



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY  
REGIONAL PLANNING  
COMMISSION

## Champaign County Rural Transit Advisory Group (RTAG)

**Date:** Wednesday, May 8, 2024  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Place:** John Dimit Conference Room, 1776 E. Washington St., Urbana, IL 61802  
**Members:** Tawanna Nickens, Wendy Hundley, Rick Williams, Ashley Richey, Martha Newton, Mike Smith  
**Others:** Rita Morocoima-Black, Debbie Peterik, Emma Woods

### AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Introductions
- III. Audience Participation
- IV. Approval of Agenda
- V. Approval of Draft Minutes from the RTAG meeting of February 7, 2024
- VI. New Business
  - A. Presentation and approval of C-CARTS FY24 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (Oct.-Dec.) Service Report
  - B. Approval of ICT Intergovernmental Agreement with C-CARTS
  - C. Approval of requested bus stop location change in Rantoul
  - D. Update on grant awarded vehicles.
- VII. Announcements
- VIII. Adjournment

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Champaign County Urbanized Area Transportation Study  
A program of the Champaign County RPC

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## Champaign County Rural Transit Advisory Group (RTAG)

**Date:** Wednesday, February 7, 2024  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Place:** Jennifer Putnam Room  
 Brookens Administrative Center  
 1776 E. Washington Street, Urbana  
**Members Present:** Tawanna Nickens, Wendy Hundley, Rick Williams, Ashley Richey, Mike Smith, Martha Newton  
**Others Present:** Klentoria M. Lee-Clements  
**Staff Present:** Rita Morocoima-Black, Emma Woods, Evan Alvarez, Debbie Peterik

### MEETING MINUTES

Subject to Review and Approval

- I. Call to Order  
Ms. Nickens called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.
- II. Introductions  
RTAG members and staff introduced themselves.
- III. Roll Call  
**The roll was taken by sign in sheet. A quorum was declared present.**
- IV. Audience Participation  
None
- V. Approval of Agenda  
**Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Hundley seconded. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**
- VI. Approval of draft minutes from the October 18, 2023, RTAG meeting.  
**Ms. Hundley made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the October 18, 2023, RTAG meeting. Mr. Smith seconded. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**
- VII. New Business
  - A. Approval of revised 2024 RTAG Meeting Calendar

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**Ms. Hundley made a motion to approve the revised 2024 RTAG Meeting Calendar, seconded by Mr. Smith. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**

B. Approval of Wendy Hundley as RTAG Vice-Chair

**Mr. Williams made a motion to approve Wendy Hundley as RTAG Vice-Chair, seconded by Mr. Smith. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**

C. Presentation and Approval of C-CARTS FY24 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (July-Sep) Service Report

Below are highlights of the report:

- The number of education trips for the demand response service increased, and it is assumed because it was the start of the school year.
- There were 1,289 senior trips for quarter one that made-up about 57 percent of our total demand response which is four percent less than last quarter.
- There was a one percent increase in our lift use.
- System-wide service characteristics: we had 2,257 demand response trips, 3,959 fixed route trips and for a total of 6,020.
- Trip denials increased quite a bit. Ms. Woods gave an example: it is a possibility somebody called and requested six months in advance trips and maybe they cancel trips they requested. Ms. Lee-Clements commented the fixed route service does require a lot more manpower than the demand response. If people want to go anywhere between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., we have four routes in Rantoul that take up most of that time. If we were able to open it up more and take demand response trips at that time, the denial number would go down significantly. Many people want to come into Champaign and C-CARTS cannot accommodate those trips because of the fixed route.

**Ms. Newton made a motion to approve the C-CARTS FY24 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (July-Sep) Service Report, seconded by Mr. Williams. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**

D. Consolidated Vehicle Procurement (CVP) Grant Update

IDOT has been moving quite slow for the last few years in getting vehicles to agencies due to COVID and other setbacks. C-CARTS has been awarded three replacement vehicles because of the 2022 CVP applications. It is hopeful those vehicles will be delivered in two years. The application was submitted for four vehicles when we submitted the application in 2022. Three



were awarded out of the four. That adds three more vehicles to the ten that we have been waiting for since 2019.

