



# Public Transportation in Rochester Hills

Rochester Hills City Council  
March 12, 2018

# Overview

- Perception of public transit in Rochester Hills
  - Fall 2017 Transit Survey
- Overview of SMART
- Finding the right mix of transit services



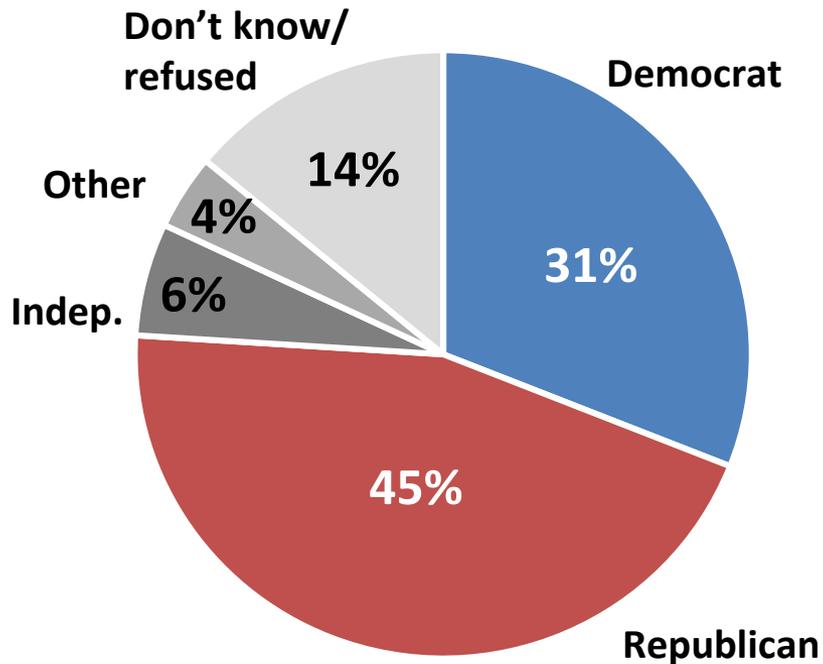
# Perception of public transit

# Fall 2017 transit poll

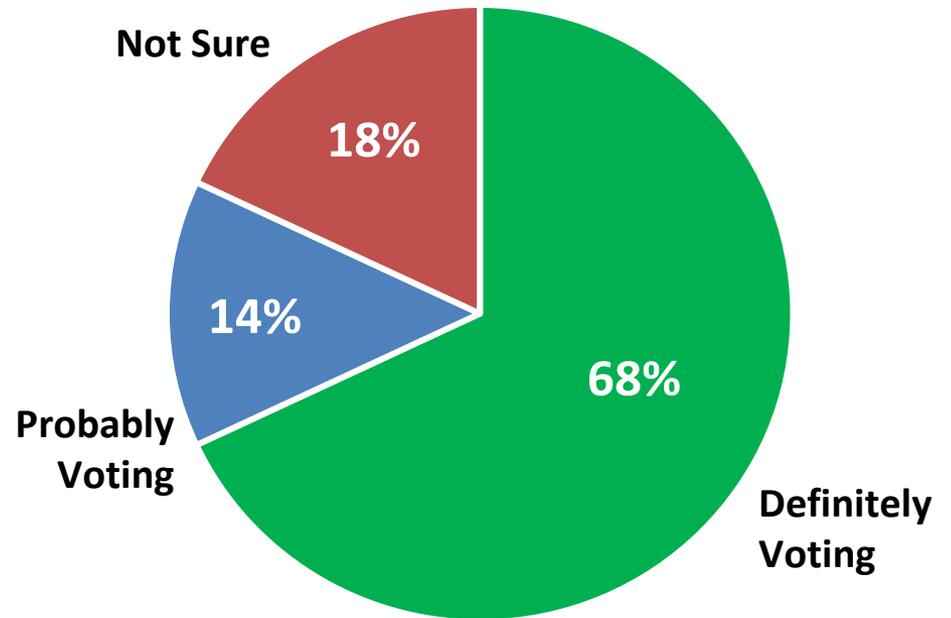
- 400 likely voters in Rochester Hills and Rochester
- Phone survey conducted October 9-12, 2017
- Conducted by Mitchell Research on behalf of Oakland County Public Transportation Authority

# Key survey demographics

Party Affiliation



% Likely Voters – 2018  
Gubernatorial Election



# Voters split before & after survey

- Asked about support for a 1-mill SMART property tax
- Asked again after hearing general information about costs and possible services

