



CHARLOTTE COUNTY

FLORIDA

Charlotte County Transit

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025-2034

July 2024
Final Report

Exercise



Expanded Options

Neutral Agree with B

Charlotte County should consider adding regularly-scheduled bus service with reservation-based curb-to-curb transit service.



With Charlotte County Transit?



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Introduction

Charlotte County Transit's Transit Development Plan will cover FYs 2025-2034.



Picture Credit: Charlotte County

Section 1

SECTION 1. Introduction

This planning effort was initiated by the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to prepare a major update of Charlotte County Transit's 10-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP).

This TDP represents the transit vision in Charlotte County from 2025 to 2034, functioning as the strategic guide for public transportation for the community. This TDP update allows Charlotte County to outline actions to be taken in the following year and set transit goals for subsequent years. As a strategic plan, the TDP will also identify needs in an unconstrained fashion and for which currently there is no funding. As a development plan for local transit services, the plan will be consistent with community goals, reflect the priorities that leadership has established, and integrate the various community characteristics and development patterns that influence decisions and growth within Charlotte County and its municipalities.

Preparing and submitting a TDP major update every five years that complies with Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) Rule 14-73.001 (commonly called the TDP Rule) is required by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) as a prerequisite to receiving State Public Transit Block Grant funds. According to Rule 14-73.001, F.A.C. – Public Transportation, “The TDP shall be the applicant’s planning, development and operational guidance document to be used in developing the Transportation Improvement Program and the Department’s Five-year Work Program.”

The most recent 10-year TDP major update for Charlotte County Transit was adopted in July 2019 for Fiscal Years (FY) 2020–2029. This current major update for FY 2025–2034 is due to FDOT District One by September 1, 2024.

TDP Requirements

Current TDP requirements were formally adopted by FDOT on February 20, 2007. Major requirements of the Rule include:

- Major updates must be completed every 5 years, covering a 10-year planning horizon.
- A Public Involvement Plan must be developed and approved by FDOT or consistent with the approved Metropolitan/Transportation Planning Organization (MPO) Public Involvement Plan.
- FDOT, the Regional Workforce Development Board (RWDB), and the MPO must be advised of all public meetings at which the TDP is presented and discussed, and these entities must 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.
- Estimation of the community's demand for transit service (10-year annual projections) must use the planning tools provided by FDOT or another demand estimation technique approved by FDOT.

Organization of This Report

This report is organized into 10 major sections, including this Introduction.

Section 2 summarizes the **Baseline Conditions** findings derived from analyses of the operating environment for

transit services in Charlotte County. This includes a physical description of the study area, population profile, employment information, demographic data, and socioeconomic characteristics that may impact transit services. Additionally, travel behavior and commuting trends also are reviewed, including vehicle ownership, modes of commuting, and journey-to-work characteristics. Land use trends, major transit trip generators and attractors, existing roadway conditions, and tourist and visitor levels also are explored. The information compiled and presented provides the basis for more-detailed analysis in subsequent tasks of the Charlotte County Transit 2025–2034 TDP.

Section 3 summarizes the **Existing Services** evaluation conducted for the TDP. The analysis uses data for the current on-demand service from Charlotte County Transit and the National Transit Database (NTD), a national repository of validated transit data for all federally-subsidized transit agencies across the U.S., presenting a detailed examination of operating performance. Furthermore, a performance trend analysis presents a detailed examination over time of operating data for Charlotte County Transit's on-demand services.

Section 4 presents the **Public Involvement Summary**, including a summary review of the outreach efforts completed and the associated findings. TDP outreach efforts were conducted in two phases and include stakeholder interviews, public input surveys, discussion groups workshops, grassroots outreach events, public workshops, and presentations, as well as use of online platforms and tools.

Section 5 presents the **Situation Appraisal**, which reviews the current overall planning and policy environment

within the county to better understand transit needs. First, a review of local plans and documents is presented; assessment of these plans helps to identify and evaluate applicable federal and state policies, as well as local community goals and objectives that relate to transit and mobility. Then, the appraisal examines the strengths and weaknesses of the system, as well as any existing threats to the provision of service in the county and key opportunities for addressing those threats and/or enhancing the transit-friendliness of the operating environment.

Section 6 identifies **Goals, Objectives, and Policies** to guide implementation of the TDP. A review and update of the goals and objectives outlined in the previous TDP major update was completed to stay consistent with the goals of Charlotte County Transit and its local community.

Section 7 presents the **Transit Demand Assessments**, summarizing the various demand and mobility needs assessments conducted as part of the TDP. Included is a market assessment that provides an examination of potential service gaps and latent demand using GIS-based analyses.

Section 8 discusses the **Transit Needs Development** process and results for the 10-Year major update. The identified improvements for Charlotte County Transit services represent the transit needs for the next 10 years that were developed without consideration for any funding constraints. The identified service improvements were prioritized using an evaluation process developed to rank the transit service alternatives. The resulting ranking of alternatives were then used to develop the 10-year implementation plan presented in Section 9.

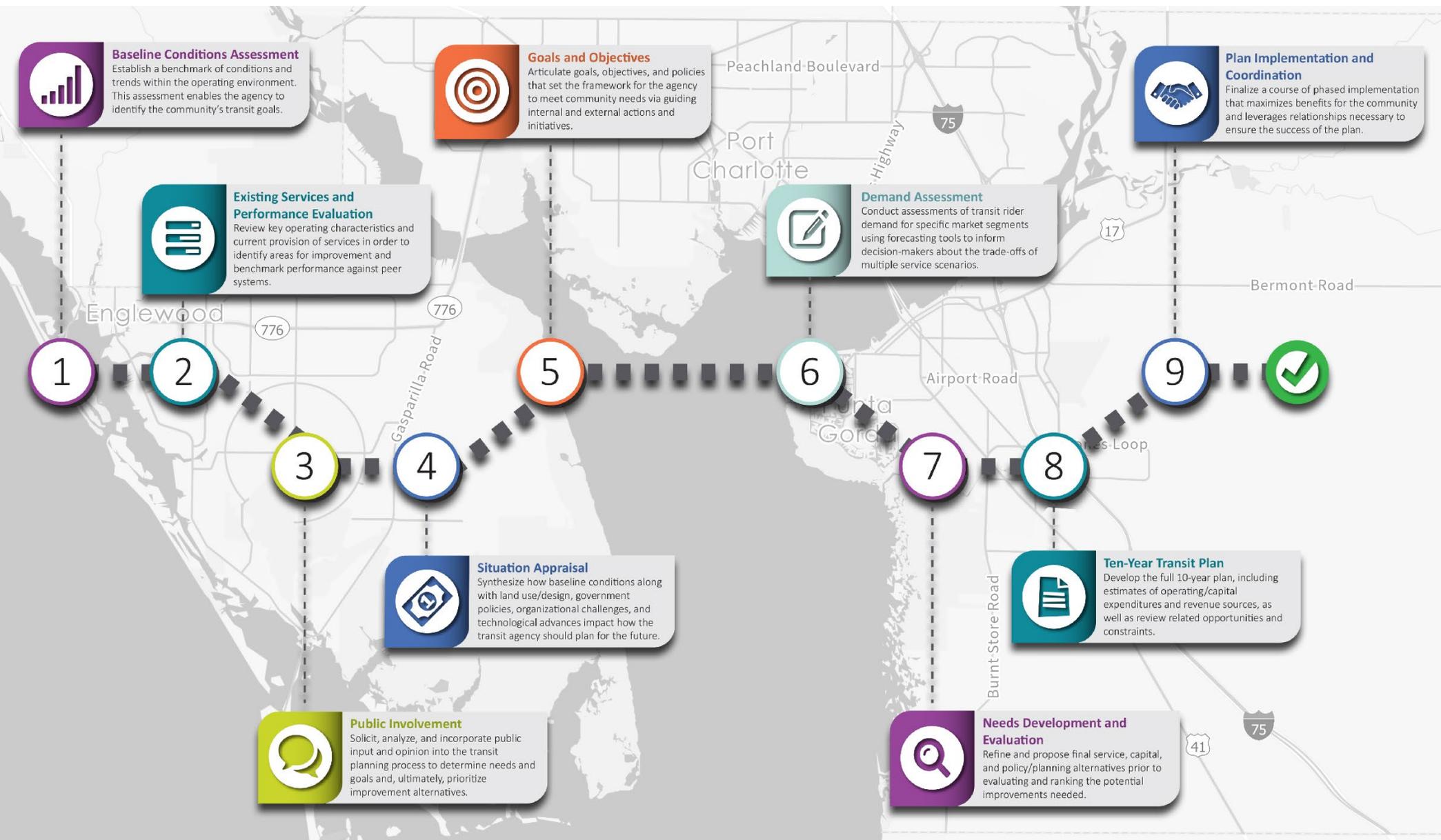
Section 9 summarizes the **Recommended 10-Year Plan** developed for Charlotte County Transit. The Plan shows the recommended service, capital/technology, and policy improvements, as well as the unfunded needs. It also includes a discussion of the revenue assumptions and capital and operating costs used. Thereafter, the 10-year phased implementation plan for the TDP is summarized. A set of service, capital/technology, and policy improvements are programmed for the 10-year period and the improvements that may not be funded now but should be considered if additional funding becomes available are also listed.

Section 10 introduces an **Implementation and Coordination** guide, summarizing the techniques and approaches to help facilitate outreach and implementation efforts after TDP adoption. This section identifies implementation strategies and ways to make use of the various relationships, tools, and outreach materials from this process to continue to build support for the implementation of the 10-Year TDP.

Charlotte County Transit TDP Process

The process to develop the Charlotte County TDP is consistent with FDOT's *Guidance for Preparing & Reviewing Transit Development Plans*, Version III (2022) known as the "TDP Handbook." As shown in Figure 1-1, it includes a series of discrete and interrelated tasks. Combined these tasks contribute to the full picture of the current operating environment and existing/future transit needs in Charlotte County.

Figure 1-1: Charlotte County Transit TDP Process



TDP Checklist

This TDP meets the requirements for a major update per Rule Chapter 14-73, F.A.C. Table 1-1 lists each requirement and the location in the TDP.

Table 1-1: TDP Checklist

Public Involvement Process		TDP Section
✓	FDOT-approved TDP Public Involvement Plan (PIP)	4& Appendix C
✓	Opportunities for public involvement outlined in PIP	4& Appendix C
✓	Solicitation of comments from RWDB	4& Appendix C
✓	Notification to FDOT, RWDB, and MPO about public meetings	4& Appendix C
✓	Provision of review opportunities to FDOT, RWDB, and MPO	4& Appendix C
Situation Appraisal		
✓	Plans and policy review	5
✓	Socioeconomic trends	5
✓	Land use	5
✓	Organizational issues	5
✓	Technology/innovation	5
✓	Transit-friendly land use and urban design efforts	5
✓	10-Year transit ridership projections	7
✓	Farebox Recovery report	3 & Appendix A
Mission and Goals		
✓	Mission and vision	6
✓	Goals and objectives	6
Alternatives Development & Evaluation		
✓	Documentation of development of transit alternatives	8
✓	Documentation of evaluation of transit alternatives	8
Implementation Program		
✓	10-year program of improvement strategies and policies	9
✓	Maps indicating areas to be served and types and levels of service	9
✓	10-year financial plan showing funding sources and expenditures of funds	9
✓	Documentation of monitoring program to track performance	9 & Appendix E
✓	Implementation plan with projects and/or services needed to meet the goals and objectives in the TDP	9
Relationship to Other Plans		
✓	Consistent with Florida Transportation Plan	5
✓	Consistent with local government comprehensive plan	5
✓	Consistent with regional transportation goals and objectives	5
Submission		
✓	Adopted by Charlotte County BCC	
✓	Submit to FDOT by September 1, 2024	

Baseline Conditions

Charlotte County is projected to be home to approximately 300,000 residents by 2040.



Picture Credit: Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau

Section 2

SECTION 2. Baseline Conditions

This section reviews the study area in the context of Charlotte County to understand the conditions in which Charlotte County Transit operates and potential factors influencing its services. A key goal of this TDP is to identify transit strategies to support growth in Charlotte County and enhance connectivity within and outside of its boundaries. The information in this report lays the foundation upon which to review or analyze trends and help identify areas of opportunity for development of future modified, enhanced, and/or expanded transit services.

Study Area

Charlotte County is located on the west coast of Florida and is bordered on the north by Sarasota County and DeSoto County; on the west by the Gulf of Mexico; on the east by Glades County; and to the south by Lee County. The total land area of the county is 681.1 square miles, with approximately 266 square miles dedicated to conservation. Charlotte County's only incorporated area and county seat is the City of Punta Gorda. Four major roadways intersect Charlotte County: I-75, US-41, US-17, and SR-776 (Map 2-1).

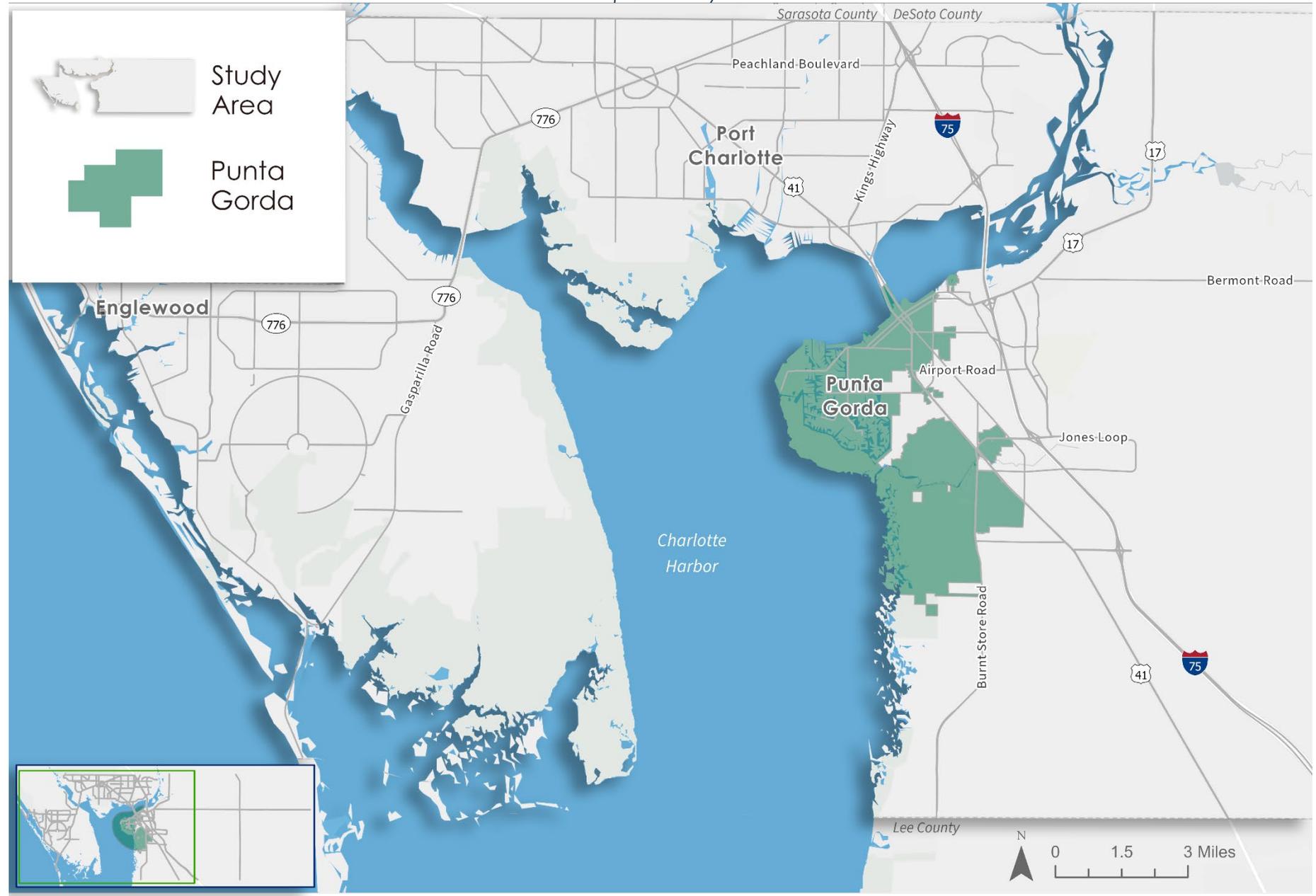
Community Scorecard Highlights

% of residents who rated positively

84%	Overall quality of life
72%	Overall quality of business and service establishments
61%	Overall design or layout of residential and commercial areas
53%	Overall opportunities for education, culture and the arts
47%	Overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus)
40%	Employment opportunities

Source: Charlotte County

Map 2-1: Study Area



Source: Charlotte County

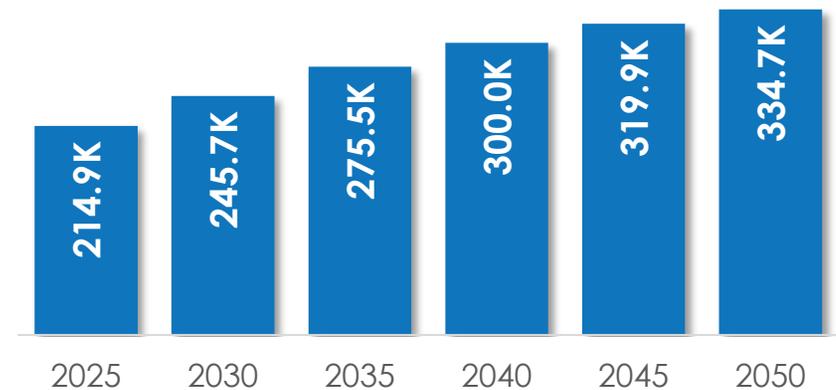
Population

Higher population density can be a key indicator of a healthy transit market. Areas with high population density often are associated with land uses that promote transit use and amenities that promote multimodal activity. Data derived for Charlotte County's population shows it is expected to grow over the next two decades, exceeding 245,000 residents by 2030 and reaching approximately 300,000 residents by 2040 (Figure 2-1). From 2025 to 2050, the population is projected to grow more than 55%. Areas with expected higher growth are concentrated in already populated areas, in Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte (Maps 2-2 and 2-3). Babcock Ranch, in east Charlotte County, is also expected to see higher population density/growth.

Age Distribution Projection

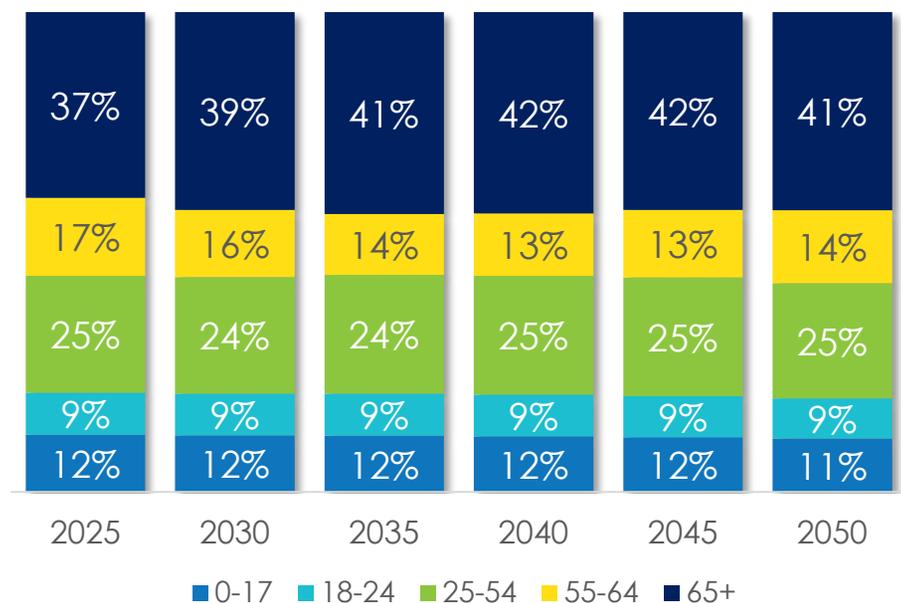
Age can affect individual transportation preferences and needs. Millennials and Generation Z tend to drive less and desire more transportation choices compared to earlier generations. Older adults can become more mobility limited with age due to physical or cognitive impairments and are a population group that tends to rely more on transit. Planning for a growing aging population is important to ensure that all residents have access to both life sustaining and popular destinations. Understanding the age distribution of the county can help better plan communities and resource allocation where needed most (Maps 2-4 and 2-5). The 65+ age cohort will increase the most, as expected, by 4% by 2050 while the other cohorts will decrease or remain steady. The typical working age cohorts, 18-64 years old, will decrease by 3% (Figure 2-2).

Figure 2-1: Population Projections | 2025–2050



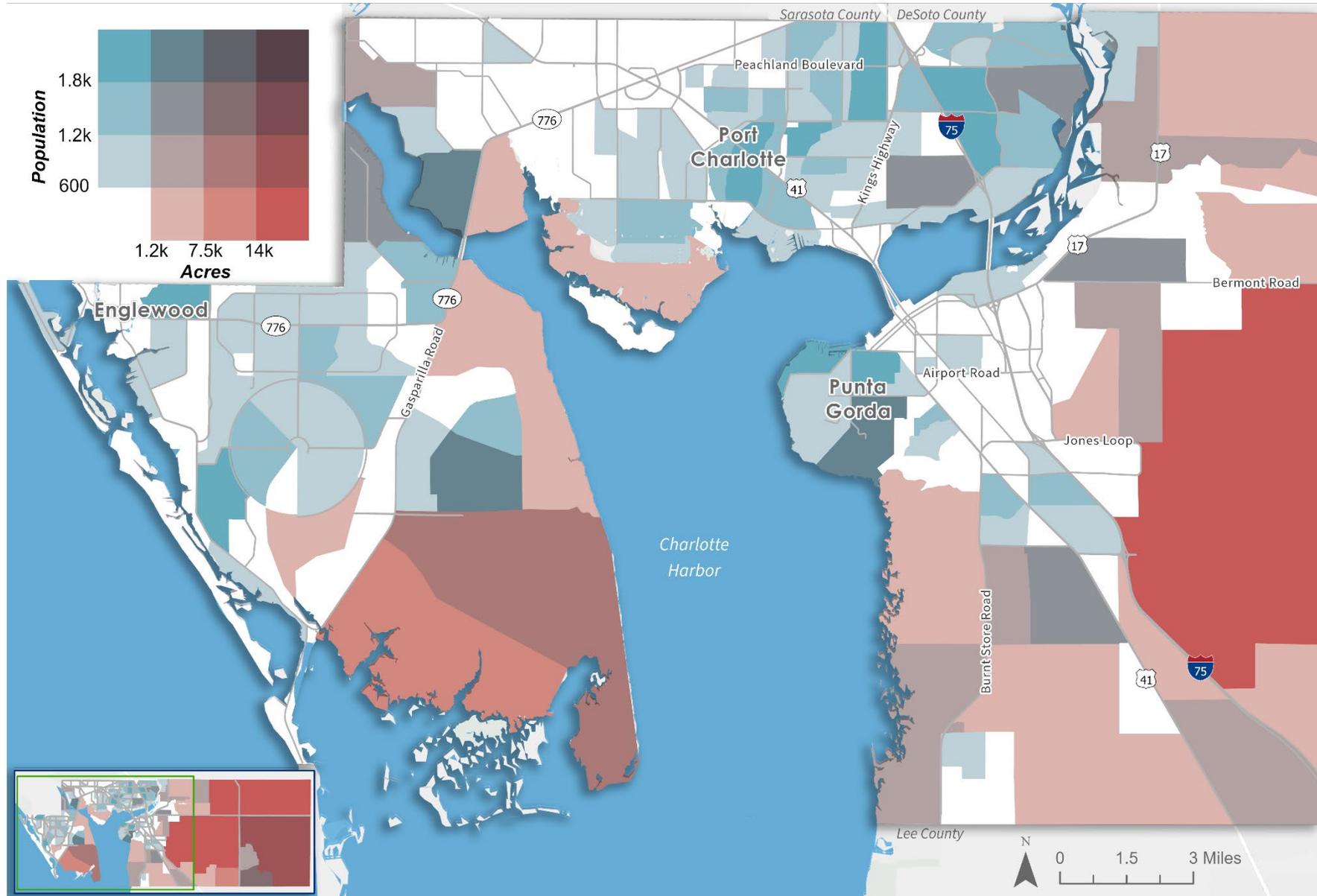
Source: Charlotte County

Figure 2-2: Population Projections by Age | 2025–2050



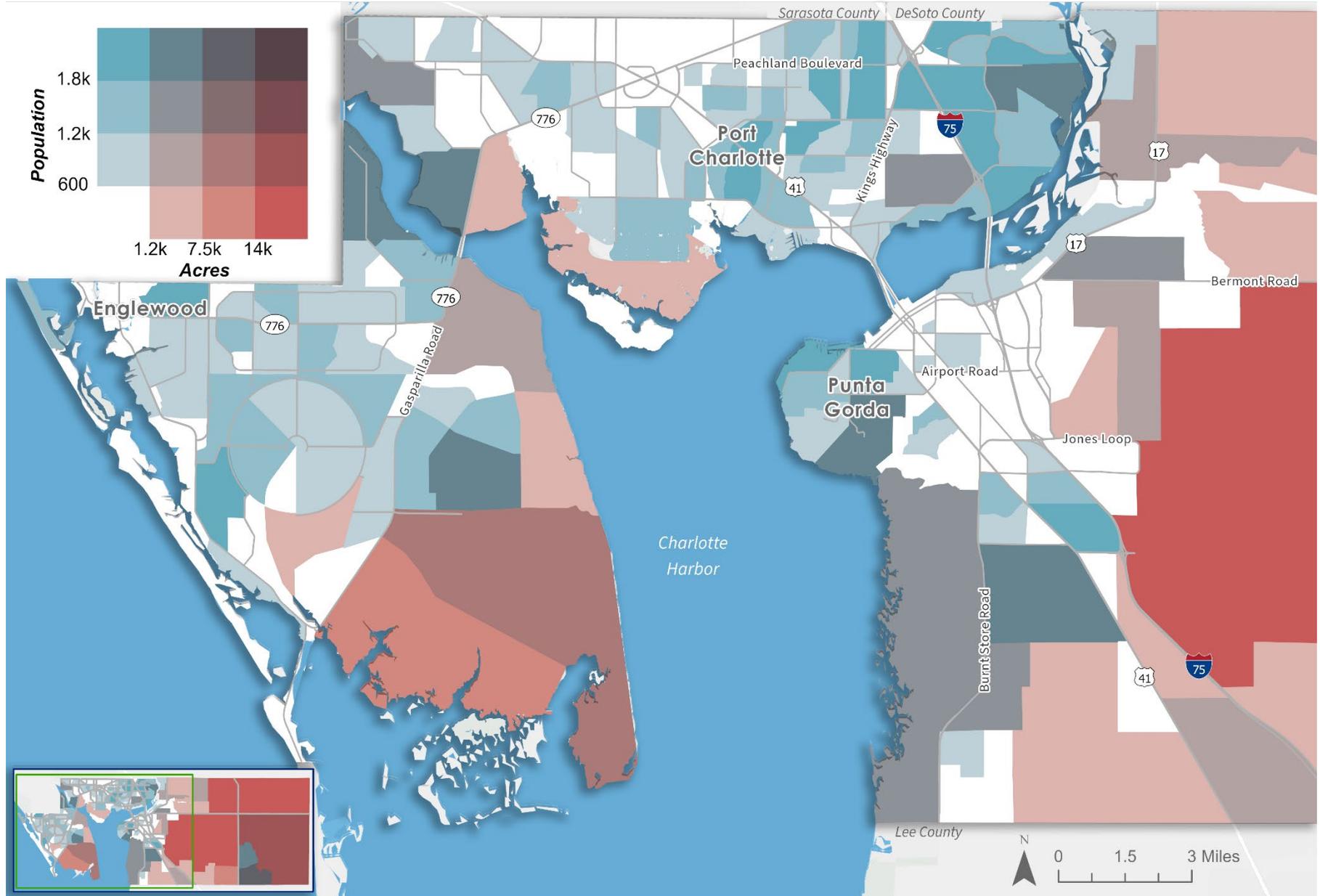
Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR)

Map 2-2: Population by TAZ Size | 2025



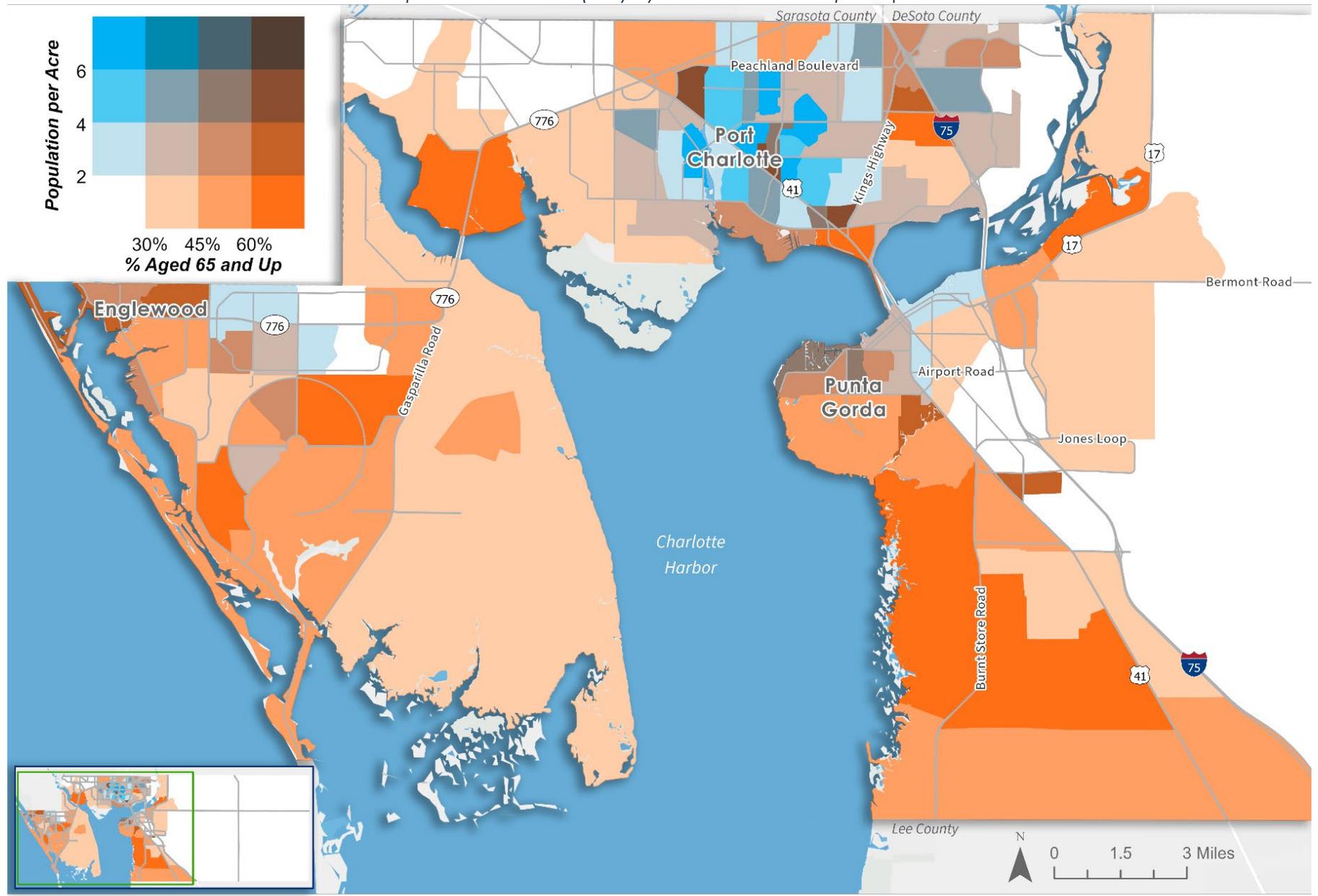
Source: Charlotte County MPO

Map 2-3: Population by TAZ Size | 2034



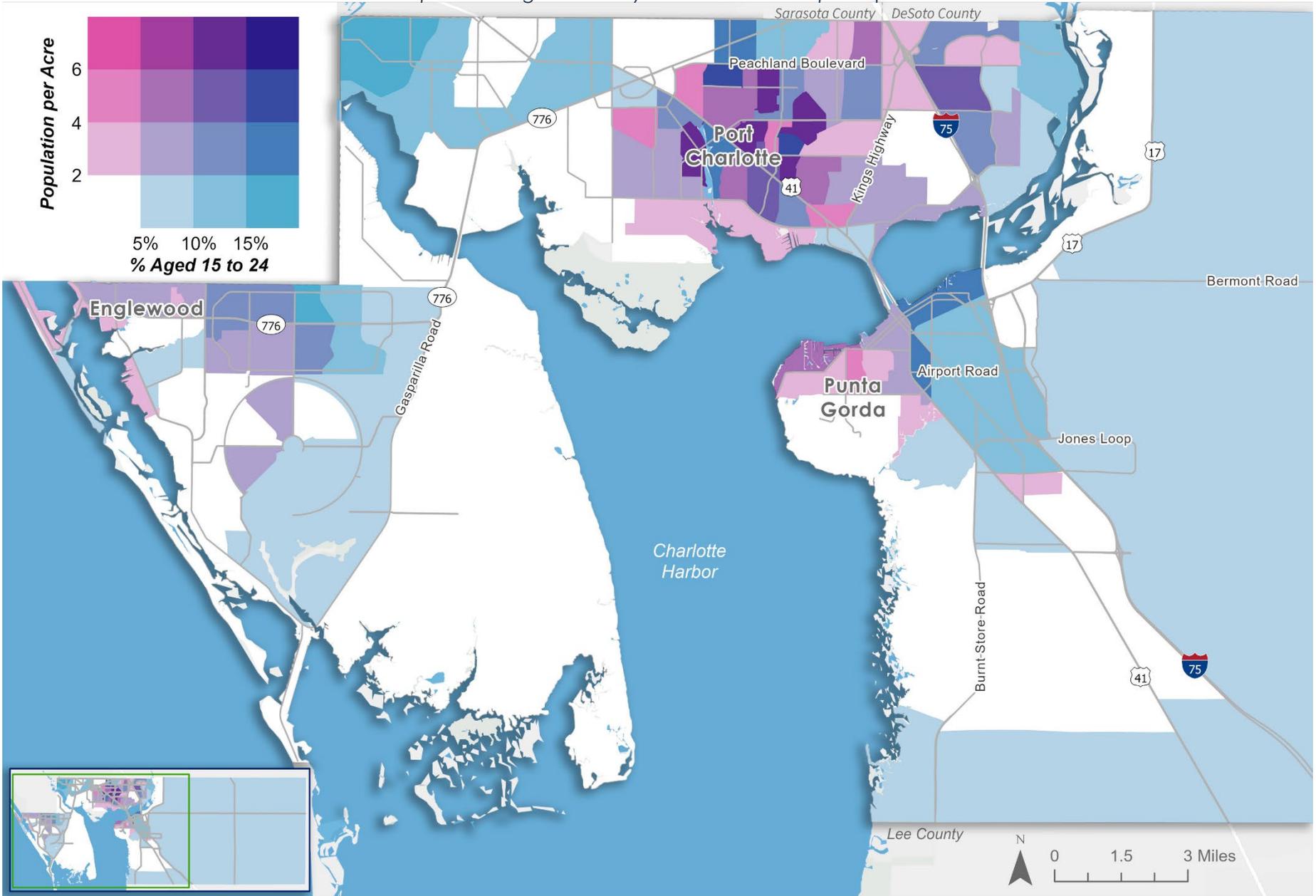
Source: Charlotte County MPO

Map 2-4: Older Adults (65+) by Census Block Group Size | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-5: Younger Adults by Census Block Group Size | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

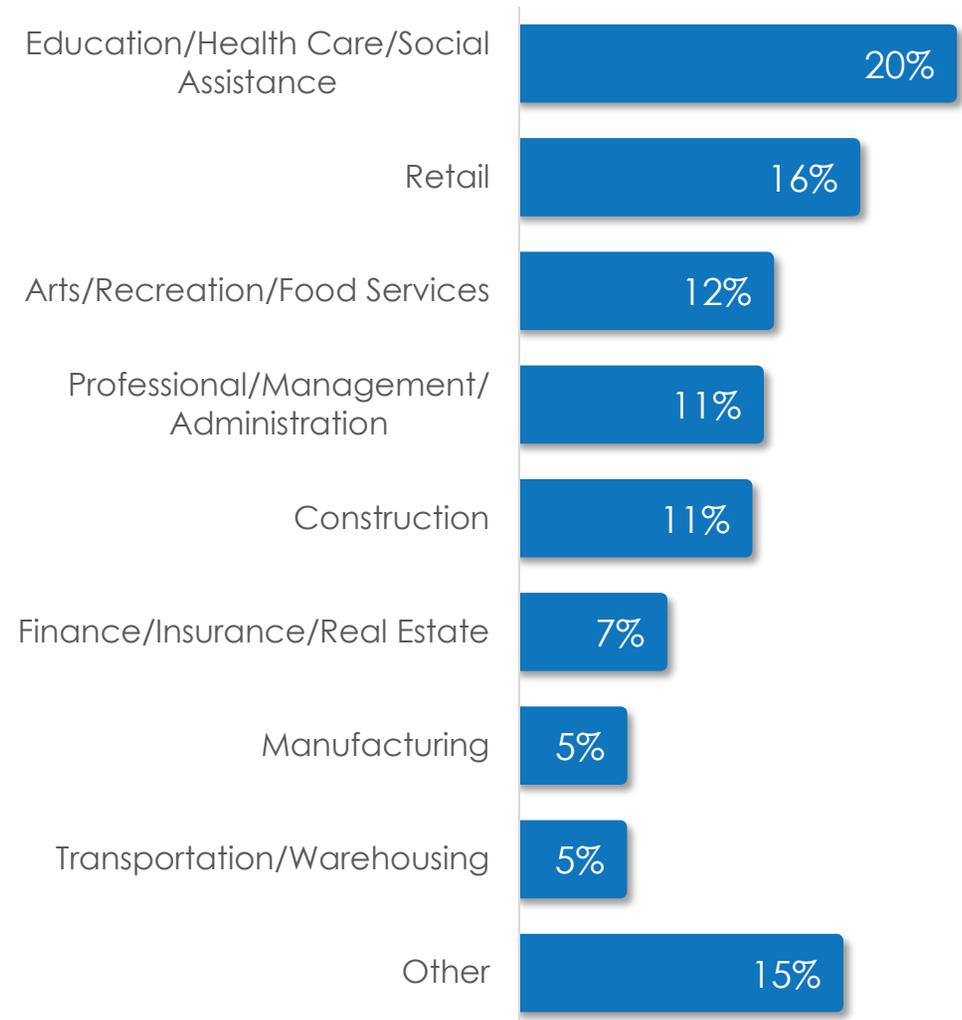
Employment

Employment density is another important factor to consider when analyzing a transit market. Areas of high employment density often include activity centers that cluster shopping centers, medical offices, and/or educational centers that attract transit trips. Areas like downtowns also tend to have higher employment densities and more limited parking, which also can increase transit demand. Furthermore, job access via transit can ensure workers get to their jobs without the higher cost of commuting, thereby providing essential benefits to the economy.

Employment markets and transit service hours can also influence job opportunities, particularly for those who are transit dependent. Based on 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) data, the largest employment sectors in Charlotte County are education/health care/social assistance (20%), retail (16%), art/recreation/food services (12%), and professional/management/administrative (11%), making up nearly 60% of employment in Charlotte County (Figure 2-3).

It is also important to understand where the jobs in the county are most concentrated. Higher employment densities are found along major roadways, with notable clusters in Punta Gorda, along US-41, and in Babcock Ranch (Map 2-6). Employment density is projected to increase in areas where employment is currently established or adjacent to it (Map 2-7).

Figure 2-3: Employment by Industry



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Major Employers

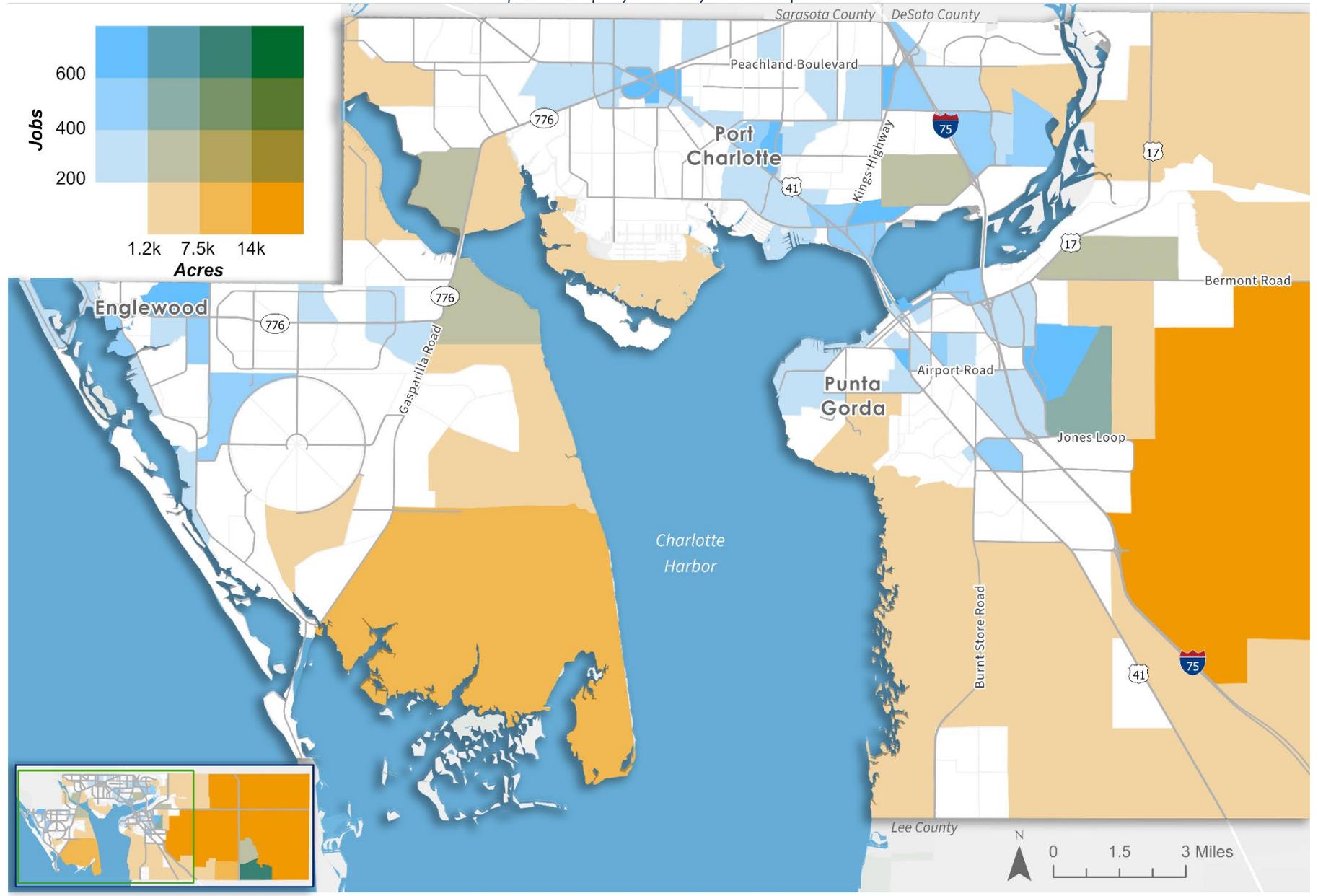
Another key set of trip generators are major employers. In 2024, the largest employer in the county is the Charlotte County School District with just over 2,200 employees, followed by the Charlotte County Local Government with more than 1,700 employees (Table 2-1). The top industry sectors of employers are education, public administration, healthcare, and accommodations. Most of the listed employers have locations and employees distributed throughout the county.

Table 2-1: Major Employers

	Employer	Employees	Industry
1	Charlotte County School District	2,250	Educational Services
2	Charlotte County Local Government	1,727	Public Administration
3	ShorePoint Health	1,319	Healthcare
4	Sunseeker	1,300	Accommodations
5	Publix Super Market	1,219	Retail
6	Millennium Physician Group	1,128	Healthcare
7	HCA Florida Fawcett Hospital	930	Healthcare
8	Walmart	625	Retail
9	Cheney Brothers Inc	550	Distribution
10	Fedex	400	Couriers

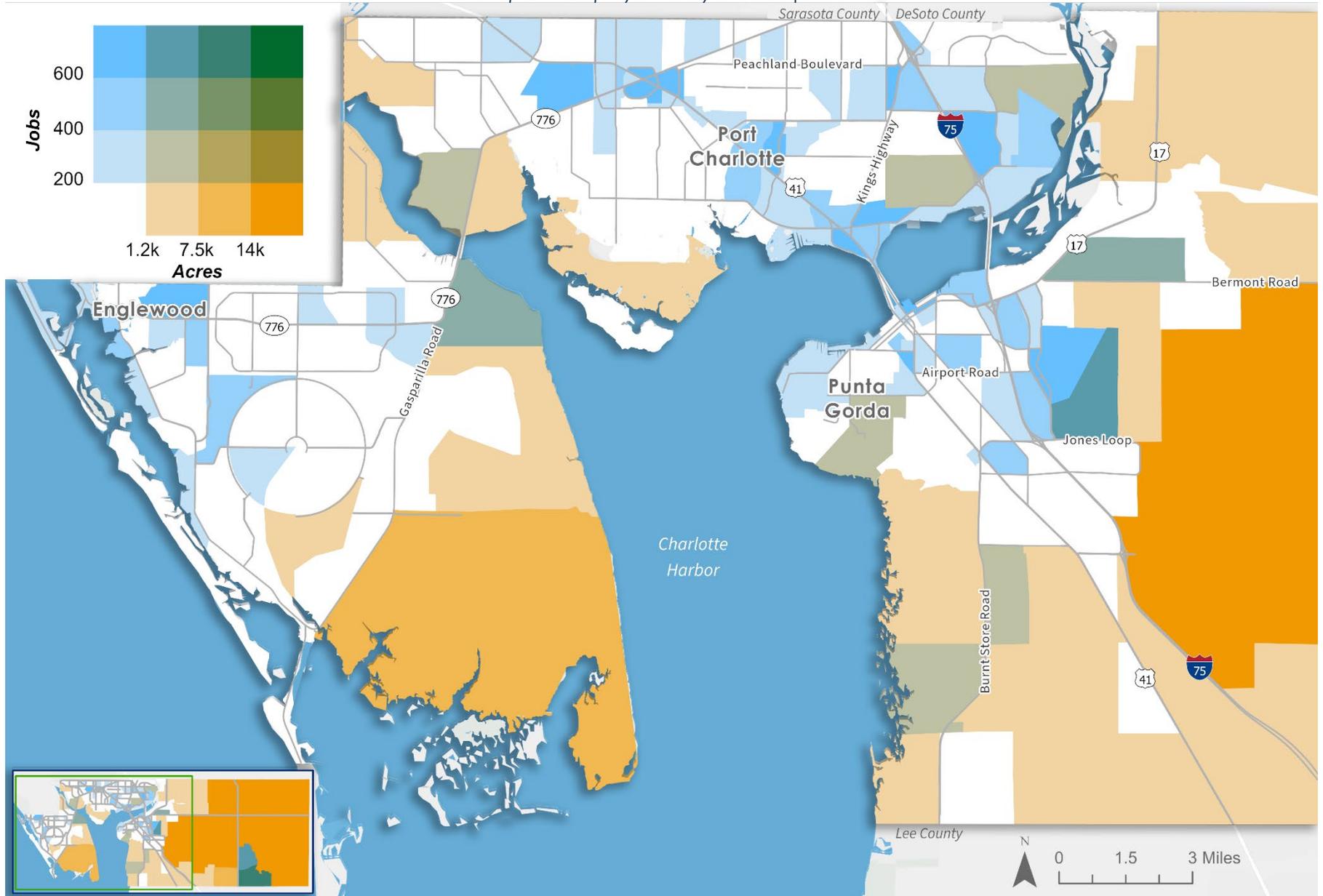
Source: Charlotte County Economic Development Office

Map 2-6: Employment by TAZ Size | 2025



Source: Charlotte County MPO

Map 2-7: Employment by TAZ Size | 2034



Source: Charlotte County MPO

Income Distribution

Annual household income also can be a key indicator of potential public transit need. According to the Transportation Equity Network, transportation is the largest household expense after housing with the average American household spending 18% of its after-tax income on it.

Approximately 40% of Charlotte County households earned more than \$75,000 and 17% earned less than \$25,000 in 2022 (Figure 2-4). Concentrations of households living below the poverty level are found along US-41, in both Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda. Additionally, there are pockets adjacent to the Sarasota County border in Englewood (Map 2-8).

Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed

Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) individuals are employed but due to high cost of living combined with childcare and transportation costs, are considered living paycheck to paycheck.

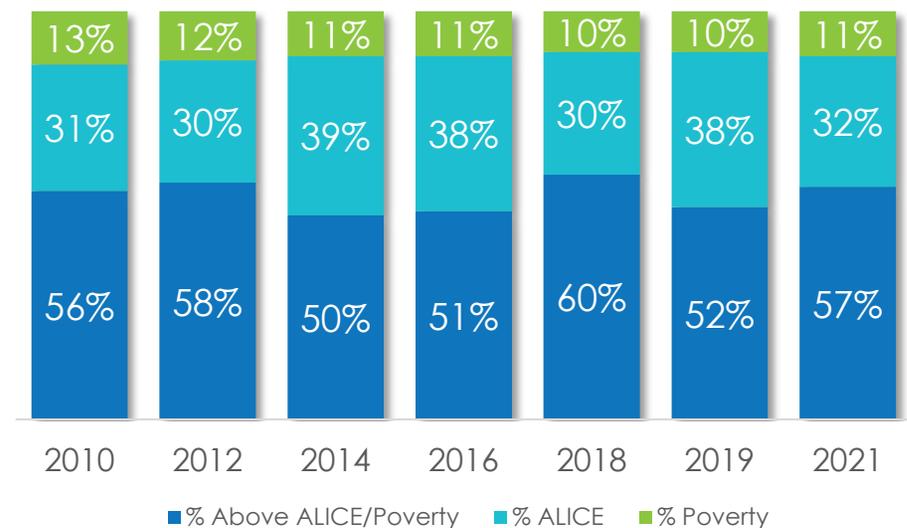
In 2021, approximately 33% of Florida households and 32% of Charlotte County households qualified as ALICE. According to the United Way, approximately 51% and 50% of households in the 33952 and 34224 ZIP codes, respectively, are considered ALICE or living in poverty (Figure 2-5).

