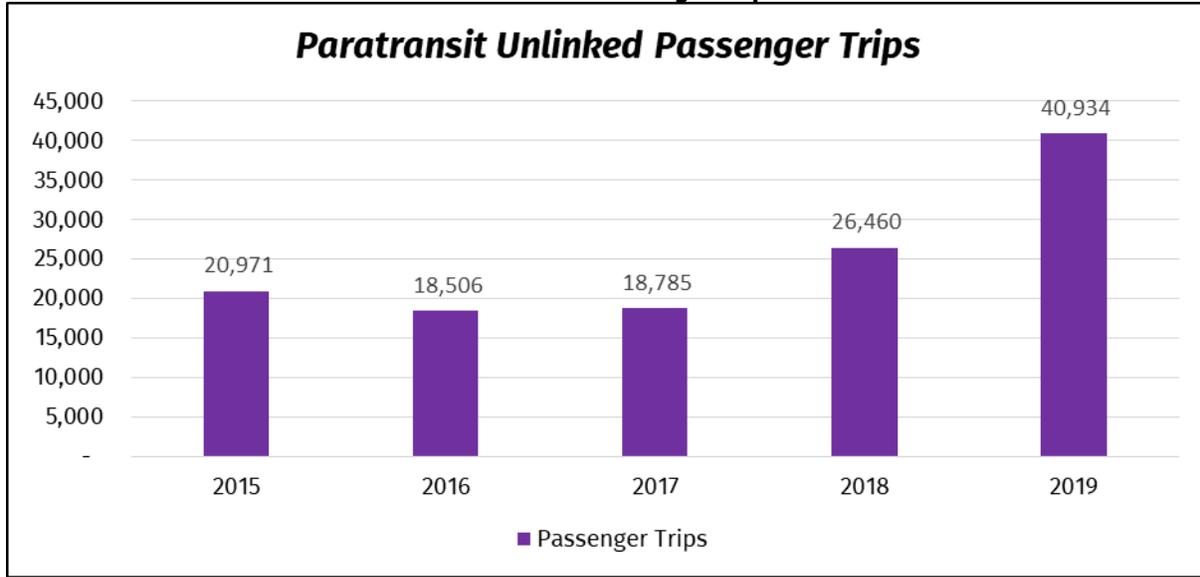
Reservations must be made a minimum of 24 hours in advance and up to 14 days prior. The basic cash fare for paratransit is double the fixed route fare or \$3.60 for curb-to-curb service per one-way trip. Door-to-door service will be given when requested with 24-hour notice or at the time of the ride reservation. Each trip has one scheduled destination, with no changes happening after the passenger boards. An additional stop can be added but at the cost of another full \$3.60 trip charge as well.

### RIDERSHIP

Paratransit trips have shown an increase between the years 2015 to 2019. Over this four-year period, there was a significant increase in trips from 2018 to 2019, with approximately a 55% increase. There was a change in Medicaid reimbursement tiered rates to providers by the State of Iowa. In result, agencies are putting their clients on the paratransit system to save money, causing paratransit ridership increased significantly.



