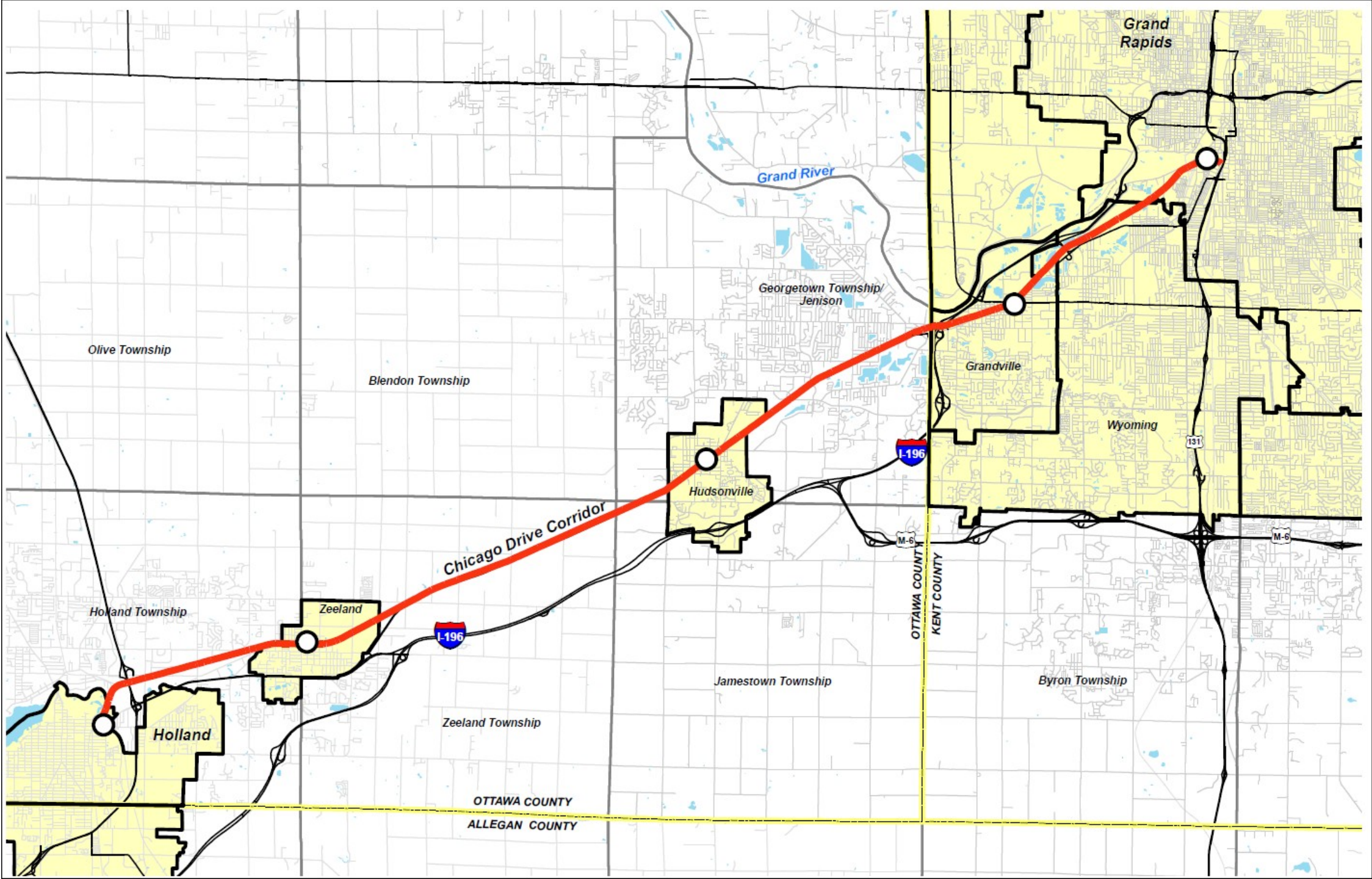


# West Michigan Express Pilot Project

Planning Today  
for a Better Tomorrow

Patrick Waterman  
Hudsonville City Manager







# Talent Attraction





EXIT 87  
Leonard St  
EXIT ONLY

EXIT 88  
Ann St  
1 MILE

EXIT 87  
Leonard St  
EXIT ONLY

SLOW TRAFFIC  
AHEAD  
EXPECT DELAYS

SPEED  
LIMIT

EXIT  
86

30

# Cost of Living

## Average Yearly Cost of Vehicle Ownership



Compact Car  
**\$8,600**

SUV  
**\$12,000**



Pickup Truck  
**\$13,000**



# WEST MICHIGAN EXPRESS

## Creating the Chicago Drive Prosperity Corridor

*Holland + Zeeland + Hudsonville + Jenison + Grandville + Wyoming + Grand Rapids*



**The West Michigan Express** initiative is a collaborative effort to link the seven West Michigan communities along the Chicago Drive corridor with express public transportation options beginning with bus service and leading to commuter rail for the purpose of enhancing economic growth and quality of life in the region.

### OUR VISION

The Chicago Drive "Prosperity Corridor" between Grand Rapids and Holland is nationally recognized as a desirable area in which to live, work, and run a business thanks to its access to express public transportation, affordable housing, and skilled workforce.

### OUR MISSION

To establish phased express public transportation that runs between Grand Rapids and Holland beginning with bus service and leading to commuter rail.





