



Southeast Minnesota Travel Study

Project Open House
March 2016

Nelson/Nygaard in association
with

- Kimley-Horn
- Morris Leatherman Company
- Air Sage

We all have a stake in **A**  **B**



Southeast Minnesota Travel Study

Welcome!

This brief presentation provides an overview of the Southeast Minnesota Travel Study Findings and Opportunities.

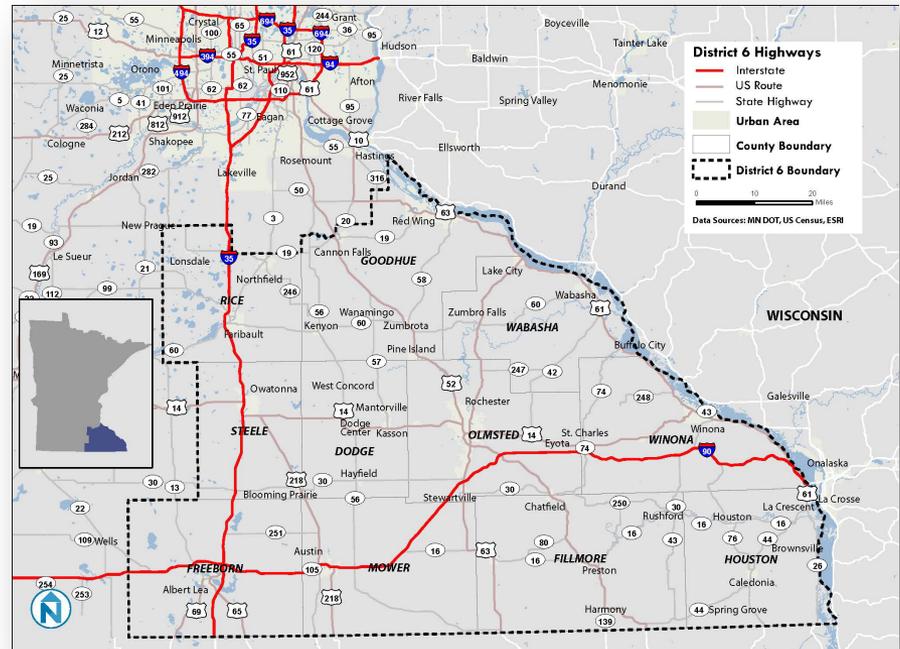


Southeast Minnesota Travel Study

Purpose: To determine what types of new service might be feasible to assess alternatives and recommendations for implementing new or expanded transit service in Southeast Minnesota.

The study looked at these counties:

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



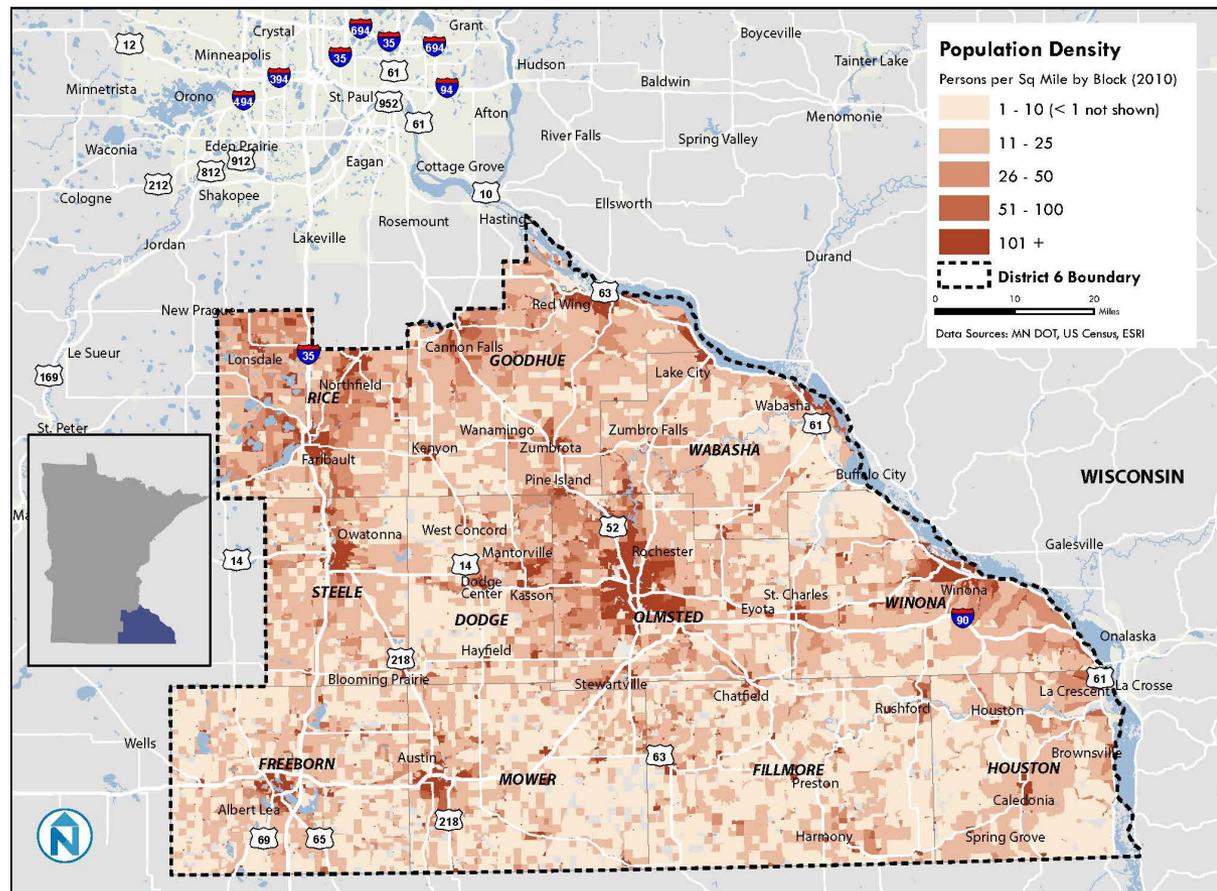
About The Study

- ▶ Many people have participated actively in this study
- ▶ The study was initiated in December 2014 with participation from regional transit agencies, Workforce Development, human service agencies, and regional planning entities.



Market Assessment | Population and Growth

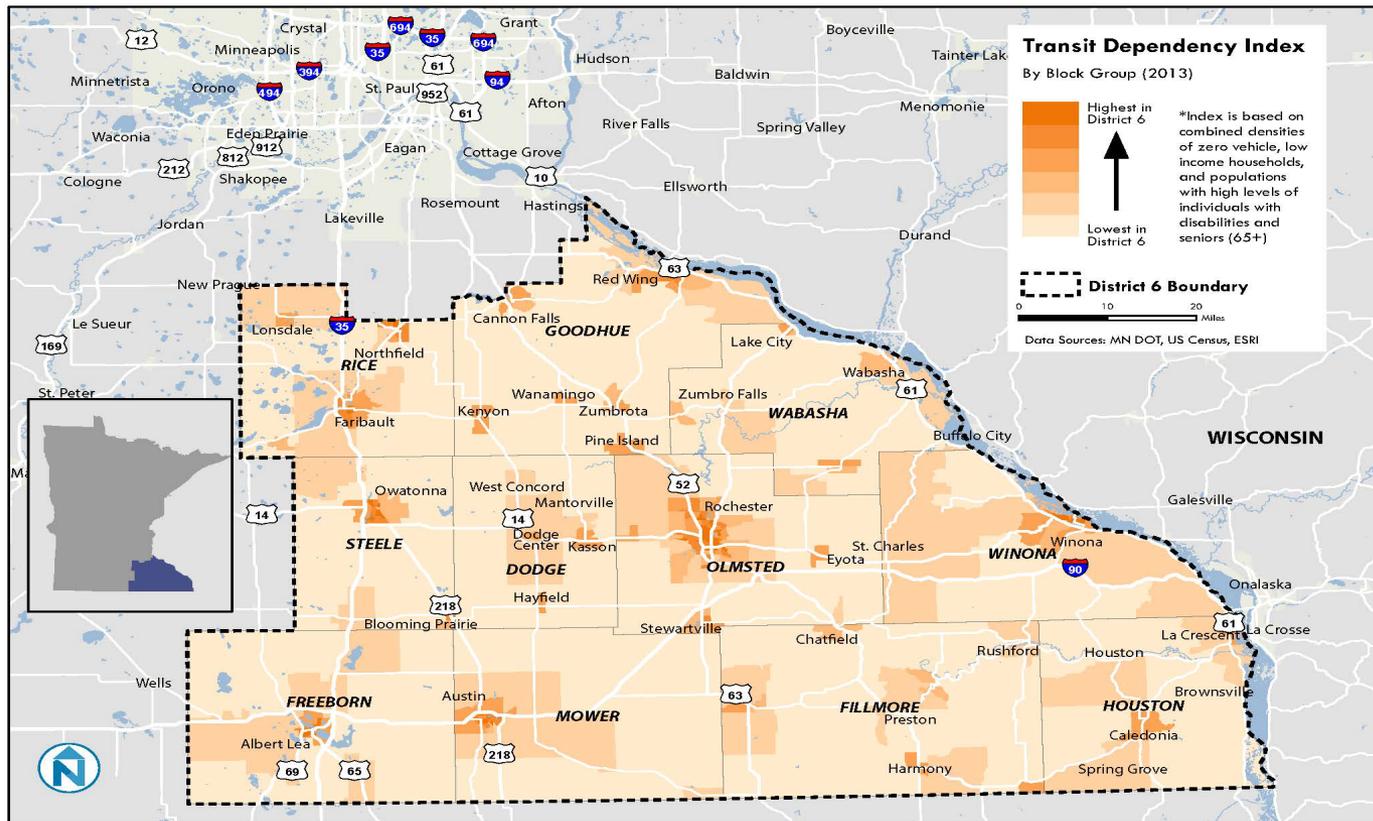
The greatest population densities are in Rochester and smaller cities.



