

MARION TRANSIT SERVICES ANALYSIS

FINAL REPORT



JUNE 2023



Prepared by
Kimley»Horn
Expect More. Experience Better.



**OCALA MARION
TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING
ORGANIZATION**

Marion Transit Service Analysis

Prepared for:

Ocala Marion Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)

Marion Transit Services



Prepared By:

Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.



Table of Contents

Section 1. Introduction	1
Report Content	1
Section 2. Urban Area Boundary Changes	2
Existing Services	3
Section 3. Evaluation Framework and Service Alternatives	5
Step 1: Demographic Analysis	5
Older Adults	6
Zero-Vehicle Households	7
Low-Income	8
Persons with Disabilities	9
Transit Propensity Index	10
Step 2: Identify Candidate Service Zones.....	11
Step 3: Identify Service Points.....	11
Step 4: Prioritize Candidate Service Zones.....	13
Step 5: Develop Service Alternatives.....	15
Service Alternative #1: Dunnellon Route	16
Service Alternative #2: Citra-Reddick Route	18
Service Alternative #3: Fort McCoy Route	20
Service Alternative #4: Forest Corners Route	22
Service Alternative #5: Marion Oaks Route	24
Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) Meeting.....	26
Section 4. Implementation Actions	27
Point-Deviated Service.....	27
Staffing and Fleet Requirements.....	27
Routing and Scheduling	27
Published Schedules	27
Days of Service	28
Service Routing/Testing	28
Funding/Match Requirements	28
FTA Section 5311	28

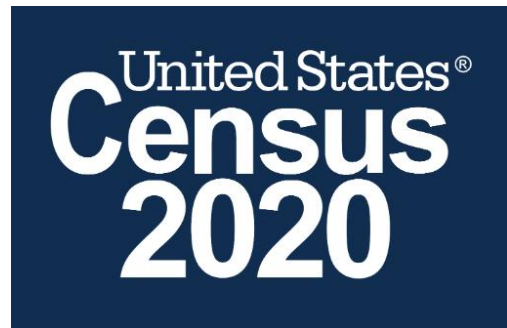


FCTD Innovative Service Development Grant	28
Notifications/Advertising of Service	29
Performance Monitoring	29
Appendix A: Service Points and Locations.....	30
Appendix B: Prioritization Criteria and Scoring.....	31

Section 1. Introduction

The Ocala Marion Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) works with Marion Transit (MT) to provide public transportation services throughout Marion County. MT makes use of Federal Transit Authority (FTA) Section 5311 Program funding to provide public transportation services to areas of the County outside of Census and FTA defined urban areas. As the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), MT also assumes responsibility for coordinating local transportation services for individuals who are transportation disadvantaged (TD) consistent with the rules defined by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD). That responsibility includes provision of door-to-door paratransit services to meet the transportation needs for medical, life-sustaining, educational, work, business, and recreational activities for Marion County's TD population, as well as other recipients in the County.

The TPO and MT are working together to reevaluate transportation disadvantaged and rural public transportation service levels based on recently published 2020 Census data. The 2020 Census data redefines urban areas and, in turn, the boundaries of FTA Urban Areas. The resulting changes have impacts on the use of FTA funding.



This report documents an evaluation of the 2020 Census data and its impact to existing MT service. The service evaluation is designed to result in modified transportation disadvantaged and rural transportation services that are consistent with the 2020 Census urban/rural designations and that meet growing transportation demand in the community. In addition, an important aspect of this project is identifying areas and/or communities that will maximize use of the existing levels of available transit service funding. This report supports the implementation of Goal 1 of the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP): "To provide the best possible transportation service to those in the service area".

Report Content

Including this Introduction, this report is organized into four sections. They include the following:

- Section 2 provides background information on the 2020 Census and the changes to the definition of urban areas. A map series is presented to illustrate the changes to FTA Urban Areas from 2010 to 2020 based on decennial Census data.
- Section 3 describes the evaluation framework applied to identify modified and new rural public transportation services. This section also describes the actions taken as part of each step in the evaluation framework and the resulting service alternatives developed. A map series is presented to illustrate each proposed service alternative.
- Section 4 describes short-term actions for implementation of proposed service alternatives. A tentative timeline along with responsible parties for each action identified is also presented.

Section 2. Urban Area Boundary Changes

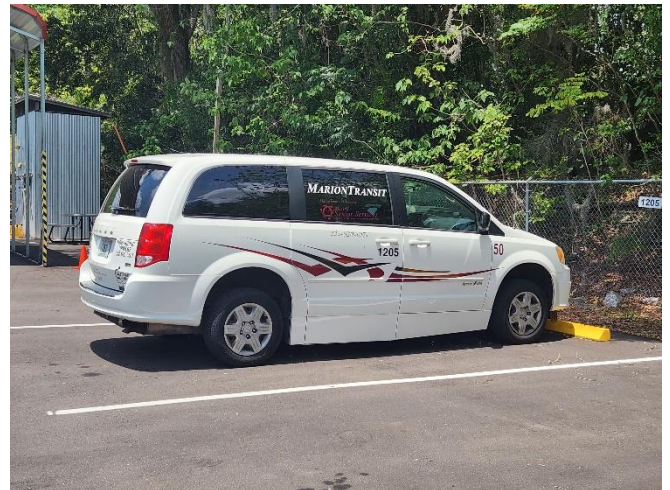
The 2020 Census establishes new definitions and geographies for urban areas. Urban areas are delineated by applying specific criteria to the decennial census data. Rural areas encompass all population, housing, and geography not included within a Census Urban Area delineation. The 2020 Census defines an urban area as follows:

“... a densely settled core of census blocks that meet minimum housing unit density and/or population density requirements. This includes adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses. To qualify as an urban area, the territory identified according to criteria must encompass at least 2,000 housing units or have a population of at least 5,000.”

There are three key changes to the 2020 Census approach to delineating urban areas: (1) An area can now qualify as an urban area by meeting the minimum housing unit *or* population threshold, (2) the minimum population threshold was raised from 2,500 to 5,000 people, and (3) housing unit density is now used in place of population density to define an urban area. In addition, the 2010 Census grouped Urban Areas into urban areas and urban clusters, based on a population above or below 50,000 people. The 2020 Census no longer distinguishes between different types of urban areas.

For FTA programs, the U.S. Census Bureau’s urban area classifications delineate geographic boundaries for both urban and rural areas. Consequently, the delineations impact the funding distribution and eligibility for FTA’s various discretionary and formula grant funding programs. For the purposes of its grant programs, FTA still defines an urban area as an urban area encompassing a population of 50,000 or more. Figure 1 illustrates the impact from the 2020 Census on FTA Urban Areas that include portions of Marion County. There are three Census-delineated urban areas that include portions of Marion County and meet the FTA’s population threshold of 50,000 people or more to be classified as an Urban Area:

- Ocala Urban Area
- The Villages-Lady Lake Urban Area
- Beverly Hills-Homosassa Springs-Pine Ridge Springs Urban Area



As shown in the map series, the impact to the FTA Urban Areas consists of expansion of the geographic coverage of two of the three urban areas: the Ocala Urban Area and Lady Lake-The Villages Urban Area. There was a negligible amount of expansion within Marion County for the Homosassa Springs-Beverly Hills-Citrus Springs Urban Area.

Existing Services

The impact of the 2020 Census urban area delineation presents a favorable environment for users of MT's existing rural public transportation services. The two existing services, the Blue Line and Gold Line, are deviated fixed-route services that follow a designated route but provide on-demand trips for riders within a reasonable distance from designated destinations (i.e., service points such as banks, post office, medical facilities, etc.). Riders may also make same day reservations if the bus is able to deviate from its route and stay within its advertised schedule.

The Gold Line operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM and provides services to the Marion Oaks Area. The Blue Line operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and provides services to the Dunnellon Area. Figure 2 shows the general service areas for the Gold and Blue Lines, respectively. Based on the revised FTA Urban Areas, both routes could continue to operate with only limited modifications to their geographic service area.

Figure 1: 2010 vs. 2020 Urban Areas (Populations Greater Than 50,000)

