
DGRI Citizen Alliance Meeting March 13, 2024 3:00p 29 Pearl Street NW (DGRI Offices)

1. Call to order (3:00)
2. Accept Minutes from November 14, 2023 (3:01)
(enclosed) *Motion*
3. FY2025 Budget Discussion (3:05) *Info Item (Kelly)*
4. Transit Master Plan Overview (3:25) *Info Item (Monoyios)*
5. Alliance member Discussion (3:50)
6. Adjourn (4:00)



DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

**Citizen Alliance Meeting
November 14, 2023**

1. Call to Order – Tim Kelly called the meeting to order at 2:06 pm.

Attendance

Members Present: Stephanie Andrews, Richard App, Sergio Ciara-Reyes, Emily Evers, Jorge Gonzalez, Sarah Green, Jono Klooster, Latesha Lipscomb, Nick Monoyios, Tim Mroz, Maleah Rakestraw, Reb Roberts, Danielle Rowland, Scott Stenstrom, Eddie Tadlock and Katherine Williams.

Others Present: Tim Kelly, Mark Miller, Mandy McDaniel, and Bill Kirk.

2. Approve Minutes from June 2023
Unanimous approval of the June 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented.

3. 2024 Citizen Alliance Plan
Kelly discussed the budget process and ways to engage stakeholders. DGRI is working towards completing a 10-year plan, and they hope to engage everyone again in that process. They started with action groups as the initial structure and are about 80% done with the projects. Several project committees were formed, and Kirk invited interested individuals to join the workgroups. They also think of ways to keep everyone involved in the budgeting process, including committee work and inviting others into the room. They plan to refresh their approach to community engagement and get back into neighborhoods. They also want to start a speaker series with local and national speakers. They are looking for input on which subject areas they should discuss.

Speaker Series discussion and recommendations:

Lipscomb hopes that the Speaker Series will result in measurable outcomes. People will leave with new information on issues like homelessness that can be addressed, helping them focus on what needs to be done. The group seeks feedback on what they can do better and wants to rebuild relationships outside of downtown.

Kelly suggests that the Speaker Series should cover big-picture topics like the City Master and Transit Master plans. If there are other topics that people want to discuss, they should let the group know. DGRI has a unique ability to convene these groups, and the Speaker Series should not be limited to this group alone.

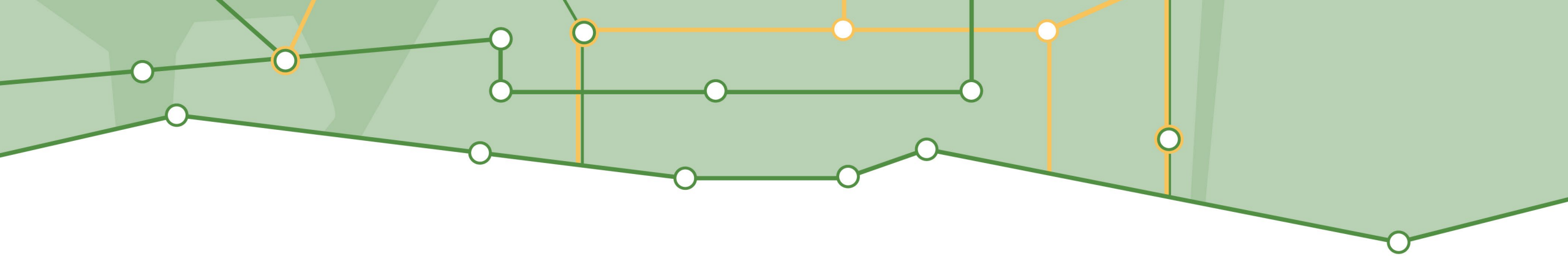
Andrews suggests they find ways to increase turnout and keep people engaged and welcomed at the table. They should also create platforms for community engagement and discussions about climate change and how it affects the business community.

App suggests bringing speakers from other cities to share their experiences, like what has naturally happened in Cincinnati and Columbus. They should also host panel discussions around challenging subjects and consider upstream solutions.

Lipscomb recommends being mindful of who they invite regarding engagement and interaction. They should leverage this group to do more and bring people together. DGRI could go into each ward, host conversations, build connections, and honor and uplift the talent they have at home.

They agreed they would like to focus on fixing these issues to make the city great, such as improving reading scores. Finally, with the election coming up, they want to bring in candidates for discussions.

4. GR Forward master plan update
5. DGRI/Citizen Alliance – community convening opportunities.
 - a. CityGR master plan
 - b. Transit Master Plan
 - c. other community projects
6. Member Discussion
7. Public Comment
No public comment.
8. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 2:49 pm.



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Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. – Citizen Alliance

March 13, 2024

A framework for the future of connectivity.

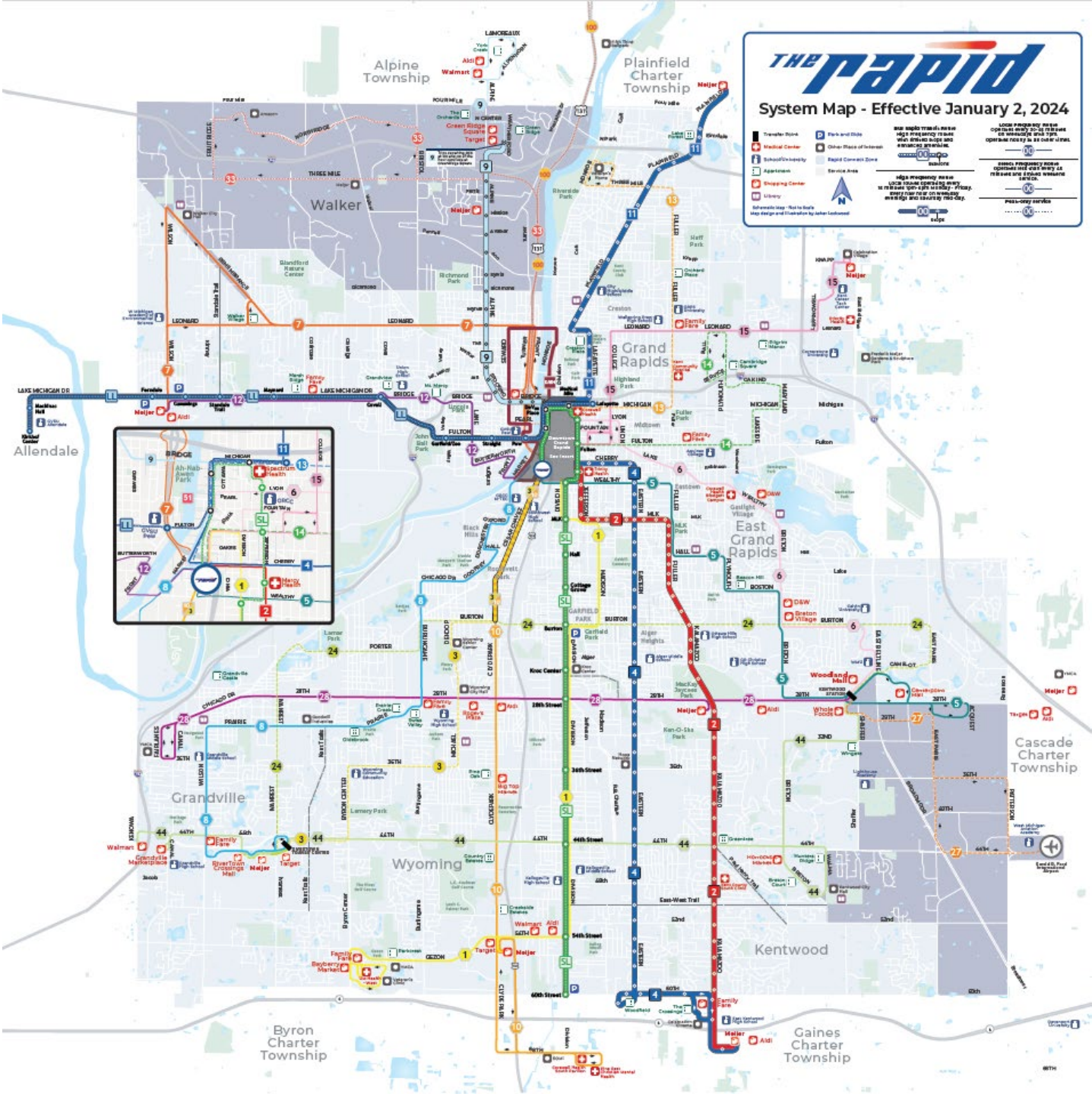


Project Overview

- Study Area
- Public Involvement Structure
- Guiding Principles
- Tasks & Timeline

TMP Process

- Existing and Future Conditions
- Market Assessment
- West Michigan Express
- Peers Analysis
- Public Engagement
- Next Steps



Project Overview

What will The Rapid be in the next 20 years?

Who and where will it serve?

How will it serve those people and communities?

How will it be funded?

How will it be staffed and supported by vehicles and facilities?

