

TRANSIT NEEDS

V. TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Information used in the transit needs assessment were developed from focus groups, a telephone household survey, major employer interviews, and a demographic analysis. The information and findings of these tasks are summarized below.

TELEPHONE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Objectives

The objective of this part of the report is to generate a profile of the total market for transit service in the target areas of Kent County as the initial step in projecting the latent demand for service.

At the outset, little is known about how the general adult public envisions their possible uses of public transportation, or even whether they are aware of services that do exist. Thus, we suspect two things initially.

- ◆ First, the total latent demand, or “market,” for new services serving specific areas is likely to be relatively small. Thus, it will require an exploratory process to winnow out the latent demand, finding the core market where needs could be met by new service and who are interested in considering it.
- ◆ Second, the public, accustomed to the use of individual modes of transportation, is likely to have a more difficult time than residents of a transit-served urban area envisioning how they would use these services.

The first task is to look at the broad picture of interest in using the proposed services or services like them, and then narrow the focus. The process is iterative, beginning with an exploration of residents’ awareness and use of service in general and of existing paratransit services, as well as their usual local transportation modes, and related matters.

The analysis continues with an examination of residents’ interest in considering their potential use of new transit services. To take express routes as an example:

- ◆ How interested are area adults in using express service to Grand Rapids?
- ◆ What are the demographic differences between those who indicate they would use new services and those who would not? Are there major differences of a linear nature (e.g. a relationship between income and potential utilization) that could be used to predict demand or are the relationships irregular or only minor?
- ◆ Do they travel to the central city destinations that would be served?
- ◆ Are the purposes for which they think they would use service commuter-oriented or not?
- ◆ Are they employed, and if so, where do they work?
- ◆ Are there differences in transportation between those who reside in the areas in closest proximity and those who live farther away?

- ◆ What are the current modes used to get to work among those who are most interested in using transit?

Method

A survey was conducted with 1,037 adults, 18 years old or older, throughout the target areas of Kent County, Michigan. The sample consisted of random digit dialed numbers, including both landline and cell phone numbers. Sample error in a sample of this size is plus or minus three percent when responses are divided approximately 50:50. When the distribution of responses is more skewed, as in a situation in which only 10 percent answer one way and 90 percent another, simple error is slightly lower, plus or minus two percent. Interviews occurred during August and September of 2010.

Early in the survey respondents were asked in which township they live. Virtually everyone was able to respond with the exception of a small number of people whose approximate location was found by reference to a census tract associated with their telephone number, or a series of questions that enabled them to be located.

Data was weighted by gender and age-group according to the population norms of the target townships provided by the U.S. Census data for 2006.

Summary of Results

Current Mode

Respondents were asked to state the current mode they use for local travel. If the respondent was employed outside the home for 30 hours or more a week, he or she was asked the commute mode. Similarly, if the respondent was a student, he or she was asked the usual mode to get to school. All others, including homemakers and retired persons, who are neither employed outside the home or students, were asked their mode for making the types of trips they commonly make locally. The results are shown in Exhibit V-1.

It is evident from the chart that the single occupancy vehicle is highly dominant in the study area, with 87.8 percent indicating that that is the primary mode of their transportation. An additional 10.4 percent indicate they carpool or ride with other people with their usual trips.

To obtain a broader picture of the total local travel market in the study area, each respondent was asked about travel of others in the household. Because this survey was conducted by telephone, a limit had to be placed on the number of persons other than the respondent that was asked about. For example, if there were more than one employed person besides the respondent, the respondent was asked about his or her spouse, or if not married, the person closest in age to the respondent.

**Exhibit V-1
Current Mode for Local Trips**

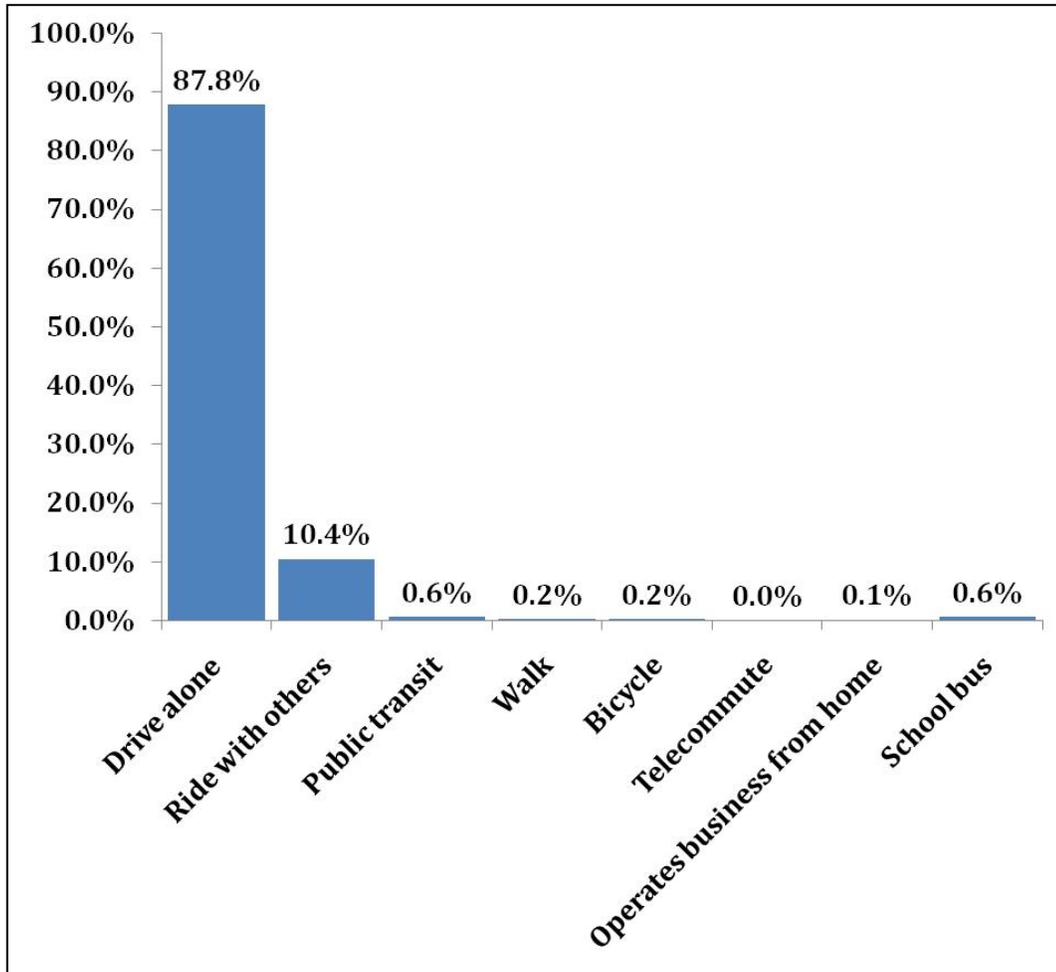
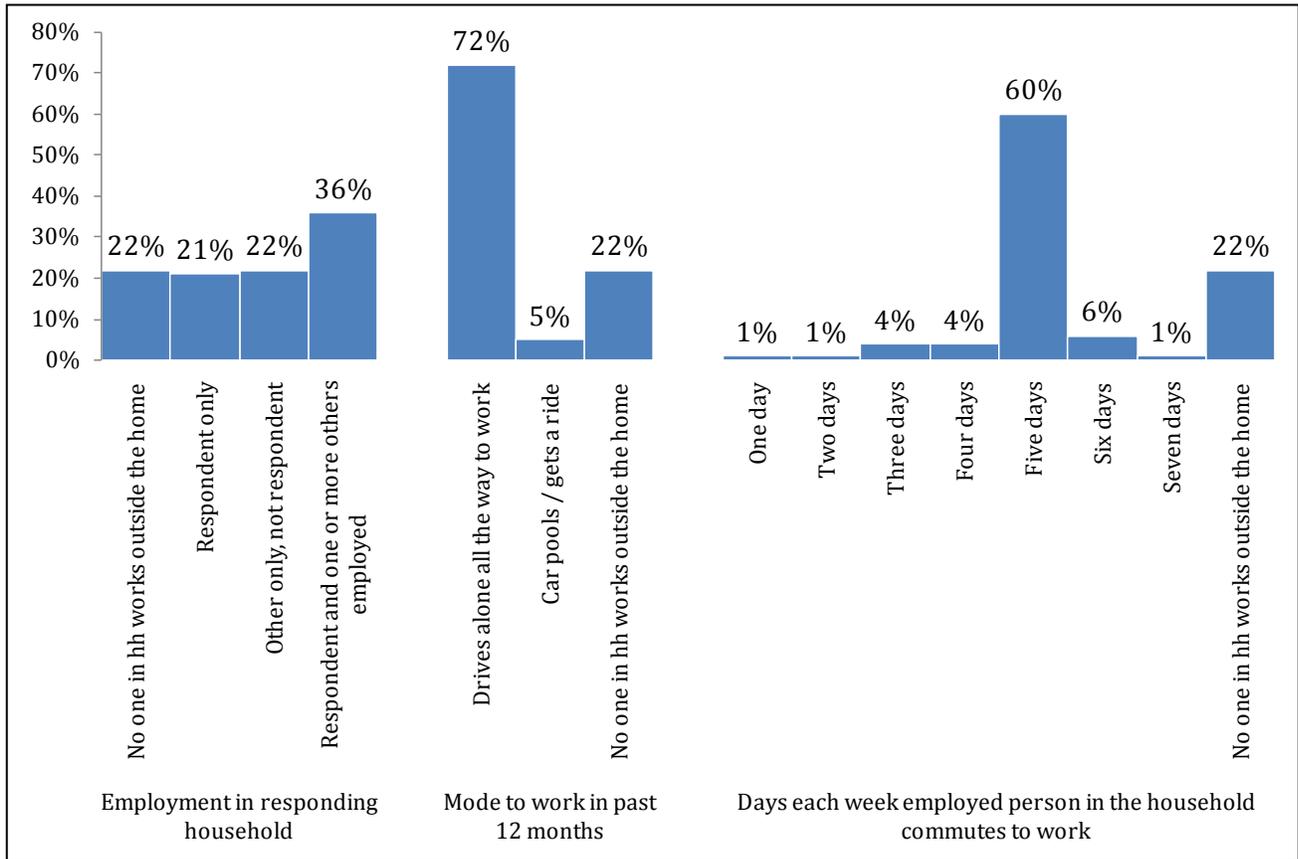


Exhibit V-2 shows that 22 percent of households indicated that no one in the household was employed outside the home for 30 hours or more per week. In 21 percent of households only the respondent to whom the surveyors spoke was employed. In 22 percent of the households, only a person other than the respondent was employed, and in 36 percent of the households the respondent and another person were employed. Thus, for 22 percent of households within the study area, there is no commute trip, but in 77 percent of the households there is a commute trip.

Exhibit V-2 Work Commute

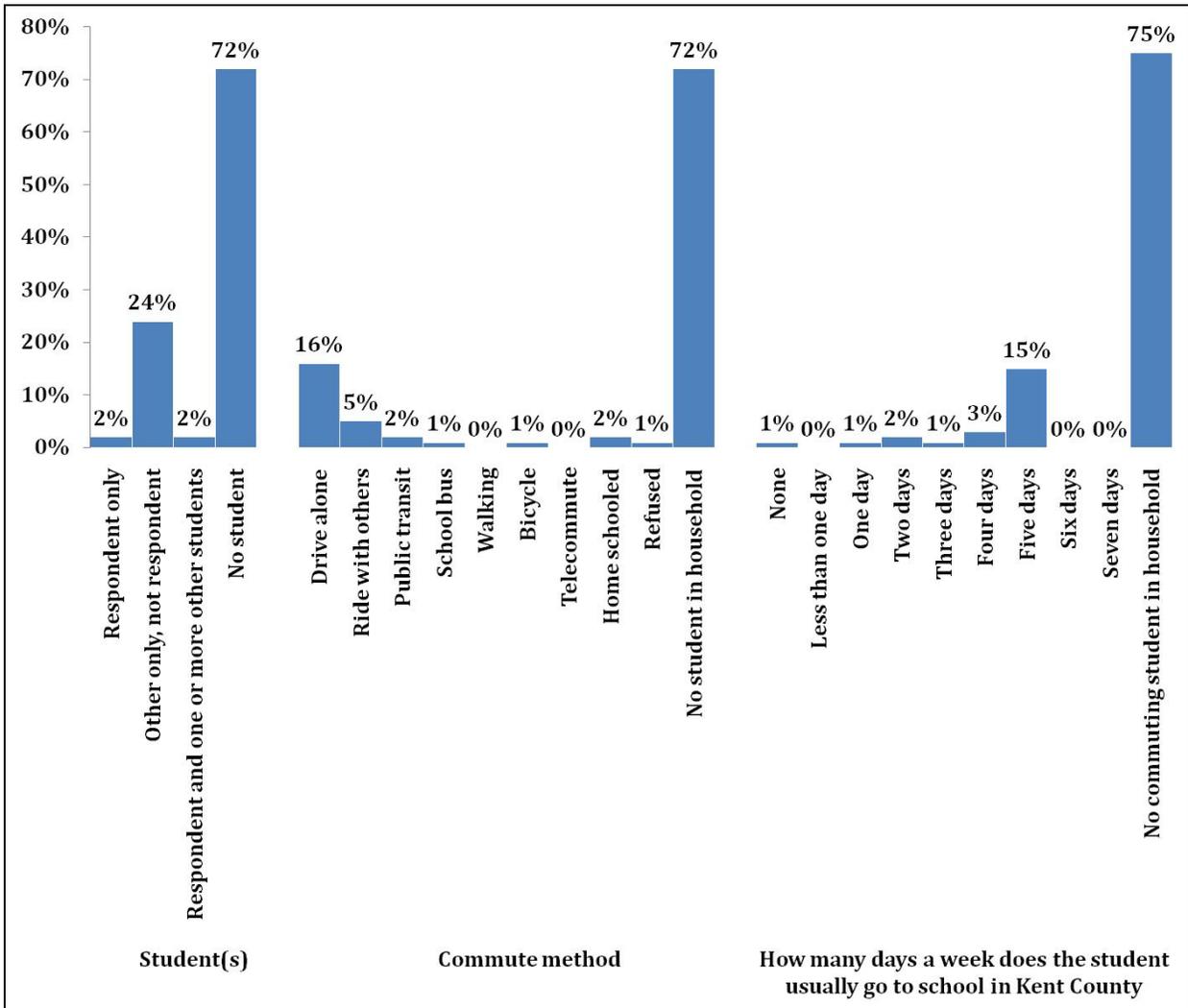


Among all households, then, 72 percent have a work trip that involves driving alone all the way to work, and another five percent rideshare.

The vast majority of those who travel to work commute five days per week. A few (seven percent) commute either six or seven days, and a total of ten percent commute less often.

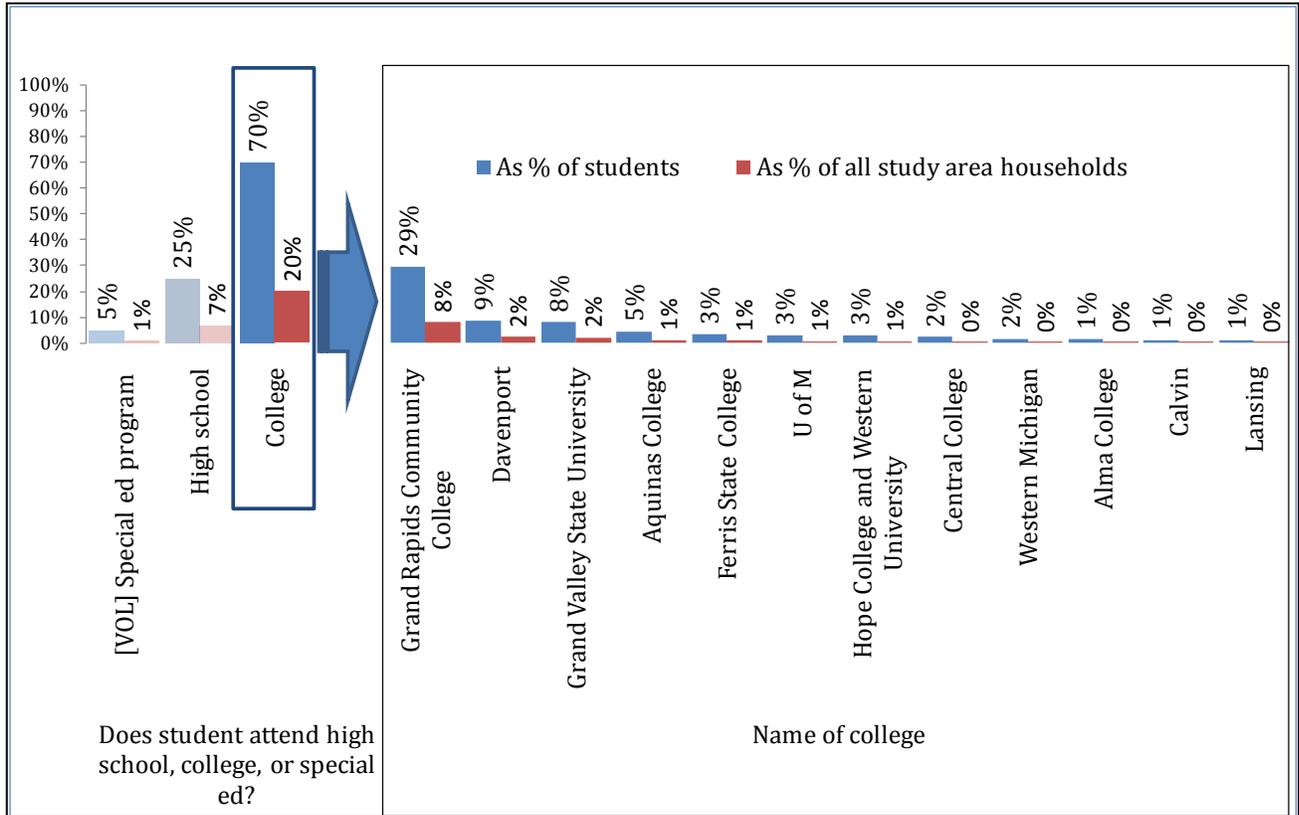
As seen in Exhibit V-3, a total of 26 percent of the households surveyed contained a student 16 years old or older who attends high school or college. Some of these are very young, and some are nontraditional students at a community college. For those who are students, the predominantly mode to school is to drive alone (16 percent of all study area households). Some ride with others, and some use transit (including a school bus). The dominant frequency of making the school commute is five days a week.

Exhibit V-3 School Commute



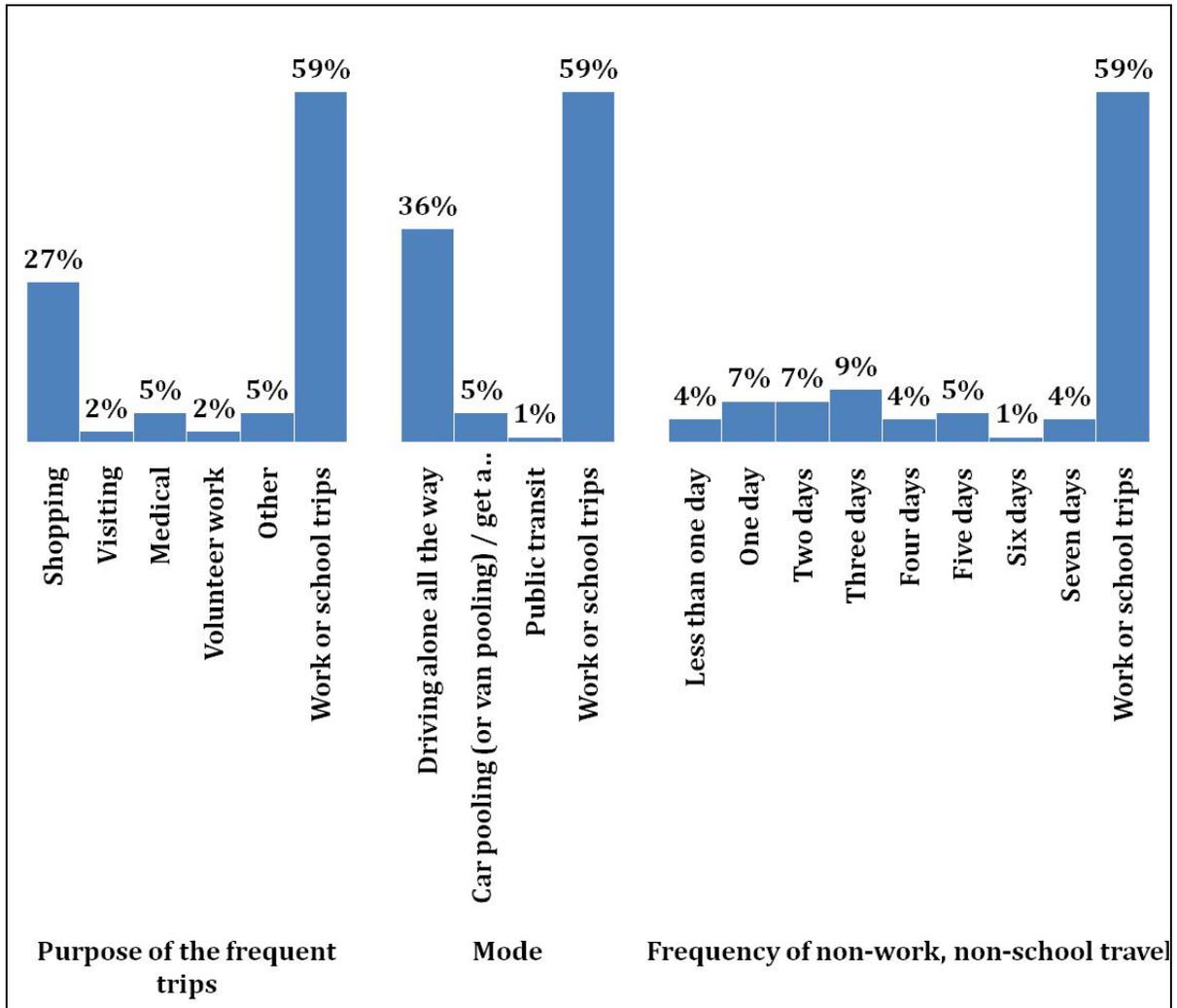
The survey showed that 28 percent of study area households have a student 16 years old or older. Most of these are college students. More of them attend Grand Rapids Community College than any other college, a fact that may offer opportunities for building student ridership. The chart in Exhibit V-4 shows percent of households with students 16 years or older.

Exhibit V-4 Households with Students



Those respondents who were neither employed nor students were asked about their other types of travel. For the most part, such trips were for shopping, although a few were for social visits, medical reasons, volunteer work, and other purposes. In 59 percent of all households, someone made a school or work trip, leaving 41 percent who made other trips. The frequency of such trips varied greatly, with no dominant pattern (as seen in Exhibit V-5).

**Exhibit V-5
Other Local Travel**

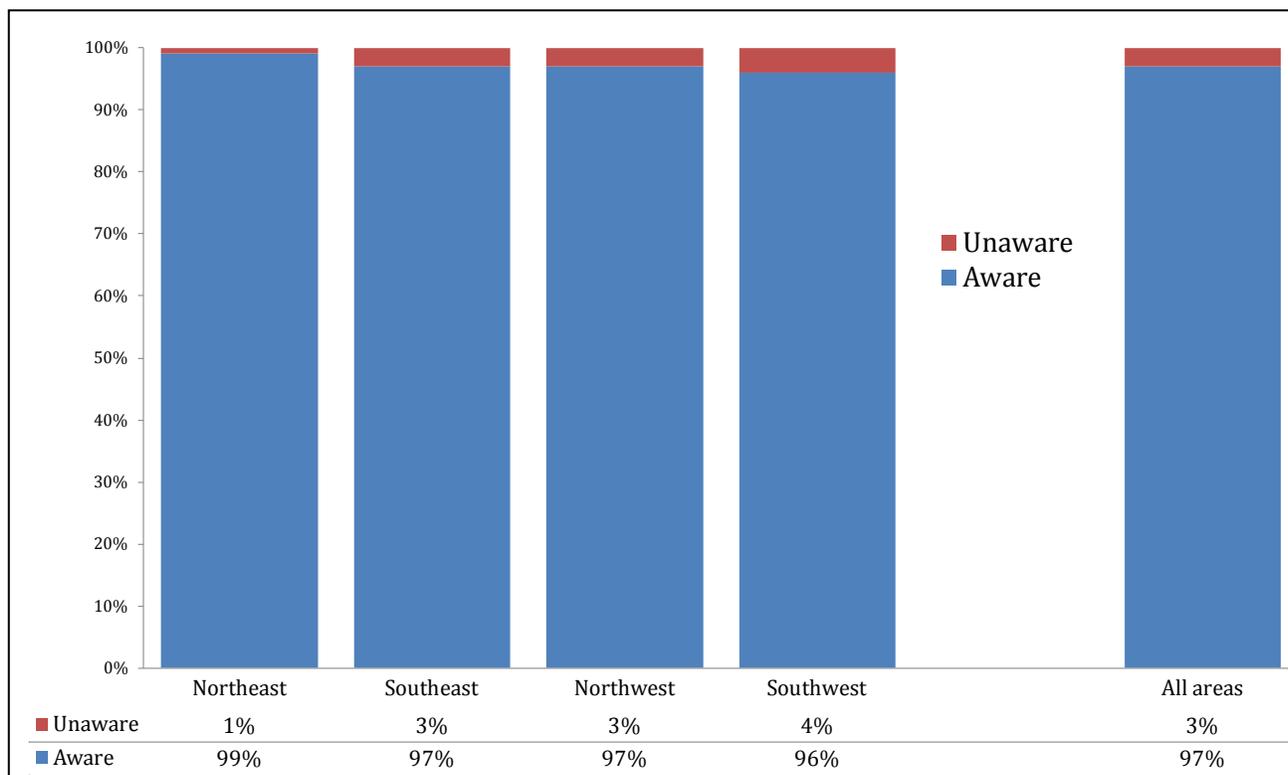


Level of Awareness of Transit Service

To gauge whether these suburban and rural residents had any exposure to public transportation, they were asked whether they were aware of the transit service in Grand Rapids, The Rapid. Overwhelmingly, 97 percent were aware.

The chart in Exhibit V-6 suggests that there may be some slight difference in awareness among the four general quadrants dividing the county. However, the differences are very slight and can be ignored for purposes of promoting any new possible services.

**Exhibit V-6
Awareness of Public transportation**

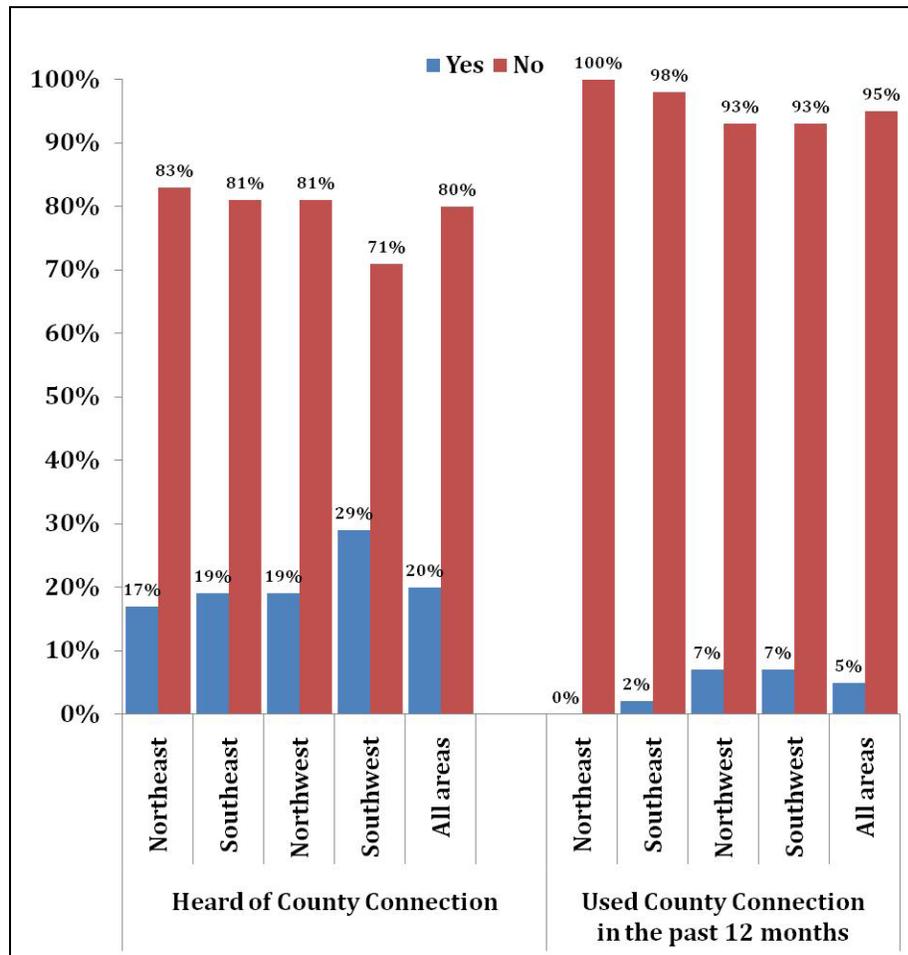


Awareness and Use of County Connection

The only public transportation serving the entire target area at the time of the survey was County Connection. Although most respondents had heard of The Rapid, relatively few, 20 percent, had heard of County Connection, as shown in Exhibit V-7. More respondents in the southwest part of the target area were aware of County Connection than respondents elsewhere. The reason for this difference is not apparent in the survey results.

Of the 20 percent of respondents who had heard of County Connection, five (5) percent indicated that they had used it in the past 12 months. This would amount to one percent of the adult population of the area.

**Exhibit V-7
Awareness and Use of County Connection**



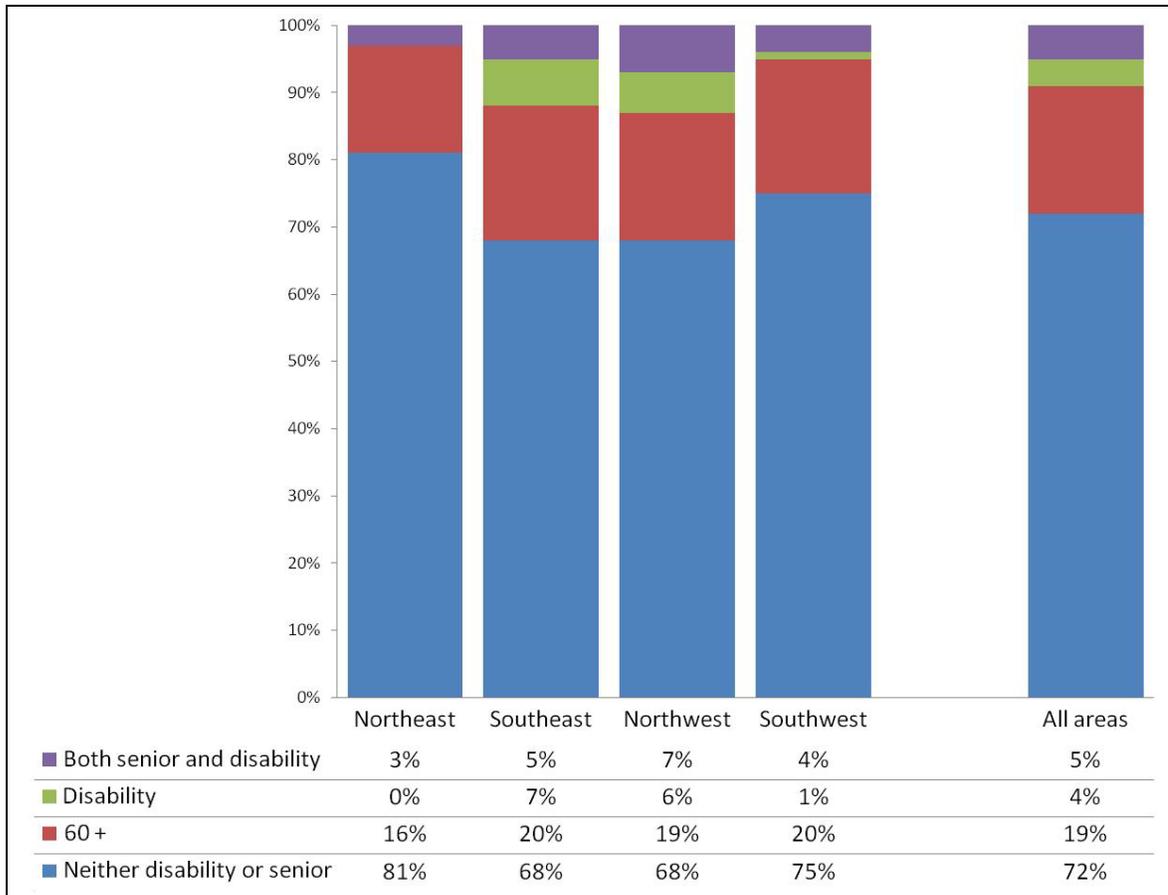
Age and Disabilities

Leading into a question concerning the utilization of paratransit services, respondents were asked their age and their disability status. Areawide, five (5) percent indicated that they were both over 60 and had a disability, while another four (4) percent indicated they had a disability but were not over 60. Nineteen (19) percent indicated they were 60 with no disability, and seventy-two (72) percent indicated that they were neither seniors nor disabled. Exhibit V-8 displays the responses collected regarding age and disability status.

These percentages varied considerably among the regions. There were very few persons reporting a disability in the northeast, three (3) percent in total, and five (5) percent in the southwest. More persons in the southeast and northwest reported having a disability with the totals for these areas twelve (12) percent and thirteen (13) percent, respectively. The population 60 and older also varies

somewhat, with only nineteen (19) percent in the northeast, twenty-five (25) percent in southeast, twenty-six (26) percent in the northwest, and twenty-four (24) percent in the southwest.