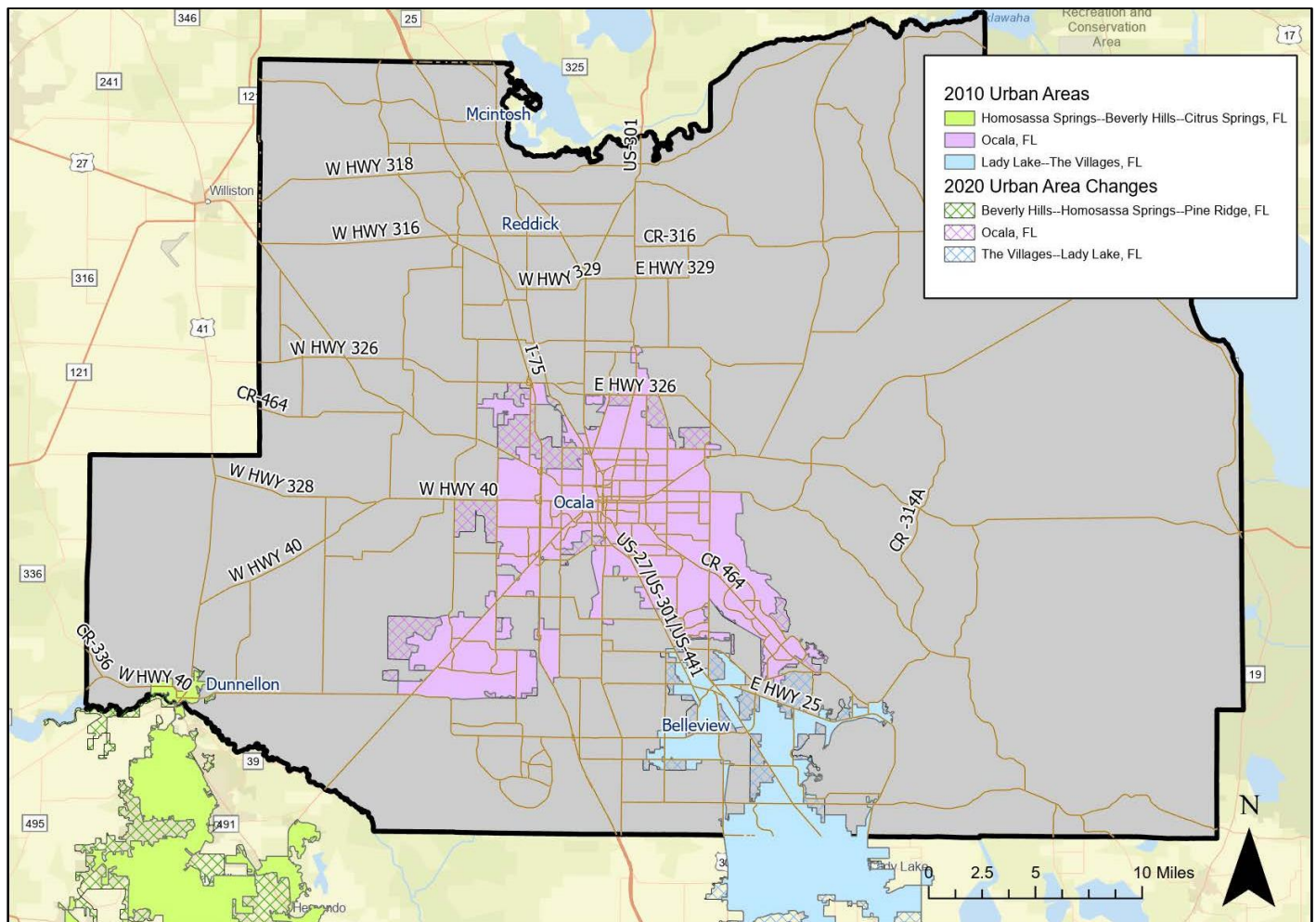
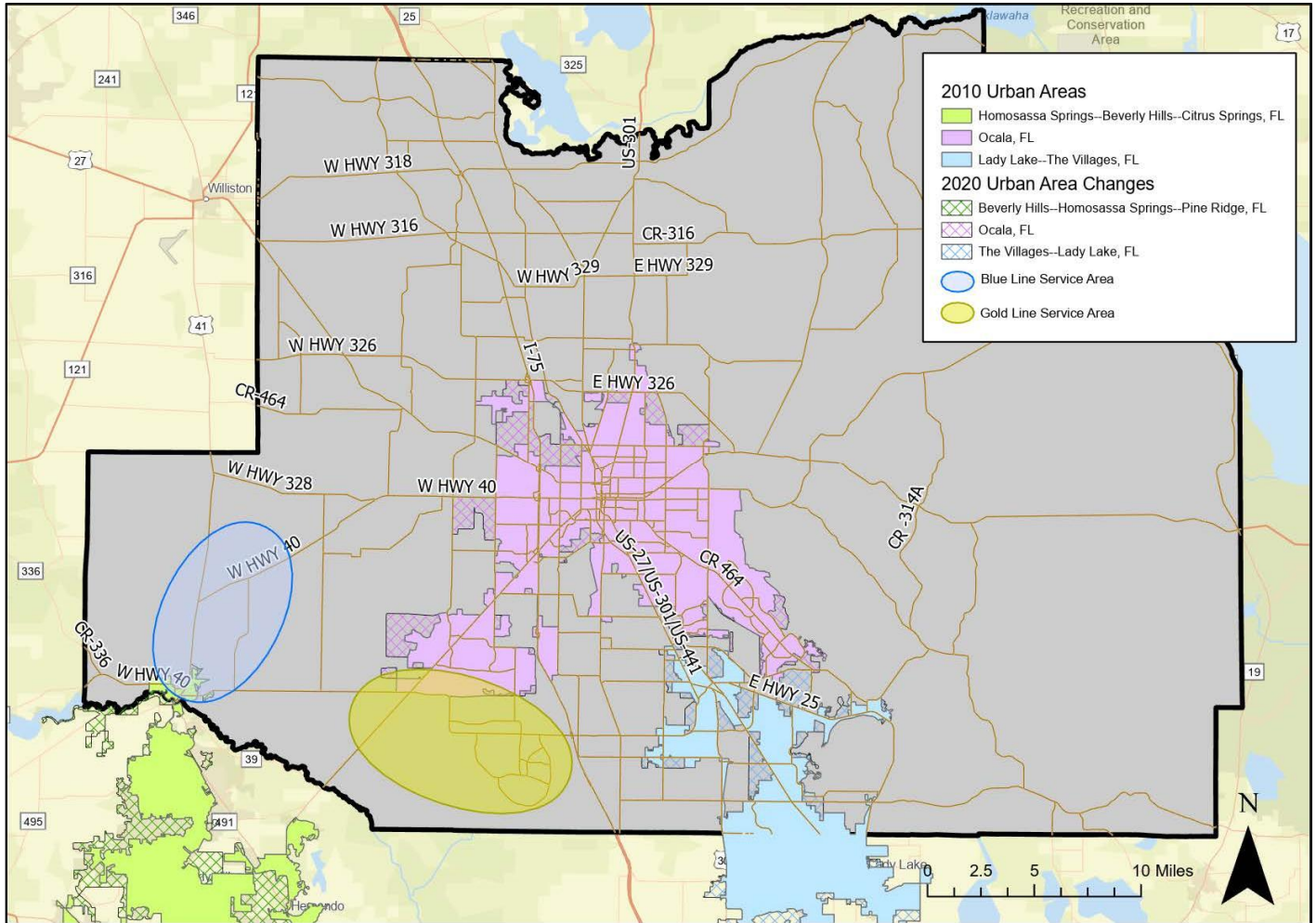


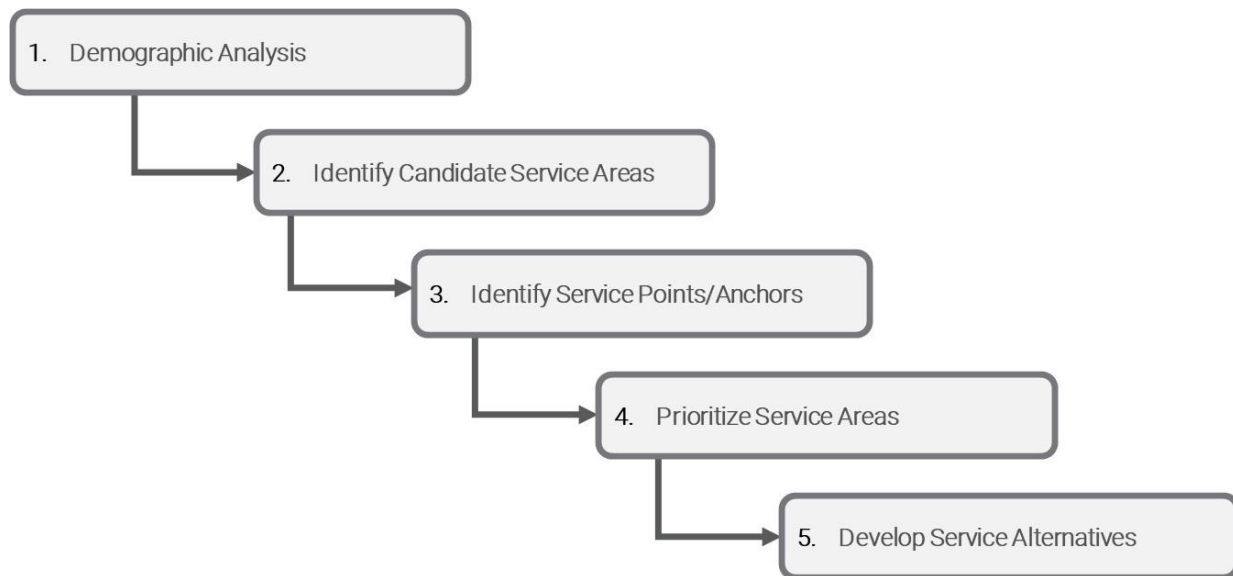
Figure 2: Marion Transit Services Blue and Gold Line Service Areas



Section 3. Evaluation Framework and Service Alternatives

An evaluation framework was developed to guide the identification and prioritization of service alternatives. The evaluation framework consists of five major steps, as illustrated in Figure 3. Each step is described in the following section, including supporting data used, data sources, the decision criteria, and the conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis.

Figure 3: Evaluation Framework



Step 1: Demographic Analysis

Step 1 of the evaluation framework consists of the analysis of demographic data. The demographic data analyzed help to identify populations that are more likely to be transit dependent. Transit dependent populations are characterized differently based on the operating environment. In Marion County, transit dependent populations are defined as exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics:

- *Older Adults*: Individuals aged 60 and older
- *Zero-Vehicle Households*: Households where no individuals own a vehicle
- *Low-Income Households*: Households that are at or below the poverty line
- *Persons with a Disability*: Individuals with an identified disability characterized as a difficulty with either hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, selfcare, and/or independent living

The demographic analysis is presented on the following pages by each of the above transit dependent indicators and is accompanied by maps to illustrate where concentrations of these populations reside within the County. Data was sourced from 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates at the Census tract and block group levels.

