

# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study



**Sarpy County Board Meeting**  
Stakeholder Meeting/Project Update  
September 27, 2016

**Michael Felschow, MAPA Program Director**  
**Corinne Donahue, AICP, Olsson Associates**  
**Nick Weander, PTP, MPA, Olsson Associates**

# Transit Study History

- Elected officials heard a need for transportation to services/employment
- Leadership aware:
  - » Fastest growing county in NE
  - » Previous/current studies focus on Metro area
    - Heartland 2050
    - Metropolitan Travel Improvement Study (MTIS)
    - 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan
- Partnership between MAPA, Sarpy County, and six communities
  - » Focus on Sarpy County
- Study initiated in Feb 2016

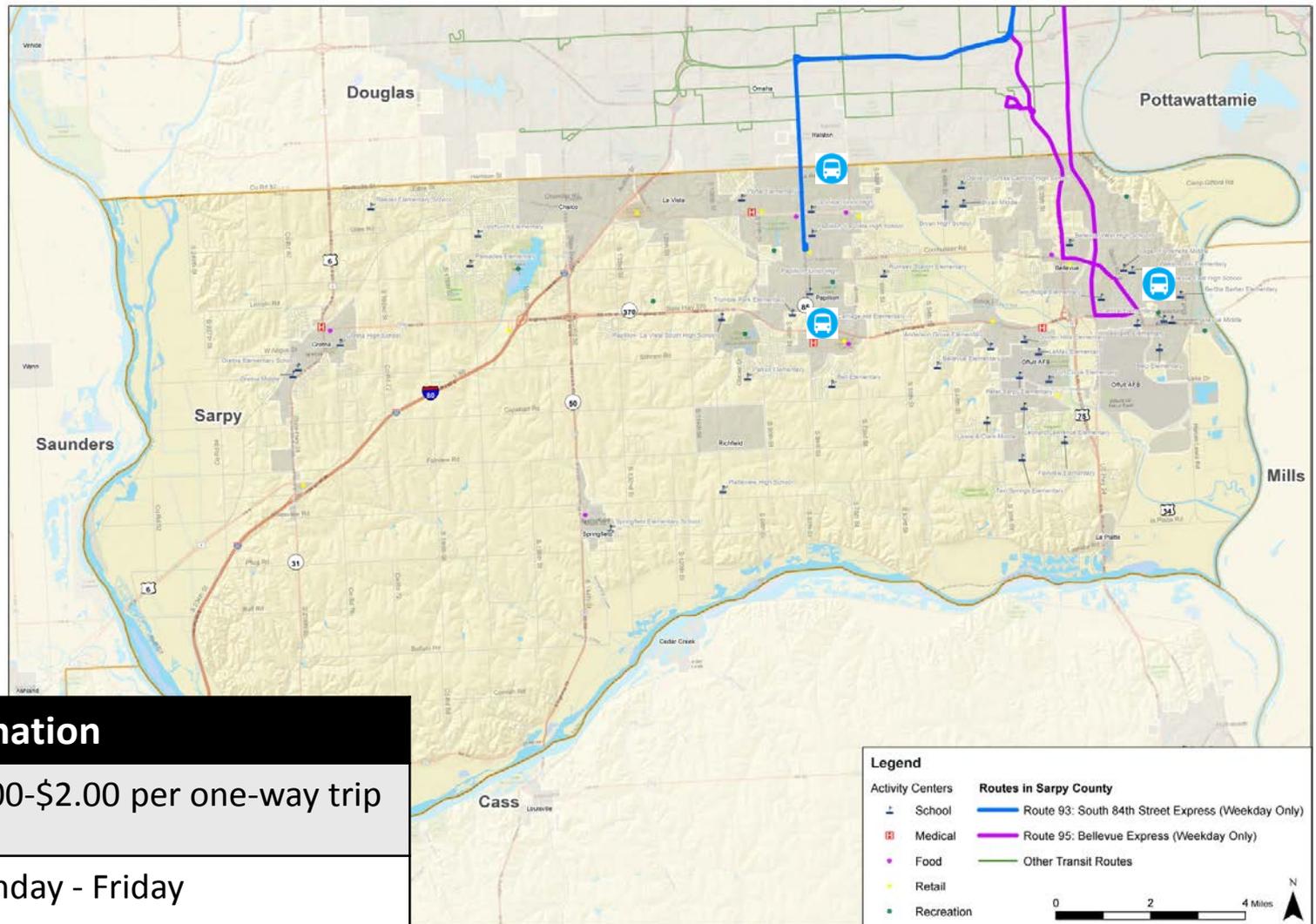


# Study Summary Tasks

- ☑ Form Working Group with representation from each entity
- ☑ Develop Vision/goals for future public transit in Sarpy County
- ☑ Identify existing transit services and needs/gaps in Sarpy County
- ☑ Conduct community outreach
- ☑ Develop future alternatives to meet the needs
- ☐ Prepare final plan, budget, and implementation plan



# Existing Transit Services



# Transit Goals for Sarpy County

- Improve mobility
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Improve access to jobs, homes, and services
- Increase transit options
- Coordinate transit and land use plans
- Create healthy, livable communities within Sarpy County



# Community Engagement

- Working Group – Technical Committee
  - » Monthly project meetings
- Steering Committee
- Stakeholder Meetings:
  - » Sarpy County, Bellevue, Gretna, La Vista, Springfield, Papillion, Transit providers, Major employers, Non-profit organizations
  - » Three rounds of outreach
- Community Open Houses
  - » Coordination with the 2050 LRTP
- Community Survey



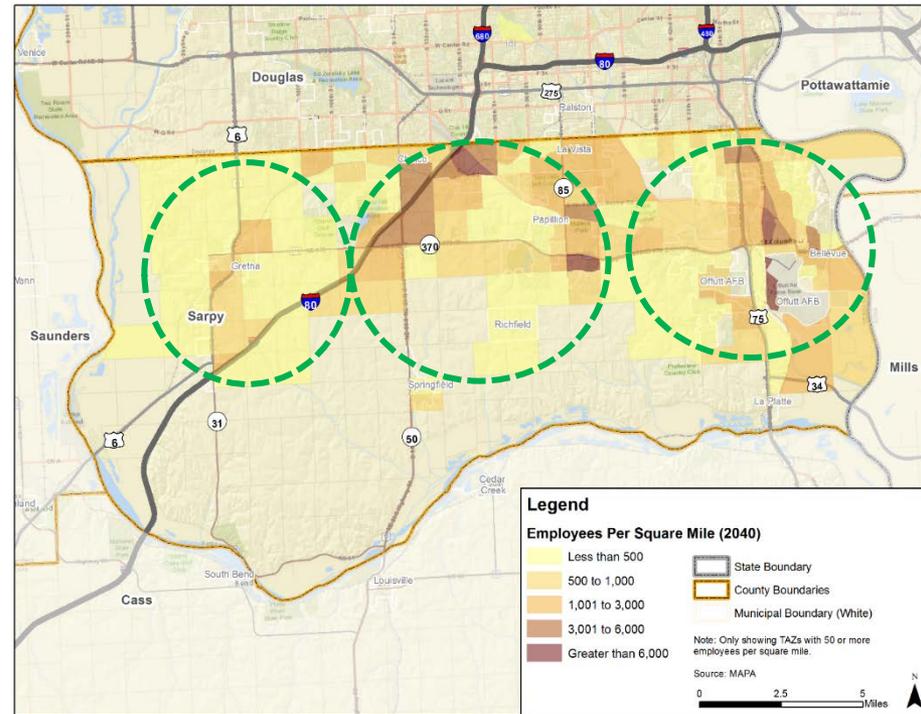
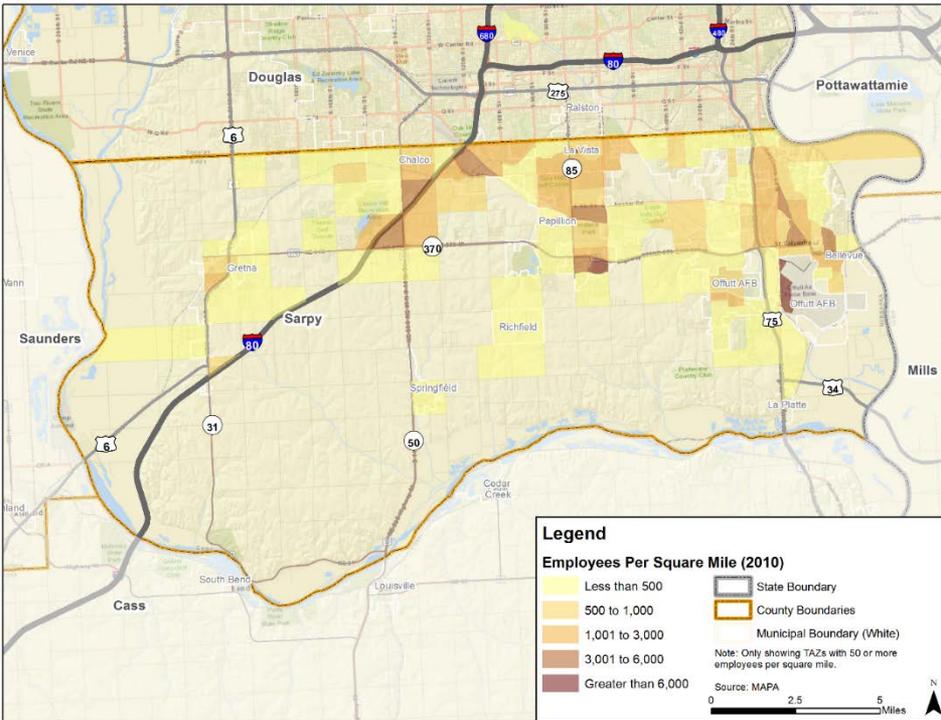
# What Did We Hear?

- General support for public transit
  - » Accessible, meet need of employers, connectivity to major activity areas, affordable, convenient
- Many people have lived other areas and surprised limited transit options in Sarpy Co
- Majority have not used transit
- Transit options - important to have for residents with limited or no means of transportation
- Businesses are interested
- Expand express routes, call-a-ride services, flexible routes
- Must have land use and development support public transportation



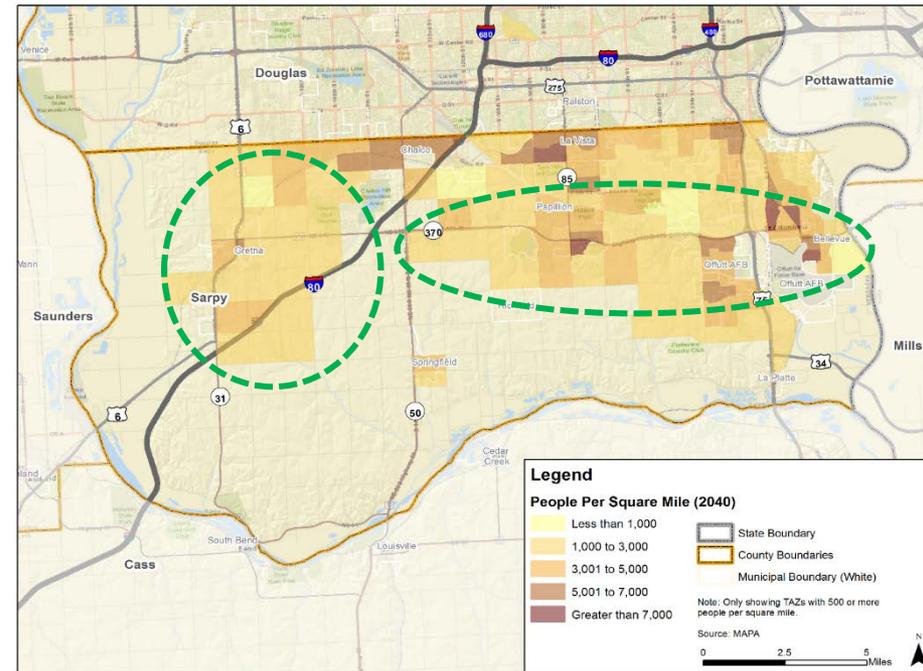
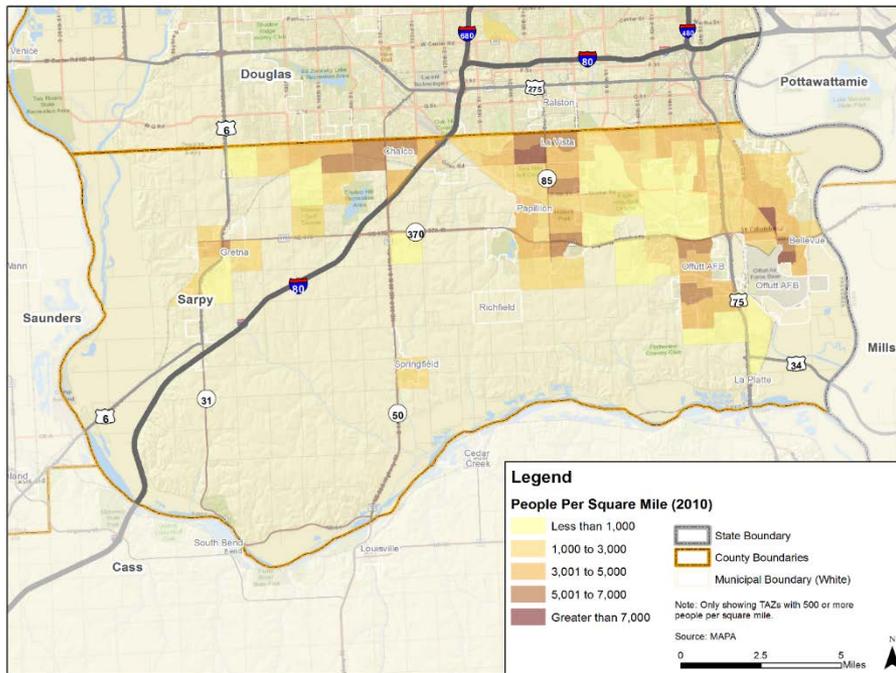
# Market Analysis Overview

- Employment (2010 and 2040)



# Market Analysis Overview

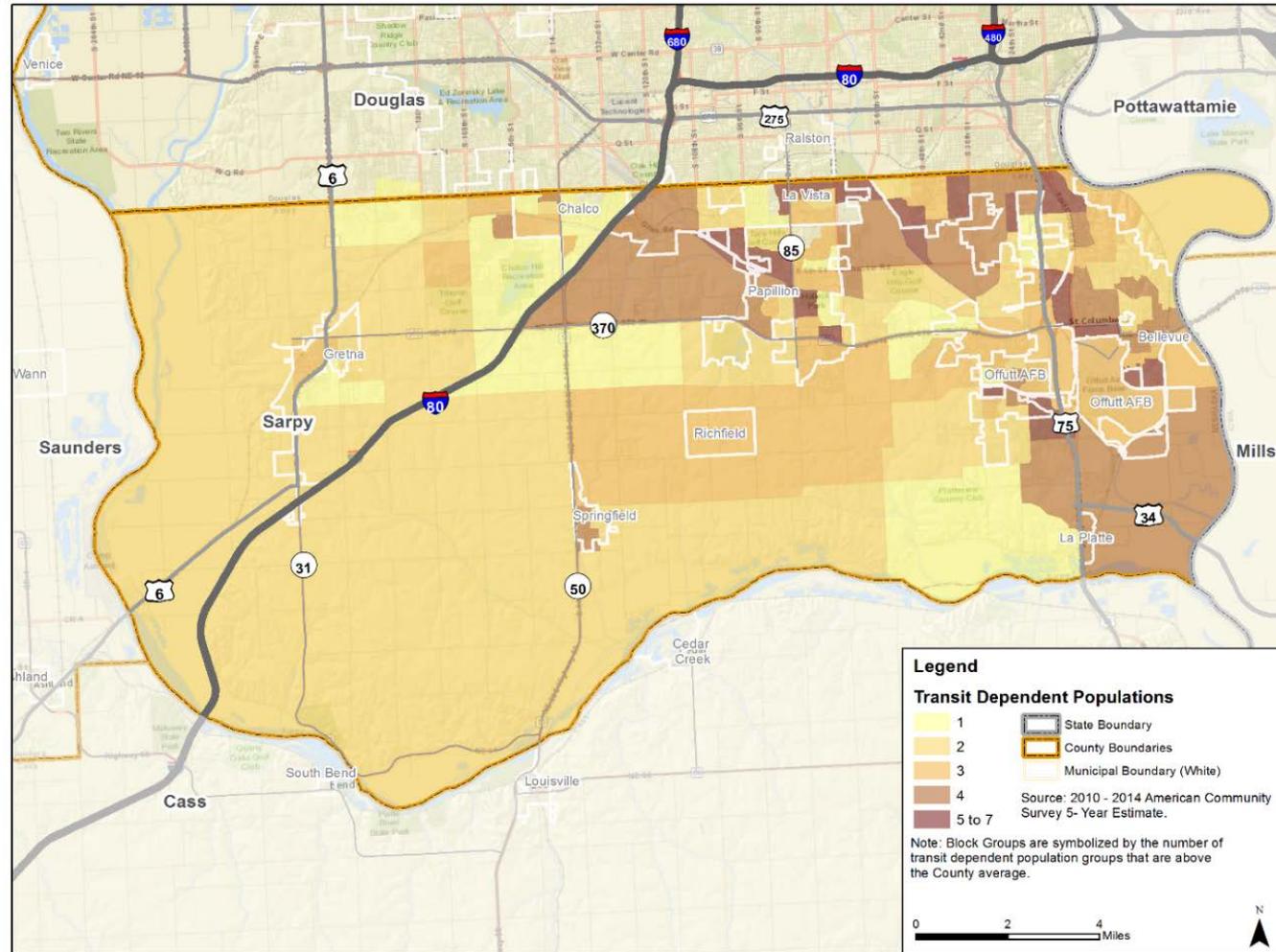
- Population (2010 and 2040)



- Analyzed populations likely more dependent on public transportation: elderly, low-income, disabled, minority, and households with zero vehicles

# Market Analysis Overview

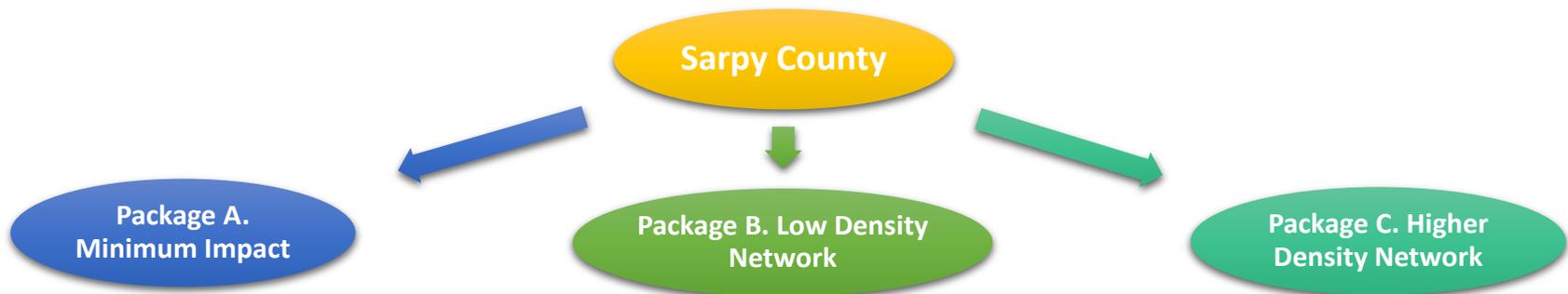
- Transit Areas with the Highest Need for Public Transportation



# Transit Alternative Packages

- Packages Developed Based on:

- » Transit goals
- » Data
- » Historical Agency Ridership
- » Performance
- » Demand
- » Peer communities
- » Input from the community
- » Input from key stakeholders
- » Online survey results
- » Working Group discussions
- » Costs considerations



# Stakeholder Feedback

- What do you like best or least about each transit package?
  - » Why?
- What transit package do you think meets the future needs for Sarpy County?
  - » Why?
- What transit package is most feasible for Sarpy County?
  - » Why?
- What transit package would be your preference for the future?
  - » Why?
- What suggestions or modifications do you have to ANY of the transit packages?



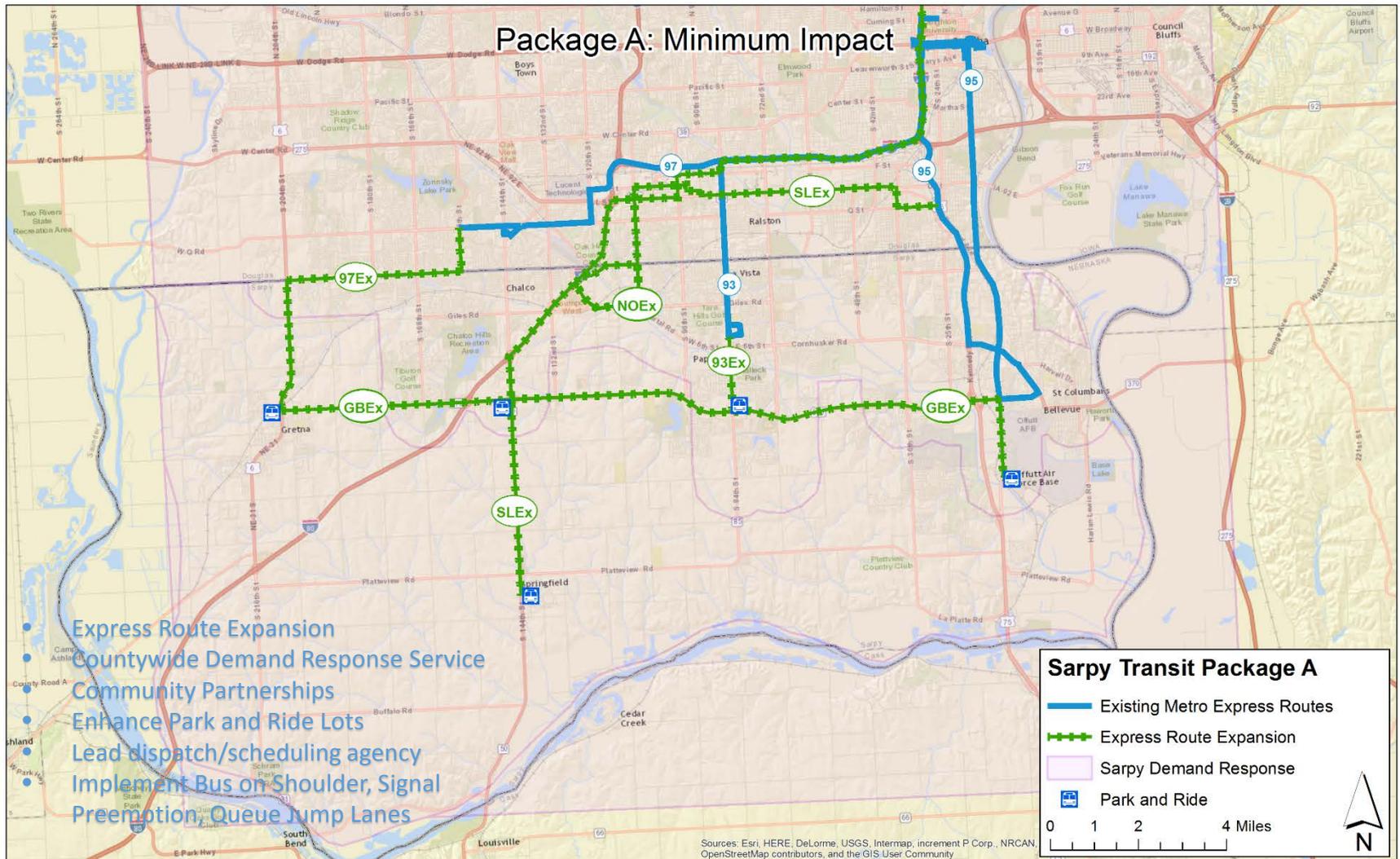
# Package A: Minimum Impact

- Express Route Expansion
- Countywide Demand Response Service
- Community Partnerships
  - » Uber/Lyft
  - » Rideshare Program
  - » Taxi Voucher Program
- Enhance Park and Ride Lots
- Lead dispatch/scheduling agency
- Implement Bus on Shoulder, Signal Preemption, Queue Jump Lanes

A. Minimum Impact



# Package A: Minimum Impact

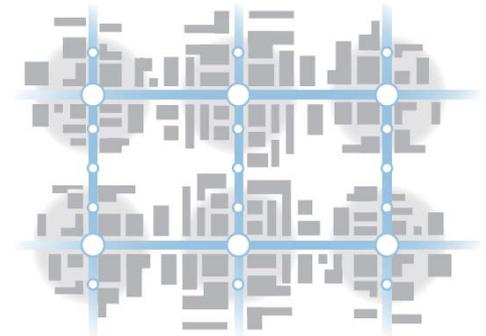


- Express Route Expansion
- Countywide Demand Response Service
- Community Partnerships
- Enhance Park and Ride Lots
- Lead dispatch/scheduling agency
- Implement Bus on Shoulder, Signal Preemption, Queue Jump Lanes

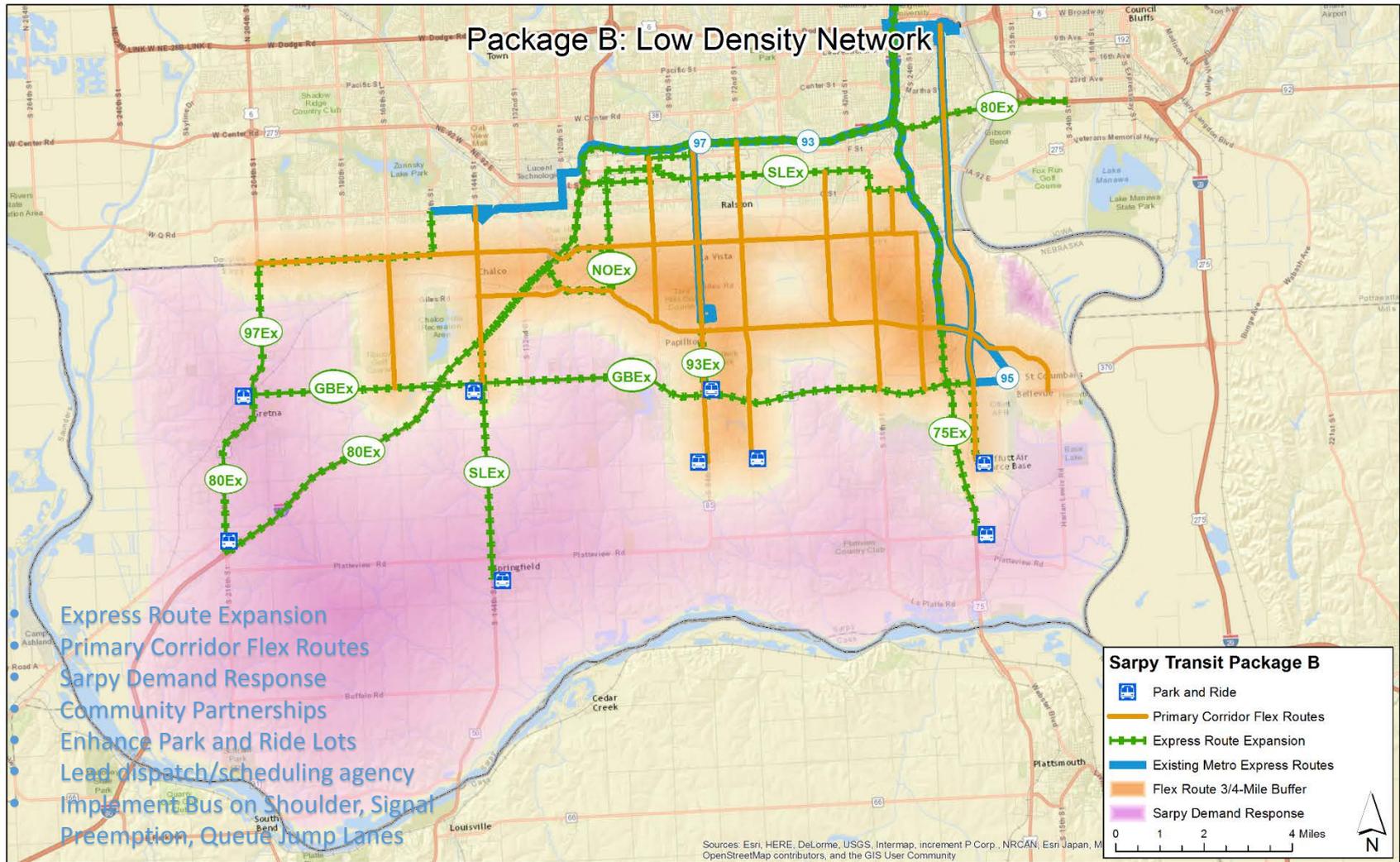
# Package B: Low Density Network

- Express Route Expansion
- Primary Corridor Flex Routes
- Sarpy Demand Response
  - » Uber/Lyft
  - » Rideshare Program
  - » Taxi Voucher Program
- Community Partnerships
- Enhance Park and Ride Lots
- Lead dispatch/scheduling agency
- Implement Bus on Shoulder, Signal Preemption, Queue Jump Lanes

B. Low Density Network



# Package B: Low Density Network



# Package C: Higher Density Network

- Express Route Expansion
- Primary Corridor Flex Routes
- High Capacity Corridors
- Sarpy Demand Response
  - » Uber/Lyft
  - » Rideshare Program
  - » Taxi Voucher Program
- Community Partnerships
- Enhance Park and Ride Lots
- Lead dispatch/scheduling agency
- Implement Bus on Shoulder, Signal Preemption, Queue Jump Lanes

C. Higher  
Density  
Network





# Next Steps

- Community Outreach – Transit Packages
  - » Stakeholder meetings – Sept/Oct 2016
- Refine Transit Packages based upon feedback
- Complete Technical Memorandum 2 – Summary of Transit Packages
- Develop Final Plan with Preferred Alternative



# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study



**Thank You!**



**Michael Felschow, MAPA Program Director**

**Corinne Donahue, AICP**

**Nick Weander, PTP, MPA**



# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study Project Description – September 2016

The Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency launched the **Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study** in February 2016. The purpose of the study is to look at short-term and long-term public transportation options in the County.

Limited transit service is available in some parts of the County today; however, **what is the vision for public transit services in the future?**

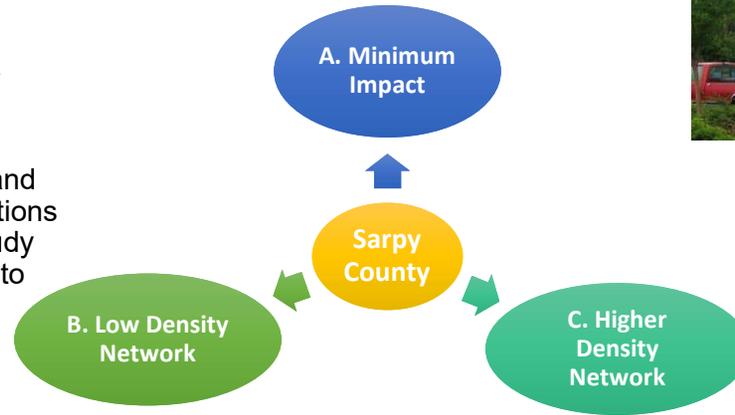
The Olsson Associates team completed the following study tasks:

- Identify existing services and transit needs.
- Conduct community outreach.
- Develop future alternatives to meet the needs.
- Prepare a final plan, budget, and implementation plan (ongoing).

Three Sarpy County Transit Alternative Packages were developed and shaped from multiple factors, including: transit goals, data, historical ridership, performance, demand, peer communities, input from the community, key stakeholders, online survey, Working Group discussions, consideration of costs associated with the services, and available funding scenarios.

- **Package A: Minimum Impact**
- **Package B: Low Density Network**
- **Package C: Higher Density Network**

The three Alternative Packages will be presented to the public in September and October 2016. Comments and suggestions are welcome. The next steps of the study will be to refine the transit Packages into a Preferred Plan, budget and implementation plan for near-term (1-10 years), medium-term (11-20 years), and long-term (20+ years).



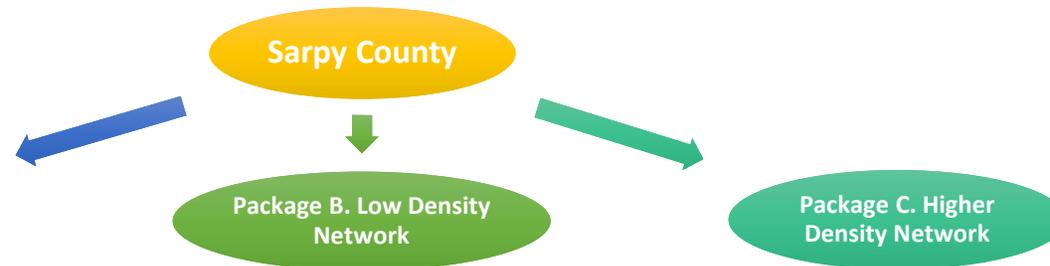
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- For more information, visit: [www.mapacog.org](http://www.mapacog.org)

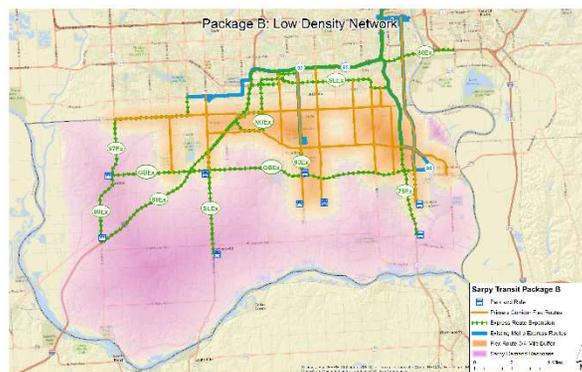




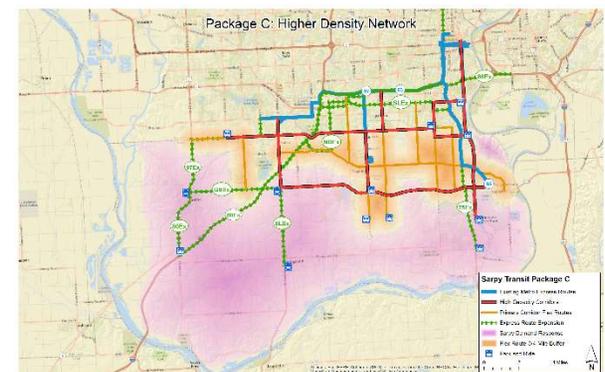
# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study – Transit Alternative Packages - Summary



- Package A: Minimum Impact**
- Express Route Expansion
  - Countywide Demand Response Service
  - Community Partnerships
    - Uber/Lyft
    - Rideshare Program
    - Taxi Voucher Program
  - Enhance Park and Ride Lots
  - Lead dispatch/scheduling agency
  - Implement Bus on Shoulder, Signal Preemption, Queue Jump Lanes



- Package B: Low Density Network**
- Express Route Expansion
  - Primary Corridor Flex Routes
  - Sarpy Demand Response
  - Community Partnerships
    - Uber/Lyft
    - Rideshare Program
    - Taxi Voucher Program
  - Enhance Park and Ride Lots
  - Lead dispatch/scheduling agency
  - Implement Bus on Shoulder, Signal Preemption, Queue Jump Lanes



- Package C: Higher Density Network**
- Express Route Expansion
  - Primary Corridor Flex Routes
  - High Capacity Corridors
  - Sarpy Demand Response
  - Community Partnerships
    - Uber/Lyft
    - Rideshare Program
    - Taxi Voucher Program
  - Enhance Park and Ride Lots
  - Lead dispatch/scheduling agency
  - Implement Bus on Shoulder, Signal Preemption, Queue Jump Lanes



# MAPA

## Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA)

### Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

#### Technical Memorandum 1

*May 2016*



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# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Sarpy County is the fastest growing county in the State of Nebraska. Located immediately south of Omaha (Nebraska's largest city), Sarpy County and its local municipalities are faced with increasing development pressure brought on by a strong economy and close proximity to major employment and entertainment centers. As population continues to increase, so too will demand for services. This project seeks to identify what the existing and future demand for transit service is and will be in Sarpy County, identify strategies to improve existing services, target new services, and identify a deployment schedule to meet the changing needs of the residents of Sarpy County.

To accomplish this effort, the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) retained the Olsson Associates team. Working closely with stakeholders from Sarpy County, Bellevue, Papillion, La Vista, Gretna, Springfield and *Metro* (Omaha's transit provider). This report includes a review of existing transit operations in the study area and identifying underserved and unserved transit markets. The next steps to be described in subsequent memoranda include the review of potential transit service options and identification of potential solutions for new and enhanced service in Sarpy County.

The Omaha metropolitan area is completing a number of transportation plans that will guide future growth. The region recently completed the initial development of the Heartland 2050 regional vision. This large-scale and multi-faceted effort included the development of a regional transit vision (Heartland Connections) and future land use scenario development to better guide future regional investments. A second major study focused on transportation, the Metropolitan Travel Improvement Study (MTIS) will identify future improvements to be made to the regional interstate, freeway and arterial system and the development of MAPA's new 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. This Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study builds upon this previous work to provide residents of Sarpy County and the Omaha metropolitan area a menu of future mobility choices and development patterns as communities continue to grow.



## 1.2 Study Approach

The study comprises a multi-level data collection effort, evaluation of current conditions and operational structures, a review of peer communities, and the development of alternative scenarios for short-, medium- and long-term service. Based on public and stakeholder involvement specific system improvements are recommended. The study approach concludes by defining financial efforts and organizational structures that should be implemented to provide the most effective service.

A Steering Committee was assembled for the study and is assisting throughout the effort. Feedback from local jurisdictions, transit providers, major employers, non-profit organizations, and the general public was a critical element of a successful planning process. Listening to, evaluating, and including this feedback throughout the overall study effort was a focus area of this plan.

## 1.3 Report Contents

As the transit study progresses over the next year, three Technical Memoranda will be prepared. This report is the first such Technical Memorandum and includes the following sections:



- **Chapter 2** includes the development of project goals and vision for transit service in Sarpy County. The goals and vision will provide guidance to the project team, MAPA, Sarpy County and its stakeholders in the development of enhanced transit service for Sarpy County.
- **Chapter 3** contains a market analysis for the study area. This section provides a review of demographic information to assist in determining focus areas that may contain unserved or underserved populations, as well as identify various market segments such as older adults, people with disabilities, low-income populations, minority areas and zero-vehicle households. Chapter 3 also examines regional commute patterns in order to assist decision makers in understanding how residents get to and from work.
- **Chapter 4** examines the existing transit service in the study area. Based upon surveys of transit providers and operating data, this chapter will look at the current service, performance and ridership that exists in the study area.
- **Chapter 5** summarizes the public input efforts that have occurred to date that correspond with the project. Summaries of public open house meetings, stakeholder involvement events, and the overall public involvement survey are presented in this chapter.

- **Chapter 6** identifies the existing transit needs, gaps and potential future demand for transit service in the study area. Utilizing research developed by the Transit Cooperative Research Board, the transit needs and demand are identified.
- **Chapter 7** reviews Sarpy County and six peer communities. The peer agency data was collected and contrasted. Specific criteria to select the peer communities included similarities to the study area, transit operating characteristics, transit organizational structure, and potential best practices in place that could be applied through this study.
- **Chapter 8** presents the draft service guidelines for improving transit service in the study area and next steps for the overall study process, including the development of transit alternatives.

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# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

## Chapter 2 Study Goals

### 2.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this feasibility study is to identify the potential for enhanced public transportation service in Sarpy County. The objectives of this study are to assess the existing conditions within Sarpy County, determine current demand and provisions for transportation services, and propose and evaluate potential service options. Transportation services examined and service options proposed will focus on providing transportation to major activity centers. The final result of this study is the recommendation of a preferred service option, a discussion of the specific characteristics and cost considerations of the service, and an implementation plan.



### 2.2 Vision, Goals and Objectives

It is necessary to recognize the goals and objectives of public transportation in Sarpy County as they will determine the direction to be taken in the future. The goals and objectives, along with the corresponding performance standards, provide the specific direction for implementation of the transit service. The vision for transit service consists of a vision statement and a set of goals and objectives.

---

*Vision: Implement public transportation to help build healthy, connected, sustainable communities in Sarpy County through affordable service, innovative strategies, transit supportive land use strategies along high capacity transit corridors, and cooperation among the County and local municipalities.*

---

Based on the input provided by the Steering Committee, stakeholder interviews, the public community survey, and the local project team, the following goals and objectives were defined.

- **Goal: Enhance economic development in Sarpy County and improve access to major activity centers, including employment opportunities for all area residents.**
  - **Objective:** Support the economic vitality and competitiveness of the area by improving transportation access to existing and future job opportunities.
  - **Objective:** Improve access to jobs for underprivileged residents.
  - **Objective:** Provide higher density land uses along primary travel corridors and key growth areas.

