



Southeast Minnesota Travel Study

Project Overview

Updated January 2016

Overview of Existing Conditions

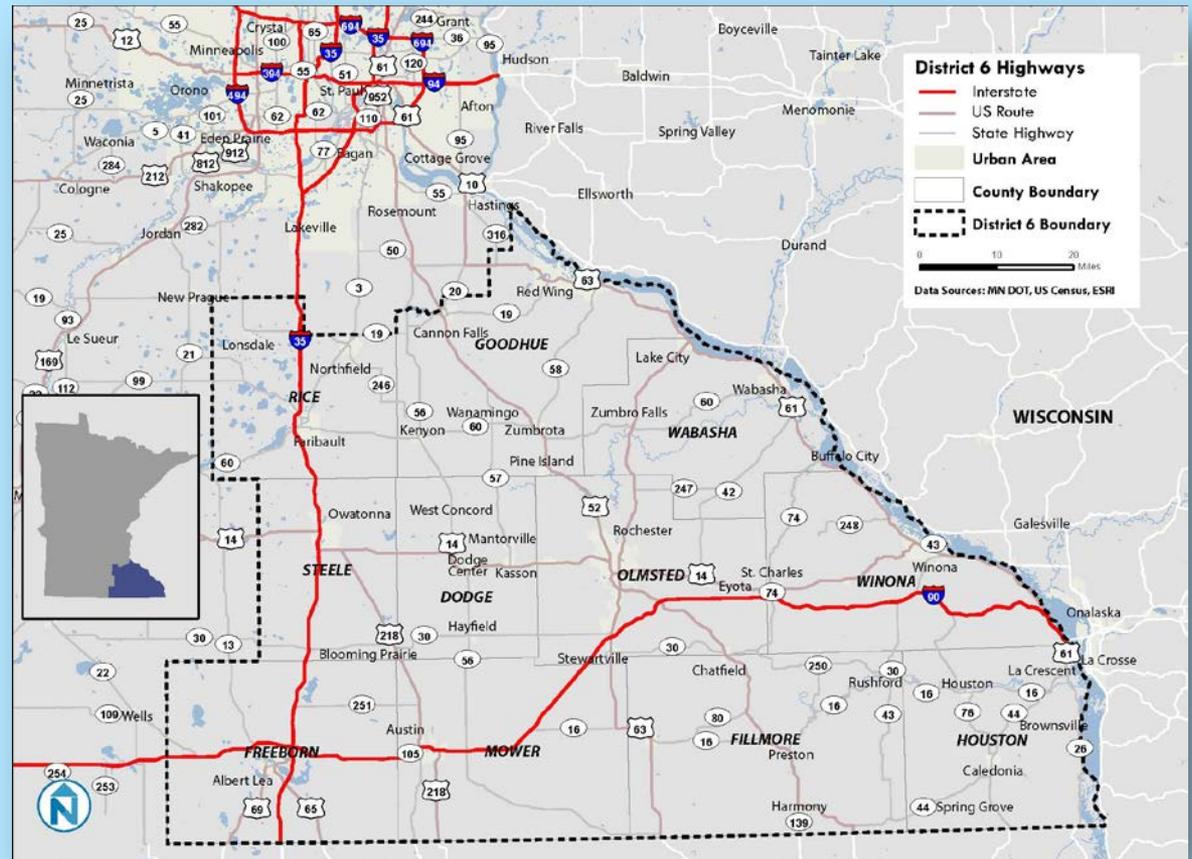
- Market Assessment
- Travel Behavior Analysis
- Report on Public Input: Perceptions and Preferences
- Preliminary Opportunities
- Preliminary Ridership Estimates

Overview

The purpose of this study is to determine what types of new services might be feasible and to assess alternatives and recommendations for implementing new services.

Eleven counties:

- Dodge
- Houston
- Steele
- Fillmore
- Mower
- Wabasha
- Freeborn
- Olmsted
- Winona
- Goodhue
- Rice



Scope of Work

Task	Deliverables
1. Project Management and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
2. Public Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Groups and Public Meetings
3. Existing Conditions: Commuter and Non-Commuter Demographics, Attitudes, And Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Assessment • Travel Behavior Analysis • Public Input: Perceptions and Preferences
4. Create Inventory of Existing Facilities And Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Regional Transportation Service Opportunities
5. Southeast Minnesota Network Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeling and evaluation • Draft recommendations
6. Plan Preparation and Editing Final Southeast Minnesota Regional Travel Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and Final Reports • Public Outreach

Major Findings

- Market Assessment
- Travel Behavior Analysis
- Public Input: Perceptions and Preferences
- Preliminary Regional Transportation Service Opportunities

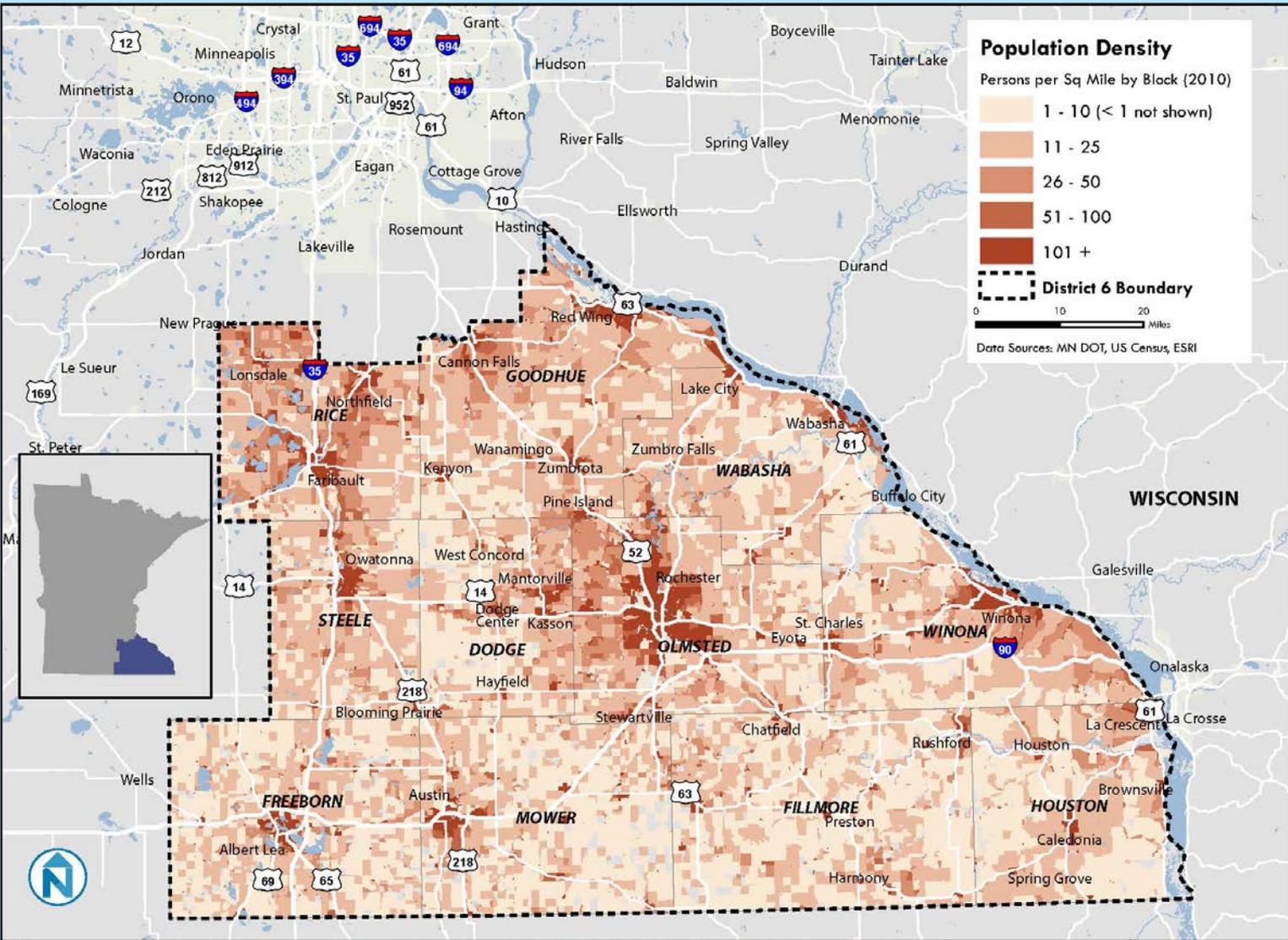
Market Assessment

- Previous Studies and Plans
- Demographic and Employment Characteristics
- Existing Transportation Services and Infrastructure



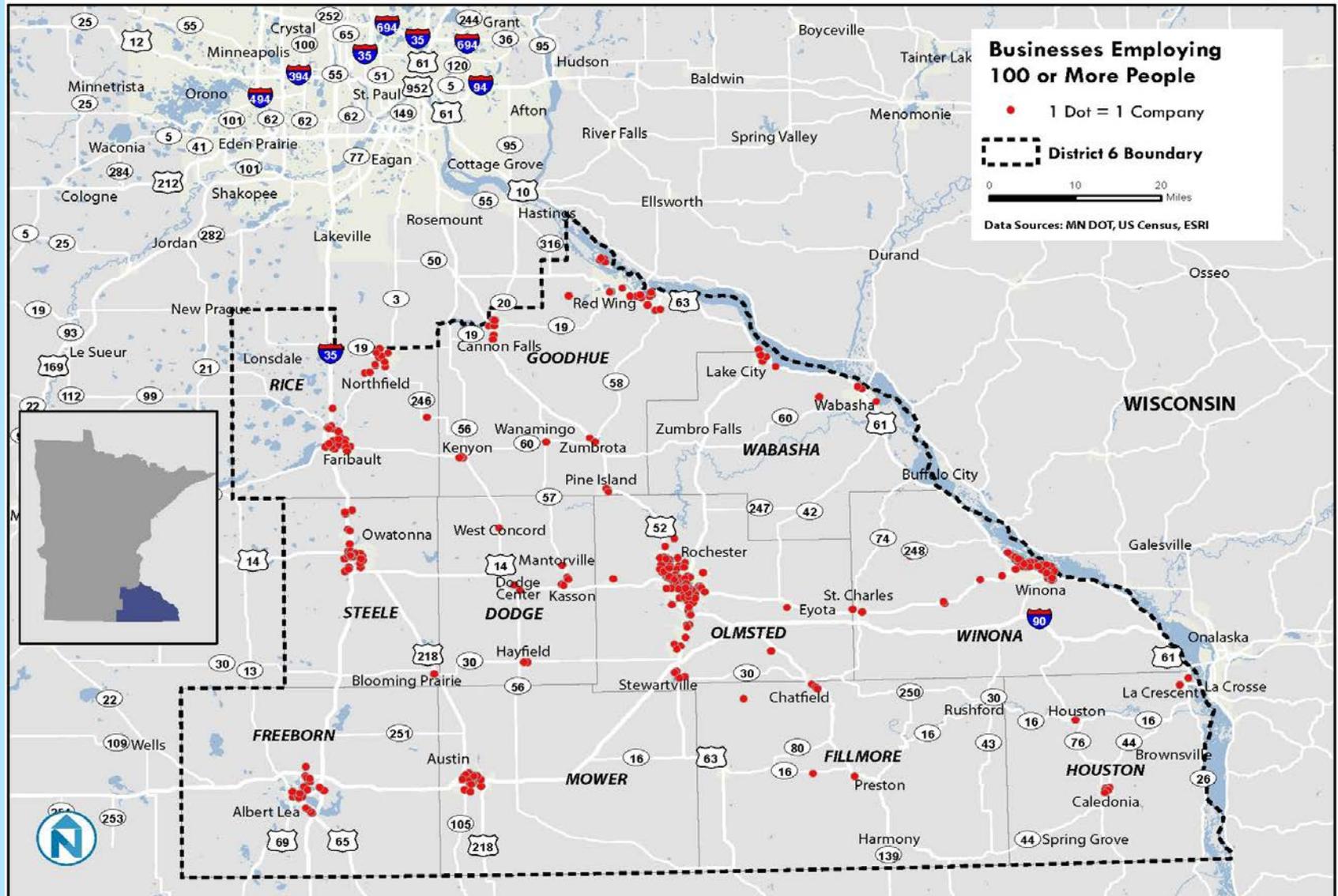
Market Assessment | Population and Growth

