



OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

# Transit and Mobility Today

## Overview

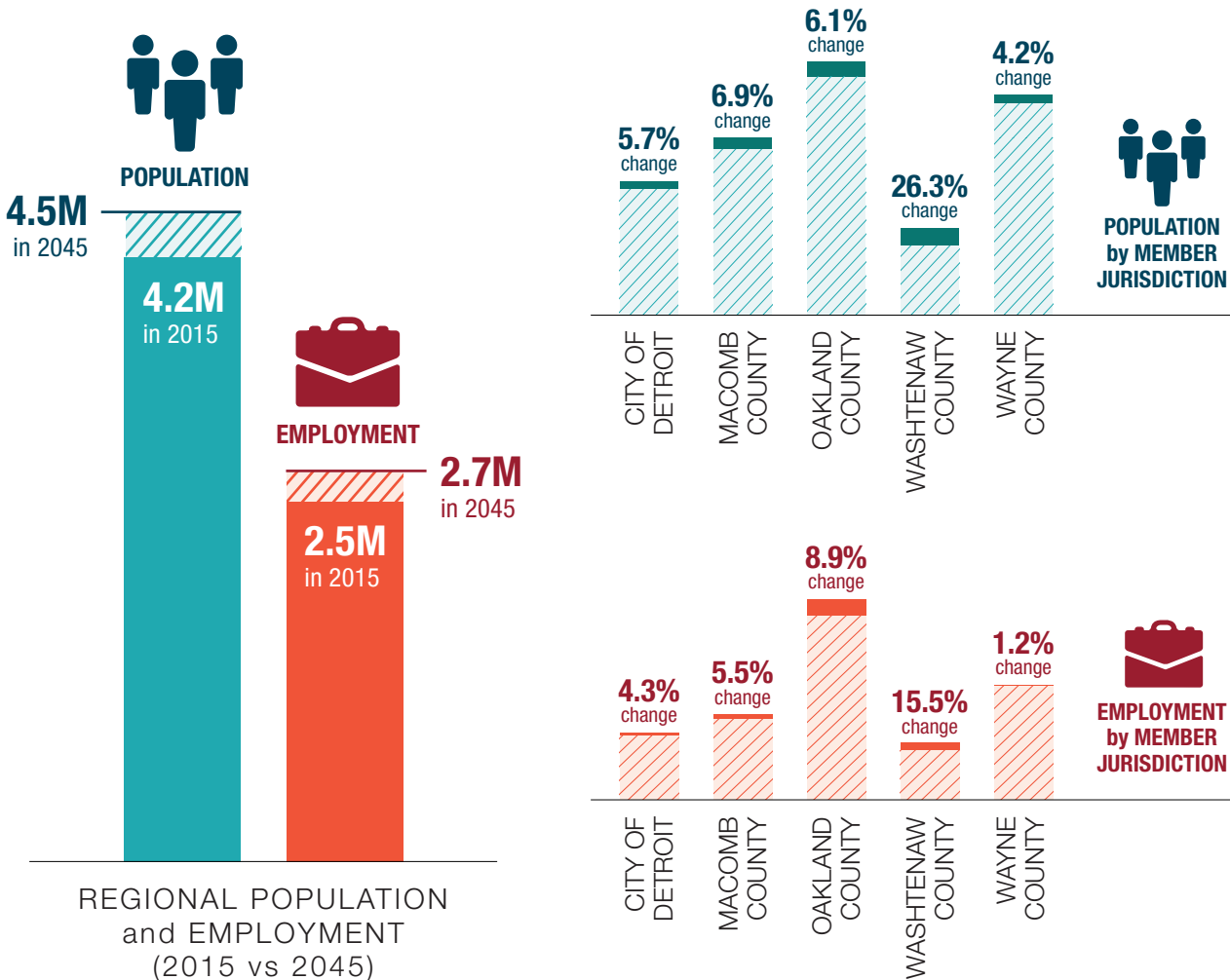
Five transit systems currently provide service to people across southeast Michigan: the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA a.k.a. TheRide), the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Detroit Transportation Corporation (DTC aka The People Mover), M1 Rail (operator of the QLINE streetcar), and the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART). In total these transit systems provide nearly 33 million trips in the region per year (Source: 2017 National Transit Database).

The Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) was established by the Michigan Legislature in 2012 to coordinate transit investments and service within four counties – Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, and Washtenaw. Spanning over 2,600 square miles, the RTA area includes over 4 million residents and nearly 1.9 million jobs.

## The Region today

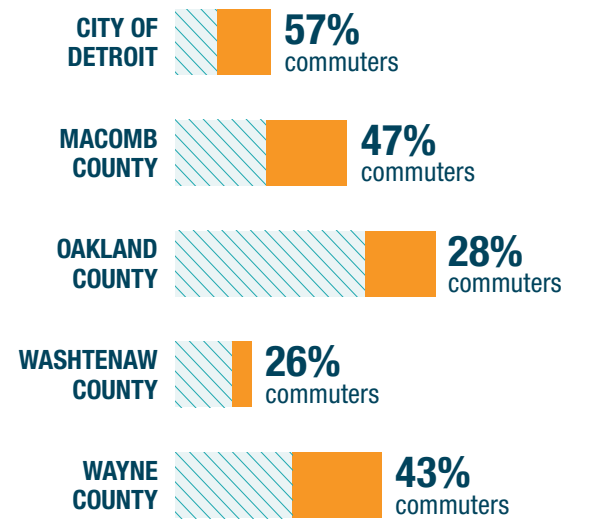
Southeast Michigan is home to roughly 4.2 million residents as of 2015, which is expected to grow to 4.5 million by 2045. There were approximately 2.5 million jobs in 2015, and it is expected to grow to 2.7 million by 2045. Residents of Southeast Michigan are looking for continued transit growth to match and support regional population and employment growth. People currently use transit to get to work, school, medical appointments, and shopping, and for recreational activities. There are many areas in the region that would benefit from additional service, catered to the people that live there and the kind of service that would be a good fit for their needs.

### Change in population and employment (2015-2045)



## HOW PEOPLE ARE COMMUTING

In 2015, there were 2.5 million commute trips that had origins and destinations within the region. 39% of those trips crossed a county or City of Detroit boundary. Detroit had the largest share of commuters (57%), that traveled across county boundaries for work.



2015 COMMUTER TRIPS by MEMBER JURISDICTION

	2015	2045 estimated
Senior population (over 65)	15% of total population	22% of total population
Young adult population (18–25)	10% of total population	8% of total population
Low-car households	15% of households	15% of households
Workforce (leading sectors)	(1) Professional services, (2) retail trade, and (3) manufacturing	(1) Professional services, (2) medical facilities, and (3) leisure and hospitality

## Transit systems people use today

	AAATA	DDOT	DTC	M-1 RAIL	SMART
Service Area (Square Miles)	81	114	3	3	1,074
Annual Operating Budget	\$45,857,698	\$135,072,500	\$18,459,629	\$8,996,404	\$126,881,400
Number of Routes	37	43	1	1	49
Fleet Size (Fixed Route Buses or railcars)	133	288	11	6	279
Annual Revenue Hours	442,968	1,043,153	47,889	27,457	731,271
Annual Revenue Miles	5,616,860	13,633,306	555,462	183,644	1,207,896
Annual Ridership	1,678,401	23,449,636	2,212,661	1,192,110	8,570,187
Average Weekday Ridership	25,000	85,000	5,000	3,500	29,000
Full Adult Fare	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$0.75	\$1.50	\$2.00
Farebox Recovery	19%	17%	8%	8%	20%

### AAATA



**ROLE:** AAATA exists to provide access to destinations throughout the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area for increasing numbers of residents, workers and visitors via transportation options that contribute to the Area's social, environmental and economic vitality at a cost that demonstrates value and efficient stewardship of resources.  
(Source: 2019 Strategic Business Plan)

The Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA, aka TheRide) provides public transit service for the City of Ann Arbor, the City of Ypsilanti, and Ypsilanti Township, and contracts service with the townships of Superior and Pittsfield. Additionally, AAATA operates express commuter transit service to the communities of Canton and Chelsea and contracts for service to Detroit Metro Airport (AirRide) through a partnership with the Michigan Flyer. AAATA also provides a suite of additional transportation services for specialized populations and trip types.

