

City of Hialeah Circulator Study



Submitted to:

City of Hialeah

Submitted by:

Carr Smith Corradino

October 1998

Executive Summary

This report identifies the recommendations for development of a circulator service in the City of Hialeah. It is based on work conducted as part of a feasibility study to explore the possibility of local bus service sponsored by the city to serve the residents of Hialeah.

The study, which was funded through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Municipal Grant Program, resulted in development of a proposed circulator service, which is summarized below. As part of the study, the City applied to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the Public Transit Service Development Program. The study has been coordinated with the MPO, the Florida Department of Transportation, and Miami-Dade Transit Agency.

Study Overview

Hialeah is a community of over 200,000 people with a wide variety of community facilities, businesses, factories, residences, etc. that are spread throughout the community (Figure S-1). Based on discussions with residents, local officials, and current transit riders, there is significant need for additional transportation in the community. Miami-Dade Transit Agency routes have adequate coverage in the area (Figure S-2) but most of the routes run on one-hour headways; in addition, major developing areas such as the portion of the city west of the Palmetto Expressway have very little service. Figure S-3 presents an evaluation of the transit service level in the community. Key populations in need of transportation include seniors, youths, and people needing access to jobs in the community or to the regional transit (Metrobus or Metrorail).

Service Recommendations

After review of a variety of service options and extensive discussions with community officials, MDTA, MPO, and private sector representatives, it is recommended that Hialeah implement a demonstration circulator service that is coordinated with Miami-Dade Metrobus, Metrorail, Tri-Rail, and local jitney services. A system of two routes should be developed with a central transfer point or multiple transfer points. This would allow people to go in four different directions at a relatively high frequency. One option would be the Hialeah Metrorail station, where infrastructure exists to accommodate Metro Dade buses. The proposed routing is shown in Figure S-4.

The following design goals were followed in design of the system:

- Provide transit to underserved or unserved areas
- Target senior citizens, income-disadvantaged, and youth as primary markets