Population Density



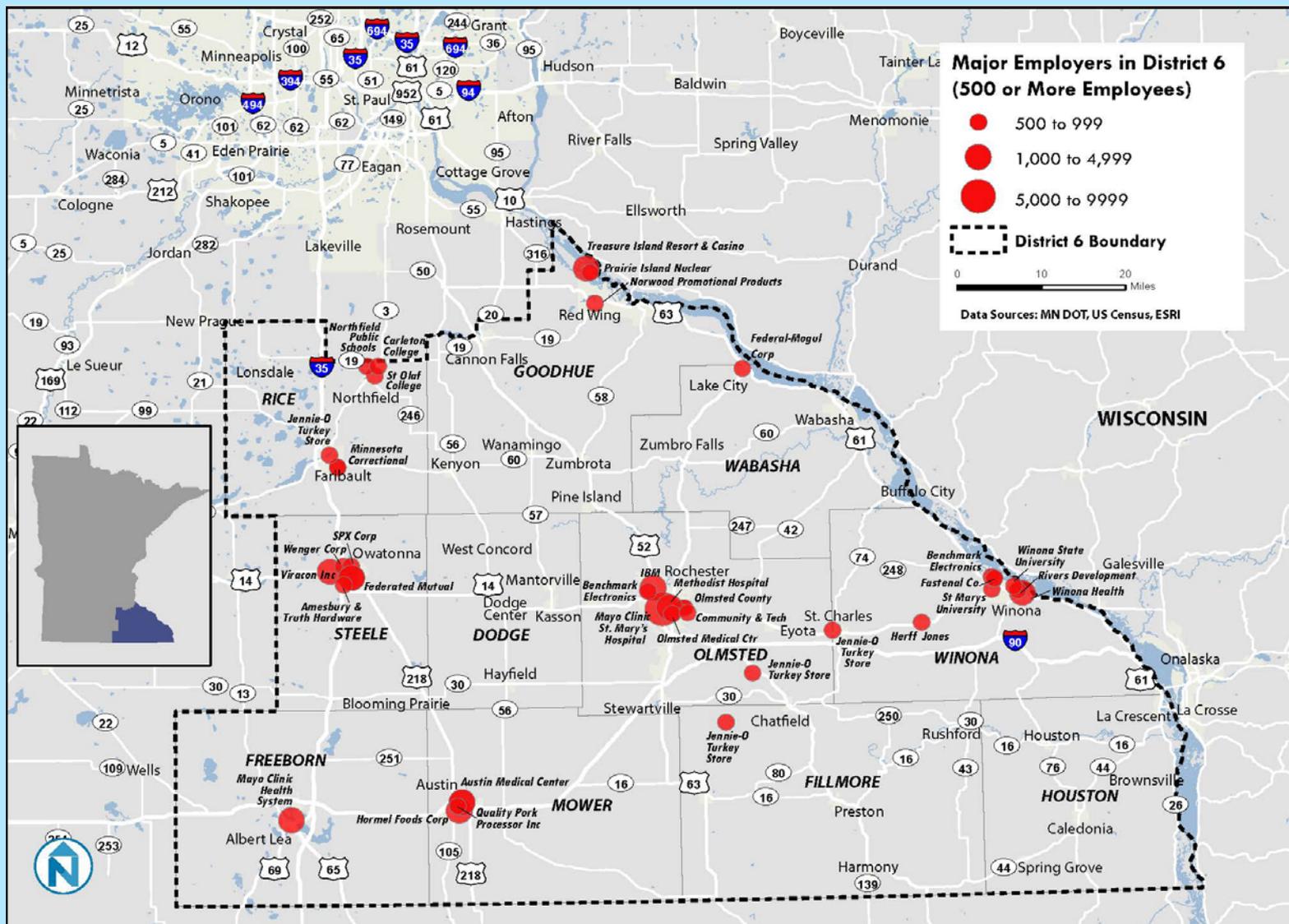
Market Assessment | Demographics & Employment

Businesses Employing 100 or More People



Market Assessment | Demographics & Employment

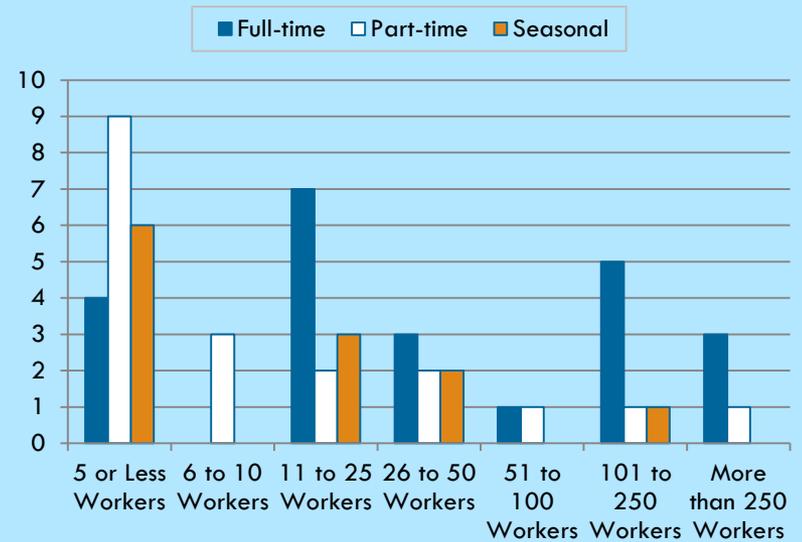
Businesses Employing 500 or More People



Market Assessment | Employer Input

- **Small sample from survey, but reflective of the range of employer types**
- **90% of the surveyed employers provide free parking; the others mostly provide no parking**
- **Surveyed employers generally do not provide information about transportation options, but many said they would be willing to if it were available.**

Number of Workers at Primary Location



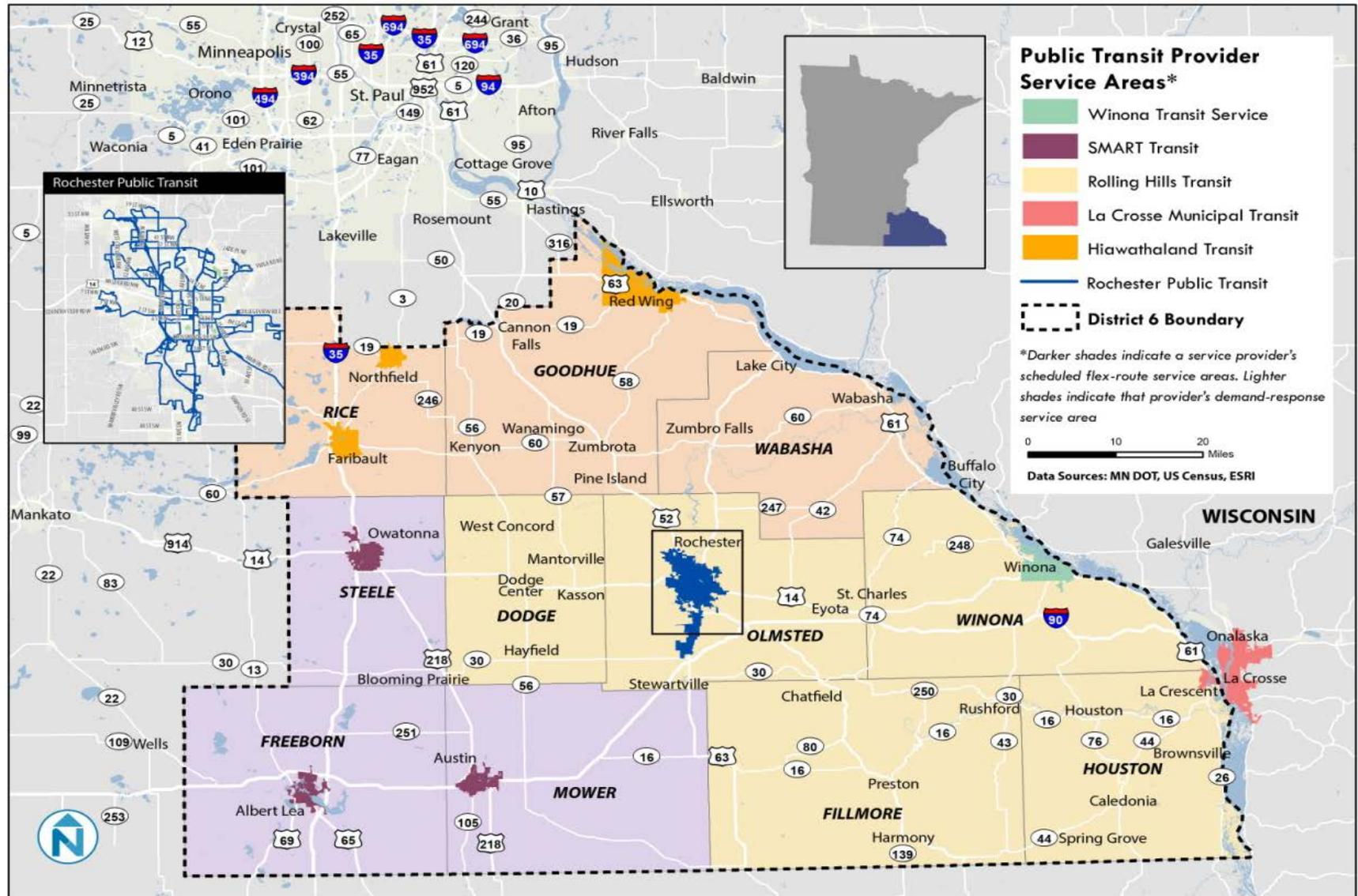
Market Assessment | Employer Input

- **Largest number of job shifts begin in 7:00 AM hour and end in 3:00 PM hour**
- **Most employers said they would be adding employees in the future**
- **Other issues:**
 - **Challenging to get employees to rural worksites**
 - **Difficult to organize car and vanpools due to the geographical spread of their workers' home locations.**
 - **Lack of alternative transportation options in rural areas makes it hard to retain employees due to the additional cost and time burden of commuting to work.**

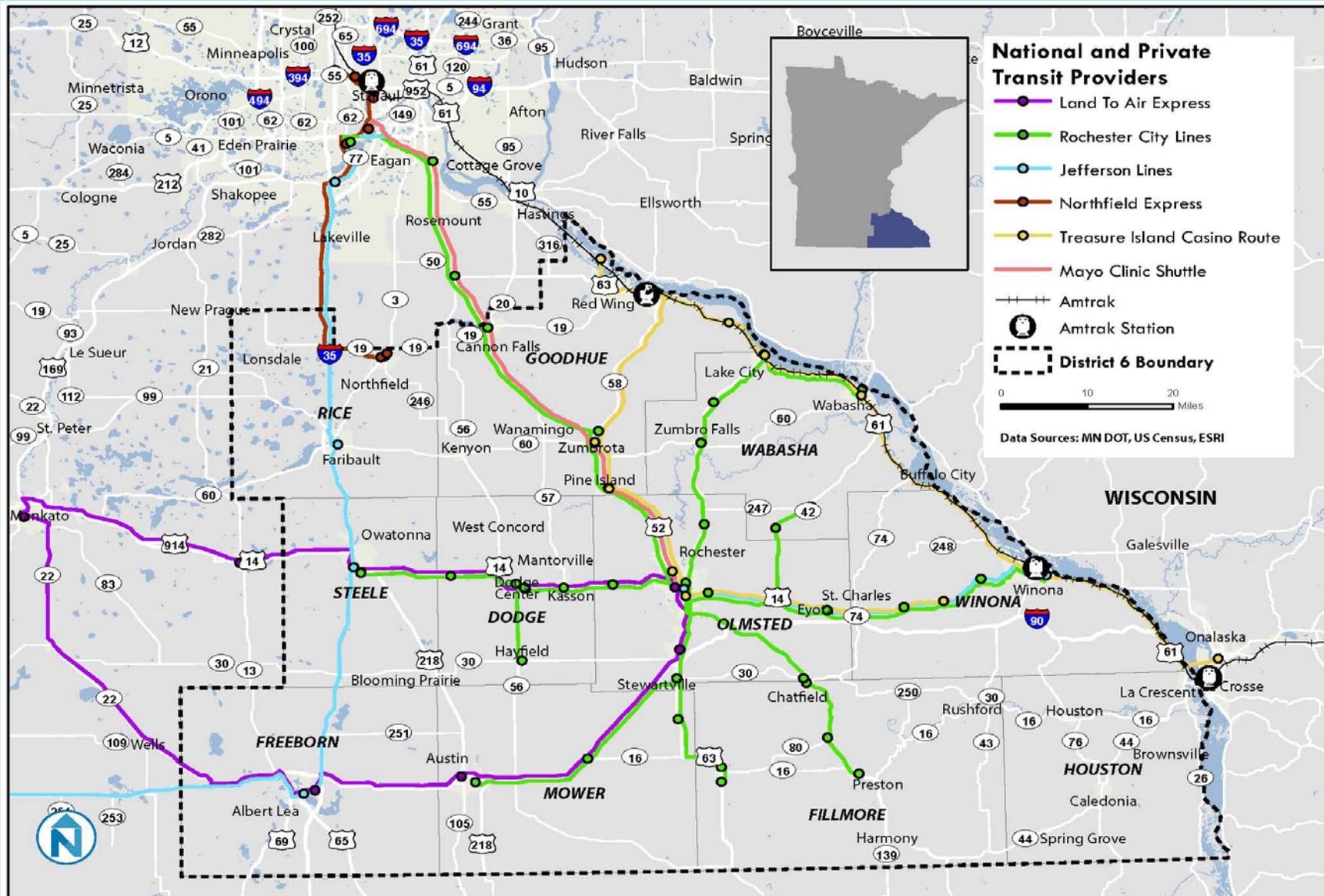
Market Assessment | Transit & Transport Infrastructure

System	MnDOT Peer Group	Service Area	Population Served
La Crescent Apple Express (La Crosse MTU)	Urban Fixed-Route	La Crescent, MN and La Crosse, WI	56,000+
Rochester Public Transit	Urban Fixed-Route	City of Rochester	106,000+
Rolling Hills Transit (SEMCAC)	Multi-County	Dodge, Fillmore, Houston, Olmsted, and Winona Counties	113,000+
SMART	Multi-County	Freeborn, Mower, and Steele Counties	93,000+
Three Rivers Hiawathaland Transit	Multi-County	Rice, Goodhue and Wabasha Counties	68,000+
Winona Transit Service	Small Urban	City of Winona	27,000+

