Ocala/Marion County Transit Development Plan
Final Report

Tindale-Oliver & Associates, Inc.
Planning and Engineering

August 2012

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Final Report

Prepared for

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Section 1

INTRODUCTION

The Ocala/Marion County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) operates as the governing board of the SunTran transit system and has initiated a major update of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) for transit service in Marion County. The TPO also provides staff services for the planning activities associated with people who are transportation disadvantaged in Marion County. A major update to the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) for the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), Marion County Senior Services (MCSS), is also being prepared at this time.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The main purpose of this study is to update the TDP for SunTran service in Marion County, as currently required by State law. This TDP is prepared to fulfill the State requirements and is a 10-year plan for transit and mobility needs, cost and revenue projections, and community transit goals, objectives, and policies.

TDP REQUIREMENTS

This TDP is prepared according to the TDP rule of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), which was formally adopted by FDOT on February 20, 2007. Major requirements identified in the adopted TDP rule include the following:

- Requires major updates every five years.
- Requires a public involvement plan to be developed and approved by FDOT or consistent with the approved transportation/metropolitan planning organization public involvement plan.
- Requires that FDOT, the regional workforce board, and the planning organization be advised of all public meetings where the TDP is presented and discussed and that these entities be given the opportunity to review and comment on the TDP during the development of the mission, goals, objectives, alternatives, and 10-year implementation program.
- Requires the estimation of the community's demand for transit service (10-year annual projections) using the planning tools provided by FDOT or a demand estimation technique approved by FDOT.

The intent of the TDP requirements reflected in this report is "to provide better planned and, thus, improved public transit services, and to provide the State with improved estimates of transit needs over a longer period of time."

An additional requirement for the TDP was added by the Florida Legislature in 2007, when it adopted House Bill 985. This legislation amended s. 341.071, F.S., requiring transit agencies to "… specifically address potential enhancements to productivity and performance which would have the effect of increasing farebox recovery ratio." FDOT subsequently issued guidance requiring the TDP and each annual update to include a one- to two-page summary report on the farebox recovery ratio and strategies implemented and planned to improve it as an appendix item.

TDP Checklist

This plan meets the requirement for a major TDP update in accordance with Rule Chapter 14-73, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). Table 1-1 is a list of TDP requirements from Rule 14-73.001. The table also indicates whether or not the item was accomplished in this TDP.

Table 1-1
TDP Checklist

Public Involvement Process	
√	Public Involvement Plan (PIP) drafted
√	PIP approved by FDOT
√	TDP includes description of Public Involvement Process
√	Provide notification to FDOT
√	Provide notification to Regional Workforce Board
Situation Appraisal	
√	Land use
√	State and local transportation plans
√	Other governmental actions and policies
√	Socioeconomic trends
√	Organizational issues
√	Technology
√	10-year annual projections of transit ridership using approved model
√	Assessment of whether land uses and urban design patterns support/hinder transit service provision
√	Calculate farebox recovery
Mission and Goals	
√	Provider's vision
√	Provider's mission
√	Provider's goals
√	Provider's objectives
Alternative Courses of Action	
√	Develop and evaluate alternative strategies and actions
√	Benefits and costs of each alternative
√	Financial alternatives examined
Implementation Program	
√	Ten-year implementation program
√	Maps indicating areas to be served
√	Maps indicating types and levels of service
√	Monitoring program to track performance measures
√	Ten-year financial plan listing operating and capital expenses
√	Capital acquisition or construction schedule
√	Anticipated revenues by source
Relationship to Other Plans	
√	TDP shall be consistent with Florida Transportation Plan
√	TDP shall be consistent with local government comprehensive plan
√	TDP shall be consistent with MPO long-range transportation plan
√	TDP shall be consistent with regional transportation goals and objectives
Submission	
√	Adopted by Ocala/Marion County TPO
√	Submitted to FDOT by September 1, 2012

ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

This report is organized into 13 major sections (including this Introduction). The remainder of this section provides an overview of this TDP, including the objectives of this report and an overview of the project approach.

Section 2 summarizes the **Study Area and Demographics** for Marion County. This includes a review of baseline conditions, including a physical description of the study area, a population profile, and demographic and journey-to-work characteristics. Particular emphasis is placed on locating high concentrations of populations and households with characteristics that are traditionally conducive to transit use. These characteristics include youth population, older adult population, low-income population, zero-vehicle households, and population density. The information compiled and presented in this section provides the basis for more-detailed analysis in subsequent tasks of the TDP and TDSP. Land use trends, major transit trip generators and attractors, economic factors, existing roadway conditions, and major employers are also explored.

Section 3 presents results of the **Public Involvement** efforts performed to date as part of the TDP and TDSP updates. The results of an on-board survey and direct involvement and information distribution techniques used to obtain input from the public are summarized in this section.

Section 4 provides a review of **Existing Transportation Services**. This section provides an overview of public transportation services and facilities provided by SunTran and Marion County Senior Services.

Section 5 presents the results of the **Trend Analysis** conducted for paratransit, fixed-route, and complementary ADA services in Marion County. The trend analysis reviews the performance of the public transportation system over time, from fiscal years 2006 to 2010. Based on the results of the trend analysis, general conclusions are offered regarding system strengths, system weaknesses, and data reporting issues.

Section 6 provides the results of the **Peer Review Analysis.** This type of analysis compares the performance of the public transportation system with other transit systems selected as having similar characteristics at a given point in time. Two peer review analyses were conducted using 2010 data, one for the paratransit system and one for the fixed-route system. Based on the results of the peer review analyses, general conclusions are offered regarding system strengths, system weaknesses, and data reporting issues.

Section 7 presents the results of a **Transit Demand Analysis and Mobility Needs**. Transit demand and mobility needs for the study area were assessed using various analytical techniques. The demand analysis is characterized as market assessments for both fixed-route services. A number of transit demand projection techniques are identified and used to estimate the potential demand for fixed-route services.

Section 8 includes a **Review of Plans and Documents.** A review of local, state, and federal plans was conducted prior to conducting the Situation Appraisal and updating the goals and initiatives for this TDP. The review of plans was conducted to ensure consistency between TDP goals and initiatives with other government policies and planning efforts.

Section 9 presents the **Situation Appraisal**, consisting of a review of the current overall planning and policy environment within the county to better understand the transit needs. Reviewed are existing socioeconomic trends, travel behavior, land use, public involvement, peer review/trend analysis, technology, and funding.

Section 10 presents the TDP **Goals and Objectives** developed based on the reviews performed in earlier tasks of the TDP planning process. Goals, objectives, and initiatives are critical in determining which service improvement alternatives should be programmed in the Transit Development Plan.

Section 11 includes the **Alternatives Development** for Marion County through 2022. Needs were developed based on public participation, evaluation of existing SunTran services, quantitative market assessments, and input from TPO/SunTran staff. A number of service, capital, and other improvement alternatives were developed that meet the identified public transportation needs in Marion County through the year 2022. This section also includes the outline of a Performance Monitoring Program for SunTran.

Section 12 presents the **Transit Alternatives Evaluation** methodology and process. It includes the basic evaluation methodology and criteria, along with the thresholds used to score the various alternatives. This section also includes the weighted and assessed alternatives and alternatives rankings based on the identified methodology and process.

Section 13 presents the **Ten-Year Transit Development Plan.** First, a review of vehicle and infrastructure needs for providing transit services over the next 10 years is presented, including a vehicle replacement and acquisition schedule and a list of other capital equipment/infrastructure needs through the year 2022. Then, a summary of the recommended 10-year transit needs is presented. Finally, the TDP financial plan is

presented, including a summary of capital and operating costs and assumptions used in developing the 10-year financial plan. An implementation plan is provided with a summary of cost-feasible projects and unfunded needs, followed by the coordination requirements for implementing the 10-year transit plan.

Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan

In addition to the State TDP, the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD) requires that each CTC submit a Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP), an annually updated tactical plan, that includes the following components for the local transportation disadvantaged (TD) program:

(1) Development Plan
(2) Service Plan
(3) Quality Assurance
(4) Cost/Revenue Allocations and Fare Justification

The TDSP report was prepared and is presented separately from this TDP.

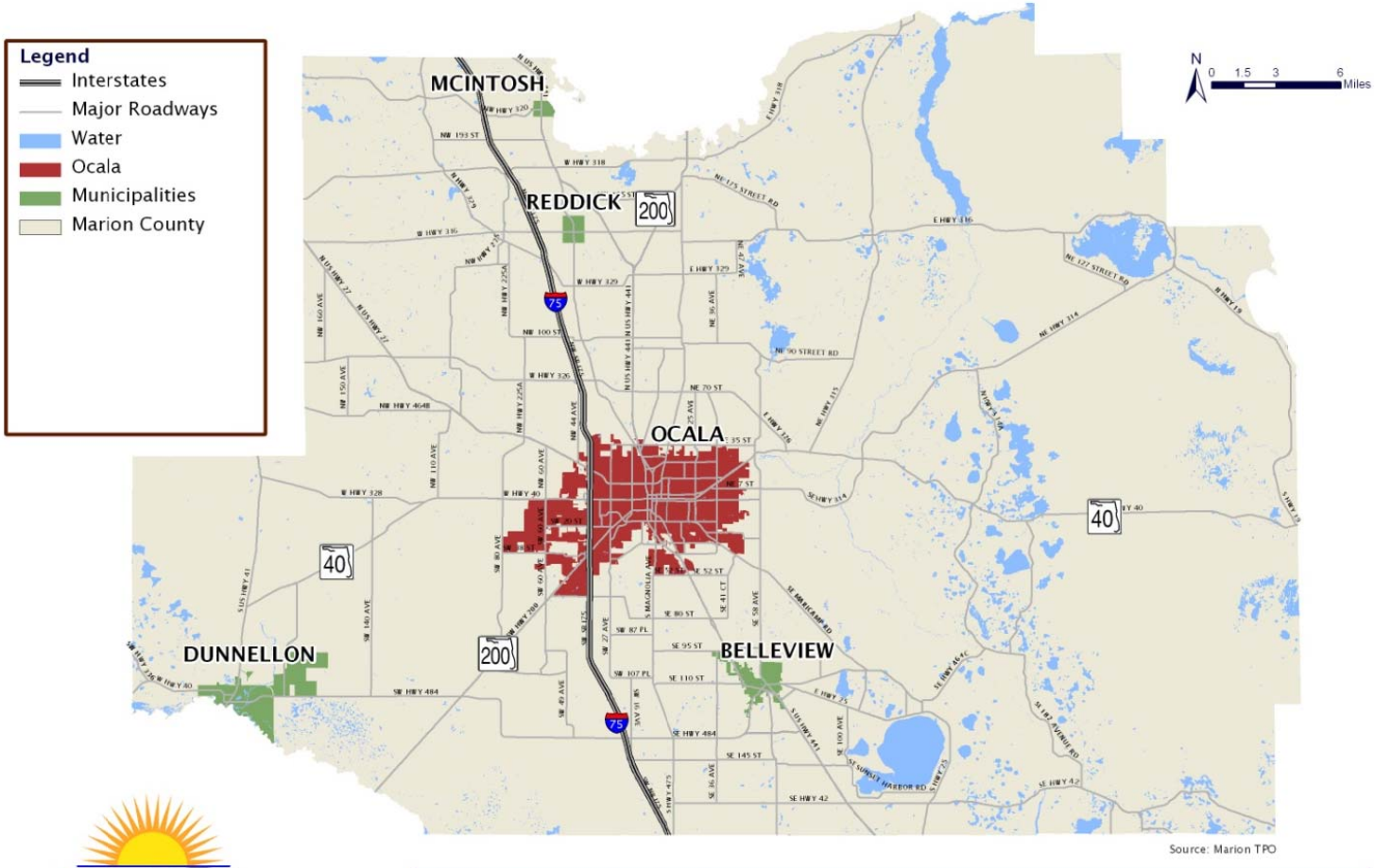
Section 2

STUDY AREA AND DEMOGRAPHICS

This section reviews the study area in the context of the TDP update. Included in this review are a physical description of the study area, population profile and trends; demographic and journey-to-work characteristics; data on tourism, major activity centers, commute patterns, land use, and roadway conditions; and a review of existing transit services. Maps, figures, and tables are also used to illustrate selected study area conditions.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

Marion County is located in north central Florida and is bordered on the north by Alachua and Putnam counties, on the south by Sumter and Citrus counties, on the west by Levy County, and on the east by Volusia and Lake counties. Marion County's population is concentrated in the city of Ocala, located in the central portion of the county and, to a lesser extent, in Belleview in the southern central portion of the county. A large retirement community known as The Villages runs through the southern portion of the county and continues into the Lake and Sumter county urban area. Interstate 75 runs north-south through the center of the county and west of Ocala. Other major north-south routes include US 301, US 441, and US 41. SR 40 is the main east-west road through the center of the county. For the purpose of this TDP, the study area encompasses the entire area of Marion County, as designated by the TPO planning area. Map 2-1 gives a physical representation of the study area.



Map 2-1: Study Area

POPULATION PROFILE

Population information from the 2010 Census was used to develop a population profile for the SunTran service area. As shown in Table 2-1, the population of Marion County increased 28 percent from 2000 to 2010 (from 258,916 to 331,298). In addition, the *Florida Statistical Abstract 2010*, prepared by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida, indicates a county population projection of 398,200 people by the year 2020 and 469,300 people by the year 2030, increases of 20 percent and 42 percent, respectively.

Table 2-1
Population Characteristics

Population Data	Marion County 2000	Marion County 2010	% Change 2000–2010
Persons	258,916	331,298	27.96%
Households	106,755	137,726	29.01%
Number of Workers	104,422	113,661	8.85%
Land Area (square miles)	1,579	1,579	0.00%
Water Area (square miles)	84	84	0.00%
Person per Household	2.36	2.4	-2.56%
Workers per Household	0.98	0.82	-1.95%
Persons per Square Mile of Land Area	164	209.82	27.94%
Workers per Square Mile of Land Area	66.14	71.98	8.83%

Source: 2000 Census of Population and Housing, 2010 Census, American Community Survey 2010

There are five municipalities in Marion County: the City of Belleview, the City of Dunnellon, the City of McIntosh, the City of Ocala, and the City of Reddick. The City of Ocala has the highest population, with more than 10 times that of the second largest municipality, Belleview.

Table 2-2 provides population trends for Marion County, its municipalities, and other areas for 1990, 2000, and 2010. The fastest-growing municipality in Marion County is Belleview, with a 68 percent change in population from 1990 to 2010. It should be noted that 81 percent of the population in Marion County resides in unincorporated areas of the county, an increase of 76 percent over the total population in 1990.

Table 2-2
Marion County Population Trends for Cities and Towns

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1990–00	% Change 2000–10	% Change 1990–2010
City of Belleview	2,666	3,478	4,492	30.50%	29.15%	68.49%
City of Dunnellon	1,624	1,898	1,733	16.90%	-8.69%	6.71%
City of McIntosh	411	453	452	10.20%	-0.22%	9.98%
City of Ocala	42,045	45,943	56,352	9.30%	22.66%	34.03%
City of Reddick	554	571	506	3.10%	-11.38%	-8.66%
Unincorporated County	147,533	206,573	267,800	23.30%	29.64%	81.52%
Total County	194,833	258,916	331,398	25.20%	27.99%	70.09%

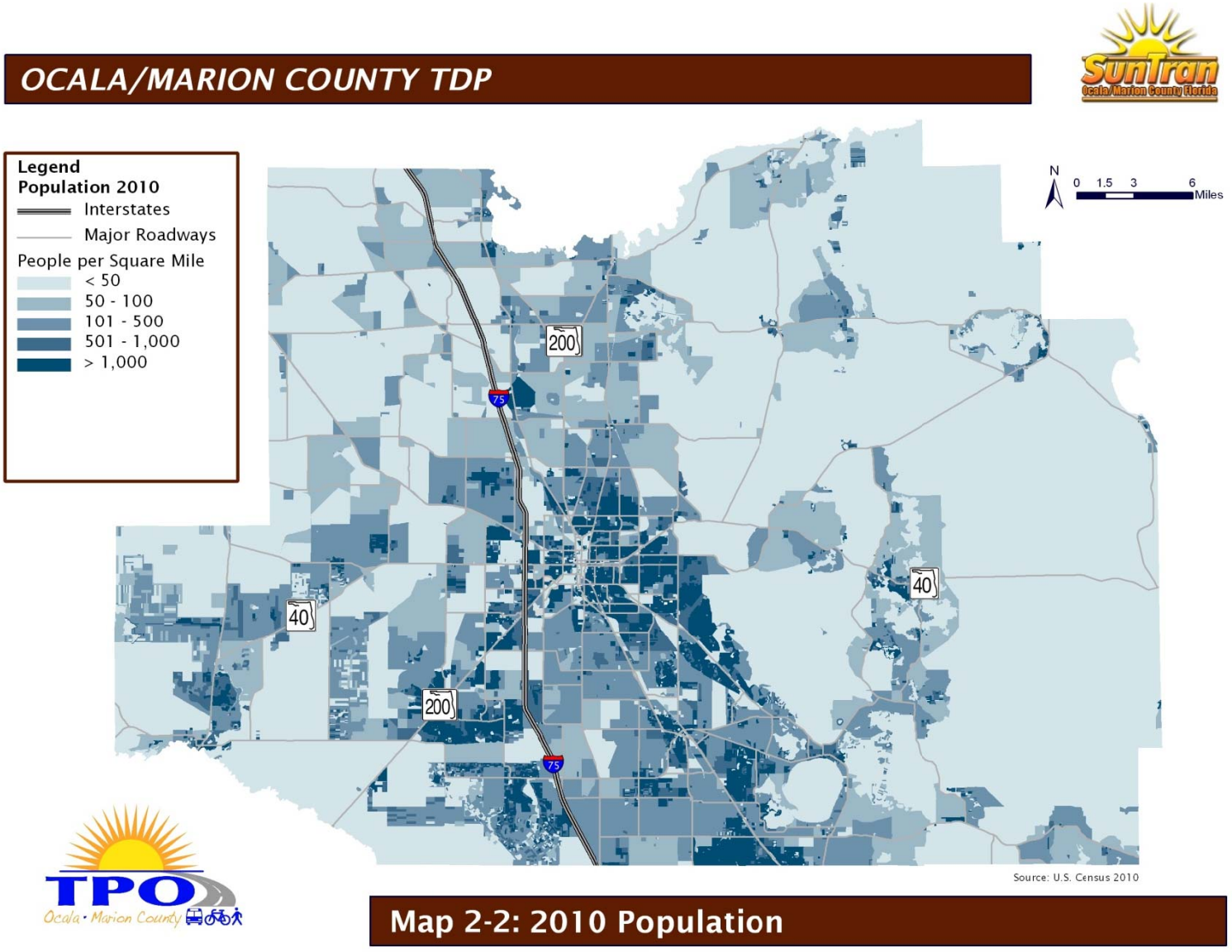
Source: 1990 and 2000 Census of Population and Housing; 2010 Census

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT DENSITIES

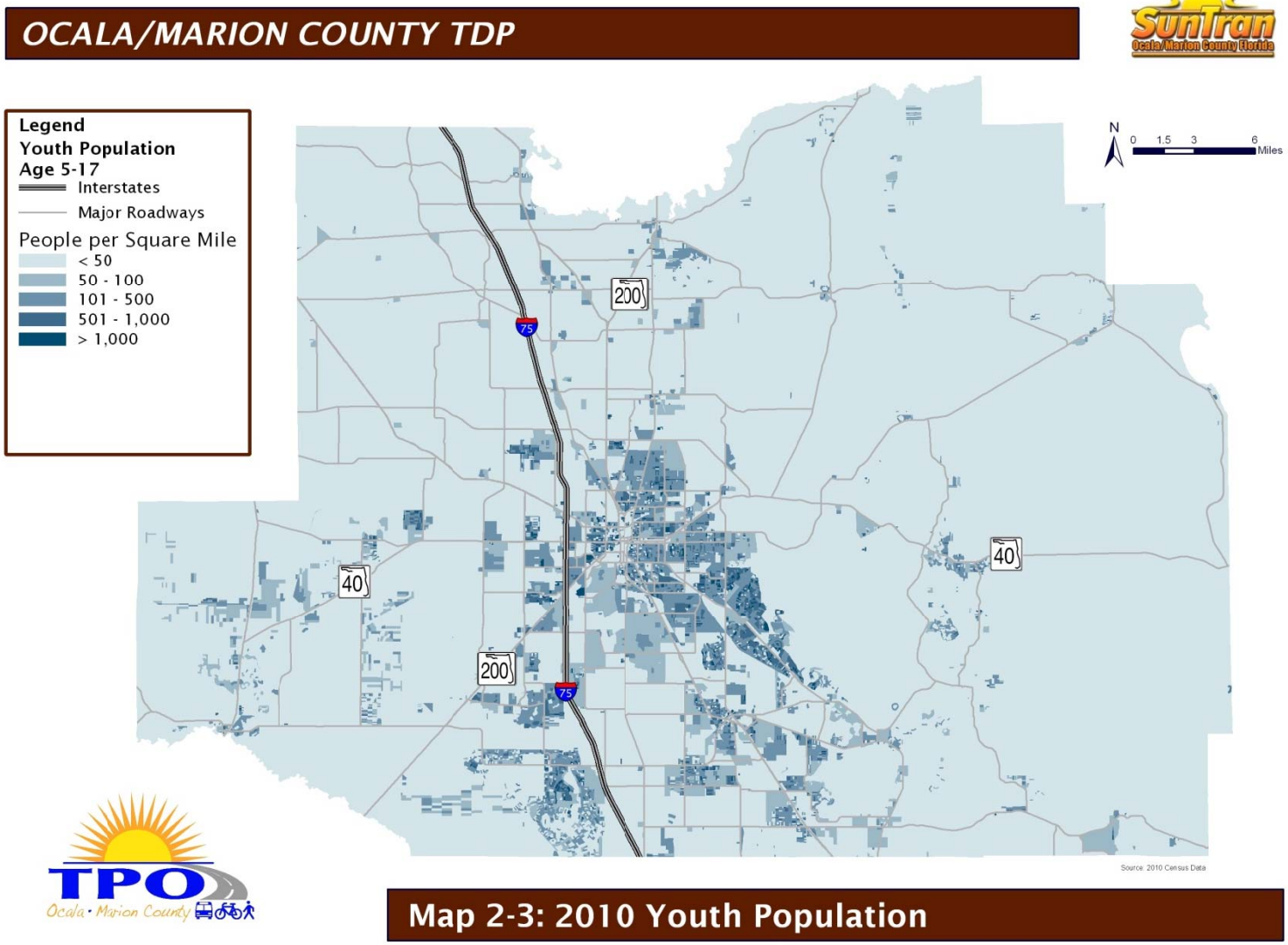
Using 2010 census data, population densities by census block group were determined for the youth, minority, and older adult populations. These targeted populations tend to rely on transit the most; therefore, they are a particular area of focus. Maps 2-4 through 2-7 show these population densities.

For the general population, the densest areas occur east of I-75 and run south to the southern edge of the county. The SR 200 corridor south of Ocala also has dense areas of population.

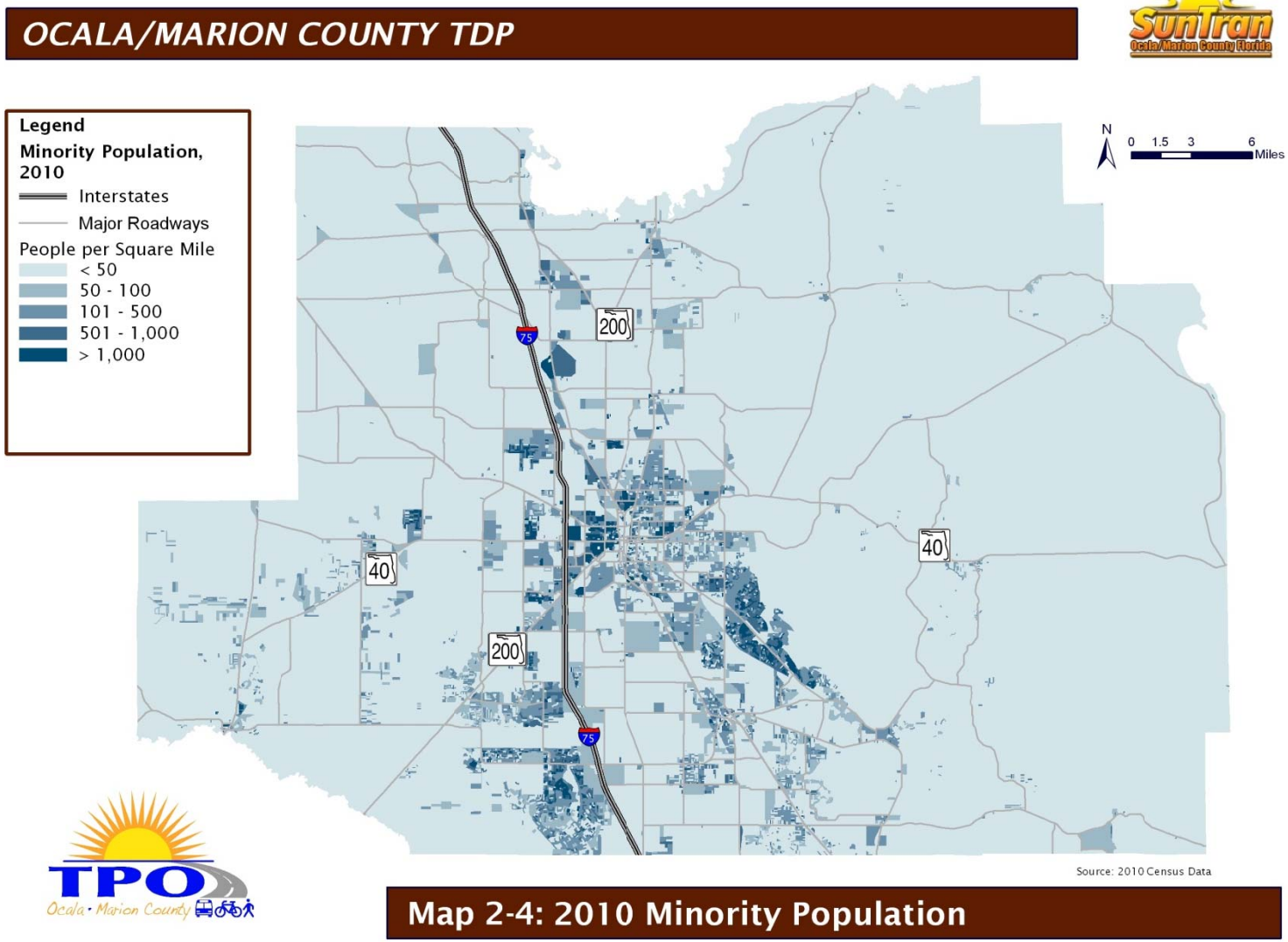
Maps 2-8 and 2-9 display the employment density for Marion County. To capture the total number of employees who work in Marion County and not just employees who reside within the county, the socio-economic data forecast developed for the Marion County TPO's 2035 LRTP was used. These data were developed for 2013 and 2022 and are organized by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) rather than census block group. TAZs are smaller than census block groups and are used in transportation demand modeling to provide more detailed statistics for present and future conditions. Most growth in employment density is projected to occur along SR 200 to the southwest of Ocala, as well as in Reddick and Dunnellon.



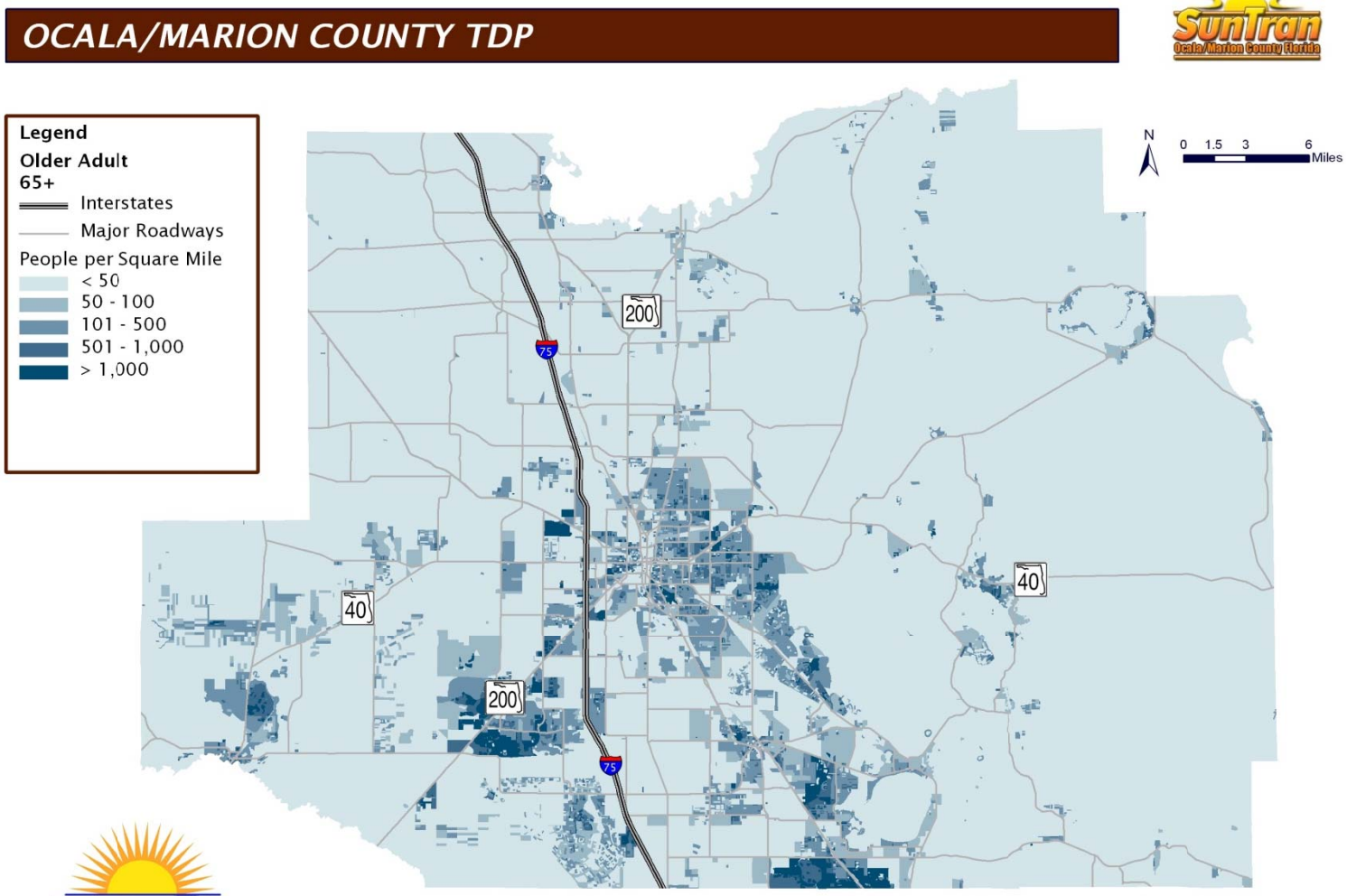
Map 2-2: 2010 Population



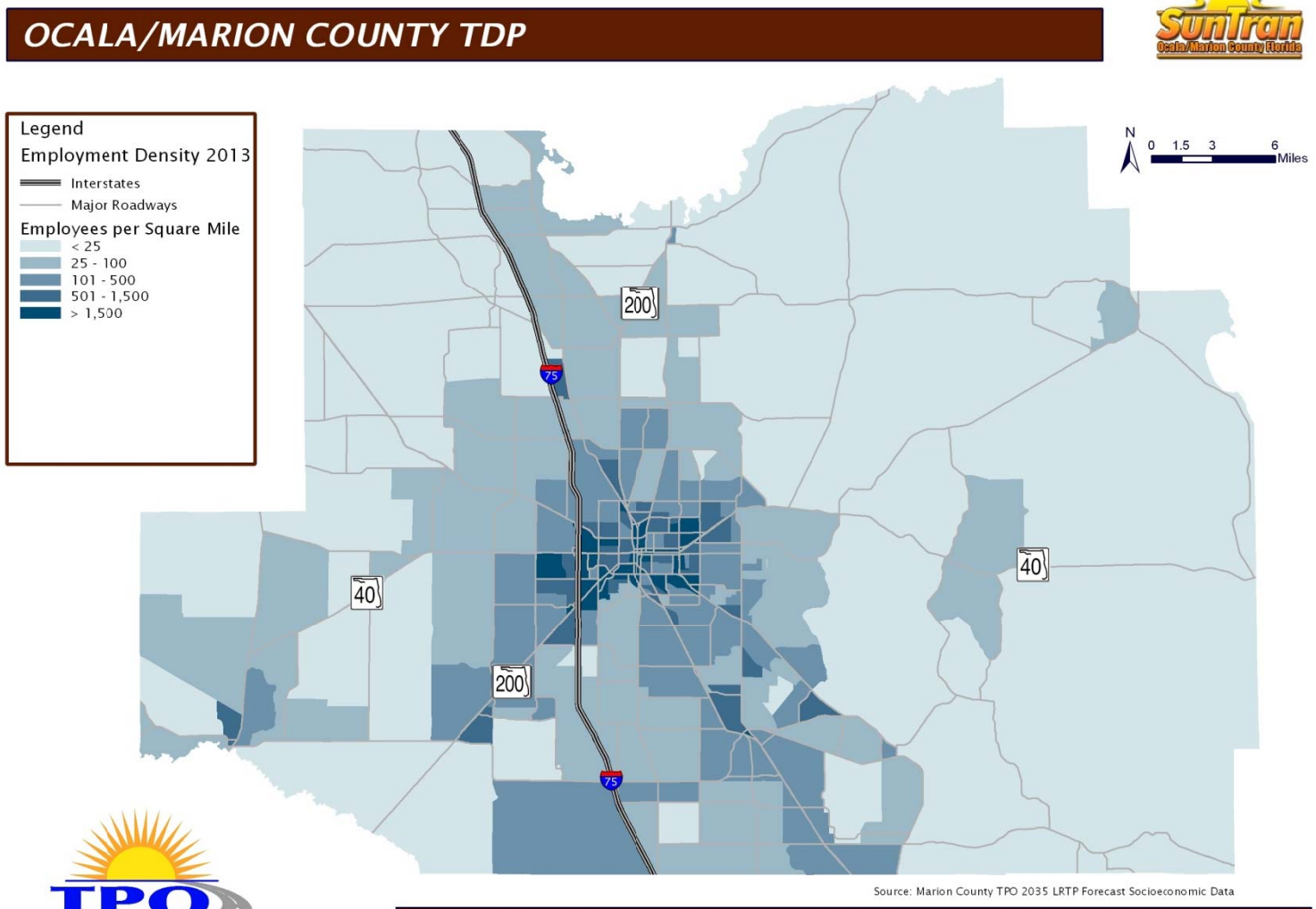
Map 2-3: 2010 Youth Population



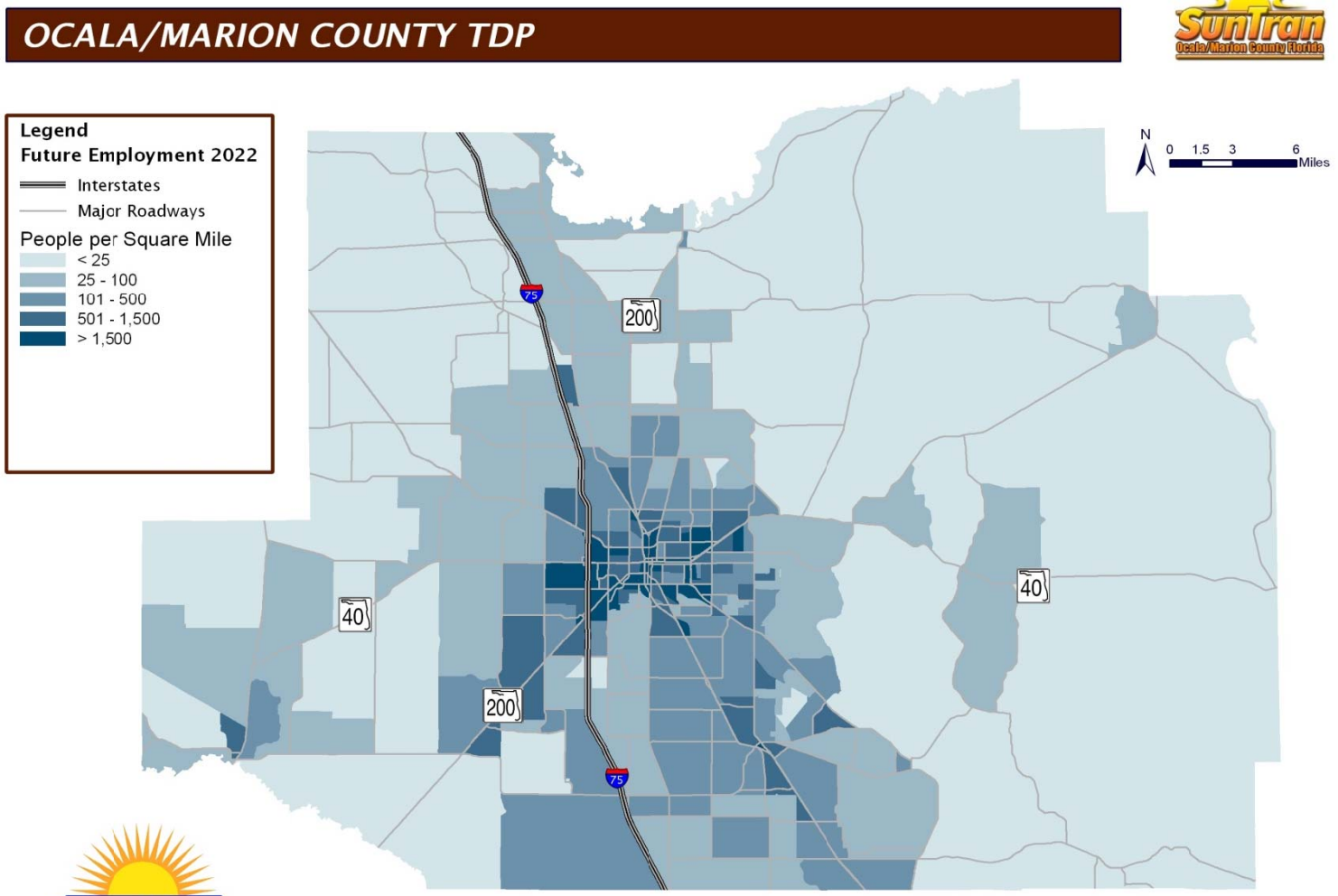
Map 2-4: 2010 Minority Population



Map 2-5: 2010 Older Adult Population



Map 2-6: 2013 Employment Density



Map 2-7: 2022 Employment Density

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATION

Marion County has a significant transportation disadvantaged population. Marion County Senior Services is the designated CTC for Marion County and operates paratransit services under the name Marion Transit Services (MTS), providing public transportation to the transportation disadvantaged population of the county. Priority is given to those who do not own or drive their own vehicle and do not have family or friends to assist them in traveling to and from destination points. TD service also is provided based on needs; medical needs and life-sustaining activities are given higher priority than business or recreation.

Table 2-3 shows trend in the TD population and TD passengers between 2007 and 2011 in Marion County. The TD population has increased by 11 percent, from 138,818 in 2007 to 154,514 in 2011. However, the number of TD passengers served has increased at a faster pace, 23 percent, from 6,499 2007 to 7,997 in 2011. While there was a significant decrease in TD passengers from 2007 to 2008, the passenger count began to increase in 2009, with the highest number of passengers served occurring in 2011.

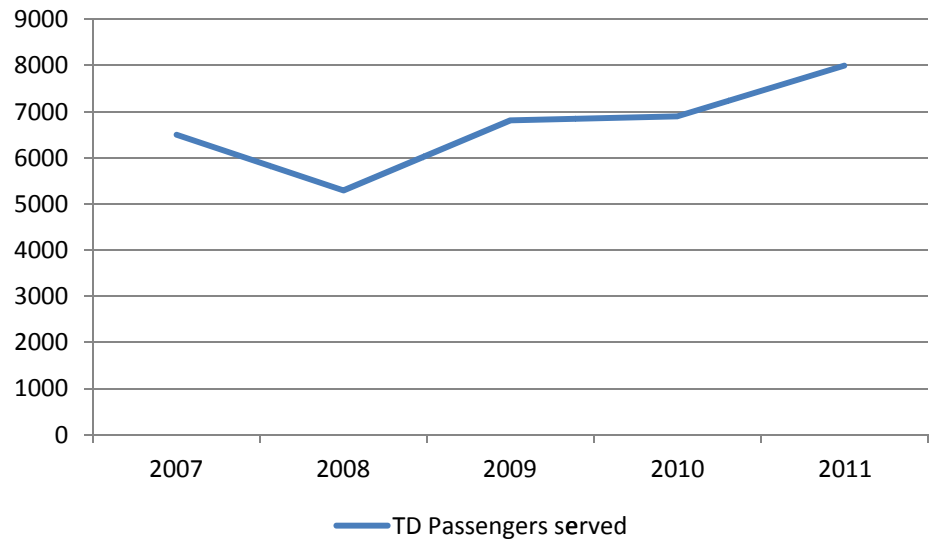
Table 2-3
Marion County TD Population and Passenger Trends

Year	Potential TD Population	TD Passengers Served
2007	138,818	6,499
2008	142,570	5,292
2009	146,433	6,810
2010	150,414	6,898
2011	154,514	7,997
% Change (2007–2011)	11.3%	23.0%

Source: 2007-2011 FCTD Annual Performance Reports

TD passenger ridership was fairly steady between 2006 and 2010. While there was a significant decrease in TD passengers from 2007 to 2008, ridership quickly rebounded the next year. Figure 2-1 shows the number of TD passengers served during the five-year period from 2007–2011.

Figure 2-1
Number of TD Passengers Served, 2007–2011



Source: 2007-2011 FCTD Annual Performance Reports

DEMOGRAPHIC AND JOURNEY-TO-WORK CHARACTERISTICS

Minority Population

Table 2-4 displays the percent distribution of minority populations within Marion County compared to the State of Florida. The percentage of minority population in Marion County is less than 20 percent, which is less than that of the Florida average of 25 percent. Conversely, the proportion of Marion County's non-minority population, (81%), is greater than that of Florida's (75%).

Table 2-4
Minority and Non-Minority Population within Marion County, 2010

Geographic Location	Minority Population	% of Total Population	Non-Minority Population	% of Total Population	Total Population
Marion County	63,034	19.03%	268,264	80.97%	331,298
Florida	4,692,148	24.96%	14,109,162	75.04%	18,801,310

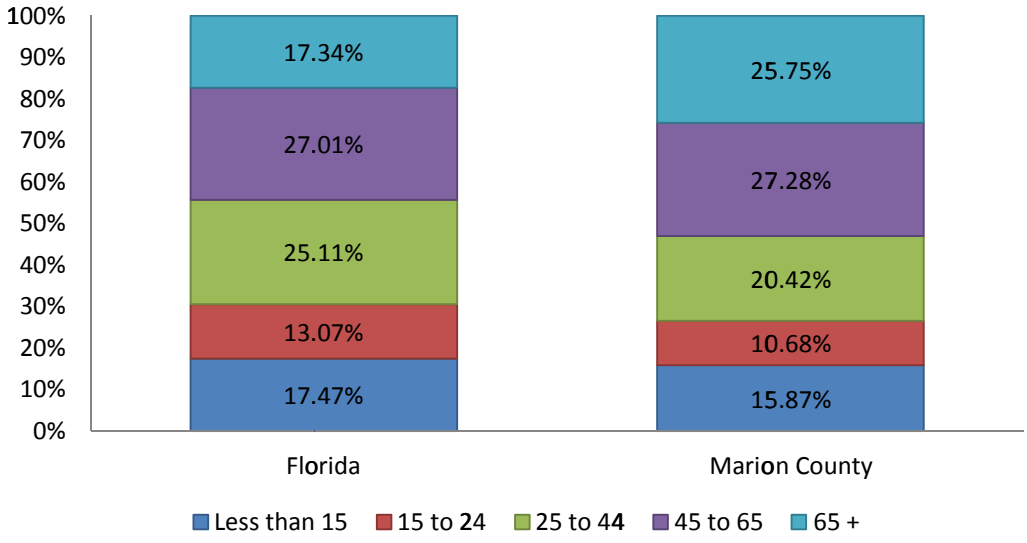
Source: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010 American Community Survey

Age Distribution

The age distribution of population in Marion County is a major factor when considering public transportation. Almost 42 percent of the population is below the age of 15 years or above the age of 65 years. The population segment between 45 and 65 years, which will be the next wave of retirees, represents nearly 30 percent of the total population within the county.

According to the *Florida Statistical Abstract 2010*, the county's median age is expected to increase from 46.7 years in 2010 to 49.8 years in 2020 and to 51.9 years by 2030. A growing need for public transit within Marion County can be assumed, considering the projected increase in median age. The age groups of 15 years or younger and older than 65 years are more likely to use public transportation. This is due to the fact that persons younger than 15 years cannot legally operate a motor vehicle and, therefore, typically have a higher propensity for using transit; persons 65 years and older also face a higher chance of no longer being able to drive due to age-related driving impairments.

Figure 2-2
Age Distribution of Residents, Marion County and Florida, 2010

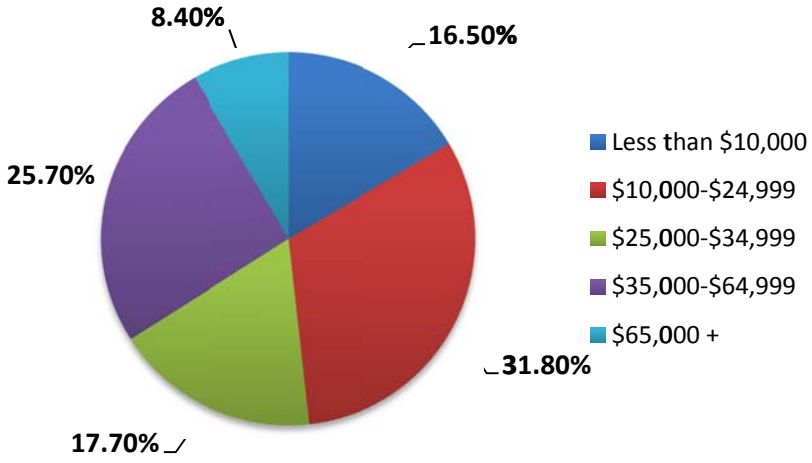


Source: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010, American Community Survey

Income

Median income is an important factor in determining public transit needs. It can be inferred that persons with a low income will be less likely to own a vehicle and, therefore, more likely to use public transit. Figure 2-3 shows the distribution of median income for residents in Marion County.

Figure 2-3
Marion County Income, 2010



Source: 2010 American Community Survey

Household Vehicle Availability

Similar to age and income, vehicle availability also is an important factor in determining public transit needs. Table 2-5 presents the number of vehicles available by household within Marion County and Florida. The distributions of household vehicle availability in Marion County are fairly consistent with those of Florida. Marion County has a slightly lower percentage of households with zero vehicles and a slightly higher number of households with two vehicles than the Florida average. Almost half of the households in the county have at least two vehicles available.

Table 2-5
Distribution of Vehicle Availability, 2010

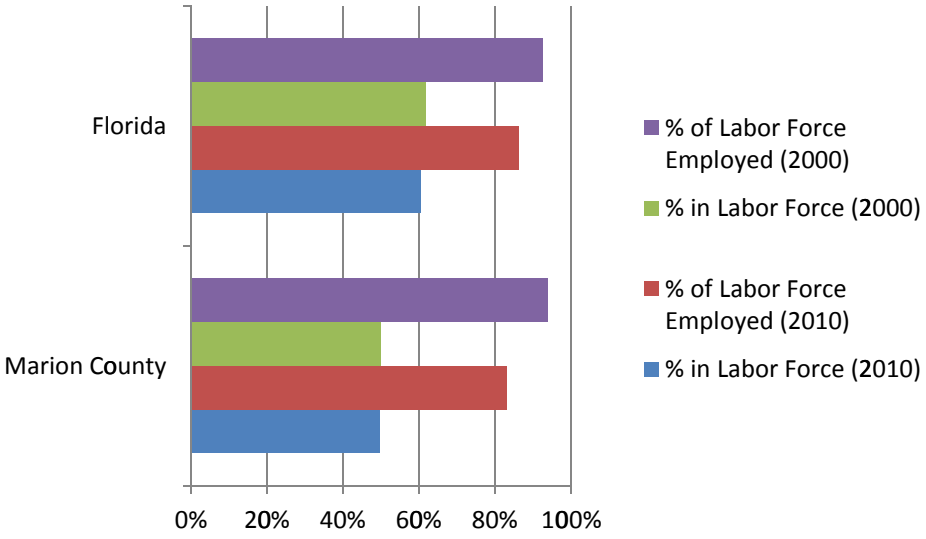
Area	Number of Vehicles Available			
	0	*1*	*2*	*3+*
Marion County	1.2%	25.6%	48.2%	25.3%
Florida	3.0%	25.0%	45.6%	26.5%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey, 1 year estimates

Employment Characteristics

Figure 2-4 displays the percent of population above the age of 16 in the labor force and the percent of the labor force employed. Marion County has a significantly lower percentage of the population in the labor force (50%) than the Florida average (60%). This is, in large part, due to the high percentage of retired population in the county. Both Marion County and Florida have a similar percentage of the labor force employed. Both the state average and Marion County saw a drop of nearly 10 percent of the labor force employed, most likely a result of the economic downturn in the later part of the decade.

Figure 2-4
Labor Force Participation, 2000–2010



Source: 2010 American Community Survey, 1 year estimates; 2000 Census of Population and Housing

TOURISM

Marion County has a number of tourist attractions that draw tourists to the region. Silver Springs—Ocala's "Nature's Theme Park"—frequently has events that attract guests and visitors. In addition, just down the road from Silver Springs is Wild Waters, a water-based theme park. To accommodate the local tourists, the number of hotel rooms has increased by more than 36 percent, from 1,266 rooms in 2005 to 1,979 in 2009.

Marion County is also considered the "Horse Capital of the World," with more than 200 horse farms, and ranks #3 in the nation for total value of horses sold. According to the Marion County Chamber of Commerce, nearly 29,000 county residents are employed in the thoroughbred industry alone.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Other major industries in Marion County include government, education, healthcare, manufacturing, construction, and leisure/hospitality. Major employment centers include healthcare centers such as Munroe Regional Medical Center and Ocala Regional Medical Center and manufacturing factories such as E-ONE, Inc.; Closetmaid; Lockheed-Martin; and Signature Brands, LLC. In addition, Cheney Brothers, Inc., and Swift Transportation Company are major employers in the distribution and transportation sectors. Retail centers also employ a large percentage of workers in Marion County. Table 2-6 shows the top 20 major private sector employers and major government employers in Marion County.

MAJOR TRIP GENERATORS

Major trip generators in Marion County include schools, libraries, the three hospitals located in Ocala, previously-identified major employers, shopping centers, and the Ocala Central Business District (CBD).

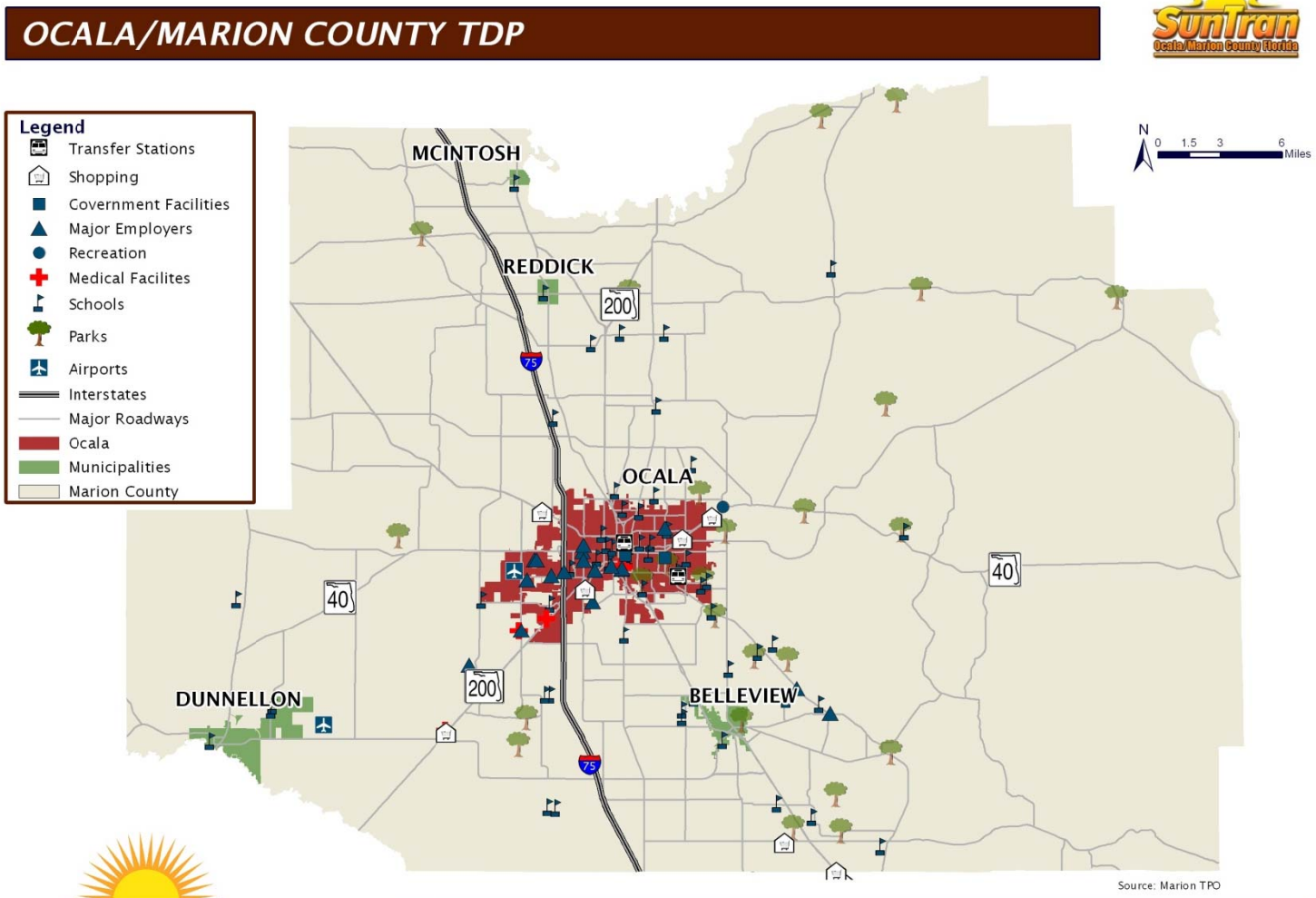
Shopping centers tend to be concentrated in and around Ocala along SR 200 southwest of Ocala, SR 40 in northeastern Ocala, and US 27 south of Ocala. Other specific generators include the Wild Waters Family Water Park, Silver Springs Nature Park west of Silver Springs Shores, Ocala Civic Theatre, and Central Florida Community College. Ocala is the primary CBD in the county, serving as the center for both business and government activities, and a smaller CBD is located in Dunnellon. Map 2-10 shows the major trip generators and attractors in Marion County. Marion County identifies 20 key "Employment Activity Centers," which includes a mix of existing and planned centers. These occur predominately along I-75, but additional employment centers are scattered

throughout the county. The Marion County Comprehensive Plan identifies Circle Square Woods, an existing employment center, and Marion Oaks, a regional activity center.