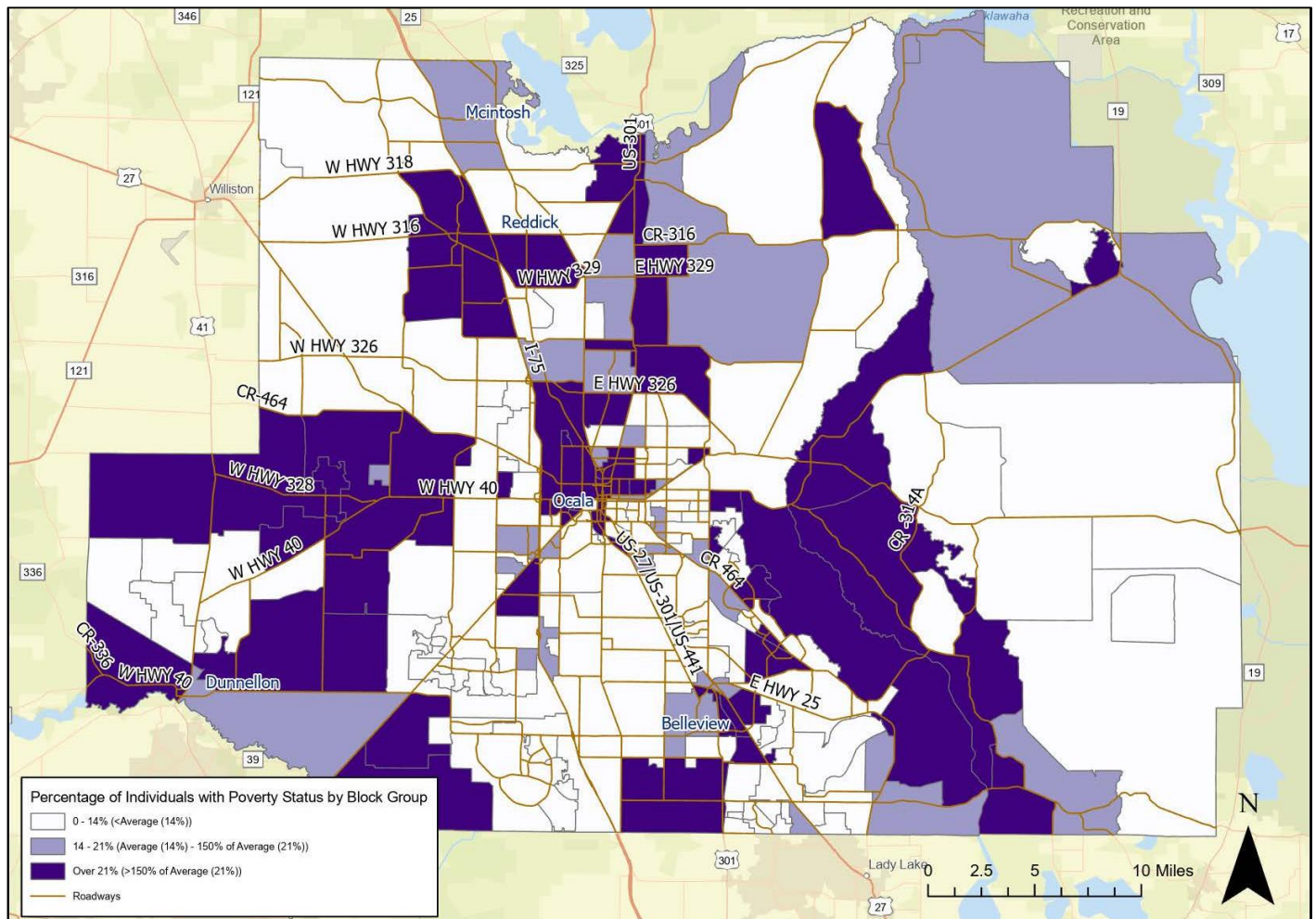
Low-Income

Figure 6 illustrates the percentage of individuals by poverty status by block group. Overall, 14 percent of the population of Marion County is considered low-income. Figure 6 is symbolized using three categories to display the highest and lowest concentrations of individuals by poverty status:

- Below average (below 14%)
- Average to 150% of the average (14% to 21%)
- Above 150% of average (above 21%)

The highest concentrations of individuals with poverty status are in block groups located in the areas of Citra, Reddick, Fairfield, Fort McCoy, Dunnellon, Umatilla, Ocala, Ocala National Forest, Salt Springs, and Southeast of Marion Oaks.

Figure 6: Percentage Individuals by Poverty Status by Block Group (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates)



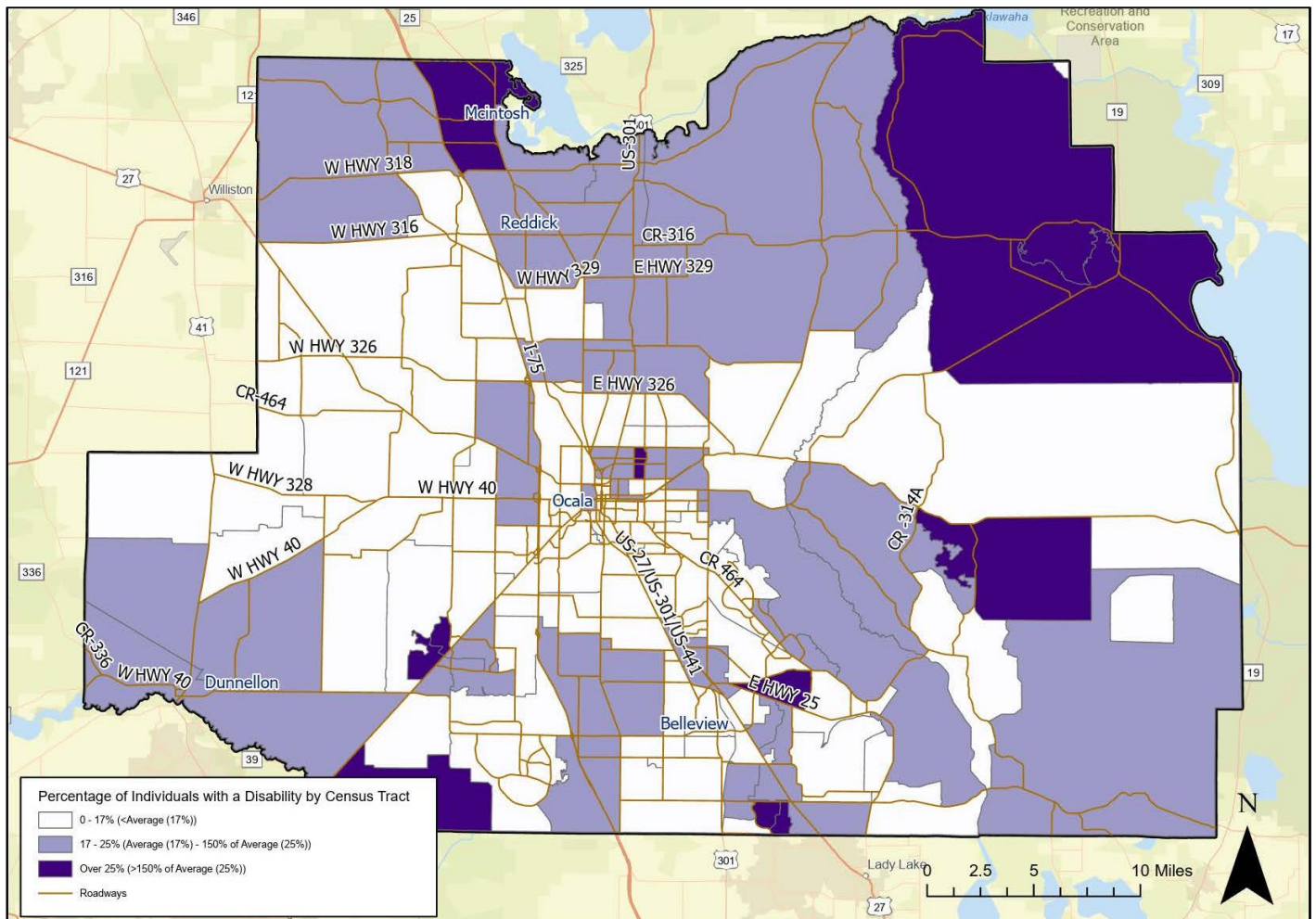
Persons with Disabilities

Figure 7 illustrates the percentage of individuals with a disability by census tract, which was the most granular level of data available for 2021 ACS 5-year estimates of disability status. Overall, 17 percent of the population of Marion County identify as having a disability. Figure 7 is symbolized using three categories to display the highest and lowest concentrations of individuals by disability status:

- Below average (below 17%)
- Average to 150% of the average (17% to 25%)
- Above 150% of average (above 25%)

The highest concentrations of individuals with an identified disability are in census tracts located in the areas of McIntosh, Salt Springs, and southeast of Dunnellon.

Figure 7: Percentage of Individuals with a Disability by Census Tract (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates)

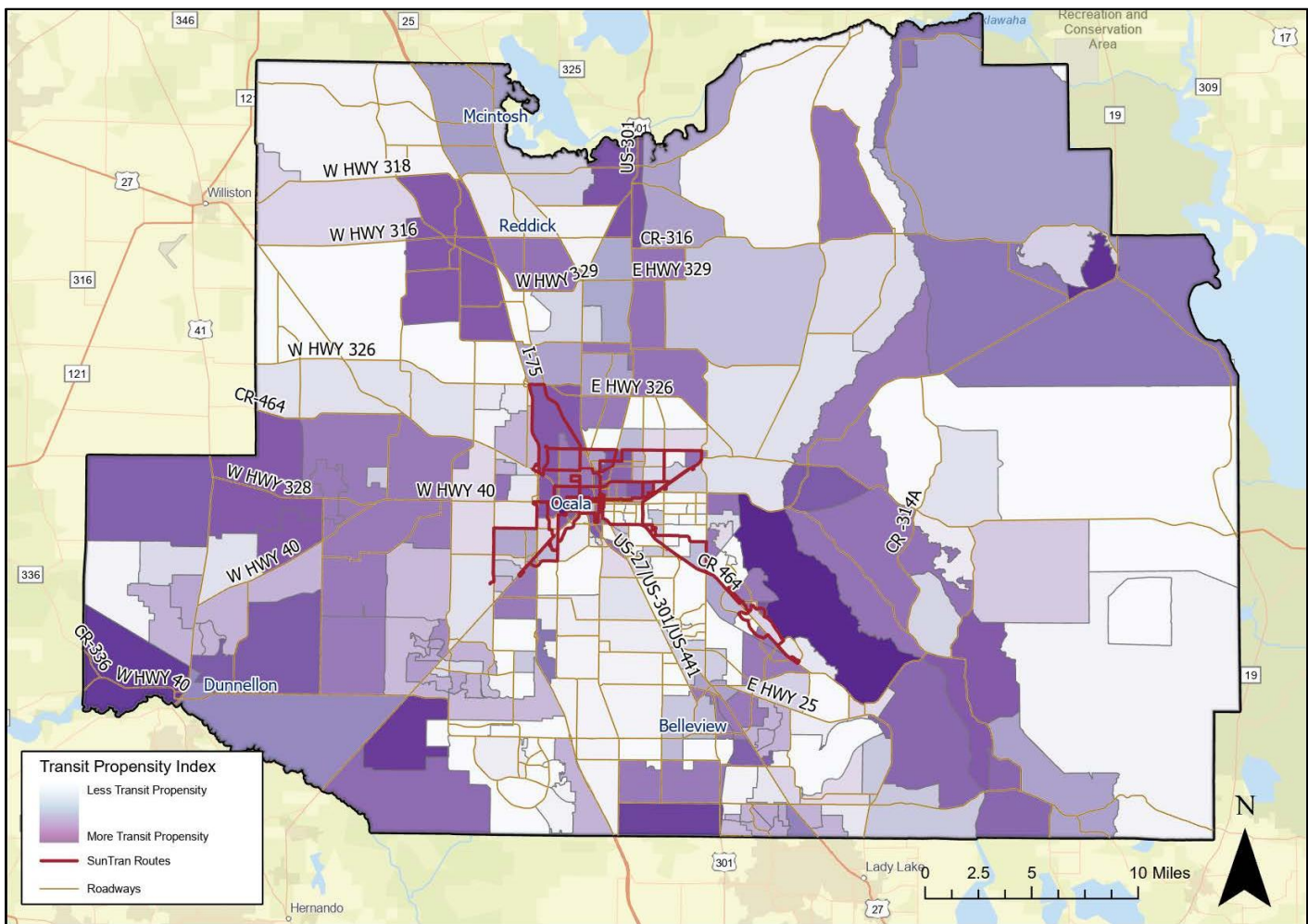


Transit Propensity Index

An overlay analysis of the demographic data was prepared to understand where concentrations of transit dependent populations exist within the County. This type of overlay analysis is typically referred to as a Transit Propensity analysis or a Transit Orientation Index (TOI). The process of overlaying the demographic data provides for a composite representation of transit dependent populations, as defined within the local operating environment. The result is areas with higher concentrations of more than one transit dependent characteristic can be easily and visually distinguished from other areas on a map or other geographic format.

