Telecommute Study

CRTPA BOARD RETREAT

JANUARY 16, 2024

Review
Project Purpose

Scope of Work

- Establish Project Working Group for technical input
- Provide a snapshot of telecommuting in the region
- Determine the impact of telecommuting on the region's transportation network
- Identify resources related to telecommuting and potential telework programs

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

What is TDM ?

- TDM is a set of strategies and options aimed at reducing congestion and providing mobility choices that influence how people travel.

- TDM encourages people to move away from single-occupancy vehicles and explore alternative ways to get around.

- TDM isn't just about getting from point A to point B. It's also about planning smarter communities that support multi-modal options.

Benefits of TDM

- Expand mobility choices
- Maximize efficiency of the system
- Reduce congestion
- Lower vehicle emissions
- Promote wellbeing and public health
- Deliver economic benefits & user cost savings

| Environment & Public Health | Operations | Equity | Economic | Planning for Future Growth |

TDM Strategies

Education & Marketing

- Bike month
- Bike/walk to school day
- Safety fairs
- Trip planning assistance
- Worksite carpool promotion event

Incentives & Facilitation

- Telecommuting
- Flexible schedules
- Preferential parking (carpool, vanpool)
- Subsidized transit passes
- Vanpools
- Carpool/ride share
- Guaranteed ride home program
- Worksite amenities (showers, secure bike parking)

System Improvements

- Mobility friendly spaces
- Carshare
- Bikeshare
- Active transportation connections
- Connections to transit

Supportive Policies

- Priced Parking
- Transit oriented development
- Integration with Transportation Impact Analysis requirements
- Employer in-office requirements

TDM Strategy – Telecommuting

- Primarily work remotely

- Hybrid work schedule

  In-person & remote

- Flexible work schedules

- Remote work hubs
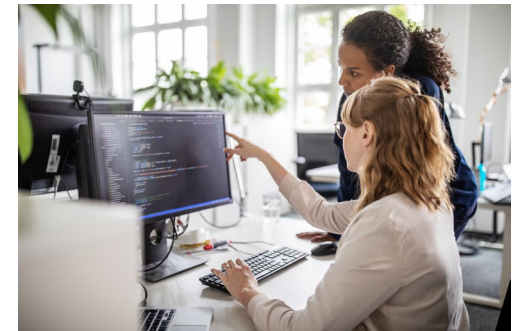
Telecommuting

Benefits

- Travel time savings for employees
- Ease peak hour congestion
- Economic savings for employers (reduced real estate need, utility costs)
- Worker recruitment and retention

Telecommuting

Trade-Offs

- Increased discretionary trips in non-peak hours
- Workers live further away (sprawl)
- Decreased demand for office space
- Economic impacts to surrounding businesses

Findings

Lessons Learned

Project Working Group

Feedback from Agencies Implementing Telecommuting

Feedback from Employers

Literature Review

Project Working Group (PWG)

The PWG met at the initiation and wrap-up of the study.

PWG members provided input on TDM strategies and programs, with an emphasis on Telecommuting.

The following agencies were represented on the PWG :
- Leon County
- City of Tallahassee
- Office of Economic Vitality
- Florida Department of Transportation
- RideOn
- Florida State University
- Florida Agricultural amd Mechanical University
- StarMetro

Office of Economic Vitality (OEV)

The OEV works to attract a range of industries and professional services to Tallahassee/Leon County, such as manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, and IT/tech.

Working from home is an incentive to attract the best and the brightest talent.

OEV asked for a toolkit to provide employers with assistance on managing remote workers.

Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU)
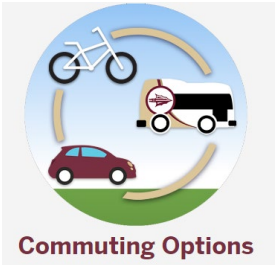# Transportation Office

Students primarily attend courses in-person. Recently announced new undergraduate and graduate online degree programs.

A transportation access fee is included as part of tuition, it supports transit. Students are not charged for parking.

Freshmen are permitted to bring cars to campus.

FAMU does not have a telework program currently but is interested in what other universities are doing and the effectiveness of their programs.

Florida State University (FSU)
Transportation Office

Charges a Transportation Access Fee that covers all modes of transportation, also used to improve the overall transportation infrastructure of campus.

Created a fee for premier parking. Reserved student parking is $415; It sold out in 1 day in 2023, program is expanding in 2024.

Parking further away remains free but is underutilized.

FSU offers park-and-ride lots on the periphery of campus, they are served by the university's circulators, and mostly vacant.

Florida State University (FSU)
Alternate Work Location Arrangement (AWLA)

Initiated the AWLA Pilot Program" in June 2021 and are finalizing policies for adoption.

Provides a flexible worksite arrangement on a temporary or fixed basis that serves the employees and the University's needs.

- **Telework**: FSU allows for eligible employees up to two (2) days per week of work from an Alternate Work Location.

- **Remote Positions**: Part of an incentive for recruitment is 100% remote working for positions based on highly skilled recruitment needs.

Apalachee Regional Planning Council
RideOn Commuter Services

Provides services to the employer and employees

Micro transit or flex services, increase services to support commuters.
- Flex service is a "call ahead" curb-to-curb transportation service which serves a dedicated area. Tallahassee flex buses provide connections to bus stops on North and South Monroe St.

More interest in bike facilities. Transit cannot accommodate e-bikes.
- Consider bike accommodations at transit stops.

Carpool and vanpool use decreased in pandemic, numbers are still down.

Greatest commuter needs remain in the rural counties.

ReThink Your Commute

Employer engagement is a primary strategy – program provides a presentation to new-hires on benefits of TDM.