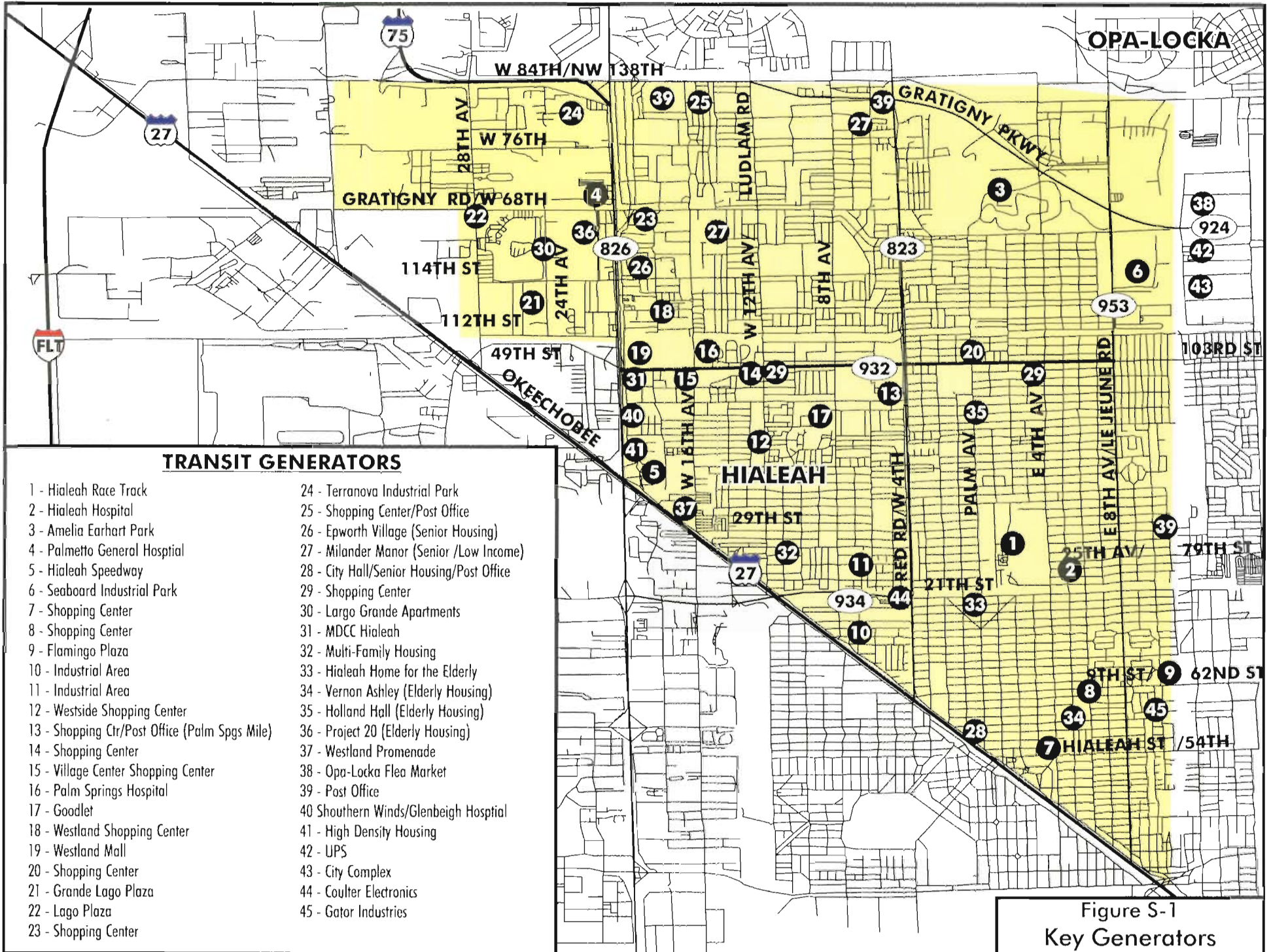


Figure S-1
Key Generators

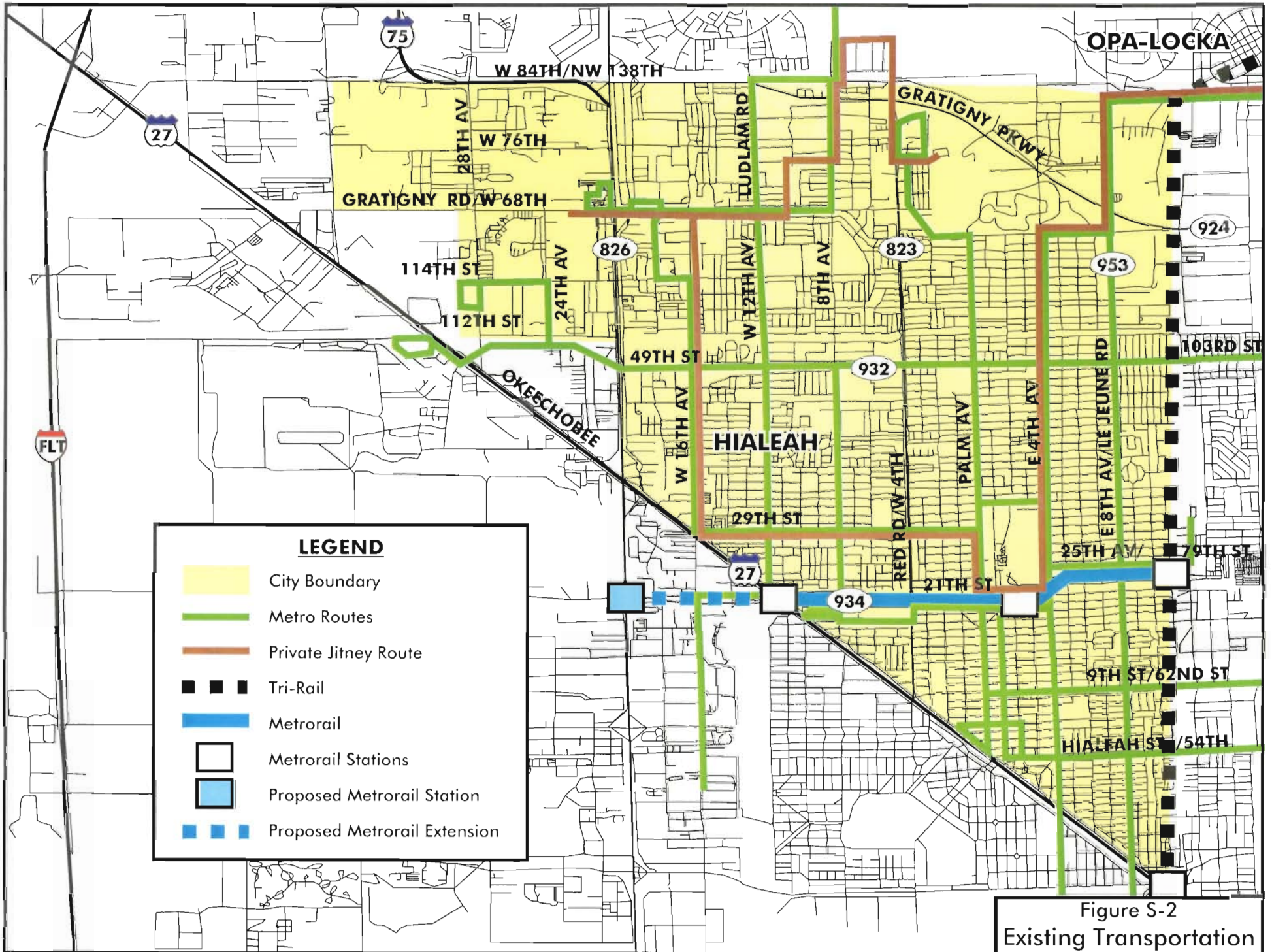
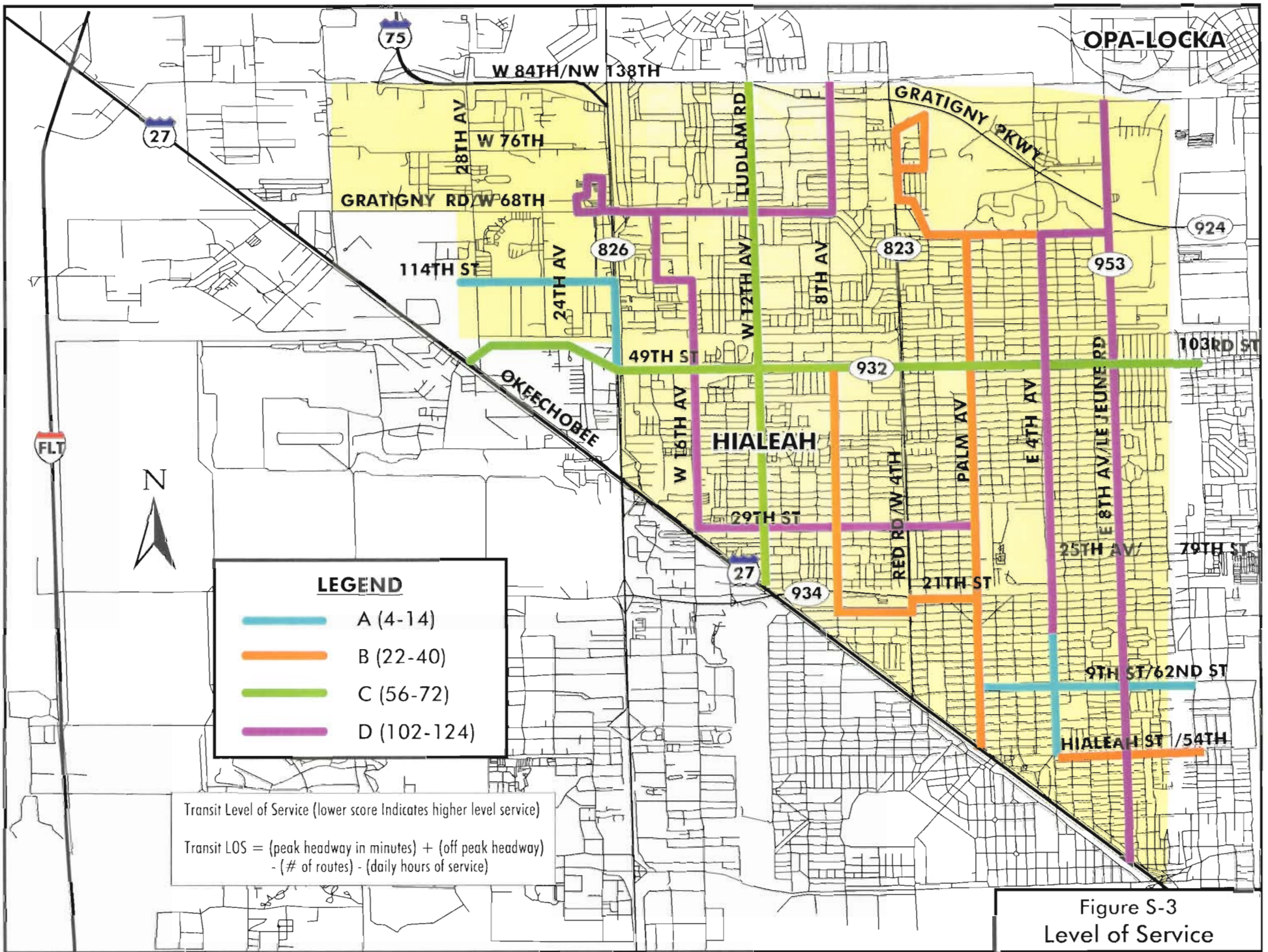


Figure S-2
Existing Transportation



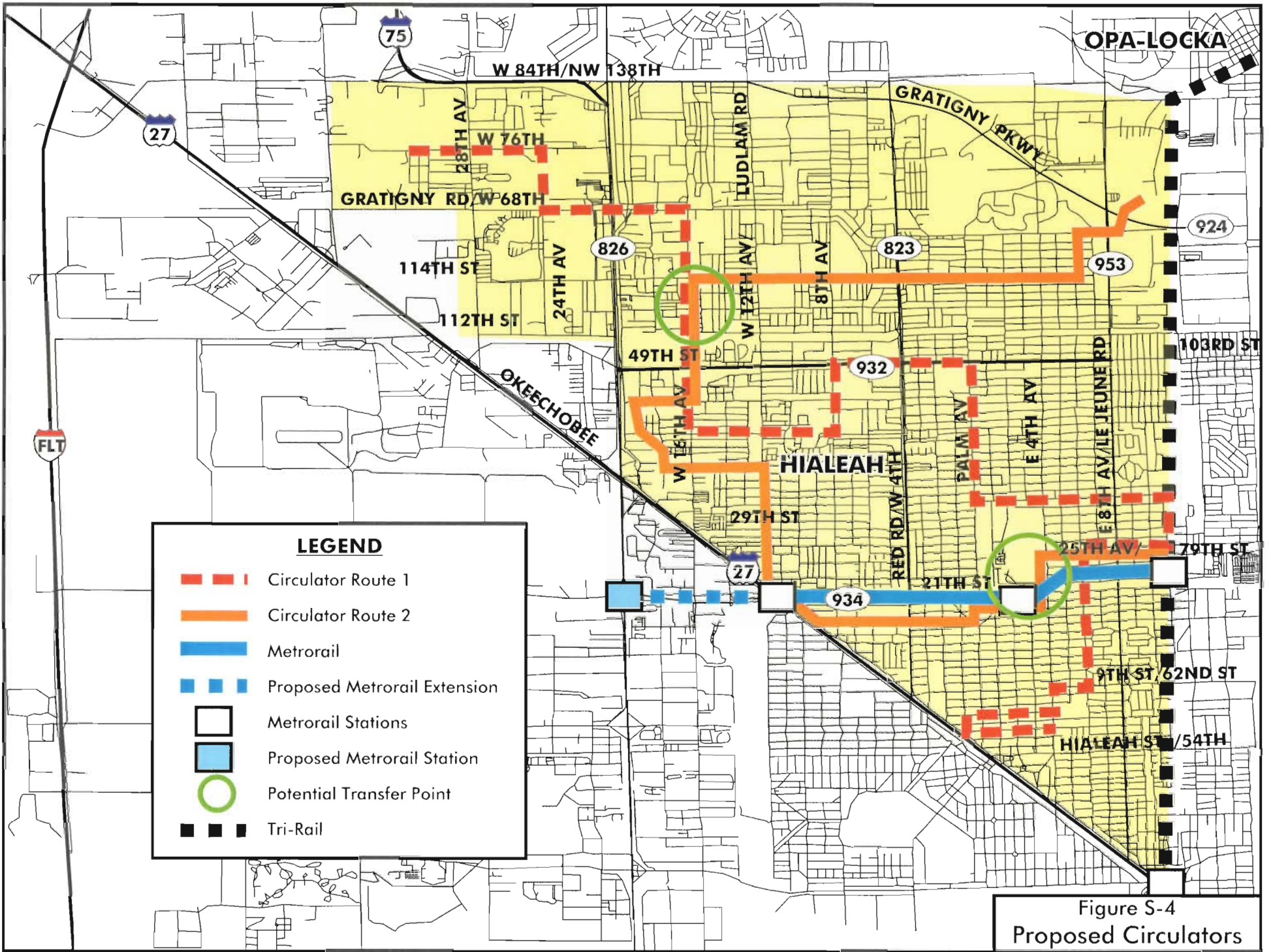


Figure S-4
Proposed Circulators

- Link residential areas of the city with major shopping, health care, recreational, employment and social service destinations
- Use neighborhood streets whenever possible
- Coordinate and interface with all existing transportation providers, including MDTA, Conchita Express, Metrorail, various children's transportation services, social service agencies, etc.