E. Opioid Settlement Taskforce/C-CARTS Service Update

Michelle Jett from Champaign County contacted staff back in December to discuss the possibility of addressing the different needs of the people affected with opioid. C-CARTS would provide transportation for patients. We indicated we were interested if we could get more information on the type of service and location they needed, and if there was funding they could provide. The funding would be used as local match for C-CARTS. Staff will be meeting with the task force next week along with Judge Dyer who is running the Champaign County Drug Court.

C-CARTS has been in existence for 13 years and we have always been sending back money to IDOT. We have not been able to spend all the funding allocated to C-CARTS. The main reason is we do not have enough match to pull down all the allocation that we are receiving. The only match we have currently is the contract we have with Rantoul. If Champaign County, through the opioid task force, is able to provide some funding for the transportation service, we will be able to pull down more money and not be sending money back to the state. With more funds, we will be able to have more drivers and avoid having that high number of denial trips that we currently have.

We are hopeful we will be able to provide this service for the opioid patients at our non-peak hours. We know that our peak hours are between 5:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. in the morning and 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Our idea in talking to Judge Dyer is to try to schedule the service for the opioid clients between 9 and 10 a.m. in the morning and at 2:00 p.m. in the afternoon when the drivers are not as busy. We would also add another driver using the funding that we are receiving.

We must submit our budget to IDOT in March. March 8 staff will go to the County Highway Committee to present the new budget for approval. We have less than a month and we want to include this in the contract. If we do it now by July 1, we can have the service running.



#### F. Rantoul Transportation Costs and Inequities Project Presentation

Below are highlights of the presentation:

- For the past year, we have been studying the impact of what a fare-free C-CARTS system would look like.
- The Village of Rantoul pays C-CARTS for the Eagle Express fixed route service to run every month.
- The vans run like a bus route. They run between about 5:00 AM and 8:30 AM, and then from about 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM. It is mostly designed to get people from the Village of Rantoul to employment into the factories, but it runs throughout the whole Village of Rantoul
- During COVID, C-CARTS suspended fares between April 2020 and August 2021. A lot of transit agencies also suspended fares around the country because we were still unsure how COVID was transmitted on surfaces. If you were paying the drive, a lot of people were not comfortable. By going fare-free, this allowed people to get on the van, and get off, avoiding those interpersonal interactions. Transit ridership dropped 80 percent around the country. People were hesitant to use public transit except C-CARTS ridership increased by 40 percent. MTD ridership dropped at over 70 percent.
- The goal of the study is to analyze demographic and employment factors in Rantoul to really understand and determine the viability of fare-free transit. Rita applied for a grant with IDOT. The goal was to look at those demographic and employment factors to understand and determine the viability of operating C-CARTS without fares moving forward.
- The first task was a ridership study. We looked at ridership before, during and since COVID.
- Task two was to study the impact of fare elimination on job access.
- Task three was a cost-benefit analysis.
- The current task is to weigh in factors and identify funding solutions to see if a fare-free system is viable in the long-term.
- Preliminary findings:
  - Recent spending increases on maintenance costs due to aging fleet and increased driver retention leading to increased service hours.



- Currently not in a position to eliminate revenues but many moving pieces, sources of revenue, and operational conditions that could change the situation.
- Not feasible in the short-term but absolutely on the table for long-term.
- It is hopeful that the study will be completed by the fall, or at this time next year.

#### G. IL patient medical trip study survey

IDOT is working on a project with a researcher from the University of Illinois at Chicago. They put together a Technical Committee and are looking for a way of improving the systems by which medical patients receive transportation services in Illinois, including facilities specifically for veterans such as Veteran Affairs hospitals and clinics around the state.

The main reason for completing this survey is that hospitals and insurance companies with patients are complaining about the lack of transportation, particularly hospitals and insurance companies. They have been having big losses because patients are missing their appointments due to lack of transportation.

IDOT is looking at ways of providing better medical transportation services. The way to do that is to start from the beginning by finding out what the problems are, talking to the patients and the hospitals to find out how we can improve the service. As part of this, the Technical Committee working on this along with the researcher at the University of Illinois at Chicago to put together this survey. It is a 31-question survey that is going to be distributed at different locations such as hospitals, clinics, and transit locations. Right now, they are doing the testing of the survey. They asked us to work with them on developing the survey. Staff provided several comments regarding the survey. The survey is now two pages. They will be giving people incentive to complete the survey by giving them a gift card.

