

2026-2030 SHORELINE METRO TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Prepared by:

Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission

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Chapter1: Introduction

Shoreline Metro Transit

Shoreline Metro Transit offers Fixed Route Transit service and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit service in the cities of Sheboygan, and Sheboygan Falls, and Village of Kohler, located within the Sheboygan Urbanized Area in Wisconsin, about 50 miles north of Milwaukee. Both the services are operated by the City of Sheboygan.

Study Purpose

The Shoreline Metro Transit Development Plan (TDP) serves as a strategic framework to guide the planning and growth of the transit system over a five-year period. It supports the efficient allocation of capital and operational funding while addressing the increasing demand for transit services. The plan incorporates a comprehensive analysis of factors anticipated to affect service delivery and identifies strategies to enhance transit operations within the Sheboygan area. Through this process, the TDP defines the appropriate future direction and service models necessary to meet the evolving transportation needs of the community.

The following topics were included in the scope of the study:

- Developing goals and objectives for the transit system
- Assessing the existing transit system
- Public engagement
- Transit needs assessment
- Service planning and recommendations
- Creating funding and implementation plan

Planning Process

A multi-organization advisory committee was established in the beginning of the project to guide the decision making and the progress of the project. The advisory committee consisted of Shoreline Metro's transit director and employees, local citizens, officials from the Cities of Sheboygan and Sheboygan Falls, Village of Kohler, and Town of Sheboygan, Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Sheboygan County, staff from Sheboygan Area School District, Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Sheboygan MPO/Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission staff.

The City of Sheboygan applied for and received a Section 5304 Statewide Transit Planning Program Grant, which covered 80% of the plan's funding. The remaining 20% was provided by the City of Sheboygan. The City of Sheboygan and Shoreline Metro's transit director contracted with the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission to lead the planning effort.

The development of this TDP was guided by a comprehensive evaluation of transit needs and service opportunities within the Sheboygan area. The planning process included research on existing conditions, an assessment of the current transit system and service area, and an analysis of alternative transit service configurations. Data was collected and analyzed to evaluate system performance, service area characteristics, and travel patterns. Two targeted data collection efforts were conducted to gather input from transit riders and to better understand route ridership patterns. Additional planning activities included a peer system analysis, development of a cost allocation model, evaluation of route productivity, and establishment of the TDP's goals and objectives. Together, these analyses informed the development and evaluation of alternative service configurations, ultimately leading to the recommended public transportation plan for the Sheboygan area. The Implementation Strategy section outlines the actions and priorities needed to implement the key recommendations identified in this TDP.

Transit System Overview

Shoreline Metro Fixed Route Service

Shoreline Metro is owned and operated by the City of Sheboygan and provides limited transit service to the Village of Kohler and to the City of Sheboygan Falls. Shoreline Metro was acquired in the early 1970s by a private operator. Similar to other privately owned and operated bus companies, the rising costs of maintaining a quality public service resulted in a significant profit loss. Despite the provision of subsidies in 1971, the privately owned Sheboygan Bus Lines continued to absorb increasing deficits. By the summer of 1972, the owners of the bus system filed an application to discontinue service in the Sheboygan area, a request that was granted by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Continuation of the bus service was assured as the City of Sheboygan was given temporary authority to operate the service. A city referendum vote in April 1973 was supported by a 3 to 1 margin, allowing the city to acquire and operate a municipal bus transportation system. The results of this change in ownership provided not only immediately financial stability, but also the opportunity for evaluation and implementation of operating and service improvements. Items such as routing and the level of service have generally been preserved in their underlying form and provide the foundation of the current transit system.

In 1992, Shoreline Metro initiated paratransit services under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). This door-to-door service provides transportation to the disabled population in the community that, in many cases, is unable to utilize the fixed-route service. Shoreline Metro contracted these services to the Sheboygan County Health and Human Services Department (and its private sector transportation provider) over several years but brought this service component in-house in 2007. In addition, Shoreline Metro's fixed-route service is fully accessible to disabled passengers who can utilize such service.

Shoreline Metro's service is mostly a fixed route, fixed-scheduled bus system. Demand response service for the disabled is operated through the "Metro Connection" division of Shoreline Metro.

Paratransit Service

In order to meet the special needs of persons with disabilities and to comply with the ADA, Shoreline Metro operates low-floor buses on its regular, fixed-route system. For disabled persons who qualify for ADA paratransit service, Shoreline Metro offers demand-response paratransit service during the same hours of operation as its fixed-route service within three-fourths of a mile of all Shoreline Metro fixed routes and within its current transit service area (cities of Sheboygan, Sheboygan Falls, and the Village of Kohler). The ADA paratransit service is provided through Shoreline Metro's "Metro Connection" division. Current hours of operation are 5:15 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. on Saturdays. There is no service on Sundays or major holidays.

Clients make their own arrangements for transportation service. ADA certified persons can request next day service prior to 3:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled service. Shoreline Metro can be reached at 920-459-3281, Option 2, regarding this service. Service includes door-to-door service with assistance from the first door to the vehicle and from the vehicle to the first door. Certification to use this program is required. Eligibility criteria for this program include:

- An individual with a disability who is unable to board, ride or disembark from a fully accessible Shoreline Metro bus;
- An individual with a disability who is able to board, ride or disembark from a fully accessible Shoreline Metro bus, but an accessible vehicle is not available on the regular bus system; or
- An individual who has a specific impairment-related condition, which prevents the individual from getting to or from a boarding or departure location on the regular bus system; this relates to environmental or architectural barriers under public control, which prevent individuals getting to or from accessible transportation.

Individuals with a qualifying disability may be considered eligible on:

- A trip-by-trip basis (conditional);
- A seasonal or weather basis (conditional);
- A permanent life certification (unconditional); or
- A short-term or revolving three-year basis (unconditional).

The ADA became law on July 26, 1990. The law is intended to provide equal access to people with disabilities in the areas of employment, public services, public transportation, private accommodations, and telecommunications. The ADA requires recipients of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds (including Shoreline Metro) to provide transportation services to people with disabilities by using both lift-equipped fixed-route service and complementary

paratransit service. Individuals are eligible to use ADA public transportation service or paratransit if they meet the eligibility criteria established in the ADA noted above.

An ADA paratransit fare for a one-way trip is \$4.00 at all times of operation. This fare is paid using an electronic fare media system. Trips are paid in advance and applied to a customer's account. A trip gets deducted from the account each time a trip is taken. Fares for individual trips are generally not available. Customers who are clients of an agency may have their transportation covered by the agency (at the "agency fare" rate). Personal care attendants of a qualified rider may ride at no additional charge. However, other accompanying riders must pay regular fares and may be limited if needed to allow other qualified customers to ride.

An \$8.00 fare for certain "premium" ADA paratransit services has been approved and implemented. These services include:

- Same-day reservations: Customers will be able to call and schedule a trip on the same day. Trips will only be permitted based on availability and are not guaranteed. Customers are still encouraged to make trip reservations in advance.
- Same-day changes: Customers will be able to call and modify a trip on the same day the trip is to be provided. For example, a customer wants to go to the supermarket instead of the dentist (because the appointment got canceled).
- Second bus – Customers that "no show" on their return trip home will be able to call and request a second bus to pick up the customer.

Service Characteristics

Current regular fixed-route transit services provided in the Shoreline Metro service area are provided on nine regular routes and one seasonal route. Eight of these routes (Routes 3 North and South, 5 North and South, 7 North and South, and 10 North and South) exclusively serve the City of Sheboygan portion of the transit service area. Route 20 (Kohler/ Sheboygan Falls Route, with limited service) serves the City of Sheboygan as well as the Village of Kohler and the City of Sheboygan Falls. Route 40 ("The Square") is a seasonal route that serves the downtown, riverfront, lakefront, and South Pier (Blue Harbor) areas of the City of Sheboygan. The route typically runs from mid-June through the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. All routes converge at the transfer point in Sheboygan's central business district. The downtown serves as the main transfer point between routes, and schedules are designed so that transfers are easily accommodated (with a few exceptions). The transfer point is located in the central portion of the block bordered by North 9th Street, Center Avenue, North 8th Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue.

Service is generally provided six days a week, Monday through Saturday, with no service on Sundays or on six observed holidays. Weekday service begins at 5:15 a.m. and ends at 8:15 p.m. Saturday service begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 4:15 p.m. North and South Shuttles are available during periods of hourly service when north and south side routes are not operating on weeknights and on Saturdays. Shuttle Service is available in the areas serviced by the Sheboygan

routes and excludes the area serviced by Route 20 in Kohler and Sheboygan Falls. Headways are generally 30 minutes in length for nearly all routes and are generally 60 minutes in length for Route 20 (except for the Kohler Company Special run, which has a headway of 30 minutes). Generally, numbered city routes (3, 5, 7 and 10) operate every half hour during the daytime on weekdays and hourly on weeknights and Saturdays, unless noted differently below. Map 4, below, provides the Shoreline Metro fixed-route overview. Profiles of each of Shoreline Metro's routes are noted below:

Route 3 North

Route 3 North serves the north central portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 3 North travels for a length of 6.9 miles from its southern terminus at the downtown transfer point to its northern terminus at the intersection of Eisner Avenue and North 21st Street. Major trip generators served by Route 3 North include the north side Piggly Wiggly supermarket, Plastics Engineering Company (PLENCO), Pigeon River/Etude and Cooper Elementary Schools, the Sheboygan Leadership Academy, St. Dominic's and St. Paul's Elementary Schools, the Walgreen's pharmacy on Calumet Drive, the McDonald's restaurant on North Avenue, RCS, Locate Staffing, and the recently relocated Lakeshore Technical College (LTC) Sheboygan campus. Michigan Avenue is also served by Route 3 North from North 13th Street to North 10th Street (inbound only).

Route 3 South

Route 3 South serves the south-central portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 3 South generally travels for a length of 7.0 miles from its southern terminus at the intersection of Georgia and Union Avenues to its northern terminus at the downtown transfer point. Major trip generators served by Route 3 South include the South Pier District (on certain trips, including Blue Harbor Resort), Georgia Avenue Apartments, Bio Life plasma center, the University of Wisconsin Green Bay – Sheboygan Campus, Bookworm Gardens, Lutheran High School, Horace Mann Middle School, Old Wisconsin, James Madison and Sheridan Elementary Schools, and Immanuel Lutheran School.

Route 5 North

Route 5 North serves the northeast portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 5 North travels for a length of 6.5 miles from its southern terminus at the downtown transfer point to its northern terminus at the intersection of Eisner Avenue and North 10th Street. Major trip generators served by Route 5 North include Here We Grow Child Care Center, Urban Middle School, the north side Piggly Wiggly supermarket, Ridge Court apartments, North High School, Vollrath Park, Grant Elementary School, Sheboygan County Christian Elementary School, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Elementary School, the Sheboygan County YMCA, Deland Park and Marina, and the Sheboygan Senior Activity Center. Eisner Avenue is also served between North 13th Street and North 10th Street.

Route 5 South

Route 5 South serves the south-central portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 5 South travels for a length of 8.3 miles from its southern terminus at Indian Meadows Mobile Home Park to its northern terminus at the downtown transfer point. Major trip generators served by Route 5 South include the Shoreline Metro offices and garage, Rockline Industries, Heritage Square, Indian Meadows Mobile Home Park, Lakeshore Display, Wilson Elementary School, Bethlehem Lutheran Elementary School, and Christ Child Academy.

Route 7 North

Route 7 North serves the northwest portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 7 North travels for a length of 7.3 miles from its southern terminus at the downtown transfer point to its northern terminus at North Taylor Drive and Main Street. Major trip generators served by Route 7 North include the Mead Public Library, the Sheboygan Police Department, the Aurora Sheboygan Clinic, Pick and Save supermarket, St. Nicholas Hospital, Field of Dreams, St. Nicholas Apartments, Jefferson Elementary School, and Trinity Lutheran School. North Taylor Drive is also served between Superior Avenue and Main Avenue.

Route 7 South

Route 7 South serves the southeast portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 7 South generally travels for a length of 9.8 miles from its southern terminus at the intersection of County Highway EE/Weeden Creek Road and County Highway OK/South Business Drive to its northern terminus at the downtown transfer point. Major trip generators served by Route 7 South include Longfellow and Jackson Elementary Schools, Farnsworth Middle School, South High School, Sheboygan County Christian High School, the Boys' and Girls' Club, Country Village Apartments, and Lakeshore Display. Route 5 South also serves the Industrial Park during deviated service runs.

Route 10 North

Route 10 North serves the west central portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 10 North travels for a length of 7.0 miles from its eastern terminus at the downtown transfer point to its western terminus at the Meijer Supermarket. Major trip generators served by Route 10 North include the Aurora Sheboygan Clinic, the Sheboygan County Job Center, Memorial Plaza (including the Marcus Cinema), Meijer Supermarket, Kohl's, Taylor Heights Shopping Center (including Festival Foods), Tamarack Apartments, Wasserman Apartments, the Salvation Army Daycare, and the Sheboygan Leadership Academy. Much of Erie Avenue is also served by Route 10 North.

Route 10 South

Route 10 South serves the southwest portion of the City of Sheboygan. Route 10 South travels for a length of 9.1 miles from its southern terminus at the south side Walmart Supercenter to its northern terminus at the downtown transfer point. Major trip generators served by Route 10 South include the City of Sheboygan Municipal Service Building, Wildwood Park, Aldi Supermarket, Acuity Insurance, Nemak, the Sheboygan County Detention Center, the south side Walmart Supercenter, the Goodwill store, Washington Square Shopping Center (including the south side Piggly Wiggly Supermarket, Walgreen's and Culver's), and Sheridan Elementary School. Pennsylvania Avenue is also served between 15th and 9th Streets.

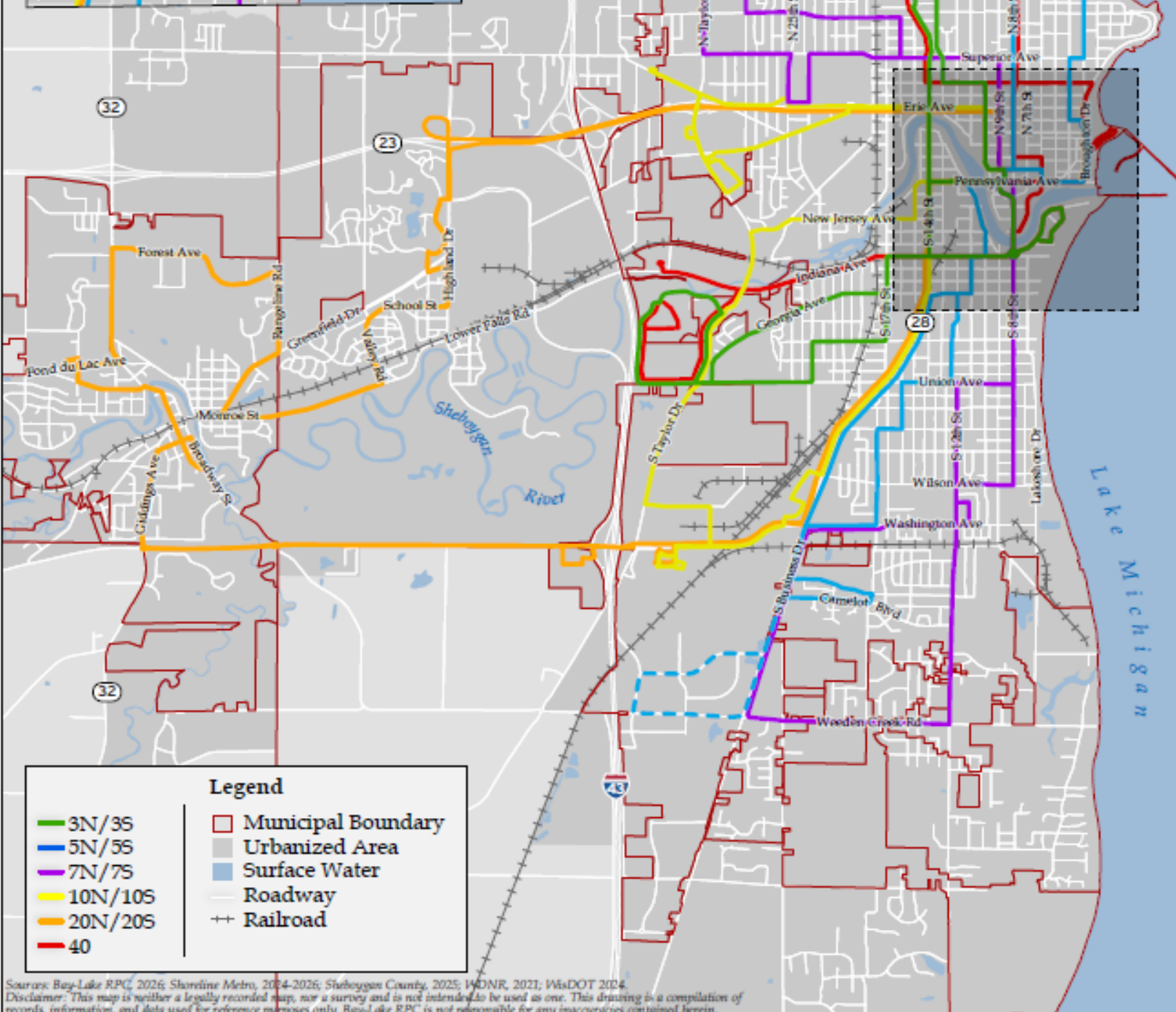
Route 20 (Sheboygan Falls and Kohler Route)

Route 20 serves the City of Sheboygan Falls and the Village of Kohler, and connects those communities to the various City of Sheboygan routes operated by Shoreline Metro. On most trips, Route 20 travels for a length of 21.4 miles from its eastern terminus at the downtown transfer point to its western terminus in the vicinity of the Sheboygan Falls Piggly Wiggly Supermarket; one trip (the Kohler Company Special run) is about half that length. Major trip generators served by Route 20 in the City of Sheboygan Falls include the Sheboygan County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Forest Avenue Mobile Home Park, the Sheboygan Falls Piggly Wiggly Supermarket, Sheboygan Falls City Hall, Sheboygan Falls High School, and Rochester Park. Major trip generators served by Route 20 in the Village of Kohler include Woodlake Market, the Kohler Company, and Deer Trace Shopping Center (including Target). The one major trip generator served by Route 20 in the City of Sheboygan is the south side Walmart Supercenter. It should be noted that Route 20 North travels in a counterclockwise fashion, while Route 20 South travels in a clockwise fashion; both routes serve the same destinations. The Kohler Company Special run (6:45 a.m. to 7:15 a.m. on weekdays) has the Kohler Company as its only destination, but all other trips serve all of the above noted destinations.

Route 40 ("The Harbor Centre Express Plus")

Route 40 is a seasonal route (mid-June through the Saturday before Labor Day) that operates in downtown Sheboygan, South Pier, the Riverfront and a portion of the Lakefront. Route 40 travels for a length of 4.6 miles, with its beginning and ending points at the downtown transfer point. Major trip generators served by Route 40 include South Pier (including Blue Harbor Resort and Harbor Pointe Mini Golf), Visit Sheboygan, the Riverfront, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Deland Park and Marina, the beach adjacent to Broughton Drive, and various destinations in downtown Sheboygan off North 8th Street (including City Green). Michigan Avenue is also served between North 3rd Street and North 8th Street.

Map 1: 2025 Shoreline Metro Transit Route Structure



Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bush-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

Shuttle Service

Shoreline Metro provides a shuttle service on weekday afternoons, weekday evenings and Saturdays to accommodate passengers during peak and hourly service. Passengers may use the shuttles by paying the same fare as the regular routes. Shuttle Service is available in the areas serviced by the Sheboygan routes and excludes the area serviced by Route 20 in Kohler and Sheboygan Falls. Passengers are not permitted to change their destination once the shuttle has left the Transfer Station.

Afternoon Peak Shuttles operate on weekdays between 3:45 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. During “drop and go” service, all routes come into the Transfer Station, drop off their passengers and pick up passengers already waiting. At :20 and :50 past the hour during this period routes may automatically leave the station.

Evening Shuttles operate from 5:15 pm to 8:15 pm on Monday through Friday. Shuttles will usually depart the Transfer Station shortly after all regular routes have departed the Transfer Station. Normal fares do apply. Shuttles are outbound (drop off) only and will not pick up passengers along the route. The shuttles depart from the Transfer Station shortly after all regular routes have dropped off at the Transfer Station.

Saturday Shuttles are provided to complement the regular routes during hourly service from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. A North Shuttle is provided when all regular routes go southbound at :15 past the hour and a South Shuttle is provided when all regular routes go northbound at :45 past the hour. The shuttles will take passengers to their destination (drop off must be at a regular bus stop) in order as determined by the bus driver. Shuttles will usually depart the Transfer Station shortly after all regular routes have departed the Transfer Station. Normal fares do apply. Shuttles are outbound (drop off) only and will not pick up passengers along the route.

The average length of the North and South Shuttles is 6.5 miles. One purpose of the shuttles is to drop off passengers on the north and south sides of the City of Sheboygan in a timely manner so that they do not wait an extraordinary amount of time to make connections to their next bus at the transfer point, and to drop off passengers near their destinations at the end of the service day.

Fare Structure

Table 1 illustrates the fare structure of Shoreline Metro. The full cash fare is \$2.00. Sheboygan Area School District (SASD) students ride free of charge with proper identification per an agreement between Shoreline Metro and the SASD. A student 20 ride punch card costs \$11.00. The day pass costs \$4.00, and customers can purchase a six-pack of day pass for \$18.00. The monthly pass costs \$50.00; frequent riders can save \$22.00 or more per month (this assumes two rides per day, five days per week for four weeks) by purchasing a monthly pass at the Shoreline Metro downtown transfer point, or at four supermarkets in the City of Sheboygan and one supermarket in the City of Sheboygan Falls.

Table 1. Shoreline Metro Fare Schedule

Shoreline Metro Fare Schedule	
Fare Category	Price
Cash	
Single Trip	\$2.00
Half-Fare	\$1.00
Passes	
Day Pass	\$4.00
6-pack Day Passes	\$18.00
Monthly Pass	\$50.00
30-Day Pass	\$45.00
Student Fares	
Students of SASD	Free
Children under Age 5	Free
Student Punch Cards (20 trips)	\$11.00
Half Fares	
Half-Fare Punch Cards (20 Trips)	\$10.00

Source: Shoreline Metro Transit, 2025; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Cash fares for qualified elderly and disabled persons and military veterans are less than or equal to half the regular cash fare. The half fare for elderly, disabled and veteran riders is always \$1.00. The ADA paratransit fare is \$4.00. This fare is paid using an electronic fare media system. Trips are paid in advance and applied to a customer's account. A trip gets deducted from the account each time a trip is taken. Fares for individual trips are generally not available. Customers who are clients of an agency may have their transportation covered by the agency (at the "agency fare" rate).

Free transfers between routes and sales of adult and student tokens were discontinued in August of 2020 in response to the need to have safer fare media due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shoreline Metro operated a fleet of 22 transit coaches in 2024. In addition to the 22 transit coaches, Shoreline Metro had five service vehicles. Another 11 vehicles are used by Shoreline Metro and its Metro Connection division for ADA paratransit in the transit service area and for transportation under Sheboygan County's Section 85.21 elderly and disabled transportation program; five of the vehicles were purchased by Sheboygan County, while five other vehicles were purchased by the City of Sheboygan but are titled to Sheboygan County. Shoreline Metro rotates its vehicles on a daily basis.

Facilities

Shoreline Metro has an air conditioned (heated in winter) transfer center that involves a significant portion of a city block in the central business district (across from city hall, and near the post office, some small businesses and several banks), and is well lit during evening hours, providing safe shelter for Shoreline Metro passengers. In addition to being a transfer point for all Shoreline Metro fixed routes, the transfer center is the location in the City of Sheboygan where passengers can access various intercity bus services, including Indian Trails, Jefferson Lines, Lamers Connect (on weekends). Amenities at the transfer center include Wi-Fi, a customer service office that is staffed during the daytime on weekdays, and bike racks. Transferring is made easier for passengers, as the individual routes have assigned bus stalls.

Other facilities maintained by Shoreline Metro include 28 passenger shelters at various bus stops with traditionally high ridership levels, 25 of which are owned by Shoreline Metro, with three others (Tamarack Apartments, Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center and Meijer) being privately owned. These shelters are located at main passenger loading intersections, as well as at the following locations: Geele Avenue near RCS; Georgia Avenue near Horace Mann Middle School; North 8th Street across from Lincoln Avenue; South Business Drive adjacent to the Indian Meadows Trailer Park; the Aurora Sheboygan Clinic off North 25th Street; Saemann Avenue near Lakeshore Community Health Care Clinic; South 12th Street and Weeden Creek Road; Country Village Apartments; Tamarack Apartments (privately owned); Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center (privately owned); and near the south side Walmart Supercenter.

The transit office houses administrative staff, maintenance and storage. Due to the cold winter months in the Shoreline Metro service area, the storage for buses is indoors.

Systemwide Ridership and Revenue Mile Trends

Annual Revenue Passenger Trips

Table 2 outlines the annual revenue passenger trips for Shoreline Metro from 2014 to 2024, broken down into fixed route and paratransit trips. Over this 11-year period, fixed route trips consistently made up the majority of total passenger trips. The number of fixed route trips rose from 538,802 in 2014 to a peak of 679,263 in 2019, before dropping sharply to 373,021 in 2020. This is due largely in part to the COVID-19 pandemic and its ensuing lockdowns. Since then, ridership has steadily rebounded, reaching 582,212 in 2024.

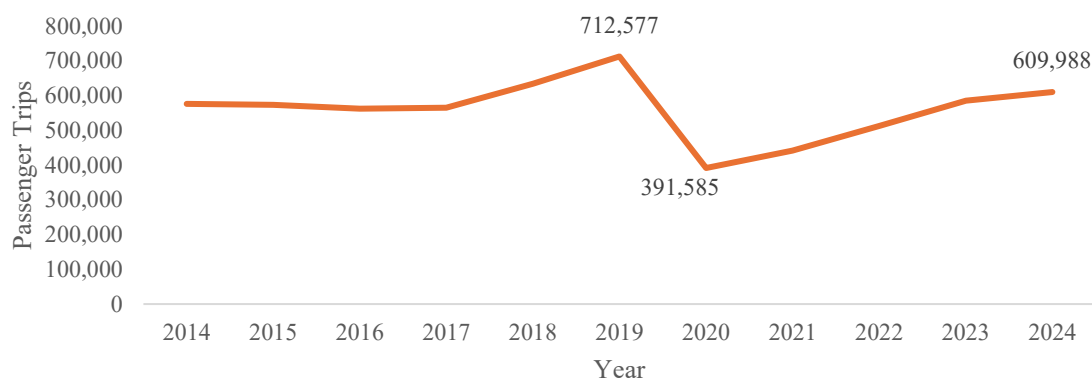
Paratransit trips saw a steady decline, decreasing from 37,062 in 2014 to a low of 18,564 in 2020, then gradually increasing to 27,776 in 2024. Total passenger trips reached their highest point in 2019 at 712,577, followed by a significant decline in 2020 to 391,585. Since then, total trips have recovered steadily to 609,988 in 2024. Figure 1 displays this trend over past 10 years.

Table 2. Annual Revenue Passenger Trips

Year	Fixed Route Trips	Paratransit Trips	Total Passenger Trips
2014	538,802	37,062	575,864
2015	537,765	35,492	573,257
2016	527,775	34,317	562,092
2017	529,726	35,589	565,315
2018	599,714	34,658	634,372
2019	679,263	33,314	712,577
2020	373,021	18,564	391,585
2021	420,503	21,367	441,870
2022	487,393	25,111	512,504
2023	560,155	25,173	585,328
2024	582,212	27,776	609,988

Source: Shoreline Metro (for all years listed); Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Figure 1. Annual Revenue Passenger Trips



Source: Shoreline Metro (for all years listed); Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Annual Revenue Miles

Table 3 presents the annual fixed-route revenue miles for Shoreline Metro from 2014 to 2024. During this period, revenue miles generally trended downward, starting at 602,100 miles in 2014 and ending at 522,653 miles in 2024. The most notable decline occurred between 2016 and 2018, with revenue miles dropping from 577,826 miles to 536,426 miles. A slight rebound followed in 2019 with 555,500 miles, but the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 brought a sharp decrease of over 50,000 miles to 476,794 miles, the lowest point in the period. Since then, revenue miles have gradually increased, peaking again at 528,343 in 2023 before dipping slightly in 2024.