Market Assessment | Transit & Transport Infrastructure

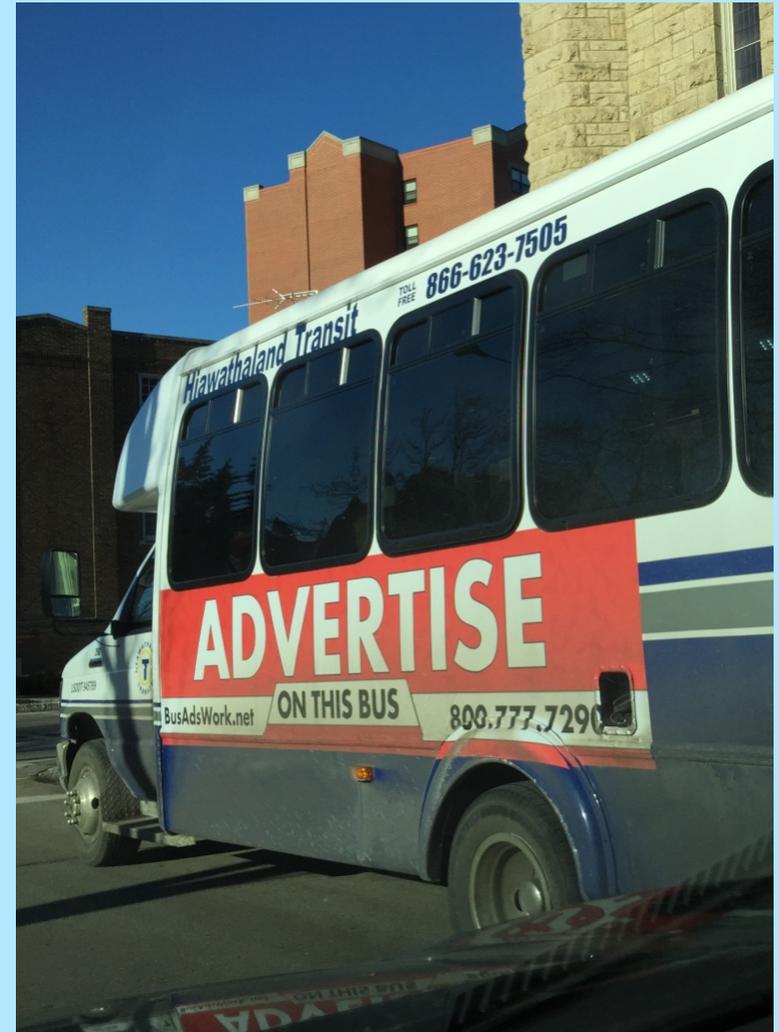


Market Assessment | Transit & Transport Infrastructure



Market Assessment | Conclusions

- Large portions of the study area are very rural with sparsely distributed populations
- Isolation of both jobsites and workforce will prove challenging in offering alternative transportation choice for some commuters



Market Assessment | Conclusions

- Each transit system in SE Minnesota has its own fare mechanism, service span, and information resources
 - Must consider ways to develop more consistent policies and approaches to providing service and informing the public
- Markets for new regional transportation service are diverse, though commuters are most obvious
 - Need to identify core markets in order to prioritize critical corridors to serve

Rushford Hwy 43 PROJECT Road Construction Ahead

TAKE THE BUS AVOID THE DETOUR

The Rushford bus can take you where you need to go

CONVENIENT CURB TO CURB SERVICE FROM YOUR HOME
IN RUSHFORD OR RUSHFORD VILLAGE
10 A.M. - 2 P.M.
SENIORS RIDE FREE
50¢ PER RIDE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC, INCLUDING CHILDREN

Rolling Hills Transit

Whether you need to go grocery shopping, have your hair done, stop at the bank, get your child safely to the swimming pool, go to the dentist, work out, or simply meet a friend for lunch, the Rolling Hills Transit bus can take you there and back home.

Senior diners can pick up free tokens at Senior Dining or just board the bus. Riders with exact change can pay cash or purchase tokens when they board. Tokens can also be purchased at Pam's Corner, Rushford IGA, and Kwik Trip.

In addition to the curb to curb service, the bus will stop at Creek Side Park hourly from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. as a "park and ride" service for those who live outside of Rushford and want to avoid the construction area while taking care of business in town.

Senior diners: Register for rides at Senior Dining or by calling Senior Dining at **507-864-2786**.

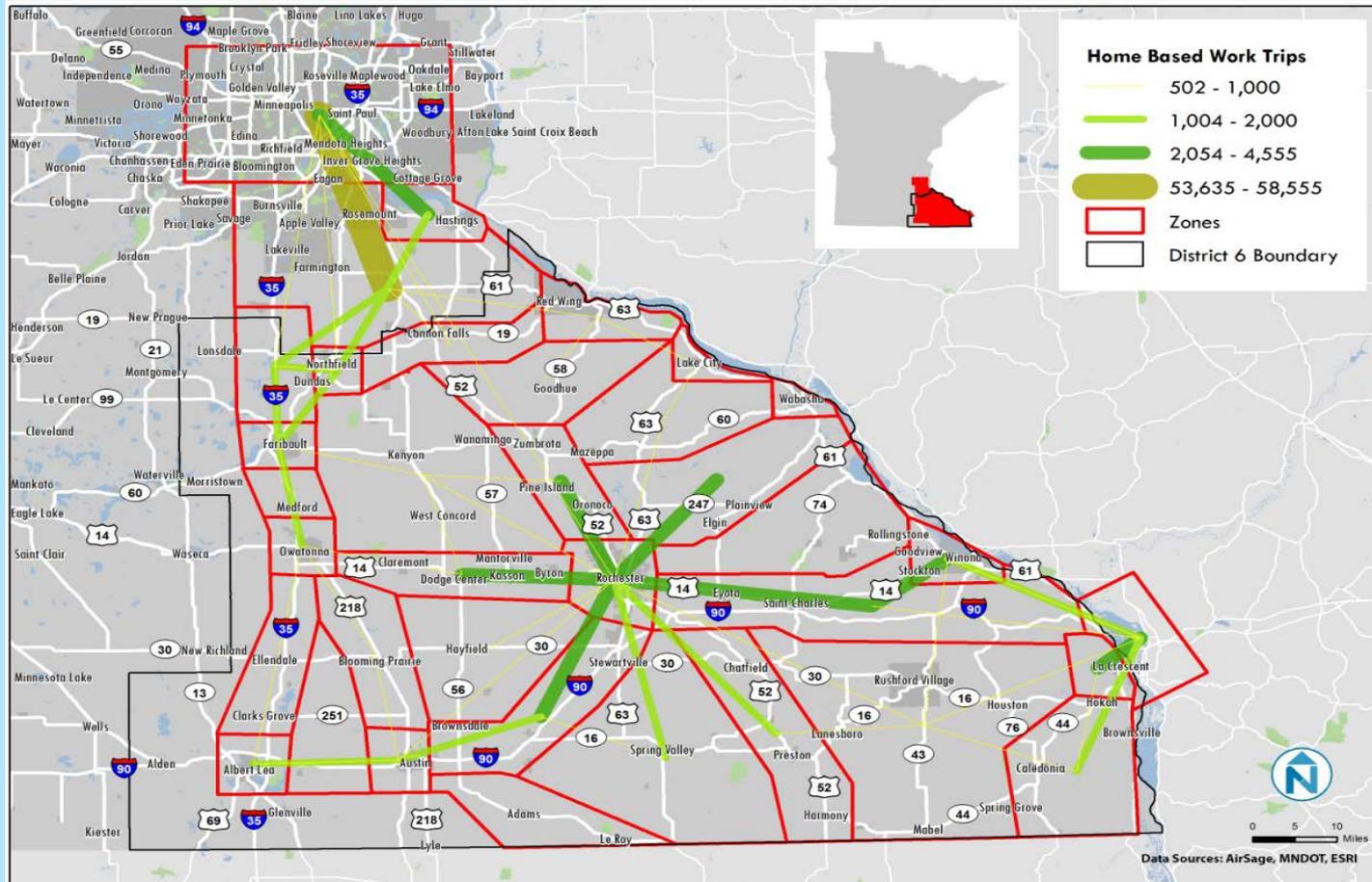
All other riders should call **800-528-7622** to schedule a ride or for information.

This two-month trial program is made possible by: Rushford IGA, Farmers Co-op Elevator, Kwik Trip, Rushford Dental, Dar Auctions & Realty, Norman's Electric, Pam's Corner, State Farm, New Beginnings, Engelson Tax Office, Rushford Chiropractic, Mill Street Mall Fitness, Stumpy's Restaurant & Bar, and Rushford Peterson Valley Farmers Market. The program is a joint project between the Highway 43 EDA and Chamber Steering Committee and Semcac's Rolling Hills Transit.

Travel Behavior Analysis

Home-Based Work Trips

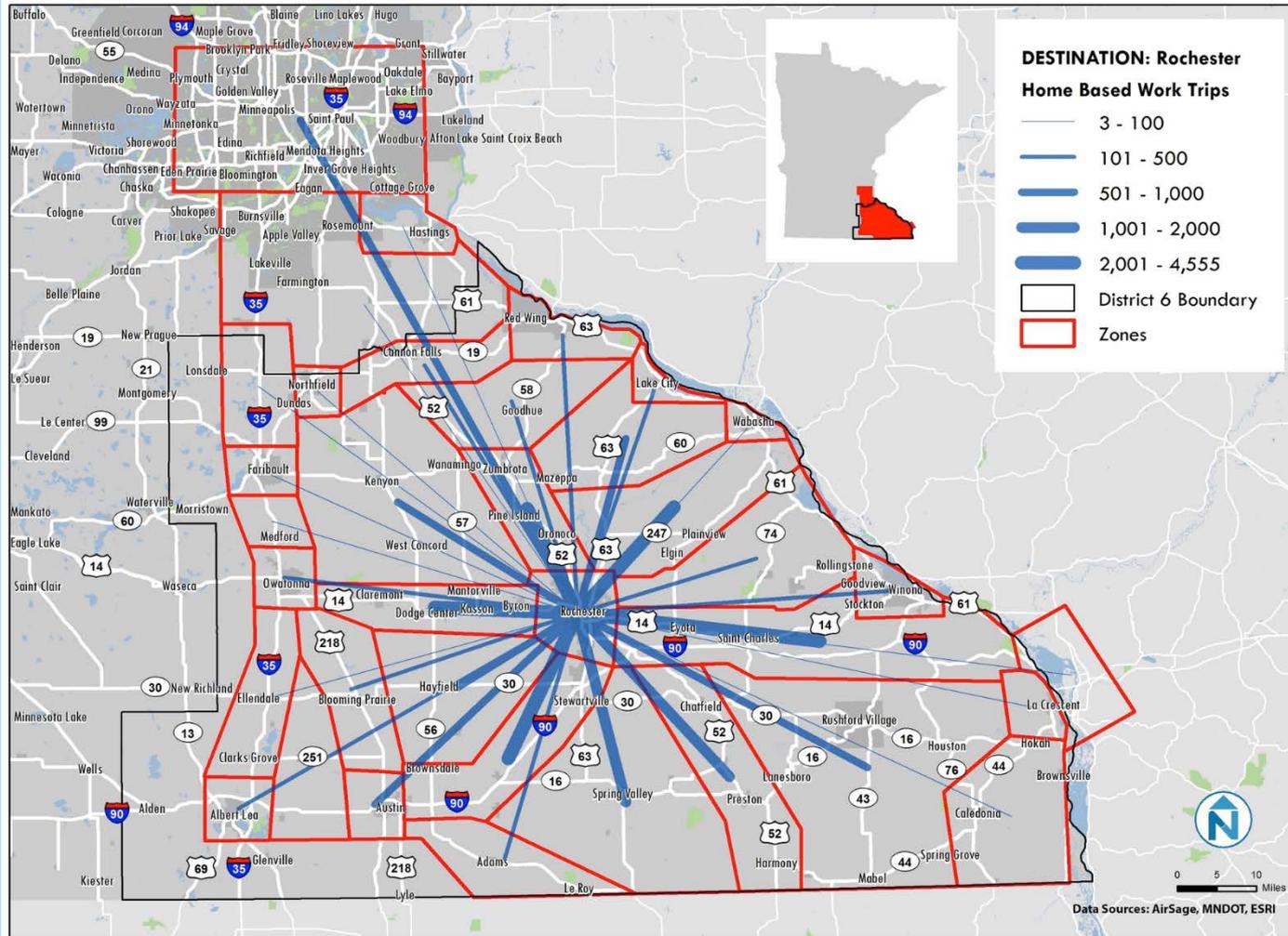
Analyzed and mapped US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) and mobile phone signal data