Market Assessment |

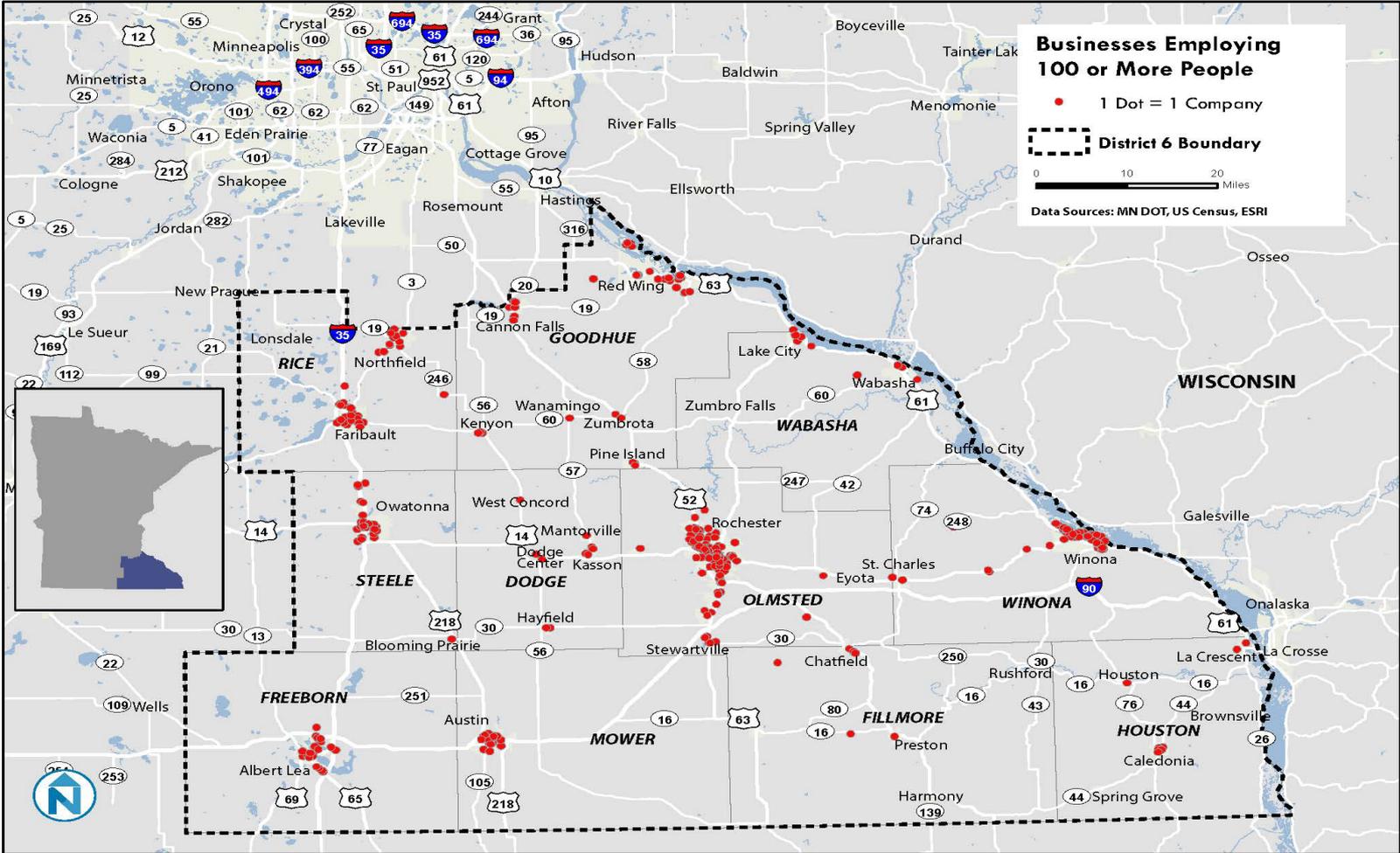
Demographics & Employment

The highest levels of transit dependency are also in these areas.



Market Assessment | Demographics & Employment

We looked at where people work in Southeast



Market Assessment | Employer Input

We also surveyed employers in the 11-county region.

- ▶ 90% of the surveyed employers provide free parking; the others mostly provide no parking
- ▶ Largest number of job shifts begin in 7:00 AM hour and end in 3:00 PM hour
- ▶ Employers told us:
 - It's challenging to get employees to rural worksites.
 - It's difficult to organize car and vanpools due to the geographical spread of their workers' home locations.
 - The 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

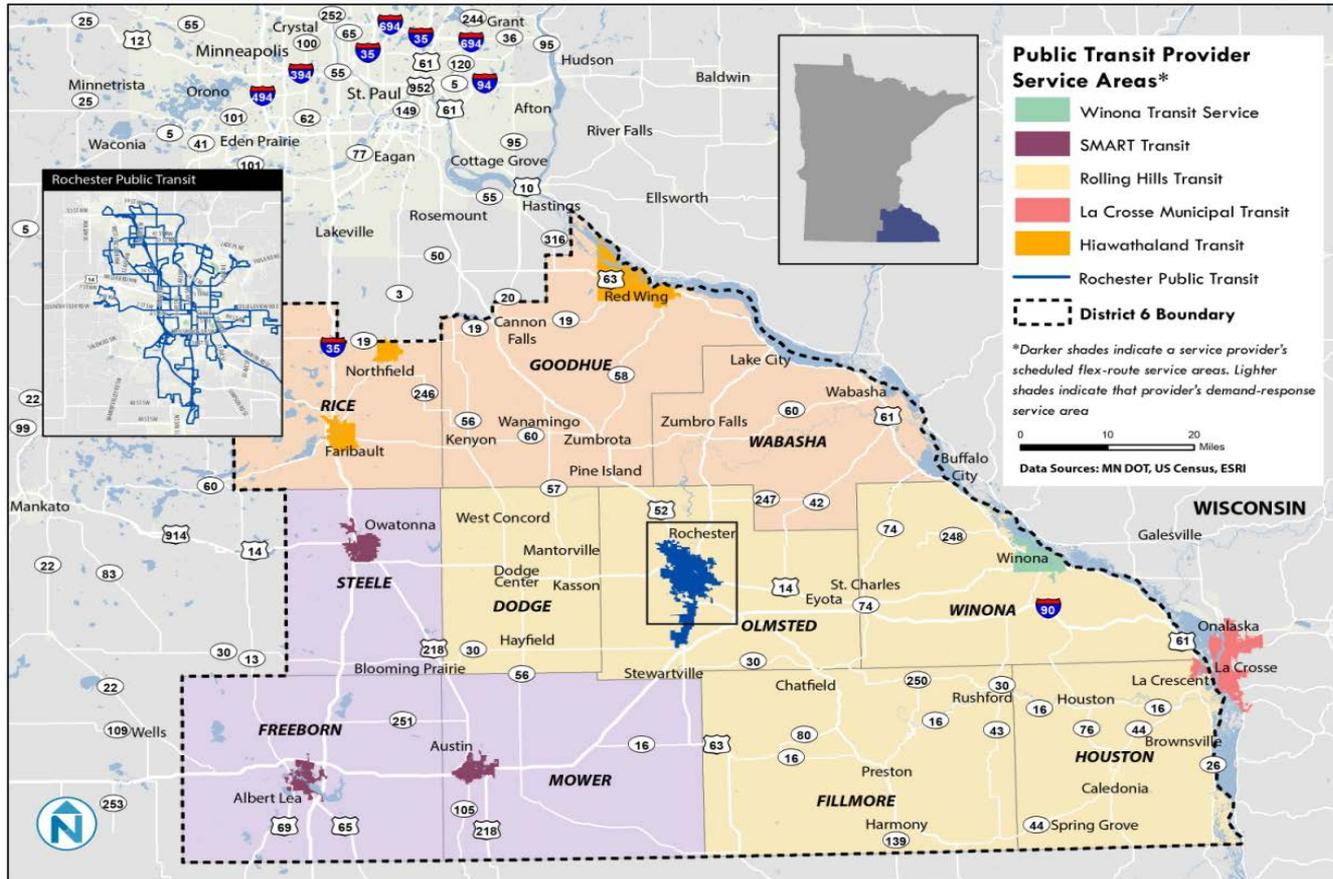
We assessed the existing regional and urban public transit providers.

