



Transit Access Barrier Study

Operational Planning & Infrastructure Committee

September 9, 2025

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No Action is required

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Bridging Possibilities

To identify potential barriers in public transit and provide recommendations to reduce or eliminate those barriers within the context of GCRTA services and facilities

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Project Goals

- **Prepare** and deliver a data-driven, community-centered, actionable plan to GCRTA that supports the GCRTA mission and vision.
- **Create** opportunities for meaningful engagement to influence and define the recommendations for GCRTA to implement.
- **Provide** a deeper understanding of the role of transit and transit agencies in the alleviation of poverty.

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Project Update

Completed

- *Fall 2025*
- *Winter 2025*
- *Summer 2025*

November 2024

Stakeholder
Outreach

Focus
Groups

Spring 2025

Identification of
Transit Barriers

Recommendations

We Are Here



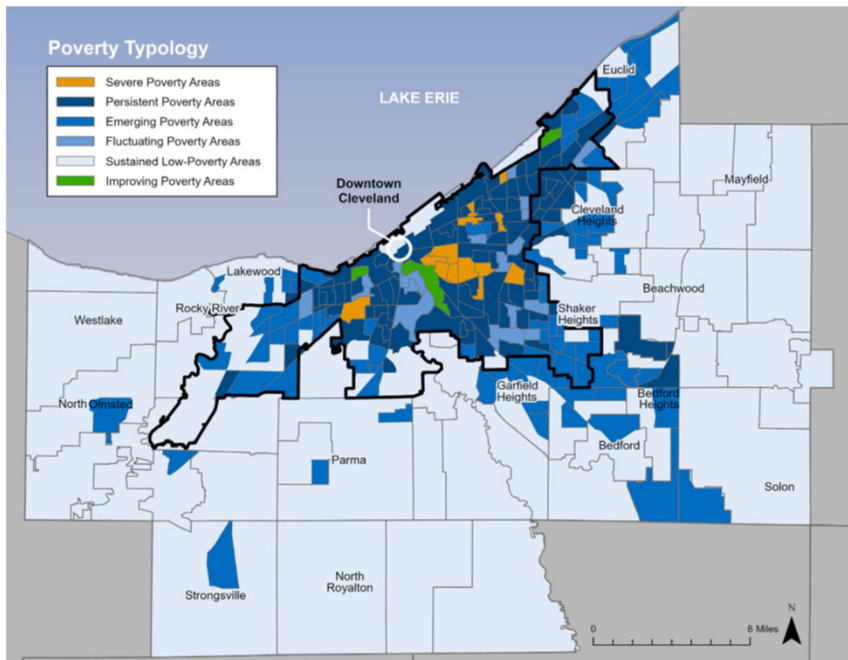
Existing
Conditions
February 2025

Engagement
June/July 2025

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Poverty Definition



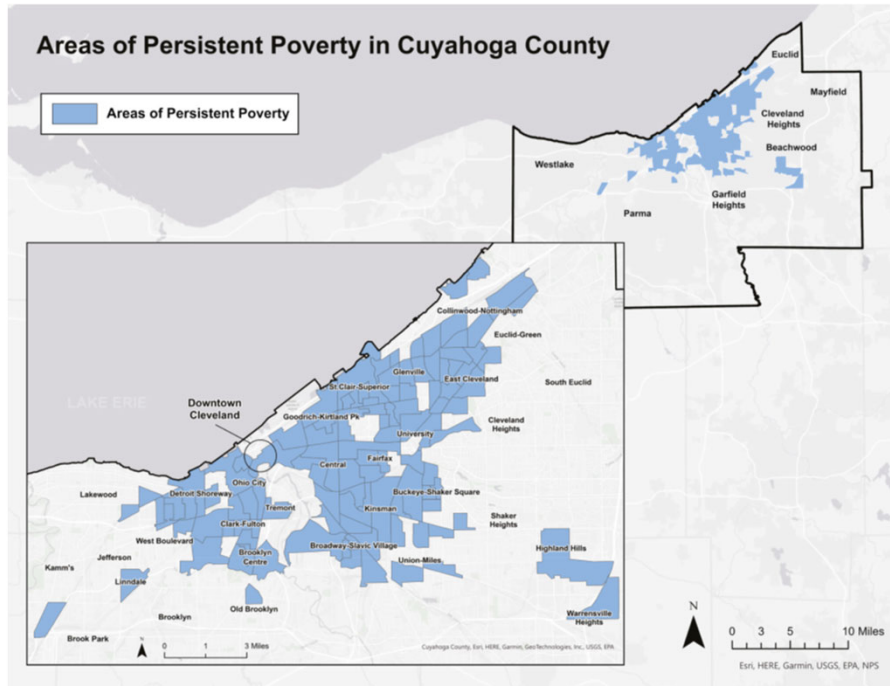
- Poverty typology throughout the County
- Project focused on Persistent Poverty Areas