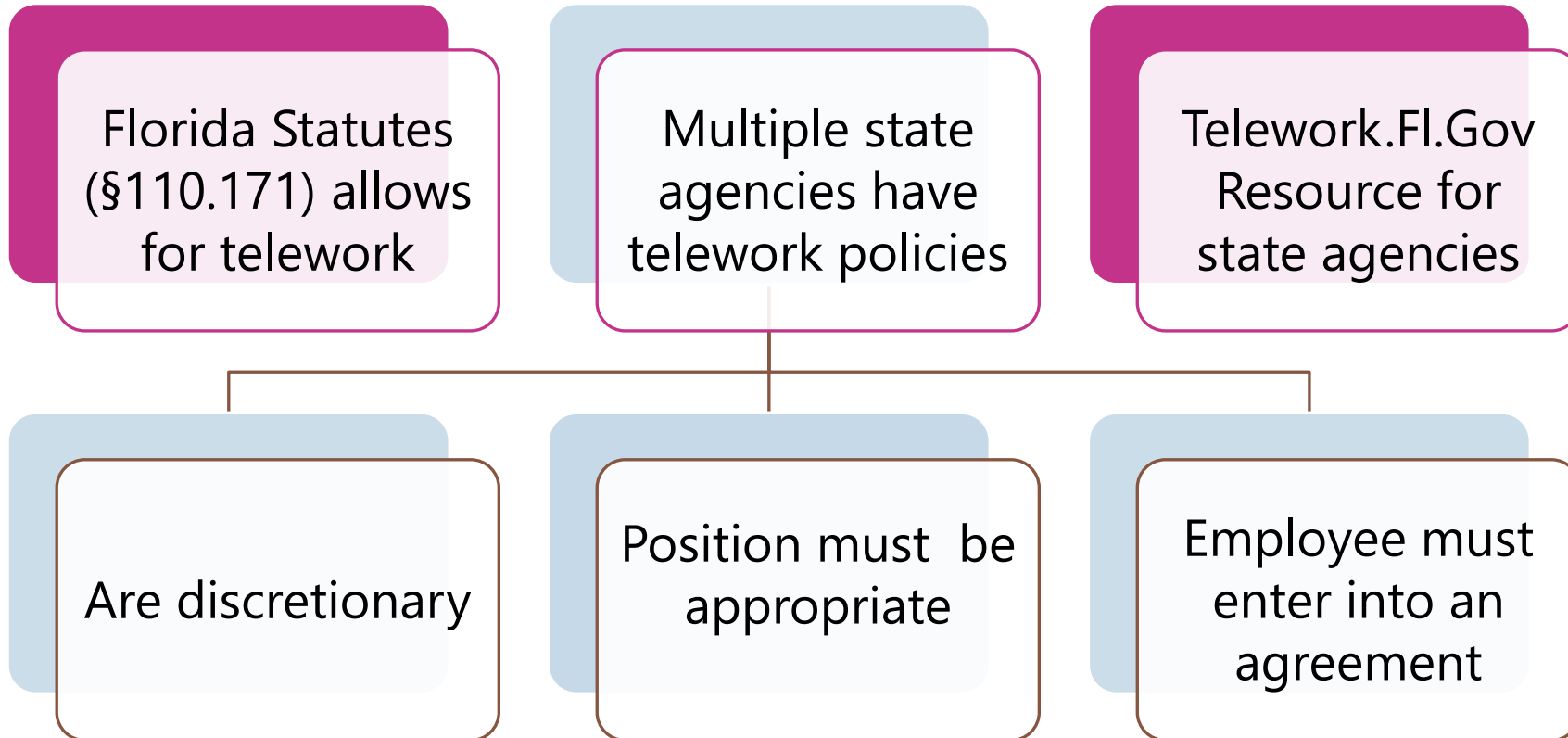Make parking expensive; City of Orlando pays money to employees who opt out of sponsored parking.

A significant number of Central Florida businesses have a hybrid policy, but the current push is to get staff back in the office.

Lake Nona development was built to include coworking spaces as well as broadband that supports working from home.
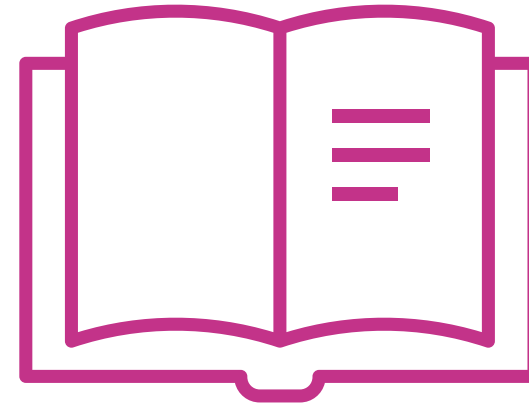
State of Florida
Telecommuting Program

Florida Statutes (§110.171) allows for telework

Multiple state agencies have telework policies

Telework.Fl.Gov Resource for state agencies

Are discretionary

Position must be appropriate

Employee must enter into an agreement

Research

Summary of Literature Review

Literature Review

Clear communication of the benefits of teleworking can encourage involvement in a telework program.

Providing comprehensive resources and support can lead to increased participation for employees and employers.

Challenges to successful telework programs include the need for necessary work infrastructure (such as equipment), childcare, and addressing socialization and productivity concerns.

Literature Review

Miami-Dade TPO estimated that 30% of employees in the county worked flexible schedules, including telecommuting, pre-pandemic. As a follow-up South FL Commuter Services is currently evaluating if telecommuting can become a long-term strategy to reduce congestion.
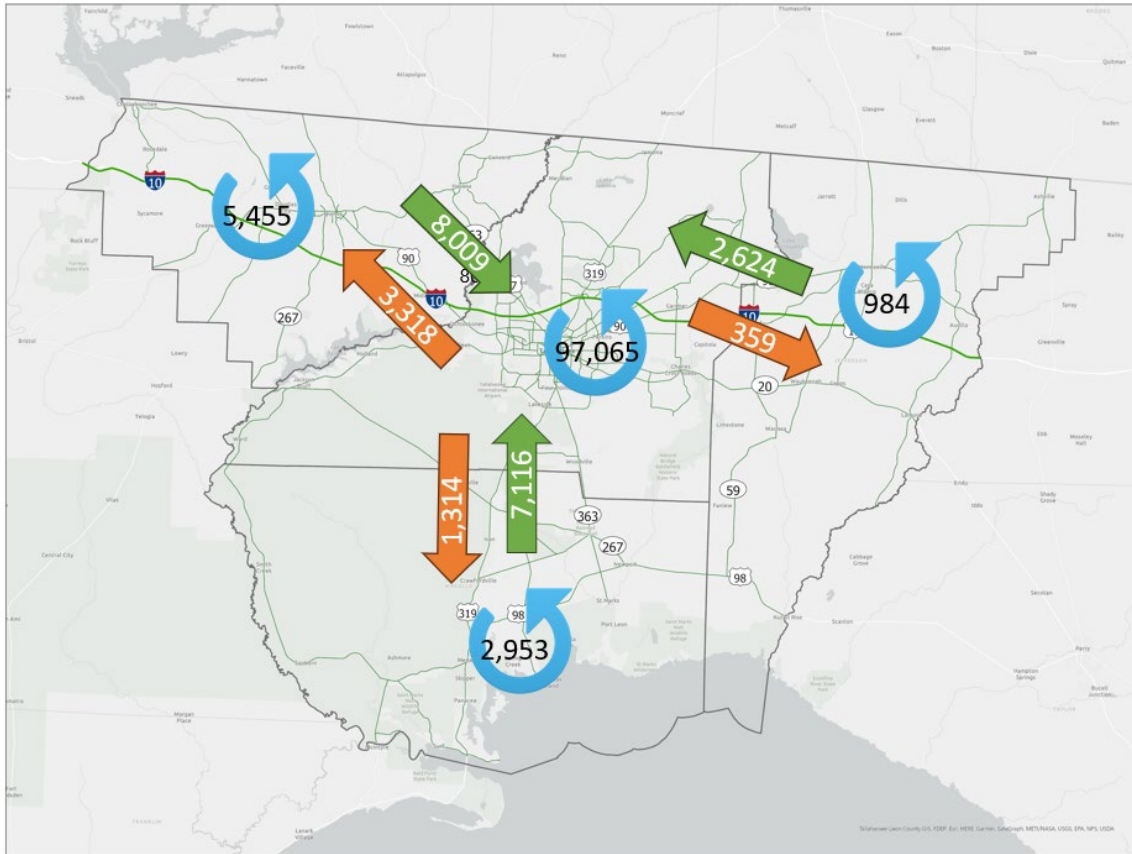
Employees who utilize telecommuting often demand less compensation, leading to cost savings for employers.