In 2019, AAATA plans to modernize its internal processes, enhance the customer experience, develop ideas for the future, and collaborate with the community.

To learn more about AAATA visit:  
<https://www.theride.org/AboutUs>

### DDOT



**ROLE:** DDOT is Detroit's transit provider! As the largest public transit agency in Michigan, DDOT primarily serves the city of Detroit, but offers service connecting to neighboring cities including Dearborn, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Harper Woods, Livonia, Redford Township, River Rouge and Southfield.  
(Source: DDOT Website)

The Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) primarily serves the city of Detroit, but offers service connecting to neighboring cities including Dearborn, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Harper Woods, Livonia, Redford Township, River Rouge and Southfield. DDOT has 48 fixed bus routes, including 11 24-hour routes, and 6 express routes, connecting neighborhoods across the city to major job centers in Downtown and Midtown. In 2018 alone, DDOT updated its brand, replaced 30 buses, adjusted its fare structure, deployed its ConnectTen routes (frequent, 24-hr service on the top ten DDOT routes) and several pilot programs (i.e. Free WIFI, Night Shift, etc.). DDOT also provides a suite of additional transportation services for specialized populations and trip types.

In 2019, DDOT plans to engage neighborhoods as part of its Your Routes, Your Ideas initiative, continue upgrades to its technology, replace an additional 30 buses, deploy new bus stop signage and shelters, implement fare changes, rehabilitate the Coolidge Terminal, and relocate its administrative offices.

To learn more about DDOT visit:  
<https://detroitmi.gov/departments/detroit-department-transportation>