Figure 8 illustrates a map of the transit propensity index analysis that was developed to provide an overview of areas containing the highest concentration of transit dependent populations (older adults, zero-vehicle, low-income, and disabled populations) in Marion County. This allows for the identification of zones that could be considered for new or expanded rural transportation services. The darker shaded areas reflect areas with higher transit propensity based on the four transit dependent characteristics evaluated.

Figure 8: Transit Propensity Index (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates)



Step 2: Identify Candidate Service Zones

As indicated, the overlay analysis allows for a visual representation of where transportation disadvantaged populations are concentrated throughout the County. The overlay facilitates identification of candidate zones (i.e., block groups) that could be targeted for public transportation services. That identification of candidate zones is premised on the probability that more bus ridership demand can be met in areas that have a higher transit propensity. Based on the overlay analysis illustrated in Figure 8, 15 zones are identified for further evaluation and consideration for rural public transportation service. Candidate zones include the following are illustrated in Figure 9.

- Citra
- Dunnellon
- East Lake Weir
- Fairfield
- Forest (Southeast Ocala)
- Forest Corners
- Fort McCoy
- North Dunnellon
- Reddick
- Salt Springs
- Silver Springs
- South Marion Oaks
- Southeast Marion Oaks
- West Dunnellon
- West Marion Oaks

Consistent with the focus of this analysis, candidate zones include high transit propensity areas located outside of the FTA's 2020 Urban Areas (i.e., rural areas).

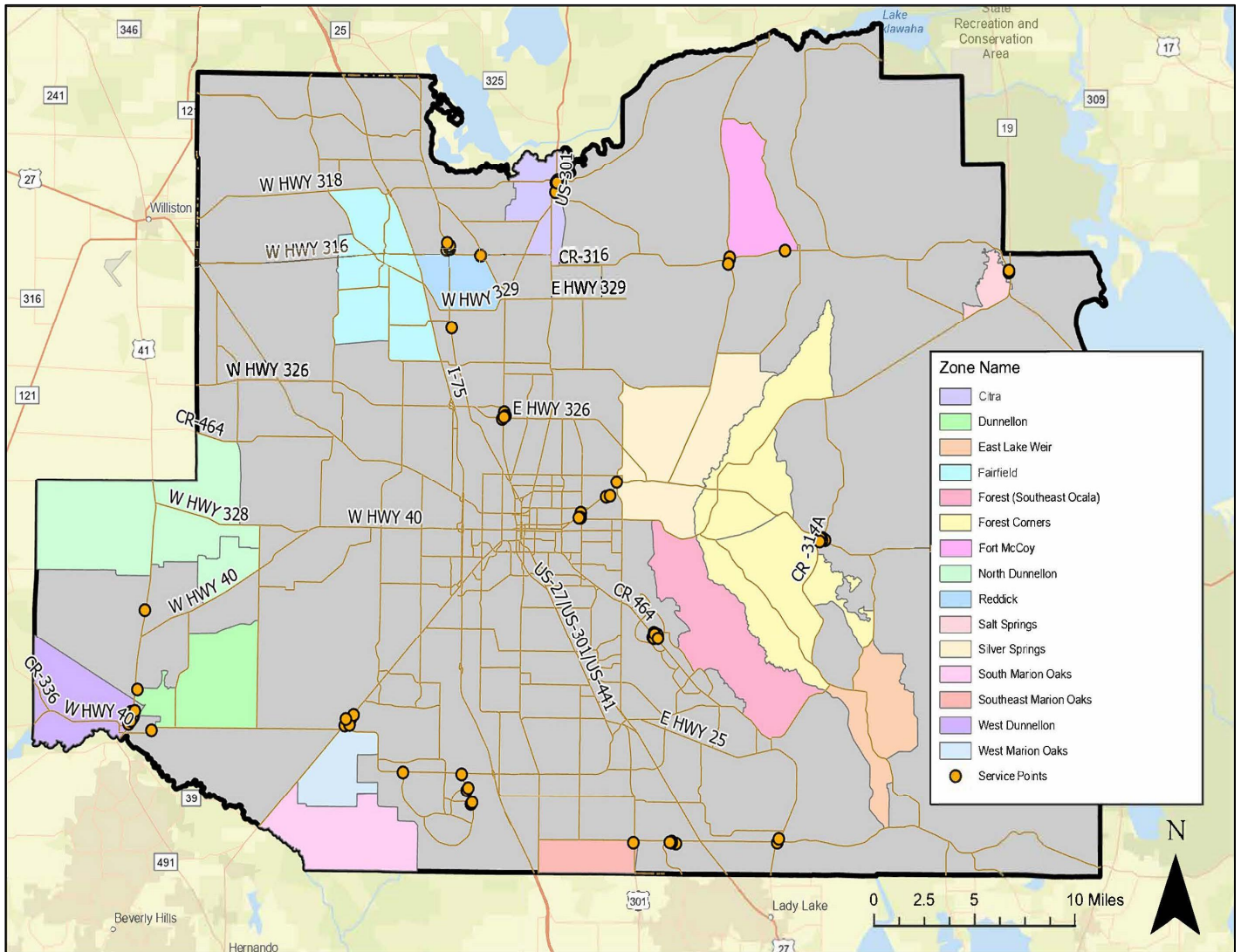
Step 3: Identify Service Points

The analysis is insufficient if focused solely on where target populations reside. Therefore, the evaluation framework must also include the identification of service points where transit dependent populations would likely travel to. Specifically, the question stated was, *"Where within, or near, each candidate service zone do people need to go to perform life-sustaining activities?"*

Multiple service points are identified within and around each candidate zone. Service points include essential services such as grocery stores, post offices, pharmacies, medical services, banks, and libraries. Service points were identified and considered based on their location within or near each candidate zone, as well as locations that exist along the service routing to and from Marion Senior Services in Ocala. In addition, existing MT service points from the current MT Blue and Gold Lines were added to the list. Figure 9 identifies service points for the candidate zones. A comprehensive list of all the identified service points, including zone served, location name, type of services provided, and address, is included in Appendix A.



Figure 9: Marion Transit Services: Service Points



Step 4: Prioritize Candidate Service Zones

The limited resources available through FTA funding sources require that any new or modified services are prioritized in the candidate zones identified in Step 3. To that end, four prioritization criteria were developed to filter through the candidate service zones and identify those that meet service delivery operational requirements, potential productivity levels, and proximity to life-sustaining activities. The four criteria including the following:

- **Demographic Data** – The demographic data and resulting overlay analysis reveal high concentrations of transit dependent populations within each candidate zone. Candidate zones are given point scores for each demographic group (older adults, zero-vehicle households, low-income households, persons with disabilities) where the proportion in the candidate zone is higher than the countywide average.
- **Number of Service Points** – Improving access to life-sustaining activities is the primary charge of transportation service provision. Zones with proximity and access to more service points are given a higher prioritization score for this criterion.
- **Population Density** – Large tracts that exhibit high transit propensity may be difficult to serve if population densities are low. Travel to and from dispersed, low-density, and very rural operating environments create service and scheduling inefficiencies and decrease opportunities to reach more people and service points. As a result, zones with a higher population density are given a higher score for this criterion.
- **Distance** – The distance buses need to travel to service start points is an important consideration as longer distances equate to more travel time to and from target communities, thus putting a constraint on daily operating hours. Furthermore, distance from the operations hub adds complexity to potential operational issues such as breakdowns, incidents, and other unforeseen issues that could impact service. As a result, candidate zones that were closer to the Marion Senior Services transit hub were given a higher score in this criterion.

Table 1 shows the prioritized rank order of the 15 candidate zones based on these criteria. Detailed metrics and corresponding scoring for each criteria are included in Appendix B.

As shown in Table 1, scoring for the various candidate zones ranged from seven to fourteen, with the higher number indicating a higher prioritization. The Citra, Reddick, and West Dunnellon zones rank highest while the North of Dunnellon, Silver Springs, and Fairfield zones rank the lowest. Table 1 also groups high priority zones that could potentially be served by the same service route through color-coding (e.g., the orange-colored zones, Citra and Reddick, could potentially be served by the same route). More details of the grouping are described in Step 5.

Table 1: Candidate Zone Prioritization Scores

Zone Name	Score
Citra	14
Reddick	14
West Dunnellon	14
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	13
Forest Corners	12
Dunnellon	11
South Marion Oaks	11
Southeast Marion Oaks	11
West Marion Oaks	11
Fort McCoy	10
Salt Springs	10
East Lake Weir	9
North of Dunnellon	8
Silver Springs	8
Fairfield	7

Step 5: Develop Service Alternatives

Based on the prioritization performed in Step 4, service alternatives were narrowed down to the five following proposed routes:

- Dunnellon Route
- Citra-Reddick Route
- Fort McCoy Route
- Forest Corners Route
- Marion Oaks Route

Each of these routes are proposed to run as “point-deviated services,” where vehicles follow a fixed schedule around multiple destinations (i.e., service points) and can deviate anywhere within a defined service zone to pick up and drop off riders who request service. Point-deviated service is currently utilized for the MT Blue and Gold Lines.

Figures 10 through 14 show each of the five routes mentioned above. For each proposed route, a quarter-mile buffer area and a one-mile buffer area around the proposed service route is shown. The buffer areas depict service area ranges based on distance and not on travel time. These ranges represent the approximate distance a driver may be able to go to pick up a rider who requested service. A path from Marion Senior Services in Ocala to the route is shown as the vehicle travels outside of the urban area into the non-urban service area. The service points along the route are identified on the primary map and inset map. The service alternatives presented were developed in coordination with Marion Transit and Ocala Marion TPO staff.

Service Alternative #1: Dunnellon Route

Figure 10 shows the proposed Dunnellon Route. This route was modeled to serve a similar geography and service points to the existing MT Blue Line. The Dunnellon Route would serve areas along SR 40 between Marion Senior Services and Dunnellon in the southwestern portion of the county. This service is unique compared to other service alternatives due to it serving a non-urban area between two urban areas: Ocala and the Beverly Hills-Homosassa Springs-Pine Ridge Urban Area.