Travel Behavior Analysis

Home-Based Work Trips

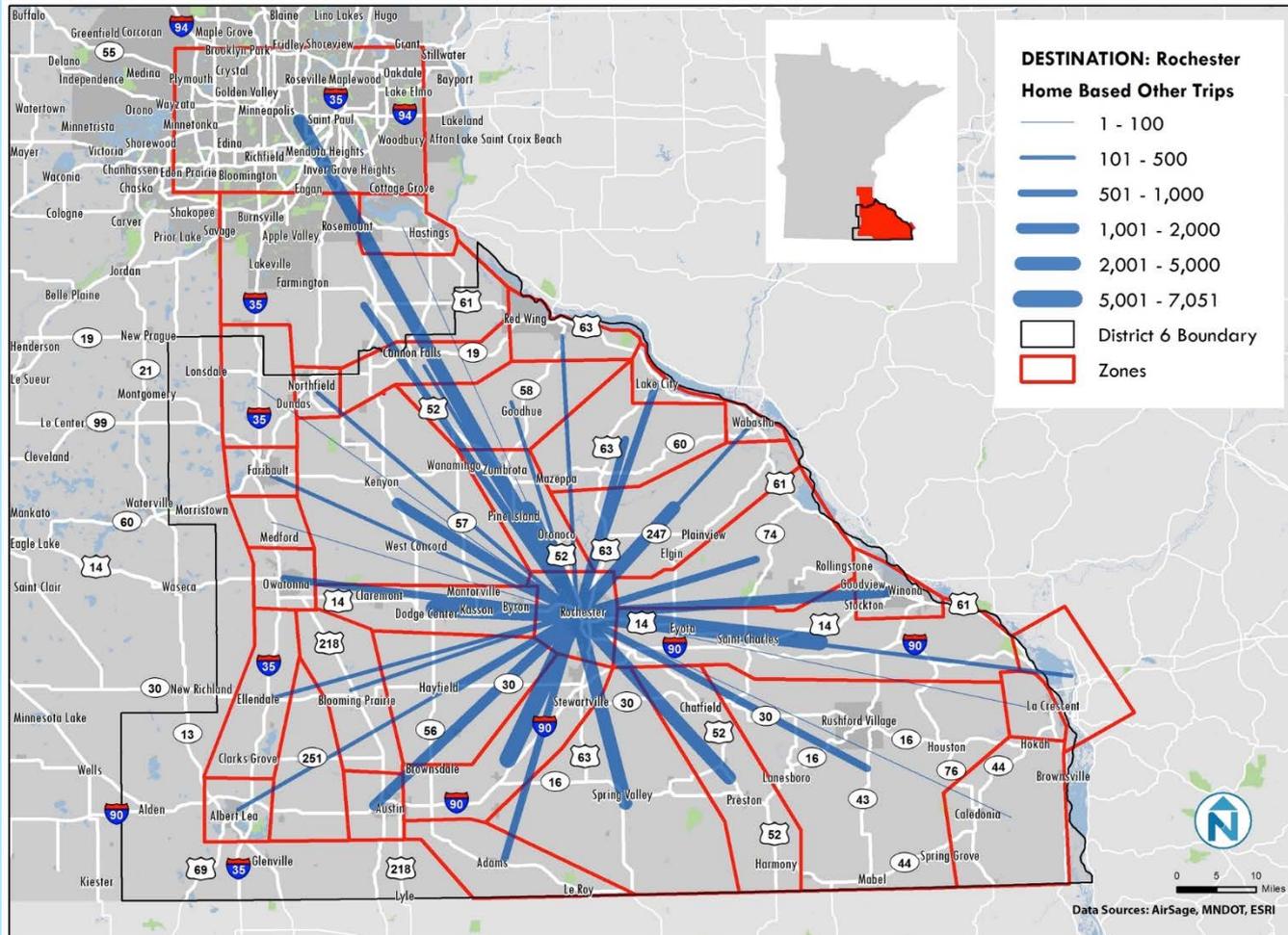
Rochester as Destination



Travel Behavior Analysis

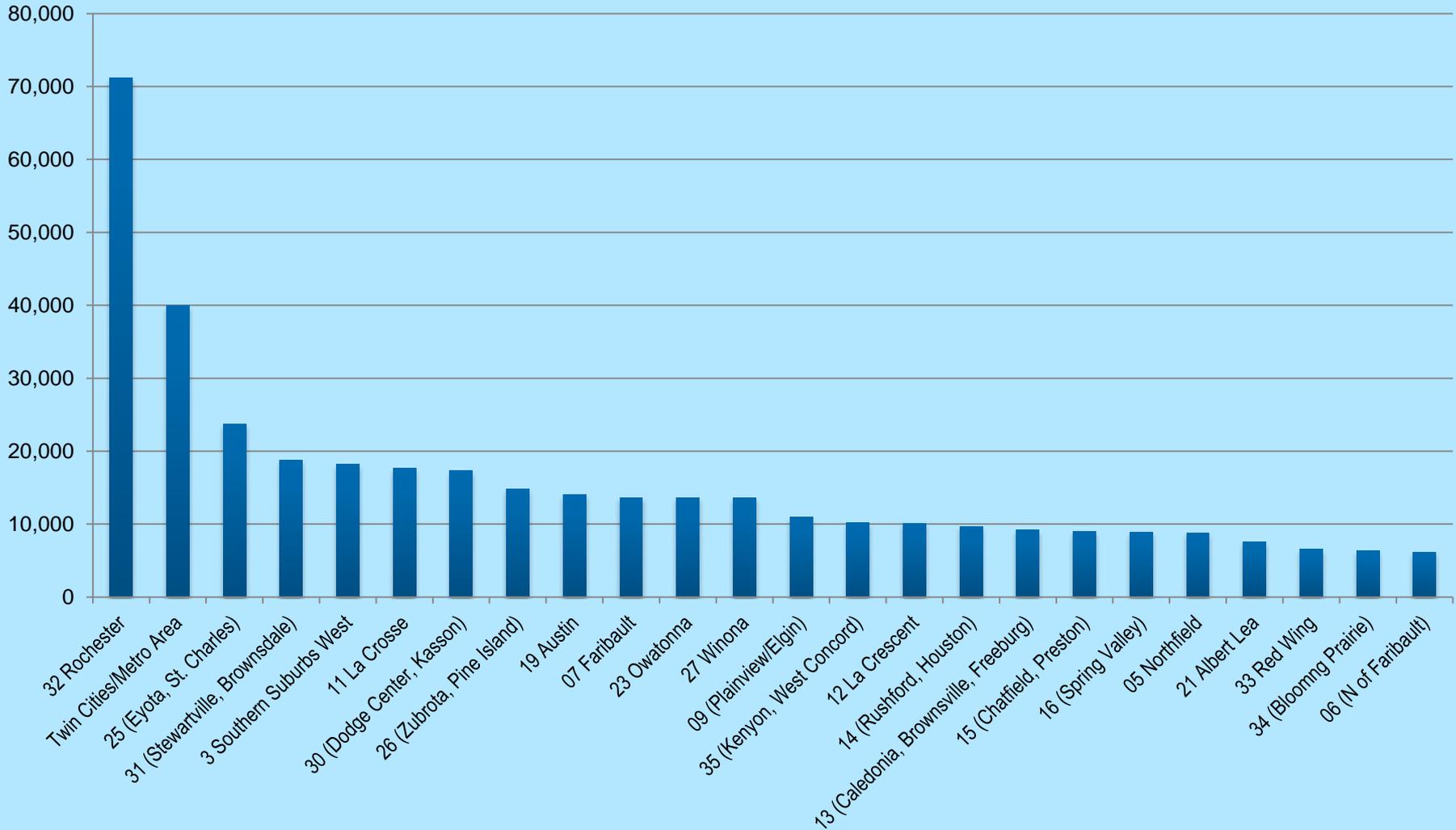
Home-Based Other Trips

Rochester as Destination



Travel Behavior Analysis

Primary Destination Zones (HBW and Other Trips)



Travel Behavior Analysis

Primary Trip Pairs (HBW and Other Trips)

	Origin	Destination	Avg. Daily Total Volume (Home-Based Trips)
1	25 (Eyota, St. Charles)	Rochester	11,209
2	Rochester	25 (Eyota, St. Charles)	10,704
3	30 (Dodge Center, Kasson)	Rochester	9,969
4	31 (Stewartville, Brownsdale)	Rochester	9,932
5	Rochester	30 (Dodge Center, Kasson)	9,741
6	Rochester	31 (Stewartville, Brownsdale)	9,547
7	26 (Zumbrota, Pine Island)	Rochester	9,214
8	Rochester	26 (Zumbrota, Pine Island)	8,663
9	La Crescent	La Crosse	7,039
10	La Crosse	La Crescent	6,977
11	06 (N of Faribault)	Twin Cities and Southern Suburbs	6,734
12	Twin Cities and Southern Suburbs	06 (N of Faribault)	6,616
13	Northfield	Twin Cities and Southern Suburbs	6,433
14	25 (Eyota, St. Charles)	Winona	5,660
15	09 (Plainview/Elgin)	Rochester	5,488
16	Winona	25 (Eyota, St. Charles)	5,478
17	Rochester	09 (Plainview/Elgin)	5,185
18	13 (Caledonia, Brownsville, Freeburg)	La Crosse	4,463
19	Rochester	Twin Cities and Southern Suburbs	4,423
20	Red Wing	Twin Cities and Southern Suburbs	4,351
21	La Crosse	13 (Caledonia, Brownsville, Freeburg)	4,238
22	15 (Chatfield, Preston)	Rochester	3,853
23	16 (Spring Valley)	Rochester	3,841
24	Rochester	15 (Chatfield, Preston)	3,636
25	Owatonna	Faribault	3,536
26	Faribault	Owatonna	3,520
27	Rochester	16 (Spring Valley)	3,466
28	Faribault	Northfield	3,017

Travel Behavior Analysis | Conclusions

- **Key links for home-based trips:**
 - Cities in the northern part of the study area with destinations in the Twin Cities
 - Key cities and towns with Rochester
- **Of daily home-based trips, 2/3 are not for work**
- **Highest travel volumes at AM Peak, followed by Midday and PM peak**
- **Significant levels of internal commuting within each analysis zone**
- **Approximately 50% of commuters travel to another county for work**

Public Input: Perceptions and Preferences



Household Travel Survey

- 1,500+ random households
- Weighted to reflect population differences between counties



On-Board Survey

- Administered to users of Hiawathaland Transit, La Crosse MTU (La Crescent route only), Rolling Hills Transit, SMART, and Winona Transit Service



Focus Groups

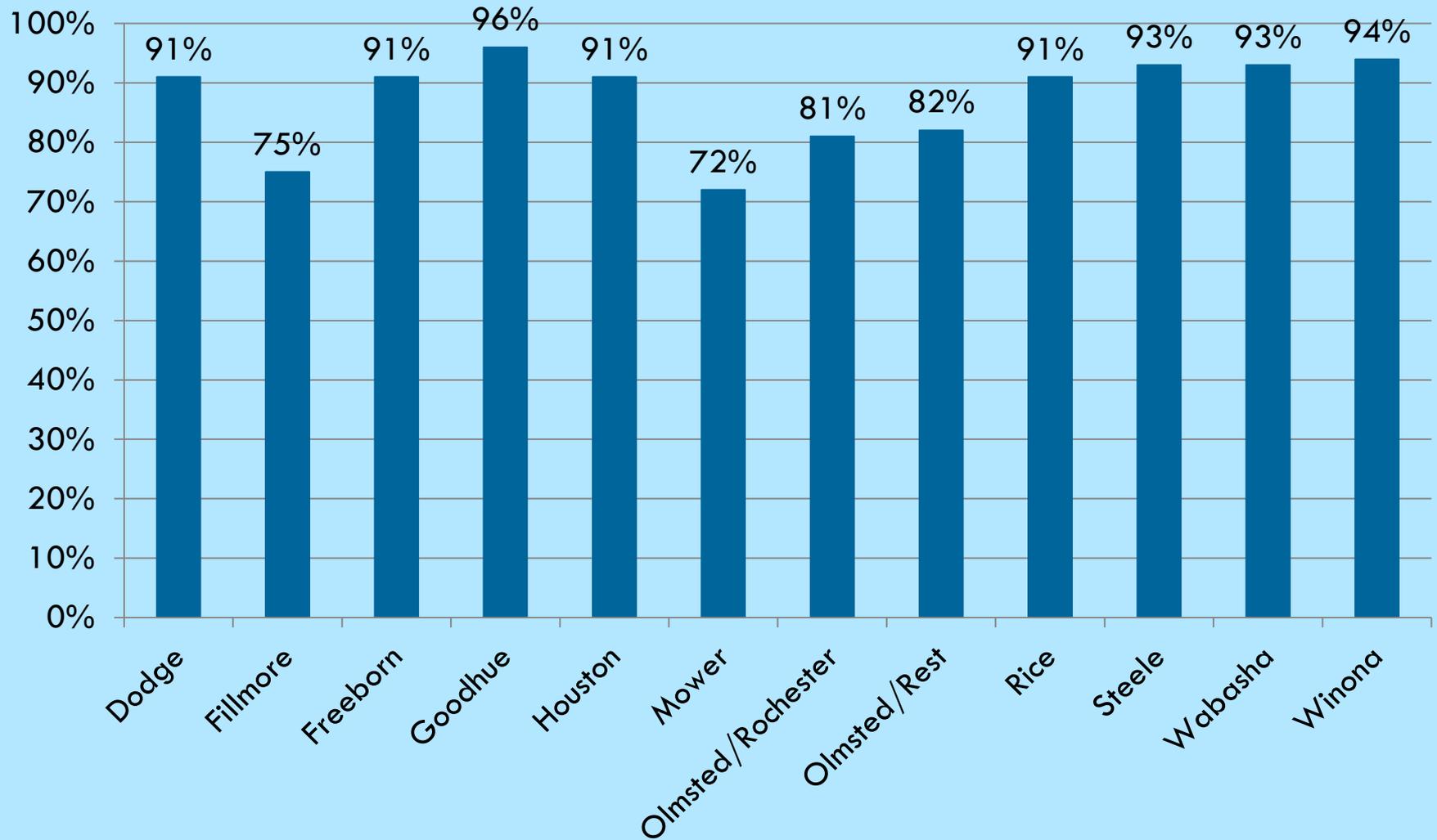
- Austin, Faribault, Red Wing, and Winona
- Riders and non-riders



Public Input | Household Survey



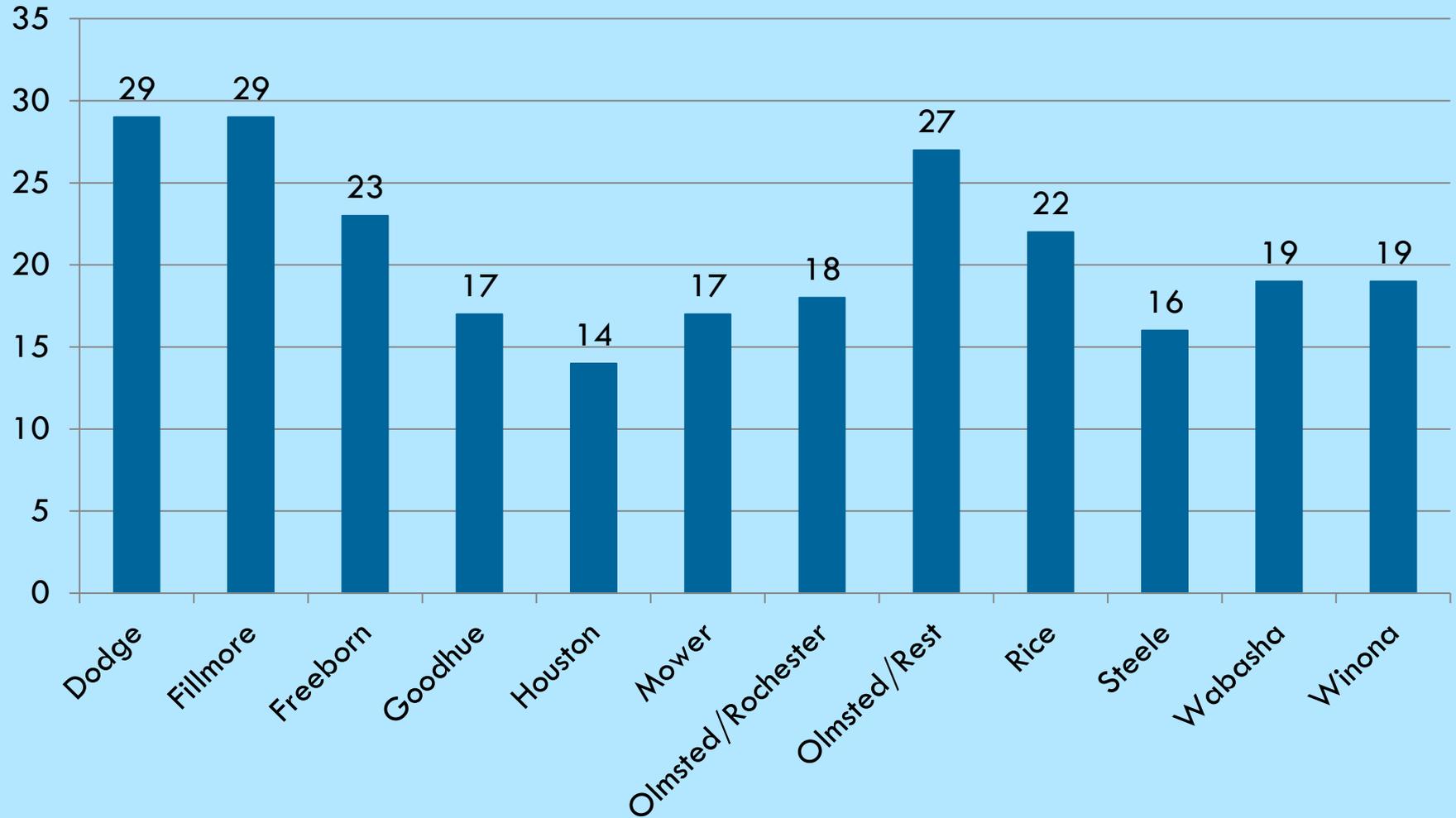
Percentage of “Drive-Along Commuters” by County