## Likely “Yes” Voters

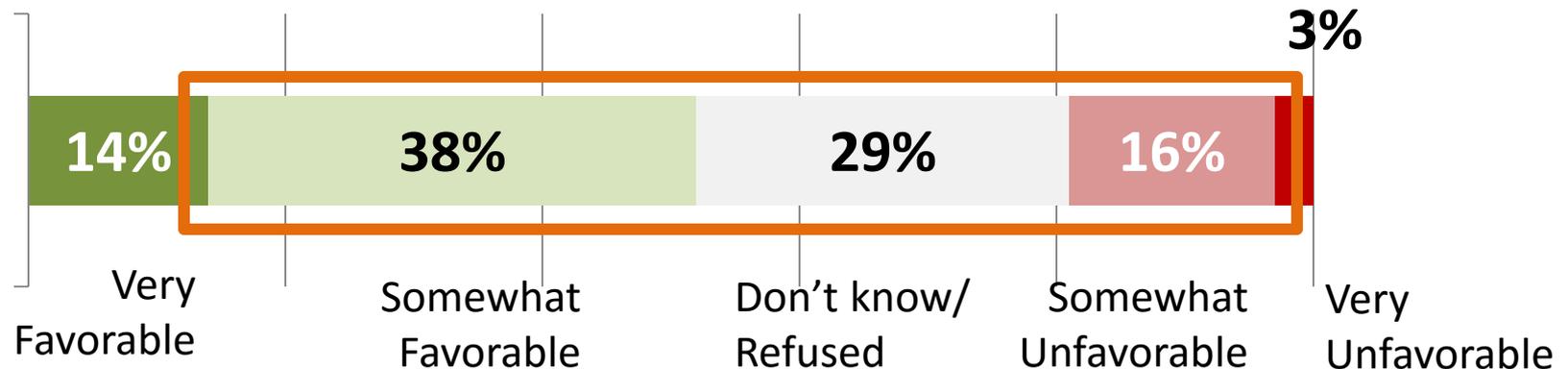
<b>Before</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>49%</b>

*Includes voting yes or “leaning” yes*

# Limited perception of transit

- **83%** have no opinion or no strong opinion of SMART
- Limited interaction with transit could be major factor
- Opportunity to educate community about transit

Opinion of SMART



# Comparison: Transit millage votes

- Strong support in similar communities

## “Yes” Votes for RTA and SMART Millage

	RTA 2016	SMART 2014
Bloomfield Twp	52.6%	71.8%
W. Bloomfield Twp	54.2%	71.4%
Birmingham	57.8%	74.0%
Farmington	58.8%	75.1%
Farmington Hills	55.4%	71.3%
<b>Rochester Hills</b>	<b>46.8%</b>	
<b>Rochester</b>	<b>47.0%</b>	

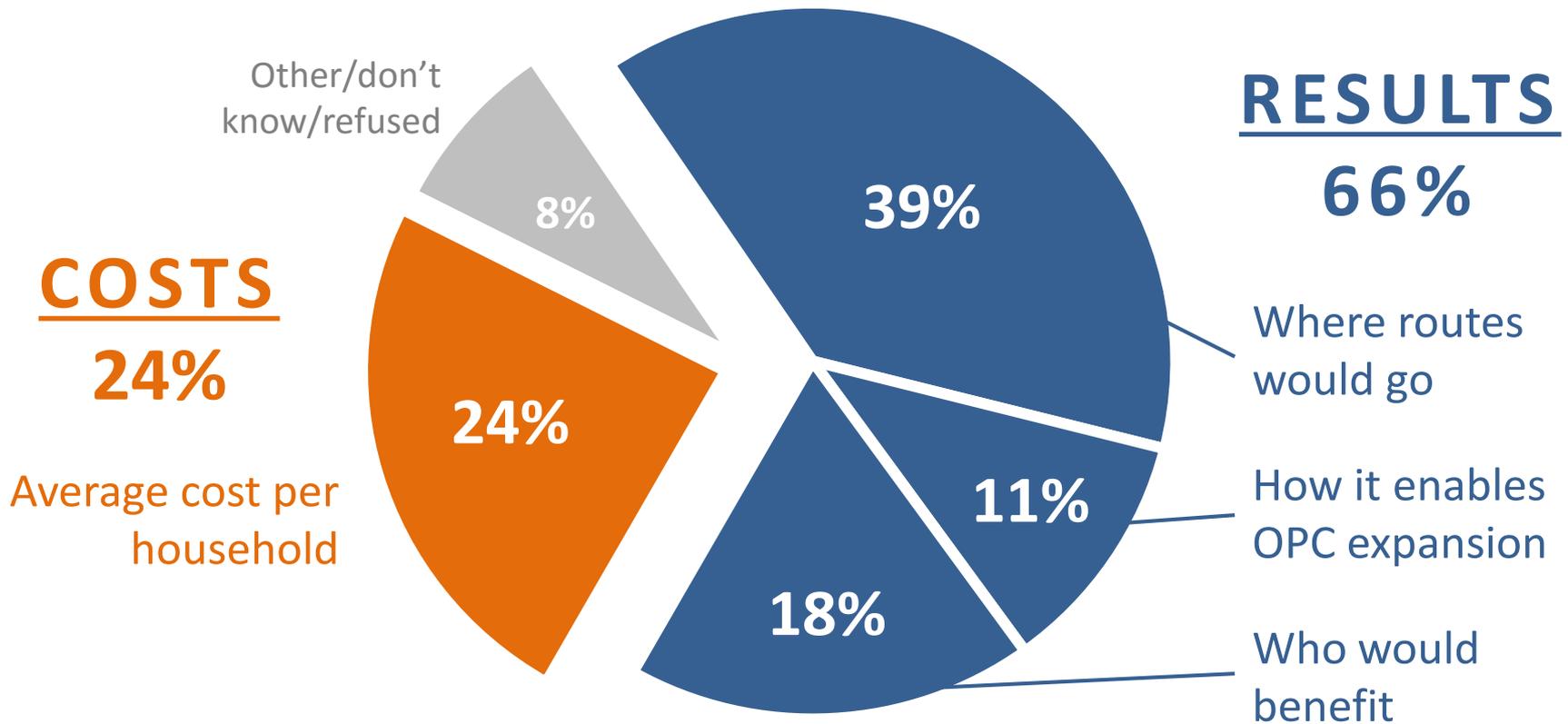
Compare to  
Fall 2017  
Survey

# Transit votes in context

- Overwhelming support for SMART millage
  - Clear, strong value proposition
- Modest support for RTA millage
  - Proposed service map, but little detail on other programs
  - Very little proposed in Rochester Hills, Rochester
- Fall 2017 survey did not contain detailed service proposal or a “real” ballot measure with costs
  - Support comparable to RTA millage, even without a detailed proposal

