

# TARC 2025: Moving Forward Together

Public Engagement Plan

June 2024



## Project Management Team:



## Prepared by:



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# Public Engagement Plan

## Introduction

### Purpose of this Document

The Public Engagement Plan (PEP) details the overall community engagement strategy, methods, and schedule for the TARC 2025: Moving Forward Together study. This Public Engagement Plan (PEP) has been prepared to:

- Set overall goals and priorities for the TARC 2025 public engagement process.
- Communicate the overall TARC 2025 project intent, goals, and schedule.
- Clarify the intended engagement approaches for target TARC customer audiences.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and Project Partners.
- Define metrics for measuring the success of the engagement plan.





# Project Overview

## Background and Objectives

TARC 2025: Moving Forward Together is a federally-funded network redesign project that will solicit direct input from the community to create two proposals for an updated TARC transit network that can better meet the community's goals and priorities – within the reality of the funding that TARC can expect over the next 5 to 10 years. TARC and Planning Team members will engage in a community conversation around trade-offs, priorities, and goals to inform the TARC Board of Directors' strategic decisions that will guide the creation of the two proposals.

One proposal will assume a significant reduction in available operating revenue, as is currently projected by TARC. The other proposal will show how TARC could be more reliable and useful for Louisville residents if additional dedicated operating revenue is secured.

This effort is one of the core TARC approaches to proactively address its looming fiscal cliff and maintain a reliable and effective regional transit system. The intent is that TARC will implement the new network between August 2025 and January 2026.

The objectives of this study include the following:

- **Engage the Community:** Actively engage the community in comprehensive discussions about public transit priorities and the overall transit network, ensuring diverse and inclusive participation.
- **Alternative concepts:** Create and evaluate alternative concepts for TARC service that effectively balance the community's transit goals with available financial resources.
- **Workable solutions:** Set a clear path forward for the TARC's transit services that aligns with the community's needs and preferences and can be implemented within expected funding.

## Public Engagement Plan Goals

To achieve a community-supported network redesign, a robust public engagement process must be undertaken. Change can be difficult. Due to the financial situation, it is necessary, but even then it will still be difficult to implement without a clear mandate from the community and key stakeholders like Louisville Metro elected officials, business and community leaders, civil rights, environmental, and neighborhood organizations, and the Louisville public that relies on public transportation.

To achieve the mandate means working directly with the community in the planning process so it is not TARC's plan, but rather the overall community's plan. Achieving that means accomplishing the following goals in the TARC 2025 planning process:

- Cultivate and develop a representative stakeholder advisory committee consisting of individuals who can channel the voices of key demographics and sectors of the Louisville region.
- Implement equitable engagement strategies that prioritize gathering informed input from TARC customers and their key demographics.
- Proactively and transparently communicate TARC's challenges and goals for TARC 2025 to TARC employees, key stakeholders, and the community. Specifically, about the funding challenges that TARC is currently facing, the need for decisions on next steps, and the effect that different choices will have on the functionality of the TARC transit network.

# Project Overview

- Provide multiple opportunities for all community members to learn about and provide input regarding their current and desired use of TARC.
- Regularly evaluate whether the developing plan reflects community values and priorities.

## Metrics for Success

As the Planning Team works through the engagement process successful engagement will be measured against the following data points:

- At each engagement milestone, analyze total number of community members that participated and their key demographic data and evaluate to ensure TARC customers and residents of Federally Designated Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) are being engaged. During the first phase of public engagement, ensure that - at a minimum - the following activities are completed:
  - Engage in person at the 20 highest ridership bus stops in the TARC system to build awareness and collect early community feedback through an online survey.
  - Participate in at least 25 community events through event tabling or standing meeting presentations in areas of high transit reliance within AoPP's.
  - Canvas 10 specific community areas where engagement may be most difficult and distribute project information through bilingual door hangers, and direct mailers in these specific areas.
  - Provide thematic summaries and records of each engagement activity on the project website.
- Measure and document demographics of Stakeholder Advisory Committee members to ensure transparency and diversity and that the group equitably represents TARC customers, and high influence community leaders. Key groups to ensure at least a minimum level of representation include civil rights, business, environmental, advocates for individuals with disabilities, education, and neighborhood organizations. Minimal geographic balance must also be ensured.
- Document engagement and outreach to each of the 26 Jefferson County Council Districts.
- Document engagement with each of the two (2) surrounding Kentucky counties – Oldham and Bullitt counties
- Measure engagement numbers with the Southern Indiana areas serviced by TARC and ensure it is representative of at least the percentage of funding coming from Southern Indiana.
- Engage each of the Metro Louisville top 20 businesses in total workforce size, according to Greater Louisville Inc.

# Project Fact Sheet

## What is TARC 2025: Moving Forward Together?

TARC 2025: Moving Forward Together is a network redesign project that will solicit direct input from the community to create two proposals for an updated TARC transit network that can better meet the community's goals and priorities – within the reality of the funding that TARC can expect over the next 5 to 10 years. The project is funded through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) [2021 Areas of Persistent Poverty Program](#) (AOPP) and [Route Planning Restoration Program](#) (RPRP). TARC 2025 will evaluate the entire TARC transit network, allow for extensive community engagement, and deliver a plan for proposed changes to TARC's transit network that will work within the expected levels of funding.

## What will the final product of TARC 2025 be?

The TARC 2025 process will deliver two proposals for an updated TARC transit network that can better meet the community's goals and priorities – within the reality of the funding that TARC can expect over the next 5 to 10 years. One proposal will assume a significant reduction in available operating revenue, as is currently projected by TARC. The other proposal will show how TARC could be more reliable and useful for Louisville residents if additional dedicated operating revenue is secured. The intent is that TARC will implement the new network between August 2025 and January 2026.

## Why is TARC 2025 needed?

TARC is facing historic financial challenges and a looming deficit. Action must be taken now to ensure the system's long-term sustainability. TARC 2025 will help address this situation by working directly with the community to update Louisville's transit network to better meet shared priorities within the reality of expected funding in the coming years.

Additionally, a regular best practice for any business or public service is to periodically review and revise activities to ensure we deliver the best possible value and service to our customers and stakeholders. TARC 2025 will help to gather updated community priorities and analyze transit service within the context of a post-pandemic Louisville in order to propose an updated network that can best serve Louisville region residents within the reality of funding that TARC can expect over the next 5 to 10 years.

## Who is developing TARC 2025?

TARC staff will manage TARC 2025 as the Project Management Team (PMT), with input from across the organization. Additionally, TARC has hired a consultant Planning Team of national and local experts to develop the plan and initiate the public engagement strategy. The consultant team is led by locally based Schmidt Associates with collaborating firms including Jarrett Walker + Associates (transit system planning), Gresham Smith and EHI Consultants (public engagement strategies), and RASOR (project communications).

