

Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee Meeting

March 16, 2017

1:30 PM

MCM Elegante Hotel
Fountainview Room
2355 Interstate 10 South
Beaumont, TX 77705

Agenda

- **Introduction of New Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee Members**
- **Review, Discussion, and Approval of "DRAFT" 2017 South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan**
 - Bob Dickinson, Director, South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
 - Larry Badon, Project Manager, The Goodman Corp.
- **Other Business**
- **Next Meeting Date**
- **Adjourn**

Planning for the Future

Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan



Regional Public Transportation
Coordination Steering Committee
Stakeholder Meeting



TRANSPORTATION &
ENVIRONMENTAL
RESOURCES

SETRPC
SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

AGENDA

Review the South East Texas Regional Planning
Commission's 2017 South East Texas Regional Public
Transportation Coordination Plan
Questions/Discussion

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

- Background and Purpose of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan
- Methodology used to produce the plan



Chapter II

Transportation Resources in the Region

A LIST OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

- Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT)
- Port Arthur Transit (PAT)
- South East Texas Transit (SETT)

What types of Information were provided?

- Types of vehicles used
- Number of vehicles used
- Fare structures of each transportation system
- Areas where each systems operated



Chapter III

Assessment and Analysis of Unmet Transportation Needs

- Geographic data
- Demographic data on overall population, age, race, income, individuals with disabilities, and persons with limited English proficiencies
- List of all health and human services agencies and programs
- Assessment of transportation overlaps and gaps in services
- Description of the research methodology, observations and recommendations



Chapter IV

Planning for Comprehensive Services

This section describes how this five-year plan integrates services of various programs including:

- **Section 5307** – makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas with a population of over 50,000 or more to assist in capital and operating expenses
- **Section 5310** (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities)- provides funding to States for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities
- **Section 3006(b)** – open to 5310 recipients to assist in financing innovative projects for the transportation disadvantaged (i.e. deployment of coordination technology)



Chapter IV

Planning for Comprehensive Services

- **Section 5311** - Formula grants for rural areas - provides capital, planning, and operation assistance to States to support public transportation in rural areas with a population of less than 50,000
- **Section 5314** – makes Federal resources available to Workforce programs to improve public transportation services
- **Section 5339** – makes Federal resources available to States and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment
- Health and human services programs
- Workforce programs



Chapter V

Integrated Planning Processes

This section describes how this five-year plan will integrate with other metropolitan, rural and Statewide transportation plans:

- **Metropolitan Transportation Plan** – a 20 year plan that identifies transportation projects and programs that will meet the regional goals and accommodate the future needs of the three-county region
- **Transportation Improvement Program** – short-range transportation plan that includes highway and transit projects that are expected to be constructed within the next four years
- **Unified Planning Work Program** – a statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area for a given fiscal year
- **Transit Development Plan** – developed by transit providers to analyze services. It offers short and long-term direction for changes to services
- **Communication Plan** – developed by SETRPC to address the priority need for better communication systems

Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

- **Vision** - Provide full mobility and access to healthcare, human services, employment, education, commerce, social, and community services for all persons in the Jefferson, Hardin, and Orange County region
- **Mission Statement** - To foster the development of a seamless public transportation system that achieves efficiencies, eliminates duplication, increases coordination, and addresses service gaps



Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

- **Goals and Objectives:**

Goal 1: Connectivity – Establish connectivity among the Cities of Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange, Texas.

Strategies:

1. Continue Beaumont Municipal Transit, Port Arthur Transit, and South East Texas Transit operations.
2. Identify opportunities to maintain and expand the number of transportation vehicles in the region.
3. Develop a regional transit service that would operate between the City of Beaumont and the City of Port Arthur.
4. Explore the possibility of acquiring permanent operators by offering additional incentives.

Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Goal 2: Expansion of Service – Expand public transportation service throughout the region.

Strategies:

1. Explore the possibility of expanding the transit service operation hours by initiating a survey to transportation patrons.
2. Review existing transit routes within the Cities of Beaumont and Port Arthur to identify potential changes to accommodate priority populations groups.

Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Goal 3: Secure Funding – Advocate and support efforts to secure funding for transportation services throughout the region.

Strategies:

1. Explore the possibility of getting available funding to help expand transportation services throughout the region.
2. Diversify funding base by seeking new transportation funding opportunities to benefit priority population groups.

Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Goal 4: Customer Service – Increase awareness and understanding of transportation issues that priority population groups face throughout the region.

Strategies:

1. Collaborate with various transportation agencies to disseminate information to bus operators on the transportation needs of the priority population groups.
2. Conduct training classes for bus operators on how to interact with bus patrons.
3. Consider recruiting bus drivers based on customer service skills rather than on driving skills.

Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Goal 5: Public Awareness – Increase awareness and understanding of using public transportation to priority population groups throughout the region.

Strategies:

1. Collaborate with various members of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee to form focus groups to help advertise the bus service.
2. Leverage various media and opportunities.
3. Look for opportunities to expose the system to new passengers.
4. Print pertinent transportation information in English and in Spanish to assist the Spanish speaking population to understand the available options.

Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Goal 6: Improve the Infrastructure Around Bus Stops

Strategies:

1. Work with local governments to provide better sidewalks that provide access to public transit stops.
2. Explore opportunities that will secure funding to improve amenities at transit bus stops.
3. Work with community organizations to begin an “Adopt-A-Stop” program.

Chapter VI

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Goal 7: Websites and Social Media

Strategies:

1. Establish transportation coordination, both rural and urban, by developing an informational website that would be an easy to use resource connecting users with a variety of transportation services in the region.

CHAPTER VII

SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

- Organizational Infrastructure
 - South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
 - Metropolitan Planning Organization
 - Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee
- Leveraging and Sustaining Resources
 - Continue to use available funding to provide transportation services
 - Continue to investigate the best practices of receiving and using Federal funding to sustain the transportation systems

CHAPTER VII

SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

Work Plan

| Objectives | Expected Outcome | Specifics/Collaborators/ Timeframe | Assessment Method |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Collaboration | | | |
| Identify collaborators and stakeholders who will increase and strengthen the mobility management concept. | Accessibility and cooperation among groups for maximum results. | Coordinated Committee. Efforts continuous. | Participation by affiliations, coalitions and partnerships who have expressed interest in expanding transportation in the region. Increased membership in Steering Committee. Increased attendance at Coordinated Committee meetings. |

CHAPTER VII

SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN Work Plan

| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Identify and assess unmet transportation needs in the region through a variety of informational venues including surveys, public forums, local public meetings, etc. | Keep the Plan current by including new thoughts, needs, and direction. | Regularly update SETRPC Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan as a living document to include projects and direction from Steering Committee. Update the Plan at the March, 2017 Steering Committee meeting. Work with the Steering Committee on a continuous basis to address unmet needs. Efforts continuous. | Dissemination of Plan updates to SETRPC Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee . |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

CHAPTER VII

SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

Work Plan

| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Make appropriate contacts to set the foundation to increase provision of accessible transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities using 5310 funding. | Seniors and individuals with disabilities will enjoy greater mobility with increased public transportation and public transportation alternatives to and from jobs and employment support services. | Meet with organizations representing seniors and individuals with disabilities to assess the possibilities of improving transportation for this segment of the population. Beginning in 2017. | Number of appropriate contacts and potential projects. |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|

CHAPTER VII

SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

Work Plan

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Participate in various community boards and committees to outreach to specific interest and to minority communities.</p> | <p>Individuals from many backgrounds and experiences will enjoy greater mobility and increased public awareness of transportation services.</p> | <p>Texas Department of Health and Human Services Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas Beaumont, Orange, & Port Arthur Workforce Solutions Any additional agencies that may be appropriate, beginning 2017. Coordinate Title VI and LEP information for BMT and PAT.</p> <p>Efforts Continuous.</p> | <p>Number of boards and committees that members of stakeholders participate in, that addresses these specific communities.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

CHAPTER VII

SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

WORK PLAN

| Marketing | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Provide stakeholders with awareness education on coordinated transportation services and public transit. | Increased use of transportation services by the elderly, individuals with disabilities, veterans, the young, and low income persons. | Train at least one stakeholder to attend schools in the area to speak to students about the benefits of using public transportation. FY 2018. | Record of contacts made and outreach visits completed. Number of individuals successfully trained. |
| Disseminate practical information to potential riders so they can access public transportation. | People who have not used public transit will have the tools necessary to assist them in utilizing buses, private or other transportation recourses. | Create a website that will provide information on utilizing public transportation. 2017 monthly press releases to media (some media outlets may offer free public announcements). FY 2018. | Tracking of public information in local media. Number of website updates. Number of media releases that appear to the public. |

CHAPTER VII

SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

WORK PLAN

| Professional Development | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Continue education in mobility issues and connect regularly with area mobility managers. | Best practices will be utilized by mobility manager and disseminated to stakeholders. | Appropriate readings such as Federal Register. Various webinars, radio programs, newsletters. Connecting with regional mobility managers. Efforts Continuous. | Status reports and inclusion in Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan . |
| Report progress to RPTCSC at scheduled meetings to establish clear, measurable goals for mobility management. | Allow the stakeholders to provide feedback on transportation matters. | Periodic reports submitted to stakeholders. Begin in FY 2018. | Number of meetings held and reports submitted. |

CHAPTER VIII

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **Priority #1- Connectivity Among the Cities of Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange**
 - Metrics
 - Number of intercity trips
 - BMT, PAT, and SETT ridership
 - Passengers per revenue mile
 - Passengers per revenue hour
 - Cost per revenue mile
 - Cost per revenue hour
 - Cost per passenger



CHAPTER VIII

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **Priority #2 - Service Expansion**

- Metrics

- BMT, PAT, and SETT ridership
 - Passengers per revenue mile
 - Passengers per revenue hour
 - Cost per revenue mile
 - Cost per revenue hour
 - Number of additional transit operation hours beyond current baseline
 - Percentage increase in regional population residing within one-half mile of fixed route service



CHAPTER VIII

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **Priority #3- Secure Transportation Funding**

 - Metrics

 - Number of alternative funding sources pursued annually
 - Number of alternative funding sources awarded annually

- **Priority #4 – Improve Customer Service**

 - Metrics

 - Number of formal complaints received by BMT, PAT, and SETT related to customer service and/or driver/rider interaction
 - Number of formal commendations received by BMT, PAT, and SETT related to customer service
 - Percentage of operators receiving formal training in customer service, specifically geared toward elderly and disabled riders



CHAPTER VIII

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **Priority #5- Increase Public Awareness**

 - Metrics

 - BMT, PAT, and SETT ridership
 - Level of utilization of transportation services provided by social service and other non-transit agencies
 - Level of public engagement with agencies regarding transportation services
 - Number of agencies providing transportation information to the public
 - Number of regional travel training sessions held



CHAPTER VIII

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **Priority #6- Improve Amenities at Bus Stops**

 - Metrics

 - Number of bus stops with shelters
 - Number of bus stops with benches
 - Number of bus stops with fully functional sidewalks and wheelchair ramps within one-quarter mile
 - Number of bus stops maintained through a community “Adopt-A-Stop” program



CHAPTER VIII

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- **Priority #7 Website/Social Media Presence**

- Metrics

- Number of social media accounts devoted to transportation services in the SETRPC region
 - Number of engagements on regional transportation social media accounts
 - Number of visitors to regional transportation websites
 - Frequency of posted updates to websites and social media accounts



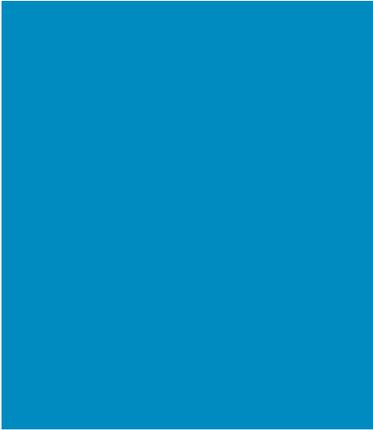
NEXT STEPS

- Adoption of the 2017 South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan on March 16, 2017



Planning for the Future

2017 South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan



TRANSPORTATION &
ENVIRONMENTAL
RESOURCES

SETRPC
SOUTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Introduction



At the request of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and with guidance and input from human services agencies, public transit operators, and other interested parties in each county, the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) facilitates the planning process and prepared a Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan for the southeast Texas region, which consists of Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange Counties.

1.1 Purpose

The 2017 coordination plan is intended to provide a framework to assist community leaders, human services agencies, and public transit operators with improving transportation services in each county and between counties. The objective of the 2017 coordination plan is to assess the existing transportation needs and services in the region; identify unmet needs or service gaps for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and those with lower incomes; and to identify and



prioritize strategies for meeting those needs, in a cost-effective manner.

The primary reason for this objective is to:

- ✓ **Promote Transportation Equity** – While the transportation disadvantaged typically describes the physically impaired, it also can include those with mental incapacities, the elderly, as well as those who, because of personal or family economic situations, are unable to afford and support reliable personal transportation. To enjoy the same level of independent living and full participation in society as the general population, it is critical that these population groups are provided transportation that is suited to meet their needs. These transportation services can include public transit fixed-route service, specialized demand response, paratransit, ridesharing, taxi service, and even volunteer drivers. The purposes of the trips can include access to employment, medical appointments, recreation, social visits, and many others.
- ✓ **Manage Resources Efficiently** – Managing resources efficiently can result in developing strategies that will help to address gaps in coverage as well as eliminate duplication of services. It can also, at times, allow for the sharing of resources, which could increase efficiency and lower operation costs for transportation providers.
- ✓ **Foster Cooperation** – This process involves the shared effort of human services agencies, transportation providers, workforce development agencies, the public, and others. This effort requires communication between these entities and can also provide a venue for the sharing of ideas and particular knowledge those different agencies, organizations, and individuals have to offer. Communication among stakeholders may also reveal previously unknown funding sources.
- ✓ **Create Economic Development Opportunities** – Enhancing transportation options can create access to employment, job training, shopping, and other services for those who otherwise may not have such opportunities. Attaining the goals of the coordinated plan may, therefore, serve to promote self-sufficiency and equal

opportunity for employment of individuals, thereby contributing to the economic health for the entire community

1.2 Background and National History of the Federal and State Requirements for Coordination Plan

On February 24, 2004, President George W. Bush signed executive order 13330 establishing the Interagency Transportation Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. The order called for the formation of a council consisting of 11 Federal departments charged with coordinating 62 Federal programs that provide funding for human services transportation. The council developed a report that recommended the most effective means of facilitating integration of services, simplifying access and mobility, and the most efficient use of available resources. The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) United We Ride (UWR) program, also begun in 2004, provided grants for coordinated planning at the State level and formulated a self-assessment tool to assist States and regions in developing coordinated plans.



The Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan was created in response to FTA regulations set forth by those programs. Transit projects using funds from the FTA's Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Section 5310) must be derived from a locally-developed plan for public transit and human services transportation coordination. The Section 5310 program funds assist with the purchase of specialized transit vehicles used to serve elderly and disabled persons, and provide capital and operating assistance for public transportation services that go beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The coordination planning process was first undertaken in 2006 in response to the Federal requirements in the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)*, which was adopted into law in August of



2005. SAFETEA-LU requires that projects selected for funding under three FTA programs—the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom programs—be “derived from a locally developed public transit-human services transportation plan,” and that the coordination planning process be undertaken every five years.

Passed in July of 2012, the Federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) renewed some coordinated planning requirements from SAFETEA-LU, but only mandated that projects selected for funding under the renamed Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individual with Disabilities program (Section 5310) be included in the coordinated planning process.

The FTA requires that public transit-human services transportation plans include, at a minimum, the following elements required:

- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes;
- An assessment of available transportation services that identifies current providers;
- Strategies to address the identified gaps between current services and delivery; and
- Priorities for implementing strategies.

1.3 Methodology

SETRPC, with guidance and input from human services agencies, public transit operators, and other interested parties in each county, has sponsored the planning process and prepared the maps, tables and inventories of the coordination plan



for the region. For the South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination

Plan, SETRPC staff invited a wide range of stakeholders from Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange Counties to meetings to identify the unmet transportation needs in the region. Stakeholders represented the following members of the counties:

- Individuals with disabilities
- Seniors (65 years and older)
- Public and private providers
- Workforce agencies
- Members of the general public
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

SETRPC and the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee (RPTCSC) provided guidance to the consultant team throughout the project to assess options and to identify specific coordination strategies for implementation. The methodology to update the plan involved a number of concepts, which included the following:

- Conducting a widespread public involvement process;
- Documenting inventories of all of the existing transportation providers;
- Conducting a needs assessment;
- Preparing a demographic profile;
- Identifying and prioritizing strategies to address unmet needs; and
- Develop Mission Statement, goals, and performance measures.

1.3.1 Public Involvement



The concept of public involvement for the purpose of this plan is the two-way communication between government and citizens. More specifically, it means SETRPC sharing information with the public for review and considering input from the public. Public involvement includes providing the public with information at key decision points and providing opportunities to influence SETRPC decisions.

In May of 2016 work began on an update to the coordinated plan. The majority of participants at this time were either individuals or representatives of agencies that formed the RPTCSC. During the update SETRPC reiterated the meaning of coordinated planning, re-emphasized its importance for the region, and gave old and new stakeholders an opportunity to provide input toward the updated plan.

In the months of July and August of 2016 three focus groups and four public meetings were held to let the citizens of the region assist in the development of the update of the

Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. Agency and Rider surveys were also conducted and were also used in the development of the plan.

The 2017 Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan builds on the communication, data collection, identification of common objectives, and development of a shared knowledge based from the last five years. It also introduces the results of strategic planning sessions that identified specific activities that serve to implement an updated set of goals and objectives. Finally, the 2017 Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan introduces performance measures that will contribute to the monitoring of human services transportation in the region and allow practitioners and planners to adjust strategies accordingly.



CHAPTER 2: TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES IN THE REGION



This section assembles in one place brief descriptions and background data about investment in transit within the SETRPC region. It will identify the transportation providers and agencies that participate in coordination of regional public transportation services, outline the various characteristics of each participating entity, and resources available that may aid in improving regional accessibility and mobility for all residents of Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties.

It is very important to the update of the plan that accurate data is captured as it relates to existing transportation resources available throughout the region. To help accomplish this task SETRPC distributed surveys to an array of entities, which included workforce centers, social service agencies, non-profit disability organizations, local and private transportation service agencies, and state agencies.

To ensure the process of updating the RPTCP considers a broad range of relevant input, SETRPC has vetted the development of the plan through its Stakeholder Committee, a group that includes representatives of:

- Human services providers
- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Individuals with disabilities
- Seniors (65 years and older)
- Public and private transit providers
- Workforce agencies
- Members of the general public

Throughout the public involvement process SETRPC held three focus group and four public involvement meetings with the majority of all demographics listed above being represented at each meeting. SETRPC also created and distributed a Riders' Survey and an Agency



Survey. Dissemination of the surveys comprised of emailing a link to the surveys on Survey Monkey and providing hardcopies of the survey to the patrons and agencies throughout the region.

SETRPC designed the riders' survey to assess citizens' transportation concerns around the region. For several days in August 2016, Texas Southern University (TSU) students volunteered their services and distributed surveys to patrons of Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT) and Port Arthur Transit (PAT) to help record rider concerns.

The most common criticism about the public transportation system is the lack of connectivity between Beaumont and Port Arthur. While public transportation throughout the region does come very close to covering a large area, according to some riders the disconnect between the two transportation systems makes it difficult, if not impossible, for transit dependent persons to seek employment or make medical appointments in neighboring communities. There are also serious concerns about the fact that the transit service does not operate in the late evening. Because of this some citizens do not use the service for fear of not being able to return home from their late evening jobs. In addition to the concern regarding the lack of connectivity between/around Beaumont



and Port Arthur, riders also expressed discontent related to the cleanliness of bus stops, buses not running on time, a lack of marketing/education of public transportation, and a shortage of operators for the demand response service.

An Agency Survey was also developed with slightly different questions. This particular survey was designed to evaluate the need for transportation coordination within the region. This survey did not attempt to determine the root causes of the public transportation problems, though our participants were generous with their comments. The final document will discuss some possible reasons for the problems brought up by the participants.

After data submission, the information was entered into a database using Microsoft Excel. The spreadsheet that was developed helped in the evaluation of the responses. In total, approximately 115 people participated in the surveys.

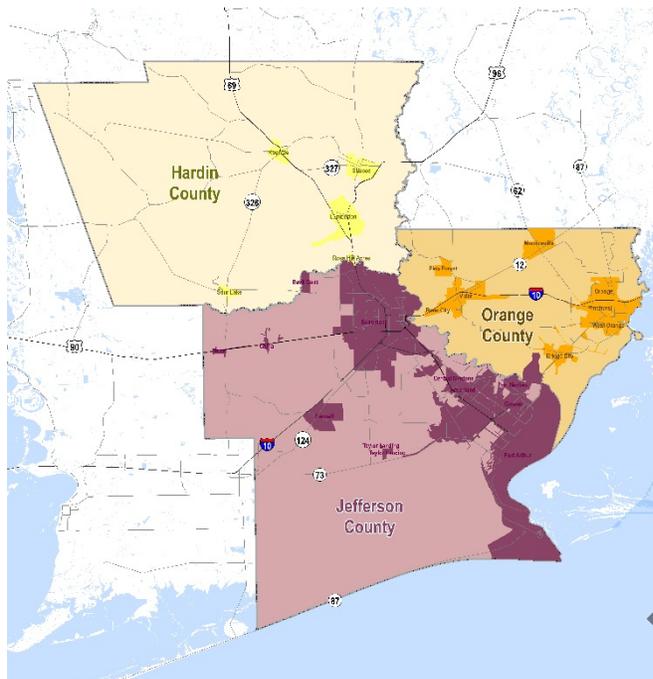
Objective

SETRPC examined the two comprehensive surveys and assessed the resources available, specifically looking at service areas, schedules and availability of funding and vehicles, to identify gaps, inefficiencies, and potential areas of coordination to better meet the transportation needs of citizens. Particular awareness has been paid to ensure inclusion of essential stakeholders to represent key demographics, which include: seniors, persons with a disability, persons living below poverty level, veterans, children, and others.

The outcomes found in this Transportation Resources Inventory Report was a very important factor in updating the 2017 RPTCP. The information gathered was reviewed and analyzed with results from the Rider Survey. This data supports SETRPC in making recommendations and setting goals for the region to assist in breaking down barriers, therefore, allowing for greater freedom of mobility and independence for all citizens of the southeast Texas region.



2.1 CURRENT CONDITIONS



This segment presents a summary of each county demographic breakdown, including population, and available services throughout the county. This document outlines the various characteristics of each participation entity, and resources available that may aid in improving regional accessibility and mobility for all residents of Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties. To develop this inventory, information was obtained from the Texas Department of

Transportation, Beaumont Municipal Transit, Port Arthur Transit, and South East Texas Transit. Inventory of transportation providers and responses were summarized from a regional coordination survey.

The types of transportation available include:

Fixed Route Transit – transit service in which vehicles run along an established path at preset times. This type of service is found usually in urban areas.

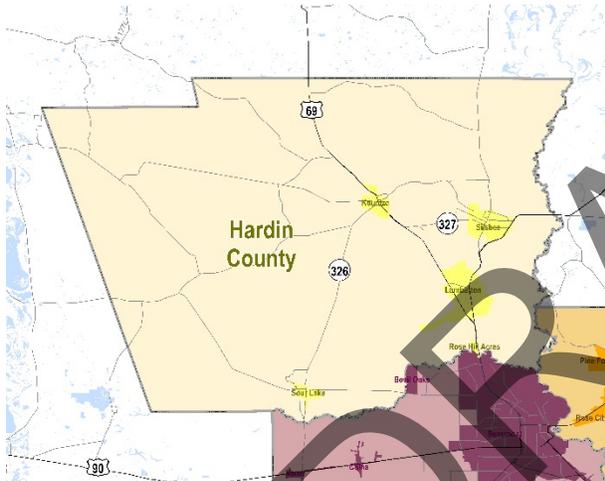
Demand Response Transit – A user oriented form of public transport characterized by flexible routing and scheduling of small/medium vehicles operating in shared-ride mode between pick-up and drop-off locations according to passenger's needs. This type of service usually provides for low passenger demand areas, such as rural areas, where a regular bus service would not be viable.

The participants of regional public transportation coordination can be summarized into two groups: transportation providers and human service provider/agencies. Each group provides a unique perspective to developing strategies, and on-going implementation of regional coordination. Transportation providers operate transportation services for a

variety of agencies and the public. Human service agencies either provide funding for transportation or provide information of how to access services. The data sources are from the United States Census Bureau and the county websites, if available.

The SETRPC region consists of three county areas extending more than 2,388 square miles. Differences in demographics, travel patterns, transportation needs, and economic strengths exist in each county. There are no fixed transit services currently connecting the three counties.

2.1.1 HARDIN COUNTY



Hardin County is bordered by six counties: Tyler on the north, Jasper on the east, Orange on the southeast, Jefferson on the south, Liberty on the southwest, and Polk on the northwest.

Hardin County is the second largest county in the three-county region in square miles (897 sq. miles), and the third largest in population 54,635. Population in

Hardin County has increased by 2 percent since 2010. The population density is 62 persons per square mile.

Table 1

| Hardin County Population | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Year | Population |
| 2010 | 54,635 |
| 2014 | 55,621 |

The county seat of Hardin County is Kountze and had a population of 2,097 in 2014.

Available resources in Hardin County include:

Fixed Route Transportation Provider(s)

None

Independent School Districts Providing Transportation

Kountze Independent School District

Hardin-Jefferson Independent School District

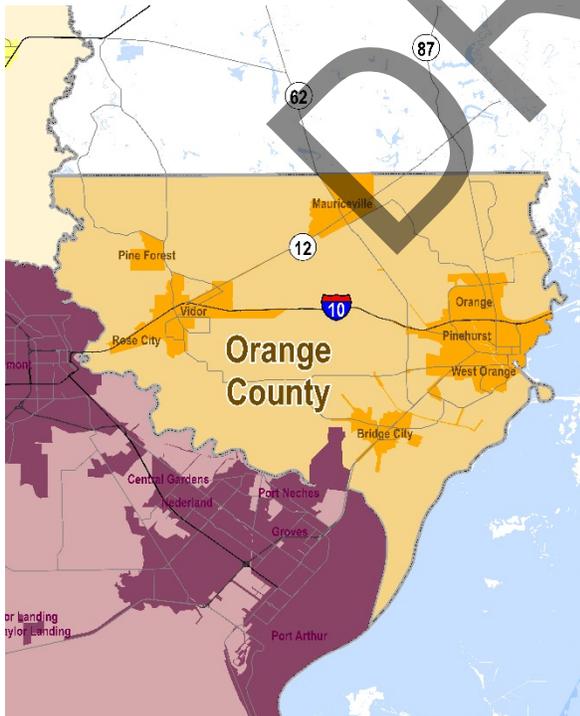
Lumberton Independent School District

Silsbee Independent School District

Demand Response Transportation Provider(s)

South East Texas Transit – contracted by Nutrition and Services for Seniors

2.1.2 ORANGE COUNTY



Orange County is bordered by four counties and two parishes (Louisiana version of counties): Jasper on the north, Newton on the north, Hardin on the northwest, Jefferson on the west, Calcasieu Parish on the east, and Cameron Parish on the southeast.

Orange County is the third largest county in the three-county region in terms of square miles (380 sq. miles) and the second largest in terms of population (Table 2). Population in Orange County has increased by 2 percent since 2010. The population density is 219 persons per square mile.

Table 2

| Orange County Population | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Year | Population |
| 2010 | 81,837 |
| 2014 | 83,433 |

The county seat of Orange County is Orange, Texas (population 18,595 in 2014).

Available resources in Orange County include:

Fixed Route Transportation Provider(s)

None

Independent School Districts Providing Transportation

Orangefield Independent School District

Vidor Independent School District

Bridge City Independent School District

West Orange-Cove Consolidated Independent School District

Little Cypress-Mauriceville Independent School District

Demand Response Transportation Provider(s)

South East Texas Transit-contracted by Orange County Transportation and

Orange Community Action Association

2.1.3 JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County is bordered by five (5) counties: Orange on the northeast, Liberty on the northwest, Hardin on the north, Chambers on the southwest and Cameron Parish (Louisiana) on the east.

Jefferson County is the largest county in the three-county region, in terms of square miles (1,111sq. miles) and population (Table 3). Population in Jefferson County has decreased by 0.055 percent since 2010. The population density is 227 persons per square mile.

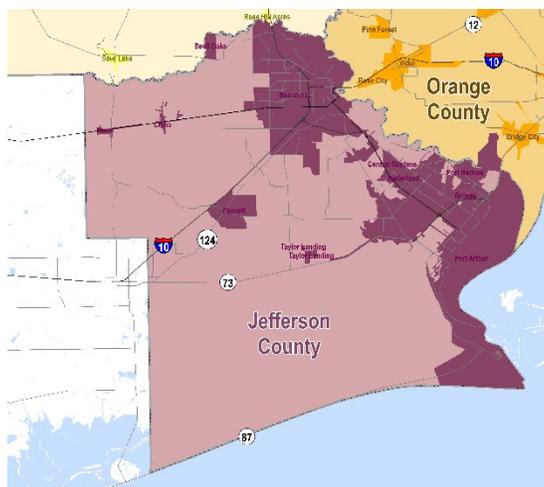


Table 3

| Jefferson County Population | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Year | Population |
| 2010 | 252,373 |
| 2014 | 252,235 |

The county seat of Jefferson County is Beaumont, Texas (population 117,585 in 2014) and is, by far the largest community in the county.

Available resources in Jefferson County include:

Fixed Route Transportation Provider(s)

Beaumont Municipal Transit

Port Arthur Transit

Independent School Districts Providing Transportation

Nederland Independent School District

Beaumont Independent School District

Hamshire-Fannett Independent School District

Port Arthur Independent School District

Port Neches-Groves Independent School District

Sabine Pass Independent School District

Demand Response Transportation Provider(s)

South East Texas Transit-contracted by

Nutrition and Services for Seniors



2.2 TRANSIT PROVIDER SUMMARIES

This segment will provide a summary of the region’s transportation providers that are open to the general public on a regular basis. The information gathered included items such as service area, days and times of services, and fares charged.

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission envelops three counties (Jefferson, Hardin, and Orange). Within the three counties there are the following public transit providers:

1. Two fixed route public transit providers:

Beaumont Municipal Transit

Port Arthur Transit

2. One rural demand response public service provider:

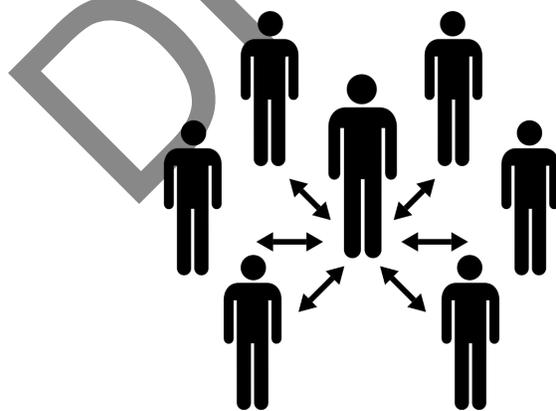
South East Texas Transit

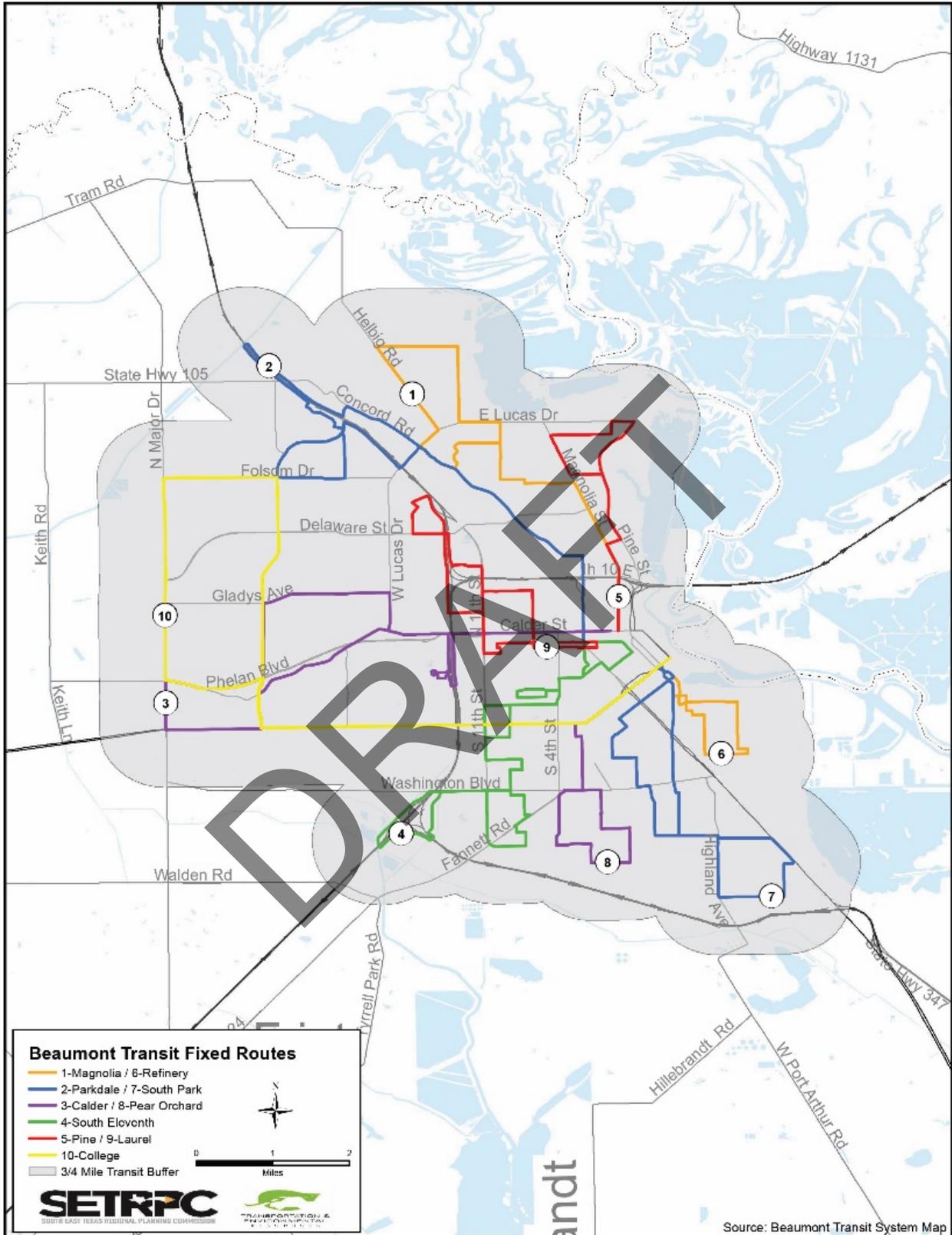
The City of Beaumont is the largest city and is also one of the main economic centers of the region, with Port Arthur also being an important economic player in the area. Both cities are major destinations of most inter-county rural transit trips. Beaumont Municipal Transit and Port Arthur Transit provide the largest amount of public transit service in the region. South East Texas Transit provides rural on demand services to all three counties.

2.2.1 BEAUMONT MUNICIPAL TRANSIT (BMT)



Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT) is a publicly funded transit agency. BMT owns 17 fixed-route buses and eight paratransit vans. All of BMT's 17 fixed route buses are equipped with wheelchair ramps. BMT operates nine routes during the week, seven fixed-routes on Saturday, and a paratransit service called Special Transit Services, in the urban area of Beaumont, six days a week from 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. BMT provides paratransit services to those residents who are disabled, and unable to access the fixed route service. Residents must apply to qualify for its paratransit service. According to the 2014 National Transit Database, BMT provided 651,637 passenger trips in 2009 and 588,439 passenger trips in 2014. BMT projects its ridership for 2016 to be 408,576 for fixed routes and 23,155 for paratransit. Its annual cost to provide transit is approximately \$5,292,647.





BEAUMONT TRANSIT FIXED ROUTE SERVICE AREA MAP

BMT's fare structure is listed in **Table 4**.