Public Input | Household Survey



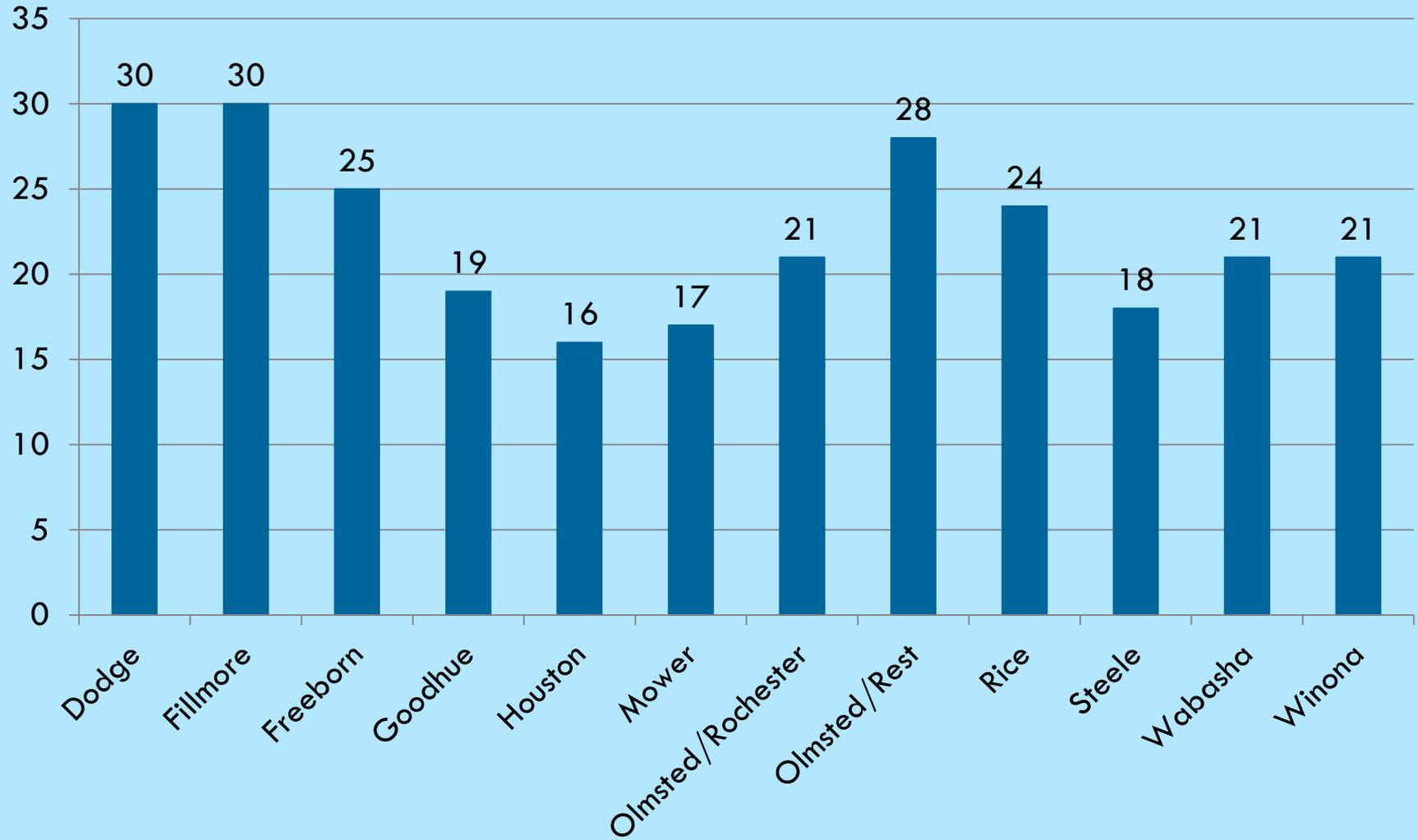
Average AM Commute Travel Time by County - Minutes



Public Input | Household Survey



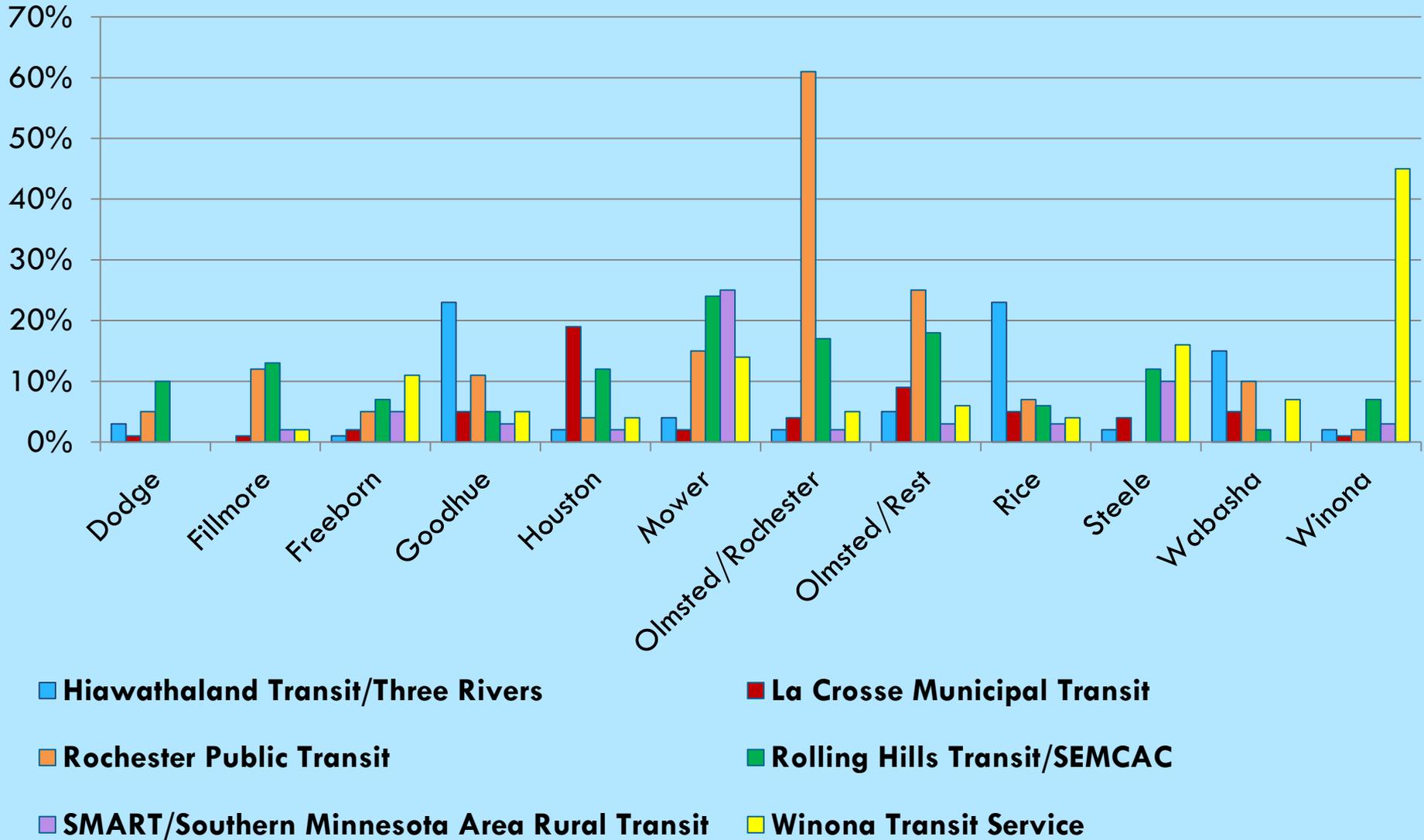
Average PM Commute Travel Time by County - Minutes



Public Input | Household Survey



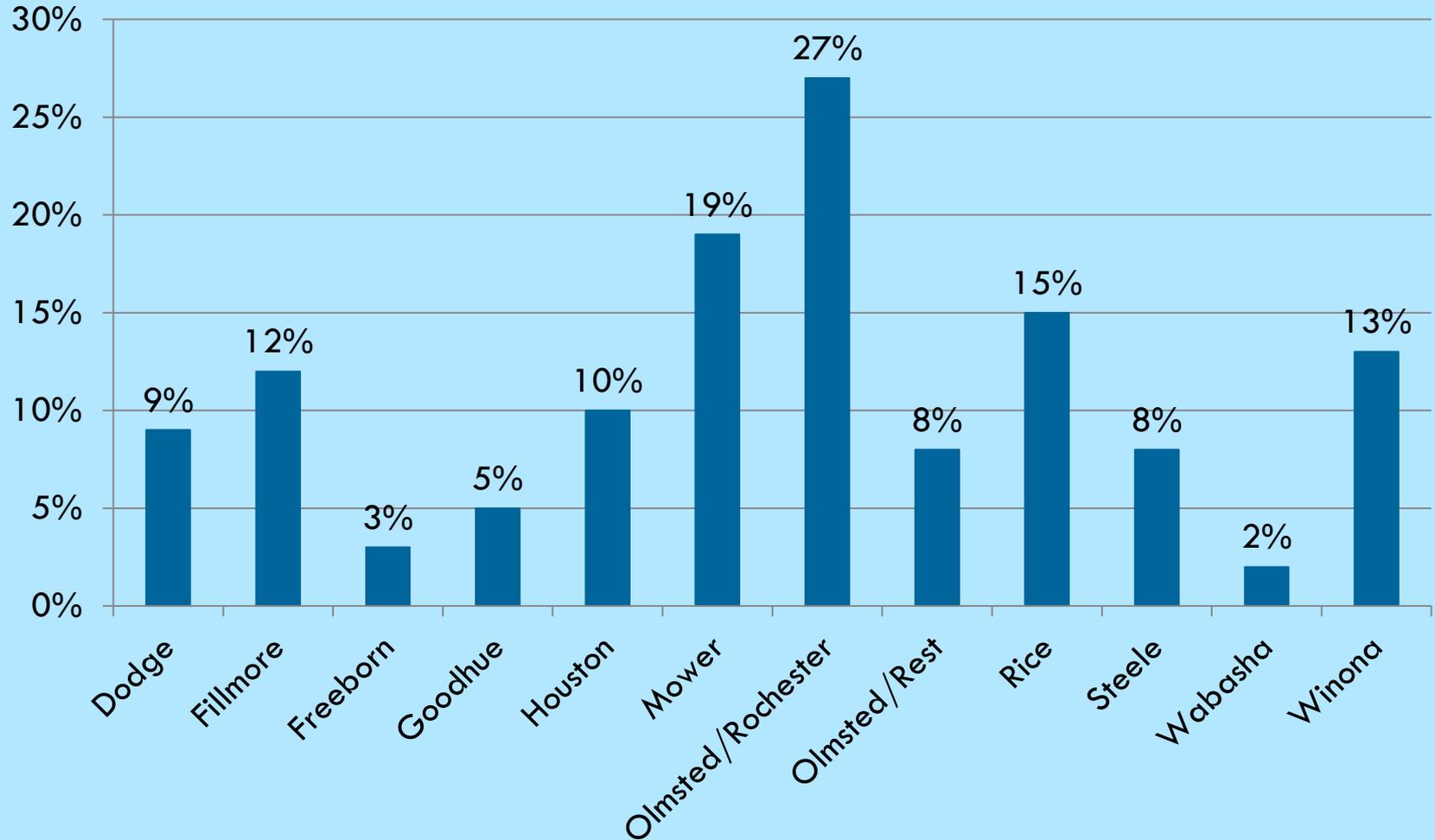
Awareness of Transit Systems in Study Area (by County)



