



# HEARTLAND RURAL MOBILITY PLAN

**TRB 19<sup>th</sup> National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference**  
***Burlington, Vermont – October 26, 2010***



**Tindale-Oliver & Associates, Inc.**  
Planning & Engineering



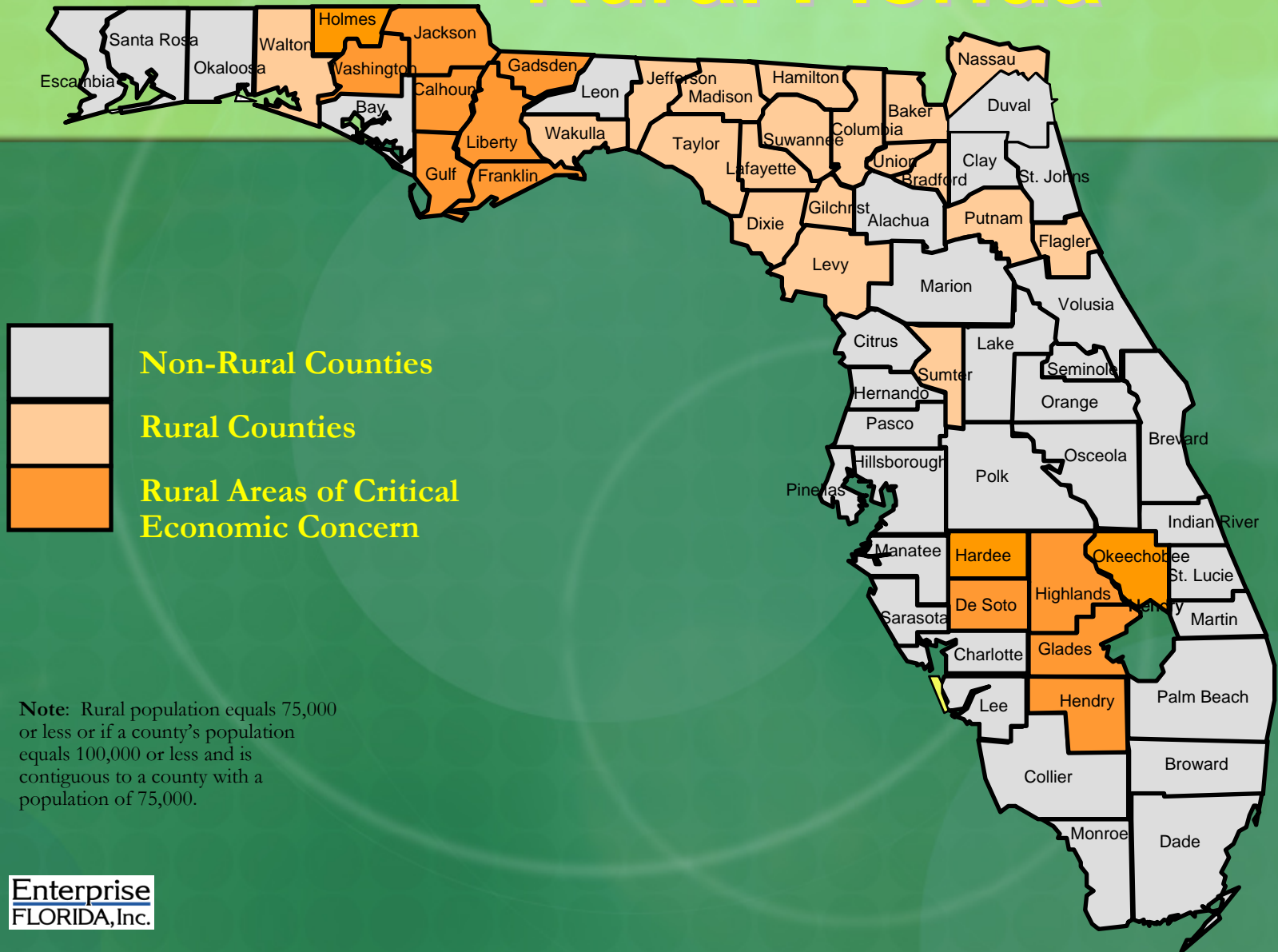
# Presentation Outline

- Introduction & Overview
- Mobility Plan Process
- Mobility Plan Recommendations
- Next Steps
  - Mobility Working Group
  - Project Implementation

# Florida's Rural Population

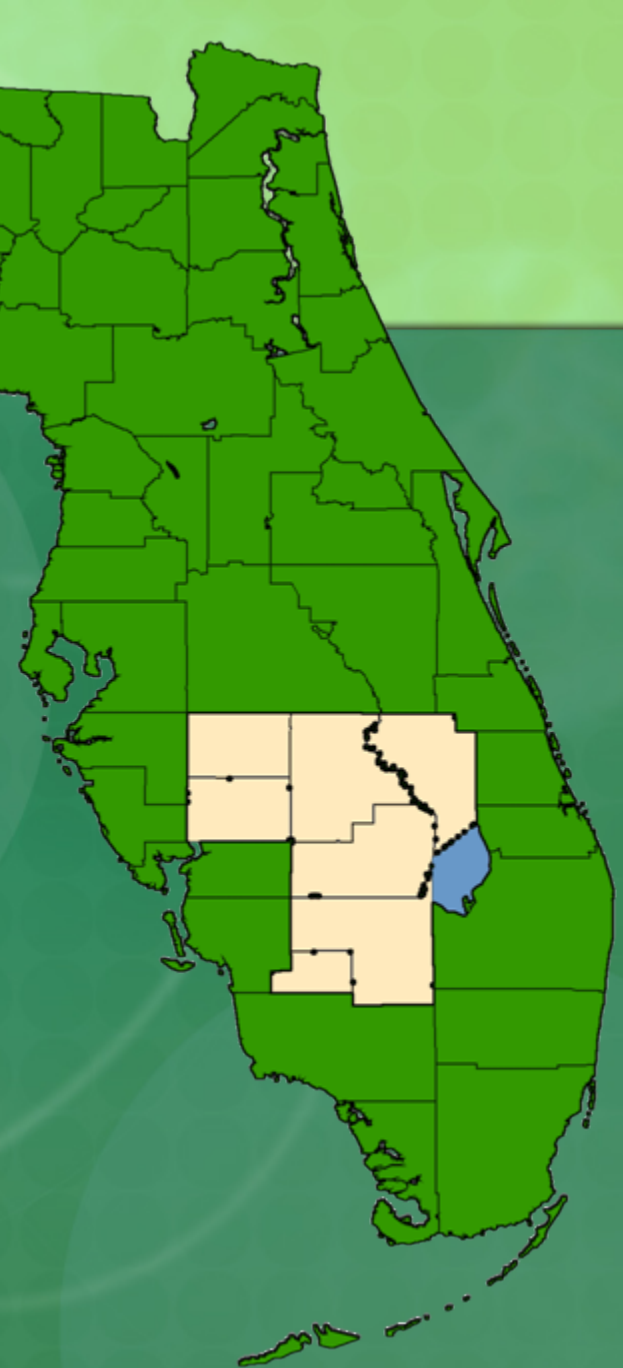
- 16% of total population in rural areas
- 26 of 67 counties are rural
- Per capita income 15% to 25% lower than in urban counties
- Rural population with high school diploma is 7% less than national average
- Rural population with college degree is slightly more than half of national average
- Per capita incomes in Florida's "Designated Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern" are 60% of national average
- High unemployment rates

# Rural Florida



**Note:** Rural population equals 75,000 or less or if a county's population equals 100,000 or less and is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000.

