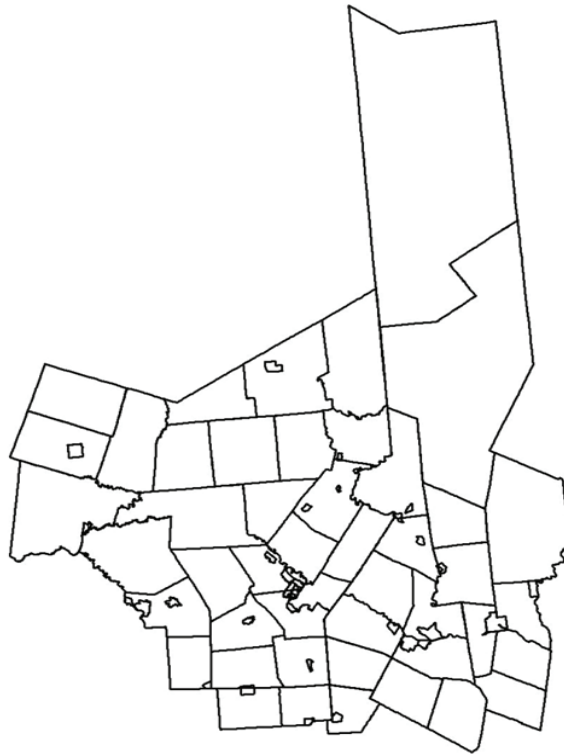


Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study



Environmental Justice Analysis 2016

DEVELOPED BY:

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HOCTS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS

I. INTRODUCTION

Executive Order 12898

On February 11, 1994, Federal government action was taken to correct the injustices by the signing of Executive Order 12898, “*Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations.*” This executive order was the first presidential effort to direct each Federal agency to review its procedures and make EJ part of their policies and activities by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. The executive mandate states – “*Each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.*” ²

What Executive Order 12898 is and is not

According to the U.S.DOT, Executive Order 12898 *is not a law or a statute, neither does it create new requirements nor establishes enforcement authority for departments and agencies.* Federal-aid recipients have long been required to certify nondiscrimination under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as well as under many other policies, regulations and laws.

USDOT Responses

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) states that environmental justice is more than a set of legal and regulatory obligations. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have embraced the principles of environmental justice as a means toward improving the transportation decision-making process. Today, effective transportation decision making requires understanding and addressing the unique needs of many different sociodemographic groups. Early, inclusive, and meaningful public involvement in transportation decision making is a proven means for designing transportation facilities that fit more harmoniously into communities. The involvement of people affected by transportation projects offers many benefits and does not threaten the accomplishment of other USDOT priorities, such as safety and mobility. ³

In 1997, the USDOT issued its *DOT Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* to summarize and expand upon the requirements of Executive Order 12898. The U.S. DOT stressed that EJ should be integrated into every transportation decision, from the forming of a transportation plan to post-construction operations and maintenance. Therefore, all transportation programs are to incorporate the following three fundamental principles of EJ:

1. To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations; and
2. To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process, and
3. To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

¹: As cited in Federal Highway Administration: Preventing Discrimination in the Federal-Aid Highway Program: A Systematic Interdisciplinary & Integrative Approach Reference Manual, March 27, 2002

²: As cited on the Federal Highway Administration’s Environmental Justice website:
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/references/

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4. To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations; and
5. To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process, and
6. To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

The *USDOT Order* applies to all policies, programs, and other activities that are undertaken, funded, or approved by the FHWA, the FTA, or other U.S. DOT component. These include:

- Policy Decisions
- Systems Planning
- Metropolitan and Statewide Planning
- Project Development and Environmental Review under NEPA
- Preliminary Design
- Final Design Engineering
- Right-of Way
- Construction
- Operations and Maintenance ⁴

FHWA and FTA staff works with State DOT's, MPOs, transit providers, and other local agencies to ensure Title VI and EJ considerations are integral to all surface transportation activities. The Federal staff is committed to:

- Ensuring Federal transportation regulations and policies affirm and reinforce nondiscrimination.
- Ensuring that Title VI compliance and EJ principles are understood and implemented in metropolitan and statewide planning activities and in NEPA processes and documents; and

³ & ⁴: As cited on the Federal Highway Administration's Environmental Justice website:
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/references/

- Identifying effective practices, potential models, and other technical assistance resources to promote the integration of Environmental Justice into all planning, development, and implementation activities.

The FHWA and FTA have released reference guides that are designed to aid MPO's, as well as, state and local agencies in developing Environmental Justice policies. In August of 2012, the FTA issued its Environmental Justice Policy Guidance for FTA Circular and in April of 2015 the FHWA released the FHWA Environmental Justice Reference Guide. These documents provide information regarding the current standards and regulations for Environmental Justice Project evaluation and policy.

HOCTS Incorporation of Environmental Justice

HOCTS has addressed EJ regulations in its programs and policies as cited in the Long Range Transportation Plan Update 2015-2035 (LRTP Update 2035), the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Title VI Policies/Procedures/Reports, for all sub-recipients and contractors of HOCTS.

Long Range Transportation Plan Update 2015– 2035

EJ influenced three out of six HOCTS LRTP priority areas concerning the scope and nature of transportation planning. One priority area, *Mobility and Accessibility* states, “A coordinated approach to developing a transportation network which meets the existing and growing needs of all users.” Another priority area, *Public Participation* states, “Promote public access and input in the regional transportation process.” The third priority area, *Environmental Impact/Mitigation* states, “Plan and develop a transportation system that enhances and protects the region’s natural and built environment, transportation system, facilities from potential threats and climate change.” Each of these priority areas take into consideration EJ and helps to ensure equality throughout the transportation planning process.

Transportation Improvement Program

As cited in HOCTS TIP FFY 2017-2021, Presidential Executive Order 12898, further amplifies Title VI by providing that “each federal agency shall make Environmental Justice part of the mission by identifying and addressing, as environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority and low-income populations.”

The provisions of the federal laws and orders apply to the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), and MPO member agencies under contract to NYSDOT for receipt of federal monies. Within Herkimer and Oneida Counties the Governmental Policy and Liaison Committee acts as the MPO, and HOCTS is identified as the staff and program manager for all funding received. The GP&L Committee, the member agencies under contract to NYSDOT, and any consultants or subcontractors to member agencies receiving federal transportation planning monies are bound by Title VI and Affirmative Action provisions. The HOCTS UPWP includes an EJ task to maintain compliance throughout the programs and implement regulations as they are updated and relevant to the MPO process.

Unified Planning Work Program

The UPWP states that the EJ objective is to ensure that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the

HOCTS planning process. The HOCTS staff will continue to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related statutes and implemented regulations as they relate to the HOCTS planning process. This compliance will be achieved by HOCTS Title VI plans, Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) submissions, Affirmative Action Plans, Equal Opportunity Employer notices, public participation policy, Environmental Justice documentation, and related reports, documents, meetings, and trainings to assure compliance with appropriate legislation.

Title VI Monitoring and Compliance

HOCTS is considered a sub recipient of federal transportation funds. NYSDOT, as the primary recipient, asks HOCTS to submit responses to a number of questions relating to Title VI to help ensure that the agency is complying with Title VI requirements. HOCTS updates data analysis for the Herkimer and Oneida Counties metropolitan planning area related to Title VI upon the adoption of all significant planning and policy documents developed by HOCTS.

HOCTS will annually review its operations to ensure compliance with Title VI. Every other year or in tangent with the development of the TIP, whichever occurs sooner, HOCTS will perform a self-certification review for Title VI and include it as an appendix to the TIP document. For any active contracts or sub-recipients that HOCTS has oversight of, Title VI compliance will be verified at the beginning of the contract and once per year, if the contract duration is longer than one year. This compliance will be verified through completion of a questionnaire kept on file with HOCTS.

All contracts originating from or utilizing funds from HOCTS will be reviewed by the Oneida County Attorney's Office for HOCTS, which ensures all contracts include nondiscrimination clauses. Oneida County is the HOST Agency for the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study. As outlined in the HOST agreement, HOCTS operates under the umbrella of all Oneida County policies, unless specific programs require HOCTS to develop additional policy, plans, analysis or guidelines. This includes all Federal legislation as it relates to Title VI, Environmental Justice, American Disabilities Act and other pertinent legislation.

Any complaints or concerns regarding discrimination arise under Title VI, written statements of the complaint can be filed with the Title VI Coordinator for Oneida County. The Title VI Coordinator keeps a record of all formal Title VI complaints with findings, recommended remedial actions, and remedial actions taken. For more information please see: HOCTS Title VI Notice and the Oneida County Title VI Policy (available at www.hocts.org)

II. CHARACTERIZING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Transportation Planning Process

Although EJ is not a new concern in regards to transportation, it has evolved with greater emphasis. The USDOT, as one of the many federal agencies mandated by Executive Order 12898, is mandated to review their procedures and make EJ part of their policies and activities by addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on minorities and low-income people. This includes the processes, programs and products of transportation planning, including project development.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) defines environmental justice as the pursuit of equal justice and equal protection for all people under the environmental statutes and regulations, as well as ensuring that “EJ communities” are not exposed to unjustly high and adverse environmental impacts. An “EJ community” is any aggregated or dispersed population that (a) is low-income population based on the Bureau of the Census (BOC) Current Population reports, (b) is over 50-percent minority, or (c) contains a minority population percentage meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis.

USDOT cites three primary EJ principles are at the core of the transportation planning process:

- Avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- Ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- Prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

Minority Groups

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued Policy Directive 15, Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity, in 1997, establishing five minimum categories for data on race. Executive Order 12898, the DOT and FHWA Orders on Environmental Justice address persons belonging to any of the following groups of African, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, or Low-Income.

Poverty Groups

Executive Order 12898, the DOT and FHWA Orders on Environmental Justice defines “Low-Income” to be a person whose household income (or in the case of a community or group, whose median household income) is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. The Department of Health and Human Services issue these guidelines each year in the Federal Register. The guidelines are a simplification of the poverty thresholds for use for administrative purposes, such as determining eligibility for certain federal programs.

Disproportionately High and Adverse Effects

According to EJ sources, disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income is defined as an adverse effect that 1) is predominately borne by a minority population and/or a low-income population; or 2) will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that would be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population.

An adverse effect is defined as the cumulative human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Bodily impairment, infirmity, illness or death;
- Air, noise, and water pollution and soil contamination;
- Destruction or diminution of aesthetic values;
- Destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community’s economic vitality;

- Destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services; adverse employment effects;
- Displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations;
- Increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community; and
- The denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits of FHWA programs, policies, or activities.

III. HOCTS REQUIREMENTS

On October 7, 1999, FHWA and FTA issued a memorandum, “*Implementing Title VI Requirements in Metropolitan and Statewide Planning*.” The memorandum identifies a series of actions that can be taken to support Title VI compliance and EJ goals, improve planning performance, and minimize the potential for subsequent corrective action and complaint. The memorandum also provides technical assistance in these three key areas of planning:

1. It provides questions and concerns to raise during annual self-certification of compliance with Title VI, and at the time of approval for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
2. It provides questions and concerns to raise while reviewing public-involvement efforts regarding the engagement of minority populations and low-income populations.
3. It encourages UPWP, and State Planning and Research to begin developing or enhancing technical capability for assessing impact distributions among populations.

To certify compliance with Title VI and address EJ, MPOs:

- Utilize analytical capabilities to ensure that the LRTP and the TIP comply with Title VI.
- Identify residential, employment, and transportation patterns of low-income and minority populations so that their needs can be identified and addressed, and the benefits and burdens of transportation investments can be fairly distributed.
- Evaluate and, where necessary, improve their public involvement processes to eliminate participation barriers and engage minority and low-income populations in transportation decision making.

The FHWA and the FTA have issued documents designed as guidance for Federal, Local and State Agencies, as well as, MPO’s to ensure that EJ policies are implemented and followed throughout the planning process.

The FTA’s circular, “*Environmental Justice Policy Guidance for Federal Transit Administration Recipients*” was issued on August 15th, 2012. The FTA “circular contains recommendations for State DOT’s, MPO’s and transit providers on: (1) how to fully engage EJ populations in the transportation decision-making process; (2) how to determine whether EJ populations would be subjected to disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of a public transportation project, policy, or activity; and (3) how to avoid, minimize or mitigate these effects.” (FTA C 4703.1, 8).

The FHWA’s “Environmental Justice Reference Guide was issued on April 1st, 2015, as an additional resource to help ensure compliance with EJ requirements.

Overview of HOCTS Environmental Justice Analysis/Scope of Work

HOCTS has cited five key steps (below) to develop a process which will assess and ensure that the planning efforts comply with the regulations and requirements of Title VI and the Executive Order on Environmental Justice:

1. Develop a Demographic Profile of the HOCTS Planning Area
2. Identify Needs and Issues of Target Populations
3. Methodology and Data Collection of Target Populations
4. Establish Thresholds for Identifying Imbalances in the Transportation Planning Process
5. Analysis of Target Populations

Upon evaluation of these areas, HOCTS will assess the benefits and burdens of existing and planned transportation projects on minority, low-income, disabled, elderly, and disadvantaged populations.

Demographic Profile of the HOCTS Planning Area

Demographic Data

The data sources used for the development of a demographic profile of the HOCTS planning area are the 2010 U.S. Census and the 2014 American Communities Survey. The HOCTS planning area includes the following municipalities of Herkimer and Oneida Counties:

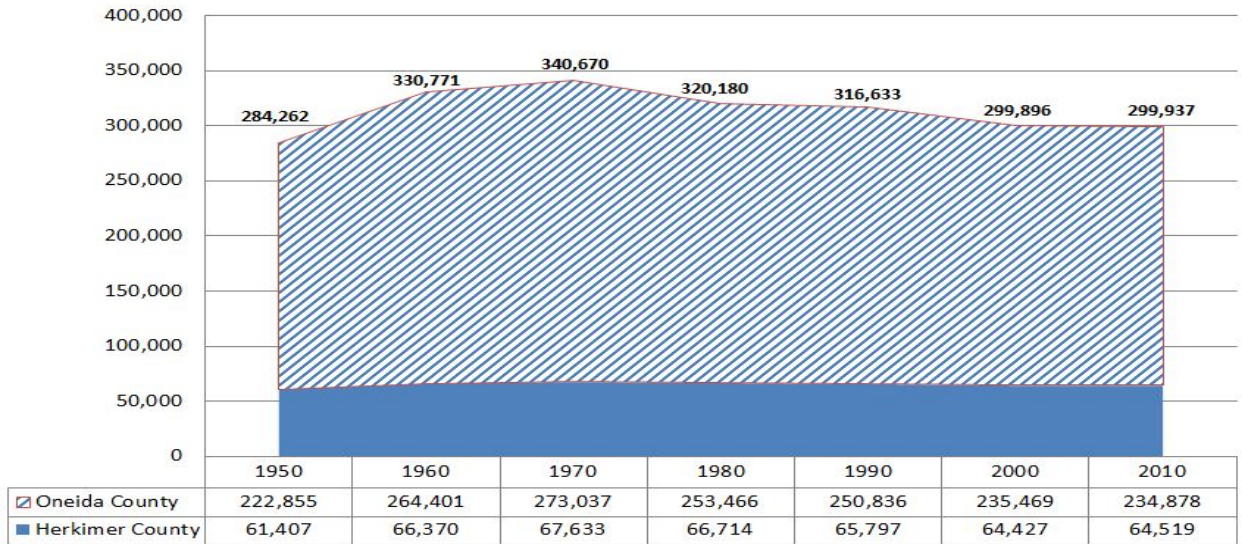
Herkimer County – City of Little Falls, and the Towns of Columbia, Danube, Fairfield, German Flatts, Herkimer, Litchfield, Little Falls, Manheim, Newport, Ohio, Russia, Salisbury, Schuyler, Stark, Warren, Webb, and Winfield.