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, Steele, and Waseca 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

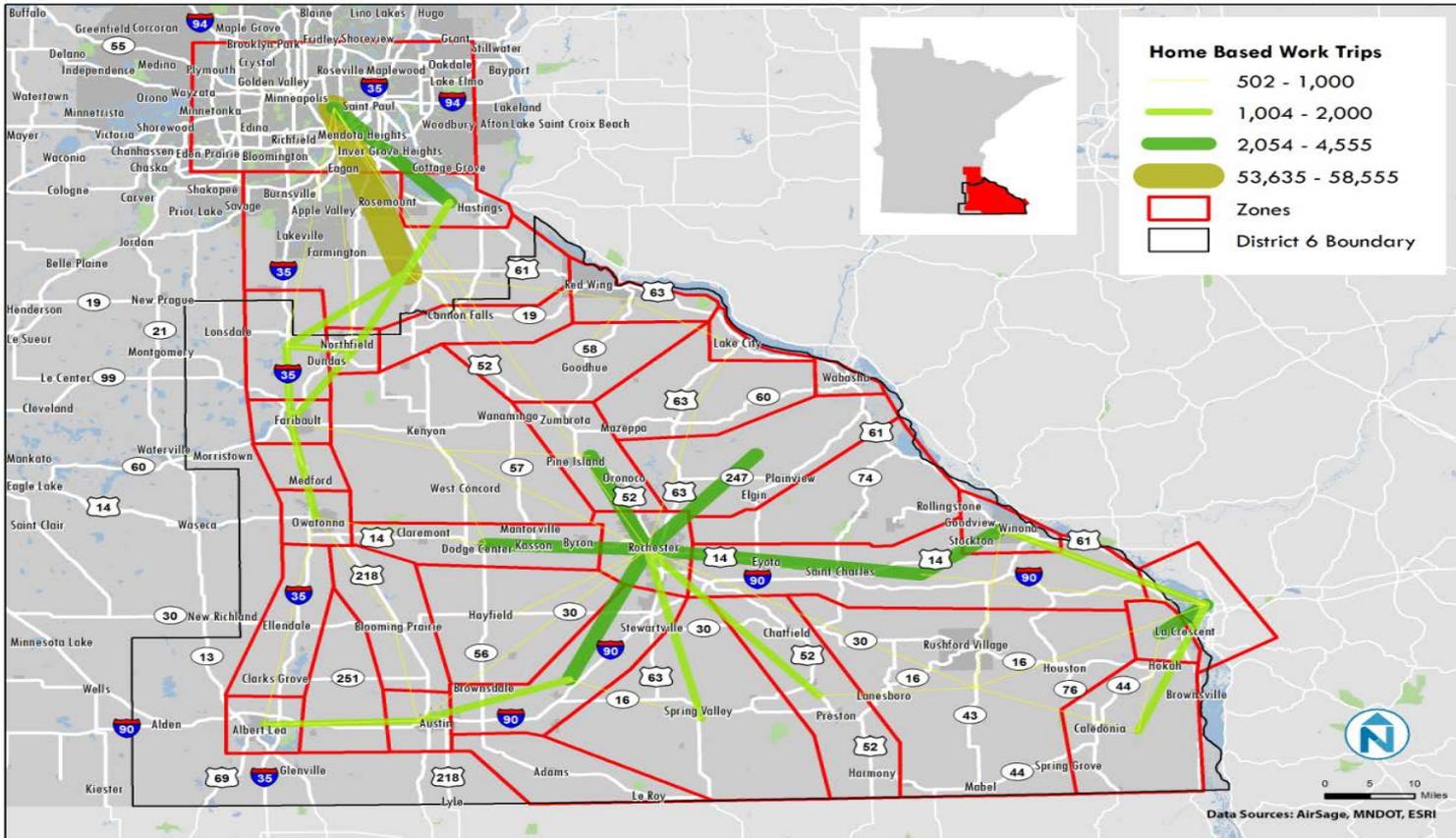
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Travel Behavior Analysis |

Home-Based Work Trips

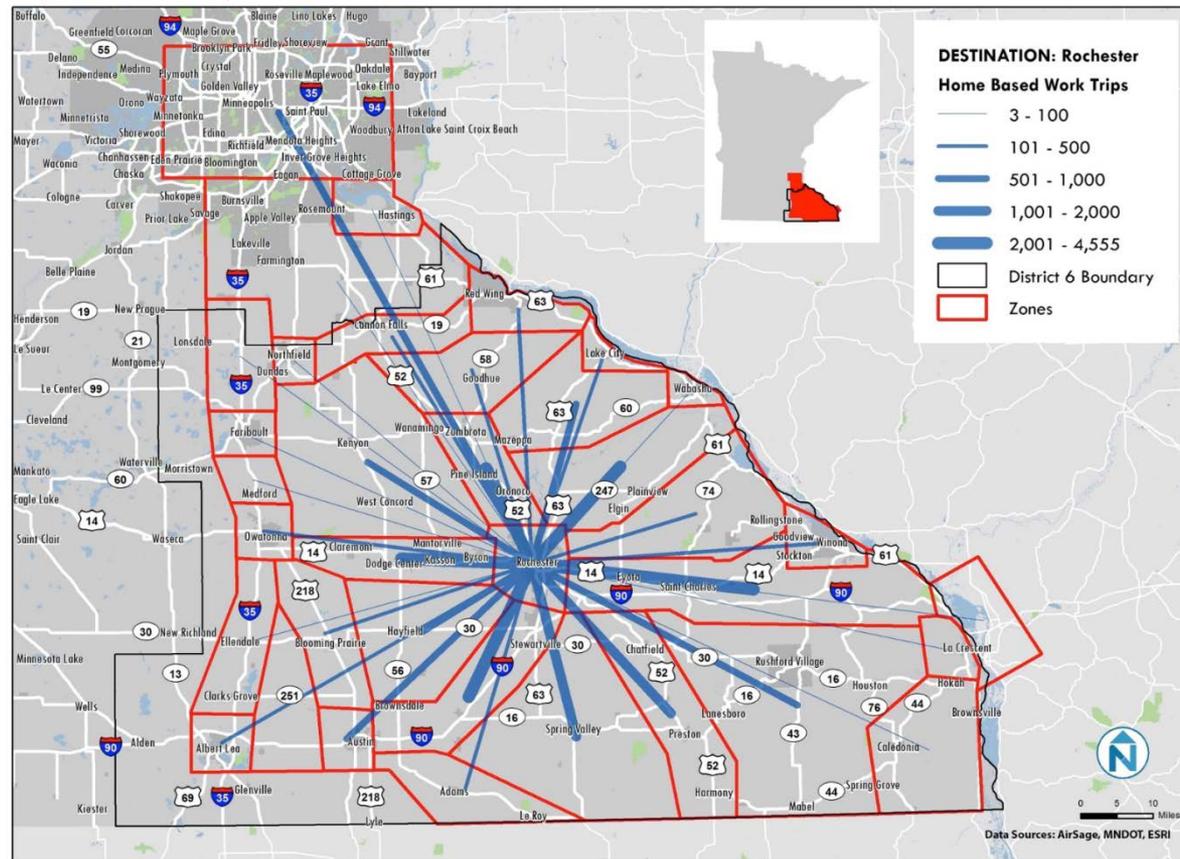
We analyzed/mapped US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) and mobile phone signal data.