They are asking if we have contacts at clinics, hospitals, transit agencies or nonprofits that work with medical patients that are willing to distribute the survey. Rita encouraged the members of RTAG to let her know if they have any contacts. They are mostly looking for clinics that serve low-income and racially diverse populations, clinics that have a high no-show rate, and major medical facilities.

#### VIII. Announcements



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There is a request from a business in the Village of Rantoul to change the location of a bus stop in the middle of downtown. The process for changing a bus stop is that we have a public hearing so that the community is aware of the changing of the process stop.

Discussion continued the reasoning for changing the bus stop and the process.

IX. Adjournment

**Mr. Williams made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hundley to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.**

DRAFT

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# C-CARTS – ICT Service Proposal

4/22/24

This proposal is for the purpose of using C-CARTS to provide service for Faculty, Staff and Students from Lincoln Square to the Illinois Center for Transportation (ICT) in Rantoul. To meet the desired trip times and projected demand, this is a combination of adding on to the existing Rantoul Connector route, shown in Figure 1 below, as well as adding a few trips.

This service would ideally begin on May 13, 2024.

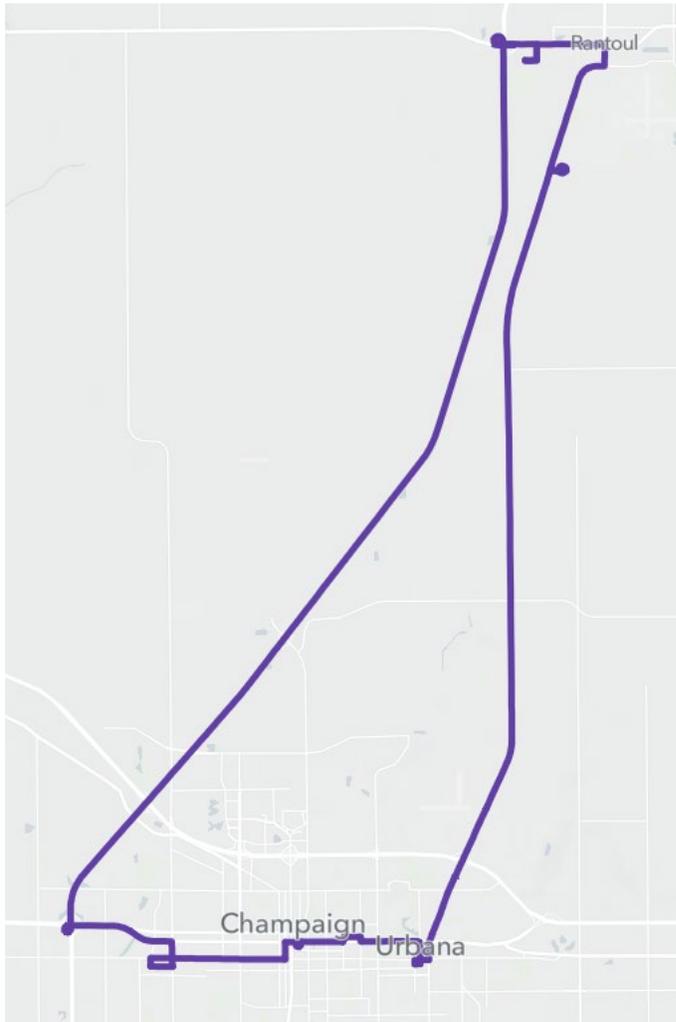
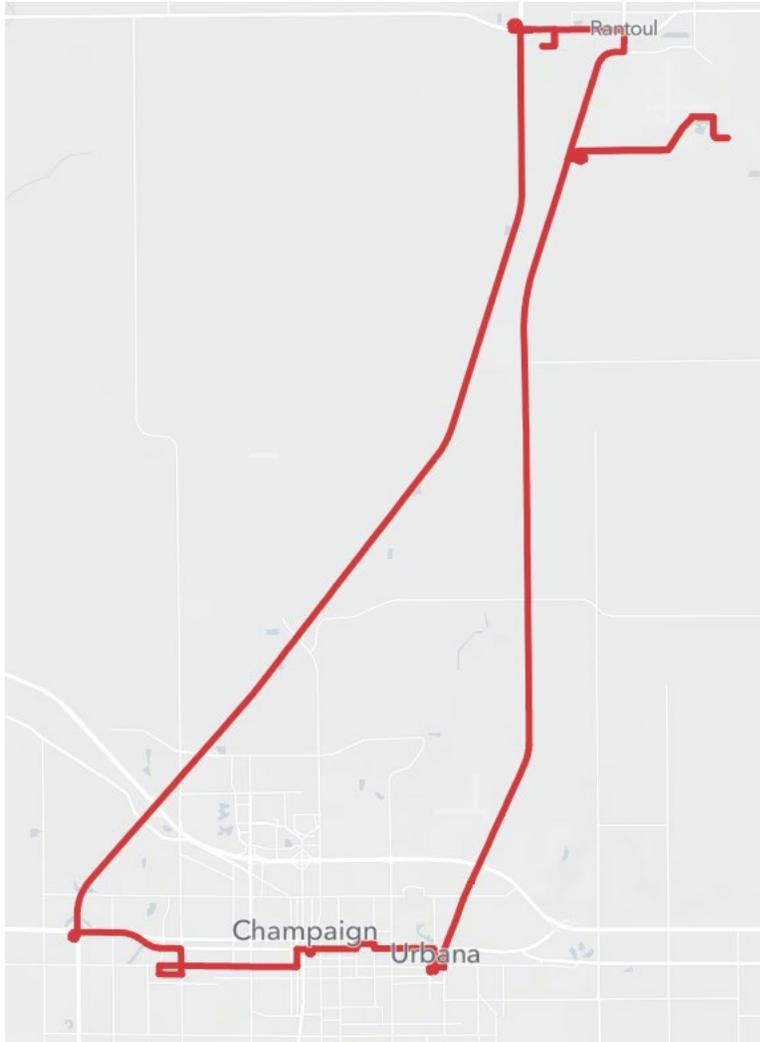