How will it build partnerships (with housing, etc.)?

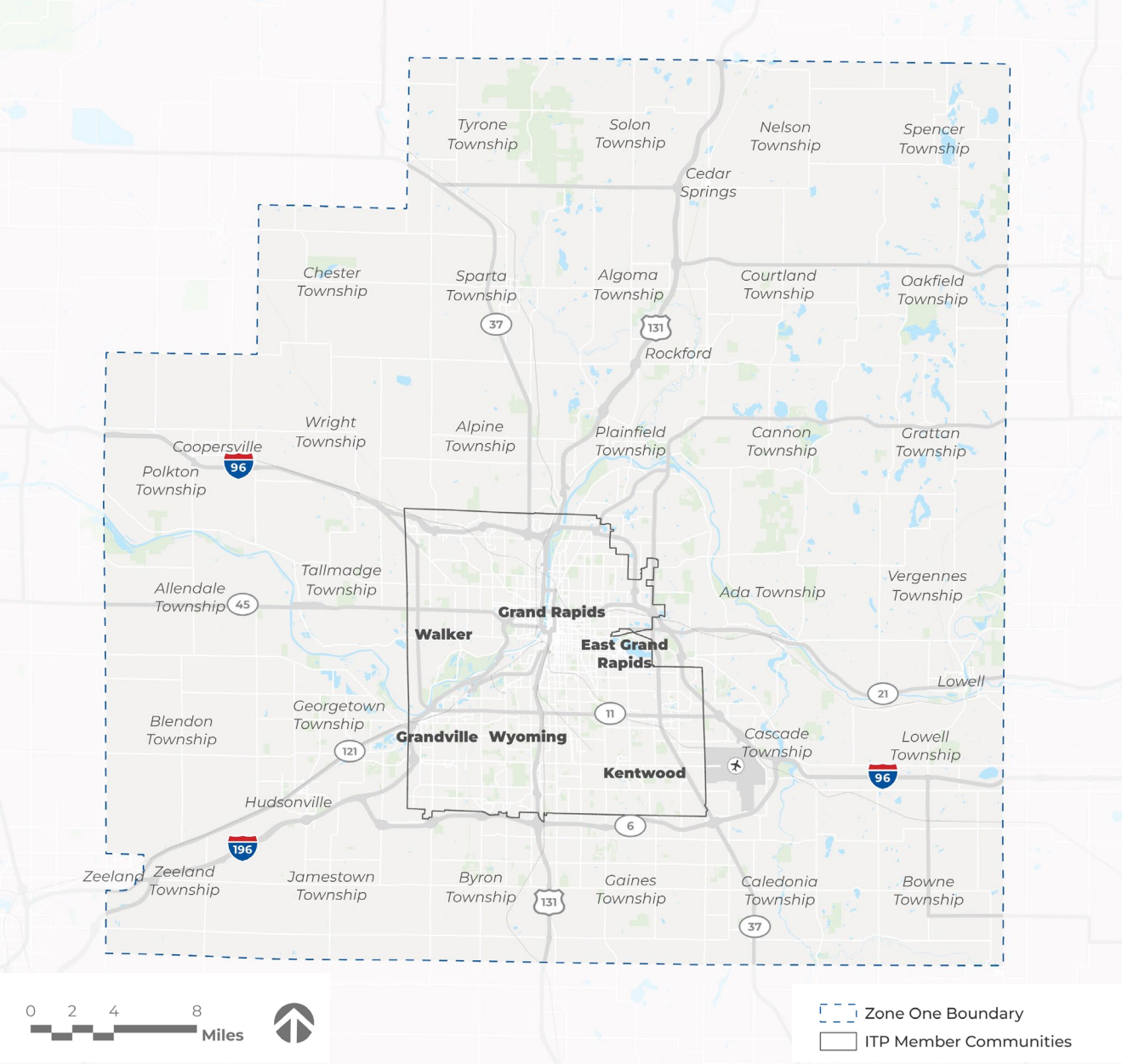
What is “success” and how will it be measured and ensured?

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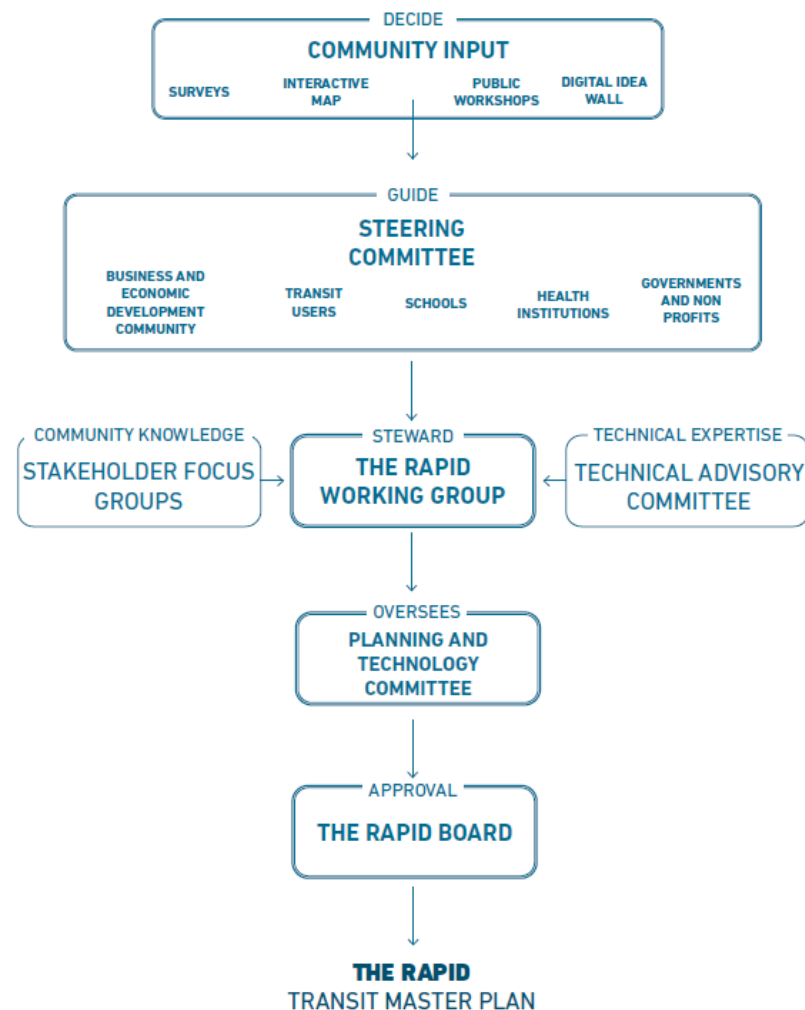
TMP Study Area (Zone 1)

34 Jurisdictional Plans & Developments informing the TMP

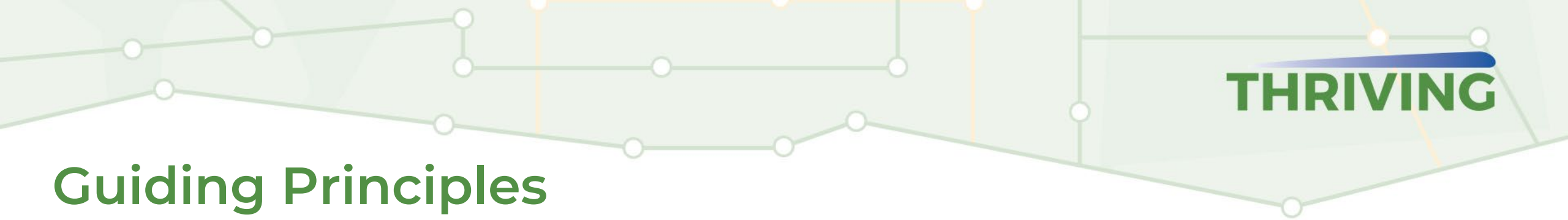
Reviewed plans/projects that were completed and/or in progress



Public Involvement - Stakeholders



- **The Rapid Working Group** (*internal staff*)
- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** (*municipal planning and engineering staff*)
- **Steering Committee** (*public and private stakeholders*)
- **Planning and Technology Committee** (*citizen members and subset of The Rapid Board*)
- **Stakeholder Focus Groups** (*representatives from different sectors of the community*)
- **Community and City/Township Officials**
- **The Public**



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Guiding Principles

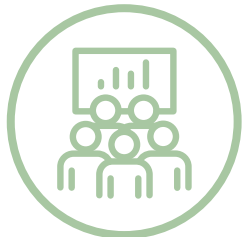
At The Rapid, we are the transportation provider of choice and convenience because...