Table 3. Annual Fixed-Route Revenue Miles

Year	Revenue Miles
2014	602,100
2015	599,904
2016	577,826
2017	543,561
2018	536,426
2019	555,500
2020	476,794
2021	506,006
2022	504,065
2023	528,343
2024	522,653

Source: Shoreline Metro (for all years listed); Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

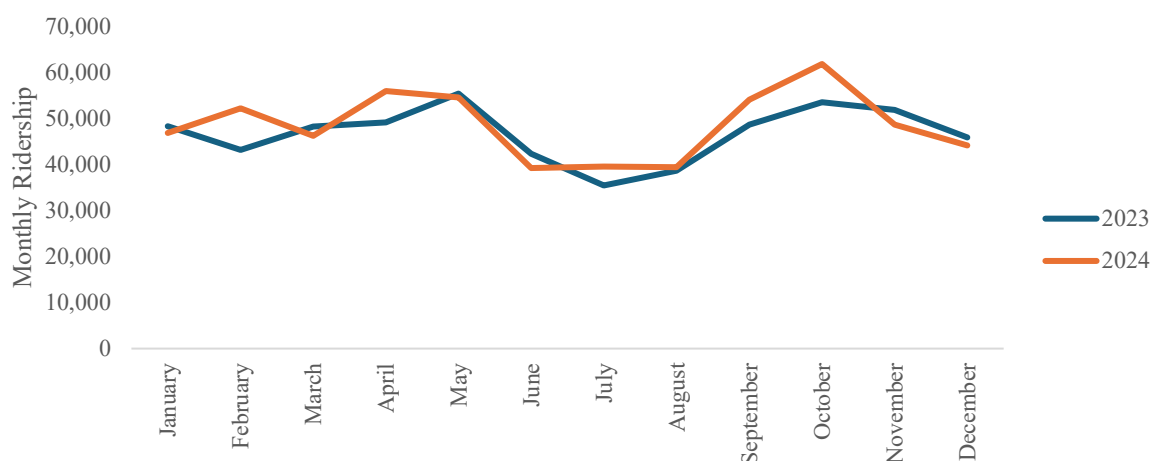
Monthly Ridership: 2023 – 2024

Figure 2 depicts Shoreline Metro’s monthly ridership between 2023 and 2024. Monthly ridership in 2023 and 2024 shows relatively similar increases and decreases month to month, reflecting fluctuations that may be due to seasonal patterns, events, or other external factors. January 2023 had slightly higher ridership than 2024, with 48,284 riders compared to 46,777 riders, respectively. February saw a significant reversal, with 2024 increasing sharply to 52,164 riders, above 2023’s 43,142 riders.

In both years, May showed some of the highest ridership. The month showed a slight dip in 2024 (54,493 riders) compared to 2023’s 55,353 riders. June ridership showed a sharp decline in both years, with ridership dropping to 42,279 riders in 2023 and 39,191 riders in 2024, continuing a summer lull that extended into July and August. This can be tied back to the Sheboygan Area School District starting summer vacation, leading to a drop in student riders.

As the school year started back up, September and October ridership in 2024 rose significantly compared to the same months in 2023, especially in October, where 2024 reached a peak of 61,776 riders versus 53,456 riders in 2023. However, November and December both declined in 2024, with November dropping to 48,638 riders from 51,833 riders, and December slipping slightly to 44,125 riders from 45,865 riders.

Figure 2. Monthly Ridership, 2023 – 2024



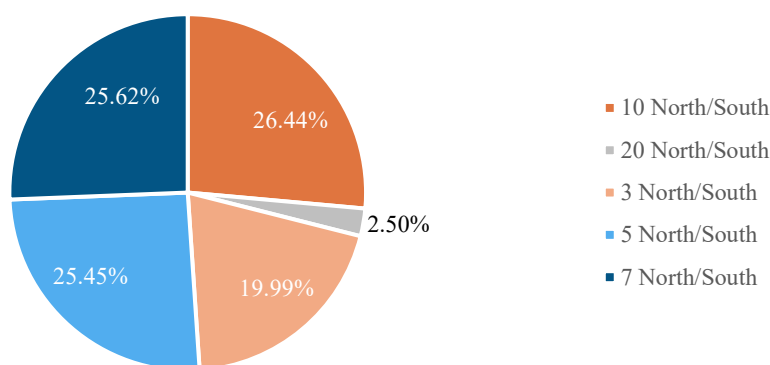
Source: Shoreline Metro, 2023 – 2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Ridership by Route: 2024

Figure 3 displays Shoreline Metro's ridership by route in 2024. The largest share of ridership comes from Route 10 North/South (22.95%), followed closely by Route 40 Harbor Centre Express (22.25%), and Route 5 North/South (22.09%). Route 7 North/South also contributed significantly with 17.36% of the total ridership.

The remaining routes had smaller ridership shares. Shuttles account for 7.92% of total ridership, Trippers make up 3.59%, Route 20 North/South for 2.17%, Route 3 North/South for 0.54%, Route 20 Kohler Special for 0.32%, and Special services have the smallest share at 0.81%. This distribution highlights a strong reliance on a few core routes, with the top four comprising over 84% of total ridership.

Figure 3. Ridership by Route, 2024

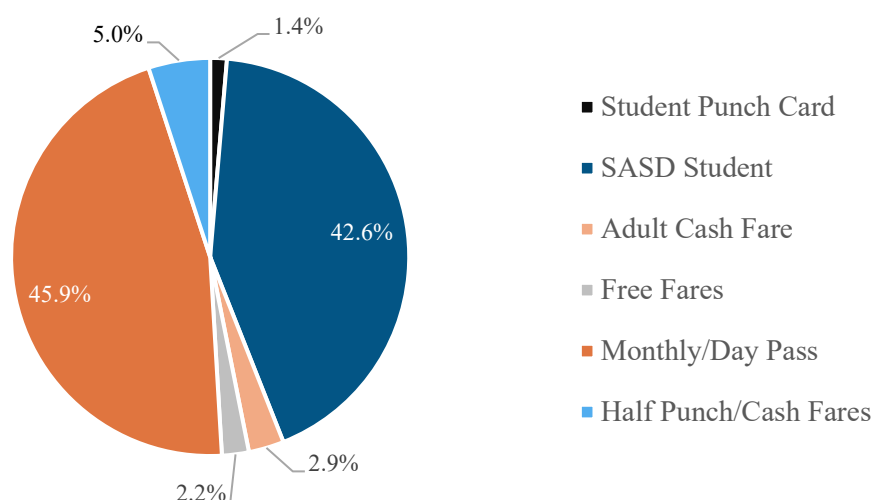


Source: Shoreline Metro, 2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Ridership by Fare Category: 2024

Figure 4 shows the breakdown of trips by fare type. The largest share of ridership, 45.9%, came from those using Monthly or Day Passes. Close behind were SASD Student riders, accounting for 42.6% of fares used. The remaining fare categories made up smaller portions. Half Punch/Cash Fares represented 5.0%, Free Fares were 2.9%, Adult Cash Fare made up 2.2%, and Student Punch Cards had the smallest share at 1.4%. This distribution highlights a strong reliance on prepaid or school-sponsored fare programs.

Figure 4. Ridership by Fare Category, 2024



Source: Shoreline Metro, 2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Funding Sources: 2020-2024

Table 4 presents the funding sources for Shoreline Metro from 2020 to 2024. Over the five-year period, the largest contributor was the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), increasing from \$1.1 million (29.4%) in 2020 to \$1.74 million (40.4%) in 2024. Funding from WisDOT remained relatively stable from 2020 to 2022 but saw a decline in amount and percentage in 2023 and 2024. WisDOT funds accounted for 24.6% of total funding in 2020 to 17.5% in 2024. CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act/ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding fluctuated, peaking in 2020 at 18.3%, dropping to zero in 2021, and then rebounding in the following years. In 2024, Covid relief funds made up 11.1% of Shoreline Metro's funding. Passenger revenue showed strong growth, nearly quadrupling from \$126,774 in 2020 to \$546,289 in 2024. The City of Sheboygan made a significant contribution in 2021. Other smaller but steady contributors included Sheboygan County, the Sheboygan Area School District, and the City of Sheboygan Falls and Village of Kohler. Total funding grew from approximately \$3.75 million in 2020 to a peak of \$4.41 million in 2023, before slightly declining to \$4.3 million in 2024.

Table 4. Funding Sources, 2020 – 2024

Funding Source	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage
Wisconsin DOT	\$920,673	24.60%	\$929,425	25.00%	\$929,418	22.70%	\$794,415	18.00%	\$752,645	17.50%
USDOT	\$1,100,000	29.40%	\$1,233,624	33.10%	\$1,546,933	37.70%	\$1,629,378	36.90%	\$1,736,609	40.40%
CARES Act/ARPA	\$684,135	18.30%	\$0	0.00%	\$427,751	10.40%	\$648,339	14.70%	\$476,363	11.10%
HUD - CDBG Funding	\$42,493	1.10%	\$42,493	1.10%	\$42,493	1.00%	\$42,493	1.00%	\$42,493	1.00%
City of Sheboygan	\$0	0.00%	\$450,613	12.10%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%
City of Sheboygan Falls	\$38,696	1.00%	\$38,696	1.00%	\$38,696	0.90%	\$38,696	0.90%	\$38,696	0.90%
Village of Kohler	\$13,366	0.40%	\$13,366	0.40%	\$13,366	0.30%	\$13,366	0.30%	\$13,366	0.30%
Sheboygan County	\$364,918	9.70%	\$368,392	9.90%	\$360,126	8.80%	\$358,368	8.10%	\$364,308	8.50%
Sheboygan Area Schools	\$90,000	2.40%	\$90,000	2.40%	\$90,000	2.20%	\$91,350	2.10%	\$91,350	2.10%
Passenger Revenue	\$126,774	3.40%	\$386,747	10.40%	\$500,966	12.20%	\$522,455	11.80%	\$546,289	12.70%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$366,627	9.80%	\$168,944	4.50%	\$152,415	3.70%	\$275,060	6.20%	\$233,657	5.40%
TOTAL	\$3,747,682	100.0%	\$3,722,300	100.0%	\$4,102,164	100.0%	\$4,413,920	100.0%	\$4,295,776	100.0%

Source: Shoreline Metro, 2020-2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Expense Breakdown: 2020-2024

Table 5 outlines the expense breakdown for Shoreline Metro from 2020 to 2024. Salaries consistently represented the largest portion of expenses, rising steadily from \$2.17 million in 2020 to \$2.48 million in 2024. Benefits, while lower than salaries, also remained significant. A decline was noted between 2020 and 2021, dropping from \$935,439 to \$867,376. Between 2021 and 2024, benefits fluctuated slightly but stayed near the \$850,000 mark. Commodities saw notable growth, rising from \$583,199 in 2020 to a peak of \$901,547 in 2023 before a slight decrease in 2024 to \$818,580. Utilities and personal services made up smaller shares of the budget, with utilities showing a spike in 2023 to \$92,815. The total of these line items increased each year, from \$3.84 million in 2020 to \$4.3 million in 2024. As inflation and operating costs continue to increase, and Covid relief funds exhaust, it is critical to determine a sustainable flow of funding for Shoreline Metro.

Table 5. Expense Breakdown, 2020- 2024

Expenses	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Salaries	\$2,168,221	\$2,138,964	\$2,200,018	\$2,304,147	\$2,476,517
Benefits	\$935,439	\$867,376	\$853,365	\$835,657	\$842,183
Personal Services	\$97,165	\$146,309	\$100,741	\$122,600	\$115,754
Utilities	\$59,175	\$67,299	\$75,259	\$92,815	\$42,742
Commodities	\$583,199	\$669,537	\$872,780	\$901,547	\$818,580
TOTAL	\$3,843,199	\$3,889,485	\$4,102,163	\$4,256,766	\$4,295,776

Source: Shoreline Metro, 2020-2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Chapter 2: Transit Goals and Objectives

The TDP Review Committee worked on establishing goals and objectives at the beginning of the TDP process to guide the development of the transit network and ensure it meets the needs of current and future riders. The following goals are designed to align with broader community planning efforts, sustainability targets, and the values of efficient and effective transportation.

Goal 1: Enhance System Efficiency and Reliability

Objective 1.1: Optimize transit schedules and frequency to reduce waiting times, improve travel times, and increase reliability.

Objective 1.2: Invest in transit infrastructure such as signal prioritization, and modernized terminals to minimize delays and improve operational efficiency.

Goal 2: Improve Accessibility and Mobility

Objective 2.1: Expand transit coverage to underserved and high-demand areas, ensuring that all neighborhoods have convenient access to transit services.

Objective 2.2: Develop transit routes that are aligned with major employment centers, education hubs, healthcare facilities, and recreational areas to meet diverse travel needs.

Objective 2.3: Ensure that transit services are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities by upgrading facilities, vehicles, and providing specialized services.

Goal 3: Support Economic Development and Regional Growth

Objective 3.1: Integrate transit planning with regional development strategies to support economic growth and improve connectivity between key commercial and residential areas.

Objective 3.2: Develop transit-oriented development (TOD) strategies to promote dense, mixed-use development near transit hubs and stations.

Objective 3.3: Partner with local businesses and employers to incentivize transit use, such as offering employer-sponsored passes and commuter programs.

Goal 4: Promote Sustainability, Environmental Stewardship, and Traffic Reduction

Objective 4.1: Increase the use of clean energy sources and low-emission vehicles within the transit fleet to reduce the environmental impact and contribute to improved air quality.

Objective 4.2: Encourage the integration of transit with other sustainable transportation modes, such as cycling, walking, and electric scooters, to create a seamless multimodal network that reduces reliance on personal vehicles.

Objective 4.3: Develop policies that incentivize the use of transit as an alternative to single-occupancy vehicle trips, aiming to reduce traffic volume and improve overall mobility within the region.

Goal 5: Strengthen Community Engagement and Ensure Broad Access

Objective 5.1: Develop and implement effective public outreach initiatives to gather input from a wide range of community members on proposed transit improvements and services.

Objective 5.2: Ensure that transit services are affordable and available to all residents, with particular attention to supporting low-income individuals and communities with limited access to transportation.

Objective 5.3: Design and deliver transit services that cater to the specific needs of various groups within the community, including seniors, students, non-English speakers, and others with unique transportation requirements.

Goal 6: Ensure Financial Sustainability and Cost-Effectiveness

Objective 6.1: Evaluate the financial performance of transit services regularly to ensure that funding is allocated effectively and efficiently.

Objective 6.2: Explore alternative funding sources, including public-private partnerships, grants, and dedicated revenue streams, to reduce reliance on public subsidies.

Objective 6.3: Develop a long-term funding strategy to maintain and expand the transit system while ensuring fare structures remain affordable.

Goal 7: Strengthen Partnerships with Neighboring Communities

Objective 7.1: Collaborate with adjacent municipalities, counties, and transit agencies to improve regional connectivity and service coordination.

Objective 7.2: Develop joint planning initiatives and data-sharing agreements to ensure alignment of transit policies, infrastructure investments, and operational standards.

Objective 7.3: Pursue shared funding opportunities and intergovernmental partnerships to expand cross-jurisdictional transit services that support regional mobility goals.

Chapter 3: Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment

Transit Needs Assessment

To identify the transportation needs of a community it is important to analyze the trends and patterns developed over the past several years that have shaped the community and the future trends. The following section analyzes the socioeconomic data of the Shoreline Metro area to understand the baseline demographics of the communities. This analysis is helpful to determine areas where high ridership could be potentially generated, suggest alternative or additional routes in certain areas, and determine if the fixed route transit is best suited in the areas where it is currently served.

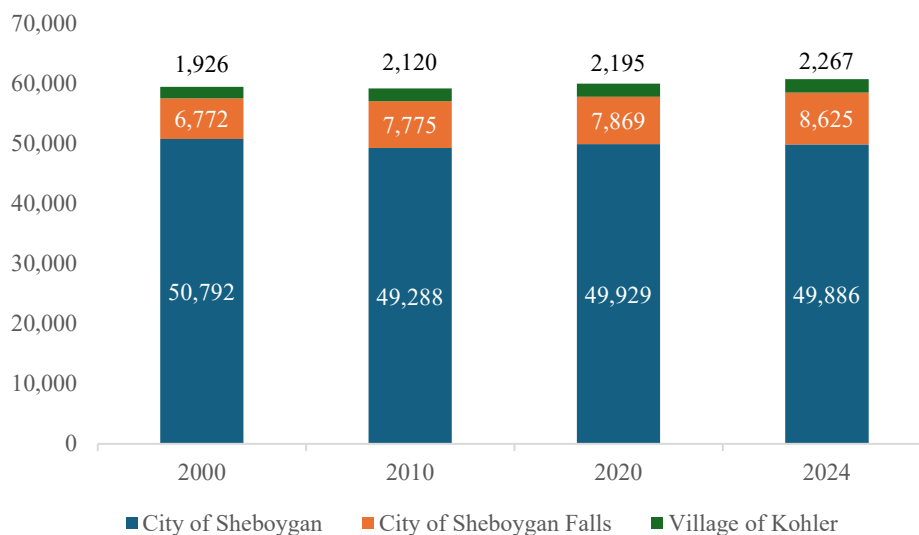
Population Trends

Over the past several decades, the City of Sheboygan Falls and Village of Kohler have witnessed population growth, with the highest population growth (14.8% and 10.1% respectively) between the years 2000 and 2010 according to the Decennial Census. On the contrary, the City of Sheboygan saw some fluctuation in its population with a 3% decrease between 2000 and 2010, and 1.3% increase between 2010 through 2020 (Decennial Census).

On October 10th, 2024, the Wisconsin Department of Administration released the state's population estimates for 2024. The City of Sheboygan Falls, and Village of Kohler were estimated to have population increases. At a 9.6% increase, the City of Sheboygan Falls saw the greatest increase in population between 2020 and 2024, gaining an estimated 756 residents. The Village of Kohler saw a 3.3% increase in its population during this time, adding 72 residents. Losing an estimated 0.1% of its population, the City of Sheboygan saw a decrease of 43 residents between 2020 and 2024.

Figure 5 shows the total population of the communities in the transit service area in 2000, 2010 and 2020 (according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census), as well as population estimates for 2024 (produced by the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Demographic Services Center).

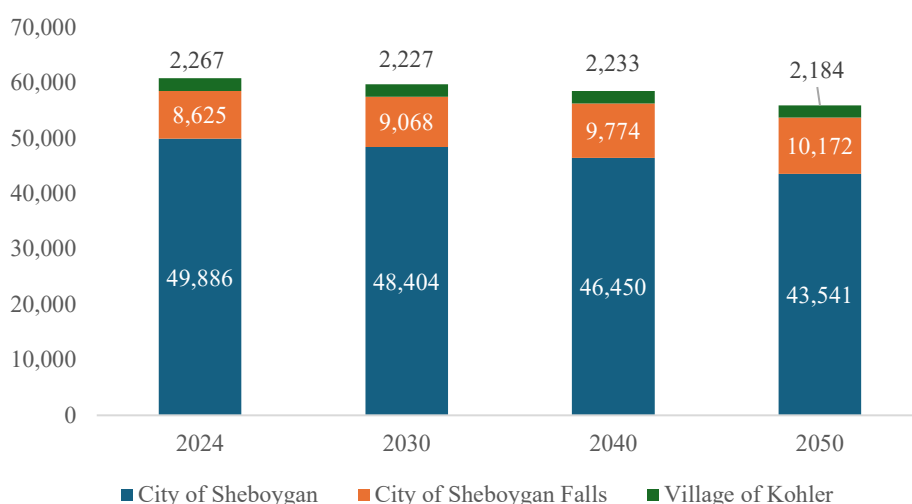
Figure 5. Shoreline Metro Service Area Population, 2000-2024



Source: U.S Census Data, 2000-2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Figure 6 displays population projections through 2050 from the Wisconsin Department of Administration. With a projected increase of 1,962 residents, the City of Sheboygan Falls would see a 25.2% increase from 2020 to 2050. The City of Sheboygan and Village of Kohler are both projected to lose population over the next three decades. With a 13% decrease in population, the City of Sheboygan will see the largest loss of 6,388 residents. The Village of Kohler is projected to have a small decrease in population, losing just 11 residents, or 0.5% of its population.

Figure 6: Population Projections by Community



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

While demographic data shows modest changes in the population in recent years, a significant amount of development has occurred in the City of Sheboygan in the past few years. Despite the City of Sheboygan's projected population decrease over the next 20 years, the population in the region is projected to grow and employers are anticipating continued hiring.

Population and Employment Activity

Factors like population and employment density are the most important factors when it comes to transportation and can be related to the need for public transit. Daily travel activity to and from the place of employment show the locations of travel.

Population Density

Map 2 shows the highest concentrations of population density per square mile can be found north of the City of Sheboygan in the area between Superior Avenue and Geele Avenue, and N8th Street and Calumet Drive. The other cluster with the highest density of population is on the south side of the City of Sheboygan between Union Avenue and Franklin Park and S8th Street and S14th Street.

Map 2: Population Density Distribution

Legend

Population per Square Mile by Census Block Group

50.07 - 1106 1107 - 2584 2585 - 3961 3962 - 6824 6825 - 10690

□ Municipal Boundary □ Urbanized Area □ Surface Water

— Roadway ++ Railroad

Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024; Sheboygan County, 2025; US Census Bureau, WDNr, 2021; WisDOT 2024.
Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bay-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

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Employment Density

Map 3 presents the distribution of jobs within Shoreline Metro’s service area by census block. Key employment clusters are evident along major corridors such as Washington Avenue and South Taylor Drive in the City of Sheboygan, corresponding to the city’s industrial and commercial hubs. Additional clustering can be seen in the city center of Sheboygan, showing a thriving economy in the city’s core. On the western edge of the city along State Highway 23, the presence of Aurora Urgent Care and HSHS St Nicholas Hospital provide thousands of jobs to healthcare workers.

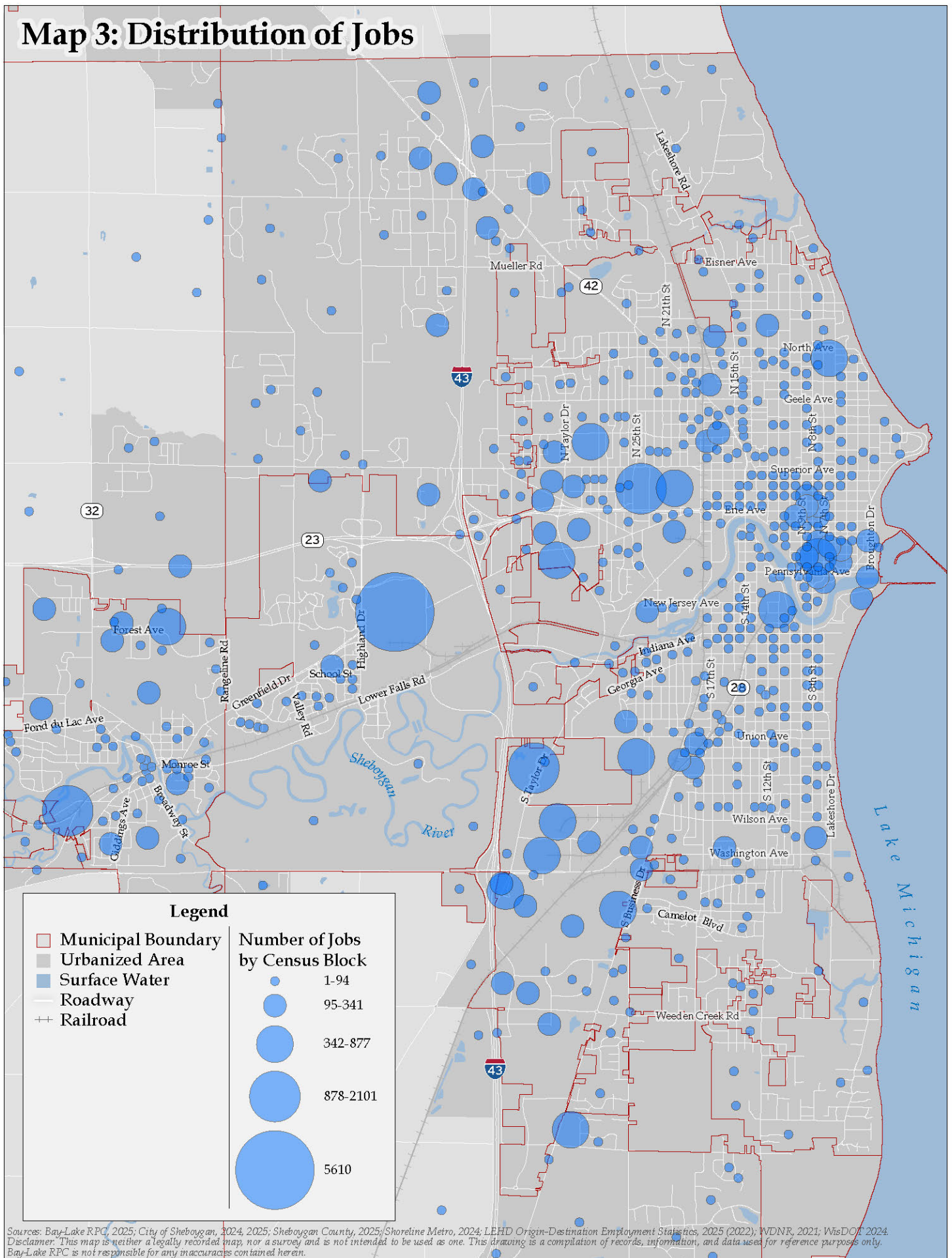
Outside the City of Sheboygan, Kohler Company holds the most prevalence. Employing over 5,000 individuals ranging from factory workers to sales coordinators. Kohler Company remains a stable anchor of employment in Shoreline Metro’s service area. Transitioning west to the City of Sheboygan Falls, Bemis Company employs around 1,000 individuals between its factories, warehouses, and office spaces throughout the city. The broad distribution of jobs across Shoreline Metro’s service area highlights the need to align transit services with key employment centers to ensure accessibility for the local workforce. The table of the top employers with the number of employees is shown below.

Table 6. Top Employers in Sheboygan County

Company	Description	# of Employees
Kohler Co.	Enameled iron and metal sanitary ware manufacturing	5,000+
Bemis Mfg. CO.	Plastics product manufacturing	1,000+
Aurora Medical Group	Physician offices	1,000+
Nemak	Aluminum die-casting foundries	1,000+
Sargento Foods, Inc	Cheese manufacturing	1,000+
ACUITY	Direct property and casualty insurers	1000+
Johnsonville Sausage	Meat processing	500-999
Rockline Industries	Converted paper product manufacturing	500-999
Piggly Wiggly	Managing offices	500-999
HSHS St. Nicholas	General medical and surgical hospital	500-999
Masters Gallery Foods	Dairy-product merchant wholesalers	500-999
The Vollrath Co	Kitchen utensils, pot and pan manufacturing	500-999
American Orthodontics	Dental equipment and supplies manufacturing	500-999
Old WI Sausage	Meat markets	250-499
Pine Haven Christian	Senior living	250-499
Nemschoff Chairs	Institutional furniture manufacturing	250-499

Source: Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation, 2025; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Map 3: Distribution of Jobs



Combined Population and Job Density

Map 4 displays the combined population and employment density projected on the same map to represent a singular measure of activity. The darkest green areas represent the most activity in them. This includes areas downtown in the City of Sheboygan, north towards North Avenue. Other areas such as Kohler with its high amounts of industry show higher job density. In terms of coverage, Shoreline Metro covers most of the high-density areas highlighted in the map.

Map 4: Population and Job Density

Legend
Population and Job Density

Population Density
Job Density

— Municipal Boundary — Roadway
- - Urbanized Area - - Railroad
■ Surface Water

Sources: Bay-Lake RPO, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024, 2025; Sheboygan County, 2025; Shoreline Metro, 2024; LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2025 (2022); WDNR, 2021; WisDOT, 2024.
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Bay-Lake RPO is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024, 2025; Sheboygan County, 2025; Shoreline Metro, 2024; LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2025 (2022); WISDOT, 2021; WisDOT, 2024. Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bay-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

Transit Dependent Populations and Households

Throughout the United States, transit system ridership is drawn in large part by the “transit dependent” population, which includes young adults, the elderly (65 years of age and older), households with an income at or less than 80% of the county median household income, the mobility impaired, members of households with zero available vehicles, and single parent households.

The following pages include several maps displaying spatial distribution of the following groups throughout the communities covered by the Sheboygan Transit area.

Population Between the Ages of 15-19

Populations between the ages of 15 and 19 (Map 5) are relatively evenly distributed throughout Shoreline Metro’s service area. The highest concentrations are found within the City of Sheboygan, specifically between Union Avenue and the Sheboygan River, and between Superior Avenue and Eisner Avenue near the Town of Sheboygan boundary. Both areas are well served by fixed-route transit.

Outside the City of Sheboygan, the entire Village of Kohler exhibits higher concentrations of 15–19-year-olds. In the City of Sheboygan Falls, this age group is notably concentrated south of Fond du Lac Avenue. All these areas are adequately served by fixed-route transit.

The Town of Sheboygan, although outside Shoreline Metro’s service area, contains a significant number of 15–19-year-olds but is not served by fixed-route transit.