Figure 2-4: Income Distribution | 2022



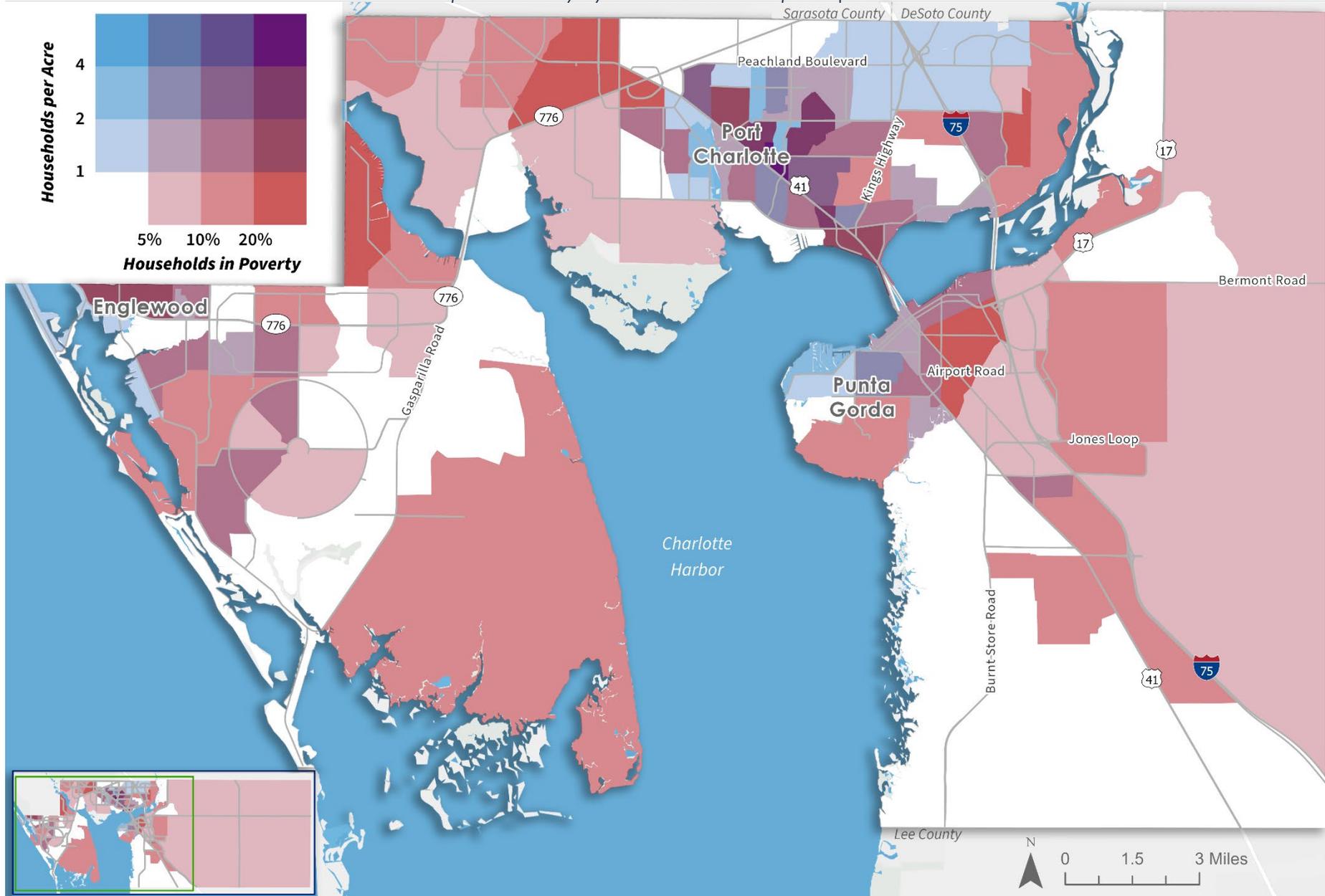
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Figure 2-5: ALICE | 2010 - 2021



Source: United Way, Charlotte County Report

Map 2-8: Poverty by Census Block Group Size | 2022



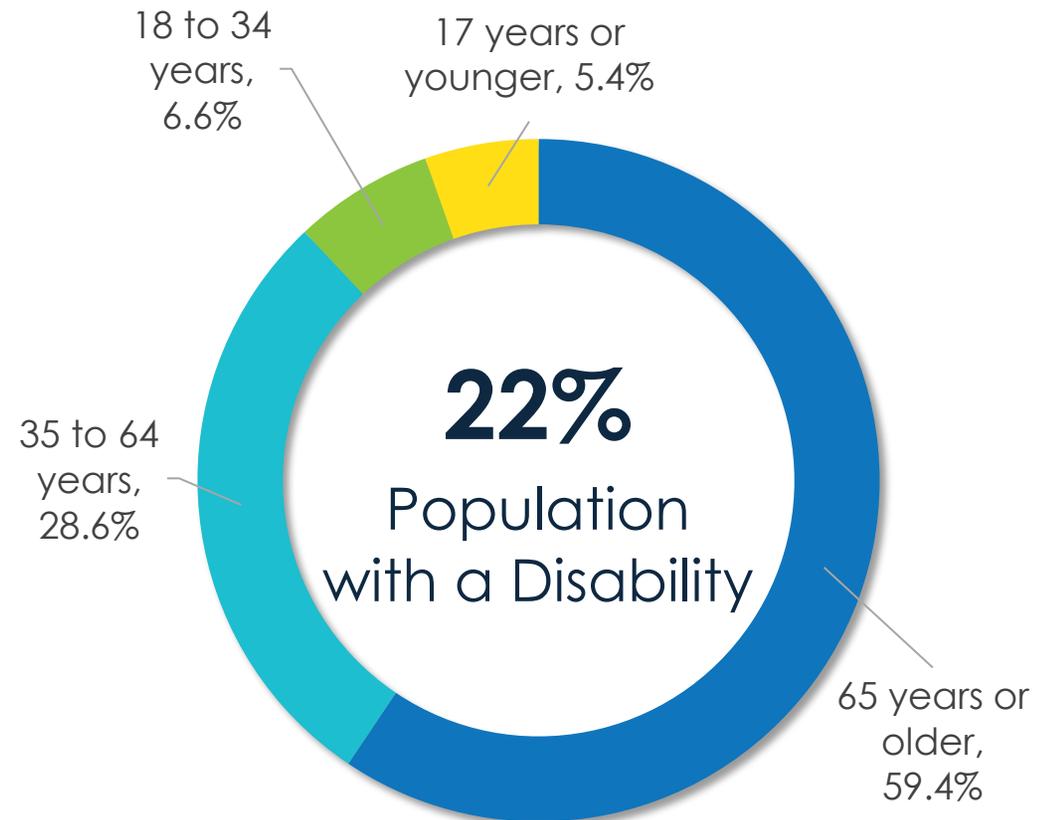
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Individuals with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities may need public transportation service for their mobility needs if they cannot drive or walk long distances. Observing changes in the number of and where persons with disabilities live is important to ensure transit access is considered. According to ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022), 22% of Charlotte County's population has a disability with 59.4% being 65 years or older (Figure 2-6).

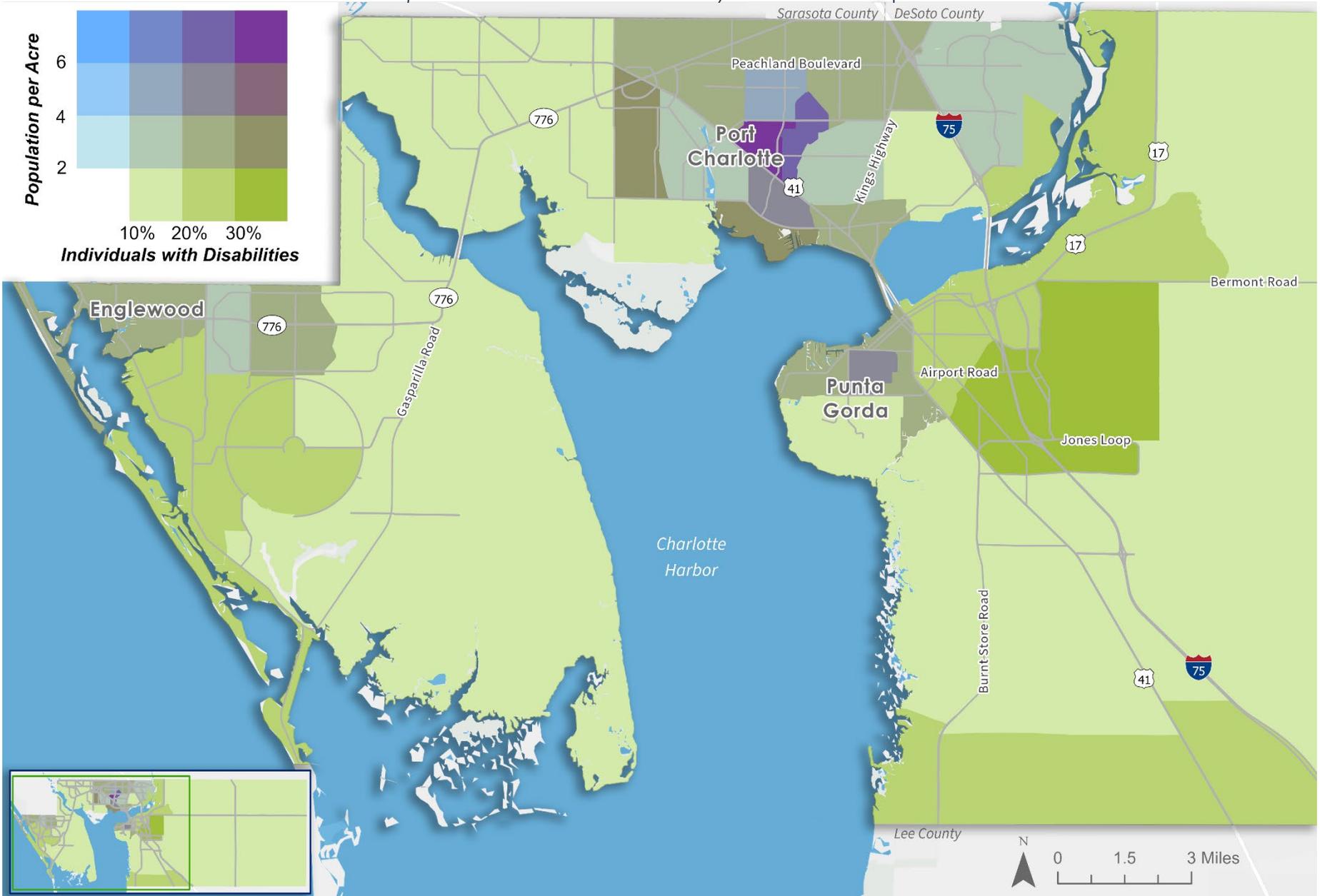
Households with one or more individuals with a disability are spread throughout Charlotte County. Clusters of block groups adjacent to US-41 in Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda or near the Gulf of Mexico in Englewood each contain at least 20% of this population group (Map 2-9).

Figure 2-6: Population with Disabilities | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-9: Individuals with Disabilities by Census Tract Size | 2022



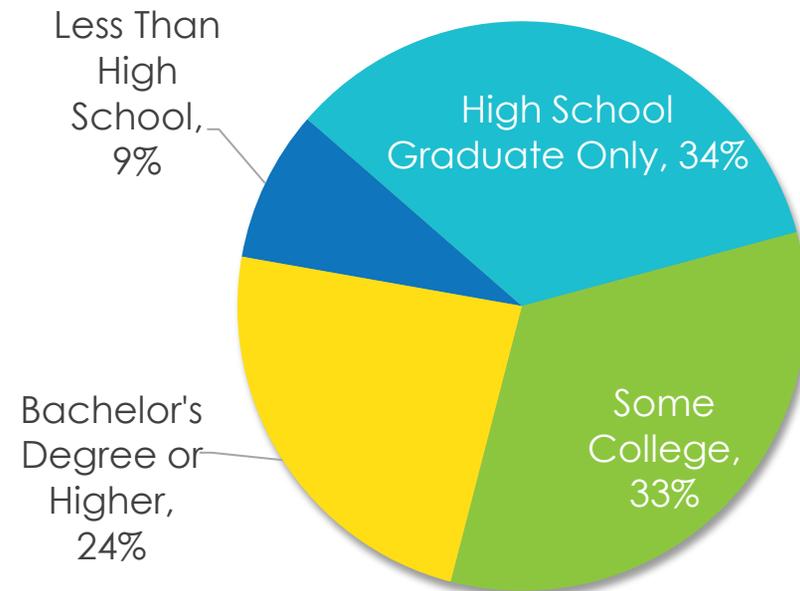
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Educational Attainment

Education level is an important factor in understanding local demographics as, generally, education level correlates with income.

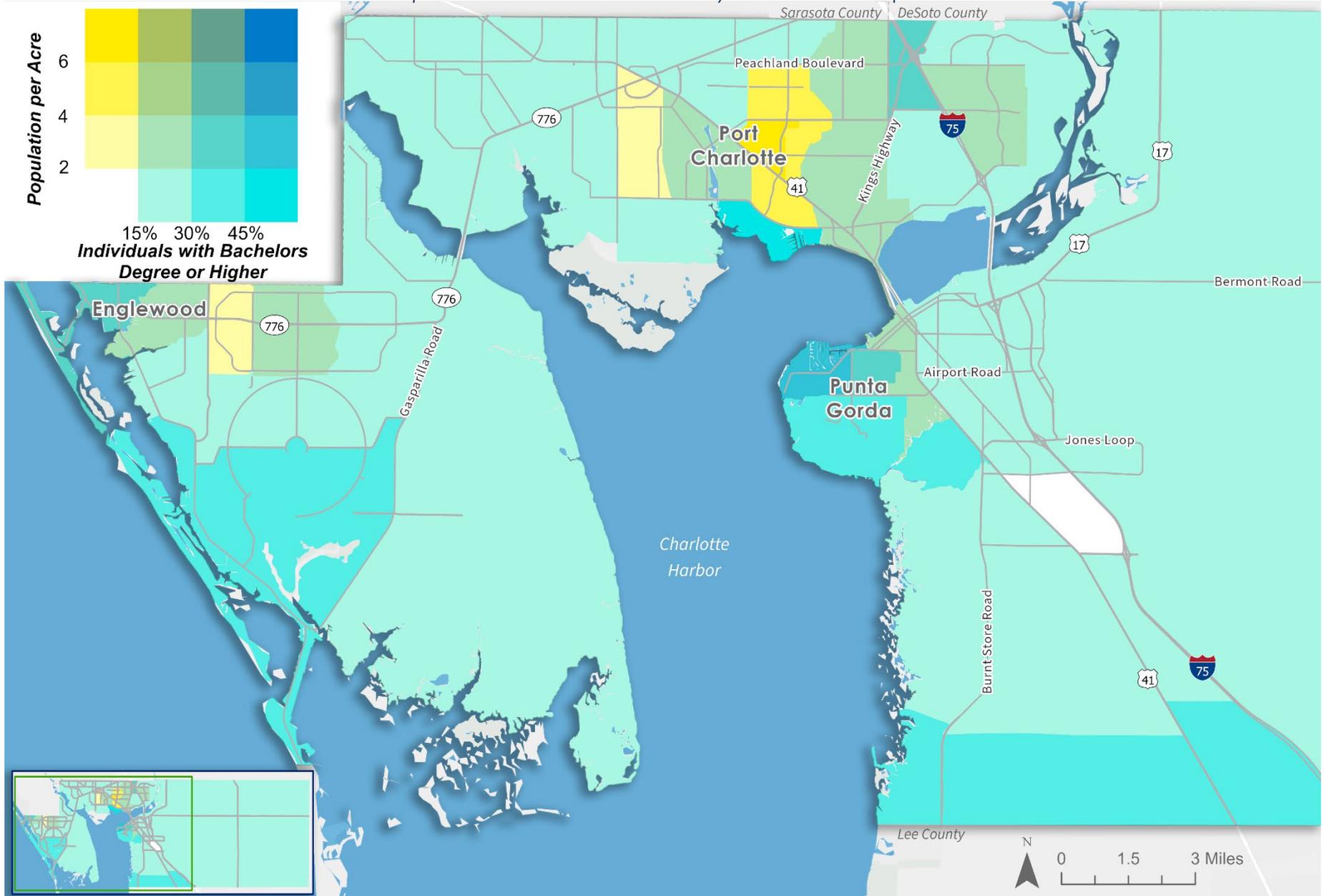
In Charlotte County, 57% of residents 25 years or older reported having either some college experience or a bachelor's degree or better. Approximately 34% of residents are high school graduates, while under 10% have less than the equivalent of a high school diploma (Figure 2-7). Educational attainment at the bachelor's degree level or higher is greatest in Punta Gorda and adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico (Map 2-10).

Figure 2-7: Educational Attainment | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-10: Educational Attainment by Census Tract Size | 2022



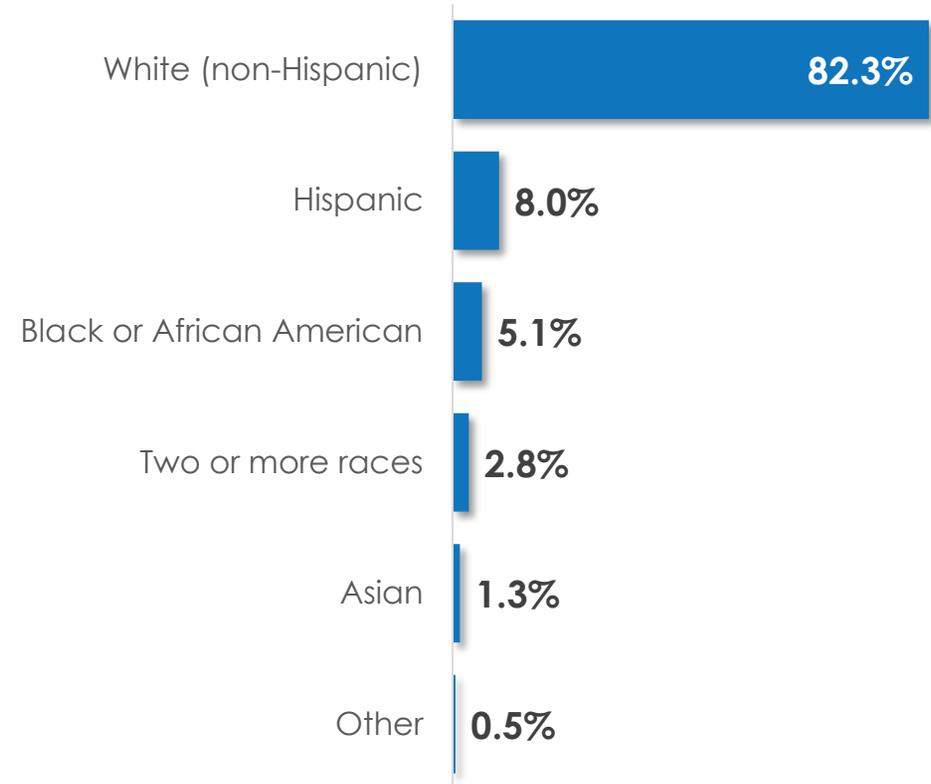
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Race and Ethnic Origin

Historically, non-white persons represent a greater proportion of transit passengers compared to the overall population, so it is important to identify the extent of those populations in Charlotte County. Currently, most residents identify as White (non-Hispanic) (82.3%) or Hispanic (8.0%) in Charlotte County (Figure 2-8).

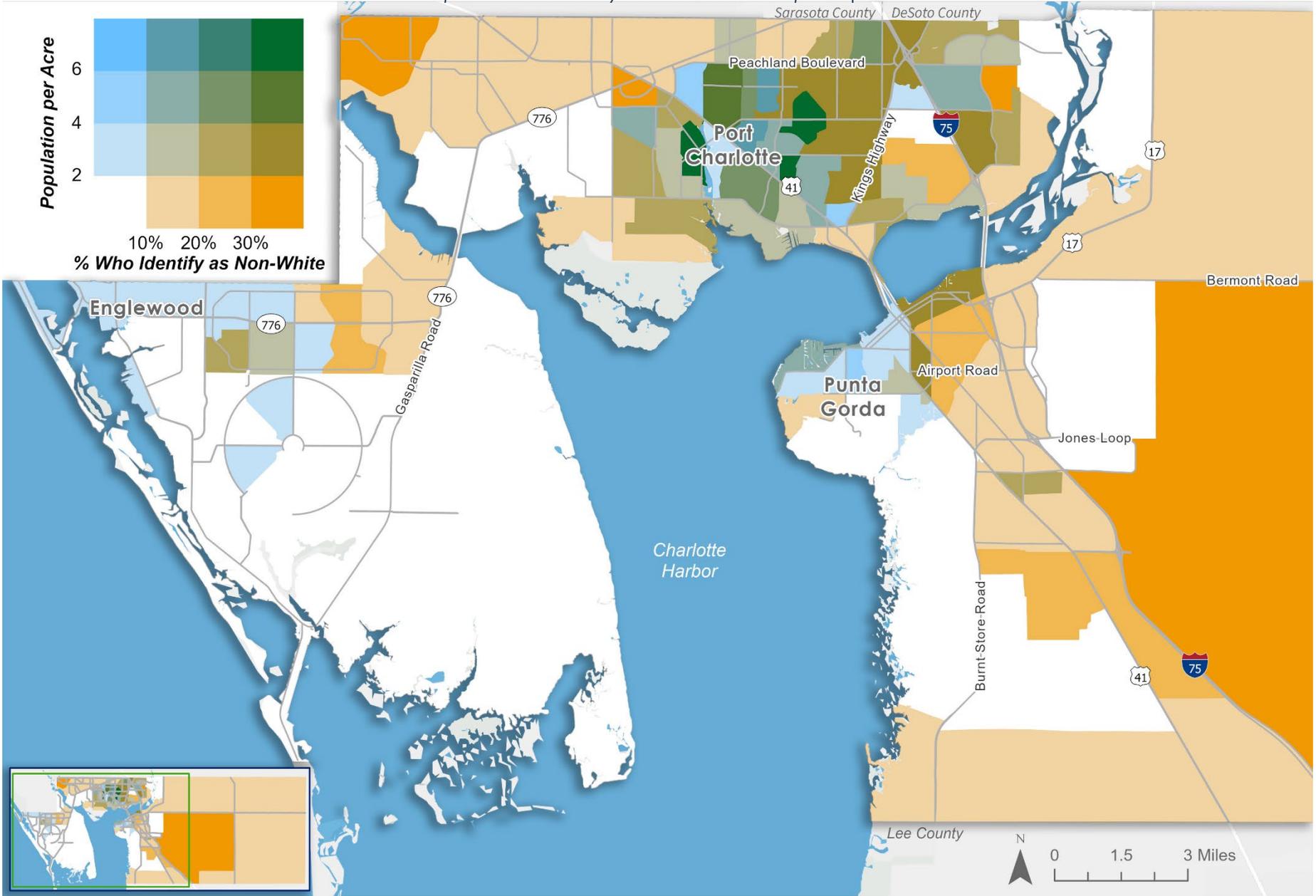
Port Charlotte has areas with the highest concentrations of minority populations in the county, followed by areas east of I-75 (Map 2-11).

Figure 2-8: Race and Ethnicity | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-11: Minorities by Census Block Group Size | 2022

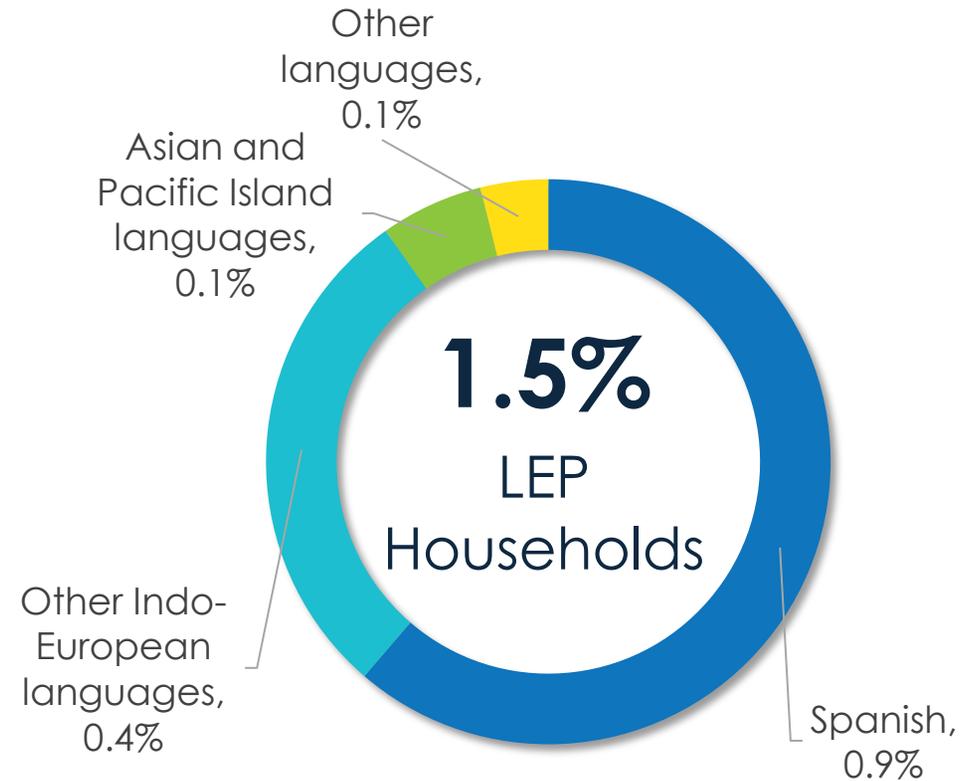


Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Limited English Proficiency

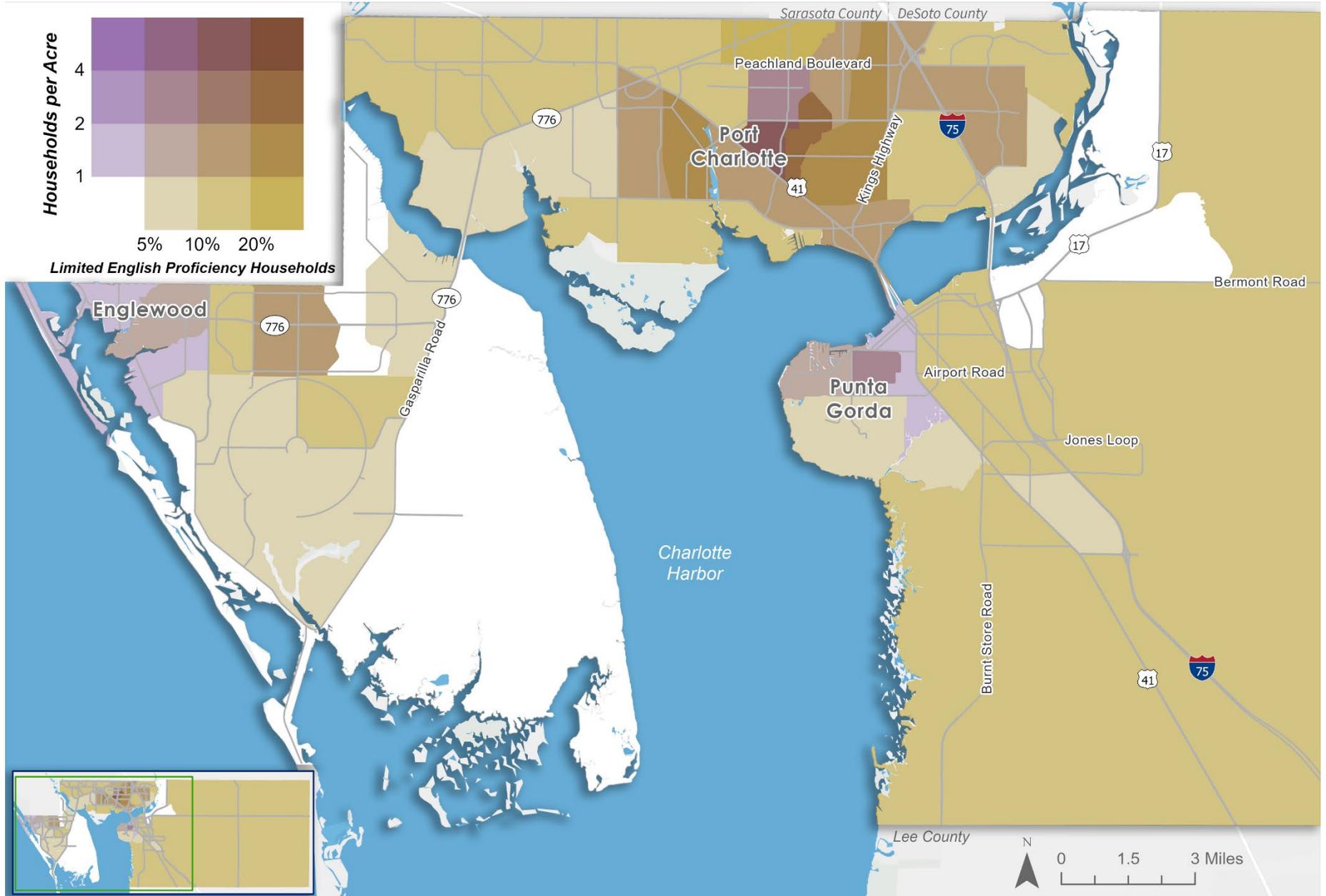
Transit may also provide Charlotte County residents with limited English proficiency (LEP) additional travel options to services and jobs. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, LEP individuals are persons age 5 or older who self-identify as speaking English less than "very well." The total LEP population equals the sum of all individuals who speak a language other than English and speak English less than "very well." Approximately 1.5% of households in Charlotte County identify as LEP households (Figure 2-9). Areas in Port Charlotte, adjacent to US-41, contain higher concentrations of LEP households (Map 2-12).

Figure 2-9: LEP Language Characteristics | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-12: LEP Households by Census Tract Size | 2022



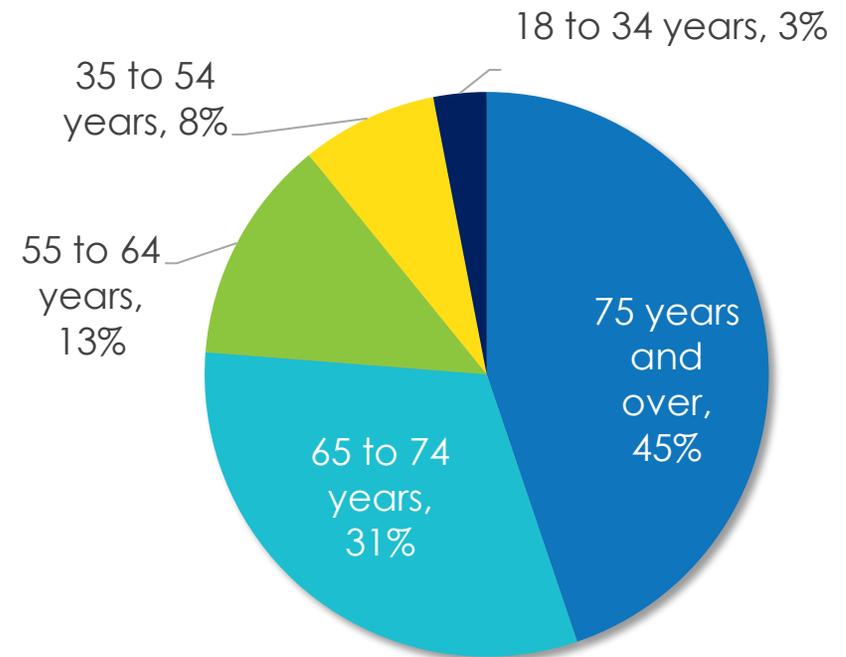
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Veteran Status

Veterans, especially those with disabilities, may have specific mobility needs that influence their use of transit. According to 2022 ACS data, there are more than 20,000 veterans in Charlotte County and more than 75% are 65 years or older (Figure 2-10).

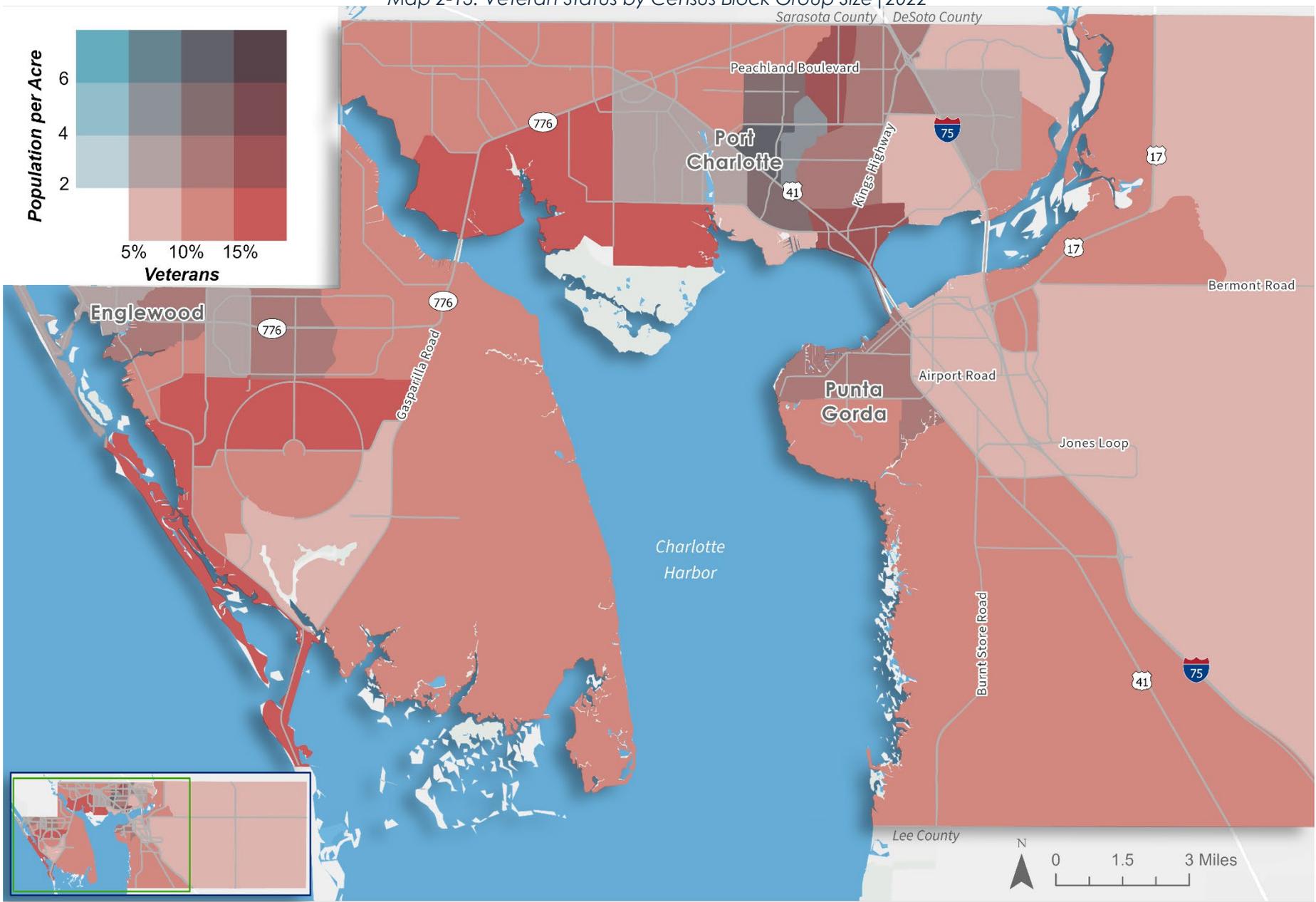
Census tracts in Port Charlotte, adjacent to Charlotte Harbor, and near the Gulf of Mexico in the Englewood area contain higher concentrations of veterans (Map 2-13).

Figure 2-10: Veteran Status by Age Group | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-13: Veteran Status by Census Block Group Size | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Automobile Ownership

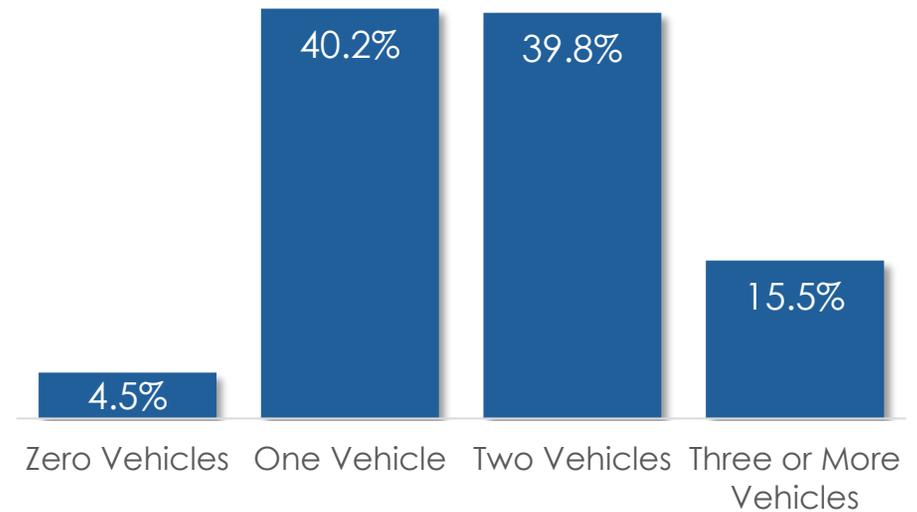
Owning a vehicle can be a significant cost, particularly for households already near or below the poverty line. Households that do not own a vehicle, either because of unaffordability or by choice, are considered "zero-vehicle households" and are more likely to use transit for work, education, and recreational trips.

Most households in Charlotte County have access to at least one vehicle (Figure 2-11). Higher-densities of zero-vehicle households are in Port Charlotte (Map 2-14).



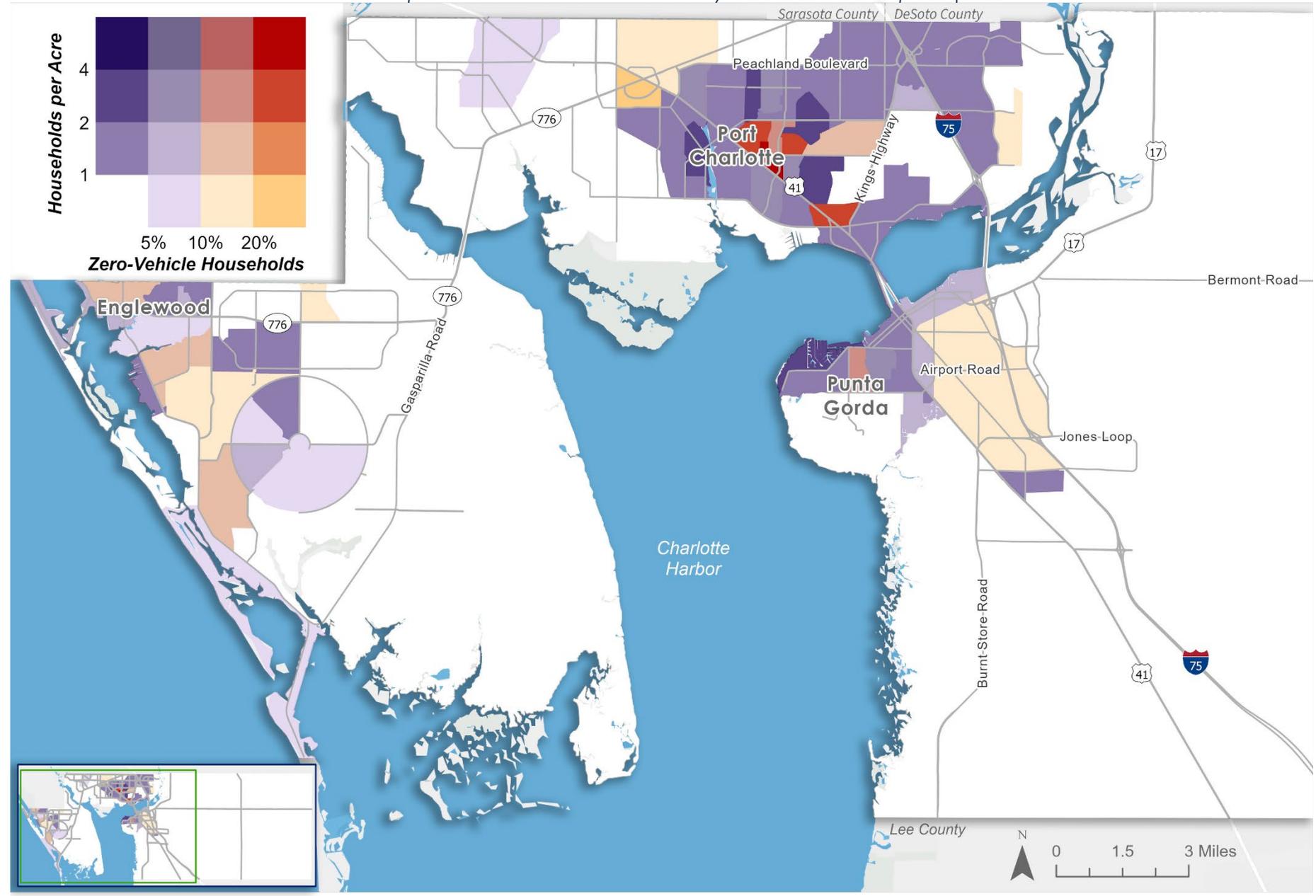
13%
*Rental Households
are Zero-Vehicle*

Figure 2-11: Vehicles per Household | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-14: Zero-Vehicle Households by Census Block Group Size | 2022



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Assisted Housing

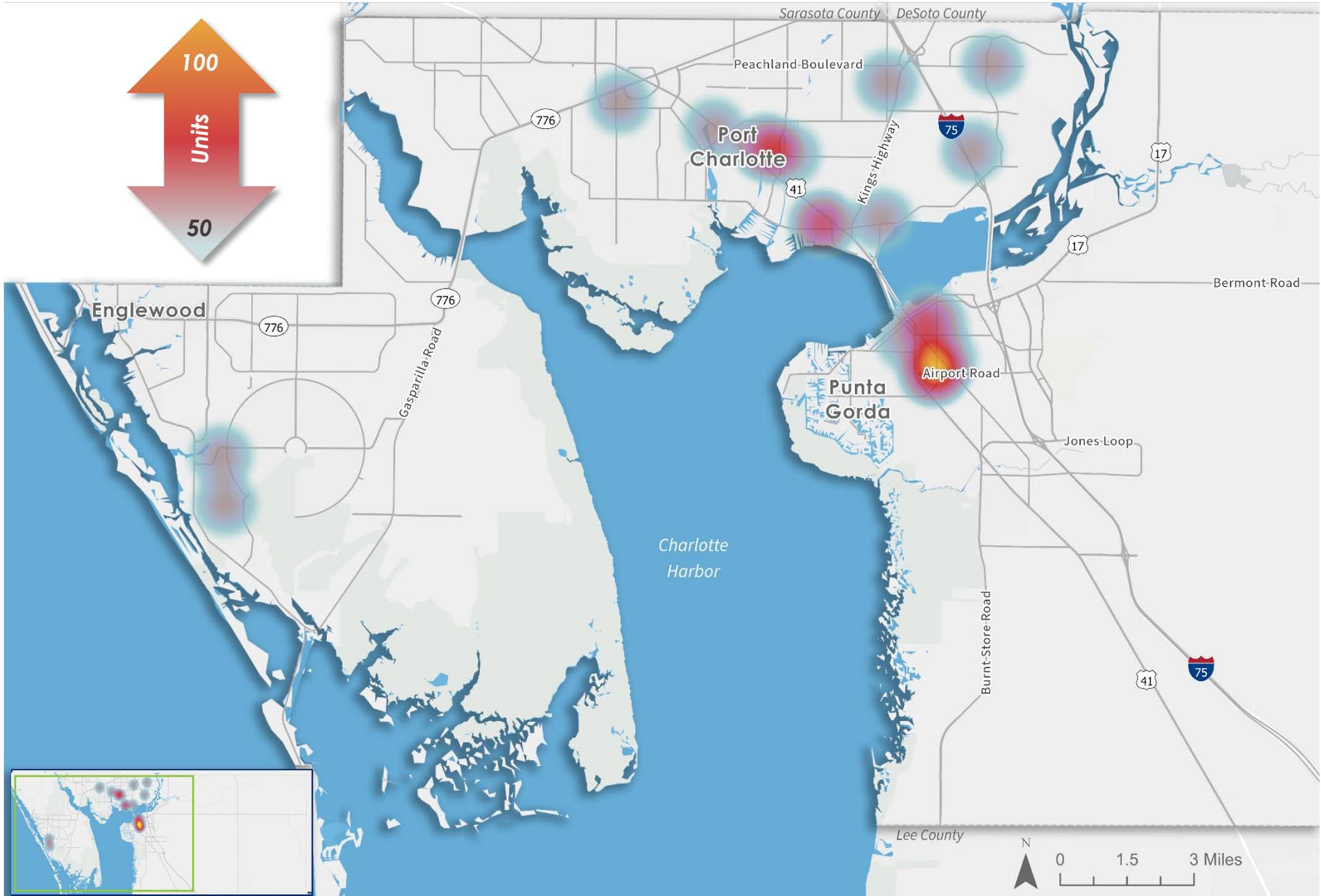
Various federal and local programs provide funding assistance for subsidized and affordable housing for eligible persons, including older adults, families, farmworkers, the homeless, low-income, or persons with disabilities. There are 2,177 assisted housing units among 20 properties in Charlotte County (Table 2-2). Although most developments are adjacent to US-41, there are a concentration of units in downtown Punta Gorda and adjacent to Airport Road (Map 2-15).

Table 2-2: Occupied Assisted Housing Properties

Location	# of Developments	Assisted Units
Port Charlotte	10	1,079
Punta Gorda	8	822
Rotonda West	1	176
Grove City	1	100
Total	20	2,177

Source: Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse

Map 2-15: Occupied Assisted Housing Locations | 2024



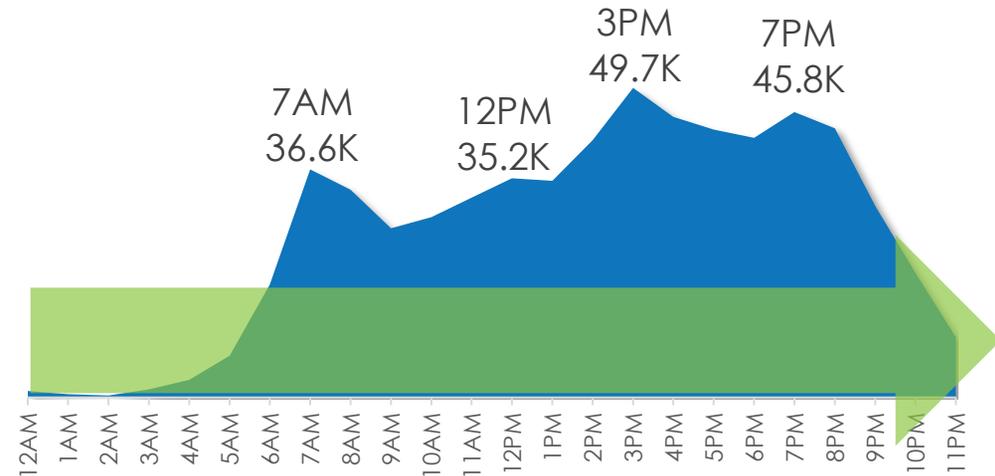
Source: Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse

Travel Behavior

A travel behavior analysis was conducted using Replica, a national model that uses data derived from road traffic, mobile phones, and financial transactions to model mobility trends. The analysis illustrates average daily trip flows and volumes, which can be helpful in planning future transit services.

Insight into trip departure times is essential for understanding the community's transportation needs and how Charlotte County Transit may best respond. Using June 2023 Replica data, the distribution of trip start times for an average weekday for trips originating in Charlotte County was examined. Although there are spikes of activity during the morning and evening peak commute periods, peak travel time is from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM (Figure 2-12).

Figure 2-12: Average Weekday Trip Start Time



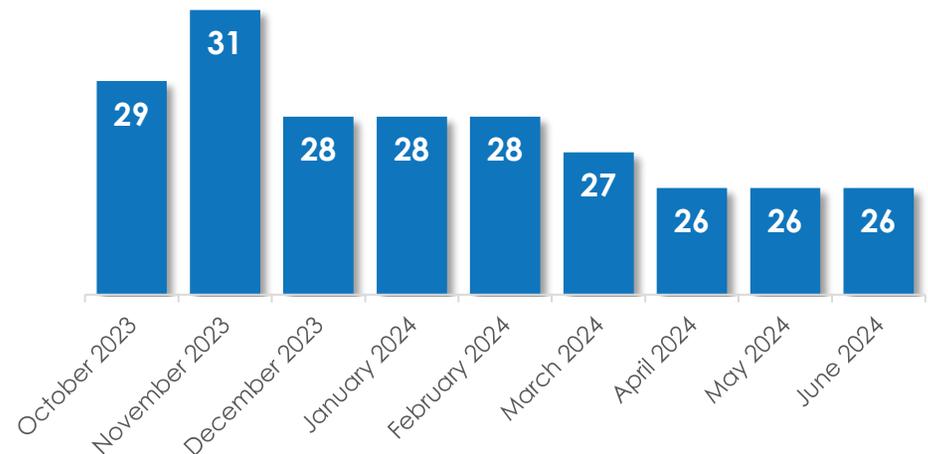
Source: Replica

Commute Profile

Insight into Charlotte County's commuter profile, such as trip length and commute modes, is important to understand how transit may supplement travel options.

According to Charlotte County Transit, the average trip time between October 2023 and June 2024 was 28 minutes. Since March 2024, trip times have been improved to 26 minutes (Figure 2-13). This could be due to Charlotte County Transit's new scheduling software.

Figure 2-13: Trip Duration (in minutes)

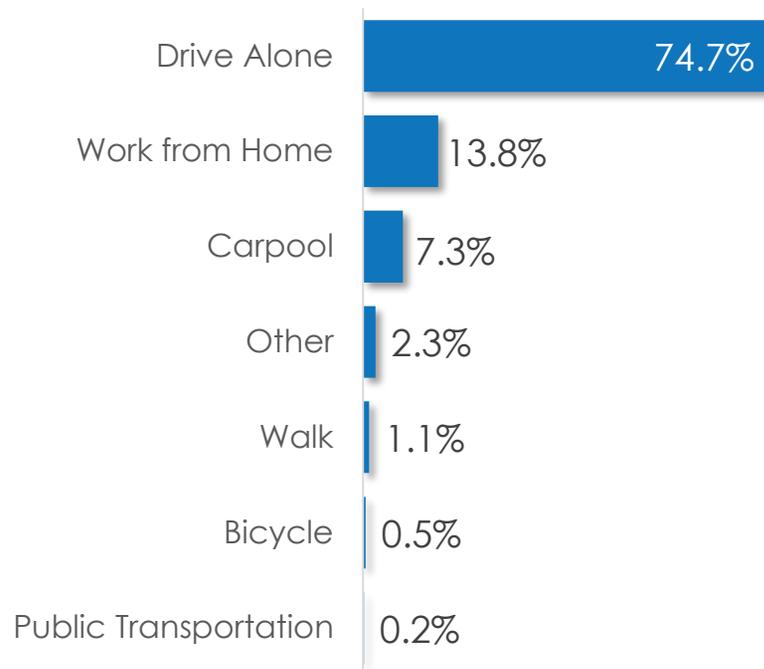


Source: Charlotte County Transit

Like many suburban areas in Florida, most residents who commute to work drive alone (74.7%). Approximately 14% report working from home while 7.3% carpool (Figure 2-14).