### DTC

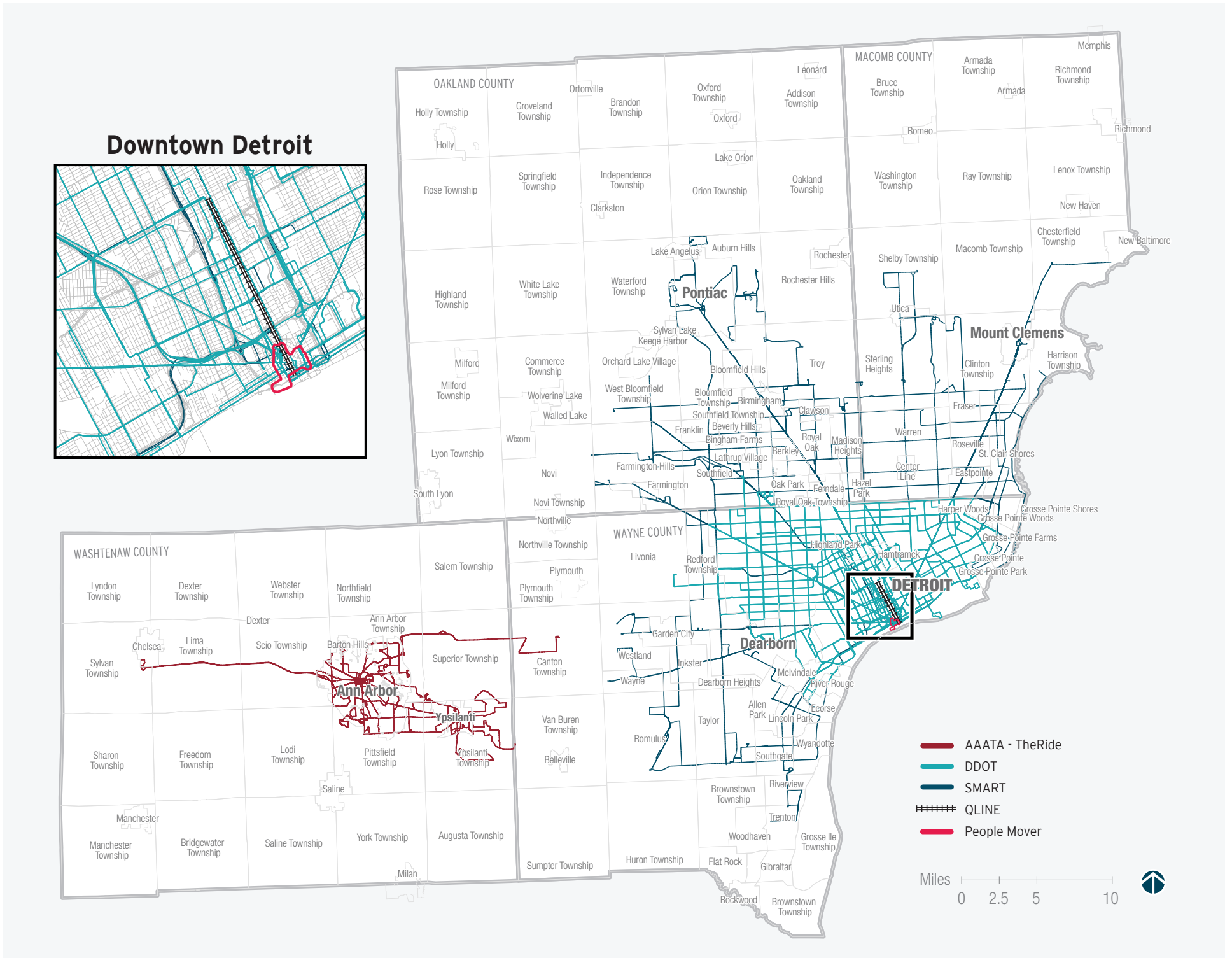


**ROLE:** DTC's mission is to provide safe, reliable, efficient and accessible rail transportation services that will serve to enhance business development and quality of life functions in Detroit by augmenting pedestrian travel and by supporting both private conveyances and other modes of public transportation.  
(Source: DTC Website)

The Detroit Transportation Corporation (DTC), an agency of the City of Detroit, owns and operates the Detroit People Mover (DPM). DPM is a fully-automated light rail system that operates on an elevated, one-way loop connecting major employment centers and destinations within Detroit's central business district (CBD). DPM serves 13 stations with 12 driverless vehicles. The integration of eight of the thirteen People Mover stations into pre-existing structures links over 9 million square feet that can be traversed unimpeded by outside elements.

To learn more about DDOT visit:  
<https://www.thepeoplemover.com/>

## Transit systems people use today (continued)



### M-1 RAIL



**ROLE:** Providing convenient transportation to key destinations in the downtown, midtown and New Center areas of Detroit.

M-1 RAIL is a non-profit organization formed in 2007 that developed, owns, and operates the QLINE streetcar project in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies. QLINE is a 6.6-mile circulating streetcar loop with 12 stops within Detroit on Woodward Avenue, providing service to the Downtown, Midtown, New Center, and North End neighborhoods.

To learn more about DDOT visit:  
<https://qlinedetroit.com/about/>

### SMART



**ROLE:** Serving since 1967, SMART is Southeast Michigan's only regional public transportation provider, offering convenient, reliable and safe transportation for Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties. SMART's Fixed-Route and small bus services connect people to employment and educational institutions. (Source: SMART website)

SMART currently serves various communities throughout Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. SMART runs 48 fixed routes that connect popular community destinations such as the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Detroit Zoo, Henry Ford Medical Center, the Detroit Metro Airport (DTW), Wayne State University, etc. SMART also provides a suite of additional transportation services for specialized populations and trip types.

In 2019, SMART plans to implement fare changes, finalize a comprehensive operations analysis (COA) of its system, deploy a transit signal priority (TSP) project with MDOT, upgrade its paratransit service, develop park and ride (P&R) strategies, upgrade its facilities, and modernize its internal processes.

To learn more about DDOT visit:

[http://smartpathplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SMART\\_ExistingConditionsDraft-v12.pdf](http://smartpathplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SMART_ExistingConditionsDraft-v12.pdf)