Oneida County - Cities of Rome, Sherrill, and Utica; and the Towns of Annsville, Augusta, Ava, Boonville, Bridgewater, Camden, Deerfield, Florence, Floyd, Forestport, Kirkland, Lee, Marcy, Marshall, New Hartford, Paris, Remsen, Sangerfield, Steuben, Trenton, Vernon, Verona, Vienna, Western, Westmoreland, and Whitestown.

Population Trends

The 2010 decennial Census found the population of our region has stabilized after three decades of decline. Previously, between the years 1970 and 2000, the total regional population dropped from 340,670 to 299,896 people, representing a loss of about 12% of the population over the 30 years. When the 2010 Census counts were released, the total regional population was found to be 299,397; this is less than two tenths of a percent drop from the 2000 population. Therefore the population, for all intents and purposes, has stabilized from the previous 30 years.

Herkimer-Oneida Counties Regional Population Change: 1950 to 2010

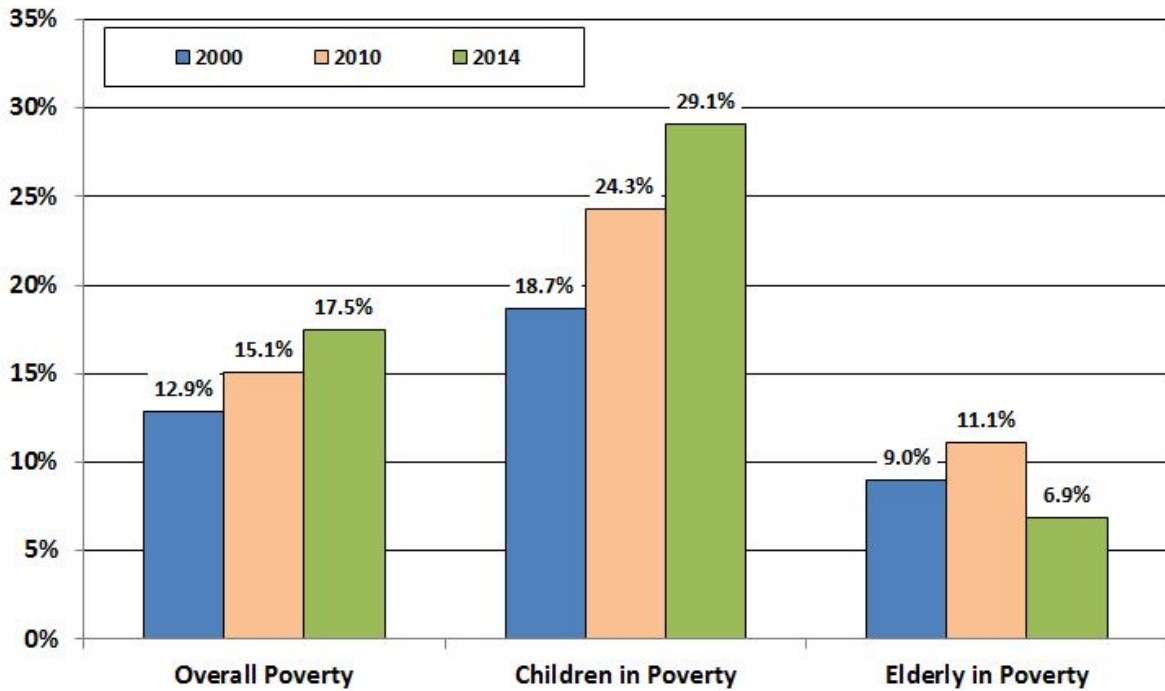


Source: US Census Bureau (1950-2010)

Poverty Existing in the Herkimer-Oneida Population

Combined, the two county region has 17.5% of its population living below the poverty line in 2014. When the numbers are further broken down, more than one in four (29.1%) of children under 18 and are in poverty, and about one in fifteen (6.9%) of elderly over age 65 live below the poverty line. The current estimate for poverty among the elderly does represent a decline in the percent of elderly living below the poverty line from 11.1% in 2010, to 6.9% in 2014. The number living below the poverty line correlates to as many as 19% of all households receiving food stamps or SNAP benefits in the region according to 2014 ACS data; which represents a significant increase in the percent of SNAP households compared to the 2010 estimates.

Regional Populations in Poverty



Source: US Decennial Census 2000
US Census ACS 1 Year Estimates, 2010, 2014

Population Diversity

According to the 2014 ACS One Year Estimates, there are approximately 43,000 people in our region who qualify as being of “minority” racial status (identifying as something other than “white non-Hispanic”). This is an increase of some 4,000 minority persons since 2010. The vast majority of minorities, more than 39,500, reside in Oneida County and about 3,500 live in Herkimer County. While the percent of the population identifying itself as being black has remained relatively stable, the Asian population has significantly increased in the last four years with more than 9,900 residents indicating that they are of partial Asian descent. Culturally, the percent of respondents saying they are Hispanic has nearly doubled over the last fifteen years, growing from some 8,000 people in the Census 2000 to nearly 14,000 in the 2014 ACS.

The changing of racial status, as part of the ACS, has begun to reflect immigration and refugee populations that have settled or been relocated to Oneida and Herkimer Counties. In the most immediate past ten years, nearly 4,000 refugees have been relocated to Utica and the Mohawk Valley. To date, close to 15,000 immigrants/refugees have come to the region through the United Nations and the programs of the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees. The immigrants/refugees, primarily settle within the City of Utica, and are initially dependent on social services. The cultural differences and language barriers of this growing immigrant/refugee population create significant barriers for securing employment, accessing public transportation and obtaining personal transportation.

Representation of Elderly and People with Disabilities

Other populations important to the transportation demographic profile are the elderly, people with disabilities, and households without vehicles.

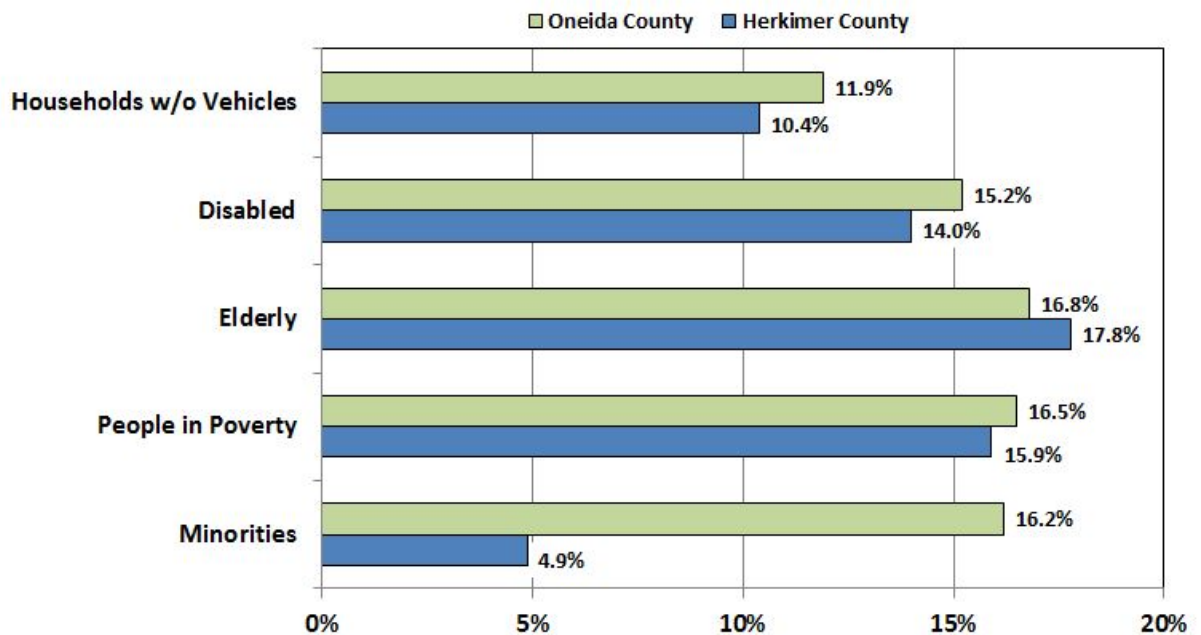
The median age is 42.8 years old in Herkimer County and 41.2 years old in Oneida County.

People identifying themselves as having disabilities in the 2014 ACS comprise about 16% of the regional population, (approximately 46,000 residents). Further breakdown shows roughly 12.5% (36,000) of these live in Oneida County and almost 3.5% (10,000) live in Herkimer County.

Within the two counties, more than a third of all elderly people (36.7%) claimed to have a disability in the 2014 ACS. Further breakdown shows, 33.6% of elderly in Herkimer County and 37.7% in Oneida County claim to have disabilities.

About 14,000 households in Herkimer and Oneida Counties lack any vehicle for transportation purposes according to the 2014 ACS data. This lack of transportation is slightly different within each county however. In Herkimer County, one in ten households (10.4%) do not have any vehicles. In Oneida County, about one in eight (11.9%) lack any vehicle present.

Selected Demographics for HOCTS Planning Area



Source: US Census ACS 5 Year Estimates 2014

Needs and Issues of Target Populations

The process of identifying the needs and issues of the minority and low-income populations is continuous. For this analysis, HOCTS staff reviewed existing documentation of various surveys, studies, and HOCTS plans. This documentation included, but is not limited to, the Long Range Transportation Plan Update 2035, the Transportation Improvement Program, the 2017 Coordinated Plan and the Unified Planning Work Program. These sources cite the following findings:

- ❖ In the urban areas of the two-counties, the majority of job opportunities for the low-income individuals are not located near the residences of these individuals creating a transportation barrier:
 - Many available jobs are located at suburban business parks (West Frankfort Industrial Park, Utica Business Park, Griffiss Business and Technology Park, Oneida Nation Enterprises etc.) a good distance from the city and rural individuals.
- ❖ Gaps in the public transit system in Oneida and Herkimer Counties create barriers for the low-income individuals to find and retain employment, and also for the elderly population:
 - Timing - Lack of service for weekends, holidays, and/or late night or early morning shifts; and inconvenient schedules for elderly individuals who have doctor appointments, shopping, or social activities.
 - Access - Finding an acceptable childcare center on a public transit route to work can be difficult. Although some low-income individuals live on bus lines, accessing a bus stop can become a challenge when small children, inclement weather, special needs, illness, and times that deviate from the schedule are involved. These and other individual specific situations are all barriers to transit.
 - Location– Currently, there are few bus runs to the suburban business parks where employment opportunities exist. Local transportation to the rural parts of Oneida County is limited.
- ❖ Alternatives to public transit are limited:
 - Taxicabs are typically a higher cost and not reliable, especially when childcare is involved.
 - Of the low-income individuals who do own a vehicle, their vehicles are often unpredictable and if it breaks down, they may be unable to pay for the repair; which can result in a loss of wages.
 - Elderly individuals, who do not own a vehicle and cannot afford taxicabs, rely on public transportation, volunteer transportation services, friends or family members.

❖ Urban Transit Operator

In addition to significant capital constraints, Central New York Regional Transit Authority (CNYRTA), and other upstate providers of public transit services, are faced with persistent shortfalls in operating funding. Economic recession, decrease in tax revenue and cuts in federal subsidies has forced CNYRTA to raise fares and reduce service beginning in 2009 and continuing to the current years. During those years, all CNYRTA operating subsidiaries including Centro of Oneida (which serves urban Oneida County), were stripped of their least effective services. While the most recent budgetary cycle resulted in no additional decrease in operating aid, the ability of upstate systems to grow to meet demand and operate in a way that creates demand through expansion of service has been eliminated. Further declines in

Federal and State aid will compromise the Authority’s ability to fulfill its core mission of providing transit service to the urbanized area and populations in need.

❖ **Rural Transit Operator**

In spite of increased mandates and system operating costs the Oneida County Rural Transit services has remained stable. System ridership has increased in the past few years, although maintaining ridership gains is challenging. Other system challenges exist, such as branding, system image, marketability, keeping technologically current and public awareness.

❖ **Mobility Transit Planning**

Sustainable future funding is always a challenge. Federal and NYSDOT operating assistance and capital funding are determined by the current Federal transportation legislation.

The existing public transit service is located in the Utica urbanized area, Rome urban cluster, and rural areas of Oneida County and Herkimer County. This public transit system is the only transportation available for many of the elderly, disabled, low income, students, and disadvantaged commuter populations of the two-county area.

Methodology and Data Collection of the Target Populations

Adhering to Executive Order 12898, HOCTS identified minority population and people in poverty as the target populations. For this analysis, other populations were added to the target area as well, which include: Hispanic and Minority, Limited English Proficiency, individuals with physical disabilities, elderly, and households without vehicles.

Demographics of the Target Populations for the HOCTS Planning Area

Data Set*	Oneida County	Herkimer County	Total for MPO Planning Area
Total Population	233,934	64,329	298,263
Total Housing Units	104,074	33,357	137,431
Minority Population	37,913	3,131	41,044
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	11,336	1,073	12,409
Elderly Population (65 yrs.+)	39,234	11,457	50,691
In Poverty Populations	38,599	10,228	48,827
No Vehicle Access	10,794	2,756	13,550

*Source: 5 Year ACS Estimates (2014-2010)

Thresholds for Target Populations for Identifying Imbalances in the Transportation Planning Process

Threshold Determinations

In order to establish a meaningful assessment of the potential EJ impacts of regional projects, seven population characteristics were examined. These included: minority population, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population, individuals with physical disabilities, elderly population, people in poverty, and households without vehicles. Block group or tract data from the Census 2010 and Three Year ACS 2010-2014 Estimates were used to identify unusually high concentrations of persons or households in each of these categories at the block group level.

The first step involved establishing the mean values for block groups or tracts in each of the seven criteria. Once mean values were determined, block groups with higher concentrations (i.e. with a percentage of persons or households in excess of one standard deviation above the mean for each population characteristic) were then identified as being above the necessary threshold value. Block groups exceeding the thresholds were mapped.

For each population or household characteristic, the threshold values, by county, are as follows:

Criteria	County	Mean Value for Block Groups Within County	Threshold Values
Concentration of Minority Populations	Herkimer	4.8%	9.3%
	Oneida	17.7%	39.7%
Concentration of Limited English Proficiency	Herkimer	0.8%	2.8%
	Oneida	3.6%	10.9%
Concentration of Persons Age 65 or Older	Herkimer	18.2%	24.2%
	Oneida	16.9%	25.6%
Concentration of Persons in Poverty	Herkimer	16.3%	28.8%
	Oneida	18.7%	36.3%
Lack of Available Vehicle in Household	Herkimer	10.6%	21.9%
	Oneida	14.0%	29.4%

Analysis of Target Populations

Results of GIS Mapping of Target Populations

The compiled census data was used to prepare Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps to illustrate target population concentrations in the HOCTS MPA. The GIS maps were then used to examine whether its programs, policies, and activities showed any disproportionately high and adverse human, health, or environmental effects on the target population. These maps will be used in public involvement activities, as well as the planned process of future transportation projects. The census data will also be incorporated into travel-demand forecasting models for assessments of the benefits and burdens of existing and planned transit projects. The challenge of future transportation projects will be to plan these projects as solutions to EJ issues brought about by feedback from the public participation process.