The development process can incorporate a concrete and achievable TDM framework. It's about planning and building communities that support technological and multi-modal options.

Current Conditions

CRTPA Planning Area
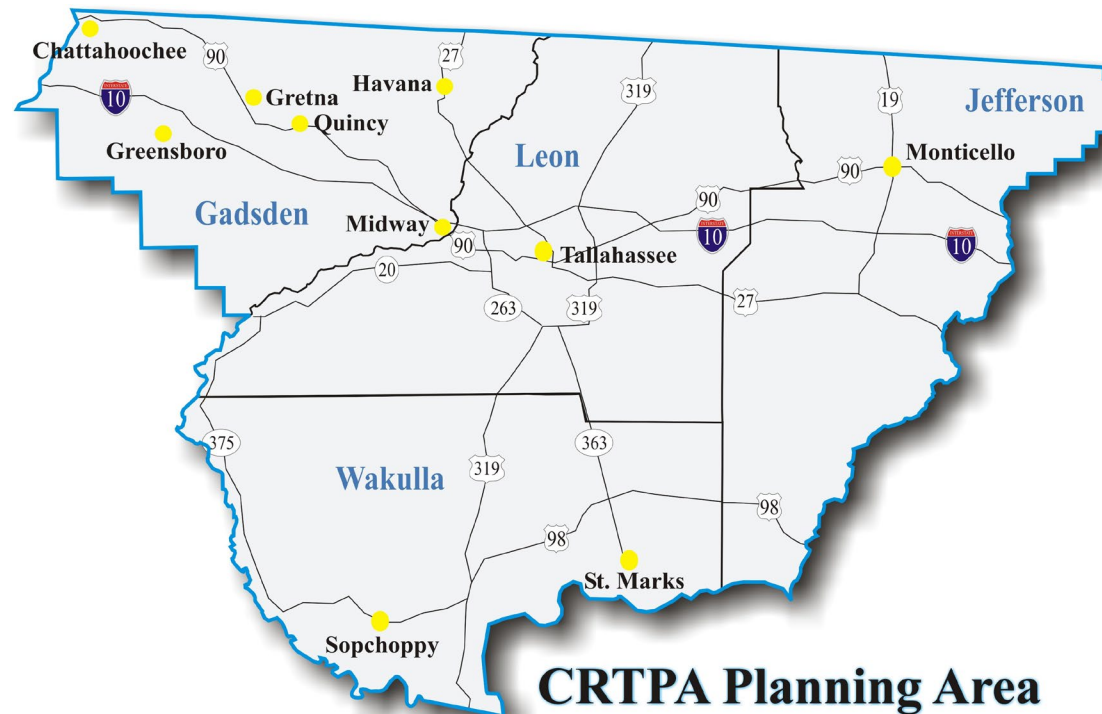
Commute Patterns

Home	Workplace	Work Trips
Gadsden	Gadsden	5,455
Jefferson	Gadsden	72
Leon	Gadsden	3,318
Wakulla	Gadsden	262
Gadsden	Jefferson	61
Jefferson	Jefferson	984
Leon	Jefferson	359
Wakulla	Jefferson	44
Gadsden	Leon	8,009
Jefferson	Leon	2,624
Leon	Leon	97,065
Wakulla	Leon	7,116
Gadsden	Wakulla	194
Jefferson	Wakulla	62
Leon	Wakulla	1,314
Wakulla	Wakulla	2,953

SIZE	EMPLOYER	INDUSTRY
5,000+	Florida State University	Education
	State of Florida	Government
	Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare, Inc.	Healthcare
2,000 - 4,999	City of Tallahassee	Government
	Florida A&M University	Education
	Leon County Schools	Education
1,000 to 1,999	Capital Regional Medical Center	Healthcare
	Leon County	Government
	Tallahassee Community College	Education
	Trulieve	Agriculture
300 to 999	Apalachee Center, Inc.	Healthcare
	Capital City Bank Group	Finance & Insurance
	Capital Health Plan	Healthcare
	Citizens Property Insurance Corporation	Business Services
	Coastal Forest Resources Company	Manufacturing
	Georgia Pacific	Manufacturing
	Goodwill Industries - Big Bend	Social Services
	Mainline Information Systems	Technology
	Sodexo	Food Services
	St. Marks Powder	Manufacturing
	The Florida Bar	Associations & Organizations
	VA Outpatient Clinic	Healthcare