- **Goal: Improve accessibility and mobility options available to Sarpy County residents.**
  - **Objective:** Improve mobility and provide transportation choices for all area residents, including multimodal connections for transit, cyclists, and pedestrians.
  - **Objective:** Provide affordable transportation options to equalize accessibility for those with limited transportation options.
  - **Objective:** Position public transportation as a viable alternative to single occupant vehicles to reduce congestion on area roadways, particularly on 370.
  - **Objective:** Explore long range transportation options that address future transit needs with incentives to attract transit riders.
- **Goal: Protect and improve the quality of life in Sarpy County.**
  - **Objective:** Provide transportation options that allow seniors and those with disabilities to remain independent.
  - **Objective:** Improve access to area shopping and recreational activities for those with limited transportation options.



## Chapter 3 Market Analysis

### 3.1 Introduction

The population and employment characteristics of Sarpy County and the surrounding area are described in this chapter as part of determining what type of transit service would be most beneficial and feasible. By analyzing the demographics, population and employment concentrations and general commuting patterns of the study area, transportation investments can be identified where they are needed the most. **Chapter 3** organizes and reviews available data and reports pertaining to the feasibility of public transit service, in concert with current and planned transportation and land use conditions affecting transit service.

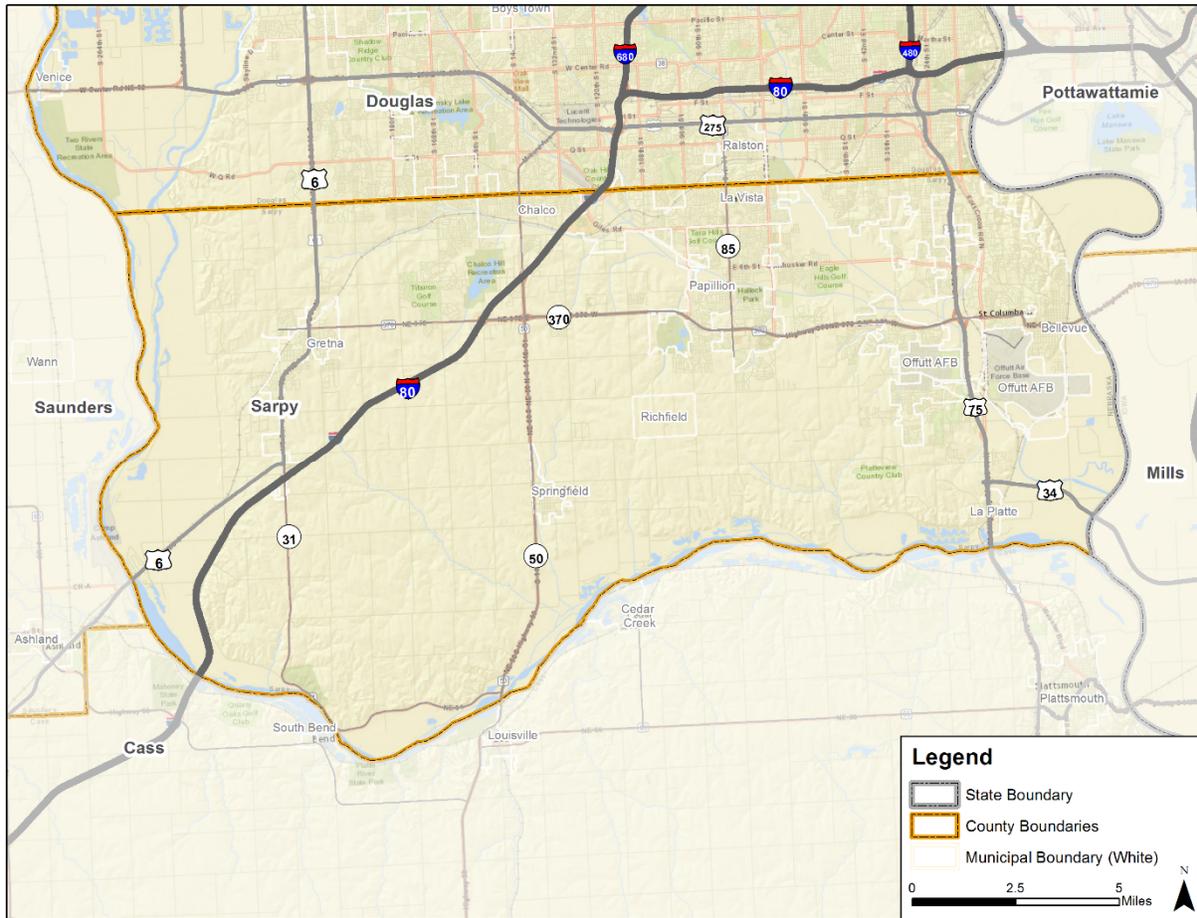
### 3.2 Study Area Location

This analysis focuses on Sarpy County, but also includes information from adjacent counties due to the nature and proximity of the communities to Sarpy County. The major cities in Sarpy County, starting with the highest populated, include Bellevue, Papillion, La Vista, Gretna, and Springfield as well as other Census-designated places such as Chalco, Offutt Air Force Base (AFB), Richfield and La Platte. **Table 3-1** displays the study area's 2014 population totals by county and city. **Figure 3-1** on the following page illustrates the defined study area.

Table 3-1 Study Area Population Totals

Jurisdiction	Population
<b>County</b>	
Douglas County, NE	531,057
<b>Sarpy County</b>	<b>165,955</b>
Pottawattamie County, IA	93,153
Cass County, NE	25,315
Saunders County, NE	20,867
Mills County, IA	14,946
<b>City</b>	
Omaha	435,454
Bellevue	52,690
Papillion	21,100
La Vista	17,125
Chalco	10,811
Gretna	5,416
Offutt AFB	4,678
Springfield	1,288
Richfield	166
La Platte	92
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 -2014 ACS, 5-year estimate.</i>	

Figure 3-1 Study Area Map



### 3.3 Land Use Overview

Existing and future land use for the area was provided by the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) and is shown in **Figure 3-2** and **Figure 3-3**.

Much of the anticipated development is anticipated to occur in the northern half of county, with the exception of Offutt AFB where a large proportion of industrial use is expected. Expanded industrial uses are also anticipated along the I-80 corridor. Residential use accounts for an even larger amount of land within Sarpy County. Areas of residential growth can be most clearly observed surrounding the Nebraska Highway 370 (N-370) corridor and in the northwest section of the county surrounding US Highway 6.

Figure 3-2 Existing Land Use

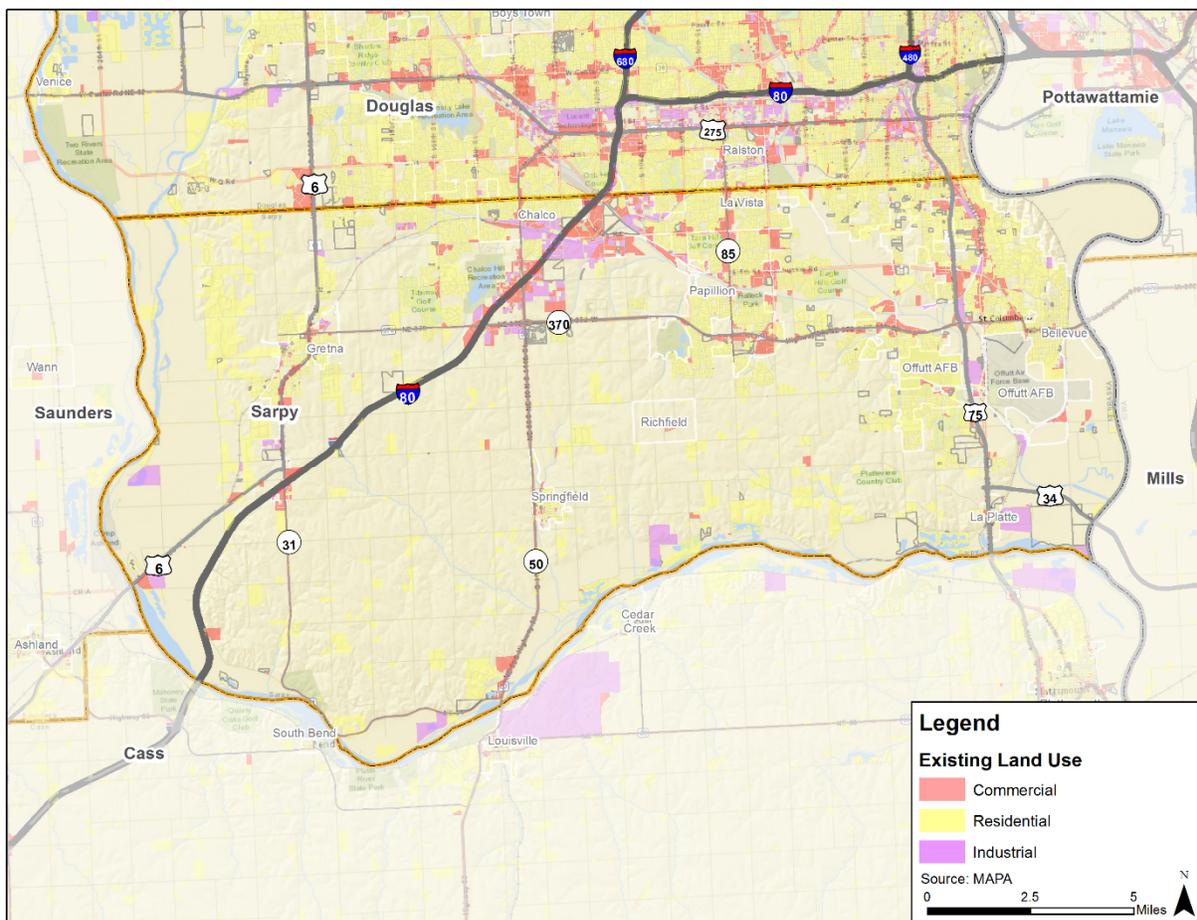
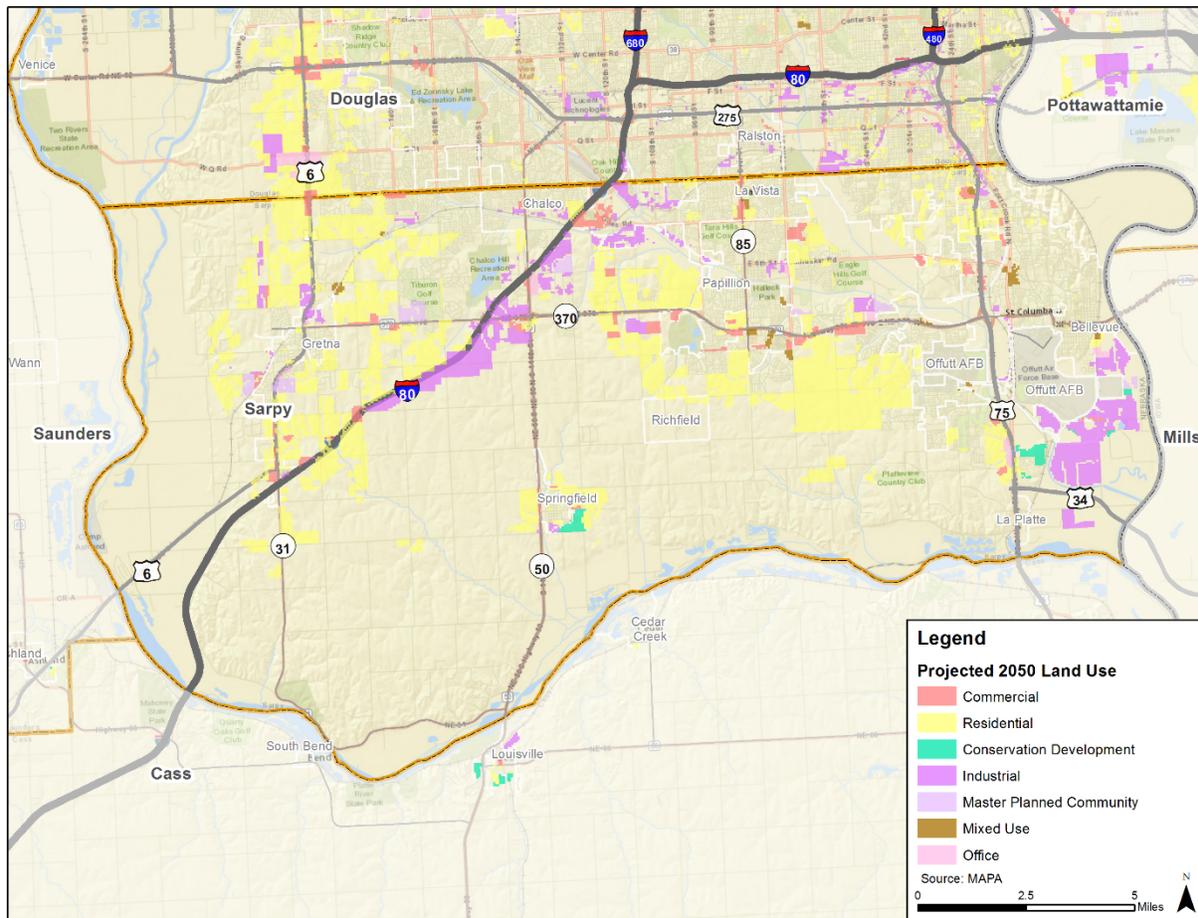


Figure 3-3 Future 2050 Land Use



### 3.4 Population

Population projections for Sarpy County were developed from 2010 to 2040<sup>1</sup>. **Table 3-2** below displays the projections by households, population and by students from pre-school to high school aged. **Figure 3-4** and **Figure 3-5** identify the current and projected population density for Sarpy County. **Figure 3-6** shows the total population change from 2010 to 2040. The 2040 population in Sarpy County is expected to increase by 73 percent. This population growth impacts the needs of the county, including the need for transportation. The highest concentrated areas of population growth are expected north and south of Gretna and surrounding the 370

<sup>1</sup> MAPA projections were originally done for households, so in order to understand how much population growth to expect, the current average household size of 2.71, or persons per household, was multiplied by the projected number of households in Sarpy County.

Highway corridor. Another large area of growth is south of Highway 370 and west of Offutt Air Force Base.

Table 3-2 Population Projections (2010 to 2040)

	Households	Population	Students
2010 Total	58,319	158,044	4,061
2040 Total	101,232	274,338	5,841
<b>Total Change</b>	<b>42,913</b>	<b>116,294</b>	<b>1,780</b>
Percent Change	73%	73%	44%
Annual Compound Growth Rate	1.86%	1.86%	1.22%

Figure 3-4 2010 Sarpy County Population Density

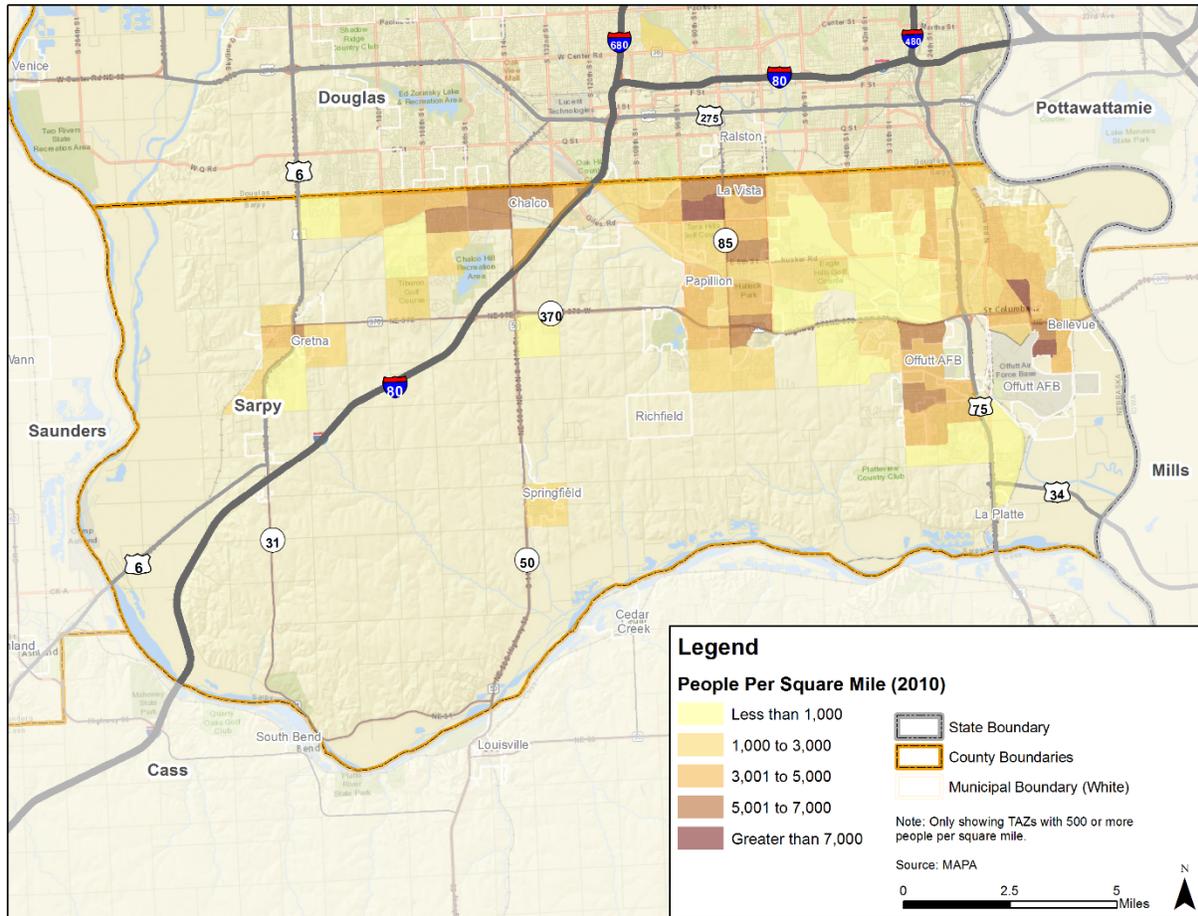


Figure 3-5 2040 Sarpy County Population Density

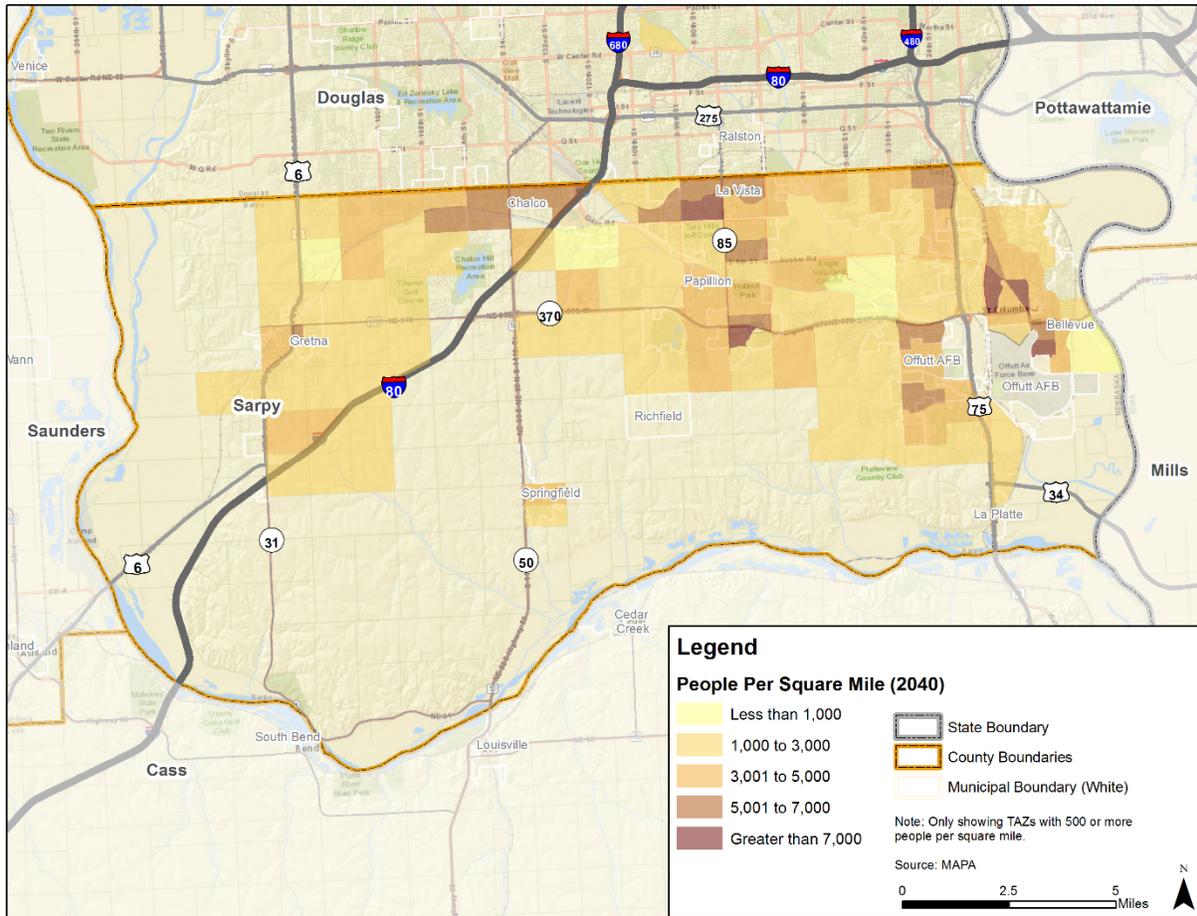
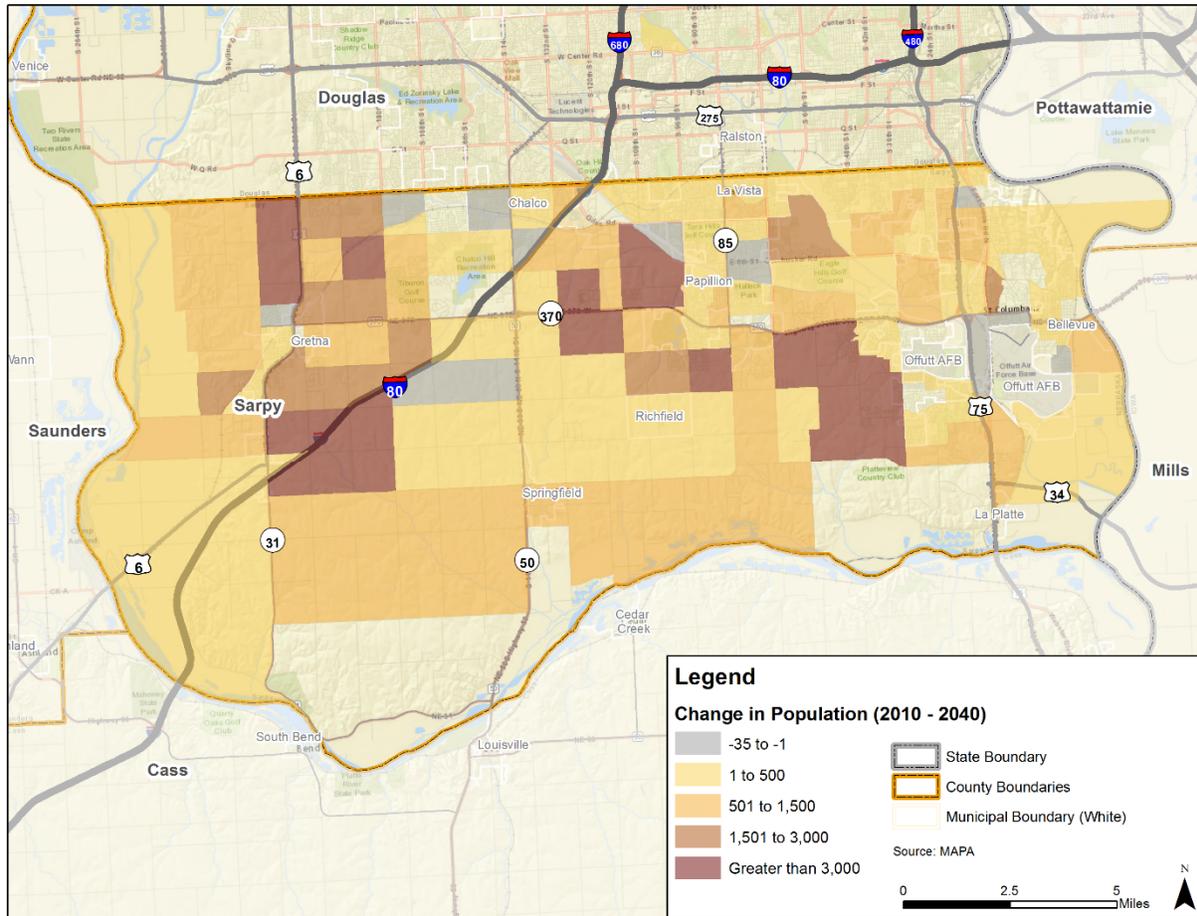


Figure 3-6 Change in Population 2010-2040



### 3.5 Transit Dependent Population Characteristics

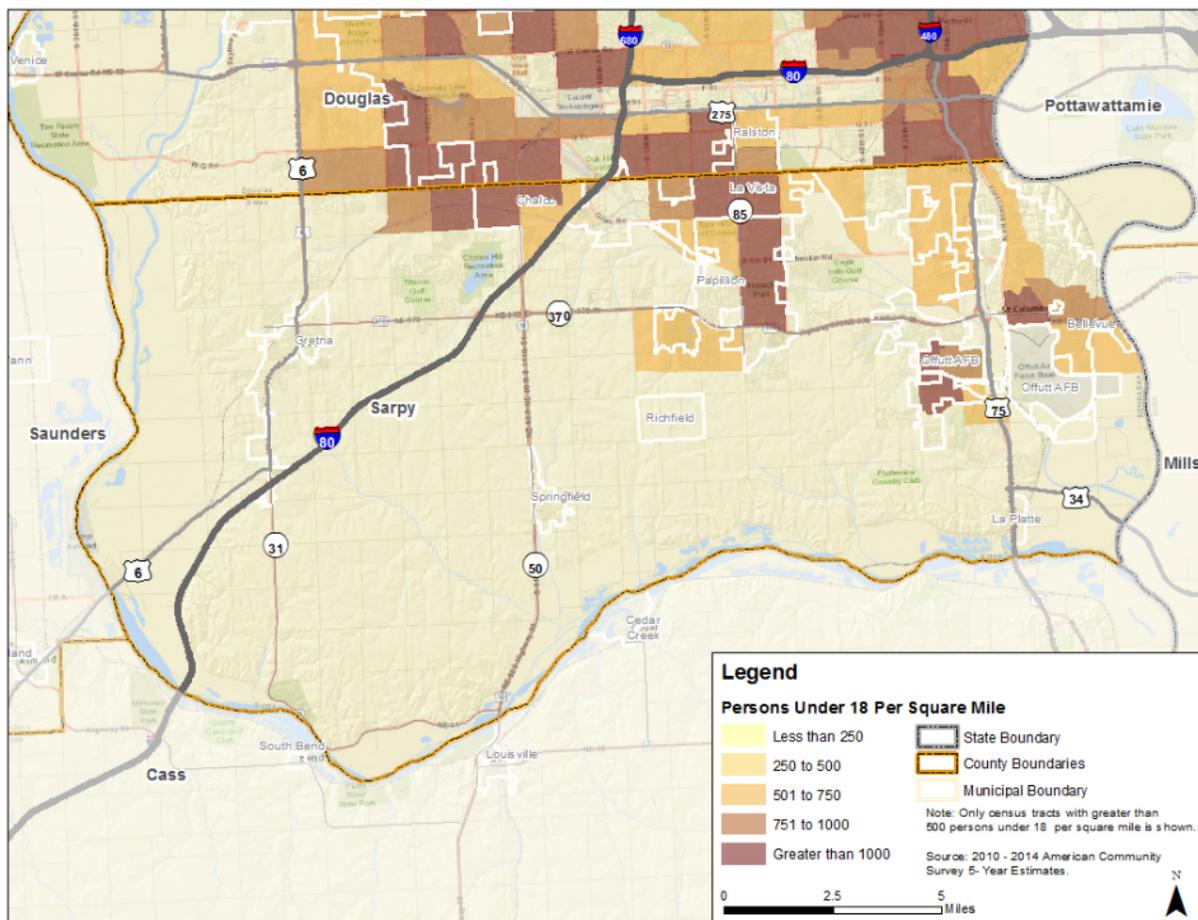
The following text examines sectors of the population considered more likely to use public transportation. These individuals may not own or drive cars as a result of such things as age, disability, or income level, so they may be more inclined to use other methods of transportation such as transit, ridesharing, walking or biking. The location of these population groups more dependent on public transportation are identified on the following density maps including:

- Youth population (age 18 and younger)
- Elderly population (age 65+)
- Disabled population
- Low-income population
- Minority population
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population
- Households with access to one or fewer vehicles

### Youth Population (Age 18 and Under)

The population in this age cohort, especially those without a driver's license, rely heavily on friends, family or other alternatives for transportation including walking, biking, or using public transportation. In 2014, the American Community Survey (ACS) estimated the youth population over 28 percent for Sarpy County, a total of 47,200 people. In Douglas County, the share is slightly less at 26 percent of total population. The density of youth population is shown in **Figure 3-7**. The areas with the highest density of young people are found just south of Offutt AFB and west of US 75; in La Vista near the northern Sarpy county line; and the area west of Chalco. These areas contain in excess of 1,500 youth per square mile.

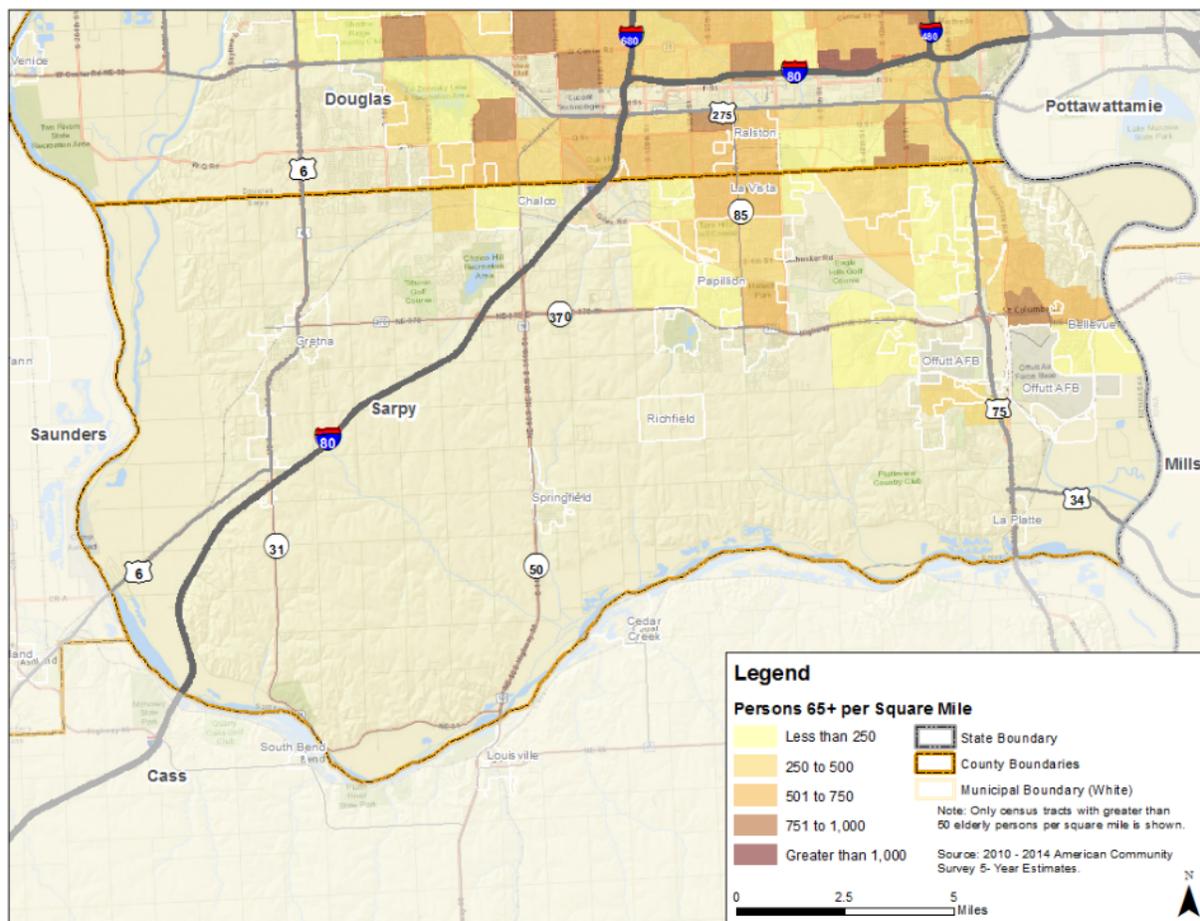
Figure 3-7 Density of Youth Population



### Elderly Population (Age 65+)

Meeting the daily needs of individuals becomes an increasingly difficult task when people can no longer drive due to age. Public transportation allows a person who can no longer drive to continue to access medical, shopping, or other social events when friends or family may not be available. In 2014, the ACS estimated 10 percent of the total population in Sarpy County (over 16,500 people) were over age 65. For comparison, the population of Douglas County over age 65 was 12 percent of the total population. The density of the elderly population in Sarpy County is shown in **Figure 3-8**. The highest concentrations of elderly are in the areas just north of Offutt AFB in west Bellevue; and east of 84<sup>th</sup> Street where the youth population was also common.

Figure 3-8 Density of Elderly Population



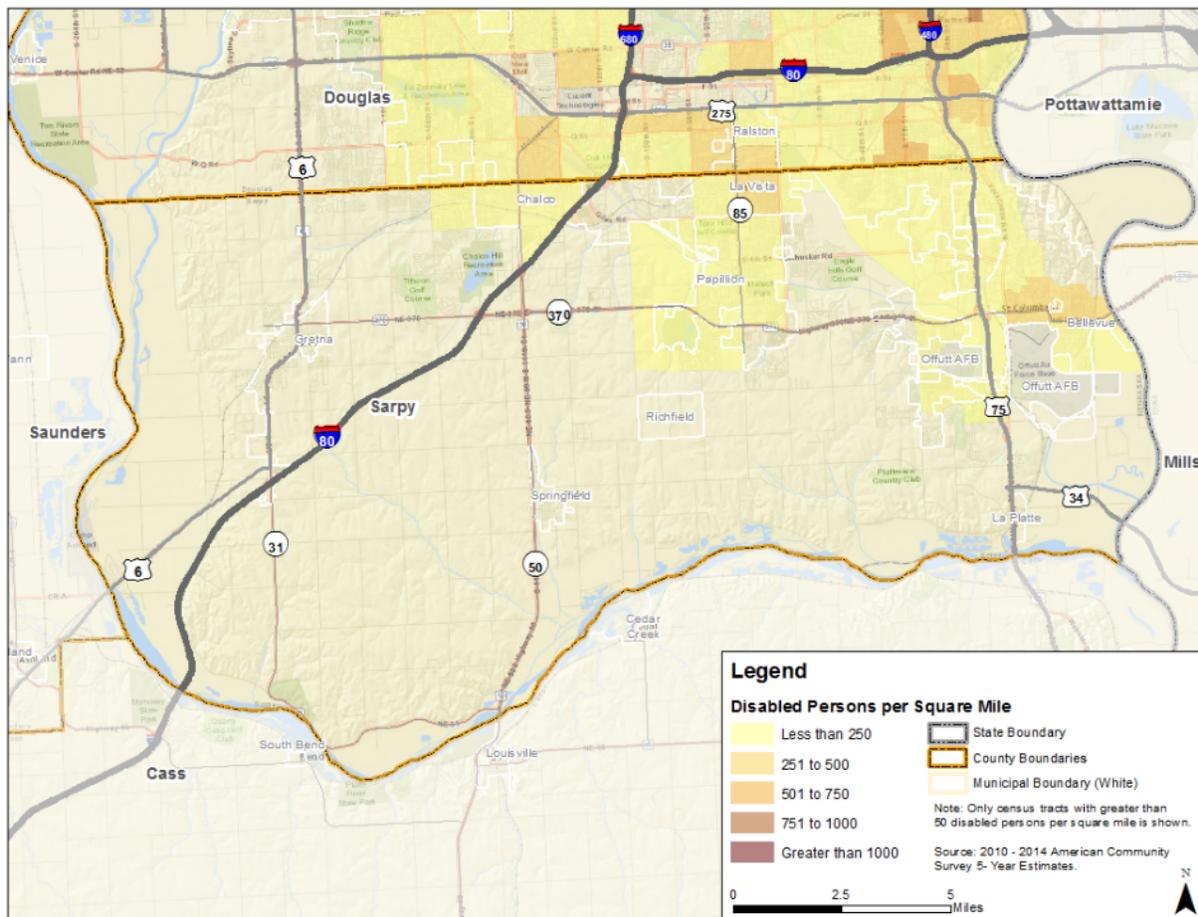
### Disabled Population

Persons with disabilities may also be dependent on public transportation. The ACS dataset includes information pertaining to disabled individuals between the ages of 20 and 64 years old. The ACS uses six disability types including hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty,

ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, or an independent living difficulty. Anyone responding to the question with any of the listed disability types is considered to have a disability.

In Sarpy County, an estimated four percent of the population in 2014, was considered disabled; whereas, approximately six percent of the Douglas County population had a disability. The density of disabled population can be seen in **Figure 3-9**. The highest concentrations of disabled individuals are located in areas of La Vista and Bellevue – similar to the elderly and youth populations.

Figure 3-9 Density of Disabled Population



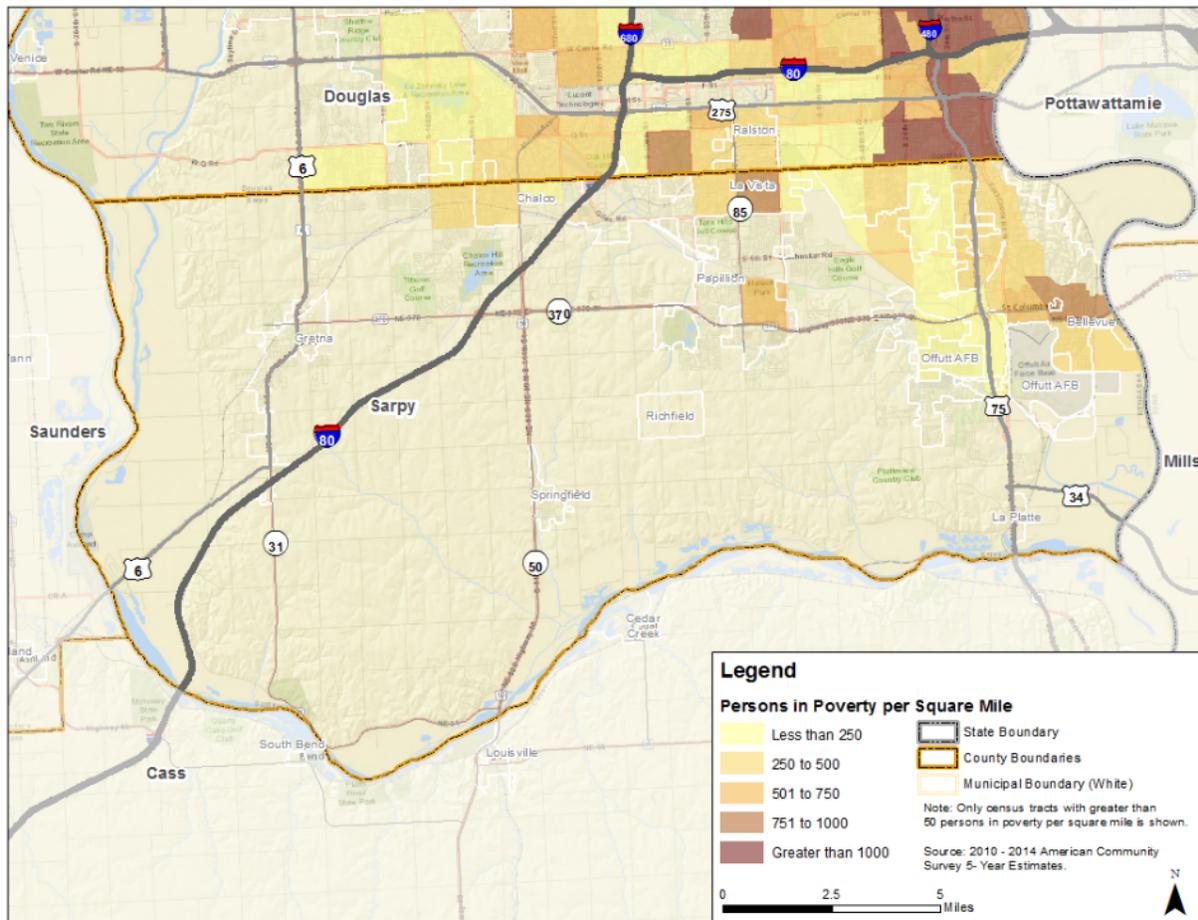
## Environmental Justice

Residents with low-income, concentrated minority population or residents with one or fewer vehicles in their household are more likely to have a need for alternative transportation options due to the cost of owning and maintaining a car within a household. When identifying areas where a significant portion of low-income or minority people live, those areas are determined as environmental justice areas. Executive Order on Environmental Justice 12898 requires all federal agencies, including both the FHWA and FTA, to address the impact of their programs with respect to Environmental Justice. To the extent practicable and permitted by law, the Executive Order states that neither minority nor low-income populations may receive disproportionately high or adverse impacts as a result of a proposed project. These population groups are explained further in the section below.