Public Input | Household Survey



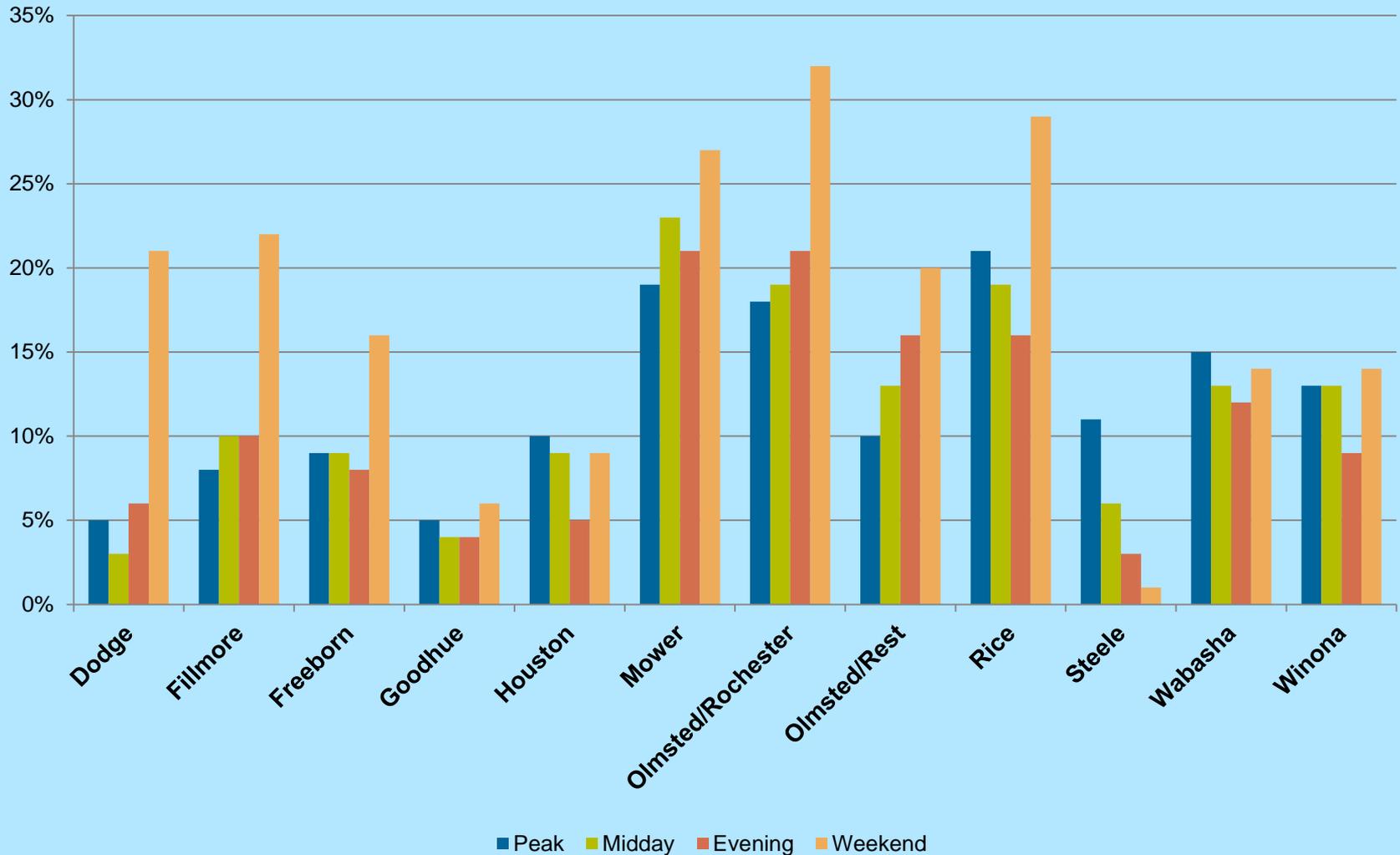
Transit Use in Past 12 Months (by County)



Public Input | Household Survey



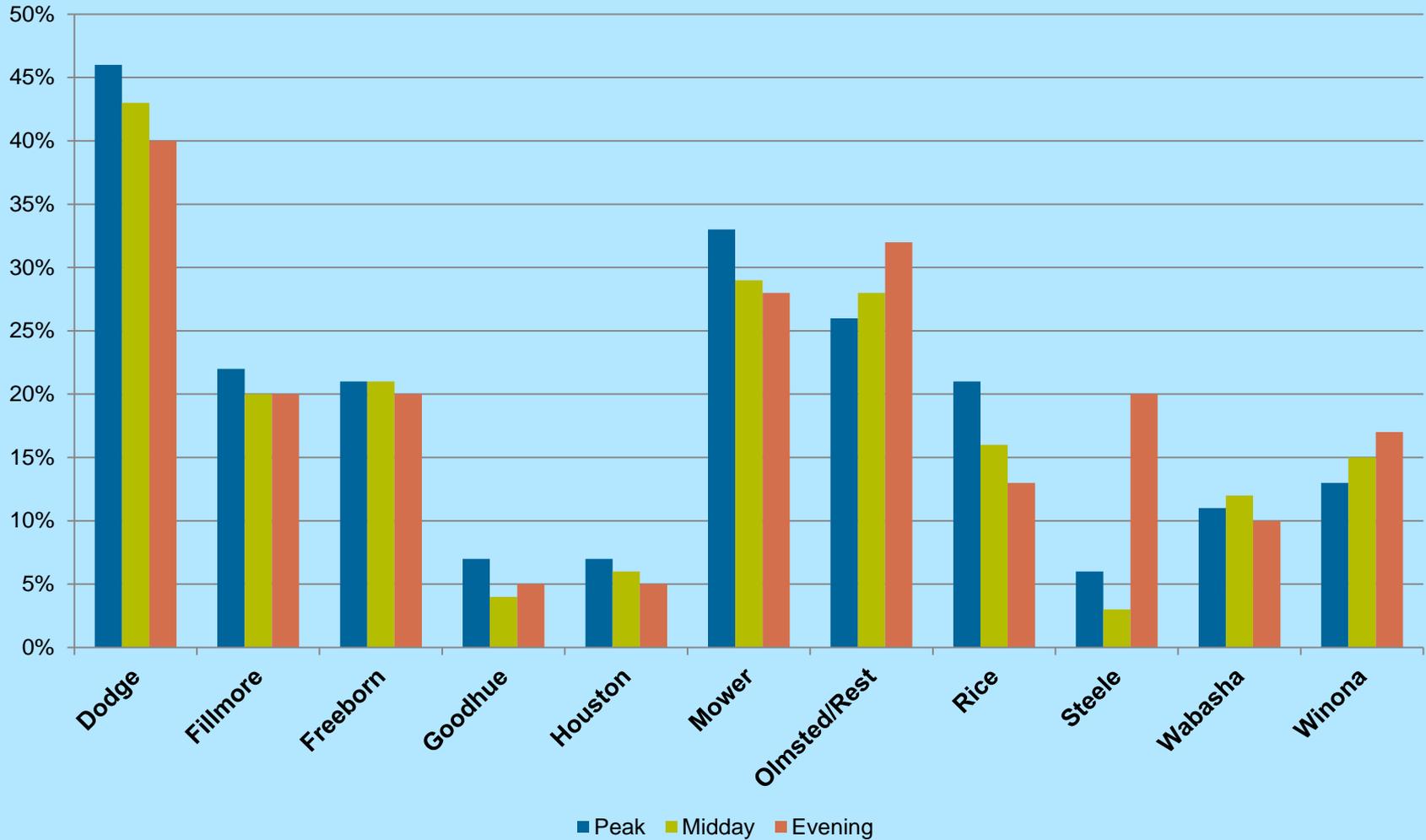
Likelihood of Using Commuter/Express Bus to Twin Cities by County



Public Input – Household Survey



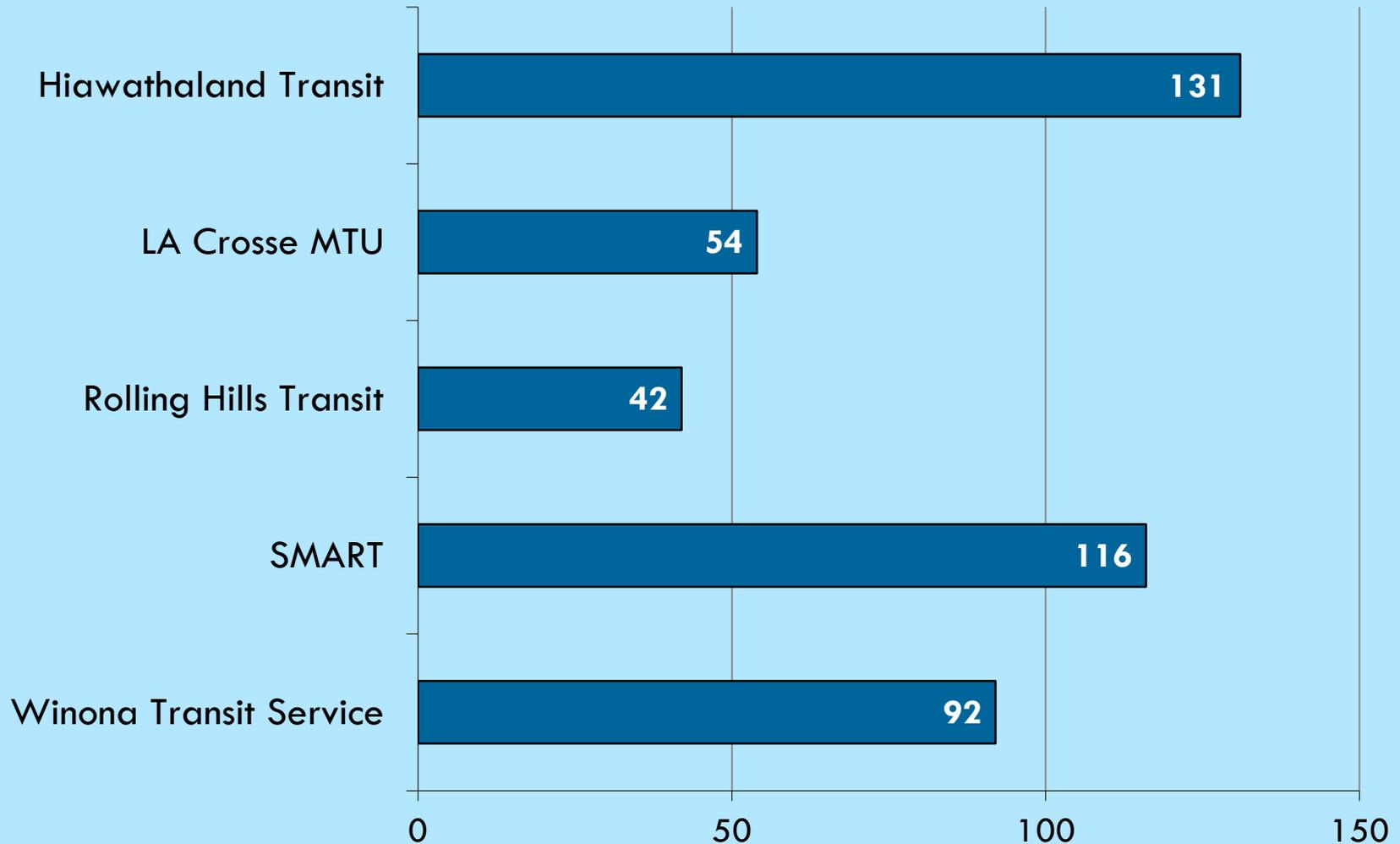
Likelihood of Using Commuter/Express Bus to Rochester by County