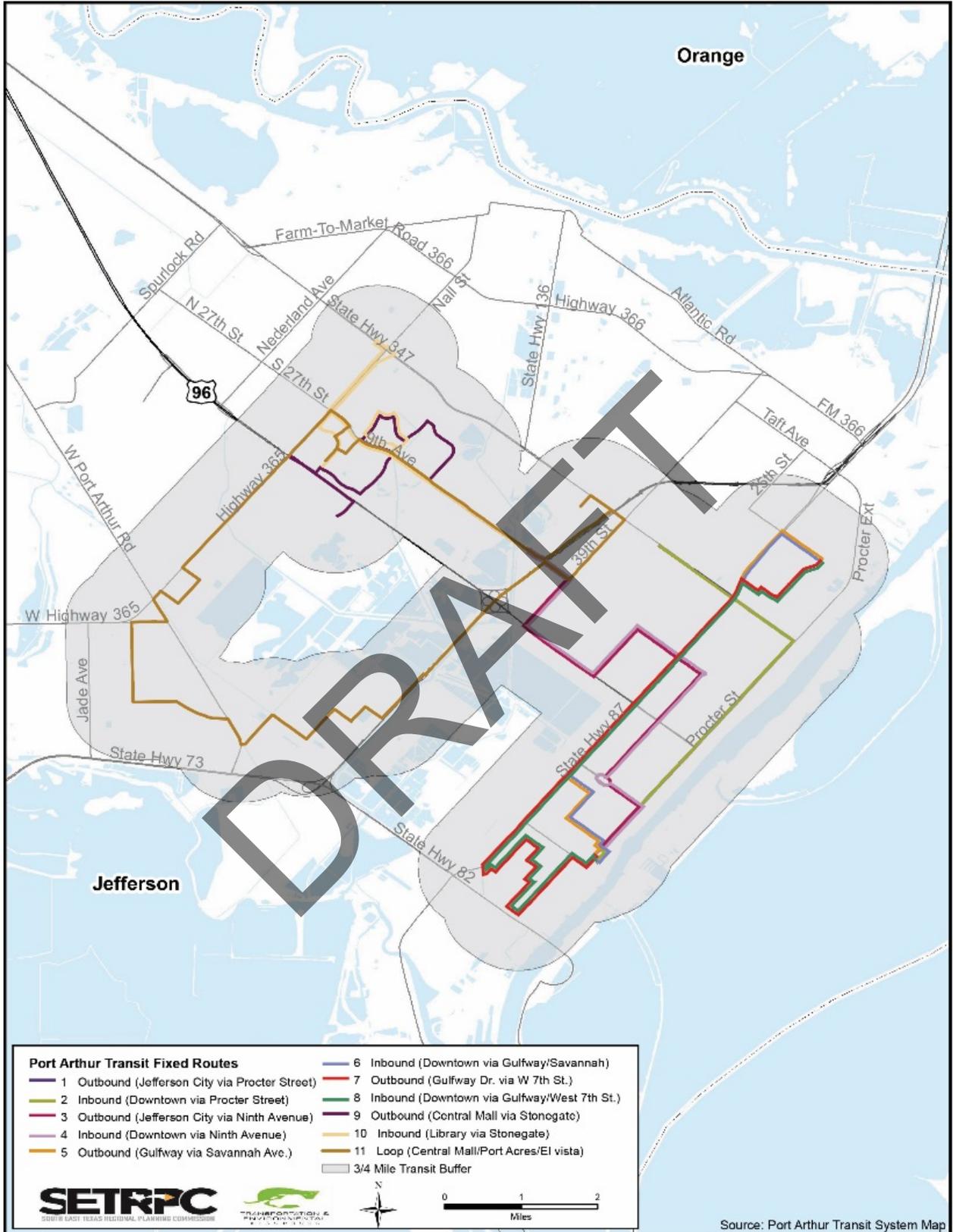
Table 4

| Beaumont Municipal Transit – Fare Structure | |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|
| FIXED ROUTE | AMOUNT |
| Adults Cash | \$1.50 |
| Reduced Cash Fare (Elderly, Disabled, Youth) | \$0.75 |
| Adult Monthly Pass | \$40.00 |
| Reduced Monthly Pass (Elderly, Disabled, Youth) | \$30.00 |
| Weekly Adult Pass | \$12.00 |
| Weekly Reduced Pass (Elderly, Disabled, Youth) | \$9.00 |
| Daily Pass (Adult) | \$3.00 |
| Reduced Daily Pass (Elderly, Disabled, Youth) | \$2.25 |
| Transfers | \$0.25 |
| Adult Tickets (Transfer Included) | \$1.25 |
| Reduced Tickets (Transfer included) | \$1.00 |
| PARATRANSIT | AMOUNT |
| Cash One-way Ride | \$2.50 |
| Monthly Pass | \$80.00 |
| STS Tickets (book of 10) | \$25.00 |

2.2.2 PORT ARTHUR TRANSIT (PAT)



Port Arthur Transit (PAT) is a publicly funded transit agency that currently leases 10 fixed-route buses and 15 paratransit vans. PAT operates 11 fixed routes and a paratransit service in the urban area of Port Arthur, Texas, five days a week from 6:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. (except on designated City holidays). All vehicles are equipped with lifts for wheelchair ramps. PAT provides paratransit services to those residents who are disabled, and unable to access the fixed route service. In 2009 PAT provided 148,689 passenger trips and 124,716 passenger trips in 2014 - 2015. Its annual cost to provide transit is approximately \$2,178,527.



PORT ARTHUR TRANSIT FIXED ROUTE MAP

PAT's fare structure is provided in **Table 5**.

Table 5

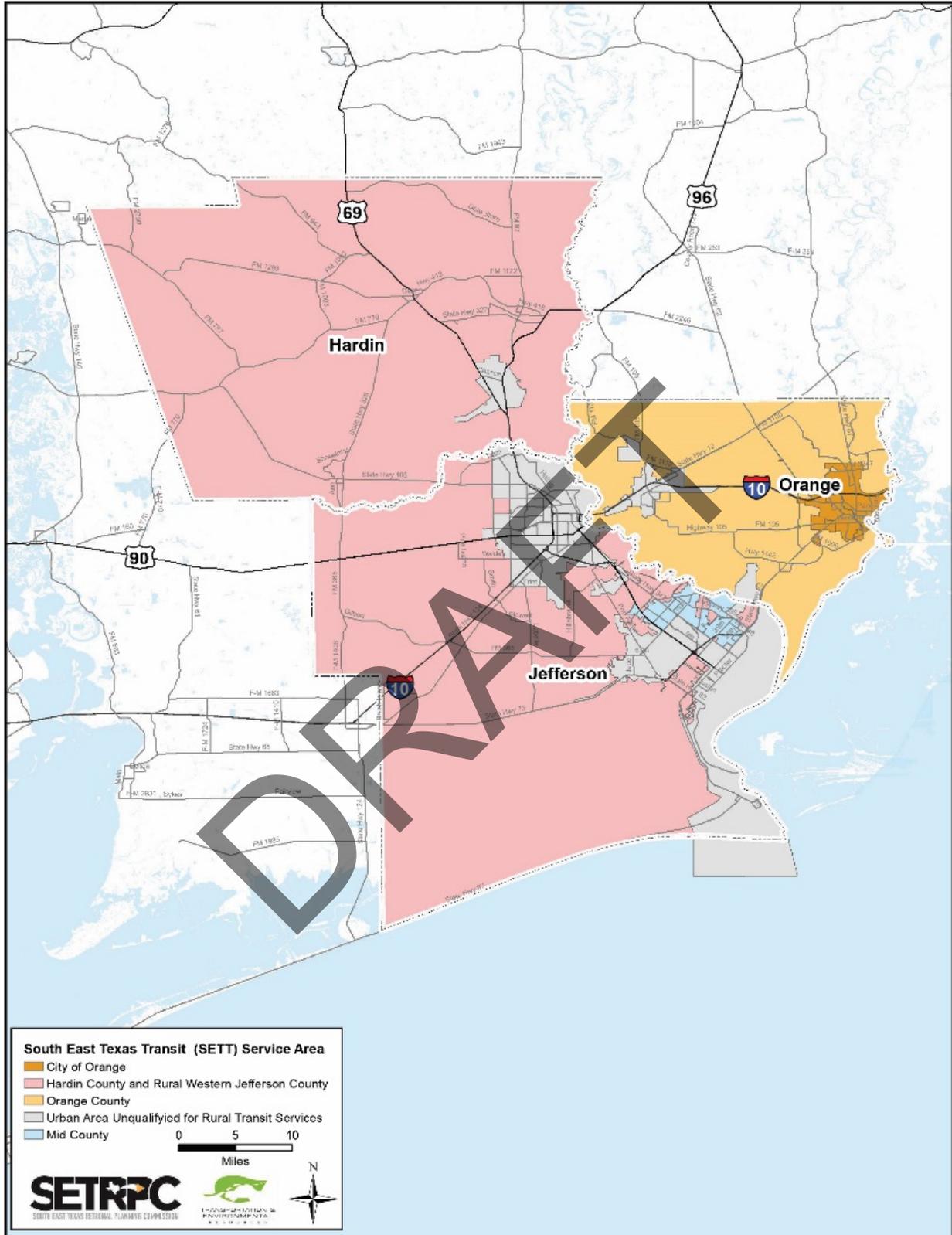
| Port Arthur Transit – Fare Structure | |
|----------------------------------------------|---------|
| FIXED ROUTE | AMOUNT |
| Adults Cash | \$1.50 |
| Reduced Cash Fare (Elderly, Disabled, Youth) | \$0.75 |
| Day Pass | \$1.75 |
| Weekly Pass | \$8.25 |
| Monthly Pass | \$22.00 |
| Children (ages 5-12) | \$0.50 |
| Route Transfers | Free |
| Children Under 5 years of age | Free |
| PARATRANSIT | AMOUNT |
| Cash One-way Ride | \$2.00 |
| Book of 20 Tickets | \$50.00 |
| Monthly Pass | \$80.00 |
| Out of Service Area | \$2.25 |

2.2.3 SOUTH EAST TEXAS TRANSIT (SETT)



South East Texas Transit (SETT) is administered by the SETRPC and currently contracts with the local transportation providers – Orange County Transportation

(OCT); Orange Community Action Association (OCAA); and Nutrition and Services for Seniors (NSS) to perform services in Hardin, Jefferson, and Orange Counties. SETT is a rural transit curb-to-curb demand response system designed to serve persons residing in non-urbanized areas for healthcare, shopping, social services, employment, education, and recreational transportation needs. There are three defined service areas:



SOUTH EAST TEXAS TRANSIT SERVICE AREA MAP

RURAL HARDIN AND JEFFERSON COUNTIES

SETT offers curb-to-curb service providing public transportation to residents of Hardin County and rural Western Jefferson County.

Operated by:

Nutrition and Services for Seniors

Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$1.00 for traveling within the county

\$1.50 for traveling outside the county

MID-JEFFERSON COUNTY

SETT offers curb-to-curb service for individuals over 60 years of age and individuals with disabilities residing within the Mid-County service region of Groves, Port Neches, and Nederland.

Operated by:

Nutrition and Services for Seniors

Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$1.00 for traveling within Mid-County (Groves, Port Neches, Nederland)

\$2.50 for traveling to Beaumont or Port Arthur

ORANGE COUNTY

SETT offers curb-to-curb service providing public transportation to residents of Orange County.

Operated by:

Orange County Transportation

Monday thru Friday 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$1.00 for traveling within the county

\$2.50 for traveling to Beaumont or Port Arthur

Orange Community Action Association

Monday thru Friday 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

\$1.00 for traveling within the county

SETT coordinates trips between the three providers to create seamless travel for residents. It performed 59,544 trips in 2010. It had an annual budget of \$1,313,740 in FY 2010. Services are provided to all residents of Orange County, rural Hardin County, rural western Jefferson County, and the mid-county area of Jefferson County (defined as Groves, Port Neches, and Nederland). Residents are requested to call 24 hours in advance to schedule a trip, and service is based on vehicle availability and capacity. SETT’s fare structure is provided in **Table 6** below.



Table 6

| South East Texas Transit – Fare Structure | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Rural Hardin and Jefferson Counties | AMOUNT |
| Travel within county | \$1.00 |
| Travel from County to County | \$1.50 |
| | |
| Mid-Jefferson County | AMOUNT |
| Travel within Mid-County (Groves, Port Neches, Nederland) | \$1.00 |
| Travel to Beaumont or Port Arthur | \$2.50 |
| | |
| Orange County | AMOUNT |
| Travel within county | \$1.00 |
| Travel to Beaumont or Port Arthur | \$2.50 |

Source: South East Texas Transit Informational brochures

2.3 Transportation Providers

Below is a summary of the Transportation Providers:

Table 7

| Provider | Type of Service | Annual Ridership | Fleet Size | Fare Structure | Geographic Area |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Beaumont Municipal Transit | Fixed Service Paratransit | 588,439 (2014) | 17 fixed route 8 paratransit | See table 4 | Beaumont urban area |
| Port Arthur Transit | Fixed Service Paratransit | 124,716 (2014 – 2015) | 10 fixed route 15 paratransit | See Table 5 | Port Arthur urban area |
| South East Texas Transit – Orange County Transportation, Orange Community Action Association, and Nutrition and Services for Seniors | Demand Response | 60,417 (2016) | 19 vehicles | See table 6 | Rural Hardin and Rural Western Jefferson County, Mid-Jefferson County, Orange County |

Social Service agencies that provide transportation information, funding, or transportation services to their clients are listed in **Table 8**.



Table 8

| Social Service Agencies | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Beaumont – Workforce Solutions 304 Pearl Street Beaumont, Texas 77701 | Provides oversight for employment and training programs in the north Jefferson County area. Provides transportation information and funding. |
| Orange – Workforce Solutions 2415 N 16 th Street Orange, Texas 77630 | Provides oversight for employment and training programs in the Orange County area. Provides transportation information and funding. |
| Port Arthur – Workforce Solutions 3901 North Twin City Highway Port Arthur, Texas 77624 | Provides oversight for employment and training programs in Hardin, Orange, and Jefferson Counties. Provides transportation information and funding. |
| Hardin County Solutions Center Silsbee Public Library 295 N 4 th Street Silsbee, Texas 77656 | Provides oversight for employment and training programs in Hardin County. |
| RISE – Resource Information Support and Empowerment 755 South 11 th 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 8 th 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. |

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Texas Department of Health and Human Services 3105 Executive Boulevard Beaumont, Texas 77705</p> | <p>Oversees the operations of the health and human services system, provides administrative 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.</p> |
| <p>Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas 2780 Eastex Freeway Beaumont, Texas 77703</p> | <p>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.</p> |
| <p>ARC of Greater Beaumont 700 North Street Beaumont, Texas 77701</p> | <p>Works to ensure the Americans with IDD have services and supports they need to grow, develop and live in communities in the Beaumont area. Provides transportation information.</p> |
| <p>Goodwill Industries of Southeast Texas 1180 South Eleventh Street Beaumont, Texas 77701</p> | <p>Provides critical human services such as job training, placement, retention and other community-based services to individuals with disabilities throughout southeast Texas.</p> |
| <p>Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS) 5550 Eastex Freeway, STE. D Beaumont, TX 77708</p> | <p>Provides a variety of services that assist eligible people with disabilities in preparing for, obtaining, retaining or advancing in competitive integrated employment.</p> |

Chapter 3: 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.

3.1 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.

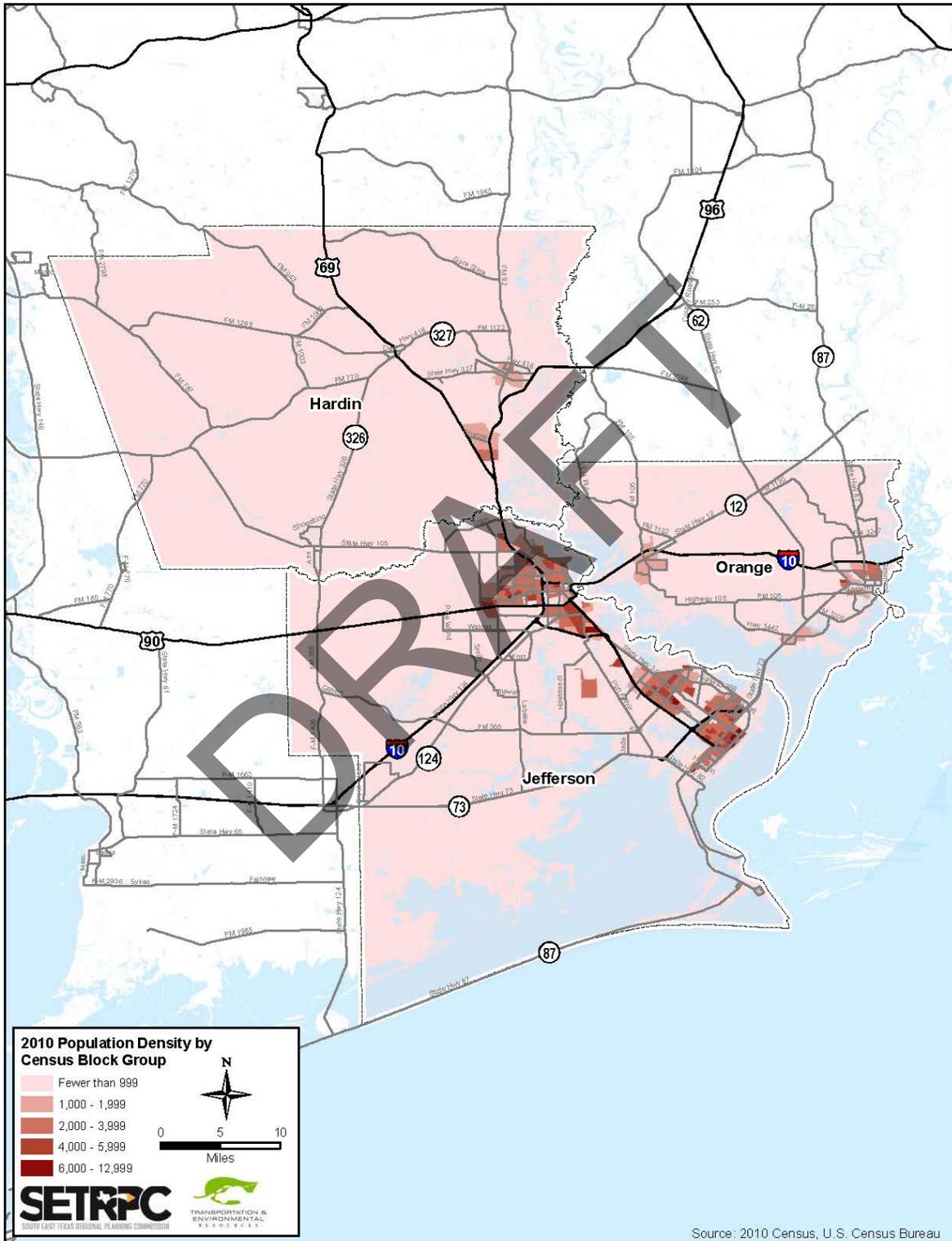
Maps 11A-C through 14 provides an overview of the major attractions in the city, and maps of the fixed transit routes of BMT, PAT, and the service area of SETT.

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.

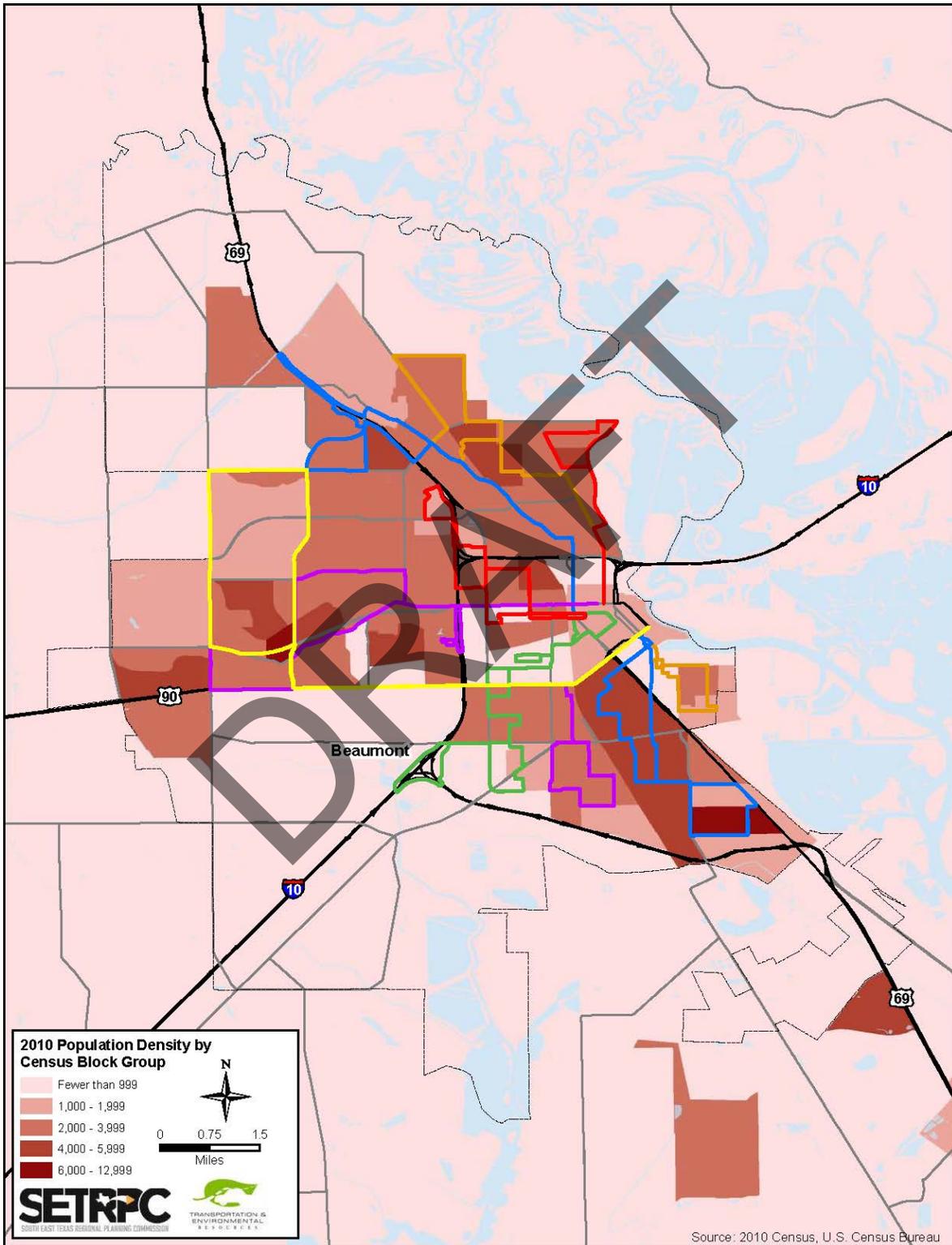
Maps 16A-C is an illustration of a Transit Need Index map, which is developed to identify areas in high need of public transit services, and is developed from economic and sociodemographic information (i.e. zero vehicle households, population density, job density, young, old, etc.). This type of information 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.



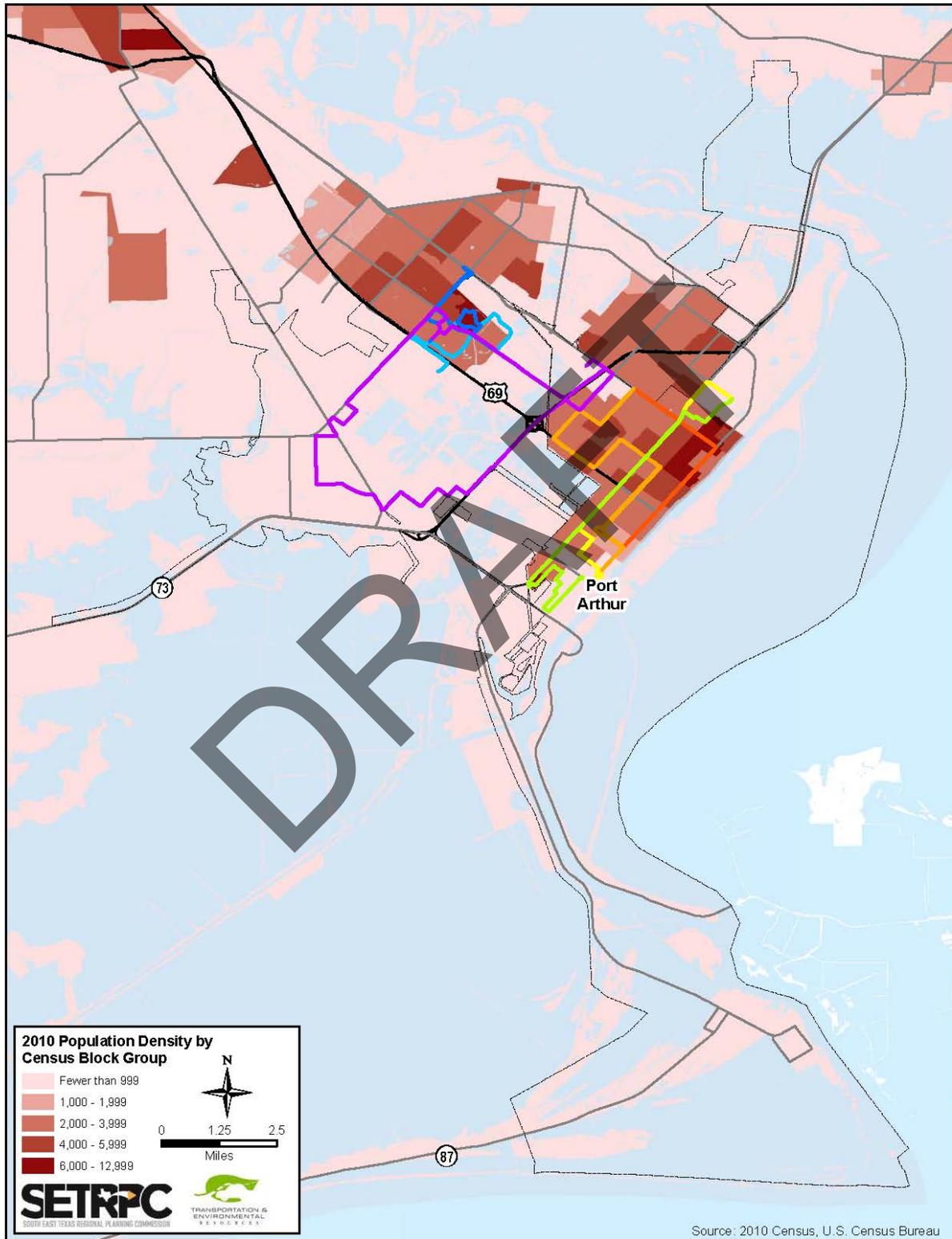
MAP 1A 2010 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



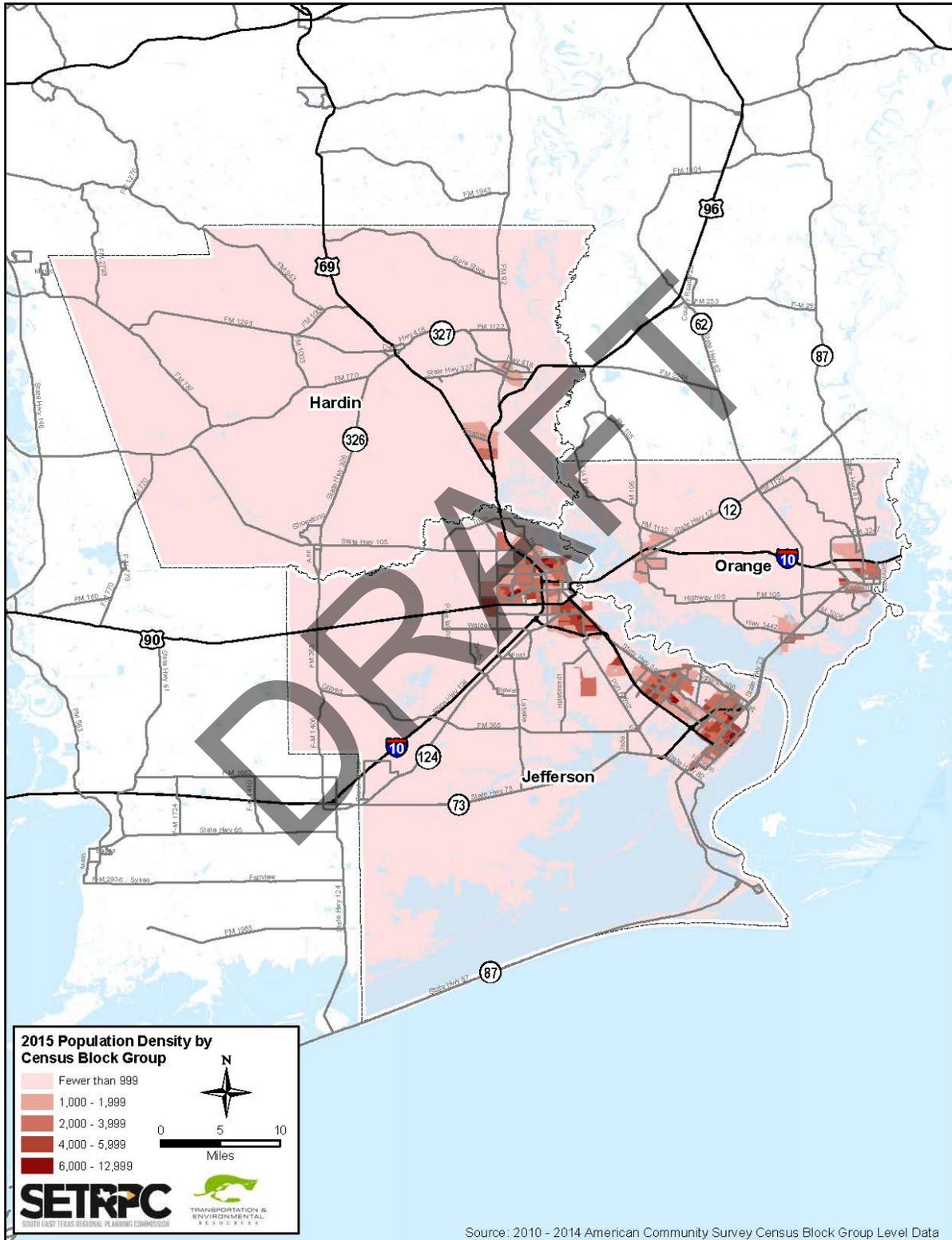
MAP 1B 2010 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



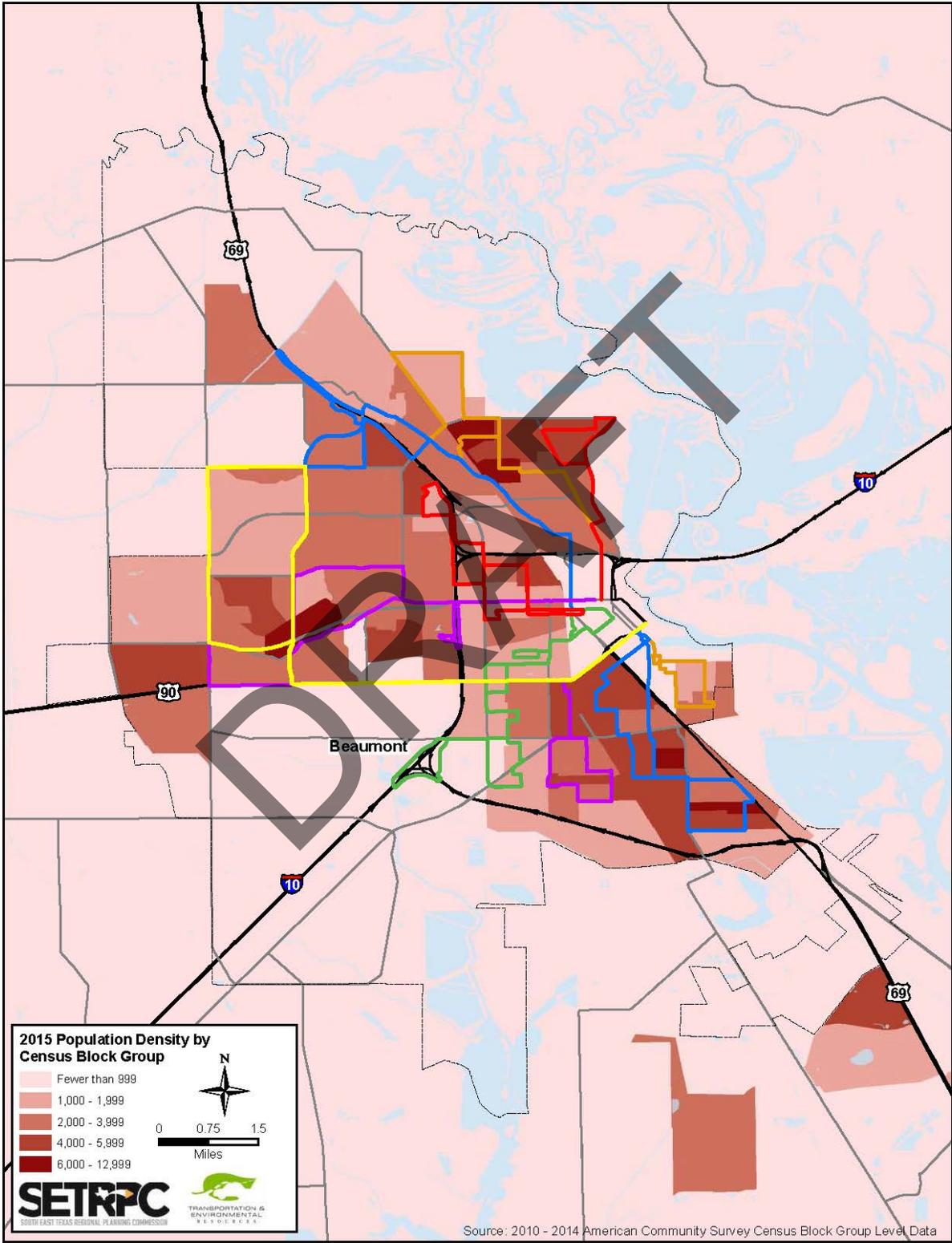
MAP 1C 2010 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



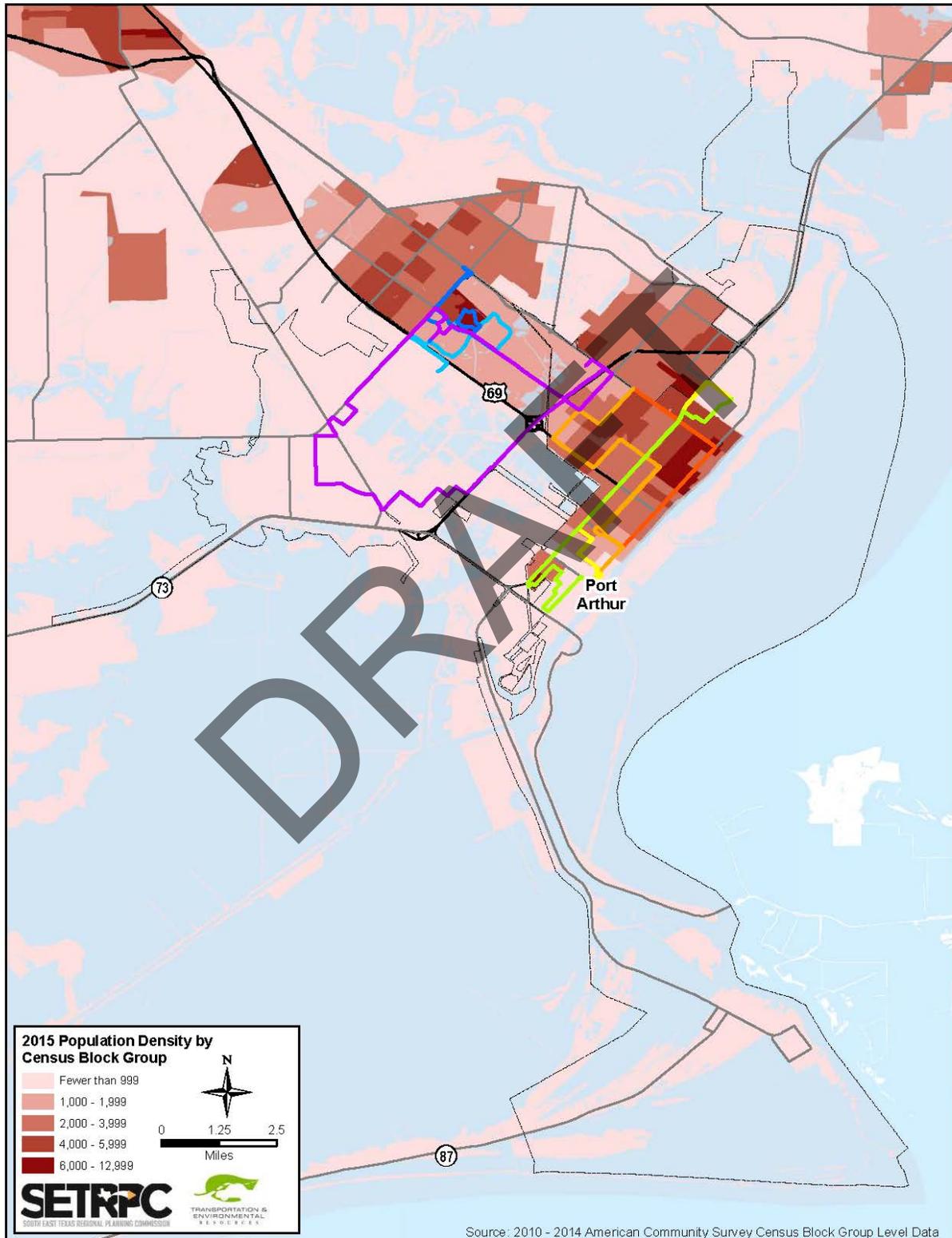
MAP 2A 2015 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



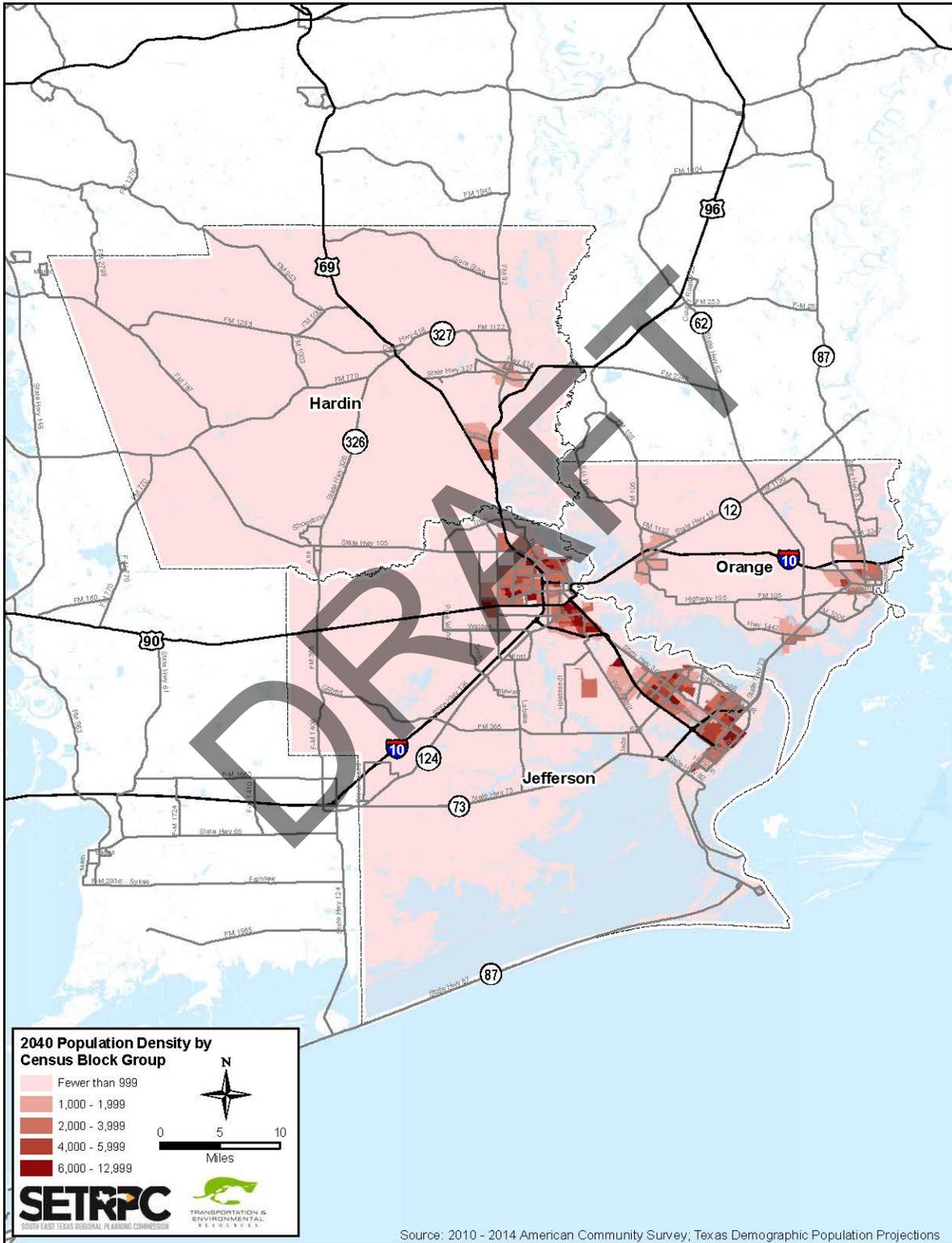
MAP 2B 2015 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