It is recommended that the City of Hialeah circulator service should:

- Provide service at 30-minute frequency
- Operate two-way service along the entire route alignment
- Have a service span (hours of operation) of 12 hours on weekdays and eight hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.
- Establish a transit focal point at a central location.
- Consider a fare of less than the MDTA/Conchita fare of \$1.25 (75 cents is suggested). This should reflect the intent of the service to serve as a local neighborhood service and the probability that most trips on the service will be short. It will be important to ensuring ridership, but the potential for conflict/competition with MDTA/Conchita must be examined carefully to ensure the service is complementary rather than competitive.

The two proposed routes are approximately 11 miles long. Peak hour driving time with 10 stops (at 18 seconds per stop) is 42 minutes. Because of the targeted market for seniors, significant time should be allowed in the schedule for seniors to get on and off the bus. Therefore, a one-hour, one-way running time for both routes is recommended.

To maintain 30-minute frequency on the service, eight buses will be required. Two spare vehicles should be available. Therefore, 10 vehicles will be needed.

Organization

The purpose of the Hialeah Circulator will be to establish a local community transit service that can complement the regional service provided by MDTA and will increase the overall level of transit mobility in Hialeah.

The first step in establishing the Hialeah Circulator will be obtaining appropriate licensing and approval from the Dade County Passenger Transportation Regulation Commission (PTRC). The certificate of transportation is required by Chapter 31 of the County Code. To allow the City to qualify for County funds in the future, an interlocal agreement will need to be signed with Dade County. The interlocal agreement establishes the operating parameters of the circulator service and its relationship to MDTA.

The City of Hialeah would be the administrator and designated funding recipient of funds being applied to the circulator. The most likely scenario would be for administration of the service to be the responsibility of the City's Streets and Leisure Services (parks) division.

In putting the circulator service on the street, the City has several options:

- Providing all service, which would require hiring and training drivers and support personnel, acquiring vehicles, and providing all administrative and maintenance functions.
- Acquiring the vehicles and contracting all or portion of administration, operations and maintenance.
- Contracting out the service including vehicles, to a provider.

Assuming the operating span, frequencies, and fares defined above, it is estimated that over 1,000,000 passenger trips annually would be provided by the service. The demonstration project represents an opportunity to implement a model of how communities/systems can increase/improve local transit services in their community using a public/private partnership while allowing the regional bus service to allocate its resources to enhancing regional services.

Cost and Funding

This section addresses the funding for establishing the proposed service. Table S-1 presents the costs for starting up the program.

Item	Cost
Buses (10 E1 Dorado ELF "cutaway" model bus or similar)	\$980,000
Operating Cost (Assumes fully allocated costs covering administration, maintenance, operation, and marketing)	\$1,260,800
TOTAL	\$2,240,800

A fare of \$0.75 has been recommended for the circulator service. This fare would provide \$803,760 in operating revenue. Table S-2 presents the program's first-year cost requirements with fare revenue accounting for \$1,437,040.

In August 1998, the City of Hialeah applied to the Florida Department of Transportation for its Public Transit Service Development Program. This program provides operating and/or capital funds for three years for demonstration transportation services. The applying entity must provide a minimum of 50 percent matching funds. In August 1998, FDOT awarded the City \$175,000 for start-up of the demonstration service in FY 1998, which the City agreed to match. (There may be additional funds available through this program.) As a result, additional funding will be needed as shown in Table S-3.

As shown in Table S-3, slightly more than \$1 million needs to be funded to fully implement the circulator service. The City is working to procure this funding. In recognition that in Fiscal Year 1999, with authorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, there may be Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds available as well as funds available from other programs. The City of Hialeah has requested from the MPO, through the Transportation Improvement Program process, consideration for additional funds to support the Hialeah Circulator demonstration program.

Table S-2 First-year Costs with Fare Revenue		
Item	Cost	
Buses		\$980,000
Operating Costs	\$1,260,800	
Less Fare Revenue	\$803,760	
Net Operating Cost		\$457,040
TOTAL		\$1,437,040

Table S-3 Additional Funding Requirements			
Item	Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Proposed First-year Cost Requirement	\$1,437,040		
FDOT Grant		\$175,000	
City Match		\$175,000	
TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENT			\$1,087,040

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1. Introduction

In October, 1997, the Metropolitan Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization Governing Board approved funding of a Circulator Services Study under the FY 1998 UPWP Municipal Grant Program. The City of Hialeah also provided funding for the study.

In December, 1998, the City initiated the study with the support of Carr Smith Corradino.

The objective of the Hialeah Circulator Study is to explore the possibility of developing a local bus service to serve the residents of Hialeah. The service would be coordinated with existing Miami-Dade bus and rail service, as well as Metro Rail and Tri-Rail and local private jitney operators.

The study's focal points include determining:

- The best type of service for Hialeah
- How it should be coordinated and operated
- The level of funding available to support the service.

This report documents the work conducted for the ten-month study, the recommendations of the study, and operating and funding scenarios.

2. Existing Conditions

This chapter presents information on existing conditions in Hialeah as they relate to a potential transit circulator service. Information is provided on the demographic base of the community, transportation providers, and potential travel demand.

2.1 Demographics

The City of Hialeah is located in northwest Dade County and covers over 20 square miles (Figure 2-1). The city was incorporated in 1925 and has a population of over 200,000 as of the 1990 census. Estimates by the Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research place the population at 206,500 as of April, 1996. Other estimates place the population closer to 215,000.

The City has a largely Hispanic population, with many residents of Hispanic origin. Many households are occupied by extended families, which include elderly relatives. Over 50% of the housing units in the city are multifamily and there are many small businesses (over 67,000 service jobs). In summary, Hialeah has population and density levels to warrant significant transit service but demographic factors (widespread origins and destinations) that are less than conducive to the service. In discussions with current riders of Miami-Dade Transit Agency (MDTA) buses, users of the jitney services, and community officials, there is a perception that the level of public transportation service in Hialeah is insufficient.

1990 census data were reviewed to identify transportation characteristics for the community. Figure 2-2 identifies the transit “propensity,” or likelihood of areas in the city to have residents that use or would use transit. The “high” areas are those most likely to support transit while the medium and low areas are less likely. The assessment presented in the graphic is based on population density, age, sex, income, and automobile availability.

2.2 Existing Transportation Services

MDTA’s Metrobus service is the primary transportation service provider in Hialeah. Transportation is also available from private jitney services, private transportation companies (including guaguas, which specialize in transporting children for after school activities, and local taxi services). Regional service is available through Metrobus and Metrorail as well as Tri-Rail.

Figure 2-3 presents an overview of the existing transit service in the city. MDTA’s service is fairly extensive, although there are some unserved areas, particularly in the northwestern and northeastern areas of the city.