Table 2-6
Top 20 Major Public and Private Employers, Marion County

Employer Name	Number of Employees	Business Type/Sector
Major Private Sector Employers		
Munroe Regional Center	2,652	Healthcare
Walmart (combined)	2,370	Retail Sales
Ocala Regional Medical Center & West Marion Community Hospital	1,725	Healthcare
Publix Supermarkets (combined)	1,275	Retail Sales
AT&T	1,000	Support Services
Lockheed-Martin	928	Manufacturing
E-ONE, Inc.	850	Manufacturing
The Centers	568	Healthcare
Cheney Brothers, Inc.	542	Distribution
Swift Transportation Company	537	Transportation
ClosetMaid	460	Manufacturing
Hospice of Marion County, Inc.	452	Healthcare
Childhood Development Services, Inc.	371	Education
On Top of The World Communities, Inc.	358	Real Estate Developer
Signature Brands, LLC	303	Manufacturing
Custom Window Systems, Inc	302	Manufacturing/Distribution
K-Mart Corporation	300	Distribution
Townley Manufacturing Company, Inc.	256	Manufacturing
Jenkins Auto Group	205	Manufacturing
Cone Distributing, Inc.	187	Distribution
Major Government Employers		
Marion County Public Schools	6,031	Education
State of Florida (all departments)	2,582	Government
Marion Co. Board of County Commissioners	1,439	Government
U.S. Government	916	Government
City of Ocala (all departments)	950	Government
Marion County Sheriff's Office	840	Government
College of Central Florida	401	Education

Source: Ocala/Marion County Community Demographic Profile, 2011



Map 2-8: Major Trip Generators and Attractors

COMMUTING PATTERNS

To assess current commuter trends and patterns, an analysis using the "On the Map" application provided by the U.S. Census Bureau was used. "On the Map" is an online resource to retrieve and map Longitudinal Employer–Household Dynamics (LEHD) data. The application contains data from the year 2000 through 2009 and is a current information source for workplace data based on composite information of local unemployment insurance earnings data, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data concerning where workers live and work, firm characteristics such as industry, and with census and survey data.

Table 2-7 summarizes the commuter flows for workers living in Marion County. According to the data, 54 percent of the workers residing in Marion County also work in Marion County. The remaining 46 percent of workers commute to neighboring counties or outside of the region. The number of workers commuting has increased significantly, particularly to Orange and Duval counties, with 18 percent and 25 percent increases, respectively, during the 5-year period. Marion County also had a 10 percent reduction of people living and working within the county during this 5-year period.

Table 2-7
County of Work for Workers Residing in Marion County, 2004 and 2009

County of Residence		County of Work							
		Marion	*Lake*	*Alachua*	*Orange*	*Duval*	*Hillsborough*	*Other*	*Total*
Marion County (2009)	Number of Workers	53,123	4,922	4,267	4,879	3,535	3,367	25,134	99,227
	% Distribution	53.54%	4.96%	4.30%	4.92%	3.56%	3.39%	25.33%	100.00%
Marion County (2004)	Number of Workers	58,894	5,173	4,484	4,082	2,794	3,167	19,655	98,249
	% Distribution	59.94%	5.27%	4.56%	4.15%	2.84%	3.22%	20.01%	100.00%
Percent Change (2004–2009)		-10.69%	-5.79%	-5.78%	18.35%	25.27%	5.27%	26.62%	0.00%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau "On the Map" online application; LEHD Data 2004, 2009

Table 2-8 reflects commuting flows for Marion County as a work destination. Of the trips terminating in Marion County, 40 percent come from outside the county. This reflects a 10 percent increase in trips that originated outside of the county in 2004. Therefore, while

Marion County experienced a decline in workers that both reside and work in the county, there was a corresponding increase in workers commuting from outside the county.

Table 2-8
Commuting from Neighboring Counties to Marion County, 2004 and 2009

County of Work		County of Residence							
		Marion	Citrus	Orange	Hillsborough	Lake	Duval	Other	Total
Marion County (2009)	Number of Workers	53,123	3,449	2,868	2,400	2,235	2,232	22,522	88,829
	% Distribution	59.80%	3.88%	3.23%	2.70%	2.52%	2.51%	25.35%	100.00%
Marion County (2004)	Number of Workers	58,894	3,194	1,966	2334	1,588	1,861	14,508	84,345
	% Distribution	69.83%	3.79%	2.33%	2.77%	1.88%	2.21%	17.20%	100.00%
Percent Change (2004–2009)		-14.35%	2.53%	38.52%	-2.36%	33.64%	13.88%	47.40%	5.32%

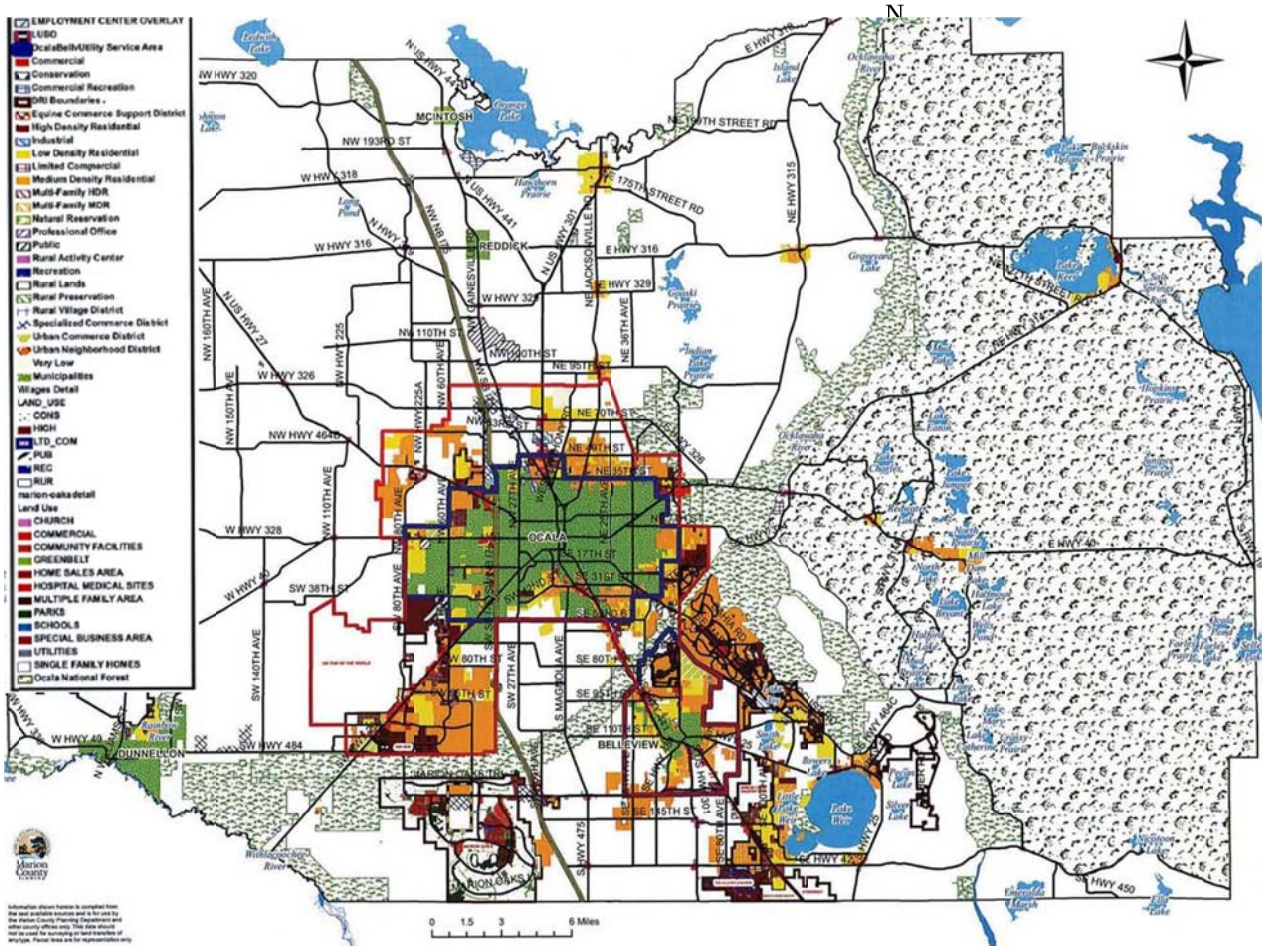
Source: US Census Bureau "On the Map" online application. LEHD Data 2004, 2009

LAND USES

As part of the baseline conditions assessment, a review of current and emerging land uses was also conducted. Marion County and each municipality have prepared their own land-use maps. At the county level, the corridors along US 301/441/27, County Road 464, and County Road 200 south of Ocala will all continue to develop both high-density residential, as well as commercial. US 300/441 north of Ocala are zoned to medium-density residential, high-density residential, and commercial. Map 2-9 shows the future land use of Marion County, and Map 2-10 shows the city of Ocala.

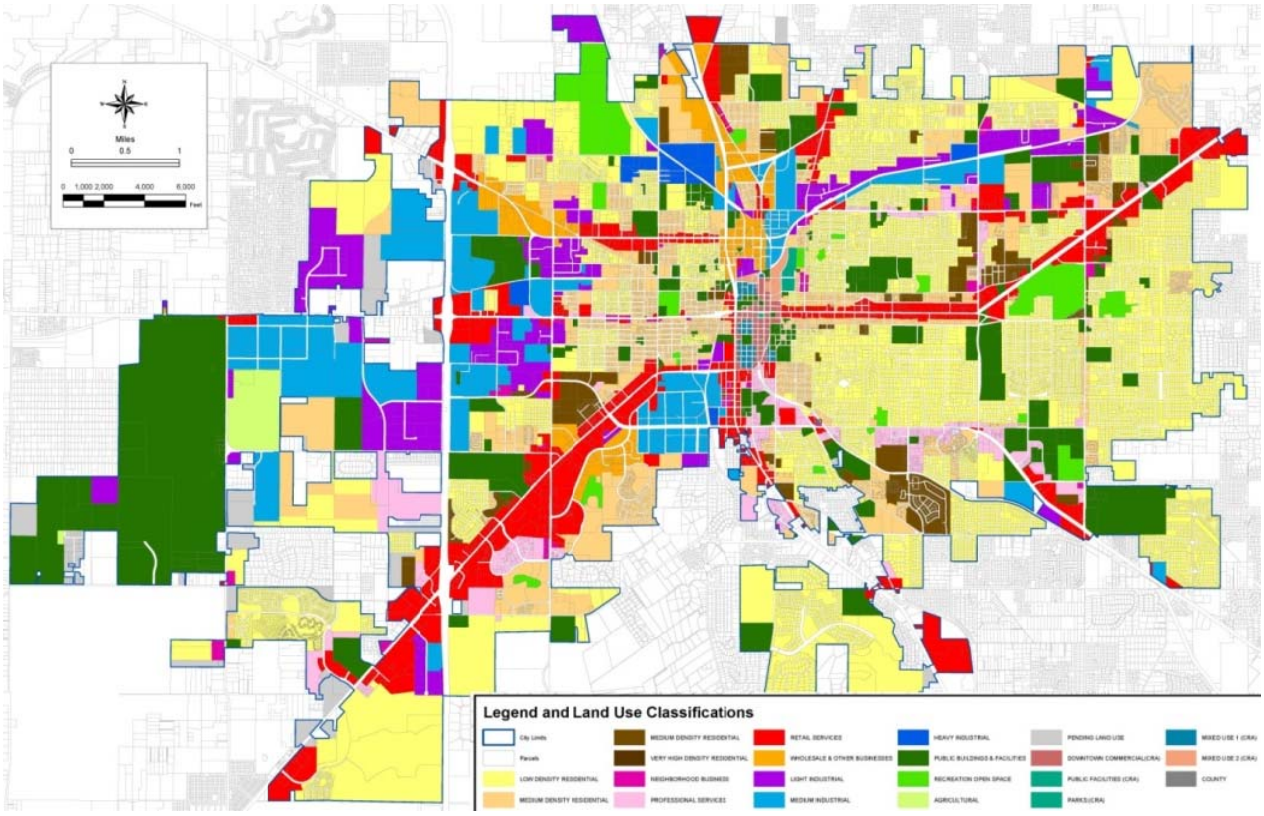
In the most recent Comprehensive Plan adopted by Marion County, the conservation element includes a plan to implement an urban growth boundary. Policy 1.2.11a states that Marion County will require activities that contribute to maintenance or improvement of air quality, such as "Land development patterns that make for compact urban areas, or containment of existing urban areas with controlled expansion (Urban Growth Boundary) so as to minimize dependence upon private transportation and increase the feasibility of mass transit." This growth management ring will also assist in defining where future urban development will occur. (Policy 2.1.2a). This boundary ring was adopted in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan and is shown on Map 2-9, Marion County Future Land Use, 2035.

Map 2-9
Marion County Future Land Use, 2035



Source: 2035 Comprehensive Plan, Marion County Planning Department

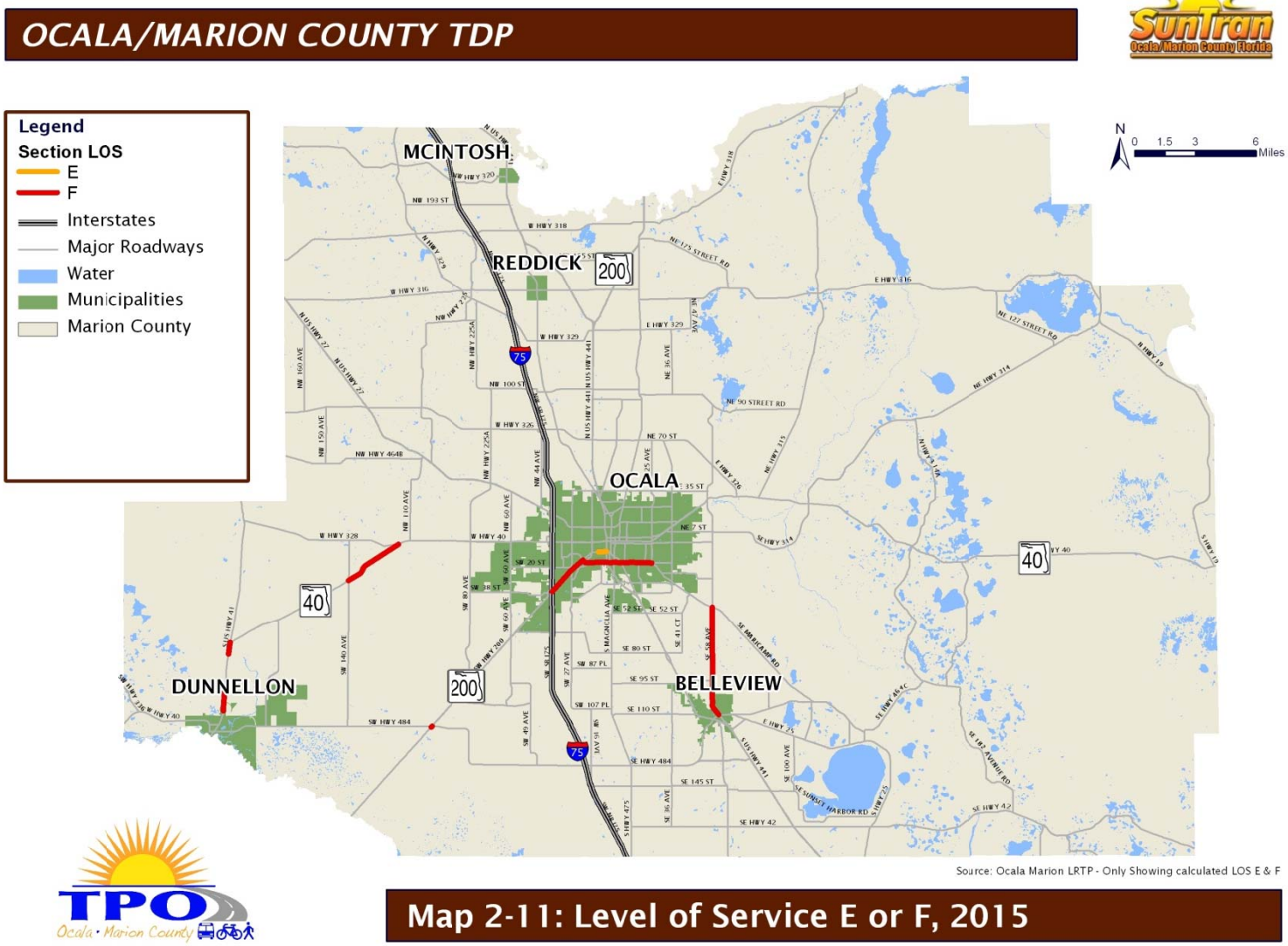
Map 2-10
Ocala Future Land Use, 2012



Source: City of Ocala Growth Management - http://www.ocalafl.org/gm/GM3.aspx?id=2434 Future Land Use 2012 Map

ROADWAY CONDITIONS

Existing roadway conditions were also considered for the establishment of baseline conditions. According to the 2010 Congestion Management Process—State of the System Report for the Ocala/Marion County TPO, only one percent of the roadway miles operate at level of service (LOS) E or F. Map 2-11 highlights these roadways, which represents three percent of the total vehicle miles traveled on Marion County major roadways.



Map 2-11: Level of Service E or F, 2015

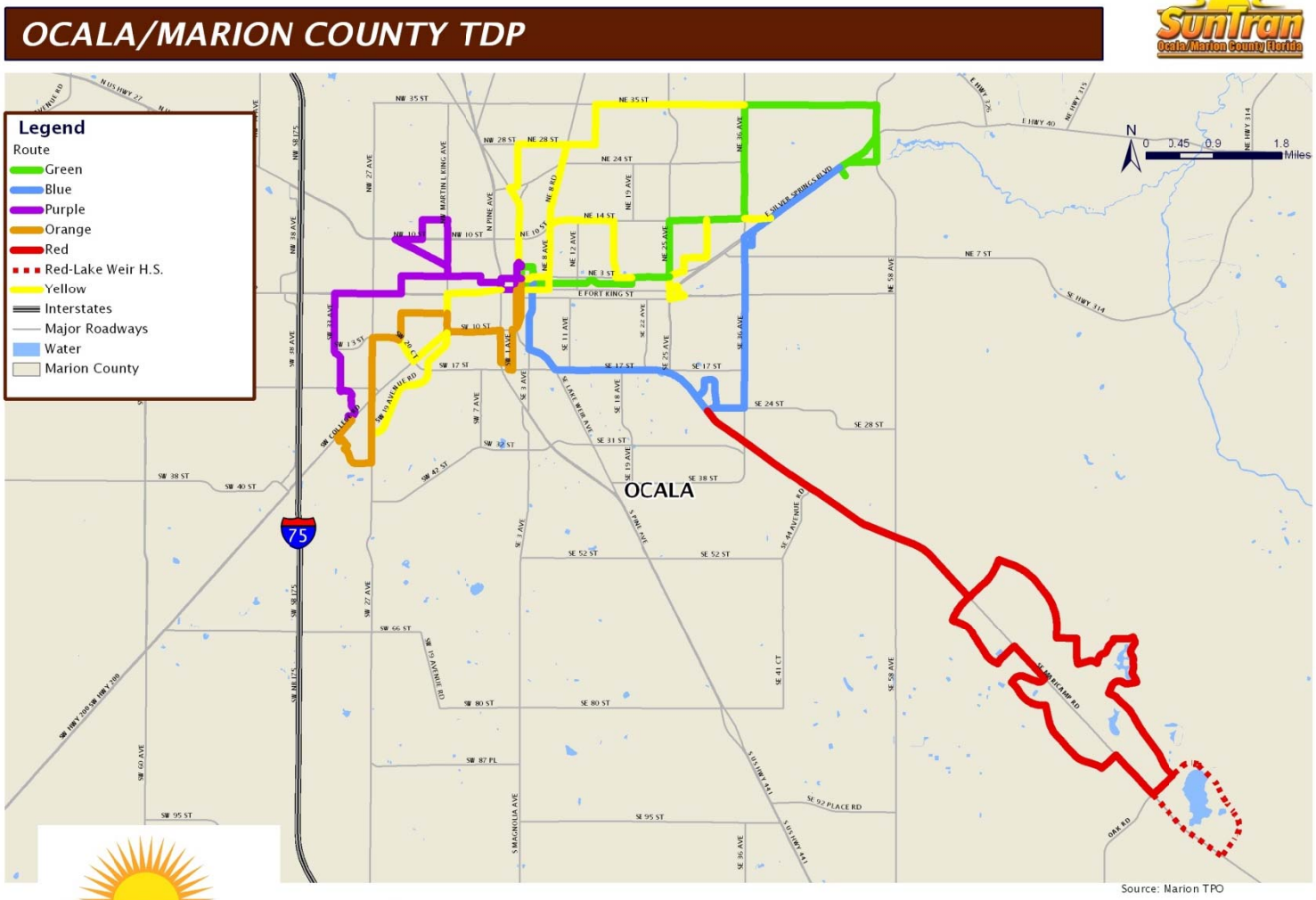
EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES

As discussed in the introduction, SunTran is the provider of fixed-route bus service within Marion County. It is a cooperative effort of the Ocala/Marion TPO, Marion County, City of Ocala, FDOT, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The characteristics of the routes operated by SunTran are given in Table 2-9, and the routes are illustrated in Map 2-12.

Table 2-9
SunTran Route Characteristics

Route Name	Description	Frequency	Span
Green Route	Downtown Transit Station to Walmart at Silver Springs, serving Coehadjoe Park, Booster Stadium, One-Stop Work Force Center, MTI High School, and stops at Silver Springs and Wild Water attractions by request.	60 minutes	5:29 AM to 7:25 PM
Blue Route	Downtown Transit Station to Walmart at Silver Springs, serving Shoppes of Silver Springs Plaza, Appleton Museum, 40 East Shopping Center, YMCA and Jervey Gantt Park, Marion County Health Department, and stops at Silver Springs and Wild Water attractions by request.	60–70 minutes	5:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Purple Route	Downtown Transit Station to Central Florida Community College, serving the Ocala Housing Authority, Lillian Bryant Park, Howard Middle School, Hampton Aquatic Fun Center, Howard Academy, and Court House.	60–70 minutes	5:27 AM to 7:25 PM
Orange Route	Downtown Transit Station to Paddock Mall, serving Gateway Plaza, Ocala Police Department, Marion County Adult Education Center, Compass Health & Fitness, Munroe Regional and Ocala Regional Medical Centers, and Downtown Square.	60–70 minutes	5:00 AM to 7:54 PM
Red Route	Health Department Transfer Station to Lockheed-Martin, serving Ralph Russell Field, Heather Island Plaza, Silver Springs Shores Community Center, Baseline Road Trailhead, Forest High School, Cedar Shores Shopping Center, and Dayco. Also stops at Lake Weir High School during August– May school year. Stops at Silver Springs Shores Post Office available upon request.	120–140 minutes	4:45 AM to 8:00 PM
Yellow Route	Southwest Ocala—Route A – Downtown Transit Station to Vanguard High School and Walmart on Easy St., or North Ocala—Route B – Downtown Transit Station to Coehadjoe Park, Silver Springs and Wild Waters attractions, Walmart at Silver Springs, and Marion County Public Library.	120–140 minutes	5:00 AM to 8:00 PM

n

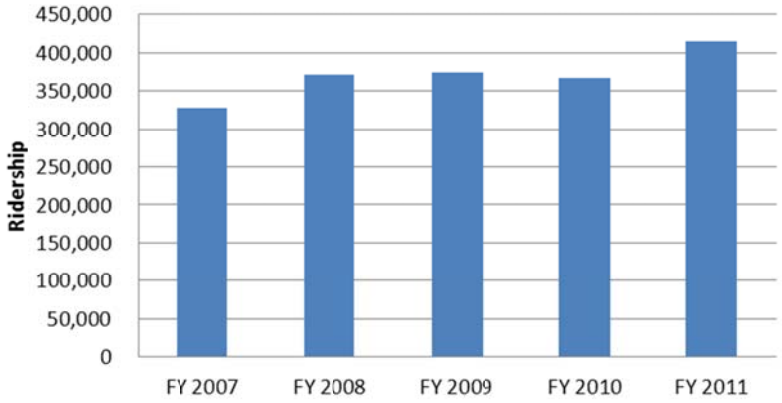


Map 2-12: SunTran Existing Transit Service

Annual Ridership

SunTran's annual ridership has increased approximately 26 percent during the last 5 years, from approximately 327,000 riders in FY 2007 to almost 415,000 riders in FY 2011. There was a very minor decrease in ridership in FY 2010, which quickly rebounded the following year.

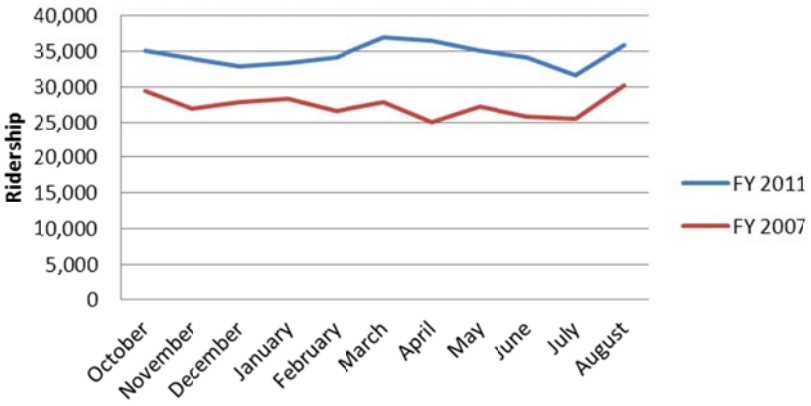
Figure 2-5
SunTran Annual Ridership, FY 2007–FY 2011



Source: Ocala/Marion TPO

In a comparison of ridership by month in FY 2007 and five years later in FY 2011, it was observed that ridership trends are consistent. In both years, ridership peaked in March and again in August, with a low period in July and from December through February. Figure 2-6 shows SunTran ridership by month for FY 2007 and FY 2011.

Figure 2-6
SunTran Ridership by Month, FY 2007 and FY 2011



Source: Ocala/Marion TPO. Note: Data for September not available

Section 3

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The purpose of this section is to summarize the public involvement activities undertaken as part of the TDP and TDSP update. The goal of the public involvement activities is to increase the likelihood of active participation from citizens and stakeholder agencies during the development of the updated TDP and TDSP. Input from the public is critical since the 10-year TDP provides a strategic guide for public transportation in the community over the next 10 years.

Current legislation requires that the TPO provide documentation of its public involvement plan to be used in the TDP development process. Pertinent language from the TDP rule is as follows:

> The TDP preparation process shall include opportunities for public involvement as outlined in a TDP public involvement plan, approved by the Department, or the local Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Public Involvement Plan, approved by both the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration.
>
> —Florida Rule 14-73.001

Public involvement is an ongoing process in which feedback from the public is continuously received and accumulated. At the start of this project, a kickoff meeting was held with staff from the TPO, SunTran, and the project team to review the scope of services and discuss current issues in Marion County pertinent to the TDP process, including the Public Involvement Plan that would be used for the update process.

While there were multiple public involvement opportunities in conjunction with this TDP, recent additional activities in the county were also reviewed for the public involvement process, including the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Ocala 2025 Vision process. Ocala 2035 Vision process identified a strong general opinion among the participants that transit service needed to be increased and enhanced throughout the city and that transit corridors needed to be prioritized.

The public involvement process in the 2035 LRTP identified specific corridors via a "Strings and Ribbons" process on which the public wanted to see improvements occur. The process identified six service areas and destinations, including SR 200 west of I-75, Marion Oaks,

Belleview, Airport Industrial Park, Silver Springs Shores, and Dunnellon. Three of these areas are represented in the TDP Needs Plan.

Specific public involvement activities summarized in this section include discussion groups and stakeholder interviews. In addition to summarizing these public involvement activities, this section also presents the results of the on-board survey conducted for SunTran.

ON BOARD SURVEY

An on-board survey was conducted in January 2012 to collect rider input on each of SunTran's fixed bus routes. Information on current transit services was collected to provide direction to SunTran and the Ocala/Marion TPO for future service improvements and policies. In addition to collecting information from bus patrons about their opinions on possible improvements to the system, the on-board survey effort will assist SunTran and the Ocala/Marion TPO in identifying who is using the system (i.e., demographics) and in tracking where bus riders origins and destinations (i.e., travel characteristics). This section documents the approach and results of the on-board survey effort.

The on-board survey is a tool used by transit agencies to gather direct feedback from bus patrons on various aspects of operations and services. Information collected is used to determine how SunTran can ensure the quality of its customer services. In addition, SunTran can use the on-board survey results to determine the demographic make-up and travel characteristics of its existing customer base.

Survey Approach

To survey bus riders, a self-administered questionnaire was distributed to all persons boarding a SunTran bus during the survey period. A copy of the on-board survey instrument can be found in Appendix A. The survey was distributed by a team of trained survey personnel. Prior to sending surveyors out on SunTran buses, an orientation session was conducted to instruct surveyors about their duties and responsibilities and to address any issues or concerns they had about the survey process. The surveys were distributed on 50 percent of all SunTran fixed-route bus runs for one full weekday and Saturday. Bus runs reflect operator work shifts and were used to identify the 50 percent service coverage and corresponding surveyor work plan.

On-Board Survey Results

A total of 570 SunTran bus riders completed a survey, including 395 a weekday and 175 on Saturday. Table 3-1 presents the response rate by question for the survey effort, showing an average response rate by question of 77.75 percent. For analysis purposes, questions were divided into three major categories: travel characteristics, rider demographics, and customer service and satisfaction.

Travel Characteristics

Travel characteristics questions were designed to ask respondents about their individual trip details and their travel behavior. Topics covered included the following:

- Trip origin (type and location)
- Trip destination (type and location)
- Vehicle ownership and usage
- Transit stop/station access and egress travel mode
- Frequency of transit use

Table 3-1
On-Board Survey Response Rate

Question #	Valid	Total	Response Rate	Question #	Valid	Total	Response Rate
Q1	545	570	95.61%	Q20a	469	570	82.28%
Q2	186	570	32.63%	Q20b	458	570	80.35%
Q3	542	570	95.09%	Q20c	457	570	80.18%
Q4	356	570	62.46%	Q20d	455	570	79.82%
Q5	539	570	94.56%	Q20e	445	570	78.07%
Q6	186	570	32.63%	Q20f	453	570	79.47%
Q7	519	570	91.05%	Q20g	452	570	79.30%
Q8	529	570	92.81%	Q20h	443	570	77.72%
Q9	545	570	95.61%	Q20i	444	570	77.89%
Q10	551	570	96.67%	Q20j	453	570	79.47%
Q11	503	570	88.25%	Q20k	450	570	78.95%
Q12	501	570	87.89%	Q20l	48	570	8.42%
Q13	491	570	86.14%	Q21	232	570	40.70%
Q14	494	570	86.67%	Q22	471	570	82.63%
Q15	476	570	83.51%	Q23	439	570	77.02%
Q16	494	570	86.67%	Q24	466	570	81.75%
Q17	461	570	80.88%	Q25	445	570	78.07%
Q18	471	570	82.63%	Q26	456	570	80.00%
Q19	470	570	82.46%	Q27	445	570	78.07%

Questions 1 and 5 asked respondents about the type of place they were coming from to start their one-way trip and the type of place they were going to on the same one-way trip, respectively. Figures 3-1 and 3-2 present the results to these two questions. As shown in Figure 3-1, one-half of respondent transit trips originated at home; the second highest trip origin indicated by respondents was work. Similarly, the two highest trip destinations were work and home (see Figure 3-2).

Figure 3-1
Trip Origin Statistics

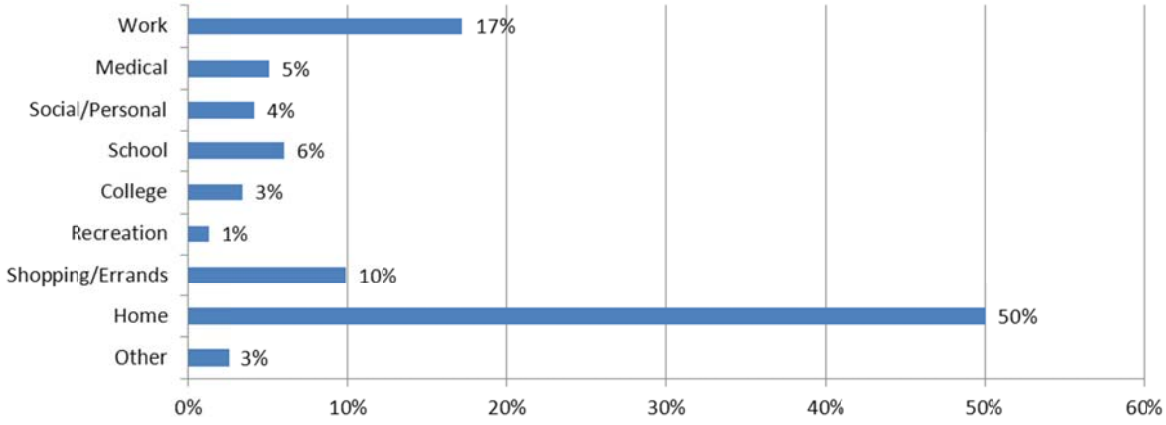
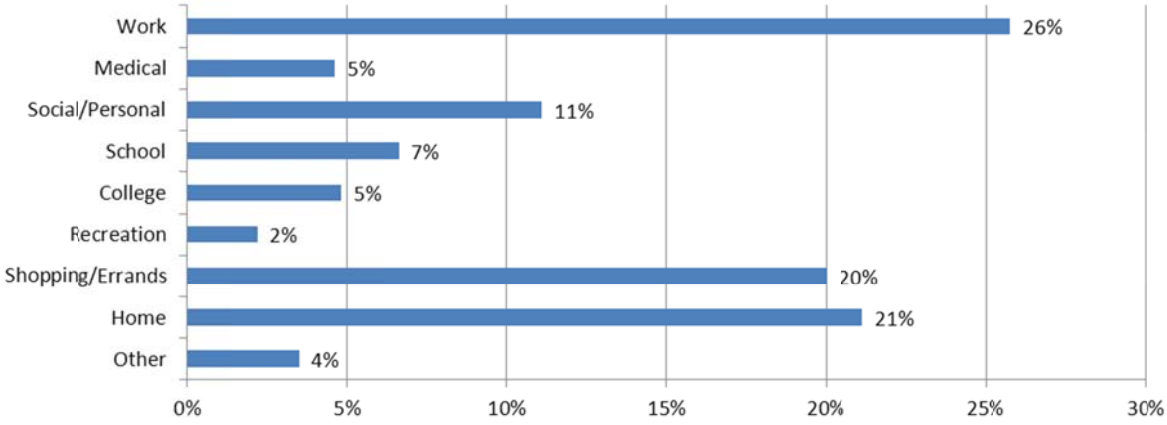


Figure 3-2
Trip Destination Statistics

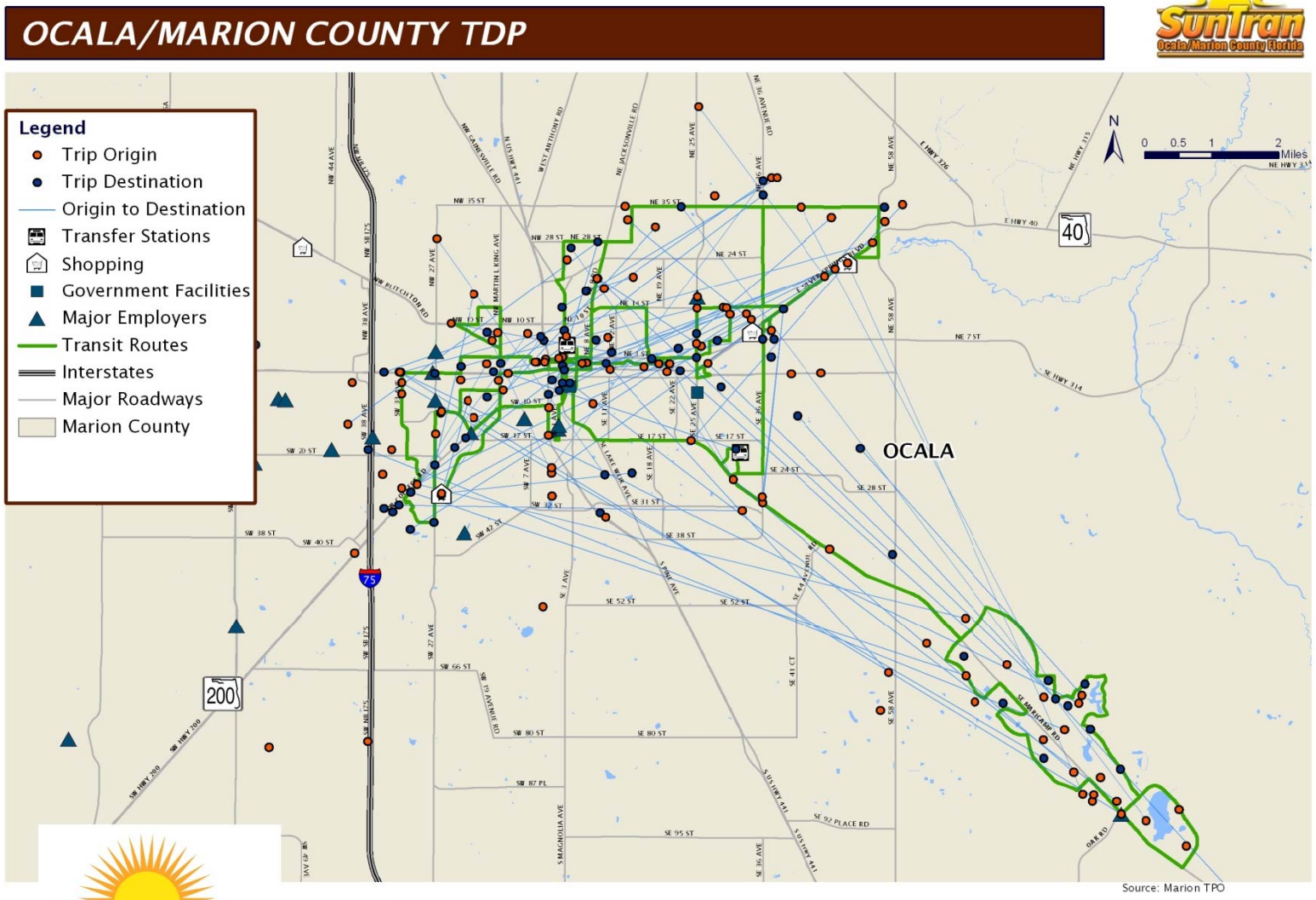


To illustrate the relationship between trip origins and destinations, an origin-destination (O-D) analysis was performed using the results of survey Questions 2 and 6. These two questions asked respondents to indicate the address or name of their trip start location and their trip end destination, respectively. Respondents were asked to specify an address; the

name of the place, business, or building; or indicate the nearest intersection of where they were coming from and going to. Information provided by respondents was geocoded using ArcGIS software. Geocoding is the process of assigning geographic coordinates to data records. Once trip origins and destinations were mapped, desire lines were drawn between corresponding trip pairs. A total of 79 O-D pairs were matched using the collected survey information. Map 3-1 illustrates the matched trip pairs.

Table 3-2 shows a trip purpose matrix, which combines trip origin and destination types to better display the relationship between trip origin and destination locations. Based on information in this table, home-to-work and work-to-home trips were the most common trip pairs. Shopping/Errand trips also were indicated by respondents as a common trip type. Of the 527 valid responses received for the origin and destination questions, approximately 20 percent indicated respondents were traveling to or from shopping/errands.

Questions 3 and 7 asked respondents to describe how they get to bus stop/station to board the bus and how they will reach their final destination one they leave the bus. The responses to these questions reveal how transit users must combine various modes of travel in order to complete their individual trip. As shown in Figures 3-3 and 3-4, the predominant travel mode used by respondents to get to and from the bus stop/station is walking.



Map 3-1: Survey Origins & Destinations

Table 3-2 Trip Purpose Matrix

Where are you COMING FROM NOW?	What type of place are you GOING TO NOW?										
	Work	Medical	Social/ Personal	School	College	Recreation	Shopping/ Errands	Home	Other	Total Origins	% Total Origins
Work	25	3	6	1	1	1	7	42	2	94	17.8%
Medical	5	4	5	3	0	0	3	5	0	28	5.3%
Social/ Personal	0	1	9	0	0	0	3	4	2	23	4.4%
School	5	0	1	9	0	1	0	14	1	33	6.3%
College	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	13	0	19	3.6%
Recreation	0	0	0	0		2	1	4	0	7	1.3%
Shopping/ Errands	4	3	5	0	0	1	17	19	4	54	10.3%
Home	89	12	28	21	23	6	71	0	5	255	48.4%
Other	4	1	1	0	0	0	2	1	5	14	2.7%
Total Destinations	133	24	56	34	26	11	105	102	19	527	
%Total Destinations	25.2 %	4.6%	10.6%	6.5%	4.9%	2.1%	19.9%	19.4 %	3.6%		

Figure 3-3
Bus Stop Access

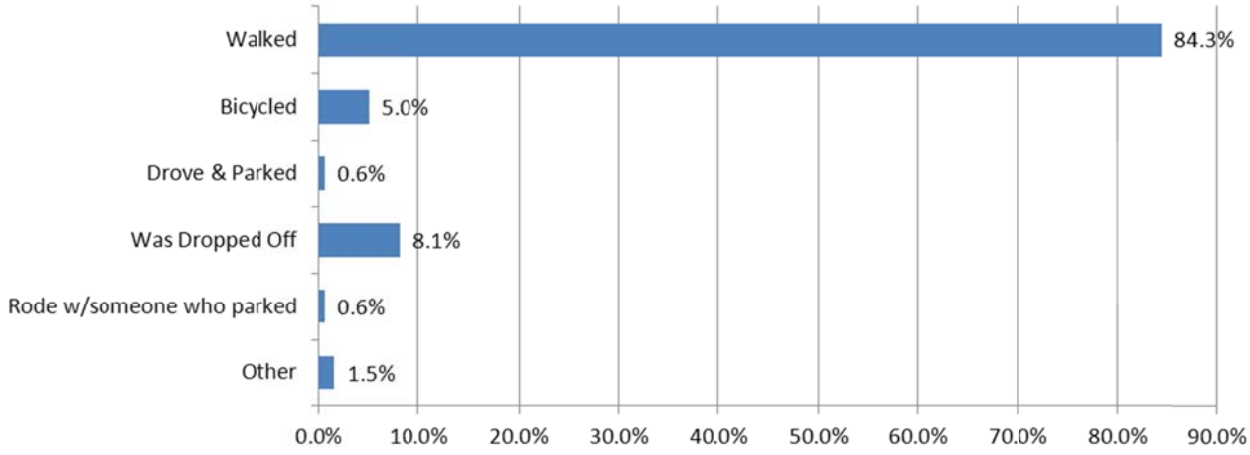
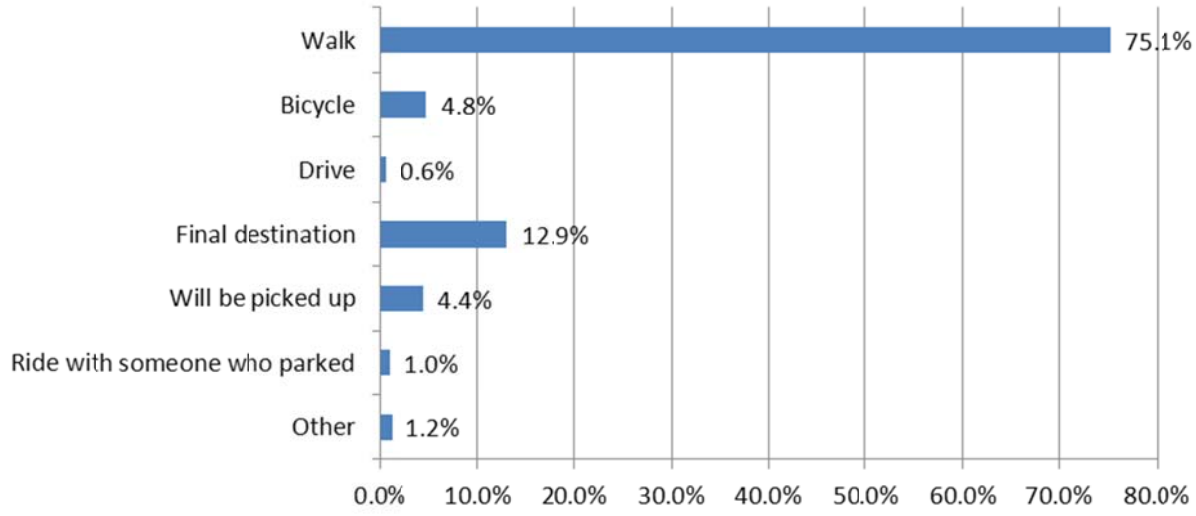


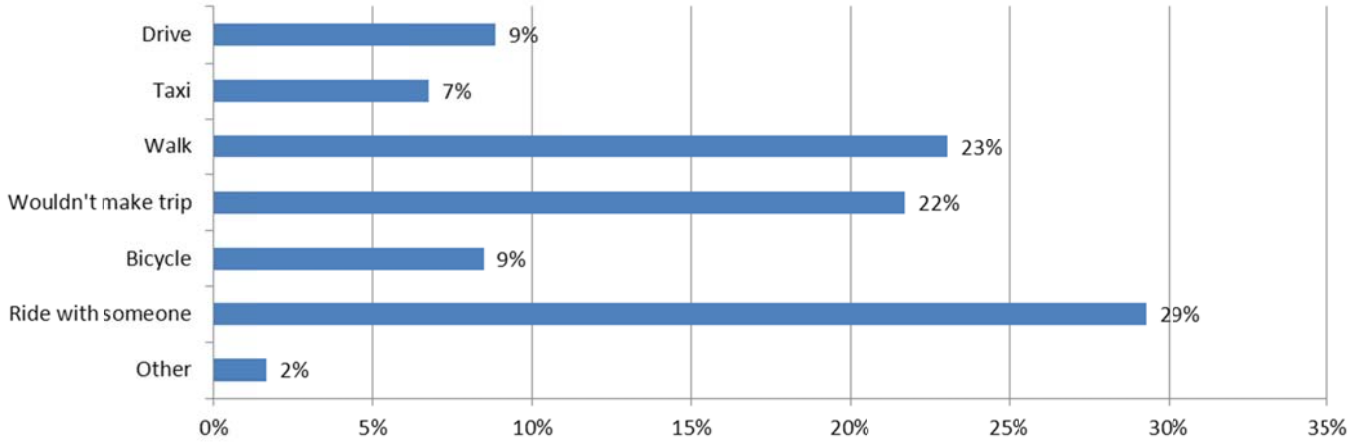
Figure 3-4
Bus Stop Egress



Question 8 asked bus riders about how they would complete their trip if bus service were not available. As shown in Figure 3-5, the most common response provided was to ride with someone else, followed by walking. These responses, along with the large distributions of individuals who indicated that they would not make the trip at all or would ride a bicycle, reflect the significant portion of survey respondents who rely on the transit service as their primary mode of transportation.

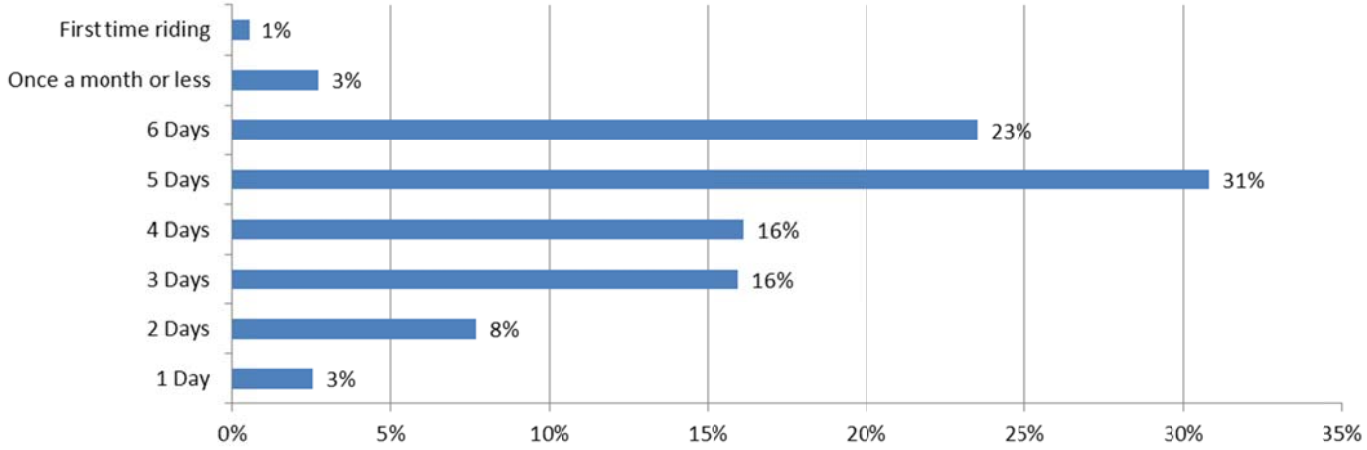
Approximately nine percent of survey respondents indicated that they would drive to complete their trip if they could not complete it by bus. The result also indicates the low number of "choice riders" currently using SunTran bus service.

Figure 3-5
Trip Alternatives



In Question 9, respondents were asked how many days per week, on average, they ride the bus. As shown in Figure 3-6, approximately 54 percent of respondents indicated that they use SunTran service five or more days a week.

Figure 3-6
Frequency of Bus Use

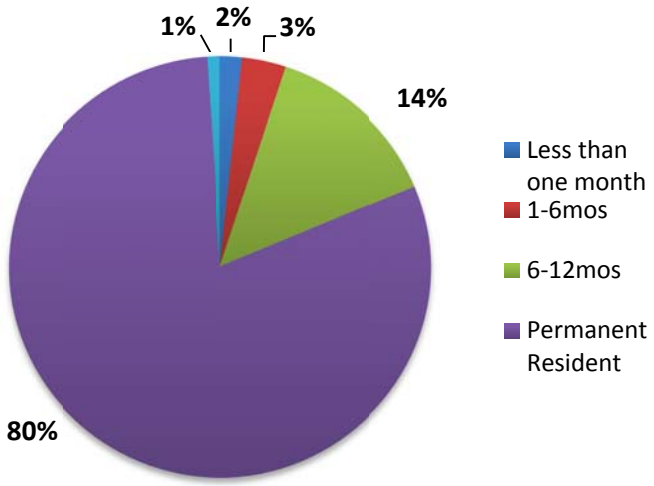


Rider Demographics

The next section of the survey includes a variety of demographic questions to query respondents about their household income levels, age, gender, and ethnicity, among other things. Other topics covered by the demographic questions include reasons for using SunTran service and how long riders have been using SunTran service.

Question 15 asked respondents how many months out of the year they reside in Marion County. As shown in Figure 3-7, most respondents (80%) indicated that they reside in Marion County for more than six months each year, while only one percent of respondents reside in Marion County less than one month. The results show that permanent residents are the primary users of SunTran service.

Figure 3-7
Residence Status



Question 16 asked respondents to indicate the most important reason they ride the bus. Respondents were asked to select only one response. As shown in Figure 3-8, the number one reason, selected by 29 percent of respondents, is "I do not drive." Other reasons include "Car is not available all the time" and "I do not have a driver's license." Combined, this further suggests that a large portion of survey respondents have limited transportation options and, therefore, rely heavily on the bus service.

Figure 3-9 displays information pertaining to rider demographics (race, gender, age, and income), as provided by survey respondents.

Figure 3-8
Reasons for Using SunTran

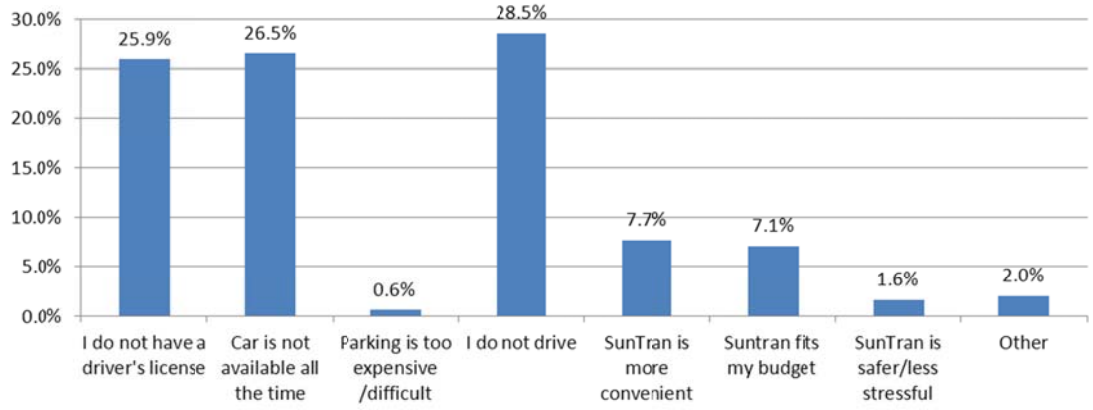
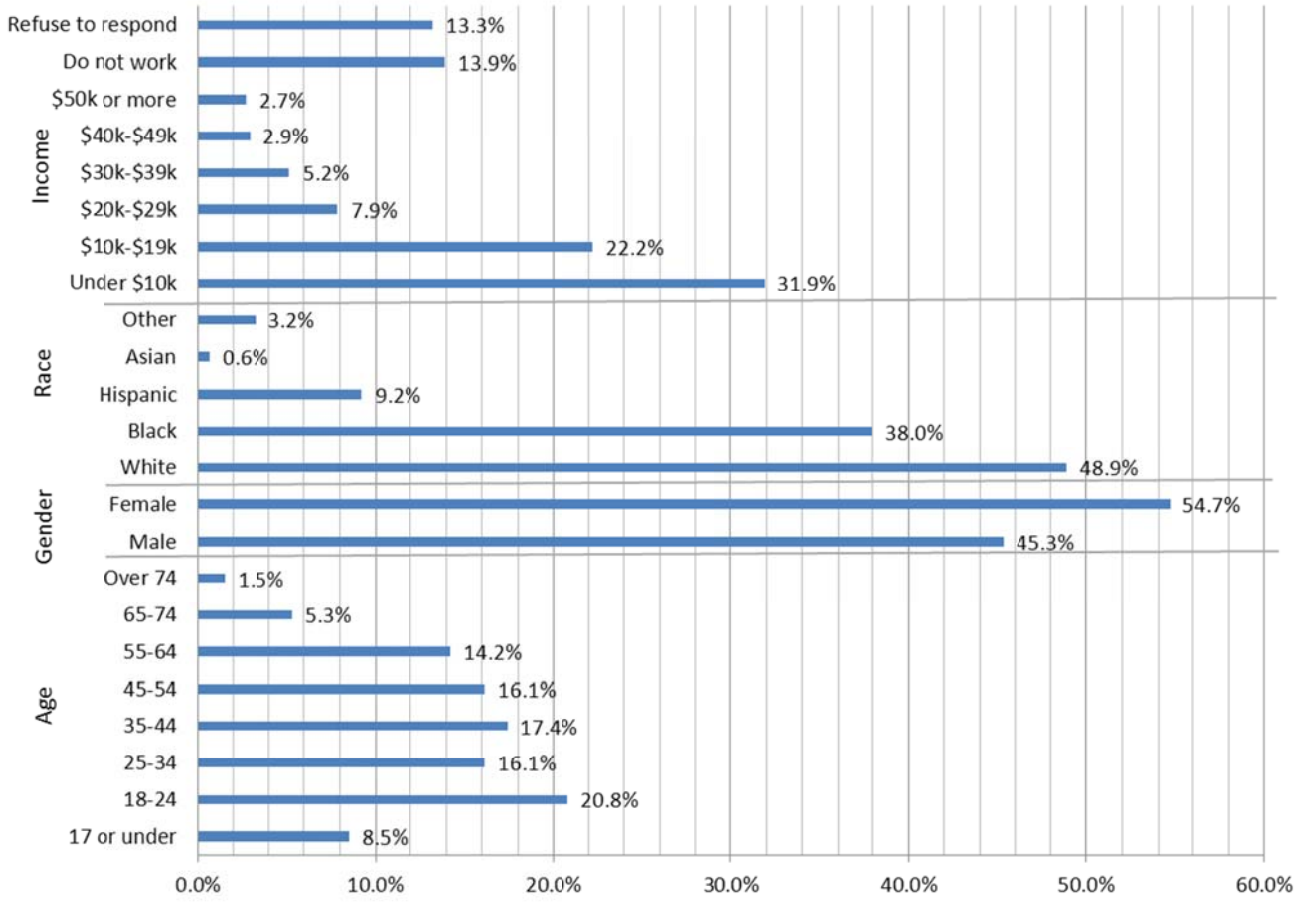


Figure 3-9
Rider Demographics



Several cross-tabulations were prepared using travel characteristics, demographics, and fare use data from the survey. Figure 3-10 shows a cross-tabulation of frequency of transit use compared to the fare that riders pay, indicating that more than half of the riders surveyed pay the full adult fare. In addition, half of the respondents are regular riders in that they use SunTran five or more days per week, on average.