Areas greater than 20% of population below Federal Poverty Line - Census 2000, Census 2010, and ACS 2018-2022 5-year

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Persistent Poverty



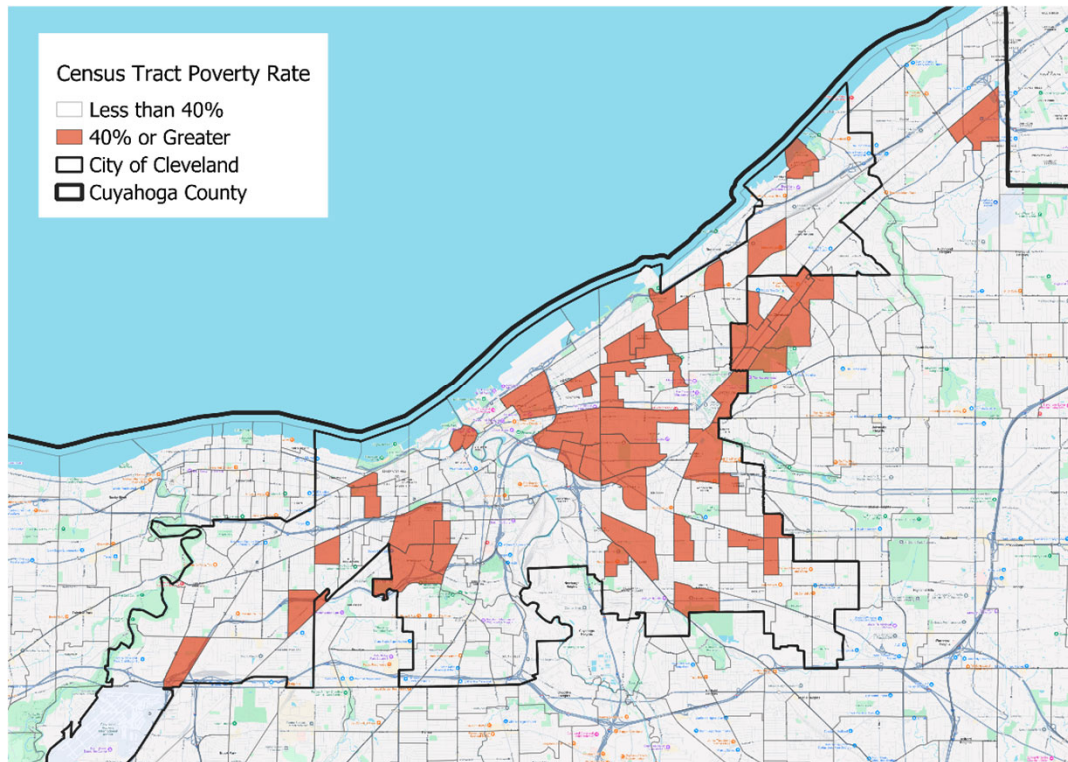
- One-quarter (26%) of the Census tracts in Cuyahoga County; 57% of total tracts within the City of Cleveland
- There are 211,549 county residents living in areas of persistent poverty
- Exhibit need for public transit access
 - More workers use public transportation (10% vs 2%)
 - Higher incidence of households with no vehicle available (30% vs 7%)