Exhibit V-8
Presence in Household of a Person with a Disability and/or a Person 60 or Older



Use of Paratransit

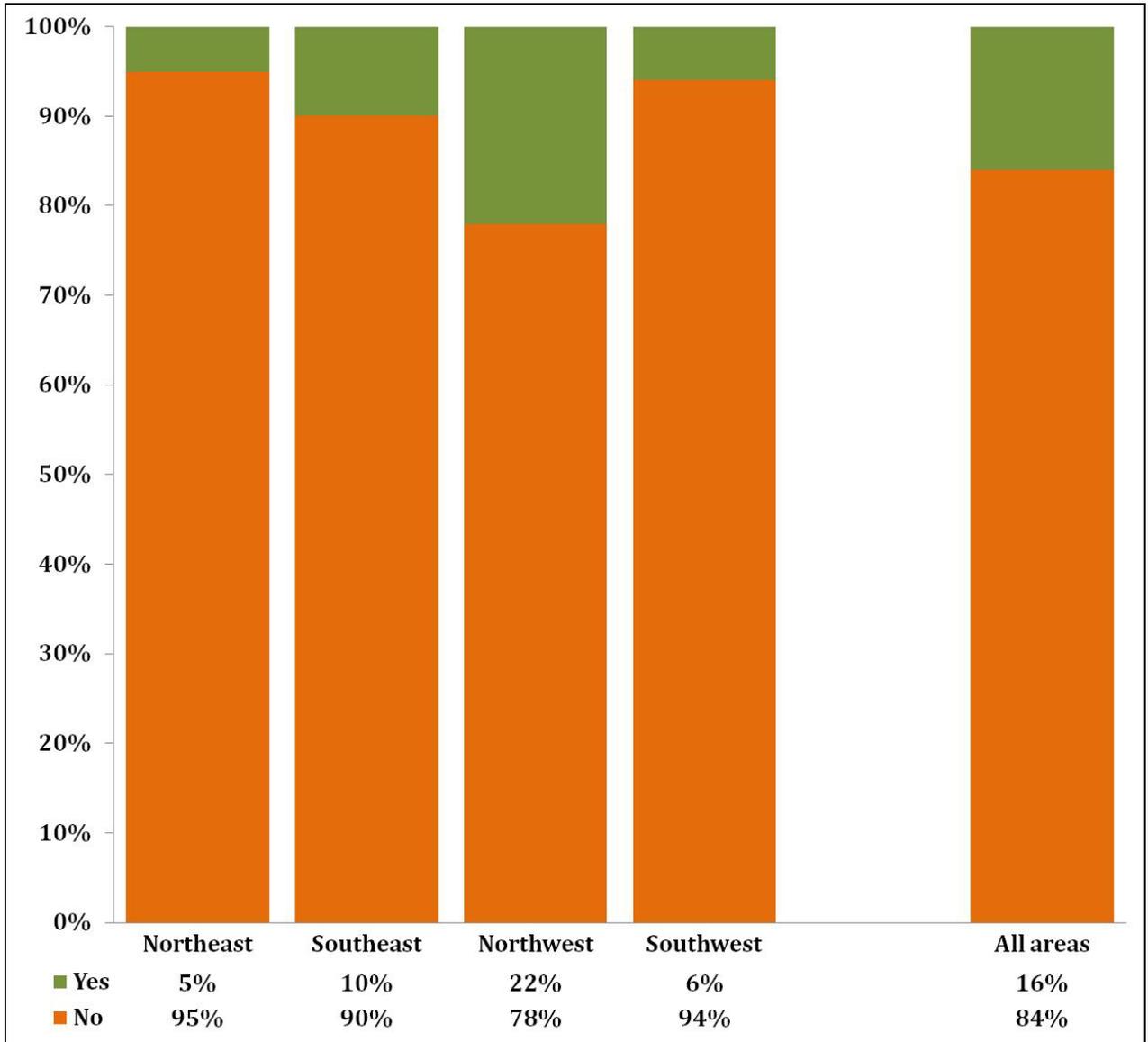
Those who reported a disability were asked a follow-up question: whether they had utilized one of more of the several transit services available to the disability community and to seniors. The responses are shown in Exhibit V-9. In the chart, therefore, the percentages represent the nine (9) percent of the persons who identified themselves as being disabled or older than 60.

Note: The unweighted sub-sample size of this group is 124 persons.

Of those meeting the criteria of being 60 or older, having a disability, or both, 16 percent indicated that they had used one or more of the transportation services. Although the regional subsamples are very small, averaging only approximately 20 to 30 persons per region, it appears that the northwest part of the county has the greatest level of utilization. If utilization figures maintained by the various

providers verify that this is the case, then the larger unmet need would appear to be in the southeast and southwest areas, which have populations that apparently are eligible but very few of which have used the services.

**Exhibit V-9
Using Paratransit Among Those 60 or Over and/or With a Disability**



Those who indicated that they had used a service were asked which of the services they had used. Exhibit V-10 outlines the responses that were received. This subsample is too small for reasonable analysis. The unweighted subsample includes 26 people. While the sample is very small, the distribution is in accord with the common observation that the area served by Go-Bus is quite limited, while the Hope Network services range farther.

**Exhibit V-10
Use of Paratransit Services**

		<u>All areas</u>
Did you or the other person use the Go-Bus in the past 12 months?	Yes	5
	No	21
Did you or the other person use the Hope Network in the past 12 months?	Yes	12
	No	14
Did you or the other person use the North Kent Transit in the past 12 months?	Yes	1
	No	25
Did you or the other person use the Red-Cross in the past 12 months?	Yes	5
	No	21

Note: The unweighted number of persons who used the paratransit services is too small for reliable analysis.

Focus groups conducted prior to the survey suggested that many current or potential users of the existing paratransit service felt underserved because of the various limitations on the services, and because of the cost of County Connection which might otherwise serve as a substitute. Of the 26 respondents who said they had used a service, 18 persons said that it was adequate for their purposes, while eight persons indicated that it was too limited. Their comments, reproduced in the chart, are consistent with the findings of the focus groups.

Although the population is relatively small, there is clearly some latent demand for additional paratransit service. While the survey indicates that there is a small proportion of the adult population who consider existing services inadequate, actually measuring the extent of need for specific and additional paratransit services among that population would require a systematic survey of many more current users, and a larger sample of population 60 or older or with disabilities than could be incorporated in focus groups or this more general-purpose survey.

Latent demand

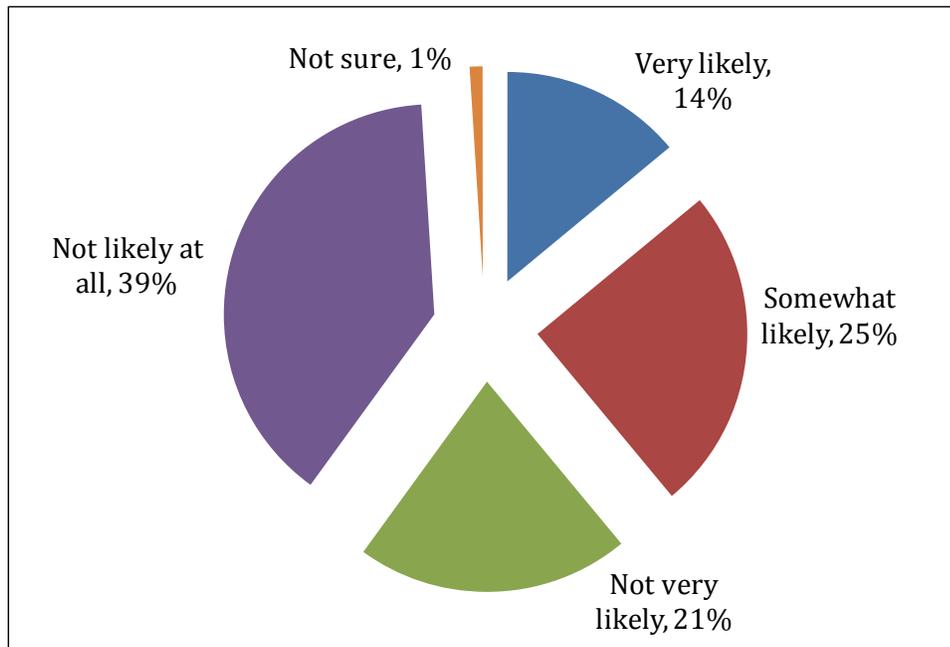
Respondents were asked a series of questions about transit services that they would be likely to use. Some of these questions were quite specific involving particular express routes, extensions of existing routes of The Rapid, and a specific type of door-to-door service. However, this section of the survey began with a more general question intended to help the respondent to begin thinking in terms of possible transit services and his or her reaction to these services in general prior to asking about specific routes.

The question was worded as follows:

- ◆ *I have asked you several questions about the local trips you make. Local transportation can be improved by improving roads or public transportation. In this survey, we are interested in public transportation.*
- ◆ *Let's say that new public bus services were developed so that you could go between [insert the name of the Township where the respondent lives] and other places in Kent County. Let's say it would run frequently and on-time, and it was easy for you to get to the bus stop. Answering realistically, how likely would you be to use these public transit buses once a month or more to make local trips in Kent County?*

The distribution of responses is shown in the chart in Exhibit V-11. This response is fairly typical of the response in many underserved markets. A total of thirty-nine (39) percent indicated they would be either very likely (14 percent) or somewhat likely (25 percent) to use the service. This does not, of course, mean that all of them actually would use such service. It does, however, mean that they are interested in considering it. This provides a starting point. This distribution also means that it can be assumed that roughly sixty (60) percent of the adult public is simply not interested in using transit service even when it is described in these relatively positive terms.

Exhibit V-11
Potential for General Transit Services



For reference, in less rural settings in similar surveys, thirty (30) percent to thirty-five (35) percent commonly express interest in such generally defined services.

Potential Market

The first of two charts (Exhibit V-12) describing the market demographically indicates the percent of each of the three groups (likely, somewhat likely, unlikely to use new local transit service) who fall into each of the demographic categories.

As indicated previously, most people drive alone to their destinations. This is true of more of those who say they are unlikely to use public transportation (91 percent) than it is of those who say they are likely to do so (82 percent) and those who are somewhat likely to do so (81 percent). Conversely it can be said that if public transit is offered, it is more likely to attract those who already ride with others than it is to attract those who typically drive alone. However, the much larger market is among those who now drive alone.

Most people in the target area have a vehicle available for their use. There are some differences but relatively small ones among the three potential user/non-user groups in this respect.

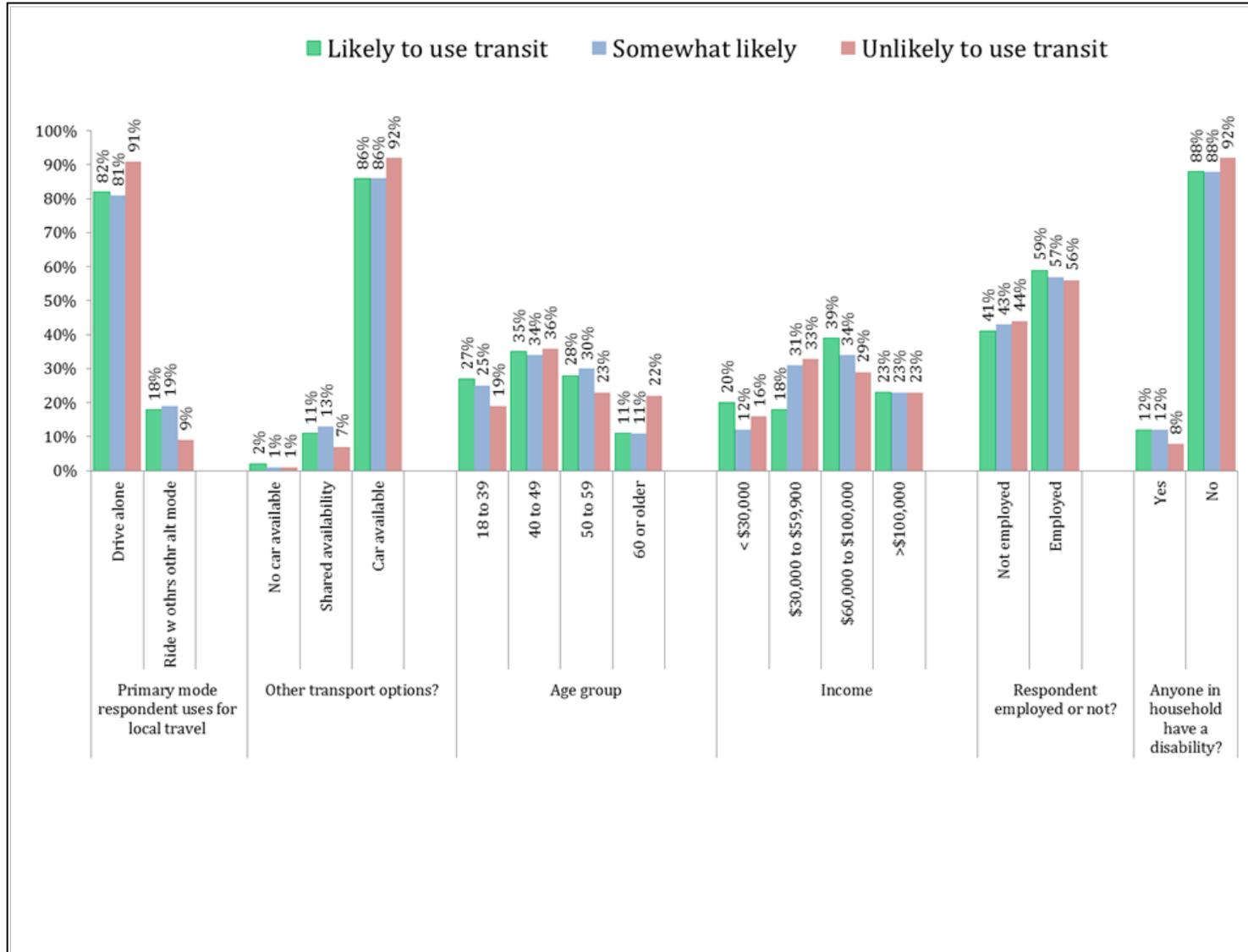
The age distribution is interesting because it suggests that the likely and somewhat likely user groups tend to fall somewhat more into the younger age categories than those who are less likely to use it. For example, of those likely to use public transit, twenty-seven (27) percent fall in the age range between 18 and 39, while only eleven (11) percent of the likely users are 60 or older. Conversely, while only nineteen (19) percent of the unlikely users are in the 18 to 39 age group, twenty-two (22) percent of unlikely users are in the oldest age group, 60 and older.

Likely users have a higher proportion of the lowest income category (below \$30,000 for the household), but the relationship between income and the likelihood of using public transit is irregular and not strong. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of it is that thirty-nine (39) percent of those likely to use transit fall in the income category between \$60,000 and \$100,000 a year, an indication that they, or at least their households, are very economically active.

There is a very small relationship between being employed and being interested in using public transportation, but it is not a strong relationship. Most adults are employed, and this is simply reflected in the potential for ridership.

Finally, there is a slightly greater tendency (12 percent) for likely and somewhat likely users than others (8 percent) to report that they or someone else in the household has a disability.

Exhibit V-12
Demographics of the potential Market (1)



In the previous chart, the demographic characteristics of each likely user group were examined. In Exhibit V-13 the percentages are reversed and consider the interest in using transit among the various demographic groups.

Of those who drive alone, thirteen (13) percent said they would be likely to use such transit service, but twenty (20) percent of those who share a ride indicated they would be likely users. Similarly, of those who drive alone, only twenty-three (23) percent indicated they would be somewhat likely to use it, but thirty-seven (37) percent of those who share a ride indicated they would be somewhat likely to use it.

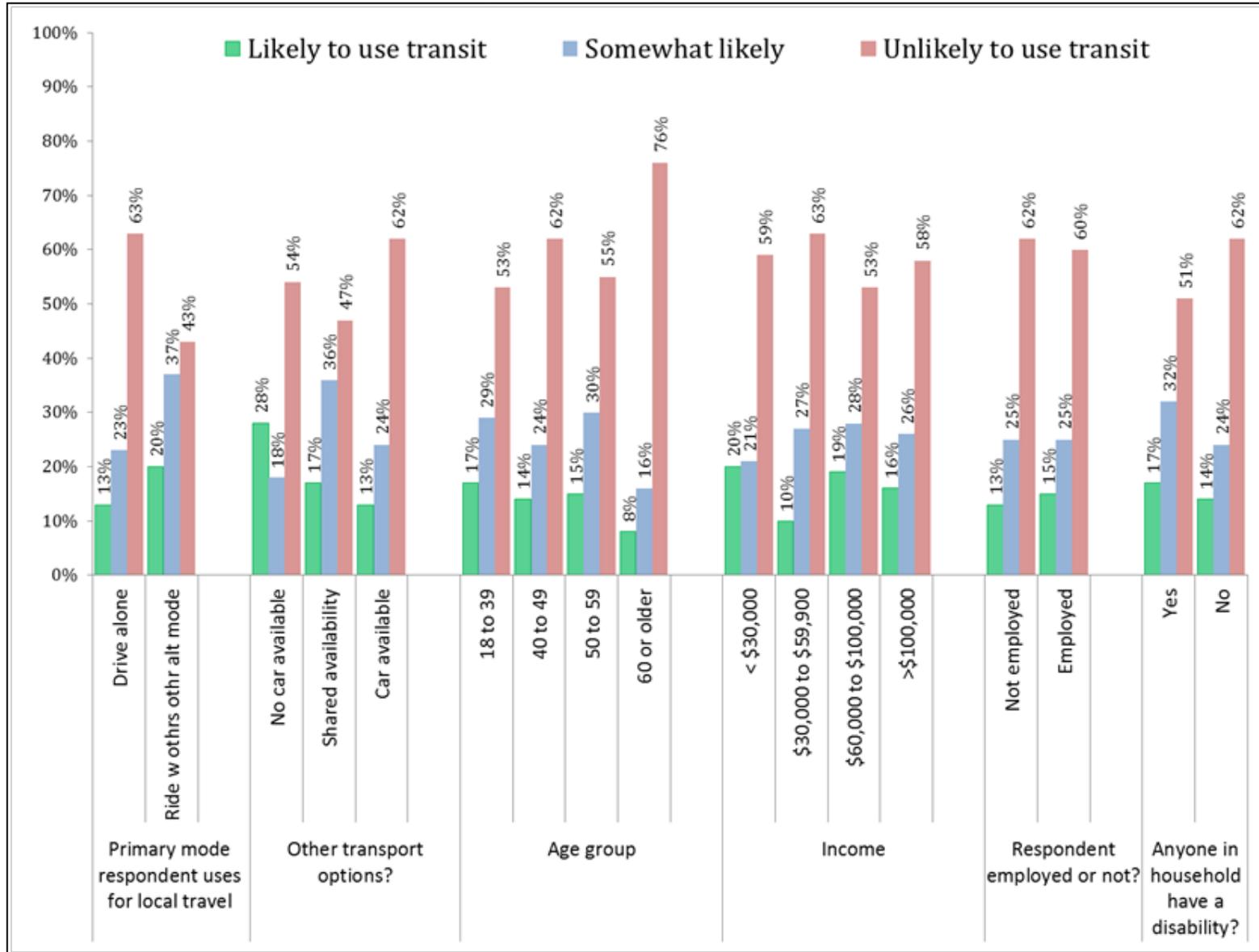
Those with no car available constitute an extremely small proportion of the total adult population and that portion of the chart can be ignored. Obviously that group, insofar as they may be economically and socially active, would be dependent on transit or ride-sharing in any event. Those who share availability of a vehicle have only a slightly greater chance of being likely to use transit than do those with a vehicle. The primary difference between those who share availability and those who have their own vehicle available is in those who are only “somewhat likely” to use transit.

As was observed with regard to the previous chart, there is a substantial difference in attitudes toward using transit between the younger and the older members of the adult population. It is the younger population that is more likely to be interested in using these types of transportation services. For example, while seventeen (17) percent of the 18 to 39-year-old respondents said they were likely to use the service, only eight (8) percent of those 60 and older said this. Conversely, those who are 60 and older were the most likely of all to say they were unlikely to use public transit. This may seem paradoxical to those accustomed to thinking of transit service that serves the elderly, but it is typically the younger population, because of their lower incomes, coupled with their need for mobility who are most interested in utilizing public transit.

Again, an unusual, mixed, and irregular, relationship between income and the likelihood of using public transit is revealed. As one would expect, there is a difference between the extremes of income, but, unexpectedly, it is quite small. Of those with household incomes below \$30,000, 20 percent are very likely users compared to sixteen (16) percent of those with household incomes in excess of \$100,000. Also, the relationship is not linear, for only ten (10) percent of those with incomes in the range of \$30,000-\$59,900 said they would be likely users. In short, it cannot be said with confidence that the lower the income the greater the consideration adults would give to using transit.

There is very little difference between those who are employed and those who are not employed in terms of their reaction to the potential use of new transit service. Finally, there is a slight tendency for those who are themselves disabled or live with someone who has a disability to indicate an interest in using transit (17 percent) compared to those in other households (14 percent), but the tendency is only slight.

**Exhibit V-13
Demographics of the potential Market (2)**

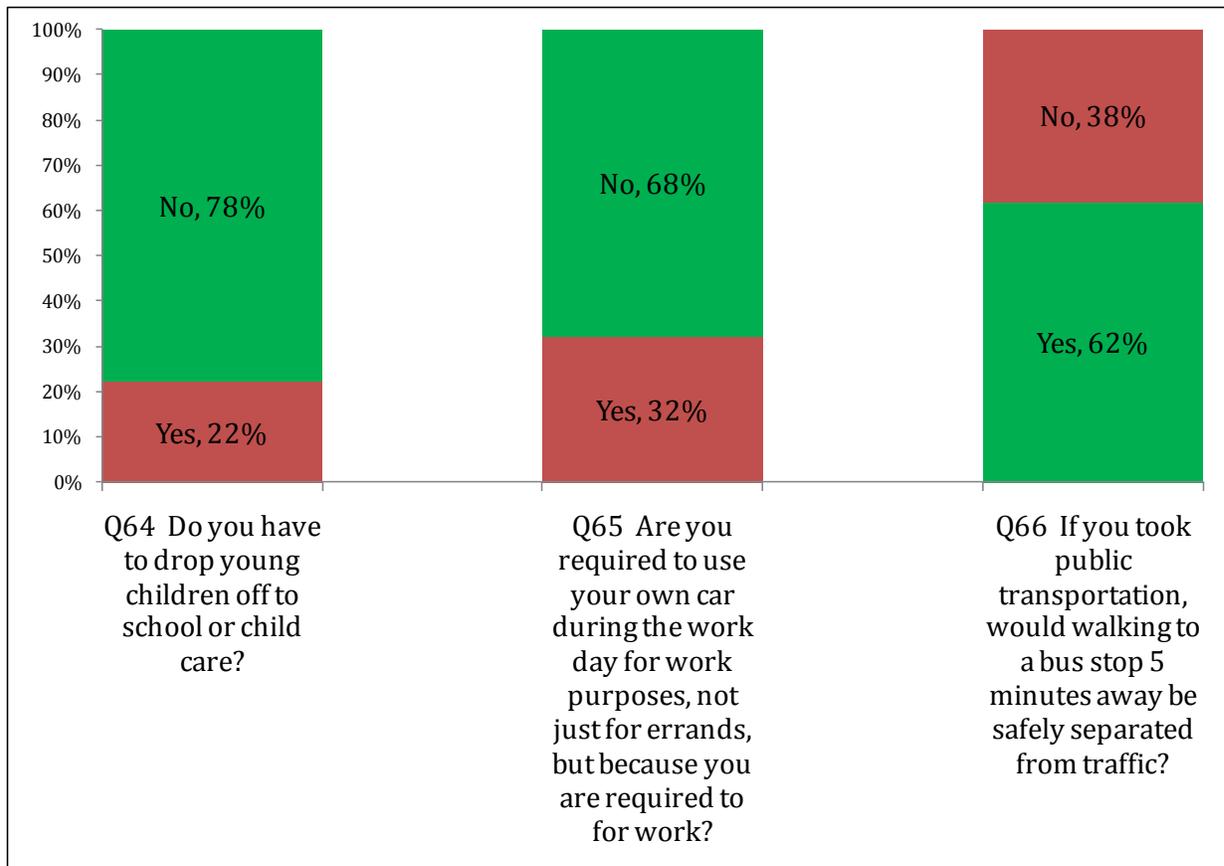


Overall, these relationships are not as strong as one might expect in a more urban population with more experience with public transportation, its opportunities, and challenges. When people understand the benefits and limitations of public transportation for their own use, the relationship between potential utilization of new service and demographic characteristics tends to be much stronger than observed here.

Barriers

There are also various barriers to using public transportation. These include the three named in Exhibit V-14; that is, having to drop young children off to school or childcare, having to use one's own vehicle for work purposes, and having a walk to the potential bus stop that is perceived as unsafe from traffic.

**Exhibit V-14
Barriers**



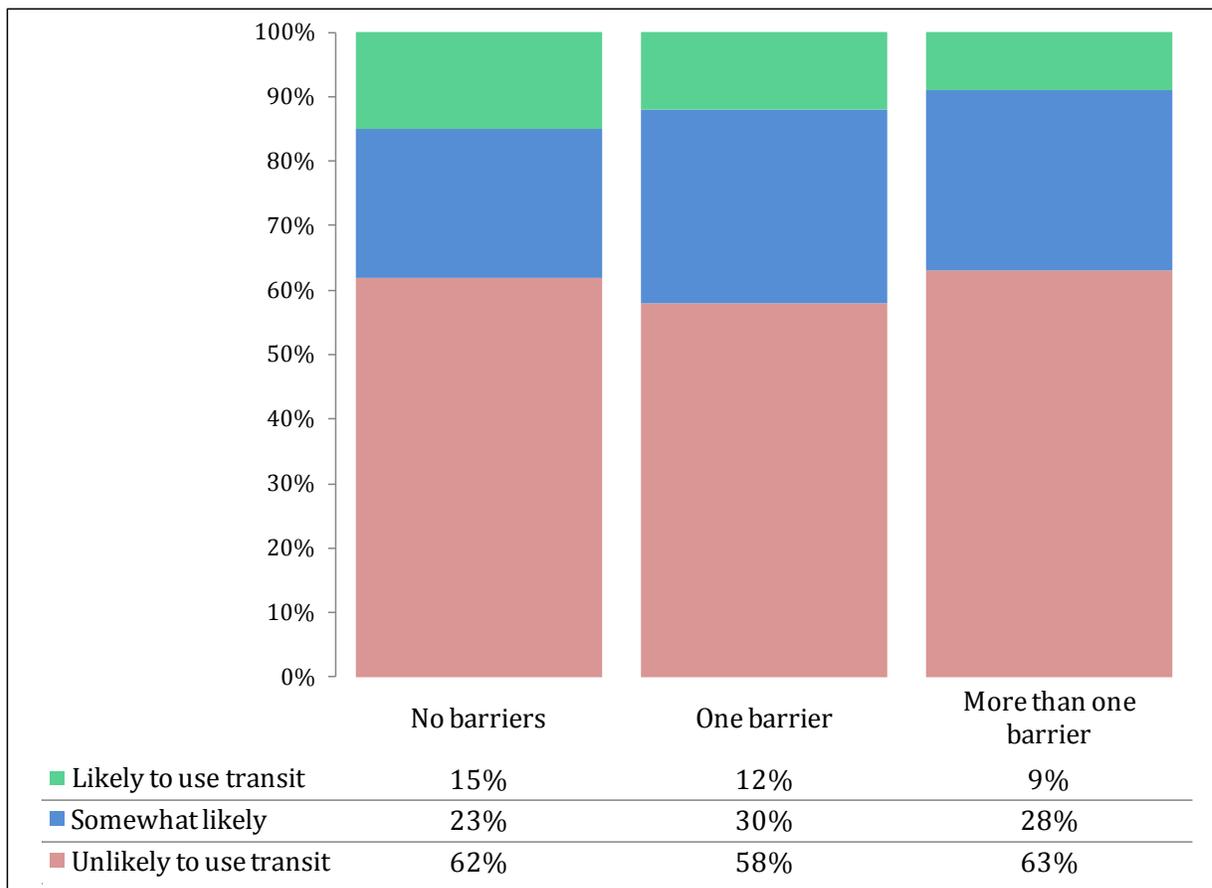
The chart shows in the green portion of the bars the percent that do *not* face one of the barriers and, in deep red, the percent who do. Note, for example, that latent demand for transit would be limited for some people (22 percent) because they feel they must drop off young children to school or childcare. Similarly, the 32 percent who say they must use their own vehicle at work would be

unable to use public transit for work purposes. Finally, thirty-eight (38) percent perceive that a five-minute walk to the bus stop would not be safely separated from traffic.

Exhibit V-15 shows how these barriers relate to people's perception that they would or would not use public transportation. In the longer run, as total estimates are prepared of the numbers of likely users of the three types that were the focus of the study (express service, route extension service, and door-to-door service), the perception of having barriers will be useful in further defining the limits of the total level of latent demand for public transportation.

Having no barriers to using public transportation is related to a slightly higher tendency to consider oneself likely to use it (15 percent) than those with a single barrier (12 percent) and those with more than one barrier (nine percent).

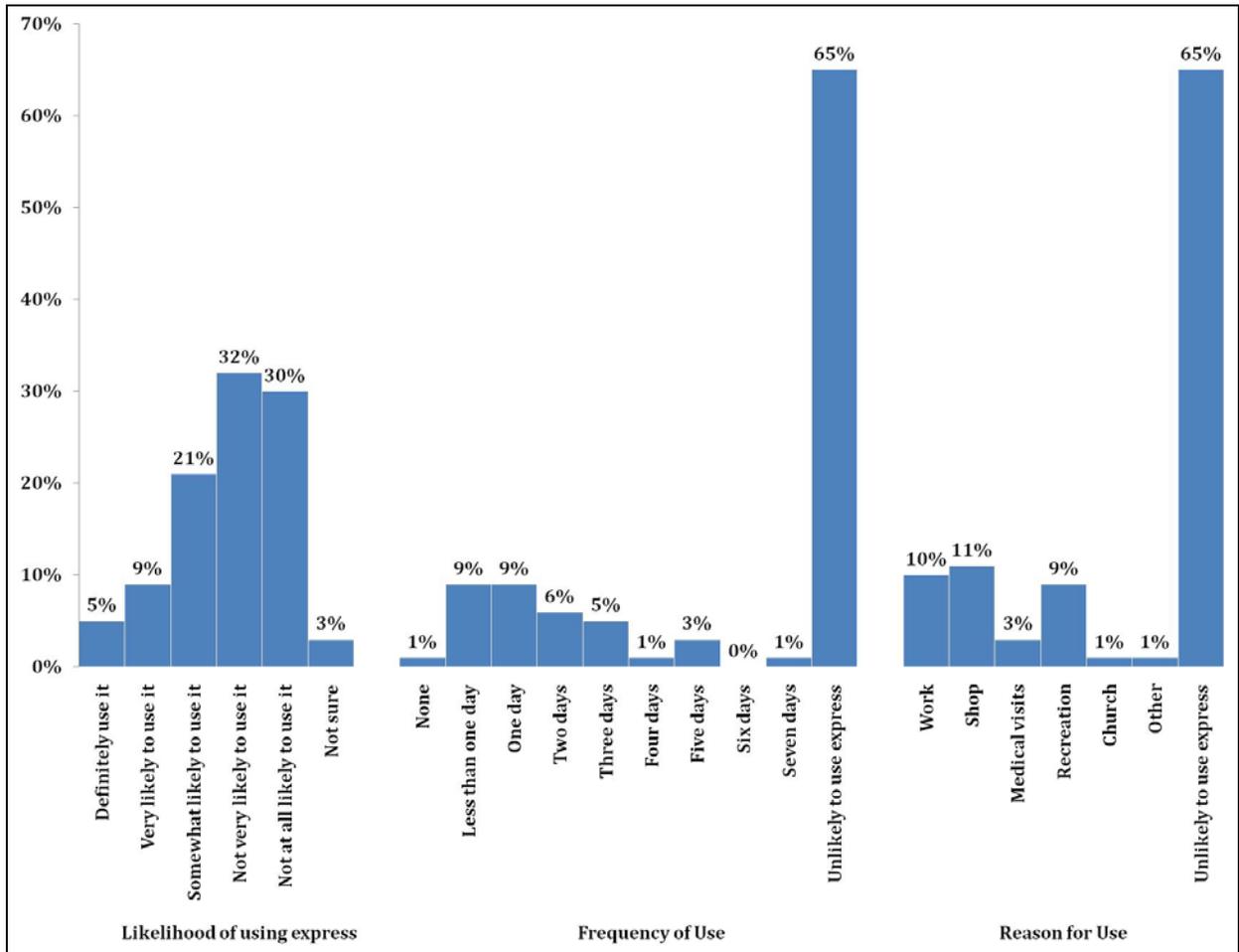
**Exhibit V-15
Barriers and General Transit**



Specific Transit Services

Respondents were asked a series of questions about express routes. In general, the questions were specific to the townships in which they reside. For example, those residing in Cedar Springs or Rockford were asked about express bus service running between Cedar Springs, Rockford, and the City of Grand Rapids. Others were asked similar questions specific to their areas. If no express route was being discussed for a given area, a general question was asked about the use of express service to downtown Grand Rapids from the place where they live. The results are shown in Exhibit V-16.

**Exhibit V-16
Demand for Express Routes**



Respondents were asked to state whether they felt they would definitely use such a service, be very likely to use it, be somewhat likely to use it, not very likely or not likely at all to use it. The same model was followed also for route extensions, and for door-to-door service countywide.

Of all respondents, five percent said they would definitely use express service to downtown Grand Rapids, and nine percent indicated they would be very likely to use it. In addition, twenty-one percent said they were somewhat likely to use it.

To repeat a point made earlier, this does not mean that there is a fixed five percent latent demand of people who would definitely begin using transit service. A question about express service was asked of all respondents as if it would be universally available. However, many people would live outside the desirable two-mile radius of a park and ride lot, while others would find that it did not meet their needs for service at particular hours, and so forth. Also, these express routes would really be commuter routes for workers employed in the City of Grand Rapids who used them regularly for several days a week to commute. What these general percentages do, however, is provide a perspective on the total extent of latent interest.

Respondents who indicated they would definitely use the route, be very likely to use the route, or somewhat likely to use the route, were asked two follow up questions. The first was how many days per week they would be likely to use it, and the second was the purpose for which they believed they would use it. Notice that although a total of thirty-five (35) percent were asked these questions, only a total of ten (10) percent indicated they would be likely to use the service on three or more days a week. Ten (10) percent indicated they would use it to commute.

