



North-South Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

Community Meeting#1
March 16, 2015



AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Project Overview
3. Project Scope
4. Public Engagement Process
 - Role of Steering Committee
 - Role of Advisory Committee
 - Community Meetings
 - Website
5. Discussion
6. Next Steps

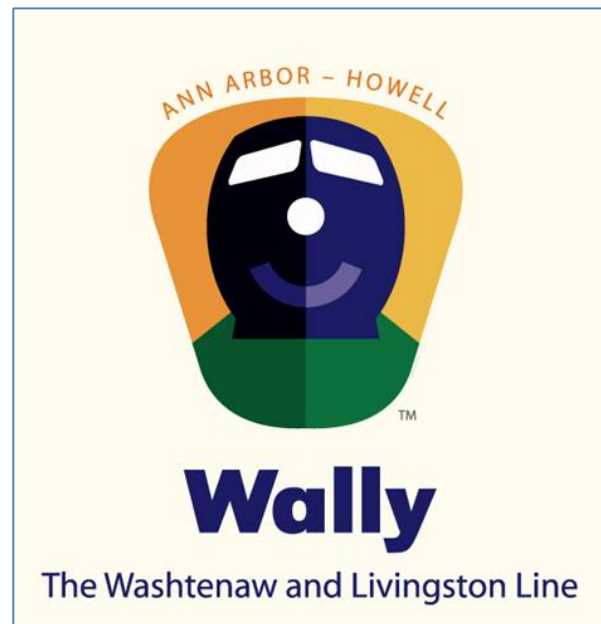


North South Commuter Rail

Status Report - February 2015

Same project – different roles

**Friends
of
WALLY**



Advocates

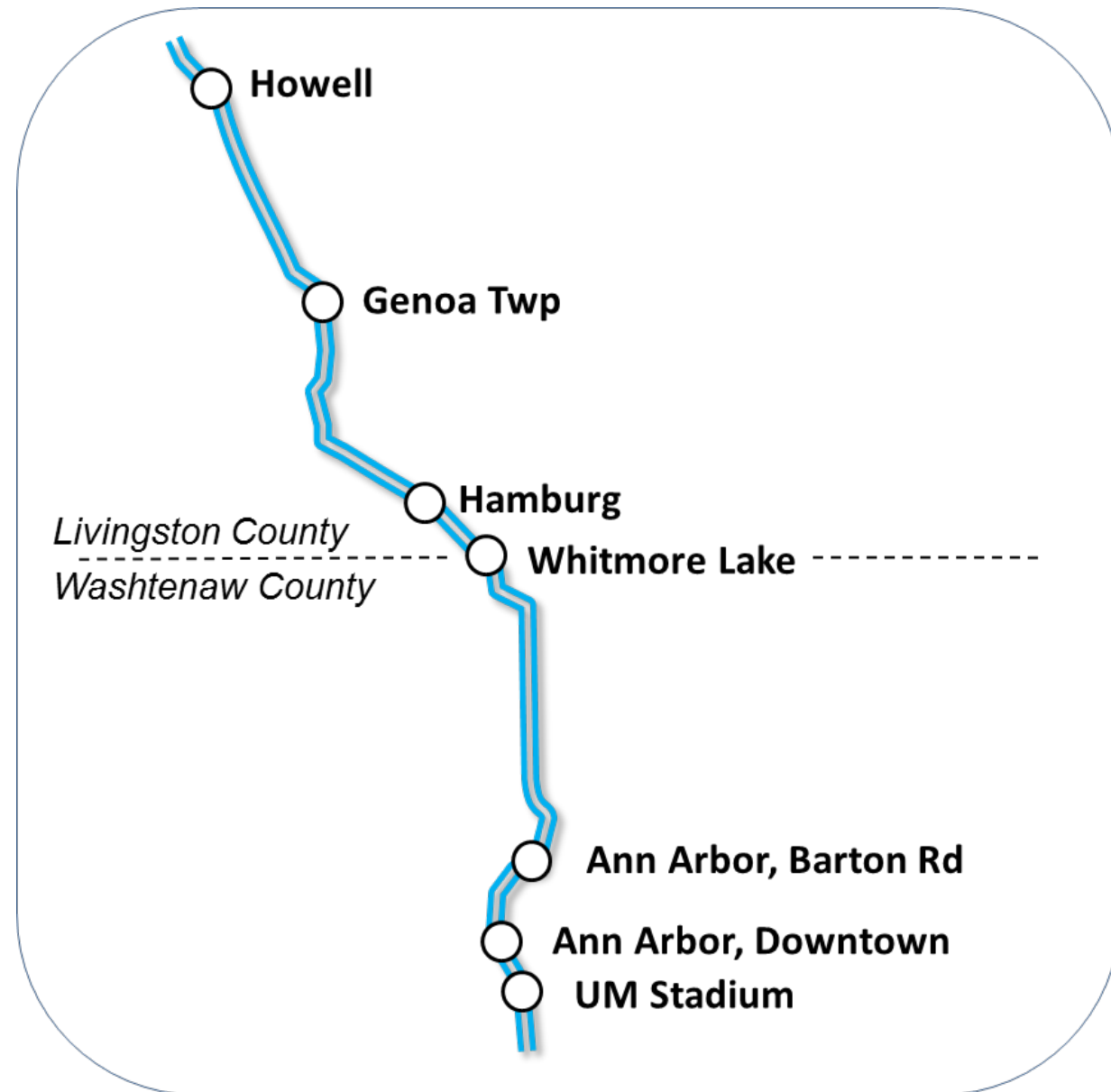
**Ann Arbor Area
Transportation
Authority**



Public Agency

What's this project all about?

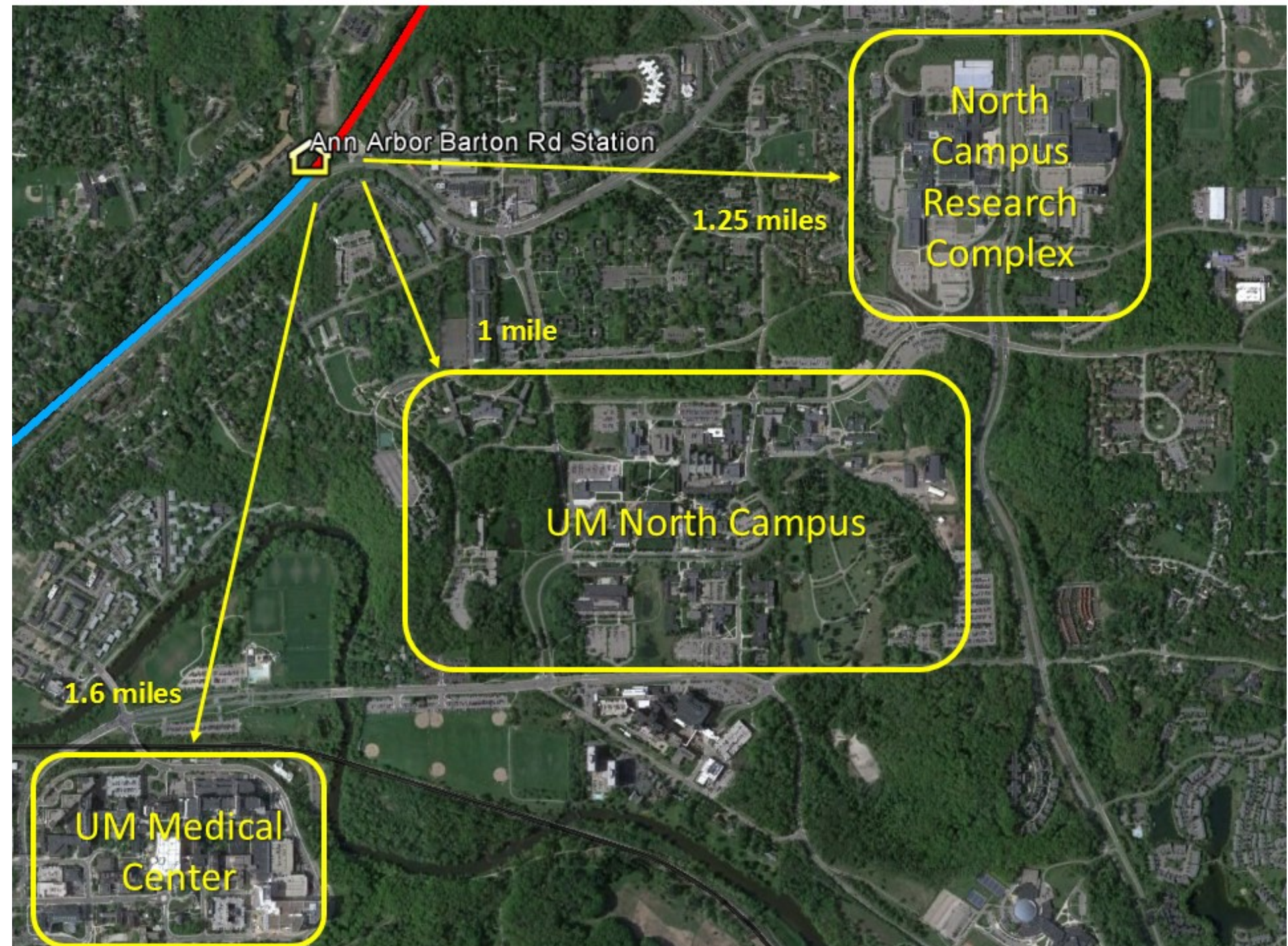
N-S Commuter Rail – The Route



- Passenger service on an existing State-owned freight line
- Stations proposed for Howell, Genoa Twp, Hamburg Twp, Whitmore Lake and Ann Arbor
- Initially 4 trains each direction per day
- Connecting buses in Ann Arbor will serve North Campus, Medical Center, and downtown

Ann Arbor Barton Road Station

Shuttle buses from station on Plymouth near Barton Road

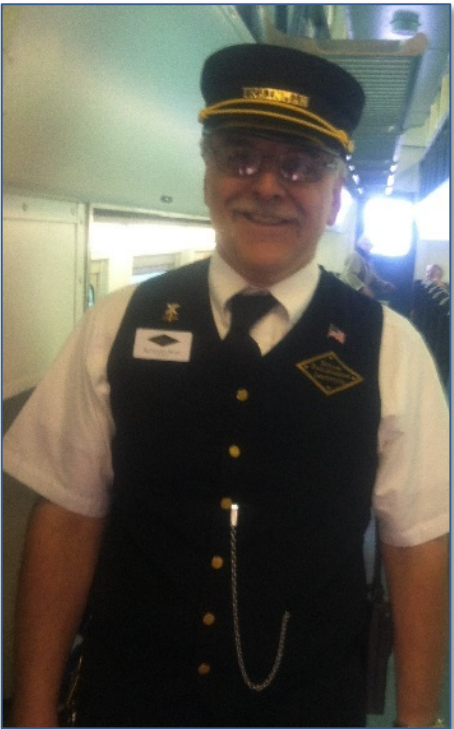


Ann Arbor Downtown Station

Fits within
existing
railroad
right-of-way,
east of tracks



N-S Commuter Rail – the Train



N-S Commuter Rail - Stations

- Security / Lighting / Shelter
 - Transit / Ped Access
 - Auto / Bicycle Parking
 - Ticketing*



