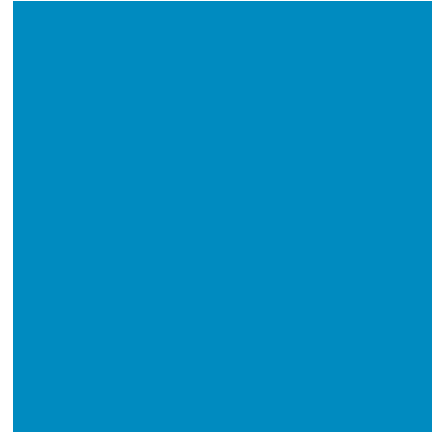


Planning for the Future

South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Needs Assessment Plan



TRANSPORTATION &
ENVIRONMENTAL
RESOURCES

SETRPC
SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Approved by Steering Committee: November 30, 2016

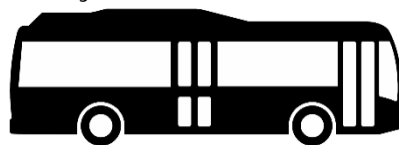
SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLAN

Introduction

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and regional transportation planning agency for the southeast Texas region. Its mission is to solve area wide problems by promoting intergovernmental cooperation and coordination, conducting comprehensive regional planning, and providing a forum for the discussion and study of area issues. SETRPC works in collaboration with different governmental entities to develop policies and make decisions about regional issues related to economic growth and mobility.



A very important task of SETRPC is to develop a Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP). This plan is updated every five years to evaluate the public transportation system in the southeast Texas region and identify any deficiencies or areas where transit service is underprovided. The plan is required by the Federal Government to ensure that local governments provide more efficient transit services for seniors, individuals with disabilities, persons living below poverty level, veterans, children, and others. The purpose of this document is to assess the current state of transportation mobility and determine whether or not possible solutions to address identified deficiencies can be reasonably met with available funding.



An Assessment of Transportation Services and an Identification of Unmet Transportation Needs

A key step in coordinating transportation services is a careful analysis of the mobility needs of various segments of the population and the potential need for transit services. This section identifies populations who benefit from a coordinated transportation system, and the needs of a wide-range of existing and potential transit users, as well as agencies and entities as related to their role in coordinating human service transportation. While Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT), Port Arthur Transit (PAT), and South East Texas Transit (SETT) serve the public and a large number of different populations within the three-county area, this particular plan focuses on specific groups of transit dependent populations. Certain segments of the population may be expected to have a greater dependence on, and make more extensive use of, public transit than the population as a whole because they have historically had more limited access to the automobile as a mode of travel than the population in general. Six such “transit-dependent” population groups were identified for this plan:

- Seniors (ages 65 and older)
- Persons with low incomes
- Veterans
- Children (18 years and under)
- Disabled individuals
- Households with no vehicle available

Transit dependent persons generally either do not have access to a vehicle or are unable to operate a vehicle. The elderly (65 years of age and over), the young (under 18 years of age), individuals with disabilities, and low-income families are more likely to be transit dependent.

UPDATED DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF REGION

The following maps provide an overview of the demographic context in the southeast Texas region. Maps 1A through maps 3C give an overview of the population density of the three counties region. Maps 1A-C, and maps 2A-C, illustrate that there has been very little growth in the region in the past five years, and maps 3A-C provides a projection of population growth in the year 2040. The population growth has been slow, and has mostly been and will continue to be in the Beaumont and Port Arthur urban areas.

Maps 4A through 5C provide an overview of where the young and elderly populations are located. These age groups traditionally use public transportation to go to school, visit friends, or go to the doctor's office. Within the urban areas the highest percentage of the young occurs in the northeast and southern ends of Beaumont, and the eastern sections of both Orange and Port Arthur. A large part of the elderly population seems to be located in the southern and eastern sections of Beaumont and also the northern and eastern sections of Port Arthur.

There is a large concentration of jobs in the urban areas of Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange, as shown in maps 6A-C. Employment density projections for the year 2040 (maps 7A-C), show that there will be very little change in the locations of employment in the future.

Maps 8A-C provides an overview of where the individuals with disabilities are located. The northeast and southern sections of Beaumont and the southeast section of Port Arthur have the highest concentration of individuals with disabilities. Traditionally, this is the demographic that will utilize the services of the demand response transportation providers.

The highest percentage of persons below poverty level reside in the urban areas of all three counties in the region, as shown in maps 9A-C.

The areas with the highest density of persons below the poverty level are as follows:

- The northeast section of Beaumont
- The southern and eastern sections of Orange
- The western, eastern, and southeast sections of Port Arthur

It is no surprise that some of these same areas also have a large percentage of persons that do not have access to vehicles (maps 10A-C). These segments of the population are sometimes underserved by traditional transportation options (personal automobiles, transit services, etc.), and would benefit from better public transportation services.

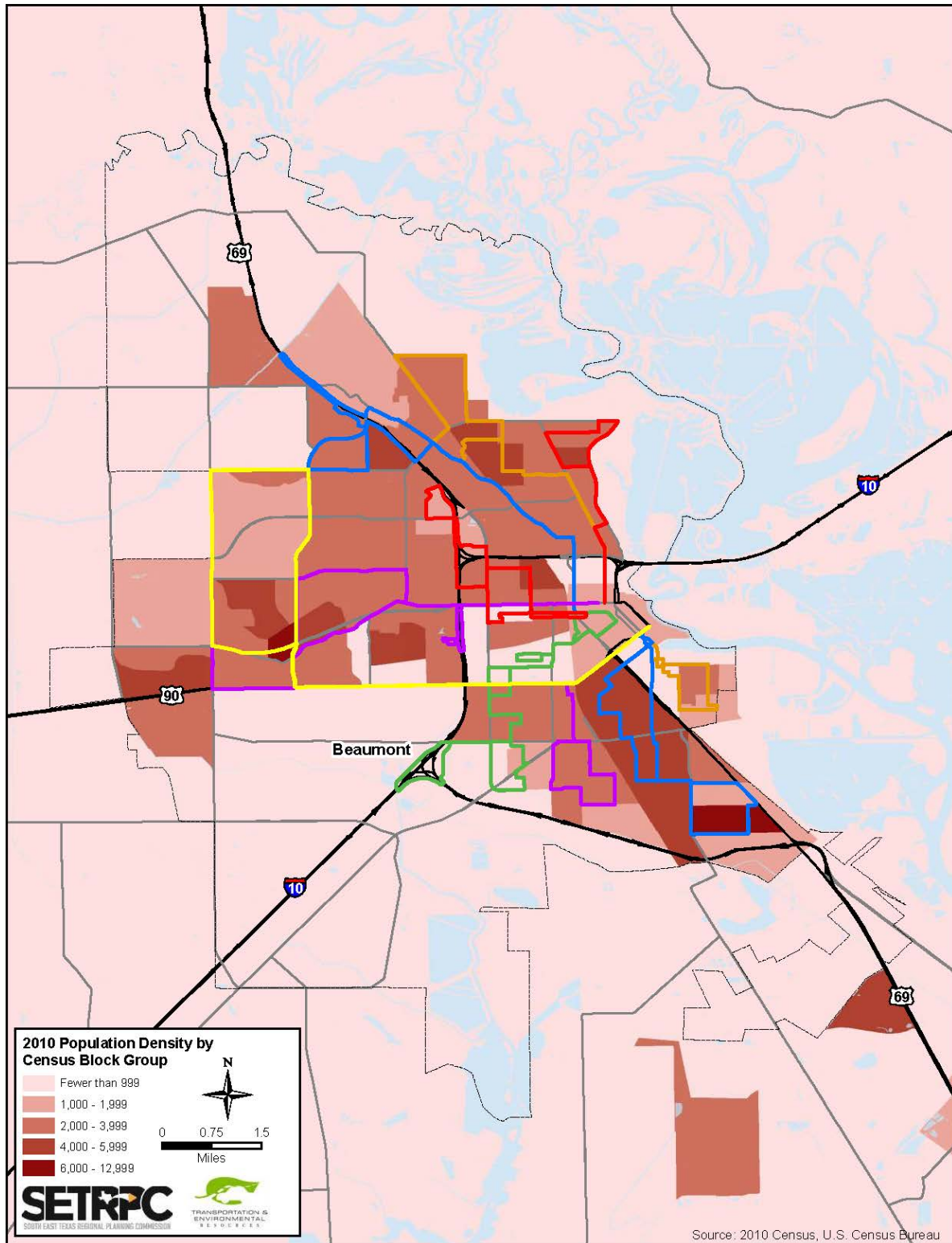
Maps 11A-C through 14 provides an overview of the major attractions in the city, and maps of the fixed transit routes of BMT, PAT, and the service area of SETT.

The largest percentages of population using the transit systems for getting to and from work are located in the urban areas as shown by maps 15A-C. The northeast and southeast sections of Beaumont as well as the south and southeast sections of Port Arthur are the areas that utilize transit at the highest percentage. Very few places in the rural areas have high percentage of transit users.

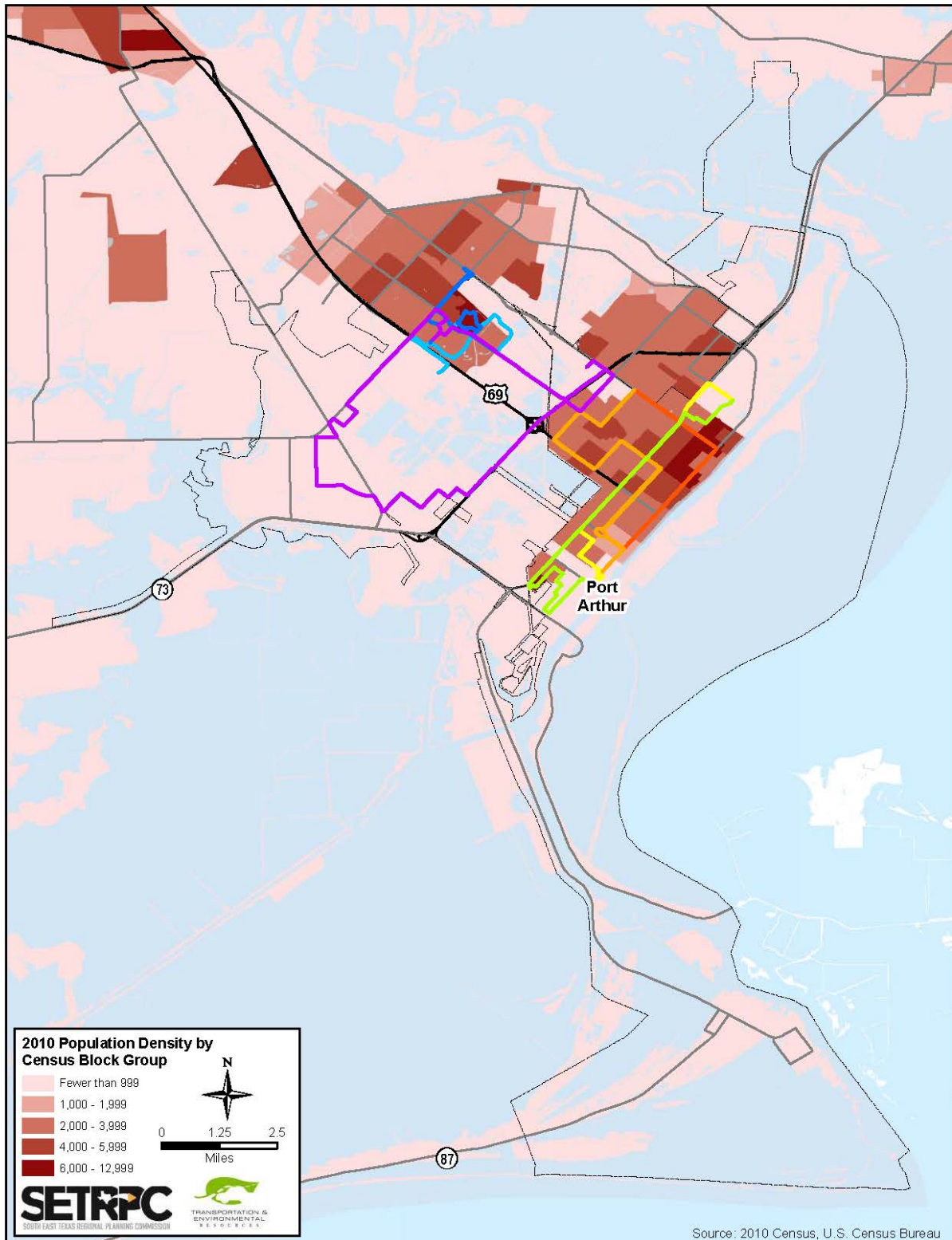
Maps 16A-C is an illustration of a Transit Need Index map, which is developed to identify areas in high need of public transit services, and is developed from economic and sociodemographic information (i.e. zero vehicle households, population density, job density, young, old, etc.). This type of information assists community leaders and planners in identifying levels of access to transit services and shortcomings in providing service. As illustrated, the highest level of need can be found in the urban areas of each county. When transit dependent populations (low-income, young, elderly, and disabled) are overlapped with the areas that have public transit, underserved areas can be identified.