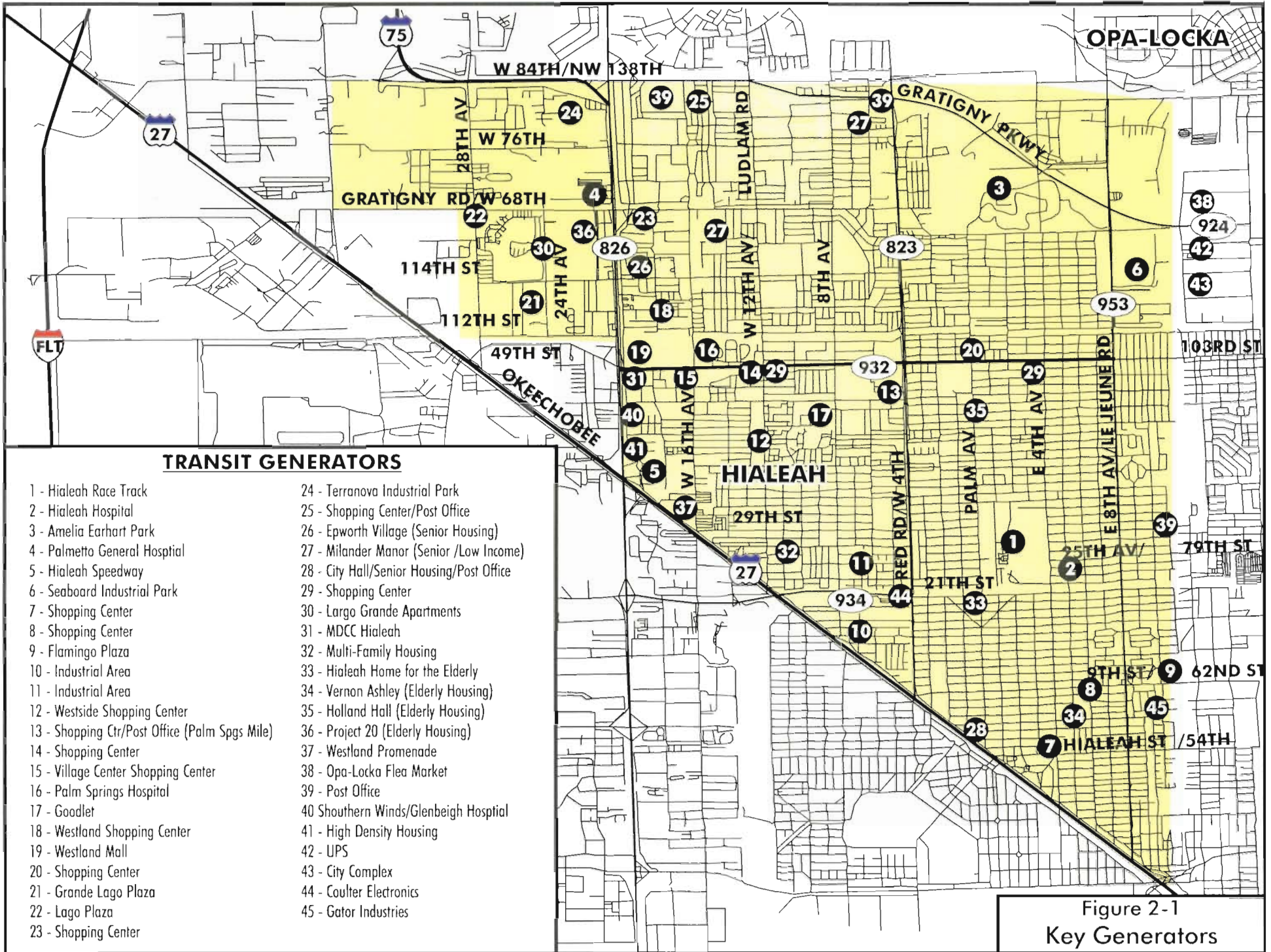
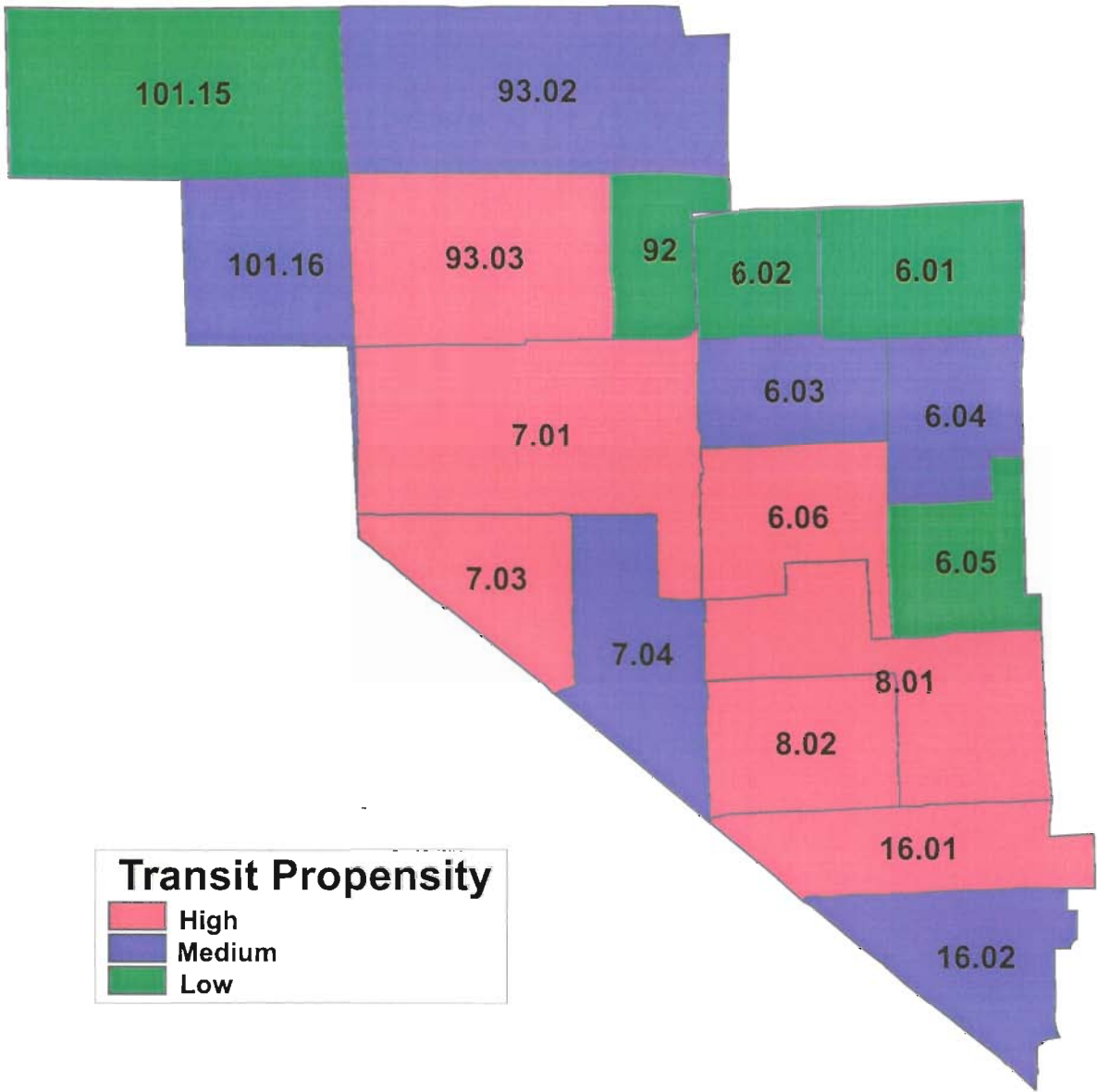