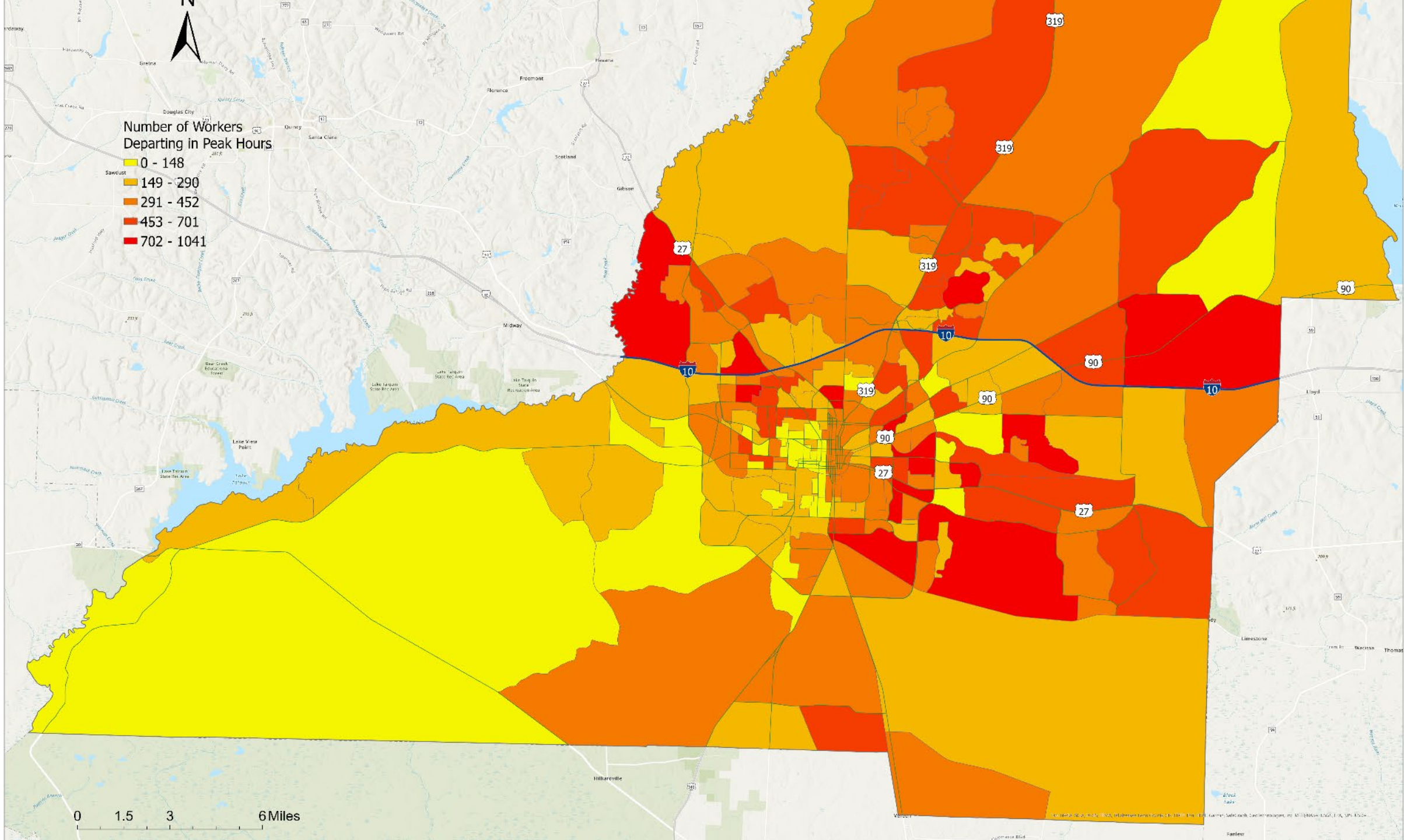Major Employers in the Region

Number of Jobs by Work
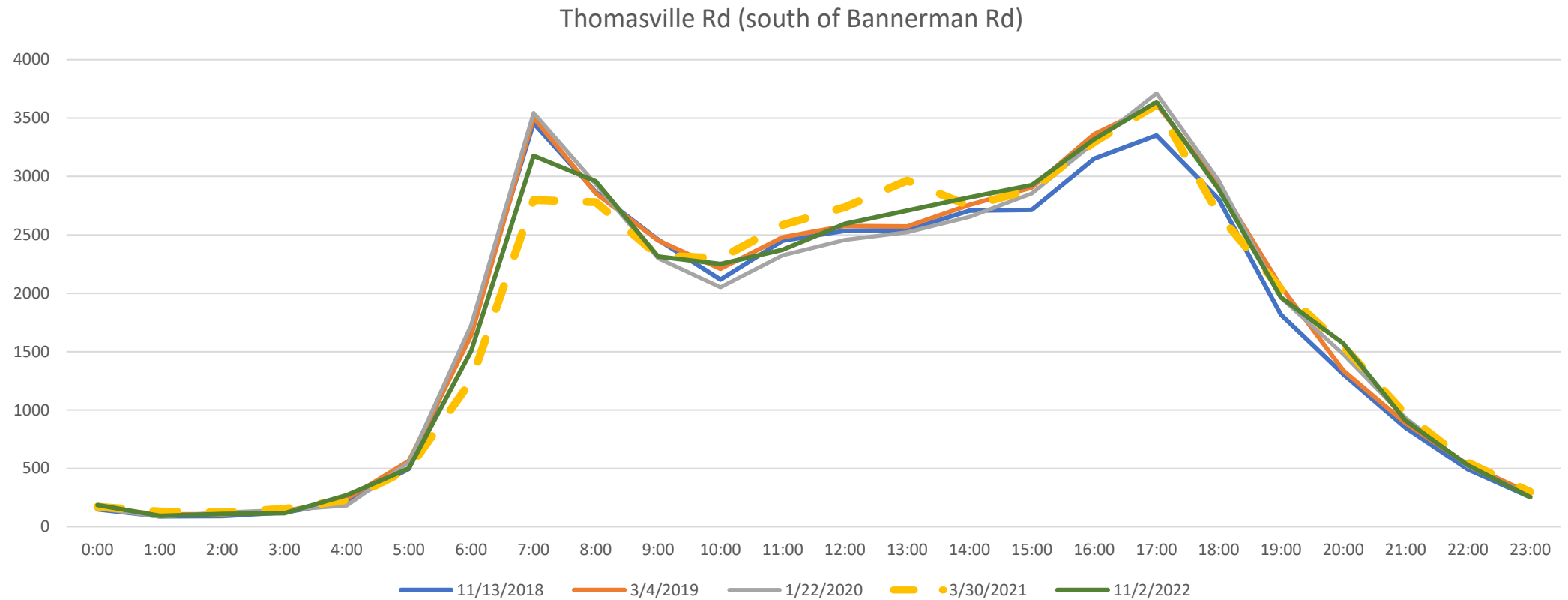Census Block 2019

0 - 20
21 - 100
101 - 200
201 - 500
>500