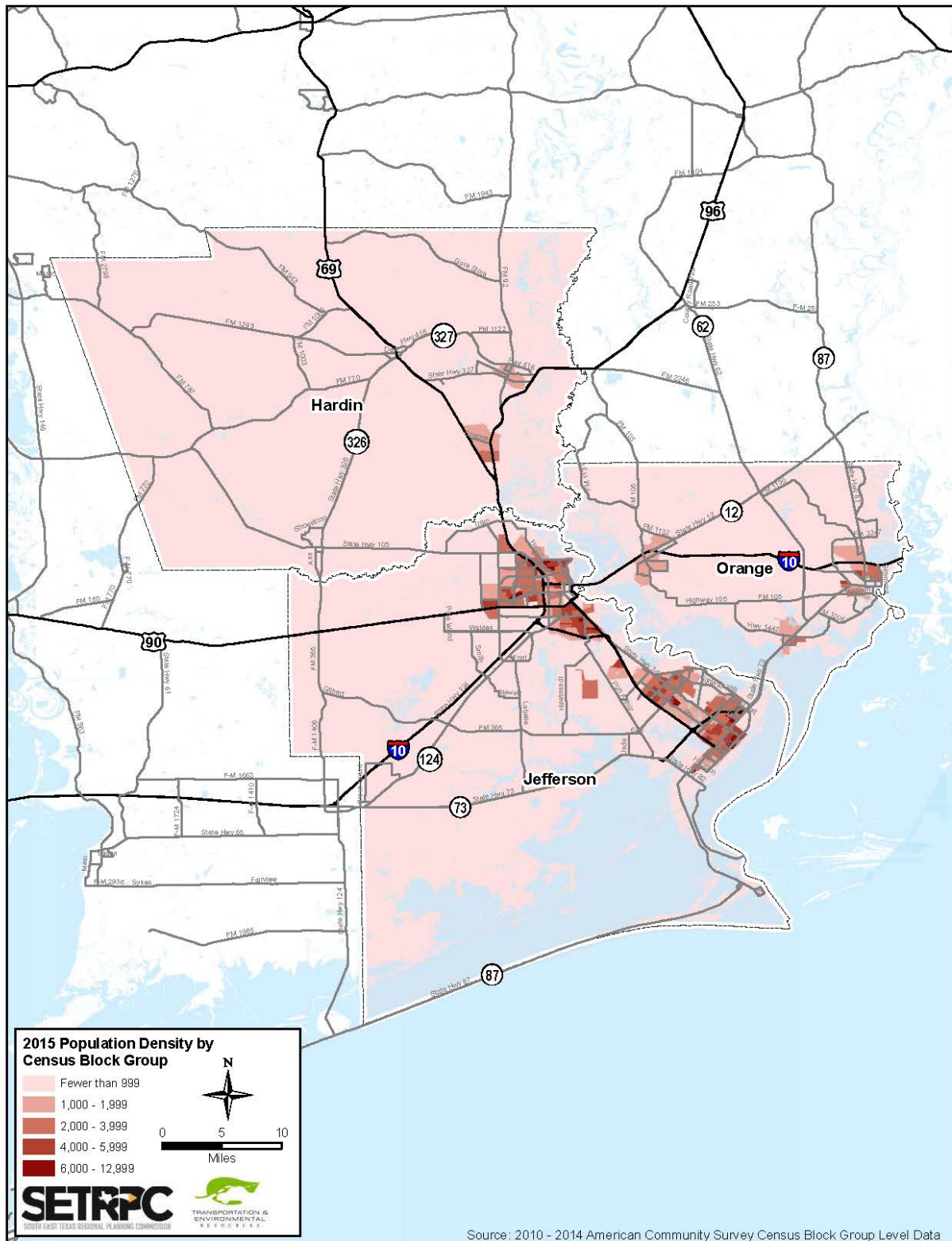
MAP 1B



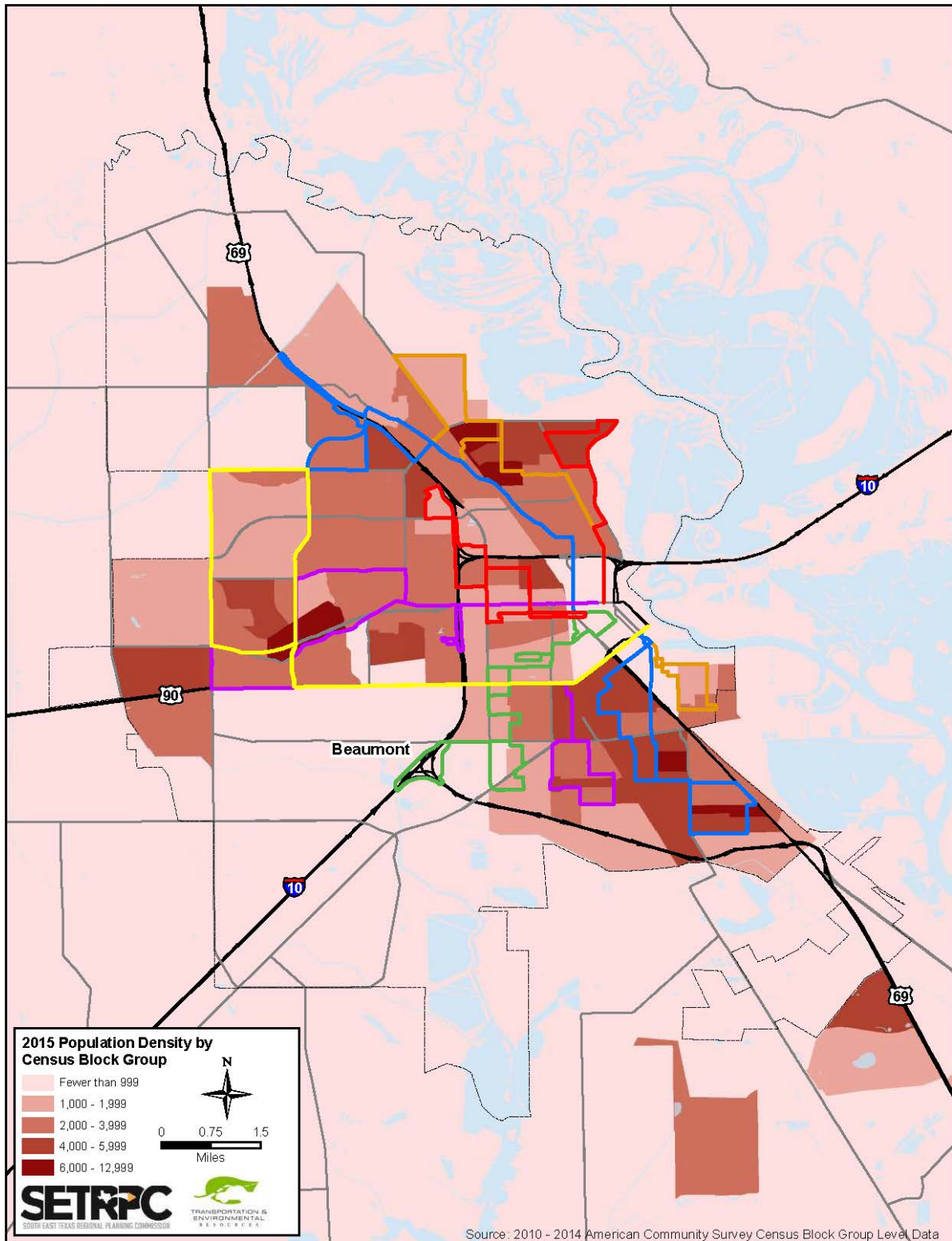
MAP 1C



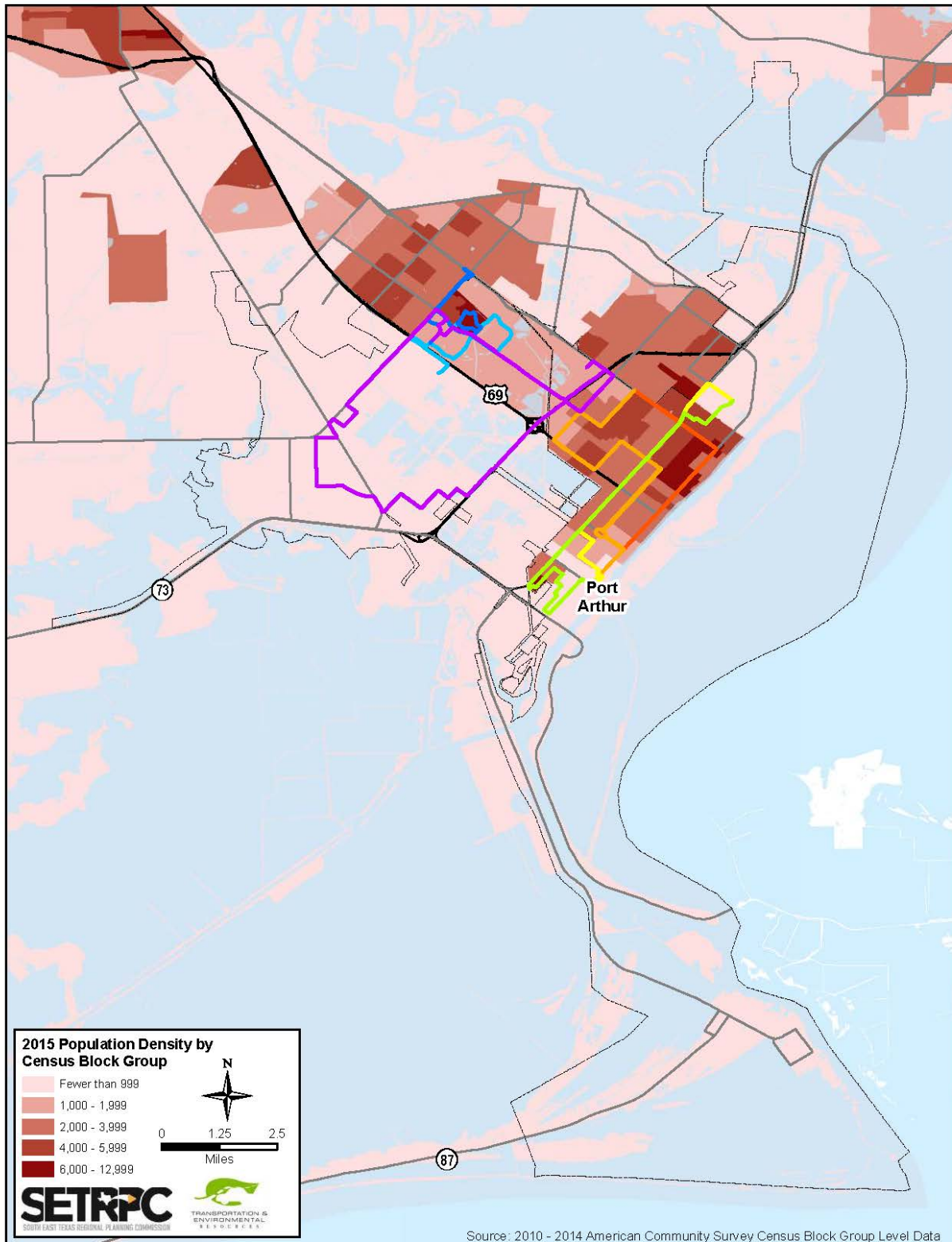
MAP 2A



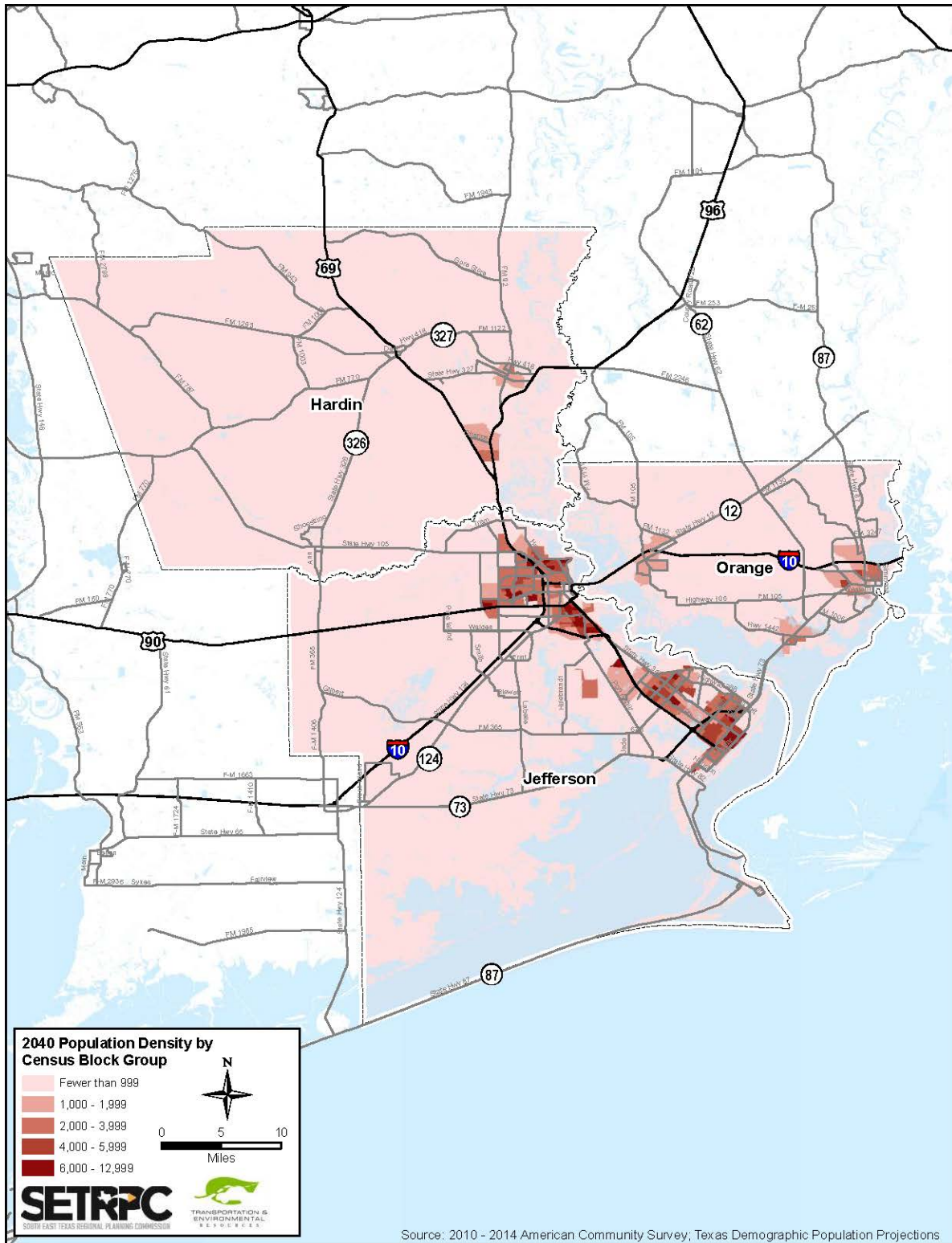
MAP 2B



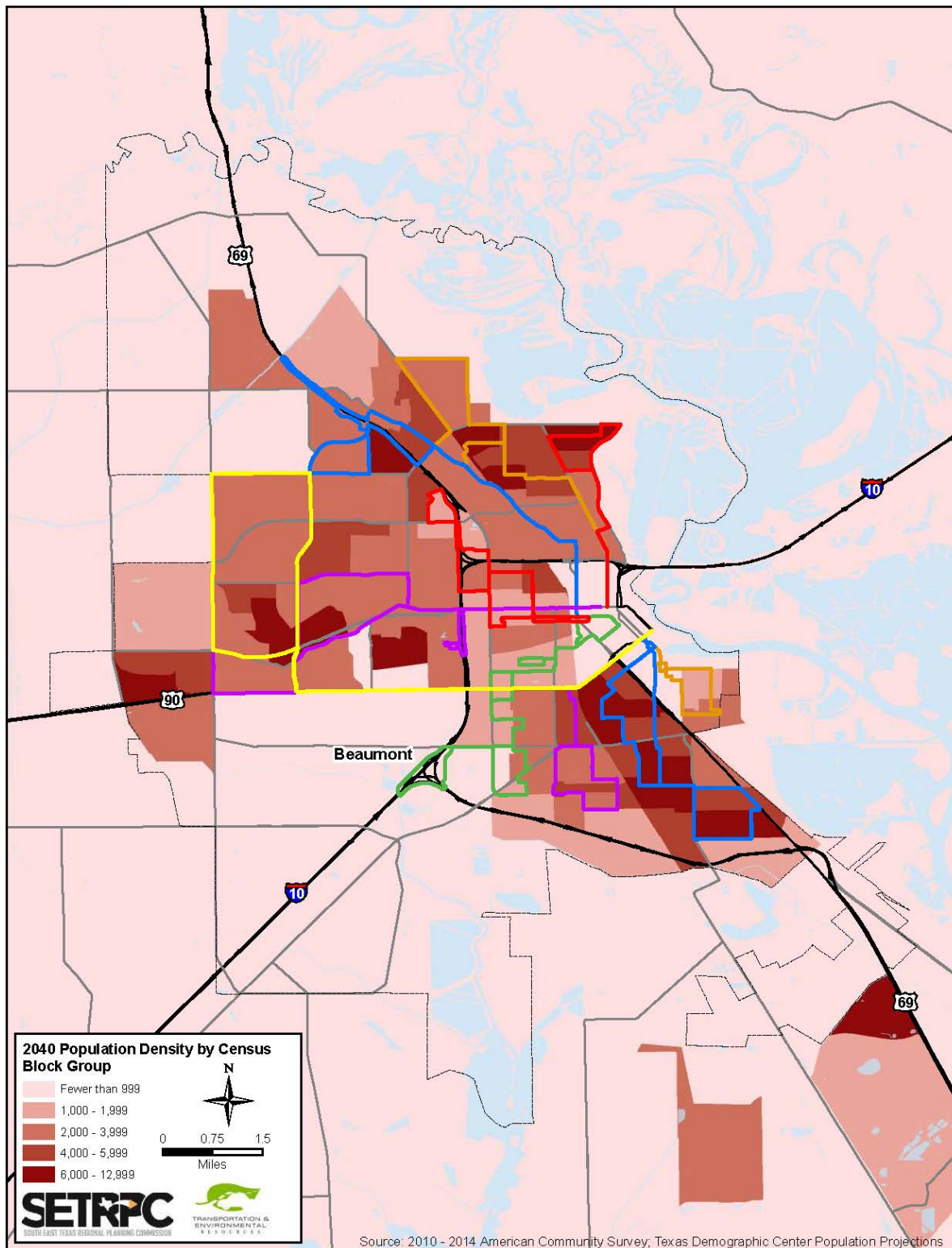
MAP 2C



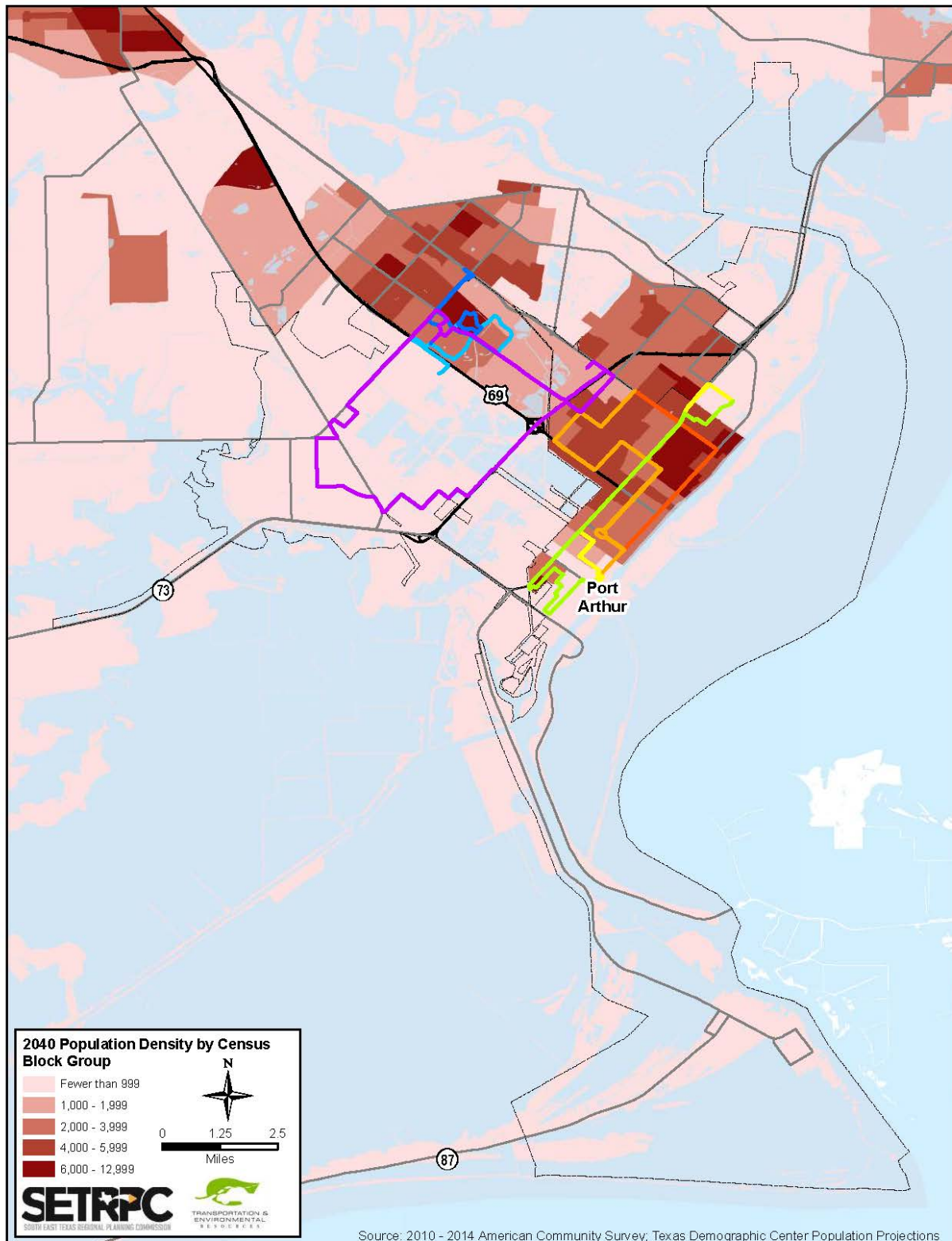
MAP 3A



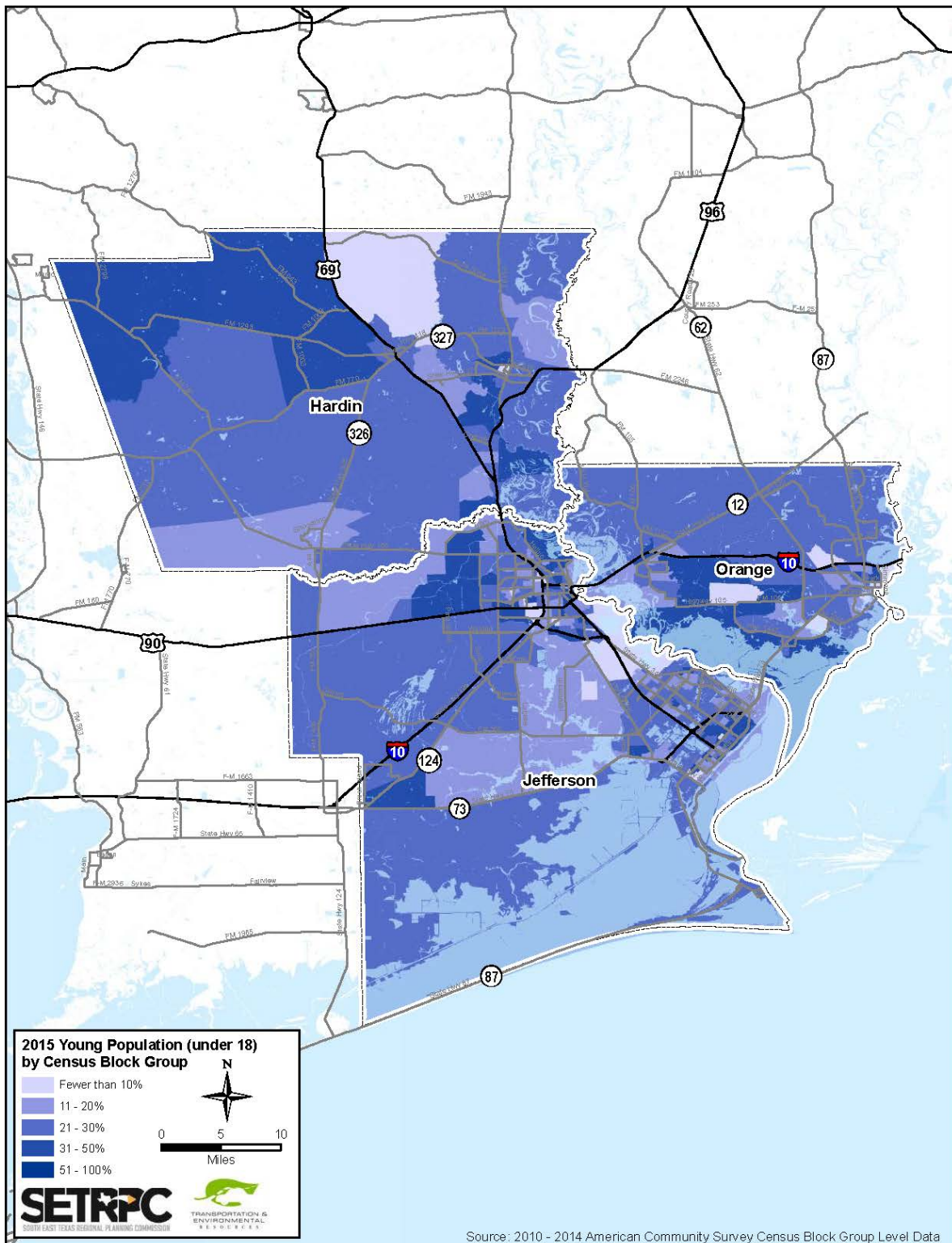
MAP 3B



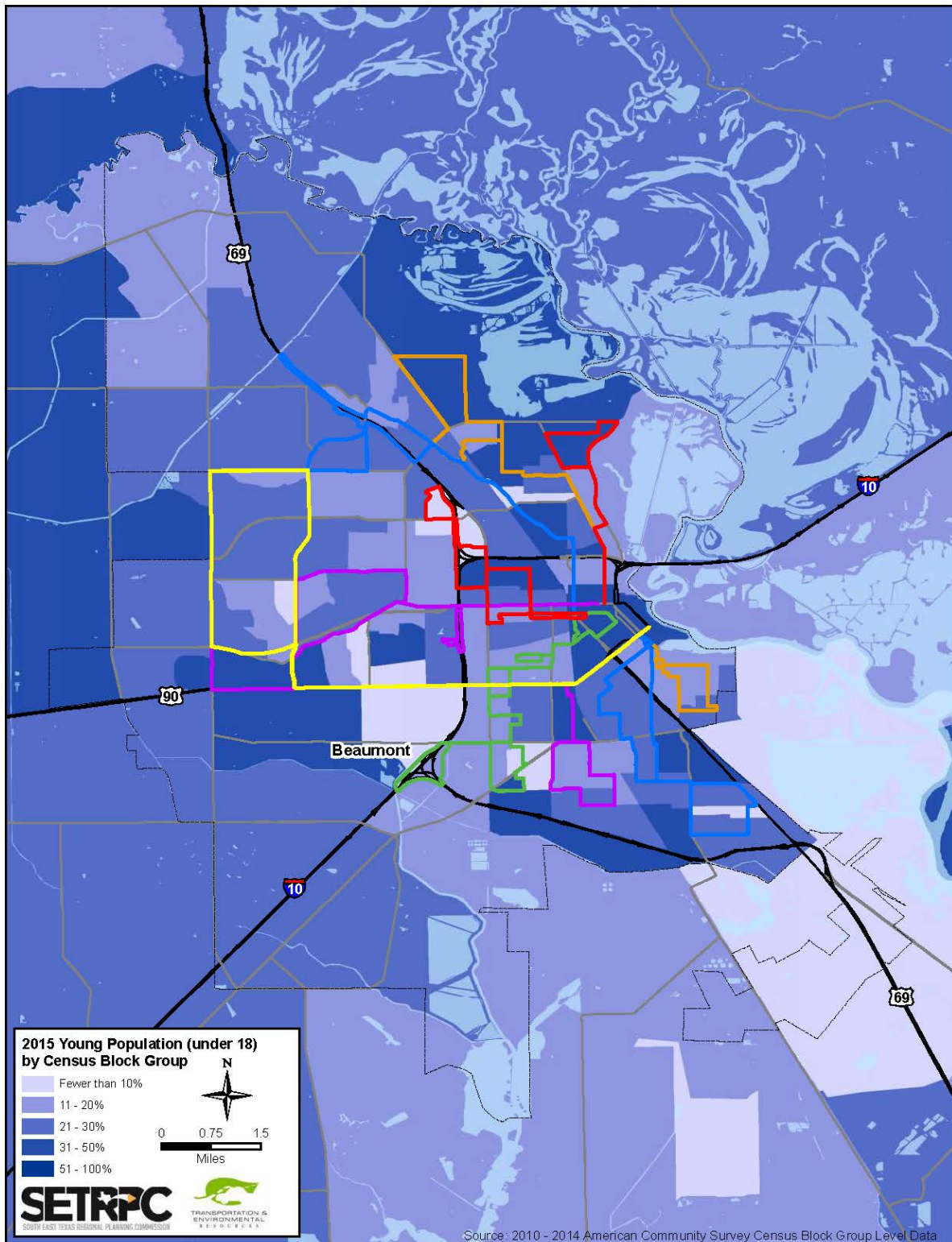
MAP 3C



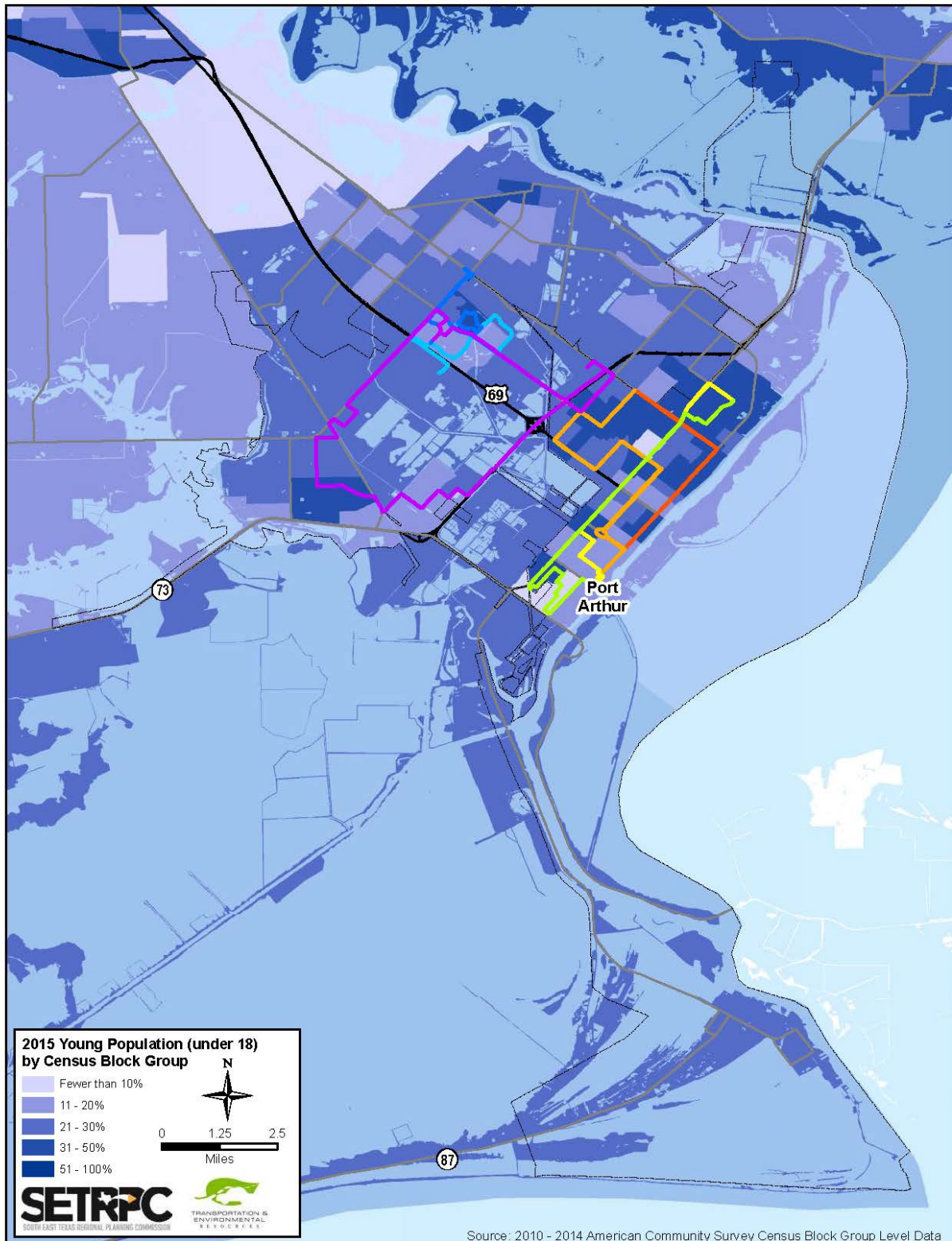
MAP 4A



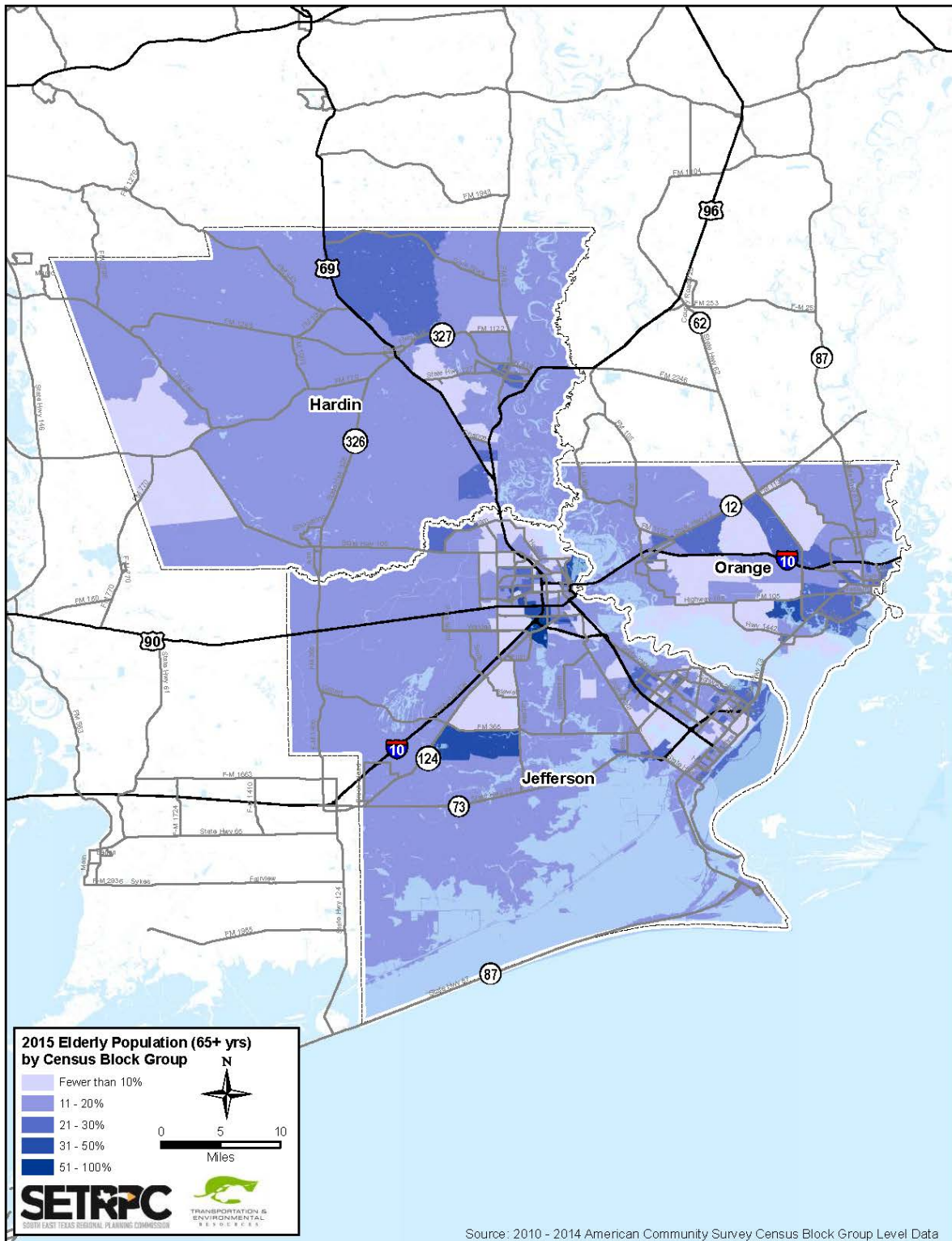
MAP 4B