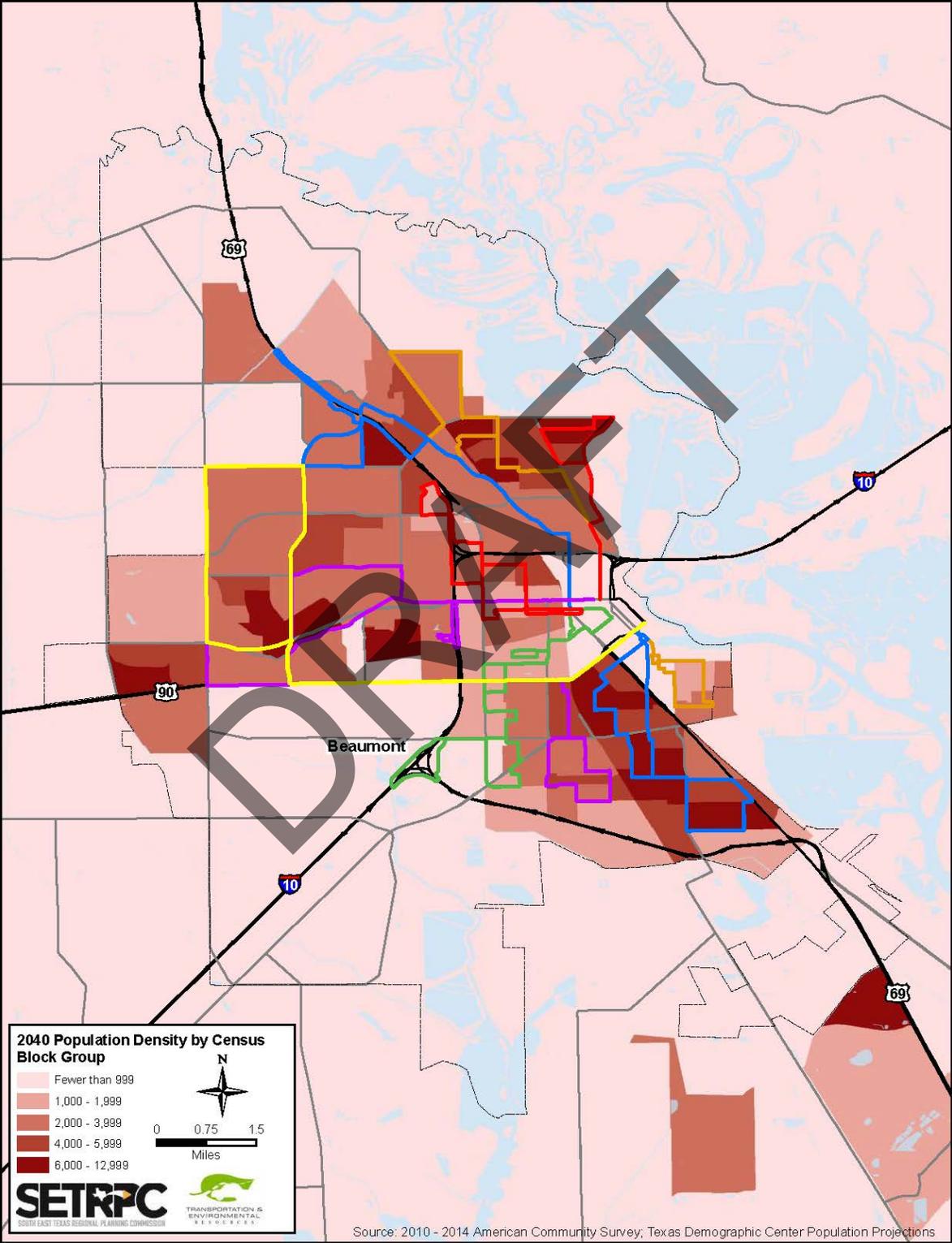
MAP 2C 2015 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



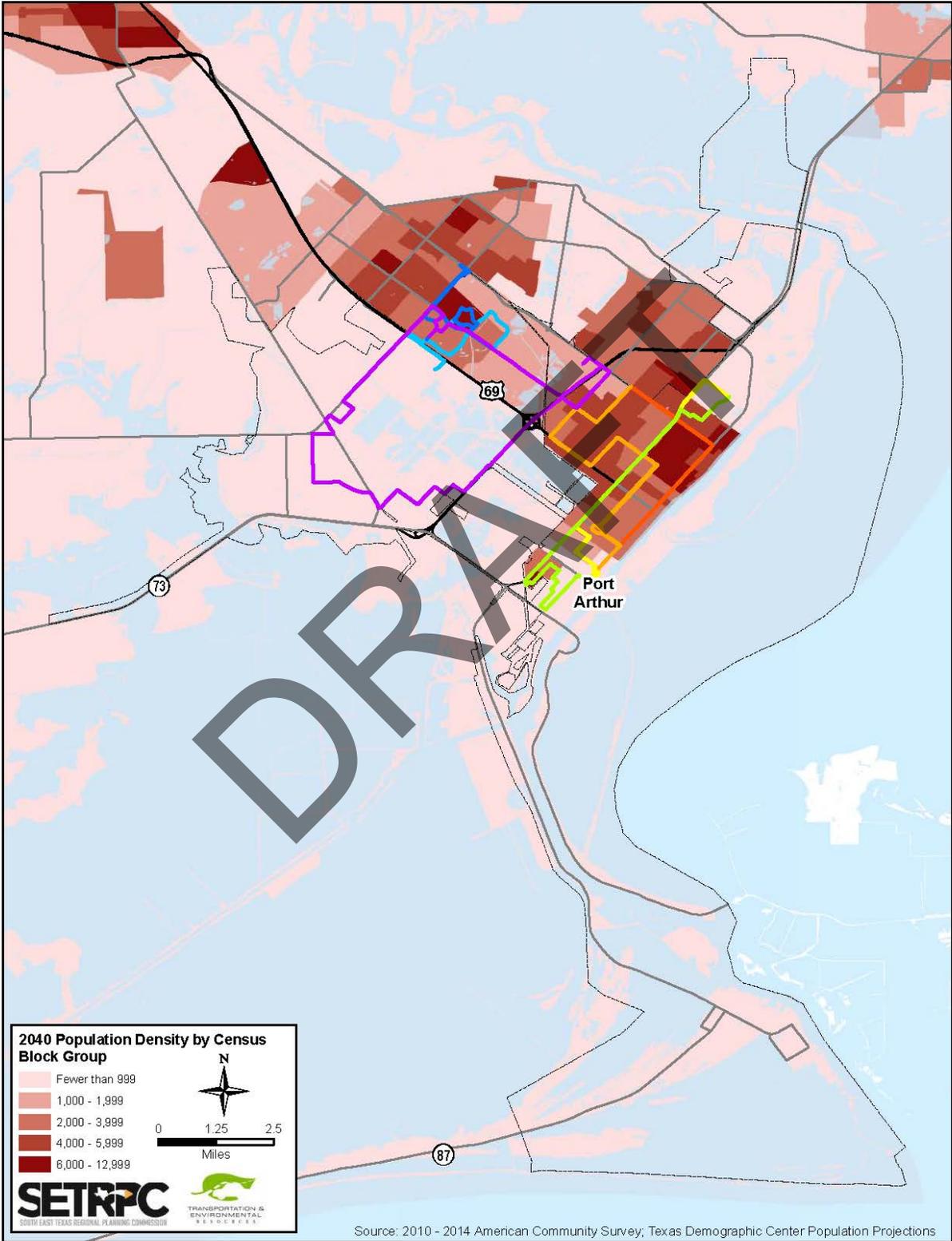
MAP 3A 2040 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



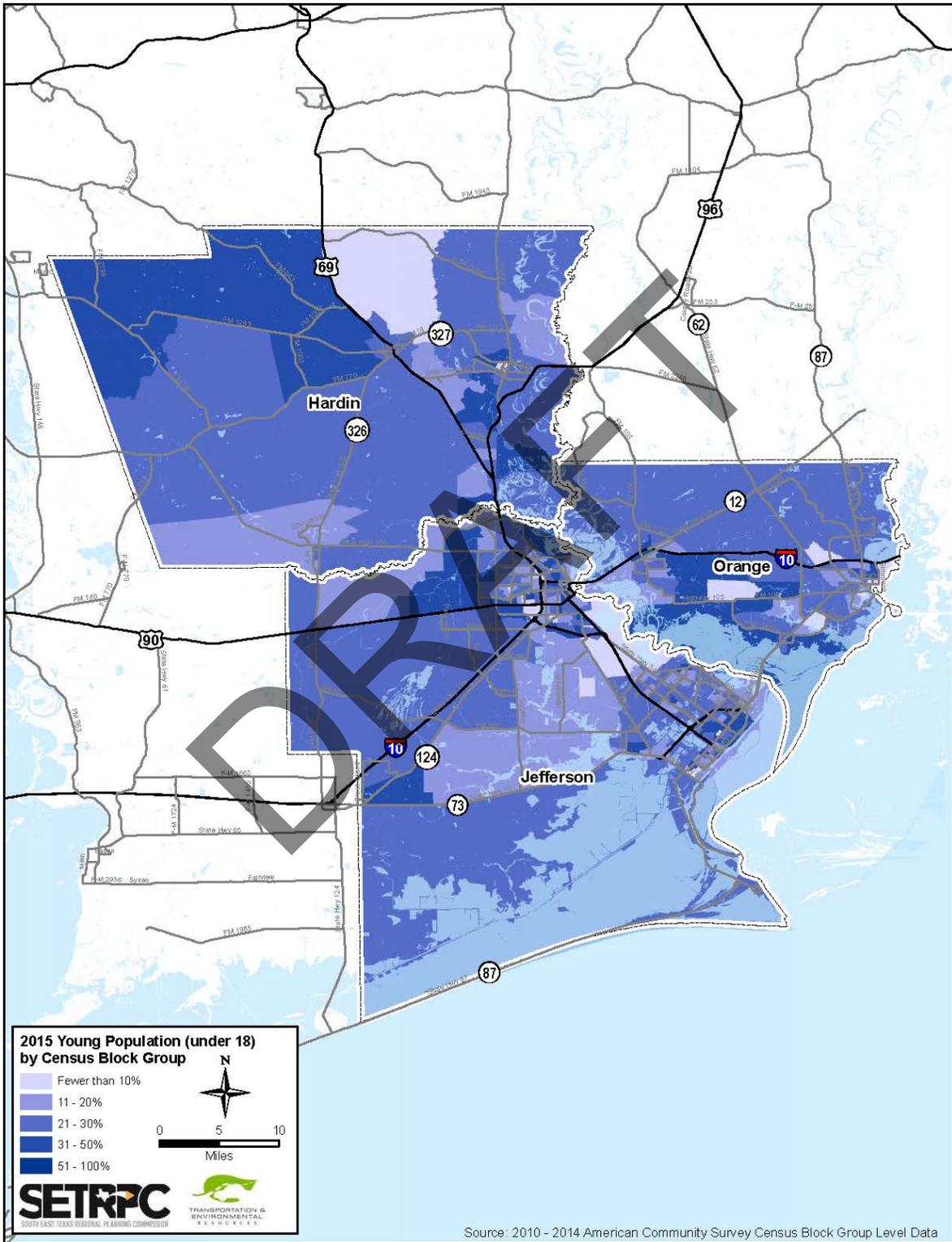
MAP 3B 2040 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



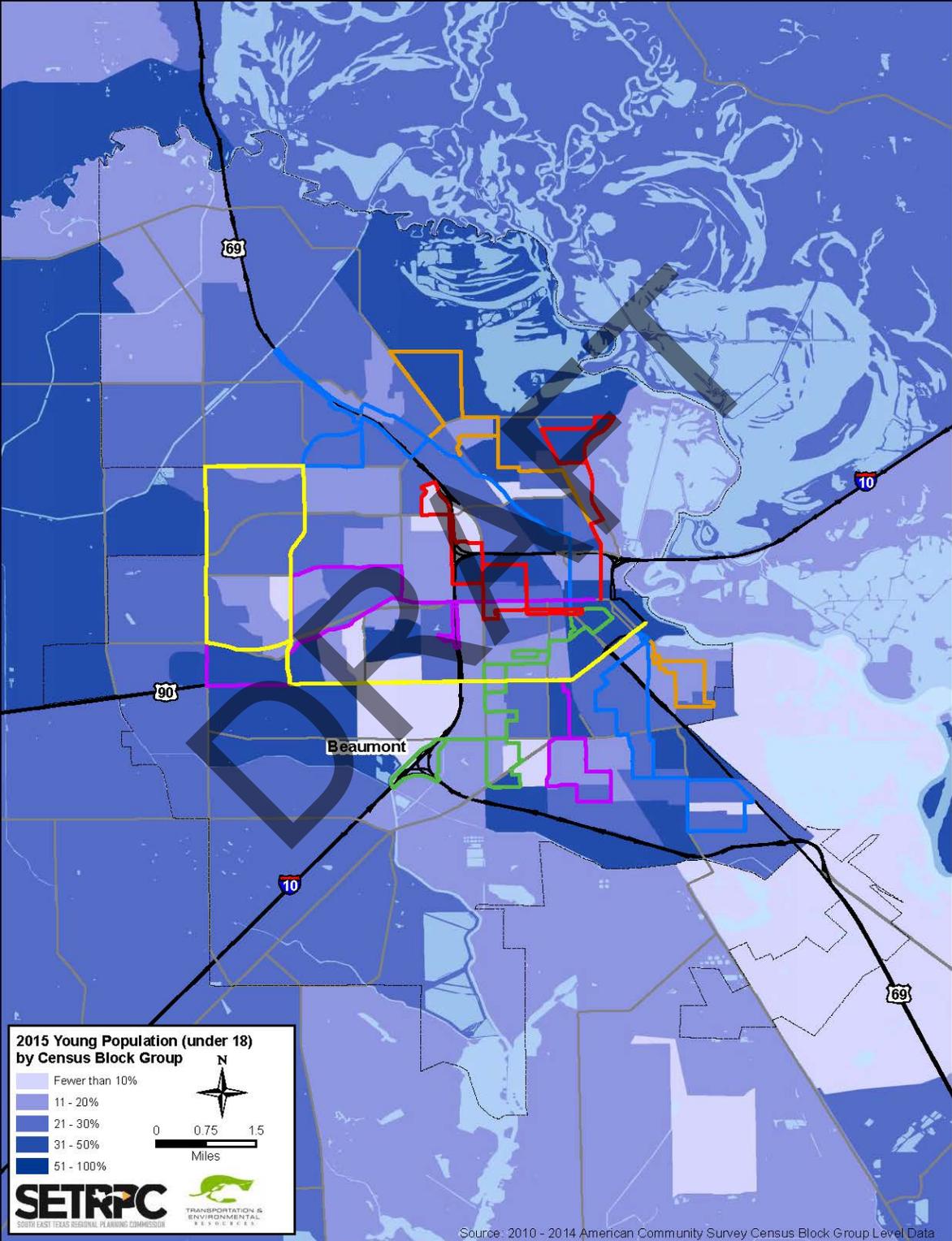
MAP 3C 2040 POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



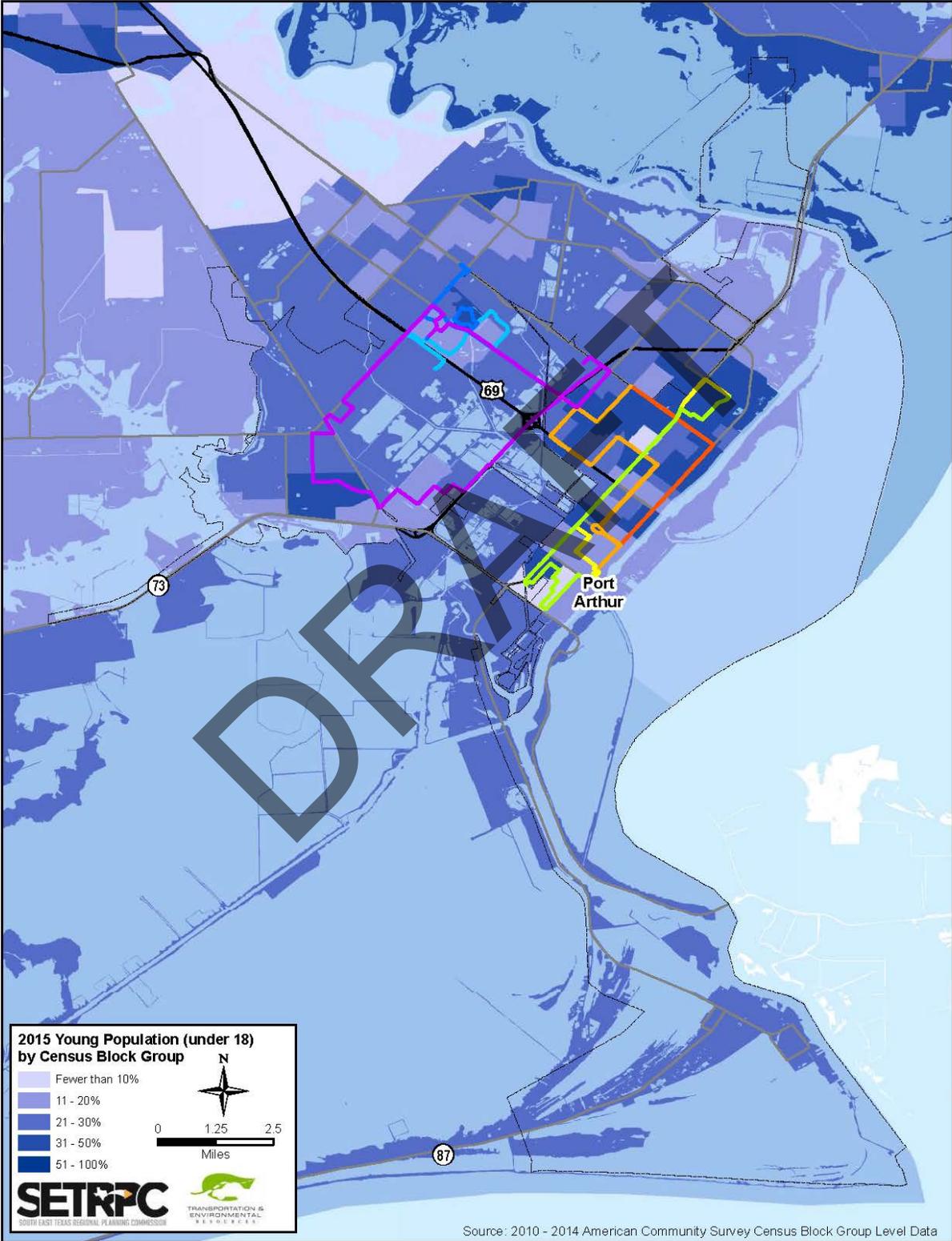
MAP 4A 2015 YOUNG POPULATION (UNDER 18) BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



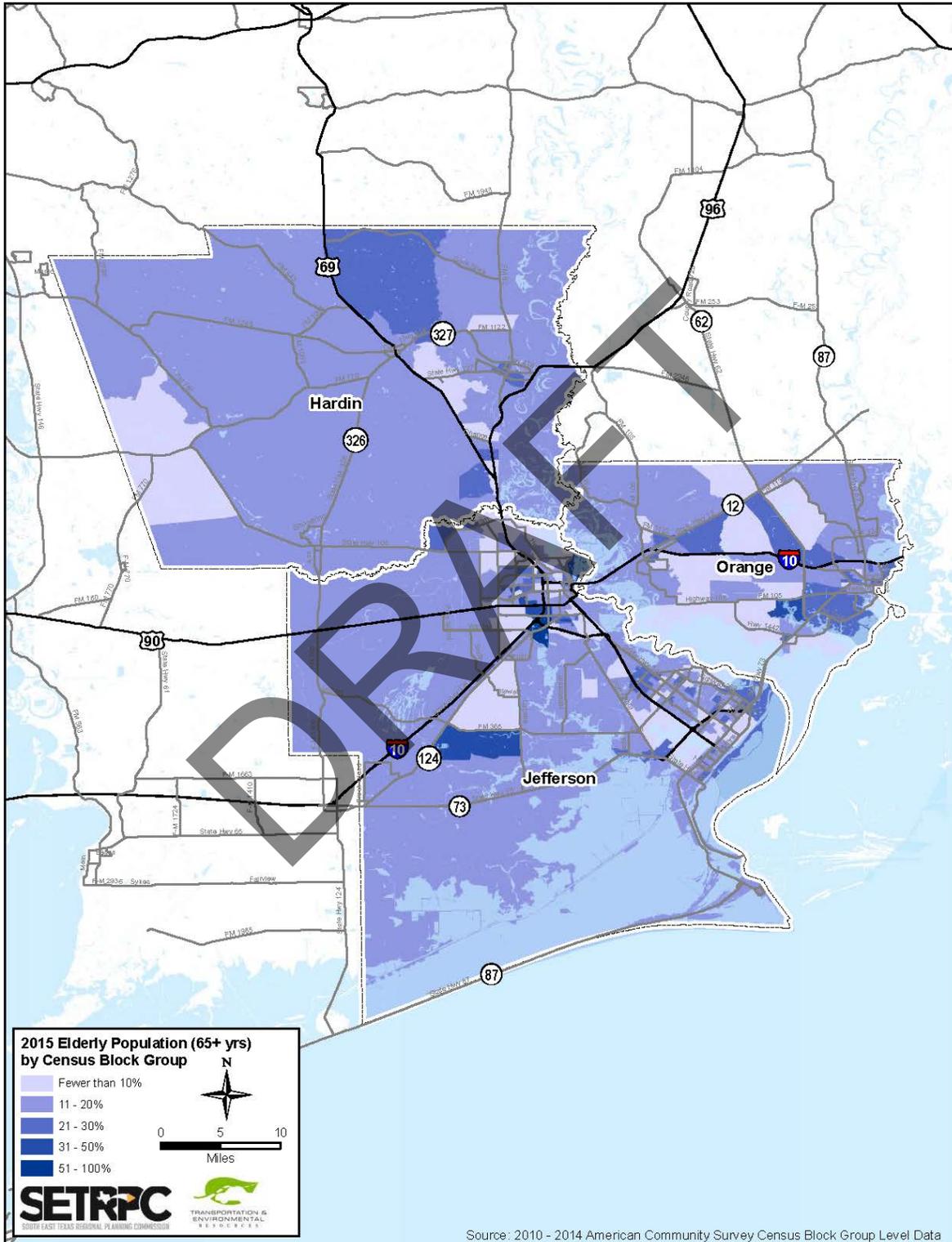
**MAP 4B 2015 YOUNG POPULATION (UNDER 18) BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP:
BEAUMONT**



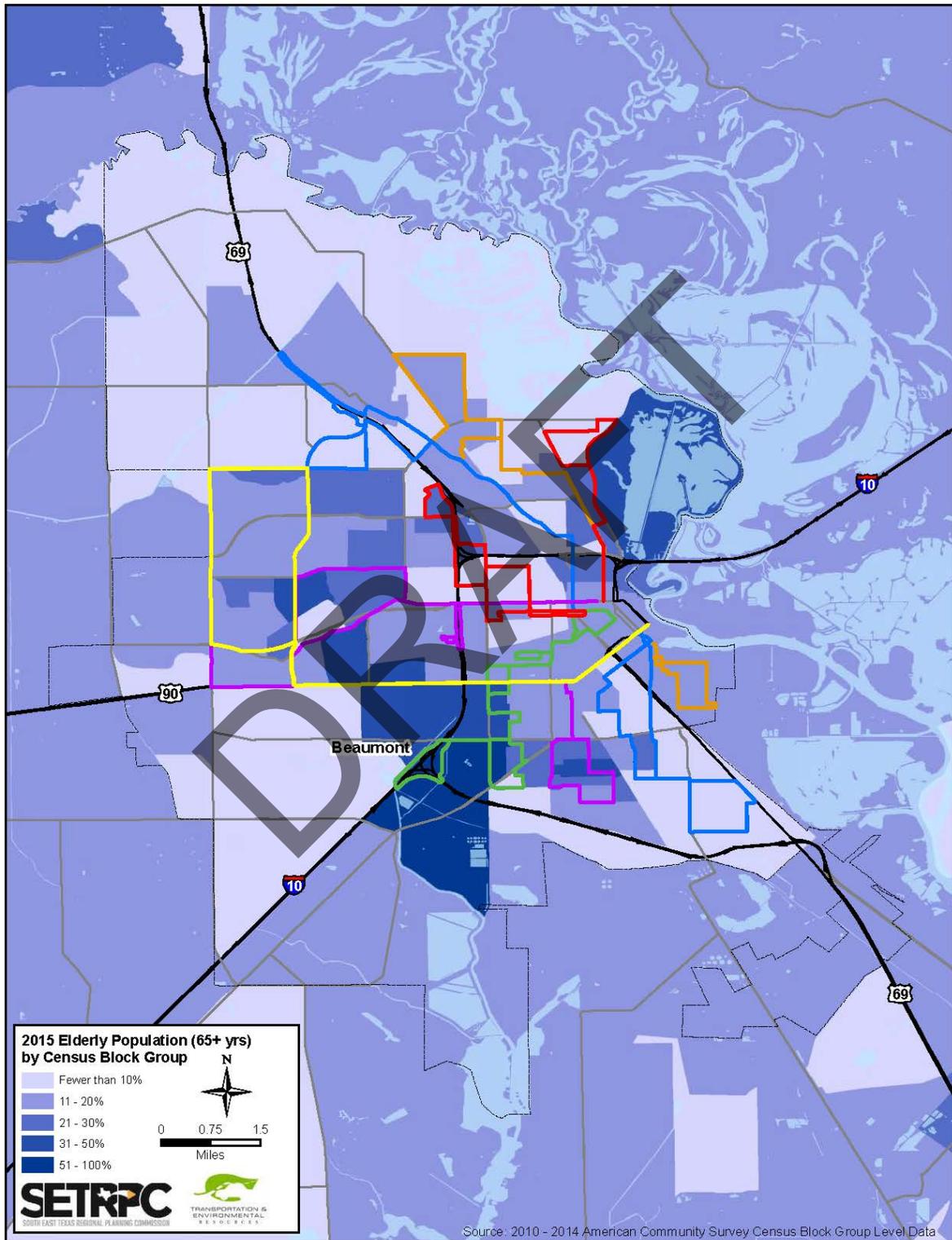
MAP 4C 2015 YOUNG POPULATION (UNDER 18) BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



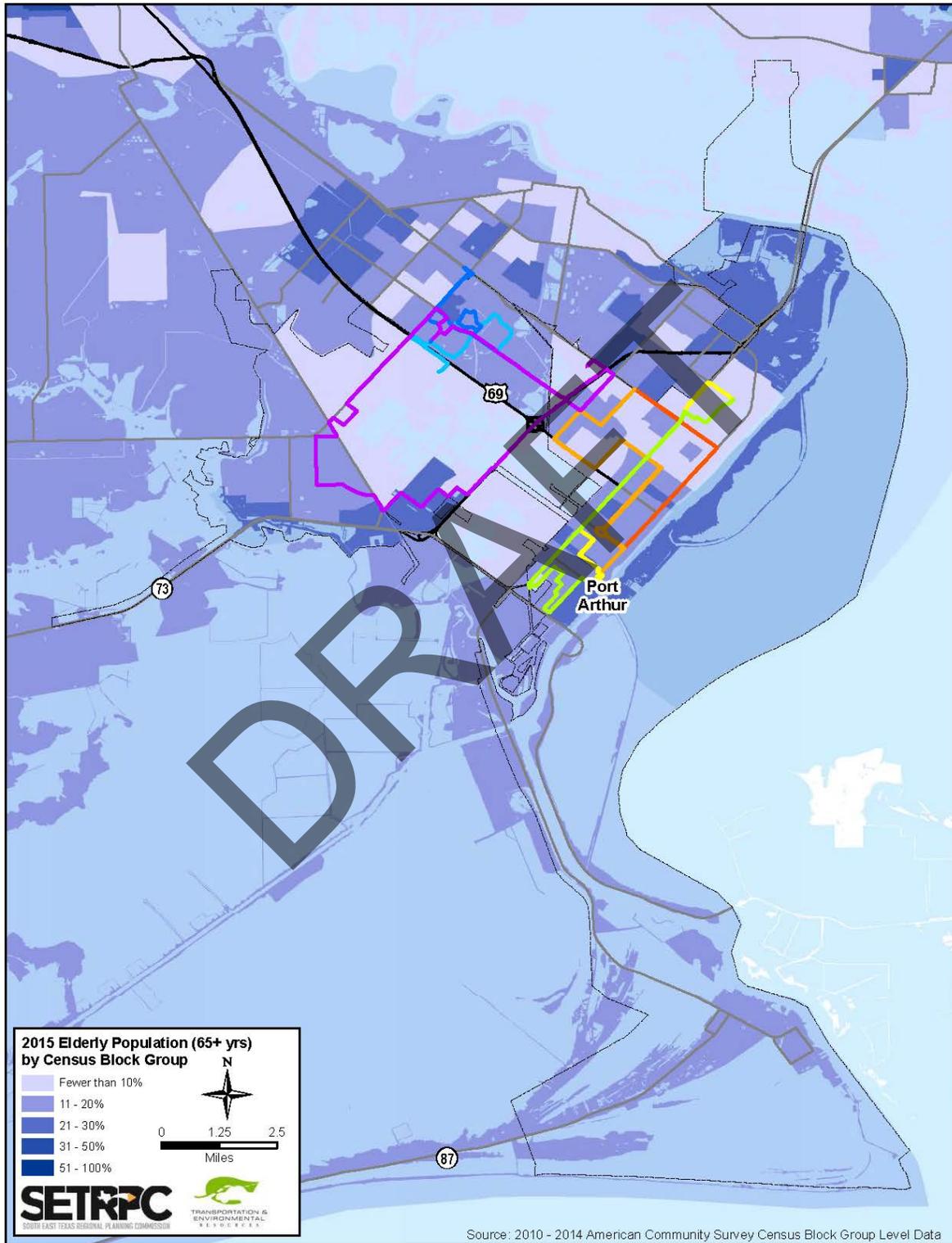
MAP 5A 2015 ELDERLY POPULATION (65+ YEARS) BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



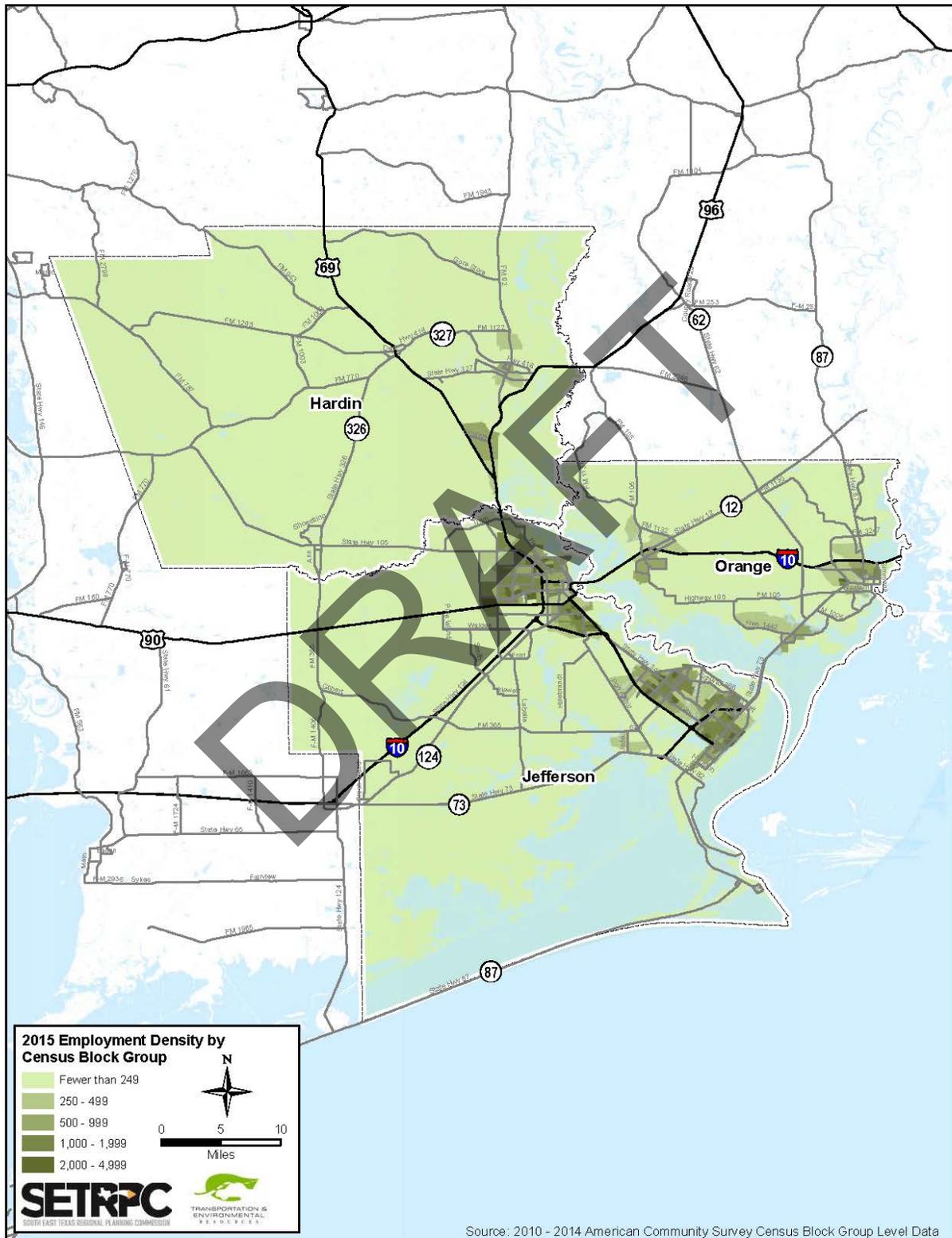
MAP 5B 2015 ELDERLY POPULATION (65+ YEARS) BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



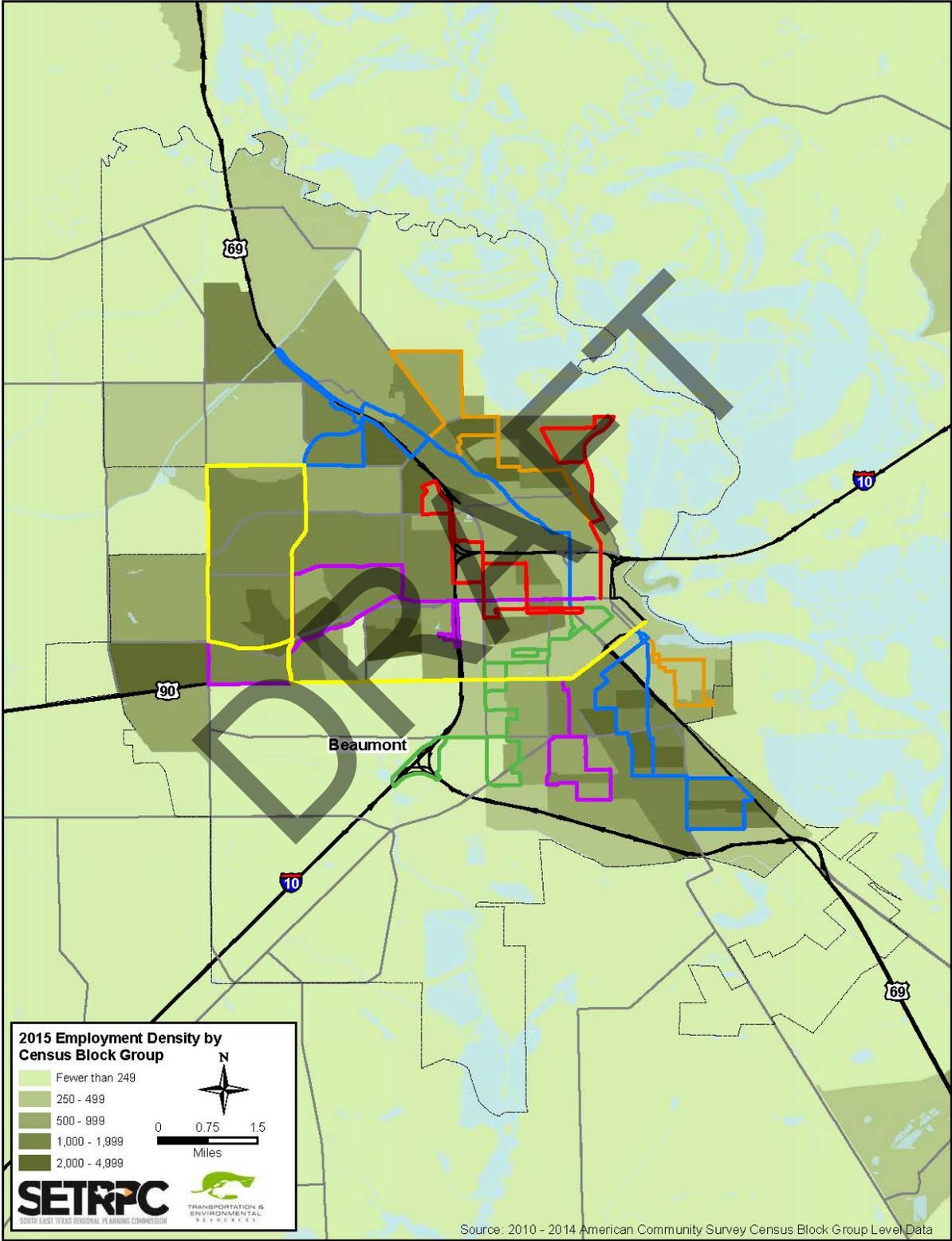
MAP 5C 2015 ELDERLY POPULATION (65+ YEARS) BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



