

CITY OF ALACHUA, FLORIDA

**CATS
TRANSIT IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM**

FINAL REPORT

December 2008

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2008 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

For about two years, the City of Alachua has been providing public transportation service designed with two purposes in mind:

- To connect under-employed and unemployed East Gainesville residents with job opportunities at companies located in Alachua
- To provide a transportation alternative for Alachua residents that travel to the University of Florida, Shands Hospital, Downtown Gainesville, and the VA Medical Center for work, medical, shopping or pleasure trips

The first year of operation was funded with a grant from the Florida Department of Transportation. Funding from the City of Alachua and a financial contribution from the Board of County Commissioners supported the second year of operation. Ridership on the CATS route in Year One was lower than expected. However, the overall response to changes in Year Two showed a marked improvement, as evidenced by monthly ridership figures in excess of 100.

The City believes it is important to help serve the growing and ever-changing travel needs and expectations of the residents of Alachua. At this time, the City would like to focus its efforts on providing service that would meet some of the same travel needs as the existing shuttle route but concentrate on providing a stronger, transportation alternative to the residents of Alachua. To achieve this goal, the City undertook a study with the following objectives:

- Design a new system that would operate within the City of Alachua
- Preserve access to Gainesville RTS for regional transit trips
- Investigate funding issues

Since September 2006, The City of Alachua has provided a limited shuttle service between East Gainesville and southwest Alachua that provides an essential transportation service that is not offered by any other transit provider in the County and fulfills an unmet market need for transportation services.

The remaining sections of this report outlines the history of CATS (as presented in the CATS Business Plan), describes the existing service, presents a set of new routes that are designed to serve the City of Alachua and details the pertinent operating characteristics of the proposed service.

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II. EXISTING SERVICE

Background

Since September 2006, the City of Alachua has provided a limited shuttle service between East Gainesville and southwest Alachua that provides an essential transportation service that is not offered by any other transit provider in the County and fulfills an unmet market need for transportation services. This section briefly describes the City of Alachua Transit System (CATS). A condensed history and general description of the existing service is taken from the December 2007 City of Alachua Transit System Business Plan that was accepted by the MTPO on December 13, 2007.

CATS was created by the City of Alachua, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and North Central Florida Regional Planning Council (NCFRPC). New public transportation service was suggested in the fall of 2005 by the Alachua Mayor and City Manager in response to needs that were identified by the East Gainesville Initiative Task Force.

As a result of these suggestions, a Greater Alachua Transportation Task Force (GATTF) was created in October 2005. Task Force members included elected officials and local citizens as well as representatives from Dollar General, Florida Works, and MV Transportation, Inc., a private transportation service provider. Representatives from Gainesville's Regional Transit System (RTS) also participated, and the meetings were moderated by the Regional Planning Council.

The goal of the task force was to identify a way to provide public transportation that would match East Gainesville residents seeking jobs with employers located in Alachua. Following several months of discussion, the task force agreed that the next step would be to develop a transportation project that would be eligible for transit corridor development funds from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 2 Office for a two-year demonstration project. The Regional Planning Council prepared the FDOT application and submitted it to the City of Alachua for approval and subsequent adoption of Resolution 06-19 by the Alachua City Commission. The application was then submitted to FDOT prior to the May 1, 2006 deadline.

The City received \$83,750 from FDOT for the first year of operations, which covered the period from September 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007. A total of \$63,750 was budgeted for transportation operations and \$20,000 for marketing. The CATS service was inaugurated on September 12, 2006. Actual Year One expenses totaled \$91,544. The shortfall of \$7,794 was provided by the City of Alachua.

The primary goal was to provide a safe, reliable, and viable transportation option to residents in Alachua and job seekers in Gainesville by offering a transportation service that originates in East Gainesville, stops at the Progress Corporate Park and southwest Alachua industrial center complexes, and returns to East Gainesville at the end of the day.

Specific objectives included:

- Reduce auto trips on US 441
- Alleviate traffic congestion
- Offer access to rapidly growing employment sectors in Alachua to residents of East Gainesville
- Provide City of Alachua residents with a travel alternative to Gainesville for employment, medical appointments, and personal shopping trips

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- Assess the potential for expanded transit operations in Alachua County beyond Greater Gainesville

The three largest distribution center employers located at the Alachua southwest industrial complex are Dollar General (opened in October 2000), Wal-Mart (opened in January 2007), and Baugh Southeast (opened in January 2008). Collectively these employers provide over 1,400 jobs. It is projected to grow to over 2,400 jobs by 2012. In addition to these employers, another employment base served by the CATS project is the Progress Corporate Park area located along U.S. Highway 441 east of Alachua. Together there are approximately 1,000 jobs in this area.

Since the start of service, day-to-day operations have been managed and operated by a private transportation provider, MV Transportation, Inc. Service is provided using a handicapped accessible 14-passenger bus with room for 7 standees. The first year operating budget provides approximately six hours of service each day Monday through Friday.

Passenger fares were set at \$2 per one-way trip, with the ability to implement a reduced fare for senior and handicapped riders. The fare revenue collected by MV offsets the budgeted operating costs. Currently, the vehicle used to operate the CATS service does not have any type of farebox. Passengers give their fare directly to the driver who records the fare on a daily worksheet. If the City expands the service, this practice should be changed immediately. At a minimum, vehicles operated by third-party transportation providers should be required to have a "drop box" where passengers can deposit their fare.

The remainder of the first year FDOT grant was allocated to marketing. With this funding, the city engaged a marketing firm that developed a brand identity and launched the new service.

Service Design and Schedule

From the outset, CATS has consisted of one route designed to offer one morning trip that operates between Gainesville and Alachua before it returns to Gainesville and serves the University of Florida, Shands Hospital at the University of Florida, and VA Medical Center. An afternoon trip starts at the VA Medical Center and runs to Alachua. The afternoon return trip operates between Alachua and the RTS Downtown station.

In the first year of operation, the CATS route started in Gainesville at the Alachua County Health Department, continued on to Downtown Gainesville, and then ran to the Progress Corporate Park and Dollar General Distribution Center in Alachua. After that leg of the route was completed, the bus continued on to Hitchcock's Shopping Plaza in Alachua and back to Gainesville serving Shands Hospital at University of Florida and the Veteran's Administration Medical Center. The Year One and Year Two route alignments are illustrated in Exhibit II-1 and Exhibit II-2.

The route alignment was modified for the second year of operation. In Gainesville, the alignment was modified to serve the RTS Downtown Transfer Center, a Super Wal-Mart store, 13th Street Corridor and Northwood Village to connect with RTS. In Alachua, service was extended to the Wal-Mart and Baugh SE Distribution Centers, nearby office buildings, City Hall, other local employers, and apartments.

Schedule changes were also made at the time of the Year Two alignment changes. In addition to the changes that were needed because of the alignment modification, the number of scheduled

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bus stops was increased from 7 to 22. The Year One and Year Two CATS schedules are presented in Exhibit II-3 and Exhibit II-4.

