

goMARTI Project

APRIL 2022 COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

SUMMARY REPORT

AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

The PLUM Catalyst: Tammy Meehan Russell, Justin Johnson, Patty Day
May Mobility: Shana Downs, Praveena Ramaswami, Will Kawsy, Fawna Tucker
Visit Grand Rapids: Megan Christianson, Lilly Smith
Mobility Mania: Myrna Peterson, Lisa Arnold
MnDOT: Thomas Johnson-Kaiser

OVERVIEW

In April 2022, the goMARTI team and partners held three listening sessions in Grand Rapids to engage with various stakeholders in the community to get a better understanding of how the goMARTI self-driving shuttle pilot project could best serve the needs of the Grand Rapids area.

The intent of these listening sessions was to begin a conversation with the Grand Rapids larger community, explain the technology and pilot, and to gather feedback on what would be most beneficial and of use to the community. By listening and gathering feedback, the team will be able to make adjustments and determine pilot stops and hours for the pilot, as well as to begin building trust with the community for a new technology.

LISTENING SESSIONS HELD

- SESSION 1: APRIL 20 @ ITASCA COUNTY RESOURCE CENTER
 - Organizations and providers of social and human services that work frequently with clients in Itasca County were invited to attend.
- SESSION 2: APRIL 21 @ LAKESHORE PLACE SENIOR APARTMENTS
 - Members of the Lakeshore Place Senior Apartment Complex and members of the Northstar Women's Service Association were invited to attend.
- SESSION 3: APRIL 21 @ RAPID BREWING
 - Members of the Grand Rapids business community, including the Downtown Business Chamber and other downtown businesses were invited to attend, in partnership with Visit Grand Rapids.

ATTENDEES

A variety of interest groups participated in the three goMARTI listening sessions including:

- Individuals in the community
- River Grand
- MS Group
- Itasca County Fair
- Itasca County
- Orion Corp
- Grand Itasca
- Oak Hill Assisted Living
- 7C7H
- Reif Center
- Itasca Medical Care (IM Care)
- ICHHS -(Itasca County Health and Human Services)
- AEOA -(Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency)
- MDI- (Minnesota Diversified Industry)
- Itasca Life Options
- Northland Counseling
- Northstar Women's
- United Way
- Visit Grand Rapids
- Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
- Wings 'N Willows Art Gallery
- Lake Lover Vintage
- Shaw Florists
- Historical Society
- Move It Real Estate
- Get Fit Itasca
- Nevaeh Properties
- Academic/Program Director
- Essentia Health
- Lake Shore Place Apartments Board
- Saint Andrews Lutheran Church

GOAL OF LISTENING SESSIONS

- Where would you like to goMARTI to stop along the route? (i.e. 10-12 pick-up/drop-off locations)
- Are there certain areas of the city where you would like to see a goMARTI shuttle?
- When would you be most likely to use the goMARTI shuttle pilot? (i.e. Hours of operation - 60 hours available per week)
- What are some barriers you or your clients might find to using the goMARTI pilot?
- What other groups and/or types of engagement would you recommend in the community as we roll out the project?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Comments provided during group discussion

- It would be helpful to have the goMARTI pilot hours match the Itasca Resource Center hours
- Clients are often waiting 1-2 hours for transport using existing public transportation options
- Access to services like Second Harvest Foods should be considered on the route
- Technology access could be a challenge for some of their clients. Partnering with 211's call center will be a helpful resource to those requesting rides without a smartphone or ability to use the app
- Discussion about job creation, who would be eligible, how many, training of operators, etc.
- Desire to make this an amenity to improve quality of life (not just a "fun toy")
- Request that the team consider shelters for winter at pick up locations for safety
- Discussion of how wheelchair riders would interact with the vehicle and operator (safety, tie downs, assistance from operator)
- Discussion of how sharing rides with other passengers would work (picking up other riders going the same area vs riders going to different parts of the city; i.e. what's most efficient)
- Plum Catalyst and May Mobility answered questions about coordination with other agency partners including the City of Grand Rapids, Itasca County, Public Works, Police, Fire, etc.