# Project Fact Sheet

## How Is TARC 2025 Funded?

Facing financial challenges, TARC looked externally to fund TARC 2025. A grant was received through the FTA's 2021 Areas of Persistent Poverty (AOPP) and Route Planning Restoration Program (RPRP), which was awarded to conduct a system-wide analysis of Louisville's post-pandemic transit needs and to identify how resources can be better allocated to serve transit riders, especially low income and disadvantaged communities who more heavily rely on TARC services.

## Where is the focus of TARC 2025?

TARC's transit system currently serves the entirety of Jefferson County and parts of Clark and Floyd counties in Indiana. Pre-pandemic some TARC express routes also served small portions of Bullitt and Oldham counties in Kentucky. TARC 2025 will focus on all of those areas, with a special focus on identifying challenges and barriers that transit users experience in federally designated Areas of Persistent Poverty through the TARC service area.

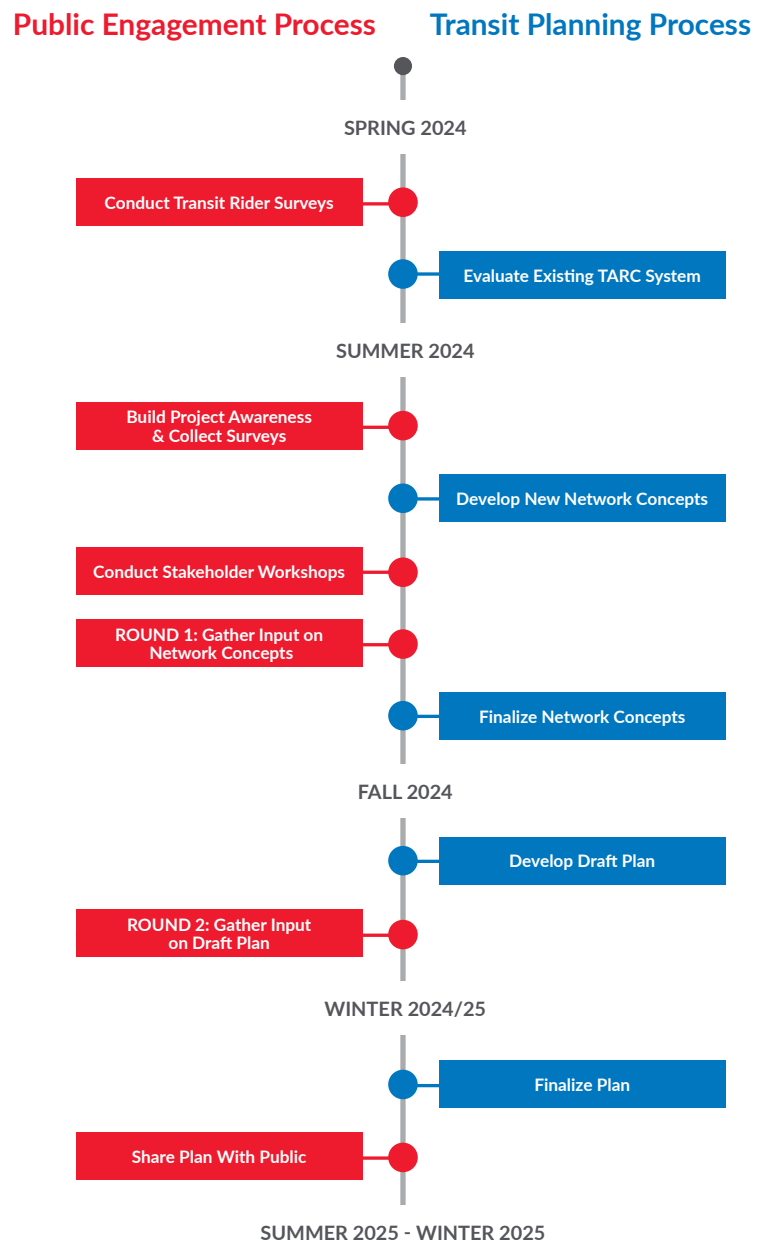
## How was the Stakeholder Advisor Committee Selected?

The Stakeholder Advisory Committee is intended to be a diverse group of community leaders with two key characteristics: They represent TARC customers and the people, businesses, and organizations who have a lot at stake when considering significant changes to TARC's network. They may also be seen as individually influential within the city or represent an organization or business with significant ability to influence change at the city and regional level.

## Project Timeline

The TARC 2025 planning process will start in April 2024 and will be completed in Spring 2025. See the schedule for details. This process will be completed in four phases: Market and Needs Assessment, Concepts Development and Analysis, Draft Plan, and Final Plan.

## PROJECT TIMELINE



# Project Process

The Public Engagement Plan (PEP) will serve as a guide for community engagement throughout the planning process. The process is organized into four distinct rounds of engagement.

## Capacity Building

The Capacity Building phase is focused on building a strong foundation of community engagement. Through early engagement both within TARC and externally through outreach in the community, a Stakeholder Advisory Committee will be developed to deeply engage with the process and represent the communities, people, and organizations who rely on TARC's services the most, as well as some of the city's largest and most influential businesses, institutions, and individuals. In addition to identifying the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, TARC and the Planning team will be directly engaging TARC Customers and their communities to raise project awareness, encourage transparency, and begin to define community goals. This process will be vital for engaging directly with TARC customers and key stakeholders to communicate about the process, goals, and timelines to start preparing the community for the critical conversations and decisions that will be made during this process.

## Engagement Round 1: Concepts Analysis

Following Capacity Building, the first round of transit planning engagement will start by educating stakeholders on transit system planning and introduce three potential TARC network options for community review and feedback. Community engagement during this phase will include Stakeholder Advisory Committee Workshops, "on-the-ground" engagement, three public open house events, and through the project website.

In person engagement will prioritize TARC customers in their respective communities. These engagement activities will focus on communicating/explaining the plan alternatives and collecting feedback to inform TARC's Board as they set the guiding principles that will inform final draft plan recommendations.

## Engagement Round 2: Review Draft Plan

Building off Engagement Round 1, Engagement Round 2 will present a refined TARC system plan and shared through the project website. Feedback will be collected from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee as well as from the community at large with a focus on collecting feedback and input from TARC customers who are most directly impacted by the plan recommendations. Feedback will be collected through the project website, "on-the-ground" engagement and public open house events.

## Engagement Round 3: Final Plan Presentation

The final round of engagement will focus on presenting TARC 2025: Moving Forward Together to the public. TARC staff, along with the Planning Team, will present the plan's findings through a series of in-person and virtual meetings, so political and community leaders and the public know what to expect as the plan is implemented and are prepared for changes.



# Engagement Strategy and Tools

## Overview

The TARC 2025 PEP proposes a stakeholder and community engagement strategy focused on educating, engaging, and collaborating with the community and specifically TARC customers who will be directly impacted by this plan as well as community leaders who have the potential to influence community decision making and support potential change in both TARC's network and funding. Supporting efforts will include:

- Developing and consistently reiterating messaging that clearly define the purpose and desired outcome of TARC 2025.
- Using a variety of print, online, and in-person communication channels to keep stakeholders and community members informed about the project and the progress being made.
- Developing engaging and informative materials that will capture the public's attention and encourage participation.

