

Community Transportation

San Juan County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan



March 12, 2019

An update of the 2014 San Juan County Coordinated Human
Services Transportation Plan

This plan is dedicated to a true champion of San Juan County, Joyce Rupp. Her life's passion was social service and her understanding her community. As Community Services Director, she initiated the 2010 San Juan County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, and was instrumental in making it a reality for many San Juan County community members. She is missed.

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Acronyms and Terms

2010 Plan – the San Juan County Human Services Transportation Plan, published July 2010

2014 Update – this San Juan County Human Services Transportation Plan, published March 2015

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

OFM – Washington State Office of Financial Management

SCC – Senior Services Council

SJ County - San Juan County

SJC HST -San Juan County Human Services transportation

SJC HSTP- San Juan County Human Services Transportation Plan

State - Washington State

The County – San Juan County

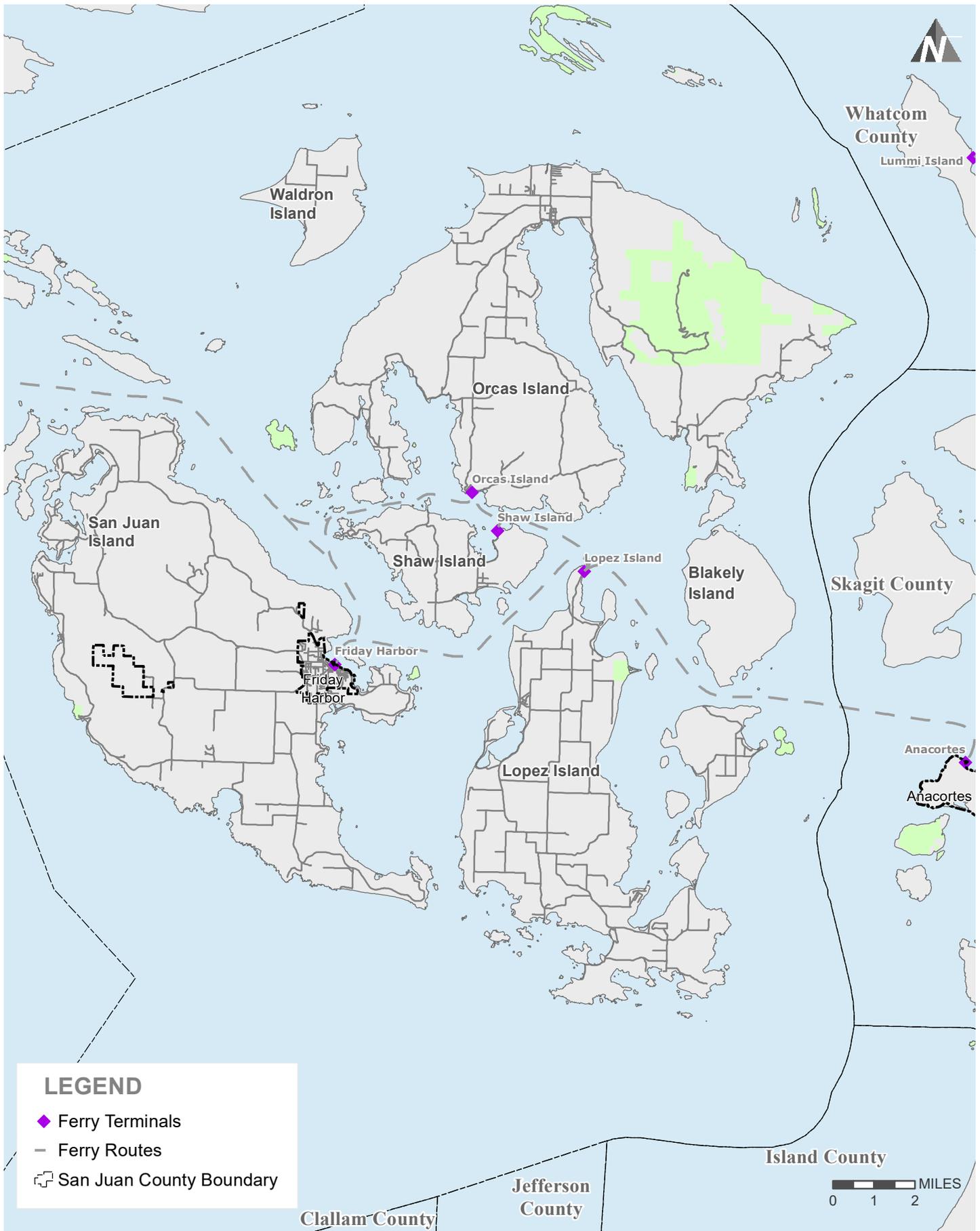
TVP – Transportation Voucher Program

U.S. Census – the 2010 United States Census counts and analysis

WSDOT HSTP – Washington State Department of Transportation Human Services Plan

VA- United States Veterans' Administration

Voucher program- Transportation Voucher Program



San Juan County Transportation Routes

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning



FIGURE

Executive summary

The 2018 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) update builds on the work completed in the 2010 HSTP and the 2014 plan update. It examines strategies for the unique and diverse needs of an isolated and rural population. It identifies the ways to facilitate access to essential services and community opportunities not otherwise accessible to some county residents. It also explores means to improve services and other needs such as coordinating transportation services between island-based and mainland transportation.

With the overlapping descriptions of individual transportation needs, San Juan County Human Services Transportation programs have found that the most useful criteria to identify the transportation-vulnerable and underserved populations in San Juan County are: low income; people with disabilities; and senior/over age sixty-five. These three criteria most frequently accompany lack of access to a vehicle, which is a significant factor in this county with no public transportation service.

The plan describes the methods of determining public needs and service gaps and makes recommendations for strategies, actions, and projects to meet the needs and close the gaps.

A table of priority projects for 2019-2021 is included at the end of Chapter 7 and is repeated as the last Appendix.

Priority projects include: increasing access to San Juan County's Transportation Voucher Program; exploring partnership with non-profit providers; and supporting drivers to operate the San Juan County Senior Center vehicles. Coordination with adjacent counties' human service transportation is currently limited, but opportunities for enhancement are noted. Education and outreach are approached through a network of public and private service providers. Interviews indicate that casual or organized community discussions are also an important means of distributing information about services. Reliable funding for organizational capacity is identified as a basis for pursuing other funding, communications and networking, and the continued success of human services transportation in San Juan County.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Background

San Juan County is largely rural and removed from many conveniences common in mainland Washington by approximately an hour aboard the Washington State Ferry, with a destination of Anacortes, in Skagit County. Regional and coordinated transportation is largely with the State Ferry system and service providers in Anacortes and Skagit County. Most San Juan County residents use an automobile to access community services and amenities and to transport supplies to their homes.

According to the most recent census estimates, over thirty percent of the population are seniors (aged 65 and older), approximately twelve percent are disabled, and ten percent generate a household income that is below the federal poverty level (\$25,100 for a family of four). San Juan County Health and Community Services Department has coordinated and developed community transportation programs to meet the needs of the geographically isolated rural county where traditional public transportation services have not yet been feasible.

2014 Plan

The first San Juan County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (2010 Plan) was developed in 2010 to address the transportation needs of the elderly, of people with disabilities, and of low income populations in accordance with the criteria of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). In the process of developing the first plan, the planning team used a steering committee, multiple stakeholder meetings and interviews involving more than ninety people on four of the county's islands, and a public survey. The plan was updated in 2014, with a similar outreach process to the 2010 plan. The 2014 plan found that the most effective approach to updating the plan was to focus on making incremental updates to the 2010 plan by evaluating and improving the programs resulting from the 2010 Plan that would help meet the needs of residents and close the existing service gaps.

Implementation and update

The 2014 Plan outlined the following broad strategies to meet existing needs and closer service gaps:

- Ensure mobility program coordination
- Maintain and make best use of voucher funds
- Maintain and enhance programs to address needs of individuals with remote locations.
- Ensure Transportation Voucher Program is broadly available
- Make best uses of senior vans
- Improve communications about transportation options with all potential users
- Better coordinate local and regional providers for ferry shuttle services at island and mainland ferry terminals.

A mobility manager has been at work in the County Health and Community Services Department since 2012. The most successful program has been an innovative response to the challenges of dispersed population and geographical isolation. It is the Transportation Voucher Program (TVP), which is well-suited to local community needs.

The TVP serves about 300 of the most transportation-vulnerable community members, who amount to almost two percent of San Juan County's population. This program coordinates a unique public-private partnership of service providers and local social organizations working together to provide transportation access for an established and expanding client base. The voucher program enables participants to pay for taxi services and ferry fares on San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez islands, and for auto repair and parts services on Orcas and San Juan islands.

Coordination with San Juan County planning

The San Juan County Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element¹ lists goals and policies related to Transit (6.5.H. Goals, p. 33). Three of the six Transit goals are specifically relevant to this plan:

1. To encourage and support development of public and private transit and shuttle services.
2. To improve access to health and human services, employment, social, educational, recreational and tourism destinations.
3. To improve mobility and the quality of life for residents and workers.

Several of the Policies for Transit (6.5.H. 1-5 and 8, p. 33-34) are also directly applicable to coordinated human services transportation:

1. Support the development of social service public transit options and the work of nonprofit and private community transportation partners to:
 - a. Reduce the isolation of target populations;
 - b. Increase accessibility to transportation services; and
 - c. Create additional organizational capacity to sustain implementation of community-identified transportation needs.
2. Support the work of community transportation partners such as San Juan County Health and Community Services, Senior Services, Family Resource Centers, San Juan Friends and Neighbors Program, SJ Rideshare, social service organizations and private transportation providers to evaluate public transportation needs, further identify opportunities for service coordination, and implement actions described in the 2010 San Juan County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.
3. Encourage the development of transportation services that meet the needs of the community, especially individuals with lower incomes, seniors, persons with disabilities, and veterans.
4. Support coordinated human services transportation planning that creates improved access to transportation information, develops economies of scale, eliminates inefficiencies, and provides greater visibility of transportation options.
5. Explore and support the collaborative efforts of community organizations, state and federal partners, and transportation providers to provide cost effective service delivery, increase capacity to serve unmet needs, and to improve mobility and the quality of transportation services.
6. Coordinate with the WSDOT Public Transportation Division to implement high priority

¹ http://www.co.san-juan.wa.us/Planning/docs/CompPlan/SectionB6_21-2013.docx.pdf

projects identified by the community using the ranking criteria for selecting projects established in the San Juan County 2010 Health and Human Services Transportation Plan.

This plan has been prepared in accordance with of the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element and with the guidance provided by the Washington State Agency Council on Coordinated Transportation. Methodology, gap assessment, strategy, and prioritization of policies have each been addressed and are described in the sequence of chapters.

Coordination with State planning

The Washington Transportation Plan 2030 (WTP) mobility policy goal identifies two strategies that directly address human services transportation:

- Strategically prepare to meet the needs of an aging population.
- Support transportation for special needs populations.

The WTP recommends actions to address these two strategies, and several are addressed in San Juan County:

- Require regional coordination to efficiently and economically increase the productivity of elderly travel options.
- Increase the use of small, on-demand transit vehicles, which may be more cost effective than large buses in many areas of the state.
- Consider the needs of rural areas that currently lack transit, ride sharing, or vanpool options, by enhancing coordination opportunities with human service transportation, and possibly with school transportation providers.
- Require regional coordination to efficiently and economically increase the productivity of travel options for people with disabilities.

This plan also supports the goals and objectives of the Washington Statewide Human Services Transportation Plan. The San Juan County Human Services Transportation Plan contributes to identifying statewide transportation deficiencies, developing strategies and recommendations to improve access and enhance mobility for target populations.

Funding human services transportation in San Juan County²

The most significant funding sources for human services transportation in Washington State are:

- Locally funded public transportation agencies
- WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program (federal and state funds)
- State and federally funded human service programs

The only public transportation agency serving and operating in San Juan County is the Washington State Ferry system. With no local public transit system, San Juan County has created a community transportation program, which has developed public/private partnerships. San Juan County programs are eligible for the WSDOT Consolidated Grant Program.

² Described in the 2013 Washington Statewide Human Services Transportation Plan
<https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Transit/Grants/human-services-transportation-plan.htm>

WSDOT (State) funding applicable to San Juan County

- Rural Mobility Grants (Transportation providers, rural agencies).
- Specialized Paratransit/Special Needs Grants (nonprofit providers for elderly and persons with disabilities).

Federal funding (administered by WSDOT)

- FTA Section 5310 Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation (nonprofit agencies serving rural areas, to provide vehicles and other equipment).
- FTA Section 5311(f) Rural Public Transportation (Providers, capital, operating, and planning activities to enhance rural and small urban intercity transportation).
- State social service agency programs focusing on individual needs and access to services
- Medical transportation programs consistent with federal Medicaid program requirements (through the Northwest Regional Council/Area Agency on Aging).

Goals of the 2018 Plan

San Juan County's senior population is growing faster than in other Washington counties, and there is no public transportation other than the ferry system. An important consideration of the 2018 plan is to enhance the options for seniors to stay in their homes, to age in place. Isolated, lower- income earning and disabled community members are also considered high priorities in developing goals for San Juan County human services transportation.

Islanders often have a strong sense of independence and self-reliance, which sometimes makes them unwilling to seek available services. The same attitude serves to make most islanders conservative in their use of services.

The goals for this 2018 plan update are to:

- Increase independence and community access to essential goods and services.
- Evaluate the programs developed in accordance with the goals of the 2014 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Plan.
- Identify gaps in service.
- Develop strategies, potential actions, and programs to maintain and enhance human services transportation to meet the needs of San Juan County residents.

Chapter 2 Methodology

Practical application of new programs since 2010 indicates that the most effective approach to this plan update is to focus on evaluation of and improvements to those programs, which were developed in accordance with San Juan County's first Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (July 2010). Demographic data and current transportation options have been updated through research in Washington State publications, examination of local resources, and stakeholder consultations.

Demographic profile

The demographic profile of the County was updated and organized using: the 2010 United States Census Bureau Fact Finder; the American Community Survey 2012-2017 five-year estimates; Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) website data; the Washington Statewide Human Services Transportation Plan (July 2013); the Washington State Advisory Council on Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Template with Instructions; San Juan County 2036 Comprehensive Plan Update Population Projections; OFM County Growth Management Population Projections by Age and Sex: 2010-2040; and the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan.

Demographics are described in this plan to help define population groups who are challenged or unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation because of income situation, age, or physical or mental disability. Maps were prepared by San Juan County geographic information specialists to illustrate the dispersed nature of residents and the common destinations in commercial and service centers on three islands and in Anacortes. These maps can be found in Chapter 3.

Stakeholder involvement

The first San Juan County plan, developed in 2010, involved approximately ninety people in various meetings and used a survey to identify service gaps and broad community needs to list priority projects. In the 2108 update, a more concise approach was used to evaluate current programs and identify gaps. A core group of stakeholders has helped to advise the planning process. This plan has started with the experience of the Health & Community Services Department with newly created programs and networks and with advice and contributions from representatives of the San Juan County Public Works Department, Family Resource Centers on three islands, the three County Senior Centers, the voucher program transportation providers, and program participants/users.

Outreach to local stakeholders began in October 2018 with stakeholder interviews and the publication of an online survey. The first public meeting was held on November 13, 2018 in Friday Harbor with additional meetings held on Orcas Island on November 14 and on Lopez Island on November 15. These meetings were advertised in local papers and on online news websites, and the times and locations were also directly emailed to TVP providers and users. The meetings were used to gather opinions and advice about the effectiveness of the County transportation programs, determine service gaps, and to seek recommendations for improvements to the programs. Interviews with service providers and program participants were conducted on dates before and after those meetings, and conversations with stakeholders have been ongoing throughout the development of the plan.

The survey questions, meetings' notes and stakeholder interviews are detailed in Appendix A.

Inventory of current transportation options and services

Information about current options and services was sought through contacting administrators and service providers on all three main islands and in Anacortes and by attending stakeholders' meetings. The inventory of transportation options and services accessible by county residents was developed from meeting and interview notes and from rechecking and evaluating the options and services listed in the 2014 Plan. Information about air service between islands and the mainland was not replicated because the cost of the service makes it unavailable to low-income residents, except in unique and rare circumstances.

Needs assessment and identification of strategies

Unmet needs for transportation were identified through discussions of the experience of the stakeholders and program administrators at meetings, on-line, and in interviews.

An evaluation of the programs was developed using the current conditions, goals and expectations established in the 2010 Plan as a baseline. The number of participants in the Transportation Voucher Program, along with coordination, outreach, and technology use, plus feedback from participants, administrators, and providers were all factors in program evaluation.

The needs assessment and recommendations from stakeholders provided a basis for strategies and actions to meet them.

Strategies and Ranking priority projects

Overall strategies are aligned with those of the 2010 and 2014 Plan. Sustaining and improving current programs, which have proved successful in creating transportation services for groups of people who would not otherwise have them, was considered basic to selecting projects and actions to meet identified needs. Projects were also chosen in consideration of the network of service providers available in the county, including the potential for sustaining or increasing their availability. Expanding services and networking regionally are important considerations in long term planning and providing services to destinations that are not available in San Juan County.

For ranking projects, they were grouped under the four overall strategies. A worksheet with potential projects, along with their purposes and projected outcomes, was developed and circulated to stakeholders for ranking. (See Appendix C for the worksheet).