Figure 1 - Current Rantoul Connector Route

## AM service

In order to meet the desired arrival time in the 8:00am hour, we propose adding a stop at ICT on the 7:58am Rantoul Connector Northbound trip. This will add 15 minutes to the trip, serve ICT at 8:25am and the new trip time will end at Rantoul Walmart at 8:40am.



*Figure 2 - Rantoul Connector with ICT diversion*

An option to offer another trip would be to have the van deadhead back to Lincoln Square from Rantoul Walmart and begin a Northbound trip at 9:20am and arrive at ICT at 9:45am. See Figure 3 below for the routing.

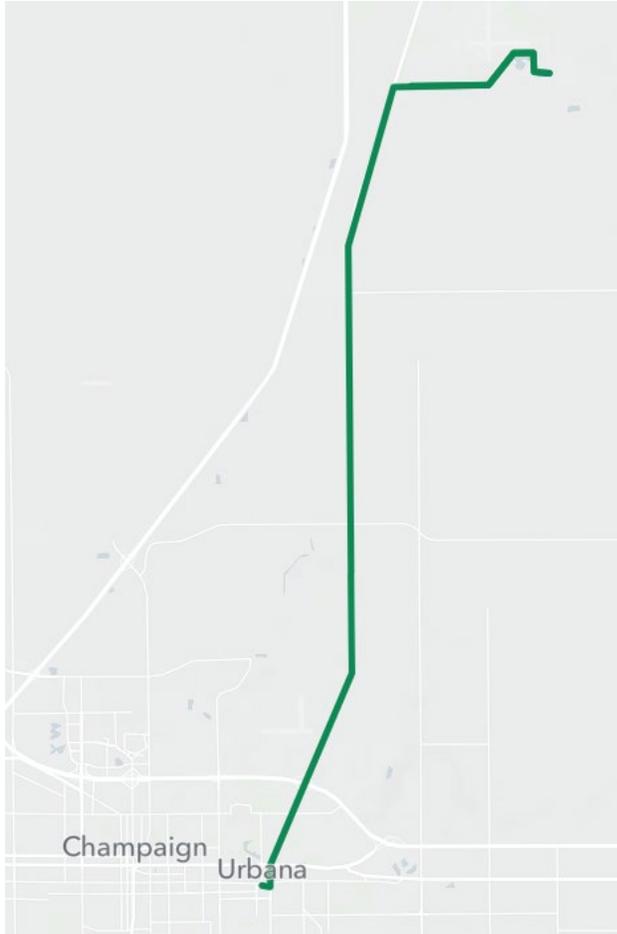


Figure 3 - Lincoln Square to ICT routing

### **PM Service**

In order to meet the desired departure time from ICT in the 5:00pm hour, a new trip is needed. The proposal is to use the same routing as shown in Figure 3 at leave Lincoln Square at 4:35pm and arrive at ICT at 5:00pm. There would be a 5 minute layover scheduled for boardings and return to Lincoln Square at 5:30pm.

