



# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Grand Island and Hall County have had public transportation services available to residents since the mid-1970s. These services were funded in part by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) rural transportation programs and Hall County.

After the 2010 Census designation of Grand Island to an urban area, the Grand Island Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GIAMPO) was established in 2013 to serve as the formal transportation planning body for the greater Grand Island metropolitan region. The move from rural to urban designation affected the funding mechanisms for public transportation in Grand Island. As an urban area, the FTA appropriates funding to urban communities, such as Grand Island, by formula allocations across the United States each fiscal year. The formula is based on population and population density. One designated recipient within the urban area is appointed by the Governor, and for Grand Island, it is the City of Grand Island.

Prior to fiscal year (FY) 2014, Hall County has been the sole local governmental funding agency for Hall County Public Transportation. After July 1, 2016, the City of Grand Island is now the primary funding partner from a local perspective, with a small portion of the local match (5%) from Hall County. The allocation for Hall County is based upon existing services located primarily within the urban area of Grand Island and some service requests outside the City that include rural trips.

In April 2016, the City of Grand Island City Council approved an interlocal agreement where the City provides public transit services within Hall County<sup>1</sup>. The City of Grand Island has an existing contract with Senior Citizens Industries, Inc. for an initial 12-month term, with options for a maximum of two years renewal<sup>2</sup>. This contract is funded by FTA 5307 (Urban) and 5311(Rural) funds and local matching funding sources from the City of Grand Island and Hall County.



*Hall County Public Transportation*

<sup>1</sup> [https://agendamanagement.blob.core.windows.net/agenda-1000-public/meeting/132492/20160412-100\\_13.pdf](https://agendamanagement.blob.core.windows.net/agenda-1000-public/meeting/132492/20160412-100_13.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://agendamanagement.blob.core.windows.net/agenda-1000-public/meeting/132496/20160614-100\\_15.pdf](https://agendamanagement.blob.core.windows.net/agenda-1000-public/meeting/132496/20160614-100_15.pdf)

## 1.2 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study is to provide baseline information to the City of Grand Island, as the City's first year managing the transit service was July 1, 2016 thru June 30, 2017, and to give the City a plan for transit service based upon, but not limited to, community input and vision for the future. The study identifies future transit opportunities, challenges, and overall transit demand for public transportation in Grand Island and Hall County. This Final Report includes the transit needs and future transit options that most effectively satisfy the community's vision for the Grand Island region.

This feasibility study assesses the need for future transit services in Grand Island and Hall County. Stakeholders and policymakers reviewed quantifiable data regarding transit demand and other types of transit services besides what is offered today. Short-term alternatives for future public transit in Grand Island and Hall County are developed to meet the needs of the community. A Fiscally Constrained Plan and an Illustrative Plan were developed with an implementation plan to move forward. The funding plan is realistic for municipal and county governments.

## 1.3 Report Contents

Three Technical Memorandums were prepared for this study and are summarized within this Final Report. The Final Report includes the following sections:

**Chapter 1** provides a description of this report. In this chapter a reader will find an introduction to the study, the purpose of the study and brief descriptions of the contents found within.

**Chapter 2** includes the development of project goals and vision for transit service in Grand Island and Hall County. The goals and vision provide guidance to the project team, the City of Grand Island, GIAMPO, and local stakeholders as alternatives were developed.

**Chapter 3** contains a market analysis for the study area. This section provides a review of demographic information to assist in determining focus areas that may contain unserved or underserved populations, as well as identify various market segments such as elderly, people with disabilities, low-income populations, minority areas, and zero vehicle households. Chapter 3 also examines regional commute patterns to assist decision-makers in understanding how residents get to and from work.

**Chapter 4** examines the existing transit service in the study area. This chapter presents the current service, performance, and ridership that exists in the study area.



*Hall County Public Transportation service daily to St. Francis Hospital*

**Chapter 5** identifies the existing transit needs, gaps, and potential future demand for transit service in the study area. Utilizing research developed by the Transit Cooperative Research Board and other industry methodologies, the transit needs and demand are identified.

**Chapter 6** summarizes the first round of public input from public open houses and stakeholder involvement events.

**Chapter 7** discusses Grand Island and similar peer communities. Specific criteria to select the peer communities included similarities to the study area, transit operating characteristics, and transit organizational structure.

**Chapter 8** analyzes both the online survey distributed to the Grand Island area community, and the transit rider survey distributed on the Hall County Public Transportation buses. The surveys were intended to not only assess the existing transit services according to riders and non-riders, but also gather customer satisfaction of transit within the community.

**Chapter 9** summarizes the second round of focus groups meetings that were held in Grand Island on August 2-3, 2017. This chapter presents a brief review of the Round Two public engagement conducted thus far for the Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study.

**Chapter 10** identifies four primary alternatives (Status Quo, Same-day Demand Response, Flexible Route Service, and Fixed Route Service) that are exclusive alternatives, meaning only one of these alternatives would be implemented. Each of the additional services (Regional Airport Service, Commuter Express Routes, Rideshare Programs, and Vanpool Programs) could theoretically operate alongside any of the other additional services, or with one of the primary alternatives.

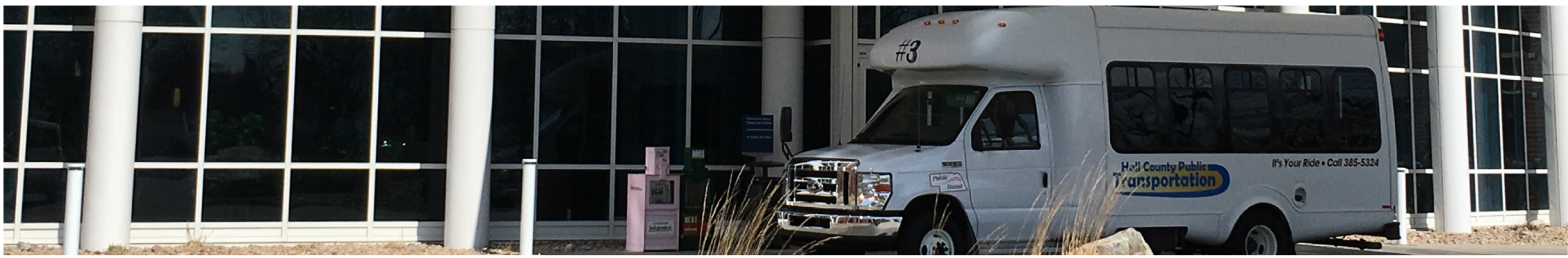
**Chapter 11** explains the differences in contract models for transit agencies. This analysis will be a critical resource when it is determined which contract model is chosen going forward.

**Chapter 12** outlines the Fiscally Constrained Plan for the contracted service provider for the next five years. The Plan identifies realistic expenses and reflects revenues for transit projects and services.

**Chapter 13** presents information building from the projects identified in Chapter 12 and moves to an enhanced level of public transportation for the community, or the Illustrative Plan.

**Chapter 14** provides a brief discussion of the implementation plan for actions over the next two years.

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## CHAPTER 2

## VISION AND GOALS

To develop goals and objectives for this feasibility study, it is necessary to evaluate the needs of the community, support the plans and policies of local governmental agencies, and identify areas where operating efficiencies and enhancements can be achieved. This chapter includes the vision and goals for the study.