Figure 2-1
Key Generators

Figure 2-2
Transit Propensity



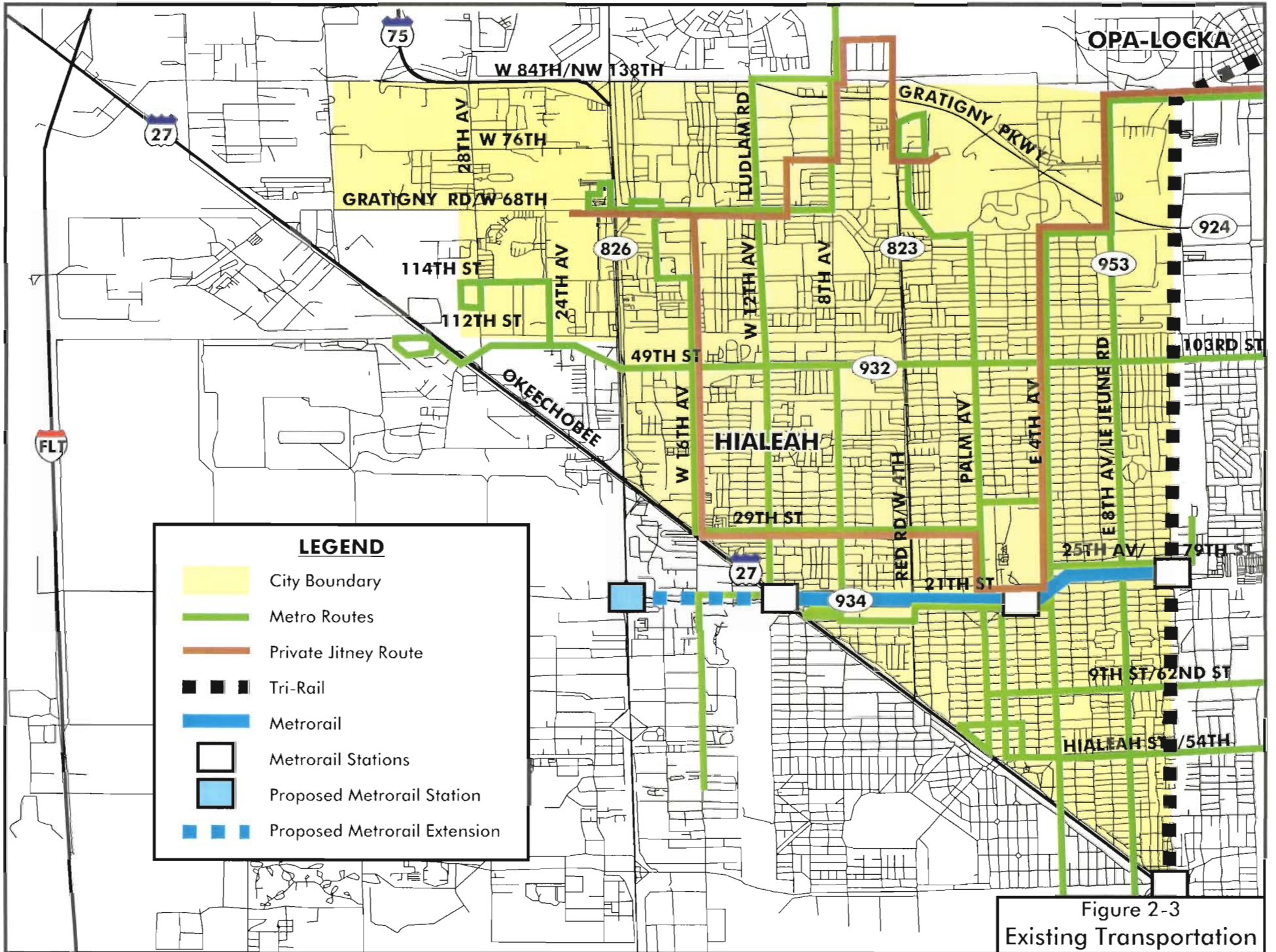


Figure 2-3
Existing Transportation

Table 2-1 and Figure 2-3 present MDTA and jitney routes that serve Hialeah, their service spans (hours when service is available) and frequencies (the number of times a bus on a particular route passes a particular point).

**Table 2-1
Metro-Dade Bus Routes
Operating in Hialeah**

Route	Headway		Hours per Day
	Peak	Off-Peak	
28	60	60	5:30 a.m. – 7:55 p.m.
29	70	70	5:49 a.m. – 7:50 p.m.
33	30	45/60	5:30 a.m. – 11:35 p.m.
36 ¹	1/20/60	30/60	5:03 a.m. – 10:05 p.m.
37	30	30	4:54 a.m. – 12:14 a.m.
42	60	60	4:45 a.m. – 8:50 p.m.
54	20	30/60	5:10 a.m. – 10:08 p.m.
62	10/20/30	15/30	5:11 a.m. – 1:33 a.m.
73	30/60	60	5:01 a.m. – 10:52 p.m.
87	30	60	5:49 a.m. – 8:08 p.m.
E ¹	60	60	5:45 a.m. – 8:53 p.m.
J ¹	20	30/60	4:20 a.m. – 12:48 a.m.
L	10/20	12/24/30	4:32 a.m. – 2:24 a.m.
Airport Shuttle Tri-Rail Shuttle			

¹Peripheral service daily.

Using the bus service data available from MDTA, an assessment of the level of service in Hialeah was made. This information is presented in Figure 2-4.

2.3 Community Circulators in Other Municipalities

There are a number of communities in south Florida that operate localized community transit services. These include long-established services such as Hallandale in Broward County and new services such as the Electric Wave in Miami Beach and a circulator service in North Miami Beach.

2.3.1 The Miami Beach Electric Wave Circulator

The Electric Wave circulator opened in the Spring of 1998 and operates on a 12-block portion of South Beach (Washington, 5th Street, and 17th Street). Six electric vehicles provide the service. The contract manager for the service is the Miami Beach Transportation Management Association. Operations are provided by Red Top (American Bus Lines) which hires and trains the drivers, provides for insurance, and handles dispatching. If additional vehicles are needed in the case of big events, Red Top brings in their own buses. The operations contract is worth approximately \$1.1 million annually.