The following are descriptions of the GIS mapping of the target populations

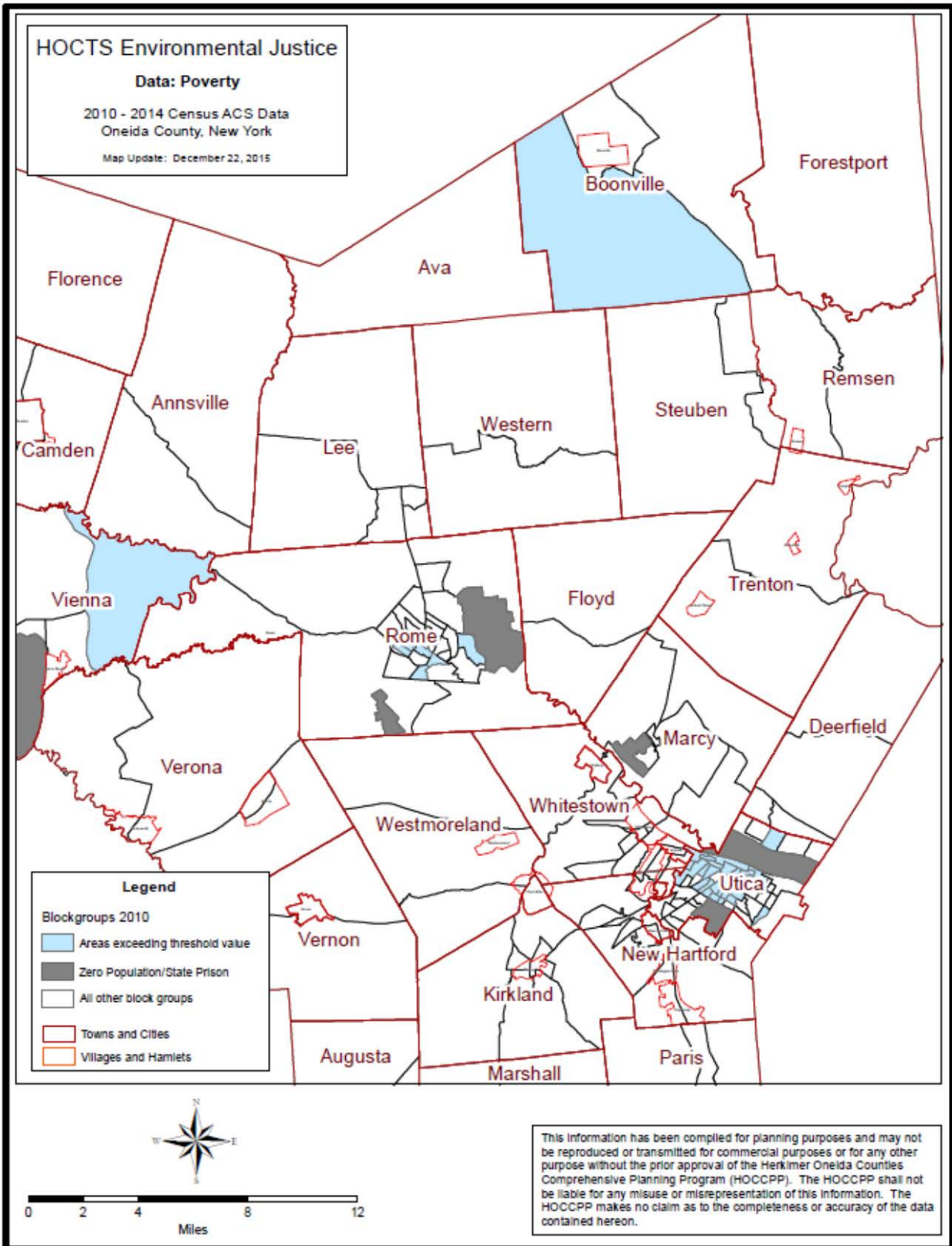
◆ **People in Poverty (Maps 1 & 2)**

The 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS) Estimates indicate that 16.5% (38,599) of the total population in Oneida County live below the poverty level. This is an increase of 3.1% from the 2006-2010 ACS Estimates. Map 1 presents the Threshold of People in Poverty by Census Block Group in Oneida County, using the threshold of 17.6%. The map shows that within the City of Rome, the southwest portion of the inner city area, as well as, an eastern portion of the City adjacent to the Griffiss Business Park, show higher concentrations of persons in poverty. The eastern portion of the City, adjacent to the Griffiss Business Park, shows a high percentage of concentration of single mothers housed in older housing than seen in other areas of the city.

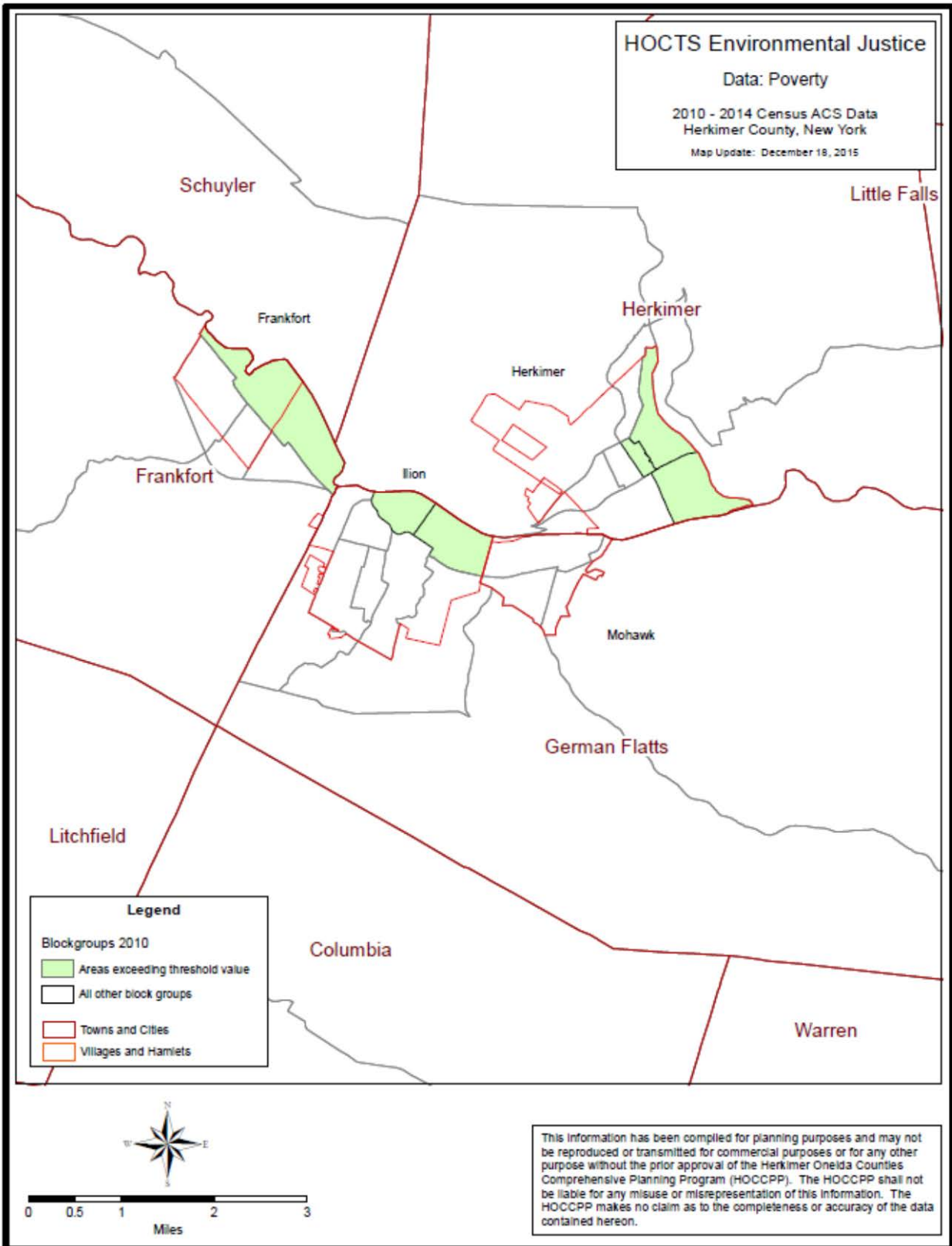
Within the greater Utica area on the map, large portions of east, west and central Utica, as well as the Cornhill area, show higher concentrations of persons in poverty. A block group in the southeastern portion of the City meets the poverty threshold as a result of a high concentration of low income housing along Culver Avenue. Other notable areas of poverty in Oneida County include the eastern half of the Town of Vienna and the southwest half of the Village of Boonville.

In Herkimer County, the 2010-2014 ACS Estimates indicate that 15.9% (10,228) of the total population, live below the poverty level. This is an increase of 3.1% from the 2006-2010 ACS Estimates. Map 2 presents the, Threshold of People in Poverty by Census Block Group in Herkimer County, using the threshold of 12.5%. Within Herkimer County, there are three notable areas meeting the poverty thresholds within highly populated areas. The first, involves the eastern portion of the Village of Herkimer north and south of Route 5. The second, concentration of persons in poverty is just north of the Village of Ilion. The final, concentration of people in poverty in Herkimer County is located in the north eastern corner of Frankfort.

MAP 1 - Oneida County in Poverty Populations



MAP 2 – Herkimer County in Poverty Populations

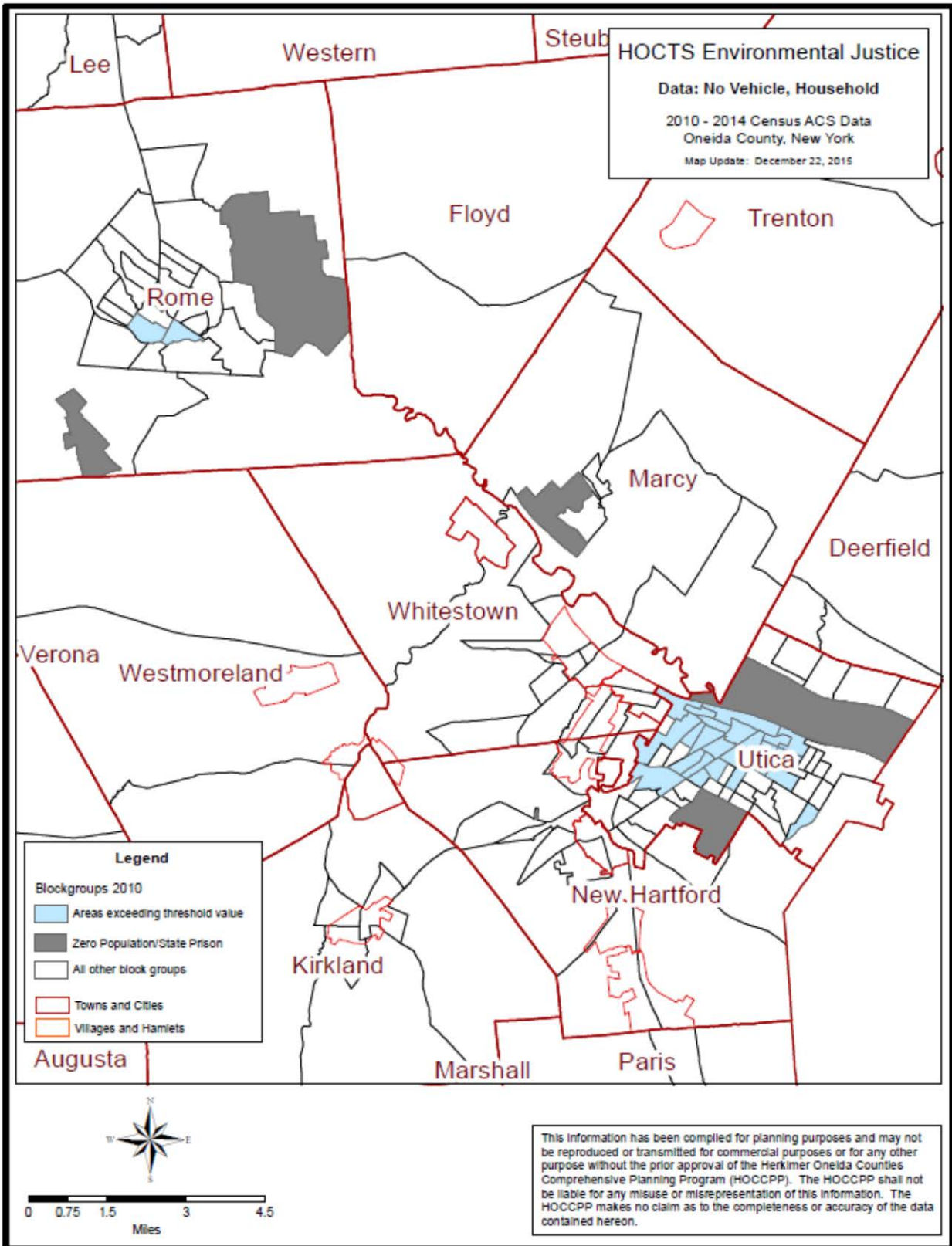


◆ **Households without Vehicles (Maps 3 &4)**

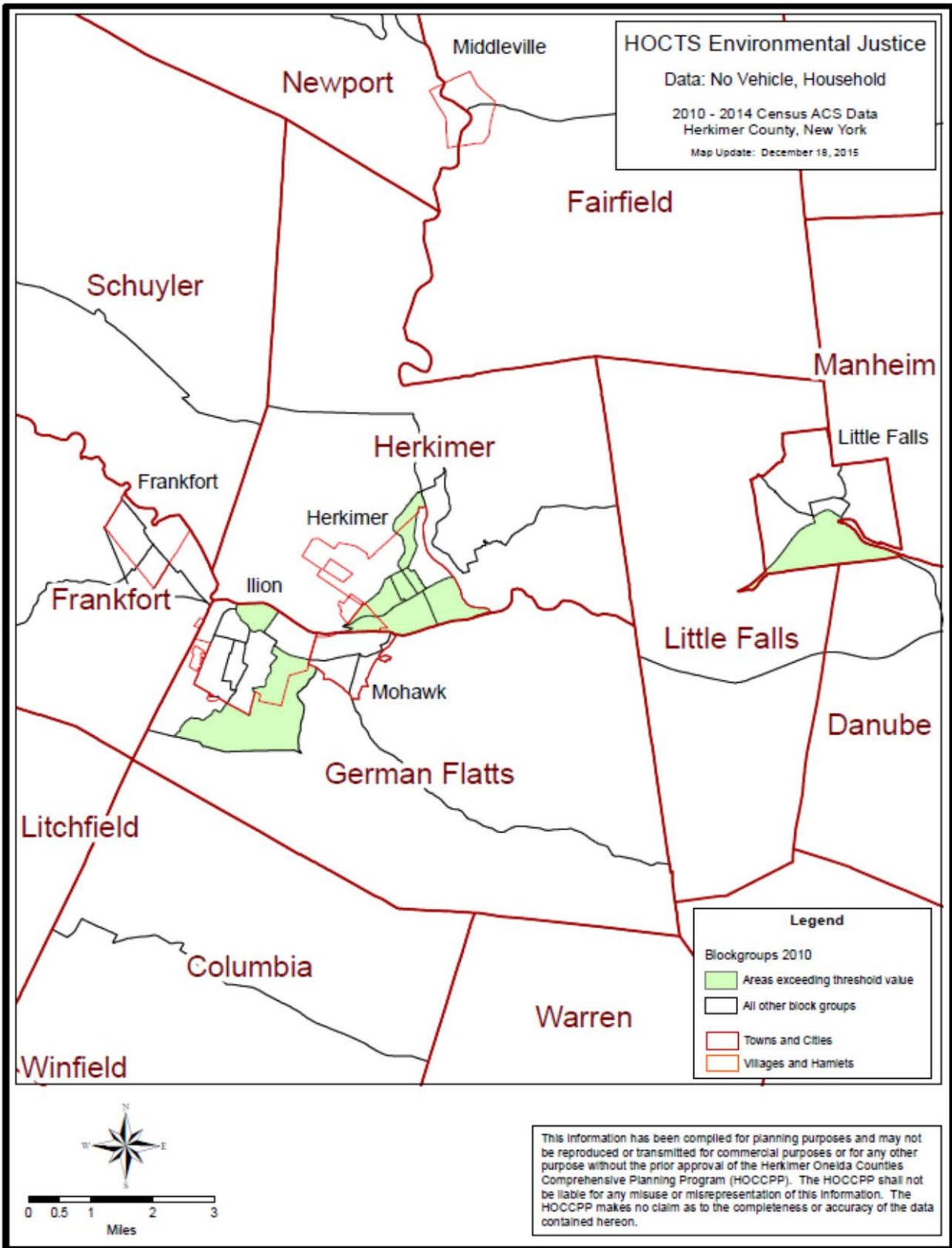
According to the 2010-2014 ACS Estimates, 4.6% (10,794) of the total population in Oneida County, have no vehicle access. This is an increase of 3.1% from the previous census data. Map 3 presents the, Threshold of Lack of Available Vehicle in Households by Tract Level Data in Oneida County, using the threshold of 15.5%. Map 3 shows that within the city of Rome, the tracts making up the southern portion of the center city have unusually high concentrations of households without vehicles. Within Utica, portions of east, west and central Utica, as well as, the Cornhill area, show higher concentrations of households without vehicles.