### Low Income Individuals

Many low income individuals are unable to afford their own automobile, or afford a second vehicle, or choose not to use their dispensable income on a personal automobile; therefore, they may be more dependent on public transportation. In 2014, the ACS reported approximately seven percent of the population in Sarpy County (over 11,000 persons), were considered to be low-income, which is lower than Douglas County's rate of 14 percent. **Figure 3-10** on the following page outlines the areas most concentrated with poverty stricken individuals. The highest density of low-income population is located east of 84<sup>th</sup> Street, near La Vista.

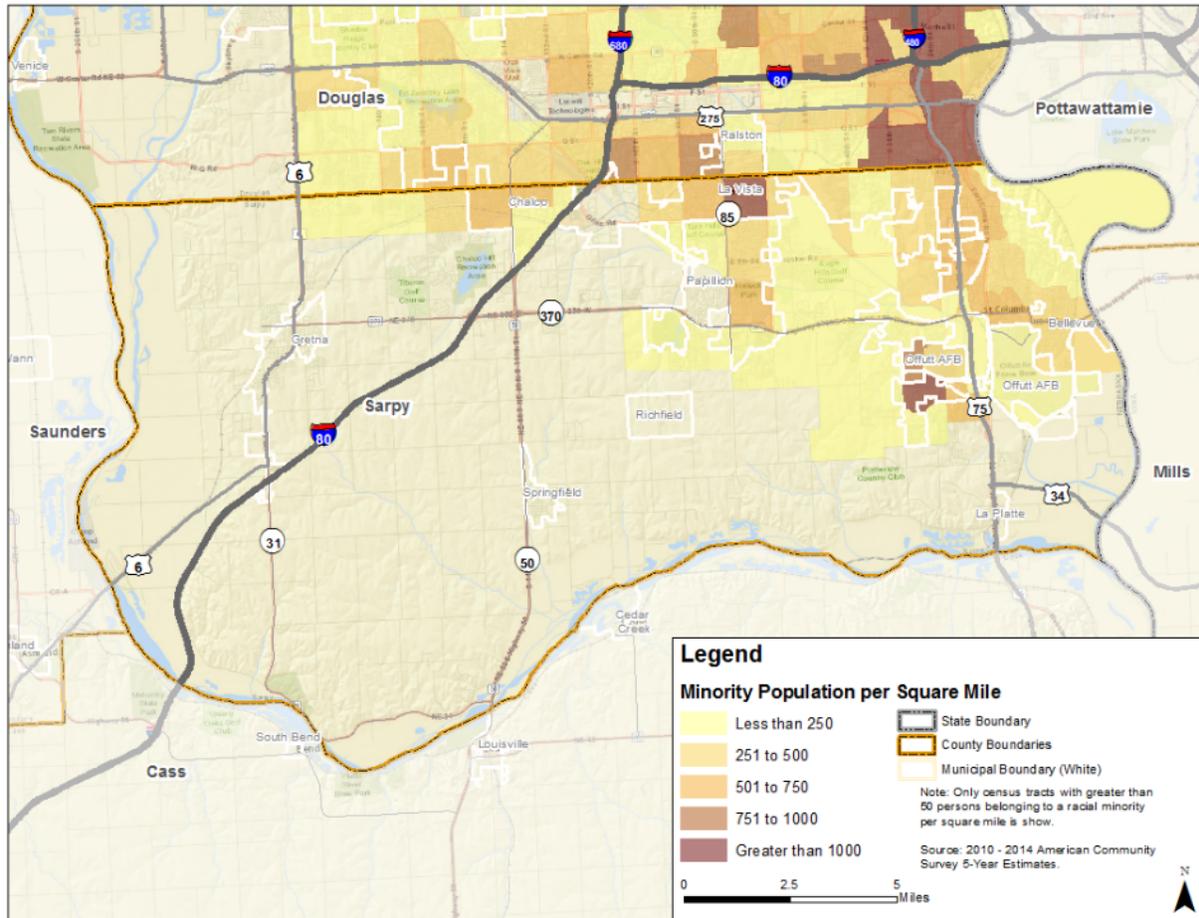
Figure 3-10 Density of Low Income Population



### Minority Population

Minority populations are often correlated with low-income populations or those that may have limited access to cars due to language barriers. In 2014, the ACS reported 11 percent of the population in Sarpy County (18,500 persons) were minority, which is lower than Douglas County's rate of 21 percent minority population for that same time period. **Figure 3-1** identifies the areas with the highest density of minority population. Areas of high minority concentration include a portion of La Vista east of 84<sup>th</sup> Street and a portion of Sarpy County south of Offutt Air Force Base.

Figure 3-11 Density of Minority Population

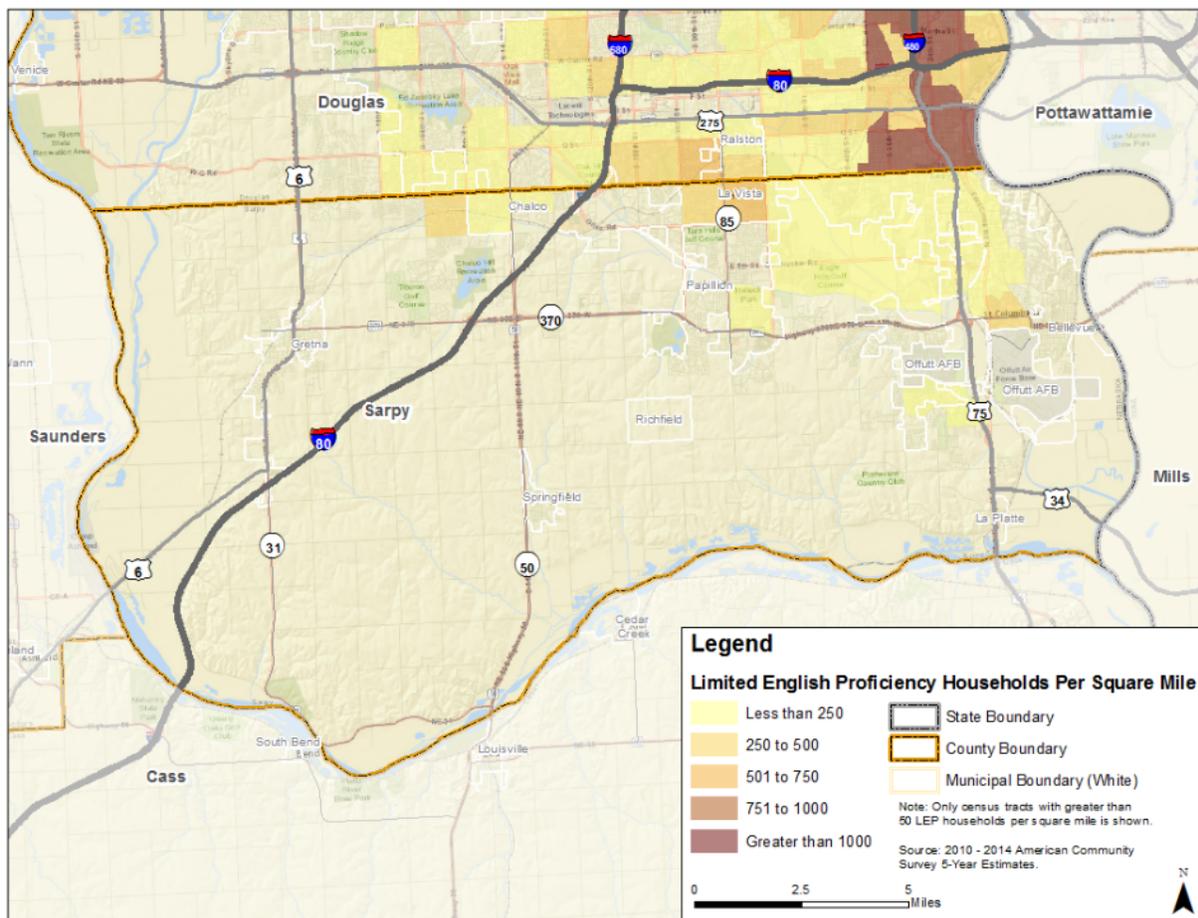


### Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Population

Individuals with Limited English Proficiency can be considered a disadvantaged group when it comes to accessing personal automobiles. These populations typically have limited incomes which makes owning or maintaining a car more difficult, or have difficulty obtaining a driver's license due to language or regulatory barriers. Public transportation is an option that is easier to access than a vehicle for non-English speaking individuals. As of 2014, the ACS estimated three percent of the population in Sarpy County, or over 5,000 people, were LEP individuals, which is lower than Douglas County's rate of six percent LEP population for that same year.

**Figure 3-12** shows the LEP population concentrations in the study area. The highest density areas for LEP individuals can be seen in the central area of La Vista and just north of Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue. Individuals with Limited English Proficiency are less common than other transit dependent populations in Sarpy County.

Figure 3-12 Density of Limited English Proficiency Population

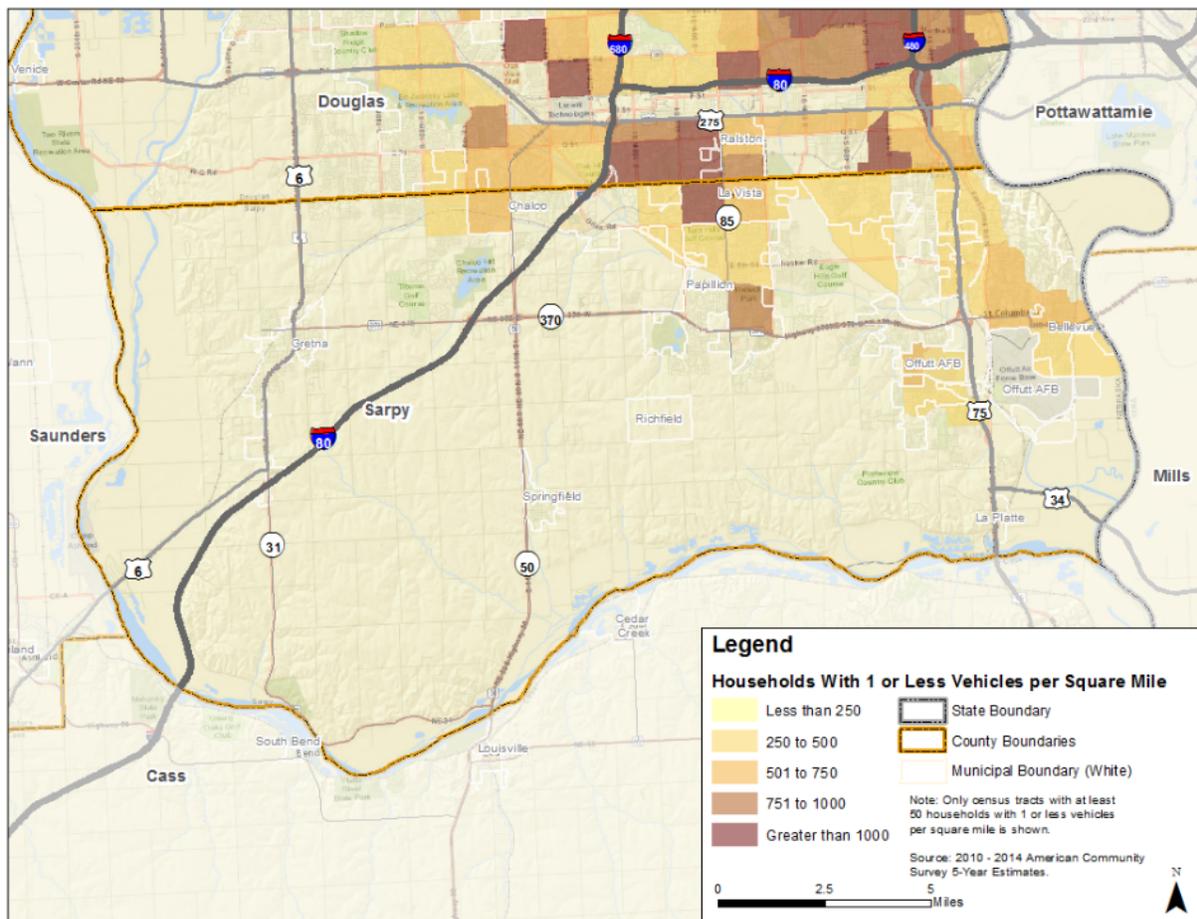


### One or Fewer Vehicle Households

Households with one or fewer vehicles may be dependent on public transportation, particularly if multiple people in the household need to travel to jobs, schools, or social services. These households may also have limited transportation options if their one vehicle breaks down. Limited vehicle access brings together all the population groups previously described. The ability to either own a vehicle or operate a vehicle is limited by whether someone is too old to comfortably drive, too young to have a driver's license or car, has a disability, has limited income, or has limited English proficiency.

In 2014, the ACS estimated 11 percent of the households in Sarpy County have limited access to automobiles, which is lower than Douglas County's rate of nearly 17 percent of total households for that same year. The density of one or fewer vehicle households is shown in **Figure 3-13**. Concentrated areas of limited vehicle access can be seen west of Chalco, in La Vista west of 84<sup>th</sup> Street, in Papillion east of 84<sup>th</sup> Street and north of Highway 370, and in Bellevue north of Offutt AFB.

Figure 3-13 Density of Households with One or Less Vehicles



### Transit Propensity

**Figure 3-14** contains an overlay of all seven demographic categories based upon the number of transit dependent categories that exist in each geographic unit above the Sarpy County average. **Table 3-3** summarizes the county rates and totals for each demographic group and compares them with the Nebraska state average and the national average.

The areas of Sarpy County with the highest number of transit dependent categories are found in northeastern parts of the county in Papillion, La Vista, and Bellevue, as well as north and south of Offutt AFB. This analysis, along with the other companion maps visualizing the specific transit dependent populations, will begin to identify where public transportation service is needed most in Sarpy County. The next section examines employment in the study area.

Figure 3-14 Transit Dependent Populations

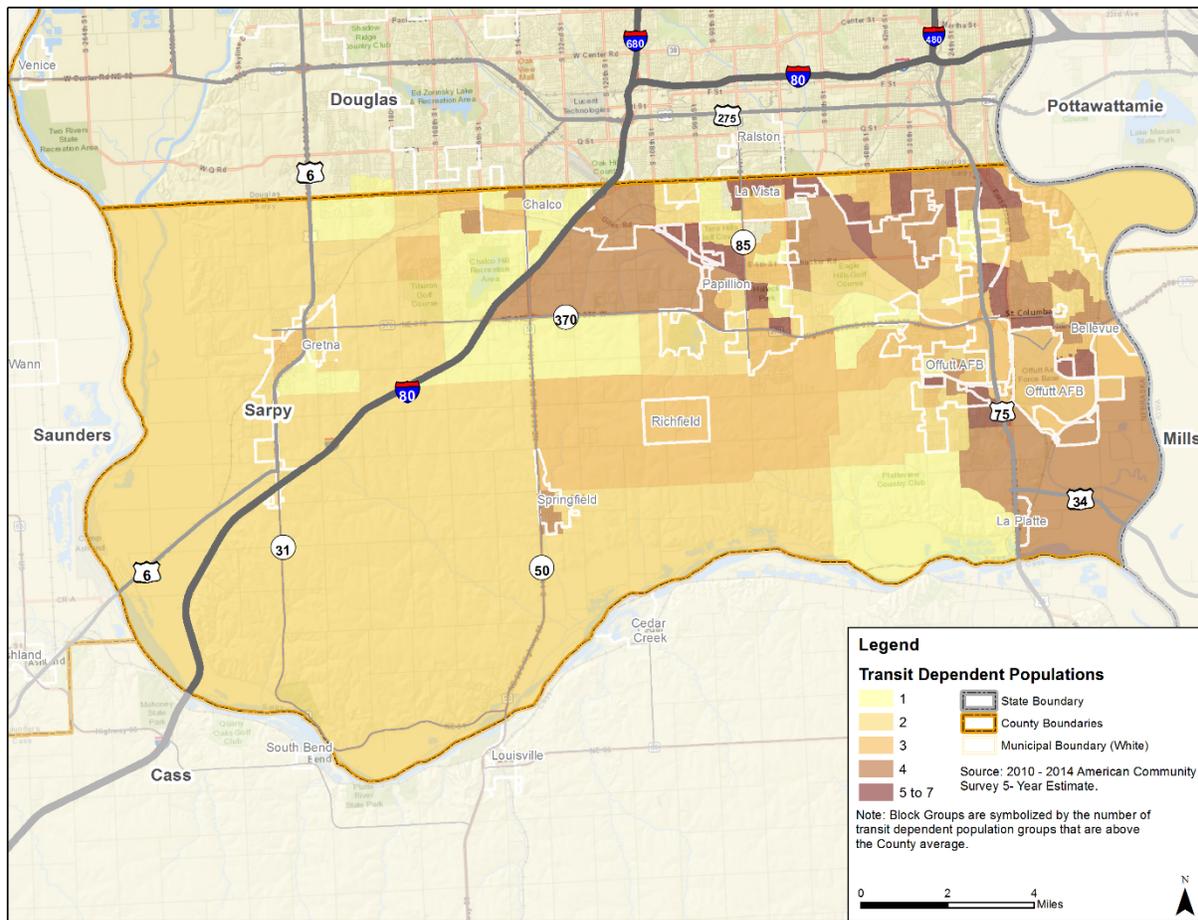


Table 3-3 Transit Dependent Population in Douglas and Sarpy County

	Sarpy County	Douglas County	Nebraska	United States
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>65,955</b>	<b>531,057</b>	<b>1,800,000</b>	<b>318,000,000</b>
Total Youth Population Age 16 years and under	47,196	137,657	-/-	-/-
<b>% Youth</b>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>25.9%</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	<b>23.1%</b>
Elderly Population	16,521	62,155	-/-	-/-
<b>% Elderly</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>14.5%</b>
Disabled Population	6,806	28,964	-/-	-/-
<b>% Disabled</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
Low-Income Population	11,156	76,173	-/-	-/-
<b>% Low-Income</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>
Total Minority Population	18,531	110,831	-/-	-/-
<b>% Minority</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>37.9%</b>
Total LEP Population	5,066	32,962	-/-	-/-
<b>% Limited English Proficiency</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
Total 1 or Less Auto Households	18,090	88,792	-/-	-/-
<b>% 1 or less Auto Households</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>35.6%</b>	<b>43%</b>

### 3.5 Employment

MAPA prepared employment projections for Sarpy County from 2010 to 2040. **Table 3-4** below displays the projections for employment growth by three industry sectors including general industrial, retail commercial, and service office. **Figure 3-15** and **Figure 3-16** identify the current and projected employment density for the county, while **Figure 3-17** shows the total change from 2010 to 2040. The highest concentrated areas of employment growth are expected east of the I-80 corridor, southeast of Offutt AFB and just east of La Vista.

Table 3-4 Sarpy County Employment Projections (2010 - 2040)

	General Industrial	Retail Commercial	Service Office	Total
2010 Total	16,857	12,268	32,194	<b>61,319</b>
2040 Total	28,213	23,947	67,770	<b>119,930</b>
<b>Total Change</b>	<b>11,356</b>	<b>11,679</b>	<b>35,576</b>	<b>58,611</b>
Percent Change	67%	95%	110%	<b>96%</b>

Figure 3-15 2010 Sarpy County Employment Density

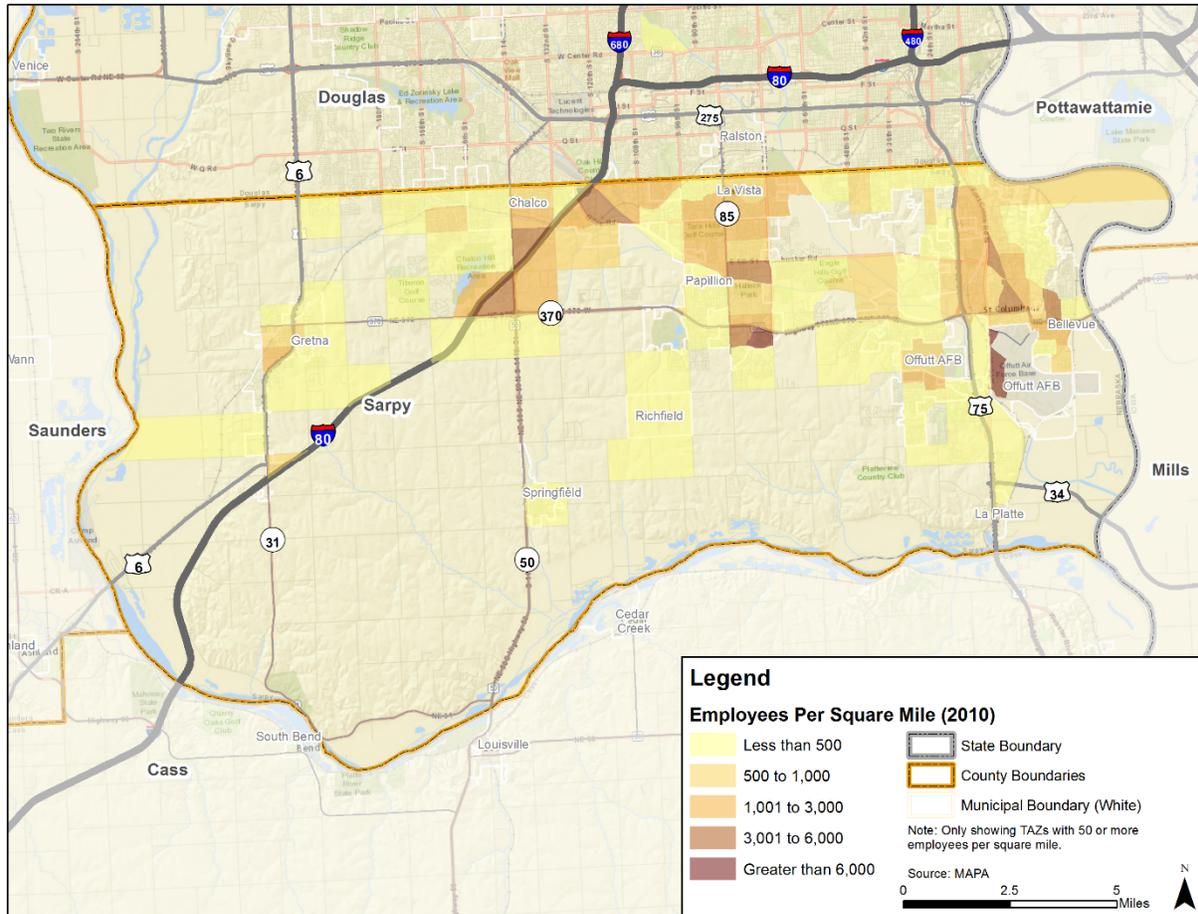


Figure 3-16 2040 Sarpy County Employment Density

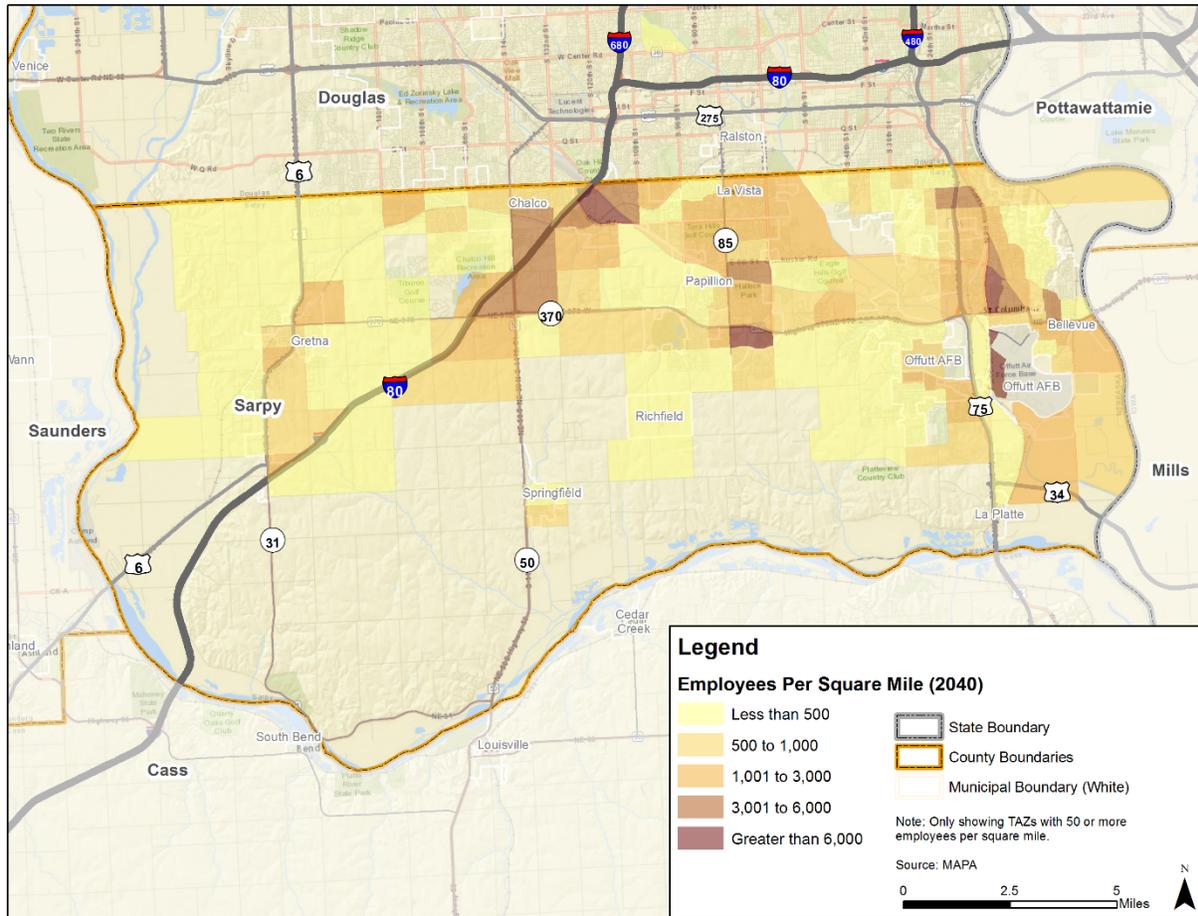
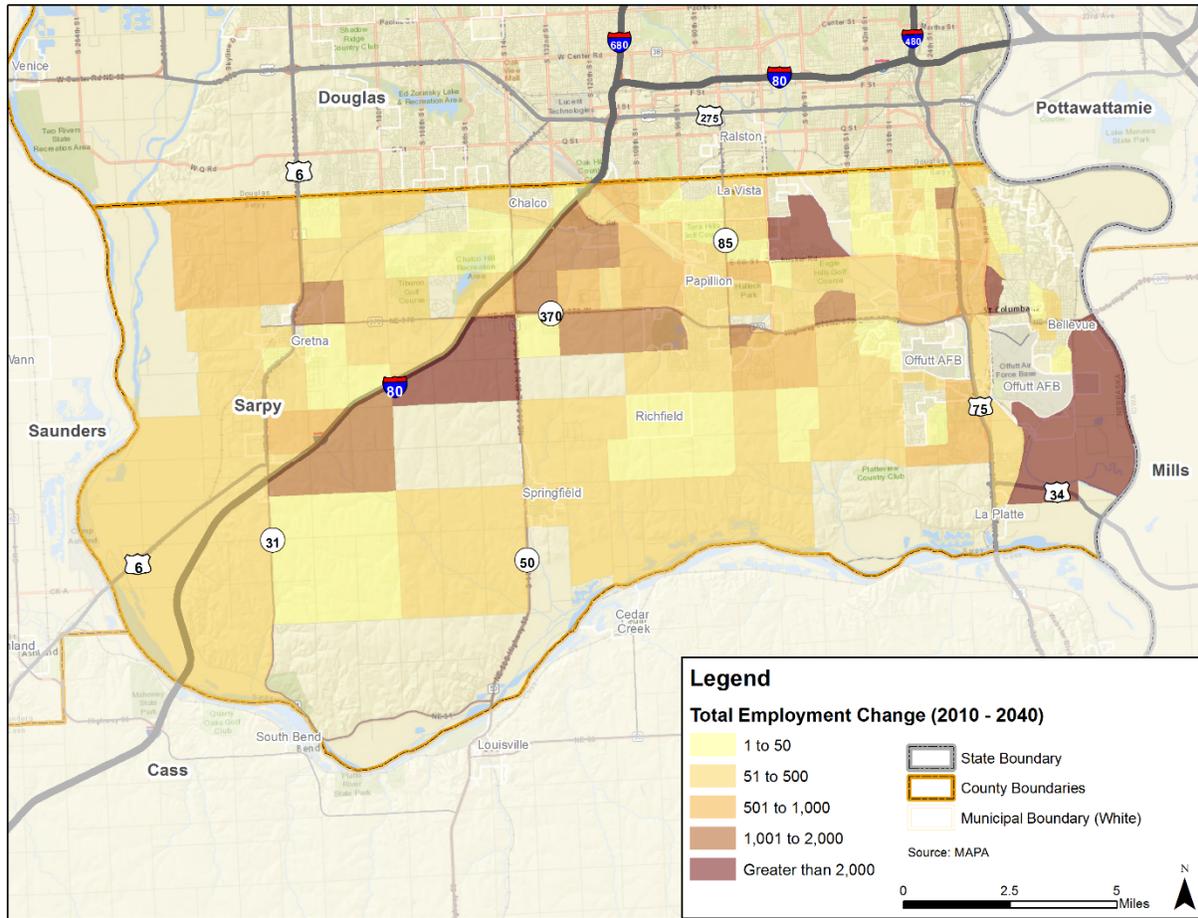


Figure 3-17 2010-2040 Sarpy County Projected Employment Change



**Table 3-5** shows the current employment for Sarpy County broken into the major NAICS industry sectors. Nearly half of all employment within the county is accounted for in the top four industries including Transportation and Warehousing, Retail Trade, Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance.

Table 3-5 Sarpy County Employment by NAICS Industry

#	NAICS Industry Sector	Count	Share
1	Transportation and Warehousing	10,662	16.2%
2	Retail Trade	7,640	11.6%
3	Educational Services	6,497	9.9%
4	Health Care and Social Assistance	6,200	9.4%
5	Accommodation and Food Services	5,222	7.9%
6	Construction	5,177	7.9%
7	Finance and Insurance	3,859	5.9%
8	Wholesale Trade	3,720	5.6%
9	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3,502	5.3%
10	Manufacturing	2,891	4.4%
11	Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	2,343	3.6%
12	Public Administration	1,816	2.8%
13	Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,711	2.6%
14	Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	1,587	2.4%
15	Information	1,309	2.0%
16	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	863	1.3%
17	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	587	0.9%
18	Utilities	213	0.3%
19	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	50	0.1%
20	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	25	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap LEHD (2014).

### Major Employers

While the beginning of this analysis examined where transit riders are originating, this section continues its emphasis on understanding common destinations within the study area.

**Table 3-6** and **Table 3-7** list the major employers for Douglas and Sarpy County, and **Figure 3-18** and **Figure 3-19** show where they are located.

Larger concentrations of employment provide additional opportunities for commuter-related public transportation. For the entire metro area as a whole, the top five employers include Offutt AFB, CHI Health, Omaha Public Schools, Methodist Health System and Nebraska Medicine. Considering the majority of top employers in the metro area are found inside Douglas County, it is important to collect information for both counties. The distribution of employment in the entire study area can be visualized in **Figure 3-20**. The majority of employment within Sarpy County is concentrated along the I-80 corridor, and north of Highway 370. Other high intensity employment areas fall along 84<sup>th</sup> Street (Highway N-85), as well as east of US 75 north of Offutt AFB.

Figure 3-18 Major Employers in Douglas County

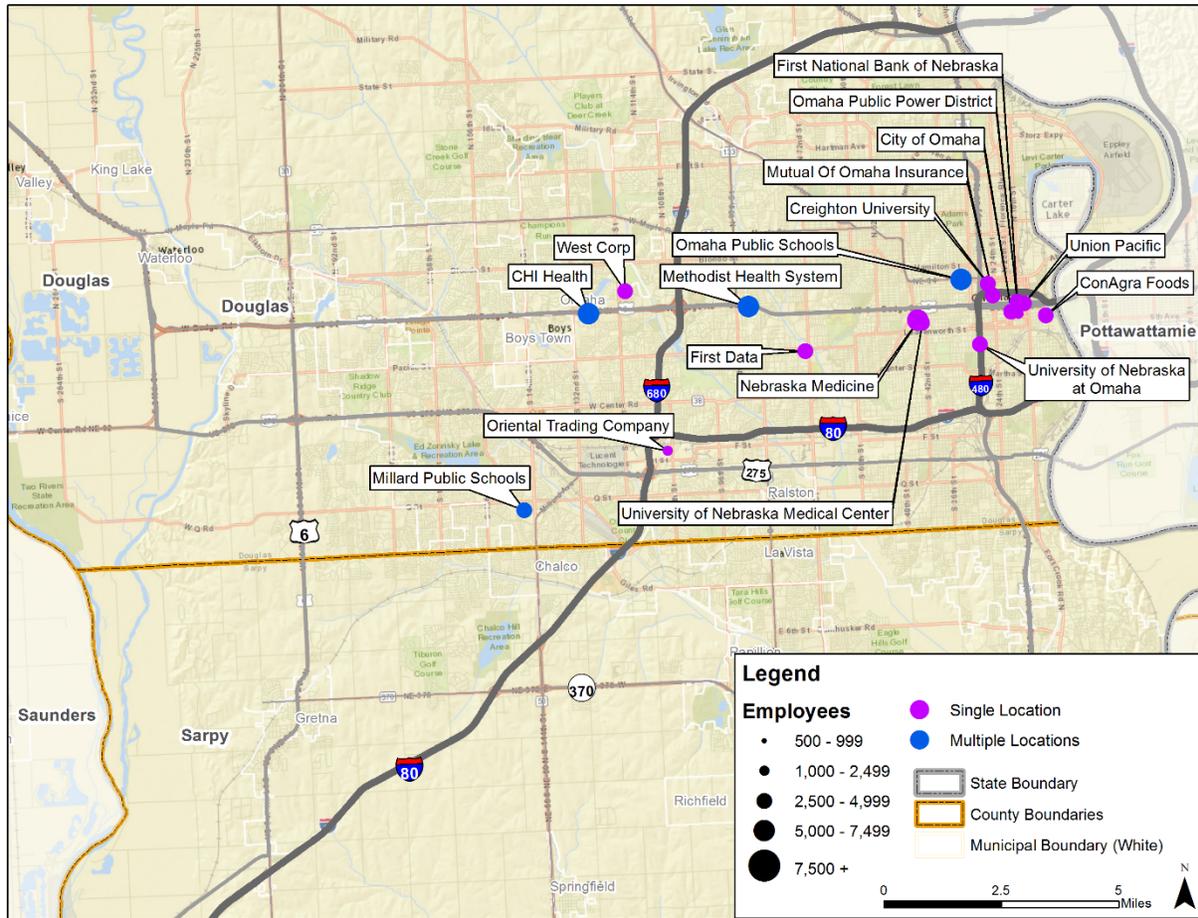


Table 3-6 Major Employers in Douglas County

Rank	Company	Local Employment	Industry
1	CHI Health	7,500+	Healthcare
2	Omaha Public Schools	5,000 – 7,499-	Education
3	Methodist Health System	5,000 – 7,499-	Healthcare
4	Nebraska Medicine	5,000 – 7,499-	Healthcare
5	U of N Medical Center	2,500 – 4,999	Healthcare
6	First Data	2,500 – 4,999	Transaction Processing
7	Union Pacific	2,500 – 4,999	Railroad/Transportation
8	First National Bank of Nebraska	2,500 – 4,999	Banking
9	West Corp	2,500 – 4,999	Technology/Customer Service
10	ConAgra Foods	2,500 – 4,999	Food Products/Manufacturing

Source: [http://www.omaha.com/special\\_sections/Metro-guide/workplaces/Metro-guide-omaha-s-largest-employers/article\\_130501d2-0e54-5282-8ea5-42c9aa675d48.html](http://www.omaha.com/special_sections/Metro-guide/workplaces/Metro-guide-omaha-s-largest-employers/article_130501d2-0e54-5282-8ea5-42c9aa675d48.html) (2015)

Figure 3-19 Major Employers in Sarpy County

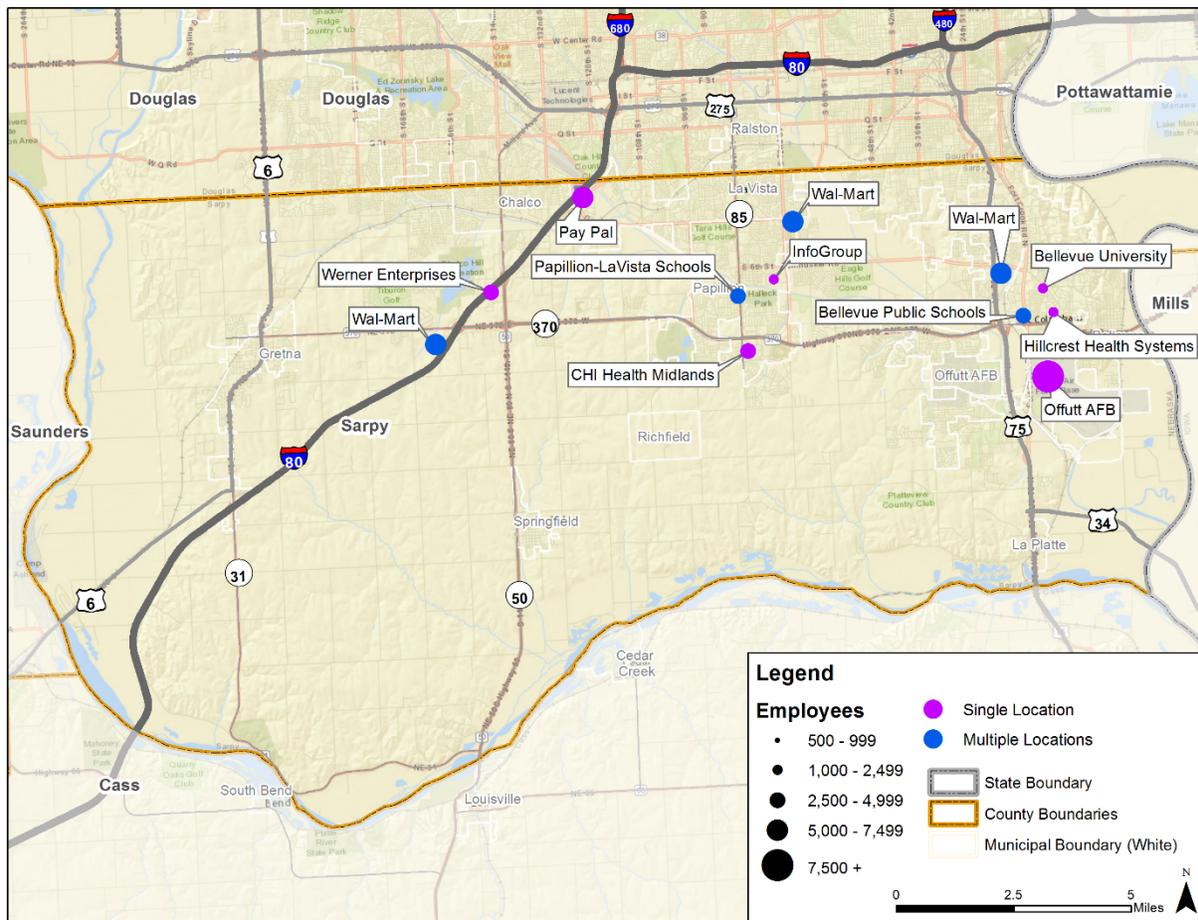
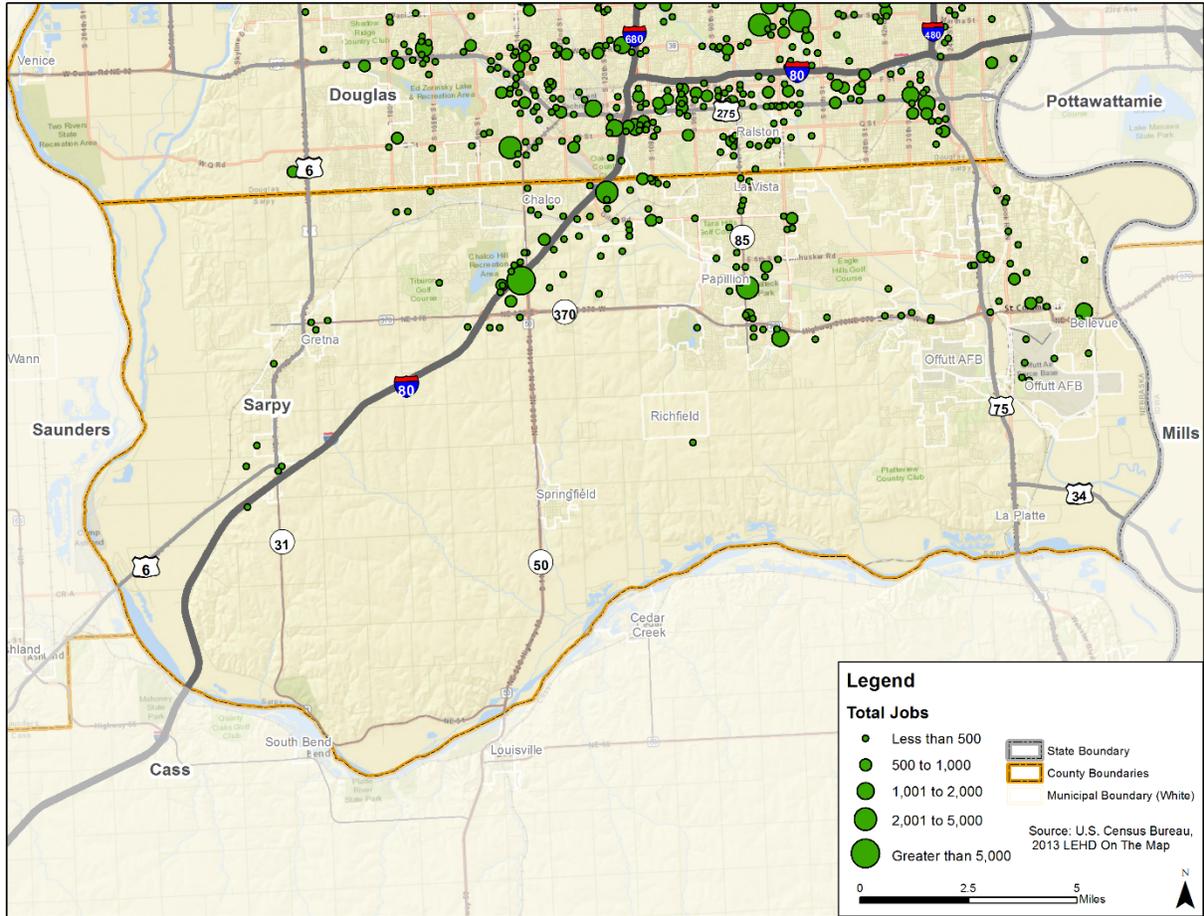