-  **COMMUNITY | We reflect you and your needs.**
-  **GROWTH | We plan for action.**
-  **CONVENIENCE | We serve for user experience.**
-  **INTERNAL WORKFORCE | We value employee personal growth.**
(Engaged and prepared to meet our future challenges)
-  **ADAPTABILITY | We're future-flexible.**

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Project Status

IN PROGRESS



Public Involvement

Building partnerships (throughout the process, public workshops targeted for Fall 2023 and Spring 2024)

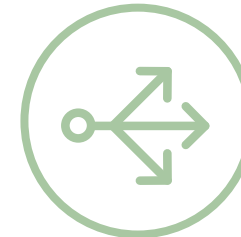
COMPLETE



Market Analysis

Transit demand, travel patterns, mobility need

IN PROGRESS



Future Options and Scenarios Analysis

Who and where to serve? How?



Existing and Future Conditions Analysis

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats



Peer Review

Best practices from similar and aspirational mobility providers

COMPLETE

COMPLETE

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Project Status

COMPLETE



West Michigan Express Planning

Reassess feasibility, develop implementation plan

IN PROGRESS



Planning Guidelines, Policies and Performance Measures

How to measure and ensure success?

IN PROGRESS



Administrative and Operational Staffing Evaluation

How to staff?



Corridor Analysis

Connections to places outside current service area



Fleet, Facilities and IT Strategy

How to support?

IN PROGRESS

ON DECK

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Project Status

IN PROGRESS

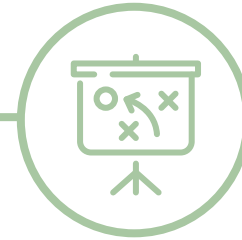


Joint Development Opportunities

How to shape what happens next to transit?



Phased Implementation Strategy



Final Transit Master Plan (May 2024)



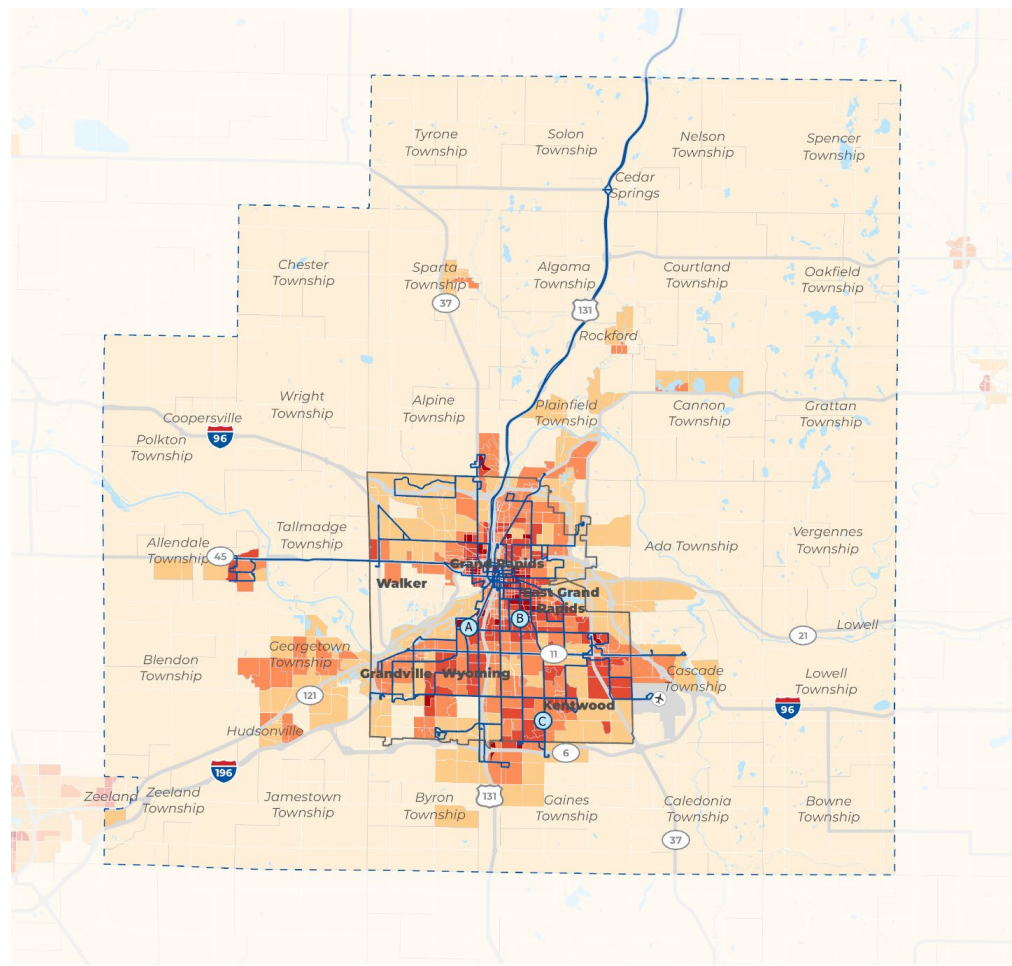
Financial and Funding Analysis

How to fund?

ON DECK

Transit Demand Index

Population & Employment

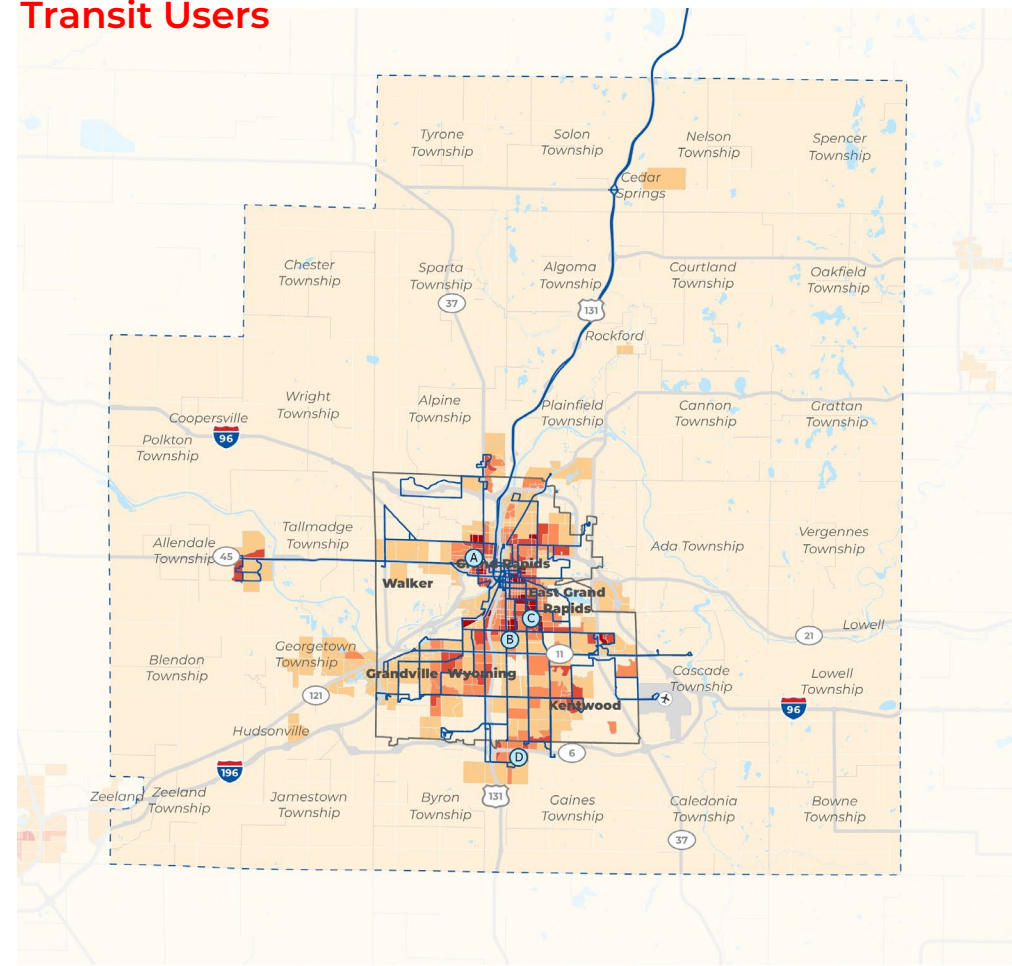


Transit Demand Index
Service Frequency Supported by Existing Population and Employment

Insufficient Demand	Zone One Boundary
> 60 Minutes	ITP-Member Communities
60 Minutes	The Rapid Routes (Winter 2023)
30 Minutes	
15 Minutes or Better	

Transit Propensity Index

Minorities, Young Adults, Seniors, Disabilities, Income, Zero-Vehicle Households, Rental Units, Existing Transit Users