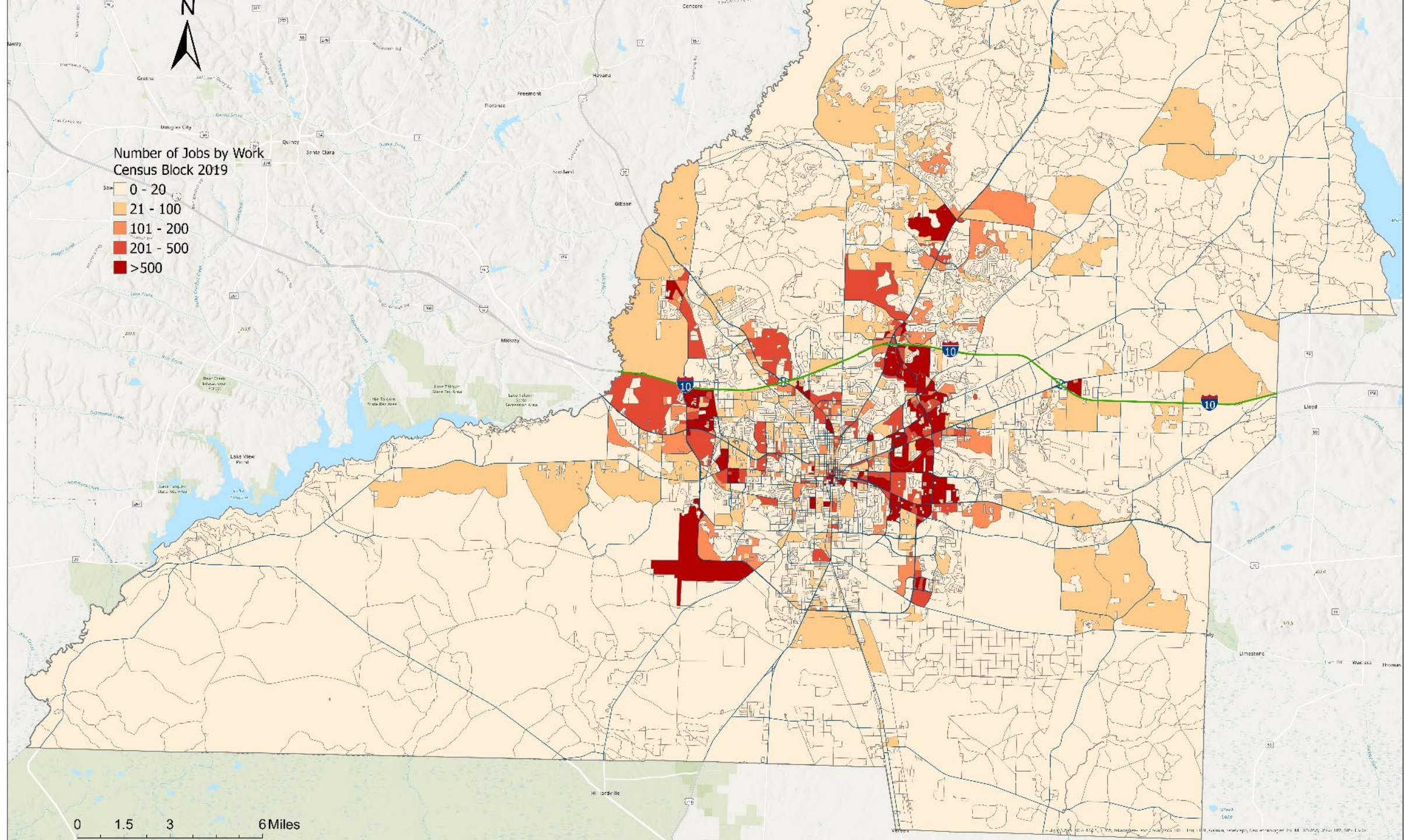
0   1.5   3   6 Miles

Number of Workers
Departing in Peak Hours
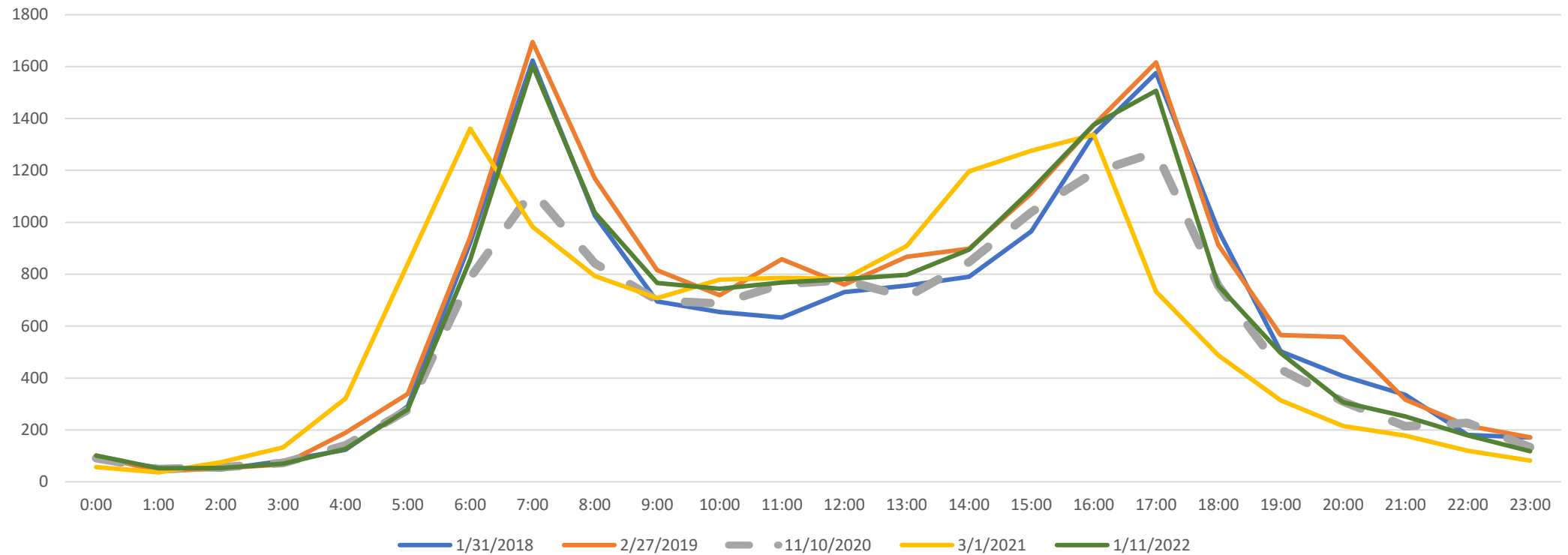
- 0 - 148
- 149 - 290
- 291 - 452
- 453 - 701
- 702 - 1041