Table 3-7 Major Employers in Sarpy County:

Rank	Company	Local Employment	Industry
1	Offutt Air Force Base	7,500 +	Government
2	PayPal, Inc.	2,500 – 4,999	Service
3	Bellevue Public Schools	1,000 – 2,499	Education
4	Wal-Mart	Unknown	Retail
5	Werner Enterprises	1,000 – 2,499	Trucking
6	Papillion-La Vista Schools	1,000 – 2,499	Education
7	InfoGroup	500 - 999	Service
8	Hillcrest Health Systems	500 - 999	Healthcare
9	Bellevue University	500 - 999	Education

Source: <http://www.sarpy.com/trans/stats/employers.html> (2014)

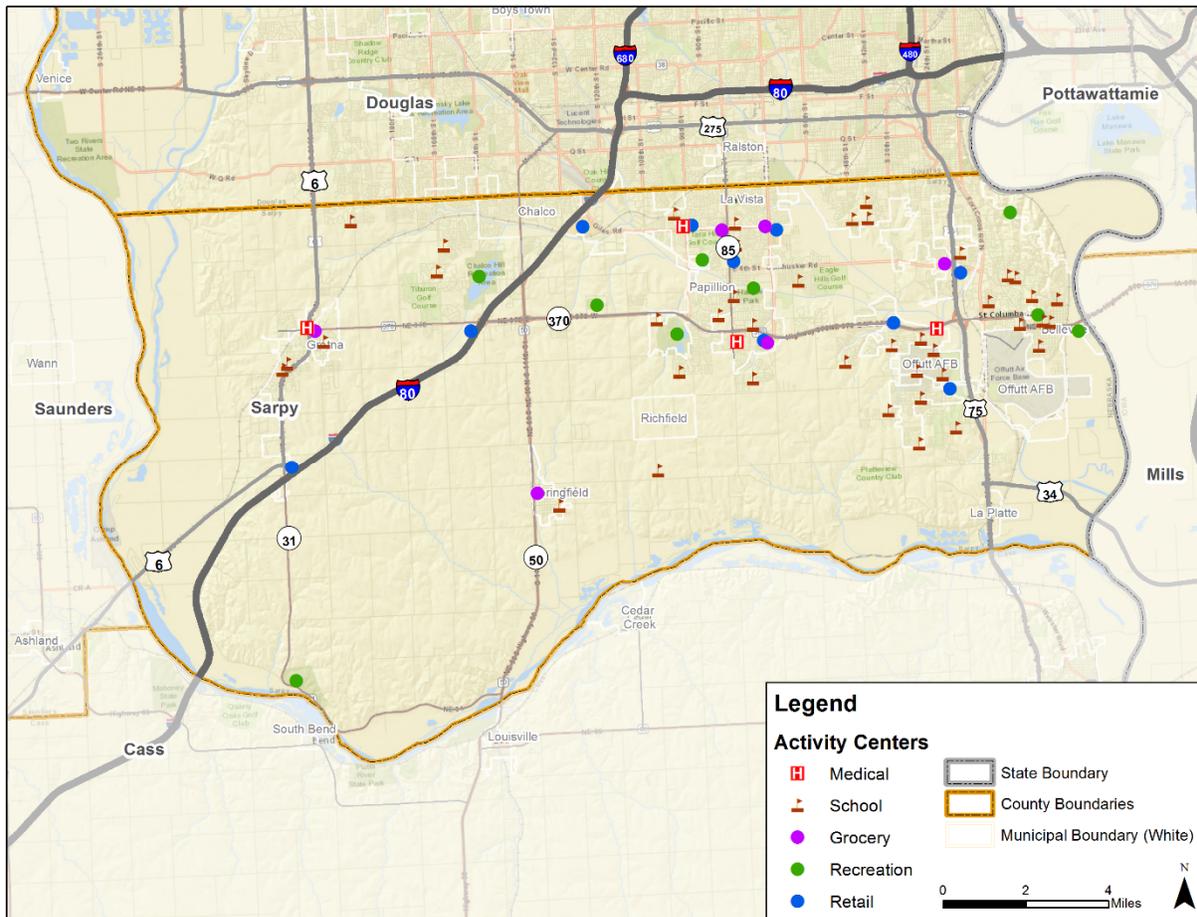
Figure 3-20 Total Jobs in Douglas and Sarpy County



### Major Activity Centers

In addition to the daily home-to-work and work-to-home commute, other daily needs for non-work based trip destinations warrant transit connections including medical facilities, schools, grocery stores, recreational areas and shopping destinations. These destinations are identified in **Figure 3-21** below. Finding concentrations of these destinations can help in determining the alignment of future transportation service.

Figure 3-21 Major Activity Centers in Sarpy County



The next section examines Census travel patterns of area commuters. These findings will begin to paint a picture of what the predominant home-to-work movements are today.

### 3.6 Commuter Travel Patterns

Commuter travel patterns indicate the connection between where people live and where they work. These patterns were determined from the 2013 U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program.

The LEHD program produces public-use information combining federal, state, and Census Bureau data on employers and employees under the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Partnership. The LEHD data provides a dataset that describes geographic patterns of employees by their employment locations and residential locations as well as the connections between the two locations.

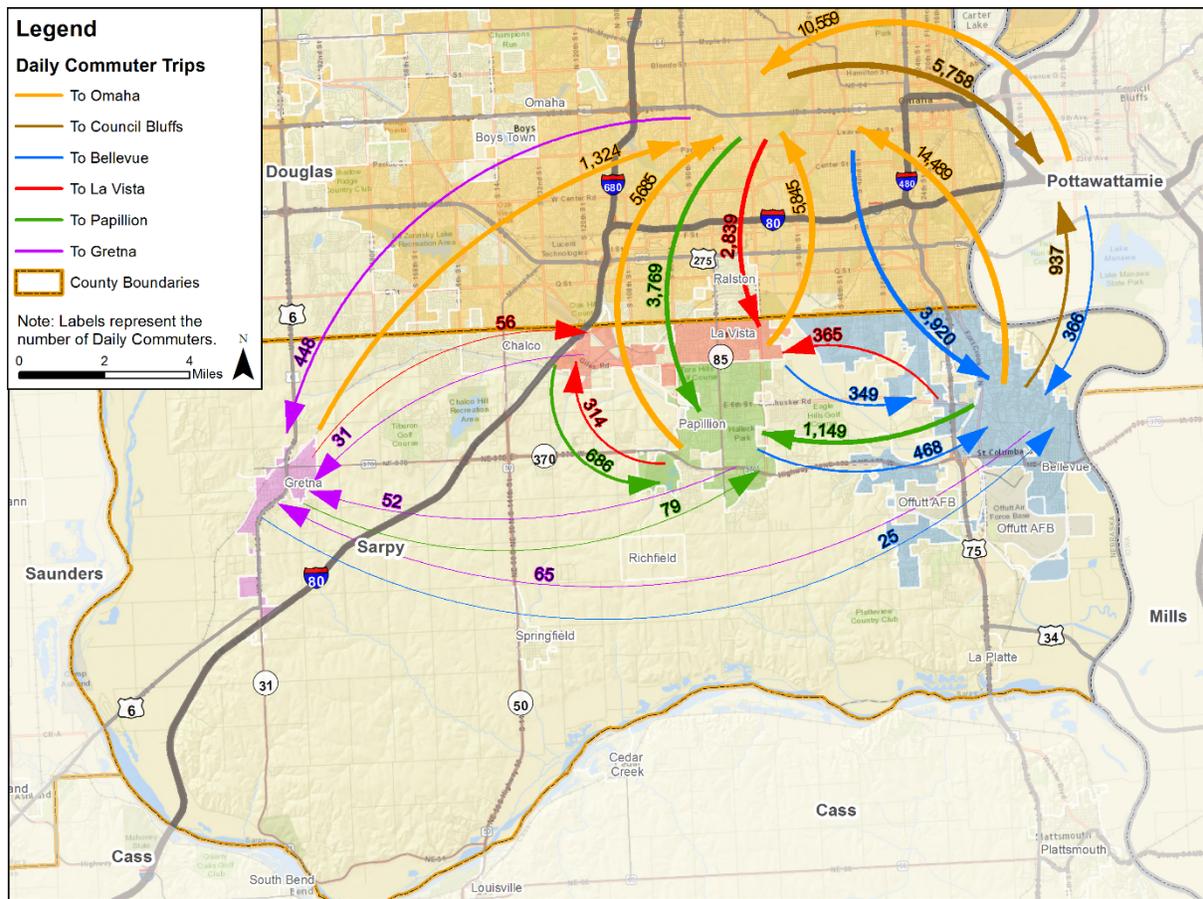
The work trip travel movements reported by LEHD for communities located in the study area are shown in **Figure 3-22**. The information shows the number of workers living in each community and then the location of their employment. **Table 3-8**, found below, shows a list of the major intercity commuter connections occurring within the study area. The top seven intercity connections include Omaha as either a destination or an origin.

Table 3-8 Intercity Commuter Connections

Rank	Direction	Commuters
1	Bellevue to Omaha	14,489
2	La Vista to Omaha	5,845
3	Papillion to Omaha	5,685
4	Omaha to Bellevue	3,920
5	Omaha to Papillion	3,769
6	Omaha to La Vista	2,839
7	Gretna to Omaha	1,324
8	Bellevue to Papillion	1,149
9	La Vista to Papillion	686
10	Papillion to Bellevue	468

Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap LEHD Origin-Destination Statistics (2013).

Figure 3-22 Work Trip Movement Flow



While the majority of higher volume commuting patterns originate from Sarpy County and terminate in Douglas County, there are few alternative transportation options available to make those connections. This begins to explain the low rate of workers using public transportation as a means of transportation to work, as shown in **Table 3-9**. Totals for both Sarpy and Douglas County, as well as Nebraska are all shown.

Table 3-9 Means of Transportation to Work

	Sarpy County	% of Total	Douglas County	% of Total	Nebraska	% of Total
<b>Total Workers 16 years and over</b>	87,895	-/-	269,360	-/-	945,395	-/-
<b>Car, truck, or van - drove alone:</b>	76,402	86.92%	222,886	82.7%	767,564	81.19%
<b>Car, truck, or van - carpooled:</b>	7,075	8.04%	25,509	9.47%	91,000	9.62%
<b>Public transportation (excluding taxicab):</b>	243	0.28%	3,322	1.23%	6,514	0.69%
<b>Walked:</b>	586	0.67%	5,654	2.10%	26,232	2.77%
<b>Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, or other means:</b>	801	0.91%	2,794	1.04%	12,017	1.27%
<b>Worked at home:</b>	2,788	3.17%	9,195	3.41%	42,068	4.44%
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year Estimate 2010 – 2014.</i>						

When considering Sarpy County as a whole, there are nearly 86,000 working age individuals living within the county and nearly 66,000 individuals employed in Sarpy County. This accounts for a net job outflow of 20,000. Of the 66,000 individuals employed in Sarpy County, 22,000 or 33 percent both work and live within the county. The remaining 44,000 employees live outside Sarpy County and commute into the county for work.

Looking back on the 86,000 working residents living in Sarpy County, 58 percent of commuter movement is connected to the city of Omaha. Work destination totals are summarized in **Table 3-10** below. More detailed analysis of where Sarpy County workers live and where Sarpy County residents work are found in **Figure 3-23** and **Figure 3-24** respectively.

Table 3-10 Sarpy County Commuter Destination

City Destination	Commuters	% of Total
Omaha	49,750	58%
Bellevue	6,443	7.5%
Papillion	5,406	6.3%
Lincoln	2,957	3.4%
La Vista	2,783	3.2%
Council Bluffs	2,097	2.4%
Gretna	1,120	1.3%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap LEHD Origin-Destination Statistics (2013).*

Figure 3-23 Where Sarpy County Workers Live

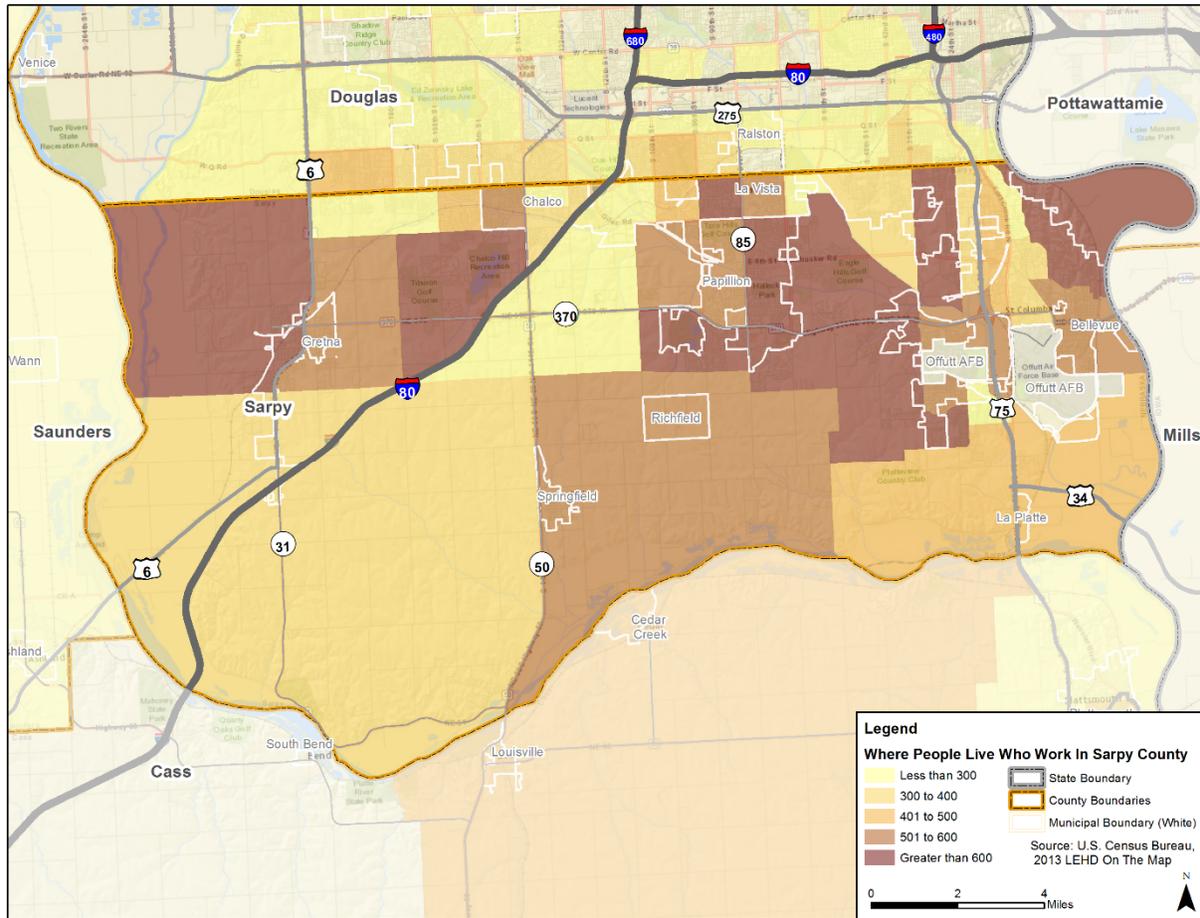
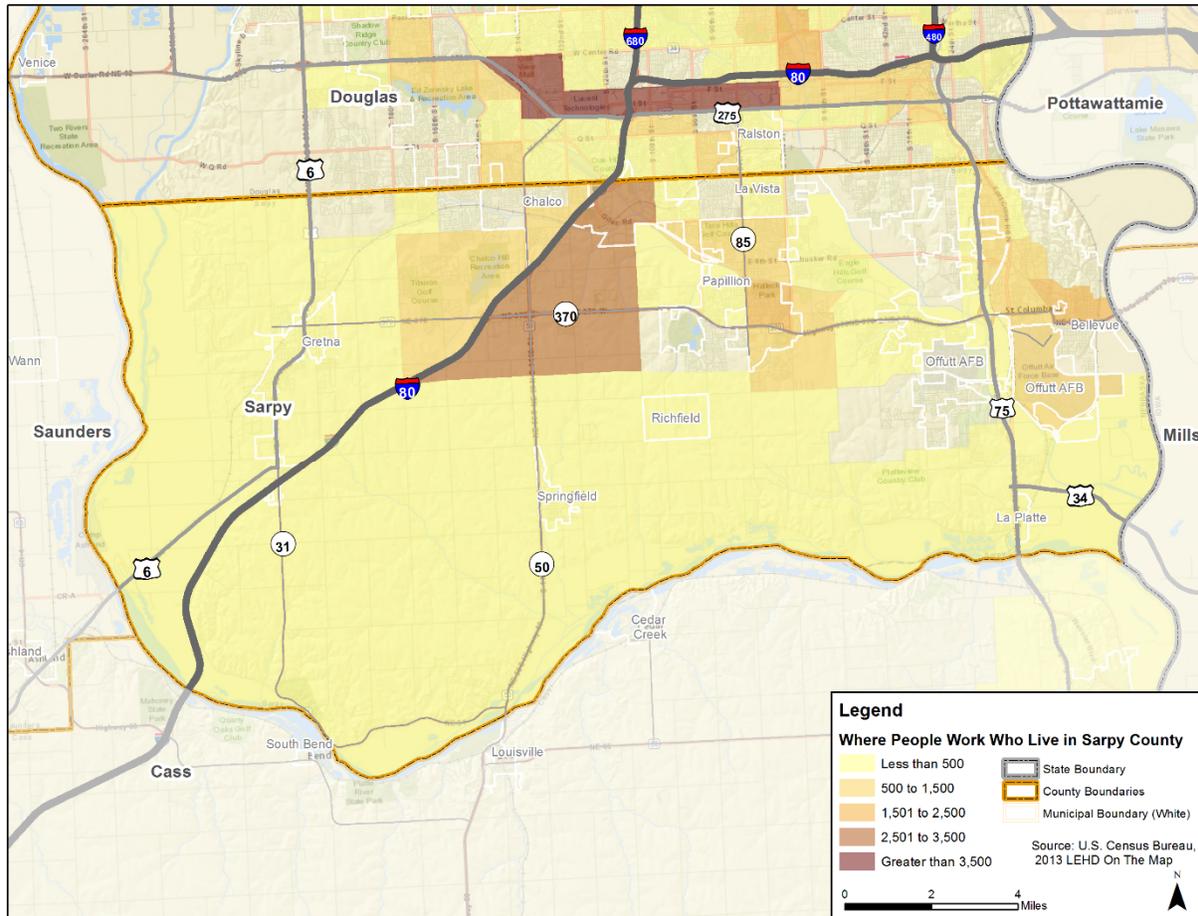


Figure 3-24 Where Sarpy County Residents Work



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# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

## Chapter 4 Existing Transit Services

### 4.1 Introduction

Sarpy County residents have limited access to public transit service. Local fixed route transit service is not currently available in Sarpy County. Transit options include limited Express Bus service provided by *Metro* and specialized demand response service for elderly and disabled residents provided by local human service agencies and municipalities.

Bellevue, La Vista, and Papillion coordinate with *Metro* to provide Express Bus service to the greater Omaha transit system. Express services are provided in the morning, with return trips taking place during traditional evening travel times. No other general public transit service operates beyond the *Metro* peak hour Express routes. The Express Routes are agreed upon by the sponsoring communities and are provided by *Metro* on a contractual basis.

Demand response service in Sarpy County occurs by van and small bus service from the City of Bellevue, City of Papillion and City of LaVista, the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA), and the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska via the Ponca Express. It should be noted that the Ponca Express only provides service to the Omaha metro area from their Niobrara and Norfolk, Nebraska service centers. The Ponca Tribe also can provide trips inside of the Omaha metropolitan statistical area (MSA) through their urban services program.

Detailed information on the existing transit service available in Sarpy County is contained in the following subsections.

### 4.2 Service Summary

#### Fixed Route

There is no traditional fixed route transit service in Sarpy County.

#### Express Bus Routes

*Metro* transit of Omaha provides two express routes into Sarpy County. Detailed information concerning these routes is contained in the following subsections.

#### *System Ownership*

*Metro* is a political subdivision of the State of Nebraska. The Mayor of Omaha appoints a four-member Board of Directors to oversee the operation of the system. A City of Omaha property tax generates local revenues that assist in system operations. The funds are also used to match federal funds. The local funding is required by State Statute to be used inside the Omaha city

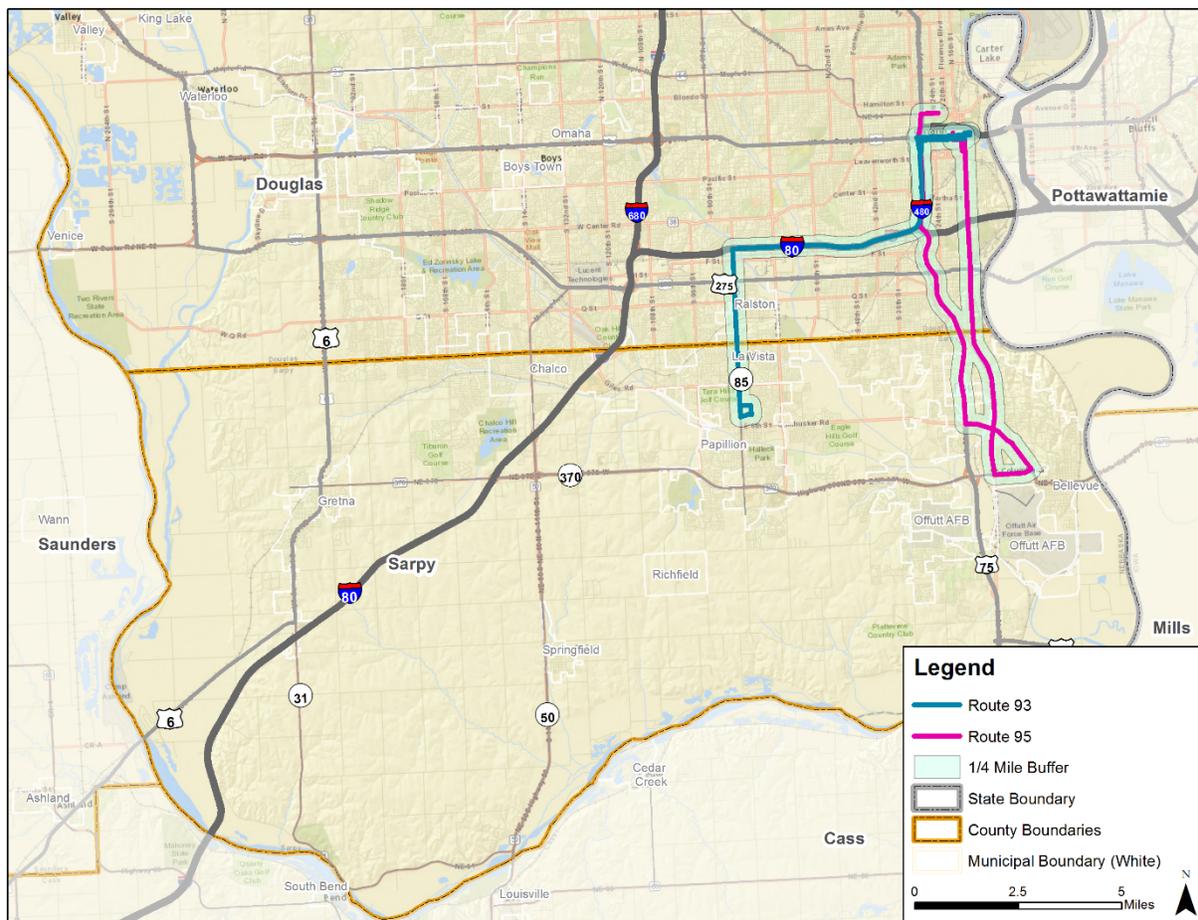


limits. Transit service outside of the City of Omaha can be developed through agreements between the *Metro* and the interested jurisdiction.

*Route Structure*

The Route 93 Express and Route 95 Express provide Sarpy County with connectivity to destinations inside of Omaha. Route 93 serves the 84<sup>th</sup> Street corridor that connects the communities of Papillion and La Vista to the Omaha metropolitan area. Route 95 serves the city of Bellevue via 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Fort Crook Road, and the US-75/I-480 corridors. The existing route structure for *Metro*'s express services is shown in **Figure 4.1** on the following page.

Figure 4-1 Sarpy County *Metro* Express Bus Routes



Route 93 Express

Two buses (running 30 minutes apart) provide connectivity from 22<sup>nd</sup> and Cuming Street in Omaha (the location of the *Metro* garage) to the Tara Plaza Park and Ride lot in Papillion. Route 93 serves two Park and Ride lots in Sarpy County: the Tara Plaza Park and Ride at 818 Tara Plaza in Papillion and the CVS Pharmacy Park and Ride at 6901 South 84<sup>th</sup> Street in La Vista.

Service is provided during the morning peak period and the evening peak period travel time during weekdays only. Schedules for the Route 93 Express are shown on the following page. **Table 4-1** shows the northbound route schedule. The southbound schedule is shown in **Table 4-2**.

Table 4-1 Route 93 – Northbound Schedule

Route 93 - Weekday Northbound				
Location	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2
Tara Plaza Park and Ride	6:20a	6:50a	5:19p	5:49p
84th & Harrison	6:25a	6:55a	5:24p	5:54p
84th & Q St	6:29a	6:59a	5:27p	5:57p
84th & F St	6:32a	7:02a	5:30p	6:00p
24th & Douglas	6:48a	7:18a	--:--	--:--
16th & Douglas	6:51a	7:21a	--:--	--:--
16th & Capitol	6:54a	7:24a	--:--	--:--
22nd & Cuming	6:59a	7:29a	5:45p	6:15p

Source: Metro, 2016

Table 4-2 Route 93 – Southbound Schedule

Route 93 - Weekday Southbound				
Location	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2
22nd & Cuming	5:58a	6:28a	4:42p	5:12p
12th & Dodge	--:--	--:--	4:47p	5:17p
16th & Dodge	--:--	--:--	4:48p	5:18p
24th & Dodge	--:--	--:--	4:51p	5:21p
84th & F St	6:09a	6:39a	5:08p	5:38p
84th & Q St	6:11a	6:41a	5:11p	5:41p
84th & Harrison	6:14a	6:44a	5:14p	5:44p
Tara Plaza P.&R.	6:18a	6:48a	5:19p	5:49p

Source: Metro, 2016

Route 95

Three buses running 30 minutes apart on Route 95 provide connectivity from *Metro* garage at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Cuming Street in Omaha to the No Frills Park and Ride lot at Galvin Road and N-370 and points in between. Route 95 serves a total of four Park and Ride lots:

- Bellevue University Park and Ride
  - 1000 Galvin Road S, Bellevue, NE 68005
- No Frills Park and Ride
  - 1510 Harlan Drive, Bellevue, NE 68005
- Lied Activity Center Park and Ride
  - 2700 Arboretum Drive, Bellevue, NE 68005
- Marathon Ventures Park and Ride
  - 901 Fort Crook Road, Bellevue, NE 68005



Service is provided during the morning peak period travel time and the evening peak period during weekdays only. Schedules for the Route 95 Express are available on the following page. **Table 4-3** shows the northbound route schedule. The southbound schedule is shown in **Table 4-4**.

Table 4-3 Route 95 – Northbound Schedule

Route 95 - Weekday Northbound						
Location	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3
Galvin Rd & Harvell	6:12a	6:42a	7:12a	--:--	--:--	--:--
Galvin & Harlan	6:15a	6:45a	7:15a	--:--	--:--	--:--
Fort Crook Rd. & Harlan	6:20a	6:50a	7:20a	4:45p	5:15p	5:45p
Metro College T. C.	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:55p	5:25p	5:55p
16th& Davenport	--:--	--:--	--:--	5:12p	--:--	--:--
Fort Crook & Childs	6:27a	6:57a	7:27a	--:--	--:--	--:--
13th & J St. SE	6:35a	7:05a	7:35a	--:--	--:--	--:--
13th St & Douglas SE	6:45a	7:15a	7:45a	--:--	--:--	--:--
17th & Davenport	6:47a	7:17a	7:47a	--:--	--:--	--:--
22nd & Cuming	--:--	7:22a	7:52a	--:--	5:40p	6:10p

Table 4-4 Route 95 – Southbound Schedule

Route 95 - Weekday Southbound						
Location	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 3
22nd & Cuming	5:50a	6:20a	--:--	4:07p	4:37p	--:--
16th & Davenport	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:12p	4:42p	5:12p
14th & Douglas SW	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:15p	4:45p	5:15p
13th & J St SW	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:22p	4:52p	5:22p
Fort Crook & Childs	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:30p	5:00p	5:30p
Galvin Rd & Harvell	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:37p	5:07p	5:37p
Galvin & Harlan	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:40p	5:10p	5:40p
Fort Crook Rd. & Harlan	--:--	--:--	--:--	4:45p	5:15p	5:45p
17th & Davenport	--:--	--:--	6:47a	--:--	--:--	--:--
Metro College T. C.	6:00a	6:30a	7:00a	--:--	--:--	--:--
Galvin Rd & Harvell	6:12a	6:42a	7:12a	--:--	--:--	--:--

*Rider Profile*

Metro completed an onboard survey for all fixed express routes in 2012. At that time, Metro found that 89 percent of riders were between 18 and 64 years old. Race and ethnicity of riders on the Metro system varied, but was primarily “Black/African American” (47 percent) and “White/Non-Hispanic” (39 percent). Most Metro riders were also living in households with an annual income of \$29,999 or less.

Approximately 58 percent of Metro riders lived in a household with zero vehicles available to the family; whereas 21 percent of riders chose to ride Metro when a vehicle was available for the same trip. The vast majority of riders walked to their Metro connection, averaging a distance of 0.26 miles to use Metro. Riders who drove to access transit service traveled an average of six miles to do so.

Trips to work constituted the largest percentage of trip purposes with 42 percent of trips. The remaining trip purposes were almost evenly split between college/university, personal/social/recreational, other, shopping, medical/hospital/doctor, and school.

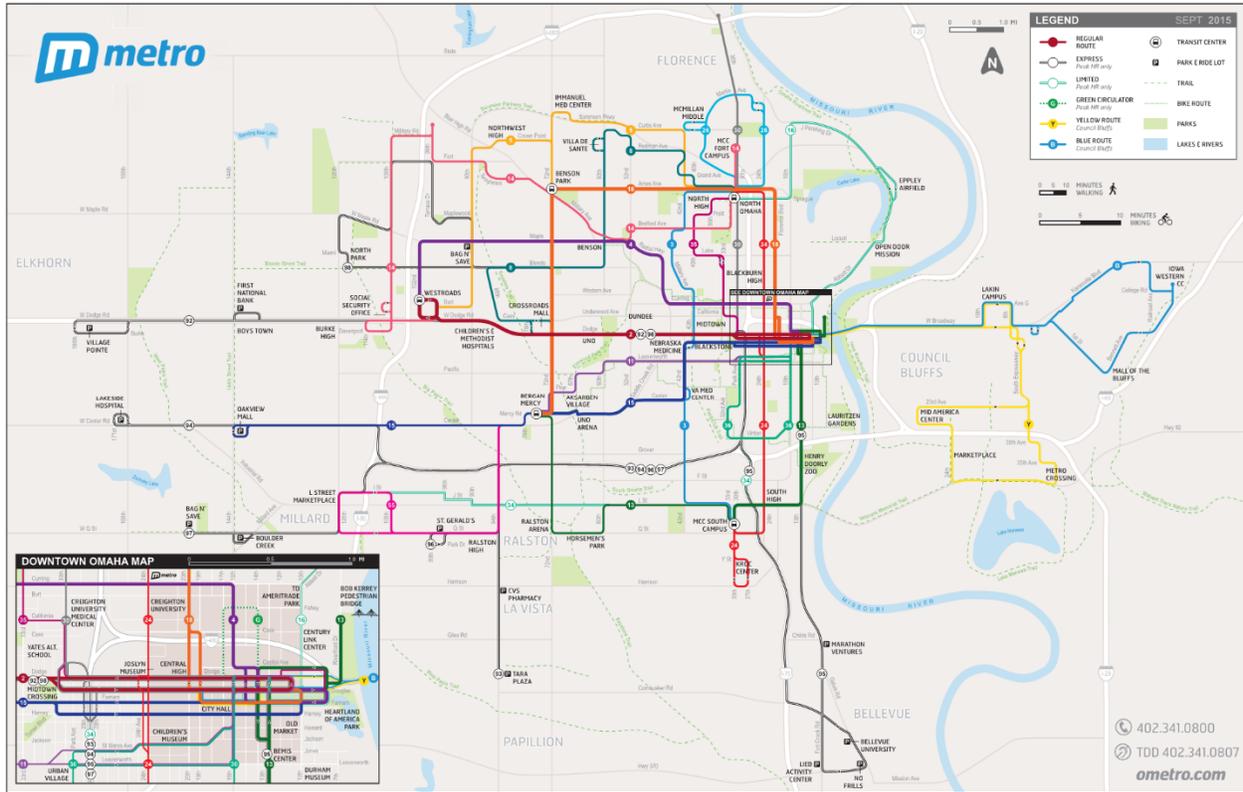
*Service Area*

The two Metro express routes serve very specific corridors and destinations in Sarpy County. Route 93 serves the 84<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor and makes only two stops in Sarpy County before continuing on to Omaha. Route 95 serves the Galvin Road/Fort Crook Road corridor in Bellevue.

To the north, Metro serves the City of Omaha and provides two routes into and out of Council Bluffs, Iowa. The majority of Metro’s service occurs inside the I-80/I-680 loop where population and employment density is higher. Express service exists to the West and Southwest Omaha

providing connectivity to lower density suburbs. *Metro's* system map is shown below in **Figure 4-2**.

Figure 4-2 *Metro* Transit System Map



### Service Hours

Service in Sarpy County is provided by *Metro* during morning and afternoon peak travel times. Morning (northbound) service begins at 6:20am for Route 93 and 6:12am for Route 95. The last available boarding in Sarpy County for the morning peak occurs at 7:27am on Route 95 at the Marathon Ventures Park and Ride lot.

Evening (southbound) service begins a 4:07pm for Route 95 and 4:42pm for Route 93. The last Sarpy County stop occurs at 5:49pm at the Tara Plaza Park and Ride on Route 93 and at 5:45pm at the Lied Activity Center Park and Ride on Route 95. Riders seeking to return to Omaha would be able to return to the *Metro* garage at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Cuming by 6:15pm on either route but would not have an option to return to Sarpy County via *Metro* until the following morning.

### Vehicle Fleet

Information regarding the existing fleet used for the Express routes will be added to the report, as received from *Metro*.

*Fare Structure*

The base fare for express routes on the *Metro* system is \$1.50. Transfers must be purchased at the time the fare is paid and cost an additional \$0.25. A detailed breakdown of *Metro's* fare structure is shown below in **Figure 4-3**

Figure 4-3 *Metro* Transit Fare Structure

FARES		ometro.com	
Adult regular	\$1.25	10 Ride Card	
Adult express	1.50	Adult	\$12.50
Student (with Metro ID)*	1.00	Adult with transfer	15.00
Child (ages 5-9)	.50	Express	15.00
Child under 5 with adult	FREE	Student*	10.00
Elderly/Disabled/Medicare (with Metro ID)	.60	Elderly/Disabled/Medicare	6.00
Transfer (purchase when paying fare)	.25	30 Day Passes	
Downtown Circulator	3.00	Adult	55.00
Event Express		Elderly/Disabled/Medicare	27.50

\*Ages 10 - Sr. High. Student fare valid on school days until 6:00 p.m.

*Dispatch and Scheduling*

Detailed information for *Metro* dispatch and scheduling will be added to the report, as received by the provider.

*Existing Ridership*

In total, *Metro* provided 18,725 trips in 2015 on Route 93 and Route 95. Detailed information on ridership for each route is shown below in **Table 4-5** and **Table 4-6**.

Table 4-5 Average Daily Ridership

Average Daily Ridership													
Route	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	2015 TOTAL
93 Express	37	35	37	38	32	35	29	30	37	34	33	25	402
95 Express	40	41	43	39	39	38	37	40	42	43	42	32	476

Table 4-6 Total Monthly Ridership

Monthly Total Ridership													
Route	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	2015 TOTAL
93 Express	777	706	821	838	638	776	678	627	776	750	663	550	8,600
95 Express	837	810	943	854	780	833	856	841	886	941	830	714	10,125

*Revenue Miles and Service Hours*

Operating statistics and route statistics for fiscal year 2015 for the Route 93 Express and Route 95 Express are on the following page in **Table 4-7** and **Table 4-8**.

Table 4-7 Metro Express Route Revenue Miles and Service Hours

2015 Revenue Service	93 Express		95 Express	
	Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours	Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours
Weekdays through 8-21-15	100.75	4.13	99.36	4.95
Weekdays starting 8-24-15	100.75	4.13	135.33	6.17
Annual Totals:	25,792.00	1,057.28	28,709.43	1,378.22

Table 4-8 Metro Express Route Operating Statistics

2015 Route Statistics	93 Express	95 Express
Annual Ridership	8,600	10,125
Estimated Cost per Route*	\$89,845	\$117,130
Passengers per Rev Hour	8.1	7.3
Passengers per Rev Mile	.33	.35

\*Metro cost per hour assumed to be \$85.

### Demand Response Services in Sarpy County

The communities of Bellevue, La Vista and Papillion provide specialized, demand response transit service for their elderly and disabled populations. A detailed breakdown of each service is contained in the following subsections.

#### Bellevue Specialized Transit Service

##### System Ownership

The Bellevue Specialized Transit Service is operated by the City of Bellevue, Nebraska. Service operation and management are administered by the Bellevue Human Services department. The city provides for the service through combination of local property tax revenue, fare revenues, state and federal funding. The agency operates on a two-year budget cycle for local revenue.

##### Rider Profile

Riders utilizing the Bellevue Specialized Transit Service must be residents of Bellevue and either be over age 60 or have a disability. Bellevue does not provide general public transit service.