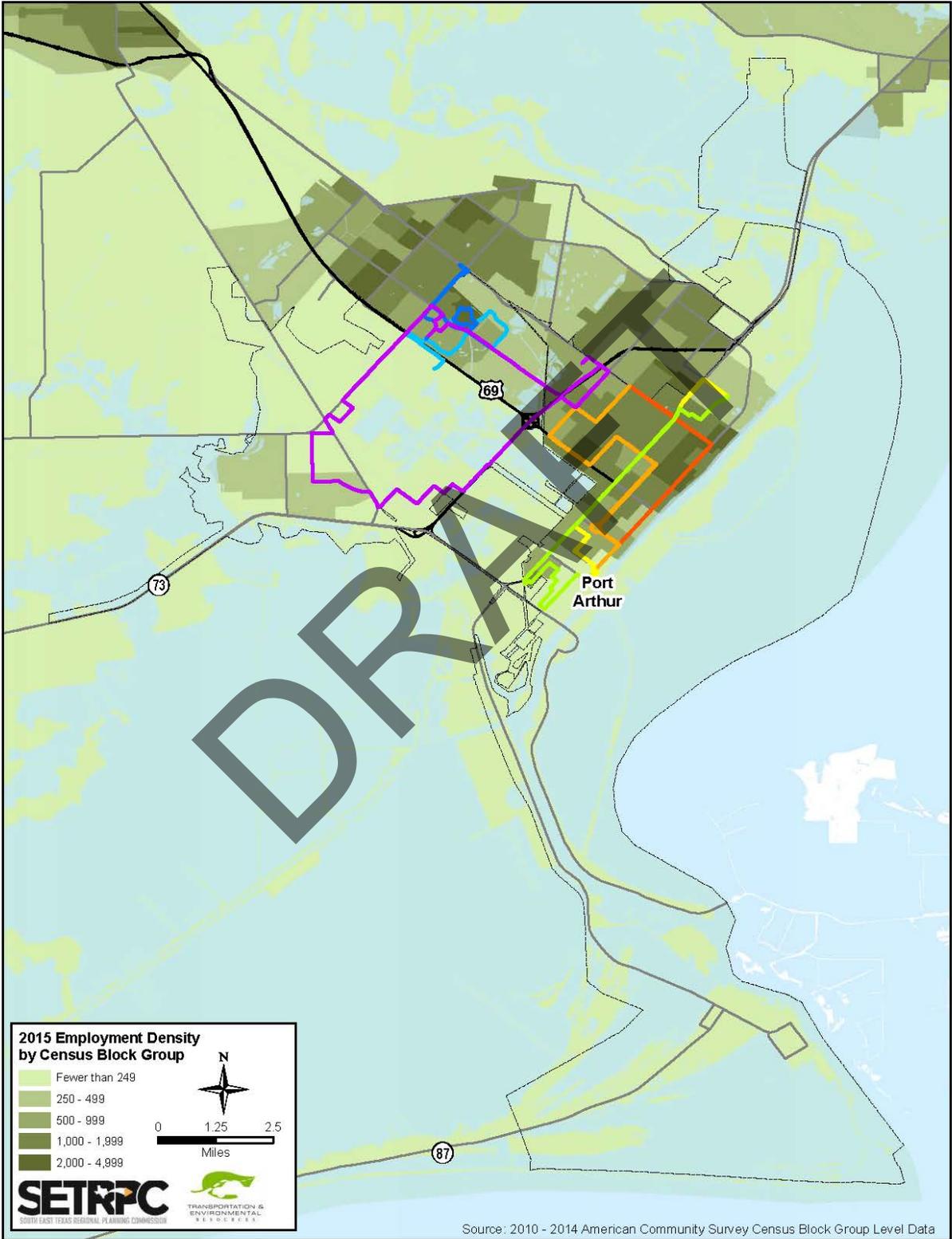
MAP 6A 2015 EMPLOYMENT DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



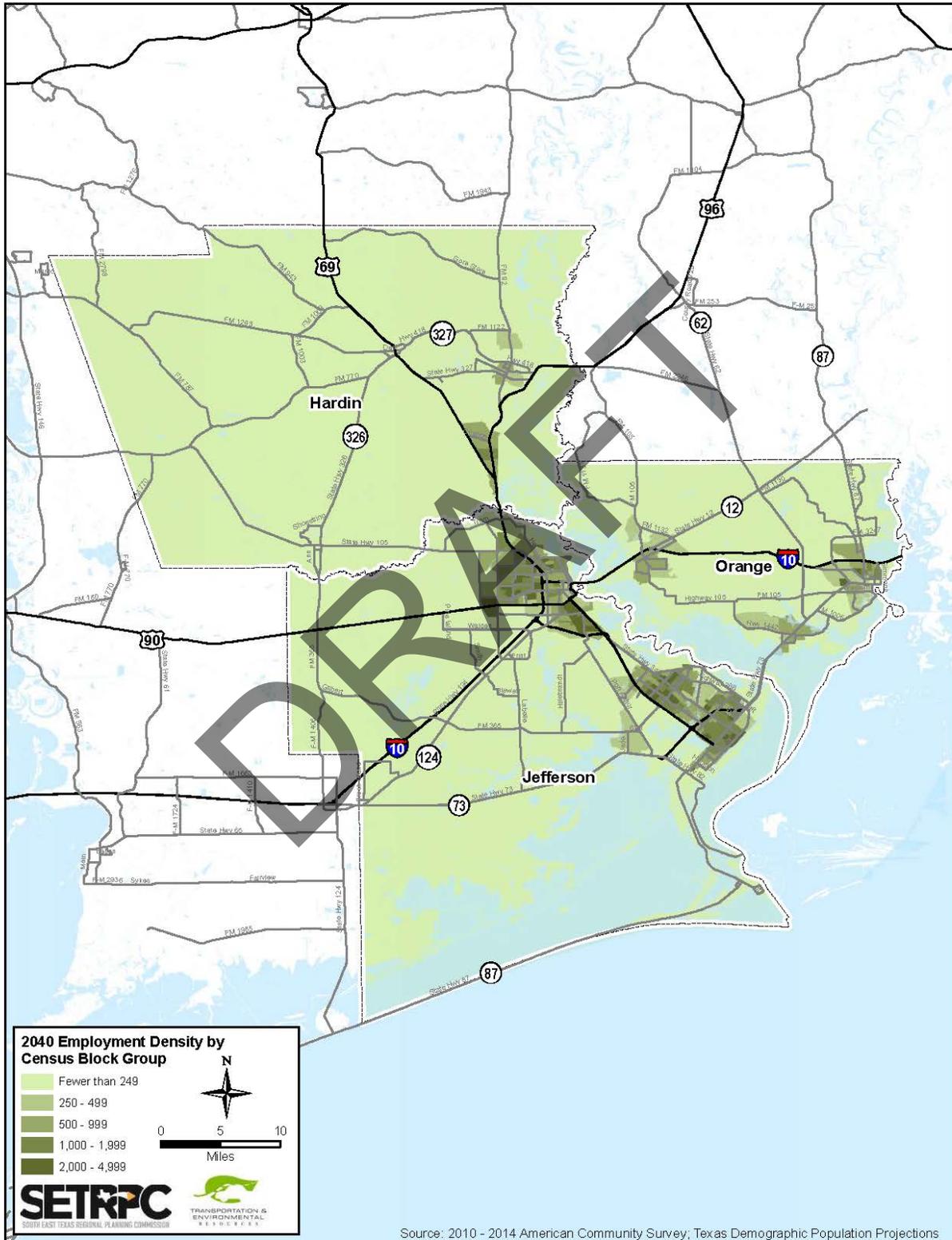
MAP 6B 2015 EMPLOYMENT DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



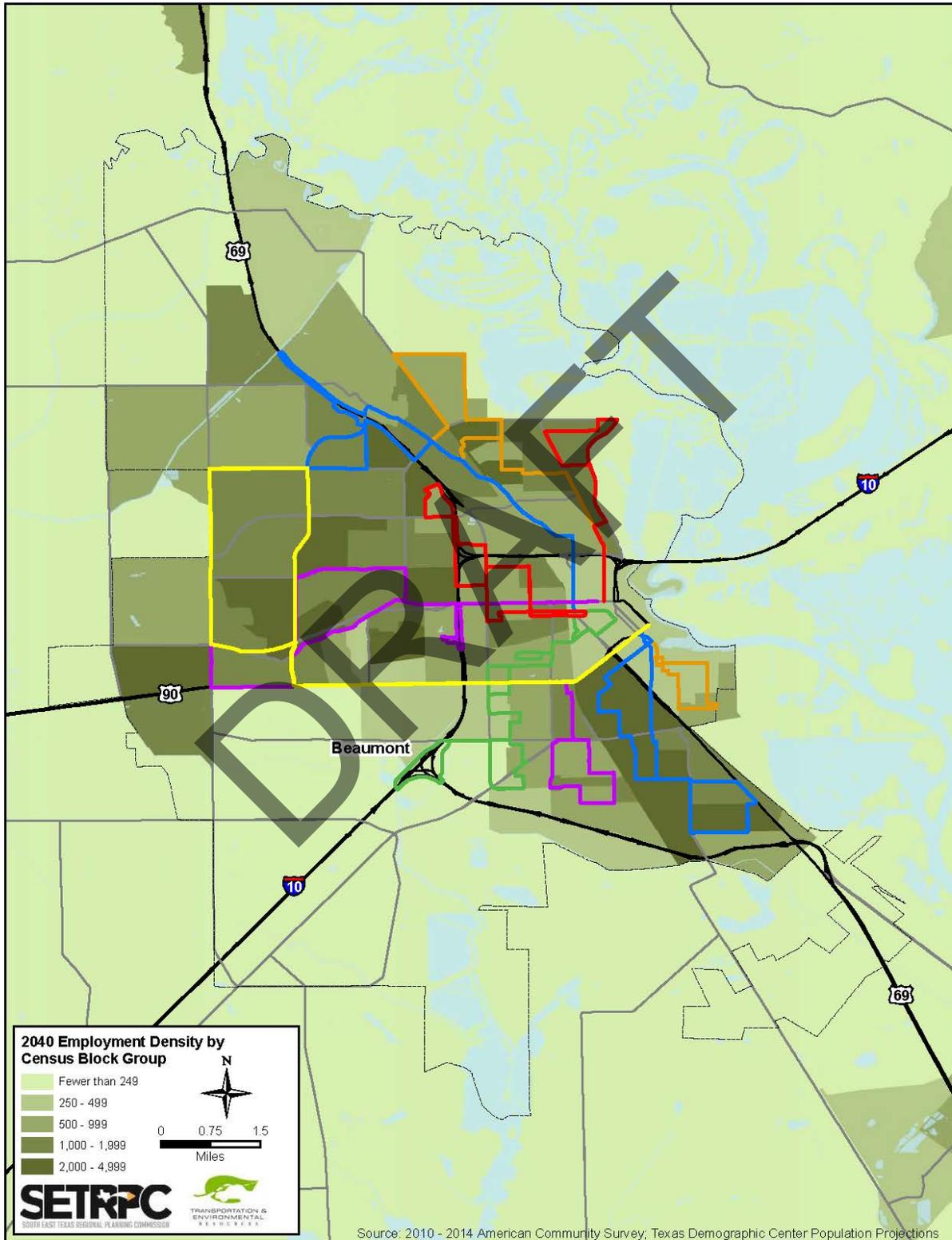
MAP 6C 2015 EMPLOYMENT DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



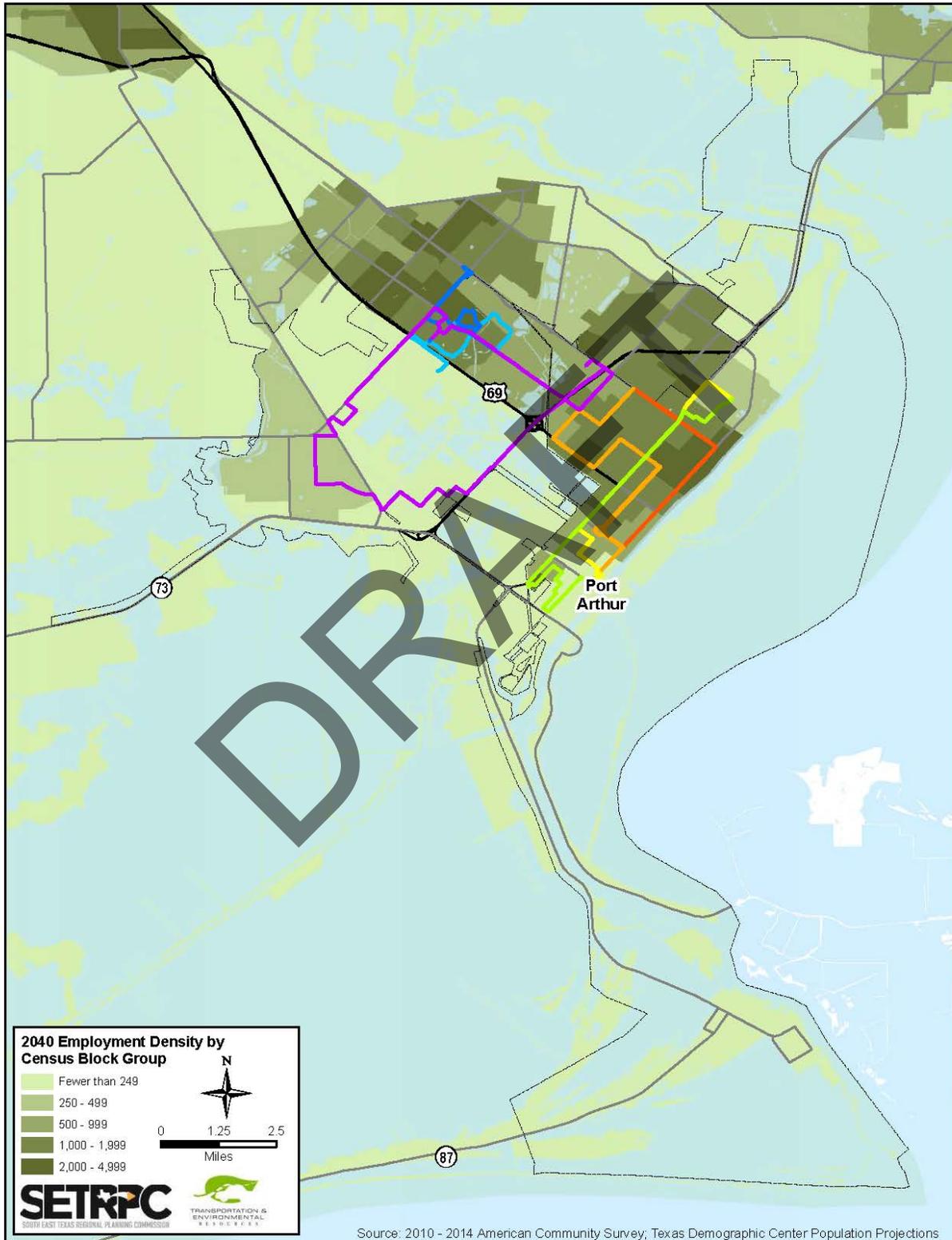
MAP 7A 2040 EMPLOYMENT DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



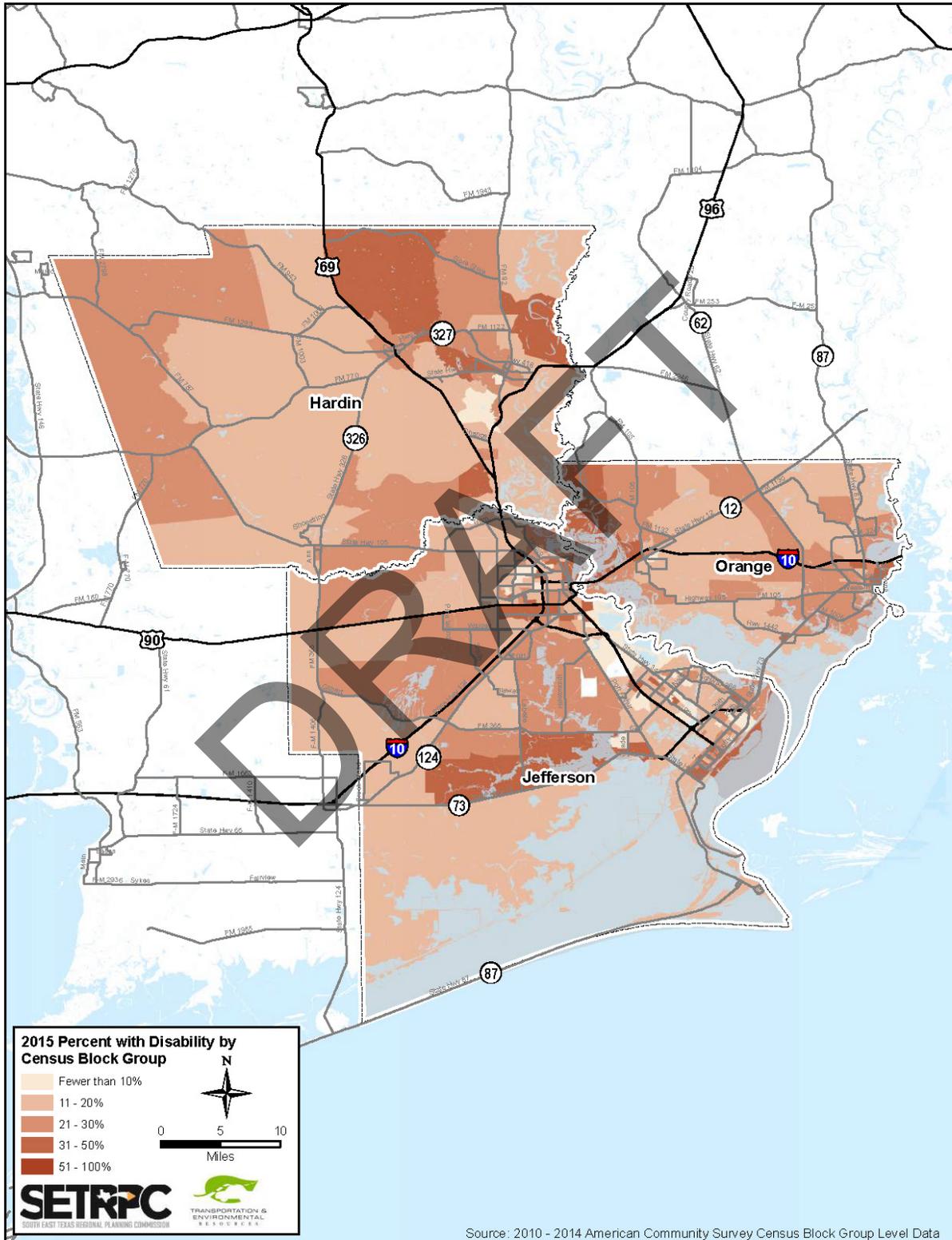
MAP 7B 2040 EMPLOYMENT DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



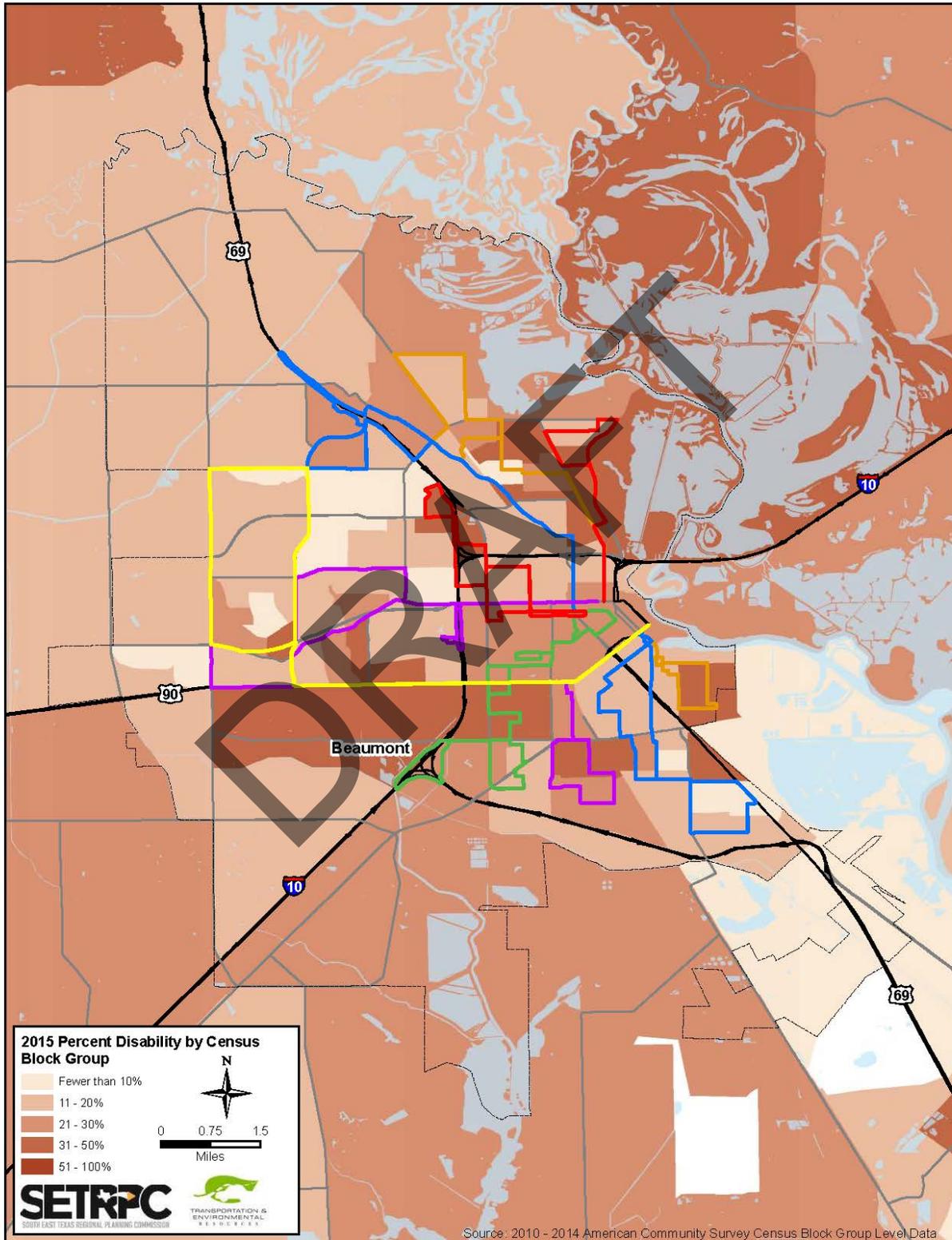
MAP 7C 2040 EMPLOYMENT DENSITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



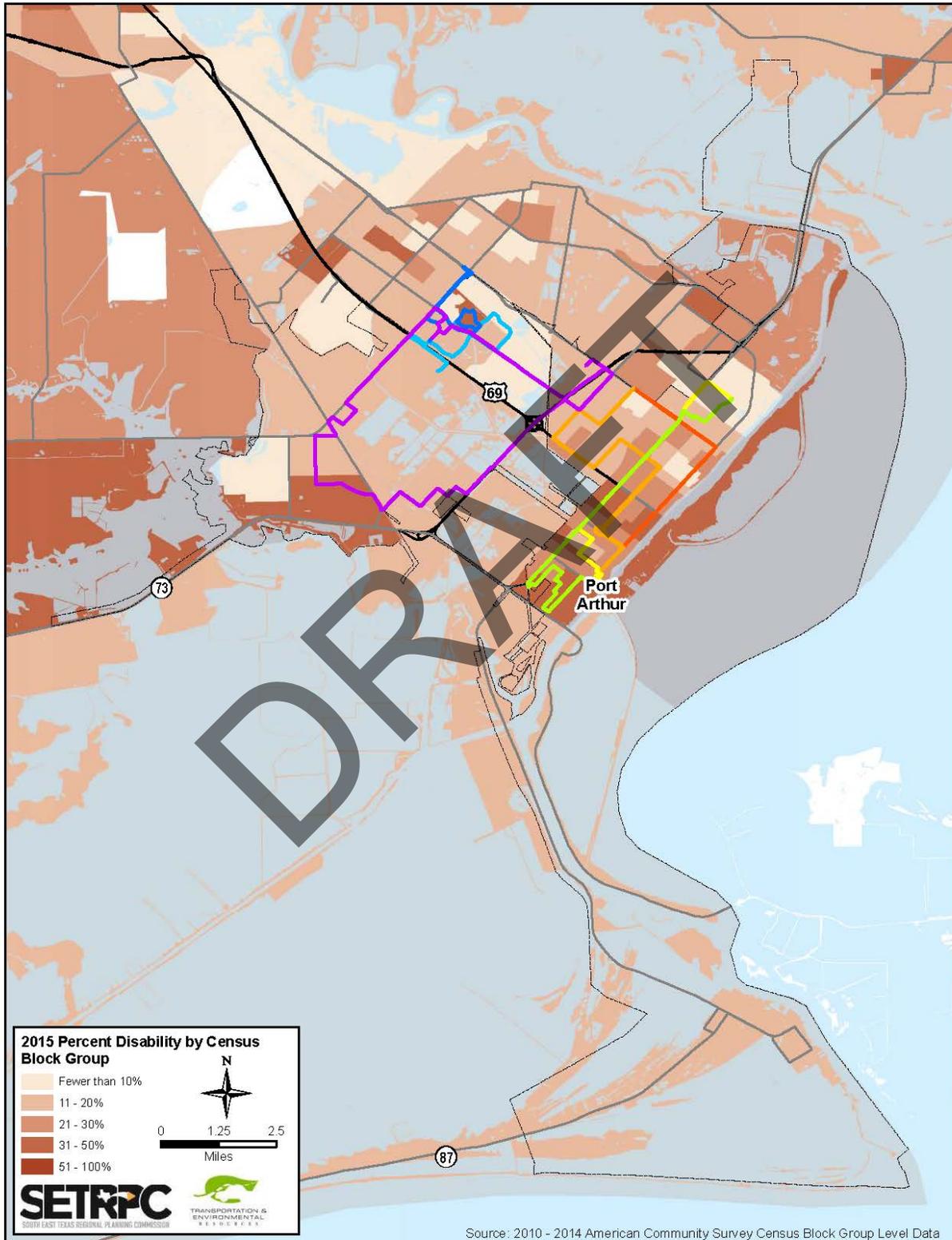
MAP 8A 2015 PERCENT WITH DISABILITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



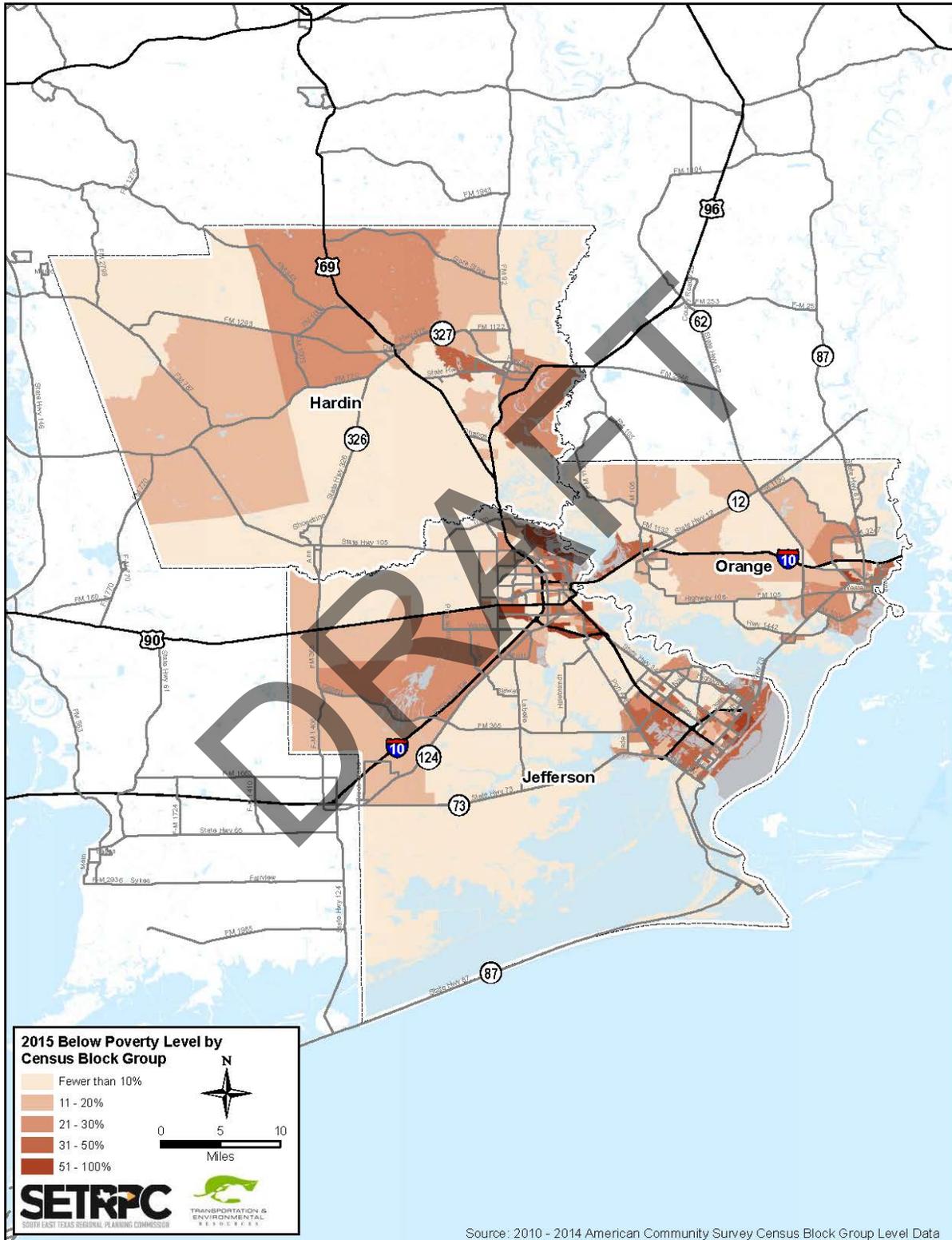
MAP 8B 2015 PERCENT WITH DISABILITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



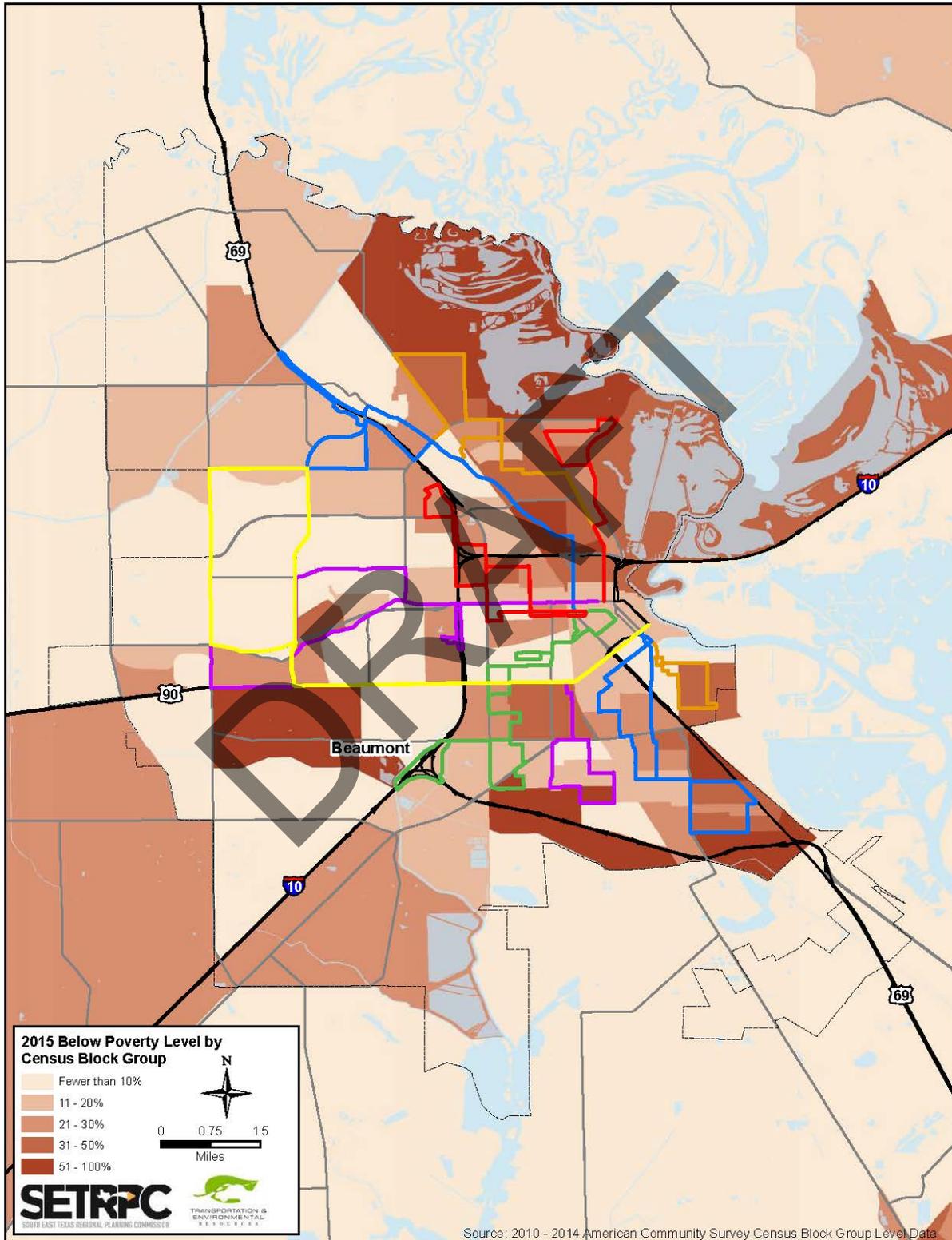
MAP 8C 2015 PERCENT WITH DISABILITY BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



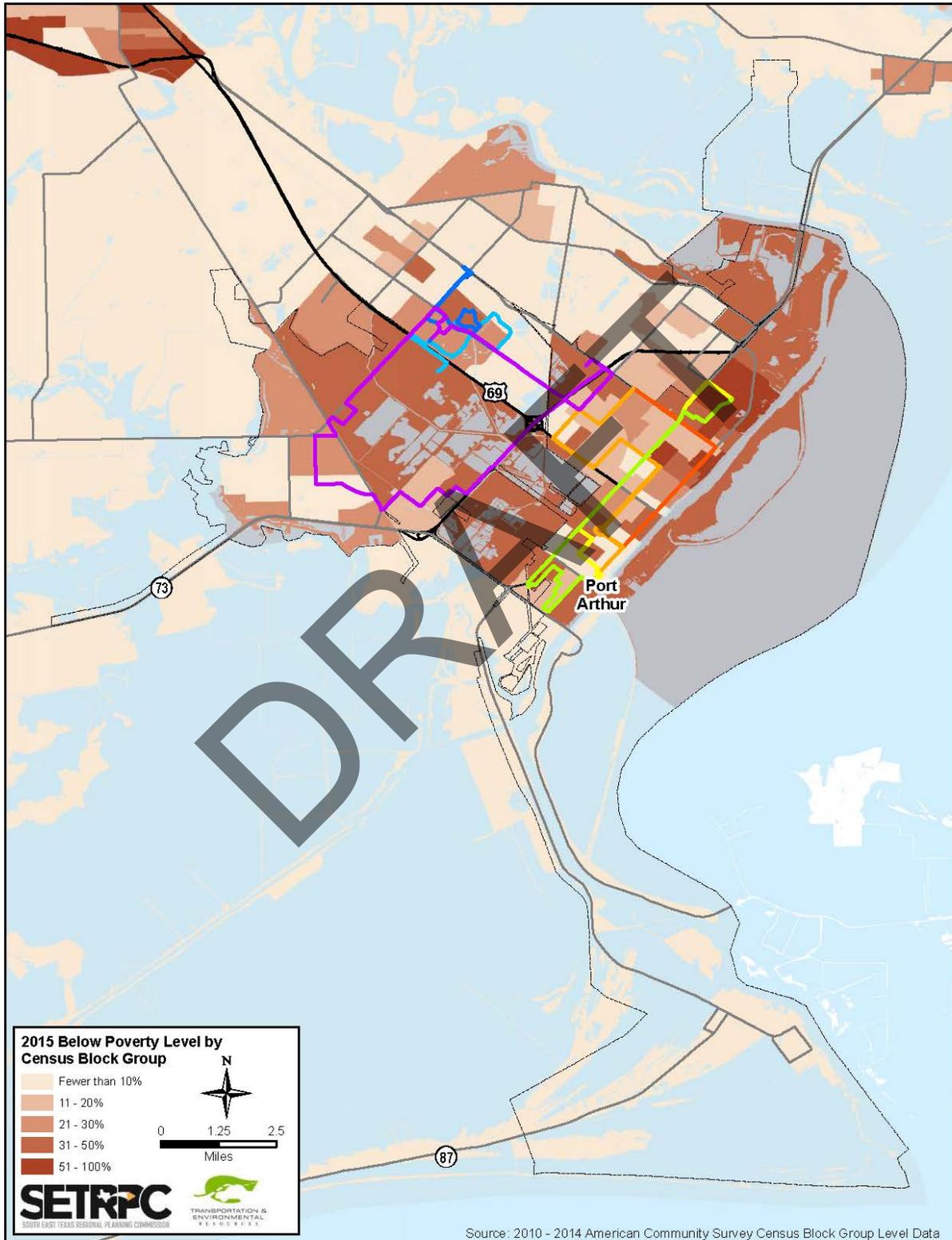
MAP 9A 2015 BELOW POVERTY LEVEL BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