0   1.5   3   6 Miles

Hourly Volume Results from Portable Traffic Monitoring Sites

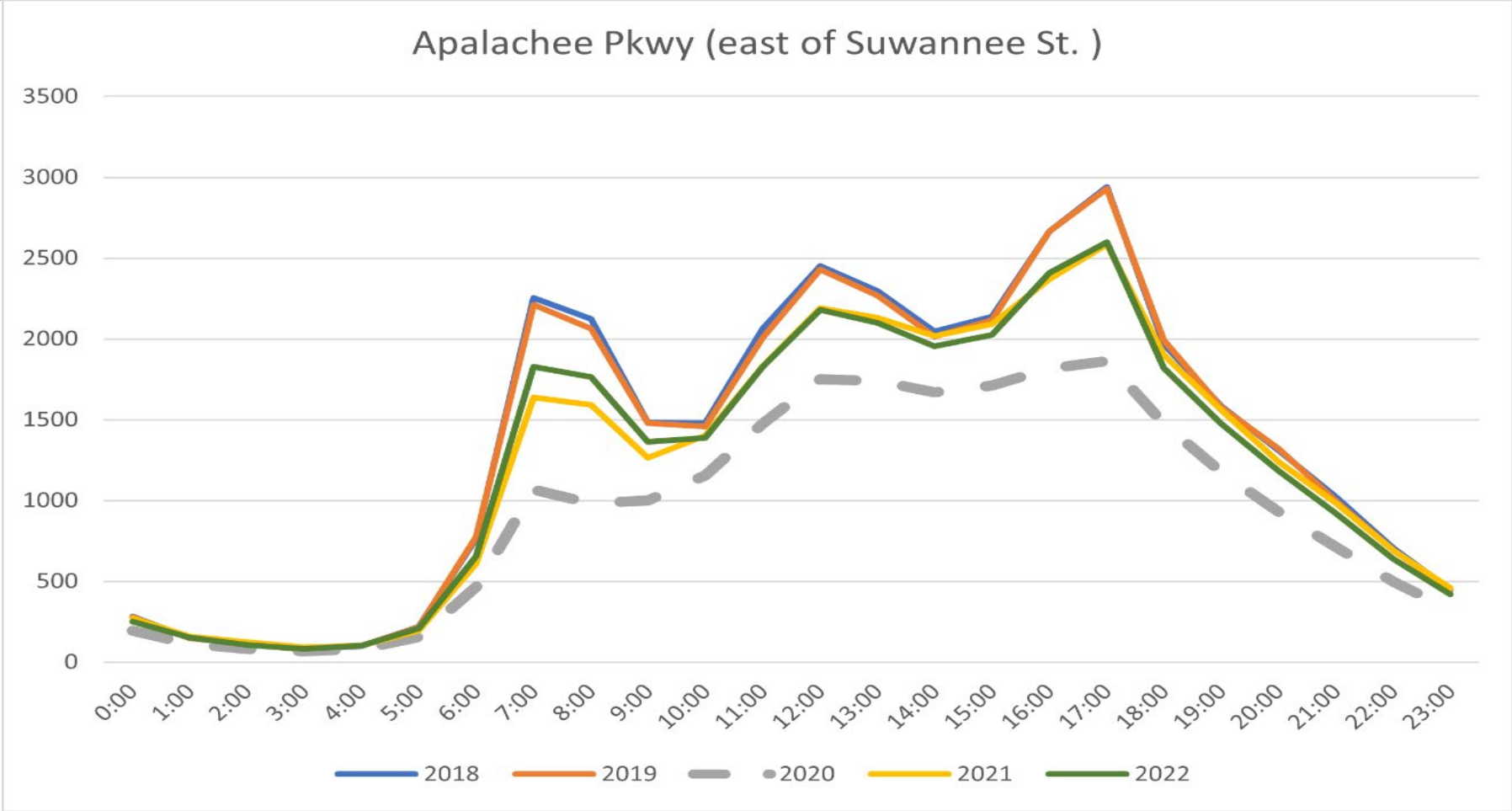Thomasville Rd (south of Bannerman Rd)

Hourly Volume Results from Portable Traffic Monitoring Sites

Captial Circle SW (east of Springhill Rd)

Hourly Volume Results from Permanent Traffic Monitoring Sites

Apalachee Pkwy (east of Suwannee St.)

Potential Impacts of Telecommuting

Scenarios were generated and then modeled using the Northwest Florida Regional Planning Model.