Population Between the Ages of 20-24

Populations aged 20 to 24 (Map 6) are concentrated primarily in the City of Sheboygan. This population group contains young adults who are either in college or starting their careers and may rely on public transportation for their commutes. Furthermore, this age group may face financial barriers to owning and maintaining a vehicle, making them a key age bracket for public transportation. Several census tracts report over 7.4% of their population within this age group. The most prominent cluster lies in the southern half of the city, between Interstate 43 and South Business Drive. Other notable areas include the region between Superior Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue. These areas are properly served by fixed-route transit, with census tracts not served by transit having the lowest amounts of 20-24-year-olds.

Elderly Population (Ages 65 and Over)

Since 2010, the elderly population (65 and older) within Shoreline Metro’s service area has grown, increasing from 14.7% to 16.8% by 2020. As physical and cognitive abilities decline, elderly individuals may rely on public transit to reach medical appointments and carry out daily activities. Unlike younger age groups, residents aged 65 and older (Map 7) are more likely to reside outside Sheboygan’s city

center. Within the City of Sheboygan, higher concentrations of older adults are found south of Weeden Creek Road and between Erie Avenue and the Sheboygan River. Both areas are served by fixed-route transit.

Notable populations of older adults also reside in the Village of Kohler and the City of Sheboygan Falls. In Sheboygan Falls, higher concentrations occur north of Fond du Lac Avenue and south of Monroe Street, areas that are also served by fixed-route transit.

The highest concentrations of residents 65 and older are located between Interstate 43 and North Taylor Drive, spanning both the City and Town of Sheboygan. While those in the city are served by fixed-route transit, residents in the Town may be beyond convenient walking distance to transit service.

Mobility Impaired Population

Individuals experiencing mobility impairments are dispersed throughout Shoreline Metro's service area (Map 8). A large area from Interstate 43 eastward to North 9th Street contains over 7% of residents with mobility challenges. This corridor includes many of the area's healthcare providers and is well served by fixed-route transit.

Low Income Populations (Households with 80 Percent or Less of County Median Household Income (MHI))

Households earning 80% or less of the county median household income (MHI) are considered "low-to-moderate income," based on the 2019–2023 American Community Survey. For Sheboygan County, the MHI during that period was \$72,902, making the low-to-moderate income threshold \$58,322.

Nearly all census tracts with notable concentrations of households earning 80% or less of the area's MHI are located in the City of Sheboygan (Map 9). The city center, particularly the area from the railroad to Lake Michigan's shoreline, contains nearly half of all such households. Fortunately, this area is well served by fixed-route transit.

Outside of Sheboygan, the only notable concentration is located in the City of Sheboygan Falls, particularly south of Fond du Lac Avenue. This area also has access to fixed-route transit.

Zero Vehicle Households

Households without vehicle access are fairly evenly distributed across Shoreline Metro's service area, with two prominent clusters (Map 10). The first cluster lies in downtown Sheboygan, from the Sheboygan River north to Superior Avenue, where more than 10% of households lack vehicle access.

The second is in the City of Sheboygan Falls, where over 4% of households fall into this category. Both areas are served by fixed-route transit.

Single Parent Households

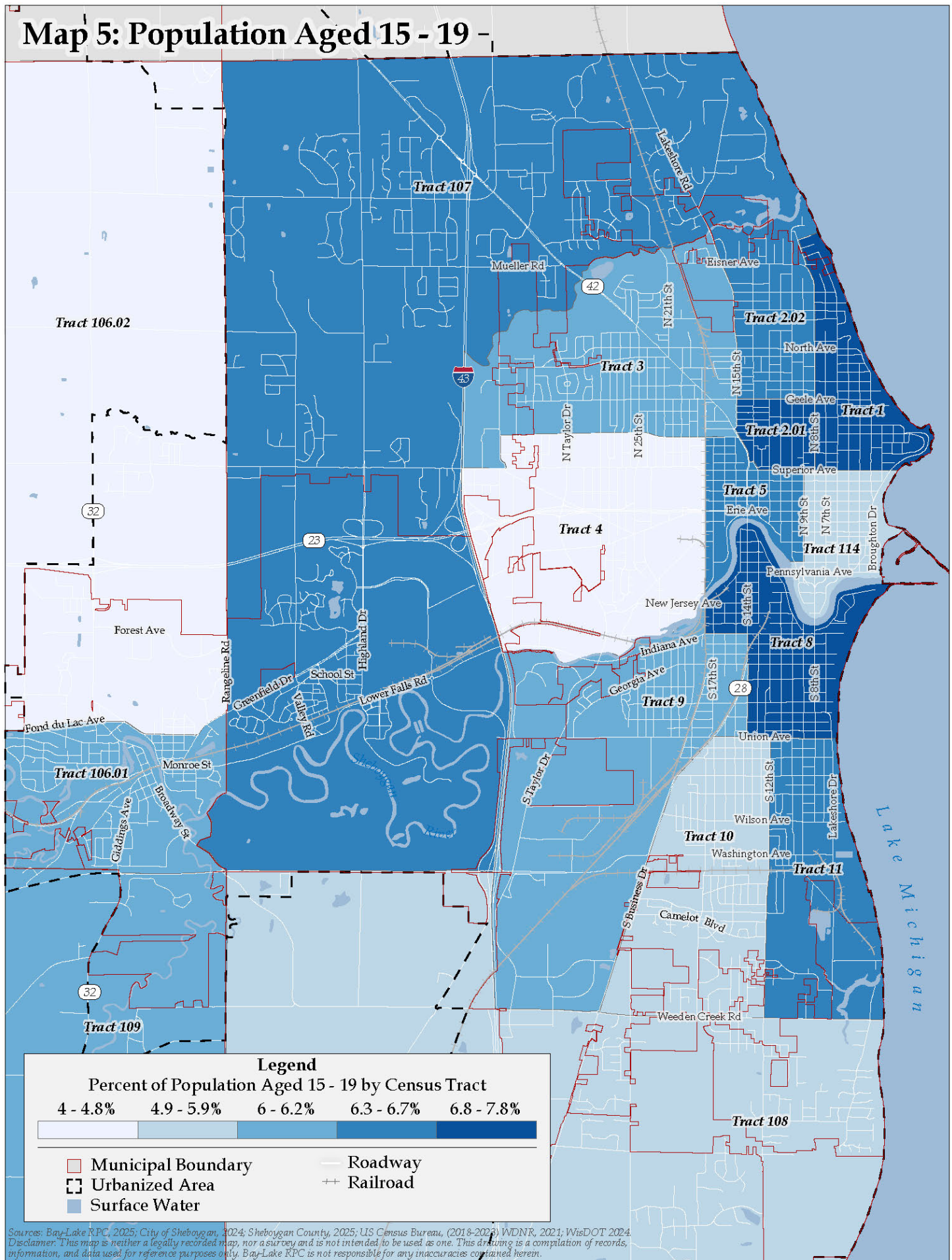
Children in single parent households may rely on public transportation to get to and from school, sports, or other activities while their parent is working. Single-parent households are primarily concentrated in the Cities of Sheboygan and Sheboygan Falls (Map 11), both of which are adequately served by fixed-route transit. In the City of Sheboygan, the highest density occurs between the Sheboygan River and Union Avenue, where over 10% of households are headed by a single parent.

Population Commuting by Bus

The population commuting by bus is defined as workers age 16 and older who reported taking a bus or trolley to work in the 2019– 2023 American Community Survey, adjusted for the working population age 16 and older. The highest concentration of residents commuting by bus is located in the city center of Sheboygan (Map 12). This area benefits from proximity to the Downtown Transit Center, providing direct access to all Shoreline Metro routes.

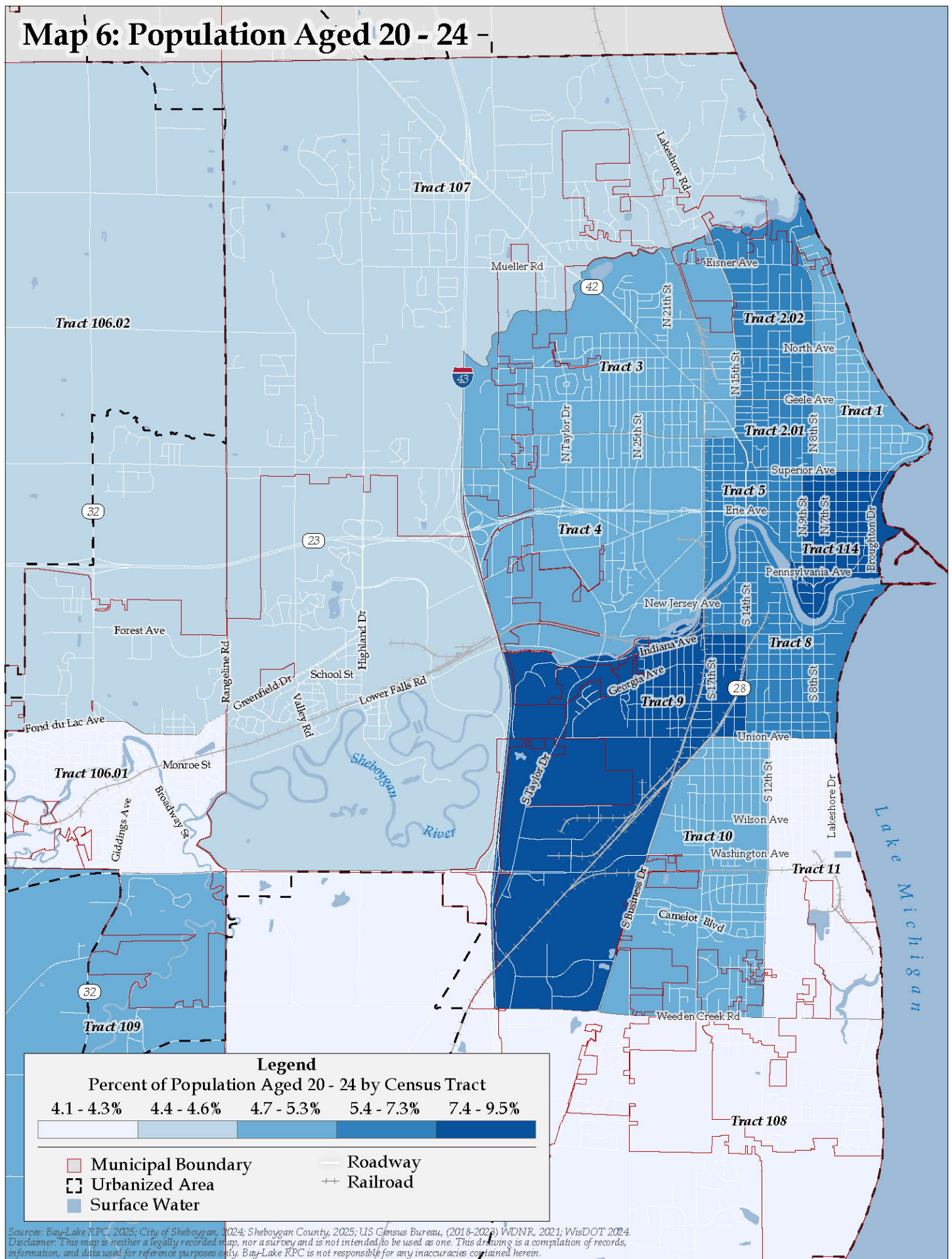
Outside of Sheboygan, the Village of Kohler is the only other municipality with a recorded population commuting by bus. This is likely due to workers commuting to the Kohler Company.

Map 5: Population Aged 15 - 19 -



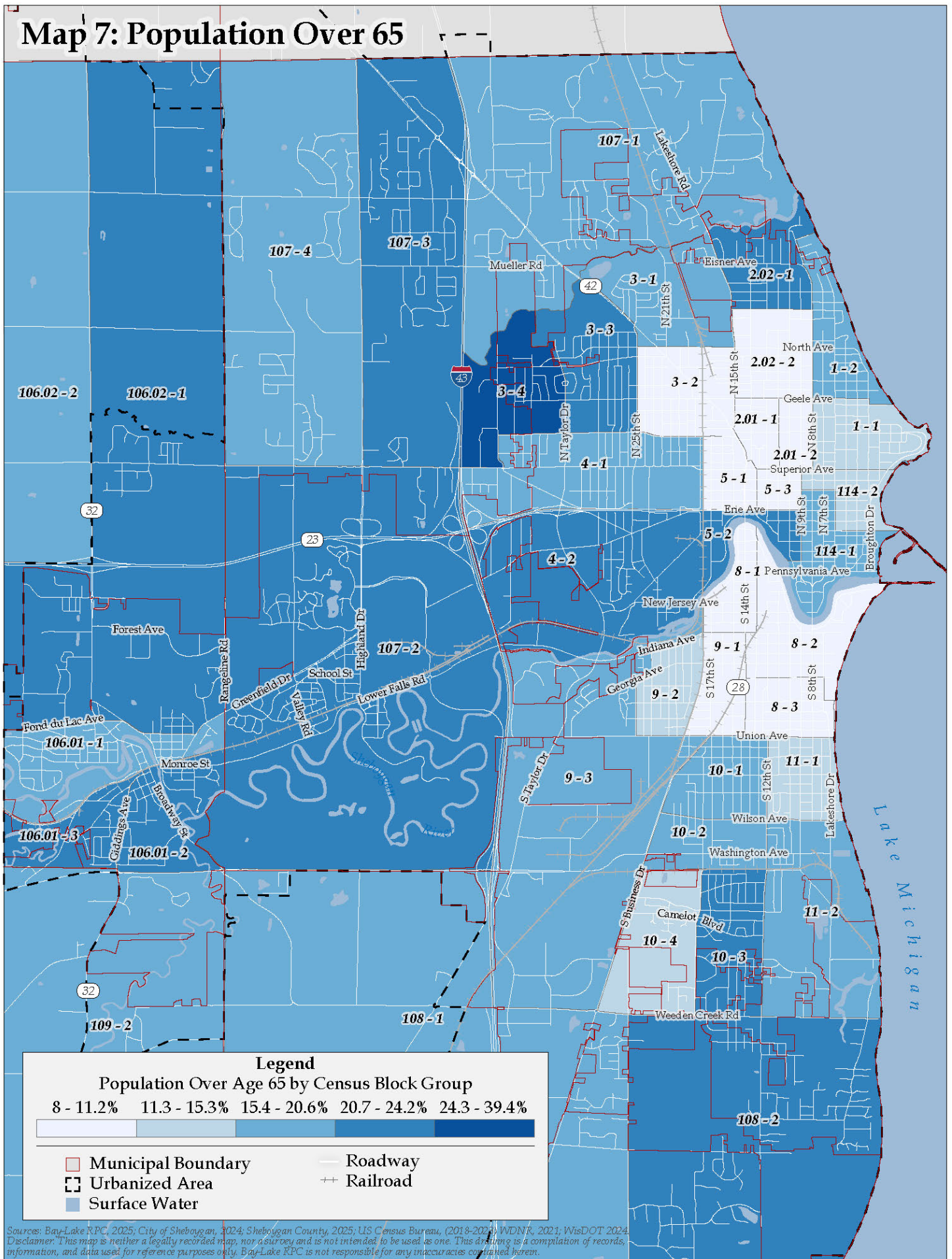
Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024; Sheboygan County, 2025; US Census Bureau, (2018-2023); WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024
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Map 6: Population Aged 20 - 24 -



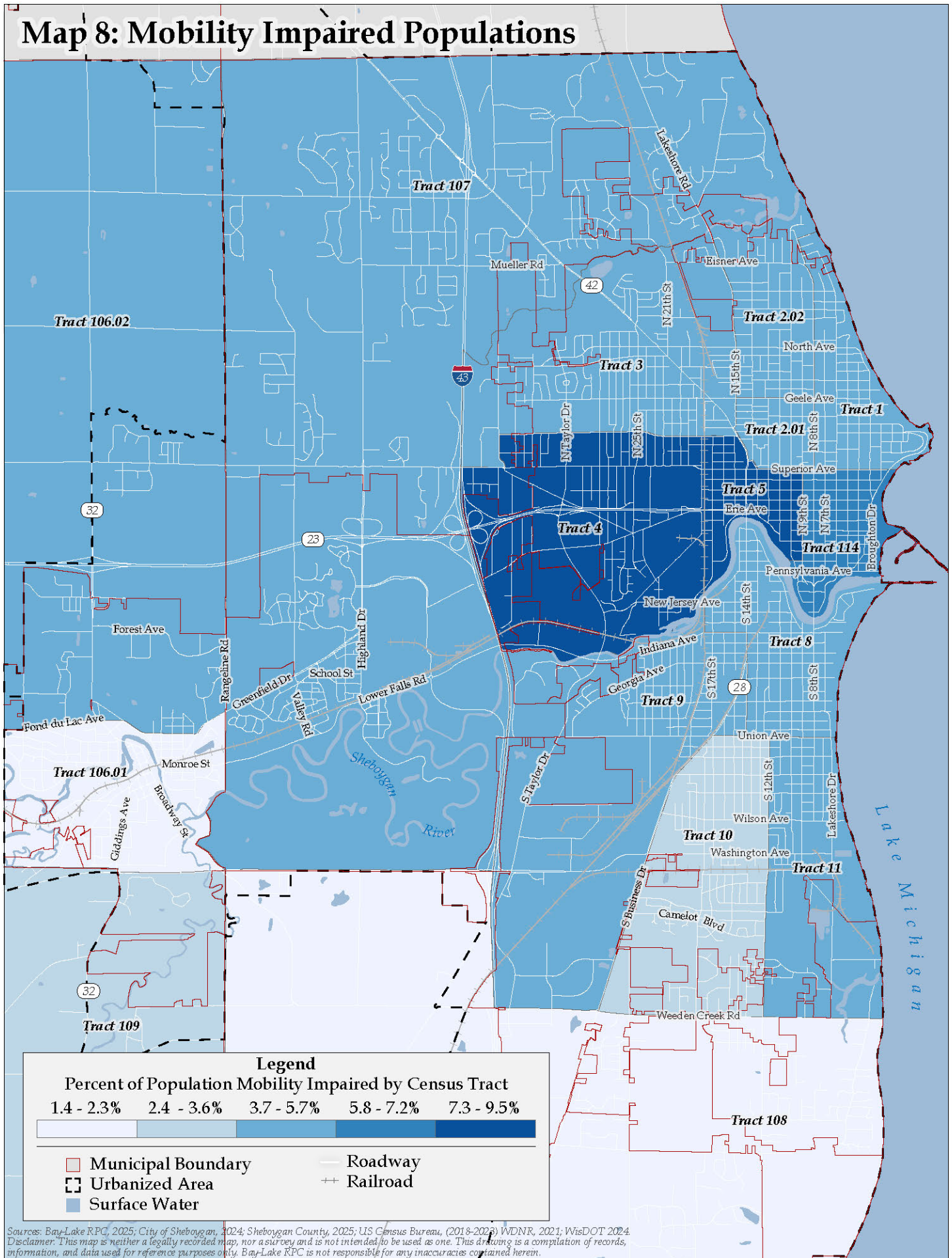
Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024; Sheboygan County, 2025; US Census Bureau, (2018-2023) WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024
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Map 7: Population Over 65



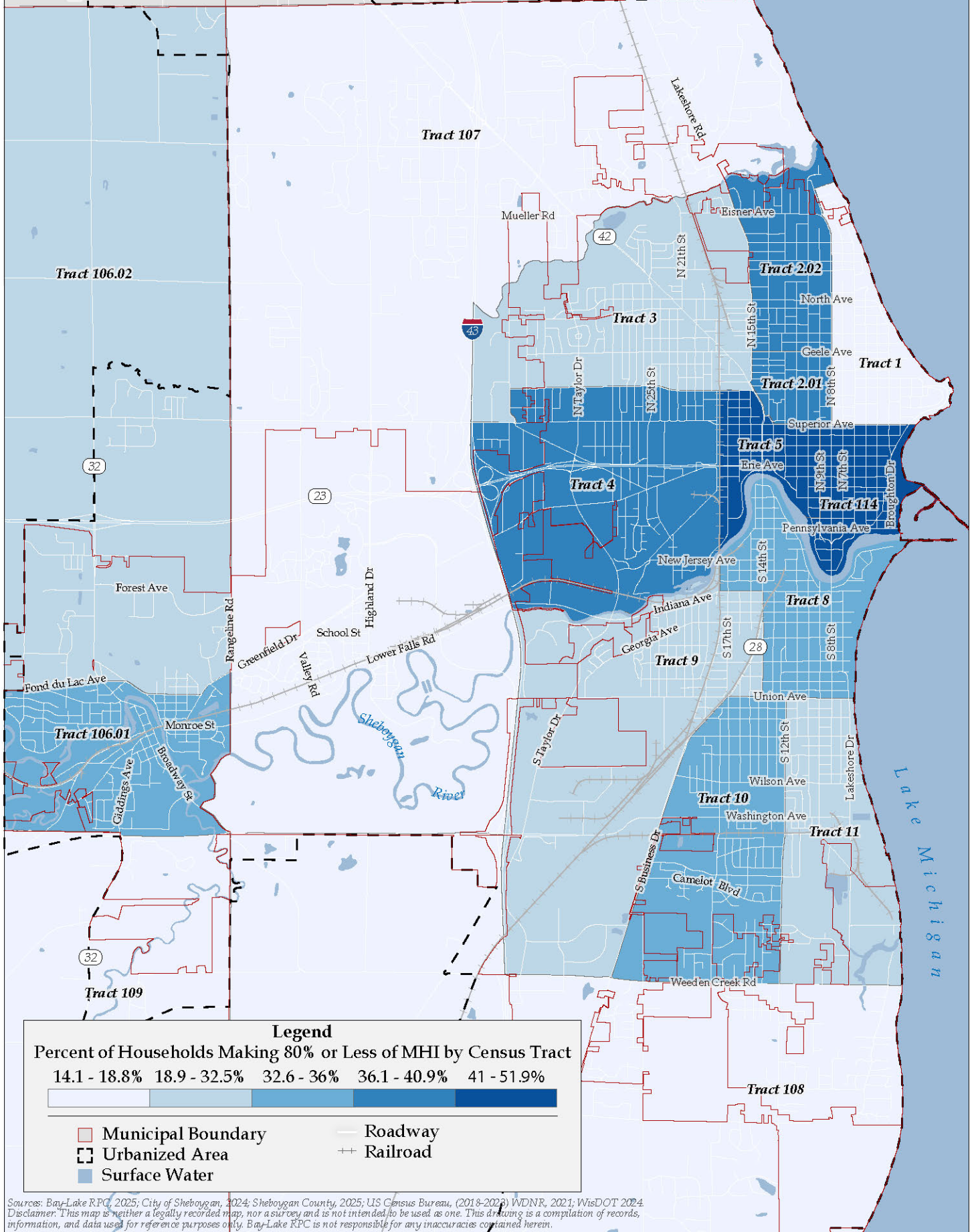
Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024; Sheboygan County, 2025; US Census Bureau, (2018-2023); WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024
 Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bay-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

Map 8: Mobility Impaired Populations



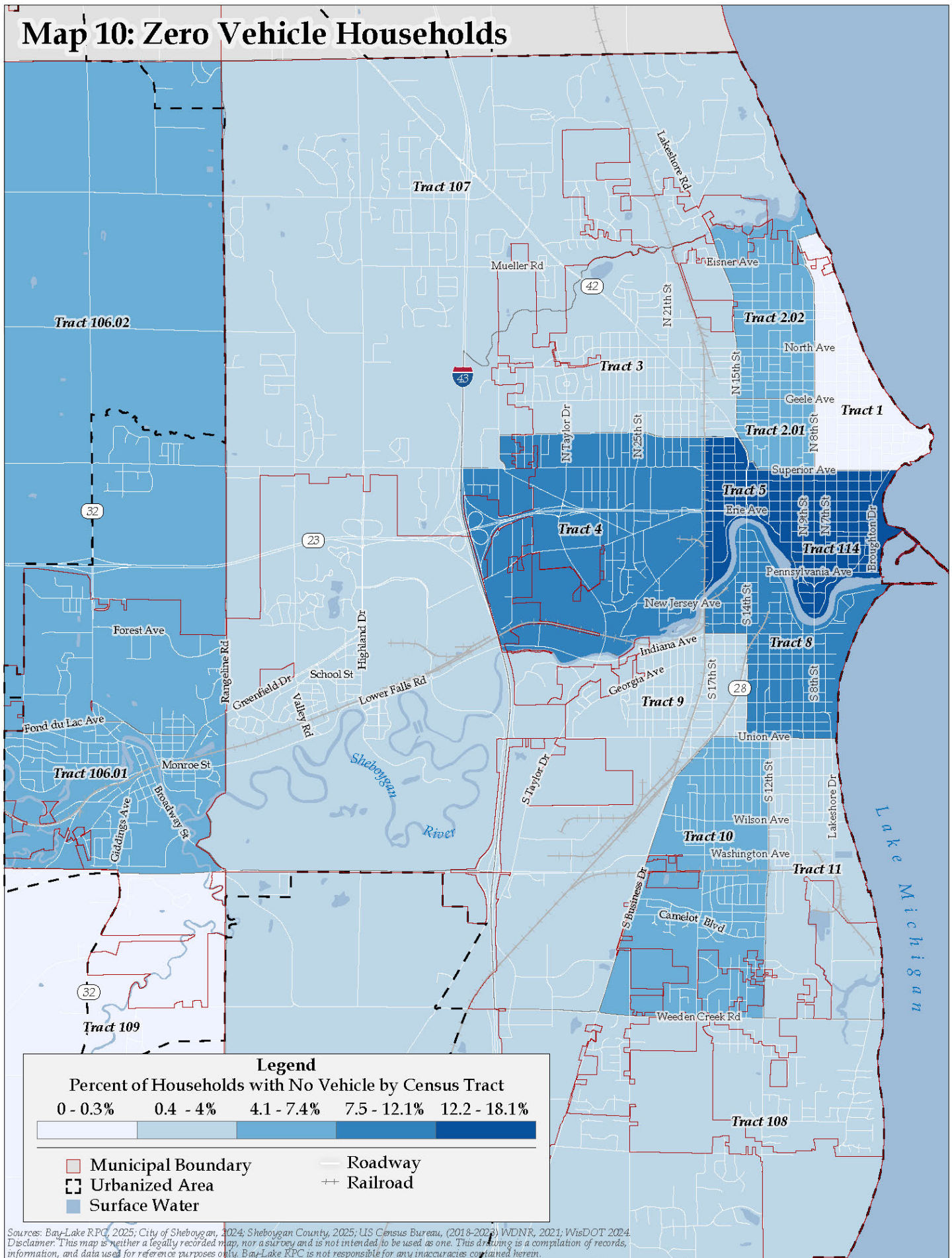
Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024; Sheboygan County, 2025; US Census Bureau, (2018-2023); WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024.
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Map 9: Households Making 80% or Less of MHI

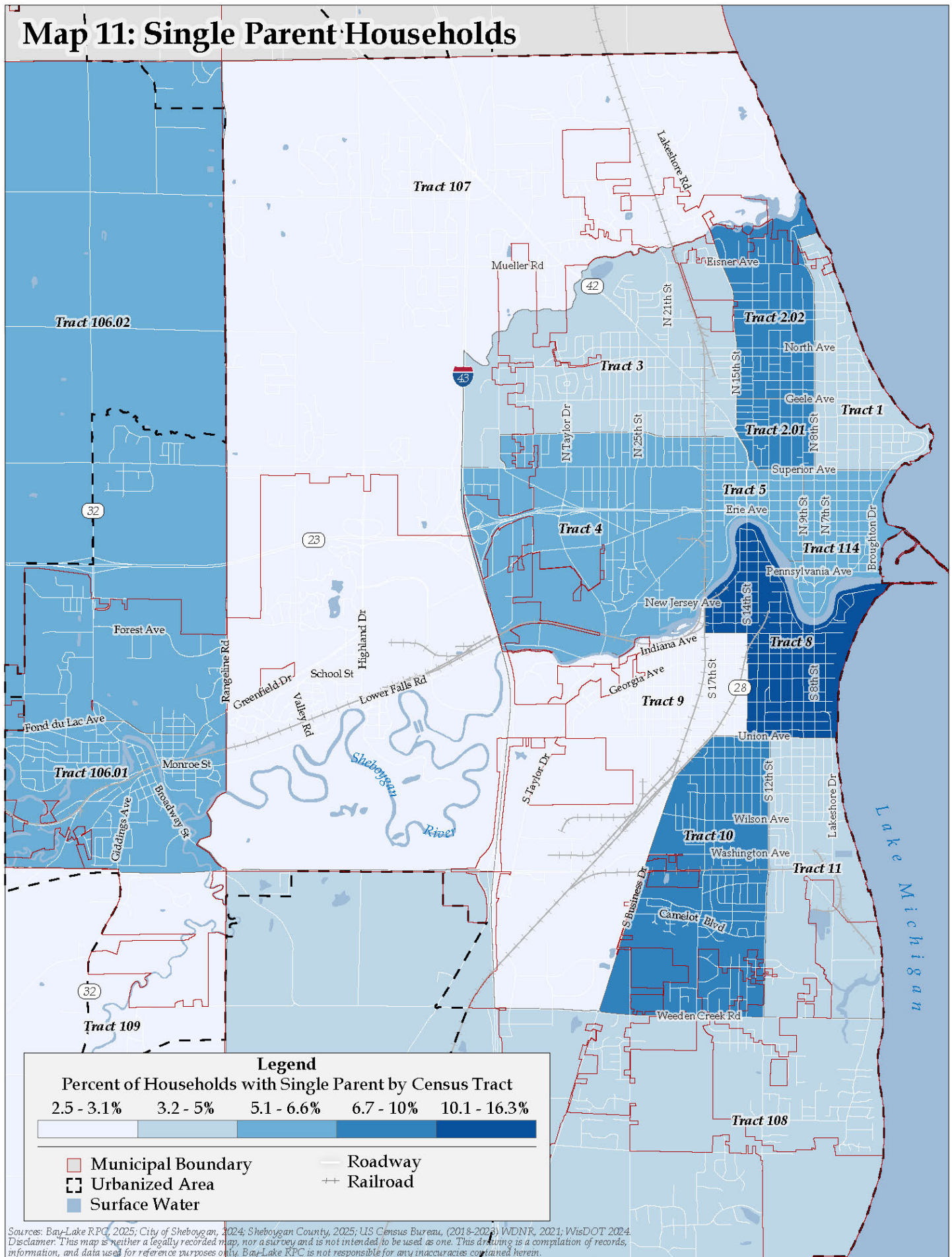


Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024; Sheboygan County, 2025; US Census Bureau, (2018-2023) WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024.
Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bay-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