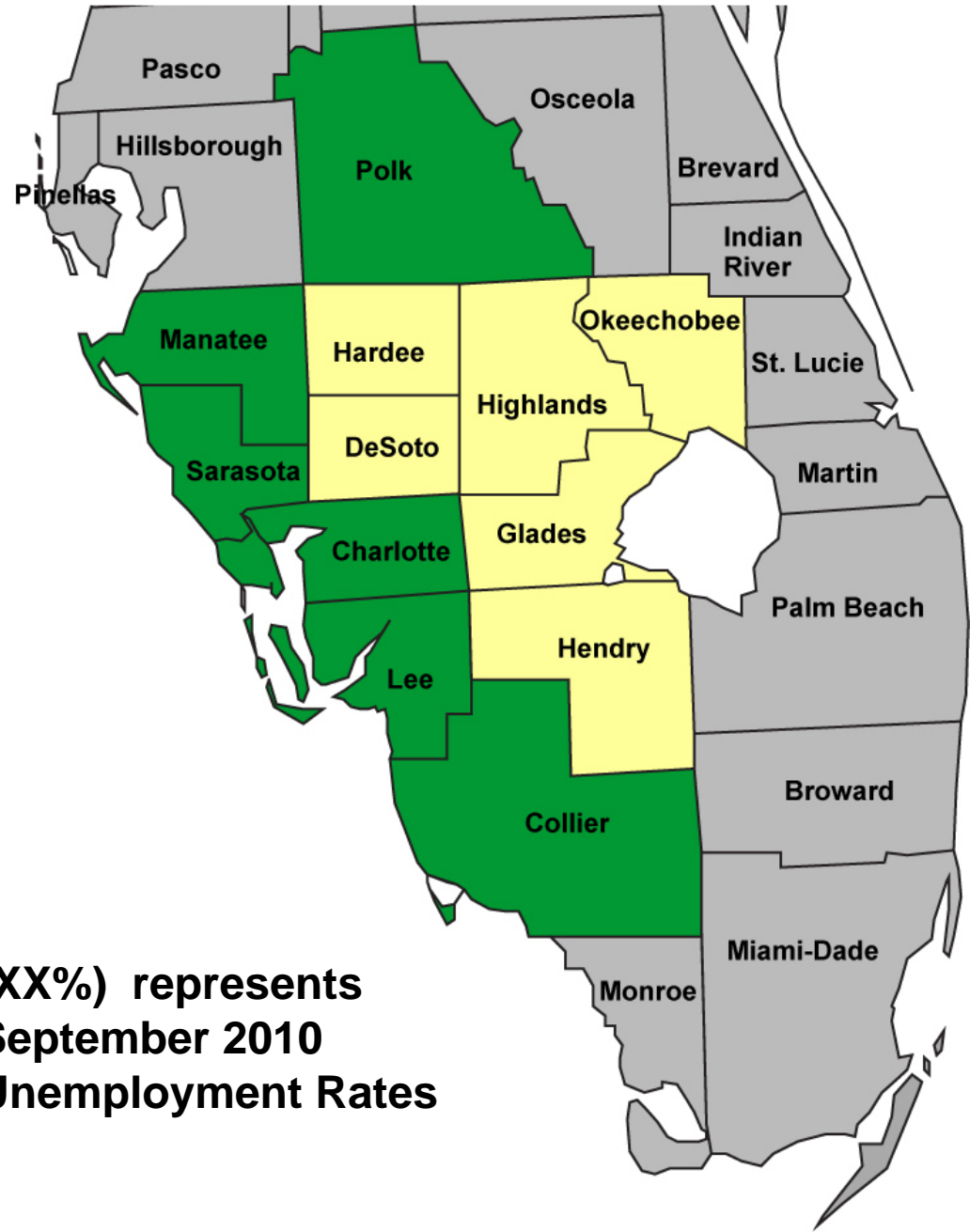
# Study Area



# Heartland Region

- DeSoto (13.0%)
- Glades (13.4%)
- Hardee (14.8%)
- Hendry (20.2%)
- Highlands (13.2%)
- Okeechobee (14.7%)
- FLORIDA (11.9%)

## FDOT District 1



# Project Overview

- What? –
  - Heartland Regional Mobility Plan
- Why? –
  - Planning Framework, Maximize Funding Partnerships, Serve Mobility Needs of Communities, Optimize Coordination