Exhibit II-1 CATS Year One Route Alignment

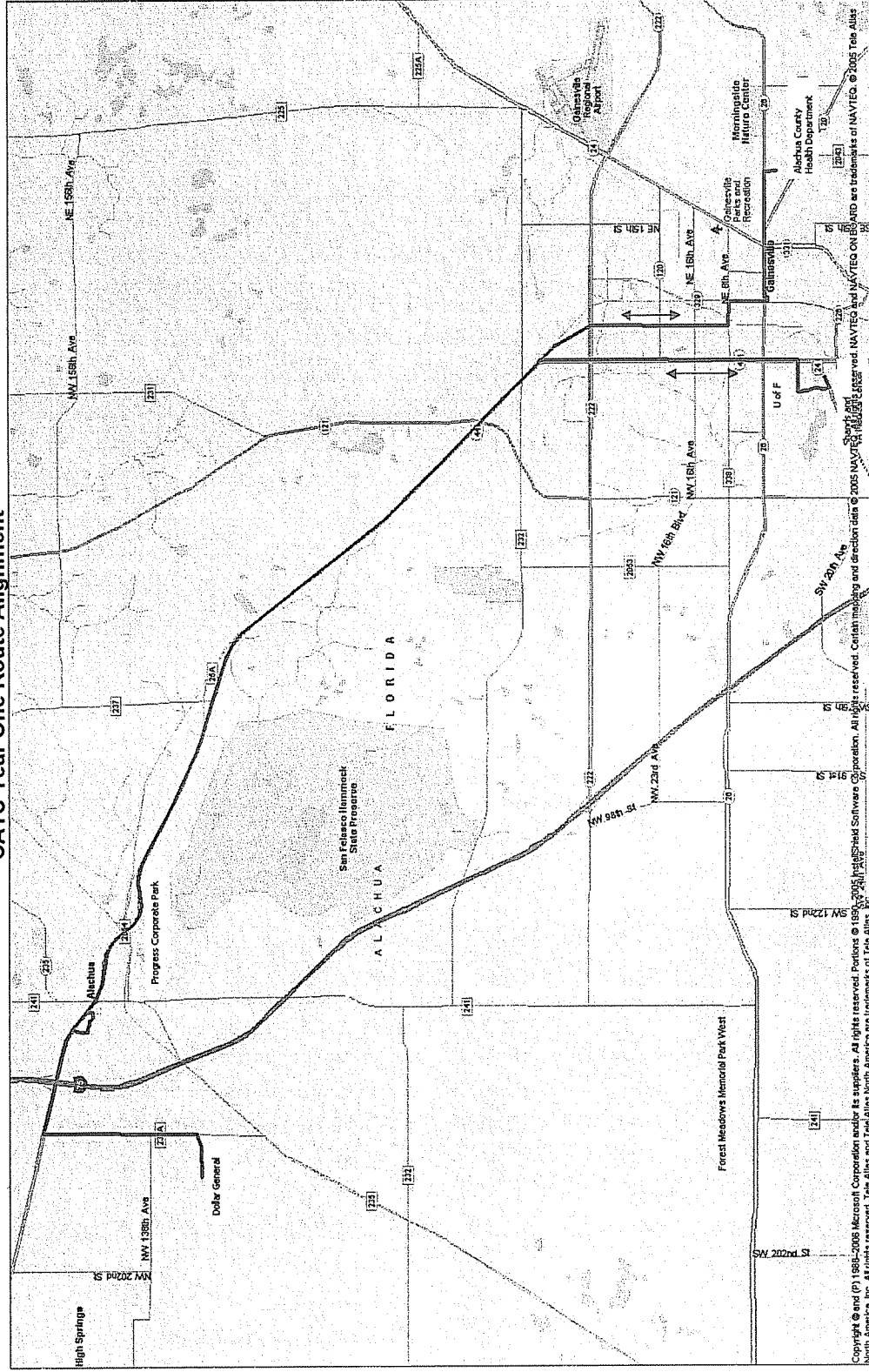
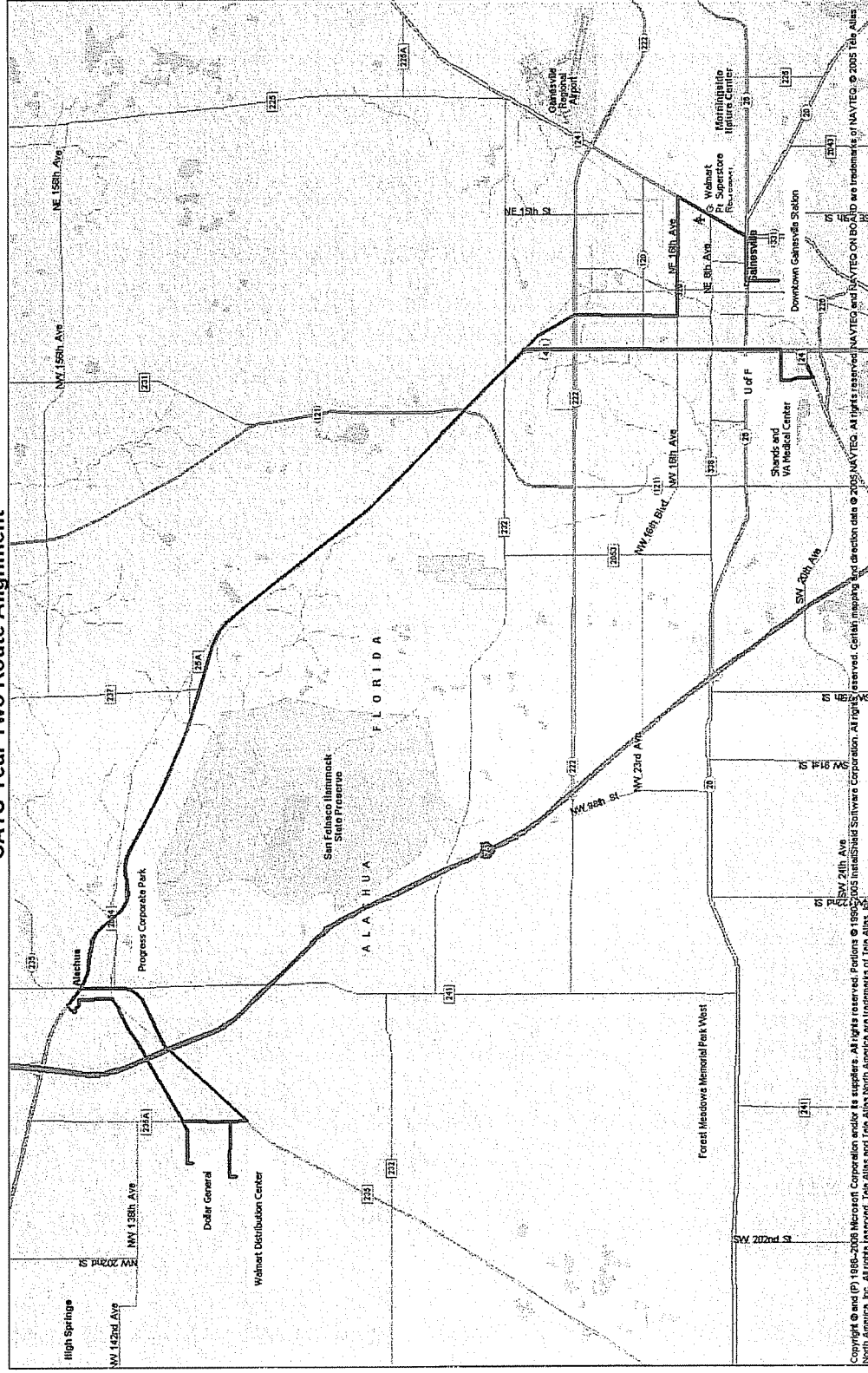


Exhibit II-2 CATS Year Two Route Alignment



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The major changes in the Year One and Year Two route alignments involve the eastern leg of the Gainesville portion of the service and the segments that serve the employment sites west of Alachua. New service was added along NE Waldo Road and the Wal-Mart Superstore. In Alachua, the alignment was modified to operate along a counter-clockwise loop and serve both the Dollar General and Wal-Mart distribution centers.

The improved schedule provides more detailed bus stop information, which makes it easier for passengers to comprehend pick-up and drop-off times.

**Exhibit II-3
Year One CATS Schedule**

MORNING TRIP		AFTERNOON TRIP	
Stop Location	Time	Stop Location	Time
Alachua Co. Health Department	5:50 AM	VA Medical Center	3:00 PM
Gainesville Downtown Plaza	6:00 AM	Shands @ UF Medical Center	3:15 PM
Alachua Progress Corporate Park	6:30 AM	Hitchcock's Plaza	4:10 PM
Alachua Job Center-Dollar General	6:50 AM	Alachua Job Center-Dollar General	4:40 PM
Hitchcock's Plaza	7:05 AM	Alachua Progress Corporate Park	5:05 PM
Shands @ UF Medical Center	7:50 AM	Gainesville Downtown Station	5:40 PM
VA Medical Center	8:00 AM	Alachua Co. Health Department	6:00 PM

**Exhibit II-4
Year Two CATS Schedule**

MORNING TRIP		AFTERNOON TRIP	
Stop Location	Time	Stop Location	Time
Gainesville Downtown Station	5:50 AM	VA Medical Center	3:42 PM
Waldo Road @ NE 3rd Ave.	5:55 AM	Shands @ UF Medical Center	3:47 PM
Walmart Super Center	5:58 AM	Univ. of Florida (Museum Rd.)	3:52 PM
Northwood Village Plaza	6:13 AM	NW 18th Ave. @ 13th St. (Wachovia)	3:58 PM
Alachua Co. Public Works	6:21 AM	NW 21 st Ave. @ 13th St. (Szechuan Palace)	4:02 PM
Progress Corporate Park	6:27 AM	NW 41st Ave. @ 13th St. (Auto Zone)	4:05 PM
Hunter Marine	6:30 AM	Northwood Village Plaza	4:12 PM
Alachua Apts/Sherwood Oaks	6:35 AM	Hitchcock's Plaza	4:29 PM
Sandvik Mining	6:38 AM	Alachua City Hall	4:32 PM
Waco Bldg. 100,200	6:43 AM	Dollar General	4:40 PM
Walmart Dist. Center	6:47 AM	Baugh SE	4:44 PM
Baugh SE	6:51 AM	Walmart Dist. Center	4:48 PM
Dollar General	6:55 AM	Waco Bldg. 100,200	4:52 PM
Alachua City Hall	7:03 AM	Sandvik Mining	4:57 PM
Hitchcock's Plaza	7:06 AM	Alachua Apts/Sherwood Oaks	5:00 PM
Northwood Village Plaza	7:23 AM	Hunter Marine	5:05 PM
NW 39th Ave. @ 13th St. (CVS)	7:30 AM	Progress Corporate Park	5:08 PM
NW 23rd Blvd. @ 13th St. (Plaza Verde)	7:33 AM	Alachua Co. Public Works	5:14 PM
NW 16th Ave. @ 13th St. (GHS)	7:37 AM	Northwood Village Plaza	5:22 PM
Univ. of Florida (Museum Rd.)	7:43 AM	Walmart Super Center	5:37 PM
Shands @ UF Medical Center	7:48 AM	Waldo Road @ NE 3rd Ave.	5:40 PM
VA Medical Center	7:53 AM	Gainesville Downtown Station	5:45 PM

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III. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

To help portray the potential need for public transportation in the City of Alachua, a select set of demographic characteristics was reviewed and mapped. The first three characteristics include:

- elderly population
- low-income families
- households with no car available
- population density

These key characteristics were chosen because they are known to have a strong correlation to transit usage. A density figure for the first three characteristics was determined by comparing it to the total population to show the census block groups where the greatest concentration of each group exists as opposed to the block groups with the largest absolute number. This technique helps identify areas where transit service can be operated in the most cost-efficient manner.

Isolating the location of these groups helps identify the areas where the need for public transportation is probably the highest. For this study, however, potential transit trips are not the most important factor considered in the development of the transit improvement plan. The City of Alachua strongly believes that public transportation should be provided along with all the other valuable services it provides to the community. The need for this type of service will increase as the community grows and other factors such as higher petroleum prices affect travel behavior.

The maps presented at the end of this section show the demographic data for U.S. Census block groups, which are a statistical subdivision of a larger census tract. Block groups are the lowest level geographic entity for which decennial census data is tabulated. They usually contain between 300-3000 people with the optimum size being 1500 people.