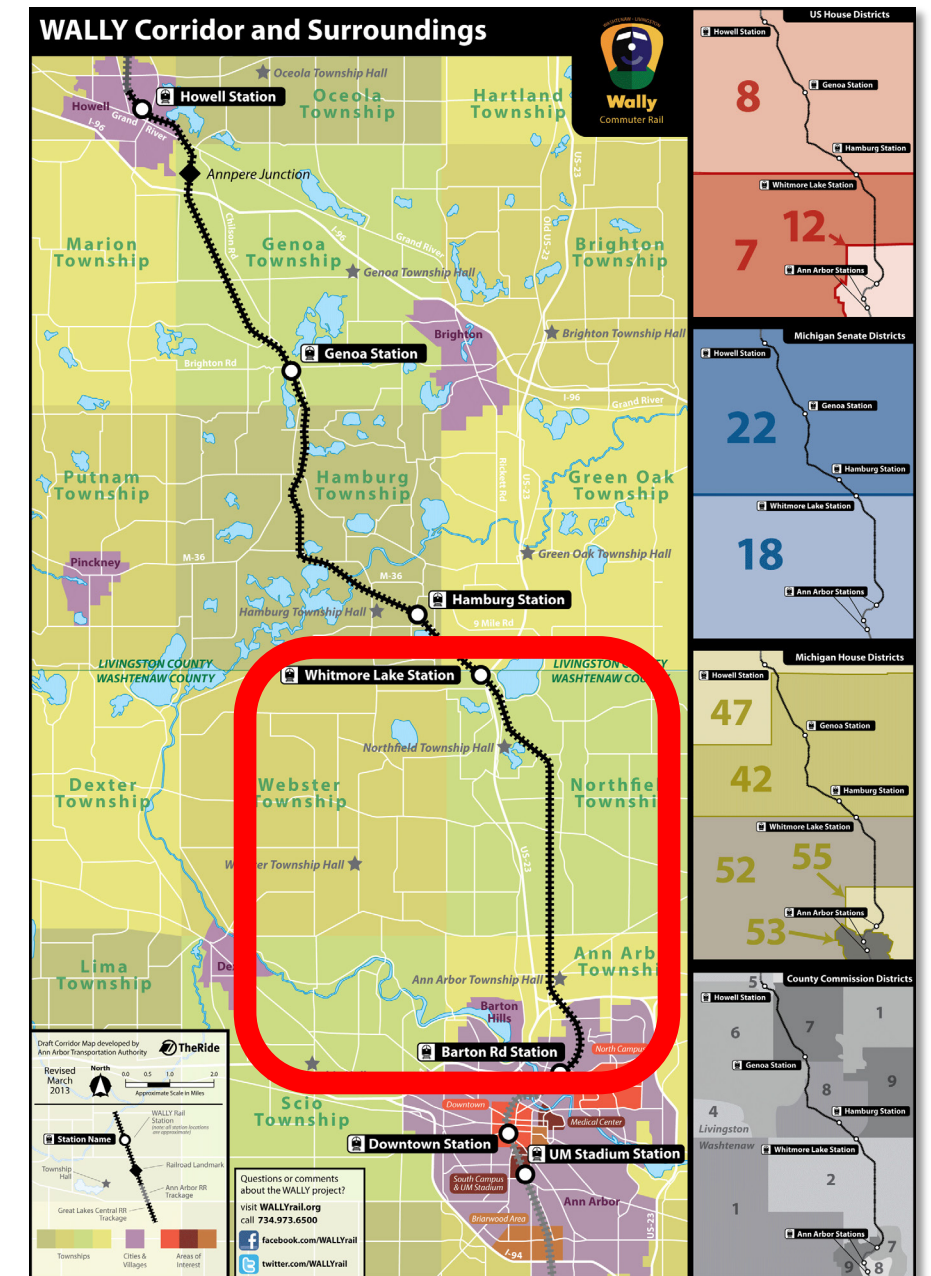
- Community Centers
- Transit Oriented Development
- Sustainable Design Techniques



Whose idea is this?

Project Background

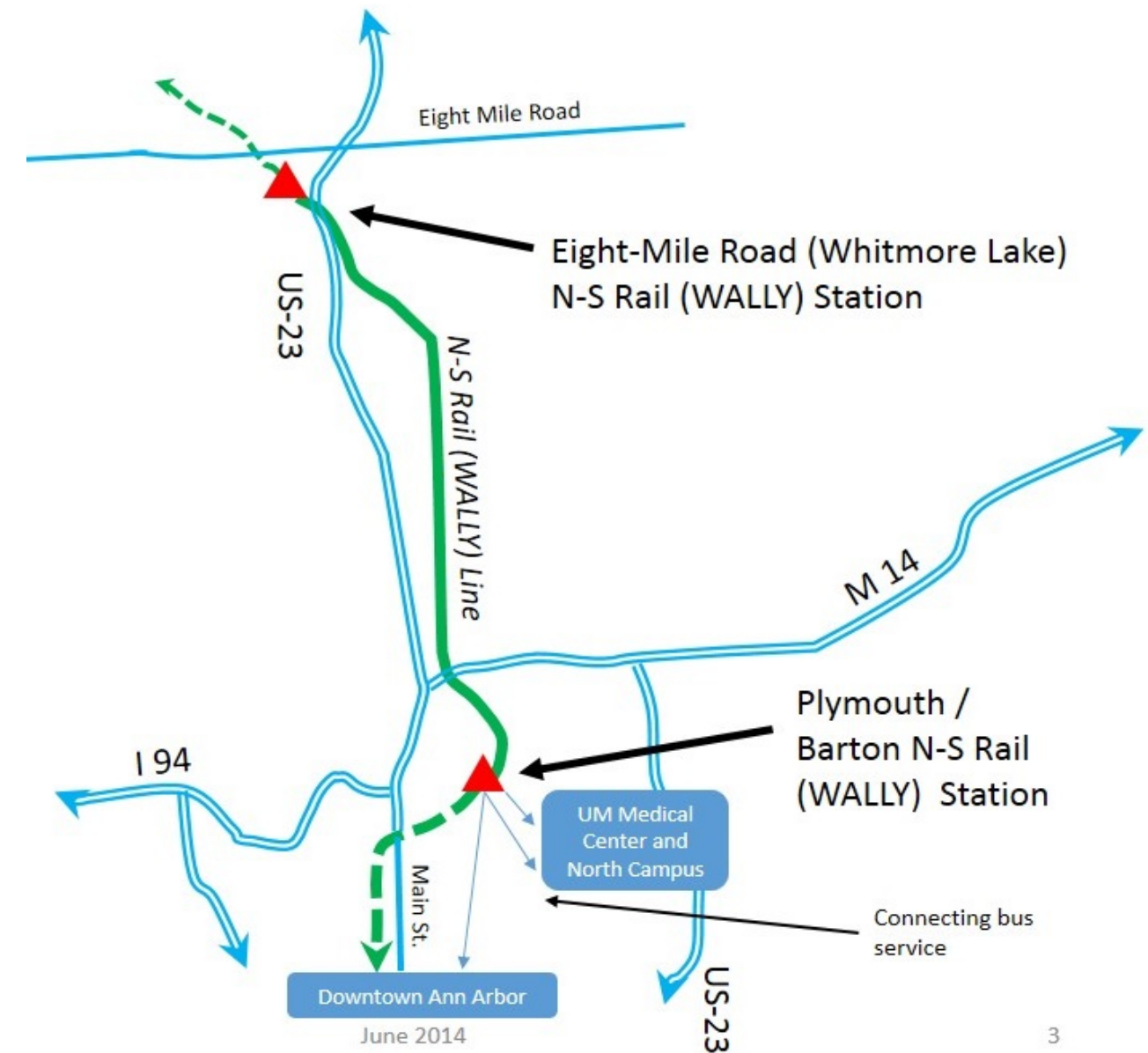
- Early efforts (2006-2009)
 - US-23 Widening Project
 - WATS /Wally Coalition
 - RL Banks Study
- AAATA as “Designated Authority”
- “WALLY Shuttle” - 2014
 - \$4.3M Capital (initial)
 - \$1.5M Operating (annual, net of fares*)



* Does not include any offset for State formula funding, which would further lower the local public funding requirement

Opportunities and Challenges

- Construction on US-23
- Willing communities, property owners
- Federal grant for Feasibility Study
- Prepare project for Federal funding



Why Another Feasibility Study?

Recent Improvements

- Track and crossing improvements
- Grade crossing protection
- New siding
- MDOT funded for freight traffic



Other Developments

- MDOT Railcar Refurbishment
 - Railcar Static Displays
 - First Revenue Service in Howell
- Ann Arbor Station Study
- AARR Change of Ownership
- Livingston Transportation Coalition
- Friends of WALLY

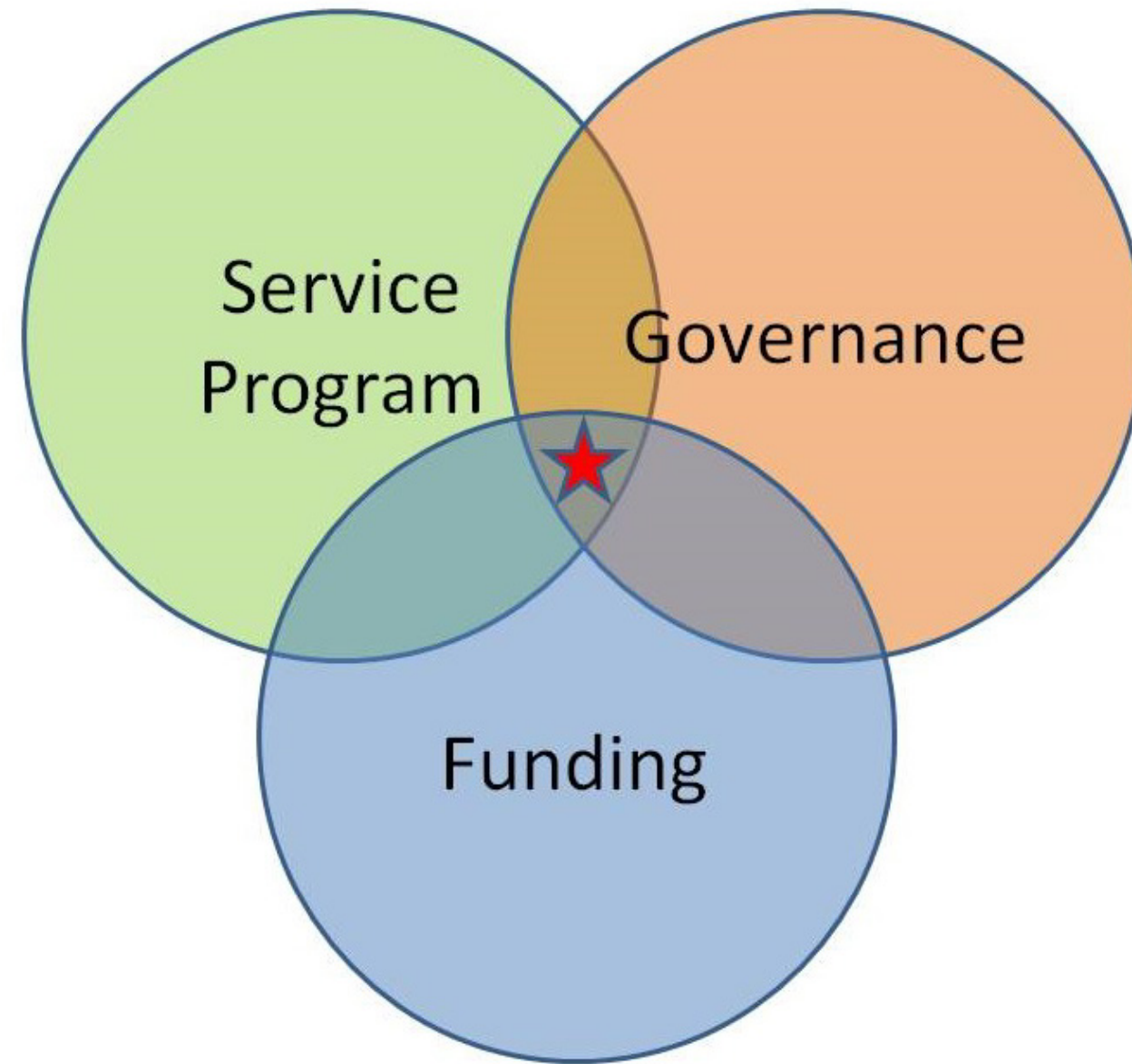


Feasibility Study

- \$640,000 Federal Highway Administration
- \$160,000 local sources
- Federal Transit Administration
- Public Involvement
 - Steering Committee
 - Advisory Committee
 - Interested Citizens