According to the 2010-2014 ACS Estimates, 4.2% (2,756) of the total population in Herkimer County, have no vehicle access. This is an increase of 2.8% from the previous census data. Map 4 presents, the Threshold of Lack of Available Vehicle in Households by Tract Level Data in Herkimer County, using the threshold of 11.2%. Within Herkimer County the main areas meeting the thresholds for households without vehicles are the southern and central part of the Village of Herkimer, the southern part of the City of Little Falls, the northern and southeastern sections of the Village of Ilion, as well as, an area just south of the Village of Ilion.

MAP 3 – Oneida County No Vehicle Access Populations



MAP 4 – Herkimer County No Vehicle Access

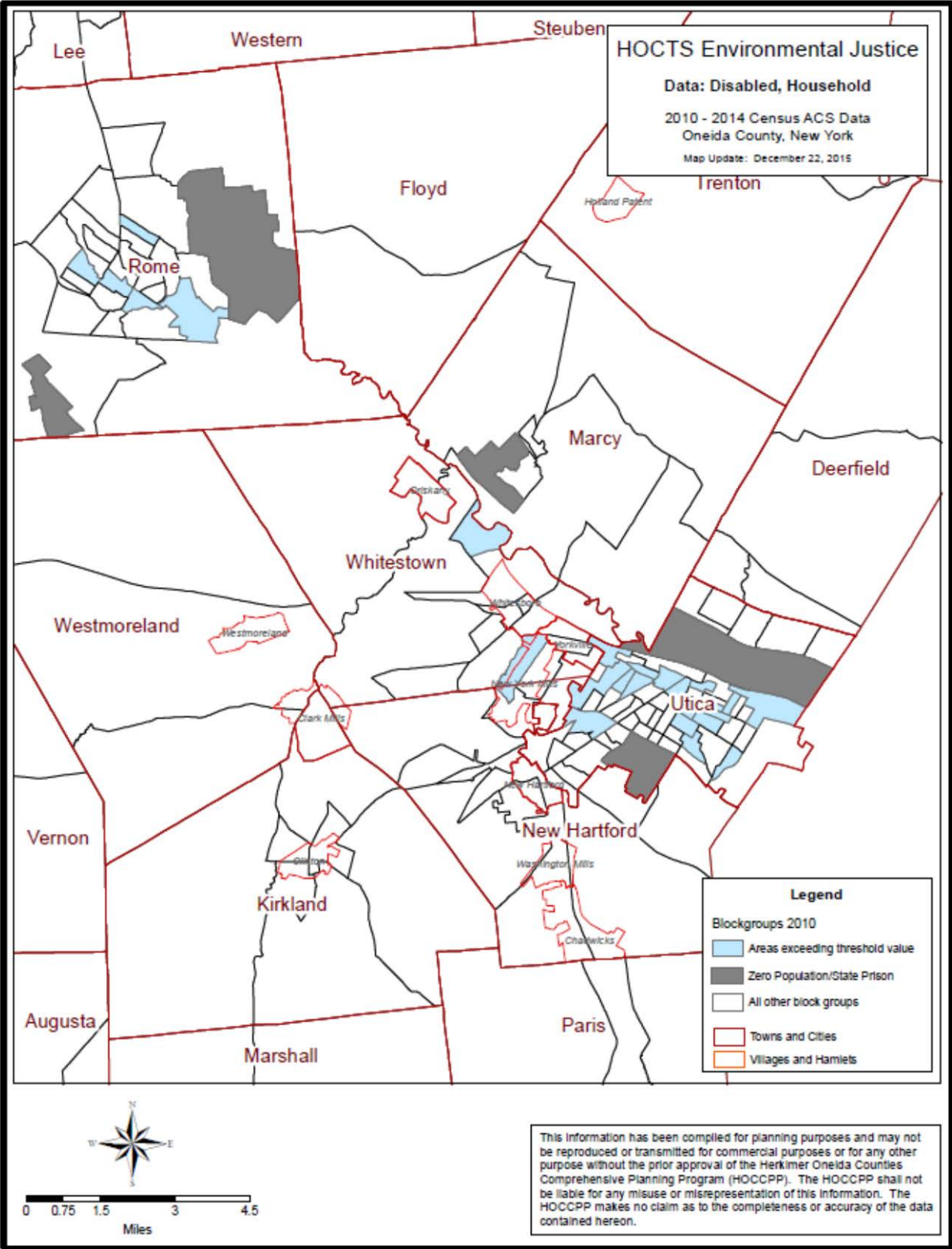


◆ **Individuals with Disabilities (Maps 5 & 6)**

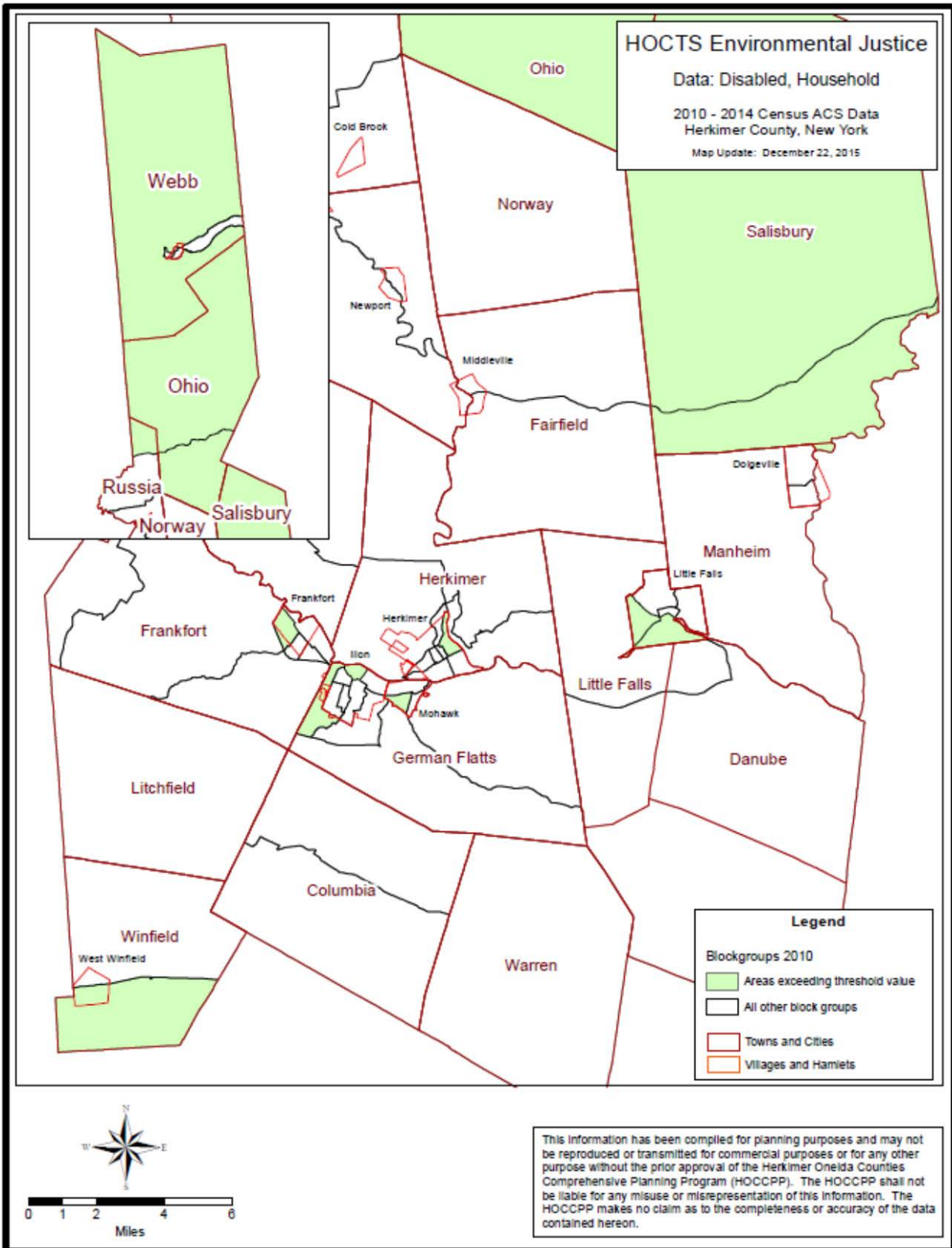
Map 5 presents the, Threshold of Individuals with Disability by Census Block in Oneida County, using a threshold of 12.5%, based on the most recent available Census and ACS data. The map shows that both the southwestern portion and a small section of the inner City of Rome show higher concentrations of persons reporting disabilities. The area in the outer City district that comprises the NYS Correctional Facility prisons contains no private housing units; therefore, it is not an area of focus. Throughout the greater Utica area there are numerous areas that meet the threshold, along with an area in the eastern portion of Whitestown.

Map 6 presents the Threshold of Individuals with Disabilities by Census Block in Herkimer County, using a threshold of 8.7% based on the most recent available Census and ACS Data. The map shows that there are several areas that meet the threshold throughout Herkimer County. These areas include the Towns of Webb, Ohio, Salisbury and the southern portion of Winfield. The southwestern corner of the City of Little Falls, the northeastern portion of the Village of Herkimer, the southern portion of the Village of Mohawk, the western section of the Village of Ilion and the south eastern corner of the Village of Frankfort, all meet the threshold for disabled households.

Map 5 – Oneida County Individuals with Disability



MAP 6 – Herkimer County Individuals with Disability



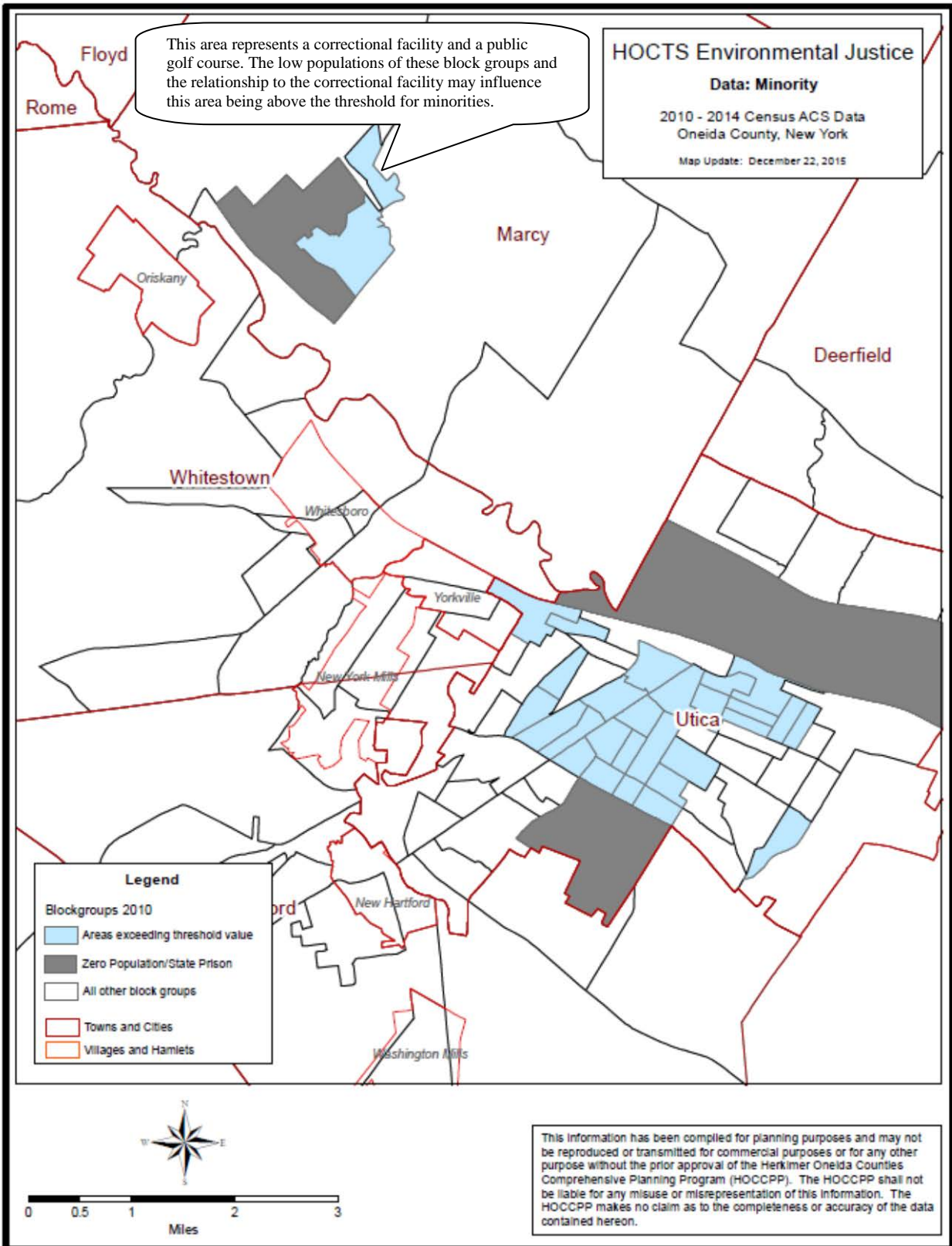
◆ **Minorities (Maps 7 & 8)**

While the thresholds identified in Map 7, Oneida County Minority Populations represent high concentrations of minorities in the county, there are only two areas of note. The first involves the southwestern portion of the town of Marcy. This tract represents an area adjacent to the New York State Correctional Facility, which may explain the area being above the threshold despite the fact that the correctional facility is not part of this study. The second area of note is within the city of Utica, high concentrations of minority populations can be found within the center city and surrounding areas. This area is bounded on the north by the Mohawk River, the east by Culver Ave, the south by the Parkway and Burrstone Road and the west by the City boundary.