### 2.1 Data Collection and Evaluation

In this report, a significant amount of data collection was conducted to understand the environment in which transit operates in Grand Island and Hall County and to evaluate and identify the strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of the community.

A thorough analysis of the demographic and socioeconomic data was conducted for purposes of identifying markets with high propensity for transit utilization, and potential new markets for Grand Island and Hall County. A comprehensive evaluation of how Grand Island compares to its industry peers in terms of operating and financial performance to highlight strengths and weaknesses was conducted. Finally, a variety of market research activities and public engagement were undertaken including:

- An online community survey for all residents
- An onboard customer survey for transit riders
- Community focus groups

These activities were designed to gain an understanding of the community's perceptions of Hall County Public Transportation, the services it provides, the services most desired by users and non-users of the system, and the community's vision for the future of transit.

### 2.2 Consistency With Other Plans and Programs

During the development of the vision and goals, the adopted GIAMPO Long Range Transportation Plan and City of Grand Island Comprehensive Plan were reviewed for consistency. The goals and objectives developed for this study address, for example, the need to pursue the development of transit friendly land use, policies, regulations, and land development criteria.



*Hall County Public Transportation serving Golden Age Village*

## 2.3 Proposed Vision, Goals, and Objectives

As part of the first round of public engagement, study goals were discussed. The following goals and objectives help define the outcomes of this study.

### **Hall County Public Transportation Vision:**

#### Efficient Mobility for All Residents in the Grand Island Region

### Goals and Objectives

The scope of this project calls for a development of a five-year plan to efficiently operate transit service inside the Grand Island Metropolitan Planning Area, while understanding the constrained budgets of local partners.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Goal: Efficiently provide mobility options to area residents.**

- Objective: Improve mobility by increasing knowledge of available services to area residents and access to public transit.
- Objective: Provide affordable, efficient public transportation options for those with limited access to transportation.
- Objective: Explore options for governing structures to assist in supporting future public transportation services.

#### **Goal: Enhance economic activity by improving access to employment for area residents.**

- Objective: Support economic development, vitality, and competitiveness by efficiently enhancing access to existing employment centers.
- Objective: Improve access to jobs for underemployed or low-income area residents.
- Objective: Examine opportunities to provide public transportation to second- and third-shift employees at area employment centers.

#### **Goal: Coordinate with local organizations for public transportation options, while being good stewards of the public dollar.**

- Objective: Identify partnership opportunities with local businesses, community organizations, and area partners.
- Objective: Develop financially achievable transit alternatives to provide service to area residents who need it the most.
- Objective: Examine non-traditional solutions to provide after-hours transportation options for low-income employees at area employment centers.

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#### <sup>1</sup> Local Study References

- Grand Island Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GIAMPO), 2040 Performance Based Long Range Transportation Plan - Adopted April of 2016
- <http://www.grand-island.com/home/showdocument?id=15898>
- Grow Grand Island, Implementation Plan, January 2015  
<http://files7.design-editor.com/91/9120474/UploadedFiles/663C7F99-1CF5-D924-BCF7-235F8DF48067.pdf>
- Grandeur Vision, Vision Plan, November 2014  
<http://files7.design-editor.com/91/9120474/UploadedFiles/7E17FD7B-FB1C-370F-B31B-DC9ABA04D225.pdf>



## CHAPTER 3

## MARKET ANALYSIS

### 3.1 Introduction

The population and employment characteristics of Grand Island and the GIAMPO area are described within this chapter. The data assisted in determining what type of transit service best fits for the community. By analyzing the demographics, population and employment concentrations and general commuting patterns of the study area, transportation investments may be targeted to areas with a high transit need. This chapter organizes and reviews available data and reports pertaining to the feasibility of public transit service, in concert with current and planned transportation and land use conditions affecting transit service. **While this chapter is a summary of the market analysis phase of the study, the complete analysis is available in Technical Memorandum 1.**

### 3.2 Study Area

The study area location focuses on the City of Grand Island, Hall County, and part of Merrick County. The major communities in Hall County, starting with the highest populated, include Grand Island, Wood River, Doniphan, Cairo, and Alda. **Table 3.1** displays the study area's 2011-2015 population totals, as estimated by the U.S. Census' American Community Survey by county and city.

### 3.3 Land Use Overview

Existing and future land use for the City of Grand Island was provided by GIAMPO, as shown in **Figure 3.1** and **Figure 3.2**. Much of the development is anticipated to occur westward, as well as areas in the southwest and the southeast of the City. Industrial expansion occurs west of the airport, and south of Highway 281, towards Interstate 80. A majority of the commercial development will continue along the existing Highway 281 corridor, but also along South Locust Street, nearby interstate interchanges, and at the intersection of Highway 2 and Highway 281.

Table 3.1: Current Area Population Totals

Jurisdictions	Populations
Nebraska	1,869,365
Hall County	60,792
Merrick County	7,776
Grand Island	50,582
Alda	607
Cairo	888
Doniphan	1,020
Wood River	1,393