Travel Behavior Analysis |

Home-Based Work Trips to Rochester

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ASSOCIATES, ILLC.



Travel Behavior Analysis | Conclusions

Key findings included:

- ▶ Major travel patterns:
 - Cities in the northern part of the study area to destinations in the Twin Cities
 - Cities and towns in the 11 counties to Rochester
- ▶ Of daily home-based trips, 2/3 are not for work
- ▶ Highest travel volumes at AM peak, followed by Midday and PM peak
- ▶ Approximately 50% of commuters travel to another county for work



Public Input: Perceptions and Preferences

We collected additional information from the public



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

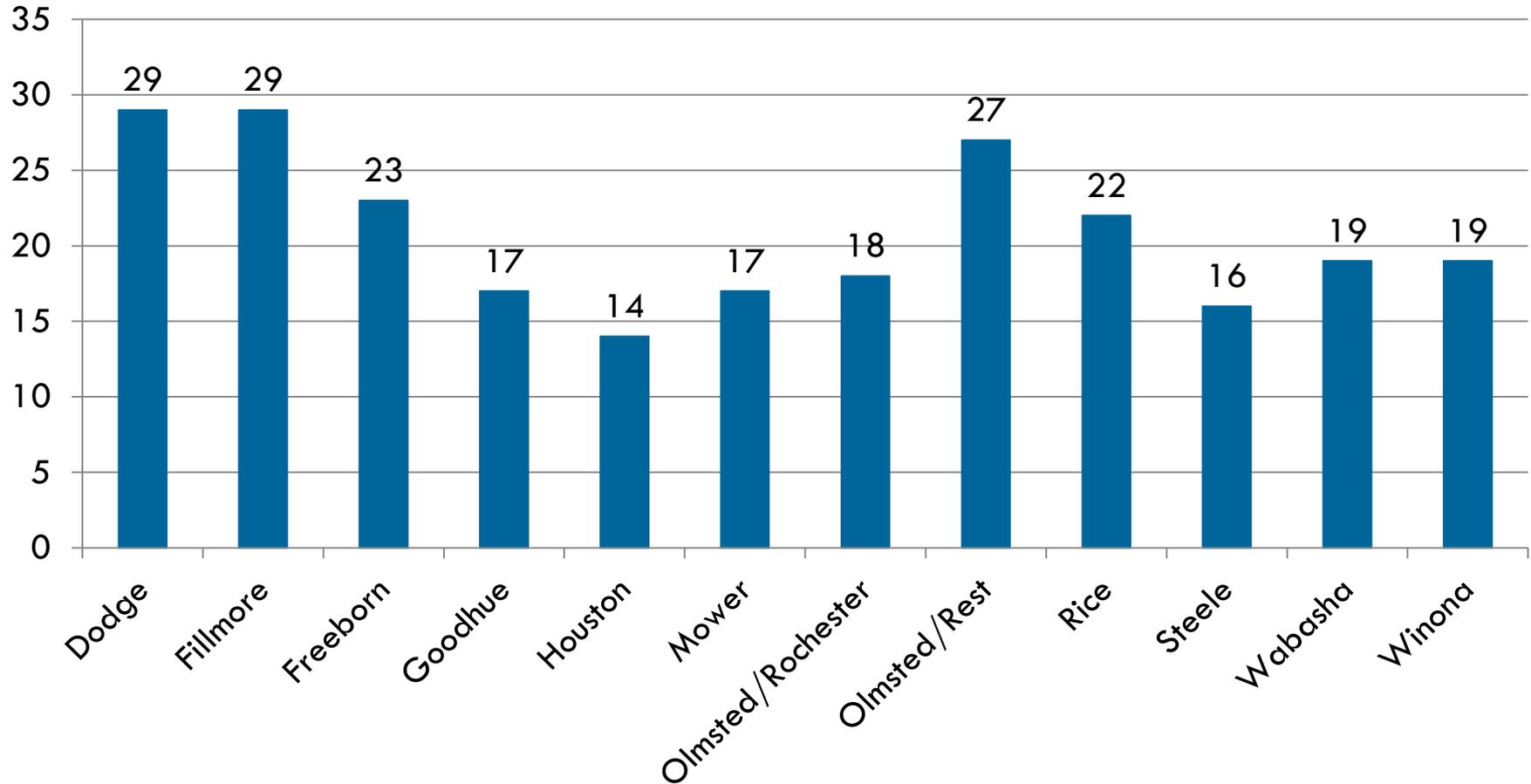


Public Input | Household Survey



Average AM Commute Travel Time by County – Minutes

Commute trips range from 14–30 minutes on average, depending on the county of residence.

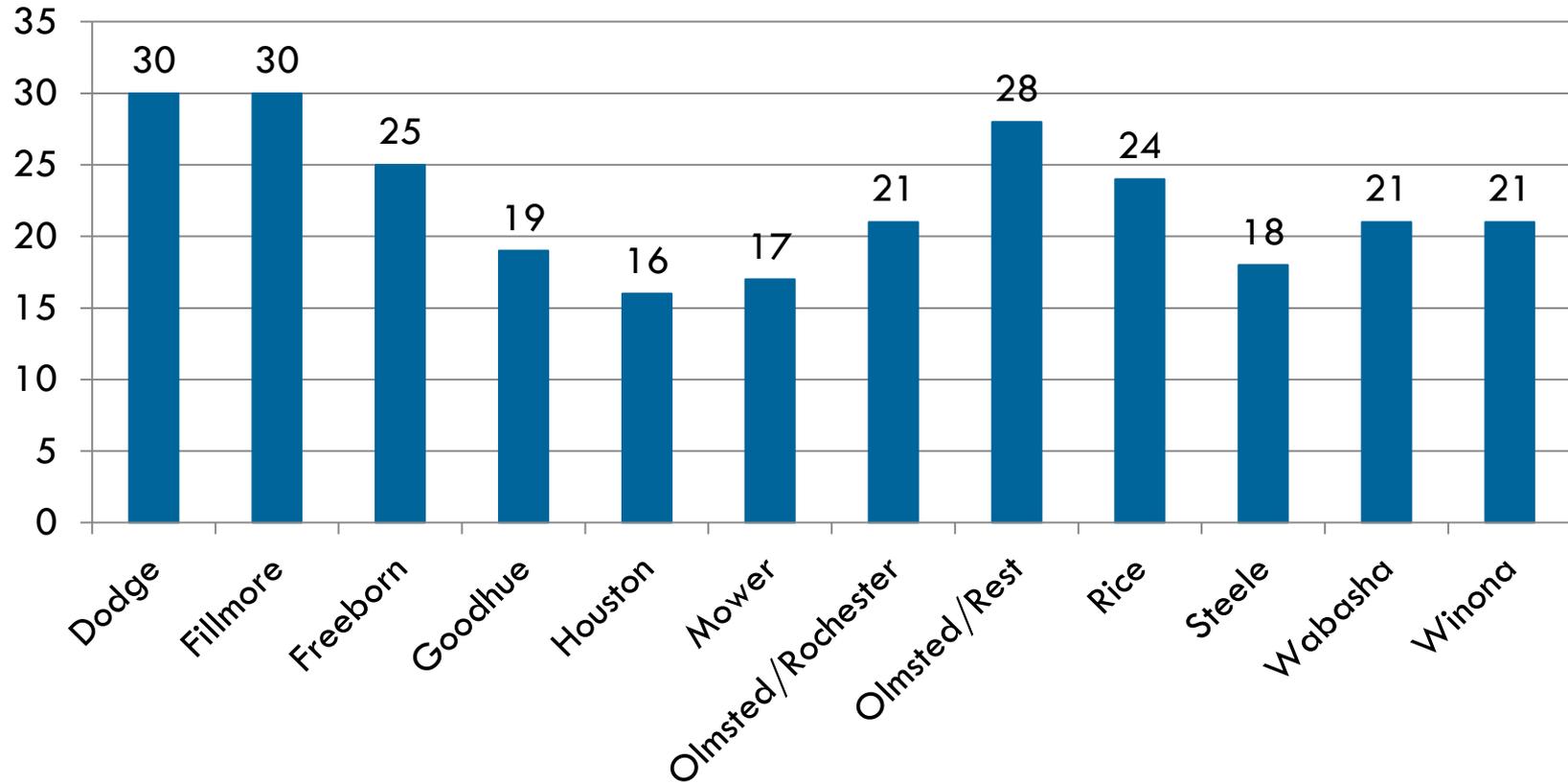


Public Input | Household Survey



Average PM Commute Travel Time by County – Minutes

Commute trips range from 14–30 minutes on average, depending on the county of residence.