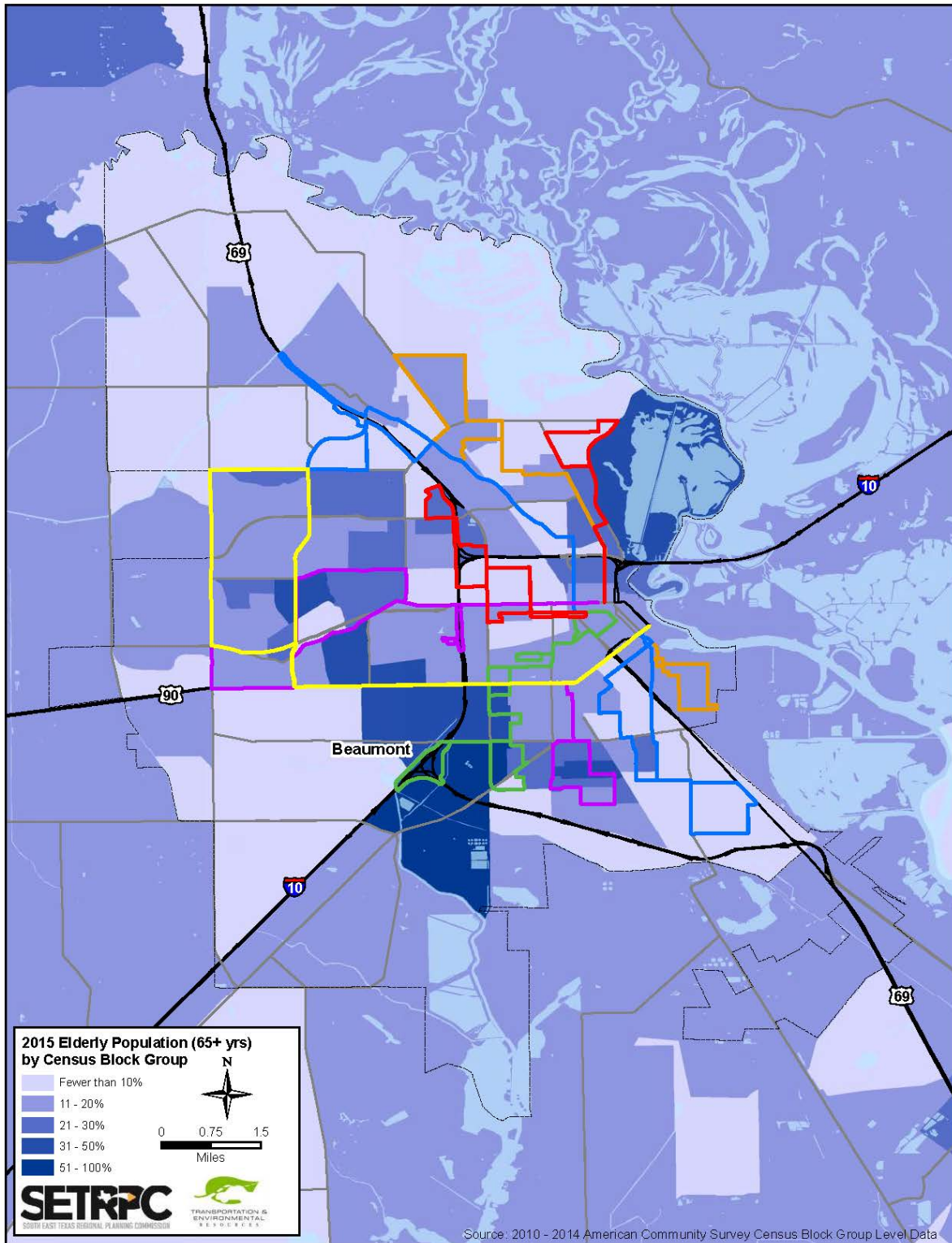
MAP 4C



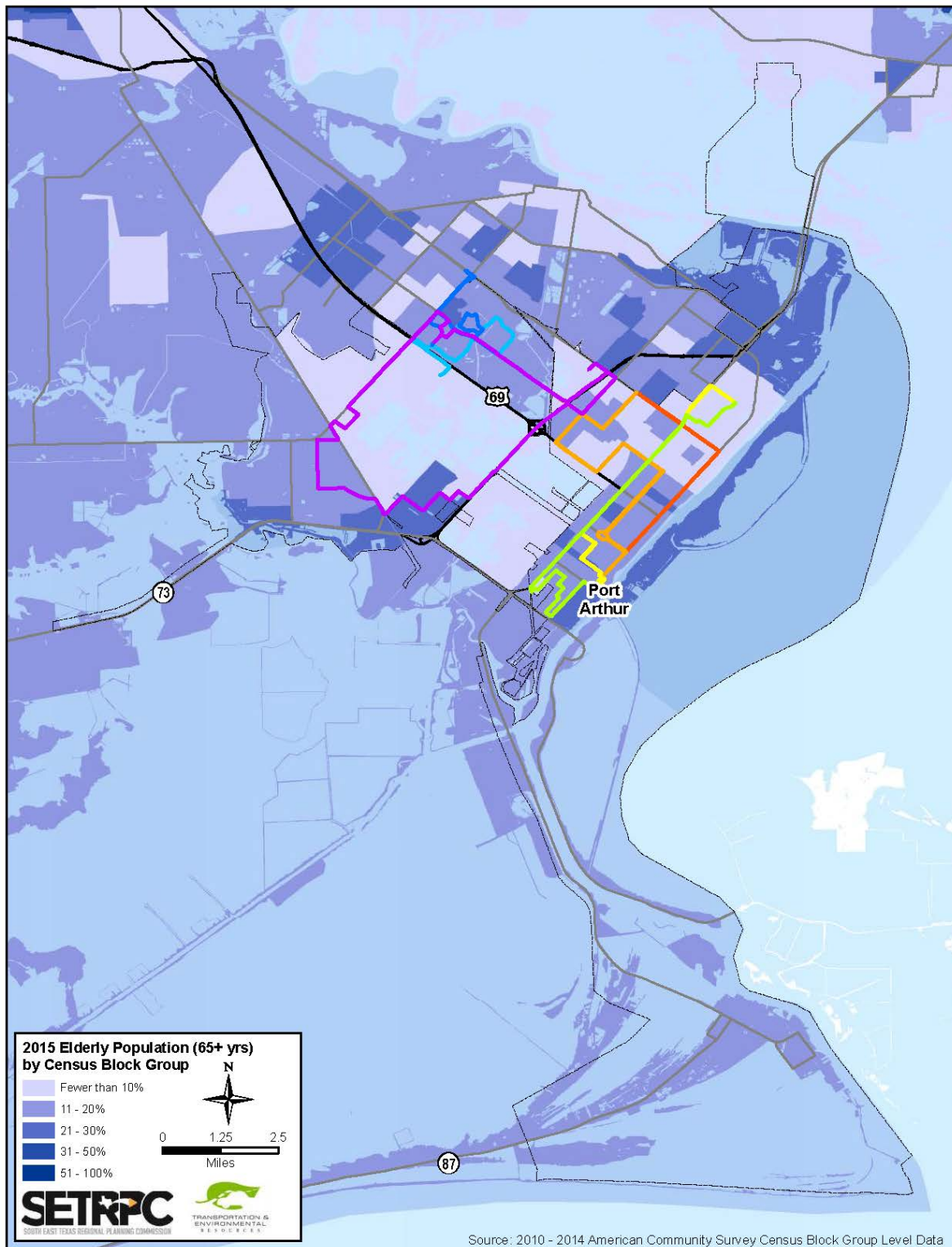
MAP 5A



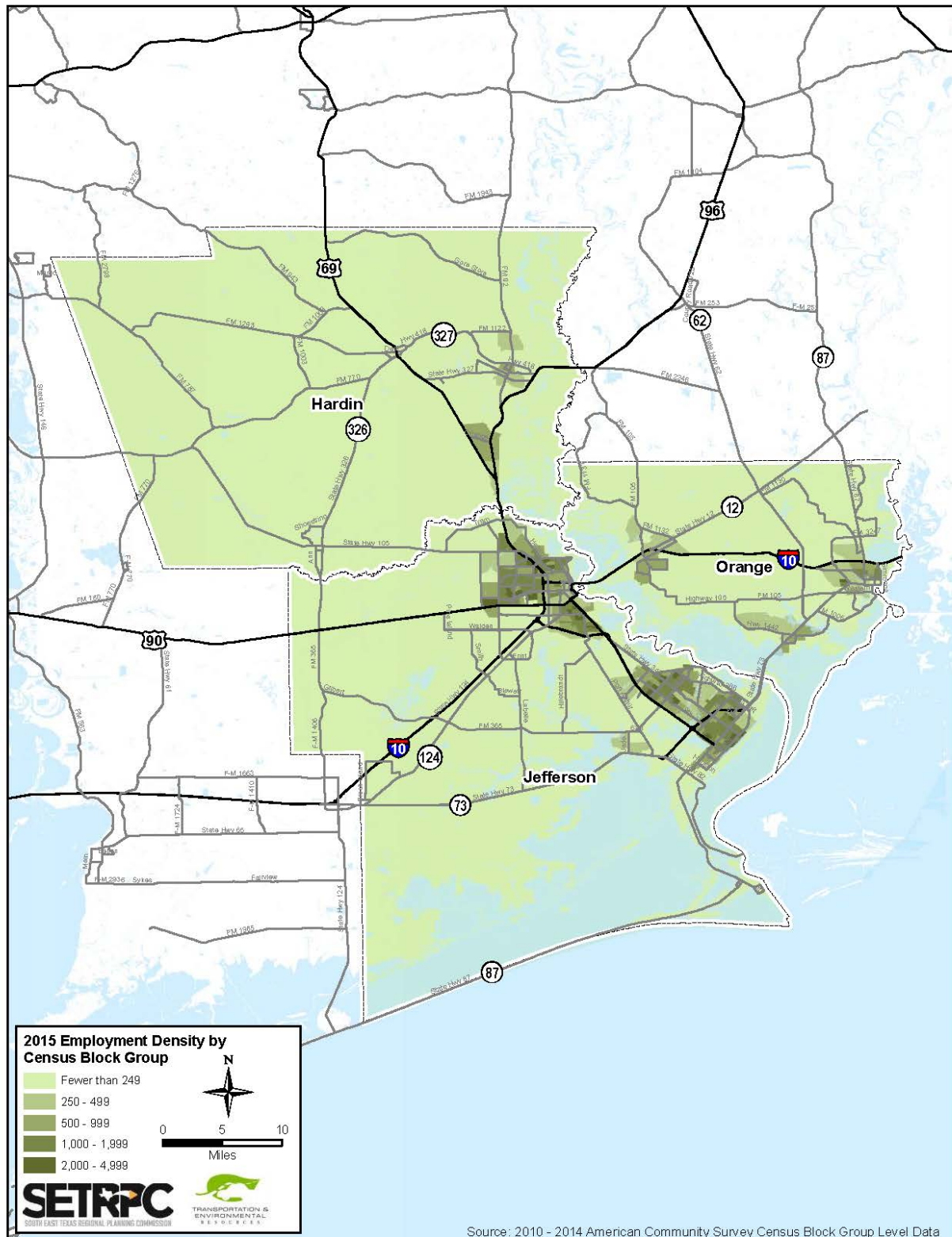
MAP 5B



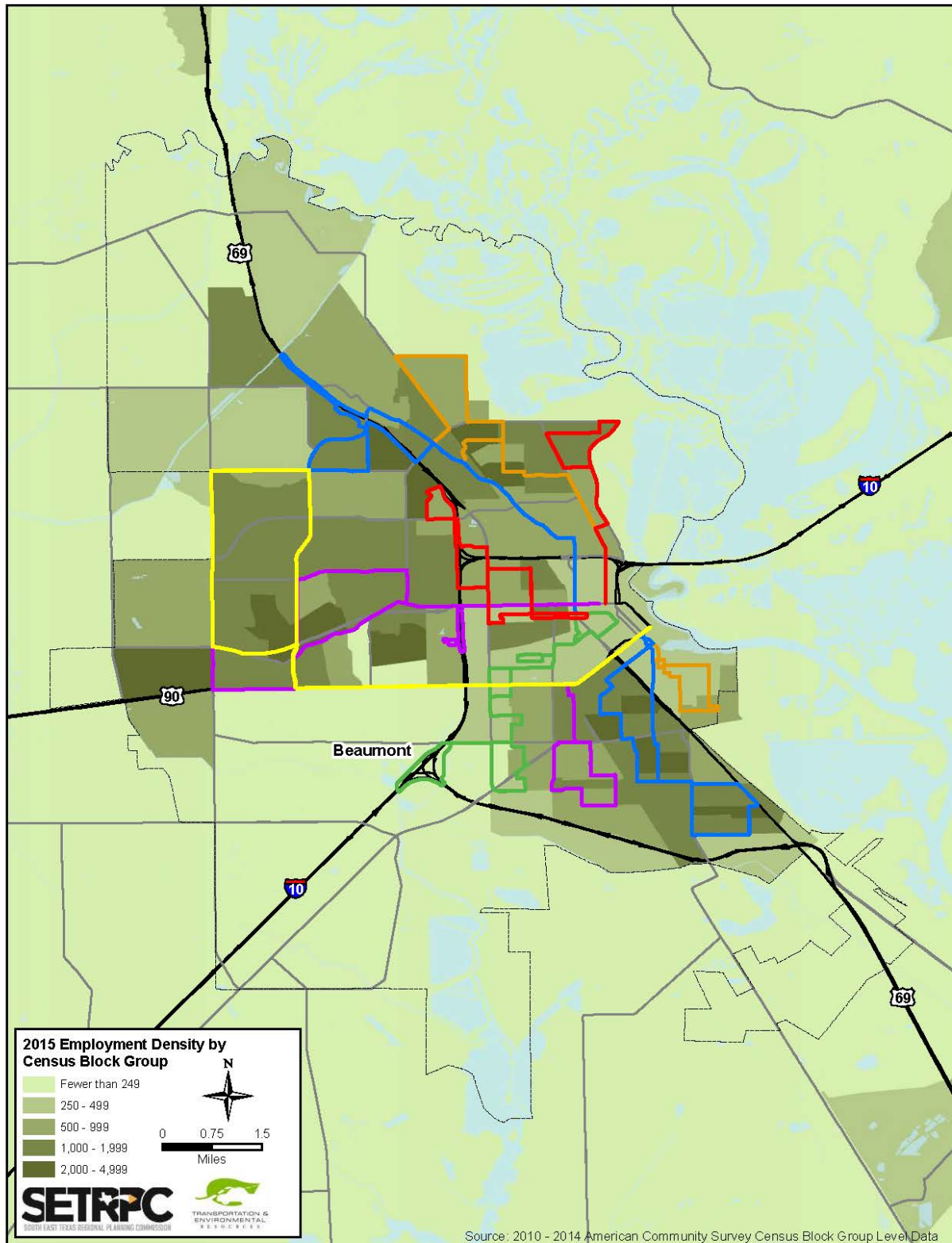
MAP 5C



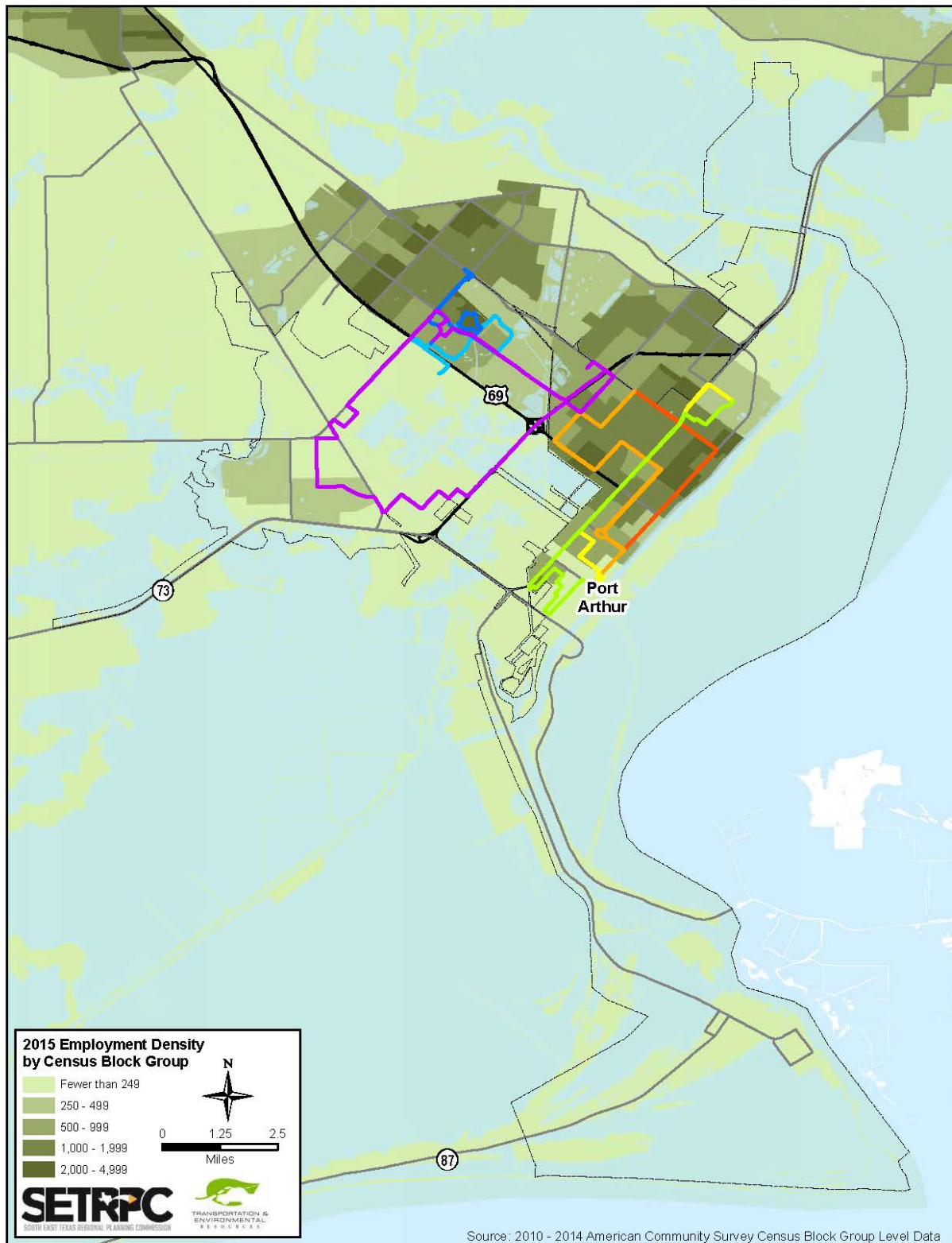
MAP 6A



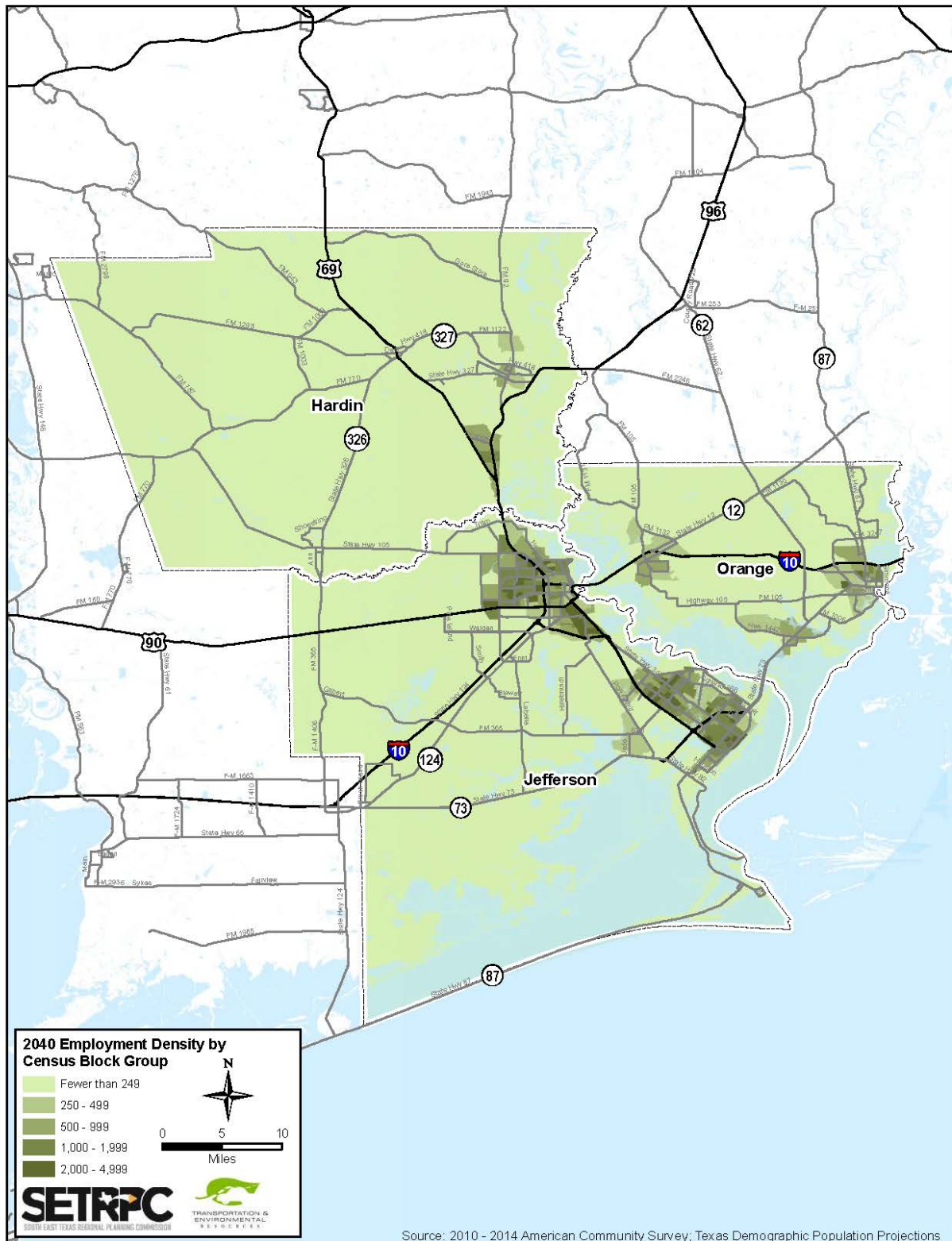
MAP 6B



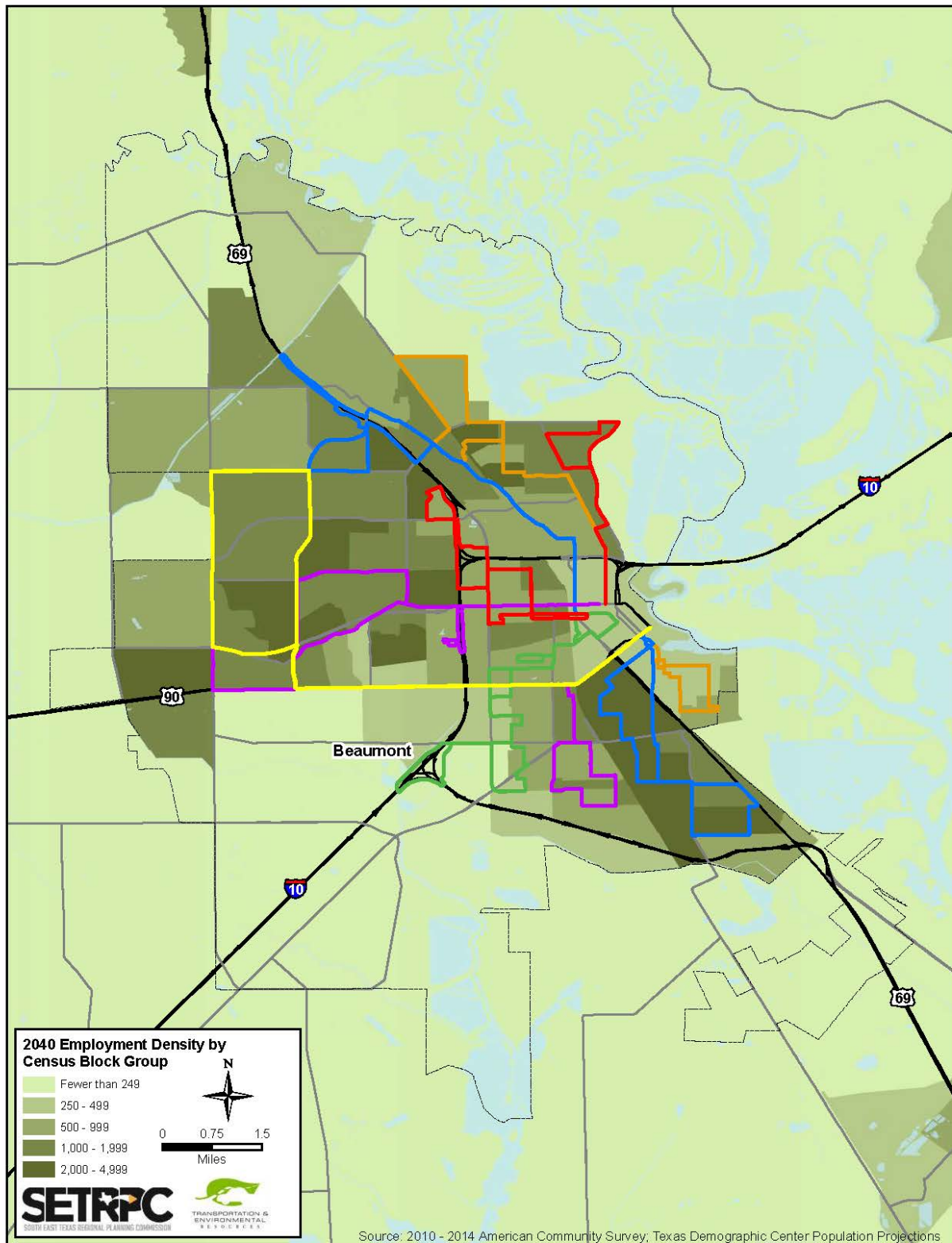
MAP 6C



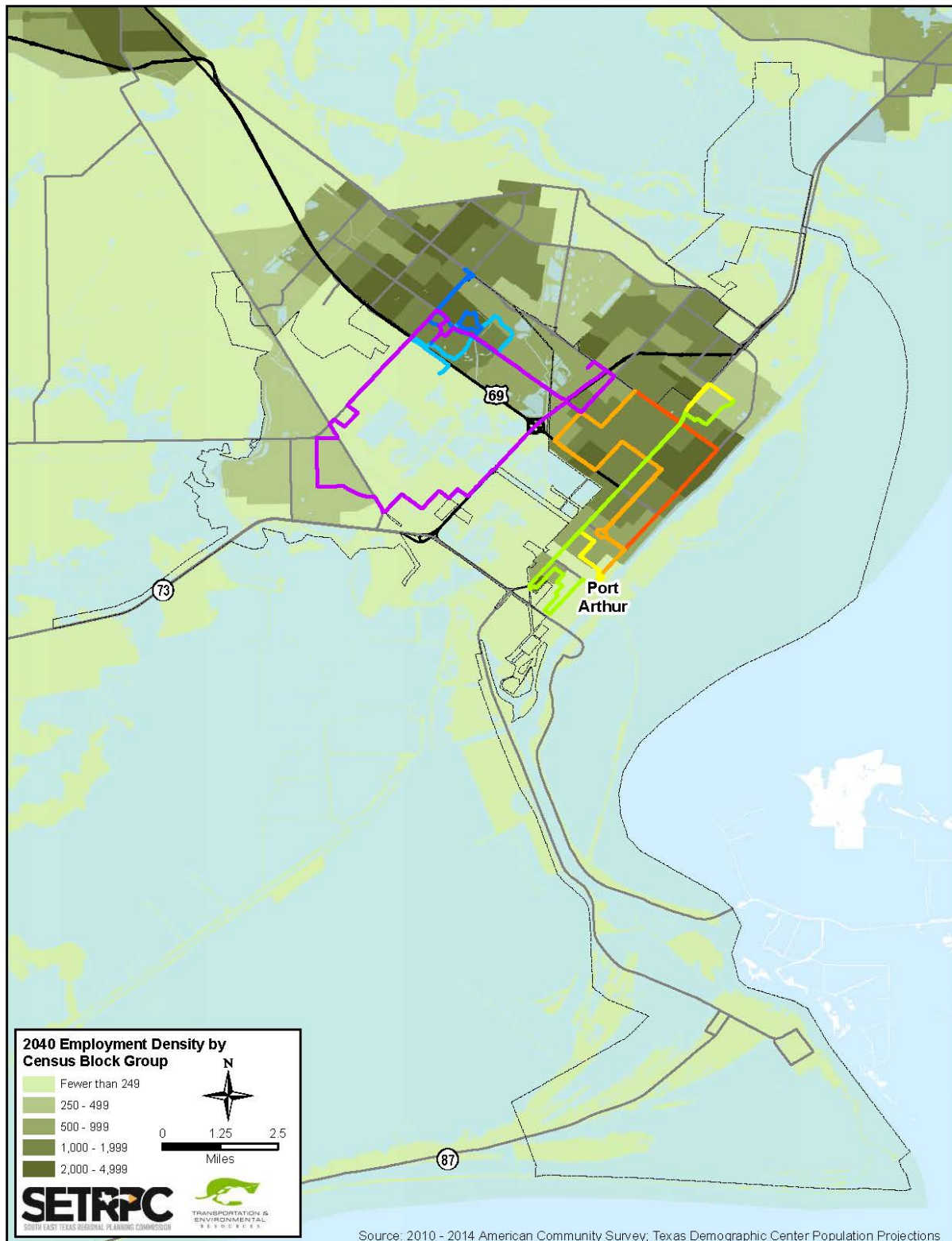
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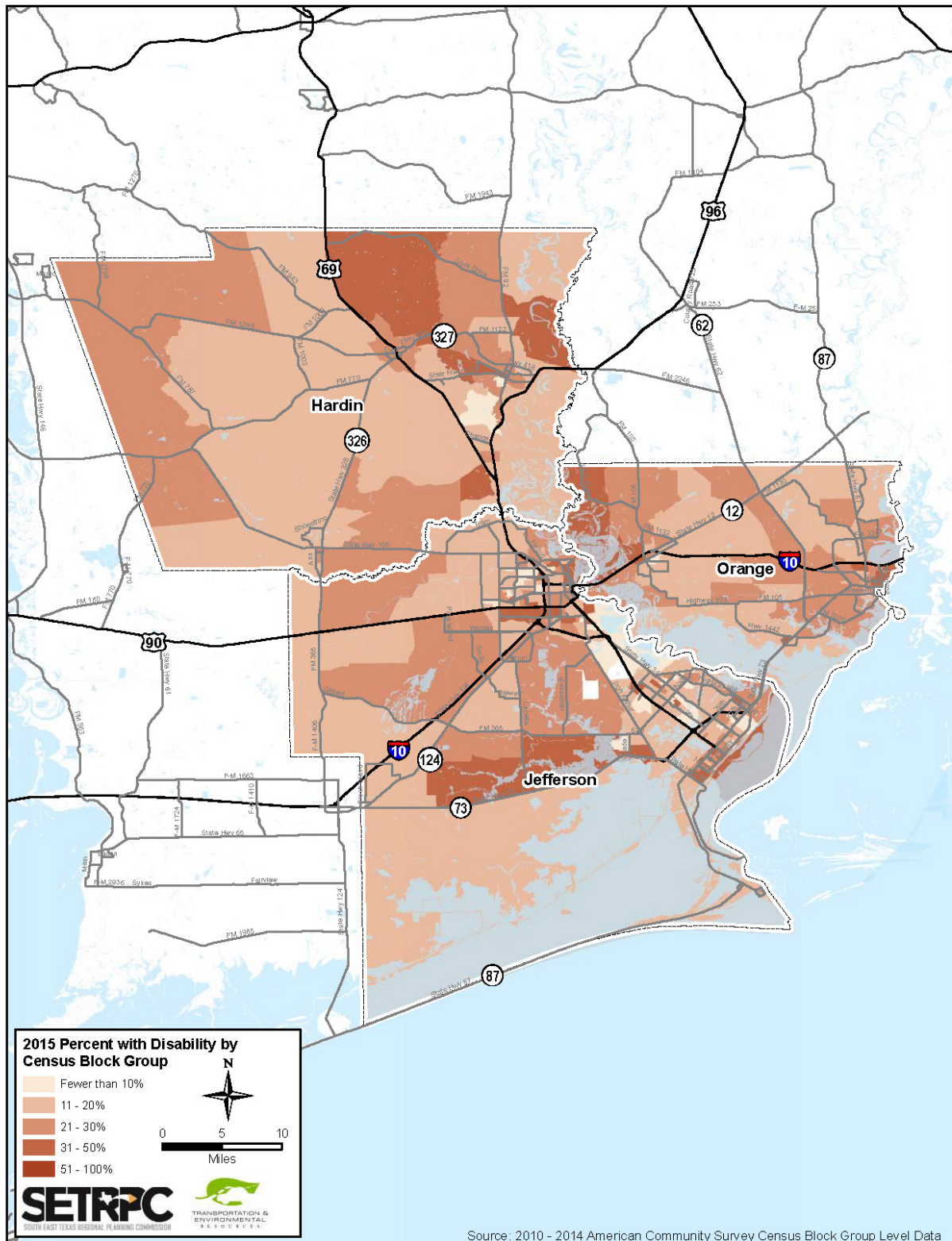
MAP 7B