Given that this commuter express service would be oriented to peak hours only, it would be difficult to use it for purposes other than commuting. However, it is not as if such service could not be used for shopping or recreation. Those would however be very infrequent uses, in spite of the fact that during a survey situation it would appear to be an attractive alternative to some potential users.

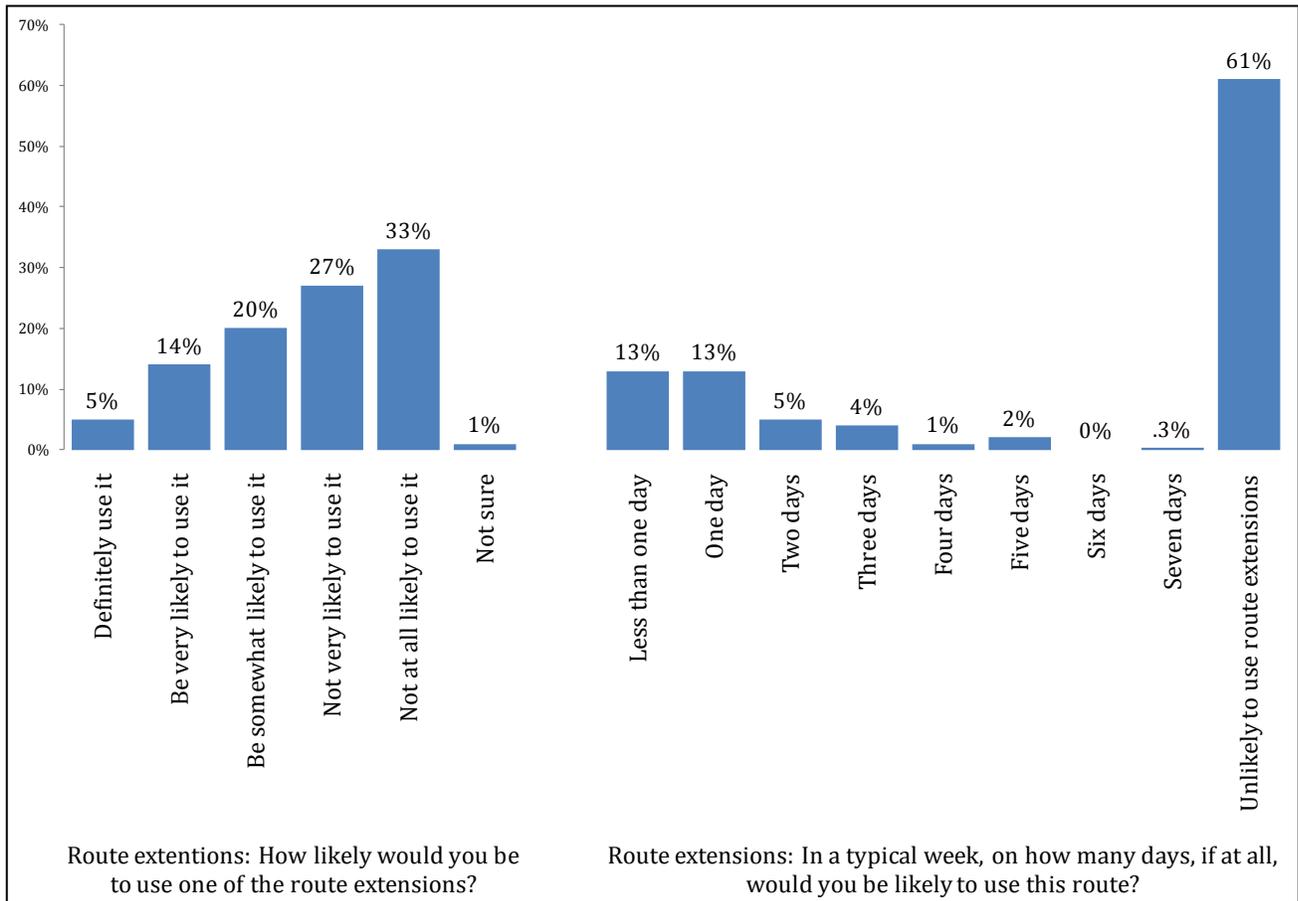
At a later time, these percentages will be narrowed using these and other survey questions such as whether the proposed hours of service meet their needs, and whether there are insurmountable barriers to their using these routes, and whether they in fact are employed in the downtown area of Grand Rapids. All of these factors will be taken into account and the limited percentages applied to the total adult population to achieve an estimate of the latent demand.

Route Extensions

As with the express routes, route extensions were asked in area-specific ways. For example, residents of Plainfield Township were asked, "At one time there was Rapid service into Plainfield along Plainfield Avenue to downtown Grand Rapids. Let's say that The Rapid could restore that service, extending it to Northland Drive in Plainfield. Thinking realistically about your travel needs and preferences, how likely would you be to take the bus on this route once a month or more would you definitely use it, be very likely to use it, somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely to use it?" The results are shown in Exhibit V-17.

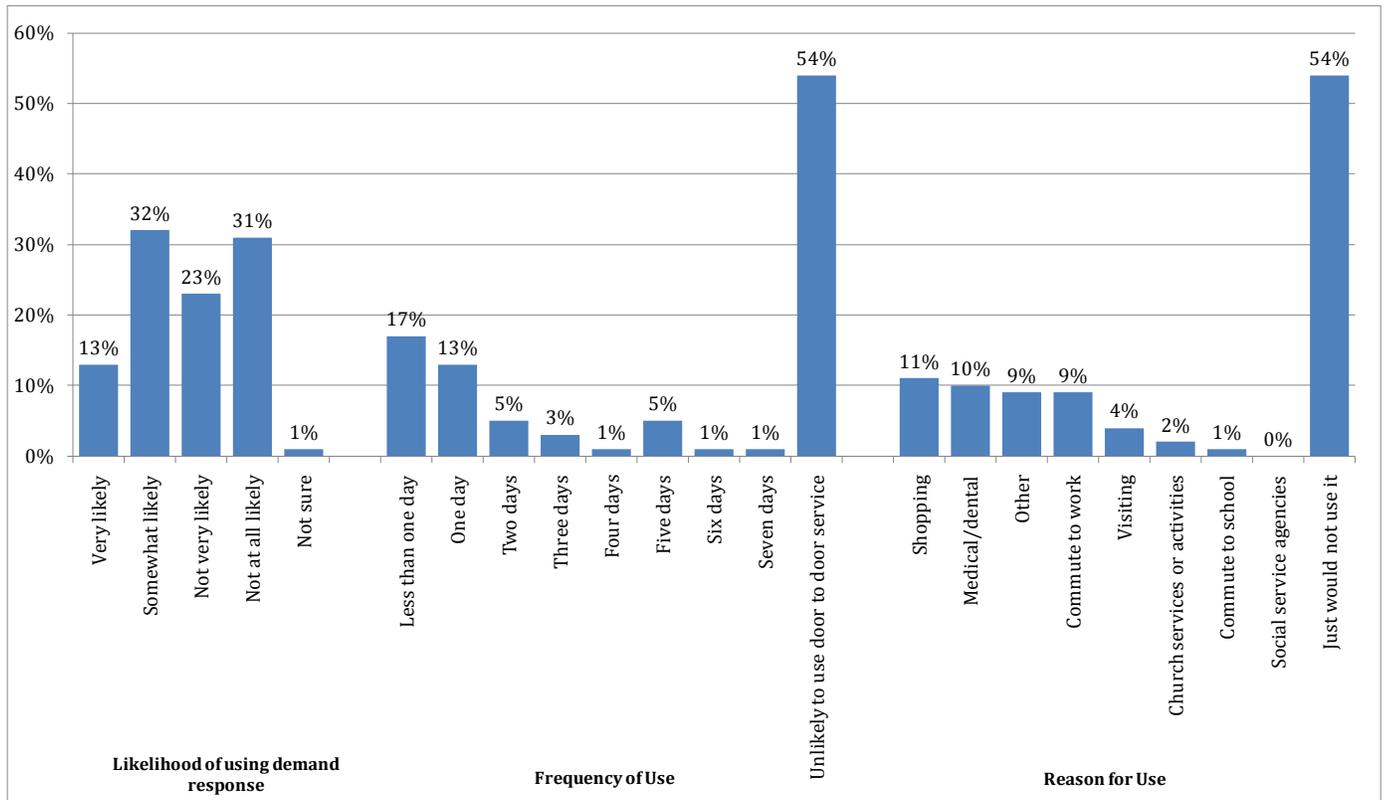
Five (5) percent indicated they would definitely use that type of service. In addition, fourteen (14) percent said they would be very likely to use it and another twenty (20) percent somewhat likely to use it. Again, these percentages establish an approximate market ceiling on the potential demand for such extensions.

Exhibit V-17 Demand for Route Extensions



All respondents were asked their potential utilization of the countywide door-to-door service. The conditions were that the rider would have to call a day ahead to reserve a place and pay a five dollar fare in each direction. Such a service would be highly competitive with taxi service, and could be expected to be widely popular. In terms of the trip purpose, nine (9) percent felt they would use that service to commute to work. It would certainly be inexpensive and perhaps a welcome service for commuters during Michigan winters. However, it would be unrealistic to expect public support for such individualized service. Ultimately in determining latent demand for such service, the potential user’s age, disability status, utilization of current services, and potential trip purpose will all have to be taken into account to provide a realistic assessment. The results are shown in Exhibit V-18.

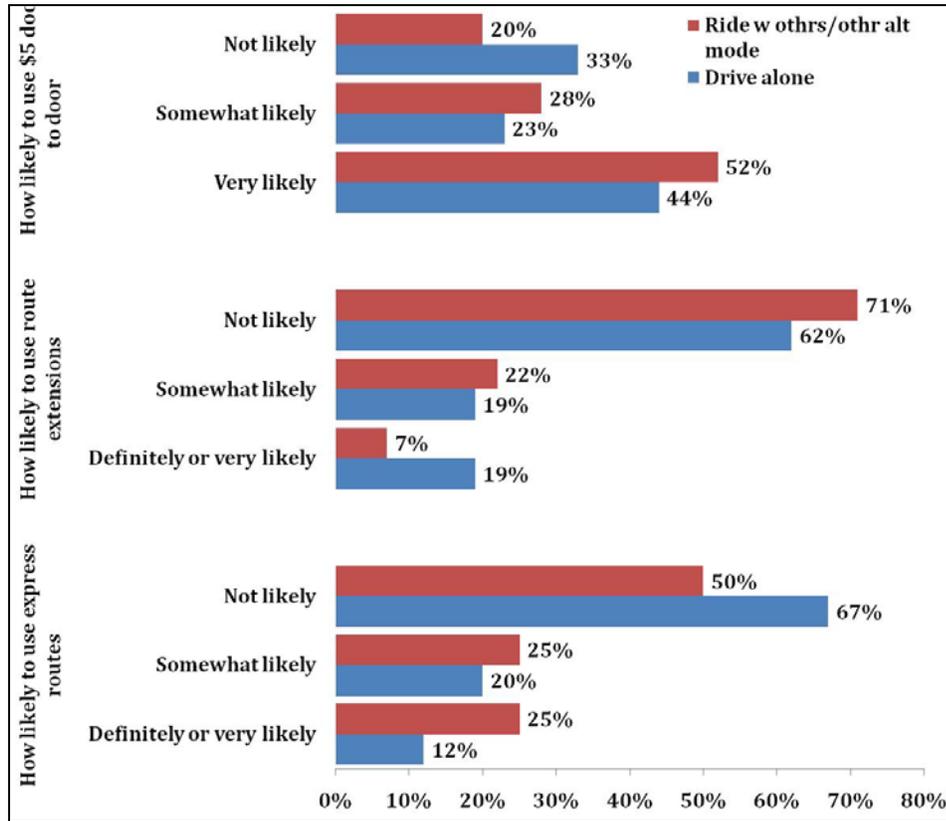
**Exhibit V-18
Demand for Universal, County Wide Demand Response Service**



How New Service Relates to Current Modes

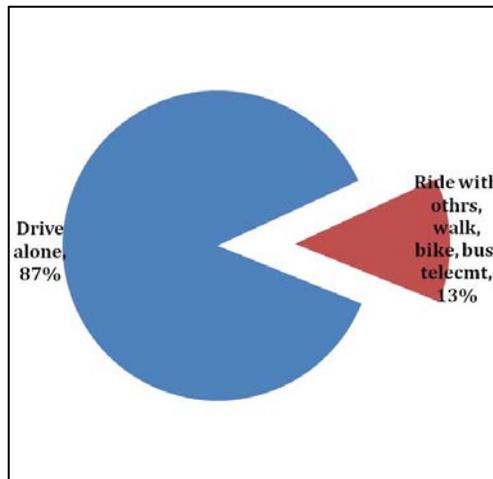
The usual tendency in terms of potential demand for new transit service is that demand is greater among those who already use alternative modes of local transportation, and do not rely on a single occupancy vehicle for all their transportation needs. In this survey is interesting to note that while the usual pattern prevails for express service and door-to-door service, it does not prevail for route extension service. Exhibit V-19 shows the responses among those who already use alternative modes and those who drive alone.

Exhibit V-19
Current Usual Mode and Stated Likelihood of Using New Transit Services



The following exhibit, Exhibit V-20, shows the comparison of the population that uses other alternatives and the population that drives alone.

Exhibit V-20
Current Usual Mode

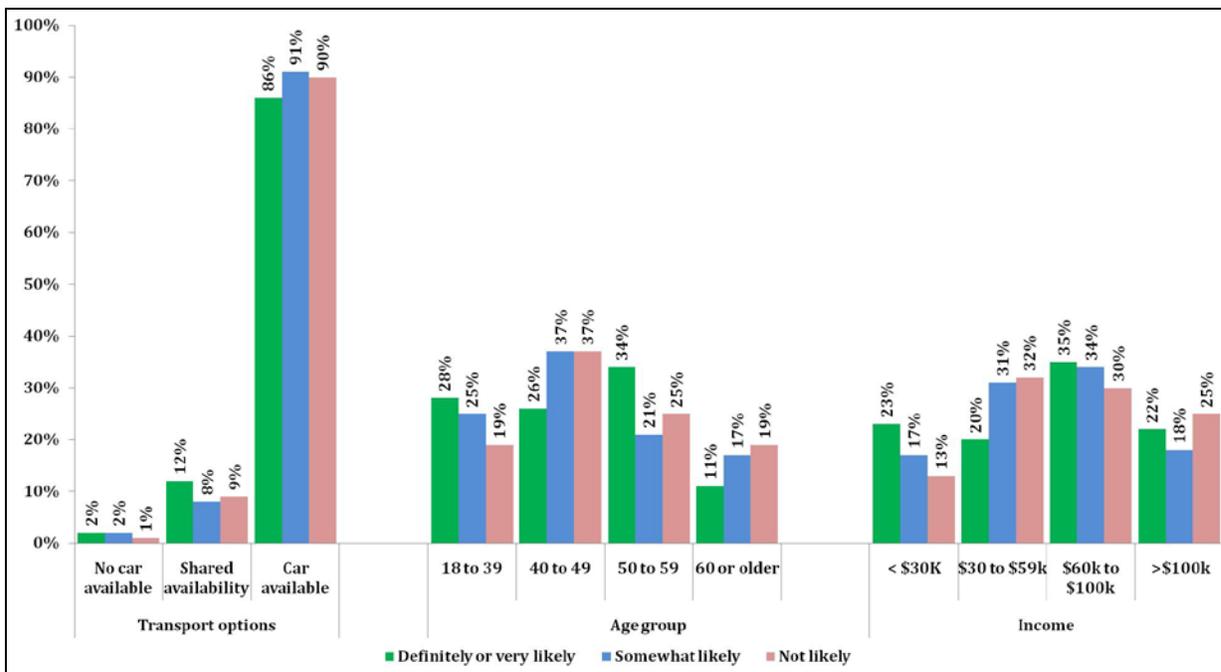


Express Routes

Demographics

The demographic profile of the market segments for commuter express (seen in Exhibit V-21) are similar to those of the more general question reported earlier on the demographics of those interested in transit service in general.

Exhibit V-21
Key Demographics and Stated Interest in Using Express



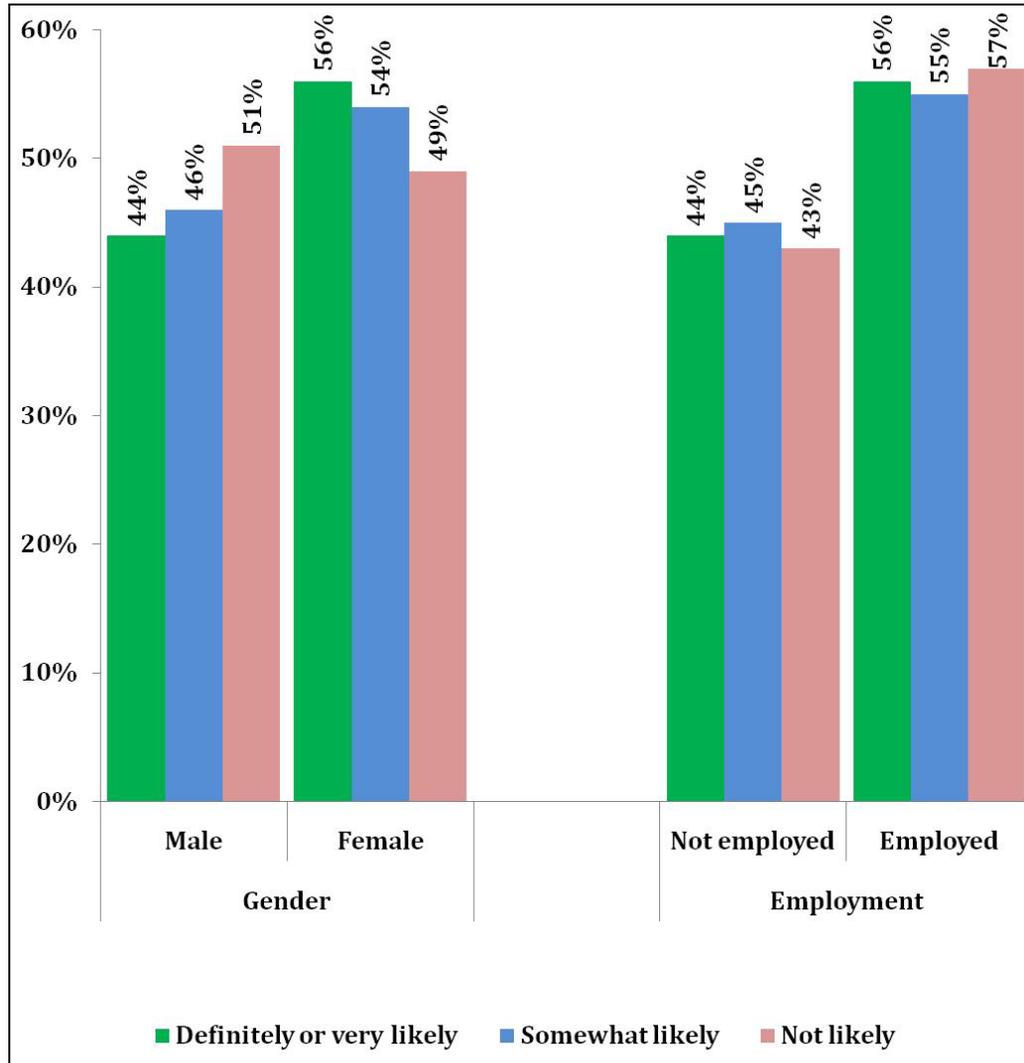
Compared to those who are only somewhat likely or not likely to use express service, those who say they are definitely or very likely to use express service are:

- ◆ Slightly more likely to have shared availability of the vehicle rather than having their own vehicles (twelve (12) percent, compared to eight (8) percent and nine (9) percent respectively).
- ◆ More likely (28 percent) to be in the youngest age range (18 to 39 years old) and fewer (11 percent) in the age range 60 or older.
- ◆ They are also slightly more likely to have household incomes under \$30,000 (43 percent in that category compared to 17 percent for the somewhat likely express users and 13 percent of those not likely to use express).

These are unusually small differences among potential user market segments. They are consistent in direction with findings elsewhere, but much less pronounced, and therefore lacking in predictive capacity.

The distribution of demographics among those more and less likely to use express service follows reasonably closely to the profile of the adult public. Some tendency is apparent in Exhibit V-22 for women to be overrepresented among those definitely or very likely to use transit.

**Exhibit V-22
Gender and Employment**



An alternative way to look at these demographics is shown below in Exhibit V-23. In this case percentages are to be read across the row from left to right, not down the column, thus showing the attitudes toward utilization of express within each demographic group.

Exhibit V-23
Alternative Perspective on Demographics

		<u>Definitely or</u> <u>very likely</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>likely</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>likely</u>
Other transport options?	No car available	21%	27%	52%
	Shared availability	18%	17%	65%
	Car available	13%	22%	65%
Age group	18 to 39	18%	25%	56%
	40 to 49	10%	22%	67%
	50 to 59	19%	17%	64%
	60 or older	9%	21%	70%
Income	< \$30,000	22%	26%	52%
	\$30,000 to \$59,900	10%	24%	66%
	\$60,000 to \$100,000	16%	25%	59%
	>\$100,000	14%	19%	67%
Gender	Male	12%	20%	67%
	Female	15%	23%	62%
Employment	Not employed	14%	22%	64%
	Employed	14%	21%	65%

This chart illustrates several findings:

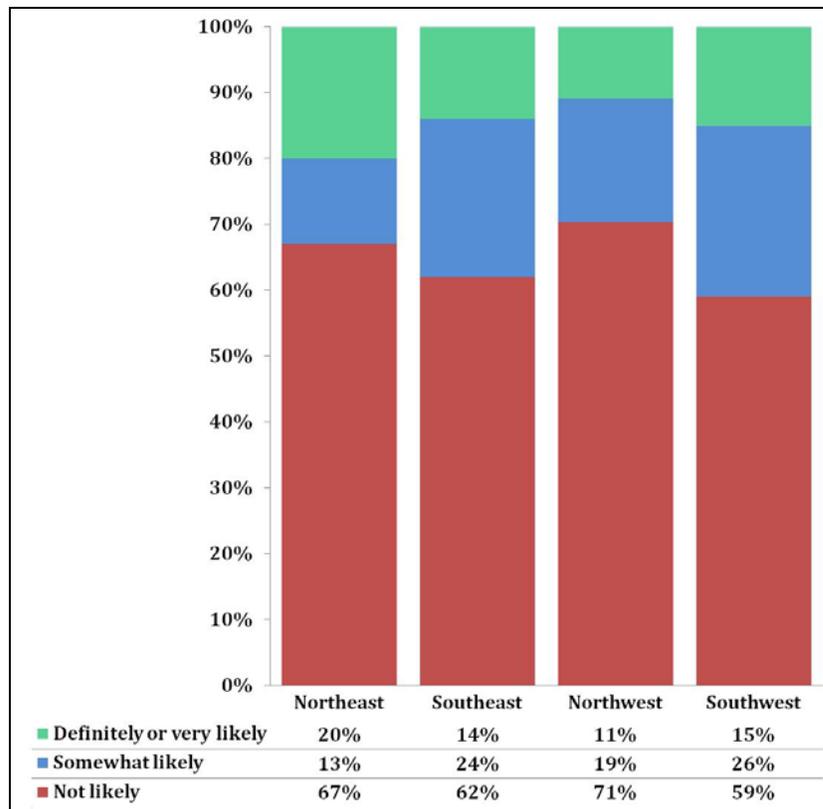
- ◆ Those with no car available or shared availability are more likely than those with a vehicle available to be likely to use express service.
- ◆ Those under the age of 60, especially those between 18 and 39 and those who are 50 to 49 are more likely than those over 60 to be interested in using express service. However, there is no continuous predictive relationship between age and likely utilization, a fact that is unusual in the study of potential transit markets.
- ◆ Those with household incomes below \$30,000 annually are likely to be more interested than others in using this service. However, substantial proportions of those earning \$60,000-\$100,000, or earning more than \$100,000 annually (16 percent and 14 percent respectively) are also quite interested in using it as well.
- ◆ Women are somewhat more interested than men in using express. Among women, fifteen (15) percent indicate they would definitely use it or be very likely to use it, and another twenty-three (23) percent that they would be somewhat likely, for a total of thirty-eight (38) percent. The comparable total for men is thirty-two (32) percent. This is typical of the gender tendencies elsewhere, though the relationship is somewhat weaker.
- ◆ There is no difference between the level of interest among those who are employed and those who are not employed.

Geographic Distribution

One of the important elements in understanding latent demand for service in the study area is geography. Investigating the geography of demand for express service begins with a look at the basic quadrants into which the county can be divided.

The level of interest in using express service is greatest in the northeast portion of the county, as seen in Exhibit V-24. However, each of the possible express routes would serve only specific cities and townships. For example the more Northern service is specifically targeted to Cedar Springs and Rockford with easy access also from Algoma Township. For this reason analysis needs to be more closely limited geographically.

Exhibit V-24
Interest in Using Express by Area



In the process of narrowing down the view of demand for express service, another way in which to consider the distribution of interest in using the express routes is by township of residence. The table in Exhibit V-25 indicates the proportion of the total population that falls into each market segment. Thus, for example, of all those who say they are definitely or very likely to use public transit, one percent reside in Algoma Township, and another two percent in Byron Township. Of those not likely to use express service, to give only one example eleven percent reside in Plainfield Township.

**Exhibit V-25
Residence Interested in Using Express (percent of total adult population)**

	Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely	All respondents in this twp
Ada Township	.8%	1.4%	2.4%	4.5%
Algoma Township	1.3%	.8%	1.3%	3.4%
Alpine Township	.5%	1.3%	5.4%	7.2%
Bowne Township	.0%	.5%	.8%	1.3%
Byron Township	1.8%	2.0%	4.7%	8.4%
Caledonia Township	.7%	1.1%	2.4%	4.2%
Cannon Township	.9%	.7%	3.8%	5.4%
Cascade Township	.5%	.8%	5.9%	7.2%
Cedar Springs	.3%	.4%	.7%	1.4%
Courtland Township	.5%	.3%	1.8%	2.7%
Gaines Township	.9%	2.8%	5.9%	9.6%
Grand Rapids Township	.5%	2.0%	4.0%	6.4%
Grattan Township	.0%	.6%	1.2%	1.7%
Lowell	.4%	.2%	1.1%	1.8%
Lowell Township	.8%	.8%	.7%	2.4%
Nelson Township	.1%	.0%	1.8%	1.8%
Oakfield Township	1.4%	.1%	.9%	2.5%
Plainfield Township	1.1%	2.3%	10.8%	14.1%
Rockford	.4%	.6%	1.0%	2.1%
Solon Township	.2%	.6%	1.4%	2.2%
Sparta Township	.1%	.5%	3.6%	4.2%
Spencer Township	.4%	.4%	1.2%	1.9%
Tyrone Township	.1%	.4%	1.6%	2.0%
Vergennes Township	.3%	.4%	.9%	1.7%

Given that express service under discussion is commuter oriented, it is important to understand the relationship between people interested in using this potential new service, and the location of their place of work if they are employed. Of the total adult population, four percent say both that they are definitely or very likely to use express service to downtown Grand Rapids, and that they are employed in the City of Grand Rapids. This is very important because it sets a ceiling on the likely utilization of any commuter express oriented to a commute from rural or suburban areas to Grand Rapids City. Exhibit V-26 outlines the relationship.

Exhibit V-26
Work Commute Destination and Interest in Using Express

	Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely	All respondents
Ada Township	.2%	.4%	.5%	1.1%
Algoma Township	.0%	.1%	.0%	0.1%
Alpine Township	.0%	.2%	.4%	0.5%
Belmont	.1%	.1%	.1%	0.3%
Bowne Township	.0%	.0%	.1%	0.1%
Byron Township	.1%	.9%	.9%	1.9%
Caledonia Village	.1%	.1%	.0%	0.2%
Caledonia Township	.1%	.4%	.2%	0.7%
Cannon Township	.0%	.0%	.4%	0.4%
Cascade Township	.1%	.4%	.5%	1.0%
Casnovia Village	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Cedar Springs	.2%	.0%	.3%	0.5%
Comstock Park	.4%	.1%	.2%	0.7%
Courtland Township	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Cutlerville	.1%	.3%	.4%	0.8%
East Grand Rapids	.0%	.0%	.5%	0.5%
Gaines Township	.0%	.0%	.9%	0.9%
Grand Rapids City	3.7%	2.3%	10.0%	16.0%
Grand Rapids Township	.6%	.4%	.6%	1.6%
Grandville	.0%	.2%	.8%	1.1%
Grattan Township	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Kent Village	.0%	.1%	.4%	0.5%
Kentwood	.4%	.9%	2.4%	3.7%
Lowell	.1%	.1%	.0%	0.2%
Lowell Township	.1%	.0%	.0%	0.1%
Nelson Township	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Oakfield Township	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Plainfield Township	.1%	.2%	1.8%	2.1%
Rockford	.2%	.8%	1.5%	2.5%
Sand Lake Village	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Solon Township	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Sparta Village	.0%	.0%	.7%	0.7%
Sparta Township	.0%	.6%	.4%	1.0%
Spencer Township	.0%	.0%	.0%	0.0%
Tyrone Township	.0%	.0%	.1%	0.1%
Vergennes Township	.0%	.0%	.4%	0.4%
Walker	.1%	.2%	2.7%	2.9%
Wyoming	.4%	1.1%	1.2%	2.7%
Not sure	.1%	.0%	.7%	0.8%
All over Kent Co	.1%	.0%	.6%	0.7%
Outside of Kent Co	.2%	1.4%	7.4%	9.0%
Student only	.7%	.2%	1.4%	2.3%
Not employed	5.4%	9.2%	27.2%	41.9%

The total adult population of the area is estimated at slightly more than 149,000 persons. Assuming that remains the case when the 2010 Census is reported, there would be roughly 5,500 people in this category of those who say they would definitely use or would be very likely to use express service. To repeat a point, this is not the final number because there are the barriers that would stand in the way of many of these people. This will be examined in subsequent charts in this report.

The first key to narrowing that population is to consider only the areas directly accessible to the proposed express routes. The express routes that were specifically described to respondents from the appropriate townships included the following areas:

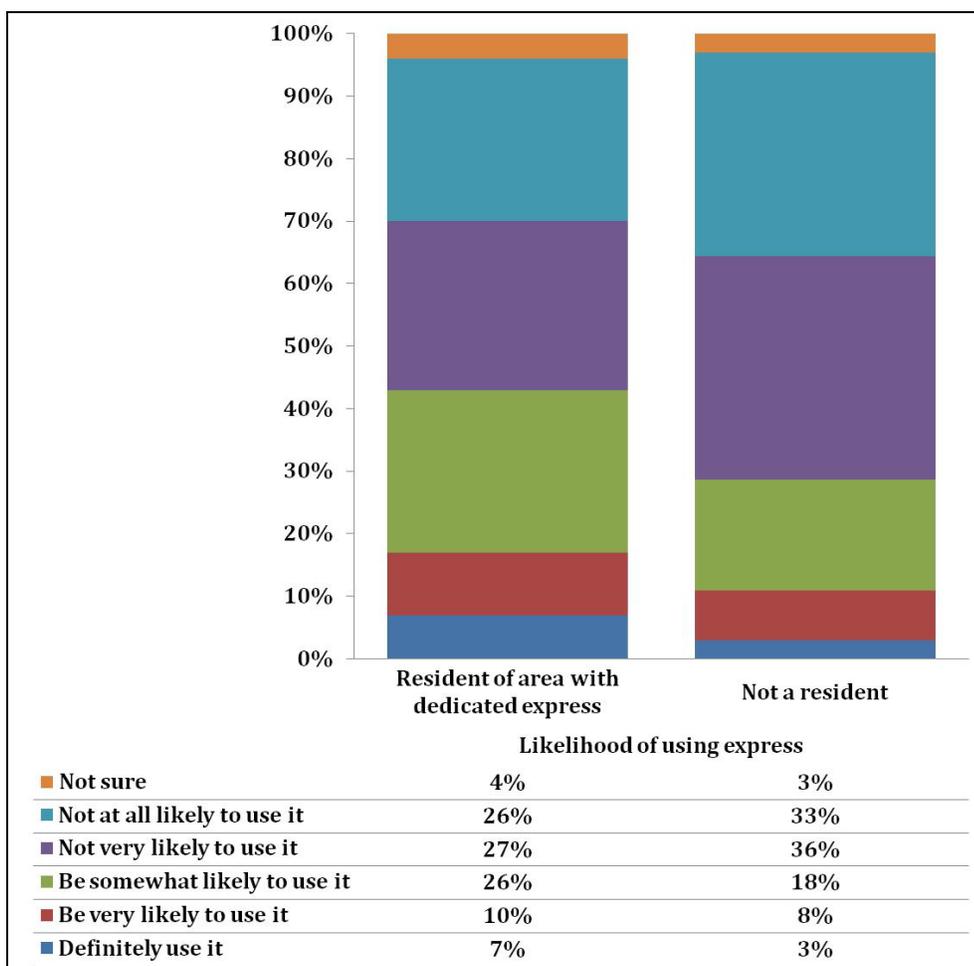
- ◆ A northern route including Algoma Township, Cedar Springs, and Rockford.
- ◆ A southeastern route including both Ada and Lowell (both Township and city).
- ◆ A southwestern route including Byron and Gaines Townships.
- ◆ A southeastern route including Cascade and Caledonia Townships.

Those who do not reside in any of those townships were asked a residual question focused on whether they would be likely to use express service oriented to downtown Grand Rapids from the area in which they live. Thus, while the destination was the same, the specificity was less.

Taken as a whole, the adult populations of these targeted cities and townships comprise forty-five (45) percent of the adult population of Kent County outside of the 6 city area served by The Rapid. Within that forty-five (45) percent who are residents of the areas targeted for express, a total of seventeen (17) percent indicated that they are definitely (7 percent) or very likely (10 percent) to use express service as described, and twenty-six (26) percent that they are somewhat likely to use it. The balance indicated they are unlikely to use it.

