



STATEWIDE INTERCITY BUS PLAN

IDOT Planning Conference **Interactive ICB Workshop**

presented to

IDOT Planning Conference Attendees

presented by

IDOT, together with Cambridge Systematics, TYLin,
and RM Chin

September 2, 2026



Illinois Department
of Transportation



Game Plan

- Background on Intercity Bus (ICB) and Statewide ICB Plan – 5 min
- ICB Survey & *Call to Action* – 5 min
- Workshop (35 min)
 - » Explanation & break into teams
 - » Develop your idea
 - » Share your idea
 - » Vote & Prizes

Background on IL Intercity Bus



Overview of Existing Services

Private Intercity Services

- Greyhound/FlixBus
- Jefferson Lines
- Coach USA:
 - » Van Galder
 - » Wisconsin Coach Lines
- Barons Bus Lines
- Amtrak Thruway
- Peoria Charter Bus
- Tornado Bus
- Landline
- Reindeer Shuttle

5311(f) Supplemented Services

- Shawnee Mass Transit District
- South Central Transit
- RIDES MTD
- Reagan MTD (via Greyhound/FlixBus)

Not Currently Running ICB Service in IL

- Indian Trails
- Miller Transportation

Intercity Bus Routes

Intercity Bus Routes by Provider (and number of routes)

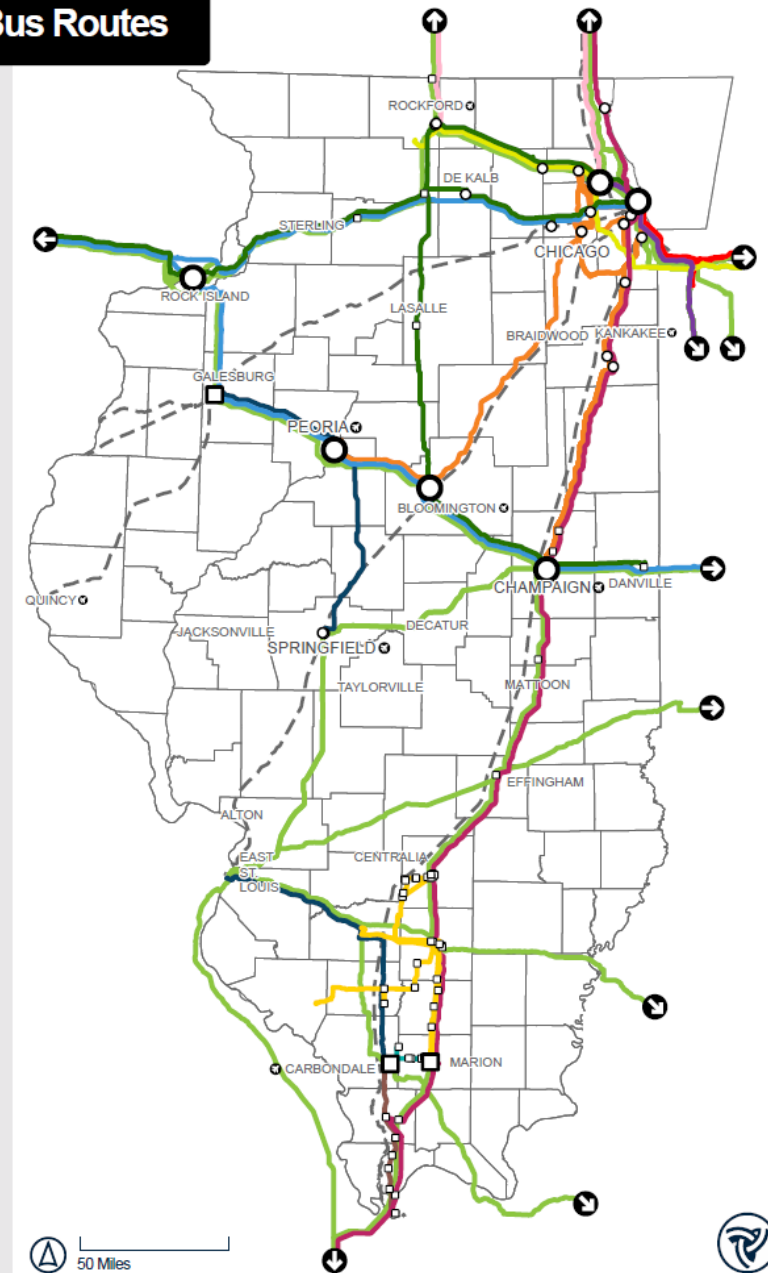
- Amtrak Thruway (2)
- Barons Bus Lines (2)
- Coach USA (2)
- Greyhound / FlixBus (28)
- Jefferson Lines (2)
- Landline (2)
- Peoria Charter Coach (9)
- Reagan MTD (via Greyhound) (2)
- Reindeer Shuttle (1)
- Rides Mass Transit District (RMTD) (1)
- Shawnee MTD (1)
- South Central Transit (8)
- Tornado Bus (1)