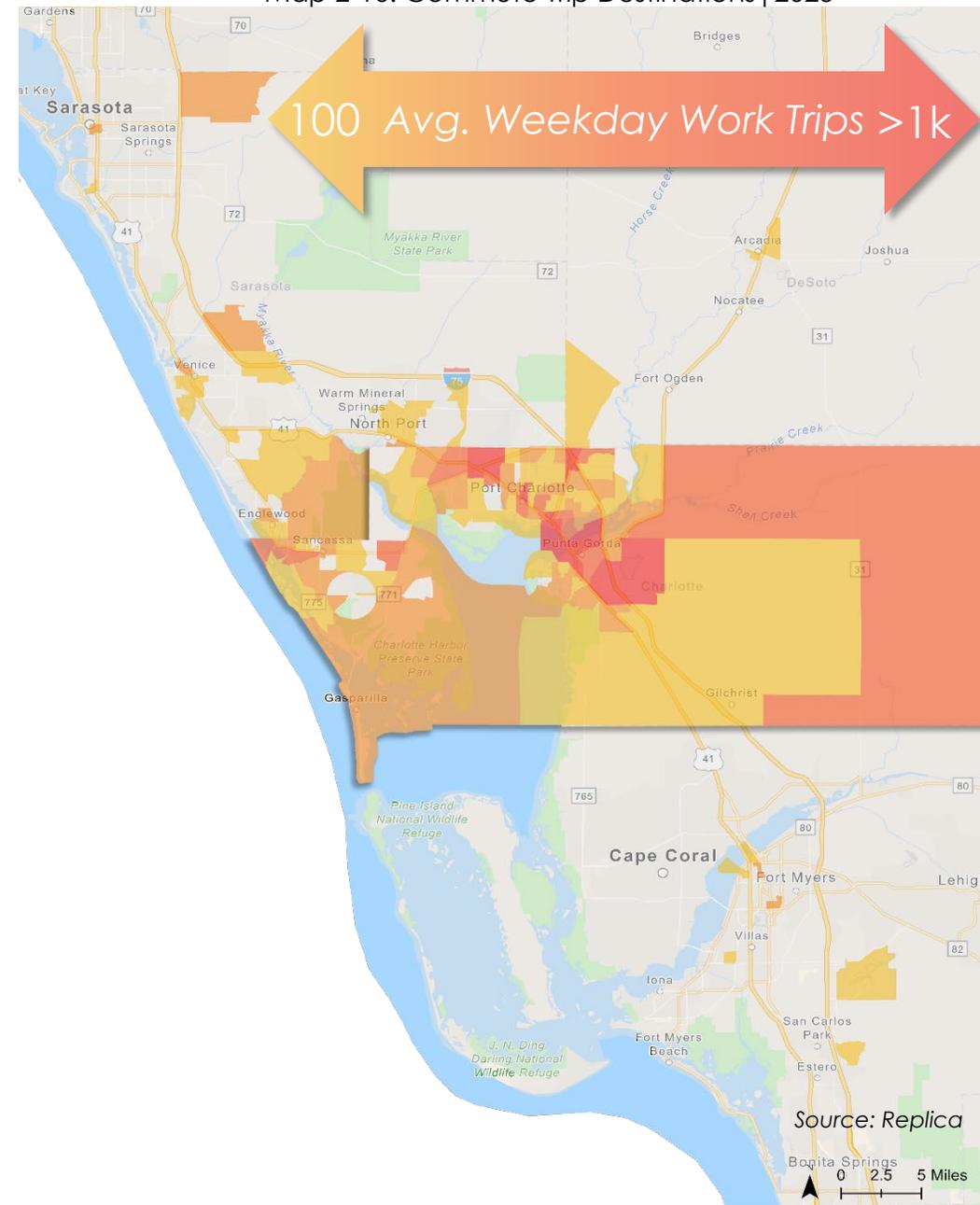
The average weekday commuter trips originating from Charlotte County in June 2023 using Replica were examined. Most trips ended within the urbanized area of the county, with smaller concentrations coming from Estero to the south and Sarasota to the north (Map 2-16).

Figure 2-14: Commute Mode



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018-2022)

Map 2-16: Commute Trip Destinations | 2023



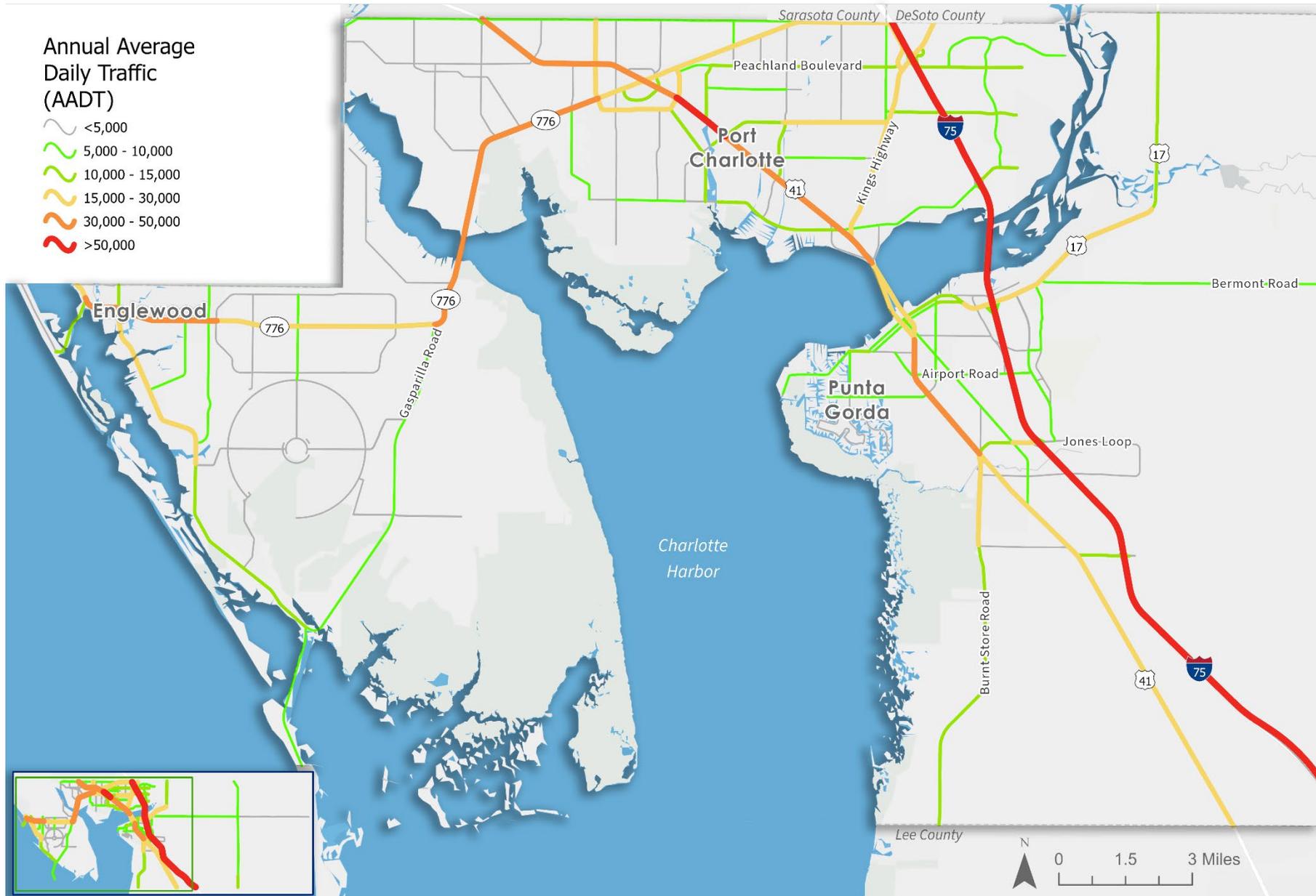
Roadway and Traffic Conditions

The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) on Charlotte County roadways was reviewed using FDOT data to assess congested roadways that may be better served by transit. In Charlotte County, I-75 has the highest AADT with more than 50,000 trips. Parts of US-41 have more than 30,000 AADT, indicating possible congestion issues (Map 2-17).



*AADT in Charlotte
County (2022)*

Map 2-17: Roadway and Traffic | 2023



Source: FDOT

Tourist and Visitor Levels

The Punta Gorda Airport services Allegiant and Sun Country Airlines, with service to and from 50 non-stop destinations. According to the Charlotte County Airport Authority, 1.9 million aviation passengers were served in 2023, a 3% increase from 2022. Airport travel peaked seasonally from February through April and was lowest in August and September (Figure 2-15).

Charlotte County reported 986,100 visitors, and 58.2% lodging occupancy in FY 2023. According to the January 2024 Charlotte County Monthly Report, \$1.45 million in Tourist Development Tax (TDT) revenue was collected year-to-date through December 2023, a 4.9% decrease from the same 2022 period. This marginal decline could be attributed to Hurricane Ian, which impacted Charlotte County in September 2022.

Figure 2-15: Punta Gorda Airport Passengers | 2023



Source: Charlotte County Airport Authority



Picture Credit: Charlotte County

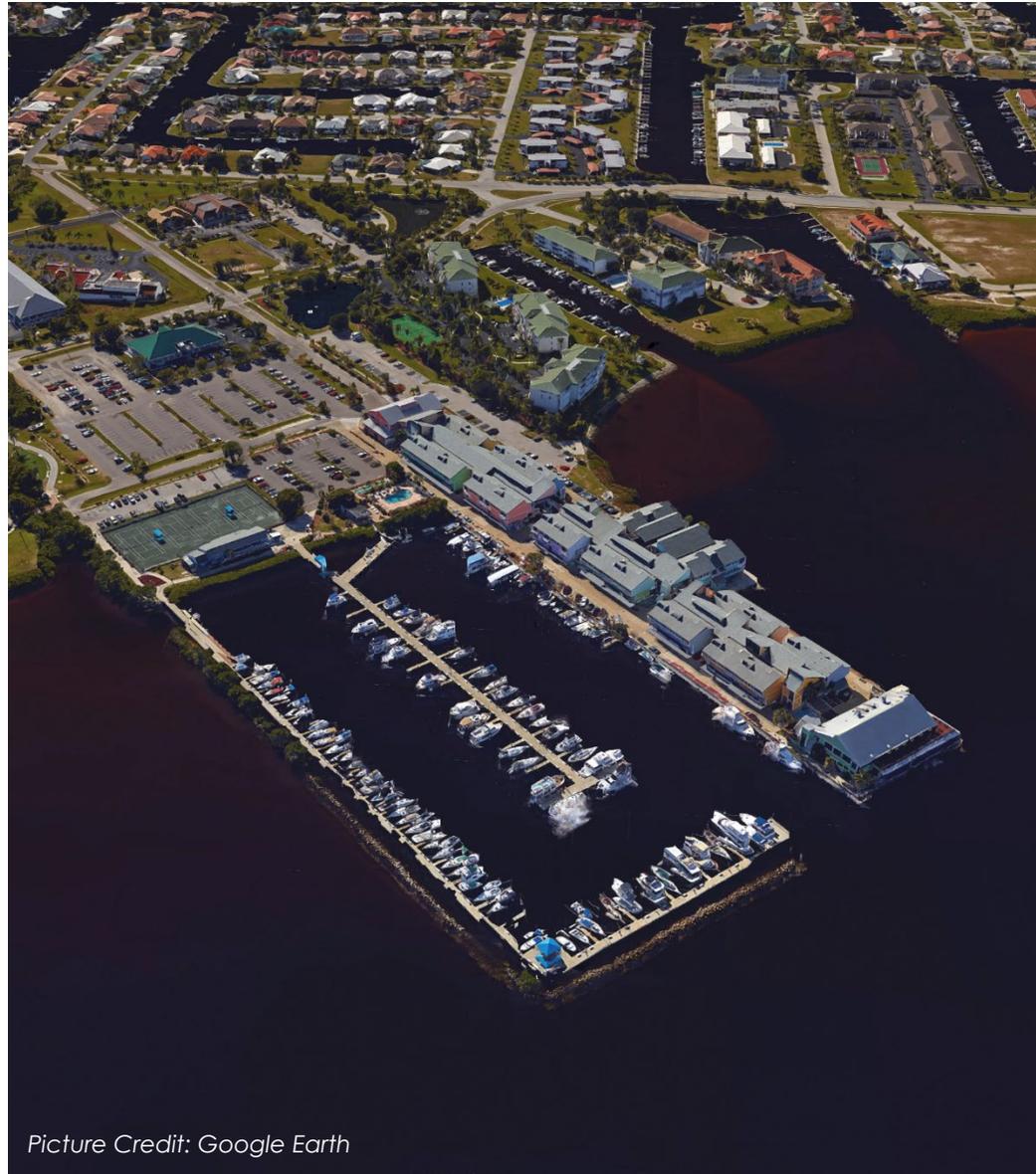
Major Activity Centers and Trip Generators

Major activity centers can attract thousands of visitors or be employment hubs, creating significant travel demand to the area. Charlotte County attracts visitors from all over the world with its signature beaches, leisure resorts, sporting events, retail, and outdoor attractions. The County has established over 5,000 acres of parkland that provides opportunities for recreation and access to greenspace in environmental parks, as well as a plethora of trails and county-owned parks ranging from mini-parks to regional or special use parks.

One hub for shopping and dining in Charlotte County is Fishermen's Village located along the Peace River in Punta Gorda. Fisherman's Village offers a variety of shops, restaurants, lodging, and a marina and, as of January 2024, is a stop for the American Cruise Line's Gulf Coast and Keys Cruise.

The Charlotte Sports Park is another notable point of interest in Charlotte County. The sports facility is home to Tampa Bay Rays' spring training facility and hosts special events and sports tournaments, including minor-league sports events. The stadium holds up to 7,500 people and includes a children's play area, practice fields, batting cages, and is connected to the Tippecanoe Environmental Park. In 2021, the facility hosted both the Prospect Wire Baseball National and State championships which attracted over 3,500 athletes and generated a \$5.9 million economic impact for the county.

There are also three post-secondary educational facilities in the county, including Florida Southwestern State



Picture Credit: Google Earth

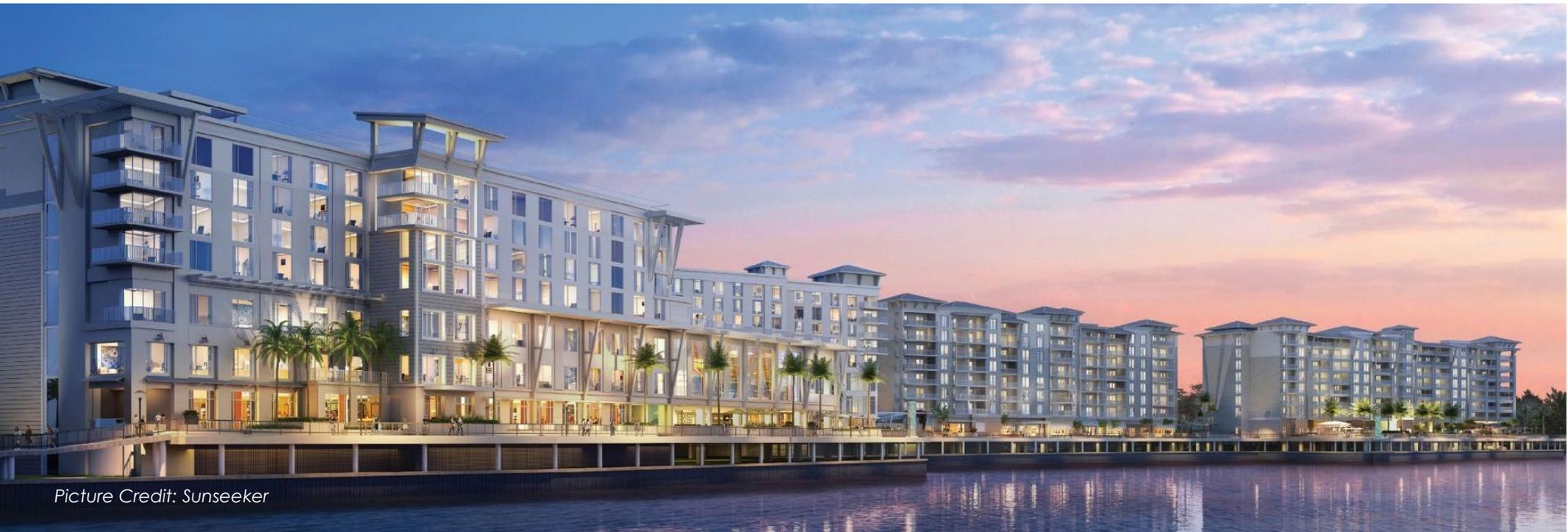
College, Jersey College for Nursing, and Charlotte Technical College. The Charlotte County Fairgrounds also hosts the annual county fair and other festivals and events year-round.

Sunseeker Resort

The Sunseeker Resort Charlotte Harbor located off US-41 is an Allegiant Travel Company waterfront resort that opened in December 2023. The resort has 785 luxury guest rooms and suites on 22 waterfront acres. The property features 20 dining options and 60,000 square feet of meeting and event space. Amenities and activities include retail and shopping, a spa, salon, and

two pools. The resort employs approximately 1,200 people for a variety of jobs.

Directly adjacent to the resort is a public boardwalk along the Charlotte Harbor/Peace River. The elevated boardwalk extends to the Riverwalk, connecting the Bayshore Live Oak Park to the Live Oak Point.



Picture Credit: Sunseeker

Growth and Development

Like other places in Florida, residential development is experiencing high growth in Charlotte County. This accelerated growth may increase transit demand as the number of residents and activity centers increase.

Permits

With growth comes increased residential and commercial permitting, which is occurring throughout the county. Charlotte County issued nearly 82,000 permits in FY 2023 (Figure 2-16). Thus far, there have been nearly 20,000 permits issued in FY 2024 to date. Currently in the permitting phase is the Charlotte Harbor Business Center located at 9225 Piper Rd. in Punta Gorda, which will feature 139,200 square feet of warehouse space when constructed.

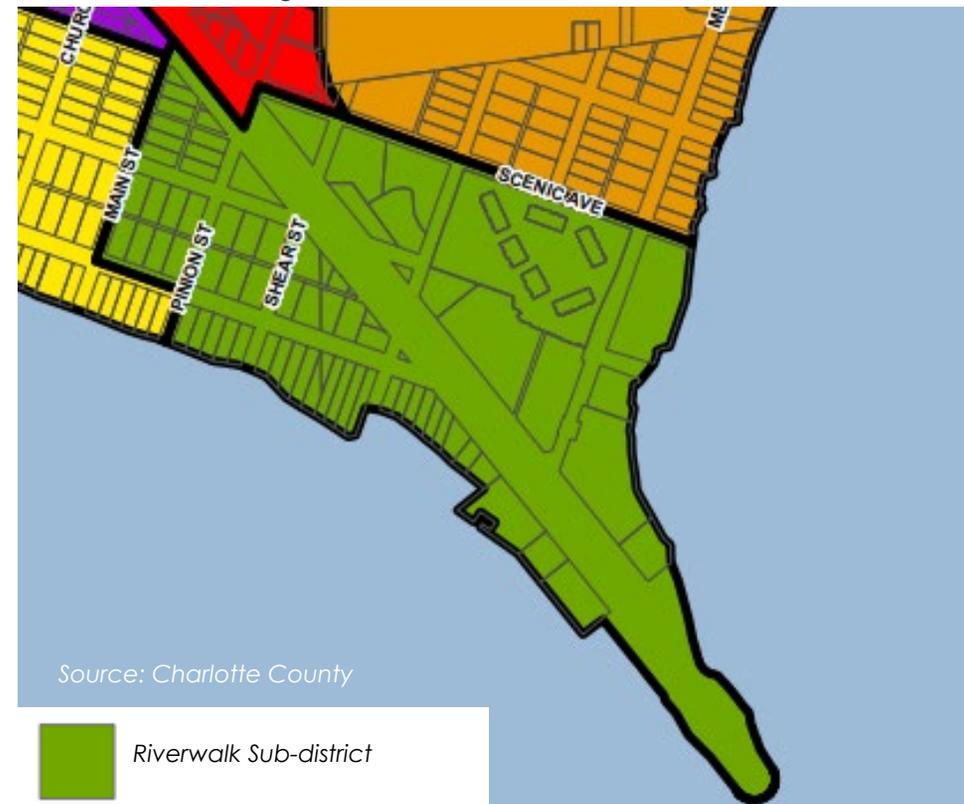
Riverwalk Sub-district

A part of the Charlotte Harbor Community Revitalization Area plan, the Riverwalk Sub-district is along the Charlotte Harbor and the Peace River, intersected by US-41 and bordered by Scenic Avenue and Main Street (Figure 2-17). The Riverwalk Sub-district is also home to the Sunseeker and adjacent boardwalk. This area and the surrounding neighborhood are expecting two new restaurants and a new shopping center. The plan allows modifications to density and height allowances based on development parameters.

Figure 2-16: Charlotte County Permits | 2023-2024



Figure 2-17: Riverwalk Sub-district



Babcock Ranch

Babcock Ranch is an 18,000 acre planned community in southeastern Charlotte County located adjacent to SR-31. Since 2016, 2,540 homes have been constructed. In January and February 2024, more than 200 single family unit permits were issued, indicating continued growth. The Shoppes at Yellow Pine, a 120,000-square-foot development expected to be complete in 2025, will host retailers, restaurants, and Tampa General Hospital Urgent Care.

West Port Community Development

The West Port Community is a 450-acre master planned community bound by US-41 to the north and SR-776 to the south, with about 2,000 single family and multifamily units grouped in multiple villages. The community features planned retail, restaurant, and possible hotel commercial uses. It is also within walking distance to Centennial Park, the Centennial Park Recreation and Aquatic Center, the Charlotte County Fairgrounds, and the Charlotte Sports Park. According to February 2024 permitting data, 543 single family certificates of occupancy have been issued since April 2021.

Florida Gulf Coast 75 Logistics Center

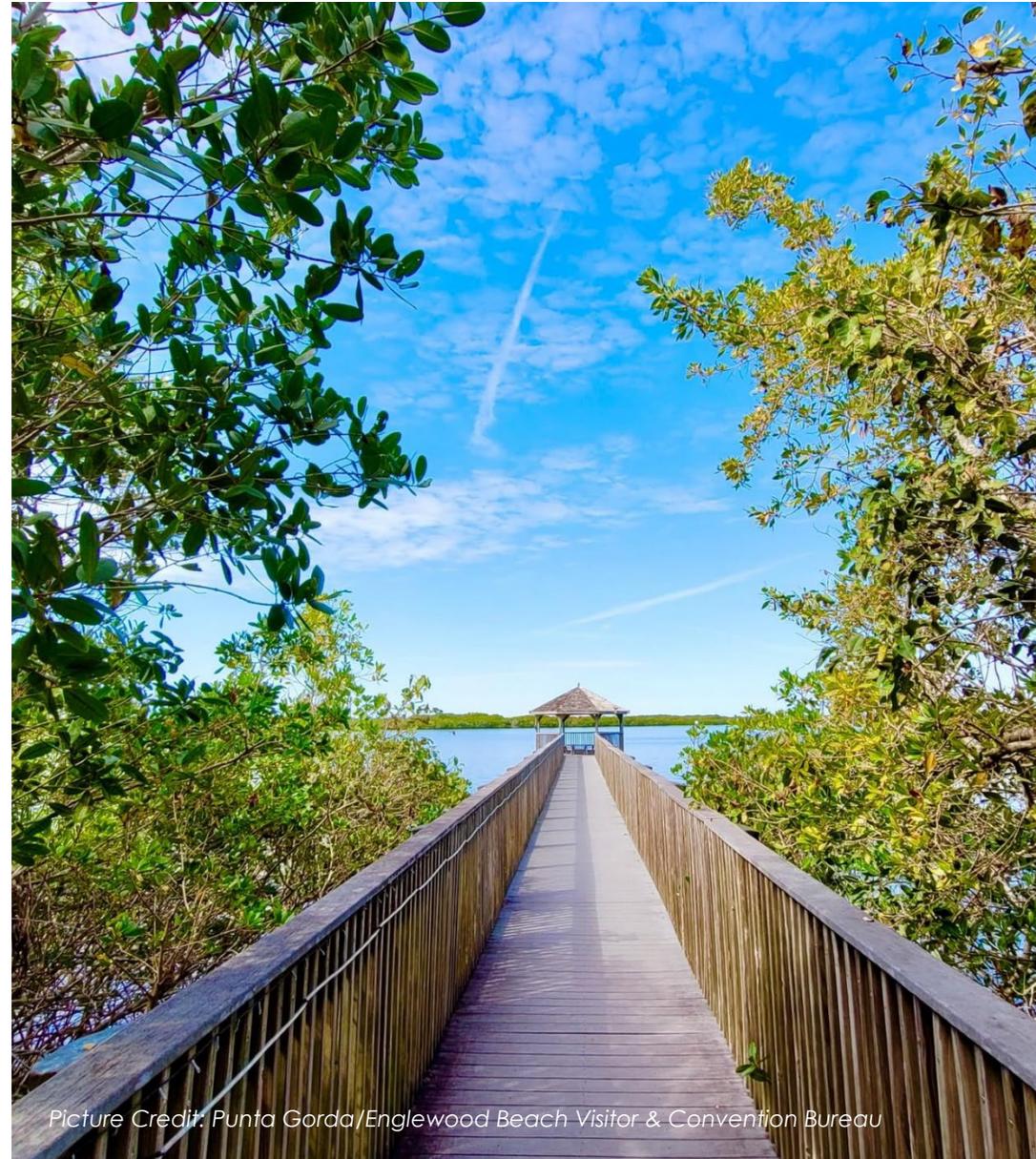
The 378,000 square-foot warehouse logistics facility, located in Punta Gorda just east of I-75 within the Charlotte Airport Park (ECAP), will include 54 loading docks and 73 trailer storage spaces. The facility is adjacent to the FedEx Ground facility.



Future Land Use

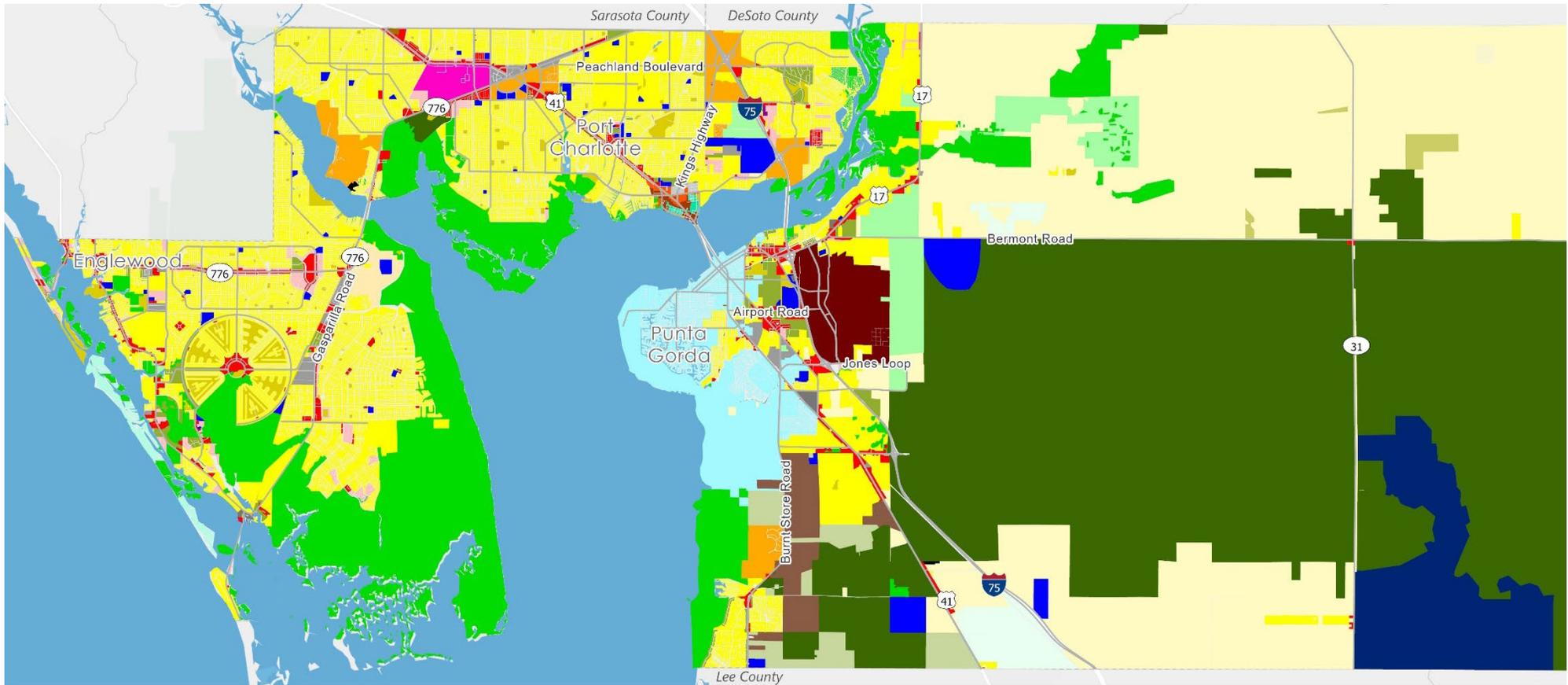
Reviewing and understanding future land use (FLU) designations is important as it illustrates the vision for growth and development patterns in the county. Map 2-18 shows Charlotte County's FLU designation. The following provides key trends examined in the Charlotte County future land use map:

- Resource Conservation lands are concentrated in the southeastern portion of the county. This land use is surrounded by agricultural land uses, as well as the Babcock Mixed Use designation to the south.
- Preservation land use is located along the western side of the cape surrounding Charlotte Harbor, while the "city" land use designation encompasses the eastern side of the cape.
- Low-density residential is scattered throughout the county, but there is a concentration of low density residential in the western and northwestern areas.
- The coastal region in the county incorporates a mix of low, medium, and high-density residential, coastal residential, preservation, parks and recreation, and a small section of commercial land use.



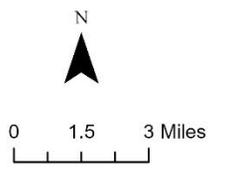
Picture Credit: Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau

Map 2-18: Future Land Use



- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Agriculture | Charlotte Harbor Commercial | Commercial | High Intensity Industrial | Murdock Village Mixed Use | Recreational Vehicle Park |
| Babcock Mixed Use | Charlotte Harbor Industrial | Compact Growth Mixed Use | Low Density Residential | Office & Institutional | Resource Conservation |
| Burnt Store Limited Development | Charlotte Harbor Mixed Use | DRI Mixed Use | Low Intensity Industrial | Parks & Recreation | Rural Community Mixed Use |
| Burnt Store Village Residential | City | Enterprise Charlotte Airport Park | Medium Density Residential | Preservation | Rural Estate Residential |
| Charlotte Harbor Coastal Residential | Coastal Residential | High Density Residential | Mineral Resource Extraction | Public Lands & Facilities | US 41 Mixed Use |

Projection: State Plane Florida West. Datum: NAD 1983 2011. Source: Community Development Department.



Source: Charlotte County

Existing Services Evaluation



Charlotte County Transit's ridership has increased 87% from 2021 to 2023.

Picture Credit: Benesch

Section 3

SECTION 3. Existing Services Evaluation

This section reviews Charlotte County Transit's services, including details of its reservation-based "curb-to-curb" service and supporting transit facilities. Additionally, an assessment was conducted to review how efficiently Charlotte County Transit supplies its transit service and how effectively those services meet the needs of the community it serves.

Charlotte County Transit Overview

Since 2001, Charlotte County Transit has provided demand-response service in Charlotte County. Charlotte County Transit's mission is to provide safe, high quality, convenient, efficient, and affordable transportation to the public in Charlotte County. The curb-to-curb service picks up passengers at an origin point and connects them to their destination in a shared vehicle.

Service Hours & Coverage

Currently, passengers can use the service Monday through Saturday to reach destinations in most of Charlotte County, including Englewood, Port Charlotte, and Punta Gorda. Monday through Friday, Charlotte County Transit operates from 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM. Map 3-1 shows the weekday service area. Saturday service is limited to a specified zone and operates from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM (Map 3-2). Currently, no service is provided on Sundays or County and nationally recognized holidays.

Trip Reservation Process

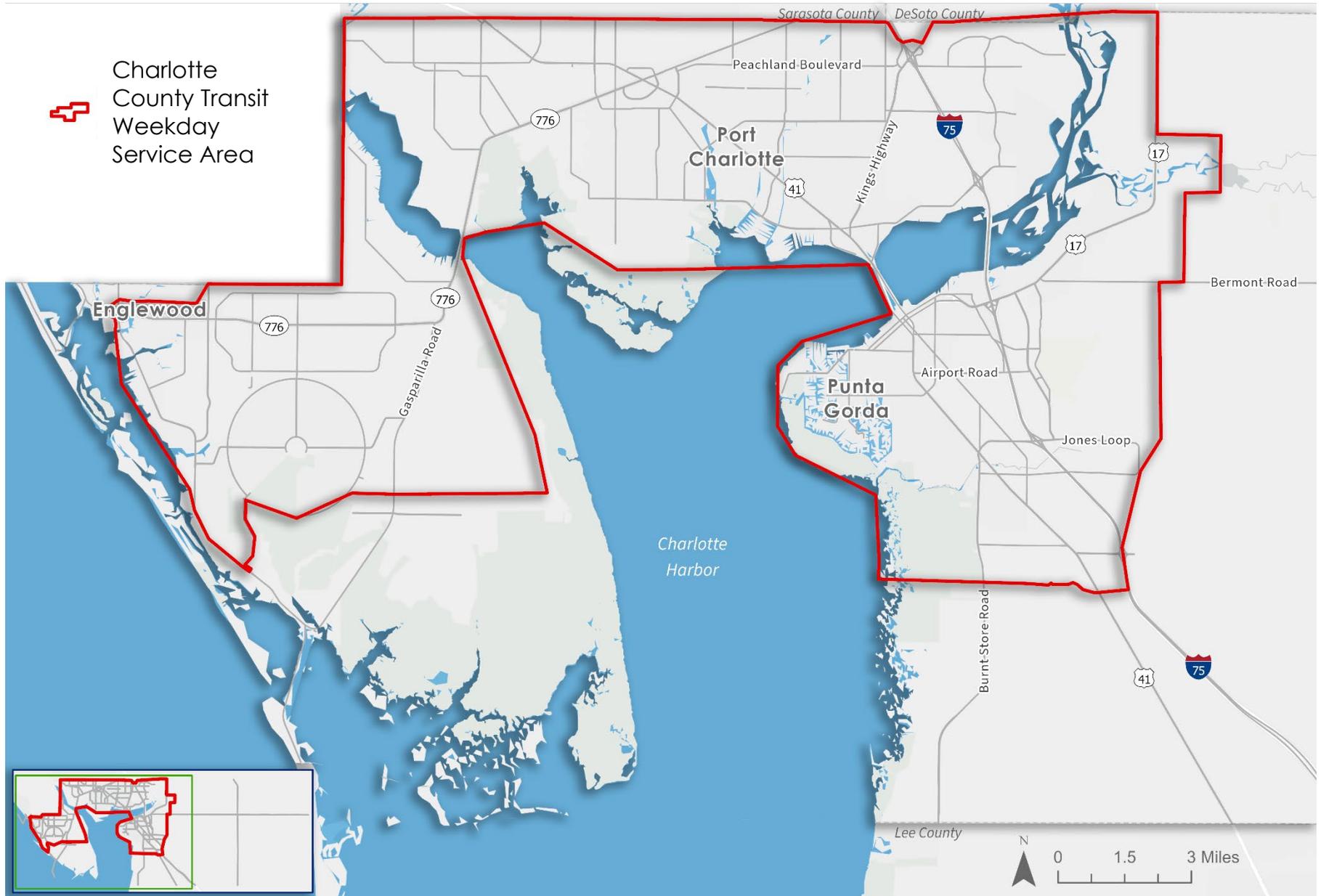
Charlotte County Transit requires reservations for all passengers on a first come, first served basis. As reservations are not taken on Saturdays, a passenger requesting service on a Monday should submit the request the Friday prior. Due to recent software upgrades, service requested on the same day and for the next day is often accommodated, but not guaranteed. Although cancellations are allowed within one hour of the scheduled reservation time, they are marked as a "no-show."

Charlotte County Transit also offers a subscription ride service, which allows passengers to request service to and from the same location on a regular basis. If a passenger will not be taking one of the regularly scheduled rides, passengers are responsible for canceling that trip, but it will not affect the following subscription ride service trips.

Fares

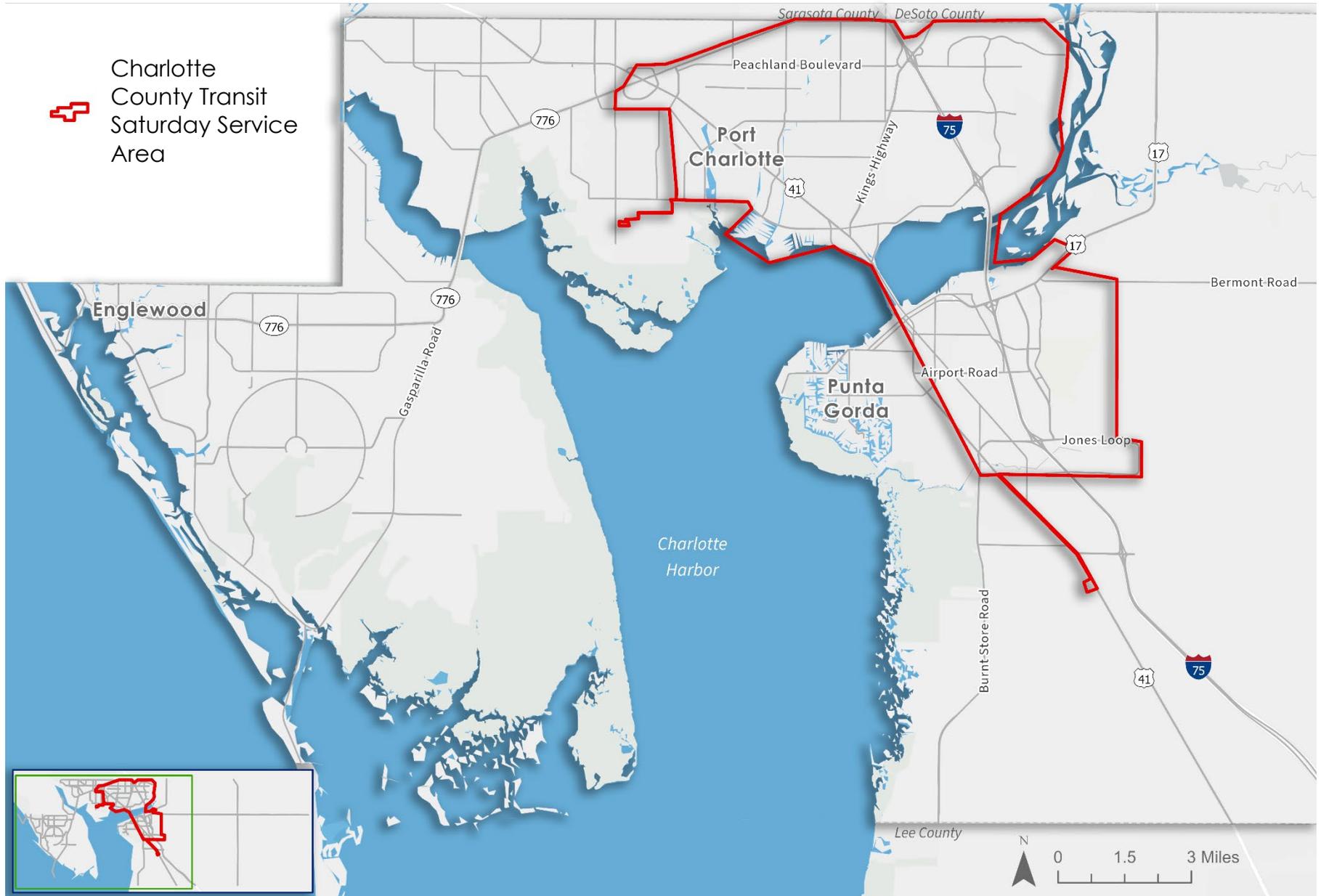
Charlotte County Transit went fare-free in 2020. Prior to this, the regular bus fare was \$2.00 and reduced fare was \$1.00. Children under 12 years old and caregivers did not have to pay a fare. The Farebox Recovery Report (FRR) is in Appendix A.

Map 3-1: Weekday Service Area



Source: Charlotte County Transit

Map 3-2: Saturday Service Area



Source: Charlotte County Transit

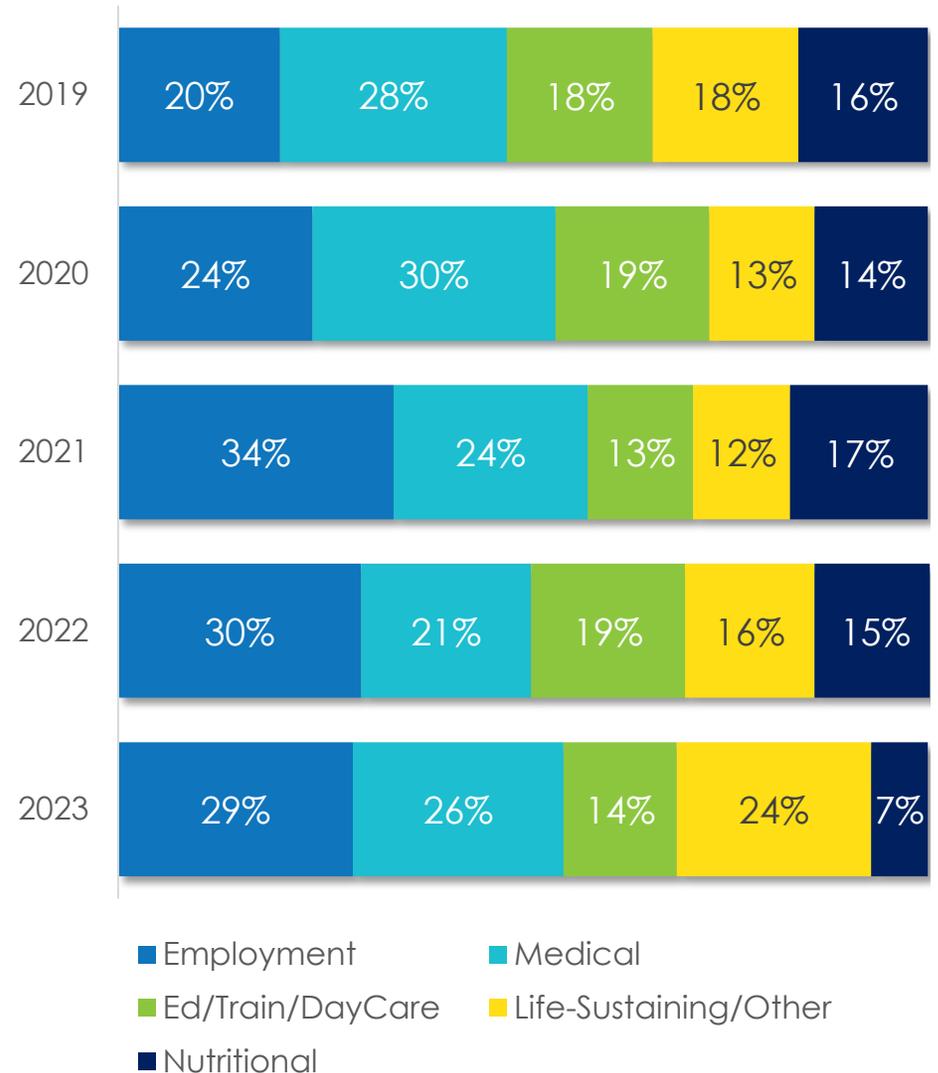
Transportation Disadvantaged

Charlotte County formed a “transportation section” to serve as the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) in 1986. Since then, Charlotte County has continued as the CTC for the county. According to the Charlotte County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP), approximately 61.6% of the county population could be considered TD.

The TD program is available only to qualified residents who are considered to have a disability, are age 60 or older, or are low-income. Passengers must fill out an application and be accepted. Like the public “curb-to-curb” service, reservations are required.

TD trips include employment, medical, educational/training/daycare, life-sustaining, or nutritional. In 2023, employment was the most common trip type comprising approximately 29% of trips, followed by medical trips at 26% (Figure 3-1). The number of employment trips increased from 2019 to 2023, peaked in 2021 but declining slightly since. Additionally, medical and educational/training/daycare trips have fluctuated throughout the 5-year period. Notably, nutritional trips show the most significant decrease in trips from 2019 to 2023 (-9%), with the largest decline occurring between 2022 and 2023.

Figure 3-1: Transportation Disadvantaged Trip Types | 2019-2023



Source: 2023 Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) TD Commission Annual Report

Ridership Trends

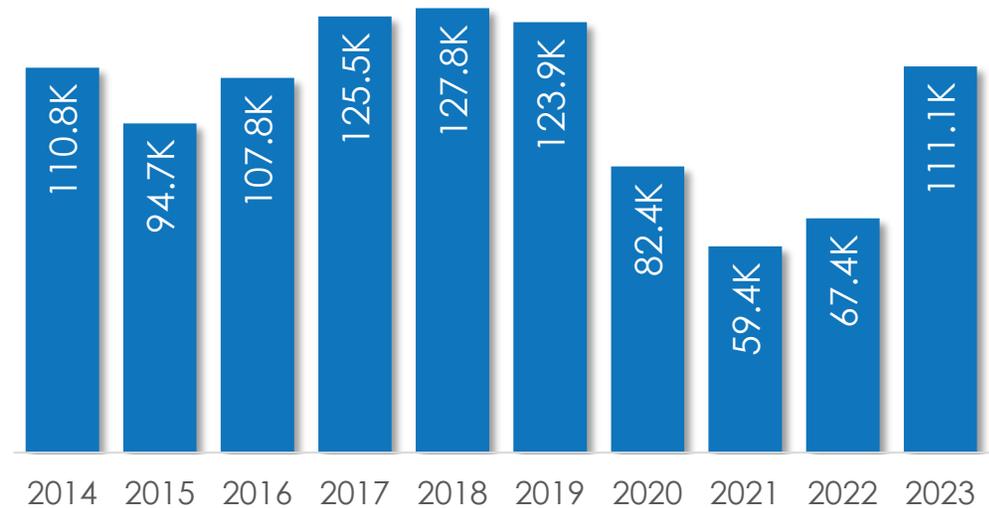
A review of Charlotte County Transit's systemwide ridership trends from 2014 to 2023 was conducted. Ridership slightly decreased to approximately 95,000 passenger trips in 2015 (Figure 3-2). In 2016, Charlotte County Transit experienced a steady increase in ridership until the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Congressional Research Service, nationwide transit ridership fell by approximately 50% of pre-pandemic levels in 2020 and 2021. However, Charlotte County Transit fared better than systems nationally and regionally, with ridership staying at approximately 66% of pre-pandemic ridership in 2020. Between 2022 and 2023, Charlotte County Transit's ridership increased approximately 65%.

Other Transportation Services

A review of other private and public organizations providing transportation services in Charlotte County or regionally was compiled. An inventory of transportation providers is included in Appendix B. These providers serve the public or specific client groups such as persons with disabilities, older adults, or people needing medical care. Other local and regional transportation options include:

- Uber and Lyft provide app-based on-demand transportation throughout the county. Although services can be requested to and from anywhere, Uber and Lyft rides are most conveniently accessed in denser areas where the driver supply and passenger demand is higher.
- American Cruise Lines is a river cruise service serving Punta Gorda. This trip connects from St. Petersburg to Key West along Florida's Gulf Coast.

Figure 3-2: Charlotte County Ridership, 2014-2023



Source: FTIS

Veteran Service

A van service connects to veterans' facilities in Cape Coral (Lee County) and St. Petersburg (Pinellas County) is provided every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Passengers meet at the Cultural Center and vans are driven by veterans. Those who are interested in utilizing the service should contact the Veteran Driver coordinator.

Regional Partners

Regional transit can play a pivotal role in enhancing transportation networks, reduce congestion on roads, and foster economic development. Furthermore, regional transit connections can provide efficient, reliable, and accessible transportation options for residents and visitors. Charlotte County is bordered to the

north by Sarasota County, which is served by Breeze Transit (formerly Sarasota County Area Transit) and to the south by Lee County, served by LeeTran. Currently there are no transit connections to Lee County.

Breeze Transit

Breeze Transit has both fixed-route service and on-demand transit zones. The Breeze OnDemand Venice/Englewood service area crosses into Charlotte County in northwest Englewood and connects to Beach Road and McCall Road (Figure 3-3). Passengers can connect to fixed-route services using this service.

Transit Facilities

Charlotte County Transit maintains an administration and operations facility to support the dispatch of service to passengers in most of Charlotte County.

Administration and Operations Facility

Centrally located in Port Charlotte adjacent to Veterans Boulevard, the Charlotte County Transit Administration and Operations Facility was completed in 2022 (Figure 3-4). This facility hosts administration and operations employees, including bus operators. The location allows the efficient dispatching of vehicles throughout the Charlotte County Transit service area.

Vehicle Storage Facility

Charlotte County Transit maintains a vehicle storage facility in Punta Gorda at 25490 Airport Road, which is helpful to serve areas in east Charlotte County.

Figure 3-3: Breeze Transit OnDemand

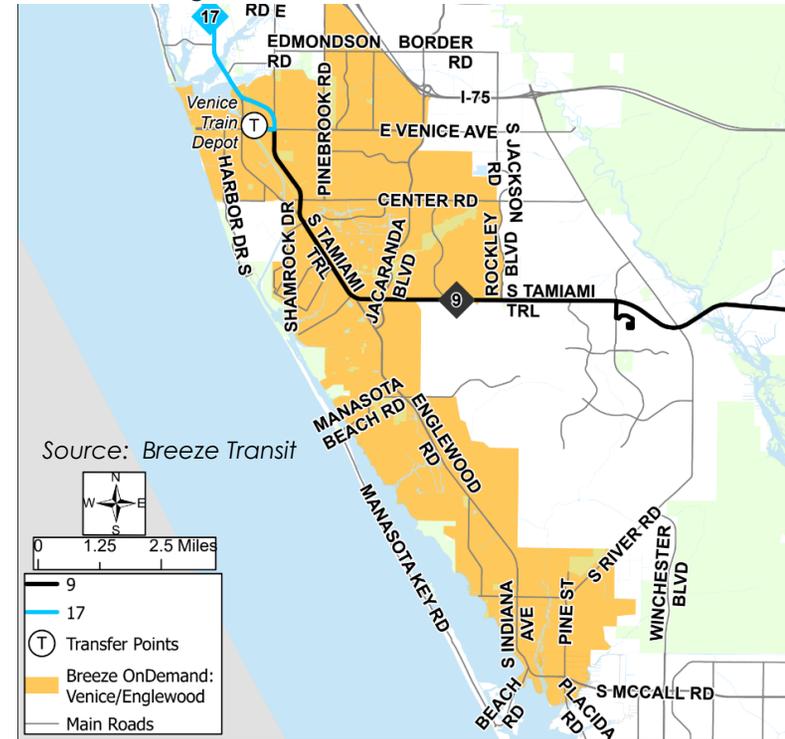


Figure 3-4: Charlotte County Transit Administration and Operations Facility



Picture Credit: Charlotte County

Vehicle Inventory

Charlotte County maintains a fleet of 33 vehicles for its curb-to-curb service and TD services (Table 3-1). These services are fully accessible to patrons in wheelchairs.

Table 3-1: Vehicle Inventory

Purchase Year	Count
2016	1
2018	9
2019	10
2020	10
2021	3

Source: Charlotte County Transit

Technology

Charlotte County Transit will be launching a mobile app in August 2024. This will allow passengers to book and cancel trips in addition to locating the vehicle picking them up.