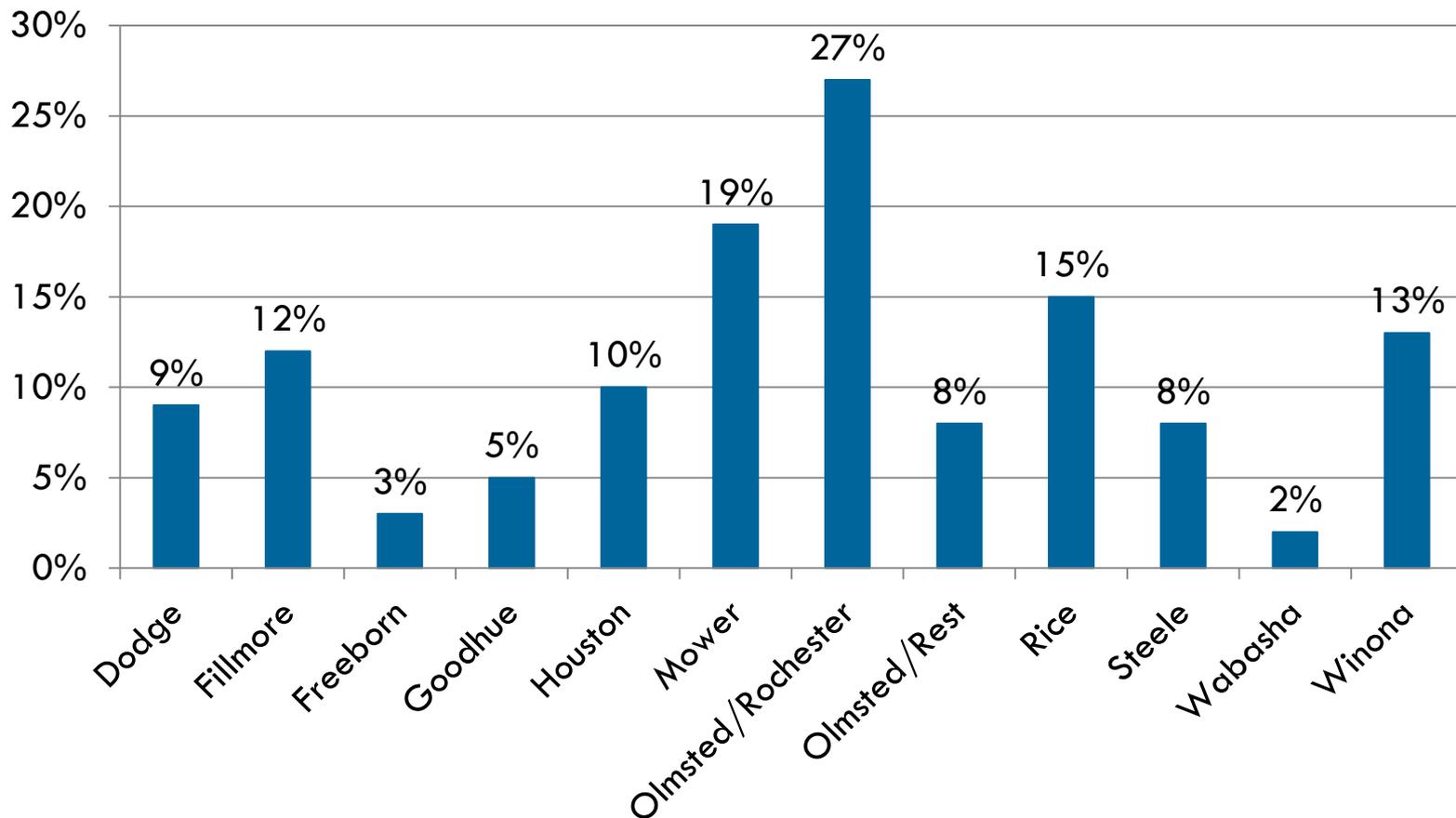


Public Input | Household Survey



Transit Use in Past 12 Months (by County)

And only a small segment of the population has used transit.

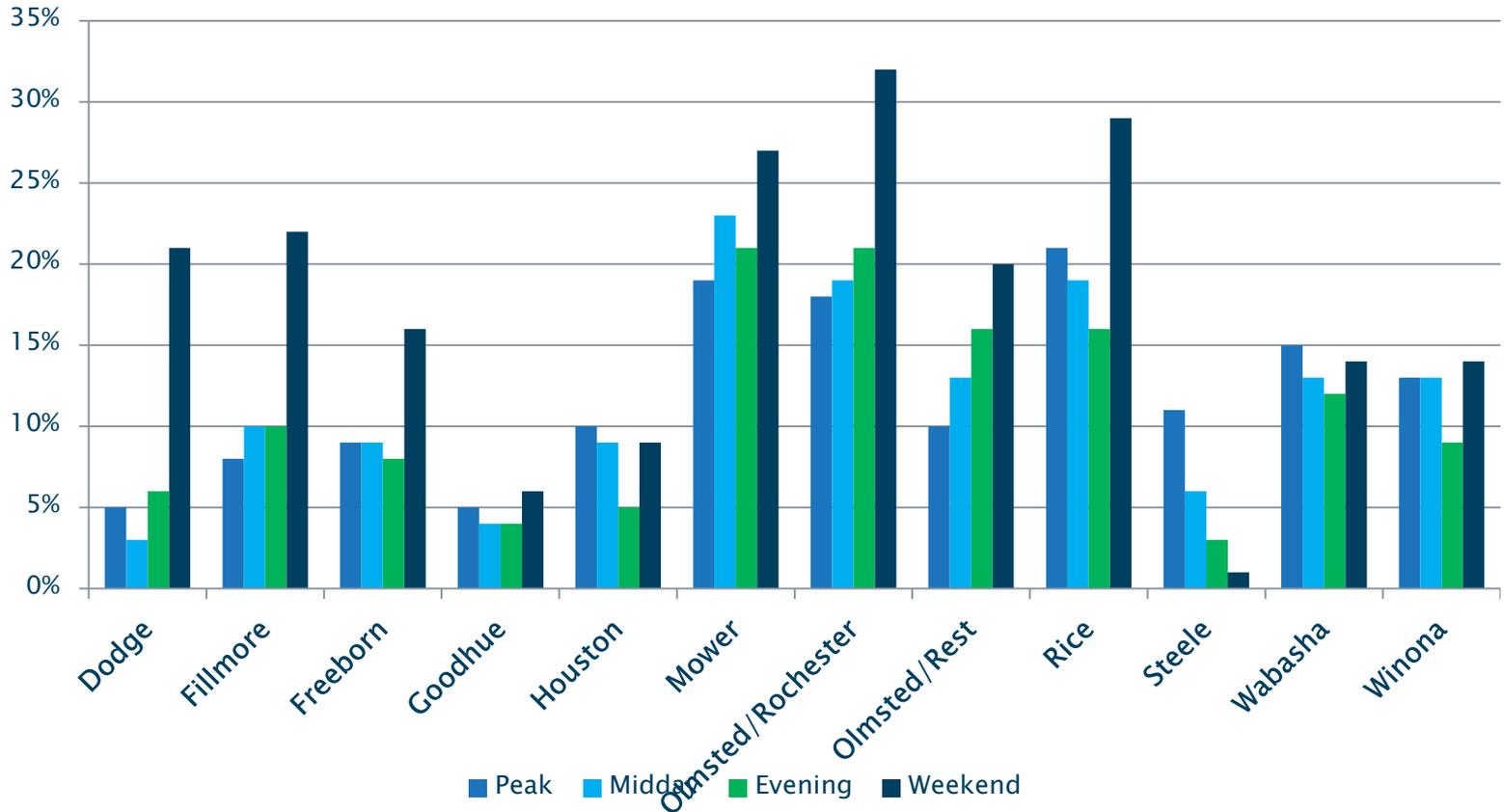


Public Input | Household Survey



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

There is moderate interest in transit service to the Twin Cities.