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

Figure 3.1: Existing Land Use

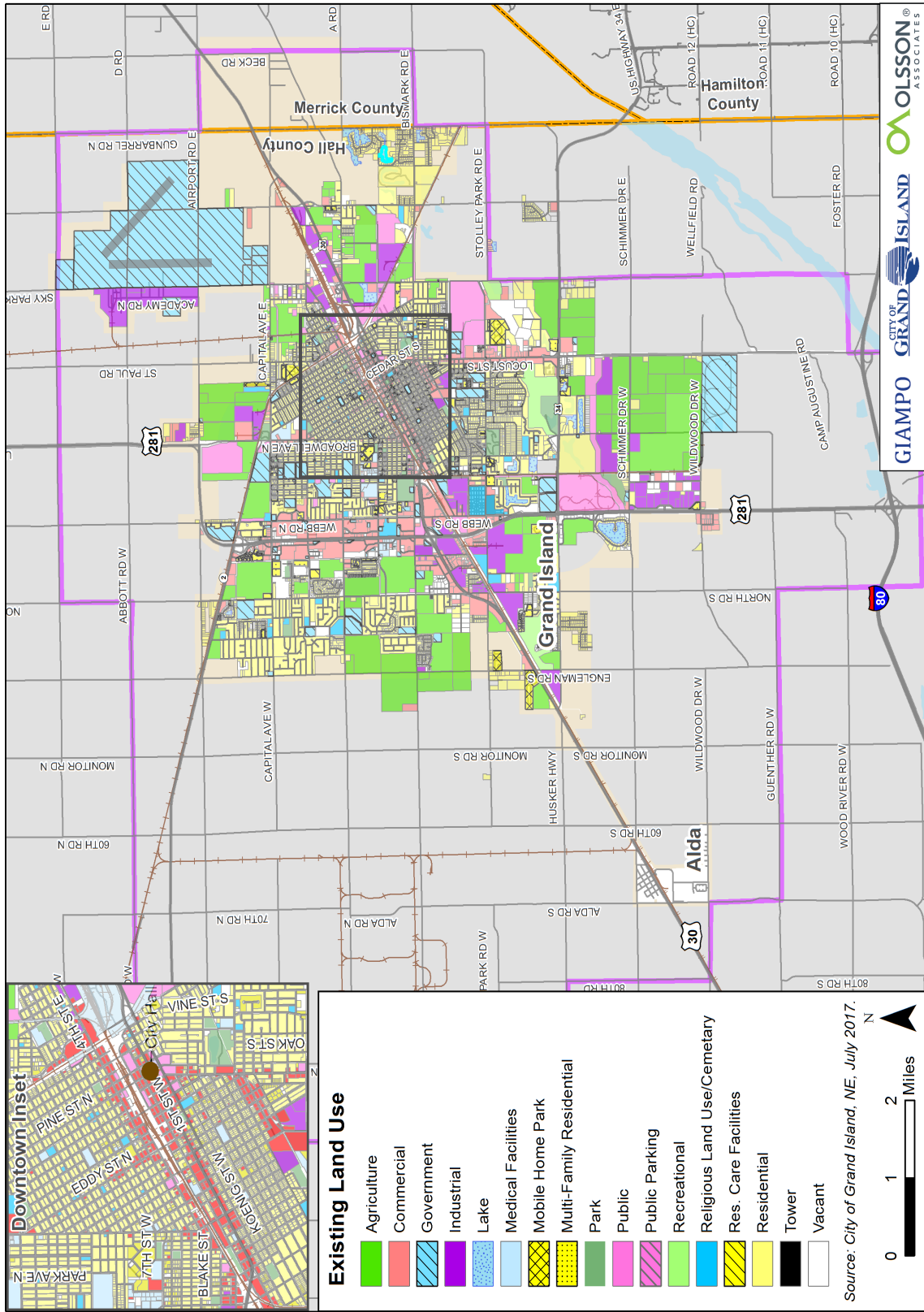
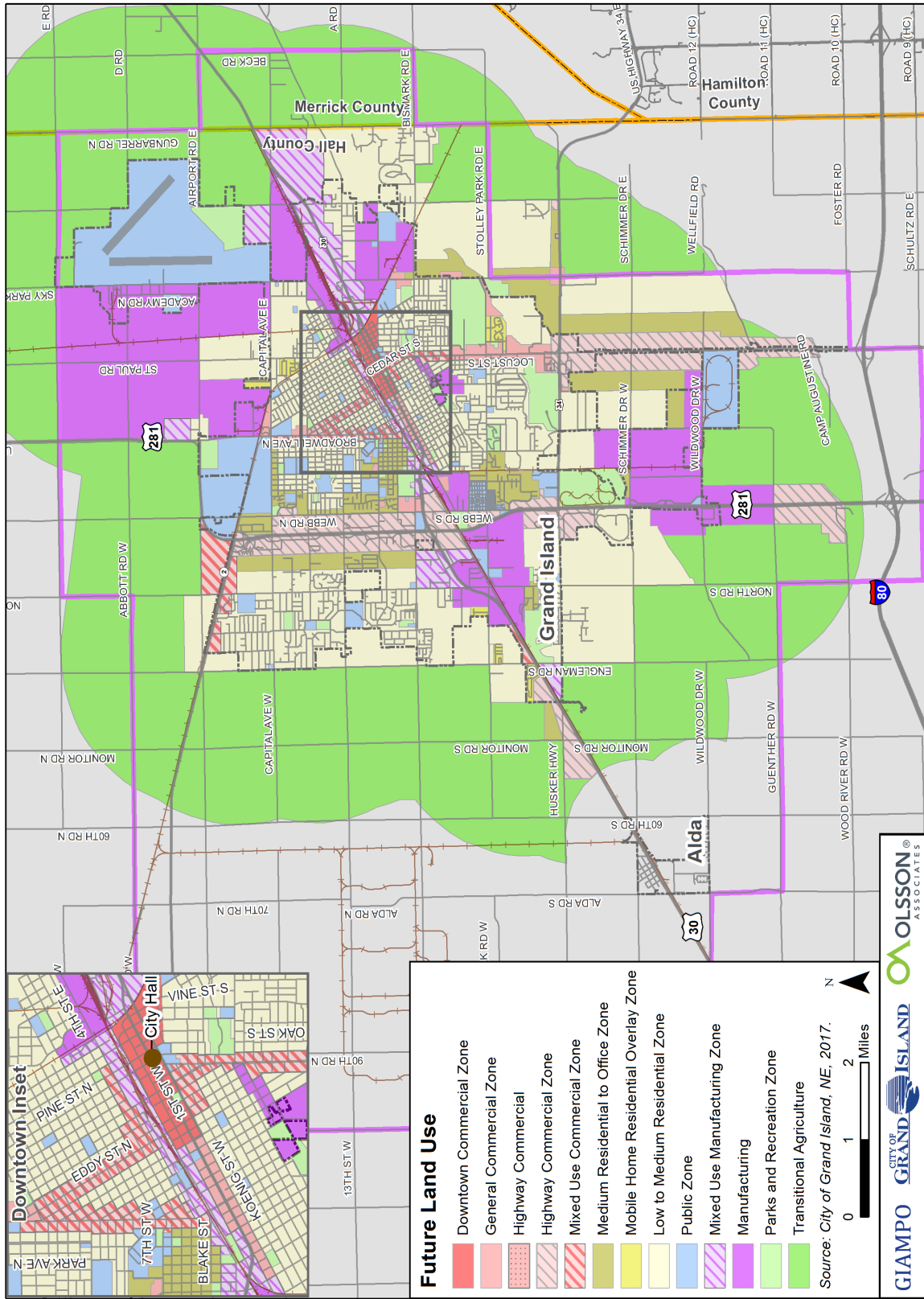




Figure 3.2: Future Land Use



### 3.4 Population

Population projections for Grand Island and Hall County were developed for the GIAMPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). After applying the compound annual growth rate of 1.1 percent through the 2040 horizon year, the LRTP found the total number of households rose by 33 percent, or 6,186 households since the 2014 base estimate of 18,801 households <sup>1</sup>. **Table 3.2** displays the projections for households and population, by County and City. **Figure 3.3** identifies the current household density, while **Figure 3.4** depicts where the new households are projected by the year 2040. The majority of the development will take place in the northwest, southwest, and southeast of the City.

Table 3.2: Future Populations and Households Summary

	2010	2020	2030	2040
<b>Grand Island</b>				
Population	48,520	54,129	60,387	67,368
Households	18,326	20,076	22,397	24,987
<b>Hall County</b>				
Population	58,607	65,832	72,941	81,374
Households	22,196	23,702	26,442	29,499

Source: GIAMPO LRTP, 2016.

<sup>1</sup> Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation, Grand Island Community Housing Study, 2014.