# Project Overview

## How?

- Supporting Documentation
- Issues
- Needs
- Strategies
- Services
- Actions

## Who?

- Partnership FHREDI /  
FDOT: Regional Collaboration





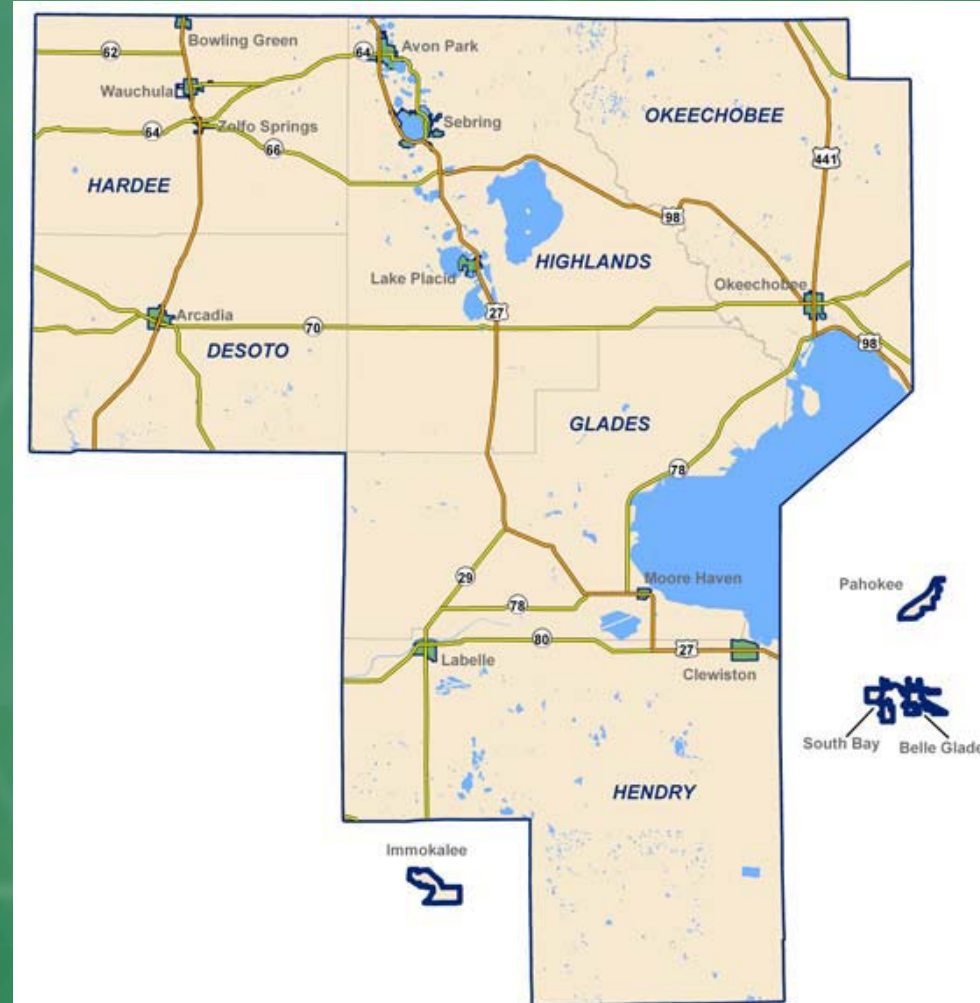
# Mobility Plan Components

- ✓ Identify Region Characteristics and Demographics
- ✓ Identify Transportation Resources
- ✓ Establish Public Involvement Plan
- ✓ Assess Overall Regional Mobility Needs
- ✓ Evaluate Existing Public Transportation Services
- ✓ Develop Goals, Objectives, Policies
- ✓ Identify and Evaluate Mobility Alternatives
- ✓ Develop Rural Mobility Operations and Strategic Implementation Plan

# Objectives

- Regional Strategic Mobility Plan
- Business / Economic Foundation
- Identification of Needs Among All Markets
- Collaboration and Public Outreach
- Define Regional Process for Implementation

## *Florida Heartland Region*



# Where are we coming from?

- **Florida DOT Rural Planning and Marketing Assessment**
  - Focus of study = Rural mobility
  - Advisory committee, interviews, estimate of need
- **Focus Areas Identified**
  - Employment and economic development, job training, education, elder mobility
- **Heartland Rural Mobility Summit**
  - Sebring – December 2005
- **FHREDI / Heartland Visioning Process**

# Steering Committee



- Local Interest Groups
- Economic Development Representatives
- Social Services
- Local Government Staffs
- Community Transportation Coordinators
- Regional Planning Councils
- FHREDI Staff
- Florida DOT Districts (D-1 & D-4)

# Assessment

## Regional Mobility Needs Assessment

### Baseline Conditions

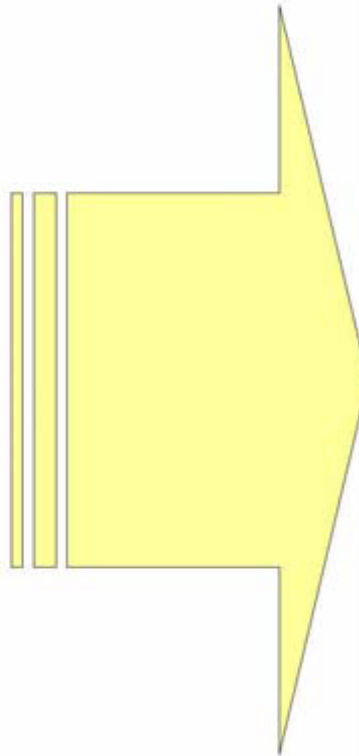
- Geography
- Population & Employment
- Other Demographics
- Transit Orientation Index
- TD Population
- Economic and Labor Force
- Journey to Work
- Commuting Trends
- Roadway & Traffic Conditions

### Existing Transportation Resources

- Fixed-Route Transit
- Paratransit
- Private Carriers
- Social Service Agencies
- Faith-Based Agencies

### Public Involvement

- Agency Coordination Meetings
- HRMP Steering Committee
- Survey & Comment Cards
- Public Workshops
- Discussion Groups
- Public Hearings
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Presentations to Boards
- Newsletters, E-mails, Website