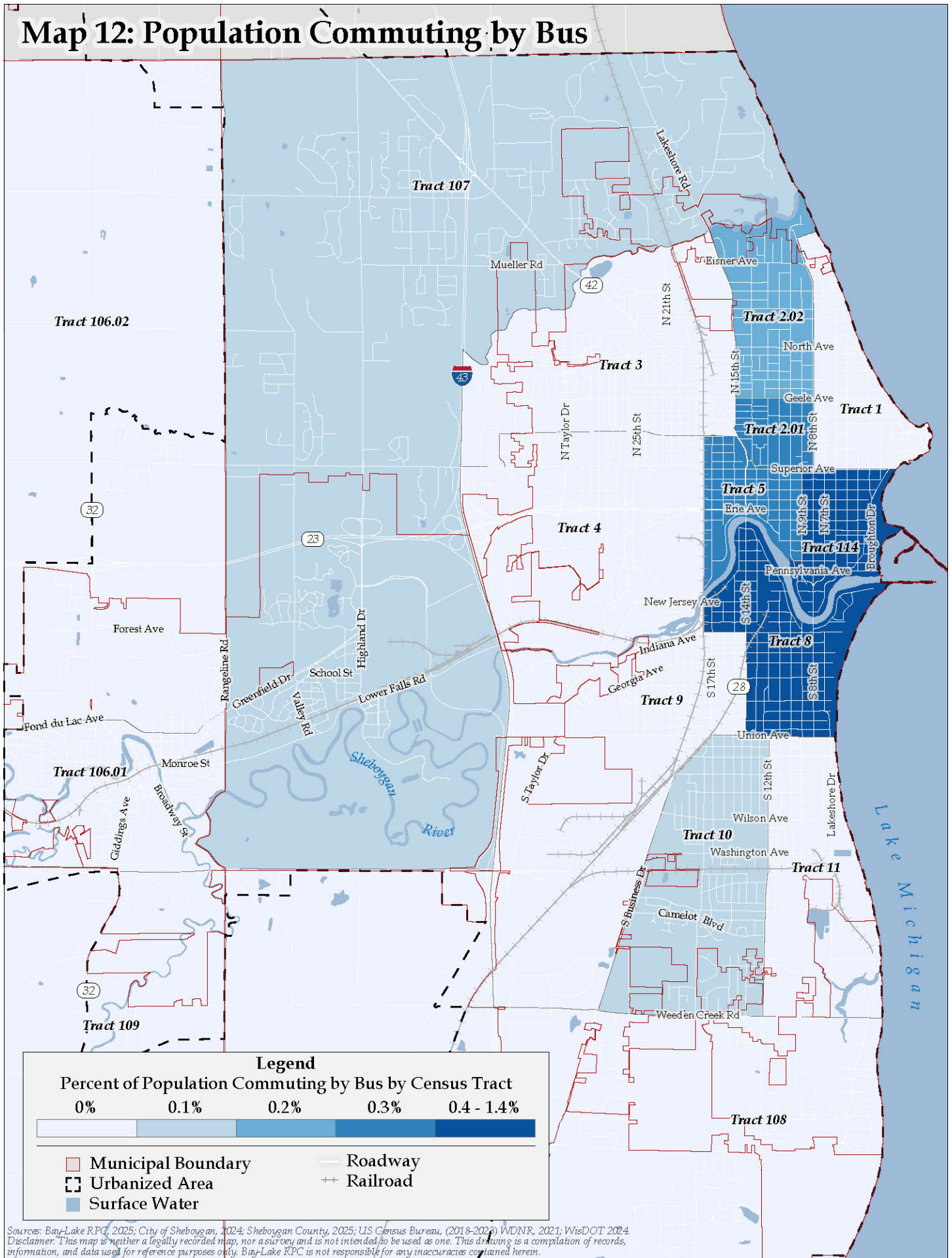
Map 10: Zero Vehicle Households



Map 11: Single Parent Households



Map 12: Population Commuting by Bus

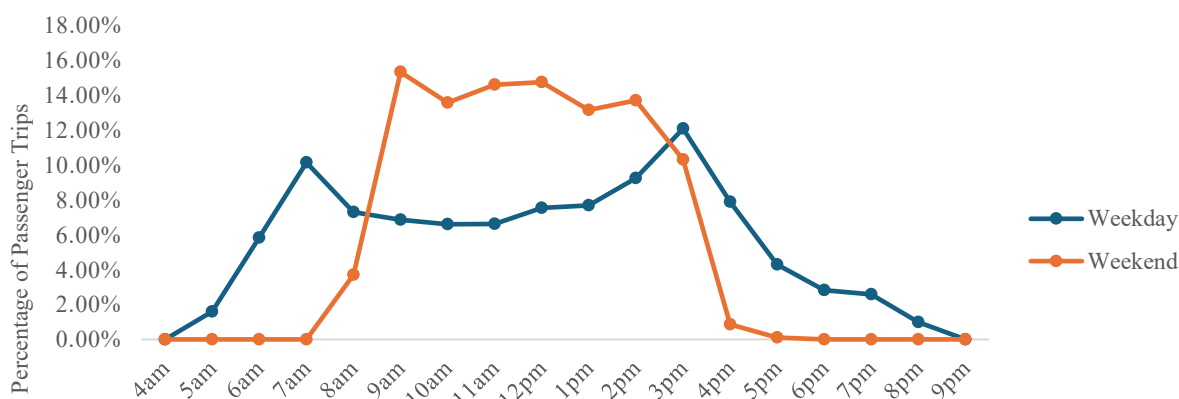


System-Wide Review

Ridership by Time of Day

Weekday ridership of Shoreline Metro is greatest on weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Nearly 50% of weekday ridership occurs during this timeframe. This is likely due to student ridership for the SASD, along with morning and evening commutes to and from work. On weekends, ridership is heavily concentrated between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., with sharp decreases before and after.

Figure 7. Percent of Fixed Route Ridership by Time of Day by Service Day, 2024



Source: Shoreline Metro, 2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Ridership by Bus Stop

A detailed examination of ridership by bus stop offers valuable insight into community transit usage patterns. These findings support data-driven decisions regarding the allocation of limited resources and the strategic placement of routes and stops.

The following maps display the average daily passenger stops by bus stops for weekdays and Saturdays, respectively. The ridership shown in these maps are depicted based on the bus stop where passengers boarded the bus; these instances are known as “boardings.”

Average Daily Boardings by Bus Stop

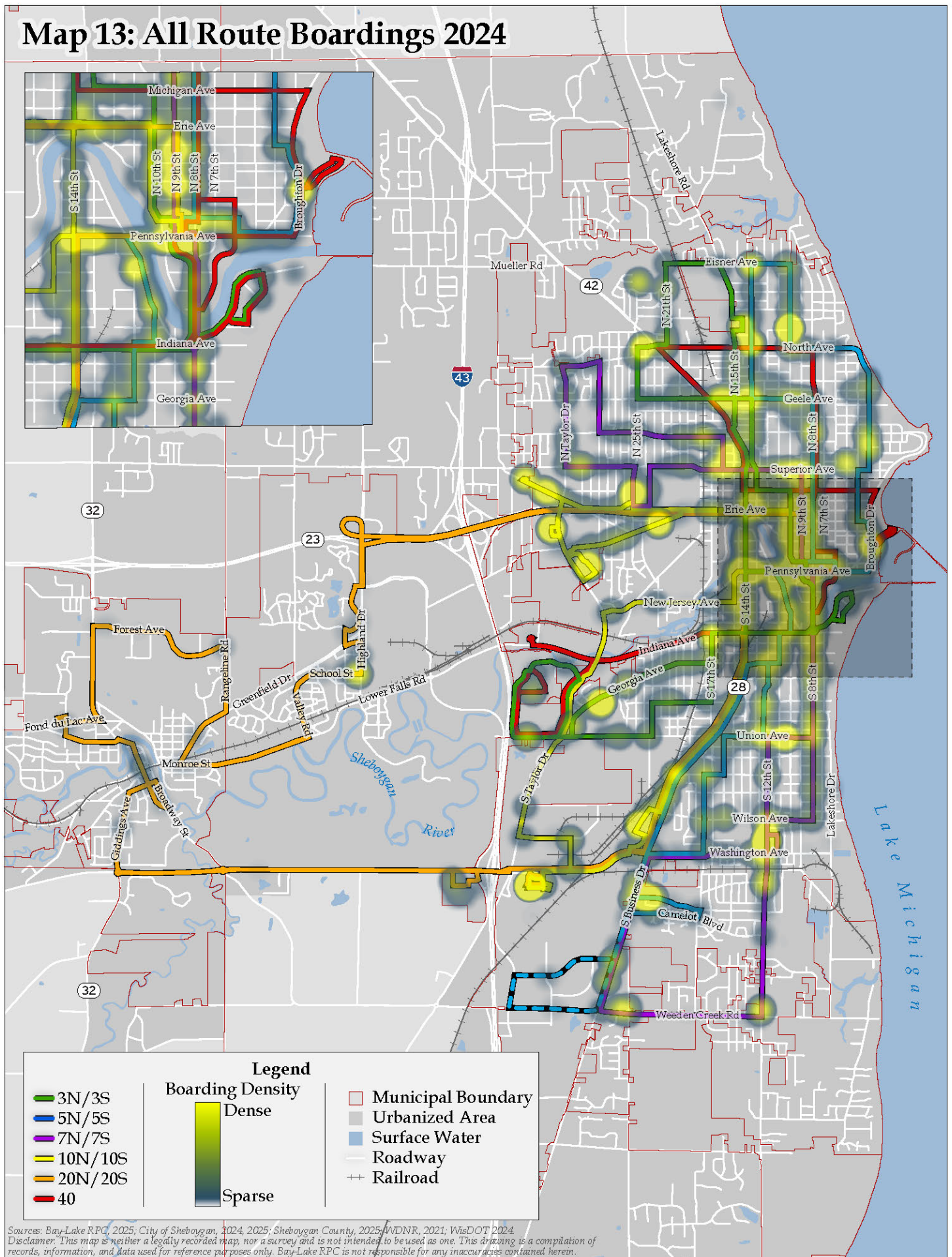
The highest boarding densities occur primarily in and around the City of Sheboygan's urban core. This area is supported by multiple routes operating along Pennsylvania Avenue, as well as North 10th, 9th, and 8th Streets. The presence of the transfer center, combined with numerous small businesses and local establishments, makes this area a primary hub for transit activity. These strong demand patterns highlight the importance of maintaining reliable, high-capacity transit service within the city center.

Additional areas of high boarding density align with major employment centers, health care facilities, educational institutions, and retail destinations. These areas are primarily served by Route 3 (Piggly Wiggly, Walgreens Pharmacy, Horace Mann Middle School), Route 5 (North High School, YMCA, Rockline Industries, Indian Meadows Mobile Home Park), Route 7 (South High School, Hmong Cultural Services Center, Mead Public Library, St. Nicholas Hospital), and Route 10 (Memorial Plaza, Aurora Sheboygan Clinic, Sheboygan County Job Center, South Walmart, and Goodwill). The concentration of key destinations along these routes contributes to consistent ridership demand throughout the day.

Areas outside the City of Sheboygan along Route 20 generally experience lower boarding densities, apart from Kohler Co. and the City of Sheboygan Falls' downtown area near the YMCA and Memorial Library. These segments may be more suitable for coverage-focused service, targeted improvements, or service restructuring rather than frequency expansion.

Overall, the map identifies a clear ridership core where transit investments are likely to yield the greatest return, while also highlighting peripheral areas where service design should balance access, efficiency, and resource allocation. These findings can help guide future decisions related to service frequency, route alignment, capital improvements, and long-term transit network development.

Map 13: All Route Boardings 2024



Average Daily Alightings by Bus Stop

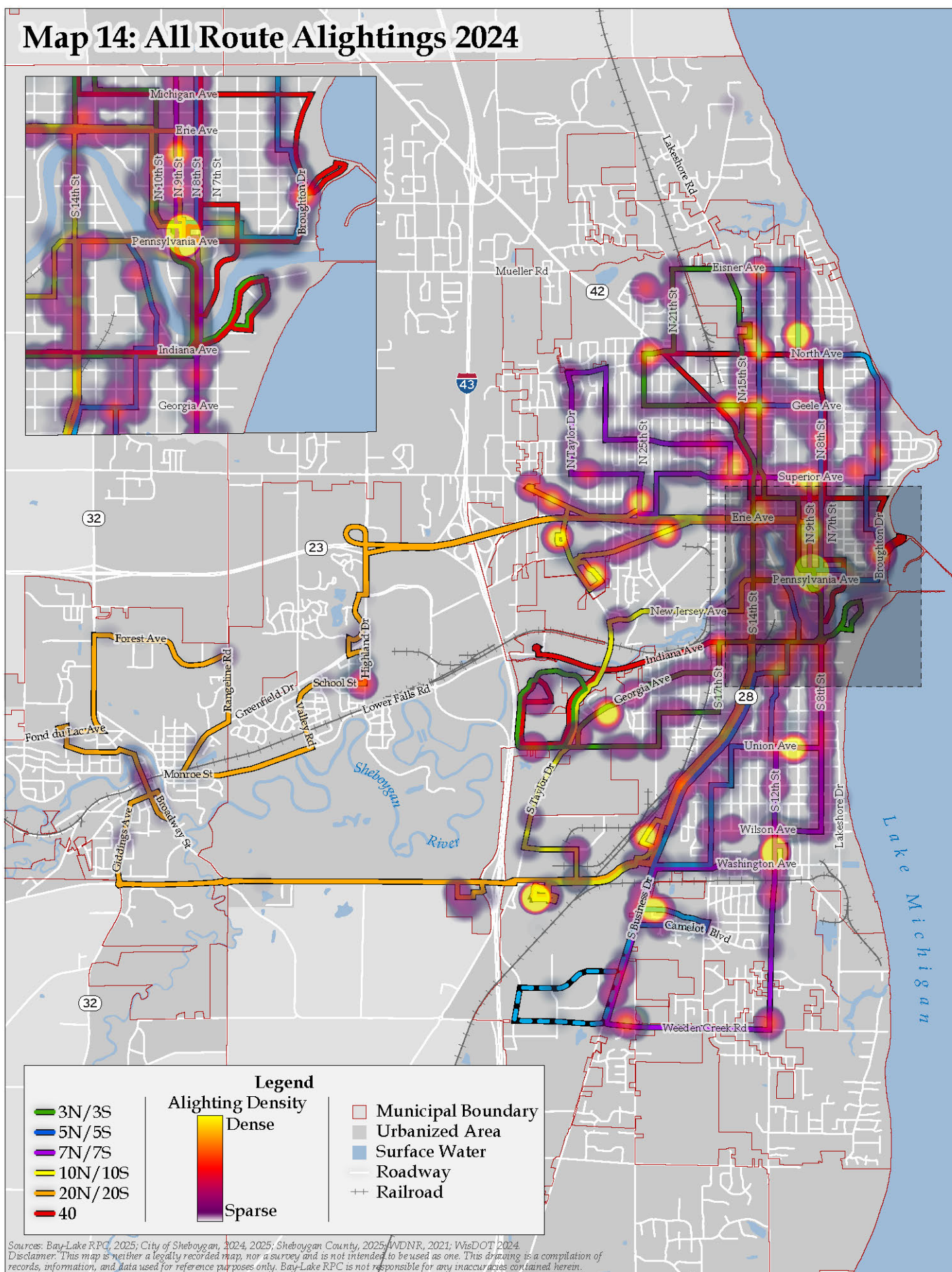
The alighting density map complements the boarding analysis by identifying key destination areas within the transit system. While alighting patterns generally align with boarding activity within the City of Sheboygan's urban core, alighting densities are more spatially concentrated, reflecting the location of major employment, medical, educational, and commercial destinations.

Compared to the more dispersed boarding patterns observed across residential areas, alighting activity is clustered along primary corridors and within the downtown area, particularly along Pennsylvania Avenue, Erie Avenue, Superior Avenue, and North Avenue. This concentration indicates that riders from multiple neighborhoods converge at a limited number of high-demand destinations.

Along Routes 3, 5, 7, and 10, alighting activity is notably concentrated near major trip generators, while boarding activity is distributed more evenly along these corridors. Outside the City of Sheboygan, alighting activity remains limited and destination-focused, with notable concentrations near Kohler Co. and the City of Sheboygan Falls' downtown area.

These patterns confirm a centralized ridership core and highlight the importance of prioritizing stop amenities, pedestrian access, and service reliability at high-alighting locations.

Map 14: All Route Alightings 2024



Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2025; City of Sheboygan, 2024, 2025; Sheboygan County, 2025; WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024

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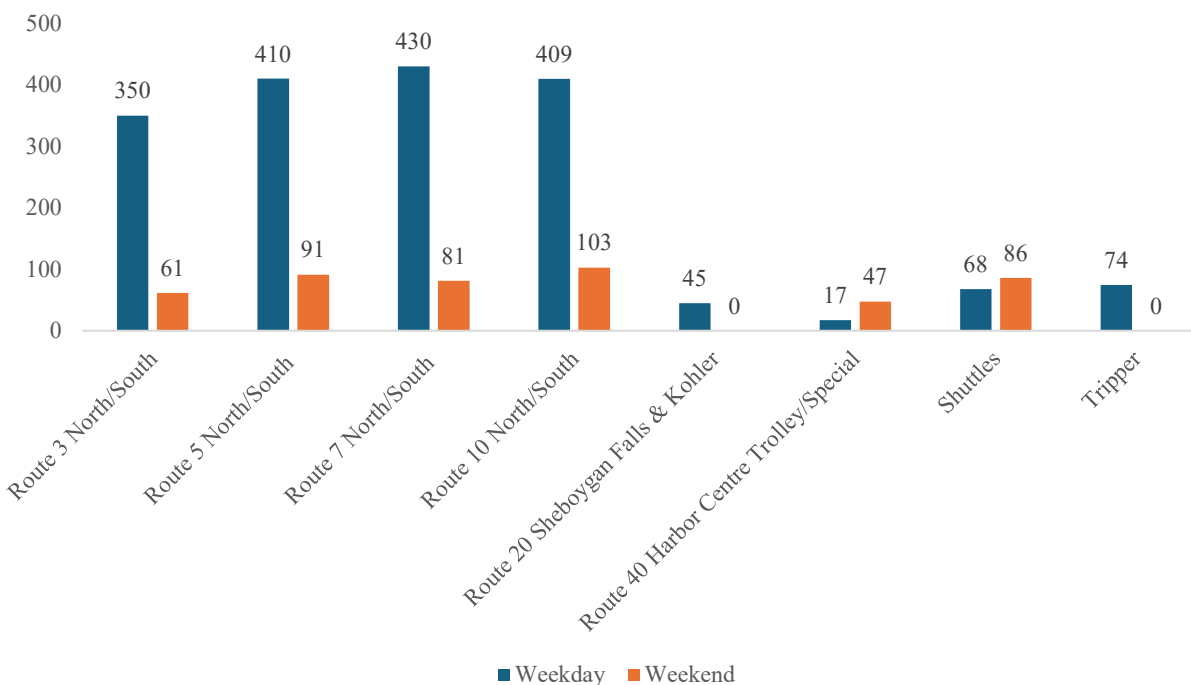
Route Review

Daily ridership across Shoreline Metro varies greatly by route. As seen in Figure 8, Routes 7, 5, and 10 have the highest average daily ridership. Route 7's ridership is primarily driven by those who access public services such as the Mead Public Library and multiple health centers including the Aurora Sheboygan Clinic and St. Nicholas Hospital.

Route 10's ridership can be attributed to the popular retail stops on the south side of Sheboygan including the Piggly Wiggly, Goodwill, and Walmart. Along with social services including the Sheboygan County Job Center.

Route 5's ridership centers mainly around service to the YMCA and Uptown Social (Senior Center). Other popular destinations along this route include the Southtown Mall and Indian Meadows Mobile Home Park.

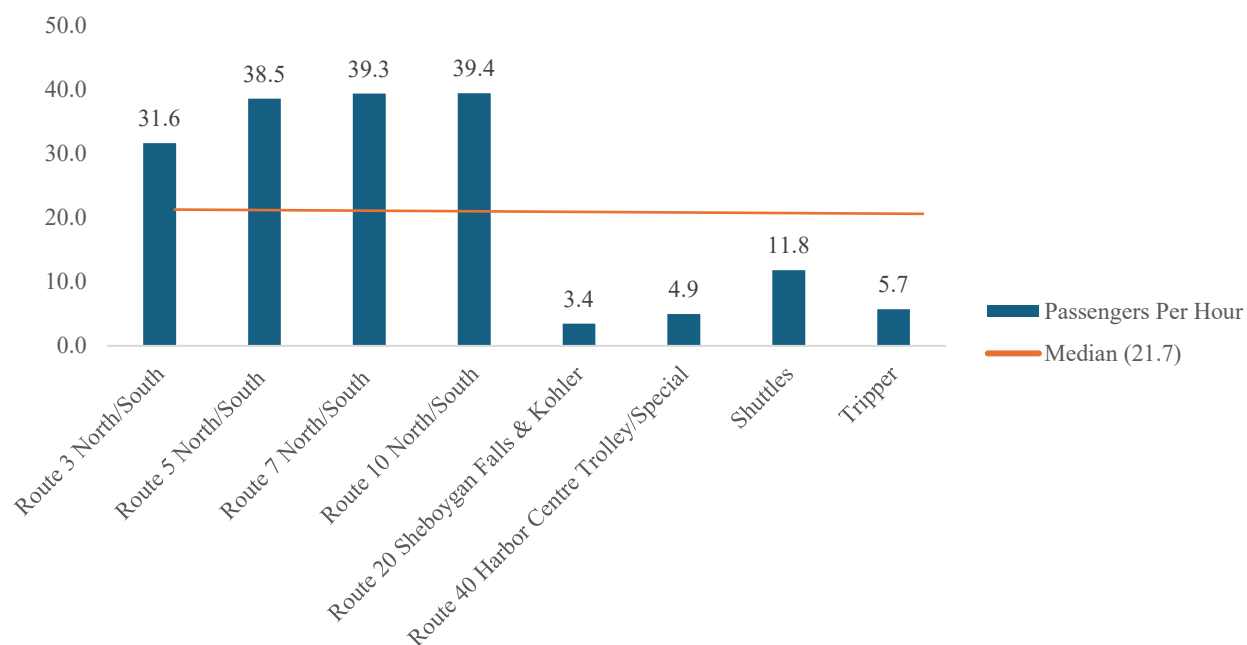
Figure 8. Average Daily Ridership by Route by Day of Week, 2024



Source: Shoreline Metro, 2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Unlike ridership alone, measures of productivity calculated as passenger trips per revenue hour, account for differences in service levels across routes. Routes 3, 5, 7, and 10 have the highest productivity by a significant margin. Routes 20, 40, Shuttles, and Trippers each fall below the median productivity of 21.7 passengers per revenue hour.

Figure 9. Productivity by Route, 2024



Source: Shoreline Metro, 2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Ridership Trends

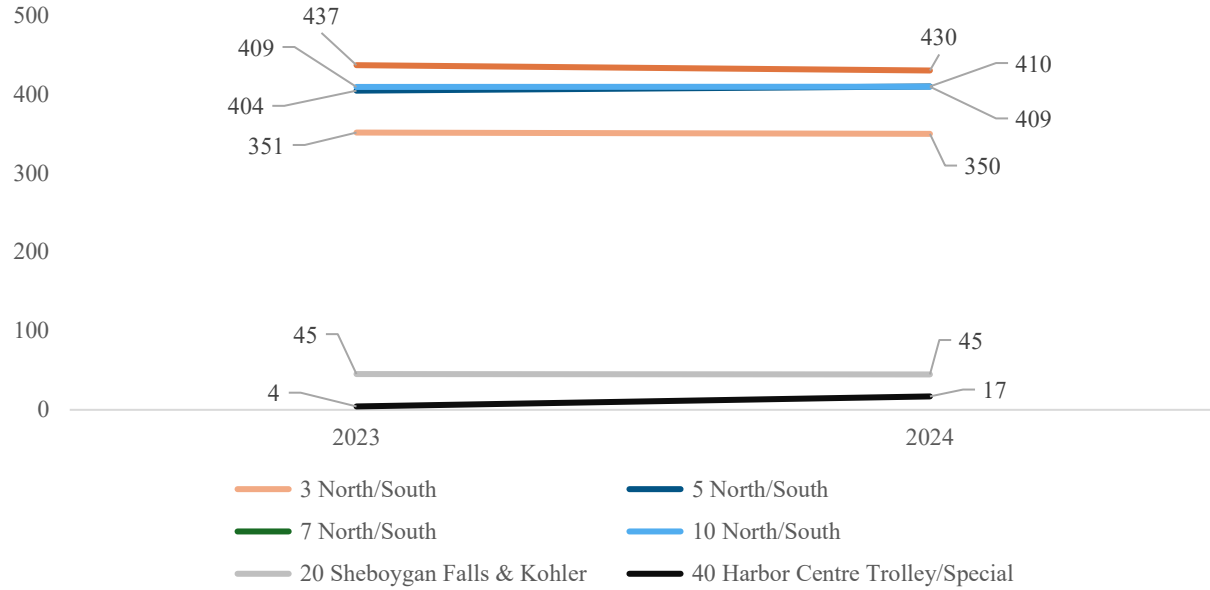
Weekday ridership across the system remained generally stable between 2023 and 2024, with modest shifts by route. The highest-ridership services, Routes 5, 7, and 10 continued to carry most weekday passengers, each averaging roughly 400 riders per day in both years. Route 7 experienced a slight decline, while Routes 5 and 10 remained essentially flat, indicating consistent demand on the system's core corridors.

Route 3 showed a small decrease in weekday ridership over the period, though overall usage remained steady relative to other primary routes. In contrast, lower-ridership services experienced minor growth. Route 20 (Sheboygan Falls & Kohler) maintained low but stable ridership, while Route 40 (Harbor Centre Trolley/Special) saw a noticeable increase, though absolute ridership levels remained comparatively small.

Saturday ridership increased across most routes between 2023 and 2024, indicating strengthening weekend demand. Route 10 continued to carry the highest Saturday ridership and experienced modest growth over the period. Routes 5 and 7 also saw increases, reinforcing their role as key weekend services serving major activity centers.