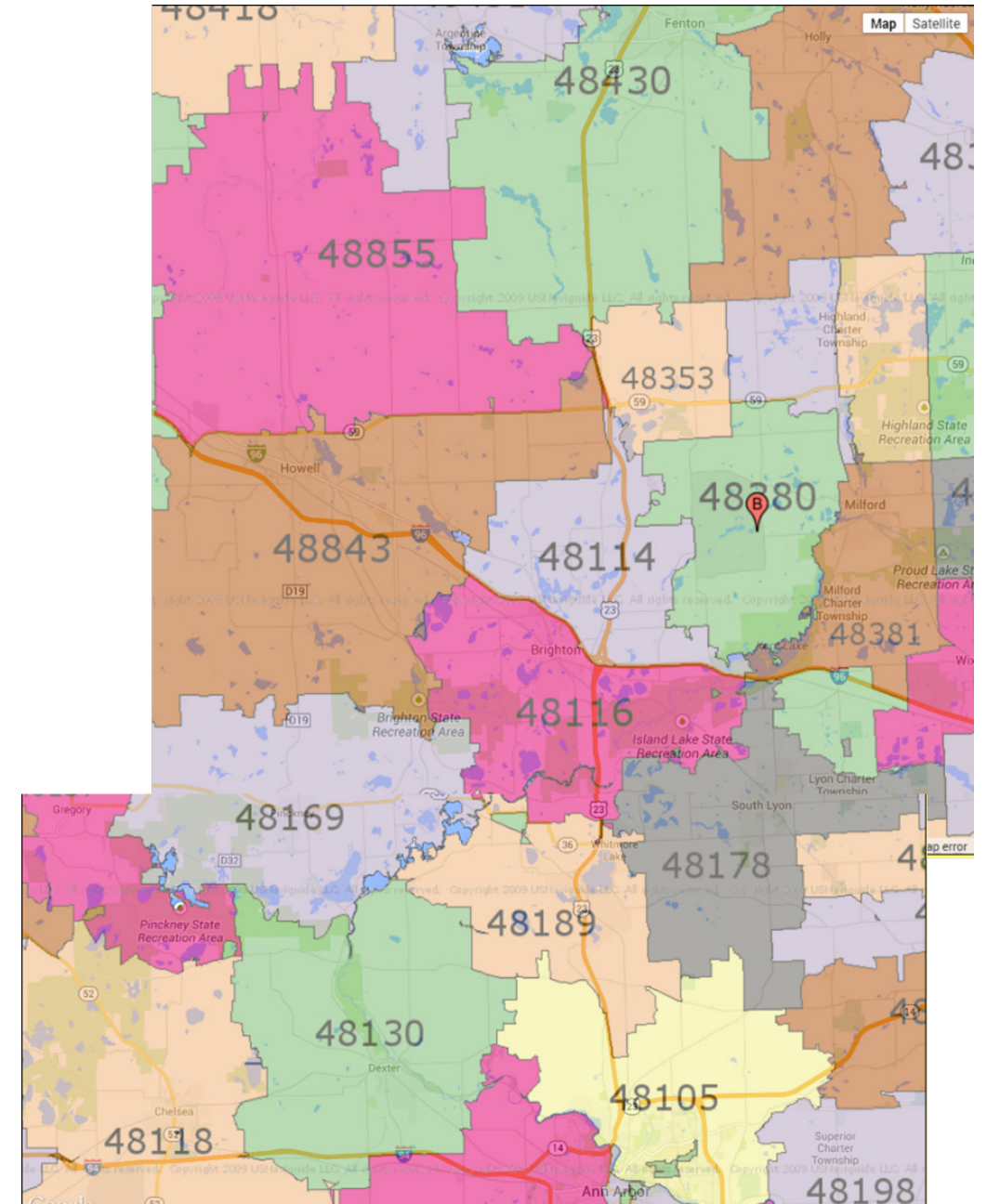
Much More Detailed Scope of Work



Who's going to ride this thing?

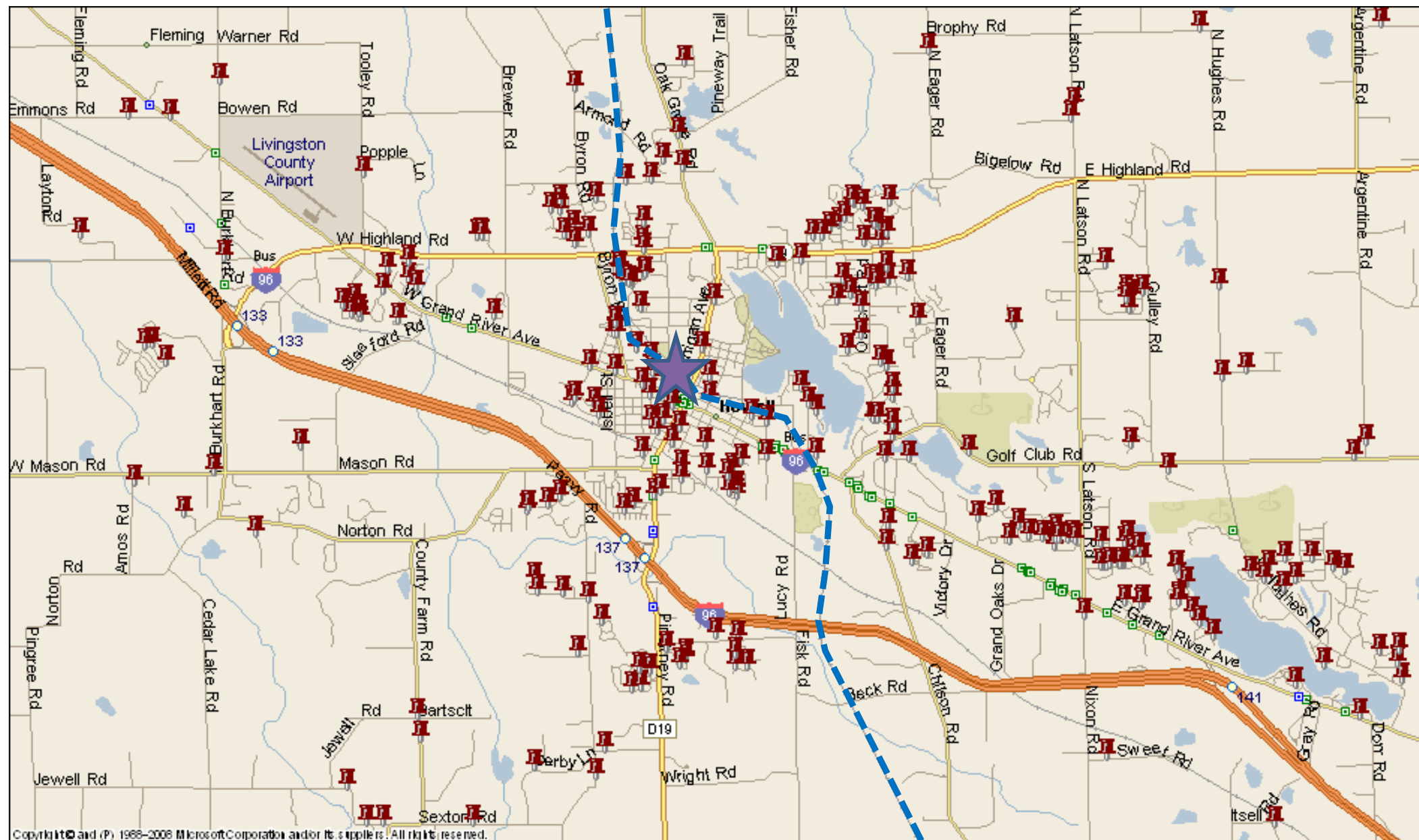
Demand Estimates

- 11,782 Livingston Co residents commute to Washtenaw Co
(2010 ACS / SEMCOG)
- 6,332 corridor residents work at UM Ann Arbor Campus and Health Systems
(UM Data)
- 1300 riders, 2600 trips daily
(2007 Survey Results)



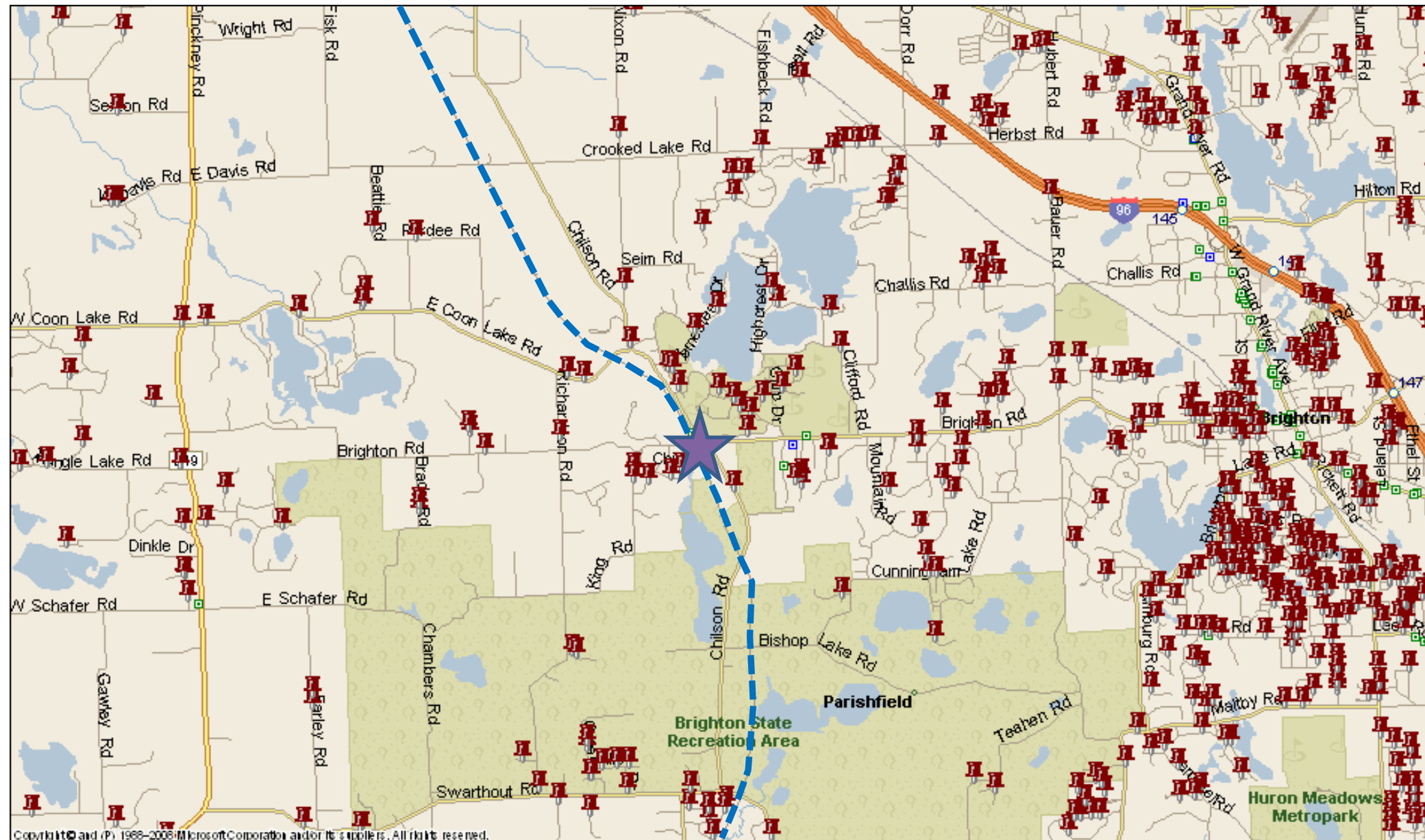
UM Employees Living Near a N-S Rail Station

Howell



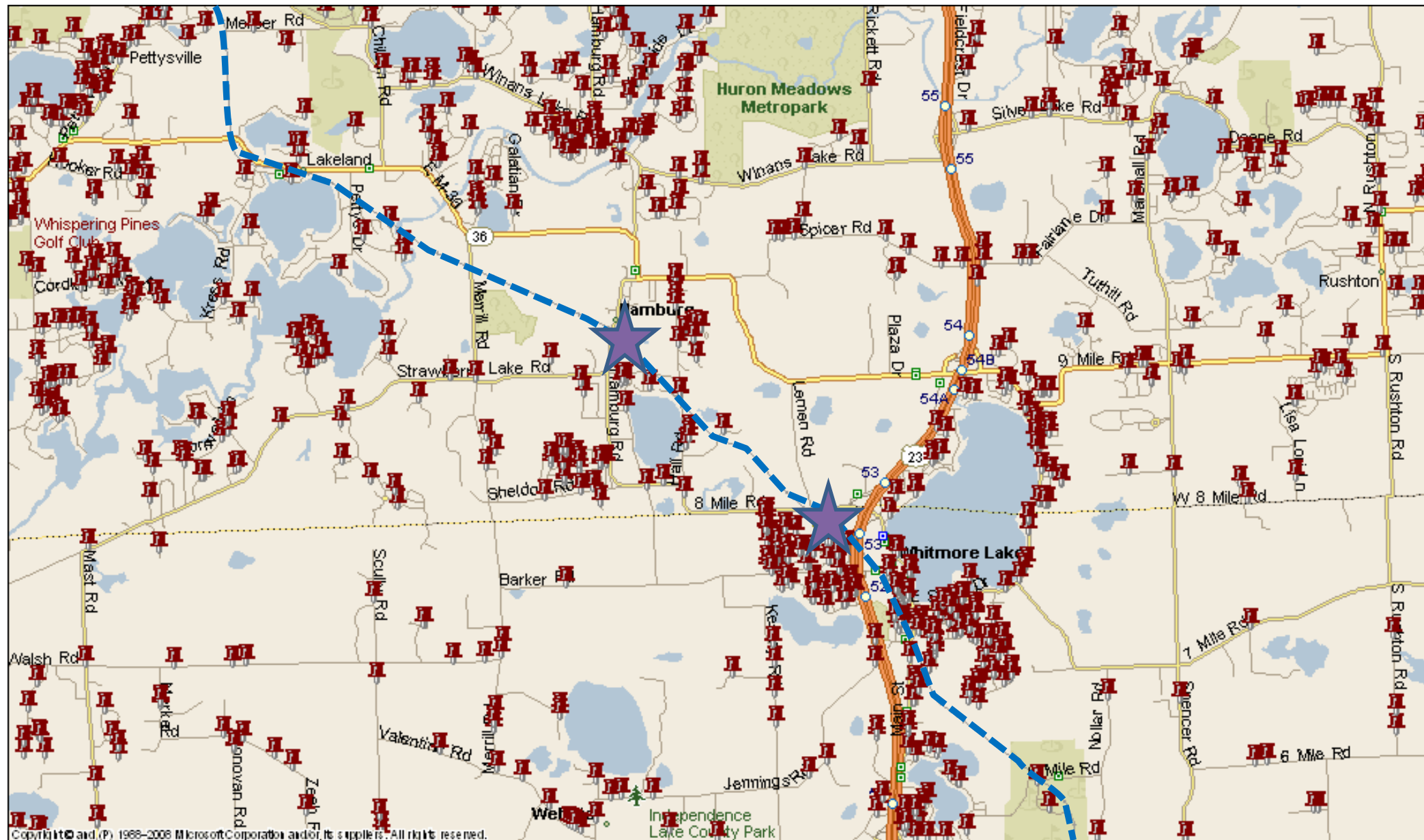
UM Employees Living Near a N-S Rail Station

Genoa / Brighton



UM Employees Living Near a N-S Rail Station

Hamburg / Whitmore Lake



I'm not going to ride this thing.
Why would I support it?