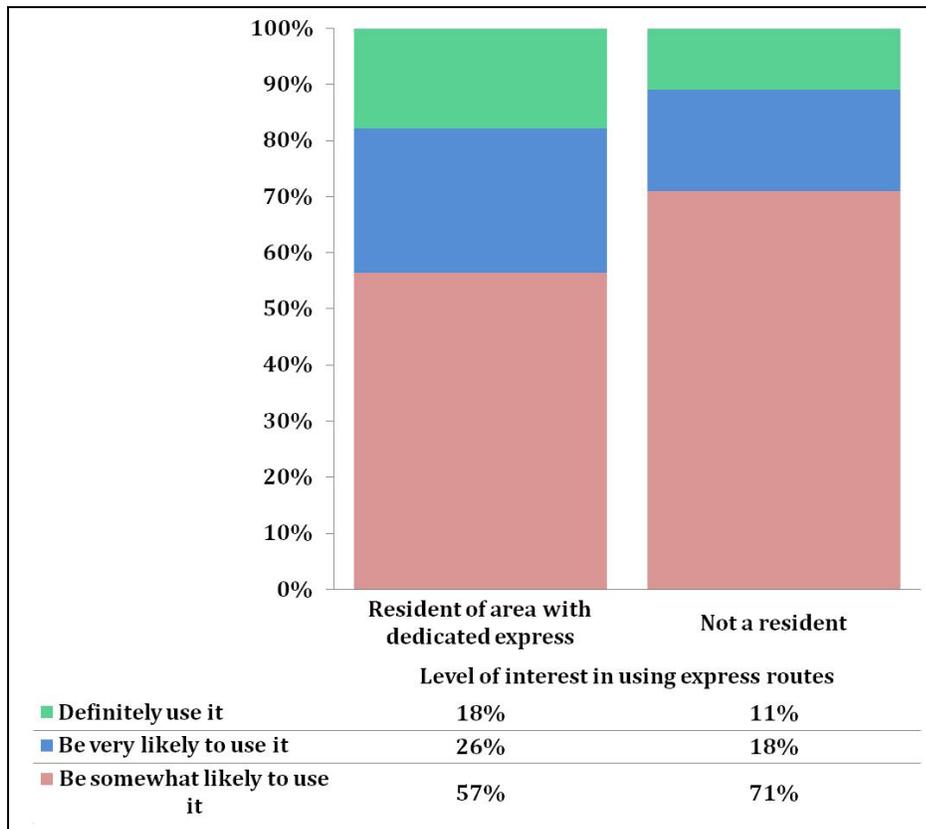
By narrowing the focus of the research and concentrating on the residents of the target areas, it is found that by a margin of forty-three (43) percent to twenty-nine (29) percent residents of the target area compared to the residents outside of it, respond that they would definitely use express service, be very likely to use it, or be somewhat likely to use it. This suggests that the tentative planning of these routes is hitting the appropriate targets. Exhibit V-27 shows the targeted areas and the response.

**Exhibit V-27
Target Areas**



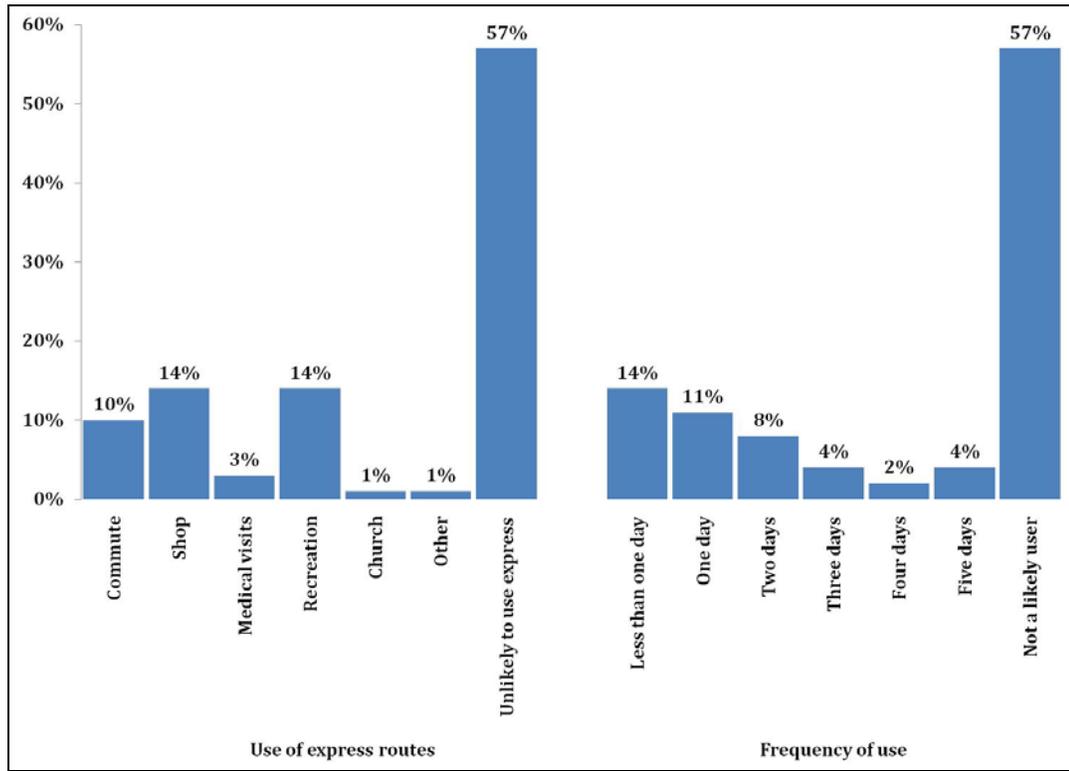
Considered in a different way, findings indicate that the level of intensity of interest differs between the two areas. In the chart, those who are unlikely to use express service are dropped, and percentages are recomputed among those who have some reasonable chance of actually becoming users. In this manner, it can be seen that while eighteen (18) percent of the target area residents indicate they would definitely use such express service, only eleven (11) percent of residents of the other areas say the same thing (see Exhibit V-28).

**Exhibit V-28
Level of Interest**



Those who indicated that they were definite users, likely users, or were somewhat likely to use express, were asked follow-up questions concerning the purpose for which they might use it, and the frequency with which they might use it for those purposes. The results are seen in Exhibit V-29.

**Exhibit V-29
Purpose and Frequency**



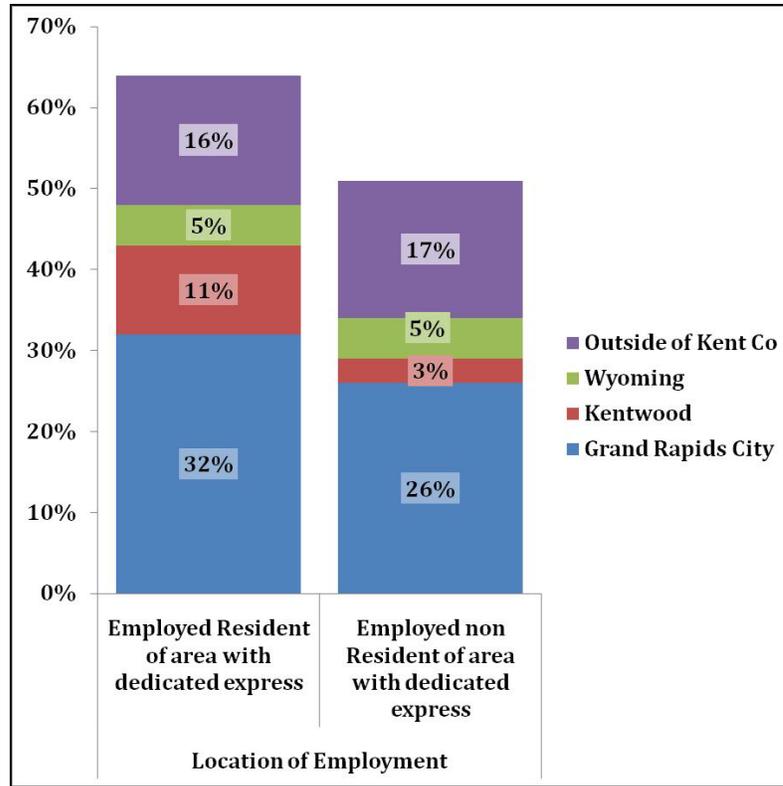
Continuing to focus on the residents of only the target area, you can see those respondents who indicated some reasonable likelihood of using express service break down as shown in the chart in terms of the purpose for which they believe they would use it, and the frequency with which they would expect to use it.

The chart first shows how the forty-three (43) percent who fall into the realm of possible use break down in terms of purpose. Ten percent of those potential users (i.e., 4.3 percent of the total adult population in the area targeted for express) anticipate commuting. Another fourteen (14) percent would expect to use it to go shopping, three (3) percent for medical visits, fourteen (14) percent for recreation, two (2) percent for church or church activities, and one (1) percent for miscellaneous other reasons. Of all of these purposes, the only one that is realistic for service that runs only during peak hours is commuting.

In terms of the frequency with which people expect to use express service, express in general is oriented toward commuting service which generally serves those riders who travel four or five days a week to their jobs. It is not oriented to casual use. Although certainly some casual users would probably make use of it, their numbers would be too small and unpredictable to have a material effect on the latent demand for such service.

Another limiting factor in terms of utilization of express commuter service is the location of commuters' workplaces. Exhibit V-30 shows the location of these workplaces. All of the service would be oriented to downtown Grand Rapids. Taking the top four workplaces of the employed residents in the target areas, Grand Rapids city, and its neighbors Kentwood and Wyoming are significant destinations for their working populations. Those in the areas targeted for express, however, are significantly more likely to work in the City of Grand Rapids.

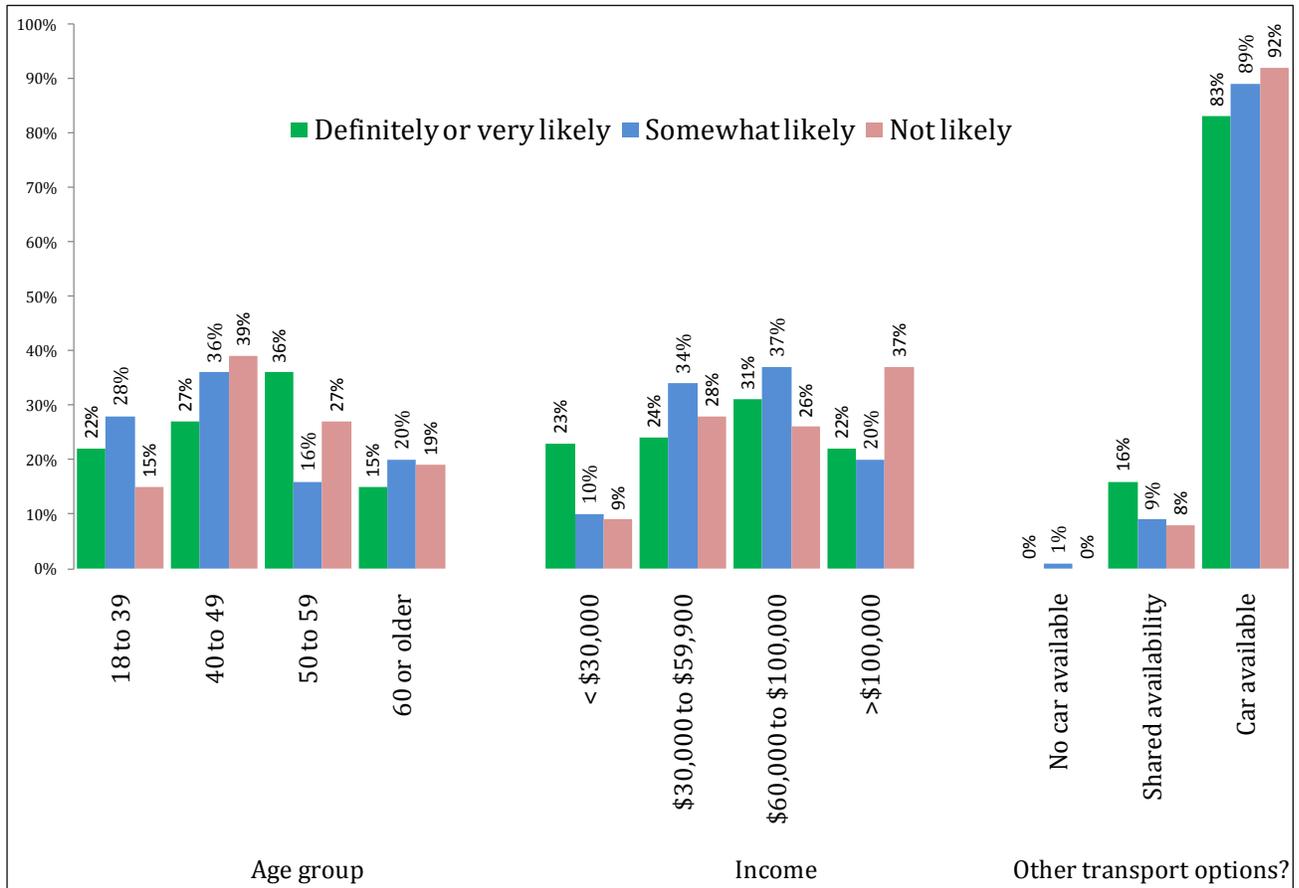
**Exhibit V-30
Top Work Destinations**



In both the areas with the potential express routes and those without such possible routes, similar percentages (16 percent and 17 percent, respectively) of employed persons indicate that they work outside of Kent County, and would thus be precluded from benefiting from commuter service to downtown Grand Rapids.

Next, the key demographics and level of interest in express service must be considered among those who are residents of the areas in which dedicated express routes are tentatively planned. Specifically, consider the differences among those who indicated a definite or very likely intent to use express and others with lesser or no interest in the service. See Exhibit V-31.

Exhibit V-31
Demographics of Express Market Segments by Age, Income, and Transportation,
Including Only Areas Targeted for New Express Service



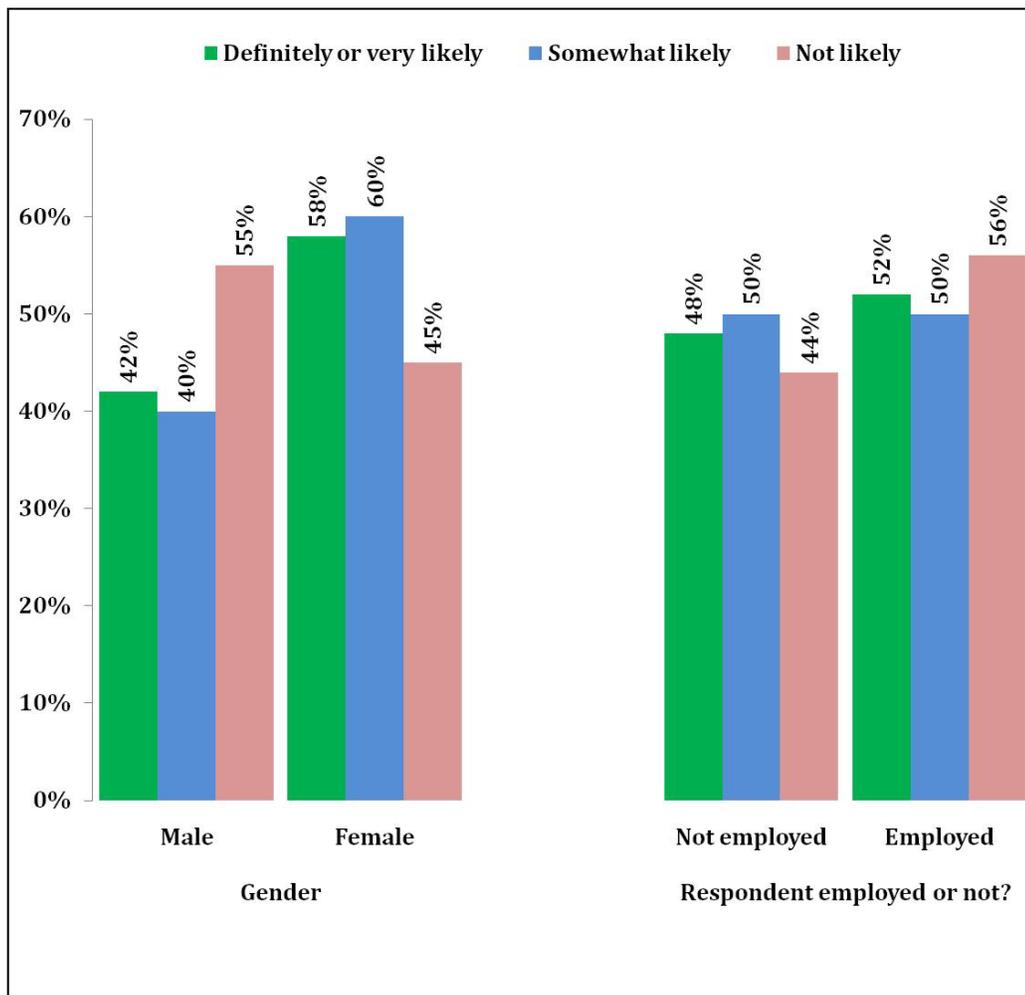
Those who are most likely to utilize the express service are less likely than others to be 60 or older (15 percent). Those most likely to use express service are also more likely than others to fall into the age range 50 to 59. Why the greatest contrast is within this specific age category is interesting, but not apparent from the survey.

In terms of income, more of those most likely to use express service have household incomes below \$30,000 per year (23 percent) than those who are only somewhat likely to use it (10 percent) or those who are unlikely to use it (9 percent). Conversely, those unlikely to use it are more likely than others to have household incomes of \$100,000 or more. Thus, having narrowed the study population to those in the targeted area, correlations between income and potential use are now revealed to be more as traditionally expected. It is also true, however, that the definite or likely users have a broad range of incomes, indicating they understand that this is not a service for only the transit dependent.

Finally, those with greater likelihood of actually using express transit service are more likely to currently share a vehicle with others (16 percent) compared to those who are only somewhat likely users (9 percent) or unlikely users (8 percent). This relationship is not uncommon, because those who already use an alternative mode (even if it is described simply as riding with others) tend to be more open to using improved public transit. Oddly, however, riding with others is three times more common (12 percent) in areas not targeted for an express route than in those areas which are (4 percent).

As seen in Exhibit V-32, within the target area the tendency for women to predominate among the likely users is more pronounced than it is among the total study area population. However, this may reflect a different gender distribution, because as you can see in the next chart, there is very little difference between men and women in terms of their interest in using express service. In the target area, fifty-eight (58) percent of the most likely users are women, while forty-two (42) percent of men.

**Exhibit V-32
Demographics of Express Market Segments by Gender and Employment**



As in the total study area, there is very little difference in terms of employment except that those who reject the idea of using express transit are somewhat more likely to be employed (56 percent) than those who embrace the idea.

The alternative way to look at these demographics is shown below in Exhibit V-33. In this case, percentages are read from left to right, thus showing the attitudes toward utilization of express within each demographic group.

**Exhibit V-33
Demographic Table of Express Market**

		Definitely or very likely	Somew hat likely	Not likely
Transport options	No car available	41%	41%	18%
	Shared availability	17%	21%	62%
	Car available	12%	22%	65%
Age group	18 to 39	19%	27%	54%
	40 to 49	9%	24%	67%
	50 to 59	17%	16%	67%
	60 or older	9%	24%	67%
Income	< \$30,000	21%	27%	52%
	\$30,000 to \$59,900	9%	24%	67%
	\$60,000 to \$100,000	14%	29%	57%
	>\$100,000	16%	13%	71%
Gender	Male	12%	19%	69%
	Female	13%	26%	61%
Empolymnt	Not employed	13%	23%	64%
	Employed	13%	22%	65%

Several conclusions can be drawn from this chart:

- ◆ Those with no car available or shared availability are more likely than those with a vehicle available to be likely users of express service. There are, however, very few persons with no vehicle, and this is not a significant market for express service.
- ◆ As found among respondents when examining demographics of route extensions among all respondents, those under the age of 60, especially those between 18 and 39 and those who are 50 to 49, are more likely than those over 60, or those between the ages of 40 and 49 to be interested in using express service. Because this is not a linear relationship, this provides relatively little guidance in predicting actual utilization.
- ◆ Those with household incomes below \$30,000 annually are likely to be more interested than others in using this service. However, substantial proportions of those earning \$60,000-

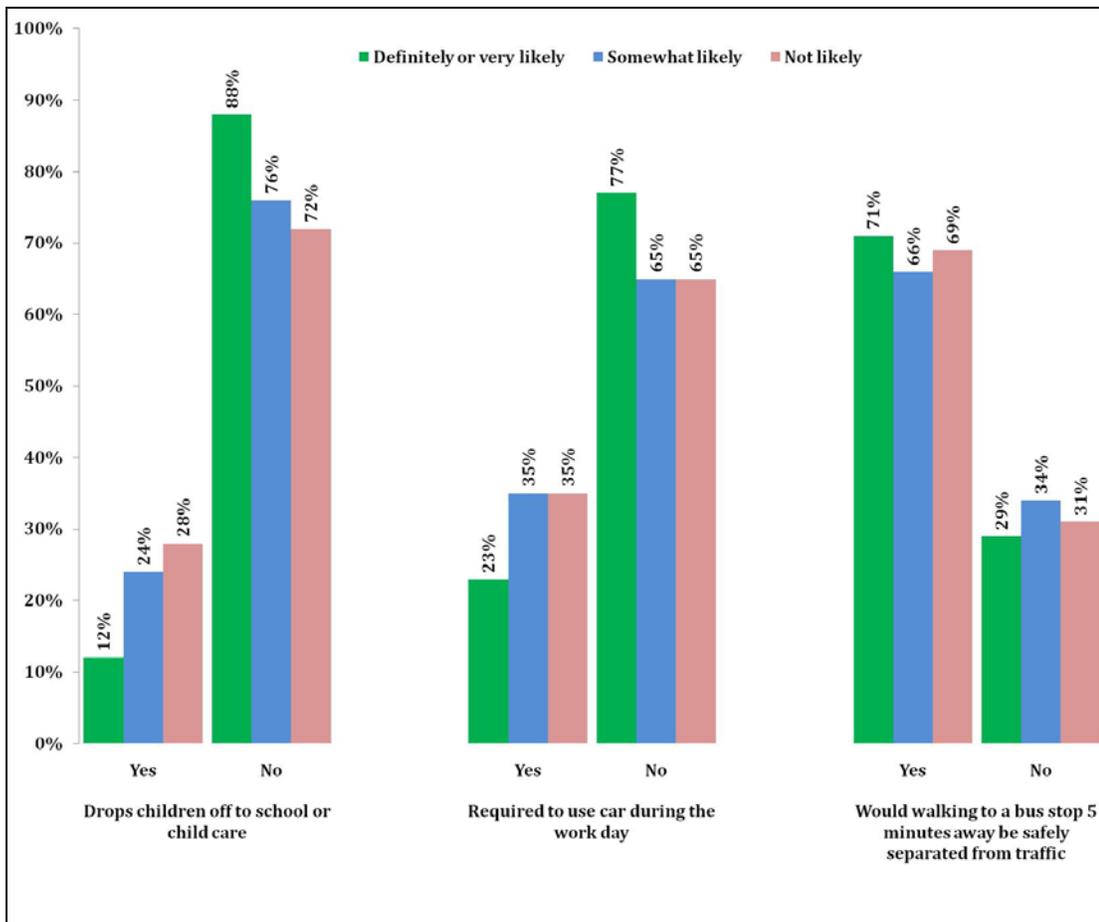
\$100,000 or more than \$100,000 annually (16 percent and 14 percent, respectively) are also quite interested in using it.

- ◆ Women are somewhat more interested than men in using express service. Among women, 13 percent indicate they would definitely use it or be very likely to use it, and another 26 percent indicated that they would be somewhat likely, for a total of 39 percent. The comparable total for men is 31 percent. This is typical of the gender tendencies elsewhere in the transit market, but the relationship is often stronger in potential markets.
- ◆ There is no difference between the level of interest among those who are employed and those who are not employed.

Barriers, Disincentives, and Incentives for Using Express

In an earlier section of this report, practical barriers to using public transit that will tend to limit the latent demand were discussed. In Exhibit V-34, you can see that, within the areas targeted for express service, the three barriers have a partial suppressing effect on demand. For example, those who say they must carry children to/from school or childcare are less likely than those who do not have that obligation to say they would definitely use or be very likely to use express service.

**Exhibit V-34
Barriers to Using Express Market**

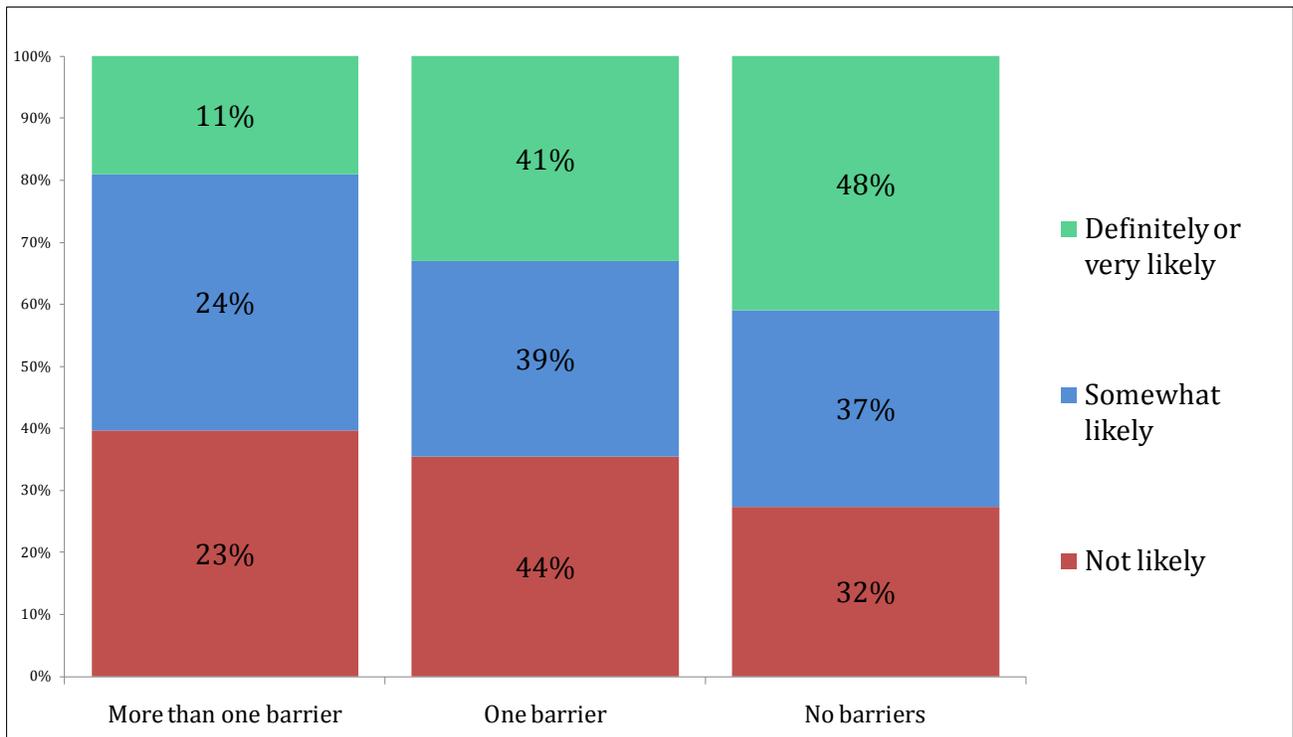


Similarly, having to use one's car at work during the day for work purposes is also a barrier. Thus, while only twenty-three (23) percent of those who say they must use their vehicle for work purposes indicate a strong intent to use express service, seventy-seven (77) percent of those who do not share that obligation express that level of interest.

However, there is no consistent perception of a lack of safety in walking to the bus stop. It can be assumed that this is because an express service is typically a park and ride service not subject to a walk.

Potential users of any service can, of course, encounter more than one barrier as seen in Exhibit V-35. The chart makes clear that multiple barriers have multiple impacts, and that these must be taken into account in considering latent demand. While forty-eight (48) percent of those facing the barriers and residing in the targeted express areas indicate they would definitely use of the very likely to use express service, of those facing more than one barrier, only eleven (11) percent said the same thing. In other words those facing more than one barrier were more than four times less likely than others to indicate likely use of express.

**Exhibit V-35
Multiple Barriers Create Obstacles to Using Express Service**



All respondents, regardless of whether they had indicated any interest in using express, were asked several questions about what would make them more or less likely to use express, and whether the hours of express service would meet their needs. The results are shown in Exhibit V-36.

Service limitations can also serve to enhance or detract from service. Respondents were asked whether the schedule of commuter express service would fit their needs. The description of the hours is indicated in the table. Of the most likely users, fewer than half (40 percent) indicated that those hours would meet their needs. This would be a major limiting factor.

Respondents were also asked whether the limited stops which would be made by a commuter express would make them more or less likely to use the service. Forty-nine (49) percent indicated it would make them more likely to use it, while only six (6) percent said it made them less likely, and thirty-eight (38) percent indicated they would make no difference to them. Clearly, the limited stops are an attractive aspect of express service.

**Exhibit V-36
Incentives and Disincentives for Using Express Service**

How likely would you be to use the new service once a month or more?		Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely
This kind of express service would make only a limited number of stops. Would that make you more likely or	More	49%	48%	38%
	Less	6%	12%	8%
	No difference	38%	39%	44%
	Not sure	7%	1%	9%
If the express service were started, it would be scheduled mostly for	Yes	40%	31%	23%
	No	55%	62%	73%
	Not sure	6%	7%	5%
Once in Grand Rapids you could connect with The Rapid to get to locations other than downtown.	More	27%	27%	16%
	Less	5%	2%	4%
	No difference	63%	66%	77%
	Not sure	5%	4%	3%
A Guaranteed ride home would be provided to those with an urgent need to get home or who missed the last	More	71%	66%	31%
	Less	1%	0%	2%
	No difference	27%	33%	65%
	Not sure	1%	0%	2%
Employers who chose to do so could pay your bus fare as a tax free benefit under a special federal program.	More	49%	41%	22%
	Less	1%	0%	4%
	No difference	49%	58%	72%
	Not sure	1%	0%	2%

Certain incentives tend to encourage ridership. It would be important to provide guaranteed ride home program because seventy-one (71) percent indicated that it would make them more likely to use the service and only twenty-seven (27) percent said it would make no difference to them.

Finally, an employer subsidy as a tax-free benefit would appeal to approximately half (49 percent) of those who are most likely users.

Latent Demand

With all of the foregoing information, a concrete estimate of latent demand for express service can be determined in four rounds. The first round is objective. The further rounds involve judgment calls.

- ◆ First round – Those with latent demand for express service:
 - Reside in areas in which express is feasible and described in existing planning documents – specifically:
 - A northern route including Algoma Township, Cedar Springs, and Rockford.
 - A southeastern route including both Ada and Lowell (both Township and city).
 - A southwestern route including Byron and Gaines Townships.
 - And finally, a southeastern route including Cascade and Caledonia Townships.
 - Are employed.
 - Work in the City of Grand Rapids.

These criteria identify an estimated total of 11,100 adults in the proposed service areas combined. This is the total market, but does not represent latent demand that would emerge with the offering of new express service.

- ◆ Second round – Intent:
 - Intent:
 - Those with latent demand state that they would “definitely” use express service and would use it to commute to work. This criterion identifies a total of 1,280 adults in the proposed service areas combined. It can be assumed that their strong statement of intent indicates a probability of 1 that they will follow through if not eliminated for other reasons to be considered in subsequent rounds. We will refer to their probability using the type of transit service they were asked about as “p.” Thus, in this case, p=1.
 - Those with limited latent demand (p=.5) state that they are “very likely” to use express service. Initially, this criterion identifies a total of 714 adults in the proposed service areas combined. However, their intent is “discounted” by 50 percent, leaving an estimated 360 persons.
 - Those with very limited latent demand state that they are “somewhat likely” to use express service (p=.02). This criterion identifies a total of 437 adults in the proposed service areas combined. Their intent is “discounted” by 80 percent, leaving an estimated 90 persons.
 - Thus the total pool of those who commute to work and have some probability of using new express service can be estimated as 1,730.
 - Note that the intent to commute via this service will be greater or lesser depending on various factors, such as the cost of service (including the offset of availability of a tax-free transit benefit), the quality of service, availability of guaranteed ride home, and, most important, the cost of alternatives, specifically the price of gasoline and availability of free worksite parking.

For purposes of discussion and reaching initial estimates in this study, probability factors were used to adjust for the likelihood of people actually doing what they say they will do in terms of using new transit service. The factors used are 1, .5, and .02. These factors are inevitably somewhat arbitrary. Experience teaches that demand in practice difference from the intent of service respondents. People say they will diet, for example, and often do not. Thus we have to decide on probability weights. But what weights?

The market research world discusses this issue and concludes that each product and service differs, depending on whether it is a luxury or a necessity, and depending on environmental factors such as the state of the economy. We have seen both over and under estimates. Projections of demand for rail service in Memphis (TN) were exceeded. Projections of ridership increase for the Central Ohio Transit authority were exceeded. Projections of demand for express service in the Research Triangle/Raleigh/Durham area were reasonably close (and the line is among the system's most productive now).

Gasoline prices, employment levels, demographic shifts between the time of a survey and the implementation of service, fares, and many factors influence the probabilities. The initial set of probabilities we have used offer what we consider to be a ceiling to the market. These are maximum, not minimum numbers.

- ◆ Third round – Discounting factors to establish a lower and upper bound. Those facing significant barriers to the use of transit for commuting will be discounted by an agreed factor. Barriers include:
 - Hours of service would or would not meet their commuting needs. Those with this limitation will be dropped. However, in the event of development of such a service, and especially if it were an aspect of a TDM program, it is possible that employers would adjust the hours of some employees.
 - An agreed proportion of those facing two barriers will be assumed to be unable to overcome those barriers. Specifically, these barriers are 1) having to use one's own vehicle for work-related purposes, and 2) having to transport children to/from child care or school during the commute. It is assumed that some proportion (amount to be determined) of these commuters could deal with these barriers, but that many could not.

The additional barrier discussed in the earlier text (perception that the walk to the bus stop would not be safe) does not apply to this park and ride oriented service.

- ◆ Final round – Frequency. The resulting population will be predicted to use express service within a frequency range determined by the frequency of their current commuting days at the high end and their stated intent to use express service for a specific number of days at the low end. This will be translated into estimated numbers of total annual trips.