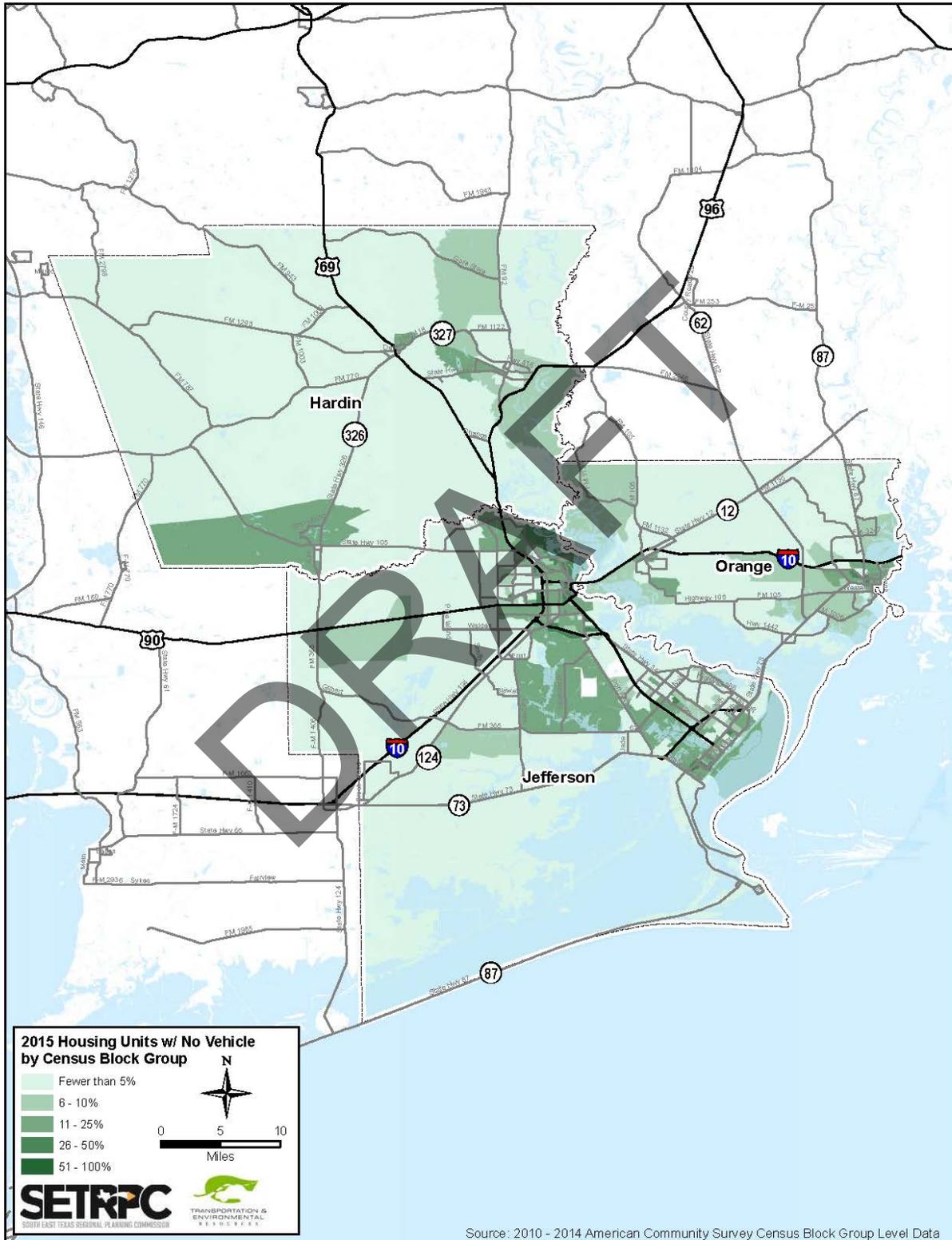
MAP 9B 2015 BELOW POVERTY LEVEL BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



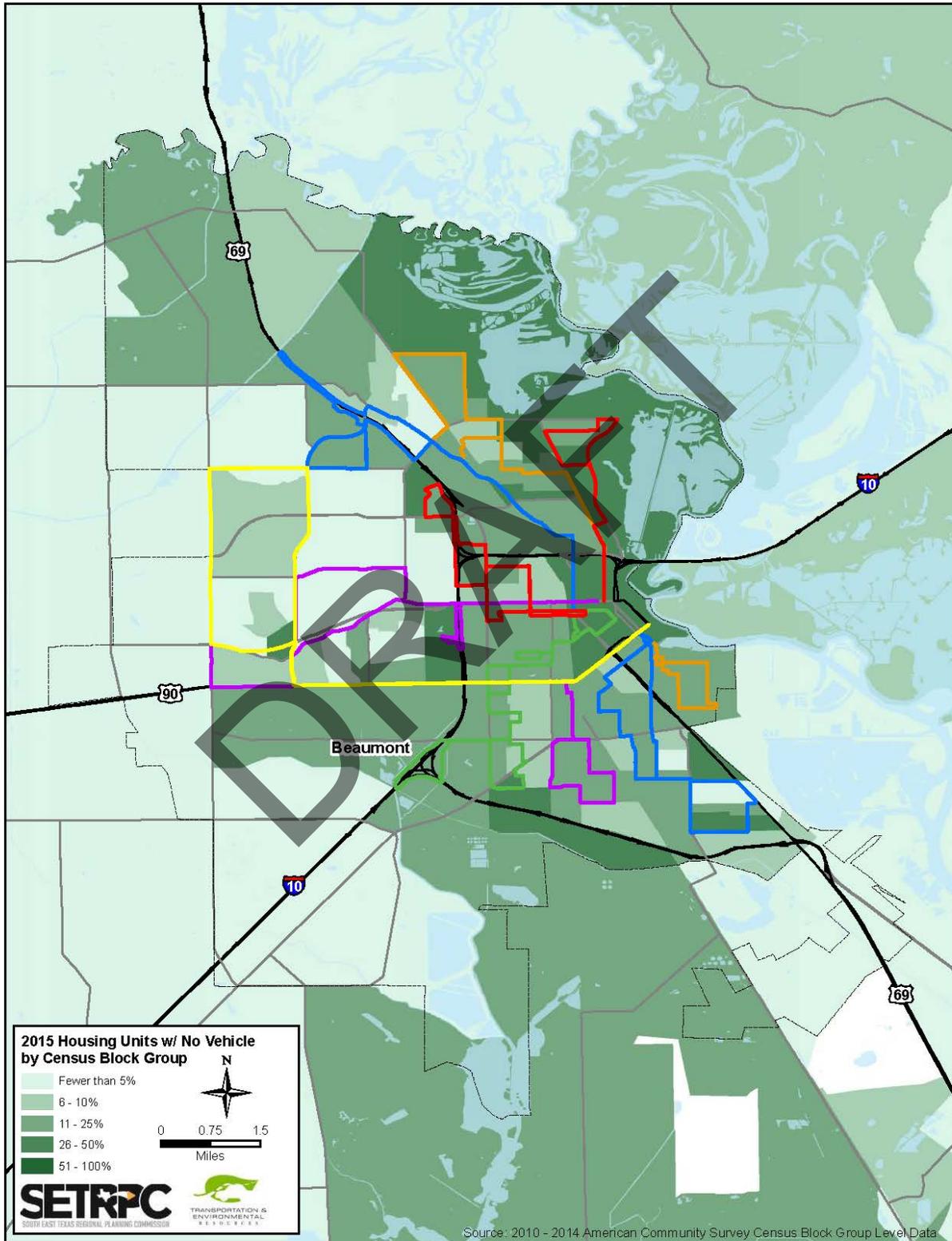
MAP 9C 2015 BELOW POVERTY LEVEL BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



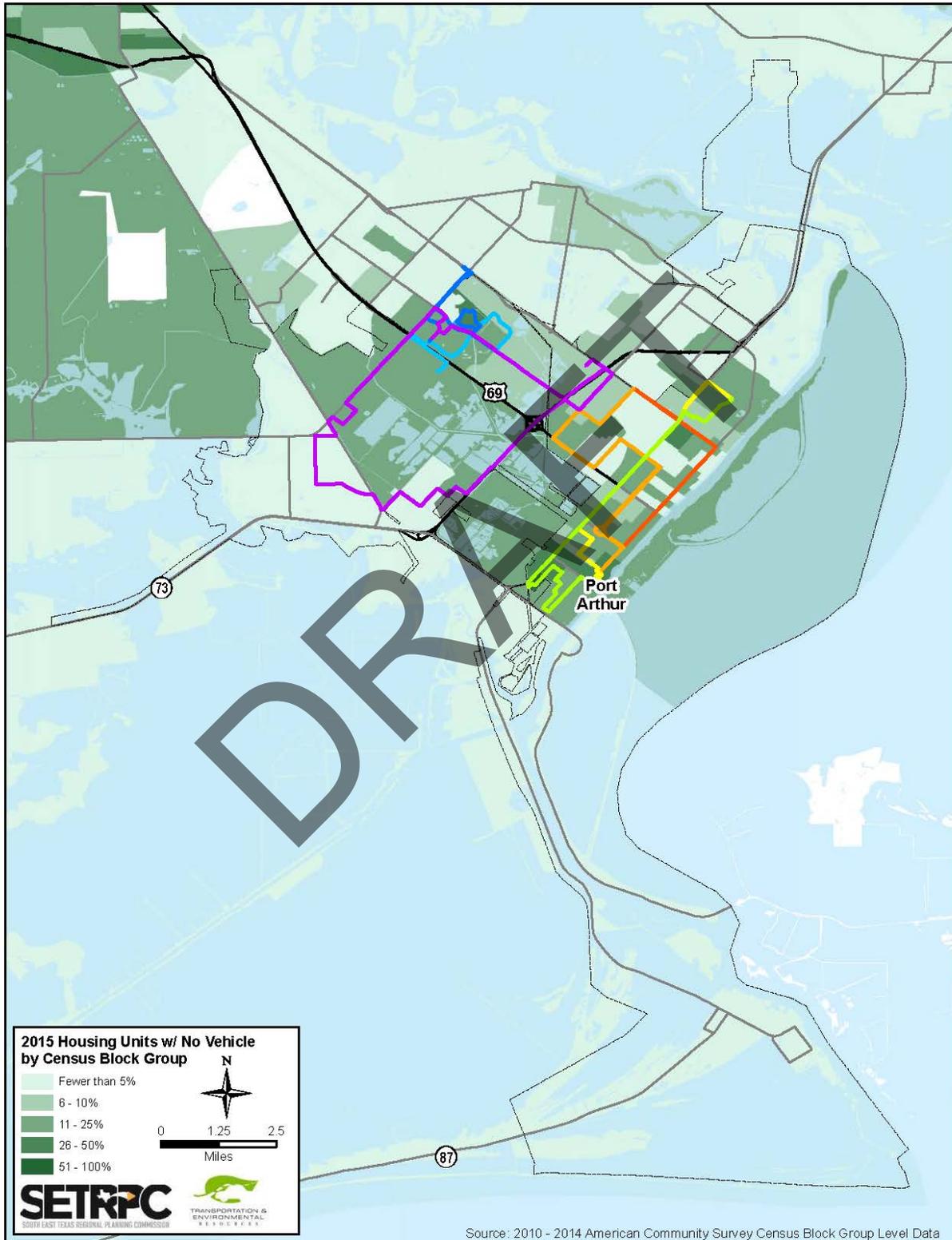
MAP 10A 2015 HOUSING UNITS W/ NO VEHICLE BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



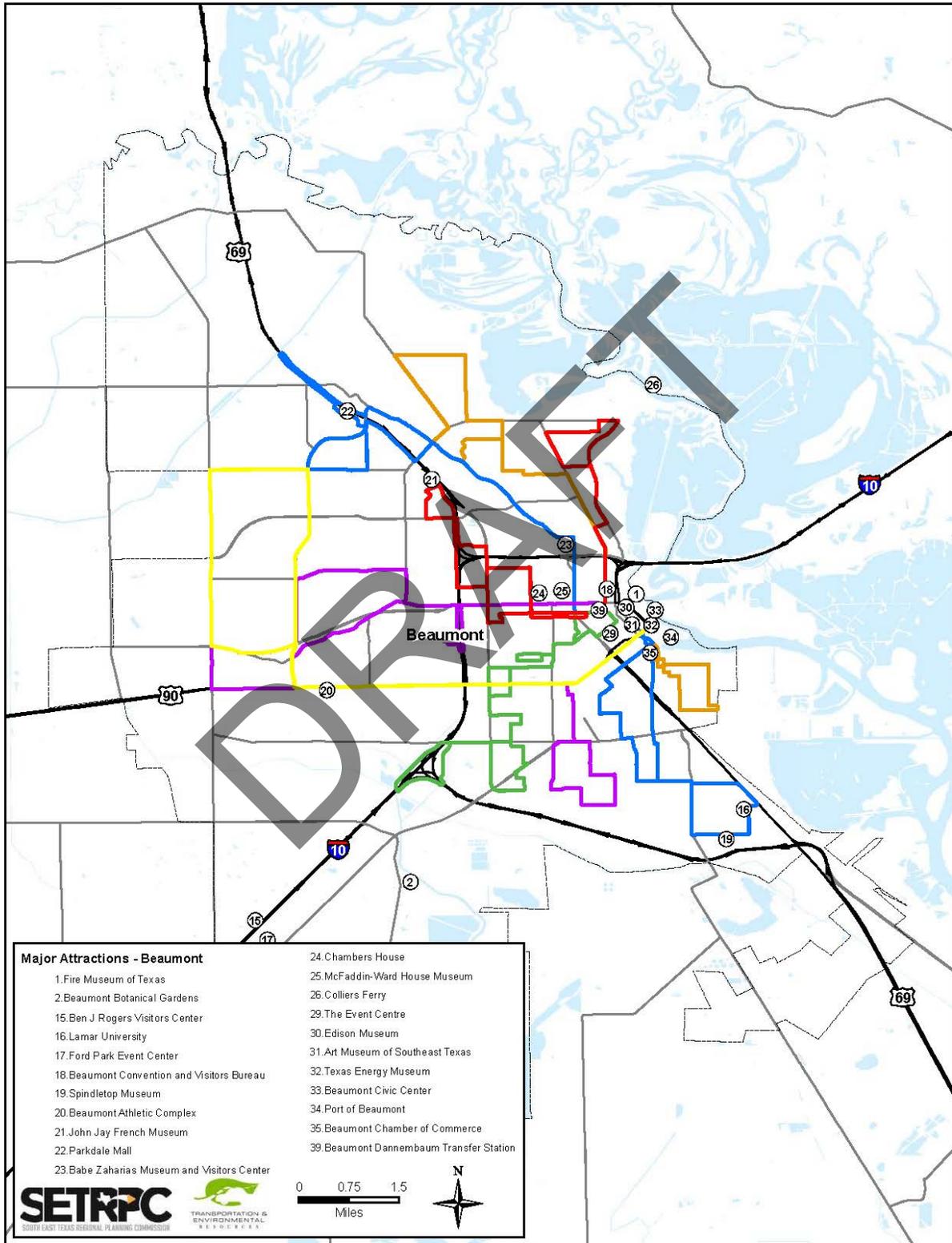
MAP 10B 2015 HOUSING UNITS W/ NO VEHICLE BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



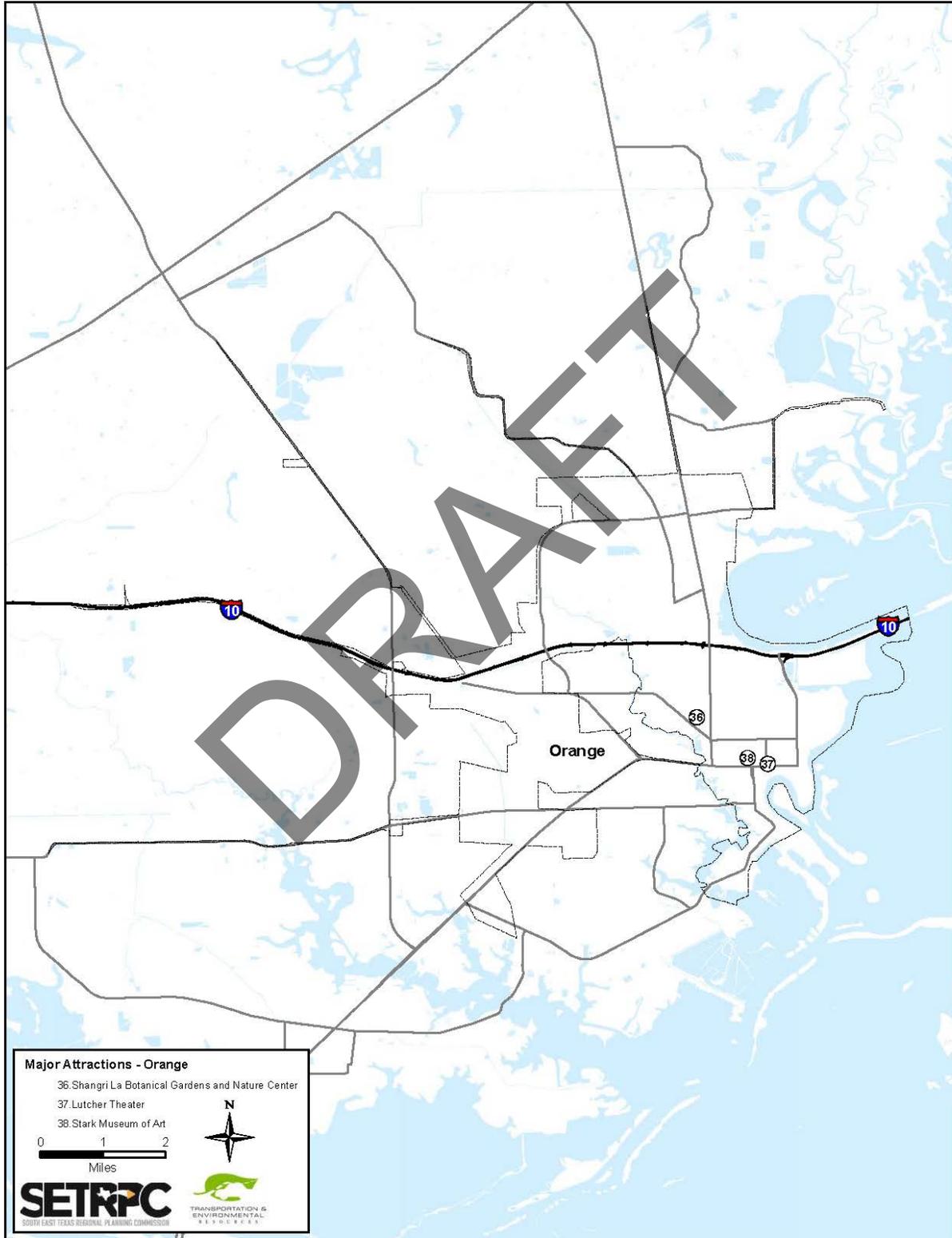
MAP 10C 2015 HOUSING UNITS W/ NO VEHICLE BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



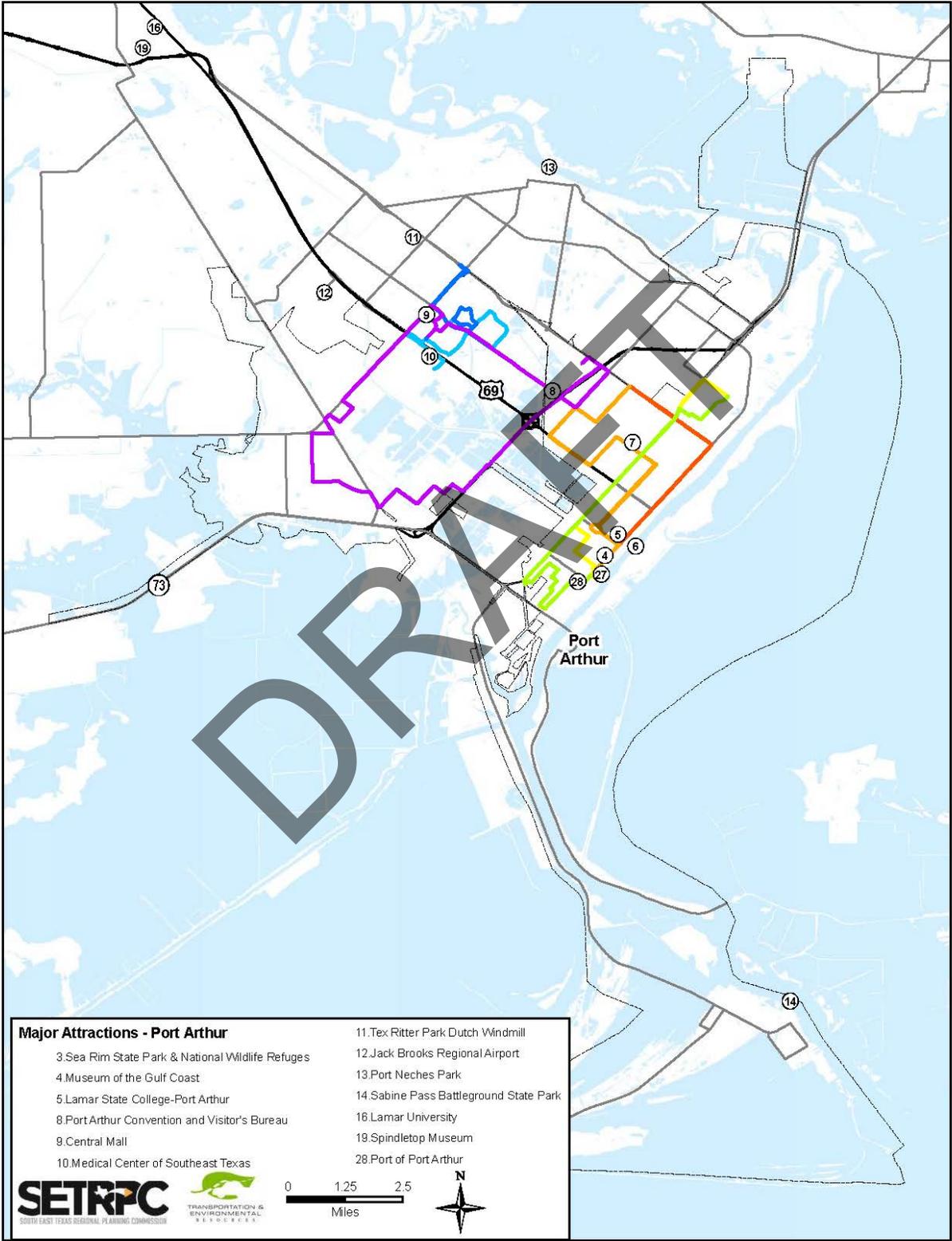
MAP 11A MAJOR ATTRACTIONS: BEAUMONT



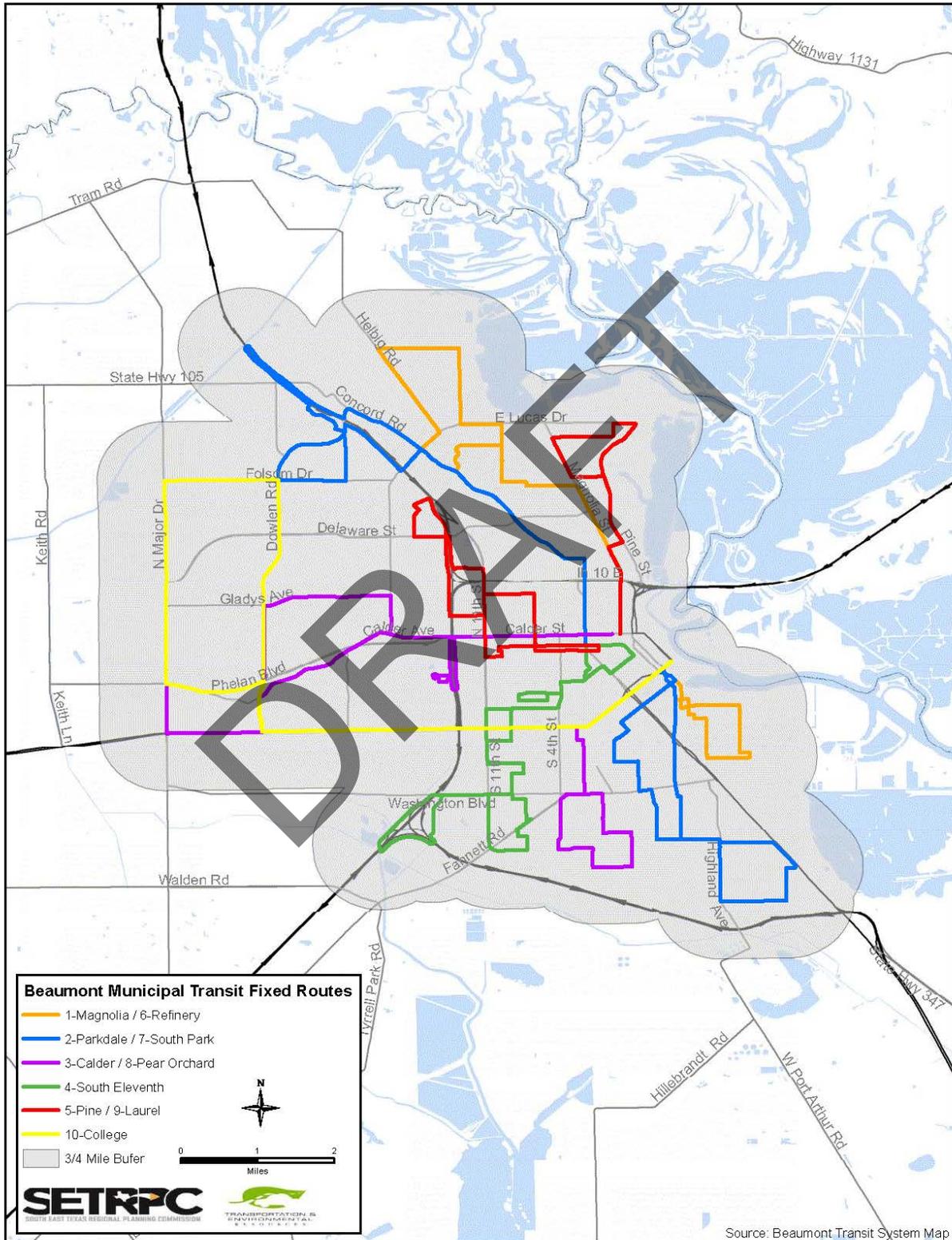
MAP 11B MAJOR ATTRACTIONS: ORANGE



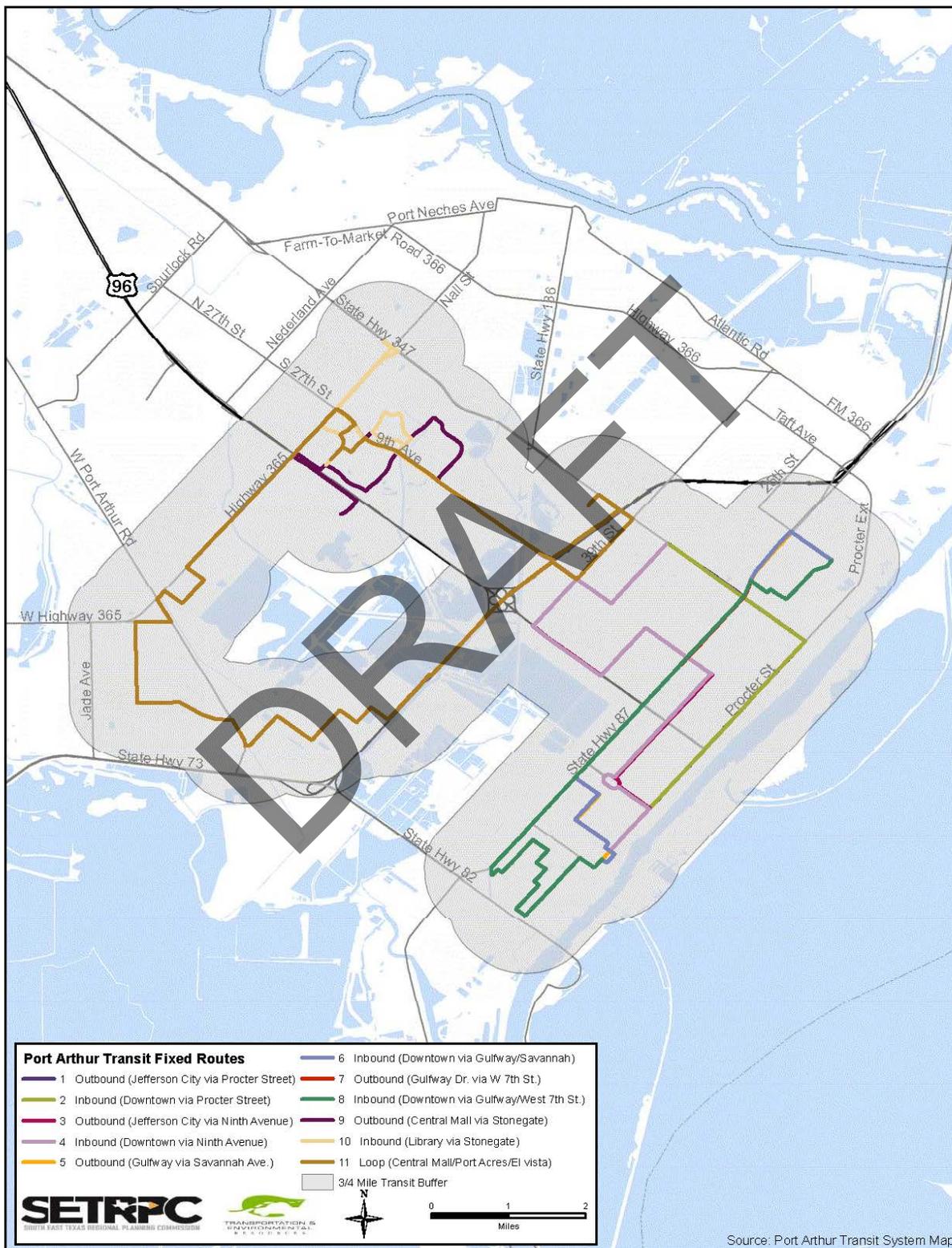
MAP 11C MAJOR ATTRACTIONS: PORT ARTHUR



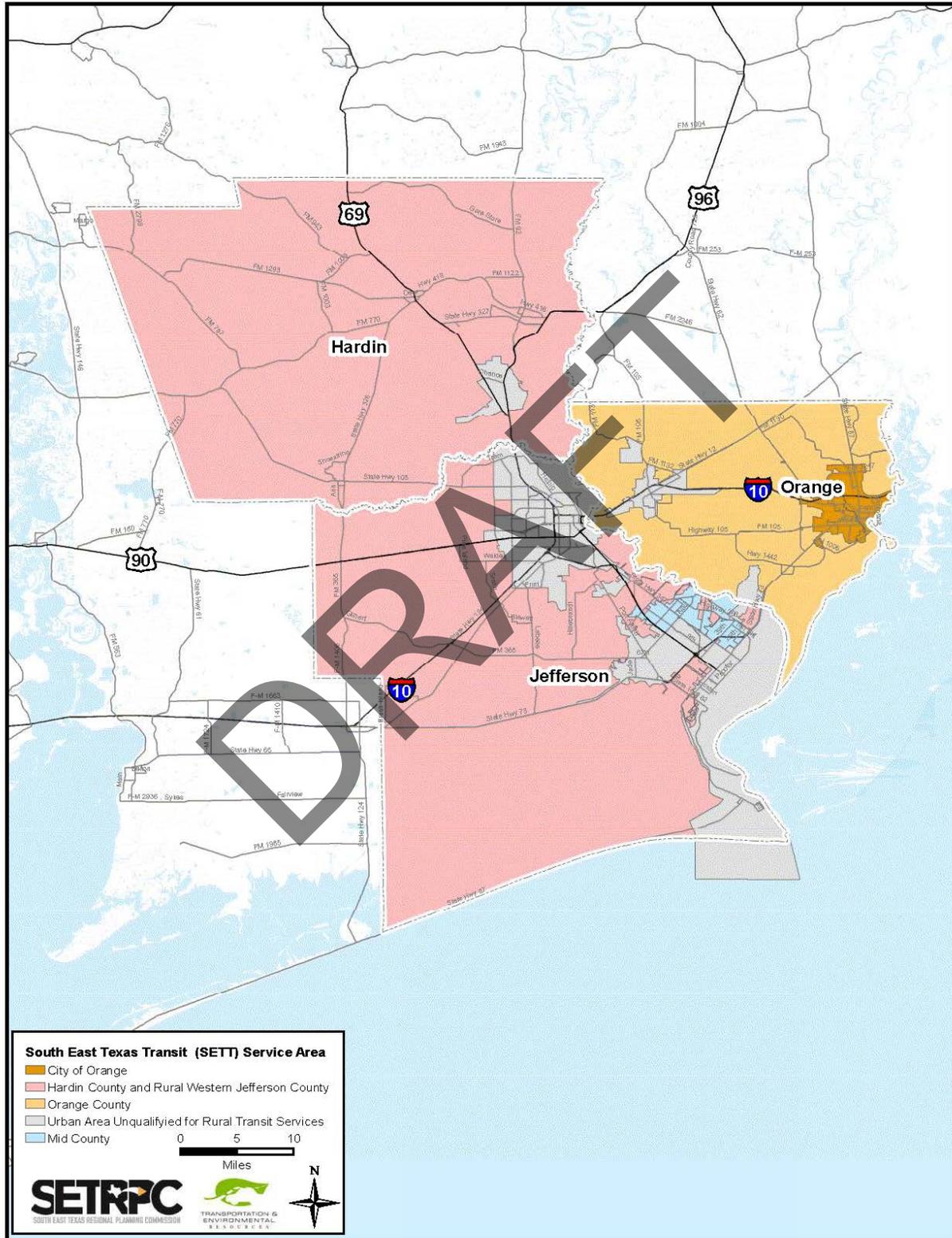
MAP 12 BEAUMONT MUNICIPAL TRANSIT FIXED ROUTES