Chapter 3 Demographics and Access to Services

Special needs origins and destinations

Among the thirty-nine counties in Washington State, San Juan County has two unique challenges: isolation from the mainland and the demographics of its population. San Juan County contains less than 175 square miles of land scattered across dozens of islands in the northwest corner of Washington State. These islands are located in the Salish Sea, which is north of Puget Sound, between the United States mainland and Vancouver Island, British Columbia. (Figure 1, Page v)

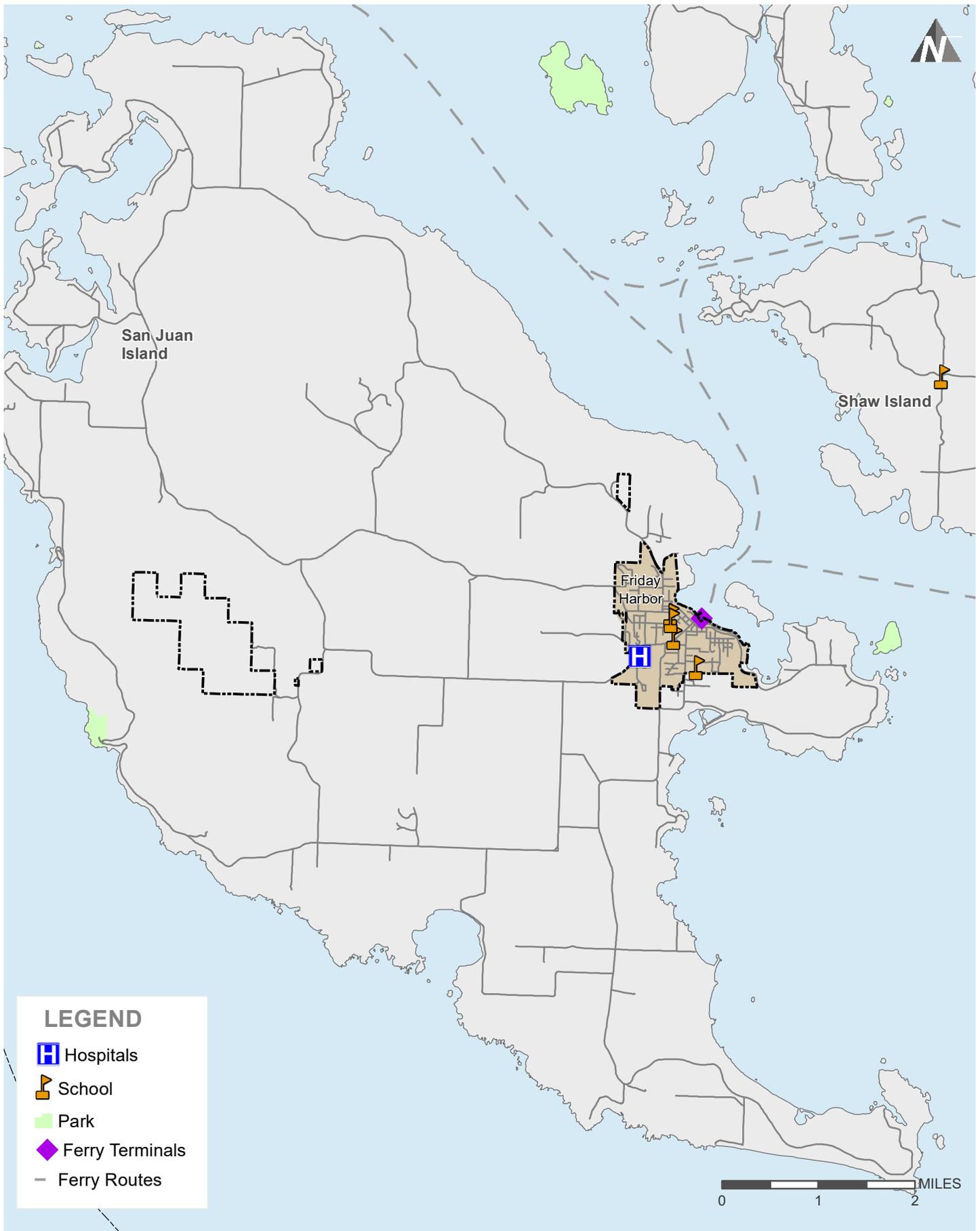
The OFM estimated 2,250 people reside in Friday Harbor, and 16,320 in the county overall. Approximately 86 percent of county residents live outside of Friday Harbor, which is the only incorporated town, the County Seat, the center of government services, and the location of the county's only hospital. The overall population density in the county averages ninety persons per square mile, but homes are dispersed throughout the three main islands of San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez in rural areas along rural roads that follow the meandering contours of island topography.

Unincorporated population centers, which have some amenities, services and community opportunities, on other islands are located in Eastsound, eight miles from the Orcas Island ferry landing, and in Lopez Village, four miles from the Lopez Island ferry landing. A small grocery store and post office on Shaw Island are only a few steps from the ferry landing. Other small population centers, such as Roche Harbor and Deer Harbor, may have a

small store, inn, restaurant or gas station.

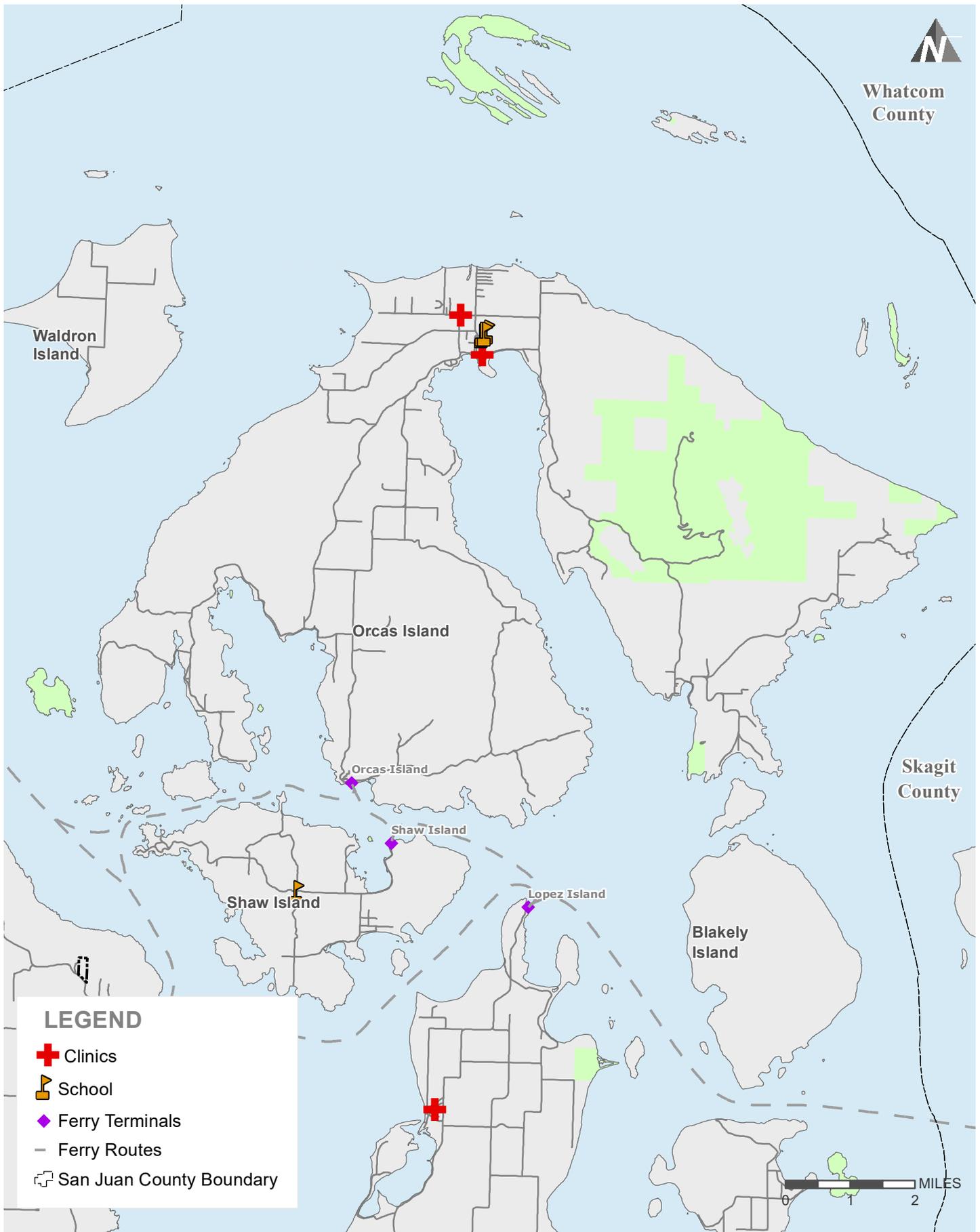
About twenty of the total inhabited islands in the county have year-round residents (some have as few as two residents), but most people live on the four most populated islands: San Juan, Orcas, Lopez, and Shaw. These four also are the only islands with scheduled ferry service and the docking facilities to accommodate ferries with car decks, operated by the State Department of Transportation.

Most residents rely on the Washington State Ferry (WSF) system, to access services or supplies they need on the mainland. Some might fly in small planes or take private boats in good weather, but all who live in the islands depend on WSF, directly as passengers or otherwise for goods and services. In this way, the county's population is doubly dispersed - along rural roads and across marine channels with limited and costly options for crossing them.



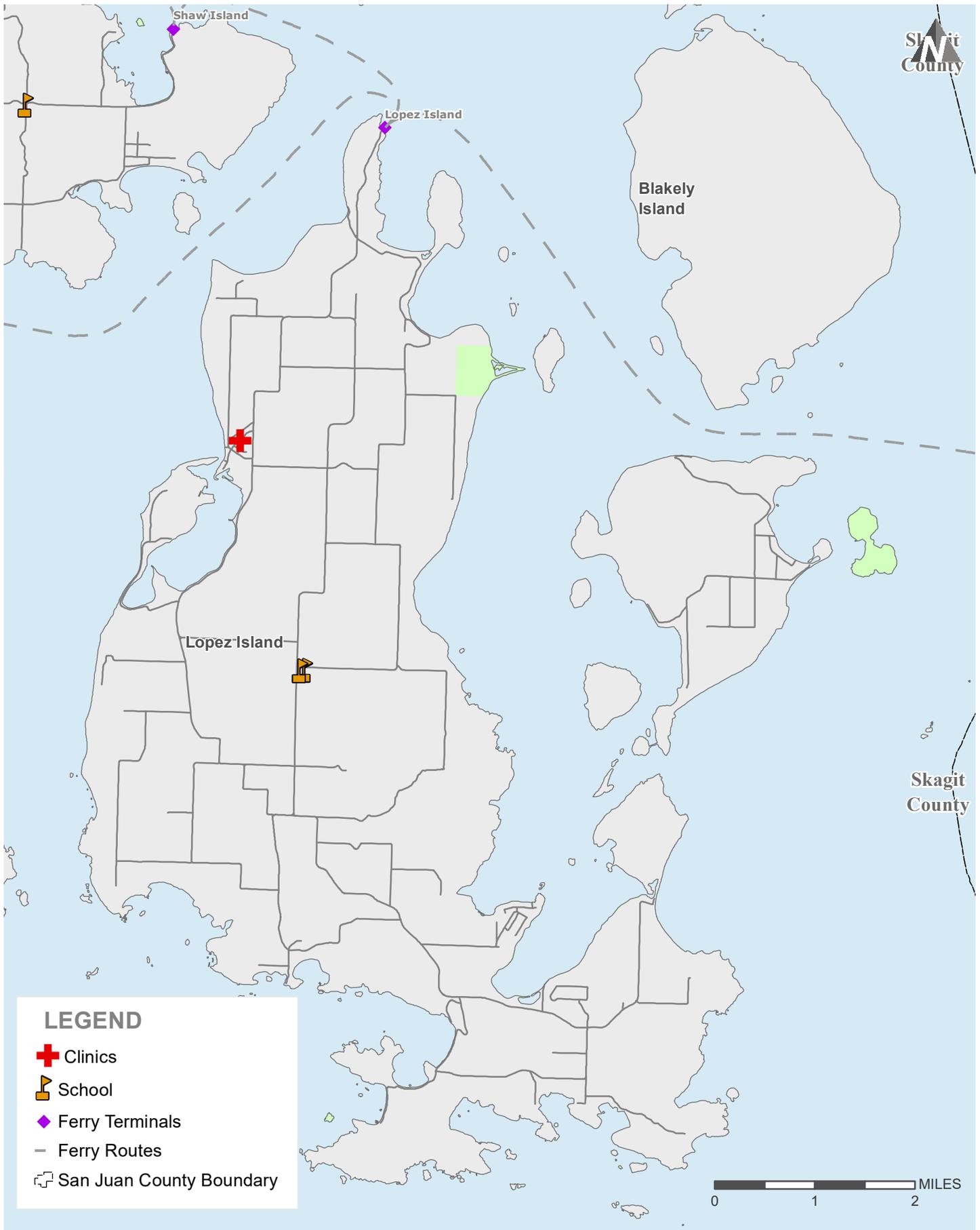
San Juan Island Common Destinations
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

FIGURE



Orcas Island Common Destinations
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

FIGURE



Lopez Island, Lopez Village, and Shaw Island Common Destinations

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning



FIGURE

Access to medical and other services

When the first San Juan County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (2010) was written, medical services within the county were limited to small clinics or professional offices and an inter-island medical clinic in Friday Harbor, which provided more technology-dependent services such as x-rays.

In 2012 Peace Health Medical Group completed a new hospital in Friday Harbor that also serves as a medical center. The new Peace Island Hospital and Clinic has increased the types of services available within the county with an emergency room, a cancer center, imaging facilities, and an outpatient surgery center.

However, transportation issues for those without access to a personal vehicle remain. The location of the hospital requires automobile transportation for most people, and ferry travel is necessary for everyone not on San Juan Island. The hospital does provide transportation services from the ferry landing in the form of voucher reimbursements for the 'RoundTowner taxi service.

The hospital has limited services and only a few beds. There is no birthing center in the county. Many people still take the ferry to get to medical services in Anacortes, Mount Vernon, or Bellingham on the mainland. An emergency service helicopter or airplane is available when required.

The ferry trip to the mainland takes at least an hour and waiting times to board the ferry can average an hour at terminals on each side of the crossing. Passenger decks are above the car deck, and walk-on passengers board on the car deck when departing from the islands. Passengers with mobility or other medical challenges may need to take an aide or driver with them, some may require a special needs van, and some may need transport by ambulance.

The expense of ferry tickets, currently around \$50 for a standard vehicle and driver to the mainland, can be a financial challenge. Walk-on tickets are less costly, but walk-on passengers face an additional challenge to connect with land transportation once they arrive at the ferry terminal, which is more than two miles from the town of Anacortes.

San Juan County demographic profile

Based on the Washington State Office of Financial Management's (OFM) small area population data, the San Juan County population estimation for 2016 is 16,320 total of which 2,205 live in Friday Harbor. Table 3.1 shows the estimated population distribution among the county's islands. More than 80 percent of the population lives on San Juan and Orcas Islands, with population almost equally split between the two islands.

Table 3.1. Estimated population distribution 2016

Island	Population
San Juan (Including 2,250 in Friday Harbor)	7,810
Orcas	5,395
Lopez	2,466
Shaw	241
Total ferry-served population	15,912
Other islands	402
Total	16,320

Population Projection for 2036 Comprehensive Plan Update, 2017

The OFM also produces estimates of population growth for each county in low, medium, and high projections. The current OFM San Juan County population moderate growth rate projection is found in Table 3-2.

Table 3.2. Moderate rate population growth in San Juan County

Year	2018	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Number of County residents	16,810	16,256	16,606	16,939	17,216	17,443

Source: Washington Office of Financial Management, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Seasonal population fluctuations in the summer, especially in July and August, increase the number of persons actually on the islands to as many as twice the ordinary number of residents. Seasonal residents and visitors are a mainstay of county economy and employment, and they also have an impact on infrastructure, services, taxi providers, traffic, and ferry wait times and available spaces.

Special transportation needs

The Washington Statewide Human Services Transportation Plan (WSHSTP) identifies several factors that can create difficulties for persons who need to transport themselves or purchase transportation for everyday purposes. WSHSTP and the U.S. Census have quantified groups within the population that are likely to have special transportation needs. The categories and figures for the Washington State, the County and the Nation are found in Table 3.3, below. Many individuals may fit more than one of these categories, and the numbers in Table 3.3 are not mutually exclusive.

The 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates data was used for each demographics profile in the Table 3.3. This dataset is the most recent for which complete demographic data for San Juan County exists. ACS is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau and aggregated by geographic summary levels.

Table 3.3. San Juan County special needs populations

Percentage of San Juan County residents who may have transportation needs

	Age65+	Disabilities	Lowincome	No access to vehicle	Un-employed	Veterans	Linguistic isolation
Washington State	14%	12.8%	12.7%	7%	6.8%	10.2%	7.6%
San Juan County	31.2%	12.7%	10.7%	4.4%	5.1%	11.3%	2.1%
National	14.5%	12.5%	15.1%	9%	7.4%	8%	8.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2016

With the overlapping descriptions of individual transportation needs, San Juan County Human Services Transportation programs have found that the most useful criteria to identify the transportation-vulnerable and underserved populations in San Juan County are: low income; disability; and senior/over age sixty-five. These three criteria most frequently accompany lack of access to a vehicle, which is a particularly significant factor in San Juan County, where there is no reliable public transportation service all year round beyond the ferry system. There are three bus routes in the San Juan County that serve San Juan Island, Lopez Island, and Orcas Island. The service is provided daily during Spring, Summer, and Fall in the San Juan Island, while the transit service in Orcas and Lopes Islands is limited to Summer weekends.

Seniors of Age 65 and Older

San Juan County’s senior population increased from 27 percent of the total county’s population in 2013 to 31.2 percent in 2016. The increasing rates of seniors of age 65 and older is a matter of concern in San Juan County. As shown in Table 3.4, San Juan County has a disproportionately large percentage of seniors compared to the state averages.

Estimates by OFM for 2018 show the senior population comprises approximately 34 percent of county’s total population, which is twice that of the Washington State estimate. The number of seniors in the county is projected to increase by approximately 52 percent (adding almost 2,500 people) between 2015 and 2040. Growing share of older population in the county indicates a need for specialized transportation services and senior services. Many of these people live in rural areas and many have few resources for transportation. Figure 5 shows the location of residents in San Juan County over the age of 65.