While the City of Alachua is a growing city that presently does not have the population density or concentrations of documented transit-dependent groups that are associated with some other transit systems, it does have areas that contain a significant number of people that could benefit from public transportation service. The City's goal is to help meet all the needs of the community so it is interested in establishing a public transportation service that is appropriate for today's environment and well positioned to expand as the community grows.

Elderly Population

The elderly, defined as 65 years of age and older, often represent a significant portion of transit ridership at existing transit systems. There is one major area that has a comparatively high concentration of the elderly. The northern boundary of this area is U.S. Highway 441, and western boundary is NW 140th Street and NW 143rd Street. Other streets that generally define this census block group include: 140th Street, NW 135th Drive, NW 138th Street, and County Road 2054.

Low-income Families

Another demographic sub-group with a high dependence on public transportation, when it is available, is low-income families. Poverty thresholds vary according to family size. On its Web site, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that the 1999 weighted average poverty thresholds, which

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was the year used for the 2000 Census, ranged from \$13,289 for a three-person family to \$22,730 for a family of six people.

The area with the greatest concentration of persons in this category is generally bounded by NW 140th Street, Highway 235, NW 150th Avenue, and U.S. Highway 441.

Households With No Car Available

Households that fall in this category must rely on family, friends, walking, private transportation providers or some other means to satisfy their travel needs. If public transportation is available, this demographic group can be totally reliant on the public transit system. A high concentration of this demographic subgroup is the strongest indicator of transit need.

The area with the greatest concentration of occupied housing units with no car available are the older neighborhoods that are situated northeast and southeast of the intersection of U.S. Highway 441 and NW 140th Street.

Population Density

The generally accepted level of population density believed to be supportive of at least a 60-minute frequency of transit service is approximately 5,000 persons per square mile. Alachua is expected to reach this level by the next decennial census. However, other factors such as the price of gasoline, the City's interest in providing another valuable public service to its residents, and the realistic scale of the initial system should be weighed in the final decision.

The maps presented on the following pages suggest that the area where new public transportation service is most viable is found in the older, residential areas of Alachua. Connecting these areas to shopping, medical, governmental, and other services located in the vicinity of Hitchcock's Plaza and City Hall would provide a strong connection between the residential areas and transit-oriented activity centers. There is a strong correlation between these transit oriented activity centers and the Weed and Seed Boundary as shown in Exhibit III-5.

Alachua's general population has grown almost 50 percent between 2000 and 2007. The following table presents the annual estimates since Census 2000.

Annual Estimates of the Population for City of Alachua

Census	July 1, 2000	July 1, 2001	July 1, 2002	July 1, 2003	July 1, 2004	July 1, 2005	July 1, 2006	July 1, 2007	CHANGE
6098	6491	6657	6779	7078	7453	7839	8877	9115	3017
CHANGE	6.4%	2.6%	1.8%	4.4%	5.3%	5.2%	13.2%	2.7%	49.5%

Overall, the area with the greatest concentration of people with the key demographic characteristics is the census tract generally bounded by US 441, NW 140th Street, NW 138th Street and CR 2054. This tract is located just to the east of Downtown Alachua.