Route Extensions

Besides express service, the second possibility for improved public transportation service in areas beyond the service area of The Rapid, involves extending routes of The Rapid into areas where service had been discontinued, or where service might be extended somewhat. As with the study of the express routes, several questions were asked to identify latent demand for service on certain very specific route extensions from specific townships into downtown Grand Rapids. These were followed by a "catch all" question related to service in general to downtown Grand Rapids.

Questions regarding the specific route extensions were as follows:

- ◆ The first was directed to residents of Rockford, Plainfield Township, Algoma Township, Alpine Township, and Belmont and Comstock Park. They were asked: "Another way to improve service for people in the suburbs of the Grand Rapids area who have no bus service now would be to have The Rapid run its regular bus service on Plainfield Avenue farther out into the suburbs than it does now. For example, a Rapid route now runs toward Rockford, but stops at Alpine and Lamoreaux Drive. Let's say that it could be extended into Rockford on Belmont Avenue and 10 Mile Road..." (etc.)
- ◆ Another was directed to residents of Plainfield Township only. They were asked: "At one time there was Rapid service into Plainfield along Plainfield Ave to downtown Grand Rapids. Let's say that The Rapid could restore that service, extending it to Northland Drive in Plainfield..." (etc.)
- ◆ A third was for residents of Ada and Cascade Townships. They were asked: "Let's say that the Rapid could provide regular bus service on fixed routes running every 30 minutes between downtown Grand Rapids and Ada and Cascade Townships..." (etc.)
- ◆ The fourth route extension was posed to residents of Byron and Gaines Townships were asked: "The Rapid could provide regular bus service on fixed routes running every 30 minutes between downtown Grand Rapids and Byron and Gaines Townships... (etc.)
- ◆ Finally a residual question was asked of others: "Let's say that the Rapid could provide regular bus service on fixed routes running every 30 minutes between downtown Grand Rapids and the area where you live."...(etc.)

A total of fifty-six (56) percent of respondents reside in the areas with specifically described service, while forty-four (44) percent reside elsewhere in Kent County.

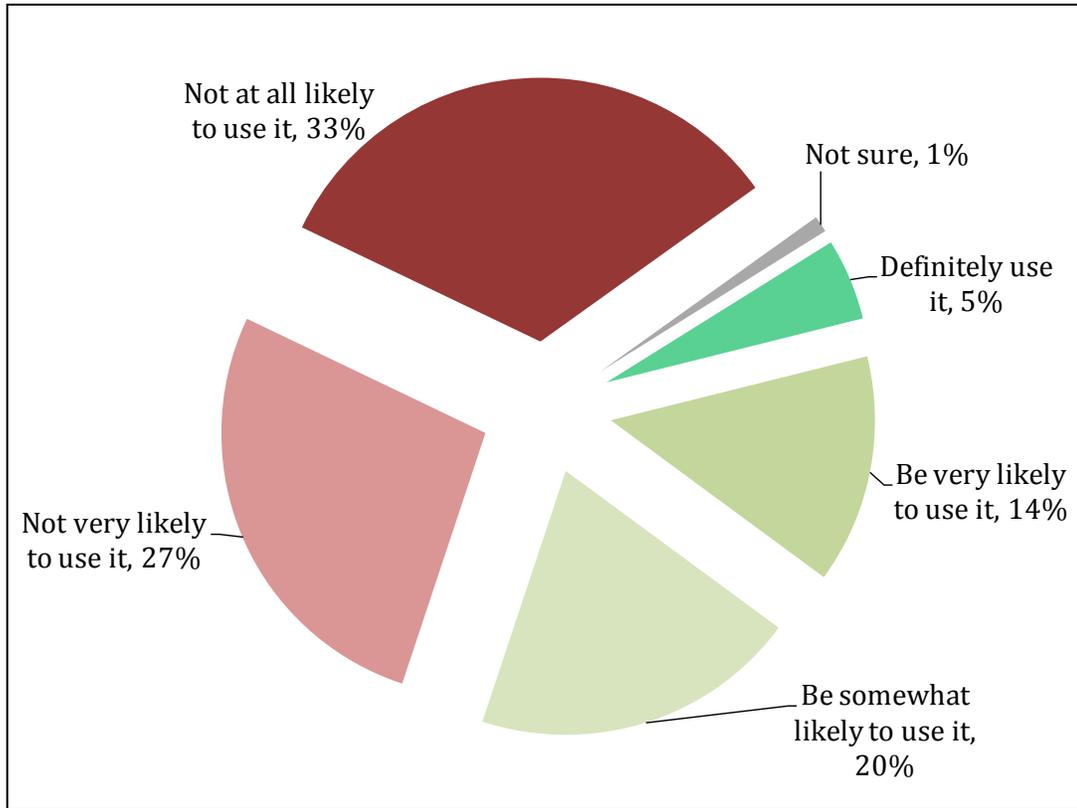
The description of each of these proposed routes was followed up with a question regarding how likely they were to use the route, and on how many days they thought they might use it each week.

Note: In this set of questions, the purpose of the trip was not asked because it is assumed that there would be many purposes of such generalized service, and unlike the situation with either commuter express or door-to-door service, the purpose of the trip could not be used to narrow the definition of latent demand.

When asked about their potential use of route extensions, five (5) percent indicated they would definitely use them, another fourteen (14) percent that they would be very likely to use them, and twenty (20) percent that they would be somewhat likely to use them. This is a total of thirty-nine

(39) percent positive response among people in the total study area. The results are shown in Exhibit V-37.

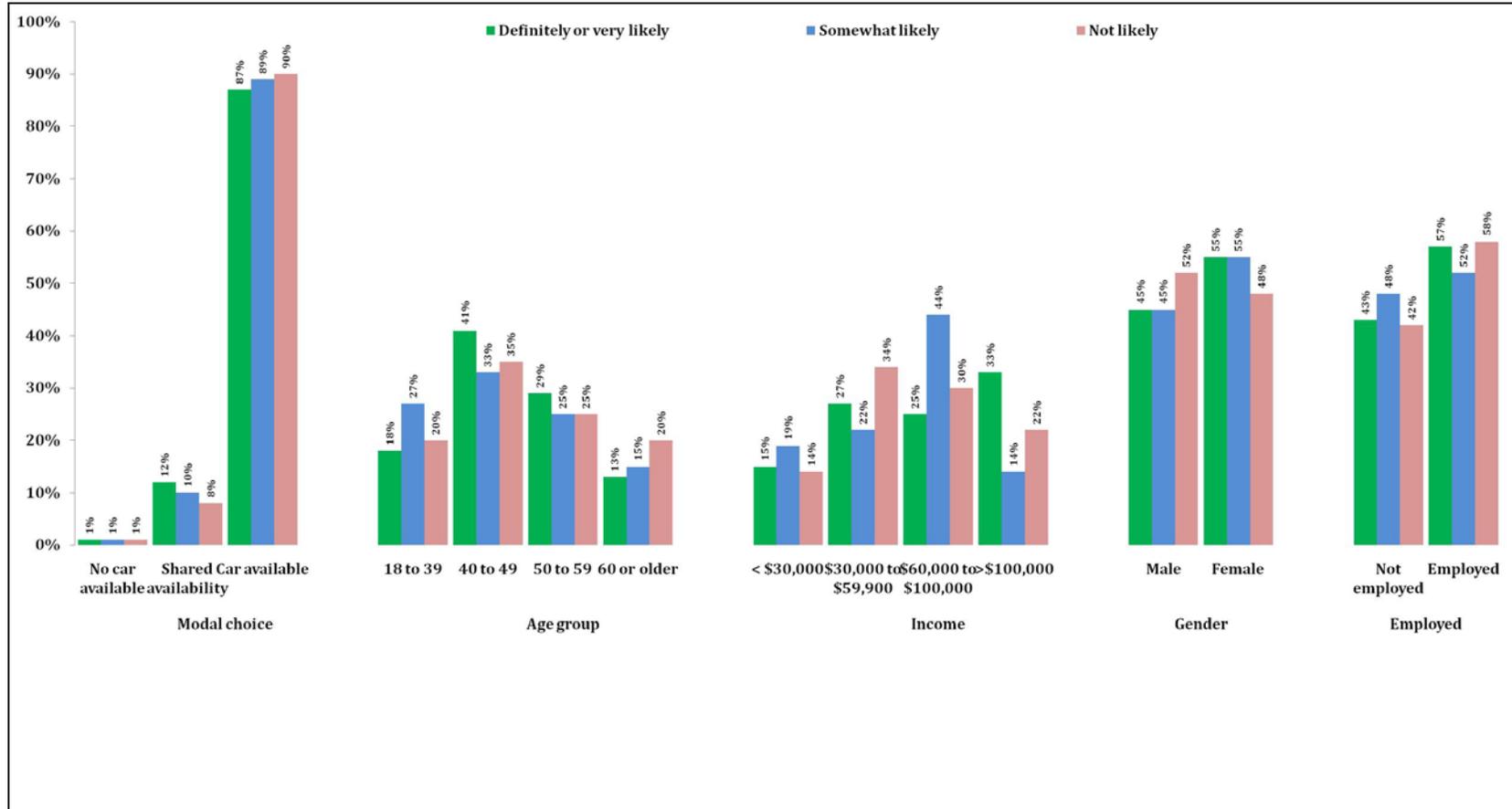
Exhibit V-37
Overall Interest in Route Extensions



First the responses in the total study area will be examined, before those people most affected by the route extensions will be examined.

The demographics of those interested or not interested in using extensions to the existing routes of The Rapid are shown in Exhibit V-38. Given that most study area residents have a car available to them, most of those who believe they would use the route extensions also have a vehicle available. Thus, eighty-five (85) percent of those who say they are definitely or very likely to use the route extensions also say they have a car available. However, as one would expect, slightly more (90 percent) of those who are not likely to use the route extensions say they have a car available. More of those who are most likely to use the route extensions (14 percent) than of those who are only somewhat likely (eight percent) or not likely (nine percent) to share availability of a vehicle.

Exhibit V-38 Route Extension Demographics



There is no clear pattern of gender difference between those who may or may not use the route extensions. The only notable relationship is that of those who are only somewhat likely to use them, many more (61 percent) are women than men (39 percent).

In terms of age, income, and employment, there are no continuous relationships that would allow us to predict utilization given those characteristics. Oddly, in general, the characteristics of the most likely users and not-likely users are more similar to each other than they are to the somewhat likely users. In each case, the characteristics of the likely users merely reflect the characteristics of the larger population.

Another way to look at demographic differences is to consider the within-group differences in terms of the likelihood of using route extensions. For example, within the group who share a vehicle, twenty-one (21) percent indicate that they are definitely or very likely to use the route extensions. This compares to somewhat fewer, seventeen (17) percent, of those who have a car available to them individually. (Those with no car available are shown in the table, but they are too few in number to attribute significance to that result.) The table in Exhibit V-39 shows the demographic differences.

Among women, there is a greater tendency (19 percent) to indicate that they are very likely to use the route extensions or somewhat likely to do (20 percent) so than among men (16 percent and 18 percent respectively), although the difference is small.

**Exhibit V-39
Interest in Using Potential Route Extension of Local Service**

		Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely
Transport options	No car available	16%	15%	69%
	Shared availability	21%	22%	57%
	Car available	17%	19%	63%
Gender	Male	16%	18%	66%
	Female	19%	20%	60%
Age group	18 to 39	15%	24%	60%
	40 to 49	19%	20%	61%
	50 to 59	21%	17%	62%
	60 or older	13%	16%	71%
Income	< \$30,000	19%	26%	54%
	\$30,000 to \$59,900	16%	15%	69%
	\$60,000 to \$100,000	14%	29%	57%
	>\$100,000	28%	11%	61%
Employment	Not employed	18%	20%	62%
	Employed	17%	19%	64%

Age differences present no clear pattern except that the least likely expected to use the route extensions are those 60 years old or older.

In terms of income, surprisingly, those with the highest level of income are most likely to say they would definitely use or be very likely to use the route extensions. The results are shown in Exhibit V-40. This is sufficiently unexpected, warranting further examination.

Providing greater detail on income levels (see inset table for detailed income levels which are simplified in most of the other charts), reveals that those with incomes under \$15,000 a year are the group most likely to be most interested in using the route extensions. It is interesting, however, that those with the top level of income measured are also quite interested. This is an example of the “U-shaped curve” of demand for public transportation, which often is found to be divided between the transit dependent, and an upper-middle-class market who, in principle, would like to use transit but often do not because of reasons of convenience.

**Exhibit V-40
Income and Interest in Using Route Extensions**

	Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely
Less than \$15,000	36%	22%	42%
\$15,000 to \$29,999	12%	28%	60%
\$30,000 - \$44,999	17%	9%	74%
\$45,000 to \$59,999	18%	22%	60%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	9%	40%	51%
\$75,000 - \$100,000	20%	22%	58%
More than \$100,000	29%	13%	58%

There is no relationship between being employed and having interest in using the route extensions.

As discussed in an earlier section, the route extensions that respondents were asked about were of two types:

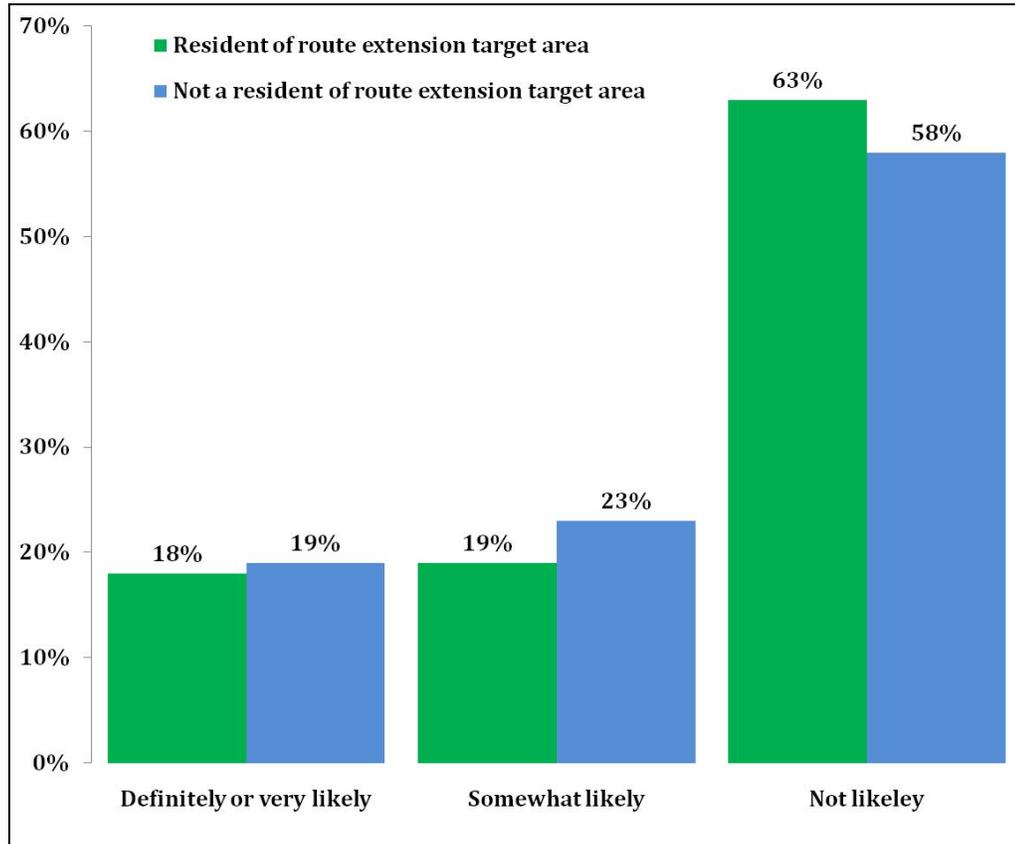
- ◆ extensions of routes into specific sets of townships adjacent to the existing service of The Rapid; and
- ◆ extensions of The Rapid into more distant areas.

In both cases, the service was described as an extension of Rapid service between the area in which the respondent resides and downtown Grand Rapids.

Exhibit V-41 displays the levels of interest among residents of the areas targeted for route extensions and areas not targeted. Notice that there is very little difference. It had been hypothesized that those who live in close proximity to Grand Rapids would be more likely to

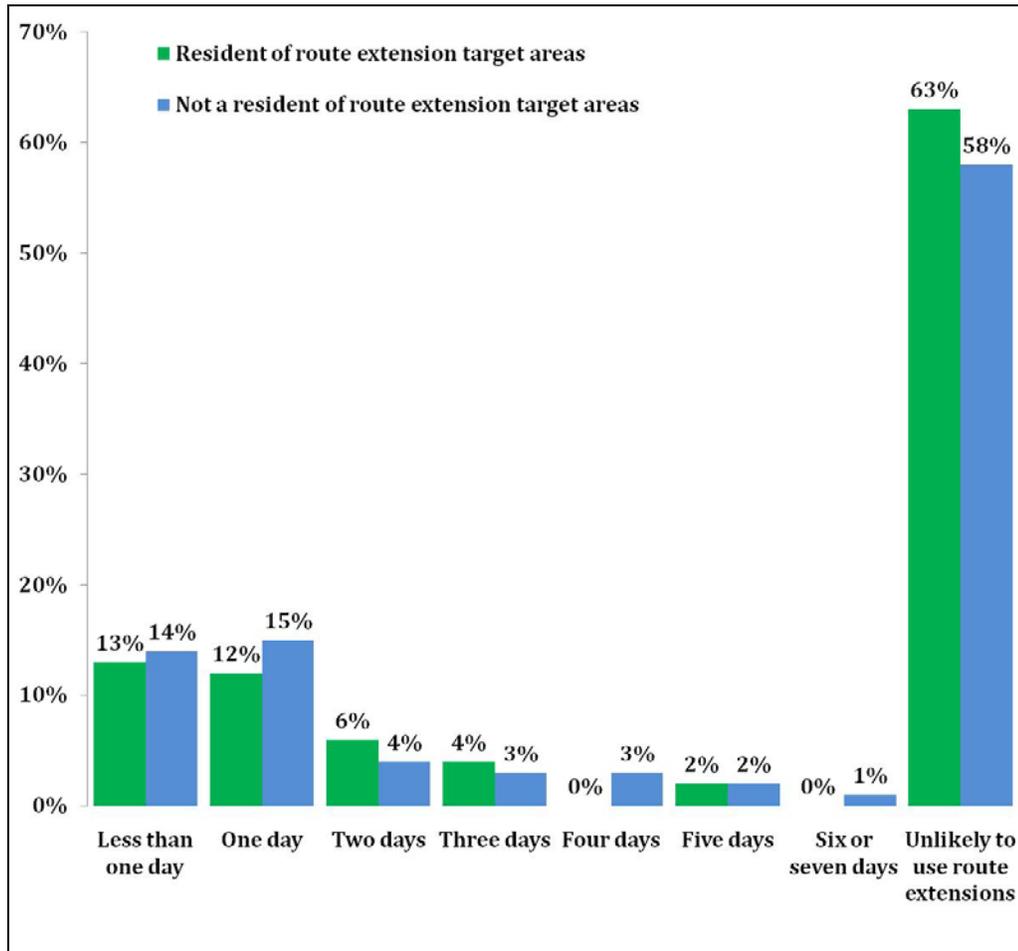
respond positively. But, perhaps those who live at a distance were focused not so much on the final destination in the City of Grand Rapids, but on the notion of having local fixed route transit service. Or perhaps there is a core of low income population there who understand the service as providing a means of getting to Grand Rapids.

**Exhibit V-41
Target Route Extensions**



The expectation of those who said they might use the route extensions is to use them infrequently. Regardless of area of residence, those who said they might use the services also tended to say they would probably use them only occasionally – one day or less than one day a week. Only a few thought they would use them regularly, as often as three to five days a week. Those responses are shown in Exhibit V-42.

**Exhibit V-42
Estimated Travel Frequency of Route Extensions**



The demographics of the route extension markets are shown in Exhibit V-43, broken into the targeted and non-targeted townships. The nontargeted township data is provided simply for the record, and primarily the targeted townships will be discussed. Within the targeted townships:

- ◆ Those who share availability of a vehicle are more likely (26 percent) to be interested in using the route extensions than those who have individual car available to them.
- ◆ Men and women do not differ in their interest except that women have a greater tendency to be somewhat likely, as opposed to unlikely, to be interested in using the route extensions.
- ◆ There are few significant differences among the age groups. The exception is that those between the ages of 40 and 49 are more likely than others to be stronger in their interest. That is, more of them (21 percent) than other age groups say they would definitely use or be very likely to use the route extensions, and fewer say that they are only somewhat likely to use them. The relationship of age to probable use is too irregular, however, to provide a useful predictor.
- ◆ Income shows the same pattern seen in the data for the total study area. The strongest interest in using the route extensions occurs among residents of households with the lowest level of

income and the highest levels of income. It is interesting to note that this is especially true in the more outlying areas.

- ◆ As was true in the overall study area, within the target area there is also no significant difference in the strong likelihood of using these new services. However, those who are not employed outside the home have a greater tendency to say they are somewhat likely to use the new transit service.

**Exhibit V-43
Level of Interest within Affected Townships**

		Route extension targeted			Route extension non-targeted		
		Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely	Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely
Modal choice	No car available	29%	16%	55%	5%	14%	81%
	Shared availability	26%	16%	57%	22%	31%	47%
	Car available	17%	19%	64%	19%	22%	59%
Gender	Male	18%	15%	67%	15%	24%	61%
	Female	18%	22%	59%	23%	22%	56%
Age group	18 to 39	17%	24%	59%	14%	28%	58%
	40 to 49	21%	15%	64%	22%	24%	54%
	50 to 59	18%	21%	61%	26%	18%	56%
	60 or older	15%	17%	68%	11%	18%	71%
Income	Less than \$15,000	24%	36%	40%	44%	13%	43%
	\$15,000 to \$29,999	14%	26%	59%	9%	30%	61%
	\$30,000 - \$44,999	21%	9%	70%	13%	9%	79%
	\$45,000 to \$59,999	16%	23%	61%	20%	20%	60%
	\$60,000 - \$74,999	14%	34%	52%	3%	46%	51%
	\$75,000 - \$100,000	23%	18%	60%	17%	28%	55%
	More than \$100,000	26%	14%	60%	33%	12%	56%
Employment	Not employed	17%	23%	60%	19%	22%	58%
	Employed	19%	15%	66%	19%	23%	58%

Latent Demand

With all of the foregoing information, a concrete estimate of latent demand for route extension service can be determined in four rounds. The first round is objective. The further rounds involve judgment calls.

- ◆ First round – Those with latent demand for route extension service:
 - Reside in areas in which route extension is feasible and described in existing planning documents – specifically:

- Rockford, Plainfield Township, Algoma Township, Alpine Township, and Belmont and Comstock Park.
- Plainfield Township only.
- Ada and Cascade Townships.
- Byron and Gaines Townships

These criteria identify an estimated total of 83,400 adults in the proposed service areas combined. This is the total market, but does not represent latent demand that would emerge with the offering of new route extension service.

- ◆ Second round – Intent and projected frequency of use:
 - Intent:
 - Those with latent demand ($p=1$) state that they would “definitely” use route extension service and would use it to commute to work. This criterion identifies a total of 4,400 adults in the proposed service areas combined. It can be assumed that their strong statement of intent indicates a probability of 1 that they will follow through if not eliminated for other reasons to be considered in subsequent rounds. (Thus $p=1$).
 - Those with limited latent demand ($p=.5$) state that they are “very likely” to use route extension service. Initially, this criterion identifies a total of 10,800 adults in the proposed service areas combined. Their intent would be “discounted” by 50 percent, leaving an estimated (rounded) 5,400 persons.
 - Those with very limited latent demand state that they are “somewhat likely” to use route extension service ($p=.02$). This criterion identifies a total of 15,600 adults in the proposed service areas combined. We would “discount” their intent by 80 percent, leaving an estimated 3,120 persons.
 - Thus the total pool of those who commute to work and have some probability of using new route extension service can be estimated as 12,900.
 - Note that the intent to commute via this service will be greater or lesser depending on various factors, including the cost of service (including the offset of availability of a tax-free transit benefit), the quality of service, and the cost of alternatives, specifically the price of gasoline and availability of free parking for work, shopping or other purposes.
- ◆ Third round – Discounting factors to establish a lower and upper bound. Those facing significant barriers to the use of transit for commuting will be discounted by an agreed factor. The primary barriers would include the perception that the walk to the bus stop would be unsafe. Another would be having to take children to school or child care.
- ◆ Final round – Frequency. The resulting population will be predicted to use route extension service within a frequency range determined by the frequency of their current local trips for purposes of commuting or shopping or other reasons. This will be translated into estimated numbers of total annual trips.

Demand Response Service

Currently, demand response service of The Rapid serves only a few participating townships, and riders must qualify to use it. The question in the survey, however, was posed to all respondents regardless of location, age, or disability. Moreover this hypothetical service would take them anywhere in the county. The Go-Bus fares, depending on age and disability are \$3.00 or \$7.00. The hypothetical fare would be \$5.00, making it more than competitive with a taxi to get anywhere in

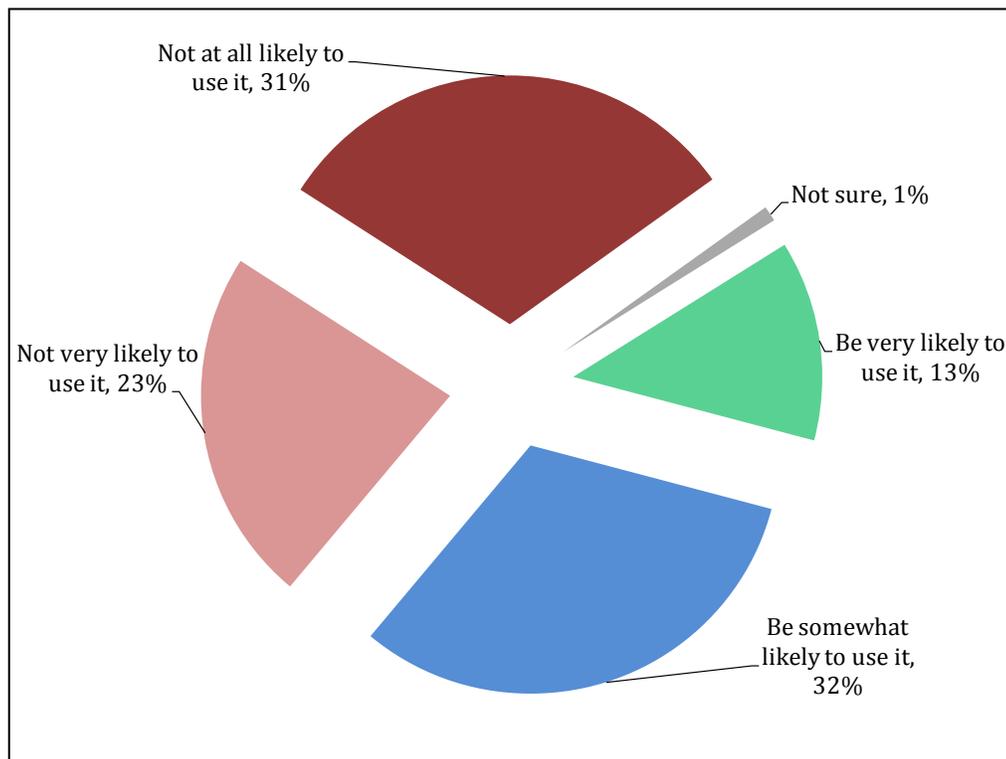
Kent County. The only drawbacks to using such a service would really be the need to reserve space a day ahead and the fact that it would pick up several people.

The question was posed this way:

- ◆ *Another change in public transportation could be new door-to-door public transit service available throughout Kent County and to anyone, not just seniors and people with disabilities. For this new door-to-door service the fare might be about \$5.00 each way to go anywhere in Kent County. You would call a day ahead to reserve a place. Or you could set up in advance a regular trip that you wanted to make routinely. The vehicle would hold about ten people. It would pick up each one at their home and then take each of them to their separate destinations.*

Thus the service, when posed to the total public in this manner is, in effect, a measure of the general public's interest in using the least expensive, most convenient form of rural public transportation without having to qualify for reasons of age, disability or income. In this sense it is not intended as a realistic option, but only to generate a ceiling of possible use. Exhibit V-44 indicates the likelihood that respondents would use door-to-door service.

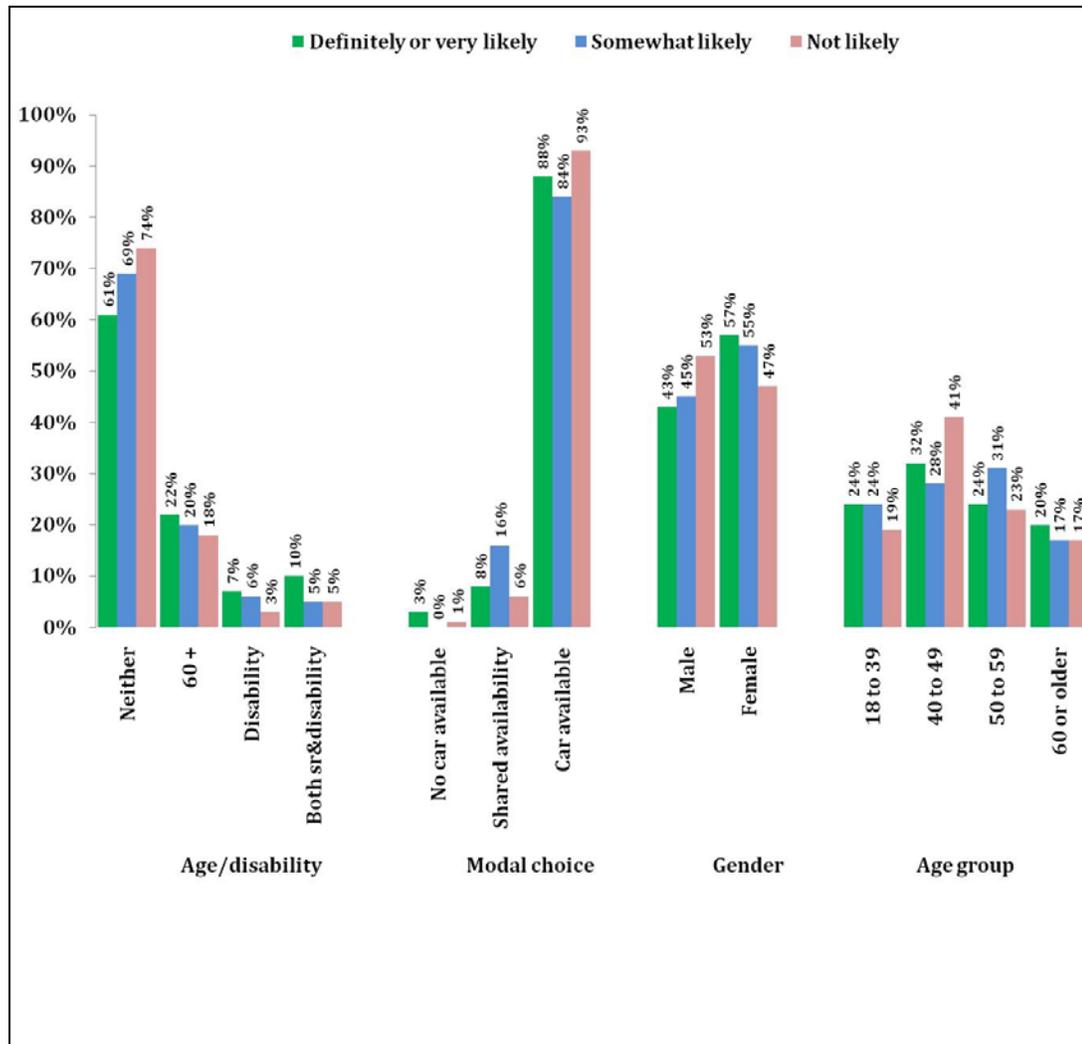
Exhibit V-44
Overview of Door-to-Door Service, at \$5 Fare



Posed in this manner, the door-to-door service attracts interest from a broad spectrum of the population, and not just from the senior or disability communities. As a matter of public policy, it is

unlikely that the wide-ranging levels of age income and non-disability status would be served. But it is interesting to note that, for example, of those who said they would definitely or very likely use this service, sixty-one (61) percent are neither over 60 years of age nor do they have a disability. On the other hand, it is also true that of the most likely users, thirty-nine (39) percent are either over 60, disabled, or both. Contrast this with the non-likely users among whom seventy-four (74) percent are neither over 60 or nor have a disability, and only twenty-six (26) percent are over 60 or have a disability or both. The results are shown in Exhibit V-45.

**Exhibit V-45
Door-to-door Demographics**



In other words, the service is more attractive to older persons and those with disabilities than it is to others. However, it is also attractive to a substantial number of people who fit neither of those descriptions.

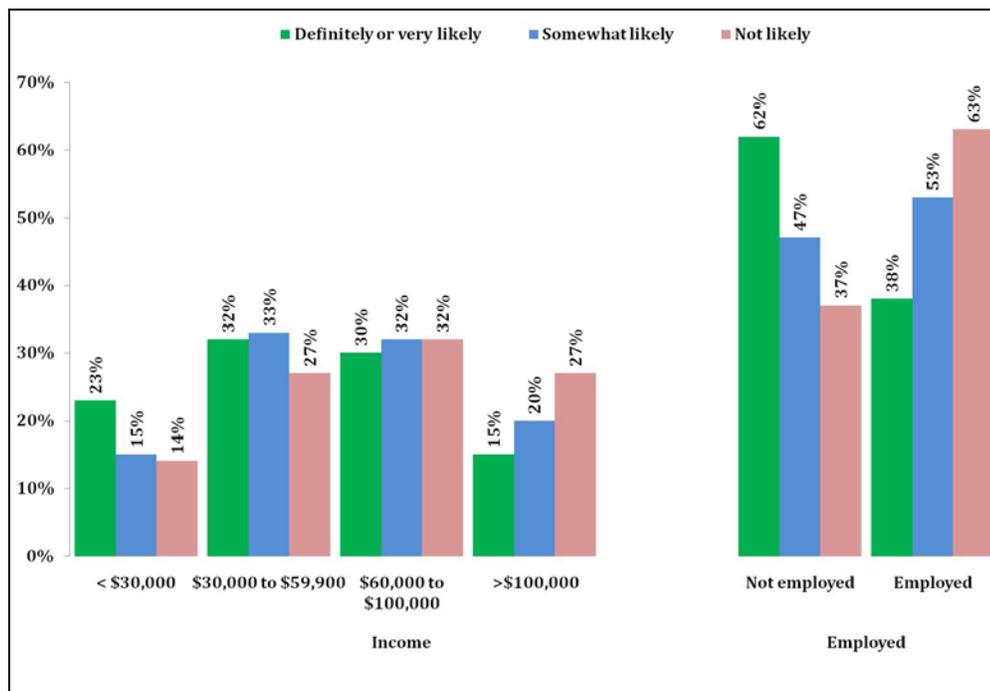
Also, regarding those respondents who are more likely to use the door-to-door service:

- ◆ Fewer have their own vehicle than do those unlikely to use the service.
- ◆ A majority of the more likely users are women (57 percent). A majority of the non-likely users are men (53 percent).
- ◆ There is not a great deal of systematic difference among the three levels of likely use in terms of age. Regardless of how likely they are to use door-to-door service, the age categories and follow the general population distribution. However, notice that one fourth of the more likely users are between the ages of 18 and 39, a fact that suggests if such a service could be provided for the general population, it would attract a significant number of younger people.