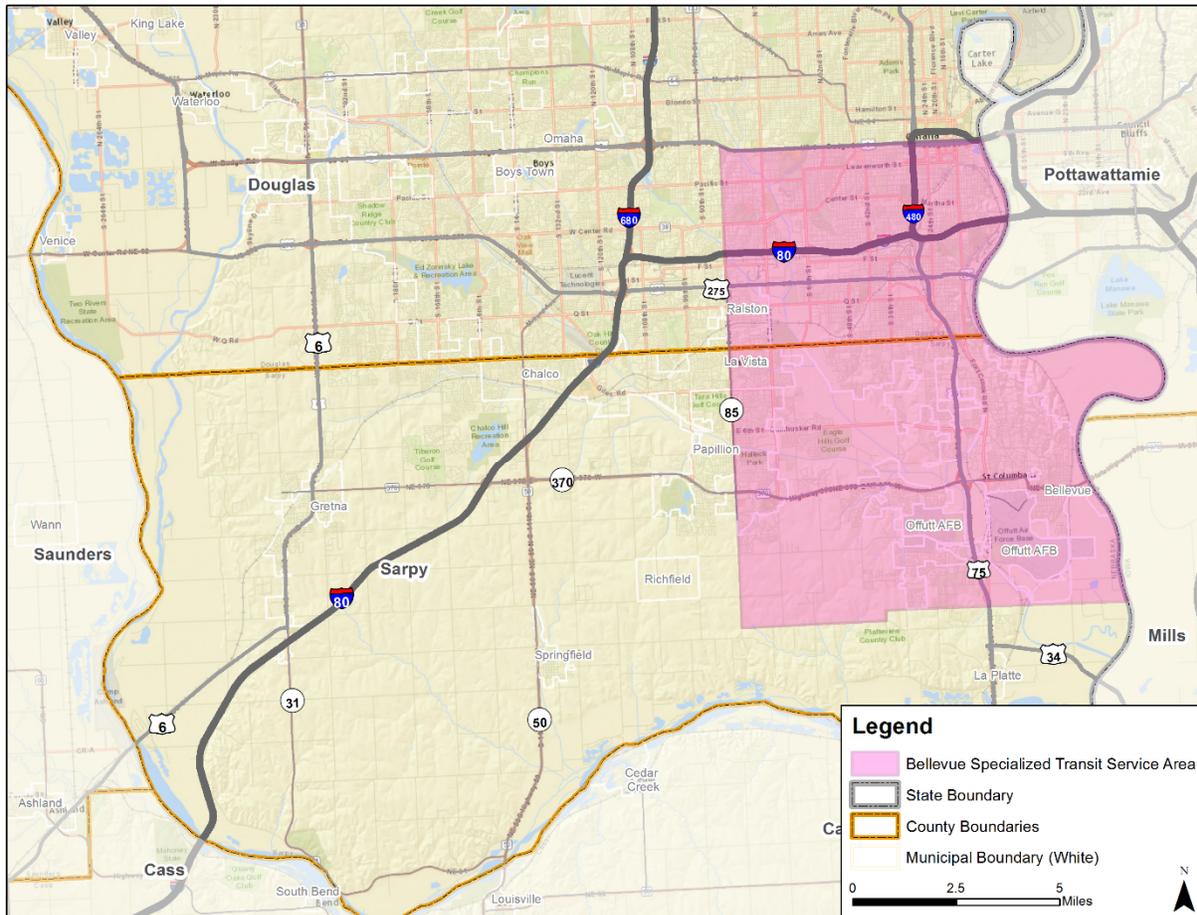


##### Service Area

The service area for the City of Bellevue’s Specialized Transit Service is generally limited by Dodge Street to the north and 84<sup>th</sup> Street to the west. Destinations are limited to those within this service area. No specific information exists for the frequency of visit to specific locations but trips are often made to Midlands Hospital, the Sarpy

County Courthouse and the Shadow Lake Mall in Papillion in particular. A map of the service area is shown in **Figure 4-4**.

Figure 4-4 Bellevue Specialized Transit Service Area



**Service Hours**

Transit service is available from 7:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday. A minimum 24-hour notice is required for passengers. Transit service is not provided on holidays for which city offices are closed and may be cancelled during periods of inclement weather. Weather cancellations generally follow local public school cancellation policies. Bellevue does not provide evening or weekend service.

**Vehicle Fleet**

Bellevue owns a fleet of six Ford E450s from model year 2009-2016. Each vehicle has an eight passenger capacity plus two wheelchairs. Every vehicle has a wheelchair lift. The agency typically replaces vehicles every six years or at 100,000 miles, if funding is available.

Four of the vehicles operate all day on a full-time basis. One vehicle operates part-time service and one vehicle is used as a spare.

**Fare Structure**

The base fare for trips inside Bellevue city limits is \$2.00 for each one-way trip. Trips scheduled outside of Bellevue’s city limits are \$4.00 for each one-way trip.

**Dispatch and Scheduling**

The City of Bellevue has one full-time employee dedicated to scheduling and dispatching for Specialized Transit Services. The scheduling process is typically conducted through paper forms for the drivers and the office, which is transferred to spreadsheet by staff typically weekly. No scheduling or dispatching software is currently in place; however, the agency is actively involved in the MAPA subcommittee discussing regional coordination and dispatch center.

**Ridership**

In Fiscal Year 2015, the Bellevue Specialized Transit Service provided approximately 9,100 rides. Detailed information on ridership by month is shown below in **Table 4-8**. The busiest months in FY2015 were October and July.

Table 4-9 Bellevue Specialized Transit Service – Ridership by Month

Bellevue Specialized Transit Ridership per Month													
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	Total
Ridership	924	837	785	1,058	705	783	694	684	720	499	661	764	9,114

**La Vista Transit Service**

**System Ownership**

The City of La Vista partners with the City of Ralston (Douglas County) to provide specialized transit service for its elderly and disabled residents. Services are managed by the La Vista Parks and Recreation Department. Funding for operations is divided between the La Vista and Ralston based on the ratio of passenger trips from each community. Vehicles are owned by the individual municipality. The branding of the vehicles remains consistent with the exception that community that owns the vehicle is listed first on the marquee. The service is funded through a combination of local property tax revenue, fare revenues, state and federal funding. The agency has a yearly budget cycle with the city for local funding.



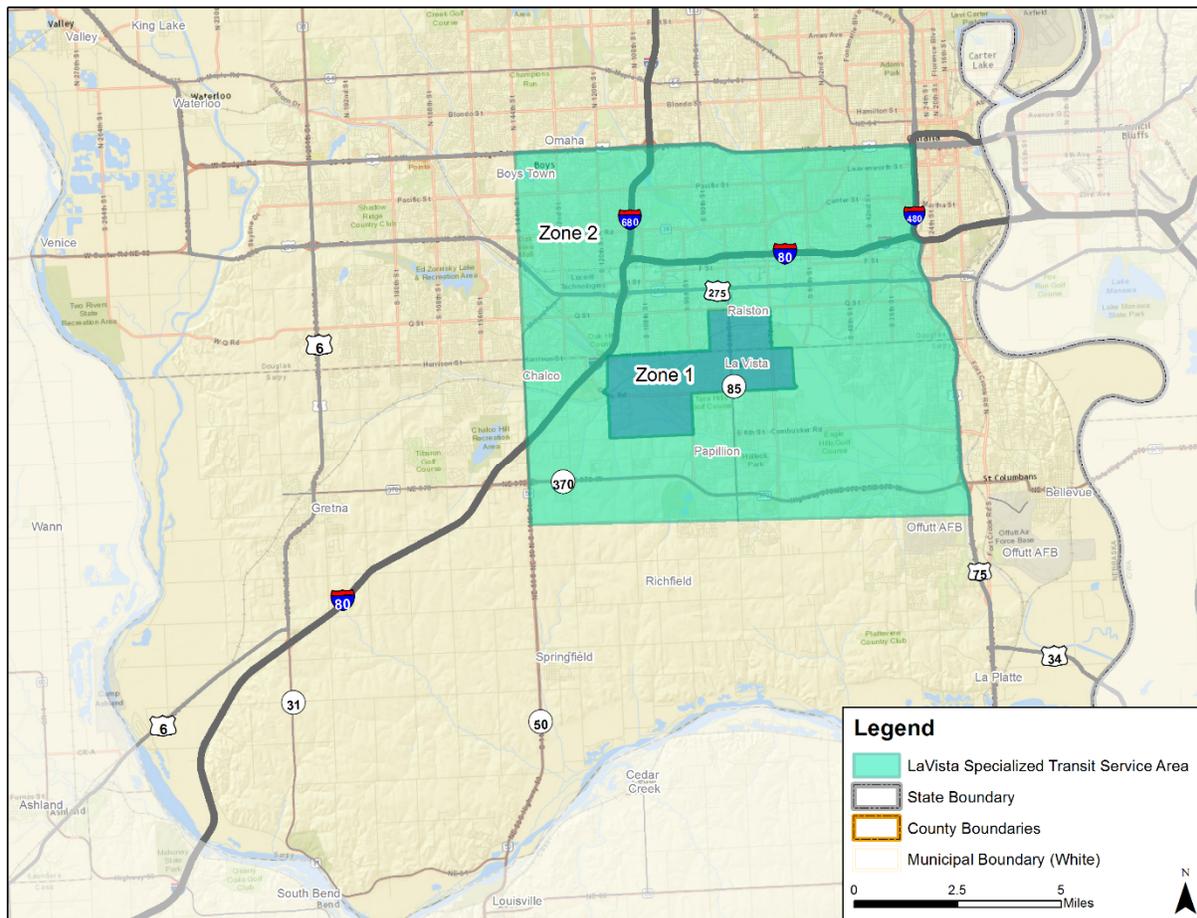
**Rider Profile**

Riders that utilize the La Vista/Ralston Specialized Transit Service must be residents of La Vista or Ralston and either be over the age of 60 or have a disability. General public transit service is not available at this time. Requests for service outside the ridership parameters are forwarded to Metro transit or MAPA.

Service Area

Transit service provided by the La Vista/Ralston partnership is divided into three service areas. Zone 1 comprises the city limits of La Vista and Ralston. All trips must originate inside of Zone 1. Zone 2 is bounded by Dodge Street to the north, 144<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, Schramm Road to the south, and US 75 to the east. Zone 3 is any location outside of Zone 2. An estimated 90 percent of trips have their destination in Zone 2. A map of the La Vista/Ralston service area is shown in **Figure 4-5** on the following page.

Figure 4-5 La Vista/Ralston Specialized Transit Service - Service Area



Service Hours

Transit service is available from 7:00am to 4:30pm Monday – Friday, with 48-hour advance reservations notice. Transit service is not provided on holidays for which city offices are closed and may be cancelled during periods of inclement weather. Service cancellations due to weather follow local public school cancellation policies. Evening and weekend service is not currently available.

### Vehicle Fleet

La Vista/Ralston Specialized Transit Service operates two 12-passenger+two wheelchair cutaway buses on a daily basis. One vehicle operates Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Two vehicles operate on Tuesdays and Thursdays. A third, 14-passenger+two wheelchair bus is held in reserve as a spare, along with a 12-passenger van. Vehicle maintenance is provided by each city. One new vehicle will be available to the City of La Vista in 2016. In 2019, the City of Ralston will have a new vehicle to replace a 2010 vehicle.



### Fare Structure

All La Vista/Ralston Specialized Transit Service passenger trips originate inside of Zone 1, which is the city limits of the community. Trips within Zone 1 and to the designated shopping areas are \$1.00 for each one-way trip. Passenger trips into Zone 2 are \$2.00 for each one-way trip. Trips to Zone 3 are \$10.00 for each one-way trip. Zone 3 trips are somewhat limited due to travel time to areas in Zone 3.

The designated shopping areas are:

- Hy-Vee Supermarket at the intersection of 96<sup>th</sup> Street and Q Street
- Family Fare Supermarket at 84<sup>th</sup> Street and Giles Road
- Fareway Supermarket at 74<sup>th</sup> Street and Giles Road
- Walmart Supercenter at 72<sup>nd</sup> and Giles Road

### Dispatch and Scheduling

Dispatch and scheduling procedures for La Vista/Ralston Specialized Transit Service are currently manual with trip sheets prepared by each driver. Each transit vehicle has a cellular phone in the vehicle. To schedule a trip, residents call the agency number, which rings to the cell phone in the vehicle. The drivers schedule the trip. Reservations must be 24 hours in advance to schedule a ride. Medical and employment trips are priority trips for the agency. The agency has many existing subscription trips today. Four part-time drivers operate the vehicles.



### Ridership

La Vista/Ralston Specialized Transit Service provided an estimated 4,960 rides in Fiscal Year 2015. This figure was calculated based upon an average of 20 passenger trips per day multiplied by 248 service days (non-holiday weekdays). An estimated 3,850 annual revenue hours are provided by the agency, based upon one vehicle operating on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and two vehicles on Tuesday and Thursdays. **Table 4-9** presents agency estimated operating statistics.

Table 4-10 La Vista/Ralston Specialized Transit Service - Operating Statistics

2015 Operating Statistics	
Annual Ridership	4,960
Estimated Annual Cost *	\$134,750
Passengers per Rev Hour	1.3
*Estimated \$35 per hour	

### Papillion Special Transportation Services

#### System Ownership

The City of Papillion owns and operates specialized demand response transit service for elderly and disabled residents who need transportation in and around Papillion. Services are managed by the Papillion Parks and Recreation Department. Operating expenses and capital investments are funded by the City of Papillion through a mixture of local property tax revenue, fare revenues, state and federal funding.

#### Rider Profile

Papillion’s transit service provides trips to the elderly (60 years old and over) and individuals with disabilities. A special rate schedule allows for the general public to utilize the system; however, these instances are rare.

#### Service Area

The service area for Papillion Special Transportation Services is limited to locations within a 10-mile radius of Papillion City Hall. The service area is more clearly bounded by Fort Street on the north, 204<sup>th</sup> Street on the west, Ashland Avenue to the south and Interstate 29 on the east. This service area as includes destinations in Iowa, as well as Cass County, Nebraska. A map of Papillion’s transit service area is shown in **Figure 4-6** on the following page.

Trips are provided to locations outside of Papillion on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Local trips are provided on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

#### Service Hours

Transit service is available with a minimum 24-hour advance request. Hours of operation are 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday – Friday, excluding holidays. In case of inclement weather, service may be cancelled. Cancellation policies mirror the policies of the local school system.



Papillion Special Transportation Services does not operate on weekends or in the evening. The agency does occasionally provide some special public transportation to community events and festivals beyond their regular hours of operation.

#### Vehicle Fleet

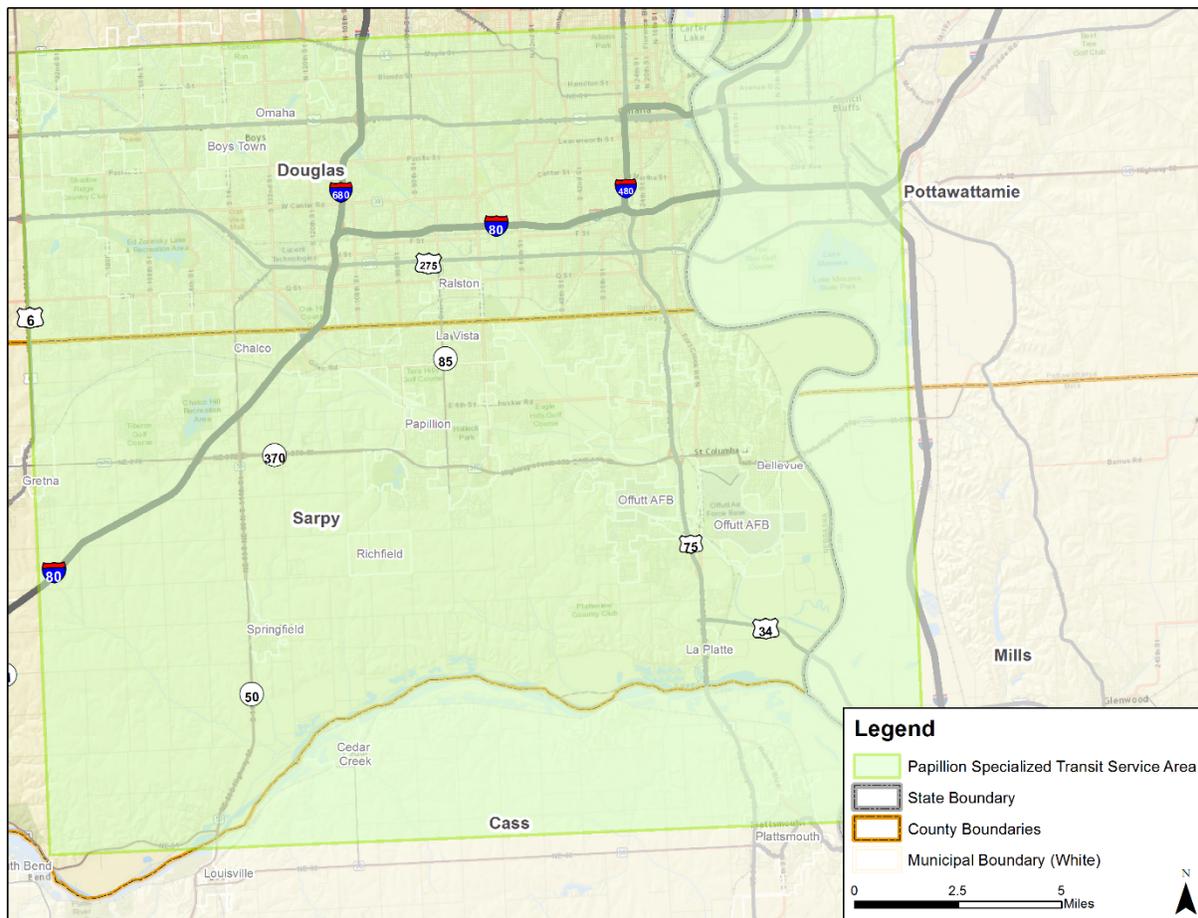
The City of Papillion owns two body-on-chassis buses with 14-person capacity plus two wheelchairs. Both vehicles are wheelchair lift equipped. The second bus is generally held in reserve on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Both buses may be used on Tuesdays and Thursdays if demand is high enough; however, typically one vehicle operates daily.

#### Fare Structure

Base fare for service is \$1.00 for each one-way trip inside Papillion and \$2.00 for each one-way trip to destinations outside of the city limits. Rides can be scheduled outside of Papillion on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, with Tuesday and Thursday rides only operating inside the city limits.

Papillion Special Transportation Services occasionally provides transportation for the general public. The base fare for these trips is \$2.00 per one-way trip inside Papillion and \$2.50 for each one-way trip outside of the city limits. The agency also has punch cards available for residents.

Figure 4-6 Papillion Special Transportation Services - Service Area



Dispatch and Scheduling

Similar to the La Vista/Ralston service, each Papillion Special Transportation Services vehicle has a cellular phone. Riders call and leave a message or speak with a driver in order to schedule a trip. The drivers schedule each request on for the specific day, which is reflected on the manifest for the day. The agency allows trips to be scheduled six weeks in advance.

Ridership

Papillion Special Transportation Services estimated 5,020 annually based on past ridership trends. The agency reports approximately 60 percent of the total trips are made within the Papillion city limits. Approximately 25 percent are outside the city limits and 15 percent of the trips are to and from the Papillion Senior Center. **Table 4-10** presents agency estimated operating statistics.

Table 4-11 Papillion Special Transportation Services - Operating Statistics

2016 Operating Statistics	
Annual Ridership	5,020
Annual Cost	\$70,770
Passengers per Rev Hour	2.2

*Sarpy County Communities without Transit Service*

The communities of Gretna and Springfield currently do not operate public transportation services. Service to Gretna and Springfield are available from the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging and the Ponca Express service.

Regional Agency Transit Services

*Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA)*

System Ownership

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) is a regional agency that was created by the US Congress under the Older Americans Act to serve families in Douglas, Sarpy, Dodge, Cass and Washington Counties in Nebraska. ENOA operates a Rural Transportation Service that provides trips throughout rural Douglas County, Sarpy County, Cass County, Dodge County and Washington County. The agency owns a fleet of vehicles that is available to the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the general public. The Rural Transportation System is funded by a grant from the Nebraska Department of Roads and the Federal Transit Administration, county revenue and transit fares.

Rider Profile

Riders on the ENOA system can be of all ages as the service is open to the general public. That said, the majority of the passengers that utilize the Rural Transportation System are over the age of 60.



Service Area

The Rural Transportation System serves rural Douglas County and all of Sarpy, Cass, Dodge and Washington Counties in Nebraska. Service does not extend into Iowa. The ENOA service area is shown in **Figure 4-7** on the following page.

Service Hours

ENOA’s Rural Transportation Service requires that trips be scheduled a minimum of 48 hours in advance. Trips can be for any purpose, but priority is given for medical and business trips. Trips are not guaranteed. Transit is available from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

### Vehicle Fleet

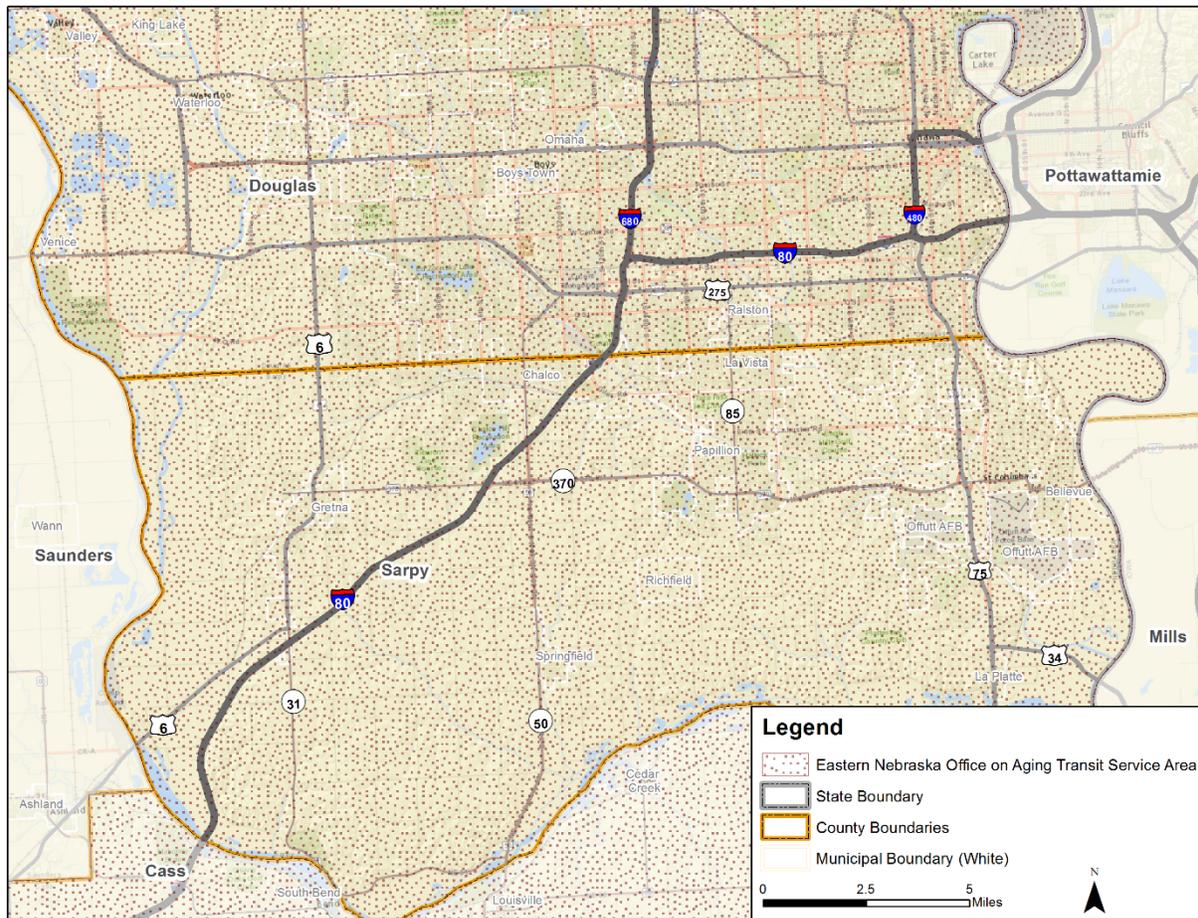
The ENOA fleet consists of 10 vehicles; 3 body on chassis buses, 3 low floor minivans, and 4 minivans. Two of the three buses and all of the low floor minivans are wheelchair accessible. Two minivans are not wheelchair accessible. It should be noted the fleet information above is for the entire ENOA service area, not specific to Sarpy County.

### Fare Structure

ENOA's fare structure is based upon the distance between the origin and the destination. A summary of fares is shown below:

- \$2 per one-way trip, 1 to 10-mile distance
- \$5 per one-way trip, 11 to 20-mile distance
- \$6 per one-way trip, 21 to 40-mile distance
- \$7 per one-way trip, 41 to 60-mile distance
- \$8 per one-way trip, 61+ mile distance

Figure 4-7 ENOA Rural Transportation System Service Area



#### Existing Ridership

ENOA reported 2,030 one-way trips were provided in Sarpy County for FY2015.

#### *Ponca Express*

##### System Ownership

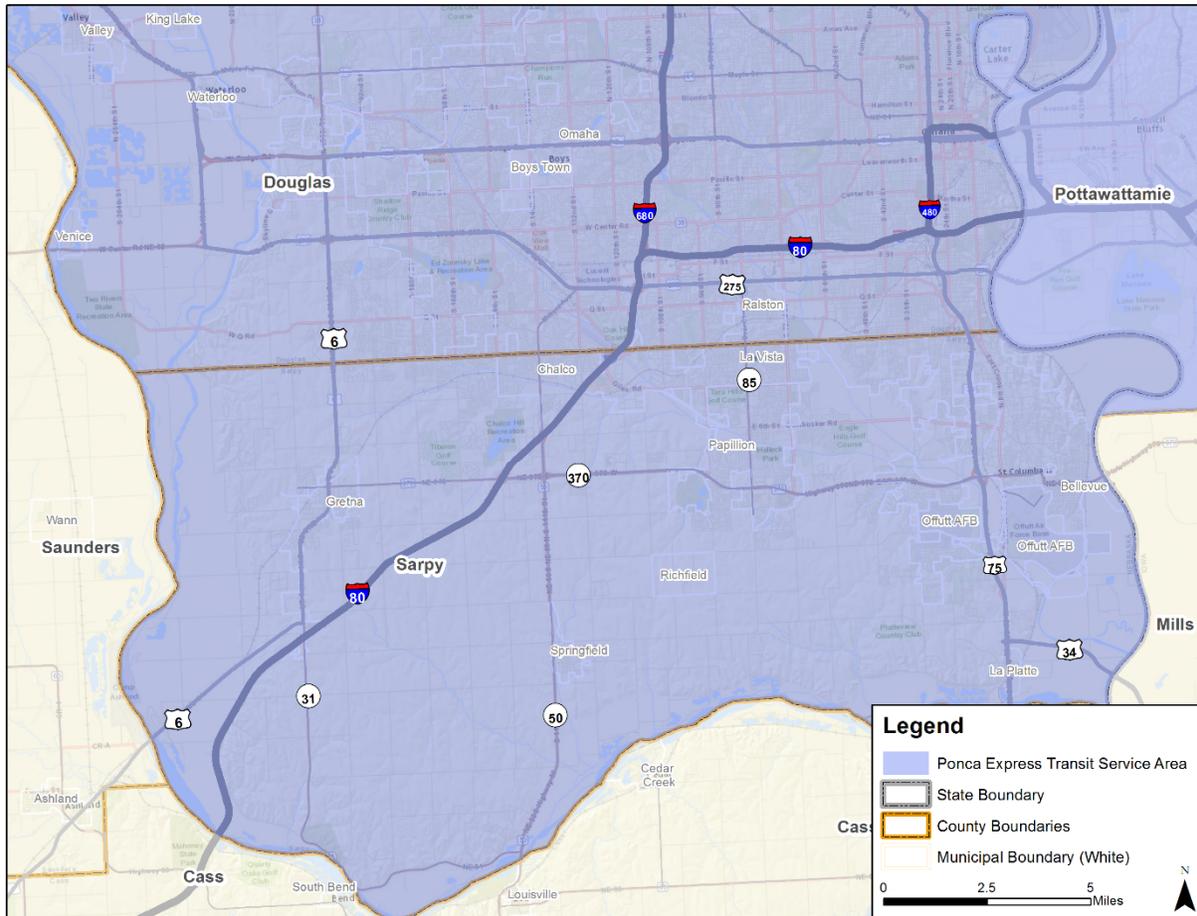
The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska owns and operates an intercity transit system for members of the tribal community and the general public. Transit services are provided from Norfolk and Niobrara, in northeast Nebraska to the Omaha metro area (including Sarpy County). A ride from Norfolk to the Omaha metro area takes approximately two hours; rides from Niobrara take approximately three hours. This intercity service is not provided on a point-to-point basis inside the Omaha metro area, but multiple stops in Omaha may be served on a given trip.

Reservations for the intercity services are taken on a first-come, first-serve basis for demand-response trips.

##### Service Area

Intercity service via the Ponca Express runs from Niobrara and Norfolk, Nebraska to the Omaha metropolitan area. Trips inside the Omaha metropolitan area can be provided by the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska's Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) services. (Information relating to MSA service has been requested). The Ponca Express service area is shown below in **Figure 4-8**.

Figure 4-8 Ponca Express Service Area



**Service Hours**

Transit service provided by the Ponca Express is provided Monday-Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm during regular business hours.

**Vehicle Fleet**

The Ponca Express has two vehicles, a Dodge Caravan minivan that can serve up to six people and a nine-passenger body on chassis bus. Intercity trips to the Omaha metropolitan area are usually made with the Dodge Caravan.

**Fare Structure**

Ponca Express trips are priced according to a Rate A/Rate B matrix. Rate A rides cost \$2.00 for adults (19-54) \$1.00 for children (4-18); seniors and children 3 and under ride free. Rate B rides cost \$5.00 for adults (19-54) and \$3.00 for children and seniors. The Ponca Express price schedule is shown in **Table 4-11** below.

Table 4-12 Ponca Express Destinations and Rate Classifications

Norfolk		Niobrara	
Rate A	Rate B	Rate A	Rate B
Madison	Niobrara	Santee	Norfolk
Stanton	Santee	Niobrara	Sioux City
Norfolk	Winnebago	Creighton	Yankton
Battle Creek	Sioux City	Bloomfield	O'Neil
Wisner	Columbus	Crofton	Neligh
Hoskins	Creighton	Winnetoon	Marty
Pierce	Yankton	Verdigre	Wagner
Meadow Grove	West Point	Springfield, SD	Winnebago
Tilden	Fremont	Verdel	Columbus
Pilger	Bloomfield		Wayne
	Crofton		Omaha
	Marty		Lincoln
	Omaha		Grand Island
	Lincoln		Madison
	Grand Island		Sioux Falls
	Wagner		Fremont

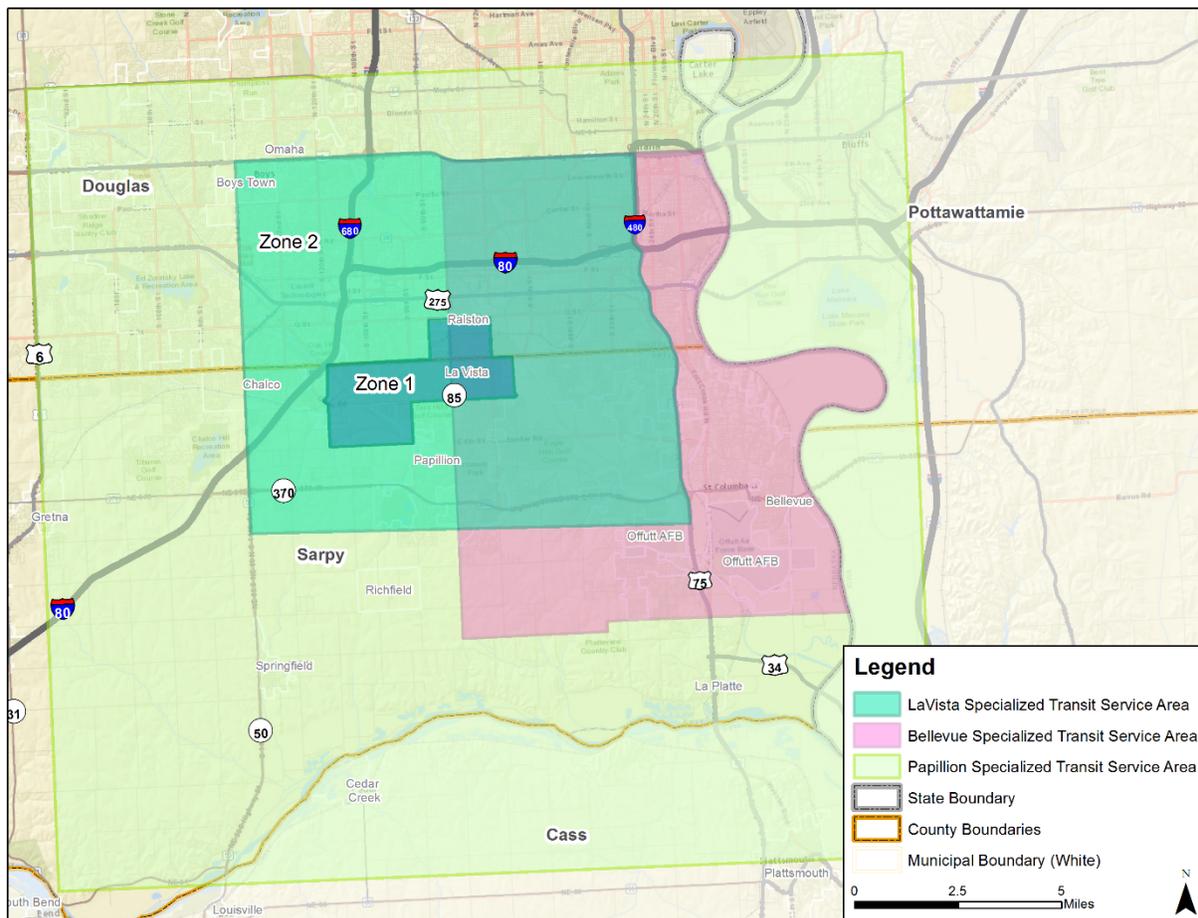
Dispatch and Scheduling

Trips are scheduled on a first come-first serve basis. Advance notice is required for reservations.

## Sarpy County – Overlap of Specialized Transit Services

Specialized transit service is generally available for the elderly (age 60 and over) and disabled population in the Sarpy County study area. Municipal services in La Vista, Papillion, and Bellevue provide access to residents of their communities to service centers across the region for a small fee. The City of Papillion occasionally provides general transit service to their residents at a special (higher) rate than is charged to an elderly or disabled rider. The map of existing specialized services is shown below in **Figure 4-9**.

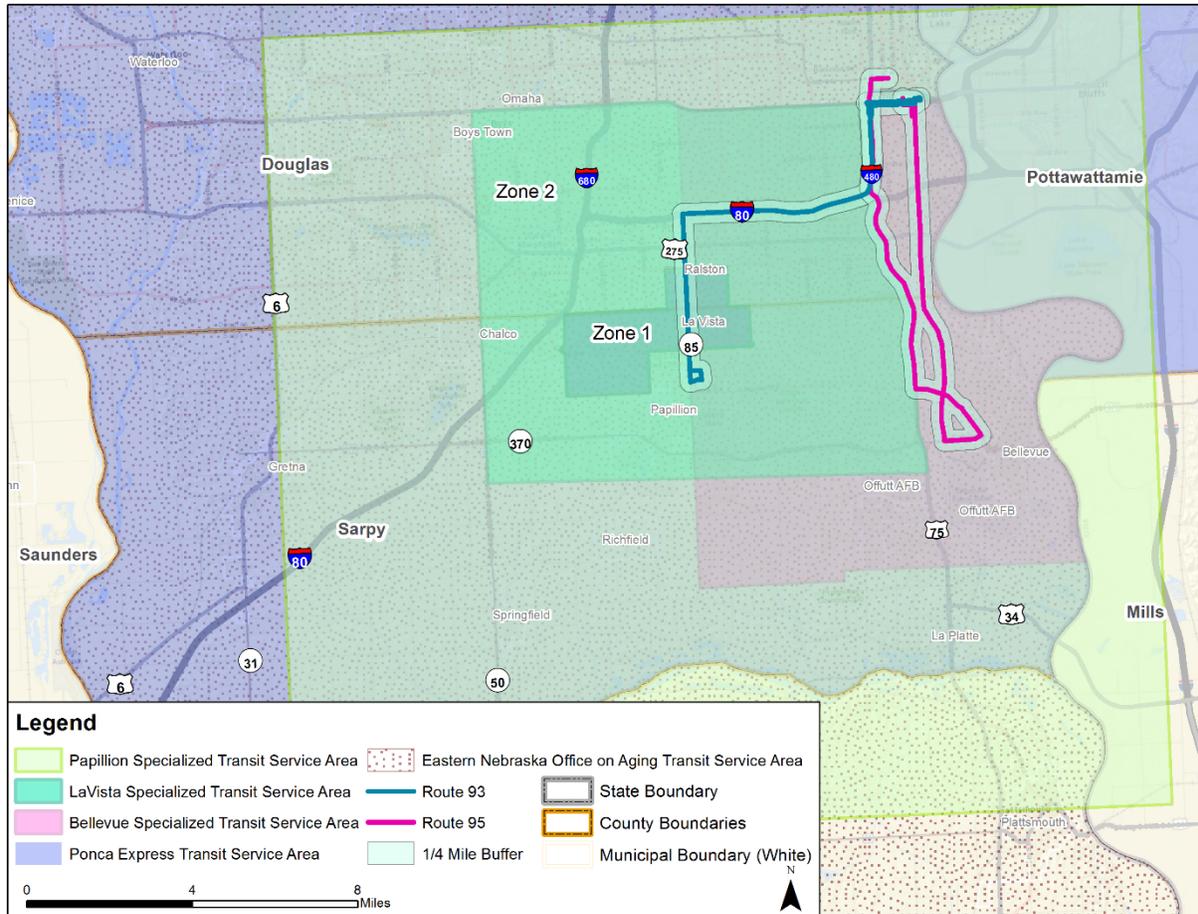
Figure 4-9 Municipal Transit System Service Areas



Some geographic overlap of specialized services does exist for the providers in Sarpy County in terms of the destinations served. The Papillion transit service provides the largest service area and can provide access to nearly all of Sarpy County and the City of Omaha. Bellevue and La Vista/Ralston’s transit service areas provide almost 50 percent overlap in terms of destination served. Both services are completely within the Papillion service area. Despite the overlap in destinations, the existing challenge of residential requirement of the community is identified as one barrier.

An overlay of all of the transit service areas is shown in **Figure 4-10** on the following page.

Figure 4-10 Sarpy County Transit Service Areas



Currently, very little coordination of service among the existing municipal and regional providers exists. This is also true for coordination with the *Metro* express routes or Park and Ride lots in Bellevue or on the 84<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor.

### Service Summary for General Public Transportation

#### Service Areas

General public transit service is available in Sarpy County but on a very limited basis. The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) is the only transit provider that regularly provides service to and from points in Sarpy County to the general public. Papillion’s transit system has the ability to provide general public transit but does so only rarely. East-west connectivity specific to Sarpy County does not exist on the *Metro* transit system as both express routes serve the downtown Omaha area.

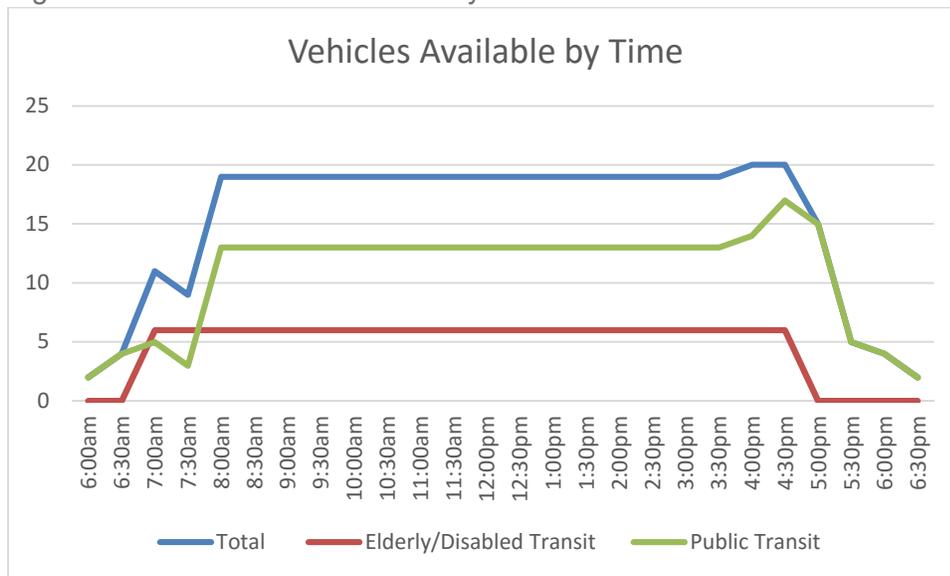
### Service Hours

Transit service providers in Sarpy County do not operate outside of the 7:00am – 4:30pm timeframe (with the exception of the last stops of the Route 93 and Route 95 Express buses). Additionally, no weekend service is available to Sarpy County residents.

