

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

CHILlicothe TRANSIT

ASTI POWELL, TRANSIT DIRECTOR

LUKE FEENEY, MAYOR

575 E. 7th Street
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601



www.chillicotheoh.gov
7440-773-1569

Chillicothe Transit Overview

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide safe, clean, reliable, efficient, and courteous transportation services to the citizens of Chillicothe to get from where they are to where they want to go. Transit Staff are committed to delivering these services in a professional, courteous, and helpful manner.

OPERATIONS

Chillicothe Transit System (CTS) is Chillicothe's public transportation provider. CTS provides the following transportation options:

Fixed Route Bus Service serving the City of Chillicothe, Monday-Saturday, utilizing three routes and 60 bus stops along Western Avenue, Bridge Street, and OH104 to the VA Hospital.

On-Demand Paratransit Service is door-to-door transportation for eligible individuals with disabilities and anyone 65 or older within the city limits.

RossGo, a subprogram of CTS, provides non-emergency medical transportation for Medicaid-eligible Ross County residents with trips to the following counties: Athens, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Gallia, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Licking, Meigs, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Scioto, Ross, and Vinton.

County On-Demand service provides to door-to-hub trips for Bainbridge, Massieville, and Frankfort twice a day, Monday-Friday.

Contract Services are provided by Chillicothe Transit to the Ross County Board of DD and EasterSeals. The contract provides transportation through schedule routes for identified participants to and from workshops and employment for residents who live within a ten-mile radius of the city limits or in the city.

BY THE NUMBERS

35

Total Transit Staff

23

16-passenger Buses

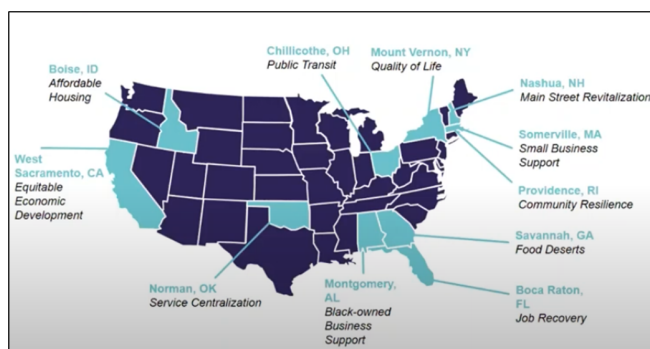
3

Ford Transit Vans

77,000+Trips Directly
Provided**293,878**Miles Driven by
Chillicothe Transit**46,260**Trips Coordinated
through RossGo

Design Thinking INNOVATION TRACK

The City of Chillicothe participated in the Bloomberg-Harvard Innovation Track, a 9-month program that teaches human-centric approach to problem solving. Chillicothe was one of 11 cities participating across the country and focused on the transit system.



Three priority groups were engaged at every step of the process:

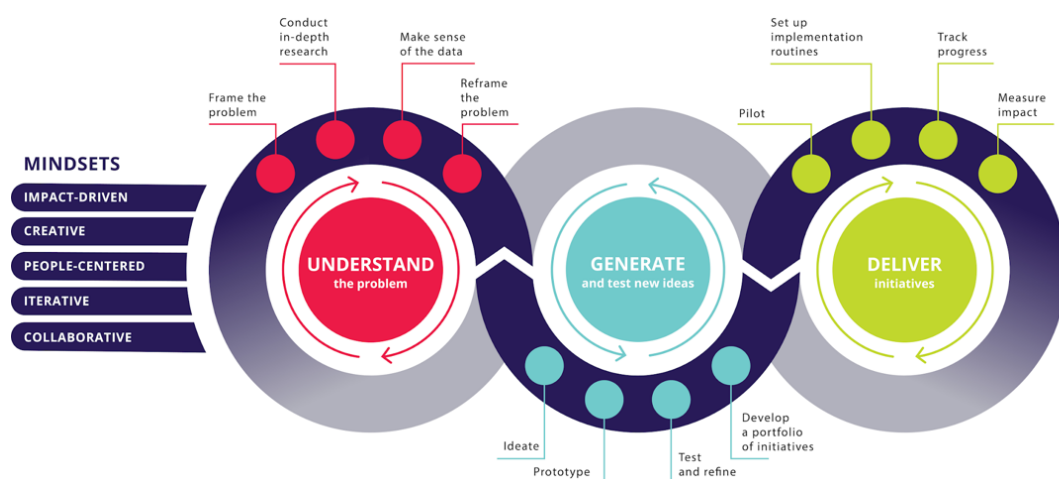
- Current Riders
- Choice Riders (those who do not depend on transit)
- Visitors