The door-to-door service does appeal disproportionately to those with household incomes under \$30,000 annually. Among the more likely users twenty-three (23) percent report incomes that level compared to only fourteen (14) percent of the non-likely users.

Exhibit V- 46 indicates that door- to-door service also appeals disproportionately to those who are not employed outside the home. Among the more likely users, sixty-two (62) percent are not employed outside the home while thirty-eight (38) percent are employed. However, of those unlikely to use this door-to-door service, only thirty-seven (37) percent are not employed outside the home compared to sixty-three (63) percent that are employed outside the home. In other words, disproportionately those likely to find door-to-door service appealing are not employed outside the home whereas the reverse is true of those who are more likely to find it unappealing.

**Exhibit V-46
Door-to-Door Income and Employment**



Interest in using the door-to-door service varies considerably among income groups and between those who are employed and those who are not employed. Interest also differs substantially among groups defined by age, disability or income (see Exhibit V-47).

**Exhibit II-47
Interest in Using Door-to-Door, by Demographics**

		(percentages to be read left to right across the rows)		
		Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely
Population likely to be eligible to use door-to-door because of:	Age	14%	30%	56%
	Disability	23%	36%	41%
	Income <\$30k	19%	34%	47%
	Others	11%	32%	57%
Modal choice	No car available	34%	12%	54%
	Shared availability	12%	55%	33%
	Car available	13%	30%	57%
Gender	Male	12%	29%	59%
	Female	15%	35%	50%
Age group	18 to 39	15%	37%	48%
	40 to 49	12%	25%	62%
	50 to 59	12%	38%	50%
	60 or older	15%	31%	54%
Income	Less than \$15,000	27%	40%	33%
	\$15,000 to \$29,999	18%	30%	52%
	\$30,000 - \$44,999	11%	34%	55%
	\$45,000 to \$59,999	18%	40%	42%
	\$60,000 - \$74,999	19%	34%	47%
	\$75,000 - \$100,000	9%	34%	58%
	More than \$100,000	9%	29%	62%
Employed	Not employed	19%	34%	47%
	Employed	9%	30%	61%

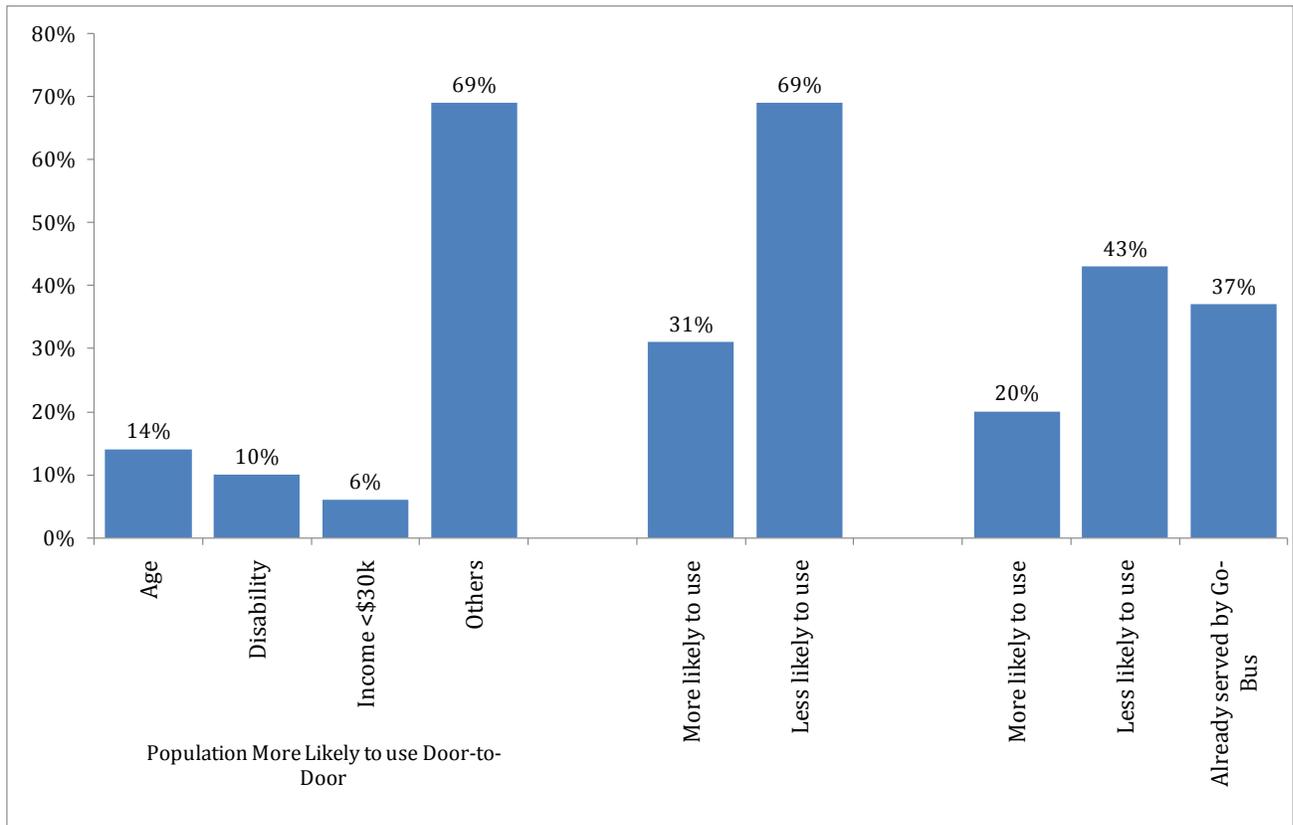
Note: Persons 60 or older, those with a disability, and low income persons are considered to be the primary markets for rural demand response service.

- ◆ Those who are in primary demand response market groups are more likely than others to say they would definitely use, or be very likely to use the door-to-door service. Those most likely to use it are those with a disability.
- ◆ There is relatively little difference between those who share a vehicle and those who have their own vehicle except that those who share a vehicle have a greater tendency to be somewhat likely to use the service than those who have a car available.
- ◆ Women are less likely than men to reject this door-to-door service (50 percent to 59 percent not likely to use it), but the difference is primarily in the “somewhat likely” category and is thus not very strong.
- ◆ There is little difference among the age groups, except that the younger group (18–39) is least likely to reject it.
- ◆ There are substantial differences among the income levels in terms of interest in using this door-to-door service. For example, of those with household incomes of less than \$15,000, 27 percent say they are likely users, but of those with incomes of \$75,000 or more, only 9 percent indicate they are likely users.
- ◆ Finally, those who are not employed are more than twice as likely to identify themselves as probable users (19 percent) as are those who are employed (9 percent).

It is important to begin the process of narrowing the focus of possible users in order to estimate the extent of latent demand. Exhibit V-48 below lists the possible approach.

For purposes of this report, three criteria have been used: (1) the age of the person, considering 60 years old as the cutoff (although some of the services are available only to those 65 and older); (2) the disability status of the person (and, if the respondent both had a disability and was 60 years old or older he or she was classified with the disability group, not the age group); (3) an income criterion, with income below \$30,000 per year for the household as the qualifier. These criteria are, of course, open for discussion. They are simply artificial constructs introduced here to begin the process of understanding the realistic limits of the market for door-to-door, countywide service.

Exhibit V-48 Door-to-Door Criteria

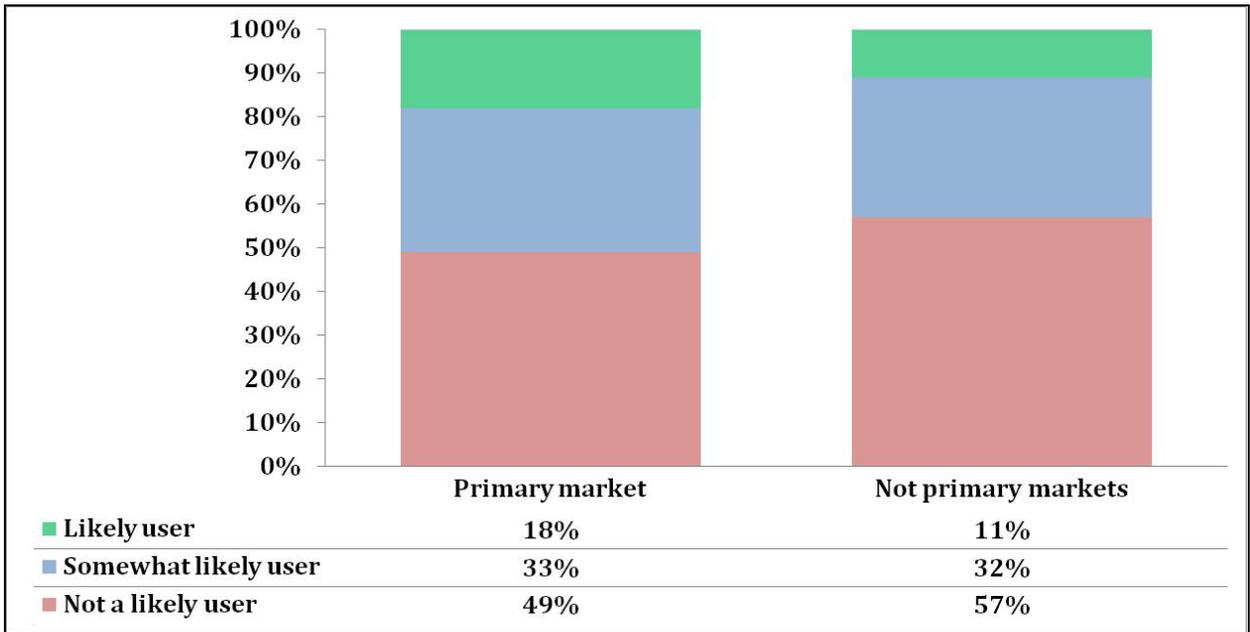


Applying these criteria, then, reveals that thirty-one (31) percent of the adults would be the demographic categories most interested in the door-to-door service, and sixty-nine (69) percent would not.

If "latent" demand is to be measured, that may imply that persons already served should be eliminated from the computation. This will be done in a subsequent analysis.

The primary demand response market criteria help focus the level of demand. Those considered "in the primary market" in this hypothetical sense are more likely (18 percent) than those not in the primary market (11 percent) to consider themselves likely users of door-to-door service, and are less likely (49 percent) than those not eligible (57 percent) to reject it. The chart in exhibit V-49 shows this hypothetical scenario.

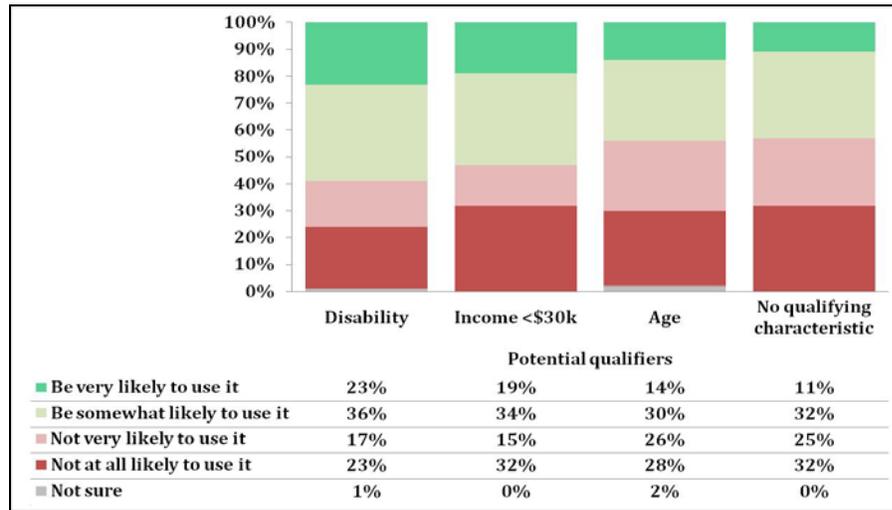
**Exhibit V-49
Primary Market Criteria**



Among the several eligibility criteria, disability is the strongest determinant of demand, income next, and age third. As Exhibit V-50 indicates, of those with a disability, 25 percent consider themselves very likely users compared to only 11 percent of those with no qualifiers. The comparable figure for the income qualifier is 19 percent, and for age, 14 percent.

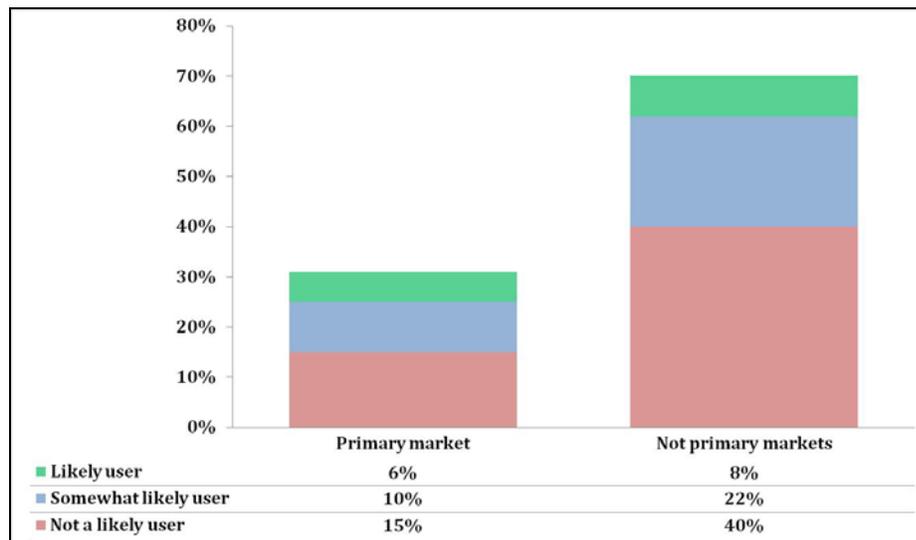
Thus, when probabilities are decided for purposes of computing latent demand, these levels of interest should be considered.

Exhibit V-50 Demand Response Primary Markets



In focusing on the primary markets for demand response service, the level of latent demand is dramatically narrowed. Exhibit V-51 shows the percent of the total adult population in each cell of the table. The chart illustrates the point that the combination of all adults realistically most likely to use the demand response door-to-door service is only six (6) percent of the population, and those “somewhat likely” to use it comprise only another ten (10) percent.

Exhibit V-51 Primary and Not Primary Markets



Within the small population defined as being in the primary market to utilize the new door-to door-service, the very few who have no vehicle are too few in number to base a projection on, but the few

there are in the sample, certainly consider themselves likely users. Oddly, however, those with a car available are more likely (19 percent) than those with no car available, to say they are likely users.

Although men and women do not differ much in term of likely use, men are more likely to entirely reject using door-to-door service (55 percent) than women (45 percent). The results are shown in the table in Exhibit V-52.

**Exhibit V-52
Interest in Using Door-to-Door, within the Primary Market**

<u>Interest in using door-to-door</u>				
<u>(Table includes total study area but only those 60 or older, or with a disability or with household income under \$30,000 annually)</u>				
Differences within demographic groups (percentages to be read left to right across the rows)				
		Definitely or very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely
Modal choice	No car available	44%	12%	44%
	Shared availability	9%	49%	43%
	Car available	19%	31%	51%
Gender	Male	19%	27%	55%
	Female	17%	38%	45%

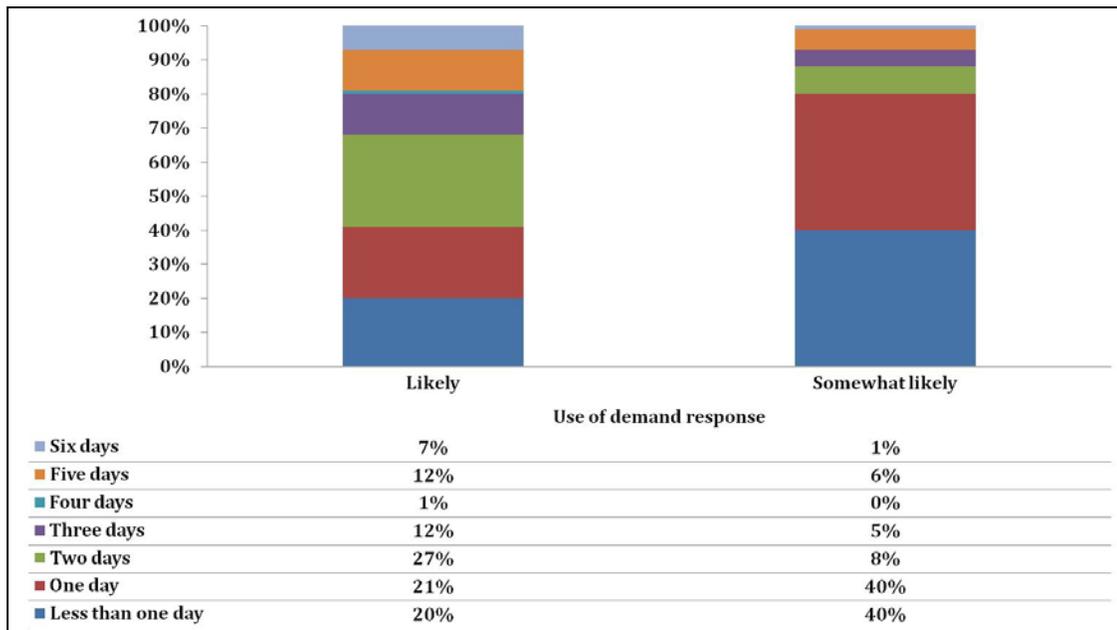
Exhibit V -53 shows trip purpose. Trip purpose among more than half of the most likely users is occasional purposes, including shopping (28 percent) and medical/dental visits (27 percent), visiting (4 percent), church (1 percent), social service agency visits (7 percent), and miscellaneous trips (8 percent), for a total of 74 percent. The other 26 percent say they would commute. Those who say they are only somewhat likely to use the service also cite predominantly occasional, not frequent, trips as the likely purpose, and only seven percent cite commuting.

**Exhibit V-53
Trip Purpose**

	<u>Primary Market</u>	
	Very likely to use it	Somewhat likely to use it
Shopping	28%	24%
Medical/dental	27%	42%
Commute to work	26%	7%
Visiting	4%	11%
Church services or activities	1%	4%
Social service agencies	7%	0%
Commute to school	0%	1%
Other	7%	10%

The occasional nature of the trip purposes is reflected in the number of days on which people believe they would use door-to-door service each week. Sixty-eight percent (68 percent) say they would use it two or fewer days a week. They would thus comprise approximately two thirds of the likely users defined as “in the primary markets” (six percent of the adult population), or four percent of all adults in the study area. Some, 13 percent indicate they would use it three or four days (slightly less than one percent of the adult population). The results are shown in Exhibit V-54.

**Exhibit V-54
Frequency Among Those in the Primary Markets**



The heavy potential users, five or six days (no one said they would use it seven days) comprise 19 percent of the likely users whom have been defined as “in the primary market” (six percent of the adult population), or slightly more than one percent of the adult population. In data not presented in table form here, it is clear that the 90 percent of these potentially frequent users say they would be using it to commute. Those using the service for four or fewer days say they would use it for shopping, (28 percent), medical visits (41 percent), and other occasional purposes. It is an open question whether this would be a viable means of commuting for many people.

Latent Demand

The next step with the door-to-door service, as with the other service expansions, is to use these results to estimate latent demand for this additional service. Clearly there are a greater number of judgment calls in the door-to-door situation than in the express or route extension components. The most likely market for use of door-to-door service is as we have described it – persons with disabilities related to mobility, persons who are 60 or older, and persons with low incomes. The door-to-door market is thus very different from the market for express or even route extensions. Both of those markets are limited by geography. The express market is additionally limited by geography of both residence and workplace, and by whether or not the person is employed. However, there are no other demographic limits on the probable market.

For door-to-door service, however, the only limits are demographic, for the service was described as being county-wide. Nor is the service highly constrained by the price of a trip, which, at the stipulated \$5 fare is roughly one third of the comparable service (County Connection) today.

This competitive price-point means that the nominal market will tend to be quite large. In one of the charts in the door-to-door section of the report, we noted the most likely primary market as being 5.5 percent of the adult population. This amounts to approximately 8,100 persons who not only said they would be very likely to use the service but also met one or more of the criteria for being in the primary market for such service (i.e. disability, age, and/or income).

Another 10 percent meet the demographic criteria, but say they are only somewhat likely to use the service. This amounts to approximately 14,800 people who would use the service at least occasionally.

Applying the probability weights of 1 for the most likely users and .5 for the “somewhat likely” users, we find a total of approximately 15,500 persons in the market for such service.

This is not a final estimate of latent demand. The final estimate will consider the number of trips per week and annually people believe they are likely to make using the service. It will also consider two other matters. First, it will deduct the persons currently served by Go-Bus and other demand response services from the total of “latent” demand since those using these services are not “latent.” Second, the probabilities assigned to the more conventional express and fixed route services studied here to estimate the proportion of those expressing interest who will actually follow through are 1 for those saying they are very likely to use or definitely will use the service and one half for those

who say they are somewhat likely. However, demand response service is considerably more challenging to use in spite of the appealing name. because using it entails giving advance notice, waiting for the vehicle within a significant time-window, and riding with a number of other persons with differing destinations, thus potentially waiting through delivery of others to their destinations. Thus initially favorable response in a survey situation is more likely than other transit services to falter in the real world. This suggests that we ought to use a greater behavioral “discount factor.” These additional factors will be considered in the final estimate.

EMPLOYER SURVEY

Transit Rider Origins and Destinations

The major employers within Kent County were identified and compared to existing Rapid service to see whether they were being served. In most cases, major employment sites in the service area are provided bus service. However, five employers are located beyond the ¼ mile walking distance threshold. They are:

- ◆ Consumers Energy in Wyoming is 1.1 miles from Route 1
- ◆ Gordon Food Service in Wyoming is 0.4 miles from Route 1
- ◆ Leon Plastics in Wyoming is 0.9 miles from Route 1
- ◆ Pine Rest Christian Mental Health in Gaines Township is 0.3 miles from Route 1
- ◆ Priority Health in Grand Rapids Township is 0.7 miles from Route 15

To analyze the travel patterns of passengers using The Rapid bus service, bus stop boarding and alighting data was obtained from The Rapid to help identify the top origins and destinations of riders. The bus stops with greater than fifty (50) boardings and alightings per day were identified. This is shown in Exhibit V-55.

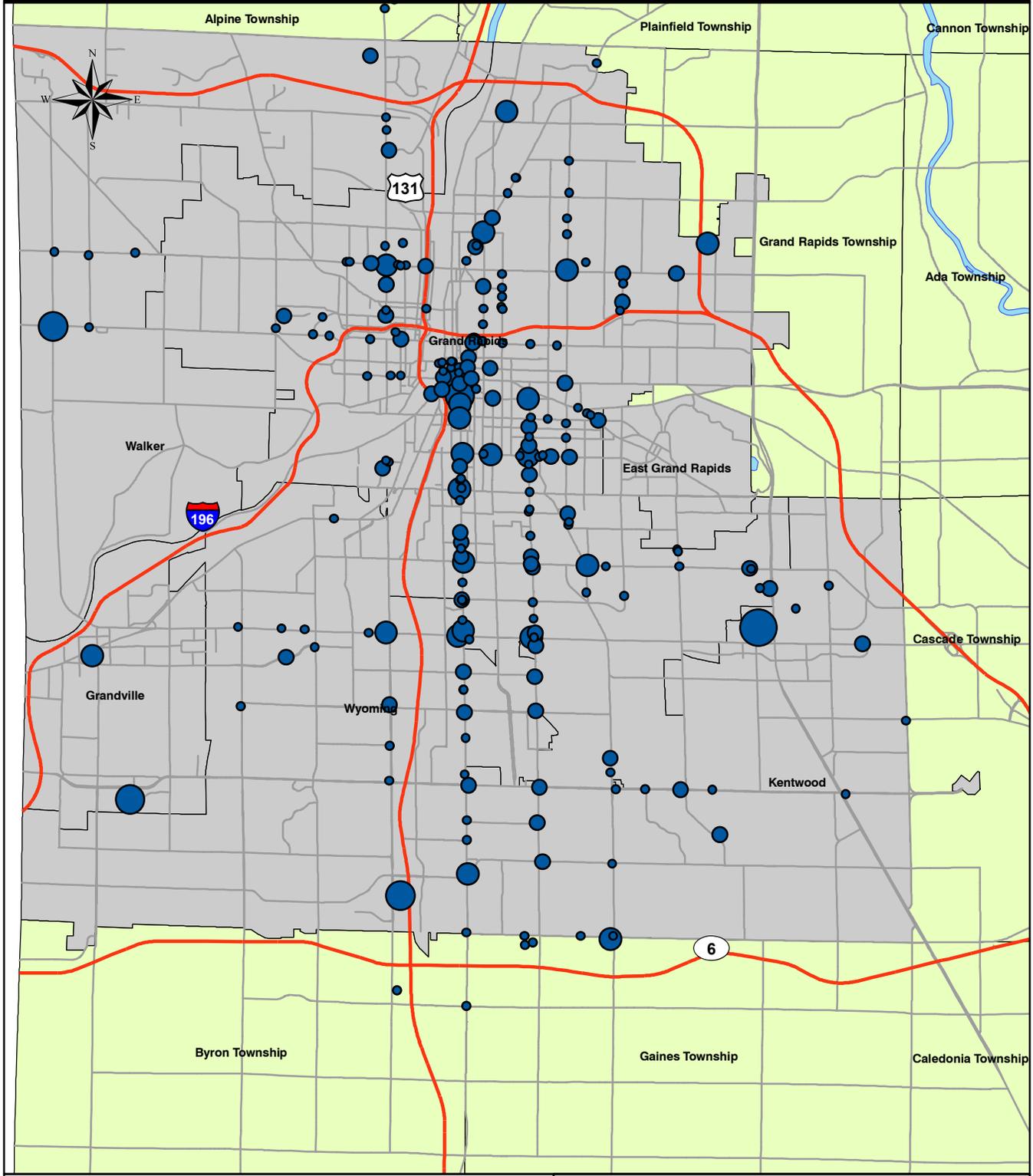
Locations of major employers were used to ascertain whether The Rapid was being utilized by their employees. The major employers are summarized in Exhibit V-56. The map shows the locations of major employers in and around the six city area.

Four major employment sites outside of downtown Grand Rapids had boarding and alighting activity above 50. While a direct correlation with the major employer cannot be shown, it can be reasonably assumed that a portion of the ridership is due to the major employer. The four locations are:

- ◆ Division Avenue S between downtown and 28th Street SE on Route 1. There are many stops with very high activity ranging from 45 to 190, the most of any route segment in the system. In this area are the employment sites of Bentleler Automotive and Pridgeon & Clay that are identified in this study.
- ◆ Roosevelt Park on Route 8 has high activity near Michigan Turkey Headquarters.
- ◆ Burton Street SE on Route 6 has high activity at the Calvin College stop and near the Holland Home Corporate Office.
- ◆ Wyoming Avenue at the Metropolitan Health Village has high boarding and alighting activity.

Exhibit V-55

Journey to Work Boardings and Alightings



Boarding/Alighting

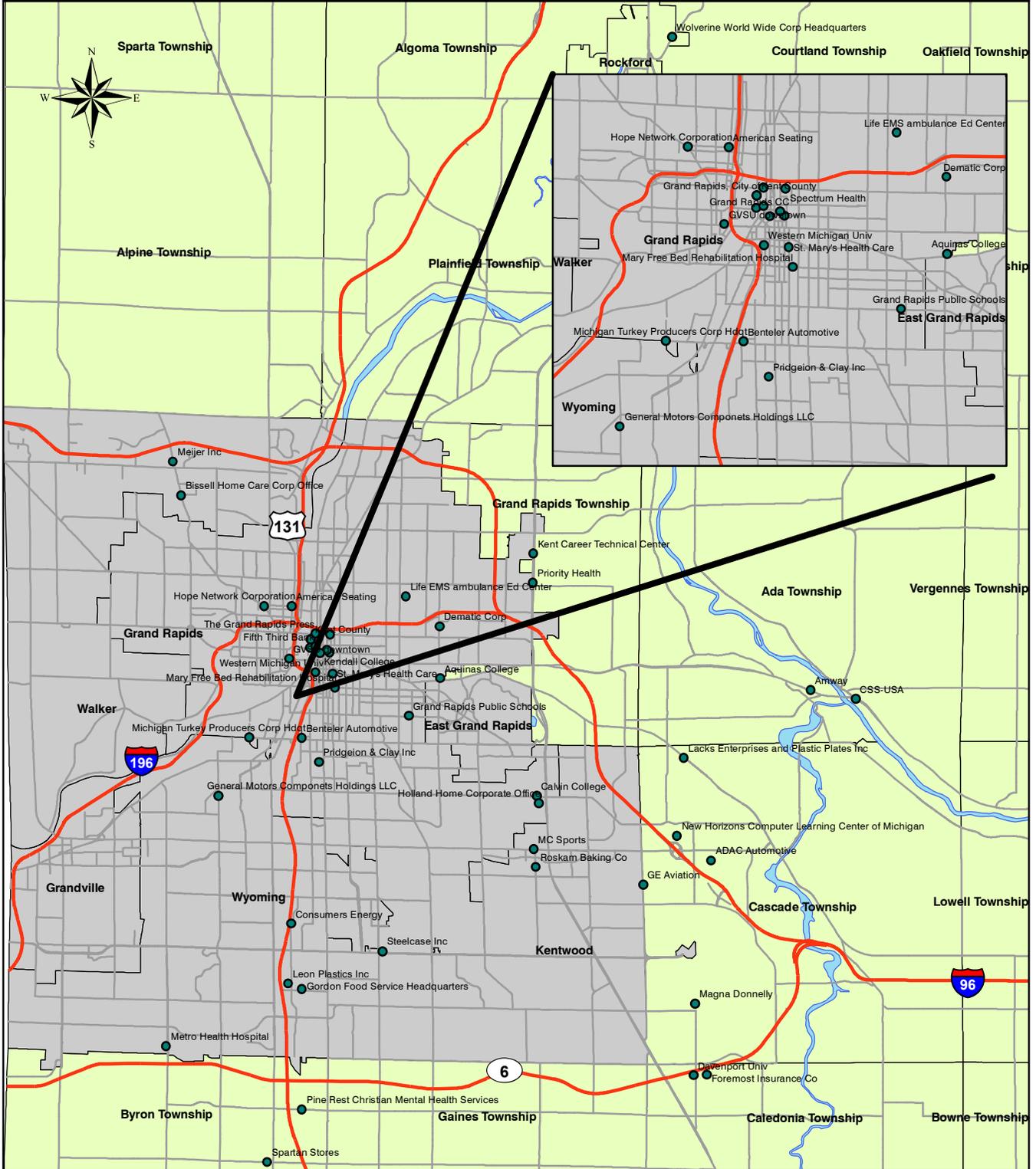
- 23 - 65
- 66 - 157
- 158 - 321
- 322 - 602
- 603 - 1345

ITP Service Area
 Study Area

**Kent County
Transit Needs Assessment**

Exhibit V-56

Locations of Major Employers in Metro Grand Rapids



- Major Employers
- ITP Service Area
- Study Area

**Kent County
Transit Needs Assessment**

Outside of downtown Grand Rapids there are an additional twelve (12) employment sites that were identified. Most are accessible by bus routes operated by The Rapid. The bus stops at or near these destinations did not have boarding activity of significance to indicate riders are using bus service to travel to and from work.

Overall, the vast majority of the major employers in Kent County are served by The Rapid. Except for downtown Grand Rapids and the four locations noted above, there does not appear to be significant commuter travel by bus to these work locations.

Kent County Journey to Work Analysis

The Kent County Journey to Work analysis identified travel patterns within the county using 2000 census data. This analysis is focused on the following three Journey to Work travel patterns:

- ◆ Travel to work from the City of Grand Rapids to locations in Kent County
- ◆ Travel to work to locations in the City of Grand Rapids from Kent County
- ◆ Travel to work in downtown Grand Rapids from Kent County

It should be noted that the Journey to Work analysis does not account for shift times, multiple locations, or the ability to connect origins and destinations effectively with a bus route. It does, however, provide a proxy for demand.

Data indicates that most Kent County residents work locally in the Grand Rapids area with 40 percent working in the City of Grand Rapids. Another 15 percent of residents in the Grand Rapids area work in other areas of Kent County. Of all the workers employed within Kent County, 91 percent also live in Kent County and do not travel significant distances to work.

All areas within the City of Grand Rapids are served by public transit, therefore, most employment sites are accessible by bus. Beyond the city limits in Kent County there are several large employers that are not served by public transit. These include:

Ada: Amway and CSS-USA
Byron: Spartan Stores Corporate Office
Cascade: Lacks Enterprises & Plastic Plates; New Horizons Computer Learning Center; ADAC Automotive; Magna Donnelly
Caledonia: Foremost and Farmers Insurance and Davenport University
Rockford: Wolverine World Wide Headquarters
Walker: Meijer Corporate Office and Bissell Home Care Corporate Office

Travel from City of Grand Rapids to Work Locations in Kent County

The following is a summary of the findings of Journey to Work travel patterns for people originating in the City of Grand Rapids and traveling to destinations within Kent County including a description of potential public transit services.

East County: Kentwood, Grand Rapids Township, Cascade and Ada

In northern Grand Rapids Township, there is Kent Career Technical Center and Celebration Village with over 1,000 people traveling to work in this area. Bus service is available to this location.