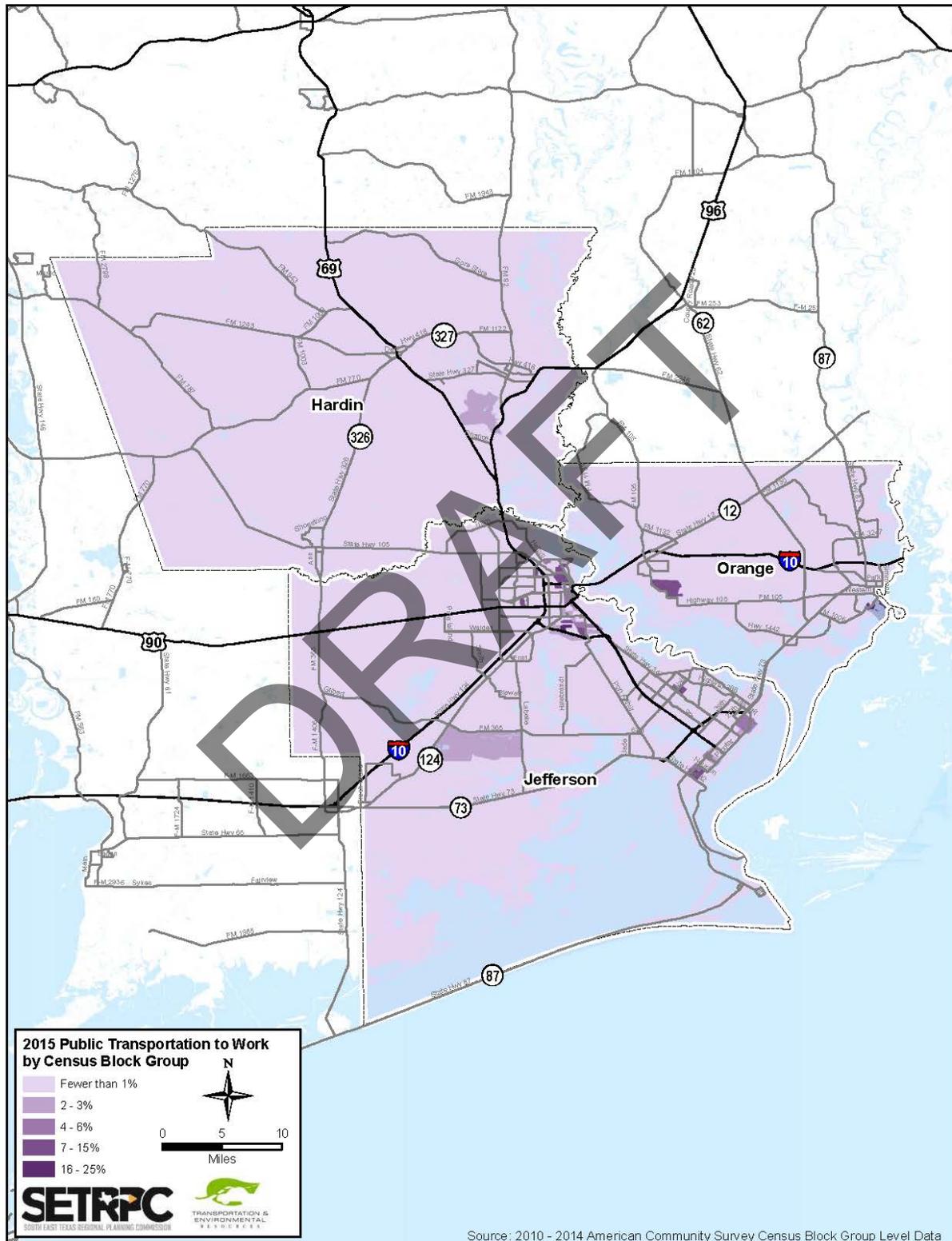
MAP 13 PORT ARTHUR TRANSIT FIXED ROUTES



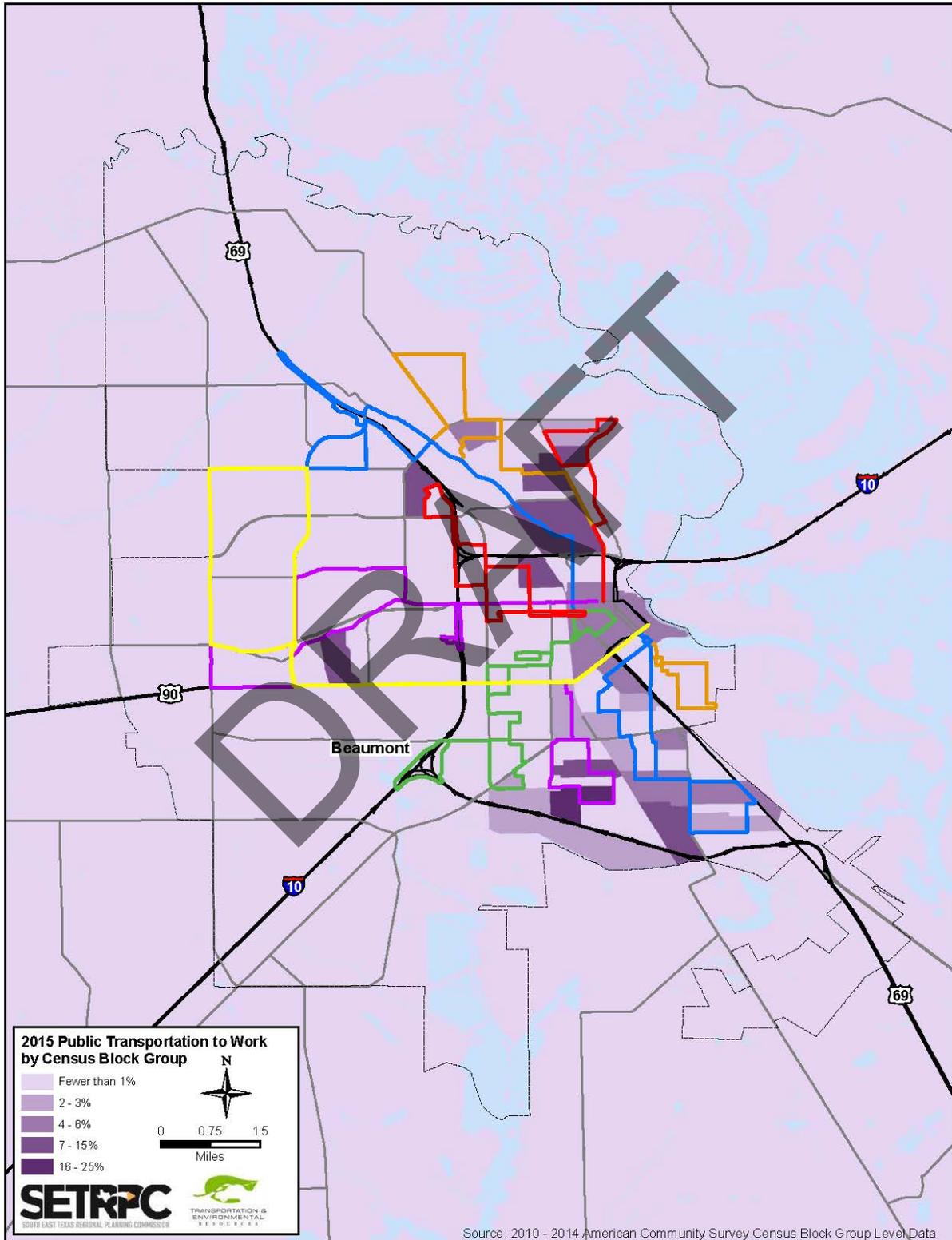
MAP 14 SOUTH EAST TEXAS TRANSIT (SETT) SERVICE AREA



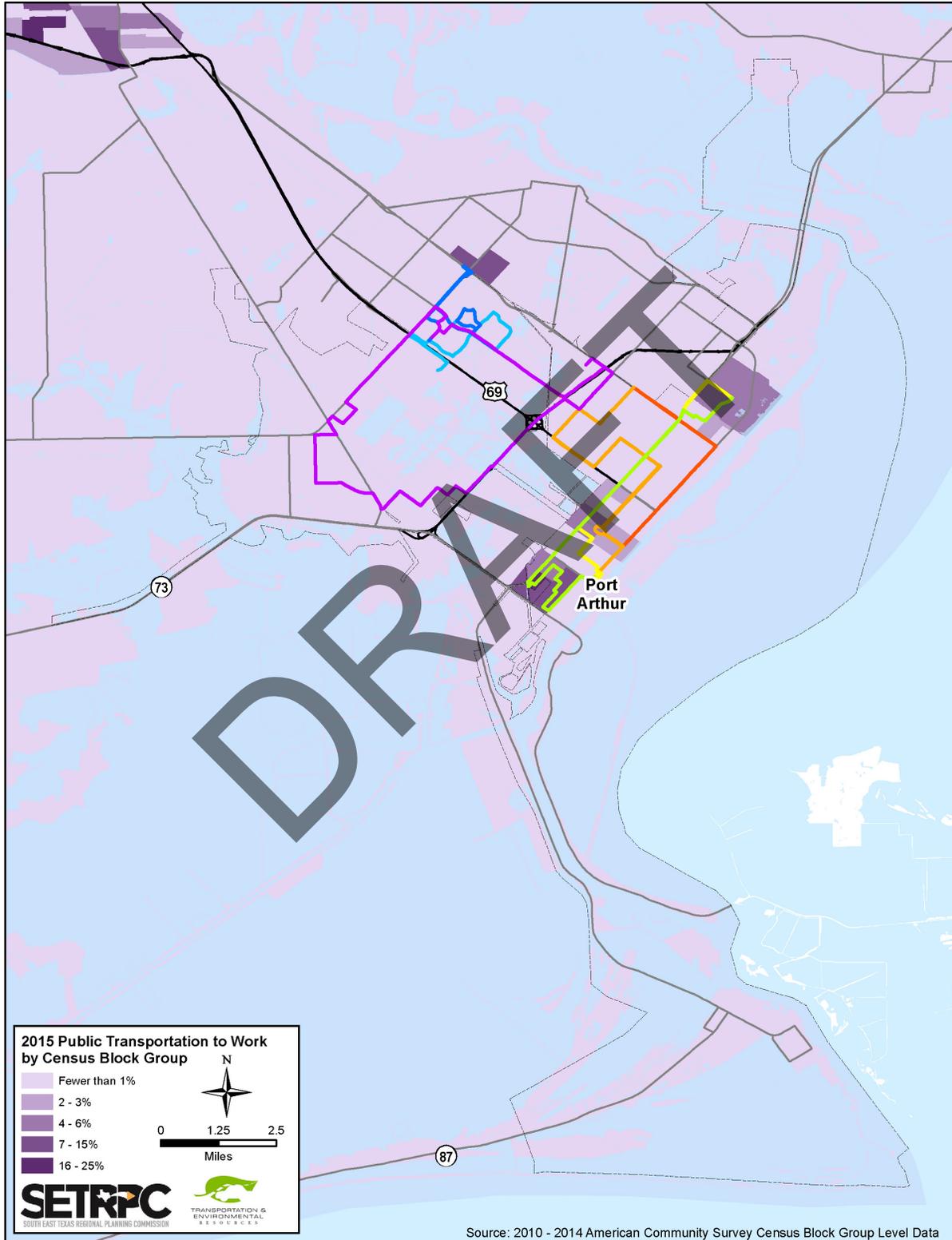
MAP 15A 2015 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO WORK BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: TRI-COUNTY



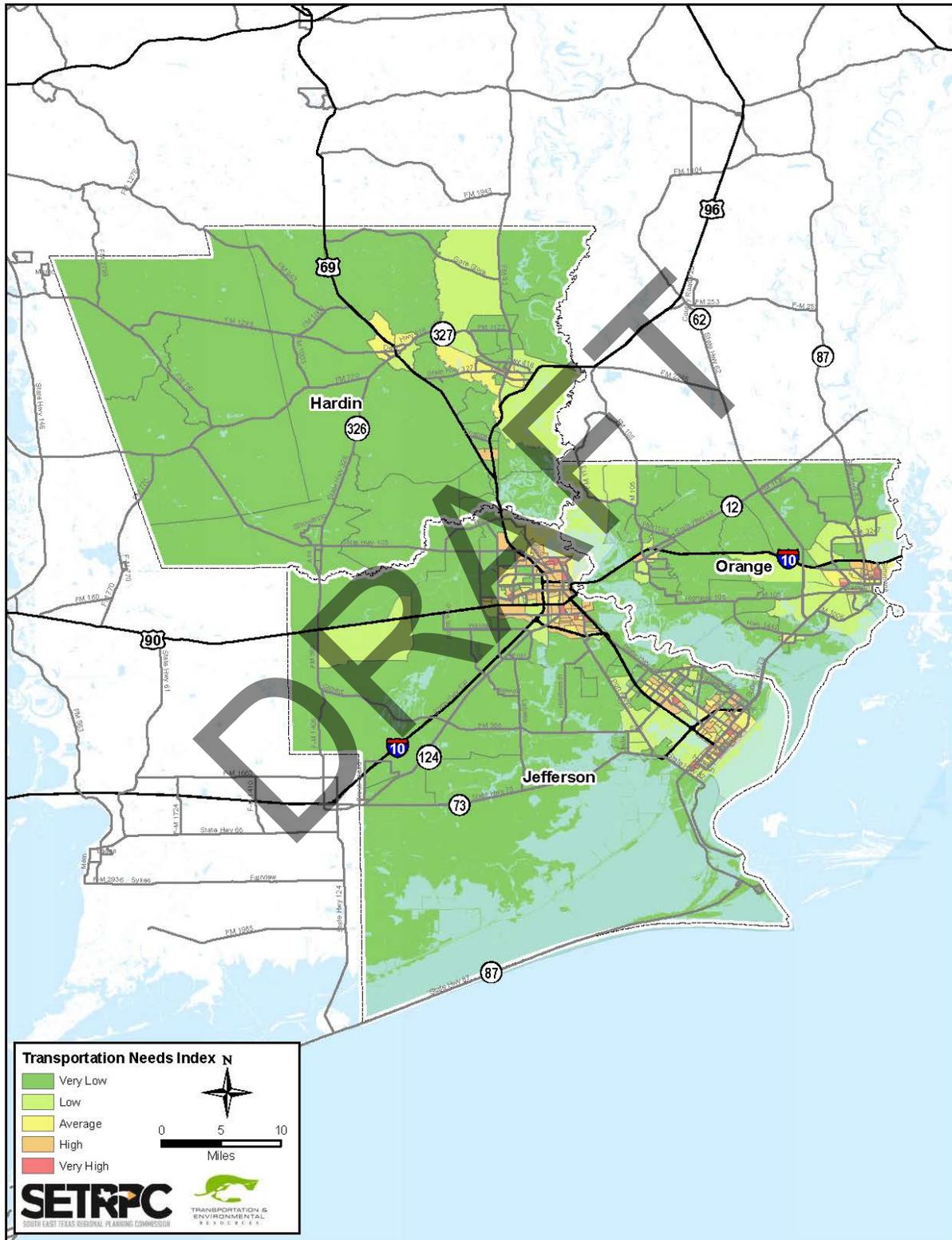
MAP 15B 2015 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO WORK BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: BEAUMONT



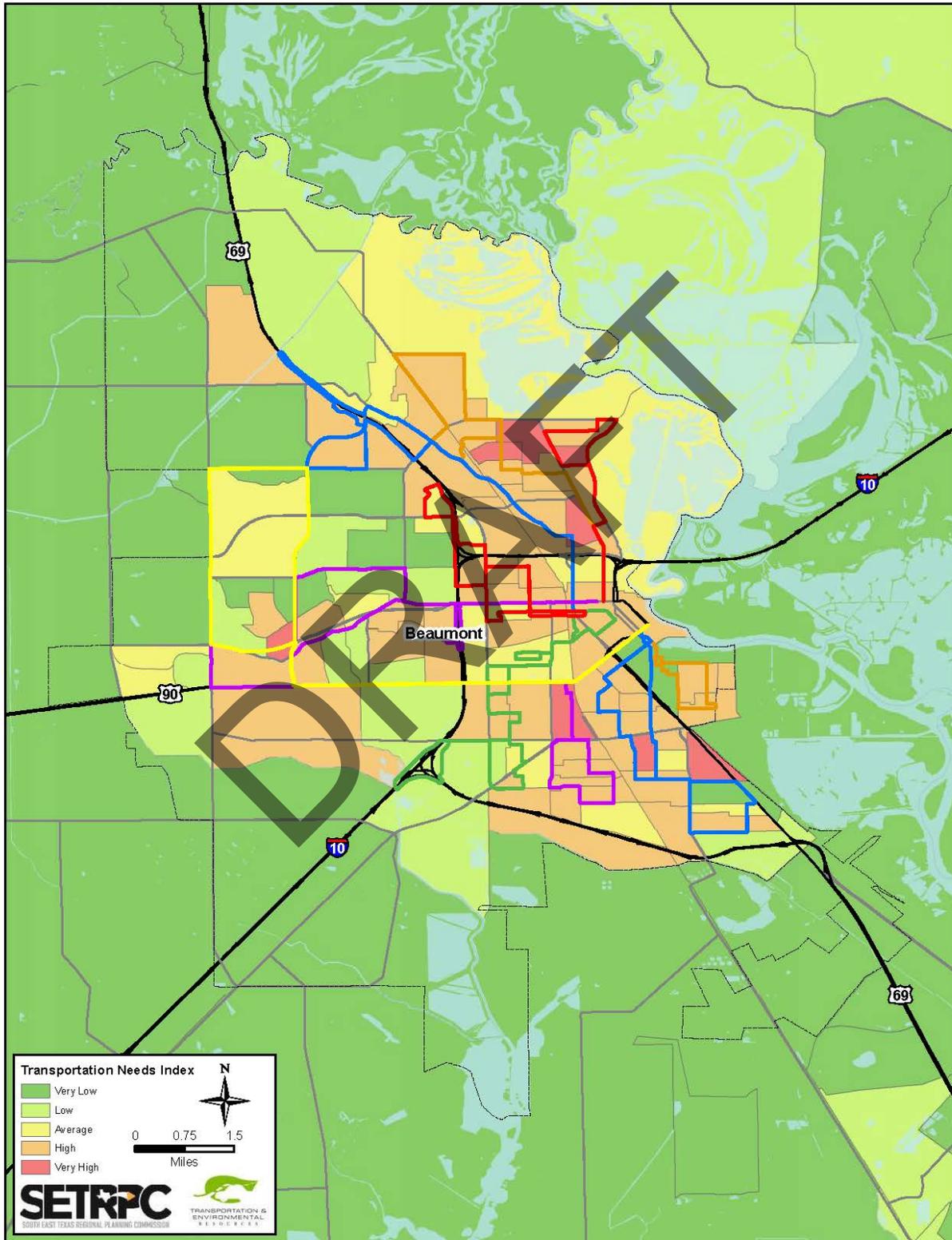
MAP 15C 2015 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO WORK BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP: PORT ARTHUR



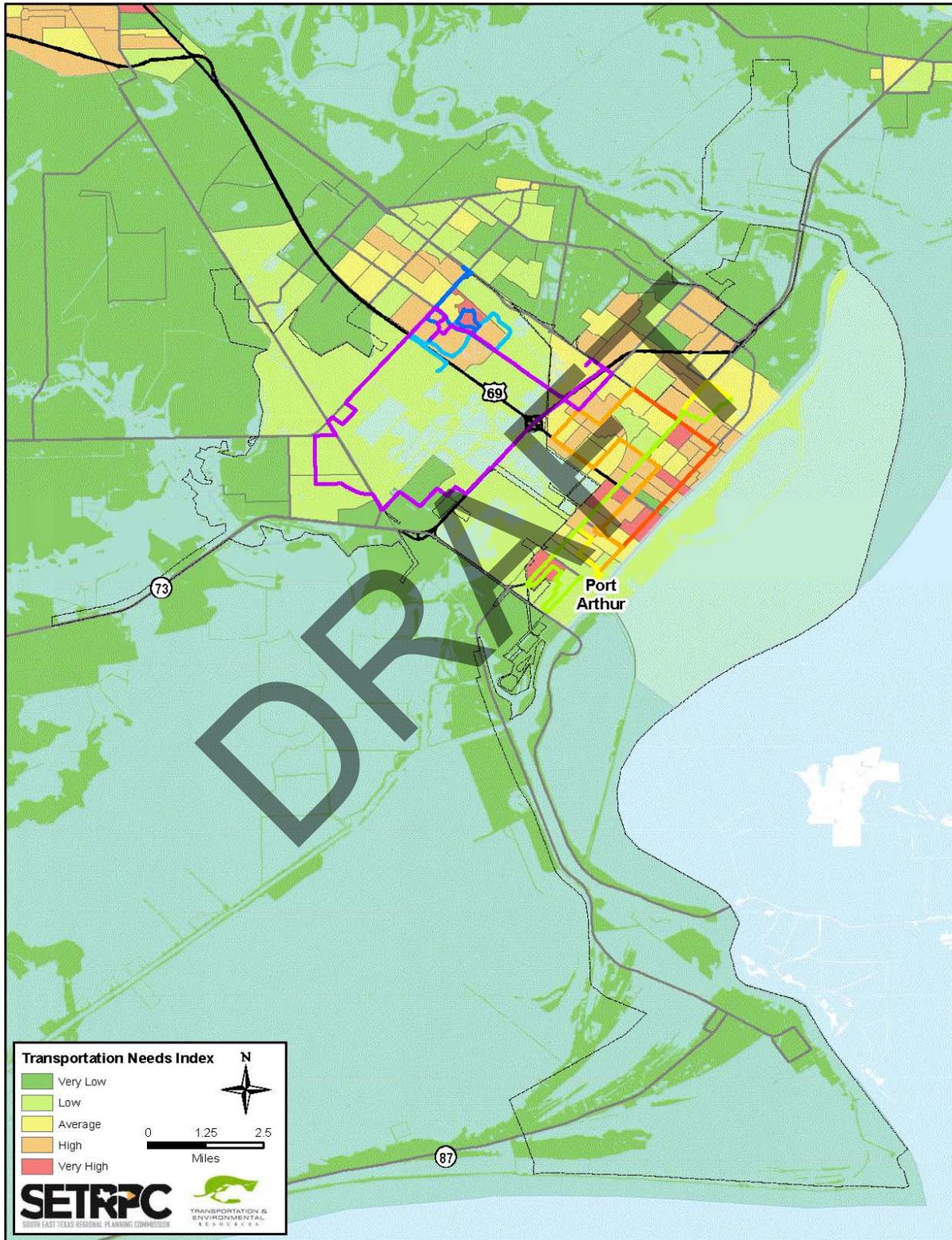
MAP 16A TRANSPORTATION NEEDS INDEX: TRI-COUNTY



MAP 16B TRANSPORTATION NEEDS INDEX: BEAUMONT



MAP 16C TRANSPORTATION NEEDS INDEX: PORT ARTHUR



3.2 REGIONAL HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICE 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.

3.3 PUBLIC INVOLVMENT 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.

3.3.1 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.

3.3.2 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.

3.3.3 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.



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.

3.4 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.

3.4.1 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.

3.4.2 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:

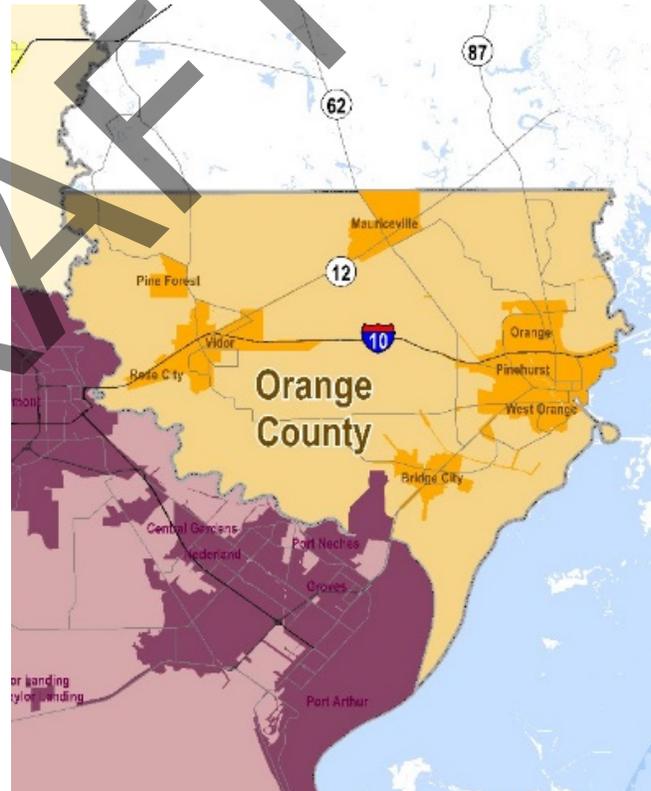
3.5 UNMET NEEDS FOR TRAVEL BETWEEN COUNTIES

- 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:

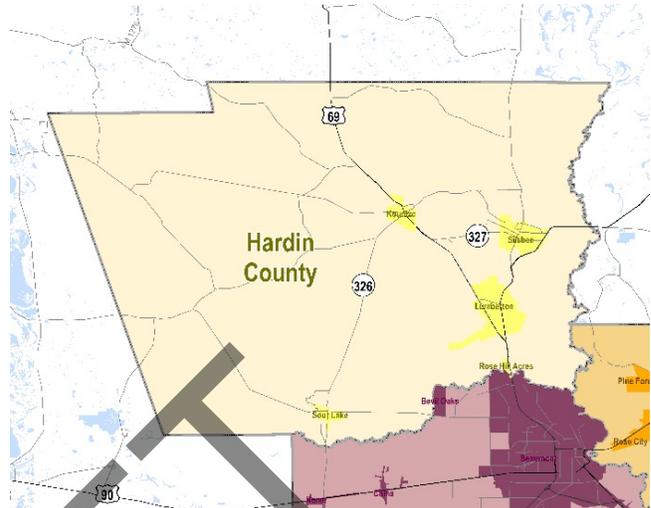
3.6 UNMET NEEDS FOR TRAVEL WITHIN ORANGE COUNTY

- 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.



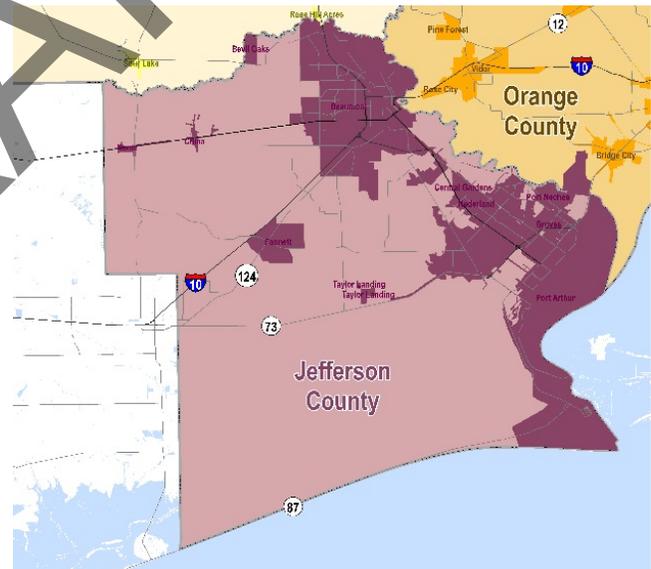
3.7 UNMET NEEDS FOR TRAVEL WITHIN HARDIN COUNTY

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



3.8 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.

3.9 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.



CHAPTER 4 – PLANNING FOR COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

The availability of funding frames opportunity for solutions to the array of issues this plan has identified. This chapter identifies a range of Federal funding sources available for transportation of the target populations in southeast Texas. The list is not intended as exhaustive, but to summarize the primary Federal and State grant and funding mechanisms that are used for public transportation in the region. Not included in this list are local funding mechanisms such as farebox revenue.

4.1 Section 5307 – Urbanized Area Formula Program

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program (49 U.S.C. 5307) makes Federal resources available to urbanized areas and to Governors for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more that is designated as such by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Funding is made available to designated recipients that are public bodies with the legal authority to receive and dispense Federal funds. Governors, responsible local officials and publicly owned operators of transit services shall designate a recipient to apply for, receive, and dispense funds for urbanized areas. The Governor or Governor's designee acts as the designated recipient for urbanized areas between 50,000 and 200,000.



4.2 Section 5310 – Formula Program for Elderly Persons and Individuals with Disabilities



This program (49 U.S.C. 5310) provides formula funding to States for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each State's share of the population

for these two groups. Formula funds are apportioned to direct recipients; for rural and small urban areas, this is the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), while in large urban areas, a designated recipient is chosen by the Governor. Direct recipients have flexibility in how they select subrecipient's projects for funding, but their decision process must be clearly noted in a State/program management plan. The selection process may be formula-based, competitive or discretionary, and subrecipients can include States or local government authorities, private non-profit organizations, and/or operators of public transportation.

The program aims to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas – large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural

(under 50,000). Eligible projects include both “traditional” capital investment and “nontraditional” investment beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services.

4.3 Section 3006(b) - Discretionary Pilot Program



The FAST Act created a discretionary pilot program for innovative coordinated access and mobility -- open to 5310 recipients -- to assist in financing innovative projects for the transportation disadvantaged that improve the coordination of transportation services and non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services; such as: the deployment of coordination technology, projects that create or increase access to community, One-Call/One-Click Centers, etc. In the first year of the discretionary program (2016) Congress appropriated \$2 million, followed by \$3 million in 2017, \$3.25 million in 2018, and \$3.5 million in 2019. For more information about the 2016 competitive program for innovative coordinated access and mobility grant, visit the Rides to Wellness Demonstration and Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants program 2016 Notice of Funding Opportunity.

4.4 Section 5311 – Formula Grant for Rural Areas



The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operation assistance to States to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for State and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program.

Eligible recipients include States and Federally recognized Indian Tribes. Subrecipients may include State or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service.

Eligible activities include planning, capital, operating, job access and reverse commute projects, and the acquisition of public transportation services.

The Federal share is 80% for capital projects, 50 percent for operating assistance, and 80 percent for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) non-fixed route paratransit service. Section 5311 funds are available to the States during the fiscal year of apportionment plus two additional years (total of three years). Funds are apportioned to States based on a formula that includes land area, population, revenue vehicle miles, and low-income individuals in rural areas.

4.5 Section 5314 - Federal Funds for Workforce Program



The program (49 U.S.C. Section 5314/FAST Section 3009) makes Federal resources available to Workforce programs to:

Carry out technical assistance activities that enable more effective and efficient delivery of transportation services foster compliance with Federal laws, and improve public transportation service;

Develop standards and best practices for the transit industry; and

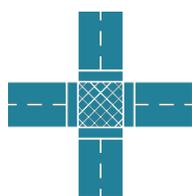
Address public transportation workforce needs through research, outreach, training and the implementation of a frontline workforce grant program, and conduct training and educational programs in support of the public transportation industry.

FTA, through a competitive bid process, may enter into grants, contracts, cooperative agreements and other agreements with eligible recipients, to carry out technical assistance activities to assist with compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.); human services transportation coordination requirements; to meet the transportation needs of elderly individuals; to increase transit ridership in coordination with Metropolitan Planning Organizations and other entities through development around public transportation stations; to address transportation equity with regard to the effect that transportation planning, investment, and operations

have for low-income and minority individuals; to facilitate best practices; and to promote driver safety.

Eligible recipients include Federal Government departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Government; Metropolitan Planning Organizations; State and local governmental entities; providers of public transportation; and national non-profit organizations (that have the appropriate demonstrated capacity to provide public-transportation-related technical assistance).

4.6 Section 5339 - Buses and Bus Facilities Program



The Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities program (49 U.S.C. 5339) makes Federal resources available to States and direct recipients to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities. Funding is provided through formula allocations and competitive grants. A sub-program, the Low- or No-Emission Vehicle Program, provides competitive grants for bus and bus facility projects that support low and zero-emission vehicles.

Eligible recipients include direct recipients that operate fixed route bus service or that allocate funding to fixed route bus operators; State or local governmental entities; and Federally recognized Indian tribes that operate fixed route bus service that are eligible to receive direct grants under 5307 and 5311.

Subrecipients include eligible recipients that receive grant funding under the formula or discretionary programs may allocate amounts from the grant to subrecipients that are public agencies or private nonprofit organizations engaged in public transportation.

SETRPC will also continue to coordinate with various service agencies such as the Texas Department of Health and Human Services, Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas, RISE, Goodwill Industries of Southeast Texas, ARC of Greater Beaumont, Spindletop Center, Texas Workforce Solutions, etc., to assure that transit dependent persons within the

three-county region have access to public transportation services. Whether it is providing transportation information, funding, or providing transportation services, these agencies integrate their services by way of utilizing various Federal programs that are available.

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CHAPTER 5 – INTEGRATED PLANNING PROCESS



As a part of the overall needs assessment this section provides a review of recent plans in the region relating to transportation and explains how these plans will interact with the 2017 Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan.

The primary components of this section are provided by the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC). SETRPC is also the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the organization responsible for leading the transportation collaborative efforts of all of the stakeholders in the region. The MPO is a Federally mandated and funded policy-making organization that ensures that existing and future expenditures of governmental funds for transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, a comprehensive planning process. This planning process must be transparent through public access and participation.

The MPO is essential because it must make sure that:

- ✓ Transportation investments are allocated appropriately;
- ✓ Planning needs reflect the region's shared vision for its future;
- ✓ There is an adequate examination of the region's transportation planning as it involves the region's future and its investment alternatives; and
- ✓ There is a collaboration of governments, interested parties, and residents throughout the planning process.

The MPO is also the lead agency that will oversee the implementation of the coordinated plan, and will ensure that coordination and consistency between the coordination plan and other metropolitan or statewide plans. Projects identified in the coordinated planning process, and selected for FTA funding through the competitive selection process will be incorporated into both the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The lead

agency will ensure that any projects selected for the TIP and STIP engage the public and stakeholder groups to provide opportunities for participation when at the planning stages of the project.

SETRPC recognizes that the regional needs related to transportation, land use, environment, economy, housing, and human services are all interrelated. Therefore,

transportation planning must be a cooperative effort as no one agency can plan, construct, operate and maintain the entire regional transportation system. The agencies and transportation providers in the southeast Texas region recognize the fact that they will be more efficient if they work together, so they have

developed working partnerships to provide reliable transportation to the transit dependent citizens in the region. For example, human services agencies work directly with transportation providers such as the workforce centers contracting with South East Texas Transit (SETT) to provide services to eligible clients. SETRPC brokers contracted trips from human services agencies for SETT to provide services to rural communities. SETRPC has established a committee of human services agencies and transportation providers to discuss on-going coordination efforts and new strategies. These relationships foster an existing working group that is well positioned to establish new coordination ideas, evaluate progress, and determine new needs and changes.



At a minimum, SETRPC will also review the 2017 Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan projects to ensure that they are consistent with the projects in the following plans to safeguard against overlaps and duplication of efforts.

5.1 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Jefferson-Orange-Hardin Regional Transportation Study (JOHRTS) area Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) aims to improve mobility for the three-county region by promoting an efficient, effective, and multimodal transportation system that optimizes existing finances, protects the environment, and provides a net social benefit to users.

The JOHRTS MTP is the official multimodal transportation plan for the JOHRTS area and addresses no less than a 20-year planning horizon. Transportation plans require developing goals and objectives that reflect regional values and satisfy long-term regional transportation needs. The regional transportation goals include:

- ✓ Preserve and Maintain the Existing Transportation System
- ✓ Improve the Operational Efficiency of the Transportation Network
- ✓ Enhance the Safety of the Transportation Community
- ✓ Enhance the Security of the Transportation Community
- ✓ Protect and Improve the Environment
- ✓ Maximize the Social Benefits of the Transportation System
- ✓ Foster Economic Development
- ✓ Maintain Financial Responsibility in the Development and Preservation of the Transportation System

The JOHRTS MTP identifies projects and programs that will meet regional goals and accommodate the future needs of the three-county region. In addition, the JOHRTS MTP underscores the vital role that transportation plays in the social, environmental, and economic health of the area.

5.2 Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC)-Metropolitan Planning Organization's (SETRPC-MPO) short-range transportation plan for the Jefferson-Orange-Hardin Regional Transportation Study area. The TIP presents the various highway and transit projects that are expected to be let for construction or implementation within the next four years. All regional transportation projects and programs are required to be identified and prioritized in the TIP in order to be eligible for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds.

5.3 Unified Planning Work Program

The SETRPC-MPO receives Federal funds for transportation planning and may also receive State and local funds in order to carry out mandated planning activities. The SETRPC-MPO is required to prepare and publish a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to document the metropolitan transportation planning activities performed with funds provided under Title 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) and Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.

The UPWP is prepared annually and is a statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area for a given fiscal year (October 1 through September 30). This document includes a list of the planning task descriptions and resulting products from each associated task, denotes who will perform the work tasks, provides the time frame for conducting the tasks, and identifies the sources of funds for each task.

5.4 Transit Development Plans (TDP)

SETRPC also provides transit planning assistance to the three transportation providers. A Transit Development Plan is developed to analyze services and provide recommendations for utilization of resources. Moreover, when funding is feasible, new project ideas are analyzed. A TDP offers short and long-term direction for changes to service, and growth of new service.

5.5 Comprehensive Transportation Communication Plan for Southeast Texas

In August 2015, SETRPC developed a Comprehensive Communication Transportation Plan to address the priority need for better communication systems. To ensure that transit users are able to access and utilize available services, public transportation providers must ensure a healthy, two-way



communication platform. Additionally, multiple pathways to communication must be available to address all access preferences, target audiences, and data requirements.

CHAPTER 6 – VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



The general concept of coordination for the southeast Texas region has support from local human services agencies, senior centers, and public transportation providers. Bringing new levels of coordination into reality, however, will require these supporters to take action. By coordinating the existing resources and implementing new projects that will fill the identified unmet needs and gaps in service, stakeholders can improve access to jobs, education, and medical appointments and treatments. Coordinated transportation may not reduce the cost of operating transportation, but it is likely to result in more transportation options within the limits of the existing financial resources and improvement of the overall quality of life for the people who live in the region.

Opportunities for improving transportation services must nurture a trusting relationship among participating organizations by clarifying vision statements, mission statements, and goals and objectives, ultimately guiding the participants toward a more coordinated approach to transportation and mobility throughout the counties, the region, and the State. Therefore, vision and mission statements, and goals and objectives play an important role in transportation planning by providing organizational identity and understanding of the transportation planning directions.

The following vision statement, mission statement, and goals and objectives were based on input and discussions received during the stakeholders meetings, focus group meetings and public meetings held during the plan update.

The mission statement identifies the purpose defined for the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan and the outcomes of the plan. The vision statement is the inspiration, the framework for the region's Regional Public

Transportation Coordination Plan. The goals help to shape how the vision will be achieved and the objectives are specific, measurable steps that can be taken to meet the goals.

6.1 Vision Statement

Provide full mobility and access to healthcare, human services, employment, education, commerce, social, and community services for all persons in the Jefferson, Hardin and Orange County region.

6.2 Mission Statement

To foster the development of a seamless public transportation system that achieves efficiencies, eliminates duplication, increases coordination, and addresses service gaps. Maximize the resources available for regional human service transportation through coordination in planning, and service delivery.

6.3 Goals and Objectives

6.3.1 Connectivity

Connectivity plays a crucial role as agencies at the Federal and State level focus on expanding the public transit system to meet the demands of urban and rural regions. All citizens within the southeast Texas region have a right to mobility and the transportation agencies within the region have a need to explore mechanisms to improve connectivity by improving transportation services. While the region's transportation providers do a very good job in serving a varied clientele, there are significant transportation gaps that do exist in the region. One of the problem areas that came up frequently in the SETRPC's outreach efforts was the transit disconnect between the Cities of Beaumont and Port Arthur, Texas. The Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT) and the Port Arthur Transit (PAT) systems provide an excellent service within their service areas, but there is a gap in service

between the two transit authorities that does not provide a seamless service to allow patrons to have access to both communities.

There are also gaps in public transportation service between the City of Orange, the City of Silsbee, Texas and the surrounding rural areas. These areas do not currently have fixed route transit service; therefore, they rely heavily on the South East Texas Transit system (SETT), which is a demand response service, to move them throughout the region. Although SETT does offer a good transportation option the provider has concerns in securing enough operators to address all of the citizen's transportation needs.

Recommendations:

Developing connectivity between Port Arthur, Beaumont, Silsbee, and Orange, Texas is one of the region's highest concerns. There are no easy ways to achieve this result due to jurisdictional as well as funding issues. However, connectivity can be achieved with the creation of a new type of service, possibly a demand response service to connect these municipalities. To accomplish this task there would need to be a study conducted to address these issues: 1) identify how many riders would use the service 2) identify the major destinations 3) identify the locations that would best promote patron transfers.

Due to the shortage of bus operators in the region, SETT sometimes cannot provide their patrons with transportation service. However, by providing enticements, such as bonuses, benefits, and full time employment to attract operators SETT could possibly maintain operators and eliminate transportation service deficiencies within the region.

GOAL 1

Establish connectivity among the Cities of Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange, Texas.