Exhibit III-1
 Elderly Population per Square Mile

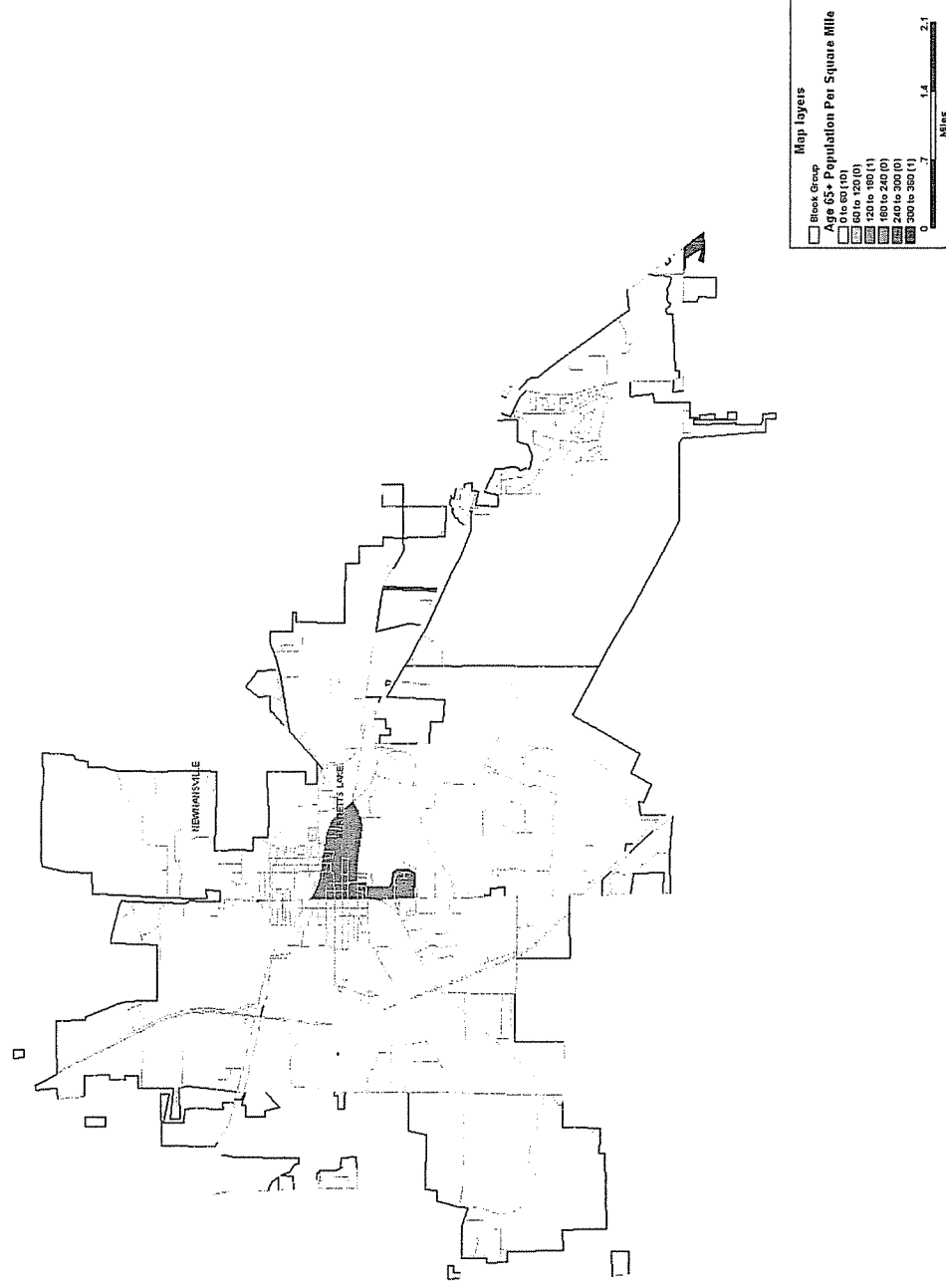


Exhibit III-2
Families Below Poverty Level per Square Mile

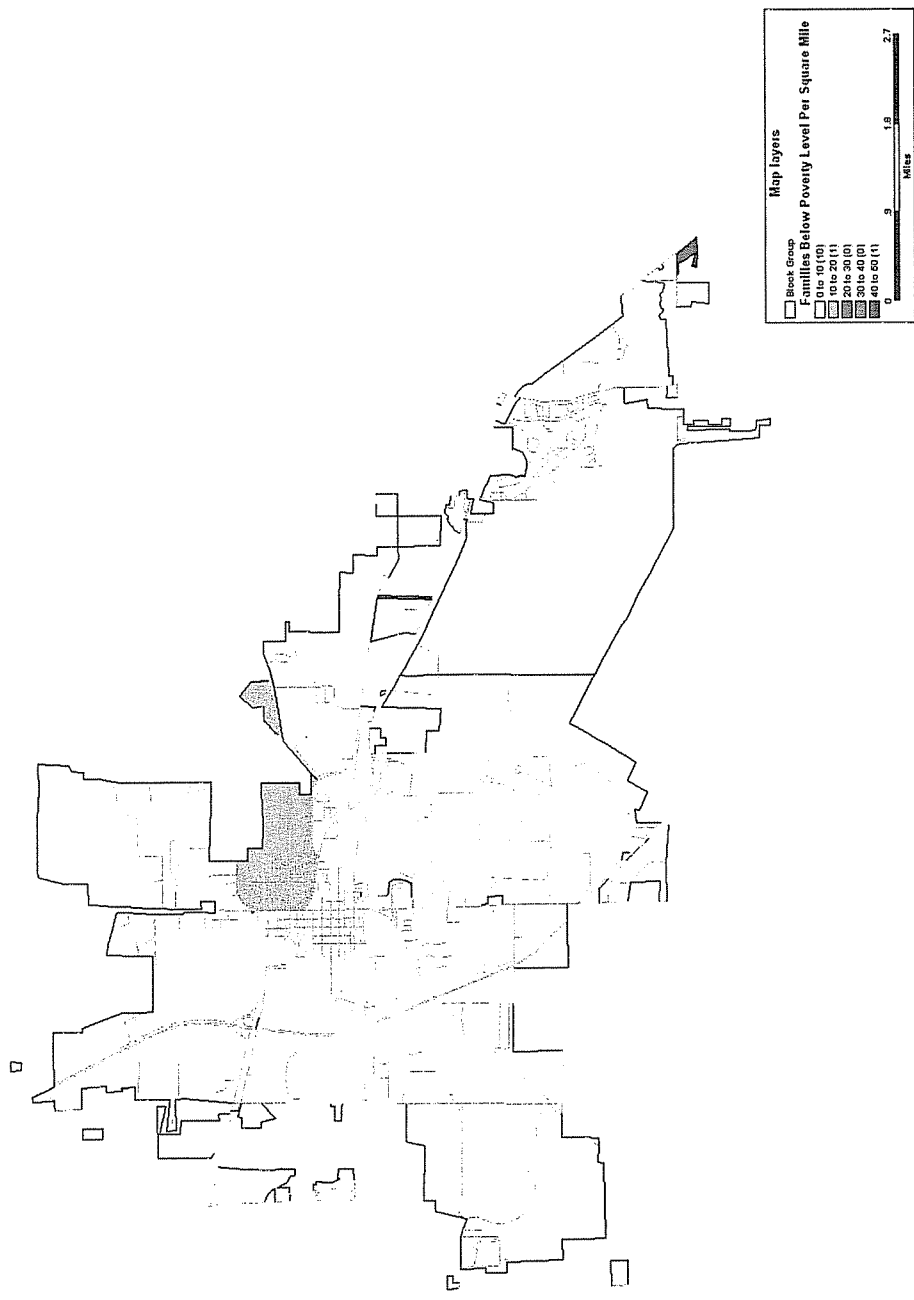


Exhibit III-3
Occupied Housing Units With No Car Available

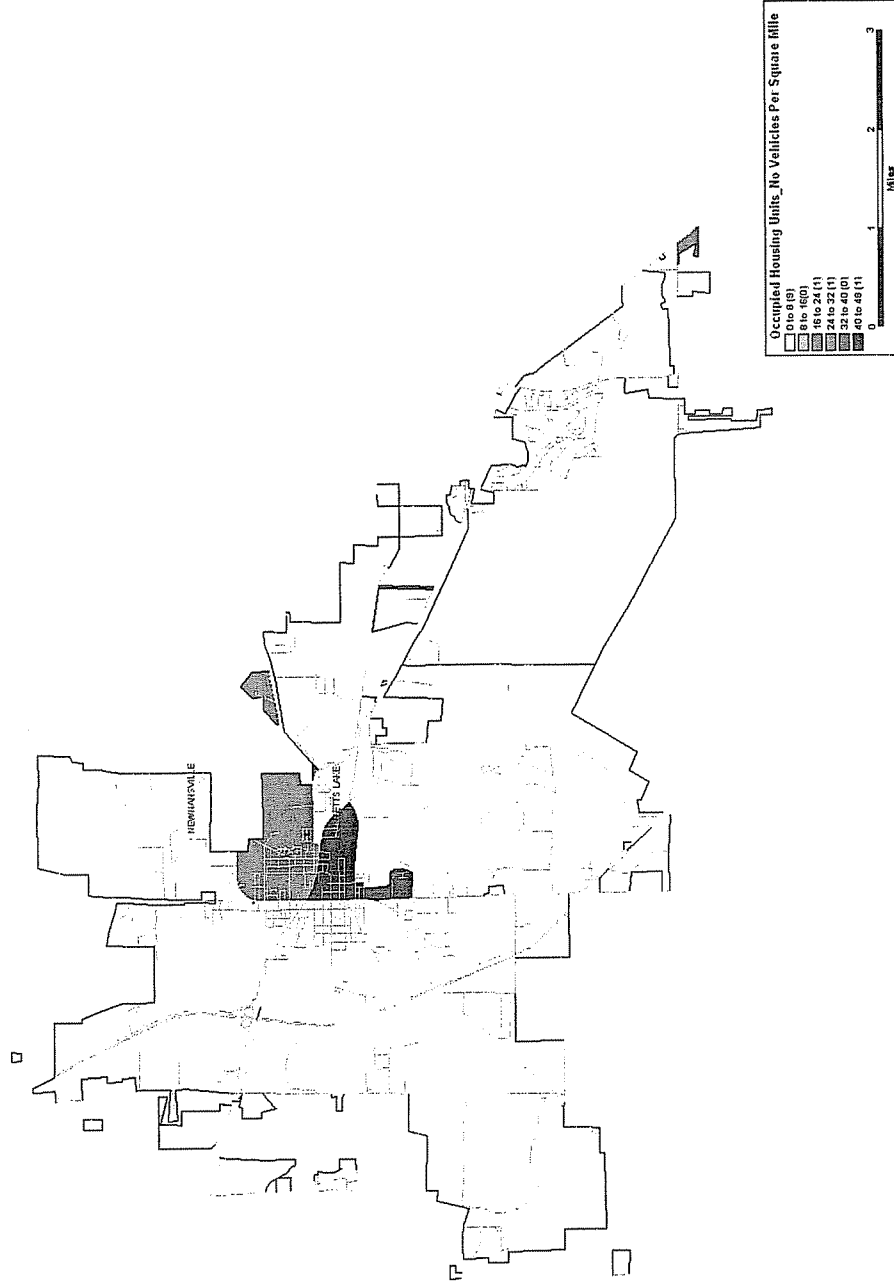


Exhibit III-4
Population Density

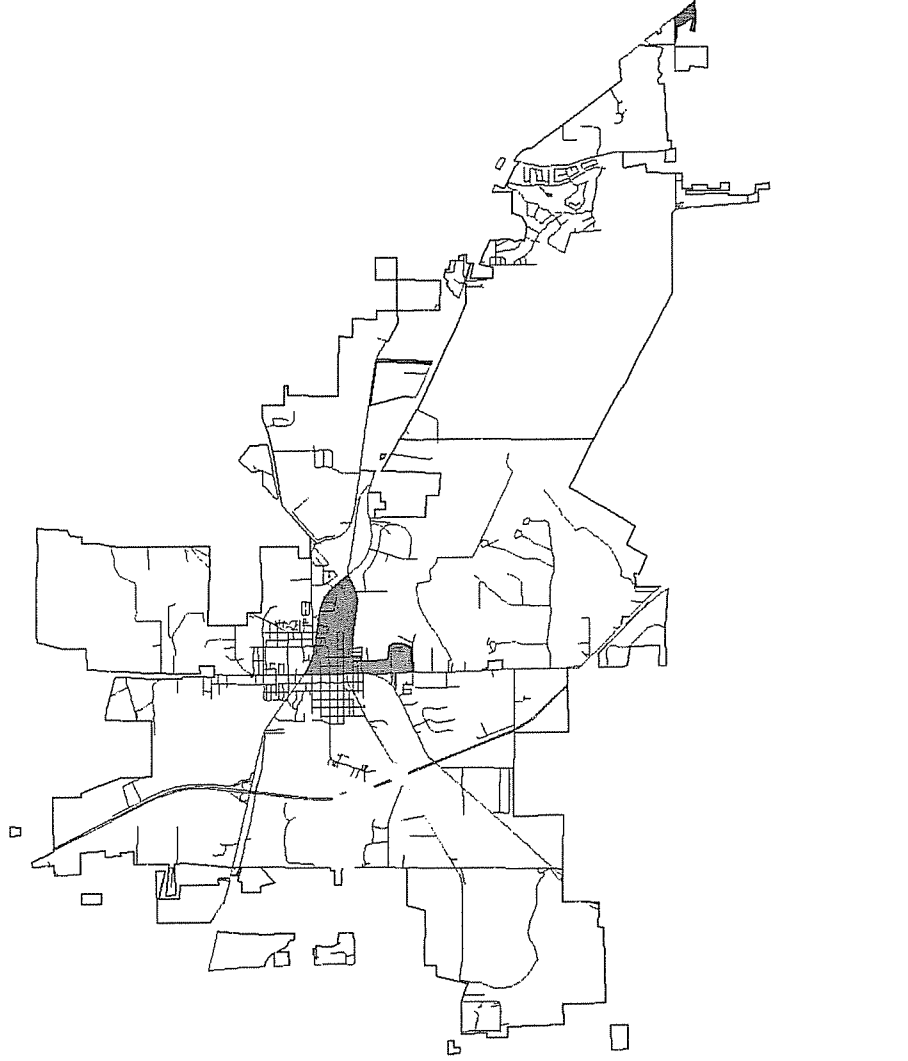
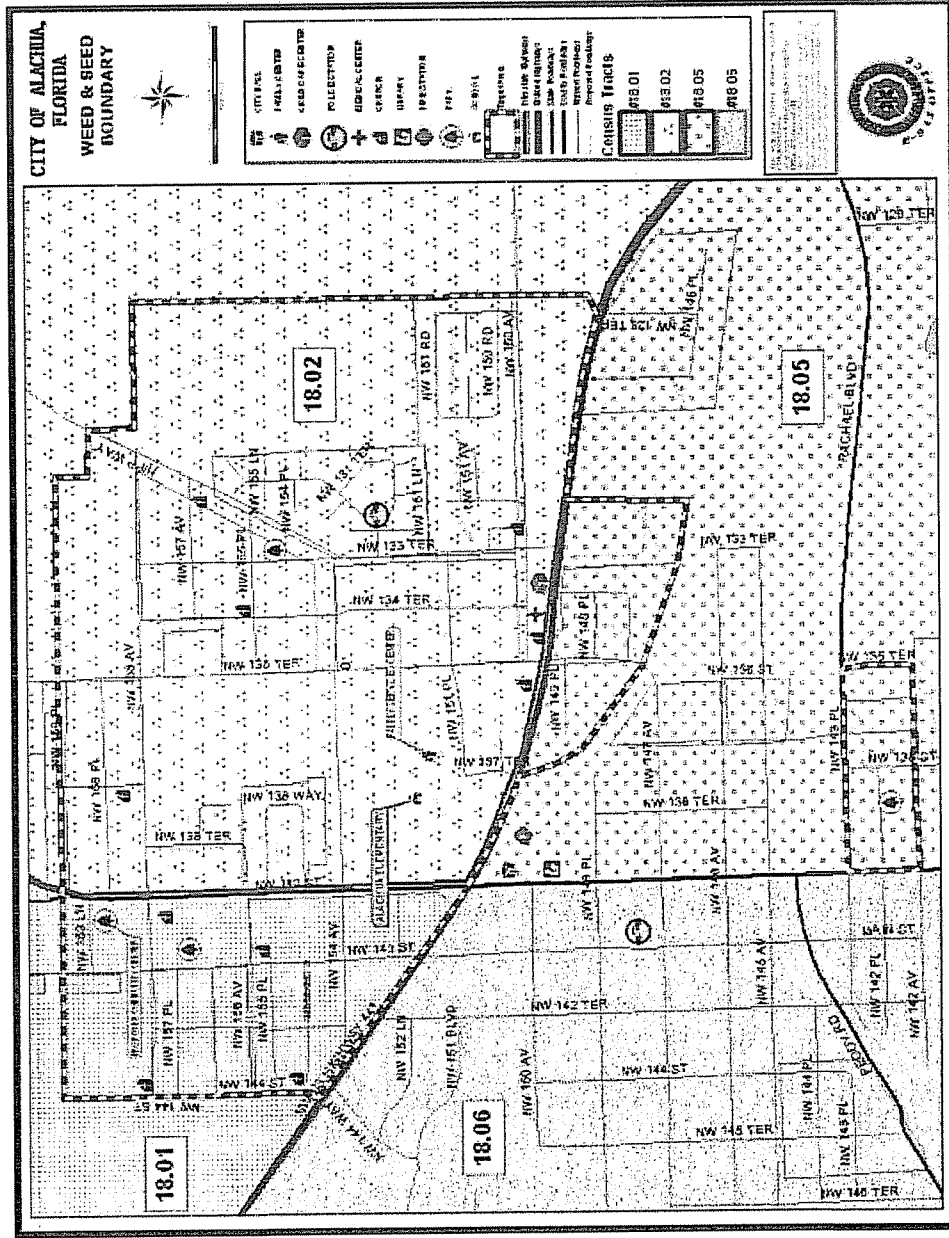