### Transit Availability

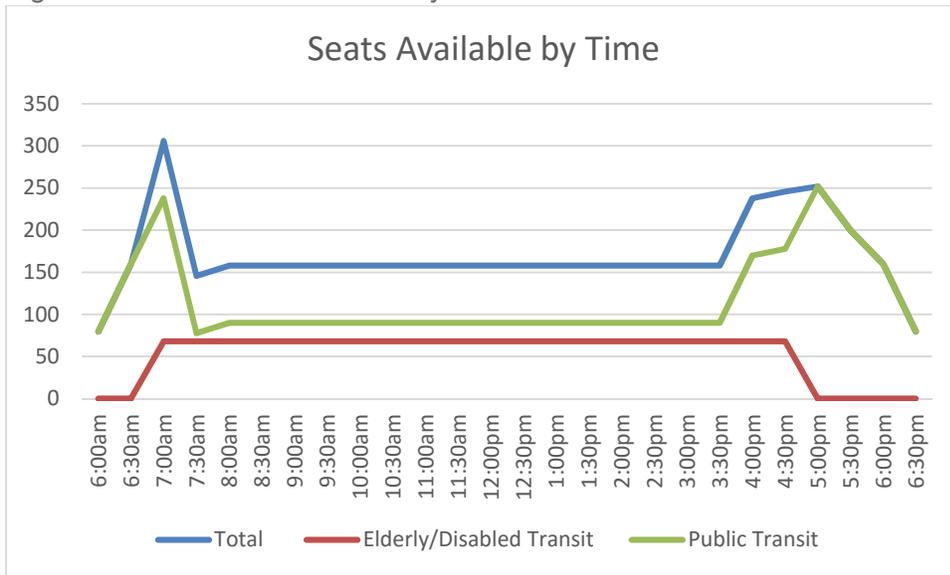
Transit service in Sarpy County operates a mix of transit vehicles that are operated at various times throughout the day. **Figure 4-11** shows a summary of peak vehicle availability by time. It should be noted that this figure includes all ten ENOA vehicles as they could all be active in Sarpy County at a given time, although it is extremely unlikely that this would occur.

Figure 4-11 Peak Vehicle Availability



**Figure 4-12** below displays the total seat availability by time for transit service in Sarpy County. As with the above figure, it should be noted that 52 seats are available through the ENOA Rural Transportation System and not all of these vehicles should be expected to operate in Sarpy County at a given time.

Figure 4-12 Peak Seat Availability



The information presented within this chapter identifies the baseline data for transit services in place today. The operational data will be used in the transit demand analysis and also in the development of future alternatives for the Sarpy County transit network.

# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

## Chapter 5 Public and Stakeholder Involvement

### 5.1 Introduction

Creating a forum for the stakeholders and the public to provide input early and continuously throughout this project allows community values to rise to the top and ensure that specific alternatives, opportunities and issues are evaluated. In addition to regular coordination with the project team and stakeholder group, the Olsson Associates team has conducted several public mobile meetings in partnership with the MAPA Long Range Transportation Plan and other ongoing community projects. Additionally, a public community survey was developed and is available in hard copy format, on stakeholder websites, through numerous social media feeds, and direct emails from interested parties.

A series of stakeholder interviews were conducted with transit providers, staff from local government partners, nonprofit organizations, and major employers. When necessary, follow-up interviews were conducted to gather additional information and gain more in depth information about issues brought to light during the initial interviews.



A high level summary of public involvement activities to date is discussed in the following sections. Community engagement activities will continue throughout the study in order to ensure the public is informed, involved, and engaged in the ultimate results of this project.

### 5.2 Mobile Meetings

One continuous challenge of engaging residents of the community is providing easy opportunities to meet with and talk to local project staff about their concerns and interest in the study. The project study team had the opportunity to partner with community hotspots and other meetings. A series of five mobile public meetings was conducted in coordination with the MAPA Long Range Transportation Plan.

Planning in general and transportation planning in particular are very abstract and complex topics for the public to understand over the course of a brief discussion. In order to simplify the approach to the transit study and relay pertinent information in an easy to digest format, a set of brief story boards was developed for use at the public meetings. These story boards were used in combination with project information sheets during the mobile meetings to provide additional depth. Two members of the Olsson Associates team and MAPA staff attended each meeting in order to provide opportunities for questions to be addressed.

### La Vista Public Library, Mobile Meeting, February 29, 2016

The project team partnered with the MAPA staff to conduct a joint public meeting with the MAPA Long Range Transportation Planning efforts from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm. The meeting took place at the La Vista Public Library at 96<sup>th</sup> and Giles Road. This location also serves as a satellite campus for the Metropolitan Community College system. The project team was able to speak with approximately 30 individuals. Discussions centered upon the existing transit services in Sarpy County, the hope for more service, and the potential service options for the future.

Generally, there was a great deal of support for public transit in Sarpy County. When asked for more specific information, two locations of were consistently discussed, to/from Sarpy County to downtown Omaha and to the midtown Omaha area. Many attendees previously used transit in other areas of the United States and had very limited exposure to transit in Sarpy County and the *Metro* system.



### Bellevue Public School, Support Center Meeting, March 7, 2016

The second mobile meeting took place from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm in coordination with the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency's outreach efforts for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan at the Bellevue Public School Support Center facility, located just east of US-75 and Nebraska Highway 370 (N-370). The meeting was sparsely attended but the project team conducted in-depth discussions with five individual attendees. Similar to the previous meeting in La Vista, attendees generally supported expanded and new transit service in Sarpy County.



Specific comments received at the meeting focused on east-west connectivity in Sarpy County, which was a different aspect than connections to the downtown and midtown Omaha. In particular, individuals employed at Offutt Air Force Base approached the project team to stress the need for transit service to the base. Many military and civilian employees at Offutt AFB have experienced public transportation in other communities, such as St. Louis and Washington D.C., and used transit regularly to access their jobs on the military bases. Additionally, one

individual had previously been involved in a survey advocating for transit service to/from Offutt AFB. The results of the past survey was shared with the Olsson team, which included areas of

the community where employees lived by zip code and base employee willingness to utilize transit service. Many of the respondents lived adjacent to the N-370 corridor. Offutt AFB does not currently have general public transit service to the base.

#### Papillion South High School Meeting, March 22, 2016

A third mobile meeting occurred on March 22<sup>nd</sup> in coordination with the MAPA Platteview Road Corridor Study from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting and approximately 15 people engaged with project staff to discuss the potential for future transit services to Sarpy County.

Residents at the meeting, similar to the previous meetings, expressed support for future transit in the county. Specifically, attendees at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting were interested in supporting expanded public transit for the elderly population in Sarpy County.

#### The Beanery, Gretna Meeting, March 31, 2016

The fourth public meeting took place on March 31<sup>st</sup> from 9:00 am to 11:00 am in coordination with the MAPA Long Range Transportation Plan outreach efforts. Project staff set up story boards inside The Beanery coffee shop at 216<sup>th</sup> Street and Schramm Road in Gretna. The open house was attended by approximately eight people and included city staff and local business owners.

Support for transit service was mixed at this location with one individual staunchly opposed to transit expansion. The remaining attendees were supportive so long as transit service would be cost effective. Specifically, individuals that attended the Gretna meeting were interested in connectivity to the *Metro* transit system through an expansion of park and ride service to Gretna. Vanpooling was also discussed with City of Gretna staff. Similar to the Bellevue mobile meeting, an interest in transit service along N-370 was also discussed.



#### MAPA Coordinated Transit Committee (CTC) Meeting, April 20, 2016

The fifth mobile meeting occurred on April 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 am until 11:30 am and was held as a part of the MAPA Coordinated Transit Committee meeting. This presentation and outreach was conducted as a follow up to stakeholder meetings held on April 6<sup>th</sup> due to conflicting schedules and low attendance.

The CTC was very engaged throughout the meeting and provided specific information concerning the challenges of coordinating human services transportation across jurisdictional lines and the difficulty of coordinating across various funding programs.

Specific comments related to the need for transit service into Sarpy County were the lack of understanding of jurisdictional boundaries for *Metro* operations, and the need to connect North Omaha populations to employment centers in Sarpy County.

### 5.3 Public Community Survey

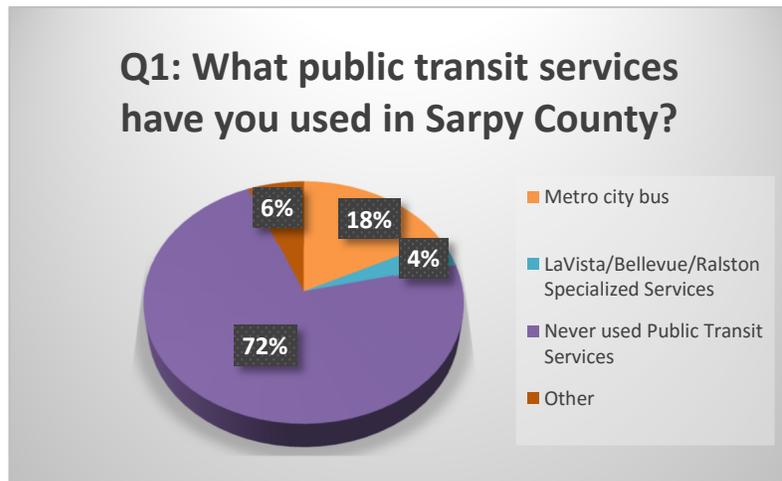
In cooperation with the Steering Committee, a public community survey was developed to gather information relating to the use, support, and need for public transit service in Sarpy County. Hard copy surveys were made available at each of the mobile meetings. English and Spanish language versions of the online survey were made available to the public on March 7<sup>th</sup> 2016. Copies of the survey instrument are available in Appendix A.

The survey contained 18 questions ranging from the participant’s current experience with transit in Sarpy County, the location where residents travel the most in a given day, whether or not they have ever had a need for public transit, the primary reason they do or do not use transit, transit option that they would be willing to use, and whether or not they would support a slight tax increase to provide transit services in Sarpy County. The survey also asked basic demographic questions relating to age, gender, household income and employment status.

To date, 182 individuals have responded to the survey either online or by hard copy. The survey will remain active until May 31, 2016. Preliminary results from selected survey questions are shown below. The final results will be included in the Final Report.

The first question asked participants to identify the type of transit service that they had previously used in Sarpy County. Approximately 75 percent of the respondents had never used public transit services in Sarpy County. Of those who had previous experience with public transit, the majority had utilized *Metro* transit service. Four percent of respondents had used the La Vista/Bellevue/Ralston Specialized Transportation Services. The results of Question 1 are shown at right in **Figure 5-1**.

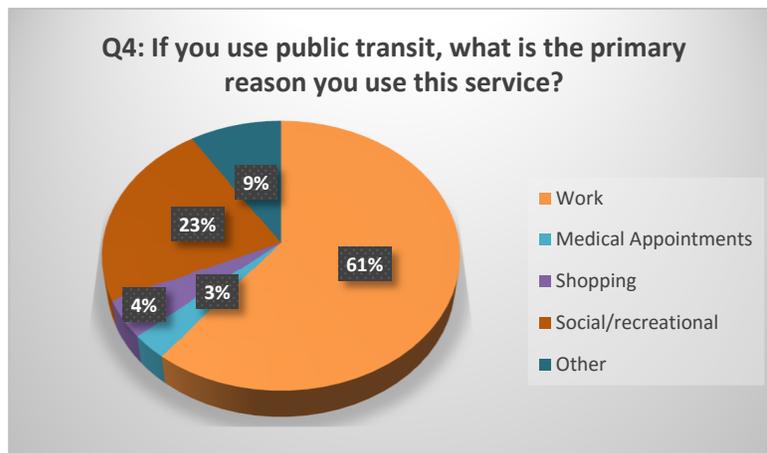
Figure 5-1 Responses to Survey Question 1



The survey asked respondents if they had ever needed public transit service in the past. Forty-eight (48%) percent of the respondents to the survey identified they did need transit service in Sarpy County.

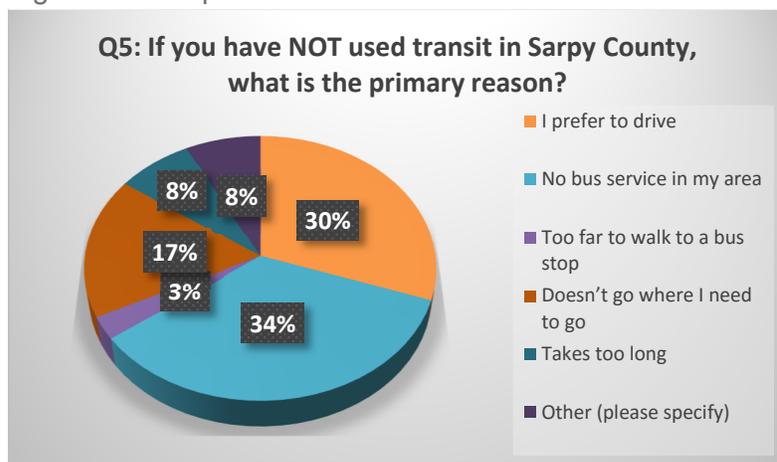
Figure 5-2 Response to Question 4

One survey question asked respondents who had used public transit about the primary purpose of their trip. Of the respondents who used public transit, 61 percent used the service as a means to get to work. Social/recreational trips were the second most common trip purpose identified by respondents. The responses are shown in **Figure 5-2**.



A follow-up question asked respondents to identify the primary reason they do not currently use transit services in Sarpy County. The most identified reason for not using transit service was the lack of bus service in the respondent’s area (34%). While 30 percent of respondents selected they preferred to drive, the remaining respondents generally selected responses that can be attributed to the transit service area not meeting their current needs. Detailed responses are shown in **Figure 5-3**.

Figure 5-3 Response to Question 5



When asked whether or not it was important for Sarpy County to have some kind of public transit service, **over 90 percent of respondents said it was important**. Approximately 55 percent of participants responded that it very important for Sarpy County to have transit service. Nine percent of respondents thought that it was not important for Sarpy County to have transit service.

Corresponding closely to the previous question, when asked if they would be willing to support a slight tax increase if public transportation would be available to all residents of Sarpy County, 58 percent said they would support a tax increase. Eighteen percent (18%) of the respondents said they would not support a tax increase with the remainder responding that they were unsure.

## 5.4 Stakeholder Interviews

A series of stakeholder interviews was conducted on April 6<sup>th</sup> at the La Vista Public Library. Stakeholders were segmented into the following five categories with group meetings conducted for each category:

- Representatives and staff from local government,
- Major employers in Sarpy County (including the Chamber of Commerce)
- Transit providers
- Non-profit organizations
- County corrections officials

Stakeholders were asked to use one word or phrase to identify the vision for transit service in Sarpy County. In response, stakeholders used the following descriptions for their vision for future transit service:

- Accessible
- Convenient
- Economical
- Expanded service
- Connected/regional service
- Consumer friendly
- Meets the needs of employers and employees

All the stakeholder groups identified the need for transit service as very high. Particularly, the need for east-west connectivity throughout Sarpy County was identified as an important issue to be solved. With that being said, there were other needs identified for different portions of the county through these interviews, such as transit service in eastern Sarpy County targeted to individuals that need transit, whereas service in the western portion of the county should be targeted toward commuter services.

With regard to public transit for employment, all stakeholders supported public transit service to Sarpy County employment centers from North Omaha is a critical topic. An existing Pilot Project funded by PayPal coordinates transit service for employees from the North Omaha Transit Center for daily trips to PayPal. Throughout the interviews, this example was used as a potential 'best practice' to expand upon. Business partners seemed interested in partnering with government organizations to assist in providing similar services where possible.



Another issue identified was evening, late night and early morning service for residents. Many of the employment centers offer second and third shift work; thus, it is important service be available outside traditional service hours.

#### Government Stakeholders

Staff from government sector project partners were invited to attend the stakeholder interviews on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Input was gathered from staff representing the City of Bellevue, City of La Vista, City of Gretna, and City of Springfield. Sarpy County was not represented at the stakeholder interviews; however, additional information was gathered from County staff at another meeting.

General input on the vision for transit in Sarpy County included:

- Accessible
- Convenient
- Economical

None of the stakeholders from government staff had previously used *Metro* in Sarpy County; however, all were aware service existed. The following issues and thoughts regarding transit in Sarpy County were discussed:

- When *Metro* re-designed services two years ago, many residents were dissatisfied with the removal of some of the underperforming local Bellevue transit routes.
- Springfield would like to see transit service to assist people to the grocery store and medical appointments. Residents who cannot access these services are moving away. The community wants to keep residents in their homes as long as possible by providing mobility options to allow access to services.
- Vanpool services in Gretna were discussed; however, the community may not be ready to support more extensive service at this time.
- Public transit to employment areas, such as the Westport area (Cabela's) was expressed by La Vista.
- Public transit is needed on 72<sup>nd</sup> Street. Nothing exists today.

Interviews continued with questions regarding to the prioritization of needs for the area. Stakeholders determined how and where investments should occur in Sarpy County.

- Expanding transit services to support employment was the most important for 3 of the 4 stakeholders in attendance.
- All representatives agreed any future service may start as a vanpool system prior to moving toward express or fixed route service.
- Dial-a-ride service to support shopping trips and medical visits is important to Springfield.

The government stakeholders discussed how to fund additional and expanded service:

- Seek grant opportunities.
- Utilize general fund revenue to fund 50/50 match for operations.
- Develop a special assessment property tax to support services.



The stakeholders discussed developing a new revenue stream that would likely be tied to public works construction projects. All attendees agreed fare revenues would not support service investments and had an aversion to sales tax due to their volatility and the impact on low-income populations (the same populations that tend to be transit dependent).

Stakeholders discussed their biggest concerns for the project, which were minimal. However, there was interest in showing elected representatives the unmet need for transit exists in local communities in Sarpy County.

### Major Employers

Representatives from major employers and the Sarpy County Chamber of Commerce attended the stakeholder interviews on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Representatives from Oriental Trading Company, PayPal, Offutt Air Force Base, and the Sarpy County Chamber of Commerce shared their experiences and expertise with the project team.

When asked for a word to describe the future vision for public transit in Sarpy County the major employers used the following words:

- Connected to the region
- Employee transportation
- Vision

None of the stakeholders at this session had previously utilized the existing transit services in Sarpy County, but several had experienced transit in other areas of the country. In particular, transit service to other military installations was mentioned.

PayPal developed a pilot transportation program in partnership with Chief Transportation and Metro to provide PayPal employee specific transportation from the North Omaha Transit Center to the PayPal offices in Sarpy County. The pilot project currently transports approximately 20

day shift employees daily to/from PayPal work site and has a budget of approximately \$100,000.

Additional concerns and specific transit needs shared by the major employers included:

- Other employers expressed interest in the PayPal project with transit options from North Omaha or other areas in Omaha to their facilities.
- Several stakeholders stressed the demand for employees in Sarpy County cannot be met by the residents of Sarpy County alone. Additional transportation to job centers is needed, especially during second and third shift hours.
- Transit is needed for connections to the Westport area (I-80 and Giles Rd), which will continue to develop commercial/retail space in the future to provide access for employees.
- Transit also need for employee transportation services to the Nebraska Crossing Outlet Mall (I-80 and US-6).
- Transit services in and around Bellevue are needed for the spouses of employees and military personnel from Offutt Air Force Base who may not have transportation options.
  - Connection to major shopping areas and grocery stores is desired.
  - The Nebraska Highway 370 corridor is of particular interest as a commuter transit corridor for Offutt Air Force Base.



Stakeholders from the major employers expressed similar themes of focusing transit services on those who need the service most, specifically mentioning transit service for the elderly and disabled population to medical services. After service for those who most need access to medical care, employers would like to see a focus on public transit to major employment centers, including options for second- and third-shift work in Sarpy County.

Employers also stressed public transit must be convenient for employees to move from their personal vehicle to public transit. Advanced technologies, such as advanced payment at kiosks and Wi-Fi, should be in future service to attract potential choice riders and relieve congestion.

Potential service options discussed that would be successful in Sarpy County include:

- Call-a-ride service for general transportation.
- Fixed route service for large employment centers.
  - Smaller vehicles may be needed in the beginning due to demand.
- Vanpool service for smaller employment centers.
- An expansion of park and ride locations with more transit service.
- Research Uber-type services to fill potential gaps.

### Transit Providers

The municipal specialized transit providers attended the stakeholder meeting from Bellevue and La Vista. The agencies identified the following when asked for a word to describe the future vision for public transit in Sarpy County.

- Expansion
- Go bigger

The agencies stressed the need to provide additional transit service as the population in Sarpy County continues to grow and age over time. Current restrictions for each of the providers allows only residents from their community to use the service.

The existing agencies provided information related to existing needs for transit service inside Sarpy County. Both agencies operate Monday-Friday during traditional work hours and receive requests for service outside of these time constraints (into the evenings and weekends), but have limited funding resources. In order to provide convenient and efficient access to shopping centers, both transit agencies focus shopping-based trips on specific days of the week.

Existing gaps and needs are listed below:

- Existing gap in transit service to/from the Veteran's Administration (VA) medical facilities.
- Evening and weekend service needed to provide access to additional jobs and entertainment.
- Employment-based trip needs continue to be a high demand.
- Medical trips have the highest priority at each agency.



When asked about the potential expansion of services into Sarpy County and what their vision would be for future service, the existing transit agencies focused on expanding services west and connections/coordination among all the transit systems. Stakeholders discussed transit service to the Westport area and would like to see service provided to the SIDs which are outside of city limits where residents do not have access to any transit service. The transit agencies acknowledged the need for expanded transit to include general public transportation.

The transit agencies discussed future funding scenarios for Sarpy County, including a potential property tax increase. However, any proposed transit improvement should also include other public works projects to garner the most support. In addition, elected officials and the community must understand transit services, future needs and demand for support.

### Nonprofit Organizations

One nonprofit stakeholder (Blackhills Works) attended the meeting on April 6<sup>th</sup>. Input was collected, with the suggestion to present at the MAPA Coordinating Transportation Committee at the next month's meeting.

Information was gathered regarding transportation services from the Blackhills Works (BHW). The agency provides transportation for its employees to Offutt Air Force Base contract areas. Employment hours are typically beyond the normal day shift. In addition, employees do not live near the base; some, living in southwest Omaha.

Blackhills Works regularly participates in the MAPA Coordinated Transit Committee and has been a grantee of MAPA through various FTA programs for an extended period of time. As a part of the coordinated transit efforts, BHW encourages and supports increased transit service in the region and is willing to assist in that effort.

Additional nonprofit input was gathered at the April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 MAPA Coordinated Transit Committee meeting, as described earlier in this chapter.



### Correctional Institutions

The final stakeholder interview was held for the Sarpy County Corrections Department; however, no stakeholders were available that day. Information from the Sarpy County Corrections Department was gathered during the Steering Committee Meeting on April 7, 2016.

The Sarpy County Corrections Department needs transportation for individuals needing to access the Corrections Department as a part of their probation or parole requirements. In the past, individuals could not access the Justice Center due to limited transit service and have been late or missed appointments for parole or probation. At times, Corrections Department staff provided last mile connections or full transportation to individuals having difficulty traveling to/from the Justice Center.

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# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

## Chapter 6 Needs/Gaps/Future Demand

Identifying needs and demand for future public transit in Sarpy County is one tool for agencies to use in local and county transportation and land use plans. The intent of the data is to identify deficiencies in the existing transit services that contribute to public transit being a less than competitive travel mode to the single occupant vehicle.

As clearly shown in **Chapter 3** of this report, significant growth is expected in Sarpy County over the next 20 years. The data within is report will provide guidance for improvement to increase public transit planning and usage within the County, thereby reducing congestion levels on the roadway and increasing public transit ridership.

The best approach for forecasting demand and estimating need is to use multiple methodologies and then evaluate the results in the context of the specific conditions for Sarpy County. The multiple methods are detailed below.

### 6.1 Community Needs – Summary from Public Input

One method of identifying needs is going to the community to understand their perception of public transit, what needs do they have, and what do they want to see. As discussed in the previous chapter, many residents were not aware of the existing *Metro Express Bus* transit service that operates during the weekday. Many stakeholders and residents did know of the specialized transit services offered to elderly residents and disabled residents, but did not know when or where it operated. This study created an opportunity to educate the partners of this study about the existing services and allowed the study team to begin developing the vision of what the citizens of Sarpy County want near-term and in the future.

To summarize the needs from our first round of public input, the following list provides the information to be used in the development of alternatives in the next phase of the study.

- Transit service should be efficient, convenient, and affordable.
- Call-a-Ride service would be good for more rural areas without pedestrian infrastructure. Express Bus service should get to destinations faster than the automobile. Explore rideshare options, such as carpool/vanpool services.
- Public transit should be in Sarpy County.
- Public transit needs are different on the eastern side of the county than on the west.



- Land use development must be denser along primary corridors to support public transportation.
- Transit solutions must be creative, not just a fixed route big bus.

The overall theme from the first round of public input is that public transportation does not need to be provided everywhere in Sarpy County to be effective. Future service will work best where it can be provided quickly, frequently, and along dense, mixed-use corridors. Both future transit investments and land development should be directed towards key areas of the system to provide convenient travel opportunities, which reduces individual automobile travel.

## 6.2 Geographic Gap Method

The geographic gap method identifies areas where transit does not effectively cover an area of the community, making transit inconvenient for citizens to access. *Metro* does provide limited express service into Sarpy County; however, due to regulations in the 1972 Legislative Bill 1275, the legally formed Authority for the City of Omaha is restricted to operate outside the city limits, unless *Metro* is reimbursed for all operational and capital expenses. To ensure transit service does go beyond the Omaha City limits, *Metro* has cooperative contracts for the express route service with Council Bluffs, Bellevue, and the cities of Ralston, La Vista and Papillion. To date, the latter communities have focused on specialized services, not general public, which does leave a geographic gap of transit service today.

Sarpy County today has approximately 166,000 residents and continues to grow and is predicted to do so in future. The population is expected to reach approximately 275,000 residents by 2040. This population growth must be met with greater development and employment opportunities. Future residents of Sarpy County will likely require increased travel capacity for more trips to work, shopping and recreation. In order to avoid traffic congestion issues while potentially reducing vehicle miles traveled and subsequently greenhouse gases, transit access must be readily available as an alternative transportation mode.

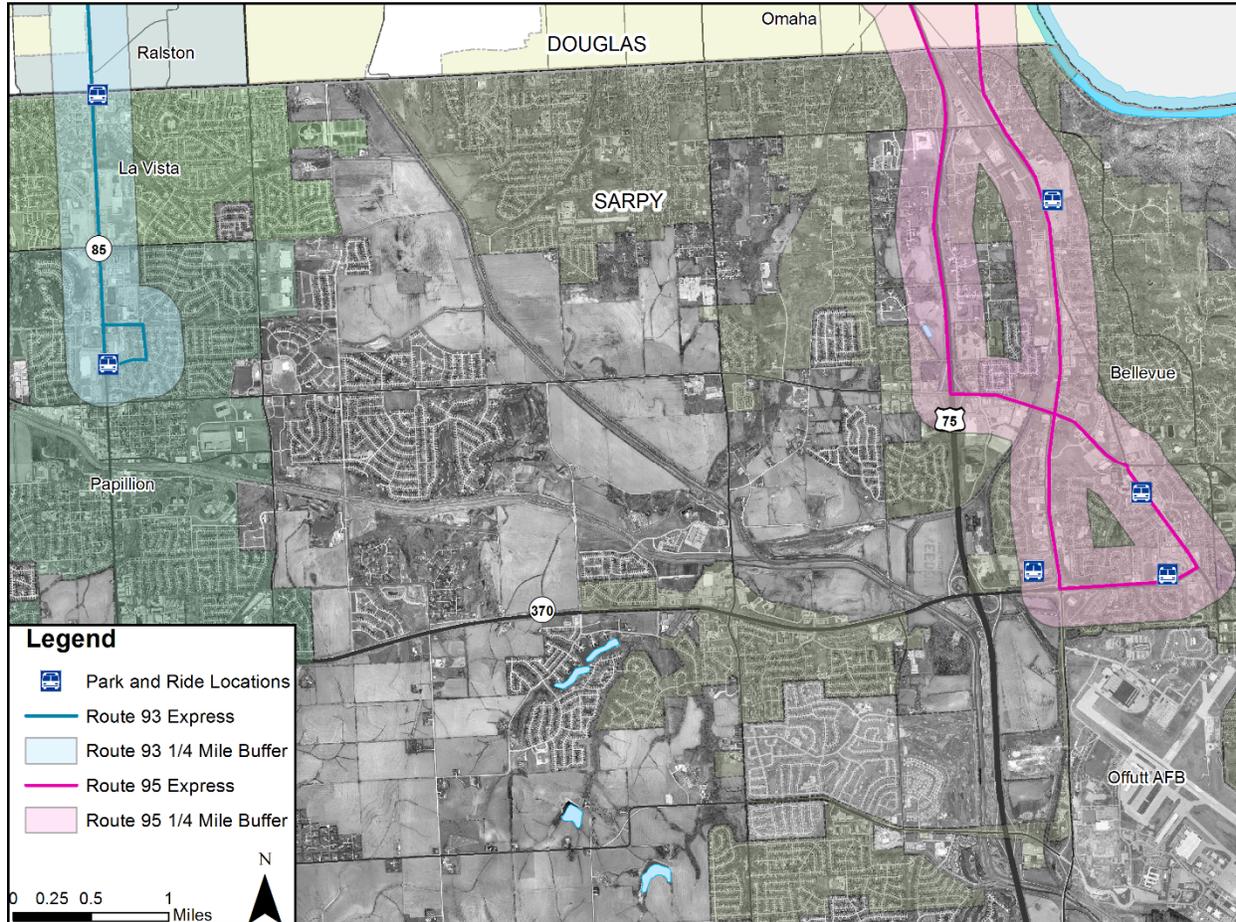
**Figure 6-1** shows the existing *Metro* Express Bus routes in Sarpy County, in addition to a ¼-mile buffer, which is a rule of thumb for how far most people will walk to a transit stop. In this case, all of the stops are at the park and ride lots, with few pedestrian connections to residential areas. Therefore, the general public transit service seems sparse in Sarpy County, with the majority of *Metro* services focused in the urban area of Omaha.



Sarpy County does not have the concentrated population density of a large city like Omaha, Des Moines, or Kansas City, which may sustain levels of over 80 people per acre in certain

areas. The majority of Sarpy County has very low densities. Areas with the greatest population density include the eastern portion of the County, near Bellevue, Ralston, and Papillion. The majority of Sarpy County does not have general public transportation, which is a large geographic gap.

Figure 6-1 Existing Metro Express Routes with 1/4-mile Boundary

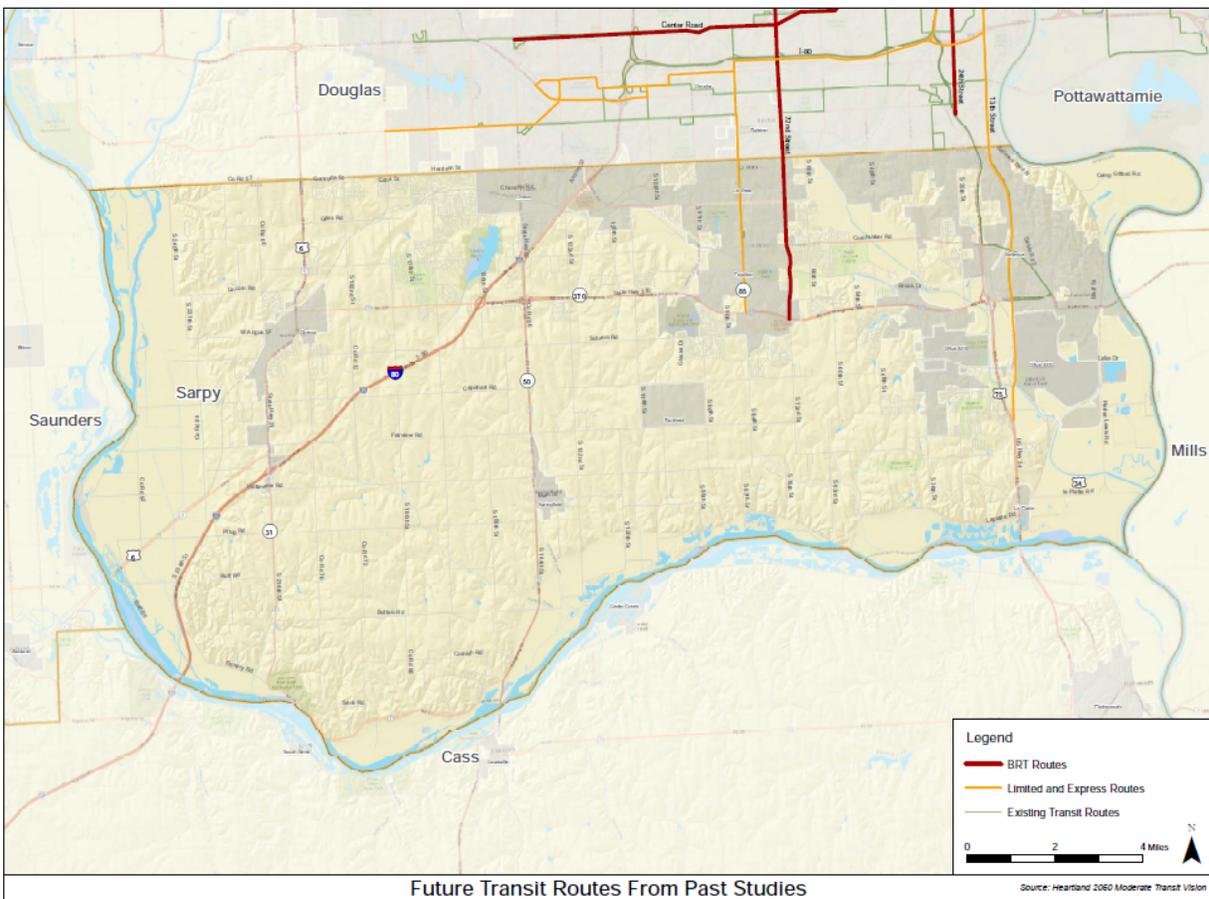


### 6.3 Future Geographic Gaps

As Sarpy’s population grows as predicted over the next 10 to 20 years, the increasing population will require new development. From a transit perspective, the most efficient and cost-effective way to accommodate new development is through infill, which may increase population along existing transit corridors. This way, additional travel demand can be accommodated through increased frequency rather than extending or adding new routes.

New development in western and southern Sarpy County is planned for lower densities. Despite this low density future development, the MAPA Regional Transit Vision identified several high capacity rapid transit service corridors and express route corridors. The overall goal for local comprehensive planning and land use plans will be to support these corridors with increased transit service that will reduce vehicle dependency and promote alternative transportation modes, thus creating new transit ridership potential for *Metro*. Future system resources should ensure proper access, right-of-way, and policy development in the areas to support increased transit service. **Figure 6-2** presents the proposed high capacity transit corridors.

Figure 6-2 Proposed High Capacity Transit Corridors

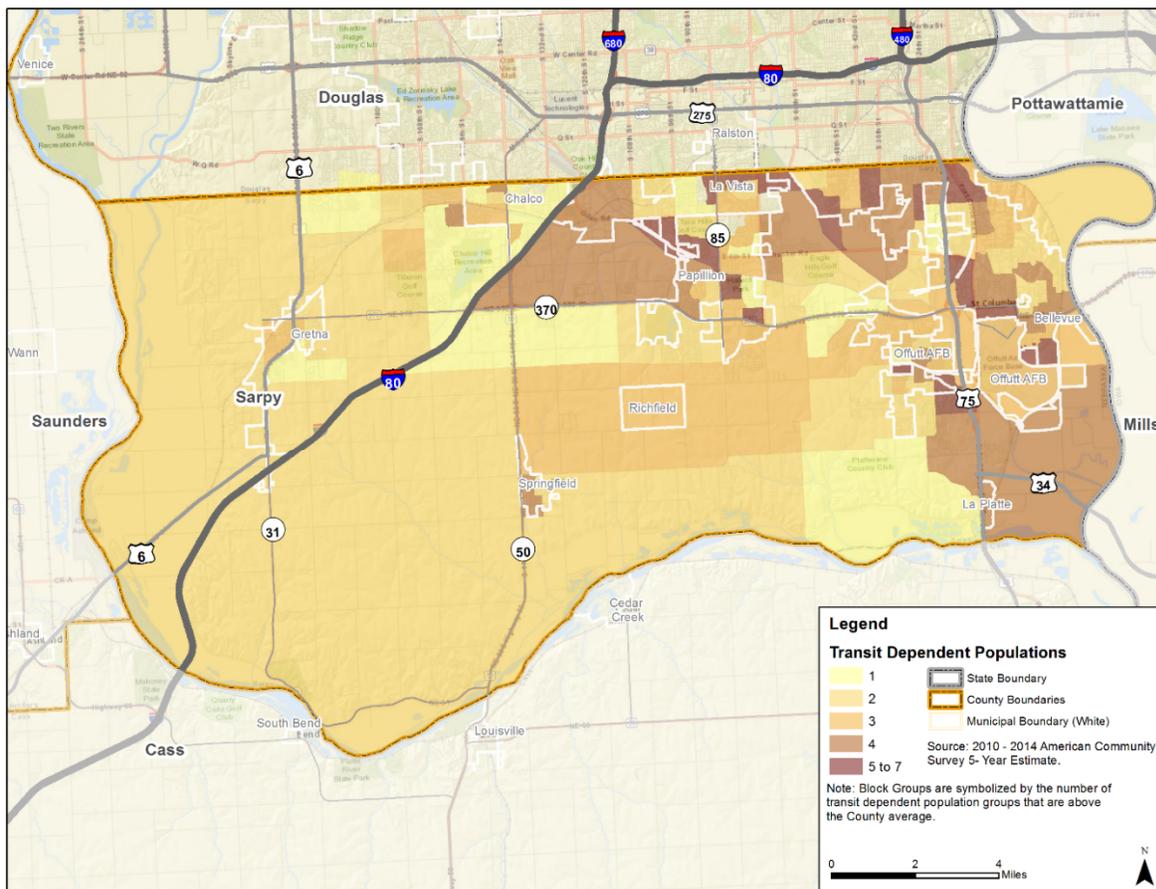


### 6.4 Transit Propensity

Specifically related to the geographic gap of services, is the transit propensity data presented in **Chapter 3** of this report. Because Sarpy County has a vast area without general public transit service, the transit propensity data shows the areas within the county with the highest need for public transportation based upon socio-economic factors and demographic data. These areas, shown in **Figure 6-3** indicate pockets of the county with a high propensity to use public transportation. As future transit service is developed through this planning process, the areas with highest propensity are a key factor.

The majority of Sarpy County residents do not live within the vicinity of the existing general public transit service. The areas with high employment density do not have transit service today. Some of the higher density residential developments do not have existing transit service. Knowing the land use and development patterns presented in **Chapter 3**, future transit planning should reflect those projected changes. Many streets within Sarpy County are designed in a disjointed/disconnected manner which requires a lengthy, complex transit service. Future street networks should be designed to be as simple and connective as possible.