The framework of the project was to ***"redesign Chillicothe Transit to move more people more places and compel the broader community to take a fresh look at transit."***

Throughout the process, residents were engaged to better understand the problem. Four areas of focus were identified for improvements:

- Efficiency of system
- Stigma around bus system/riding the bus
- Lack of knowledge/awareness on how to ride transit
- Attracting choice riders

Residents were invited to virtual community sessions or engaged during pop-up events at bus stops and on the bus to generate ideas surrounding these four focus areas and how to improve the transit system. More than 200 ideas were generated. The team assessed these ideas based on long-term impact and design criteria and ten key ideas were selected to focus on, two of which entered the prototyping and testing phase.



400+
RESIDENTS/VISITORS
ENGAGED
200+
IDEAS GENERATED
BY RESIDENTS

Prototype 1

ON-DEMAND TRANSIT

Problem statement and proposed solution: *The current fixed-route system took a long time to get anywhere and still didn't get to and from the locations desired. Providing an on-demand transit system for direct service would move people, more efficiently and quickly, getting people where they needed to go.*

Residents were engaged and asked to build their preferred on-demand systems, with inputs such as how scheduling would work and what locations could be picked-up from. Using the feedback from the initial round of prototyping, a week-long on-demand test with current riders and new choice riders was launched. Feedback from usage data, follow-up interviews, and staff input on internal operations was collected. With overwhelming feedback and lessons learned, next steps were identified to launch a pilot.



Prototype 2

TROLLEY

Problem statement and proposed solution: *Faced with stigma, Chillicothe Transit is often seen as for 'them', not 'me'. The trolley creates a positive experience and a way for the community to engage with the system, even if they are not transit-dependent, breaking down barriers and reducing stigma.*

During the first round of prototyping, business owners and residents were engaged through an idea card

exercise, providing a variety of options to build how and what the trolley should feel for the community. Unanticipated excitement from stakeholders led to a two-day test of a downtown loop using a rented trolley. While riding, residents and visitors were interviewed for feedback or directed to an open survey. Residents were able to provide feedback from a variety of standpoints including how the trolley looked, where it ran, and if it was something they wanted to see incorporated within transit permanently. More than 700 trips were taken during the two-day trolley and more than 90% of responses were positive and in favor of the trolley.

FINAL PLAN

New Service Roll-out

With feedback from both tests and the broader community input over the nine months, the City's work team reevaluated the prioritized project ideas and modified next steps to focus on the delivery of the following initiatives:

- Updating fixed-routes to be more efficient with increased frequency.
- Launching a year-long on-demand pilot in conjunction with updated fixed-routes.
- Incorporate a trolley within the system's operations.
- Develop easily understood branding and marketing.
- Improving bus stop infrastructure.

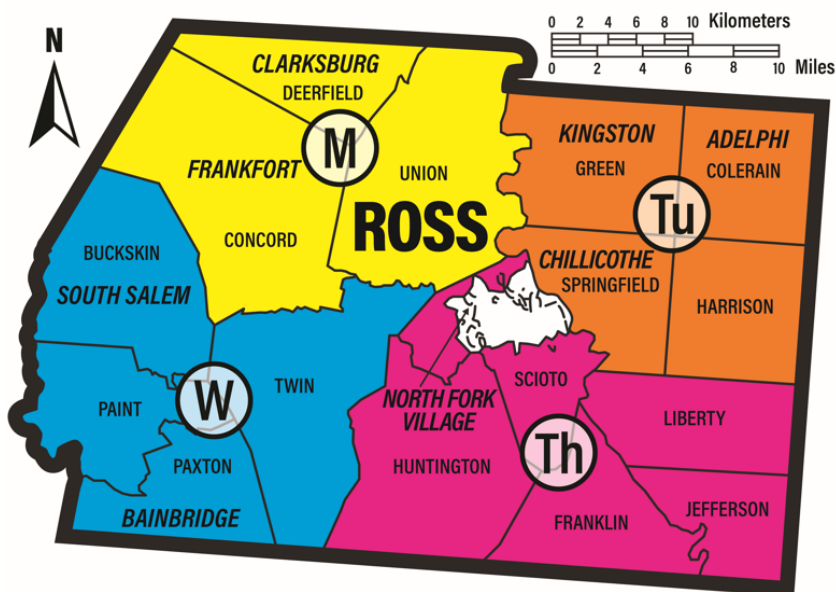
These initiatives led to the complete redesign of Chillicothe Transit set to launch January 2022.