Figure 3-11 shows that 56 percent of respondents paying the full adult fare also have an average income of less than $20,000.

Figure 3-10
Frequency and Fare Type

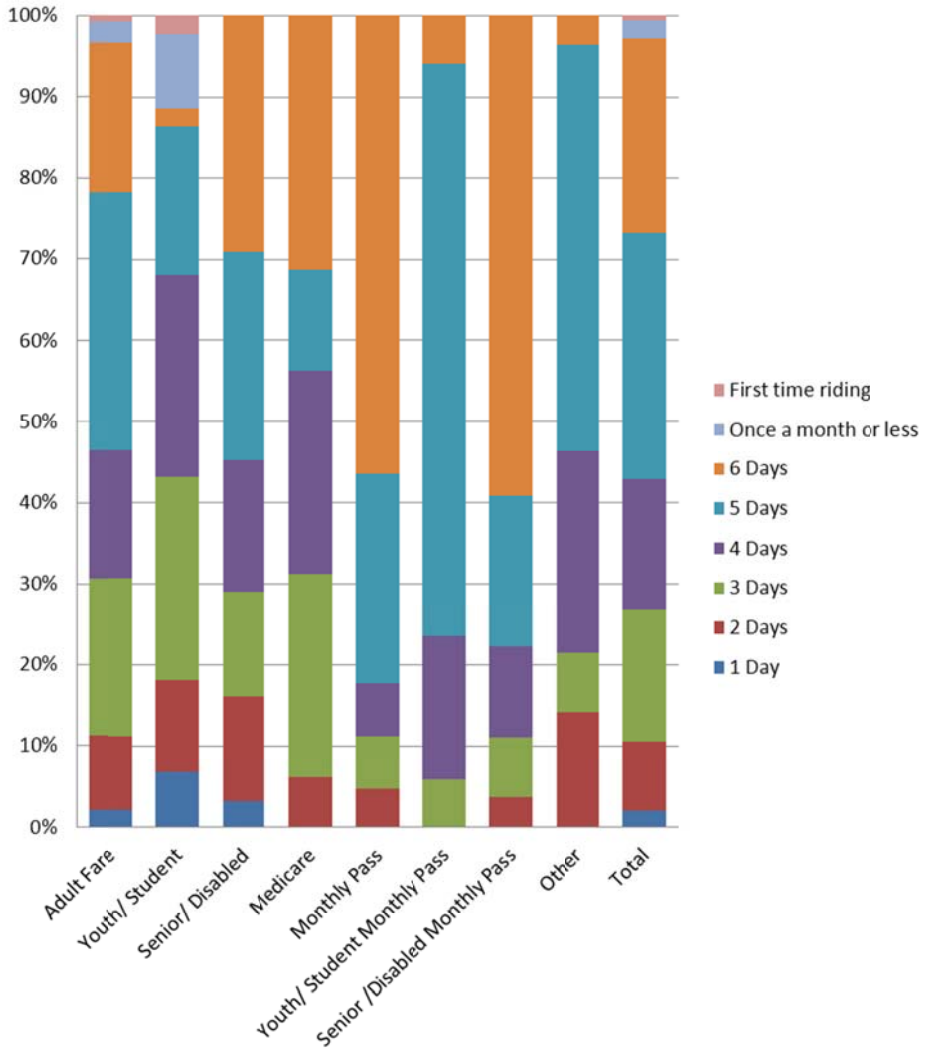
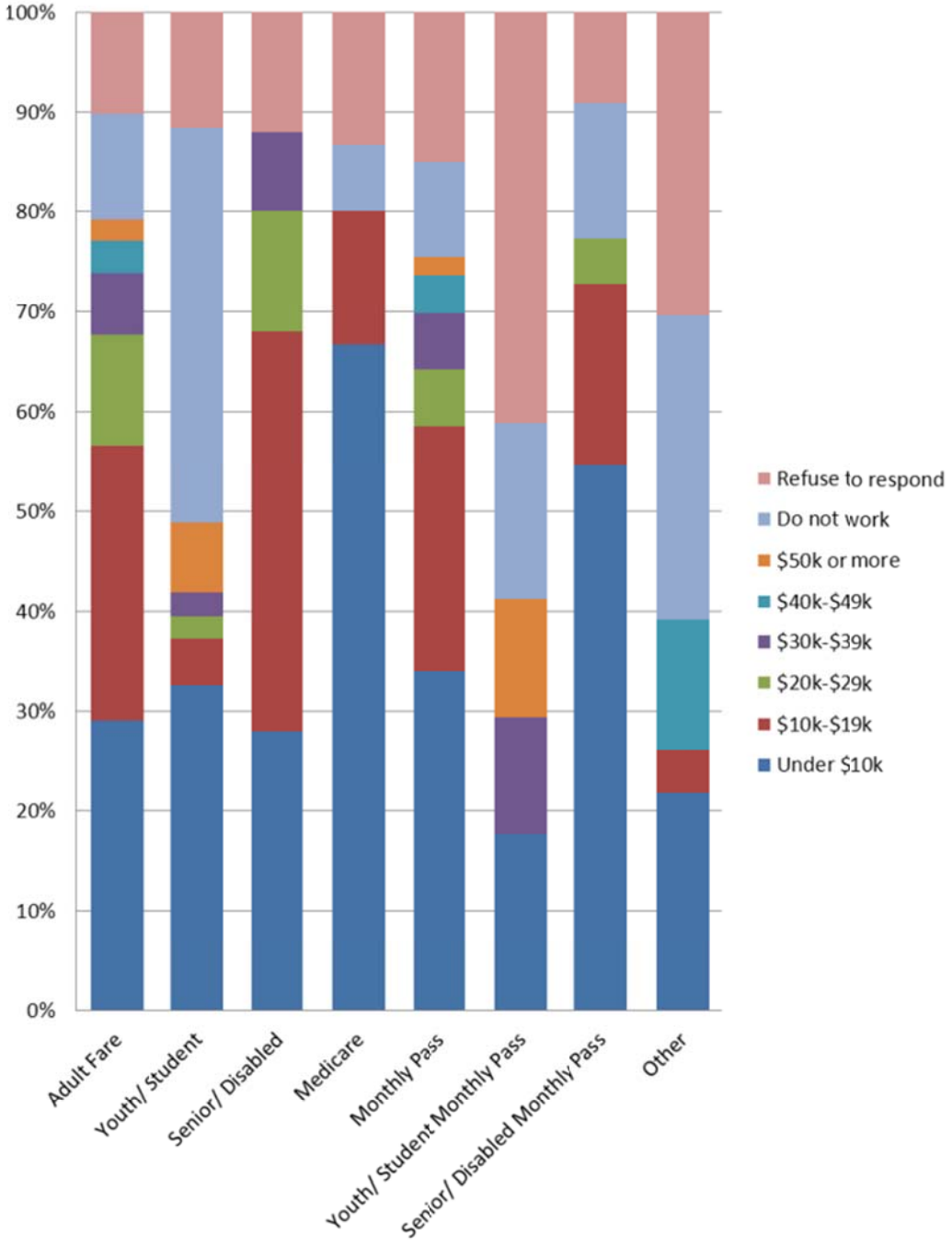


Figure 3-11
Income and Fare Type



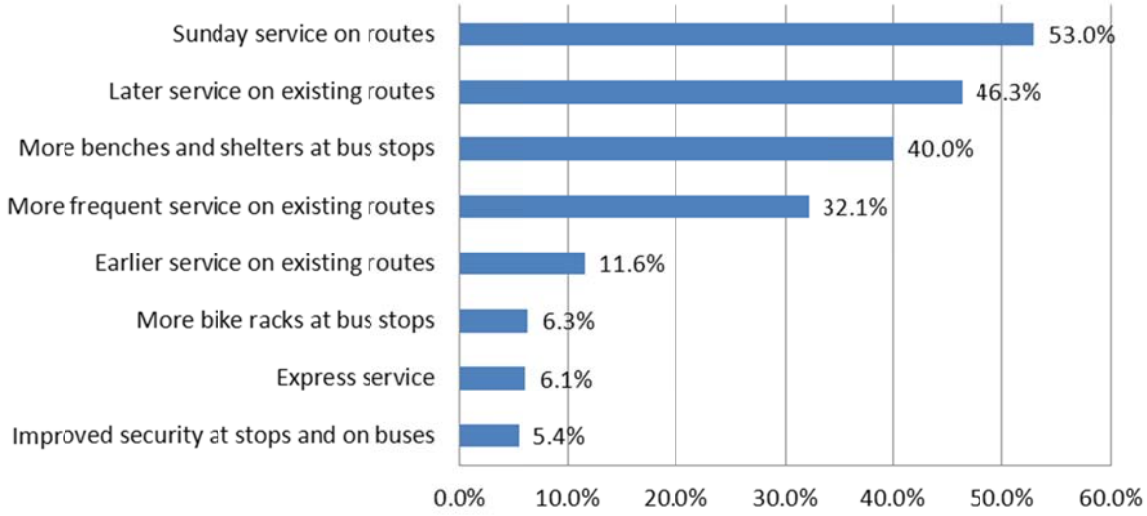
Customer Service and Satisfaction

Customer service and satisfaction questions queried respondents regarding improvements to SunTran services and about their general satisfaction levels with various aspects of SunTran service.

In Question 17, respondents were asked to select from a list of eight potential improvements that they believed were the most important improvements for SunTran to implement. In addition, space was provided for respondents to input their own improvement if desired. Figure 3-12 displays the results to this survey question. The top three improvements identified by respondents include:

- Sunday service on routes
- Later service on existing routes
- More frequent service on existing routes

Figure 3-12
Requested Service Improvements



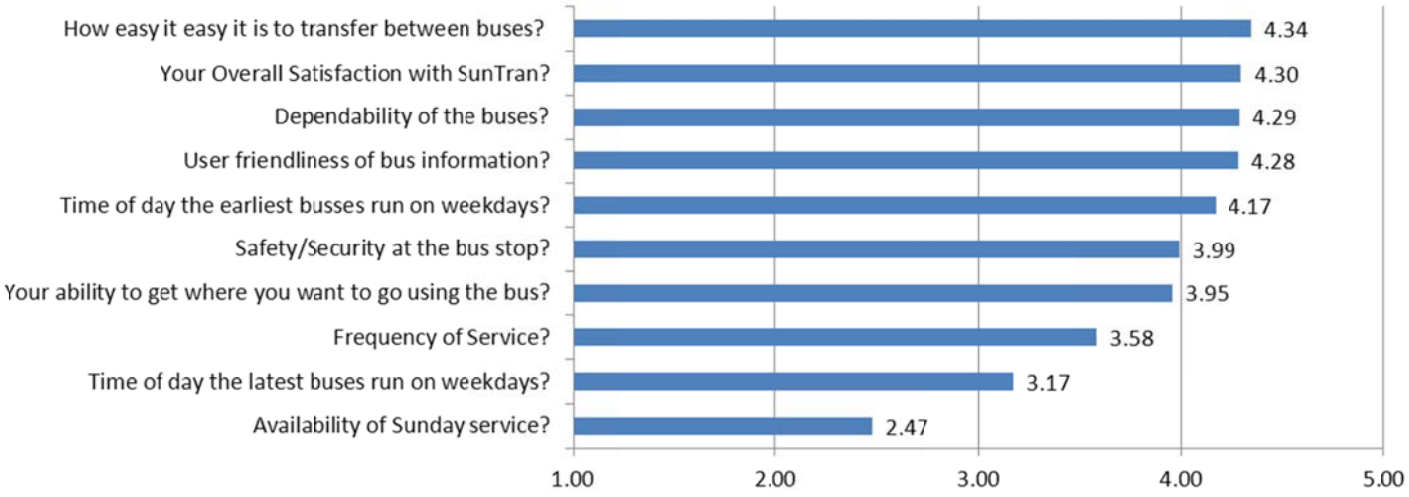
It should be noted that the sum of percentage totals exceeds 100 percent because survey respondents were allowed to select more than one improvement. Some of the most frequently referenced write-in improvement requests in the "Other" category include:

- More coverage area, including additional routes
- Additional bus stop locations
- Extended hours of service

Question 20 on the survey asked riders to indicate their satisfaction levels with various aspects of the bus service provided by SunTran. Respondents were given a list of 11 service-related criteria to rate as either "Very Unsatisfied," "Neutral" or "Very Satisfied." The respondents could select their response by circling a number from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Very Unsatisfied" and 5 being "Very Satisfied." The ratings of all the respondents were then averaged to obtain a final overall satisfaction score for each criterion.

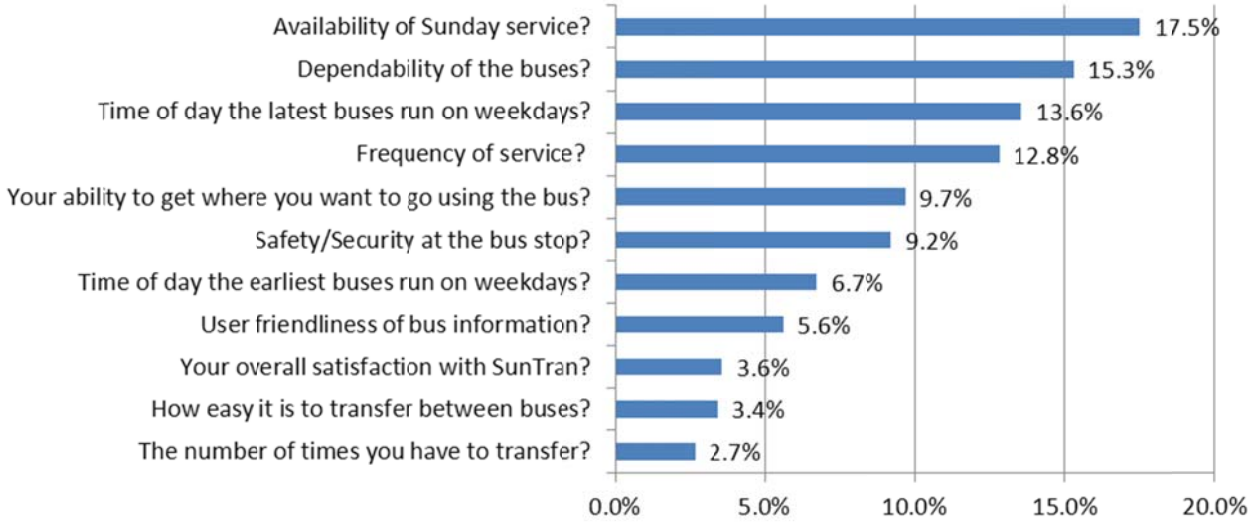
This analysis yielded the highest scores for "Ease of Transfer" and "Overall Satisfaction with SunTran." "User Friendliness of Information" and "Dependability of Buses" also scored high. The two lowest-scoring characteristics were "Availability of Sunday Service" and "Time the Latest Buses Run on Weekdays." Figure 3-13 shows all 11 categories and their respective average rating scores.

Figure 3-13
User Satisfaction with Bus Services



Question 21 asked respondents to then select the top three areas that they consider most important when riding the bus. The most frequent responses were "Availability of Sunday Service," "Time of day the latest buses run on weekdays," and "Dependability of the Buses". Figure 3-14 shows the summary of responses.

Figure 3-14
Most Important to Rider Satisfaction



On-Board Survey General Conclusions

Results from the on-board survey provide insight into various aspects of the SunTran fixed-route bus service. Salient conclusions drawn from the on-board survey analysis are summarized below.

- A significant portion of trips are work-related. Home-to-work and work-to-home are the most common trip pairs.
- Most survey respondents walk to and from the bus stop from their origins and destinations.
- Survey respondents were primarily regular users of the service. Over half of respondents indicated that they ride the bus at least five days per week. In addition, 22 percent responded that, without SunTran, they would not make their trip.
- Responses to demographic questions show that over half of the respondents make less than $20,000 a year.
- A significant percentage (27%) of regular users (those who ride the bus five days a week or more) pay the full adult fare instead of purchasing a monthly pass. The majority of respondents (56%) paying the full adult fare have an income of less than $20,000 a year.
- The most commonly-requested service improvements were Sunday service on routes, later service on existing routes, and more benches and shelters at bus stops.

- Of the 11 customer service characteristics listed, survey respondents indicated that Sunday service, bus reliability, and time of latest running buses are the most important characteristics when riding the bus.
- With an average response of 2.4, respondents indicated the least amount of satisfaction with Sunday service.
- Overall, customer satisfaction with SunTran service was very high, with an average score of 4.3. Respondents also indicated that they were highly satisfied with the ease of transfer between buses and the dependability of buses.

DISCUSSION GROUP WORKSHOPS

During the course of the TDP and TDSP major update, four discussion group workshops were scheduled to identify and assess general community perceptions of transit. This information will be used to assist in identifying issues and opportunities for SunTran. A discussion group is an excellent tool for revealing the attitudes of a particular group because of the open-ended nature of group discussions.

The four discussion group workshops conducted as part of this effort include:

- User Discussion Group, consisting of current transit riders to represent the "user" perspective.
- Operator Discussion Group, consisting of SunTran operators to obtain the staff perspective. Bus operators are an excellent source of information about customer needs and complaints; they also have useful ideas for potential route and/or service improvements.
- Non-User Discussion Group #1, consisting of members from the business, health, and education communities and local chambers of commerce to help represent the views of informed "non-users."
- Non-User Discussion Group #2, consisting of representatives from social service agencies and assisted living facility representatives to provide an opportunity to discuss paratransit needs and issues.

The first two of these discussion group workshops were held on February 9, 2012, and included the User and Operator groups. The User Discussion Group workshop, held in the morning, was attended by five people. The Operator Discussion Group workshop, held in the afternoon, was attended by 10 SunTran bus operators. The two Non-User discussion groups are planned to be held in April 2012.

User Discussion Group Workshop

At the user discussion group workshop, users were asked for direct input on SunTran services, both as a discussion group and in survey form. In addition, users were asked to participate in an activity to facilitate more direct input on different types of service improvements.

Attendees were presented with maps of the study area, including roads, current transit routes, major employment centers, and other area attractors, to review and discuss. They were given three colored dots to use to rank the desirability of specific service improvements, including later service on existing routes, Sunday service, and expanded service, since these concerns were reflected in the on-board survey data.

Users were also asked for their direct input on SunTran service in general. Most attendees agreed that lack of awareness of service availability is a major issue. Many were unaware of bus routes and timetables, particularly choice riders. Attendees agreed that, in general, the buses run on time, and this reliability is valued. Occasionally, traffic or wheelchair users can slow down buses, but drivers call ahead and ask that buses on other routes wait for transfers, which the users also appreciate.

Specific route improvements mentioned by participants include increasing the time between bus arrivals at the Walmart on the Yellow route. The arrivals are too close together to complete any shopping. Users also mentioned that the final bus leaving Walmart runs at 7:00 PM, which is too early. They suggested having it run until 7:30 PM or 8:00 PM.

Some concerns that attendees brought up were the need for an all-day pass, a more user-friendly timetable, and service expansion. Suggestions for expanded service include:

- Expand service to Sundays.
- Extend the hours of service until after 8:00 PM or 9:00 PM.
- Provide a trolley/circulator service on Silver Springs Blvd. to Walmart and Publix.
- Reduce or cut service on low ridership segments of the Yellow route; reroute the line.
- Provide a possible express route on Silver Springs Blvd.
- Provide service in the area north of Ocala, west of I-75, and to the Top of the World Community.

While users suggested they were open to fare increases, there was some concern that a $2 fare may be too high for some individuals and may discourage ridership. They were amenable to a new gas tax. Users also fully supported attempting to increase ridership to grow revenues.

User Discussion Group Workshop General Conclusions

The following highlights results from the user discussion group workshop.

- There is a need for Sunday service and later service on existing routes.
- Shopping carts cause a number of issues, including slowing down the bus at stops, taking up space, and creating a safety hazard on buses. Storage capacity on buses needs to be increased to accommodate these items, or policy needs to be enforced or changed to limit the size or number of these large carts.
- An all-day pass would be useful. Currently, the only types of passes offered are monthly passes (or discounted monthly passes for the youth/older adults/persons with disabilities) or a single-trip pass. An all-day pass would not only alleviate the need to carry change, but also would reduce the amount of time spent counting out the change prior to boarding the bus.
- Riders are not necessarily opposed to a fare increase; however, they did show concern that such an increase may limit accessibility to some current riders. They offered a gas tax as an alternative revenue-raising strategy.
- The existing bus schedule can be difficult to read; creating a more user-friendly schedule would make things easier.
- There are genuine safety concerns, such as pedestrians cutting in front of buses to cross streets and loose shopping carts blocking the bus area at the Walmart.

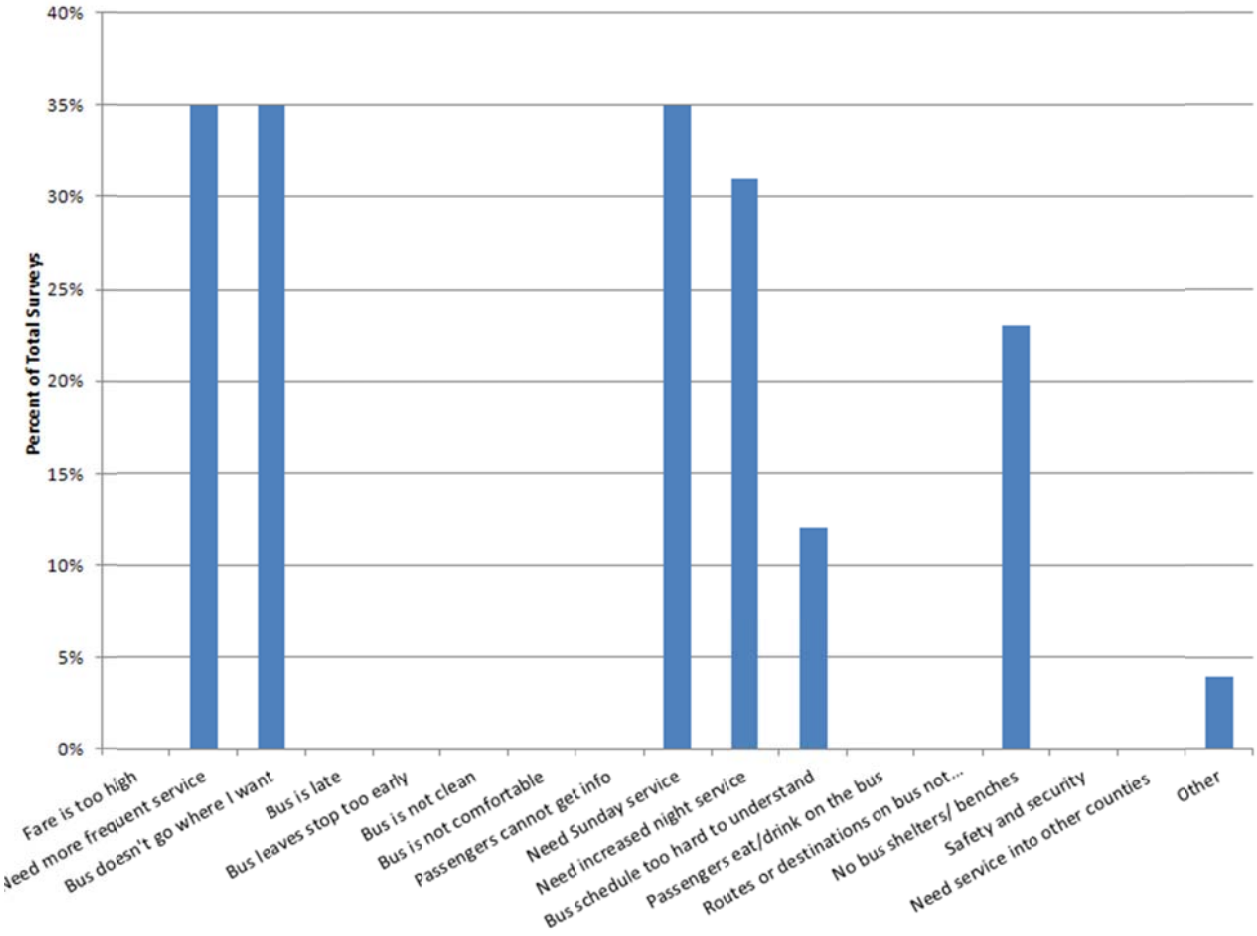
Operator Discussion Group Workshop

The bus operators of SunTran were asked to participate in a discussion group workshop. The workshop had multiple opportunities for operator input, including a survey, a discussion period, and an interactive project with a map of existing transit routes.

During the Operator discussion group, participants were shown a large map of the SunTran bus system and asked to identify areas where they perceived service weaknesses. Areas marked in red showed spots where there were safety or operational issues, and spots marked in blue showed areas needing more or new bus service. Operators were also asked to complete a survey, which asked about major customer complaints, whether those complaints were valid, where there are specific safety concerns, and an opportunity to provide any additional comments.

The majority (90%) of participants that responded to the survey cited a need for more frequent service, expanded coverage, and Sunday service. Another primary concern was the need for increased service at night. Approximately 70 percent of operators agreed that these customer concerns were valid. While only half of survey respondents provided an answer, of those that did, 50 percent cited a specific intersection on the Blue inbound route, which is an unprotected left turn onto 36th Avenue to access Trinity Villas. Other concerns include safety at bus stops with no lights. A copy of the operator survey is included in Appendix B. Figure 3-15 includes the results of the bus operator survey. Drivers were also encouraged to share their concerns with different issues that arise over the course of their daily routes. They suggested expanding coverage more to the west side of town and providing greater frequency to the Red line at Lake Weir High School since more local residents than students appear to use the route.

Figure 3-15
Bus Operator Survey Results



Safety issues arose during the discussion group as well. Drivers were particularly concerned with accessing Trinity Villas, which requires a left turn with no signal. They also noted on the map areas of additional safety and operational concerns:

- Walmart parking lot, Blue inbound—an unprotected left turn issue
- Post Office, Red Route inbound—safety issues, particularly during peak traffic times
- 17th and 25th, past 25th at the right corner
- Silver Springs Blvd., past 27th Ave.

Traffic lights that delay the bus or have a safety issue because of timing include:

- Silver Springs Blvd. & NE Watula Ave.
- 2nd & S. Pines (only for Purple Inbound)
- Just outside of Walmart
- 3rd & 25th

Additional operator concerns include:

- Need for limited Sunday service
- Riders missing the last bus—need later service
- Issues with staying on schedule are caused by drivers needing to
    - Help pack up big strollers
    - Help users read/understand the bus schedule
    - Assist riders with disabilities

Bus operators were also asked about capital improvements and needs. Routes 8 and 9 need new buses, as the existing vehicles are unable to keep up with downtown rush hour demand. Bus operators also mentioned that there are not enough shelters available for bus passengers. Additional recommended locations for shelters include:

- 14th & 25th
- Paddock Mall
- Walmart
- College of Central Florida
- Marion County Library
- Publix (40 East Plaza)

Bus operators were given an opportunity to suggest changes to existing routes. They made the following suggestions:

- Extend the Purple Route to serve along I-75.
- Extend the Orange Route past Paddock Mall along US 200.
- Extend the Blue Route south along SE 18th Ave. SE 31st St., and then north on SE Lake Weir Ave.

The operators also noted that many riders request or ask about an all-day pass. They also asked for on-board fare counters, as manually counting change for fares negatively impacts bus reliability.

Bus Operator Discussion Group Workshop General Conclusions

The following are the major summary results from both the bus operator survey as well as the discussion group workshop.

- Bus operators cited a need for later hours of service and Sunday service as major complaints they hear from bus riders.
- Large strollers, helping customers with the bus schedule, and helping passengers with disabilities slows down the routes. Large shopping carts and walkers also create safety hazards on the buses.
- Operators mentioned safety concerns about the Walmart stop on Silver Springs Blvd. They have difficulties entering the parking lot due to intersections within the parking lot that do not have any traffic control. Bus operators find that oncoming traffic does not yield, making it difficult for buses to route to the bus stop.
- Bus operators were particularly concerned with accessing Trinity Villas, which requires a left turn with no signal.
- Providing on-board fare boxes would alleviate the need for bus operators to have to delay at stops to count out change. Also, providing an all-day pass would be beneficial as well, as many customers ask for this, and it would also reduce the need to count out change.
- There is an additional need for shelters, and bus operators cited a number of locations that would benefit from added bus shelters, including Paddock Mall and College of Central Florida.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

In addition to the User Group surveys, seven stakeholder interviews were conducted to assess the attitudes of representatives from several key organizations throughout the community. The seven stakeholders were identified by TPO staff, Table 3-3 provides a list of the stakeholders that were interviewed.

Table 3-3
List of Stakeholders Interviewed

Name	Organization
Pete Tesh	Ocala Marion County Economic Development Corp.
Jayne Baillie	Chamber of Commerce
Donna Cart	Marion County Senior Services
Evelyn James	Marion County Health Department
Clark Yandle	North Magnolia Merchants Association
Richard Michael	Marion County Office of Economic and Small Business Development
Marc Mondell	City of Ocala Economic Development

A series of 16 detailed questions was developed to assess the stakeholder's views on the current and future role of transit in the community, transit finance, and governance, and other issues relevant to transit planning. A copy of the interview script that was used for each interview is presented in Appendix C. The remainder of this section summarizes the results of the stakeholder interviews; where possible, common themes and perceptions are identified.

Are you currently aware of Marion County's public transit system (SunTran) and its services?

All stakeholders responded "Yes" to this question. The level of awareness, especially concerning SunTran's services (e.g., hours/days of operation, types of services offered, routing, etc.), varied, but all stakeholders were aware that SunTran is a public transit system.

Do you use SunTran? Why? Why not?

No stakeholders use SunTran themselves. Many of the stakeholders indicated that they do not use SunTran because they have their own automobile. A few stakeholders did mention a desire to try SunTran but have not yet committed to doing so. Several stakeholders indicated that they either live outside of the service area or the service is not conducive to their schedule and/or needs.

Who do you believe uses the transit system (workers, students, unemployed, older adults, tourist/visitors)?

Stakeholders believe that SunTran is used by primarily low-income workers (not commuters) and students traveling between home and work/school. Some mentioned that, although not the predominate type of user, there is a market for "discretionary" riders who are using transit to save money or are doing so for environmental reasons.

What groups of travelers seem to experience the most difficult transportation conditions (persons with disabilities, low-income, older adults, commuters, etc.)? Why?

The stakeholders agreed that there are transportation difficulties for specific groups. While no one group was singled out, they all mentioned that older adults, people with disabilities, low-income populations, and commuters all face challenges when it comes to transportation options. A few stakeholders mentioned that the current public transit system works, but it is not as efficient, reliable, or convenient as it could be.

What type of transit service would you like to see more of in Marion County (more frequent fixed-route, express bus, trolley, demand-response, increased weekend/late evening service)?

Responses varied from not believing any additional service is necessary to wanting to see a much more regional transit system; the following is a summary of the types of

responses provided by the stakeholders:

- Expanded service to the outlying areas of Ocala and to the other municipalities of Marion County
- Increased service frequencies
- Increased demand response service
- Better connection to employment centers west of I-75
- Better connection between neighborhoods and major employment centers/other attractors to attract commuters
- Regional service to Gainesville and Leesburg

Is there a need for more service in core areas currently served by SunTran in Marion County? Is there a need for transit service in other areas in Marion County?

The stakeholder response to these questions was mixed. Some offered that the existing system provides effective service within the core areas and that there is insufficient demand to warrant expanding service to other areas of the county. Improved frequencies and service span were the main needs identified by those who felt that there is a need for more service within the core areas. For example, there is significant commercial development around Market Street on SR 200 west of I-75, yet there is not a good connecting route between there and many of the nearby neighborhoods. As for expanding service in other areas of Marion County, most agreed that this is an eventual need. Some stakeholders mentioned that, due to the current economic climate, the need for expanded service is lessened, but that eventually, as the area continues to grow, service will need to expand to reach more transit dependent riders. Several stakeholders noted that transit service should be focused within the core areas rather than expanded to outer areas, to promote an urban development pattern.

What do you think are the most significant issues facing transit users?

There was a wide agreement that the most significant issue facing transit users is convincing people to "choose" to use transit. The stakeholders did offer-up a few ideas that may encourage/increase transit ridership, including:

- Providing convenient park-and-ride locations
- Providing better connections between neighborhoods and major employment/activity centers (example: SR 200 west of I-75 (Market Street))
- Increasing service to west Ocala and other underserved areas
- Providing better infrastructure, including more/better sidewalks and stations (shelters to protect people from the elements)

What are reasonable passenger fares for transit service? (Please specify per trip or other)

Most stakeholders did not have an opinion on what a reasonable fare would be. Those who did suggested that the price should stay below $2.00 per trip and that $1.00 per

trip may be pushing the price ceiling for those who depend on transit (especially low-income users). The stakeholders recognized that fares need to be increased to cover operating expenses but expressed concern that too much of an increase may burden a transit-dependent rider.

Do you believe there is a congestion problem in Marion County?

The stakeholders all agreed that congestion was not a problem in Marion County. A few mentioned that congestion is relative and that if you compared the level of congestion in Ocala to other places, you would recognize that congestion is not an issue in Ocala, but that people who have lived in the area for a long time do think that traffic is getting worse and there is a congestion problem. Other stakeholders mentioned that during the peak (rush) hours there are a few specific locations that are congested, namely SR 200 around I-75 and 17th Street east of US 441.

Do you believe that public transportation can relieve congestion in Marion County?

The stakeholders do not believe that public transportation can relieve congestion in Marion County.

What are the major destinations within you immediate community?

The main destinations mentioned were the hospital and other medical facilities (doctor's offices), downtown, the mall, the SR 200 corridor, and the SR 40 corridor, which includes the community college.

What are the major destinations outside of your community where people are traveling to from your areas?

The destinations mentioned most frequently by the stakeholder group are:

- Gainesville—many people travel to Gainesville for medical services, with a smaller portion traveling for work or school
- Orlando—some people travel to Orlando for work, medical services, entertainment (theme parks), and the airport.
- Volusia County (beaches)

What additional steps do you feel should be taken to increase the use of public transit in Marion County?

The following highlights the stakeholder's ideas on how to increase the use of public transit in Marion County:

- Continue/increase education efforts—sell the service and highlight the benefits
- Increase advertising/awareness
- Develop incentive programs for employers and riders
- Increase public awareness of the impacts of their involvement in the planning process
- Implement park-and-ride locations

- Provide better connections between where people live (neighborhoods) and where people work (employment/activity centers)

Is more regional transportation needed to connect Marion County with surrounding areas (Lake, Sumter, Citrus, Levy, Alachua, Putnam, and Volusia counties)?

Some stakeholders felt that the focus should be on local needs, others recognized that there is a general need for regional connectivity, and others mentioned specific connections, such as between Ocala and Gainesville.

Are you willing to pay additional local taxes for an expanded transit system?

Most of the stakeholders said that they would be willing to pay additional local taxes for an expanded transit system. However, many mentioned that other options, such as advertising revenue, fare increases, and private partnerships, should be explored first. Nearly all who said they would be willing to pay additional local taxes for an expanded transit system mentioned that they would support more taxes only if they knew what exactly those taxes were going to fund – they want a clear and well-thought out plan.

What types of local funding sources should be used to increase transit service in the future (i.e., private partnerships, advertising revenues, fare increases, ad valorem tax, sales tax, gas tax)?

Most stakeholders said they were open to any publicly-supported funding sources, but that private partnerships and advertising revenues should be explored before increasing or adding taxes.

At the end of the interview the stakeholders were asked if they had any additional thoughts or comments. Some of those comments are summarized below:

- Ocala and Marion County need to incorporate strategic planning; the focus should not be just on ridership, but also how transit could be leveraged to attract employers.
- Service should focus on low-income, high unemployment areas.
- Service is needed to Marion Technical Institute due to high number of students from lower-income households.
- Providing Wi-Fi service on buses would help attract riders, especially students and commuters.
- The addition of bicycle racks on the buses appears to have attracted more users.
- Need to think about how transit can bring about new jobs and enhance the economic development of the community, bringing about a return on investment.

Section 4

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

This section begins with an overview of public transportation services and facilities provided by SunTran and Marion County Senior Services (MCSS). The remainder of the section provides a vehicle inventory and information on additional transit services in Marion County.

OVERVIEW OF MARION COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Existing public transportation services in Marion County include both fixed-route and paratransit services. SunTran, the fixed-route transit system, is governed by the Ocala/Marion TPO. Marion Transit Services (MTS), the paratransit, or demand-response, service in Marion County, is managed by MCSS. A historical summary of SunTran and MTS services is provided below.

SunTran

The Ocala/Marion TPO is the administrative agency for SunTran and has contracted with McDonald Transit to perform day-to-day operations and management for the system. SunTran has been operating since 1998 and currently operates a scheduled, fixed-route system six days per week. The service is marketed to riders of all age groups. The regular full cash fare is $1.50, with discounts offered for youth, students, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. In addition, a monthly pass is offered at a rate of $45 per month; reduced rate passes are available for youth and older adult passengers as well. Passengers must be able to board, disembark, and carry their own packages on and off the vehicles.

SunTran provides fixed-schedule service on six routes in Marion County, mostly centered in Ocala, with one route operating from Ocala to the Silver Springs Shores area southeast of Ocala. Most routes operate between 5:00 AM and 8:00 PM on weekdays and Saturdays. Headways run between 60 and 120 minutes. The Downtown Transfer Station serves as the central stop for five of the six routes, and another transfer station near the Ocala Health Department serves as the transfer location that connects a route running from the Downtown Transfer Station and another route running to Silver Springs Shores.

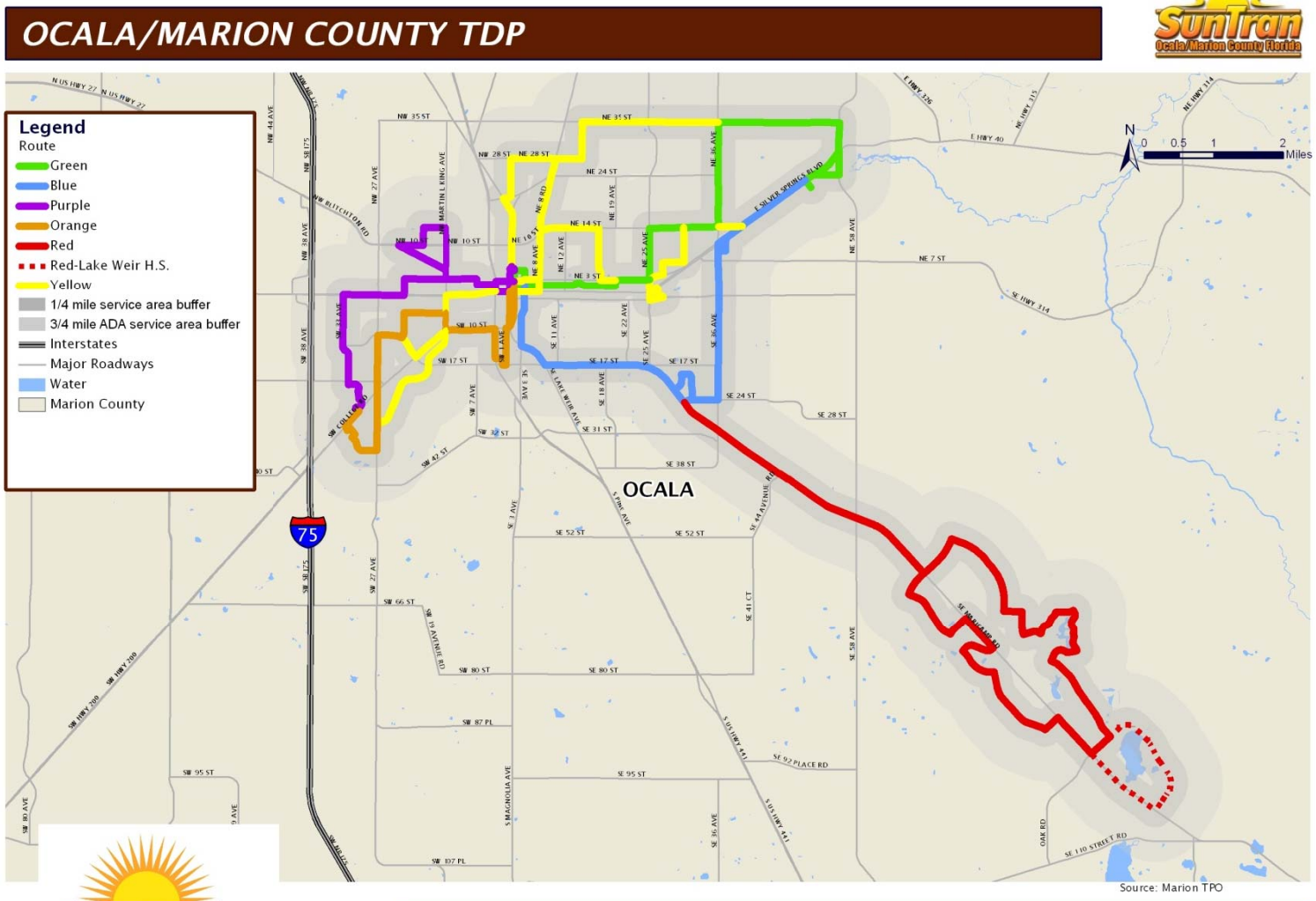
The Downtown Transfer Station also serves as an intermodal station, connecting the bus routes with Greyhound's long distance bus service and Amtrak's shuttle service to nearby train stations. SunTran currently has one maintenance facility, located in northeast Ocala near the intersection of Northeast 36th Avenue and Northeast 21st Street within the Ocala Municipal Complex area.

The bus routes operated by SunTran are illustrated in Map 4-1. Also included on the map are the ¼-mile and ¾-mile buffer service areas. The ¼-mile buffer represents the maximum distance that riders are typically willing to walk to get on the bus; the ¾-mile buffer indicates the service area where complementary ADA paratransit service must be provided. SunTran contracts with MTS to provide the complementary ADA paratransit services.

Marion Transit Services

MTS has been designated as the Marion County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for all non-emergency medical transportation and for those needing wheelchairs or other assistance. MTS began serving the transportation needs of older adults in Marion County in 1976, and service has since expanded to include the transportation disadvantaged (TD) and Medicaid clients. Since 1990, MTS has been designated by the MPO as the CTC. As the CTC, MTS is responsible for ensuring coordination of local transportation services to the maximum extent feasible.

MTS provides door-to-door paratransit services to meet numerous transportation needs for medical, life-sustaining, educational, work, business, and recreational activities for Marion County's TD citizens as well as members of other program recipients in Marion County. MTS's fleet of 40 buses serves an area of more than 1,600 square miles. Trip priorities are established by the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB), a subcommittee of the MPO.



Map 4-1: SunTran Existing Transit Service

MTS services must be reserved at least 72 hours prior to a trip, and services run between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM Monday through Friday, with certain exceptions made for patients with eligible medical conditions. Fares range from $1 to $5 for a one-way trip, depending on location and eligibility, and fare waivers are available for qualified individuals. SunTran also contracts with MTS to provide complementary ADA service to fixed-route riders traveling from and to locations within ¾-mile of existing fixed bus routes.

TRANSIT VEHICLES

SunTran Vehicle Inventory

To operate fixed-route services, SunTran maintains a fleet of nine buses. All buses are fully accessible for patrons in wheelchairs. SunTran also has two vans, which are used to provide ADA service. An inventory of vehicles for fixed-route and ADA complementary paratransit services is provided in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1
SunTran Vehicle Inventory (2010)

SunTran#	Year	Make	Length	Capacity
SUN08	2002	Gillig	30 ft	28
SUN09	2002	Gillig	30 ft	28
SUN10	2007	Gillig	35 ft	32
SUN11	2007	Gillig	35 ft	32
SUN12	2007	Gillig	35 ft	32
SUN13	2007	Gillig	35 ft	32
SUN14	2007	Gillig	35 ft	32
SUN15	2007	Gillig	35 ft	32
SUN16	2007	Gillig	35 ft	32
ST-02	2001	Dodge	19.5 ft[1]	N/A
SUN27	2008	Dodge	16.87 ft[2]	7

Source: SunTran

[1] Truck length retrieved from Auto123.com.

[2] Truck length retrieved from vehix.com.

Marion Transit Service Vehicle Inventory

As previously mentioned, to operate transportation disadvantaged services, MTS maintains a fleet of 40 vans and minibuses. Most of the vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts to be accessible to patrons in wheelchairs. An inventory of vehicles for MTS is provided in Table 4-2. Vehicle capacity includes the number of seats and the number of spaces for wheelchairs on each vehicle.

Table 4-2
Marion Transit Service Vehicle Inventory (2009)

MTS #	Year	Make	Length	Lift- or Ramp Equipped	Capacity (Seats/ Wheelchair Spaces)
1	2003	Chevy	22 ft	No	12
2	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
3	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
4	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
5	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
6	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
7	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
8	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
9	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
10	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
11	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
12	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	16
13	2003	Chevy	22 ft	Yes	17
14	2005	Ford	22 ft	Yes	16
15	2005	Ford	22 ft	Yes	16
16	2005	Ford	22 ft	Yes	16
17	2006	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
18	2006	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
19	2006	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
20	2006	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
21	2006	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
22	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
23	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
24	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16

Table 4-2 (continued)

MTS #	Year	Make	Model	Lift- or Ramp-Equipped	Capacity (Seats/ Wheelchair Spaces)
25	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
26	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
27	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
28	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
29	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
30	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
31	2007	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
32	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
33	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	12
34	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
35	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
36	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
37	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
38	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
39	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16
40	2009	Chevy	23 ft	Yes	16

Source: Marion County Senior Services

INVENTORY AND CLASSIFICATION OF EXISTING TRANSIT PROVIDERS

Ocala/Marion TPO contracts with McDonald Transit Associates for all of its fixed-route services, and Greyhound bus lines also provide services in Ocala. These services are available seven days per week at the main transfer station in Ocala. During the weekdays, Greyhound buses connect Ocala to Orlando, Gainesville, Tampa, Lake City, and a number of other areas within and outside of Florida. Amtrak provides bus service to and from Ocala for rail connections in Jacksonville and Lakeland. Amtrak buses travel to and from Ocala once each day.

A list of other transportation providers in the community that are not under contract with the Ocala/Marion TPO is provided in Table 4-3. The first provider listed, Marion County Emergency Medical Services Alliance, Inc., is under contract with Marion County to provide emergency medical and ambulance services within the county.

Table 4-3
Other Transportation Providers

Name	Type	Ownership	Service Area	Service Period	Service Frequency	Facility Address	Vehicles	Seating Capacity	Reg. Fare
Marion County Emergency Medical Services Alliance, Inc.	Emergency ambulance services	Non-profit government agency	Marion County	24 hrs	N/A	2631 SE 3rd St. Ocala, FL 34471 (352) 291-8030	54 ambulances	N/A	N/A
Pronto Limousine Services	Livery services	Private	Marion County	24 hrs	Demand-response	Ocala, FL 34474 (352) 427-2942	8 varied vehicles	1-24 passengers, dependent on vehicle	Varies
Leopard Transport Inc.	Livery services	Private	Marion County	24 hrs	N/A	PO Box 923 Ocala, FL 34478 (352) 368-2089	35	varies	Varies
Lake Limousine	Livery services Airport shuttle	Private	Lake County and Marion County	24 hrs	2 hrs Mon–Fri; 4 hrs Sun–Sat; demand-response	321 Southridge Industrial Dr. Tavares, FL 32778 (352) 622-2292	18	(2)-47 passenger buses (16)-10 passenger vans	Varies
Stagecoach Limousine	Livery services Airport transportation	Private	Ocala, Orlando, airports	7 AM – 10 PM	N/A	8377 SW 56th Terr. Ocala, FL 34476 (352) 854-6642	Varies	Varies	Varies
Greyhound Bus Lines	Fixed-route	Intercity bus	All U.S.	365 days	N/A	Not in area	13	55	Varies; avg. $13–$30 for direct routes
Amtrak	Fixed-route Shuttle	Intercity bus/train	All U.S.	365 days	N/A	Not in area	2	55	$16 to trains

Section 5
TREND ANALYSIS

This section presents the results of three trend analyses conducted to examine the performance of Marion County's fixed-route and paratransit bus services. Data were compiled based on the information provided by the Ocala/Marion TPO and the Annual Performance Reports (APR) for five reporting years from 2006 through 2010. The APR are annual reports compiled by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD).

These analyses include statistical tables and graphs that summarize selected performance indicators and effectiveness and efficiency measures for the selected time period. Performance measures report absolute data in the selected categories. These tend to be key indicators of overall system performance. Effectiveness measures refine the data further and indicate the extent to which various service-related goals are being achieved. Efficiency measures involve reviewing the level of resources required to achieve a given level of output. It is possible to have very efficient service that is not effective or to have highly effective service that is inefficient.

To better understand the data used in this type of performance evaluation, it is important to have an understanding of the terms used in transit performance measurement. In many instances, these definitions differ from initial perceptions and, therefore, may be contingent upon subjective interpretation. Despite these definitions and continuous efforts to refine them, some discrepancies remain as to how terms are defined and how information is collected by transportation agencies. Consequently, some caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings, especially for those variables that are more likely to be subject to variation in definition.

FIXED-ROUTE TREND ANALYSIS

A trend analysis was conducted to examine the performance of Marion County's fixed-route bus service. Data were compiled based on the information obtained from the Ocala/Marion TPO for the five years from 2006 through 2010. This analysis includes statistical tables and graphs that present selected performance indicators, and effectiveness and efficiency measures for the selected time period. Table 5-1 lists the measures used in this performance trend analysis. Highlights of the trend analysis are presented below.

Table 5-1
SunTran Performance Review Measures (2006–2010)

General Performance	Effectiveness	Efficiency
Service Area Population	Vehicle Miles per Capita	Operating Exp. per Capita
Passenger Trips	Passenger Trips per	Operating Exp. per Capita (in 2006$)
Vehicle Miles	Passenger Trips per	Operating Exp. per Passenger Trip
Revenue Miles	Passenger Trips per	Operating Exp. per Pass. Trip (in 2006$)
Total Operating Expense	Weekday Span of Service	Operating Exp. per Revenue Mile
Total Operating Expense		Operating Exp. per Rev. Mile (in 2006$)
Passenger Fare Revenue		Farebox Recovery
		Revenue Miles per Vehicle Mile
		Average Fare

Performance Indicators

The performance indicators are used to present the data that are received directly from Ocala/Marion TPO reports and relate to overall system performance.

As no service area population data were available for the years 2006 through 2009, they were determined by using a percentage factor applied to the countywide population for those years. This factor was obtained by imposing a ¼-mile buffer around the service area and collecting the total service area population data from the 2010 Census. By determining the percent population within the ¼-mile buffer for the year 2010 and then applying that percentage to the county wide population of previous years, a service area population was estimated.

The following is a summary of the trends that are observed among the performance indicators provided in Table 5-2 and Figures 5-1 through 5-6.

- The service area population increased from approximately 54,6700 to 57,700 persons, a total increase of 5.5 percent during the 5-year period from 2006 to 2010, or an average increase of 1.1 percent per year.
- While service area population growth was moderate, the total number of passenger trips for SunTran increased significantly, from approximately 327,600 in 2006 to 415,000 in 2010, an increase of 26.6 percent.

- Total vehicle miles of service increased from approximately 394,000 in 2006 to 464,000 in 2010, an increase of 17.8 percent.
- Revenue miles of service increased by nearly 19 percent, from approximately 372,000 in 2006 to 442,000 in 2010.
- Total operating expense increased from $1.4 million in 2006 to $1.9 million in 2010, an increase of 37.6 percent. However, the real dollar increase (adjusted for inflation) in total operating expense was 28.8 percent.
- Passenger fare revenue increased from approximately $190,000 in 2006 to $329,000 in 2010, an increase of 73.1 percent.