### Regional Mobility Needs

Mobility Options for Low-Income Residents/Seniors

Mobility Options for Workers

Mobility Options for Transportation Disadvantaged

Mobility Options for Other Captive & Choice Riders

# Comprehensive Regional System

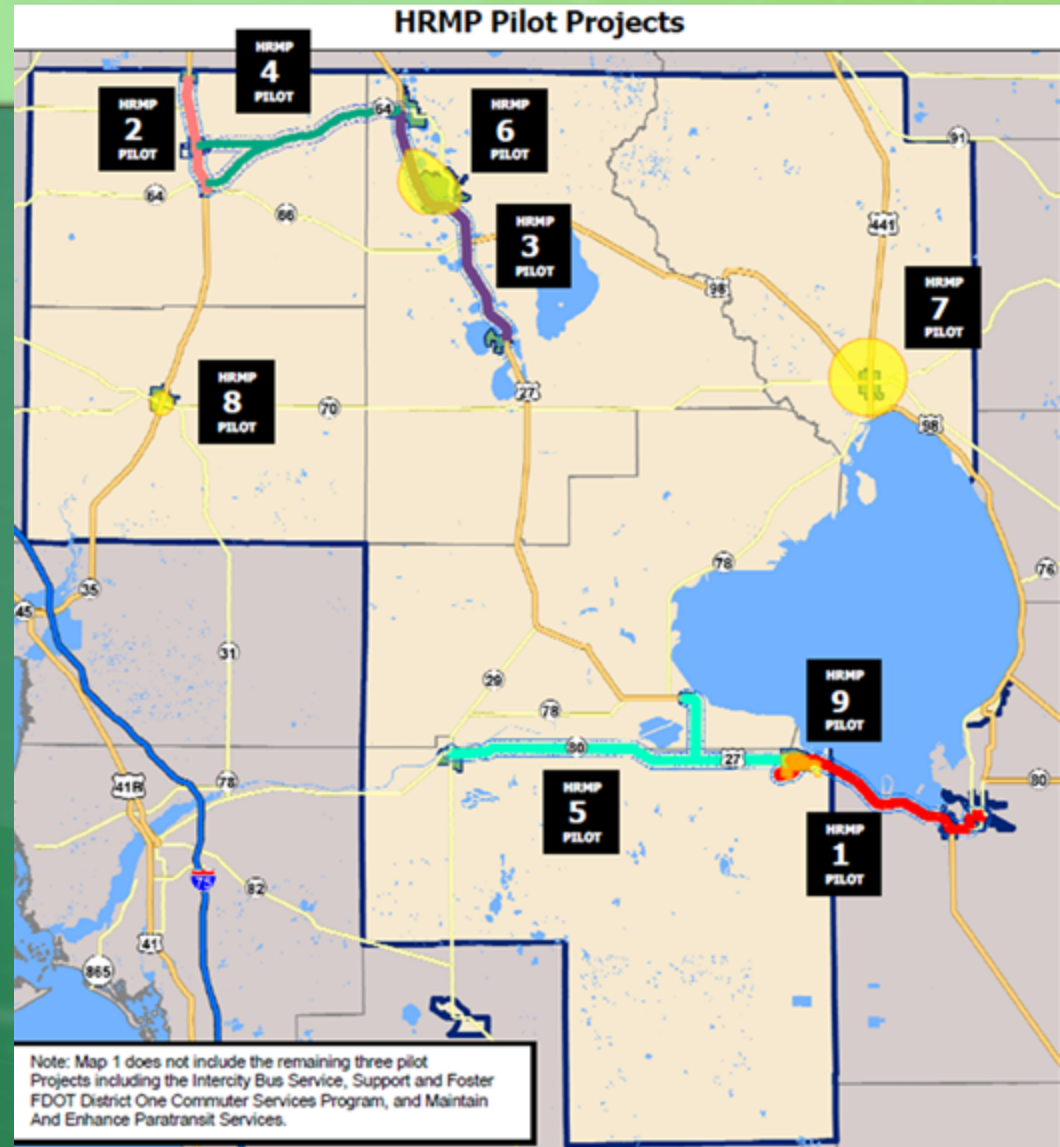
## Coordinate Existing Mobility Alternatives

- ✓ CTC/ Paratransit
- ✓ Social Services
- ✓ Fixed-Route
- ✓ Commuter Services
- ✓ Regional Bus
- ✓ Regional Rail



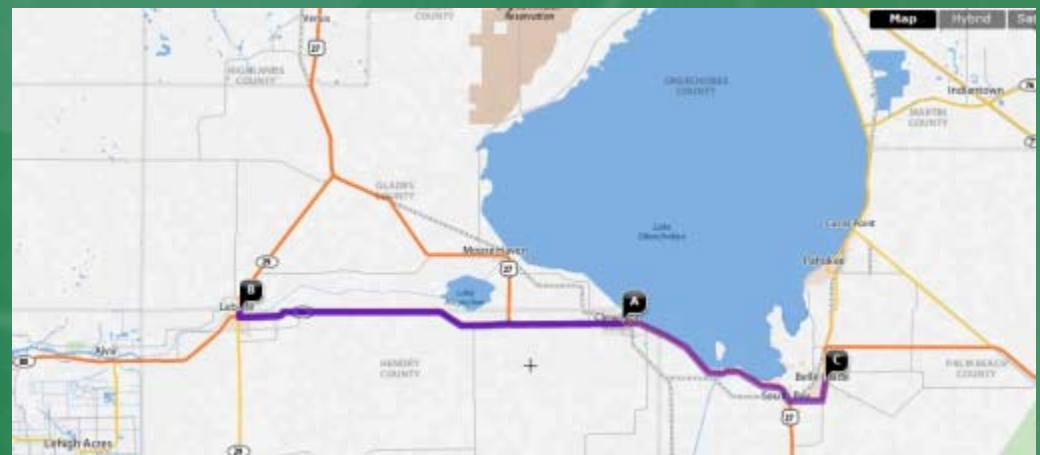
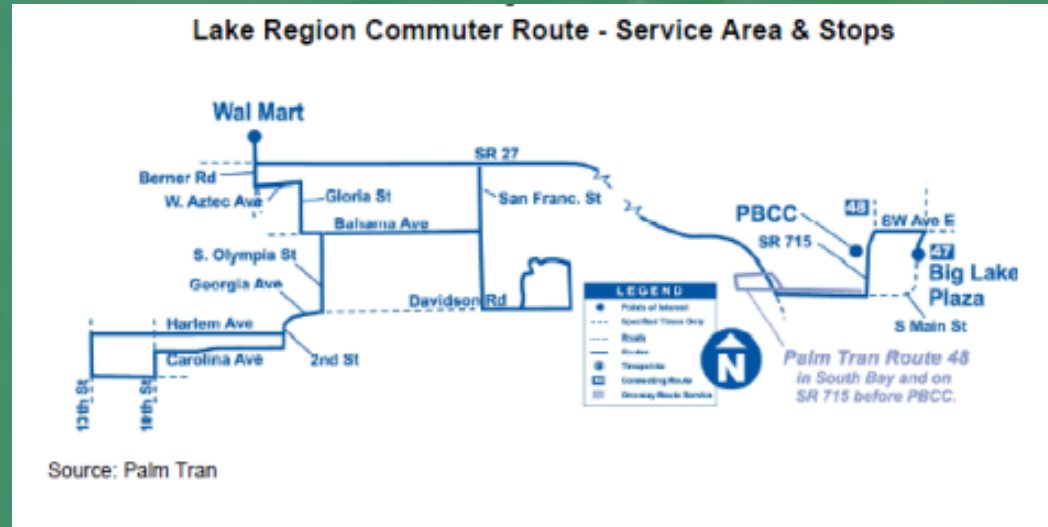
# Comprehensive Regional System

Implement Pilot Initiatives



# Lake Region Commuter Expansion/ Circulator

- ❖ Clewiston to Belle Glade
- ❖ SR 27
- ❖ Annual Op = \$182k
- ❖ Capital = \$200k
- ❖ Riders = 31,000