Rail Impact on Property Values

20%

\$3,200

Doubled

\$2.31 per foot

6.4% to 45%

\$4000

\$2.29 per meter

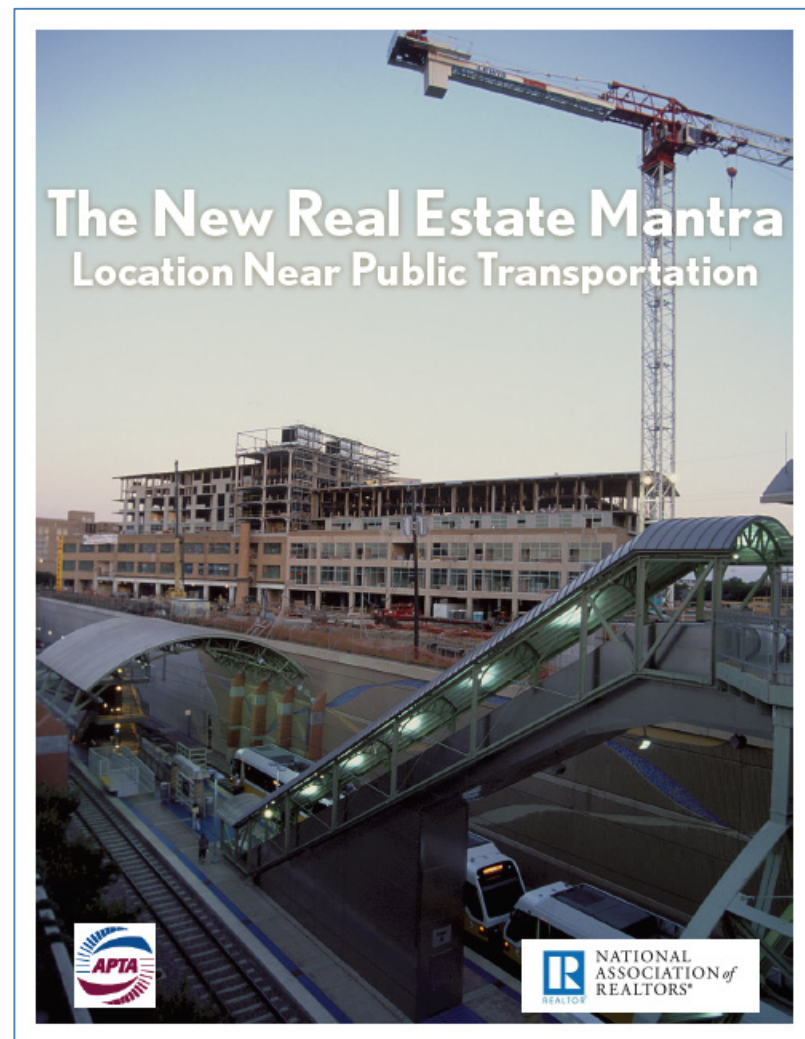
5% - 10%

65%

25%, 32%

10.6%

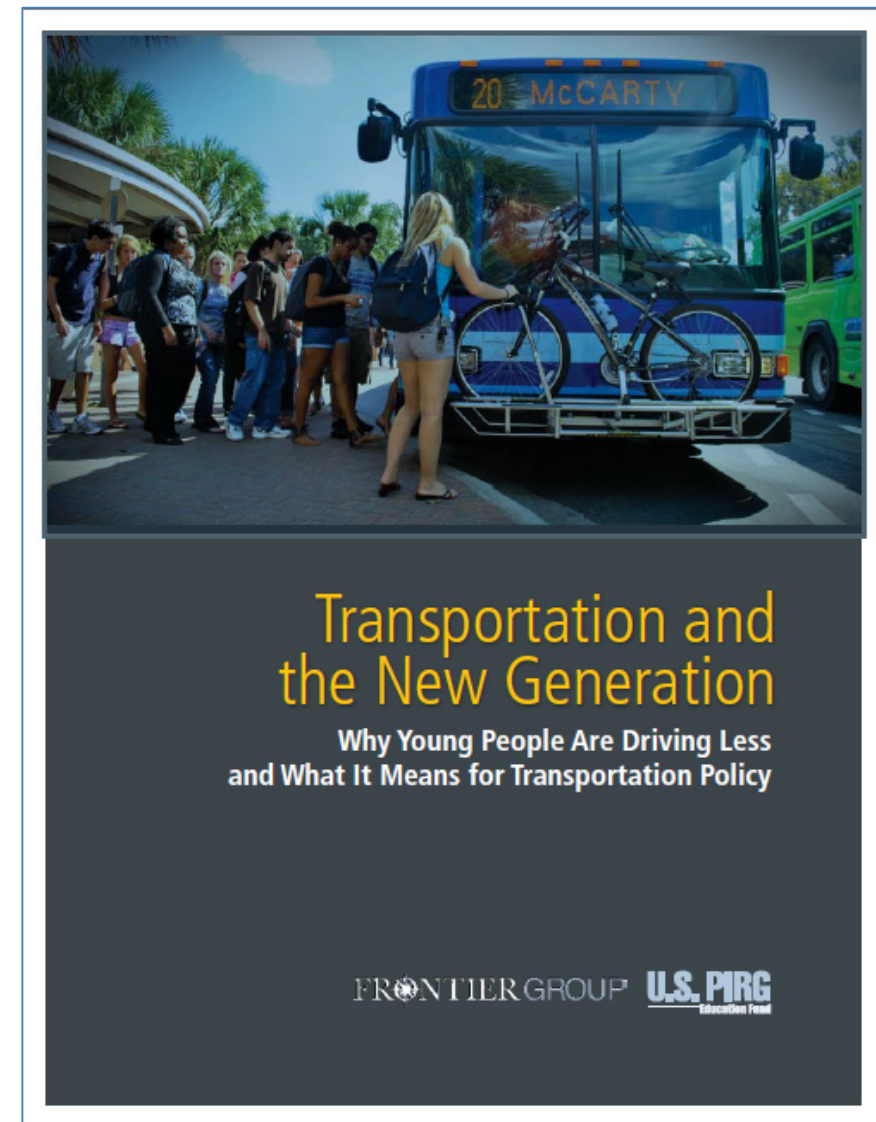
Weathering the 2008 -2011 downturn...



“Across the study regions, [areas with rail service] outperformed the region as a whole by 41.6%”

Appealing to millennials...

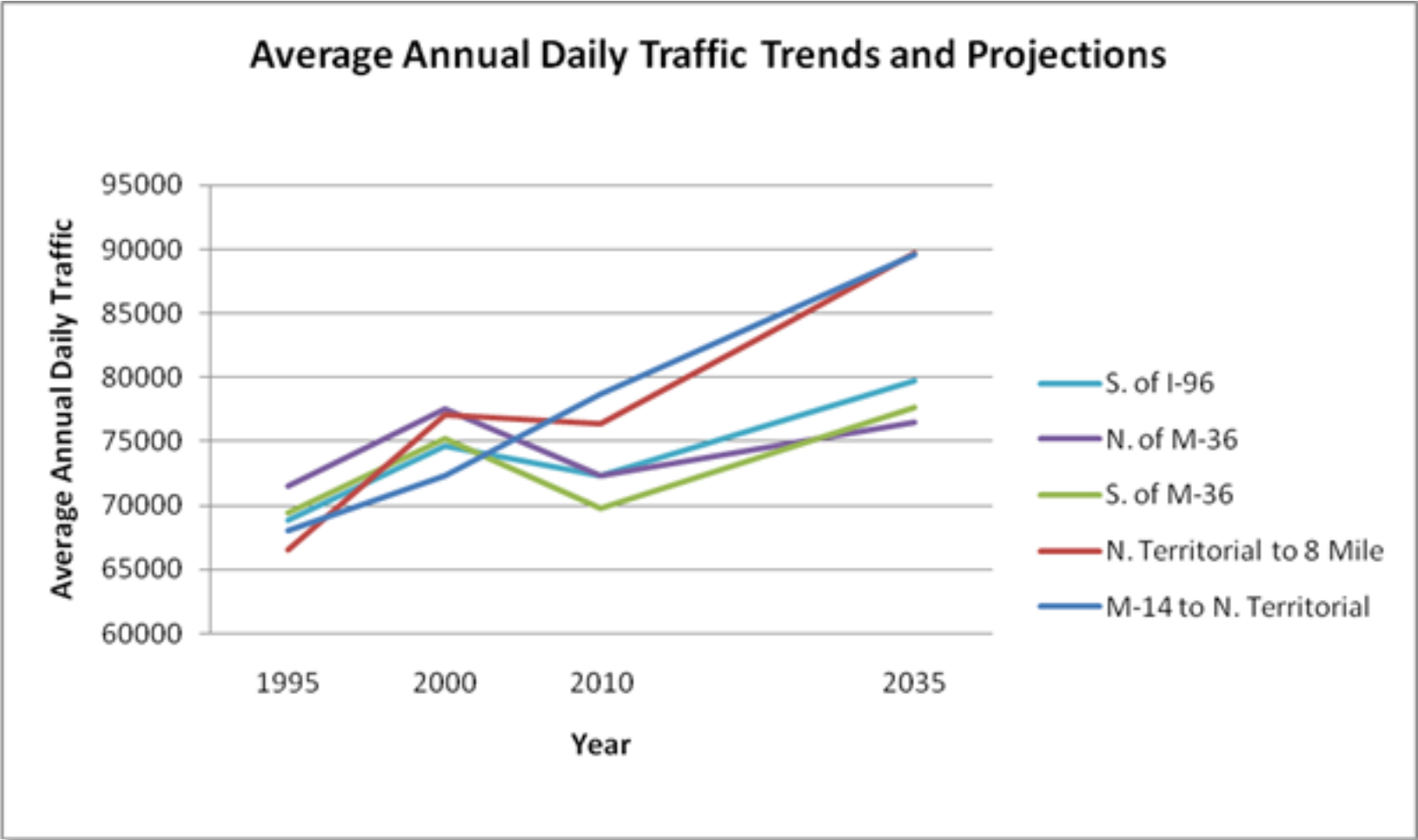
“From 2000 to 2010, the share of 14 to 34-year-olds without a driver’s license increased from 21 percent to 26 percent.”



Stimulus for Economic Development



US 23 Trends...





Thanks!