Table 5-2
SunTran Performance Indicators
Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Indicator	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Change
Service Area Population	54,673	56,253	56,974	57,619	57,692	5.5%
Passenger Trips	327,623	371,100	373,976	366,692	414,928	26.6%
Vehicle Miles	394,085	415,173	461,270	459,639	464,200	17.8%
Revenue Miles	372,250	390,271	437,721	437,710	441,999	18.7%
Total Operating Expense	$1,409,191	$1,666,326	$1,828,502	$1,831,130	$1,938,952	37.6%
Total Operating Expense (2006$)	$1,409,191	$1,638,998	$1,769,019	$1,742,508	$1,814,852	28.8%
Passenger Fare Revenue	$190,293	$217,493	$289,414	$286,404	$329,307	73.1%

Sources: Ocala/Marion TPO Annual Reports, U.S. Census

Figure 5-1
Service Area Population (000)

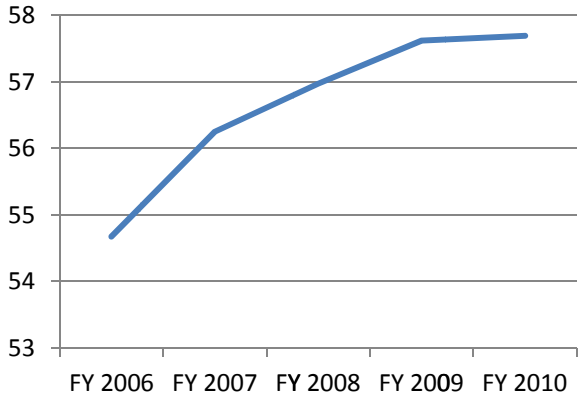


Figure 5-2
Passenger Trips (000)

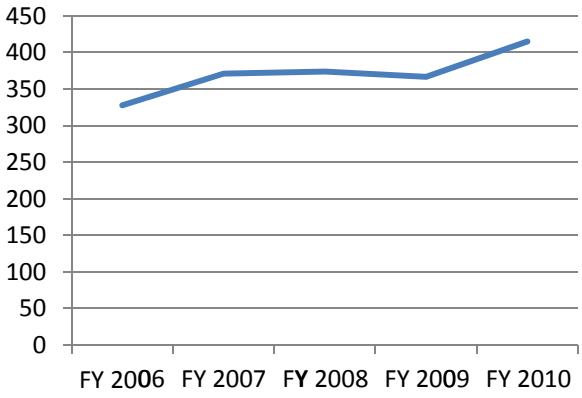


Figure 5-3
Vehicle Miles (000)

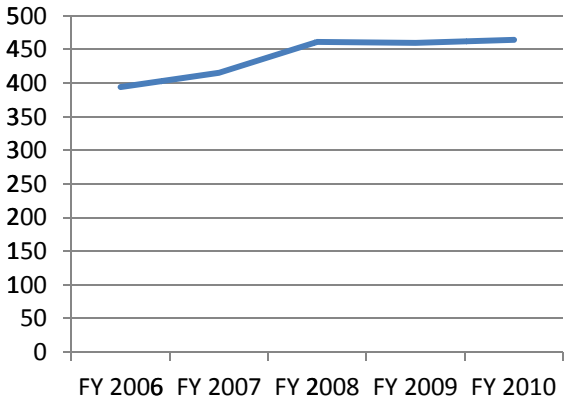


Figure 5-4
Revenue Miles (000)

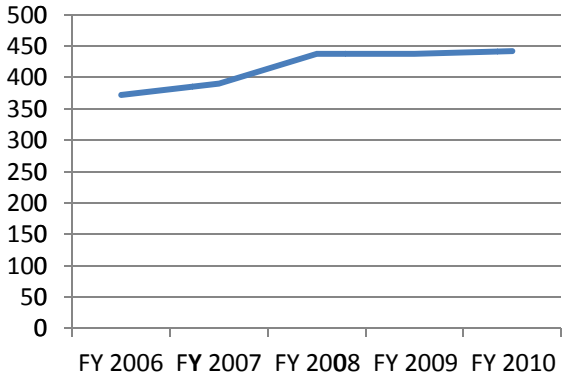


Figure 5-5
Operating Expense ($000)

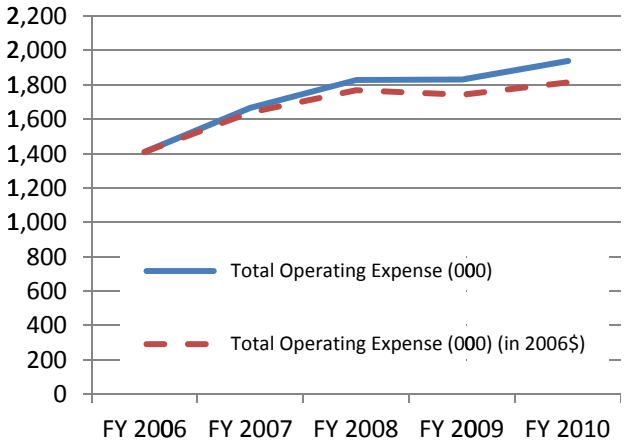
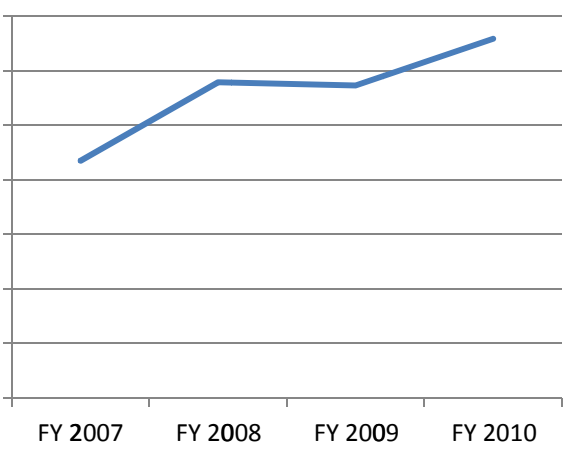


Figure 5-6
Passenger Fare Revenue ($000)



Effectiveness Measures

Effectiveness measures indicate the extent to which service-related goals are being met. Selected effectiveness measures are presented in Table 5-3 and Figures 5-7 through 5-11.

- Vehicle miles per capita increased by 11.6 percent from 2006 through 2010.
- Passenger trips per capita increased from 5.99 trips per capita in 2006 to 7.19 trips per capita in 2010, an overall increase of 20 percent.
- Passenger trips per revenue mile increased from 0.88 trips in 2006 to 0.94 trips in 2010, an increase of 6.7 percent.
- Passenger trips per revenue hour increased from 13.70 trips in 2006 to 14.85 trips in 2010, an increase of 8.4 percent.
- Service availability increased, expanding from 13 hours in 2006 and remaining at 15 hours since 2007, an overall increase of 15.4 percent.

Table 5-3
SunTran Effectiveness Measures
Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Measure	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Change
Service Supply						
Vehicle Miles per Service Area Capita	7.21	7.38	8.10	7.98	8.05	11.6%
Service Consumption						
Passenger Trips per Capita	5.99	6.60	6.56	6.36	7.19	20.0%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	0.88	0.95	0.85	0.84	0.94	6.7%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour	13.70	14.71	13.51	13.25	14.85	8.4%
Availability						
Weekday Span of Service (hours)	13	15	15	15	15	15.4%

Sources: Ocala/Marion TPO Annual Reports

Figure 5-7
Vehicle Miles per Capita

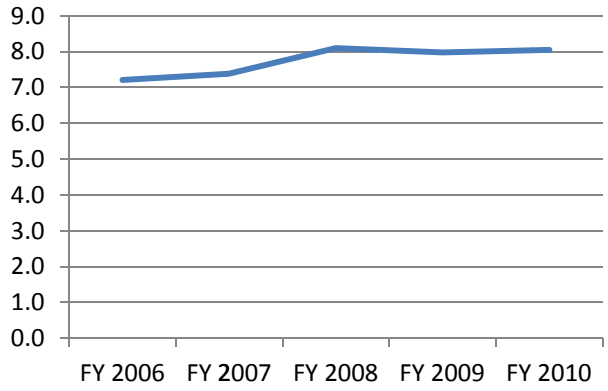


Figure 5-8
Passenger Trips per Capita

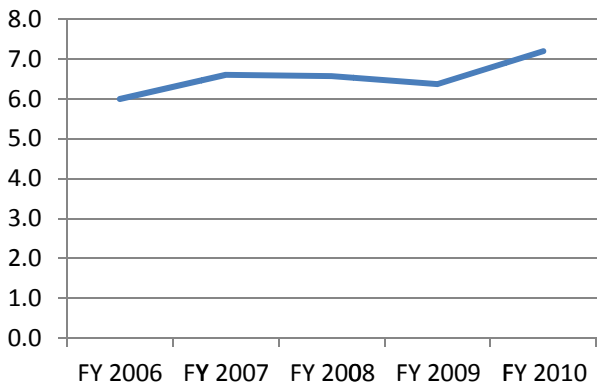


Figure 5-9
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile

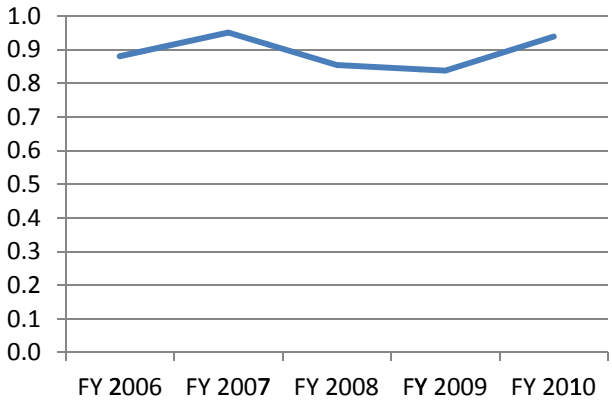


Figure 5-10
Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour

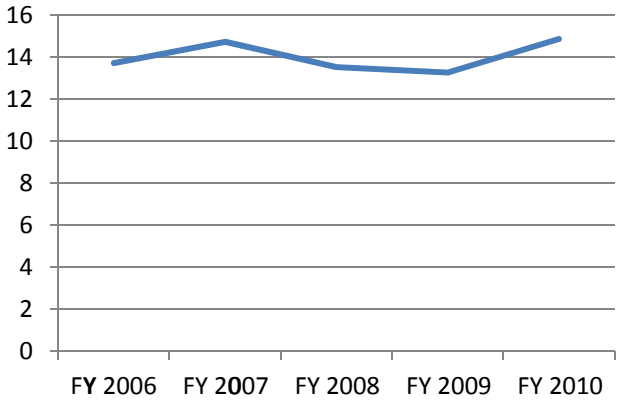
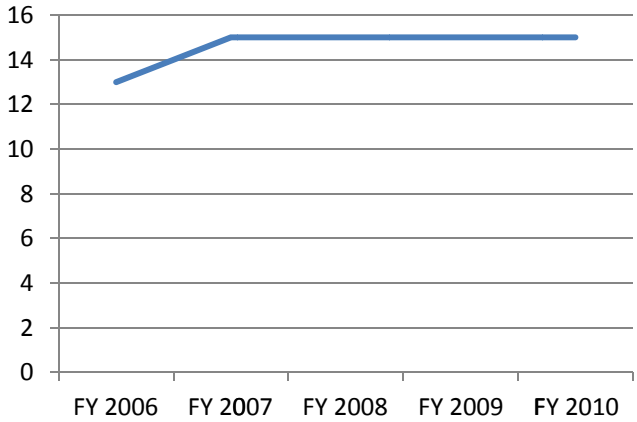


Figure 5-11
Weekday Span of Service



Efficiency Measures

Efficiency measures are intended to measure the level of resources necessary to achieve a given level of output. Efficiency measures are presented in Table 5-4 and Figures 5-12 through 5-18.

- Operating expense per capita increased by 30.4 percent from $25.77 in 2006 to $33.61 in 2010. The real dollar increase, less inflation, is 22 percent.

- Operating expense per passenger trip increased from $4.30 in 2006 to $4.67 in 2010, an increase of 8.6 percent in nominal dollars, and 1.7 percent in real dollars.
- Operating expense per revenue mile increased from $3.79 in 2006 to $4.39 in 2010, an increase of 15.9 percent in nominal dollars and 8.5 percent in real dollars.
- Farebox recovery increased from 13.5 percent in 2006 to 17 percent in 2010, an increase of 25.8 percent over the 5-year period.
- The average fare increased from $0.58 in 2006 to $0.79 in 2010, an increase of 35.4 percent.

Table 5-4
SunTran Efficiency Measures
Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Measure	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Change
Cost Efficiency						
Operating Expense per Capita	$25.77	$29.62	$32.09	$31.78	$33.61	30.4%
Operating Expense per Capita (2006$)	$25.77	$29.14	$31.05	$30.24	$31.46	22.0%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	$4.30	$4.49	$4.89	$4.99	$4.67	8.6%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip (2006$)	$4.30	$4.42	$4.73	$4.75	$4.37	1.7%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile	$3.79	$4.27	$4.18	$4.18	$4.39	15.9%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile (2006$)	$3.79	$4.20	$4.04	$3.98	$4.11	8.5%
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	$58.93	$66.06	$66.07	$66.17	$69.38	17.7%
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour (2006$)	$58.93	$54.98	$63.92	$62.97	$64.94	10.2%
Operating Ratios						
Farebox Recovery Ratio	13.50%	13.05%	15.83%	15.64%	16.98%	25.8%
Vehicle Utilization						
Revenue Miles per Vehicle Mile	0.94	0.94	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.8%
Fare						
Average Fare	$0.58	$0.59	$0.77	$0.78	$0.79	35.4%

Sources: Ocala/Marion TPO Annual Reports

Figure 5-12
Operating Expense per Capita

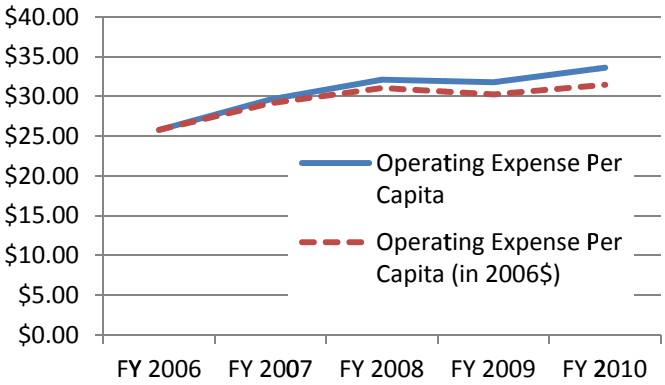


Figure 5-13
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip

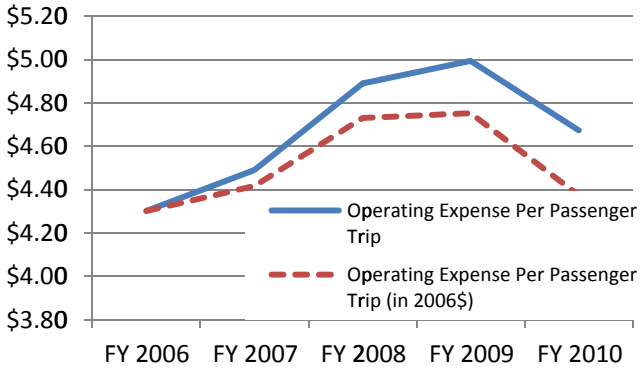


Figure 5-14
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile

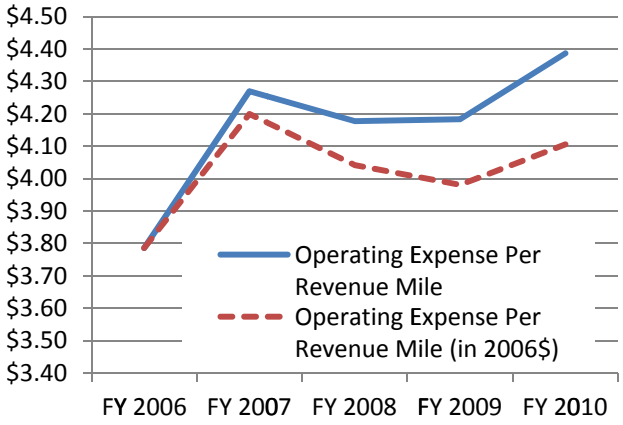


Figure 5-15
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour

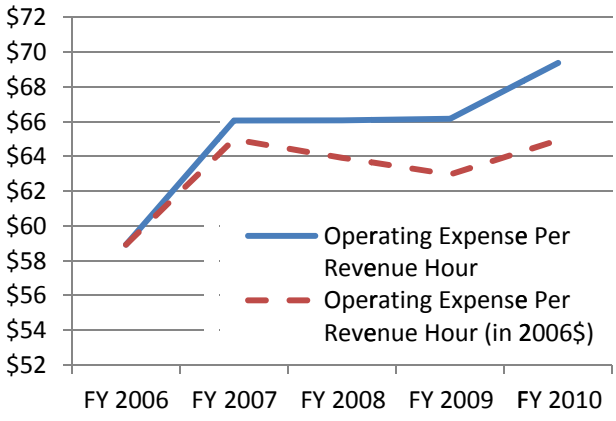


Figure 5-16
Farebox Recovery Ratio

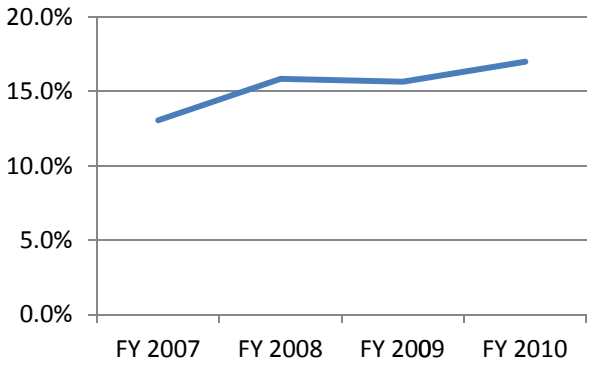


Figure 5-17
Revenue Miles per Vehicle Mile

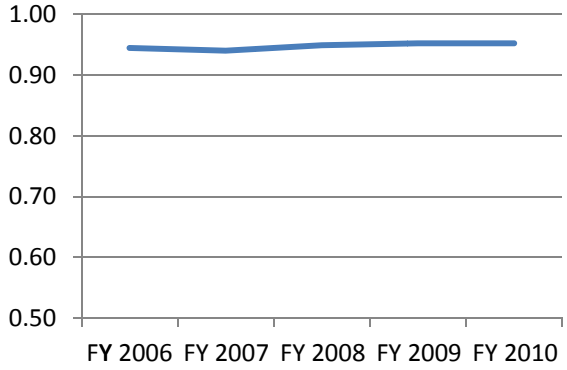
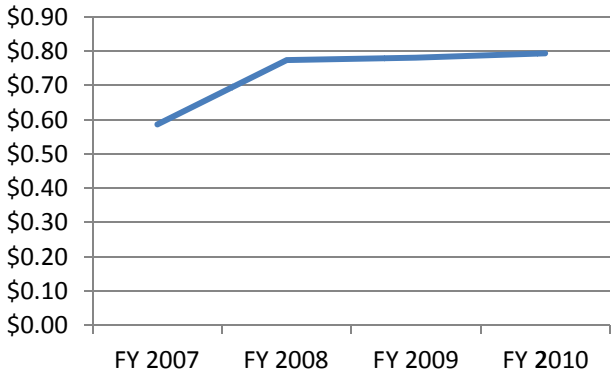


Figure 5-18
Average Fare



Summary Results of Trend Analysis

The trend analysis is only one aspect of transit performance evaluation. However, when combined with the peer review analysis, the results provide a starting point for understanding the trend in a transit system's performance over time and compared to other systems with similar characteristics. Some of the key trends observed are summarized below.

Service Consumption – Passenger trips per capita, passenger trips per revenue mile, and passenger trips per revenue hour have shown positive trends with significant gains over the

relatively short five-year period. This shows that there are more people accessing the system in comparison to the amount of service being supplied.

Service Supply – Vehicle miles per capita (service supply) has also increased through 2010, indicating that the transit services provided are meeting the growing demand of the population,

Cost Efficiency – Cost efficiency over the five-year period was measured by analyzing both the nominal and real dollar changes in costs. To analyze the costs in real dollars, all costs were deflated to 2006 dollars using annual deflation rates of 1.64 percent, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for 2010. Operating expense per capita, operating expense per passenger trip, and operating expense per revenue mile all increased between 2006 and 2010, showing a negative trend overall in cost efficiency.

Table 5-5 summarizes the trend analysis showing the positive and negative trends identified in that analysis.

Farebox Recovery Monitoring

FDOT requires TDPs to include a one- to two-page summary report on the farebox recovery ratio and strategies implemented and planned to improve it. A one-page farebox recovery ratio analysis is presented in Appendix F of this report to fulfill this requirement.

Table 5-5
Summary of SunTran Fixed-Route Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Measure/Indicator	% Change (2006-2010)
General Performance	
Service Area Population	5.5%
Passenger Trips	26.6%
Vehicle Miles	17.8%
Revenue Miles	18.7%
Total Operating Expense	37.6%
Total Operating Expense (in 2006$)	28.8%
Passenger Fare Revenue	73.1%
Service Supply	
Vehicle Miles per Capita	11.6%
Service Consumption	
Passenger Trips per Capita	20.0%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	6.7%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour	8.4%
Availability	
Weekday Span of Service	15.4%
Cost Efficiency	
Operating Expense per Capita	30.4%
Operating Expense per Capita (in 2006$)	22.0%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	8.6%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip (in 2006$)	1.7%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile	15.9%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile (in 2006$)	8.5%
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	17.7%
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour (in 2006$)	10.2%
Vehicle Utilization	
Farebox Recovery Ratio	25.8%
Operating Ratios	
Revenue Miles per Vehicle Mile	0.8%
Fare	
Average Fare	35.4%

SUNTRAN COMPLEMENTARY ADA SERVICE TREND ANALYSIS

In addition to fixed route trends, a trend analysis was conducted to examine the performance of SunTran's complementary ADA paratransit service. Data were compiled based on the information received from the Ocala/Marion TPO for the five-year period from 2006 through 2010. This analysis includes statistical tables and graphs that present selected performance indicators, and effectiveness and efficiency measures for the selected time period. Table 5-6 lists the measures used in this performance trend analysis. Highlights of the trend analysis are presented below.

Table 5-6
SunTran ADA Paratransit Services
Performance Review Measures (2006–2010)

General Performance	Effectiveness	Efficiency
Service Area Population	Vehicle Miles per Capita	Operating Exp. per Capita
Passenger Trips	Passenger Trips per Capita	Operating Exp. per Capita (in 2006$)
Vehicle Miles	Passenger Trips per Revenue	Operating Exp. per Passenger Trip
Revenue Miles	Passenger Trips per Revenue	Operating Exp. per Pass. Trip (in 2006$)
Total Operating Expense	Weekday Span of Service	Operating Exp. per Revenue Mile
Total Operating Expense		Operating Exp. per Rev. Mile (in 2006$)
		Revenue Miles per Vehicle Mile

Performance Indicators

The performance indicators are used to present the data that was received directly from the Ocala/Marion TPO. Selected performance indicators are presented in Table 5-7 and Figures 5-19 through 5-22.

Similar to the fixed-route performance review, service area population was determined by using a factor applied to the countywide population for the years 2006 through 2009. This factor was obtained by performing a ¾-mile buffer around the service area, representative of ADA requirements, and determining a percent of the total 2010 census data. This factor was then applied to each prior-year county wide population figure. This step was necessary because specific service area population data were unavailable for years from 2006 through 2009.

- Consistent with fixed-route service, the SunTran ADA service area population increased a total of 5.5 percent (from approximately 78,500 to nearly 83,000 during the 5-year period from 2006 to 2010), or an average increase of 1.1 percent per year.
- The passenger trips for SunTran's ADA service increased from approximately 14,300 in 2006 to nearly 15,600 in 2010, an increase of 9.1 percent.
- Revenue miles of service increased by 3 percent from nearly 77,000 in 2006 to 79,000 in 2010.
- Total operating expense increased from nearly $234,000 in 2006 to $324,000 in 2010, an increase of 38.7 percent. However, the real dollar increase (adjusted for inflation) in total operating expense is 29.9 percent.

Table 5-7
SunTran ADA Paratransit Services General Performance Indicators
Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Indicator	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Change
Service Area Population	78,453	80,719	81,753	82,680	82,784	5.5%
Passenger Trips	14,279	17,657	17,683	15,398	15,573	9.1%
Revenue Miles	76,769	89,375	84,665	73,791	79,060	3.0%
Total Operating Expense	$233,756	$309,177	$316,533	$297,896	$324,332	38.7%
Total Operating Expense (2006$)	$233,756	$304,106	$306,236	$283,479	$303,574	29.9%

Sources: Ocala/Marion TPO Annual Reports

Figure 5-19
Service Area Population (000)

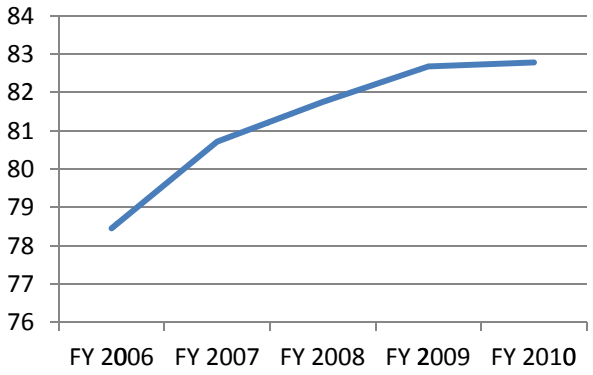


Figure 5-20
Passenger Trips (000)

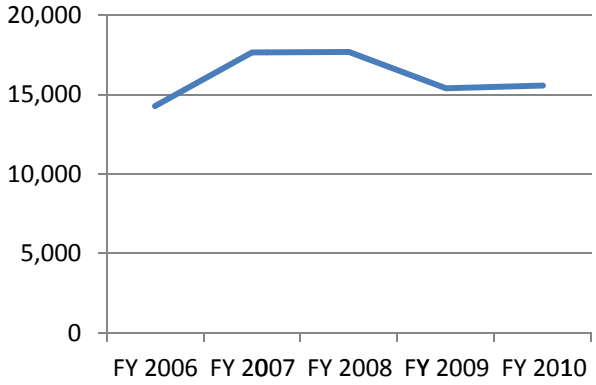


Figure 5-21
Revenue Miles (000)

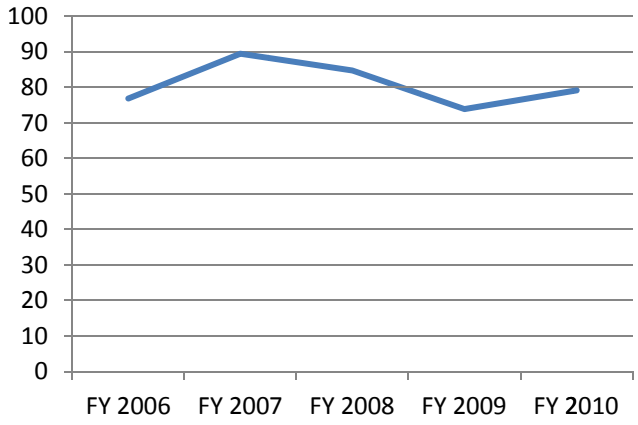
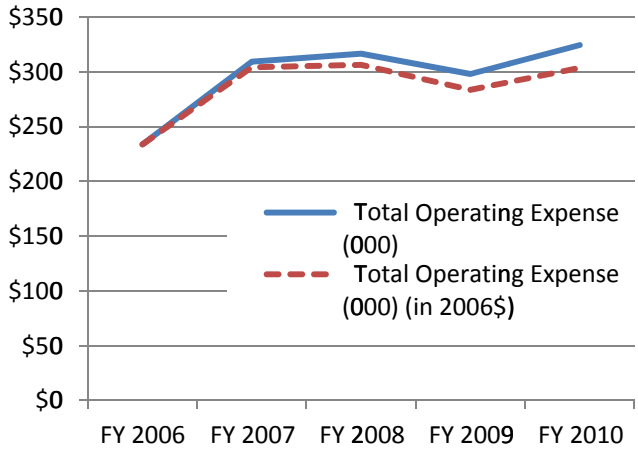


Figure 5-22
Operating Expenses (000)



Effectiveness Measures

Effectiveness measures indicate the extent to which service-related goals are being met. Selected effectiveness measures are presented in Table 5-8 and Figures 5-23 through 5-25.

- Passenger trips per capita experienced a net gain in passenger trips per capita of 3.4 percent, peaking in 2007 and 2008.

- Passenger trips per revenue mile remained stable. There was an increase in 2007, 2008 and 2009, and then a slight decline in 2010. The net change was 5.9 percent during the 5-year period.
- Service availability started at 13 hours per day in 2006 and increased to 15 hours per day in 2007, where it has remained. Over the 5-year period from 2006 to 2010, the weekday span of service increased by 15.4 percent.

Table 5-8
SunTran ADA Paratransit Services Effectiveness Measures
Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Measure	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Change
Service Consumption						
Passenger Trips per Capita	0.182	0.219	0.216	0.186	0.188	3.4%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	0.186	0.198	0.209	0.209	0.197	5.9%
Availability						
Weekday Span of Service (hours)	13	15	15	15	15	15.4%

Sources: Ocala/Marion TPO Annual Reports

Figure 5-23
Passenger Trips per Capita

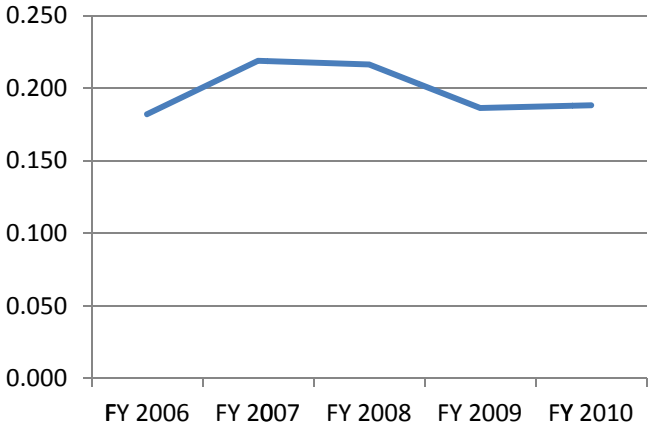


Figure 5-24
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile

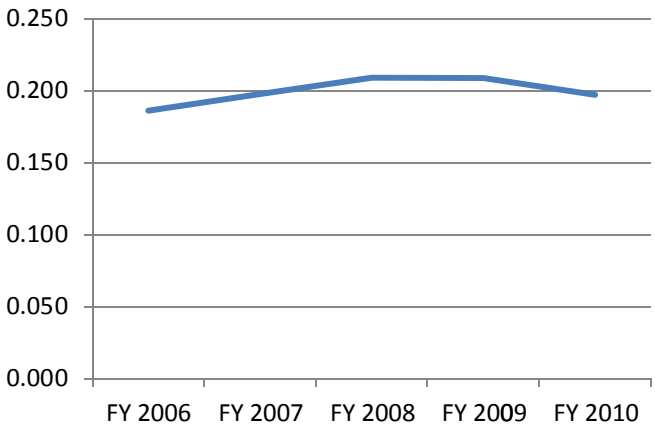
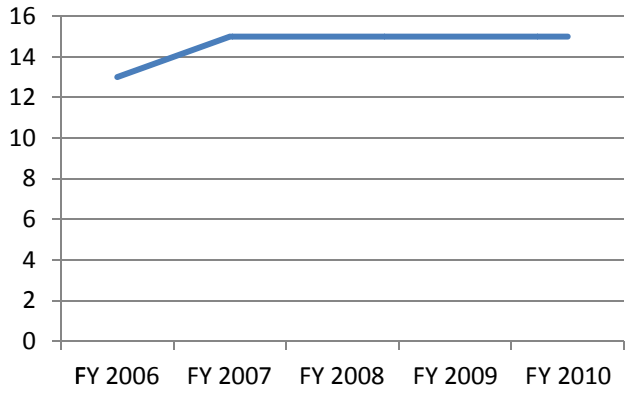


Figure 5-25
Weekday Span of Service



Efficiency Measures

Efficiency measures are intended to measure the level of resources necessary to achieve a given level of output. Efficiency measures are presented in Table 5-9 and Figures 5-26 through 5-28.

- Operating expense per capita increased by 31.5 percent, from $2.98 in 2006 to $3.92 in 2010. The real dollar increase, however, is only 23.1 percent.
- Operating expense per passenger trip increased from $16.37 in 2006 to $20.83 in 2010, an increase of 27.2 percent in nominal dollars, and 19.1 percent in real dollars.
- Operating expense per revenue mile increased from $3.04 in 2006 to $4.10 in 2010, an increase of 34.7 percent in nominal dollars and 26.1 percent in real dollars.

Table 5-9
SunTran ADA Paratransit Services Efficiency Measures
Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Performance Measure	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Change
Cost Efficiency						
Operating Expense per Capita	$2.98	$3.83	$3.87	$3.60	$3.92	31.5%
Operating Expense per Capita (2006$)	$2.98	$3.77	$3.75	$3.43	$3.67	23.1%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	$16.37	$17.51	$17.90	$19.35	$20.83	27.2%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip (2006$)	$16.37	$17.22	$17.32	$18.41	$19.49	19.1%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile	$3.04	$3.46	$3.74	$4.04	$4.10	34.7%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile (2006$)	$3.04	$3.40	$3.62	$3.84	$3.84	26.1%

Sources: Ocala/Marion TPO Annual Reports

Figure 5-26
Operating Expense per Capita

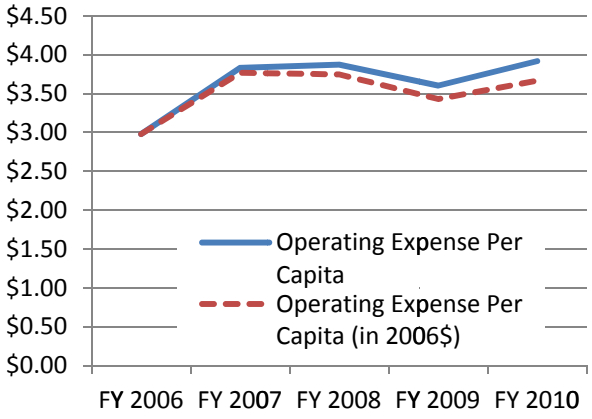


Figure 5-27
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip

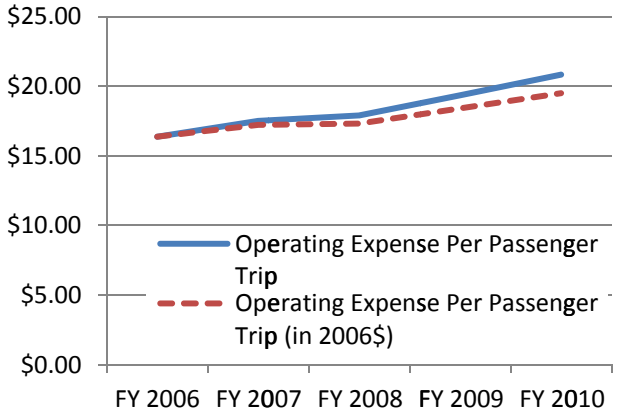
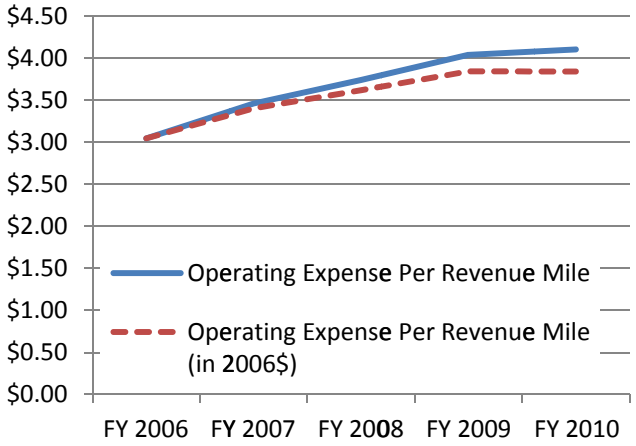


Figure 5-28
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile



Summary Results of SunTran's ADA Paratransit Services Trend Analysis

This section identifies strengths and weaknesses of SunTran's complementary ADA paratransit services. Strengths and weaknesses of the system will be referred to periodically as other aspects of performance are considered in subsequent work activities and when recommendations are prepared for the TDP and TDSP.

Table 5-10 provides a summary of the trend analysis for SunTran's ADA paratransit services, indicating each performance measure along with the percent change over the period from 2006 to 2010.

Table 5-10
Summary of SunTran ADA Paratransit Services
Trend Analysis (2006–2010)

Measure/Indicator	% Change (2006–2010)
General Performance	
Service Supply	
Service Area Population	5.5%
Passenger Trips	9.1%
Revenue Miles	3.0%
Total Operating Expense	38.7%
Total Operating Expense (in 2006$)	29.9%
Service Consumption	
Passenger Trips per Capita	3.4%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	5.9%
Availability	
Weekday Span of Service	15.4%
Cost Efficiency	
Operating Expense per Capita	31.5%
Operating Expense per Capita (2006$)	23.1%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	27.2%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip (2006$)	19.1%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile	34.7%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile (2006$)	26.1%

CTC TREND ANALYSIS

The Annual Operating Report (AOR) is a compilation of information that is submitted to the FCTD by each individual county's CTC. The substantial amount of data available regarding paratransit services from the AOR provide an opportunity to develop an assortment of measures with which to review the system performance of the transportation services provided by the CTC. The Ocala/Marion TPO is responsible for evaluating the CTC under the Planning Grant from the FCTD. Performance, effectiveness, and efficiency measures are selected that are known to provide a good representation of overall CTC system performance. Table 5-11 lists the measures used in this analysis.

Table 5-11
Marion County CTC Performance Review Measures

Performance Measures	Effectiveness Measures	Efficiency Measures
Passenger Trips	Vehicle Miles per TD Capita	Operating Exp. per Passenger Trip
Vehicle Miles	Passenger Trips per TD Capita	Operating Exp. per Pass. Trip (2006$)
Revenue Miles	Passenger Trips per Vehicle Mile	Operating Exp. per Vehicle Mile
Operating Expense	Average Age of Fleet (in years)	Operating Exp. per Vehicle Mile (2006$)
Operating Expense (2006$)	Accidents per 100,000 Vehicle Mi.	Operating Exp. per Driver Hour
Operating Revenue	Vehicle Mi. betw. Road Calls/Failures	Operating Exp. per Driver Hour (2006$)
Operating Revenue 2006$)		Local Government Revenue Ratio
Total Fleet		

A trend analysis from FY 2006 through FY 2010 was conducted to examine the performance of the Ocala/Marion County CTC over time. The tables and figures provided throughout the trend analysis present selected performance, effectiveness, and efficiency measures that are available from the APRs. Results of the CTC trend analysis are provided below.

Performance Indicators

The CTC performance measures are used to present the data that are reported directly in the APRs and reflect raw numbers of overall system performance. Six performance measures are shown in Table 5-12 and illustrated in Figures 5-29 through 5-34.

- Total annual passenger trips have fluctuated over the 5-year period but increased overall, from approximately 182,000 in 2006 to nearly 198,000 in 2010, an increase of almost 9 percent. While there was a slight decrease in FY 2007, ridership increased overall.
- Vehicle miles of service increased from 1.7 million in 2006 to 1.8 million in 2010, an increase of 8.6 percent. This increase occurred despite a sharp decrease in vehicle miles from 2007 to 2008 (9.6%).

- Revenue miles increased by 18.6 percent, from 1.4 million in 2006 to nearly 1.7 million in 2010. This includes a dramatic increase from 2007 to 2008, which accounts for 9.4 percent of the overall increase.
- Operating expenses increased fairly steadily, from $3.6 million in 2006 to $4.1 million in 2010, an overall increase of 10.8 percent; operating revenue increased $3.6 million to $3.7 million, an increase of 4 percent.
- The total fleet size fluctuated, but ended up growing from 76 vehicles to 86 vehicles over the course of the 5-year period, an increase of 13.2 percent.

Table 5-12
Marion County CTC Trend Analysis
General Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	% Change
Passenger Trips	181,919	179,300	182,010	196,613	197,964	8.8%
Vehicle Miles	1,676,092	1,860,893	1,681,524	1,782,006	1,819,872	8.6%
Revenue Miles	1,418,124	1,472,577	1,611,505	1,642,589	1,681,926	18.6%
Operating Expense	$3,674,806	$4,051,439	$3,899,817	$4,807,039	$4,070,355	10.8%
Operating Revenue	$3,571,852	$4,056,615	$4,168,177	$4,863,785	$3,715,668	4.0%
Total Fleet	76	78	88	94	86	13.2%
Operating Expense (2006$)	3,674,806	3,984,995	3,772,952	4,574,390	3,809,837	3.7%
Operating Revenue (2006$)	3,571,852	3,990,087	4,032,582	4,628,390	3,477,851	-2.6%

Source: Annual Performance Reports from 2006 to 2010, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Figure 5-29
Passenger Trips

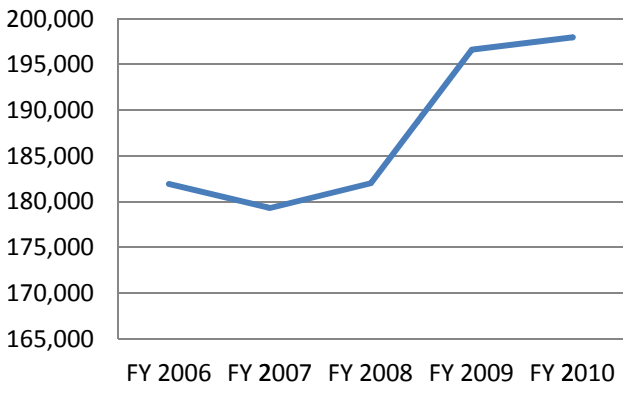


Figure 5-30
Vehicle Miles

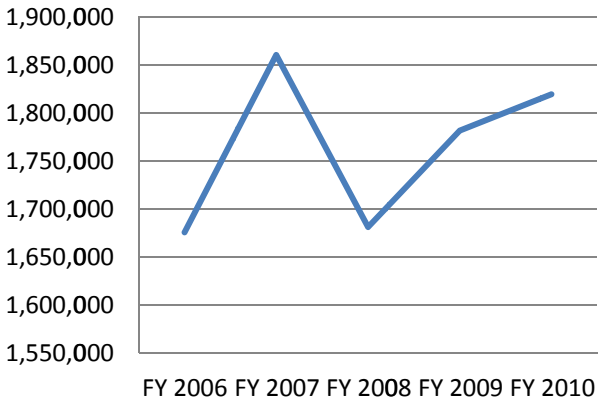


Figure 5-31
Revenue Miles

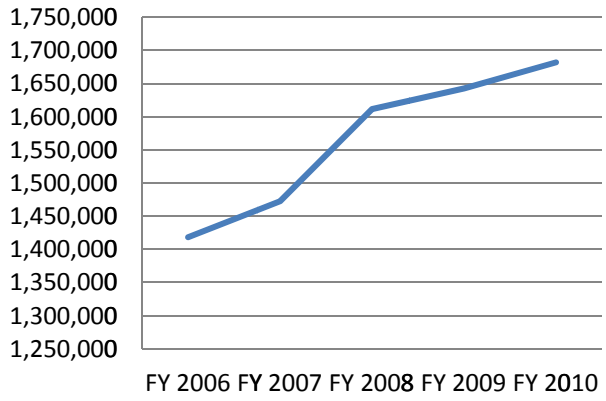


Figure 5-32
Operating Expense

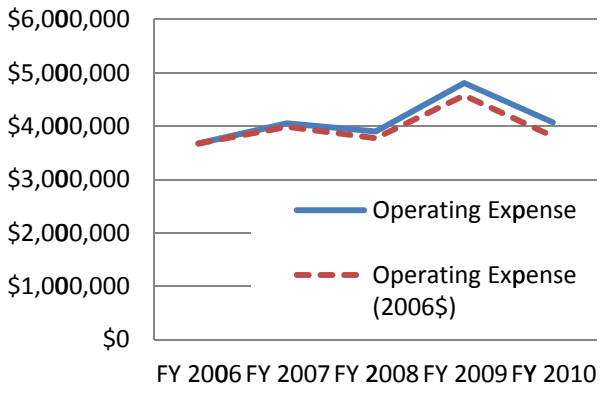


Figure 5-33
Operating Revenue

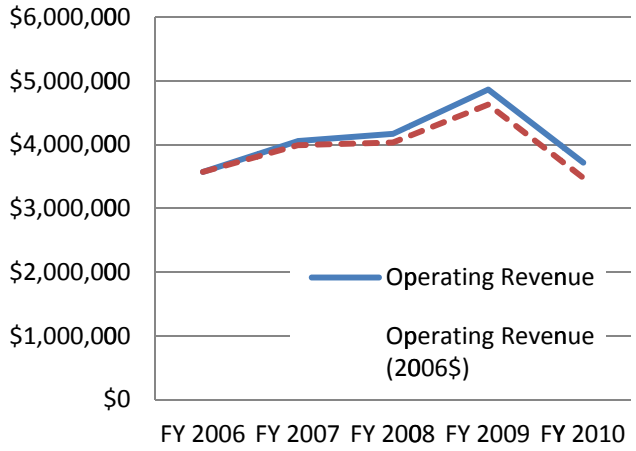
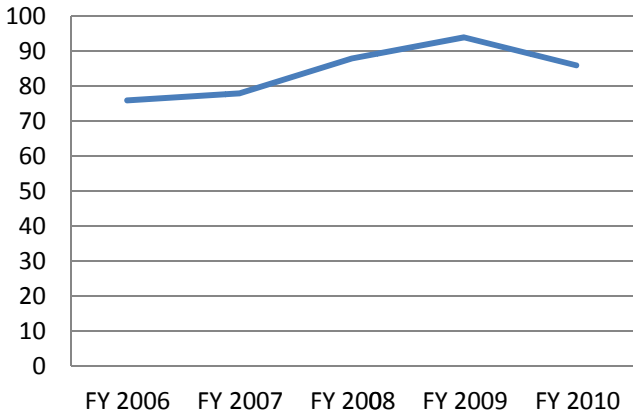


Figure 5-34
Total Fleet



Effectiveness Measures

Effectiveness measures indicate the extent to which service-related goals are being met. For example, passenger trips per TD capita is a measure of the effectiveness of a CTC system in meeting the transportation needs of the TD community. Selected effectiveness measures are presented in Table 5-13 to illustrate service supply, service availability, service consumption, and quality of service between 2006 and 2010. Figures 5-35 through 5-40 illustrate the trend in the effectiveness measures.

- Vehicle miles per TD capita decreased from 12.4 in 2006 to 12.1 in 2010, a decrease of 2.4 percent.

- Over the 5-year period, vehicle miles per passenger trip decreased by 0.2 percent, from 9.21 miles in 2006 to 9.19 miles in 2010.
- Passenger trips per TD capita decreased from 1.35 in 2006 to 1.32 in 2010, a decrease of 2.2 percent.
- Passenger trips per vehicle mile remained consistent around 0.11 across the 5-year time period.
- CTC accidents per 100,000 vehicle miles fluctuated over the 5-year period, ranging from 0.12 in 2006 to 0.16 in 2010, an overall increase of 33.3 percent during the 5-year period.
- Vehicle miles between roadcalls increased significantly from nearly 105,000 in 2006 to nearly 140,000 in 2010, an increase of 33.6 percent.

Table 5-13
Marion County CTC Trend Analysis
Effectiveness Measures

Effectiveness Measure	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	% Change
Vehicle Miles per TD Capita	12.4	13.4	11.8	12.2	12.1	-2.4%
Vehicle Miles per Passenger Trip	9.21	10.38	9.24	9.06	9.19	-0.2%
Passenger Trips per TD Capita	1.35	1.29	1.28	1.34	1.32	-2.2%
Passenger Trips per Vehicle Mile	0.11	0.10	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.2%
Accidents per 100,000 Vehicle Miles	0.12	0.05	0.24	0.34	0.16	33.3%
Vehicle Miles between Roadcalls	104,806	132,921	105,095	148,501	139,990	33.6%

Source: Annual Performance Reports from 2006 to 2010, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Figure 5-35
Vehicle Miles per TD Capita

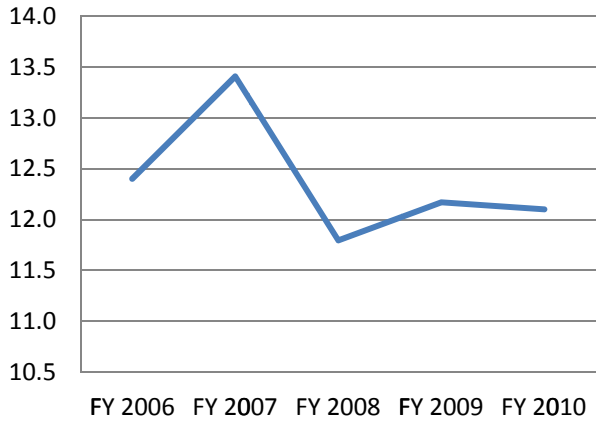


Figure 5-36
Vehicle Miles per Passenger Trip

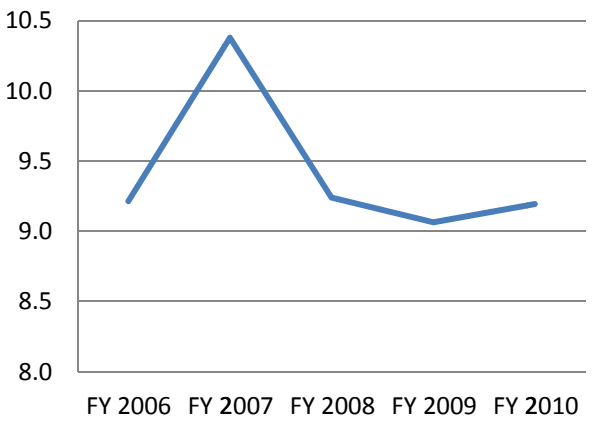


Figure 5-37
Passenger Trips per TD Capita

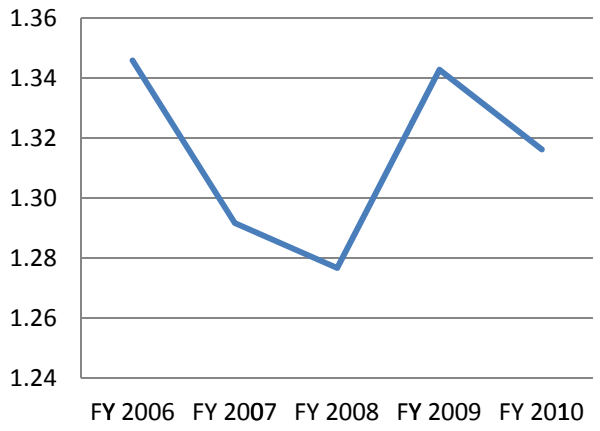


Figure 5-38
Passenger Trips per Vehicle Mile

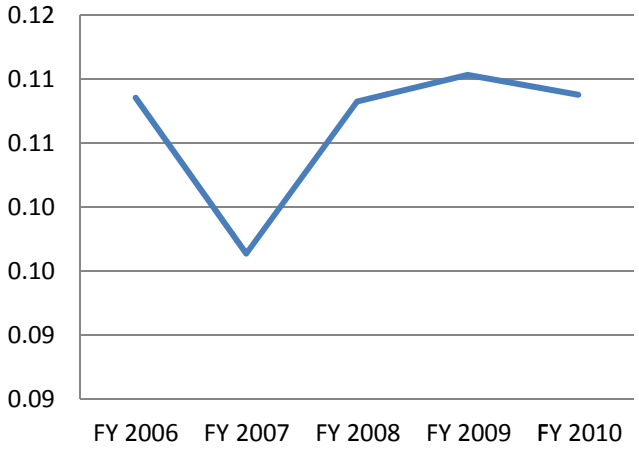


Figure 5-39
Accidents per 100,000 Vehicle Miles

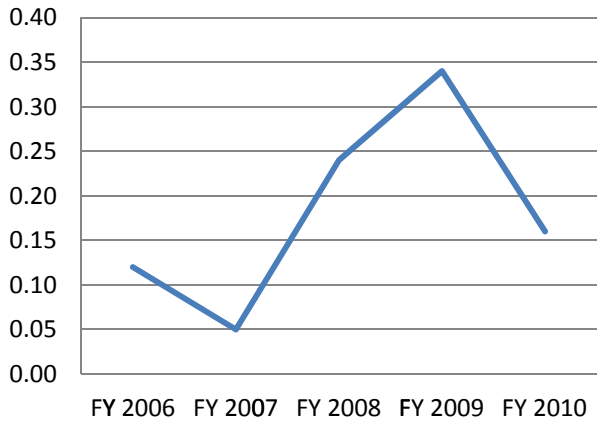
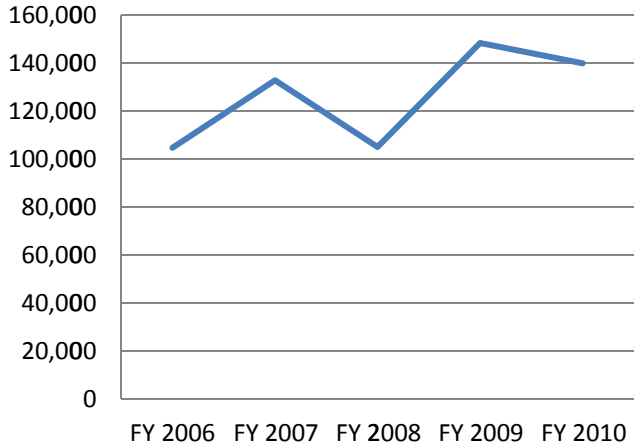


Figure 5-40
Vehicle Miles Between Roadcalls



Efficiency Measures

Efficiency measures are designed to measure the level of resources necessary to achieve a given level of output. For example, operating expense per passenger trip measures the cost of achieving a given level of ridership on the system. Selected efficiency measures are presented in Table 5-14 to illustrate performance of the system between 2006 and 2010. Figures 5-41 through 5-43 illustrate the trend in the efficiency measures.