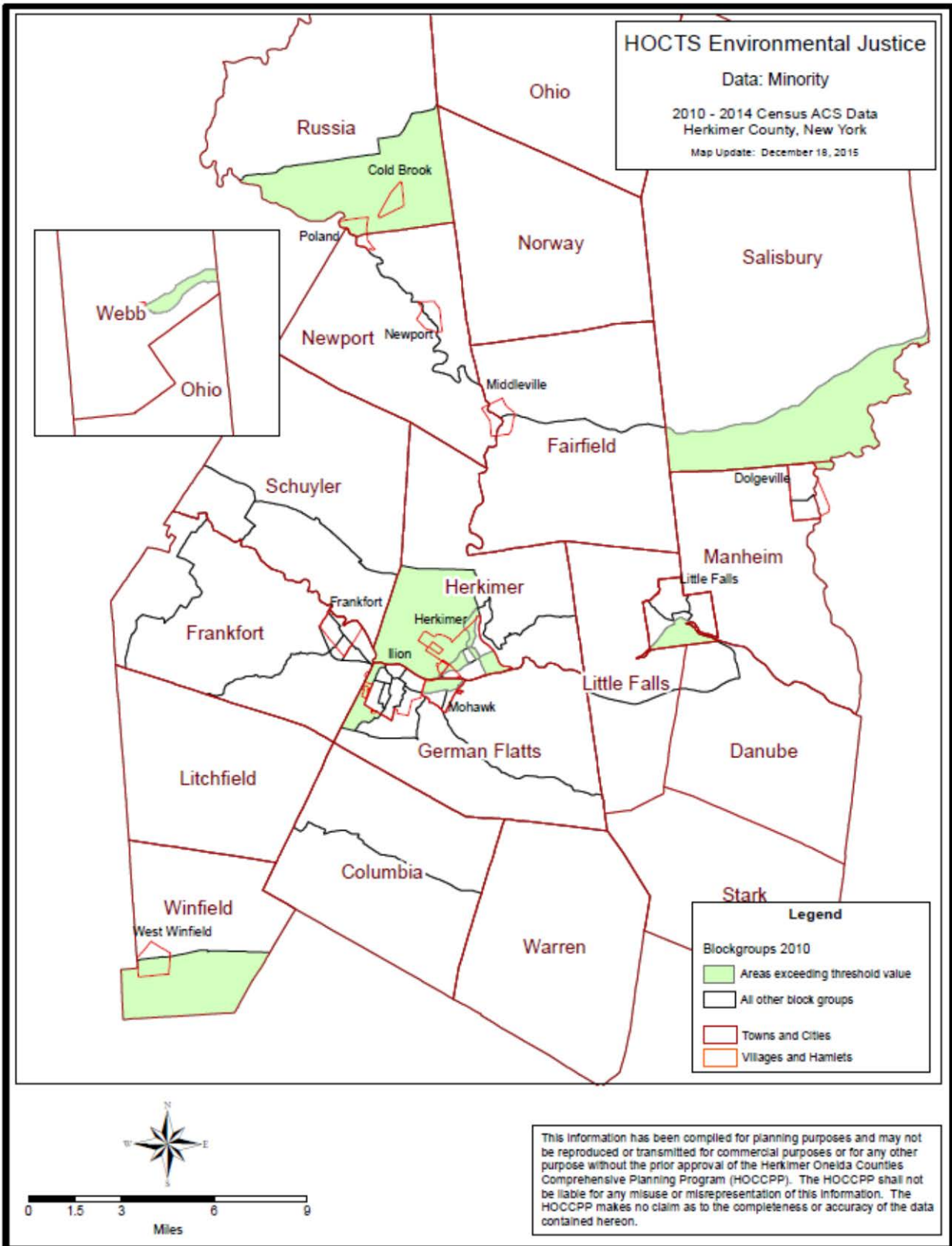
The Herkimer County Minority Populations, Map 8 shows fairly large areas of minority concentrations in and around the villages of Herkimer and Ilion. In the case of Herkimer, the concentrations are reflective of two factors: 1) The large area comprising the center and north of the village reflects the presence of Herkimer County Community College, its residence housing, and a high concentration of private apartments largely rented to college students, and 2) The area in the Village of Ilion to the southeast has a large low income housing complex contained within it. Similarly, the area showing high minority populations north and west of Ilion are largely reflective of the low income housing complexes located in border areas.

Areas of low populations, including the rural areas of Herkimer County, can be identified as areas with high concentrations of minorities. This is due to the fact that when there is a low population in an area it takes a lower number of the identified group to push the area above the threshold value. This practical theory can be used to explain the rural areas in Herkimer County that are identified as having a high prevalence of minorities, when historical data has shown the contrary.

Map 7 – Oneida County Minority Populations



MAP 8 – Herkimer County Minority Populations

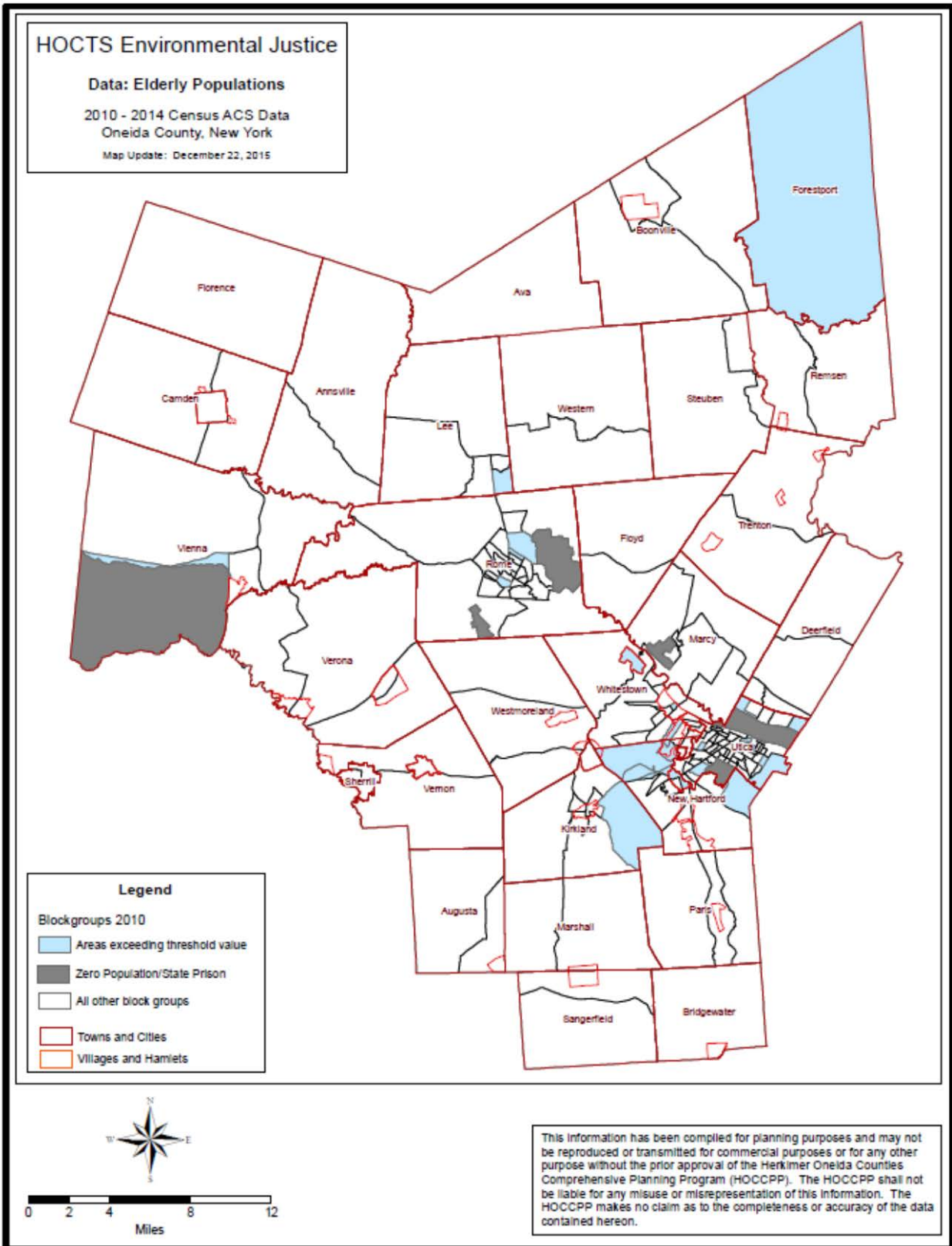


◆ **Elderly Population (Maps 9 & 10)**

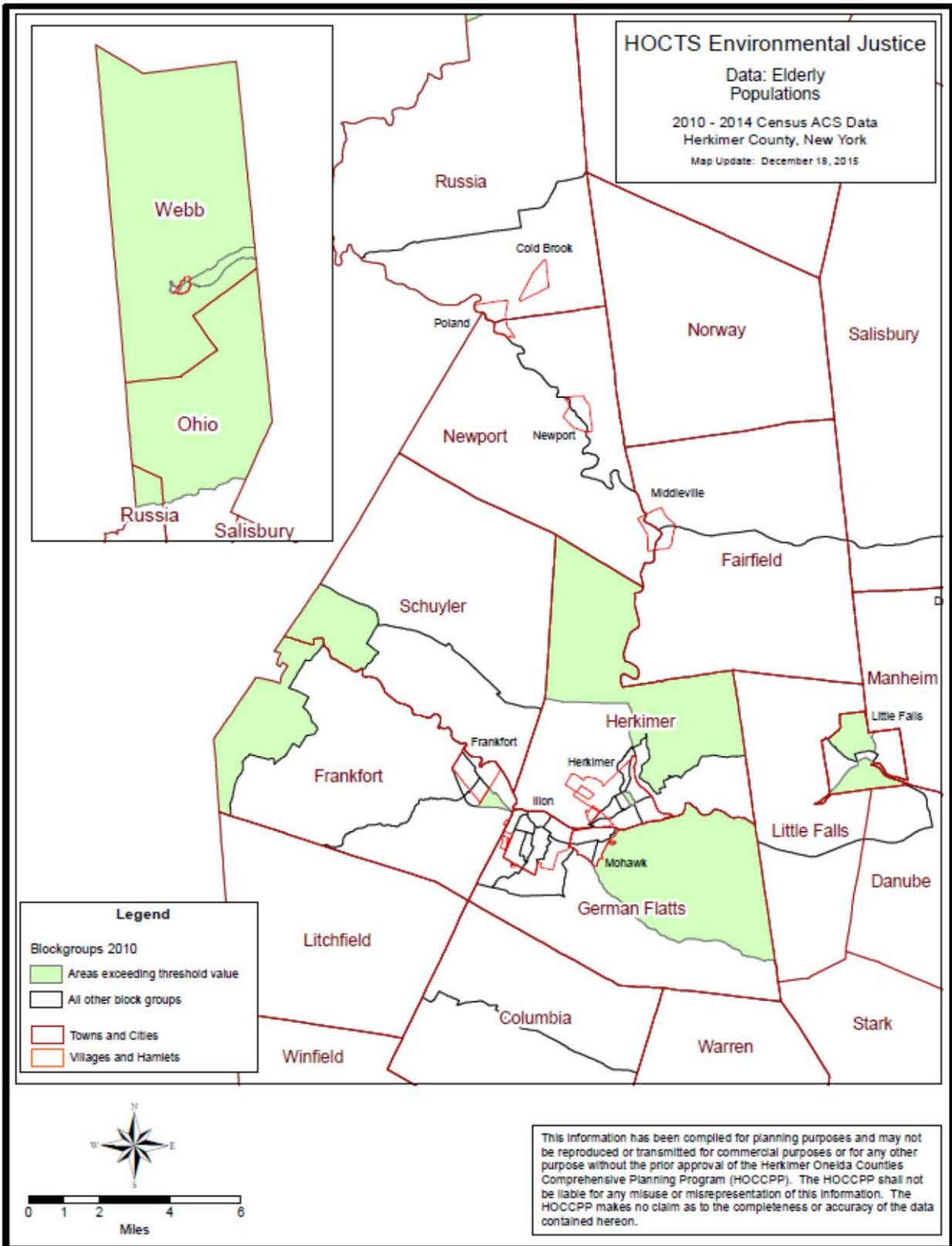
According to the 2010-2014 ACS Estimates, 16.8% (39,234) of the total population in Oneida County, is age 65 or older. This is an increase of 1% from the previous census data. Map 9 presents the, Threshold of Elderly Population by Census Block Group in Oneida County, using the threshold of 8.7%. The inner City of Rome has a few block groups with higher concentrations of elderly residents. These are mainly in the northern and northeastern parts of the City. In addition, a portion of the Center City also shows an unusually high concentration of older persons. Within the City of Utica, high concentrations of elderly populations can be found mainly in two areas: North Utica and an area in the southeast part of the City. Areas immediately west of Utica, as well as parts of New Hartford also show high concentrations of elderly residents. There is an area in the eastern part of the Town of Kirkland that shows a high concentration of elderly. This is probably reflective of the nursing homes found in that area. The Town of Forestport and the south east corner of the Town of Lee also show higher portions of elderly populations.

In Herkimer County, the 2010-2014 ACS Estimates 17.8%, (11,457) of the total population, are age 65 or older. This is an increase of 2.1% from the previous data. Map 10 presents the, Threshold of Elderly Population by Census Block Group in Herkimer County, using a threshold of 6.1%. In Herkimer County, there are several notable areas with higher concentrations of elderly residents. These areas include the City of Little Falls, the Town of Webb, the northern portion of the Town of Ohio, the northern portion of the Town of Herkimer, the north eastern portion of the Town of German Flatts and the western part of the Town of Frankfort. The western part of the Town of Schuyler adjacent to the border with the City of Utica, also shows a high concentration of elderly as well. And lastly, a small part of the Village of Herkimer, representing one of the only assisted care facilities in that area has a high number of elderly residents within that block group.