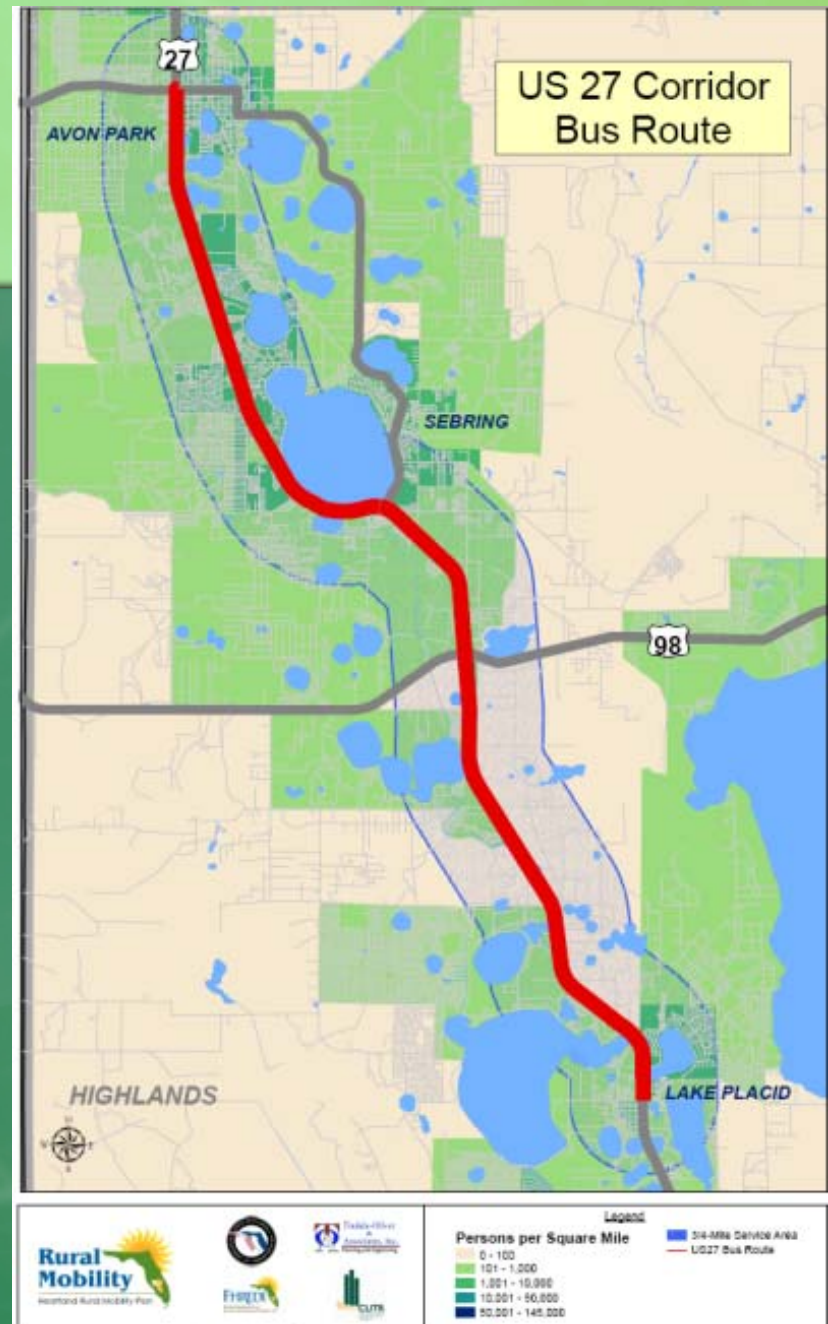
# US 17 Corridor Network

- ❖ Bowling Green / Zolfo Springs
- ❖ Ninety (90) minute frequency
- ❖ Annual Op = \$216k
- ❖ Capital = \$200k
- ❖ Ridership = 37,000



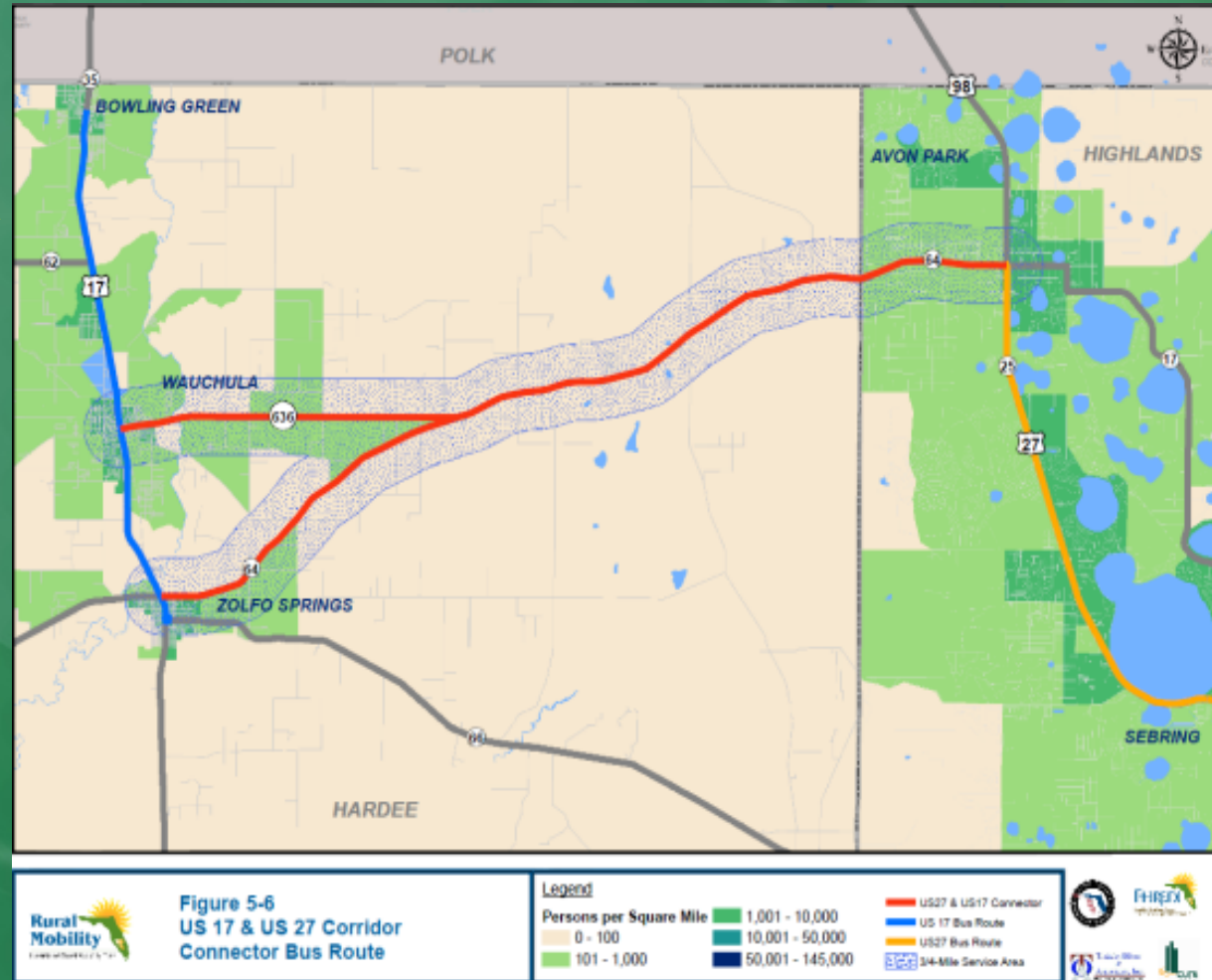
# US 27 Corridor Network

- ❖ Avon Park to Lake Placid US 27
- ❖ Annual Op = \$ 649k
- ❖ Capital = \$600k
- ❖ Riders 112,000