Figure 3.3: Existing Household Density

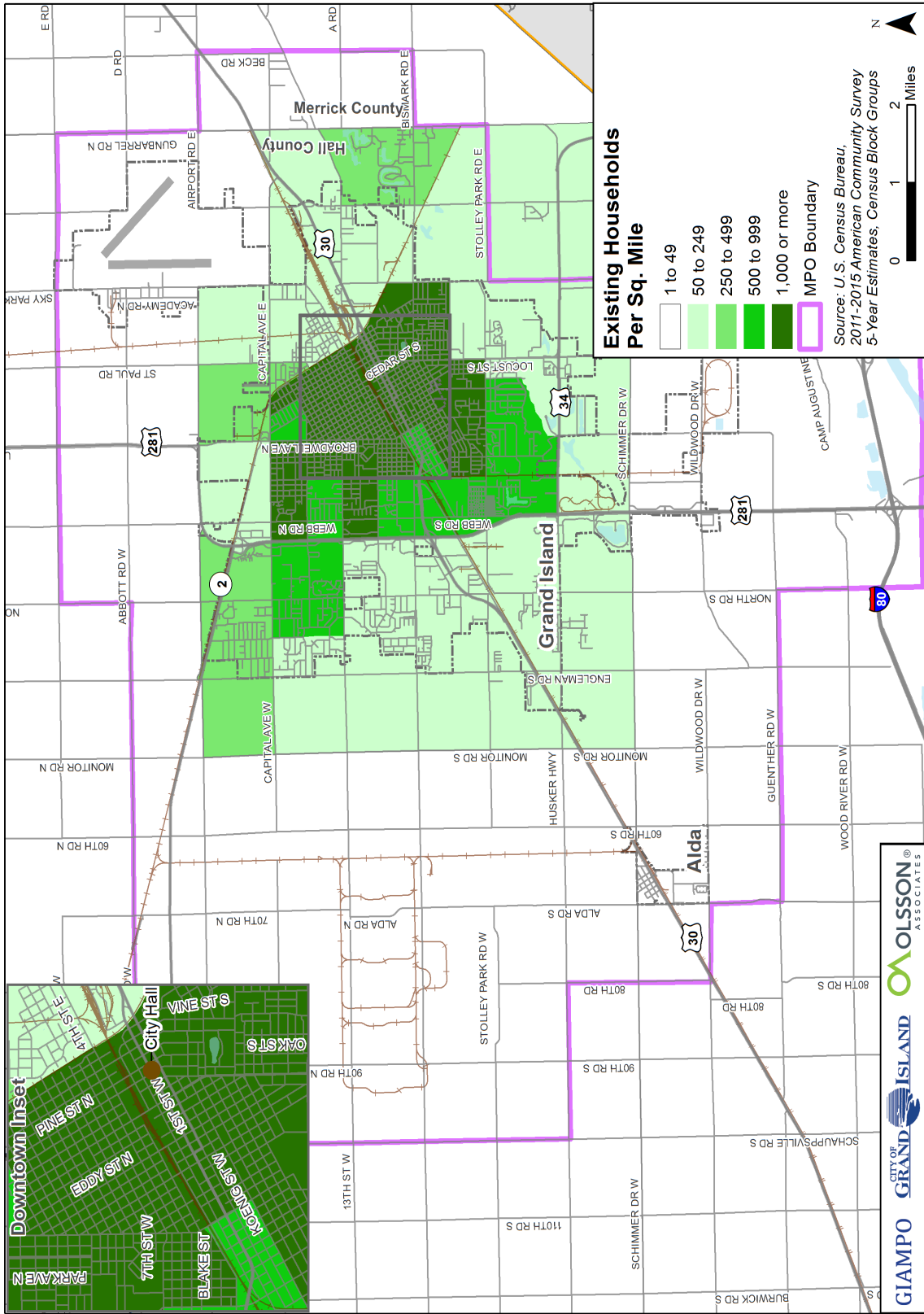
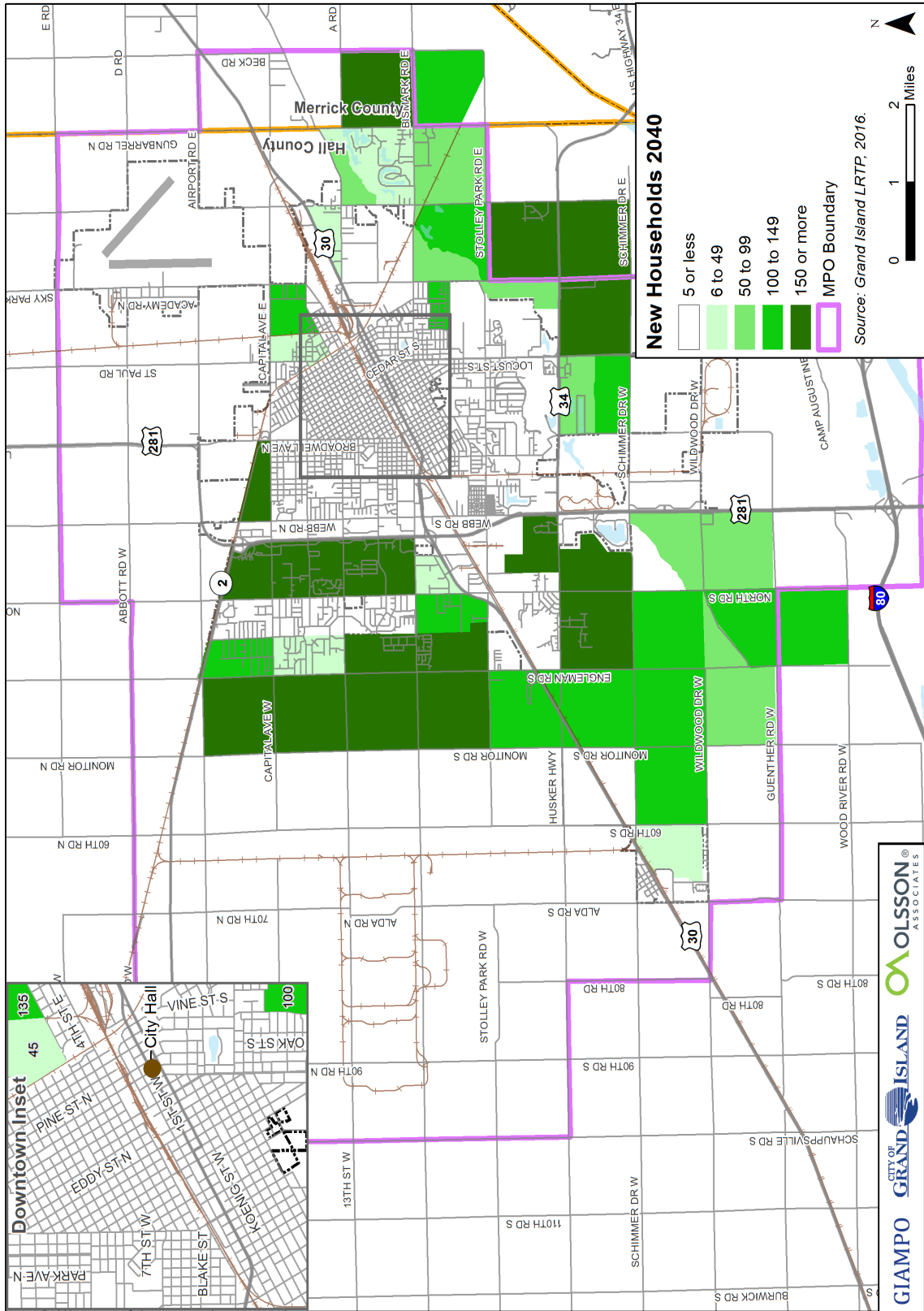


Figure 3.4: New Households 2040



## 3.5 Transit Propensity

The demographic characteristics described in this chapter provide a composite snapshot of Grand Island area residents. The transit dependent market segments are most likely to use public transit more often than other persons in the region. These datasets are used to calculate the transit propensity and identify areas with the greatest need for transit within the community.