MAP 9 – Oneida County Elderly Populations



MAP 10 – Herkimer County Elderly Populations

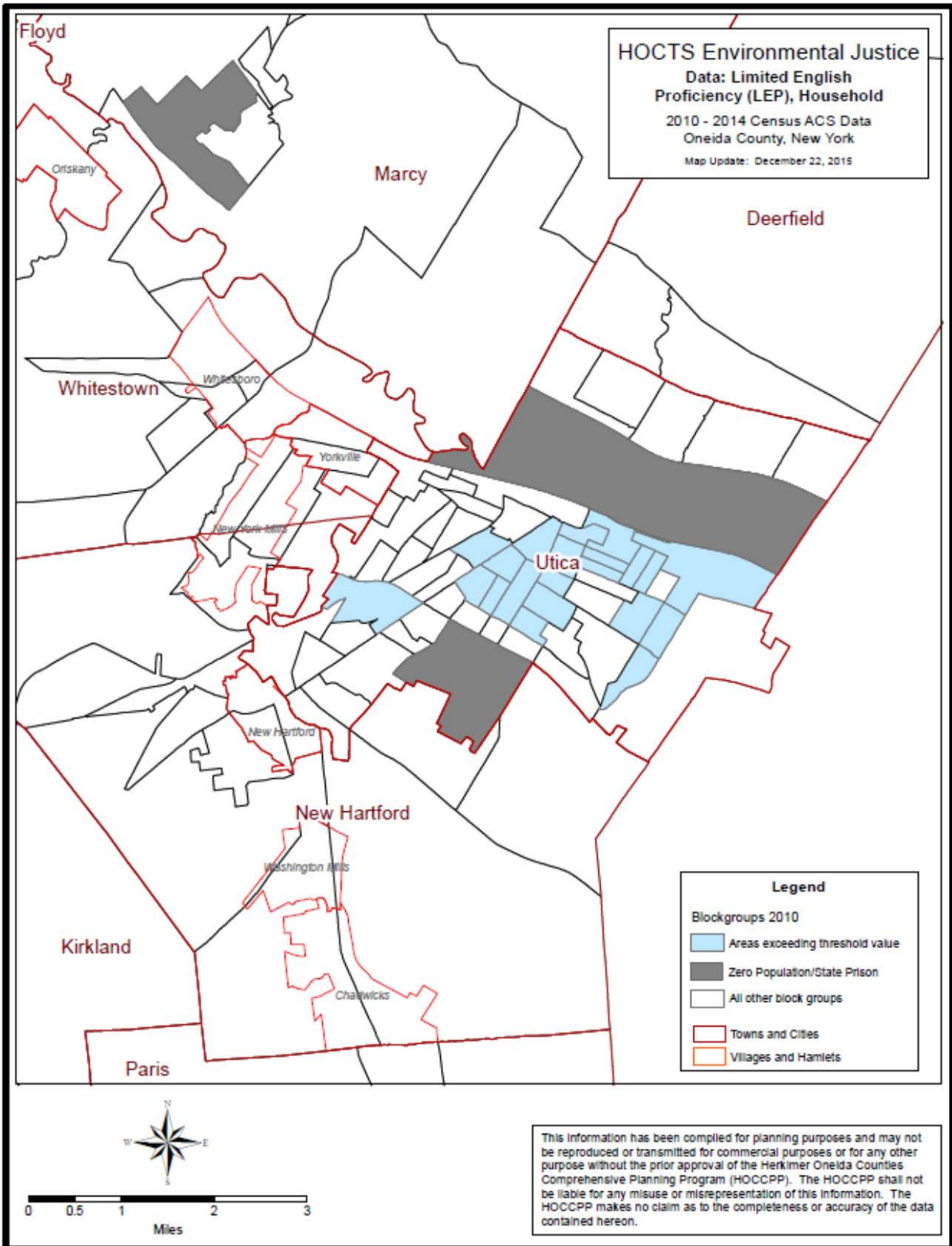


◆ **Limited English Proficiency Population (Maps 11 & 12)**

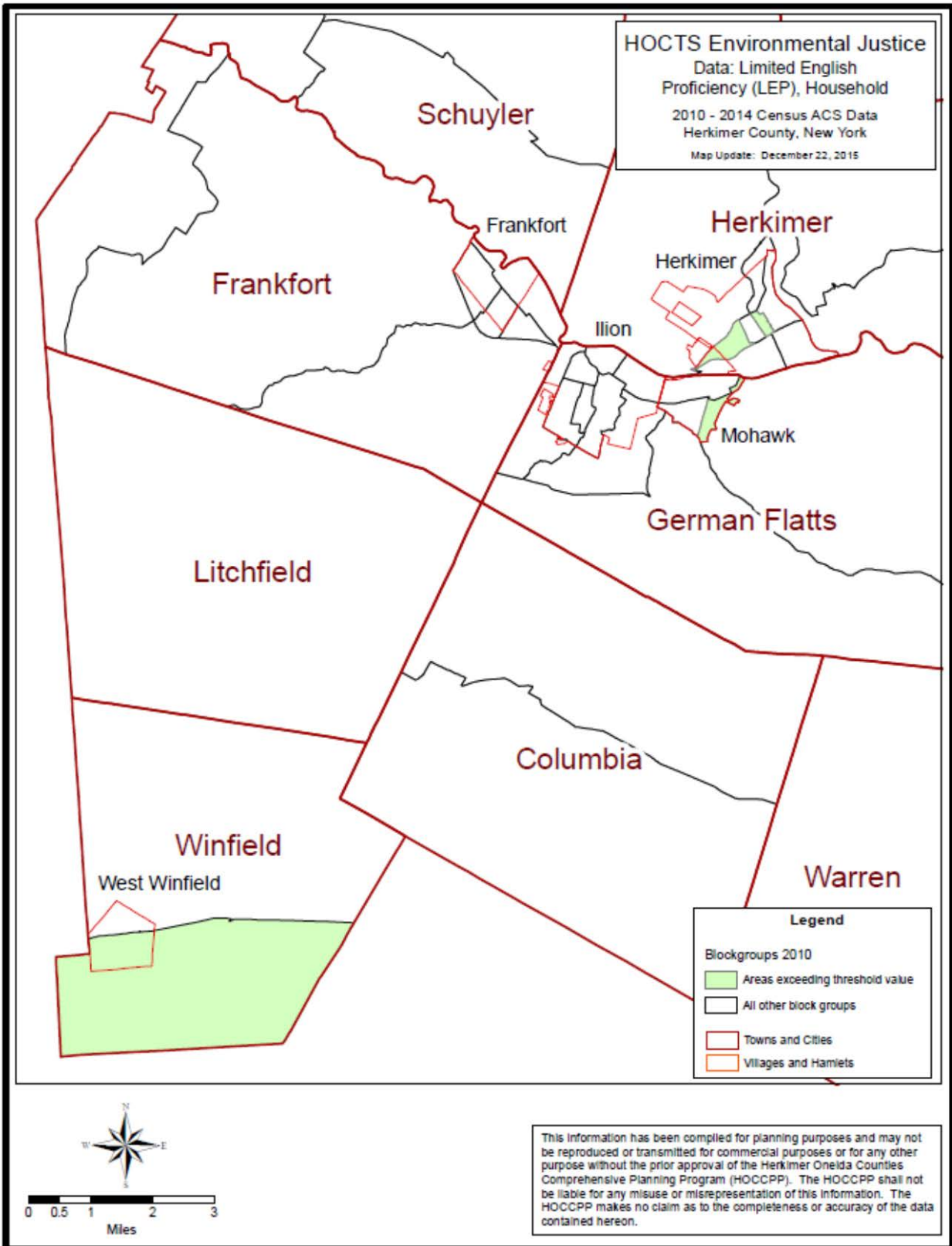
According to the 2010-2014 ACS Estimates, 4.8% (11,336) of the total population in Oneida County, consider themselves as having Limited English Proficiency. Map 11 represents the Threshold of Concentration of LEP by Census Block Group in Oneida County, using the threshold of 7.4%. In Oneida County, the pockets where the residents show unusual levels limited English proficiency are all in the City of Utica. Specifically the tracts meeting the threshold values are largely in the center City, including Cornhill, and in east Utica. LEP includes all persons who fall below the level of speaking English “well” according to census data.

In Herkimer County, 1.7% (1,073) of the total population considers themselves as having Limited English Proficiency. Map 12 represents the, Threshold of Concentration of LEP by Census Block Group in Herkimer County, using the threshold of 2.0%. In Herkimer County there are a few areas showing concentrations of LEP that are above the threshold. These areas include the southern portion of the Town of Winfield, the eastern portion of the Town of Mohawk and the Village of Herkimer along NYS Route 5.

MAP 11 – Oneida County Limited English Proficiency



MAP 12 – Herkimer County Limited English Proficiency



IV. EVALUATE THE HOCTS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMPLIANCE

The HOCTS Long Range Transportation Plan Update: 2015 to 2035, fulfills the continuing requirement of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 for MPO's to establish "a continuing, comprehensive, transportation planning process carried on cooperatively by States and local communities." The update reflects a new plan horizon of 2035 to maintain the 20 year forecast period and reflects the status of previously proposed projects, changes in demographic travel needs, regional economic conditions, land use patterns, and additions or changes resulting from MAP-21 and the current transportation legislation, Fixing Americas Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Title 23 of the United States Code, section 134(f) (revised in SAFETEA-LU section 6001(h)) describes Federal Planning Factors issued by Congress to emphasize planning factors from a national perspective. Under the Fast Act these planning factors remain unchanged.

Eight planning factors are listed in the MAP-21 legislation and these factors provide a framework for transportation planning and development in the MPO planning area. These planning factors strive to:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency.
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for all users.
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight.
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life.
6. Enhance integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the state, for people and freight.
7. Promote efficient system management and operation.
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

The FAST Act has enacted additional new planning factors to be considered in projects and strategies, which are:

1. Improve resiliency and reliability of the system.
2. Reduce or mitigate storm-water impacts on surface transportation.
3. Enhance travel and tourism.

The priority areas of the LRTP are:

- Mobility & Accessibility
A coordinated approach to developing a transportation network which meets the existing and growing needs of all users.
- System Preservation
Focus on transportation projects that preserve and enhance existing transportation facilities and/or build from the existing facilities.
- Economic Efficiency
A system is efficient when available inputs (capital) maximize the desired outputs (improvements).
- Land Use
Encourage compatibility with local and regional land use plans.
- Environmental Impact/ Mitigation
Plan and develop a transportation system that enhances and protects the regions natural and built environment, transportation system, facilities from potential threats and climate change.

- Public Participation

Promote public access and input in the regional transportation planning process.

The three priority areas, ***Mobility and Accessibility***, ***Public Participation***, and ***Environmental Impact/Mitigation***, recognize the need to address quality of life issues, safety, security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users, and accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight.

Public Participation Process

Public involvement is an integral part of transportation planning and project development decision making. Continuous interaction between community members and transportation professionals provide for an inclusive, representative, and equal opportunity for two-way communication resulting in appropriate action that reflects this public involvement. EJ should be considered in all aspects of planning and project decision making, including the design of both the public-involvement plan and the proposed facility.

Current Public Participation Process

Public Participation Plan 2016 Update

The HOCTS Public Participation Plan (PPP) is the overriding document regarding public involvement with the MPO. The PPP outlines the process to ensure on-going public involvement opportunities in the development and review of MPO transportation planning documents, plans, programs, projects, and for the completion, adoption, and implementation of these documents. Federal funding for transportation projects and planning continues under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act which was signed into law by President Obama on December 4, 2015. The purpose of the PPP is to update the MPO public involvement process according to current federal guidelines, and ensure equal opportunity for public involvement of all persons within the transportation planning process.

Transportation planning is a comprehensive and complex process that requires careful planning and decision making, which includes all modes of transportation. Therefore, engaging the public early and in all applicable stages of the transportation planning process is critical to the success of any transportation project, plan, or document. This process ensures the public has meaningful opportunities to participate in the decision making on the transportation planning process.

Under federal legislation, the MPOs are responsible for planning and programming of federal transportation funds within the designated MPO planning area. The MPA is comprised of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, therefore, as the MPO for Herkimer and Oneida Counties, the Governmental Policy and Liaison Committee (GP&L) directs the regional transportation planning process as it relates to the use of federal transportation funds. The transportation planning process is carried out by the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study (HOCTS) staff and in consult with the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC), an advisory committee of the GP&L. The voting membership of the GP&L is composed of local elected officials and appointed officials that represent the interests of the citizens of Herkimer and Oneida Counties. However, recognizing that the public has a substantial interest in the planning of regional transportation policies and programs, the GP&L, TPC, and HOCTS have, and will continue to strongly encourage public participation in the planning process.

The MPO transportation planning process is guided by three required documents: the 20-year Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the

annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Public participation is an inherent function in the development of these documents, which are federally required to complete the transportation planning process. A detailed description of the public comment opportunity to address the transportation needs of the two-County area, is outlined in the PPP by document which is available at www.hocts.org.

Public Meetings and Public Workshops

HOCTS ensures all meetings are open to the public and are held at convenient times and locations, and accessible to elderly, low income and minority individuals. As needed, HOCTS conducts Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) meetings, Governmental Policy and Liaison (GP&L) meetings, and advisory committee meetings. Other public meetings, public hearings, and public workshops are project driven and are held, as necessary, to facilitate public involvement and participation in the transportation planning process. HOCTS, when planning for public meetings, will consider all appropriate groups of interested parties as defined by the FAST Act.

Media Outreach

HOCTS maintains a news media list to be contacted via Press Releases to announce, promote and publicize all meetings, as appropriate. Media notification for public involvement is at a minimum of ten (10) days prior to a scheduled public involvement activity and includes meeting information including, date, time, location, and description of activity.

Public Feedback/Comment Opportunities

Typically, people are interested in transportation only when it affects them directly. Although HOCTS strives for broad public input, it is recognized that the majority of public comments and input come at the project and program level. It is HOCTS' goal to ensure that the transportation planning process is open, transparent and accessible to the community and attentive to the community's needs and concerns. It is an ongoing, interactive, and evolving process to include the public in transportation planning.

As required in MAP-21 (23 CFR 450.316), public involvement processes shall be proactive and provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement. HOCTS complies with the MAP-21 requirement of a PPP that is developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and "defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process".

Throughout the MPO process there are numerous opportunities for Public Involvement. Figure 1 which is provided on the next page demonstrates how public involvement works into every stage of the MPO Process.

Figure 1 – Public Involvement Opportunities

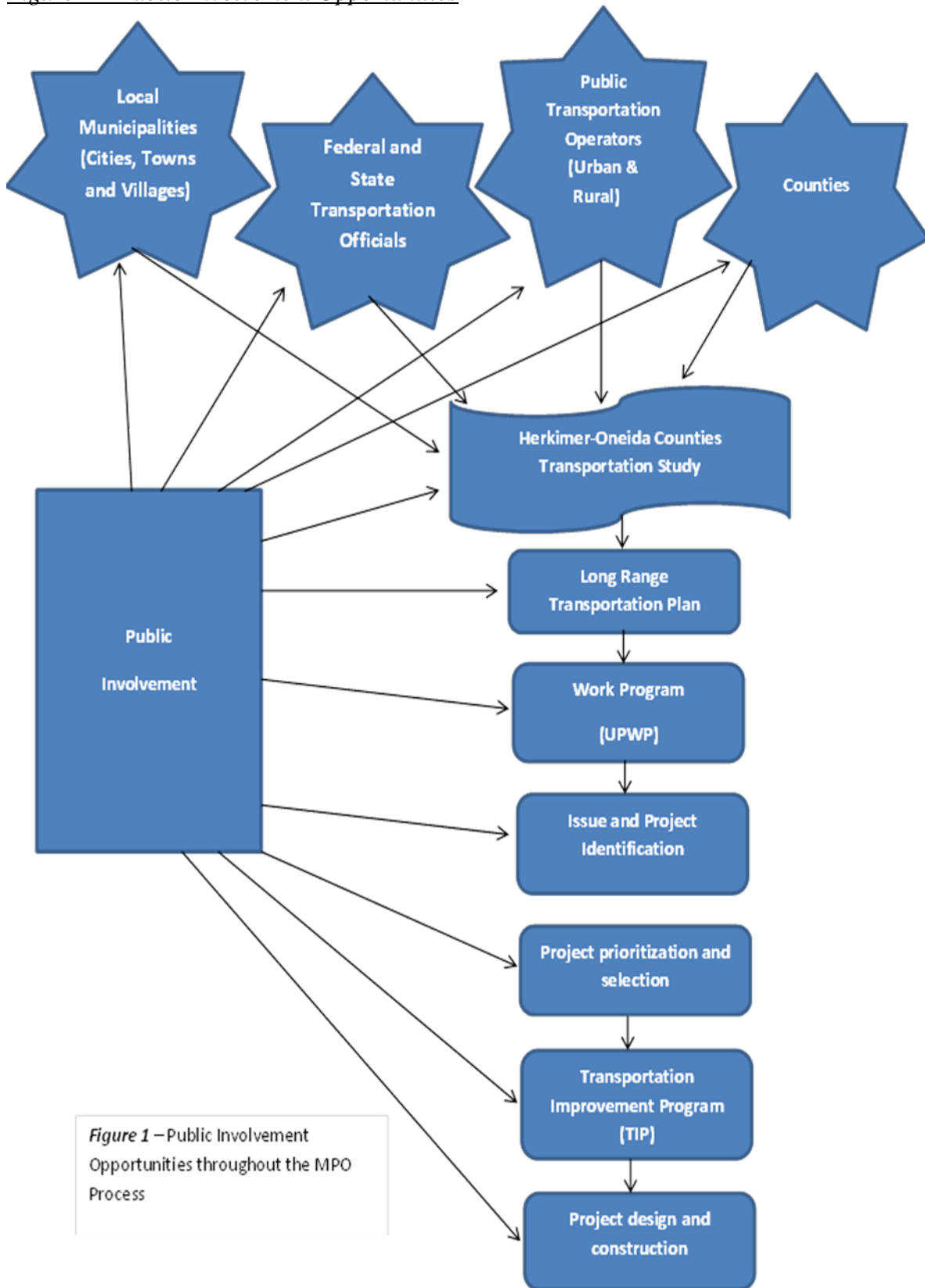


Figure 1 – Public Involvement Opportunities throughout the MPO Process

Proposed Increased Outreach Efforts

In order to ensure that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on transportation planning activities, HOCTS shall attempt to contact additional community agencies for expanded outreach activities. These additional community agencies may include, but are not limited to the, Resource Center for Independent Living, Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Human Technologies Corp., Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency, Oneida County ARC, Herkimer County ARC, Oneida County Office for the Aging, and Herkimer County Office for the Aging, among others. Public participation in an ongoing and evolving process that is federally required for the transportation planning process. HOCTS will continue to look for additional opportunities to reach out to diverse populations and to investigate innovative communication tools to maximize participation.