Exhibit III-5
City of Alachua – Weed and Seed Boundary



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IV. LOCAL SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

To help the City of Alachua build a local transit system over the next few years and expand service as the need grows and funding becomes available; three fixed-route services have been developed for consideration by the City. As noted in Chapter II, the City's goal is to focus on routes that serve the needs of Alachua residents and employers. The immediate impact of this new approach will be a modification of the existing CATS service.

All the proposed routes serve areas with appreciable transit potential. These areas were selected because they also contain some of the most important activity centers in the city including the recreation center, Hitchcock's shopping plaza, and important subsidized housing developments.

It is the City's responsibility to decide when these routes can be implemented. They have been designed so they can be introduced individually as funding becomes available or they can be launched as a group. The greatest influence on the implementation timeline will be the availability of dependable local, state, or federal funding or a combination of the three that matches the annual operating costs.

To illustrate a lower-cost alternative, a modified schedule is presented that offers a more limited service that focused on shopping and other non-work trips. The fundamental difference is a later start time and earlier end time.

The proposed routes are described in detail in the following sections. For each route, the proposed alignment, operating characteristics, tentative schedules, and projected annual operating cost are presented.

The following assumptions were used to develop the route alternatives:

- Average of 255 weekdays in a year
- Initially, no service on Saturday or Sunday and evenings
- No service on major holidays (New Year's, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day)
- Service operates generally between 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM
- Service will be operated by a private transportation contractor at a rate of \$49.47 per service hour.
- Non-revenue hours of service are estimated to be approximately 10 percent of the revenue hours. Annual service hours are the sum of these two numbers.

Revenue hours of service covers the time buses spend picking up and dropping off revenue passengers. Time spent going from the bus garage to the beginning of a route and from the end of the route back to the garage at the end of a day, along with the time the bus is being maintained or involved in similar non-revenue activities, is called non-revenue service.

Bus Stops

Each preliminary route schedule includes a set of designated timepoints. Designated timepoints show bus operators the desired schedule. They also help the public work out the approximate time a bus should arrive at various locations along the route alignment.

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Locating bus stops can depend on several factors including the location of recognizable activity centers, street and safety conditions, level of passenger activity, and bus scheduling requirements. A general rule of thumb is that bus stops should be located approximately 8-10 minutes apart or near activity centers that are familiar to the public. Based on this rule of thumb, it might not be necessary to add any bus stops along the proposed alignments unless the City or public requests them. Each proposed route alignment map shows a set of timepoints and other key stops. The City may choose to add other bus stops after the routes have been in operation for a while and average activity patterns are more established.

Fares

The current fare charged for a one-way trip on CATS is \$2.00. It is recommended the City continue charging the same fare on the proposed services.

Following is a summary of each local route including the estimated annualized service hours and operating costs.

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PROPOSED NORTH ALACHUA ROUTE

This route, presented in Exhibit IV-1, is designed to serve the area of single family and multi-family residential developments north of U.S. Highway 441. The demographic analysis showed this route would operate through an area with the highest concentration of families below poverty level and households with no car available. Some of the activity centers found in this area include:

- Hathcock Senior Community Center
- Lee's Preschool Center
- Mebane Middle School
- St. Matthew Church
- Maude Lewis Park
- Criswell Park
- Kingsland Subdivision
- Alachua Elementary School
- Hitchcock's Apartments
- Merrillwood Apartments
- Walgreen's drugstore (under construction)
- Alachua Villas apartment complex
- City Hall
- Downtown City Park
- Hitchcock's Plaza

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Exhibit IV-1



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Initially, the North Route should be interlined with the proposed South Route. Interlined routes share buses to establish a specific frequency of service and minimize total operating costs. Utilizing this technique means that only one bus is required to provide service on both the North and South routes. Preliminary schedules for the North Route are presented in Exhibit IV-2 and Exhibit IV-3.

Exhibit IV-2

North Route Schedule (Alternative One)

Run No.	Hitchcock's Plaza	Hitchcock Apts.	Hathcock Center	Merrillwood Apts.	Hitchcock's Plaza
1	6:00 AM	6:06 AM	6:13 AM	6:17 AM	6:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	7:00 AM	7:06 AM	7:13 AM	7:17 AM	7:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	8:00 AM	8:06 AM	8:13 AM	8:17 AM	8:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	9:00 AM	9:06 AM	9:13 AM	9:17 AM	9:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	10:00 AM	10:06 AM	10:13 AM	10:17 AM	10:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	11:00 AM	11:06 AM	11:13 AM	11:17 AM	11:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	12:00 PM	12:06 PM	12:13 PM	12:17 PM	12:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	1:00 PM	1:06 PM	1:13 PM	1:17 PM	1:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	2:00 PM	2:06 PM	2:13 PM	2:17 PM	2:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	3:00 PM	3:06 PM	3:13 PM	3:17 PM	3:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	4:00 PM	4:06 PM	4:13 PM	4:17 PM	4:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	5:00 PM	5:06 PM	5:13 PM	5:17 PM	5:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	6:00 PM	6:06 PM	6:13 PM	6:17 PM	6:24 PM to South Route

Exhibit IV-3

North Route Schedule (Alternative Two)

Run No.	Hitchcock's Plaza	Hitchcock Apts.	Hathcock Center	Merrillwood Apts.	Hitchcock's Plaza
1	9:00 AM	9:06 AM	9:13 AM	9:17 AM	9:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	10:00 AM	10:06 AM	10:13 AM	10:17 AM	10:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	11:00 AM	11:06 AM	11:13 AM	11:17 AM	11:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	12:00 AM	12:06 AM	12:13 AM	12:17 AM	12:24 AM to South Route
1 from South Route	1:00 PM	1:06 PM	1:13 PM	1:17 PM	1:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	2:00 PM	2:06 PM	2:13 PM	2:17 PM	2:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	3:00 PM	3:06 PM	3:13 PM	3:17 PM	3:24 PM to South Route
1 from South Route	4:00 PM	4:06 PM	4:13 PM	4:17 PM	4:24 PM to South Route

Exhibit IV-4

North Route Key Data and Estimated Annual Cost

Characteristic	Alternative One	Alternative Two
Round trip mileage	4.08	4.08
Average Operating Speed	10 mph	10 mph
Span of Service	6:00 AM to 6:24 PM	9:00 AM to 4:24 PM
Frequency of Service	60 minutes	60 minutes
Daily Round Trips	13	8
Annual Round Trips	3315	2040
Vehicle Requirement	0.5	0.5
Annualized Service Hours	3417	2142
Estimated Annual Cost	\$169,039	\$105,965
Annual Cost Per Trip	\$50.99	\$51.94

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PROPOSED SOUTH ALACHUA ROUTE

The South Route also originates at Hitchcock's Plaza. The proposed alignment will serve the neighborhood south of U.S. 441 and points east and west of U.S 235/U.S. 241. The southern end of the route will serve the Alachua and Sherwood Oaks apartments.

Other activity centers served by the proposed route include:

- Downtown City Park
- CVS
- Alachua City Hall
- Welch Park
- Alachua Recreation Center
- Historic Main Street
- Hitchcock's Plaza

The proposed alignment is illustrated on the following page.