## Audiences

The PEP has identified four categories of stakeholders to whom outreach efforts will be aimed throughout this process. Each of these groups, described below, will be engaged with specific outreach strategies and will represent diverse and influential community groups.

### Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)

The SAC is a stakeholder group convened to engage with each other, TARC and the Planning Team on transit-related topics. The group will start with 40-60 people and include neighborhood leaders, organizations that represent TARC customers, government leaders, elected officials, neighborhood leaders, community leaders, major employers, and non-profit community service organizations. This group will meet regularly throughout the planning process and participate in a series of intensive workshops to shape ideas, provide feedback from their unique perspectives, and act as a conduit to the greater region served by TARC.

### Community Partners

Members of the SAC and other community leaders who represent TARC customer communities and organizations and other key TARC stakeholders will be asked to serve as Community Partners. The Partners will serve as points of contact for broader community engagement efforts, providing the Planning Team feedback on people and organizations who should be engaged, engagement strategies, events, and, at times, helping organize outreach efforts. These individuals will help TARC and the Planning Team prioritize engaging the communities most impacted by the decisions made in this project.

### TARC Customers

The PEP has identified TARC customers as the top priority stakeholder group. The PEP defines TARC customers as the people, businesses and organizations who rely on TARC services and have the most at stake through this process. TARC customers are represented in highly specific geographic areas and represent specific demographic patterns that have been provided from prior TARC planning processes, surveys, and research. These communities and locations will be prioritized for greater public engagement as they are often the most underrepresented in civic planning initiatives.

# Engagement Strategy and Tools

## General Public

TARC's service region includes Metro Louisville (Jefferson County), an area of 400 square miles with nearly 780,000 people, 26 council districts, plus portions of Clark and Floyd Counties in Indiana. The general public will have multiple methods to engage in the planning process including, but not limited to: participating in transit pop-up events, public forums, online or in-person surveys, and visiting the project web page.

## Notification Tools

A variety of tools will be used to notify audiences of outreach opportunities and encourage their involvement. These include:

- **Project Webpages** – A new section of the RideTARC.org website will be developed to house all information related to the TARC 2025 study. Designed to educate and inform visitors about the project, these dedicated webpages will also highlight upcoming public input opportunities. The Project Webpage is further described in the next section of this plan.
- **E-Blasts** – Project news, updates, and input opportunities will be communicated throughout the study via email. These “E-blasts” will be sent to individuals who have signed up to receive TARC news updates on the TARC website as well as at the many in-person engagement opportunities that will be held as part of the TARC 2025 study.
- **Email** – Personal meeting notifications, invitations, and other communications with individuals who are participating on the SAC will be sent via email from TARC. The content of these emails will be drafted by the project team and shared with TARC for dissemination.
- **Social Media** – An on-going series of social media posts highlighting the project, progress updates and upcoming outreach opportunities will be developed for dissemination through TARC's social media platforms. Content will be blended with attractive visuals to capture social media users' attention. At project milestones, paid boosts will be used to expand the reach of key posts. Each month the Planning Team will provide a report showing the reach and engagement of each post.
- **Media Relations** – News releases will be prepared to share information and updates at major project milestones and to promote upcoming input opportunities. The content of these releases will be developed by the project team and disseminated by TARC's communications team. As appropriate, interview opportunities with local news outlets (TV, print, radio and online) will be sought and pitched in close coordination with TARC's communication team. Following each news release that is distributed, the project team will use the media tracking service Critical Mention to capture the stories that are published.
- **Signage** – Signage, such as flyers or small posters, will be designed and posted inside TARC buses, at TARC bus shelters, at Union Station and the NIA Center and select other locations to promote the project webpages and upcoming involvement opportunities.

# TARC 2025 Stakeholder Advisory Committee

## Overview

The TARC 2025 Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) is an evolving stakeholder group convened at the outset of the planning process to engage with each other, TARC, and the Planning Team on transit-related topics. The SAC will be a diverse group of government leaders, elected officials, neighborhood leaders, community leaders, major employer representatives, and non-profit community service organizations who will participate in a series of intense transit planning workshops to shape ideas, inform TARC planning priorities and goals, learn about transit challenges and opportunities, and serve as liaisons for their respective community or organization.

The SAC is intentionally made up of diverse stakeholders who represent the people, communities, and organizations who rely on TARC service as well as influential civic leaders who can play a key role in the long-term support and financial viability of TARC. The stakeholder list will be a living document that will likely grow over time as new stakeholders are identified and recruited to serve on the SAC.

## Role

The SAC is committed to participating in three stakeholder workshops, supporting broader community outreach, and informing the plan from their unique perspective. Members of the SAC will be engaged throughout the process and should be prepared to continue their role beyond the planning process as Louisville shapes its transit future.

## Engagement Strategy

The Planning Team will provide regular project communications and updates to the SAC throughout the planning process. The Planning Team will hold three workshops to educate the SAC on transit planning, explore potential transit routes, and present and receive feedback on the proposed routes. This input, along with broader community input, will be presented to the TARC Board and used to help inform draft transit plan recommendations.

## When

This group of stakeholders will be active throughout the entirety of the planning process but most direct activity with this group of individuals will take place during the stakeholder workshops held in June, July, and November.

## Notification Tools

Email will be the primary method of communication and meeting notification with the stakeholders. Stakeholders will also be encouraged to visit the webpage often and follow TARC's social media accounts to stay up to date on new information.

# Stakeholder Advisory Committee

## Stakeholder In Reach

Internal stakeholders are an equally important part of the TARC 2025 process. TARC employees - especially TARC coach operators who know specific on-the-ground situations the best - have important insight into the TARC network and local transportation needs and patterns. Local government partners also have valuable information and perspective on important transportation priorities. Throughout the process the TARC 2025 Plannign Team will engage TARC operators, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) leadership, TARC staff, and key staff at local governmental agencies in “in-reach” meetings and interviews to gather their input. During these meetings, the team will review, refine, and expand the stakeholder list, as needed. The stakeholder list will be a living document that will likely grow over time as new stakeholders are identified and recruited to serve on the SAC.

# Community Partners

## Overview

Community Partners will be a group of SAC members and other stakeholders in the community who, based on their respective community, organization, or business, can act as a direct connection for TARC 2025 to engage with TARC customers. The Partners will serve as a sounding board for the Planning Team in reviewing the approach for broader community engagement, act as points of contact, and help organize/participate in events focused on the groups they represent.

## Role

The Community Partners will help the Planning Team identify areas of focus and events that will be of significant value for outreach activities aimed at TARC customers. In some cases, they will set up events or invite members of the Planning Team and TARC staff to events within the community. The Partners will also be encouraged to attend events, share TARC 2025 information with their respective communities and organizations, and report to the project team information they receive back from these audiences.