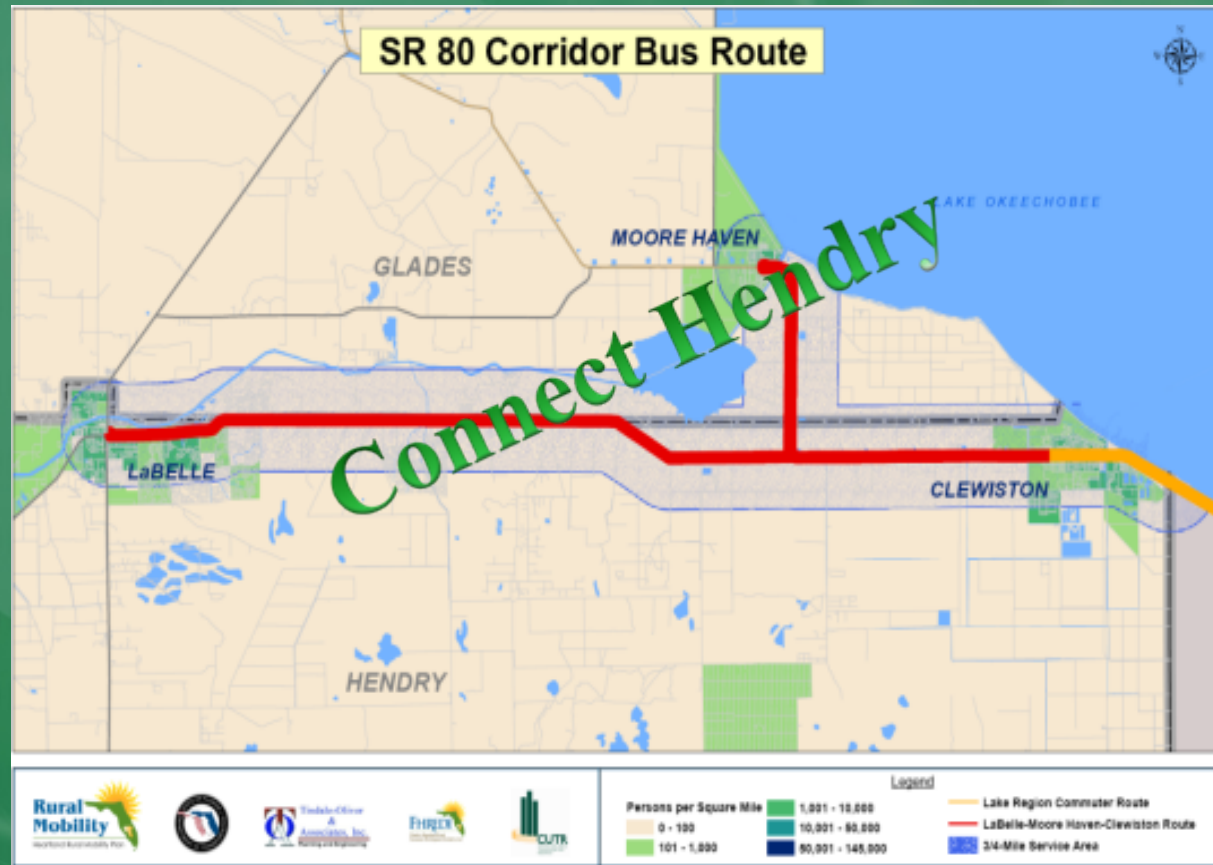
# US 17/27 Connector

- ❖ Wauchula / Zolfo Springs to Avon Park
- ❖ Annual Op = \$ 216k
- ❖ Capital = \$200k
- ❖ Riders 37,000