Trend Analysis

This section includes a review of selected service performance trends for Charlotte County Transit, using NTD and Charlotte County data from the last five years. These performance trends help evaluate and benchmark the effectiveness and efficiency of Charlotte County Transit's services.

Data from the Florida Transit Information System (FTIS), a comprehensive data repository of historical validated NTD data for transit agencies in the US, was used for these analyses. As published NTD data are typically two years behind the current operating year due to the

Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) rigorous review and validation processes, validated performance data for 2023 were not available from FTA and therefore were obtained directly from Charlotte County Transit for the trend analysis.

Performance Trend Analysis

To assess how efficiently Charlotte County Transit supplies its demand response service and how effectively it meets the needs of the area, the trend analysis used key performance indicators and two types of measures, as summarized below.

- General Indicators – Quantity of service supply, passenger and fare revenue generation, and resource input
- Effectiveness Measures – Extent to which the service is effectively provided.
- Efficiency Measures – Extent to which cost efficiency is achieved.

The trend analysis was organized by type of measure or indicator and includes statistics and tables to illustrate Charlotte County Transit's performance over the past five years (Tables 3-2 through 3-4). The percent change was measured from 2022 to 2023, as 2020 and 2021 data reflect significant services impacts from the pandemic.

Table 3-2: Trend Analysis | General Indicators

Indicator/Measure	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	22-23 % Change
Service Area Population*	181,067	186,847	194,843	202,661	206,134	1.7%
Service Area Population Density (Population per Square Mile)	784	809	843	877	892	1.7%
Passenger Trips	123,886	82,376	59,354	67,367	111,084	64.9%
Revenue Miles	770,126	538,051	440,428	398,641	391,867	-1.7%
Revenue Hours	47,391	34,027	26,239	25,373	25,274	-0.4%
Total Operating Expense	\$3,490,284	\$3,158,998	\$2,763,460	\$2,915,115	\$2,564,631	-12.0%
Vehicles Operated in Max Service	20	19	13	13	17	30.8%

Source: NTD

*Population derived from the ACS

General Indicators

Most general indicators have increased from 2022 to 2023. Like many agencies, Charlotte County Transit had to adjust operations to meet the challenges of the pandemic that began in March 2020 and dramatically changed general travel behavior; all general indicators, with exception to population and population density, decreased from 2020 to 2021. When examining post-pandemic passenger trips, ridership increased 65% from 2022 to 2023 and revenue miles and revenue hours decreased marginally (-1.7% and -0.4%, respectively), reflecting that the system was effective at supplying service. Concurrently, the annual operating expense decreased (-12.0%) and the vehicles operated in maximum service increased (30.8%) suggesting Charlotte County Transit expanded service very efficiently.

Table 3-3: Trend Analysis | Effectiveness Measures

Indicator/Measure	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	22-23 % Change
Revenue Miles per Capita	4.25	2.88	2.26	1.97	1.90	-3.4%
Passenger Trips per Capita	0.68	0.44	0.30	0.33	0.54	62.1%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Mile	0.16	0.15	0.13	0.17	0.28	67.7%
Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour	2.61	2.42	2.26	2.66	4.40	65.5%
Average Speed (Revenue Mile (RM)/Revenue Hour (RH))	16.25	15.81	16.79	15.71	15.50	-1.3%

Source: NTD

Effectiveness Measures

Despite regional and national transit industry trends, passenger trips per capita (62.1%), passenger trips per revenue mile (67.7%) and passenger trips per revenue hour (65.5%) increased. Passenger trips per revenue mile outpacing passenger trips per revenue hour suggest that more Charlotte County Transit passengers are taking advantage of the increased service and taking longer trips.

Table 3-4: Trend Analysis | Efficiency Measures

Indicator/Measure	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	22-23 % Change
Operating Exp. per Capita	\$19.28	\$16.91	\$14.18	\$14.38	\$12.44	-13.5%
Operating Exp. per Passenger Trip	\$28.17	\$38.35	\$46.56	\$43.27	\$23.09	-46.6%
Operating Exp. per Revenue Mile	\$4.53	\$5.87	\$6.27	\$7.31	\$6.54	-10.5%
Operating Exp. per Revenue Hour	\$73.65	\$92.84	\$105.32	\$114.89	\$101.47	-11.7%

Source: NTD

Efficiency Measures

The impact of the decreased operating costs is evident when examining the efficiency measures. All efficiency measures declining indicates that Charlotte County Transit service has increased efficiency from 2022 to 2023. Charlotte County Transit decreased the operating expense per passenger trip, even when examining the 5-year trend, suggesting that more efficient service is being provided. Although more recent trends suggest Charlotte County Transit is supplying more efficient service, the five-year trend suggests the operating expense has not decreased at the same rate as passenger trips, revenue hours, and revenue miles. This could be due to inflation and other factors exacerbated by the pandemic.

SECTION 4. Public Involvement Summary

Public involvement input provides critical information for developing the 10-year transit needs in the community. With various avenues to gather public input, it helps to obtain information to ascertain community perceptions on and expectations for transit services locally and regionally. This section summarizes the public involvement process and related activities conducted for the Charlotte County Transit TDP. Key findings from each of the completed events also are analyzed and discussed.

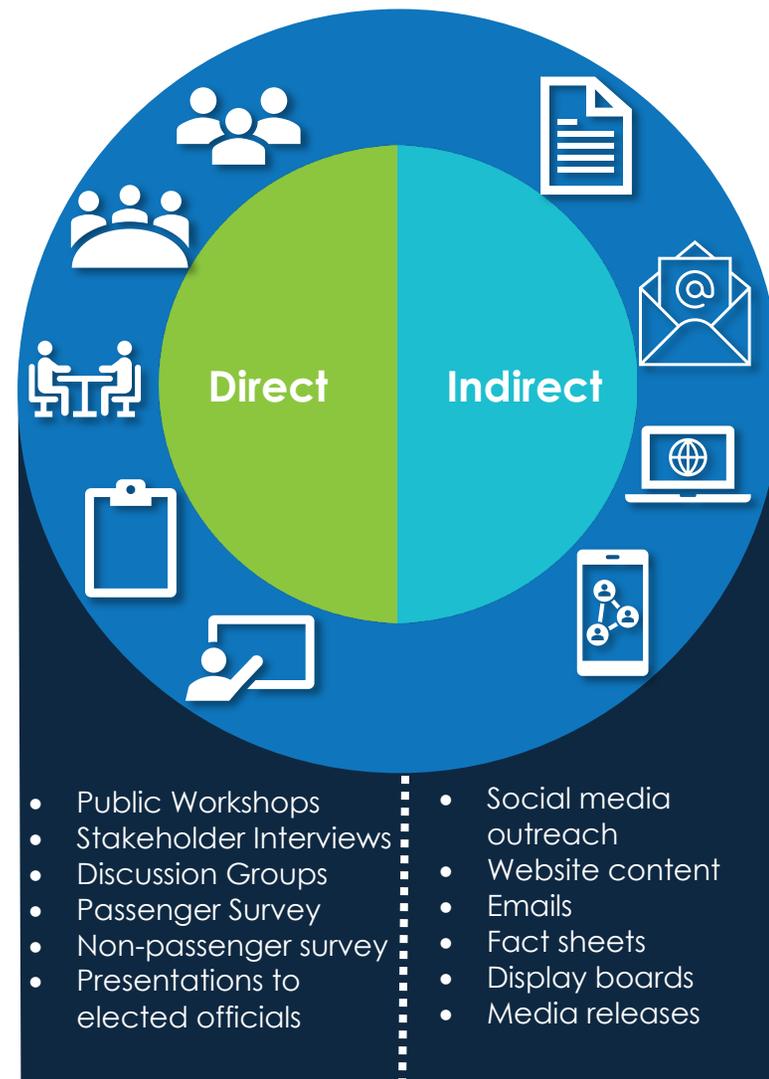
Prior to initiating any activities, Charlotte County Transit prepared a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to guide the public involvement process and activities to be undertaken during the TDP. The PIP was submitted for review and approval by FDOT District One prior to implementing the TDP outreach activities. As shown in Appendix C, the PIP includes a wide range of activities to provide numerous opportunities for involvement by the public and key stakeholders representing local and regional public or private agencies and organizations.

Public Involvement Techniques

To engage a full range of community stakeholders and facilitate active participation during the Charlotte County Transit TDP development process, activities categorized as direct or indirect were used.

Indirect involvement techniques use materials or methods to inform the public and stakeholders about the project.

Direct involvement techniques directly engage the public and stakeholders “hands-on.”



Summary of Charlotte County Transit TDP Public Involvement Activities

The direct and indirect public involvement techniques were used to ensure adequate opportunities for Charlotte County Transit's passengers, community stakeholders, and the public to actively participate in the TDP development process. Table 4-1 summarizes the public involvement activities conducted and the scale of engagement.

Table 4-1: Public Involvement Summary

Event	Date	Engaged
Stakeholder Discussions	March – May 2024	15
Discussion Groups		
Social Services/Job Access	April 9, 2024	5
Business/Growth	April 10, 2024	9
Open House Public Workshops		
Phase 1 Port Charlotte	April 16, 2024	20
Phase 1 Englewood	April 16, 2024	12
Phase 2 Punta Gorda	May 29, 2024	34
Phase 2 Port Charlotte	May 29, 2024	50
Virtual Public Workshop	May – June 2024	367
Surveys		
Transit Needs	April – May 2024	519
Transit Passenger	April – May 2024	85
Transit Priorities	May – June 2024	181
Grassroots Outreach	April – May 2024	200
Web and Social Media	April – May 2024	56
Total		1,553

Review Team Meetings

One of the goals of Charlotte County Transit's TDP is to ensure that it is developed with necessary oversight, quality control, and transparency. To support this, a Review Team was formed to guide the TDP process and to facilitate input. Coordination meetings with the Review Team were conducted as follows:

- Project Kick-off – In February 2024, a virtual meeting was held with the Review Team to discuss the TDP goals and objectives, review project tasks and deliverables, discuss the planned public involvement strategies, examine coordination of the TDP with other local and regional plans, and review the project schedule.
- Review Meeting – In May 2024, a virtual meeting was held with the Review Team to review upcoming project tasks and deliverables and the Phase 1 public involvement results and findings, and to discuss the 10-Year transit needs.
- Other meetings were held throughout the process to discuss progress and confer with staff.

Phase 1 Outreach

The first phase of outreach is important to establish the needs and priorities among residents, visitors, and stakeholders in the community. This phase helps build community support, educates the public about transit, and is a great way to spread the word about TDP efforts. This phase engages and educates the public about the TDP's purpose, benefits, and impacts and also builds support and interest in Charlotte County Transit.

Phase 1 gathers feedback and viewpoints from the public, community stakeholders, and elected officials, ensuring that potential issues are identified early.

Phase 1 outreach included stakeholder discussions, discussion group workshops, open house public workshops, a passenger survey, and a public input survey.

Stakeholder Discussions

Stakeholder interviews are one-on-one meetings to gather input from policy, agency, or community leaders regarding the future for Charlotte County and transit needs in the community. This input enhances the understanding of local conditions for transit as assessed through the perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders representing members of the broader community. To understand more about Charlotte County and its vision for transit, 15 stakeholders were engaged in April and May 2024 (Table 4-2).

Interview Methodology and Technique

A uniform list of questions and discussion topics was provided to each stakeholder ahead of the interview and is included in Appendix C. The input received was reviewed and major themes identified and summarized. Overall, interviewees indicated the need for more transit options in Charlotte County, including increased access to key employment, education, and commercial hubs and expanding transit services for everyone.

Table 4-2: Stakeholders

Name	Organization
William Truex	BCC
Stephen R Deutsch	BCC
Joe Tiseo	BCC
Christopher Constance	BCC
Ken Doherty	BCC
Carrie Walsh	BCC
Dave Gammon	BCC
Gordon Burger	BCC
Lucienne Pears	Babcock Ranch
Carmen Henry	CareerSource Southwest Florida
Joseph D. Pepe, Ed.D., MSA	Charlotte County Health Department
Tony Conte	Charlotte County Public Schools
Lisa Bratton	Charlotte County Public Schools
Maricela Morado	The Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida (AAASWFL)
M. Suzanne Roberts	Virginia B. Andes Clinic

Transit Today

Awareness – Stakeholders indicated that Charlotte County Transit's role is important to the community, but that there is a lack of awareness of the benefits and quality service that it provides. Charlotte County Transit should implement a marketing and education campaign. Almost unanimously, stakeholders indicated that the current passengers appreciated the service, but non-users may not know about the service.

Available Information – Some stakeholders mentioned how important word of mouth is and the need for ideas to spread the word about Charlotte County Transit. Stakeholders indicated that the technology has helped with the reservation process and should remain a priority for the agency.

Community Role – Although it was agreed that there was a lack of awareness of Charlotte County Transit's benefits, most stakeholders had positive comments for its role and perception in the community.

Growth – Most stakeholders acknowledged the recent population growth Charlotte County has experienced. Some stakeholders suggested that the rapid growth will lead to needing expanding services and for new or improved transportation alternatives. It was also noted that it is important that the system finds ways to identify and be ready at the right times to expand or try new services, even as tests or pilot projects.

Funding – Some stakeholders indicated that financial resources are an on-going constraint, which makes real improvement slow or delayed. Furthermore, the operator shortage was mentioned as a key challenge to growth and even maintaining current services. Finding opportunities to initiate potential public-private-

partnerships (PPP) for specific and new services is imperative if growing transit can be successful. Lastly, reinstating fares will be an ongoing discussion; most stakeholders are okay with keeping the system fare-free for now but would use fares to manage available capacity in the future as ridership grows and expansion is considered.

Where We Want to Go

Enhance Existing Service – Stakeholders like the existing service model and expanding or enhancing it where possible is highly desirable. Stakeholders indicated extending existing weekday service hours or adding some service on Sundays would benefit workers traveling to jobs or residents to recreational or religious activities. Additionally, all said continued implementation of technology is required, and some said Charlotte County Transit should consider implementing alternative-fuel vehicles.

New Service Types – Stakeholders also agreed that as Charlotte County grows, additional service connectivity options will be needed. Although local connections were considered necessary, stakeholders shared mixed feelings on circulators or shuttles. Most stakeholders agreed that regularly scheduled service or some variation, such as flex or deviated routes, may be needed and should be piloted during the busier times of the year. Additionally, some stakeholders mentioned new service technologies such as passenger ferries could be a viable alternative in the future.

New Connections – Stakeholders mentioned needing access to the growing and new medical services for workers well as citizen access. The stakeholders mentioned the new areas of development and how they

will warrant potential express routes for workers and/or visitors/residents to go to the beaches and other activity centers. Stakeholders also indicated that tourism's rapid growth will soon lead to new retail and restaurants being built, and additional needs. With the increased tourism growth, connections will be needed for visitors along with service workers. Regionally, the need for a connection to/from Sarasota will increase over time.

Technology – All stakeholders mentioned that technology needs to be a part of Charlotte County Transit's growth and some really applaud the current staff's efforts. While some think it would help with general mobility efficiency, other stakeholders mentioned technology to enhance existing services. Some stakeholders were anticipating the launch of the mobile app.

How Do We Get There

Partnerships – Some stakeholders said there should be partnerships between Charlotte County Transit and private businesses. The partnerships would support services that linked passengers to the businesses or other uses. It was mentioned that if fares returned, entities could pay for passes for visitors, students, or workers. Creative funding, such as parking credits, or partnerships with employers or businesses were lauded as key for the future of Charlotte County Transit.

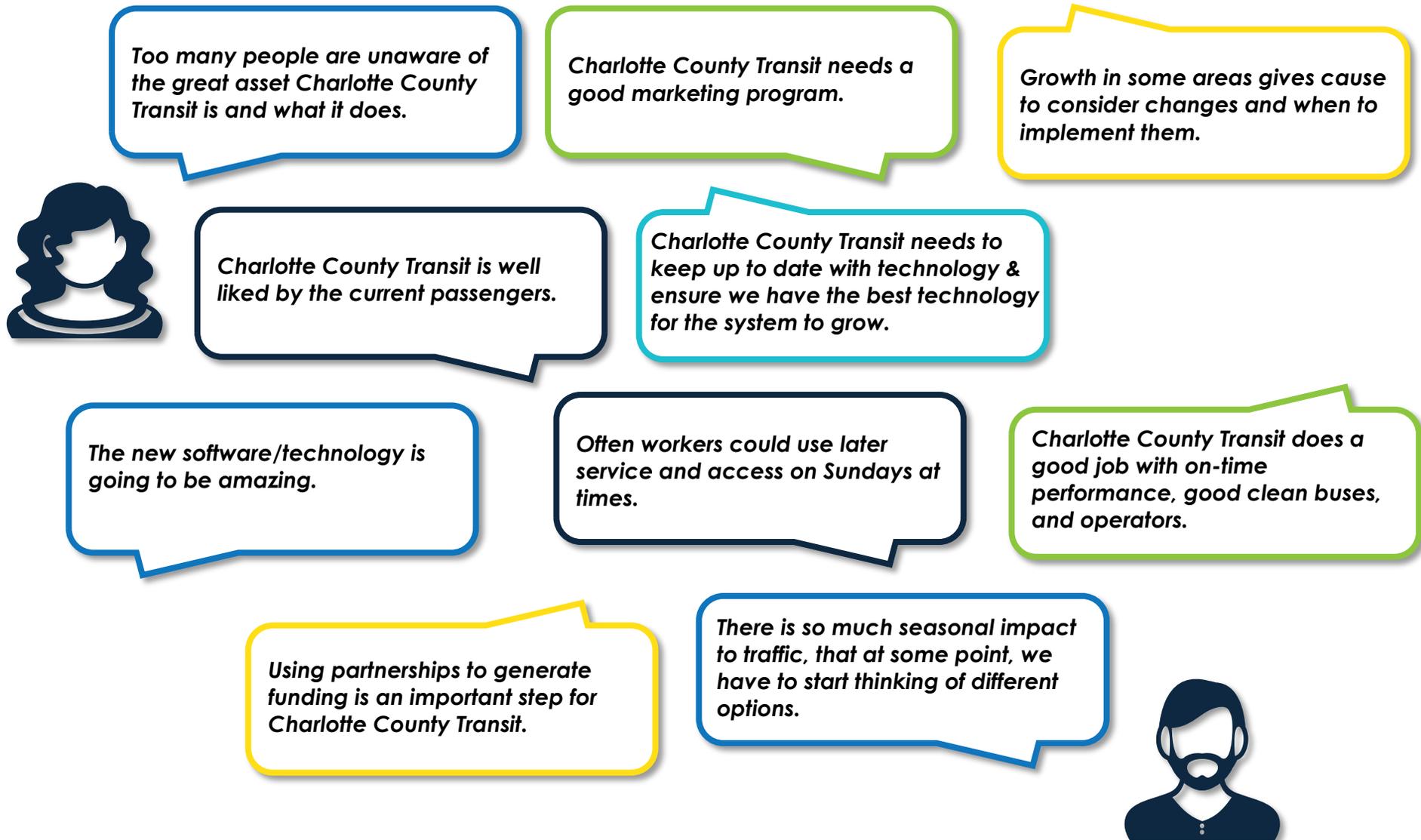
Marketing and Communications – All stakeholders mentioned more marketing and community awareness is needed. Marketing campaigns, including public television advertisements, that are designed to show the community what the service can offer are needed. Additionally, emphasis on the convenience of the service was suggested. Identifying and working on campaigns

with partners is desired and will help with funding campaigns and the potential services that PPP funding opportunities may help implement.

Range of Options – Most stakeholders indicated the growth will create demand for service options that are flexible and can grow with the county. It was noted that the impacts of seasonal residents and visitors was felt in higher traffic volumes and slower drive times. Connections between the eastern and western parts of the county were also acknowledged as needed.

Figure 4-1 shows general stakeholder comments.

Figure 4-1: Stakeholder Comments



Discussion Group Workshops

Two discussion groups, or workshops with small groups of stakeholders representing key focus areas for transit, were held and served as a virtual roundtable.

Participants took part in assessing existing services and determining future transit needs using questions to motivate and inspire conversation about the transit development process.

The TDP project team coordinated to invite potential participants representing social/public service agencies and business/education perspective. Thereafter, potential participants were contacted by the project team via email and phone calls to invite them to their respective discussions.

Social Services/Job Access Discussion Group

Social service and workforce agencies in Charlotte County that regularly engage with current and potential Charlotte County Transit passengers were invited to a discussion group on April 9, 2024 to provide input on transit needs for their clients.

Participants from the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce, Florida Division of Blind Services, Goodwill, and CareerSource Southwest Florida contributed to the discussion. Input obtained from a guided group discussion was categorized into key themes and summarized below.

Transit Today

Needed in the Community – Participants perceived Charlotte County Transit as a needed link in the community. They mentioned how transit is vital to connect to jobs and other lifeline trips. Participants felt that transit is helpful to residents' maintaining independence.

More Awareness Needed – Participants felt that awareness of Charlotte County Transit could be improved. Some participants mentioned that they see Charlotte County Transit vehicles in the community. Seeing Charlotte County Transit vehicles can make residents and visitors more aware of available transit service.

Continuous Traffic Levels – Participants said that traffic congestion is generally not too bad. They felt that the only time there was a large increase in traffic was during events, such as sports events or the county fair. Some mentioned that traffic volume on US-41 is constant even when seasonal residents leave.

Where We Want to Go

Need More Connectivity Options – Participants recommended increasing local and regional connectivity. Some participants mentioned expanding service to currently unserved areas in the county.

Need More Convenient Options – Participants stated a need to improve the availability of service. Some participants liked the existing on-demand service but felt there was a need for service east of I-75.

More Marketing Campaigns – Participants recommended developing a marketing campaign to encourage ridership targeting employers and education institutions.

How Do We Get There

Focus on Existing Service – While participants noted the importance of having mobility options, the focus should be on improving access for the existing demand. They mentioned using technology to increase efficiency in addition to ensuring there are enough operators and vehicles to serve existing passengers.

Mobility Options – Participants agreed that technology should be a part in enhancing Charlotte County Transit's future. Additionally, some participants mentioned that regularly-scheduled bus service on major corridors, such as US-41, may help ease the increasing demand for the existing on-demand service.

Increased Marketing and Education – Participants strongly recommended advertising via multiple modes including housing communities and on social media.

Upgrading Vehicle Inventory – Participants mentioned implementing alternative fuel vehicles may attract new passengers and act as a great marketing tool. Additionally, if increasing demand requires, Charlotte County Transit should consider increased seating capacity when replacing existing vehicles.

Business/Growth Discussion Group

Another discussion group workshop was held on April 10, 2024 with business, education, and economic

development leaders to gauge their input on existing and future transit needs in Charlotte County. Representatives from the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce, Englewood Chamber of Commerce, Sunseeker, Florida Southwestern State College, Charlotte Technical College, Re/MAX Realty, and ShorePoint Health, along with a current Charlotte County Transit passenger, attended.

After a presentation to set the foundation for a discussion on transit needs and vision, the attendees participated in a guided discussion. Input received and transit needs identified from workshop attendees include the following.

Transit Today

Transit is Needed – Overall, participants perceived Charlotte County Transit as a needed service to provide safe and affordable transportation to a variety of trips. A participant mentioned that Charlotte Technical College students use the service to get to educational opportunities. Some participants mentioned that they receive requests from older adults needing to reach appointments and other lifeline trips, tourists who want transit connections, and that parking is becoming sparser with growth.

Awareness and Marketing – Although Charlotte County Transit is perceived as a needed community asset, participants said that the awareness is somewhat low. Representatives from higher education centers would like to partner more with Charlotte County Transit to increase awareness to their students and staff, especially as they expand their available programs. Furthermore,

participants mentioned that multiple marketing strategies should be engaged to capture all audiences.

Where We Want to Go

Access to Educational and Economic Opportunities –

Participants also discussed providing convenient access to the major education centers. These classes help students learn a trade but, depending on the subject, sometimes the classes are not in the same location, making it tough for students to consistently reach the class.

Increased Service Supply – It was noted that recreational opportunities, class, and other appointments occur after the existing service span. Participants agreed that there is a need for more service later in the day and on Sunday. Although new areas that may have demand were mentioned, participants indicated there was a need to examine seasonal resident patterns to establish temporal demand.

Regional Connectivity – Connecting with educational/training centers in the region also was discussed as important for the business and educational community.

How Do We Get There

Supporting Communities – Participants mentioned the potential need for more transit due to continuing growth near the coast. A participant commented that there may be demand for a park-and-ride facility in Englewood due to the lack of parking at the beach.

Different Service Modes – Participants agree that there may be demand for different transit modes such as trolleys and ferries. Some participants mentioned requests for a trolley in Punta Gorda. Participants indicated that a ferry may be helpful for connections since it would be attractive to tourists and would help relieve congestion.

Marketing and Education – The discussion group participants also provided ideas to increase awareness and better educate the community on available transit services. Some participants also thought that Charlotte County Transit should expand its outreach to business owners and higher education centers. When it came to the distribution of materials and information, participants agreed that there should be paper pamphlets available at key locations in addition to any information available online for equitable access and a larger reach.

Open House Public Workshops

As part of the TDP public involvement process to determine how Charlotte County Transit should improve its service and to identify service needs, two open house public workshops were held in Port Charlotte and Englewood in April 2024. The focus was to understand participants' views about Charlotte County Transit and how to make transit a more viable travel alternative. In addition to the public, Review Committee members were invited to attend.

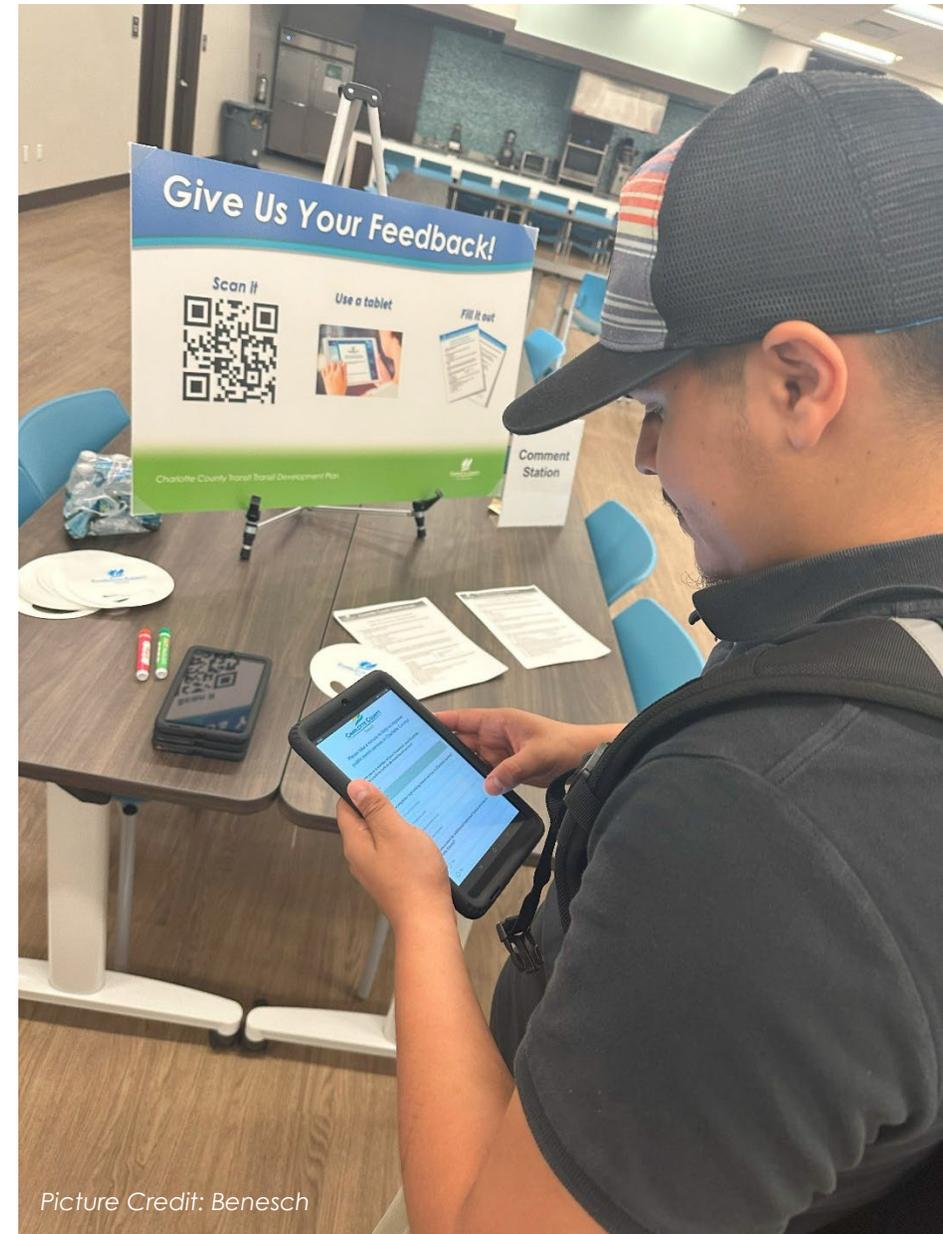
Port Charlotte – Family Services Center

The first public workshop was held at the Family Services Center in Port Charlotte from 10:00–12:00 pm on April 16, 2024. This workshop was attended by 20 participants.

The following is a summary of the comments received at the Port Charlotte workshop concerning existing and future transit services in Charlotte County.

- Additional Service Modes – Participants agreed there is a need for additional service modes within the county that include a mix of regularly scheduled routes and on-demand service. A few participants specifically mentioned a ferry service.
- Later Service – Most attendees indicated a need for extending service later on weekdays and weekends

In addition to various display boards and a feedback station, an interactive exercise also was included as part of the workshop. When participants were asked to identify if they would rather have only on-demand service or also have regularly-scheduled service, the answers favored regularly-scheduled service with reservation-based curb-to-curb service. Additionally, most participants indicated they used or would use the service to connect to shopping or recreational activities.



Picture Credit: Benesch

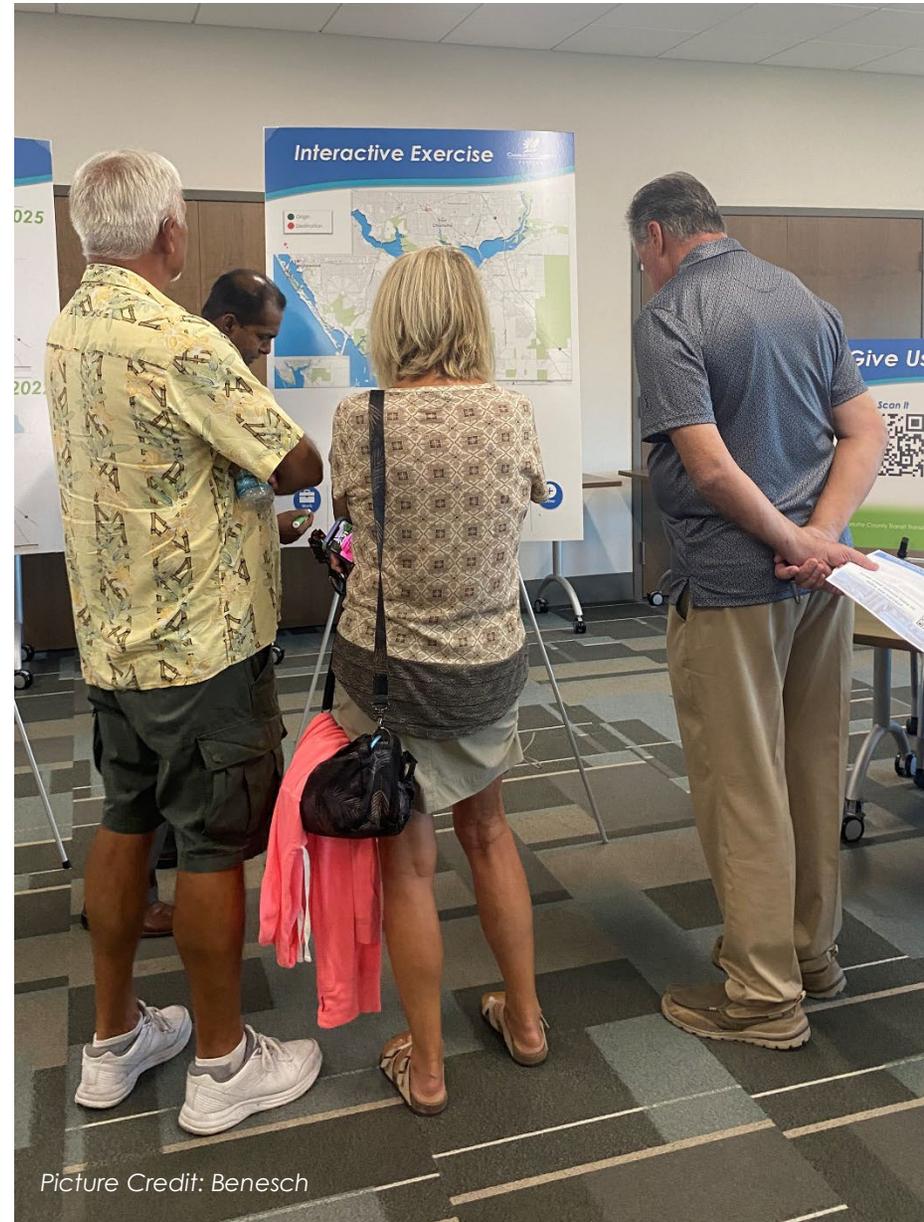
Englewood- West County Annex

A second workshop was held on April 16, 2023, from 2:00–4:00pm at the West County Annex in Englewood. Like the previous workshop, this event gathered information on the insights the public shared about transit issues throughout the county, but focused in this area. This workshop was attended by 12 participants.

The following is a summary of the comments received during the Englewood workshop.

- Increased Service – As in the previous workshop, almost all participants agreed there was a need for expanded services that include a mix of regularly-scheduled and on-demand service. Most attendees indicated that employment and residential development in the Englewood and Manasota Key areas are growing. This area also has a popular beach where public/employee parking is limited.
- Increased Service Supply – Participants agreed that there was a need for weekend service to connect workers and visitors to the beach.

During the interactive activity participants preferred a mix of on-demand and regularly-scheduled services. Additionally, most participants indicated they would be using the service to reach recreational activities or businesses in and around Englewood and Englewood Beach.



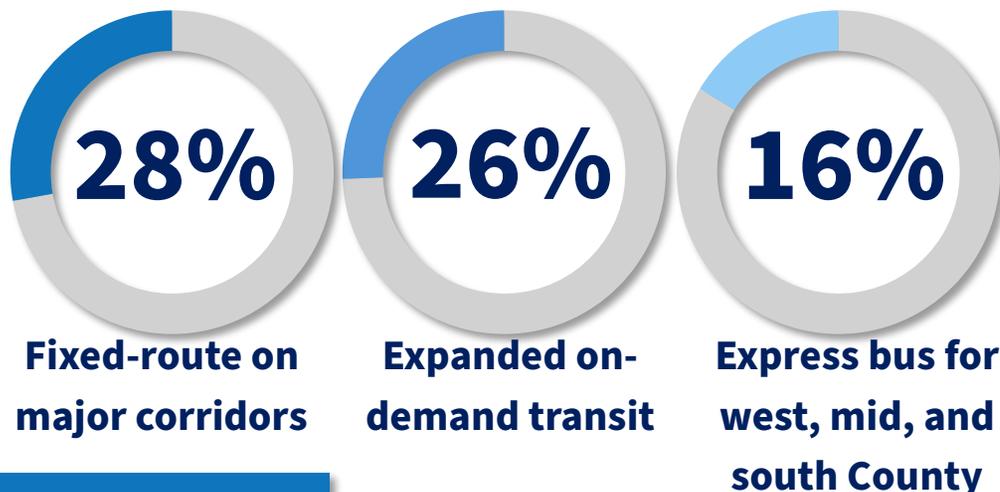
Picture Credit: Benesch

Public Input Survey

An online public input survey was initiated in April 2024 and made available via social media. The survey was also sent to MPO staff, County staff, discussion group participants, and stakeholders for distribution.

The survey was designed to collect input from the public on awareness of transit services, the need for transit in Charlotte County, current travel behavior, and opinions on improvements that are needed and should be considered for the future. Questions were asked to gather opinions about current services, willingness to use public transit, and the community's transit needs. The survey was also designed to gauge public awareness of Charlotte County Transit and to gather socio-demographic information from survey respondents. A total of 519 surveys were completed and the results are summarized in Appendix C.

What transit improvements should Charlotte County prioritize over the next 10 years?



89%

Support regularly scheduled bus service

87%

Agree there is a need for additional/improved service

I would use Charlotte County Transit to go to...

28%



Shopping/
Errands

23%



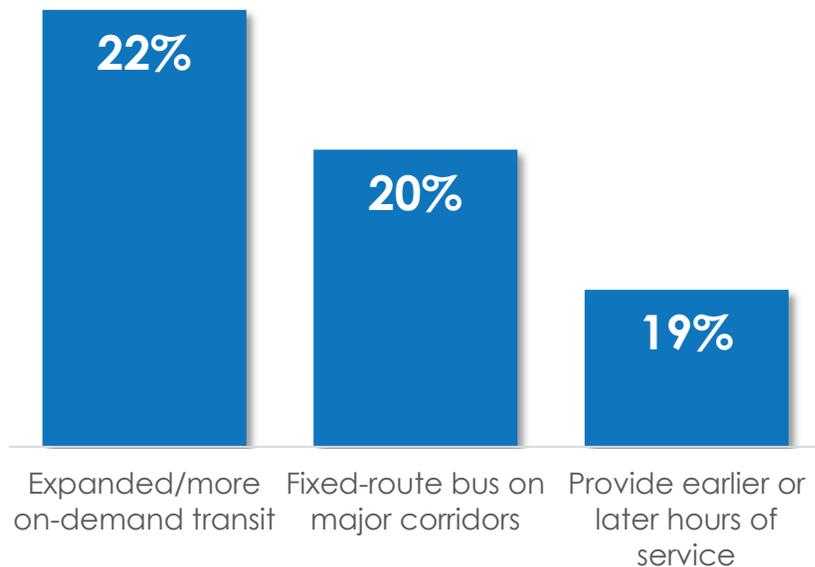
Social/
Recreation

Passenger Survey

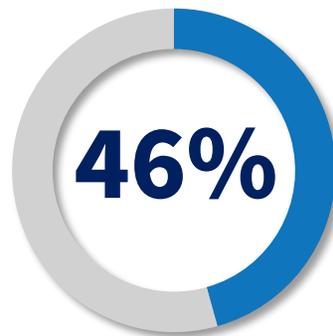
From April to June 2024, Charlotte County Transit passengers were surveyed to collect travel behavior information and needs. The survey was emailed to passengers and distributed by Charlotte County Transit staff and bus operators. The survey consisted of 13 questions to gauge passenger satisfaction, socio-demographics, travel frequency, and examine preferred transit services.

A total of 85 surveys were completed and the results are summarized in Appendix C.

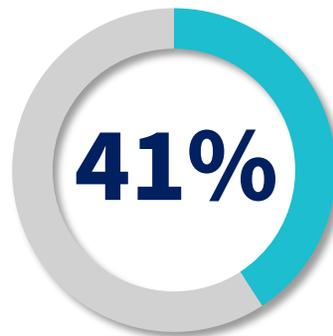
What transit improvements should Charlotte County prioritize over the next 10 years?



Does not have access to another form of transportation



Used Charlotte County Transit for more than a year



Use Charlotte County Transit 1-6 times per week

Phase 2 Outreach

Open House Public Workshops

Two workshops were held later in the TDP planning process to present the proposed 10-year transit improvements for Charlotte County Transit to the public. Feedback obtained was used to help prioritize the proposed improvements.

Each workshop was an open-house style format in which participants could come at any time to engage in discussions with Charlotte County staff and the project consultant team. Participants viewed the display boards and materials showing existing service information and transit needs. Each attendee was encouraged to complete a transit priorities survey.

The workshops were attended by 84 participants, with 34 attending in Punta Gorda and 50 in Port Charlotte.

Workshop #1—Punta Gorda

The first public workshop was held at the Punta Gorda Library from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM on May 29, 2024.

Workshop #2—Port Charlotte

The second workshop was held at the Port Charlotte Library in Port Charlotte from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM on May 29, 2024.



Picture Credit: Benesch



Picture Credit: Benesch

Virtual Workshop

To ensure equitable coverage and to engage the public in a creative way, Charlotte County Transit used a virtual public workshop interface to solicit feedback. Participants could view all materials, including display boards and fact sheets, provided at both workshops on their own time.

On the notices/flyers announcing the scheduled workshops, a QR code was placed for participants to access the virtual alternative if desired. Participants visiting the virtual workshop were also encouraged to review the 10-Year Transit Needs display board map and provide feedback via a survey. Charlotte County Transit and MPO staff also sent an email blast to help spread the word.



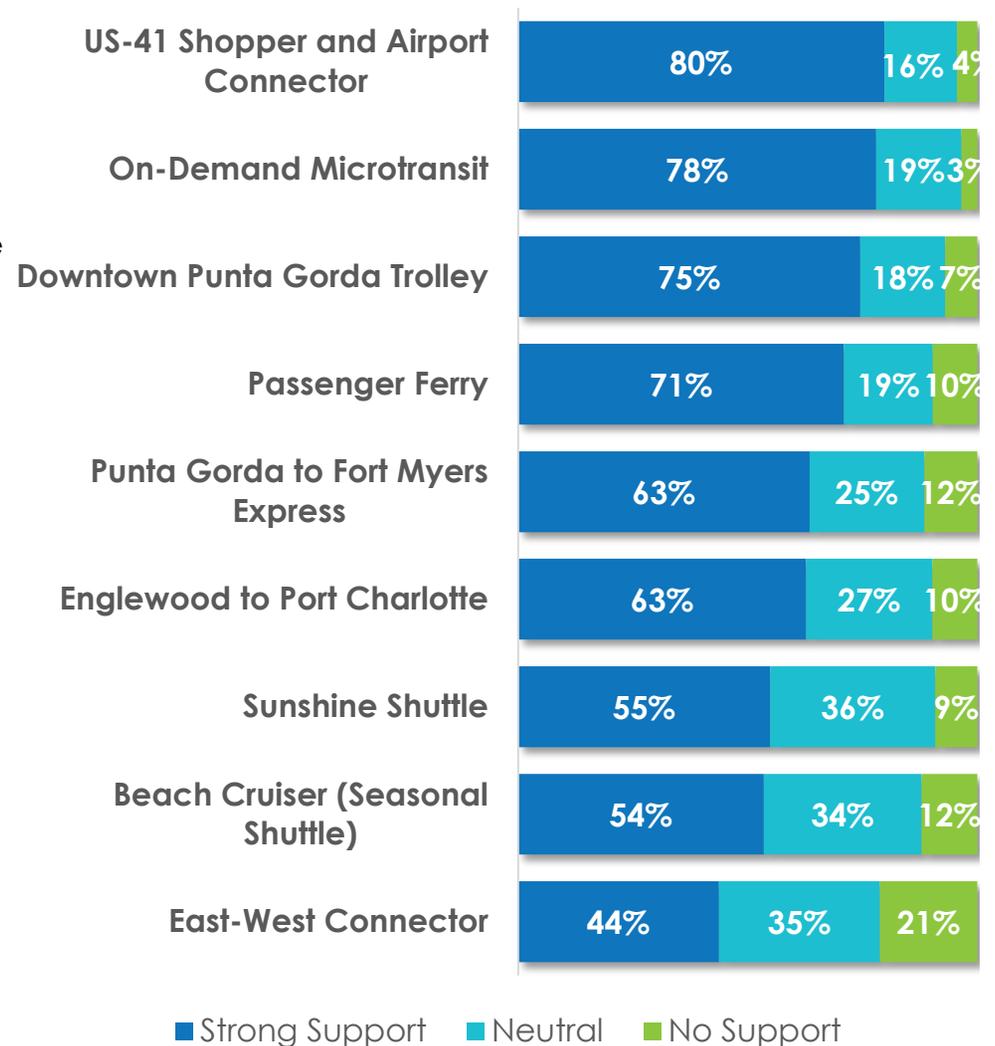
Transit Priorities Survey

Beginning in May 2024, a second TDP survey was made available online for the public to provide input on the recommended transit priorities. The survey was promoted on Charlotte County's social media and Charlotte County Transit's website, emailed to stakeholders, and made available at the public workshops. In total, 181 surveys were completed; a copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix C.

The survey was presented with a map online and multiple display boards at the in-person workshops and featured on the virtual public workshop.

The first question asked survey participants if they or a member of their household have used Charlotte County Transit. They were then asked to rank their support for the proposed service improvements. The service improvements with the most support are the US-41 Shopper and Airport Connector (80%), On-Demand Microtransit (78%), and the downtown Punta Gorda Trolley (75%). Figure 4-2 shows all service improvements ranked by percentage of "strong support" responses.

Figure 4-2: Transit Priorities Survey Results



Grassroots Outreach

In addition to the planned events, Charlotte County Transit staff participated in multiple grassroots and pop-up events to promote the TDP. Staff raised awareness about the public input surveys, public workshops, and other TDP outreach efforts, while also attempting to obtain input from those attending. To attract participants, Charlotte County Transit set a table up with promotional materials such as transit information to spread awareness of the service. Additionally, staff brought the Transit Needs Plan display board to events to discuss the proposed services with the public. Through these grass roots events, staff engaged approximately 200 people and also provided information on transit services.

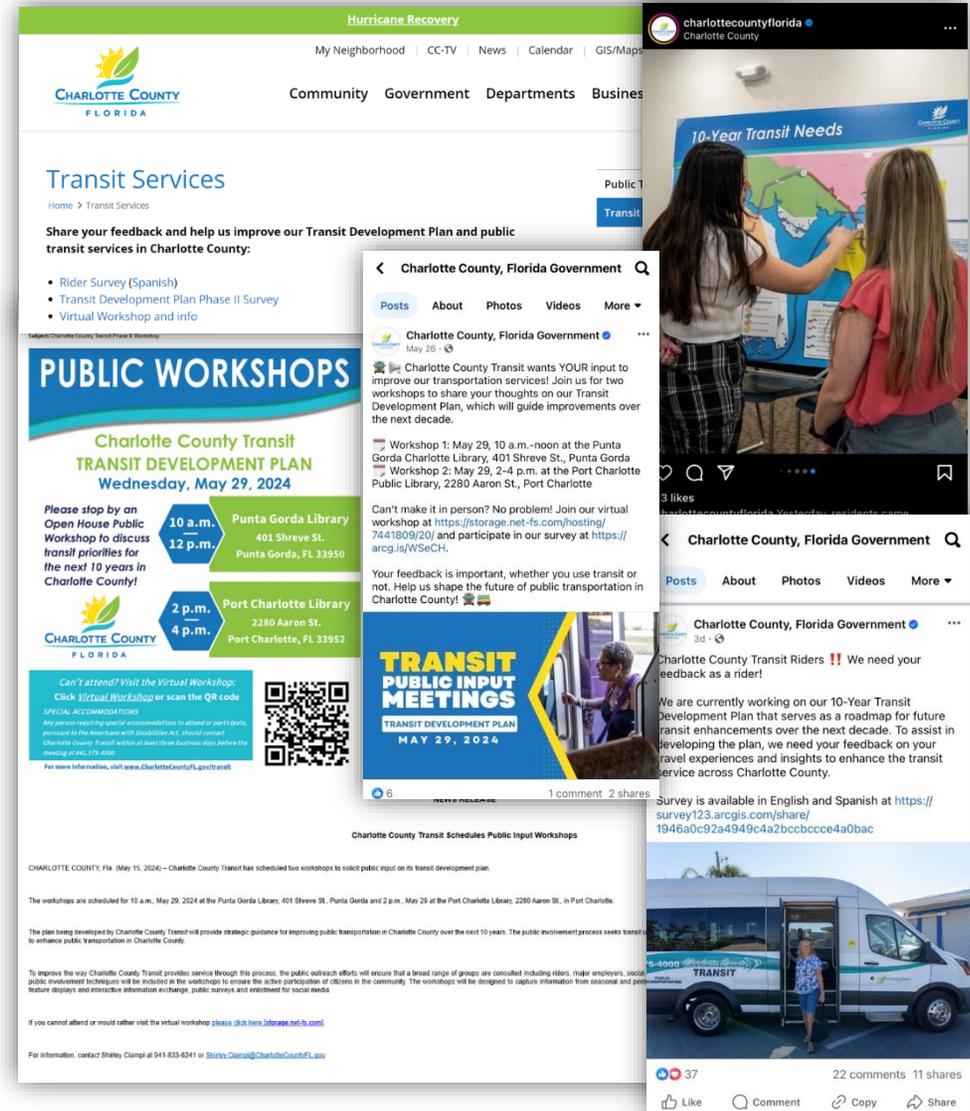


Other Outreach Efforts

Charlotte County Transit's website provides information on service hours, holiday closures, and other relevant information. During this process, advertisements and content for passengers and the public to inform on the latest TDP outreach events and updates were also posted. Additionally, Charlotte County used the available websites and social media outlets to encourage the public to take the TDP surveys and attend the workshops. Furthermore, local news media attended the second phase of workshops.

Email

Numerous emails with information about the online survey, upcoming public workshops, and the general TDP development process were used to engage and encourage public participation. Stakeholders and discussion group members were sent email notices and reminders for upcoming events such as the public workshops and encouraged to redistribute the information to other interested parties.



Transit Services
Home > Transit Services

Share your feedback and help us improve our Transit Development Plan and public transit services in Charlotte County:

- Rider Survey (Spanish)
- Transit Development Plan Phase II Survey
- Virtual Workshop and info

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Charlotte County Transit TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Wednesday, May 29, 2024

Please stop by an Open House Public Workshop to discuss transit priorities for the next 10 years in Charlotte County!

- 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.** Punta Gorda Library, 401 Shreve St., Punta Gorda, FL 33950
- 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.** Port Charlotte Library, 2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Can't attend? Visit the Virtual Workshop. Click [Virtual Workshop](#) or scan the QR code

TRANSIT PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS
TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN
MAY 29, 2024

Charlotte County Transit Schedules Public Input Workshops

CHARLOTTE COUNTY, Fla. (May 15, 2024) – Charlotte County Transit has scheduled two workshops to solicit public input on its transit development plan.

The workshops are scheduled for 10 a.m., May 29, 2024 at the Punta Gorda Library, 401 Shreve St., Punta Gorda and 2 p.m., May 29 at the Port Charlotte Library, 2280 Aaron St., in Port Charlotte.

The plan being developed by Charlotte County Transit will provide strategic guidance for improving public transportation in Charlotte County over the next 10 years. The public involvement process seeks transit riders to enhance public transportation in Charlotte County.

To improve the way Charlotte County Transit provides service through this process, the public outreach efforts will ensure that a broad range of groups are consulted including riders, rider employees, social public involvement techniques will be included in the workshops to ensure the active participation of citizens in the community. The workshops will be designed to capture information from oral and written feedback, feature displays and interactive information exchange, public surveys and entertainment for social media.

If you cannot attend or would rather visit the virtual workshop please [click here](https://storage.net-fs.com) <https://storage.net-fs.com>

For information, contact Shiley Clump at 941-833-4241 or Shiley.Clump@CharlotteCountyFL.gov

Charlotte County, Florida Government
May 28

Charlotte County Transit wants YOUR input to improve our transportation services! Join us for two workshops to share your thoughts on our Transit Development Plan, which will guide improvements over the next decade.