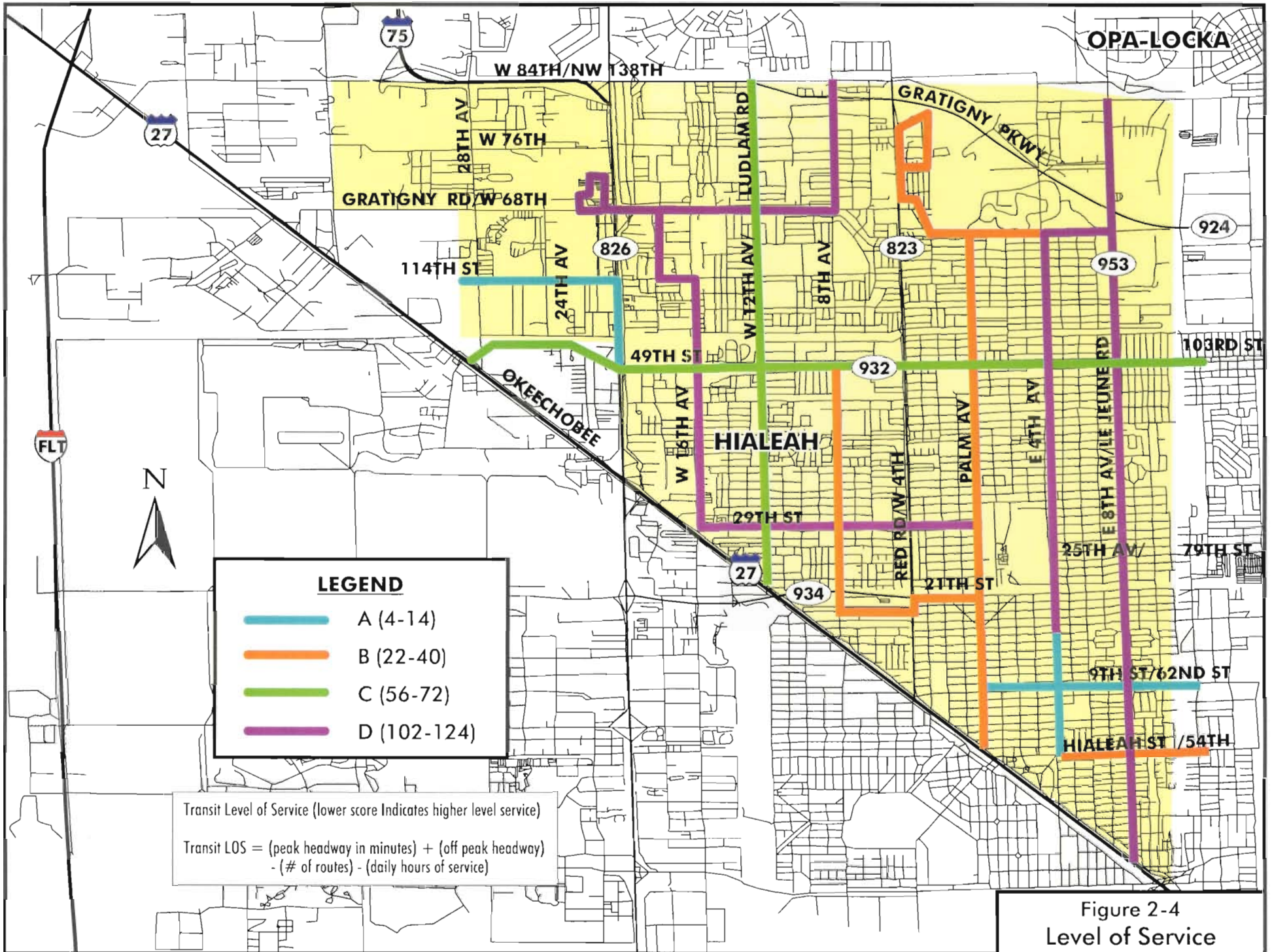


Figure 2-4
Level of Service

Funding for the service is provided by the City of Miami Beach, the Florida Department of Transportation, the Clean Cities Coalition, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, the Florida Power & Light Company, the Florida Environmental Protection Agency, and the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The organizational basis for the Electric Wave is an interlocal agreement between the Miami-Dade Transit Agency and the City of Miami Beach. MDTA provides no direct funding to the service. There is some overlap with several MDTA routes. Routes W, C, H, and K have experienced some ridership loss (although this may be directly due to the current free fare on the circulator). The circulator service is averaging about 3,500 riders per day and, although some ridership has been lost on MDTA routes, there appears to be a net gain of new trips. If the pattern continues after a fare is instituted, MDTA may consider investing some of the resources from those routes in more regionally (major corridor) service.

2.3.2 The North Miami Beach NM B-Line

The NM B-Line is a fixed route circulator in North Miami Beach with two vehicles. One is a 15-passenger van and the other is a mini-bus with a 20-22 passenger capacity. The van is operated on Monday through Friday and both vehicles are operated on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

The circulator service averages about 40 riders per day. The City anticipates ridership to increase when an advertising/promotional campaign begins.

The service is funded through the Florida Department of Transportation and the Miami-Dade Transit Agency. The operator and owner of the vehicles is a company called Handi-van. They were selected through an RFP issued by the County. The contract for the service is the County, rather than the City of North Miami Beach. This is because an interlocal agreement has not yet been approved¹. When the agreement is established between the City and MDTA, the City will be able to operate the system directly.

The City provides staff support. A half-time supervisor handles quality control and complaints; a quarter-time recreation manager handles administrative items. At this time, FDOT has committed \$100,000 for FY 1999.

2.4 Information Gathering

Review of demographic information, discussions with local officials and MDTA transit staff, and interviews with community businesses and organizations, as well as current transit users have pointed to need for more transit opportunities in Hialeah. This section presents additional information collected for the study through research efforts, meetings, etc.

2.4.1 Information Gathering/Survey

A primary target of the Hialeah Circulator service would be the elderly, people with disabilities and income limitations, and youth. In an effort to get information from these groups, survey forms were distributed through the various Parks and Recreation programs. The forms were printed in English and Spanish. The results are presented in Table 2-2.

¹For a municipality to operate a publicly funded transit service in Dade County, an interlocal agreement between the municipality and Miami-Dade Transit is required.

Table 2-2
Results of Surveys Collected from
Users of Hialeah's Seniors and
Parks and Recreation Programs

Your age?

	Responses	Percent
0 – 10	0	0.0
11 – 20	21	9.3
21 – 31	29	12.8
31 – 40	45	19.8
41 – 50	37	16.3
51 – 60	21	9.3
61 – Older	68	30.0
No answer	6	2.6
Total	227	100.0

Are you male or female?

	Responses	Percent
Male	91	40.1
Female	133	58.5
No answer	3	1.3
Total	227	100.0

Do you have any unmet transportation needs?

	Responses	Percent
Yes	101	44.5
No	104	45.8
No answer	22	9.7
Total	227	100.0

Do you use:

	Responses	Percent
Metrobus	65	28.6
Jitneys	9	4.0
Both	38	16.7
Other	70	30.8
No answer	45	19.8
Total	227	100.0

For what purpose do you use public transportation?

Work

	Responses	Percent
Yes	54	23.8
No	173	76.2
Total	227	100.0

Shopping

	Responses	Percent
Yes	74	32.6
No	153	67.4
Total	227	100.0

Church

	Responses	Percent
Yes	30	22.0
No	177	78.0
Total	227	100.0

Social

	Responses	Percent
Yes	52	22.9
No	175	77.1
Total	227	100.0

Recreation

	Responses	Percent
Yes	81	35.6
No	175	64.4
Total	227	100.0

**Table 2-2 (Continued)
Results of Surveys Collected from
Users of Hialeah's Seniors and
Parks and Recreation Programs**

Are there places you cannot go now that you would like to?

	Responses	Percent
Yes	72	31.7
No	98	43.2
No answer	57	25.1
Total	227	100.0

Do you have access to an automobile?

	Responses	Percent
Yes	129	56.8
No	86	37.9
No answer	12	5.3
Total	227	100.0

Are buses or jitneys conveniently scheduled?

	Responses	Percent
Yes	75	33.0
No	107	47.1
No answer	45	19.8
Total	227	100.0

Do you have a disability?

	Responses	Percent
Yes	24	10.6.98
No	181	79.7
No answer	22	9.7
Total	227	100.0

Are there times that you would like service that are not currently available?

	Responses	Percent
Yes	79	34.8
No	80	35.2
No answer	68	30.0
Total	227	100.0

If yes, do you require a wheelchair?

	Responses	Percent
Yes	3	1.3
No	126	55.5
No answer	98	43.2
Total	227	100.0

Two-hundred twenty-seven surveys were completed. Although the survey was not a strictly random sample (specific populations were targeted), the response is considered significant.

The majority of the respondents to the survey were 20 years or older, with a large number over the age of 60. Also, more women than men responded to the survey, with 58.5 percent of the respondents being female.

Almost half those responding, 44.5 percent, indicated they had unmet transportation needs.

2.4.2 Interviews/Meetings

The following represent meetings held as part of the study.

- Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Metro-Dade Transit Agency
- Conchita Express
- Florida Department of Transportation - District VI
- Miami Beach Transportation Management Association (concerning the Electric Wave) circulator service
- Patricia Rogers-Libert concerning the North Miami Beach circulator
- Miami Dade Consumer Services Division
- Hialeah Housing Authority
- Hialeah High School
- Hialeah/Miami Springs Chamber of Commerce
- Palm Springs Lakes Shopping Center
- ABC Products

Key findings from the meeting include a consensus that existing transit service in Hialeah was inadequate, that there were good opportunities to coordinate a local service with MDTA and jitney service, and that there is potential for private sector support for a community transit program.

3. Service Design

This section identifies the recommendations for development of circulatory transit service within the City of Hialeah. It is based on work conducted as part of a feasibility study to explore the possibility of local bus service sponsored by the city to serve the residents of Hialeah.

There is currently significant need for additional transportation within the community. MDTA routes have adequate coverage in the area but most routes run on a 60-minute frequency. In addition, major developing areas such as the portion of the city west of the Palmetto Expressway have very little service. Key populations in need of transportation include seniors, youths, and people needing access to jobs in the community, or to connect with the regional transit (Metrobus or Metrorail).

3.1 Service Design Goals

The following goals were observed in design of the route system:

- Provide transit to underserved or unserved areas.
- Target senior citizens, income-disadvantaged, and youth as primary markets.
- Link residential areas of the city with major shopping, health care, recreational, and social service destinations.
- Use neighborhood streets wherever possible to bring transit closer to residential areas.
- Minimize the need to transfer between buses to complete a trip.
- Coordinate and interface with all existing transportation providers, including MDTA, Conchita Express, various children's transportation services, social service agencies, etc.
- Minimize cost of operation.