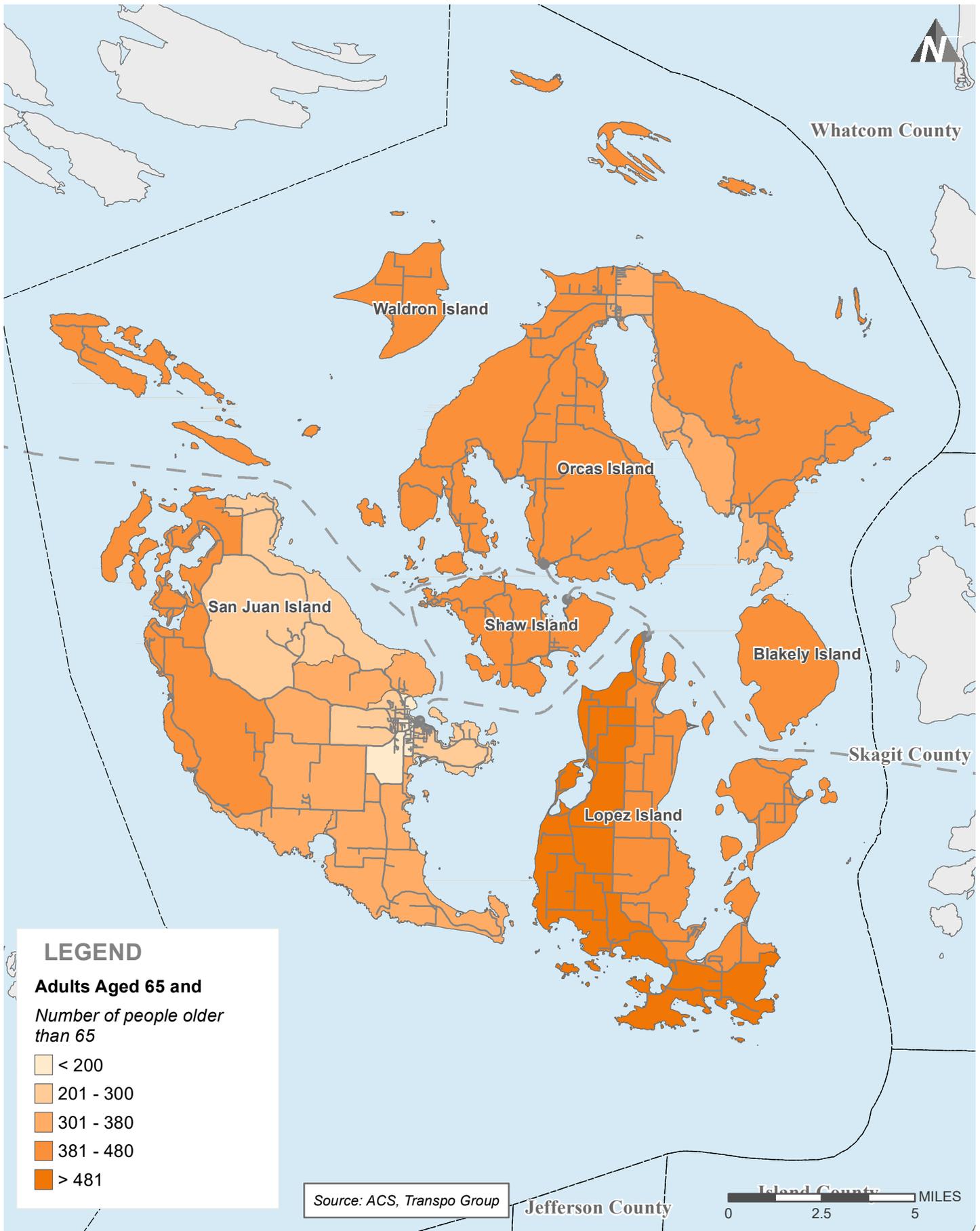
Table 3.4. Projected population over age 65

Washington State and San Juan County percentage of seniors in population

	2018	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Washington State	15.8	16.1	18.14	20.59	21.32	21.61
San Juan County	33.9	35.78	39.37	40.67	39.5	37.68

Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2017³

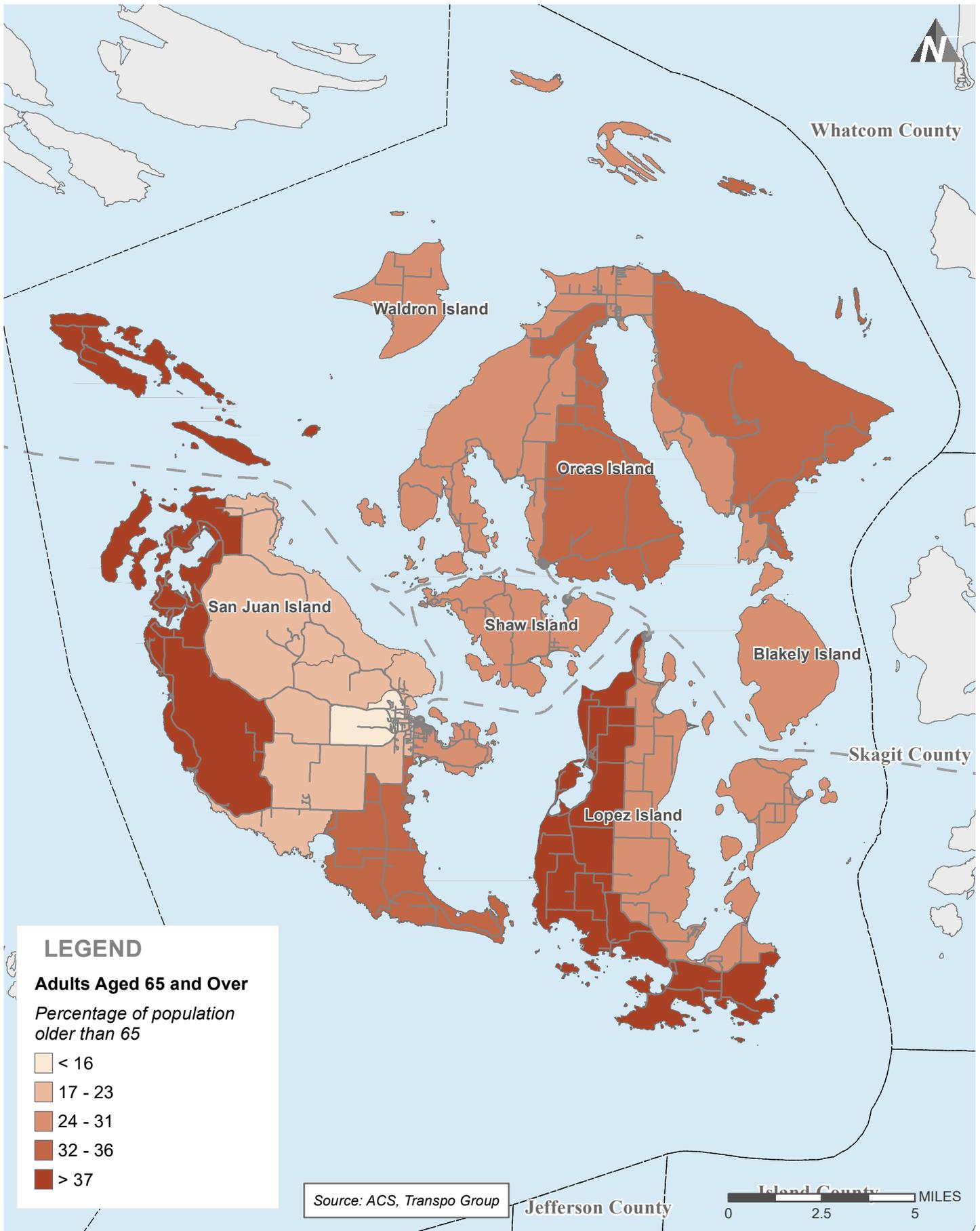
³ https://www.ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/dataresearch/pop/GMA/projections17/GMA_2017_county_pop_projections.pdf



Adults Aged 65 and Older
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

FIGURE

5-A



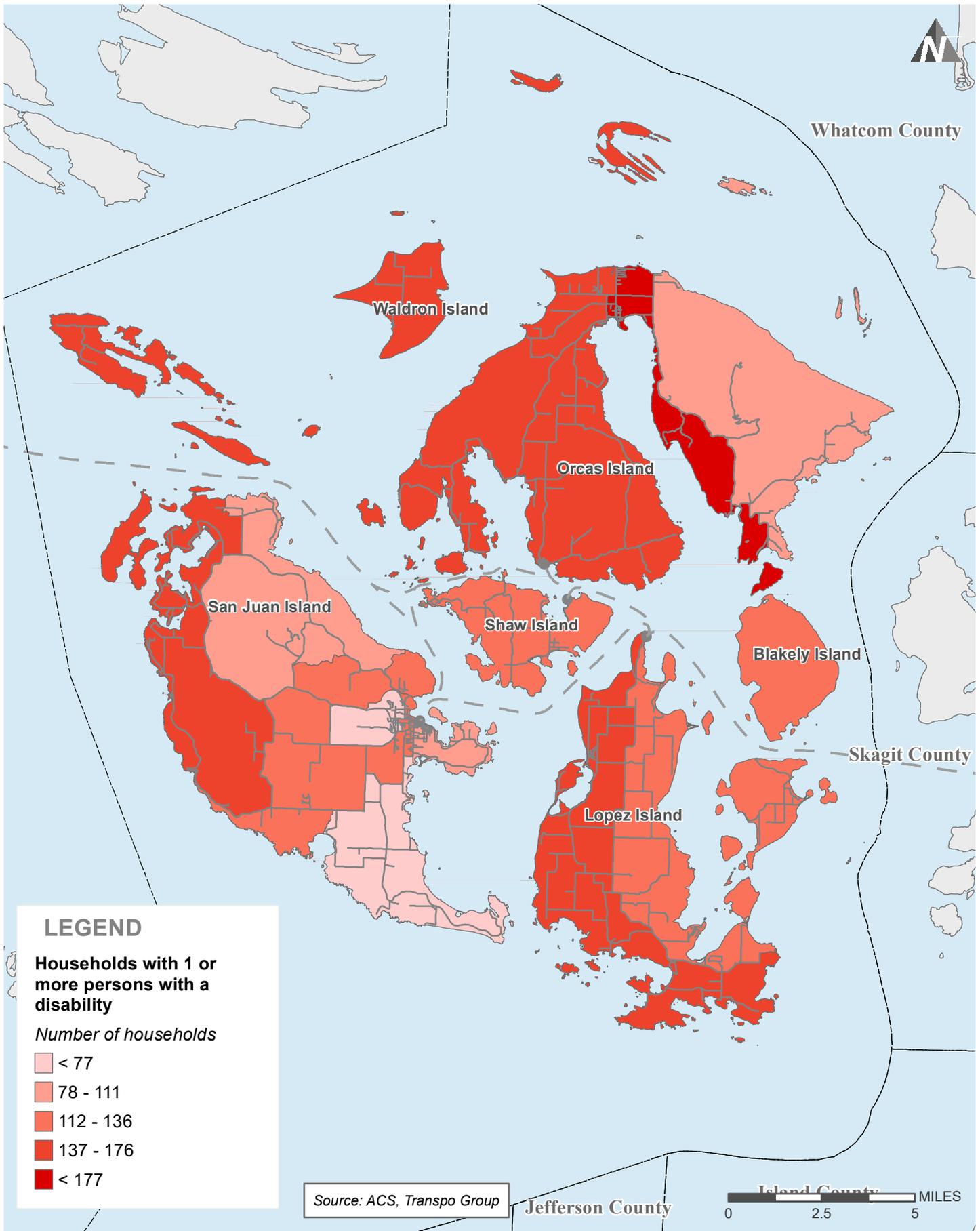
Disabilities

According to the 2016 ACS, the San Juan County's disability population increased from 1,701 people in 2012 to 2,068 people in 2016 (from 10.7 percent to 12.7 percent of the county's total population). In 2016, approximately 22 percent of seniors of age 65 and above had some type of disability, and almost four percent of youth were listed as with disability. Disabilities are categorized as difficulty with hearing or vision, or with a cognitive, ambulatory, or self-care difficulty. While not all disabilities impede someone's mobility, many disabilities greatly limit the individual's ability to travel independently.

San Juan County medical facilities, including physical therapy, are located in the three island centers. Some mental health and chemical dependency services are available on both San Juan and Orcas Islands, but many islanders travel to the Friday Harbor office of Compass Health to receive their care. Figure 6 shows the location of residents in San Juan county living with a disability.

Low income population

Nearly 11 percent of the county's total population are categorized as low-income, based on 2016 US Census data. The county's low-income population remained nearly stable with 11 percent of total population in 2012 (1,748 people) and 10.7 percent in 2016 (1,749 people) in 2016. As of 2016, 17 percent of youth were considered low-income, and five percent of seniors older 65 years old were considered low-income. Figure 7 shows the location of low in-come residents in San Juan County.