# Voters expect specific results

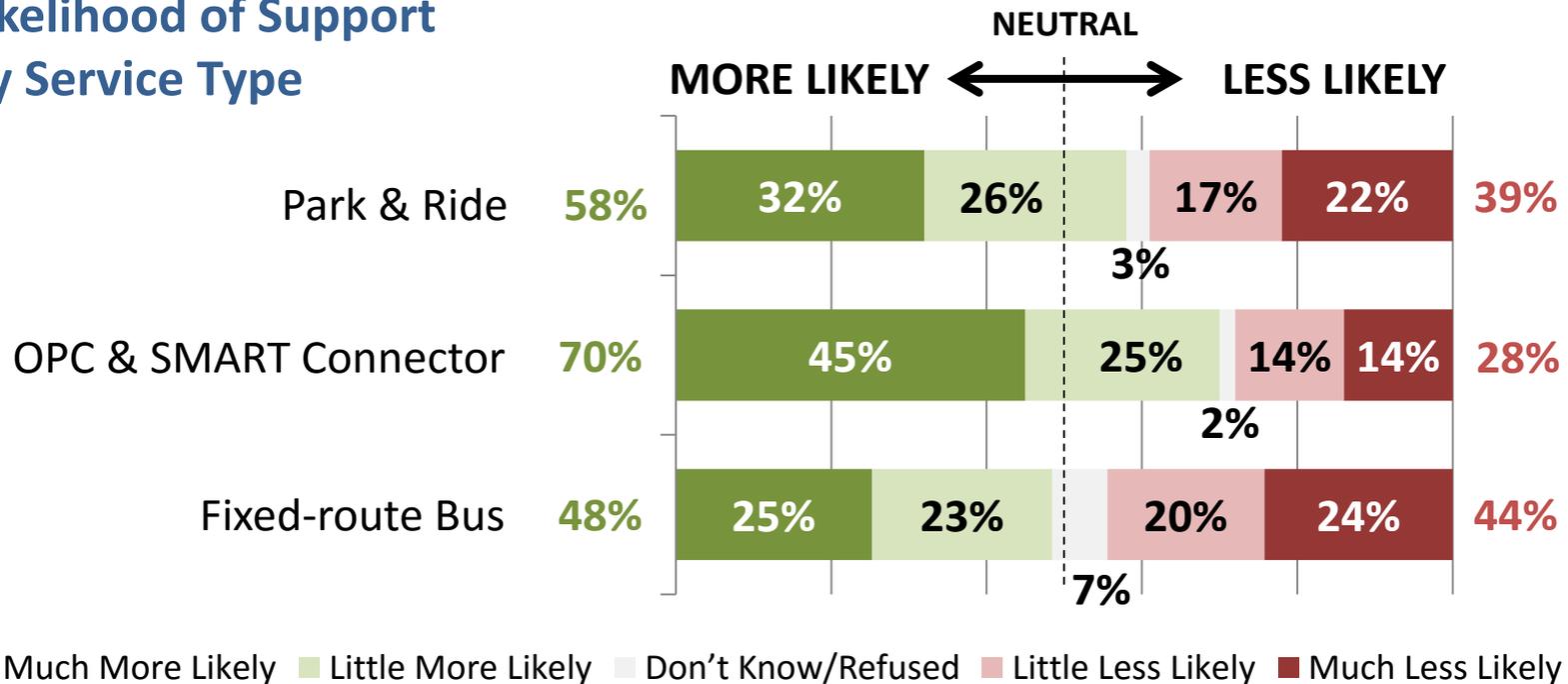
When asked what factor is MOST IMPORTANT to decision, specific results matter more than costs



# Support by type of service

All major modes have substantial support, but it is important to achieve right balance of services

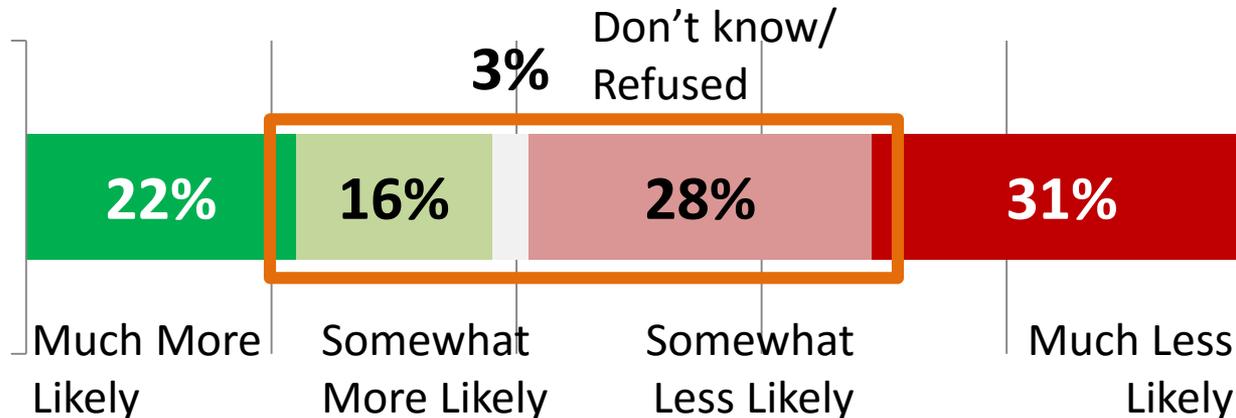
## Likelihood of Support by Service Type



# Limited sensitivity to specific cost

47% of voters are **not substantially more or less likely** to vote yes after learning that owner of \$300,000 home would pay \$150 per year.