Project Team

Project Sponsor

Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

Michael Benham

Special Assistant for Strategic Planning

Project Liaisons

Michigan Department of Transportation

Kristian Foondle, Railroad Project Manager

Federal Transit Administration

Stewart McKenzie, Community Planner

Federal Highway Administration

Kurt Zachary, Local Program Engineer

Consultant Team

SmithGroupJJR

Quandel Consultants

Bergmann Associates

AECOM

Steering Committee

- State, Regional and Local transportation agencies
- County units of government within the study area
- City and Township units of government within the study area
- University of Michigan

Advisory Committee

- Federal Agencies
- State
- County
- Township
- City
- Downtown Development Authorities
- Chambers of Commerce
- Environmental Advocates
- Municipal/Land Use
- Economic Development/Business
- Communications

Interested Citizens + Community Participants



- Project Management
- Environmental Planning, Analysis & Clearance
- Stakeholder Engagement





- Project Management
- Environmental Planning, Analysis & Clearance
- Stakeholder Engagement



- Commuter Rail Operations
- Cost Estimating





- Project Management
- Environmental Planning, Analysis & Clearance
- Stakeholder Engagement



- Commuter Rail Operations
- Cost Estimating



- Ridership Estimates
- Governance + Funding





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- Commuter Rail Operations
- Cost Estimating



- Ridership Estimates
- Governance + Funding



- Traffic Engineering
- Alternatives Synopsis
- Bridge Evaluation

Commuter Rail

- Utilizes diesel-electric or electrically propelled locomotives
- Operates over existing railway trackage used by intercity freight and passenger trains
- Station spacing ~ 5 miles



METRA, Chicago

Light Rail

- Electrically propelled on overhead wires
- High capacity and demand
- Typically 1-4 cars primarily on exclusive ROW, trackage not shared with freight or passenger trains
- Station spacing ½ to 1 mile



Portland MAX Light Rail

Streetcar

- Electrically propelled on overhead wires
- Moderate capacity and demand
- Typically 1-2 cars primarily mixed-flow with traffic
- Station spacing 2-3 blocks to ½ mile



Toronto Transit Commission

Commuter rail service typically consists of a locomotive pulling or pushing passenger cars over a distance ranging from 25 to 75 miles with stations about 5 miles apart. Commuter rail service is specifically designed to move people as an alternative to congested freeway travel and provides the following:

- Connects suburbs/outlying communities to city centers
- Larger trains – more seating for passengers and less standing room
- Trains run at specific times, not intervals
- Fewer stations, spaced farther apart, less stops
- Frequently shares track with freight service

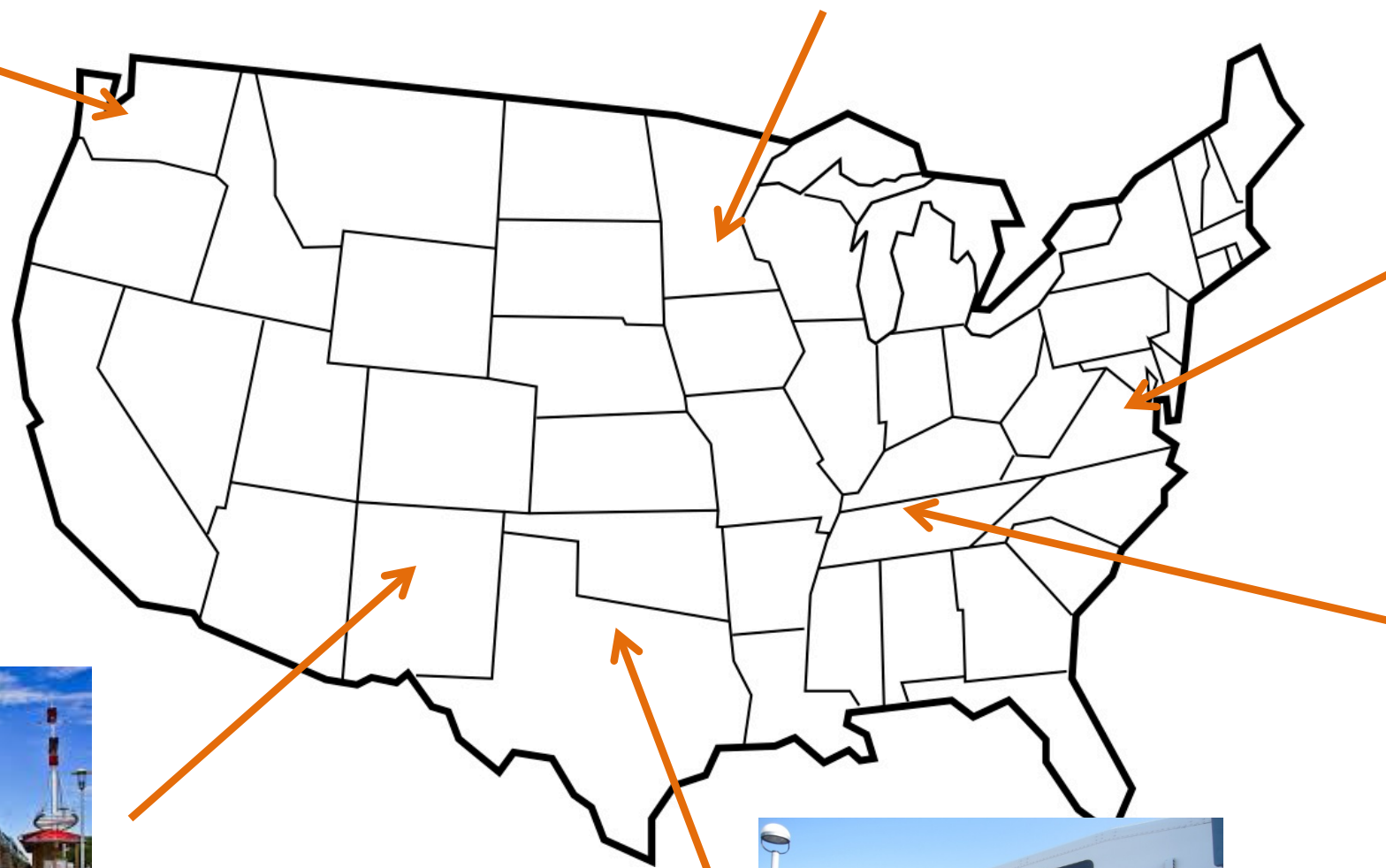




Sounder Commuter Rail, Puget Sound
82 miles, 12 stations, ~13,000 passengers daily



Northstar Commuter Rail, Minneapolis
40 miles, 7 stations, ~7,000 passengers daily



Virginia Railway Express, N. Virginia/DC
90 miles, 18 stations, ~19,400 passengers daily



Rail Runner Express, Santa Fe/Albuquerque
97 miles, 15 stations, ~3,700 passengers daily



Music City Star, Nashville
32 miles, 6 stations, ~1,225 passengers daily

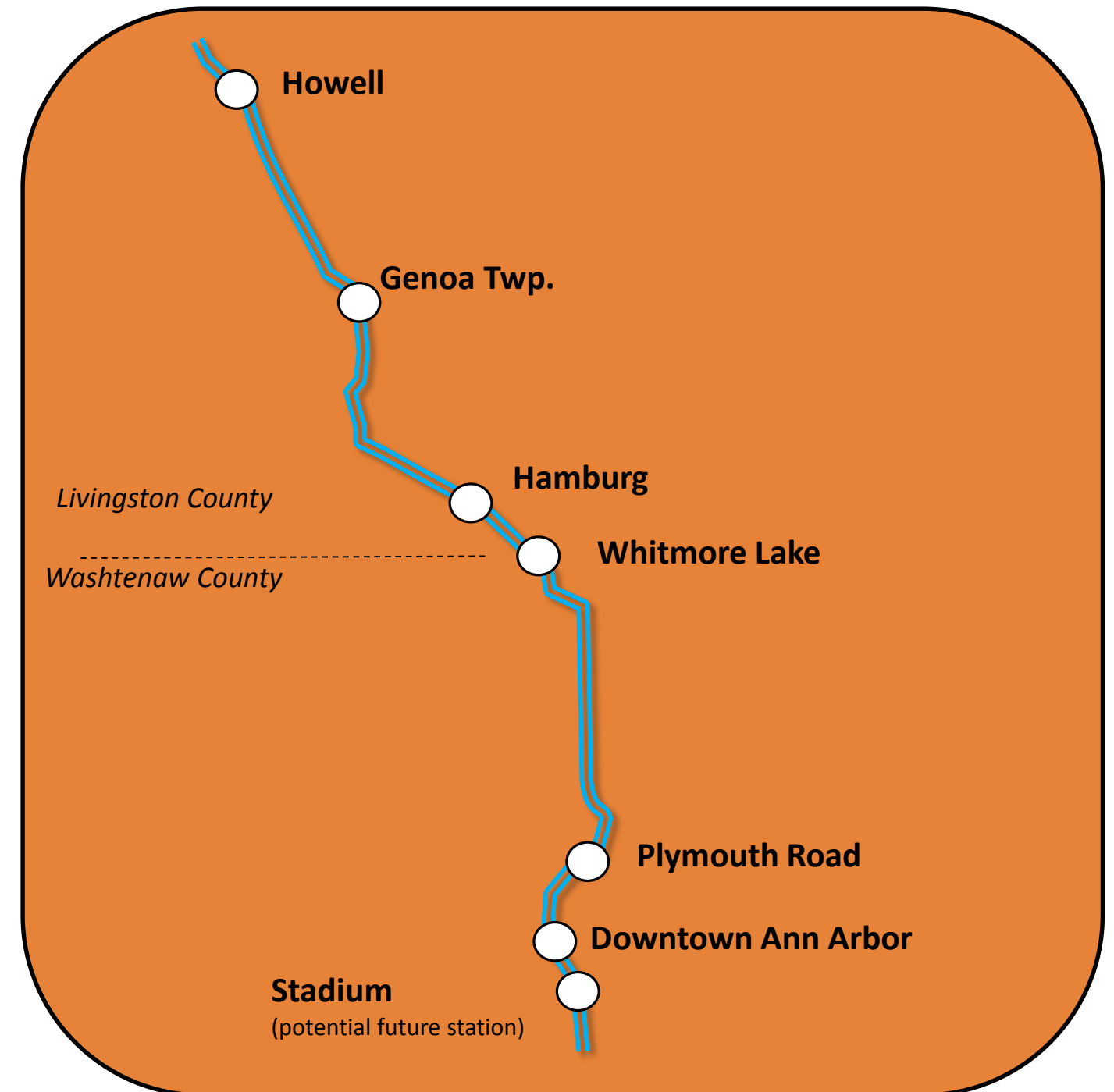


Trinity Railway Express, Dallas
34 miles, 10 stations, ~7,300 passengers daily

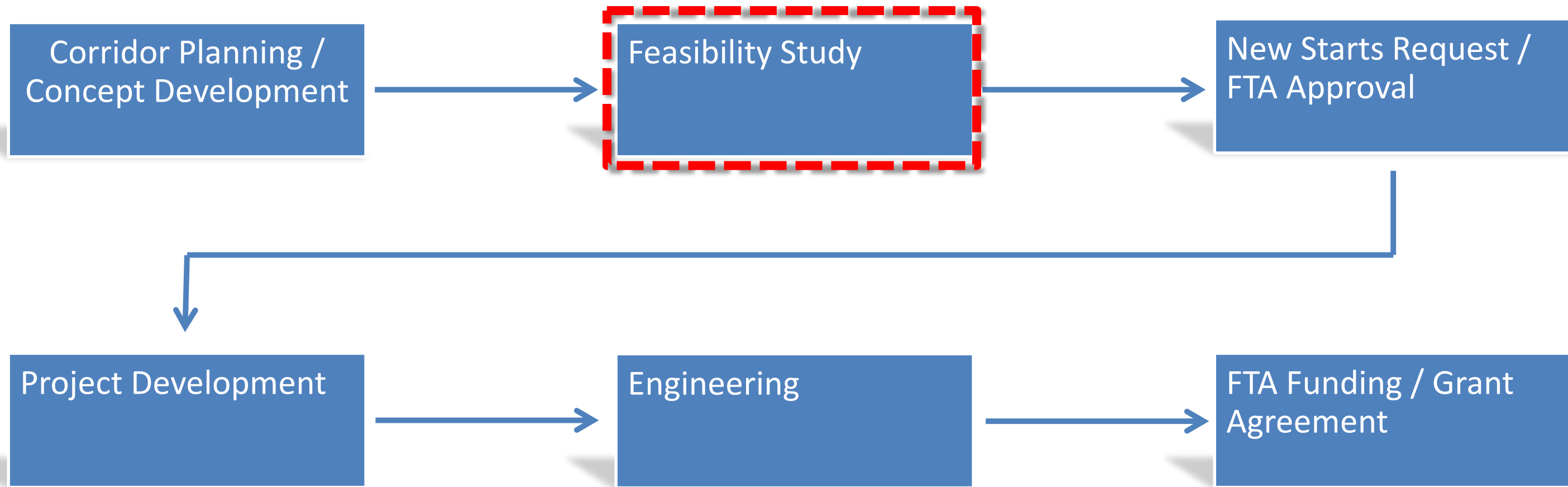
The purpose of this study is to evaluate the feasibility of providing commuter rail service as a transportation option to residents and employees in the Howell to Ann Arbor corridor.