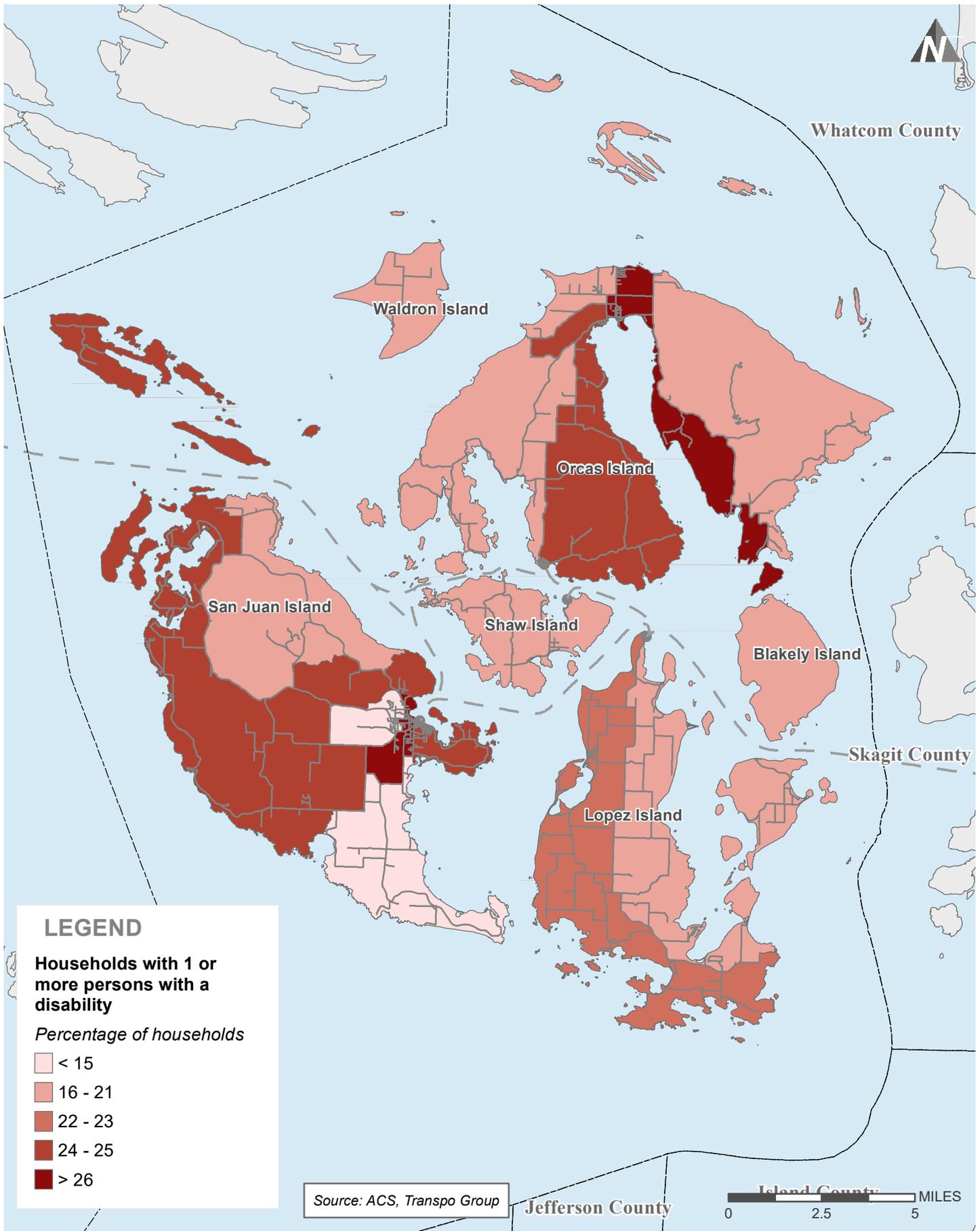


Individuals with a Disability

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning



FIGURE 6-A

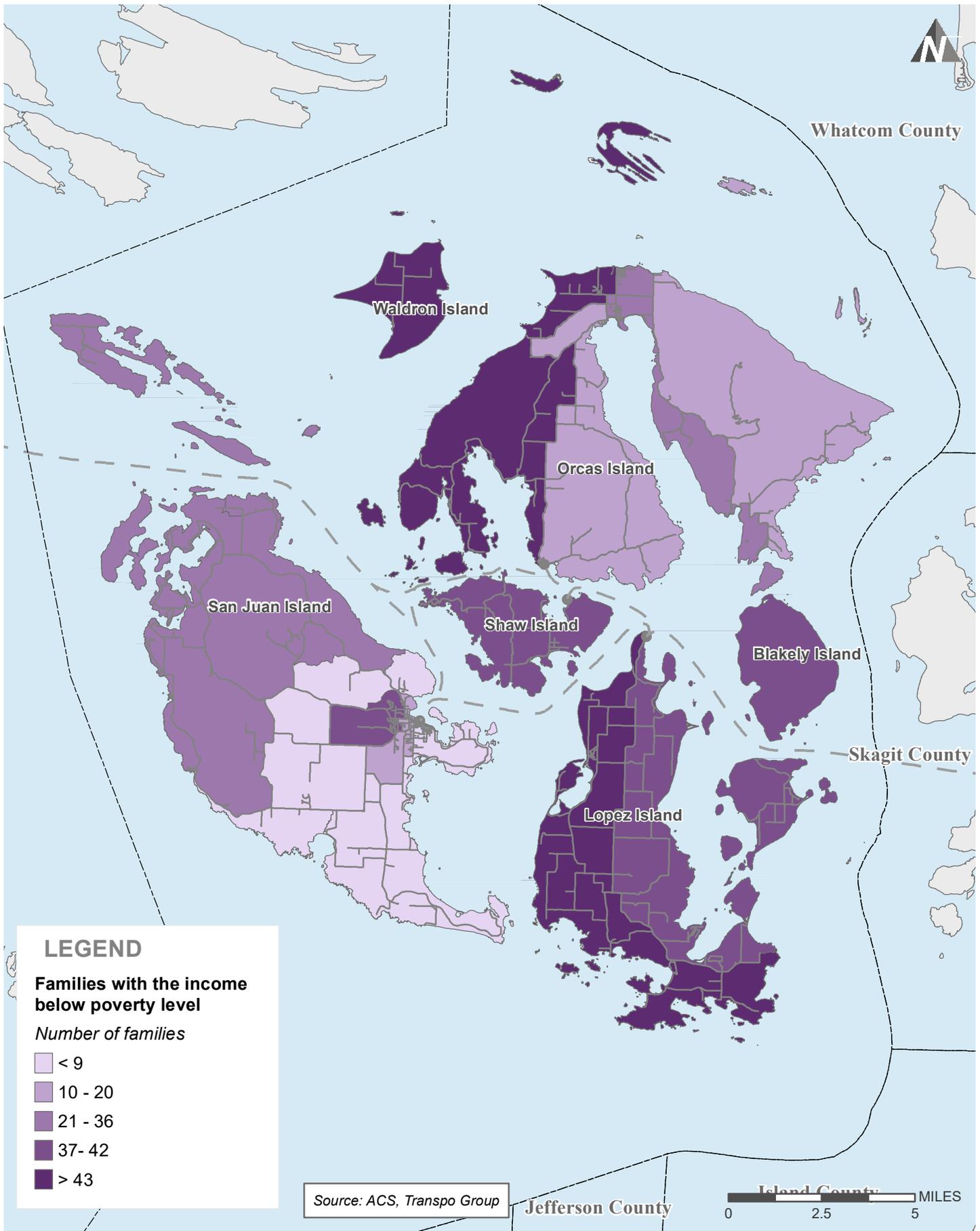


Individuals with a Disability

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

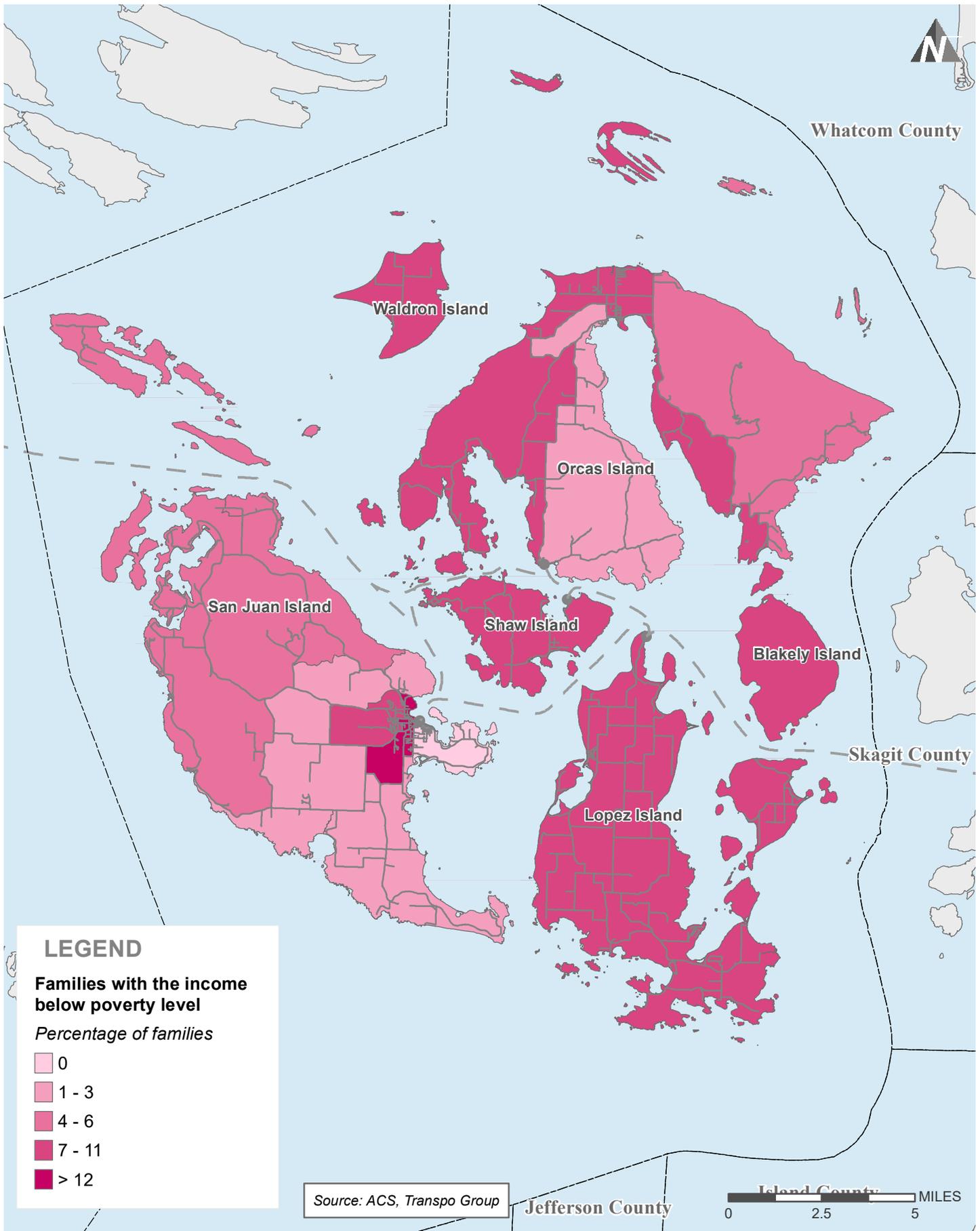


FIGURE 6-B



Low-Income Families

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning



Low-Income Families

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning



FIGURE

7-B

No access to a vehicle

This category will generally include at least some of the County's three most transportation- vulnerable groups: seniors, people with disabilities, and people who are defined as low-income. Based on 2016 ACS, approximately four percent of county's population doesn't have access to a vehicle. This rate is smaller than the state and the national level, however the rural nature of the county and the lack of extensive public transportation system in the county presents mobility challenges for the population without a car.

Figure 8 shows the location of San Juan County residents living without access to a vehicle.

Unemployed

As of 2016, approximately five percent of the total county's population were unemployed. The county's unemployment rate is lower than the state and national level. This number may possibly be related to the high proportion of seniors, who may be retired, or who may want or need employment but are not eligible to file if they have been out of the workforce for some time. The location of unemployed San Juan County residents is shown in Figure 9. San Juan County's unemployment rate also tends to fluctuate greatly between the busy summer season and slower winter season when less part-time, tourist driven work is available.

Veterans

Veterans are a diverse population and are eligible for benefits through the Veteran's Affairs Administration, which includes funding for Veterans' Administration-related special needs transportation services. Applications for Veterans' Assistance Funds are available at American Legion Posts, senior centers, and libraries on San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas Islands; at the San Juan County Council Office; and at Sheriff's offices throughout the county. As of 2016, veterans comprised approximately 11 percent of the total county's population. Figure 10 shows the location and relative density of veterans living in San Juan County.

Linguistic isolation

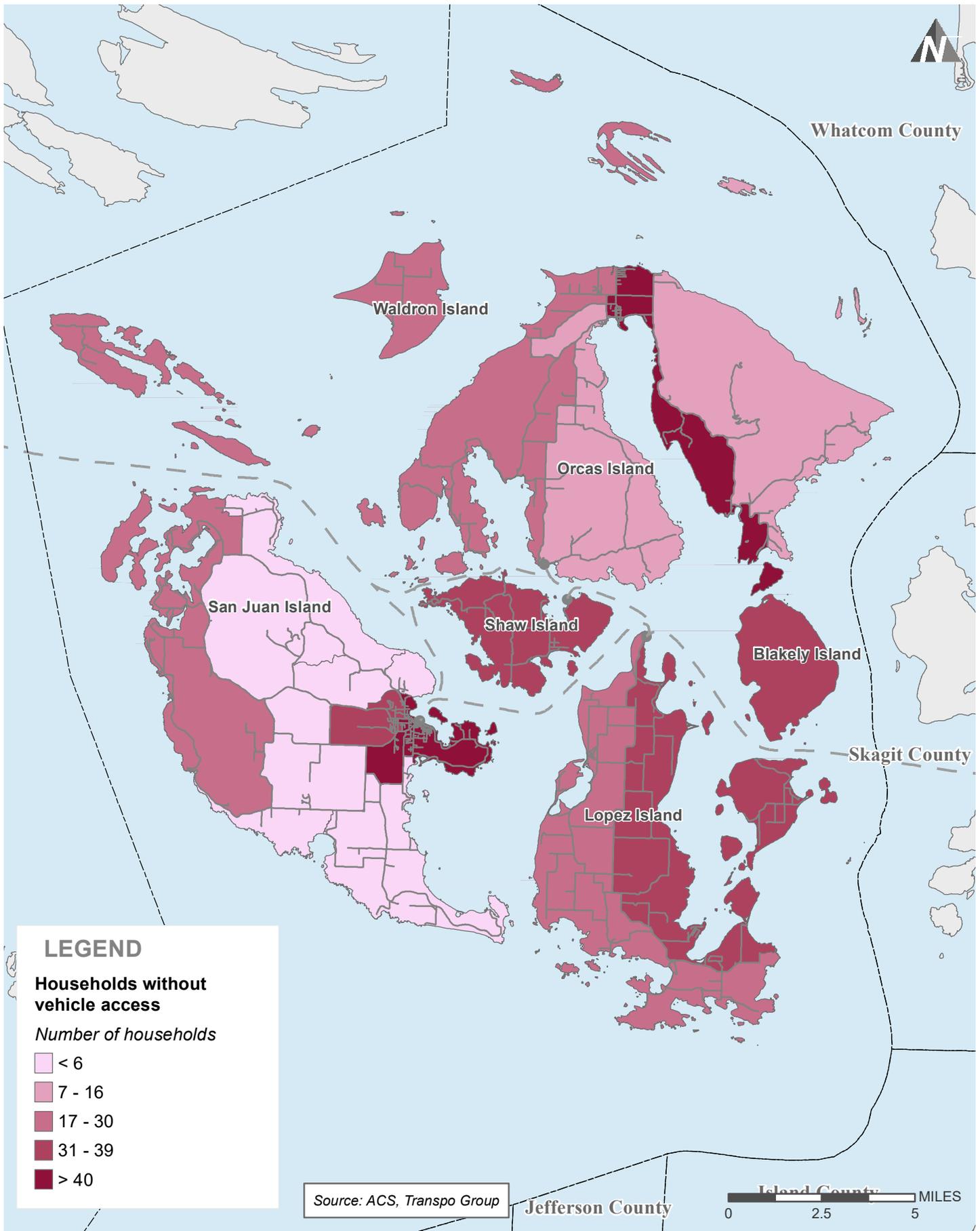
Linguistically isolated households are households in which no adult (someone over fourteen years of age) speaks English "very well". Statewide comparisons in the WSHSTP indicate that the highest number of linguistically isolated households are generally in the most populated counties⁴. As of 2016, there are approximately two percent of the county's households that are linguistically isolated. The location of linguistically isolated households is shown in Figure 11.

Students

As of 2016, approximately 16 percent of the population in San Juan County is under nineteen years of age according to the U.S. Census Bureau. San Juan County's share of population under nineteen years is lower compared to a statewide average of 25 percent in the same age group and national average of approximately 26 percent.

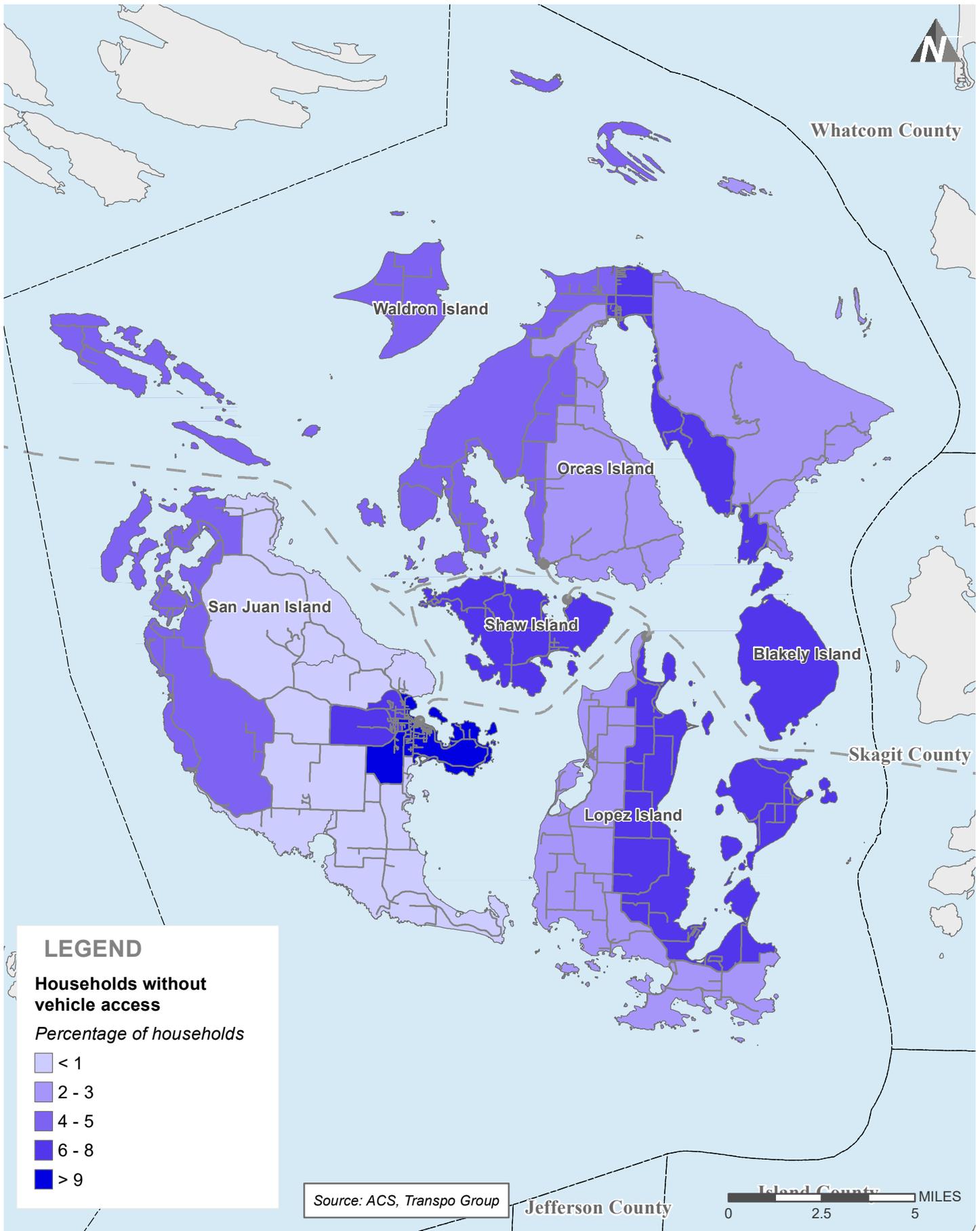
Public school systems are served by school buses. Private schools, including preschools and daycare centers, are not. Many families and students drive to school.

⁴ http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/acct/HSTP/Statewide%20HSTP_022714.pdf



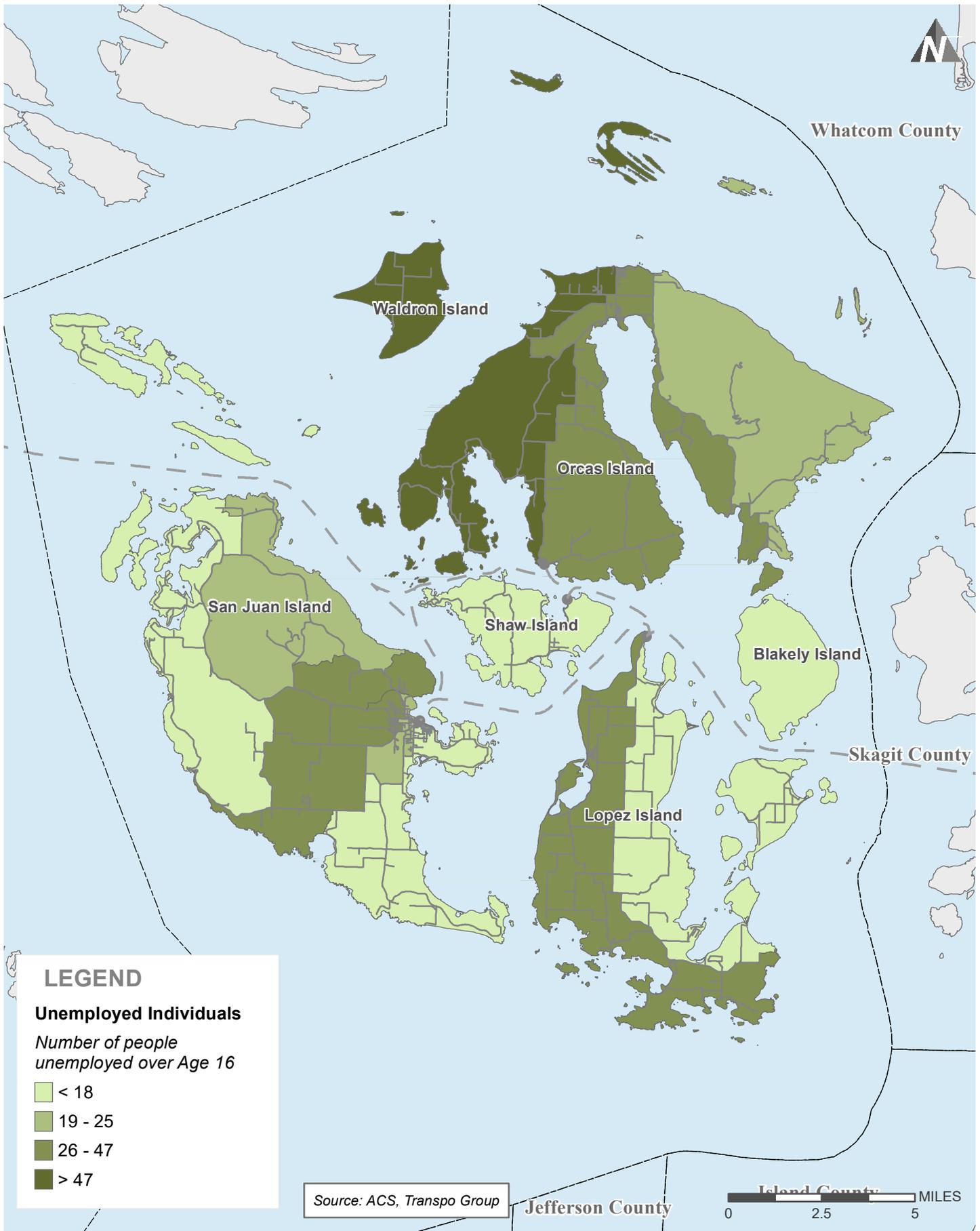
Households with No Access to a Vehicle
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

FIGURE 8-A



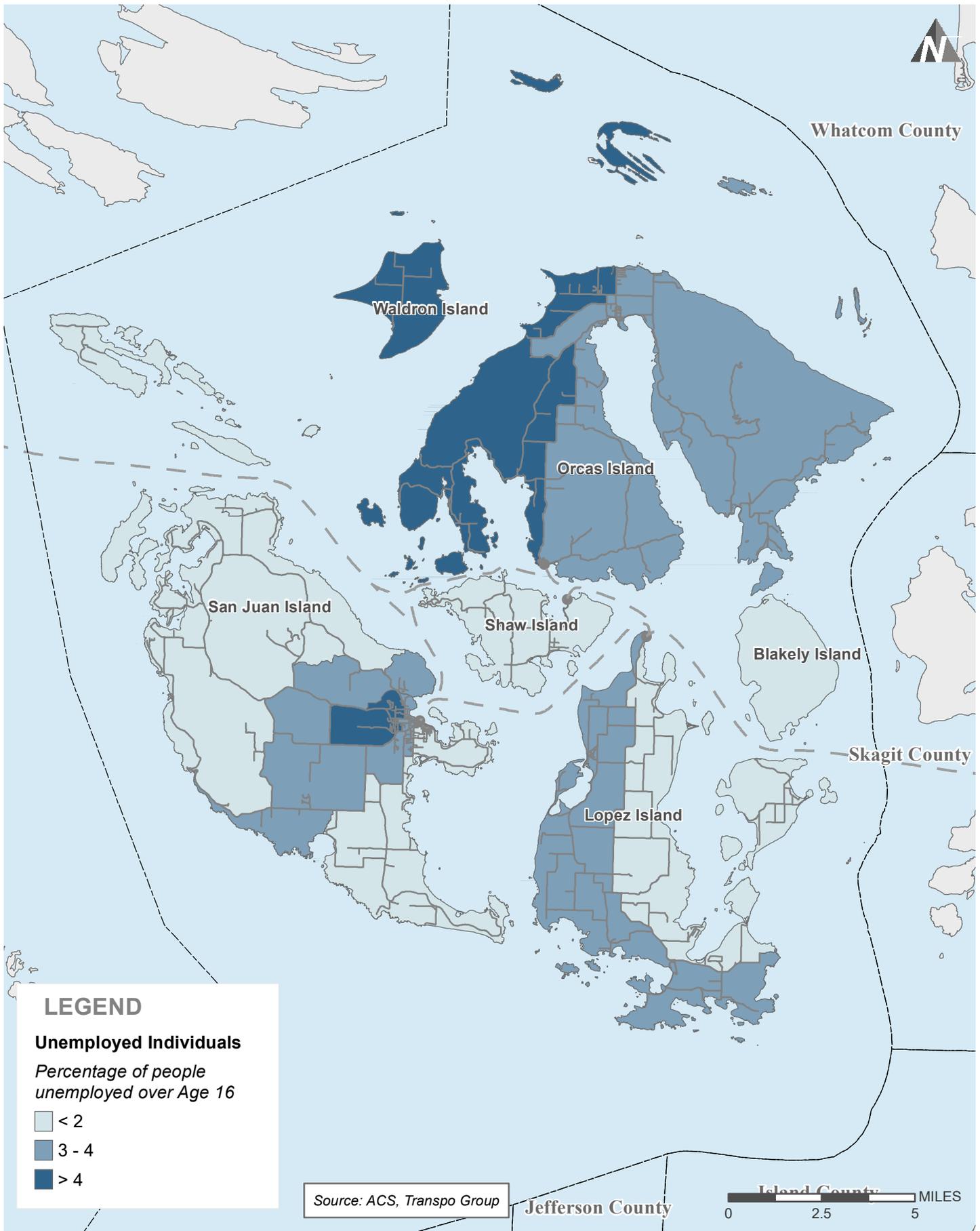
Households with No Access to a Vehicle
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