- Operating expense per passenger trip increased by 1.8 percent, from $20.20 per trip in 2006 to $20.56 in 2010.
- The operating expense per vehicle mile increased over the 5-year period, from $2.19 in 2006 to $2.24 in 2010, an increase of 2.0 percent.
- Operating expense per driver hour decreased by 4.3 percent, from $27.82 in 2006 to $26.62 in 2010.
-

Table 5-14
Marion County CTC Trend Analysis
Efficiency Measures

Efficiency Measure	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	% Change
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	$20.20	$22.60	$21.43	$24.45	$20.56	1.8%
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile	$2.19	$2.18	$2.32	$2.70	$2.24	2.0%
Operating Expense per Driver Hour	$27.82	$28.86	$28.84	$33.74	$26.62	-4.3%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip (2010$)	$20.20	$22.23	$20.73	$23.27	$19.25	-4.7%
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile (2010$)	$2.19	$2.14	$2.24	$2.57	$2.09	-4.5%
Operating Expense per Driver Hour (2010$)	$27.82	$28.38	$27.91	$32.11	$24.92	-10.4%

Source: Annual Performance Reports from 2006 to 2010, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Figure 5-41
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip

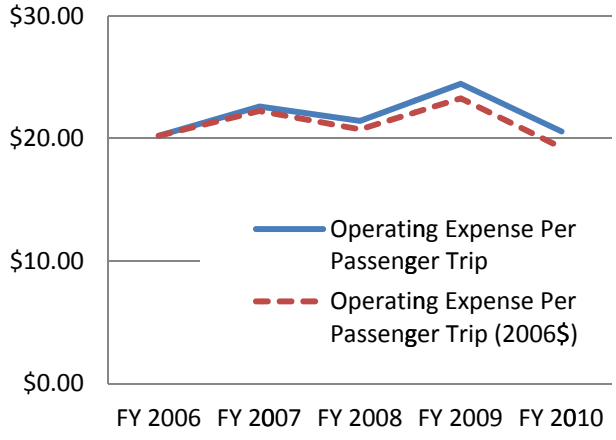


Figure 5-42
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile

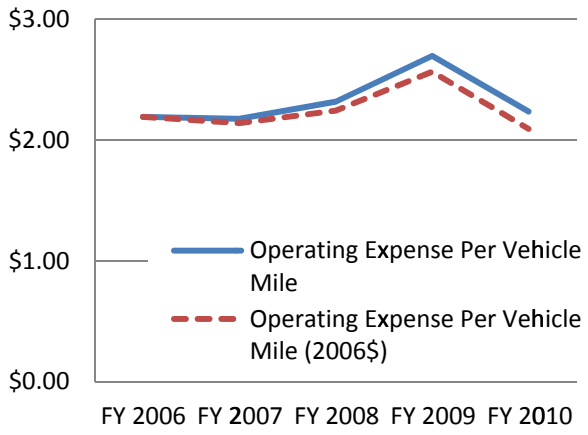
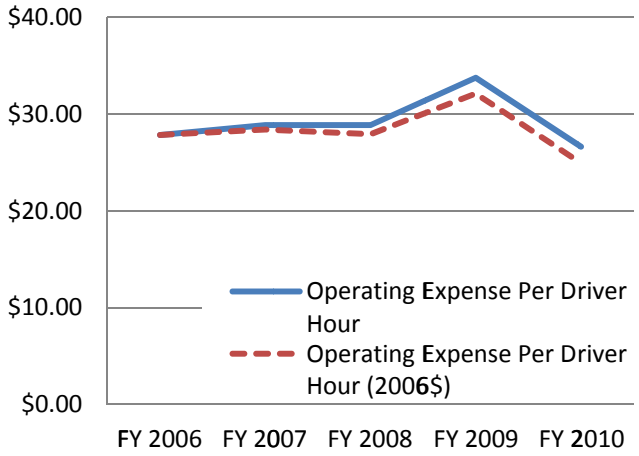


Figure 5-43
Operating Expense per Driver Hour



Summary Results of Trend Analysis

The trend analysis is only one aspect of transit performance evaluation. When combined with the peer review analysis, the results provide a starting point for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of a transit system's performance over time and as compared to other systems with similar characteristics. This section identifies strengths and weaknesses of Marion Transit Services based on the trend analysis of the CTC services. Strengths and weaknesses of the system will be referred to periodically as other aspects of performance are considered in subsequent work activities and when recommendations are prepared for the TDP and TDSP.

Table 5-15 provides a summary of the trend analysis for the transportation disadvantaged services provided by MTS, indicating each performance measure, along with the percent change over the period from 2006 to 2010.

Table 5-15
Marion County CTC Trend Analysis Summary

Performance Indicators/Measures	% Change (2006–2010)
Performance Measures	
Passenger Trips	8.8%
Vehicle Miles	8.6%
Revenue Miles	18.6%
Operating Expense	10.8%
Operating Expense (2006$)	3.7%
Operating Revenue	4.0%
Operating Revenue (2006$)	-2.6%
Total Fleet	13.2%
Effectiveness Measures	
Vehicle Miles per TD Capita	-2.4%
Vehicle Miles per Passenger Trip	-0.2%
Passenger Trips per TD Capita	-2.2%
Passenger Trips per Vehicle Mile	0.2%
Accidents per 100,000 Vehicle Miles	33.3%
Vehicle Miles between Roadcalls	33.6%
Efficiency Measures	
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	1.8%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip (2006$)	-4.7%
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile	2.0%
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile (2006$)	-4.5%
Operating Expense per Driver Hour	-4.3%
Operating Expense per Driver Hour (2006$)	-10.4%

Section 6
PEER REVIEW ANALYSIS

A peer review analysis was conducted for SunTran and MTS to compare performance at a given point in time with other transit systems with similar operating characteristics. Separate peer reviews were conducted for the CTC (MTS) and the complementary ADA paratransit and fixed-route (SunTran) portions of the transit system.

FIXED-ROUTE PEER REVIEW

The peer review was conducted using the 2010 NTD data for all selected peers. Selected performance indicators, effectiveness measures, and efficiency measures are provided throughout this section in tabular and graphical formats to illustrate the performance of the fixed-route system relative to the peer group. For each selected indicator and measure, the tables provide the SunTran value, the minimum value among the peer group, the maximum value among the peer group, the mean of the peer group, and the percent that SunTran's values are away from the mean. The methodology used to select the peer systems is discussed below.

Peer System Selection Methodology

The peer selection was conducted using 2010 NTD data available in the Florida Transit Information System (FTIS) database. The 2010 NTD data for all systems reported in NTD were then compared with 2010 data for SunTran. The peers were identified through an objective assessment of nine standard variables in the NTD. The variables include:

- Geography (southeastern United States)
- Service area population
- Population density
- Operating expense
- Revenue miles
- Passenger trips
- Average speed
- Service area size
- Vehicles operated in maximum service

First, the peer group selection was based on geographic location; the southeastern states selected were Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Fixed-route systems

operating in these southeastern states were identified. The systems meeting this criterion then were analyzed based on the eight remaining criteria.

A potential peer received 1.5 points for service area population density and vehicles operated in maximum service, and 1 point for each other measure when its value was within plus or minus 10 percent of SunTran's performance value. In addition, 0.5 points was given for each measure that fell within plus or minus 20 percent of SunTran's value. Table 6-1 presents the transit systems selected for the peer review analysis. The selection criteria and the system statistics for each of the selected peers are provided in Appendix B.

Table 6-1
SunTran Selected Peer Systems
Peer Review Analysis (2010)

System	Location
Albany Transit System (ATS)	Georgia
City of Rome Transit Department (RTD)	Georgia
Concho Valley Transit District (TRANSA)	Texas
High Point Transit (Hi-Tran)	North Carolina
Hill Country Transit District (The HOP)	Texas
Johnson City Transit System (JCT)	Tennessee

Performance Indicators

Selected performance indicators for the peer review are presented in this section. Categories of performance indicators include population, population density, ridership, revenue miles, and vehicles. Table 6-2 and Figures 6-1 through 6-10 present the performance indicators for the SunTran fixed-route peer review analysis.

Table 6-2
Performance Indicators
SunTran Fixed-Route Peer Review (2010)

Indicator	SunTran	Peer Group Min.	Peer Group Max.	Peer Group Mean	% from Mean
Service Area Population	82,784	37,000	395,300	118,379	-30.1%
Service Area Population Density	1,505	47	4,448	1,792	-16.0%
Passenger Trips	414,928	212,058	860,214	558,839	-25.8%
Revenue Miles	441,999	368,903	529,949	444,297	-0.5%
Revenue Hours	27,947	22,506	34,198	28,888	-3.3%
Vehicle Hours	28,732	24,024	35,535	30,033	-4.3%
Vehicle Miles	464,200	384,792	535,133	458,266	1.3%
Vehicles Operated in Max. Service	6	5	26	11	-46.2%
Operating Expenses	$1,938,952	$1,460,505	$2,182,510	$1,830,642	5.9%
Passenger Trips per Capita	5.01	0.99	18.66	8.23	-39.1

Source: 2010 National Transit Database (NTD), Ocala/Marion TPO.

Figure 6-1

Service Area Population (000)

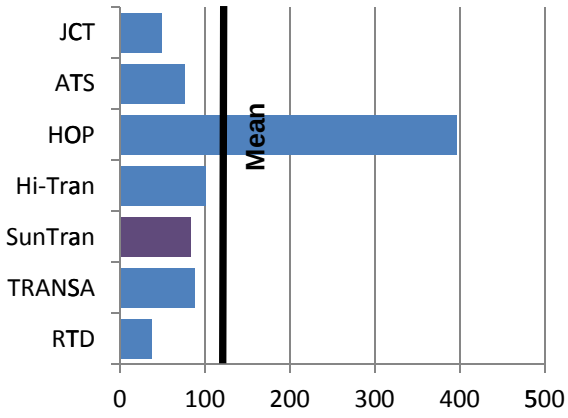


Figure 6-2

Service Area Population Density (persons/square mile)

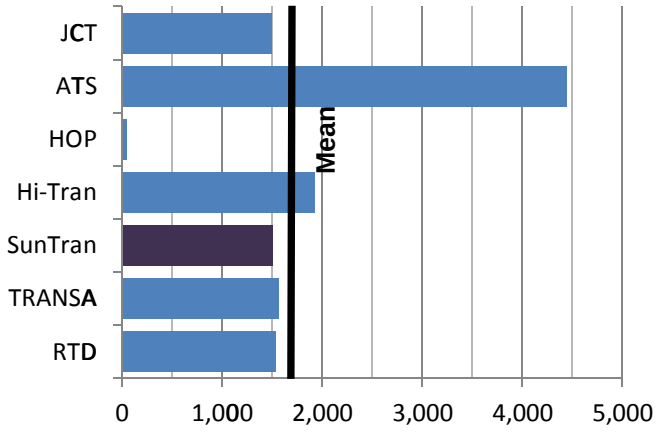


Figure 6-3
Passenger Trips (000)

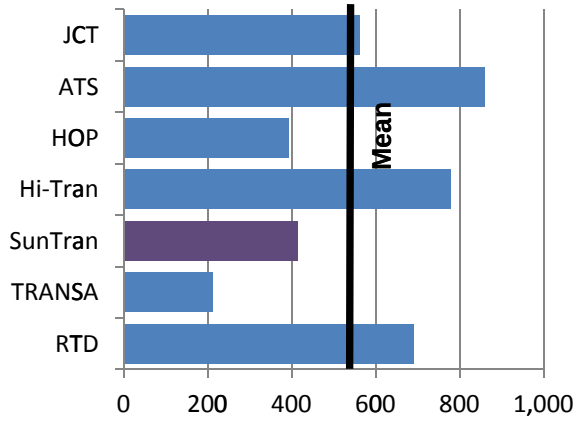


Figure 6-4
Revenue Miles (000)

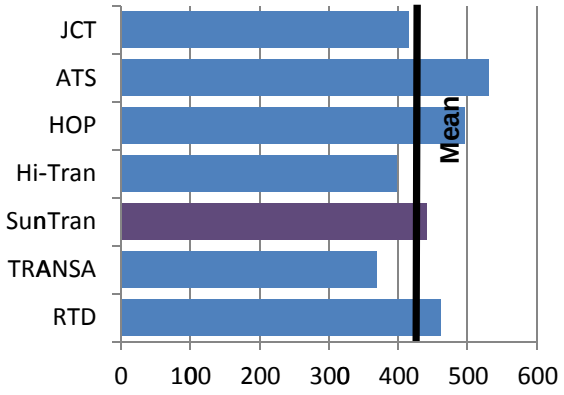


Figure 6-5
Revenue Hours

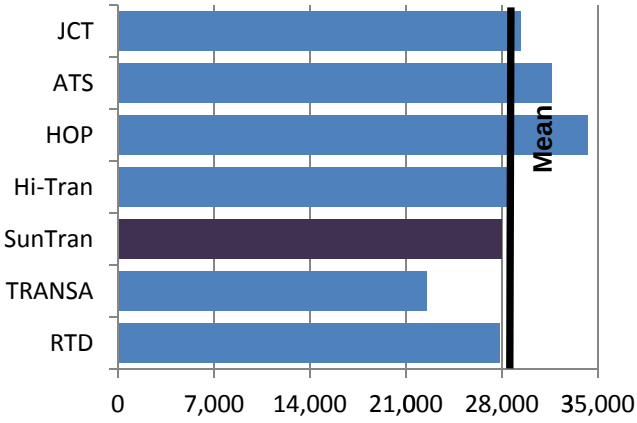


Figure 6-6
Vehicle Hours

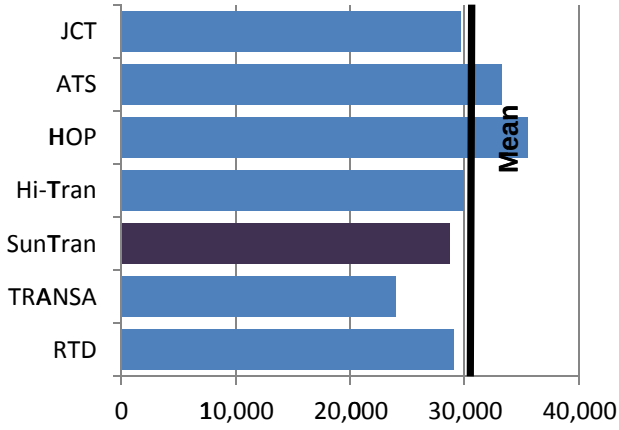


Figure 6-7
Vehicle Miles

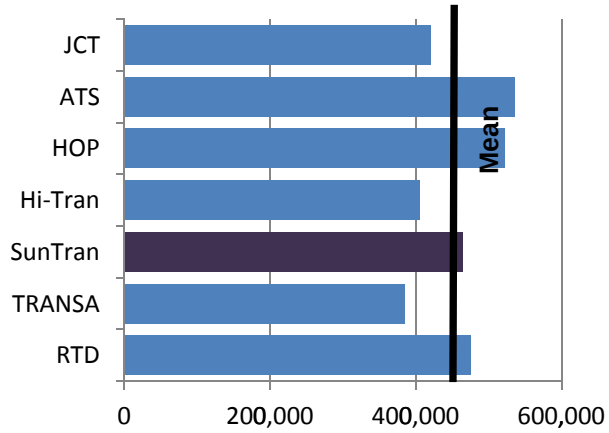


Figure 6-8
Operating Expense ($000)

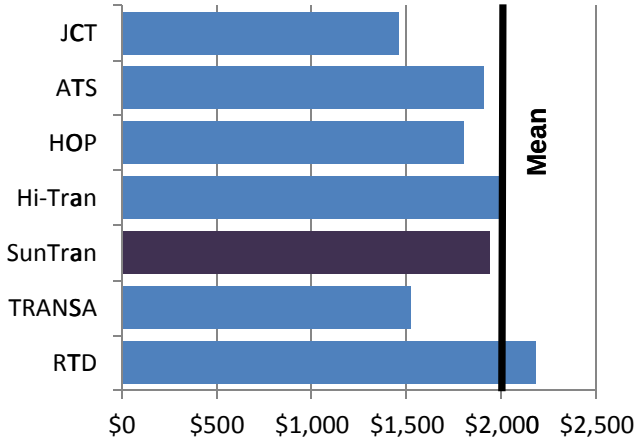


Figure 6-9
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service

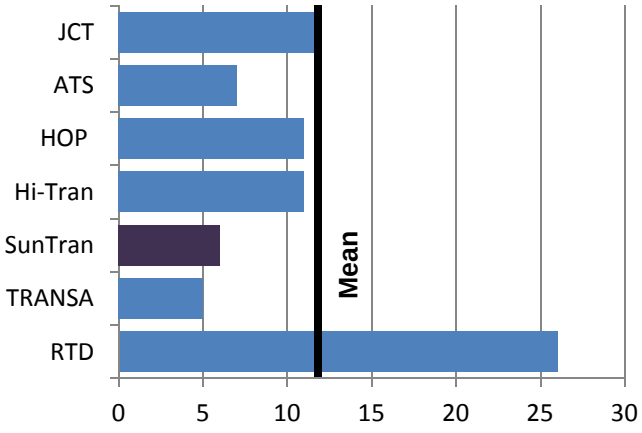
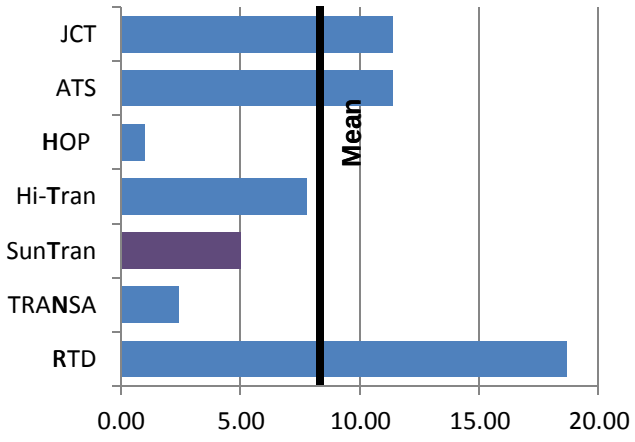


Figure 6-10
Passenger Trips per Capita



The following is a summary of the peer review analysis performance indicators, based on the information previously presented.

- Service area population for SunTran is less than the peer group average. However, the average is escalated due to Hill Country Transit (HOP) having a significantly higher-than-average service area population above the other peers.
- SunTran's service area population density is slightly below the average among its peers (16%), at 1,505 persons per square mile.

- The passenger trips for SunTran are more than 25 percent below the peer group mean, although the mean is influenced by significantly higher ridership on both Hi-Tran and ATS.
- Vehicle revenue miles for SunTran is relatively close to the peer group mean (0.52 % below). SunTran's revenue hours are 3.2 percent below the peer group mean.
- Vehicle miles for SunTran are 1.3 percent above the peer group mean, and the vehicle hours for SunTran are 4 percent below the peer group mean.
- Operating expense for SunTran is 5.9 percent greater than the peer group mean.
- SunTran is operating below the peer group mean for vehicles operated during maximum service, by just over 46 percent. This is due, in part, to RTD having an above-average number of vehicles operating during maximum service when compared to the rest of the peers.

Effectiveness Measures

Categories of effectiveness measures include service supply, measured by vehicle miles per capita; service consumption, measured by passenger trips per revenue mile; and quality of service, measured by weekday span of service. Table 6-3 and Figures 6-11 through 6-13 present the effectiveness measures for the SunTran fixed-route peer review analysis.

Table 6-3
Effectiveness Measures
SunTran Fixed-Route Peer Review (2010)

Measure	Sun Tran	Peer Group Min.	Peer Group Max.	Peer Group Mean	% from Mean
Vehicle Miles per Capita	5.61	1.32	12.83	6.25	-10.3%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	0.94	0.57	1.96	1.25	-24.8%
Weekday Span of Service (hours)	15	12	15.25	13.43	11.7%

Source: 2010 National Transit Database (NTD), Ocala/Marion TPO.

Figure 6-11
Vehicle Miles per Capita

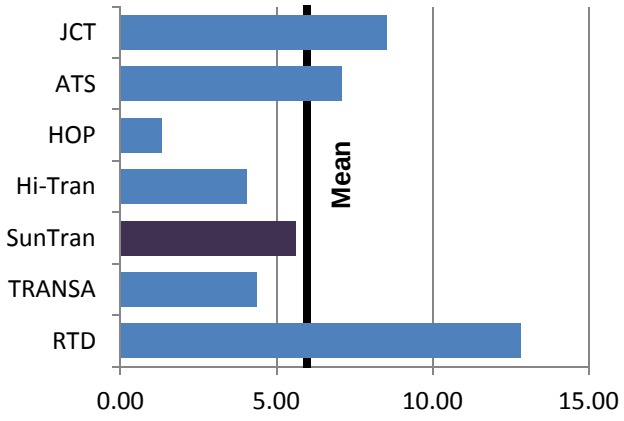


Figure 6-12
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile

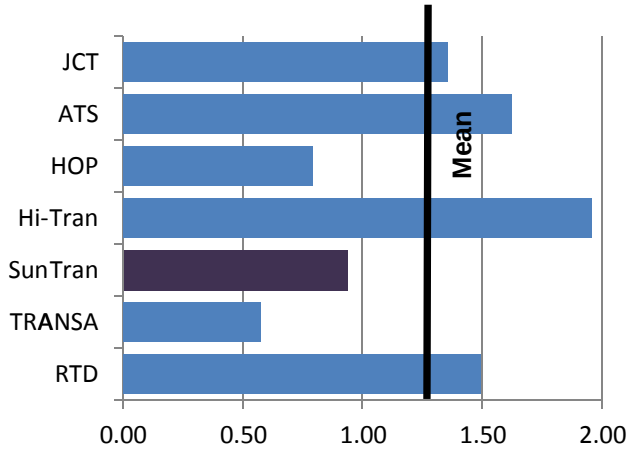
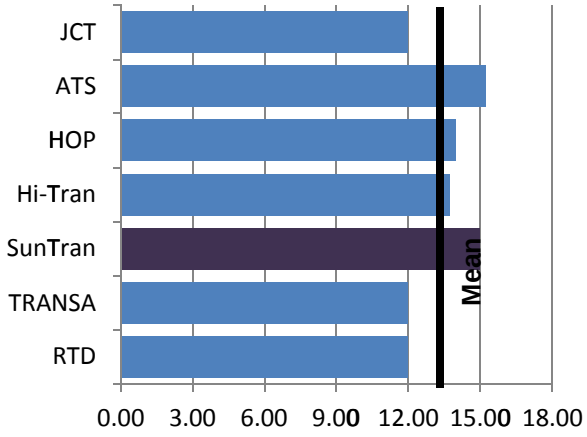


Figure 6-13
Weekday Span of Service (in hours)



The following is a summary of the effectiveness measures for the peer review analysis.

- Vehicle miles per capita for SunTran are more than 10.3 percent below the peer group mean.
- Passenger trips per revenue mile for SunTran are 24.8 percent below the peer group mean.
- SunTran's weekday span of service is 15 hours, which is 11.7 percent greater than the peer group mean of 13.43.

Efficiency Measures

Categories for efficiency measures include cost efficiency and operating ratios. Table 6-4 and Figures 6-14 through 6-20 present the efficiency measures for the SunTran fixed-route peer review analysis.

Table 6-4
Efficiency Measures
SunTran Fixed-Route Peer Review (2010)

Measure	Sun Tran	Peer Group Min.	Peer Group Max.	Peer Group Mean	% from Mean
Operating Expense per Capita	$23.42	$4.57	$58.99	$25.56	-8.4%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	$4.67	$2.22	$7.20	$3.86	21.1%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile	$4.39	$3.52	$5.01	$4.15	5.8%
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	$69.38	$49.76	$78.42	$63.97	8.5%
Farebox Recovery Ratio (%)	16.99%	5.17%	23.02%	15.68%	8.4%
Revenue Miles per Vehicle Mile	0.95	0.95	0.99	0.97	-1.8%
Average Fare	$0.79	$0.21	$0.79	$0.53	48.3%

Figure 6-14
Operating Expense per Capita

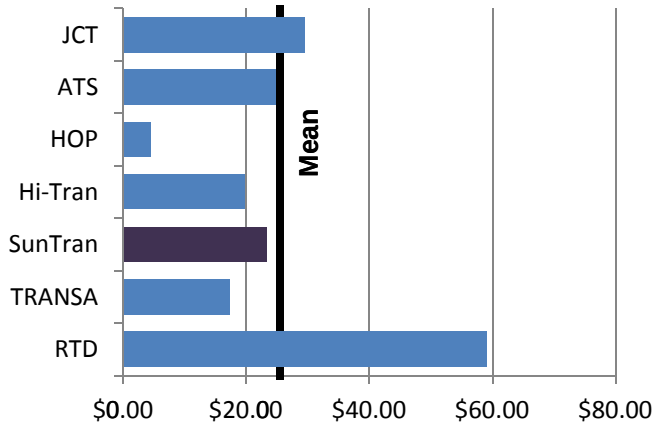


Figure 6-15
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip

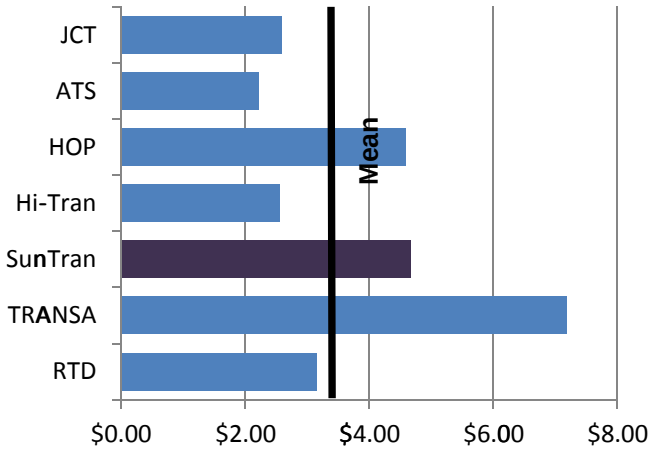


Figure 6-16
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile

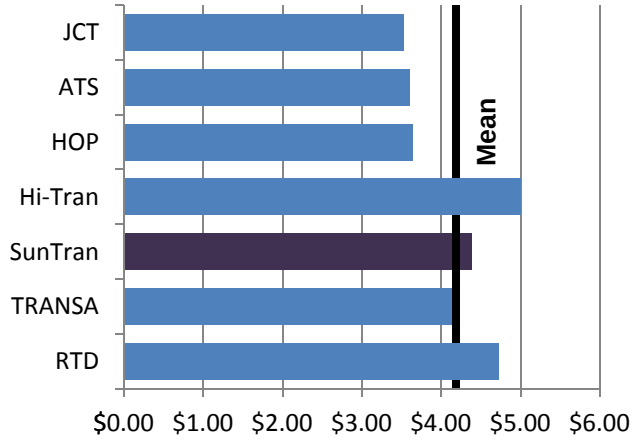


Figure 6-17
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour

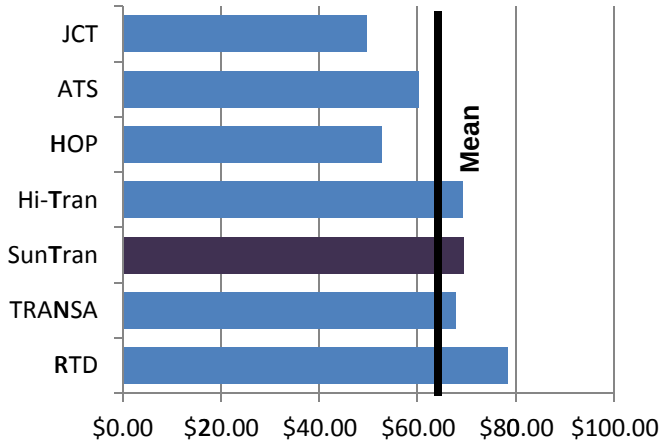


Figure 6-18
Farebox Recovery

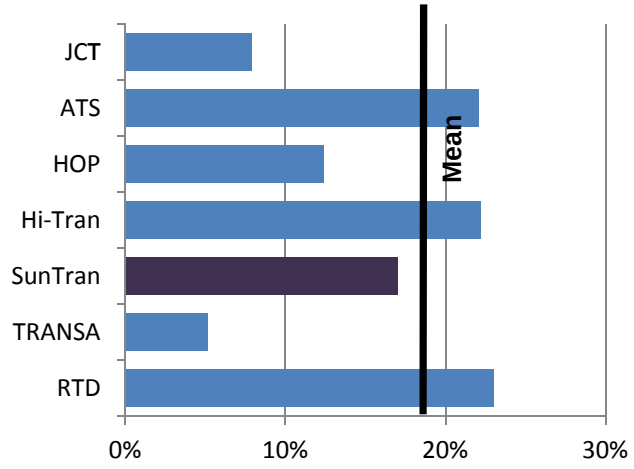


Figure 6-19
Revenue Miles per Vehicle Miles

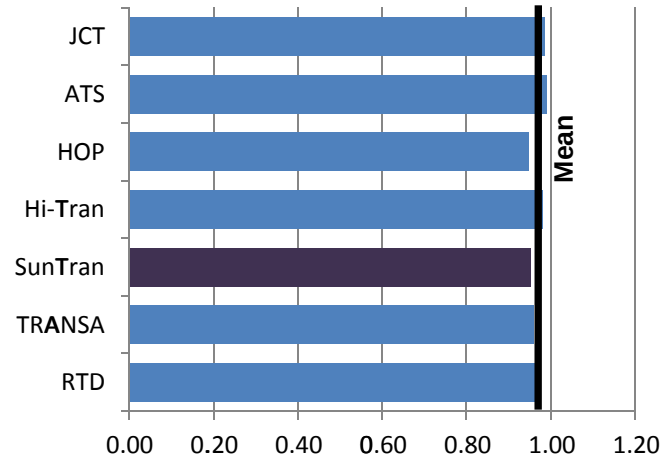
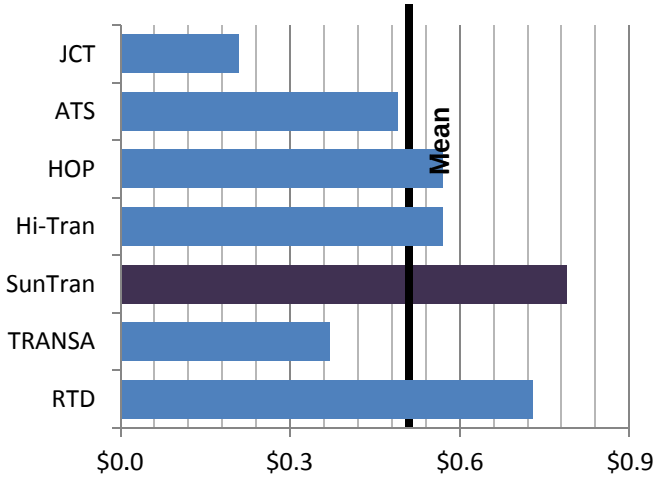


Figure 6-20
Average Fare



The following is a summary of efficiency measures for the peer review presented above.

- Operating expense per capita for SunTran is 8.4 percent below the peer group mean.
- Operating expense per passenger trip for SunTran is 21.1 percent above the peer group mean.
- Operating expense per revenue mile is 5.8 percent above the mean, while operating expense per revenue hour is 8.5 percent above the mean.
- Farebox recovery for SunTran is 8.4 percent over the peer group mean.
- Average fare for SunTran is 48.3 percent above the peer group mean.

Summary Results of Peer Review Analysis

Table 6-5 provides a summary of the peer review analysis for the SunTran fixed-route system. The summary includes the percent that SunTran is away from the peer group mean for each performance measure.

Table 6-5
SunTran Peer Review Analysis Summary (2010)

Performance Indicators/Measures	% from Mean
Indicators	
Service Area Population	-30.1%
Service Area Population Density	-16.0%
Passenger Trips	-25.8%
Revenue Miles	-0.5%
Revenue Hours	-3.3%
Vehicle Hours	-4.3%
Vehicle Miles	1.3%
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	-46.2%
Total Operating Expense	5.9%
Service Supply	
Vehicle Miles per Capita	-10.3%
Service Consumption	
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	-24.8%
Passenger Trips per Capita	-39.1%
Quality of Service	
Weekday Span of Service (hours)	11.7%
Cost Efficiency	
Operating Expense per Capita	-8.4%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	21.1%
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile	5.8%
Operating Expense per Revenue Hour	8.5%
Operating Ratio	
Farebox Recovery Ratio	8.4%
Vehicle Utilization	
Revenue Miles per Vehicle Mile	-1.8%
Fare	
Average Fare	48.3%

SUNTRAN COMPLEMENTARY ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICE PEER REVIEW

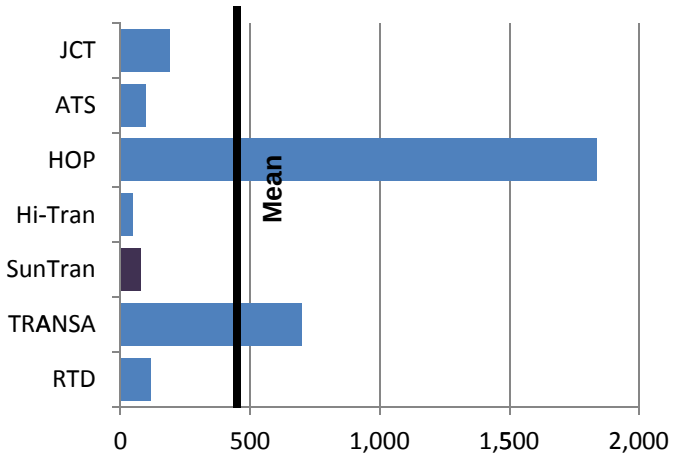
A peer review analysis was also conducted for SunTran's complementary ADA paratransit service to compare its performance at a given point in time with the same transit systems used in the peer review. The peer review was conducted using 2010 NTD data for all peers selected for the fixed-route peer review. The data used for this analysis include demand-response, directly-operated values. Hi-Tran provided information on purchased transportation; however, these data were removed to remain consistent through the measurements. For each selected measure, the tables provide the SunTran value, the minimum value among the peer group, the maximum value among the peer group, the mean of the peer group, and the percent that the system's values are away from the mean. Performance indicators are included in Table 6-6.

Figures 6-21 thru 6-23 illustrate performance indicators.

Table 6-6
SunTran Complementary ADA Services Peer Review Analysis: Performance Indicators (2010)

Measure	SunTran	Peer Group Min.	Peer Group Max.	Peer Group Mean	% from Mean
Revenue Miles	79,060	46,575	1,837,456	438,916	-82.0%
Passenger Trips	15,573	13,176	276,507	74,565	-79.1%
Total Operating Expense	$318,179	$318,179	$5,620,853	$1,604,801	-80.2%

Figure 6-21
Revenue Miles (000)



6-22
Passenger Trips

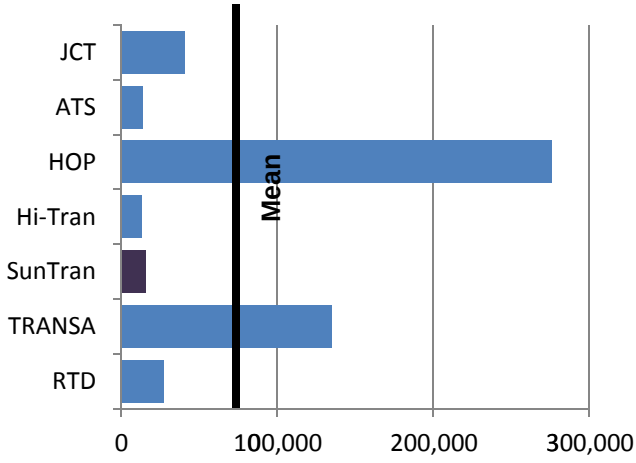
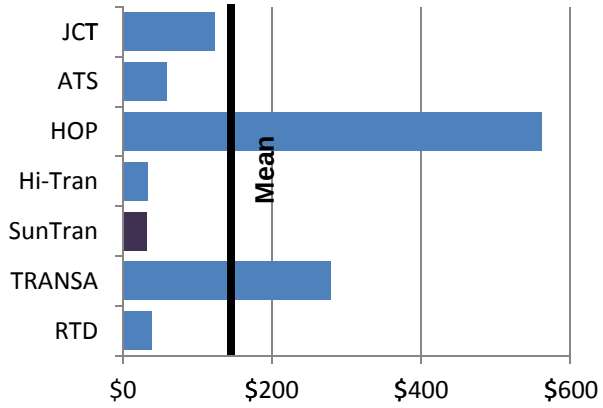


Figure 6-23
Operating Expense ($000)



Efficiency Measures

Categories for efficiency measures include cost efficiency and operating ratios. Table 6-7 and Figures 6-24 through 6-26 present the efficiency measures for the SunTran fixed-route Complementary ADA Service Analysis.

Table 6-7
SunTran Complementary ADA Services Peer Review Analysis:
Cost Efficiency Indicators (2010)

Measure	Sun Tran	Peer Group Min.	Peer Group Max.	Peer Group Mean	% from Mean
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile	$4.02	$3.06	$7.12	$4.81	-16.3%
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	$20.43	$14.08	$41.85	$24.65	-17.1%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	0.20	0.14	0.28	0.20	-1.8%

Figure 6-24
Operating Expense per Revenue Mile

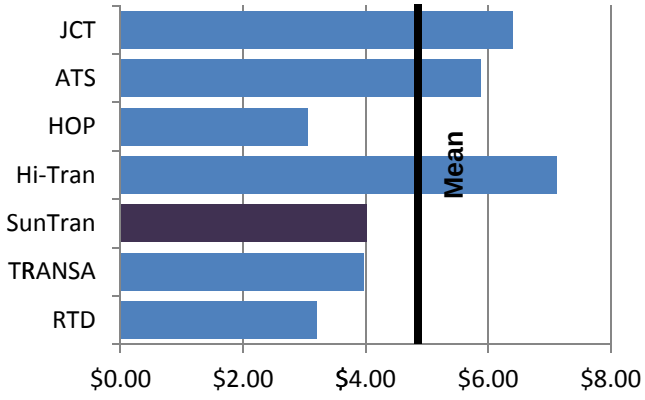


Figure 6-25
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip

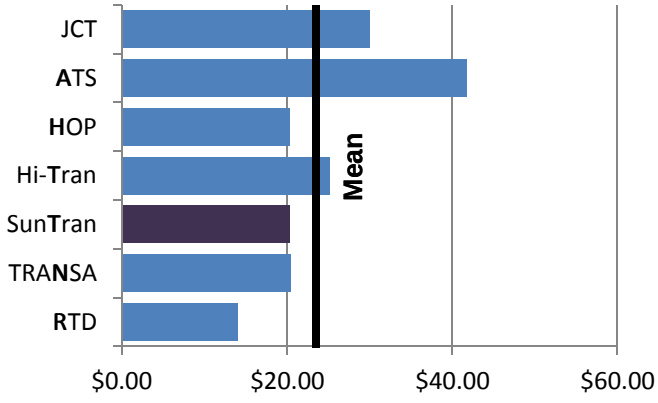
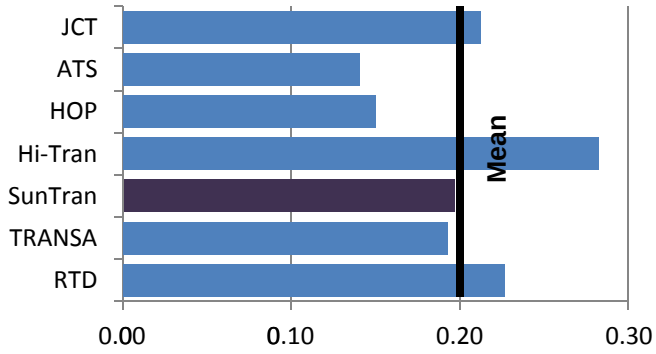


Figure 6-26
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile



SunTran's ADA paratransit service operating expense per revenue mile is below the average for all peer systems. It is important to note that two of the systems, Hill Country Transit (HOP) and Concho Valley Transit District (TRANSA), are peer systems with significantly greater passenger trips and revenue miles because they provide paratransit service that covers areas outside of the ¾-mile service area.

Summary Results of Peer ADA Analysis

- In all three performance measures, SunTran scores below the peer mean, mainly due to data from the two aforementioned peers influencing the mean very highly.
- In efficiency measures, the scores are more positive. SunTran's operating expense per revenue mile is 16.3 percent below the peer mean.
- SunTran's operating expense per passenger trip is also below the group mean (17.1%).
- Passenger trips per revenue mile for SunTran is only slightly below the mean (1.8%).
- While other transit agencies have a greater volume of ridership, SunTran's total operating expenses are well below the mean (80.2%).

CTC PEER REVIEW

A CTC peer review analysis was conducted comparing the performance of Marion County TD services with that of other CTC systems having similar operating characteristics. The peer review was conducted using 2010 AORs for all selected peers. A peer group analysis serves two functions: first, it provides a comparison of how well MTS has performed relative to similar CTCs in Florida; second, it helps to establish realistic performance standards for the evaluation process.

Peer System Selection Methodology

The peer selection was conducted using the 2010 AORs and was limited to Florida systems. First, the peers were initially identified through an objective assessment of two standard variables—county population and population density. A potential peer CTC received 1.5 points for each measure when its value was within plus or minus 10 percent of Marion County's population or population density. One-half point was given for each CTC that fell within plus or minus 20 percent of Marion's values. After the total scores were determined, the potential peers were ranked in descending order.

Second, the CTCs that received a total score of 3 points were selected. In addition, several systems with 2 points were selected based on proximity to Marion County or similarities in the county's fixed route service. Of the five systems above a score of 2 points, three systems were selected. Table 6-8 presents the transit systems that were selected as peers for the MTS peer review analysis. The selection criteria and the system statistics for each of the selected peers are provided in Appendix A.

Table 6-8
MTS Selected Peer Systems

CTC Name	County
Collier Area Paratransit	Collier
Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)	Osceola
Lake County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)	Lake
Okaloosa County BOCC	Okaloosa
MV Transportation, Inc.	Alachua

Source: Annual Performance Reports, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

The tables and graphs presented in this section summarize selected performance indicators, effectiveness measures, and efficiency measures for the CTCs considered for this review. For each selected measure, the tabular analysis provides the MTS performance, the minimum value among the peer group, the maximum value among the peer group, the mean of the peer group, and the percent that the MTS values are away from the mean value.

For comparison purposes, each performance measure is depicted graphically, along with the peer group mean (the vertical line in each chart). As indicated above, all performance statistics for the CTC peer group were obtained from the "Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged 2010 Annual Performance Report," which contains a compilation of the AORs submitted to the FCTD for FY 2010.

Performance Indicators

Table 6-9 and Figures 6-27 through 6-35 present information pertaining to the eight performance indicators that were analyzed for the Marion CTC and its peers.

Table 6-9
Marion County CTC Peer Analysis
Performance Indicators – FY 2010

Performance Measure	Marion County	Peer Min.	Peer Max.	Peer Mean	% from Mean
Service Area Population	331,298	180,822	331,298	274,452	20.70%
Potential TD Population	150,414	58,012	150,414	106,026	41.90%
Total Passengers Served	6,898	2,143	17,850	6,876	0.30%
Passenger Trips	197,964	120,832	433,139	252,785	-21.70%
Total Vehicle Miles	1,819,872	683,233	2,522,672	1,621,436	12.20%
Total Revenue Miles	1,681,926	591,105	2,102,883	2,102,883	21.10%
Operating Expense	$4,070,355	$1,577,959	$5,037,403	$3,596,832	13.20%
Operating Revenue	$3,715,668	$1,598,338	$6,165,996	$3,628,798	2.40%
Total Fleet	86	27	91	62	39.50%

Source: 2010 Annual Performance Reports, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Figure 6-27
Service Area Population

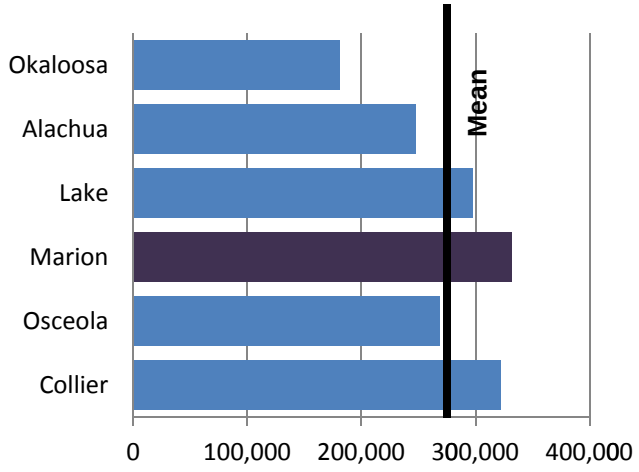


Figure 6-28
Potential TD Population

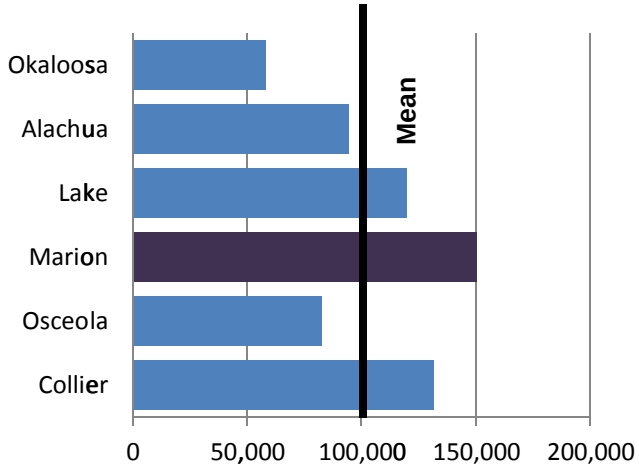


Figure 6-29
Total Passengers Served (000)

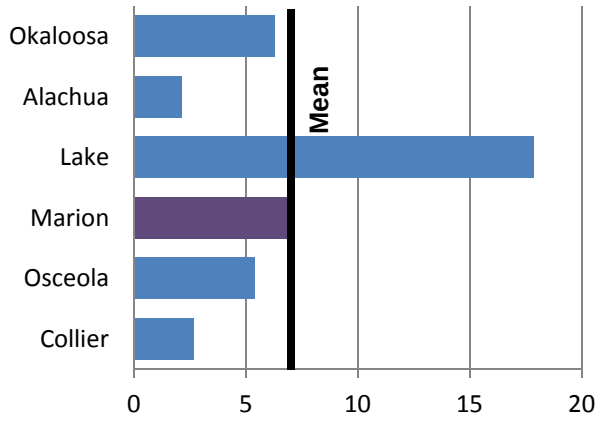


Figure 6-30
Total Passenger Trips (000)

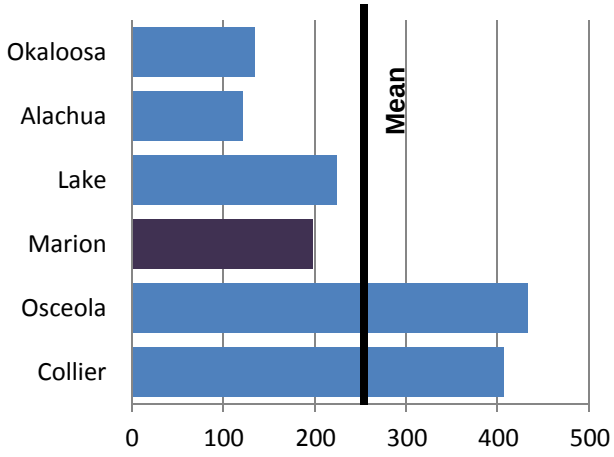


Figure 6-31
Total Vehicle Miles (000)

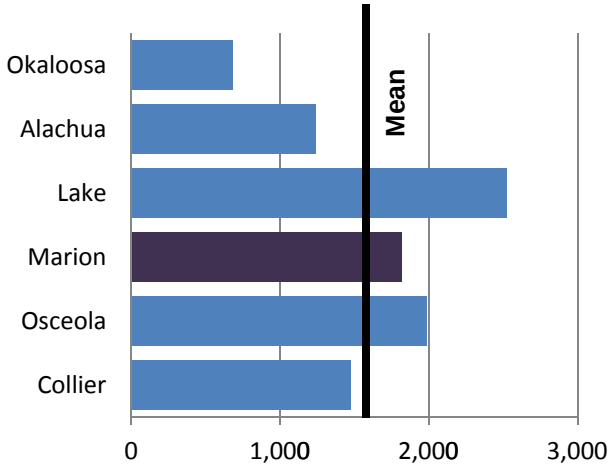


Figure 6-32
Total Revenue Miles (000)

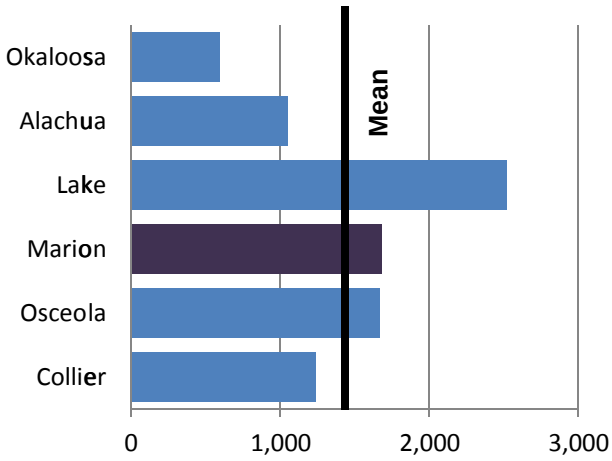


Figure 6-33
Operating Expense ($000)

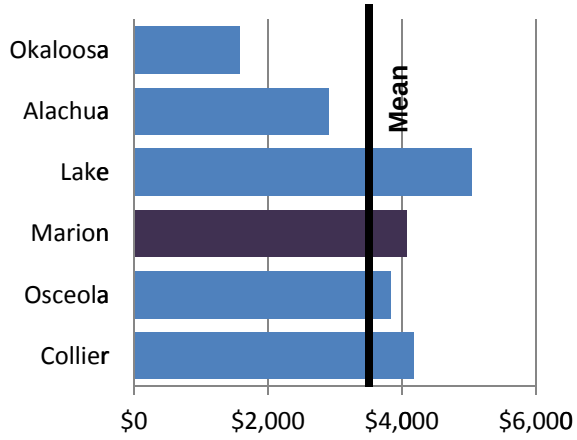


Figure 6-34
Operating Revenue ($000)

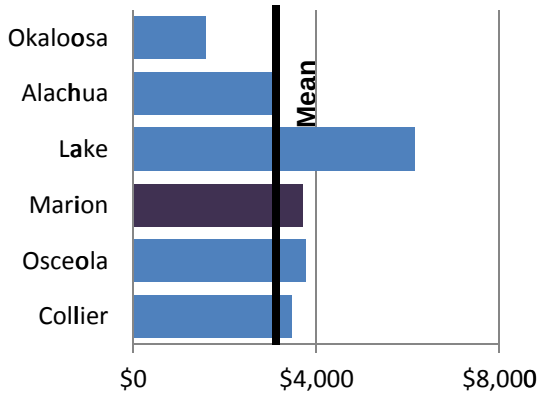
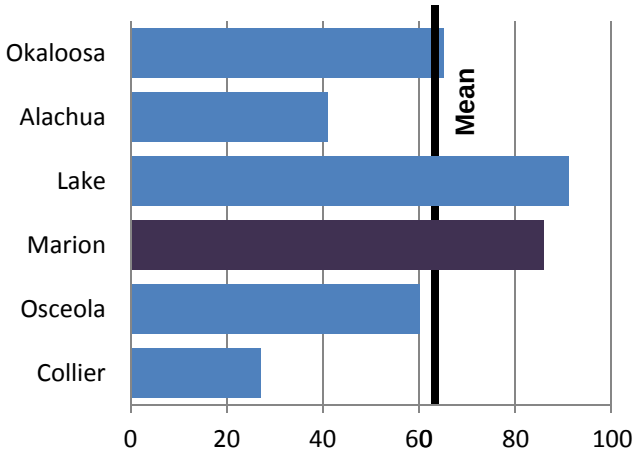


Figure 6-35
Total Fleet



Effectiveness Measures

As stated previously in the trend analysis section, effectiveness measures indicate the extent to which various service-related goals are being achieved. Shown in Table 6-10 and Figures 6-36 through 6-41 are effectiveness measures for Marion Transit Services and its peers.

Table 6-10
Marion County CTC Peer Analysis
Effectiveness Measures – FY 2010

Measure	Marion CTC	Peer Group Min.	Peer Group Max.	Peer Group Mean	% from Mean
Vehicle Miles per TD Capita	12.10	11.22	24.14	15.58	-22.3%
Vehicle Miles per Passenger Trip	9.19	3.63	11.24	7.34	25.3%
Passenger Trips per TD Capita	1.32	1.28	5.26	2.52	-47.8%
Passenger Trips per Vehicle Mile	0.11	0.09	0.28	0.16	-33.7%
Accidents per 100,000 Vehicle Miles	0.16	0.16	2.26	1.13	-85.9%
Vehicle Miles between Roadcalls	139,990	14,577	683,233	150,796	-7.2%

Source: 2010 Annual Performance Reports, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Figure 6-36
Vehicle Miles per TD Capita

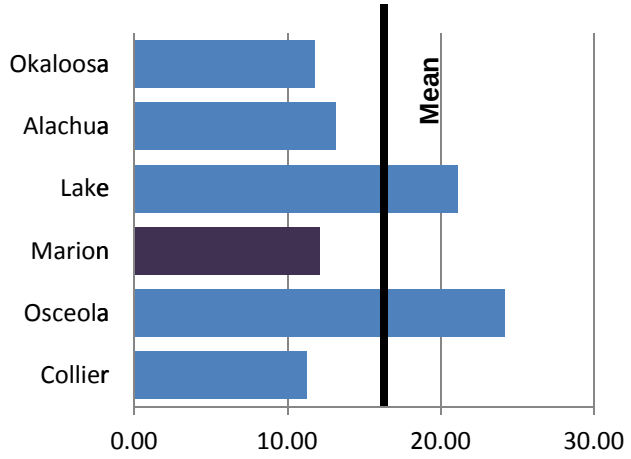


Figure 6-37
Vehicle Miles per Passenger Trip

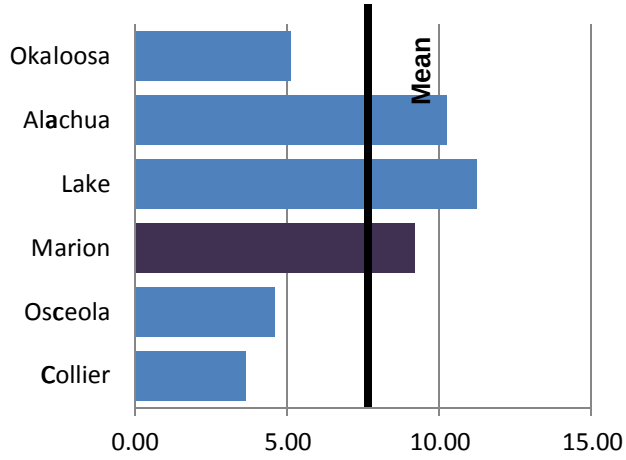


Figure 6-38
Passenger Trips per TD Capita

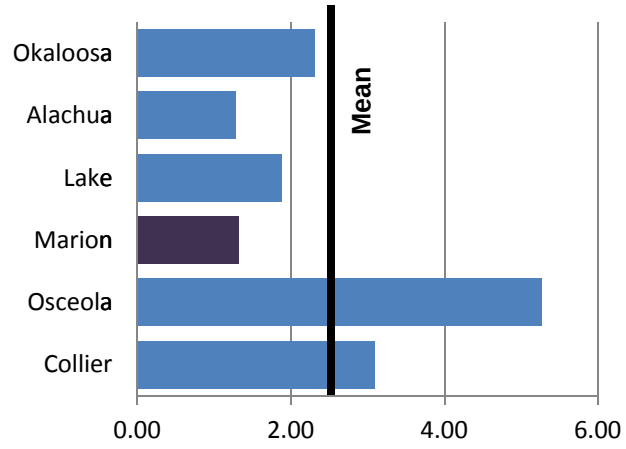


Figure 6-39
Passenger Trips per Vehicle Mile

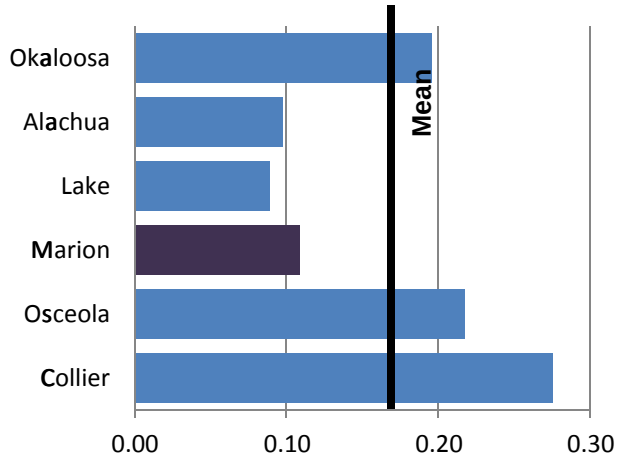


Figure 6-40
Accidents per 100,000 Vehicle Miles

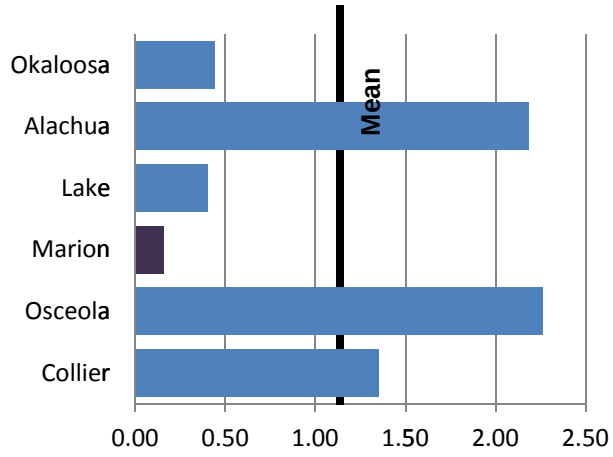
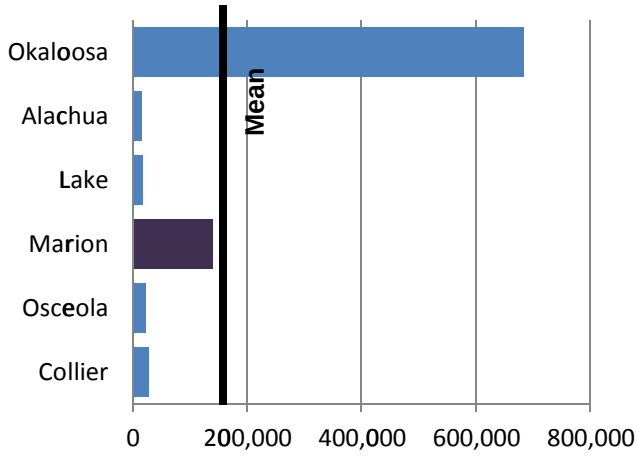


Figure 6-41
Vehicle Miles Between Roadcalls



Efficiency Measures

The final area addressed in the CTC peer analysis concerns system efficiency. As discussed previously in the trend analysis, efficiency measures involve reviewing the level of resources required to achieve a given level of output. The efficiency measures are presented in Table 6-11 and Figures 6-42 through 6-44.