Change in Likelihood of Support after Hearing Personal Cost



# Survey results: Conclusions

- Interest in transit already exists
- Residents need to know more about what transit would look like in their community
- Opportunity for more education and engagement
- Conversation is still open-ended

# Learning more: An overview of SMART

# SMART service “layers”

- **Fixed-route bus** – local, regional, park and ride routes, and the new ***FAST service***
- **SMART Connector** – Reservation-based curbside small bus service for all residents
- **ADA Paratransit** – Curbside small bus service for approved disabled riders near bus routes
- **Community Partnership Program** - Millage dollars directly support community transportation in 70+ communities



# SMART benefits

- Improved access to regional workforce for local employers
- New fleet of buses
- Cutting-edge new mobility technology
- Works with communities to develop CPP service

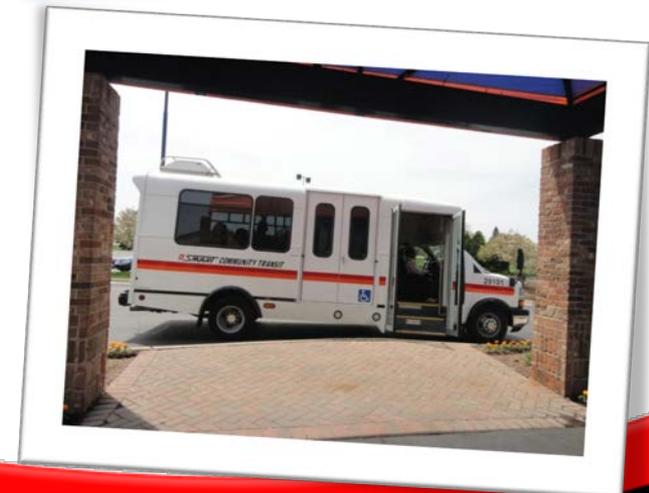


# Community Focus

## FARMINGTON HILLS

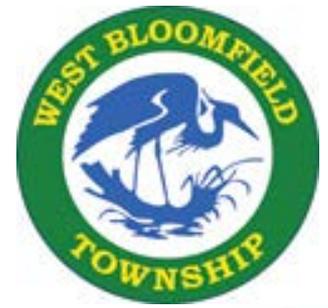


- Two park and ride routes to Downtown
- Multiple local bus routes connecting to neighboring communities
- SMART Connector service
- City-wide Dial-A-Ride service
- Community Transit run through joint Senior Center with Farmington

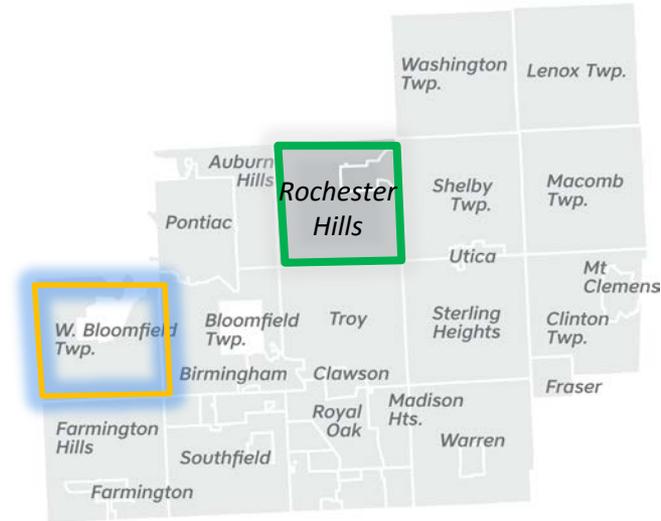


# Community Focus

## WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP



- One park and ride route to Downtown
- Multiple local bus routes connecting to neighboring communities
- Crosstown service across southern Oakland, Macomb counties
- SMART Connector service
- Community Transit run through Parks & Recreation Department



# SMART overview: Conclusions

- Many layers to public transit (not just buses)
- There are different types of bus service (not all buses are the same)
- Customized approach is important for each community (the right mix of services)

# Finding the “right mix” of transit services

# Feedback from survey

- Park and Ride and OPC senior services most important
- “Where routes go” most important factor to 38%
- “Who benefits” most important factor to 18%
- Basic fixed-route bus service moderately important



# Serving Suburban Communities

- Heavily developed but lower density and auto-focused design
- Strong commuter ties to nearby job center communities (e.g. Troy, Auburn Hills, Central Macomb County)
- Destination for workers from across region
- Street network makes it tough to serve all areas with regular bus routes