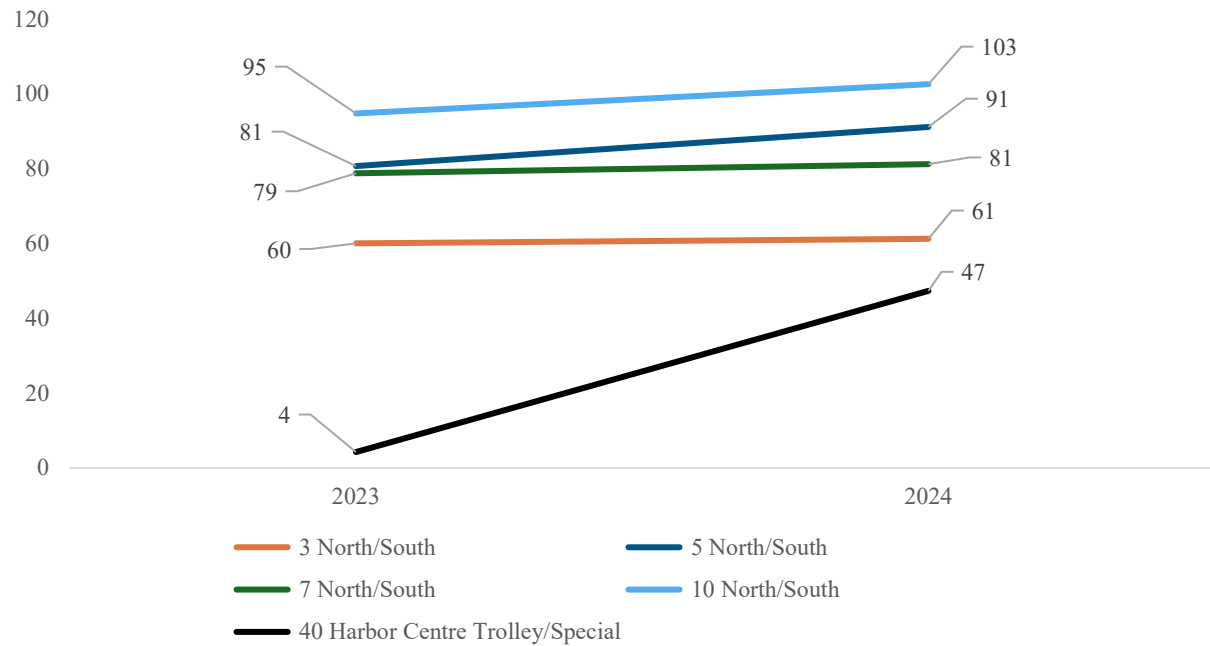
Route 3 showed relatively stable ridership with little change year over year, suggesting consistent but limited Saturday demand. The most notable change occurred on Route 40 (Harbor Centre Trolley/Special), which experienced substantial growth from a very low base, reflecting increased utilization or expanded awareness of the service.

Figure 10. Weekday Ridership by Route, 2023-2024



Source: Shoreline Metro, 2023-2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Figure 11. Saturday Ridership by Route, 2023-2024



Source: Shoreline Metro, 2023-2024; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Peer Performance Analysis

A useful way to measure the productivity of a transit operation is to compare it to transit operations in other cities. Although few transit operations are directly comparable, there are transit operations serving small, urbanized areas with similar densities and other demographic characteristics to the Shoreline Metro service area (Sheboygan) which are useful to analyze for comparative purposes. Five other small, urbanized transit operations were selected for use in comparison. Three of the transit operations are in Wisconsin, one in neighboring Iowa, and one in Indiana. All the transit operations are of similar size. The transit operations are in Wausau, Janesville and La Crosse, Wisconsin, Dubuque, Iowa, and Kokomo, Indiana. Data for comparison were published in the “agency profiles” section of the National Transit Database (NTD) for 2022 and 2023, published by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Four measures were selected for comparison of these systems. These are cost and productivity measures which are widely accepted in the public transit industry. These measures include passengers per revenue hour; passengers per revenue mile; cost per revenue hour; and cost per passenger trip.

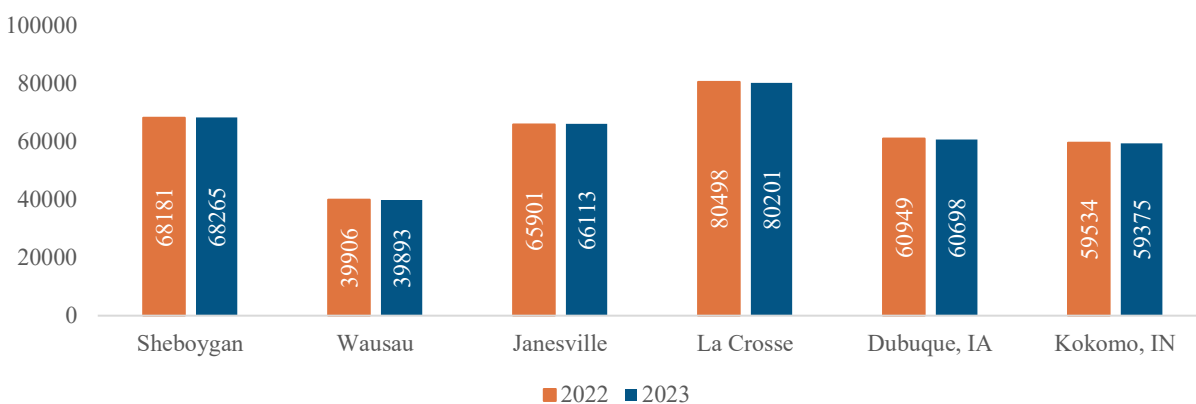
Please note that this peer system analysis only includes the fixed-route transit component at each transit operation and typically does not include paratransit services.

Population of Transit Service Area

Figure 12 displays the populations served by each transit system in 2022 and 2023. Shoreline Metro’s service area consisted of 68,181 individuals in 2022. This put Shoreline Metro ahead of Janesville’s and behind La Crosse’s transit systems. Janesville and La Crosse served 65,901 and 80,498 individuals, respectively.

Shoreline Metro’s service area increased by 84 individuals between 2022 and 2023. This made Shoreline Metro one of two transit systems in comparison to see population growth during this period, the other being Janesville. With a percentage change of 0.12%, Shoreline Metro’s growth was slightly less than Janesville’s, which saw a 0.32% increase. La Crosse experienced the largest decrease in population, losing 297 individuals.

Figure 12. Population Served by Transit System, 2022-2023



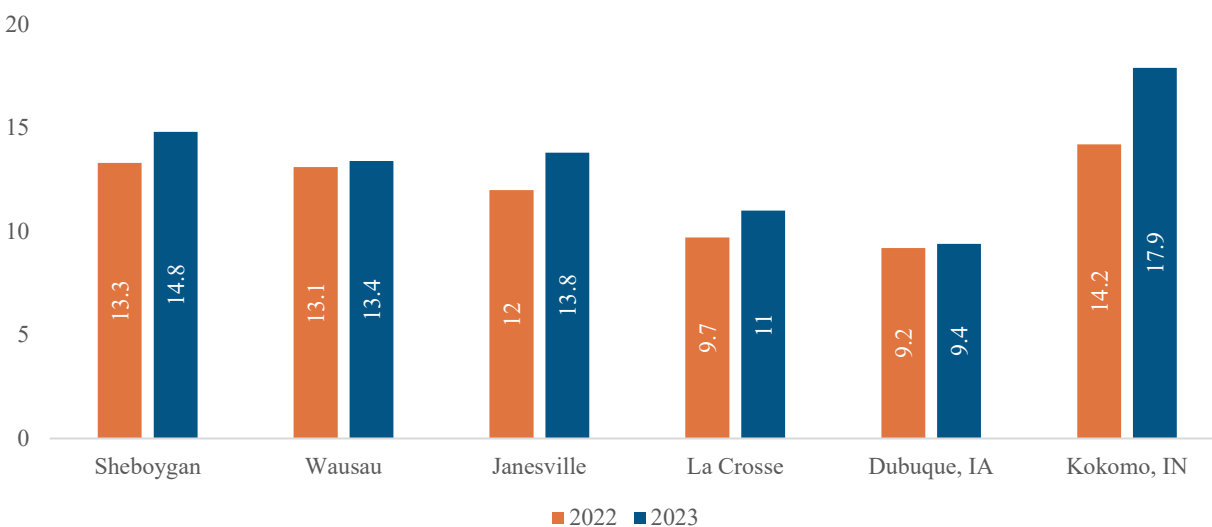
Source: National Transit Database, 2022-2023; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Passengers per Revenue Hour

Figure 13 shows productivity in terms of passengers per revenue hour. Shoreline Metro, at 13.3 passengers per revenue hour, was the second highest of the six transit systems in the comparison in 2022, only behind Kokomo. Shoreline Metro's utilization performed the highest of the four transit systems in Wisconsin.

Utilization of Shoreline Metro increased to 14.8 passengers per revenue hour in 2023, an increase of 11.28%. This increase put Shoreline Metro at the fourth highest increase of the peer systems. Kokomo (26.1%), Janesville (15%), and La Crosse (13.4%) saw higher growth in comparison, while Wausau (2.3%) and Dubuque (2.17%) experienced lower growth.

Figure 13. Passengers Per Revenue Hour, 2022-2023



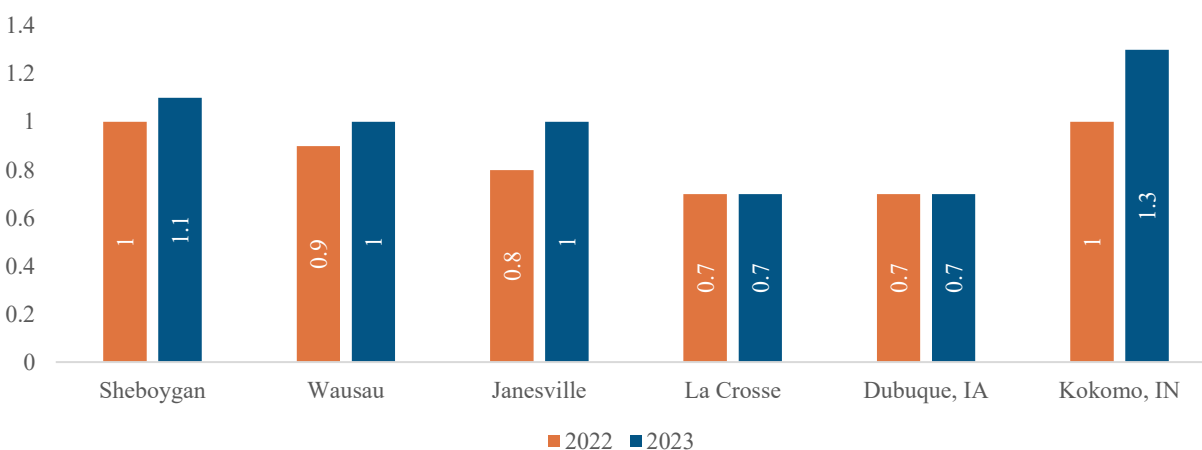
Source: National Transit Database, 2022-2023; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Passengers per Revenue Mile

The number of passengers per revenue mile is shown in Figure 14. Shoreline Metro, at one passenger per revenue mile, was tied for first with Kokomo in the comparison for 2022. Wausau followed closely behind at 0.9 passengers per revenue mile, with Janesville (0.8), La Crosse (0.7), and Dubuque (0.7) rounding out the rest of the peer systems.

In 2023, Shoreline Metro's utilization increased to 1.1, a percentage change of 10%. This increase placed Shoreline Metro at the fourth highest increase of the comparison behind Kokomo (30%), Janesville (25%), and Wausau (11.11%). La Crosse and Dubuque's transit systems did not undergo any growth during this period.

Figure 14. Passengers per Revenue Mile, 2022-2023



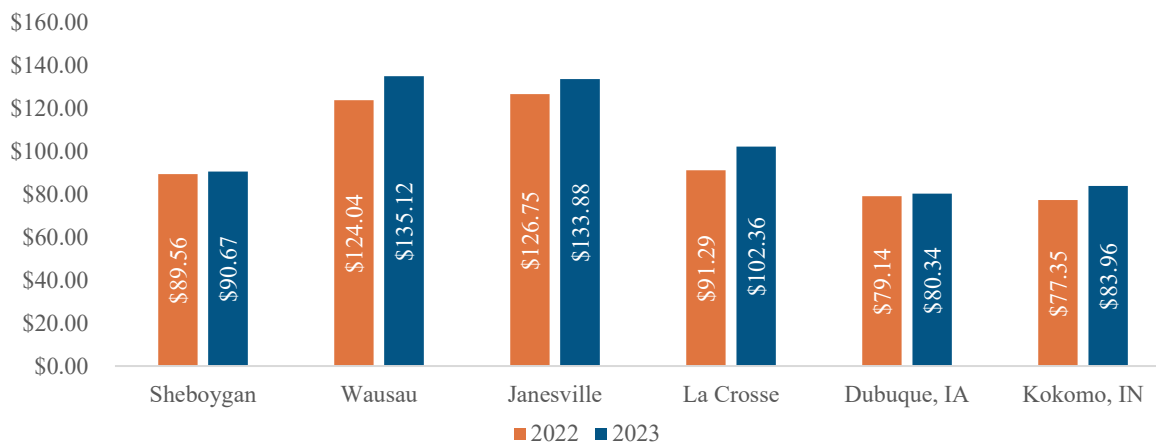
Source: National Transit Database, 2022-2023; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Cost per Revenue Hour

The cost per revenue hour reflecting vehicle operating costs is depicted for the various transit systems in Figure 15. At \$89.56, Shoreline Metro recorded the third lowest cost per revenue hour in the peer analysis in 2022. However, when comparing the transit systems in Wisconsin, Shoreline Metro performed the best in this metric.

Shoreline Metro underwent a 1.24% increase in cost per revenue hour in 2023, jumping to \$90.67. Fortunately, this increase was the smallest of comparison, keeping Shoreline Metro with the third lowest cost per revenue hour.

Figure 15. Cost per Revenue Hour, 2022-2023



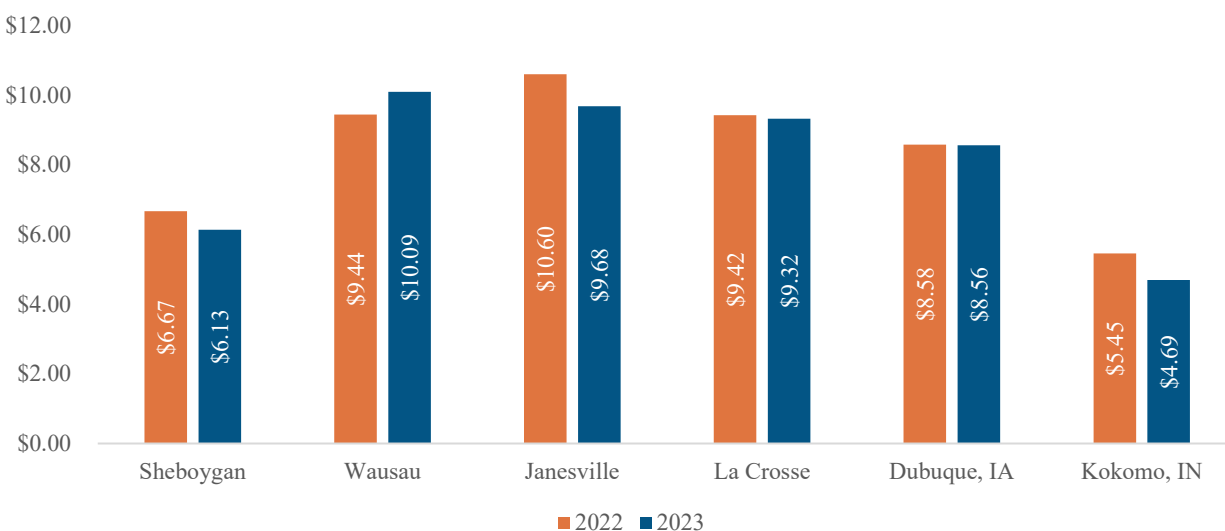
Source: National Transit Database, 2022-2023; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Cost per Passenger Trip

The cost per passenger trip is compared in Figure 16. Shoreline metro recorded the second lowest cost per passenger trip at \$6.67 in 2022, trailing only Kokomo (\$5.45). Shoreline Metro's cost per passenger trip was moderately lower than the other transit systems in Wisconsin during 2022.

The cost per passenger trip for Shoreline Metro decreased to \$6.13 in 2023. Five of the six transit systems also saw decreases in the cost per passenger trip during this period. Shoreline metro posted the second largest decrease at 8.1%, trailing only Kokomo's transit system which had a 13.94% decrease.

Figure 16. Cost per Passenger Trip, 2022-2023



Source: National Transit Database, 2022-2023; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

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Chapter 4: Public Engagement

Public engagement is a fundamental component of the Transit Development Plan, ensuring that the planning process reflects the needs, priorities, and experiences of the communities it serves. Meaningful engagement provides opportunities for residents, transit riders, businesses, community organizations, local governments, and other stakeholders to contribute ideas, identify transportation challenges, and help shape future transit services. Public input was gathered throughout the planning process, including surveys, driver interviews, stakeholder interviews, a pop-up booth at the local farmer's market, and an open house for the draft plan. This chapter describes these efforts in detail and provides an overview of the feedback received.

Community Survey

Survey conducted in August-October of 2025 provided input on the current conditions and generated ideas for service improvements from current riders and community members through a community survey.

The community survey was distributed to both transit riders and non-riders. The community survey was designed to encourage participation from start to end of the planning process. The survey addressed transit use, travel patterns, their satisfaction with the current service, desired transit improvements, and respondents' interest and willingness to support additional transit services in the community.

The survey was conducted in both online and paper formats. A flyer containing a QR code linking to the online survey was promoted through stakeholders' networks, Shoreline Metro's and City of Sheboygan's websites, and social media. Paper surveys were made available at Sheboygan City Hall.

Findings

A total of 51 responses were received, including two paper responses and 49 online responses. The open-ended responses can be found in Appendix B. Below is a summary of the responses to the community survey's questions.

Transit Use

A majority of respondents (65%) reported using Shoreline Metro Transit (Figure 17). Among those who use the transit system, 18% ride more than 10 times a week, 9% rides 7-10 times a week, and 30% ride 1-2 times week and 3-6 times a week, respectively (Figure 18).

Figure 17. Do You Use Public Transit?

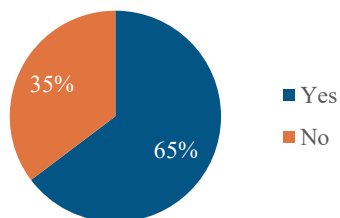
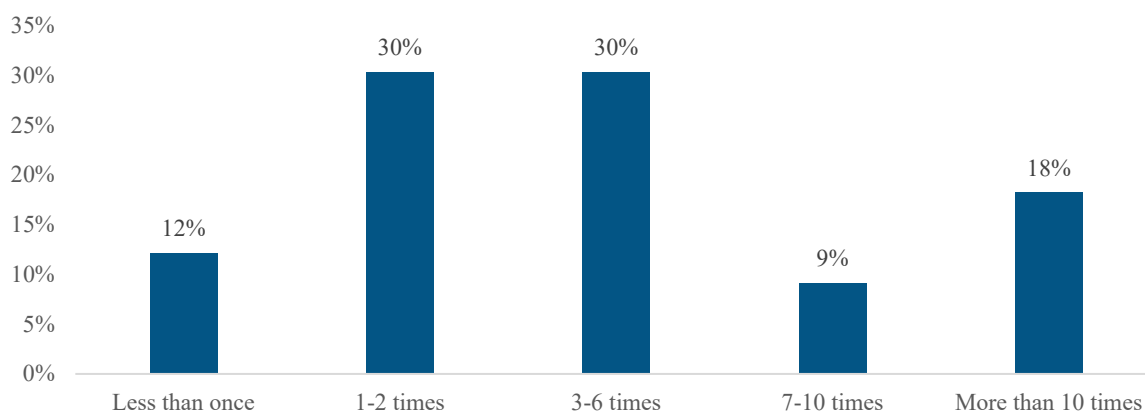
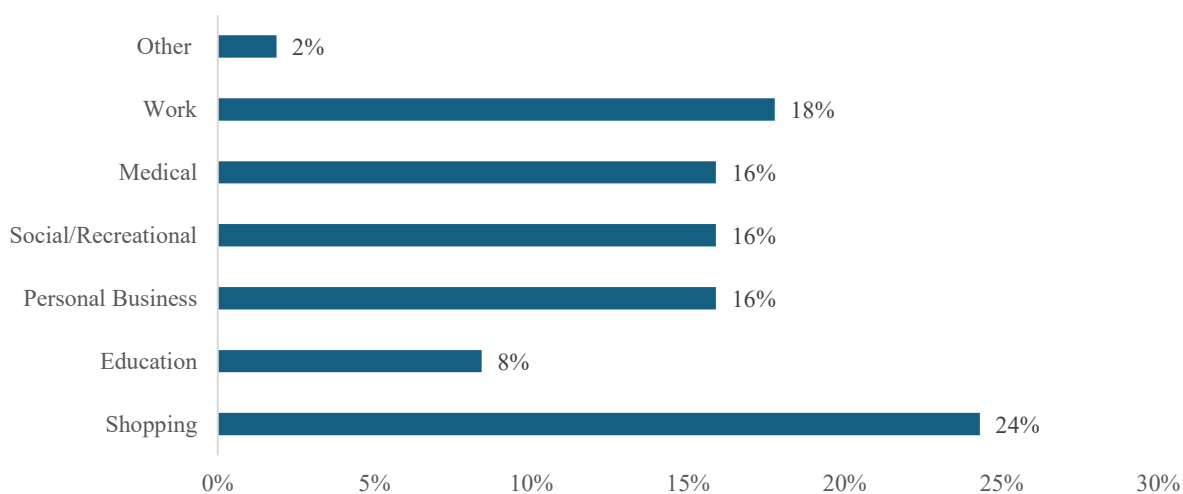


Figure 18. Transit Use per Week



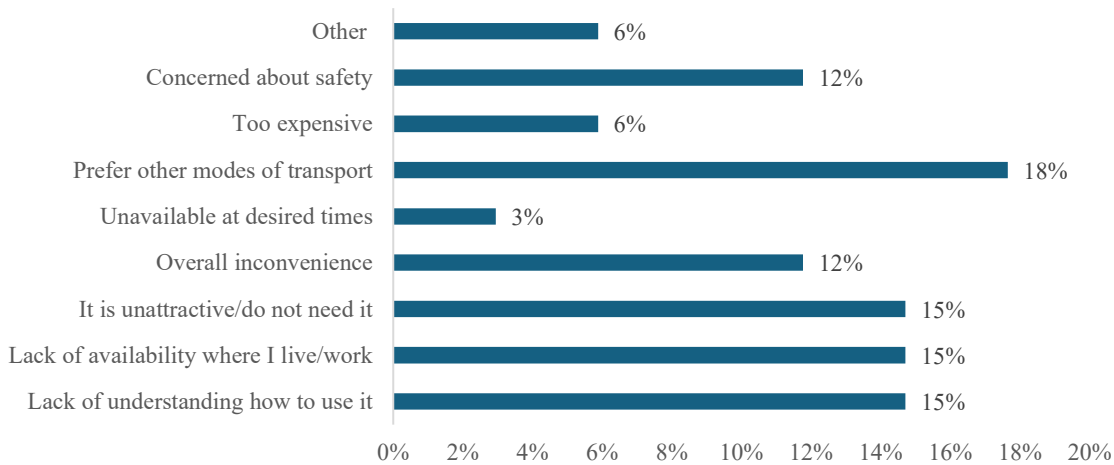
When asked their reason for riding, nearly a quarter of respondents utilize Shoreline Metro for shopping trips. Work trips follow at 18%, while medical, social/recreational, and personal business trips each account for 16% of responses. Education purposes make up 8% and only 2% of respondents selected other reasons. The overall data suggests most transit use is for essential and routine activities, with shopping and work being the primary purposes of the trip.

Figure 19. Reason for Using Transit



For those who do not ride Shoreline Metro (Figure 20), 18% stated they prefer other modes of transportation, while lack of availability, lack of understanding, and not needing it each account for 15% of responses. Overall inconvenience and concerns about safety each account for 12% of responses, and those citing the service being too expensive account for 6% of responses. These responses suggest that those who choose not to ride Shoreline Metro do so because they are likely to have access to a personal vehicle.

Figure 20. Reason for Not Using Transit



Transit and the Community

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with statements about the value of public transit to the community. As shown in Figure 21, there is strong community support for public transportation in the Sheboygan area. A large majority of respondents either agree or strongly agree that public transportation contributes positively to the quality of life and the economic health and sustainability of the community. Similarly, most respondents also strongly agree that it is important for the community to provide public transportation. Very few participants expressed disagreement or had no opinion. Overall, the results demonstrate that public transit is viewed as a valuable community asset, both socially and economically.

Figure 21. Community Value of Transit

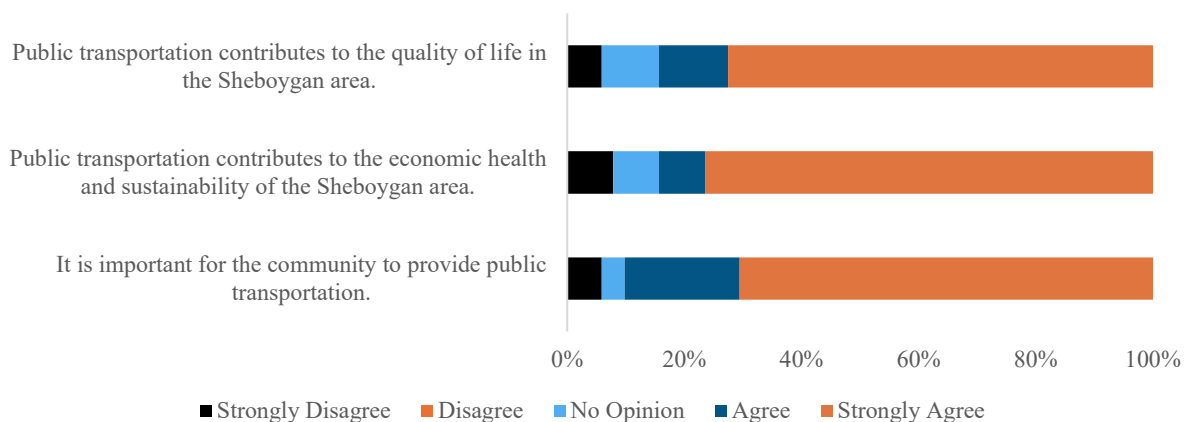
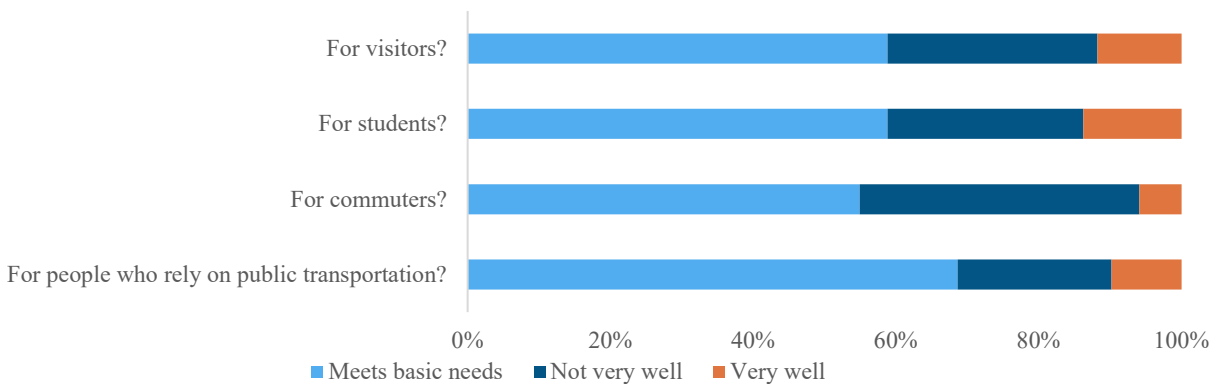


Figure 22 illustrates how respondents perceive the effectiveness of transit service for different user groups. Overall, most respondents indicated that transit meets basic needs across all groups. Satisfaction is highest among visitors, students, and people who rely on public transportation, with the majority believing their needs are adequately met. However, perceptions are less positive for commuters, as a larger portion of respondents felt transit does not meet their needs very well. Only a small percentage across all groups rated the service as meeting needs very well, suggesting there is room for improvement in service quality and accessibility, particularly for commuters.

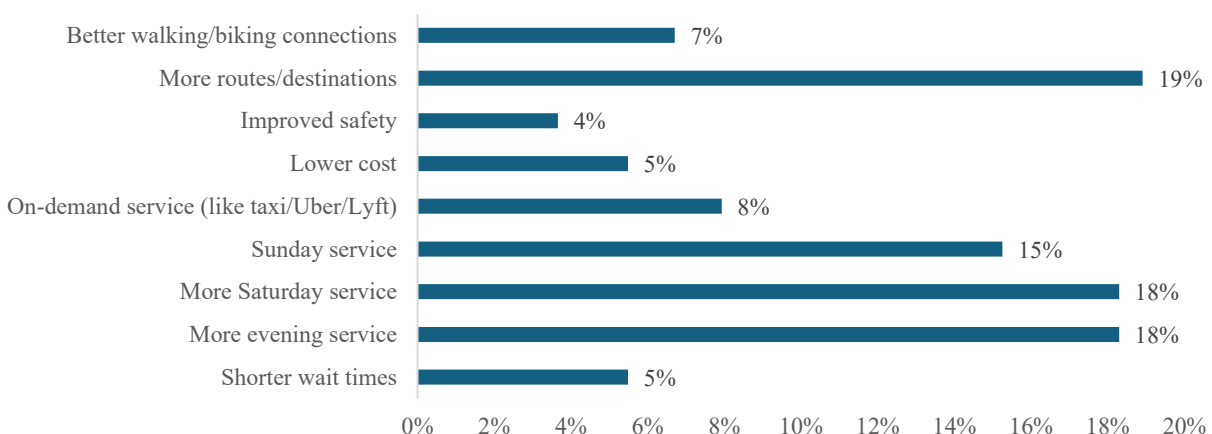
Figure 22. How Well Does Transit Meet Transportation Needs



Improvements

When asked about improvements to the transit system, the most frequently suggested enhancement was the addition of more routes/destinations, cited by 19% of respondents. Expanded Saturday and evening service each accounted for 18% of responses. Adding service on Sundays was cited as the top priority for 15% of respondents, while on-demand service (8%), better walking/biking connections (7%), lower costs (5%), shorter wait times (5%), and improved safety (4%) rounded out the rest of responses. The overall data points towards expansion of service, whether through additional routes or operating hours, as the main areas of improvement.