Questions that were raised during the discussion

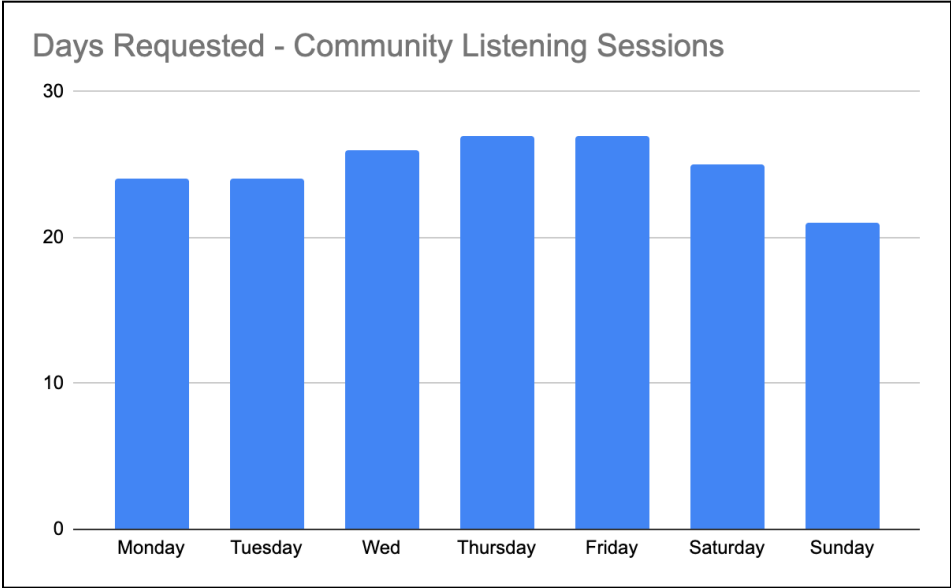
- goMARTI vehicles having a home storage place for maintenance and parking
- How May Mobility's other deployments have gone in different cities
- Whether taxes would go up or residents would be charged to provide the pilot
- How the vehicle would function in negative temperatures with high snow totals
- Around the number of vehicles, passenger capacity (with and without wheelchairs)
- What is the minimum age to ride? (May provided context that other cities have implemented a 12+ ridership minimum for children without an adult)
- Why the route didn't extend to the Walmart area of town (The team discussed the desire of the City of Grand Rapids to stay off major streets and to keep vehicle speeds to 30mph or less)
- Can you set up rides in advance?
- Do riders have to agree to terms and conditions? How?

BARRIERS IDENTIFIED TO PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT

- Weather conditions/lack of shelter
- Ability to enter and exit the vehicle safely and easily for those with accessibility issues
- Response time
- Not having a smartphone or technical knowledge of downloading and operating apps
- Drop off/Pick up locations too far from desired locations
- Unfamiliarity with using shared ride services and riding together with unknown individuals