## Other mobility options people use today

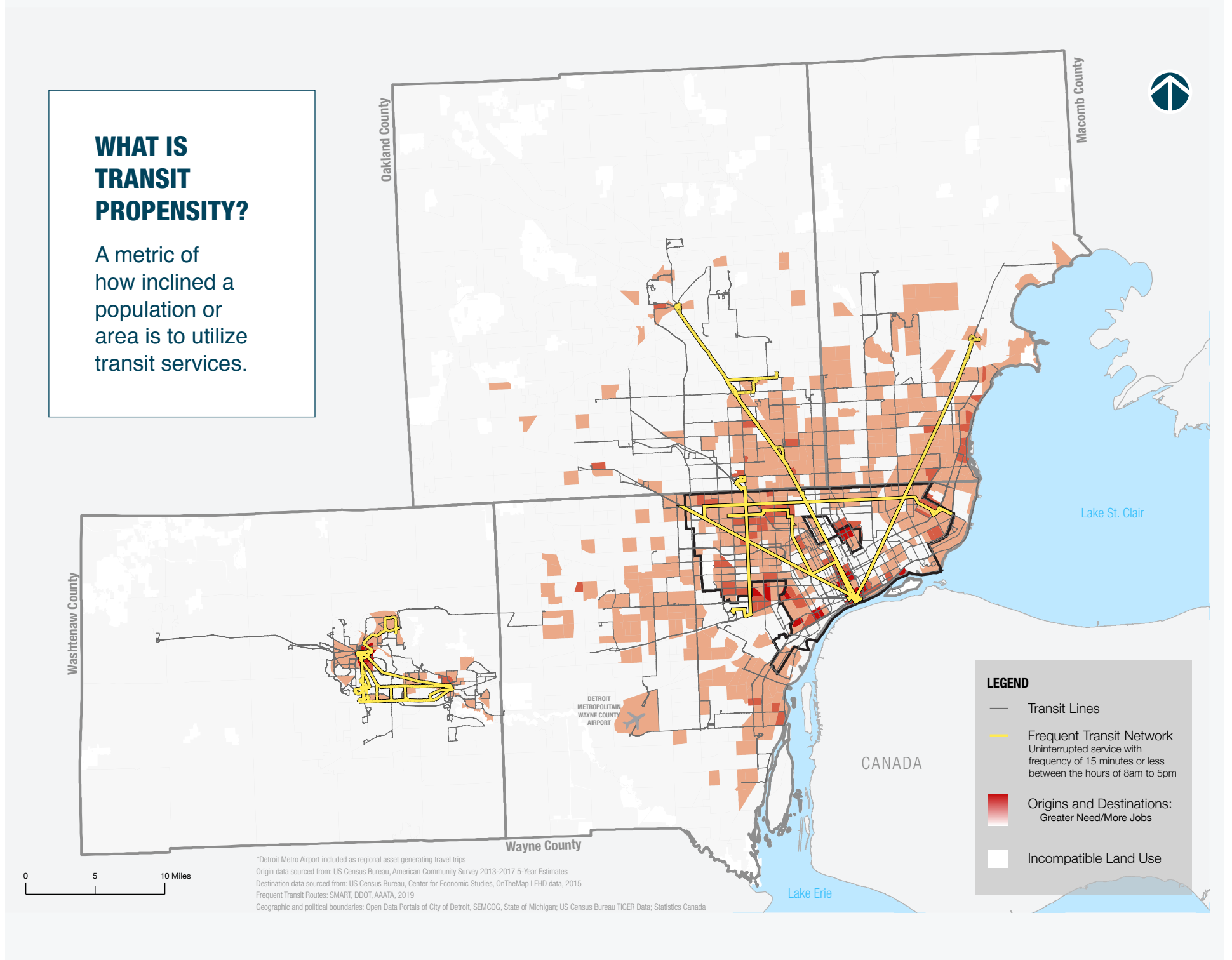
There is a large eco-system of additional mobility services that exist beyond major transit providers. This includes on-demand services operated by dozens of municipalities, many of them in direct partnership with SMART; several non-profit providers; employee shuttle services; transportation network companies (e.g. Uber, Lyft, etc.); bike sharing services (e.g. MOGO, ArborBike); and e-scooters (e.g. Bird, Lime, Spin). There are over 100 different providers that include North Oakland Transportation Authority, Richmond-Lenox EMS, Western-Washtenaw Area Value Express, Jewish Family Services, Quicken Employee Shuttles, and Detroit Public Schools/Trinity Transportation.

The majority of the municipal and non-profit providers are focused on delivering service to seniors and people with disabilities within their communities.

## Transit propensity and frequent transit network

The transit propensity map below highlights areas where market demand supports additional transit services. The areas highlighted in dark red and blue have high concentrations of populations that traditionally use transit services such as individuals over the age of 65, under the age of 18, those with disabilities, individuals in poverty, households with no or one vehicle and veteran status.