Figure 6-3 Sarpy County – Areas with Highest Transit Need

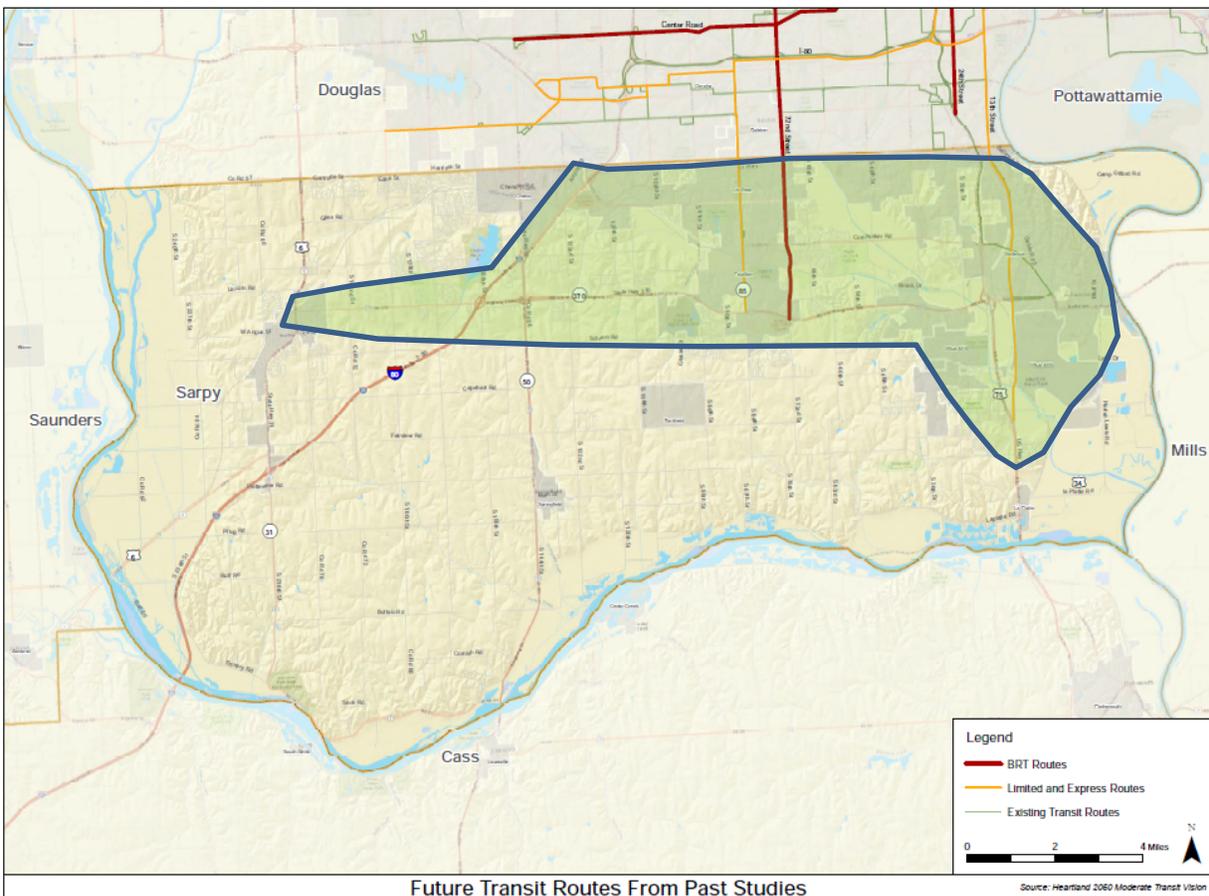


### 6.5 Geographic Gap Summary

In addition to the high capacity transit corridors identified previously, Highway 370 should be included as a high capacity transit corridor for Sarpy County. The growth projected along the corridor is significant, which supports transit service in the future. The existing Platteview Road Corridor Study for MAPA and the Metropolitan Travel Improvement Study (MTIS) for NDOR reflect growth from east to west **and provide an opportunity for public transportation to be a solution to projected congestion.**

Future transit service within the high intensity transit corridors should be provided in context with the population density of the development, and designed to provide direct service and links to major activity centers. **Figure 6-4** presents the highest demand area for Sarpy County based upon the transit propensity information presented in Chapter 3, projected population and employment, and anticipated congestion. The outlying areas of Sarpy County also warrant public transit service; however, it does not have to be a large, fixed route vehicle. These areas could be effectively served with other modes of public transportation, such as Call-a-ride services, rideshare services, or flexible transit routes.

Figure 6-4 Sarpy County Highest Transit Demand Area



## 6.6 Policy Gaps

Transit-related policies include county and municipality policies in place to provide quality transit service, as well as to encourage land development design favoring public transportation. These policies are important for congestion reduction in the region and are included generically in the existing local plans. Policy gaps occur where existing policies are too vague and do not adequately support the provision of both transit service and transit-friendly land development.

Existing plans for the communities in Sarpy County include policies related to streets and highways, public transit, pedestrians and bicycles, railroads, and air and water transportation. The overall aim of the plans to develop an integrated transportation system that provides safe efficient movement of people and goods is a good goal. However, many of the public transportation sections of the plans are not specific with recommendations and are too general to guide future development to support multimodal transportation.

Overall themes from the plans include policies for building a multimodal network with adequate provisions for all uses, encouraging public transit as an alternative to automobile transportation, and providing for appropriate transit facilities to make service successful. The policies recognize transit's role as a mobility provider in the network; however, they do not go so far to suggest transit be considered the preferred form of mobility over the automobile. This is realistic for Sarpy County. However, with the projected growth in the county and no existing transit service, stronger policies need to be in place to advance public transit as an alternatives mode of transportation for our residents.



To strengthen languages in the local plans, they should include policies which require public transportation to be given preference as the desired mobility along certain designated corridors (such as the high capacity corridors and the highest transit needs area identified above). Transit preference could include transit priority measures, such as Bus-on-Shoulder transit service, shared/dedicated lanes, or removal of on-street parking. This designation of hierarchy helps to elevate transit and promote transit-related infrastructure improvements.

The plans must also include policies which relate to funding transit improvements, which are typically broad and nonspecific. These policies must be refined in the future to better address appropriate funding measures through the development of the Transit Program. Types of funding sources should be tied to the location of service of project and the amounts of people/businesses benefitting from the improvements, and whether funding needs to stem from current or future sources.

Other sections within the local and county plans include Land Use, Housing, and Community Development sections, etc. which recognize the importance in some areas of the County higher-

density development, infill development, and mixed-use development in minimizing urban sprawl and reducing congestion. These policies lay out a basic framework for encouraging transit-friendly development; however, many lack specific details as to how such development is accomplished in terms of subdivision and road design. Transit Oriented Development is often mentioned without specific guidelines as to what this form of development actually entails.

## 6.7 Development Patterns

A number of design strategies for development contributes to a “transit-friendly” environment. In such areas, transit is as accessible and easy to use as automobile transportation.

- **Dense development.** While “density” may be an unattractive concept to some, transit-supportive densities do not have to consist of high-rise development. Transit service is effective at densities of at least 10-12 people per acre, which corresponds to roughly 4 dwelling units per acre. Denser development, such as two- or three-story apartments or townhomes, are also well-suited for transit services.
- **Connective street patterns.** Grid-type street patterns which intersect regularly are easy for transit vehicles, passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists to understand and navigate. Disconnected or meandering street patterns, which include cul-de-sacs or other non-through streets, interrupt the flow of travel and are difficult to navigate.
- **Corridor-type development.** Transit works well where a variety of land uses are present on a single corridor, allowing passengers to access many destinations on a single transit route. The high capacity transit corridors, shown above, are examples of this development.
- **Minimal setbacks.** In many developments today, homes or shopping are set back far from arterial streets, often with walls or parking lots in between the street and the ultimate destination. This kind of development favors the automobile and discourages transit. Keeping development close to the street helps make transit more convenient.
- **Minimal parking requirements.** Excessive development of parking lots takes up valuable space and does not contribute to the appearance or vibrancy of the city environment. Parking should be provided in reasonable amount for the types of land uses developed. Some transit oriented developments include maximum, rather than minimum, parking requirements so as to curtail automobile use and promote transit.



Current development in Sarpy County includes a mix of design strategies, some transit-friendly; however, many favor automobile transportation. The older communities in eastern Sarpy County have more dense development and grid street patterns. Commercial uses are found on major corridors while residential uses are found on neighborhood streets. This type of development

can be served well with transit routes running along major streets and residents have an easy walk to access service.

In more recent years, residential and commercial development has trended towards lower-density development along meandering or disconnected street patterns. This type of development favors the automobile and is found in many areas in west Sarpy County and the south. These developments include many cul-de-sacs, few through streets, walls on each side of the street, and difficult access for potential transit riders.

Transit oriented development (TOD) refers to a particular style of urban design which is meant to encourage transit use. TOD is an appropriate design strategy for outer areas of a city, especially at the ends of high capacity transit corridors. Infill development, however, may combine elements of TOD, as discussed in the above text, with principles of good neighborhood design – higher densities, connective streets, mixed uses. Zoning regulations should be provided for these types of developments.

Land development proposals for the local municipalities and the county should be reviewed for their adherence to the principles of transit-friendly design. Some key questions to instate during the development review process is to ask if the development proposals include:

- Is this development within the high capacity transit corridors or in the high transit need area for Sarpy County?
- Are the densities proposed in this development consistent with transit supportive density requirements?
- Is the street pattern connective and easy to understand? Is there a clear and easy path available for pedestrian access to nearby activity centers and transit service?
- How will the residents of this development access shopping and other commercial needs? Are mixed uses planned within the development or available nearby?
- Can people easily access major streets from homes or shops, or are there barriers such as parking lots or walls? Is the development pedestrian-friendly?



For public transportation to make an impact on the future development and growth in Sarpy County, the above policy recommendations address specific policy gaps and are a starting point for the local municipalities and the county.

## 6.8 Mobility Gap Methodology

Evaluating transit plans typically includes a careful analysis of identifying the transit needs and potential demand for future services. The mobility gap methodology is the total number of trips

not taken because members of zero-vehicle households do not have the ease of mobility available to members of households with ready access to a car. The mobility gap for the nation as a whole and the nine Census regions has been developed from data in the 2009 National Household Travel Survey. A mobility gap estimate based on household vehicle availability, with the gap measured in trips per day, is computed as:

$$\text{Need (trips)} = \text{Number of Households having No Car} \times \text{Mobility Gap}$$

The mobility gap computation uses households with no vehicle available multiplied by the gap number for Nebraska (sited in the TCRP 161 report) to estimate the daily mobility gap. The estimate produced by the mobility gap methodology is measured in one-way trips per day.<sup>2</sup>

To produce an estimate for annual need, it is recommended that the daily Mobility Gap figure be multiplied by 300 days. This figure reflects that trip need is likely reduced on the weekends, but annual need is not just associated with weekdays. This results in an **annual need of 1,092,420 trips for Sarpy County**, as shown in **Table 6-1**.<sup>3</sup>

Table 6-1 Mobility Gap Transit Need

Sarpy County Mobility Gap and Transit Need					
0-Vehicle Households in Sarpy County	x	Mobility Gap Factor for Nebraska	=	Daily Transit Need	Annual Transit Need
1,734	x	2.1 trips	=	3,641	1,092,420

TCRP 161 - <http://www.trb.org/TCRP/Blurbs/168758.aspx>

The estimates of need made using the mobility gap method are typically **far greater than the number of trips actually observed** on transit systems and are likely greater than the demand that would be generated for any practical level of service.

Today, approximately 40,000 annual trips are provided by *Metro* and the identified providers discussed in Chapter 4. Approximately four percent of the total need from the Mobility Gap methodology is being met, as shown in **Table 6-2**.

Table 6-2 Mobility Gap Methodology

Ridership	Agency
18,725	<i>Metro</i>
9,100	Bellevue
4,960	La Vista / Ralston
5,020	Papillion
2,030	ENOA
<b>39,835</b>	<b>Total Ridership</b>
<b>4%</b>	<b>Need Met Today</b>

<sup>2</sup> The demand analysis is based on methodologies developed for the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the American Academy of Scientists.

<sup>3</sup> TCRP 161 - <http://www.trb.org/TCRP/Blurbs/168758.aspx>

Much of the remaining trip-based mobility gap is likely filled by friends and relatives driving residents of non-car-owning households. Therefore, as Sarpy County continues to increase public transportation for residents in the community, it would be recommended to establish a target or goal for the proportion of the gap to be satisfied by publicly provided services.

### 6.9 Peer Data Demand Methodology

The Peer Data Demand Methodology calculates the transit usage in the current area or other similar peer areas and forecasts ridership with a similar level of service. Applying the transit ridership per capita for the existing ridership level (Sarpy today = 0.2) - in other words, future transit service would remain status quo – just as it is today – expected ridership would be approximately 65,851. This calculation uses the population projections discussed in **Chapter 3**. **Table 6-3** presents the transit projections.

The transit ridership per capita for Omaha is 5.9 and slightly lower for Tulsa, OK at 4.8. When averaged, the result is 5.4. Should Sarpy County implement transit services to the level in Omaha and Tulsa, the transit demand results in approximately 1.5M annual trips. A more realistic scenario for Sarpy County is using 2.0 for the ridership per capita, which results in approximately 549,000 annual one-way trips.

Table 6-3 Peer Data Transit Demand Methodology

Peer Data Transit Demand			
Transit System	Population	Ridership	Ridership per Capita
Omaha	725,008	4,307,165	5.9
Kansas City	1,519,417	16,181,226	10.6
Des Moines	450,070	4,449,816	9.9
Tulsa	655,479	3,155,745	4.8
Albuquerque	741,318	13,150,338	17.7
Grand Rapids	569,935	12,506,289	21.9
Tucson	843,168	20,873,321	24.8
<i>All Systems Average</i>			<b>13.7</b>
<b>Omaha/Tulsa Average</b>			<b>5.4</b>
Sarpy County – 2016	165,955	39,835	0.2
Sarpy County – 2040	274,338	65,851	0.2
Sarpy County – 2040	274,338	1,475,289	5.4
<b>Sarpy County - 2040</b>	<b>274,338</b>	<b>548,676</b>	<b>2.0</b>

### 6.10 Employment Demand Methodology

Transit demand generated by residents commuting to work is one methodology calculated for Sarpy County.<sup>4</sup> Using the employment flow data from the 2013 US Census and transit mode

<sup>4</sup> TCRP 49, pg 27

share percentages identified in the TCRP methodology, potential employment commute trips were calculated. Work trips were calculated for work trips to/from Douglas and Pottawattamie Counties. Using this methodology, the potential number of trips by transit was calculated, and shown in **Table 6-4**. As indicated, the highest potential for commuter transit trips is from Sarpy to Douglas County with approximately 140,000 annual passenger trips. Sarpy to Pottawattamie County generates approximately 7,200 annual one-way trips. The total demand using the Employment Methodology is approximately 148,000 annual one-way trips.

Table 6-4 Employment Demand Methodology

Employment Demand				
Travel Pattern	Total Commuters	Transit Mode Share	Daily Commuters	Annual 1-way pass/trip
Sarpy to Douglas	44,998	1.2%	540	140,394
Sarpy to Pottawattamie	2,328	1.2%	28	7,263
<b>Total Annual Demand</b>				<b>147,657</b>

### 6.11 Summary of Sarpy County Needs and Demand

A summary of the results of the Methodologies are presented in **Table 6-5**. These estimates are not cumulative. Different approaches focus on different markets. Other methodologies exist; however substantial data collection is needed (and outside the scope of this project) to feed into the models for appropriate projections. One additional Methodology was researched using the existing US Census data mode of transportation to work by bus. However, for Sarpy County, due to the exiting limited services, the census reported less than one percent (approximately 130 people) of the total population used transit for commuting to/from work. Existing demand for this data resulted in approximately 66,000 annual one-way trips, assuming each person travels round trip, works five days per week, for 50 weeks of the year, which is significantly lower than the other methodologies. While the demand forecasts have highly variable results, they are useful in identifying a range of demand for Sarpy County.

Table 6-5 Summary of Methodologies

Summary of Need and Demand in Sarpy County	
<b>Need</b>	
Mobility Gap Transit Need	1,092,420
<b>Demand</b>	
Employment Demand	147,657
Peer Data Methodology	548,676
<i>NOTE: Demand Methodologies overlap. Demand assumes a high level of transit in the area.</i>	

# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

## Chapter 7 Peer Communities

### 7.1 Introduction

Chapter 7 provides a host of information regarding peer communities for the Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study. An overview of the peer selection process is described and transit agency data analyzed. Peer communities were identified in cooperation with project stakeholders based upon the most recent data available.

### 7.2 Methodology and Selection Criteria

To identify and select peer communities, the Study Team reviewed previously adopted studies in the MAPA region where peer community reviews were conducted. This review resulted in the identification of over 40 potential peer communities. However, many of the studies reviewed were not focused on the transit services to/from suburban areas and did not meet the needs of this study. Selection criteria were used to determine the communities with similar characteristics to Sarpy County.

With the assistance of stakeholders, the study team determined that total population, population density, service area, regional preference, the existing types of services/modes offered, existing operating budget, ridership statistics, and the availability of service in suburban areas be used as criteria to select an initial list of ten peer communities. It should be noted that regional preference was also used as a qualitative criterion used to identify areas with similar cultural and geographic properties to the Omaha metropolitan area.

An initial list of ten potential peer communities was provided to the project working group in order to determine a final list of six peers. The initial list of peer communities is shown below in **Table 7-1**.

Table 7-1 Initial Peer Communities

	Community	Selected
1	Des Moines, IA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Colorado Springs, CO	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Albuquerque, NM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Johnson County, Kansas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Tucson, AZ	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Grand Rapids, MI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Harrisburg, PA	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Little Rock, AR	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Toledo, OH	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Tulsa, OK	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



The initial list was reviewed by the study stakeholders for their applicability to local conditions and six communities were carried forward for further analysis. **Table 7-2** lists the selected peer communities along with the relevant information for the selection criteria. Data for the selected communities was drawn from the National Transit Database (NTD) 2013 dataset. It is important to note that the communities identified are listed by their Urbanized Area.

Table 7-2 Selected Peer Communities

Criteria	Omaha	Kansas City	Des Moines	Tulsa	Albuquerque	Grand Rapids	Tucson
<b>Population</b>	725,008	1,519,417	450,070	655,479	741,318	569,935	843,168
<b>Population Density</b>	2,098	2,242	2,244	1,651	2,959	2,031	2,385
<b>Service Area (Sq. Miles)</b>	178	332	163	196	235	185	230
<b>Regional Preference</b>	NA	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N
<b>Existing Types of Services/Modes</b>	2	5	4	2	2	4	3
<b>Existing Transit Operating Budget</b>	\$26,631,092	\$81,214,338	\$22,637,301	\$17,670,277	\$43,198,824	\$41,251,361	\$70,923,667
<b>Ridership</b>	4,307,165	16,181,226	4,449,816	3,155,745	13,150,338	12,506,289	20,873,321
<b>Existing Services to Suburban Areas</b>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Suburban Location in a Major Metropolitan Area</b>	Bellevue-52,690 La Vista-17,125 Papillion-21,921 Gretna-5,584 Springfield-1,615	Johnson County-574,272	Ankeny-49,488 West Des Moines-59,815 Urbandale-41,157 Altoona-15,317	Sand Springs-19,277 Jenks-18,312	Los Ranchos de Albuquerque-6,074 Rio Rancho 90,627	Walker-24,015 Wyoming-73,434 Grandville-15,613 Kentwood-49,736	Marana-37,028 Sahuarita-26,441 Green Valley-22,519 Oro Valley-41,493

Source: National Transit Database, 2013 <http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/data.htm>

### 7.3 Peer Communities Overview

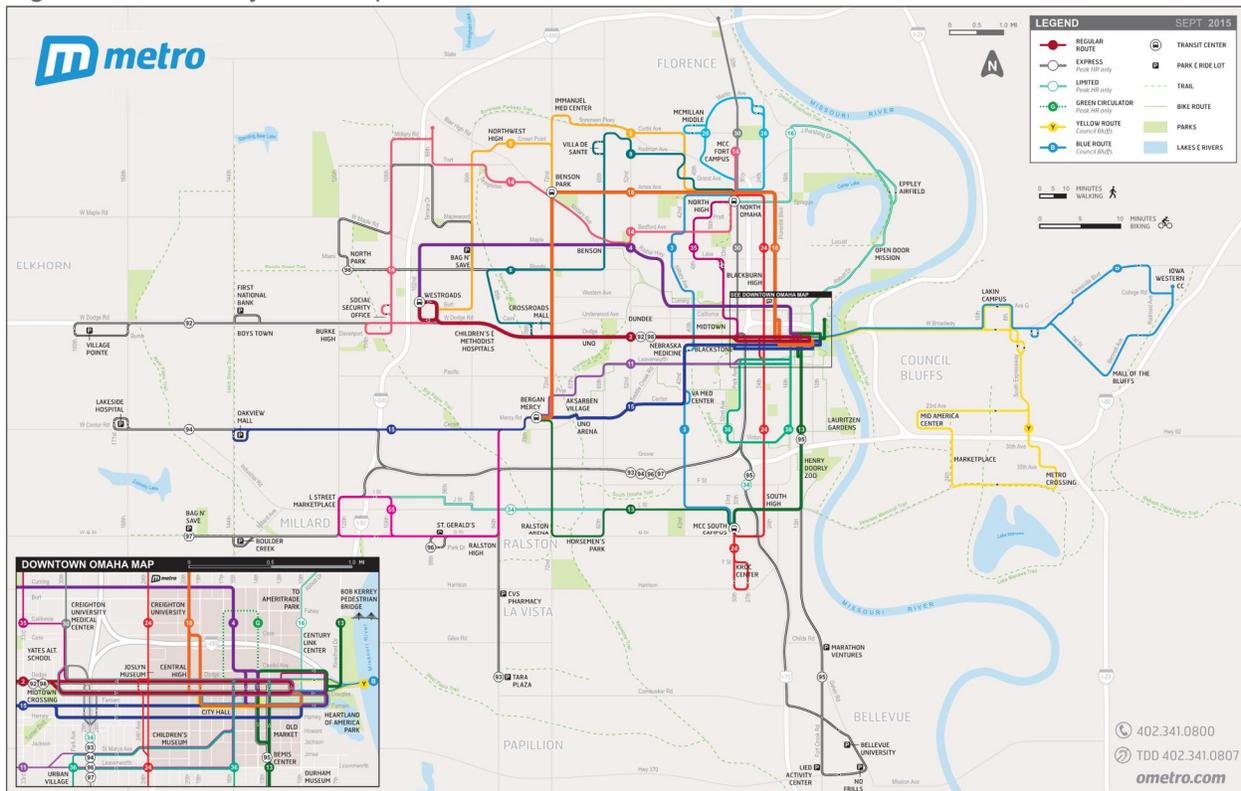
This section provides a brief overview of Omaha and each peer community. Each community is discussed as an Urbanized Area (UZA), as opposed to a metropolitan area, to maintain consistency with NTD data. An urbanized area is a census designated geography consisting of a densely developed territory that contains a minimum residential population of 50,000 people. Urbanized areas do not conform to congressional districts or any other political boundaries. Sarpy County, the focus of this study, is a part of the Omaha UZA.

#### Omaha, Nebraska

Located in south eastern Nebraska on the Missouri River, Omaha is the largest city by population in the state. The Omaha UZA has a population of 725,008.

Transit service in Omaha is provided by the Transit Authority of Omaha, known as *Metro*. *Metro* has 27 fixed bus routes, including seven express routes. *Metro* also provides demand response service. **Figure 7-1** on the following page shows the *Metro* system.

Figure 7-1 *Metro* System Map



Source: Metro, <http://www.ometro.com/index.php/bus-system/system-map/>.

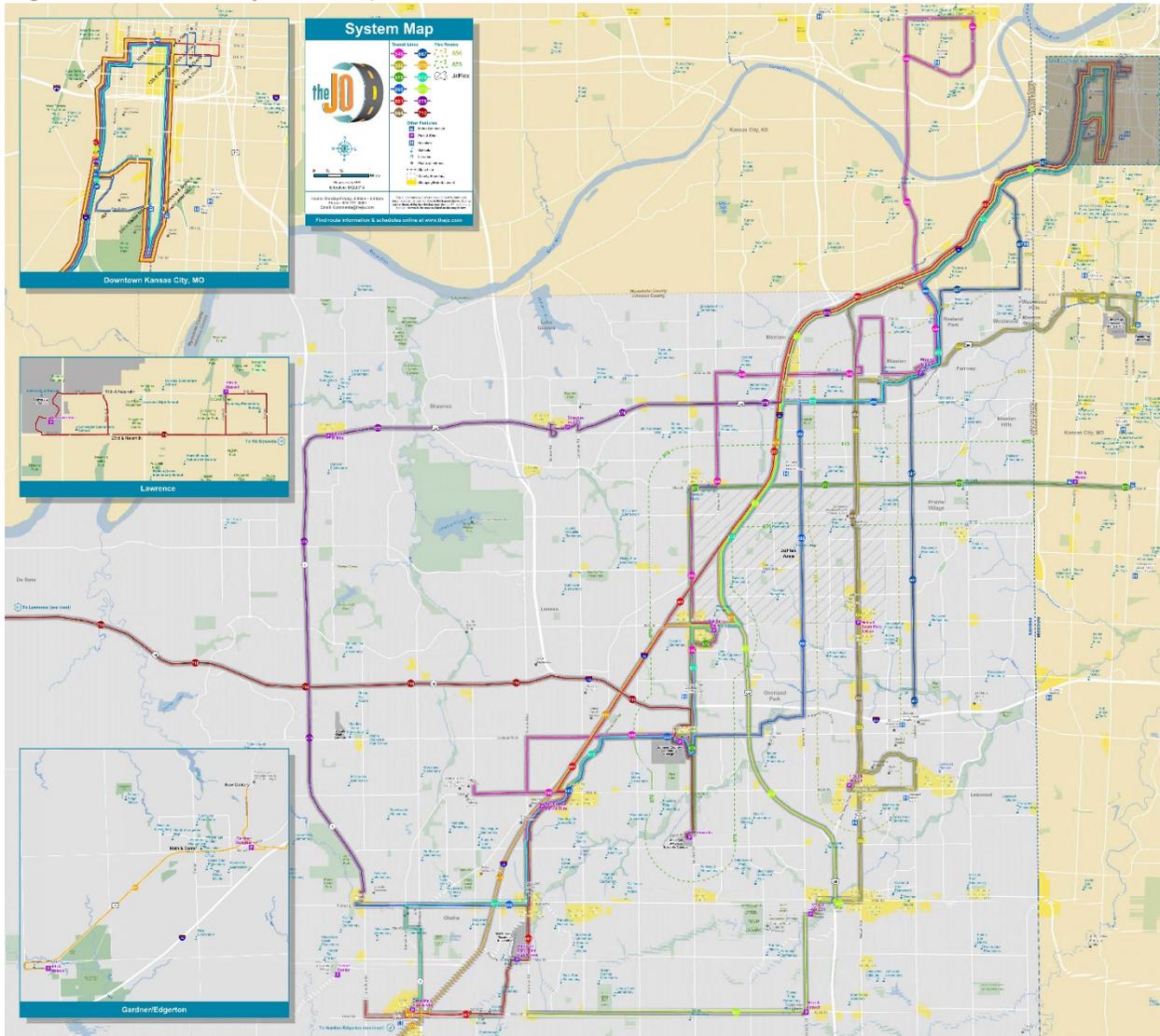
### Johnson County, Kansas

Johnson County is located in northeast Kansas on the border of Kansas and Missouri and is the largest county in the state by population. Parts of Johnson County are included in the Kansas City Urbanized Area (UZA). The Kansas City UZA has a population of 1,519,417.

Transit service in Kansas City is managed by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), including transit service in Johnson County referred to as The JO. Previously, it was managed separately by Johnson County Transit. However, Johnson County now pays KCATA an annual fee to manage the service. KCATA in the process of rebranding all transit in the region as RideKC. The RideKC streetcar will start operations in 2016. Johnson County is adjacent to the KC metro area, similar to Sarpy County and Omaha.

The JO system has 14 fixed bus routes including two flex bus routes. The JO also provides demand response and demand response-taxi services. **Figure 7-2** shows the transit system in Johnson County.

Figure 7-2 The JO System Map



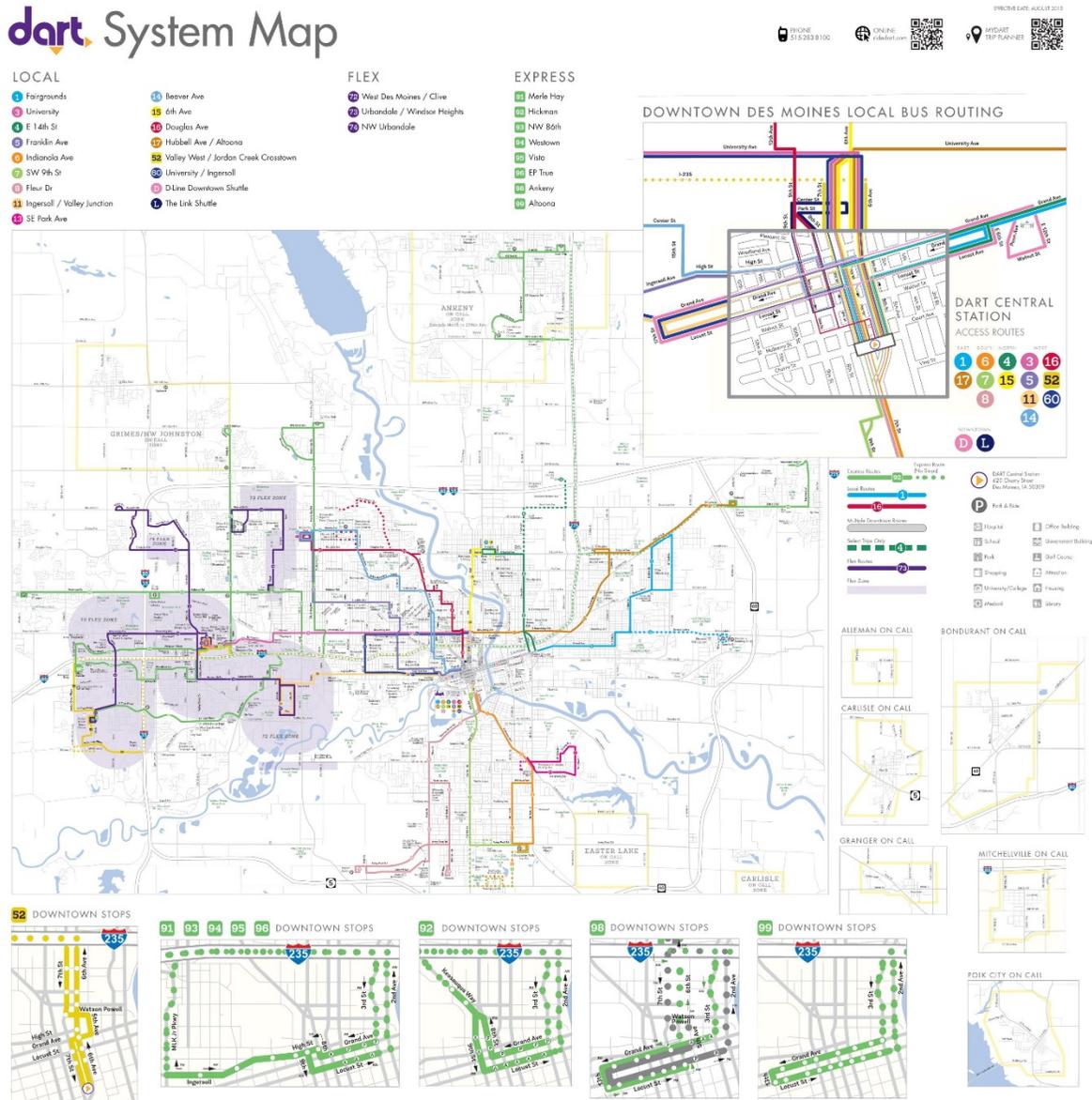
Source: Johnson County Transit, <http://www.jocoqov.org/dept/transit/jo/system-map>.

### Des Moines, Iowa

Located in central Iowa, Des Moines is the state capital of Iowa and is the largest city by population. The Des Moines UZA has a population of 450,070.

Transit service in Des Moines is provided by Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART). The DART system has 28 fixed bus routes including three flex bus routes, and eight express bus routes. The DART also provides demand response, vanpool, and demand response-taxi services. Des Moines has several suburban low density communities surround the metro area, similar to Sarpy County and Omaha. **Figure 7-3** on the following page shows the DART system.

Figure 7-3 DART System Map



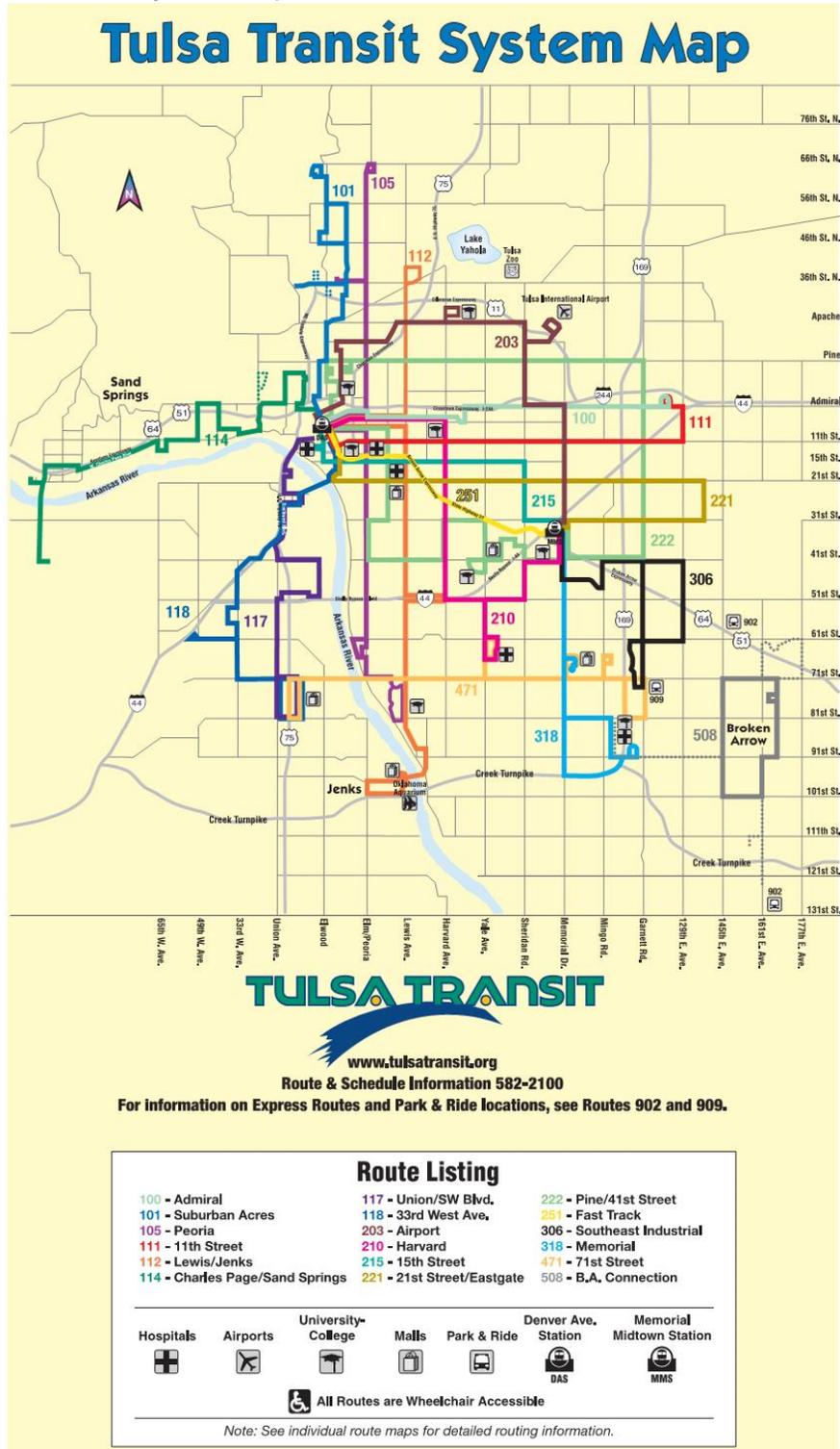
Source: DART, <https://www.ridedart.com/system-overview>.

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Located in northeast Oklahoma on the Arkansas River, Tulsa is the second largest city in Oklahoma. The Tulsa UZA has a population of 655,479.

Transit service in Tulsa is provided by the Metropolitan Tulsa Transit Authority (MTTA). The Tulsa Transit system includes 18 fixed bus routes and demand response service. **Figure 7-4** on the following page shows the Tulsa Transit system map.

Figure 7-4 Tulsa Transit System Map



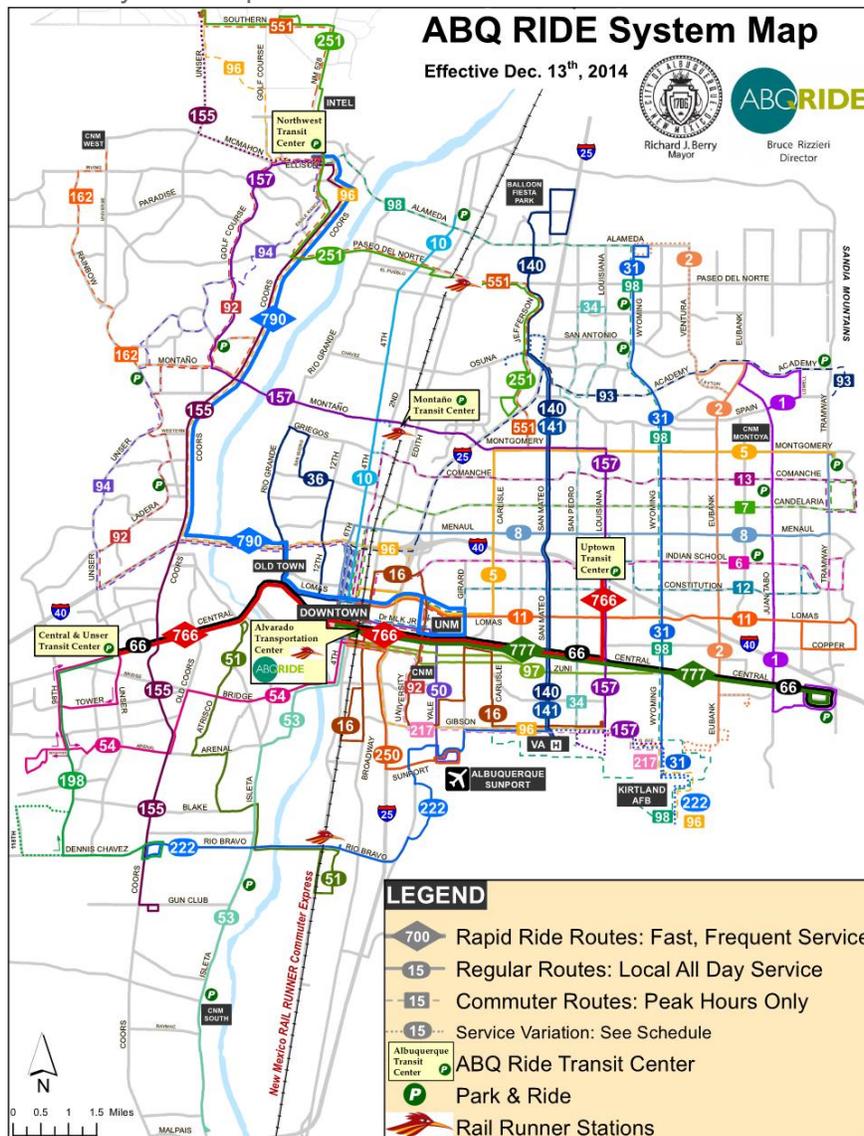
Source: Tulsa Transit, <http://tulsatransit.org/maps-schedules/>.

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Albuquerque is located in central New Mexico straddling the Rio Grande and is the largest city in New Mexico. The Albuquerque UZA has a population of 741,318.

Transit service in Albuquerque is provided by the City of Albuquerque Transit Department, it is known as ABQ Ride. The ABQ Ride system has 36 fixed bus routes including three bus rapid transit (BRT) routes and 10 commuter bus routes. The agency also provides demand response service. In addition, the Rio Metro Regional Transit District, which manages the New Mexico Rail Runner Express commuter rail also operates three fixed bus routes within Albuquerque. **Figure 7-5** shows the ABQ Ride system.