Table 6-11
Marion County CTC Peer Analysis
Efficiency Measures – FY 2010

Measure	Marion CTC	Peer Group Min.	Peer Group Max.	Peer Group Mean	% from Mean
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	20.56	8.84	24.03	16.32	26.0%
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile	2.24	1.93	2.82	2.27	-1.6%
Operating Expense per Driver Hour	26.62	24.32	45.38	33.82	-21.3%

Source: 2010 Annual Performance Reports, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Figure 6-42
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip

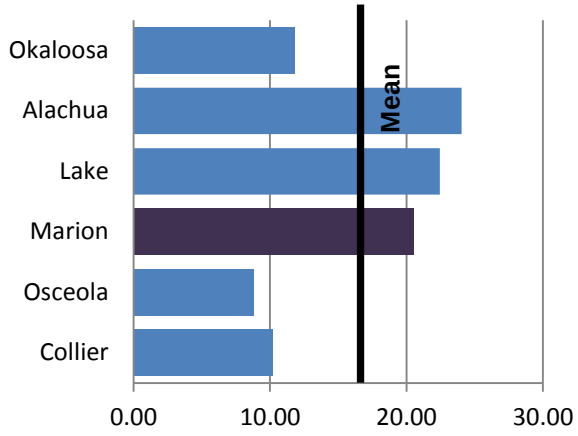


Figure 6-43
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile

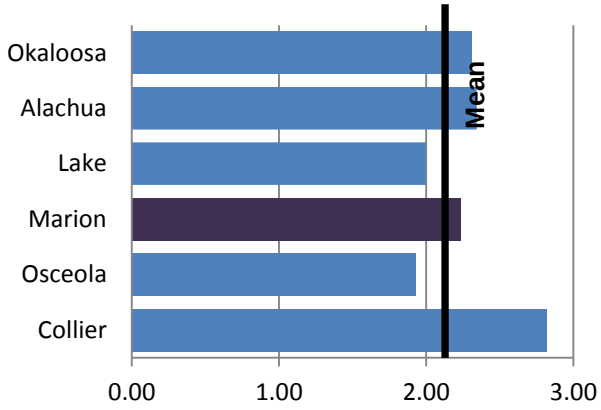
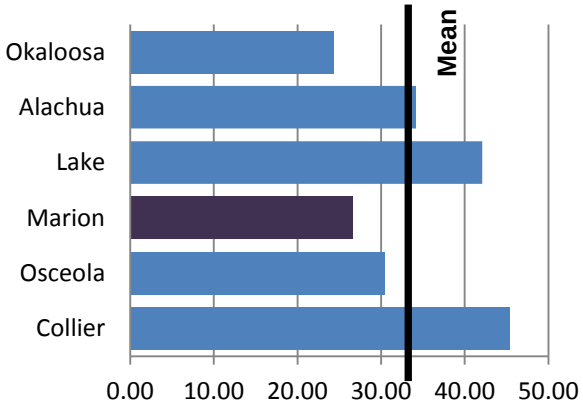


Figure 6-44
Operating Expense per Driver Hour



Summary Results of Peer Review Analysis

Table 6-12 provides a summary of the peer review analysis performed for the Marion County CTC. The summary includes each performance measure, as well as the percent that each measure is above or below the peer group mean.

Table 6-12
Marion County CTC Peer Review Analysis Summary – FY 2010

Performance Indicators/Measures	% from Mean
Performance Measures	
Service Area Population	20.7%
Potential TD Population	41.9%
Total Passengers Served	0.3%
Passenger Trips	-21.7%
Vehicle Miles	12.2%
Revenue Miles	21.1%
Operating Expenses	13.2%
Operating Revenues	2.4%
Total Fleet	39.5%
Effectiveness Measures	
Vehicle Miles per TD Capita	-22.3%
Vehicle Miles per Passenger Trip	25.3%
Passenger Trips per TD Capita	-47.8%
Passenger Trips per Vehicle Mile	-33.7%
Accidents per 100,000 Vehicle Miles	-85.9%
Vehicle Miles between Roadcalls	-7.2%
Efficiency Measures	
Operating Expense per Passenger Trip	26.0%
Operating Expense per Vehicle Mile	-1.6%
Operating Expense per Driver Hour	-21.3%

Section 7

TRANSIT DEMAND AND MOBILITY NEEDS

Transit demand and mobility needs were assessed for the study area using various analytical techniques. Two market assessment tools and ridership forecasting software were used to assess demand for public transportation services. This section includes the results of that demand analysis. When combined with the public involvement feedback, the demand assessment yields the building blocks for a transit services Needs Plan for the county.

MARKET ASSESSMENT

The transit market assessment for Marion County includes an evaluation from two different perspectives: the discretionary market and the traditional market. Analysis tools for conducting each market analysis include a Density Threshold Assessment (DTA) and a Transit Orientation Index (TOI). The two analysis tools can be used to determine whether existing transit routes are serving areas of the county considered to be transit-supportive for the corresponding transit market. The transit markets and the corresponding market assessment tool used to measure each are described in detail below.

Discretionary Market – Density Threshold Assessment (DTA)

The discretionary market refers to potential riders living in higher-density areas of the county that may choose to use transit as a commuting or transportation alternative. A DTA was conducted based on industry standard relationships to identify those areas of Marion County that will experience transit-supportive residential and commercial density levels in 2022. Traffic analysis zone (TAZ) data obtained from the Ocala/Marion County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) were obtained to conduct the DTA.

Ocala/Marion County TAZ data do not contain projections for future year dwelling units, which are an essential part of the DTA; however, they do contain the existing-year dwelling units. The future year dwelling units were calculated using the population growth rate and the base year dwelling unit density.

Three levels of density thresholds were developed to indicate whether or not an area contains sufficient densities to sustain efficient fixed-route transit operations:

- **Minimum** – Reflects minimum population or employment densities to consider basic fixed-route transit services (i.e., fixed-route bus service).
- **High** – Reflects high population or employment densities that may be able to support higher levels of transit investment than areas that meet only the minimum density threshold (i.e., increased frequencies, express bus).
- **Very High** – Reflects very high population or employment densities that may be able to support higher levels of transit investment than areas that meet the minimum or high density thresholds (i.e., premium transit services, etc.).

The following table presents the density thresholds for each of the noted categories.

Table 7-1
Transit Service Density Threshold

Transit Mode	Population Density Threshold[1]	Employment Density Threshold[2]
Minimum	4.5–5 dwelling units/acre	4 employees/acre
High	6–7 dwelling units/acre	5 - 6 employees/acre
Very High	>=8 dwelling units/acre	>=7 employees/acre

[1] TRB, National Research Council, TCRP Report 16, Volume 1 (1996), *Transit and Land Use Form,* November 2002, MTC Resolution 3434 TOD Policy for Regional Transit Expansion Projects.
[2] Based on a review of research on the relationship between transit technology and employment densities.

Traditional Market – Transit Orientation Index (TOI)

The traditional transit market refers to population segments that historically have had a higher propensity to use transit and/or are dependent on public transit for their transportation needs. Traditional transit users include older adults, youth, and households that are low income and/or have no vehicles.

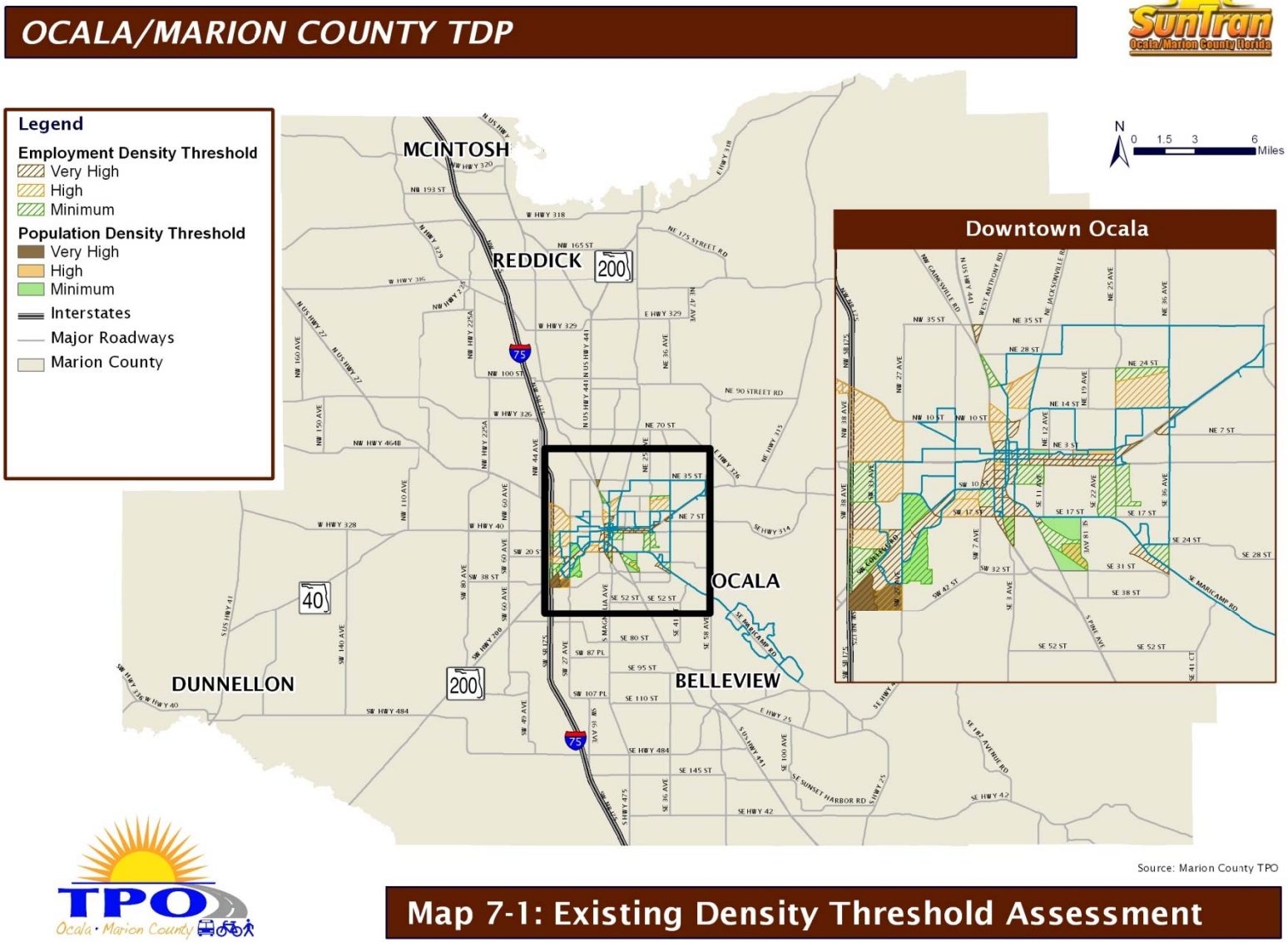
A TOI assists in identifying areas of the county where a traditional transit market exists. To create the TOI, 2010 Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) demographic data estimates were compiled at the block group level and categorized according to each block group's relative ability to support transit based on the prevalence of specific demographic characteristics. For this analysis, five population and demographic characteristics were used to develop the TOI; each characteristic is traditionally associated with the propensity to use transit.

- Population density (persons per square mile)
- Proportion of the population age 65 and over (older adults)
- Proportion of the population under age 16 (youths)

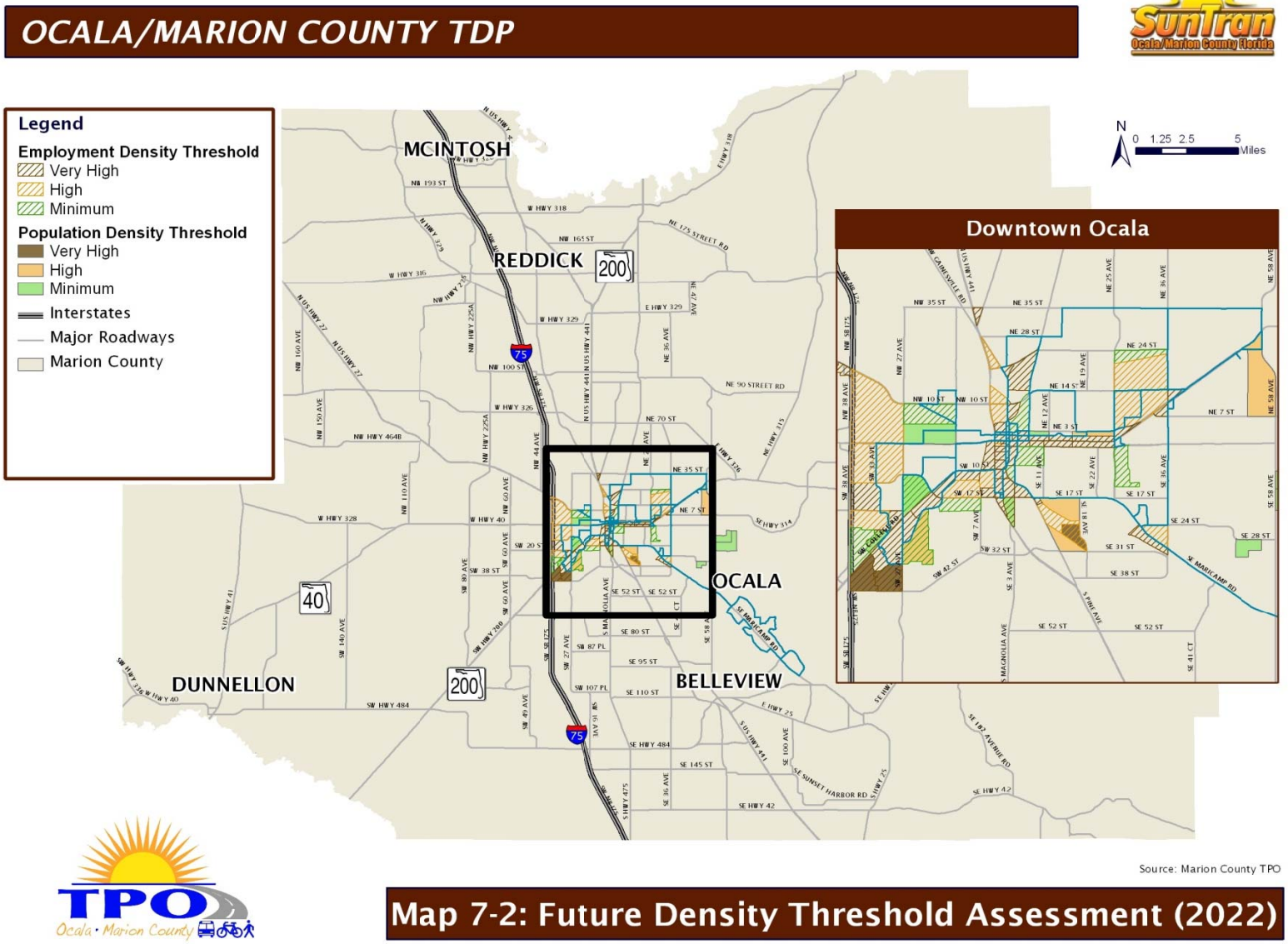
- Proportion of the population below the poverty level
- Proportion of households with no vehicles (zero-vehicle households)

ESRI data do not include zero-vehicle household information. As a surrogate measure, the number of households with an annual income equal to or less than $10,000 was used. It was assumed that households earning less than $10,000 were not able to afford vehicles or other costs associated with vehicle ownership. The block groups are rated as "Very High," "High," "Medium," or "Low" in their respective levels of transit orientation, where "Very High" reflects a very high transit orientation, i.e., a high proportion of transit-dependent populations.

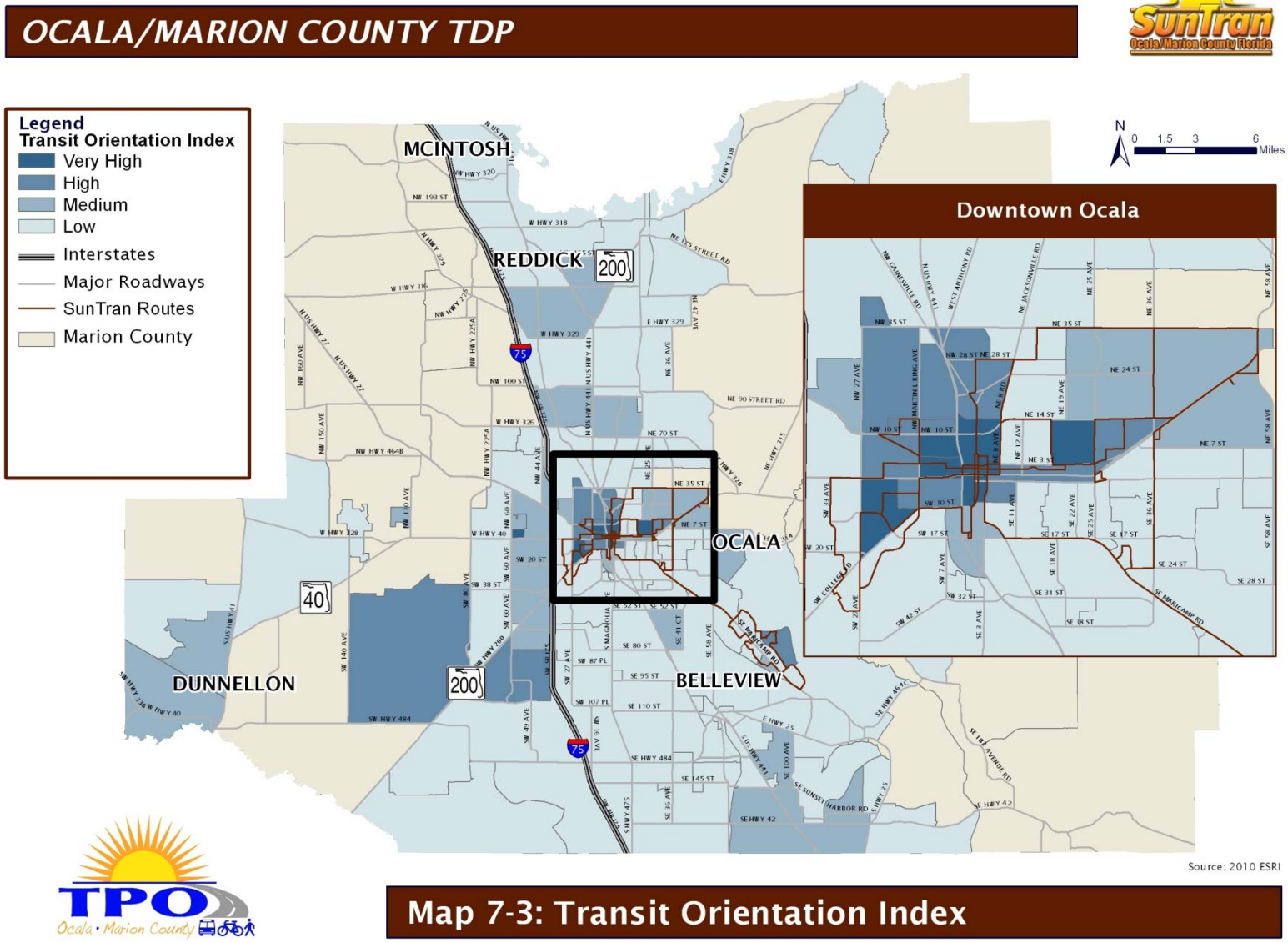
Maps 7-1, 7-2, and 7-3 illustrate the 2013 and 2022 DTA and the 2010 TOI, respectively. In addition, these maps include the existing SunTran service network to show how well SunTran covers those areas of the county that are considered transit supportive for both market assessments.



Map 7-1: Existing Density Threshold Assessment



Map 7-2: Future Density Threshold Assessment (2022)



Map 7-3: Transit Orientation Index

T-BEST MODELING FOR SUNTRAN FUTURE ALTERNATIVES

Ridership forecasts were prepared using the FDOT-approved transit demand forecasting tool, Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool (T-BEST). T-BEST is a comprehensive transit analysis and ridership-forecasting model that is capable of simulating travel demand at the individual route level. The software was designed to provide near- and mid-term forecasts of transit ridership consistent with the needs of transit operational planning and TDP development. In producing model outputs, T-BEST also considers the following:

- *Transit network connectivity* – Refers to the level of connectivity between routes within the bus network. The greater the connectivity between bus routes, the more efficient the bus service becomes.
- *Spatial and temporal accessibility* – Refers to service frequency and to distance between stops. The larger the physical distance between potential bus riders and bus stops, the lower the level of service utilization. Similarly, less frequent service is perceived as less reliable and, in turn, utilization decreases.
- *Time-of-day variations* – T-BEST accommodates peak-period travel patterns by rewarding peak service periods with greater service utilization forecasts.
- *Route competition and route complementarities* – T-BEST accounts for competition between routes. Routes connecting to the same destinations or anchor points, or that travel on common corridors, experience decreases in service utilization. Conversely, routes that are synchronized and support each other in terms of service to major destinations or transfer locations and schedule benefit from that complementary relationship.

The following section outlines the model input and assumptions used, includes a description of the T-BEST scenario run performed using the model, and summarizes the ridership forecasts produced by T-BEST.

Model Inputs/Assumptions and Limitations

T-BEST uses various demographic and transit network data as model inputs. The inputs and the assumptions made in modeling the SunTran system in T-BEST are presented below. It should be noted, however, that the model is not interactive with roadway network conditions. Therefore, ridership forecasts will not show direct sensitivity to changes in the roadway traffic conditions or speeds.

- *Transit Network* – The transit route network for all SunTran routes was created to reflect 2011 conditions, the validation year for the model. The transit network for Marion County was not available in T-BEST, so a system using data received from the TPO was used to create a network. It includes:
  - Current service span
  - Existing headways—the frequency with which a bus will arrive at a stop (e.g., 1 bus every 60 minutes or 1 bus every 30 minutes)
  - Establishing passenger travel times on board a bus
  - Defining special generators
  - Entering observed average daily ridership

- *Demographic Data* – The demographics used as the base input for the T-BEST model are derived from the 2000 Census and 2010 InfoUSA spatial and tabular databases. The model uses a Census-Block-level personal geodatabase as the format for spatial distribution of population data. Varying data sets were used for T-BEST because demographic data in T-BEST are hard-coded and cannot be modified by end-users.

- *Population and Employment Growth Rates* – T-BEST uses a socio-economic data growth function to project population and employment data. A population growth rate and an employment growth rate were calculated using the 2035 TAZ forecasts developed for the Marion County LRTP. As indicated previously, population and employment data are hard-coded into the model and cannot be modified by end-users. As applied, the growth rates do not reflect fluctuating economic conditions as experienced in real time.

- *Special generators* – These were determined to evaluate locations with opportunities for high ridership. SunTran special generators include the following:
  - Silver Springs Theme Park
  - Paddock Mall

- *T-BEST Model Limitations* – According to Rule 14-73.001, F.A.C., T-BEST is the FDOT-approved model for transit ridership forecasting as part of TDPs in Florida. It has long been a desire of FDOT to have a standard modeling tool for transit demand that could be standardized across the state similar to the Florida Standard Urban Transportation Model Structure (FSUTMS) model used by MPOs in developing LRTPs. However, while T-BEST is an important tool for evaluating improvements to existing and future transit services, model outputs do not account for latent demand for transit that could yield significantly higher ridership, and,

correspondingly, model outputs may over-estimate demand in isolated cases. In addition, T-BEST cannot display sensitivities to external factors such as an improved marketing and advertising program, changes in pricing service for customers, and other local conditions.

Although T-BEST provides ridership projections at the route and bus stop levels, its strength lies more in its ability to facilitate relative comparisons of ridership productivity. As a result, model outputs are not absolute ridership projections, but rather are comparative for evaluation in actual service implementation decisions. T-BEST has generated interest with DOTs in other states and continues to be a work in progress that will become more useful as its capabilities are enhanced in future updates to the model. Consequently, it is important for the transit agency to integrate sound planning judgment and experience when interpreting T-BEST results.

Using these inputs, assumptions, and actual ridership data, the T-BEST model was validated. Using the validation model as the base model, T-BEST ridership forecasts for the TDP planning horizon year, FY 2022, were developed. The generated annual ridership forecasts reflect the estimated level of service utilization if no changes were to be made to any of the fixed-route services.

Table 7-2 shows the projected number of annual weekday riders by route in 2013 and 2022 as well as ridership growth rates from 2013 to 2022 derived from T-BEST. According to T-BEST, average weekday ridership is expected to increase 7.24 percent (from 1,243 to 1,333 average daily riders) by 2022. Ridership on all routes is projected to increase.

Table 7-2
Annual Ridership and Growth Rates

SunTran T-BEST Ridership and Growth Rates (2013–2022)				
Route	***Average Weekday Daily Ridership (2013)***	***Average Weekday Daily Ridership (2022)***	***Absolute Change (2013-2022)***	***Growth Rate (2013-2022)***
Green	211	234	23	10.90%
Blue	223	233	10	4.48%
Purple	260	276	16	6.15%
Orange	299	313	14	4.68%
Red	150	169	19	12.67%
Yellow	100	108	8	8.00%
Total All Routes	1,243	1,333	90	7.24%

Implications

Based on the T-BEST results shown, maintaining the status quo will result in marginal increases in transit ridership. For SunTran to increase the market share for transit, service expansion will need to occur and service improvements identified in this TDP, through other transit planning efforts and in the public feedback received, will need to implemented.

Section 8

REVIEW OF PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

A supportive component of the TDP Update is the review of recent transit policies and programs. This section reviews transit policies at the federal level as well as relevant statewide and local planning activities conducted by FDOT, Marion County, the City of Ocala, and the Ocala/Marion County TPO. Various transportation planning and programming documents are summarized, with an emphasis on issues that may have implications for public transportation in Marion County. These implications will be discussed in more detail subsequently in the Situation Appraisal component of the TDP.

The following local plans were reviewed in order to understand current transit policies and plans with potential implications for SunTran's services and to help the TDP become a plan that will guide local transportation decision making:

- Ocala/Marion County 2007–2016 TDP Update
- Ocala/Marion County 2007 TDSP Update
- Ocala/Marion County 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update
- Ocala 2035 Vision
- Marion County Comprehensive Plan
- City of Ocala Comprehensive Plan

In addition, the following state and federal plans also were reviewed:

- Florida Transportation Plan (FTP)
- State Growth Management Legislation (House Bill 7207)
- FDOT Work Program
- Strategic Intermodal System
- State of Florida TD 5-Year/20-Year Plan
- Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)
- Clean Air Act of 1990
- Proposed Title VI and Environmental Justice Circulars
- DOT Livability Initiative and Federal Sustainable Communities Program

LOCAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Ocala/Marion County 2007-2016 Major TDP Update

As part of the system's transit planning process, the TPO is required to complete a major update of its TDP every five years. The most recent major update of the TDP was completed in 2007, providing a strategic guide for public transportation in Marion County for a 10-year period, from FY 2007 through FY 20016. This TDP assessed the performance of existing services, reviewed demographic and travel behavior characteristics of the service area, summarized local transit policies, developed proposed transit enhancements, and prepared a 10-year implementation plan for fixed-route transit services. The TDP concluded a 10-year financial plan (projected costs and revenues) through FY 2016 that provided guidance for SunTran during and beyond the 10-year planning horizon, along with the capital and operating costs and revenues required to successfully execute the implementation plan.

The TDP was developed to meet the TDP rule requirements and plan for Marion County's 10-year vision for transit. The goals, objectives, and initiatives that were developed to guide transit service in Marion County over the 10-year planning period are presented below.

Goal 1: Increase ridership and accessibility for current and potential transit users.

- **Objective 1.1:** Increase the fixed-route service area by 25% by 2012.
- **Objective 1.2:** Decrease passenger fixed-route access time by 25% by 2012.
- **Objective 1.3:** Increase unlimited and stored value pass sales by 100% by 2015.
- **Objective 1.4:** Increase ridership by 50% by 2015.

Goal 2: Maximize coordination and efficiency of transportation services to better serve the entire population of Marion County, including the transportation-disadvantaged, social service organizations, Medicaid-sponsored transportation services, and inter-county commuters.

- **Objective 2.1:** Review Marion Transit Services ridership for areas of possible transfers to Fixed-Route services.
- **Objective 2.2:** Ensure seamless coordination between SunTran services and private transportation systems by 2012.
- **Objective 2.3:** Ensure coordination with land use policies and local jurisdictions.
- **Objective 2.4:** Provide connections to neighboring counties by 2014.

Goal 3: Provide for the most cost-effective transportation services possible.

Objective 3.1: Hold maintenance costs at less than 20% of total system costs. Minimize costs required to operate and administer transportation services.

Objective 3.2: Maintain annual operating cost per revenue mile of $1.00.

Objective 3.3: Achieve an operation ratio (farebox revenues/total operating expenses) of at least 15% for fixed-route and demand-responsive service.

Objective 3.4: Maintain financial support of transit services consistent with the financial plan in the Major Update for the TDP (2007–2016).

Goal 4: Promote and provide for the necessary expansion of the coordinated transportation system necessary to meet the future needs of the general public, including the transportation disadvantaged.

Objective 4.1: Annually review the opportunities for additional services for future implementation including the following:

- Explore opportunities for implementing express bus service along high density corridors in suburban areas.
- Study the demand for inter-county transit.
- Develop a new fare policy and structure.
- Study the feasibility of growth in transit services to meet the needs of the general public, including:
  - Identifying transit needs for the general public.
  - Identifying potential transit demand.
  - Comparing needs, demand, service costs, and potential funding to determine feasibility.

Objective 4.2: Meet the future needs and demand of users for both services and amenities described in the Major Update to the TDP (2007–2016).

During the TDP development process, specific transit service target areas were identified by TPO staff to be focus areas for new service development. Five areas were selected including:

- Area 1: Between Silver Spring Boulevard to the north, SW 60th Avenue to the west, SW 66th Street to the south, and SW 27th Avenue to the east. Specific corridors in Area 1 include SW 60th Avenue/Silver Spring Boulevard, 38th Street, and the southern portion of SR 200.
- Area 2: North of SR 200 and west of SW 60th Avenue. Corridors that are located within Area 2 include SW 80th Avenue/38th Street, and the southern portion of SR 200.

- Area 3: Bounded by SW 66th Avenue to the north, SR 200 to the east, CR 484 to the south, and I-75 to the east. Corridors that run through Area 3 include SW 49th Avenue/95th Street/SW 60th Avenue, SW 103rd Street/62nd Avenue, and southern sections of SR 200.
- Area 4: Marion Oaks area. Corridors in Area 4 include CR 484 and Marion Oaks.
- Area 5: Belleview area. Corridors bisecting this area include US 301, SR 35/62nd Avenue/102nd Place, and Abshire Boulevard/110th Street/Oak Road.

SunTran Ocala/Marion 2007 TDSP Update

The Ocala/Marion 2007 TDSP update was completed previously in 2006. The TDSP is used by the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) and the Local Coordinating Board (LCB) to maintain and/or improve transportation services for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) and to serve as a framework for performance evaluation. The TDSP is updated annually and submitted to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) for final approval. Marion County services under the TD program are provided funding from state TD funds, local revenues, and private sources.

Marion County Senior Services (MCSS) has been designated as the Marion County CTC for all non-emergency medical transportation and for those needing wheelchairs or other assistance. MCSS operates transportation services under the name Marion Transit Services (MTS). MTS provides door-to-door paratransit services to meet numerous transportation needs for medical, life sustaining, educational, work, business, and recreational activities for Marion County's TD citizens as well as members of other program recipients in Marion County.

The goals, objectives, and strategies that were developed as part of the TDSP are described below.

Goal 1: Provide increased mobility for transportation disadvantaged services using the MCSS system and promote an increase in ridership.

Objective 1.1: Provide transit or demand response services to 10% of the transportation disadvantaged population by 2012.

Objective 1.2: Provide the ADA-eligible population with paratransit service that is comparable to the service provided by the fixed-route system.

Objective 1.3: Comply with all applicable ADA requirements.

Objective 1.4: Never decline service to any transportation disadvantaged individual due to lack of availability of ADA-accessible vehicles.

Goal 2: Maximize coordination and efficiency of transportation disadvantaged

services with SunTran fixed route services and private transportation providers to better serve the entire population of Marion County.

Objective 2.1: Transition 25% of Marion Transit Services exclusive ridership, at least partially, to Fixed-Route services.

Objective 2.2: Ensure seamless coordination between Marion Transit Services and private transportation systems by 2012 to eliminate duplication or fragmentation of services for in county and out of county transportation.

Goal 3: Provide for the most cost-effective transportation services possible.

Objective 3.1: Hold maintenance costs at less than 20% of total system costs. Minimize costs required to operate and administer transportation services.

Objective 3.2: Maintain annual operating cost per passenger mile of under $18.00.

Objective 3.3: Achieve an operation ratio (farebox revenues/total operating expenses) of at least 20% for fixed-route and demand-responsive service.

Objective 3.4: Maintain financial support of transportation disadvantaged services consistent with the financial plan in the Major Update for the TDP (2007–2016).

Goal 4: Provide for the most comprehensive transportation services possible to serve all transportation disadvantaged residents of Marion County.

Objective 4.1: Meet the future needs and demand of users for both services and amenities described in the Major Update to the TDP (2007–2016).

Objective 4.2: Re-evaluate transit services for the transportation disadvantaged annually.

An implementation plan was also developed to phase potential service improvements over the five-year period.

Ocala/Marion County 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update

The 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is the fundamental planning document for long-range transportation system development in Marion County. The projects included in the LRTP will use federal and state funds and may be pursued by the TPO over the next 25 years. The plan must be "cost feasible"; therefore, financial resources that will cover the cost of the projects must be identified. The TPO has assumed local gas tax collections and impact fees as a portion of the projected revenues included in the LRTP Cost Feasible Plan.

The LRTP update had an extensive public involvement process, which included a program called "Strings and Ribbons." The Strings and Ribbons program offered citizens an opportunity to learn about the transportation planning process and how projects are developed and funded. The process included interactive, hands-on activities in which participants purchase transportation improvements that they think are important to the overall transportation system over the next 25 years.

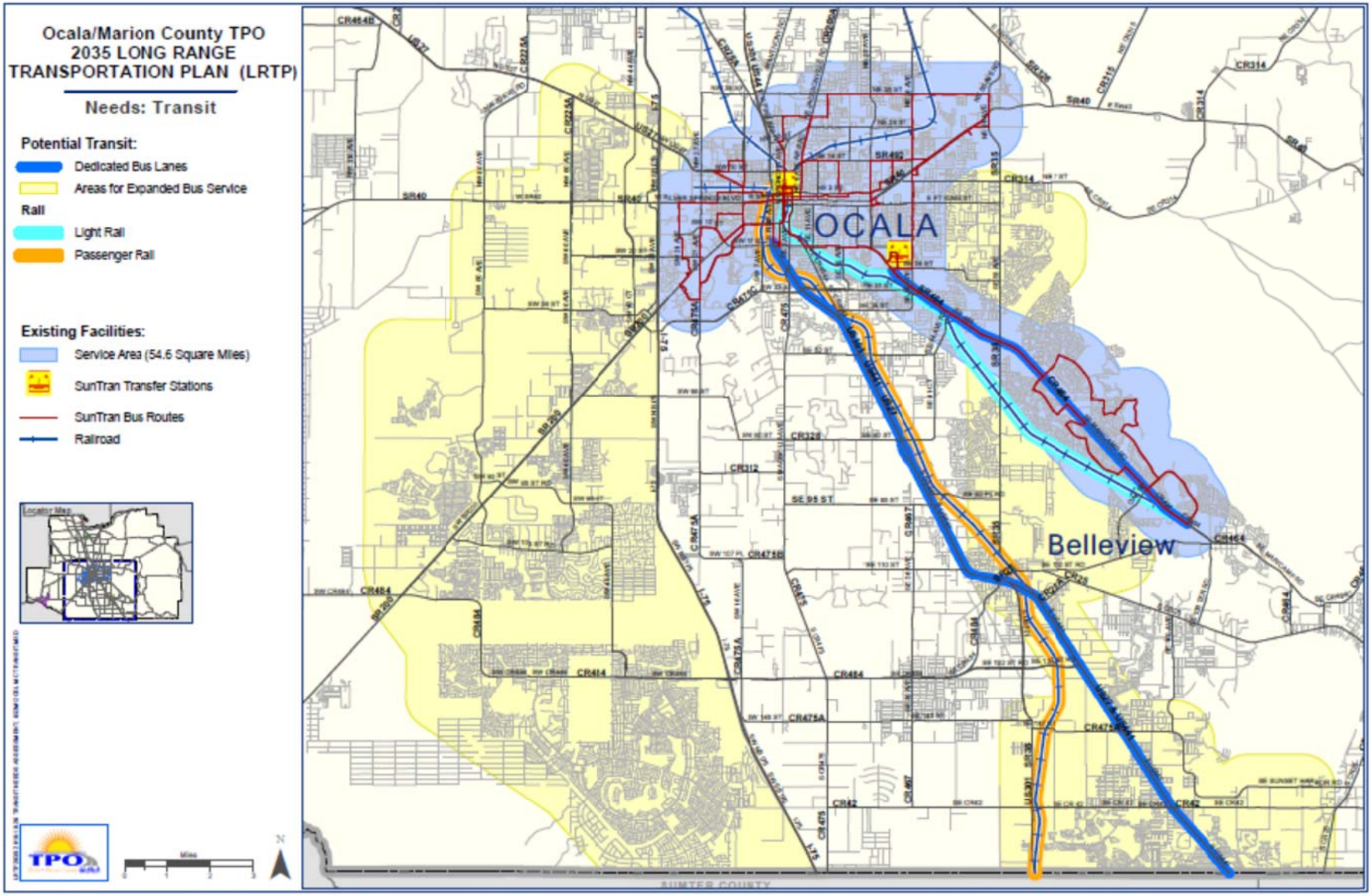
Transit projects that are included in the 2035 LRTP Needs Assessment are listed below and depicted on Map 8-1:

- Expanded bus service to west of the City of Ocala to the CR 484 and SR 200 intersection and south to the Sumter County line.
- Expanded bus service to the east of Ocala passed SR 35 and south to Belleview and the Sumter County line.
- Dedicated bus lane along US 27/US 441.
- Dedicated bus lane along CR 464.
- Passenger rail from the City of Ocala to the Sumter County line.
- Light rail from the City of Ocala to CR 464 (east of Belleview).

Ocala 2035 Vision

The Ocala 2035 Vision was developed to describe how the community wants the city to look and function in the future. As part of the development process and to achieve greater public participation, the City of Ocala formed the Community Form & Design Visioning Leadership Group. The group comprised a diverse group of citizens who were responsible for actively encouraging other citizens to participate in the vision process. The group also evaluated all public comments and feedback received during the public meetings and prepared the final Ocala 2035 Vision recommendations and implementation strategies.

The Ocala 2035 Vision provides a roadmap for the future, built upon community consensus to promote continued support and implementation over time. The recommendations of the Ocala 2035 Vision will be used to establish priorities for future decision making. Transit and mobility-related strategies from the Ocala 2035 Vision are listed below by design topic.


Ocala/Marion County TPO
2035 LONG RANGE
TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)
Needs: Transit
Potential Transit:
Dedicated Bus Lanes
Areas for Expanded Bus Service
Rail
Light Rail
Passenger Rail
Existing Facilities:
Service Area (54.6 Square Miles)
SunTran Transfer Stations
SunTran Bus Routes
Railroad
OCALA
Belleview
SUMTER COUNTY

General Strategies

- Conduct a study to evaluate redevelopment potential of the West Ocala area (Downtown to I-75, SR 200 north to City limits).
    - Create Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) and/or other programs to promote revitalization of sub-areas within West Ocala. (Year 2011)
- Redevelop the west side of Pine Avenue as High Intensity to visually, physically, socially, and economically connect east and west. (Years 2012 and ongoing)
- Conduct a study to evaluate redevelopment potential of the Tuscawilla Park area.
    - Create CRAs and/or other programs to promote revitalization. (Year 2011)
- Establish joint planning areas with Marion County to promote the Vision as it relates to areas adjacent to the City limits and implementation of regional mobility efforts. (Year 2011)

Urban Form & Open Space Strategies

- Implement recommendations of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan to identify, acquire, and program new parks, trails, and open spaces in the City. Identify, reserve, and/or acquire right-of-way needed to create a connected park system. (Year 2011 and ongoing)
- Maintain an inventory of vacant or underutilized properties with existing zoning or future land use classifications that will support mixed use development. (Year 2012 and ongoing)
- Maintain an inventory of vacant or underutilized properties with development potential adjacent to or within one-quarter mile of a transit corridor depicted on the vision plan. (Year 2012 and ongoing)

Building & Site Design Strategies

- Create an incentive program to encourage infill, development, or redevelopment. (Year 2011-2015)

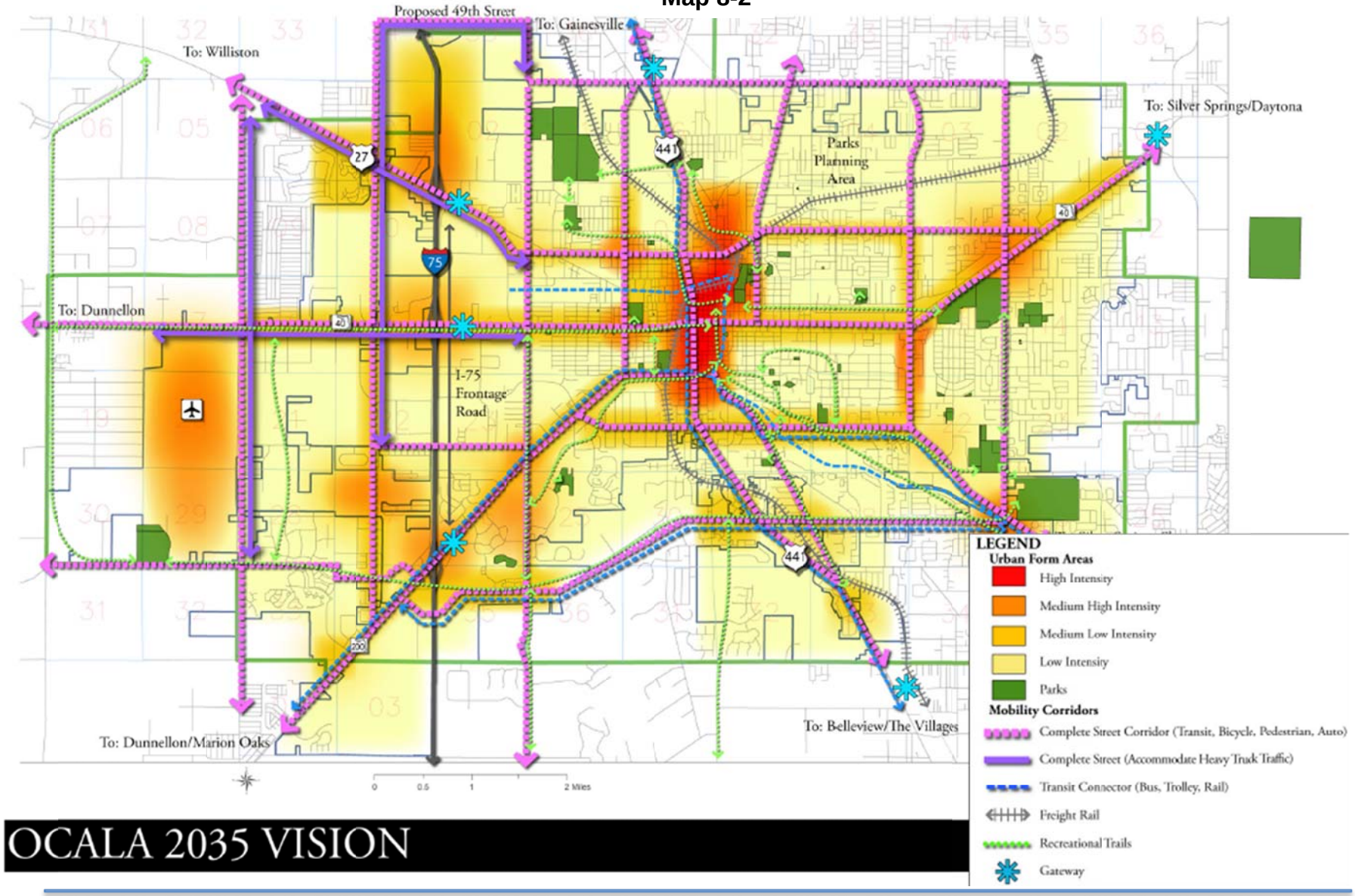
Mobility & Connectivity Strategies

- Develop Streetscape Master Plans, including landscape and hardscape details, to improve visual aesthetics of City gateway corridors, including SR 200, SR 40, US 27, and US 441. Coordinate with FDOT and Marion County to ensure that all applicable transportation design criteria are met. (Years 2012–2015)
- Provide for an interconnected street system to relieve and distribute traffic volumes as an alternative to roadway widening. (Year 2011 and ongoing)
- Require Complete Street evaluations for the viability of multimodal transportation and desirable visual aesthetics. (Year 2011)

- Establish a citywide sidewalk improvement program to provide the pedestrian connectivity desired in the vision.
    - Identify areas of the city that do not have sidewalks or have disconnected sidewalk links. (Years 2011–2015)
    - Prioritize sidewalk program to maximize connectivity and support neighborhood sub-area plans and Parks Master Plan. (Years 2011–2015)
    - Acquire easements for sidewalks where they do not exist. (Years 2011–2015)
    - Include sidewalk improvements in the annual Capital Improvement Program. (Years 2011–2015)
- Identify, reserve, and/or acquire transit corridor right-of-way for regional transit system connections to Belleview, Silver Springs Shores, Dunnellon, the Villages, Gainesville, Orlando, and Jacksonville. (Years 2011–2035)
- Identify, reserve, and/or acquire transit corridor right-of-way for transit system connections in the urban core. (Years 2011–2015)
- Provide trolley service that connects the North Magnolia area, Downtown, and the hospital district. (Years 2016–2035)
- Provide trolley service that connects West Ocala to downtown. (Years 2016–2035)
- Establish minimum residential densities and commercial intensities to support the use of public transportation along Complete Streets and Transit Corridors depicted on the Vision map. Incorporate with future mobility plans. (Year 2011)
- Evaluate opportunities to reestablish passenger rail service connected to the national Amtrak rail network. (Years 2011–2016)

The 2035 Vision Plan provides a map with an overview of the ideas presented by public input and the Leadership Group. Map 8-2 shows Urban Form Areas and Mobility Corridors.

Map 8-2


Proposed 49th Street
To: Gainesville
To: Williston
To: Silver Springs/Daytona
Parks Planning Area
To: Dunnellon
I-75 Frontage Road
To: Dunnellon/Marion Oaks
To: Belleview/The Villages
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
OCALA 2035 VISION
LEGEND
Urban Form Areas
High Intensity
Medium High Intensity
Medium Low Intensity
Low Intensity
Parks
Mobility Corridors
Complete Street Corridor (Transit, Bicycle, Pedestrian, Auto)
Complete Street (Accommodate Heavy Truck Traffic)
Transit Connector (Bus, Trolley, Rail)
Freight Rail
Recreational Trails
Gateway

Marion County Comprehensive Plan

Marion County has goals, objectives, and policies within the Transportation and Land Use Elements of its comprehensive plan relative to the promotion and support of transit use. The goals of the Transportation Element is to develop a balanced and sustainable transportation system improving access and travel choices through enhancement of roads, public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems, aviation and multimodal facilities. Mixed-use projects and development patterns that promote shorter trip lengths and generate fewer vehicle miles traveled are encouraged and promoted by the County through the Future Land Use Element and Capital Improvements Element (Policy 1A.1.7).

All new development and redevelopment within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) will require greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction measures. Pursuant to Policy 1A.1.8, the following strategies will be implemented to ensure compatible uses that promote shorter trip lengths and generate fewer vehicle miles per capita by February 10, 2012:

- Require interconnected developments for vehicular and pedestrian connection between developments.
- Use access management standards to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).
- Allow innovative site designs and roadway configurations to minimize the number of lane miles needed while maximizing access.
- Minimize gated communities, which prevent existing or future roadway interconnections.
- Promote use of public transit by requiring development along transit corridors and routes to accommodate mass transit and provide for park-and-ride areas, sheltered bus/rail stops, and bus turnouts, as appropriate.
- Discourage the use of single-occupancy vehicles by adopting reduced parking requirements and by limiting roadway capacity on key roads, as appropriate, as a disincentive to automobile travel.
- Protect existing railroad corridors and facilitate the location of industrial and commercial employment centers along those corridors, and encourage increased use of rail transport by industrial and commercial enterprises.
- Encourage walking and bicycle use by requiring bikeways, trails, and pedestrian paths for development with the UGB.

The County also has an objective to ensure adequate rights-of-way for roadway, mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian pathways and protect existing and future rights-of-way from building encroachment. To meet this objective, the County has developed policies for minimum right-of-way requirements in the Land Development Code (LCD) and rights-of-

way acquisition (Policies 1A.2.1 through 1A.2.7). Where site and location analysis determines that there is a need, the County may provide or require the provision of bicycle and/or pedestrian ways and/or other alternative modes of transportation through the LDC to connect residential, recreational, schools, and commercial areas internally and to adjacent properties unless such facilities would create a safety hazard.

Policy 1A.3.3 requires new residential and non-residential development and redevelopment projects generating more than 1,000 net new trips accessing arterial or collector roadways to enhance community health, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase connectivity, and minimize trips on major roadways through the provision of the following facilities.

Residential Development

- Deeding of land or conveyance of required easements generally parallel to a property's frontage of residential development located on arterial or collector roadways to the county, as needed, for the construction of public sidewalks, bus turn-out facilities, and/or bus shelters.
- Interconnected local streets, drive accesses, pedestrian networks, and bicycle networks that provide access between land uses (including non-residential uses) and direct routes to transit to reduce congestion. These projects include, but are not limited to, State and County arterials and collectors. Developers may deed land for right-of-way and/or construct roadway extensions to County specifications.

Non-Residential Development

- Deeding of land or conveyance of required easements generally parallel to a property's frontage of non-residential development located on arterial or collector roadways to the county, as needed, for the construction of public sidewalks, bus turn-out facilities, and/or bus shelters.
- Development of, or participation in, a transportation demand management (TDM) program that provides funding or incentives for transportation modes other than single occupant vehicle to reduce VMT. Such TDM programs must use a methodology approved by the County and may require performance monitoring and reporting.

Marion County's Mass Transit Sub-Element goal is to coordinate with the TPO to undertake action to serve transportation disadvantaged persons with an efficient mass transit system, provide for the development of a rational and integrated multimodal transportation system, provide management support to coordinate all components of the mass transit service system and relevant comprehensive plan elements, and preserve options to promote the development of long-range transit alternatives.

In Objective 1b.7 and its implementing policies, the County's objective is to have all areas within an UGB identified in the Future Transportation Corridor Map served by transit. Within a UGB, availability of transit facilities must be one of the criteria used to evaluate proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments. In addition, Marion County must require that transit facilities, such as turn-out bays, preemptive signals, high-occupancy vehicle lanes, bus-only lanes, and transit shelter locations identified within future transit corridors and existing routes lacking adequate facilities, are included in roadway design proposals for the expansion of arterials or collectors. For Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) and for new developments, Marion County may require site and building design to be coordinated with public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

The County must provide connections between and within land uses in order to increase pedestrian mobility and transit accessibility where opportunities and resources permit. A list of transit-related short-term (five-year) and long-term (2035) strategies for implementation of this policy are listed below (Policy 1b.8.7).

Short-Term Strategies

- Improvements to existing transit routes including increased service levels.
- Connections of established transit stops to the sidewalk network.

Long-Term Strategies

- New transit fixed facilities such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

In addition, Policy 1b.9.1 includes parking strategies to enhance multimodal opportunities, including locating bus stops at existing, major parking facilities (i.e., malls and shopping centers).

The County's comprehensive plan focuses on the provision of future transit service for new development and redevelopment through the LDC to develop a balanced and sustainable transportation system. Strategies have also been included to encourage multimodal opportunities and the availability of transit services within the UGB.