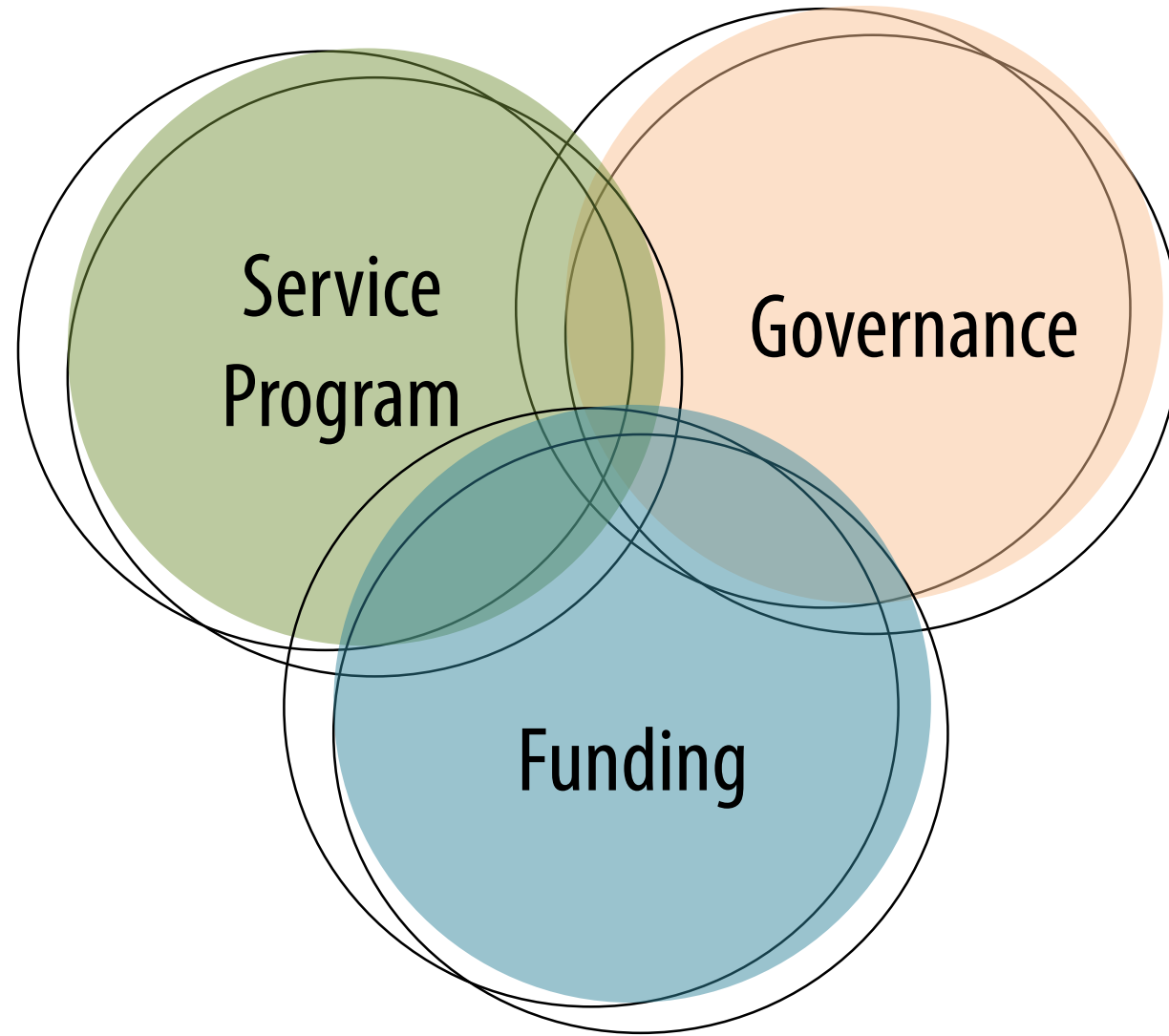
Previous studies completed a technical review of the Draft Business Plan and other information related to initiation of commuter rail service.

This study will build on the previous efforts but is intended to provide more detailed information to assist with a determination of feasibility.



New Starts: The federal government’s primary financial resource for supporting locally planned, implemented, and operated major transit capital investments - commuter rail, light rail, heavy rail, bus rapid transit, streetcars, and ferries.

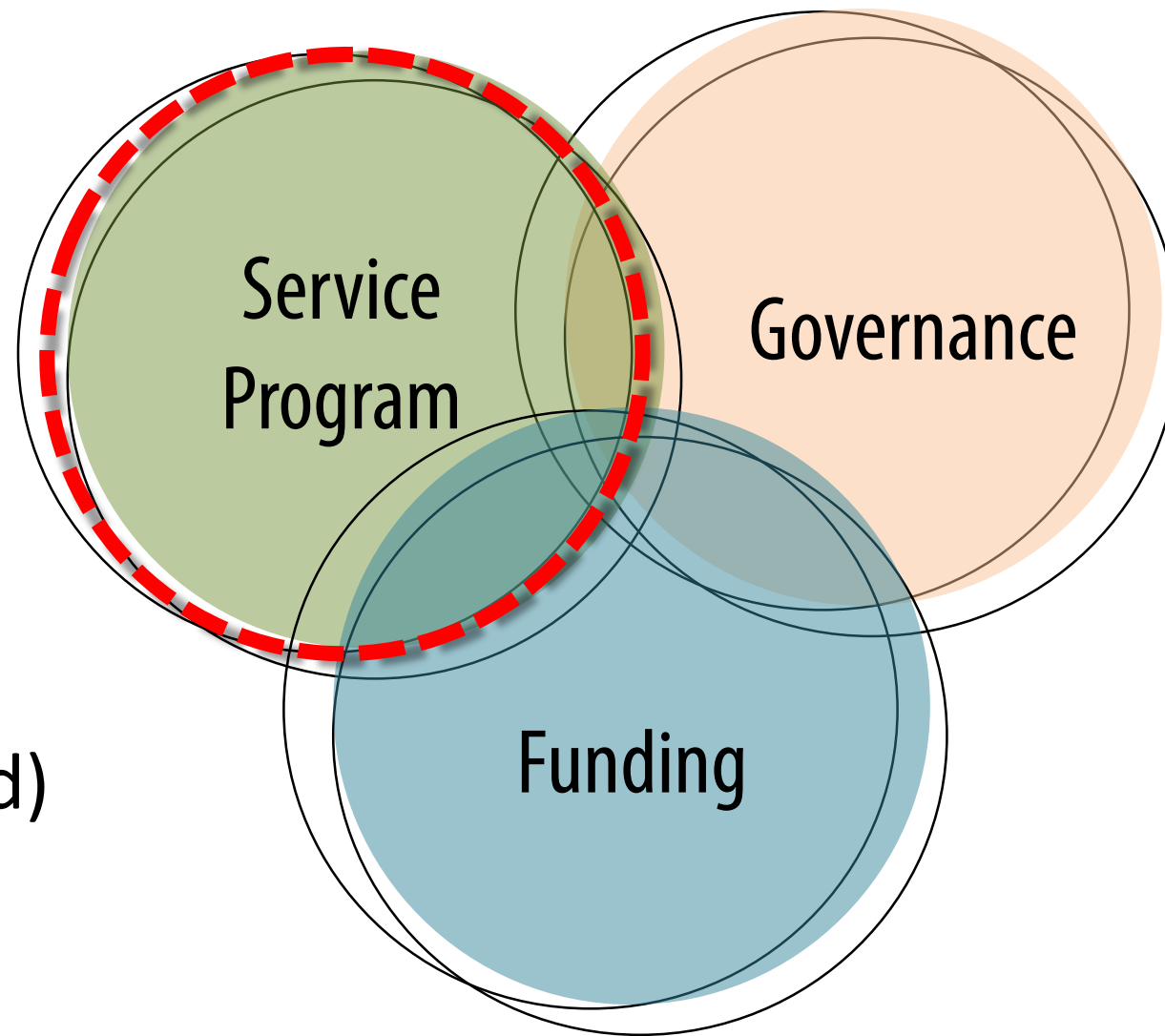




Tasks

Capital + Operating Costs

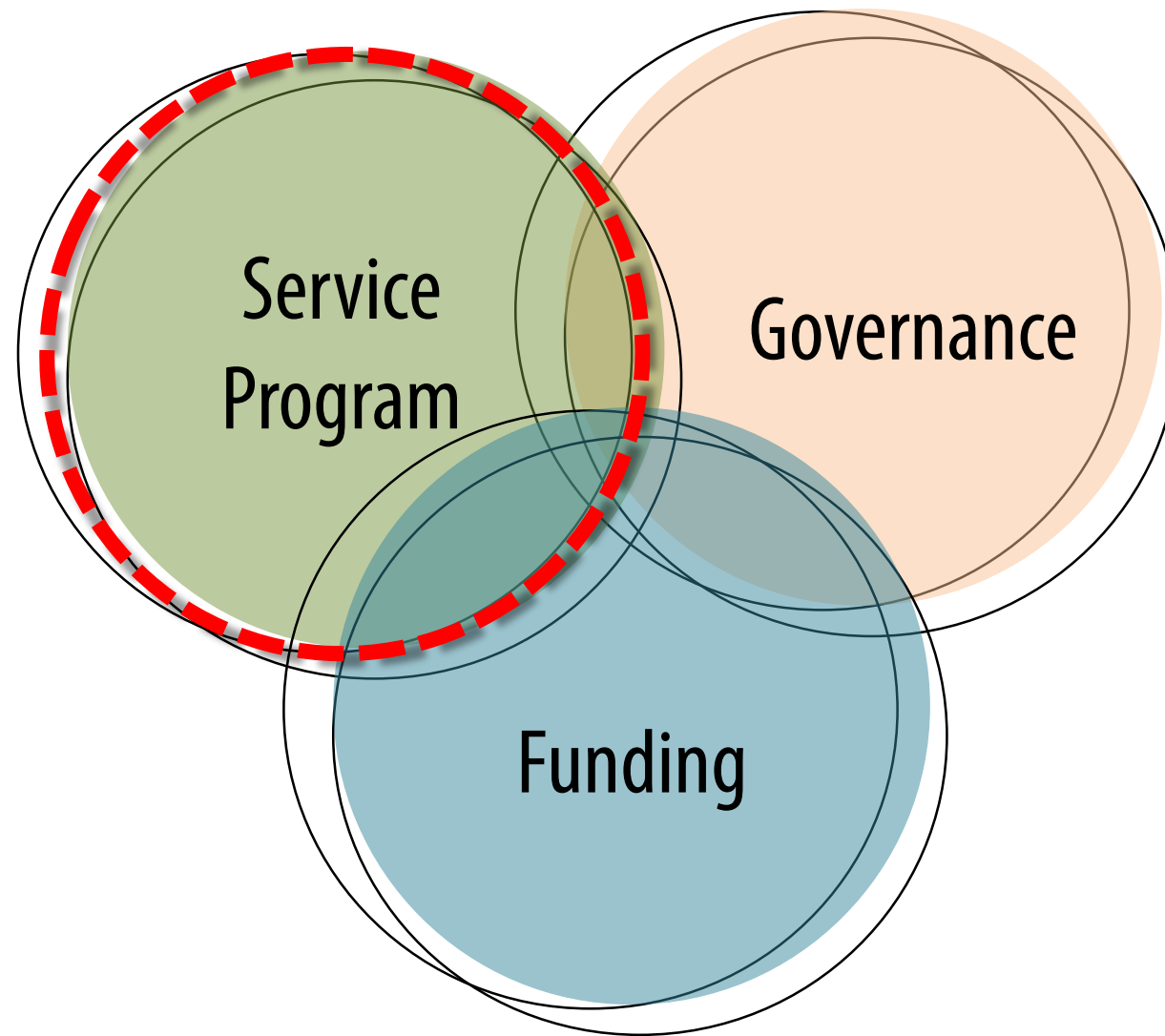
- Track and signal improvements
- Station construction + operations
- Layover and maintenance facilities
- Insurance requirements
- Trackage rights (if required)