## Engagement Strategy

To engage and recruit Community Partners, The Planning Team will focus on two primary tactics. The Planning Team will directly engage with SAC members to recruit Community Partners. In addition, the Planning Team will send regular communication to a growing list of region wide stakeholders to keep them informed and ask for stakeholders with particular interest in or need for public transit to increase their engagement in the project as a Community Partner. These communications will start in early June.

## When

Community Partners will be engaged throughout the entire planning process but will be especially active during the stakeholder workshops, community canvassing, and neighborhood events that will be orchestrated from June to September.

## Notification Tools

Email will be the primary initial method of communication and meeting notification with the Community Partners, with in person/phone/virtual meeting communication to follow with Community Partners who wish to be more engaged. They will also be encouraged to visit the webpage often and follow TARC's social media accounts to stay up to date on new information.



# TARC Customers

## Overview

In 2022 alone, TARC recorded over five million trips. This PEP has identified TARC Customers as a key stakeholder group for the TARC 2025 planning process. TARC Customers are defined as the people, businesses, and organizations who rely on TARC services. From prior TARC planning processes, surveys, and research, TARC Customers are represented in highly specific geographic areas and represent specific demographic patterns. These communities and locations will be prioritized for greater public engagement to more fully engage the communities who will be most impacted by the decisions made in this process and who are often the most underrepresented in civic planning initiatives.

## Engagement Strategy

Engagement with TARC Customers will focus on meeting them in their community and/or on their commute. Utilizing TARC stop pop-ups, the Engagement Team will be able to talk face-to-face with existing TARC Customers about their experiences and needs and have the ability to provide information about the TARC 2025 plan. TARC Customers will have the opportunity to talk to the Planning Team during tabling at neighborhood events, through public open houses, and neighborhood canvassing. TARC Customers will also be encouraged to engage with the virtual presentations, online surveys, and other neighborhood events.

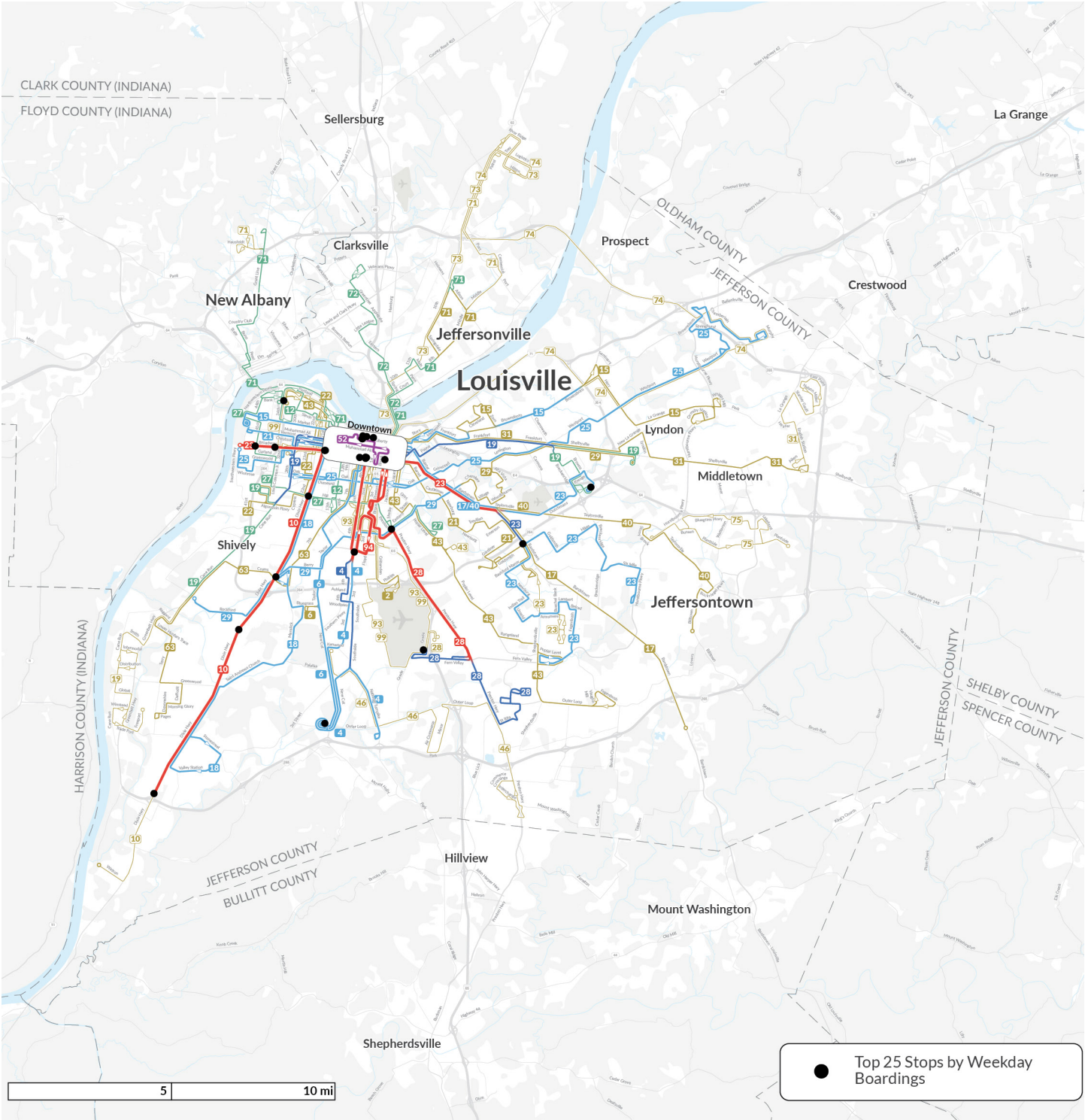
## When

TARC Customers will be engaged throughout the entire planning process but will be especially involved before the stakeholder advisory committee workshops, and then at each step of the process to ensure they have the opportunity to influence the plan alternatives, draft plan and learn about final recommendations. Engagement with TARC customers will occur during the entire 10-month planning process.