**Chart 4.3: Paratransit Unlinked Passenger Trips FY 2015 - 2019**

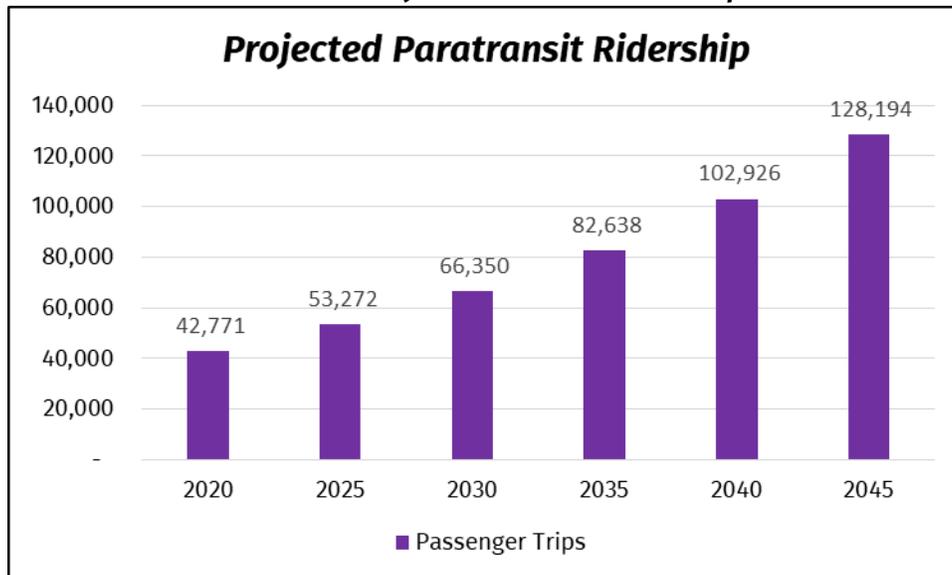


Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2019

**PROJECTED RIDERSHIP**

Projections suggest that paratransit ridership will increase 4% to 5% per year. This is likely due to the aging population demographics. However, the number of persons who become certified and ride will be affected by Medicaid Waiver rules and other restrictions. Recent changes to Medicaid Waivers have led to an increase in the number of trips. By the year 2045, projections point to a large increase in the total number of eligible clients who ride paratransit more frequently. The projected increase in the cost of these demand response services will significantly impact future budgeting. Such changes may force the agency to make service cutbacks and/or seek greater local tax support.

**Chart 4.4: Projected Paratransit Ridership**



Source: Sioux City Transit System, 2019



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

### BUS REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

**Figure 4.2: Capital Replacement Program FY 21- FY 24**

#### MPO-29 / SIMPCO (24 Projects)

Fund	Sponsor	Transit # Expense Class Project Type	Desc / Add Ons / Addnl Info		FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
5339	Sioux City	5691 Capital Replacement	New Transit Maintenance & Storage Facility	<b>Total</b>	9,513,971			
				<b>FA</b>	7,547,337			
				<b>SA</b>				
5310	Sioux City	5814 Capital Replacement	Light Duty Bus (176" wb) UFR, VSS Unit #: 1349	<b>Total</b>	76,000			
				<b>FA</b>	60,800			
				<b>SA</b>				
5307, 5339	Sioux City	5815 Capital Other	Automated Fare Collection Hardware, Software & Technology	<b>Total</b>	150,000			
				<b>FA</b>	120,000			
				<b>SA</b>				
5310	Sioux City	5816 Capital Expansion	Capital Expenditure to retrofit fixed route buses with annunciators.	<b>Total</b>	119,846			
				<b>FA</b>	95,877			
				<b>SA</b>				
5307	Sioux City	5818 Capital Replacement	Garage Parking Lot concrete replacement - Phase III	<b>Total</b>	170,000			
				<b>FA</b>	136,000			
				<b>SA</b>				
PTIG, 5307	Sioux City	5819 Capital Replacement	MLK Heat Pump Replacement: five units	<b>Total</b>	85,000			
				<b>FA</b>				
				<b>SA</b>	68,000			
PTIG, 5307	Sioux City	5820 Capital Replacement	MLK Boiler and Chiller repairs and replacement	<b>Total</b>	30,000			
				<b>FA</b>	24,000			
				<b>SA</b>				
5307	Sioux City	5821 Capital Replacement	New Project Unit #: 1303	<b>Total</b>	45,000			
				<b>FA</b>	36,000			
				<b>SA</b>				
5307	Sioux City	5823 Capital Replacement	New Project Unit #: 1304	<b>Total</b>	60,000			
				<b>FA</b>	48,000			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5825 Capital Replacement	Medium Duty Bus (29-32 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1324	<b>Total</b>	199,800			
				<b>FA</b>	169,830			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5826 Capital Replacement	Medium Duty Bus (29-32 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1325	<b>Total</b>	199,800			
				<b>FA</b>	169,830			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5827 Capital Replacement	Medium Duty Bus (29-32 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1326	<b>Total</b>	199,800			
				<b>FA</b>	169,830			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5828 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (35-39 ft.) Unit #: 1331	<b>Total</b>	459,200			
				<b>FA</b>	390,320			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5829 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (35-39 ft.) UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1332	<b>Total</b>	834,120			
				<b>FA</b>	709,002			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5830 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (35-39 ft.) UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1338	<b>Total</b>	834,120			
				<b>FA</b>	709,002			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5831 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (35-39 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1339	<b>Total</b>	469,200			
				<b>FA</b>	398,820			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339	Sioux City	5832 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (35-39 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1340	<b>Total</b>	469,200			
				<b>FA</b>	398,820			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5833 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (40-42 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1341	<b>Total</b>	493,300			
				<b>FA</b>	419,305			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5835 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (40-42 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1352	<b>Total</b>	493,300			
				<b>FA</b>	419,305			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339, 5307	Sioux City	5836 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (40-42 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1353	<b>Total</b>	493,300			
				<b>FA</b>	419,305			
				<b>SA</b>				
5339	Sioux City	5837 Capital Replacement	Heavy Duty Bus (40-42 ft.) Diesel, UFR, VSS, Low Floor Unit #: 1354	<b>Total</b>	493,300			
				<b>FA</b>	419,305			
				<b>SA</b>				
PTIG, 5339, 5307	Sioux City	6100 Capital Replacement	New Project to replace Bus Wash Equipment	<b>Total</b>	300,000			
				<b>FA</b>				
				<b>SA</b>	240,000			
5339, 5307	Sioux City	6101 Capital Other	New Project - electric bus charging system & equipment	<b>Total</b>	124,032			
				<b>FA</b>	99,225			
				<b>SA</b>				
PTIG	Sioux City	6102 Capital Replacement	New Project - Replace ADA sliding doors in MLK Lobby	<b>Total</b>	39,000			
				<b>FA</b>				
				<b>SA</b>	31,200			