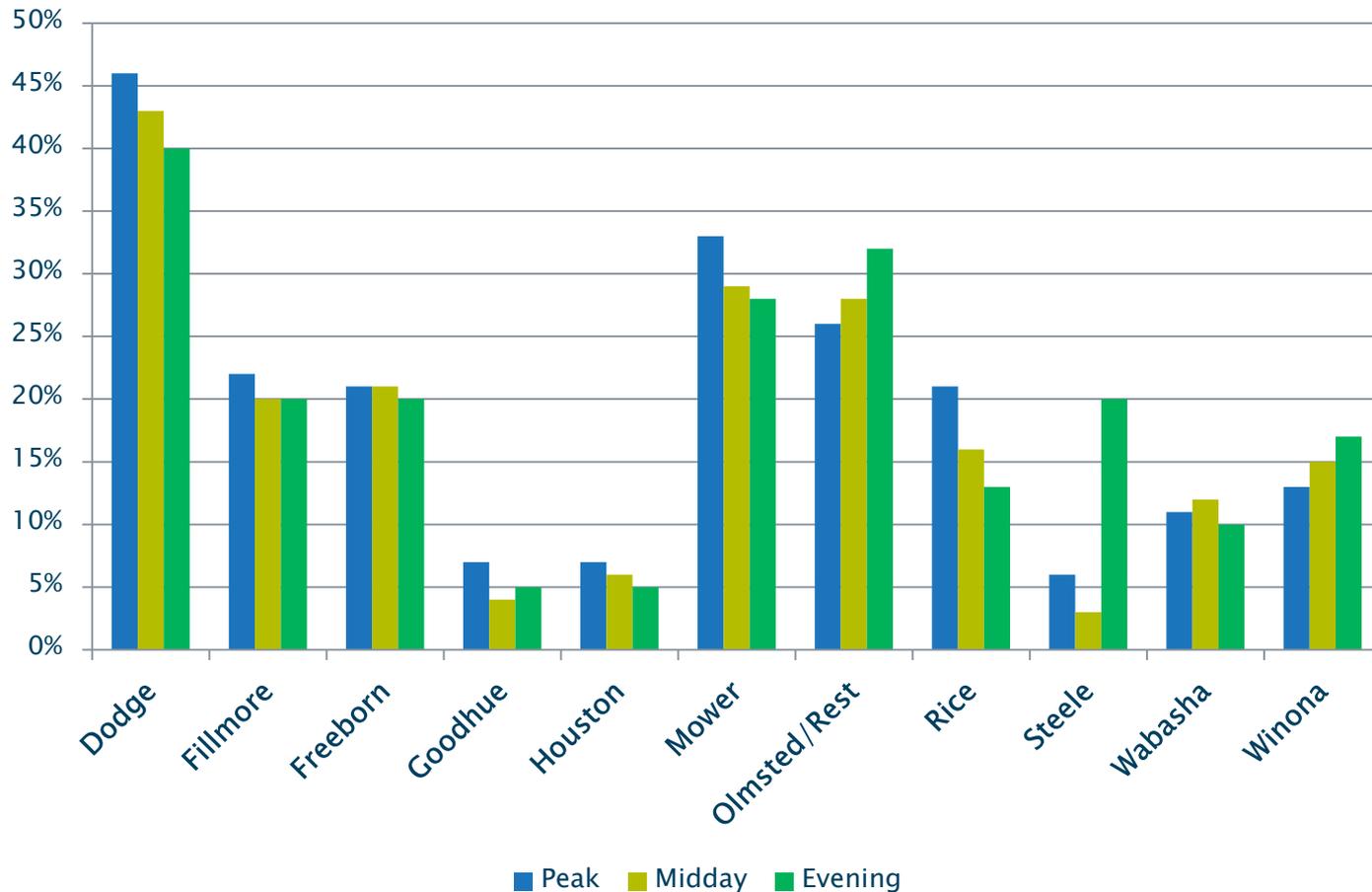


Public Input – Household Survey



Likelihood of Using Commuter/Express Bus to Rochester by County

There is also a high level of stated interest in transit service to Rochester.



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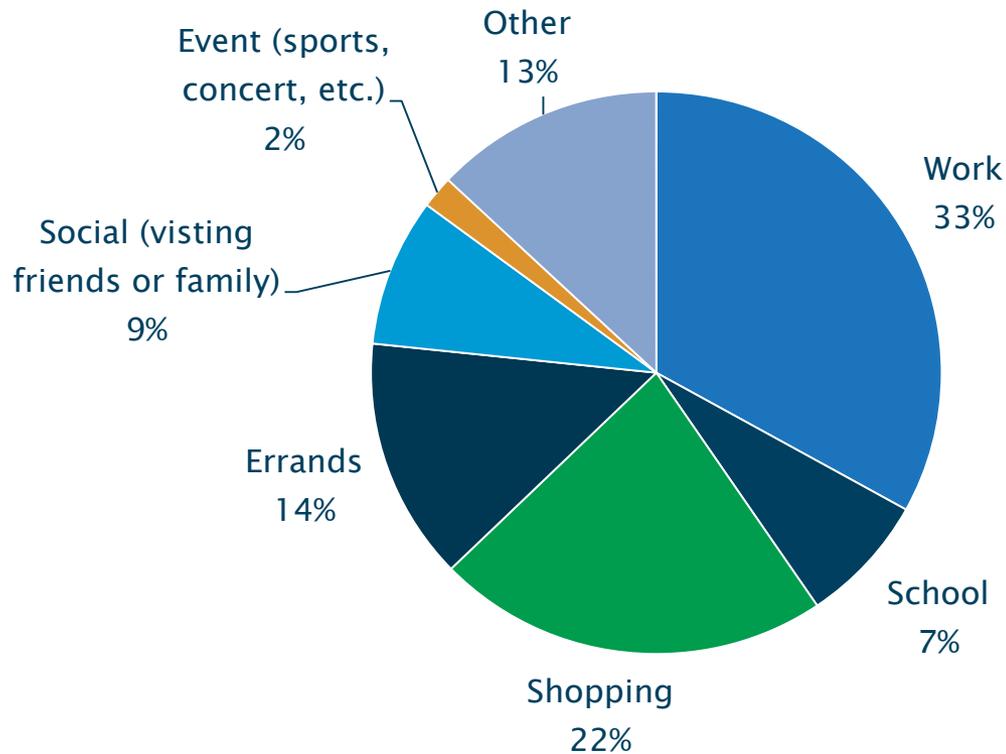