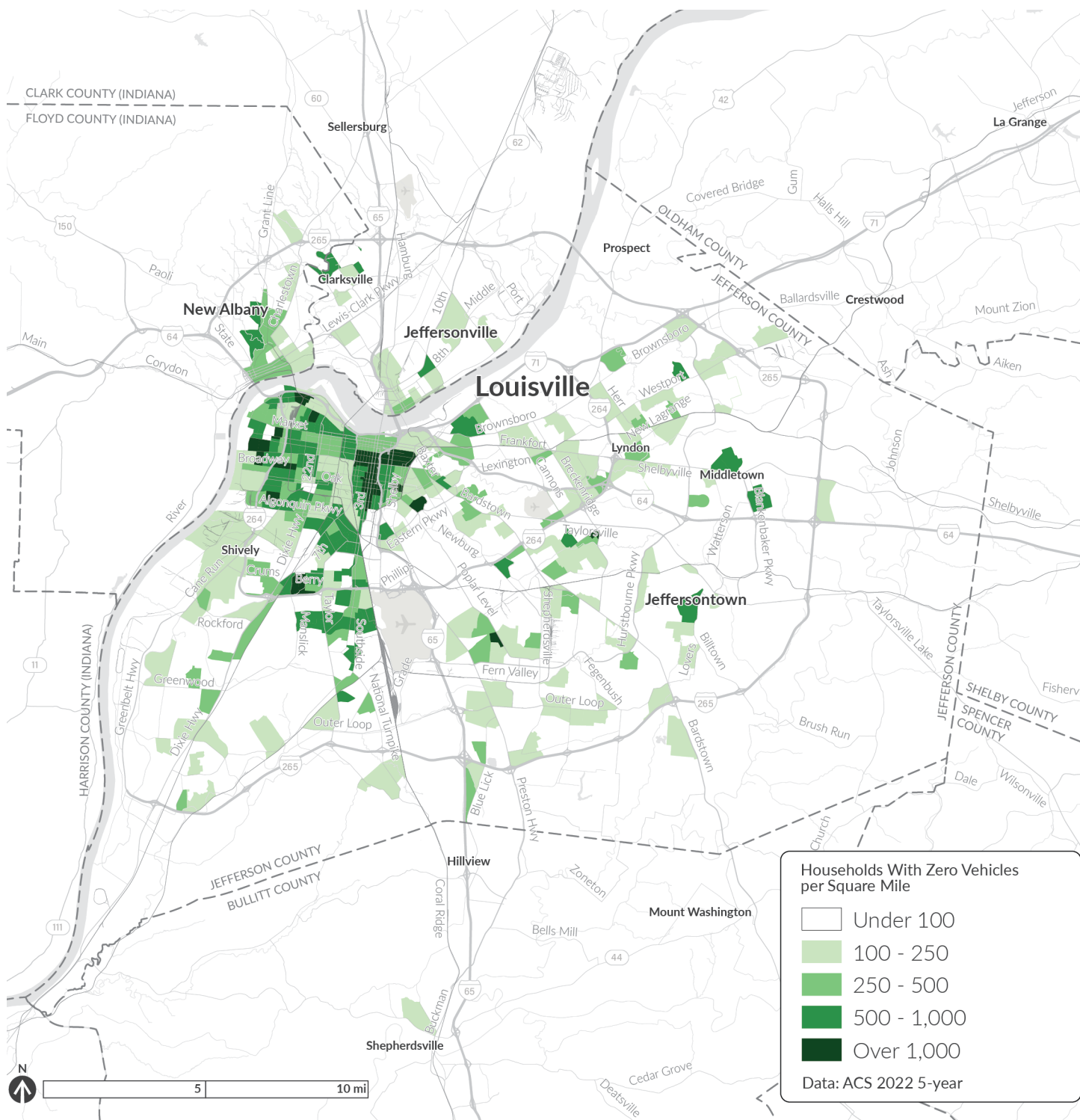
## Notification Tools

Multiple tools will be used to communicate with TARC Customers about the project and upcoming input opportunities. Through posts on social media and the webpage, customers will be informed about the opportunities to get involved. Event details will be shared in advance to allow for adequate planning. Signage on buses will feature a URL to the dedicated webpage as well as a QR code that will connect individuals to the webpage. In addition, customers who opt-in to TARC news updates will receive Eblasts containing project and updates as needed through that existing communications channel.

# TARC Transit System Today



# Households with Limited Access to Personal Vehicles



# General Public

## Overview

TARC's service region includes Metro Louisville (Jefferson County), an area of over 400 square miles and 780,000 people, plus portions of Clark and Floyd Counties in Indiana. There are about 618,000 people and 417,000 jobs within a half-mile of existing TARC stops. As such, TARC has prioritized direct engagement with the people and organizations who will be most impacted by this planning process, but recognizes that TARC, its service, and future plans need support from the community at large and will have broad impacts on the region. The Planning Team and TARC will develop a wide array of tools and opportunities for the General Public to follow along and be engaged through open workshops, pop-ups, online tools, and educational outreach.

These efforts will include outreach to Jefferson County and each of the 26 metro council districts, Oldham County, Bullitt County, Shelby County, and Southern Indiana residents.

## Engagement Strategy

Engagement with the General Public will be focused on public communication methods. These methods include public presentations, the project webpage, social media, and news updates. This information will provide regular updates on the planning process and relay public input throughout the engagement process.

## When

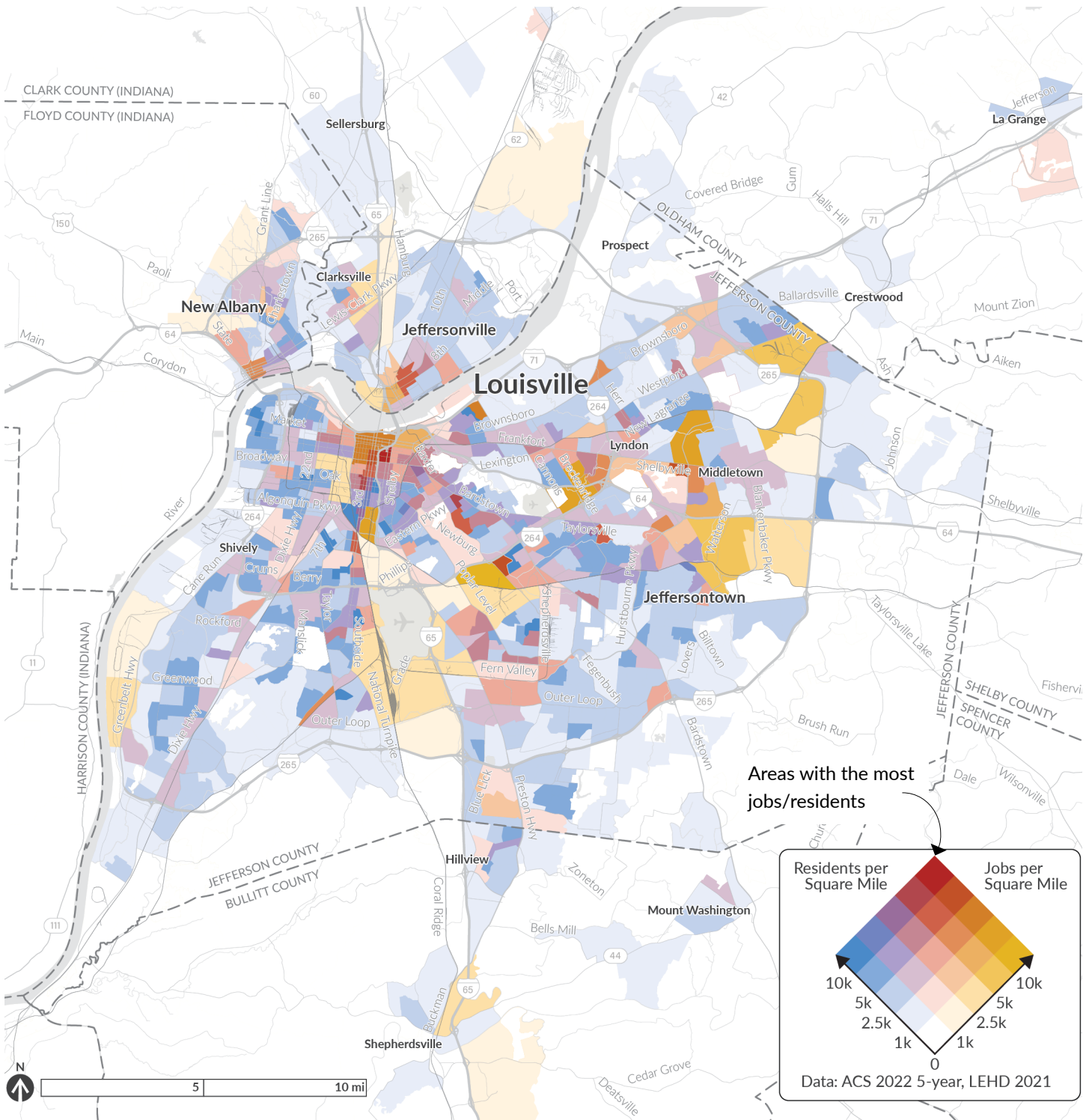
Engagement with the General Public will happen throughout the entire 10-month planning process and include a series of transit stop pop-ups, tabling at neighborhood events, public open houses and virtual public forums. In addition to the various in-person and virtual events, the General Public will be encouraged to participate in the ongoing survey hosted on the TARC 2025 Web Page.