### 3.5.1 Methodology

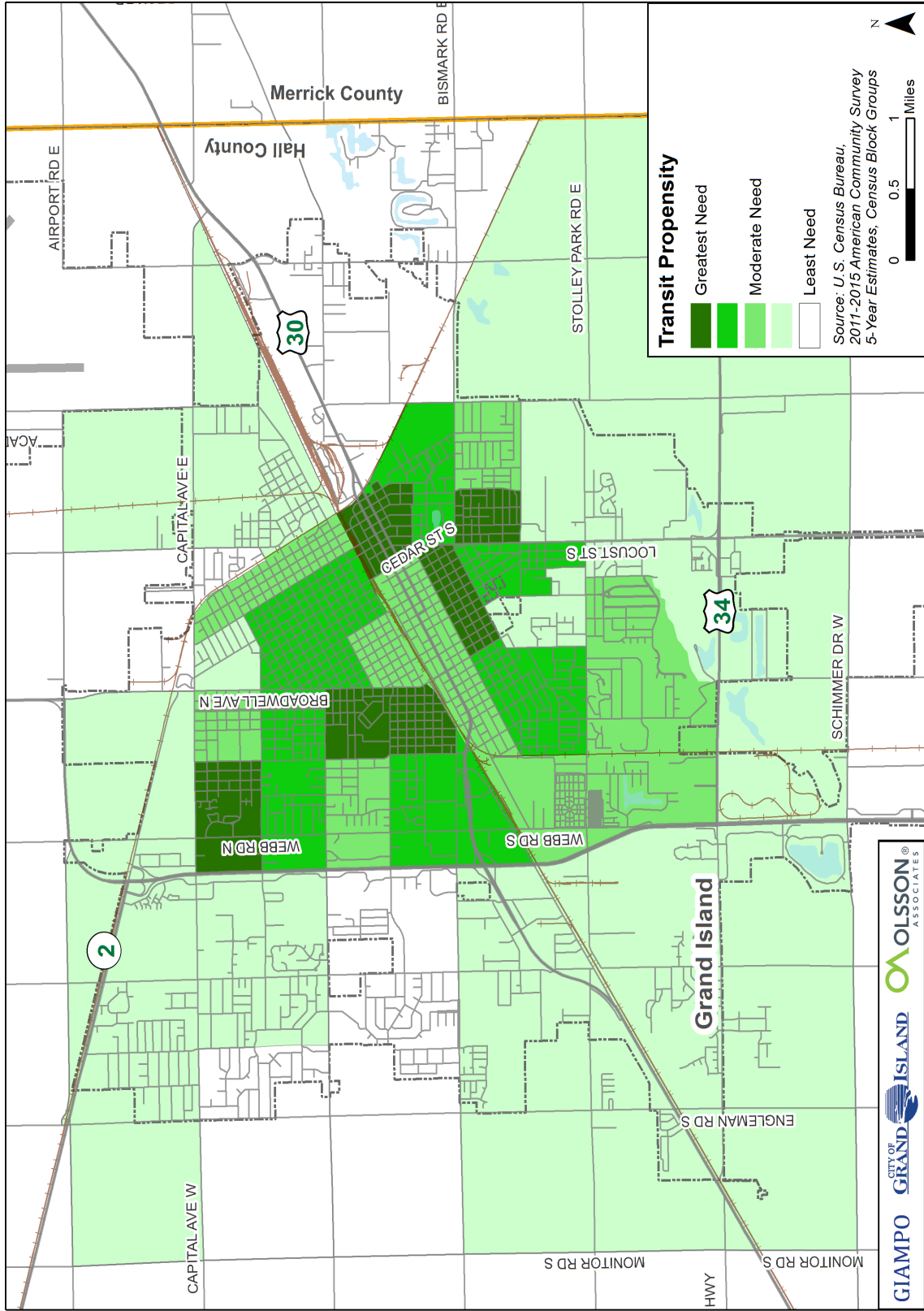
The Transit Propensity Analysis provides a general understanding of areas in the community with the greatest transit need. Each of the categories listed below was used to develop the transit propensity.

- Elderly Population - Number of persons aged 65 years old and over
- Disability Population - Number of persons living with a hearing, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, or independent living disability
- Low-Income Households - Number of households with an income in the past 12 months below the poverty level
- Zero Vehicle Households - Number of households without owning an automobile

The composite transit propensity map is shown in **Figure 3.5**. Densities for the analysis are at the block group level. The areas with the greatest need within the Grand Island region are found in and around downtown Grand Island. As transit alternatives are developed, the transit propensity data will be used in the analysis to ensure that areas with a high transit need are adequately served by public transportation.

The next sections examine the existing employment in the study area, as well as how work and non-work trip flows explain the transportation needs of those who live and/or work in Grand Island region.

Figure 3.5: Transit Propensity Map



## 3.6 Employment

### 3.6.1 Existing and Future Employment

The majority of jobs in the Grand Island region are concentrated at the retail-heavy businesses along the Highway 281 corridor, the retail and public employees located in the downtown area, and industrial concentrations at the intersection of Highway 30 and Highway 281, as well as east of the City. **Figure 3.6** presents the 2014 employment concentrations for the Grand Island region.

Employment projections for Grand Island and Hall County were developed for the GIAMPO Long Range Transportation Plan. Future employment forecasts in that plan were based on region-specific employment projection growth rates, provided by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development for 2010 to 2020. Hall County is one of 22 counties located in the Central Economic Region of Nebraska, therefore the Central Region's growth rates were applied to Hall County's future employment forecasts.

After applying the annual projected regional growth rate of each industry to the Hall County existing employment base provided by the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce, a total of 8,087 new jobs are estimated by the year 2040, a 21 percent increase from 2013

Allocation of these employment sectors were based on discussions with City of Grand Island and GIAMPO staff, the 2004 Grand Island Comprehensive Transportation Plan, as well as further analysis of available land, permitted densities, future land uses, and neighboring developments. The sector of employment and the location of the employment center has a significant impact on the needs of the region's transportation network.