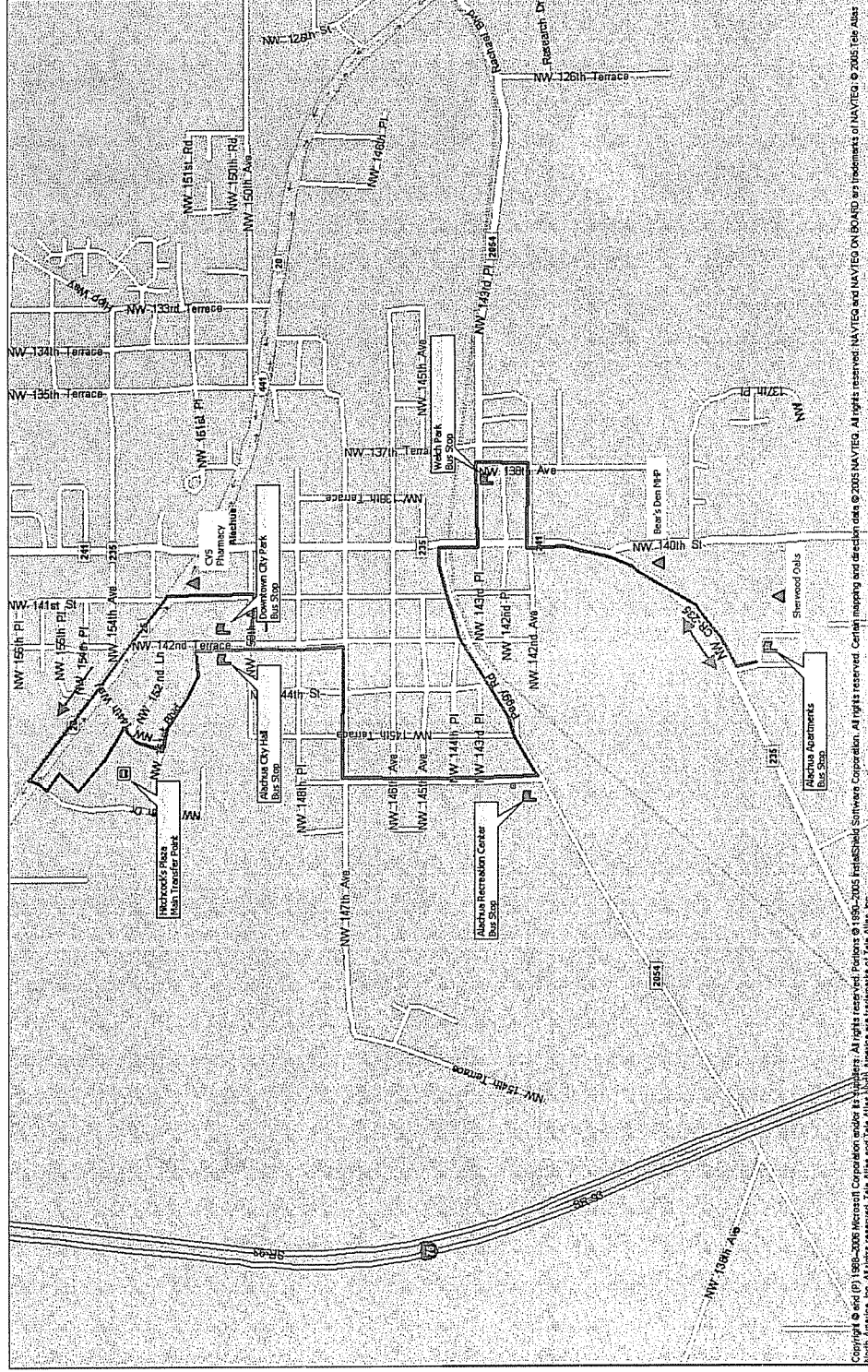
In the future, selected trips on this route could be extended to service the SW Industrial Center Complex provided the necessary service and schedule modifications are made. Alternatively, a new West Route could also service this quadrant of the City in the future.

The proposed South Route runs within one block of Historic Main Street to service this significant activity center. It does not run along Main Street due to its potential impact on Main Street merchants, on-street parking and pedestrian safety. In the future, a specialized service that is operated with a historic trolley vehicle may be considered if demand for the service becomes evident, operational issues are addressed and funding becomes available.

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Exhibit IV-5
Proposed South Alachua Route Alignment



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As noted earlier, the South Route will be interlined with the North Route. The preliminary schedule and alternative schedule for the South Route is presented in the following exhibits.

Exhibit IV-6

South Route Schedule (Alternative One)

Run No.		Hitchcock's Plaza	Recreation Center	Welch Park	Alachua Apts	Welch Park	Recreation Center	Hitchcock's Plaza	
1	From North Route	6:30 AM	6:36 AM	6:40 AM	6:44 AM	6:47 AM	6:51 AM	7:00 AM	To North Route
1	From North Route	7:30 AM	7:36 AM	7:40 AM	7:44 AM	7:47 AM	7:51 AM	8:00 AM	To North Route
1	From North Route	8:30 AM	8:36 AM	8:40 AM	8:44 AM	8:47 AM	8:51 AM	9:00 AM	To North Route
1	From North Route	9:30 AM	9:36 AM	9:40 AM	9:44 AM	9:47 AM	9:51 AM	10:00 AM	To North Route
1	From North Route	10:30 AM	10:36 AM	10:40 AM	10:44 AM	10:47 AM	10:51 AM	11:00 AM	To North Route
1	From North Route	11:30 AM	11:36 AM	11:40 AM	11:44 AM	11:47 AM	11:51 AM	12:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	12:30 PM	12:36 PM	12:40 PM	12:44 PM	12:47 PM	12:51 PM	1:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	1:30 PM	1:36 PM	1:40 PM	1:44 PM	1:47 PM	1:51 PM	2:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	2:30 PM	2:36 PM	2:40 PM	2:44 PM	2:47 PM	2:51 PM	3:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	3:30 PM	3:36 PM	3:40 PM	3:44 PM	3:47 PM	3:51 PM	4:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	4:30 PM	4:36 PM	4:40 PM	4:44 PM	4:47 PM	4:51 PM	5:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	5:30 PM	5:36 PM	5:40 PM	5:44 PM	5:47 PM	5:51 PM	6:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	6:30 PM	6:36 PM	6:40 PM	6:44 PM	6:47 PM	6:51 PM	7:00 PM	Pull In

Exhibit IV-7

South Route Schedule (Alternative Two)

Run No.		Hitchcock's Plaza	Recreation Center	Welch Park	Alachua Apts	Welch Park	Recreation Center	Hitchcock's Plaza	
1	From North Route	9:30 AM	9:36 AM	9:40 AM	9:44 AM	9:47 AM	9:51 AM	10:00 AM	To North Route
1	From North Route	10:30 AM	10:36 AM	10:40 AM	10:44 AM	10:47 AM	10:51 AM	11:00 AM	To North Route
1	From North Route	11:30 AM	11:36 AM	11:40 AM	11:44 AM	11:47 AM	11:51 AM	12:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	12:30 PM	12:36 PM	12:40 PM	12:44 PM	12:47 PM	12:51 PM	1:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	1:30 PM	1:36 PM	1:40 PM	1:44 PM	1:47 PM	1:51 PM	2:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	2:30 PM	2:36 PM	2:40 PM	2:44 PM	2:47 PM	2:51 PM	3:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	3:30 PM	3:36 PM	3:40 PM	3:44 PM	3:47 PM	3:51 PM	4:00 PM	To North Route
1	From North Route	4:30 PM	4:36 PM	4:40 PM	4:44 PM	4:47 PM	4:51 PM	5:00 PM	To North Route

Exhibit IV-8

South Route Key Data and Estimated Annual Cost

Characteristic	Alternative One	Alternative Two
Round trip mileage	5.58	5.58
Average Operating Speed	11 mph	11 mph
Span of Service	6:30 AM to 7:00 PM	9:30 AM to 5:00 PM
Frequency of Service	60 minutes	60 minutes
Daily Round Trips	13	8
Annual Round Trips	3315	2040
Vehicle Requirement	0.5	0.5
Annualized Service Hours	3443	2423
Estimated Annual Cost	\$170,325	\$119,866
Annual Cost Per Trip	\$51.38	\$58.76

City of Alachua
2008 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

PROPOSED ALACHUA – NORTHWOOD PLAZA ROUTE

The Alachua-Northwood route will serve the following activity centers:

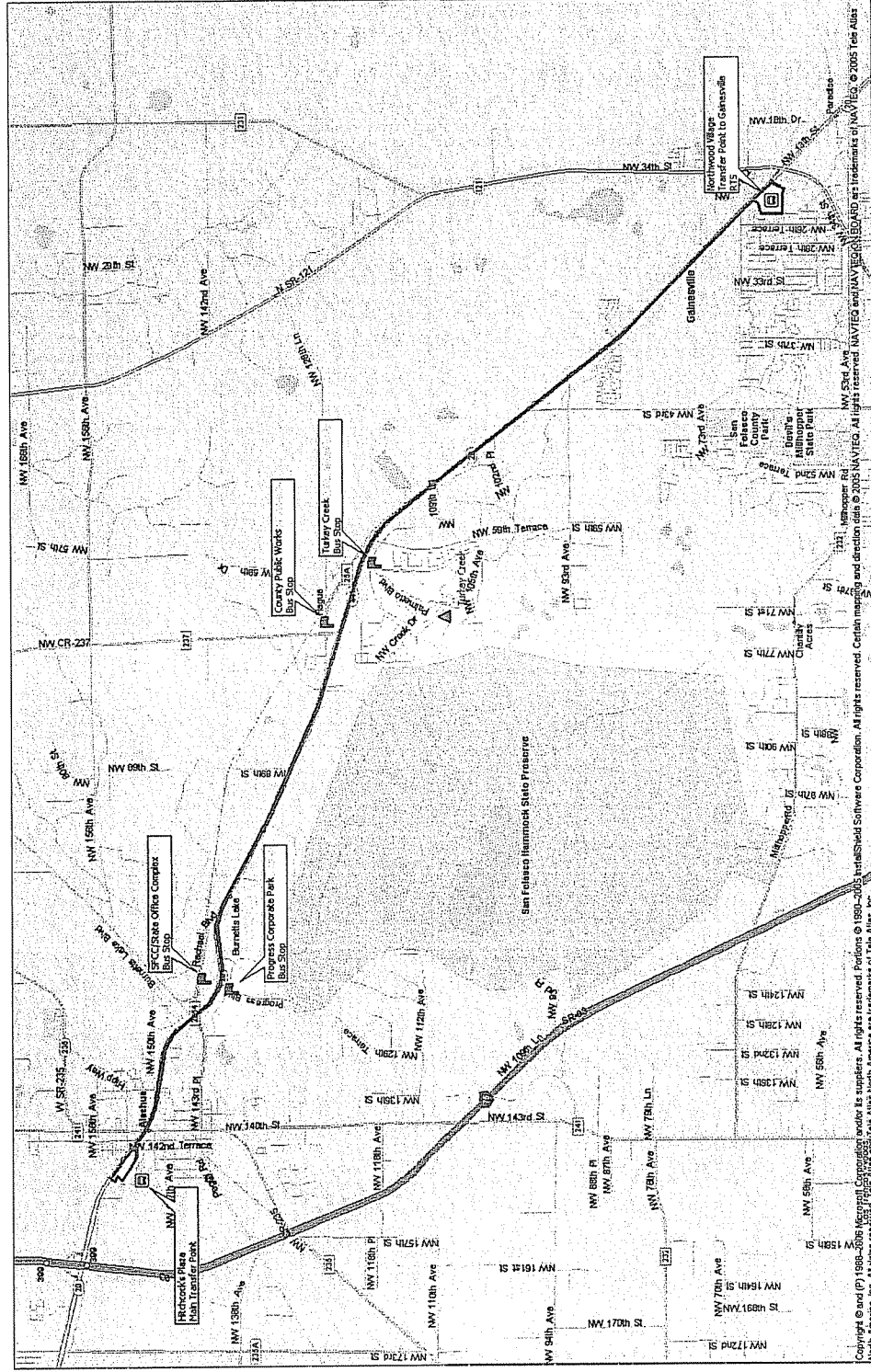
- Progress Corporate Park
- Santa Fe Community College (opening in 2009)
- State Office Complex
- Alachua County Public Works at Hague
- Turkey Creek

In addition, this route will end at Northwood Village where connections can be made to and from the Gainesville RTS Route 8. Similar to the existing CATS route, Route 8 can take passengers to the Gainesville Mall, Gainesville High School, University of Florida, Shands Hospital, and the VA Medical Center. According to the RTS schedule, Route 8 departs Northwood Village every 30 minutes on weekdays.

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Exhibit IV-9
Proposed Alachua-Northwood Plaza Route Alignment



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Exhibit IV-10

Alachua – Northwood Plaza Schedule (Alternative One)

	Run No.	Hitchcock's Plaza	Santa Fe College	Public Works	Northwood Plaza	Public Works	Santa Fe College	Hitchcock's Plaza
Pull Out	1	6:30 AM	6:34 AM	6:40 AM	6:50 AM	7:00 AM	7:06 AM	7:12 AM
	1	7:30 AM	7:34 AM	7:40 AM	7:50 AM	8:00 AM	8:06 AM	8:12 AM
	1	8:30 AM	8:34 AM	8:40 AM	8:50 AM	9:00 AM	9:06 AM	9:12 AM
	1	9:30 AM	9:34 AM	9:40 AM	9:50 AM	10:00 AM	10:06 AM	10:12 AM
	1	10:30 AM	10:34 AM	10:40 AM	10:50 AM	11:00 AM	11:06 AM	11:12 AM
	1	11:30 AM	11:34 AM	11:40 AM	11:50 AM	12:00 PM	12:06 PM	12:12 PM
	1	12:30 PM	12:34 PM	12:40 PM	12:50 PM	1:00 PM	1:06 PM	1:12 PM
	1	1:30 PM	1:34 PM	1:40 PM	1:50 PM	2:00 PM	2:06 PM	2:12 PM
	1	2:30 PM	2:34 PM	2:40 PM	2:50 PM	3:00 PM	3:06 PM	3:12 PM
	1	3:30 PM	3:34 PM	3:40 PM	3:50 PM	4:00 PM	4:06 PM	4:12 PM
	1	4:30 PM	4:34 PM	4:40 PM	4:50 PM	5:00 PM	5:06 PM	5:12 PM
	1	5:30 PM	5:34 PM	5:40 PM	5:50 PM	6:00 PM	6:06 PM	6:12 PM
	1	6:30 PM	6:34 PM	6:40 PM	6:50 PM	7:00 PM	7:06 PM	7:12 PM

Exhibit IV-11

Alachua – Northwood Plaza Schedule (Alternative Two)

	Run No.	Hitchcock's Plaza	Santa Fe College	Public Works	Northwood Plaza	Public Works	Santa Fe College	Hitchcock's Plaza
Pull Out	1	9:30 AM	9:34 AM	9:40 AM	9:50 AM	10:00 AM	10:06 AM	10:12 AM
	1	10:30 AM	10:34 AM	10:40 AM	10:50 AM	11:00 AM	11:06 AM	11:12 AM
	1	11:30 AM	11:34 AM	11:40 AM	11:50 AM	12:00 PM	12:06 PM	12:12 PM
	1	12:30 PM	12:34 PM	12:40 PM	12:50 PM	1:00 PM	1:06 PM	1:12 PM
	1	1:30 PM	1:34 PM	1:40 PM	1:50 PM	2:00 PM	2:06 PM	2:12 PM
	1	2:30 PM	2:34 PM	2:40 PM	2:50 PM	3:00 PM	3:06 PM	3:12 PM
	1	3:30 PM	3:34 PM	3:40 PM	3:50 PM	4:00 PM	4:06 PM	4:12 PM

Under the proposed schedules, every North Route inbound trip would meet an outbound Alachua – Northwood Plaza Route trip. Inbound South Route passengers would have to wait 30 minutes if they wanted to transfer to the outbound Alachua – Northwood Plaza route.

The only way to avoid this is to assign one vehicle each to the North Route and South Route, which would significantly increase the annual operating costs. Adding a bus would increase the frequency of service from 60-minutes to 30-minutes and offer a timed-transfer from both routes to the Alachua – Northwood Plaza Route, but operating costs would probably increase 100 percent. Based on the Gainesville RTS 2008 Fall Schedule, Alachua – Northwood Plaza trips would meet a Gainesville RTS Route 8 bus to facilitate inter-system passenger transfers.

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Exhibit IV-12

Alachua-Northwood Plaza Key Data and Estimated Annual Cost

Characteristic	Alternative One	Alternative Two
Round trip mileage	22.78	22.78
Average Operating Speed	25-35 mph	25-35 mph
Span of Service	6:30 AM to 7:12 PM	9:30 AM to 4:12 PM
Frequency of Service	60 minutes	60 minutes
Daily Round Trips	13	7
Annual Round Trips	3315	1785
Vehicle Requirement	1	1
Annualized Service Hours	3494	1964
Estimated Annual Cost	\$172,848	\$97,134
Annual Cost Per Trip	\$52.14	\$54.42

Before any service is implemented, the City should discuss the schedules with the transportation contractor to determine if any adjustments should be made and finalize the estimated annual service hours.

The following exhibit summarizes the annual service hours, vehicle requirements and estimated annual operating cost for all three routes. Alternative One is the full-service option that would serve both local shopping and other trips along with a portion of local commuter trips. Alternative Two is a lower-cost option that concentrates on local trips.

Exhibit IV-13

Summary of Proposed Routes

Proposed Route	Vehicle Requirement	Annual Service Hours		Est. Annual Cost	
		Alt. One	Alt. Two	Alt. One	Alt. Two
North	0.50	3,417	2,142	\$169,039	\$105,965
South	0.50	3,443	2,423	\$170,325	\$119,866
Alachua-Northwood	1.00	3,494	1,964	\$172,848	\$97,159
TOTAL	2	10,354	6,529	\$512,212	\$322,990

Future Services

After the three primary routes have been implemented, the next route that should be considered can be designed to serve the western segment of the U.S. 441 corridor and the employment centers in western Alachua. This route would serve the following:

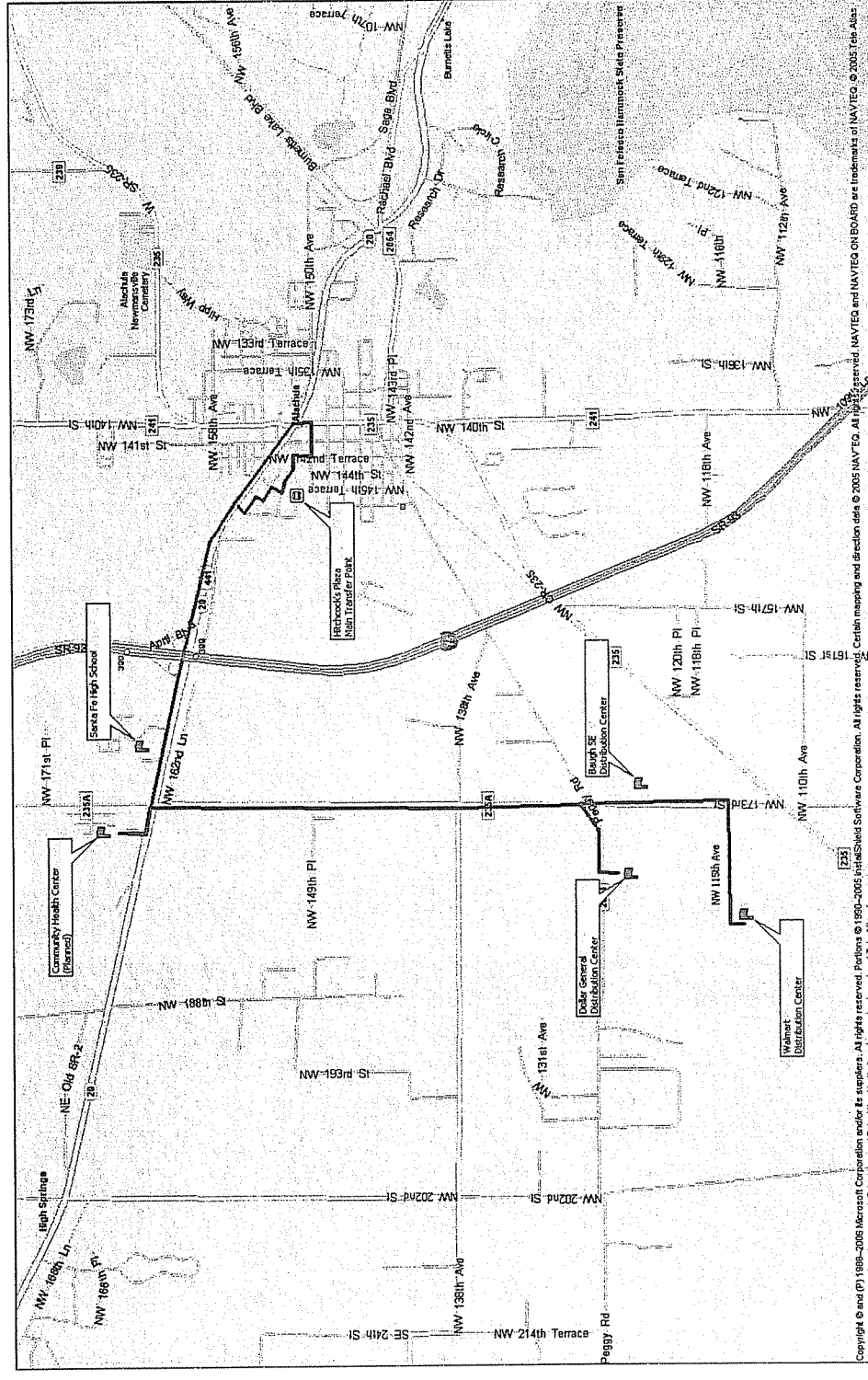
- Santa Fe High School
- New health center programmed for 2009
- Retail expansion along U.S. 441, especially near the I-75 interchange
- Existing and future employment centers like the Dollar General and Wal-Mart distribution centers

A map that shows the alignment of this potential route is shown below.

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Exhibit IV-14
West Route (future service)



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2008 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

If all four routes were in operation, the conceptual design of the Alachua West route would permit transfers between all the routes to facilitate work, medical, school and shopping trips.

2008 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

V. IMPACT OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Any local government that provides fixed route transit must ensure the fixed route service is accessible and provide complementary paratransit to eligible, disabled persons that cannot access the regular service. The Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington provides a summary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 on its website. The summary states, "The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed July 26, 1990 as Public Law 101-336 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq) and became effective on January 26, 1992. The law was written to strike a balance between the reasonable accommodation of citizens' needs and the capacity of private and public entities to respond. Public transportation services operated by state and local governments are covered by regulations of the Department of Transportation.

The law is comprised of a detailed and extensive set of rules that must be followed to comply with the law. The fundamental requirements are summarized below. This information was extracted from the Federal Transit Administration website.

- All public entities that operate fixed route transit service have to provide paratransit service that is both comparable and complementary to the fixed route service.
- Complementary paratransit can be provided by publicly operated dial-a-ride service, dial-a-ride service contracted to a private provider, user-side subsidy programs (e.g. contract with local taxi operators), and other approaches that might be proposed by the service provider.
- Category 1 eligible persons have mental or visual impairments that prevent them from navigating the system. Category 2 eligible users are persons who could use accessible fixed route transportation but accessible vehicles are not available at the right time. Category 3 persons include individuals with a specific condition (e.g. blindness) that prevents them getting to and from a bus stop.
- Basic complementary paratransit service consists of demand responsive, origin-to-destination service.
- The local planning process should decide when this will be provided as door-to-door or curb-to-curb service.
- Service must be provided anywhere within the area that lies within a corridor with a width of $\frac{3}{4}$ mile on each side of each fixed route.
- A paratransit reservation service must be provided during the same hours the transit administrative office is open.
- Paratransit reservations may be allowed as much as 14 days in advance.
- Trips cannot be scheduled more than one-hour before or after the time the individual wants to travel.
- The hours and days of operation must match the fixed route hours and days of operation.
- Waiting lists and limits on the number of trips that can be taken during a specific time period are not allowed.

The regulation defines ADA complementary paratransit service as origin-to-destination service. The intent was to ensure that transit providers provide service that actually gets an eligible passenger from their point of origin to their point of destination. In other words, transit providers may have to offer either door-to-door or curb-to-curb service if needed by a passenger or as a result of other conditions (e.g. adverse weather, sidewalk construction, etc.) to satisfy the origin-to-destination service requirement.

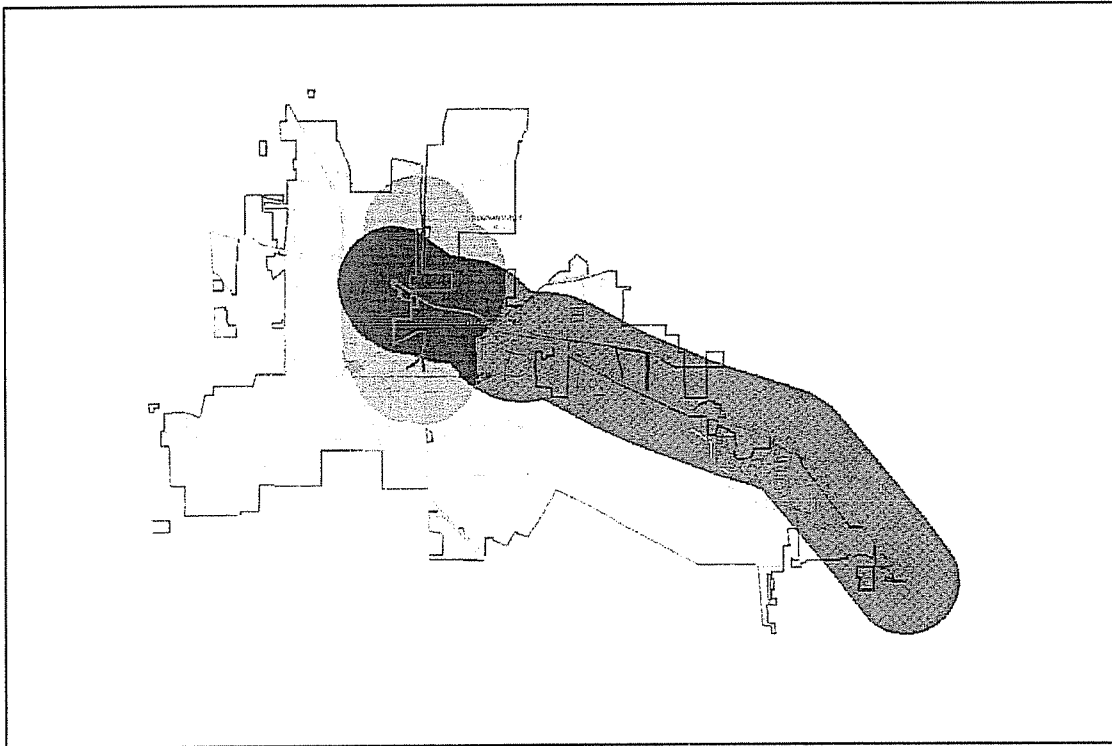
City of Alachua

2008 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

If the City implements one or more of the proposed fixed routes, it will be required to also offer complementary paratransit service. The fixed route service will likely be operated by the existing private transportation contractor. The City should discuss with the operator their capacity and interest in providing the ADA service. If all three alignments are implemented as fixed-routes, the ADA service area would cover the area shown in the following exhibit.

ExhibitV-1

Approximate ADA Service Area



Before a final service design is selected, a service option the City may wish to discuss is route-deviated service. This type of service runs along a defined alignment and makes designated stops. Concurrently, the bus is allowed to deviate a short distance from the alignment to pick up and drop off passengers. This type of service is characterized as demand-response service instead of fixed-route service so complementary paratransit service is not required. This approach is not endorsed in this study because it adds to the vehicle dispatching requirements, can increase overall running time, often increases the non-revenue time spent at the end of each run waiting to begin the next trip, lengthens the travel time for other passengers, requires passengers to make advance arrangements for pick-ups, and increases the responsibilities of the vehicle operators.

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Annualized Cost of ADA Service

Under Alternative One, the span of service for the three proposed routes runs from 6:00 AM to 7:15 PM. The ADA service must be offered during the same period, which equals 13.25 hours of service each weekday. Assuming the demand for ADA service can be handled with one vehicle, an estimated 3,548 hours of ADA service would be required annually. This includes the non-revenue hours associated with getting to and from the service area and other non-revenue trips. If this service is provided at the same rate (\$49.47 per hour) offered by the existing contractor, the maximum annual cost of ADA complementary paratransit service would equal \$175,520.

The estimated hours of complementary paratransit service and annual operating cost presumes the contractor would dedicate a complementary paratransit vehicle exclusively to the Alachua service during the prescribed hours of operation. The City might be able to reduce the cost of ADA Complementary Paratransit Service in two ways. First, the City could negotiate with the contractor to only pay for the service hours associated with the daily paratransit trips. Second, some trips could be served by the proposed County transportation routes.