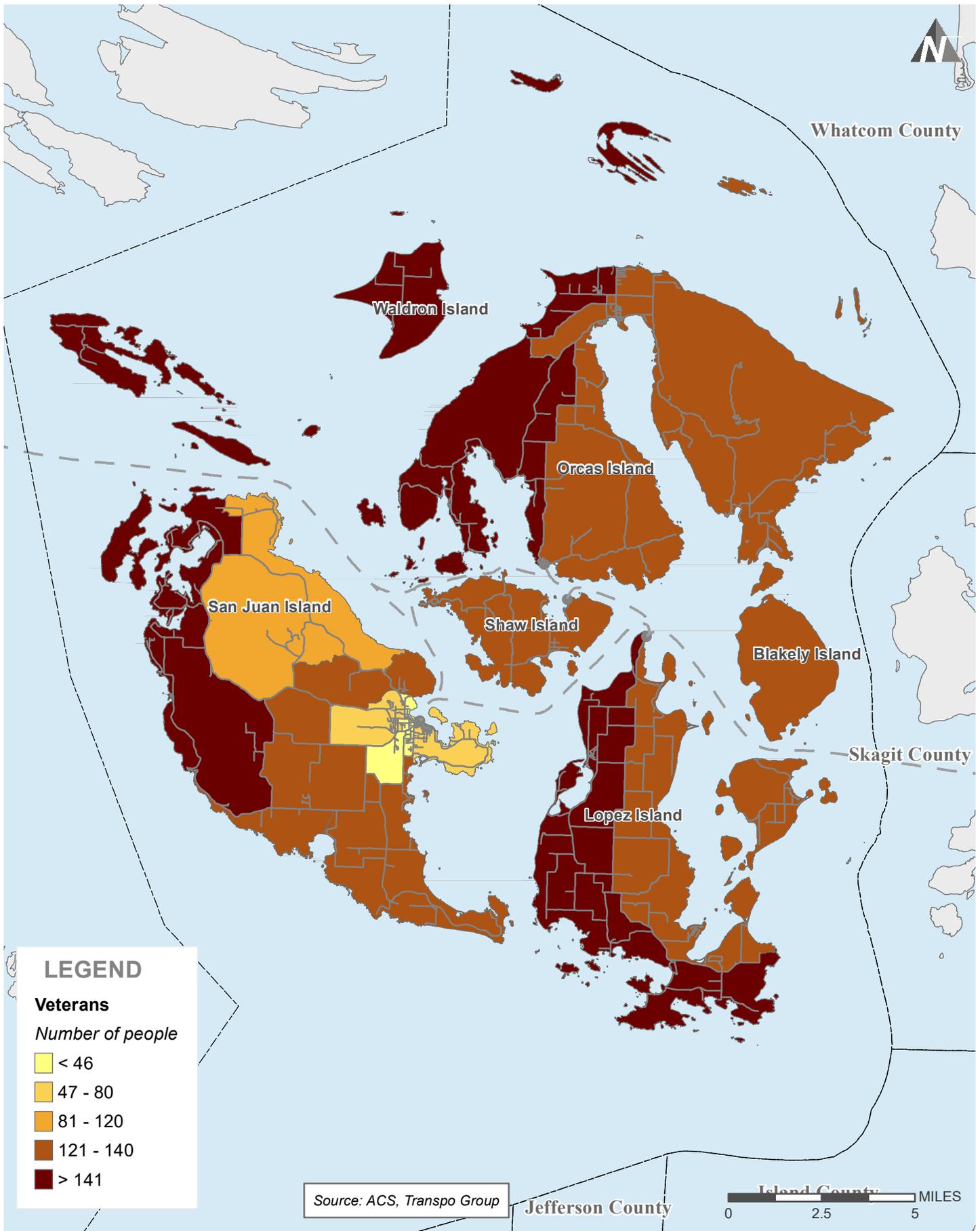
FIGURE 8-B



Unemployed Individuals
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

FIGURE 9-A



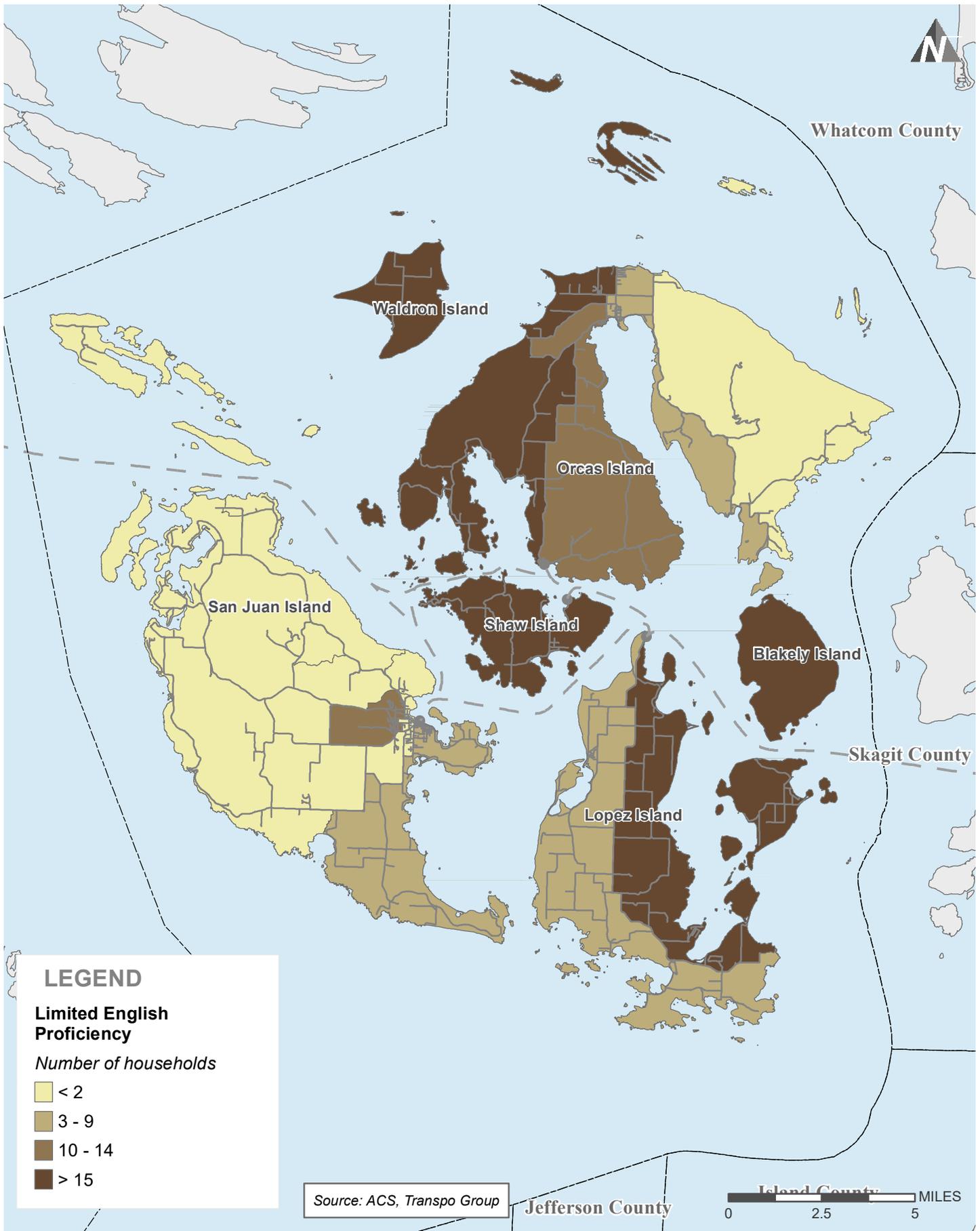




Veterans in San Juan County
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

FIGURE

10-B



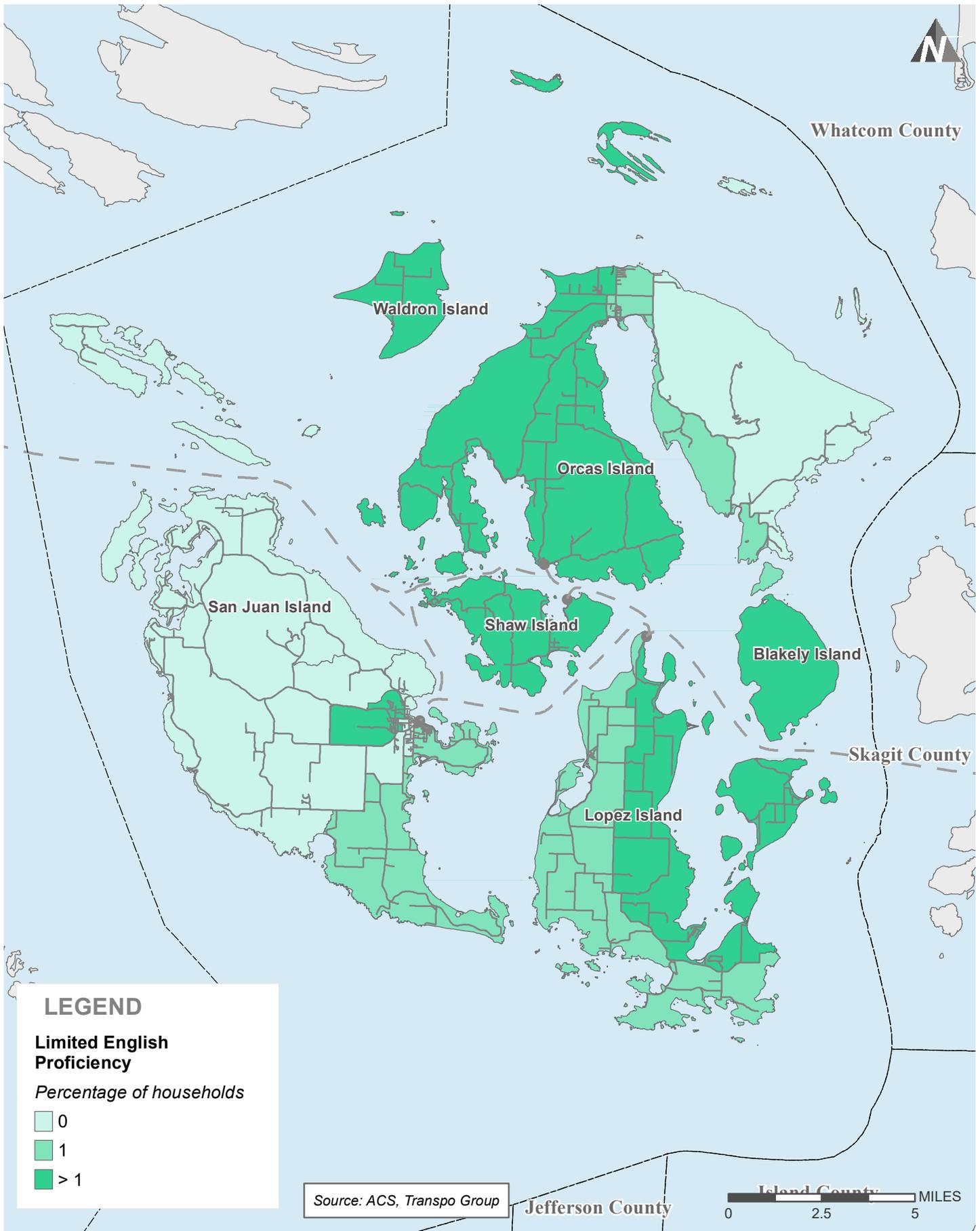
Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning



FIGURE

11-A



Individuals with Limited English Proficiency
 San Juan County Human Services Transportation Planning

FIGURE

11-B

Chapter 4 Participation, Issues, and Discussions

Participation

The 2018 Human Services Transportation Plan Update process followed a similar format to the 2014 update. Focused on key stakeholders, the participation process was used to identify service gaps and evaluate current programs. These stakeholders included the San Juan County Director of Health & Community Services, representatives from San Juan County Public Works Department, Family Resource Centers, Senior Centers, the TVP transportation providers and users, and a few members of the interested public.

- Family Resource Centers provide social services on Lopez, Orcas and San Juan islands and are a contact point for community services, including the TVP. With small island populations, staff workers get to know the community, and understand how to best assist families and individuals in need of services. Family resource centers also issue vouchers for Washington State Ferry fares.
- Senior Centers on San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas Islands acquired newer, reliable and accessible vans with the help of San Juan County and funding from WSDOT in 2012-13. The vans are used for weekly lunches and for other activities, including trips to the mainland for medical trips, errands and events.
- TVP providers are the local taxi companies, four on San Juan Island, and two on Orcas Island and a network of automobile parts and service businesses on San Juan and Orcas Islands. State Ferry tickets can be obtained through any of the Family Resource Centers on each island. The TVP can be used for taxi rides, WSF fares, and for auto parts and repair services up to the amount of \$300.

Participation in the 2018 HSTP update was kicked off by a press release inviting the public to participate in an online transportation survey. This survey was also sent directly to stakeholders, TVP providers and clients, with a paper copy available upon request. The survey received 95 responses over the course of the plan update.

The press release also announced the dates of public outreach meetings designed to elicit feedback and spark discussion on transportation needs and programs in the County. A public outreach meeting was held on each of the 3 ferry served islands.

The first meeting was held on November 13, 2018 on San Juan Island, with meetings on Orcas and Lopez following the next two days. Additional interviews with stakeholders or interested community members were conducted continuously throughout the process.

Although they were well-advertised online, through newspapers, direct email and telephone invitations, the public meetings were lightly attended. However, most of those who did attend, or were interviewed, were persons involved in using or administering the County Human Services Transportation programs.

The documentation of meetings and interviews is found in Appendix A.

Summary of discussions and issues

Meetings and interviews were focused around four major questions.

- ***What are the common destinations, themes, or kind of TVP experience?***

Destinations/origins

Common destinations for each island are typically the WSF terminals/ landings or a village or town where amenities and services are clustered. Examples include Eastsound on Orcas, Lopez Village on Lopez Island, and Friday Harbor and Roche Harbor on San Juan Island. See maps of each island in Chapter 3.

Many islanders need medical services that are provided rarely or not at all in San Juan County and, to obtain them, those island residents must travel at least as far as Anacortes – sometimes on to Bellingham, Mount Vernon, or Burlington – to meet their appointments or hospital stays.

Besides medical services, common destinations are:

- Senior Centers,
- Family Resource Centers
- Grocery stores
- Other retailers, such as hardware and clothing stores (including thrift and resale shops)
- Food banks
- Libraries
- Churches
- Recreational events

By far the most common origin and destination listed was simply “home.” Origins for necessary travel are not only found within the single incorporated town and the two urban growth areas, but they are widely distributed throughout the hilly islands on winding rural roads.

Many people in need of transportation services are dependent on friends and neighbors to provide them rides into town or to the ferry from their home. However these favors can tend to get used up very quickly when people have consistent transportation needs.

Roni Becker, the Senior Services specialist on Lopez Island, commented that on Lopez there is not an expectation of a robust transportation system. People have chosen to live in a remote rural area, and so they understand that things like transportation will be a challenge.

Beth Helstein, the volunteer outreach coordinator for the San Juan Island Library made the comment that transportation to recreational and cultural destinations should be considered as some kind of priority since participation in community activities has preventive health benefits in reducing isolation, depression and anxiety. Libraries, theaters, parks, and museums may fall to the bottom of the list of destinations in the scenario of a tight transportation budget, but she would like to make sure they are not excluded. The TVP program does not currently limit the activities destinations one can use the vouchers for.

Transportation Voucher Program

Overall response to the Transportation Voucher Program was overwhelmingly positive, with the most common response being that the program should be a top priority for the County and potentially expanded or see an increase in funding.

Most participants found the TVP program easy to sign up for, and many participants were interested in ways the program could be expanded, or in ways that the program could allocate funds so that those with very serious medical or other hardships could have slots reserved for them. While it was understood that all participants in the program are experiencing some level of hardship, there are still different degrees and a person who might be in desperate need of transportation services later in the grant funding cycle may not be able to access them due to the overall demand. Some suggested a tiered system.

Lopez Island mostly uses vouchers for ferry transportation to Anacortes on the mainland where the Lopez Village clinic has ties with specialists and services at Island Hospital and Clinic, and other service providers are more numerous than in San Juan County.

Lopez Islanders would like to have a taxi service or other link to the ferry terminal, along with a few mechanics who are affiliated with the voucher program. Another idea from the Lopez Family Resource Center was to have an emergency fund for seniors or low income clients that come in with an emergency and need transportation to the extent of only one ferry ticket.

The voucher program extends to the ferry system, which is valuable for medical services, but transportation on the mainland can still be complicated. Questions were raised about extending their use with mainland transportation providers.

Some participants asked if we could extend the program for vouchers to the mainland. They commented that bus schedules are challenging, and that Bellingham, Mount Vernon, and Burlington (with common destinations for SJ County residents) are not covered by the voucher system.

- ***How do people find out about services? Do they need help to get them? Can we use technology to get the word out?***

Outreach

It was suggested that the County could improve their communication to clients, and since recently there has been an extensive waitlist for the program some applicants may have even forgotten they had applied by the time they are approved.

The LIFRC (Lopez Family Resource Center) feels that we are reaching the people who need the services. Comments indicated that, at this point, we don't need to advertise because it appears there are plenty of clients.

People mostly learn about services and the program through the senior centers or resource centers, and word of mouth works for those who do not use them. Many TVP clients do not use technology. The success of the program makes more people want to get involved and use it. Word of mouth builds credibility.