### 3.6.2 Major Employers

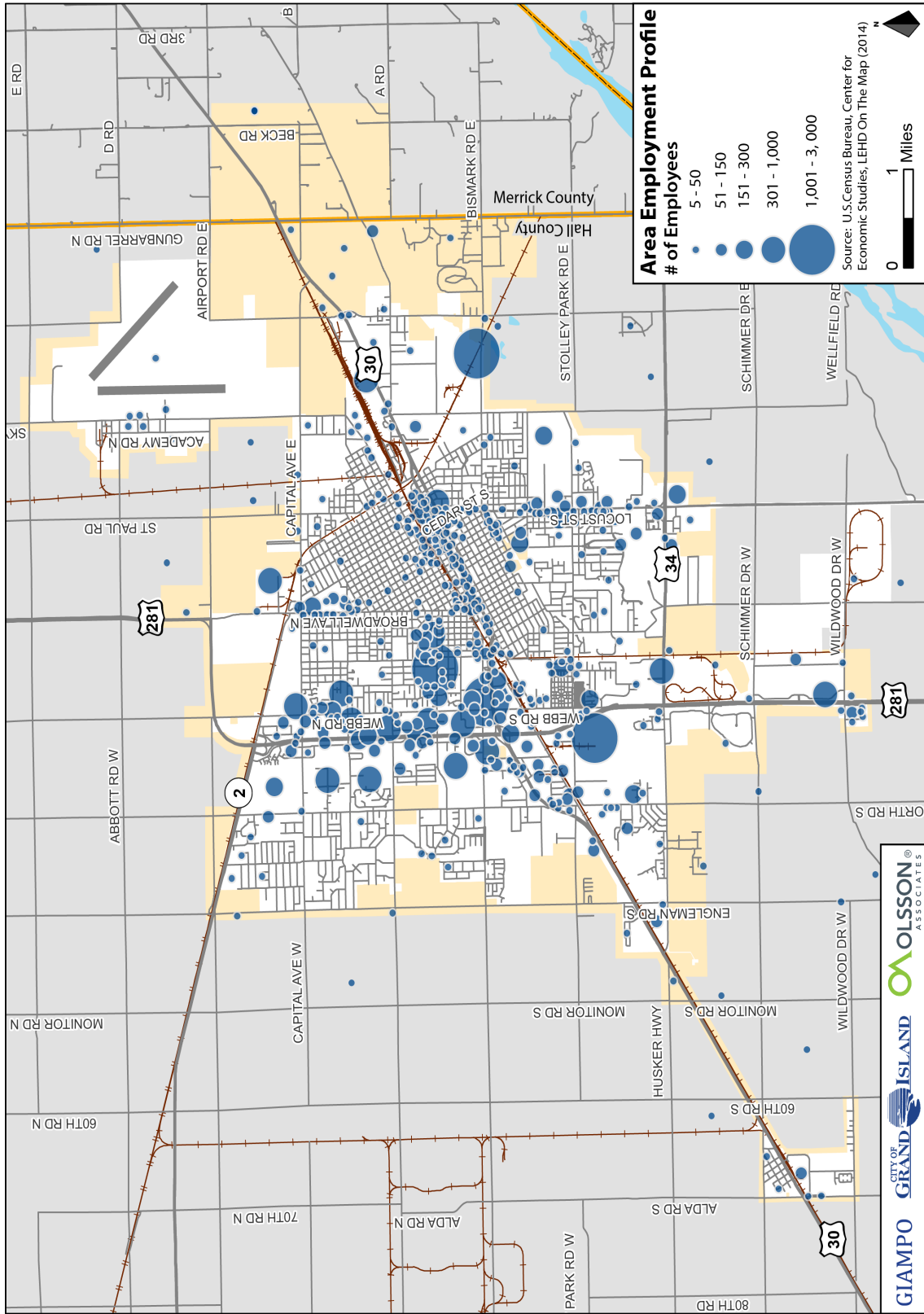
The major employers in the Grand Island region are listed in **Table 3.3**. Larger concentrations of employment provide additional opportunities for commuter-related public transportation. For the Grand Island area, the top five employers include JBS, CHI Health St. Francis, Grand Island Public Schools, Hornady Manufacturing, and CNH Industrial America. When reviewing the map of major employers, it is important to consider some of these larger employers are not all in one location. Of the top 10 employers, five are concentrated in a single location and five are dispersed in other locations around the City.

Table 3.3: Grand Island Major Employers

Employer	# of Employees
JBS	3,200
CHI Health St. Francis	1,300
Grand Island Public Schools	1,250
Hornady Manufacturing	751
CNH Industrial America	722
Walmart	662
Chief Industries	650
McCain Foods	550
City of Grand Island	535
Principal Financial	445
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,065</b>

Source: Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation (2017).

Figure 3.6: Existing Grand Island Employment Profile





### 3.7 Commuter Travel Patterns

Commuter travel patterns indicate the connection between where people live and where they work. **Figure 3.7** illustrates the work trip travel movements for communities in the Grand Island region. These data were extracted from the 2014 U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program. The LEHD program produces public-use information combining federal, state, and Census Bureau data on employers and employees under the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Partnership. The LEHD data describes geographic patterns of employees by their employment locations and residential locations, as well as the connections between the two locations. The information shows the number of workers living in each community and the location of their employment. **Table 3.4** shows a list of the major commuter connections from and to Grand Island.

Since the GIAMPO LRTP was completed, employment totals are now available for as recent as 2014. According to the LEHD program, the City of Grand Island has approximately 25,000 working age individuals living within the City and approximately 32,000 individuals employed in Grand Island. This accounts for a net job inflow of 7,000. Of the 32,000 employed in Grand Island, 16,400 (66 percent), both work and live within the City. The remaining 15,600 employees live outside Grand Island and commute into the City for work.

Table 3.4: Intercity Commuter Connections

Direction	Commuters
Hastings to Grand Island	1,099
Grand Island to Lincoln	872
Grand Island to Hastings	790
Kearney to Grand Island	790
Grand Island to Kearney	731
Lincoln to Grand Island	686
Omaha to Grand Island	625
Grand Island to Omaha	622
Aurora to Grand Island	411
Central City to Grand Island	299
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,925</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD On The Map (2014)*

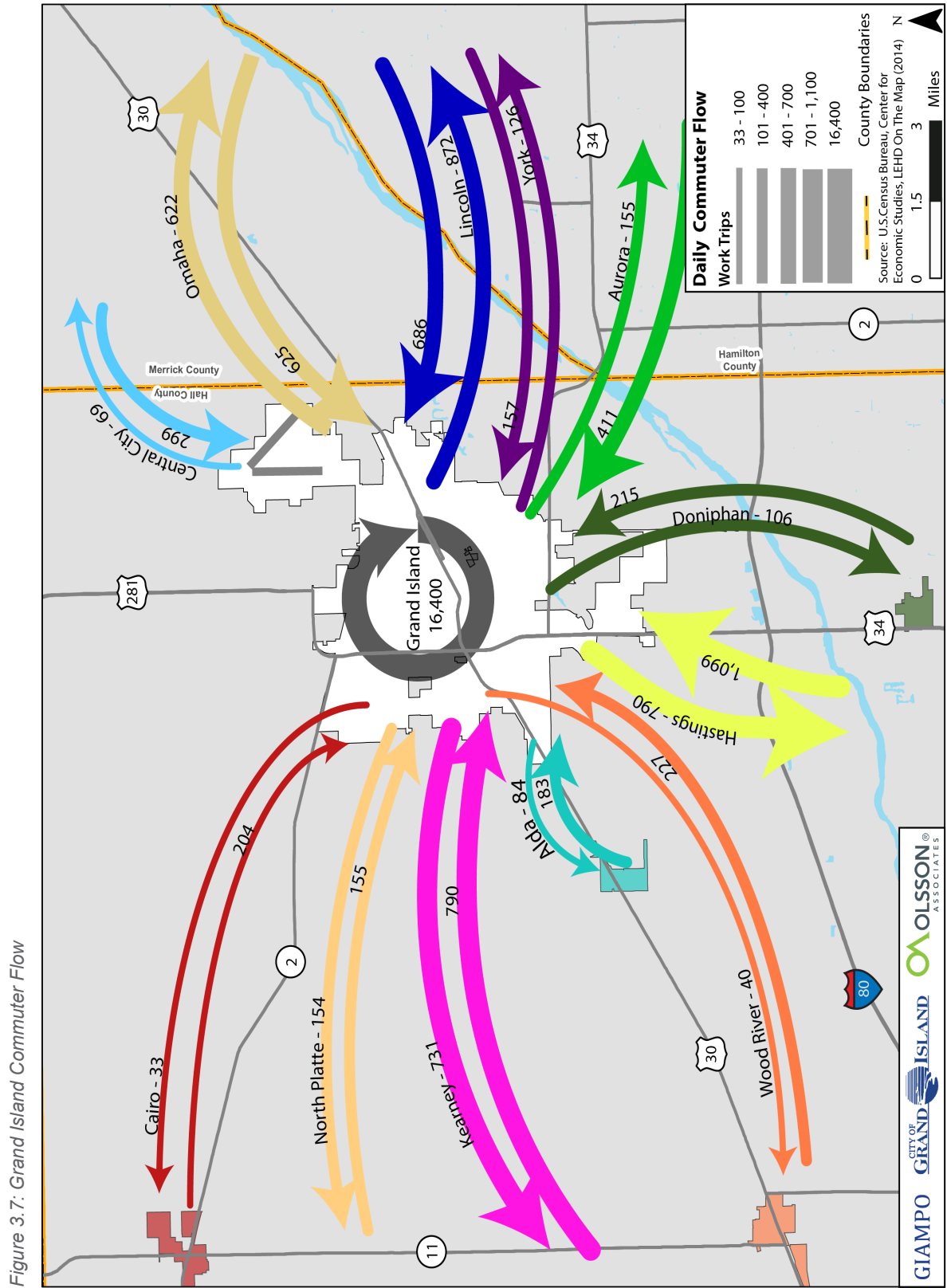
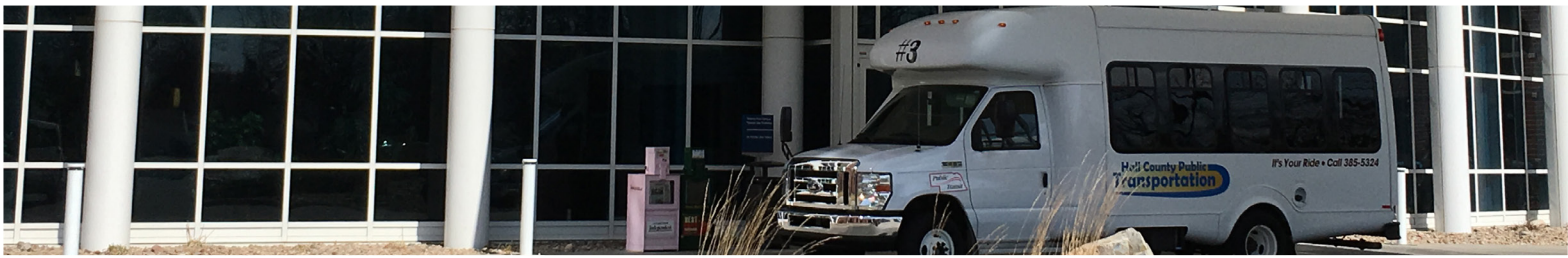