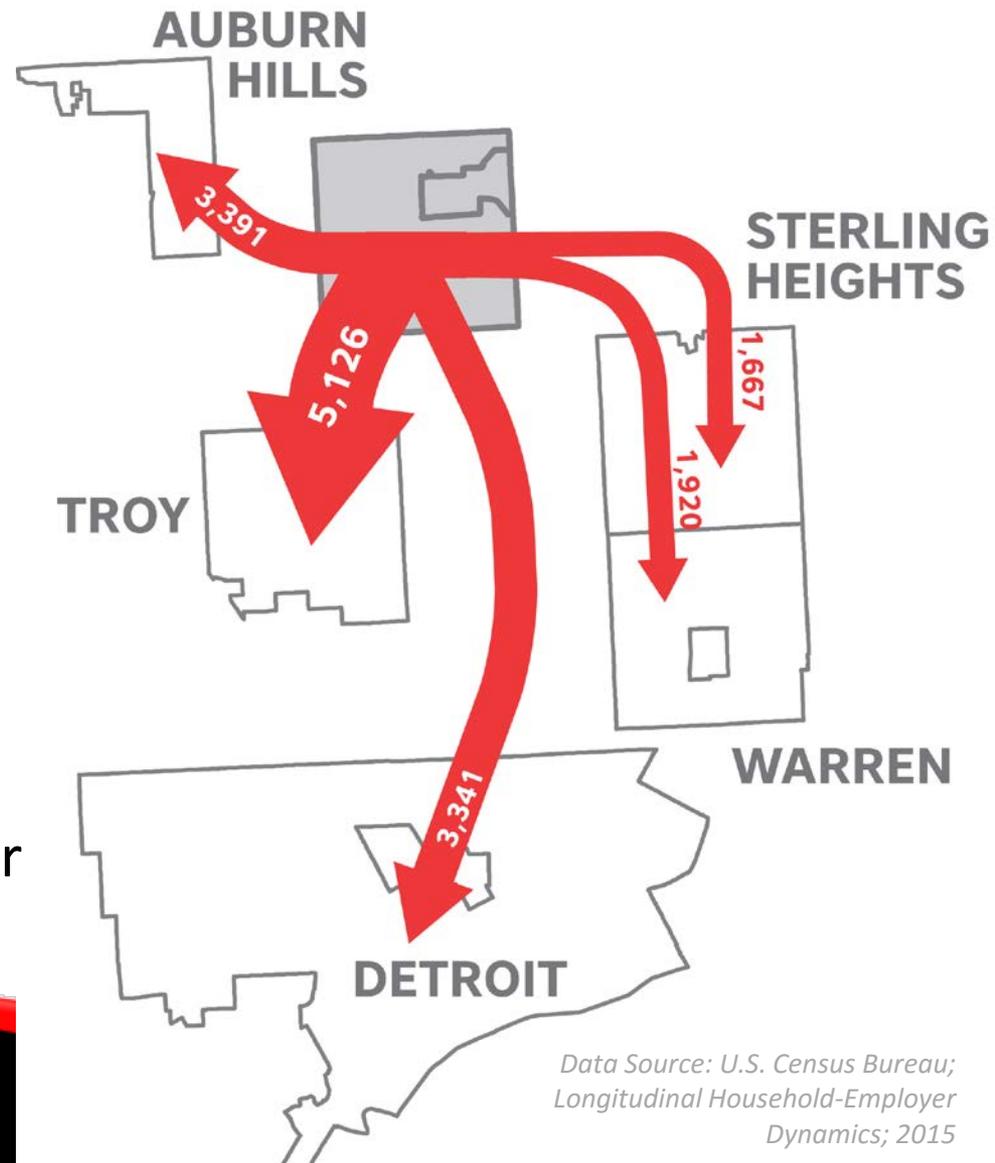
# Rochester Hills commuters

## Commuting In:

- 41,000 jobs in in Rochester Hills & Rochester
- 85% of jobs held by non residents

## Commuting Out:

- 36% commute to five communities shown
- 14% live and work in Rochester Hills or Rochester