Website

Maintaining and improving the use of the TVP webpage on the County website was a strategy suggested by multiple participants. Given that it is becoming increasingly common for people to seek services through the County website, participants suggested the webpage be updated more consistently and include timely information for program participants and providers.

Senior Service Centers

Each now has an accessible van, but there is a widespread opinion that more drivers are needed (possibly with some form of payment) for the vans to meet more of the needs for on-call transportation, or to establish a regular route beyond the senior center lunches and a few mainland trips.

A San Juan senior van makes a run to the mainland a few times a month. Orcas Senior Center has a similar schedule. The Lopez van is available. There is a price per trip and destinations are variable.

Could there be set days that the van would go to the ferry? What are the patterns that would set such a schedule? Or would the schedule set the pattern? Shuttles with set routes for the summer were introduced on San Juan and Orcas islands; they are mostly tourist-oriented, with recreational destinations.

- ***What's working?***

In general, the TVP program is working well for both providers, clients and those who sign clients up for the program. San Juan County has made strides in the past year to improve the program's communication with providers, including more timely and consistent release of the program's active user roster and an update of the program's application form.

Majority of clients stated that signing up for the program was very easy and low barrier. Participation in the program is very strong, and a waitlist to sign up for the program shows that the need and available clients outweighs the current capacity of the program.

Almost all of the program's vendors state that they were reimbursed in a very timely fashion when they submitted billing's to the County.

- ***What's not working?***

Perry Pugh of Napa Auto Parts was concerned about clients abusing the system with regards to the auto repair and auto parts portion of the TVP program. He has seen clients use vouchers to buy auto parts for others who are not program participants, use the voucher to buy supplies and tools rather than auto parts, and sometimes spend the entire amount of their voucher award as soon as they receive it rather than wait for an emergency.

There were many conversations with stakeholders about the way the County could better manage the TVP funds for people who have emergency or serious needs later in the grant cycle. Due to the cyclical nature of the grant and the need exceeding available capacity, providers often find their clients are not able to be awarded a voucher later in the grant cycle when it is desperately needed.

Curt Van Hying of the non-profit Round Towner suggested that the County needs to have 12 months of usage data to accurately gauge what is working effectively within the TVP and what is not. More information is needed about how people are using the vouchers. More data is also needed on the usage of the Senior Center vans.

It was also suggested by some that the County consider setting some sort of prices for providers who accept vouchers. Some taxi providers are significantly more expensive than others, which means if clients use those services their voucher is used up sooner. The County's model for the TVP program is very low barrier and with the expectation's that the client knows how best to use their voucher, but it may help to put some kind of system in place to encourage the use of these funds to stretch as far as possible.

While there are funds available to Medicaid clients who need transportation to medical appointments, there are not currently any Medicaid transportation providers in the County.

Cara Cohn of Washington Vocational Services commented that the lack of transportation services once TVP funds have been exhausted creates a significant safety issue for people with transportation needs, especially those with a disability. Cara stated that many of her clients with a disability travel on foot to get to work on roads with limited or no walking path, sidewalk or even shoulder, sometimes to multiple jobs and in all weather.

Ongoing efforts to engage stakeholders

After this version of the plan is complete, checking in with program participants and with the general public will be included as ongoing outreach and monitoring of the programs. The website can be revised to make it easier to navigate.

Ongoing communication with service providers works to continually fine-tune the existing programs. Interviews or meetings with key stakeholder groups, in addition to questionnaires given to larger groups will help determine what other services may be needed and when they become feasible.

There was some limited interest in forming a citizen's advisory group to work on transportation service needs in the County. The County may explore over the planning period forming just such a body if the requisite number of interested community members can be found.

Chapter 5 Transportation Options and Services

San Juan County does not have the ground transportation services ordinarily found in mainland areas. Multi-modal infrastructure is scarce, there is no year-round public transportation, and the roads are slow and windy with long distances between destinations.

Most county residents fill their transportation needs with a private vehicle. Alternatives include vans and buses that serve particular populations (seniors and students), private taxis, and intermittent volunteer drivers organized by social service agencies, or friends and neighbors going in the same direction. Some county residents walk the road or trails, use bicycles, scooters, horses, or hitchhike.

Marine transportation for cars and most foot passengers is provided by the Washington State Ferry System with service to four of the San Juan Islands and to the mainland via Anacortes, in Skagit County.

Emergency medical transport to the mainland is provided via helicopter, small airplane, and boats operated by County sheriff and fire departments, as well as many volunteer pilots and skippers.

Public Transit – Fixed Route

San Juan Transit operates three fixed routes serving San Juan Island, Lopez Island, and Orcas Island. The service is provided daily during Spring, Summer, and Fall on San Juan Island, and limited to Friday, Saturday, and Sunday during Summer on Lopez Island and Orcas Island. There is no service provided during winter months. The fare is \$5.00 for each boarding and \$15.00 for the daily pass. Table 3.5. summarizes the transit routes.

Table 3.5. San Juan County Existing Transit

Island	Area Served	Operating Seasons	Operating DOW	Approximate Operating Hours
San Juan	Friday Harbor/Snug Harbor/ Lime Kiln Pt. State Park	Spring, Summer, Fall	Daily	Spring: 9:45 a.m. – 6:20 p.m. Summer: 9:25 a.m. – 6:20 p.m. Fall: 9:15 a.m. – 6:20 p.m.
Lopez	Lopez Ferry/ Lopez Village Park/ Shark Reef Park/Lopez Schools/Spencer Spit State Park	Summer	Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Holidays	Summer: 10:21 a.m. & 6:14 p.m.
Orcas	Ferry Landing/ West Sound/Deer Harbor/Rosario Resort	Summer	Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Holidays	Summer: 9:15 a.m. & 5:10 p.m.

Source: San Juan Transit, 2018

The routes serve the majority of the tourists’ attractions like Roche Harbor Village, Whale Watching Park, Lavender Farm, Museums, and Camps.

Publicly funded transportation providers

The Transportation Voucher Program is San Juan County’s unique, public/private, countywide multi-modal transportation program, which began in September of 2012. The voucher program is designed to support the transportation-vulnerable members of the community access as many local providers of transportation services as possible. It is a creative solution designed to serve as many people as possible in a challenging logistical environment.

The purpose of this project is to increase independence and community access. It works with a partnership of county government, non-profit organizations, and local private providers to link participants with transportation for essential trips, such as medical appointments, shopping, or church. Administrative services are provided by the County Health & Community Services department; and by multiple staff members of the Family Resource Centers on three islands.

San Juan County is remote in a multitude of ways. It is spread across an archipelago, and can be remote for individuals, even on the same island. The reason the TVP works is that it is evenly accessible, networks with participants and providers, and creates flexibility within a menu of island providers, which leads to efficiency in participation and equity in provider distribution. Current TVP providers include six taxi companies, five auto mechanic shops, a private transit company, two NAPA auto-parts locations, a bicycle shop, and a mainland medical services transport provider. The TVP also provides ferry fares for participants through all three family resource centers.

A strong network of public administrators and private providers support the two major avenues of the program, one feeding the other. Participants apply via computer, by mail, or in person, often with help from senior center or family resource center staff. Eligibility for the TVP is primarily based on income and is available to anyone with the income less than \$25,000. Participants can qualify by self-declaring elderly or disabled. Qualifying participants are offered a \$300 voucher that can be used for services from a variety of pre-approved transportation providers.

During the TVP's most recent grant cycle beginning July 2017 through early 2019, the TVP program had awarded vouchers to 382 clients with an additional 85 on the waitlist for a voucher.

Senior Services vehicles

In 2010, a WSDOT capitol grant enabled the Senior Services facilities on three islands to each purchase a new ADA-compliant van. The Senior Services Council (SSC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation which has purchased additional passenger vehicles used by each Senior Services facility to assist seniors with transportation needs. San Juan County staff coordinates the use of each island's Senior Services vehicles to transport seniors and people with disabilities with fuel and vehicle maintenance costs provided by the SSC.

The Senior Services vehicles bring seniors to the centers multiple days a week for lunches on each island. On-demand services can be included in the weekly lunch service, and these after-lunch stops can include trips to grocery stores, the post office, medical appointments, and other errands. Senior Services vehicles are also used for monthly trips to the mainland, to attend medical appointments and for shopping. All of the drivers of these vehicles are pre-screened volunteers.

School districts

San Juan County has four separate public school districts. Each district determines which students are transported, what routes are used, and how transportation is provided. School districts provide bus services from home to school and back. On an elective basis, transportation to and from extracurricular events is provided, supplemented by student fees raised by individual families or club events.

Students who have an Individualized Education Plan to meet specific needs are transported via accessible van to and from required educational, medical, or social services using school district vehicles or service providers.

Private transportation services

Not-for-profit

The 'RoundTowner is provided by the San Juan Islands Shuttle System, which is a Washington state non-profit, with IRS 501(c)(3) status, and was organized exclusively for charitable purposes.

Specifically, San Juan Islands Shuttle System's mission is to provide free or affordable transportation for senior citizens, people with disabilities, and the rural general public in the San Juan Islands. The 'RoundTowner is available by appointment daily from 8 AM to 6 PM. The service is provided in Friday Harbor to the destinations such as Ferry Landing, Post Office, Library, and Friday Harbor High School.

A new service being operated on Orcas is a program called "Orcas Door to Door." The program is an assistive transportation service for Orcas Islanders age 60 plus or for people with disabilities, either temporary or permanent, that result in their inability to drive. The program is available for those who need door-to-door assistance to access essential services and social events in order to remain healthy and active within our community. Orcas Door to Door attempts to formalize the process of friends and neighbors providing others with a lift by coordinating volunteer drivers who are insured and have passed a background check.

In its second year of operation, Orcas Door to Door provided 625 rides to 25 island residents, totaling over 5,300 miles. Also, during 2018, 24 new member/riders registered and 8 new volunteer drivers came on board. The program has now 27 vetted volunteers and 55 members, 33 of the members have requested rides. The

remaining members registered with the program in anticipation that they may need rides in the future.

Independent taxi services

San Juan Island and Orcas Island have multiple taxi services available year-round. Lopez Island has intermittent taxi providers, typically never more than one but often times none available at all.

Airport Shuttle Service

Transportation shuttle service to the SeaTac Airport is provided by Island Airporter. The shuttle operates between Friday Harbor, Roche Harbor, and SeaTac Airport from Monday to Friday. There are additional private airport shuttles that operate between the SeaTac Airport and Anacortes ferry terminal.

Regional transportation coordination

Washington State Ferries

State-operated car ferries serve persons accessing the county from the mainland and those traveling to different islands within the county. They are a marine extension of the Washington State highway system. Published daily schedules and fares change seasonally. Four islands in San Juan County are served from the terminal at Anacortes via multiple routes, and one circulates as an interisland route.

Numerous people commute from their home islands to other islands for commerce. Foot and bicycle passengers traveling within the county are not charged a fare. Many workers, students, and many different community members travel on the interisland route.

All ferry terminals provide medical preferential loadings to passengers who find it detrimental to their health to wait in a ferry line. For the trips to and from Anacortes, a doctor can fax a “medical preferential form” to the terminal stating the reason for priority loading.

Nonprofit organization ferry accounts

The Family Resource Centers maintain commercial accounts with WSF and are charged at a discounted rate. The criteria for certification includes not-for-profit tax status and having a primary purpose to:

- Help clients with medical issues.
- Provide clients with low-income social services.
- Help clients suffering from domestic violence.
- Provide clients with employment-seeking services.
- Help clients with social security questions.

Tickets supplied by Family Resource Centers are funded through various donations and by the Transportation Voucher program.

Anacortes medical taxi connections

San Juan County residents can receive free round-trip taxi service from the Anacortes Ferry Terminal when obtaining medical services from Island Hospital, from a hospital-operated clinic, or outpatient service. The ride service is provided by Mert’s Taxi and requires one day’s advance notice. The patient will be met upon arrival to the Anacortes Ferry Terminal.

Skagit Transit (SKAT)

SKAT provides mainland-connecting service from the ferries through Route 410, which stops at the Anacortes WSF ferry terminal. The service provides connection to the March's Point Park & Ride were additional routes connect to Burlington and Mount Vernon. However, the variability in ferry arrival and departure times, coupled with the practice of changing the ferry schedule seasonally, and the reality of a fixed-route system like SKAT's dramatically reduce the reliability of this transportation option. If the ferry is as much as ten minutes late, the fixed- route bus must continue on and passengers must wait for the next scheduled bus, typically at least an hour later.

Emergency medical services

Airports in San Juan County

In addition to providing direct transportation access, the airports in the county play an important role in emergency medical evacuation. Most of the inhabited islands have at least basic airstrips, which are owned and maintained by private entities or local port authorities.

Air ambulance service in the county is via helicopter. Island Air also provides a specially configured small airplane equipped to accommodate stretchers and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel.

Marinas

The Sheriff's boat is moored at the Friday Harbor Port Marina and responds to medical emergencies on all the islands and surrounding waters. Equipped and certified as a marine ambulance, the boat is used mostly during the stormiest winter months when the weather precludes access from helicopter or planes.

Coordination with Emergency Management Agencies

In the event of, and subsequent to the onset of an emergency/disaster condition, the San Juan County Department of Emergency Management convenes objective based planning coordination using teleconference and in person meetings. Participants may include: responders, public works, NGOs, Human Services and other providers/stakeholders related to the emergent incident, or consequences of the incident/event/condition. This includes offices/representatives of Human Services and NGOs responsible for provision of services for residents with special transportation needs.

In 2005, San Juan County adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) for All Hazard Incident Management. Consequently, an Incident Management Team may be convened to plan for a long notice event, or for response and long term recovery from an emergency or disaster event. Participants in this planning structure may be assigned a position/role and area of responsibility under the NIMS Incident Command System.

A member of Health & Community Services may be called upon to serve as a "Transportation Branch Director" when participating as a member of a local Incident Command Team. These roles and areas of responsibility are outlined in the County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and further detailed in the County Departments Emergency or Operations Plans.

Working within this structure allows assessment specific to the situation to best utilize existing resources, identify gaps at the time of need, identify existing resources available for sharing to address the need, and source outside resources if needed. These resources may include programs, people and equipment.

Specific plans to identify where vulnerable populations may be located in the event of a disaster include:

- Using existing Senior Services contact lists for seniors/vulnerable residents, including the list of “Meal on Wheels” delivery addresses.
- Using client contact lists from existing NGOs/non-profits in the county providing services to these residents.
- Working with the Assessor’s Office and County GIS for list of properties and addresses which qualify for special consideration for disability or senior citizen tax programs.
- Using provisions of [SB 5346](#) effective 7/24/2015 to provide first responders with contact information for subscribers to Life Alert services during an emergency.
- Working within the limits allowed by HIPAA to obtain information from local EMS, Health Dept and health care providers to locate residents with known special needs.

Other transportation services

Unemployed seeking work

Participants in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, WorkFirst, or Work Source programs are served by the Career Center in Friday Harbor, which is operated by the Northwest Workforce Development Council. Participants from other islands must travel by interisland ferry to visit this office in Friday Harbor and those enrolled in unemployment assistance must occasionally travel to Mount Vernon.

Veteran’s assistance

The Veterans Advisory Fund was established by San Juan County in 2007 and provides emergency services to indigent veterans, their dependents, widows, widowers, and/or orphans. San Juan County has approximately 2,500 veterans. Requests for transportation (or other) assistance can be made at the American Legion post or at the County Council offices. A county-appointed advisory committee authorizes the expenses.

Technology used in transportation assistance and ITS Systems

The most visible and used technology is the website for the Human Services, which is one of the programs listed on the San Juan County Health and Community Services opening page. The website supplies applicants with a downloadable application form for the voucher program. It links voucher program participants to service providers. Additionally, the Health & Community Services communicates important information regarding eligible riders to service providers in the voucher program via email.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are not currently implemented in San Juan County, and the county is not included in a regional ITS architecture system.

Feedback received through the public participation process of the HSTP indicated that many users of the TVP program are not comfortable using technological systems. Still, expanding the use of technology and ITS systems in the County represent an opportunity for the County TVP and other HST programs moving forward.

Ideas that were mentioned during the public participation process for ways to better utilize technology to aid in transportation services included:

- Develop an App to assist patrons with connecting to the various modes of transportation needed to commute to destinations on the mainland, and to provide transportation information about in County Services, similar to the ITS project “Hopelink One Stop Access” in King County (p.11 of the WSDOT Transit ITS architecture report).
- Develop a call-center type network that could quickly connect clients to the appropriate transportation service, similar to the ITS project “Human Services Council Veterans Transportation Technology Improvement Project” in Southwest Washington (p.7 of the WSDOT Transit ITS architecture report).
- Develop a volunteer organizing website for on-call volunteer drivers similar to Orcas Door to Door.
- Issue pre-paid cards to TVP clients rather than using a system of reimbursing vendors.

Chapter 6 Service Gaps and Strategies

San Juan County is the only county in Washington State that has no public transit system other than a ferry. No island has bus service, except intermittent private bus services that operate in the summer months. San Juan and Orcas are the only islands that currently have taxi service.

Programs for human services transportation are available in San Juan County, and the TVP has substantially improved access to transportation services for many. However, the TVP program does not have secure funding, and further, longer term needs of a large number of transportation-vulnerable members of the community remain to be met.

Needs assessment

A feature of the needs assessment for this 2018 plan update has been to examine the performance of the programs developed in accordance with the goals and expectations established in the first plan update, published in 2014. Priority projects in the 2014 plan update were ranked under the headings:

- A. Maintain Organizational Capacity
- B. Expand Existing Transportation Options
- C. Create new In-County Services
- D. Expand Regional Connectivity

San Juan County’s Community Transportation Program (or Human Services Transportation Program), which developed from the 2010 Plan, has accomplished projects that carry out these priority directives of the 2010 Plan.

- On-demand taxi services (most of which are not ADA accessible) are available via the transportation voucher program on San Juan and Orcas Islands, and intermittently on Lopez Island. The transportation voucher program is also used towards the cost of ferry tickets, either as a single resource or to supplement other programs.
- Organizational capacity has been created through establishment of a mobility manager position in the San Juan County Health and Community Services Department in 2012. The Mobility Manager has coordinated funding, developed the Transportation Voucher Program, and increased communications among service providers and the population served by the countywide program.

- Substantial funds towards purchase of a new accessible van for three island senior centers was provided through a WSDOT capital grant. The grant was matched with Senior Center contributions, and three new vehicles were procured and are now in service.

San Juan County Health & Community Services developed and now administers the TVP. Using a website and electronic communications with service providers and participants, Health & Community Services coordinates and distributes information about transportation service providers to improve program effectiveness and accessibility. The TVP assists over six hundred persons each biennium to gain greater access to their community, be it medical care, social services, shopping, or recreation.

Using the needs discussed during the preparation of the 2014 Plan as a springboard, along with experience and programs developed since then, stakeholders have evaluated the current programs and looked ahead to improvements and expansion.

The stakeholders groups expressed their appreciation of current programs, which are addressing many of the previously identified gaps. So, the most current questions become:

- How can these services be maintained and improved?
- What are we doing well, what could be better?
- How can we more effectively reach the target population?