3.2 Service Options

Several alternatives for the transportation circulator were considered. These included:

- Demand response
- Point/route deviation
- Hub and spoke
- Fixed-route (linear route)
- Fixed-route (loop route)

3.3 Review of Service Options

An evaluation of the alternatives was conducted. A summary of this analysis for each alternative is as follows:

- **Demand Response** - Although this type of public transportation is the most convenient to the passenger, it is expensive to operate and supervise. The curb-to-curb nature of the service requires an excessive amount of miles and hours to be expended when compared to fixed-route service. Further, skilled dispatch personnel must be employed to control the dynamic scheduling of each vehicle.
- **Point/Route Deviation** - This service combines the simplicity of regularly scheduled fixed-route service with the convenience of demand response. However, it is almost as expensive to operate as the latter, and still requires skilled dispatch personnel to control the operation at all times.
- **Hub and Spoke** - This structure, also known as timed transfer, consists of relatively short linear or loop routes operating between a centrally located common transfer point and two or more different geographic areas of the community. This method provides good transit coverage, high schedule reliability due to the short route lengths, and easy passenger access to any part of the community which is served by a route. However, it can be expensive to operate because of the need to provide compatible levels of service on all routes so that they all meet at the transfer point simultaneously. Further, although transfer connections are coordinated, having to transfer between buses to complete a trip is one of the most common responses by the public when asked to state reasons for reluctance to use transit. As well, some passenger trips may require significant out-of-direction travel to reach a destination, due to having to go through the hub.
- **Fixed-Route/Loop** - This service type provides the maximum level of geographic coverage at the least possible cost. Operating a loop in one direction results in considerable out-of-direction travel for certain trips. Bi-directional operation reduces the amount of out-of-direction travel, but does not eliminate it for all trips, depending on the size of the loop. If the route alignment ever needs to be changed, such as for extensions into new areas, some segments of the original route will be left without service because of realignment of the loop to different streets.
- **Fixed-Route/Linear** - This is the most common route structure for transit service. Although it is more expensive to operate than a Loop route, it minimizes out-of-direction travel and can be modified at any time with a minimum of disruption to established travel patterns. Also, schedule recovery (layover) points can be located at the terminus of the route without inconveniencing passengers on the bus who have yet to reach their destination, as with Loop routes.

Based on this analysis, it was determined that the Hialeah Circulator system should be linear fixed-routes, operating on high frequencies out of a common transfer point. The proposed route alignments should link almost all of the major commercial, government, health care, recreation and social service destinations with nearly all of the medium and high density residential units in the city, and with many

single-family residential neighborhoods. The proposed service is envisioned to operate as “streetcar” type service, meaning that boarding and alighting activity would remain fairly constant during a one-way trip. It is anticipated that very few riders would travel from one end of a route to the other. This is because the routes have been designed with a combination of origins and destinations throughout. The service should operate out of a transit center that would allow frequent service. The circulator should be the local service for the community. It would provide linkage to the regional service provided by Metrobus and Metrorail.

3.4 Recommendations

It is recommended that the City of Hialeah circulator service should:

- Provide a minimum of 30-minute frequency on a system of linear routes that provide coverage through the city by meeting at a transfer center to make the service as convenient as possible;
- Operate two-way service along the route alignment to minimize the need for out-of-direction travel, which is common to loop-type route alignments;
- Have a service span (hours of operation) of approximately 12 hours on weekdays, and eight hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays to satisfy the travel needs of the majority of transit users;
- Consider an “on-street” transit terminal or meeting point at the Hialeah Metro Rail Station and Westland Mall. The transit terminal should allow for coordination among the City route, Conchita, MDTA, and other services. This formalized transfer point would allow for safe transferring between buses, provide shelters and benches for passengers to wait for other services in comfort, and would be a focal point to showcase transit in the community; and,
- Consider a fare of less than the MDTA/Conchita fare of \$1.25 (\$.75 is recommended). This should reflect the intent of the service to be a local neighborhood circulator and the probability that most trips on the service will be short. It will be important to ensuring ridership, but the potential for conflict/competition with MDTA/Conchita must be examined carefully to ensure the service is complementary rather than competitive.

3.5 Route Design

It is recommended that a system of linear routes (Figure 3-1) be developed with a central transfer point. One option would be the Hialeah Metrorail station, where infrastructure exists to accommodate Metro Dade buses. The other option would be Westland Mall. It is also feasible for both locations to serve as transfer locations depending on the final routes selected.

The system should be implemented depending on available funding. The first route to be implemented (Phase A) would operate generally from northwest Hialeah south to the 49th Street Corridor, east to the Metrorail station on 79th Avenue and then south to the downtown. Phase B would generally link southwest Hialeah with northeast Hialeah. The routes would intersect at a central transfer point and operates in 30 minutes frequency. Phase A focuses on the City residents with retail/commercial

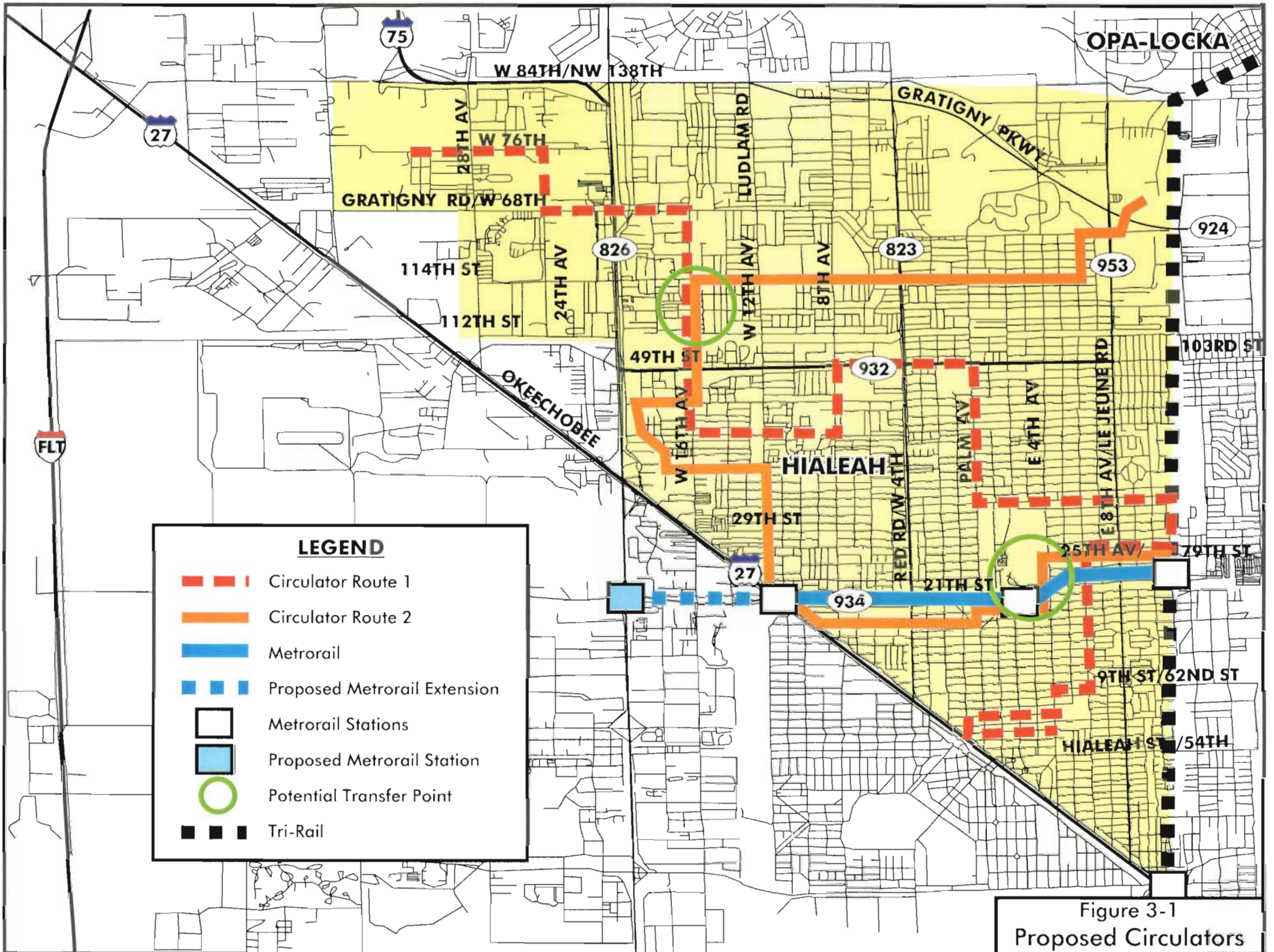


Figure 3-1
Proposed Circulators

government services. Phase B focuses on expanded linkage to employment at industrial areas. The routes will intersect with and complement existing MDTA and jitney services.