# Connecting Communities

Improving Quality of Life/  
Reducing Cost of Living

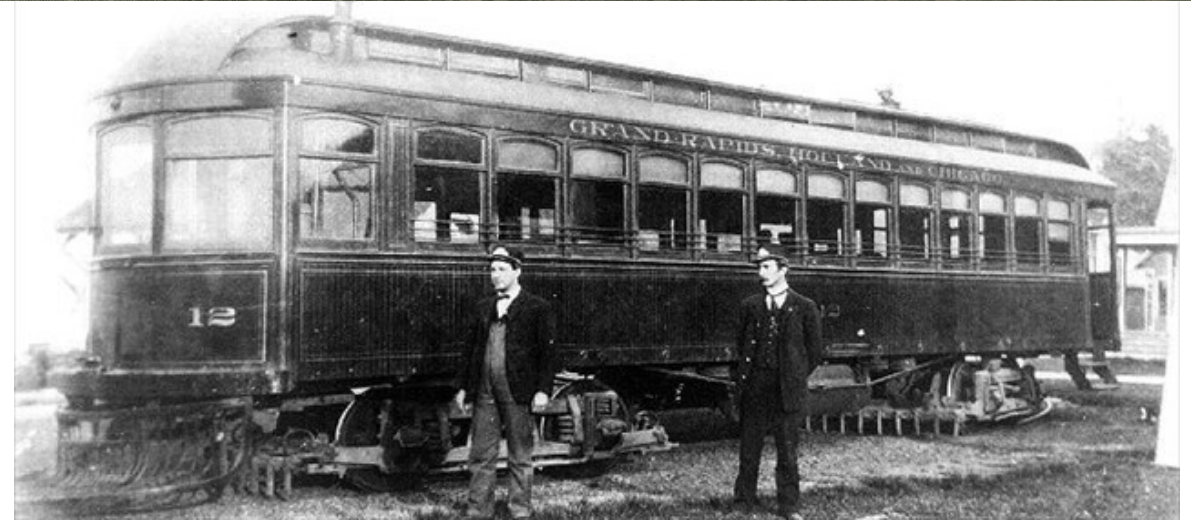
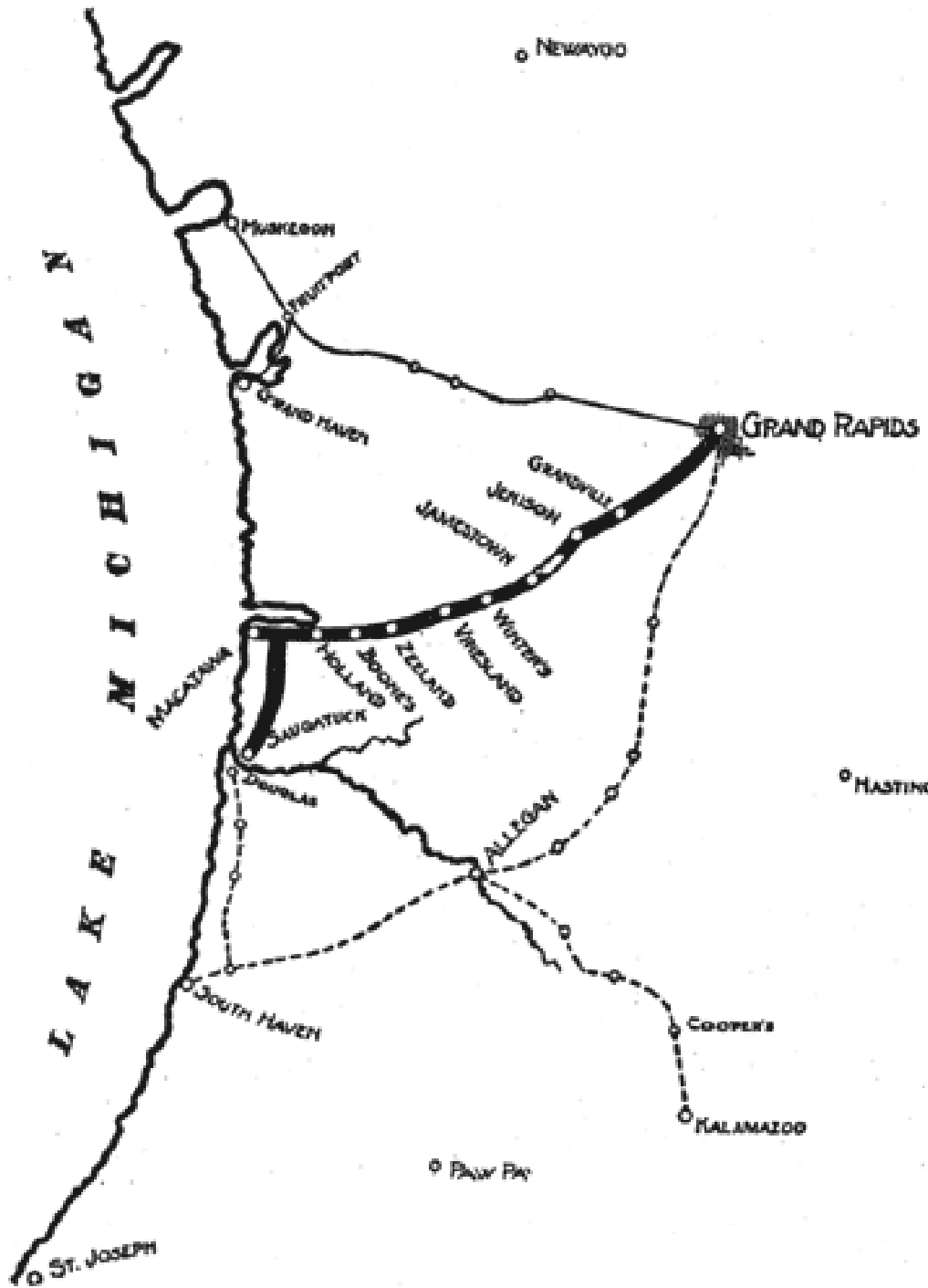
# Connecting Labor Sheds