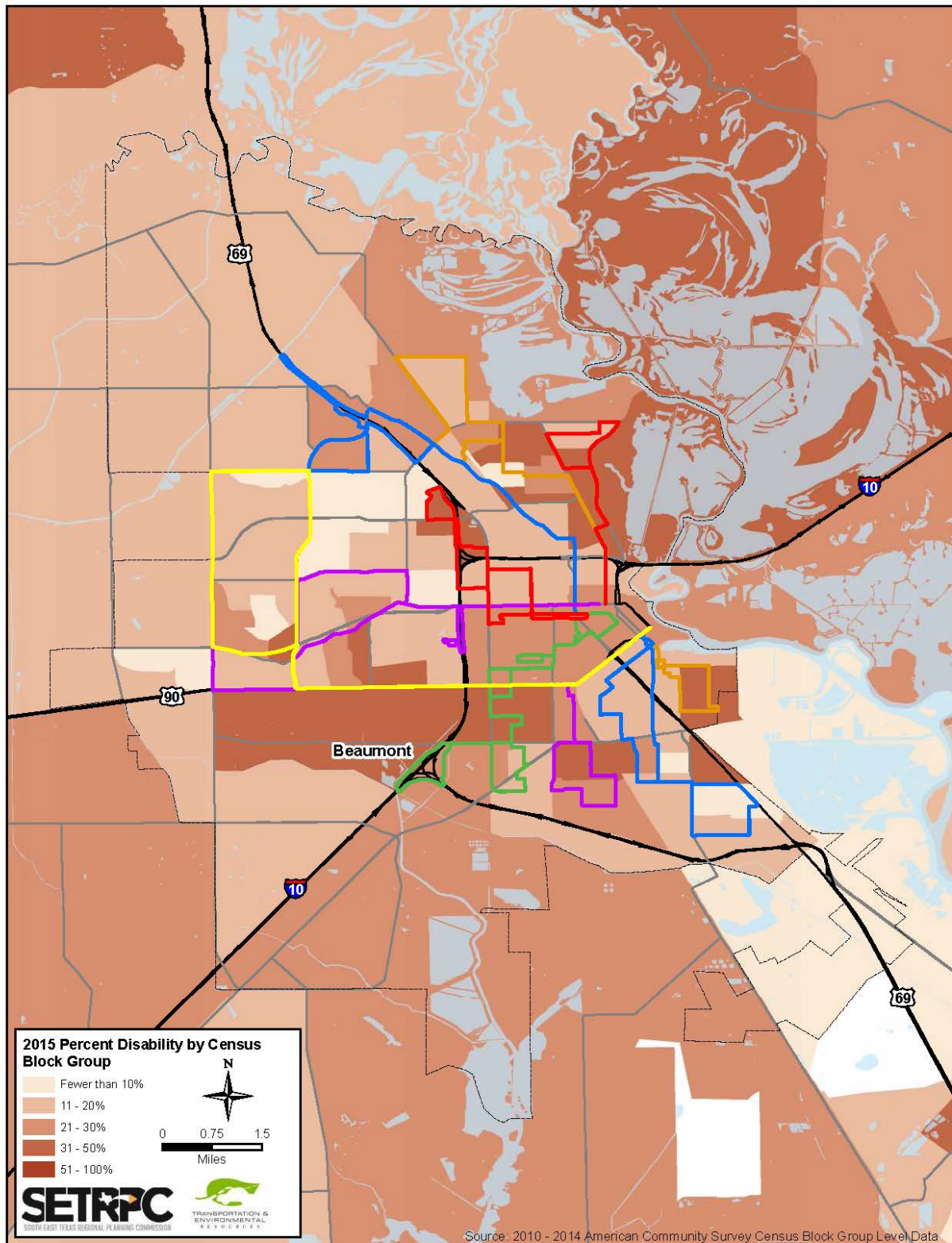
MAP 7C



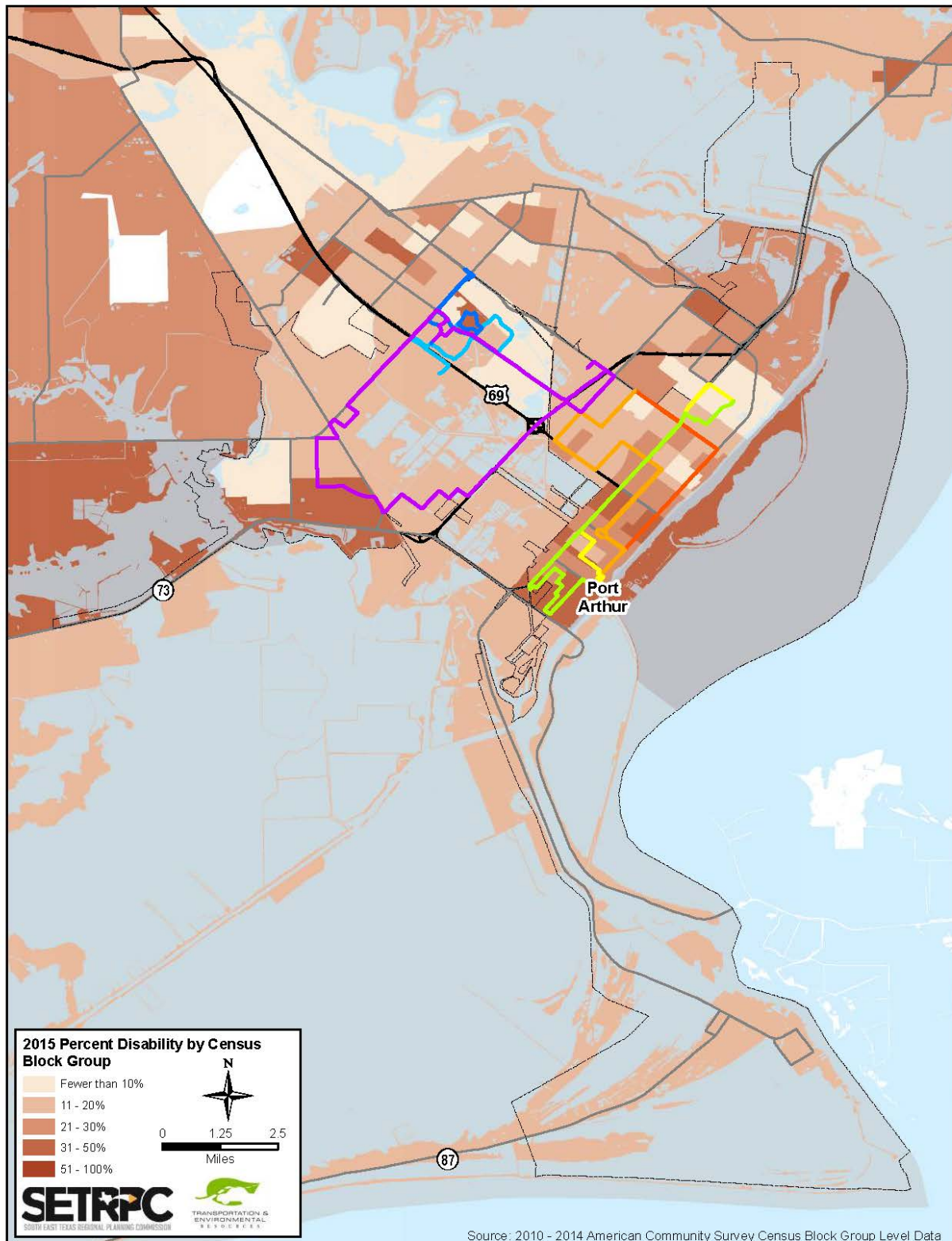
MAP 8A



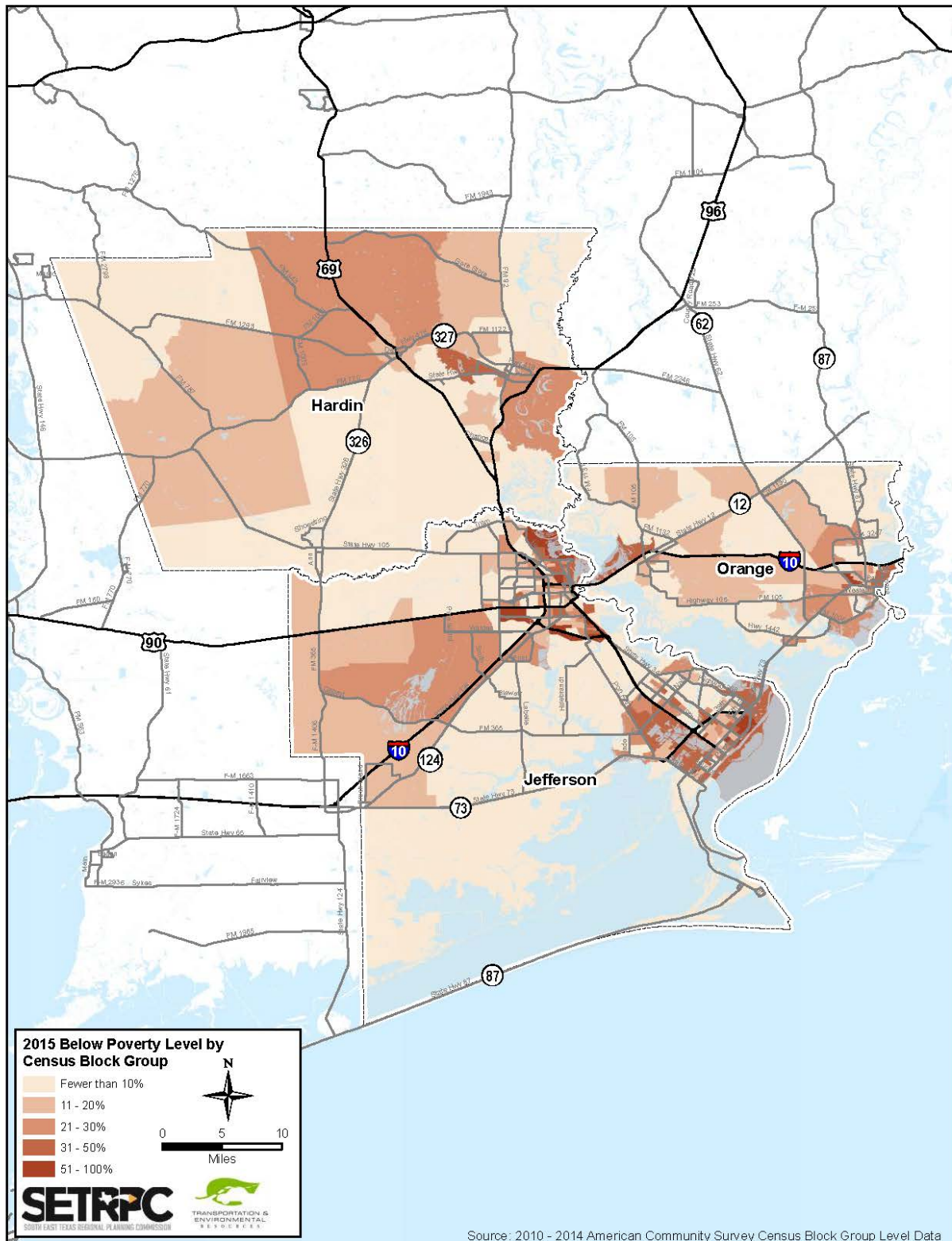
MAP 8B



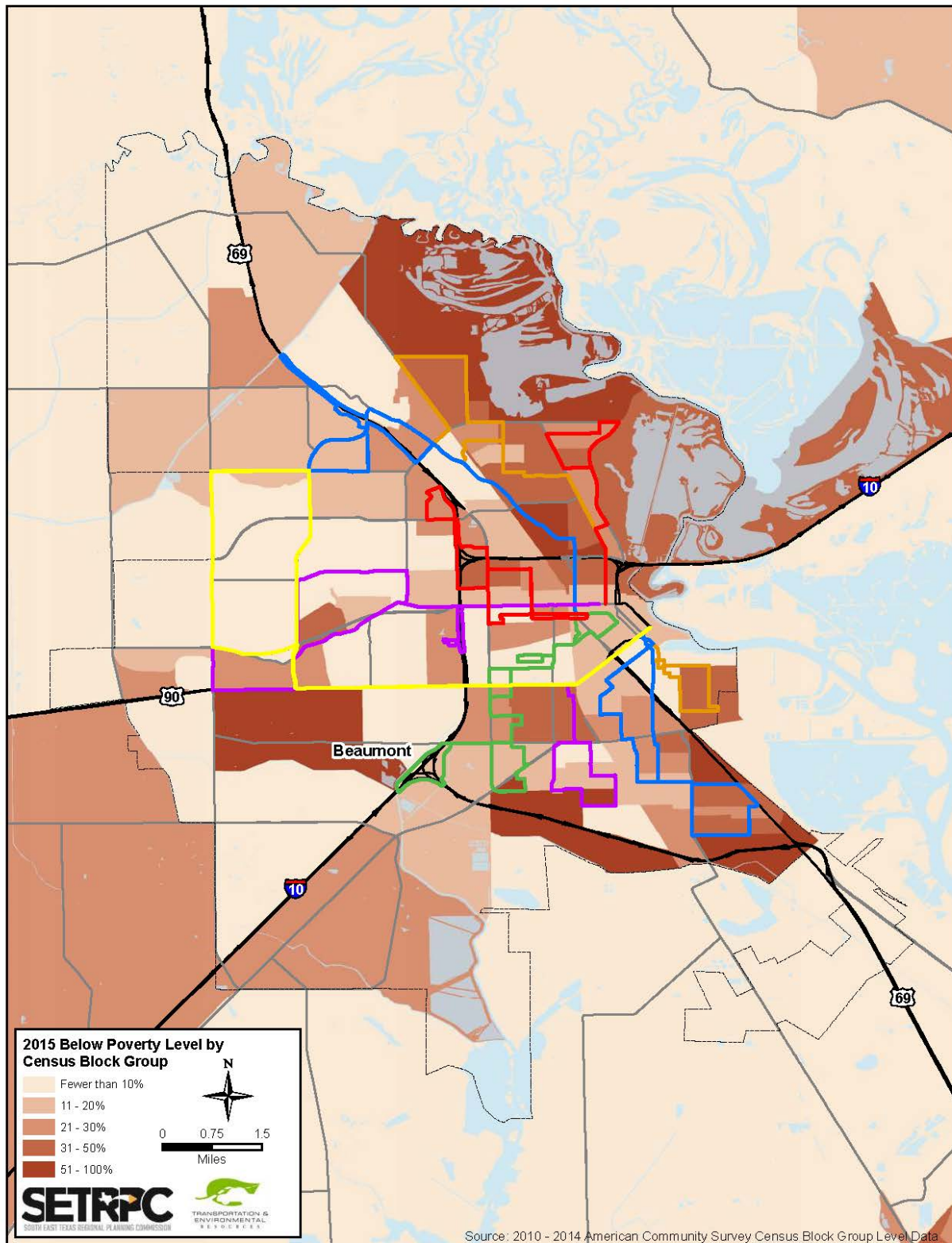
MAP 8C



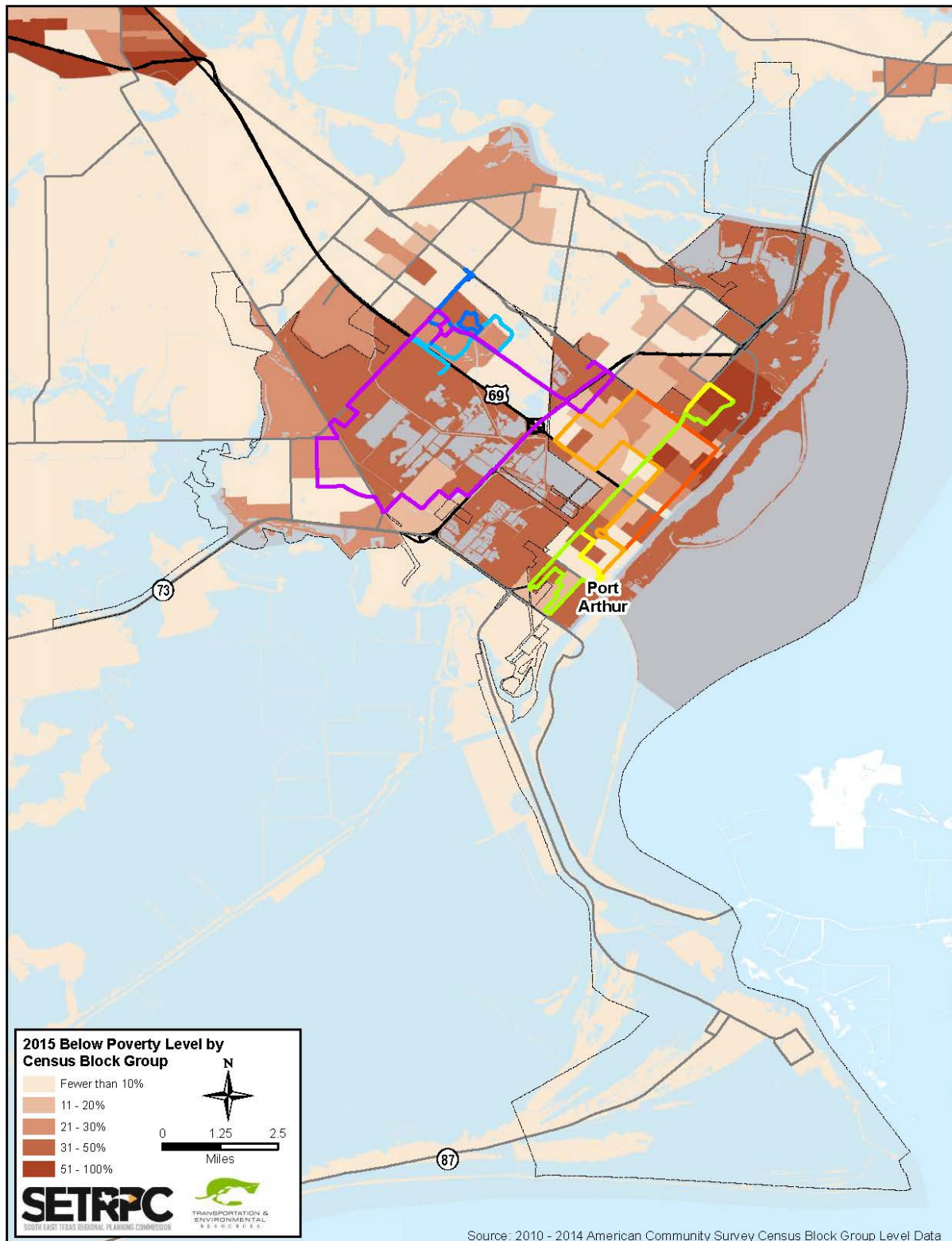
MAP 9A



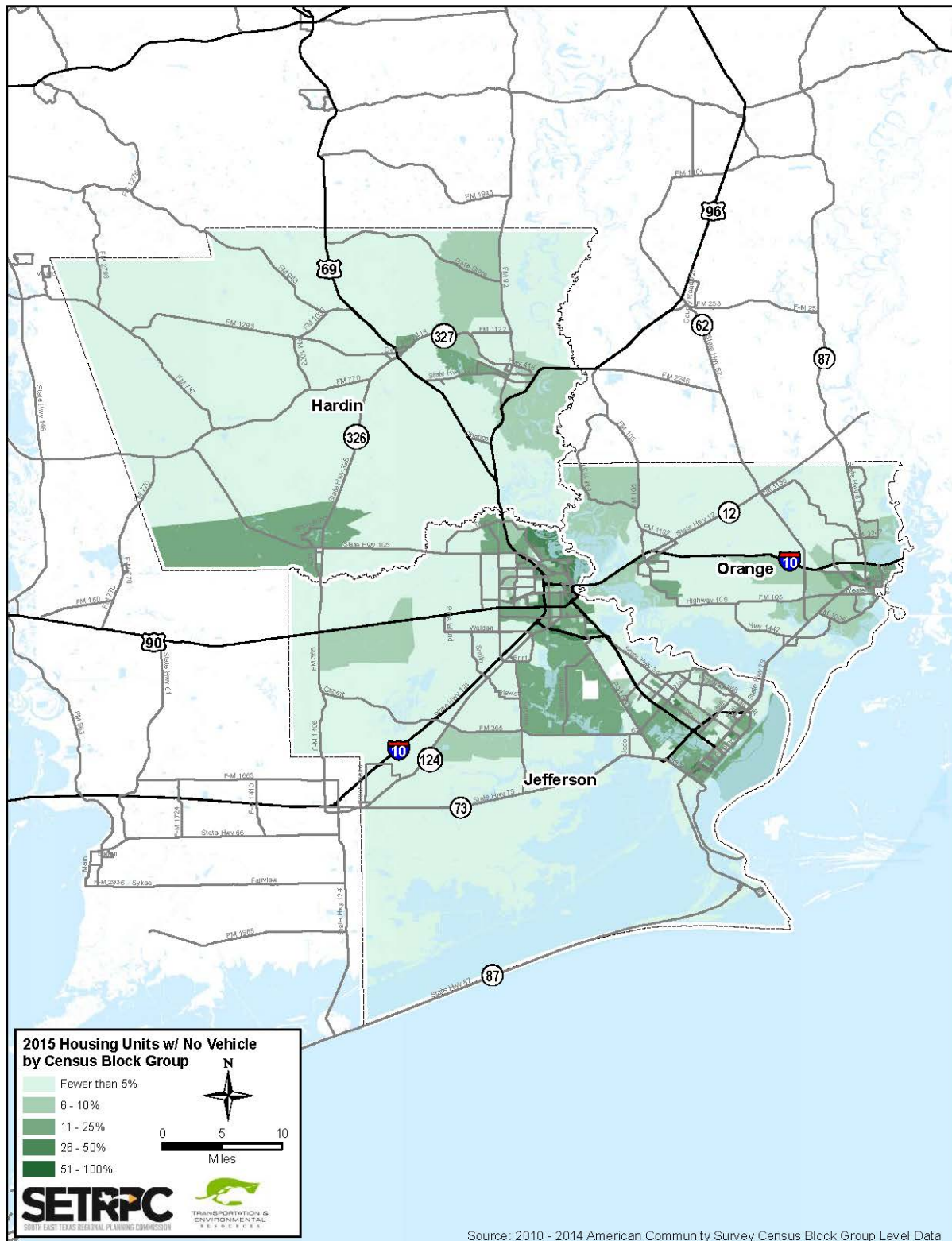
MAP 9B



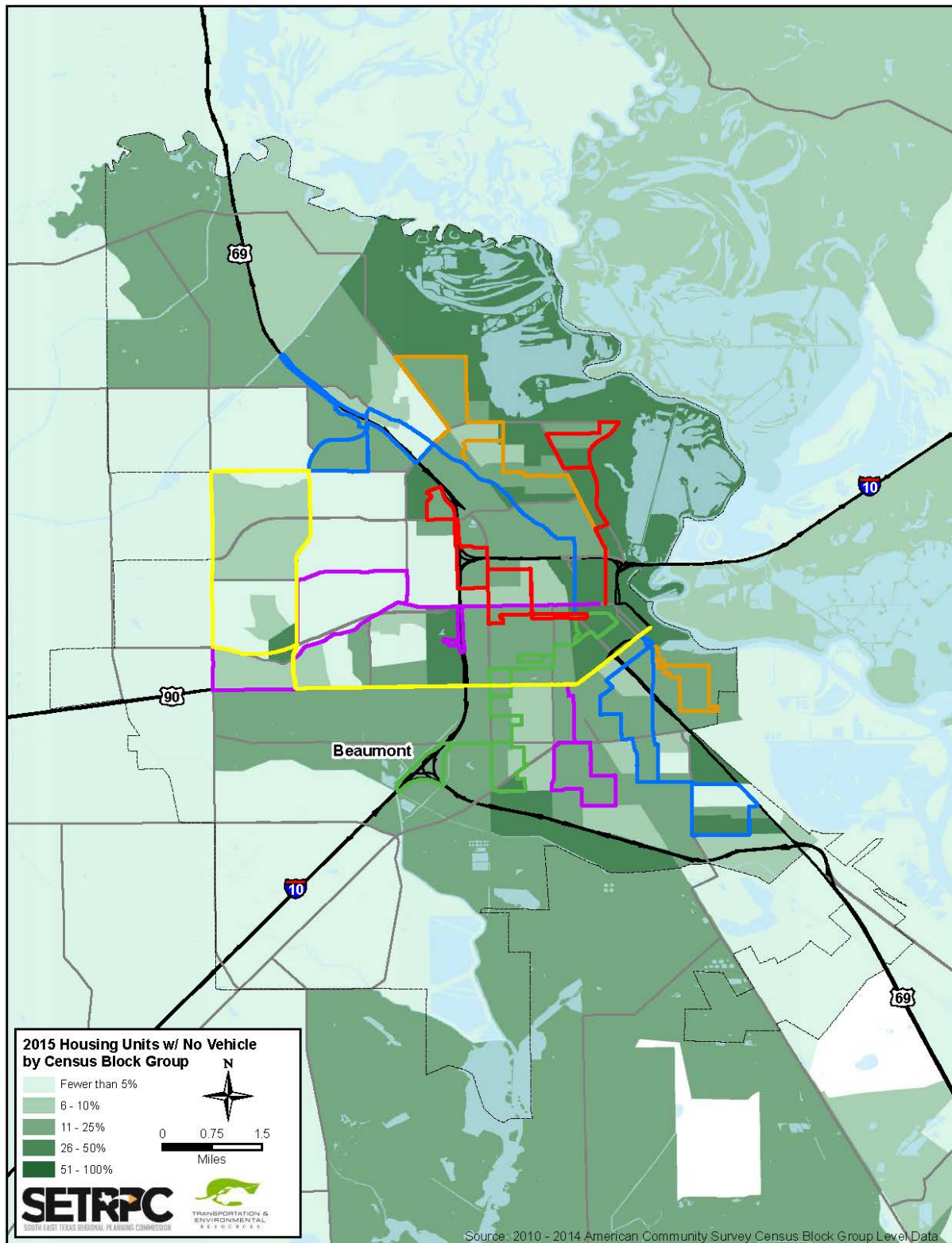
MAP 9C



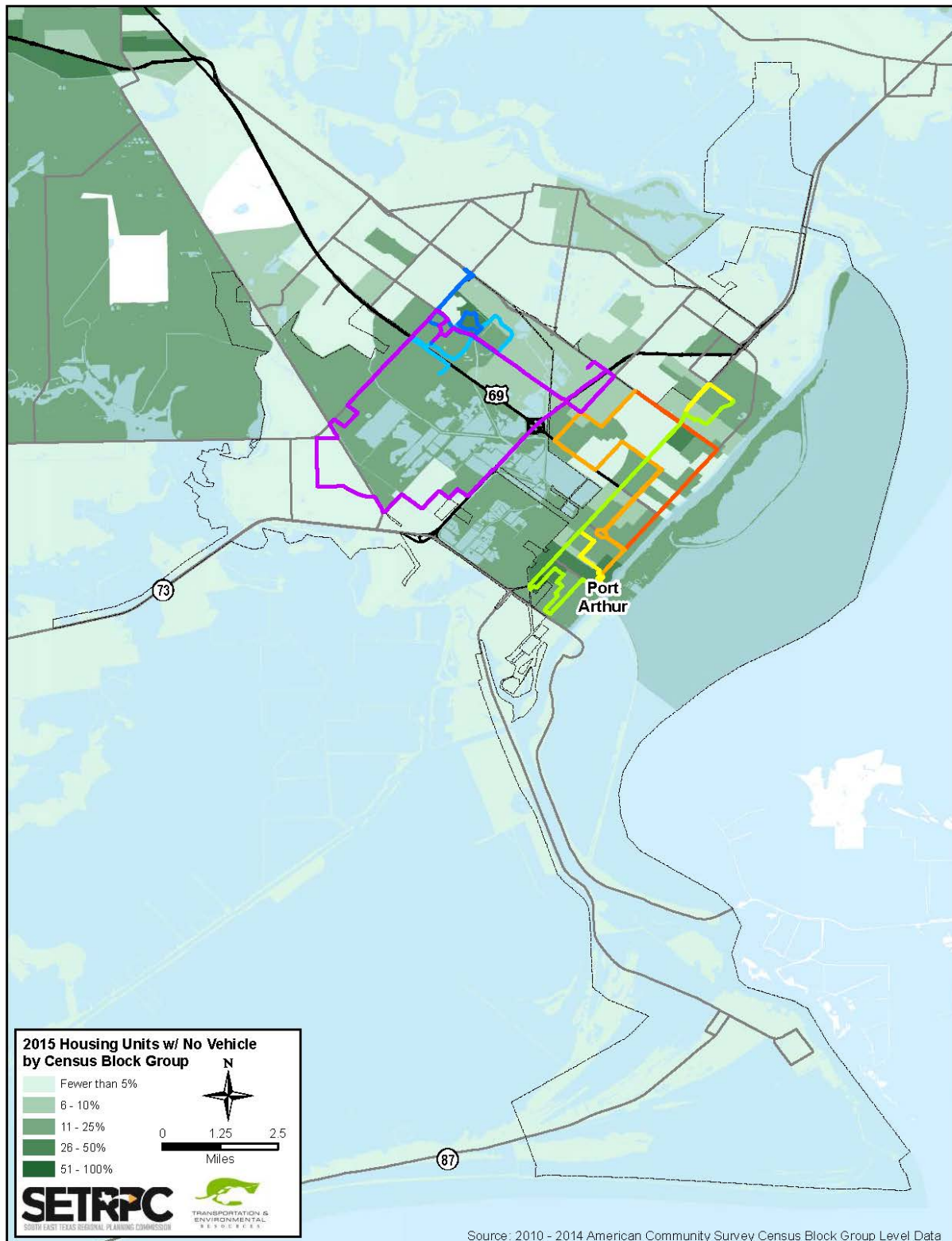
MAP 10A



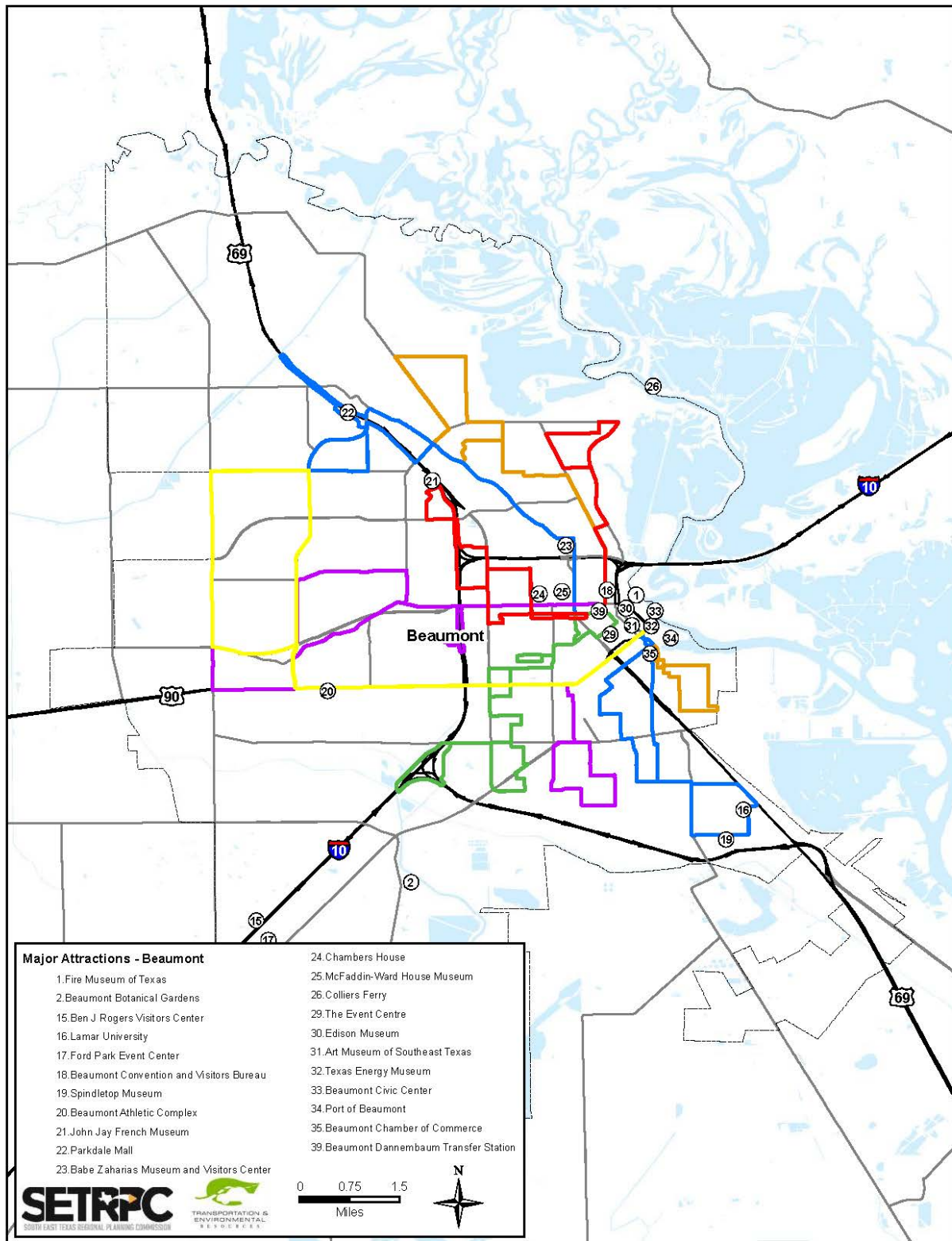
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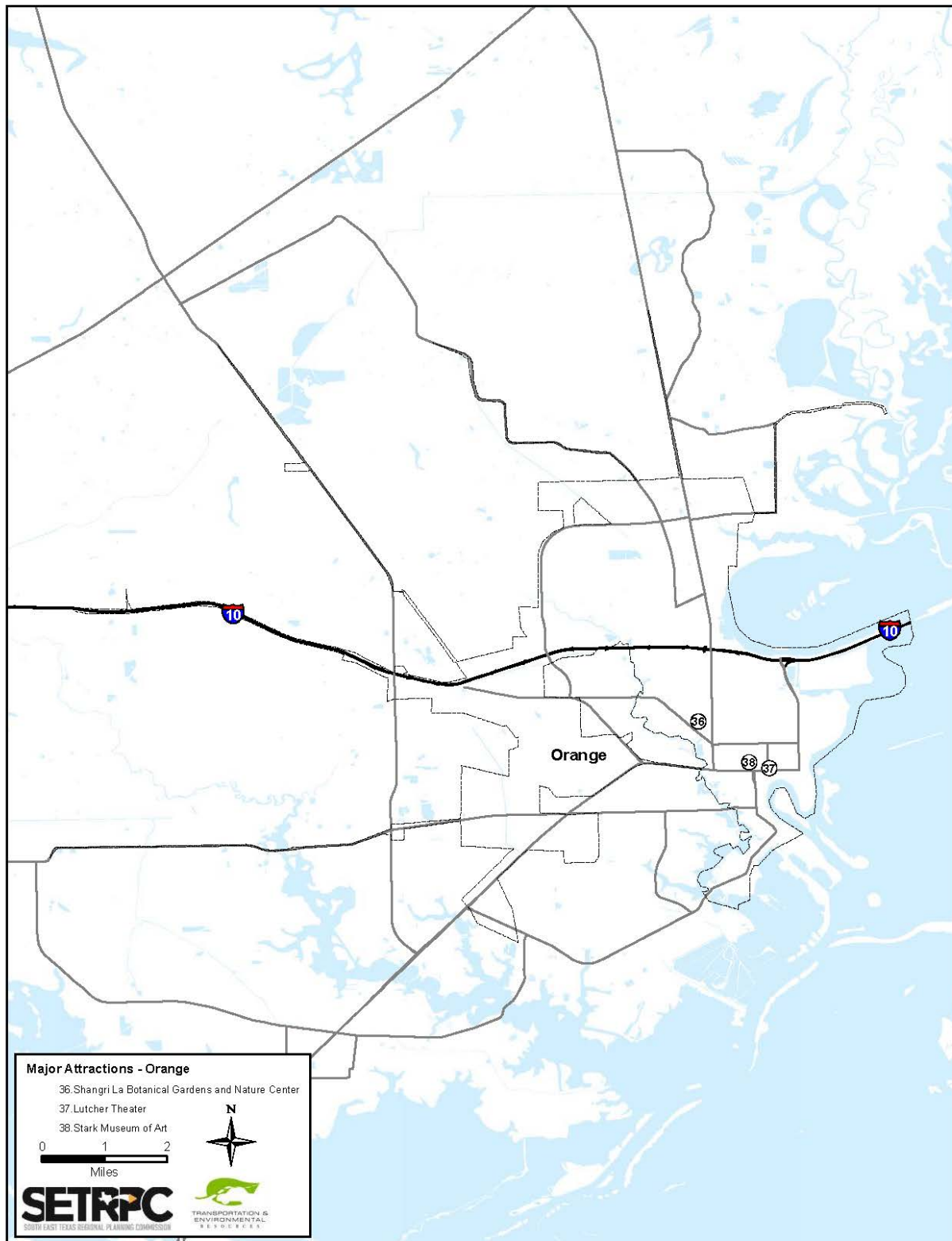
MAP 10C