Strategic Objectives:

1.1 Continue Beaumont Municipal Transit (BMT), Port Arthur Transit (PAT), and South East Texas Transit (SETT).

1.2 Identify opportunities to maintain and expand the number of vehicles in the region providing transportation services.

1.3 Develop a regional transit service that would operate between the City of Beaumont and the City of Port Arthur.

1.4 Explore the possibility of acquiring permanent operators by offering additional incentives

Timeline:

1.1 Ongoing through 5 year plan period

1.2 Ongoing through 5 year plan period

1.3 Begin with study in FY 2018

1.4 Begin in FY 2018

Roadblocks:

Funding

Connectivity between agencies



6.3.2 EXPANSION OF SERVICE



Operating hours and expanded weekend service for BMT and PAT needs to be addressed. According to the attendees of the focus groups held for the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan, whether it is a senior citizen going to a medical appointment or someone trying to get to a place of employment, improving the service hours of operation and adding more

weekend service would greatly improve the public's confidence in the existing transit systems. Few potential riders consider services convenient enough to rely on public transportation in place of cars. For those who lack vehicles, the limited service hours and routes impair their economic opportunity.

Limited hours affect those who work during off-peak hours and also those looking to attend entertainment venues at night. The public says that additional service is needed in the region, and demand exists for more frequent weekend services. Transit is most attractive when patrons are certain that they will not be stranded and the transit system is reliable.

Recommendations:

SETRPC should conduct a study to examine the feasibility of expanding the hours of operations by at least one hour in the evening and providing additional routes on weekends. The study should address the areas of 1) how many people would actually

use the expanded service 2) where the major attractions of the patrons are located 3) determine if the transit routes are accommodating the needs of riders.

GOAL 2

Expand public transportation service throughout the region.

Strategic Objectives:

2.1 Explore the possibility of expanding the transit service operation hours by initiating a survey to transportation patrons to get feedback on the need for expanded weekday and weekend services.

2.2 Review existing transit routes within the Cities of Beaumont and Port Arthur to identify potential changes to accommodate priority populations groups.

Timeline:

2.1 Begin survey in FY 2018

2.2 Ongoing through the 5 year plan period

Roadblocks:

Low ridership

Connectivity among all agencies

6.3.3 SECURE FUNDING



For most public transportation systems, operating cost seem to be rising every year and there seems to be no end in sight. The aging population is helping to spur growth in paratransit use across the southeast Texas region, and it is in need of funding. The strong demand for the door-to-door service by individuals with disabilities is in need of funding also. The cost of operating fixed route transit service, the constant need for expanded service, and uncertainty of the cost of fuel for transit vehicles, all lead to

transportation agencies continuously searching for additional funding. Currently, transportation providers in the region are continuously balancing demand, need and resources to achieve efficiency and effectiveness. Vehicles are expensive to acquire and maintain. Therefore, it is imperative that SETRPC keep in touch with Federal funding allocations to make sure that southeast Texas receives their fair share of transportation funding.

Recommendations:

The local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) should designate a staff person to constantly monitor the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Federal Register, and all State and Federal legislation for new grants opportunities to acquire additional transportation funding.

GOAL 3

Advocate and support efforts to secure funding for transportation services throughout the region.

Strategic Objectives:

3.1 Explore the possibilities of available funding to help expand transportation services throughout the region.

3.2 Diversify funding base by seeking new transportation funding opportunities to benefit priority population groups.

Timeline:

3.1 Ongoing

3.2 Ongoing

Roadblocks:

- Lack of potential funding sources
- Competitiveness among local providers
- Complicated processes (grants)

6.3.4 CUSTOMER SERVICE



Transportation options can be critical to the ability of transit dependent persons to get where they need to go, especially when they have limited driving options. Transportation operators need to be aware of the needs, challenges, problems, and issues that these transit dependents experience every day. Many operator training programs focus on how to drive the bus. But this is only half of the job. The operators should be trained on how to manage day to day issues relating to transit dependent persons such as individuals with disabilities, aging populations, and individuals with limited English proficiency, etc.



Recommendations:

The operating agencies should offer professional development training to bus operators that include topics on customer interaction, bus supervision issues, preventing and managing violence incidents on the bus, etc.

GOAL 4

Increase awareness and understanding of transportation issues that priority population groups face throughout the region.

Strategic Objectives:

- 4.1 Collaborate with various transportation agencies to disseminate information to bus operators on the transportation needs of the priority population groups.
- 4.2 Conduct training classes for bus operators on how to interact with bus patrons.
- 4.3 Consider recruiting bus drivers based on customer service skills rather than on driving skills

Timeline:

- 4.1 Begin in FY 2018
- 4.2 Begin in FY 2017
- 4.3 Ongoing

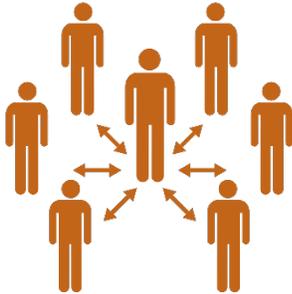
Roadblocks:

Requires cooperation of counties and transportation agencies

Funding



6.3.5 INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS



Increasing public awareness of transportation services within the three-county region is a core element of a successful public transportation system. As the attendees of the SETRPC public stated, “People don’t know how or who can ride the bus”. Yet, informing the public and motivating people to ride public transportation remain a great challenge.

Public awareness campaigns can motivate changes in transit ridership in a number of ways. After viewing some kind of advertisement of transportation services, a pamphlet, or a public service announcement, people might be motivated to use the services, and/or inform others of the services provided.

Recommendations:

It is extremely important to involve the stakeholders to organize focus groups of the target audience as part of the messaging development and implementation. If they are involved, there is a far greater chance that the transportation information will reach the intended groups.

Agencies like, for example, the Department of Health and Human Services Commission, is geared specifically to public awareness and can help communities to spread the word about the advantages of using public transportation.



GOAL 5

Increase awareness and understanding of the advantages of using public transportation to priority population groups throughout the region, such as individuals with disabilities, aging populations, and individuals with limited English proficiency, etc.

Strategic Objectives:

5.1 Collaborate with agencies on the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee to form focus groups to help advertise the bus services.

5.2 Leverage various media and opportunities

Traditional Media (Radio, TV, Print)

Op-Ed Pieces

Social Media (Twitter, Facebook)

Community meetings

5.3 Look for opportunities to expose the system to new passengers

5.4 Print pertinent transportation information in English and in Spanish to assist the Spanish speaking population to understand the available options.

Timeline:

5.1 Begin FY 2018

5.2 Begin FY 2018

5.3 Ongoing

5.4 Begin FY 2018



Roadblocks:

Requires cooperation of counties and transportation agencies

Funding

6.3.6 IMPROVE AMENITIES AT BUS STOPS



All bus riders have the right to feel safe and as comfortable as possible while waiting for a bus at a bus stop. For some individuals using BMT and PAT bus systems, the idea of waiting at a bus stop may cause fear of inconvenient and unsafe conditions, such as enduring detrimental weather and waiting in an unsafe environment. This is especially true given the fact that not all buses run on time which forces a rider to wait even longer in these conditions. Research has found that bus stops with good amenities have a positive effect on ridership (according to the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), thereby, giving the bus riders a sense of safety and comfort while waiting for their bus.

Bus stop amenities consist of benches, shelter, proper signage, garbage cans, route maps, appropriate sidewalks and ramps (recommended by Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines of 1990), and proper lighting, etc. It has been suggested, by attendees of the SETRPC public meetings that improving the amenities at the bus stops might increase the ridership of the transit systems. Many bus stops in the region lack some of these amenities because of lack of funding and possibly because of poor ridership at the bus stops. The most important amenities that concern



the members of the public are trash cans and shelters. Research by the TCRP has shown that bus stops with these amenities have higher ridership than those stops that do not. Remember, the bus stop is the transit system's waiting room. No one wants to go to a doctor's office that had a dark waiting room and no place to sit. At the minimum bus stops should be well lit and have a bench.

Recommendations:

The MPO should work with local governments to improve the amenities around bus stops and start an Adopt-A-Stop program to encourage individuals or groups (church, social, etc.) to keep bus stops clean.

GOAL 6

Improve the infrastructure around bus stops

Strategic Objectives:

- 6.1 Work with local governments to provide better sidewalks that provide access to public transit stops.
- 6.2 Explore opportunities that will secure funding to improve amenities at transit bus stops (i.e. shelters, benches, trash cans).
- 6.3 Work with community organizations to begin an "Adopt-A-Stop" program, which would allow for the public to help with keeping the bus stops clean.

Timeline:

- 6.1 Begin in FY 2017
- 6.2 Begin in FY 2018
- 6.3 Ongoing throughout the 5 year plan period

Roadblocks:

Political and business support

Citizens participation

6.3.7 WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA



In just the past few years, platforms such as websites, Twitter, Facebook and blogging have rapidly become some of the most powerful and effective tools a transit agency can use to engage their current and potential ridership as well as other important stakeholders. In what started as a trickle, now more than

50 transit agencies in the United States have some form of social media presence. Transit agencies, have leveraged websites and social media in ways that project a more friendly and personal face for transit to the public.

While websites are built for information or specific functions, such as finding a route schedule or purchasing tickets, social media is created for interaction, both of these forms of technology can be instrumental in getting transportation information to citizens throughout the region.

Recommendation:

SETRPC should develop a website that is informative and in a constant state of change, because creating a website that never changes would create a sense of boredom to the public and they would lose interest quickly.

SETRPC should also create a presence on social media to help build trust and increase transparency. Create how-to-videos for YouTube that would offer advice for the first time rider and explain how to use the system, bike racks, and fareboxes.

GOAL 7

Develop a website that would provide transportation information to priority population groups.

Strategic Objectives:

7.1 Establish transportation coordination, both rural and urban, by developing an informational website that would be an easy to use resource connecting users with a variety of transportation services in the southeast Texas region. This would include information about public transportation, taxi services, Uber services paratransit, nonprofit organizations, Carpool South East Texas, and others.

Timeline:

7.1 Begin in FY 2017 and will be an ongoing project

Roadblocks;

Cost

Web access (consumers)

Keeping the website up-to-date



6.3.8 STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE UNMET NEEDS OF EACH PRIORITY SEGMENT

In order to meet these goals and objectives the following is a list of potential strategies, by targeted groups, that could be used to implement the coordination plan.

Prioritize Strategies to Address Unmet Needs of the Elderly

Rapid growth in the number of older people in the southeast Texas region during the coming decades will lead to greatly increased needs for expanded and enhanced public transportation services in the urban as well as the region's rural areas. The older adult population utilizes the public transportation services so that they can remain independent and live in their own homes. Some of the needed actions that will help to expand mobility options for the older people include the following:

- ✓ Enhancements to fixed-route public transportation operations and planning such as additional bus operator training, incorporating travel needs of older people in route planning and stop placement, and coordination with other agencies and transportation providers;
- ✓ Enhancements to public transportation vehicles such as low-floor buses, kneeling buses, improved interior circulation, additional stanchions and grab bars, comfortable seating designed for older riders, and accessibility features either required or encouraged by ADA like lifts and ramps, larger letters on head signs, and stop announcements;
- ✓ Actions to help older people take advantage of existing services, like presenting information in ways that are easy to read and as clear as possible, information and assistance programs to connect older people with appropriate services, and outreach and training programs;
- ✓ Application of universal design strategies at transit facilities, bus stops, and on streets and sidewalks in the immediate vicinity of transit facilities and stops;
- ✓ Assuring supportive services to caregivers who provide transportation, encouraging further development of unsubsidized private transportation services, coordinating with non-emergency medical transportation provided

under Medicaid and Medicare, and supporting modifications to automobiles and roadways to increase the safety of older drivers.

Prioritize Strategies to Address Unmet Needs of the Disabled

Individuals with disabilities can achieve a greater degree of freedom when they have full access to a variety of transit modes, but this can only be achieved when the pathways to transit – the infrastructure and conditions in the built environment – allow full access to transit stops, stations, and vehicles.

- ✓ Develop an aggressive marketing campaign to inform individuals with disabilities about the benefits of using accessible fixed-route transit and inform the general public about the social equity importance of accessible transit services;
- ✓ Install special poles at transit stops to help vision-impaired and other riders to identify the location as a public bus stop;
- ✓ Installation of landing pads, curb cuts and bus shelters;
- ✓ Partner with the City or local businesses to build sidewalks to fill gaps between transit stops and sidewalks not linked to the stops;
- ✓ Promote coordination among service providers.

Prioritize Strategies to Address Unmet Needs of the Veterans

Veterans need access to public transportation to receive the employment and training services that are available in the region to help them thrive in post-military careers. They also need to be able to get to medical services and benefits offered to them by the Veterans Administration.

- ✓ Improve connectivity across multiple modes including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian;
- ✓ Explore using innovation and technology when appropriate;
- ✓ Include veterans who use the transit system on transportation committees.

Prioritize Strategies to Address Unmet Needs of Children (under the age of 18)

Providing the safest possible public transportation ride to children under the age of 18 is a primary concern. Although many school age children take a school bus to school, many others take public transportation. Some also need public transportation to perform a variety of duties throughout their day to day activities. There is a need for having access to part-time jobs in the evening and on weekends, and also a need to visit friends and family. To help these young citizens enjoy their public transportation experiences there is a need for the following:

- ✓ Provide the school with public transit education and training seminars;
- ✓ Provide improved bus stop amenities (i.e. shelters, benches, trash cans, etc.);
- ✓ Provide information on social media, including Facebook and Twitter; websites and content need to be regularly and frequently updated; youth are aware of and avoid stagnant sites.

Prioritize Strategies to Address Unmet Needs of Persons with Limited English Proficiency

There are persons with limited English proficiency that are already riders of public transportation. Because they lack the ability to speak English well, this population often work in jobs which tend to pay low-wages, and are likely to depend on public transportation because they cannot afford a car. There are some that do not know about the transportation options in the region. Some strategies that can be helpful in assisting this population to use public transportation are:

- ✓ Provide culturally appropriate outreach programs to inform the community about available services;
- ✓ Provide the Latino community gathering places with a how-to-ride video and a laminated pocket guide with riding information in Spanish;
- ✓ Hire staff who reflect the target community population or train staff to communicate with the target community population;
- ✓ Keep in touch with members of the community and seek their advice on what small changes you can make so that your service is more attuned to their cultural mores and can better accommodate their way of living.

Prioritize Strategies to Address Unmet Needs of Low-income Citizens

Access to transportation by low-income individuals and families has become limited as the majority of low-income households reside in rural areas and cities, while basic amenities are increasingly located in the suburbs. With jobs emerging further and further away from low-income residential areas in southeast Texas, many low-income workers often have difficulty accessing jobs, training and other services such as childcare because of inadequate transportation. In addition, many minimum wage jobs require working evening or weekend hours, but traditional transportation systems often do not serve their routes during these times. Access to affordable transportation for low-income workers, elderly rural residents and children makes the trip to work, school, and medical appointments possible. It fosters self-sustainability, promotes independence, and permits spending on other household essentials. Given these benefits, these strategies will demonstrate that rural public transportation is indispensable.

- ✓ Implement half-priced days periodically, maybe once a week to help low-income patrons;
- ✓ Provide bike racks on buses so that low-income patrons could combine transit and cycling to provide a higher level of affordable mobility.

CHAPTER 7 – SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

The Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan has a twofold focus. One focus of the plan is to address immediate unmet needs and another focus is to address the need for a constant assessment and progress of coordination proposals. To this



end, the stakeholders have ascertained that the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) is the lead agency, responsible for advocating, and supporting coordination throughout the region. The activities that SETRPC is responsible for would include, but are not limited to, activities such as public involvement/outreach, training, and marketing. SETRPC monitors the progress of the goals and objectives, and engage stakeholders to help improve regional mobility.

SETRPC is a voluntary association of local governments that serves an area composed of Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties. Membership in SETRPC is open to all general and special purpose local governmental bodies in the three-county region: counties, cities, school districts and other special purpose districts such as water and sewer districts, municipal utility districts and port and drainage districts. The SETRPC is governed by an Executive Committee composed of elected officials from the various city councils, county commissioners' courts, and special district boards that form its membership.

7.1 Organizational Infrastructure



In 1974, the Governor of Texas designated the SETRPC as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the three-county region comprising the Jefferson-Orange-Hardin Regional Transportation Study (JOHRTS) area. The standard MPO structure consists of the planning staff, a policy committee, and a technical advisory committee. The SETRPC-MPO serves as the planning staff. The JOHRTS Transportation Planning Committee, comprised of elected officials from local government bodies in the region, serves as the policy committee and is the MPO governing body. The JOHRTS Technical Committee is the technical advisory committee and includes local professionals involved in various aspects of the transportation infrastructure, such as public works directors, traffic engineers, representatives of public transportation operations, and related private sector interests. The JOHRTS Technical Committee is responsible for interacting with the planning staff to review transportation plans and projects for recommendation to the JOHRTS Transportation Planning Committee.

SETRPC has created a Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee (RPTCSC) to assist in developing and updating the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. This group meets on a regular basis and is made up of private and public transportation providers, human services agencies, and staff of the SETRPC. The primary objective of this group is to monitor and direct coordination activities. The RPTCSC will assist in identifying the lead agency or mobility manager to coordinate transportation in the region. The RPTCSC membership consists of the following:

Texas Department of Transportation and the SETRPC each have standing membership;

- ✓ Any public, private non-profit, or for-profit organization based in the three-county region that currently funds, arranges, or provides such transportation services for its citizens, clients, or customers;
- ✓ Any public transportation agency or State, regional or County entity involved in the planning or provision of public transportation in the three-county region;
- ✓ Organizations representing groups of consumers and constituents that would be positively affected by such mobility and access improvements in the three-county region;
- ✓ Medical centers, hospitals, and rural healthcare providers in the three-county region;
- ✓ Organizations representing the needs of individuals with disabilities in the three-county region;
- ✓ Organizations representing the needs of persons with low income in the three-county region;
- ✓ Organizations representing the needs of veterans in the three-county region;
- ✓ Institutions providing adult and post-secondary education in the three-county region; and
- ✓ Private volunteer citizens who are residents of the southeast Texas region. There must be at least one citizen member on the council but no more than 10 percent of the total organizational members.

The SETRPC-MPO JOHRTS Transportation Planning Committee meets on a quarterly basis and as necessary shares information from the RPTCSC to help formulate MPO policy as it relates to the transportation needs of the transit dependent citizens of the three-county region.

7.2 Leveraging and Sustaining Resources



Public transportation is constantly being asked to provide more services with a limited amount of funding. Transportation and human services agencies are constantly trying to stretch their resources by combining services or purchasing service for their clientele from other providers. This strategy can save them the cost of operating their own transportation services. As funding resources become scarce, it is important that agencies find more creative ways to fund service, the southeast Texas region is no exception. The RPTCSC should build a coalition that would allow them to take leadership roles as well as make financial commitment to improve transportation operations within the region.

Historically, the public transportation industry has been funding transportation projects with State or Federal dollars. Funds can be found in a variety of sources such as Federal, State, regional, local governments, in-kind contributions, foundation contributions, and non-profit contributions.

The southeast Texas region currently has two fixed route public transportation providers, Beaumont Municipal Transit and the Port Arthur Transit. There is also a demand response transit system, South East Texas Transit system, that provides service throughout the three-county region. There is also a small number of human services providers that offer services to their clients to and from their agencies, and government funded shuttles operating to the VA Clinic.

Planning to sustain these services in the region may be an issue for the immediate future. However, there are a number of Federal programs that will provide funding for these types of services and SETRPC will continue to seek in order to sustain the region's transportation services. Currently, a new Secretary of Transportation is set to take

leadership of the United States Transportation Department, and unfortunately it is not possible to predict which programs and funding streams will survive the new administrations transportation activities. However, once all the issues are settled, SETRPC will examine the available funding streams and decide how to best go forward to applying available funding to continue and/or improve the existing services. There is a chance that the public and private human services agencies should attempt to coordinate with each other, pooling funding, if possible, to give the region the best possible transportation services. SETRPC will continue to investigate the best practices of receiving and using Federal funding to sustain the transportation options in the southeast Texas region.

7.2.1 Work Plan – a guiding document for the activities to be carried out to accomplish the goals and objectives listed in Chapter VI.

| Objectives | Expected Outcome | Specifics/Collaborators/Timeframe | Assessment Method |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Collaboration | | | |
| Identify collaborators and stakeholders who will increase and strengthen the mobility management concept. | Accessibility and cooperation among groups for maximum results. | RPTCSC. <i>Efforts continuous.</i> | Participation by affiliations, coalitions and partnerships who have expressed interest in expanding transportation in the region. Increased membership in RPTCSC. Increased attendance at RPTCP meetings. |
| Identify and assess unmet transportation needs in the region through a variety of informational venues including surveys, public forums, local public meetings, etc. | Keep the RPTCP current by including new thoughts, needs, and direction. | Regularly update the RPTCP as a living document to include projects and direction from RPTCSC. Update the RPTCP at the March, 2017 RPTCSC meeting. Work with RPTCSC on a continuous basis to address unmet needs. <i>Efforts continuous.</i> | Dissemination of the RPTCP updates to RPTCSC. |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Make appropriate contacts to set the foundation to increase provision of accessible transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities using 5310 funding. | Seniors and individuals with disabilities will enjoy greater mobility with increased public transportation and public transportation alternatives to and from jobs and employment support services. | Meet with organizations representing seniors and individuals with disabilities to assess the possibilities of improving transportation for this segment of the population. Beginning in 2017. | Number of appropriate contacts and potential projects. |
| Participate in various community boards and committees to outreach to specific interest and to minority communities. | Individuals from many backgrounds and experiences will enjoy greater mobility and increased public awareness of transportation services. | Texas Department of Health and Human Services Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas Beaumont, Orange, & Port Arthur Workforce Solutions Any additional agencies that may be appropriate, <i>beginning 2017</i> Coordinate Title VI and LEP information for BMT and PAT. Efforts Continuous. | Number of boards and committees that members of stakeholders participate in that addresses these specific communities. |
| Marketing | | | |
| Provide stakeholders with awareness education on coordinated transportation services and public transit. | Increased use of transportation services by the elderly, individuals with disabilities, veterans, the young, and low income persons. | Train at least one stakeholder to attend schools in the area to speak to students about the benefits of using public transportation. FY 2018. | Record of contacts made and outreach visits completed. Number of individuals successfully trained. |
| Disseminate practical information to potential riders so they can access public transportation. | People who have not used public transit will have the tools necessary to assist them in utilizing buses, private or other transportation recourses. | Create a website that will provide information on utilizing public transportation. <i>2017</i> monthly press releases to media (some media outlets may offer free public announcements). FY 2018. | Tracking of public information in local media. Number of website updates. Number of media releases that appear to the public. |
| Professional Development | | | |
| Continue education in mobility issues and | Best practices will be utilized by mobility | Appropriated readings such as Federal | Status reports and inclusion in RPTCP. |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>connect regularly with area mobility managers.</p> | <p>manager and disseminated to stakeholders.</p> | <p>Register. Various webinars, radio programs, newsletters. <i>Efforts Continuous.</i></p> | |
| <p>Report progress to RPTCSC at scheduled meetings to establish clear, measurable goals for mobility management.</p> | <p>Allow the stakeholders to provide feedback on transportation matters.</p> | <p>Periodic reports submitted to stakeholders.</p> | <p>Number of meetings held and reports submitted.</p> |

DRAFT

CHAPTER 8 – PERFORMANCE MEASURES TO EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS

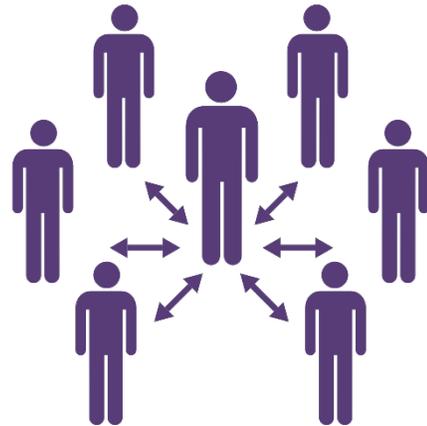
8.1 Locally Determined Performance Measures

SETRPC, as the lead agency for the implementation of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan (RPTCP), is responsible for using locally determined performance measures to quantify the degree to which the priorities identified in the plan are successfully met. Below is a delineation of the priorities (goals) identified in the plan and the metrics it is suggested that SETRPC and other regional partners utilize in tracking how the goals are met. For each performance measure, the agency(ies) to which the metric applies should determine a specific target value, range, and/or percentage change over time that represents successful attainment of the goal.

8.1.1 Priority #1: Connectivity among the Cities of Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange

Suggested Metrics (as applied to any new intercity service):

- 1.1 Number of intercity trips
- 1.2 BMT, PAT, and SETT ridership
- 1.3 Passengers per revenue mile
- 1.4 Passengers per revenue hour
- 1.5 Cost per revenue mile
- 1.6 Cost per revenue hour
- 1.7 Cost per passenger



Means of Collection: Data related to ridership and operating costs of any new service providing intercity connections would be collected by BMT, PAT, and/or SETT staff in the same manner as this type of data is currently collected for existing service.

8.1.2 Priority #2: Service Expansion

Suggested Metrics (as applied to any service expansion):

- 2.1 BMT, PAT, and SETT ridership
- 2.2 Number of additional transit operating hours beyond current baseline
- 2.3 Percentage increase in regional population residing within one-half mile of fixed route service
- 2.4 Passengers per revenue mile
- 2.5 Passengers per revenue hour
- 2.6 Cost per revenue mile
- 2.7 Cost per revenue hour
- 2.8 Cost per passenger



Means of Collection: BMT, PAT, and SETT staff regularly collect data related to ridership and operating costs that can be used to effectively monitor the performance of any service expansion.

8.1.3 Priority #3: Secure Transportation Funding

Suggested Metrics:

- 3.1 Number of alternative (i.e. non-formula) funding sources pursued annually
- 3.2 Number of alternative (i.e. non-formula) funding sources awarded annually

Means of Collection: SETRPC will coordinate with the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee (RPTCSC) to make members aware of funding opportunities on an ongoing basis and to track grants and other funding sources pursued.



8.1.4 Priority #4: Improve Customer Service

Suggested Metrics:

- 4.1 Number of formal complaints received by BMT, PAT, and SETT related to customer service and/or driver/rider interaction
- 4.2 Number of formal commendations received by BMT, PAT, and SETT related to customer service and/or driver/rider interaction
- 4.3 Percentage of operators receiving formal training in customer service, specifically geared toward elderly and disabled riders



Means of Collection: BMT, PAT, and SETT administrative staff will collect and track data related to customer complaints/commendations. Human Resource personnel in each organization will identify training opportunities for operators and staff and track completion of training courses.

8.1.5 Priority #5: Increase Public Awareness

Suggested Metrics:

- 5.1 BMT, PAT, and SETT ridership
- 5.2 Level of utilization of transportation services provided by social service and other non-transit agencies
- 5.3 Level of public engagement with agencies regarding transportation services (e.g. number of website "hits," social media engagements, phone calls, etc.)
- 5.4 Number of agencies providing transportation information to the public

5.5 Number of regional travel training sessions held

Means of Collection: BMT, PAT, and SETT regularly collect ridership data in order to comply with Federal and State reporting requirements. Likewise, private agencies can monitor levels of utilization of their transportation services as an indicator of the public's awareness of them. Customer surveys, particularly canvassing the client base of social service agencies, can be used to gauge public awareness of transportation options.

8.1.6 Priority #6: Improve Amenities at Bus Stops

Suggested Metrics:

- 6.1 Number of bus stops with shelters
- 6.2 Number of bus stops with benches
- 6.3 Number of bus stops with fully functional sidewalks and wheelchair ramps within one-quarter mile
- 6.4 Number of bus stops maintained through a community "Adopt-A-Stop" program

Means of Collection: BMT and PAT will collect and maintain all data related to the condition and amenities at bus stops and the surrounding area.

8.1.7 Priority #7: Website/Social Media Presence

Suggested Metrics:

- 7.1 Number of social media accounts (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) devoted to transportation services in the southeast Texas region
- 7.2 Number of engagements (e.g. likes, shares, etc.) on regional transportation social media accounts
- 7.3 Number of monthly visitors to regional transportation websites
- 7.4 Frequency of posted updates to websites and social media accounts

Means of Collection: Designated webmasters and social media managers for SETRPC, BMT, PAT, and other relevant agencies will be responsible for collecting and assessing analytics for transportation websites and social media pages.

8.2 Statewide Performance Measures

As detailed by TxDOT in the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning Guidebook, lead agencies must collect, maintain, and provide data on statewide performance measures. These performance metrics are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the coordinated public transit / human services transportation planning efforts.

The required statewide performance measures as delineated by TxDOT are as follows:

Collaborate

1. Number of active, formal partnerships
2. Number of persons engaged in transportation planning & education activities

Identify Gaps & Inefficiencies

3. Number of:
 - a. Gaps & inefficiencies identified in the coordinated plan, including those concerning priority population groups
 - b. Recommended actions in the coordinated plan for resolving these gaps & inefficiencies

Resolve

4. Number of items in the plan that move from a planning to implementation phase
5. Number of activities identified in the coordinated plan that are:
 - a. Underway, but not completed
 - b. Completed

The SETRPC will use the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Steering Committee (RPTCSC) as the primary means to collect data related to the “Collaborate” and “Resolve” measures. At least once annually, the committee membership will be polled to determine the number of active, formal partnerships in place and the nature of those partnerships. Committee members will be asked to quantify the number of persons in their organization engaged in transportation planning and education activities. SETRPC will be responsible for ensuring all committee members are utilizing a common definition of “partnerships” and “transportation planning and education activities” for consistency in reporting to TxDOT. The committee will also be reminded of the recommendations in the coordination plan and asked to detail any efforts they have underway and/or completed that support the recommendations. These activities will be added to any SETRPC-led activities for reporting to TxDOT under the “Resolve” measure.

SETRPC staff will be responsible for collecting data related to the “Identify Gaps & Inefficiencies” measure. Staff will review the current Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan and note the number of gaps and inefficiencies identified in the plan and the number of recommended actions.

All information gathered by SETRPC staff and through the polling of RPTCSC members will be compiled into a spreadsheet and transmitted to TxDOT as directed. Data will be maintained annually so that progress can be compared and tracked over time.

CONCLUSION



Decisions we make today on how best to invest in transportation options for elders and individuals with disabilities will affect the future quality of life for thousands of southeast Texas residents. Baby boomers (children born between the years of 1946 and 1964) made up 40 percent of the US population in 1964. Today, the oldest baby boomers are in their late 60's.

By 2030, about one in five Americans will be older than 65. As the elderly become a large percentage of the population, a higher percentage will also become disabled due to physical frailty caused by the effects of aging. Veterans, the young, as well as low-income persons that live in the rural areas of the three-county region would also benefit from improvements in public transportation.

The changing demographics of the elderly, the growing number of individuals with disabilities, along with transportation issues affecting all transit dependent persons in the southeast Texas region will challenge the conventional solutions of more buses, and paratransit vans. While such traditional modes of transportation will surely be needed, there is a limit to how much the region can afford. Improved coordination among existing services, innovative ways of delivering services, and a regional commitment to placing public facilities and social services at locations served by the public transit will also be needed.

Emphasis in the SETRPC's Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan is to make progress in coordination among all public service agencies to provide the most cost-effective transportation services for the greatest number of people. The region will continue to focus on developing innovative ways to provide services for all transit dependent persons.

Some of the areas that will be focused on are:

- ✓ Connectivity
- ✓ Expansion of Service
- ✓ Securing Funding for Services
- ✓ Customer Service
- ✓ Increasing Public Awareness
- ✓ Improve Amenities at Bus Stops
- ✓ Website and Social Media

SETRPC has appointed members to the RPTCSC to guide the transportation plans, policies, and programs for coordinating the region's transportation efforts. It will be crucial to the short and long-term success of the plan for the committee to periodically evaluate the region's transportation coordination's effectiveness and assess its strengths and weaknesses. This self-evaluation process will be internal, making use of the performance measures developed in Chapter VIII.

The RPTCSC as well as the many members of the public will need to be updated periodically on the progress of the RPTCP and this will also allow them to discuss needs and solutions that will continue to come up occasionally. Lastly, as Statewide initiatives develop over time, SETRPC will continue to coordinate directly with Statewide programs.



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

DRAFT

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+

DRAFT

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
Silsbee Public 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.

Appendix D

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
- b. Weekly
- c. Monthly
- d. Seldom or never

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

- a. My own vehicle
- b. Family/Friends
- c. Port Arthur Transit
- d. Beaumont Municipal Transit
- e. South East Texas Transit
- f. Taxi
- g. Biking
- 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
- b. I use a wheelchair
- c. I travel with a service animal
- d. I use a walker
- e. I use a scooter

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.

| | <i>Not Important</i> | | | <i>Very Important</i> | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|-----------------------|---|
| 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.

DRAFT

**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

Appendix G

SOUTH EAST TEXAS 2016 ON-BOARD SURVEY RESULTS

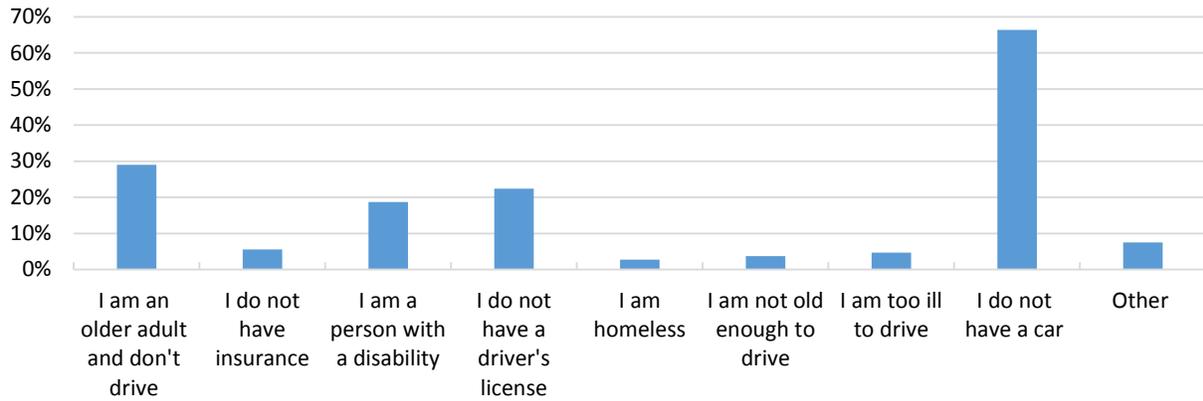
A survey was conducted by the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) to determine the transportation characteristics and commuting habits of Orange County, Jefferson County, and Hardin County residents that utilize public transportation. The survey was conducted on-board shuttle buses 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:

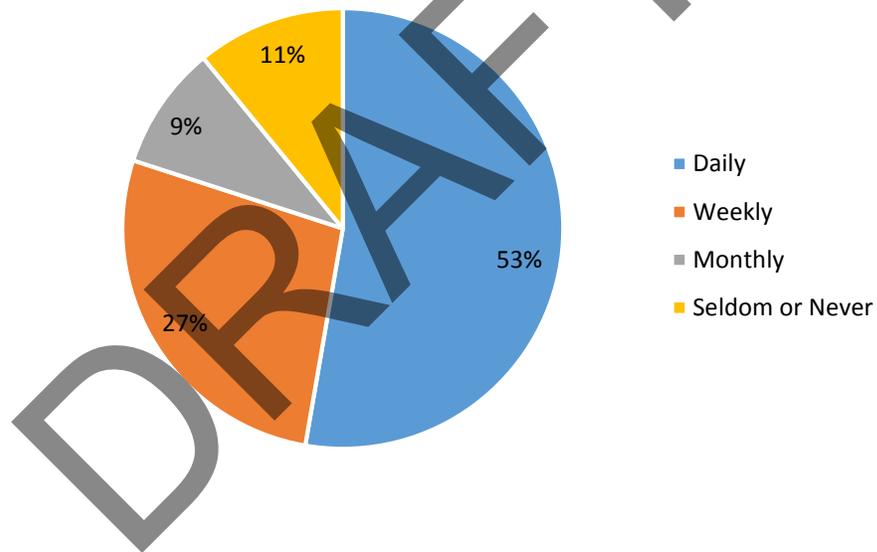
- 66% of the respondents utilize public transportation because they do not have access to a vehicle, followed by 29% of respondents who are an older adult and don't drive.
- About half of the respondents (54%) utilize public transportation on a daily basis.
- Other than utilizing Beaumont Municipal Transit, 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.