- Workshop 1: May 29, 10 a.m.-noon at the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library, 401 Shreve St., Punta Gorda
- Workshop 2: May 29, 2-4 p.m. at the Port Charlotte Public Library, 2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte

Can't make it in person? No problem! Join our virtual workshop at <https://storage.net-fs.com/hosting/7441809/20/> and participate in our survey at <https://arcgis.com/survey123>.

Your feedback is important, whether you use transit or not. Help us shape the future of public transportation in Charlotte County!

Charlotte County Transit Riders !! We need your feedback as a rider!

We are currently working on our 10-Year Transit Development Plan that serves as a roadmap for future transit enhancements over the next decade. To assist in developing the plan, we need your feedback on your travel experiences and insights to enhance the transit service across Charlotte County.

Survey is available in English and Spanish at <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/1946a0c92a4949c4a2bccbcccc4a0bac>

37 likes, 22 comments, 11 shares

Situation Appraisal

Charlotte County Transit is overseen by the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners.



ERMEN'S WILLAGE

Picture Credit: Benesch

Section 5

SECTION 5. Situation Appraisal

Transit systems function best when the many factors impacting how effectively and efficiently services are provided are known. A “situation appraisal” is an assessment process specifically infused with a strategic planning focus to help identify and quantify/qualify such factors.

Conducting a situation appraisal as part of this TDP helps Charlotte County Transit examine its current strengths and weaknesses. It also helps to identify existing or emerging challenges and opportunities for providing services and assists in identifying future transit needs in the community. This situation appraisal is also a key requirement under the current TDP Rule.

Prior to this appraisal, a review of relevant local, regional, and federal plans, policies, and studies was conducted. This ensures consistency between the 10-year transit plan goals and initiatives and policies or planning efforts relevant to Charlotte County Transit's services. This also helps to understand the policy context under which transit operates in Charlotte County and the region.

Strengths

Describes the positive trends or areas.



Challenges

Describes obstacles, negative trends, or areas for improvement.



Opportunities

Describes external trends favorable for transit services.



Threats

Describes external trends that are unfavorable or problematic.



Review of Plans and Studies

Various public agencies and private entities produce plans and policies at the local and regional levels that may impact transit in Charlotte County or the immediate region. In addition, certain federal or state plans, policies, and regulations also may impact how Charlotte County Transit provides, funds, or plans for local transit services.

This review is intended to help Charlotte County Transit understand these potential impacts while concurrently pursuing its own goals for creating a viable and accessible transit system locally and for the region.

The following plans, programs, and policy documents were reviewed and summarized, with an emphasis on potential implications for Charlotte County (Tables 5-1 through 5-3).

Local Plans

- City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan
- Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan
- Charlotte County Transit TDP Major Update (2020–2029)
- Charlotte County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)
- Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

Regional Plans

- LeeTran 2021–2030 TDP Major Update
- Sarasota County (Breeze) 2020–2029 TDP Major Update

State and Federal Plans

- State of Florida Transportation Disadvantaged 5-Year/20-Year Plan
- FDOT Complete Streets Implementation Update: Handbook and Design Manual
- Florida Transportation Plan
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
- Implications to Public Transportation of Emerging Technologies

Table 5-1: Local Plans

Plan Title	Geographic Applicability	Most Recent Update	Responsible Agency	Plan/Program Overview	Key Considerations/Implications for TDP
City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan	City of Punta Gorda	2017	Punta Gorda	Primary policy document that addresses land use, transportation, capital projects, public facilities, recreation, government coordination, conservation, and development goals, among others, for the city.	<p>Provides goals for ensuring a safe, efficient, and quality transportation system; establishes a policy of monitoring modal split, transit trips per capita, and automobile occupancy rates to measure the system's efficiency. A key strategy is to expand transit service to areas with demonstrated need, such as assisted living facilities and low-income neighborhoods. In addition to supporting the County in its efforts to provide public transportation services (providing bus stops, constructing connections to transit routes, increasing public awareness), some policies support the objective of strengthening the entire multimodal network such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development regulations to support compact, mixed-use development in prioritized corridors and design standards for parking (maximum parking requirements or elimination thereof, park-and-ride lots, and on-street parking), and access points will ensure adequate transit, bicycle, and pedestrian site access to promote these modes in place of single occupant vehicles. • Seeks to strengthen the downtown area as a "park once" environment. • Bicycle and pedestrian connections from residential areas to be added and maintained. • Encouraging water taxi or ferry services to provide a unique mode of transportation. • Participation in TDM [transportation demand management] programs with MPO and FDOT to encourage use of transit.
Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan	Charlotte County	2010	Charlotte County	Primary policy document that addresses land use, transportation, capital projects, public facilities, and economic development goals, among others, for the county.	<p>Discusses the intention to invest in expanding service to meet growing demand for public transit services. Prescribes several transit-supportive goals, objectives, and policies, such as the need to develop transit-oriented design strategies, a frontage road network for transit service, maximize use of the right-of-way, improve connections with pedestrian and bicycle networks, promote the expansion of aviation, and coordinate with other transit agencies to meet regional mobility needs.</p>
Charlotte County Transit TDP Major Update	Charlotte County	2019	Charlotte County Transit	The State of Florida Public Transit Block Grant Program, enacted by the Florida Legislature to provide a stable source of funding for public transit, requires public transit service providers to develop and adopt a 10-Year TDP per FDOT requirements. Major updates must be completed every five years and include an assessment of baseline conditions, a public involvement plan, and ridership estimates.	<p>Primary policy document that emphasizes transit improvements and additions in key corridors; outlines a cost feasible plan and focuses on expansion of service to fixed-route. Although demand response service is the current service model, there is an emphasized need for expanded demand response service on Saturdays, new fixed-route service or flex-route service, transit centers, and connectivity with surrounding counties. Proposed service enhancements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Dial-A-Ride – Maintain existing on-demand services provided but upgrade current advance reservation window to 2-24 hours. • Charlotte Link – App-based on-demand services between 4 hubs (2 in port Charlotte, 1 in Punta Gorda, and 1 north of Rotunda). • Babcock Express – Peak fixed-route service operating between downtown Punta Gorda and Babcock Ranch. Target 2 early trips and 2 return trips. • US-41/Airport Connector – Fixed-route service connecting downtown Punta Gorda/Punta Gorda Airport to Port Charlotte. • Englewood Express – Express route to connect Englewood Public Library to the Port Charlotte Town Center. • Downtown Circulator – High-frequency service in the Downtown Core and hourly service to the Sunseeker Resort. • Beach Circulator – Regional circulator to connect Englewood Library, Manasota Key, with Sarasota County Breeze Transit Service.

Table 5-1: Local Plans (continued)

Plan Title	Geographic Applicability	Most Recent Update	Responsible Agency	Plan/Program Overview	Key Considerations/Implications for TDP
Charlotte County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)	Charlotte County	2021	Charlotte County Transit	Emphasizes transit improvements and additions that serve needs of transportation disadvantaged population in an efficient and cost-effective manner.	Identifies key populations in need, such as older adults and low-income populations. Guiding policies as part of outlined goals and objectives, relevant to broader Charlotte County Transit system include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjusting to meet demands of the transportation disadvantaged (TD) population, expanding service in areas of Charlotte County. Goals and strategies to partner with local profit and non-profit transportation entities.
Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan	Charlotte County	2020	Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO	The Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO guides the transportation process in Charlotte County. The LRTP is a comprehensive cost-feasible transportation infrastructure plan that includes highway, transit, freight, and non-motorized components.	Includes a plan to invest in regional transportation infrastructure to improve connectivity of the region. Highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining a low-cost public transit system. Cost-Feasible Plan includes \$16.44 million (YOE) for transit capital (including vehicles and station amenities) and \$118.87 million (YOE) for operations and maintenance. This includes continued operations of the dial-a-ride service already in place and provides for implementing fixed-route transit service throughout the county. Projects were identified in the TDP completed in 2019 with frequencies of 60 minutes. Expansion of bicycle facilities, including all roads being improved on the highway needs plan (except I-75). Expansion of sidewalk facilities associated with new roadway construction or road improvements constructed especially in urbanized areas.
Charlotte County Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan	Charlotte County	2018	Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO	A Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan attempts to identify improvements needed for bike and pedestrian infrastructure. An added benefit of a Plan is to qualify for State and Federal funding. The intent is to create a vision for the county that can be a guiding principle to protect bicyclists and pedestrians.	A review of the current pedestrian and bike infrastructure throughout the county was completed with the goal of identifying targeted areas for improvement to achieve a comfortable, convenient, and safe transportation choice for people of all ages and abilities. Better pedestrian infrastructure supports the goals of increasing ridership by making the first/last mile as convenient and safe as possible. Policy oriented proposals to make infrastructure throughout Charlotte County safer and more practical for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Some policy action steps proposed are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Development Regulations and Land Development Codes with Walking and Biking Oriented Standards. Adopt Complete Streets Policy in Support of Existing Vision Zero Policy. Conceptual costs for proposed projects are \$75.2M
Charlotte County Transit Annual Progress Report	Charlotte County	2023	Charlotte County Transit	In the interim years between TDP major updates, an annual report on the progress towards the 10-year TDP goals is required by law.	Charlotte County Transit provides on-demand curb-to-curb service. In FY 2023, Charlotte County Transit re-implemented pre-pandemic service hours and continues to be fare-free. Highlights of services planned for FY 2024 in the updated TDP Implementation plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Dial-A-Ride Charlotte Link service in Englewood Englewood Express Downtown Punta Gorda Circulator A combination of technology-based-on-demand and the first ever fixed-route service for Charlotte County is planned for FY 2024.

Table 5-2: Regional Plans

Plan Title	Geographic Applicability	Most Recent Update	Responsible Agency	Plan/Program Overview	Key Considerations/Implications for TDP
LeeTran 2021-2030 TDP Major Update	Lee County	2020	LeeTran	The State of Florida Public Transit Block Grant Program, enacted by the Florida Legislature to provide a stable source of funding for public transit, requires public transit service providers to develop and adopt a 10-Year TDP per FDOT requirements. Major updates must be completed every five years and include an assessment of baseline conditions, a public involvement plan, and ridership estimates.	<p>LeeTran does not currently provide service to Charlotte County. The TDP does not identify planned service needs that connect to Charlotte County. However, through public outreach there have been some requests to have greater connectivity in the future. The TDP, however, reviews major service changes, including changing and discontinuing routes. Key transit alternatives proposed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal changes to routes to help better serve capacity. • Discussion on assessing new facilities throughout the county. • Improving headway time and on-time performance.
Sarasota County Area Transit 2020-2029 TDP Major Update	Sarasota County	2019	Sarasota County	The State of Florida Public Transit Block Grant Program, enacted by the Florida Legislature to provide a stable source of funding for public transit, requires public transit service providers to develop and adopt a 10-Year TDP per FDOT requirements. Major updates must be completed every five years and include an assessment of baseline conditions, a public involvement plan, and ridership estimates.	<p>Emphasizes transit service that improved operating frequencies on core routes, reduced trip travel times, and increased directness of travel paths. Taking steps towards high-frequency grid in future and subsequent-year transit improvements include improved core frequencies. Key elements of plan that pertain to Charlotte County include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intention to connect to Charlotte County Transit if a fixed-route was in place. • Intention to connect all southwestern counties with reliable service dependent on fixed-route. • Also focuses on connections with Manatee, Pasco, Polk, and Pinellas counties. • SCAT services a small portion of the Englewood community located on the Charlotte-Sarasota County border. • Approximately 5% of commuters travel from Sarasota County to Charlotte. Englewood service and North Port service were emphasized for intercounty connectivity.

Table 5-3: State and Federal Plans

Plan Title	Geographic Applicability	Most Recent Update	Responsible Agency	Plan/Program Overview	Key Considerations/Implications for TDP
State of Florida Transportation Disadvantaged 5-Year/20-Year Plan	Florida	2007	Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD)	Accomplish cost-effective, efficient, unduplicated, and cohesive TD services within its respective service area. Includes the explanation of the Florida Coordinated Transportation System, five-year report card, Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability Review, and a strategic vision and goals, objectives, and measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and field-test model community transportation system for TD persons; create strategy for the Florida CTD to support development of universal transportation system. • Long-range strategic vision includes developing a universal cost-effective transportation system with a uniform funding system and services that are designed and implemented regionally throughout the state.
FDOT Complete Streets Implementation Update: Handbook and Design Manual	Florida	2018	FDOT	Developed to create alternative transportation systems to facilitate Complete Streets focused design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revising guidance, standards, manuals, policies, and other documents. • Updating how decision-making is processed. • Modifying evaluation of performance. • Managing communication between agencies. • Updating training and education in agencies.
Florida Transportation Plan	Florida	2020	FDOT	Florida's long-range transportation plan, as required by state and federal law.	<p>Supports development of state, regional, and local transit services through a series of related goals and objectives, emphasizing new and innovative approaches by all modes to meet needs today and in future. The most recent update emphasizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security for Florida's residents, visitors, and businesses. • Resilient and quality infrastructure. • Connected, efficient, and reliable mobility for people and freight. • Transportation choices that improve equity and accessibility. • Transportation solutions that strengthen Florida's economy. • Mobility solutions that enhance Florida's communities. • Transportation systems that enhance Florida's environment.
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act	USA	2021	117 th US Congress	Reauthorizes and expands federal funding for the nation's surface transportation infrastructure, including transit systems and rail transportation network. Maintains strong commitment to safety.	<p>Authorizes federal funding to advance public transportation through safety, modernization, climate, and equity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes \$33.5 billion for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and \$4.6 billion to support rural transit systems. • Funds dedicated to repairing and upgrading existing infrastructure, increasing accessibility, expanding service areas, and upgrading buses to zero-emissions models. • Increases funding to meet transportation needs for older adults and people with disabilities. • Provides \$12 billion in partnership grants for intercity rail service.
Implications to Public Transportation of Emerging Technologies	USA	2016	National Center for Transit Research		White paper that explores possible consequences for public transportation as a result of introduction of new technologies such as autonomous vehicles, connected vehicles, and other innovations that impact efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and overall demand for transportation.

Development and Growth Trends

It is beneficial to understand the demographic trends and markets that can impact public transportation services. Key findings from the assessment of socioeconomic and demographic trends for this TDP are summarized below.

- According to BEBR, Charlotte County is projected to have over 250,000 residents by 2050, more than a 20% increase over the current population.
- Currently, more than 1 in 3 residents are 65 years or older. This age group will continue to grow, peaking at 42% of the county population in 2045, according to BEBR.
- Approximately 36% of jobs in Charlotte County are in educational services, health care and social assistance, or retail trade industries, according to the ACS. Higher employment densities are found along major roadways, in Punta Gorda, along US-41, and in Babcock Ranch.
- Although 17% of households earn \$25,000 or less annually, approximately 33% are considered Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed (ALICE). According to the ACS, Approximately 40% of Charlotte County households have an annual income of \$75,000 or more.
- Approximately 4.5% of all households in Charlotte County are zero-vehicle households. According to the ACS, of rental households, approximately 13% are zero-vehicle households.

Implications

Charlotte County's population and employment is expected to continue growing, creating more demand for both on-demand and regularly scheduled transit options.

Charlotte County's growing industries, such as hospitality and tourism, are in established areas. An overarching goal is for transit to be a more viable option to access jobs and recreational activities. Charlotte County Transit's success will depend on its ability to improve services and develop more mobility options to attract new markets while also serving its current passenger base.

The older adult population is projected to grow and there are sizable segments of low-income households in the county. Statistically, these demographic groups are more inclined to use transit, an indication of why Charlotte County should continue to provide and improve transit for access to jobs and other services. While traditional passengers should remain a key focus for service, Charlotte County Transit should also aim to attract more discretionary passengers who choose to ride transit. Key considerations for Charlotte County Transit include enhancing mobility options and marketing existing and proposed services.

Travel Behavior and Patterns

It is important to understand existing travel and commuting behaviors and patterns to determine possible impacts or benefits affecting public transit services. Some key findings are as follows:

- Although most commuters in Charlotte County continue to use their personal vehicles (74.7%), the share of those who work from home is nearly 14%.
- According to Replica, a demographic data analysis tool that uses road traffic, mobile phone data, and financial transactions to model mobility trends, in Fall 2023, the average morning weekday trip start time in Charlotte County was approximately 7:00 AM, a part of the peak traffic hours. Travel also spiked at 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM.
- Most commute to work trips that originated in Charlotte County end in Charlotte County. Those who work outside of Charlotte County travel to Sarasota or Lee counties.
- According to the ACS, approximately 30% of transit users report a travel time of more than 60 minutes while 41% who drove alone report a commute time of 15-29 minutes in Charlotte County.

Implications

Charlotte County Transit currently provides curb-to-curb service in most high population and job density areas of the county. To provide faster, cost effective service and to capture more commuters, it may need to consider introducing regularly scheduled service. This will give additional transportation options in areas with current on-demand services and eliminating a need for a reservation may be attractive to passengers looking for more flexibility with scheduling their trip.

An increase in working from home may indicate a market for microtransit, providing the option of short on-demand trips for shopping or recreation.

Furthermore, ACS data indicate that more than one-third of Charlotte County residents are employed in educational services, health care and social assistance, or retail industries. These industries can have fluctuating work schedules that may require travel during later hours at night. Charlotte County Transit should explore supplying later service through employer partnerships.

Continued demand for current services and the need to provide connections outside of the current service area continues to be a challenge. Supplying both regularly scheduled bus and on-demand service may address local service demand on busy corridors, such as US-41. Express services would help connect passengers with longer trips.

Public Involvement

Charlotte County Transit conducted outreach to gather input on transit needs for the TDP and to raise awareness of its services. Following are key needs identified during the TDP public involvement efforts:

- Increasing Service Options – The public and key stakeholders agreed that adding service options, such as regularly scheduled transit, will increase mobility options throughout the county.
- Improve Service Supply – Throughout outreach efforts, participants mentioned increased demand for same-day service. Furthermore, some participants indicated a need to connect to beaches for both recreation and employment.
- Awareness Campaign – Implementing an awareness/education campaign to promote transit service is necessary to attract new passengers. The existing service was praised, but stakeholders echoed many residents do not know it is available.
- Partnerships – Partnering with private entities, such as education centers and businesses to help generate interest and fund services, were also identified by stakeholders and discussion group members.

Implications

A lack of awareness about current transit service was identified through outreach as a major challenge, but ongoing efforts by Charlotte County Transit to increase awareness was acknowledged. Research suggests that youth and college students are more open to transportation alternatives than previous generations. Targeted social media campaigns could increase awareness among this group of potential passengers.

Input indicates that Charlotte County Transit services are an essential part of the community's fabric. Increased service supply, more flexible service, and more hours of service would increase the quality of service for current passengers and may attract new passengers. Continued success depends on the ability of Charlotte County Transit to adapt and implement services that will expand its passenger base and capture new transit markets.

Charlotte County Transit has a unique opportunity to use this input, which includes perspectives from new residents who are familiar with regularly scheduled transit in other areas, to envision its new network.

Connections to the beach were mentioned throughout the first phase of outreach. Due to the unique geography, service options such as a ferry or regularly scheduled bus service could supplement connections in and around the county. Additionally, new connections may provide the opportunity for public-private partnerships.

Land Use/Urban Design

In 2023, Charlotte County ranked 11th among Florida counties in terms of population growth percentage, according to BEBR.

In May 2023, Charlotte County established the Murdock Village Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Murdock Village is envisioned to be a mixed-use neighborhood development with various housing types, entertainment, retail, and open space (Figure 5-1). A part of Murdock Village is the West Port Development, which will have up to 2,400 dwelling units, 200,000 square feet of retail, and a hotel. According to the CRA, the annual economic impact is projected to be \$92 million from the 400 permanent jobs created and economic activity.

Figure 5-1: Murdock Village CRA



Implications

As developers invest in new and expanded neighborhoods and retail space, Charlotte County Transit should continue to monitor and leverage opportunities for public-private partnerships to support transit growth. New trips generated by residential and commercial/retail developments create additional mobility needs. Charlotte County Transit can expect to see greater demand for its services in these areas.

Furthermore, Charlotte County Transit should take advantage of the rapid community growth to continue to be involved in the community, particularly with land use and development. By providing input and support, it may result in transit supportive higher-density/intensity developments and/or transit-oriented developments (TODs). Although the existing pattern of low-density residential land uses/development throughout the county remain a challenging environment to providing efficient transit services, implementing a mix of transit service options will assist efficiently serving residents and visitors.

Technology

Charlotte County Transit continues to implement new technologies to improve the quality of its services and enhance the overall transit riding experience for its patrons. The addition of a mobile app will add more technology options and convenience for Charlotte County Transit passengers. In addition to recent scheduling software upgrades to make trip dispatching more efficient, Charlotte County Transit should continue to evaluate technology upgrades that benefit passengers, which may include the following:

- No/low emission alternative fuel buses – Currently, Charlotte County Transit operates a fleet of vehicles powered by fossil fuels. When replacing buses over the next 10 years, considering no/low emission technologies like electric, compressed natural gas (CNG), or electric-hybrid vehicles will reduce the carbon footprint while also providing a more technologically advanced and environmentally friendly option for travel. Although the upfront capital cost of these vehicles is typically higher, they may offer longer-term savings on fuel costs.

Implications

Charlotte County Transit should continue to invest in new and emerging technologies to increase the accessibility and attractiveness of its services to attract new passengers, while increasing the quality of service for existing passengers.

Transitioning to alternative fuel buses may attract passengers who are more environmentally conscious. These technologies may also provide an advantage of federal and state grant opportunities to help fund no or low-emission transit vehicles.

Furthermore, if regularly scheduled bus transit is planned on an already congested corridor/intersection, Charlotte County Transit should work with the appropriate local and regional partners, including FDOT and city/county engineering staff, to implement infrastructure that benefits transit services, as necessary. When new traffic lights are installed, ensuring that the proper hardware is present for future Transit Signal Priority (TSP) would be helpful for when regularly scheduled transit service is implemented to reduce bus run time delays at certain locations. This technology can also assist buses through traffic by giving them priority at select intersections.

Organizational Attributes and Funding

Charlotte County Transit operates under the Department of Budget and Administrative Services. As the governing body for Charlotte County Transit, the Charlotte County BCC is tasked with providing funding support and approving the TDP and other transit-related initiatives.

Charlotte County Transit is primarily funded by FTA formula funds. Charlotte County Transit has not collected fares since 2020; local funding has been supplied by Charlotte County's general fund.

Establishing public/private partnerships is another way to increase revenues for transit services. The private sector can be broadly interpreted to include employers, merchants, retail establishments, and private nonprofit organizations. Contributions from the private sector can take the form of ongoing operating support or one-time capital purchases.

Implications

Stakeholders and the public commented on the positive impact Charlotte County Transit has made through its current leadership/management and organizational structure. Most stakeholders recognized the continued efforts by the current transit team/division to improve mobility options in the community, indicating the need for the current structure to continue.

When implementing new services, leveraging new state and federal revenue sources should be a priority for Charlotte County Transit. As improved transit services may attract more visitors and can bolster economic development by connecting workers to jobs, private or educational entities may be open to discussing local contributions as an investment/fair share allocation for transit.

Private partnerships with local businesses and education centers may also be a viable avenue of funding and should be explored. Appendix D explores multiple funding source options. With improved Charlotte County Transit services, major resorts may be able to rely on transit for their guests instead of private shuttles. The TDP should be used as a strategic blueprint that Charlotte County Transit needs to explore these local options to make transit better work for its community and the region in the next 10 years.

Regional Coordination

Regional coordination and planning efforts are effective for transit priorities and goals when adjacent entities and their plans consider future needs. While Charlotte County Transit does not currently have any direct regional connections, Sarasota County's Breeze OnDemand service serves the Englewood area and connects to the larger Breeze fixed-route network.

Although working remotely has increased since the last TDP major update was adopted five years ago, those who do commute typically travel to the Englewood/North Port area or the Fort Myers/Lee County area. Furthermore, through the Veteran's Council, scheduling and transportation is provided to Cape Coral and St. Petersburg for veterans to connect to Veterans Affairs Hospitals.

Implications

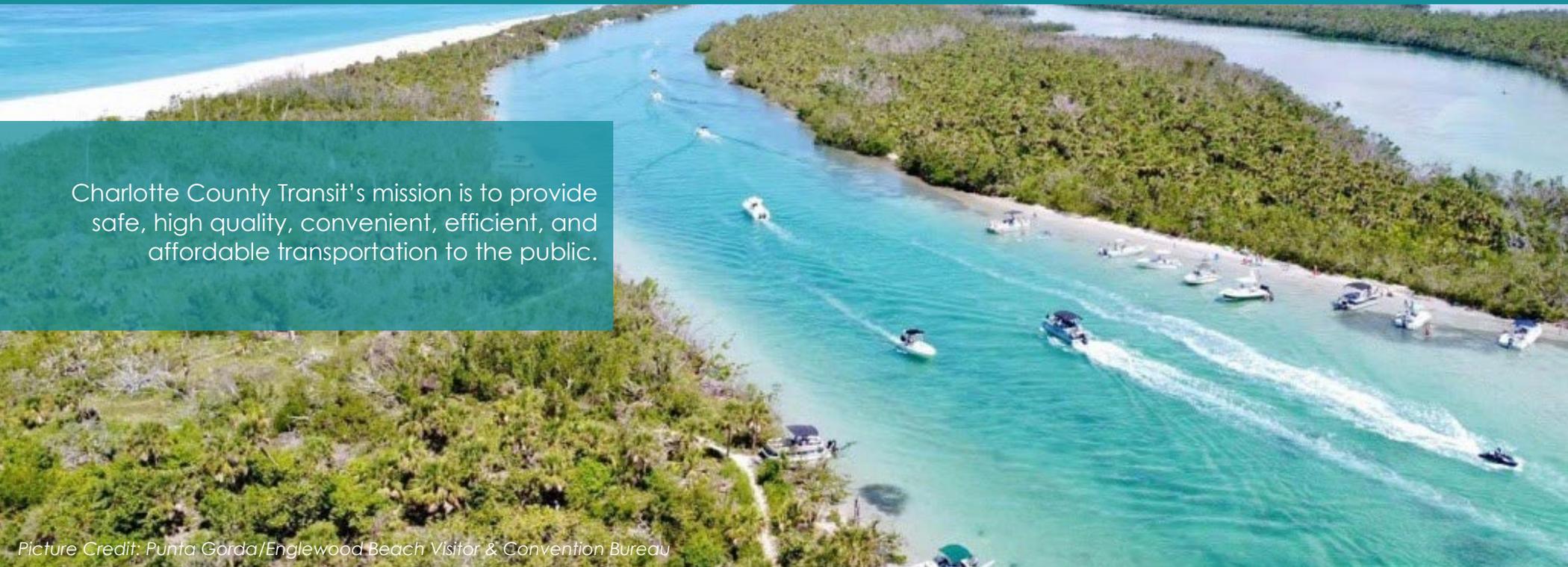
Partnerships with regional transit providers and FDOT are crucial to improving regional travel by transit. As the public and visitors to the region want connectivity, Charlotte County Transit must establish and maintain a strong regional network and partnerships.

While connecting to Sarasota County has been the primary regional need, transit connections south to LeeTran in Lee County have also been discussed and should be considered in the next 10 years. Daily regional travel flows to Lee County indicate a potential need for express-type service to areas south of Charlotte County. This connectivity has become even more possible with LeeTran's plans to move its current Merchants Crossing transfer point further north, making the connection to LeeTran shorter.

Breeze Transit has an established OnDemand zone that connects to Charlotte County Transit's existing service boundary. However, close regional coordination with Sarasota County may help to ensure that this zone is maintained to continue to connect passengers.

Goals and Objectives

Charlotte County Transit's mission is to provide safe, high quality, convenient, efficient, and affordable transportation to the public.



Picture Credit: Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach Visitor & Convention Bureau

Section 6

SECTION 6. Goals, Objectives, and Policies

This section showcases the transit goals and objectives for Charlotte County Transit, providing the policy direction to guide and achieve the community's vision for transit over the next 10 years.

The goals, objectives, and policies presented in this section were prepared based on reviews and assessments of the goals, objectives, and policies in the previously adopted TDP and findings from the situation appraisal.

Mission

Provide safe, high quality, convenient, efficient, and affordable transportation to the public in Charlotte County.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The goals, objectives, and policies recommended for the 10-year planning horizon are presented below.



Improve Charlotte County Transit's overall effectiveness and efficiency through strategic investments in innovative technologies and infrastructure upgrades.



Develop, maintain, improve, and enhance an efficient public transit system that maximizes community benefits through increased mobility options.



Increase the visibility and successfully promote transit services in Charlotte County.



Foster the development of multimodal infrastructure that integrates transit with land use planning to create accessible and sustainable communities.

Goal 1: Improve Charlotte County Transit's overall effectiveness and efficiency through strategic investments in innovative technologies and infrastructure upgrades.

Objective 1.1: Explore and maintain strategies to keep low capital and operating costs, support public transportation in the long term by choosing the most efficient options, maximize federal and state funds, and adopt new technologies that improve cost-effectiveness.

Policy 1.1.1 – Coordinate with the MPO and other local agencies to identify and pursue private sponsorship options (e.g., public/private partnerships, trading possible future bus stop space for parking, etc.).

Policy 1.1.2 – If regularly scheduled transit is implemented, explore advertising where applicable, as a potential revenue source.

Objective 1.2: Increase transit ridership by 2% annually and improve cost efficiency by 1% annually.

Policy 1.2.1 – Explore using available resources efficiently to provide more transit service options.

Policy 2.1.2 – Continue to evaluate annually and implement the use of appropriate technologies to improve service quality, efficiency, and reliability.

Policy 2.1.3 – Explore prospects of providing park-and-ride opportunities at mobility hubs to enhance system usage and convenience.

Objective 1.3: Implement intelligent transportation systems (ITS), such as real-time passenger information systems and updated scheduling software, to streamline operations and enhance the overall passenger experience.

Policy 1.3.1 – Identify emerging ITS technologies and best practices through continuous research, pilot projects, and collaboration with stakeholders to stay up-to-date with advancements and ensure the implementation of cutting-edge solutions.

Policy 1.3.2 – Utilize mobile applications, digital signage, automated announcements, and other communication channels to deliver real-time updates and alerts to passengers in a timely and accessible manner, enhancing their travel experience and reducing uncertainty.

Goal 2: Develop, maintain, improve, and enhance an efficient public transit system that maximizes community benefits through increased mobility options.

Objective 2.1: Consider a cost-effective expansion of public transportation services through the most effective mix of options, with a priority on service for transit-dependent persons.

Policy 2.1.1 – Based on anticipated ridership and emerging employee/visitor markets, consider implementing a hybrid system with a mix of regularly scheduled transit and on-demand microtransit services as funding becomes available.

Policy 2.1.2 – Evaluate capital expenditures based on operational efficiencies, such as the use of right-sized and the most technically and ecologically efficient vehicles.

Policy 2.1.3 – Maintain a fleet management policy that outlines regular maintenance schedules, vehicle retirement criteria, and procurement guidelines to ensure a safe, reliable, and environmentally friendly transit fleet.

Policy 2.1.4 – Conduct a procurement study for no- or low-emission vehicles to minimize environmental impact and support sustainability goals by 2030.

Policy 2.1.5 – Ensure that all service meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Objective 2.2: Evaluate opportunities to improve and enhance public transit service to meet current and future demands and needs annually.

Policy 2.2.1 – Continue to develop, and implement creative, technology-based community transit services that best respond to local, regional, and tourism conditions and needs.

Policy 2.2.2 – Continue to adhere to federal and state guidelines/procedures to ensure the safety of employees, passengers, and the public.

Policy 2.2.3 – Explore and expand appropriate mobile technologies to improve service, reliability, energy efficiency, and safety based on best practices in transit systems management.

Policy 2.2.4 – Coordinate with major developers to establish partnerships and explore funding opportunities.

Goal 3: Increase the visibility and successfully promote transit services in Charlotte County.

Objective 3.1: Increase marketing and public outreach efforts to educate workers, employers, residents, and visitors about the benefits, availability, and characteristics of existing and planned transit services.

Policy 3.1.1 – Rebrand Charlotte County Transit to modernize and enhance the public's perception by emphasizing reliability, efficiency, and sustainability.

Policy 3.1.2 – Consider increasing social media campaigns to enhance the image and reach of public transit in Charlotte County.

Policy 3.1.3 – Maintain and document an ongoing public involvement process through surveys, discussion groups, interviews, public workshops, and participation in public events.

Policy 3.1.4 – Distribute system information for residents and visitors in educational centers, public places, and with business partners located throughout the county.

Policy 3.1.5 – Enhance Charlotte County Transit's website and social media outlets by maintaining and regularly updating current service and schedule information.

Policy 3.1.6 – Conduct an on-board survey at least every five years as part of a major TDP update to monitor changes in user demographics, travel behavior characteristics, and passenger satisfaction.

Policy 3.1.7 – Develop and implement a transit marketing plan that includes campaigns to educate potential passengers, increase awareness, and enhance ridership as regularly scheduled transit services are initiated.

Policy 3.1.8 – Identify and engage key partners that can enhance the ability to reach potential passengers and increase ridership through specific joint efforts. These partners may include workforce development agencies, chambers of commerce, health and community services, public and private entities, and others as appropriate.

Policy 3.1.9 – Explore marketing opportunities and collaborations with the chambers of commerce to advertise and encourage ridership and connections through partnerships.

Policy 3.1.10 – Investigate opportunities and collaborations with FDOT District One's Commuter Services program to encourage transit ridership.

Policy 3.1.11 – Develop and execute advertising campaigns aimed at specific demographics, highlighting the convenience, affordability, and environmental benefits of using the transit service.

Goal 4: Foster the development of multimodal infrastructure that integrates transit with land use planning to create accessible and sustainable communities.

Objective 4.1: Continue to coordinate transit expansion with improvements to related facilities such as sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure to facilitate a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system.

Policy 4.1.1 – Develop safe, comfortable, and useful transit facilities at major destinations incorporating seating, shelters, signage, trees/landscaping, sidewalks, and bicycle storage as deemed appropriate by location and ridership demand.

Policy 4.1.2 – Promote transit improvements toward areas with supportive land use patterns, higher residential density and commercial intensity, and key trip attractors.

Policy 4.1.3 – Promote collection points/transit stops in areas with high sidewalk network density and other supportive and/or private infrastructure development.

Policy 4.1.4 – Identify key areas for bicycle storage facilities associated with Mobility Hubs/microtransit collection points or transit stops.

Policy 4.1.5 – Provide bicycle racks on all regularly scheduled buses.

Policy 4.1.6 – Annually evaluate federal, state, and local grant opportunities that can be used to enhance and expand transit facilities.

Objective 4.2: In cooperation with the MPO, continue to enhance and improve multimodal connectivity throughout the region.

Policy 4.2.1 – Through the MPO process, continue to work cooperatively with neighboring communities to implement services that improve the connectivity between public transit modes and services.

Policy 4.2.2 – Continue to work through the MPO to ensure coordinated regional transportation planning and programming.

Policy 4.2.3 – Ensure coordination and consistency with local and regional plans for future public transit services in Charlotte County.

Policy 4.2.4 – Evaluate opportunities for cooperative efforts to establish regional connections with neighboring county transit systems, including Breeze Transit, LeeTran, and DeSoto Arcadia Regional Transit (DART).

Policy 4.2.5 – At least annually, participate in a meeting led by FDOT District One's Commuter Services with transit staff from neighboring counties to better understand existing and future transit services and to identify coordination requirements associated with public transit services across county lines.

Objective 4.3: During planning updates, if the opportunity arises, Charlotte County Transit staff should coordinate with the appropriate entities, such as state and local governments, transportation agencies, and the Tourist Development Council to integrate public transit needs into the land use planning, development process, and visitor considerations.

Policy 4.3.1 – Maintain the consistency of Charlotte County Transit programs and initiatives with local government comprehensive plans, to the extent possible.

Policy 4.3.2 – Maintain and enhance coordination and communication between the MPO and Charlotte County Transit.

Policy 4.3.3 – During comprehensive plan updates, Charlotte County Transit staff should coordinate with the County and the City of Punta Gorda to include transit-friendly land use policies, regulations, and land development criteria, in coordination with local jurisdictions.

Policy 4.3.4 – During long-range plan updates, Charlotte County Transit staff should coordinate with roadway improvement projects to ensure that transit-friendly infrastructure is appropriately considered and incorporated.

Policy 4.3.5 – When new major roadway projects are implemented, Charlotte County Transit staff should request the appropriate County department to consider complete streets design standards that accommodate multiple modes of transportation in the planning and development of transportation infrastructure projects, such as streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit corridors.

Policy 4.3.6 – With each TDP major update, Charlotte County Transit staff should provide relevant comments and input to the appropriate state and local entities that may help integrate transit needs into planning and decision-making on infrastructure investments and service improvements.

Policy 4.3.7 – Work with planning staff to coordinate and develop transit-oriented development guidelines that encourage mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods close to mobility hubs, ensuring that land use decisions prioritize transit accessibility and promote walkability and bikeability.

Transit Demand Assessment

The majority of Charlotte County Transit's trips originate in Port Charlotte.



Picture Credit: Charlotte County

Section 7

SECTION 7. Transit Demand Assessments

This section summarizes the transit demand assessment conducted to understand existing and potential local travel needs as it relates to public transit. These types of latent demand assessments are a key component of TDPs and, when combined with the initial analyses and outreach, serve as building blocks for identifying the community's transit needs. This section summarizes the demand and mobility needs assessment conducted as part of Charlotte County Transit's TDP using the following assessment techniques:

- Transit Market Assessment – Two map-based market assessment tools were used to assess demand for transit services for the next 10 years. The tools delved into traditional and discretionary transit rider markets (as defined later in this section) in Charlotte County.
- Spatial Trip Distribution Analysis – Using actual data collected by Charlotte County Transit, an assessment of existing rider demand and distribution was conducted using trip origin and destination data.

Transit Market Assessment

Two GIS-based tools were utilized to expand the population and employment data analyses summarized previously in this TDP. The Density Threshold Assessment (DTA) supplements these findings by illustrating the relationship between the discretionary market (the

discretionary market includes potential passengers living and/or working in higher-density areas who may choose to use transit as a commuting or transportation alternative) and the use of transit as a commuting alternative.

The Transit Orientation Index (TOI) measures levels of traditional rider markets, such as older adults, youth, and low-income/no-vehicle households, compared to existing transit coverage to gauge propensity for transit use.

Discretionary Rider Markets

A DTA was conducted using industry-standard density thresholds to identify areas in the county with transit-supportive residential and employee density levels today and in the future. Socioeconomic data for the study area, including dwelling units and employment levels developed for the regional travel demand model, were used.

Discretionary Market Assessment Methodology

Socioeconomic data forecasts developed for the 2050 Charlotte County MPO LRTP, including dwelling unit and employment data by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ), were used for the DTA. Using linear interpolation of 2015 and 2050 LRTP data, 2025 and 2034 dwelling unit and employment figures by TAZ were estimated and analyzed.

Three density thresholds based on industry standards and available research were used to define corresponding investment levels for transit, as described below:

- Minimum Investment – Reflects minimum dwelling unit or employment densities to support basic

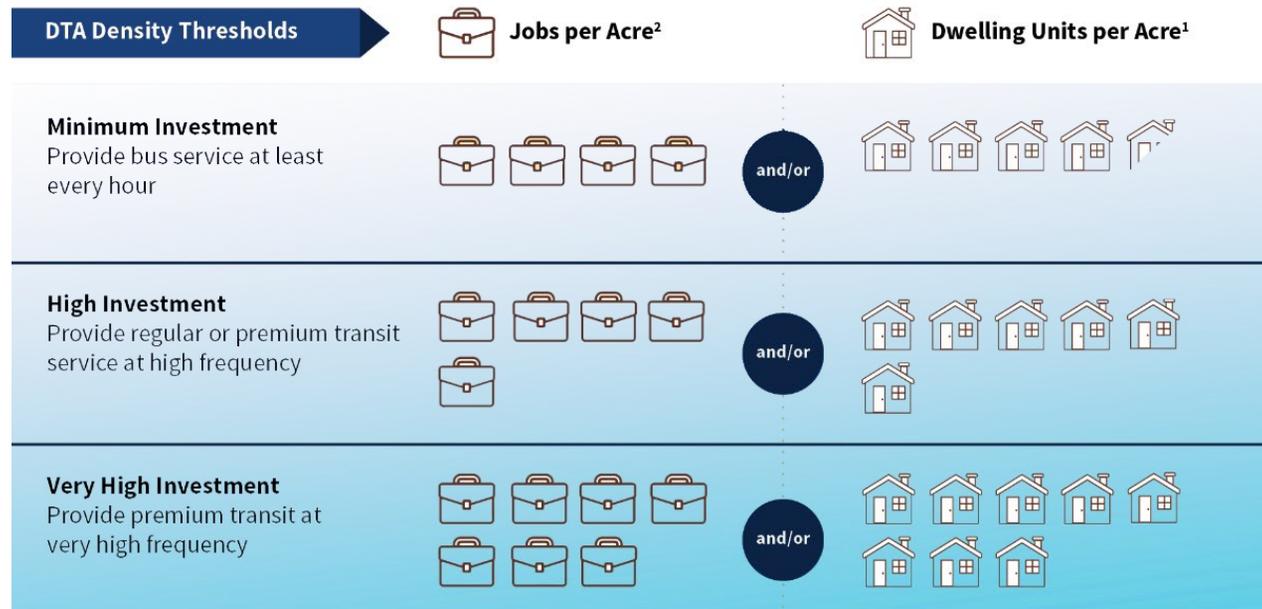
regularly scheduled transit services (i.e., low-frequency local fixed-route bus service).

- High Investment – Reflects increased dwelling unit or employment densities that may support higher levels of transit investment (i.e., high frequent service, may include premium modes such as bus rapid transit (BRT)-lite, etc.).
- Very High Investment – Reflects very high dwelling unit or employment densities that may support more significant levels of transit investment (i.e., very high frequent services, exclusive lane BRT, and rail).

Figure 7-1 presents the dwelling unit and employment density thresholds associated with each level of transit investment.

As density increases, areas generally become more transit-supportive; the DTA assists in determining the presence of optimal conditions for varying levels of fixed-route transit service. Maps 7-1 and 7-2 illustrate the 2025 and 2034 DTAs conducted for Charlotte County, based on existing and future dwelling unit and employment densities. The results of these analyses also will be critical for subsequent use in the assessment of transit needs and demand.

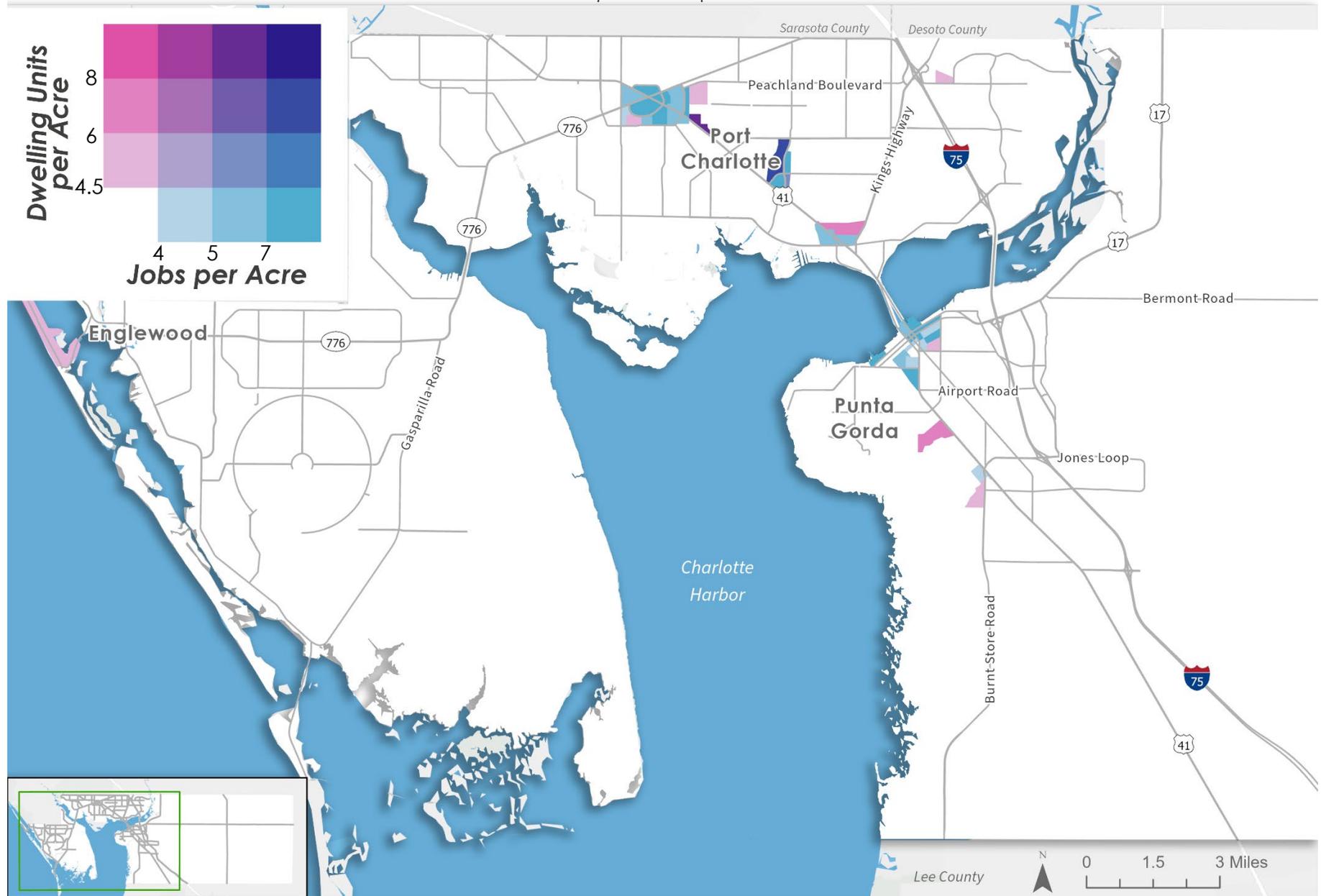
Figure 7-1: DTA Density Thresholds



¹ Transportation Research Board (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 research on relationships between transit technology and employment densities.

Map 7-1: DTA | 2025



Source: Charlotte County

DTA Summary of Findings

The 2025 DTA indicates that the discretionary transit markets are derived mainly from employment densities, rather than from dwelling unit densities, as follows:

- Minimum Investment employment densities are in Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda along US-41.
- All areas considered to meet the High Investment or Very High Investment employment thresholds for transit investment are located:
 - At and around the SR-776 and US-41 interchange in Murdock.
 - In downtown Punta Gorda.
 - North of US-41 at Harbor Boulevard in Port Charlotte.
 - Around Burnt Store Road just south of US-41.
- All areas considered to meet the High Investment or Very High Investment dwelling unit density threshold for transit investment are located:
 - Along US-41 south of Rio Villa Dr.
 - South of Westchester Boulevard between US-41 and Kings Highway in Port Charlotte.
 - South of US-41 along Burnt Store Road.
- All High Investment or Very High Investment areas except Manasota Key are within the Charlotte County Transit service area.
- All areas in the 2025 DTA that meet the High Investment or Very High Investment thresholds for dwelling units and/or employment will remain for the 2034 DTA. New areas that meet the Minimum Investment requirements are adjacent to established areas as follows:

- Between Loveland Boulevard and Kings Highway, south of Peachland Boulevard, and north of Rampart Boulevard.
- Between US-41 and Bayshore Road in Port Charlotte.
- There is projected increased density in the following areas:
 - Murdock east of Murdock Circle and between Veterans Boulevard and US-41 until Cochran Boulevard.
 - South of Westchester Boulevard between US-41 and Kings Highway in Port Charlotte.
 - Downtown Punta Gorda.

Traditional Rider Markets

The traditional rider market includes population segments that historically have a higher propensity to use or are dependent on public transit for their transportation needs. For some individuals, the ability to drive is greatly diminished with age and they must rely on others for transportation. Younger people may not have a driver's license, access to a car, or may prefer using transit to reach work, school, and recreational activities than prior generations. For lower-income households, transportation costs can be more burdensome, resulting in less vehicle access and more reliance on public transportation.

The TOI assists in identifying residential areas of the county where traditional rider markets exist defined as:

- Youths – persons 15 to 24 years
- Low-income households – households that meet the federal poverty definition
- Zero-vehicle households
- Older adults – persons 65 years and older



Youths



Low-Income Households



Zero-Vehicle Households



Older Adults

TOI Methodology

To create the TOI, selected demographic data from the 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018–2022) were analyzed by block group to develop a composite ranking. Figure 7-2 illustrates the TOI methodology. Each block group was assigned a transit orientation of Very High, High, Medium, or Low. Any block group with a population density less than 100 people per square mile was assigned as Very Low and was not analyzed or shown on the map.

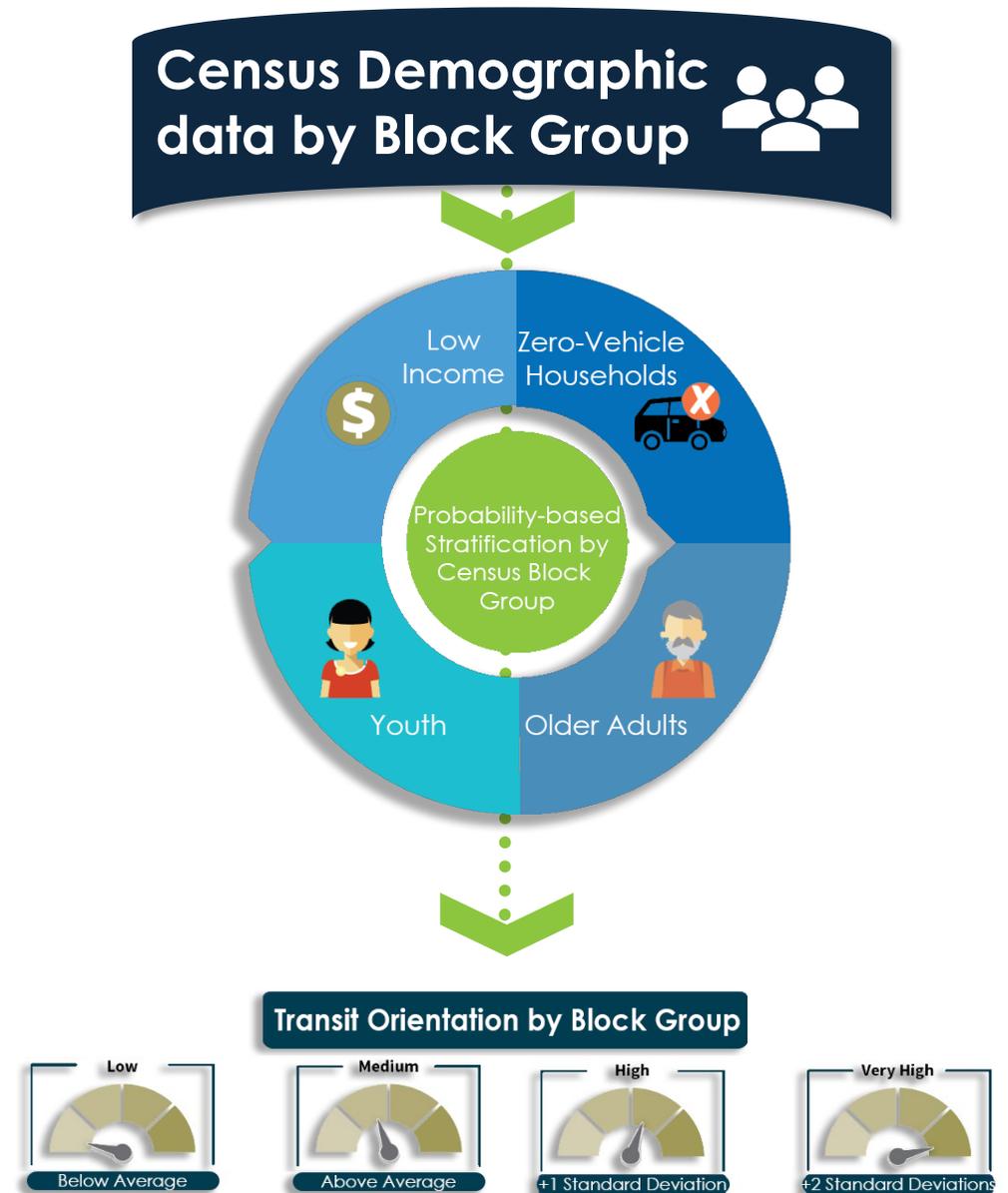
Map 7-3 illustrates the 2023 TOI results and population density, reflecting areas throughout Charlotte County with varying traditional market densities.