Public Input | Onboard Survey



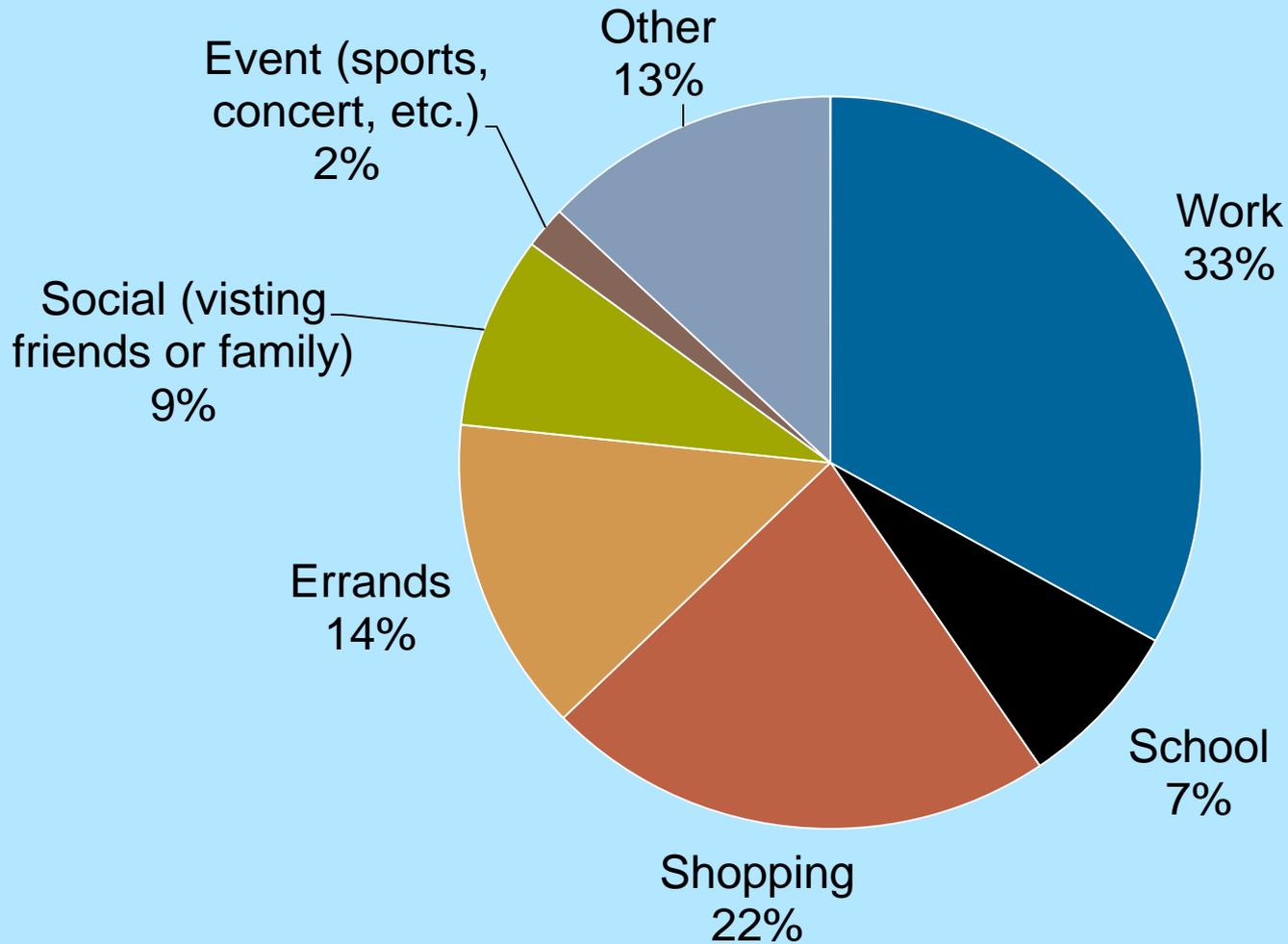
Surveys Completed: By Transit System



Public Input | Onboard Survey



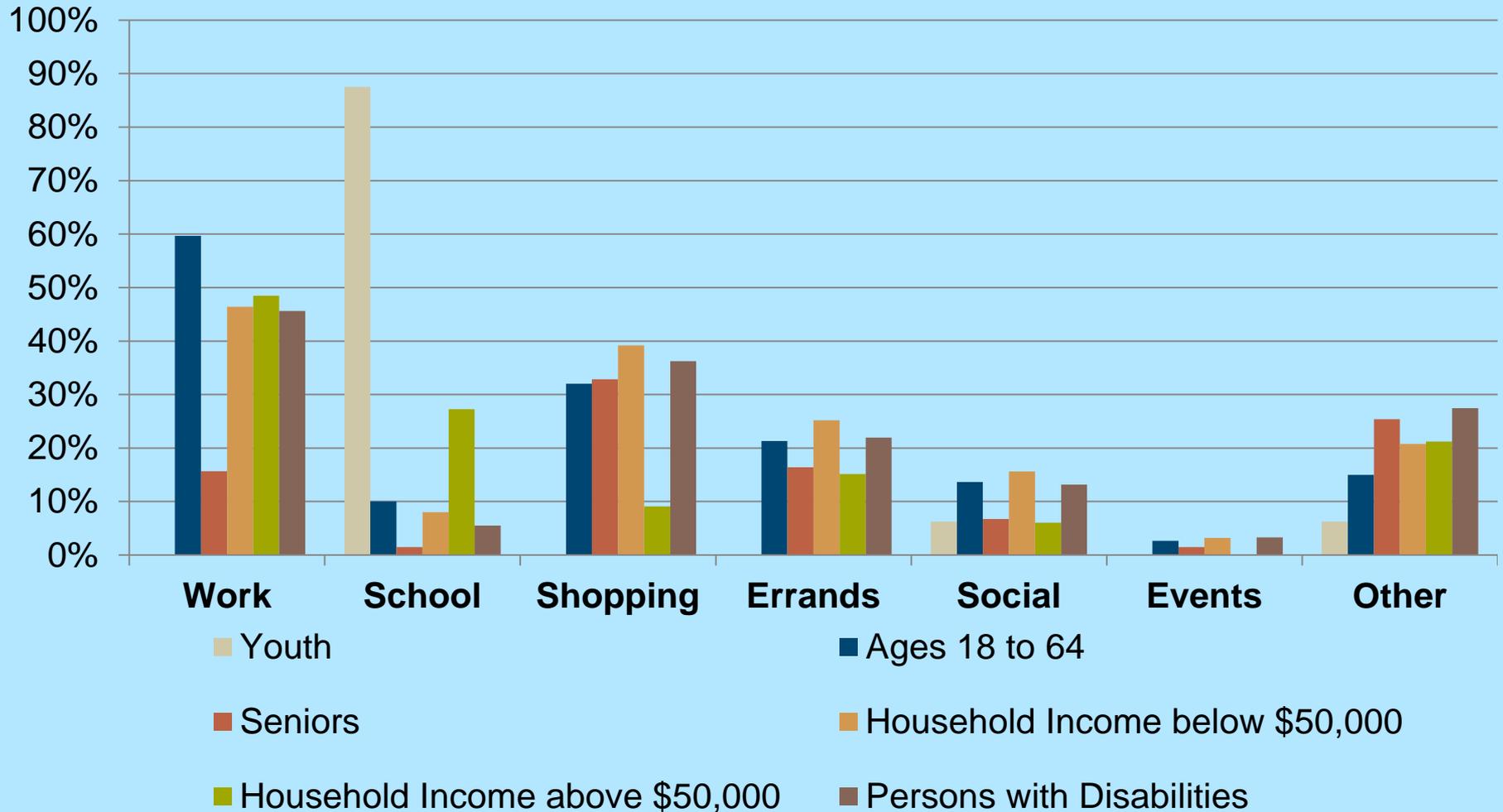
Primary Trip Purpose



Public Input | Onboard Survey



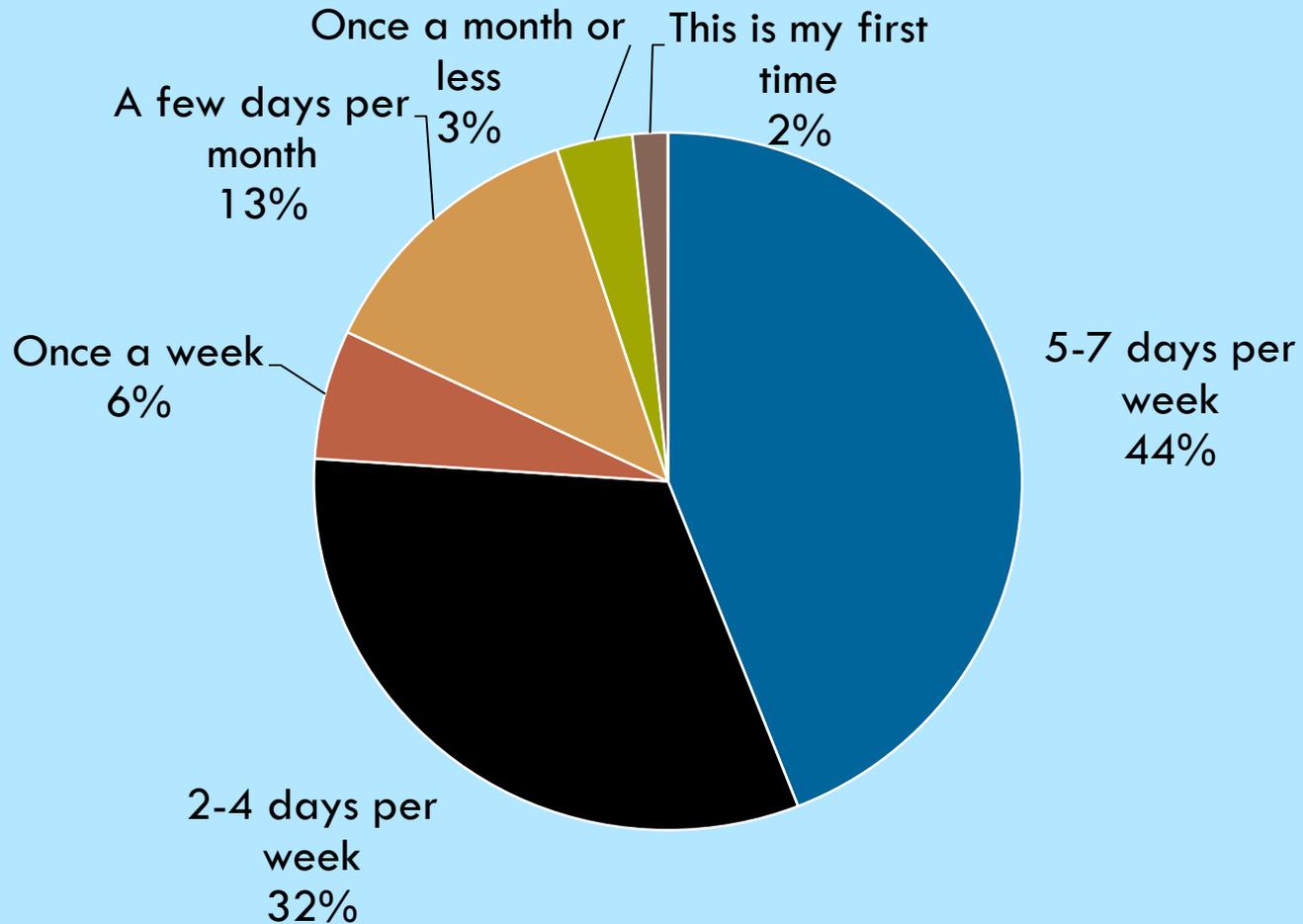
Primary Trip Purpose by User Group



Public Input | Onboard Survey



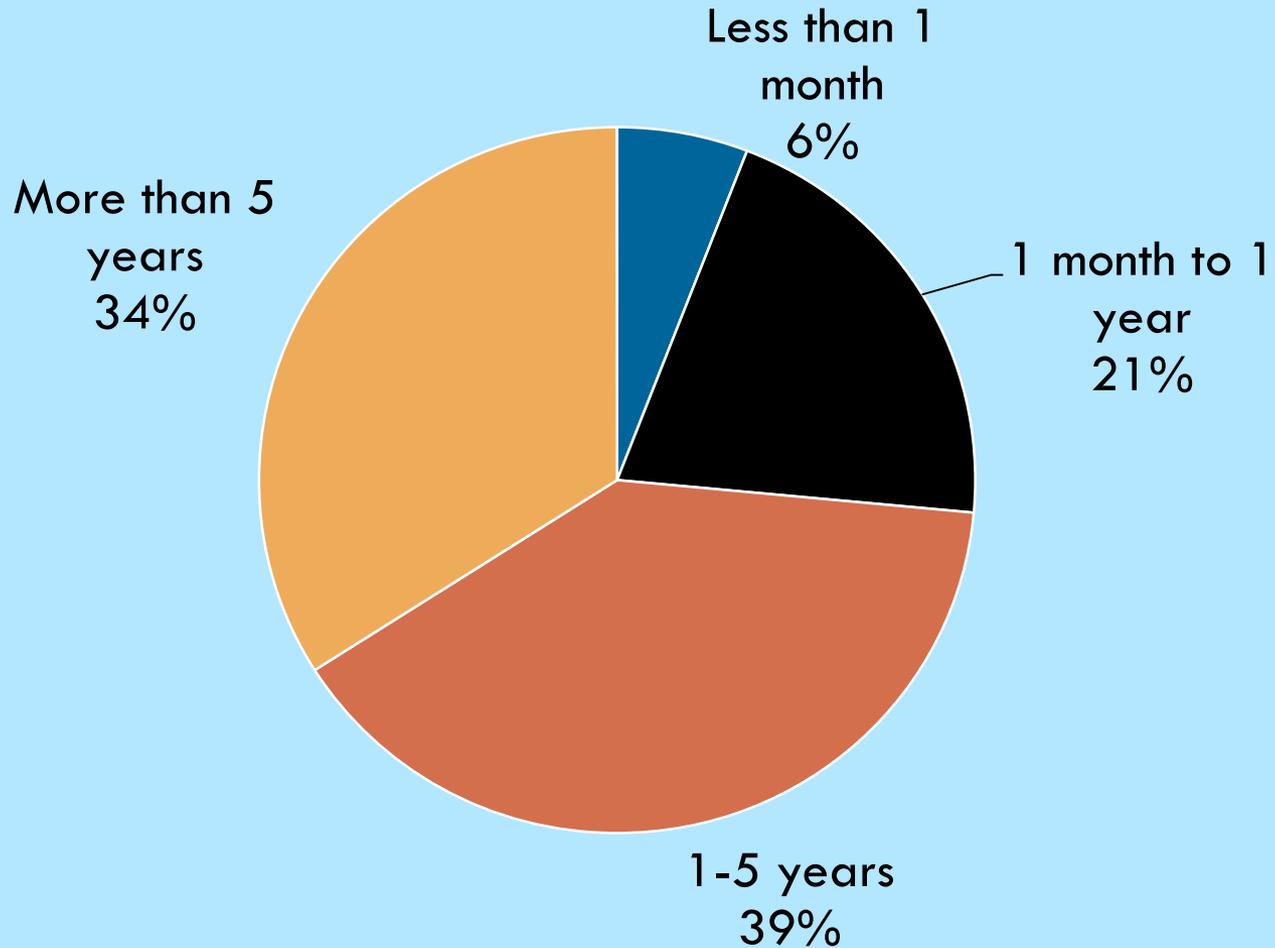
Frequency Riding Transit



Public Input | Onboard Survey



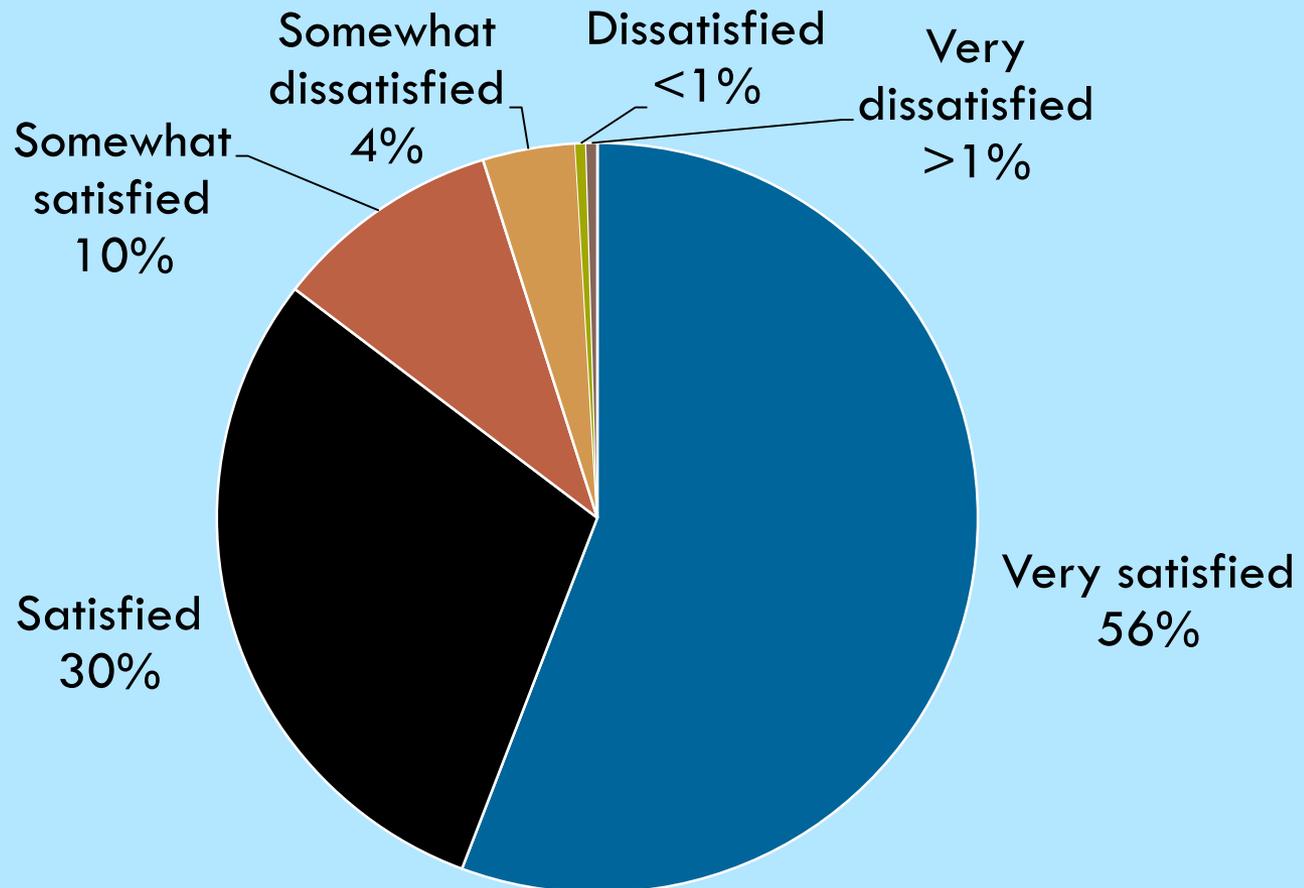
Length of Time Using Transit Service



Public Input | Onboard Survey



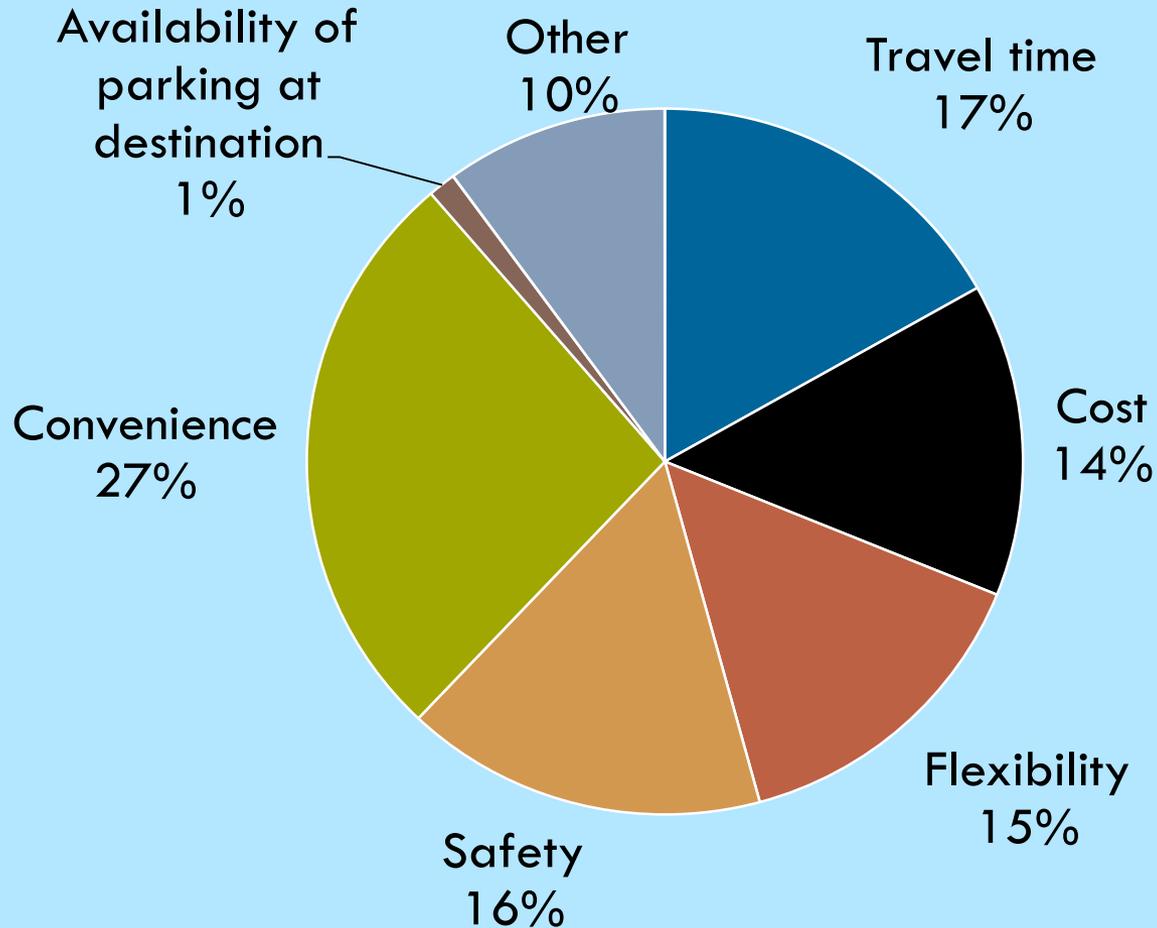
Satisfaction with Availability of Transit Service in Community



Public Input | Onboard Survey



Primary Factor in Mode Choice





- **Key destinations identified**
 - Rochester for work, medical, and shopping trips
 - Mankato in western half of District
 - La Crosse in eastern half of District
 - **Work/commute trips primary reason for accessing key destinations**





- Shopping trips were a major topic of discussion, particularly for those living in more rural areas
- Bloomington was noted as a primary destination by the largest group of individuals describing a preference for travel to a destination in the Twin Cities region
 - Mall of America / Light-Rail park-and-ride





Transit Investment Priorities in Order of Preference

1. New regional public transit services
2. Incentives for taking transit, biking, ridesharing
3. New or expanded private providers
4. More and better information about available services
5. Special group trips
6. Formal vanpools
7. Ridesharing
8. New park-and-ride lots



Public Input | Conclusions

- Differences between potential markets regarding service priorities and preferences
- Older adults seek more personalized, convenient service; younger riders are more sensitive to travel times
- On-board amenities may appeal to commuter markets and encourage mode shift to transit



Preliminary Opportunities | Core Markets



■ Millennial

- Expect new and diverse mobility options; 26% of Population



■ Baby Boomers and Older Adults (Age 50+)

- Want to “age in place,” alternatives to driving; 34% of Population



■ Commuters

- Half of all Minnesota workers commute to a different county
- Job growth in District 6 will continue, with clustering around Rochester



■ College Students

- Lower rates of automobile use, occasional regional trips



■ People with Disabilities

- Lower automobile use and higher transit dependence
- Non-work trips: smaller share of trips than other markets

Preliminary Opportunities | Core Markets



■ Transit Demand / Market for Regional Service