Fostering job growth and  
Talent Attraction

Reducing Traffic and  
Environmental Impacts

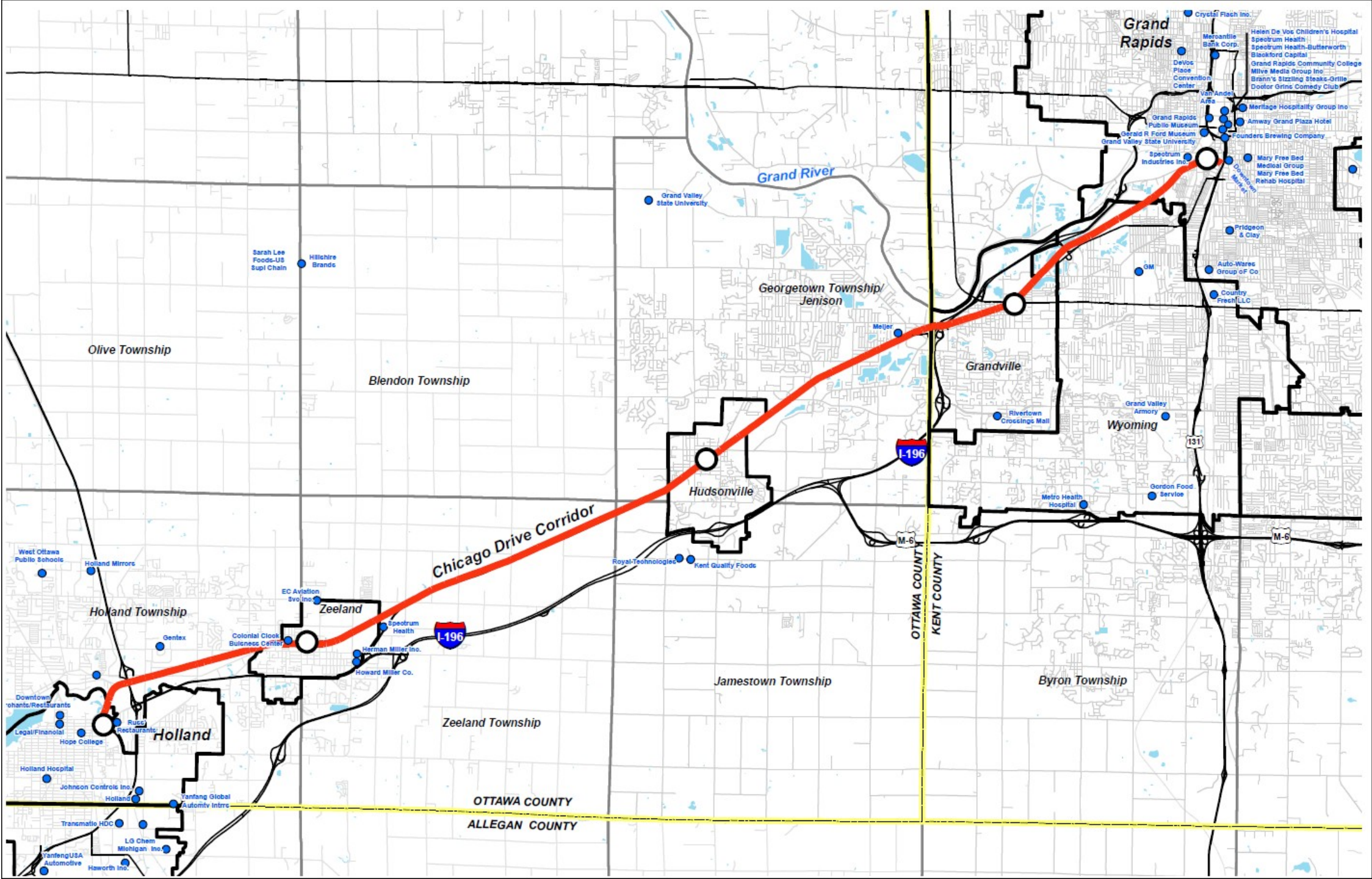
Offering a New  
Transportation Option

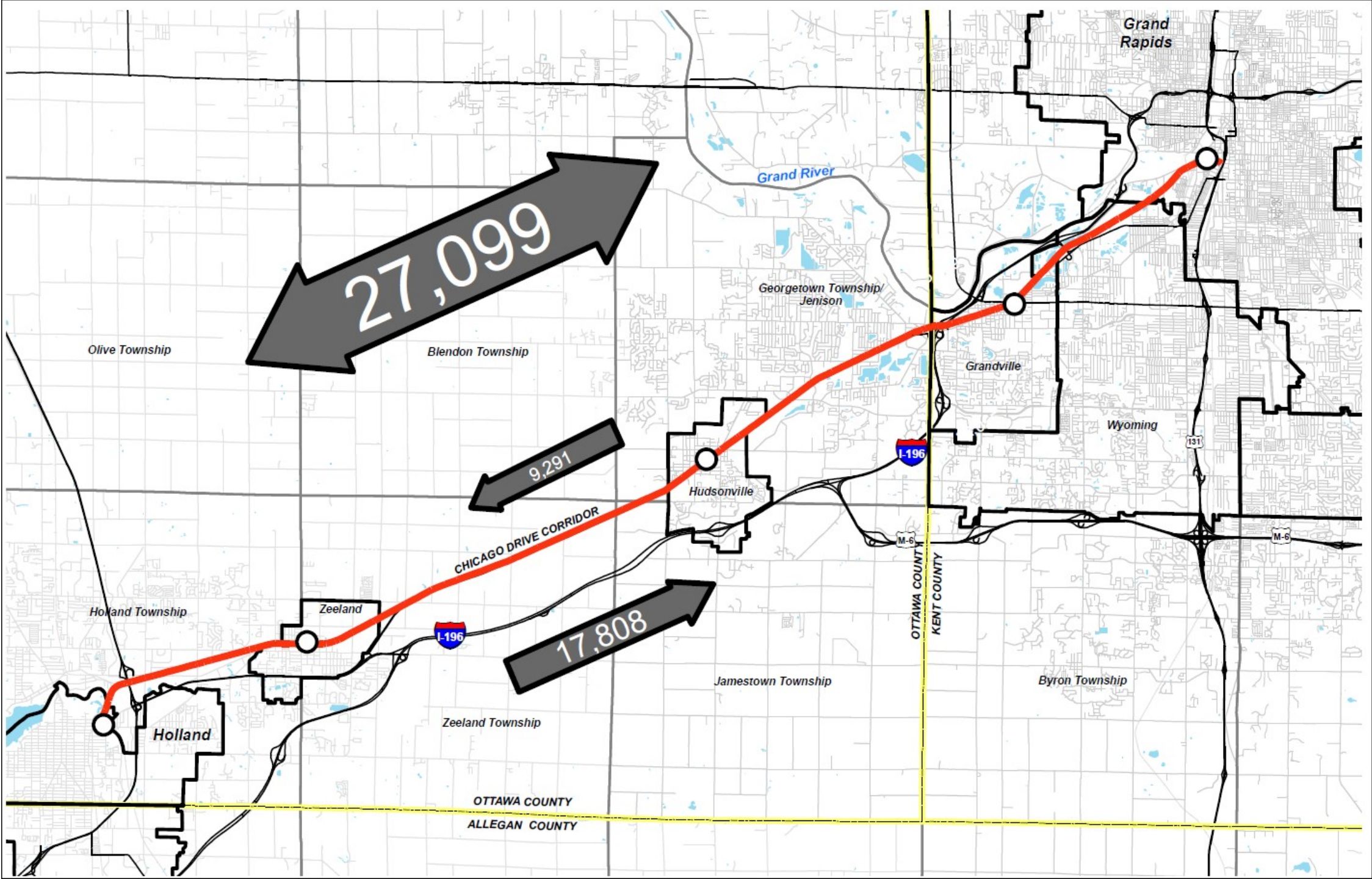
Latest data update completed on:  
July 2018











**76,000 new jobs over next 10 years!**

**-Talent 2025**

# Job Outlook



# West Michigan Express Task Force

- Mallory Avis, MDOT
- Tammy Britton, Talent 2025
- Tim Burkman, Macatawa Area Coordinating Council
- Debbi Coleman, Hope Network/Wheels to Work
- Jenna Elswick, City of Holland
- Elisa Hoekwater, Macatawa Area Transit
- Greg Holcombe, Urban Innovations (Consultant)
- Abed Itani, GVMC
- Dennis Kent, MDOT
- Ryan Kilpatrick, Housing Next
- Kellee Kortas, Lakeshore Advantage
- John Langdon, MARP
- Tim Maday, City of Zeeland
- Tim Mroz, The Right Place
- Julie Ornee, Frost Center
- Josh Naramore, Mobile Grand Rapids
- Adam Pennell, Gentex
- Ashley Perrin, City of Hudsonville
- Tom Purmort, MARP
- Dan Strikwerda, City of Hudsonville
- Josh Owens, Mobile Grand Rapids
- Matt VanDyken, City of Holland
- Conrad Venema, The Rapid
- Roger Victory, State Senator
- Lindsay Viviano, MEDC
- Patrick Waterman, City of Hudsonville (Chair)
- Gabe Wing, Herman Miller





# WEST MICHIGAN EXPRESS STUDY



Prepared for:



Prepared by:  
MP2 PLANNING, LLC

February, 2018

***“Through this study, as an outside observer, it is clear that the West Michigan region with its twin anchors of Grand Rapids and Holland is a unique place.***

***In the consultant’s experience, public transit with an eye on eventual utilization of the Chicago Drive corridor for commuter rail, should be pursued in a cautious logical way.***

***The potential short term benefits (helping drive the economic vitality of the corridor by enhancing opportunities for employees to get to work) and long term benefits (community development and enhancement as the region grows) make such a pursuit worthwhile.”***