Beyond fine-tuning, revising, and expanding the successful TVP program, additional questions address potential future services:

- Expanding regional connectivity.
- Expanding use of existing vehicles.
- Establishing a scheduled route around the islands, or simply to meet scheduled ferry routes.

Table 6.1 identifies needs and service gaps that were found during the discussions and during public meetings with service providers and administrators, and in interviews with stakeholders. The identified needs and service gaps in 2018 remain very constant since the 2014 plan update.

Table 6.1. Needs and service gaps 2018

San Juan County needs and service gaps 2018
A consistent, year-round taxi service is needed on Lopez.
Once transportation program participants are on the mainland, connections with ground transportation are inadequate.
Ferry vouchers are helpful, but it still can be challenging to get to the ferry landing, and to get on the ferry when not in a vehicle.
Mobility-impaired walk-on passengers may be challenged with carrying anything, and with getting to ferry seating via elevator.
Public transportation with a regular, year-round route is not available.
More volunteer drivers are needed.
Use of senior vans is limited.
While many people are using the voucher program and senior vans, more outreach could reach even more who would use the programs.
The website navigation could be improved.
The TVP programs does not have secure funding.
Applications for the TVP program surpass available funding.
More data on the usage of transportation services is needed.

Identified needs and strategies

Most of the ideas identified in the meetings and interviews demonstrated themes and suggestions that were similar on each island. On all the islands in San Juan County, those who live or work outside the core village on their island cannot easily access transportation other than by personal vehicle. For those who cannot drive, dependency can lead to isolation.

The TVP has established a basic level of service for individuals whose basic necessary trips originate at their homes on rural roads. But this is a service that would not exist without grant- funded support.

For those who need to reach the mainland, there are additional challenges, as every mainland trip requires a ferry ride and associated trip links. Mobility-impaired passengers find traveling alone on the ferry to be very difficult, and, if possible, bring along assistance if they have it or can pay for it.

Senior center vans offer once-a-month trips to Anacortes, sometimes further. Medicaid provides funds for some ferry fares. The TVP is applicable to ferry tickets.

Taxi services operate on San Juan and Orcas islands, but none is consistently available on Lopez Island. Fluctuating seasonal demand for taxis makes the small independent businesses challenging to sustain, especially providing year-round service to far-out and isolated locations.

A major challenge for the TVP and taxis is that, in the dispersed rural areas where few collection points exist, the same amount of money does not equal same amount of rides for each voucher program participant. Ferry travel on Lopez or Orcas, and often on San Juan Island, includes a ride of several miles to the ferry dock and back again, and taxis are relied upon by many for those connections.

Coordinated service for those traveling to the mainland can be assisted with the scheduled Skagit Transit service, but coordinating ferry and bus rides often involves a lot of stress and requires an ability to be flexible to missed rides and sailings.

No regular, year-round bus service is available on the islands, though there is a small bus and some vans that operate in the summer. Further, there are no shelters at any of the bus stops, even at the tourist destinations and these vehicles are not ADA accessible.

Senior vans are ADA accessible. However, they rely upon volunteer drivers and it is difficult to find them. Senior vans bring seniors to lunch multiple times a week at the senior centers and make monthly trips to the mainland for errands and events. Passengers may be charged a fee or asked for a donation for mainland trips to help cover the cost of fuel and WSF fares.

Despite the small communities' word of mouth network, not all persons who could benefit from the senior services or TVP may know about them, or understand that they may benefit from them.

Countywide coordination of community based transportation

The Health & Community Services Department continues to explore ways to better coordinate with community partners to deliver transportation services, and feedback during the public outreach process for this plan showed that improvement has been made. However, communication with clients and vendors could always be better. Information about the programs and services is available in person, through the senior centers, the family resource centers, and at the County Department of Health and Community Services, and on-line on the County web site.

Common Access Point and Coordinated Referrals

Each island has a patchwork approach to providing rides for seniors and others who need them. The average person in need of a ride likely does not know what is available in their community. There is a community need on each island for some entity to work as a "one stop transportation shop" which would keep track of all available transportation services. Currently much of this referral work is being done by the Family Resource Centers.

Accessible services

The three senior vans are each ADA accessible. On-demand taxi services are not ADA equipped. At present, wheelchair accessible services are limited to vehicle and driver availability. Privately owned San Juan Transit in Friday Harbor has a van with a lift and will coordinate services with local agencies.

Mobility Management and Planning

Public input on this need was somewhat mixed. Most maintained that the County taking charge of mobility management and planning was very important and should be emphasized going forward, still others thought

that the County should strive to minimize overall administrative cost with the focus being on using those dollars for clients and services.

However, in the absence of a transportation authority or even a representative RTPO there is no entity to assist in developing printed material and forms to make information clearly obtainable for those using programs and services. There may be some interest in establishing a citizen’s advisory group for transportation services.

Regional coordination

The TVP may feasibly be extended to mainland providers, and at times has been, but few TVP participants have used the linkage. Technology can help to distribute information about existing services via the TVP and its potential uses for mainland transportation.

Current schedules of Skagit County transportation services can be made more available to San Juan County residents. Washington State Ferries may explore ways of better aligning routes with regional transportation services, such as SKAT, or make special considerations for mobility impaired passengers.

Major Strategies

The four major strategies are maintained from the 2010 and 2014 Plan:

- A. Maintain Organizational Capacity
- B. Expand Existing Transportation Options
- C. Create New In-County Services
- D. Expand Regional Connectivity

The following table lists general strategies to meet the service gaps listed in Table 6.1.

Table 6.2. General Strategies

Strategies to meet needs and close service gaps
Ensure mobility program coordination.
Maintain and make best use of voucher funds.
Maintain and enhance programs to address needs of individuals with remote locations.
Ensure TVP program is broadly available.
Make best uses of our senior vans.
Improve communications about transportation options with all potential users.
Better coordinate local and regional providers for ferry shuttle services at island and mainland ferry terminals.

Chapter 7 Priority Projects

Since 2013, the San Juan County Human Services Transportation work and programs have established a basic level of services for on-call rides, for assistance with essential automobile repairs, for accessible vans, and for ferry fares. Activities have served to advance the goals of the first 2010 SJC HSTP: reducing the isolation of target populations; increasing accessibility (both in terms of awareness of services and physical accessibility) and creating organizational capacity to sustain planning, implementation, and management of human services transportation.

These programs have created new services for the mobility-vulnerable population of San Juan County, who would not otherwise have them. In this challenging logistical environment, the Transportation Voucher Program (TVP), in particular, is a creative way to serve as many people as possible.

The Transportation Voucher Program (TVP) is designed to flexibly accommodate the needs of a dispersed rural population. The widely distributed TVP services are established in the organizational network and community of San Juan County. The TVP serves roughly two percent of the total population, and it efficiently delivers assistance along with choices that empower people to engage in solving their specific transportation challenges.

The TVP, which has been operating for almost 6 years, has awarded vouchers to 382 San Juan County residents during the current grant cycle. The program has upwards of sixteen different private providers, offering transportation options for eligible participants on three separate islands that extend from taxi rides to vehicle repairs to ferry fares.

ADA Accessible vans for the senior centers have been purchased and are now available on each of the three major islands for the first time. Their use is increasing social interactions at senior lunches, and facilitating other important errands within San Juan County and on the mainland in Skagit County.

Ranking

The 2010 Plan priority ranking description noted that priority projects should be considered as “parts of a phased whole” and assumed that the projects will expand as their “need, effectiveness, and utility are demonstrated”.

The current programs are meeting some of the needs of target populations, and close a significant gap in access to transportation services. Therefore, an important strategy is considered in the 2018 Update is to continue and expand successful programs, which are resulting in increased mobility and access to essential services and supplies for the most transportation-vulnerable members of the community. If these successful programs of management, vouchers, frequent and personal communication, fail, the others have much less to stand on.

Projects were also chosen in consideration of the network of service providers available in the county, including the potential for sustaining or increasing their availability.

Projects that seek expansion and development, such as new in-county transportation systems, island shuttles, or regional networking, were also discussed at community meetings, although participants realize they will require significant energy and investment to implement.

A worksheet showing the recommended priority projects derived from the needs assessment developed through stakeholder meetings in late 2018 was circulated to participating providers, and other stakeholders. The recipients were asked to rank the projects by number, with one as the most important.

Results of the worksheet activity gave a high priority to activities that maintain and expand current programs for greater use and wider access and they were given a high priority for San Juan County human services transportation projects.

The group considered sustaining and improving current programs to meet identified needs. Expansion of existing services and available vehicles was favored. Expanding services and networking regionally are important considerations in long term planning and providing services to destinations that are not available in San Juan County remain included and should be attended to as opportunities arise or can be created.

Also, in view of the county's rapidly escalating senior population, County services should be ready to adapt to meet the growing need of a very spread-out and rurally isolated population.

Table 7.1 below shows the priority projects to accomplish the strategies to meet service gaps. Rank within each category indicates the most urgent projects to fund to keep the programs running, to enhance them, and to work toward the future.

Table 7.1. Priority projects for 2019 – 2021

Projects are shown with relationship to major strategies and with the stakeholder priority rankings

Prioritized Human Services Transportation Projects 2019 - 2021					
Strategy	Projects	Type	Provider	Outcome	Rank
Maintain Organizational Capacity					
Mobility coordination and management for countywide program.	Fund Mobility Manager and coordination services for more efficient use of available public and private resources dedicated to transportation for residents with special needs.	Operating	San Juan County WSDOT	Programs continue to operate and expand.	2
Improve and Continue TVP.	Maintain TVP at current operating levels and increase efficiency of program.	Operating	San Juan County WSDOT	TVP remains central program for SJC HST populations.	1
Maintain connections with stakeholders using technology and in person.	Regularly revise and update website & applications with input from stakeholders. Attend/hold meetings with groups of service providers at regular intervals.	Operating	Mobility Manager	Service providers and residents have most current program information. Manager able to respond promptly to concerns.	3
Expand Existing Transportation Options					
Establish strategic partnerships with TVP providers.	Increase TVP efficiency by contracting directly with not-for-profit on-demand providers in population centers	Operating	Multiple providers	Stretching funding and increased TVP efficiency.	4
Optimize uses of senior vans.	Reimburse drivers to assist with on-call service to transportation-vulnerable community members using senior services vehicles	Operating	San Juan Senior Centers	Expanded use of accessible vans operated by senior services.	7

Public transportation feasibility study.	Fund planning efforts to research and propose a San Juan County Public Transportation Plan.	Planning	TBD	Enhanced potential for regularly scheduled transportation service.	10
Create New In-County Services					
Establish island shuttle services.	Establish scheduled shuttle services from the ferry to village destinations on 3 major islands.	Operating	TBD	Access to services and fewer vehicles at ferry landing.	5
Establish round-island transport service.	Explore providing scheduled round-island bus service on 3 major islands.	Operating	TBD	Predictable public transportation; fewer automobile trips; reduced need for vouchers.	9
Expand regional connectivity					
Better coordination between local and regional providers.	Better distribution of information and coordination of ride services to medical facilities from the ferry terminals on San Juan Island and in Anacortes.	Operating	Mobility manager	County residents have greater access to services and resources.	6
Extend voucher program to key mainland service providers.	Network voucher acceptance with Skagit Transit and Anacortes taxi services.	Operating	Mobility manager	County residents have greater access to services and resources.	8

Future steps

Planning has helped San Juan County Human Services transportation stakeholders and administrators to focus on available resources and possible growth and improved services. Findings also indicate that current programs, though successful, and greatly appreciated by the community, are still in the fledgling stage. Lopez, where the taxi service is often nonexistent, has only a little more than a third of the population numbers of Orcas and San Juan Islands. And on those more populated islands, there are still only a few service providers for taxi rides, so that resource is not entirely secure.

Another challenge for this young program is funding. Thus far, the program administration and capital funds have all come from WSDOT, via two-year consolidated grants. While gratefully accepted and put to great use in and for San Juan County, the insecurity of funding leaves local efforts vulnerable. Local transportation choices will ultimately fall to elected officials, non-profits and the citizens of San Juan County.

The TVP and the Health & Community Services Department hold the short and long-term perspectives together in the most efficient way possible for San Juan County in the near future. If the department keeps developing and meeting growing service needs, they will be a successful example for San Juan County public transportation efforts to build on moving forward.

No matter the source of funding, service needs in San Juan County are broad, and the geographical circumstances are unique. Service solutions must be flexible and are best coordinated locally. The Transportation Voucher Program is designed to meet a wide array of remotely located needs and remote locations with diverse and broad provider options and an island-specific administrative network.

Next organizational steps

San Juan County will continue to operate the current Transportation Voucher Program (TVP) through June of 2019, and has made application for WSDOT 2019-21 Consolidated Grant funding for continued Transportation Voucher operating funds.

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SAN JUAN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2013 Update to Transportation Element

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ORCAS ISLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

2011 Needs Assessment

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Appendix A Stakeholder Participation 2018

Stakeholder participation in the 2018 HSTP update was kicked off by a press release inviting the public to participate in an online transportation survey. This survey was also sent directly to stakeholders, TVP providers and clients, with a paper copy available upon request. The survey received 95 responses over the course of the plan update.

The press release also announced the dates of public outreach meetings designed to elicit feedback and spark discussion on transportation needs and programs in the County. A public outreach meeting was held on each of the three ferry served islands.

Appendix A.1. Survey Questions Circulated

The following questions were included in the survey to both the public and stakeholders. The survey was tiered so that one survey could be sent both to stakeholders and the general public, and get appropriate feedback only from those who interacted with certain services (such as the TVP).

San Juan County Human Services Transportation Survey

The community transportation program serves senior, low-income, and disabled persons to ensure they are able to get from their homes or care facilities to medical and social service providers, to stores, libraries, and educational facilities. Program coordination can extend from island-to-island within the county and to Anacortes, where it is primarily used for access to out-of-county medical services.

Transportation Voucher Program

San Juan County's Transportation Voucher Program (TVP) is our most successful program to date. It is locally driven, public/private, countywide and multi-modal.

Local administration is via a partnership of government, non-profit organizations, and local private providers. Fifteen local transportation providers, such as taxi companies, auto repair providers, NAPA auto parts stores, and a windshield replacement service currently participate. Family Resource Centers on each island supply ferry fares.

Please identify your home ZIP code:

- 98222 – Blakely Island
- 98243 – Deer Harbor
- 98245 – Eastsound
- 98250 – Friday Harbor
- 98261 – Lopez Island
- 98279 – Olga
- 98280 – Orcas
- 98286 – Shaw Island
- 98297 – Waldron
- Other...

Please indicate how you interact with transportation services:

- I need help with transportation
- I help people access transportation services
- I provide transportation services
- None of the above

How frequently do you need / provide / help people with transportation?

- Rarely
- Occasionally (once or twice a month)
- Regularly (once a week)
- Frequently (more than once a week)

What time of day do you need / provide / help people with transportation?

- Morning commute time (7-9AM)
- Mid Day (9AM - 4PM)
- Afternoon commute time (4-6PM)
- Evenings (6 - 10PM)
- Night (10PM - 7AM)

What type of destination do you commonly need / provide / help people with transportation?

- General Errands
- Work
- School
- Childcare
- Medical
- Senior Center
- Recreation
- Other...

Where do you (or those you help) typically need to travel?

- On the same Island you live
- To another island in San Juan County
- Whatcom County
- Skagit County
- Island County
- Snohomish / King / Pierce County
- Other...

What is the primary reason you (or those you help) need transportation services?

- Disability
- Transportation costs are too expensive
- Lack of transit service
- I don't feel safe or comfortable walking/biking to my common destinations
- Other...

Do you have experience with the Transportation Voucher Program?

- Yes
- No

What has been your role in the Transportation Voucher Program?

- I have used Transportation Vouchers for ferry tickets
- I have used Transportation Vouchers for taxi rides
- I have used Transportation Vouchers for car repairs
- I help people sign up/administer the TVP
- I am a transportation provider who participates in the TVP

What are the most common places trips begin when using the Transportation Voucher Program?

What are the most common places trips end when using the Transportation Voucher Program?

How well is coordination of the Transportation Voucher Program working? (ie ease of signing up for services, accessing providers, communication with the County, etc)

What else could be done to better serve the participants? To encourage more participation (from providers or clients)?

Do you have any other comments regarding transportation in San Juan County?

Appendix A.2 Community Meetings - 2018

November 13, 2018 Friday Harbor KeyBank Meeting Room

November 14, 2018 Orcas Island Senior Center Lundeen Room

November 15, 2018 Lopez Family Resource Center Meeting Room

The meeting presentations gave a background on the goals of updating the Human Services Transportation Plan, a summary of available transportation options, an overview of key demographics in the County and maps showing common transportation destinations. The meetings focused on discussion around both the Transportation Voucher Program, and other ways transportation service projects could be incorporated into the County.

Despite being advertised in local periodicals and online, as well as direct invitation to TVP program clients and vendors, there were no attendees at the Lopez Island meeting on November 15.

Attendees were led through the survey questions first as a jumping off place for discussion. Questions for the group were focused on examining the performance of the current programs and how they could be improved.

How well is coordination working?

- Website
- Access to vouchers
- Access to service providers

Further topics covered: are we reaching all the people potentially eligible for human services transportation support? What other services would be useful?

Have we identified all of the current common destinations? Are there other transportation providers we can include?

General Comments/Discussion

November 13th Meeting-

Meeting Attendees:

Ryan Page, San Juan County Health & Community Services
Dave Dunaway, San Juan County Health & Community Services
Mark Tompkins, San Juan County Health & Community Services
Gail Leschine-Seitz, San Juan County Health & Community Services
Christine Coray, San Juan County Public Works
Stacy Clauson, WSDOT Public Transportation
Curt VanHyning, San Juan Island Shuttle System
Sandi Ugrin, San Juan Islands Shuttle System & TVP User
Zed Park, Bob's Taxi & Tours, TVP Provider
Jennifer Armstrong, Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center
Cindy Gutierrez, Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center

Sandi Ugrin made the comment that while it is desirable to connect to Skagit Public Transportation, not all seniors are able or comfortable riding on a bus.

Cindy Gutierrez said they've had a very easy time with coordinating the TVP program with the County, they receive the active client list frequently. Mark Tompkins then jumped in to provide a broad overview of the administration of the TVP program since the participants present had different relationships to the program. Cindy stated that it was helpful to receive the client list more frequently as they are unaware if a client is using other providers and running out of funds.

Sandi began a discussion about the available auto repair/parts stores in Friday Harbor. She was unaware if there were any currently participating in the program. She said this is a very important part of the program, people depend on the auto repair function and the alternative is traveling in very unsafe cars. This began a discussion about the history of auto repair shops on San Juan Island and their participation in the TVP.

Stacy Clauson expressed WSDOT's concern with the auto repair portion of the TVP and how it did not really fit into the state's definition of public transportation. This led into a discussion on the auto repair portion of the TVP, and the data collection that would be required to show that the repaired vehicles using these vouchers were actually providing public transportation such as ride logs from participants.