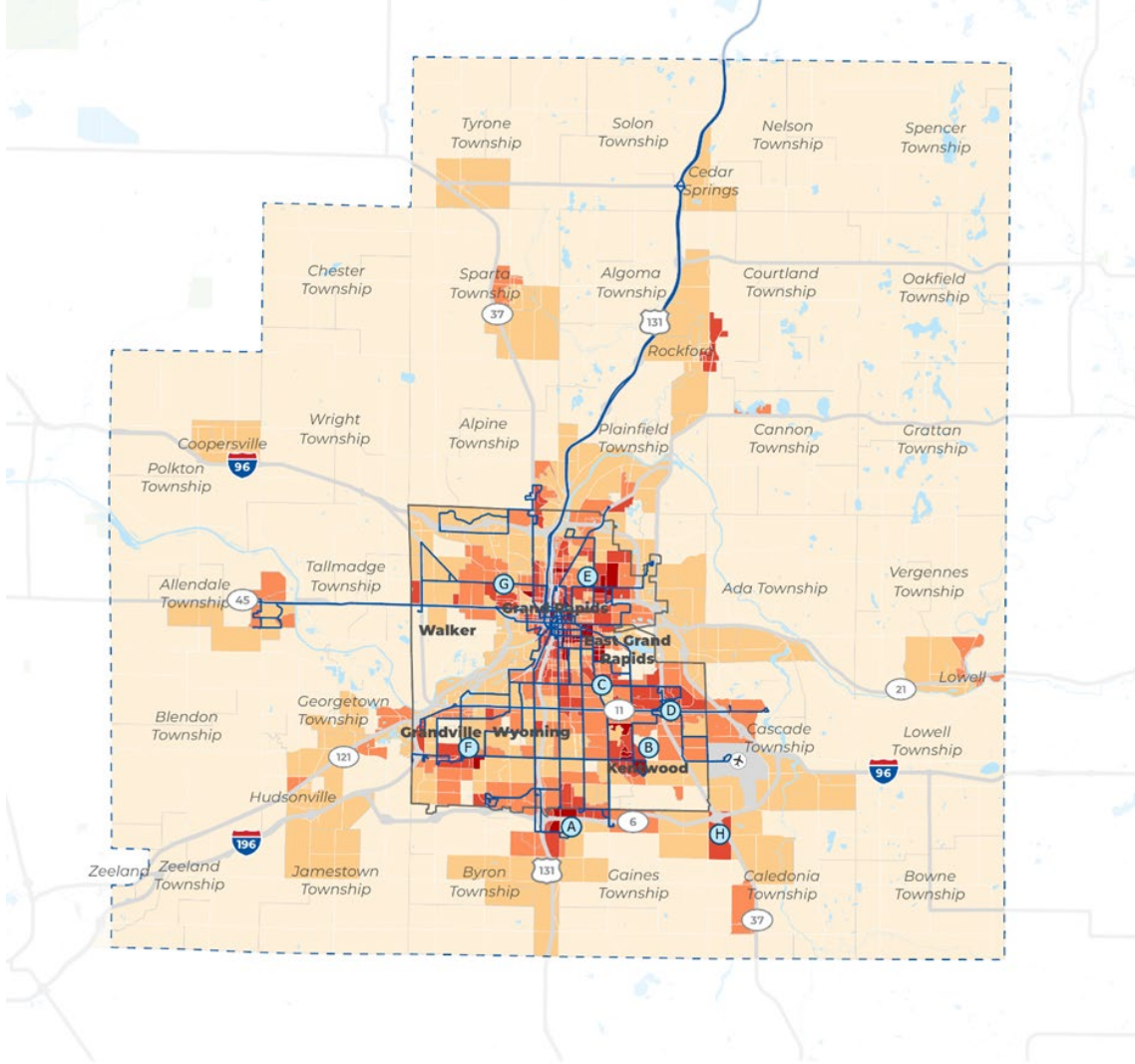
Composite Transit Propensity Index

Very Low (8 - 11)	Zone One Boundary
Low (12 - 16)	ITP Member Communities
Medium (17 - 21)	The Rapid Routes (Winter 2023)
High (22 - 26)	
Very High (27 - 34)	

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Trip Generation Potential

Activity Centers & Existing/Future Land Use

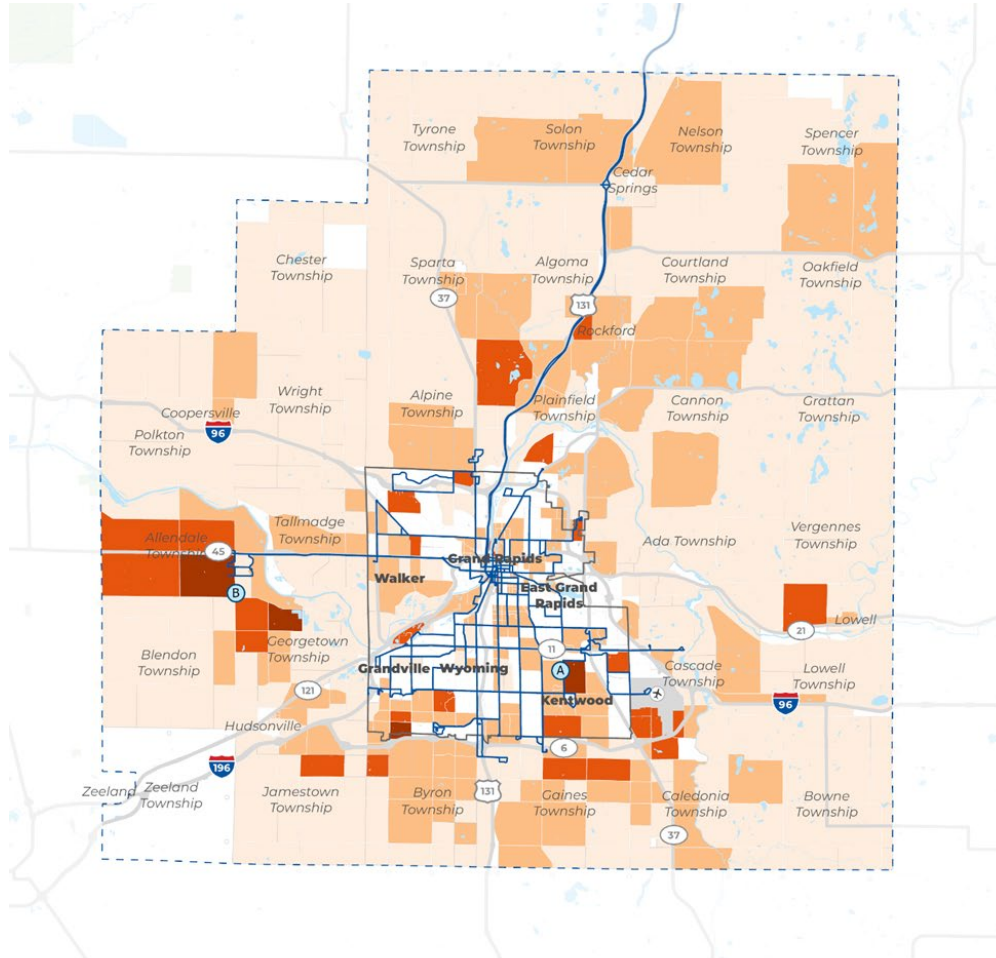


Composite Trip Generation Potential Index

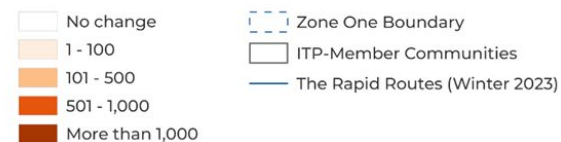
- Very Low (1 - 4)
- Low (5 - 7)
- Medium (8 - 9)
- High (10 - 11)
- Very High (12 - 15)
- Zone One Boundary
- ITP-Member Communities
- The Rapid Routes (Winter 2023)