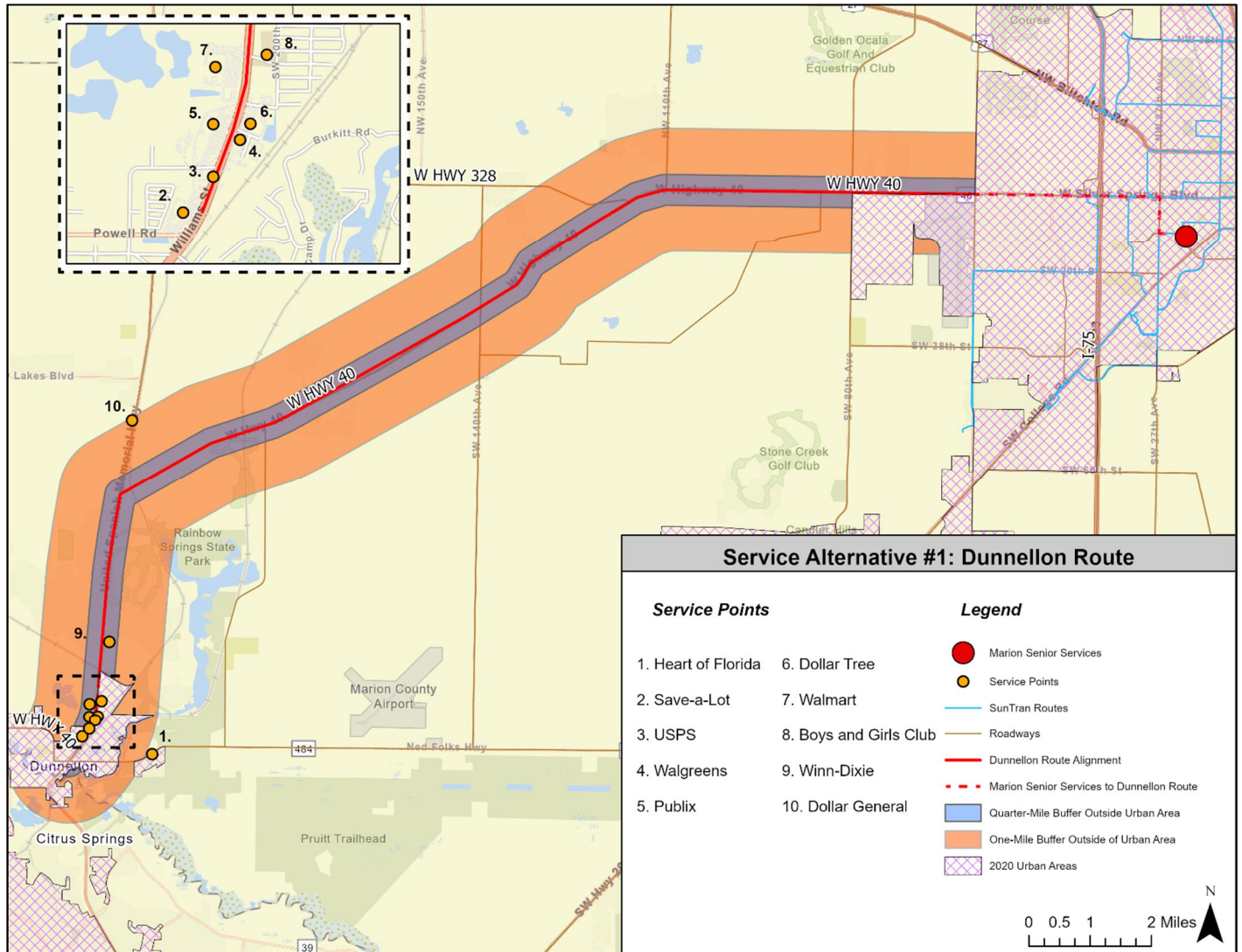
The route is proposed to connect to ten identified service points, also shown in Figure 10. Those service points include medical, grocery, post office, banking, and community service locations. The service would benefit patrons by connecting them to both Ocala and Dunnellon via SR 40.

Service to the Dunnellon area was a high priority based on the Step 4 prioritization exercise, specifically when looking at demographic data. The demographic analysis shows higher concentrations of transportation disadvantaged populations when compared to the countywide average in the following categories:

- 22% of individuals below the poverty line (Dunnellon and West Dunnellon)
- 11% of households with zero-vehicles (West Dunnellon)
- 51% of individuals aged 60 and over (West Dunnellon)
- 24% of individuals with an identified disability (West Dunnellon)



Figure 10: Service Alternative #1: Dunnellon Route



Service Alternative #2: Citra-Reddick Route

Figure 11 shows the proposed Citra-Reddick route. This route would serve areas along US 301 north of Marion Transit Services towards the Citra and Reddick communities in Marion County. These two areas were identified as the top candidates for service expansion resulting from the transit propensity analysis and prioritization process as part of Step 2 of this analysis. Thirteen service points were identified along the route and those locations include essential services in Citra, Reddick, and areas north of Ocala.

The route would serve the Citra and Reddick candidate zones identified in Step 2 of this analysis. The Citra and Reddick zones have population densities that indicate service may be more heavily utilized in these areas (i.e., 187 and 119 persons per square mile, respectively). Additionally, the demographic analysis shows higher concentrations of transportation disadvantaged populations when compared to the countywide average in the following categories:

Citra:

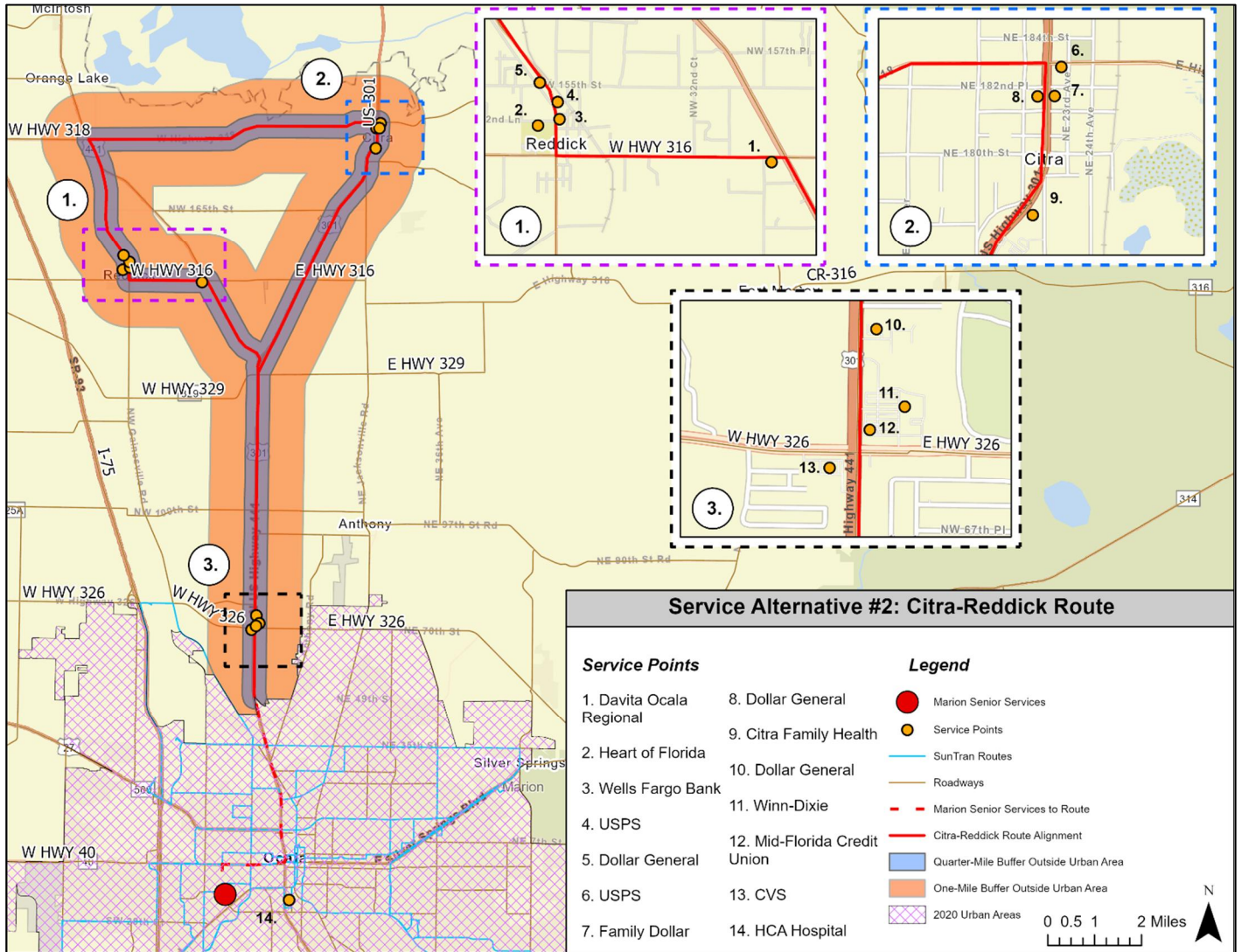
- 45% of individuals below the poverty line
- 9% of households with zero-vehicles
- 17% of individuals with an identified disability

Reddick:

- 24% of individuals below the poverty line
- 7% of households with zero-vehicles
- 20% of individuals with an identified disability