Stops

- Non-Urbanized (population < 50,000)
- Urbanized (population > 50,000)
- Larger stops denote inter-provider transfer points

Population Density (per km²)

- < 200
- 201 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 2,000
- 2,001 - 4,000
- 4,000+



Defining Intercity Bus

Federal Definition:

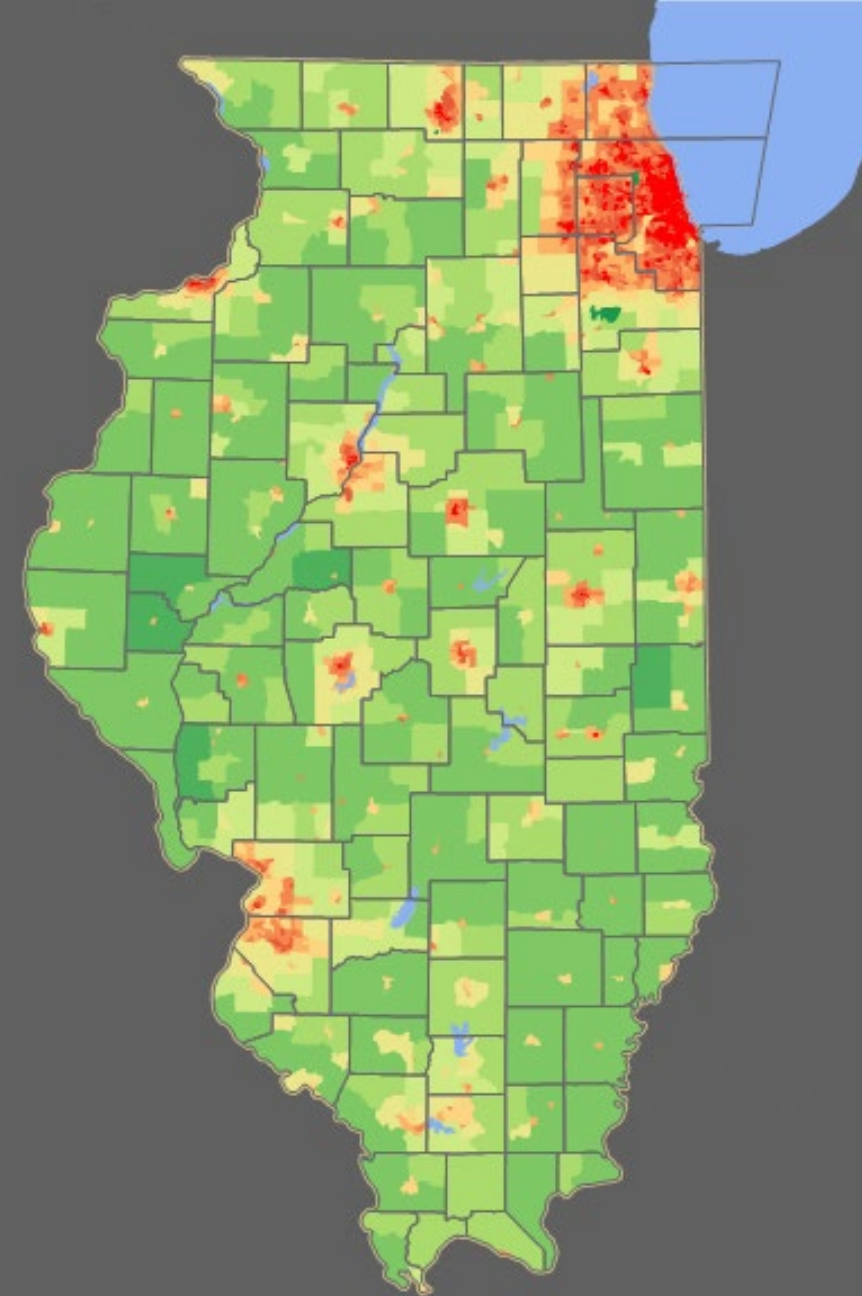
- Regularly scheduled fixed-route bus service
- Serves rural areas connecting two or more urbanized areas not in close proximity
- Available to the general public
- Ability to carry baggage
- Connect with other ICB services if available
- Corresponds to 5311 programs described as “rural feeders”