Replica Data

Percentage of Employee Work from Home

Four-county region

Year	Percentage
2022	16.0%
2021	19.3%
2019	3.0%

Percentage of Employee Work from Home

Year	Wakulla	Leon	Jefferson	Cadsden
2022	17.0%	15.9%	16.5%	16.2%
2021	24.3%	18.6%	21.8%	20.7%
2019	2.5%	3.2%	3.0%	1.8%
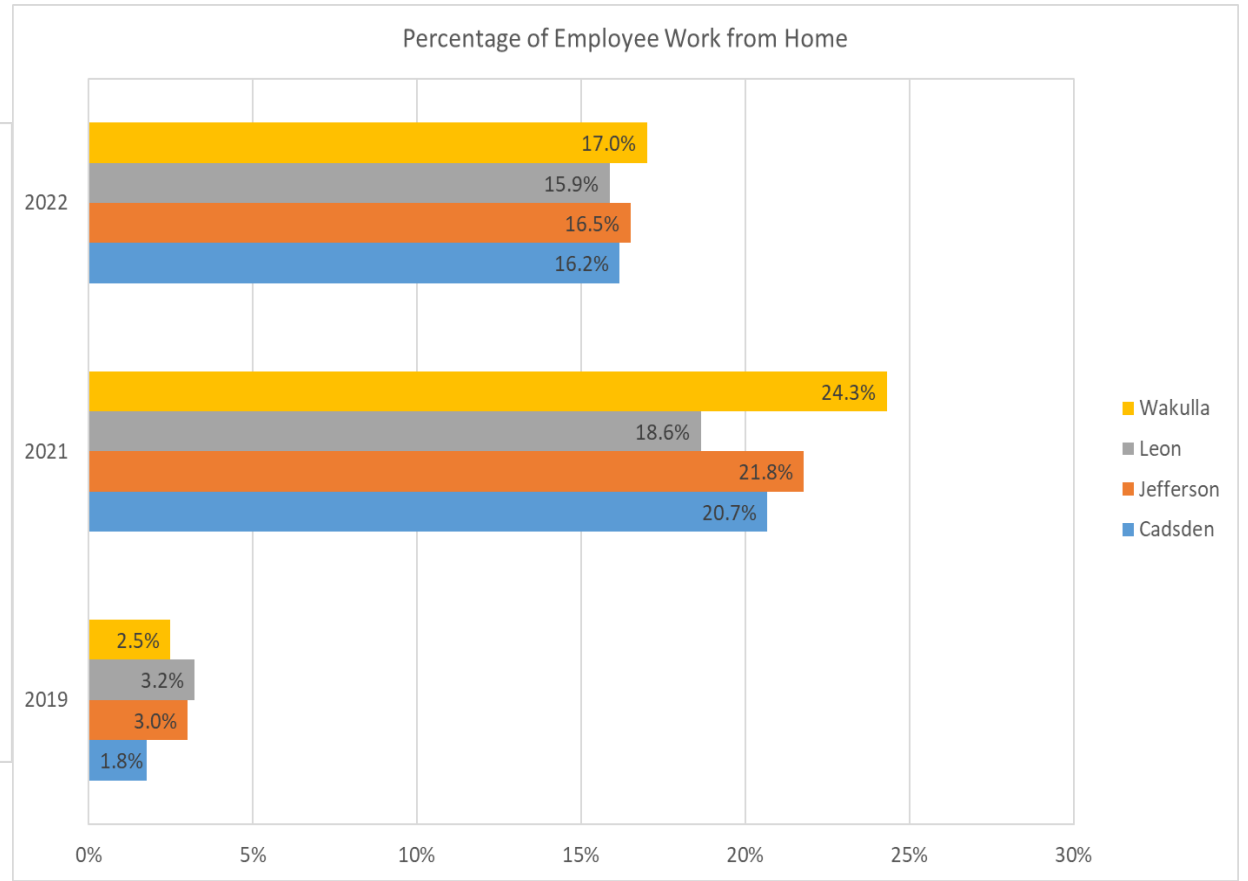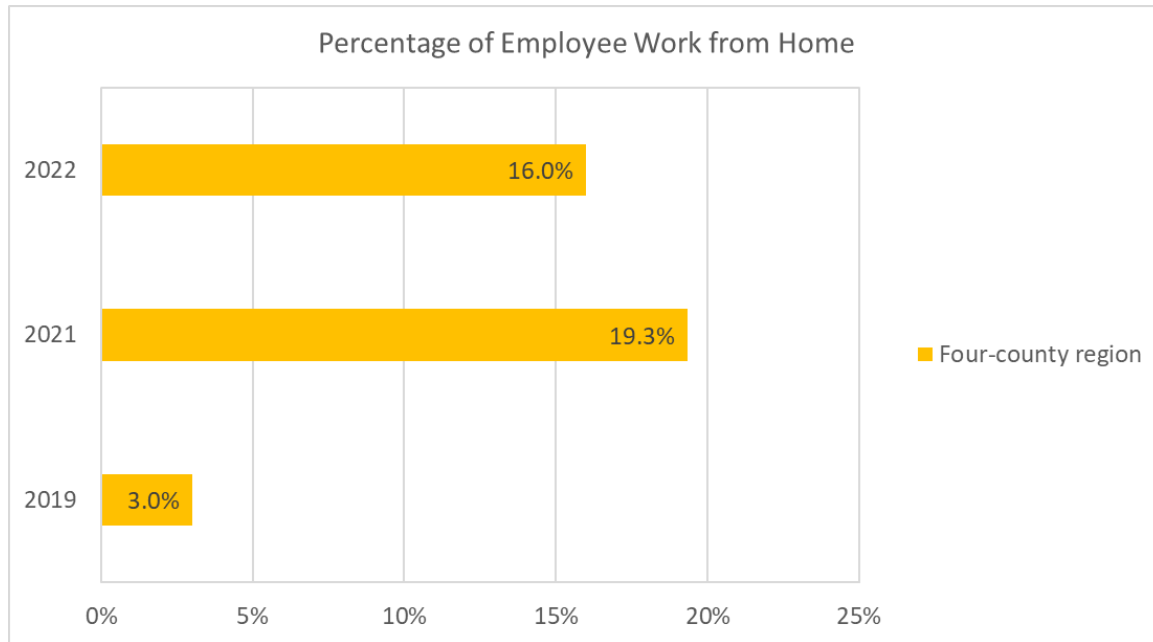
Generating Scenarios

Using replica data, the following scenarios are created based on the CRTPA's 2045 Cost Feasible Plan from the Regional Mobility Plan :

- Low – 15%:
  - WFH percentage remains at the same status as of Fall 2022

- Medium – 20%:
  - Policy incentives and telecommuting technology advancing

- High – 25%:
 - WFH percentage approaches pandemic levels

Scenarios Configuration

Model parameters of each scenarios were modified

- Trip generation rates –**home-based work trip**
- Trip attraction rates – **for the types of jobs that permit telework**
- Considering the model base percent for employees working from home is 3%.
  - For example, Scenario 1 has 15% WFH, it indicates a 12% reduction.