9,291 WB | 27,099 | 17,808 EB



# Cost of Living

## Average Yearly Cost of Vehicle Ownership

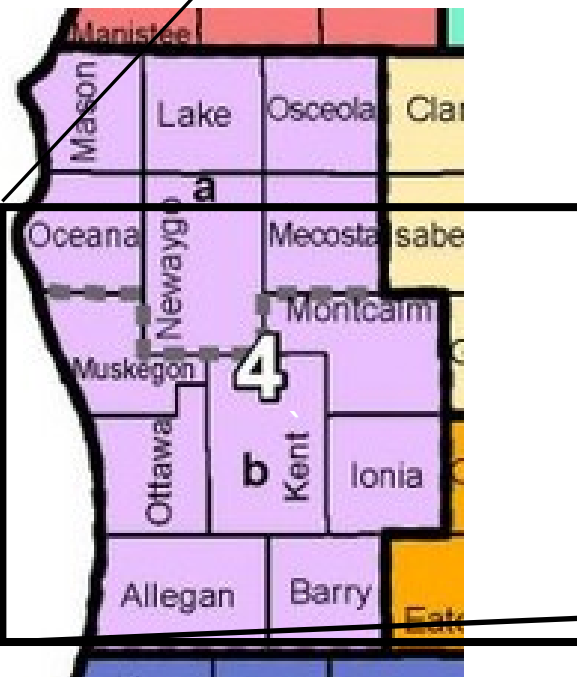
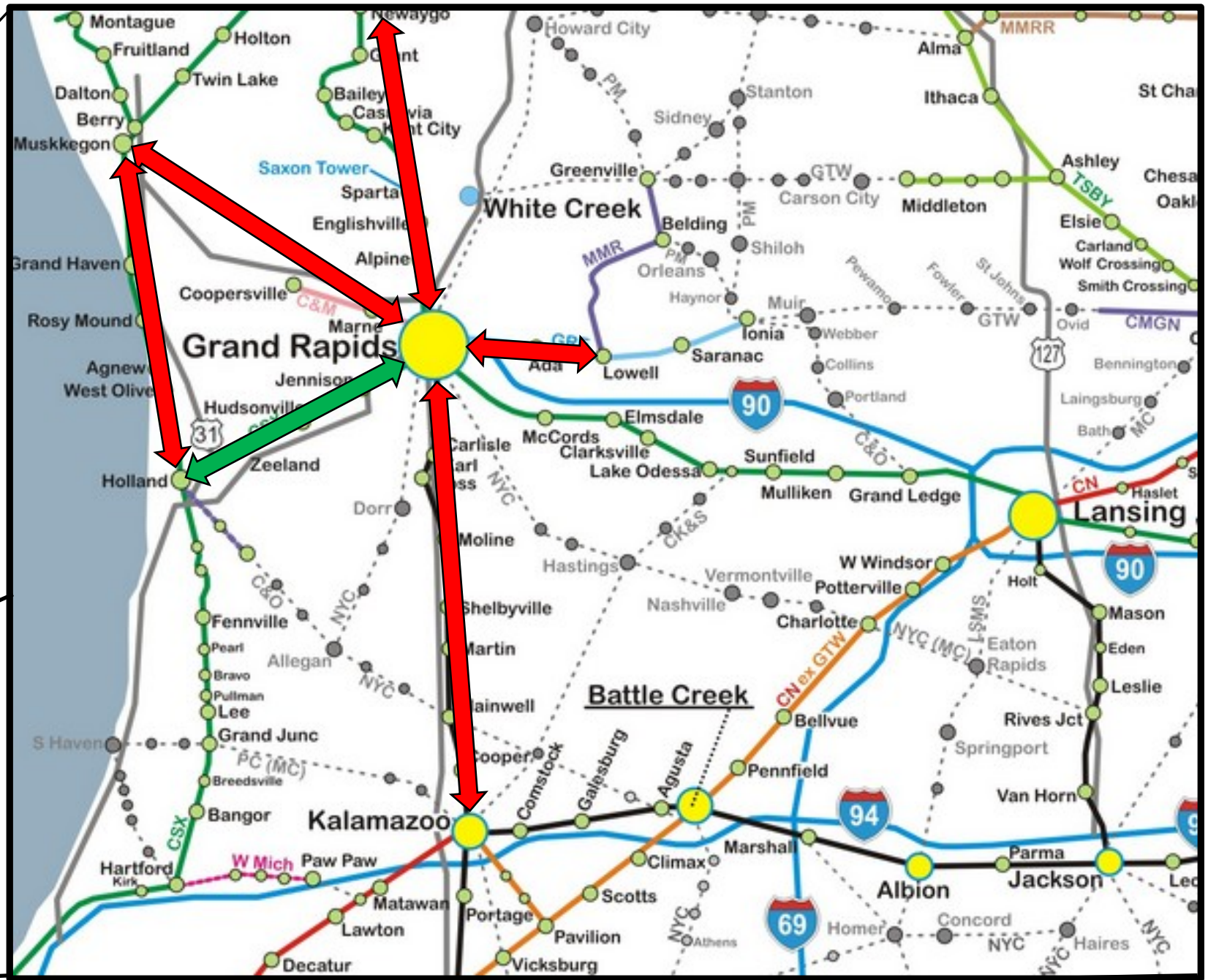


\$13,000





# A Regional Model for Change



# West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance Grant



- **WMX was selected first among our Region 4 peers at the West Michigan Prosperity Initiative presentations last fall.**
- **AS such, the project was awarded a **\$22,500** (**\$12,000** local match) grant to fund an employer/employee survey and, if warranted, the groundwork to develop a service and operations plan for the WMX.**
- **The Frost Research Center at Hope College worked with us to develop a new survey intended to learn the true interest in this new service.**
- **A cross section of around **50** small, medium and large employers within **2** miles of the Chicago Drive corridor were selected to participate in the survey. Members of the task force personally called these employers to ask for their cooperation in distributing the survey.**

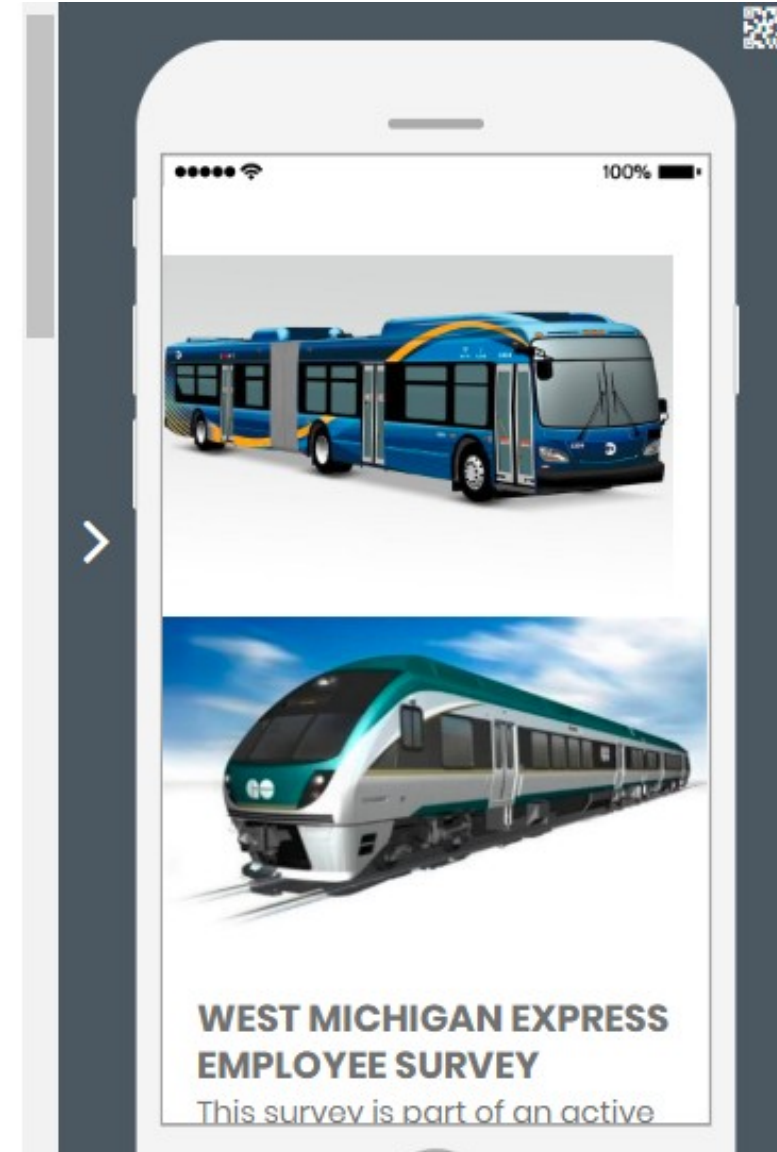
# WMX Employee/Employer Survey



## WEST MICHIGAN EXPRESS EMPLOYEE SURVEY

This survey is part of an active discussion underway to begin express bus/rail service in the Chicago Drive corridor to connect together Holland-Zeeland-Hudsonville-Grandville-Wyoming-Grand Rapids. Your answers to the following survey questions will help to determine if such express transportation services are worth pursuing

The survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Your identity will be kept confidential. If you choose to be entered into the drawing, your contact information will not be associated with your survey responses.