Public Input | Onboard Survey



Primary Trip Purpose

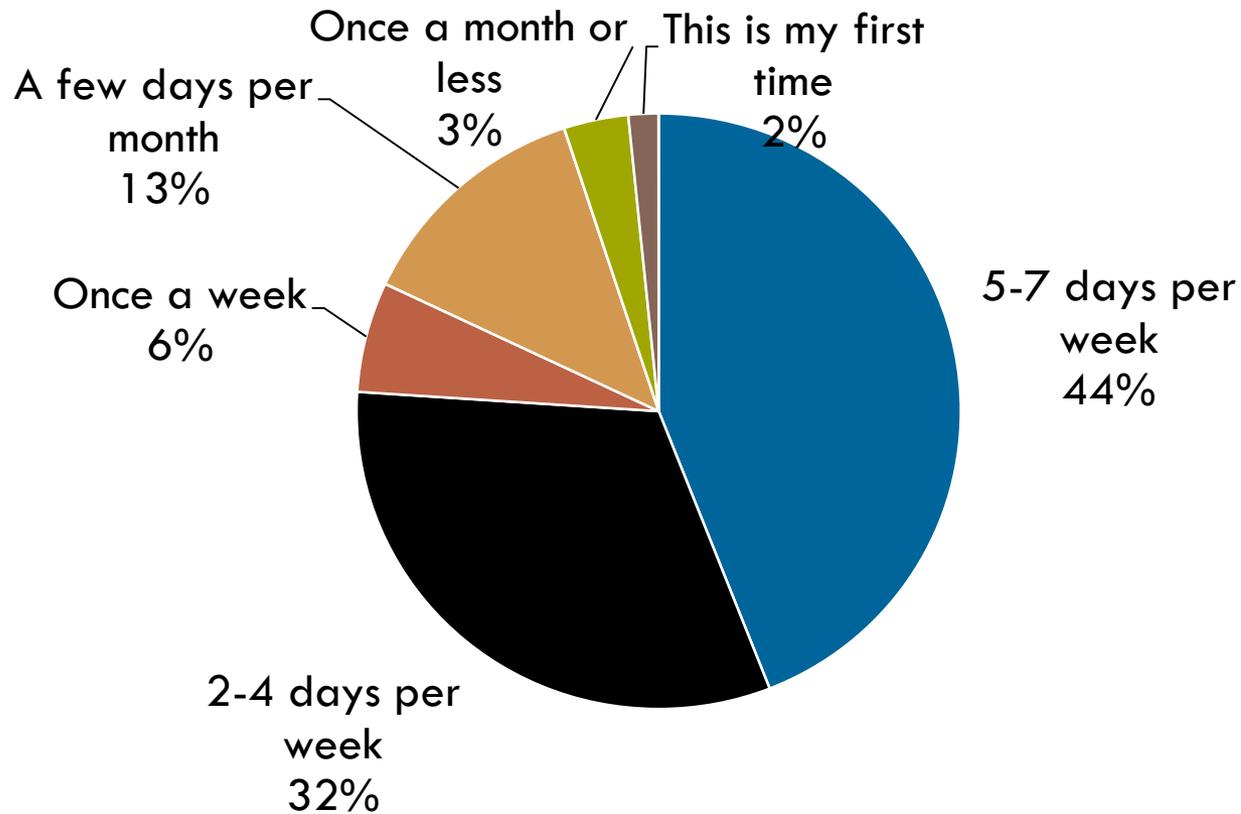
The largest group of bus riders use transit for travel to Shopping is also an important reason to take transit. work.





Frequency Riding Transit

Most transit riders ride regularly.

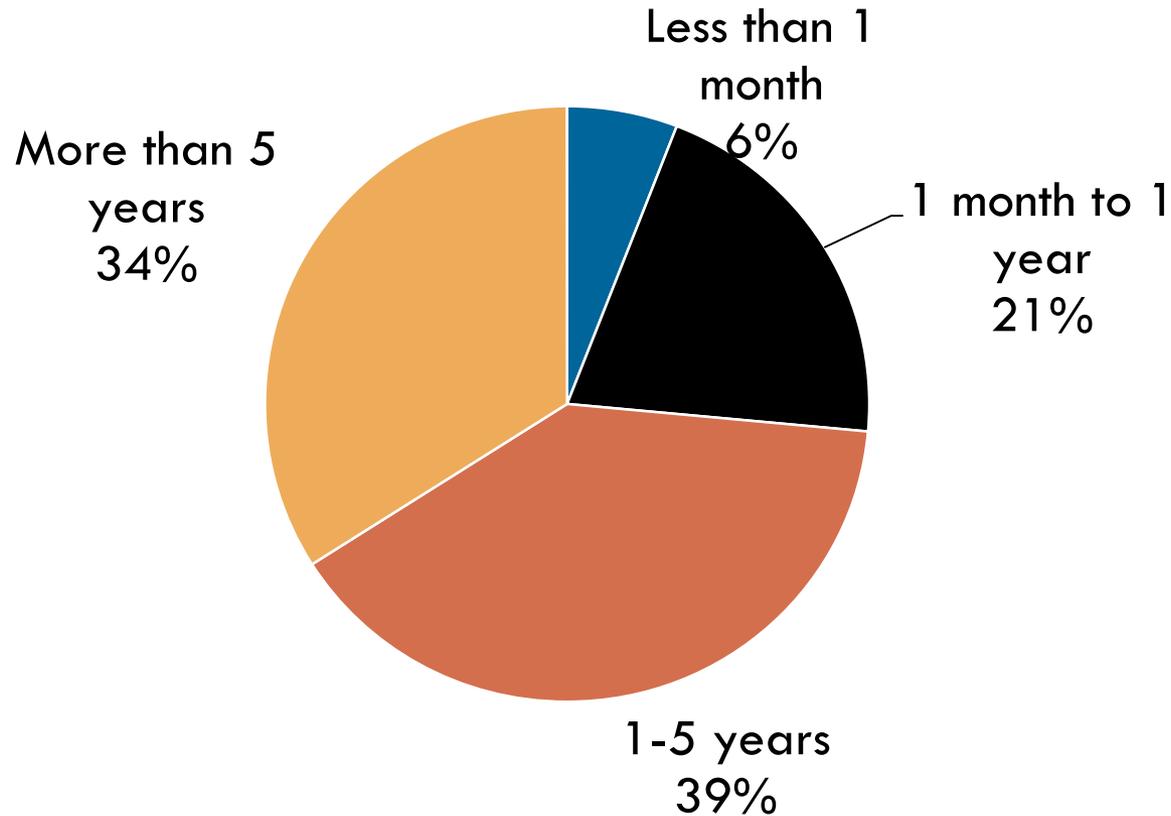


Public Input | Onboard Survey



Length of Time Using Transit Service

And most are long-term riders. But about 20% are new to transit.

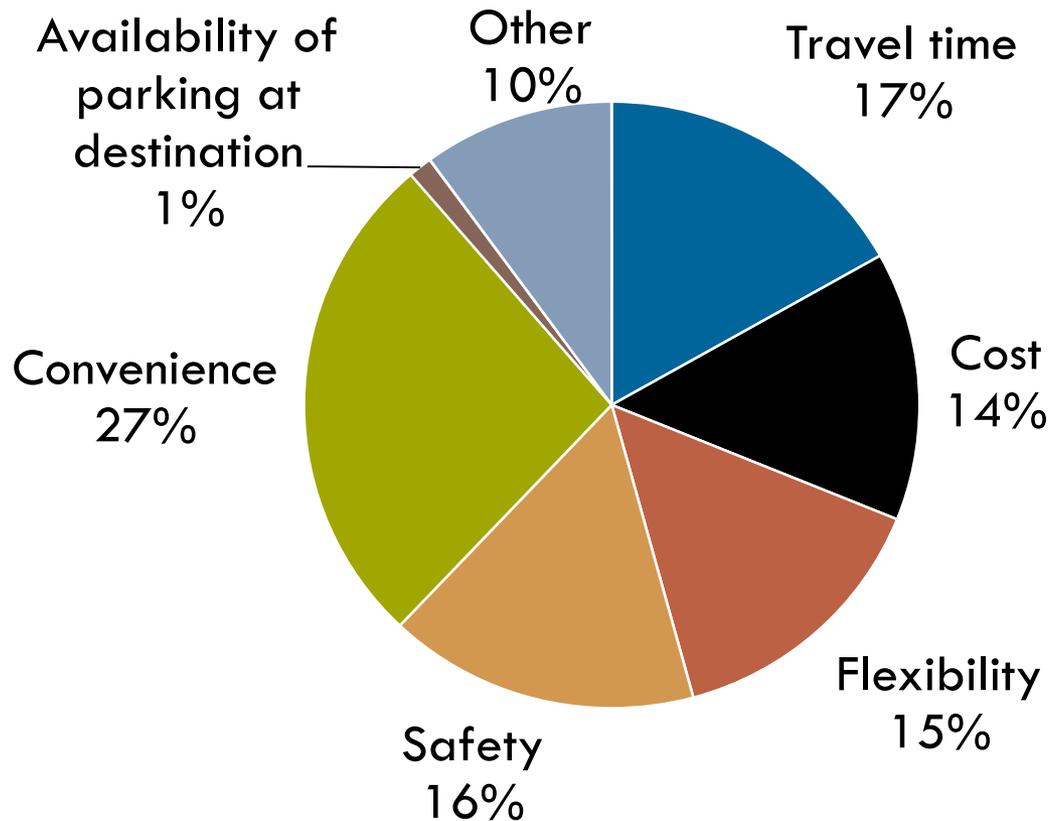


Public Input | Onboard Survey



Primary Factor in Mode Choice

People choose transit for many different reasons.