City of Ocala Comprehensive Plan

The City of Ocala's adopted Comprehensive Plan was last updated in Winter 2009 and has several goals, objectives, and policies that may impact transit services and/or planning. In the Transportation Element, the following goals, objectives, and policies are specific to transit and are therefore pertinent to SunTran and transportation disadvantaged services.

Goal 1: To create and maintain a safe, efficient, and aesthetic transportation system that encourages multi-modal transportation.

Objective 8: Incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies into the land use and transportation planning process to reduce travel demand.

Policy 8.1: Develop a Commuter Assistance Program through coordination with FDOT, TPO, and the TDM clearinghouse at the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR).

Policy 8.2: Encourage new development and existing businesses to participate in TDM strategies such as carpooling, vanpooling, parking management, telecommuting, flexible work hours, bicycle, and mass transit provisions.

Objective 9: Design roads to accommodate alternative transportation modes, aesthetics and safety.

Objective 10: Develop and maintain adequate access routes to the airport and rail service that is properly integrated with the transportation system shown on the transportation map series.

Policy 10.3: Coordinate intermodal management of surface transportation within airports, rail service, and related facilities.

Objective 11: Preserve the potential expansion of the airport to accommodate future growth in quantitative and qualitative terms.

Policy 11.6: Establish a transit stop at the airport at such time that commercial service becomes available.

Policy 11.9: As an integral component of the airport master planning process, the City shall make provisions for regional transportation facilities for the efficient use and operation of the Airport.

Objective 12: Provide Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) for the city service area that will increase mobility while increasing safety.

Goal 3: Provide an efficient and safe public transit system that is accessible to all citizens.

Objective 1: Provide safe and efficient public transit services based upon existing and proposed major trip generators and attractors.

Policy 1.1: All development and redevelopment projects will be required to address transit amenities such as bus stops and accessibility, where appropriate.

Policy 1.2: Identify future transit needs by participating in the Ocala/Marion County TPO TDP updates.

Policy 1.3: By the year 2003, the City will determine the feasibility of implementing a park and ride program in conjunction with the SunTran bus system through coordination with the Ocala/Marion TPO.

Policy 1.4: Construct sidewalks, wheelchair ramps, and improve access to bus stops at appropriate locations.

Goal 4: Direct growth to the Transportation Concurrency Exception Area/Urban Redevelopment Area, as shown on Map 5 of the Future Land Use Map Series, in order to discourage urban sprawl; reduce development pressures on rural lands; maximize the use of existing public facilities; and centralize commercial, governmental, retail, residential, and cultural activities.

Policy 1.2.3: The City shall adopt the following development standards as a means of encouraging alternative modes of transportation within the TCEA:

b. Construction of bus shelters or bus lighting using solar technology, built to City specifications.
c. Construction of bus turn-out facilities.
d. Payments to SunTran bus system, which either increase service frequency or add additional bus services.

Policy 2.3: All new developments within the TCEA that meet or exceed 200 linear feet of property frontage shall include sidewalks with benches. All new developments with the TCEA shall provide lighting either by way of solar powered lighting on covered benches or street lamps and shade trees, if applicable. If shade trees are not applicable to that area, covered benches with solar lighting are required. These covered benches can be used as bus transportation stops promoting multi-modal transportation.

The review of transit planning documents was conducted to enhance the understanding of existing plans and programs that are relevant to public transportation in Marion County. In addition to providing guidance for the goals and objectives, the background review also helped identify relevant data and information available from existing sources. The guidance and information were used to support the development of this TDP.

STATE PLAN AND POLICIES

Florida Transportation Plan (FTP)

In 2010, FDOT completed the 2060 Florida Transportation Plan Update, which looks at a 50-year transportation planning horizon. The 2060 FTP calls for a fundamental change in how and where Florida invests in transportation. The FTP defines transportation goals, objectives, and strategies to make Florida's economy more competitive, communities more livable, and the environment more sustainable for future generations. Pertinent long range goals and objectives include the following:

- **Goal**: Invest in transportation systems to support a prosperous, globally-competitive economy.
    - **Objective**: Improve transportation connectivity for people and freight to established and emerging regional employment centers in rural and urban areas.
    - **Objective**: Invest in transportation capacity improvements to meet future demand for moving people and freight.
- **Goal**: Make transportation decisions to promote responsible environmental stewardship.
    - **Objective**: Plan and develop transportation systems and facilities in a manner which protects and, where feasible, restores the function and character of the natural environment and avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts.
    - **Objective**: Plan and develop transportation systems to reduce energy consumption, improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Goal**: Maintain and operate Florida's transportation system proactively.
    - **Objective**: Achieve and maintain a state of good repair for transportation assets for all modes.
    - **Objective**: Minimize damage to infrastructure from transportation vehicles.
    - **Objective**: Optimize the efficiency of the transportation system for all modes.
- **Goal:** Improve mobility and connectivity for people and freight.
    - **Objective**: Expand transportation options for residents, visitors, and businesses.

- **Objective**: Reinforce and transform Florida's Strategic Intermodal System facilities to provide multi-modal options for moving people and freight.
- **Objective**: Expand and integrate regional public transit systems in Florida's urban areas.
- **Objective**: Increase the efficiency and reliability of travel for people and freight.
- **Objective**: Integrate modal infrastructure, technologies, and payment systems to provide seamless connectivity for passenger and freight trips from origin to destination.

In summary, the FTP supports the development of state, regional, and local transit services. The growth in Florida requires new and innovative approaches by all modes to meet the needs today and in the future.

State Growth Management Legislation (House Bill 7207)

House Bill (HB) 7207, the Community Planning Act, was signed into law on June 2, 2011. That bill is intended to stimulate Florida's economic development and economic recovery by taking state government out of the development business and giving the responsibility of community planning back to local communities. The landmark legislation is the biggest change to growth management laws in many years, repealing most of the State-mandated growth management planning laws that have governed development activities within Florida since the original Growth Management Act of 1975. As of June 3, 2011, the role of state and regional agencies in the review of comprehensive plan amendments and the time needed to process the majority of plan amendments has been significantly reduced, and many development and plan amendment hurdles have been modified throughout the state, transportation concurrency being one of the main hurdles. State-mandated concurrency requirements have been repealed and, consequently, a large share of growth management responsibility has shifted to cities and counties.

The new legislation also supersedes Senate Bill (SB) 360, the Community Renewal Act, which required the preparation of mobility plans within dense urban land areas (DULAs) and Transportation Concurrency Exemption Areas (TCEAs). Instead, a local jurisdiction interested in implementing its own concurrency ordinance or mobility plan can still do so, but will have limitations on how to implement and enforce the ordinance. HB 7207 strengthens legislative language that supports multi-modal approaches to transportation by stating that Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements "shall provide for a safe, convenient multi-modal transportation system" (F.S. Section 163.3177 [6b]).

FDOT Work Program

FDOT annually develops a Five-Year Work Program. The Work Program is a project-specific list of transportation activities and improvements developed in cooperation with the TPO and local transportation agency. The Work Program must be consistent, to the maximum extent feasible, with the capital improvement elements of local government comprehensive plans.

The Tentative Work Program is presented to the State Legislature at the beginning of each legislative session. It identifies transportation projects and programmed funding by year and is adopted by July 1 each year.

Once adopted, the Work Program is used by FDOT to develop the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that is used at the federal level to ensure that planning efforts are consistent with federal guidelines. All transit funding coming through FTA must be included in the STIP before a grant award can be finalized and approved. Close coordination with FDOT on the programming of federal funds is required in the development of the Tentative Work Program, as well as throughout the year as federal adjustments and allocations are announced.

State transit planning and programs encourage the growth of public transportation services and support the increasing local investment in transit systems. The State has several funding programs that are available if local areas are able to commit to a dedicated funding source for system development and expansion. Legislation passed over the past few years indicates that the State plans to continue to foster a multimodal approach to transportation investment.

Strategic Intermodal System

FDOT has developed a transportation system designed to enhance Florida's economic competitiveness. This system, known as the Strategic Intermodal System or SIS, is composed of transportation facilities and services of statewide and inter-regional significance. In 2003, the Florida Legislature enacted a law establishing the SIS. This new system represents a fundamental shift in the way Florida views the development and financing of transportation facilities and services.

The SIS was designated through the work of statewide transportation partners in 2003 under the Omnibus Transportation Bill. The Legislature recommended partners and

enacted objective criteria and thresholds, based on quantitative measures of transportation and economic activity. Two types of facilities were established:

- **SIS Facilities** – facilities that play a critical role in moving people and goods to and from other states and nations, as well as between major economic regions in Florida.
- **Emerging SIS Facilities** – facilities that do not currently meet adopted SIS criteria but are experiencing growing levels of activity.

The SIS corridors in Marion County are I-75, US 301, and SR 326 from I-75 to US 301. Emerging SIS corridors in Marion County include US 27 and SR 326/SR 40 from US 301 to the Lake County line. State financial strategies emphasize funding for SIS facilities, along with linkages between SIS facilities, including express bus service on highway corridors and bus routes serving intermodal facilities. The 2040 SIS Multi-Modal Unfunded Needs Plan was completed in October 2011 and is the first update to the 2006 SIS Multi-Modal Unfunded Needs Plan. There are no unfunded transit improvements for Marion County included in the 2040 SIS Multi-Modal Unfunded Needs Plan.

The Ocala/Marion TPO will continue to coordinate with FDOT to understand specific implications of the SIS regarding public transportation. Since significant State funding will be allocated to the SIS, it will be important to identify transit facilities that should be considered for inclusion as an SIS or emerging SIS facility.

State of Florida TD 5-Year/20-Year Plan

Developed by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), this plan is required under the Florida Statutes and includes the following elements:

- Explanation of the Florida Coordinated Transportation System
- Five-Year Report Card
- Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability Review
- Strategic Vision and Goals, Objectives, and Measures

The long-range and five-year strategic visions were reviewed and used for guidance and are indicated below.

Long-Range Strategic Vision

Create a strategy for the Florida CTD to support the development of a universal transportation system with the following features:

- A coordinated, cost-effective multimodal transportation system delivered through public-private partnerships.
- A single, uniform funding system with a single eligibility determination process.
- A sliding scale of fare payment based on a person's ability to pay.
- Use of electronic fare media for all passengers.
- Services that are designed and implemented regionally (both inter-county and inter-city) throughout the state.

Five-Year Strategic Vision

Develop and field-test a model community transportation system for persons who are transportation disadvantaged by incorporating the following features:

- Statewide coordination of community transportation services using Advanced Public Transportation Systems including Smart Traveler Technology, Smart Vehicle Technology, and Smart Intermodal Systems.
- Statewide coordination and consolidation of community transportation funding sources.
- A statewide information management system for tracking passenger eligibility determination.
- Integration of Smart Vehicle Technology on a statewide multimodal basis to improve vehicle and fleet planning, scheduling, and operations. This effort includes vehicle and ridership data collection, electronic fare media, and geographic information system (GIS) applications.
- Development of a multimodal transportation network to optimize the transportation system as a whole, using Smart Intermodal Systems. This feature would be available in all areas of the state via electronic access

FEDERAL PLANS AND POLICIES

MAP-21

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012, provides needed funds and transforms the policy and programmatic framework for investments to guide the growth and development of the nation's vital transportation infrastructure.

This summary reviews highlights of some of the key policies and programs.

- Expand the National Highway System (NHS) to incorporate principal arterials not previously included.
- Focus on national transportation goals, increase the accountability and transparency of the Federal highway programs, and improve transportation investment decision making through performance-based planning and programming.
- Creates jobs and supports economic growth by authorizing $82 billion in Federal funding for FYs 2013 and 2014 for road, bridge, bicycling, and walking improvements.
- Support the Department of Transportation's (DOT) aggressive safety agenda.
- Streamline Federal highway transportation programs.
- Accelerates project delivery and promotes innovation.

Clean Air Act of 1990

The Clean Air Act of 1990 and subsequent amendments determine the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). NAAQS are standards based on the amount of particulate matter in the air, measured in parts per million of the following pollutants:

- Carbon Monoxide (CO)
- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)
- Ozone (O_3)
- Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)
- Lead (Pb)
- Particulate Matter (PM)

On January 6, 2010, EPA proposed revisions to the NAAQS for ground-level ozone. The revisions are based on scientific evidence about ozone and its effects on people, sensitive trees, and plants. The proposed revisions would affect two types of ozone standards. The first deals with protection of public health, including the health of at-risk populations such as children, people with asthma, and older adults. The secondary deals with protection of public welfare and the environment, including sensitive vegetation and ecosystems. Specifically, the EPA proposes to revise the existing ozone standards and update the Air Quality Index (AQI) for ozone.

An area meeting NAAQS standards is classified as an "attainment area." EPA's reconsideration of the Clean Air Act health standard for ground level ozone is currently

going through interagency review led by OMB. Following completion of this final step, EPA will finalize its reconsideration. Due to the current state of the economy, and the financial burden that higher environmental standards are expected to place on corporations, President Obama announced September 2, 2011, that the EPA's tighter standards would not be implemented. The anticipated implementation of the new standards will not be until 2013.

Proposed Title VI and Environmental Justice Circulars

FTA is proposing changes to the Title VI and Environmental Justice (EJ) Circulars, with an anticipated implementation date of June 2012. The proposed changes will likely impact transit agencies, MPOs, and state DOTs. The proposed EJ Circular moves EJ language to the new circular with the exception of the service and fare equity analysis section that remains in the Title VI Circular. In addition, the EJ Circular provides further clarification and additional details on the various steps. Notable changes to the proposed Title VI Circular include the following:

1. All recipients, including MPOs, are required to submit Title VI programs every three years.
2. Title VI program must be approved by grantee's Board of Directors or equivalent before it is submitted to FTA.
3. Grantees must submit all documents that comprise a complete Title VI Program, even if the documents have not changed since the last submission.
4. Reporting requirements are based on whether the transit agency's annual operating budget is $10 million or greater or $3 million or greater in discretionary capital grants rather than operating in a large urbanized area and receiving Section 5307 funds.
5. Transit agencies with annual operating budgets of less than $10 million and not receiving $3 million or more in discretionary capital grants would not be required to evaluate service and fare equity changes or monitor transit service.

DOT Livability Initiative and Federal Sustainable Communities Program

All of FTA's programs work to enhance the livability of communities by providing transportation options for people and communities across the country. FTA's grant programs provide flexibility for communities to make investments in transit as part of multimodal transportation networks, with connections to improved facilities for walking and bicycling, and encouragement of transit oriented developments. The programs below represent highlights of the policies and provisions specifically intended to help communities

improve their quality of life by identifying investments in transit. Most of these policies/provisions do not have associated designated funding sources. Rather, these elements are eligible for federal transit funds under appropriate FTA grant programs.

- **Transit-Oriented Development** – FTA encourages Transit-Oriented Developments (TODs) through its grants, programs, research, technical assistance, and various partnerships. TOD is defined as compact, mixed-use development near transit facilities and high-quality walking environments. Transit elements of TOD are eligible for FTA funding.
- **Joint Development –** Joint development is a specific form of transit-oriented development that is often project-specific, taking place on, above, or adjacent to transit agency property that was acquired (in whole or in part) with federal transit funds. Joint development activities are subject to FTA review for eligibility of transit funding.
- **Transit Enhancements** – The term "transit enhancement" (TE) means projects or project elements that are designed to enhance mass transportation service or use and are physically or functionally related to transit facilities. FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Grant Program requires at least one percent of money to be used for transit enhancement. Other transit enhancement funding is also available under the Surface Transportation Program (STP).
- **Bike and Pedestrian** – Funding from FTA grant programs can be used for bicycle facilities and access and pedestrian-related enhancements connected to transit facilities.
- **Intercity Bus (5311(f))** – The Intercity Bus Program under FTA's Non-Urbanized Area Formula Grant Program supports the connections between non-urbanized areas and the larger regional or national system of intercity bus service.
- **Art in Transit** – Art in Transit is an example of the quality of life initiatives that FTA supports through the Urbanized Area Formula Grant Program, STP, and other funding sources. FTA program funds may be used for the costs of design, fabrication, and installation of art that is part of a transit facility.

Section 9

SITUATION APPRAISAL

The requirements for a major update of a TDP include the need for a situation appraisal of the environment in which the transit agency operates. The purpose of this appraisal is to help develop an understanding of SunTran's transit operating environment in the context of the following elements:

- Socioeconomics
- Travel behavior
- Land use
- Public involvement
- Organizational issues
- Technical issues
- Funding

The assessment of these elements resulted in the identification of possible implications for Ocala-Marion County's transit program. The assessment and resulting implications are drawn from the following sources:

- Review of relevant plans, studies, and programs prepared at all levels of government (see Section 8).
- Results of technical evaluation performed as part of the TDP planning process (throughout the TDP).
- Outcomes of discussions with TPO staff.
- Outcomes of public outreach activities.

Issues, trends, and implications are summarized for each of the major elements in the remainder of this section.

SOCIOECONOMIC TRENDS

According to data from the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), Marion County's population is projected to increase by 20 percent from 2010 to 2020 (398,200 to 469,300). To better assess the impact of the growth in population on transportation needs, it is important to understand which transit-dependent populations and markets could be impacted or may benefit from public transportation services. The market assessments presented in Technical Memorandum #3, including the traditional and discretionary market assessments, indicate that many of the core areas of the county that are considered

transit-supportive are currently being served by SunTran. However, a number of areas, primarily on the southwest side of Ocala, with population from traditional transit market segments are currently not served by SunTran.

Implications – SunTran must strive to meet the county's demand for public transportation as the population continues to grow. Traditional and discretionary market segments are anticipated to grow consistent with the overall population growth within the county. SunTran should continue to target its base ridership, which consists of traditional bus users, while at the same time make efforts to gain discretionary riders. SunTran's continued success depends on its ability to tailor services that will expand its rider base and capture new transit markets and riders.

TRAVEL BEHAVIOR

The analysis of 2010 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data from the census indicates that approximately 52.8 percent of the workers residing in Marion County also work in Marion County. Approximately 47 percent of workers commute to neighboring counties, with Orange County ranking first among counties to which Marion County workers are traveling. According to the 2010 LEHD data, for workers within Marion County, approximately 36 percent work within the Ocala metropolitan area.

Implications – SunTran will continually be challenged by the need to provide service to those needing public transportation but living in areas that are low-density and/or are not transit-supportive. Alternative transportation options, such as vanpool and carpool, may be promoted as potential travel options until SunTran reaches such areas in the future. Corridors with the highest transit trip potential should receive priority when considering bus service expansions. Other corridors experiencing high volumes of transit use may be targeted for other service improvements or modifications.

LAND USE

During the Ocala 2035 Vision process, public feedback included the following key issues in regards to the land use within Ocala:

- A lack of high density, mixed-use development.
- Roadways forming barriers that divide the city.

- Regulatory barriers that prevent flexibility in design.
- A lack of architectural standards to define local community.

Consequently, Marion County has adopted a vision plan for future integration with its comprehensive plan. The County has also adopted an urban growth boundary to create a more dense land use pattern, particularly within the city of Ocala. The vision plan establishes a "complete street" policy, with efforts to review and create a Master Plan that includes landscape and hardscape details. This plan will also address retrofitting existing roads and the development of new roads to include mobility features for transit, bicycle, pedestrians, and automobiles. An additional strategy identified by the 2035 Vision includes establishing minimum residential densities and commercial intensities to support the use of public transportation along identified complete streets and transit corridors. The 2035 Vision also intends to continue developing the transit system to connect to outlying communities and other counties.

In addition, land use policy considerations at the state level have changed in recent years. By passing HB 7207, the State placed responsibility for transportation planning and growth management in the hands of local planners. This allows Marion County, the City of Ocala, and SunTran to work together to leverage their local resources and funding to best suit local conditions. This bill also requires that Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements provide "convenient multimodal transportation systems."

Implications – SunTran must continue to participate in and coordinate with ongoing efforts that encourage transit-supportive development throughout Marion County. SunTran should work to ensure that land development policies and land development codes require transit infrastructure to support adequate levels of transit service. The City of Ocala and Marion County both have made a multimodal transit system a priority, so SunTran should be poised to leverage this investment to the best of its ability, particularly in coordination with the Ocala 2035 Vision plan.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

As part of the TDP process, SunTran has undertaken several activities to garner public input on future transit enhancements. In February 2012, two discussion group meetings were held to discuss SunTran enhancement priorities and user and operator satisfaction with the current transit system. The activities were conducted to provide a forum for the public to express concerns and generate ideas regarding the most important needs for the

SunTran system. Additionally, an on-board survey of SunTran fixed-route buses was conducted at around the same time to collect rider input on current transit services and to provide direction for future improvements, marketing, and policies. Finally, a series of interviews with stakeholders and bus operators was conducted to discuss existing and future service characteristics and needs. In addition to the efforts conducted as part of the Ocala/Marion TDP update, a number of other public outreach efforts were conducted recently. While not directly performed by SunTran, public involvement was a very large part of the Ocala 2035 Vision process, and this public involvement effort identified a strong general opinion among the participants that transit service needed to be increased and enhanced throughout the city, and that transit corridors needed to be prioritized. General conclusions drawn from public involvement efforts conducted for the TDP as well as other efforts include the following:

- **Expand Service Coverage** – Public outreach participants expressed a desire for SunTran to expand its service coverage and reach new and underserved areas of Marion County. Need for service coverage along SR 200 and service west of I-75 was indicated as a service priority throughout the public outreach efforts. Currently, there are only two routes that serve some parts of the SR 200 corridor (Purple and Orange), and neither route serves the SR 200 corridor west of I-75. There is currently no service in Ocala along I-75.

- **More Service Hours/Frequency** – Public feedback emphasized later service hours for all routes and Sunday service as high priorities. In addition, more frequent service was also a high priority with users. When asked during the SunTran on-board survey, respondents were least satisfied with lack of late service and service on Sundays.

- **Regional Connectivity** – Feedback received through public outreach efforts emphasized a need to connect Ocala with other municipalities, including Belleview. While stakeholders agreed that regional connectivity was important, some felt that prioritizing local connections first was more important.

- **Infrastructure** – The need for more transit infrastructure at bus stops was mentioned as another priority for the current transit system by the participants at public outreach efforts. SunTran needs to upgrade current bus stops by adding more benches, shelters, and amenities and to concentrate on maintaining them. Improving stop and station visibility and improving the accessibility to bus stops were also indicated as priorities.

- **Funding** – The majority of SunTran riders are transit-dependent; therefore, fare increases were met with mixed reactions when funding options were discussed with stakeholders and workshop attendees. Other funding options, such as local tax increases, were also discussed. While tax increases was an option that the public was willing to consider, they desired that other alternatives such as advertising, fare increases, and private revenues be explored and exhausted prior to resorting to a tax increase. They also wanted a clear and well-thought out plan for exactly what the tax increase would fund in the transit system.

Implications – SunTran should take public input received into account when prioritizing service improvements for Marion County. Across all public involvement efforts, a variety of improvements were identified, including, but not limited to, expanded service, infrastructure upgrades, and modifications to the existing structure of the SunTran fixed-route bus network. Important to the agency will be the need to balance the allocation of limited resources if and when these improvements are implemented. How to distribute public transportation service is a policy decision that the Ocala/Marion TPO will need to balance based on the availability of resources. One of the major strategic planning considerations for Ocala/Marion County is whether to enhance public transportation by extending service to new areas, anticipating that new ridership will be generated, or improving service and service delivery in the existing service areas.

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

The Ocala/Marion TPO is the administrative agency for SunTran and has contracted with McDonald Transit to perform day-to-day operations and management for the system. SunTran is currently the only fixed-route public transit provider in Marion County. Since operations began in 1998, SunTran has not completed an assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of current transit operations and identify opportunities for improvements through changes to its operations, marketing, and administration. Additionally, the TPO must coordinate with County and City governments to locate, permit, and build bus stops and other transit infrastructure/amenities within the right-of-way of the roadways along SunTran routes.

Implications – Based on the discussions that occurred during the TDP public involvement efforts regarding the efficiency of the current SunTran routes, the TPO should conduct a Comprehensive

Operational Analysis (COA) to assess the transit system. A COA will identify the productivity of existing routes and whether efficiencies can be gained as well as enable the County to make policy decisions and proceed with a clear vision for the future of SunTran. In addition, the TPO should work with County and City governments to develop a plan to improve bus stop infrastructure/amenities and access to them.

TECHNOLOGY

SunTran has implemented wireless technology on all of its buses. This technology provides in-vehicle service to all passengers and improves the customer service experience. However, SunTran lacks key technologies such as Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs) that can assist the system in keeping track of its ridership at the route level and assist in route-level performance monitoring.

In addition, the TPO is considering implementing queue jump lane technologies at selected intersections in Ocala. Queue jump lanes provide priority treatment to transit by letting buses bypass long queues at congested intersections. This transit priority technology uses special priority lanes, often right-hand turn lanes, and are often combined with a priority signal for bus that permit transit through movements at an intersection.

Implications – While wireless technology is provided on a systemwide basis, many on-board survey respondents were unaware that it existed and suggested it as a service improvement. At the time of the survey, WiFi service had just been implemented. Stakeholders also suggested that wireless service on buses would attract additional youth and choice riders. SunTran should consider additional advertising of its wireless availability so current and potential riders will be aware of its existence.

SunTran should also consider using other technologies such as Automated Passenger Counters (APCs) on its buses to enhance its ridership data collection and performance monitoring efforts. In addition, the TPO should continue reviewing the possibilities of implementing queue jump lane technologies at selected locations in Ocala, and a list of candidate intersections for queue jump lanes should be developed and assessed.

FUNDING

Securing a dedicated long-term funding source for public transportation services is a goal that many providers of transit have aspired to achieve. To date, such efforts have not been in the forefront in Marion County, and SunTran continues to be funded by a mix of federal, state, and local funds allocated on a year-by-year basis, including gas tax funds from the City of Ocala and ad valorem tax revenues from Marion County.

As the County works to balance its budget under the current economic climate, the TPO will have to continue to complete with City and County departments to maintain/increase existing funding levels. The prospects of finding another funding source in the near future are low, as stakeholder interviews conducted for the TDP revealed that they would support any new tax only as an absolute last resort, with stringent requirements to understand where and for what the tax would be spent. Stakeholders suggested public-private partnerships, advertising, and fare increases as alternative methods to raise additional funds. Consequently, the ability to expand services and meet transit demand and mobility needs throughout the county will be limited unless SunTran's share of the City/County budgets grows.

Implications – To expand service, funding levels will need to increase. The current economic climate has made the ability to create new revenue streams for the agency more difficult. In addition, the potential benefits from expanded and more frequent transit service on the business community need to be emphasized. Awareness of the returns on transit investment may positively influence any funding discussions with the private sector and could help form public-private partnerships to help fund transit in Ocala.

Section 10

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives are an integral part of any transportation plan because they provide the policy direction to achieve the community's vision. The goals and objectives presented here were prepared/updated based on review and assessment of existing conditions, feedback received during the public involvement process, and local and State transportation planning documents and policies. In addition, the Situation Appraisal conducted as part of this TDP also was reviewed to gain a better understanding of community goals and objectives relating to transit and mobility.

The goals and objectives for this TDP were developed consistent with the goals and objectives found in the adopted Ocala/Marion County TDP as well as other key plans, such as the Ocala/Marion County 2035 LRTP and the Ocala 2035 Vision plan.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement governing transit in the Ocala/Marion County area is as follows:

> To ensure the operation of a safe, efficient, and cost effective transportation system that meets the needs of Marion County's general public, including its transportation disadvantaged, while providing a system that is integrated with other modes of travel, including pedestrian, bicycle, and automobiles, as well as with the county's existing and future land uses.

To follow the mission statement, the following goals and objectives were established.

Goal 1: Increase ridership and accessibility for current and potential transit users.

- **Objective 1.1:** Increase the fixed-route service area by 25% by 2017.
- **Objective 1.2:** Decrease passenger fixed-route access time by 25% by 2017.
- **Objective 1.3:** Increase bus pass sales by 100% by 2020.
- **Objective 1.4:** Increase ridership by 50% by 2020.
  - **Initiative 1.1:** Provide at least one new route connecting major employment, shopping, education, and service centers to high density

residential neighborhoods along corridors with a high transit orientation index.

Initiative 1.2: Continue coordinating with Lake and Sumter counties on potential inter-county connections.

Initiative 1.3: Work with private interests to implement area circulators linking outlying residences and businesses to SunTran services.

Initiative 1.4: Increase average frequency to at least one bus every 30 minutes in core area services and 60 minutes in other services.

Initiative 1.5: Develop a performance monitoring program that addresses performance standards for fixed-route and paratransit services.

Initiative 1.6: Evaluate fare structure to analyze opportunities for instituting additional passes.

Initiative 1.7: Add 10 new pass sales outlets along transit routes, including an outlet at the Central Transfer Station, malls, and retail outlets.

Initiative 1.8: Work with local governments to offer organization-sponsored passes.

Initiative 1.9: Work with local governments to assess, develop, and implement a plan to improve access to/at SunTran bus stops and stations, ensuring compliance with ADA and Florida minimum accessibility standards.

Initiative 1.10: Design, implement, and maintain a comprehensive survey program to assess the community need for transit services.

Initiative 1.11: Maintain a reliable and adequate fleet of vehicles for fixed-route and demand-response services.

Initiative 1.12: Post SunTran routes and schedules on the SunTran and MPO websites.

Initiative 1.13: Marion Transit Services and SunTran should participate in school and community events to increase public awareness of public transportation.

Initiative 1.14: Target population segments considered to be transit-dependent.

Initiative 1.15: Market transportation services to diverse population groups.

Initiative 1.16: Market existing transit services as a travel option to potential users and as a community asset.

Initiative 1.17: Consider the potential for development-sponsored transportation services, especially for developments targeting older adults.

Initiative 1.18: Assist the City of Ocala to identify, reserve, and/or acquire transit corridor right-of-way for regional transit system connections to Belleview, Silver Springs Shores, Dunnellon, and the Villages.

Initiative 1.19: Assist the City of Ocala to identify, reserve, and or acquire transit corridor right-of-way for transit system connections in the urban core.

Goal 2: Maximize coordination and efficiency of transportation services to better serve the entire population of Marion County, including the transportation-disadvantaged, social service organizations, Medicaid-sponsored transportation services, and inter-county commuters.

Objective 2.1: Assess Marion Transit Services ridership every five years for areas of possible transfers to fixed-route services.

Objective 2.2: Ensure seamless coordination between SunTran services and private transportation systems by 2017.

Objective 2.3: Ensure coordination with land use policies and local jurisdictions.

Objective 2.4: Provide connections to neighboring counties by 2019. Work with Lake and Sumter counties to coordinate inter-county service.

Initiative 2.1: Identify and address any actual or perceived barriers to coordination in Marion County.

Initiative 2.2: Comply with the applicable requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Initiative 2.3: Provide the ADA-eligible population with paratransit service that is comparable to the service provided by the fixed-route system.

Initiative 2.4: Provide rider training for fixed-route services to transportation disadvantaged service users.

Initiative 2.5: Bring the appropriate social service organizations that provide transportation into the coordinated system either through purchase of service contracts, coordination of contracts, or joint use agreements to reduce the duplication of transportation services provided in and outside the county.

Initiative 2.6: Coordinate with the County Planning Department and Transportation Planning Organization in developing transit-friendly land development regulations.

Initiative 2.7: Develop an administration system that will handle the training, operations, and maintenance of different vehicles, as well as pay scales, etc.

Initiative 2.8: Ensure consistency with local, County, and municipal plans.

Initiative 2.9: Meet annually with transit staff in neighboring counties to better understand existing and future transit services and to identify coordination requirements associated with public transit services across county lines.

Initiative 2.10: Solicit funding from neighboring County transit agencies to assist in running inter-county connector services.

Initiative 2.11: Identify and accommodate opportunities for private-sector participation in funding the coordinated transportation system.

Initiative 2.12: Identify and accommodate opportunities for establishment or coordination of privately-sponsored transportation services in meeting transportation needs.

Initiative 2.13: Expand on development review procedures requiring consideration of multimodal transportation system impacts.

Initiative 2.14: Incorporate TDM strategies into the transportation planning process to reduce travel demand.

Initiative 2.15: Enable new development and existing businesses to participate in TDM strategies by supporting carpooling, vanpooling, parking management, telecommuting, flexible work hours, bicycle, and mass transit provisions.

Goal 3: Provide for the most cost-effective transportation services possible.

Objective 3.1: Hold maintenance costs at FY 2011 levels, or reduce costs over time. Minimize any increase in maintenance costs. Minimize costs required to operate and administer transportation services.

Objective 3.2: Reduce annual operating cost per revenue mile by 15%.

Objective 3.3: Maintain an operation ratio (farebox revenues/total operating expenses) of at least 15% for fixed-route and demand-response service.

Objective 3.4: Maintain financial support of transit services consistent with the financial plan in the Major Update for the TDP (2013-2022).

Objective 3.5: Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of transit service delivery every five years.

Initiative 3.1: Maximize the multi-loading of vehicle trips on ADA services to reduce the cost per trip and maximize efficiency.

Initiative 3.2: Determine the most cost-effective service type on all major corridors, given demand, routings, and coverage areas.

Initiative 3.3: Identify the costs associated with transit services and secure the required funding.

Initiative 3.4: Submit grant applications/requests for funding available through federal, State, and local sources.

Initiative 3.5: Perform scheduled maintenance activities for all transit vehicles.

Initiative 3.6: Implement a comprehensive operational analysis process that assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of transit services at least every five years.

Goal 4: Promote and provide for the necessary expansion of the coordinated transportation system necessary to meet the future needs of the general public, including the transportation disadvantaged.

Objective 4.1: Annually review the opportunities for additional services for future implementation including the following:

- Explore opportunities for implementing express bus service along high-density corridors in suburban areas.
- Study the demand for inter-county transit.
- Determine the feasibility of implementing a park-and-ride program in Marion County.

- Study the feasibility of growth in transit services to meet the needs of the general public, including:
    1. Identify transit needs for the general public.
    2. Identify potential transit demand.
    3. Compare needs, demand, service costs, and potential funding to determine feasibility.

Objective 4.2: Meet the future needs and demand of users for both services and amenities described in the Major Update to the TDP (2013–2022).

Initiative 4.1: Provide the needed vehicle capacity to meet demand and identified needs.

Initiative 4.2: Provide the needed personnel to operate, maintain, and administer the coordinated system to meet demand and identified needs.

Initiative 4.3: Maintain or establish the necessary organizational structures and institutional arrangements necessary for the coordinated system to meet demand and identified needs.

Initiative 4.4: Identify and secure the necessary federal, State, local, and private funding to support the coordinated system required to meet demand and identified needs.

Initiative 4.5: Increase passenger comfort through the provision of passenger shelters and benches.

Initiative 4.6: Develop, finance, and maintain a capital infrastructure improvement program.

Initiative 4.7: Make customer comment cards available to patrons of the fixed-route and demand-responsive services.

Initiative 4.8: Establish a Transit Advisory/Guidance Committee.

Initiative 4.9: Implement a method of counting route-by-route ridership.

Section 11

ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT

This section presents the development and evaluation of service improvements to SunTran for the 2012 Ocala/Marion County TDP. Those proposed improvements, or alternatives, to fixed-route service represent the Needs Plan for the TDP. The Needs Plan was developed based on feedback received through the TDP public outreach efforts, analysis of the transit demand and market assessments, and discussions with TPO and SunTran staff. Alternatives consist of improvements to existing service and improvements that expand service. Consequently, the alternatives reflect the desire of the community and have been designed to address public transportation needs throughout the county.

In addition to presenting the Needs Plan, a methodology for prioritizing service improvements in the Plan is presented in this section. The resulting prioritization will be used to develop the TDP implementation plan and financial plan. As Marion County continues to grow, the prioritized Needs Plan will assist the Ocala/Marion TPO in selecting and implementing service improvements as funding becomes available.

NEEDS PLAN ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT

The Needs Plan alternatives were developed based on a number of different efforts, including public involvement, transit demand and market assessments data analysis, and feedback received from TPO staff and SunTran. Public outreach efforts consisted of a variety of tasks, including discussion groups, surveys, interviews with SunTran operators, and stakeholder interviews.

Alternatives can be grouped into two major categories: improvements to existing service and improvements that expand service.

- **Existing Service Improvements** – Improvements to service frequency, extended service hours, and/or more weekend service.

- **Service Expansion** – New routes operating in areas of the county with no existing transit service. Service alternatives such as TDM also fall under this category of service improvements.

FIXED-ROUTE IMPROVEMENTS

As presented in Section 7, three market assessment tools were used to guide the development of the 2022 transit needs. The three tools are:

- Transit Orientation Index
- Density Threshold Assessment
- T-BEST Ridership Demand Projections

In addition to these tools, a public outreach effort consisting of on-board surveys, discussion groups, and stakeholder interviews provided input from the public on needed public transportation service improvements for the next 10 years. Specific results from this public outreach effort can be found in Section 3 of this report. This input, along with the analysis results from the utilization of the market assessment tools, was used to develop the 2022 transit needs, which are summarized below. Each needed transit alternative is presented together with an explanation of its significance to the overall transit system.

Improvements to Existing Services

Expanding hours and increasing frequencies on existing bus routes are significant needs identified through the public involvement efforts performed as part of the development of the TDP. Needed improvements to existing fixed routes are as follows:

Expand hours of service at night (from 8–10 PM) – Add two hours of service to the end of the current service schedule.

- ***Significance*** – *On-board survey respondents rated later service as the second most important improvement they desired to see. Input from SunTran bus operators and a SunTran user discussion group also indicated later service as a priority improvement. Additional hours improve convenience and allow riders to feel secure in their ability to arrive home at the end of the day if they are delayed or unable to meet the existing schedule. Expanding services an extra two hours at the end of the day would provide added service for those who must work late or need to get back home from a late shopping trip.*

Implement 30-minute frequency during peak hours on selected routes – The frequencies of 4 routes— Green, Blue, Orange, and Purple—should be increased to operate at 30-minute headways all day.

- ***Significance*** *– On-board survey results as well as user discussion group input suggest that 30-minute frequencies are a priority for riders. The on-board survey identified work trips as one of the major trip purposes; therefore, targeting peak hours for more frequent service provides enhancements to those transit users relying on SunTran for work trips. This improvement during peak hours will encourage using transit as an alternative to travel to and from work. It will also reduce any crowding that buses have during peak periods. Peak hours will be determined by ridership and other factors based on system performance. In addition, increased frequency, in general, enhances the bus system's attractiveness to potential riders.*

Implement 30-minute frequency all day on selected routes – Frequencies of the aforementioned routes—Green, Blue, Orange, and Purple—should be increased to operate at 30-minute headways instead of the 60-minute headways. These currently run on a figure-8 configuration.

- ***Significance*** *– SunTran users, through the on-board survey as well as user discussion group meetings, identified higher frequency on SunTran routes as another one of their highest priorities. The Purple, Blue, and Orange routes frequently run at high capacity and will benefit from increased frequency to increase rider satisfaction and increase capacity on these routes. In addition, increased frequency enhances the bus system's attractiveness to new ridership.*

Implement 30-minute frequency on all routes – This includes implementing Sunday 30-minute headways on all SunTran routes.

- ***Significance*** *– Expansion of frequency systemwide provides better connections and will make the SunTran system more attractive to choice riders by allowing for greater reliability. It will also enable greater flexibility in the route configuration. Expanded frequency was cited as a much-needed improvement based on input received at the TDP public involvement activities.*

Add limited Sunday service on selected routes – Implement Sunday service on three routes—Routes 2 (Blue), 3 (Purple), and 4 (Orange). The service will be provided at 60-minute headways for 6 hours a day.

- ***Significance*** *– Sunday service was rated as one of the most needed improvements on both the on-board survey (ranked 1st in desired improvements by on-board survey respondents) and by operators and users during discussion group meetings. A phased approach provided TPO to add Sunday service to the system without having to fund a systemwide expansion at one time.*

Add limited Sunday service on all routes – Implement Sunday service on all SunTran routes at 60-minute headways for 6 hours a day.

- ***Significance*** – *Expanding Sunday service to the other remaining routes, making the whole system address, as indicated previously, one of the most needed improvements identified during the TDP process.*

Service Expansion

Implement Marion Oaks Limited Express (LX) – This new limited express route will connect the Marion Oaks area to downtown Ocala, connecting the proposed park-and-ride lot (see Capital Improvements summarized later in this section) at the I-75 interchange at CR 484 just east of Marion Oaks. The Marion Oaks LX will provide hourly transit service operating mostly on I-75 and then serving SR 200 into the Downtown Transfer Center in Ocala. It will also serve Paddock Mall to provide connectivity to routes that serve the SR 200 corridor.

- ***Significance*** – *The Marion Oaks area currently has no access to any public transit services provided throughout Marion County. In an effort to provide better regional connectivity, a limited express service is recommended to connect this area to Ocala. The express route will provide hourly service to residents of Marion Oaks to connect to Ocala and surrounding areas. It also provides essential connections to the shopping and retail areas along the SR 200 corridor. Input from public involvement activities has shown a keen interest in providing service to other parts of the county outside of Ocala such as the Marion Oaks community.*

Implement SR 200/Marion Oaks Circulator – This new route along SR 200 corridor will provide service from the Paddock Mall stop to the Market Street shopping area, Marion Community Hospital, Rasmussen College, Fore Ranch residential development, The Centers medical facility on 60th Avenue, and other residential and commercial locations on SR 200, 60th Avenue, and 60th Street. In addition, the route will also connect Marion Oaks area to SR 200 corridor, via SW 49th Avenue. In Marion Oaks, the route will provide transit services to area residents to connect with major commercial and retail activities on SR 200 as well as opportunities to access the other transit routes serving SR 200 area. This route will also provide service to the proposed park-and-ride lot in the Marion Oaks area and connections to the Marion Oaks LX, the potential express route to Ocala.

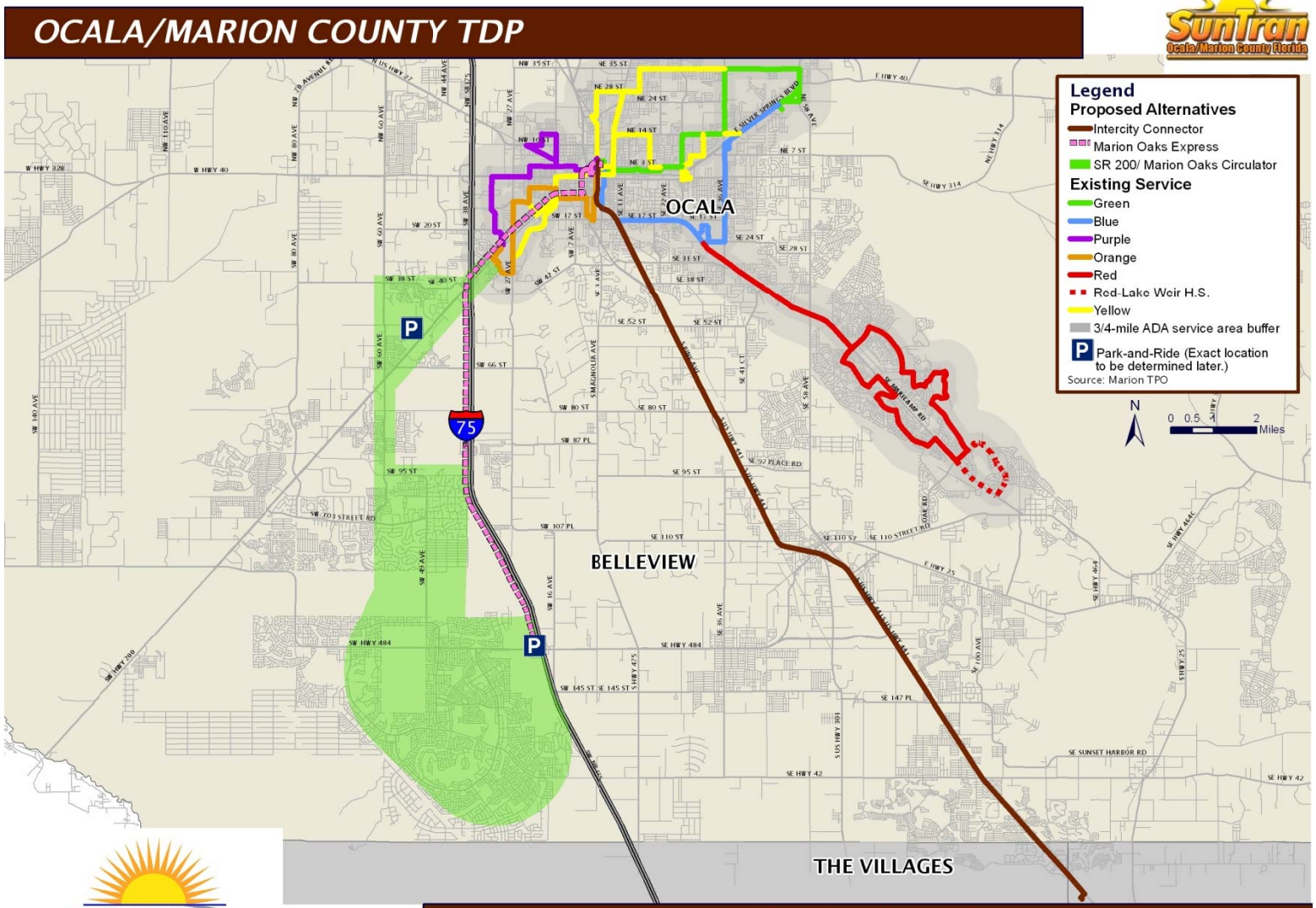
- ***Significance*** – *The SR 200/Marion Oaks Circulator connects high employment and population density areas that support transit services along SR 200 to residential areas in Marion Oaks. The large number of retail centers and traffic congestion issues also suggests the need for transit service along the corridor. Stakeholders*

interviewed expressed interest in connecting job centers to residential areas in the rest of the county, and such a service will connect this high concentration of retail/commercial areas along SR 200 with residential areas in other part of the county. The stakeholders also suggested providing transit service to Market Street, which this proposed alternative does. Operator and user discussion groups showed a marked interest in expanding SunTran service coverage of SR 200, particularly west of I-75. The Marion Oaks area currently has no access to the transit services provided in Ocala or its surrounding areas in Marion County. Marion Oaks is a growing area with many retirees as well as minority population segments that have a higher orientation to use transit. This circulator service is an effort to serve that need by providing transit service within the area as well as connections to other areas in the county. The route will provide transit service to residential and commercial areas along CR 484 and within other areas mostly south of CR 484 in Marion Oaks. It is designed to work in tandem with an express route to provide greater connectivity to downtown Ocala. The circulator route also provides access to the proposed park-and-ride lot in Marion Oaks.

Intercity connector – This new route is proposed to serve as a connector, linking SunTran with the transit services in both Lake and Sumter counties. This route will provide two trips per day, one AM trip and one PM trip, from Downtown Ocala to Spanish Springs in The Villages in Lake/Sumter counties. The route will ultimately connect major cities in Lake County and key locations in Sumter County with Ocala and also will serve as a route to the Belleview area in Marion County.

- ***Significance*** – *Designed to address public comments and the need for regional connectivity, this connector service would link Ocala with the northeast Sumter County area and major cities in Lake and Sumter counties. The route would also provide service to The Villages, which is situated on the county border of all three counties. The Villages has a large number of retirement communities, which may benefit from additional transit connections to local cities. Additionally, this route acts as an precursor for the proposed dedicated bus lane improvement identified in the cost feasible transit plan of the Ocala/Marion 2035 LRTP. Because a dedicated bus lane is a premium bus service, establishing a fixed-route service along the route prior to such a premium service will provide an opportunity to build up a rider base for a future potential dedicated bus lane improvement.*

Map 11-1 presents the service improvement needs for the next 10 years for Ocala/Marion TDP.



Map 11-1: 10-year TDP Service Needs

Capital Improvements

Improve bus stop infrastructure and develop bus stop ADA accessibility action plan – The TPO should continue to improve infrastructure at bus stops and develop a Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Action Plan. The plan should assess existing fixed-route bus stop infrastructure for possible accessibility improvements. Bus stops should then be prioritized in the plan for improvements based on applicable criteria.

The plan should provide a priority list of bus stops and improvements that can be implemented to enhance ADA accessibility, connectivity to the pedestrian network, and improved use of the SunTran fixed route bus system. In addition, accessible stops/shelters and other bus stop amenities and comforts improve rider experience at bus stops as well as the potential for attracting new riders.

Bus Technology Improvements Program (Install APCs) – Technology improvements are important to helping SunTran leverage its existing bus operations in a way that most benefits ridership. One major capital need for SunTran is the installation of APC bus technology on its bus fleet. Currently, SunTran does not maintain an APC system, which is reflected in the challenges faced in collecting ridership data at the route level. By improving passenger counting information, SunTran can focus on improving service to the areas that need it most.

Conduct a feasibility study on implementing a park-and-ride program – Conduct a feasibility study on the need for a park-and-ride program in coordination with the Ocala/Marion County TPO. In addition, establish park-and-ride lots with one at the I-75 interchange at CR 484 in the Marion Oaks area (for serving the limited express route from downtown Ocala to Marion Oaks) and another shared-use park-and-ride lot on SR 200 corridor serving the transit services on the SR 200 corridor

- ***Significance*** *–Enhanced transportation systems are a large part of the 2035 Vision Plan for Ocala, and providing a park-and-ride program would assist in this process. Stakeholder interviews also suggested a desire to see convenient park-and-ride locations. Additionally, with SunTran coordinating with ReThinkyourcommute.com, a park-and-ride program in Marion County could provide additional economic opportunities.*

PARATRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

Maintain/expand ADA paratransit services – SunTran should maintain its existing ADA paratransit service and expand it in the current service area if/when more demand

exists. Additionally, SunTran should also provide ADA services in any new SunTran service areas beyond the existing service areas that may result from implementation of the fixed-route transit service needs identified previously.

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Other improvements include various general improvements that are not necessarily route-specific. These improvements are drawn primarily from public involvement efforts performed as part of the development of the TDP. Needed improvements to existing system services are as follows.

Conduct a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) to review the existing route structure – Conduct a review of existing bus scheduling and routing on a stop-level basis to determine underperforming or inefficient segments and stops. Due to constraints that the slow economy has put on typical transit funding sources, the efficient allocation of existing resources has become more critical than ever. It is recommended that SunTran conduct a COA on a systemwide level to assess the existing system for potential efficiency improvements.

- ***Significance*** *– In the transit user group workshop, some concerns were raised that route segments may be underutilized. These routes may be using system resources that could be dedicated to providing more service in alternate areas, including service to key health facilities currently not served as well as other areas identified during the public involvement process. By conducting a comprehensive route- and stop-level review, SunTran may be able to increase the service attractiveness and ridership with utilizing the same resources.*

Implement transit awareness/education programs – Implement a program using existing resources to provide awareness/education on safe and efficient use of available transit services. This includes using bus maps/schedules and other materials currently used and distributed by SunTran to provide riders with additional information on policy related to behavior when riding the bus. Such measures may help increase bus rider and operator safety as well as on-time performance, increasing the attractiveness of SunTran.

- ***Significance*** *– User and bus operators mentioned specific challenges with riders who have strollers and larger packages, resulting increased boarding time and thus delaying service to all riders. These types of problems can be addressed with public education programs involving signage and on-board advertising to educate passengers about proper policy.*

Implement all-day bus pass – The TPO should review the current SunTran fare structure to explore the possibility of implementing an all-day bus pass.

- ***Significance*** *- Operators (based on input from riders) and the SunTrans riders who attended the transit user discussion group mentioned a desire to implement an all-day pass. This pass system can reduce the need to count out change to passengers who are riding multiple times a day. In addition, the on-board survey results showed that 27 percent of regular users (those who ride the bus 5 days a week or more) pay the full adult fare instead of purchasing a monthly pass. The daily pass option may be appealing to these users, and it may also attract potential new users to the transit system.*

Promote/expand TDM strategies – Marion County should continue coordinating with "reThink," the FDOT District 5 Commuter Services program, to promote and expand the use of TDM strategies aimed at reducing single-occupant vehicle trips in Ocala/Marion County. The website for the commuter services, www.ReThinkyourcommute.com, offers a wide variety of alternative methods to commute to work and includes online tools for setting up/joining carpools and vanpools as well as regional transit options. These tools provide the following:

- Instant ridematch software for individuals interested in vanpools or carpools
- Information on bike-to-work, walk-to-work, and car-share options
- Information on park-and-ride lot locations
- Information on emergency ride home service

A link to the ReThink website is currently located on the SunTran system website. A brief description of the commuter services should be added to educate and promote TDM to visitors to the SunTran website. The TPO should continue to partner with reThink on exploring additional channels to educate study area commuters/residents about the availability of the TDM strategies as a useful tool to reduce their single-occupant trips.

The TPO should also engage businesses in Ocala to encourage them to become more proactive in providing travel choices for their employees. By providing employees with mobility options such as free bus passes or subsidized vanpools, employers can take advantage of commuter benefit programs that offer them various tax benefits (such as the federal Commuter Choice program, in which the employer covers the full cost of the tax-free benefit, up to $230 per month, for transit and vanpool expenses.) These strategies may also increase demand for establishing park-and-ride lots in the study area.

- ***Significance*** *– When asked for ideas to increase ridership, the TDP stakeholders suggested developing incentive programs for employers and commuters. This could be a subsidy program where an employer pays in part or in full for employees to use SunTran. These types of programs provide employees with a way to maintain reliable transportation at less of a cost, and it can also assist in increasing transit ridership by making commuters use alternatives to the automobile.*

Implement route-level performance monitoring program – Performance monitoring programs track the performance and efficiency of a system's routes and the system as a whole. It is a tool used by transit agencies for ensuring the provision of the most efficient and effective transit service. Such a program would assist SunTran in identifying routes in need of improvement or modification. The monitoring program suggested for SunTran consists of a comparative analysis of route performance. The methodology uses specific route-level data and compares each route's performance with all other regular local service routes. Detailed procedures for the SunTran performance monitoring program are described below. In addition, a route restructuring and elimination process is presented.

SunTran Performance Monitoring Program

SunTran currently has no official performance monitoring program at the route level. However, it does collect a significant amount of system-level data such as boarding information based on fare type, vehicle miles, revenue miles, operating costs and expenses, farebox ratio, and ADA paratransit trips related data. While this information is useful, it is collected only at the system level. To understand system strengths and weakness, it is recommended that SunTran begin to collect and sort these data at the route level. By doing so, the agency can better understand which routes and times are most and least successful.

Once SunTran collects data at the route level, it can use the performance monitoring system described below. To begin implementing the system, SunTran will need to collect data on passenger trips, revenue miles, and revenue hours at the route level.

Performance Measures & Indicators

The following fixed-route performance indicators and measures should be monitored by SunTran on a quarterly basis as part of the recommended performance monitoring program. These data are currently collected monthly at the system level.

- **Passenger Trips** – Annual number of passenger boardings on the transit vehicles.
- **Revenue Miles** – Number of annual miles of vehicle operation while in active service (available to pick up revenue passengers).
- **Revenue Hours** – Total hours of operation by revenue service in active revenue service.
- **Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile** – The ratio of passenger trips to revenue miles of service. This is the key indicator of service effectiveness that is influenced by the levels of demand and the supply of service provided.
- **Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour** – The ratio of passenger trips to revenue hours of operation.