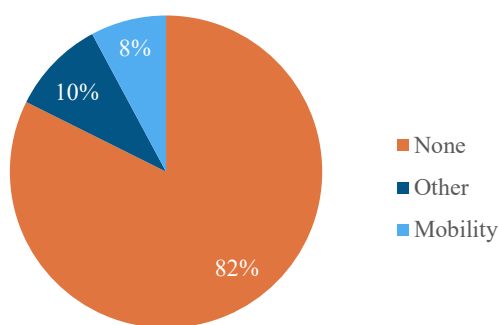
Figure 23. Areas for Improvement



Community Survey Demographics

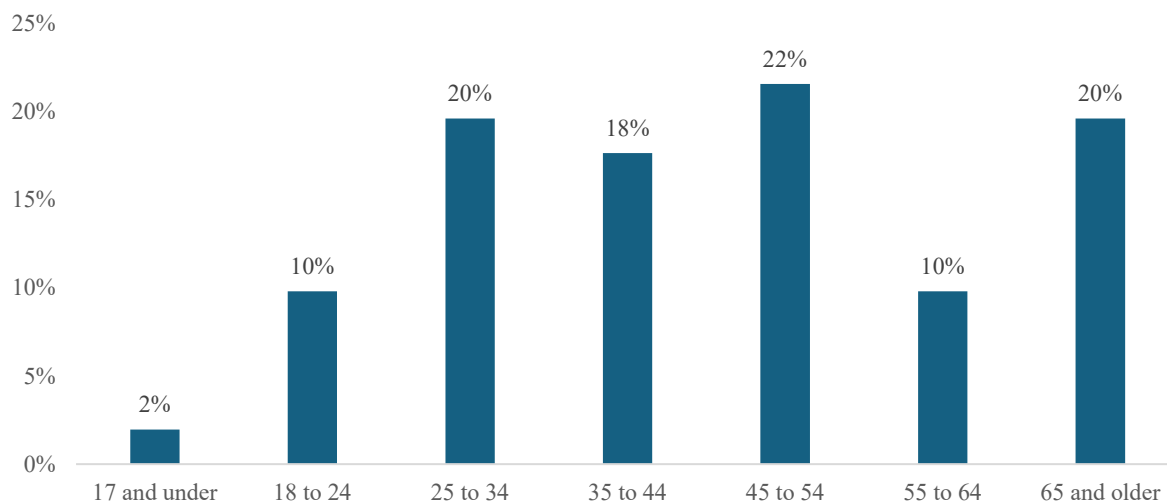
The majority of respondents (82%) do not have any disabilities that impact their ability to use the bus. A small share of respondents (8%) reported having a mobility disability, while 10% reported other disabilities that impact their ability to use the bus.

Figure 24. Disability Status



The survey respondent's age range is fairly distributed from age 25 and older, except lower responses were received from the age range 55 to 64. Responses from young adults (aged 18-24) were also on the lower end. The survey also showed only 2% responses from age group 17 and under, this could be due to lack of willingness of the students to participate in the survey. As mentioned in chapter 1, Shoreline Metro has partnership with Sheboygan Area School District, resulting in a lot of students commuting for free on the buses. The age of respondents by percentage is shown in Figure 25.

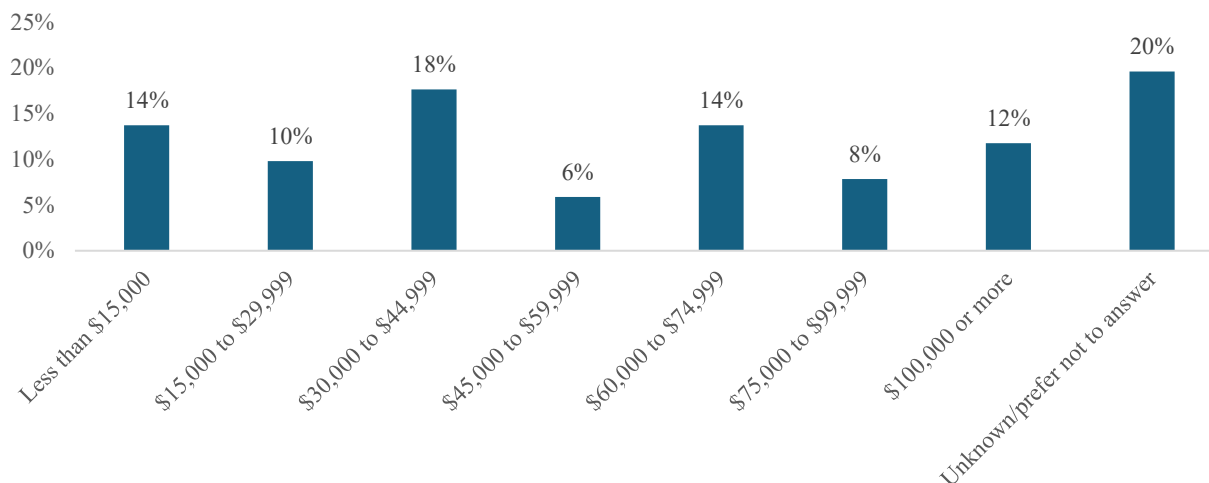
Figure 25. Age of Respondents



The household income of survey respondents was relatively evenly distributed. A total of 20% of respondents preferred not to share their income. Among those who did respond, the income

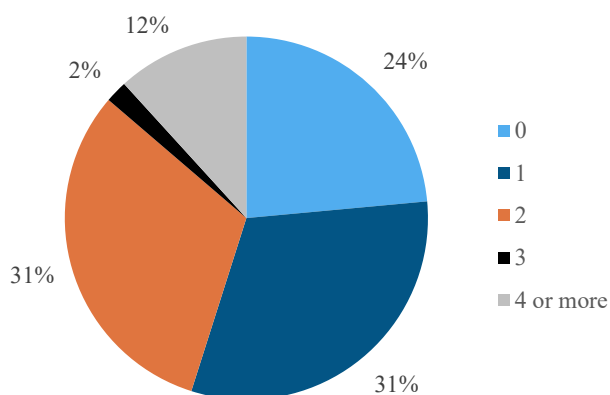
brackets of less than \$15,000, \$30,000–\$44,999, \$60,000–\$74,999, and \$100,000 or more each fell within six percentage points of one another, indicating a balanced representation across different socioeconomic groups.

Figure 26. Household Income of Respondents



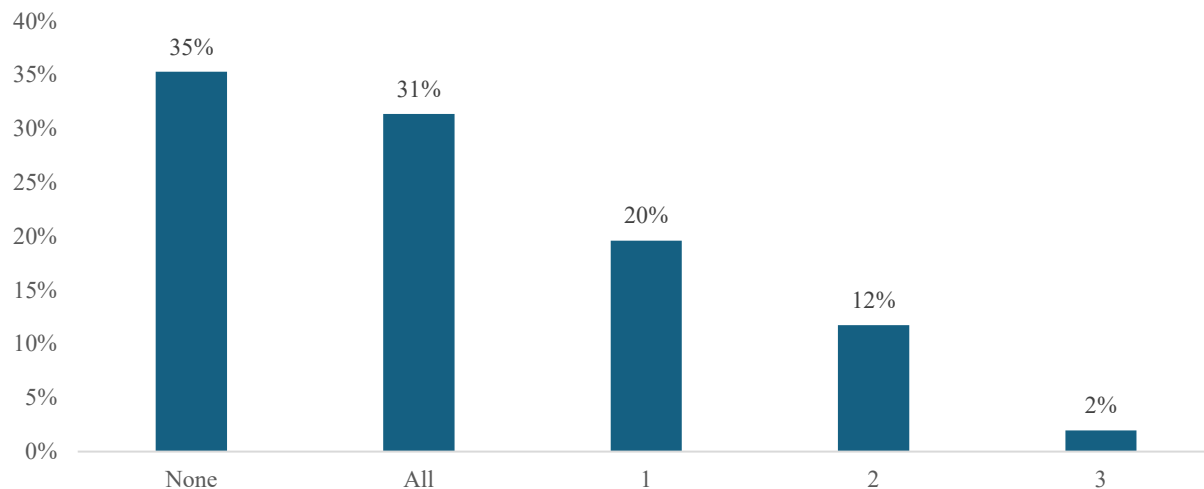
A majority of respondents (62%) reported having one or two licensed drivers in their household. Respondents representing households with no licensed drivers made up nearly a quarter of responses, creating a stark contrast between households with and without licensed drivers.

Figure 27. Licensed Drivers



As a follow-up, respondents were asked how many of the licensed drivers in their household have access to a personal vehicle. More than one-third of respondents (35%) indicated that none of the licensed drivers in their household have access to a personal vehicle, while 31% reported that all licensed drivers do. Given the rising costs of vehicles and their maintenance, it can be inferred that reliance on public transit may grow as the number of households without a vehicle increases.

Figure 28. Licensed Driver Access to a Personal Vehicle



Shoreline Metro Driver Interviews

In December 2025, Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission staff hosted two meetings with Shoreline Metro drivers to gather feedback on route structure, system performance, and areas for improvement. Six drivers participated, including two first-shift and four second-shift drivers. Discussion topics included common causes of delays, difficult-to-navigate route segments, and locations with recurring unsafe traffic behavior. The meetings were scheduled to coincide with shift changes to maximize attendance and convenience. Driver feedback was shared with the review committee and used to develop draft recommendations, with drivers later engaged in refining those recommendations.

Findings

Shoreline Metro drivers offered input on both positive aspects and challenges within the transit system. Multiple drivers highlighted strong communication between drivers and dispatch as a key attribute the transit system does well. Others noted positive relationships between co-workers and a positive working environment.

Route Functionality

Several drivers noted that routes function well under normal driving conditions. However, recurring traffic congestion on major corridors and during peak periods (e.g., rush hour, school dismissal) are the primary factors to schedule delays. Other drivers cited roadway construction, traffic incidents, weather, and passenger boardings as common causes for delays. While these incidents are often random occurrences, the overall transit system appears to operate well for drivers.

Specific route bottlenecks identified included Routes 7 and 10, where longer trip distances combined with frequent stop lights contribute to delays. Drivers also noted that Route 10 experienced increased delays between approximately 2:15 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. due to higher passenger volumes, including students traveling from local schools.

Infrastructure Constraints

Drivers identified several route segments as operationally challenging due to narrow travel lanes, limited curb clearance from on-street parking, tight turning radii, and deteriorating pavement conditions. Limited sight lines at certain intersections and access points, particularly near commercial loading areas, were also noted, increasing maneuvering times and raising safety concerns. Specific areas of concern included North 10th Street, where visibility is poor; 8th Street toward Mead, which is narrow with substandard road conditions; the Piggly Wiggly South area, requiring tight turns when exiting; and side streets where parking is allowed on both sides.

System Usage

Drivers reported strong and consistent ridership at key destinations, particularly in downtown areas and at major retail and employment centers. This indicates that existing routes effectively serve important hubs and align well with current travel demand.

Conversely, drivers also identified stops and route segments that appear underutilized, suggesting opportunities for optimization. Areas noted as having low ridership include portions of Sheboygan Falls, particularly near Elm Street, and the local trailer park, as well as the UW-Sheboygan campus and Blue Harbor. Adjusting or consolidating these stops could help improve route efficiency and reduce unnecessary travel time.

Drivers also highlighted areas currently not served by the system but desired by riders and the community, primarily in the northern portions of the service area, with some interest in southern corridor expansions. Specific locations mentioned include the northside Walmart and Menards, along Calumet Drive and Wisconsin State Highway 42. Drivers suggested options such as expanded regular service, express routes to major destinations, and seasonal or temporary services to accommodate high-demand periods, such as holidays or peak employment times. Expanding service to these areas could increase overall accessibility and better meet community travel needs.

Service Improvement Suggestions

Drivers provided a wide range of recommendations related to both service delivery and the onboard environment. Suggestions for onboard improvements included temperature control and cleanliness. Service-related recommendations focused primarily on improving on-time performance, particularly on routes operating with 30-minute headways.

Stakeholder Meetings

Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission staff, in coordination with Shoreline Metro leadership and various other public stakeholders, held multiple meetings between the summer of 2025 and spring of 2026. To gauge where the stakeholders stand on system performance, priorities, and future needs, a stakeholder survey was conducted in fall of 2025.

Findings

Stakeholders identified expanding services for transit-dependent populations as the primary measure of success for the transit plan. Increased service coverage was the second most common response, while increased ridership was identified by fewer respondents. Overall, results suggest a strong emphasis on equity, accessibility, and coverage rather than ridership growth alone.

Respondents highlighted several aspects of Shoreline Metro that are currently working well. Affordability emerged as the most frequently cited strength, followed by partnerships with schools, service frequency, and coverage of the city center. Access for K–12 students were also viewed positively. These responses indicate that Shoreline Metro is perceived as a cost-effective system with meaningful institutional partnerships and a solid core service area that supports the local economy.

The most identified improvement was expanding service to the Town of Sheboygan, followed by increased route coverage, improved access to large employers, and collaboration with surrounding rural areas. Additional opportunities included increased service to industrial areas and longer service hours. Collectively, these responses point toward a need for a more connected greater Sheboygan area, expanded employment access, and ensuring service hours meet the needs of untraditional working hours.

When asked to rank priority needs, committee members placed job access as the highest priority, followed closely by mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities and service to low-income and high-demand neighborhoods. Access to medical services, schools and colleges, and retail or recreational destinations ranked lower overall. These rankings reinforce a focus on economic opportunity and essential mobility as guiding principles for future service planning.

Outreach/Open House

As part of the public engagement process staff hosted a booth at the Juneteenth festival in the City of Sheboygan on June 19th. The outreach was to engage the audience who couldn't make it to any TDP meetings or were not aware of the plan. This outreach effort encouraged people to learn about the transit system and the planning process.

In addition, staff hosted an open house on July 7th at the uptown social community center in the City of Sheboygan. Participants shared valuable perspectives on service reliability, accessibility, travel patterns, and future transportation needs. Comments received during the open house were

documented, reviewed, and incorporated into the planning process where appropriate, helping to ensure that the final Transit Development Plan reflects community priorities and supports a transit system that is responsive to current and future needs.

The following comments were received during the open house:

- Converting some fixed route transit to on-demand transit would make people think we are taking away the fixed route reliability from the people. Not in favor of converting fixed route to on-demand transit.
- After getting off the bus it is hard to navigate to some businesses in a wheelchair since the crosswalk could be half a mile down the road from the bus stop. Some places like Meijer don't have good accessibility from the bus stops.
- It is hard to use the bus service for people working late, since they don't run later in the evenings.

Chapter 5: Recommendations

Recommendations were developed in response to review committee goals and objectives, public engagement efforts, an evaluation of existing services, and discussions with numerous stakeholders. The recommendations presented in this chapter are organized by route and potential total cost is provided for extended service hours.

Assumptions

Operating Costs

Annual operating expense estimates for both existing and proposed services were developed using a fully allocated cost per revenue hour derived from the 2024 National Transit Database, the most recent dataset available at the time the plan was initiated. The resulting cost per hour used for these estimates is \$94.65.

Inflation

A standard 2% inflation rate was also included to properly plan and account for yearly increases in future expenses.

Annual Service Days

All annual operating cost estimates are based on an assumed service calendar, shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Annual Service Days

Day Type	Number of Days per Year
Weekdays (Monday-Friday)	255
Saturdays	52
No Service (Sundays and Holidays)	58

Recommendations

The following sections outline recommended changes to Shoreline Metro’s routes and their anticipated impacts. These recommendations vary by route based on factors such as ridership data and public and stakeholder input. As a result, some routes include more recommendations than others.

NOTE: Route extensions may require further analysis to determine their impact on service timing. Some extensions may require adjustments in service frequency to ensure effective coverage.

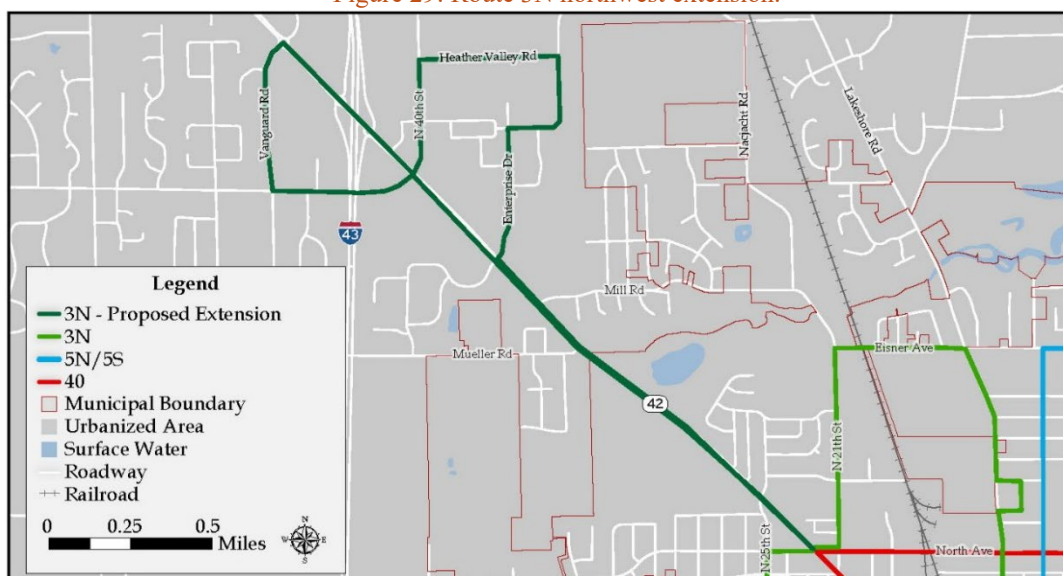
Route 3N/S

Route 3N/S records the fourth-highest ridership on weekdays and Saturdays. This route runs from 5:15 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

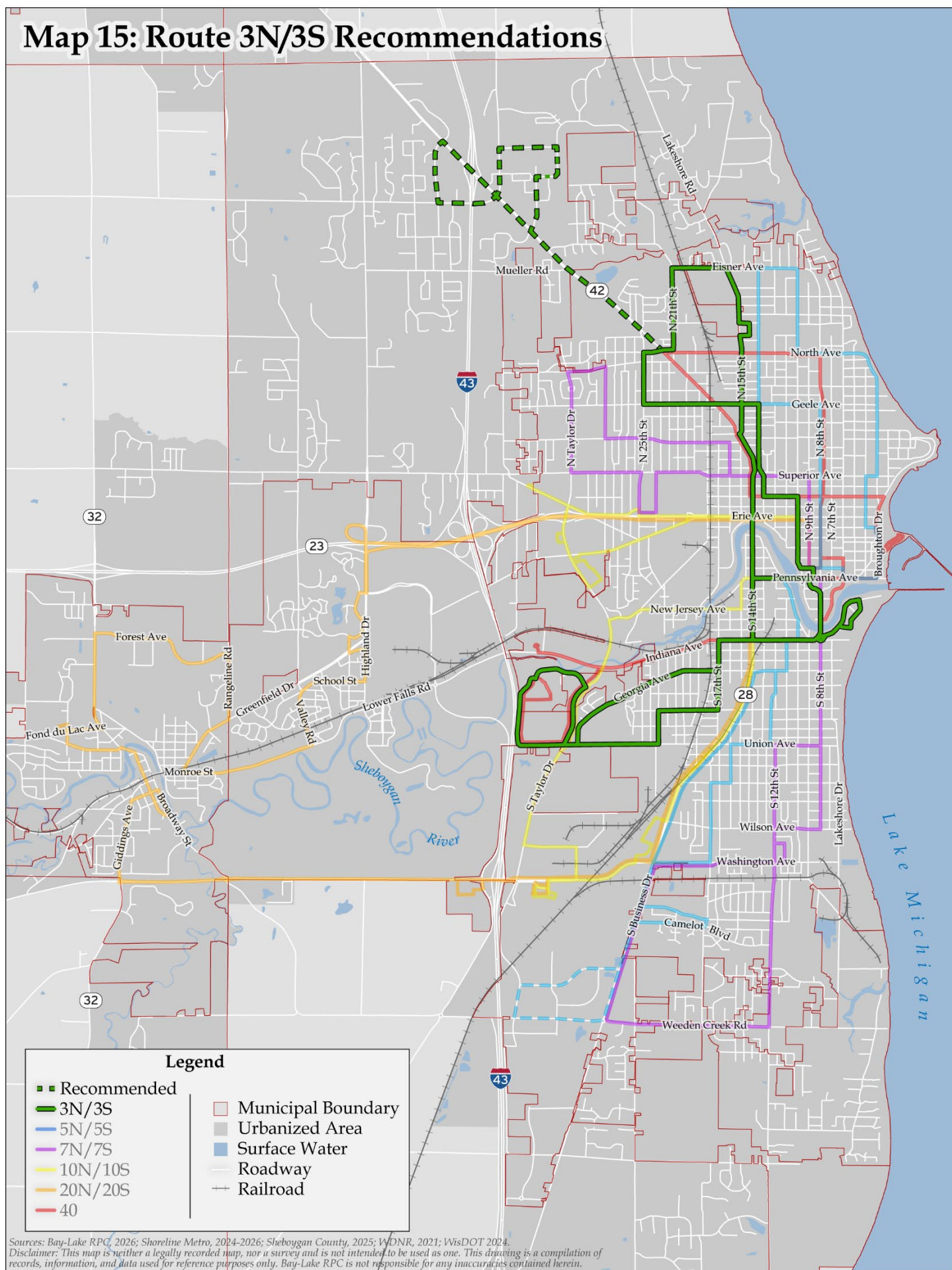
The north-central area of Sheboygan, including the popular stops of Lakeshore Technical College, Piggly Wiggly North, and Michigan Avenue, is served by the northern portion of the route. The southern portion serves the south-central portion of Sheboygan, which includes Indiana Avenue, the Aurora Medical Center, and the UWGB Sheboygan Campus.

Proposed Change	Impact
Extend Route 3N northwest to serve the northside Walmart and the Town of Sheboygan. This route extension would increase route length of 3N by approximately 6 miles. Note: This recommendation requires a local share from the Town of Sheboygan.	- Expands service coverage into currently underserved areas, improving regional connectivity between the City and Town of Sheboygan. - Improves access to major commercial destinations, supporting transit-dependent populations.
Reduce service frequency to hourly for UW–Green Bay Sheboygan Campus and Bookworm Gardens segments.	- Aligns service levels with observed low ridership at these stops. - Allows reallocation of service hours to higher-demand segments, particularly during peak periods.
Investigate on-demand service on Saturdays and after 5:00 PM on weekdays.	- Reduction in overall operating costs. - Improved service efficiency during low-demand periods. - Increase flexibility and responsiveness for evening riders.

Figure 29: Route 3N northwest extension.



Map 15: Route 3N/3S Recommendations



Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2026; Shoreline Metro, 2024-2026; Sheboygan County, 2025; WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024.
 Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bay-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

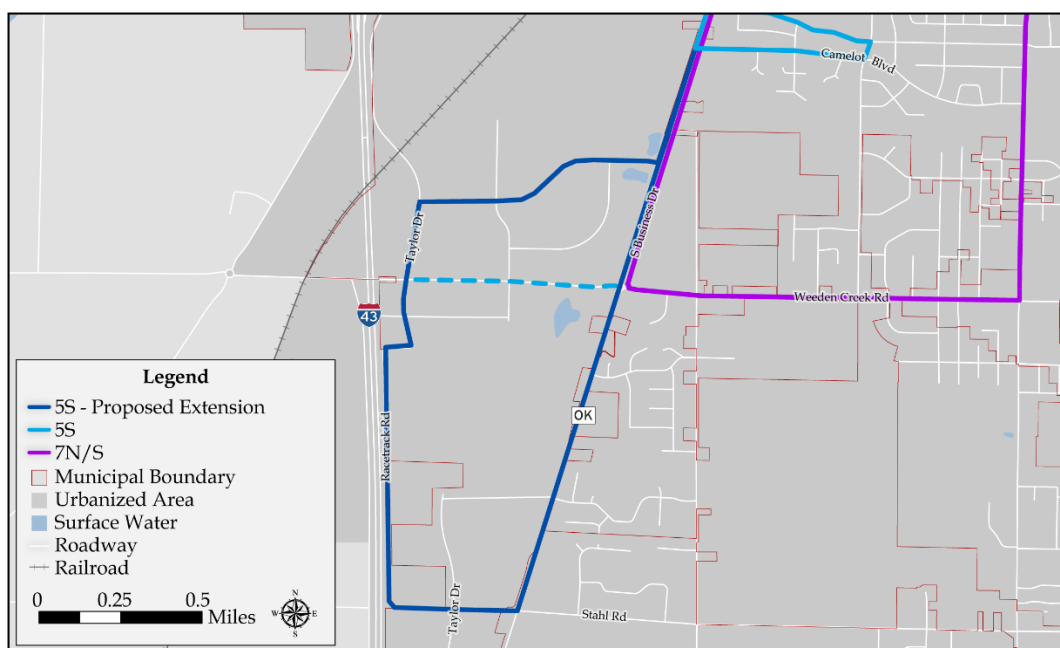
Route 5N/S

Route 5N/S records the second-highest weekday and Saturday ridership. This route runs from 5:15 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

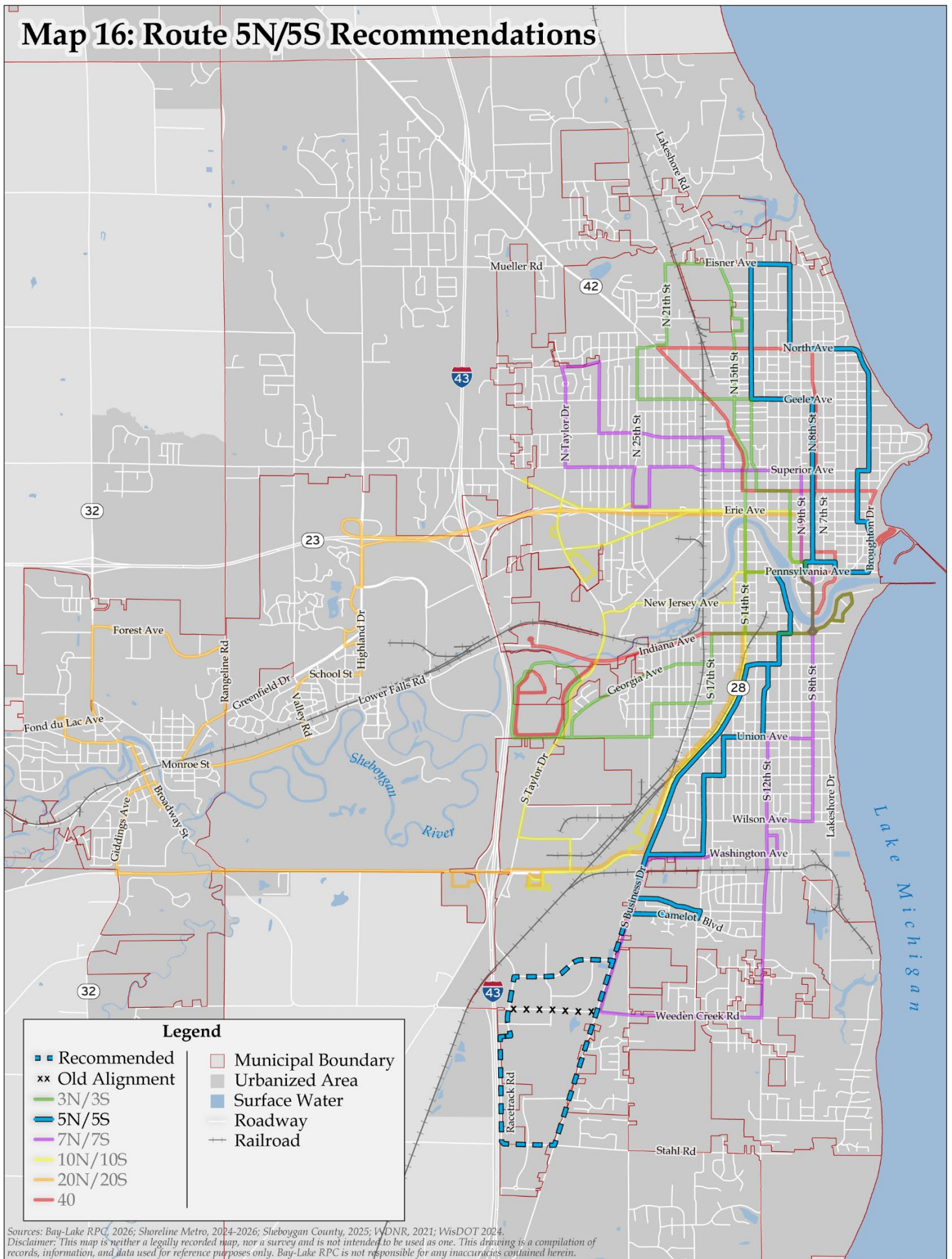
The northern portion serves the northeast portion of Sheboygan, with popular stops including the YMCA, Uptown Social (Senior Center), and Washington School Apartments. The southern portion serves the south-central portion of Sheboygan. Notable stops include Rockline Industries, Southtown Mall, and Badger State Lofts.