An option to offer a second trip would be to modify the existing last trip of the Rantoul Connector service that ends at Rantoul Walmart at 6:00pm. The proposal would be to route directly to ICT and leave at 6:15pm in order to arrive at Lincoln Square at 6:40pm. See Figure 4 for routing.

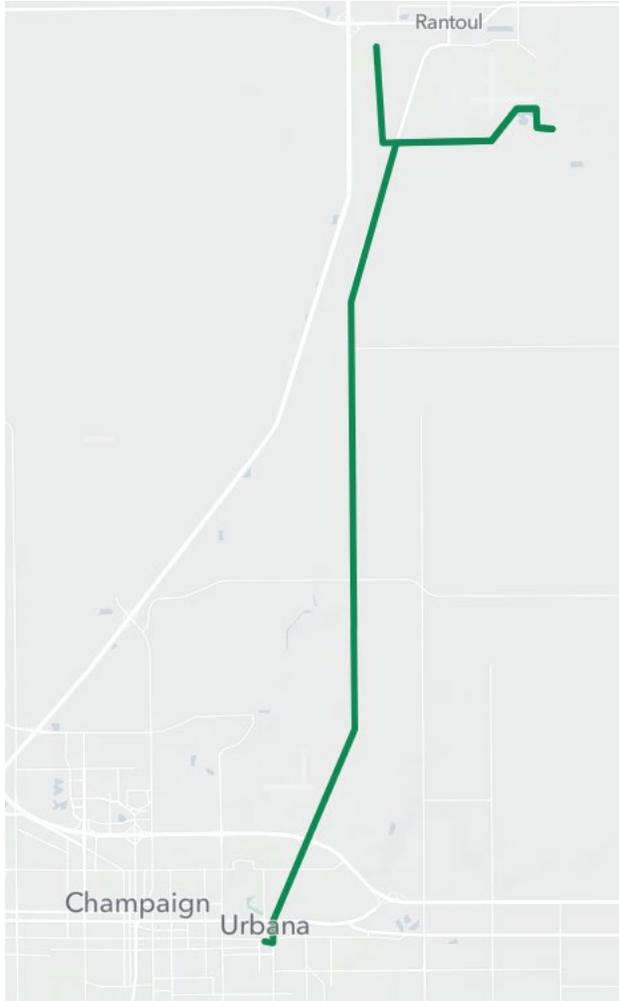


Figure 4 - PM routing from Rantoul Walmart to ICT to Lincoln Square

Since demand is unknown at this point, there are two options for service; a base option that includes one AM and one PM trip option; and an alternative option that includes two trips in the AM and two trips in the PM.

The proposed options are shown on the schedule below in Figure 5. The Red text shown is for the base option and the purple text shows the alternative option for the second trips.

AM								
Northbound				Southbound				
Lincoln Square	Fountain Valley	ICT	Walmart Rantoul	Walmart Rantoul	Round Barn Road	Illinois Terminal	Lincoln Square	
5:10A	5:30A		5:37A	5:42A	6:04A	6:14/:19A	6:34A	
6:34	6:54		7:01	7:11A	7:33	7:43	7:58	
7:58	8:18	8:25	8:40Δ					
9:20	---	9:45Δ						
PM								
Northbound				Southbound				
Lincoln Square	Fountain Valley	ICT	Walmart Rantoul	Walmart Rantoul	Round Barn Road	Illinois Terminal	ICT	Lincoln Square
	2:40P		2:47P	2:57P	3:19P	3:29/:34P		3:49P
3:49P	4:09		4:16	4:26	4:48	5:10/:15		5:30
4:35	---	5:00					5:05	5:30Δ
5:30	5:50		5:57	6:00			6:15	6:40Δ

Figure 5 - Altered Rantoul Connector Schedule

### Cost

The cost for the base option (red trips) would be 1.33 additional hours per day at \$34.88 per hour. For Summer service (63 weekdays), it would cost \$2,922.60 or \$11,829.55 annually (255 weekdays).