3.6 Route Specifications and Vehicle Requirements

The Phase A route is 11.5 miles in length (Phase B is slightly less at 11.2 miles in length). Peak hour driving time with 10 stops (at 18 seconds per stop) is 42 minutes. Because of the targeted market for seniors, significant time should be allowed in the schedule for seniors to get on and off the bus. Therefore, a one-hour, one-way running time for both routes is recommended.

To maintain 30-minute frequency on the service, eight buses will be required. Two spare vehicles should be available. Therefore, 10 vehicles will be needed.

3.7 Organization

The purpose of the Hialeah Circulator will be to establish a local community transit service that can complement the regional service provided by MDTA will increase the overall level of transit mobility in Hialeah.

3.7.1 Licensing

The first step in establishing the Hialeah Circulator will be obtaining appropriate licensing and approval from the Dade County Passenger Transportation Regulation Commission (PTRC). The certificate of transportation is required by Chapter 31 of the County Code. To allow the City to qualify for county funds in the future, an interlocal agreement will need to be signed with Dade County.

3.7.2 Administration

The City of Hialeah would be the administrator and designated funding recipient of funds being applied to the circulator. The most likely scenario would be for administration of the service to be the responsibility of the City's Leisure Services/Streets Department (Parks and Recreation Division).

3.7.3 Operations

In putting the circulator service on the street, the city has several options:

- Providing all service, which would require hiring and training drivers and support personnel, acquiring vehicles, and providing all administrative and maintenance functions.
- Acquiring the vehicles and contracting all or portion of administration, operations, and maintenance.
- Contracting out the service including vehicles, to a provider.

3.8 Cost

This section addresses the approximate capital cost of purchasing vehicles for the Hialeah Circulator service, as well as the approximate first year operating cost. The cost figures shown are estimates based upon assumptions regarding the type and number of buses to be used for the service, the frequency of service, vehicle speed and route length.

3.8.1 Capital Cost

Vehicles - El Dorado National Economical Low Floor (ELF) "cutaway" model bus or similar, equipped with wheelchair access ramp, two tie down positions and up to 21 seats, air conditioned, diamond "drop" type farebox:

Approximate cost per unit	\$98,000
Approximate total cost of 10 buses (8 in service; 2 spares)	\$980,000

3.8.2 Operating Cost (First Year)

Per the route specifications and route parameters shown above:
 Eight buses in service operating approximately 12 service hours each per weekday; and 8 service hours each per Saturday, Sunday and Holiday =

96 bus hours per weekday;		
64 bus hours per Saturday, Sunday and Holiday		
255 weekdays per year x 96 bus hours	=	24,480 hours
110 Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays per year x 64 bus hours	=	7,040 hours
Total annual bus hours	=	31,520 hours
Estimated fully allocated cost per bus hour ¹ - first year	=	\$40.00 per hour
Estimated total annual operating cost - first year	=	\$1,260,800

3.9 Funding

This section addresses the funding for establishing the proposed service. Table 1 presents the costs for starting up the program.

A fare of \$0.75 has been recommended for the circulator service. This fare would provide \$803,760 in operating revenue. Table 2 presents the program's first-year cost requirements with fare revenue accounting for \$1,437,040.

¹This is the estimated total cost of operating the service. This is fully allocated and includes administration, maintenance, and marketing. Assuming is provided by the city, or if the service is put out for bid, the actual operating cost may be lower.

Table 1 First-year Costs Hialeah Circulator Service	
Item	Cost
Buses (10 E1 Dorado ELF "cutaway" model bus or similar)	\$980,000
Operating Cost (Assumes fully allocated costs covering administration, maintenance, operation, and marketing)	\$1,260,800
TOTAL	\$2,240,800

Table 2 First-year Costs with Fare Revenue		
Item	Cost	
Buses		\$980,000
Operating Costs	\$1,260,800	
Less Fare Revenue	\$803,760	
Net Operating Cost		\$457,040
TOTAL		\$1,437,040

In August 1998, the City of Hialeah applied to the Florida Department of Transportation for its Public Transit Service Development Program. This program provides operating and/or capital funds for three years for demonstration transportation services. The applying entity must provide a minimum of 50 percent matching funds. In August 1998, FDOT awarded the City \$175,000 for start-up of the demonstration service in FY 1998, which the City agreed to match. (There may be additional funds available through this program.) As a result, additional funding will be needed as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Additional Funding Requirements			
Item	Cost	Funded	Unfunded
Proposed First-year Cost Requirement	\$1,437,040		
FDOT Grant		\$175,000	
City Match		\$175,000	
TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENT			\$1,087,040

As shown in Table 3, slightly more than \$1 million needs to be funded to fully implement the circulator service. The City is working to procure this funding. In recognition that in Fiscal Year 1999, with authorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, there may be Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds available as well as funds available from other programs. The City of Hialeah has requested from the MPO, through the Transportation Improvement Program process, consideration for additional funds to support the Hialeah Circulator demonstration program.

3.10 Implementation Issues

The purpose of this section is to identify issues, which must be resolved during implementation of Circulator Route transit service, as described in this report. The five major functional areas of a transit system (operations, maintenance, public information, finance, and administration) are listed below, along with specific issues related to each function, which will need to be addressed.

The larger issue of whether and which of the following functions will be contracted to private firms should be determined first. Following this decision, some of these tasks may be the responsibility of the private operator. Many of the issues listed below, such as setting fares, color schemes and logos, and the city will still determine cash handling. However, others, such as operational policies and trip schedules, for example, may be developed through a combined effort of the city and the contractor.

Administration

- Establish cash fare amount and if other fare media, such as passes or tickets will be made available to the public, and at what price.
- Establish organizational chart for transit department.
- Establish personnel policies, if different from other city departments, and for specific classifications, such as bus operator.
- Establish compensation packages for transit personnel.
- Designate person or department responsible for handling personal loss or injury claims by passengers.

Operations

- Trip schedule, time point locations, hours/days of service.
- Driver schedules, hours of work, reporting time policies, nonoperating time allowances.
- Driver training, safety, certification and licensing.
- Driver information and operating instructions.
- Destination sign designations.
- Bus stop locations and operating policies, such as pulling into senior centers to load/unload.
- Bus operator work rules, enforcement and disciplinary procedures (pre-employment and random drug testing, early/late operation, off-route, leaving vehicle unattended, no-show for work assignment, rude treatment of passengers, pilfering fares, etc.)
- Deadhead routes to/from garage.
- Location of layover locations and rest room facilities for drivers.
- Radio communication procedures.
- Develop policy/procedure for passenger safety and security on board buses and at bus stops.

Maintenance

Vehicle

- Specifications for new vehicle purchase.
- Training for maintenance personnel on new equipment.
- Radio equipment specs and maintenance.
- Farebox maintenance.
- Fueling procedures.
- Procedure and frequency of vehicle cleaning - exterior/interior.
- Seat repair procedure and frequency.
- Body and paint repair procedure and frequency.
- Wheelchair lifts--mechanic training and routine repair and maintenance.
- Vehicle maintenance record keeping.
- Fleet replacement schedule and planning.

Facilities

- Installation, maintenance and cleaning of bus stop signs, street furniture, shelters and other amenities.
- Updating of on-street information facilities.

Public Information/Outreach

- Bus stop sign design/color/production.
- Bus system name, logo, color, and paint design for buses.
- Establish telephone number for transit information/designate personnel and hours/days of operation.
- Design, develop, produce and distribute public timetables and other informational materials, and update as necessary.
- Designate transit representative to attend community functions and visit social service and senior housing facilities to assist the public in taking advantage of transit.
- Develop lost and found article policy and procedure/telephone contract for the public.
- Develop customer comment (complaints/commendations) policy/procedure; designate person(s) to resolve the problems.
- Designate contact person for media inquiries.

Finance/Funding

- Designate person responsible for transit system accounting (grants, fare revenue, expenses both capital and operating).
- Designate person responsible for grants management.
- Cash handling - develop policy/procedure for secure handling of cash fares from the time they are taken from the vehicles until deposit.
- Develop ridership count form for driver use; record daily ridership, and produce report periodically to track trends and productivity measures, such as local share of cost per rider.