Proposed Change	Impact
Extend Route 5S to serve the new southern industrial park development. This route extension would increase the length of Route 5S by approximately 2.5 miles.	- Improves access to employment centers, particularly for transit-dependent workers - Supports planned economic development by ensuring transportation access to new job sites.
Investigate on-demand service on Saturdays and after 5:00 PM on weekdays. (Elaborated later in this chapter)	- Reduction in overall operating costs. - Reduced wear and tear on fixed-route buses. - Improved service efficiency during low-demand periods. - Increase flexibility and responsiveness for evening riders.

Figure 30: Route 5S southwest extension.



Map 16: Route 5N/5S Recommendations



Sources: Bay-Lake RPC, 2026; Shoreline Metro, 2024-2026; Sheboygan County, 2025; WDNR, 2021; WisDOT 2024.
 Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bay-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

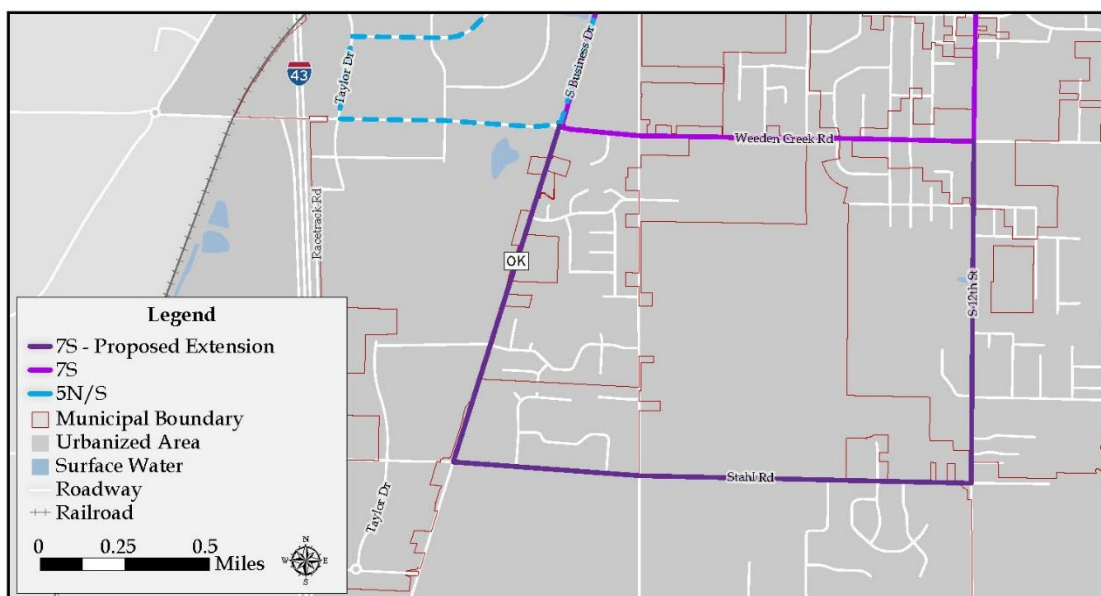
Route 7N/S

Route 7N/S records the highest weekday ridership and third-highest Saturday ridership. This route runs from 5:15 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

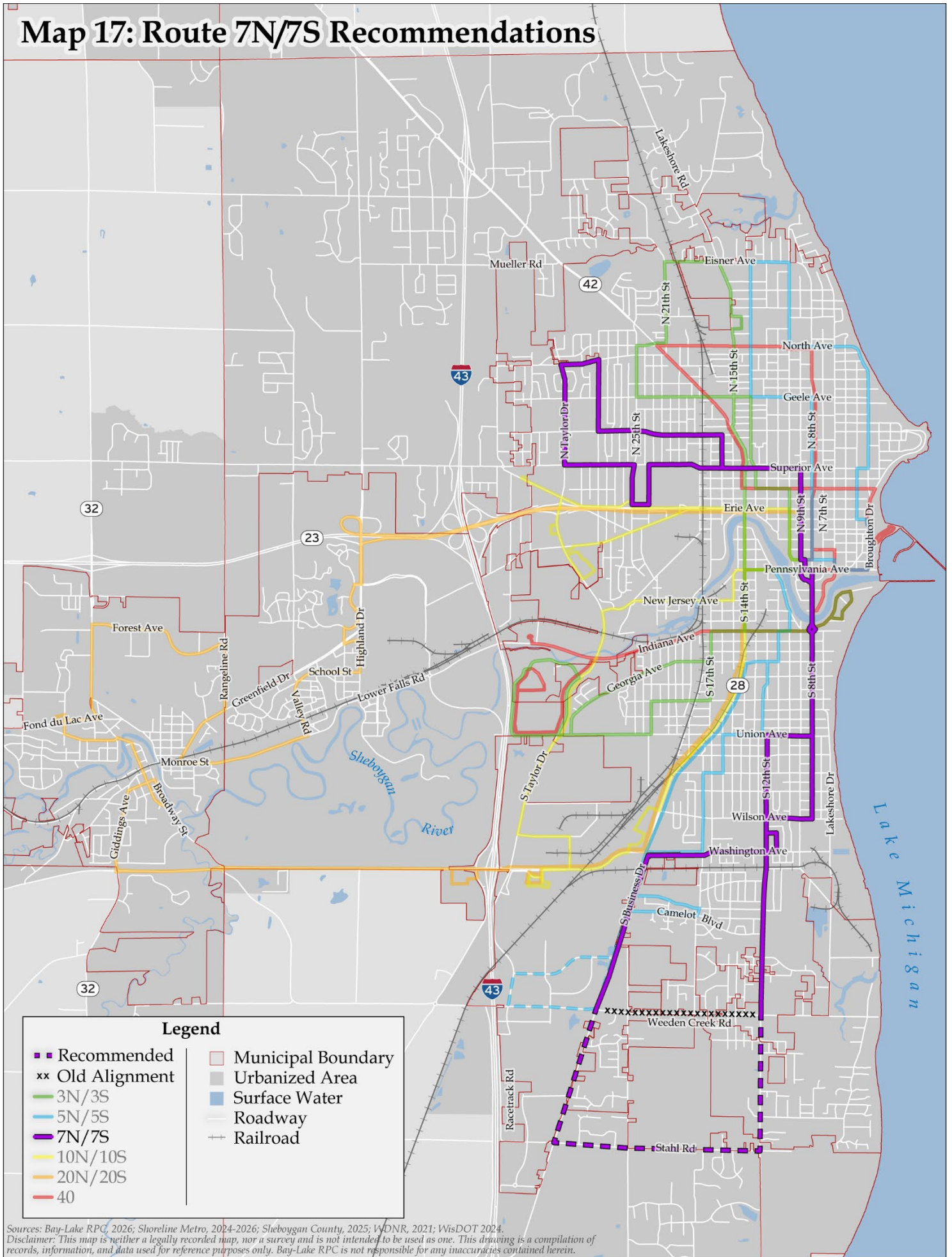
The northern portion serves the northwest area of Sheboygan, including the Mead Public Library, Aurora Sheboygan Clinic, St. Nicholas Hospital, and Pick N Save. The southern portion serves the southeast area of Sheboygan, including the Behrens Parkway Industrial Park, Country Village Apartments, and Sheboygan South High School.

Proposed Change	Impact
Extend Route 7S to serve new residential development areas. This route extension would increase the length of Route 7S by approximately 3.5 miles.	• Expands transit access to growing residential neighborhoods. • Encourages transit use among new residents and reduces auto dependency. • Supports long term ridership growth. • The frequency of the bus and timings will need to be recalculated.
Investigate on-demand service on Saturdays and after 5:00 PM on weekdays. (Elaborated later in this chapter)	• Reduction in overall operating costs. • Reduced wear and tear on fixed-route buses. • Improved service efficiency during low-demand periods. • Increase flexibility and responsiveness for evening riders.

Figure 31: Route 7S west extension.



Map 17: Route 7N/7S Recommendations



Route 10N/S

Route 10N/S records the third-highest weekday ridership and the highest Saturday ridership. This route runs from 5:15 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. on weekdays and from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. on Saturdays.

The northern portion serves the west side of Sheboygan, including retail destinations such as Meijer, Kohl's, Hobby Lobby, and Memorial Plaza. The southern portion serves the southwest side of Sheboygan, including popular destinations such as Piggly Wiggly, Goodwill, Walmart, and Wildwood Park.

Proposed Change	Impact
Investigate on-demand service on Saturdays and after 5:00 PM on weekdays. (Elaborated later in this chapter)	• Reduction in overall operating costs. • Reduced wear and tear on fixed-route buses. • Improved service efficiency during low-demand periods. • Increase flexibility and responsiveness for evening riders.

Route 20 Sheboygan Falls / Kohler

Route 20 records the lowest ridership on both weekdays and Saturdays. This route runs from 5:45 a.m. to 8:15 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

This route serves the City of Sheboygan Falls and Village of Kohler with limited stops in the City of Sheboygan. Popular destinations include the Woodlake Market, Kohler Co., the ADRC of Sheboygan County, and Deer Trace Kohler Shopping Center. On weekdays, there is a Kohler Special run that leaves the transfer point at 6:45 a.m. and picks up/drops off at the Kohler Co., returning to the transfer point at 7:15 a.m.

Proposed Change	Impact
Establish Deer Trace as a transfer hub and split Route 20 into two services (20A for City of Sheboygan and 20B for City of Sheboygan Falls and Village of Kohler). See Figure 32 for the route structuring. Add stops to 20 A to increase ridership to Deer Trace.	- Improves frequency on core segments, particularly around Deer Trace. - Better aligns service with distinct travel markets (employment vs. downtown access) - A potential negative impact being no direct connection between City of Sheboygan and Village of Kohler.
Recommendation for existing Route 20 as is: Extend Route 20 to County Highway TT to serve the Sheboygan Falls industrial park. This route extension would add approximately 4.75 miles to Route 20.	- Expands access to major employment areas currently underserved by transit. - Supports workforce mobility and economic development.

Figure 32: Route 20 County Highway TT Extension

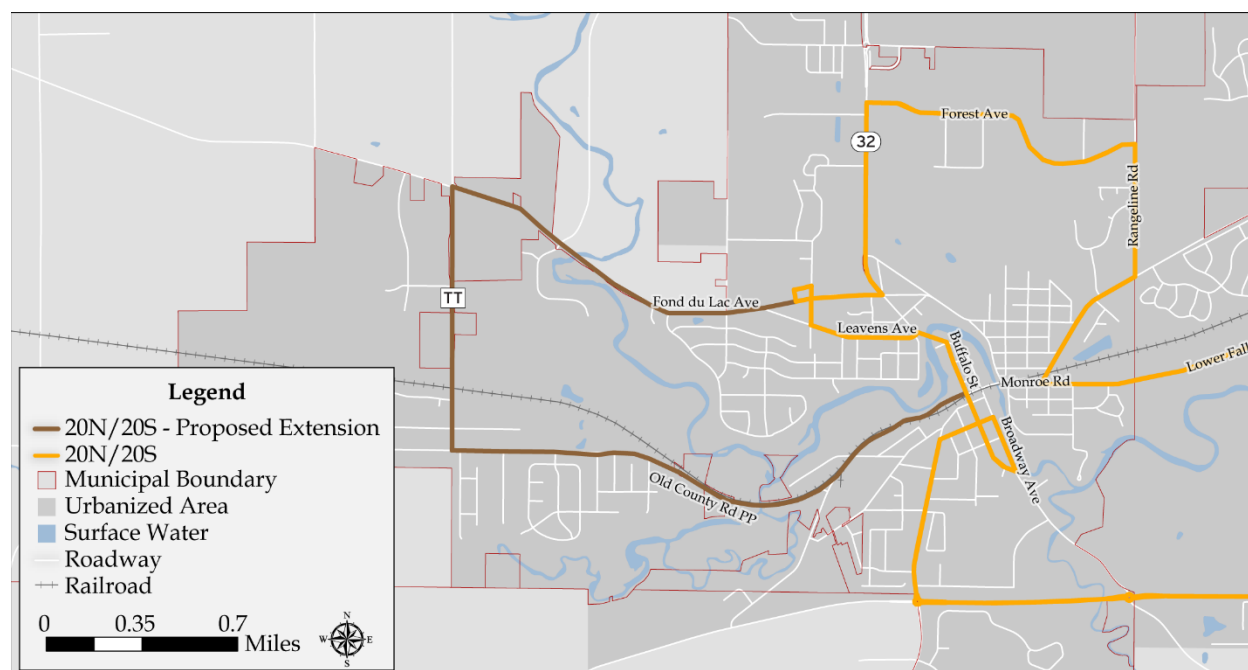
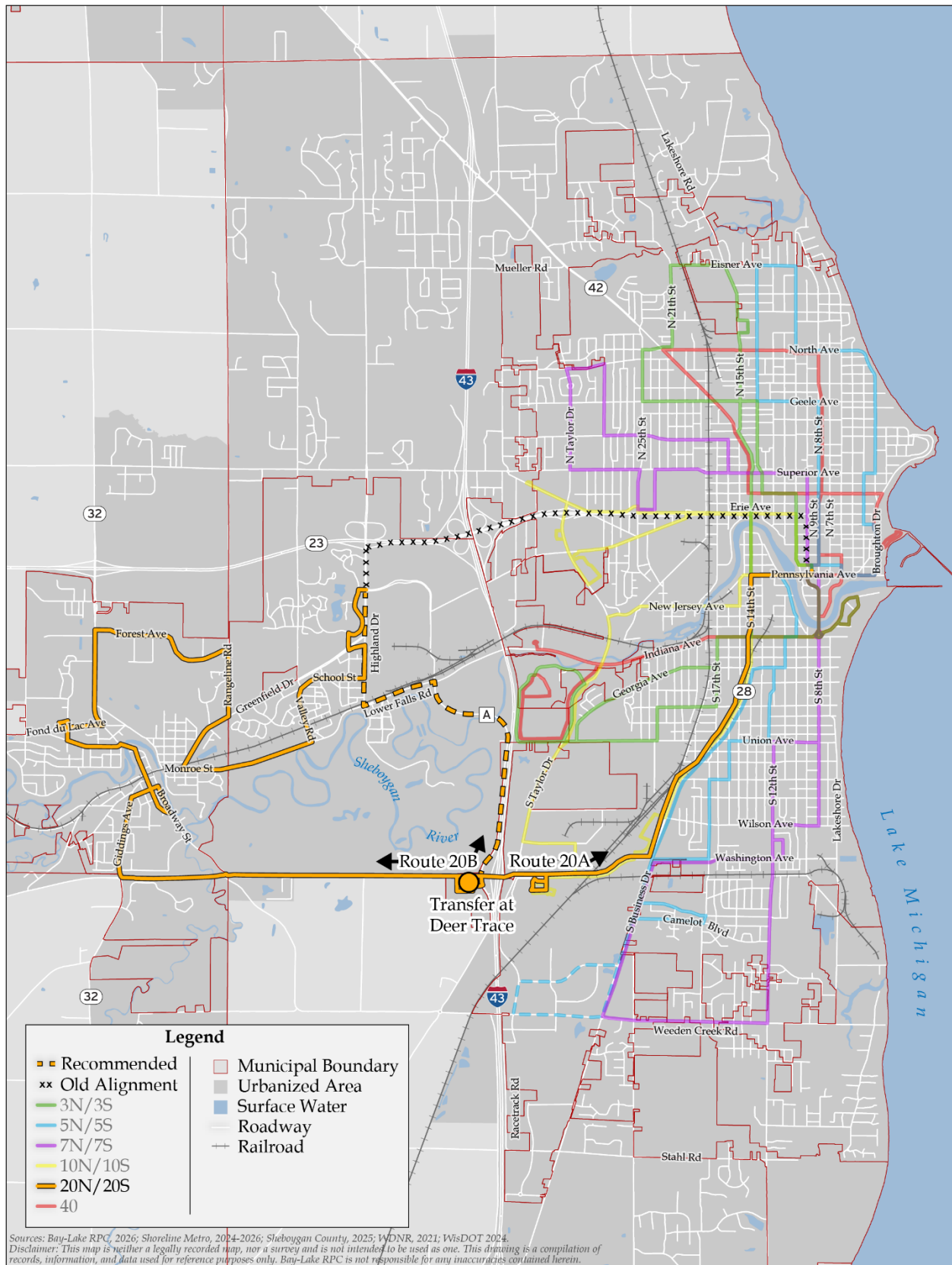
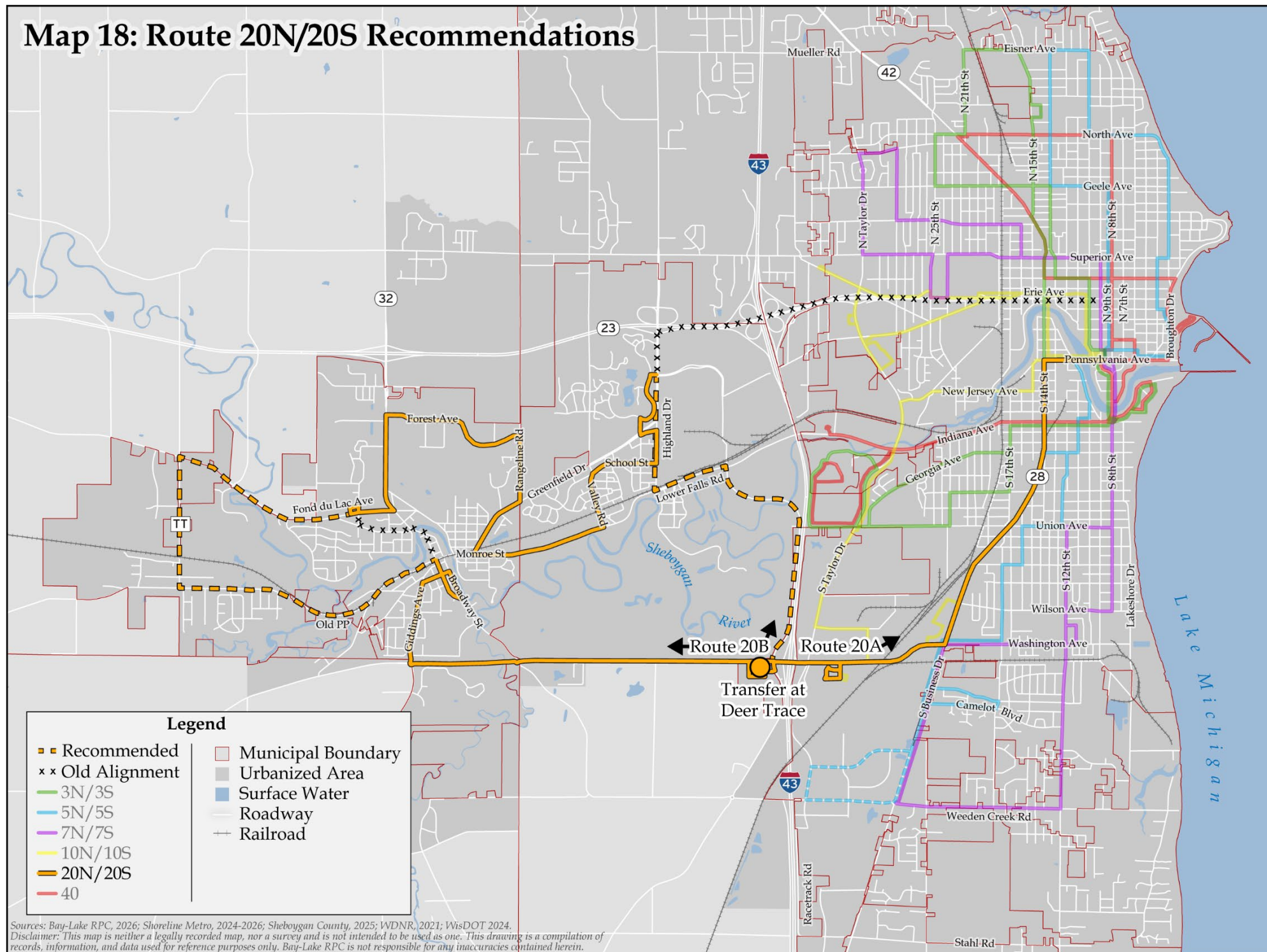


Figure 33: Route 20 Deer Trace Transfer



Map 18: Route 20N/20S Recommendations



Disclaimer: This map is neither a legally recorded map, nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information, and data used for reference purposes only. Bay-Lake RPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies contained herein.

Extended Service Hours

Extending service hours beyond its current weekday span (5:15 a.m. to 8:15 p.m.) presents meaningful opportunities and notable challenges. These should be weighed carefully in terms of efficiency and affordability. Expanding service later into the evening would most significantly benefit workers in industries with nontraditional schedules, including healthcare, manufacturing, and retail, where second and third-shift employment often falls outside the existing service window. Improved late-evening transit access could enhance workforce participation, support local employers, and increase economic stability, particularly for transit-dependent populations. In addition, extended service would advance equity goals by improving mobility for individuals without access to private vehicles, enabling access to evening education, medical appointments, and social activities. While ridership gains during late hours are typically modest, extending service can improve the overall usefulness and public perception of the system, making transit a more viable option for a broader range of trip purposes.

However, these benefits must be balanced with the operational and financial cost of the system. Late-evening service tends to have lower ridership, resulting in a higher cost per passenger and placing greater pressure on limited transit budgets. Extending all routes uniformly places a burden on the system and would likely negatively impact the efficiency of Shoreline Metro's system. Additional challenges include increased labor and staffing requirements, potential strain on vehicle maintenance schedules, and uncertainty regarding actual demand for late-night service in a relatively car-dependent community. Given these constraints, a targeted approach to service expansion is more practical and cost-effective than a systemwide extension.

The most beneficial strategy would focus on extending service along key corridors with the highest potential demand. Route 10, which serves major employment centers, retail destinations, and healthcare facilities, represents the strongest candidate for late evening service due to its alignment with shift-based employment and high ridership potential. Since retail stores like Kohls and Meijer are open later than 8 p.m., it would provide an opportunity for the employees to utilize public transport at the end of their shifts. Route 7 functions as an important east–west connector across Sheboygan, linking multiple residential neighborhoods with commercial areas and the downtown transfer point. In the evening context, routes like this often perform better than expected because they serve a broader mix of trip purposes, including retail, personal errands, and return-home trips after work.

From a planning perspective, the strongest approach may be to view Route 7 as a complement to Route 10. A two-route evening network consisting of Route 10 (for employment access) and Route 7 (for cross-town connectivity) could provide a more balanced service than pairing Route 10 with Route 3. This combination would support both job access and general mobility, which is often the most effective strategy in small transit systems with limited resources.

Other neighborhood-oriented routes may warrant limited or reduced-frequency evening service primarily to maintain basic coverage and equity, but they are less likely to generate substantial ridership. In practice, the most effective implementation would likely involve a “core network” approach, in which a small number of high-priority routes such as Routes 10 and 7, operate at reduced frequency (hourly) until approximately 10:30 or 11:00 PM, potentially supported by a simplified transfer system at the downtown hub. Alternatively, Shoreline Metro could explore

supplementing fixed-route service with demand-response or micro-transit options during late hours to balance coverage and cost efficiency.

Overall, while extending service hours can yield important social and economic benefits, especially in terms of job access and equity, a focused and data-driven approach targeting the most productive corridors will be essential to ensure that investment is both sustainable and impactful.

An estimate is provided below for a scenario in which Routes 10 and 7 are extended by three hours on weekdays. Extending each route by three hours would require no additional buses and would add six additional revenue hours per day across the system. Extending service hours is expected to improve system attractiveness and usability, particularly for non-traditional work schedules. Please note that assumptions for these calculations include Shoreline Metro's 2024 cost per revenue hour, a standard 255 weekdays per year, and an annual inflation rate of 2%.

- $255 \text{ service days} \times 6 \text{ additional revenue hours/day} = 1,530 \text{ additional revenue hours/year}$

Shoreline Metro's 2024 operating expense per revenue hour was \$94.65.

- $\$94.65 \times 1,530 \text{ additional revenue hours} = \mathbf{\$144,815}$

Assuming the estimated additional annual operating cost of **\$144,814** with 2024 data, and applying a 2% annual inflation rate, the projected cost would increase to approximately **\$153,678 in 2027, \$156,752 in 2028, \$159,887 in 2029, and \$163,084 in 2030.**

On-Demand Service Strategy

The Shoreline Metro Review Committee favored evaluating the feasibility of implementing an on-demand service model during periods of consistently low ridership, specifically weekday evenings and Saturdays. The goal of this strategy is to better align service delivery with observed demand while maintaining transit accessibility and improving overall system efficiency.

On-demand transit services offer a flexible, shared transportation option without fixed routes or strict frequency. Passengers can reserve a ride hours to days before, depending on the procedure and software systems used. This service would fill the gap between single occupancy vehicles and fixed-route transit, specifically in low-density neighborhoods or areas where fixed-route transit is not as effective.

Industry benchmarks indicate that on-demand transit services typically achieve productivity levels of approximately 4 to 6 passengers per revenue hour. However, these averages can be higher or lower depending on how many vehicles are available. Additionally, fixed-route counts are usually boardings per scheduled hour, and they often include inefficiencies like empty segments and deadheads. When agencies convert low-performing evening routes to on-demand service, they often see improved cost efficiency and higher ridership retention due to better coverage and flexibility.

Please note that assumptions regarding these calculations include a \$45 average cost per hour for operating the on-demand service, and a \$50 average cost per hour for staff to manage the service including the facilities. These dollar figures were derived from the Sheboygan County Transportation Planning and Feasibility Study. A standard 2% inflation rate is also included to account for increases in fuel, maintenance, and other operational costs. These do not include any capital cost.

I. Weekday Evening Service

The study team analyzed the weekday ridership after 5:00 PM, representing post-peak evening travel. Analysis showed ridership levels between 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM were still above the recommended threshold for a switch to on-demand service. However, as shown in Table 8, ridership declines significantly across the system after 6:00 PM. Several routes exhibit particularly low usage, supporting a switch to an on-demand service model.

Table 8: Average Weekday Ridership After 6:00 PM

Average Weekday Ridership After 6 PM	
Route	AVG Ridership
3	5
5	8
7	7
10	8
20	2

Based on the above data, Routes 3 and 7, with average hourly ridership between 5–7 passengers after 6:00 PM, are strong candidates for early conversion. Routes 5 and 10, while exhibiting slightly higher ridership, may also be considered for conversion in a phased implementation. Route 20, despite low ridership, serves a geographically dispersed area and may present operational challenges for initial on-demand deployment. As such, it is recommended that implementation be focused within the City of Sheboygan as a pilot service area, with potential expansion in later phases.

Currently, service ends at 8:15 PM on these routes. For this analysis, it is assumed that fixed-route service would end at 6:15 PM, with on-demand service replacing it during the evening period (6:15 PM to 9:15 PM)

Fixed-Route Cost Savings

The reduction in fixed-route service hours would result in the following annual decrease in service:

- 255 service days X 9 revenue/hours = **2,295 revenue hours per year**

Using Shoreline Metro's 2024 operating cost \$94.65 per revenue hour.

- $\$94.65 \times 2,805 \text{ revenue hours} = \$217,221.75$ (2024 dollars)
- Projected savings with inflation (2027): **\$230,517**

Estimated Cost Savings: ~\$230,517

On-Demand Service Cost

For this analysis, on-demand service is assumed to operate for three hours each evening, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Key assumptions include:

- Average operating cost of \$45 per vehicle revenue hour
- Administration and management costs of \$50 per hour
- Four vehicles in operation (capital costs not included)

On-Demand Service Cost

$255 \times 3 \text{ service hours} = 765 \text{ revenue hours/year}$

Operating Cost:

- $765 \text{ revenue hours/year} \times 4 \text{ vehicles} = 3,060 \text{ revenue hours/year}$
- $3,060 \text{ revenue hours/year} \times \$45 = \mathbf{\$137,700}$

Management Cost:

- $765 \text{ revenue hours/year} \times \$50 = \mathbf{\$38,250}$

Total Annual Cost:

- $\$137,700 + \$38,250 = \mathbf{\$175,950}$
- Projected cost with inflation: \$179,469 (2027), \$183,058 (2028), \$186,719 (2029)

Net Financial Impact (Weekday Evenings)

- Projected savings (2027): \$230,517
- On-demand service cost: \$175,950

Estimated Net Annual Surplus: ~\$54,567

II. Saturday Service

Saturday ridership analysis shows similar patterns of reduced demand on select routes. Table 9 presents the average hourly ridership by route on Saturdays.