Tasks

Station Locations

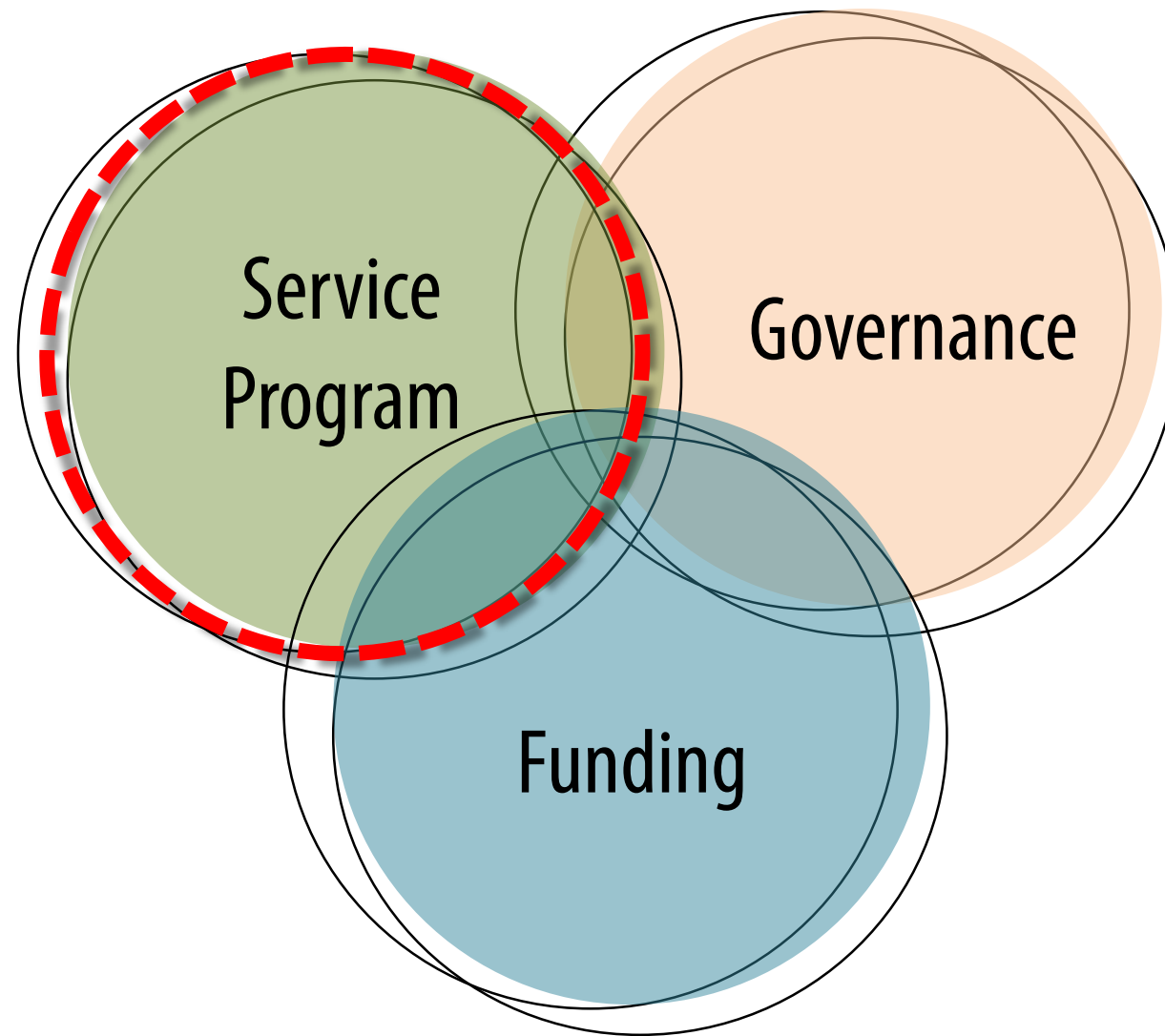
- Existing conditions
- Station elements
- Operational requirements
- Traffic – access/parking
- Environmental features / natural resources



Tasks

Demand Estimates

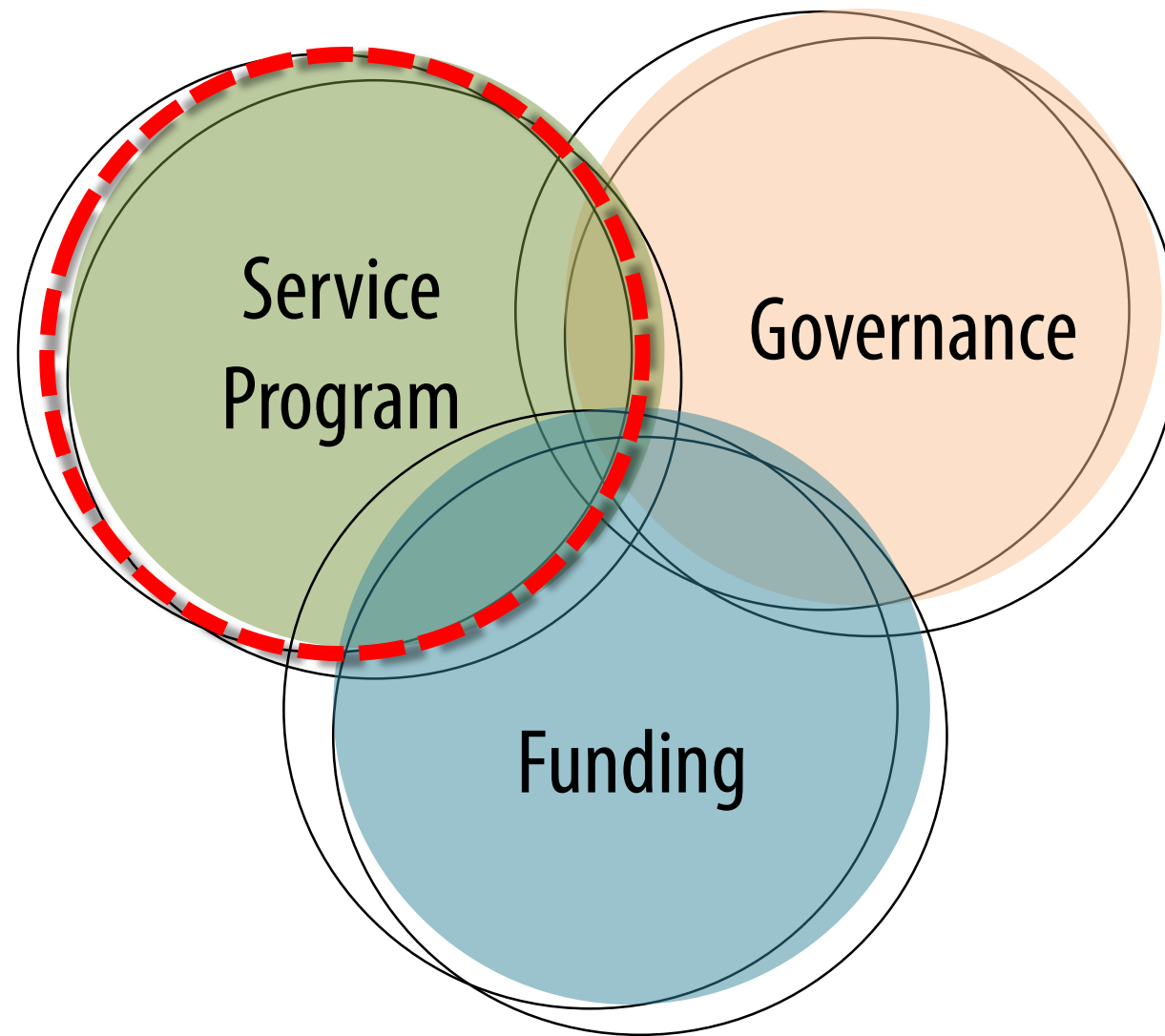
- STOPS – FTA model
- Predict detailed transit patterns
- Change in auto VMT based on predicted ridership



Tasks

Alternatives Synopsis

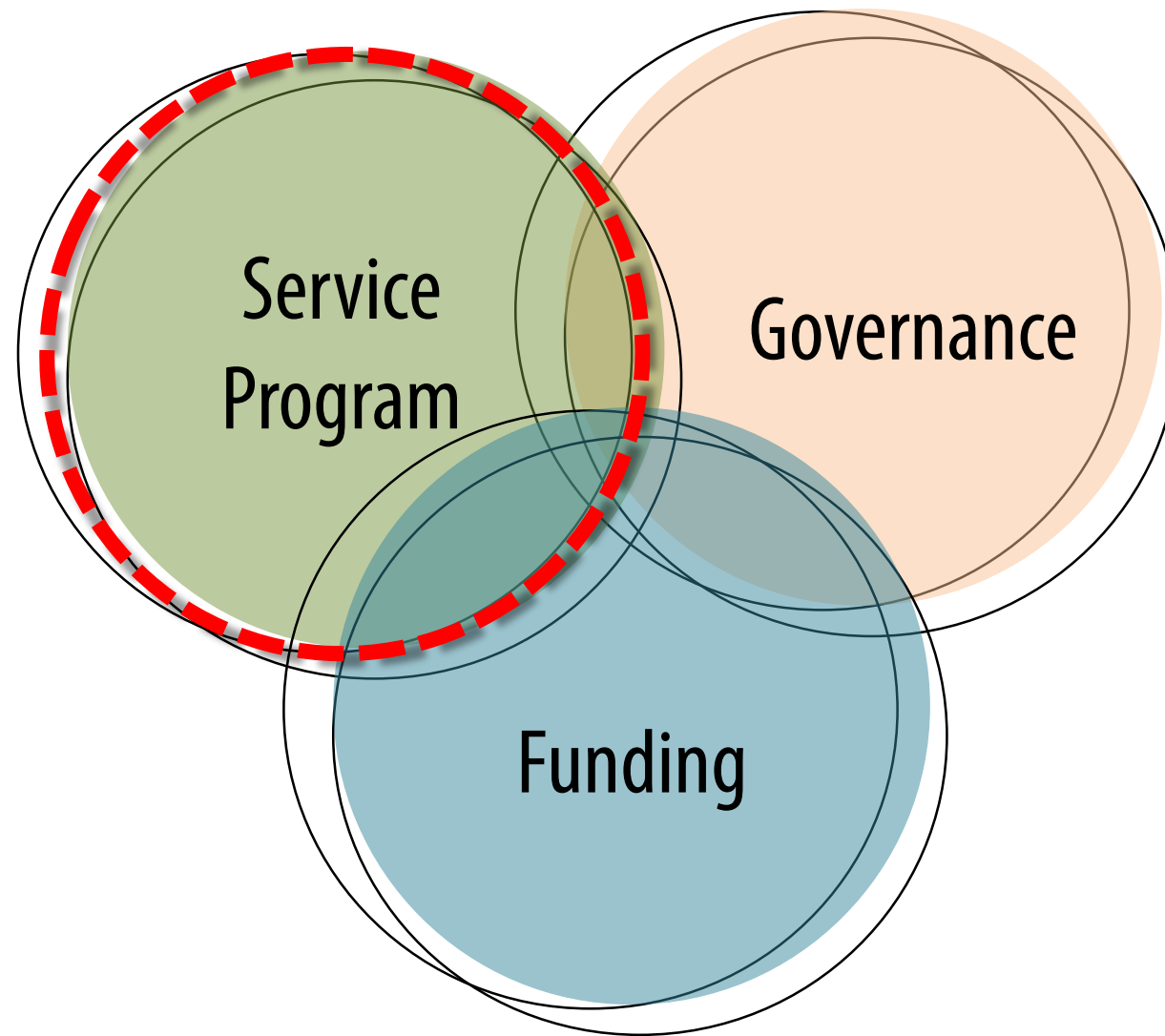
- US-23 capacity increase
- HOV lanes/BRT
- US-23 Active Lane Management
- US-23 express bus



Tasks

Green Concepts & Operating Principles

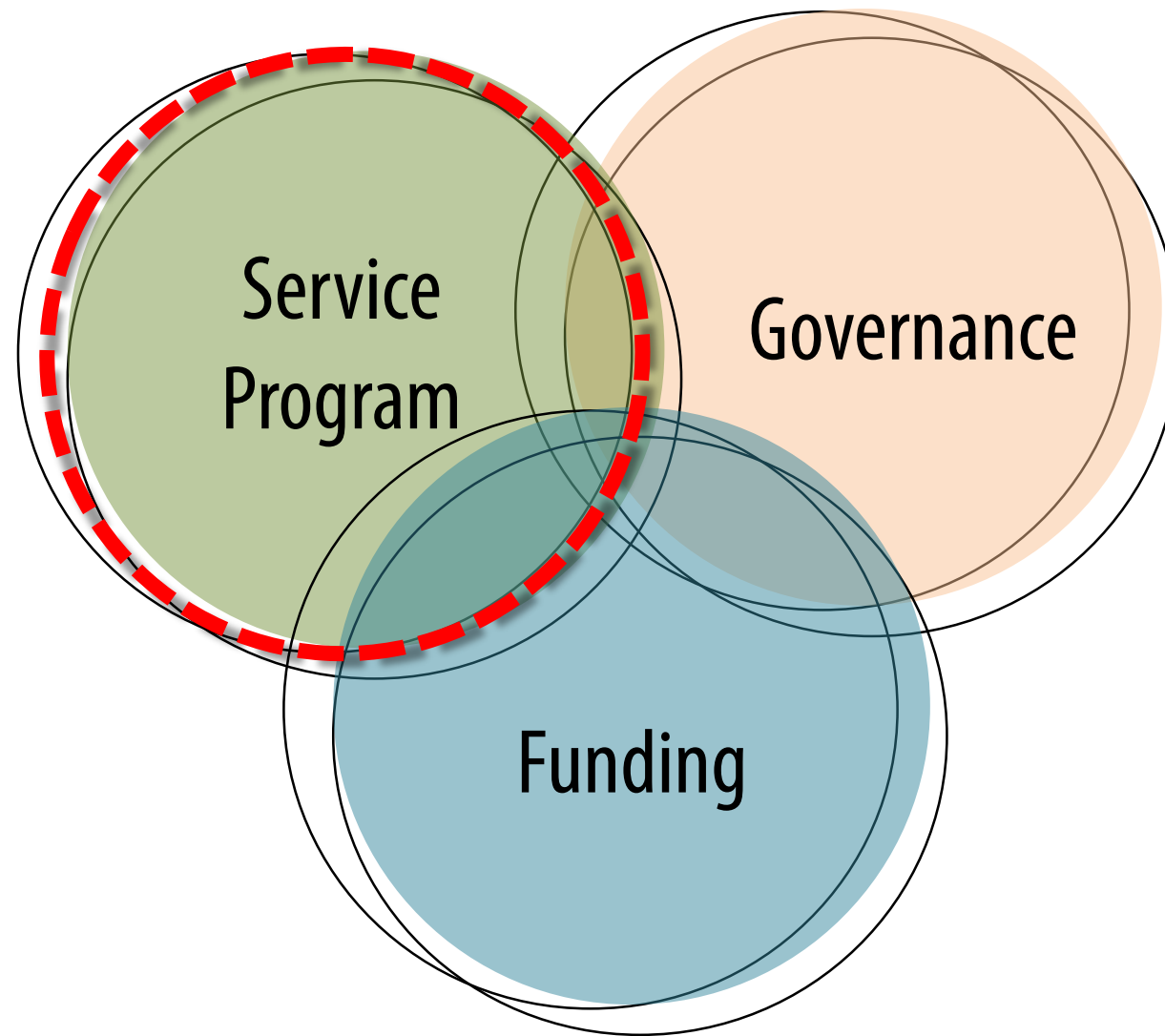
- Station sustainability
- Green operations
- Promote smart development patterns



