

Rural Transit Livability Performance Measures

Suzie Edrington
Texas Transportation Institute

Conference on Performance Measures for
Transportation and Livable Communities
September 8, 2011



A Member of The Texas A&M University System



Rural Livability Performance Measures Suitable for Use at a National Level

Objectives

- Identify, test and recommend a set of metrics that characterize the contributions of rural transit systems to the livability in the communities served
- Assist FTA in gauging the effectiveness of federal transit livability efforts in Rural America



Presentation Outline

- Rural area conditions and trends
- Transit needs index
- Rural area typologies
- Emerging vision for rural livability
- Transit impact on rural livability
- Guidelines for developing rural transit livability performance measures



Growth Trends

- Fastest growth in fringes/edges
- Significant growth in proximity to scenic landscapes – natural amenities
- Shift in industry





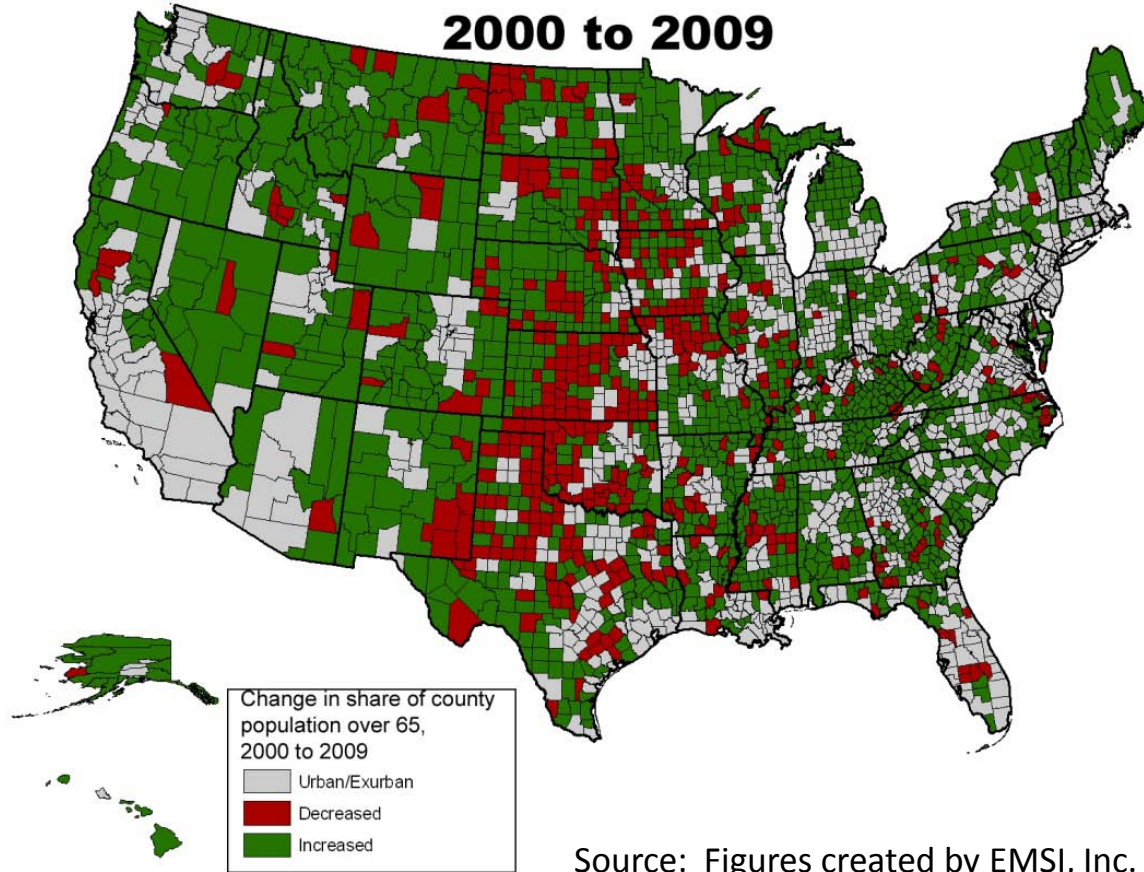
Built Environment Conditions/Trends

- Roadway configuration - freight and intercity needs
- Activity centers clustering along major trade routes
- Business practices in competition with local merchants
- Erosion of pedestrian realm