Traditional Market Summary

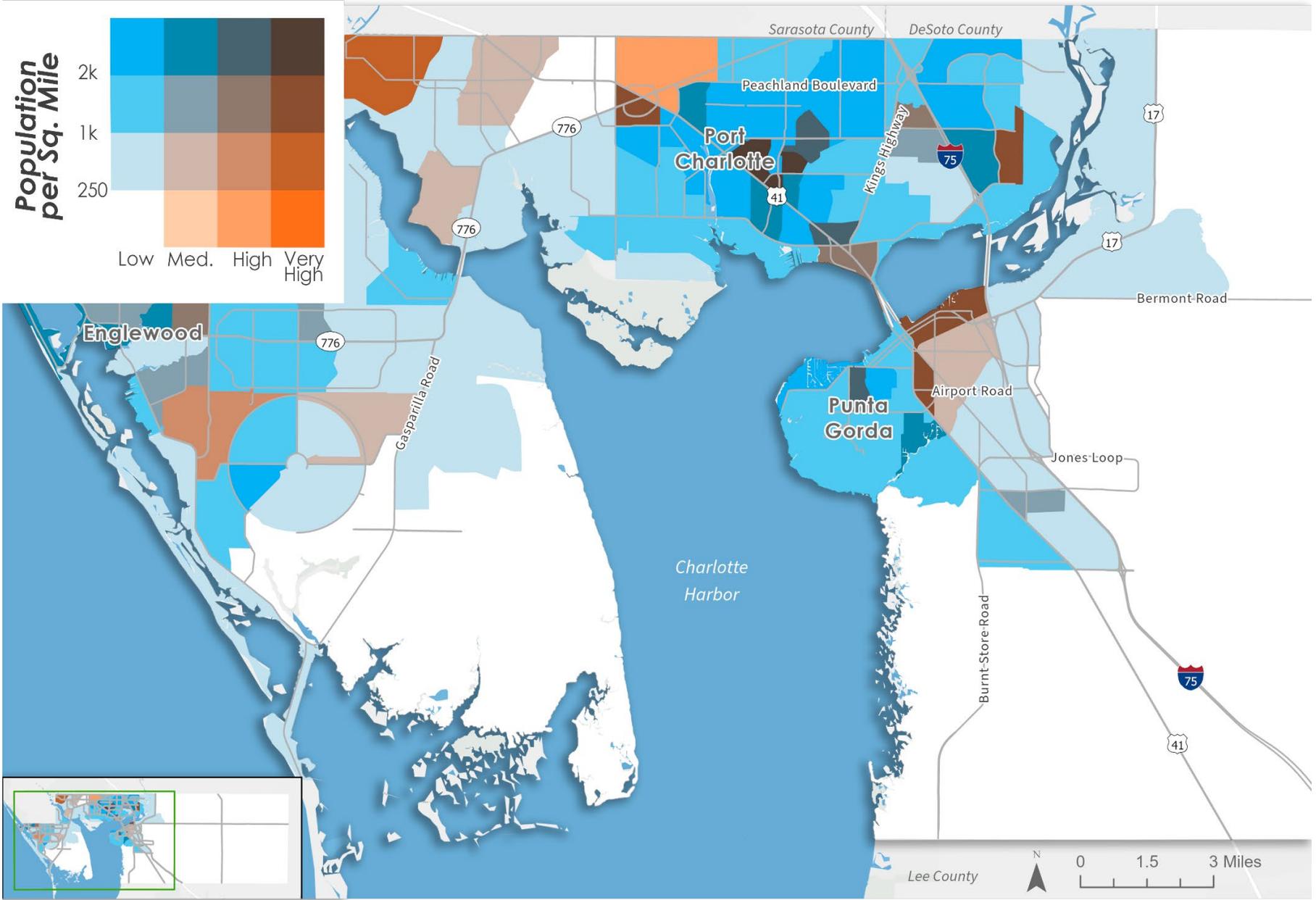
Results from the TOI analysis are as follows:

- Areas considered to meet the High TOI or Very High TOI thresholds for transit investment are located in the following:
 - North of US-41 along Harbor Boulevard and Midway Boulevard.
 - Adjacent to US-41 between Gardner Drive and Melbourne Street south of Westchester Boulevard
 - Downtown Punta Gorda.
 - Rotonda West northwest of Boundary Boulevard.
 - South of Hillsborough Boulevard to Cochran Boulevard between Collingswood Boulevard and Ferdon Circle.
 - The area between Chancellor Boulevard and Eisenhower Drive, enclosed by Campbell Street and McCabe Street.

Figure 7-2: TOI Methodology



Map 7-3: TOI, 2023



Source: ACS 2018-2022 5-Year Estimates

Spatial Trip Distribution Analysis

A demand assessment was conducted to analyze the origins and destinations of Charlotte County Transit passengers. This assessment analyzed available ridership data to identify activity centers and clusters of trips to help in planning of transit services and to identify locations for needed transit capital infrastructure and amenities.

Methodology

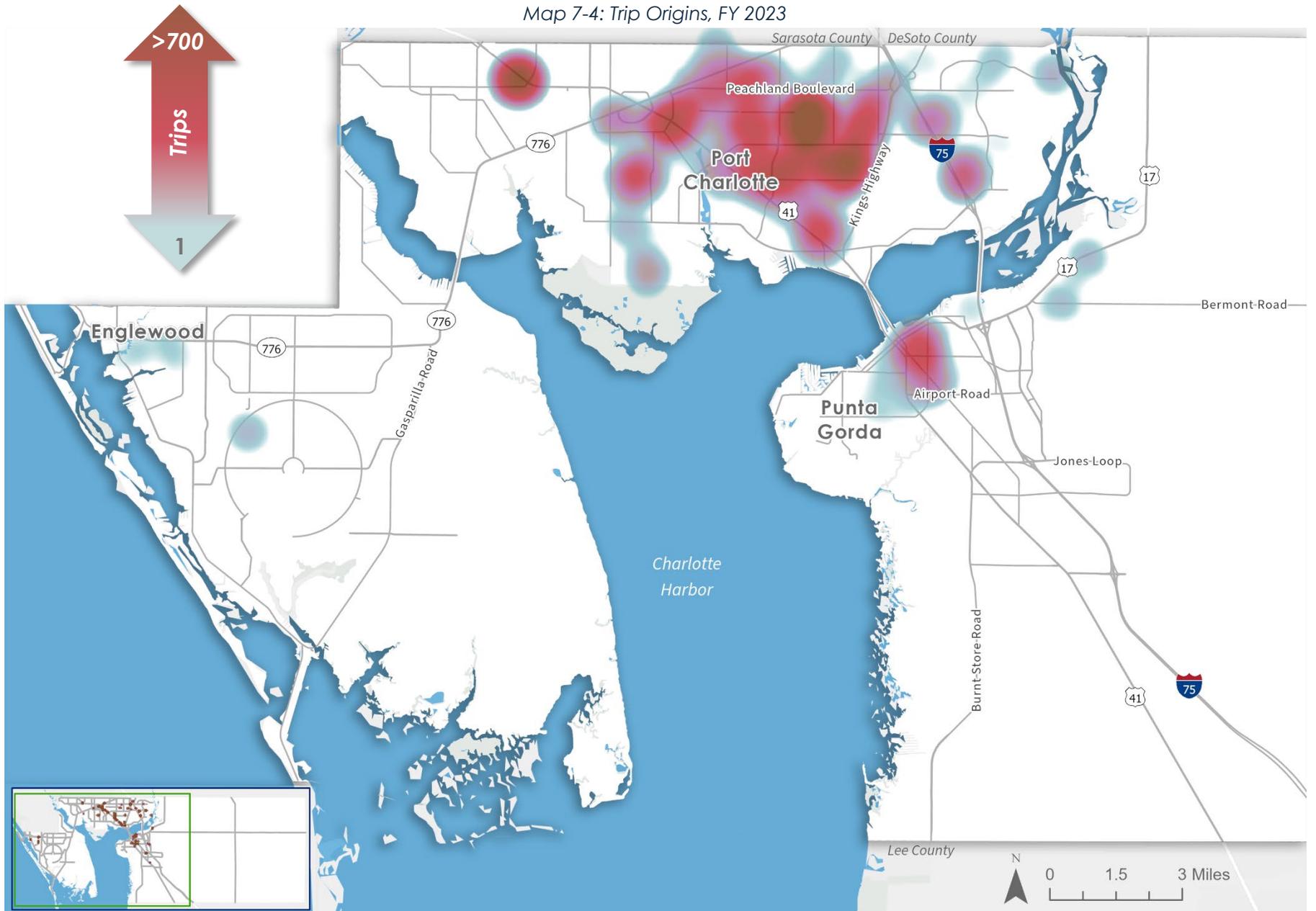
The demand assessment mapped FY 2023 trip origin and destination addresses provided by Charlotte County Transit using GIS tools. A hot-spot analysis was performed to analyze trip clusters of origins and destinations and to illustrate locations experiencing a higher volume of monthly trips. The assessment identified the top trip origins and destinations for Charlotte County Transit.

Top Origins and Destinations

The assessment identified varying levels of trip origin and destination service that indicate where passengers are picked up by Charlotte County Transit's on-demand service. Based on these findings, any new transit improvement in Charlotte County should continue to serve these locations at a minimum and corridors/areas with a higher concentration of service should be considered for multiple service types.

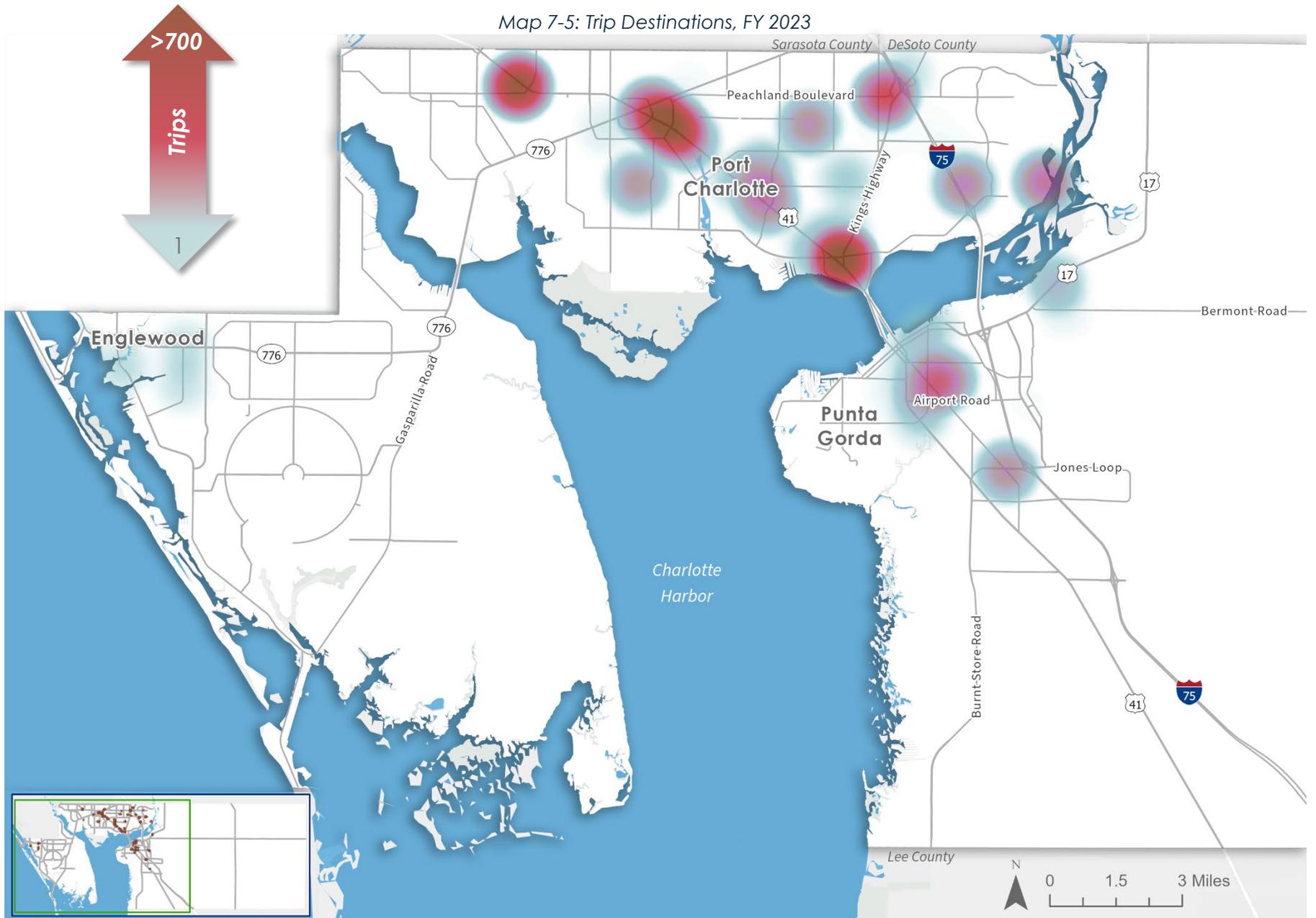
Maps 7-4 and 7-5 indicate where most current passengers regularly travel to and from. The analysis confirms the need for multiple transit options to serve and connect to the US-41 corridor, as a majority of existing trips originate and end on or adjacent to the corridor. The trip data also indicate that Punta Gorda has a high density of both origins and destinations, indicating a strong demand for transportation options. The Englewood area trip volumes are significantly lower than in Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte.

Map 7-4: Trip Origins, FY 2023



Source: Charlotte County

Map 7-5: Trip Destinations, FY 2023



Source: Charlotte County

Ridership Demand Forecast

As another component of the transit demand assessment, forecasted transit ridership for the proposed transit network was analyzed using TBEST, the FDOT-approved ridership estimation software for TDPs. This analysis gauges the route-level and systemwide demand, assuming both maintaining existing transit services and implementing the needed improvements identified in the TDP.

TBEST is a comprehensive transit analysis and ridership-forecasting model that can simulate 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, TBEST also considers the following:

- Transit Network Connectivity – The level of connectivity between routes within a bus network; the greater the connectivity between bus routes, the more efficient the bus service becomes.
- Spatial and Temporal Accessibility – Service frequency and distance between stops; the larger the physical distance between potential bus passengers 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 – Peak-period travel patterns are accommodated by rewarding peak service periods with greater service utilization forecasts.
- Route Competition and Complementarities – Competition between routes is considered. 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 sections outline the model input and assumptions, describe the TBEST scenarios performed, and summarize the ridership forecasts produced by TBEST.

Model Inputs / Assumptions and Limitations

TBEST uses various demographic and transit network data as model inputs. This analysis used the recently-released TBEST Land Use Model structure (TBEST Land Use Model 2023), which is supported by parcel-level data from the Florida Department of Revenue (DOR) statewide tax database. The DOR parcel data contain land use designations and supporting attributes that allow the application of Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)-based trip generation rates at the parcel level as an indicator of travel activity.

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 roadway traffic conditions, speeds, or roadway connectivity.

Transit Network

The following section outlines the model input and assumptions, includes a description of the TBEST scenario

performed using the model, and summarizes the ridership forecasts produced by TBEST.

It should be noted that the model projections are provided only for the regularly scheduled transit services. TBEST currently does not support on-demand services such as the existing or proposed services. However, the regularly scheduled transit services identified in the financially-unconstrained transit needs plan, as presented in the next section, are modeled as summarized in the remainder of this section.

Socioeconomic Data

To gain consistency with local existing and projected socioeconomic conditions, updated zonal population and employment totals derived from the Charlotte MPO's 2050 LRTP were used. TBEST identifies spatial intersection between the zonal data and the Census block group geometry of the region to calculate growth rates by Census block group. Once calculated, the Census block group growth rates are stored within TBEST and applied when using all TBEST analysis engines. Using the data inputs listed above, the model captures market demand (population, demographics, employment, and land use characteristics) within ¼-mile of each stop.

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 experienced in real time.

Special Generators

Special generators were identified and coded into TBEST to evaluate the opportunity for generating high ridership.

Special generators in Charlotte County include the following:

- University – Florida Southwestern College and Charlotte Technical College
- Transfer Hub – Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte, and Englewood Mobility Hubs
- Park-and-Ride – Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte, and Englewood Mobility Hubs
- Shopping Mall – Port Charlotte Town Center
- Hospital – HCA Florida Fawcett Hospital and ShorePoint Health Punta Gorda
- Airport – Punta Gorda Airport

TBEST Model Limitations

TBEST is an important tool for evaluating improvements to existing and future transit services; however, model outputs do not account for latent transit demand that could yield significantly higher ridership. In addition, TBEST cannot display sensitivities to external factors such as an improved marketing and advertising program, fuel prices, parking supply, walkability, and other local conditions so model outputs may under- or over-estimate demand in isolated cases.

Although TBEST provides ridership projections at the route level, its strength lies more in its ability to facilitate relative comparisons of ridership productivity for evaluation in actual service implementation decisions. Therefore, it is important for Charlotte County Transit to integrate sound planning judgment and experience when interpreting TBEST results.

Microtransit Ridership Estimation

At this time, TBEST does not have the ability to estimate ridership for on-demand transit services and there are few external methodologies. Therefore, Remix was utilized to estimate microtransit ridership for the 10-year TDP. Remix is a data-driven transit planning software that uses Census and other open-source data.

Ridership Forecast

Using these inputs and assumptions, the TBEST model estimated regularly scheduled ridership for 2025 and 2034. Remix was used to develop microtransit estimates for the same time periods. The following scenarios were developed for this TDP major update:

- 2025 and 2034 TDP Needs Plan Scenarios - Assumes all TDP improvements are implemented.

Table 7-1 shows the overall forecast ridership for the 2025 and 2034 TDP scenario and the percent change in ridership at the route and system levels.

Table 7-1: Ridership Projections | TDP Scenario

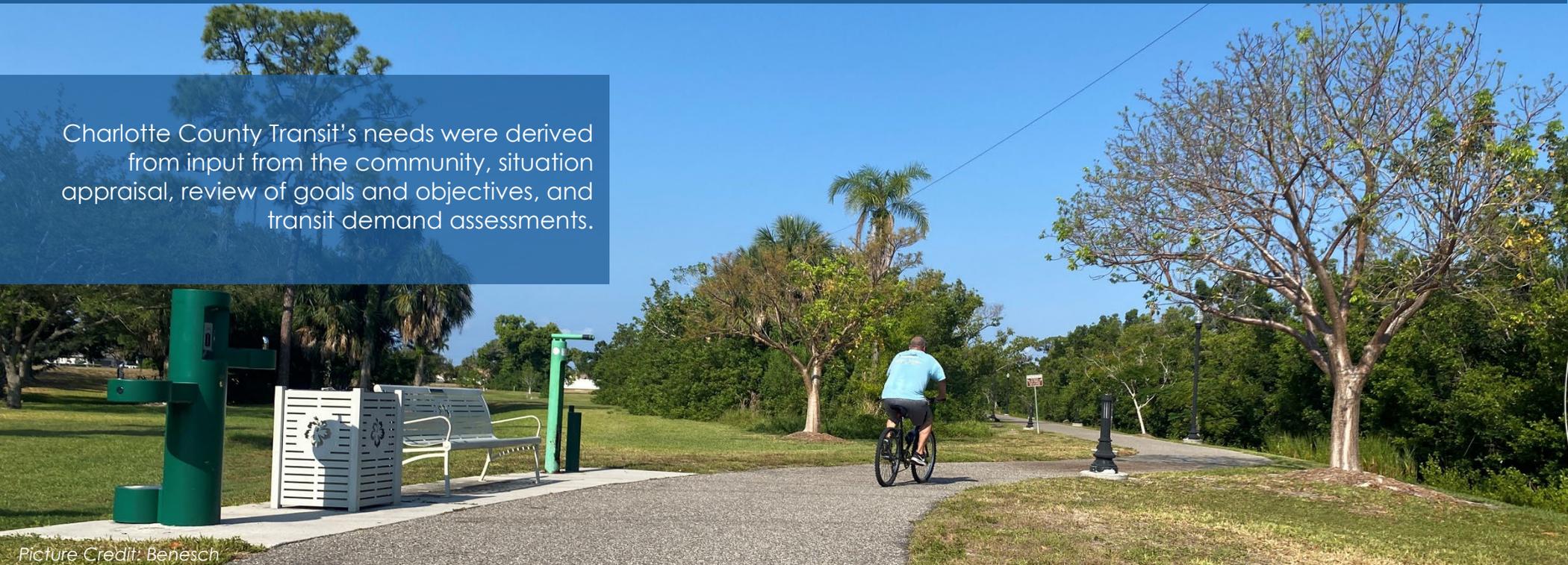
Service	2025	2034	Potential Growth
Microtransit*			
Englewood	18,876	25,783	36.6%
Murdock/West Port	37,596	52,385	39.3%
Port Charlotte	55,380	73,907	33.5%
Punta Gorda	28,444	39,794	39.9%
Regularly Scheduled Transit**			
Beach Cruiser	16,252	18,939	16.5%
Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley	19,116	21,960	14.9%
East-West Connector	5,611	6,461	15.1%
Englewood to Port Charlotte	42,614	49,392	15.9%
Punta Gorda to Fort Myers Express	37,486	41,786	11.5%
Sunshine Beach Shuttle	35,308	41,026	16.2%
US-41 Shopper and Airport Connector	264,700	293,242	10.8%
Passenger Ferry	53,850	60,312	12.0%
Total	615,233	724,987	17.8%

*Estimate source: Remix

**Estimate source: TBEST

Transit Needs

Charlotte County Transit's needs were derived from input from the community, situation appraisal, review of goals and objectives, and transit demand assessments.



Picture Credit: Benesch

Section 8

SECTION 8. Transit Needs

This section summarizes the needs development process and the resulting potential transit improvements for Charlotte County Transit's 10-year TDP. These transit needs were identified and developed without consideration of funding constraints and reflect the true unimpeded needs of the community. The improvements were identified using information gathered through various data collection, analytical, and outreach efforts conducted for the TDP.

Needs Development Process

The needs development process is essential to ensure Charlotte County Transit effectively addresses the community's current and future mobility needs, while aligning with the established goals and objectives.

These improvements, which are summarized next in this section, reflect transit needs for the next decade in Charlotte County and were identified using four methods: careful review of community needs and vision, data and analyses included in the TDP situation appraisal, direction from TDP's goals and objectives, and the transit demand assessments.



Community Needs and Vision

Multiple direct and indirect outreach techniques were used to obtain substantive public input on transit needs. Interviews with key stakeholders including elected officials, discussions with business and social service leaders, and public workshops were conducted to gather input regarding 10-year improvements.



Situation Appraisal

This situation appraisal helps to develop an understanding of Charlotte County Transit's operating environment in the context of key elements as specified in the TDP Rule. Findings from the relevant plans/studies and implications from the situation appraisal were considered in identifying potential transit alternatives.



Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives updated as part of this 10-year TDP emphasize many of the agency's existing priorities and outline new priorities for improvements based on transit needs. The objectives and policies often provide insight into transit needs within the community and the potential means with which to meet them.



Transit Demand Assessment

Assessments of transit demand and needs were conducted using GIS-based analyses and FDOT-approved estimation tools. Together with the baseline conditions assessment, these were used to help identify areas with transit-supportive characteristics when developing the 10-year transit needs.

10-Year Transit Needs

The Charlotte County TDP is formulated and designed as a strategic plan with a mix of transit service, capital, technology, and policy improvement recommendations. These 10-year improvements are intended to contribute to Charlotte County Transit's efforts to make transit an attractive and viable option, as well as aligning it with its mission to provide safe, high quality, convenient, efficient, and affordable transportation. The 2025–2034 TDP transit needs consist of a variety of improvement strategies categorized by the following:

- Technology-based on-demand microtransit using smaller vehicles to serve passengers within and between designated zones.
- Local and regional connectors using traditional high-capacity bus transit.
- Small-area circulators, operating in downtowns or beach areas.
- Waterborne transit using a passenger ferry, catering to the unique geography and the needs of a county with three regions divided by water.

The remainder of this section first presents the service needs identified for the next 10 years followed by capital/infrastructure/technology or policy needs proposed to support the implementation and continuation of services.

Service Needs

Microtransit

This 10-year strategy includes adding technology-based on-demand service in the current service area. The current curb-to-curb service will be revamped into four on-demand microtransit zones, as illustrated in Map 8-1,

and operate Monday through Sunday. The on demand microtransit service would connect residents and visitors to locations within the zones and to connection points to other transit options described next.

Local and Regional Connectors

To extend the reach of microtransit services and to connect the community to key shopping and recreation destinations, work, and other purposes at longer distances, a set of local and regional connectors that can carry more people with better cost efficiency are also identified in Map 8-2.

Area Circulators

Circulator services were identified for smaller areas, such as downtowns or beach communities, in Map 8-3 that have a need for alternative travel options to connect short distances quickly.

Passenger Ferry

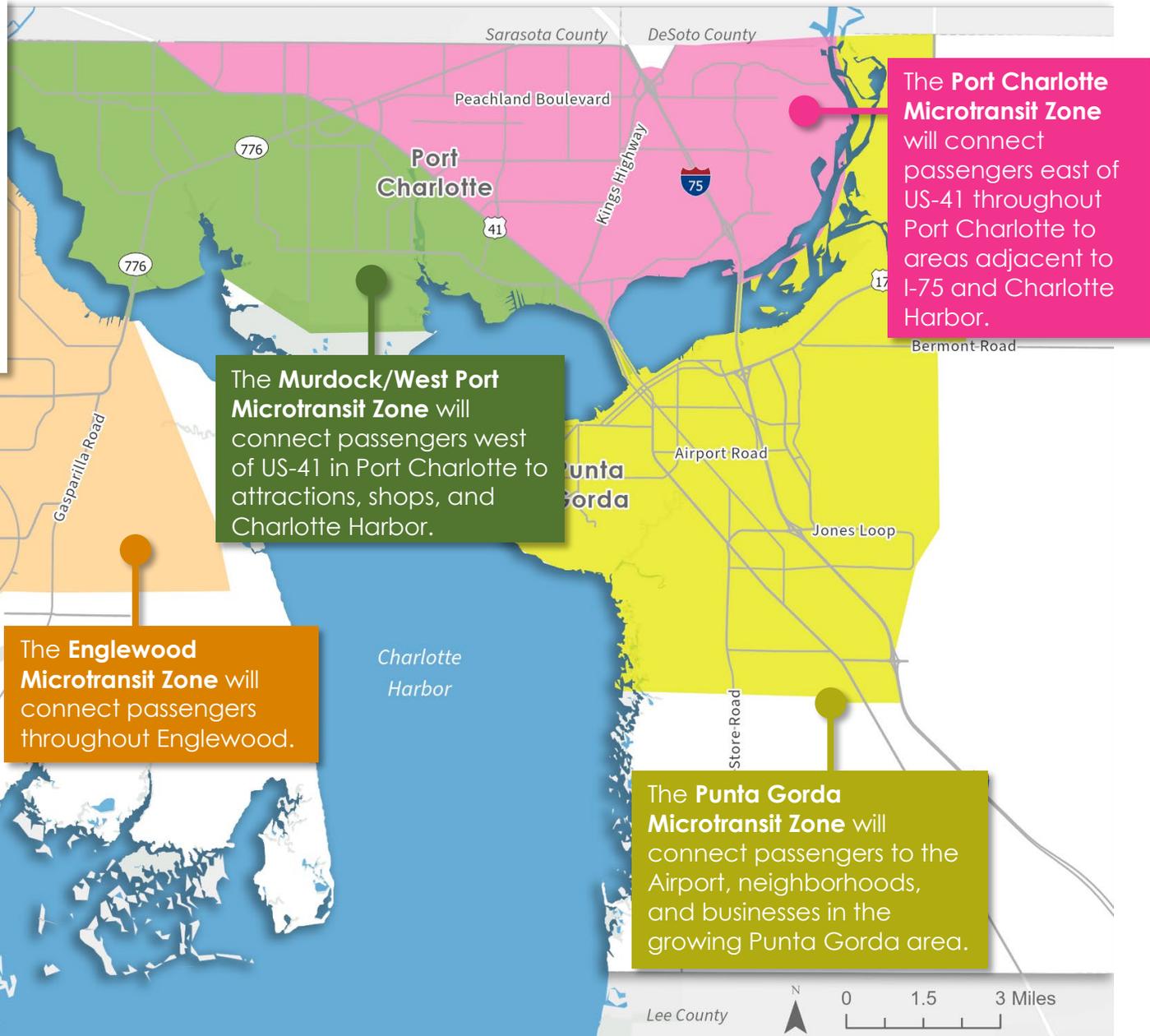
As illustrated in Map 8-4, this new service type would provide a scenic travel option to connect various areas of Charlotte County while showcasing the natural beauty of its unique geography.

As collectively presented in Map 8-5 and Table 8-1 following, the 10-year TDP transit needs plan combines a mix of surface and waterborne transit modes and technology to help make Charlotte County Transit a practical travel alternative for more people locally and regionally.

Map 8-1: Microtransit Services

Microtransit

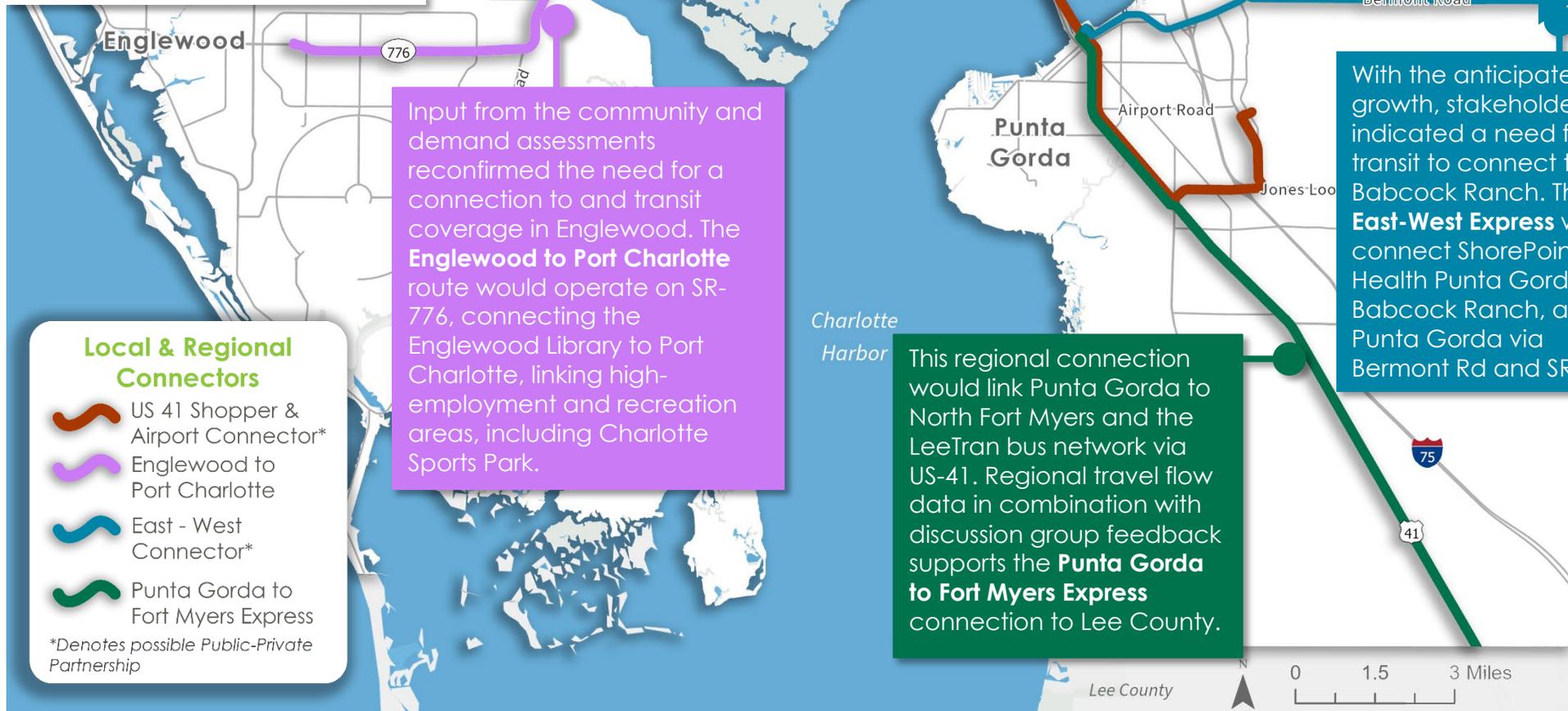
Throughout the public involvement process, having app-based and convenient transit options to attract more passengers in Charlotte County were identified. While the current on-demand services have performed well, expanding and repackaging them before adding any regularly scheduled bus transit in the county is a key need.



Map 8-2: Local and Regional Services

Local and Regional Connectors

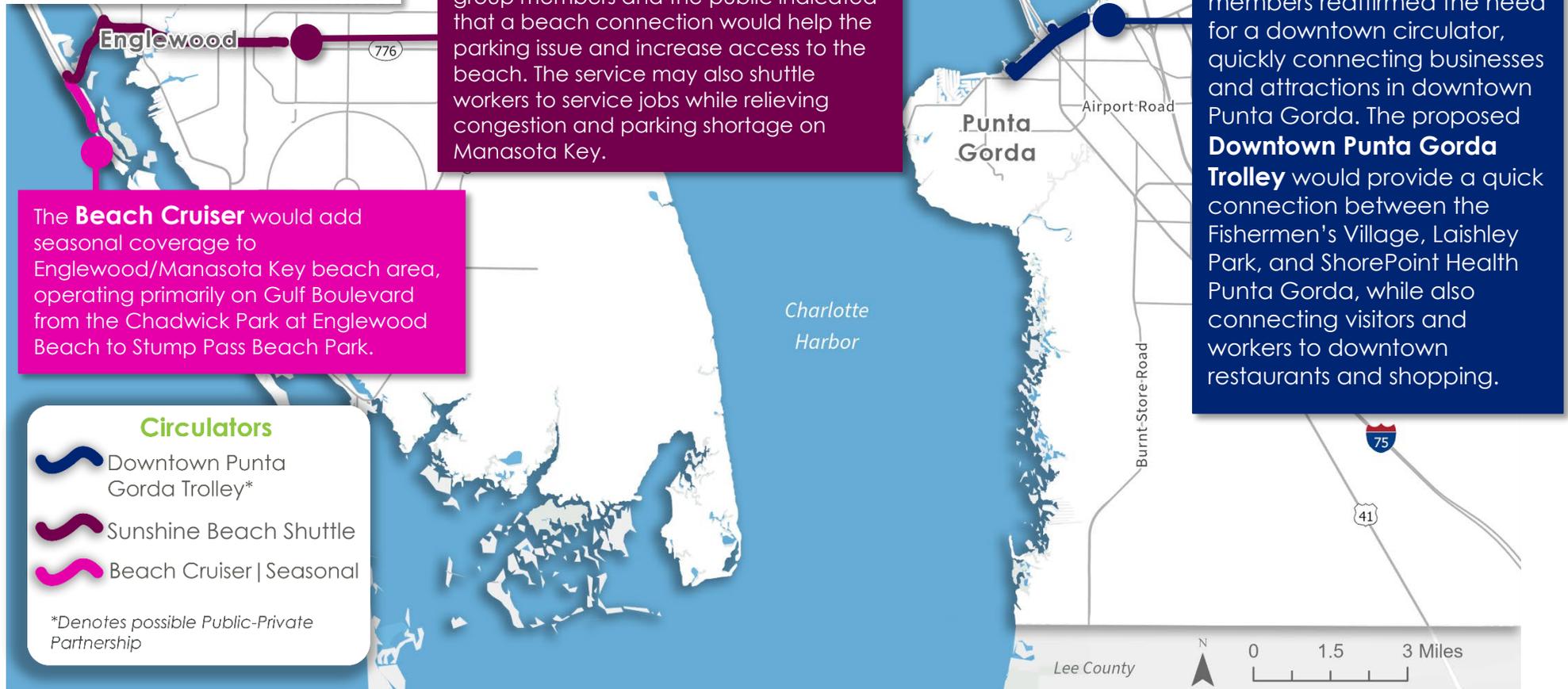
As the county's population and jobs continue to grow, the need for alternative modes and mobility options also have increased, especially to connect key areas. To provide this geographic connectivity and add another layer of options, regularly scheduled transit services are recommended.



Map 8-3: Circulator Services

Circulators

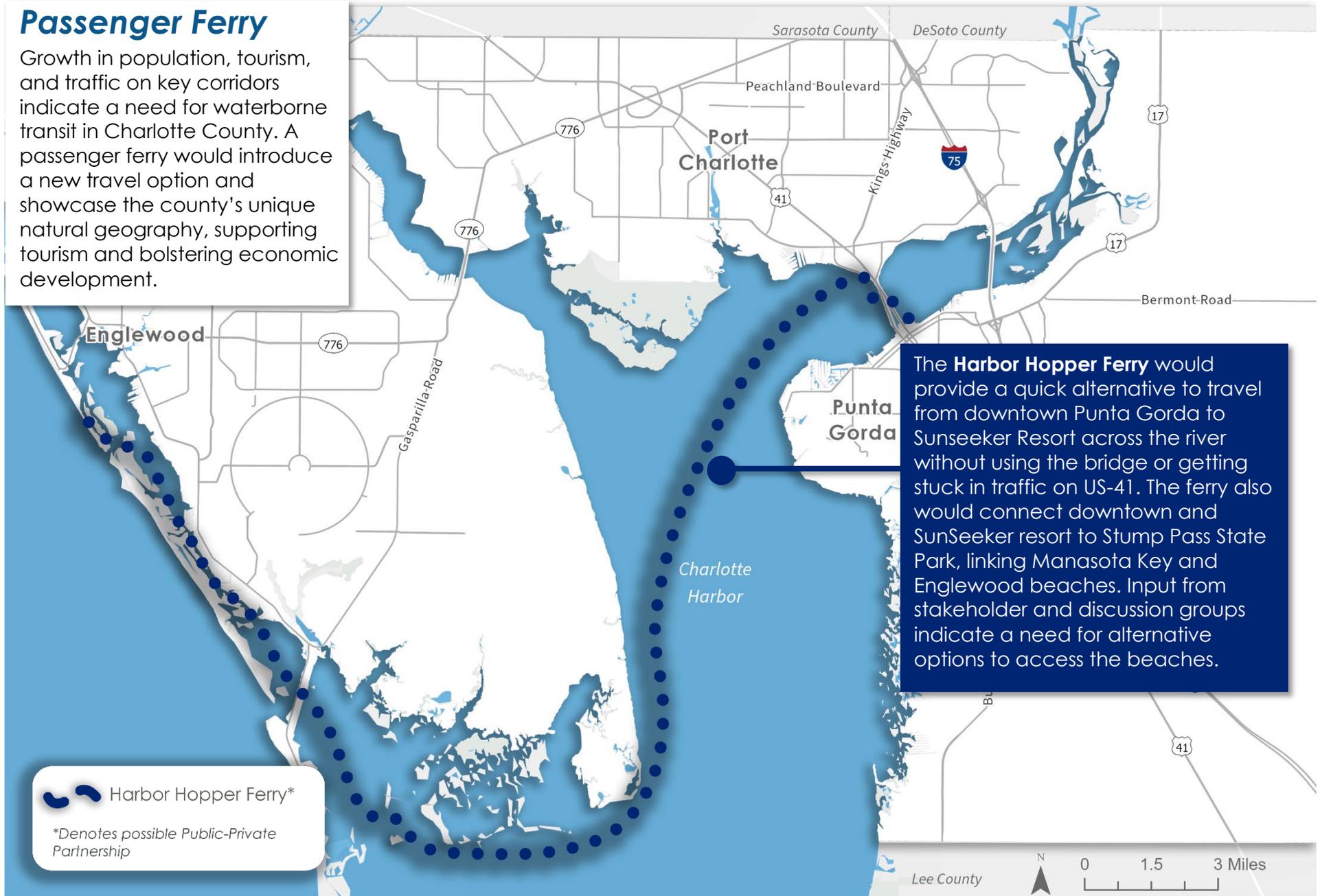
Circulators serving small areas were indicated as another need during TDP outreach by both the public and key stakeholders. Areas with parking limitations or seasonal traffic were specially highlighted as a priority going forward. There was consensus among the key stakeholders that such services may also help bolster economic development.



Map 8-4: Passenger Ferry Service

Passenger Ferry

Growth in population, tourism, and traffic on key corridors indicate a need for waterborne transit in Charlotte County. A passenger ferry would introduce a new travel option and showcase the county's unique natural geography, supporting tourism and bolstering economic development.

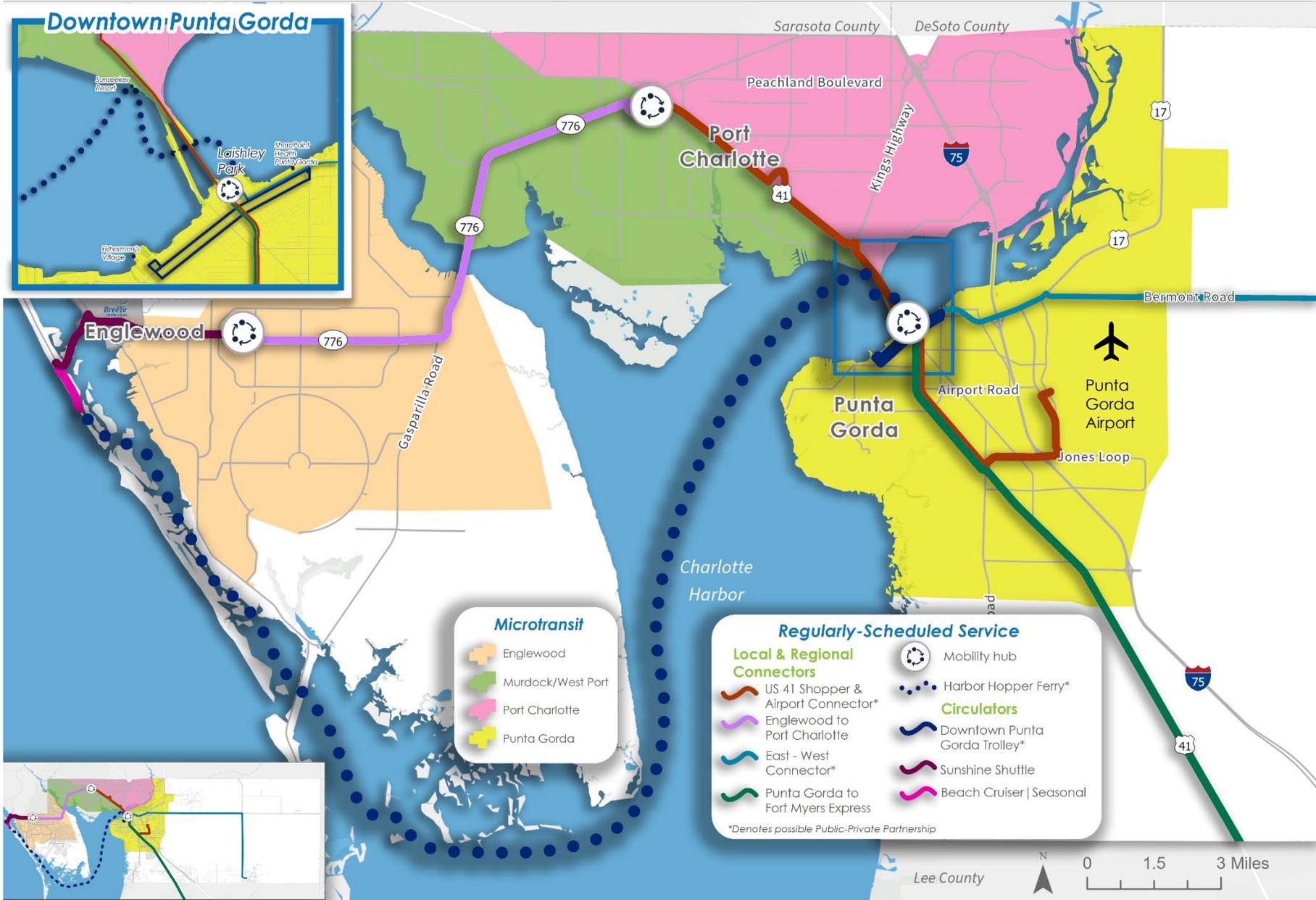


The **Harbor Hopper Ferry** would provide a quick alternative to travel from downtown Punta Gorda to Sunseeker Resort across the river without using the bridge or getting stuck in traffic on US-41. The ferry also would connect downtown and SunSeeker resort to Stump Pass State Park, linking Manasota Key and Englewood beaches. Input from stakeholder and discussion groups indicate a need for alternative options to access the beaches.

 Harbor Hopper Ferry*
*Denotes possible Public-Private Partnership



Map 8-5: 10-Year Needs Plan



Microtransit

- Englewood
- Murdock/West Port
- Port Charlotte
- Punta Gorda

Regularly-Scheduled Service

Local & Regional Connectors

- US 41 Shopper & Airport Connector*
- Englewood to Port Charlotte
- East - West Connector*
- Punta Gorda to Fort Myers Express

Circulators

- Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley*
- Sunshine Shuttle
- Beach Cruiser | Seasonal

Other Services

- Mobility hub
- Harbor Hopper Ferry*

*Denotes possible Public-Private Partnership

Table 8-1: 2034 Transit Needs Network

Service Improvement	Weekday Frequency(min)	Weekday Service Span	Days of Service
Microtransit			
Englewood	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
Murdock/West Port	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
Port Charlotte	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
Punta Gorda	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
Regularly Scheduled Service			
Beach Cruiser (Seasonal)	15	10:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley*	30	10:00 AM-10:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
East-West Connector (to Babcock Ranch)*	Peak Hour only (2 trips AM, PM)	6:00 AM-8:00 AM 4:00 PM-6:00 PM	Monday-Friday
Englewood to Port Charlotte	60	7:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Friday
Punta Gorda to Fort Myers Express	Peak Hour only (2 trips AM, PM)	6:00 AM-8:00 AM 4:00 PM-6:00 PM	Monday-Friday
Sunshine Beach Shuttle	60	10:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
US-41 Shopper and Airport Connector	60	7:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
Passenger Ferry*	60	9:00 AM-9:00 PM	Monday-Sunday

Note: The Beach Cruiser (Seasonal) would operate November to April each year when seasonal residents and tourists are most present.

*Denotes improvement with potential for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). According to the FTA, a PPP is a “contractual arrangement between a public or governmental agency and a private entity that facilitates greater participation by the private entity in the delivery and operation of an infrastructure project, facility, or service. Typically, within the transport sector, such an arrangement involves one or more aspects of the funding, financing, planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of a transportation facility.”

Capital/Infrastructure/Technology Needs

Implementation of these transit services should be supported by necessary capital infrastructure and technology improvements to ensure an enhanced experience for Charlotte County Transit users. The following improvements have been identified as the major capital needs to support the operational investments summarized previously.

Mobility Hubs

Establishing three mobility hubs, or locations that provide access to multiple alternative transportation modes including microtransit, regularly scheduled bus transit, bikeshares, and electric scooters, is proposed. The mobility hubs may also serve as a park-and-ride. The mobility hubs are proposed to be in downtown Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte, and Englewood.

Bus Stop Accessibility and Infrastructure Program

As regularly scheduled transit is implemented, bus stop infrastructure will be needed. These stops may also serve as connection points for the on-demand microtransit services.

To support these services, an annual program for installing accessible bus stops is included in the TDP. As transit demand increases, periodic assessments should occur to determine where to improve infrastructure. To continue investing in infrastructure and making bus stops accessible to all bus passengers, all infrastructure and facilities should be inventoried every five years.



Picture Credit: Benesch

Transit Signal Priority/Queue Jumps

Bus preferential treatments at signalized intersections help buses adhere to a set schedule during peak periods. With TSP green lights are extended and red lights truncated to keep buses moving through the intersection more quickly (Figure 8-1). With queue jumps, buses receive a head start by receiving the green light before general traffic from a separate signal allowing the bus to "jump the queue" and go through the intersection first in a separate lane.

To support the proposed service on US-41, TSP or queue jumps should be implemented at selected intersections with high traffic volumes to improve transit's appeal over driving on the same corridor. However, prior to any installation, a feasibility study must be conducted. Additionally, a proper evaluation by the County Traffic Engineer is warranted to ensure which measures and locations are feasible.