It was discussed the difficulty in obtaining this kind of information from program participants as the way the program is currently set-up involves very infrequent interactions with clients, and most found it unlikely that the County could collect any kind of consistent and usable data on ridesharing from repaired vehicles. However it was agreed upon that the TVP program needs to do a better job of collecting data on its use and participants to better understand how to improve the program.

Curt VanHyning was interested in ways we could possibly time out people who have signed up for the program but who have not used their funds so that others in need might access them. Curt feels that there needs to be some kind of group that can meet more frequently than the HSTP planning cycles to provide guidance and input on transportation services planning. He said that in the past this input had not been welcome. He was hesitant to propose anything permanent or over burdensome however as he felt that minimizing administrative cost and burden for transportation programs was the most important strategy to maintain.

Jennifer Armstrong wanted to express her gratefulness for the TVP program, and said that the staff of the San

Juan Family Resource Center has discussed in the past how difficult of a program the TVP can be to manage due to the high utilization, and a client population that are difficult to get in contact with. She discussed the idea which had been thrown out at the meeting of raising the voucher for each person.

Jennifer shared that they had experience with this, as the TVP used to award \$500 in vouchers rather than the current \$300. She said that for some people this did cause a hardship, but in the Resource Center's experience they have found that most simply spent their reduced voucher more wisely and saved for times when they absolutely needed it. They feel that \$300 is a good balanced level, and that for some even \$1,000 wouldn't be enough.

Ryan talked about how, in general, the County would not like to be in the position of weighing client's needs versus others. It had been discussed that the County could create a tiered system for the TVP program, or hold some vouchers back for extreme cases. But then the County would have to standardize the situations people would need to be in to qualify for those funds, and the County would rather rely on the Resource Centers and other social services providers to help navigate those situations.

After reviewing the maps and demographic information compiled, all agreed that they were mostly complete and there was not significant changes since the last HSTP update.

Following the review of the maps and demographics, Ryan led the group through a discussion on the project ranking portion of the HSTP.

November 14th Meeting-

Meeting Attendees:

Ryan Page, San Juan County Health & Community Services
Mark Tompkins, San Juan County Health & Community Services
Jami Mitchell, San Juan County Health & Community Services
Sheila MacLean, TVP User
Marlia Starwater, TVP User
Jana Webb, Orcas Community Resource Center

Sheila MacClean began a discussion on the issues users experience by sharing that she has had trouble while using the TVP program keeping track of how much funds she has left. She found it difficult to keep track, and said that providers can't really help with that. Jana Webb said that the Resource Center is always available to help people figure out their balance, especially since the County has improved the timeliness of sending out the active client list with balances to the providers.

Mark made mention of the fact that the County has updated the provider card given to users which has tracking lines on the back for users to use to track their use of funds. It was also suggested that the County could include the name of the person who signed up the TVP user in the award letter so that users can be better acquainted with how they came upon the program.

It was mentioned that since there is often a lag time between being awarded a voucher and application, having the name of the person who signed up the user helps to jog their memory, since users are typically signing up for quite a few different programs at the same time.

Once again the TVP was very well received overall by participants, and Jami Mitchell said that she appreciates that the program is made available to everyone and not just seniors, she valued that the program was based on

an income requirement.

Marlia Starwater began a discussion about the demographic data presented, she was amazed that only 5% of the County population did not have access to a vehicle. This spurred a discussion on the nature of the demographic Data, the American Community Survey, and why this number may seem lower. Group discussed the auto repair portion of the TVP and the issues of public transportation versus paying. Ryan then walked the group through the demographic maps, figures, and then the project priority rankings.

Appendix A.3 Interviews – 2018

10/30/2018 Sadie Bailey, TVP user, Phone conversation-

Sadie lives on Orcas, and has twice been a participant in the TVP program, she has used the vouchers primarily for car repair. She has been a frequent hitch hiker in the past, and uses her vehicle to provide rides to hitch hikers she sees on their way around the island. She tries not to drive at night, and says that her main reason for needing transportation assistance is the cost associated with owning a vehicle. She's found the TVP program very easy to navigate, and especially thanked Dorothy at the Orcas Family Resource Center.

Sadie was very positive overall, stating that she got great service from Crescent Beach Service when she took her car there with a voucher, and about the TVP in general. She says it is a great program which is direly needed. She has hopes that a true public transit system may eventually be implemented in the County, and would like to see the rideshare program renewed.

10/30/2018 Kathy Hagn, Social Work Health & Community Services, In Person interview-

Kathy said the TVP program was very easy to use, and that she has no problems getting her clients signed up for the program (mostly moms with young children). She is concerned about the lack of a Medicaid transportation provider in the County. She would like to see the program do more to partner with the 'RoundTowner in Friday Harbor.

She also suggested that there should be a shorter period for people to use the funds because there are needy people who miss out on the application window when the wait list has grown long. She would like to see the County take on some capacity building, including recruiting taxi drivers to work as Medicaid transportation providers.

11/8/2018 Becky Rhodes, Rhode Trips, Taxi and Tours, TVP Provider, Phone conversation-

Becky said she has owned her company for 4 years and has been a part of the TVP program for 2. She founds the process of dealing with Health & Community services very easy, and spoke very highly of the TVP program in general. Becky feels that the program has been taken over somewhat by a handful of providers, and she states she has had very few program participants use her company with vouchers. She would like to see the dept. increase their communication to users about the variety of transportation options. She has also heard many complaints from riders about the cleanliness of other taxi companies or them being unavailable.

11/18/2018 Curt Van Hyning & Sandi Ugrin, 'RoundTowner, Written E-mail Response-

Nov 18, 2018, at 12:33 PM, Round Towner <fhroundtowner@gmail.com> wrote:
Still working on the financials but I do have a count of free rides from January 1 through Yesterday (Nov 17)
577 free rides! that's a lot

On Sun, Nov 18, 2018, 3:14 PM Sandi Ugrin <san_juan_dream@yahoo.com> wrote:
Wow, 577 of 2075 rides are free! This TVP cycle still has six months to go. Are these free rides provided to people who have run out of TVP funds? Or people who are still probably on the waiting list to get funds? You can see where I'm going with this. The next six months could be really ruff for us with many more people using up their funds.
Sandi

From: Round Towner <fhroundtowner@gmail.com>
Date: November 18, 2018 at 4:44:29 PM PST
To: Sandi Ugrin <san_juan_dream@yahoo.com>
Cc: cvanhyning@gmail.com, "Bob & Linda Barnhart" <barnhart@rockisland.com>
Subject: Re: Free rides
All the free rides this year are for people who have used all of their money in the TVP program

From: Curt Van Hyning <cvanhyning@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 18, 2018 7:06 PM
To: Ryan Page <ryanp@sanjuanico.com>
Subject: Fwd: Free rides

Ryan,
These TVP clients who have exhausted their benefit continue to live on SJI and require access to shopping, healthcare and recreation. DSHS would likely agree with this assessment so it is up to us to modify TVP so these qualified needy folk can access needed services. There is money in fund which should get allocated and used by RoundTowner who is the only "low-cost" provider!
Thank you,
Curt Van Hyning

11/20/2018 Roni Becker, Senior Services Specialist Lopez Island, Phone conversation-

Roni helps clients sign up for the TVP program on Lopez, and works to assist seniors in whatever their transportation needs are. She made mention that the senior center has two vans on Lopez which are used to pick people up for senior lunches. She said the most frequent reason for a transportation need for her clients is for medical care. Often people are helped by friends or neighbors get to where they need to go.

One issue that makes providing transportation services more difficult on Lopez is that there is currently no reservation system for taking the ferry off Lopez island, which can mean those transporting people to the mainland could potentially have to wait hours at the ferry landing.

She mentioned that it is very common for seniors to have their own car, but to not feel safe to drive. Roni said that there are different expectations of transportation services and public transportation systems in a rural

area such as Lopez, but even still the needs of their aging population is growing. She would like to see a shuttle system, but people on the island are not used to a system like that.

11/20/2018 Perry Pugh, Napa Auto Parts, TVP Provider, Phone Conversation-

Perry commented on his experience with the auto parts portion of the TVP program. Perry said he had seen some abuse the system, for example people using vouchers to buy auto parts for people who were not awarded a voucher, or people who would spend the entire voucher immediately on tools rather than holding the funds for an actual repair. He said most people use the voucher for general supplies rather than for auto parts.

Perry's suggestion was to move to a prepaid gift card system to help alleviate some administrative headache around the active clients list. Perry otherwise had very positive interactions with the County, never had an issue with being reimbursed for invoices and finds it easy to communicate with the County. His main concern was to make sure the money for the program is going to those who actually need it most and to make sure any abuse is prevented.

11/26/2018 Cara Cohn, Washington Vocational Services Program Manager, Phone conversation-

Cara expressed that it is very difficult for working people with disabilities to be mobile in San Juan County, stating that transportation services in County are wholly inadequate. For those clients in the TVP program, they primarily use the vouchers on island but they are quickly used up. Many clients need transportation daily to and from work, but do not have a car. They then either end up walking in all weather conditions in unsafe locations, or hitchhiking which can also be treacherous she said. Even simple things such as going to shop for groceries are made extremely taxing, and some clients simply have to shop for groceries daily because they cannot carry that much weight the distances they have to walk.

Cara considers this first and foremost a safety issue, both to people who are forced to walk on foot and to those driving on the same roads. It is a year round problem, and she hopes to make the issue more visible. She hopes that the Senior Center vans will be better utilized, possibly even creating a route with stops spread all over the islands.

In the past she has found communication with those in charge of the TVP program very difficult, but says things have started to improve.

11/26/2018 Barbara Gurley, Direct of the Lopez Family Resource Center, Phone conversation-

Barbara said that ferry tickets are the primary way people use the TVP on Lopez Lots of people need a ride from the village to the ferry. She said there is a large volume of people who are in need of the TVP services, of all ages, and especially those with medical needs.

She said that while people often are given rides by friends or people who live close by, those favors are quickly used up and they have to consider other options. Barbara suggested that the County try to find a way to pay volunteer drivers, who could then either use school buses or the senior center vans to help transport people. She also said the TVP has been very easy for them to use, and it is greatly appreciated on Lopez.

11/28/2018 Beth Helstien, San Juan Island Library Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator, Written Response-

Hi Ryan

I think it would be great if the plan included a goal of developing some kind of round the island shuttle for each of the 3 big islands to address public transportation needs. I realize that the ridership would not be enormous and it would have to be affordable, but this idea has come up over and over again over the last 30 years. I can see it as being a grant funded thing, and working in partnership with some of the tour companies that work just in the summer. There could be an economic development opportunity as well, since clearly public transpo would increase employment opportunities for many low-income and/or non-driving islanders if they could get to a job, and the econ. opp. for a company to take this on and hire a few drivers. I know it is all complicated, but is there a way the plan could lay out a goal so the county could fund some staff time to work on developing a public/private partnership for public transpo during the plan period?

I also wouldn't mind being quoted that transportation to recreational and cultural destinations should be considered as some kind of priority since participation in community activities has preventive health benefits in reducing isolation, depression and anxiety. Libraries, theaters, parks, and museum on a list of destinations may fall to the bottom of the list in the scenario of a tight transportation budget. If you have to ask for a ride every time you want to get somewhere because you can't drive due to age or disability, you are going to budget your requests for necessities like rides to get groceries or to see the doctor.

12/5/2018 Anne Presson, Superintendent for Lopez Island & Orcas Island Hospital Districts, Phone conversation-

Anne spoke from experience both as a Lopez resident and as someone with experience with the clients of the Orcas and Lopez Island Hospital Districts. She said that University of Washington Medical, the umbrella organization for medical practices on Orcas and Lopez, would love to refer people to specialists off island, but how do they transport people to those specialists? She said the districts are considering how they could potentially subsidize this transport.

Anne stated that transportation of people from medical appointments on and off island was the biggest service gap on Lopez. There has been an increase in the number of people being flown off island due to emergency and non-emergency medical situations. People are going to EMS more frequently with medical needs as well as increased burden on air care providers, and the hospital districts are hoping to reverse that trend.

Anne wondered if there was a way for the ferries to prioritize ambulances that have driven off island, and stated the Lopez Fire chief has expressed similar concerns. An ambulance may be stuck on the mainland for hours after transporting a patient because the ambulance does not have a ferry reservation, taking that ambulance out of use until it returns. Anne also stated she hopes to see continued advocating of transportation issues in Olympia.

1/14/2019 Dennis King, Orcas Door to Door, In-Person Interview-

Dennis wanted shared the following information about Orcas Door to Door, a relatively new Non-profit transportation provider in San Juan County:

“In its second year of operation, Orcas Door to Door provided 625 rides to 25 island residents, totalling over 5300 miles. Also, during 2018, 24 new member/riders registered and 8 new volunteer drivers came on board. The program has now 27 vetted volunteers and 55 members, 33 of the members have requested rides. The remaining members registered with the program in anticipation that they may need rides in the future.

Although most of the rides provided by the program are medically related, Orcas Door to Door members use the program for a number of what might be considered non-essential rides. However these “non-essential” rides are essential for combating social isolation and helping keep the member connected to their community.

The average age of the riders is 76, while the program has 5 riders in their 80s and 4 riders in their 90s. Only 20% of the riders need transportation on a temporary basis, typically due to a planned surgery or recovering from an unplanned accident. Most of the rides provided are from members who will be using the program for as long as their stay on Orcas. Most of the riders live outside the Eastsound area, and these residents in the hamlets requested about 75% rides during 2018.

Although the program averaged slightly less 10 unique riders every month, the program’s impact to the community nearly doubled by starting the year giving rides to 18 residents to ending the year having provided rides to 33.”

Dennis said that the program has both riders and drivers located all over Orcas. The goal of the program is to match volunteer drivers with seniors in need of transportation assistance through a customized website platform. Dennis feels that the County’s volunteer drive led transportation program lacks the ability to scale with the needs of the community. The program based on using volunteer drivers with Senior Center vehicles is dependent on how many vehicles are available at any one time, while Door to Door is more responsive. The County vehicles must always be returned to the center of town, while volunteers based on different parts of the island can be more flexible.

The program was developed by local non-profit Lahari, an organization that provides education, resources and support to assist aged or infirm people with living on Orcas Island up to and including provision of hospice care. Dennis stated that the group spent six months researching rural transportation programs before developing Door to Door.

The hope of the program is to eventually merge with other transportation services to provide a unified system, where people can call one phone number to triage their transportation needs in a simplified way. As things are done now, there are multiple organizations running multiple programs that can have conflicting priorities and decisions. Dennis would eventually like to see one coordinator running an island wide system based on the model of Orcas Door to Door, possibly situated within the County government structure.

Dennis feels that not enough is being done to plan for and address the coming senior population increase in the County, and that unless steps are taken now to put programs and services into place to address the needs of this quickly growing population, things will be much more difficult to put into place later on.

Appendix B Ranking by stakeholders

These are the projects ranked in priority by in the stakeholder surveys.

Rank	Project	Purpose	Outcome
1	Maintain TVP at current operating levels and increase efficiency of program.	Improve and continue TVP.	TVP remains central program for SJC HST populations.
2	Fund Mobility Manager and coordination services for more efficient use of available public and private resources dedicated to transportation for residents with special needs.	Ensure mobility coordination and management for countywide program.	Programs continue to operate and expand.
3	Regularly revise and update website & applications with input from stakeholders. Attend/hold meetings with groups of service providers at regular intervals.	Maintain connections with stakeholders using technology and in person.	Service providers and residents have most current program information. Manager able to respond promptly to concerns.
4	Increase TVP efficiency by contracting directly with not-for-profit on-demand providers in population centers.	Establish strategic partnerships with TVP providers.	Stretching funding and increased TVP efficiency.
5	Establish scheduled shuttle services from the ferry to village destinations on 3 major islands.	Establish island shuttle services.	Access to services and fewer vehicles at ferry landing.
6	Better distribution of information and coordination of ride services to medical facilities from the ferry terminals on San Juan Island and in Anacortes.	Better coordination between local and regional providers.	County residents have greater access to services and resources.
7	Reimburse drivers to assist with on-call service to transportation-vulnerable community members using senior services vehicles.	Optimize uses of senior vans.	Expanded use of accessible vans operated by senior services.
8	Network voucher acceptance with Skagit Transit and Anacortes taxi services.	Extend voucher program to key mainland service providers.	Extend voucher program to key mainland service providers.
9	Explore providing scheduled round-island bus service on 3 major islands.	Establish round-island transport service.	Predictable public transportation; fewer automobile trips; reduced need for vouchers.
10	Fund planning efforts to research and propose a San Juan County Public Transportation Plan.	Public transportation feasibility study.	Enhanced potential for regularly scheduled transportation service.

Appendix C Proposed project list for 2019-2021

The chart shows the priority projects to accomplish the strategies to meet service gaps. Rank is based on a stakeholder survey.

Prioritized Human Services Transportation Projects 2019 - 2021					
Strategies	Projects	Type	Provider	Outcome	
A. Maintain Organizational Capacity					Rank
Mobility coordination and management for countywide program.	Fund Mobility Manager and coordination services for more efficient use of available public and private resources dedicated to transportation for residents with special needs.	Operating	San Juan County WSDOT	Programs continue to operate and expand.	2
Improve and Continue TVP.	Maintain TVP at current operating levels and increase efficiency of program.	Operating	San Juan County WSDOT	TVP remains central program for SJC HST populations.	1
Maintain connections with stakeholders using technology and in person.	Regularly revise and update website & applications with input from stakeholders. Attend/hold meetings with groups of service providers at regular intervals.	Operating	Mobility Manager	Service providers and residents have most current program information. Manager able to respond promptly to concerns.	3

Expand Existing Transportation Options					
Establish strategic partnerships with TVP providers.	Increase TVP efficiency by contracting directly with not-for-profit on-demand providers in population centers	Operating	Multiple providers	Stretching funding and increased TVP efficiency.	4
Optimize uses of senior vans.	Reimburse drivers to assist with on-call service to transportation-vulnerable community members using senior services vehicles	Operating	San Juan Senior Centers	Expanded use of accessible vans operated by senior services.	7
Public transportation feasibility study.	Fund planning efforts to research and propose a San Juan County Public Transportation Plan.	Planning	TBD	Enhanced potential for regularly scheduled transportation service.	10
Create New In-County Services					
Establish island shuttle services.	Establish scheduled shuttle services from the ferry to village destinations on 3 major islands.	Operating	TBD	Access to services and fewer vehicles at ferry landing.	5
Establish round-island transport service.	Explore providing scheduled round-island bus service on 3 major islands.	Operating	TBD	Predictable public transportation; fewer automobile trips; reduced need for vouchers.	9
Expand regional connectivity					
Better coordination between local and regional providers.	Better distribution of information and coordination of ride services to medical facilities from the ferry terminals on San Juan Island and in Anacortes.	Operating	Mobility manager	County residents have greater access to services and resources.	6
Extend voucher program to key mainland service providers.	Network voucher acceptance with Skagit Transit and Anacortes taxi services.	Operating	Mobility manager	County residents have greater access to services and resources.	8