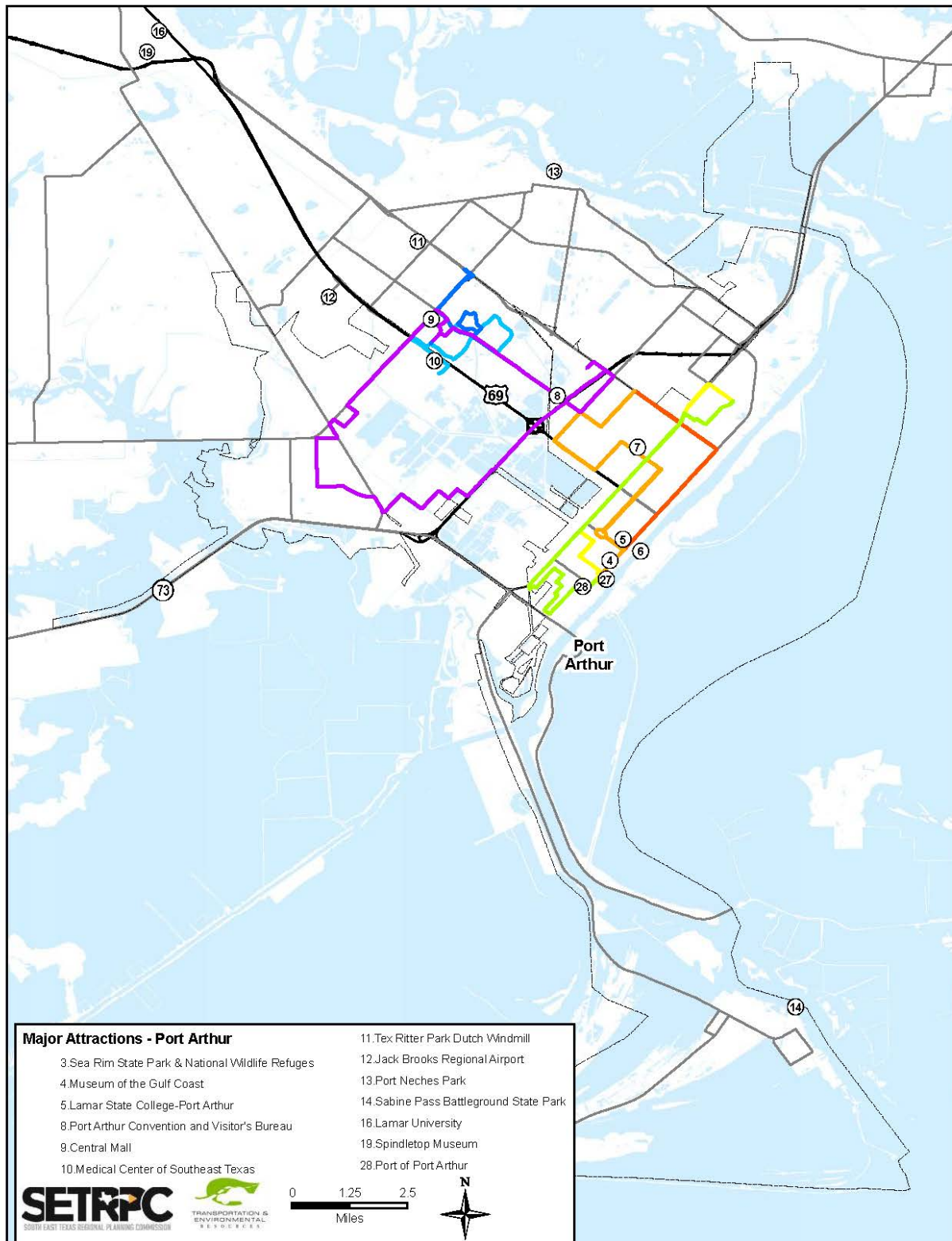
MAP 11A



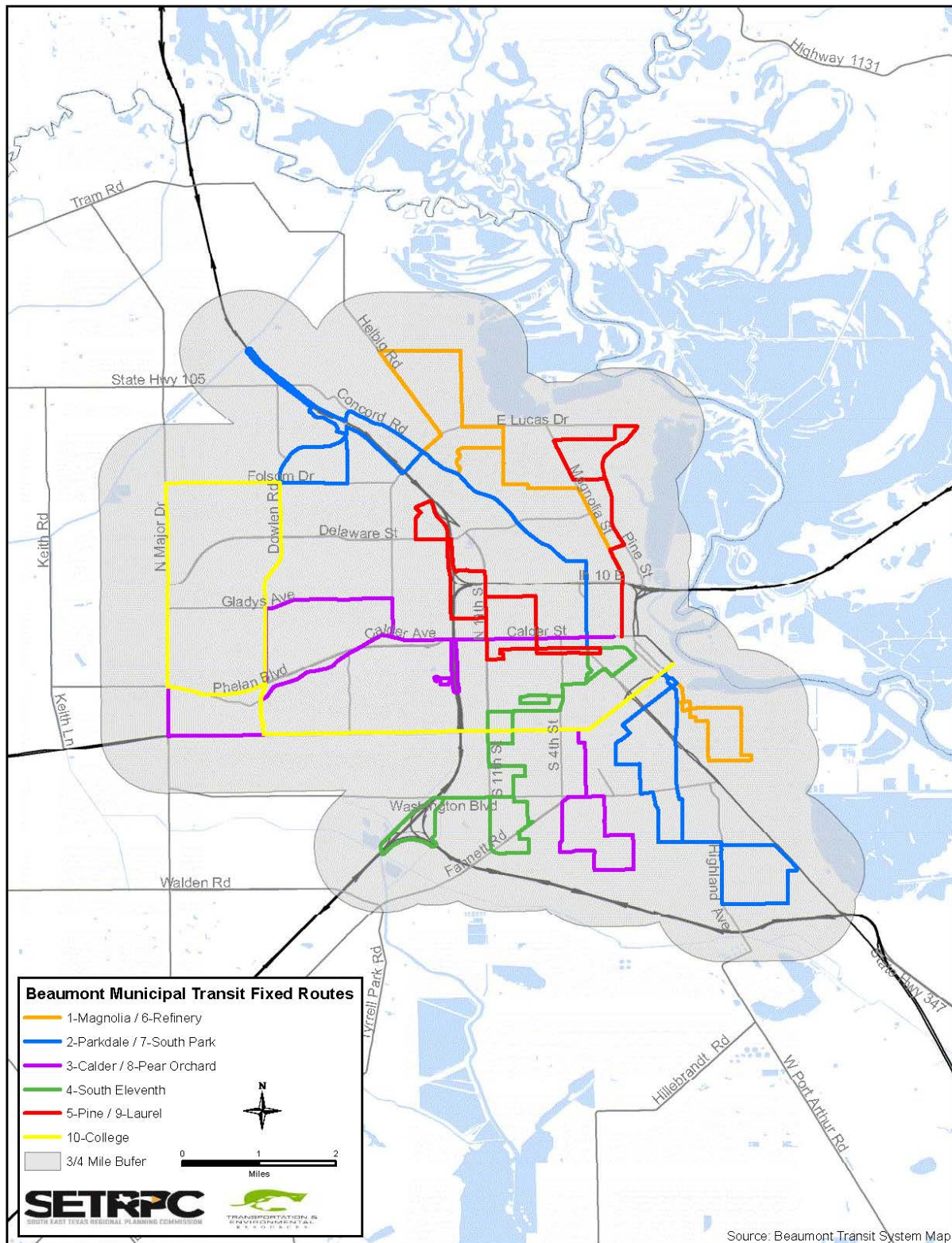
MAP 11B



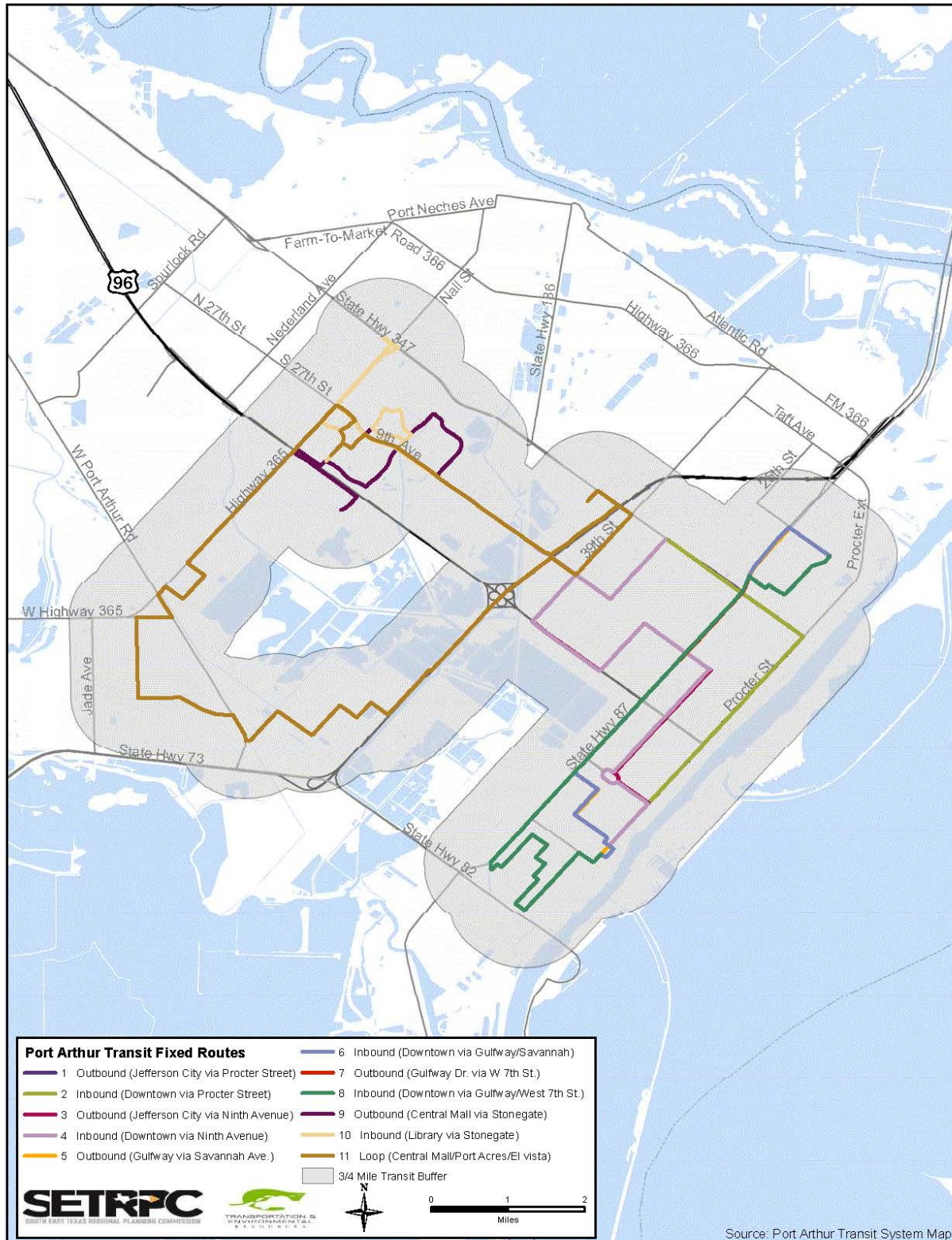
MAP 11C



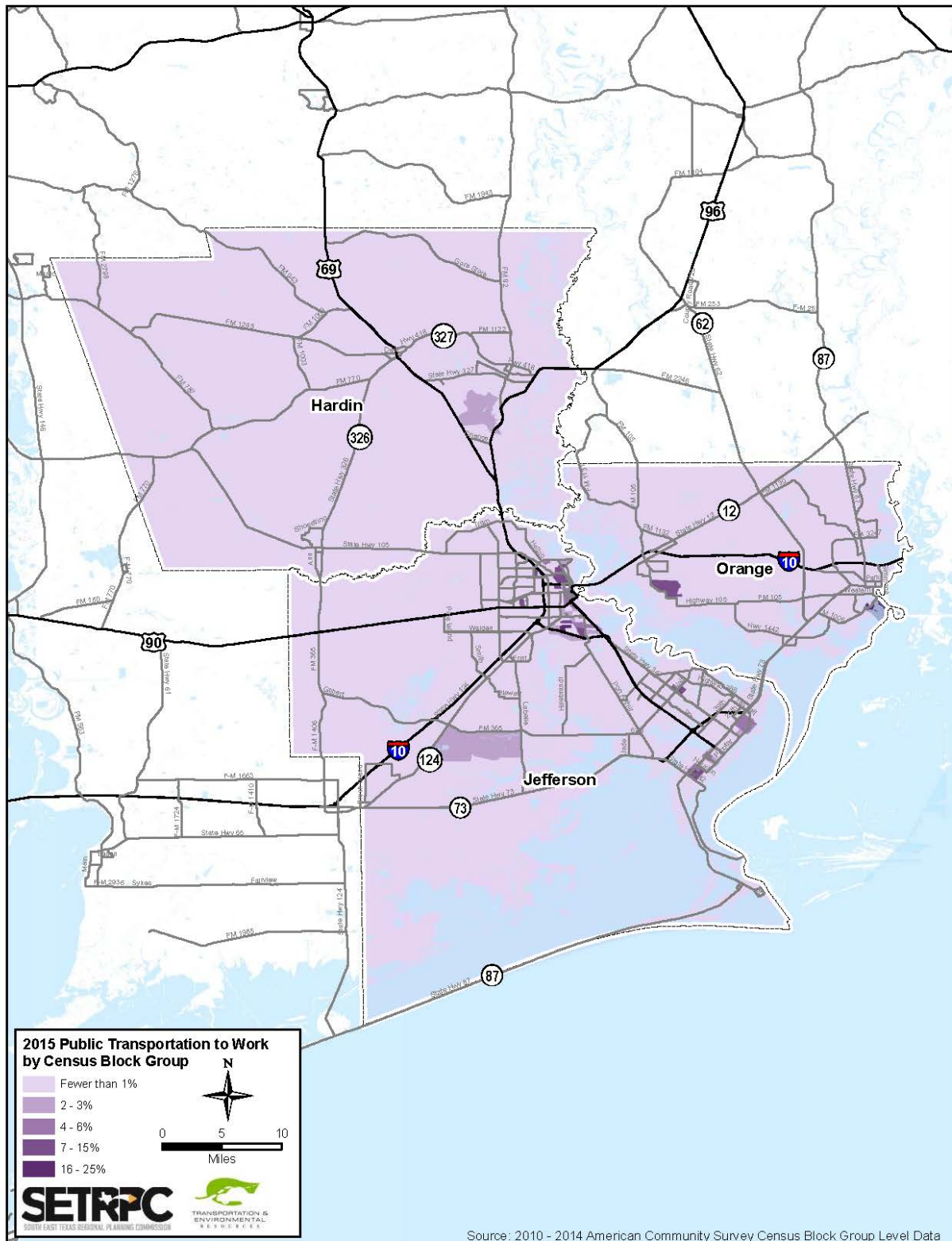
MAP 12



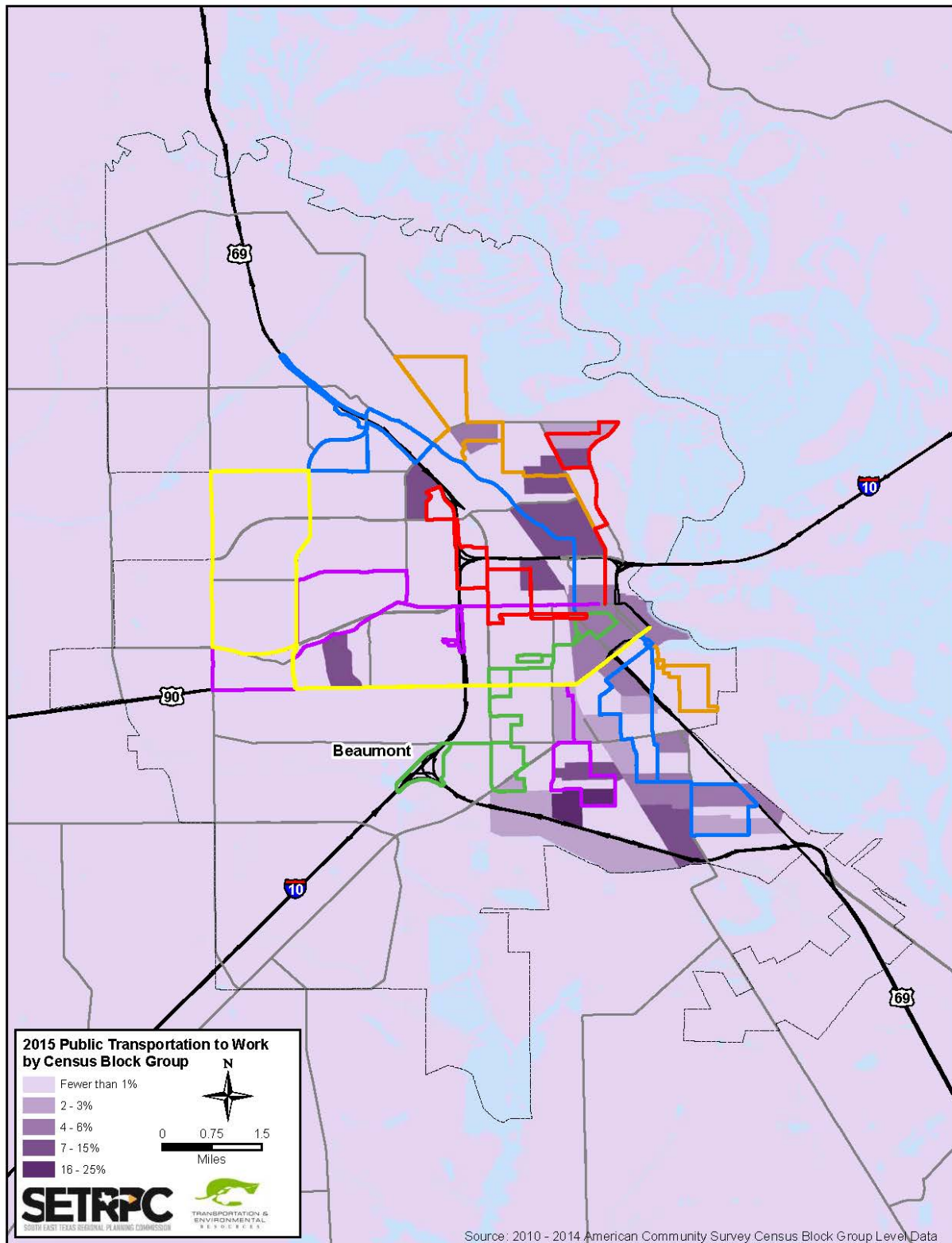
MAP 13



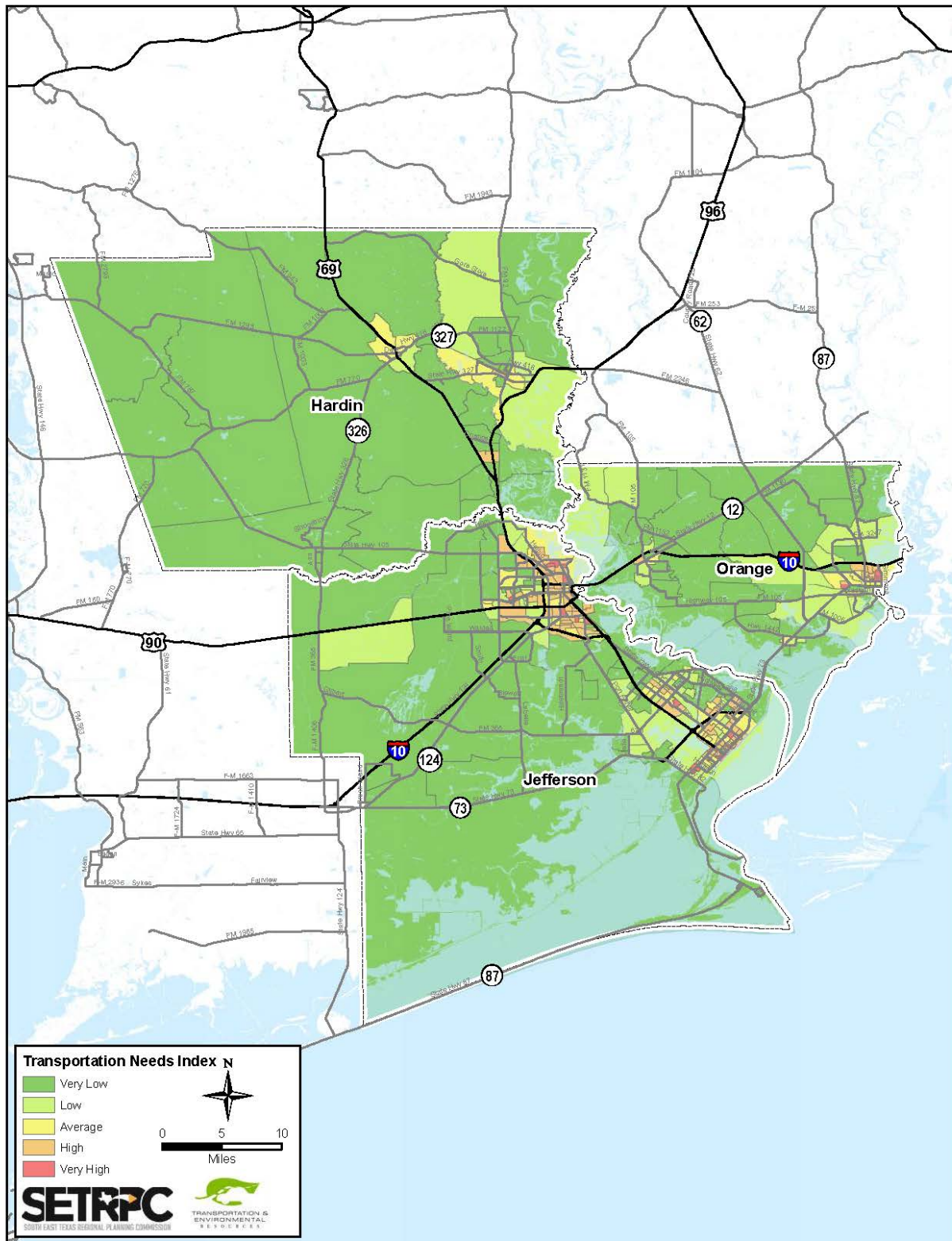
MAP 15A



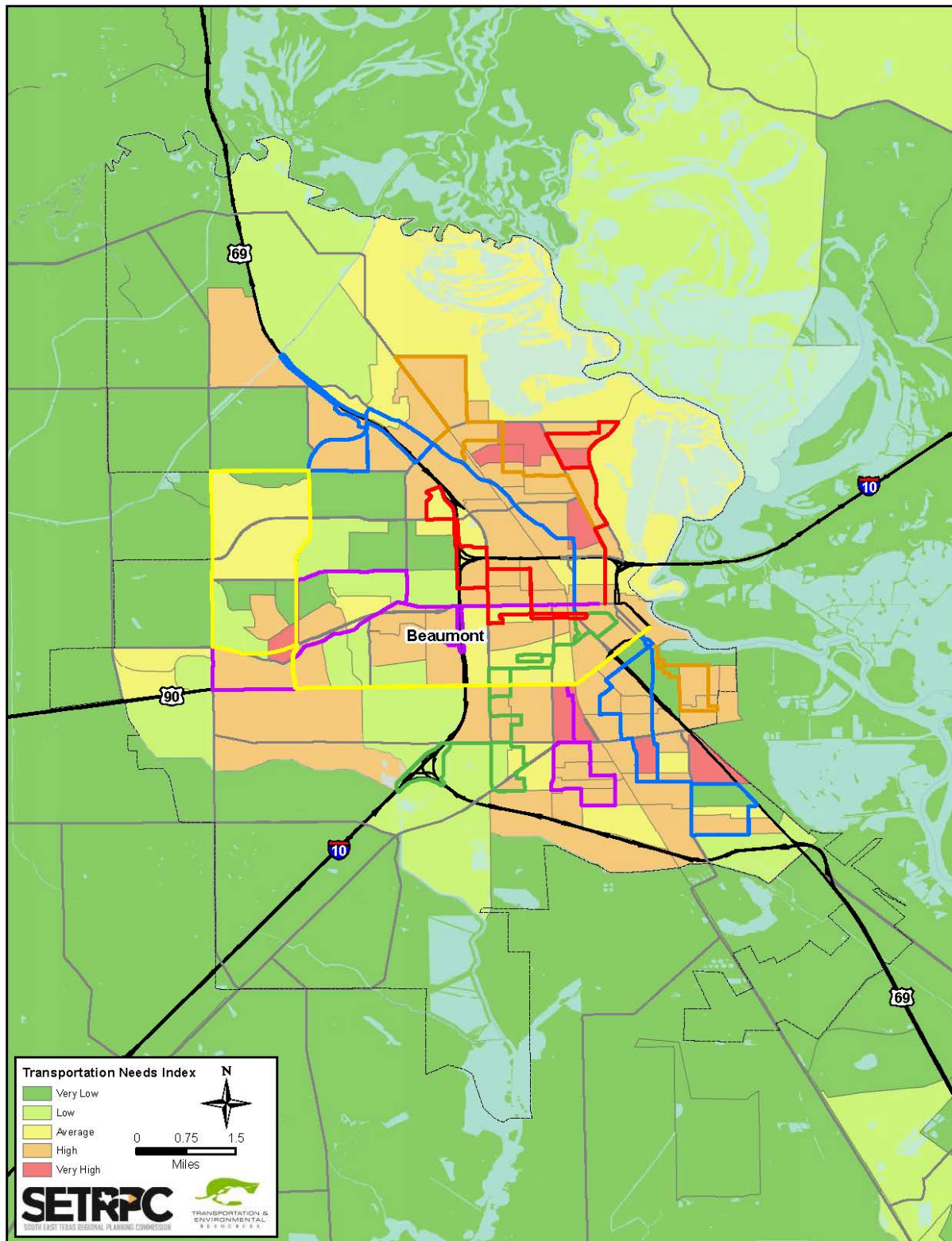
MAP 15B



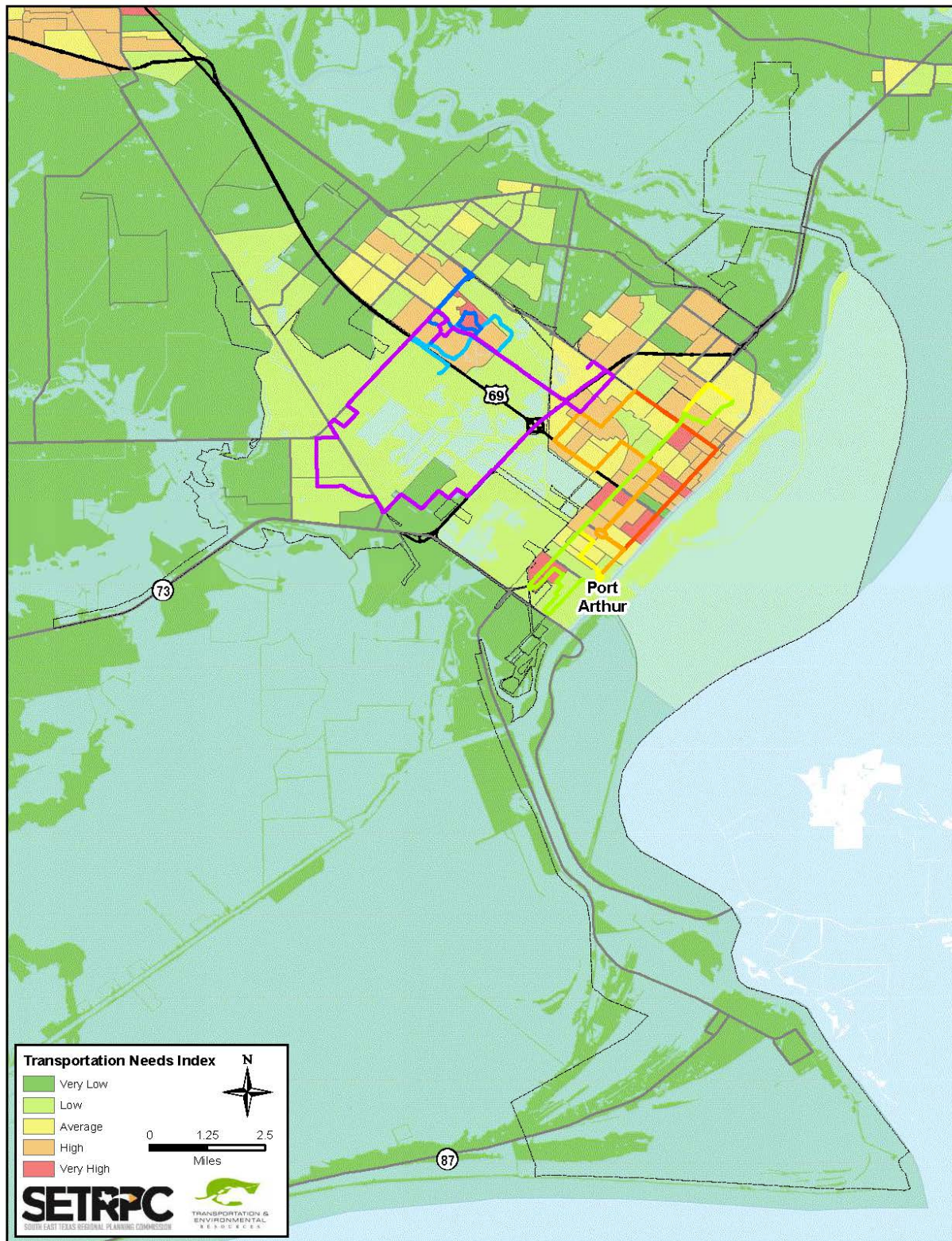
MAP 15C



MAP 16A



MAP 16B



Regional Health and Human Services Agencies

There are a number of health and human services agencies and programs that help to assist the transit dependent public with transportation information and funding throughout the region. Following is a list of those agencies:

- **Beaumont – Workforce Solutions**

304 Pearl Street

Beaumont, Texas 77701

- Provides oversight for employment and training programs in the north Jefferson County area. They also provide transportation information and funding

- **Orange – Workforce Solutions**

2415 N 16th Street

Orange, Texas 77630

- Provides oversight for employment and training programs in the Orange County area. They also provide transportation information and funding

- **Port Arthur – Workforce Solutions**

3901 North Twin City Highway

Port Arthur, Texas 77642

- Provides oversight for employment and training programs in the Hardin, Orange, and Jefferson Counties. They also provide transportation information and funding.

- **Hardin County Solutions Center**

Silsbee Public Library

294 N 4th Street

Silsbee, Texas 77656

- Provides oversight for employment and training programs in Hardin County.

- **RISE – Resource Information Support and Empowerment**

755 South 11th Street, Suite 101

Beaumont, Texas 77701

- The center for independent living, which provides four core services: advocacy, peer support, information and referral, and independent living skills training for persons with a disability in Hardin, Orange, and Jefferson Counties. Provides transportation information.

- **Spindletop Center**

655 South 8th Street

Beaumont, Texas 77701

- Provides a variety of behavioral health care services to people with mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities and chemical dependency in Hardin, Chambers, Orange, and Jefferson Counties. Provides transportation information.

- **Texas Department of Health and Human Services**

3105 Executive Boulevard

Beaumont, Texas 77705

- Oversees the operations of the health and human services system, provides administration oversight of Texas health and human services programs, and provides direct administration of some programs. Also provides transportation services, income assistance counseling, and social services in Hardin, Orange, and Jefferson Counties.

- **Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas**

2780 Eastex Freeway

Beaumont, Texas 77703

- The main charitable arm of the Diocese of Beaumont and helps all in need with counseling, relief services and others in the Diocese of Beaumont area. Provides transportation information.

- **ARC of Greater Beaumont**

700 North Street

Beaumont, Texas 77701

- Works to ensure the Americans with OIDD have services and supports they need to grow, develop and live in communities in the Beaumont area. Provides transportation information.

- **Goodwill Industries of Southeast Texas**

1180 South Eleventh Street

Beaumont, Texas 77701

- Provides critical human services such as job training, placement, retention and other community-based services to individuals with disabilities throughout southeast Texas.

- **Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS)**

5550 Eastex Freeway, STE. D

Beaumont, Texas 77708

- Provides a variety of services that assist eligible people with disabilities in preparing for, obtaining, retaining or advancing in competitive integrated employment.

Public Involvement Process

While some transportation needs can be recognized by examining how current transportation providers meet the needs identified in Census data, maps, and other sources of demographic data, many of the needs can only be understood through direct dialogue and communication with agencies and individuals that provide or rely on transportation services. A key step in understanding these needs should involve a wide range of individuals and agencies with an interest in transportation in the region. With this in mind SETRPC held three focus group meetings, and four public meetings to assist in the development of the RPTCP. At each meeting SETRPC presented maps and information to the attendees to inform them of the process of updating the plan. The

meetings included participants from across the region that helped in identifying the areas that needed additional transportation.

The participants were asked to comment on how well current transportation services meet the needs of residents for travel throughout the region. They were asked to base their evaluation of the existing services on: area served; days and hours of operation; fares; eligibility requirements of the service; vehicle accessibility of wheelchairs; customer service; reservation wait time, and ease of finding information on services. A full report of the Public Involvement Process can be found at Appendix A.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

The primary purpose of the focus group meetings was to gather input from relevant agencies and stakeholders with knowledge of the regional transportation needs of the populations of concern. SETRPC identified agencies throughout the three counties region that serve the youth, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, those who speak English as a second language, and individuals with limited incomes. Agency directors were informed of the nature of the focus groups and were asked to identify an ideal time and select individuals to participate. The agencies chosen who met the above criteria included:

1. Rise
2. Orange County Transportation
3. Health & Human Services
4. Sun Travel
5. Veterans Administration
6. Council of the Blind
7. Goodwill Industries
8. Workforce Solutions
9. Texas Department of Transportation

The focus groups were conducted for approximately one hour each and followed the focus group question guideline (see Appendix A.) The meetings were documented by a note taker, and the notes were coded and content analyzed to identify highlights and common themes among the focus groups. Summary of the focus group meetings has been included as Appendix B1-B3.

PUBLIC GROUP MEETINGS

The primary purpose of the public meetings was to give the community a chance to participate in the transportation planning process that would lead to an update of the southeast Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. SETRPC used email, radio announcements, newspaper notices, Facebook posts, flyers, and Twitter posts to express that all were welcome to come and give their ideas regarding public transportation services and needs in the three counties region.

SETRPC and the consultant team provided display boards detailing the process that SETRPC will use to update the current Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. The boards included some demographic information and a list of the region's transportation providers. After a brief presentation attendees examined the boards and were given an opportunity to make comments and/or ask questions. The comments and questions were captured using flip charts and comment cards. Summary of the public meetings has been included as Appendix C1-C4.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS AND PUBLIC MEETINGS



Some attendees, by virtue of their economic status, age and mobility, are reliant on public transportation, walking, and alternative modes of transportation provided by others, most notably friends, relatives, governmental and social service agencies.

The weather, bus stop cleanliness, sidewalk conditions, and public transportation inter-county connectivity affect the citizens that participated in these meetings. They are extremely concerned about these issues and spend a lot of time planning their transportation and time spent in transit. Some constituents also perceive that they spend an excessive amount of their available income on transportation.

Their economic livelihoods, sense of independence, and self-esteem are affected by their ability to access private and public services. Those who are in job training programs are assisted by the agencies that serve them during