In Ada where Amway and CSS-USA is located, there are over 1,300 people traveling to this area for work from the city. There is no bus service to Ada.

In Kentwood adjacent to Cascade, over 3,900 are traveling to work from the city followed by a bordering tract with over 1,900 traveling to work. This area includes Calvin College, Holland Home Corporate Office, MC Sports, and Roskam Baking. In addition, in Cascade where the airport and GE Aviation are located, over 3,700 people travel to work from the city. These areas have bus service. However, a segment of this tract extends east of I-96 in Cascade, and includes two large employers, including New Horizons Computer Learning Center and ADAC Automotive. Neither of these employers has bus service.

In between the airport and SR 6 is the Magna Donnelly Company. This area of Cascade is included in the same census tract as the airport. Although it is likely that the majority of commuters are traveling to the airport or adjacent work sites where bus service is available, some of these commuters may also be traveling to Magna Donnelly, which has no bus service.

West County: City of Walker

West of the City of Grand Rapids is the City of Walker. Journey to Work data indicates over 2,000 commuters originate in the City of Grand Rapids and travel to destinations throughout the City of Walker. The City of Walker is home to Meijer Corporate Office and Bissell Homecare Corporate Office.

Regular bus service is provided to the City of Walker along the Leonard Street NW and SR 45 corridors. However, no bus service is provided to the location of the Meijer and Bissell company headquarters.

North County: Plainfield, Alpine and Rockford

North of the City of Grand Rapids beyond I-96 are the Plainfield, Alpine and Rockford communities. Rockford is the location of Wolverine World Wide headquarters.

Journey to Work data indicates about 400 to 600 commuters traveling to various areas throughout the north county area. Except for the southeast segment of Alpine, there are no bus services to the north county area.

South County: Caledonia, Wyoming and Byron

In the Township of Caledonia, just south of SR 6, is the location of Farmers and Foremost Insurance companies and the Davenport Campus. Journey to Work data indicates just over 400 people traveling to work from the city to this area. There is no bus service to these work and education locations.

Collectively, the number of trips from the City of Grand Rapids to the numerous census tracts comprising the City of Wyoming indicates a major work related travel destination. Major employers include Metro Health Hospital, Steelcase, Consumers Energy, Gordon Food Service, Leon Plastics and Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services. In addition, the Journey to Work data from Census 2000 would include commuters traveling to General Motors in the City of Wyoming. However, that work site has been closed. There is established bus service throughout the City of Wyoming.

In Byron Township, just south of the City of Wyoming, the Journey to Work data indicates over 600 commuters traveling from the city. This is the location of Spartan Stores corporate headquarters. There is no bus service to this location.

Transit Demand from City of Grand Rapids to County Destinations

It does not appear from the Journey to Work data that there is sufficient county employment demand to warrant stand-alone commuter bus service. First consideration should be to aggressively promote Rideshare programs and vanpools from Grand Rapids to these outlying employers. Green Rides and Western Michigan Rideshare should play an important role in accomplishing this. Exhibit V-57 shows the volume of trips to each U.S. Census block group in Kent County from block groups within the City of Grand Rapids.

A second consideration should be given to route extensions to areas of higher employment. If a significant number of employees are on the route headed to the employer, it is likely that additional ridership will be generated. Routes 5 or 17 can be extended further into Cascade east of I-96 and Route 10 can be extended to Byron.

Travel from Kent County Communities to Work in the City of Grand Rapids

The following is a summary of the findings of Journey to Work travel patterns for people originating in Kent County and traveling to employment sites within the City of Grand Rapids. Exhibit V-58 shows the volume of trips to Grand Rapids from block groups in the study area.

County Origins to Work in the City of Grand Rapids

East County: Kentwood, Grand Rapids Township, Cascade and Ada

The Grand Rapids Township data indicate some moderate demand for travel to work to the City of Grand Rapids from the area near Celebration Village (1,000+). There is bus service from this area.

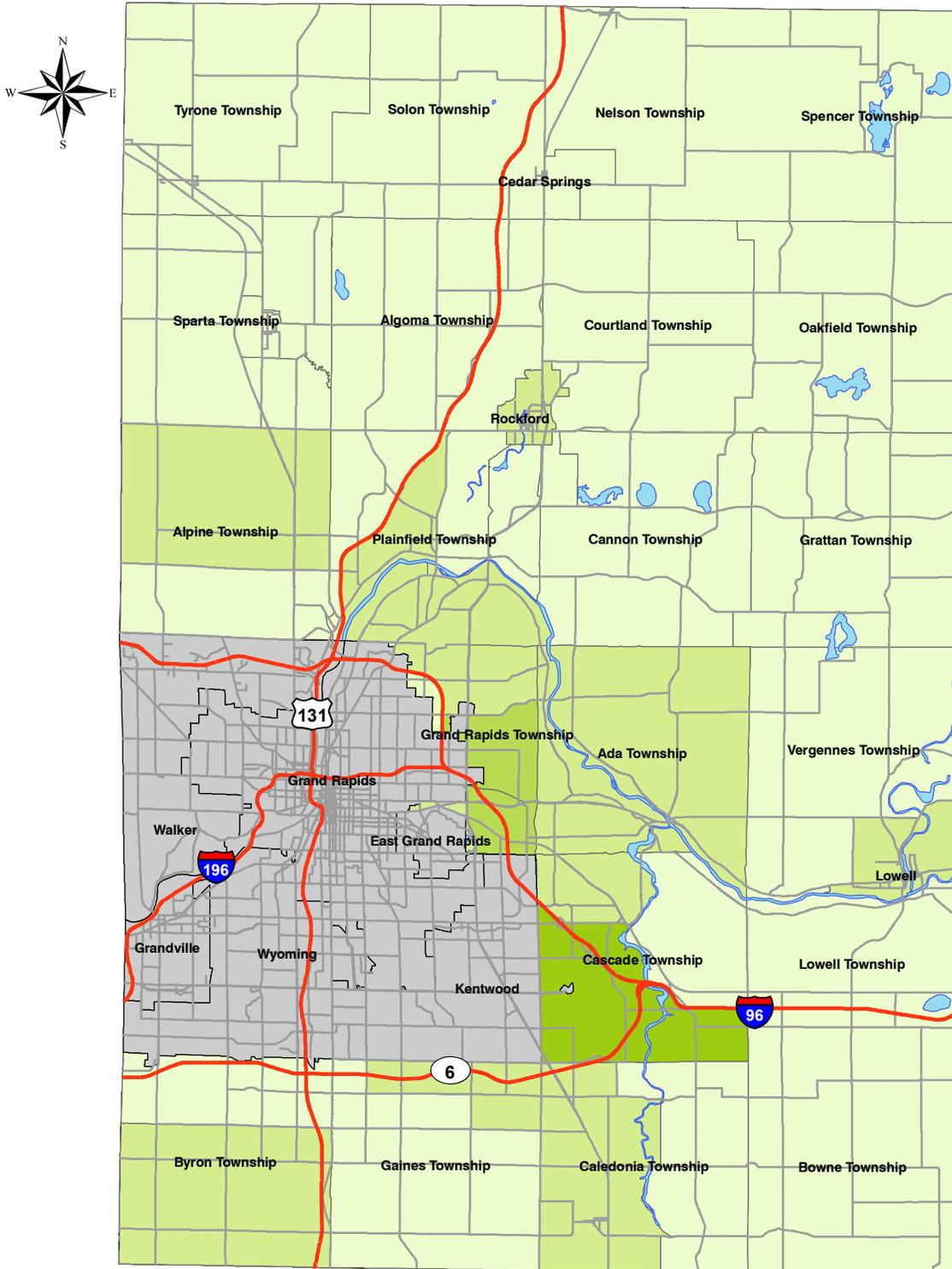
Along the Hwy 21 corridor from Lowell via Ada collectively over 4,000 people travel to the City of Grand Rapids for work. This corridor has no bus service currently.

Overall, Kentwood generates a large number of commuters traveling to the city for work. Bus service is available throughout the Kentwood area to the City of Grand Rapids.

The number of commuters from Cascade is about 1,800 originating from areas north of I-96 and bordering with Ada. These are not currently served with The Rapid service.

Exhibit V-57

Trips From Grand Rapids to Kent County



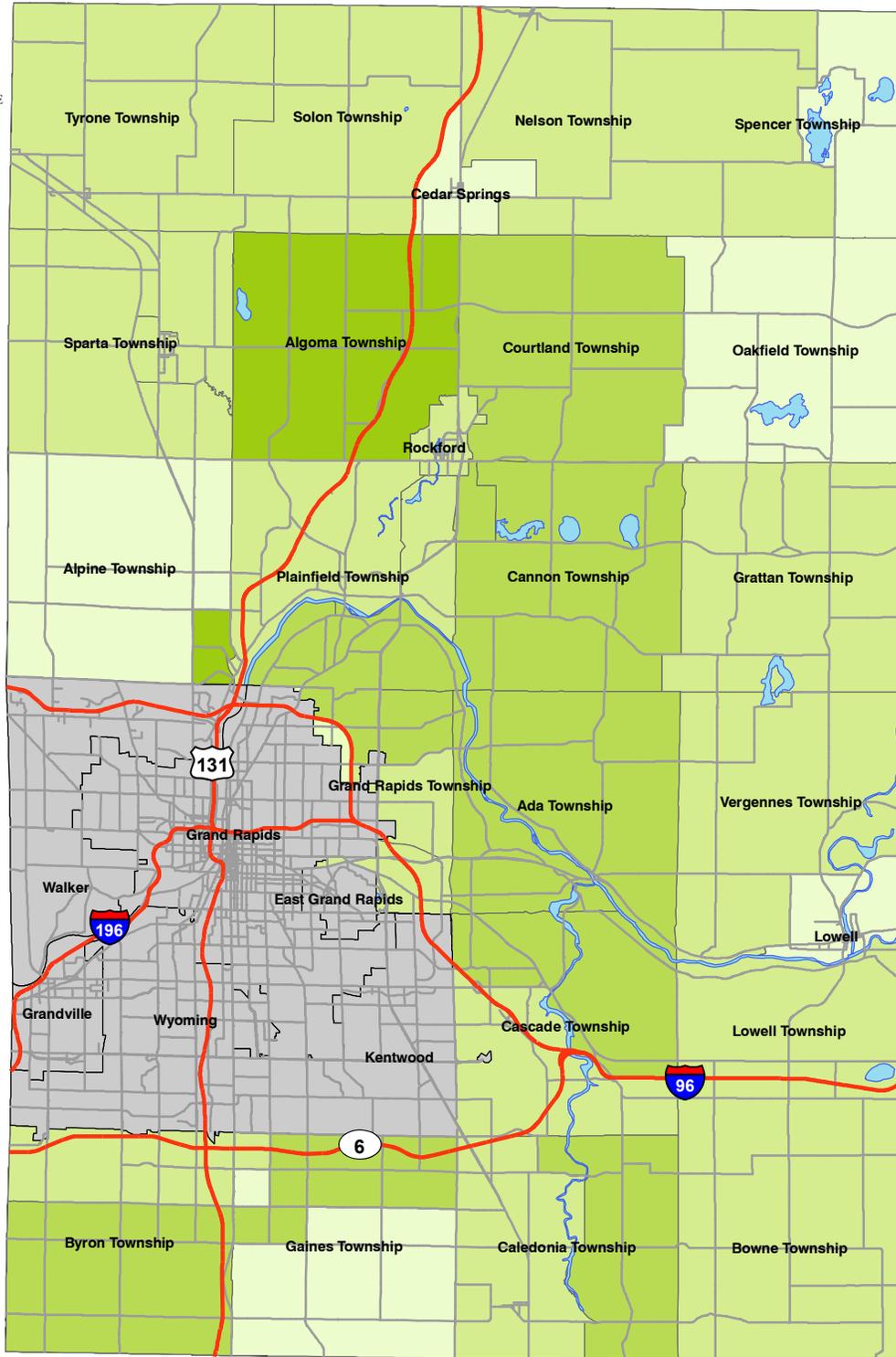
From City

- | |
|--|
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p> 0 - 294</p> <p> 295 - 881</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p> 882 - 2644</p> <p> 2645 - 3990</p> </div> </div> |
|--|

Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

Exhibit V-58

Trips to Grand Rapids From Kent County



To City

179 - 423	678 - 1009
424 - 677	1010 - 1713

Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

West County: City of Walker

The City of Walker is a major origin for those traveling to work in the City of Grand Rapids. Regular bus service is provided between the City of Walker and the City of Grand Rapids along the Leonard Street NW and Hwy 45 corridors.

North County: Plainfield, Alpine, Sparta and Rockford

These communities, north of the City of Grand Rapids, are mostly along the US 131 and Hwy 37 corridors. This area is large and collectively there is significant travel to the City of Grand Rapids for work. From Rockford to the north, there are approximately 3,600 employees commuting to Grand Rapids in the US 131 corridor. There is no commuter service to Rockford currently.

The southern portion of Alpine has bus service. Over 1,500 residents from Alpine commute to Grand Rapids.

South County: Caledonia, Gaines, Wyoming and Byron

The Caledonia and Gaines area along the Hwy 37 corridor south of Hwy 6 shows minimal demand for travel to work in the City of Grand Rapids. There is no bus service from these areas.

Byron's Journey to Work data includes an area of Gaines Township just east of Hwy 131. It shows stronger demand for commuters traveling to the city. Except for the most northern portions of Byron and Gaines, there is no bus service from these areas.

The city of Wyoming overall generates significant travel to work to the City of Grand Rapids. Wyoming is served throughout by several transit routes.

County Origin to Specific City Locations

There are a number of work locations throughout the City of Grand Rapids. Although most job opportunities are downtown, major employers or groups of employment sites are found in other neighborhoods. All communities within the City of Grand Rapids are served by public transit with most routes originating in downtown Grand Rapids.

The following information describes the largest clusters by census tract of Journey to Work activity for commuters traveling from the county to work to specific areas in the City of Grand Rapids.

Downtown Grand Rapids

Downtown Grand Rapids is by far the most significant work destination for commuters originating outside in Kent County. Over 16,000 non-Grand Rapids Kent County residents travel to work in the central and east downtown areas. This represents a substantial potential market.

To West Downtown

The areas just west of downtown on the other side of the Grand River collectively generate over 4,200 commuters from the county. The area south of I-196 is the location of the GVSU Campus and the areas north of I-196 is where Hope Network Corporation and American Seating Headquarters are located.

To North Downtown

North of downtown just past I-196 approaching the Belnap and Highland Park neighborhoods is a small area showing Journey to Work data of over 1,300 people commuting from the county.

To South Downtown

In a small area south of downtown between Hwy 131 and the Grand River (Black Hills) is where a St. Mary's Clinic and Michigan Turkey Producers Headquarters are located. Journey to Work data indicates over 1,800 commuters traveling from the county to this area.

To the east on the other side of Hwy 131 in Roosevelt Park is a segment with over 960 commuters traveling from the county. This segment is where Benteler Automotive and Pridgeion & Clay Inc. are located.

To Fulton Heights

This neighborhood east of downtown generates nearly 4,000 commuters from the county. Major employers in this area include a Spectrum Health Clinic, Aquinas College and Dematic Corporation.

Just to the north on the other side of I-196 is where a Hope Network clinic, two hospitals, GRCC Technical Center and the Kent County Jail are located. This segment shows over 1,500 commuters from the county.

To Garfield Park

Near the Garfield Park area and bordering the city limits attracts over 1,000 commuters from the county according to the Journey to Work data. There do not appear to be any large employers in this area.

To South Grand Rapids

Areas bordering the City of Kentwood collectively generate nearly 5,000 commuters traveling to work from the county. Some of the employers in this area include: Steelcase, Hope Network, Davenport Career Center, several retail centers and several medical clinics including a Spectrum Health Clinic.

To Southeast Grand Rapids

According to the Journey to Work data, the southeast area of Grand Rapids generates over 6,800 commuters traveling from the county.

A small area near the Oakdale neighborhood borders the City of East Grand Rapids shows over 1,000 commuters traveling to this area from the county. Metropolitan Hospital and Metro Health Clinic are located here.

Adjacent to the above area, there are over 3,200 and 2,400 commuters traveling to work from the county. The employment sites located in these two areas are: Holland Home Corporate Office, Calvin College, WMU Campus and Centerpointe Mall. Two employers are just south of the city limits and may be counted within this census tract. The businesses are MC Sports and Roskam Bakery.

Transit Demand from the County to the City of Grand Rapids

Downtown Grand Rapids is a focal point of the region. There are many employment opportunities due to the large number of businesses and services, city, state and federal offices, higher education, hotels, retail, dining and entertainment. The downtown and adjacent areas generate over 16,000 commute to work trips from outside the city. Many of the largest employers in Kent County are located in the downtown area. Among the largest are the City of Grand Rapids, the County of Kent, Spectrum Health, Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, The Grand Rapids Press, Grand Rapids Community College and several other higher education institutions. Exhibit V-59 shows the volume of daily trips to Grand Rapids from locations within the study area.

Although downtown Grand Rapids is a major destination, employment sites are located throughout the city and several of the large employers are located in communities beyond the city limits. Commuters relying on bus service would likely be required to transfer to continue their trip thus reducing the potential market of choice riders.

The majority of commuters to downtown Grand Rapids from the county (about 10,000) originate within the service delivery area of The Rapid bus route network while the balance of about 6,000 commuters originate where no public transit service is available.

Due to the characteristics of the area regarding multiple employment site locations and home origins, and distances involved, attracting the choice commuter rider to transit will be very challenging. The most likely market to capture would be commuters destined to Grand Rapids.

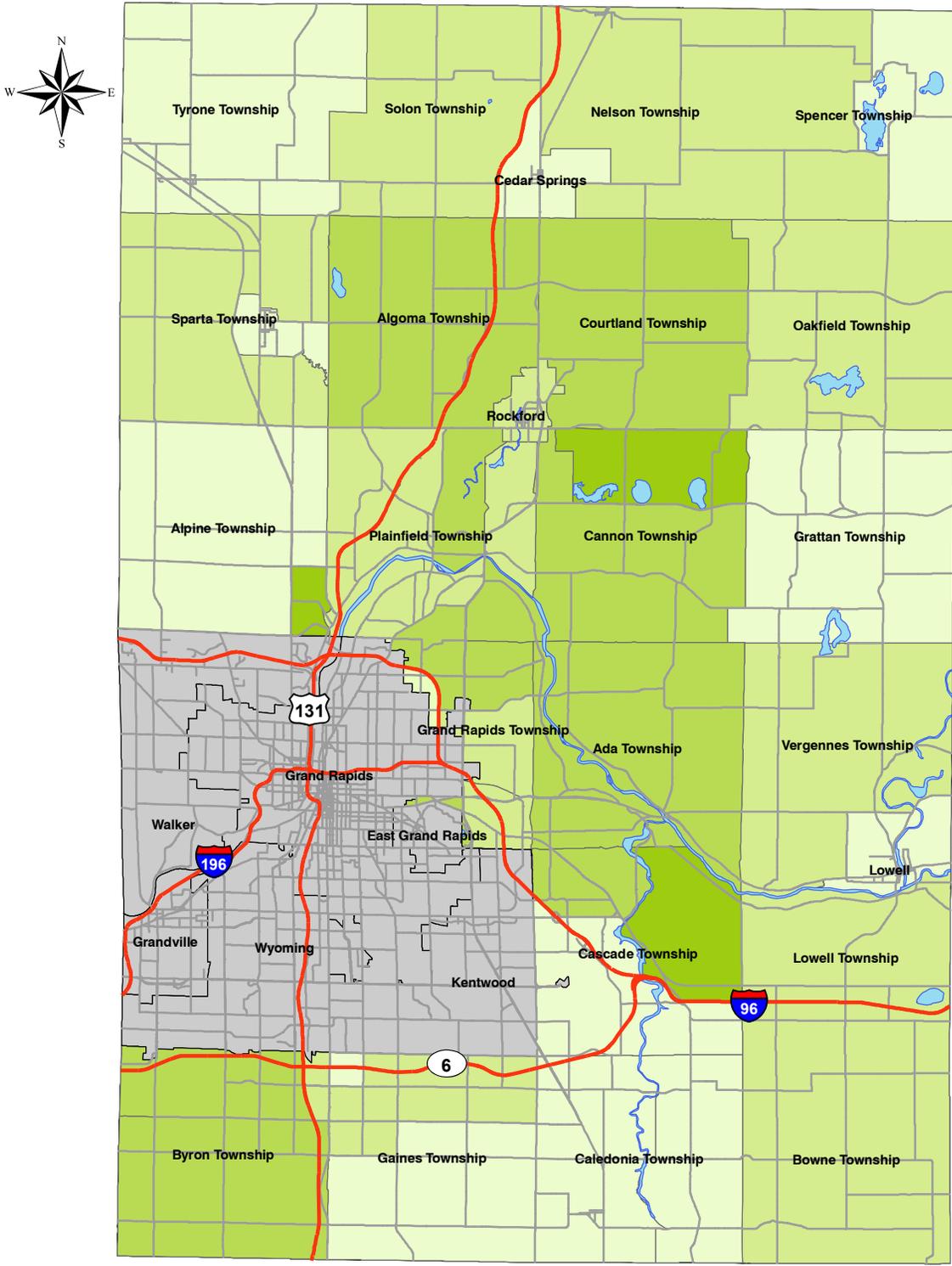
The US 131 and SR 21 corridors have large draw areas, and appear to have sufficient residents working in Grand Rapids to make commuter service successful. Specific amenities need to support any commuter services include park and ride facilities and fast/direct bus service that is scheduled to meet work shift times and transfer connections.

The size of a potential market was developed using two different assumptions. A planning level assumption for the size of a transit market is one percent of the existing Journey to Work market. This does not account for non-work trips, but for commuter markets, this is a reasonable proxy for demand. The mode split will increase if factors such as fares, traffic congestion, distance, travel time, connecting transit services, limited and/or high priced parking, employment density and financial incentives are available to influence the commuter market. Except for downtown Grand Rapids, these factors are not significant issues within Kent County.

The most likely market for commuters from the county are those destined to downtown Grand Rapids. Other commuters would need to transfer at least once to complete their trip and extending their travel time significantly. Therefore, the trip distribution and two different planning level mode split assumptions were analyzed. Exhibit V-60 shows the volume of trips to the six cities.

Exhibit V-59

Journey to Work Downtown



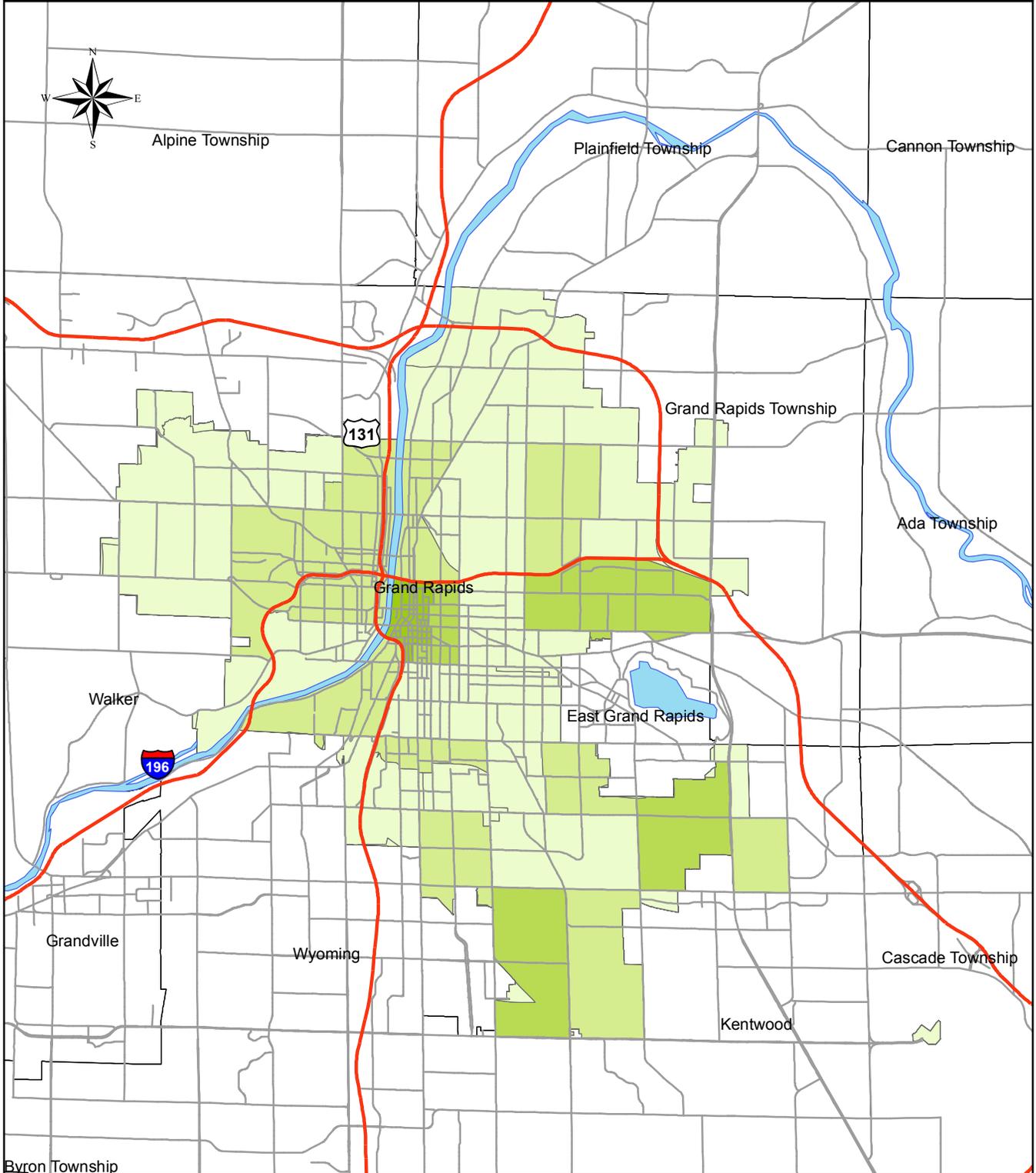
Trips to Downtown

	0- 115		211 - 310
	116 - 210		311 - 510

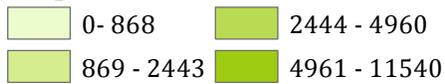
**Kent County
Transit Needs Assessment**

Exhibit V-60

Journey to the Six Cities



Trips to Downtown



Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

Exhibit V-61 shows the size of the downtown commuter market for several different corridors leading out of Grand Rapids.

**Exhibit V-61
Transit Mode Split for Trips to Downtown Grand Rapids**

Highway Corridor	JTW Commuter Trips to Downtown	1% Mode Split	Number of Bus Trips Needed	5% Mode Split	Number of Bus Trips Needed
21 East	985	10	0	49	1
37 North	430	4	0	22	1
37 South	190	2	0	10	0
44 East	1,465	15	0	73	2
96 East	880	9	0	44	1
131 North	1,600	16	0	80	2
131 South	440	4	0	22	1

Note: JTW trips are inclusive of all trips and not based on time of day. The number of bus trips needed is based on 35 passengers per bus.

As noted previously, factors such as congestion, parking availability, and parking cost all influence whether transit is competitive. In downtown Grand Rapids, both parking availability and cost can potentially influence transit needs, and thus a higher potential mode split may be viable.

The Journey to Work tables show that the US 131 North and Highway 44 East Corridors have the highest potential for commuter service. Most of the other corridors appear to have limited demand for commuter service, and would be more appropriate to be served by rideshare options.

Major Employers Survey

In order to get a more detailed look at potential demand for employer transportation, major employers in Kent County were inventoried and contacted.

Inventory of Major Employers

Using data from Kent County, the Chamber of Commerce, and on-line searches, major employers throughout Kent County were identified. A total of 50 employers with more than 500 employees or students were found. The table in Exhibit V-62 lists these employers.

Each of these employers was contacted for an appointment to complete an in-person interview with Team staff. A total of fourteen different employers responded and interviews were scheduled for the week of June 21, 2010.

Exhibit V-62

Major Employers and Education Institutions in Kent County

Employers and Education Institutions in Kent County	Address	City	Employment or Student Population Size
ADAC Automotive	5920 Tahoe Dr SE	Cascade	500+
American Seating	801 Broadway Ave NW	Grand Rapids	500+
Amway	7575 Fulton St E	Ada	4,000
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel	187 Monroe Ave NW	Grand Rapids	500+
Aquinas College	1607 Robinson Rd SE	Grand Rapids	2,160
Benteler Automotive	320 Hall St SW	Grand Rapids	500+
Bissell Home Care Corp Office	2345 Walker Ave NW	Walker	500+
Calvin College	3201 Burton St SE	Grand Rapids	4,171
Cascade Engineering, Inc	3400 Innovation Ct SE	Grand Rapids	500+
Consumers Energy	4000 Clay SW	Kentwood	500+
CSS-USA	8066 Fulton St E	Ada	500+
Davenport Univ	6191 Kraft Ave SE	Caledonia	3,751
Dematic Corp	507 Plymouth Ave NE	Grand Rapids	3,751
Ferris State College	151 Fountain St NE	Grand Rapids	1,183
Fifth Third Bank	111 Lyon St NW	Grand Rapids	500+
Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Inc	1515 Arboretum Dr SE	Cascade	200+
Foremost Insurance Co	5600 Beech Tree Lane	Caledonia	500+
GE Aviation	3290 Patterson Ave SE	Grand Rapids	1,400
General Motors Components Holdings LLC	2100 Burlingame Ave SW	Wyoming	515
Gordon Food Service Headquarters	333 50th St. SW	Kentwood	500+
Grand Rapids CC	143 Bostwick Ave NE	Grand Rapids	15,000
Grand Rapids Public Schools	1331 Franklin St SE	Grand Rapids	500+
Grand Rapids, City of	300 Monroe Ave NW	Grand Rapids	500+
GVSU downtown	401 Fulton St W	Grand Rapids	500+
Holland Home Corporate Office	2100 Raybrook St SE	East Grand Rapids	500+
Hope Network Corporation	751 Stocking Ave NW	Grand Rapids	500+
Kendall College	17 Fountain St NW	Grand Rapids	1,352
Kent Career Technical Center	1655 E Beltline Ave NE	Grand Rapids Charter Township	2,502
Kent County	300 Monroe Ave NW	Grand Rapids	500+
Lacks Enterprises and Plastic Plates Inc	5460 Cascade Road SE	Cascade	1,750
Leon Plastics Inc	4901 Clay Ave SW	Kentwood	331
Life EMS ambulance Ed Center	1275 Cedar St NE	Grand Rapids	1,342
Magna Donnelly	5085 Kraft Ave SE	Kentwood	4,225
Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital	235 Wealthy St SE	Grand Rapids	500+
MC Sports	3160 28th St SE	East Grand Rapids	500+
Meijer Inc	2929 Walker Ave NW	Walker	8,441
Metro Health Hospital	5900 Byron Center Ave SW	Wyoming	1,560
Michigan Turkey Producers Corp Hdqt	1100 Hall St SW	Grand Rapids	500+
New Horizons Computer Learning Center of Michigan	5315 28th St Court SE	Grand Rapids	4,480
Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services	300 68th St SE	Gaines	500+
Pridgeon & Clay Inc	50 Cottage Grove St SW	Grand Rapids	500+
Priority Health	1231 E Beltline Ave NE	Grand Rapids	500+
Roskam Baking Co	3061 Shaffer Ave SE	Kentwood	2,000
Spartan Stores	850 76 th St SW	Byron Center	3,040
Spectrum Health	100 Michigan St NE	Grand Rapids	11,453
St. Mary's Health Care	200 Jefferson Ave SE	Grand Rapids	2,700
Steekase Inc	901 44 th St SE	Kentwood	5,000
The Grand Rapids Press	155 Michigan St NW	Grand Rapids	500+
Western Michigan Univ	200 Ionia Ave SW	Grand Rapids	1,335
Wolverine World Wide Corp Headquarters	9341 Courtland Dr NE	Rockford	500+

Employer Interview Summaries

Calvin College

Calvin College had approximately 4,000 students, with 2,400 of them residing on campus. The majority of classroom activity takes place on the primary campus near E Beltline and Burton Street. Some smaller destinations such as the Ladies Literary Club Venue, and art studio are located in downtown Grand Rapids.

Approximately half of students have automobiles on campus. Students pay an annual parking fee of \$75. In addition to students, there are between 600 and 700 staff. The typical work time for staff is an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. shift. Parking is free for staff. Parking on-campus is available and there is no shortage of parking.

Calvin College is served by two different Rapid routes. Every student receives a reduced fare card, where they pay only \$0.50 per ride. Calvin College pays The Rapid \$0.45 per ride for each ride taken. According to the past several months, Calvin College student ridership on The Rapid is 4,300 every month. Downtown Grand Rapids, the Mall, and 28th Street are the major student destinations.

Calvin College has tried to create its own carpool program, but thus far no one has signed up. There are no vanpools. There was no awareness of the Rideshare/Guaranteed Ride Home programs that are currently offered by The Rapid.

The Rapid service is seen as decent for getting students to the Mall or Downtown. Other destinations are less desirable, as the transfer penalty and associated waiting times are seen as too long.

Lack's

Lack's is an auto-parts manufacturer with fourteen different facilities throughout the Grand Rapids suburbs. Lack's has a total of about 1,700 employees, 1,400 of which are employed in Kentwood in a series of plants that are all within 2 miles of each other.

Transportation is not an issue for recruiting, and is not seen as an overall issue for retaining employees. Starting wages are \$10.50 per hour, and employees can afford cars. There is an appreciation, however, for the fact that most plants do have some bus service to them, something that was not the case ten years ago. Parking is free and there are no parking capacity issues.

As seen in Exhibit V-63, Lack's operates three different shifts, which could have different start and end times. The early start time of the first shift and the late ending of the second shift may preclude The Rapid from being an effective transportation option.

Exhibit V-63
Lack's Work Shifts

1 st Shift	2 nd Shift	3 rd Shift
6:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	2:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m.
7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.	11:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Lack's looked at setting up an internal carpool program when gas prices went up in 2008, but then business dropped off, so the need for carpooling dropped as well. Lack's was not aware of the rideshare program offered by The Rapid.