Vehicle Replacement and Acquisition Program

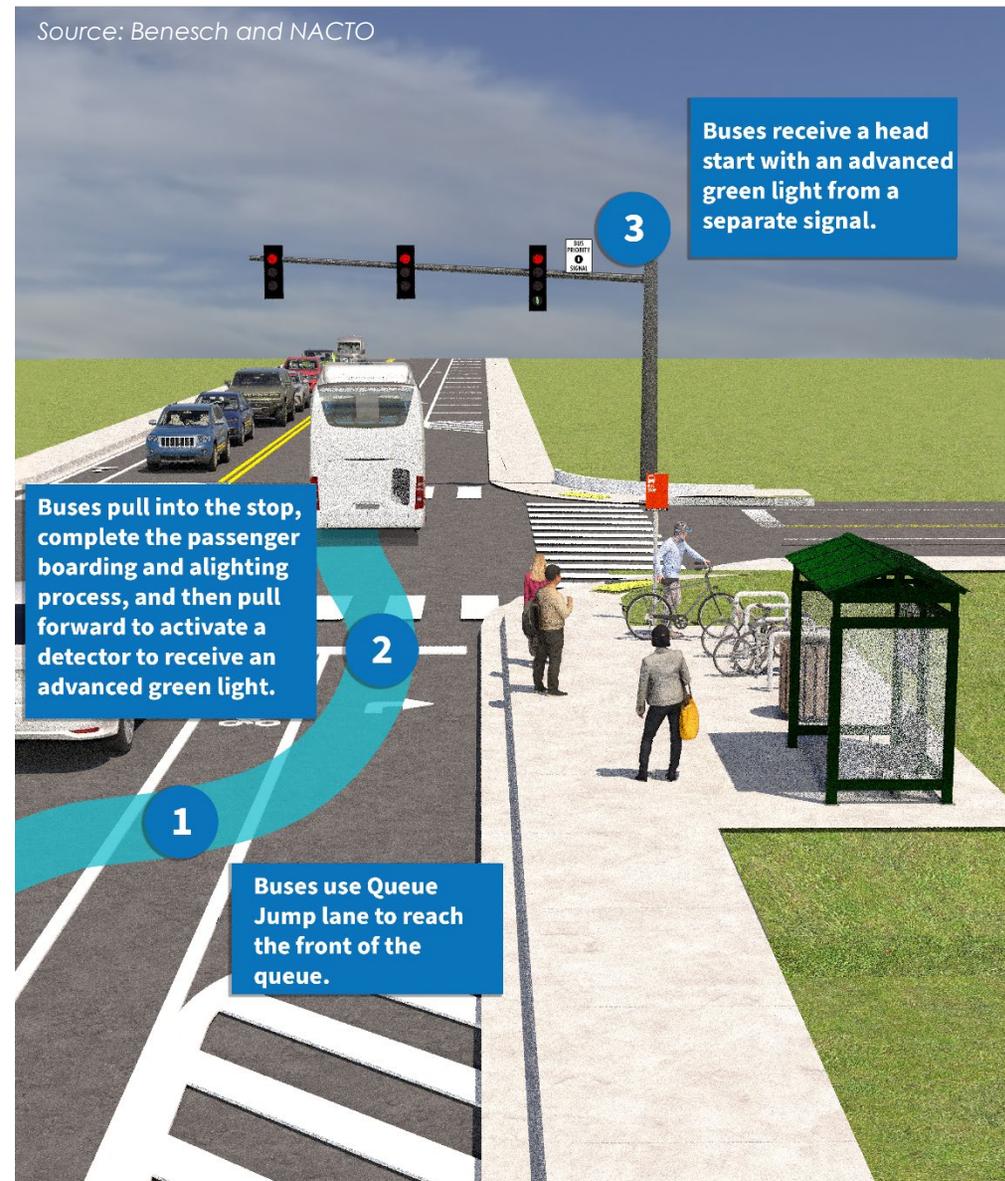
Charlotte County Transit will continue to replace vehicles as they meet their useful life. Furthermore, Charlotte County Transit will need to acquire additional vehicles to implement new or expand existing services.

Policy Needs

Transit System Re-Branding

Rebranding Charlotte County Transit can significantly enhance public perception, increase ridership, and uniquely communicate its vision to the community. Rebranding provides an opportunity to update the system's image, making it more attractive and relevant.

Figure 8-1: TSP with Queue Jump Concept



Rebranding, when combined with the improvements previously proposed in this plan, may bring new attention and interest from the public, potentially leading to increased usage of the system.

Expand Marketing/Education Program

Although it is important to make transit more convenient to attract new passengers, it is equally important that the community is aware of these services and how they work. Based on input from discussion group members and stakeholders, lack of awareness and education about currently available services are a major hurdle to making transit a more viable option. Therefore, a carefully coordinated and multi-year marketing campaign strategy that involves local stakeholders, businesses, and partner agencies is proposed.

Fare Study

Charlotte County Transit should conduct a fare study to evaluate whether to reimplement a fare for its transit services. If a fare is recommended, the study would also identify the fare structure, policies, and timeline for implementation.

Expand Vanpool Program

Charlotte County Transit should work with FDOT District One's Commuter Assistance Program program to promote the use of vanpools in Charlotte County. The current FDOT program serves travelers who live or work in the 12-county southwest Florida region and works with businesses to help employees find a better way to get to work than driving by themselves. Charlotte County should continue to coordinate with FDOT to promote and expand the use of alternative travel options such as vanpools.

Ferry Feasibility Study

The geography of Charlotte County offers an opportunity to connect its key locations with waterborne transit. With the increase in demand for fast and convenient connections that comes with growth in population, traffic and tourism, a passenger ferry has been identified as a potential need in the next 10 years. However, prior to planning and implementing such a new mode of transportation in Charlotte County, a feasibility study must be conducted to ensure the success of such investment. The study should identify the exact ferry routing, vessel and facility needs, costs, operator, and any other necessary components prior to implementing the service.

Develop Partnership/Employer Outreach Program

Implementing a Partnership/Employer Program is a strategic initiative aimed at engaging members of the business community to promote transit usage and enhancing transit education efforts. Charlotte County Transit should engage members of the business community to encourage employees to use alternative mode choices such as transit or vanpools. Furthermore, this outreach program may also benefit any PPP discussions, where applicable.

Establish Route-Level Performance Monitoring Program

A performance monitoring program tracks the performance and efficiency of routes and the system and is a tool to ensure efficient and effective transit service. Charlotte County Transit should continue its monitoring efforts for its existing on-demand services and should establish a performance monitoring program (Appendix E) for new regularly scheduled transit service if implemented in the next 10 years.

Evaluation Process

This section presents the methodology used to evaluate the 10-year transit needs and help Charlotte County Transit set meaningful priorities for funding over the next 10 years. The comprehensive evaluation process is structured to cover a wide spectrum of qualitative and quantitative factors.

The four evaluation criteria below and their associated weights are used to rank the TDP service needs.

- **Public Support** – A key reason for the success of any improvement is its acceptance and support by the community. The conclusions from public outreach efforts and input from stakeholders are reviewed to gauge public support.
- **Ridership Potential** – The findings from GIS-based technical analyses conducted as part of the demand/gap assessment and ridership projections are reviewed to assess the potential demand.
- **Geographic Connectivity** – Connectivity to key activity centers and hubs play a critical role as Charlotte County Transit focuses on enhancing services and creating a multimodal transportation system for residents and visitors.
- **Financial Feasibility** – Financial feasibility is one of the most restrictive factors and should be weighted accordingly. The costs of implementation were considered together with the associated funding and policy support.

Table 8-2 lists the evaluation criteria and associated measures. Each measure and criterion are assigned a weight to relay their relative importance. An explanation

of the associated measures of effectiveness are listed following the table.

Table 8-2: 10-Year TDP Service Needs Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Measure	Measure Weight	Criteria Weight
Public Support	Public Input	15%	35%
	Stakeholder Input	20%	
Ridership Potential	Traditional Market Coverage	10%	25%
	Discretionary Market Coverage	10%	
	Ridership Productivity	5%	
Geographic Connectivity	Connections to Key Destinations	10%	10%
Financial Feasibility	Cost Efficiency	30%	30%
Total		100%	100%

- **Public Input** – Level of interest in specific alternatives, gathered via TDP public input surveys.
- **Stakeholder Input** – Level of interest in specific improvements, gathered via outreach.
- **Traditional Market Coverage** – Areas with a TOI of High or Very High.
- **Discretionary Market Coverage** – Areas with 4+ jobs or dwelling units per acre from the DTA.
- **Ridership Productivity** – TBEST demand model trips per hour simulated for 2034.

- Connections to Key Destinations – Connections to key population and employment hubs within and around Charlotte County.
- Cost Efficiency – Estimated operating cost per trip.

Improvement Scoring Thresholds

A mix of qualitative and quantitative analyses is used to gain a more comprehensive understanding of priorities for Charlotte County Transit. A score is assigned to each proposed improvement. For the quantitative criteria (e.g., traditional market, choice market, trips per hour, and operating cost per trip) the scoring is determined using the average of the entire data set and one standard deviation (SD) above or below the average. For the remaining qualitative criteria, the score is based on professional judgment of the information (i.e., collective stakeholder input) compared across the transit alternatives. A higher score is consistent with a higher ranking for a given alternative.

Table 8-3 shows the thresholds and scoring for each criterion used in the needs evaluation.

Prioritization

The 10-year transit service priority rankings resulting from the previously described evaluation process are presented in Figure 8-2. As previously indicated, the improvements were derived without consideration for the realities of impending financial constraints to realize the community's desired vision within the plan timeframe.

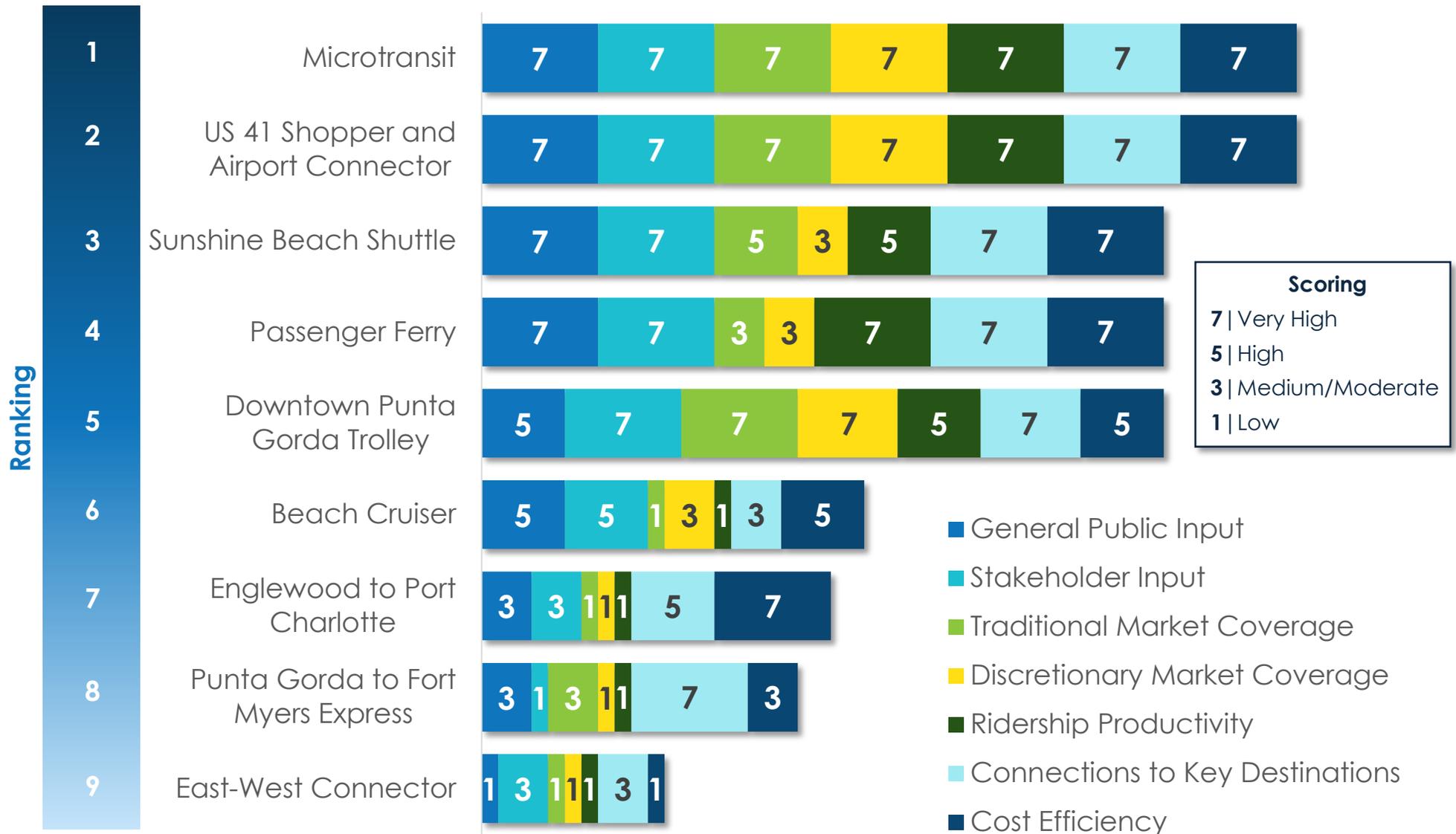
See Appendix F for full evaluation ranking table and weighted scores.

Table 8-3: 10- Year Needs Evaluation – Scoring Thresholds

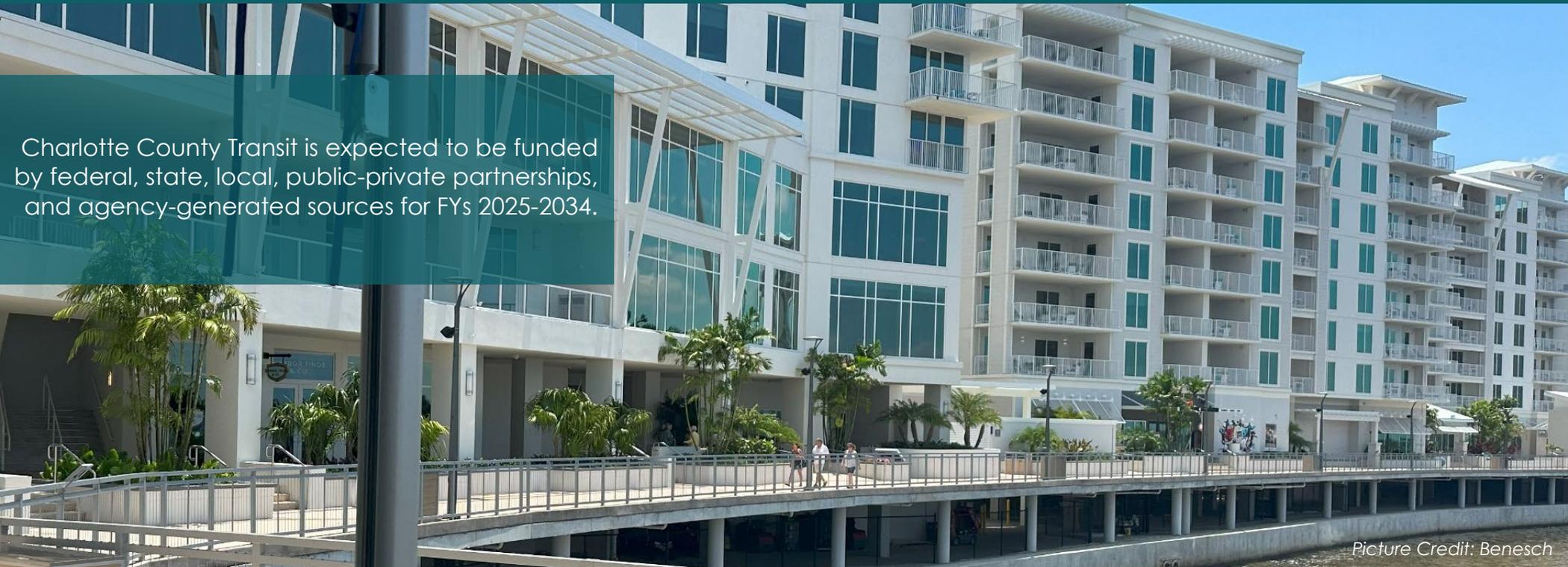
Measure	Range	Score
Public Input	Low (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Between (Average – 1 SD) to Average	3
	Average to (Average + 1 SD)	5
	More than (Average + 1 SD)	7
Stakeholder Input	None	1
	Moderate	3
	High	5
	Very High	7
Traditional Market Coverage	Low (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Average (Average – 1 SD to Average)	3
	High (Average to Average + 1 SD)	5
	Very High (Average to Average + 2 SD)	7
Discretionary Market Coverage	Low (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Average (Average – 1 SD to Average)	3
	High (Average to Average + 1 SD)	5
	Very High (Average to Average + 2 SD)	7
Ridership Productivity (Trips per Hour)	Low (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Average (Average – 1 SD to Average)	3
	High (Average to Average + 1 SD)	5
	Very High (Average to Average + 2 SD)	7
Connections to Key Destinations	None	1
	Moderate	3
	High	5
	Very High	7
Cost Efficiency (Operating Cost per Trip)	Low (Average – 1 SD)	1
	Average (Average – 1 SD to Average)	3
	High (Average to Average + 1 SD)	5
	Very High (Average to Average + 2 SD)	7

When developing the TDP implementation plan presented in the next section, these priorities are balanced with funding realities to determine to what degree the community's vision can be realized over the next decade.

Figure 8-2: Evaluation Ranking



Recommended 10-Year Plan



Picture Credit: Benesch

Section 9

Charlotte County Transit is expected to be funded by federal, state, local, public-private partnerships, and agency-generated sources for FYs 2025-2034.

SECTION 9. Recommended 10-Year Plan

This section summarizes the recommended 10-year transit plan for Charlotte County Transit's TDP. The recommended 10-year transit plan seeks to implement multiple transit options throughout Charlotte County, creating a network that connects residents while also supporting tourism. The new network includes establishing regularly scheduled transit, reconfiguring on-demand transit, and adding a passenger ferry route in Charlotte County. This plan is derived through comprehensive data analysis, bolstered by input and endorsement from both the local community and essential stakeholders in Charlotte County.

The recommended transit service, capital, technology, and policy improvements presented in this section are a culmination of the efforts conducted for this TDP, as summarized previously, to support a comprehensive transit network in Charlotte County. This includes improvement projects that can be funded or are unfunded. The capital/operating cost and revenue assumptions used to develop these funded and unfunded priorities are summarized before presenting financial and implementation plans for the 10-year TDP.

10-Year Transit Plan

After carefully reviewing the needs, projecting the funding sources assumed available over the next 10 years and discussing with staff the direction of the service provision, the recommended 10-year plan is developed. This includes the addition of new transit modes to add

options and create a network that can support residents in day-to-day travel and bolster the economy through job connections while supporting tourism. Immediate changes to Charlotte County Transit are not intended nor included in the 10-year plan to give ample opportunity to establish and secure partnerships in the community.

The recommended 10-year service, capital, and technology improvements for Charlotte County Transit's TDP are presented in the remainder of this section. These were derived after examining the previously presented needs with consideration to community direction, an understanding of the unique environment, review of goals and objectives, and demand assessments in conjunction with the projected funding sources. The recommended services are identified under each of the major improvement categories, including service, capital/infrastructure, and policy.

Service Improvements

Charlotte County Transit's TDP recommended service improvements include the following.

On-Demand Microtransit Services

The recommended plan reconfigures the existing on-demand service to establish four microtransit zones, identified previously in the 10-year needs plan based on input from TDP Phase 1 public outreach efforts. This plan also recommends allowing inter-zonal travel.

The service in the following four microtransit zones will be available for passengers using Charlotte Rides app or by calling a phone number.

- *Englewood* – This on-demand zone will continue to provide service to the neighborhoods and businesses within the Englewood area in west

Charlotte County, including the Englewood Library/Mobility Hub. It would provide an on-demand connection to the regularly scheduled Englewood to Port Charlotte route and Sunshine Beach Shuttle.

- *Murdock/West Port* – This on-demand zone continues to provide transit access in a growing residential area west of US-41 and would connect to the Port Charlotte Mobility Hub, increasing access to regularly scheduled services such as the US-41 Airport and Shopper Connector and the Englewood to Port Charlotte route.
- *Port Charlotte* – This on-demand zone would connect passengers east of US-41 to businesses and shops in addition to a connection to the Port Charlotte Mobility Hub, linking to regularly scheduled and multimodal options.
- *Punta Gorda* – This on-demand zone would circulate passengers to areas with existing coverage in Punta Gorda in addition to providing a connection to the Punta Gorda Mobility Hub.

Local and Regional Connectors

- *US-41 Shopper and Airport Connector* – A local connection from Port Charlotte to Punta Gorda Airport, linking passengers to shops and businesses along US-41 and the warehouses adjacent to the airport.
- *Englewood to Port Charlotte* – Connect the Englewood Library/Mobility Hub to Port Charlotte, with stops along SR-776, every 60 minutes.
- *Passenger Ferry* – A water-borne connection from Punta Gorda to Englewood Beach with quick trips to and from the Sunseeker Resort.

Circulators

- *Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley* – Quick connection around downtown Punta Gorda connecting Fishermen's Village, Shore Point Hospital, Laishley Park, and various multimodal trails.
- *Sunshine Beach Shuttle* – Shuttle service connecting the Englewood Mobility Hub to Englewood Beach, relieving traffic congestion and limited parking for visitors and service workers.
- *Beach Cruiser* – High-frequency and quick connection along Manasota Key, connecting Chadwick Park at Englewood Beach to Stump Pass State Park.

Capital/Policy/Technology Improvements

- *Establish Bus Stop Infrastructure and Accessibility Program* – Establish a transit infrastructure and accessibility program for Charlotte County Transit to implement bus stop infrastructure and amenities based on need. Providing infrastructure can improve the passenger's experience and comfort at bus stops and can help attract new passengers. The program will also include implementing mobility hubs in Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte, and Englewood.
- *Mobility Hubs* – Establish locations that provide access to multiple transportation modes. The mobility hubs would be in downtown Punta Gorda, Port Charlotte, and Englewood.
- *Transit Marketing and Education Campaign* – While Charlotte County Transit staff regularly engages the community about its services, its efforts have been limited due to limited financial

and personnel resources. To both educate the community and improve awareness, a need for which has been highlighted repeatedly by elected officials, stakeholders, and the public, additional financial resources have been allocated to expand current marketing/education efforts. The expanded marketing program will include strategies and approaches to capitalize on efforts made during this TDP process. Emphasis also should be on increasing the awareness of various technologies, such as the real-time bus locator and ride-reservation apps as they are available.

- *Enhanced Performance Monitoring Program* – As new regularly scheduled Charlotte County Transit services are established, a monitoring program should be implemented to track the performance and efficiency of individual routes and the network as whole. It also provides a convenient tool for ensuring the provision of efficient and effective transit service.
- *Transit Fare Study* – Charlotte County Transit has been fare-free since 2020 but should conduct a study to evaluate potential systemwide changes to fare structure and policy, along with the resulting implications.
- *Ferry Feasibility Study* – To implement the ferry service, a feasibility study should be conducted to evaluate and define all operating and capital considerations of this new service.
- *Vehicle Replacement and Acquisition Program* – As previously noted, Charlotte County Transit should continue vehicle replacements and

acquisitions to operate the proposed 10-year network.

- *Vanpool Program* – A collaborative effort led by FDOT and FDOT District One's Commuter Assistance Program to expand a well-coordinated vanpool program, expanding another layer of travel alternatives in Charlotte County.

Map 9-1 shows the recommended 10-Year plan.



Picture Credit: Benesch

Map 9-1: 10-Year Plan

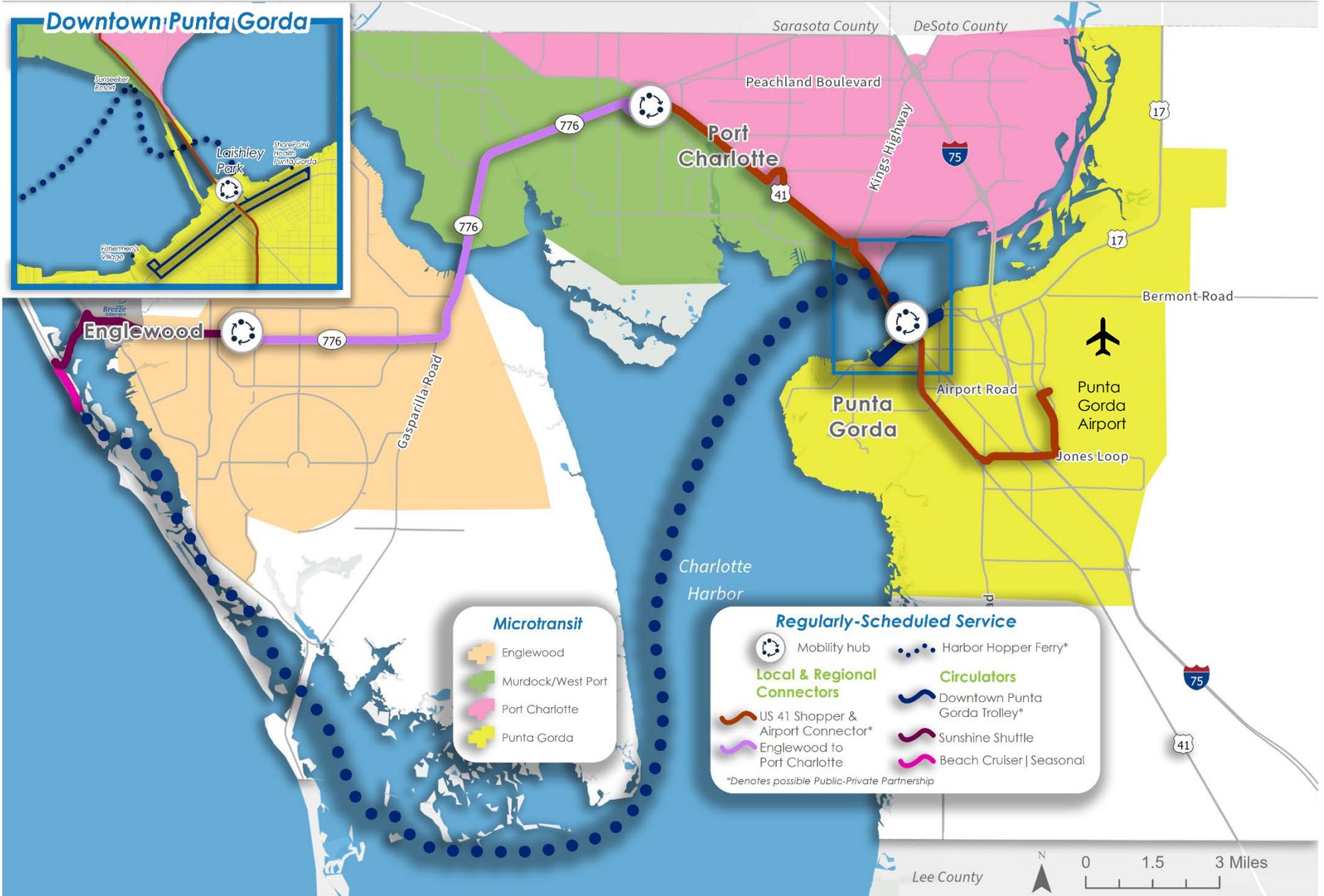


Table 9-1: 10-Year Recommended Plan Characteristics

Service Improvement	Weekday Frequency (min)	Weekday Service Span	Days of Service
Microtransit			
Englewood	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
Murdock/West Port	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
Port Charlotte	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
Punta Gorda	On-demand	5:30 AM-8:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
Regularly Scheduled Service			
Beach Cruiser (Seasonal)	15	10:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley	30	11:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Saturday
Sunshine Beach Shuttle	30	10:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
Englewood to Port Charlotte	60	7:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Friday
US-41 Shopper & Airport Connector	60	7:00 AM-7:00 PM	Monday-Sunday
Passenger Ferry	30/120*	9:00 AM-1:00 PM 3:00 PM-7:00 PM	Monday-Sunday

*Assumes the passenger ferry will operate between Punta Gorda and Sunseeker Resort every 30 minutes and to Stump Pass Beach State Park/Englewood Beach area once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

10-Year TDP Financial Plan

A financial plan to support implementation of these TDP improvements over the next 10 years is summarized in this section. The cost and revenue assumptions used to develop the financial plan and a summary of cost and revenue projections are presented. The summary includes annual costs for service and capital projects including infrastructure, technology, or policy improvements programmed for implementation within the next 10 years and supporting revenues reasonably expected to be available to fund the implementation.

Operating Cost Assumptions

Numerous assumptions were made to forecast transit operating costs from 2025 through 2034 based on data from Charlotte County Transit and other transit industry data. Key operating cost assumptions include:

- Operating costs for microtransit services were estimated using a per revenue hour cost of \$106.39 (2024\$), based information provided by Charlotte County Transit for its existing on-demand service.
- Operating costs for regularly scheduled services were estimated using an operating cost per revenue hour of \$92.72 (2024\$), based on neighboring regularly scheduled bus systems and bus systems of similar size and operating environments.
- Based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for 2013-2023, an average annual inflation rate of 2.4% is used for all operating cost projections.
- The cost of operating the passenger ferry is estimated at \$177.00 per hour, based on data

from recently implemented and similar ferry service in Manatee County.

- Annual ferry service costs reflect the total operating cost after deducting estimated fare revenue. A farebox recovery rate of 30% was assumed based on information from Manatee County (55% fare ratio), adjusted to reflect a more conservative rate for the Charlotte County ferry.
- Maintaining and expanding a vanpool program is \$50,000 (2024\$) annually.

Capital/Infrastructure Cost Assumptions

Several assumptions were made to project costs for infrastructure/technology needs to support implementation of the service alternatives described previously. These capital cost assumptions include the following:

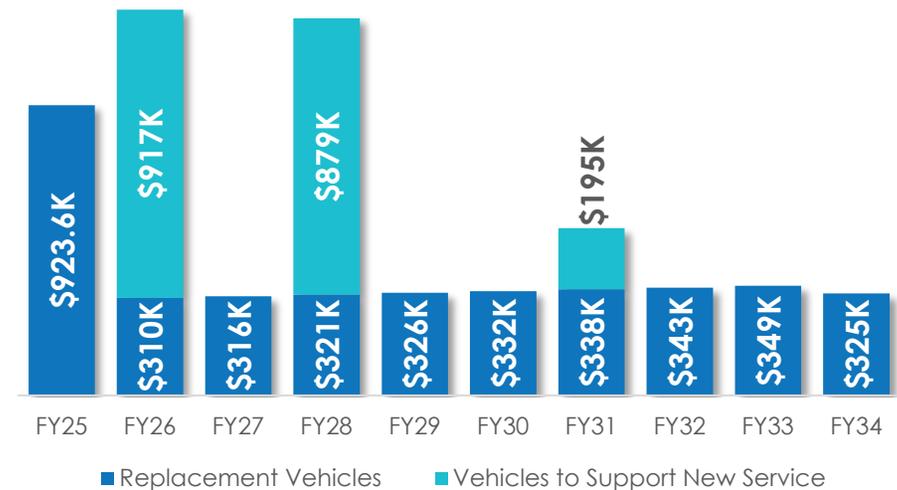
- The 2.4% annual inflation rate established for operating costs is also used for all capital cost projections, unless otherwise noted.
- The bus stop infrastructure/accessibility program cost is \$35,000 (2024\$) annually. The infrastructure needs for mobility hubs are also included in the annual infrastructure costs.

Vehicle Replacement/Acquisition Assumptions

The vehicle replacement plan is a critical component of the 10-year financial plan. Figure 9-1 shows the costs for replacement and new vehicles by year assuming:

- Vehicle life cycles (in years) are based on guidance from Charlotte County Transit.
- Replacement vehicles planned to be purchased include those necessary to replace vehicles within the existing fleet that will reach the end of their useful life within the TDP planning period.
- The cost of a cutaway bus is \$125,000 (2024\$). The cost for the Beach Cruiser vehicle is \$40,000 (2024\$), based on estimates from a vendor.
- Based on data from Charlotte County Transit, an annual growth rate of 2% is used for capital cost projections, including replacement vehicles.
- The FTA-standard 20% spare vehicle ratio will be maintained for all new vehicle purchases.

Figure 9-1: Vehicle Replacement and Acquisition Schedule



Note: Per transit staff, for some years, this may include vehicle-related capital costs.

Other Cost Assumptions

- No cost for the Transit Fare Study is assumed as it is already funded.
- The one-time cost of rebranding Charlotte County Transit is assumed to be \$300,000 and is included in the FY25 operating cost.
- The cost of expanding the transit marketing/education program is \$50,000 (2024\$) annually beginning in FY26. The first five years subsequent to the rebranding reflect the amount after a previous allocation.
- A Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study to be \$100,000 (2024\$).

Revenue Assumptions

Revenue assumptions and projections to support the TDP are based on data from Charlotte County Transit staff and information on transit industry/FDOT funding programs. The basic structure/composition of Charlotte County Transit's funding today, which includes federal, state, and local sources, is expected to continue for the next 10 years.

The following key assumptions were used to project Charlotte County Transit TDP revenues:

- Revenue projections from federal sources, including annual FTA formula grant funds, are based on information from Charlotte County Transit.
- Projections for existing funds from FDOT, such as Block Grant funding, will continue per Charlotte County Transit.
- Contributions from the Florida CTD are to be \$552,000 (2025\$) annually.
- Charlotte County general fund contributions total \$21.4 million over the 10 years.
- Local sources, such as Senior Friendship, are \$20,000 annually (2025\$) until 2033, then increase to \$25,000 (2033\$).
- New funding to assist with implementing key projects including:
 - Additional FTA Section 5307, Section 5339, or other federal grant funding for new vehicles and ferry vessels.
 - A new FDOT Service Development grant to fund 50% of operating expenses for the Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley, Sunshine Beach Shuttle, and Beach Cruiser for the first three years of each service.
 - FDOT Transit Corridor funding to fund 100% of operating expenses for the US-41 Shopper/Airport Connector route.
 - A new public-private partnership between the downtown businesses and the City of Punta Gorda to contribute 50% of the Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley operating costs.
 - Hotel/resort industry contributions to fund 25% of the Passenger Ferry operating costs.
 - The Charlotte County Tourist Development Council to fund 75% of the Passenger Ferry operating costs.
 - Additional local (general fund) revenue of \$1.1 million for the 10-year period. This would fund the 50% local match needed for the FDOT Service Development grants for the Sunshine Beach Shuttle and the Beach Cruiser. Local funds are also expected to cover the other 50% of the Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley when the FDOT Service Development grant expires.
 - FDOT District One's Commuter Assistance Program funding for the vanpool services is assumed at \$50,000 (2024\$) annually beginning in FY2030.
 - Reinstatement of fares starting in FY 2026. A 5% farebox recovery rate for microtransit services and any implemented expanded services is estimated.
 - An 8% farebox recovery rate is assumed when new Charlotte County Transit

- regularly scheduled services are implemented.
- The MPO or FDOT will fund the Passenger Ferry Study.

10-Year Cost/Revenue Summary

Annual operating and capital costs and supporting revenues for Charlotte County Transit are summarized in Table 9-2. As shown, it would cost \$64.6 million to operate Charlotte County Transit services in the next 10 years, with another \$6.8 million in capital costs to support the necessary fleet and capital infrastructure. Operating costs would continue to be funded mainly with a mix of partnerships, local, state, and federal sources as discussed previously.

Figure 9-2 shows the annual operating and capital costs for Charlotte County Transit's TDP implementation plan. Figure 9-3 shows the total costs and revenues by year. Figure 9-4 shows the expected revenues by source.



Picture Credit: Benesch

Table 9-2: 10-Year Financial Plan

Cost/Revenue	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33	FY34	Total
Operating Costs											
On-Demand/Microtransit	\$3,705,438	\$4,406,416	\$4,369,170	\$4,545,916	\$4,729,779	\$4,921,046	\$5,120,012	\$5,326,989	\$5,542,296	\$5,746,288	\$48,413,348
Englewood to Port Charlotte	\$0	\$0	\$300,997	\$308,202	\$315,579	\$323,133	\$330,868	\$338,788	\$346,897	\$355,200	\$2,619,664
US-41 Shopper and Airport Connector	\$0	\$0	\$809,030	\$828,395	\$848,224	\$868,527	\$889,317	\$910,604	\$932,400	\$954,718	\$7,041,215
Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$253,799	\$259,874	\$266,095	\$272,464	\$278,986	\$285,664	\$1,616,882
Passenger Ferry	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$196,354	\$201,054	\$205,866	\$210,794	\$215,839	\$221,006	\$1,250,912
Extended Microtransit Hours from 5:30 AM to 8 PM	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$461,010	\$472,045	\$483,344	\$494,913	\$1,911,312
Sunshine Beach Shuttle	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$306,522	\$313,859	\$321,372	\$941,753
Beach Cruiser	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$153,261	\$156,930	\$160,686	\$470,876
Vanpool	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$57,625	\$59,004	\$60,416	\$61,862	\$63,343	\$302,250
Total Operating Costs	\$3,705,438	\$4,406,416	\$5,479,197	\$5,682,513	\$6,343,735	\$6,631,258	\$7,332,171	\$8,051,882	\$8,332,413	\$8,603,190	\$64,568,213
Capital Costs											
Vehicles to Support New Service	\$0	\$917,390	\$0	\$879,391	\$0	\$0	\$194,713	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,991,494
Replacement Vehicles and Other Capital Costs	\$923,568	\$310,287	\$315,562	\$320,926	\$326,382	\$331,930	\$337,573	\$343,312	\$349,148	\$325,000	\$3,883,688
Expand Transit Marketing/Education Program	\$0	\$28,422	\$40,177	\$41,462	\$42,778	\$45,125	\$59,004	\$60,416	\$61,862	\$63,343	\$442,589
Bus Stop Infrastructure Investment	\$0	\$36,696	\$37,574	\$38,473	\$39,394	\$40,337	\$41,303	\$42,291	\$43,304	\$44,340	\$363,712
Ferry Feasibility Study	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$109,924	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$109,924
Total Capital Costs	\$923,568	\$1,292,795	\$393,313	\$1,390,176	\$408,554	\$417,392	\$632,593	\$446,020	\$454,314	\$432,683	\$6,791,407
All Costs	\$4,629,006	\$5,699,210	\$5,872,509	\$7,072,689	\$6,752,289	\$7,048,650	\$7,964,764	\$8,497,901	\$8,786,727	\$9,035,874	\$71,359,620
Revenues											
Local Interfund Transfer - General Fund	\$1,350,957	\$1,336,446	\$1,457,576	\$1,590,851	\$1,692,362	\$1,838,617	\$2,441,156	\$3,224,904	\$3,174,877	\$3,339,173	\$21,446,920
Local Senior Friendship	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$210,000
FDOT Transportation Disadvantaged	\$552,000	\$561,384	\$570,928	\$580,633	\$590,504	\$600,543	\$610,752	\$621,135	\$631,694	\$642,433	\$5,962,005
FDOT Public Transportation Block Grant	\$401,619	\$406,840	\$412,129	\$417,487	\$422,914	\$428,412	\$433,981	\$439,623	\$445,338	\$451,127	\$4,259,470
FDOT Public Transportation Block Grant - New Ridership	\$0	\$0	\$27,326	\$27,612	\$29,951	\$30,265	\$30,579	\$36,721	\$37,119	\$37,517	\$257,089
FTA Public Transportation 5307 Grant	\$1,198,062	\$1,743,742	\$1,769,898	\$1,796,447	\$1,823,394	\$1,850,745	\$1,878,506	\$1,250,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$16,310,794
FTA 5310 Urban	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$1,000,000
FTA 5311 Rural	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$82,800	\$828,000
FTA 5339 Grant	\$923,568	\$310,287	\$315,562	\$320,926	\$326,382	\$331,930	\$337,573	\$343,312	\$349,148	\$355,084	\$3,913,772
Agency Microtransit Farebox Revenue	\$0	\$220,321	\$218,458	\$227,296	\$236,489	\$246,052	\$279,051	\$289,952	\$301,282	\$312,060	\$2,330,961
FDOT District One's Commuter Assistance Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$57,625	\$59,004	\$60,416	\$61,862	\$63,343	\$302,250
New Public-Private Partnership - Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$126,900	\$129,937	\$133,047	\$136,232	\$139,493	\$142,832	\$808,441
Hotel/Resort Industry Contribution (25% Passenger Ferry)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$49,088	\$50,263	\$51,467	\$52,698	\$53,960	\$55,251	\$312,728
Charlotte County Tourist Development Council (75% of Passenger Ferry)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$147,265	\$150,790	\$154,400	\$158,095	\$161,880	\$165,754	\$938,184
FDOT Service Development - Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$126,900	\$129,937	\$133,047	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$389,884
FDOT Service Development - Sunshine Beach Shuttle	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$153,261	\$156,930	\$160,686	\$470,876
FDOT Service Development - Beach Cruiser	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$76,631	\$78,465	\$80,343	\$235,438
FDOT Transit Corridor - US-41 Shopper and Airport Connector	\$0	\$0	\$809,030	\$828,395	\$848,224	\$868,527	\$889,317	\$910,604	\$932,400	\$954,718	\$7,041,215
FTA Section 5307/5339/Other Federal Grants - New Vehicles/Vessels	\$0	\$917,390	\$0	\$879,391	\$0	\$0	\$194,713	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,991,494
Agency New Regularly Scheduled Service Farebox	\$0	\$0	\$88,802	\$90,928	\$129,116	\$132,207	\$135,372	\$175,395	\$179,593	\$183,892	\$1,115,304
New Local Revenue Needed	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$366,124	\$374,887	\$383,861	\$1,124,872
MPO/FDOT Support - Passenger Ferry Study	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$109,924	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$109,924
All Revenues	\$4,629,006	\$5,699,210	\$5,872,509	\$7,072,689	\$6,752,289	\$7,048,650	\$7,964,764	\$8,497,901	\$8,786,727	\$9,035,874	\$71,359,620
10-Year Cost & Revenue Summary											
Total Revenues	\$4,629,006	\$5,699,210	\$5,872,509	\$7,072,689	\$6,752,289	\$7,048,650	\$7,964,764	\$8,497,901	\$8,786,727	\$9,035,874	\$71,359,620
Total Costs	\$4,629,006	\$5,699,210	\$5,872,509	\$7,072,689	\$6,752,289	\$7,048,650	\$7,964,764	\$8,497,901	\$8,786,727	\$9,035,874	\$71,359,620
Revenues Minus Costs	\$0										
Rollover from Prev. Year	\$0										
Surplus/Shortfall	\$0										

Figure 9-2: Annual Operating and Capital Costs

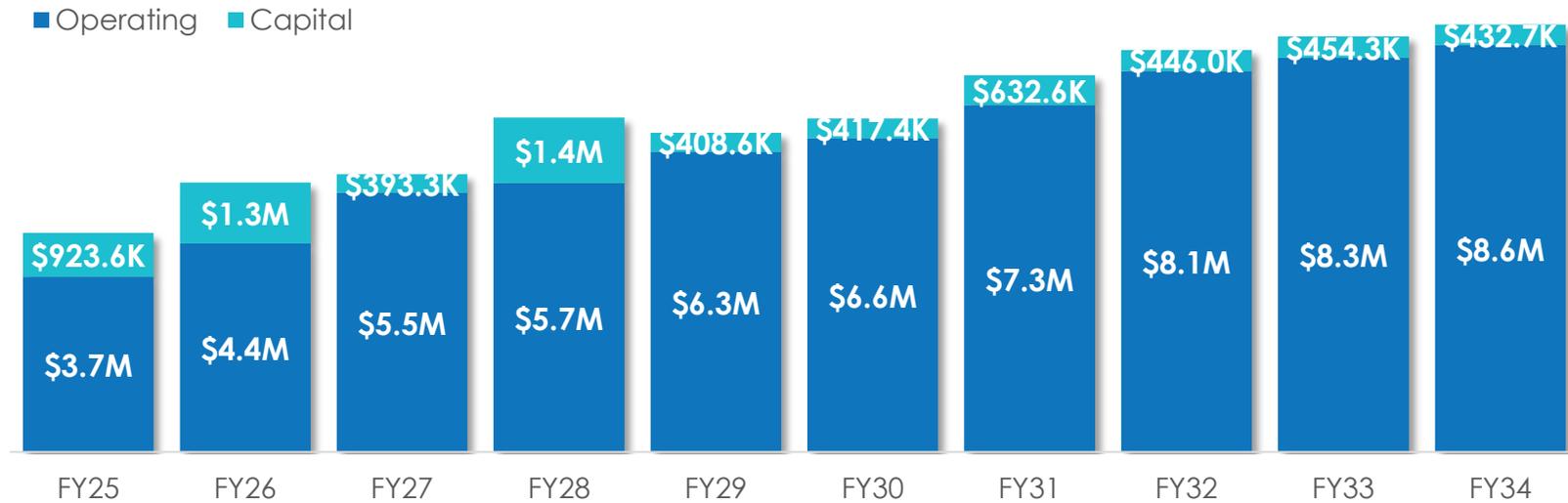


Figure 9-3: Annual Costs and Revenues

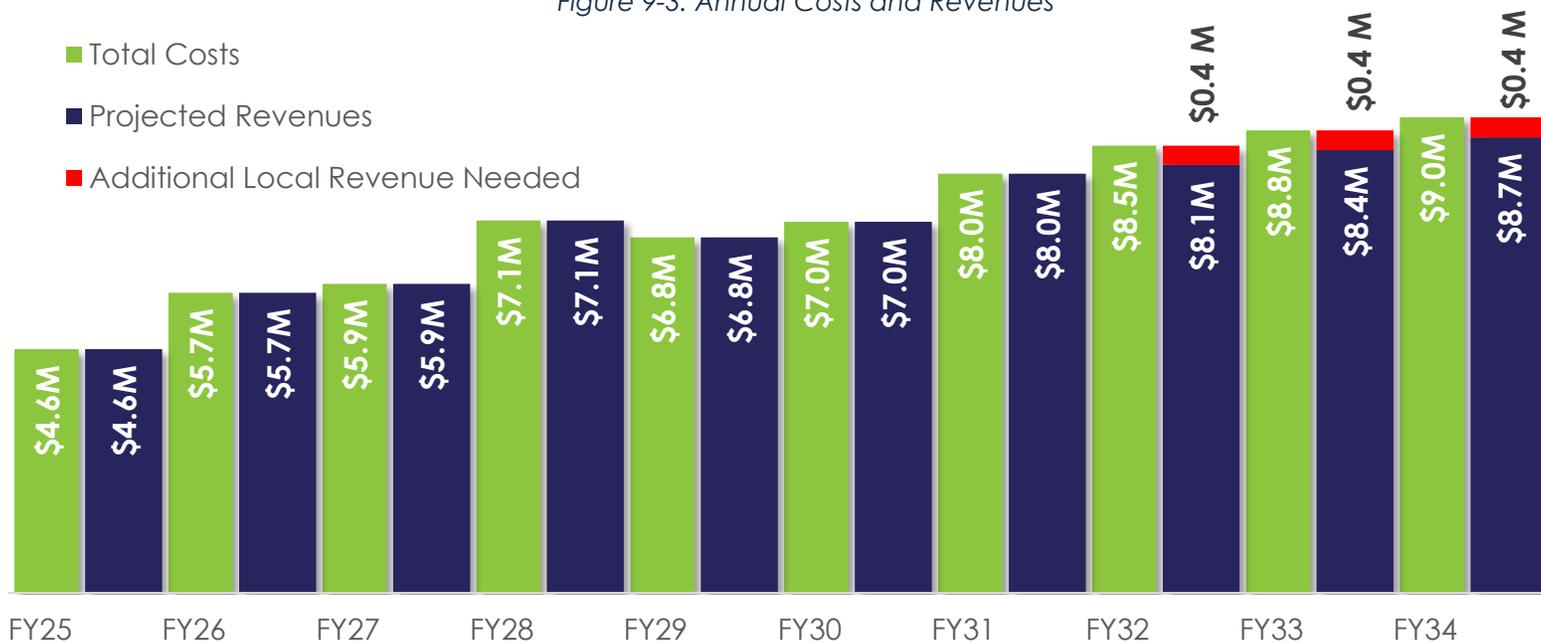
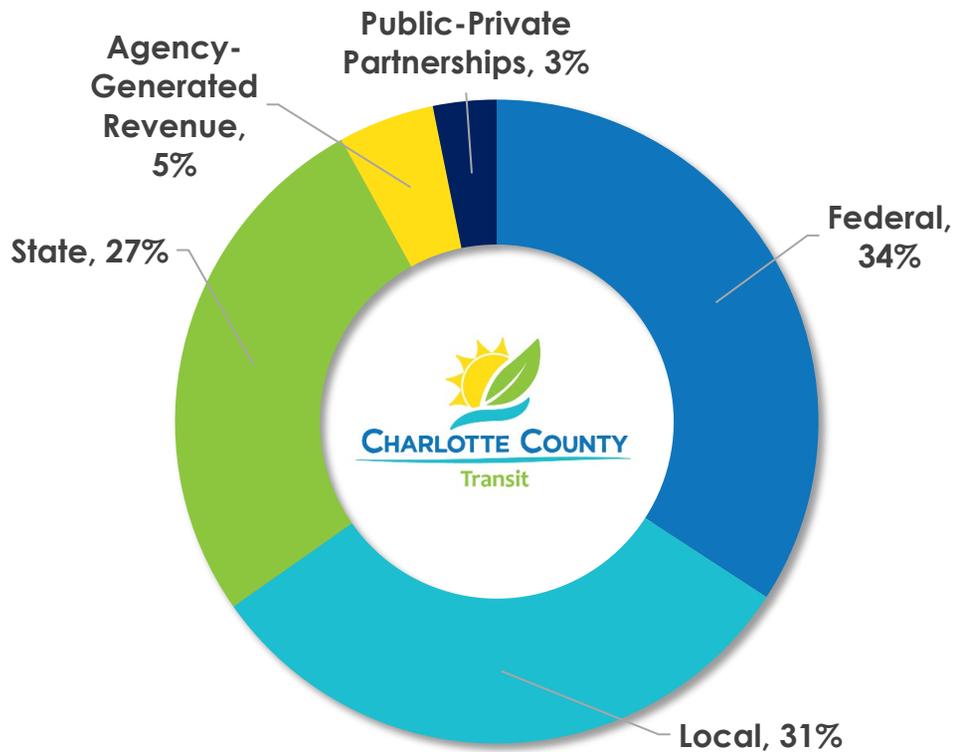


Figure 9-4: Revenue Sources



10-Year TDP Implementation Plan

The implementation plan presented in Table 9-3 outlines operating and capital improvements that are funded in the 10-Year TDP, as well as unfunded needs. The table also shows the implementation years, operating and capital costs associated with the improvements, and the type of anticipated funding sources for the plan.

It should be noted that this funding schedule does not preclude the opportunity to delay or advance any projects. As priorities change, funding assumptions do not materialize, and/or more funding becomes available, this project implementation schedule can and should be adjusted.

Table 9-3: 10-Year Implementation Plan

Improvements	Implementation Year (FY)	Annual Operating Cost (2024\$)	Capital Cost (2024\$)	Potential Operating Revenue Source
Service Improvements				
Microtransit (Four Zones)*	2026	\$3,430,848	N/A	Existing
Englewood to Port Charlotte	2027	\$280,378	\$125,000	Existing
US-41 Shopper and Airport Connector	2027	\$753,608	\$250,000	FDOT Transit Corridor
Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley	2029	\$225,489	\$125,000	FDOT Service Dev./Local/PPP
Passenger Ferry**	2029	\$174,451**	\$425,000	Tourism Dev. Council/Hotel & Resort Industry
Earlier/Later Microtransit Service	2031	\$390,661	\$0	Federal
Beach Cruiser	2032	\$126,838	\$40,000	FDOT Service Dev./Local
Sunshine Beach Shuttle	2032	\$253,675	\$125,000	FDOT Service Dev./Local
East-West Connector	Unfunded	\$93,459	\$125,000	Unfunded
Punta Gorda to Fort Myers Express	Unfunded	\$93,459	\$125,000	Unfunded
Sunday Service	Unfunded	\$531,094	\$0	Unfunded
Capital/Technology/Policy Improvements				
Transit Fare Study***	2025	N/A	\$23,000	Existing
System Re-branding***	2025	N/A	\$300,000	Federal
Expand Transit Marketing/Education Program	2026	N/A	\$50,000****	Federal
Mobility Hubs/Infrastructure	2026	N/A	\$35,000	Federal
Ferry Feasibility Study	2028	N/A	\$100,000	MPO/FDOT
Transit Signal Priority (TSP)	Unfunded	N/A	\$25,000	Unfunded
Queue Jumps	Unfunded	N/A	\$150,000	Unfunded

*Allows for inter-zone travel.

**Reflects cost after farebox recovery revenue deduction.

***Already funded.

****Annually.

Implementation and Coordination



Section 10

SECTION 10. Implementation and Coordination

Securing the support of key stakeholders in the community and elected officials who approve the necessary budget to fund the improvements for the TDP is merely the initial step in a longer journey towards its realization. This section outlines key elements for Charlotte County to consider as it implements the plan to successfully grow the system in alignment with the TDP's vision.