REQUESTED HOURS OF PILOT

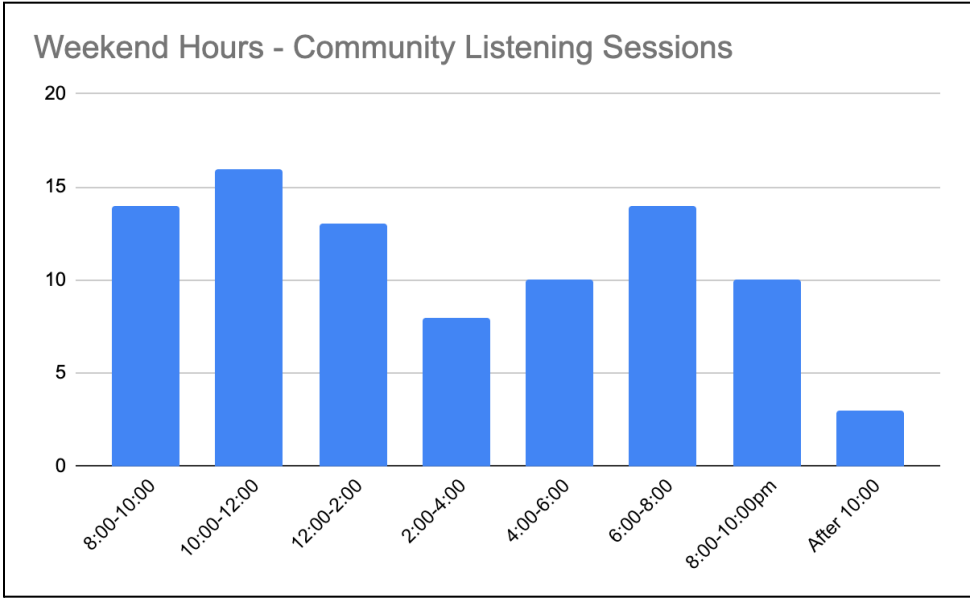
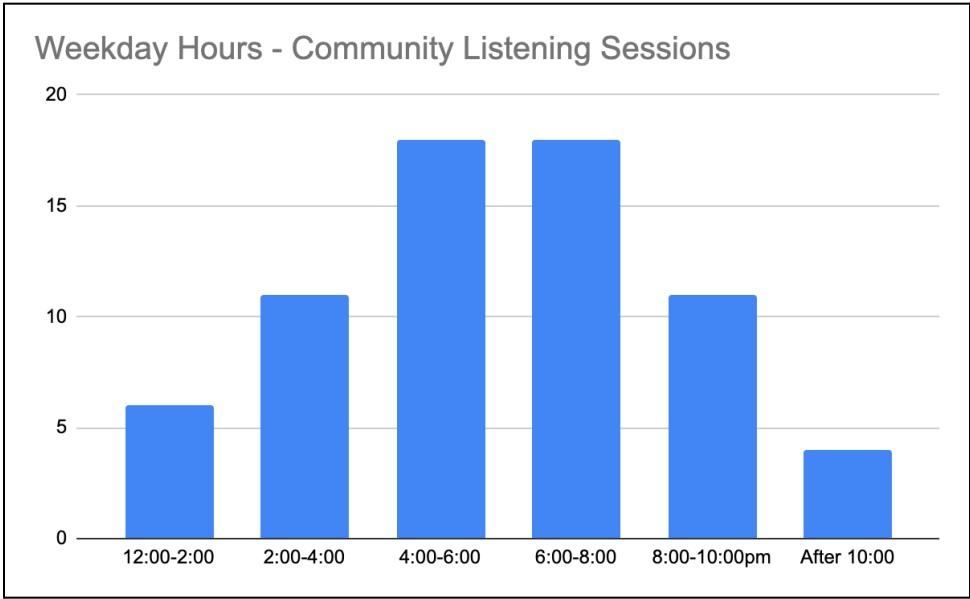
The goMarti pilot was always intended to be for evenings and weekends to complement other methods of transportation. In order to fine tune this and come up with a specific schedule for the pilot we asked participants of the community listening sessions to identify days and times they feel the pilot would be most beneficial. Below is a summary of the responses.



Monday and Tuesday were the least requested weekdays with 24 or the 38 respondents indicating there was a need on those days. Thursday and Friday were the most requested weekdays. While Sunday was the least requested day overall, those that selected it highlighted a strong need identifying church and other social gatherings as their primary use for those days.

We will look at hours for the pilot in two buckets, weekdays and weekends. For weekdays, 4:00pm to 8:00pm were the most selected times with 2:00-4:00pm and 8:00-10:00 closely following. Respondents that indicated these evening times note Reif events, YMCA, return trips from medical appointments and social engagements such as dinners and sport events and their desired activities.