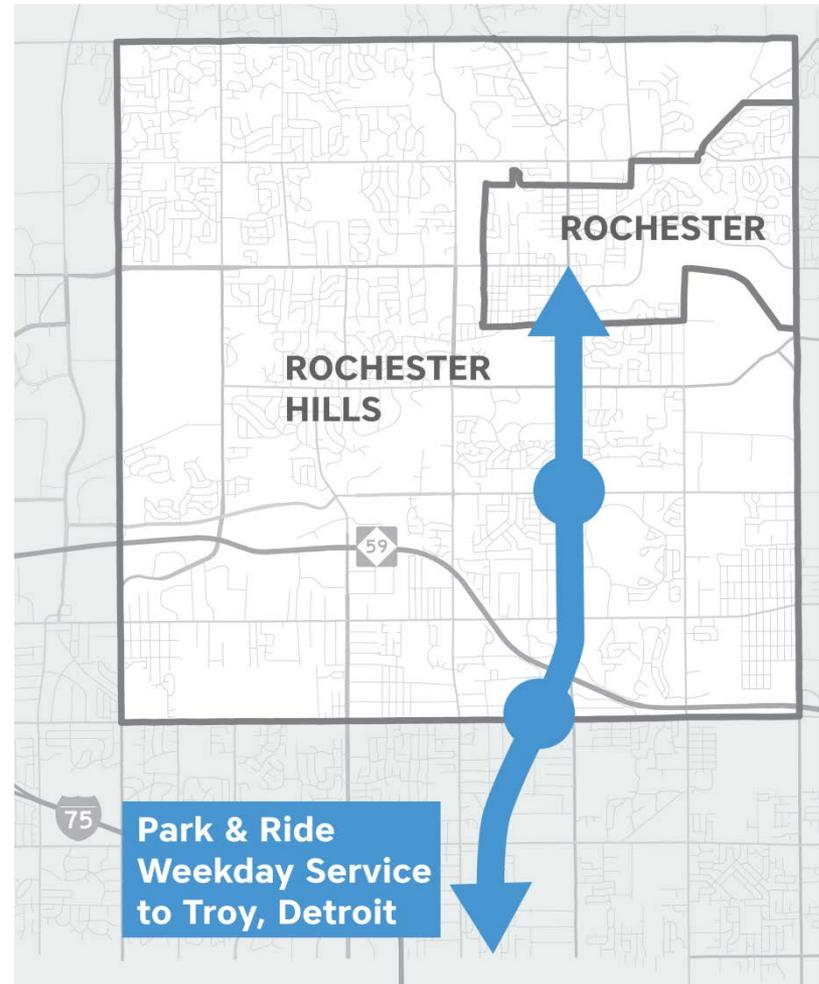


# Possible ingredients to “mix”

- Park and ride bus service to Troy, Detroit
- Local routes connecting to Village of Rochester Hills, Oakland University, Meadowbrook, Auburn Hills
- **FAST** Woodward extension from Troy
- Flexible small-bus transit serving neighborhoods
- Traditional reservation-based SMART Connector
- Older Persons Commission service enhancement

# Park & Ride

- Limited-stop express service
- Park & ride lots
- Runs southbound in the morning, northbound in the evening
- Weekdays only



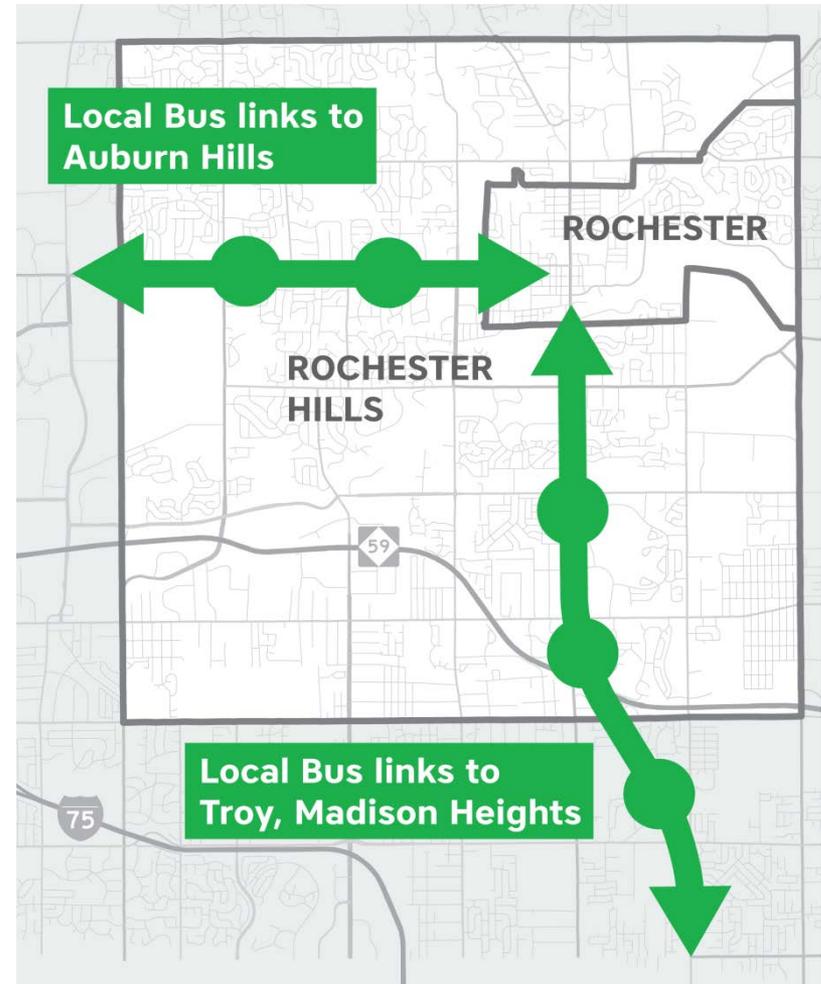
# FAST Woodward

- Limited-stop service runs 18-20 hours per day, 7 days a week
- New buses branded for *FAST* service
- On-board WiFi