Exhibit V-64 shows the locations of Lacks employees in Kent County. The largest concentration of employees by zip code lives near the Kentwood facilities in Wyoming, Kentwood and Caledonia. Many also live within the transit district and have access to bus service. A potential market is the transit dependent and those who are environmentally conscience, but there is not that high of a propensity for transit as there is free parking and the locations are scattered throughout the area. Ridesharing appears to be the most appropriate way to serve Lacks facilities.

Kent County ISD

The Regional Career Technical Education Supervisor of Kent ISD was contacted to discuss transportation needs of the ISD. Kent ISD is located at 2930 Knapp NE, Grand Rapids. It is served by The Rapid's Route 15.

Kent County ISD represents all educational endeavors in Kent County, including parochial, public, and home schooled children. Kent ISD transports children throughout the County.

The Career and Technical training program partners with hundreds of businesses and post-secondary partners. Approximately 2,300 Kent County high school students are in this program, and ISD provides transportation to get students between classrooms and their training sites.

Three times a day buses from throughout the county converge on the Kent ISD Career/Technical Center and then distribute students to their various destinations. Destinations include the aviation maintenance program at Gerald Ford Airport (125 students), Grand Valley State University (50 students), Central High School (50 students), Metro Health Hospital (125 students), and Grand Rapids Community College (50 students).

One of the challenges faced by this transportation network is the need to have students conveniently travel from one program to another in an expeditious manner. Timing continues to be an issue with the routes, as not all students have the same start and stop times. The three session times are 6:55 a.m. – 9:15 a.m., 9:20 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., and noon – 2:15 p.m. The first and third sessions are the most popular. Students cannot drive to GVSU and GRCC – there is no place to park and ISD provides transportation.

Exhibit V-64

Lacks Enterprises, Inc. Employee Residences



Employee ZIP



Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

Transportation costs are a major factor for the ISD. Some schools cannot afford to do more than one session (two bus trips) due to the transportation costs.

The Rapid has not been seen as an alternative for school trips, even though the Career/Technical Center is connected well with downtown Grand Rapids and GVSU and GRCC.

Outreach with the Kent County ISD by the Rapid is recommended to ascertain the ability for Route 15 to take over some of the functions of school shuttles at a much lower cost.

Spartan Stores

Heather Baldwin, the Human Resources Manager, was contacted to discuss transportation needs for employees for Spartan Stores. Spartan Stores is located at 850 – 76th Street SW, Grand Rapids 49518. The closest Rapid service is Route 1, which is just over one mile away.

Spartan Foods is both a distributor and retailer of groceries, and has over 99 locations throughout Michigan. Overall, Spartan Stores has approximately 9,000 employees.

Company headquarters are at the 850 – 76th Street SW location, and between 600-700 employees are employed at the headquarters. Most employees have work times of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Some employment growth could happen in the future, but the size of the office complex would likely have to be increased to accommodate more staff.

Spartan Stores operates a warehouse behind the headquarters complex which employees between 400 – 500 people. These employees are on 24 hour shifts.

Overall, transportation has not been seen as an issue for employees. According to Ms. Baldwin, the draw area from Spartan Stores is from throughout western Michigan, and not necessarily concentrated in Grand Rapids. There is no company carpool program. During the 2008 gas spike, Spartan Stores used the Rapid's carpool rideshare program.

For many of the headquarters staff, the need to travel to stores or other locations is essential. Spartan Foods does offer several pool cars at the headquarters complex. One potential disincentive for using alternative modes to access work was mentioned. If more employees began carpooling, Spartan Stores would need to provide more pool cars.

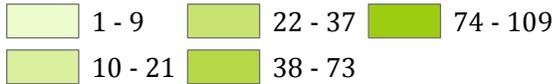
There may be some opportunity to attract some riders to Spartan Stores via an extension of Route 1 or 10. The employee distribution shown in the graphic below shows that most Spartan Stores employees do not reside in areas served by The Rapid. As can be seen in Exhibit V-65, the biggest Kent County concentrations are located in the south suburbs. Carpool and rideshare options appear to be the best options for improving mobility for Spartan Stores employees.

Exhibit V-65

Spartan Stores Headquarters Employee Residences



Employee ZIP



Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

Western Michigan University (WMU)

Dr. James Schultz, the Director of the Grand Rapids Campus of Western Michigan University, was contacted to discuss transportation needs for both employees and students of WMU. The downtown campus is located at 200 Ionia Avenue SW in Grand Rapids. A second Grand Rapids campus is located at 2333 East Beltline Avenue SE. The Rapid serves both locations.

WMU in Grand Rapids serves approximately 1,500 students. About 900 students attend the Beltline location and the remaining 500 attend the downtown Grand Rapids location. WMU's target market is for full time employees furthering their education on a part-time basis. The majority of students are working on an advanced degree. Approximately 30 employees work in the downtown campus.

Parking is an issue at the downtown campus, particularly when events are occurring at the arena, which is a couple of blocks away. A new parking ramp was constructed that has alleviated most of the parking capacity concerns.

Parking is free for employees. Employees have option of receiving a transit pass in lieu of a parking subsidy.

Students must pay to park at the downtown campus. Parking is free for both students and staff at the Beltline location. Students have requested discounted parking passes as well as DASH student discounts in order to reduce the impacts of parking costs.

In downtown, WMU is working with the parking commission to obtain safer enclosed bicycle parking. Some WMU employees vanpool from points further west.

Based on the map in Exhibit V-66 showing the distribution of downtown students, downtown campus WMU-GR students are scattered throughout Kent County. It appears that half are within The Rapid service area. Attending school before or after work makes using transit services challenging due to the various class times and job locations. There is a potential to attract the environmentally conscience market to use transit, as WMU has direct service from locations throughout Grand Rapids. The most likely market is for those who live within the transit district and their work/school locations are conveniently accessed by bus.

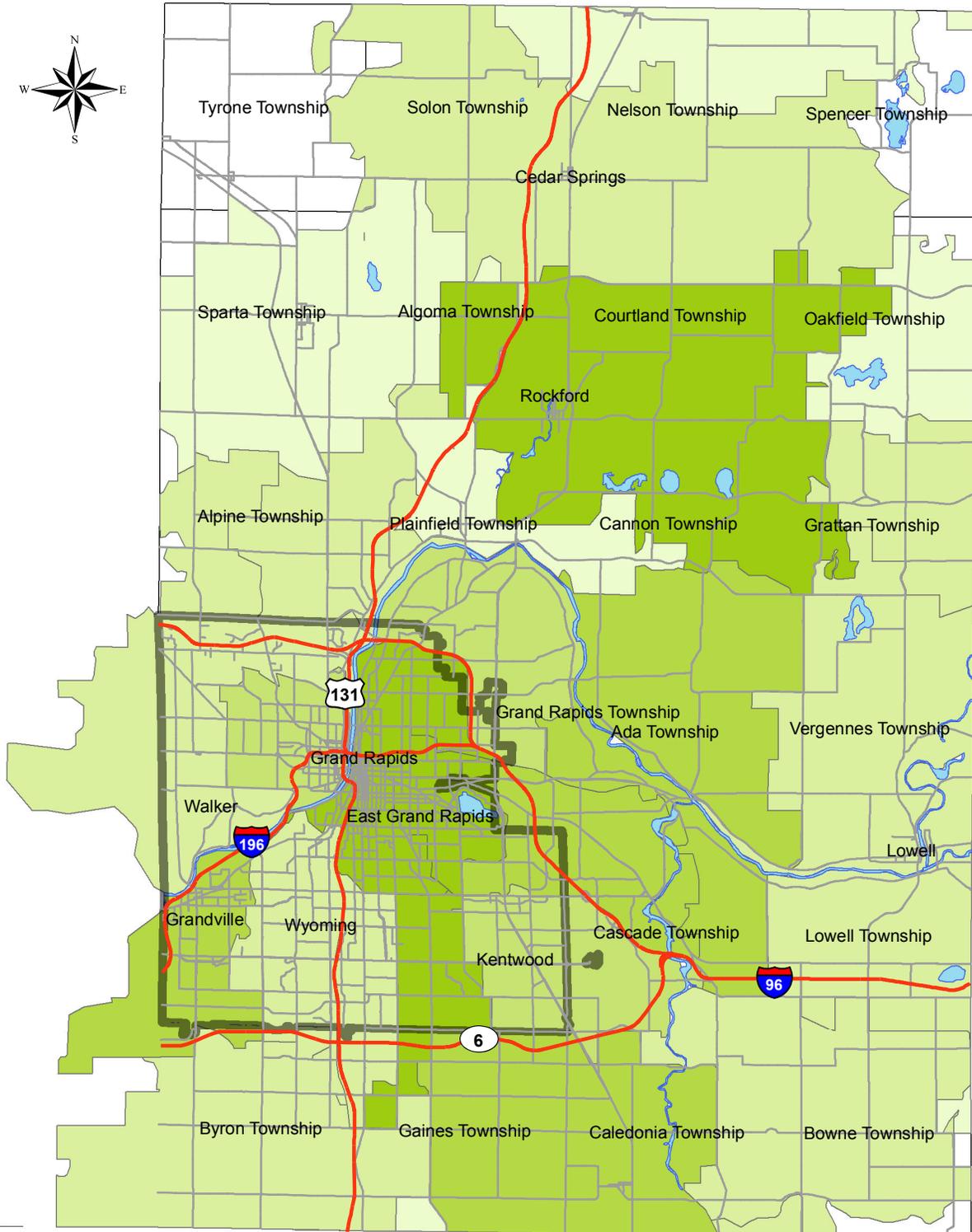
American Seating

The transportation needs of American Seating employees were discussed with Paul Dieterle, the Vice President of Human Resources. American Seating is located at 801 Broadway Avenue NW. The corporate headquarters location is within several blocks of two American Seating factories.

American Seating employs 475 persons just northwest of downtown Grand Rapids. Of these 160 are in corporate headquarters and have an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. shift time. The remainder work either first or second shift. American Seating's shift times depend on how many orders are available. During busy times, both first and second shifts work on ten hours (5 a.m. – 3:20 p.m. and 3:20 p.m. – 11:40 p.m.) while during less busy times the shift times are from 6 a.m. – 2:20 p.m. and 2:20 p.m. – 10:40 p.m. There are approximately 215 employees in first shift and 100 in the second shift.

Exhibit V-66

Western Michigan University Student Distribution



Trips to WMU



Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

The shift times for a ten hour workday are either too early or too late for employees to utilize Rapid service to come to work. Corporate employees have the opportunity to use the bus. Route 9 is several blocks from headquarters.

There is no carpool program, and any carpool activities that do take place are made through word of mouth.

Parking is free at all three American Seating locations, and there are no capacity issues. Transportation is not an issue during the hiring process. American Seating tends to have between 30 and 60 new hires annually.

The bulk of American Seating's employees are unable to use Rapid service due to either early start times or late end times.

Metro Health

The Director of Human Resources for Metro Health indicated that Metro Health is a new hospital complex located at 2122 Health Drive in Southwest Grand Rapids. It is the southern terminus of Route 16.

Metro Health used to be located near downtown Grand Rapids, but three years ago moved to a new campus in the southeast suburbs. On a daily basis, there are 2,100 employees, 200 volunteers, and 100 contract staff – for a total of 2,400 persons coming to work daily. There was turnover as a result of the move, as certain staff no longer had convenient commutes.

Work shifts are typical health care shifts, and include the 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. shifts, as well as the 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., and 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. shifts.

The Director of Human Resources does not feel that transportation is an issue for most employees. Some people are using Route 16, but there is no quantifying how many. There are no parking issues as parking is free and there is ample supply. There is special parking for carpools, but this is a result of the building being LEED certified, and not due to transportation issues. There are carpools that are organized through Green Rides as there is no official Metro Health carpool program.

An examination of the employee distribution in Exhibit V-67 shows that the highest concentrations of employees are in the south suburbs (Wyoming, Kentwood, Caledonia, and Bryon) and in Grand Rapids. Route 16 can accommodate many of these employee concentrations and does operate early enough to accommodate all first shift employees.

An extension of Route 16 to Bryon may attract additional ridership. Additional analysis should be considered regarding extending Route 16 south into Byron to identify shift times and actual origins. Considering the widely scattered number of employees throughout Kent County, enhancing Rideshare potential should also be examined.

Exhibit V-67

Metro Health Employee Residences



Employee ZIP



Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

Spectrum Health

Spectrum Health is located in downtown Grand Rapids and is currently served by many Rapid Routes. There are 16,000 employees at Spectrum Health, and they work a variety of different shifts. There are the typical three healthcare worker shifts, but the majority of staff works an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. schedule. Staff does not pay to park at Spectrum Health. In addition, Spectrum has its own shuttle service connecting parking lots and different buildings.

Spectrum does provide a transit pass in the form of the employee identification tag. Spectrum Health does provide a subsidy for transit users. 4,000 employees a month ride The Rapid. The employee identification card is used as a fare media, and operators punch a button on the farebox to track the number of riders. Mr. Bailey mentioned that The Rapid has reached the limit for adding employee identification as a form of payment as there are no more vacant farebox buttons.

Spectrum uses the Green Rides System to match employees with potential carpool partners. The system is internal Spectrum use only, but the software does have an option to connect employee information to Western Michigan Rideshare.

The analysis showed that 5,000 employees live within walking distance of The Rapid service. The largest concentration of non-Grand Rapids employees lives in the southwest suburbs as well as the northeast suburbs.

A Spectrum Health representative felt that many Spectrum staff still cannot see themselves riding a bus, even though the buses are now cleaner and operate better. Increased frequency on key routes would attract more riders. In addition, people do not like transfers at Central Station, as it creates an out-of-direction trip and a longer wait for many different trip patterns. Transit mode share to Spectrum could be higher with more direct service. Rockford may be an area where potential expansion of service would be warranted.

Grand Valley State University

The Assistant Vice President for Operations, Pew Campus, and Regional Centers and the Manager of Operations for Grand Valley State University (GVSU) were interviewed.

GVSU has a staff of 2,000 employees and approximately 24,000 students. There are two campuses – one just west of downtown Grand Rapids and the other in Allendale. Approximately 10,000 students live in areas adjacent to GVSU in Allendale.

GVSU has been contracting with The Rapid to provide intra-campus service since 2000. Both students and staff can ride any Rapid route, including the non-GVSU ones, and show their ID as fare payment. Transit is rolled into the tuition payment.

GVSU embraces a “Culture of Transit” that is supported from the University President on down. It is used in recruiting, during visits, when new hires are made, and during orientation. Parents hear about the transit options for their children and get the message that transit is one of the keys to the affordability of GVSU. Transit information is included in direct mail campaigns to students. Individual route plans are also created if requested.

This “Culture of Transit” has led to significant ridership on The Rapid. Approximately 20,000 riders per day are made on campus routes and an additional 1,000 daily rides are made on non-GVSU funded Rapid routes. Approximately 15-20 percent of staff use transit. The program has been so successful that there is now surplus parking, and parking utilization has been decreasing.

GVSU uses The Green Rides program to promote ridesharing. There is also an electronic transportation bulletin board to request matches for riders. There is no financial support for vanpools.

GVSU conducts annual surveys to determine if transportation needs have changed and route adjustments are made as a result.

Several different ways to improve Rapid service to GVSU were identified. Evening and second shifts need later service. All buildings are open until 10 p.m., and students and employees need a way to get back home. There is a desire not to transfer at Central Station, as it adds up to 15 minutes of travel time. Many people heading to GVSU live in Lakeshore, and an expansion of service to Lakeshore should be examined.

Grand Rapids Community College

The Executive Vice President for Business & Finance was interviewed to ascertain transportation challenges for Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC).

GRCC has two different campuses and several smaller locations. The main campus is located in downtown Grand Rapids. Enrollment is 17,500 for credit students and 13,000 non-credit program students. There are approximately 1,200 staff. A smaller campus with an enrollment of 3,000 is located on Lakeshore outside of Grand Rapids. Smaller locations include a technical center (MTech) and learning corners in three Grand Rapids locations, all of which are located in close proximity to bus routes. Sixty percent of students are part-time, and the remaining 40 percent are full-time students. Enrollment is at its peak currently.

Campus access is a very significant issue. The downtown GRCC campus is located just south of Spectrum Health, and there are parking capacity issues. GRCC currently has approximately 2,930 stalls in ramps and an additional 450 stalls remotely. A GRCC-funded shuttle connects the remote parking with the main campus, which costs GRCC \$80,000 annually.

The vision for the future is less parking. Some of this is driven because of parking ramp replacement costs, but it is also driven by how to accommodate more students into the existing footprint. The goal is to reduce the parking needs and move more students and staff to public transportation and shuttles.

GRCC does not have a transit program. Transit passes may be purchased at the bookstore, but there is no UPass or student pass program. GRCC desires to learn more about transit pass programs.

The carpool program is not highly used, and there are no incentives for students or staff to carpool. In addition to a student pass program, Mr. Partridge suggested several improvements to The Rapid service. The speed of Rapid is seen as a detriment to attracting new riders – the new Division BRT line will go a long way toward improving the attractiveness of bus service.

Several outlying areas, such as Ada, Fulton, and Plainfield should be served by The Rapid.

According to the student address distribution, in Exhibit V-66, major student distributions outside of Grand Rapids are in the northeast suburbs, but virtually all close in zip codes have significant concentrations of students. GRCC clearly draws from all of Kent County. The Division corridor does indeed look like a decent draw for GRCC students.

Kent County

An interview was conducted with the Kent County Human Resources Manager. Kent County has 1,800 employees scattered through multiple locations. Approximately 1,500 are in the downtown location in three different buildings, and 120 are located in the facility near the airport. The typical shift for county employees is from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Most County employees do not use transit. DASH, however, is used as the county pays for the remote parking. It appears that the DASH branding has successfully worked to attract people to ride a bus that otherwise would not be interested.

The County pays for all employee parking, although some of that may be remote and only accessible with DASH. There is no corresponding transit pass program.

Persons interested in carpooling are referred to Western Michigan Rideshare.

Transportation is not an issue for recruitment. The feeling is that County jobs pay well and there is no need to use transit. In addition, Grand Rapids is fairly small, so there is no incentive to not drive. According to a map of the residences of Kent County employees, in Exhibit V-68 the Northeast suburbs have a high concentration of employees outside of The Rapid service area. The largest concentrations of employees appear to reside within Grand Rapids.

Exhibit V-68

Kent County Government Employee Residences



Employee ZIP



Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

Employee Interview Conclusions

Several themes were consistent among the interviews.

- ◆ None of the suburban large employers had a defined need that bus service could successfully meet, although strategic extensions of The Rapid's Routes 1, 10, and 16 could potentially serve some major employment sites.
- ◆ Enhanced carpooling appears to be the most appropriate method to improve mobility to many different employers.
- ◆ Downtown Grand Rapids employers and schools clearly had transportation needs that could be addressed by additional transit service. A lack of inexpensive or free parking is the primary reason for this need. More direct and commuter service is desired.
- ◆ Based on zip code scattergram analyses of residence locations, it appears that trips to downtown from the northeast and southwest suburbs had the highest demand. These locations correspond with the Journey-to-Work analysis.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

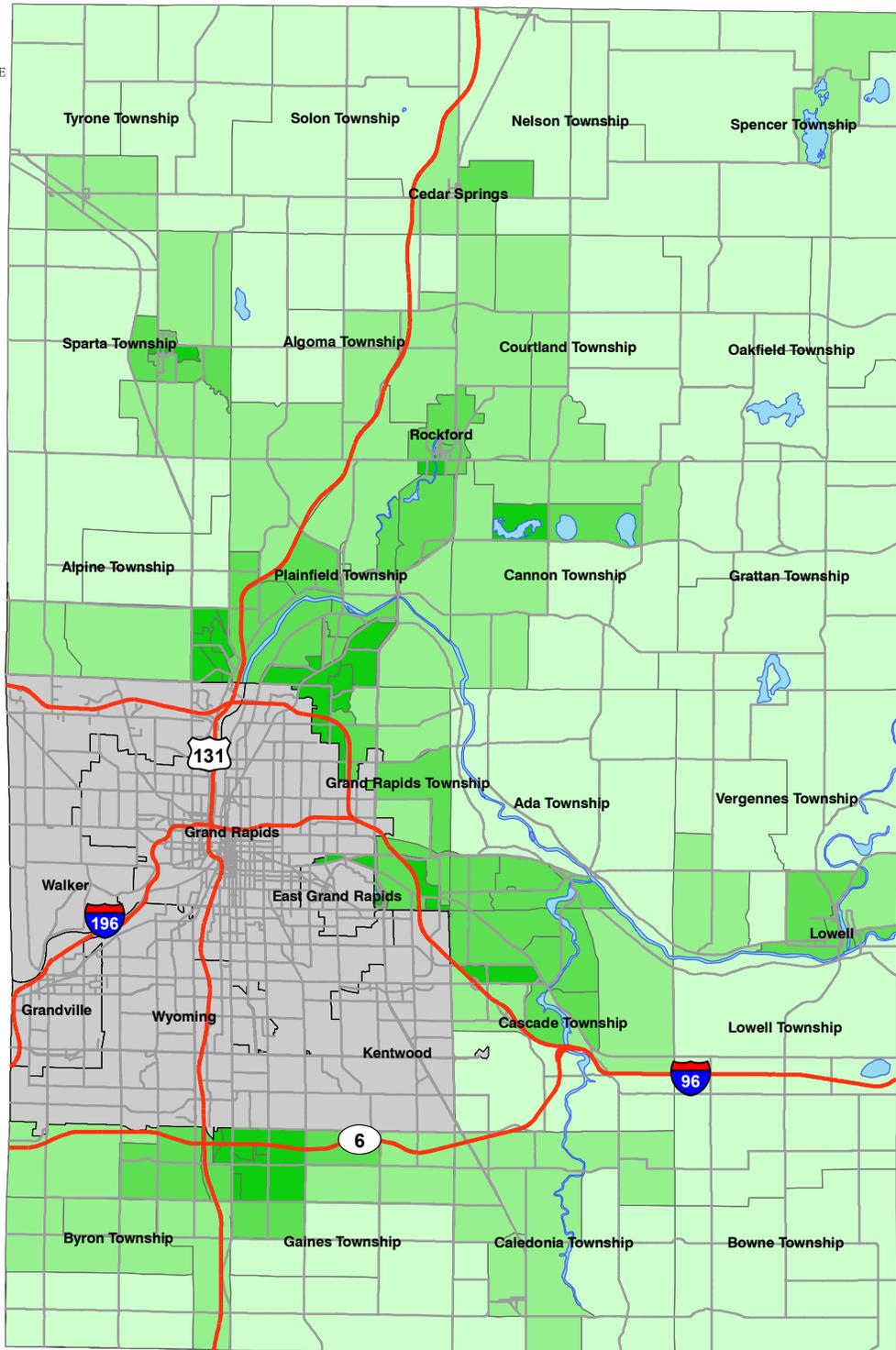
Transit Propensity

Transit propensity is a measure of the likelihood that a local population will use transit service, were it available to them, taking into account their demographic characteristics. The model was derived through research completed on transit trip generation. The end result is an estimate of the relative propensity for transit per census block group.

To calculate transit propensity, U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 data were gathered at the block group level for the entire county. The data included: total population, land area by square mile, population density, number of persons age 65 and older, number of households, and the number of occupied housing units with zero vehicles available. These figures were entered into the previously cited model to determine each block group's transit propensity, measured by the number of potential transit trips per square mile. This information is graphically depicted in the map in Exhibit V-69.

Areas of highest projected transit demand had transit propensities of greater than 36,421 trips per square mile. These areas had a combination of the greatest population densities, largest elderly populations, and had the highest numbers of occupied housing units without an available vehicle. Block groups in this category are located in Rockford, Alpine Township, Gaines Township, Grand Rapids Township, and Plainfield Township.

Exhibit V-69 Transit Propensity



Transit Propensity / Square Mile

925 - 3589	9455 - 36420
3590 - 9454	36421 - 170637

Kent County Transit Needs Assessment

Areas of moderately high transit propensity, with potential trips of 47,253 to 87,089 trips per square mile, were in the block groups located throughout the county, with a concentration in Cedar Springs, Lowell, Plainfield Township, Grand Rapids Township, Cascade Township, and Sparta Township.

Areas of moderate transit propensities, with potential trips per square mile of 3,590 to 9,454 were located in the less densely populated areas of the county. These block groups have lower density of senior citizen populations, and zero-vehicle households. Block groups in this category tend to be located in more rural areas. These areas include the lower density areas sounding the six city area to the with a large concentration in Cannon Township, Courtland Township, Algoma Township to the North and in Byron Township and Caledonia Township to the South.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

A series of public meetings were held during the week of June 14, 2010. The purpose of these meetings was to solicit input from the public on perceived transportation needs.

The first public meeting of The Kent County Needs Assessment was held in the City of Lowell. The meeting took place in the City Council Chambers, located at 301 East Main Street in Lowell. There were 20 individuals in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an understanding of transportation needs that exist in the county.

Many points of interest were brought up during the meeting, and included the following:

- ◆ Currently the access to service is very limited and in many cases rationed.
- ◆ To use the existing County Connection service requires advanced scheduling.
- ◆ The County Connection service is costly, with fares of \$14 for trips scheduled a day in advance and \$19 for trips scheduled the same day.
- ◆ There is an existing need for transportation service for seniors in Lowell.
- ◆ Many different agencies provide transportation through the ride link program. These organizations include The Rapid, Hope Network, (UNCH), and Senior Neighbors.
- ◆ Currently there is no county service for individuals who are not a senior or do not have a disability.
- ◆ There needs to be multiple levels of service, because seniors, individuals with disabilities, and general users have different needs.
- ◆ The addition of transportation to the county would allow choice riders the freedom to choose transit or drive a car.
- ◆ Park and ride options have a strong potential for work and shopping trips. This kind of service is also favored, because it is environmentally friendly.
- ◆ Use of private providers should be looked at as an alternative option to public systems.
- ◆ Express bus systems provide options that would be useful in lower density areas.
- ◆ Options like Zipcars have the potential to work in county areas.
- ◆ Partnerships between existing transportation providers are key in ensuring the system will function well.
- ◆ There is a need for transportation from Lowell to Grand Rapids for work trips.

The second public meeting of The Kent County Needs Assessment was held in Gaines Township. The meeting took place in the community room, located at 8555 Kalamazoo Avenue Gaines Township. There were 17 individuals in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an understanding of transportation needs that exist in the county.

Many points of interest were brought up during the meeting, and included the following:

- ◆ Go! Bus does not provide adequate access to family and doctors, especially for those who live outside of contracted townships.
- ◆ The cost of County Connection is too expensive to justify short trips.
- ◆ Go! Bus has limited service area of the six cities and contracted townships.
- ◆ North Kent transit is a good service, but limits on number of rides are an issue.
- ◆ Bike paths could provide a good connection to public transportation.
- ◆ It is currently difficult to identify bus stops, because of placement behind shopping centers.
- ◆ Highway M6 provides a potential road for public transportation, because of its access to medical facilities and shopping.
- ◆ There is a need for east and west transit in addition to a need for north south transportation to Grand Rapids.
- ◆ There is a need for public transportation on 68th Street to and from gains market.
- ◆ There is a need for transportation, like van pools offered by The Rapid, which can be used for work trips.
- ◆ There was well-used public transportation to Davenport University, but the contract expired and service was canceled.
- ◆ Artificial service boundaries like city and township lines create transportation limits.
- ◆ Township contracts differ by location. This can be confusing and create additional limits. It appears inefficient for a Go! Bus to pass through a Township without providing any rides.
- ◆ Go! Bus has a limit of 16 rides per month. This makes using Go! Bus for work trips difficult.
- ◆ Go! Bus requires a one day notice. This can cause scheduling problems in the case of an emergency or sudden appointment.
- ◆ The Kent County Needs Assessment should work with The Rapid's master plan, which is looking at express service and other county options.
- ◆ North and south transportation on highway 131 to Cutlerville is a needed service for shopping and work trips.
- ◆ Service from Rockford to Davenport University is needed for work trips.
- ◆ Transit dependent riders are limited to working within existing service areas.

The third public meeting of The Kent County Needs Assessment was held in the City of Cedar Springs. The meeting took place in the Council Chambers, located at 66 South Main Street in Cedar Springs. There were 12 individuals in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an understanding of transportation needs that exist in the county.

Many points of interest were brought up during the meeting, and included the following:

- ◆ The North Kent Transit has a limit of six trips per month, making it difficult to use the service for medical or work trips.

- ◆ The cost of County Connection is very high at \$14 one way.
- ◆ County Connection runs well generally, while North Kent Transit is often over booked and requires in long waits.
- ◆ North Kent Transit has different limitations on number of rides in each township.
- ◆ Any transit needs to be convenient for user. This means the service should be timely and frequent.
- ◆ The 14 Mile Cascade and Cedar Springs Park and Ride lot is a popular service and has the potential of working well with public transportation.
- ◆ Car travel from North Kent County is costly. This makes public transportation appealing to commuters.
- ◆ Transportation would help the parking and congestion of downtown Grand Rapids.
- ◆ Transportation from the northern part of the county to Grand Rapids for medical, work, and shopping is needed.
- ◆ The North Kent Mall S-curve had a park and ride that was well used, and might be a good location for a public transportation service.
- ◆ Public transportation would provide an alternative option to the expressway, which is often slow due to repairs and accidents.
- ◆ High occupancy vehicle Lanes and express bus lanes would make public transportation more appealing.
- ◆ The recent growth of Cedar Springs has made the area a better candidate for public transportation than it would have been in the past.
- ◆ Cost of any new service can be an issue and lead to lost support of officials.
- ◆ Cost of Go! Bus to Cascade is high and creating a strain on funding that cannot be maintained.
- ◆ Work transportation for one vehicle or zero vehicle households would be useful.

The fourth public meeting of The Kent County Needs Assessment was held at Hope Network. The meeting took place in the Education Center, located at 755 36th Street SE in Wyoming. There were 20 individuals in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an understanding of transportation needs that exist in the county.

Many points of interest were brought up during the meeting, and included the following:

- ◆ There is a current lack of transportation service to work as well as service times that meet the needs of individuals who work.
- ◆ There is no service to areas outside of the six cities or areas that do not have contracts.
- ◆ County boundaries create transit restrictions for individuals who may work outside of the county.
- ◆ Jobs outside of the bus line pay more on average, but there is no access by bus, so transportation dependent individuals cannot access those jobs.
- ◆ Any created service should improve quality of life including shopping, community access, and not just work access.
- ◆ Countywide transportation is needed. The existing service leaves many without any options and those with options have very limited choices.
- ◆ The current systems make it difficult to get timely service and require advanced notices, which are sometimes impossible to give.
- ◆ Go! Bus pickups and drop offs can be early or late and create timing issues.

- ◆ Door-to-door service provides safer service and is the preferred method of many current riders.
- ◆ Medical appointments out of Grand Rapids are costly and can be limited due to a lack of services.
- ◆ Cascade and Plainfield Township have had issues transporting people to medical appointments due to service boundaries.
- ◆ Employers and public transit have a disconnect that could be improved through the use of needs marketing and information.
- ◆ Employers want people with a driver's license, because under the current system they are more dependable.
- ◆ The general public has a poor understanding of public transportation and what services it can provide.
- ◆ Reverse commute for areas outside of existing service contracts is need and imperative to make the system work properly.
- ◆ The ability to change a scheduled ride not only cancel would provide additional flexibility.
- ◆ Circulator routes that connected to express buses would be useful in areas of higher population densities.
- ◆ Trips need to be able to handled people with groceries and other goods.
- ◆ Cost of transit is an issue form many people and especially for people who receive no assistance.
- ◆ Limit of 16 rides per month in Caledonia creates a strain on individuals who use transit for work and medical trips.
- ◆ A fee based on income system would be preferred by groups who help individuals with low income find jobs.
- ◆ There is a need for information about public transportation and what it can do for individuals.

The Fifth public meeting of The Kent County Needs Assessment was held in Plainfield Township. The meeting took place in the Board Room located at 6161 Belmont Avenue in Plainfield Township. There were 13 individuals in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain an understanding of transportation needs that exist in the county.

Many points of interest were brought up during the meeting, and included the following:

- ◆ Advanced notice is needed, and service is not always available for the existing county services.
- ◆ Individual addresses determine who has access to public transportation, based on Go! Bus contracts.
- ◆ Access to employment is limited to individuals in the county, because they do not have an adequate means of transportation to get to work.
- ◆ Young adults and college students are a potential market and should not be over looked.
- ◆ Parking and congestion issues downtown make a transportation service from the county appealing.
- ◆ Grand Valley College contributes 1 million rides to The Rapid each year. It is very likely some of this demand exists in the county out side of the current service area.
- ◆ Park and Ride lots have been successful throughout the county and have the potential of acting as locations for public transportation service.

- ◆ Trips require advanced notice and result in missed medical rides when emergencies arise.
- ◆ Convenient, fast, and modern amenities such as wireless internet would make county transportation attractive to commuters.
- ◆ Transit to Alpine Avenue and the ball field would be a popular recreational route.
- ◆ Rather than one large county system, use a system that connects areas of higher density.
- ◆ The East Beltway, 5 Mile, and the Plainfield apartments provide a potential route for work trips and shopping.
- ◆ There is a need for transit from Grand Rapids to Comstock Park.
- ◆ Lack of existing transportation hurts the quality of life and creates a negative impact socially.
- ◆ To use transportation for school commutes would reduce the need for county residents to drive downtown and fight congestion and parking.
- ◆ Townships create phony divisions that are the underlying issue to many of the existing transportation problems.

A separate public input meeting was held at the Grandville Senior Center. The meeting took place in the center located at 3380 Division SW, Grandville. The meeting was attended by seniors who participate at the center.

Many points of interest were brought up during the meeting, and included the following:

- ◆ The high cost of County Connection makes the service impractical for everyday use.
- ◆ Transportation service is needed to the medical offices on the beltline.
- ◆ Transportation service is needed to the IRS offices in Plainfield Township on 3 Mile.
- ◆ Transportation service is needed to the medical offices in Walker.
- ◆ A service that provided rides between Cedar Springs, Rockford, and Grand Rapids would be useful for shopping and travel.
- ◆ There is currently no Sunday service, and it is difficult to get to church services in Kentwood or Fulton.
- ◆ There is a need for transportation to Eagle Park medical offices in Cascade.
- ◆ The current system requires two reservations for a doctor's appointments and can be difficult to schedule.
- ◆ Door-to-door trips for medical and grocery trips is preferred.
- ◆ There is lack of knowledge as to what services currently exist and who is eligible to use them.