Recommended Implementation Strategies

Sudden changes in the operating environment sometimes occur leading to the advance or delay of service implementation. Although the TDP adoption "gives the green light," it does not ensure that implementation will go according to the recommended schedule. The following action items should be carefully considered and followed through to ensure that public support, funding, and operational support are preserved until the next major TDP update.

- **Secure Funding** – Most of the recommended services require funding support from public and private partners for implementation. When examining the proposed timeline, outline steps to take and the partners to engage in the current year and succeeding years to secure the needed funding.
- **Network Establishment and Integration** – When implementing a programmed service in the TDP,

examine the current services and the operating environment at that time to determine if adjustments or scaling from an operational perspective is needed.

- **Continue to update through TDP Annual Progress Reports** – Use annual progress updates to the TDP to provide needed motivation to reiterate the benefits of the recommended alternatives.

Expanded Marketing and Outreach

Capitalizing on and using the momentum from the TDP, continued outreach and support from key stakeholders after adoption will improve the likelihood of achieving the implementation plan. Charlotte County has already conducted extensive public outreach as part of the TDP process that can be expanded upon to market other planning efforts, such as service initiation efforts, marketing programs and campaigns, and budget plans. The following are ways to create awareness and support plan implementation.

- **Staff Focused Leadership** – The marketing efforts of Charlotte County Transit needs to continue to have dedicated staff and steady leadership to be successful. Charlotte County Transit should consider dedicated staff position(s) to support its increased marketing and outreach needs. Not only should they get the word out, but have an equal effort to reach out and build relationships and recruit true partners.
- **Specific Campaigns** – Specific needs and markets should be identified, and campaigns designed to reach targeted audiences.

- **Outreach to Build Relationships** – The marketing program should include specific goals and objectives, to identify potential partnering entities, recruit and build relationships with common goals and needs, and formulate necessary public-private-partnerships for projects identified in the TDP.
- **TDP Executive Summary** – Promotion of the TDP should extend beyond its adoption. The Executive Summary, which will be completed after plan adoption, should be used as a promotional tool and an effective medium to continue generating support for the TDP's recommendations.
- **Building on TDP Efforts/Relationships** – Throughout the TDP public involvement process, Charlotte County Transit engaged and educated the public. Staff should continue to leverage these relationships and build support for the implementation strategies. Stakeholders or individuals involved throughout the process may serve as facilitators for outreach or could provide support or a connection to support new improvements. These future efforts can build upon the tools and lessons afforded by the TDP and aid in prioritizing specific target markets to engage.

Plan Coordination and Integration

Charlotte County Transit should consider coordination of the TDP with other planning efforts:

- **Coordination with Other Plans** – Ensuring consistency with key state, regional, and local

plan priorities should remain a primary focus of Charlotte County Transit.

- **Informing Other Plans** – The analyses completed during Charlotte County Transit's TDP can be used to help update required plans or feed into longer-term documents, such as the MPO's LRTP. The adopted TDP can support required plans, such as the Title VI plans, as it documents how the system will meet or serve populations that fall under Title VI protections. The adopted TDP can also be useful for other local and regional entities and subsequent planning and programming efforts, such as local comprehensive plans, Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Needs Plan, or the MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), etc.

Next Steps

The following are several key steps to get implementation in motion and to move forward successfully. During the early years after adoption, Charlotte County staff should engage in the following:

- **Expand and continue the marketing/awareness campaign**, assess where additional efforts would be beneficial, and develop plans to initiate. Ensure potential partners are identified and recruited appropriately. Staff should target meetings, activities, events, and other venues at which to share the TDP Executive Summary and provide details of the planned transit growth to

educate the community and leaders while keeping momentum going while moving ahead. These may include homeowner associations, civic clubs, service organizations, elected and/or appointed boards or committees, public events or festivals, etc.

- **Implement Rebranding Effort**, a critical component of the overall marketing strategy to make transit a visible and viable alternative in Charlotte County. The new image would also boost the visibility and attractiveness of the new services implemented, providing a “fresh start” for transit in the community.
- **Engage Charlotte County leadership** to ensure implementing at least the minimum projects and/or expanded services as approved in the TDP Implementation Plan.
- **Engage potential private funding partners** identified in the recommended TDP to ensure a smoother process and productive discussions early on to build support for the improvements and the benefits of such projects to all parties involved.
- **Prepare and submit applications for public funding** as identified to implement alternatives included in the implementation plan.
- **Working with the FDOT District One Commuter Services program**, identify and approach major employers to actively promote and encourage transit use. The supportive employers and businesses should promote employee commuter

programs, introduce new services, and/or other commute options to improve access to current and emerging jobs. All partners should actively promote commute options for access to jobs.

- **Prepare and submit an Annual Progress Report** using FDOT's TDP Handbook as a guide. Continue the annual progress updates until the next TDP major update.

Appendix A. Farebox Recovery Report

CURRENT FAREBOX RECOVERY RATIO

The farebox recovery ratio (FRR) for Charlotte County Transit, the public transportation provider for Charlotte County, was 0% for on-demand services in fiscal year (FY) 2023.

PRIOR YEAR FARE STUDIES AND CHANGES

The last Charlotte County Transit fare change was implemented in 2020. As a result, the system is fare free.

STRATEGIES THAT WILL AFFECT THE FAREBOX RECOVERY RATIO

The FY 2025-2034 TDP major update identifies strategies that will be used to maintain or increase the farebox recovery ratio if fares are reinstated, including the following:

- Continuously monitor performance to determine if adjustments need to be made.
- Minimize costs required to operate and administer transportation services.
- Increase ridership by adding additional services.
- Determine the most cost-effective service type on all major corridors, given demand and coverage areas.
- Increase ridership while maintaining costs to operate and administer transportation services by engaging the public to refine services and aim to better meet the needs of customers.
- Evaluate fare structure to analyze opportunities for instituting additional passes.
- Work with key employers, community-based contracts, and homeowner associations to expand marketing efforts aimed at increasing ridership and revenue for the system.
- Coordinate with Breeze Transit and LeeTran to implement regional fares.

Appendix B. Other Transportation Services

Table B-1: Other Transportation Service Providers

Provider	Eligible Passengers	Service Type	Vehicle Type Provided
A Better Solution of Venice	Elderly, Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Car
A1 Royal Transportation	Private Pay Consumer	Flexible-Route	Limousine/Luxury Car, Van
AllyRides	Disabled, Elderly, Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Non-Emergency Stretcher Van, Wheelchair Van
Ameditrans, Inc.	Disabled, Elderly, Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Ambulatory Van, Non-Emergency Stretcher Van, Wheelchair Van
American Cancer Society Road to Recovery Program	Cancer Patient	Flexible-Route	Car, Taxi
Blue Bird Taxi and Yellow Cab	Disabled, Elderly, Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Taxi, Van, Wheelchair Van
Cabbie's Taxi Service	Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Taxi
Charlotte Yellow Cab	Disabled, Elderly, Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Taxi, Wheelchair Van
Doctors Transport Service	Cancer Patient, Disabled, Elderly, Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Ambulatory Van, Non-Emergency Stretcher Van, Wheelchair Van
Florida Shuttle Services	Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Mini-Bus
GulfCare Transport	Private Pay Consumer	Unlisted	Ambulatory Van, Non-Emergency Stretcher Van, Wheelchair Van

Table B-1: Other Transportation Service Providers (continued)

Provider	Eligible Passengers	Service Type	Vehicle Type Provided
Joseph Transportation	Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Limousine/Luxury Car, SUV
MediCab Transportation	Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Ambulatory Van, Non-Emergency Stretcher Van, Wheelchair Van
MobilityWorks	Disabled	Door-to-Door	Wheelchair Van
Ride Safe Transport	Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Wheelchair Van
Royal Floridian Transportation Company	Private Pay Consumer	Door-to-Door	Ambulatory Van, Limousine/Luxury Car, Mini-Bus
Wheelchair Transport Service	Americans with Disabilities Act Eligible, Cancer Patient, Disabled, Elderly, Private Pay Consumer, Transportation Disadvantaged, Veterans	Door-to-Door	Ambulatory Van, Non-Emergency Stretcher Van, Wheelchair Van

Appendix C. Public Involvement

Public Input Survey

Survey respondents were asked if they had used Charlotte County Transit. Most respondents, 78.2%, indicated they had not used the service while 21.8% said they had in Figure C-1.

Survey respondents were asked how important transit is in the Charlotte County community. Although most had not used the service, the majority responded that it must be provided (73.4%). Figure C-2 shows that approximately 19.8% of respondents indicated it might be useful and other respondents said it does not matter to me (3.7%), and not important (3.1%).

Figure C-1: Have you or a member of your household used Charlotte County's curb-to-curb on-demand transit service?

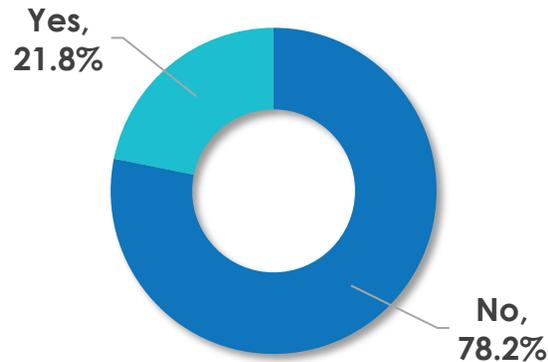
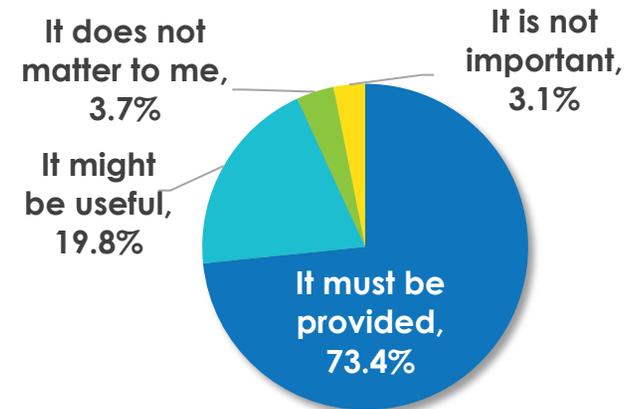
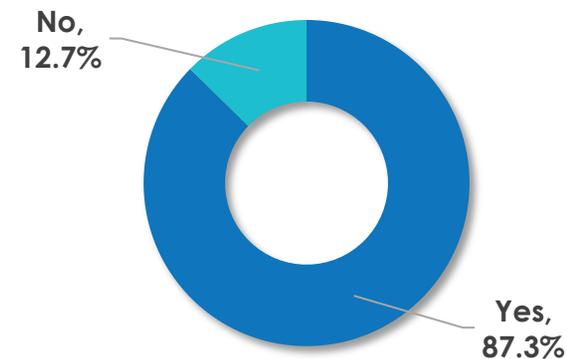


Figure C-2: How important is providing transit services in Charlotte County?



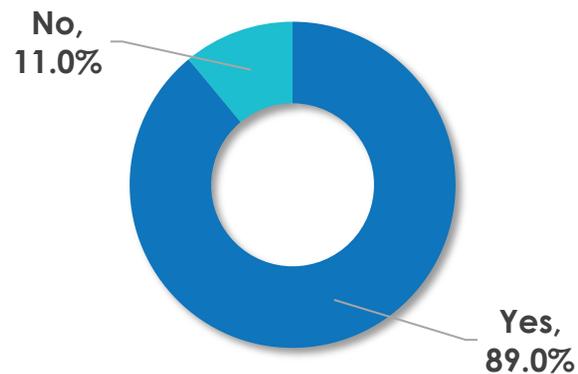
Respondents were asked if there was need for additional or improved transit services within Charlotte County. Approximately 87.3% of respondents indicated a need for improvement while 12.7% felt the services are adequate (Figure C-3).

Figure C-3: Is there a need for additional or improved transit services within Charlotte County?



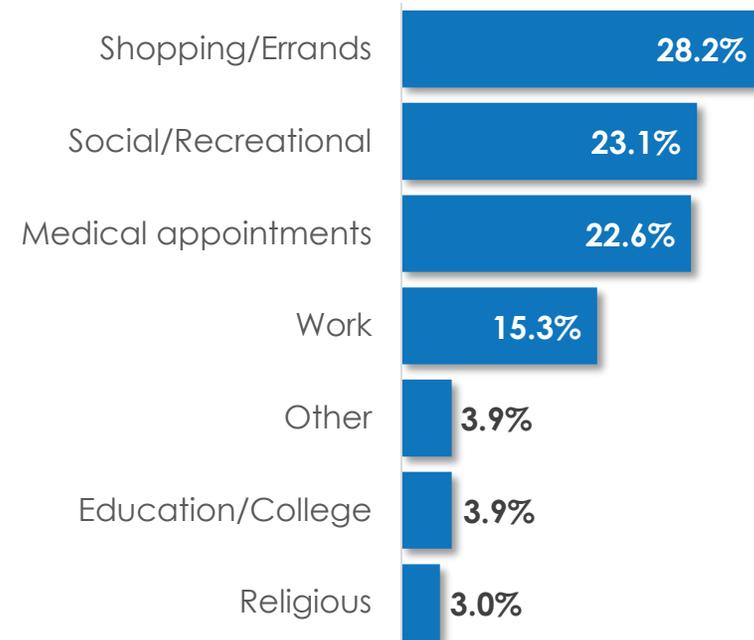
Respondents were asked whether they would support Charlotte County implementing a regularly scheduled bus service that runs on a designated route (also known as fixed-route bus service). The majority, 89.0%, said they would support implementing a fixed-route service while only 11.0% said they would not support it (Figure C-4).

Figure C-4: Would you support implementing a fixed-route service?



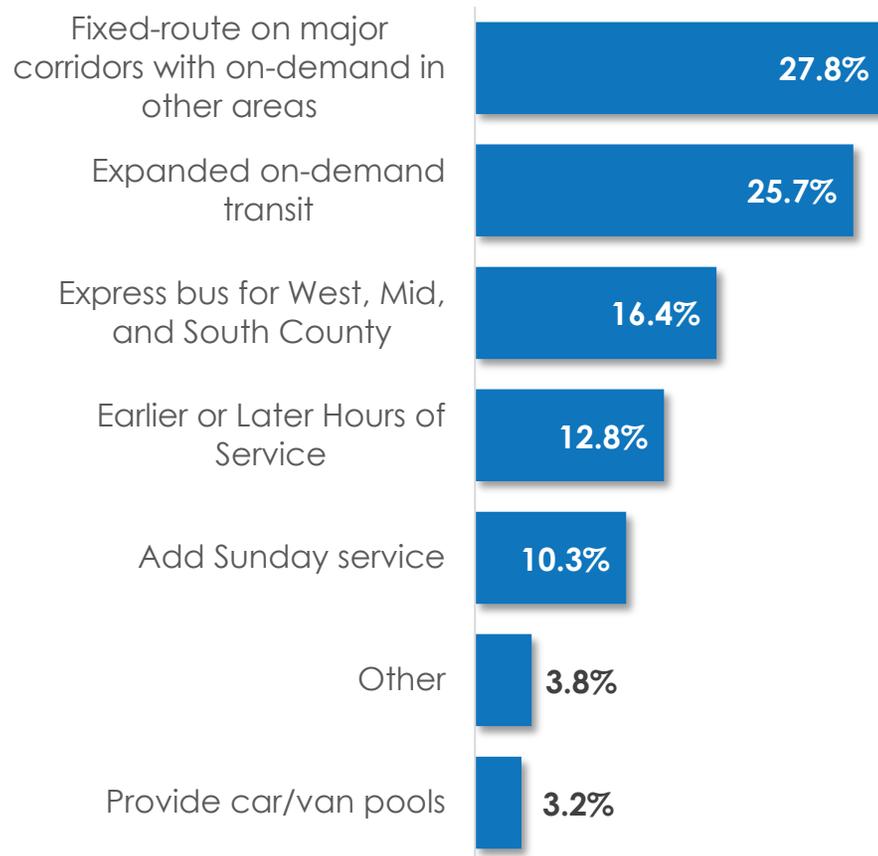
In addition to support for transit service it is important to understand the community's existing travel behavior. Respondents were asked how they use the transit now, if they do, or what would they use it for in the future. Figure C-5 shows the top three responses as Shopping/Errands (28.2%), Social/Recreational (23.1%), and Medical appointments (22.6%).

Figure C-5: If you do/would use the service, where do/would you go?



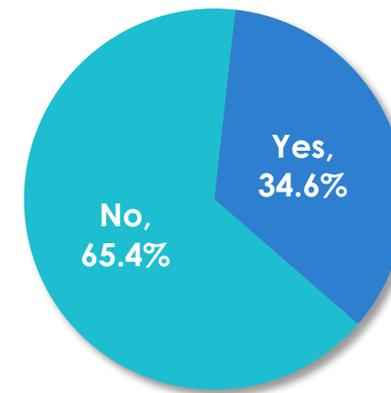
Respondents were asked to choose up to three transit improvements to prioritize over the next 10 years. Figure C-6 shows fixed-route service on major corridors with on-demand service for other areas of the county was the highest priority (27.8%). The next most popular was expanding on-demand transit (25.7%) and implementing express bus for west, mid, and south county (16.4%). Adding earlier or later hours of service (12.8%), adding Sunday service (10.3%), other improvements (3.8%), and providing carpools/vanpools (3.2%) were also selected priorities.

Figure C-6: What transit improvements should Charlotte County prioritize over the next 10 years?



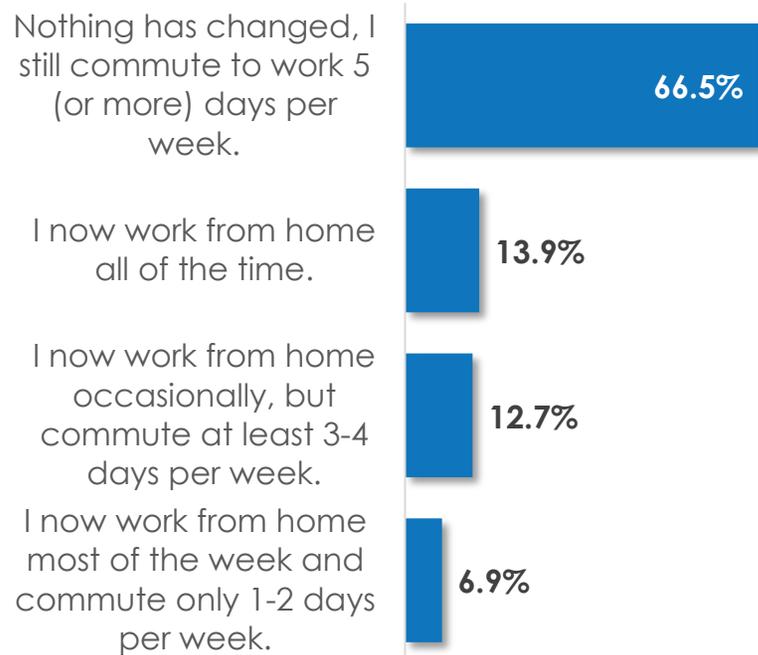
Currently, Charlotte County does not charge for its curb-to-curb service. Respondents were asked if this policy should be continued or if there should be a fare introduced. Most respondents (65.4%) agreed that no fare should be introduced. Approximately 34.6% of respondents believe that Charlotte County should institute a fare (Figure C-7).

Figure C-7: Should Charlotte County Transit implement a fare?



Working from home has become a much more popular work structure. To understand how commuting patterns have changed, respondents were asked if they were currently employed and how had their work commute changed since the pandemic. Most respondents (66.5%) indicated that nothing has changed and that they still commute. However, 13.9% work from home all the time, 12.7% occasionally work from home now, and 6.9% work from home most of the time (Figure C-8).

Figure C-8: If you are currently employed, how has your work commute changed since the pandemic?

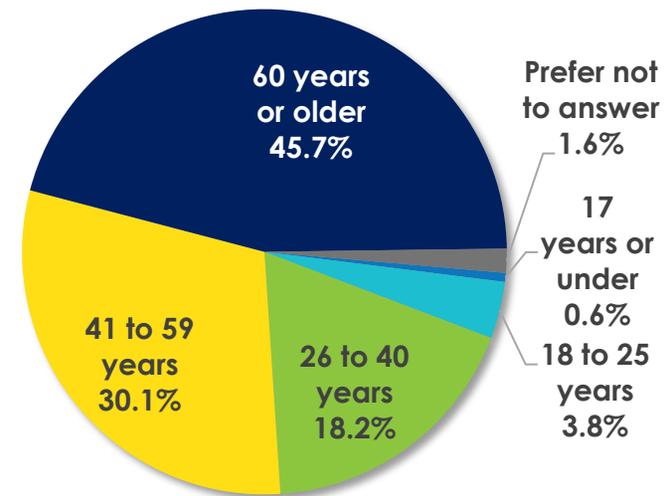


Respondent Socio-Demographic Information

Respondents were asked to provide socio-demographic information, including age, personal vehicle access, home zip code, gender, race and ethnicity, and income. All demographic information was optional and provided a "Prefer not to answer" option.

Most respondents indicated they are 60 years old or over (45.7%). Figure C-9 shows another 30.1% are 41-59 years, followed by 26-40 years (18.2%), 18-25 years (3.8%), and 17 years or under (0.6%). Approximately 1.6% preferred not to answer.

Figure C-9: How old are you?



Understanding the population that does not have access to a personal vehicle is important to understand their needs for mobility. Respondents were asked if they have access to a personal vehicle. The majority (92.9%) indicated they have access to a personal vehicle while 7.1% said they do not (Figure C-10).

Figure C-10: Do you have access to a personal vehicle?

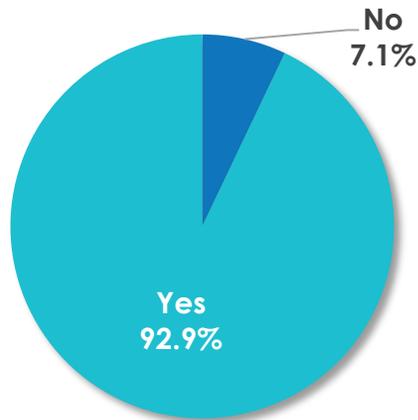
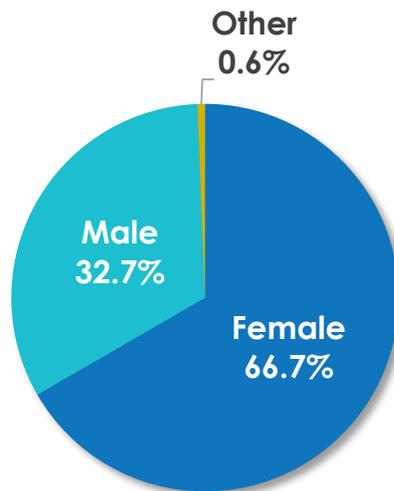


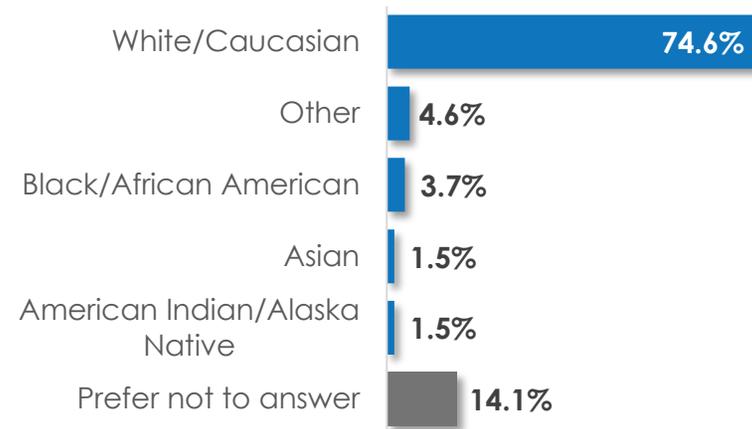
Figure C-11 shows most respondents indicated they are female (66.7%); males make up 32.7% of respondents and other gender identities make up the remaining 0.6%.

Figure C-11: Gender of Respondents



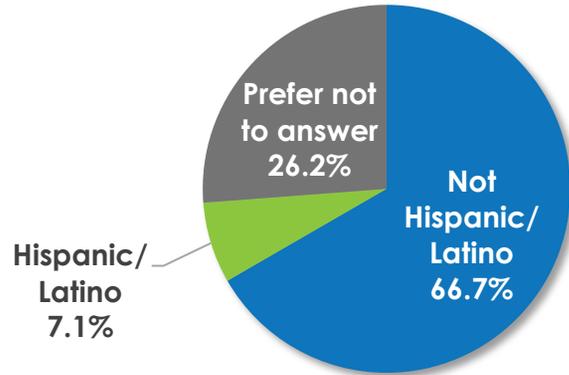
Respondents were also asked their ethnicity and race. Most respondents indicated they are White/Caucasian (74.6%), as shown in Figure C-12, followed by Other (4.6%), Black/African American (3.7%), Asian (1.5%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (1.5%). Approximately 14.1% preferred not to answer.

Figure C-12: Race of Respondents



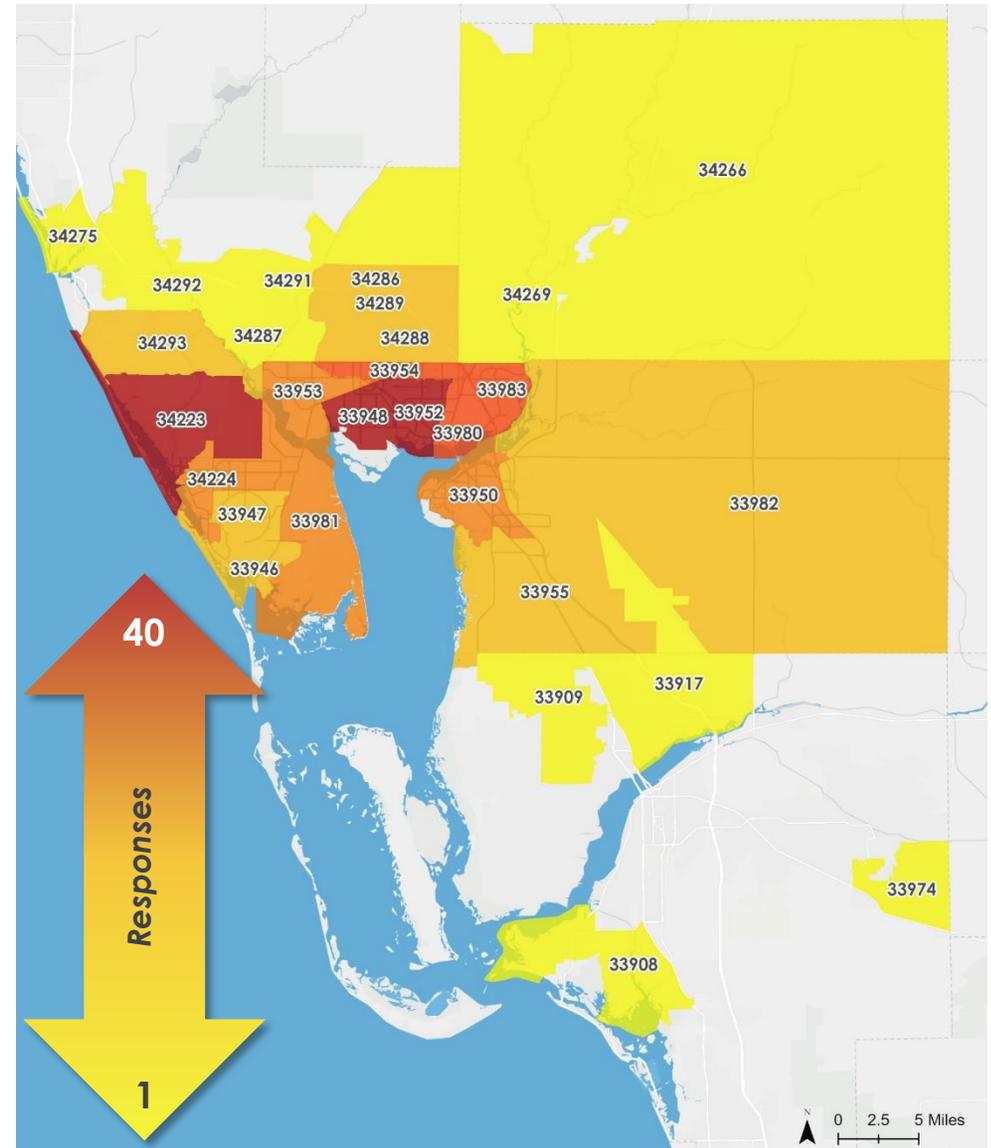
Respondents were also asked if they were of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Figure C-13 shows most respondents (66.7%) selected not Hispanic/Latino. Approximately 26.2% preferred not to answer.

Figure C-13: Ethnicity of Respondents



The top three ZIP codes of residents who completed the survey are 34223 (Englewood, Manasota Key, North Port, South Venice, and Woodmere), 33952 (Port Charlotte), and 33948 (Port Charlotte and Murdock). The distribution of surveys is displayed in Map C-1.

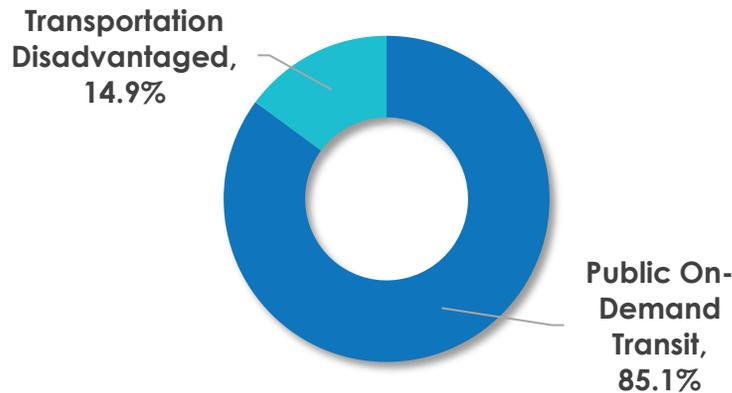
Map C-1: Responses by ZIP Codes



Passenger Survey

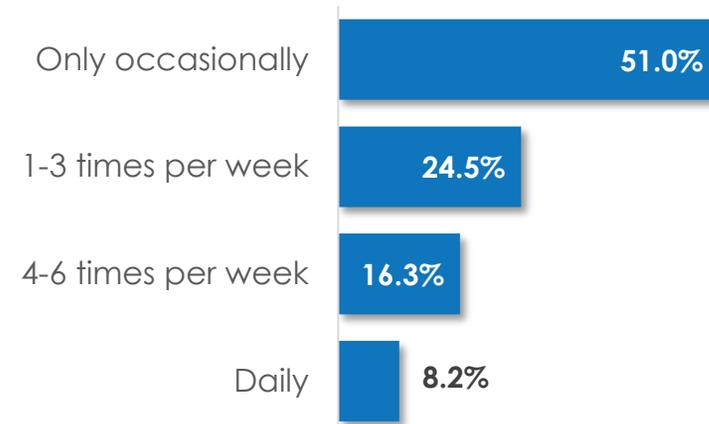
Passenger survey respondents were asked what transportation service they were using, public on-demand or transportation disadvantaged. Most respondents, 85.1%, indicated they were using public on-demand while 14.9% said they were using transportation disadvantaged (Figure C-16).

Figure C-16: Which type of Charlotte County transportation service are you using today?



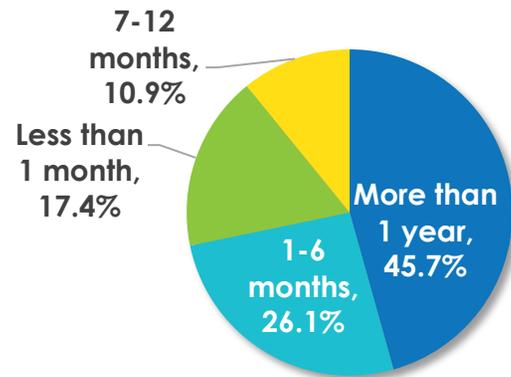
Respondents were asked how often they use Charlotte County Transit services. The majority (51.0%) indicated they use the service only occasionally. Figure C-17 shows that approximately 24.5% of respondents use the service 1-3 times per week, 16.3% responded 4-6 times per week, and 8.2% said daily.

Figure C-17: How often do you use Charlotte County Transit services?



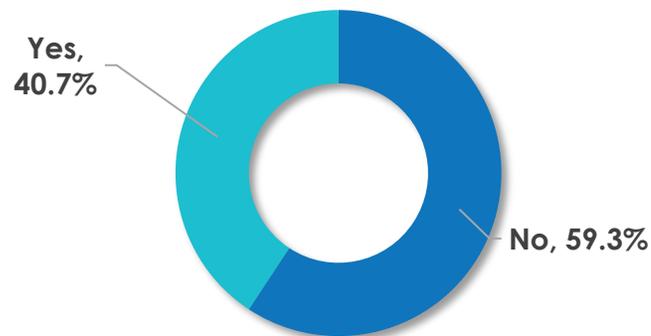
When respondents were asked how long they had been using the service, the most common answer was more than a year (45.7%) whereas 26.1% indicated 1-6 months. Approximately 17.4% responded less than 1 month and 10.9% said 7-12 months.

Figure C-18: How often do you use Charlotte County Transit services?



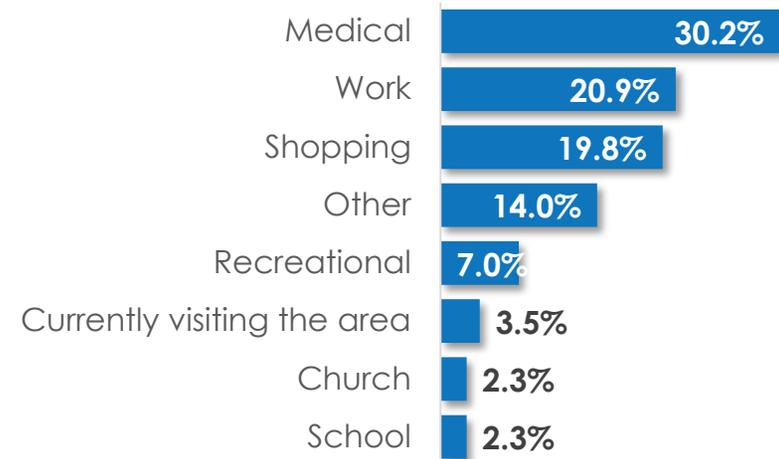
Respondents were asked if they would have access to another form of transportation if Charlotte County Transit were not available. The majority (59.3%) responded they would not.

Figure C-19: If Charlotte County Transit were not available today, would you have access to another form of transportation?



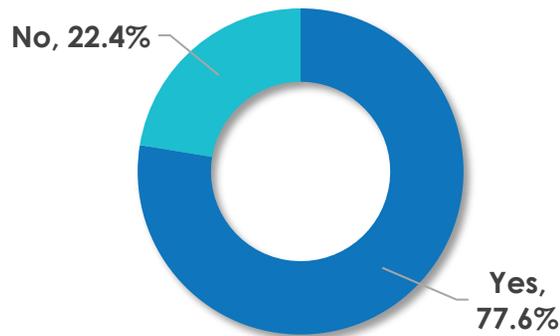
When asked why the respondent uses Charlotte County Transit, the top three purposes are medical (30.2%), work (20.9%), and shopping (19.8%). Other responses included other (14.0%), recreation (7.0%), currently visiting the area (3.5%), school (2.3%), and church (2.3%).

Figure C-20: What is the primary purpose you use Charlotte County Transit?



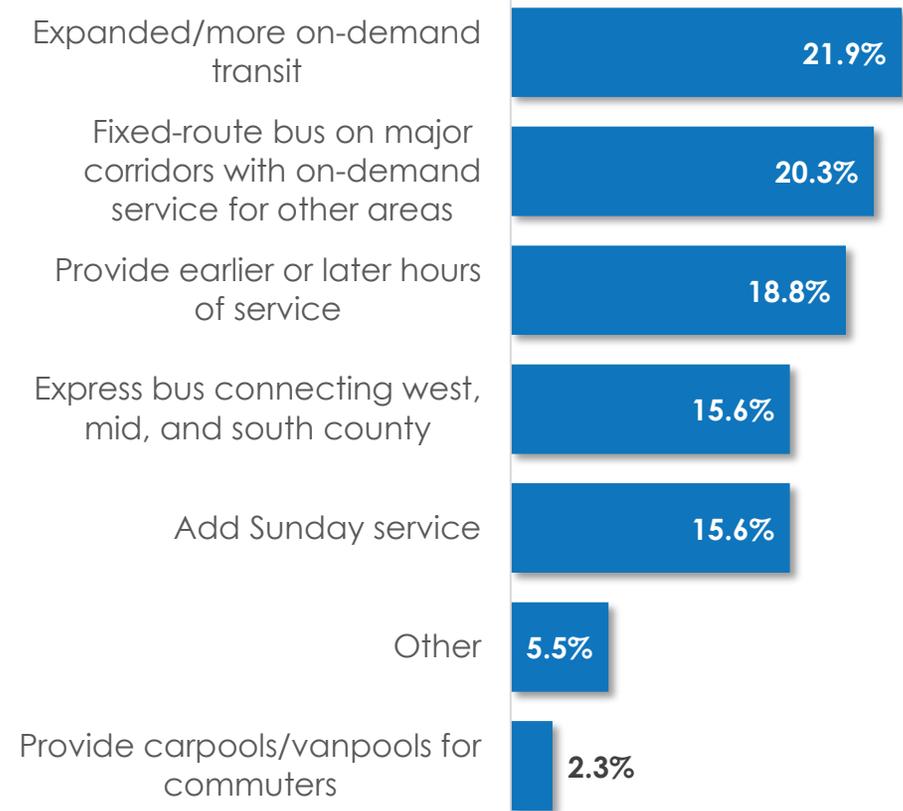
The majority (77.6%) of respondents agreed there is a need for additional transit services in Charlotte County (Figure C-21).

Figure C-21: Do you think there is a need for additional transit service in Charlotte County?



To help evaluate transit needs in Charlotte County, passengers were asked what transit improvements they would prioritize over the next 10 years. The top three priorities were expanded/more on-demand transit (21.9%), fixed-route bus on major corridors with on-demand service for other areas (20.3%) and providing earlier or later hours of service (18.8%). Adding Sunday service (15.6%) and express bus connecting west, mid, and south county (15.6%) were also received favorably (Figure C-22).

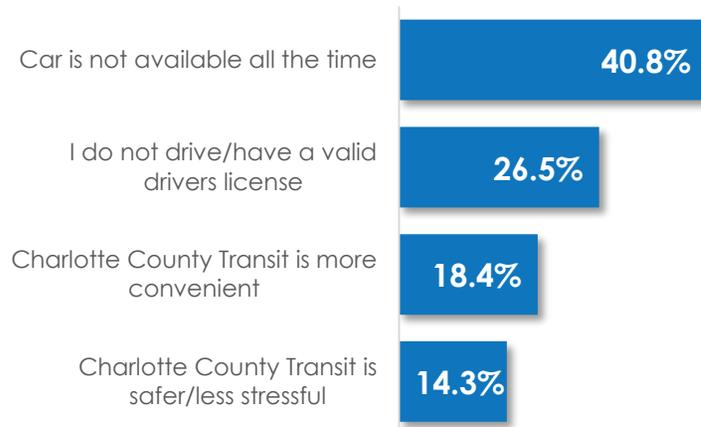
Figure C-22: What transit improvements should Charlotte County prioritize over the next 10 years?



Most respondents said that a car not being available all of the time was the most important reason for using Charlotte County Transit. Approximately 26.5% indicated they did not have a driver's license. Figure C-23 shows that others responded that Charlotte County Transit is

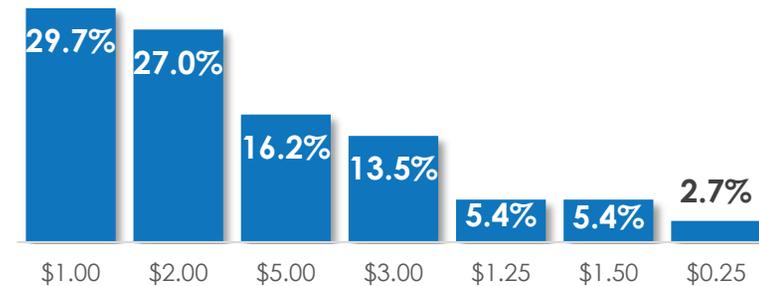
more convenient (18.4%) and Charlotte County Transit is safer or less stressful (14.3%).

Figure C-23: What is the most important reason you ride Charlotte County Transit?



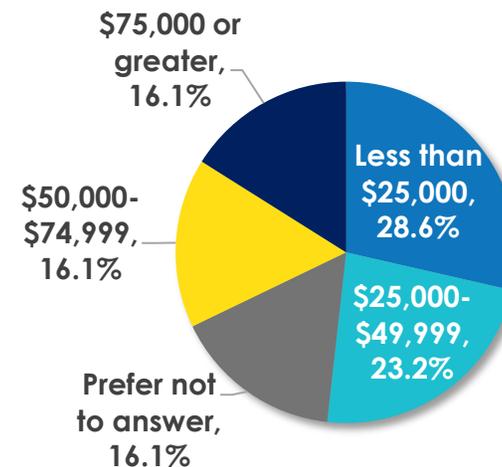
Respondents were asked if Charlotte County Transit implemented a fare, what a reasonable one-way fare would be. Respondents entered a range of answers, but the most popular was \$1.00 (30%). Figure C-24 shows the other fares respondents entered.

Figure C-24: If Charlotte County Transit is to implement a fare in the future, what do you think is a reasonable one-way fare?



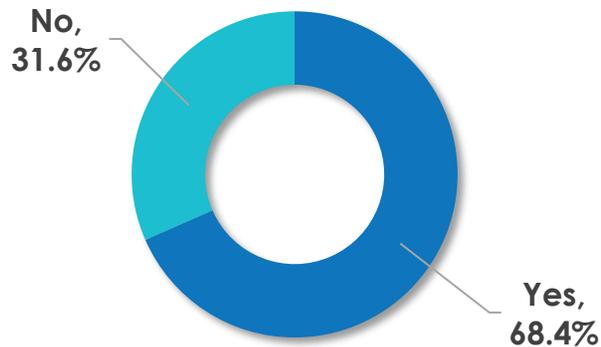
Approximately 28.6% of respondents indicated that their household income is less than \$25,000 and 23.2% said \$25,000 to \$50,000. Approximately 16.1% responded \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000 or greater, or preferred not to answer, respectively.

Figure C-25: My total household income is...



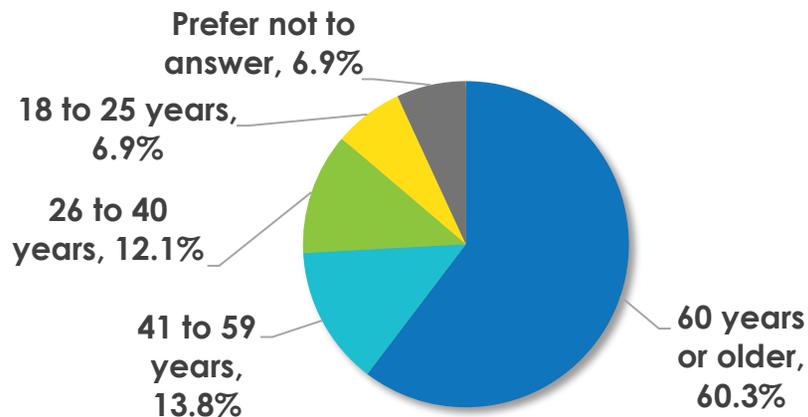
The majority (68.4%) said they do have a driver's license (Figure C-26).

Figure C-26: Do you have a driver's license?



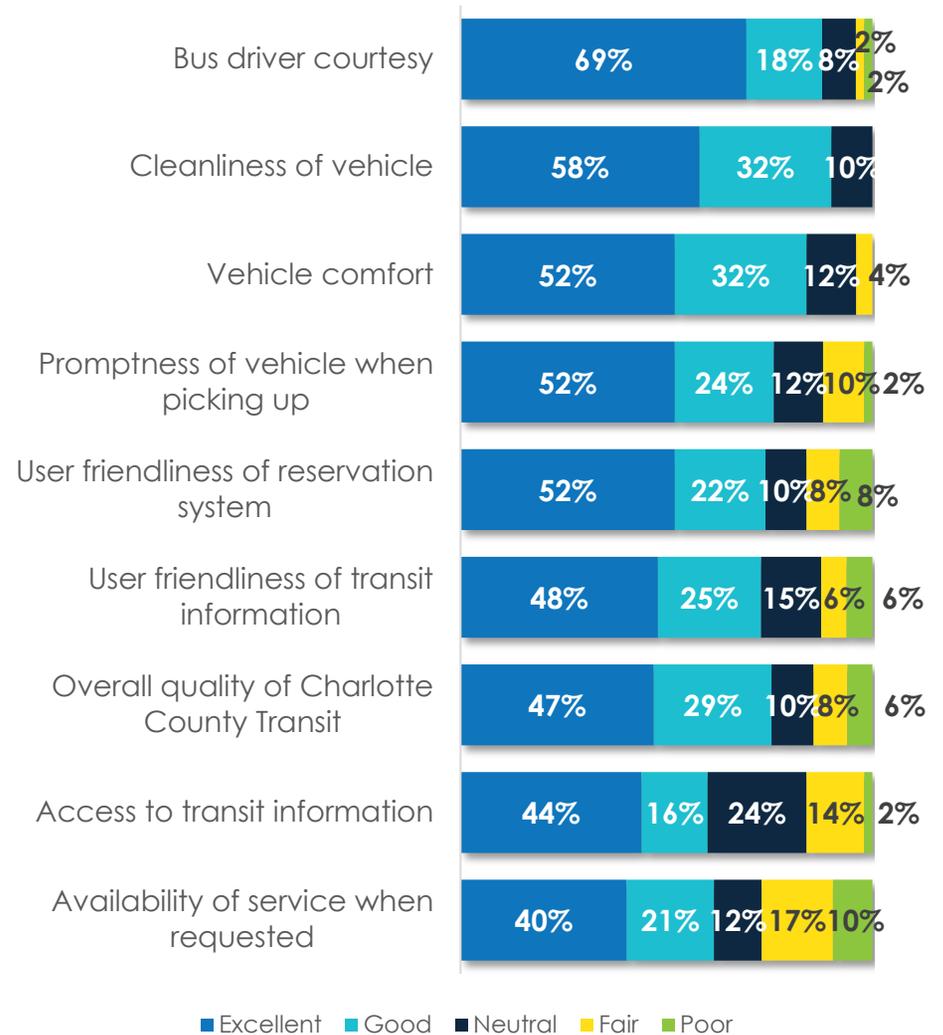
Approximately 60.3% responded that they are 60 years or older, 13.8% are 41-59 years, 12.1% are 26-40 years, and 6.9% are 18-25 years old (Figure C-27). Approximately 6.9% preferred not to answer.

Figure C-27: How old are you?



Since passengers have unique insight into Charlotte County Transit services, they were asked to rate characteristics as excellent, good, neutral, fair, or poor. Figure C-28 shows the results ranked by "excellent" ranking.

Figure C-28: Please rate the following Charlotte County Transit characteristics.



Appendix D. Other Revenue Sources

Other Revenue Sources

Lease Revenues

Transit systems can generate income through leasing portions of physical facilities, typically terminal, station, transfer, or parking facilities. Leases can be annual with rate adjustments or multi-year.

Advertising

Many transit agencies solicit and accept advertising on their vehicles, facilities (stations, shelters), and materials (tickets, schedules, maps). Advertising serves as a source of earned income, can establish broader community partnerships, and may capture interest and support for transit and other public services. Revenues from advertising flow directly or indirectly to the operating agencies from single- or multi-year advertising contracts and agreements, and from time-limited and event-based arrangements. It is important to note that state funds cannot be used for advertising at this time.

Private-Public Partnerships

Employer Contributions

Employer contributions can provide funding for one-time capital costs or ongoing operating support. Paying for a passenger shelter or bench would be a valuable financial contribution from a private or commercial entity. Employers or merchants that benefit from transit service may be interested in financially supporting it, particularly if a bus stop is or were to be located at their

front door to maximize convenience for employees or customers. If Charlotte County Transit reinstates fares, employers could also help subsidize the cost of transit tickets or passes.

Education/Training Institutions

Opportunities exist for funding partnerships and interlocal agreements between Charlotte County and the education and training institutions using transit services. The interlocal agreement could allow students, faculty, and staff to ride at no charge if fares are reinstated.

Special Event-based Arrangements

Special events taking place in Charlotte County also create opportunities for transit partnerships. Transit could provide trips to attendees at venues such as the Charlotte Sports Park for people attending Spring Training or other events.

Service and Business Organizations

Organizations, such as Senior Friendship, often contribute to community special projects. For transportation, this could include paying for or contributing toward the cost of a new vehicle or a bus bench or shelter near older adult housing. These types of organizations may also pay for trip reimbursement for after-school or childcare programs.

Appendix E. Performance Monitoring Program

Once the proposed transit services are implemented, the following performance indicators and measures should be monitored by Charlotte County Transit quarterly for its on-demand and regularly scheduled services:

- **Passenger Trips** – Annual passenger boardings on the transit vehicles.
- **Revenue Hours** – Annual hours of vehicle operation while in service (available to pick up revenue passengers).
- **Revenue Miles** – Annual miles of vehicle operation while in service.
- **Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour** – Ratio of annual passenger trips to annual revenue hours.

As regularly scheduled services can take up to three years to become established and productive, performance data up to that point should be reviewed and interpreted cautiously. Furthermore, regularly scheduled services will be new for Charlotte County Transit and will have few benchmarks to compare initially. Although adjustments/modifications are encouraged, outright discontinuations based on performance monitoring data alone are discouraged.

Evaluation Methodology and Process

This process is based on two measures, trips per mile and trips per hour, which are weighted equally to derive an overall route score. An individual route score for a particular measure is based on a comparison of the measure as a percentage of the system average. A

higher score represents better overall performance when compared to other routes.

The noted comparative performance evaluation can be beneficial, but caution should be exercised when using the final scores and rankings to compare routes as the results may not reflect the specific goals established for a particular route (i.e., geographic coverage vs. ridership performance). The process is useful, however, in highlighting routes that may have comparative performance-related issues. These routes can then be singled out for closer observation going forward to determine specific changes that may help mitigate any performance issues.

Once a route score is determined, routes can be ranked to reflect their comparative performance or highlight changes in performance over time via the three performance levels illustrated in Figure E-1.

Figure 10-29: Performance Monitoring Program



Appendix F. Prioritization Evaluation Results

Rank	Improvements	General Public Input	Stakeholder Input	Traditional Market Coverage	Discretionary Market Coverage	Ridership Productivity	Connections to Key Destinations	Cost Efficiency	Weighted Score
1	Microtransit	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7.0
2	US 41 Shopper and Airport Connector	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7.0
3	Sunshine Beach Shuttle	7	7	5	3	5	7	7	6.3
4	Passenger Ferry	7	7	3	3	7	7	7	6.2
5	Downtown Punta Gorda Trolley	5	7	7	7	5	7	5	6.0
6	Beach Cruiser	5	5	1	3	1	3	5	4.0
7	Englewood to Port Charlotte	3	3	1	1	1	5	7	3.9
8	Punta Gorda to Fort Myers Express	3	1	3	1	1	7	3	2.7
9	East-West Connector	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	1.6

Scoring

- 7 | Very High
- 5 | High
- 3 | Medium/Moderate
- 1 | Low