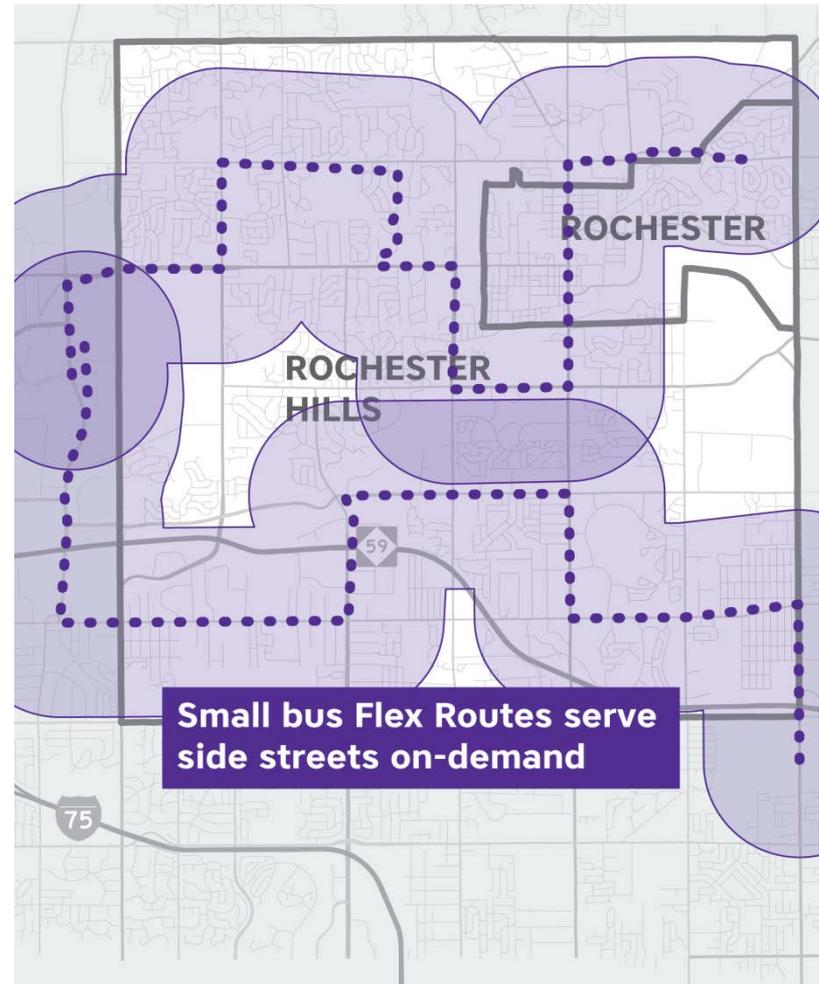
# Local Bus Service

- Connects to neighboring communities
- Provides basic transit service on key routes
- Stops are more closely spaced than FAST or Park & Ride routes



# Flex Routes

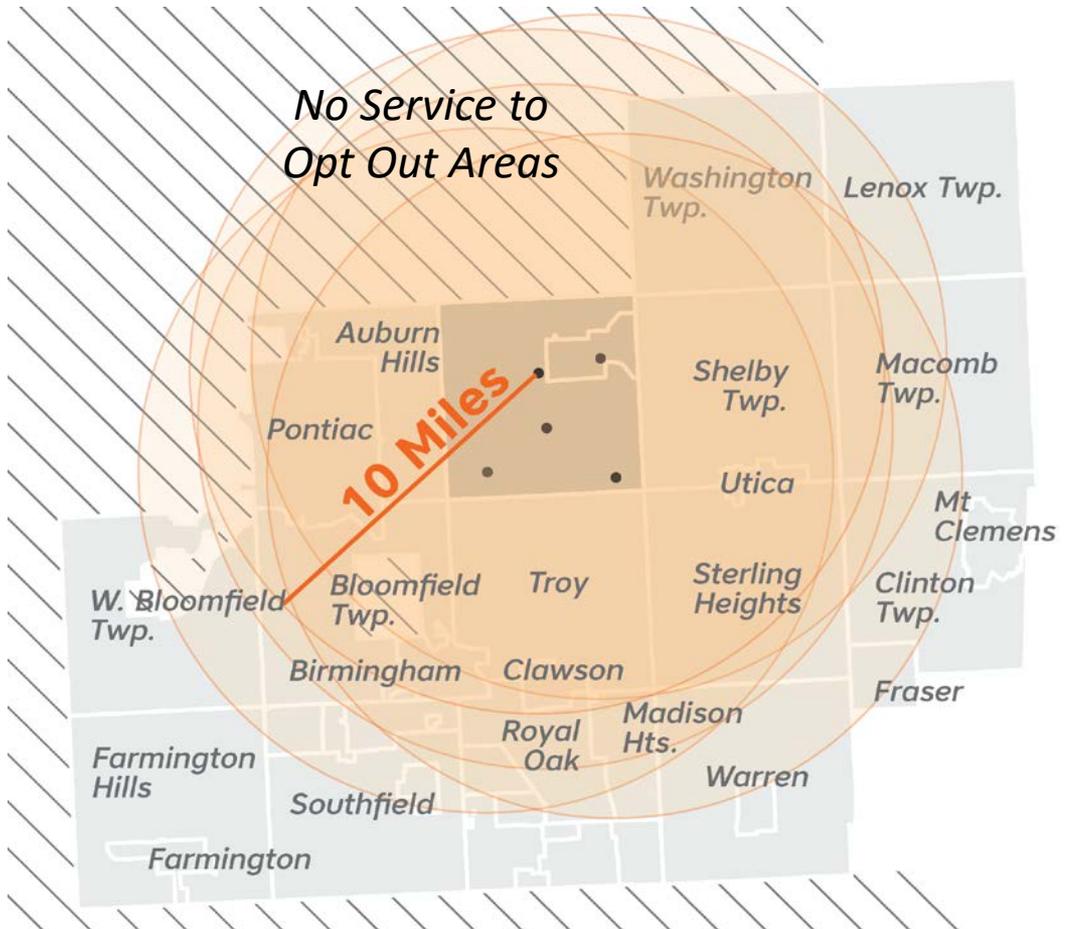
- Small buses deviate from route on main roads to pick up and drop off in neighborhoods
- Can be a mix of on-demand and scheduled service
- Covers larger area than regular buses
- Good for lower-density areas with suburban-style street network