# WMX Survey Participation

- **50 employers were selected.**
- **However employees from over 166 employers participated in the survey.**
- **In all, we had 1,974 respondents**



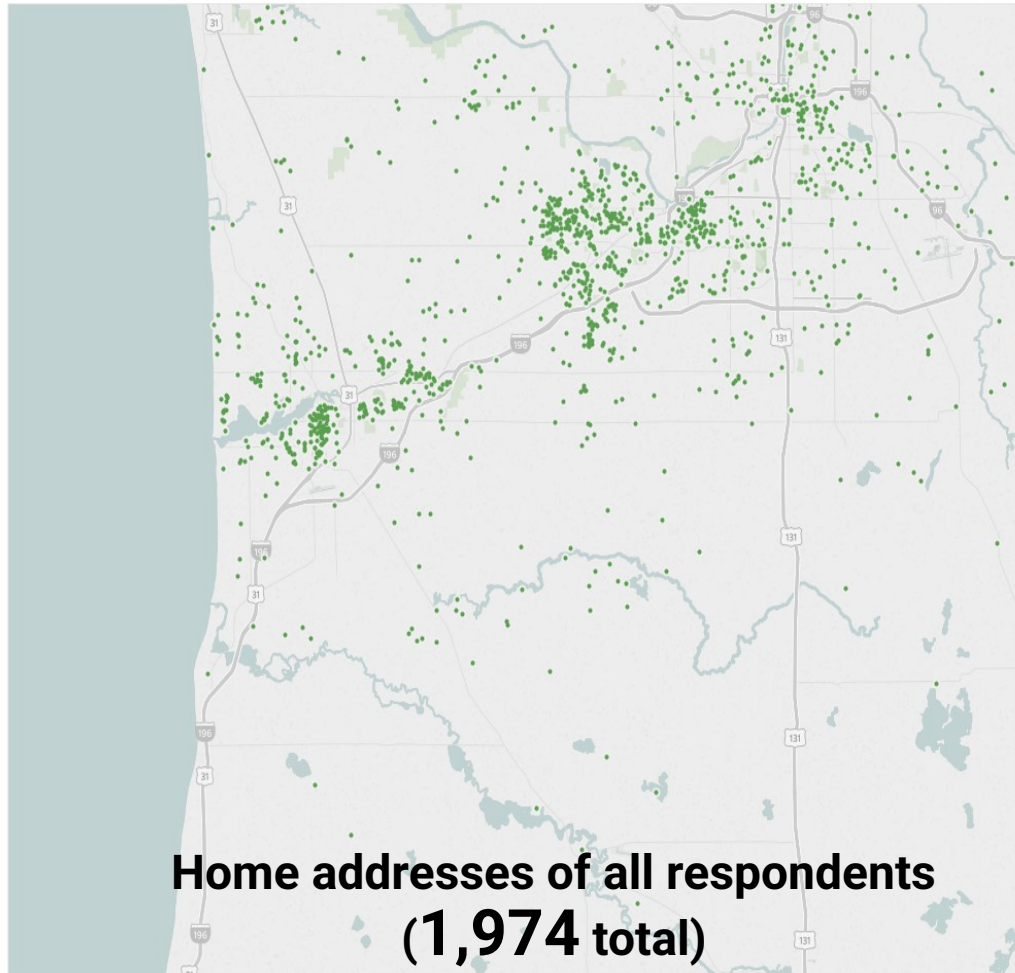


# Employee/Employer Survey



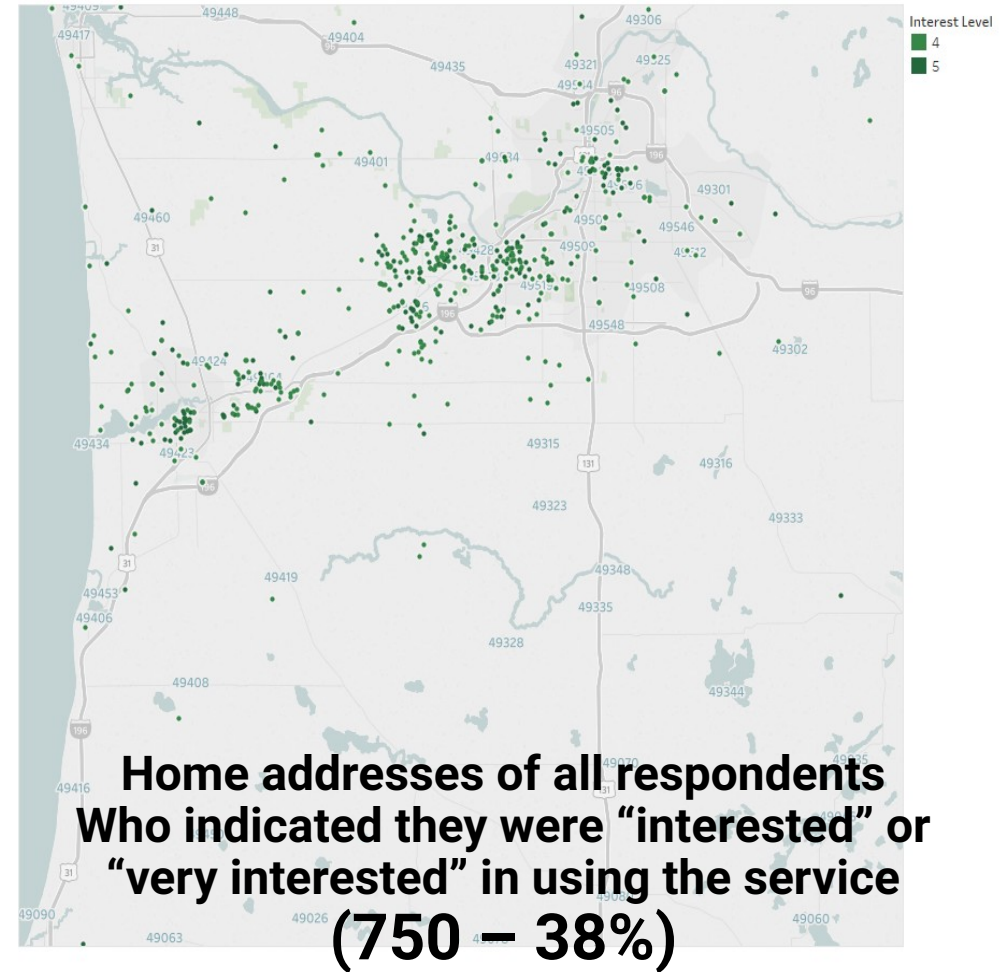
West Michigan Express

All Respondents	Interest Level	Only Interested and Very Interested	Only Interested Close to Chicago Drive	Interested Close to Chicago Drive without Spectrum	Comments