Areas greater than 20% of population below Federal Poverty Line -
Census 2000, Census 2010, and ACS 2018-2022 5-year

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High Persistent Poverty



- Census tracts with 40% or greater poverty rate
- Residents are more like to:
 - Identify as a Minority
 - Be Unemployed
 - Receive some form of public cash assistance
 - Have a disability

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Engagement



Cleanliness & Maintenance



Transfers & Connection Issues



Safety & Security



Service Availability



Communication & Information Barriers

- Meet with Stakeholders throughout Cuyahoga County based on demographic and geographic indicators
- Connected with 242 people via focus groups, and over 60 people this summer through neighborhood and stakeholder canvassing.
- Presented at the November CMHA Progressive Action Council
- Met with the CAC in November and July to present progress and receive feedback

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Engagement



WHAT WE HEARD

- Transfers
- Safety
- Cleanliness
- Specific route and shelter/stop concerns
- Follow-through from RTA

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Development of Recommendations

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The diagram consists of the text 'Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority' on the left, followed by a horizontal line made of two parallel lines (the top one is blue, the bottom one is red). This line connects to a rectangular box on the right. The box has a thick red border and a thin blue inner border. Inside the box, the text 'Connecting the Community' is written in blue, with 'the' on a separate line and in italics.

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Research & Peer Review



Pittsburgh Regional Transit

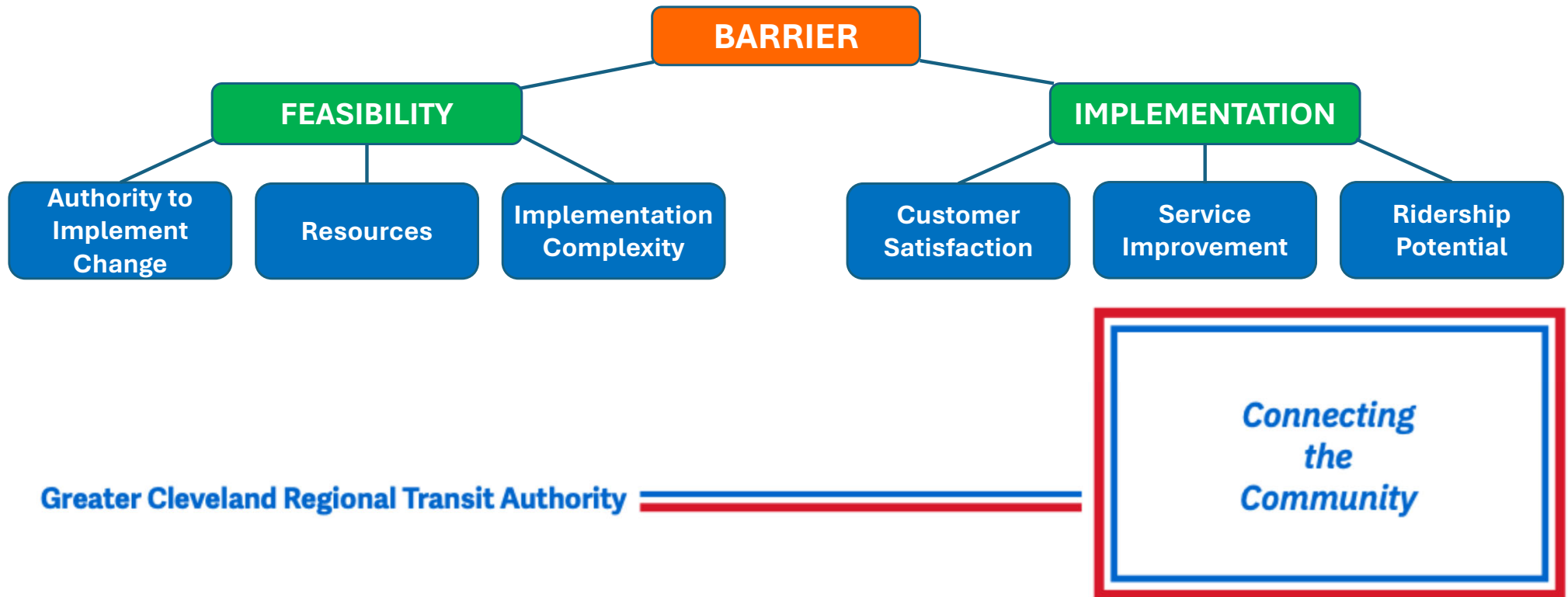


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Identified Opportunities

- Recorded over 30 opportunities or barriers based on engagement
- Identified, summarized, and prioritized opportunities based on feasibility and impact
- Developed focus areas for recommendations and potential solutions



Economic Relief



Maintain the Value of Transit