Table 9: Average Saturday Hourly Ridership

Average Saturday Hourly Ridership	
Route	AVG Ridership
3	7
5	10
7	9
10	11

Further analysis shows notable decreases in ridership after 2:00 PM. Table 10 presents the average hourly ridership by route after 2:00 PM on Saturdays.

Table 10: Average Saturday Ridership After 2:00 PM

Average Saturday Ridership After 2:00 PM	
Route	AVG Ridership
3	5
5	7
7	6
10	8

Route 3 falls within the typical on-demand productivity threshold and is an appropriate candidate for full Saturday conversion to on-demand service. This service will operate within the existing Saturday service span of 8:15 AM to 4:15 PM.

Routes 5, 7, and 10 fall within the on-demand threshold after 2:15 PM. These routes will transition to on-demand service between 2:00 PM and 4:15 PM.

Fixed-Route Cost Savings

The reduction in fixed-route service hours would result in the following annual decrease in service:

Route 3 Fixed-Route Reduction

- 52 Saturday service days x 8 revenue hours/day = **416 revenue hours per year**

Routes 5, 7, and 10 Fixed-Route Reduction

- 52 Saturday service days x 7 revenue hours/day = **364 revenue hours per year**

Total fixed-route reduction = 780 revenue hours per year

- 780 revenue hours x \$94.65 = **\$73,827 (2024 dollars)**

Projected savings (2027): \$78,346

On-Demand Service Cost

- Period 1: 8:15 AM – 2:15 PM (6 hours)
 - Route 3 demand (2 vehicles)
- Period 2: 2:15 PM – 4:15 PM (2 hours)
 - Route 3 + Routes 5, 7, 10 (4 vehicles)

Operating Cost:

- (2 vehicles x 6 hours x 52 Saturdays) + (4 vehicles x 2 hours x 52 Saturdays) = **1,040 vehicle hours per year**
- 1,040 vehicle hours per year x \$45 = **\$46,800**

Program Management Cost:

- 416 hours/year x \$50 = **\$20,800**

Total cost: \$67,600

Net Financial Impact (Saturdays)

Projected savings: \$78,346

On-demand service cost: \$67,600

Estimated Net Annual Surplus: ~\$10,746

Based on observed ridership patterns and operating cost analysis, transitioning select low-ridership routes to an on-demand service model during off-peak periods represents a cost-effective and service-responsive strategy for Shoreline Metro. Routes 3, 5, 7, and 10 demonstrate consistently lower demand on Saturdays, with Route 3 notably holding low ridership the entire day. Furthermore, systemwide ridership declines significantly after 6:00 PM on weekdays, with Routes 3, 5, 7, and 10 exhibiting low utilization during evening hours. Under these conditions, maintaining fixed-route service results in disproportionately high operating costs relative to ridership served.

To better align service provision with demand, it is recommended that Route 3 transitions to on-demand service on Saturdays, followed by Routes 5, 7, and 10 transitioning to on-demand service after 2:00 PM. During weekdays, discontinuing Routes 3, 5, 7, and 10 after 6:00 PM in favor of on-demand service until 9:00 PM. This approach maintains essential mobility for riders in lower-demand areas and time periods while improving overall system efficiency.

Financial analysis indicates that these service modifications would yield measurable cost savings. The Saturday service transitions are projected to generate approximately \$10,750 in annual net savings. Similarly, the evening service conversion is estimated to produce approximately \$54,567 in annual net savings.

In addition to financial benefits, the proposed on-demand service model enhances service flexibility by enabling more direct trip-making and reducing wait times associated with low-frequency fixed-route service. This model is particularly well-suited to periods of low demand, where traditional fixed-route operations are less efficient. Other benefits include decreased spending on fuel costs and reduced wear and tear on fixed route buses. Overall, the recommended strategy supports more efficient resource allocation while maintaining service coverage and positions the system to reinvest savings into higher-performing routes, service frequency improvements, or future mobility initiatives.

III. On-Demand Fares

Fare policy will play an important role in the success of on-demand service implementation. It is recommended that fares be set at a level that is consistent with or modestly higher than the existing fixed-route fare.

A fare equal to the current base fare would provide the simplest transition for riders and minimize potential ridership loss. However, on-demand service provides more value through decreased travel times, fewer stops, and better accessibility (curb to curb) than fixed route transit. Hence, a modest increase (e.g. \$1.00 per trip) could be considered to partially offset operating costs while remaining affordable.

Given the relatively low ridership levels observed during evening and Saturday service, fare revenue is expected to represent only a small portion of total operating costs. As such, the primary objective of fare policy should be to support ridership and accessibility. Discounted fares for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and other eligible populations should be maintained to ensure equitable access.

IV. Considerations

While on-demand transit service offers a cost-effective approach to maintaining service coverage, several important considerations must be evaluated. Although the projected cost savings are significant, they are sensitive to key assumptions, particularly related to vehicle requirements and ridership response. Variations in these factors could reduce the net savings; however, this service model is expected to remain cost-effective under most reasonable scenarios.

Vehicle Requirements

These scenarios assume that four vehicles will be sufficient to meet demand across the proposed on-demand service area. However, actual vehicle requirements will depend on factors such as trip distribution, peak demand periods, and geographic coverage.

Currently, Shoreline Metro utilizes 11 paratransit vehicles that could be used to support on-demand service. If demand is more concentrated during certain hours or dispersed across a wider area than anticipated, additional vehicles may be required to maintain reasonable wait times and service reliability. Any increase in fleet requirements would result in higher operating costs and could reduce projected net savings.

Productivity

Productivity assumptions are based on industry benchmarks of four to six passengers per revenue hour. Actual performance may vary, particularly during the initial transition period as riders adjust to the new service model. Over time, increased familiarity and service flexibility may improve ridership.

Inflation and Cost

A 2% annual inflation rate has been used to project future costs. While this provides a conservative baseline, actual cost increases, particularly for labor, fuel, and maintenance, may exceed this rate and reduce overall savings. Although the relative cost advantage of on-demand service is expected to remain, higher-than-anticipated inflation could reduce the magnitude of projected savings.

Service Accessibility

On-demand service differs in service delivery compared to fixed-route service. The need to request trips in advance, variable pickup times, or the reliance of web and phone-based booking may present challenges for some riders. This is particularly relevant for populations with limited access to technology or those who prefer the predictability of fixed schedules. To ensure equitable access, measures such as call-in booking options, user education, and clear advertising and communication will be important with service implementation.

V. Pilot Program

To evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of on-demand transit service, Shoreline Metro should implement a pilot program focused on low-ridership routes during evenings, Saturdays, or both. This pilot will allow Shoreline Metro to test real world performance, validate assumptions, and refine service. Most pilot programs are conducted over a period of one to two years. This ensures enough data collection to determine seasonal variations, ridership patterns, and operational chokeholds. This timeline would also allow riders to adjust to the new system and identify gaps in service delivery.

Service Design

This pilot program would include two components:

- Evening On-Demand Service (Weekdays)

Replacing fixed route service on Routes 3, 5, 7, 10 from 6:15 PM to 9:15 PM with on-demand service.

- Saturday On-Demand Service

Replacing fixed route service on Route 3 with fully on-demand service operating between 8:15 AM and 4:15 PM. Followed by replacing fixed route service on Routes 5, 7, and 10 with on-demand service between 2:15 PM and 4:15 PM.

It is recommended that the on-demand service should be structured within the geographic zones consistent with the existing fixed route service coverage areas. This maintains existing coverage while also allowing for operational flexibility.

Vehicles and Operations

Shoreline Metro's existing fleet, including its 11 paratransit vehicles, should be utilized to minimize upfront capital costs. Fleet deployment should remain flexible and respond to the demand conditions.

Service Accessibility

To ensure equitable access to the service, the pilot program should feature multiple booking options. This includes phone and web-based reservations. Shoreline Metro could also investigate the optimization of mobile app booking options.

Clear communication and rider education are critical for a smooth transition. Shoreline Metro should include printed materials, online resources, and coordinate with local organizations to assist riders unfamiliar with on-demand transportation.

Performance Measures

Program success should be evaluated using a set of defined performance measures. These include passengers per revenue hour, cost per passenger trip, average wait times, and rider feedback. These metrics should be monitored consistently and compared to fixed-route performance.

Evaluation

Performance reviews should be conducted often throughout the pilot programs period. These reviews allow for Shoreline Metro to make data driven decisions regarding service coverage, operating hours, and fleet size.

At the conclusion of the pilot period, Shoreline Metro should conduct a comprehensive evaluation to determine whether the on-demand service meets operational, financial, and customer needs. Based on these findings, Shoreline Metro may expand the on-demand service, modify its design, revert to fixed-route service where appropriate, or continue to operate the service without change.

Fare Policy

Passenger fares contribute a significant amount to a transit agency's operational budget. Fare policy, levels, and collection technology are important to consider when determining strategic financing for a transit agency. A fare policy has been recommended for Shoreline Metro to provide multi-year guidance to the staff, the Transit Commission and the Common Council for setting and changing fares. The fare policy is also cognizant of sentiment that fares should remain reasonable for passengers throughout the period covered by this TDP.

Shoreline Metro has maintained fare levels that are consistent with those of comparable transit agencies. Table 11 below summarizes peer-agency fares.

Table 11: Peer Agency Fare Profile

Agency	Location	Adult Fare	Monthly Pass
Fond du Lac Area Transit	Fond du Lac	\$2.00	\$40.00
Green Bay Metro	Green Bay	\$2.00	\$41.00
Beloit Transit	Beloit	\$1.50	\$48.00
Maritime Metro	Manitowoc	\$1.50	\$30.00
Go Transit	Oshkosh	\$2.00	\$50.00
Janesville Transit System	Janesville	\$1.50	\$52.00
Valley Transit	Appleton	\$2.00	\$60.00
Peer Average		\$1.79	\$45.86
Shoreline Metro	Sheboygan	\$2.00	\$50.00

Shoreline Metro last implemented a fare increase in January 2026. Because of this, Shoreline Metro's fare structure remains competitive relative to peer systems and affordable for the community it serves, the project team does not recommend a fare increase currently. Maintaining current fare levels supports ridership retention and growth, particularly among transit-dependent populations, while avoiding additional financial burden during a period of rising household costs.

Shoreline Metro should continue to monitor key performance indicators, including operating costs, farebox recovery ratio, ridership trends, and regional economic conditions. Fare adjustments should be investigated in 2029-2030 if there are significant changes in operating expenses, service levels, or funding availability that impact the system's financial sustainability.

Consistent with federal requirements, Shoreline Metro will continue to provide discounted fares for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities during all hours of operation. These reduced fares will not exceed 50% of the full adult fare.

The fare for complementary paratransit service, as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), will remain at \$4.00 throughout the TDP period. This fare is consistent with ADA regulations, which permit paratransit fares up to twice the fixed-route base fare, and ensures that paratransit service remains accessible to eligible riders. Table 12 summarizes the fare structure for the duration of this TDP.

Table 12: Recommended Fare Structure

	Actual Fare	Recommended Fare				
Fare Category	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Cash						
Single Trip	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00
Half-Fare	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
Passes						
Day Pass	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00
6-pack Day Passes	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Monthly Pass	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
30-Day Pass	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00
Student Fares						
Students of SASD	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Children under Age 5	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Student Punch Cards (20 trips)	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00
Half Fares						
Half-Fare Punch Cards (20 Trips)	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00

Marketing Recommendations

The purpose of these marketing recommendations is to ensure that Shoreline Metro delivers clear, consistent messaging and promotes a positive understanding of its services throughout the Sheboygan area. As service is expanded and modified through implementation of this TDP, targeted marketing efforts will be necessary to communicate route changes and highlight new travel options. These efforts should include coordinated outreach to key audiences, including existing riders, major employers, and funding partners.

Shoreline Metro should continue to utilize a mix of communication strategies, such as on-board announcements, printed materials, and in-person outreach, to ensure information is accessible to a wide range of users. In addition, digital marketing should be a central component of the agency's strategy. This includes maintaining an active presence on social media platforms to promote service updates, fare programs, and new initiatives.

Marketing Actions

Maintain a consistent brand identity and messaging framework across all communication channels, including print materials, vehicles, websites, and social media.

Continue marketing campaigns to support service changes, including:

- Launch campaigns for new or modified routes
- Service change announcements distributed in advance of implementation
- Promotion of fare programs and ridership incentives

Expand outreach to key stakeholder groups, including:

- Major employers and employment centers
- Existing and potential funding partners
- Community organizations and advocacy groups
- Non-English-speaking groups and organizations

Continue to utilize multiple communication strategies to reach diverse audiences, including:

- On-board announcements and signage
- Printed materials (flyers, brochures, system maps)
- In-person outreach events and community engagement
- Email and website updates

Strengthen digital marketing efforts by:

- Maintaining active and regularly updated social media accounts
- Sharing service alerts, promotions, and rider information
- Coordinating messaging across platforms for consistency

Conduct regular rider and market research, including:

- System-wide rider surveys at least every 1–2 years
- Targeted surveys of key markets (e.g., downtown employees, students, older adults, and individuals with disabilities)
- Collection of feedback on service quality, travel behavior, and unmet needs
- Use survey results to inform future service planning and marketing strategies

Establish performance metrics to evaluate marketing effectiveness, such as:

- Changes in ridership following campaigns
- Social media engagement and website traffic
- Customer awareness and satisfaction levels

Capital Improvements

Shoreline Metro divides its vehicles into two categories: heavy duty buses and medium duty buses. Shoreline Metro also uses FTA’s Useful Life Age Benchmark (ULB) set in FTA 5010.1D, page IV-17. Because useful life is measured by both mileage and age for vehicles, condition is not considered in this inventory. Table 13 below displays Shoreline Metro’s vehicle inventory.

Table 13: 2025 Shoreline Metro Vehicle Inventory

Vehicle Type	Vehicle Count	ULB-Age (Years)	ULB-Mileage (Miles)	Vehicles Beyond ULB-Age	Vehicles Beyond ULB-Mileage ¹	Percent of Fleet Beyond ULB ²
Revenue						
Heavy Duty Bus ³	22	12	500,000	5	5	23%
Medium Duty Bus	11	7	200,000	5	1	9%
Sub-Total	33			10	6	18%
Non-Revenue						
Light Duty (Support) Vehicles	5	10	100,000	5	0	0%
Sub-Total	5			5	0	0%
Total	38			15	6	16%
1. Mileage as of January 16, 2025.						
2. The lesser of the number of vehicles beyond ULB age or mileage divided by vehicle count (by type).						
3. One heavy duty bus is a trolley that has a useful of seven years or 200,000 miles.						

Source: Shoreline Metro, 2025; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2025

Shoreline Metro sets a Transit Asset Management performance target to allow for 13% of revenue vehicles to pass beyond useful life. Shoreline Metro is actively replacing five heavy duty buses using Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. In addition, Shoreline Metro sets the TAM performance target to allow for 0% of non-revenue vehicles to pass beyond useful life.

Implementation of on-demand service may require the procurement of smaller, demand-responsive vehicles. The timing and scale of these purchases should be guided by ridership trends, service performance, and overall cost-effectiveness.

Other Recommendations

Mid-Course Review

A “mid-course review” of the TDP should be conducted in 2028. This will allow the TDP to be a more flexible document in terms of being open to potential opportunities that may present themselves before the next TDP is prepared. This review could include additional routing revisions to respond to land use and transportation changes in the transit service area or change economic circumstances that warrant reexamination of the fare structure. Of course, the TDP can be amended at any time as changing conditions warrant.

Financial Plan

This section discusses the various funding sources utilized by Shoreline Metro and lays out a financial plan for implementing on-demand transit service. Shoreline Metro's total operating expenses in 2025 were \$4,392,527. Operating revenues contributed \$833,903, supplemented by federal and state transit assistance programs and local funding contributions. The 2025 funding structure includes \$1,655,740 in Section 5307 federal funding, \$756,321 in Wisconsin State Section 85.20 funding, \$49,474 in Section 85.205 funding, and \$1,089,412 in local share contributions. Residual CARES funding totaling \$7,677 also supported transit operations during the year. Table 14 below projects Shoreline Metro's operating revenues throughout the duration of this TDP period. These projections do not include any major changes to the current transit service. The following assumptions were applied to these projections:

- A 2% annual inflation rate to account for increases in labor, fuel, maintenance, utilities, and other services.
- Passenger revenues and intergovernmental funding sources were also projected to increase modestly over the planning period.
- CARES Act funding is assumed to expire after 2025 and is not included in future projections.
- Local share contributions are projected to increase incrementally as needed to maintain balanced operating budgets.

Table 14: Current and Projected Operating Funding Sources for the Existing Transit System

Funding Source	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Section 5307 Funding	\$1,655,740	\$1,635,700	\$1,619,343	\$1,603,343	\$1,587,119	\$1,571,248
WisDOT 85.20	\$756,321	\$748,758	\$741,271	\$733,859	\$726,521	\$719,256
WisDOT 85.205	\$49,474	\$50,463	\$51,472	\$52,501	\$53,551	\$54,622
CARES Act/ARPA	\$7,677	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenues	\$833,903	\$850,581	\$867,593	\$884,945	\$902,644	\$920,697
Local Share Contributions	\$1,089,412	\$1,111,200	\$1,133,424	\$1,156,092	\$1,179,213	\$1,202,797

Source: Shoreline Metro, 2025; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2026

Funding Source Descriptions

The following funding programs comprise the primary sources of operating assistance for Shoreline Metro:

- Section 5307 Funding is provided by the federal government for transit capital, operating, and planning-related assistance in urbanized areas. Formula allocations are based on population, low-income population, and population density.
- WisDOT 85.20 Funding provides operating cost assistance to Wisconsin transit systems operating public transportation services, including fixed-route bus, share-ride taxi, rail, or other conveyance. Funding appropriations are determined through a statewide formula program.

- WisDOT 85.205 Funding provides state assistance for ADA paratransit services for individuals who are unable to use fixed-route transit services.
- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided temporary financial assistance to transit agencies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are expected to expire after 2025.

Financial Plan with On-Demand Service

As discussed in the recommendations section, transitioning weekday evening and Saturday service on Routes 3, 5, 7, and 10 to an on-demand service model is expected to improve overall service efficiency while reducing operating costs for Shoreline Metro.

Based on the financial analysis, the recommended weekday evening and Saturday service modifications are projected to generate a combined annual net savings of approximately \$65,000 beginning in 2027. These savings reflect reductions in fixed-route operating expenses offset by the estimated operating and administrative costs associated with implementing on-demand transit service.

These savings have been incorporated into a financial forecast beginning in 2027. The financial forecast assumes that Shoreline Metro will utilize existing fleet resources, including available paratransit vehicles, minimizing initial capital investment requirements.

In addition to direct operating savings, the proposed service model may provide secondary financial benefits through reduced fuel consumption, decreased wear on fixed-route vehicles, and more efficient allocation of service resources. Table 15 below displays the projected operation funding with On-Demand Service.

Table 15: Projected Operating Funding with On-Demand Service

Funding Source	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Section 5307	\$1,655,740	\$1,635,700	\$1,619,343	\$1,603,150	\$1,587,119	\$1,571,248
WisDOT 85.20	\$756,321	\$748,758	\$741,271	\$733,859	\$726,521	\$719,256
WisDOT 85.205	\$49,474	\$50,463	\$51,472	\$52,501	\$53,551	\$54,622
CARES Act/ARPA	\$7,677	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenues	\$833,903	\$850,581	\$867,593	\$884,945	\$902,644	\$920,697
Local Share Contributions	\$1,089,412	\$1,119,479	\$1,065,789	\$1,083,450	\$1,101,564	\$1,120,025

Source: Shoreline Metro, 2025; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2026

Impact on Federal Operating Assistance

Because of changes in funding at the federal and state levels, 5307 funds are projected to decrease by approximately 1% each year through the planning horizon. However, because the recommendation maintains public transit service through on demand service rather than eliminating service entirely, major reductions in Section 5307 funding are not anticipated. Furthermore, on demand service remains eligible for federal transit assistance, and may continue

contributing to future formula funding calculations. As a result, the financial analysis does not assume major decreases in federal funding aside from the anticipated budget reforms.

Impact on State Operating Assistance

Similar to federal funding, Section 85.20 funds are also projected to see a roughly 1% decrease throughout the planning horizon. Because these funds are tied to operating expenses, an additional slight reduction in state funding is anticipated following implementation of the service changes (~1% reduction). However, this reduction is expected to be limited, as the overall funding structure remains stable and demand for transit service continues within the community. Any decrease in state operating assistance is projected to be smaller than the reduction in total operating expenses, resulting in a net positive financial impact on the system.

Impact on Local Share Contributions

The most direct financial benefit of the proposed service modifications is improved operational efficiency and a reduction in overall operating costs. By aligning service delivery more closely with actual demand, Shoreline Metro can help moderate future increases in local funding requirements compared to maintaining the existing service structure. However, local contributions may still need to increase over time due to potential reductions in federal and state transit funding.

In addition, on-demand service models often support higher fare levels than traditional fixed-route services, which can generate additional revenue to help offset operating expenses. Overall, the recommended service strategy improves financial sustainability by enhancing cost efficiency, preserving mobility options for riders, and positioning Shoreline Metro to better manage future financial pressures while maintaining the flexibility to reinvest available resources into service improvements, capital needs, or expanded mobility programs.

Implementation Strategy

The following is a recommended implementation strategy for elements in this TDP:

2027

- Develop detailed service design for on-demand pilot program.
- Coordinate with Town of Sheboygan officials regarding potential local funding participation.
- Continue replacing heavy-duty buses using CMAQ funding.
- Implement on-demand pilot program in late 2027.

2028

- Continue operation and monitoring of on-demand pilot program.
- Evaluate ridership trends, wait times, productivity, and customer feedback from pilot operations.

- Implement Route 5S extension to the southern industrial park if funding and operational analysis support implementation.
- Begin implementation planning for Route 7S residential growth area extension.
- Begin implementation of Route 3N extension into the Town of Sheboygan.
- Evaluate need for procurement of smaller demand-response vehicles if pilot demand exceeds existing fleet capacity.

2029

- Conduct formal mid-course review of the Transit Development Plan.
- Implement Route 7S extension to new residential development areas.
- Continuing fleet replacement planning consistent with TAMP targets.
- Assess financial sustainability of on-demand service operations.

2030

- Continue monitoring and refinement of on-demand service operations.
- Implement Route 20 extension to County Highway TT industrial park if funding and ridership projections support expansion.
- Assess need for additional vehicles to support expanded evening or on-demand operations.
- Review fare structure and determine whether fare adjustments are necessary based on operating conditions and funding availability.

Appendix A: Community Survey Flyer



Have Your Voice Heard!

Help Improve Public Transportation in the Sheboygan Area

The Shoreline Metro Transit Development Plan is our roadmap for the next five years. It shows how we'll improve the bus system, spend money wisely, and keep up with the growing demand for public transportation.

We're starting by learning more about how the community uses the bus service, and how it can be improved. Your feedback is confidential and will only be used for this planning effort.

Scan the QR code, or visit the link below to take the survey!

↓



<https://arcg.is/1zDffT1>

Who is Bay-Lake RPC?



Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission is a multi-service agency within Wisconsin that provides a variety of federal, state, and local programs. The Bay-Lake RPC is a public agency established similar to a municipality and provides a range of planning services to member local governments in northeast Wisconsin.



Appendix B: Public Survey Comments

Respondents of the public survey were given the opportunity to share additional comments or suggestions. These responses have been edited for formatting purposes only.

- 1) *Staff at the transfer site to assist people in between routes, to assist with students, keep general population of riders from becoming unhinged is appreciated.*
- 2) *Shorter time between buses on route 20.*
- 3) *Add a route from the quarry to Weeden Creek Rd not stopping at transfer point two buses one North one south the Southside one would turn around by old Wisconsin and go north and the Northside on turn around by the quarry. It would help those who would help the people that work out by county J.*
- 4) *I need a bus that goes to and from Milwaukee Mitchell Airport and Milwaukee Intermodal when I need to catch a bus from the Intermodal to O'Hare airport or the train to Chicago. Thank you for your consideration on this important public service.*
- 5) *Very glad Sheb. has buses at all. I really understand complications expanding service. Thank you for adding bike racks to buses.*
- 6) *Need more help for homeless in the community. Need more for kids/teens to do. -This will better help the community, including the metro.*
- 7) *Expanded service times and area covered.*
- 8) *I appreciate that students are able to ride the bus for free, which can help get to and from school. I believe the hours that they can ride for free should be extended, as how they are now, youth are not able to attend after school activities and still ride the bus home with their student pass. This limits involvement in prosocial and supervised activities if they do not have reliable transportation home. Although they can get punch cards for after that time, this can still sometimes be a barrier. Having later/earlier bus options for folks who work 3rd shift would also be beneficial.*
- 9) *The reason I checked that buses don't work well for visitors is that 1) visitors pay cash fares and you eliminated transfers, making their fare essentially doubled; and 2) bus drivers no longer sell day passes, a smart convenience for visitors. These things make the buses unfriendly for any visitor, but also for engaging potential new riders!*

- 10) The drivers are very helpful.*
- 11) It would be great to see a route go to the northside Walmart and Olive Garden and the new shopping area that will be built out there. What I really need is later bus service on Saturdays for my work schedule.*
- 12) I do often see the bus empty. Maybe Sheboygan is still an old school community. I wanted to take the bus years ago when Aurora tried to provide. I lived on N27th 1/2 block from North Ave. it would have taken an hour to get to work. And didn't look into getting home as I worked PM.*
- 13) Get rid of the bus service and save tax dollars.*
- 14) It would be helpful to have a route that visits Menards and the Northside Walmart. It would be even better if it went to Howards Grove High School and Lakeland University. A southbound route that went to Best Buy would also be appreciated since walking there from Home Depot feels dangerous with the traffic. I walk to work, but I would use the bus more to get to where I need, and visit more Sheboygan shops and restaurants, if it ran later on Saturdays and on Sundays.*
- 15) Town of Sheboygan Deer Trace - better options. Evening pickups once an hour, service ends too early, Saturday morning service not early enough, ends too soon - kids participate in community recreation. Significant collaboration needed between community recreation, school extracurriculars to realistically provide "equal" opportunities and access. Bus and robust bike program.*
- 16) As an agency, we have noticed not having the bus line going past the northside Walgreens creates a barrier. There are many resources on the northside of Sheboygan that aren't accessible by bus, for example, Mary's Room and St. Vincent de Paul. It also eliminates a lot of job opportunities for clients because they aren't able to access the northside for employment. I also think having later bus times would be beneficial for those who work later hours or second shift. We notice clients have to look for jobs that are hiring for first shift due to relying on the bus as transportation and first shift hours aren't always guaranteed or available. Another suggestion (unsure how realistic it is though) would be to lower the bus fare. Coming up with \$3/day or \$48/month can be a barrier for some people and in order to earn money through employment, they oftentimes rely on the bus system to gain employment. It can create a cyclical effect and a barrier to meet basic needs. Thank you for all you do!*
- 17) More routes to Deertrace Shopping Center.*

- 18) *It is important for people who take public transportation to be able to access the Shipping Mill when they are looking for jobs. The shipping mill is the only place in Sheboygan that does fingerprinting and having to walk there from the closest bus stop in bad weather, with children, with groceries, etc. is not feasible. I understand it is not always required for jobs, but for a majority of background checks, it is.*
- 19) *Town of Sheboygan.*
- 20) *-Service from 5am-11pm would be nice. Could do departures once an hour from 5am-8am then every half hour until 6pm then back to every hour until 11pm -Service to the DMV -Service to St. Vincent De Paul/North Side Walmart -Service to Best Buy/Home Depot/Target/Game Stop area by the south side Walmart.*
- 21) *I used to take the bus, but there are many others and I tried to support and want to see the buses still run like they used to years ago.*
- 22) *More routes from Sheboygan Falls directly to Kohler which would make a first shift worker the ability to be at work at 6 or 7 am and the ability for a bus to go to Kohler if you work in the hospitality section between 9am and 11 am. The same would hold true to get back home at 9:30 pm or 10:30 pm. More stops from falls to deer trace and not such long waits to get back to falls.*
- 23) *Port Washington.*
- 24) *Better Saturday service would be great. Sunday routes that can get people to church. Would be nice if a bus would go to the north side of town.*
- 25) *We need access to the North Side of town. At least to St. Vincent De Paul and Mary's Room.*
- 26) *Thank you for making public transportation a priority in Sheboygan. Although our family does not use public transportation presently, I have in the past years.*

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