Household Growth

Number of Housing Units

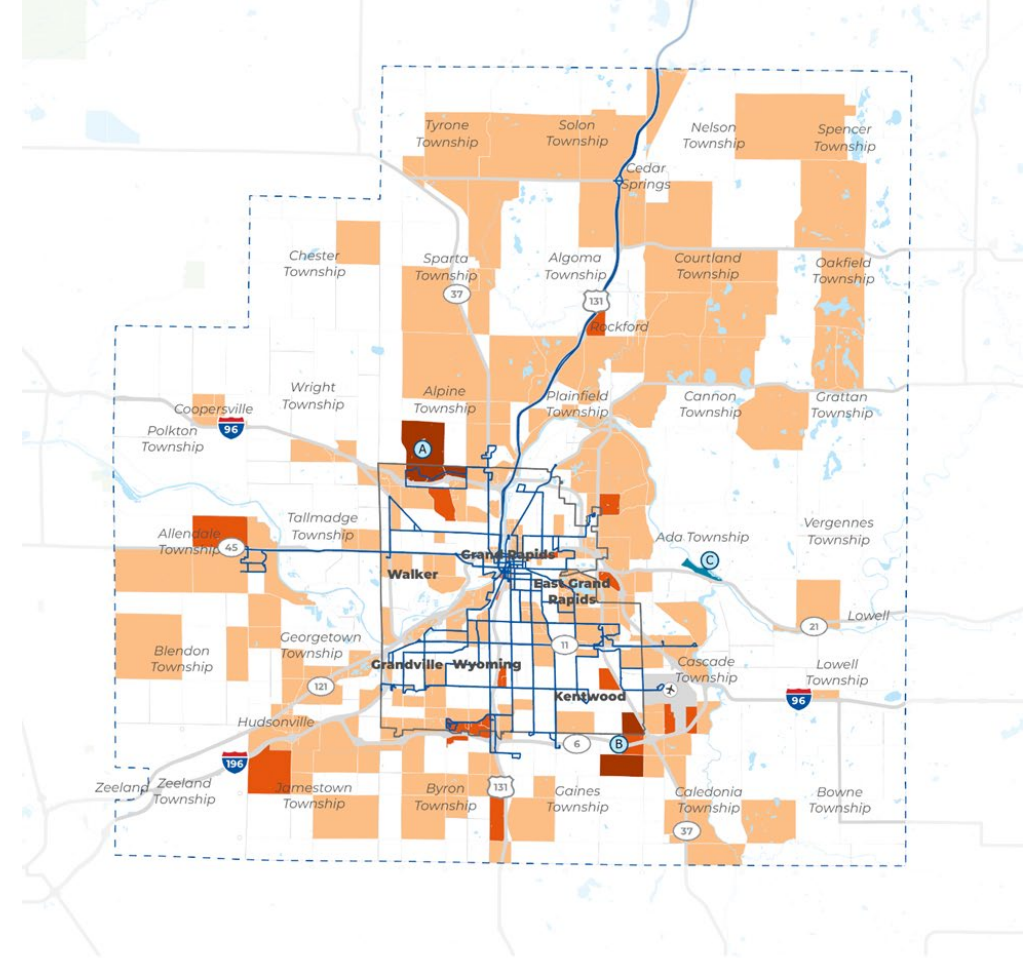


Household Growth 2015-2045 (Number of Housing Units)

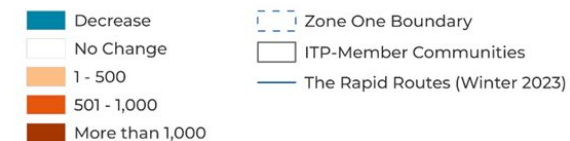


Employment Growth

Number of Jobs



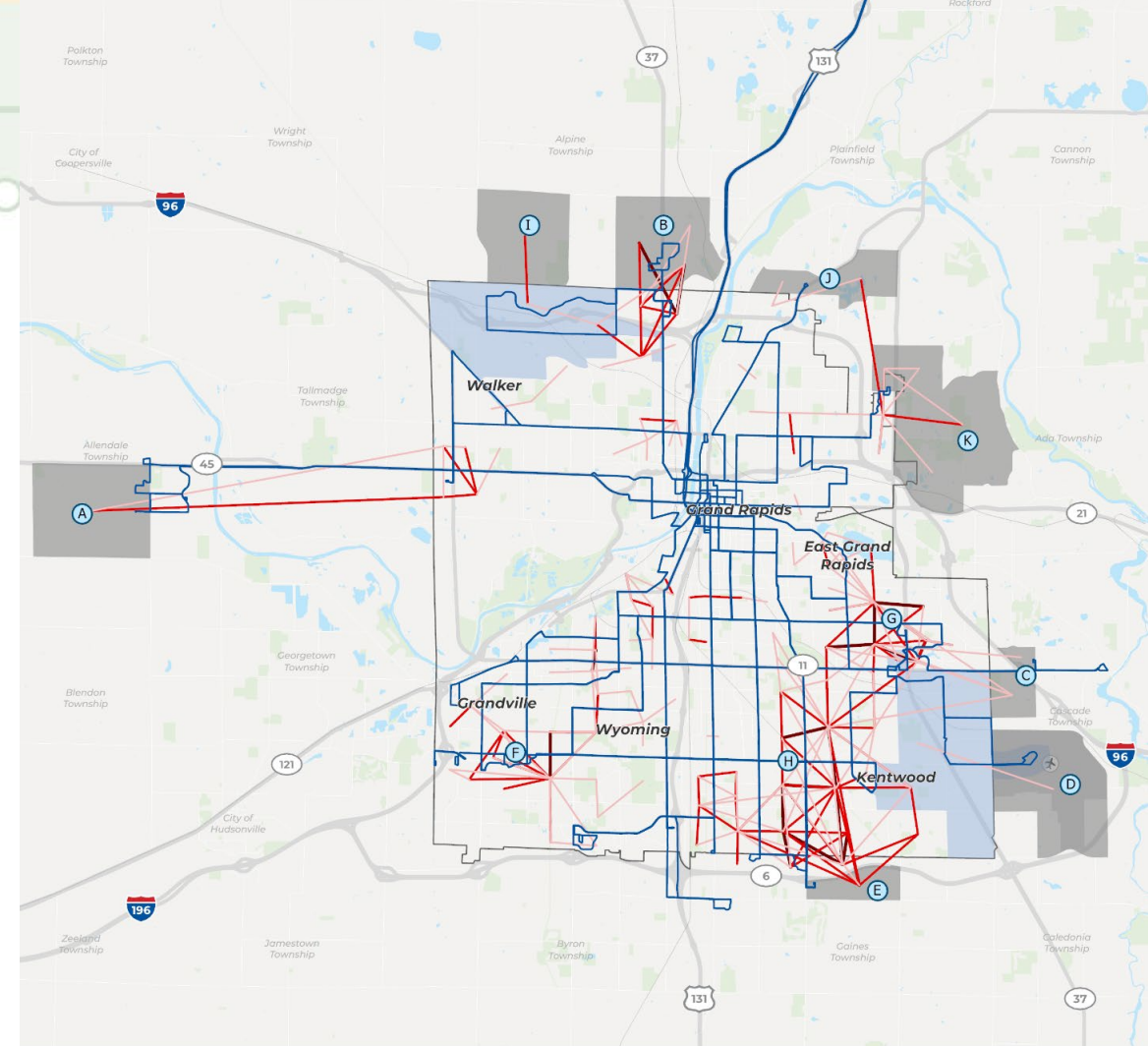
Employment 2015-2045 (Number of Jobs)



2015 - 2045

Key Findings

- More trips/people are coming into downtown Grand Rapids **from outside the six-city service area** than compared to from within the six-city service area
- On average, **transit travel times are 2-3 times longer** than other modes
- Non-transit trips are typically less than 15-minutes long
- Transit trips to downtown Grand Rapids are **23-28% shorter** than other transit trips