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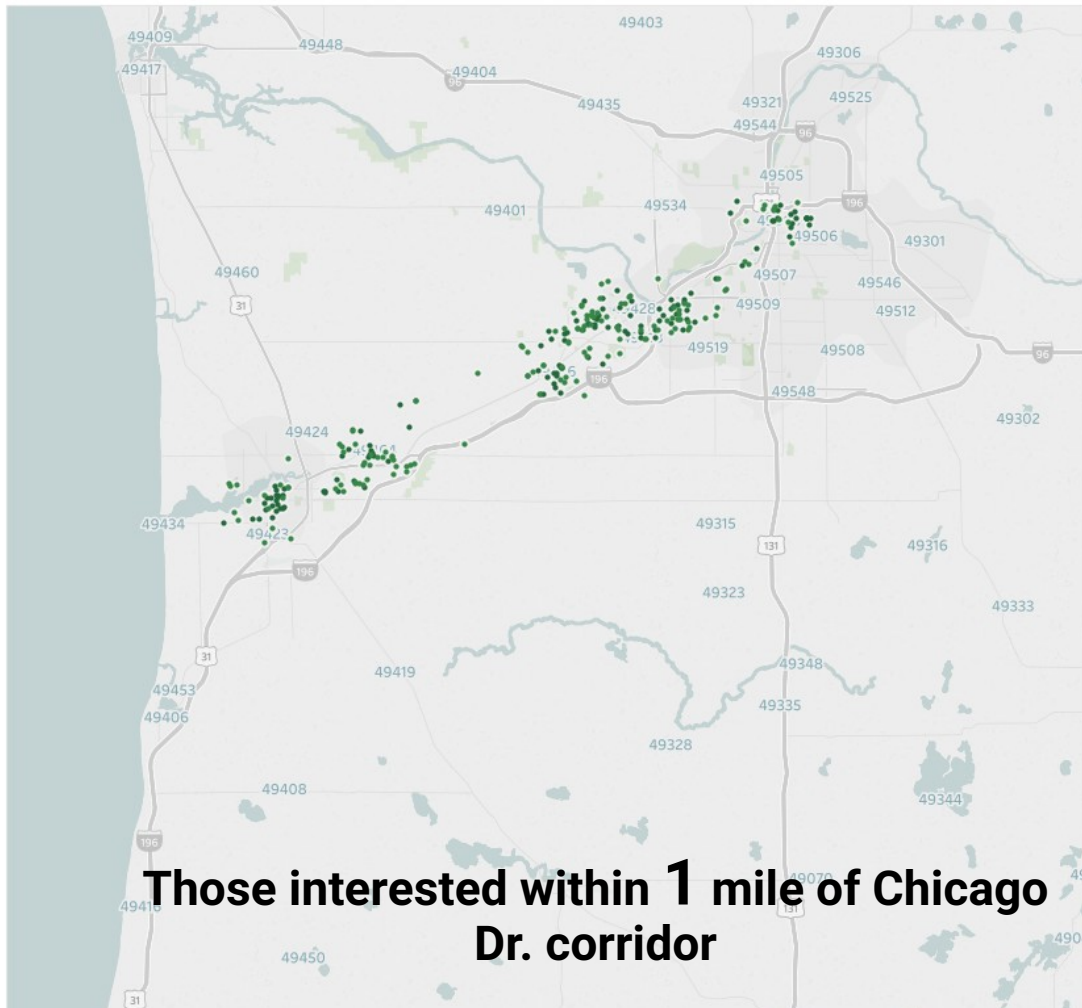


West Michigan Express

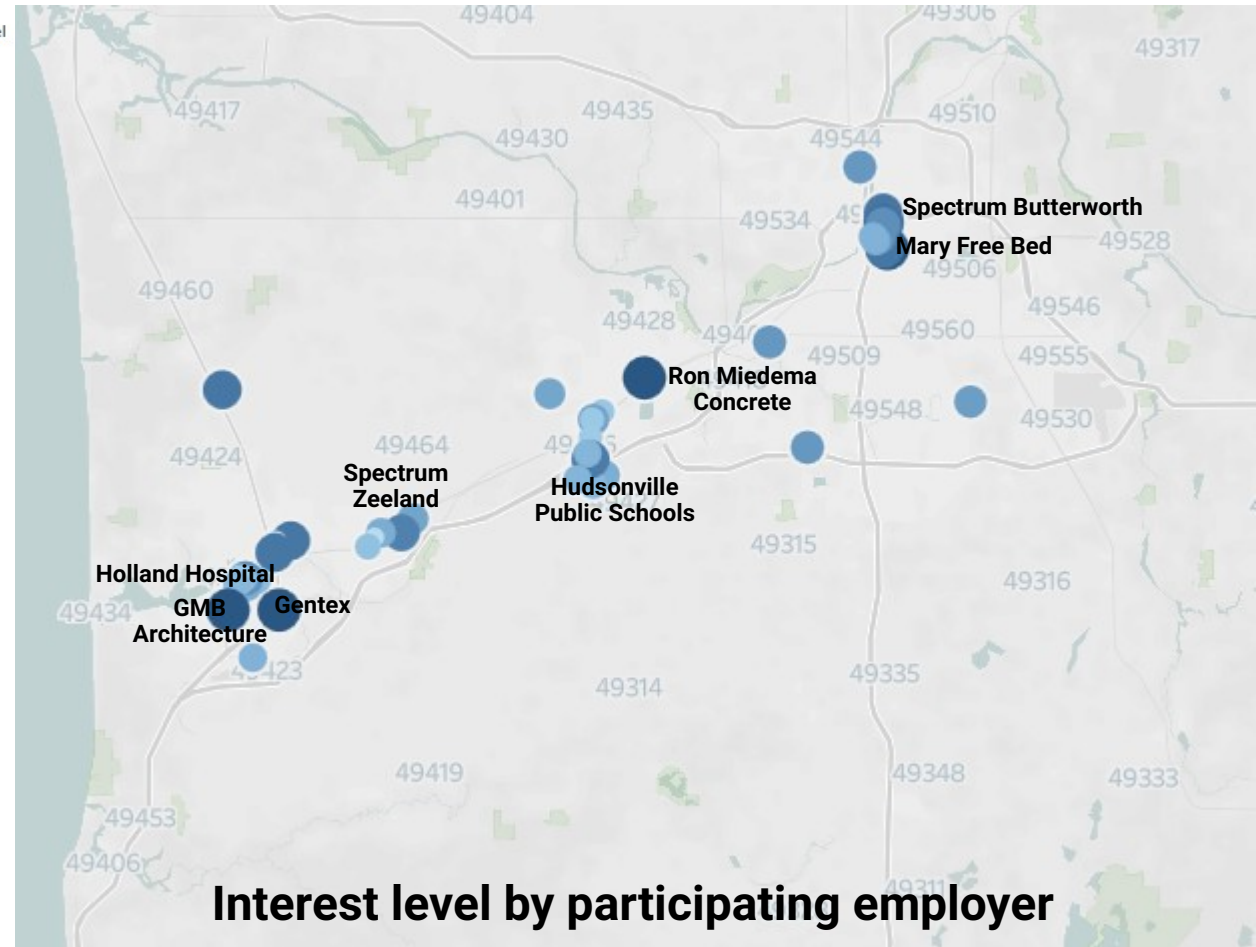
All Respondents	Interest Level	Only Interested and Very Interested	Only Interested Close to Chicago Drive	Interested Close to Chicago Drive without Spectrum	Comments
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# Employee/Employer Survey