Figure 3.7: Grand Island Commuter Flow



## CHAPTER 4 EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES

### 4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 provides an overview and analysis of existing operations and financial information for Hall County Public Transportation. In addition, information on current ridership and system performance are included in the summary data. Other transportation providers serving Hall County and Grand Island are also summarized within the chapter.

### 4.2 Hall County Public Transportation

Grand Island and Hall County have had public transportation services available to residents since the mid-1970s. The current services, after July 1, 2016, are funded in part by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) urban transportation programs, 5311 rural funds, the City of Grand Island, and Hall County.

Prior to fiscal year (FY) 2014, Hall County was the sole local governmental funding agency for Hall County Public Transportation. After July 1, 2016, the City of Grand Island is now the primary funding partner, with a small portion of the local match (5 percent) from Hall County. The allocation for Hall County was based upon existing services located primarily within the urban area of Grand Island and some service requests outside the City (rural trips funded by the 5311 funding program).

In April 2016, the Grand Island City Council approved an interlocal agreement where the City provides public transit services through contract services with Senior Citizens Industries, Inc. (SCI) for an initial 12-month term, with two one-year renewable options. This contract is funded from FTA 5307 (urban) and 5311 (rural) funds and local matching funding sources via the City of Grand Island and Hall County.

Today, Hall County Public Transportation provides demand response, curb-to-curb service for Hall County residents. Reservations must be made 24 hours in advance, Monday through Friday between 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Transit service is available from 6:00 am to 5:00 pm. The base fare is \$2.00 per one-way trip. Tickets are also available for purchase for 1 trip, 10 trips, or 20 trips. Hall County Public Transportation typically has seven or eight peak vehicles providing service from 6:00 am to 5:00 pm, each weekday. The agency provides transportation to all residents age 18 and older. Those under 18 years must have an adult companion.



*Hall County Public Transportation Rider*

From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, the agency provided approximately 35,000 annual one-way trips. Ridership is anticipated to increase slightly in FY 2016-2017 due to the discontinuation of the taxi voucher program in late 2016.

### 4.2.1 Fleet and Facilities

The Hall County Public Transportation office, operated by Senior Citizens Industries (SCI), is located at 304 E. 3rd Street, the Grand Generation Center, in downtown Grand Island. The buses are parked overnight across 3rd Street, in an uncovered lot. All SCI administration and operation are housed at this facility. The City of Grand Island hired a Transit Program Manager in May 2017, and one of the position’s primary duties is to oversee the contracted service provider. Administratively, the Transit Program Manager reports directly to the Public Works Director.

Hall County Public Transportation operates curb-to-curb, demand response service for the residents within Hall County, using a fleet of 12 vehicles, as shown in **Table 4.1**. The fleet includes minivans and small body-on-chassis gasoline-fueled buses. Seating capacity ranges from two seats in the minivans to 14 seats on the body-on-chassis buses. All vehicles are accessible with a wheelchair lift or ramp, with the exception of the 2012 12-passenger van. The lifts and ramps allow for level boarding at sidewalk or curb level. This feature reduces and/or eliminate gaps between the boarding location and the bus, as well as allow passengers with mobility devices to safely and independently board the bus. The existing fleet does not have vehicle bike racks.

Table 4.1: Hall County Public Transportation Fleet Information

SCI Fleet - August 2016						
		Type of Vehicle	Age of Vehicle (Yrs)	Vehicle Capacity	Wheelchair Lifts	Wheelchair Ramps
1	2014	Dodge Grand Caravan	3	2	No	Yes
2	2014	Dodge Grand Caravan	3	2	No	Yes
3	2013	Ford Small Bus	4	14	Yes	No
4	2008	Chevy Small Bus	9	14	Yes	No
5	2009	Chevy Small Bus	8	14	Yes	No
6	2014	Ford Small Bus	3	14	Yes	No
7	2015	Senator II Small Bus	2	14	Yes	No
8	2015	Senator II Small Bus	2	14	Yes	No
9	2010	Ford Small Bus	7	14	Yes	No
10	2010	Ford Small Bus	7	14	Yes	No
11	2010	Ford Small Bus	7	14	Yes	No
12	2012	Chevy Van	5	12	No	Yes

Source: SCI, Spring 2017.

### 4.2.2 Ridership

Annual passenger trip data for Hall County Public Transportation was 35,085 in FY 2015-2016. This ridership is slightly lower than the previous year of 36,394. Average ridership for the Hall County Public Transportation is slightly higher on Tuesday and Thursday, and slightly lower on Mondays. Annual weekday ridership by percent is listed below.