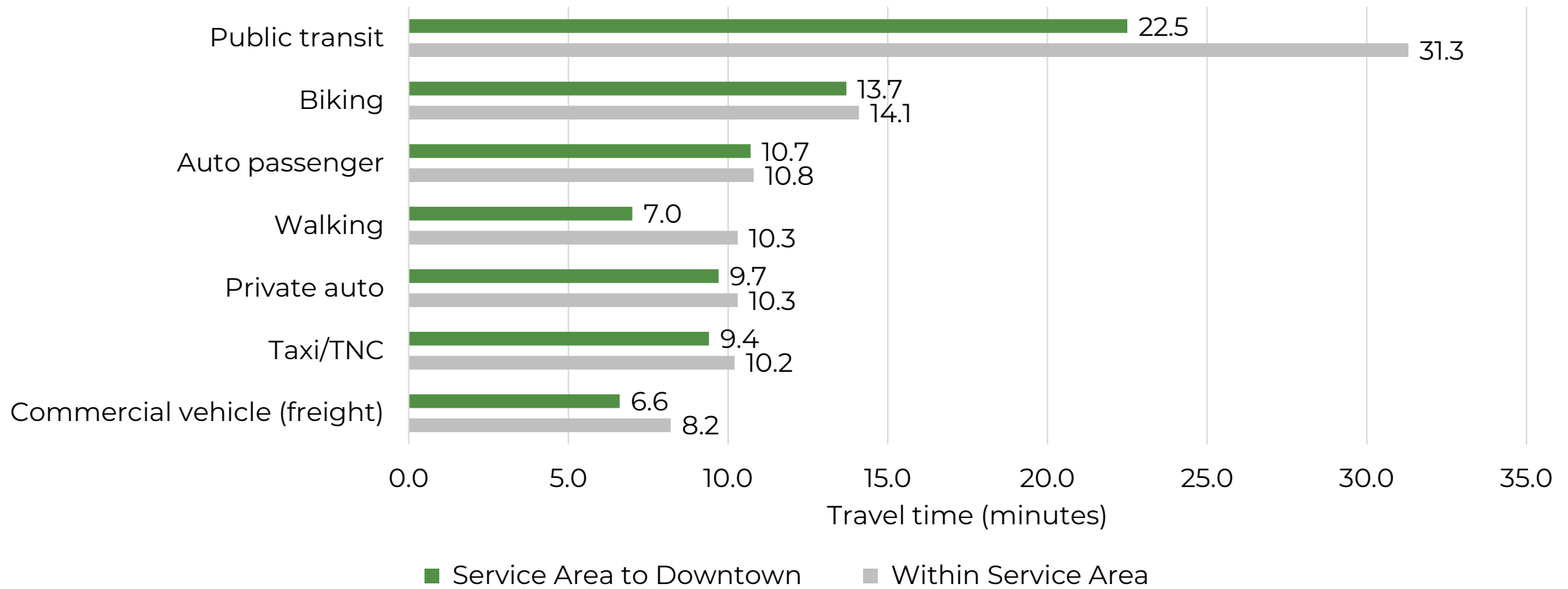


Trips by All Modes Throughout Zone 1



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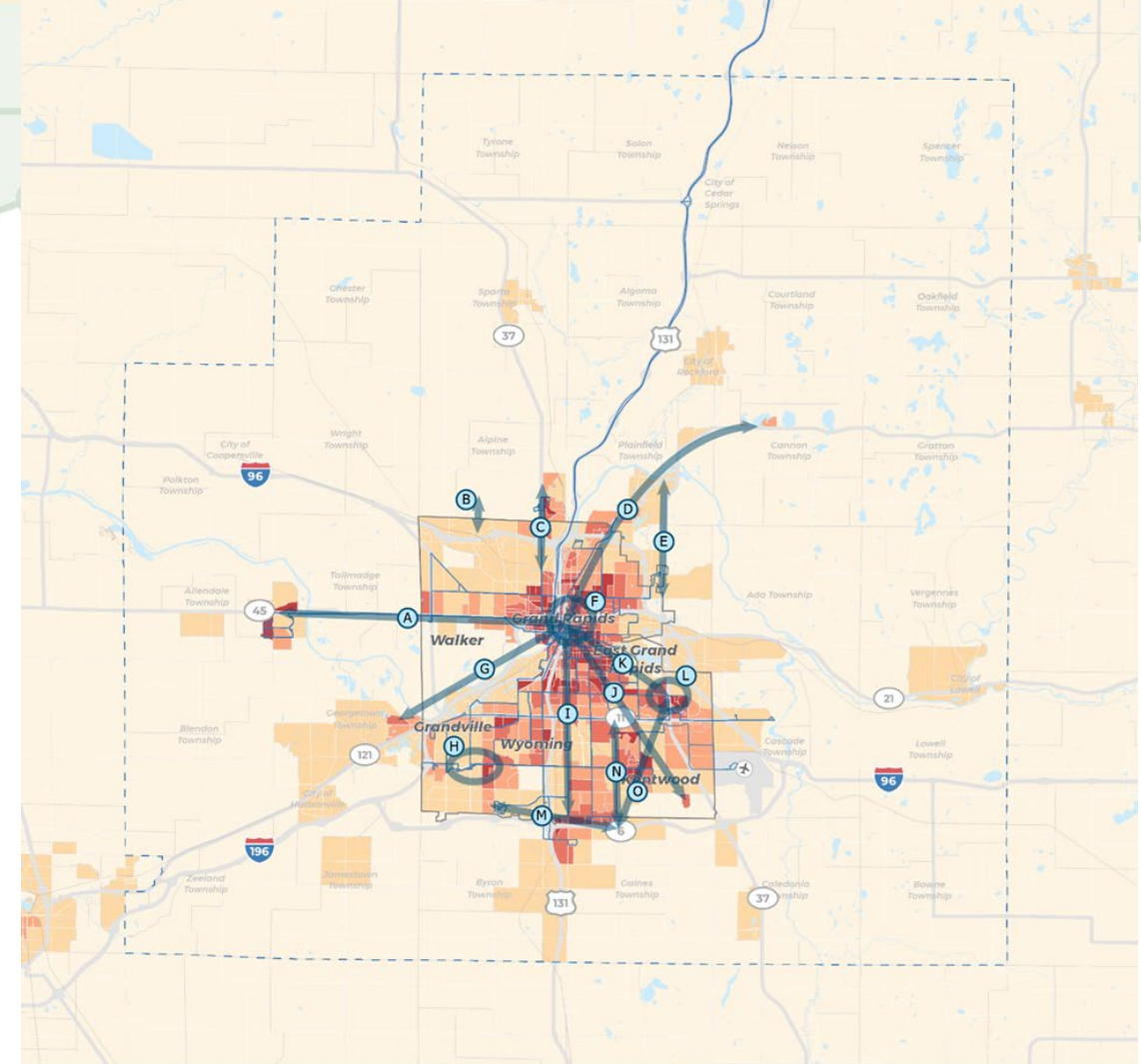
Travel Time by Mode



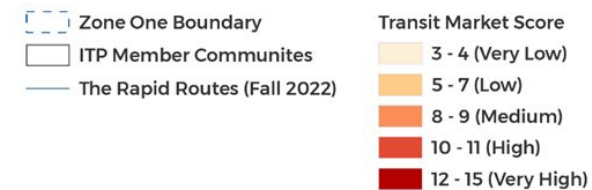
Market Assessment Needs

Market Analysis

- ✓ Service expansion opportunities based on
 - ✓ Composite score of transit-supportive markets
 - ✓ Highest volume travel patterns



Composite Transit Market Score and Top Origin-Destination Desire Lines



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West Michigan Express (WMX)

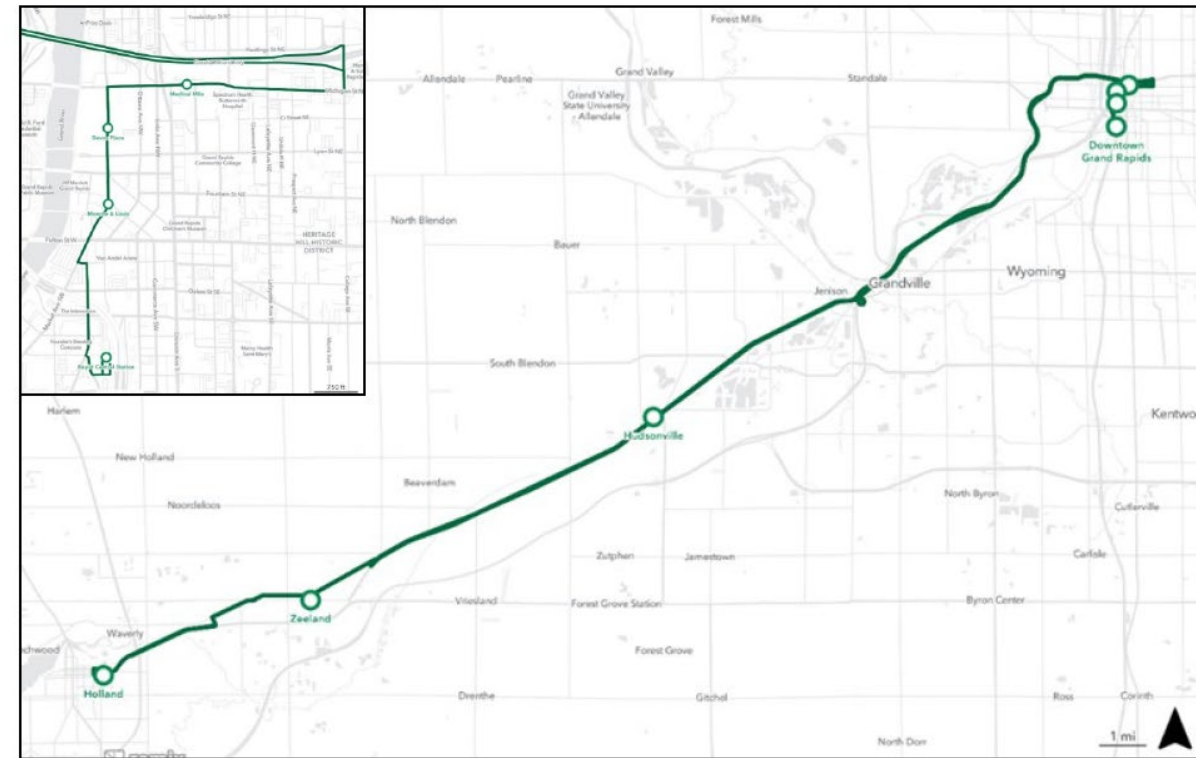
Feasibility Review *(completed)*

- Benchmarked against an express bus route with similar characteristics
- Distance and time from downtown
- Density
- Travel patterns and ridership estimates
- Recommended service model

Implementation Plan

(In coordination with WMX Task Force)

- Stops and alignment (P&R locations)
- Schedule and service span
- Cost estimates and funding