their training periods. They provide transportation to certain destinations including job interviews; however, their ability to accept employment and to meet the requirements of employers to work non-traditional hours is directly related to their ability to use reliable and flexible transportation. Most of the people in these meetings expressed concern that public transportation schedules and routes do not serve certain areas of the city adequately, nor do they provide adequate service at times during the evenings and weekends. Many individuals who work, people involved in school or training programs, and the elderly and/or disabled, are unable to attend safely and comfortably after school activities, tend to duties such as shopping, or attend cultural events in the late evening and during the weekends. The reduced bus schedules during the evenings and weekends create major inconveniences for these citizens. They are forced to rely on transportation from friends or family.

Participants also discussed the necessity of walking to many destinations because it is more time efficient and may be the only way to get to a destination. Some also discussed the fact that walking may be necessitated by buses that are running late or that simply do not show up. Walking for most is always considered dangerous at times and risky at best.

Some participants perceive themselves as particularly vulnerable to conditions that jeopardize their health and safety, since they sometimes have to get to the bus stops

under dangerous or less than safe conditions (lack of or damaged sidewalks, unlit streets, etc.). These conditions were often reported by persons with a disability.

Although provisions for discounted fares have been made for seniors and school children, there were also some participants who suggested that reduced fares should occasionally be offered for everyone, as this activity could entice more riders to use the public transportation system.

The lack of public transit inter-county connectivity, particularly between the cities of Beaumont and Port Arthur, is a common theme that was heard at each of the public meetings. The attendees stated that there is an absolute need for this service because many transit dependent patrons such as veterans, and low-income residents, would like to have access to the two major cities (Beaumont and Port Arthur) for employment and medical reasons. The public did state that there is a need for some kind of coordination between Beaumont and Port Arthur to provide transit service connecting the two areas.

The daily commute graphic below is derived from data available through the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) tool. LEHD uses payroll records to determine where employees live and work. As shown in the diagram, in 2014 there were approximately 3, 213 people living in Port Arthur that commuted daily to the Beaumont area for work. Likewise, 2,043 people had the opposite commute (i.e. live in Beaumont and commute to Port Arthur for work). The other numbers on the graphic are read similarly for commutes between Beaumont and Orange and between Port Arthur and Orange. This graphic clearly illustrates the need for inter-county public transportation. The attendees did acknowledge that there was a prior transit service connecting Beaumont and Port Arthur for a short time but the service was discontinued due to low ridership and long headways.

In summary, the attendees of the focus groups and public meetings do believe that BMT, PAT, and SETT do provide good services with the resources that have been allocated.

Surveys

SETRPC places high value on agency and customer feedback and conducted two surveys regarding unmet transportation needs throughout the region. One survey was offered to the agencies providing public transportation and another was conducted with transit riders and some non-riders. Copies of the surveys can be found in Appendix D-E.

AGENCY SURVEY

The agency survey was administered via an online survey provider, and hard copies were provided when requested. Six agencies responded to the survey. Most participants stated that while there were indeed some unmet needs in the region, the transportation providers provide adequate coverage with the limited resources available.



All of the respondents indicated that there is a need for more public transportation services in rural Jefferson, Orange and Hardin Counties, but the lack of qualified operators in the region is an obstacle. The lack of transportation presents a barrier to access human services agencies and many individuals in these communities depend on public transportation to link them to better employment opportunities, food, and health services. Several human services agencies work with local transit agencies to provide public transportation to transit dependent individuals. This includes assisting individuals with disabilities by providing them with information on

scheduling rides, providing vouchers, and bus passes for residents when warranted. More hours of service, and more ADA-accessible vehicles were listed as the greatest need for public transportation in the community.

The top potential benefits to a regionally coordinated transportation plan listed by organizations include:

- Increased ridership with fixed route services and improved efficiency
- Increased ability for individuals with disabilities to live independently in their communities and provide greater mobility throughout the region
- Decreased cost of providing transportation services throughout the region

Limited accessibility, hours of operation, and financial reasons were among the major obstacles listed to coordination and mobility in the community/organization.

RIDER SURVEY

The rider survey was conducted by addressing citizens actually using public transportation. The survey was used to determine the transportation characteristics and commuting habits of those in the region that use public transportation. The survey was conducted on-board buses for passengers to complete during the duration of their trip. There were 108 respondents of the survey: 65 percent residing in the Beaumont District, 30 percent in the Port Arthur District, and 5 percent in the Orange District.

Below are some key takeaways from the **On-Board Survey** (further data analysis of the On-Board and Agency Survey results can be seen in Appendix G):

- 66 percent of the respondents utilize public transportation because they do not have access to a vehicle followed by 29 percent of the respondents who are an older adult and don't drive.
- Over half of the respondents (54%) utilize public transportation on a daily basis.

- Other than utilizing the Beaumont Municipal Transit, Port Arthur Transit System, or South East Texas Transit System, respondents primarily relied upon walking (50%) as a means of transportation and family/friends (45%).
- The top three choices for why respondents needed transportation included: Shopping (63%), Work/Seeking Work (59%), and Medical Visits/Appointments (57%).
- When asked what could be changed to provide more accessible and safer public transit, respondents indicated the following:
 - Drivers need more training in speaking to patrons who ride the bus
 - More frequent service to reduce wait time at stop locations
 - Amenities at bus stop locations including shelters, accessible sidewalks and ADA compliant ramps, and benches
- Service within and beyond the local community, but not outside the county, were also seen as a very important feature of a transportation service (service out of the county not an important feature for on-board riders)



The Agency and the Rider Surveys echoed each other in terms of unmet needs. Among the most common purposes for which consumers need transportation include:

- Employment
- Shopping
- Health Care Services
- Educational Services

A summary of the key findings of the focus groups, public meetings, and surveys, and the identification of unmet transportation needs for inter-county travel appears below:

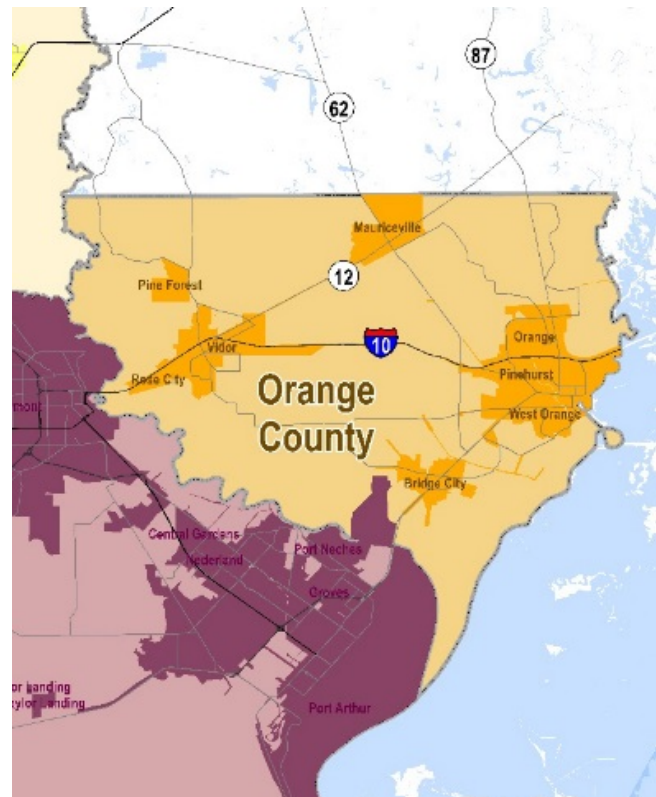
UNMET NEEDS FOR TRAVEL BETWEEN COUNTIES

- Lack of coordination between the existing services across the region.
- Limited transportation options between counties for travel to medical centers, including veterans traveling to Veterans Administration medical facilities in Jefferson County.

The meetings also addressed travel needs within the counties. A summary of the key findings of the assessment and the identification of unmet needs within the counties appears below:

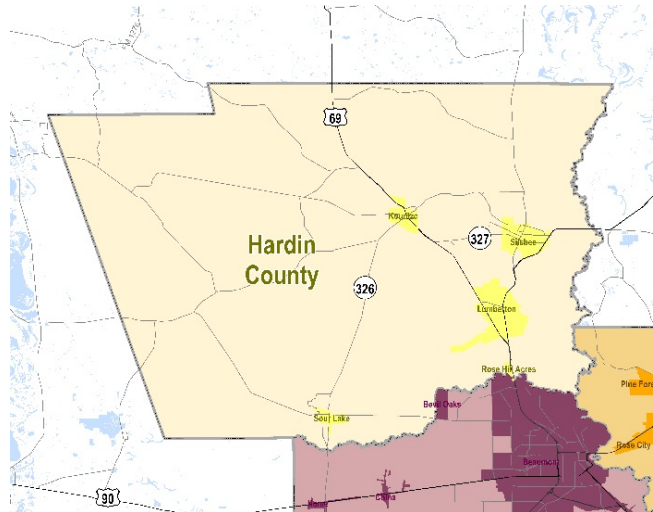
UNMET NEEDS FOR TRAVEL WITHIN ORANGE COUNTY

- Lack of transportation services because Orange County does not have fixed route transit services.
- Lack of transportation operators, which is a problem for the demand response service that is operated by Orange County. The County cannot get enough qualified operators to work for the service due to low pay and part time status.
- Lack of adequate public transportation for work trips.



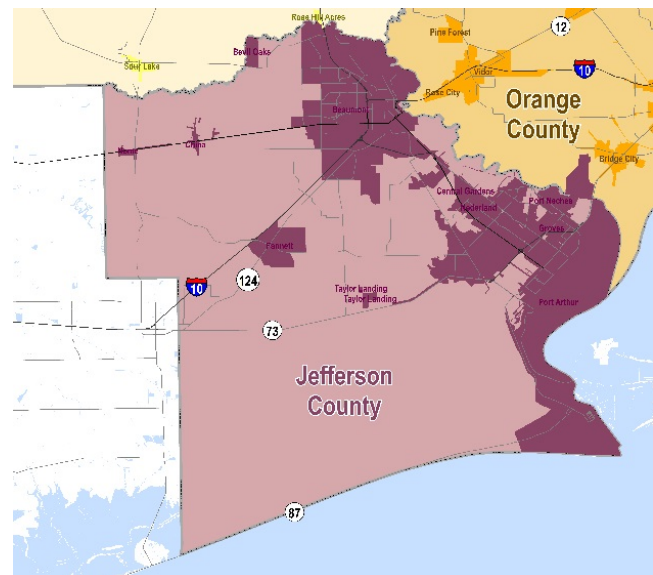
UNMET NEEDS FOR TRAVEL WITHIN HARDIN COUNTY

- Lack of public transit service throughout the county.
- Lack of transportation services connecting citizens to airports and medical appointments.