For weekends there was a clear distinction between requests for the pilot on Saturday and Sunday. Saturday had requests throughout the day with the peak times from 4:00pm to 10:00pm, which is similar to what we saw on weekdays. Alternatively, on Sundays there were requests starting at 8:00am and dramatically declining by 2:00pm.



Based on the information collected the project team is proposing the following schedule for the pilot. While this is our proposed starting point the hours can always be adjusted throughout the pilot if we were to see demand at alternative times.

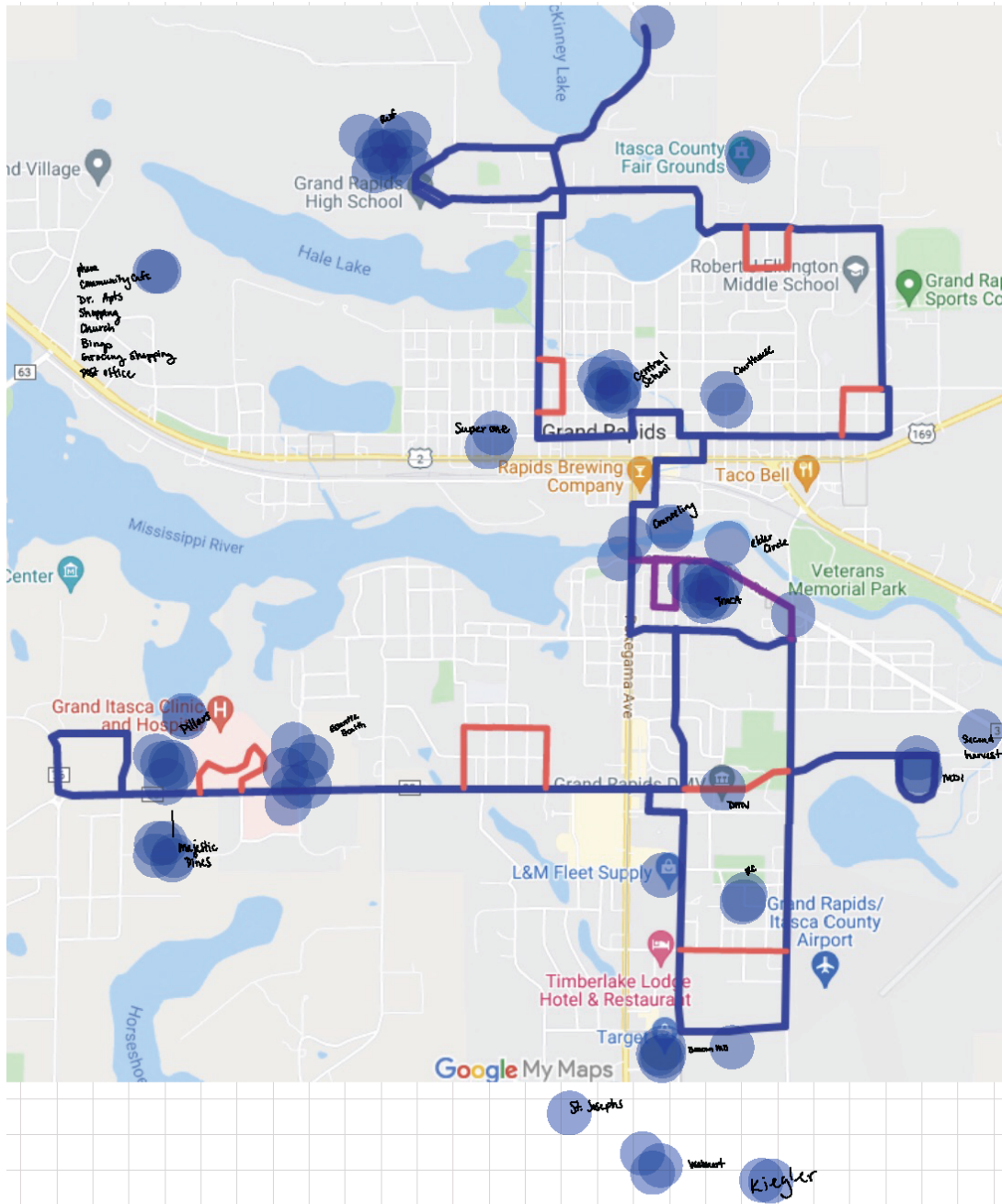
Proposed Pilot Hours:

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	2:00-10:00
Wednesday	2:00-10:00
Thursday	2:00- 10:00
Friday	2:00-10:00
Saturday	10:00-10:00
Sunday	8:00-2:00

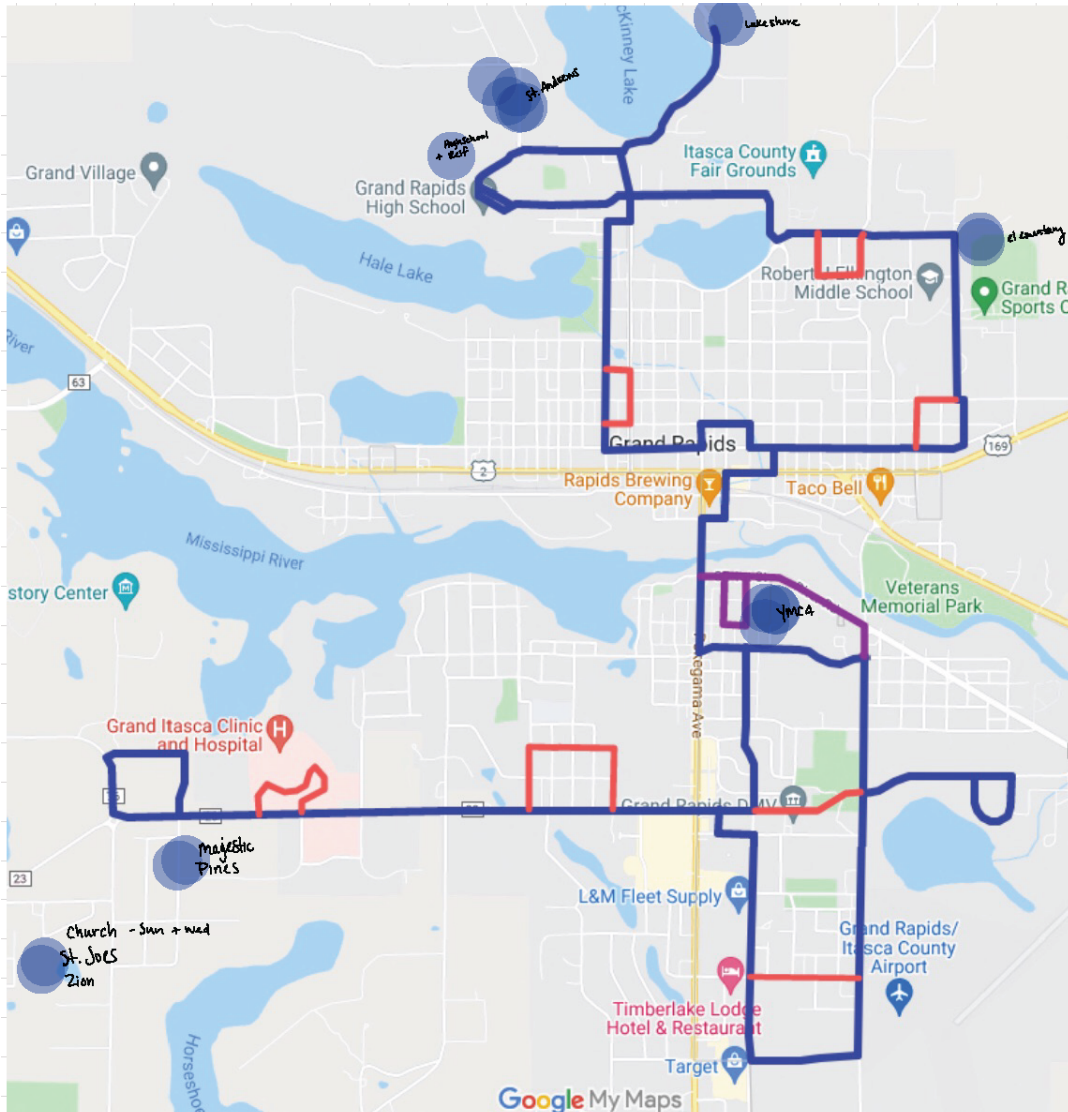
REQUESTED STOPS FOR PICK UP/DROP OFF

The below heat maps show the results of the 3 community listening sessions when participants were asked where they would like to use the goMARTI pilot.