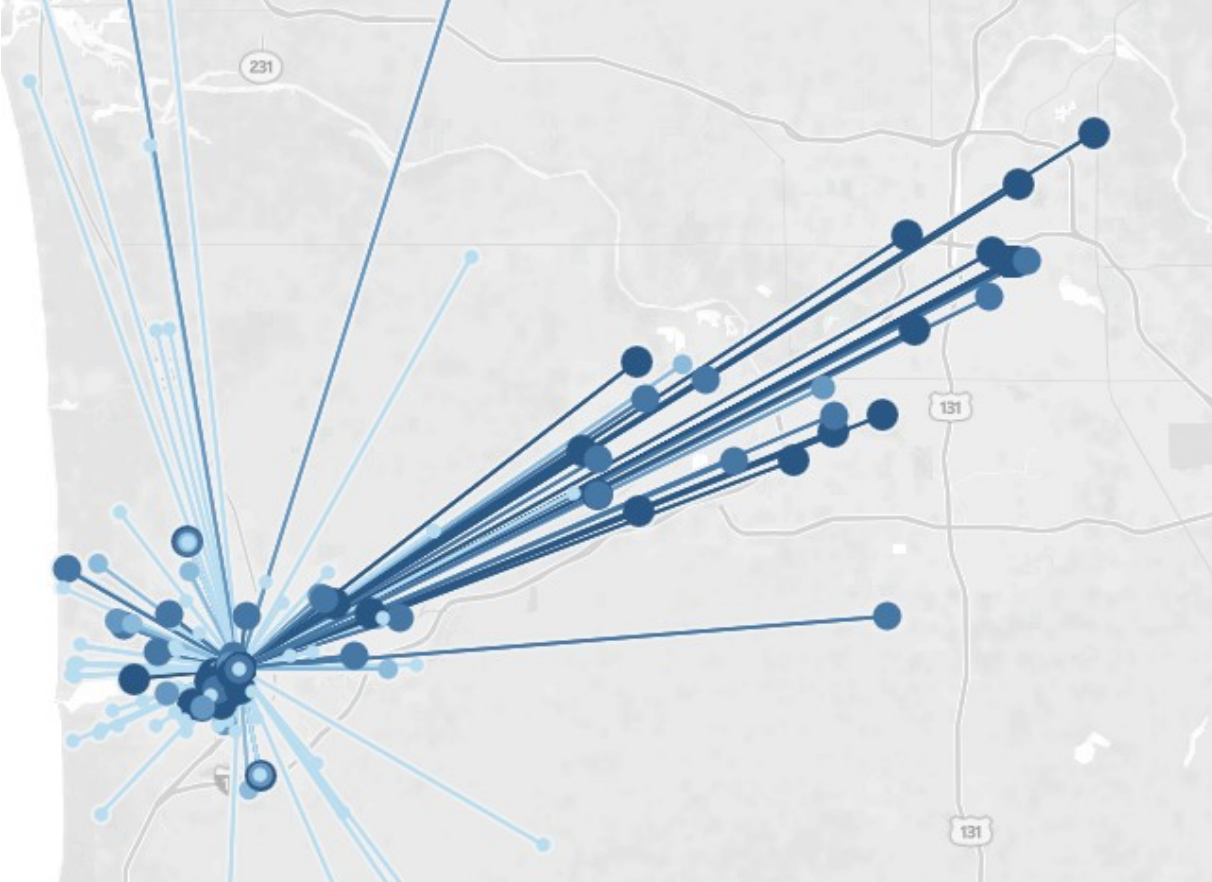


Those interested within 1 mile of Chicago Dr. corridor

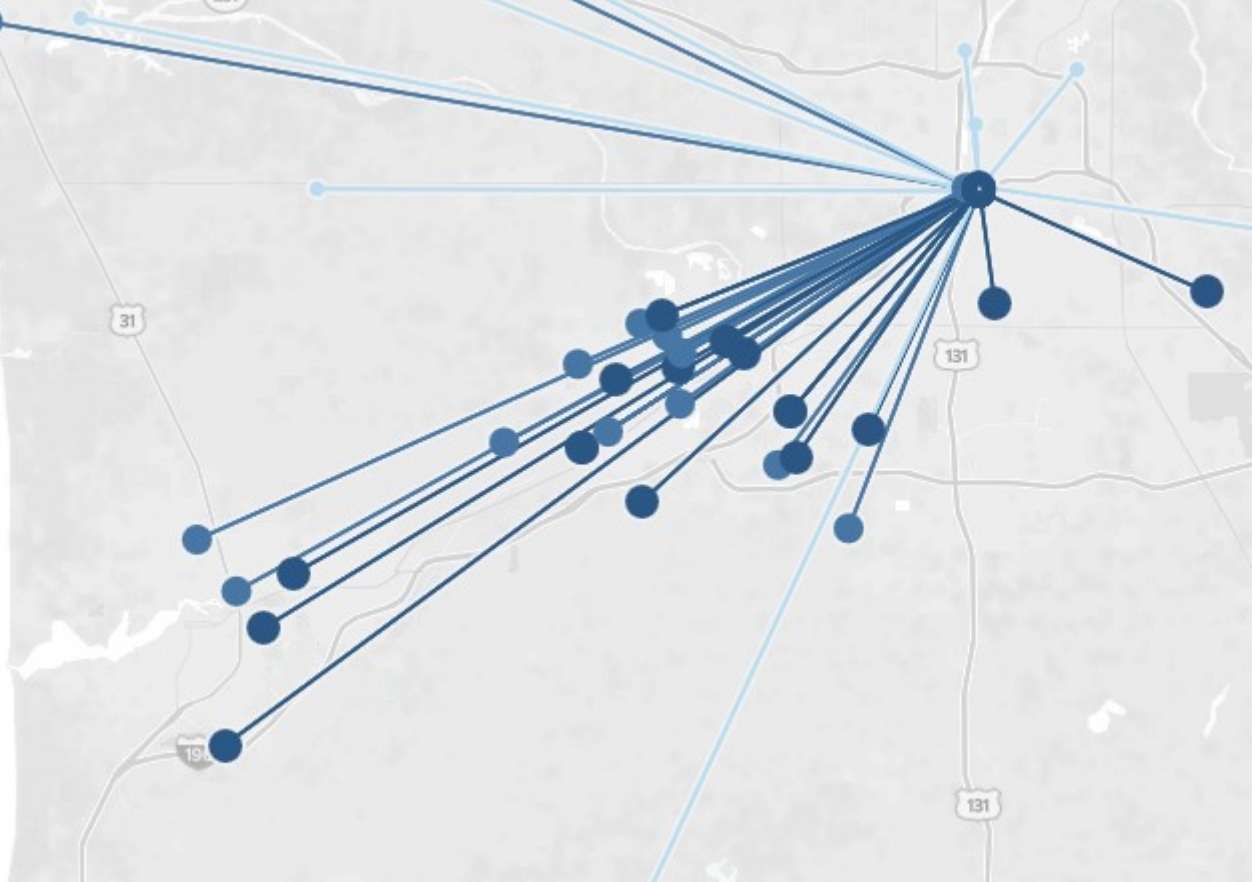


Interest level by participating employer

# Employee Commuting Patterns



Hope College Commuters



Spectrum Hospital Commuters

# Operation and Service Plan

## The What

- Beginning with express bus service for cost reasons and ease of implementation and to establish a ridership base.
- Initial goal is to attract **1,200** round-trip riders/day.
- Coaches running on **15** minute intervals at each transit stop during peak commuter times. (**30** minute intervals during non-peak times)
- Using approximately **10**, state-of-the-art, (wi-fi, bathrooms, etc.), branded, over-the-road coaches