○ Potential Markets/Stations

— Proposed West Michigan Express Alignment

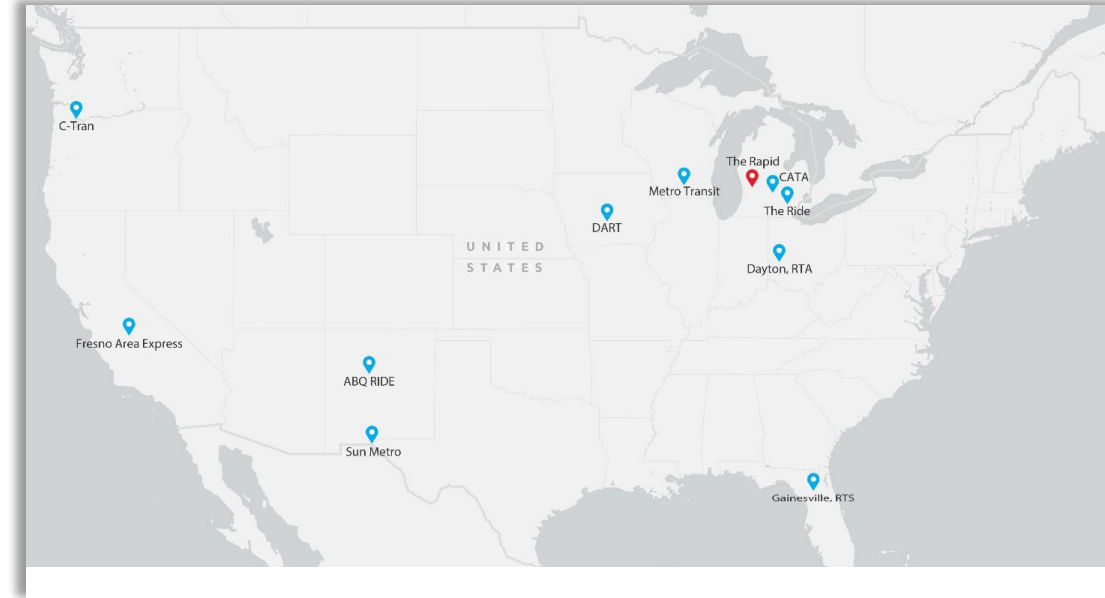
Peers Analysis - Benchmark Peers

- Relative peers based on operational and financial characteristics
- Compared by National Transit Database (NTD) data
- Service efficiency, service, cost-effectiveness and funding sources

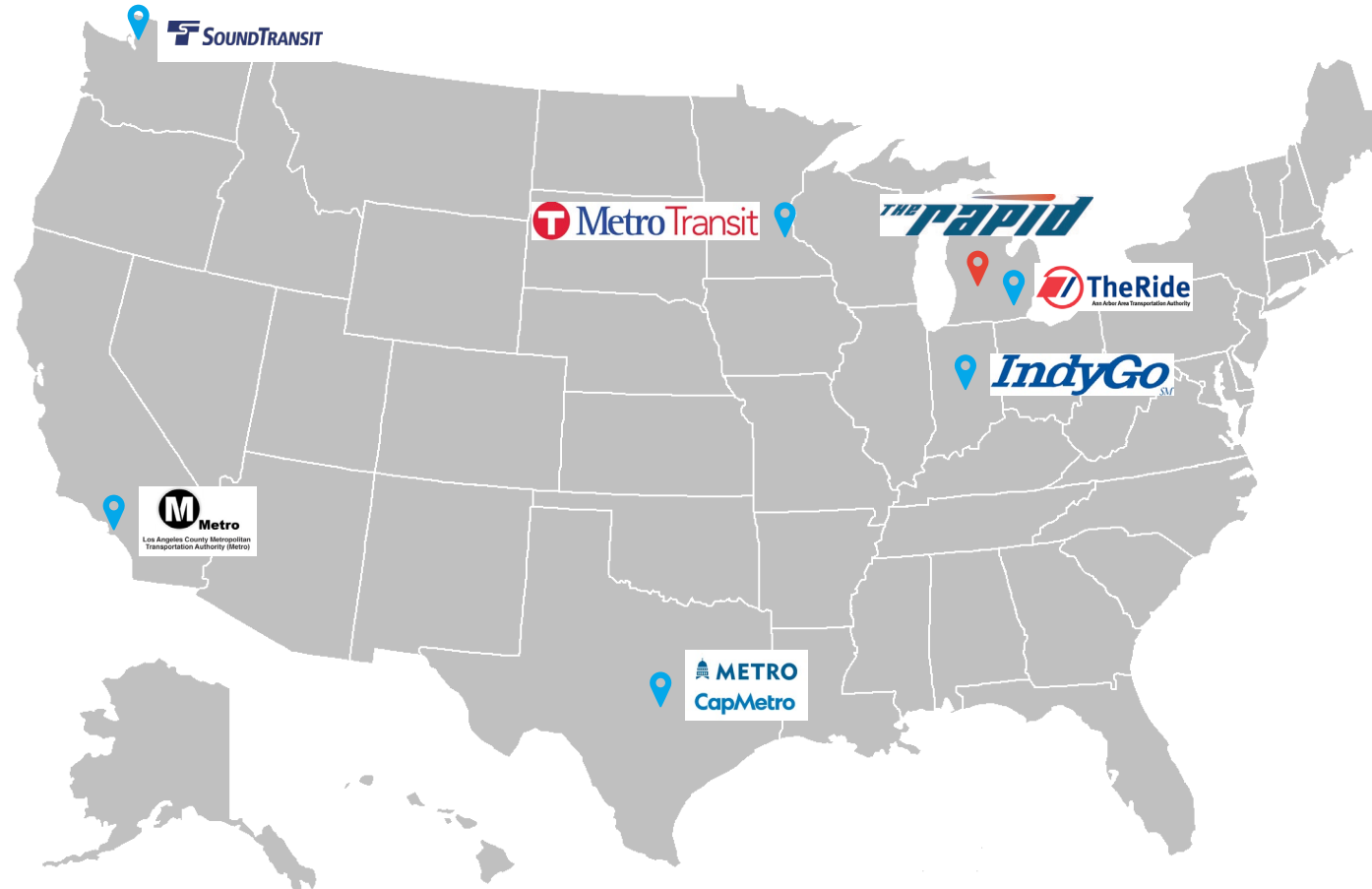
Benchmark Peers:

- C-Tran (Clark County, WA)
- Fresno Area Express
- ABQ RIDE
- Sun Metro (El Paso)

- DART (Des Moines)
- Metro Transit (Minneapolis)
- CATA
- The Ride
- Dayton, RTA
- Gainesville, RTS



Peers Analysis - Aspirational Peers



Peers

- ✓ **The Ride**
(Ann Arbor, MI)
- ✓ **IndyGo**
(Indianapolis, IN)
- ✓ **CapMetro** (Austin, TX)
- ✓ **LA Metro**
(Los Angeles, CA)
- ✓ **Metro Transit**
(Minneapolis, MN)
- ✓ **Sound Transit**
(Seattle, WA)

Aspirational Peer Analysis - Categories

Primary Topics / Categories

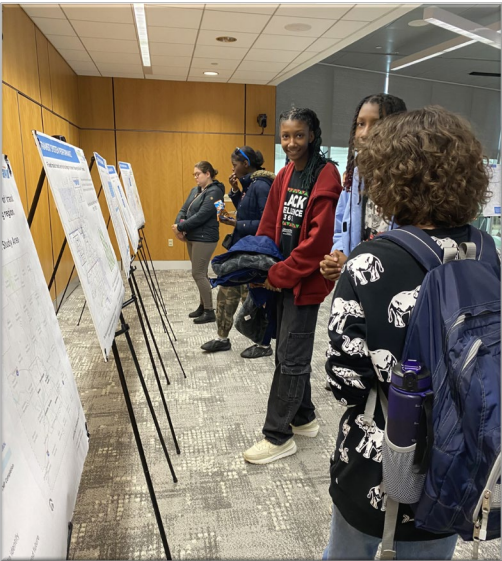
- Sustainable Funding
- Successful TOD
- Medium-Sized City Mode Split
- Innovative Marketing
- Affordable Housing
- Success with Regional Expansion

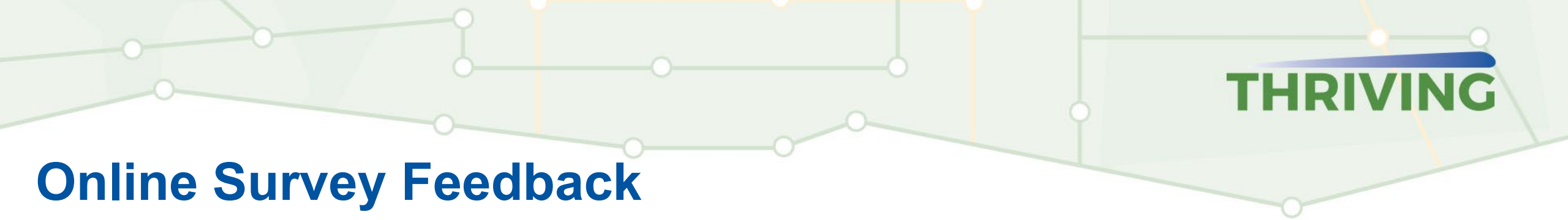
Additional Topics / Categories

- IT Improvements
- Contract Rate Methodology
- Safety Best Practices
- Measuring Customer Experience
- Data Analytics/Visualization Tools
- Public Policy/Government Affairs

***Any other topics that you'd like to
learn about from peers?***

Public Engagement Steering Committee, Open House, & Focus Groups





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Online Survey Feedback

- ✓ Attract new and returning “choice” riders
- ✓ Improved travel times and bus frequency
- ✓ Accessible and easy to navigate independently
- ✓ Safety Perceptions
- ✓ Expanded
 - ✓ Service area
 - ✓ Service frequency
 - ✓ Service hours