## Notification Tools

Multiple tools will be used to communicate with and notify the General Public about the project and upcoming input opportunities. Through posts on social media and the webpage, customers will be informed about the opportunities to get involved. Event details will be shared in advance to allow for adequate planning. Signage on buses will feature a URL to the dedicated webpage as well as a QR code that will connect individuals to the webpage. In addition, customers who opt-in to TARC news updates will receive Eblasts containing project and updates as needed through that existing communications channel.



# Go where the people are!





# Types of Engagement Events

Following is a brief description of the community outreach tactics that will be used as part of this plan's community outreach efforts. A more in-depth discussion of each tactic is provided later in this section.

## Ridership Survey

The Planning Team will conduct a travel behaviors survey among both TARC customers and the general population to gauge changes in travel behaviors from prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to the present day. Within this study, there will be a particular emphasis on communities living in corridors where transit service has been reduced or eliminated as well as areas of persistent poverty.

## Project Webpage

The TARC website ([www.rideTARC.org](http://www.rideTARC.org)) and TARC 2025 webpages ([www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025](http://www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025)) will provide visitors with updated and ongoing information about the transit planning process. This platform will host reports from the Planning Team regarding their findings and public engagement summaries. This site will also provide opportunities for public survey responses and methods to provide feedback directly to TARC.

## Community Canvassing

Community Canvassing will be done in high ridership communities. Community Canvassing is an engagement method that the Planning Team will use to provide underrepresented communities with information about the TARC 2025 process for awareness. Community Canvassing involves the Planning Team, volunteers, Community Partners, and TARC team members in on-the-ground neighborhood walks around existing high transit ridership areas sharing brief/easy-to-understand project and contact information. Canvassing also includes the distribution of direct mailers focused on areas in direct proximity to high density, high ridership routes where engagement has been historically most difficult. The team anticipates distributing bilingual door hangers and direct mailers to drive project awareness and connect the community to the project webpage.

## Transit Stop Pop-ups

The Planning Team will conduct "Transit Stop Pop-up" events at up to twenty (20) high ridership locations throughout the existing transit system. These events will allow the Planning Team to engage with the community and interview community members at high-ridership bus stops to provide information about the planning process and collect feedback directly from TARC customers in communities most reliant on TARC service.

## Tabling at Community Events & Presenting at Standing Meetings

To help meet the community where they are, TARC will attend at a minimum 25 public events and festivals, as well as visit and present at standing neighborhood/organization meetings and events throughout the study process. Engagement at these events will provide on-the-ground relationship building, a format for sharing updates on the project, and opportunities to receive feedback. These events will be focused on communities with high TARC ridership, transit reliance, and TARC Customer demographics.

# Types of Engagement Events and Tools

## Stakeholder Workshops

Members of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee will be invited to join TARC and the Planning Team in a series of round table transit planning exercises. This event will consist of various interactive activities to help participants learn about the transit system and evaluate potential trade-off decisions. Stakeholder Advisory Committee Workshops are a participatory planning method for guided problem-solving. They empower stakeholders as active participants in the planning process, allow the Planning Team to listen and respond to locals' needs and desires, and educate them about how public transportation works within communities.

## In Person Public Open House Events

Three In Person Public Open House events will be held in both Engagement Rounds 1 and 2. During Engagement Round 1 the open houses will be used to share the three proposed system modification alternatives with the public and to gather their input. Feedback gathered at these events will be reviewed and used to help make decisions on modifications to the proposed alternatives (if needed) and on next steps. During Engagement Round 2 the public will see a refined TARC system plan based on the feedback from Engagement Round 1.

These events will be held at key locations across Jefferson County. Each location will be accessible using public transit and will be ADA accessible. Event dates, times, and locations will be promoted through the project website, eblasts sent to subscribers, social media networking (including paid placements to expand reach), local news releases, and through the SAC/Community Partners' communications channels.

## Virtual Open Office Hours

During July and August, the TARC team will hold virtual "office hours" at a two set times each week – a midday and evening time slot – to allow interested members of the public who cannot attend an in-person event an opportunity to hear directly from staff about the project, ask questions, and submit comments.

## Virtual Public Forums

Virtual Public Forums will be held to share key findings of the study and proposed system modifications, and to gather input. The forums will present the same information as the Public Open House events, but will be held online, and use a web-based narrative to present information and alternatives under consideration. Survey questions will be embedded throughout to collect input from visitors. Open 24/7, these forums are great opportunities to meet people where they are – online – and whenever they are available. Two forums will be held, one during Engagement Rounds 2 and the other in Engagement Round 3. These events will be open to all members of the public and links to it will be prominently posted throughout the project webpages. The Forum will be recorded and available for viewing after their initial live presentation.

# Ridership Survey

## Overview

The TARC 2025 Planning Team will conduct a travel behaviors survey among both TARC customers and the general population to gauge changes in travel behaviors from before the COVID-19 pandemic to the present day. Within this study, there will be a particular emphasis on communities living in corridors where transit service has been reduced or eliminated as well as areas of persistent poverty.

To accomplish this, a combination of online, telephone and onboard bus surveys will be conducted. The mailer-based survey will sample a total of 20,000 addresses for this effort. The ridership-based survey will include a total of 1,000 surveys conducted by Planning Team members on buses, at bus stops and in areas near bus stops – with a goal of 500 surveys among the general population and 500 among TARC customers.

## Timeline

Ridership Survey initiated a pilot survey in March 2024. The planning team then conducted the survey in two parts. Part One of the survey was conducted through on-board survey of TARC customers from April 21st to April 27th 2024. Part Two of the ridership survey was conducted by mailers and follow-up calling throughout April 2024.