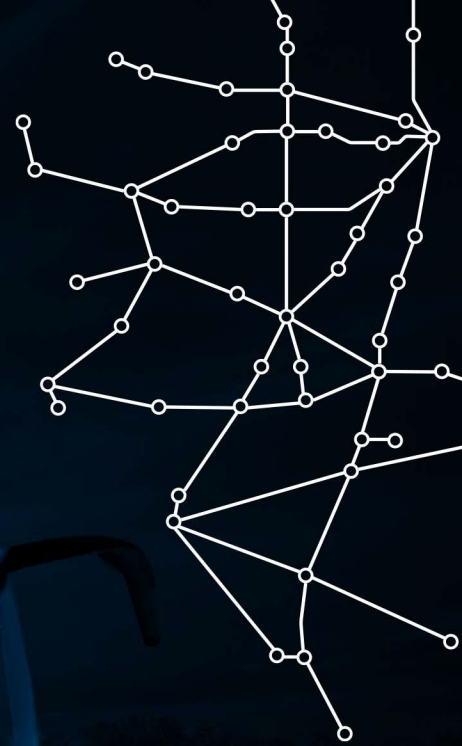
IDOT Working Criteria for ICB

Regularly scheduled bus service that is:

- Available to the general **public**
- Operates along **fixed routes** with **limited stops**
- Ideally serves **rural** Illinois communities, and connects those communities to **urbanized areas**, and the broader regional or national transportation network
- When possible, the service should also **connect with other intercity bus routes or transportation options** to support longer-distance travel and access to jobs, education, medical care, and other essential services.
- Intercity bus service does **not** include commuter, charter, tour, or school bus service.



Overview of the Study



Project Team Overview + Introductions

IDOT Leadership:

- Shoun Reese, *Deputy Director, Transit*
- David Schafer, *Bureau Chief, Transit Operations*
- Perry Cox, *Project Manager*
- Hannah Schmidt, *Transit Program Planning Manager*

Contact Information:

Perry Cox, Perry.Cox@illinois.gov

Consultant Team:

- **Cambridge Systematics:**
Leah Mooney, Nusrat Sharmin, Scott Boone
- **TYLin:**
Matt Orenchuk, Michael Groh
- **RM Chin:**
Maurice Willis, Mike Hatfield

Contact Information:

Leah Mooney, lmooney@camsys.com
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Project Overview

Plan Goals

- ✓ **Connectivity:** Identifying network gaps and opportunities
- ✓ **Access:** Expanding network coverage
- ✓ **Sustainability:** Strategies to allow for growth and increased ridership over time

Objectives

- ✓ **Develop recommendations** to expand coverage and an implementation strategy, including sustainable funding and a well-defined role for IDOT.
- ✓ **Implement pilot projects** based on the analysis final recommendations.

Key Steps in the Study:

- ✓ Existing Conditions Analysis
- ✓ Needs / Gap Analysis
- ✓ Best Practices Analysis
- ✓ Recommendations
- ✓ Implementation Plan
- ✓ Outreach and stakeholder engagement
- ✓ Final Plan
- ✓ Support for Implementation

Project Timeline

Kickoff Meeting (We are here)

Stakeholder Meetings *Fall/Winter 2026*

- ✓ Engaging other stakeholders
- ✓ Follow up engagement with you and **individual meetings**

Final Report 2028

- ✓ **Internal Review** with IDOT
- ✓ **Presentation** to stakeholders
- ✓ **Report** available to public

Survey Launch Q3 2026

- ✓ For **current and potential riders**.
- ✓ Available for **10-12 weeks**
- ✓ **Digital** and **physical promotion**

Feedback on Findings 2027

- ✓ Follow-up engagement with you
- ✓ **Public meetings** to share initial findings at selected locations

Survey Research Topics



Survey Research Topics

Usage

Break down all results by riders vs non-riders.