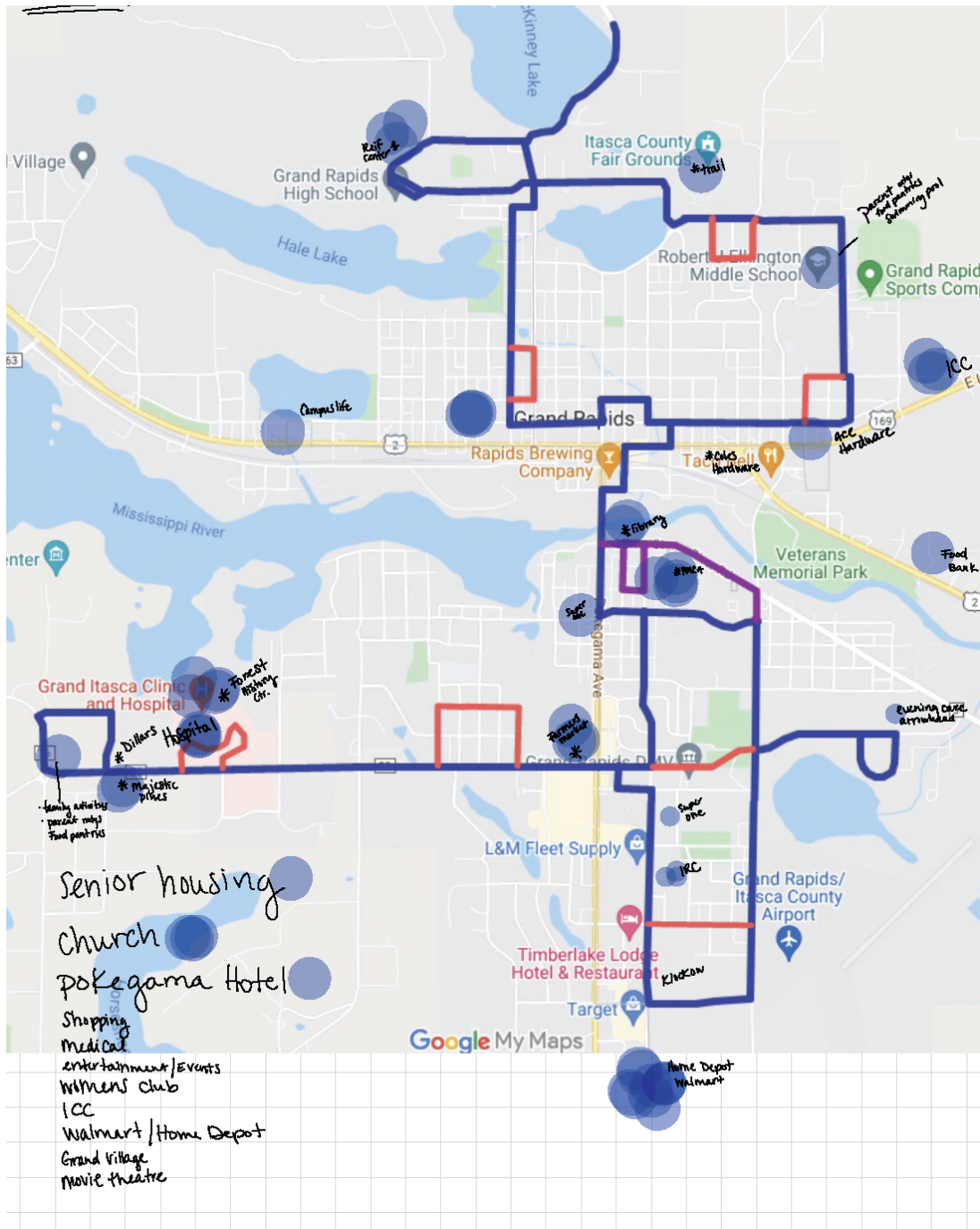
Session 1 Heat Map: Organizations



Session 2 Heat Map: Senior Community

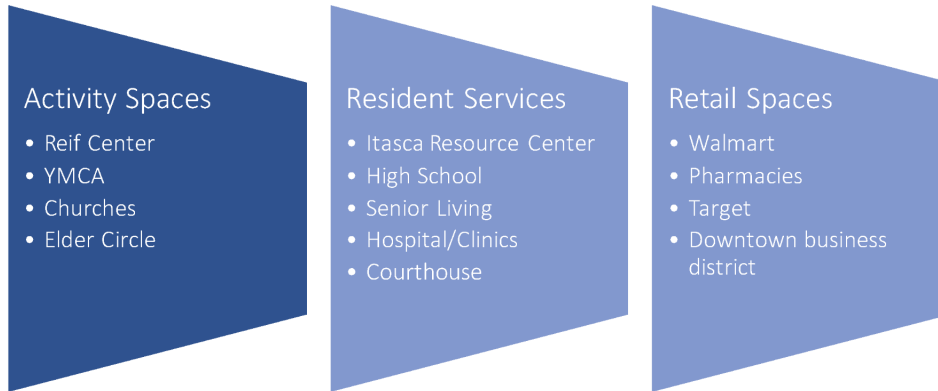


Session 3 Heat Map: Businesses



Here is summary of some of the most requested stop locations:

Where would you like goMARTI to stop?