Evaluation Methodology & Process

This process is based on two measures—trips per mile and trips per hour—that are weighted equally to derive an overall route score. A route's score for a particular measure is based on a comparison of the measure as a percentage of the system average for that particular measure. These individual measure scores are added together and divided by 2 to get a final aggregate score. This final composite performance score is an indication of a route's performance for all three measures when compared to the system average for those measures. A higher score represents better overall performance when compared to other routes.

The noted comparative performance evaluation can be beneficial, but care should be taken when using the final scores and rankings, because these figures are comparing routes to one another and may not reflect the specific goals established for a particular route (i.e., geographic coverage vs. ridership performance). The process is particularly useful, however, in highlighting those routes that may have performance-related issues. These routes can then be singled out for closer observation in future years to determine specific changes that may help mitigate any performance issues. Once a route score is determined, routes can be ranked to show the highest performing and lowest performing routes.

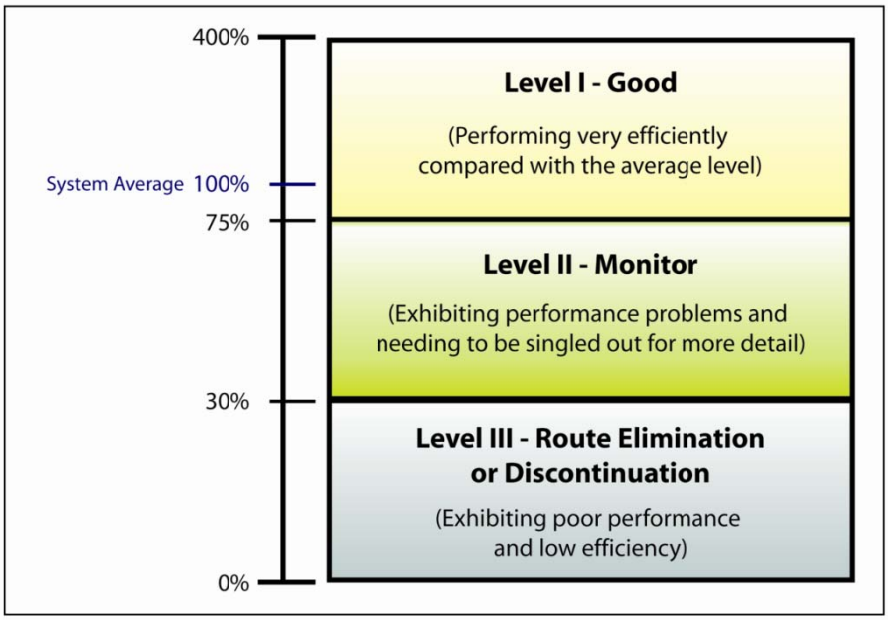
The rankings are a useful proxy for determining the comparative performance of any route, as well as highlighting changes in performance over time. To track the performance variation over time, three performance levels have been developed:

- **Level I – Good (≥ 75%)**
  Transit routes that fall in this category are performing efficiently compared with the average level of all the agency's routes.

- **Level II – Monitor (30% to 74%)**
  Routes that fall in this category exhibit varying levels of performance problems and need more detailed analysis (e.g., ridechecks, on-board surveys, increased marketing efforts, etc.) to aid in identifying specific changes that can be made to help improve the route's performance.
- **Level III – Route Modification or Discontinuation (≤ 29%)**
  Routes that fall in this category exhibit poor performance and low efficiency. Recommendations for these routes may include truncation of the route, reduction in the route's number of revenue hours, or discontinuation of the route.

Figure 11-1 illustrates the three evaluation levels and notes the recommended thresholds for each level. In the future, SunTran may want to consider changing the thresholds noted for each performance level to more specific performance standards. Setting such a performance standard will assist in eliminating any scoring bias towards routes that appear to be performing poorly because of the average-based scoring proposed for the performance monitoring program. To implement such standards, SunTran would need to select appropriate performance standards.

Figure 11-1
Evaluation Levels



Section 12

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION

This section presents the alternatives evaluation process and results. Because there are many alternatives offered, ranging from service expansion to implementation of new routes, it is important for SunTran to prioritize these improvements to effectively plan and implement improvements within the next 10 years using the existing and any new funding sources.

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This section presents the methodology use to evaluate the TDP alternatives presented previously in this report. To prioritize and program service improvements, it is important to weigh the benefits of each service improvement against the others. By conducting an evaluation of the service improvements in the Needs Plan, the Ocala/Marion TPO and SunTran can better prioritize projects and allocate funding using an objective service implementation process. This section identifies and defines the evaluation criteria used in prioritizing the service improvements developed for the TDP Needs Plan and the methodology by which those criteria were applied.

Three evaluation categories were identified for determining criteria for the evaluation:

- Transit Markets
- Productivity and Efficiency
- Service Maintenance

Table 12-1 lists the evaluation categories, each category's corresponding criteria, the associated measure of effectiveness, and the assigned weighting for each criterion. A description of all the elements in the table follows.

Table 12-1
Alternatives Evaluation Measures

Category	Criteria	Measure of Effectiveness	Relative Weighting	Overall Category Weight
Transit Markets	Public Involvement	Level of interest in specific alternatives	20%	50%
	Traditional Market	Percent of corridor length in "High" or "Very High" TOI	12%	
	Choice Market	Percent of corridor length in areas that meet the "minimum" tier for employment or residential density	12%	
	Fringe/Regional Market	Connectivity to key fringe areas and adjacent counties	6%	
Productivity & Efficiency	Productivity	Trips per hour (T-BEST generated trips and revenue hours of service)	15%	30%
	Cost Efficiency	Cost per trip (including new trips)	15%	
Existing Resource Utilization	Existing Service Upgrades/Maintenance	SunTran has an established route and stop infrastructure and ADA service already in place	20%	20%
Total			100%	100%

Transit Markets

The transit demand analysis is characterized as a market assessment. For the evaluation of alternatives, four transit markets have been identified: Public Involvement, Traditional Market (which uses TOI data), Choice Market (which uses DTA data), and Fringe/Regional Market.

- **Public Involvement** – An extensive public outreach process was conducted for this TDP effort, which resulted in a number of opinions and suggestions from transit users, non-users, and community organizations. For the alternatives evaluation, a particular route or type of service was categorized as "No Interest," "Moderate Interest," or "High Interest" based on an in-depth review of public involvement feedback, including on-board surveys, discussion group meetings, stakeholder interviews, and bus operator interviews.

- **Traditional Market** – The traditional transit market refers to population segments that historically have had a higher propensity to use transit and/or are dependent on

public transit for their transportation needs. For the alternatives evaluation, the proportion of each corridor operating within a "high" or "very high" TOI area was calculated.

- **Choice Market** – The "choice" or discretionary market refers to potential riders living in higher-density areas of the county that may choose to use transit as a commuting or transportation alternative. The proportion of each corridor meeting the "minimum" residential or employment density threshold in the DTA was calculated and used for the alternatives evaluation.

- **Fringe/Regional Market** – Each potential route was assessed for potential fringe/regional connectivity. Routes serving key areas outside of the current service area and inter-county routes having connections to surrounding counties were scored higher than those limited to current service area. Based on conclusions drawn from public involvement input, service to outlying areas in Marion County with key trip attractors and to key regional locations is desired attribute for SunTran routes.

Productivity and Efficiency

Productivity is generally measured in terms of ridership, and service efficiency is used by transit agencies to gauge how well they are using their existing resources. Each is critical to the success of the agency and services performing well in terms of their productivity and efficiency should receive a higher priority than those services that are performing poorly. Forecasted ridership, revenue hour, and operating cost figures for each individual alternative are used in this measure.

- **Productivity** – Productivity was measured in terms of annual passenger trips per revenue hour of service. To provide for an equal comparison between alternatives, passenger trips and revenue hours of service were generated using output from T-BEST ridership demand estimation software.

- **Cost Efficiency** – The cost efficiency of each alternative was evaluated using a standard transit industry efficiency measure, operating cost per passenger trip. Operating costs used were calculated using operating cost per trip based on SunTran performance data and T-BEST ridership data.

Existing Resource Utilization

This measure is used to include the existing services in the alternatives evaluation. Keeping the existing services and expansions to those services in the evaluation allows for the comparison between existing services and proposed service changes to those same routes with the new services.

- **Existing Service Upgrades/Maintenance –** Scoring for this criterion is based on the Ocala/Marion TPO's priority of maintaining existing service levels and enhancing those services when and where it is necessary and feasible. This measure accounts for the fact that existing routes already have established stop infrastructure and already include ADA complementary paratransit services within service areas. It is assumed that changes to these services (frequency, span, or minor route modification), if any, have minimal or no impact on existing ADA paratransit service area.

Alternatives Scoring Thresholds

As noted, each criterion is assigned a weight. Weighting the criteria measures the relative importance of each criterion among the group of criteria to be applied. For each transit alternative, a score was determined either through the computation of the selected measure of effectiveness or through the educated judgment of the analyst. Potential scores were assigned depending on the relative comparison of a given transit alternative with other transit alternatives as it relates to a given criterion. A higher score is consistent with a higher ranking for a given alternative for the criterion being evaluated. The highest score is equal to the total weight given to each of the criteria, as previously shown in Table 12-1.

The thresholds for computation-based criteria (traditional market, choice market, trips per hour, operating cost per trip) were determined using the average of the entire data set and one standard deviation above or below the average. Table 12-2 includes the thresholds and scoring for each criterion used in the alternatives evaluation.

Table 12-2
Scoring Thresholds

Criteria	Range	Score
Public Involvement–Interest in Improvement	None	1
	Moderate	3
	High	5
	Very High	7
Traditional Market Potential (% Serving Traditional Market)	Less than (Average – 1 STDEV)	1
	Between (Average – 1 STDEV) to Average	3
	More than Average to (Average + 1 STDEV)	5
	More than (Average + 1 STDEV)	7
Choice Market Potential (% Serving Choice Market)	Less than (Average – 1 STDEV)	1
	Between (Average – 1 STDEV) to Average	3
	More than Average to (Average + 1 STDEV)	5
	More than (Average + 1 STDEV)	7
Fringe/Regional Market Connectivity	No	0
	Yes	5
Trips per Hour	Less than (Average – 1 STDEV)	1
	Between (Average – 1 STDEV) to Average	3
	More than Average to (Average + 1 STDEV)	5
	More than (Average + 1 STDEV)	7
Operating Cost per Trip	More than (Average + 1 STDEV)	1
	More than Average to (Average + 1 STDEV)	3
	Between (Average – 1 STDEV) to Average	5
	Less than (Average – 1 STDEV)	7
Existing Service Upgrades/Maintenance	No	0
	Yes	7

Note: STDEV = statistical standard deviation.

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION

The results of the evaluation are presented in Table 12-3, where the service alternatives are scored based on the criteria and thresholds identified previously.

Table 12-3
Alternative Scoring

Evaluation Criteria		Maintain existing fixed route bus service	Expand hours of service at night (from 8pm to 10pm)	Implement 30-minute frequency during Peak Hours on select existing routes (Green, Orange, Purple, Blue)	Implement 30-minute frequency on select existing routes (Green, Orange, Purple, Blue)	Implement 30-minute frequency on all Existing routes	Add limited Sunday service on selected existing routes (Blue, Purple, Orange)	Add limited Sunday service on all existing routes	Marion Oaks Express	Intercity Connector LX (Ocala, Belleview, The Villages)	SR 200/Marion Oaks Circulator
Public Involvement	Interest	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	High	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	Very High
	Score	7	7	7	7	5	5	5	3	3	7
	weight	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Traditional Market	% in Trad.	24.45%	24.45%	24.45%	24.45%	24.45%	24.45%	24.45%	23.99%	19.48%	21.33%
	Score	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5
	weight	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Choice Market	% in Choice	22.92%	22.92%	22.92%	22.92%	22.92%	22.92%	22.92%	22.22%	18.68%	17.76%
	Score	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3
	weight	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Fringe/Regional Market	Yes/No?	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Score	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	5
	weight	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%
Trips per Hour	Trip/Hr	14.81	17.11	14.22	10.81	9.70	14.48	13.85	16.47	16.65	16.65
	Score	5	7	3	1	1	5	3	5	5	5
	weight	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Operating Cost per Trip	Cost /Trip	$5.70	$4.10	$4.92	$6.46	$8.66	$5.03	$4.65	$4.60	$4.50	$5.19
	Score	3	5	5	3	1	5	5	5	5	5
	weight	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Existing Service Upgrades/Maintenance	Yes/No?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Score	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	0	0	0
	weight	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Total Score		**5.20**	**5.80**	**5.20**	**4.60**	**3.90**	**5.10**	**4.80**	**3.60**	**3.12**	**4.16**

Once scored, each alternative was ranked based on the score. Table 12-4 shows the rankings of each TDP service alternative. This ranking identifies the priorities based on the evaluation methodology used. The rankings were used to assist in development of the implementation plan for the TDP alternatives.

Table 12-4
Ranking of 10-Year TDP Transit Alternatives

Proposed Improvement	Score	Rank
Expand hours of service at night (from 8 to 10 PM)	5.80	1
Maintain existing fixed route bus service	5.20	2
Implement 30-minute frequency during peak hours on select existing r (Green, Orange, Purple, Blue)	5.20	2
Add limited Sunday service on selected existing routes (Blue, Purple, Orange)	5.10	4
Add limited Sunday service on all existing routes	4.80	5
Implement 30-minute frequency on select existing routes (Green, Oran Purple, Blue)	4.60	6
SR 200/Marion Oaks Circulator	4.16	7
Implement 30-minute frequency on all existing routes	3.90	8
Marion Oaks Express	3.60	9
Intercity Connector LX (Ocala, Belleview, The Villages)	3.12	10

Section 13

TEN-YEAR TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This section presents the 10-Year Transit Development Plan for SunTran, Ocala/Marion County's fixed-route bus transit service. First, a review of vehicle and infrastructure needs for providing transit services over the next 10 years is presented, including a vehicle replacement and acquisition schedule and a list of other capital equipment/infrastructure needs through the year 2022.

Then, a summary of the recommended 10-year transit needs, developed and evaluated based on public outreach efforts, analysis of the transit demand and market assessments, and discussions with TPO and SunTran staff, is presented. Finally, the TDP financial plan is presented, including a summary of capital and operating costs and the assumptions used in developing the 10-year financial plan. An implementation plan is provided with a summary of cost-feasible projects and unfunded needs, followed by the coordination requirements for implementing the 10-year transit plan.

TEN-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

A capital plan was developed as part of the TDP update with capital needs that were determined based on service requirements and through information received from and discussions held with TPO/SunTran staff. The major capital needs, including vehicle and other infrastructure/equipment needs, are summarized below.

Vehicles

SunTran replaced seven older buses in its fleet in 2007. This fleet update was made possible by a $2.5 million earmark from FTA. Assuming a 12-year vehicle life-cycle, 2 new buses will be added to the existing fixed-route fleet and 2 existing buses will undergo engine and transmission rebuilds and added back to the fleet. In addition to these replacement buses, 4 more buses are required to implement the transit needs identified for the next 10 years in this TDP. A unit cost of $400,000 (in $2011) is assumed for buses for local and express services.

Vehicle replacement also will be necessary related to the provision of paratransit services through 2022 to accommodate maintaining the existing ADA paratransit fleet and providing ADA transit services for fixed-route service needs. The two cutaway buses purchased in 2011 for ADA services assume a seven-year life and will need to be replaced

by 2018. One additional cutaway bus will need to be purchased to provide ADA services in additional areas. A unit cost of $75,000 (in $2011) is assumed for ADA/flex vehicles.

Bus Stop Infrastructure/Accessibility Program

The TPO's Bus Stop Infrastructure/Accessibility Program continues the ongoing bus stop infrastructure program and also implements accessibility improvements at SunTran bus stops based on the recommended Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Action Plan. In the ongoing infrastructure program, the TPO will continue to work with SunTran to purchase and install bus stop signs and benches and shelters at the stops. The accessibility improvements at bus stops will be implemented to enhance ADA accessibility, connectivity to the pedestrian network, and improved use of the SunTran fixed-route bus system.

Park-and-Ride Lot Program

The 10-year capital needs also include establishment of park-and-ride lots to serve as complementary facilities for transit use. Potential areas for constructing a park-and-ride lot are identified around the I-75 interchange at CR 484 for serving the limited express route from downtown Ocala to the Marion Oaks area (see Figure 13-1). In addition, the program also assumes at least one shared-use park-and-ride lot serving the transit services on the SR 200 corridor. Ocala/Marion County will need to continuously evaluate the need for the placement of additional park-and-ride lots in other SunTran service areas.

Figure 13-1
Marion Oaks Area Potential Park-and-Ride Lots

Source: Google Earth

For costing purposes, the potential facility in the Marion Oaks area assumes 30 parking spaces at a cost of $3,500 per space and assumes a construction cost (excluding the cost of land, which is assumed to be available from FDOT) of $105,000 per lot. The potential shared-use lot on SR 200 assumes no cost to implement, which may use underused/unused parking areas already available in the area.

Ten-Year Capital Plan Assumptions

Unit cost assumptions for the capital plan are summarized in Table 13-1, and the vehicle replacement and expansion schedule is provided in Table 13-2.

Table 13-1
Assumptions for Transit Capital Plan ($2011)

Type	Life Span (yrs)	Unit Cost
Regular Bus	12	$400,000
Paratransit	7	$75,000
Engine/Transmission Rebuild (per bus)	n/a	$52,333
Shelter	n/a	$25,000
APC Units	n/a	$8,480
Park-and-Ride Lots (excludes land)	n/a	$105,000

Table 13-2
Vehicle Replacement and Expansion Schedule

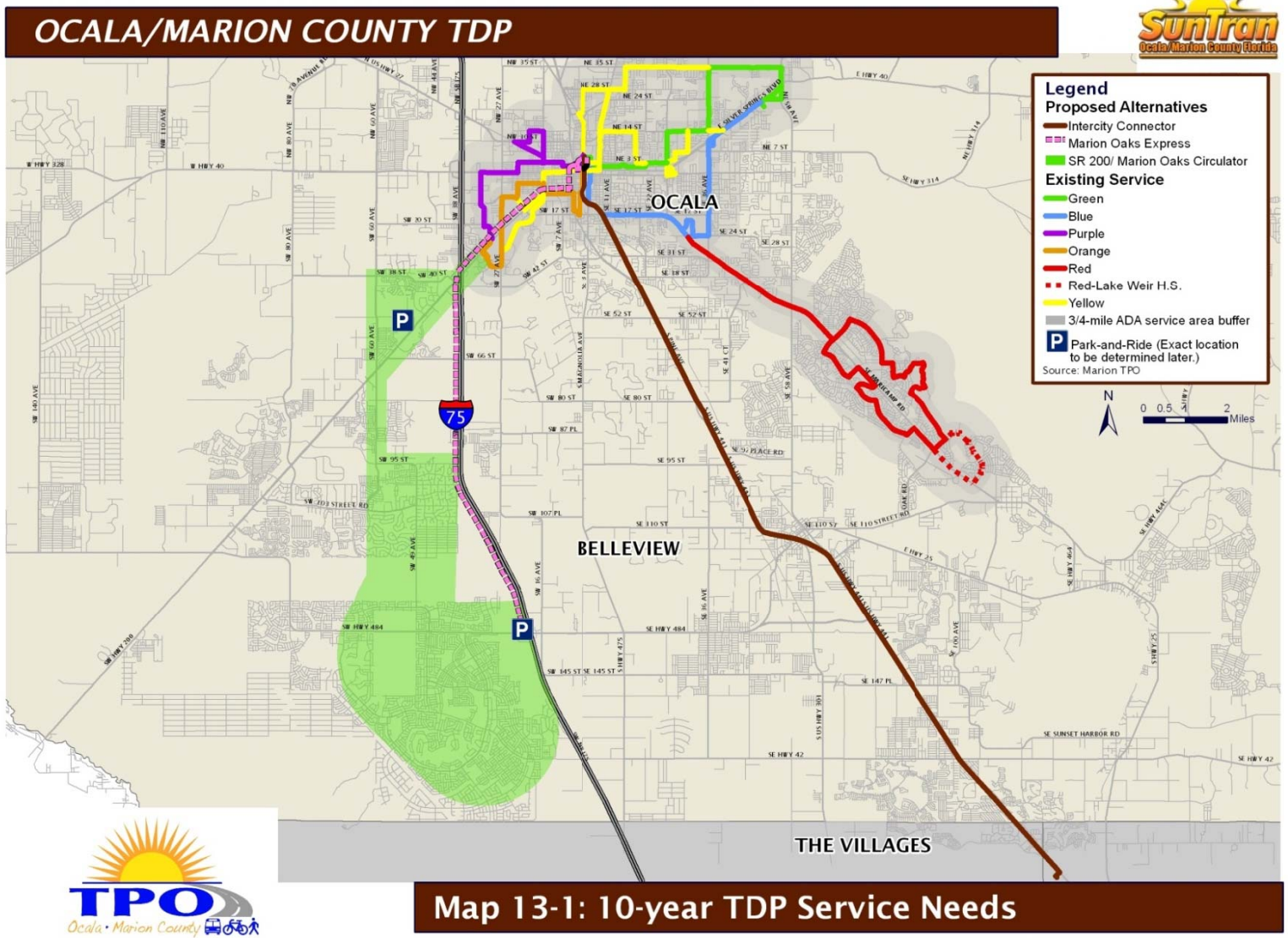
Year	Buses			Complementary ADA Paratransit Vans	
	Replace	*Rebuild*	*New*	*Replace*	*New*
2013	0	2	0	0	0
2014	0	7	0	0	0
2015	2	0	4	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	2	0	1
2018	0	0	0	2	0
2019	0	0	0	0	0
2020	0	0	0	0	0
2021	0	0	0	0	0
2022	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	2	9	6	2	1

TEN-YEAR TDP NEEDS

TDP needs have been grouped into two major categories, existing service improvements and expansions and capital/infrastructure and other improvements. Each category and its corresponding needs are described below. In addition, Map 13-1 presents the service needs identified for Ocala/Marion County for the next 10 years.

Existing Service Improvements and Expansions

- ***Expand hours of service at night (from 8 to 10 PM)*** – Add two hours of service to the end of the current service schedule.
- ***Implement 30-minute frequency during peak hours on selected routes*** – Frequencies of 4 routes—Green, Blue, Orange, and Purple, which currently run on a figure-8 configuration—should be increased to operate at 30-minute headways during peak hours, including 30-minute headways during 3 hours in the morning and 3 hours in the afternoon.
- ***Implement 30-minute frequency all day on selected routes*** – Frequencies of the aforementioned 4 routes—Green, Blue, Orange, and Purple—should be increased to operate at 30-minute headways all day instead of the current 60-minute headways.
- ***Implement 30-minute frequency all day on all routes*** – This includes implementing 30-minute headways on all existing SunTran routes.
- ***Add limited Sunday service on selected routes*** – Implement Sunday service on 3 routes—Blue, Purple, and Orange. The service will be provided at 60-minute headways for 6 hours a day.
- ***Add limited Sunday service on all routes*** – Implement Sunday service on all SunTran routes at 60-minute headways for 6 hours a day.
- ***Implement Marion Oaks LX*** – This new limited express route will connect the Marion Oaks area to downtown Ocala, connecting the proposed park-and-ride lot at the I-75 interchange at CR 484 just east of Marion Oaks.
- ***Implement SR 200/Marion Oaks Circulator*** – This new route along SR 200 corridor will provide service from the Paddock Mall stop to the Market Street shopping area, Marion Community Hospital, Rasmussen College, Fore Ranch residential development, The Centers medical facility on 60th Avenue, and other residential and commercial locations on SR 200, 60th Avenue, and 60th Street. In addition, the route will also connect Marion Oaks area to SR 200 corridor, via SW 49th Avenue. In Marion Oaks, the route will provide transit services to area residents to connect with major commercial and retail activities on SR 200 as well as opportunities to access the other transit routes serving SR 200 area. This route will also provide service to the proposed park-and-ride lot in the Marion Oaks area and connections to the Marion Oaks LX, the potential express route to Ocala.


OCALA/MARION COUNTY TDP
SunTran
Ocala/Marion County Florida
Legend
Proposed Alternatives
Intercity Connector
Marion Oaks Express
SR 200/ Marion Oaks Circulator
Existing Service
Green
Blue
Purple
Orange
Red
Red-Lake Weir H.S.
Yellow
3/4-mile ADA service area buffer
P Park-and-Ride (Exact location to be determined later.)
Source: Marion TPO
N
0 0.5 2 Miles
OCALA
BELLEVIEW
THE VILLAGES
75
P
TPO
Ocala · Marion County
Map 13-1: 10-year TDP Service Needs

- ***Implement Intercity Connector LX*** – This new route is proposed to serve as a connector, linking SunTran with the transit services in both Lake and Sumter counties. This route will provide two trips per day, one AM trip and one PM trip, from downtown Ocala to Spanish Springs in The Villages in Lake/Sumter counties. The Villages has a large number of retirement communities that may benefit from additional transit connections to local cities. The route will ultimately connect major cities in Lake County and key locations in Sumter County with Ocala and also will serve as a route to the Belleview area in Marion County.
- ***Maintain/Expand ADA paratransit services*** – SunTran should maintain its existing ADA paratransit service and should expand it in the current service area if/when more demand exists due to potential enhancement to SunTran's existing service. Additionally, SunTran should also provide ADA services in any new SunTran service areas beyond the existing ADA-paratransit service areas that may result from implementation of fixed-route transit service needs identified previously.

Capital/Infrastructure and Other Improvements

- ***Improve bus stop infrastructure and develop Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Action Plan*** – The TPO should continue to improve infrastructure at bus stops and develop a Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Action Plan. The plan should assess existing fixed-route bus stop infrastructure for possible accessibility improvements. Bus stops should then be prioritized in the plan for improvements based on applicable criteria.
- ***Conduct a park-and-ride feasibility study and implement a park-and-ride program*** – Conduct a feasibility study on the need for a park-and-ride program in coordination with the Ocala/Marion County TPO. In addition, potentially establish park-and-ride lots with one at the I-75 interchange at CR 484 in the Marion Oaks area (for serving the limited-express route from downtown Ocala to Marion Oaks) and another shared-use park-and-ride lot on SR 200 corridor serving the transit services on the SR 200 corridor.
- ***Conduct a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) to review the existing route structure*** – Conduct a review of existing bus scheduling and routing on a stop-level basis to determine under-performing or inefficient segments and stops. Due to constraints that the slow economy has put on typical transit funding sources, the efficient allocation of existing resources has become more critical than ever. It is recommended that SunTran conduct a COA on a system-wide level to assess the existing system for potential efficiency improvements.

- ***Implement transit awareness/education programs*** – Implement a program using existing resources to provide awareness/education on safe and efficient use of available transit services. This includes using bus maps/schedules and other materials currently used and distributed by SunTran to provide riders with additional information on "Do's and Don't's" when riding the bus. Such measures may help increase bus rider and operator safety as well as on-time performance, increasing the attractiveness of SunTran.
- ***Implement all-day bus pass*** – The TPO should review the current SunTran fare structure to explore the possibility of implementing an all-day bus pass.
- ***Implement route-level performance monitoring program*** – Performance monitoring programs track the performance and efficiency of its routes and the system as a whole and is a tool used by transit agencies for ensuring the provision of the most efficient and effective transit service. Such a program will assist SunTran in identifying routes in need of improvement or modification. The monitoring program recommended for SunTran consists of a comparative analysis of route performance. The methodology uses specific route-level data and compares each route's performance with all other regular local service routes.
- ***Promote/expand TDM strategies*** – Marion County should continue coordinating with "reThink," the FDOT District 5 Commuter Services program, to promote and expand the use of TDM strategies aimed at reducing single-occupant vehicle trips in Ocala/Marion County.
- ***Bus Technology Improvements Program (Install APCs)*** – Technology improvements are important to helping SunTran leverage its existing bus operations in a way that most benefits ridership. One major capital need for SunTran is installation of APC bus technology on its bus fleet. Currently, SunTran does not maintain an APC system, and it is reflected in the challenges faced in collecting ridership data and monitoring performance at route level. By improving passenger counting information, SunTran can focus on improving service to the areas which it is most needed.

TEN-YEAR TDP FINANCIAL PLAN

This section of the TDP presents capital and operating costs as well as revenues associated with implementation of the 10-year plan. Understanding that SunTran is operating under significant funding constraints, all of the Needs Plan service improvements will not be able to be funded with the existing revenues sources. Nevertheless, operating and capital costs for the Needs Plan and an implementation program for services in the Needs Plan have been prepared in the event that additional funding is identified. Those service

improvements that can be programmed with the existing revenues are shown in the cost-feasible plan, which is included at the end of this section.

Cost Assumptions

A number of cost assumptions were made to develop service characteristics and forecast transit costs for the time period from 2013 through 2022. These assumptions, made for operating and capital costs for fixed-route and paratransit services, are based on a variety of factors, including service performance data from SunTran, information from other recent Florida TDPs, and discussions with TPO/SunTran staff. These assumptions are summarized as follows:

- Based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for the last 5 years, from 2007 to 2011, an average annual inflation rate of 2.23 percent was used for all operating cost projections for fixed-route service.
- Annual operating cost for fixed-route service is based on the total revenue hours and operating cost per hour. The operating cost per revenue hour for existing fixed-route services and future operating enhancements is assumed to be $69.38, based on data from the TPO's annual summary report for SunTran for FY 2011.
- Based on reviewing various recent TDPs in Florida, the unit costs for the purchase of transit vehicles are assumed to be $400,000 for a regular fixed-route service bus and $75,000 for a cutaway bus for providing paratransit/flex service.
- Based on the historic complementary ADA operating cost for 2009, 2010, and 2011, the annual complementary ADA paratransit operating cost was calculated and a 2.23 percent inflationary factor was assumed.
- As ADA paratransit service is not mandatory for serving express routes, it is assumed that limited express services, including Marion Oaks LX connecting Ocala to Marion Oaks and Intercity Connector LX serving Ocala and Belleview, will not require complementary ADA paratransit services if implemented.
- No other capital costs are assumed for ADA paratransit services except the replacement of buses, as shown in the vehicle replacement schedule presented previously.
- Based on the data available from recent TDPs in Florida, an annual growth rate of 3 percent was used for all capital cost projections for fixed-route and paratransit services.
- A 20-percent spare ratio was factored into the vehicle replacement and expansion schedule.
- Engine/transmission rebuild cost is assumed at $52,333 per bus.

Revenue Assumptions

Revenues for fixed-route service are based on a variety of sources and assumptions for different revenue sources, including the following:

- Funding from federal, State, and local sources was based on the actual and projected Ocala/Marion TPO's 2012–2013 transit budget and on information available from TPO staff.
- A total of $295,000 in Federal Section 5309 funds is assumed for FY 2013. No Section 5309 funds are assumed thereafter.
- A total of $920,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding is assumed for FY 2013 based on data available from TPO staff.
- FDOT Service Development funds are assumed to cover 50 percent of operating costs for all new and expanded services. Local funds are assumed to provide the matching funds for the Service Development funds.
- Farebox revenues from existing services are calculated using historical and current farebox data and applying a 3 percent inflation factor. Farebox revenues from the new/expanded services are calculated using a farebox recovery ratio of 17 percent, which was calculated based on historical data for SunTran.
- A 3 percent inflation factor was assumed for projecting revenues included in the TDP financial plan.

Ten-Year TDP Cost Feasible Plan

Table 13-3 summarizes the Cost Feasible Plan with the projected operating and capital costs and revenues for Ocala/ Marion TDP from FY 2013 through FY 2022. The table categorizes costs by service and capital improvement categories. At this time, budget constraints do not allow for implementation of additional service improvements. As a result, all service improvements in the Needs Plan will remain unfunded unless additional revenue streams are identified.

Table 13-4 presents the potential service options for the 10-year TDP, including a host of service and capital improvements that are currently not funded within the next 10 years. The table shows a potential year of implementation, operating costs, and 10-year capital cost (in $2011) for each of the improvements.

Table 13-3
Cost Revenue Summary

Cost/Revenue	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	10-Year Total
Operating											
Costs											
Maintain Existing Fixed-Route	$2,267,023	$2,317,623	$2,369,352	$2,422,236	$2,476,300	$2,531,571	$2,588,076	$2,645,842	$2,704,897	$2,765,270	**$25,088,191**
Maintain Comp. ADA Paratransit for Existng Fixed Routes	$341,911	$349,542	$357,344	$365,320	$373,474	$381,810	$390,332	$399,044	$407,951	$417,056	**$3,783,786**
Service/Frequency Improvements	$0	$273,098	$837,580	$856,275	$875,387	$894,925	$914,900	$935,321	$956,197	$977,539	**$7,521,222**
New Fixed-Route Service	$0	$0	$0	$0	$868,262	$887,642	$907,454	$927,708	$948,414	$969,583	**$5,509,063**
Total Costs	**$2,608,934**	**$2,940,263**	**$3,564,276**	**$3,643,831**	**$4,593,423**	**$4,695,948**	**$4,800,762**	**$4,907,915**	**$5,017,460**	**$5,129,449**	**$41,902,262**
Revenues											
Federal 5307 for Operating	$1,180,000	$1,215,400	$1,251,862	$1,289,418	$1,328,101	$1,367,944	$1,408,982	$1,451,251	$1,494,789	$1,539,633	**$13,527,380**
FDOT Block Grant Funds	$720,000	$741,600	$763,848	$786,763	$810,366	$834,677	$859,717	$885,509	$912,074	$939,436	**$8,253,990**
Local Match for FDOT Block Grant	$605,000	$623,150	$641,845	$661,100	$680,933	$701,361	$722,402	$744,074	$766,396	$789,388	**$6,935,649**
Fare Revenue fromExisitng Services	$320,000	$329,600	$339,488	$349,673	$360,163	$370,968	$382,097	$393,560	$405,367	$417,528	**$3,668,444**
Fare Revenue fromExpanded Services	$0	$46,398	$142,302	$145,478	$296,240	$302,852	$309,612	$316,522	$323,587	$330,809	**$2,213,800**
Total Revenues	**$2,825,000**	**$2,956,148**	**$3,139,345**	**$3,232,432**	**$3,475,803**	**$3,577,802**	**$3,682,810**	**$3,790,916**	**$3,902,213**	**$4,016,794**	**$34,599,263**
Revenues Minus Costs	**$216,066**	**$15,885**	**($424,931)**	**($411,399)**	**($1,117,620)**	**($1,118,146)**	**($1,117,952)**	**($1,116,999)**	**($1,115,247)**	**($1,112,655)**	
Rollover from Prev. Year	**$0**	**$216,066**	**$231,952**	**($192,980)**	**($604,379)**	**($1,721,999)**	**($2,840,146)**	**($3,958,098)**	**($5,075,097)**	**($6,190,344)**	
Surplus/Shortfall	**$216,066**	**$231,952**	**($192,980)**	**($604,379)**	**($1,721,999)**	**($2,840,146)**	**($3,958,098)**	**($5,075,097)**	**($6,190,344)**	**($7,302,999)**	**($7,302,999)**
Capital											
Costs											
Vehicles	**$170,000**	**$301,000**	**$2,701,221**	**$0**	**$1,044,796**	**$184,481**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$4,401,498**
Replacement Buses for Exisitng Services	$0	$0	$900,407	$0	$0	$184,481	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$1,084,888**
Engine/Transmission Rebuilds	$170,000	$301,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$471,000**
Expand Exisitng Services	$0	$0	$1,800,814	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$1,800,814**
Add New Transit Service	$0	$0	$0	$0	$1,044,796	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$1,044,796**
Other Capital/Infrastructure	**$330,000**	**$27,799**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$357,799**
Bus Stop Infrastructure Program/Accessibility Action Plan	$120,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$120,000**
Bus Technology Improvements Program (Install APCs)	$85,000	$27,799	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$112,799**
SunTran Comprehensive Operations Analysis	$125,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$125,000**
Total Costs	**$500,000**	**$328,799**	**$2,701,221**	**$0**	**$1,044,796**	**$184,481**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$4,759,297**
Revenues											
Federal 5309	$295,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$295,000**
ARRA Funds	$920,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$920,000**
Total Revenue	**$1,215,000**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,215,000**
Revenue Minus Cost	**$715,000**	**($328,799)**	**($2,701,221)**	**$0**	**($1,044,796)**	**($184,481)**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	
Rollover from Prev. Year	**$0**	**$715,000**	**$386,201**	**-$2,315,020**	**-$2,315,020**	**-$3,359,816**	**-$3,544,297**	**-$3,544,297**	**-$3,544,297**	**-$3,544,297**	
Surplus/Shortfall	**$715,000**	**$386,201**	**($2,315,020)**	**($2,315,020)**	**($3,359,816)**	**($3,544,297)**	**($3,544,297)**	**($3,544,297)**	**($3,544,297)**	**($3,544,297)**	**($3,544,297)**
Cost Feasible Plan Summary											
Operating Costs	$2,608,934	$2,940,263	$3,564,276	$3,643,831	$4,593,423	$4,695,948	$4,800,762	$4,907,915	$5,017,460	$5,129,449	**$41,902,262**
Existing Operating Revenues	$2,825,000	$2,956,148	$3,139,345	$3,232,432	$3,475,803	$3,577,802	$3,682,810	$3,790,916	$3,902,213	$4,016,794	**$34,599,263**
Additional State Funding (Service Development)	$0	$136,549	$418,790	$428,137	$725,927	$443,821	$453,727	$0	$0	$0	**$2,606,950**
Additional Local Funding	$0	$136,549	$418,790	$428,137	$725,927	$443,821	$453,727	$0	$976,443	$1,112,655	**$4,696,048**
Rollover from Prev. Year	$0	$216,066	$505,049	$917,698	$1,362,574	$1,696,807	$1,466,302	$1,255,803	$138,804	$0	
Operating Surplus/Shortfall	**$216,066**	**$505,049**	**$917,698**	**$1,362,574**	**$1,696,807**	**$1,466,302**	**$1,255,803**	**$138,804**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Capital Costs	$500,000	$328,799	$2,701,221	$0	$1,044,796	$184,481	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$4,759,297**
Existing Capital Revenues	$1,215,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$1,215,000**
Additional Local Funding	$0		$2,315,020	$0	$1,044,796	$184,481	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$3,544,297**
Rollover from Prev. Year	$0	$715,000	$386,201	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	
Capital Surplus/Shortfall	**$715,000**	**$386,201**	**($0)**	**($0)**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

Table 13-4
Recommended TDP 10-Year Service Options

Improvement	Implementation Year	Annual Operating Cost (2011$)	Capital Equipment Cost (2011$)
Maintain/Expand Existing Service			
Maintain existing fixed route bus service	On going	$1,938,952	$1,250,000
Maintain existing paratransit service	On going	$318,179	$150,000
Expand hours of service at night (from 8–10 pm)	2014	$255,598	$0
Implement 30-minute frequency during peak hours on selected existing routes (Green, Orange, Purple, Blue)	Unfunded*	$511,196	$1,600,000
Implement 30-minute frequency all day on selected existing routes (Green, Orange, Purple, Blue)	Unfunded	$1,277,990	$1,600,000
Implement 30-minute frequency all day on all existing routes	Unfunded	$1,916,986	$2,800,000
Add limited Sunday service on selected existing routes (Blue, Purple, Orange)	Unfunded	$64,940	$0
Add limited Sunday service on all existing routes	Unfunded	$129,880	$0
Add New Transit Service			
SR 200/Marion Oaks Circulator	Unfunded**	$638,995	$800,000
ADA service for SR 200/Marion Oaks Circulator	Unfunded**	$121,558	$75,000
Marion Oaks LX	Unfunded	$319,498	$400,000
Intercity Connector LX (Ocala, Belleview, The Villages)	Unfunded	$85,199	$400,000
Capital/Infrastructure/Other			
Implement Bus Technology Improvements Program (install APCs)	2013	$0	$112,800
Conduct Comprehensive Operations Analysis	2013	$0	$125,000
Bus Stop Infrastructure Program/Accessibility Action Plan	2013	$0	$120,000
Conduct feasibility study and establish park-and-ride program	Unfunded	$0	$150,000
Implement transit awareness/education programs	TBD	n/a	n/a
Promote/expand transportation demand strategies	TBD	n/a	n/a
Implement all-day bus pass	TBD	n/a	n/a

* Project included in TDP finance plan beginning in 2015. Funding to be determined later.

** Project included in TDP finance plan beginning in 2017. Funding to be determined later.

Appendix A

On-Board Survey Instrument

SunTran On-Board Survey

SunTran is planning for the future and needs your feedback to help improve transit services. Your participation in this survey is anonymous and voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, please return the blank form to the surveyor. If you choose to fill out a survey, please check (✓) the correct item, write out, or circle your answers. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

This survey is about the ONE-WAY transit trip you are making now!

Example of ONE-WAY Bus Trip

1. What **TYPE OF PLACE** are you **COMING FROM NOW?** (Please ✓ the starting place of this **ONE-WAY TRIP**) (Please ✓ only one)

1__ Work
2__ Medical
3__ Social/Personal
4__ School (K-12)
5__ College/Tech
6__ Recreation
7__ Shopping/Errands
8__ Home
9__ Other (specify)_____

2. What is the **ADDRESS OR NAME** of the **PLACE, BUSINESS, OR BUILDING** you are **COMING FROM NOW**?

Address or Intersection (e.g., 1700 West International Speedway Boulevard)

Place, Business, or Building Name (e.g., Volusia Mall)

City State Zip

3. How did you get to the first bus stop for this **ONE-WAY TRIP**? (Please ✓ only **ONE**)

1__ Walked ➡ *# blocks?* ____
2__ Bicycled ➡ *# blocks?* ____
3__ Drove & parked ➡ *# miles?*____
4__ Was dropped off
5__ Rode with someone who parked
6__ Other (specify) _____

4. **LIST ALL** of the **BUS ROUTES** in the **EXACT ORDER** you will use to make **THIS ONE-WAY TRIP**:

FIRST Bus Route ➡ **SECOND** Bus Route ➡ **THIRD** Bus Route

5. What **TYPE OF PLACE** are you **GOING TO NOW** on this **ONE-WAY TRIP**? (Please ✓ the ending place of this **ONE-WAY TRIP**) (Please ✓ only ONE)

1__ Work
2__ Medical
3__ Social/Personal
4__ School (K-12)
5__ College/Tech
6__ Recreation
7__ Shopping/Errands
8__ Home
9__ Other (specify)_____

6. What is the **NAME OR ADDRESS** of the **PLACE, BUSINESS, OR BUILDING** you are **GOING TO NOW**?

Address or Intersection (e.g., 1700 West International Speedway Boulevard)

Place, Business, or Building Name (e.g., Volusia Mall)

City State Zip

7. After you get off the last bus you will use to complete this **ONE-WAY TRIP**, how will you get to your **FINAL DESTINATION** ? (Please ✓ only ONE)

1__ Walk ➡ *# blocks?* ____
2__ Bicycle ➡ *# blocks?* ____
3__ Drive ➡ *# miles?*____
4__ This stop is the final destination
5__ Will be picked up
6__ Ride with someone who parked
7__ Other (specify) _____

8. How would you make this one-way trip if not by bus? (Please ✓ only ONE)

1__ Drive
2__ Taxi
3__ Walk
4__ Wouldn't make trip
5__ Bicycle
6__ Ride with someone
7__ Other (Specify)_____

9. On average, how many days a week do you ride the bus?

1__ 1 2__ 2 3__ 3 4__ 4 5__ 5 6__ 6
7__ Once a month or less
8__ First time riding

10. How long have you been using SunTran bus service?

1__ This is the first day
2__ Less than three months
3__ 3 months to 6 months
4__ 7 months to 1 year
5__ 1 to 2 years
6__ More than 2 years

PLEASE CONTINUE ON BACK OF SURVEY ➡

11. What type of fare do you usually pay when you ride the bus?

1__ Adult Fare ($1.50)
2__ Youth/Student Fare ($1.10)
3__ Senior/Disabled (75¢)
4__ Medicare (75¢)
5__ Monthly Pass ($45.00)
6__ Youth/Student Monthly ($34.00)
7__ Senior/Disabled Monthly ($23.00)
8__ Other _____

12. Did you use a wheelchair ramp to board the bus for this trip?

1___ Yes 2___ No

13. Do you have access to a car or other personal vehicle that you could have used to make **THIS** trip?

1__ Yes 2__ No

14. How many working vehicles (cars, motorcycles, trucks, vans) are at your home? (✓only **ONE**)

1__ 1 2__ 2 3__ 3 or more 4__ None

15. How many months out of the year do you reside in Marion County?

1__ Less than one month
2__ Visitor/Tourist
3__ 1-6 months
4__ Permanent Resident
5__ 6 to 12 months

16. What is the most important reason you ride the bus? (Please ✓ only ONE)

1__ I do not have a valid driver's license
2__ Car is not available all the time
3__ Parking is too expensive/difficult
4__ I do not drive
5__ SunTran is more convenient
6__ SunTran fits my budget better
7__ SunTran is safer/less stressful
8__ Other _____

17. Which three of the following improvements do you think is most important? (✓ **THREE**)

1___ More benches and shelters at bus stops
2___ More bike racks at bus stops
3___ Earlier service on existing routes
4___ Improved security at stops and on buses
5___ Sunday service on Route(s) _____
6___ Later service on existing routes
7___ More frequent service on existing routes
8___ Express service. Where? _____
9___ Other (Specify) _____

18. How do you prefer to receive information about SunTran service, schedules, and changes?

1__ SunTran website
2__ Newspaper
3__ Bus signs/shelters
4__ TV
5__ Bus schedules
6__ Bus driver
7__ Call SunTran
8__ Other _____
9__ In bus
10__ Transfer plaza
11__ Radio

19. How often do you use the wireless internet service available on SunTran buses?

1__ Never 2__ Rarely 3__ Often 4__ Every time I ride a SunTran bus

20. How satisfied are you with each of the following? Circle a score for each characteristic.

Please indicate	Very Satisfied		Neutral		Very Unsatisfied
a. Your overall satisfaction with SunTran	5	4	3	2	1
b. Frequency of service (how often buses run)	5	4	3	2	1
c. Your ability to get where you want to go using the bus	5	4	3	2	1
d. The number of times you have to transfer	5	4	3	2	1
e. How easy it is to transfer between buses	5	4	3	2	1
f. Time of day the *earliest* buses run on **weekdays**	5	4	3	2	1
g. Time of day the *latest* buses run on **weekdays**	5	4	3	2	1
h. Availability of Sunday service	5	4	3	2	1
i. Safety/Security at the bus stop	5	4	3	2	1
j. Dependability of the buses (on time)	5	4	3	2	1
k. User friendliness of bus information	5	4	3	2	1
l. Other, please specify_____	5	4	3	2	1

21. Considering Question 20 above, list the three areas that are most important to you when riding the bus: _____, _____, and _____

22. Your age is?

1__ 17 or under
2__ 18 to 24
3__ 25 to 34
4__ 35 to 44
5__ 45 to 54
6__ 55 to 64
7__ 65 to 74
8__ Over 74

23. What is your gender? 1__ Male 2__ Female

24. What is your race or ethnic heritage? (Please ✓ only ONE)

1__ White 2__ Black 3__ Hispanic 4__ Asian 5__ Other_____

25. What was the range of your total household income for 2011?

1__ Under $10,000
2__ $10,000 to $19,999
3__ $20,000 to $29,999
4__ $30,000 to $39,999
5__ $40,000 to $49,999
6__ $50,000 or greater
7__ Do Not Work
8__ Refuse to Respond

26. Do you have a valid driver's license? 1__ Yes 2__ No

27. What is the zip code of your permanent residence? _____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY!

Appendix B

SunTran Operator Survey

Operator Survey

*Please take a few moments to answer the following questions. This survey is part of an effort to improve SunTran service. Please do **NOT** put your name or other identifying mark on the survey.*

1. The following is a list of possible complaints SunTran passengers may voice to bus operators. Please read the list of common complaints below carefully and mark the **5 complaints** that you hear most frequently from passengers.

_____ fare is too high
_____ need more frequent service
_____ bus doesn't go where I want
_____ bus is late
_____ bus leaves stop too early
_____ bus is not clean
_____ bus is not comfortable
_____ passengers cannot get information
_____ need Sunday service
_____ need increased night/evening service
_____ bus schedule too hard to understand
_____ passengers eat/drink on the bus
_____ route or destination on bus not clear
_____ no bus shelters/benches
_____ safety and security
_____ OTHER (please specify) _____
_____

2. Do you think these complaints are valid? Please explain.

3. Do you know of any safety problems on any routes? Please explain.

4. Provide specific service improvements to SunTran bus routes. Include information for routes that you drive and that you don't drive. Examples of service improvements include improving bus running times, adding new destinations, improving service frequency, combining services with other SunTran routes, etc.

Route	Service Improvement/Comment

5. Use the space below to provide any other comments that could help improve SunTran service.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

Appendix C

Stakeholder Interview Script

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
OCALA/MARION TDP

1. Are you currently aware of Marion County's public transit system (SunTran) and its services?
2. Do you use SunTran? Why? Why not?
3. Who do you believe uses the transit system? (Workers, Students, Unemployed, Older Adults, Tourists/Visitors)
4. What groups of travelers seem to experience the most difficult transportation conditions (persons with disabilities, low-income, older adults, commuters, etc.)? Why?
5. What type of transit services would you like to see more of in Marion County? (more frequent fixed-route, express bus, trolley, demand response, increased weekend service, late evening service)
6. Is there a need for more service in core areas currently served by SunTran in Marion County? Is there a need for transit service in other areas in Marion County?
7. What do you think are the most significant issues facing transit users?
8. What are reasonable passenger fares for transit service? (please specify per trip or other)
9. Do you believe there is a congestion problem in Marion County? (If yes, go to the next question; if no, skip to question 11)
10. Do you believe that public transportation can relieve congestion in Marion County?
11. What are the major destinations within your immediate community?
12. What are the major destinations outside of your community where people are traveling to from your area?
13. What additional steps do you feel should be taken to increase the use of public transit in Marion County?
14. Is more regional transportation needed to connect Marion County with surrounding areas (Lake, Sumter, Citrus, Levy, Alachua, Putnam, and Volusia counties)?
15. Are you willing to pay additional local taxes for an expanded transit system?
16. What types of local funding sources should be used to increase transit service in the future? (i.e., private partnerships, advertising revenues, fare increases, ad valorem tax, sales tax, gas tax)

Appendix D

CTC Peer Selection Criteria

Table D-1
CTC Peer Selection Criteria

Marion County CTC Peer Systems (Florida)													
Name	Land Area (sq mi)	Service Area Population	Density (per sq. mi.)	Passenger Trips	Vehicle Miles	Revenue Miles	Miles between Roadcalls	Accidents per 100,000 Miles	# of Vehicles	Driver Hours	TD Population	Operating Revenue	Operating Expenses
Osceola	1,327	268,685	202	5,697	1,987,598	1,668,543	21,842	2.26	60	126,153	82,353	$3,773,092	$3,830,517
Collier	1,998	321,520	161	2,660	1,476,166	1,241,324	27,852	2.32	27	91,701	131,575	$3,460,167	$4,161,683
Okaloosa	930	180,822	194	6,307	683,233	591,105	683,233	0.44	65	64,888	58,012	$1,598,338	$1,577,959
Alachua	875	247,336	283	2,143	1,239,074	1,050,116	14,577	2.18	41	84,978	94,221	$3,059,528	$2,903,072
Lake	938	297,052	317	17,850	2,522,672	2,102,883	17,279	0.40	91	119,697	119,583	$6,165,996	$5,037,400
Marion	1,585	331,298	209	6,898	1,819,872	1,681,926	139,990	0.16	86	152,880	150,414	$3,715,668	$4,070,355
Mean	1,276	274,452	228	6,926	1,621,436	1,389,316	150,796	1.29	62	106,716	106,026	$3,628,798	$3,596,831

Notes:

1. Peer systems were selected based on service area population, service area population density, and land area, using 2010 census population data.
2. Based on 2010 AOR data from FCTD.

Appendix E

Fixed-Route Peer Selection Criteria

Appendix E
Fixed-Route Peer Selection Criteria

Name	Average Speed (RM/RH)	Passenger Trips	Revenue Hours	Revenue Miles	Service Area Population	Service Area Population Density	Total Operating Expense	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service
City of Rome Transit Department	17	690,511	27,830	461,504	37,000	1,542	2,182,510	26
Concho Valley Transit District	16	212,056	22,506	368,903	88,128	1,574	1,526,430	5
Albany Transit System	17	860,214	31,612	529,949	75,616	4,448	1,906,741	7
Johnson City Transit System	14	562,453	29,349	414,422	49,381	1,496	1,460,505	12
Hill Country Transit District	14	392,631	34,198	495,166	395,300	47	1,806,016	11
High Point Transit	14	779,083	28,774	398,139	100,442	1,932	1,993,343	11
SunTran	16	414,928	27,947	441,999	82,784	1,505	1,938,952	6
Mean	**15**	**558,839**	**28,888**	**444,297**	**118,379**	**1,792**	**1830642.43**	**11**

Notes:

1. Peer systems were selected based on service area population density, revenue miles, and vehicles operated in maximum service.
2. Based on 2010 NTD data.

Appendix F

Farebox Recovery Ratio Analysis

ANNUAL FAREBOX RECOVERY RATIO REPORT – 2012
SUNTRAN FIXED-ROUTE BUS SYSTEM, OCALA, FLORIDA
JULY 2012

CURRENT FAREBOX RECOVERY RATIO

The farebox recovery ratio for SunTran, the public transportation provider for Marion County, Florida, was 16.99 percent in FY 2011. The background with regards to the farebox recovery ratio includes the following.

PRIOR YEAR FARE STUDIES AND CHANGES

SunTran was established in 1998 and maintained a fare of $1.00 from 1998 to 2008. In 2008, fares were increased from $1.00 to $1.50 in a two-step process taking place over a six-month period (from $1.00 to $1.25 in July, and from $1.25 to $1.50 in January). Monthly passes and reduced fare rates also increased as part of the fare adjustment. This fare increase was due predominately to the increase in cost of fuel as well as an increase in service The increase in service added one hour at the start of the day and two hours of additional night time service. The increase in service span occurred at the same time as the fare increase. Ridership increased by 26 percent between 2006 and 2010.

PROPOSED FARE CHANGES FOR THE UPCOMING YEARS

SunTran is not planning to implement a fare increase at this time.

STRATEGIES THAT WILL EFFECT THE FAREBOX RECOVERY RATIO

The following is a list of strategies SunTran will employ to improve the farebox recovery ratio.

1. Determine most cost-effective service type on all major corridors, given demand, routings, and coverage areas.
2. Increase ridership by increasing average frequency and improving fare collection options and fare media accessibility for riders.
3. Increase ridership by transitioning transportation disadvantaged services patrons to fixed-route service.
4. Minimize costs required to operate and administer transportation services.
5. Hold maintenance costs to less than 20 percent of total system costs by performing scheduled maintenance activities for all transit vehicles.