# SMART Connector

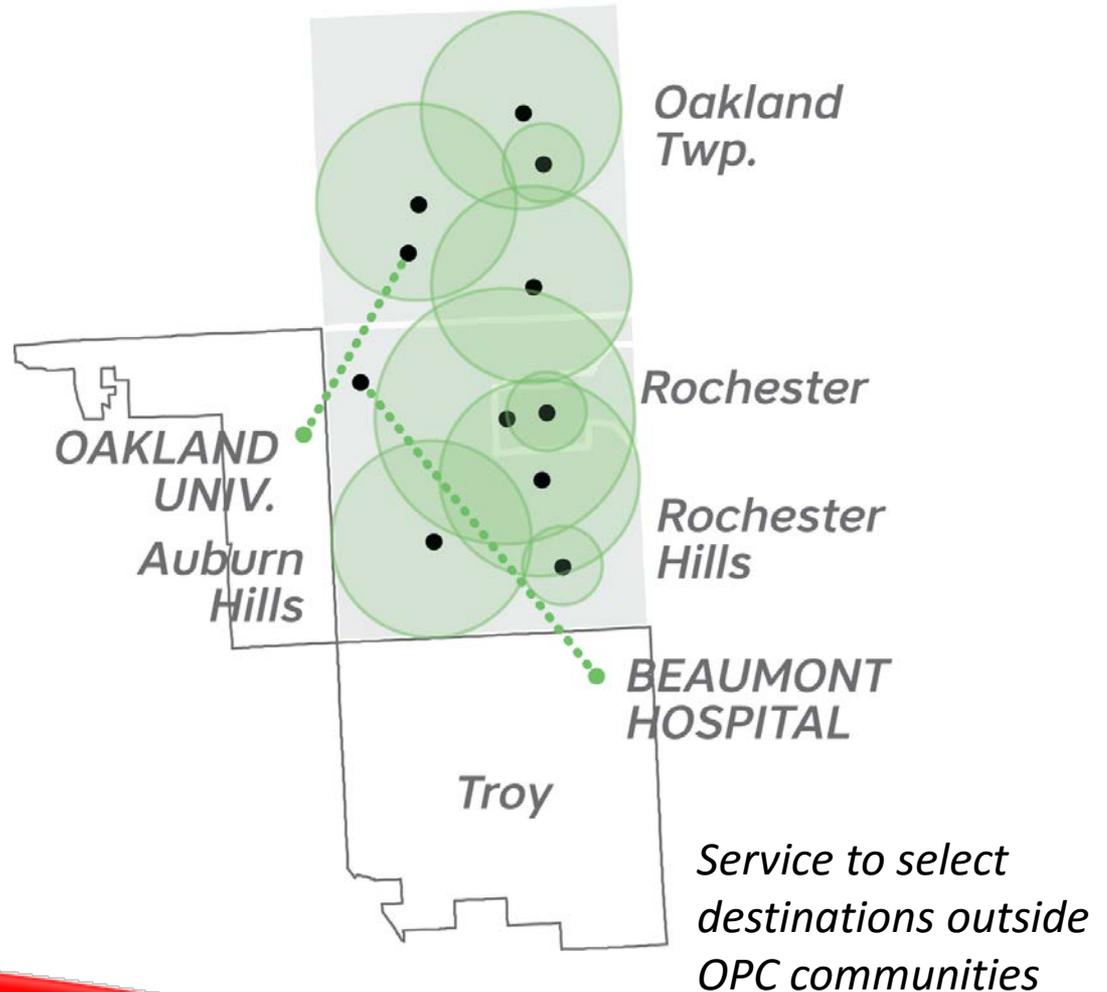
- New access to SMART's region wide Connector service
- ADA certified riders can get a ride anywhere fixed route goes, system-wide

*Transfer between Connector buses or to fixed route to complete 10+ mile trips*



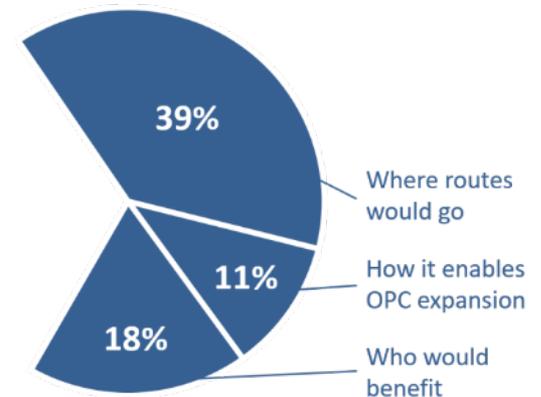
# Older Persons Commission

- Capacity to serve additional trips, extend Sunday service hours, reduce wait times
- Replace vehicles more quickly, purchase expansion vehicles



# Responding to survey priorities

- **Where would routes go?** Detroit, neighboring communities, community destinations, scaled service for neighborhoods and major corridors alike
- **Who would benefit?** Seniors and disabled, institutional students/staff, commuters to outside of community, workers employed in community
- **How would OPC be impacted?** Expand service to meet growing demand





**Thank You!**

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