Public Participation Process that Reflects Compliance with Environmental Justice Requirements

The HOCTS Public Participation Plan 2016 Update added the following Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism to reflect compliance with EJ requirements.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism

If HOCTS receives a complaint, conflict, or dispute regarding any policy document, planning document, procedural policy or environmental justice element, at any stage of the transportation planning process, the following guidelines and/or process shall be adhered to.

- Informal Dispute Resolution Guidelines:
 1. All issues raised are to be seriously considered.
 2. Prioritize issues raised, noting frames of references and a clear understanding of content.
 3. Document discussions and clarify positions.
 4. Set and adhere to timeframes and/or deadlines, and escalate as necessary.
- Formal Dispute Resolution Process:
 1. All disputes should be heard and documented at the staff level. Any supporting documentation should be included: minutes, letters, dates of event occurrences, inquiries, and any other related material.
 2. Disputes should be resolved within a short amount of time, usually a two-week timeframe.

If no resolution is found by the allotted time, the process shall continue to escalate to the next appropriate level until the dispute is resolved. At each escalation level, the appropriate executives from each associated agency shall convene to discuss and resolve the issues. This may include staff from HOCTS, Oneida County Department of Planning, NYSDOT Region 2, NYSDOT Main Office, FTA, FHWA, EPA, DEC and/or other project-related agencies. Escalation should be raised until a resolution is found. Escalation shall be determined by the agreement of the HOCTS Program Manager and the Region 2 Regional Planning and Program Manager. Notification of any action which requires utilization of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism shall be made in writing via mail or e-mail by the HOCTS Program Manager to the Chairman of both the Governmental Policy and Liaison Committee and Transportation Planning Committee.

HOCTS TIP FFY 2017-2021 Projects

Methods for Identifying/Addressing Imbalances

To review the distribution of FHWA funds, the locations of projects currently listed in the HOCTS TIP will be examined. The function of the TIP is to schedule the design and construction of federal aid-eligible transportation projects five years into the future. Prior to final adoption by HOCTS GP&L Committee, the draft TIP is made available to the public by distribution, internet and through events. The purpose is to make the TIP available for public comment as the document is being developed. Comments received are reviewed by HOCTS and considered for incorporation into each final document. The present schedule for TIP revisions is once every two years.

In addition to programming available FHWA funds for the Utica Urban Area, HOCTS also receives planning funds from FTA for the same area. An analysis of the public transit service area is included. HOCTS does not make the final determination regarding public transit routing. That responsibility lies with CNYRTA/ Centro of Oneida, as the federally designated recipient of FTA Capital and Operating funds in the Utica Urban Area.

Application and Evaluation of Methods

It was determined that the method to be used to identify and evaluate the EJ compliance of the HOCTS FFY 2017-2021 TIP would be through a combination of analysis and mapping. GIS mapping of target populations will be correlated with HOCTS FFY 2017-2021 TIP projects.

Evaluation of Other Modes

Public Transit

US Department of Transportation regulations regarding public transit service prohibit discrimination in routing, scheduling or quality of transportation. The transit operators within Herkimer and Oneida Counties provide fair and equitable service to all residents contained within the service areas. **Maps 15, 16, 17 and 18** show the current transit routes of the local transit operators within the HOCTS Study Area serving the target area populations. The following is a description of the various transit systems in Oneida and Herkimer Counties:

Urban Transit Operator

Centro of Oneida – Utica (Map 15)

Centro of Oneida's Utica operation consists of fixed route and demand-response services in the City of Utica and the Towns of New Hartford, Whitestown and Kirkland. The fixed route system is comprised of eleven routes operating in a pulsed, time-transfer system with schedules coordinated at Centro's Transit Hub located between Bleecker and Elizabeth Streets in Downtown Utica. Complementary Centro Call-A-Bus demand-responsive service is provided to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the regular route transit system and who meet the criteria established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Both the regular route and demand-responsive services are based at the Centro maintenance and operations facility located at 185 Leland Avenue, Utica. Centro of Oneida – Utica's fleet is comprised of 32 vehicles, including twenty-four 35-foot transit coaches, seven 26 foot vehicles and one van used in Call-A-Bus service. Heavy duty transit coaches typically last twelve years in fixed-route use. The average age of the fixed-route fleet in Utica is 2.8 years. This service transports in excess of one million riders annually in fixed route and demand-responsive service and travels over 900,000 revenue miles of service.

Centro of Oneida – Rome (Map 16)

Centro of Oneida’s Rome operation consists of fixed route and demand-responsive services in the City of Rome. The fixed route system consists of six routes operating in a pulsed, time-transfer system with schedules coordinated at Centro’s George Street terminal at 225 Liberty Street. Complementary Centro Call-A-Bus demand-responsive service is provided to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use Centro’s regular route transit system and who meet the criteria established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Centro's maintenance facility is located on Race-Martin Street Station in Rome. The Centro of Oneida – Rome fleet comprises seven vehicles, including five transit coaches larger than 26-feet and two 26-foot long demand-responsive vehicles. The average age of the fixed-route vehicle fleet in Rome is 4.3 years. Centro of Oneida – Rome transports 164,000 riders annually in fixed-route and demand-responsive service and travels over 211,000 revenue miles of service.

Rural Private Transit Operator

Oneida County, Rural Transit (OCRT) (Map 17 & 18)

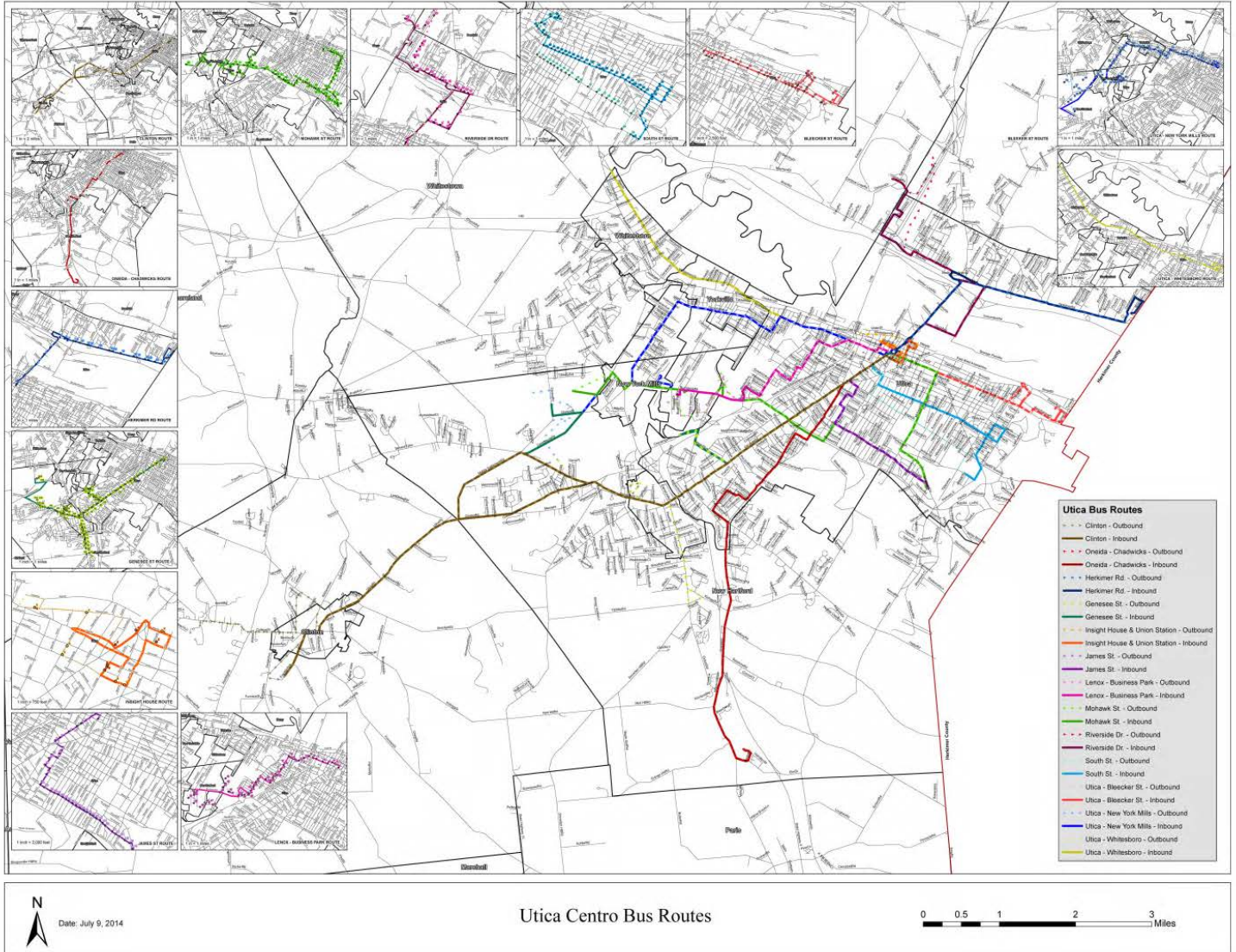
The OCRT system is operated by Birnie Bus Services Inc. (BBS), which is a bid-contract service. The vehicle fleet is owned by Oneida County and leased back to BBS for operation and maintenance. The OCRT service provides public transit to passengers who need transportation services between non-urbanized rural areas and urbanized areas.

BBS is a privately owned company that provides rural and interurban transportation in Central New York from Syracuse to Little Falls, and rural public transportation in Oneida, Herkimer, Lewis, Chenango, and Madison Counties. The fares charged by BBS are on a zone-to-zone system in accordance with an approved tariff. BBS has its corporate office and main garage facilities in Rome, New York.

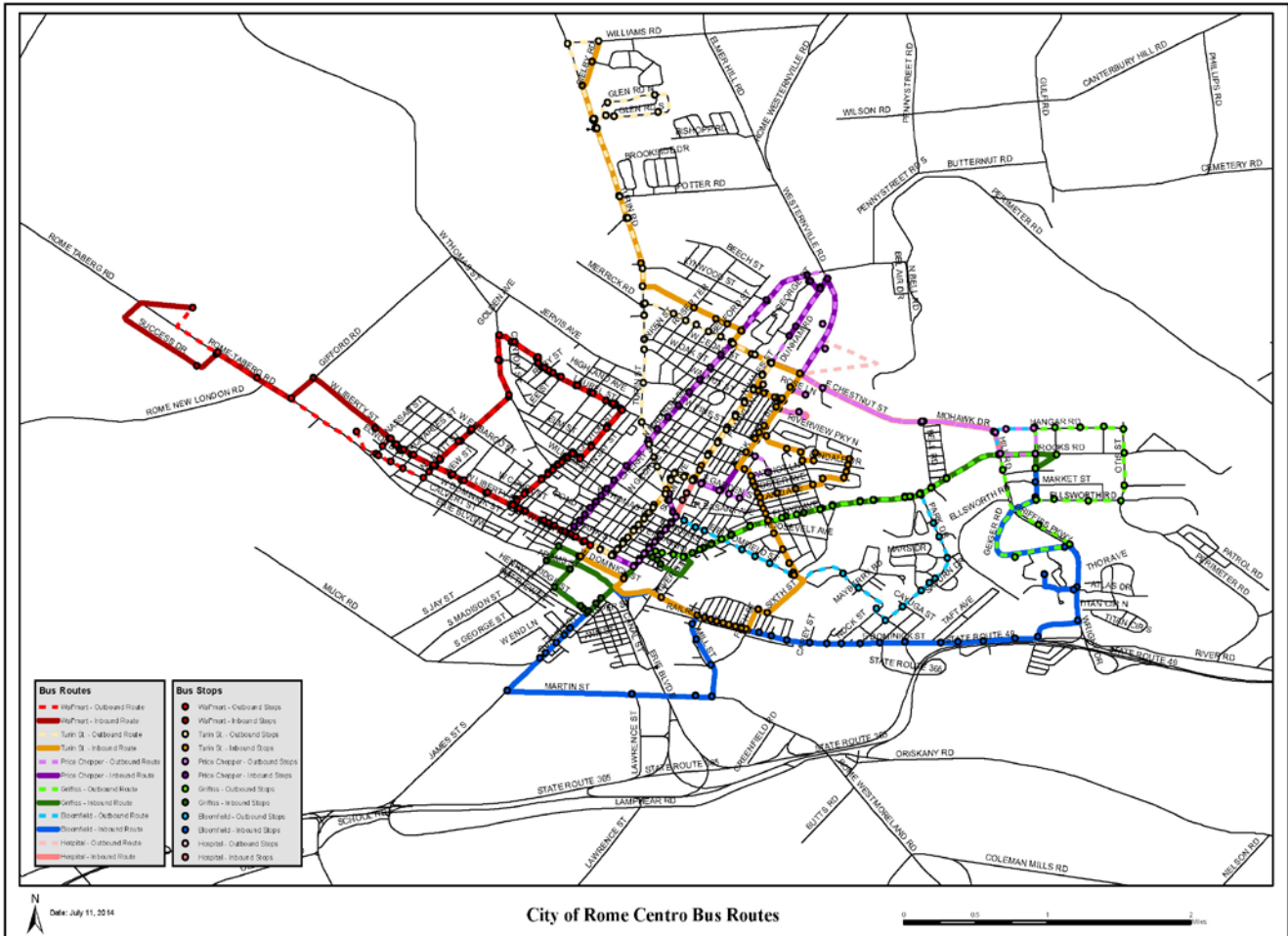
BBS provides area residents with coach line service to and from system hubs, Utica and Rome. The OCRT service to and from Utica include stops in Alder Creek, Barneveld, Boonville, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Chadwicks, Clark Mills, Clinton, Deansboro, Hamilton, Madison, Marcy, New Hartford, Oriskany Falls, Paris, Port Leyden, Remsen, Rome, Waterville, Westmoreland, and Whitesboro. The OCRT service to and from Rome include stops in Alder Creek, Ava, Barneveld, Boonville, Camden, Churchville, Clark Mills, Durhamville, Floyd, Forestport, Holland Patent, Lee, Lowell, New Hartford, New London, Oneida, Osceola, Prospect, Remsen, Sherrill, Stokes, Sttitville, Taberg, Vernon, Vernon Center, Verona, West Branch, West Leyden and Westmoreland.

BBS is a large provider of human services transportation in Oneida County holding contracts with; Developmental Disabilities Services Office (DDSO), The ARC of Oneida-Lewis Chapter, Upstate Cerebral Palsy (UCP), Vocational & Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), Ava Dorfman Senior Center, YMCA, Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL) and others.