The cost for the additional trip options (highlighted red and purple trips) would be an additional 2.74 hours per day at \$34.88 per hour. For Summer service (63 weekdays), it would cost \$6,020.99 or \$24,370.66 annually (255 weekdays).

Champaign County Area Rural Public Transit System (C-CARTS)  
**FY2024 Quarter 2 Service Report**

The quarterly report reflects the last completed IDOT fiscal quarter, Quarter 2, from October 2024 to December 2024.

**Grantee:** Champaign County  
**Subcommittee and oversight:** Rural Transit Advisory Group (RTAG) and Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)  
**Operator:** Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD)

**Trip type** indicates the purpose of each trip. Note: a trip is classified by the purpose of the activity that preceded it. For example, if a rider takes the bus to a doctor’s appointment and then walks to a grocery store before boarding the bus again to return home, the first trip is classified as *medical*, and the return trip is classified as *shopping*.

**Trips** are one-way rides, counted each time an individual rider enters a vehicle. For example, a round trip counts as two trips.

**Days** are the number of business days (normally M-F, except on Federal holidays and closures due to inclement weather) operated during the quarter.

**Average trips** refers to the total number trips in the quarter divided by total number of operating days.

**Lift** refers to trips requiring ADA Lift equipment.

**60+** refers to trips provided to older adults 60 years of age or older.

**Denials** are counted when a rider requests a trip that could not be accommodated.

**Service miles** are miles driven while riders are on the vehicle (excludes miles driven to and from the MTD garage).

**Service hours** are hours driven while riders are on the vehicle (excludes time spent driving to and from the MTD garage).

Note on fare structure: 5311 trips that begin or end in the rural general public service area cost \$6 each way. Riders aged 60 years and older are eligible for a \$2 one-way fare. Personal care assistants ride for free, and children aged 12 and under rider for \$1 each way. Trips that begin and end in Rantoul are \$2 each way, regardless of the rider’s age.

**Demand Response Service Characteristics**

	Trip Type						Days	Daily Average	Lift	60+	Denials
	Medical	Personal	Shopping	Social	Employment	Education					
October	198	79	90	157	200	38	22	34	205	440	109
November	209	78	84	157	174	27	22	33	190	413	46
December	193	49	106	179	134	14	21	32	187	413	39
<b>Total</b>	600	206	280	493	508	79	65	33	582	1,266	194

Systemwide Service Characteristics

	DR Trips	FR Trips	Total Trips	Service Miles	Service Hours
October	762	1,281	2,043	23,330	1,251.75
November	729	1,164	1,893	20,880	1,224.75
December	675	1,150	1,825	21,914	1,219.75
<b>Total</b>	2,166	3,295	5,761	66,124	3,696.25

Note: DR = Demand Response | FR = Fixed Route

Grant Funding

	Project Income	Service Contract	Total Revenue	Expended Federal	Remaining Federal	Expended State	Remaining State	Total Expended	Total Remaining
Q1	11,094	29,100	40,194	238,238	244,783	4,457	780,229	242,695	847,291
Q2	11,024	29,682	40,706	145,996	98,787	75,969	704,260	221,965	619,326
Q3									
Q4									

Note: Figures in this table are rounded to the nearest dollar amount.

C-CARTS Registered Riders

	Population (2010 Census)	Community	October New Riders	November New Riders	December New Riders	Total Served	% Population Served
DRZ1	22,171	Dewey					10.5%
		Fisher					
		Foosland					
		Gifford		1		1	
		Ludlow					
		Penfield					
		Rantoul	10	18	14	42	
Thomasboro							

	<b>Population (2010 Census)</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>October New Riders</b>	<b>November New Riders</b>	<b>December New Riders</b>	<b>Total Served</b>	<b>% Population Served</b>
DRZ2	17,317	Allerton					0.7%
		Broadlands					
		Homer			1	1	
		Longview	1				
		Ogden					
		Philo	1			1	
		Royal					
		Saint Joseph					
		Sidney					
DRZ3	12,317	Ivesdale					0.6%
		Pesotum					
		Sadorus					
		Tolono					
DRZ4	20,327	Mahomet	2			2	0.7%
		Seymour					
		Bondville					
MTD District	128,949	Champaign	2		1	3	0.6%
		Savoy					
		Urbana	2			2	
Outside County							
<b>FY24 Q1 New Riders:</b>				<b>52</b>			