- Transit is not a priority for many SE Minnesota residents
- If new transportation services are offered, preference is for *regional public transit services – express/commuter routes*



■ Modest Regional/Employment Growth

- Population growth rate of 15% over next 30 years
- Influx of manufacturing and warehousing jobs outside of population centers with shift-based travel demand



■ Limited Choices / Lack of Service Coordination

- Low levels of knowledge of transit options and DAR procedures
- Separate fare mechanisms, service hours, and information resources



■ Limited Public Information

- Regional travel, ridesharing, and connecting services

Preliminary Opportunities | Service Concepts

Millennials



Baby Boomers & Older Adults



Commuters



College Students



People with Disabilities



New/expanded commuter routes to Rochester (public or private)



Midday operation on existing commuter routes



Scheduled transit to Twin Cities



Specialized group trips to key medical/shopping destinations



Preliminary Opportunities | Service Concepts

Millennials

Baby Boomers
& Older Adults

Commuters

College
Students

People with
Disabilities



Promotion and expansion of vanpools



Improved marketing/information for public transit and commuter route services



Financial incentives for commuters



Rideshare matching

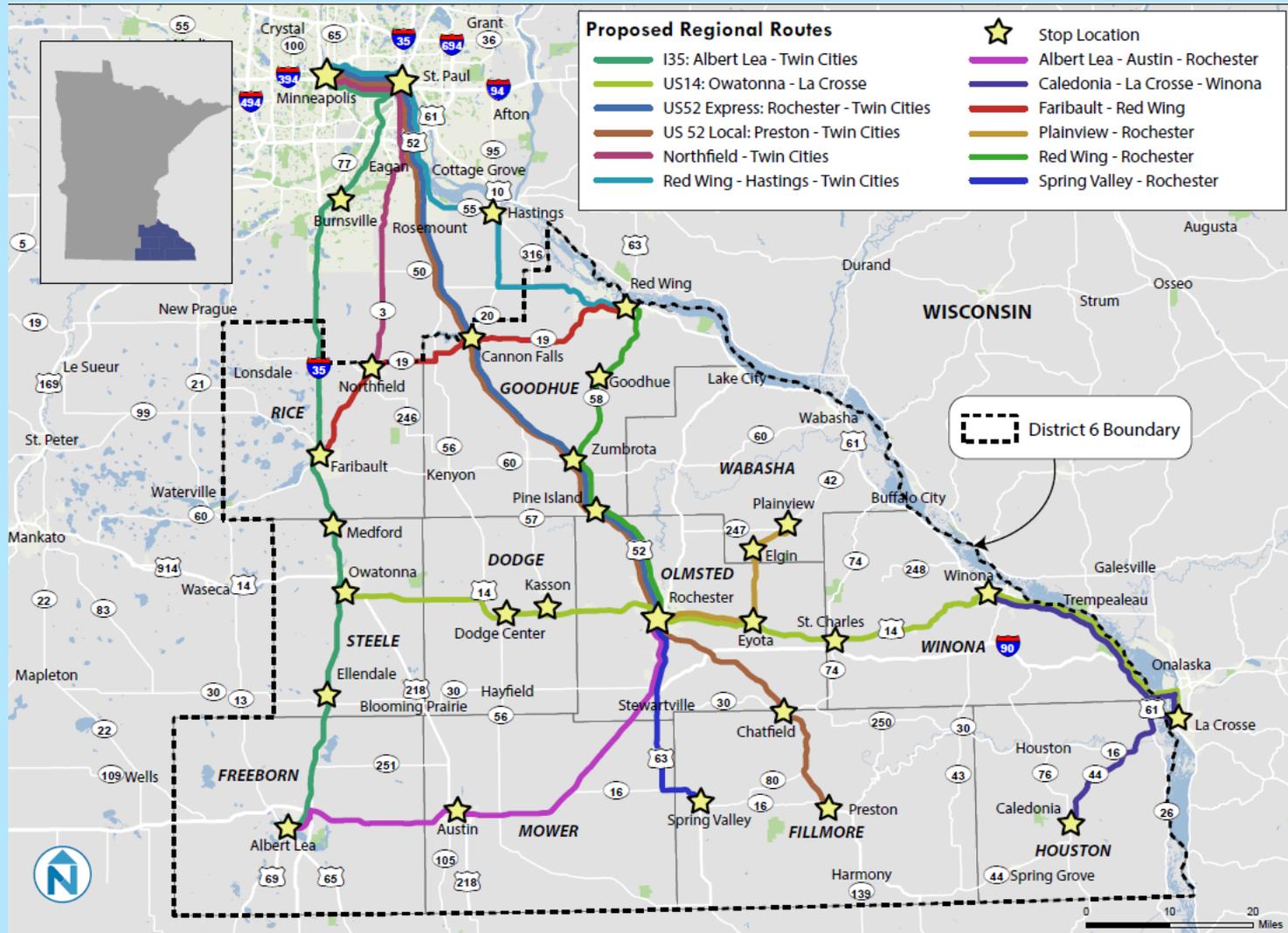


Enhancements to local transit services (service span, service days, route design, etc.)



Preliminary Opportunities | Ridership Estimates along Corridors

Several corridors were evaluated for potential services.



Preliminary Opportunities | Ridership Estimates along Corridors

Preliminary ridership estimates are as follows (to be updated mid-January):

Route/ Highway	Number of Stops	Total Daily Work Commute Trips	Adjusted Daily Work Commute Transit Trips Estimated	Total Adjusted Daily Transit Trips Estimated
52 Preston-Rochester-Twin Cities	8	4,609	137	297
52X Rochester-Twin Cities Express	2	631	18	37
14 Owatonna-La Crosse	8	6,634	186	379
I-35 Albert Lea-Owatonna-Faribault-Twin Cities	8	4,812	143	292
44/16/14/61 Caledonia- La Crosse-Winona	3	8,57	23	47
61/10 Red Wing-Hastings- Twin Cities	4	6,147	185	379
I-90 W Albert Lea-Austin-Rochester	4	1,601	45	92
58 Red Wing- Zumbrota - Rochester	4	1356	36	73
63 S Spring Valley- Rochester	2	526	13	27
42 Plainview-Elgin-Rochester	3	1,168	31	64
19 Faribault-Northfield-Red Wing	4	2,115	60	122
52N Northfield-Twin Cities	3	772	20	40

Preliminary Opportunities | Next Steps

- **Developing evaluation criteria**
- **Revising ridership estimation and corridors**
- **Developing a set of service investment alternatives**