Source: TPMS



### PARATRANSIT/SRTS FUTURE CONDITIONS

#### PROGRAMMED PROJECTS

There are no programmed projects currently in place for expansion of the paratransit system. Potential programmed projects include the replacement or expansion of the existing bus fleet for future paratransit growth. The paratransit system potentially could experience difficulty pertaining to its ability to meet the demand of their services with their existing fleet as the Baby-Boomer generation is entering into the elderly stage of their lives, potentially increasing the number of individuals who are dependent on public transportation.



Image: Example of SRTS ADA bus

### CURRENT TRANSIT SERVICE EFFORTS

#### TAG AND PTP

With the passage of SAFETEA-LU, it was required that a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan be developed through a local process including representatives from public and private transportation providers, human service agencies, interested parties, and the public. This process is in place to improve transportation services for persons with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with lower incomes by ensuring communities coordinate transportation resources provided through multiple federal programs. This coordination is designed to enhance transportation access, minimize duplication of services, and facilitate the most appropriate and cost-effective transportation possible with available resources.

The Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) and Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) came into existence from a SIMPCO workshop that was held in 2006 in response to a series of Mobility Action Plan (MAP) workshops being held by IA DOT around the state. TAG has been meeting regularly since 2006 to discuss transportation issues in the MPO and SRTPA planning area and to develop the PTP.



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

As part of the update to the 2020 – 2024 PTP, a Siouxland Mobility Survey was distributed in 2018 in an effort to identify existing needs and coordination issues. In addition to feedback given by the respondents of the survey, concerns documented at regularly held TAG meetings were also taken into consideration for identifying existing needs and coordination issues. The following needs and coordination issues pertaining to transportation were identified:



- Affordable transportation
- Expanded Schedule of availability
- Information on what is available
- Demand greater than services available
- Limited or no funding for the internal transportation program



- Too many disconnects between districts and agencies
- Riders and or transportation providers have inflexible schedules
- Access to information on what is available



- Ensured accessibility for all passengers at all times
- Important for Sergeant Bluff to maintain access to transportation using both Sioux City Transit and SRTS



- Transit needs to evolve to meet the needs of a growing younger generation that does not drive. For example, having an electronic trolley/bus that can provide limited services on popular routes to the downtown area.

The needs listed above have been the focus of the group and will remain the focus of the TAG group in the future as well as guide the direction of projects and goals listed in the LRTP. The PTP can be found at the SIMPCO office as well as online at: <https://simpco.org/divisions/transportation-planning/passenger-transportation-plan/>

### MODAL CONNECTIVITY

Linkage among and between transportation modes is critical for convenient, cost-effective passenger planning and travel. Intermodal connectivity in the metropolitan planning area was made easier in 2004 with the opening of the MLK Center in downtown Sioux City. The MLK Center serves as the transfer center for SCTS routes. Passengers are able to transfer among all SCTS routes and can make connections to inter-city buses, private cars, an airport, or taxicab from neighboring cities like Omaha and Sioux Falls. The MLK Center provides bicycle carriers on each bus and secure bicycle parking at the transfer point.

In the greater Sioux City area, there are several taxicab and limousine services. Jefferson Bus Lines, located in the MLK Center, provides inter-city bus service within Iowa in addition to connections to Kansas City, Sioux Falls, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Ames, and many other popular destinations.

### TRANSIT SECURITY

SCTS ensures a secure and safe environment through multiple approaches. The security of the vehicles, passenger centers, and garages are covered by security cameras 24/7, monthly facility inspections, and daily equipment checks. A lock-out procedure prevents damaged or broken equipment from being used. Vehicle preventative maintenance adheres strictly to the manufacturers' and to FTA guidelines.