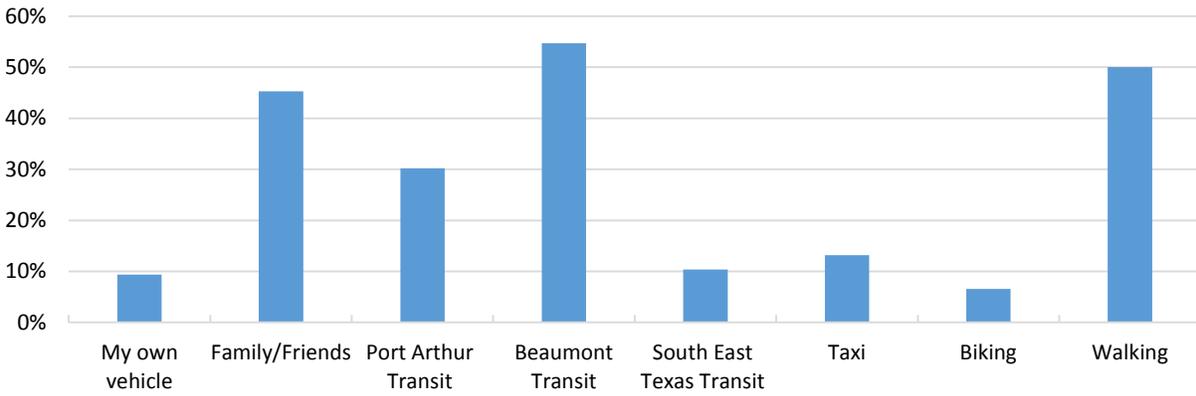
Q1: I need public transportation because



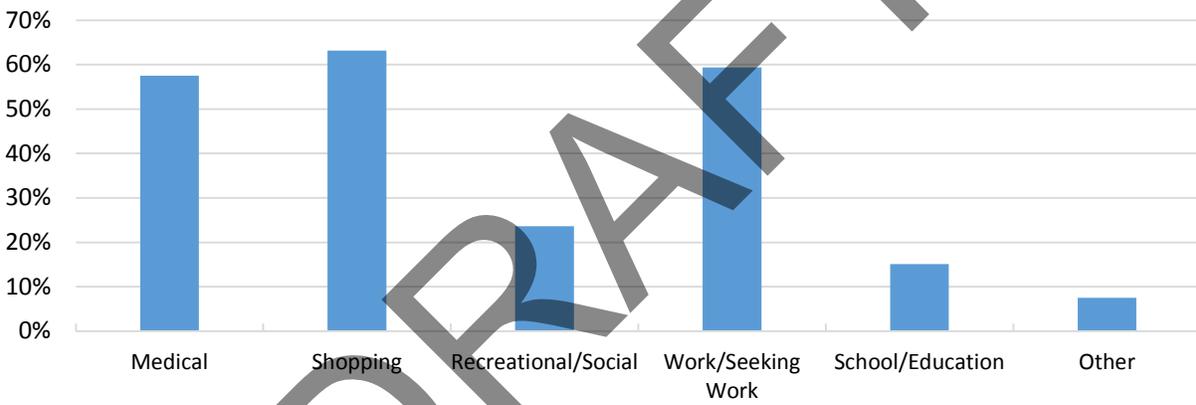
Q2: How often do you use public transportation:



Q3: I use the following means of transportation:



Q4: I need transportation to:



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 | Count | Response |
|-------|---------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 | Downtown | 1 | Fourth and Cedar St. 11th; Calder and 7th Calder; Liberty and 7th Laurel |
| 2 | Irving St. | 1 | Franklin House South-Ave. D |
| 2 | Library | 1 | Gulfway Dr. |
| 2 | Louis Manor | 1 | Gulfway Proctor |
| 2 | Steelton | 1 | Gulfway and 9 th Ave. |
| 2 | Walmart | 1 | Gulfway and El Paso Port Arthur |
| 1 | 103 Park, Bridge City | 1 | Harmony Science Academy-Beaumont |
| 1 | 11 th St. Calder | 1 | Highland/Lavaca |
| 1 | 401 Park Drive, Bridge City | 1 | Highland and Florida |
| 1 | 4265 Crow Rd. | 1 | Highland and Virginia |
| 1 | 7 th St. and Grannis | 1 | Hwy 327 Silsbee |
| 1 | 7 th and Calder | 1 | I use the bus all over town |
| 1 | At home going to doctor | 1 | Intersection of Ave. F and Foch St. Habanero Bar and Grill |
| 1 | Beaumont Ave. and Gulfway | 1 | Irvin's |
| 1 | Barber Bus Station | 1 | Jefferson City or Walmart |
| 1 | Calder and 7th | 1 | Lake Arthur Dr. |
| 1 | College | 1 | Lamar College |
| 1 | Concord and Delaware | 1 | Lamar Institute of Technology |
| 1 | Concord to Maddox Street | 1 | Lamar University |
| 1 | Corner of Wilson and Steelton | 1 | Laurel Street in Beaumont |
| 1 | Dannenbaum Station | 1 | Library to DeQueen |
| 1 | Dowlen Rd. | 1 | Louis and Gulfway |
| 1 | Dowlen and 11 th St. | 1 | Lucas St. |
| 1 | Dowlen and College | 1 | MLK, Silsbee |
| 1 | Eighth to W. Euclid | 1 | Magnolia St. |
| 1 | Elmira Street | | |

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/39th St/32nd St.
1 Virginia Street in front of Virginia Manor
1 Virginia and Bob St. and Toccoa and 11th 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

DRAFT

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

| Count | Response | Count | Response | Count | Response |
|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | I don't know the name of the site | 1 | Park | 1 | St. E |
| 1 | I have never used the bus | 1 | Park and Pennsylvania | 1 | Subway (S.11thSt.) |
| 1 | Intersection of Ave. F and Foch St. | 1 | Park and Washington (Uncle's House) | 1 | Target |
| 1 | Jefferson County Health | 1 | Pear Orchard | 1 | TDCJ Parole Office (E. Commerce) |
| 1 | Job Seeking | 1 | Pearl | 1 | Texas Ave. |
| 1 | Lancaster Cornwall Apt | 1 | Planet Fitness | 1 | Thomas Blvd. |
| 1 | Lavaca | 1 | Plasma Center | 1 | Tinseltown |
| 1 | Louis Manor | 1 | Plymouth Village | 1 | Transportation |
| 1 | Lucas | 1 | Port Arthur City Hall | 1 | Tri Supply by DPS Office |
| 1 | Lucas and Concord | 1 | Proctor | 1 | VanC |
| 1 | Lucas and Delaware | 1 | Professional Building | 1 | Visit Mother |
| 1 | Magnolia | 1 | Renal Center | 1 | Waffle House (Tinseltown) |
| 1 | Memorial | 1 | Restaurants | 1 | Washateria |
| 1 | My Job | 1 | S 11 th | 1 | West End |
| 1 | Nederland | 1 | Same | 1 | Wingstop |
| 1 | North End | 1 | Seat Belt | 1 | Work office off Calder and I-10 |
| 1 | Nowhere | 1 | Shelter | 1 | Work (Dallas St.) |
| 1 | O Care | 1 | South Eleventh | 1 | Work Days Inn Hotel |
| | | 1 | Stagg | | |

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?

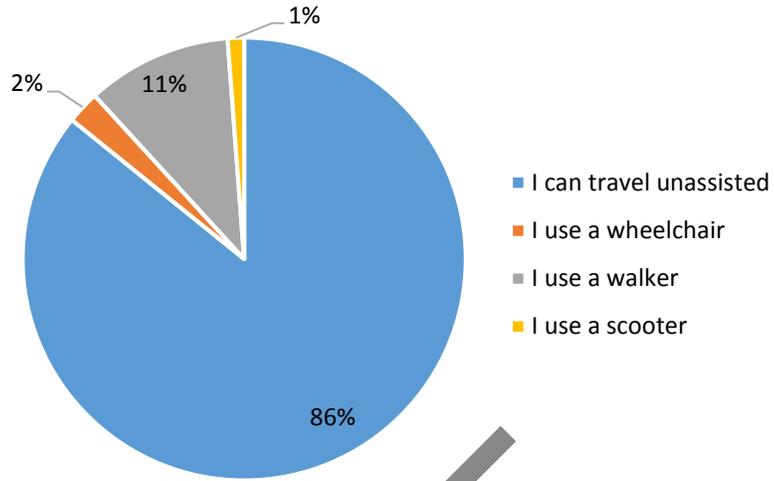
Count Response

- 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.

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% |

DRAFT

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?

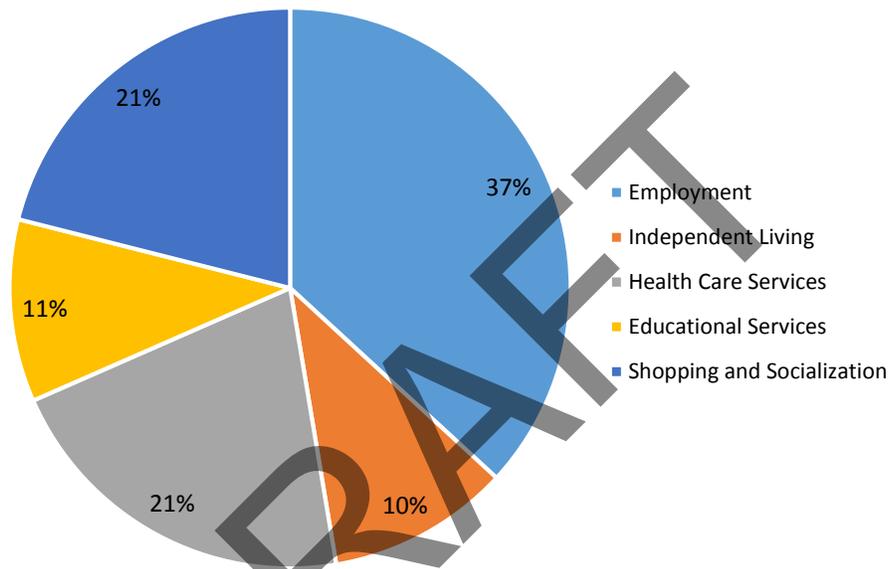
More hours of service, mixture of services and equipped vehicles were listed as the greatest need for public transportation in the community.

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.

Appendix H

Open House Public Meetings for Draft Document

There were four Public Meetings held for the public to review the draft document:

1. February 20, 2017, Theodore Johns Library, Beaumont, Texas
2. February 21, 2017, Silsbee Public Library, Silsbee, Texas
3. February 22, 2017, Port Arthur Public Library, Port Arthur, Texas
4. February 23, 2017, Orange Public Library, Orange, Texas

Two comments from the Orange public meeting expressed a desire to have more public transportation services in Orange County.

DRAFT

*REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
COORDINATION PLAN 2017 DRAFT*



PUBLIC MEETINGS:

February 20, 21, 22, 23

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) is gathering public comment on the draft 2017 South East Texas Area Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. This 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 Beaumont

Monday, February 20, 2017 – 3 pm
Theodore Johns Public Library
4255 Fannett Road
Beaumont, TX

City of Silsbee

Tuesday, February 21, 2017 – 3 pm
Public Library
295 N 4th Street
Silsbee, TX

City of Port Arthur

Wednesday, February 22, 2017 – 3 pm
Port Arthur Public Library
4615 9th Avenue
Port Arthur, TX

City of Orange

Thursday, February 23, 2017 – 3 pm
Public Library
220 5th Street
Orange, TX

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT:

Bob Dickinson

SETRPC

409.899.8444 x7520

bdickinson@setrpc.org

ACTUALIZACIÓN DEL
PLAN REGIONAL DE COORDINACIÓN DEL
TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO 2017 BORRADOR



REUNIONES PÚBLICAS:
Febrero 20, 21, 22, 23

South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) está reuniendo comentarios públicos para actualizar el borrador 2017 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 Beaumont

Lunes, Febrero 20, 2017 - 3 pm

Biblioteca

Theodore Johns
4255 Fannett Road
Beaumont, TX

City of Silsbee

Martes, Febrero 21, 2017 - 3 pm

Biblioteca Pública de la Ciudad de
Silsbee

295 North 4th Street
Silsbee, TX

City of Port Arthur

Miércoles, Febrero 22, 2017 - 3 pm

Biblioteca Pública de Port Arthur

4615 9th Avenue
Port Arthur, TX

City of Orange

Jueves, Febrero 23, 2017 - 3 pm

Biblioteca Pública de la Ciudad de
Orange

220 5th Street
Orange, TX

Para mayor información contacte a:

Bob Dickinson

SETRPC

409 899-8444 x7520

bdickinson@setrpc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, February 17, 2017

CONTACT: *Bob Dickinson – Director, Transportation and Environmental Resources*
409-899-8444 extension 7520 or email: bdickinson@setrpc.org

Community Meetings Scheduled for Input on Regional Public Transit Needs

“SETRPC to host series of public meetings beginning Monday, February 20th, 2017”

(Beaumont) --- The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission’s Transportation and Environmental Division is gathering public comment on the draft 2017 South East Texas Area Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan. The 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 seeking input from residents to develop strategies that provide transportation for the southeast Texas three county region. Community input is critical at this stage of the process in order to develop strategies that meet the actual needs of the community. Meetings begin **Monday, February 20th, 2017**, providing citizens in Jefferson, Orange and Hardin Counties the opportunity to provide comments on their transit needs. “This is an opportunity for the public to give their thoughts on where transit services are needed the most, making the best use of our region’s resources”, says Bob Dickinson, Director of Transportation and Environmental Resources for SETRPC.

Interested citizens are invited to attend any of the public meetings listed below.

Monday - February 20, 2017 - 3:00 p.m.

Theodore R Johns, Sr Library - 4255 Fannett Road - Beaumont, TX

Tuesday - February 21, 2017 - 3:00 p.m.

City of Silsbee Public Library - 295 N. 4th Street - Silsbee, TX

Wednesday - February 22, 2017 - 3:00 p.m.

City of Port Arthur Public Library - 4615 9th Avenue - Port Arthur, TX

Thursday - February 23, 2017 - 3:00 p.m.

City of Orange Public Library - 220 5th Street - Orange, TX

These meetings are designed to solicit resident’s ideas and input on possible transit changes and improvements that can help create better connections throughout the region. All meetings are the same and are not restricted to a specific area. The public is strongly encouraged to be an active part of this process by selecting a meeting day and time that fits their schedule. For more information on the South East Texas Area Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan, the upcoming public meetings, or special needs requests (48 Hours); please contact **Bob Dickinson** at (409) 899-8444 extension 7520 or bdickinson@setrpc.org.

SETRPC, in conjunction with the Texas Department of Transportation, local governments and other interested parties, are facilitating the of the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan.

ACTUALIZACIÓN DEL
PLAN REGIONAL DE COORDINACIÓN DEL
TRANSPORTE PÚBLICO 2017 BORRADOR



REUNIONES PÚBLICAS:
Febrero 20, 21, 22, 23

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Para mayor información contacte a:

Bob Dickinson
SETRPC
409 899-8444 x7520
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*REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
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Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning

PURPOSE

The purpose of the regionally coordinated transportation planning (RCTP) effort is to provide more efficient and effective public transportation services, especially for people with disabilities, older adults, people with low incomes and others with health and human service needs.

STATE AND FEDERAL MANDATES

- Transportation Code. In 2003, the Texas legislature and governor added Chap. 461 requiring coordination of public transportation services funded with federal, state, or local funds.
- Executive Order 13330 on Human Services Transportation Coordination. In 2004, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13330 calling for:
 - Reducing duplication among federally funded human service transportation services
 - Increasing efficient delivery of services
 - Expanding access to transportation services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes and others
- The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU). In 2005, the federal transportation bill called for establishing locally-developed, coordinated public transit / human services transportation plans. Three Federal Transportation Administration programs were explicitly linked to these plans: Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC), New Freedom, and Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities.

FUNDING FROM TxDOT TO REGIONS

- Initial funding. In 2006, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) contracted with local agencies to develop a regionally coordinated plan for each of Texas' 24 designated state planning regions.
 - A locally-determined agency serves as lead for coordinating regional transportation activities.
 - Most lead agencies are councils of government / regional planning commissions. Others include entities such as metropolitan planning organizations, a county, a city, a community action agency and even a steering committee that formed itself into a non-profit organization.
- Continuation Funding. TxDOT has provided funding in subsequent years to move forward with regionally coordinated transportation planning activities.

STEERING COMMITTEES

Fundamental to the regional planning effort is the routine engagement of a stakeholder steering committee in each region. These committees provide insight and guidance on regional public transportation issues and activities such as developing, updating and implementing regional transportation plans. At a minimum, committees shall include representatives of:

- older adults, individuals w/disabilities & people w/low incomes (or advocates for these priority populations)
- human services providers
- public, private and non-profit transportation providers
- recipients of funding thru Sec. 5307 (small urban transp. providers) & Sec. 5311 (rural transp. providers)

LEAD AGENCY ROLE

The lead agency:

- Facilitates discussion and keeps others engaged in the planning process.
- Manages the development, implementation and ongoing modification of a regionally coordinated transportation plan. The lead agency assures that activities move forward and goals and objectives are accomplished satisfactorily and in a timely and inclusive manner.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Steve Wright, TxDOT Public Transportation Division at (512) 374-5226 or steve.wright@txdot.gov. Visit www.regionalserviceplanning.org.

REGIONALLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

This section shall include a general description of the background and purpose of this five-year plan and the methodology used to develop it including a description of how the development and approval process engaged priority populations including individuals with disabilities and individuals 65 and older.

II. TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES IN THE REGION

This section shall include a list and narrative description of:

- Transportation providers derived from a current, comprehensive inventory of providers including those offering public fixed route and demand-response services, and those offering services through private, non-profit, community-based organizations, health and human services agencies, work force agencies, and others. By August 31, 2015, the Public Transportation Division, under contract with the Texas A & M Transportation Institute (TTI), will update the 2013 provider inventory. TTI will obtain information directly from recipients of funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). **Lead agencies shall survey non-FTA recipients for inclusion in the inventory.**
- All agencies responsible for transportation planning in the region.

III. COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE PUBLIC'S UNMET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS, ASSESSMENT OF OVERLAPS & GAPS IN THE DELIVERY OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES & GAP ANALYSIS

This section shall be based on a current, comprehensive regional needs assessment and gap analysis and include a narrative description with supporting data explaining the region's unmet needs and inefficiencies based on findings from this needs assessment. This section shall include:

- Geographic data
- Demographic data on overall population, age, race, income, persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency, and other data to indicate need for transportation services.
- A list and narrative description of all health and human services agencies and programs, and work force agencies, and contact information derived from a current, comprehensive inventory of such agencies.
- Assessment of transportation overlaps and gaps in services including unmet transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, individuals 65 and older, people with low incomes, individuals with limited English proficiency, children , veterans, people lacking transportation to and from employment and other members of the public.
- A description of the research methodology, observations/findings and recommendations.
- Research instruments.

IV. PLANNING FOR COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

This section shall describe how this five-year plan integrates services of various programs including:

- Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) program and other FTA-funded programs
- Health and human services programs
- Work force programs
- Other

V. INTEGRATED PLANNING PROCESSES

This section shall describe how this five-year public transit-human services transportation plan will align or integrate with other metropolitan, rural, and statewide transportation plans, as appropriate. This section shall include a:

- Comprehensive list and narrative description of various planning processes concerning transportation needs and/or services conducted in the planning region such as those led by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), rural planning organizations (RPOs), other transportation agencies, work force agencies, health and human services agencies, and others.
- Explanation of how these plans are or will be integrated.

VI. VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This section shall include vision and mission statements as well as clearly articulated goal(s) and objectives for achieving the goal(s). Lead agencies shall determine the vision and mission statements, goals and objectives using a deliberative process actively involving the steering committee and other stakeholders including riders and potential riders. Lead agencies and other stakeholders shall collaboratively prioritize objectives (identifying those that are short- or long-term) and address implementation based on time, resources and feasibility.

VII. SUSTAIN PLANNING & IMPLEMENT PLAN

This section shall describe the planning region's capacity to sustain regional transportation planning activities and to implement or "work the plan" once it is developed and approved. This shall include a description of:

- Organizational infrastructure, staff capacity, and plans for leveraging resources to conduct and pay for activities and projects to achieve identified priorities;
- How the lead agency will regularly and meaningfully engage regional stakeholders including individuals with disabilities, individuals 65 and older, people with low incomes, veterans, advocates for children, and other members of the public;

VIII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES TO EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS

This section shall list and describe specific, locally-determined metrics for each identified gap in transportation service (or for each priority identified in the plan). Each metric shall objectively measure the extent to which each priority was met or gap filled. This section shall describe how the lead agency will collect, maintain and assess this data

In addition, this section shall describe how the lead agency will collect, maintain and provide data on statewide performance measures to the Texas Department of Transportation which will collect common data elements statewide. The statewide performance metrics are listed on page 21 of the Regionally Coordinated Transportation Planning Guidebook.

South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan

Executive Summary

Approved by Steering Committee: August 23, 2011



Introduction

The ability to access goods, services, and social interaction is essential to an individual's high quality of life. Some people may take their transportation options for granted, rarely considering *how* they are able to get to a doctor's appointment, the grocery store, place of employment, or friend's house. Others, however, do not have the luxury of indifference when it comes to transportation concerns. Persons with disabilities, the elderly, and those with low incomes can be particularly affected by a lack of transportation options available to assist them, significantly impacting their mobility. Fortunately southeast Texas, like all other regions in Texas, has established a coordinated transportation system that plans for and provides transportation services to those who are transportation disadvantaged, improving efficiencies and increasing mobility options. To supplement past coordination, and to better understand and match resident needs with transportation resources, the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission has developed this plan to provide an update of its regional coordination efforts.



THE PLANNING PROCESS

The methodology to develop this plan is centered on the following concepts:

- Conducting extensive stakeholder involvement and public outreach
- Documenting existing transportation conditions
- Conducting a needs assessment
- Identifying and prioritizing strategies to address the unmet needs
- Identifying a preferred organizational model to promote coordination

Three main steps were taken to develop recommendations to further implement coordination.

Public Involvement

A major focus of developing a coordinated transportation plan is public input and stakeholders' input. A plan review committee was created to oversee the creation of this plan and initiate discussions about coordination opportunities. Two rounds of public workshops generated helpful input on needs and coordination strategies.

Needs Assessment

An analysis was conducted of the existing service to assess the region's needs, gaps and redundancies. Needs come in the form of areas needing transit service, areas needing better coordination, areas where redundancy can be eliminated and other forms as established.

Strategies and Recommendations

Strategies for addressing the region's needs were established by drawing from the current needs, current practices in the state and best practices across the country. These strategies are formed around the three main concepts of *communications*, *resources* and *connectivity*.

Public Involvement

Pursuant to development of the plan update, the SETRPC sponsored an inclusive public outreach process. This process included two public meeting series and focus group participation to gather public and stakeholder input on the needs for improved transportation options. Public meetings and focus groups create information that is at the core of the coordination effort. Following are the methods that were used to publicize meetings:



- Public service announcements were distributed to media in the three-county region.
- Posters were displayed in public libraries.
- Flyers were delivered to public libraries, places of worship, Fletcher School, public gathering places, and religious organizations.
- Posters were displayed in Port Arthur Transit vehicles and at the Beaumont Municipal Transit central transfer center.
- Flyers were sent via electronic mail to economic development organizations, human service agencies, and religious organizations.
- The public meeting schedule was published on the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission website.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

All public meetings were convened in public facilities, i.e. public libraries, city halls, and elementary school. One of the public meetings in Jefferson County was held in a neighborhood where there is a concentration of Hispanic persons and a translator was present to accommodate potential translation needs.

Three focus group sessions were held, two at nonprofit agencies and one at a public library. These sessions were held at Resource Information Support Empowerment Center (RISE), a human services agency that addresses the needs of disabled citizens; the Beaumont Housing Authority, which addresses the housing and social services needs of low-moderate income residents; and the Port Arthur Public Library, where a focus group session for the Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan Steering Committee was convened to give members an opportunity to provide input.

INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS

Since they have regular contact with under-served populations, a survey instrument was developed to gather input from human services providers in the region. A similar survey

instrument was developed for economic development corporations since they address workforce issues. During the period beginning December 2010 and ending February 1, 2011, 19 agencies completed these surveys, either via telephone or by completing the survey form and transmitting it via electronic mail.

SUMMARY OF INPUT RECEIVED

- Improve Hours of Service for Existing Services
- Intra-regional Bus Transportation Linkages
- Additional Buses
- Expanded Transportation Options (i.e. taxi, express bus service, and train service)
- Expand Bus Transportation Coverage
- Increase/Improve Public Awareness
- Affordability of Existing Services
- Enhance Bus Transportation Facilities
- Service to Un-served Areas.
- Cross-Regional Service
- Transportation to the Southeast Texas Regional Airport
- Public Education
- More Use of Technology

PUBLIC INPUT CONCLUSION



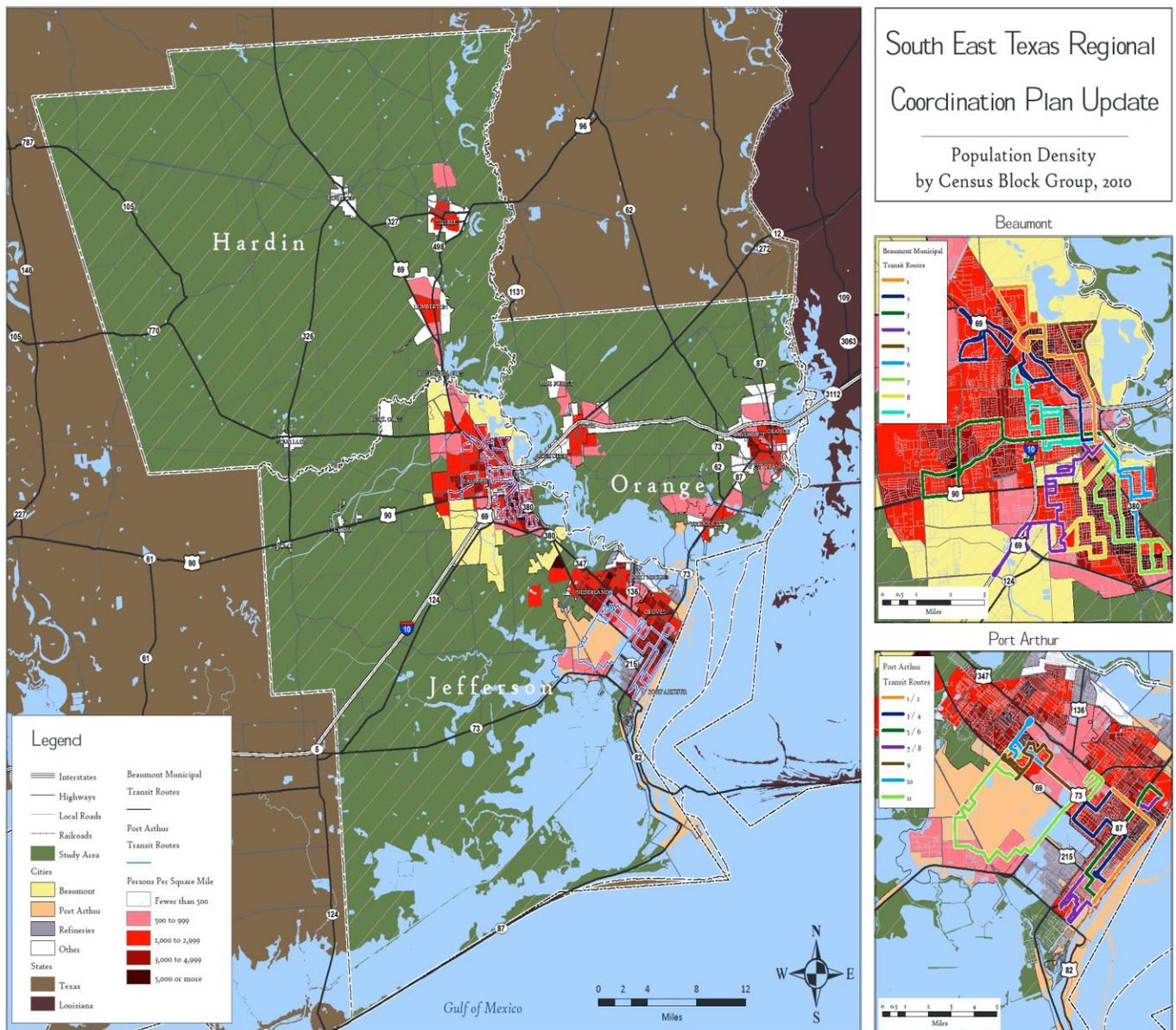
A broad cross-section of persons took part in the public outreach process for the South East Texas Regional Public Transportation Coordination Plan Update. Neighborhood associations, transportation advocacy groups, human service providers, economic development corporations, public housing agency clients, transit providers, and other concerned citizens participated by attending meetings and completing surveys.

Expanded hours of service, cross-regional service, and more buses were the highest priorities for participants. Many expressed an awareness of the constraints under which transportation agencies in the three-county area are operating, the greatest of these being funding constraints and comparatively low population densities, especially outside of the urban areas. Nevertheless, a strong desire for improved access to employment and essential services manifested itself throughout the process.

Expanded hours of service, cross-regional service, and more buses were the highest

Needs Assessment

Transit dependent populations are spread throughout the three-county region. Transit dependency means “having to rely on transit services instead of the private automobile to meet one’s travel needs.” 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 16 years of age), persons with disabilities, and low-income families are more likely to be transit dependent.



A key step in coordinating transportation services is a careful analysis of the mobility needs of various segments of the population and the potential needs of transit services. 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.

UNMET NEEDS

Almost all of the participants identified that providing more geographic coverage of transportation for persons of low income, elderly and disabled, increasing hours of service for the existing transit services, and centralizing sources of information as the main areas of unmet needs. Some specific comments regarding unmet needs included:

- Providing more direct service to workforce worksites
- Timely delivery of clients to worksites
- More reliable vehicles
- The need for regional transit connectivity between Hardin, Jefferson and Orange Counties
- The issues of unmet needs are associated with the gaps in communication and some factors of access, such as flexible hours and lower fees (issues commonly associated with the level of funding available)



Human service agencies indicated that more service in the rural areas and increased service hours in the urban areas were needed.

CONSTRAINTS AND OBSTACLES

Participants in the survey and discussions identified several areas that present constraints and obstacles to establishing a complete coordination system. The information gathered is summarized into three main areas of focus that form the basis of recommendations formed in the coordination plan: Regional Connectivity, Resources, and Communications.

Regional Connectivity

The need for residents to access destinations outside of their communities is a common comment from stakeholders and the public. This is especially an issue for low-income residents and the elderly. The SETRPC, human service agencies, and transportation providers continuously work on this issue to identify ways to provide seamless travel across the region.



Resources

Ten to 20 years of sprawled population growth that once depended on automobiles, has begun to look to transit as a transportation option. This demand has placed a large burden on existing resources. Sprawled growth and limited funding makes it difficult for transit to allocate enough resources to serve all residents. As a result, localities must choose where to allocate resources most effectively, charge fares that help recover expenses, limit hours of service to the core times when service is needed the most, and limit destinations to those that are most commonly and conveniently accessed.

Communications

Participants in the survey and discussions believe that transportation providers in southeast Texas are doing the best with what resources they have. The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission does a good job planning and coordinating transportation services. It is perceived that one missing link is the communities' awareness of these transportation programs and options. No single strategy will be successful unless it can be effectively communicated to the intended market groups. Coordination strategies should include clear and effective understandings of how to best communicate with the intended audiences. These audiences may be residents who need transportation services or even human service agencies who help educate communities.



Strategies and Recommendations

The fundamental purpose of planning for public transportation coordination is to define transportation needs and resources that, when unified, create increased mobility and access for those with limited transportation options. Unfortunately, planning in general is a long process, and transportation planning truly embodies the complexities of analysis, discussion, decision making and prioritization. Because of this, planning for coordination seeks to address both short-term needs and create a framework to ensure future opportunities for community mobility and accessibility. The Plan outlines strategies built on the anticipation for immediate change and expectations for creating a strong framework for emerging opportunities.

Mission and Vision

The mission and vision statements offer the context in which coordinated human service public transportation service strategies are developed and implemented in the Jefferson, Orange, and Hardin County region. The mission statement identifies the purpose defined for the coordination plan and the outcomes. The vision statement identifies the eventual effect reached when the goals and objectives of this plan are being achieved.

Mission:

Promote, coordinate, and sustain human services and transportation for the Jefferson, Hardin and Orange County area through the use of technology, communication, and the creation of a coordination council representing diverse perspectives.

Vision:

To develop and sustain a coordinated transportation system offering dependable, accessible, affordable, and convenient transportation options. Establish a coordination of transportation resources and services that respond to unmet needs and offer service to every resident, especially those who have limited transportation options.

Recommendations and Strategies

The goals and objectives are built on several core principles developed through the outreach and input processes. They reflect short and long term needs for transportation services and coordination initiatives. Each goal is intended to provide specific direction, and its associated objectives can be measured and implemented according to an anticipated schedule or timeline.

I. Enhance Communications

To be effective, the transportation services and resources available must be accurately communicated to the targeted markets. Further, the intent of information must be modified according to the use and audience. With multiple transportation providers and human service agencies, it is unreasonable to expect and rely on each entity to coordinate communication and information. Therefore, it is critical that information be coordinated regionally. A single entity should serve as a repository for transportation related information.

Communication Recommendations

1) Regional Mobility Coordinator

A regional mobility coordinator can provide services ranging from data analysis to travel training. In context of communication, this position would coordinate the communication of the various transportation services so that residents of the region can best understand their transportation options.



2) Define Central Source of Transportation Information

Whether it is a resident, caregiver, or stakeholder, information about transportation services at a regional level would greatly improve the awareness of an individual's transportation options. SETRPC should explore new ways of conveying the information to residents. This approach will require an understanding of each audience group, what transportation information they seek most, and how they access information.

3) Stakeholder Communication Engagement

Stakeholder communication engagement is centered on the idea of developing a forum for how stakeholders can share with the region the information they provide to their constituents, how some information can be unified for regional communication purposes, how to ensure the structure of such communication can benefit stated goals and objectives, and how best to take ownership and help disseminate information as needed. Communication engagement would allow each stakeholder to understand what information is available, how they can contribute, and how they can benefit from communication coordination. A Regional Mobility Coordinator could serve as the moderator for this coordination council function.



II. Establish Connectivity

Connectivity can be achieved two ways; operationally and logistically. Operationally, connectivity can be achieved with the creation of expanded or new services that serve unmet needs and gaps in service coverage. New services can be specific to targeted areas (such as Silsbee) or more regionally focused (a regional commuter transit route). Logistically, current services that already overlap or are planned to be overlapped can be coordinated for better connectivity with managing operational logistics. This ranges from timing of transfers between routes and transportation systems, to providing facilities for safe and secure transfers, to providing technology that provides a seamless method of accessing services.



Connectivity Recommendations

1) *Regional "Backbone" Transit Service*

One of the highest concerns expressed throughout the region has been the development of a regional transit service connecting the municipalities of Port Arthur, Beaumont, Lumberton, Silsbee, and Orange. This also proves to be the most challenging due to jurisdictional and funding issues. Regardless, it should be the priority of the region to develop a "backbone" type service extending from each end of the region. To create this route, there are three key steps that would need to be undertaken: 1) identify the major and minor transit-oriented destinations, 2) determine service overlap that would occur, and 3) develop infrastructure that facilitates safe and reliable transfers between services.

2) *Regional Smart Card Program*

The discussion and implementation of a smart card program has been on-going for many years now. As part of this coordination plan update, a further in-depth analysis was conducted to determine the feasibility of implementing a regional smart card program. The determination is that it is feasible for all transportation providers to share a single smart card technology that allows passengers universal access to all transportation resources. A smart card program will undoubtedly break down the barriers of using multiple systems. When coupled with the recommendation for a backbone type service, it becomes critical for facilitating transfers.

3) *Transfer Facility Planning*

The region should examine locations for facilitating transfers between different transportation systems. This is currently done to some extent within municipal boundaries and between rural services. Building on that foundation and the knowledge of primary transit-oriented travel corridors, the region should identify the primary locations that best promote transfers between multiple modes of transit and between pedestrian, bicycle and automobile systems. Transfer locations could be stand-alone facilities or joint use.

III. Coordination of Resources

The costs of providing public transportation and human service transportation services are indeed rising. Cost containment, however, cannot only be achieved at the expense of service delivery. Fortunately, coordination of transportation programs and services offers the potential to improve service delivery by reducing duplication, making use of available capacity elsewhere in the system, and achieving economies of scale in providing these services. Currently, transportation providers in the region are continuously balancing demand, need, and resources to achieve



efficiency and effectiveness. The use of a coordination council and regional discussions of resources can aid in the decision making processes that define how resources are deployed.

Resource Recommendations

1) Regional Coordination Council

The idea of a council provides a framework for coordinating resources that help improve residents' mobility. The initial formation of the council should be built on three main concepts: 1) creating a forum for exchanging ideas and information, 2) developing ownership of idea implementation, and 3) understanding and monitoring coordination performance. The coordination plan identifies a variety of tasks that the coordination council can perform, and there seems to be no shortage of desire for participation. The Regional Mobility Coordinator could serve as the council's facilitator, moderating the forum of exchange, providing information and performance reporting, and exploring ideas.

2) Transportation Coordination Data

To effectively plan and implement transportation coordination initiatives, the region should create a central database of information regarding services and needs, and coordinate the collection of information on an on-going basis. A central source of information for planning purposes serves multiple purposes. A database allows for planning efforts to be more efficient, information to be consistent regionally, and for an on-going analysis of effectiveness. The SETRPC should serve as the central source, working with each stakeholder and partner to identify data, and create a conduit for information.

3) Unification of Data and Analysis

The power of accurate and timely information can never be overstated when it comes to effectively planning for transportation coordination. The time and energy consumed unifying data for each region planning project can be avoided, at least for the transit perspective, if there is a common repository of information. This would be the responsibility of a Regional Mobility Coordinator and a function of the regional coordination council. The information gathered would evolve over time, and as needs become evident, but would initially entail GIS data, detailed ridership, demand, performance, inventory and resources, and financials.

CONTINUING COORDINATION

The coordination plan not only addresses the immediate needs for transportation, but also defines a framework for ensuring continual evaluation and development of coordination initiatives. To accomplish this, a lead agency and lead staff would be established to perform key activities that move coordination efforts forward into implementation and successful outcomes. Such activities include designing services, overseeing or performing tasks such as training, public outreach, marketing, and implementation of other key coordination activities. The concept of the framework to support coordination of a regional coordination council supported by a mobility coordinator is built on three main concepts:



Leadership – Establish leadership within stakeholders that advocates, generates support, and institutes mechanisms for coordination at the highest level;

Participation – Establish a forum to bring and keep at the table the right state, regional, and local stakeholders; and

Continuity - Ensure an ongoing forum and leadership that stays focused on overall transportation goals and responds to ever-changing needs.

Organizational Structure

Sustaining coordination for transportation in the Jefferson, Hardin and Orange County region will require a two-point approach. The first is the establishment of regional staff that can lead and assist with implementing coordination strategies. This would best be achieved by establishing the position of a mobility manager. A mobility manager would be able to work with each stakeholder one-on-one, work to overcome barriers, gain detailed understanding of resources and needs, ensure implementation of coordination initiatives, and work to demonstrate coordination success. The second is the establishment of a coordination group that can exchange ideas, discuss impacts and barriers of coordination, and assist regional staff with implementation.

The proposed structure fosters coordination primarily at a regional coordination council level. The mobility manager position has been extensively discussed in the coordination plan update. This includes composition and regional staffing needed to ensure the exchange necessary to promote coordination.