**over 1,100
surveys**

2023 TMP SURVEY

+1,100 surveys completed

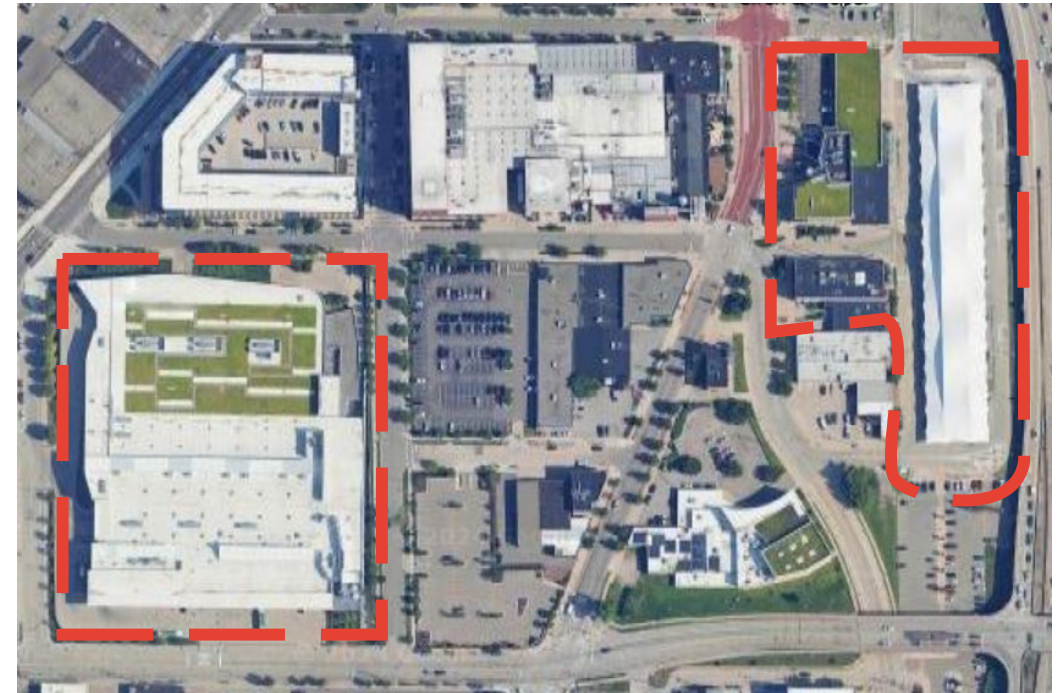
- **The top 5 public requests will require additional funding \$\$**
- 74% have access to a vehicle
- 68% usually drive
- 46% currently ride
- 29% used to ride
- 12% never used The Rapid

What do you consider to be the most important to improve the current transit system?

		HIGH	NEUTRAL	LOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE	
1	Higher service frequency (bus comes more often)	70.93% 759	25.05% 268	4.02% 43	1,070	2.33	\$
4	Longer service hours (day/night)	65.79% 704	28.04% 300	6.17% 66	1,070	2.40	\$
2	More or all routes running on weekends	70.62% 757	23.51% 252	5.88% 63	1,072	2.35	\$
1	Expanded service areas	72.79% 781	20.97% 225	6.24% 67	1,073	2.33	\$
10	Information/accessibility (easier to understand how to use the service)	39.56% 415	44.61% 468	15.82% 166	1,049	2.76	
5	Increase funding to operate additional transit services	65.07% 691	26.84% 285	8.10% 86	1,062	2.43	\$
3	Improve travel time	66.79% 708	28.40% 301	4.81% 51	1,060	2.38	\$
8	System operations efficiency	48.61% 506	44.96% 468	6.44% 67	1,041	2.58	
12	Reduce the cost to ride	25.07% 263	52.43% 550	22.50% 236	1,049	2.97	
6	More dense, walkable development near transit services	63.31% 673	28.32% 301	8.37% 89	1,063	2.45	
9	More affordable housing options near transit services	50.71% 532	34.13% 358	15.16% 159	1,049	2.64	
7	Better walking/biking access to transit services	60.91% 645	31.54% 334	7.55% 80	1,059	2.47	
13	Improved marketing/communications for services provided	33.08% 347	45.57% 478	21.35% 224	1,049	2.88	

Joint Development Potential

- Identify Potential sites
- Develop Agreements
- Develop Policies
 - Transit-Oriented Development
 - Streetscape
 - Station Amenities
- Partnerships with municipalities



**Rapid Transit Center & Bus
Operations Facility**

Amphitheater & Soccer Stadium

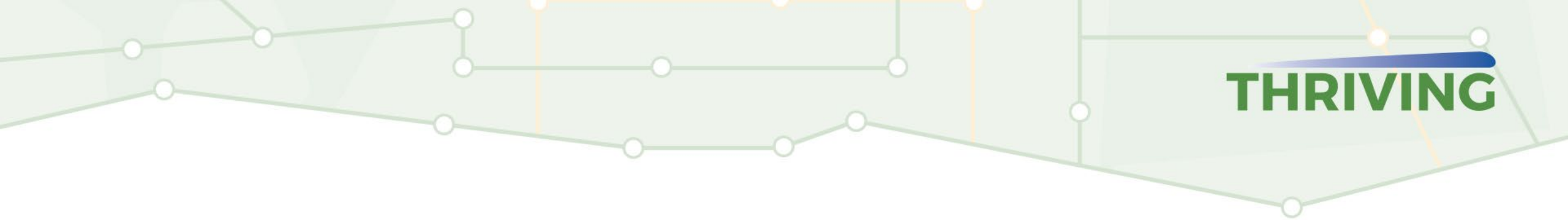
- Integrate station/stop design into a convenient 'access' experience
- What does that look like?



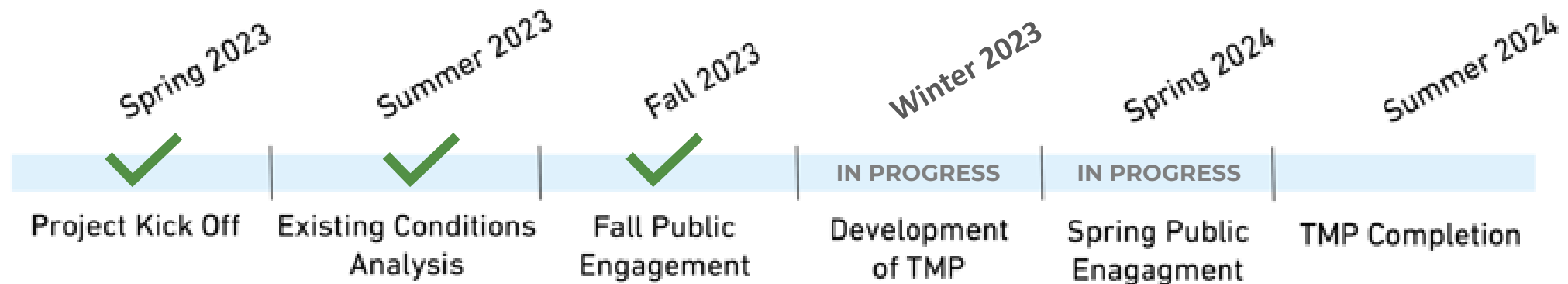
Next Steps – Examine Opportunities

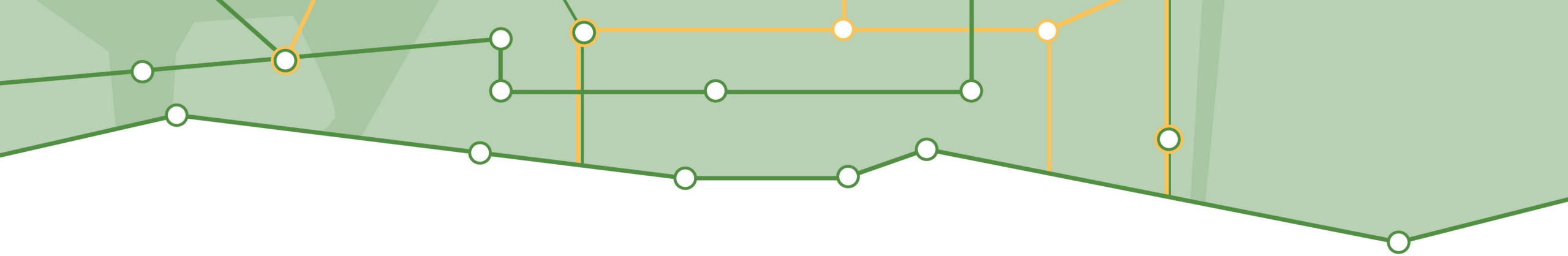


What other opportunities should be included, especially related to Downtown mobility?



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Thank You!

transitthriving.org



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Director of Planning

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A framework for the
future of connectivity.