## Notification

Due to the nature of how this survey will be conducted, no public notification efforts will be required.

# Project Webpages

## Overview

The TARC 2025 Webpages will provide visitors with updated and ongoing findings on the transit planning process, community engagement opportunities and results, upcoming events and frequently asked questions.

Hosted as a set of dedicated subpages on TARC's website ([www.ridetarc.org](http://www.ridetarc.org)), the TARC 2025 Webpages ([www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025](http://www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025)) will be the primary source of information regarding project updates, events, and event summaries throughout the project timeframe. These pages will also host public survey opportunities and provide opportunities for feedback and connection throughout the process.

## Where

The TARC 2025 Webpages will be hosted as a sub-section on the primary TARC Website and will be accessible through a link ([www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025](http://www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025)) that will be posted on TARC's home page.

## Timeframe

The TARC 2025 Webpages will be active throughout the TARC 2025 study and may be updated by TARC staff after the study concludes.

## Notification

Links to the TARC 2025 Webpages will be included on all communications materials, physical advertisements, presentations, and other outreach materials. A QR code will also be developed and included in communications materials to provide users with a direct link to the project pages.

# Community Canvassing

## Overview

Community Canvassing is an engagement method that the Planning Team will use to encourage communication and share information within neighborhoods about TARC 2025 and engagement opportunities. Community Canvassing involves the Planning Team, volunteers, Community Partners, and TARC team members engaging in on-the-ground neighborhood walks around existing high transit ridership areas. The purpose of Community Canvassing is to distribute information about TARC 2025 and engage with community members face-to-face. These canvassing events will also provide information regarding the planning process. Canvassing will also include the distribution direct mailers with project and webpage information.

## Where

There will be a series of canvassing days organized around high-ridership neighborhoods within the transit system. These neighborhoods will be identified in coordination with TARC and through review of demographic and transit ridership data.

## Timeframe

These events will occur during the Capacity Building phase. Currently, these events are anticipated to be conducted from June and July 2024.

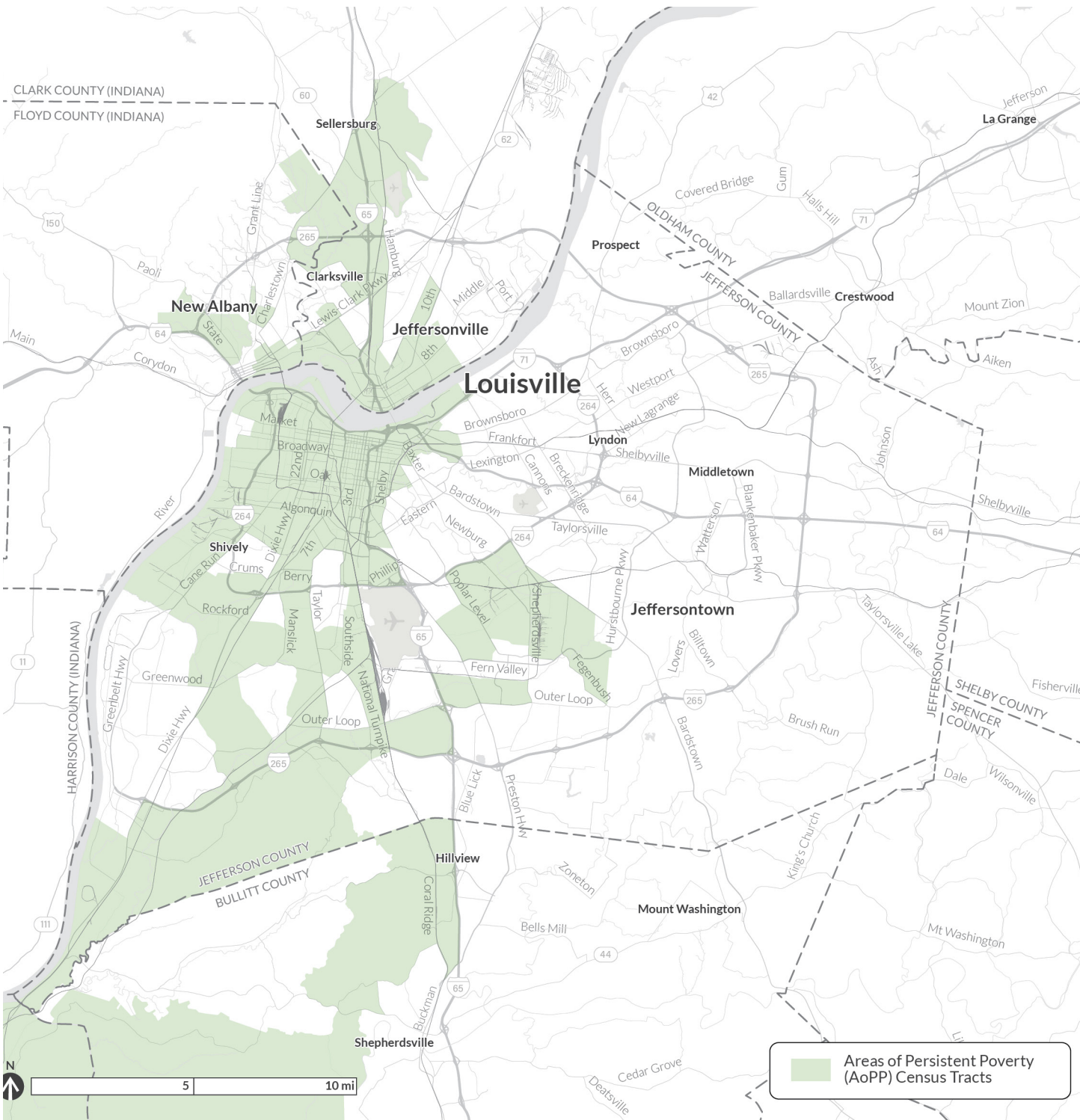
## Notification Tools

Social media will be used to share the Community Canvassing schedule with the public. In addition, scheduled dates and times will be posted on the dedicated project webpage, included in email updates sent to subscribers and shared with local media through media alerts.





# Areas of Persistent Poverty are Priority Areas for Engagement



This map displays the 25 numbered districts of the Louisville Metro Council. The districts are distributed across the city and its surrounding areas, including Jefferson County, Oldham County, and Bullitt County. Major highways such as I-65, I-71, and I-265 are shown, along with the Ohio River and the Louisville International Airport. The map also includes labels for various cities and towns, such as Clarksville, Jeffersonville, and Middletown. A scale bar at the bottom left indicates a distance of 10 miles, and a north arrow is located at the bottom left corner.



# TARC Stop Pop-ups

## Overview

The Planning Team will conduct “Transit Stop Pop-up” events at ten (20) high ridership locations throughout the existing transit system. The team will engage with the community and interview community members through face-to-face conversations to provide information about the project goals and timelines and collect early feedback from the community. The purpose of Transit Stop Pop-ups is to meet the community members and transit users in their community and on their commute. These events will allow the Planning Team to receive feedback directly from those most impacted by changes in the existing transit system, provide information about TARC 2025, and steer interested participants to the project webpages and survey.