Figure 11: Service Alternative #2: Citra-Reddick Route



Service Alternative #3: Fort McCoy Route

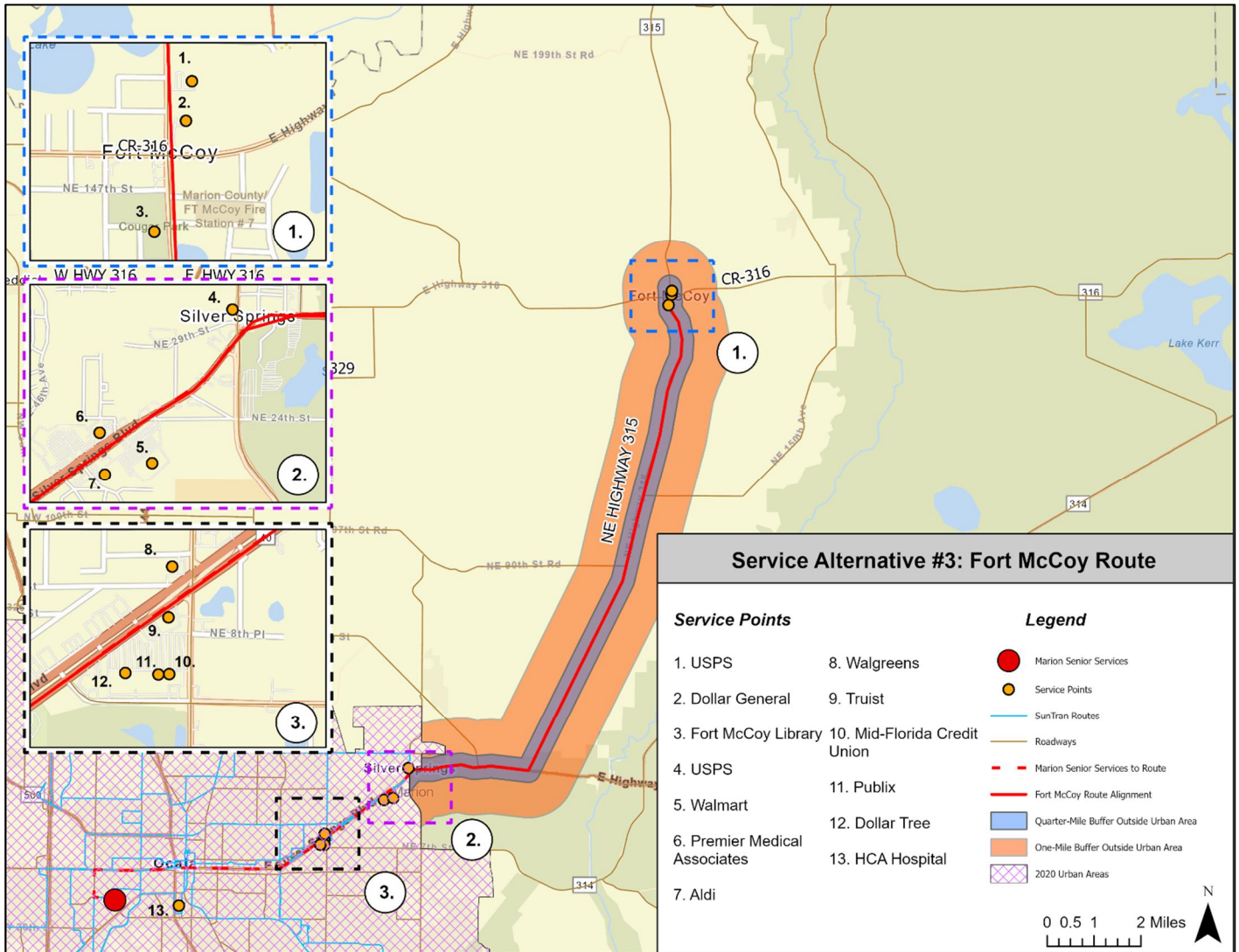
Figure 12 shows the proposed Fort McCoy Route. The Fort McCoy Route would serve areas north of Marion Transit Services towards the Fort McCoy area along CR 315. The Fort McCoy Route would benefit residents by providing connections between the Fort McCoy area, the urban areas of Ocala and Silver Springs, and the eleven identified service points.

The Fort McCoy Route was selected as alternative due to expressed interest in providing transit connections to the Fort McCoy area and its higher concentrations of transportation disadvantaged populations when compared to the countywide average in the following categories:

- 46% of individuals below the poverty line
- 67% of individuals aged 60 and over
- 21% of individuals with an identified disability



Figure 12: Service Alternative #3: Fort McCoy Route



Service Alternative #4: Forest Corners Route

Figure 13 shows the proposed Forest Corners Route. The Forest Corners Route would serve areas east of Ocala along SR 40, connecting Marion Senior Services towards Silver Springs and the Ocala Forest community. The Forest Corners Route would benefit residents by providing connections to the ten identified service points identified in the Ocala Forest area located within the Forest Corners Shopping Plaza located at the intersection of SR 40 and CR 314A, the Forest Community Center, as well as those identified in the Silver Springs area's Six Gun Shopping Plaza.

The route would serve both the Forest Corners and Silver Springs candidate zones identified in Step 2 of this analysis. The demographic analysis shows higher concentrations of transportation disadvantaged populations when compared to the countywide average in the following categories:

Forest Corners

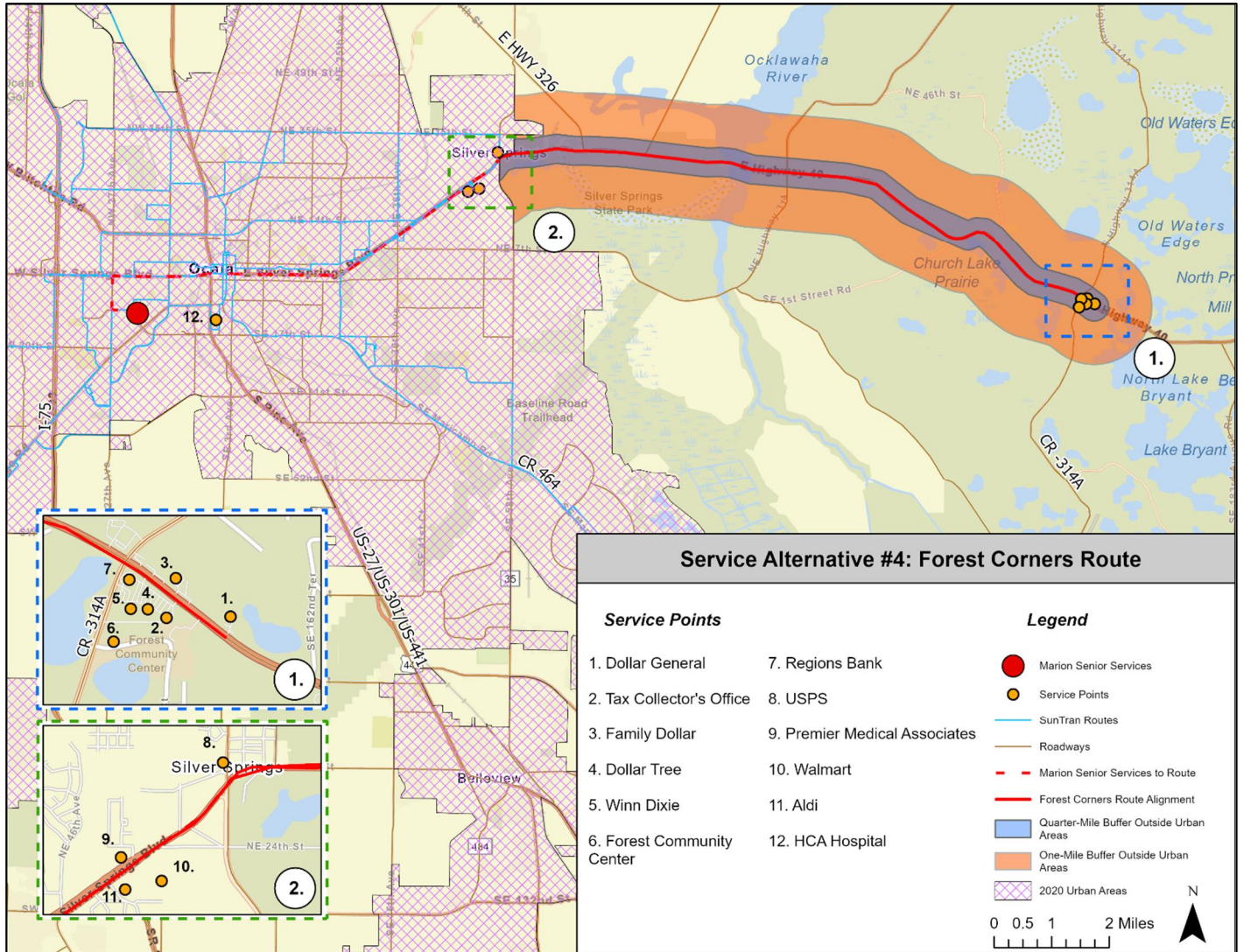
- 28% of individuals below the poverty line
- 18% of individuals with an identified disability

Silver Springs

- 48% of individuals aged 60 and older



Figure 13: Service Alternative #4: Forest Corners Route



Service Alternative #5: Marion Oaks Route

Figure 14 shows the proposed Marion Oaks Route. This route was modeled to service a similar geography and service points to the existing MT Gold Line. The major focus of the Marion Oaks Route includes service to the rural parts of the Marion Oaks community. The path would travel to the Marion Oaks area via I-75 southbound, taking the exit towards CR 484 and traveling through neighborhoods in Marion Oaks outside of the urban area. The route would provide access a high concentration of residents who live in the Marion Oaks area.

The route is proposed to connect riders to five service points concentrated in the Country Oaks Shopping Plaza at the intersection of CR 484 and SR 200. The service would benefit riders through its ability to connect a concentrated population of those who live in the neighborhoods identified in Marion Oaks towards services in and near the Country Oaks Shopping Plaza. Service to the Marion Oaks neighborhoods area would include areas of three different candidate zones identified in Step 2 of this analysis: South Marion Oaks, Southeast Marion Oaks, and West Marion Oaks. Based on the prioritization criteria developed, the Marion Oaks neighborhood was found to contain of the following levels of transportation disadvantaged populations:

South Marion Oaks

- 32% of individuals below the poverty line
- 8% of households with zero-vehicles
- 28% of individuals with an identified disability