Figure 7-5 ABQ Ride System Map



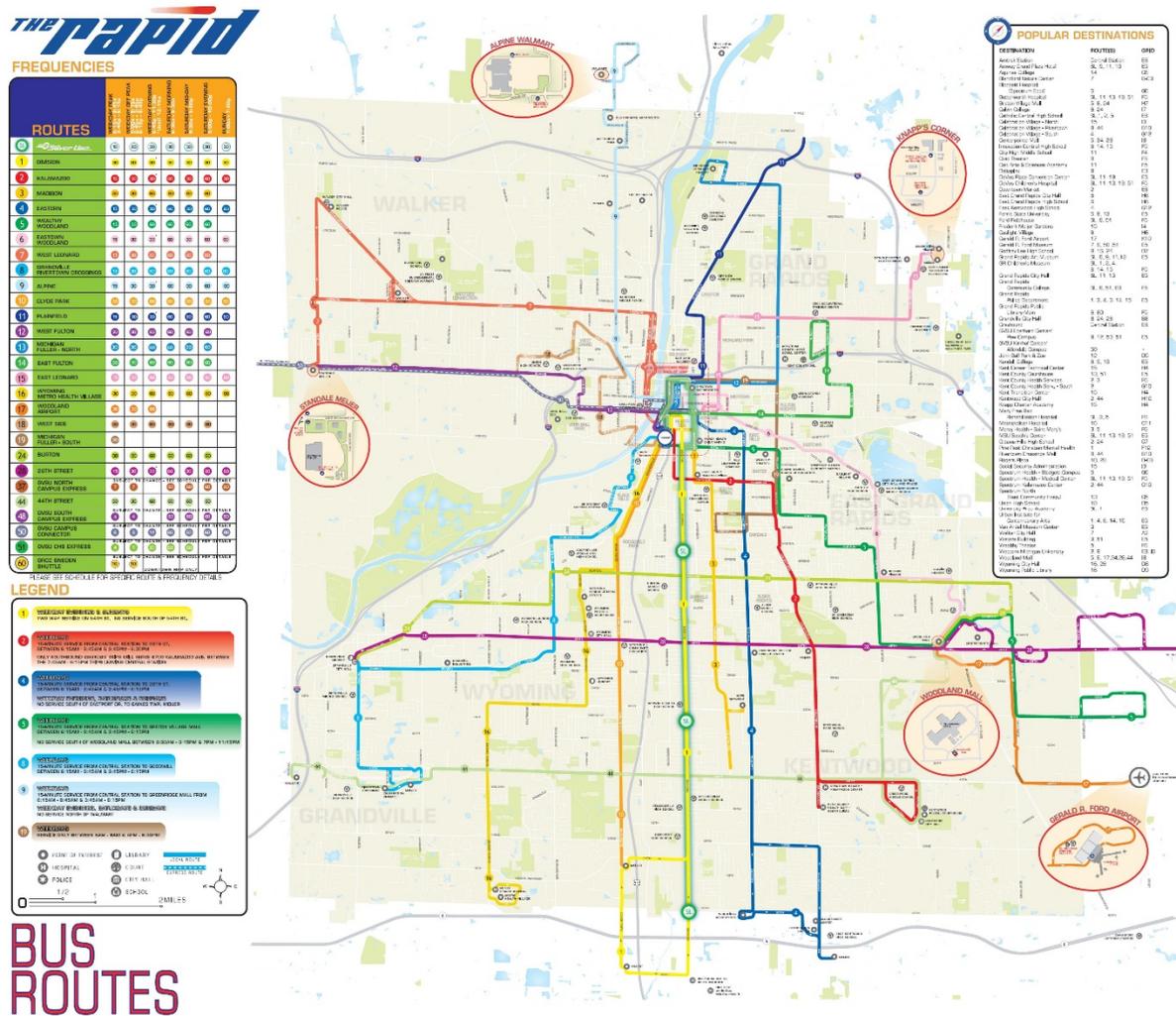
Source: ABQ Ride, <https://www.cabq.gov/transit/bus-routes-and-schedules/bus-route-facility-maps>.

## Grand Rapids, Michigan

Located along the Grand River in western Michigan, Grand Rapids is the second largest city in the state. The Grand Rapids UZA has a population of 569,935.

Transit service in Grand Rapids is provided by the Interurban Transit Partnership, known as The Rapid. The Rapid system has 28 fixed bus routes, including the Silver Line, Michigan's first BRT route. The Rapid also provides demand response and vanpool services. **Figure 7-6** shows The Rapid system.

Figure 7-6 The Rapid System Map



Source: The Rapid, <https://www.ridetherapid.org/schedules-maps>.



## 7.4 Results of Survey Questions

Each transit agency discussed above was contacted by a member of the project team and asked to participate in this peer community review by answering 14 questions. Of the six peer communities, five provided responses. The responding communities were Kansas City, Tulsa, Grand Rapids, Albuquerque, and Tucson. Tucson (Sun Tran) answered 6 of the 14 questions and passed the remaining questions on to the Regional Transit Authority who runs their suburban Sun Shuttle service. The Regional Transit Authority did not provide any additional responses. All of the responses received are summarized in the following sections by question.

### Q1 What type of services do you use to address suburban areas? (Responses 5)

Each of the respondents use a combination of fixed route systems to areas that have ridership to support a transit route and a variety of demand response options.

- Tulsa Transit uses a combination of fixed and flexible route service to serve their suburban area.
- The Rapid uses a reservation-based demand response shuttle service for residents more than 1/3-mile to their destination, or to the nearest fixed route line.
- ABQ Ride uses funding agreements with the Rio Metro Regional Transit District to serve limited commuter service to southern portions of Rio Rancho. The agency works with Bernalillo County to provide local route service to parts of the unincorporated and recently incorporated areas under a separate agreement.
- Sun Tran uses a combination of fixed routes, demand response through dial-a-ride, and an express service for outlying suburban regions. With the regional fare system, the transfer between the Sun Tran, Sun Express, Sun Shuttle, and Sun Link is extremely easy.
- KCATA uses primarily a commuter express system to the suburban regions with limited midday service. Some unique features offered by KCATA include all day weekday service between Johnson County Community College and the University of Kansas in Lawrence, paratransit options for elderly, disabled, or low-income riders through “cutaways” and taxi company contracts, and Johnson County works in conjunction with



Johnson County Developmental Supports clients to offer a dedicated home to work site commute trips.

Q2 Do the outlying areas (cities, counties, other) contribute financially to the route? Which ones? Did the community come to you requesting the service or transit went to the community? How did you determine who contributed how much for outlying services? (Responses 5)

- Sun Tran encompasses the entirety of Pima County and through Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) with each jurisdiction they provide the transit services.
- The six-city authority in Grand Rapids is assessed the same property tax millage rate to support and provide transit. The surrounding areas can purchase fixed route service at an hourly rate.
- In Tulsa, all three cities pay for the support of transit in their individual cities. A variable costs factor is used to charge each city for a transit line fully within their city. For transit lines within multiple cities, the variable cost is proportional to how much of the route is in each jurisdiction.
- ABQ Ride uses MOUs to provide suburban service at the request of the Rio Rancho to enhance their transit service. The MOU with Bernalillo County has been in place so long, it is unknown who originally requested the service.
- In Kansas City, the suburban jurisdiction contracts with KCATA for transit service to the suburban areas, which is typically express commuter service.



Q3 Do you have an MOU in place for suburban services or other areas? (Responses 4)  
Each transit agency responded they enter into contracts or MOUs with their various jurisdictions to provide transit services.

Q4 How does your agency address sharing the cost of routes? (Responses 5)

- Sun Tran's funding area and service area are the same, so it is not necessary for them to share the cost of routes.
- The Rapid provides transit services through a property tax mill. The surrounding areas can purchase fixed route service at an hourly rate.
- In Tulsa, all three cities pay for the support of transit in their individual cities. A variable costs factor is used to charge each city for a transit route within their city. For transit routes within multiple cities, the variable cost is proportional to how much of the route is in each jurisdiction.

- ABQ Ride agreement with Bernalillo County is very detailed describing the cost calculations, whereas Rio Metro contributes to the cost of ABQ Ride routes resulting in less detailed cost sharing calculations.
- KCATA apportions the costs to the ten cities contributing to KCATA on a mileage basis in most cases.

Q5 What performance measures/service standards do you have for flex routes, on call, express routes? Can you send a copy? (Responses 4)

- Tulsa Transit uses ridership through the fare box system.
- KCATA also uses both ridership and an average daily ridership.
- ABQ Ride tracks ridership, in-service bus hours, and calculates the passengers (boardings) per in-service hours.
- In addition to ridership and average week day ridership, Grand Rapids reports monthly on-time performance and average cost of trip information. Below are the tracked highlights from the FY 2015 Annual Report Card.



- **Productivity** – Fixed route ridership (2,044,353) decreased 1.83% (-157,791) compared to the same quarter of FY 2014. This falls below the standard of 4.0%.
- *Preventable Accidents* – There were 1.48 preventable accidents per 100,000 revenue miles in FY 2015. This is 0.02 below the standard of 1.50 preventable accidents per 100,000 revenue miles.
- **Customer Service** – There were 2.09 complaints per 100,000 passengers in FY 2015. This is 1.41 below the standard of 3.50. In addition, there were 0.17 commendations per 100,000 passengers. There is no standard for this category.
- **On-Time Performance** – Routes operated on-time 83.88% of the time in FY 2015. This is 0.88% above the minimum on-time performance standard of 83.00%.
- **Cost Effectiveness** – Cost per passenger was \$3.21 in FY 2015. This is \$0.11 below the standard of \$3.10. In addition, there were 1.96 passengers per revenue mile this fiscal year. This is 0.09 below the standard of 2.05 passengers per revenue mile.

Q6 What individual route ridership, annual revenue hours, revenue miles, and peak vehicles do you have for outlying on-call, flex, and express route services? (Responses 4)

- The Rapid has routes with components of both urban and suburban. They do not split their metrics by urban and suburban.
- ABQ Ride tracks all of the measures noted in the question for each route except revenue miles.
- The Rapid provided the following 2015 and 2016 ridership data for their entire system.
  - Total Ridership by Category:
    - Routes 1 – 44 ridership (3,394,003) decreased 8.0% (-295,587)
    - Contracted/Specialized Service ridership (1,831,341) decreased 0.2% (-3,054)
    - Demand-Response ridership (153,528) decreased 4.1% (-6,570)
    - Total Ridership (5,378,872) decreased 5.4% (-305,211)
      - Daily Averages:
        - Average Weekday total ridership (45,392) decreased 5.4% (-2,613)
        - Average Weekday evening ridership (5,951) decreased 9.8% (-644)
        - Average Saturday ridership (14,653) decreased 6.4% (-1,004)
        - Average Sunday ridership (6,221) decreased 6.1% (-403)

In addition to the yearly data shown above, The Rapid provided monthly ridership and performance data for February 2015 and 2016.

- Total Ridership by Category:
  - Routes 1 – 44 ridership (670,368) increased 0.4% (2,616)
  - Contracted/Specialized Service ridership (416,316) increased 7.4% (28,638)
  - Demand-Response ridership (31,071) decreased 1.4% (-432)
  - Total Ridership (1,117,755) increased 2.8% (30,822)
  - Daily Averages:
    - Average Weekday total ridership (47,706) decreased 2.0% (-992)
    - Average Weekday evening ridership (6,133) decreased 7.4% (-491)
    - Average Saturday ridership (14,833) increased 2.5% (357)
    - Average Sunday ridership (6,380) increased 8.3% (490)



The Rapid's February 2016 fixed-route system performance decreased compared to February 2015 (contracted services not included). Their fixed-route summary is as follows:

- Average passengers per hour (23.0) decreased 5.5% (-0.7 points)
  - Average passengers per mile (1.87) decreased 6.2% (-0.9 points)
  - Average fare box recovery percent (27.8%) increased 4.3% (0.6 points)
  - Average daily passengers (22,589) decreased 3.3% (-1.7 points)
  - Monthly system performance (91.1 points) decreased 3.0% (-2.8 points)
  - FY 2016 system performance (90.7 points) decreased 7.1% (-7.0 points) compared to FY 2015
- KCATA provided the following data from 2015 for The JO routes only.
    - Fixed/Flex vehicles in peak service: 42
    - Fixed/Flex total riders: 476,338
    - Fixed/Flex revenue miles: 1,232,882
    - Fixed/Flex revenue hours: 53,639
    - Special Edition (paratransit) peak vehicles: 7 (excludes the taxi component)
    - Special Edition total riders: 25,429 (excludes the taxi component)
    - Special Edition revenue miles: 201,517 (excludes the taxi component)
    - Special Edition revenue hours: 10,435 (excludes the taxi component)
    - SWIFT (home to work - Johnson County Development Supports clients) peak vehicles: 13
    - SWIFT total riders: 41,041
    - SWIFT revenue miles: 99,093
    - SWIFT revenue hours: 6,210

Q7 What is the key to success in suburban areas? (Responses 4)

- The Rapid indicated being a regional authority allows them to best address the transportation needs regionally, including the use of the PASS shuttle service to reach everyone in their service area.
- KCATA responded success occurs in very specific markets, identifying, prioritizing, and building services in those markets is key.
- Tulsa Transit relies on the local cities to promote the use of transit in their city and it is a city decision to maintain suburban service or not.
- ABQ Ride provides coverage routes that do not always financially warrant service, but fill a community service extremely important to provide minimal transit service to all areas of the community.



Q8 What type of marketing is in place for suburban services? What has been the most effective method of getting the word out? (Responses 5)

Three of the five respondents indicated they conduct marketing for suburban services, while Tulsa Transit and ABQ Ride said they do not market suburban areas.

- Tulsa Transit indicated they have asked the City of Tulsa to do the marketing for their suburban services. However, they did indicate their suburban services are included in their schedule book, on their website, and mentioned on social media platforms.
- ABQ Ride said overall they do not conduct much route-specific marketing.
- KCATA responded they maintain an email list of current riders, which is an effective means of getting information out. To reach prospective riders, the agency finds direct outreach to employers or large apartment complexes is the most effective. Their route information, including suburban routes, is available at all public buildings in the county, as well as on their website. KCATA indicated their new website and brand is currently being heavily promoted regionally, not specific services or areas. This marketing includes billboards and television ads.
- The Rapid indicated they promote their services, including suburban services, throughout the region including making presentations to local governments and organizations.
- Sun Tran also indicated they promote their suburban service, Sun Shuttle. The marketing is varied and depends on the community they hope to reach, typically using print and radio advertisements. The advertisements typically focus on certain routes that serve the community they are reaching out to. Staff also attend events throughout the Pima County and incorporate all transit services in their community wide campaigns.

Q9 Did your agency need to add software to accommodate multiple types of services?  
(Responses 5)

All five of the respondents indicated they did not need to add software to accommodate multiple types of services. The agencies were able to utilize existing software.

- KCATA indicated they utilize a variety of software including Reveal Management Services for dispatching, Hastus for scheduling, and Remix for route planning.
- Both Tulsa Transit and Sun Tran indicated they use Trapeze for scheduling.
- The Rapid utilizes paratransit software for scheduling of their suburban PASS service.
- ABQ Ride indicated they are currently looking at how to make their paratransit service more efficient using their existing Trapeze software.



Q10 How did your agency address reservations/scheduling staff for on-call and flex services? (Responses 4)

- As indicated above, KCATA has a contract with Reveal Management Services and they conduct dispatching, scheduling, and reservations for their paratransit and flex services.
- Tulsa Transit utilizes their call center for scheduling of their flex service.
- Sun Tran indicated the Sun Shuttle service is managed by two separate entities who each handle the scheduling. For the Sahuarita/Green Valley Dial-a-Ride Service, Total

Transit handles reservations and for the Oro Valley Dial-a-Ride Service the Town of Oro Valley handles reservations.

- ABQ Ride responded they charge the county based on the overall average cost per trip, including cost for reservation staff.

#### Q11 How are the outlying transit routes/services monitored? (Responses 3)

Three of the five respondents answered this question, KCATA, Tulsa Transit, and ABQ Ride. KCATA provided a response focused on the management of The JO, while Tulsa Transit and ABQ Ride provided information on the real time monitoring of their system.

- KCATA indicated Johnson County continues to make the policies for transit in the county and the Johnson County Transportation Council oversees the service and advises the Board of County Commissioners. There is also a Johnson County member on the KCATA Board. In addition, KCATA staff and contractors meet monthly to report ridership, service efficiency, fleet performance, and planning projects to the Johnson County Transportation Council.
- Tulsa Transit indicated they have system wide security cameras, live bus tracking devices, and on-street supervisors.
- Similarly, ABQ Ride monitors their outlying transit routes/services the same way they monitor the rest of their system, through road supervisors, on-time performance statistics, ridership, etc.



#### Q12 Do your on-call services travel to anywhere in the urban area or to transfer points? (Responses 4)

- KCATA indicated currently The JO's on-call service is limited to the service area within Johnson County. Trips into certain parts of neighboring Jackson and Wyandotte Counties are only provided for medical trips; however, the agency is in the process of removing this restriction.
- While Tulsa Transit does not have on-call services, they did indicate the flex service will travel anywhere in their service area including urban areas.
- The Rapid also indicated their on-call services will travel to urban areas and transfer points, but it is dependent on the proximity of the desired destination.
- ABQ Ride responded they provide origin to destination service and they do not require passengers to transfer.

#### Q13 What lessons learned/advice would you give to an agency that is looking to expand to suburban, low-density areas? (Responses 4)

- KCATA responded that understanding there will be parts of suburban communities the agency cannot serve with transit is important. Providing service to those who need transit service the most, elderly and disabled persons, through flex or paratransit service is a good starting point. In addition, fixed route service should focus on people who are

socioeconomically more likely to want and/or need transit service and work with employers, colleges, and high-density housing clusters to plan and promote transit service.

- Similarly, The Rapid responded that creating flexible approaches is key.
- Tulsa Transit said making sure city officials are on board and part of the process, as well as, citizens is important.
- ABQ Ride responded being realistic about ridership is important and to be aware peak-only commuter services have hidden costs due to the high proportion of deadheading, high capital cost compared to ridership, and detrimental impacts on driver scheduling (almost unavoidable split shifts). In addition, they indicated their most successful suburban service is park-and-ride based, with fast service to pedestrian-oriented, dense areas with expensive parking.

#### Q14 Did you research other types of vehicles for suburban services? (Responses 3)

- KCATA indicated The JO currently uses a variety of vehicles, including 30 foot low-floor buses, 40 foot low-floor buses, over the road coaches, and 12-passenger cutaways for flex routes and paratransit. In addition, they are currently reviewing other vehicle options.
- Tulsa Transit responded they use a 16-passenger bus for flex routes and regular 35 to 40 foot buses for the fixed routes in the suburban areas.
- The Rapid indicated they were unsure what vehicles were researched during the initial implementation of the suburban PASS service; however, the agency is currently looking at updating this service.
- ABQ Ride responded they did not research other types of vehicles.



## 7.5 Findings

The intent of this peer review is to compare Sarpy County with other areas around the country with similar suburban-type services and assess how what types of services are offered, how services are administered and paid for, and lessons learned.

While *Metro's* service area is consistent in size with its peer communities, a number of its peers have more existing types of services and modes and have higher ridership numbers. KCATA, DART, The Rapid, and Sun Tran all have more existing types of services and modes than *Metro* and have higher ridership numbers. While ABQ Ride has the same number of existing types and modes as *Metro*, it still has higher ridership numbers. Only Tulsa Transit has lower ridership numbers than *Metro*.

All but one of the peer communities provides transit service to suburban communities. While *Metro* provides transit services to approximately 70,000 suburban residents, all other peer communities, except Tulsa Transit, provide transit services to over 95,000 suburban residents.

With this in mind, it should also be noted that four of the six peer communities also have larger operating budgets than *Metro*. Only DART and Tulsa Transit have smaller operating budgets.

It is also important to note *Metro* is not a regional transit authority. Of the six peer systems KCATA, DART, The Rapid, and Sun Tran are regional transit authorities; ABQ Ride and Tulsa Transit continue to operate as a part of city government in their respective communities. The Rapid noted their operation as a regional authority was a key determinant of suburban success. Tulsa operates most similarly to *Metro* in this area, in that transit service to suburban cities is up to the sponsoring community.

# Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study

## Chapter 8 Sarpy County Transit Service Guidelines

By 2040, Sarpy County will be home to 274,000 people and will support over 119,900 jobs. Sarpy County is fast-growing, and despite its reputation as a place where one must own a car to live, there are many areas in the future land use plan that public transit will be successful. A reliable and efficient transportation system is an integral component of future growth and prosperity. Transit goals focus on:

- Improving mobility
- Reducing traffic congestion
- Improving access to jobs, homes, and services
- Increasing transit options
- Coordinating transit and land use plans
- Creating healthy, livable communities within Sarpy County

The future Sarpy County transit network will be challenged to provide sustainable mobility options to all areas of the county and into the Omaha metropolitan area. Today, most residents use private automobiles to travel within the county, which will likely continue into the future. However, there is a growing movement and interest in providing an alternative transportation mode for residents of the county, and more importantly for public transportation to be a realistic solution to relieve future congestion along the roadways. Sarpy County residents must see the value of transit and invest resources where the service will be most efficient and benefit the largest number of passengers.

Sarpy County faces a number of key challenges in providing sustainable mobility in public transportation. Limited funding resources, including lack of dedicated transit funding, hinder the existing transit agency's ability to provide sufficient service levels. Sarpy County is also largely developed in an automobile-centric manner, with multi-lane streets and highways throughout the region with sprawling, decentralized development. This type of land use design is difficult to serve with public transportation and makes transit travel less convenient for passengers. Since transit is not a dominant travel mode, there is a perceived "stigma" that transit is reserved only for those who do not have access to a personal vehicle.

In order to provide public transit options that meet the needs of all residents, including our most needy transit dependent riders, the future Sarpy County public transit network will need to be a connected and complete system of transit services that provide cost-effective and time-effective options to residents. Identifying key transit corridors, such as those identified in the TVP for region, are essential to build upon when developing the future system.



### 8.1 Existing Guidelines

The framework for the service guidelines should include a customer focused system, a simple system, and a sustainable system. By creating guidelines, Sarpy County will be able to direct investments to appropriate places with maximum efficiencies. The 2014 Regional Transit Vision included three tiers of service, which supported the overall transit network for the region. These guidelines are shown in **Table 8-1**.

Table 8-1 Regional Transit Vision Service Guidelines

Tier	Service Type	Description	Network Role	Key Markets	Frequency Target
Corridors	Arterial BRT Rapid Bus	High frequency, high capacity and high quality service that uses transit priority measures to speed travel times. Stop spacing is typically greater than local bus with enhanced service characteristics intended to emulate the passenger experience of arterial rail transit.	Spontaneous use, transit-oriented corridor, fast travel and short waits	All-day, all-week community and sub-regional travel	10 minutes
	Key Corridor Local Bus	Conventional bus service, operating on a timetable following a pre-set route with identified stops that typically operate as part of a wider network of integrated routes.	Structural network corridor, fast sub-regional service	All-day, all-week community and sub-regional travel	15 minutes
Network Connections	Supporting Local Bus	Fixed route transit using of various size vehicles serving a specific community area with connections to the regional and/or subregional transit network.	Network completion and service coverage	All-day weekday community and sub-regional travel	30 minutes
	Community Circulators	Fixed route or flexible route transit using of various size vehicles serving a specific community area with connections to the regional and/or subregional transit network.	Targeted network connection, local circulation	Community travel in less transit-conducive areas	60 minutes or Demand Based
Express	Commute Express	Peak hour express bus service with limited stops connecting surrounding communities with downtown and other major regional destinations. Assess typically via park-and-ride at the residential end.	Freeway or key corridor based commute	Peak period regional travel	Tailored to Demand
	Reverse Commute Express	Peak hour express bus service with limited stops connecting major core area hubs (often downtown) with employment in surrounding communities, serving reverse direction commuters.	Freeway or key corridor based commute	Reverse commute travel	Tailored to Demand

Existing transit service in Sarpy County includes the Express Tier and the Network Connections Tier with demand response services. The high capacity rapid transit corridor do not currently exist, but are recommended in the MAPA Long Range Transportation Plan. The above guidelines are necessary to ensure that the MAPA region has a comprehensive transit network, inclusive of services that fit all areas of the region. Performance of transit services should be measured regularly in order to determine if modifications are needed.

The RTV also included service design standards, which defines the types of service for different areas. These are listed below:

1. **Route Design:** Routes should be direct, following major streets across a hybrid grid and radial crosstown structure, with the exception of community circulator routes. Route deviations and out-of-direction movements should be minimized.
2. **Coverage Area:** In the urban core routes should be separated by approximately one-half mile to maintain short walking distances. Outside the urban core, service should be provided only to areas with densities of at least 2,000 residents or jobs per square mile and to special generators.
3. **Connectivity:** The system should be designed to foster timed on-street transfers in the urban core and at regional hubs. Effective transfers can save resources by limiting the need for duplicative service. Locations where transfers occur should also have high-quality amenities including enhanced shelters, lighting, pedestrian-friendly design, trip information and *Metro* branding.
4. **Service Frequency:** Frequencies of 15 minutes or better are necessary to encourage “random” usage of a transit route, which is a requirement for a large segment of the market. Recommended service frequencies are identified by route type, ranging from 10-15 minutes for bus rapid transit (BRT) services to 60 minutes for community routes.
5. **Span of Service:** Spans of service should be determined by the market served rather than the service type. Urban core network service should generally operate from approximately 4:15 a.m. until 11 p.m. on weekdays, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturdays and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays. Community services should be tailored to local demand patterns, but typically should operate from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays. Express service should be tailored to demand patterns.
6. **Stop Spacing and Placement:** Rapid bus routes on corridors also served by local services should have stops spaced one-half to one mile apart, focusing on major destinations and transfer points. Local service should have stops spaced between 1,000 feet and ¼-mile apart (closer for community services). Express routes should have minimal stops, primarily located at park-and-ride facilities and major urban destinations. Stops should be spaced on the downstream side of intersections whenever possible.
7. **New Service Warrants:** The document recommends a number of considerations in evaluating potential new service, including density (as described in the “Coverage Area” standard), transit-dependent populations and network integration. A one-year trial period for new service is recommended.



At the core of these detailed guidelines is the development of complete transit network that will serve Sarpy County and the MAPA region. The above standards included in the RTV are consistent with best practices used at many transit agencies across the county.<sup>5</sup> As the Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study continues its planning process, the above standards will be used in the development of alternatives. The transit guideline help evaluate, design, implement

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nctr.usf.edu/pdf/77720.pdf>

and monitor all transit services. The guidelines provide a linkage between local support of transit service, overall operational efficiency and ridership. They outline the conditions and provide a roadmap of the actions necessary to effectively operate all modes of transit service available in Sarpy County from local bus services to future rapid transit service.

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# Sarpy County

## Transit Feasibility Study



### Appendix A – Survey Instrument



The **Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study** is underway. The purpose of the study is to look at short-term and long-term public transportation options in the County. Limited service is available today; however **what is the vision for the future?**

Please answer the following questions. Your answers will help identify critical transportation needs and develop solutions in Sarpy County. These may include employment transportation, elderly transportation, disabled transportation, park-and-ride services, carpool/vanpool services, express bus service, etc.

**THANK YOU!**

1. **What public transit services have you used in Sarpy County?** (mark all that apply)

- Metro city bus
- La Vista/Bellevue/Ralston specialized services
- Never used public transit services
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. **What area of metro region do you travel most on a typical day?** (mark one)

- |                                       |  |                                      |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elkhorn      | <input type="checkbox"/> Offutt AFB        | <input type="checkbox"/> Bellevue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Omaha  | <input type="checkbox"/> Council Bluffs    | <input type="checkbox"/> La Vista    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Millard Area | <input type="checkbox"/> Oakview Mall Area | <input type="checkbox"/> Papillion   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> South Omaha  | <input type="checkbox"/> West Omaha        | <input type="checkbox"/> Gretna      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midtown      | <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown          | <input type="checkbox"/> Springfield |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  |  |                                      |

3. **Have you ever needed public transit service?**

- Yes; Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- No

4. **If you use public transit, what is the primary reason you use the service?** (mark one)

- Work
- Medical Appointments
- Shopping
- School
- Social/recreational
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Not applicable

5. **If you have NOT used transit in Sarpy County, what is the primary reason?** (mark one)

- I prefer to drive
- No bus service in my area
- Too far to walk to a bus stop
- Doesn't go where I need to go
- Takes too long
- Not applicable, I ride the bus
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Would you be willing to:** (mark all that apply)

- Use express buses to/from park and ride areas
- Use limited fixed route service
- Join a carpool/vanpool program
- Use Uber-type services
- Use Taxi vouchers
- Use call-a-ride services where you are picked up at your driveway
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



Please Continue on Other Side



7. What is the most important public transportation need in Sarpy County? (mark one)

- Transit service for elderly/disabled residents
- Transit service in the rural areas
- Transit service for those with limited or no other means of transportation
- More frequent bus service
- Transit service to major activity areas in Omaha  
Where? \_\_\_\_\_
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Provide more transportation options to increase economic development in Sarpy County
- Provide an alternative to driving alone
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. In your opinion, how important is it for Sarpy County to have some form of public transportation?

- Very Important    Somewhat Important    Not Important    Unsure

9. If public transportation were available to all residents of Sarpy County, including elderly/disabled residents, rural residents, and express bus routes to/from major activity locations in Omaha, would you support a slight tax increase to fund the services?

- Yes    No    Unsure

10. Have you filled out this survey before?    Yes    No

11. What is your home ZIP code? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is your school or work ZIP code? \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is your gender?    Male    Female

14. What is your age?

- Under 18    18-40    41-64    65 or older

15. What is employment status?

- Full Time    Part Time    Student    Retired    Unemployed

16. What is your household income?

- Less than \$20K    \$21K-\$60K    \$61K-\$100K    Over \$100K

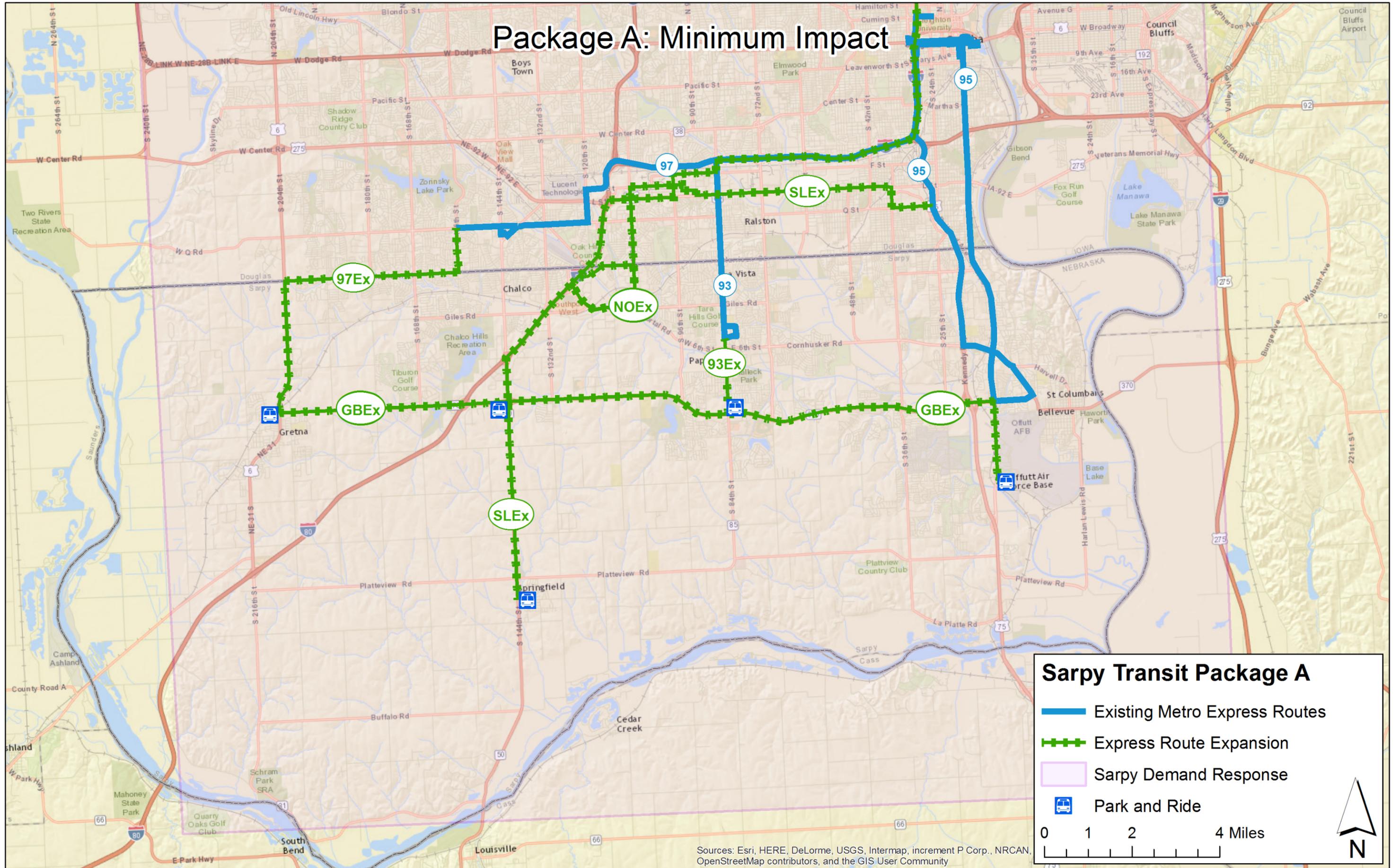
What specific public transportation would you like to see in Sarpy County in the next 10 years?

What specific public transportation would you like to see in Sarpy County in the next 25 years?

**THANK YOU!!**

Surveys collected from 2/29/2016 – 5/31/2016  
 Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA)  
 2222 Cuming Street  
 Omaha, NE 68102-4328  
 402.444.6866 ph; Megan Walker mwalker@mapacog.org  
 For more information, visit: www.mapacog.org

# Package A: Minimum Impact



**Sarpy Transit Package A**

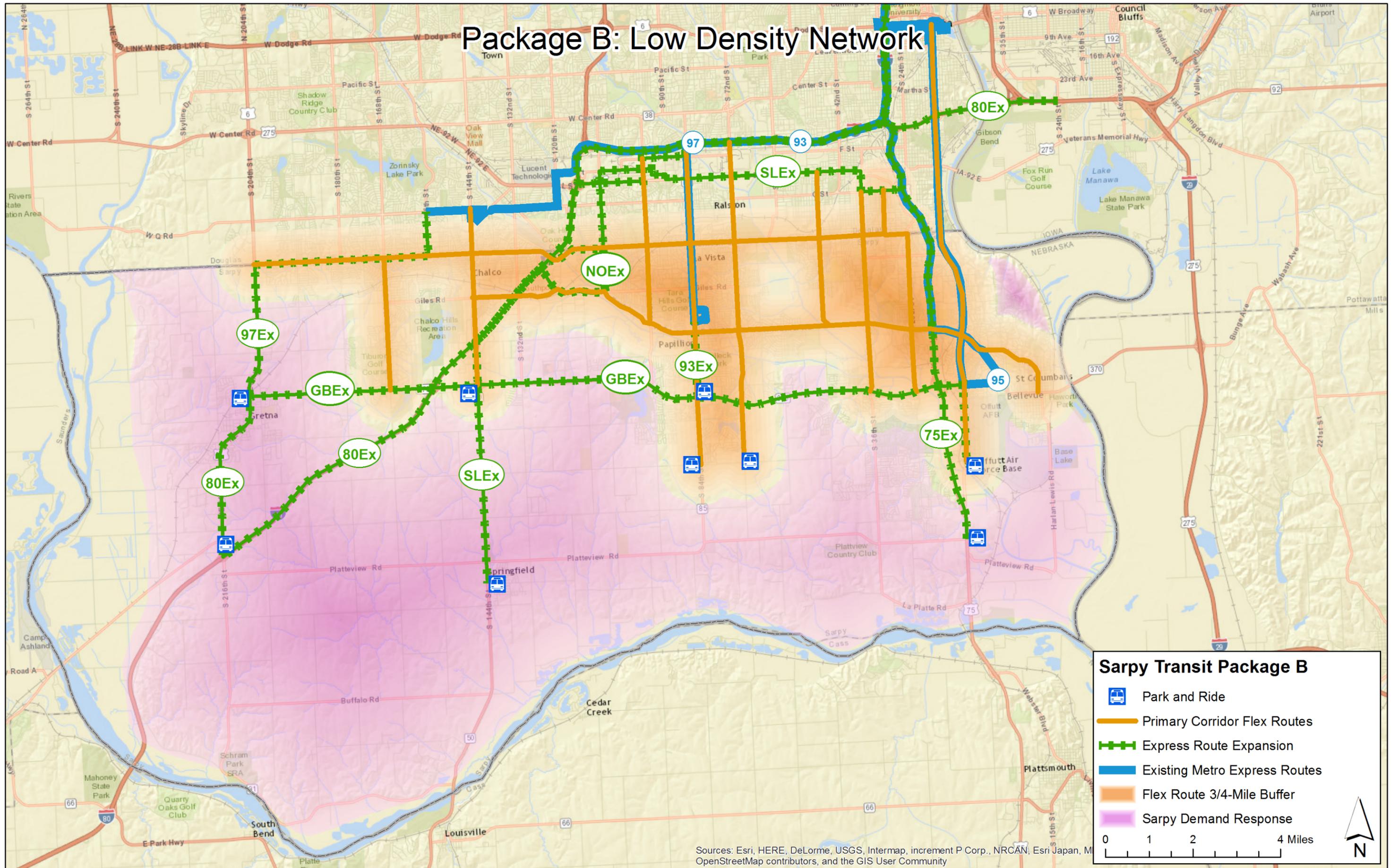
- Existing Metro Express Routes
- - - Express Route Expansion
- Sarpy Demand Response
- Park and Ride

0 1 2 4 Miles

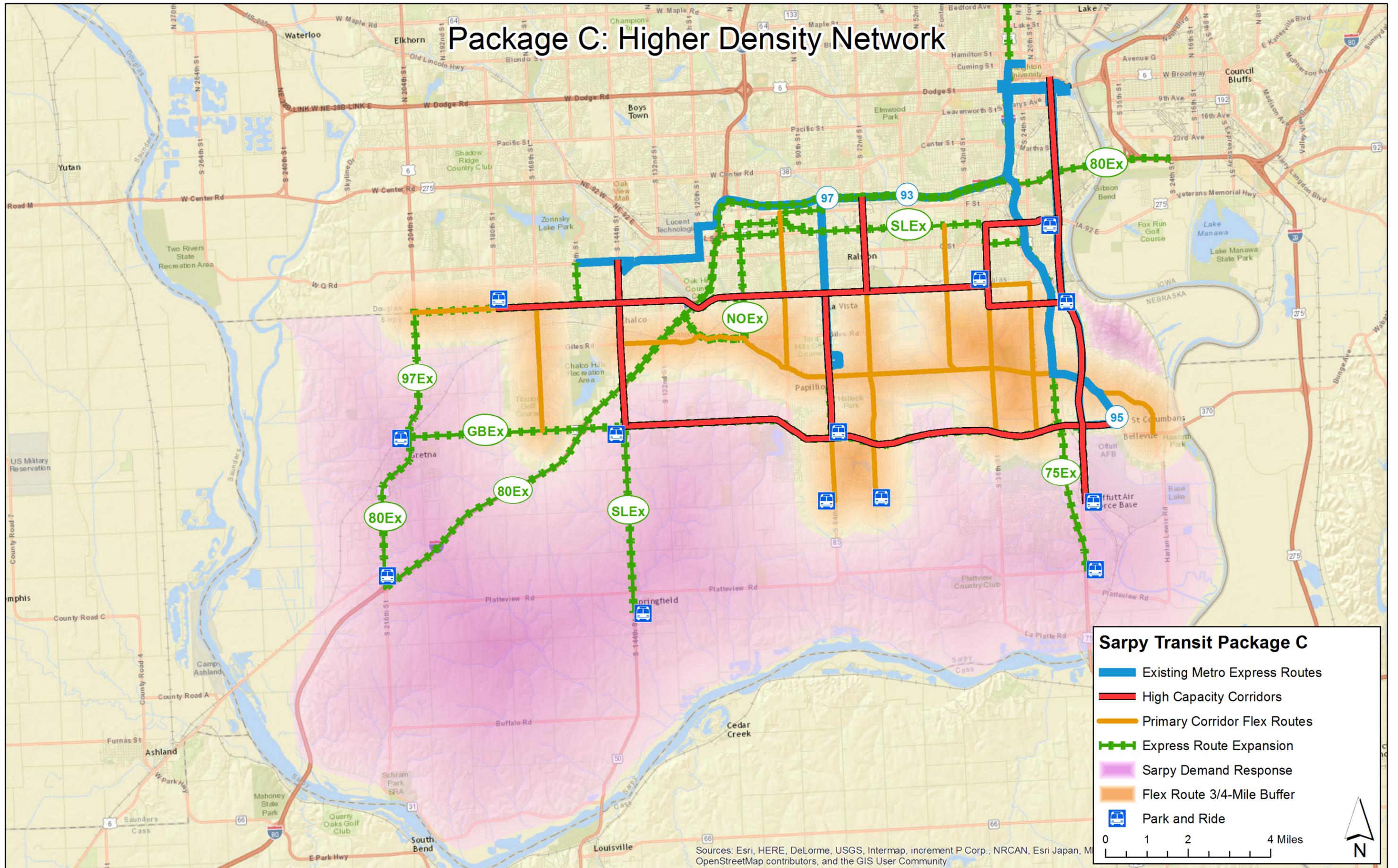
N

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

# Package B: Low Density Network



# Package C: Higher Density Network



**Sarpy Transit Package C**

- █ Existing Metro Express Routes
- █ High Capacity Corridors
- █ Primary Corridor Flex Routes
- - - Express Route Expansion
- █ Sarpy Demand Response
- █ Flex Route 3/4-Mile Buffer
- Park and Ride

0 1 2 4 Miles

N

Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, Mapbox, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community