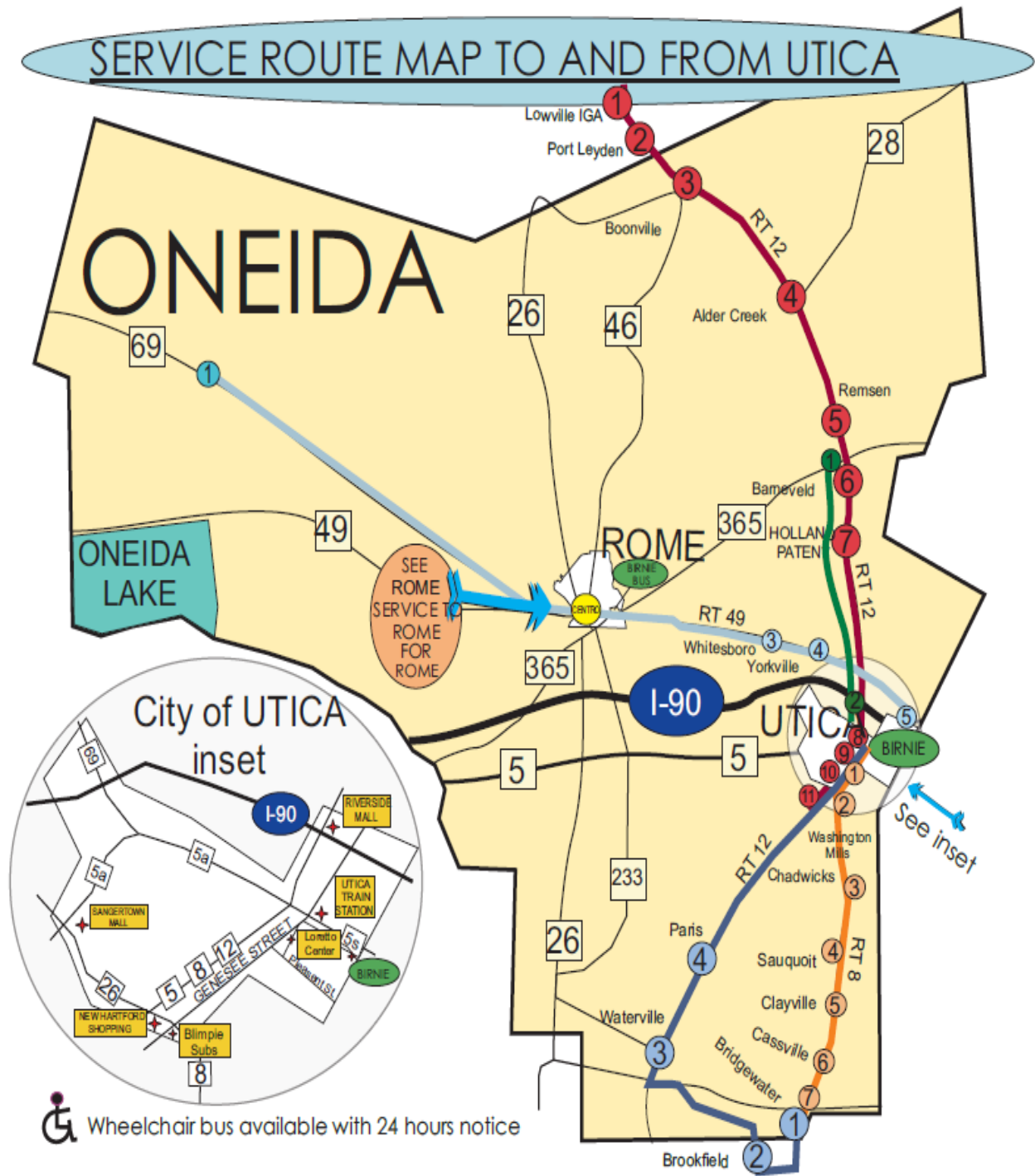
Map 15 – Utica Centro Bus Routes



Map 16 – Rome Centro Bus Routes

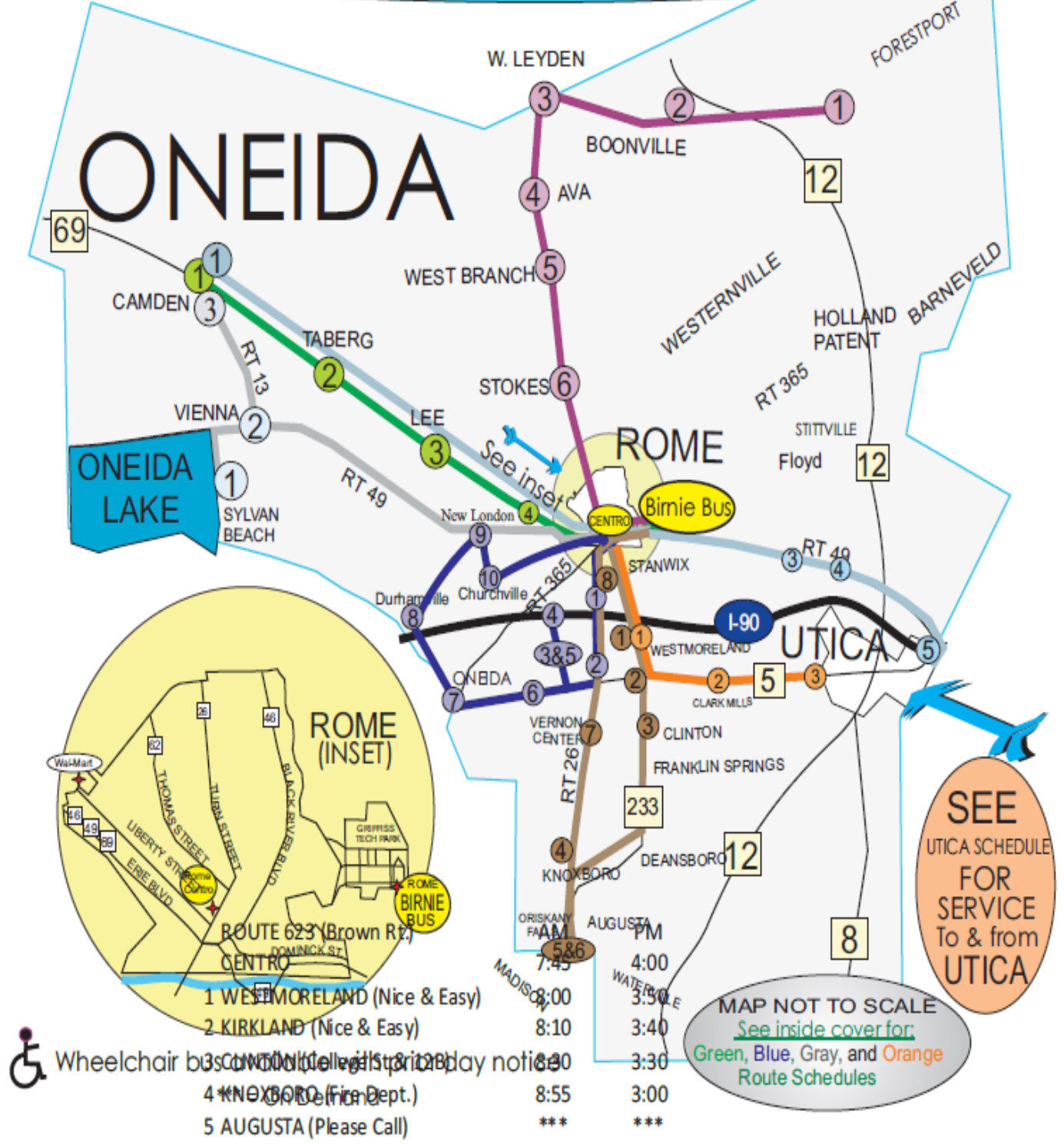


Map 17 – OCRT Utica Service Map



MAP 18 – OCRT Rome Service Map

SERVICE ROUTE MAP TO AND FROM ROME



Mobility Transit Planning

Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan 2017-2020

The locally developed 2017-2020 Coordinated Plan builds upon the 2014 Amended Coordinated Plan and the subsequent Coordinated Plans of 2008 and 2012. It will continue to be centered around the required four FTA planning elements identified in the FTA Circular C 9070.1G: July 7, 2014. The purpose of the Plan is to improve the transportation service system for Oneida and Herkimer Counties which would provide its citizens a seamless transportation system of viable coordinated mobility options to targeted populations as well as to the general public. The Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Study (HOCTS) staff will continue to build and strengthen transportation related partnerships that will improve and create innovative coordination and mobility services in the two counties.

The 2017-2020 Coordinated Plan will continue to be implemented through the Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) which includes representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation human services providers, as described in MAP-21 and the FAST Act. The continuation of the TCC will be a critical element to successfully growing the mobility options in the region, with public transit as the backbone of the system and Mobility Management as the focal mechanism in addressing transportation gaps and needs in Herkimer and Oneida Counties. The TCC has a membership that is very interested in working together to find solutions that get their customers, especially in rural areas, transportation for: medical appointments, employment, groceries and quality of life improvement. As the TCC grows and achieves small successes, the membership is expected to expand. Ideally the TCC will branch out to include linkages to other transit-using populations that have not been identified, such as special needs populations (i.e. college students, neighborhood residents and tourism sites). The TCC is viewed as the coordinating arm in the overall context of mobility options in the two counties.

The focus strategy areas for the 2017-2020 Plan will be the continuation of the four priority areas identified in the 2012 Plan Update, as deemed still viable by the TCC and MPO:

1. Organizational and Visionary: Transportation Coordination Committee

HOCTS staff will continue to facilitate the committee meetings to keep membership informed of funding opportunities, MPO activities, Mobility Management project updates, NYSDOT and Federal requirements, and any new local transportation initiatives. Meeting will continue to encourage networking and foster agency partnerships to improve coordination.

2. Consumer-Focused Services: Mobility Management

With the 2012 MAP-21 and 2015 FAST Act federal legislations, funding for Mobility Management (MM) has changed. Although JARC and New Freedom program are no longer stand alone federal programs, Mobility Management is now an eligible project under the funding programs of Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities and Section 5311 Rural Assistance Program with required local matches, respectively. The Section 5311 funding will expand Mobility Management programs to enable more transportation options in the rural areas.

Focus will continue to be to expand coordinated transportation information through a single

point of access for transportation information, to coordinate and market available transportation options, and to facilitate communication between public and private transportation service providers.

In 2015, the Mobility Management program introduced a tailored program specifically for Herkimer and Oneida Counties, which incorporates both transportation access and transportation sustainability, called *The One-Stop Resources for All Things Transportation Program*; to connect individuals to the transportation option that best meets their need.

3. Operational: Transit Improvements

Primary focus will be on increased use of mobile technology, e.g. (Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Smart Phone apps) as well as other emerging technologies to help in transportation coordination efforts.

4. Current Resources: Inventory and Strategize Assets

The MPO staff continues to plan for a system-wide transportation system analysis consultant study in 2016-2017, through an RFP contract. This task was developed from a TCC meeting which members and MPO staff recognized the need for a system-wide transportation inventory as a foundation to build future recommendations for a seamless system.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Overall in NYS, interest in bicycling and pedestrian activities has increased due to an interest in healthier lifestyles, the development of new bicycle and pedestrian paths and trails, and the promotion of bicycle and pedestrian tourism. To accommodate this increase progress has been made to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian planning into comprehensive planning at the State level, within HOCTS, and within local municipalities with adoption of complete streets policies.

The Herkimer-Oneida Counties Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Guide was updated in 2016 based on GIS mapping and field work along with assistance from partner agencies. The Trail Guide consists of NYS Bicycle Routes, Pedestrian and Bicycle Paths, and Multi-use Trails. Over 18 maps illustrate the wide variety of bicycle and pedestrian trails that are available throughout Herkimer and Oneida Counties. In the HOCTS' two-county area there has been noticeable progress in improving and increasing the number of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Freight/ Economic Development

HOCTS recognizes the importance of freight movement by truck, rail, and aircraft to the economy of Herkimer and Oneida Counties. Populations that reside near airports, industrial parks, rail-yards, or other freight transfer areas may be exposed to negative impacts, such as noise and air pollution, safety issues, and/or quality of life issues. One way to evaluate the impact of the movement of freight and to assess the benefits and burdens of the existing and proposed transportation systems is by using travel-demand forecasting models, which are developed using TransCad by the Oneida County Department of Planning GIS staff. Another way to evaluate the impact of the movement of freight is through public involvement. HOCTS uses two statewide surveys to gather initial public input. These are "Statewide Attitudinal and Preference Survey" and the "MPO Freight Movement Survey", which addresses quality of life and freight concerns. The NYS Freight Transportation Plan is in draft format as of 2016 and will be used as a resource once adopted by NYS.

Projects that must be on the TIP include highway, bridge, transit (capital and operating), bikeway, pedestrian improvements, and enhancement projects within the urbanized area that involve the expenditure of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and/or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. Although all modes of freight movement are considered in HOCTS Long Range Transportation Plan, freight movement by truck has the most impact. During the scoping of highway, bridge and rail projects, any impediments to intermodal connections are considered by NYSDOT and remedied if possible.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE MONITORING

HOCTS Transportation Planning Process

The addressing of EJ regulations within the regional transportation planning process is an evolving process. HOCTS has incorporated Title VI/Environmental Justice regulations in its goals for the LRTP 2035; in its programming of the 2016-2017 UPWP and in the self-certification process. HOCTS Public Participation Policy was initiated in 1992 by federal guidelines and established as a defined process outlining implementation as policy in 1994 by HOCTS. Most recently the HOCTS Public Participation Plan 2016 has been updated and ensures compliance with current federal legislation.

As a tangent effort, as of 2016 HOCTS has developed Title VI Notice, Data Analysis and Monitoring and Compliance Policies and procedures. This set of documents helps to ensure HOCTS is in compliance with Title VI, Civil Rights, Nondiscrimination and ADA requirements governing federally funded programs and the metropolitan planning process.

Future Monitoring

The most effective method to ensure fair participation in the transportation decision-making process and to detect any disproportionately high and adverse effects is through an engaging public participation process, reaching all affected segments of the population. Therefore, HOCTS shall conduct an annual review of its Public Participation Process for Environmental Justice compliance. Additionally, all MPO documents will be reviewed for compliance during their normal update cycles. HOCTS will reevaluate this analysis, at the minimum of once every five years (from date of adoption), and by reviewing other organizations efforts in similar studies, as new census data becomes available, and through future community input concerning environmental justice issues.

VI. RESOURCES

- Environmental Justice Analysis, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, July 2012,
http://www.smtcmpo.org/docs/reports/2012-07_EJ_Report.pdf
- Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994
<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/executive-orders/pdf/12898.pdf>
- Federal Highway Administration: Preventing Discrimination in the Federal-Aid Highway Program:
A Systematic Interdisciplinary & Integrative Approach Reference Manual, March 27, 2002
- Federal Highway Administration Order 6640.23A
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legregs/directives/orders/664023a.cfm>
- Federal Transit Administration Circular: FTA C 4703.1
- HOCTS Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Herkimer and Oneida
Counties 2017-2020
- HOCTS Long Range Transportation Plan Update 2035
- HOCTS Public Participation Plan 2016 Update
- HOCTS Transportation Improvement Program FFY2017-2021
- HOCTS Unified Planning Work Program April 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017
- Indiana's Streamlined EIS Procedures, July 6, 2001, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/indiv/eisproc.htm>
- MPO Environmental Justice Report, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission,
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/case_studies/case7.cfm
- US Census Bureau, www.census.gov
- US Department of Health & Human Services- Poverty Guidelines, <http://aspe.os.dhhd.gov/poverty>
- US Department of Transportation - Environmental Justice: An Overview of Transportation and
Environmental Justice
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/overview/index.cfm
- US Department of Transportation Environmental Justice Strategy
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/ej_at_dot/dot_ej_strategy/index.cfm
- US Department of Transportation Fact Sheet, Subject: Metropolitan Planning (MP) in MAP-21
http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/map21/FACT%20SHEETS/Program%20Restructuring/MAP21_Metro_Planning_Fact_Sheet_draft.pdf
- US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit
Administration – Transportation & Environmental Justice – December 2000, Publication No.
FHWA-EP-01-010
- US Department of Transportation: FHWA Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority
Populations and Low-Income Populations
- US Department of Transportation Memorandum, Action: Implementing Title VI Requirements in
Metropolitan and Statewide Planning, October 7, 1999,
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/legislation/ej-10-7.cfm
- US Department of Transportation Order 5610.2(a)
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/environmental_justice/ej_at_dot/orders/order_56102a/index.cfm