Ross County TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Through funding provided by the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC), a Ross County Transit Feasibility Study was conducted. The focus of the study was to:

- Understand the need of county transportation to the city (who, where, when, and size of need)
- Develop transit solutions and costs to meet the identified need

From the study, updates to the existing transit service in the county were proposed as part of the redesign of service to increase access for all county residents while maintaining necessary efficiencies in operations. Updated county service would be provided to every township in Ross County once a week, serving areas not previously accessed by Chillicothe Transit, including Kingston and Adelphi. Changes set to take place January 2022.



Chillicothe Transit remained flexible and committed to serving the public during an everchanging environment caused by COVID-19. Working under special exemptions granted by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the transit system provided service to meet unique needs that evolved out of the pandemic. Efforts included:

- Providing individual rides for high-risk populations.
- Transportation to/from testing sites and vaccination clinics.
- In partnership with Chillicothe City School District, delivered more than 2,500 meals to families and students who were online learning, including additional snow day meals.
- Partnered with Ross County Community Action to provide transportation to the emergency shelter.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Filling Community Gaps
During a Pandemic





Grant Funds **BUS STOP INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Ohio Department of Transportation provided grant funds to replace all bus stop signs. New signs were installed as part of the redesign roll-out, providing clear indication of stop location, route servicing each stop, and contact information.

Additionally, the City of Chillicothe was selected as one of the AARP Community Challenge recipients. The grant funded the purchase and installation of eight ADA-friendly benches, two shelters, and two swing sets at Chillicothe Transit bus stops.

BOOK-A-BIKE

Community Partnerships

In partnership with the Chillicothe-Ross County Public Library, four bicycles were purchased and placed at the Chillicothe Transit Hub. These bikes were entered into the library's Book-A-Bike program, allowing anyone with a library card to 'rent' the bikes, for free, for a two-hour period. In addition the bikes, the a free tire pump was installed for community use at the transit hub.



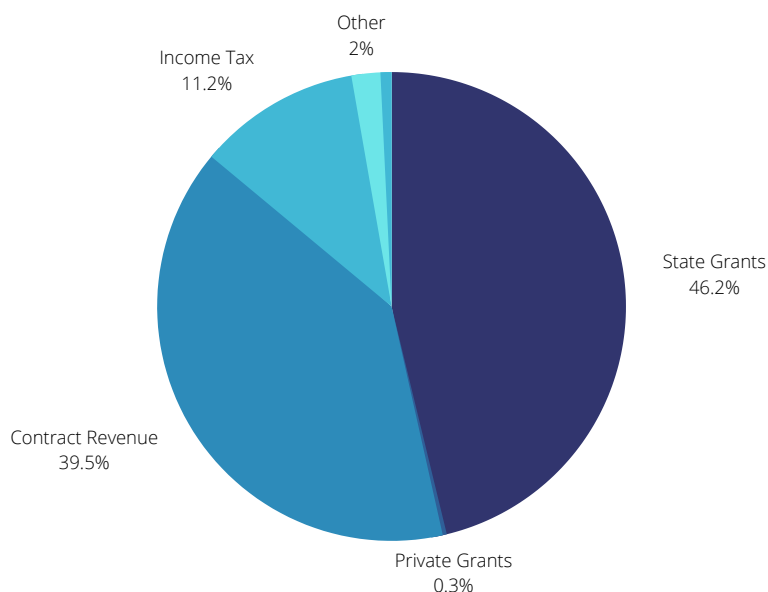
Mobility as a Service **SHARE MOBILITY SOFTWARE**

To streamline internal operations and provide additional planning tools to the public, SHARE Mobility was launched. The software not only allows for more efficient operations, but provides a public facing portal to schedule rides online, track buses, and trip planning. The community can visit rider.chillicotheoh.gov to access the portal.

Transit Department 2021 Financials*

REVENUE

Federal & State Grants	\$3,628,032
Private Grants	\$22,000
Contract Revenue	\$3,104,881
Income Tax	\$880,150
Shared Maintenance	\$59,608
Other	\$156,395
Total Revenue	\$7,851,066



EXPENSE

Salary & Fringe	\$2,554,794
Operating	\$3,475,674
Capital	\$47,383
Transit Reserve Fund	\$1,104,012
Total Expenses	\$7,181,863