## Where

The specific locations of these events will be targeted based on TARC Customer demographics, high-ridership routes and stop locations, federally designated Areas of Persistent Poverty, and other relevant factors.

## Timeframe

Transit Stop Pop-ups will be held within Engagement Rounds 1 and 2. These events are anticipated to occur between August and September 2024.

## Notification Tools

Social media will be used to share the Transit Stop Pop-up schedule and to invite the community to stop by. Additionally, TARC will share the dates/locations with key Council representatives to share with their constituents through their communications channels. Dates and times will also be posted on the dedicated project webpage, included in email updates sent to subscribers and shared with local media through media alerts.



# Transit Stops With High Ridership





# Tabling at Community Events & Presenting at Standing Meetings

## Overview

TARC staff will attend and engage the community by attending at a minimum 25 public festivals, events, and standing neighborhood/organization meetings planned throughout the study process. Neighborhood Events will provide on-the-ground relationship building, and opportunities to share updates on the project and receive feedback. These events will allow TARC and Planning Team to meet potential transit users and the General Public where they are, build relationships, and provide updates to the TARC 2025 plan.

## Where

These events will be located at existing planned neighborhood events and meetings throughout the community, identified with the support of Community Partners. TARC and the Planning Team will work with the Community Partners to identify key community events that should be attended to speak with TARC Customers and the General Public.

## Timeframe

Tabling at community events and presentations at standing meetings will take place throughout The Capacity Building Phase as well as Engagement Rounds 1 and 2, from May to September 2024.

## Notification Tools

Social media will be used to share the event schedule and to invite the community to stop by. In addition, dates and times will be posted on the dedicated project webpage, shared by TARC with Council members to share with their constituents, included in TARC email updates sent to subscribers, and shared with local media through media alerts.



# Stakeholder Workshops

## Overview

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Workshops are a participatory planning method for guided problem-solving. They empower stakeholders as active participants in the planning process, allow the Planning Team to listen and respond to locals' needs and desires, and educate them about how public transportation works within communities.

Input received from will shape feedback on community goals and priorities informing the TARC Board as they make final recommendations. The final series of workshops will collect input on the plan alternatives to inform the TARC Board on the trade-offs and community input on what each alternative is doing well and what items may warrant more consideration for integration into final plan recommendations.

## Where

These workshops will be held at a public meeting space downtown that is accessible by TARC. The locations may vary throughout the engagement process.

## Timeframe

The first workshop will serve as an introduction of the project and will occur in June. The second workshop will be held at the beginning of Engagement Round 1 in late July/early August to introduce the 3 Conceptual Networks. The final workshop will be held at the beginning of Engagement Round 2, in November, to introduce and solicit feedback on the two draft proposals.

## Notification Tools

Notifications for the Stakeholder Advisory Committee will be conducted primarily through email sent directly to Advisory Committee members. These workshops will not be promoted publicly.



# In Person Open Houses

## Overview

Once draft transit system alternatives have been completed toward the end of Engagement Round 1, they will be shared with the public for review and input through three in-person public open house events. Organized in format that will allow visitors to come at their convenience during the established meeting timeframe, the events will highlight each of the proposed alternatives using easy-to-understand visuals and narratives and associated maps. Planning Team representatives will be available throughout the sessions to discuss the options, answer questions and gather feedback which will be used by the Planning Team to make modifications (as needed) and inform next steps.

Building on the input collected during Engagement Round 1 on the plan alternatives, the Planning Team and TARC will prepare a draft preferred plan. This draft plan will be shared at host open house events during Engagement Round 2 to collect final community feedback.

The open house events in both Engagement Rounds 1 and 2 will be organized in format that will allow visitors to come at their convenience during the established meeting timeframe, the event during Engagement Round 1 will highlight each of the proposed alternatives using easy-to-understand visuals and narratives and associated maps. During Round 2 the event will present the draft preferred plan with easy-to-understand visuals, narratives and associated maps. Planning Team and TARC representatives will be available throughout the sessions to discuss the plans, answer questions and gather feedback which will be used by the Planning Team to make modifications (as needed) and inform next steps.

## Where

Open House meeting locations will be held in the west, south and east ends of Jefferson County. Specific addresses will be identified closer to the dates, will be accessible by TARC and will meet ADA accessibility requirements.

## Timeframe

The In Person Open House Events during Engagement Round 1 will take place in September 2024. The In Person Open House Events for Engagement Round 2 will take place in November 2024.

## Notification Tools

News releases and social media will be the primary tools used to promote the In Person Open Houses. In addition, session dates and times will be posted on the dedicated project webpage, included in email updates sent to subscribers, and shared with key Council representatives to share with their constituents through their communications channels. Meeting notification flyers will also be posted in TARC buses, TARC facilities, and at TARC bus stops, where appropriate.



# Virtual Public Forums

## Overview

Virtual Public Forums are designed to share the same project presentation information as the Public Open Houses and be accessible through an online format. These virtual input opportunities will include the same content as other engagement activities from Engagement Rounds 2 and 3, which are focused on presenting the plan alternatives, recommendations, and the final plan. They will be open to all members of the public when presented live (once each) and will be recorded and made available through a link on the project web page for review and input for a period of at least 30 days each. The Virtual Public Forums are geared toward audiences who wish to engage in the process, learn more and provide input, but the location and/or time of other in-person engagement activities don't work for their schedule.

## Where

The Virtual Public Forums will be accessible via the TARC 2025 Webpage at [www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025](http://www.rideTARC.org/tarc2025).

## Timeframe

These forums will primarily be held during Engagement Rounds 2 and 3. These forums are anticipated to occur live twice, and be available as a recording from September to November 2024 and in March 2025.

## Notification Tools

Information about and access to the Virtual Public Forums will be featured on the project webpage. Further, notifications about these important, city-wide community input opportunities will be shared through social media, news releases, eblasts, in-bus signage, emails to stakeholders, signage in TARC facilities and sent to TARC employees.

# Final Plan Presentations

## Overview

In Engagement Round 3, a series of public presentations will be conducted using a mix of virtual and in-person events. These events will describe the final recommendations of the TARC 2025 plan to community members, stakeholders, public officials, and other interested parties.

## Where

The Public Presentations will be focused on smaller groups while the public open houses are intended for broader community information sharing. These meetings will be conducted in both virtual and in-person formats. In-person meeting locations will be spread across Jefferson County, and one presentation will be recorded and made available by a link on the project website.

## Timeframe

The presentations will be held during the final phase of the project timeline after the conclusion of the final route recommendation phase. Currently, these presentations are planned for March 2025.

## Notification Tools

News releases and social media will be used to share the Public Presentation schedule with the community. In addition, scheduled dates and times will be posted on the dedicated project webpage and included in email updates sent to subscribers.