Public Input: Perceptions and Preferences

We collected additional information from the public



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Focus Groups

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- Riders and non-riders





Focus group participants said regional travel is not just for work.

- ▶ Shopping trips were a major topic of discussion.
- ▶ Bloomington is 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



Public Input | Focus Groups



Transit Investment Priorities in Order of Preference

Focus group participants prioritized the following

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



Core Markets for Regional Transit

Southeast Minnesota



▶ **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



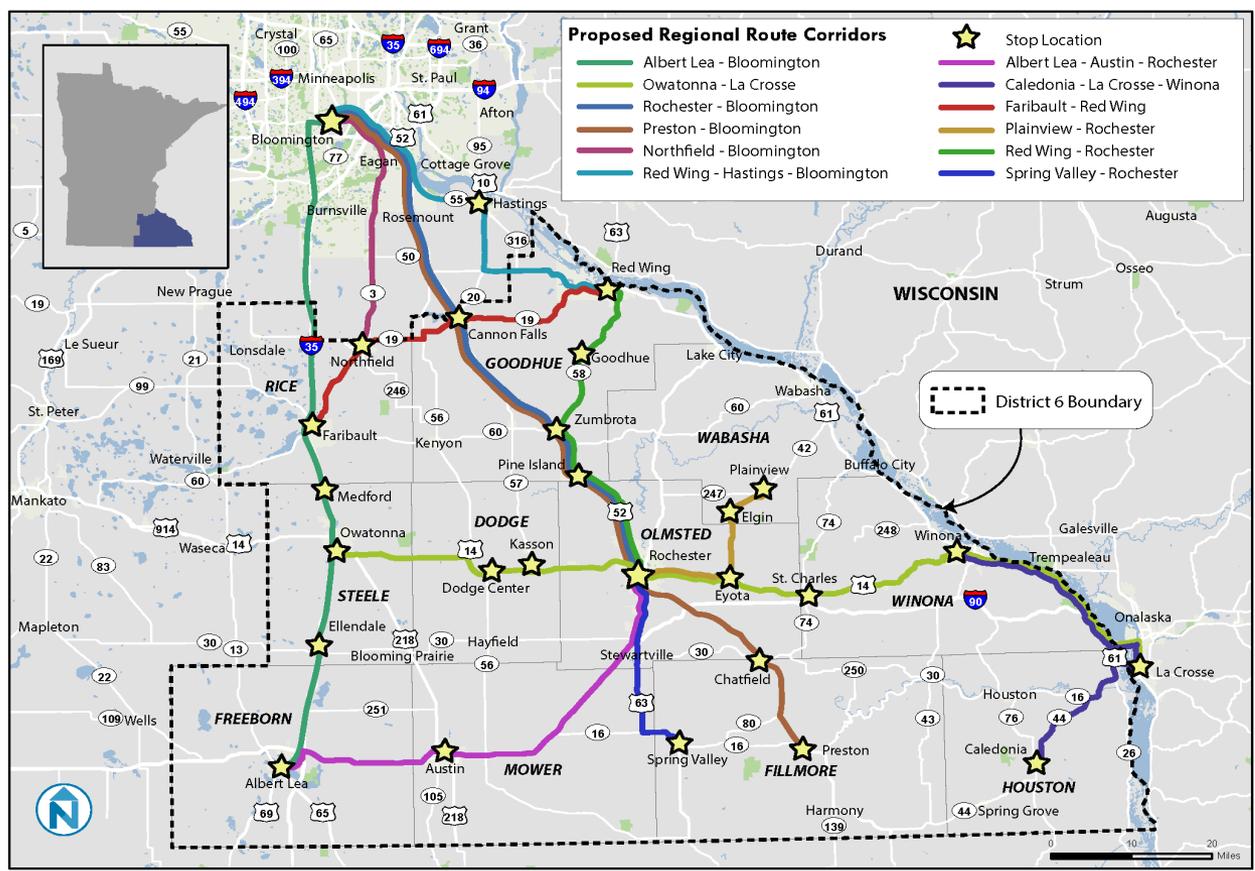
▶ **People with Disabilities**

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



Preliminary Opportunities | Ridership Estimates along Corridors

Several corridors were evaluated for potential services



Ridership Estimates | Ridership along Corridors

Route/ Highway	Number of Stops for Model Design	Total Daily Work Commute Trips	Daily Work Commute Transit Trips	Total Adjusted Daily Transit Trips
52 Preston–Rochester–Bloomington	8	6,411	197	401
52X Rochester– Bloomington Express	2	2,306	74	152
14 Owatonna–La Crosse	8	6,454	189	386
I-35 Albert Lea–Owatonna–Faribault– Bloomington	8	4,456	142	290
44/16/14/61 Caledonia– La Crosse– Winona	3	920	28	57
61/10 Red Wing–Hastings– Bloomington	4	3,653	107	218
I-90 W Albert Lea–Austin–Rochester	4	2,125	64	130
58 Red Wing– Zumbrota – Rochester	4	1,509	45	91
63 S Spring Valley– Rochester	2	549	16	32
42 Plainview–Elgin–Rochester	3	714	21	44
19 Faribault–Northfield–Red Wing	4	1,918	58	118
52N Northfield– Bloomington	3	1,342	40	81
I-90 E La Crosse–Rochester Express	4	184	6	12



Ridership Estimates | Potential Service Types

Based on potential ridership, we determined appropriate service types for each corridor segment.

- ▶ Regional Arterial Routes: Buses running between cities, typically not on highways but on regular roads
- ▶ Regional Express Routes: Buses running on highways with limited stops
- ▶ Specialized Group Trips: Limited midday scheduled service allowing people to run errands, make medical appointments or go shopping
- ▶ Vanpools: Organized groups of 5–15 people who ride a van together, usually for work/school trips



Service Concept Route Alternatives | Regional Express Services

Services

We designed a conceptual transit service for each corridor segment.

Route	Origin (AM)	Destination (PM)	Notes
35	Albert Lea	Bloomington	Counter-flow service between Bloomington and Owatonna
52R	Rochester	Bloomington	Two directions
10	Red Wing	Bloomington	Two directions
52N	Northfield	Bloomington	Two directions
14W	Owatonna	Rochester	Counter flow service between Rochester and Dodge Center only
14E	Winona	Rochester	Two directions
90	Albert Lea	Rochester	Two directions
19	Faribault	Northfield	Two directions
52S	Preston	Rochester	One way
SV	Spring Valley	Rochester	One way
42	Plainview	Rochester	One way



Key Findings

Based on ridership alone, the following routes have more than 100 potential riders and reasonable costs per beneficiary:

- Regional express bus service between Albert Lea and Bloomington
- Regional express bus service between Rochester and Bloomington
- Regional express bus service between Red Wing and Bloomington



Key Findings

These services have more than sufficient morning commute trips to warrant consideration as regional express bus routes with service in both directions. In terms of cost rankings, these services rate highly:

- Owatonna to Rochester
- Winona to Rochester
- Albert Lea to Rochester via Austin
- Faribault to Northfield



Key Findings

Small bus services for one-way commuter express routes are potentially beneficial for serving origins and destinations that are likely to generate fewer trips. Limited one-way commuter express services are ranked highly for

- Preston to Rochester
- Spring Valley to Rochester
- Plainview to Rochester



Key Findings

Support scheduled transit service but where modest demand exists.

Standalone vanpool or ridematching services (“standalone” because they are not necessarily supplementing other transit services) are rated highly in terms of cost per beneficiary and start-up costs, and would be less complex than the initiation of new transit services along these corridors:

- Cannon Falls – Red Wing
- Caledonia – La Crosse
- La Crosse – Winona
- Red Wing – Rochester



What Do You Think?

- Complete dot exercise
- Review the maps
- Talk with planners
- Share your opinions
- Tell friends/family members they can participate:

Join us for a Project Webinar on **Monday, March 21 at 3:00 PM CDT**. The session will include a formal presentation of the study findings and allow for questions and answers about the service alternatives.

From your browser, go to: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/142366741>

You can also dial in using your phone (Toll-free): 1-877-309-2073, Access Code: 142-366-741