## CHAPTER 4: TRANSIT SERVICES

An eight-camera audio/video security system is installed on all fixed-route buses. All paratransit vans are camera-equipped. Cameras cover both interior and exterior areas of the buses. Extensive security camera coverage exists for the transit administration building and MLK Center. Electronic locks that use proximity cards for access are in place at the MLK Center and the transit maintenance facility. During the operating hours, security guards (off-duty uniformed police) patrol the MLK Center and ride buses randomly. *By 2045, the goal is to achieve real-time camera access on all buses for monitoring passengers, MCO's, and the environment around them. This will also allow remote web access to monitor all building areas 24/7.*



### RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2002 Ridership Operation Utilization/Transit Efficiencies Study (ROUTES) listed several observations about SCTS, the City of Sioux City, and the Transit Advisory Board with directions to follow when looking at approaches to improve the overall system. Some of these observations have been or are in the process of being implemented. These observations and recommendations are still pertinent today and are in accordance with the goals stated at the beginning of this chapter. The following is a list of recommendations to be implemented or utilized for future transit planning.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

The Sioux City Transit System should develop a Strategic Plan or Transit Development Plan that is updated regularly. That plan should include an updated on-board rider survey, ridership analysis, and trends, route evaluations using available tools such as GIS, an examination of operating costs and financial plans, and proposed strategies to ensure an efficient and cost-effective transit system.



Image: Example of Omaha MTA hybrid bus

The strategic plan should have built-in flexibility to adjust to rapidly changing circumstances. With this goal in mind, constant operating efficiency comparisons to similar systems nationwide and an evaluation of the latest available technologies are necessary to further the goal of efficiency. Examples of implementable technologies include Battery-Electric buses and other alternative-fueled bus powertrain options. To evolve to an alternate fuel, multiple partnerships among and between the private sector and governmental jurisdictions would be necessary. The necessary

infrastructure for an alternative energy source would be essential. Both public and private sectors would need to work together to fund and install such capital improvements; and to encourage the market for its consumption.



### ITS

Sioux City Transit should continue to implement ITS architecture, as outlined in 2005 ITS Architecture for Metropolitan Sioux City Area, in an effort to improve the safety, security, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of the transit system. To this end, the scope of present technologies like Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) that are already available could be expanded. *New operating services could include linkage to transit passenger personal computers, tablets, and smartphones. Direct onboard video surveillance links to emergency officials could also be pursued to enhance the goal of improved safety and security.*

The difficult IT cost benefit decision arises from the significant procurement cost, and on-going expense to maintain new electronic systems. The primary determinant is whether the investment pays for itself, or saves expense while providing more reliable convenience and benefits. Trading the cost of a technology application for that of an employee is hard to determine for a small agency. For example, would an autonomous vehicle (NO HUMAN DRIVER) performing a circular route to key destinations in the downtown area provide more satisfaction than just the cost and novelty? Budget decisions play a crucial role in deploying services that are needed by the majority of public transit dependent riders. Over eighty percent of regular passengers fit this category. Understanding their needs, preferences, and financial capabilities for new technology are constraints to consider. It will be necessary to utilize a transportation consultant(s) to layout the most feasible and likely scenario of the future operations. The required detailed data and statistics must be gleaned internally and externally to make solid decisions long term.

The other significant aspect of investment in technology is dependable recurring grant funding at both the federal and state levels. There are no public transit systems that totally support themselves through fares, advertising, and local revenue streams. The level of funding for the reauthorization of surface transportation, Federal Highway & Transit Program, is critical for any public transit agency to survive.

Geographic Positioning Systems (GPS), automatic cash-less fare systems, automatic stop enunciation, and electronic passenger counters will be standard in future years. All of these features will help SCTS not only provide reliable service but also provide a more effective service as well. *Riders are now able to access Google maps to mark out their transit route, bus scheduling & route apps, and transit-related social media news can be taken into consideration as SCTS moves forward.* With so many technological advances happening so quickly, it is important for SCTS to keep up with these advances as they develop.



### MARKETING

SCTS should develop a marketing plan to encourage increased ridership and improve the public image of the transit service. Expanding advertising on buses should be continued by looking into options such as bus wraps, which could bring in extra income for bus services. SCTS should also keep pursuing more private/public partnerships with companies such as Tyson, Sabre, and other major employers in the SIMPCO MPO area. Employees working at a partnered business would receive discounted transit rates and the company would pay SCTS for having a bus route that runs by their business. Advertising about the public transit service should be done throughout the SIMPCO MPO, allowing people to learn what services are available, how to ride a bus, and what promotional events are being done. Also, observing the best marketing practices of other transit systems in the region can help SCTS' future marketing efforts.