Results:
- Scenario 1: 12% reduction on rates
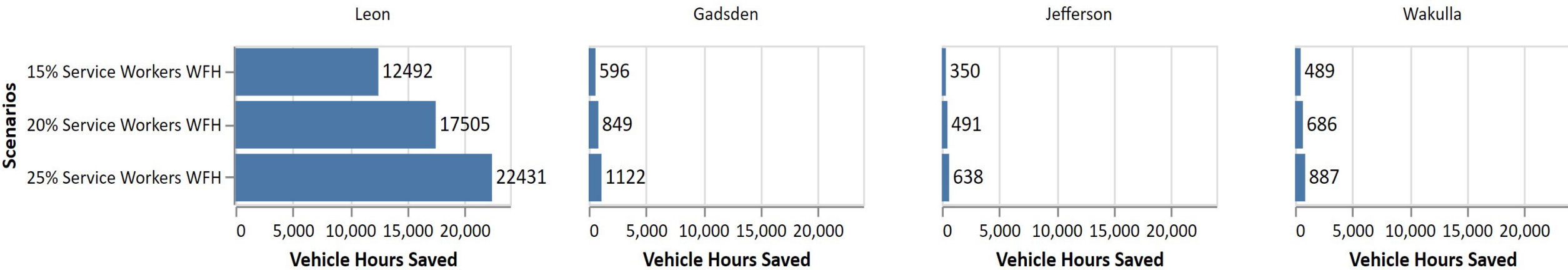- Scenario 2: 17% reduction on rates
- Scenario 3: 22% reduction on rates
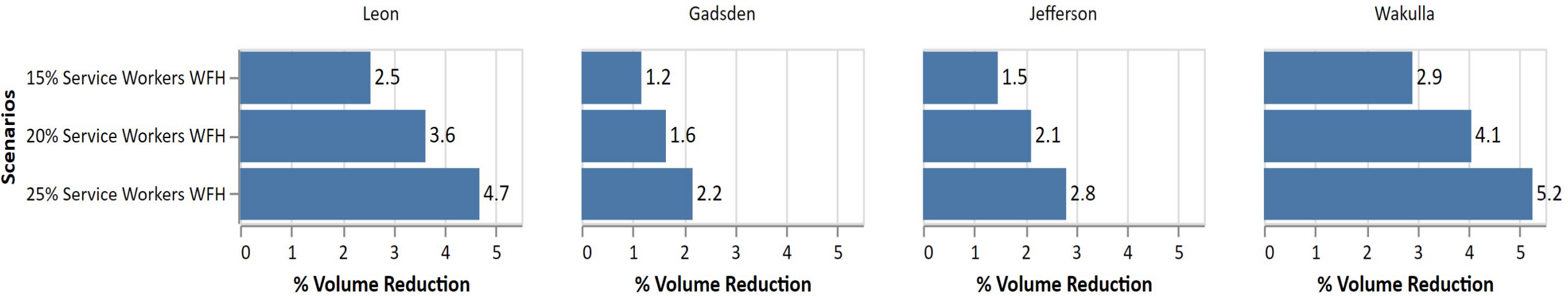
Volume Reduction by County

Vehicles Hours Saved

Roadmap to Implementation

Evaluate Resources

What is needed for employers to feel confident in a telework program?

What do employees need to be productive working remotely?

Goals

Clear goals & objectives with milestones are critical to assessing the effectiveness of any effort.

Employers- What are Your Goals?

Identify Goals - **Possible objectives**
- Reduce the number of in-office employees
- Reduce spatial need
- Reduce utility consumption
- Improve employee moral
- Ensure continuity of operations during an event

Quantify - Potential fiscal implications
- Costs to implement for employer and possible employee
- Savings in operational costs

Evaluate - **Practicable framework and metrics**
- Surveys
- Data Collection

Consideration of Costs & Benefits

Costs

- Employment Law and OSHA Concerns
- Collaboration
- Software for meetings/file sharing
- IT infrastructure changes may be necessary
- Security issues
- Equipment Costs
- Management mistrust

Benefits

- Community: decreases congestion
- Community: decreases traffic accidents
- Community: reduces fuel consumption
- Employers: improves employee satisfaction
- Employers: reduces attrition
- Employers: save money
- Employers: expands the talent pool
- Employees: save time and money
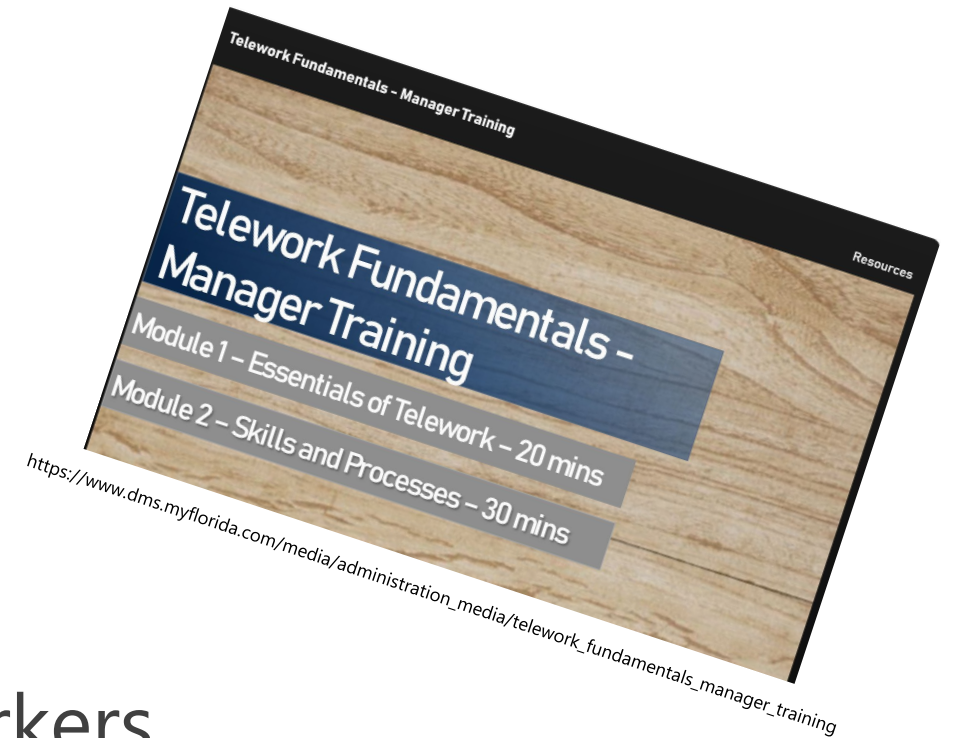
Toolkit for Employers

Adopt telework policies

Sample employee agreements

Sample workplace arrangements

Data security

Broadband access

Guidance for managing remote workers

https://www.dms.myflorida.com/media/administration_media/telework_fundamentals_manager_training

Toolkit for Telecommuters

Sample agreements

Equipment and resources

Scheduling and time-management

Training and support

Open communication and socialization

GSA Vision

"Work is what you do, not where you are."

https://www.gsa.gov/system/files/TeleworkToolbox5262011.pdf

Discussion