Keep fares and level of service consistent



Transfer Window Timing

Evaluate additional time for transfers for customers

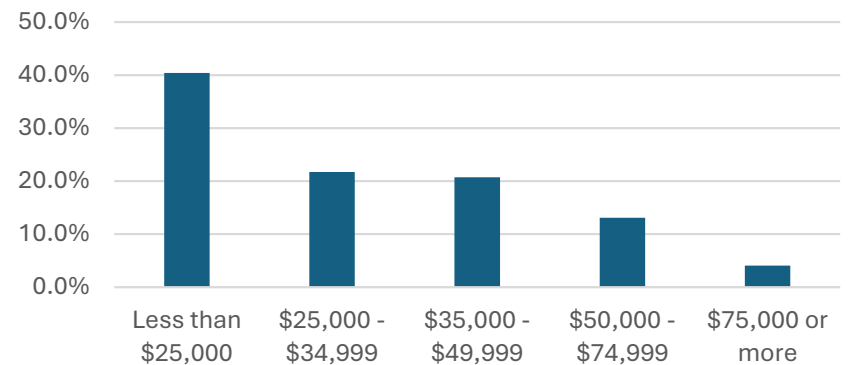


Fare Capping & Outreach

During Fare Capping rollout, utilize Stakeholders and Community Partners to develop Strategic Plan to provide account-based ticketing for riders in persistent poverty

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Transfer Occurance from the On-Board Survey



Transfers are more common in lower income riders

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Community Investment & Beautification



Coordination of Neighborhood Stops

Coordinate with municipalities and/or property owners



Additional Investment

Prioritize locations in Areas of Persistent Poverty near transfers with high ridership



Shelter Cleaning

Expand shelter cleaning based on:

- Facility Maintenance Input,
- Customer Feedback,
- Transit App information, and
- Other facilities – rail stations, transit centers.



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Family and Customer Connections



Training and Tips

Education behind existing policy and provide ridership tips for caregivers.



Taskforce to Consider Policy Changes

Create an internal and external taskforce to re-evaluate policy changes



Customer Feedback

Expand feedback options and process for follow up



SEPTA

Ways to Submit Feedback

- **Online:** Customer Feedback Form
- **Phone:** RTA Community Connection Line
- **In-Person:** Tower City Customer Service Center

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Next Steps

Delivery of the final report, which consists of:

- Analysis of areas of High Persistent Poverty and Access
- Strategic list of recommendations with short- and long-term actions
 - Transfer Policy and Fare Media Communications
 - Strategic Planning Approach for Fare Capping
 - Municipal Coordination for Bus Shelter Cleanliness
 - Enhance Identified Neighborhood Transfer Stops
 - Re-examine and develop a taskforce for family friendly policies
 - Develop additional Customer Feedback channels
 - Continue Stakeholder and Customer Focus Groups

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Questions

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