Demand in SE Michigan is concentrated in urban centers throughout the region, but the map demonstrates the need for additional services in the urban fringe to for local trips or connections to the larger regional transit system.



## Challenges people face today when using available transit and mobility options

The Region's current transit providers are doing a great job providing a breadth of services that meets many of the needs of its current customers. However, they are hampered by several challenges that can only be solved through a coordinated regional plan and investment program:

### **Challenge #1 – Regional coverage is not maximized**

There are large gaps in transit availability throughout the region, which limits people's access to job opportunities and vital services. Many of these are in areas that have a decent amount of propensity for transit, but have elected to opt-out of the existing regional transit system. There are over 250,000 jobs in the communities that currently opt-out of the SMART services. Many of these areas are key regional job centers, include large medical facilities, and include major education institutions.

### **Challenge #2 – Increased service frequency, service hours and reduced travel times are needed to meet regional needs**

There are few frequent routes, limited evening services, and very low travel speeds on routes throughout the region, which make transit inconvenient for those who rely on it and discourages most with other travel options from using it. 12.5% of the existing service could be considered frequent. There are some frequent services in higher density urban areas and along some major regional corridors, but there are none that cross the region east to west to meet that large travel market and there is a steep drop-off between frequent routes (e.g. a bus every 15 minutes) and other routes (e.g. bus every 60 minutes). Similarly, the level of transit availability during the evening drops outside of the City of Detroit. Finally, options for express trips are limited to peak commute periods or a few regional corridors.

### **Challenge #3 – The region lacks premium mobility choices**

There are limited premium transit choices at the regional level, which dampens the attractiveness of the service for potential new riders and diminishes transit's utility as an economic development tool. Premium services could include things like arterial rapid transit, bus rapid transit, branded airport services, commuter rail, light rail, or streetcar expansions.

### **Challenge #4 – A comprehensive regional solution for serving Detroit Metropolitan Airport is needed**

Most people in the region don't have access to a transit connection to the airport. This lack of connection forces travelers and residents into expensive options like private taxis, transportation network companies, and paying for long-term parking. In 2015, an estimated 8.9 million passengers boarded flights at the airport.

### **Challenge #5 – A sustainable funding model is needed to support expanded mobility options**

There is limited funding available to build and operate the transit system that the region needs. The funding that does exist is subject to frequent millage renewals, or annual budget approvals, which limits the long-term sustainability of funding. This also constrains the providers' ability to make necessary long-term capital investments needed to modernize vehicles, equipment, and facilities.

### **Challenge #6 – Major demographic trends require action today to be ready for the mobility needs of tomorrow**

Seniors are 15% of the region's population today, and they will be 25% of the region's population by 2045. This will put pressure on the transit providers to continue to support and expand specialized services like ADA paratransit and other senior oriented services. These services are expensive and require a high degree of coordination and management.

### **Challenge #7 – Lack a clear plan to integrate emerging and mobility options**

There is a large global shift underway in how mobility services are delivered, which presents an opportunity for our region to be the leader in integrating new mobility services into our mobility ecosystem. Companies like Uber and Lyft are becoming popular alternatives to driving and taking transit for people throughout the region. Studies have shown that only 78% of young adults own vehicles, compared to 91% of older generations, and the trends also show that young adults are more apt to use new services.

### **Challenge #8 – A stable and growing workforce is needed to deliver expanded service**

There are over 2,000 people currently employed at the transit providers. There is a persistent challenge in hiring willing transit operators and trained mechanics, which constrains the providers' ability to deliver existing service and will be a hindrance to providing any expanded service.

### **Challenge #9 - A need to modernize our system making transit and mobility options more accessible to all people of southeast Michigan**

Technology is driving change across the region whether we like it or not. The way people procure services, goods and amenities is evolving at such a rapid pace; our transit and mobility services need to stay current with consumer expectations to remain competitive.

### **Challenge #10 - A one-size fits all mobility solution does not work given the geographic size and development patterns of the region**

Providing high quality, reliable and frequent transit service requires more dense land uses in order to be sustainable. The outer fringes of metro Detroit region with low transit propensity are not conducive to being efficiently served by traditional transit and do not have a need for expanded regional transit services.