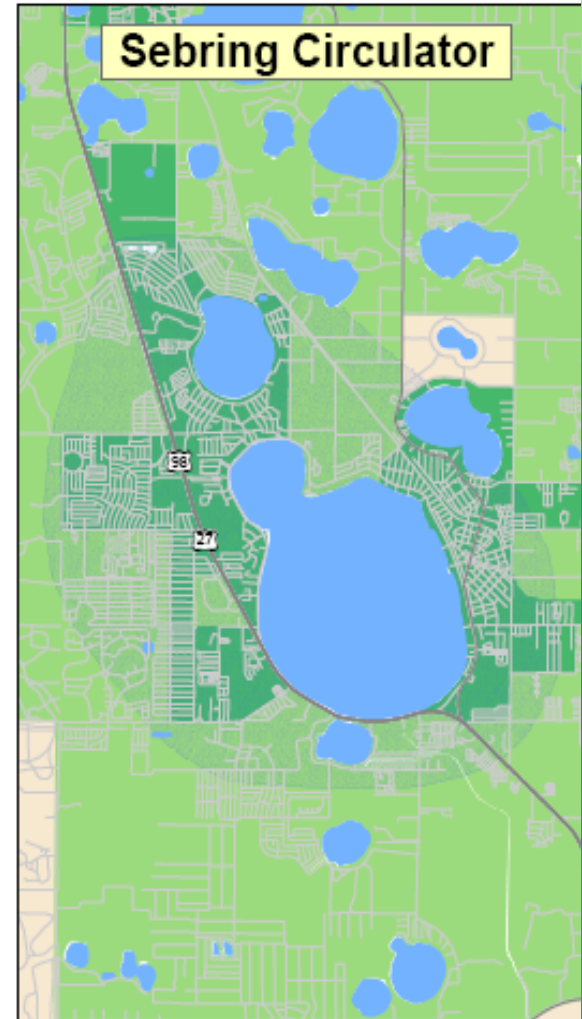
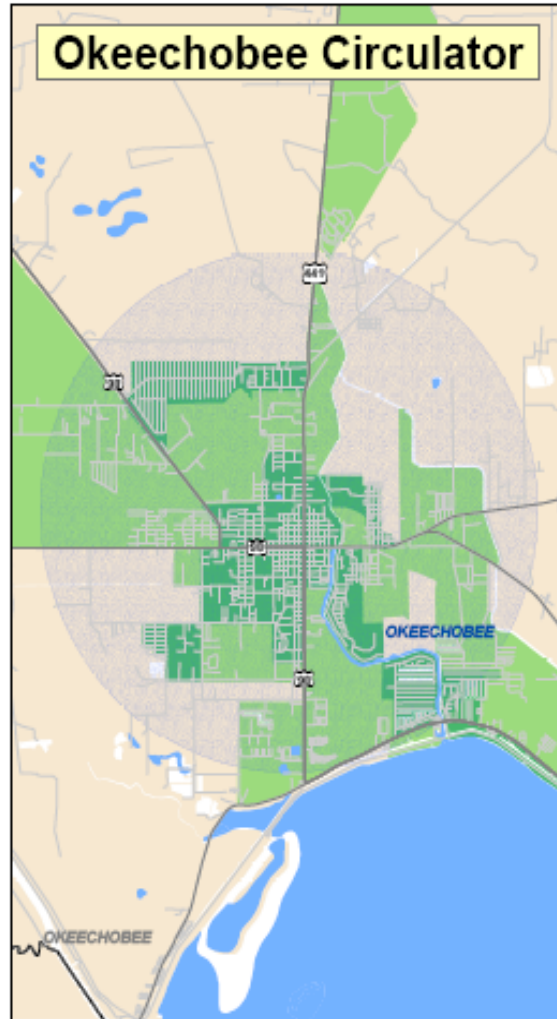
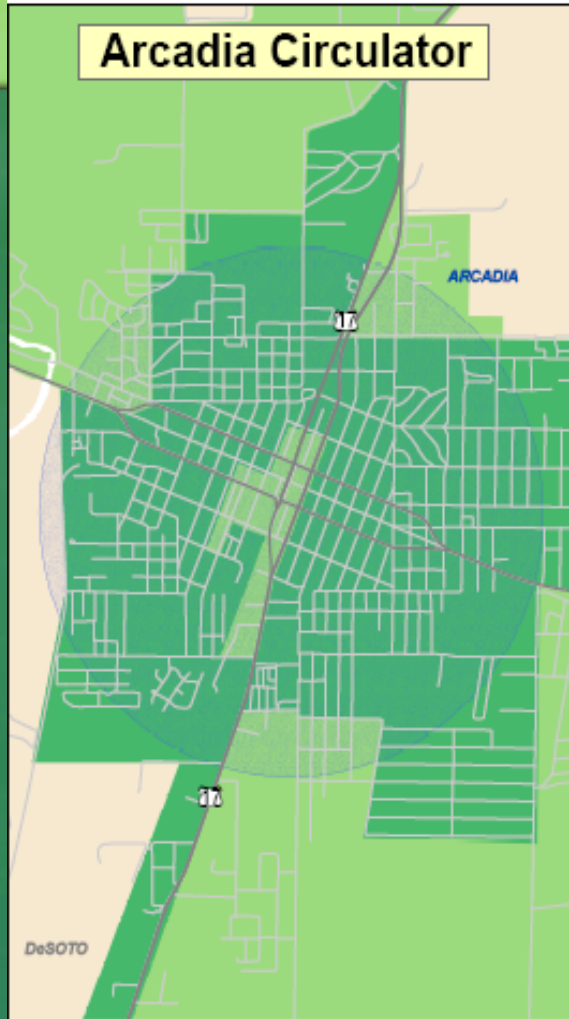


# SR 80 Corridor Bus Network

- ❖ La Belle/Clewiston  
SR 80
- ❖ Annual Op = \$ 649k
- ❖ Capital = \$600k
- ❖ Riders 110,000



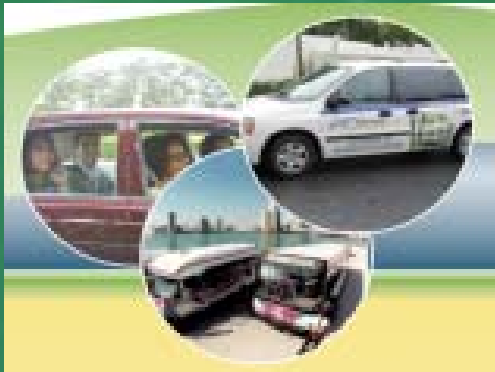
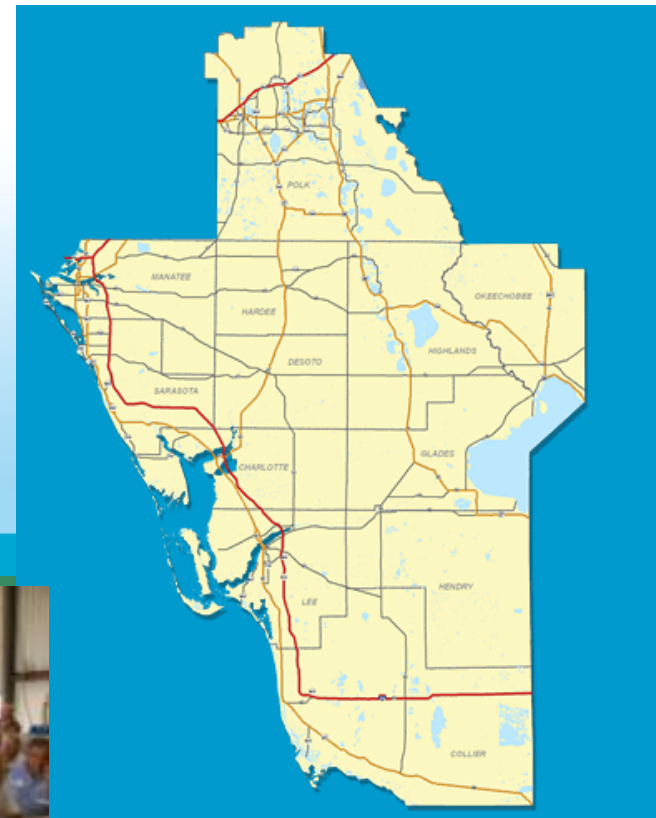
# Circulator Concepts



# Regional Commuter Services

- Launched in 2007
- Program of the Florida Department of Transportation – District 1
- Collaborating with businesses, commuters, and local communities
- 12-county region – new employer-based approach with planning/marketing emphasis