Larger Share of Older People

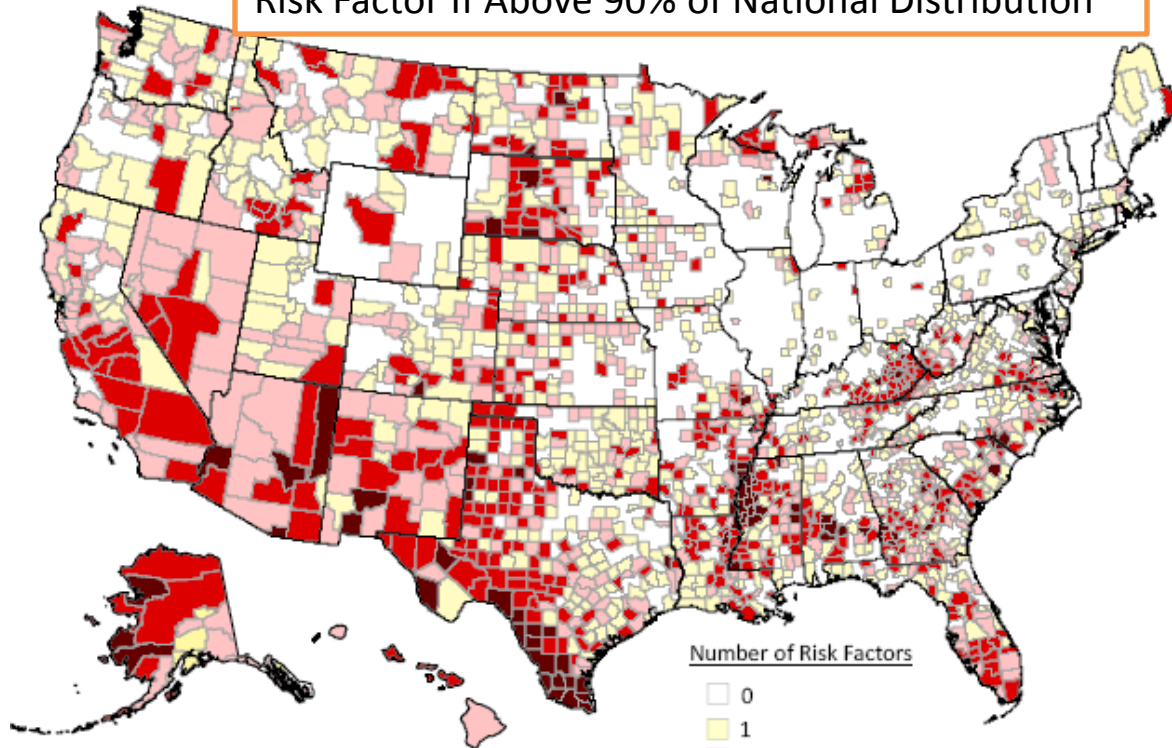
Older Americans in Rural America 2000 to 2009



Source: Figures created by EMSI, Inc.

Human Service Risk Index

Risk Factor If Above 90% of National Distribution



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2009 Population Estimates, 2005-2009 American Community Survey, and 2009 SAHPE Estimates; Department of Veterans Affairs; Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Economic Information System; Analysis and Mapping by RUPRI; AK and HI are not to scale

Number of Risk Factors

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3 to 5
- 6 to 9

rupri

The Geography of Need: Identifying Human Service Needs in Rural America, June 2011 by Heflin and Miller



Demographic/Economic Factors Vary Across America

- Elderly
- Fertility rate
- Foreign born
- Low education
- No vehicle in household
- Poverty
- Racial/ Ethnic
- Nutrition programs
- Subfamilies
- Transfer payments
- Veteran population
- Work age dependency