# Operation and Service Plan

## The Who

- Rather than create a new transit entity, the operation of WMX could likely be done through any number of existing entities including The Rapid, Hope Network, The MAX, or Indian Trails.
- Over-the-road coaches could be contracted out through Indian Trails and serviced by the Rapid (similar to GR's DASH service)
- If not operator-in-charge, Hope Network's Wheels To Work program could augment system with first mile-last mile shuttle services



# WMX Branding and Marketing

We aspire to create unique and compelling VISUAL and NARRATIVE components that make WMX as attractive as possible to ALL USERS as a MODE OF CHOICE – a preferred alternative to driving individual vehicles to work.



# Operation and Service Plan

## The How

- **No new millage being sought.**
- **WMX is in the process of determining what the operating cost gap will be and identifying potential funding sources.**
- **Also working through the logistics of installing potential transit stops in Holland, Zeeland, Hudsonville Grandville and Grand Rapids.**
- **Aside from state and federal transit funding sources, WMX will be seeking financial support to “pilot” this project for **3-5** years from private sector and other philanthropic stakeholders in our region.**

# Operation and Service Plan

## The When

- Pending...
  - Secured gap funding from outside sources...
  - State approval of operations plan;
  - Local approval of transit stops/parking facilities;
  - Signed agreement with operating agency; and
  - Securing WMX coaches

WMX could be operating as soon as Fall, **2020**

**Still much work to be done!**

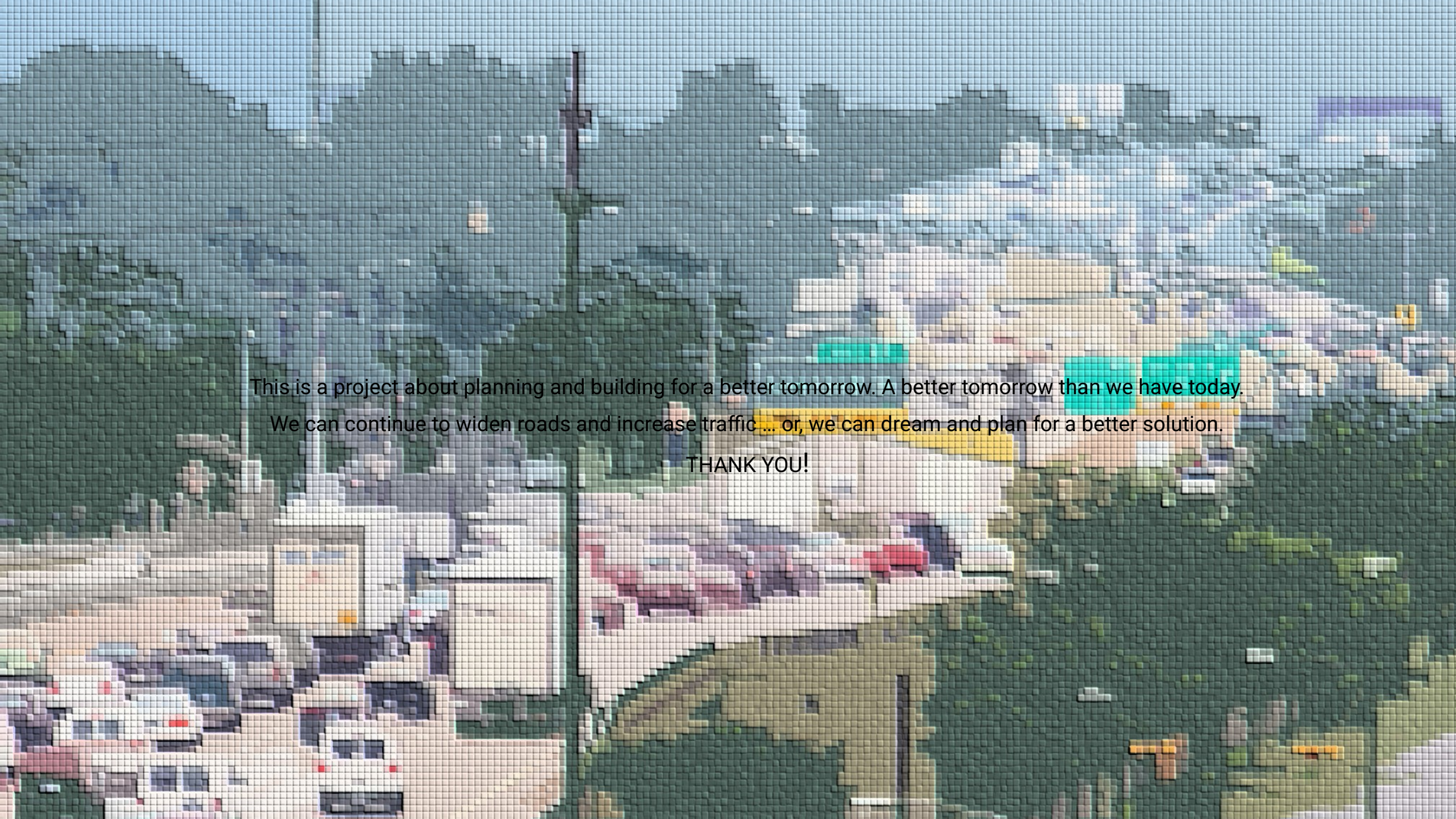


# Ways the private sector can help WMX

- **Financial pledges to WMX for at least **3** years (amount TBD)**
- **Commitment to provide connecting services between transit stop and work place (e.g. employer-provided or subscription-based shuttle service)**
- **Incentives to encourage employees to use WMX (e.g. contribution toward transit pass, flexible work hours, etc.)**
- **Supportive statements to elected officials and economic development entities about Chicago Drive as an “armature for regional growth and quality of life”.**
- **Promotional statements about WMX in company press releases.**
- **Involvement and support for WMX Task Force efforts.**

# **Ways the public sector can help WMX**

- **Support for WMX in Policy and Planning Documents and related communications with media, social media and all public communications.**
- **Support for transit-orientated-development projects, uses and amenities within walking distance from Chicago Dr. corridor.**
- **Planning and provision for WMX transit station(s)/hubs, signage etc.**
- **Integration of WMX into local existing or planned transit services and plans.**
- **Supportive statements to elected officials and economic development entities about Chicago Drive as an “armature for regional growth and quality of life”.**
- **Continued involvement and support for WMX Task Force efforts.**

An aerial, pixelated view of a city. A road runs vertically through the center, highlighted with a yellow and green glow. The surrounding area is filled with buildings, streets, and green spaces, all rendered in a low-resolution, blocky style.

This is a project about planning and building for a better tomorrow. A better tomorrow than we have today.  
We can continue to widen roads and increase traffic ... or, we can dream and plan for a better solution.

THANK YOU!