UNMET NEEDS FOR TRAVEL WITHIN JEFFERSON COUNTY

- Lack of a dedicated funding source to provide services to areas that due to lack of funding cannot be served.
- Need amenities at bus stops.
- Lack of weekend transportation services. Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT) does not operate on Sundays and operates only limited services on Saturday.
- Lack of adequate transportation for employees, in both service area and hours.
 - Transit service does not serve people in the Parkdale area
 - Citizens who work in retail cannot get home by bus due to the lack of evening transit service.



- Lack of public awareness and education on the available transportation options.
- Limited public transit service for the general public outside of the City of Beaumont.
- Veterans need rides to colleges: Lamar University, Lamar Institute of Technology, Vista College, and Brightwood College.
- Long headways between bus trips.

Gaps Analysis Summary

Many of the participants in the surveys and public meetings, while acknowledging that the public transit agencies provide the best service they can with the limited resources available, expressed that there are unmet needs in the region. Participants identified more geographic coverage and increased hours of service as the primary needs for the existing transit services.

Human services agencies did not indicate any specific geographic areas of unmet needs, but did indicate that more service in the rural areas and increased service hours in the urban areas were needed. There is also a need for a decrease in costs associated with providing transportation services throughout the region.



SETT does provide rural transit services, coordinating transportation needs over the three county rural areas by contracting with three transportation providers. But, with limited funding and resources, such as vehicles, and also due to a lack of operators, not all

transportation requests can be accommodated. Further, there are areas that are within the urban or non-rural areas that are excluded from being served by SETT, but are also too sparsely populated to accommodate urban transit service. These areas are essentially not served by public transportation.

In the Cities of Beaumont and Port Arthur, fixed route transit services are limited by the resources that have been allocated. The extent of service coverage focuses on the areas and times of day with the highest demand. But, from the perspective of residents with



limited incomes and limited access to transportation, the relative high cost of fares, and limited hours of service coverage creates barriers to accessing employment and/or education.

One common comment from the public meetings and surveys was the need for residents to access destinations outside of their communities. This is especially an issue for low-income residents and the elderly. SETRPC, and the human services agencies, continuously work on this issue by providing Demand Response services across the region. The agencies also provide public transportation information to the residents of the region.

The data gathered through the focus group meetings, public meetings, Agency Survey and the On-Board Survey will help the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and SETRPC identify the needs and opportunities for enhanced public transportation services throughout the region.



Appendix A

SETRPC Public Involvement

Outreach and Public Involvement

Ensuring that the public gives input on the region's transportation service is pivotal to updating the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan and improving overall service. To accomplish this task, SETRPC created a Steering Committee that includes diverse community interests, e.g. Goodwill, Veterans Affairs office, Lamar University, RISE, and concerned citizens. This Steering Committee identified areas of concern for veterans, minority communities, and transit dependent households. To ensure that all interested parties could participate in the transportation plan update, a public involvement strategy was developed that included public meetings, focus groups, ridership surveys, print media, and social media.

Public Meetings and Focus Groups

Public involvement for the project employed two approaches: two rounds of public meetings and one round of focus group meetings. In the initial round, four public meetings were held in Orange, Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Silsbee. Attendance and meeting locations are listed below.

TABLE 1. - FIRST ROUND: PUBLIC MEETINGS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Meetings	Date	Location	Attendees
<i>Public Meetings</i>			
City of Orange	July 19, 2016	200 5 th Street Orange, TX	15
Theodore Johns Public Library	July 20, 2016	4255 Fannett Road Beaumont, TX	30
City of Port Arthur	July 21, 2016	4615 9 th Avenue Port Arthur, TX	5
City of Silsbee	July 25, 2016	295 N. 4 th Street Silsbee, TX	3

Focus Groups				
SETRPC	July 20, 2016	2210 Eastex Freeway Beaumont, TX	6	
Goodwill Industries	August 3, 2016	1180 S. Eleventh St Beaumont, TX	7	
RISE	August 3, 2016	755 S. Eleventh St Beaumont, TX	6	
TOTAL			72	

Public Meetings Summary

Public meetings invite everyone in the community to participate in the transportation planning process. There were email invites, notices in newspapers, Facebook posts and Twitter posts were sent expressing that all were welcome to come and give their ideas regarding public transportation services and needs in the region. Over 50 attended the four public meetings held in Jefferson, Orange, and Hardin Counties.

SETRPC and the consultant team provided display boards detailing the process of the update of the South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan and the region's population density. After a brief presentation, attendees examined the boards. Comments and questions were captured using flip charts and comment cards. The following highlights key points that emerged during the public meetings:

Negative stigma attached to bus ridership - Most stakeholders stated that riding the bus was viewed negatively. It gave the impression that they were poor and could not afford another way to travel. Others indicated many people who did not speak English very clearly opted to walk rather than ride the bus because they were embarrassed. Attendees felt more education, a positive campaign, and better branding could improve the public's view of bus services.

Access was slow and limited – In some parts of the city of Beaumont residents could not access services because the bus routes did not come into their neighborhood. In addition, the places that potential patrons wanted to go was either not accessible via bus or involved lengthy travel times. Riders also stated that service was truncated in Port Arthur (ending at 6-6:30 pm) and no service on weekends. Most attendees felt that

expanded service was needed for all transit providers. BMT riders expressed concern over routes being eliminated because of low ridership. The residents felt this would further isolate the Fannett and Tyrell Park communities.

Intercity connections – The most common concern was getting to Beaumont from Port Arthur or other cities. This void left many communities without access to basic healthcare and jobs. People also noted the need for transport to the local airport and to the Houston airports, especially for early morning or late night flights.

Veteran's issues – One of the greatest transportation needs was getting from Port Arthur to the Beaumont VA Clinic. Service was created for a short while but was terminated due to low ridership and long headways.

Confusion regarding service – Many attendees expressed confusion regarding who could ride the bus; some people thought the bus was only for seniors. This issue was critical in Orange. Most attendees were not familiar with the bus systems. Many attendees expressed a need for overall education on who can ride the bus, service hours, and fares.

Safety and bus shelters – Many attendees expressed concern regarding the lack of shelters and the placement of the shelters. Others felt unsafe while waiting for the bus and unsafe when walking to bus stops because of high grass and absence of sidewalks. Trash and insects were also mentioned as issues at shelters.

Focus Groups Summary

A focus group consists of a guided discussion lead by a facilitator. This format allows for information/input gathering from targeted groups in the community. Unlike public meetings where anyone from the general public to elected officials are invited, SETRPC staff invited key stakeholders to participate in the focus group. There were 19 Stakeholders that participated. At the opening and introduction of the focus group, participants were asked two questions:

- 1. How do you feel about the local transportation system?*
- 2. What are the pressing needs in the community?*

Introduction Question #1 responses showed that most respondents expressed a stigma associated with riding the bus. More importantly, some respondents had never used the system and had no opinion at all.

Introduction Question #2 responses reflected social service agency clients needing transport to receive their services, from Goodwill, VA, or Workforce Solutions. Because many clients have fixed incomes, social service agency representatives noted that their clients cannot pay for transit. Additional transportation needs included a ride to the grocery store.

The facilitator then asked the participants to work in small groups and discuss the following questions:

- 1. What challenges do people in the community have getting transportation?*
- 2. As you look around the community, what are the community's transportation needs?*
- 3. There are several transportation services in the community, which services do you feel are working well and why?*
- 4. If you are not a bus rider, (other than the fact that you own a car) indicate other reasons why you don't ride the bus?*
- 5. What services or programs would interest you in taking transit?*
- 6. What improvements are needed to attract more people to transportation services?*
- 7. Are there new transportation services/options that should be added to help groups that do not have access to transportation?*

Below is a summary of responses to the above questions.

Question 1 - The attendees explained the difficulty many veterans in rural areas have in getting timely transport. The lack of sidewalks prevents persons in wheelchairs from accessing fixed routes. Medical trips overwhelmed some transit systems making it difficult for young persons to get trips to work.

Question 2 – The region's size means that travel times are long. In addition, riders experience long headways on fixed routes and long delays for special transit. Special concerns were noted for the Hispanic community. Many parents walk their kids to school because the school district does not provide service and area transit service is not available early in the morning. Bus routes and general service information in Spanish are needed.

Question 3 – Some attendees felt that work and home trips operated well. Others highlighted Beaumont Municipal Transit as functioning well but patrons could not access all fixed routes because some lacked sidewalks. In Orange, the rural service worked so well that it is in high demand. A shortage of operators keeps them from serving more patrons.

Question 4 – Many people view the bus as a last resort. The current system does not appear to be a viable option for work trips and convenience trips. Choice riders would need incentives to use public transit. Others indicated that they do not live in the service area.

Question 5 – Free WiFi, free days, guaranteed ride home, and discounted fares were a few of the suggestions to increase ridership. Others felt that the bus should be marketed as a “cool” option. A marketing strategy featuring area leaders using the bus would be helpful.

Question 6 – Better shelters, lighting, safety, and sidewalks topped the list as the most needed improvements. Other ideas included more education on available services and an extension of operating hours and weekend service.

Question 7 – When asked about new services, the attendees highlighted the need for intercity bus service, rides for recreation and shopping, and funding for patrons on fixed incomes. Another comment involved the use of a universal smartcard so that riders can use the BMT, PAT and SETT.

Engaging the Public Using Traditional and Non-traditional Tools

To reach the public, SETRPC engaged key stakeholders, transportation agencies, social service agencies, concerned citizens, and area universities and colleges. Depending upon the language needs, flyers in English and Spanish were emailed and delivered to stakeholders and placed in key offices/community locales. SETRPC placed public meeting notices in area newspapers. In addition, various media outlets received a press release about the upcoming public meetings; also a radio commercial about the public meeting on a Spanish station was aired several times. These methods appeal to a more traditional audience.

Because social media plays a major part of everyday life, several methods were used to capture the technologically savvy public. As a result, a Facebook page was developed to post information about the project. Various organizations and Facebook patrons were targeted. In addition, a Twitter account created another presence for the project in the social media platform.

In addition to public meetings and focus groups, the public still had a variety of ways to give input about their transportation needs. The project team conducted an on board survey of Beaumont and Port Arthur transit riders, as well as Demand Respond riders in the rural areas. There were also flyers posted and disseminated to a number of organizations throughout the region. The surveys reflected the thoughts and needs of riders.

Appendix B1

SETRPC Plan Update 2017

Focus Group Meeting

July 20, 2016 – 10:00 am

SETRPC Office, Beaumont Texas

INTRODUCTION – 2 QUESTIONS

Intro Question 1: How do you feel about the local transportation system?

Intro Question 2: What are the pressing needs in the community?

- Special needs for individuals with disabilities.
- SETRPC needs help in providing transportation for patrons.
- Transportation is a huge issue, especially transportation that connects to other services.
- Some of the transit options do not get people to places the clients need to go
- Better system to help citizens find a ride.
- Neutral as to how I feel about transportation services. No personal experience/use of the system.
- Veterans cannot ride the bus from Port Arthur to Beaumont clinic because there is no service.
- There are very good services with Orange County Transportation.
- Money constraints are a problem for some citizens.
- There needs to be some expansion of the existing services. Here to learn more about transportation services.
- The transportation facilities need improvement.
- Transit has negative stigma that needs to be improved in order to increase ridership.

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS:

Question 1: What challenges are faced when getting Transportation?

- Having trouble getting operators because the pay is not enough.

Question 2: What are the community's transportation needs?

- The region/area is very large and hard to cover. You spend a lot of time traveling to pick up clients, taking them to destination, going back to office, then returning to pick up client and take them home.
- Riders complain about the long delays.

Question 3: Which services are not working well?

- Work and home trips work well for some transit riders.
- In Orange, services are in high demand and 5-10 people are turned down for service per day. (This is primarily a result of a driver shortage which limits the number of vehicles that can serve the community.)
- All drivers are part time Orange County employees. Service would work better if all drivers were not part time.

Question 4: Why do people not ride the bus?

- Timing – when using the transit service, most people can get to their locations but can't get back home.
- Location—the bus system does not operate in some areas, making it difficult for some people to ride the bus
- People lack knowledge of the system—there needs to be more education materials about the system.

Question 5: What would interest you in taking transit?

- Cost factor.
- Safety.
- Trust that the system will be on time.
- Market the bus to look like it is fun to use.

Question 6: What improvements are needed?

- Location- place the service to meet the needs
- Restricted in boundaries, buses cannot operate in all areas.
- Need connections between Port Arthur and Beaumont

Question 7: What are the needs for new services?

- Seniors need more transportation.
- Funding to help pay for more rides.
- Cancer patients need medical treatment trips.
- When inmates are released from prison, they walk, but really need a ride to get to Beaumont.
- The system is not great for workers.
- Need for people to get to the Houston Texas Medical Center (TMC).

NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: 6

Appendix B2

SETRPC Plan Update 2017

Focus Group Meeting

August 3, 2016 – 9:30 am

Office of Goodwill Industries of Southeast Texas, Beaumont Texas

Introduction – 2 questions

Intro Question 1: How do you feel about the local transportation system?

Intro Question 2: What are the pressing needs in the community?

- Public transit does not operate in their client's area.
- Parkdale clients cannot get to Goodwill for services due to lack of transit options.
- There is no connection between Beaumont and Port Arthur. Also from 105 to Tram Rd there is no public transit, there needs to be some type of transit option.
- Some citizens are experiencing difficulties getting to the bus stop at the new public housing apartments because they must cross the freeway to reach it.
- Workforce Solutions clients cannot reach the office because of the lack of public transit.
- Beaumont for the Blind – There is no SETT rural service or BMT service, and these clients have a Beaumont address.

Focus Group Questions:

Question 1: What challenges are faced when getting transportation?

- Veterans in China, Port Arthur, Port Neches are trying to travel to Beaumont for appointments. Transit is a problem. In addition, they do not have money to pay for transit.
- There is no transportation from Port Arthur to jobs in Beaumont.
- Travel to the area airport cost \$45 compared to \$42 to travel to Houston.
- How can Goodwill provide reimbursement for transportation costs?

Question 2: What are the community's transportation needs?

- Hispanic community has transportation problems. Moms walk their kids from Ave A/College St./Stagg to get their kids to Everhart Charter School. They need earlier transportation/transit so that they can get the kids to

school at 7:30 am. Many mothers push strollers as they are walking. There are no sidewalks along 4th Street.

- Members of the Hispanic community find that it is hard to read the transit route maps. There are also language barriers as the drivers don't speak Spanish so riders are confused about the stops.
- Vets need rides to colleges: Vista College, Lamar University, Lamar Institute of Technology, and Brightwood College.
- Uber is in Beaumont area but it is hard to find drivers for early morning hours.
- It is also hard to get a taxi.
- Veterans frequently must walk 3 miles to work. There is no money for transportation to the store, work, or other places.

Question 3: Which services are not working well?

- There needs to be more hours of operation – early hours and late hours. The last pick up is 8:30 pm.
- Limited service hours are not convenient for shift workers at plants and mall workers.

Question 4: Why do people not ride the bus?

- Riding the bus is the last transportation option for some people; they will look for other options before deciding on using public transportation.
- People don't ride because the bus stops are not safe not clean, and there is a negative stigma attached to riding the bus.
- Some people believe that the current public transit system is set up to serve low-moderate income patrons and is not for people to use for work or convenience trips.
- Some areas are not served and people have to walk a long way to reach a bus stop.
- More choice riders are needed to attract others to the bus.
- Every route transfers downtown. Plus, the downtown area does not feel like a positive place.

Question 5: What would interest you in taking transit?

- Incentives, e.g. free bus rides – but with an expiration date. This will encourage people to use all their rides.
- It would help if there was an emergency ride home policy in place to accommodate folks that may have an emergency during the day.
- Half price days.

Question 6: What improvements are needed?

- Bus shelters (providing shade and protection from the elements)
- Better lighting.
- A study on expanding the routes and service hours.

- Educating the public by advertising the current transit services.
- Education about who can ride the bus. People are not always sure if it's just for seniors or if others can ride as well.

Question 7: What are the needs for new services?

- Intercity bus service is needed, especially between Beaumont and Port Arthur, but it is also needed for surrounding city residents who want to get to Beaumont.
- Medi Tran takes care of a lot of medical trips, but clients also need rides for shopping and other trips.
- Voucher program for cabs is needed.
- In Austin, there is a service called Access-A-Ride (a call same day services) that helps riders get trips. Beaumont region needs this type of service.
- Universal SmartCard is needed for patrons to ride on all systems (BMT, PAT, and SETT)

Number of attendees: 7

Appendix B3

SETRPC Plan Update 2017

Focus Group Meeting

August 3, 2016 – 1:30 pm
RISE Office, Beaumont Texas

Introduction – 2 questions

Intro Question 1: How do you feel about the local transportation system?

Intro Question 2: What are the pressing needs in the community?

- The Rise staff knows people/clients who need transit services.
- Transportation is very important for medical trips and for independent living persons. It is a challenge every day for consumers/clients to get to some of their medical appointments.
- Transportation affects how consumers/clients move in the community and the larger surrounding 3 counties.
- People have difficulties getting transportation.
- Problems getting from Port Arthur to Beaumont.
- Some people would ride the bus but there is no service in Groves.
- BMT users must call every day for each ride. The phone system poses problems, being on hold, etc. The AC on the bus is too hot or too cold. There are no out of town transportation services, e.g. to Houston.

Focus Group Questions:

Question 1: What challenges are faced when getting transportation?

- For special transit services, users must call in advance.
- Bus stops do not have sidewalks so persons using wheelchairs cannot access the stops.
- Young consumers without medical needs cannot ride the bus because medical trip consume/take priority over all other types of rides; medical trips also overshadow trips needed for work.
- Within the transit system, there is a lack of connectivity between Beaumont and Port Arthur.

Question 2: What are the community's transportation needs?

- Port Arthur students cannot get to Lamar University.

- Work, medical, education, government services and other resources take priority. There are no transportation services that provide rides to the grocery store. Therefore, some people must walk to buy groceries.
- There are long waits for the bus (local and special transit services).
- There are problems getting rides to church or other social events.

Question 3: Which services are not working well?

- BMT works well but it is hard to take fixed route, especially when there are no sidewalks to accommodate patrons and individuals with disabilities.
- Medicaid (MTM) is broken – an address mistake caused a consumer/client to miss an appointment. The agency was called immediately, but only a new driver could be sent out to get the consumer. The consumer waited hours to be picked up just to be returned home. There is always room for improvement.

Question 4: Why do people not ride the bus?

- Bus does not connect to where some live. But if it did, money could be saved on gas.
- The bus takes too long to get you to where you are going.
- The bus is not great when traveling with children.

Question 5: What would interest you in taking transit?

- Bullet train

Question 6: What improvements are needed?

- More stops are needed.
- Better connections.
- Sidewalks.
- Shelters with more than just benches.
- Easy scheduling – more subscription services.
- Incentives – buy 10 get 1 free.
- Half-price days.
- Education is important. People don't know how or who can ride the bus.
- No access to internet. Must use phones.
- Free WiFi.

Question 7: What are the needs for new services?

- Assistance with groceries on bus.
- Is there service off Washington Blvd crossing? If not, there should be because there is an assisted living facility there.
- Intercity bus service between Beaumont and Port Arthur
- Vouchers for cabs.

Number of attendees: 6

Appendix C1

**SETRPC Plan Update 2017
Open House Public Meeting
July 19, 2016 – 2:00 pm
Orange Library
200 5th Street - Orange, Texas**

Questions/Comments

- Residents in Vidor can get rides on transit by calling?
- Transit services need to be advertised better. Use a catchy slogan.
- There is a misconception about who can ride the bus. Many believe the services are only for seniors.
- The hours of operating services are limited; the buses do not run late evenings, which is a problem for citizens getting off of work late in the evenings.
- Some people cannot pay for the bus although the fare is \$1.
- More bus stops could be useful; there could be more shelters and lighting.
- Bus service trips to the grocery stores and other important places/activity centers/resources are needed.
- A lot of people walk when they could be using the service. If there were bus stops and routes based on a schedule and not buses running late and sometimes not showing up people would not need to walk to their destinations.
- The Housing Authorities Residence Council meets on the 1st Thursday of each month and would appreciate a presentation on the transit services available to them.
- Some people may not understand what transit means, so maybe a different name could be used. This would help them realize that It is easier to use bus than to walk to their destinations.

Number of attendees: 15+

Appendix C2

SETRPC Plan Update 2017 Open House Public Meeting July 20, 2016 – 3:00 pm Theodore Johns Library 4255 Fannett Rd - Beaumont, Texas

Questions/Comments

- Does rural transit operate outside of Beaumont? Yes, rural transit operates outside of Beaumont and is supplied by SETRPC.
- Fannett Rd – How far does the service go? Does it end at St. James? It seems that there is no service in the Tyrrell Park area (Tyrrell Park and Fannett). People need to get to the 5900 block of Fannett. Please consider extending service to this non-served area. Many people in this area do not have cars.
- Why does service end at St. James near Tinsel Town movie theatre? It is just 3 additional miles. Is it funding?
- Please include Tyrrell Park area in the bus route.
- Why are special transit services more expensive than the regular fixed route service? Can it be subsidized?
- Are there ways to offset special transit service fares? Some cannot afford to pay.
- Pine Laurel Route has a one hour and forty five minute (1:45 minute) headway
- Parkdale Route is 15-20 minutes late. This is hard especially in the summer when it is hot and in the winter when it is cold. (Shelters needed.) Can another bus be added to the route? Can the College Route pick people up to decrease the wait time?
- What hour would be better to end bus service in Beaumont?
- Has City Council ever directed the bus company to evaluate their system? Yes, but the council never takes the recommendations from staff.
- Has it ever recommended that service be extended to Tyrrell Park?
- Three people have passed out at the bus stop due to heat. There was a \$100,000 grant received for bus shelter. The custom bus shelters cost \$15,000. Transit staff supports the regular shelters for \$3,000 each.

- Location of bus stops are too far to walk. Who determines where bus stops are placed? (Beaumont needs to evaluate Stonehurst & Pine Club). The right of way issues are a problem when siting new bus stops because they place people in others front yard.
- The bus stops need to be maintained. Some areas also need to be mowed. The Beaumont Clean Community Commission mows because Beaumont does not have the personnel to mow, clean, and empty the trash.
- People were also concerned about eliminating the Pine Street Route because this route is still needed? It was confirmed that this route is being evaluated.

Number of attendees: 30+

Appendix C3

**SETRPC Plan Update 2017
Open House Public Meeting
July 21, 2016 – 3:00 pm
Port Arthur Library
4615 9th Avenue - Port Arthur, Texas**

Questions/Comments

- Coordination of transit service between Beaumont and Port Arthur is needed. Who will use the service?
- Port Arthur Transit's (PAT's) service area ends too early on weekdays and there is no service on the weekends. (Nederland and Port Neches service is restricted to persons with disabilities and persons 65+ because these services operate on 5311 Funds.
- There is no regular transit to smaller towns – Demand response and limited demand response.
- DARS will officially become the Division of Rehabilitation under Workforce Solutions on September 1, 2016.
- PAT operates a Dial a ride route to Twin City Hwy and the airport for \$5 each way
- If I am using the Dial a ride system, can PAT and Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT) meet at the airport to facilitate transportation between the two cities? PAT is working with Port Arthur Veterans Administration to get transportation to Beaumont's VA clinic.
- PAT Paratransit offers limited demand response routes to Sabine Pass and the entire PA area.
- PAT explained that on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, dialysis patients use demand response services. They also combine these services with paratransit.
- For the past 30 years, PAT has gone above and beyond to provide service to the community.

Number of Attendees: 5

Appendix C4

**SETRPC Plan Update 2017
Open House Public Meeting
July 25, 2016 – 3:00 pm
Theodore Johns Library
294 North 4th Street - Silsbee, Texas**

Questions/Comments

- One attendee belonged to a local civic organization that had several volunteers who shuttled those in need of transportation to medical appointments and airports. She informed SETRPC staff they did this on their own time and at their expense as a service to the community.
- A second attendee was an Uber driver. She was primarily supposed to provide rides in the Beaumont area. She did, however, live in Hardin County and wanted to expand her service there. She was apparently new to Uber and asked how she could do this. SETRPC staff suggested to her that she needed to contact Uber to find out company policy for expansion. She did state that some service was provided to Hardin County, but it was difficult for first time riders as there was only one initial pick-up location. Once the rider had used the service, a more convenient pick-up location could be arranged.
- Several people visiting the Silsbee Library stopped by the public meeting to learn about transit. The SETRPC staff explained the reason for the meeting and informed them of the transit options in the region.

SOUTH EAST TEXAS 2016 ON-BOARD SURVEY

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) is requesting your assistance in completing the following survey. The data gathered from this effort will assist the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and SETRPC in identifying areas of need and opportunities for enhanced transportation services through coordination. SETRPC currently is developing a three-county Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan that will identify several new Pilot Projects throughout the region. **Your input in the survey process will help ensure that SETRPC is fully aware of potential Pilot Project opportunities in your area.**

You can complete the survey using one of the following methods:

- Online at surveymonkey.com
- Mail at South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
Attention: Bob Dickinson
2210 Eastex Freeway
Beaumont TX 77703
- Email at bdickinson@setrpc.org

1. I need public transportation because I am/do: (*circle letter of all that apply*)

- a. I am an older adult and I do not drive
- b. I do not have insurance
- c. I am a person with a disability
- d. I do not have a driver's license
- e. I am homeless
- f. I am not old enough to drive
- g. I am too ill to drive
- h. I do not have a car.
- i. Other (please specify):

2. How often do you use public transportation?

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------|
| a. Daily | c. Monthly |
| b. Weekly | d. Seldom or never |

3. I use the following means of transportation: (*circle ALL that apply*)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. My own vehicle | e. South East Texas Transit |
| b. Family/Friends | f. Taxi |
| c. Port Arthur Transit | g. Biking |
| d. Beaumont Municipal Transit | h. Walking |

4. I need transportation to: (*circle your top THREE choices*)
 - a. Medical (doctor, dentist, chemotherapy, dialysis, etc.)
 - b. Shopping
 - c. Recreational/Social
 - d. Work/Seeking Work
 - e. School/Education
 - f. Other _____

5. Please provide the approximate location where you most often get on the bus to start a trip (*closest intersection or name of facility*).

6. Provide the approximate location (closest intersection or name of facility) of the top 3 places you generally travel to on the bus.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

7. Do you, or people you know, experience problems using public transportation due to being disabled? If so, tell us more. What could be changed to make public transit more accessible and safe for you or others?

8. Do you use a mobility aid when you travel?

a. I can travel unassisted	d. I use a walker
b. I use a wheelchair	e. I use a scooter
c. I travel with a service animal	

9. Are there places that you need to get to on public transportation, but currently cannot?

10. Below are features of transportation service. Rank how important each feature is to you by circling number 1 to 5, with 1 being not important and 5 being very important.

	Not Important			Very Important	
a. Service within your local community	1	2	3	4	5
b. Service beyond your local community	1	2	3	4	5
c. Service out of the county	1	2	3	4	5
d. Service to regional medical facilities	1	2	3	4	5
e. Daytime service	1	2	3	4	5
f. Evening service	1	2	3	4	5
g. Weekend service	1	2	3	4	5

h. Wheelchair accessible vehicles	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

11. **If you would like us to contact you about transportation resources please provide you contact information below.**

Thank you for participating in this important survey.

South East Texas Regional Planning Commission Coordinated Public Transportation Plan-Human Services Agency Survey

The federal transportation legislation known as MAP-21 requires local jurisdictions to develop a Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan as a condition for receiving funds from the Federal Transit Administration. MAP-21 also requires that projects proposed for funding is derived from a locally developed Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. The coordinated plan must be developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation, and health and human services providers.

Your organization has been identified as a “key stakeholder” in the updating process for the SETRPC 2017 Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. We would like to ask you a few questions regarding public transportation in your community and your assistance in responding to this survey will ultimately result in an updated Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. Your participation in the planning process is greatly appreciated.