Southeast Marion Oaks

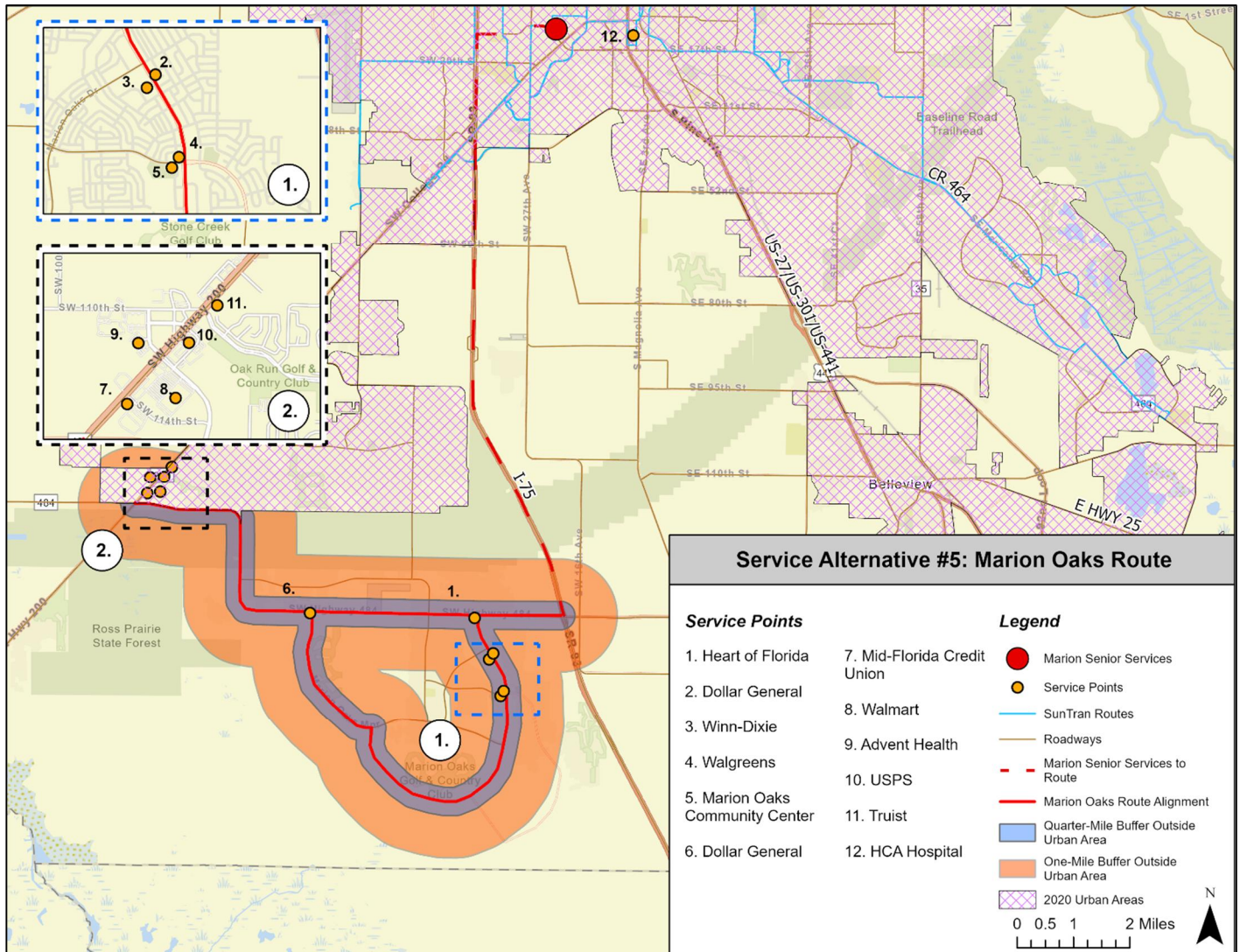
- 27% of individuals below the poverty line
- 8% of households with zero-vehicles
- 37% of individuals aged 60 or over

West Marion Oaks

- 35% of individuals below the poverty line
- 72% of individuals aged 60 or over



Figure 14: Service Alternative #5: Marion Oaks Route



Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) Meeting

The TDLCB is an advisory board that meets quarterly and provides information, advice, and direction to the CTC. On June 8, 2023, a TDLCB meeting was held to present results of the service analysis and gather feedback on the proposed service alternatives and methodology used to conduct the analysis. The TDLCB provided insights and further considerations to the analysis based on their local expertise and understanding on the needs of local TD populations.

Key takeaways from the TDLCB workshop include the following:

- *Consideration of Fixed-Route Bus Service (SunTran):* The TDLCB highlighted the possibility of connecting the five proposed service alternatives to the SunTran fixed-route network. SunTran operates only within the City of Ocala and largely within the Ocala Urban Area. SunTran routes were added to each service alternative map to better highlight the relationship between proposed MT services and the SunTran services.
- *Consideration of Additional Medical Service Points:* The TDLCB highlighted the importance of ensuring that medical services were properly considered when developing the service points that are planned to be covered by each proposed service. While medical services along each alternative were considered, additional medical services such as Premier Medical Associates and HCA Hospital were included as well.



Section 4. Implementation Actions

Key implementation actions are presented to facilitate the delivery of proposed new services. These implementation actions are an important element to any planning activity as they enable plan proposals to move forward into meaningful results. Consequently, this section describes key components required to deliver new, expanded, and high-quality rural transportation services that are consistent with the demographic and service evaluation presented in this report.

Point-Deviated Service

New service alternatives are proposed to operate consistent with the service delivery model currently implemented by MT via the Blue and Gold Routes. Point-deviated fixed-route services follow a general route alignment with designated “anchor” stop locations with set pick up and drop off times. Buses are allowed to deviate off the alignment for on-demand stop requests within a reasonable distance from anchor stops. Anchor stops, or service points in the case of MT, consist of life-sustaining activity locations such as banks, post offices, shopping locations, and medical facilities, among others. Riders may also make same day reservations if the bus is able to deviate from its route and stay within its advertised schedule.

Staffing and Fleet Requirements

Each service alternative is proposed to initially be implemented with one additional vehicle and one new operator work shift. Monday through Friday service will equate to at least one full-time employee (FTE) position. This approach simplifies the development of daily operator and equipment work assignments. As demand develops over time, modifications to the schedule could be enacted to adjust schedule to add or subtract service hours or to address periods of peak demand.

Routing and Scheduling

Published Schedules

Development of a detailed schedule to be published and made available to the public is paramount. That schedule, along with specific pick up and drop off timing, will need to be developed in cooperation with the MT transportation operations team. Given the service is proposed to operate as a point-deviated service, enough travel time along with buffered timing that allows for on-demand trip reservations will need to be factored into any route cycle time.



Days of Service

Service can be deployed in a variety of combinations depending on the availability of staffing and equipment resources, as well as service demand. For example, high-demand/high-volume routes, such as the existing Dunnellon and Marion Oaks services, should continue to be deployed five days a week, Monday through Friday. For new services (Fort McCoy, Forest Corners, Citra/Reddick), five days a week service could be applied to any one route or, alternatively, specific days of service could be identified for each new route over the course of the week. Such an approach results in a lower level of service but expands the service area coverage, or reach, of MT's rural transportation services. An example of how this would work includes the following: 1) Citra/Reddick – Service on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; 2) Fort McCoy – Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Service Routing/Testing

Specific routing and/or stop sequencing will also be important to create realistic schedules for both operators and passengers. This can most often be accomplished by running a vehicle in the field and along the proposed route. Benefits of this approach include the following:

- Confirms safe access into and within service points
- Validates travel times to and from MT offices and between service points and neighborhoods where trip requests could originate
- Surveys neighborhoods for safety issues, access, dirt roads, low-hanging tree limbs, and other operational conflicts that could pose a risk hazard
- Confirms safe pick up and drop off locations for passengers who could not otherwise be picked up at their door. For example, gated communities, unpaved access, or steep grades could prevent access but riders could still come out to the curb or another nearby location to board vehicle if they are able to

Funding/Match Requirements

FTA Section 5311

Currently, Marion Transit uses FTA Section 5311 funding to support existing Blue and Gold Line operations. Applications for Section 5311 funding are made to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) as it serves as the 5311 Program Manager for all 5311 funds issued to the State of Florida. As program managers, FDOT administers program funding and conducts all required subrecipient oversight. Eligible activities under the 5311 program include planning, capital, operating, job access and reverse commute projects, and the acquisition of public transportation services. The local share for operating assistance is 50 percent, so for every dollar spent on rural operations in Marion County under the 5311 program, the County also has to expend another dollar on rural operations.

FCTD Innovative Service Development Grant

For the last several years, the FCTD has offered a competitive grant opportunity to CTCs throughout the state. The grant program is called the Innovative Service Development (ISD) grants program and is designed to support projects that are more cost effective for the State TD Program and more time efficient for riders. The maximum award for any one project in the FY 2024 cycle is \$750,000 and requires a 10 percent match from the local agency. Typically, the grant application cycle ends in May in advance of the beginning of the State fiscal year, July 1st. More information on the ISD grant program is available on the FCTD website: <https://ctd.fdot.gov/Grants.htm>.

Notifications/Advertising of Service

Along with the published schedule, notifications and advertising of new services should be issued to area service providers, social service agencies, and neighborhood groups that can help distribute new service media and collateral. The TD local coordinating board (TDLCB) will also serve as an important resource for continued and ongoing promotion of services and their benefits, along with any significant changes to their operation.

Performance Monitoring

It is recommended that all new service is monitored for productivity (i.e., ridership) on a daily, monthly, and annual basis. Supporting ridership data informs decisions on discontinuation of service, reallocation of resources, and/or enhancement of a productive service. For small operations, monitoring service by time of day and/or monthly allows for minor adjustments in service which can make a big difference in reaching populations in need. Furthermore, monitoring service levels as compared to ridership demand justifies the allocation, or reallocation, of limited funding, staffing, or equipment resources.



Appendix A: Service Points and Locations

Zone	Service Points	Type of Service	Street	City	State	Zip
Citra	Dollar General	Grocery	18210 N US Hwy 301	Citra	FL	32113
Citra	Family Dollar	Grocery	18215 N US Hwy 301	Citra	FL	32113
Citra	Post Office (Citra)	Post Office	2250 E Hwy 318	Citra	FL	32113
Citra	Citra Family Health	Medical	17805 N US Hwy 301	Citra	FL	32113
Citra	Dollar General	Grocery	7371 N US Hwy 441	Ocala	FL	34475
Citra	Winn Dixie	Grocery	7131 N US Hwy 441	Ocala	FL	34475
Citra	Mid Florida Credit Union	Bank	7139 N US Hwy 441	Ocala	FL	34475
Citra	CVS	Pharmacy	1720 FL-326	Ocala	FL	34475
Dunnellon	Winn Dixie	Grocery	10055 US Hwy 41	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Walmart	Grocery	11012 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Publix Shopping Center	Grocery	11252 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Dollar Tree Shopping Center	Grocery	11223 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Save-A-Lot Shopping Center	Grocery	11582 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Walgreens	Pharmacy	11283 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Boys and Girls Club	Library/Community Space	20077 SW 110th St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Post Office	Post Office	11432 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
Dunnellon	Heart of Florida	Medical	19204 E Pennsylvania Ave	Dunnellon	FL	34432
East Lake Weir	Dollar General	Grocery	13842 SE Hwy 42	Weirsdale	FL	32195
East Lake Weir	Weirsdale Family Health Center	Medical	16400 Co Rd 25	Weirsdale	FL	32195
Fairfield	Florida State Fire College	Library/Community Space	11655 NW Gainesville Rd	Ocala	FL	34482
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	Publix Shopping Center	Grocery	7578 SE Maricamp Rd #100	Ocala	FL	34472
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	Dollar Tree	Grocery	4 Cedar Radial Pass	Ocala	FL	34472
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	Walmart Supercenter	Grocery	34 Bahia Ave	Ocala	FL	34472
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	Walgreens	Pharmacy	89 Midway Rd	Ocala	FL	34472
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	CVS	Pharmacy	7563 SE Maricamp Rd	Ocala	FL	34472
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	Florida Credit Union	Bank	10 Bahia Ave Ln	Ocala	FL	34472
Forest Corners	Winn Dixie	Grocery	15912 FL-40	Silver Springs	FL	34488
Forest Corners	Family Dollar	Grocery	15965 FL-40	Silver Springs	FL	34488
Forest Corners	Regions Bank	Bank	451 S Hwy 314 A	Silver Springs	FL	34488