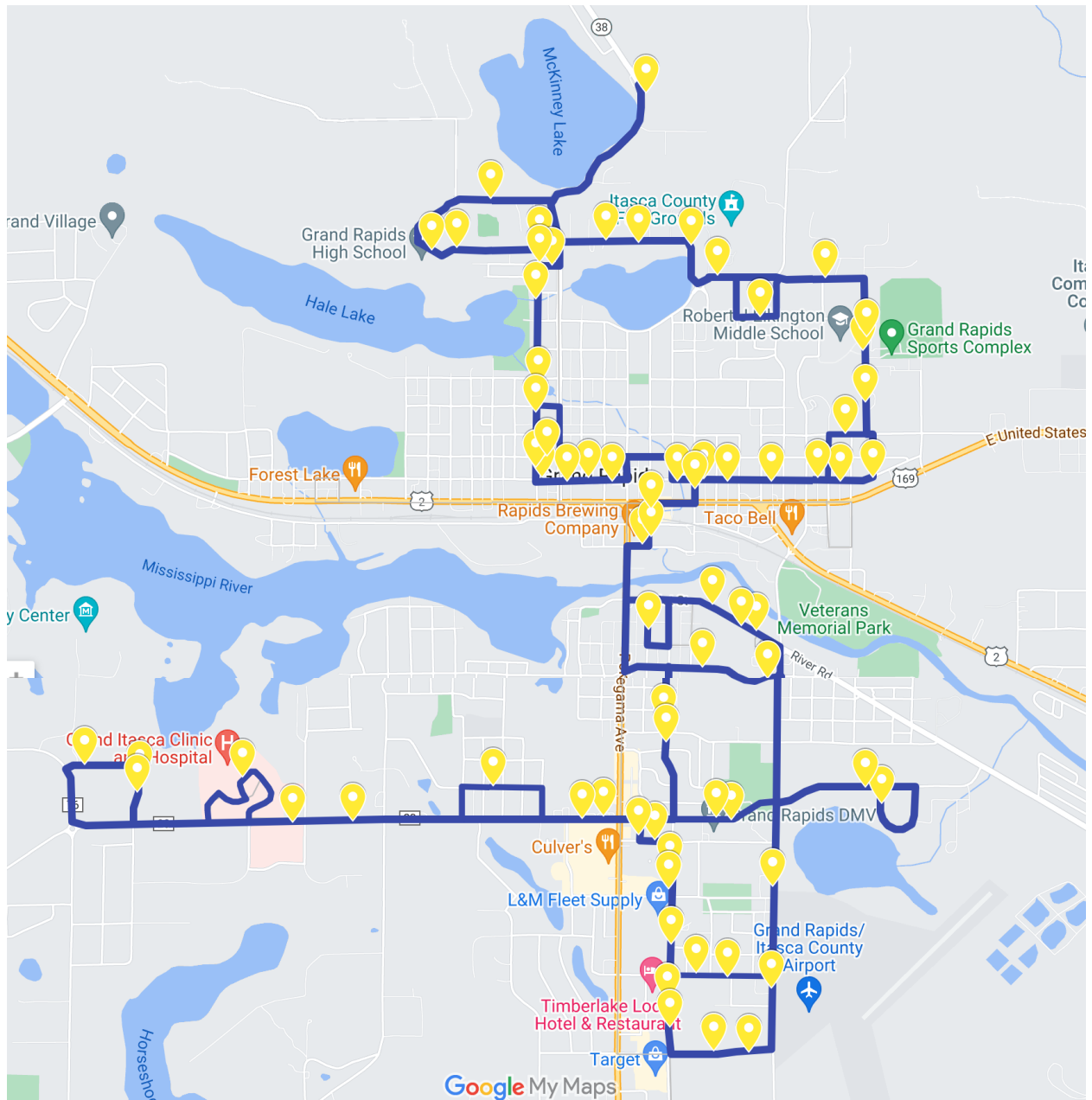


PROPOSED POINTS FOR PICK UP/DROP OFF

Based on feedback collected from the community listening session May Mobility is proposing the below locations as the pre-defined pick up and drop off locations. The 69 locations cover the vast majority of requested locations and provide great coverage throughout the pilot area. Each location has also been scouted to ensure a safe, accessible and legal stop.

Of the the most requested locations from the community listening sessions, we are able to include all but Walmart the in the pilot. While we extensively researched if Walmart would be included, the teams could not find a way to accommodate the additional roadway required. This is a location we continue to assess in the future. Coverage does include:

Category	POIs
Entertainment	- YMCA, Rapids Brewing, Cinema, Klockow, Brewed Awakening, Anytime Fitness, Reif Center, Fairgrounds
Grocery	- Super One, Aldi
Grocery/Shopping	- Ace Hardware, Walgreens, L&M Fleet Supply
Church	- St. Andrews, Alliance Church, Church of God,
Services	- Hospital, IRC, Library, Schools, DMV, Post Office, Central Square Mall, Courthouse, Civic Center
Residential and Other	- Lakeshore, River Grand, River South, Pillars, Lakewood Heights



NEXT STEPS

- More community engagement will be done in Grand Rapids in the summer of 2022
 - Several goMARTI shuttle demonstration events and outreach will take place in the community
 - First Call For Help (FCFH)/211 will engage with the community at events in the Summer of 2022 to help residents download and train around the use the goMARTI app in advance of the Fall 2022 launch
 - Launch of the goMARTI.com public website to help educate and engage with the community ongoing
 - Job opportunities will be shared on the website, in the community and with local partners to recruit and train goMARTI operations staff
 - The team will continue to re-evaluate the usage of the defined stops and hours to determine if any adjustments need to be made to help increase and improve ridership
-