1. Identification of individual responding to the survey:

- a. Name/Title _____
- b. Organization _____
- c. Business Address _____
- d. Phone _____
- e. Email _____
- f. Business Purpose of Agency/Organization _____
- g. Website _____

2. Is there a need for transportation services in rural Jefferson, Orange, and Hardin Counties?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Explain your answer _____

3. Is your community/organization involved in the direct operation of public transportation or in the provision of transportation services for human service agency clients?

a. Yes

b. No

If Yes, describe _____

4. *Only applies to human services agency representatives:* Does your organization currently work with any public transportation providers or other human service agencies to provide transportation for your consumers?

a. Yes

b. No

How does your agency provide or arrange for transportation for your consumers?

5. Are the organizations and agencies responsible for delivering human services and public transportation adequately coordinating their services to enhance mobility and deliver services efficiently? (*Select one of the following options that best matches your response.*)

a. No coordination

b. Minimal coordination

c. Moderate coordination

d. High coordination

6. What do you see as the greatest need for public transportation in your community/organization? (*Choose one*)

a. More hours of service

b. Larger service area

c. More fixed routes

d. Door-to-door service

e. Mixture of services

f. Other (*specify*) _____

7. Do you and members of the governing board perceive there are real, tangible benefits to be realized if local organizations work together to better coordinate the delivery of services?

a. Yes

b. No

If Yes, what are the top 3 potential benefits in your opinion?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

8. What are the five most common purposes for which your consumers (and/or the general public) need transportation?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

9. *Only applies to human services agency/older adult services representatives:* What percentage (approximate) of your consumers currently use the following transportation options?

- a. Beaumont Transit _____
- b. Port Arthur Transit _____
- c. South East Texas Transit _____
- d. Other (*specify*) _____

10. What are the greatest obstacle(s) to coordination and mobility in your community/organization?

11. If there are any other issues, concerns, or information relevant to this issue, provide your comments below.

Please return the completed survey to:

South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
ATTN: Bob Dickinson
2210 Eastex Freeway
Beaumont TX 77703
bdickinson@setrpc.org

Appendix F1



ACTUALIZACIÓN DEL PLAN REGIONAL DE COORDINACIÓN DEL TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO 2017



REUNIONES PÚBLICAS:

Julio 19, 20, 21, 25

South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) está reuniendo comentarios públicos para actualizar el Plan Regional de Coordinación del Transporte Público. El actualizado plan contiene estrategias para *aumentar la disponibilidad y eficiencia de los servicios de transporte público* para todos los barrios y comunidades en los condados de Jefferson, Orange y Hardin. SETRPC está solicitando su asistencia a una de las reuniones públicas antes mencionadas para dar su opinión para la actualización de este importante plan.

LA COMISIÓN REGIONAL DE PLANIFICACIÓN DE SOUTH EAST TEXAS LOS INVITA A TODOS!

City of Orange
Martes, Julio 19, 2016 – 2 pm
Biblioteca Pública
de la Ciudad de Orange
220 North 5th Street
Orange, TX

City of Beaumont
Miércoles, Julio 20, 2016 – 3 pm
Biblioteca
Theodore Johns
4255 Fannett Road
Beaumont, TX

City of Port Arthur
Jueves, Julio 21, 2016 – 3 pm
Biblioteca Pública de Port Arthur
4615 9th Avenue
Port Arthur, TX

City of Silsbee
Lunes, Julio 25, 2016 - 3 pm
Biblioteca Pública de la Ciudad de
Silsbee
295 North 4th Street
Silsbee, TX

Para mayor información contacte a:

Bob Dickinson

SETRPC

409 899-8444 x7520

bdickinson@setrpc.org

Appendix F2



REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN UPDATE 2017



PUBLIC MEETINGS:

July 19, 20, 21, 25

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) is gathering public comment to update the South East Texas Area Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. The updated plan will contain strategies for *increasing the availability and efficiency of public transportation services* for all neighborhoods and communities in Jefferson, Orange, and Hardin Counties. SETRPC is requesting your attendance at one of the listed public meetings to provide your input for updating this important plan.

SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION INVITES ALL!

City of Orange

Tuesday, July 19, 2016 – 2 pm

Public Library
220 North 5th Street
Orange, TX

City of Beaumont

Wednesday, July 20, 2016 – 3 pm

Theodore Johns Library
4255 Fannett Road
Beaumont, TX

City of Port Arthur

Thursday, July 21, 2016 – 3 pm

Port Arthur Public Library
4615 9th Avenue
Port Arthur, TX

City of Silsbee

Monday, July 25, 2016 – 3 pm

Public Library
295 North 4th Street
Silsbee, TX

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bob Dickinson

SETRPC

409.899.8444 x7520

bdickinson@setrpc.org

SOUTH EAST TEXAS 2016 ON-BOARD SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was conducted by the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) to determine the transportation characteristics and commuting habits of Orange County, Jefferson County, and Hardin County residents that utilize public transportation. The survey was conducted on-board shuttle buses for passengers to complete during the duration of their trip. There were 108 respondents of the survey: 65% residing in the Beaumont District, 30% in the Port Arthur District, and 5% in the Orange District.

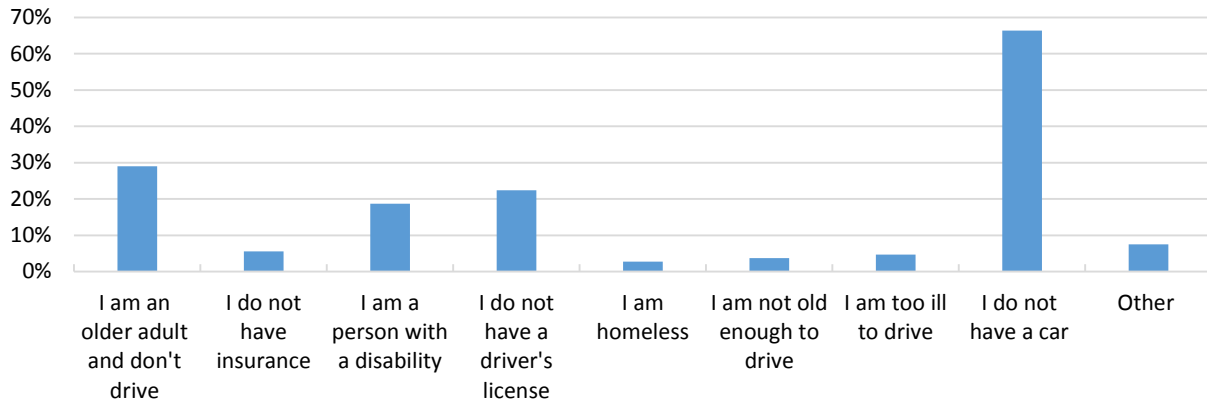
Below are the key takeaways from the On-Board Survey:

- 66% of the respondents utilize public transportation because they do not have access to a vehicle, followed by 29% of respondents who are an older adult and don't drive.
- About half of the respondents (54%) utilize public transportation on a daily basis.
- Other than utilizing Beaumont Municipal Transit, Port Arthur Transit, or South East Texas Transit, respondents primarily relied upon walking (50%) as a means of transportation and family/friends (45%).
- The top three choices for why respondents needed transportation included: Shopping (63%), Work/Seeking Work (59%), and Medical Visits/Appointments (57%).
- The top three places where respondents generally travel to are: Walmart, Parkdale Mall, and HEB (other choices included places of employment, convenience stores, homes, and doctor's offices).
- 30% of the respondents indicated that they or someone they know experiences problems using public transportation due to being disabled.
- When asked what could be changed to provide a more accessible and safe public transit, respondents indicated the following:
 - Drivers need more training.
 - Convenient service to reduce wait time at stop locations.
 - Amenities at bus stop locations including shelters, accessible sidewalks and ADA compliant ramps, and benches.
- Only 15% of respondents utilize some form of mobility aid when traveling (walker, wheelchair or scooter).
- 30% of respondents indicated that there were places that public transit does not access
 - Weekend activities (work, church)
 - Along Major Dr.
- Daytime, evening, and weekend service were rated as very important features to respondents.
- Service within and beyond the local community were seen as very important features of a transportation service (service out of the county was not an important feature).
- Service to regional medical facilities and wheelchair accessible vehicles were also rated as a very important feature of a transportation service.

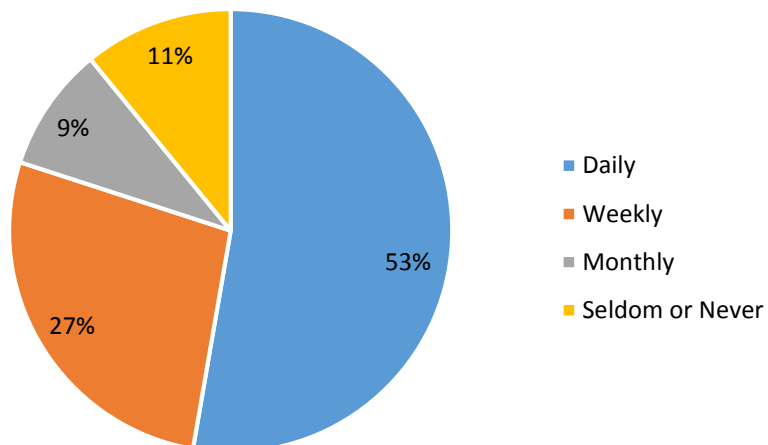
The data gathered through the on-board survey will help the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and SETRPC identify the needs and opportunities for enhanced public transportation services throughout the region. Further data analysis can be seen on the following pages.

Appendix G

Q1: I need public transportation because

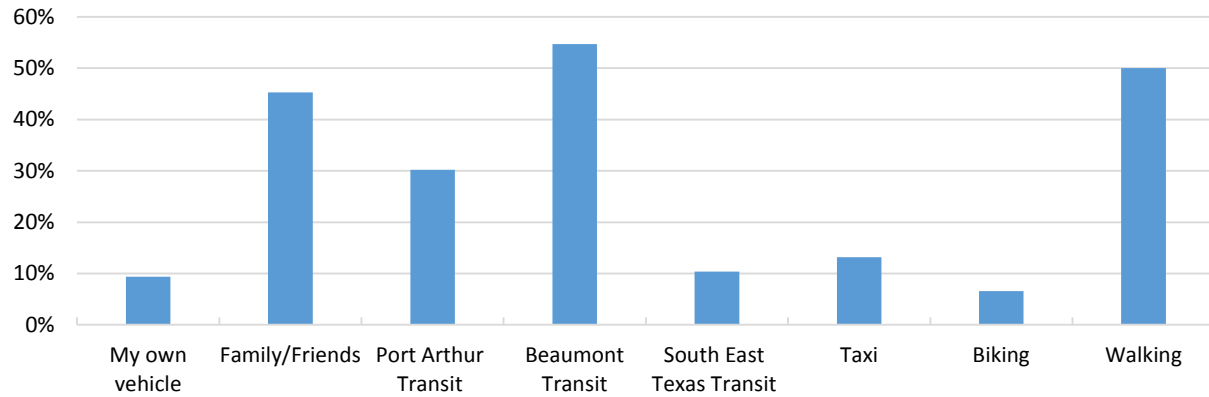


Q2: How often do you use public transportation:

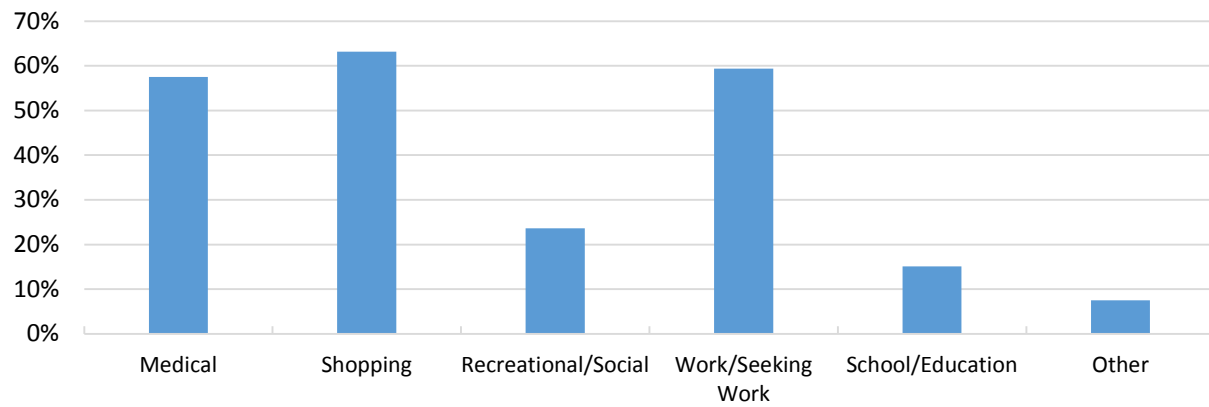


Appendix G

Q3: I use the following means of transportation:



Q4: I need transportation to:



Appendix G

Q5: Please provide the approximate location where you most often get on the bus to start a trip. (closest intersection or name of facility)

Count Response

4	Downtown
2	Irving St.
2	Library
2	Louis Manor
2	Steelton
2	Walmart
1	103 Park, Bridge City
1	11 th St. Calder
1	401 Park Drive, Bridge City
1	4265 Crow Rd.
1	7 th St. and Grannis
1	7 th and Calder
1	At home going to doctor
1	Beaumont Ave. and Gulfway
1	Barber Bus Station
1	Calder and 7th
1	College
1	Concord and Delaware
1	Concord to Maddox Street
1	Corner of Wilson and Steelton
1	Dannenbaum Station
1	Dowlen Rd.
1	Dowlen and 11 th St.
1	Dowlen and College
1	Eighth to W. Euclid
1	Elmira Street

Count Response

1	Fourth and Cedar St. 11th; Calder and 7th Calder; Liberty and 7th Laurel
1	Franklin House South-Ave. D
1	Gulfway Dr.
1	Gulfway Proctor
1	Gulfway and 9 th Ave.
1	Gulfway and El Paso Port Arthur
1	Harmony Science Academy-Beaumont
1	Highland/Lavaca
1	Highland and Florida
1	Highland and Virginia
1	Hwy 327 Silsbee
1	I use the bus all over town
1	Intersection of Ave. F and Foch St. Habanero Bar and Grill
1	Irvin's
1	Jefferson City or Walmart
1	Lake Arthur Dr.
1	Lamar College
1	Lamar Institute of Technology
1	Lamar University
1	Laurel Street in Beaumont
1	Library to DeQueen
1	Louis and Gulfway
1	Lucas St.
1	MLK, Silsbee
1	Magnolia St.

Appendix G

Count Response

1	Magnolia and Grant
1	Main Ave. and Lewis Dr.
1	Major and College
1	Mall
1	Manner4511
1	Mostly all over Beaumont
1	Near Home
1	Northridge Manor Apartments
1	Nowhere
1	On my stop
1	Park Central Apartments
1	Parkdale Mall
1	Pennsylvania Ave.
1	Phelan and Major
1	Port Arthur Transit Center
1	Proctor and Galveston
1	Richmond and Thomas Blvd.

Count Response

1	Sarah and Elmira
1	Savannah
1	Sherman
1	South Park/Washington
1	The Westside
1	Thomas and Richmond
1	Timber Place Apt. Laurel & 69
1	Twin City Hwy/39 th St/32 nd St.
1	Virginia Street in front of Virginia Manor
1	Virginia and Bob St. and Toccoa and 11 th St.
1	Walmart and Lamar University
1	Washington/Ave. C
1	Washington Blvd.
1	West Euclid
1	West Orange-Alamo St.
1	West Port Arthur Road

Appendix G

Q6: Provide the approximate location of the top three places you generally travel to on the bus.
(closest intersection or name of facility)

Count	Response	Count	Response	Count	Response
17	Walmart	2	Spindletop South Eight	1	Carley House Apt
10	Doctor			1	Cash Saver (Lavaca)
9	HEB	2	Store	1	College
9	Parkdale Mall	2	Texas Workforce	1	Concord and Lucas
7	Home	2	Walgreens	1	CVS/Pharmacy- Dowlen & Delaware
6	Mall	1	11 th St.		
6	Workforce	1	1635 Ave. A	1	Dairy Queen
4	Groceries	1	1785 Washington	1	DCI
4	School	1	32 nd St.	1	Dialysis
4	Work	1	39 th St.	1	Dollar General
3	Dowlen	1	7 th Street	1	Family Dollar
3	Downtown	1	7 th and Calder	1	French Road
3	Lamar	1	755 North 11 th	1	Gateway Shopping Center
3	Library	1	Around the city	1	G.E.T.S I-10N
3	McDonald's	1	All over Beaumont	1	Glass Rd
3	Twin City	1	Atrin Collier Park	1	Golden Triangle
3	Work	1	Autumn Chase Apt	1	Gulf Coast Medical 1302 W. Park, Orange TX
2	Calder	1	Back to the house and all across town		
2	Central Mall	1	Beaumont, TX	1	Gulfway and 5 th Ave.
2	Gulfway	1	Big Lots	1	Gulfway and DeQueen Blvd.
2	Lamar State College PA	1	Biotronics Kidney Center	1	Gulfway and Stadium
2	Lamar University	1	Brenham St.	1	Hobby Lobby
2	Major Drive	1	Bus Barn	1	Home on Virginia Street
2	Social Security	1	Calder		
2	South Park	1	Calder and 23 rd	1	Hospitals

Appendix G

Count Response

1	I don't know the name of the site
1	I have never used the bus
1	Intersection of Ave. F and Foch St.
1	Jefferson County Health
1	Job Seeking
1	Lancaster Cornwall Apt
1	Lavaca
1	Louis Manor
1	Lucas
1	Lucas and Concord
1	Lucas and Delaware
1	Magnolia
1	Memorial
1	My Job
1	Nederland
1	North End
1	Nowhere
1	O Care

Count Response

1	Park
1	Park and Pennsylvania
1	Park and Washington (Uncle's House)
1	Pear Orchard
1	Pearl
1	Planet Fitness
1	Plasma Center
1	Plymouth Village
1	Port Arthur City Hall
1	Proctor
1	Professional Building
1	Renal Center
1	Restaurants
1	S 11 th
1	Same
1	Seat Belt
1	Shelter
1	South Eleventh
1	Stagg

Count Response

1	St. E
1	Subway (S.11thSt.)
1	Target
1	TDCJ Parole Office (E. Commerce)
1	Texas Ave.
1	Thomas Blvd.
1	Tinseltown
1	Transportation
1	Tri Supply by DPS Office
1	VanC
1	Visit Mother
1	Waffle House (Tinseltown)
1	Washateria
1	West End
1	Wingstop
1	Work office off Calder and I-10
1	Work (Dallas St.)
1	Work Days Inn Hotel

Appendix G

Q7: Do you, or people you know, experience any problems using public transportation due to being disabled? If so, tell us more. What could be changed to make the public transit more accessible and safe for you or others?

Count Response

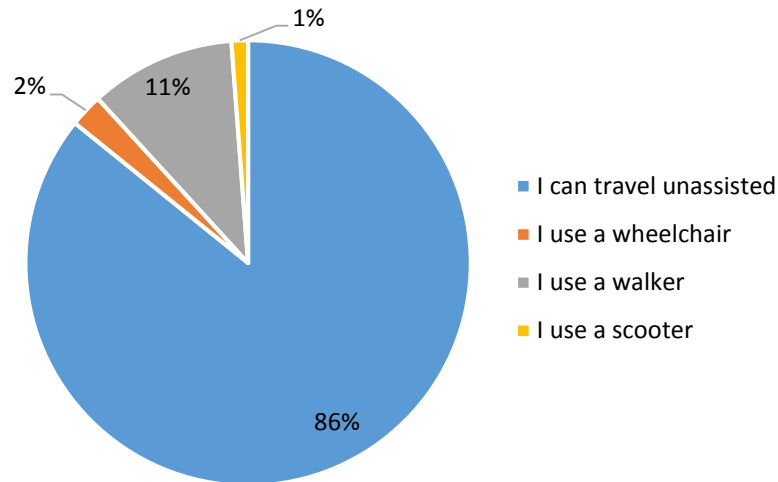
- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 | Yes |
| 1 | A lot of people do not have the resources, in other words, if your insurance is not an HMO, they don't qualify. |
| 1 | Allow passengers to exit 1st then allow to board. People using seating for handicapped. |
| 1 | Communicate more and show customers that you care. |
| 1 | Drivers actually trying to pay attention to civilians at stops, waiting for stops and building better and more covered stops and being on time and not rushing through. |
| 1 | Drivers need more training. |
| 1 | Have a place to sit while waiting for bus and insure that the grass is cut. |
| 1 | Just work on the time. They are very pleasant workers. |
| 1 | Lower fare |
| 1 | More covered areas to catch the bus |
| 1 | More service + 6 days a week |
| 1 | No I'm not really sure, but there's always room for improvement. Run on Saturdays and close at 8 or 9. |
| 1 | No and maybe add seatbelts to the bus for children under age. |

Count Response

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | No, buses and their driver does a wonderful access to get on and off |
| 1 | No, make stops closer for people traveling at night specifically in front of Lancaster Cornwall Apts. |
| 1 | On - time drivers!!! |
| 1 | Pick up at home |
| 1 | Sidewalks |
| 1 | The Laurel bus needs to pass every 30 minutes |
| 1 | They don't get up and let the people sit in the disabled seat. |
| 1 | They need ramps for wheelchair at every stop and they need cover at every stop. |
| 1 | Wait time |
| 1 | Wait Time |
| 1 | Yes, more bus stop with shaded seating area! |
| 1 | Yes, on special transit some of the drivers are rude |
| 1 | Yes, the bus stop is too far for me to walk to it |
| 1 | Yes, they need more stops and benches. |
| 1 | Yes. What Beaumont Municipal Transit severely needs to do is bus services 24 hours a day. |

Appendix G

Q8: Do you use a mobility aid when you travel?



Q9: Are there any places that you need to get to on public transportation but currently cannot?

Count Response

9	Yes
1	Carley House Apartments
1	Church on weekends
1	Maddox to Lamar. Lamar to Wal-Mart
1	New apartment located at the intersection of N. Major and Hwy 10 S
1	No. Needed on Major Dr. badly.
1	On Major Dr.
1	Pharmacy
1	Places on weekend (Church, etc.)
1	Stores and shops in Bridge City, TX

Count Response

1	The Goodyear Plant
1	The mall area for jobs on weekends
1	The Social Security
1	Yes, Chinn Ln
1	Yes, Nederland
1	Yes, Old Port Arthur Rd.
1	Yes, TDCJ Parole Office (E. Commerce - Beaumont)
1	Yes, a lot but I make the best of it
1	Yes, work. Bus don't run on weekends
1	Yes, on Fulton

Q10. Below are features of transportation service. Please rank how important each feature is to you by circling number 1 to 5, with 1 being not important and 5 being very important.

	1. Not Important	2	3	4	5. Very Important
Service within your local community	2 2.10%	2 2.10%	6 6.30%	13 13.50%	73 76.00%
Service beyond your local community	4 4.40%	6 6.60%	12 13.20%	15 16.50%	54 59.30%
Service out of the county	21 25.30%	10 12.00%	15 18.10%	9 10.80%	28 33.70%
Service to regional medical facilities	7 8.10%	4 4.70%	5 5.80%	12 14.00%	58 67.40%
Daytime service	2 2.10%	2 2.10%	4 4.30%	8 8.50%	78 83.00%
Evening service	2 2.20%	1 1.10%	9 9.70%	8 8.60%	73 78.50%
Weekend service	3 3.40%	2 2.20%	10 11.20%	13 14.60%	61 68.50%
Wheelchair accessible vehicles	12 14.10%	2 2.40%	8 9.40%	10 11.80%	53 62.40%

SETRPC HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY SURVEY RESULTS

Along with the on-board survey, there was also a survey conducted of key stakeholders throughout the region including public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers. There were seven human services agencies who responded to this survey. Survey questions and responses are below.

Q2: Is there a need for transportation services in rural Jefferson, Orange, and Hardin Counties?

All of the respondents indicated that there is a need for public transportation services to be provided in rural Jefferson, Orange and Hardin Counties. Explanations included the lack of transportation presents a barrier to access human services and many individuals in these communities depend on public transportation to link them to better employment opportunities, food and health services.

Q3: Is your community/organization involved in the direct operation of public transportation or in the provision of transportation services for human services agency clients?

Only one organization (Goodwill Industries of SETX) was involved in direct operation of public transportation service for their clients.

Q4: Does your organization currently work with any public transportation providers or other human services agencies to provide transportation for your consumers?

Three of the seven agency respondents work with public transportation providers or other human service agencies to provide transportation to consumers. These agencies provide services by assisting individuals with disabilities to set up transportation, and vouchers and bus passes for residents when warranted.

Q5: Are the organizations and agencies that are responsible for delivering human services and public transportation adequately coordinating their services to enhance mobility and deliver services efficiently?

Four of seven organizations who responded indicated that there was minimal to moderate coordination among organizations and agencies to deliver human and public transportation services.

Q6: What do you see as the greatest need for public transportation in your community/organization?

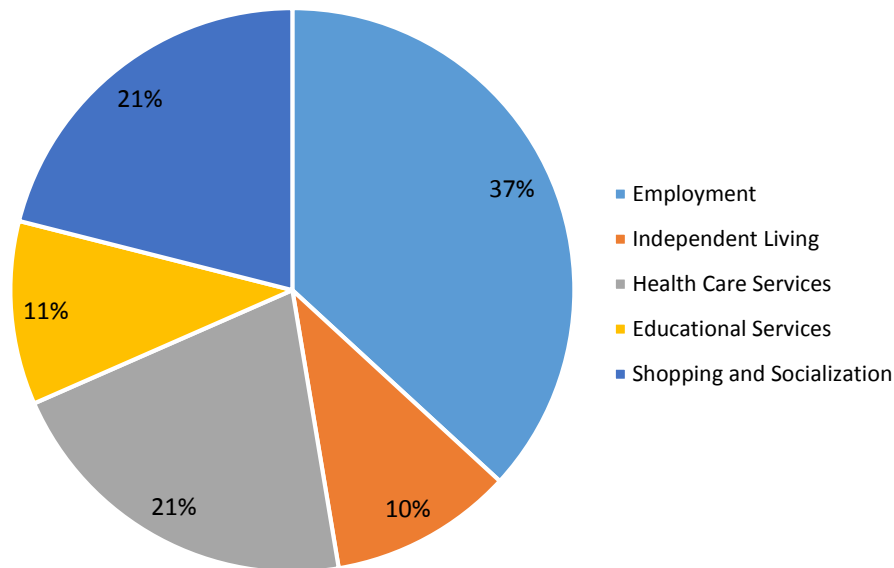
More hours of service, mixture of services and equipped vehicles were listed as the greatest need for public transportation in the community.

Q7: Do you and members of the governing board perceive there to be real, tangible benefits to be realized if local organizations work together to better coordinate the delivery of services?

Six of the seven agencies agreed that there are real, tangible benefits if local organizations work together to better coordinate services. The top potential benefits to a regionally coordinated transportation plan include:

- Increased ridership with fixed route services and improved efficiency and mobility throughout the area
- Increased ability for individuals with disabilities to live independently in their communities and provide greater mobility throughout the region
- Decrease costs of providing transportation services throughout the region
- Ease of accessing services with better promotion to public and consumers
- Increased hours of operation

Q8: What are the 5 most common purposes for which your consumers (and/or the general public) need transportation?



Q9: What percentage (approximate) of your consumers currently use the following transportation options?

Beaumont Municipal Transit and Port Arthur Transit are used by consumers between 5% - 40% of the time while South East Texas Transit is used by consumers between 1% and 2% of the time. Goodwill Industries of Southeast Texas indicated the highest percentage of usage (40%) among the Beaumont and Port Arthur transit systems.

Q10: What are the greatest obstacle(s) to coordination and mobility in your community/organization?

Limited accessibility, hours of operation, gaps in fixed route locations, and financial reasons were among the major obstacles listed to coordination and mobility in the community/organization.