- Monday – 17 percent total ridership (5,896 total annual one-way trips)
- Tuesday – 22 percent total ridership (7,574 total annual one-way trips)
- Wednesday – 20 percent total ridership (7,067 total annual one-way trips)
- Thursday – 22 percent total ridership (7,807 total annual one-way trips)
- Friday – 19 percent total ridership (6,741 total annual one-way trips)

### 4.2.3 Financial Review

An essential element of operating and sustaining transit service is a review of the financial characteristics of the system. Annual operating costs for Hall County Public Transportation, FY 2015-2016, were approximately \$490,000 based upon current service levels. Annual revenue hours were approximately 14,705, which equates to approximately \$34 operating cost per revenue hour. These costs are in the normal range for demand response transit agencies across the nation and within the state of Nebraska. The agency provides approximately 2.4 passengers per revenue hour, which is also within the normal range for demand response transit agencies across the nation.

The revenue required to operate Hall County Public Transportation comes from a variety of sources consisting of the City’s general fund, county local funding, Federal 5307 and 5311 grants and fare revenues. Using the \$490,000 budget for FY 2015-2016, **Table 4.2** provides the estimated breakout of funding sources.

Hall County Public Transportation



Table 4.2: Hall County Public Transportation Budget

Operating Budget/Revenues FY 2015 - 2016		
Amount	Source	Percent of Total
\$249,900	FTA	51%
\$65,467	Fares	13%
\$174,633	Local	36%
\$490,000	Total	100%

The largest revenue source is the FTA, representing 51 percent of total operating revenue. Fares contribute to approximately 13 percent of the budget, and local funding from the City and County is approximately 36 percent of the total budget. For the local funding in the last fiscal year (2016-2017), the City contributes approximately \$161,000 and the County contributed approximately \$5,700 annually.

The City is eligible to apply annually for 50 percent reimbursement from the Nebraska Public Transportation Assistance Program towards the local match for the 5307 program relating to Grand Island's transit operations. The Nebraska Public Transportation Assistance Program was created by the Nebraska Public Transportation Act in 1975, and it is administered by the Nebraska Department of Transportation.<sup>1</sup> The funding is available for rural areas, small urban areas (Bellevue, Grand Island, Papillion-La Vista, and South Sioux City) and large urban areas (Omaha and Lincoln). Funding is awarded in the following order -- rural areas, small urban areas, then large urban areas. In FY 2016-2017, the City received approximately \$80,000 reimbursement, which is approximately half of the local operating assistance in the urban area. This funding sources is not guaranteed; however, the City will likely apply for reimbursement each year.

Total operating expenses for FY 2015-2016 were just under \$500,000. Salary and wages account for approximately 58 percent of the total budget, which is common among most transit agencies. Fuel is the second highest cost (10 percent of total budget) for Hall County Public Transportation at approximately \$4,000 per month on average. Vehicle insurance is approximately nine percent of the budget, followed closely by routine preventative maintenance for vehicles at approximately \$3,100 per month or eight percent total budget. These four categories of expenses make up approximately 85 percent of total expenses for the transit agency. **Appendix A** presents budget detail assumptions.

#### 4.2.4 System Performance

The operating effectiveness and financial efficiency of a transit agency are central factors contributing to the success of a transit system. Operating effectiveness is the ability of a transit system to generate and sustain ridership, while financial efficiency is a transit system's ability to provide transit service at the lowest feasible cost.

**Table 4.3** presents the system-wide performance characteristics for Hall County Public Transportation.

This summary table includes data for operating effectiveness as measured by the number of passenger trips per vehicle revenue hours and vehicle revenue miles. Financial efficiency is measured by the operating cost per passenger trip and operating cost per vehicle revenue hour.

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<sup>1</sup> *Nebraska Statutes, Chapter 13, Section 13-1201 to 13-1214.* [http://www.sos.ne.gov/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Roads\\_Dept\\_of/Title-415/Chapter-2.pdf](http://www.sos.ne.gov/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Roads_Dept_of/Title-415/Chapter-2.pdf)

Table 4.3: Hall County Public Transportation System Wide Performance

System Performance	
Operating Cost	\$490,000
Passenger Trips	35,085
Vehicle Revenue Hours	14,705
Vehicle Revenue Miles	170,497
Operating Effectiveness	
Passenger Trips/Revenue Hr	2.4
Passenger Trips/Revenue Mile	0.21
Financial Efficiency	
Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	\$13.99
Operating Cost per Revenue Hour	\$33.32
Operating Cost per Revenue Mile	\$2.87

Source: Olsson Associates, 2017.



Hall County Public Transportation Bus

## 4.3 Other Transportation Providers

### 4.3.1 Burlington Trailways

Burlington Trailways provides intercity service seven days a week from Grand Island. The bus station is co-located with Arrow Stage Lines in Grand Island. Eastbound and westbound routes travel to out-of-state destinations. The buses are at the station in Grand Island at 12:50 am, 3:05 am, and 5:30 pm. Wifi is available on all buses for travelers. Feedback from local station staff estimate approximately 50 boardings and deboardings occur in Grand Island each month. Popular destinations include Lincoln, Omaha, Des Moines, and Indianapolis. Agency staff report 18 buses are on the road during peak travel periods. The company has 39 vehicles in its fleet. Passengers on Burlington Trailways include many students, elderly, and people on fixed incomes.

### 4.3.2 Central City Mini Bus - Merrick County

The Mini Bus operates demand response, curb-to-curb service Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm. Reservations are required 24-hour in advance. To travel to/from Grand Island, it is \$10 round trip. The agency travels to Grand Island the first Monday of every month. The primary purpose of most passengers traveling from Central City to Grand Island are for medical appointments.



Burlington Trailways Bus

### 4.3.3 Navigator Airport Express

The Navigator Airport Express is based out of Kearney and provides service into Grand Island Monday through Saturday. The agency focuses on airport service to multiple cities, including York, Lincoln, Omaha, and Kearney. Reservations are required to schedule a trip. The average fare from Grand Island to Omaha is \$62 per one-way trip.



Navigator Airport Express

### 4.3.4 Ponca Express

The Ponca Express transit agency is based out of Norfolk and transports passengers to/from Grand Island. Many passengers use Ponca Express to travel to the airport and to the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The agency makes the trip approximately every two weeks. The cost for the one-way trip is \$5.00 per person. The agency has 14 vehicles in its fleet, with approximately 12 vehicles operating during peak hours. Five of the 12 vehicles are wheelchair accessible. Trip requests to/from Grand Island and Hastings have increased, in addition to requests for Lincoln and Omaha.



Ponca Express

### 4.3.5 Ryde Transit

Ryde Transit is based out of Kearney and travels to/from Grand Island on a weekly basis. The agency estimates approximately 10,000 annual trips to Grand Island. The majority of trips are for medical appointments and the Veterans Administration facility in Grand Island. The one-way fare to Grand Island is \$8.00 per person. The agency has 48 total vehicles in its fleet, with approximately 38 vehicles in operation during peak hours.



Ryde Transit



### 4.3.6 Private Transit Providers

Other transportation providers within Hall County and Grand Island are private companies, taxis, and Uber. In addition to these services is the company Liberty, which is a new startup company, based out of Lincoln, known as the rural 'Uber' service. The agency is currently looking for drivers in the Grand Island area to provide service to the community. The agency, similar to Uber and the taxi service, will provide rides 24 hours a day, seven days per week. The Liberty service has independent contract drivers who make their own schedules and get paid per mile. Drivers must be 21, have a smart phone with a data plan, and pass a brief background check. Liberty will be providing trips for central Nebraska, Kearney, Grand Island, Hastings, and the surrounding areas.



*Uber Comes to Grand Island*

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