Transit Needs Index

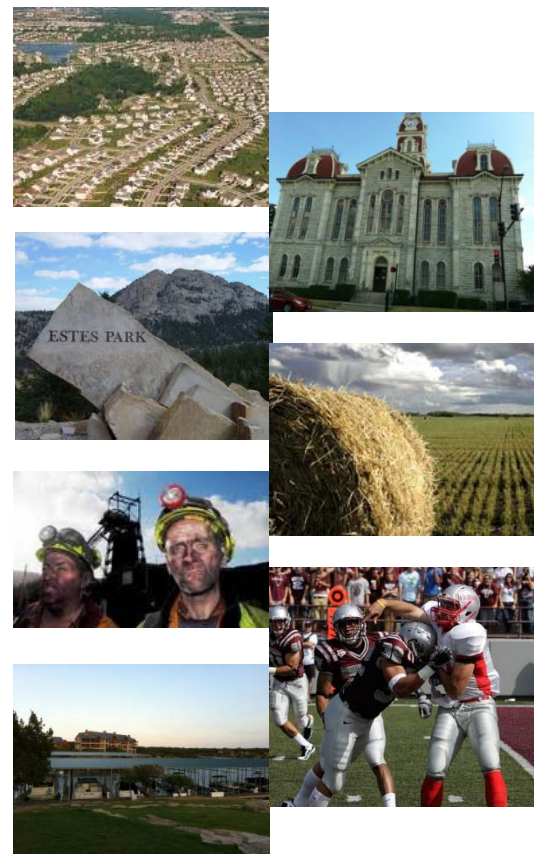
- Factors
 - Demographic and economic characteristics
- Applications for the index
 - Service planning
 - Target public and private investment



Rural Typologies

Not All Rural Areas Are the Same

- Edge
- Traditional main street
- Gateway
- Agriculture dependent
- Single-industry dependent
- University or military
- Second home and retirement



Adapted from ICMA Knowledge Network. *Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities, 2010*



Rural Typologies

Next Steps

- Ingredients for determining typologies
- Recipe to classify rural communities





Emerging Vision for Rural Livability

Provide:

- Regional and local connectivity
- Activities in nodes – accomplish multiple purposes
- Equitable and accessible transportation

Preserve:

- Pedestrian character of main streets/town centers
- Landscapes and agriculture land

Establish:

- Multi-modal connections

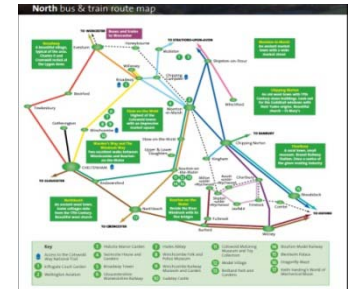
Coordinate:

- Planning and funding



Opportunities for Transit

- Provide a network of transit services that link town centers, villages with each other, as well as to intercity routes
- Provide a link in a regional multimodal connection
- Tie to areas where transit can provide access to array of jobs, education, services, health care, recreational opportunities





Opportunities for Transit

- Provide access - equitably
- Provide link between workers and rural area industries
- Pool resources to more efficiently serve region and prevent service duplication





Rural Transit Livability Performance Measures – Guidelines

- National-level data sources
- Spatial representation of measures
- Reflect the 6 Livability Principles (HUD-EPA-DOT)



Candidate Rural Transit Livability Measures – Guidelines

- What decisions will the measure support?
- Measure both direct and indirect jurisdiction
- Include measures that run counter to one another
- Include quantifiable and qualitative
- Leverage existing data – efficiency
- Develop reports to appeal to visual and statistical
- Measure after implementation

Fabish and Haas, *Measuring the Performance of Livability Programs*, 2010



Summary

- Conditions and trends
- Transit needs index
- Rural community typologies
- Vision and transit opportunities
- Guidelines for developing candidate rural transit livability performance measures



Contact

Texas Transportation Institute

Transit Mobility Program

Suzie Edrington

713-686-2971

s-edrington@tamu.edu