Familiarity

How informed are respondents about intercity bus?

Obstacles

What prevents people from riding ICB?

Factors

What elements of ICB are most important?

Purpose

Why do people travel along intercity corridors?

Purpose

Where, when, and how often do/would people travel along intercity corridors?

Menti Poll

1. How familiar are you personally with intercity bus service in Illinois?
2. If you were to travel between cities on intercity bus, how important would the following factors be to you?
3. Where do you believe the intercity bus network should reach where it currently doesn't?



How to Join

Go to
www.menti.com
Enter the Code
5419 4260

Or use QR code



Call to Action!

What is Intercity Bus?

Intercity buses are regularly-scheduled, long distance bus services that are open to the public. This does not include commuter, charter, tour or school bus service.

About the Survey:

IDOT is seeking input on current intercity bus travel needs, service gaps, rider experiences and priorities for future improvements. The survey is brief, easy to complete, and can be made available in another language to support broad participation. Scan the QR code to take the survey.

Call to Action:

Please share the survey through your communication channels with the people you serve, especially existing transit riders, community members, partner organizations and others who may have insight into intercity travel needs in Illinois.

ICB Survey

Help Us Spread the Word!



Link to survey

For more information contact
mwillis@rmchin.com

Interactive Workshop



Workshop Goals

1. Think about intercity bus for a few minutes today, and maybe learn something new
2. Have fun!



No pressure!

Workshop Instructions



Break into groups around the **10 tables** that have large maps. Grab a discussion guide (or share one if needed). Each table should have **at least 5 people**.



Review the **big map** of existing intercity bus routes (and other intercity transportation)



Work with your group to come with a **new idea** for Intercity Bus that you will recommend to the rest of the workshop participants

Use the discussion guide to work through **key questions** (Pg. 2)
Name your idea; have one person fill out the “facilitator notes” (Pg. 3)
Choose your **facilitator** to pitch the idea to the rest of the room



We will **vote** on these ideas at the end using Menti – the winning group will get **prizes!**

Concluding Slides



Menti Poll

Which group's intercity bus network idea was the best?

Vote now! Team members with the winning concept will win a prize!



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Thank you!

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Appendix



Intercity Bus Stop Typologies

Typology	Definition	Stops	%
Shared Use Facility	In the parking lot or entrance of a private or public property, not on a public street	70	50%
Curbside	On the side of a public street	37	26%
Transit Center	At, or within a block of, a property where transit is the primary use and at least two transit routes are present. Properties shared with other uses are also included if they included dedicated passenger space.	23	16%
Airport	On airport property	11	8%

Shared Use Facility

Example: McDonald's in Mt Vernon



Total	70
% of Intercity Stops	50%
% in non-UZA Areas	83%
% in UZA Areas	17%

Key characteristics:

- Half of intercity bus stops statewide
- Primarily located outside of urbanized areas
- Boarding/alighting typically occurs in a parking lot
- Rarely have bus stop signs, wayfinding, or passenger amenities
- Often are ADA-compliant for boarding but lack accessible sidewalk networks

Curbside

Example: Marion County Courthouse in Salem



Total	37
% of Intercity Stops	26%
% in non-UZA Areas	86%
% in UZA Areas	14%

Key characteristics:

- Second most common stop typology
- Primarily located outside of urbanized areas
- Frequently lack appropriate landing pad for ADA-compliance
- Rarely have more than a bench or trash can, if any amenities are present

Transit Center

Example: Chicago Bus Station



Total	23
% of Intercity Stops	16%
% in non-UZA Areas	48%
% in UZA Areas	52%

Key characteristics:

- Disproportionately located in urbanized areas
- Typically have the most amenities
- Usually publicly-owned
- Frequently enable connections to local transit and intercity rail service
- Most are ADA-compliant

Airport

Example: O'Hare Multi – Modal Facility



Total	11
% of Intercity Stops	8%
% in non-UZA Areas	9%
% in UZA Areas	91%

Key characteristics:

- Almost entirely located in urbanized areas
- Drop-offs are typically at the terminal but pick-ups may occur at another facility
- All are ADA-compliant