Zone	Service Points	Type of Service	Street	City	State	Zip
Forest Corners	Dollar General	Grocery	16085 FL-40	Silver Springs	FL	34488
Forest Corners	Forest Public Library	Library/Community Space	905 S HWY	Ocklawaha	FL	34489
Forest Corners	Forest Community Center	Library/Community Space	777 S Hwy 314 A	Ocklawaha	FL	32179
Forest Corners	Dollar Tree	Grocery	15928 FL-40	Silver Springs	FL	34488
Forest Corners	Marion County Tax Collector	Government Service	15956 FL-40	Silver Springs	FL	34488
Fort McCoy	Dollar General	Grocery	14823 NE Hwy 315	Fort McCoy	FL	32134
Fort McCoy	USPS	Post Office	14945 NE Hwy 315	Fort McCoy	FL	32134
Fort McCoy	Fort McCoy Public Library	Library/Community Space	14660 NE Co Rd 315	Fort McCoy	FL	32134
North Dunnellon	Dollar General	Grocery	19552 SW 56th Ln	Dunnellon	FL	34431
North Dunnellon	Dollar General	Grocery	11295 FL-40	Ocala	FL	34482
Reddick	Davita Ocala Regional	Medical	2620 W Hwy 316	Citra	FL	32113
Reddick	Heart of Florida	Medical	4500 NW 152nd Ln	Reddick	FL	32686
Reddick	Wells Fargo Bank	Bank	15275 NW Gainesville Rd	Reddick	FL	32686
Reddick	Post Office (Reddick)	Post Office	15373 NW Gainesville Rd	Reddick	FL	32686
Reddick	Dollar General	Grocery	4431 NW 155th St	Reddick	FL	32686
Reddick	Dollar General	Grocery	7371 N US Hwy 441	Ocala	FL	34475
Reddick	Winn Dixie	Grocery	7131 N US Hwy 441	Ocala	FL	34475
Reddick	Mid Florida Credit Union	Bank	7139 N US Hwy 441	Ocala	FL	34475
Reddick	CVS	Pharmacy	1720 FL-326	Ocala	FL	34475
Salt Springs	Post Office (Salt Springs)	Post Office	14100 N FL-19 STE G	Salt Springs	FL	32134
Salt Springs	Dollar General	Grocery	25352 E Hwy 316	Salt Springs	FL	32134
Silver Springs	Premier Medical Associates	Medical	4901 East Silver Springs Blvd	Silver Springs	FL	34470
Silver Springs	Aldi	Grocery	2115 NE 49th Ct Rd	Ocala	FL	34470
Silver Springs	Walmart Supercenter	Grocery	4980 E Silver Springs Blvd	Ocala	FL	34470
Silver Springs	USPS	Post Office	3050 NE 55th Ave	Silver Springs	FL	34488
Silver Springs	Truist	Bank	3500 E Silver Springs Blvd	Ocala	FL	34470
Silver Springs	Publix Shopping Center	Grocery	3450 E Silver Springs Blvd	Ocala	FL	34470
Silver Springs	Dollar Tree Shopping Center	Grocery	3436 E Silver Springs Blvd	Ocala	FL	34470
Silver Springs	Walgreens	Pharmacy	3529 E Silver Springs Blvd	Ocala	FL	34470

Zone	Service Points	Type of Service	Street	City	State	Zip
Silver Springs	Florida Credit Union	Bank	3504 E Silver Springs Blvd	Ocala	FL	34470
South Marion Oaks	Walmart	Grocery	9570 SW State Rd 200	Ocala	FL	34481
South Marion Oaks	UPS Store	Post Office	11100 SW 93rd Ct Rd #10	Ocala	FL	34481
South Marion Oaks	Florida Credit Union	Bank	9680 SW 114th St	Ocala	FL	34481
South Marion Oaks	Truist	Bank	9290 SW State Rd 200	Ocala	FL	34481
South Marion Oaks	AdventHealth	Medical	9521 SW State Rd 200	Ocala	FL	34481
Southeast Marion Oaks	Dollar General	Grocery	16630 US-301	Summerfield	FL	34491
Southeast Marion Oaks	Publix	Grocery	8780 SE 165th Mulberry Ln	The Villages	FL	32162
Southeast Marion Oaks	Walgreens	Pharmacy	8591 SE 165th Mulberry Ln	The Villages	FL	32162
Southeast Marion Oaks	Citizens First Bank	Bank	8590 SE 165th Mulberry Ln	The Villages	FL	32162
Southeast Marion Oaks	Mulberry Grove Postal Station	Post Office	8475 SE 165th Mulberry Ln	Summerfield	FL	34491
West Dunnellon	Winn Dixie	Grocery	10055 US Hwy 41	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Walmart	Grocery	11012 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Publix Shopping Center	Grocery	11252 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Dollar Tree Shopping Center	Grocery	11223 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Sav-A-Lot Shopping Center	Grocery	11582 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Walgreens	Pharmacy	11283 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Boys and Girls Club	Library/Community Space	20077 SW 110th St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Post Office	Post Office	11432 N Williams St	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Dunnellon	Heart of Florida	Medical	19204 E Pennsylvania Ave	Dunnellon	FL	34432
West Marion Oaks	Walmart	Grocery	9570 SW State Rd 200	Ocala	FL	34481
West Marion Oaks	UPS Store	Post Office	11100 SW 93rd Ct Rd #10	Ocala	FL	34481
West Marion Oaks	Florida Credit Union	Bank	9680 SW 114th St	Ocala	FL	34481
West Marion Oaks	Truist	Bank	9290 SW State Rd 200	Ocala	FL	34481
West Marion Oaks	AdventHealth	Medical	9521 SW State Rd 200	Ocala	FL	34481
South Marion Oaks	Winn-Dixie	Grocery	184 Marion Oaks Blvd.	Ocala	FL	34473
South Marion Oaks	Marion Oaks Community Center	Library/Community Space	294 Marion Oaks Lane	Ocala	FL	34473
South Marion Oaks	Dollar General	Grocery	896 Marion Oaks Manor	Ocala	FL	34473
South Marion Oaks	Heart of Florida	Medical	100 Marion Oaks Blvd.	Ocala	FL	34473

Zone	Service Points	Type of Service	Street	City	State	Zip
South Marion Oaks	Dollar General	Grocery	3245 SW 142 Lane	Ocala	FL	34473
South Marion Oaks	Walgreens	Pharmacy	260 Marion Oaks Blvd	Ocala	FL	34473
South Marion Oaks	HCA Florida Ocala Hospital	Medical	1431 SW 1st Ave	Ocala	FL	34471

Appendix B: Prioritization Criteria and Scoring

Zone Name	Total Square Miles	Approximate Population (Based on ACS 5-Year Estimates for 2021)	Population Density (Persons Per Square Mile)	Population Density Score (Below 50 =1, 50 to 100 =2, above 100 = 3)	Qualifying Demographic Data (Above Averages on All Criteria)*	Qualifying Demographic Data Score (Low-Income = 3, All Other Characteristics = 1)	Approximate Distance from Marion Senior Services	Drive Distance Score (Below 30 = 1, Above 30 = 0)	Number of Service/Anchor Points	Trip Attractors/Key Destinations Score (Less Than 6= 1, 6 = 2, Greater Than 6 = 5)	Score
Citra	9.87	1,841	186.6	3	Low-Income (45%) Zero Vehicle (9%) Disability (17%)	5	18 miles	1	8	5	14
Reddick	8.72	1,041	119.4	3	Zero-Vehicle HH (7%) Disability (20%) Low-Income (24%)	5	15 miles	1	9	5	14
West Dunnellon	15.72	1,477	94.0	2	Low-Income (22%) Zero-Vehicle HH (11%) Over 60 (51%) Disabilty (24%)	6	25 miles	1	9	5	14
Forest (Southeast Ocala)	29.31	1,155	39.4	1	Low-Income (25%) Zero Vehicle (8%) Over 60 (67%) Disability (21%)	6	12 miles	1	6	5	13
Forest Corners	59.25	4,558	76.9	2	Low-Income (26%) Disability (18%)	4	19 miles	1	8	5	12
Dunnellon	20.04	1,296	64.7	2	Low-Income (22%)	3	24 miles	1	9	5	11
South Marion Oaks	20.01	1,597	79.8	2	Low-Income (32%) Zero Vehicle (8%) Disability (28%)	5	22 miles	1	5	3	11
Southeast Marion Oaks	7.33	1,464	199.7	3	Low-Income (27%) Zero Vehicle (8%) Over 60 (37%)	4	18 miles	1	5	3	11
West Marion Oaks	9.41	1,391	147.8	3	Low-Income (35%) Over 60 (72%)	4	13 miles	1	5	3	11
Fort McCoy	14.28	660	46.2	1	Low-Income (46%) Over 60 (67%) Disability (21%)	5	21 miles	1	4	3	10

Zone Name	Total Square Miles	Approximate Population (Based on ACS 5-Year Estimates for 2021)	Population Density (Persons Per Square Mile)	Population Density Score (Below 50 =1, 50 to 100 =2, above 100 = 3)	Qualifying Demographic Data (Above Averages on All Criteria)*	Qualifying Demographic Data Score (Low-Income = 3, All Other Characteristics = 1)	Approximate Distance from Marion Senior Services	Drive Distance Score (Below 30 = 1, Above 30 = 0)	Number of Service/Anchor Points	Trip Attractors/Key Destinations Score (Less Than 6= 1, 6 = 2, Greater Than 6 = 5)	Score
Salt Springs	3.17	615	194.0	3	Low Income (34%) Over 60 (41%) Zero Vehicle (12%) Disability (29%)	6	31 miles	0	2	1	10
East Lake Weir	16.90	1,385	81.9	2	Low-Income (28%) Zero Vehicle (5%) Disability (18%)	5	20 miles	1	2	1	9
North of Dunelleon	48.75	4,493	92.2	2	Low-Income (29%) Disability (16%)	4	18 miles	1	2	1	8
Silver Springs	35.94	1,183	32.9	1	Over 60 (48%)	1	8 miles	1	8	5	8
Fairfield	28.84	918	31.8	1	Low-Income (30%) Zero Vehicle HH (25%)	4	18 miles	1	1	1	7
*Qualifying Characteristics: Census Block Groups that contain an amount of 5% or higher households with zero-vehicles, 14% or higher households below poverty, 30% or higher individuals age 65 or older, and Census Tracts with 17% or higher of individuals with an identified disability											