Commuter  
Services



# Potential Mobility Investments

**HRMP Pilot Projects - 2009 Cost Projections**

<b>Project No.*</b>	<b>HRMP Pilot Project</b>	<b>Operating Costs</b>	<b>Capital Costs</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
1	Lake Region Commuter Route	\$182,000	\$200,000	\$382,000
2	US 17 Corridor	\$216,309	\$200,000	\$416,309
3	US 27 Corridor	\$648,926	\$600,000	\$1,248,926
4	US 17-US 27 Connector	\$216,309	\$200,000	\$416,309
5	SR 80 Corridor	\$648,926	\$600,000	\$1,248,926
6	Sebring Circulator	\$216,309	\$150,000	\$366,309
7	Okeechobee Circulator	\$216,309	\$150,000	\$366,309
8	Arcadia Circulator	\$216,309	\$150,000	\$366,309
9	Clewiston Circulator	\$216,309	\$150,000	\$366,309
10	Inter-city Bus	Potential costs vary and will be determined once service concepts are developed.		
11	Commuter Services Program	Not available		
12	Enhanced Paratransit	Projected additional annual operating cost to provide enhanced paratransit service = \$3,224,601		
<b>Total Costs**</b>		<b>\$6,002,307</b>	<b>\$2,400,000</b>	<b>\$8,402,307</b>

# Potential Funding

<b>PROJECTED AVAILABILITY OF MAJOR REVENUE SOURCES</b>	
<b>Existing Funding Sources</b>	
Existing Fixed Route	\$0
Existing Paratransit	\$6,449,202
<b>Total Existing Revenue</b>	<b>\$6,449,202</b>
<b>Potential Funding Sources</b>	
FTA Section 5303	\$40,000
FTA Section 5307	\$350,000
FTA Section 5311	\$358,000
FTA Section 5316	\$150,000
FTA Section 5317	\$100,000
Public Transit Block Grant	\$250,000
Transit Service Development	\$100,000
Local Contributions	\$100,000
Special Assessments	\$300,000
REDI Waiver	Varies
In-kind Match	Varies
Local Match for Federal and State Programs	Varies
Farebox Revenue	\$193,051
<b>Total Potential Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,941,051</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$8,390,253</b>



# Funding Opportunities

## ■ Federal

- FTA Urban / Rural Formula Funding
- JARC/New Freedom
- TIGGER (Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas & Energy Reduction)
- TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery)

## ■ State

- Florida Public Transit Block Grant Funds
- Florida Transit Service Development Program Funds
- Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) Designation/REDI Waiver

## ■ Local

- Private / Public
- Leverage Existing Investments

# Regional Mobility Working Group (MWG)



Human  
Services



Rural  
Services



Local  
Transit  
Systems



Regional  
Express /  
Commuter  
Service

Regional Mobility Coordination for All Markets

# MWG Approach

- Utilize Urban Planning Perspective (MP0) Structure/Process
- Support Umbrella: FHREDI / RPCs/FDOT
- Local Collaboration
- Economic Development Focus
- “Ready-to-Go” Priorities

# MWVG Benefits

- Coordination
- Project Priorities
- Joint Marketing / Outreach
- Shared Resources
- Maximize Economic Development / Growth Management / Funding Eligibilities
- Promote Partnerships / Grant Opportunities
- Education and Awareness

# Regional MWG Formation Process

- ❖ **County Administrator Representation**

- ❖ FHREDI, FDOT, RPC Support

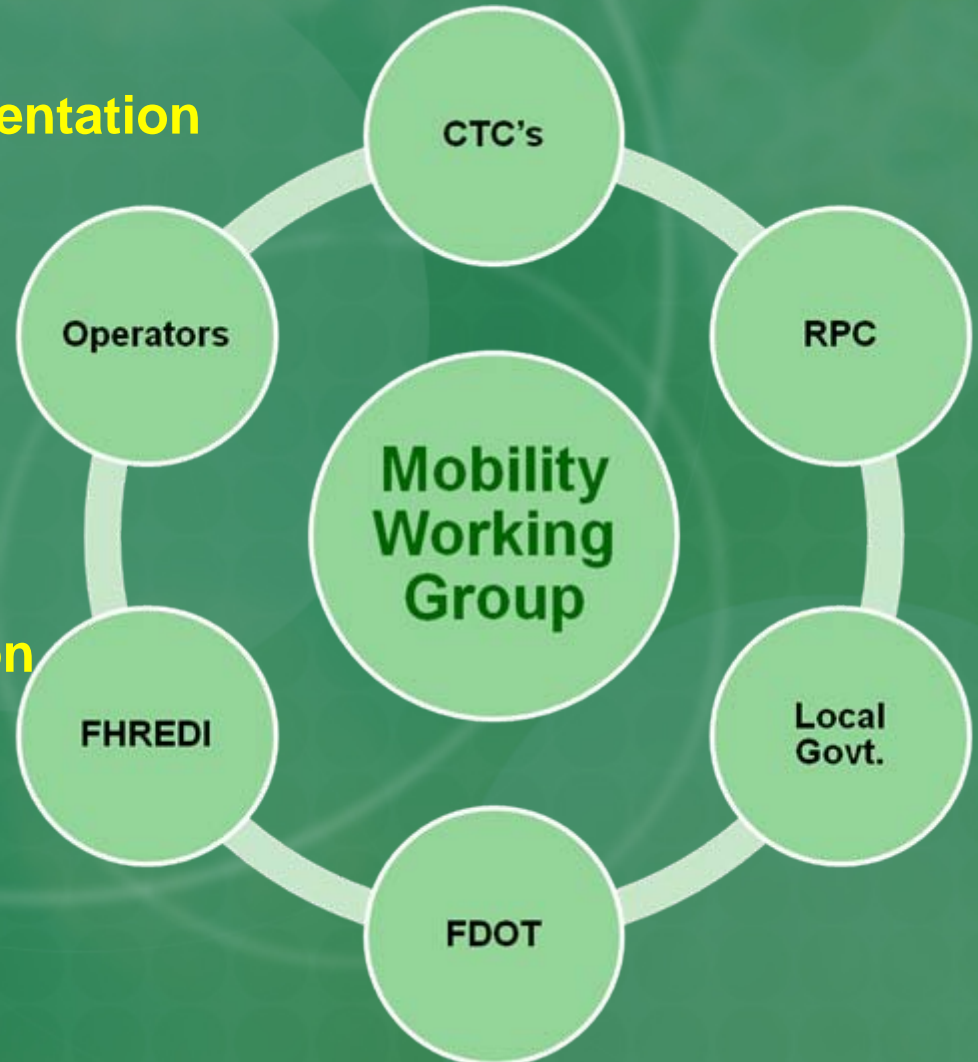
- ❖ **Other Key Regional Partners**

- ❖ Work Program Development

- ❖ **Coordination Process**

- ❖ Public Involvement

- ❖ **Grants / Funding Collaboration**



# Issues / Recommendations

- Focus on Economic Development
- Regional Network Development
- Mobility Relevance
  - Economy, Job Access, Education
  - Energy
  - Environment
  - Growth Management
- Regional Cooperation (MWG)
- Planning Process (Work Program)

# Questions ?

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