Tasks

Service Plans

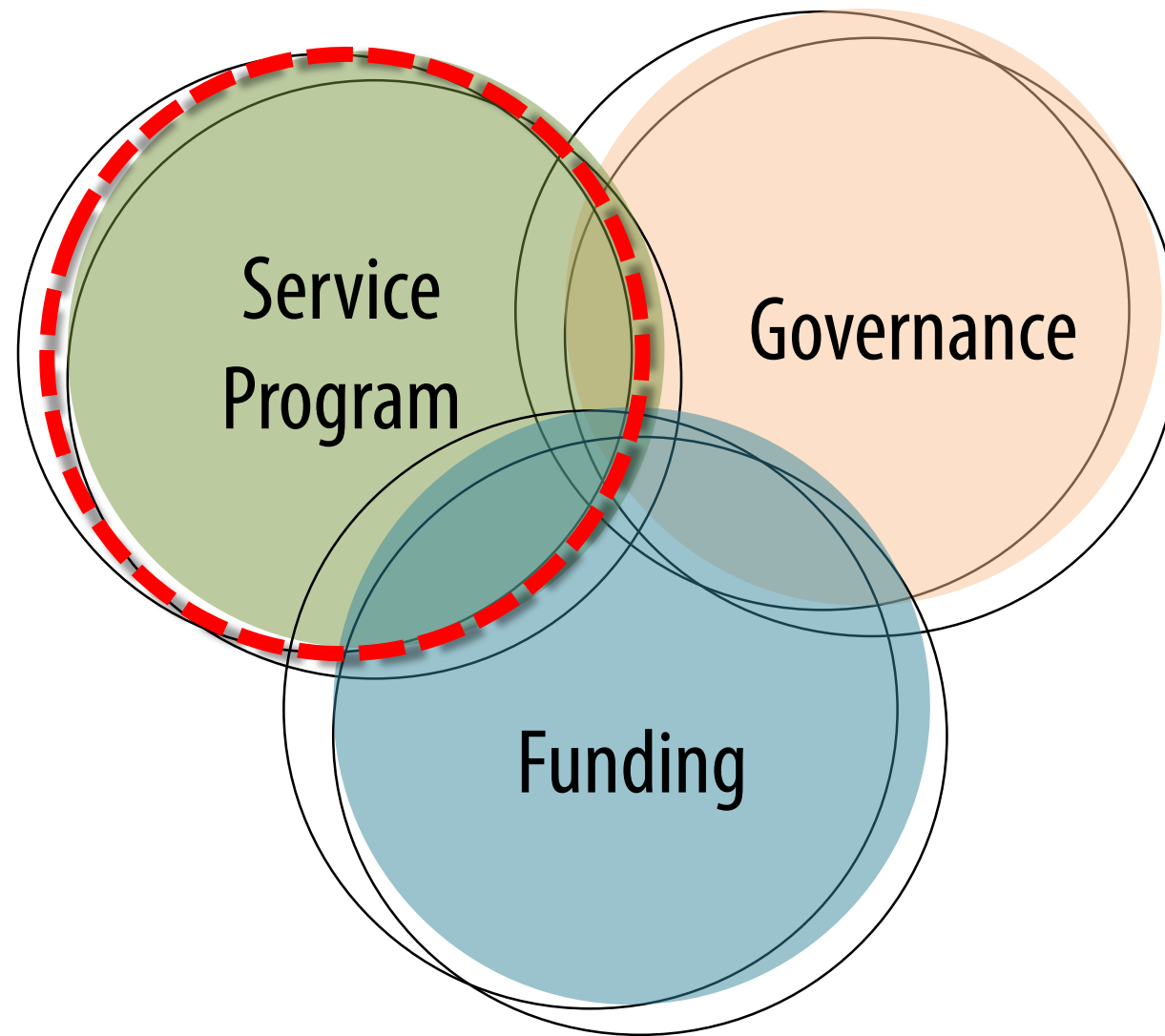
- Schedule
- Track schematics
- Station locations
- Layover facilities
- Signal modifications



Tasks

Connecting Bus Service

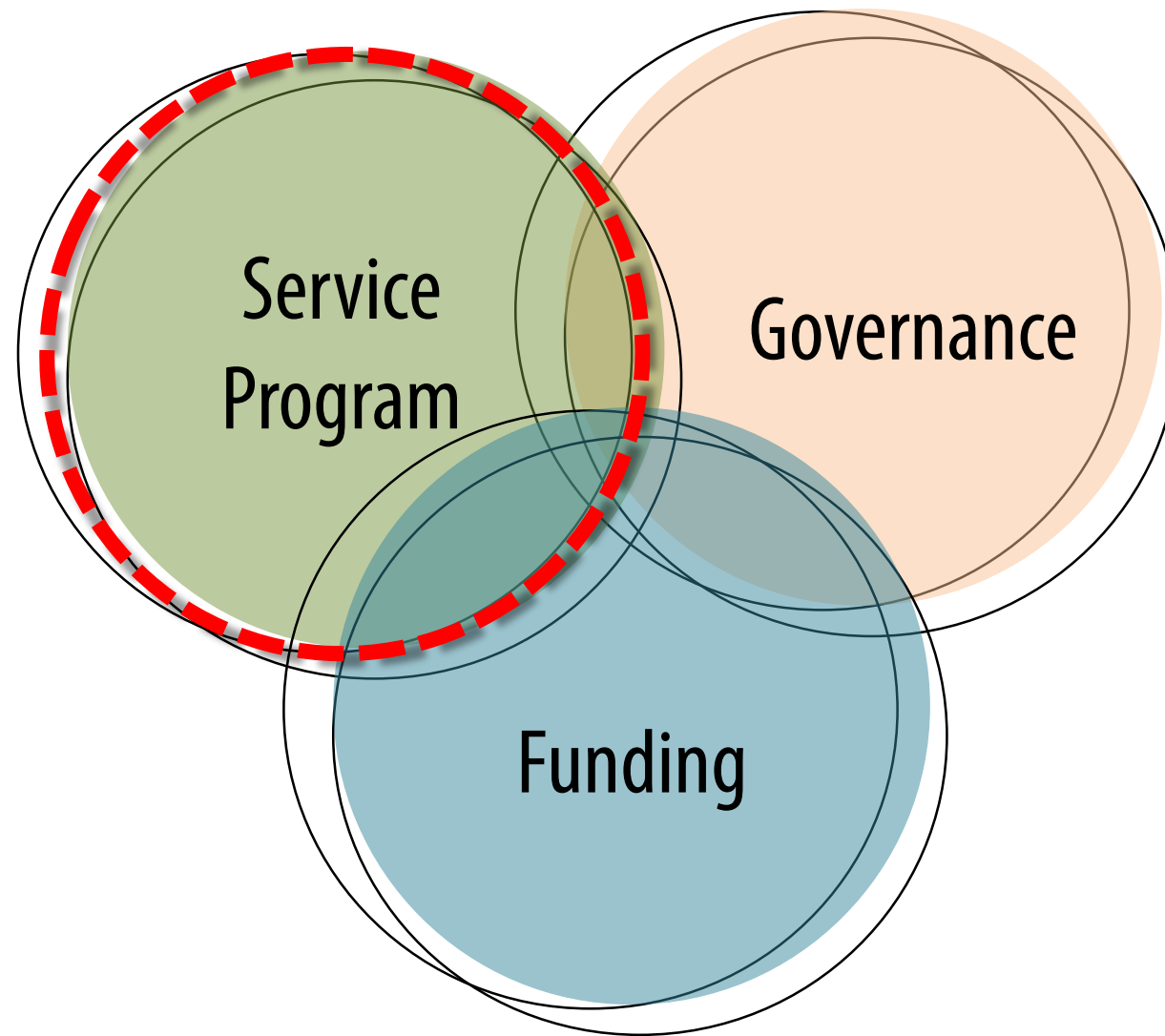
- University of Michigan
- AAATA
- Other

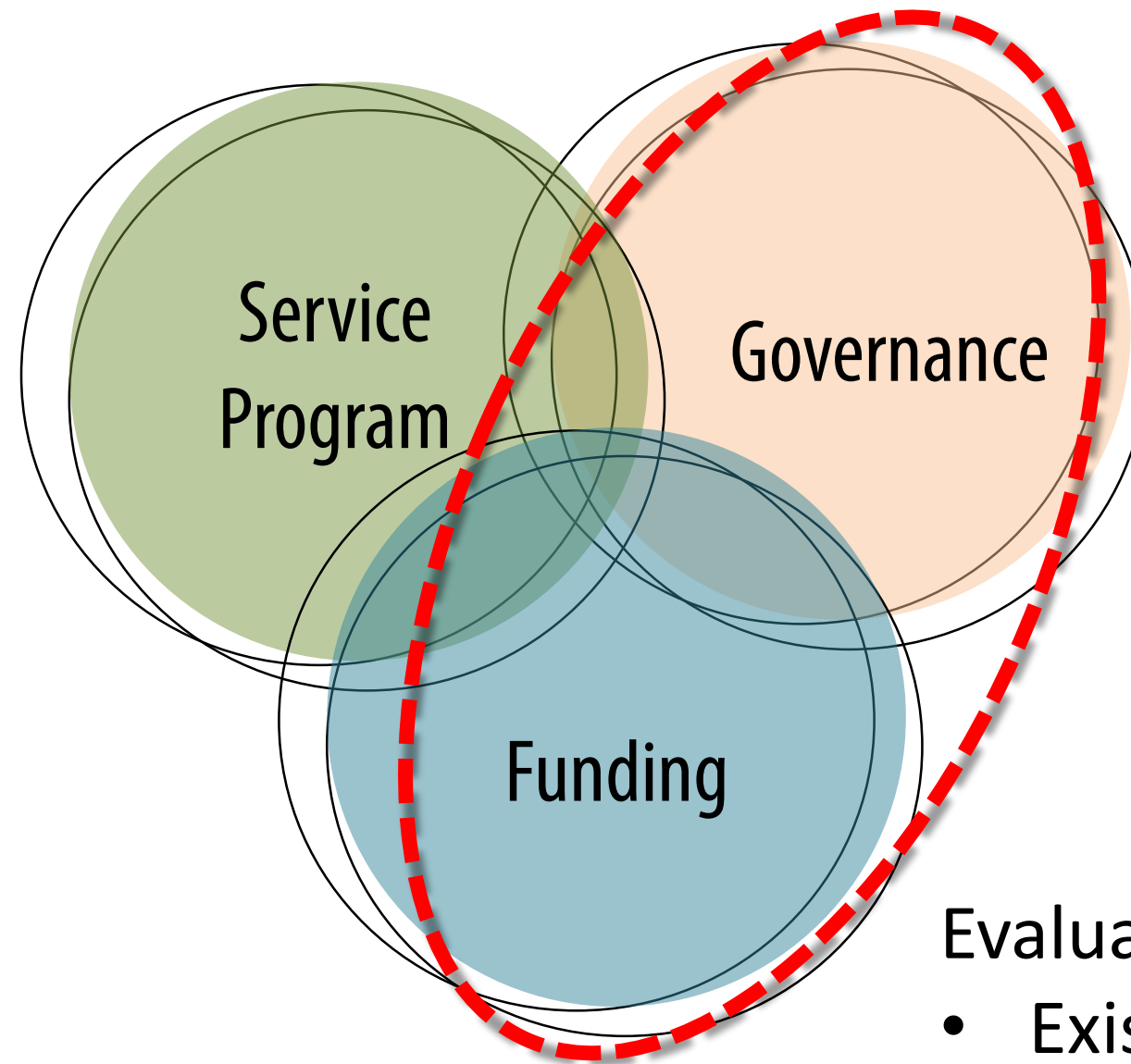


Tasks

Planning + Environmental Linkage

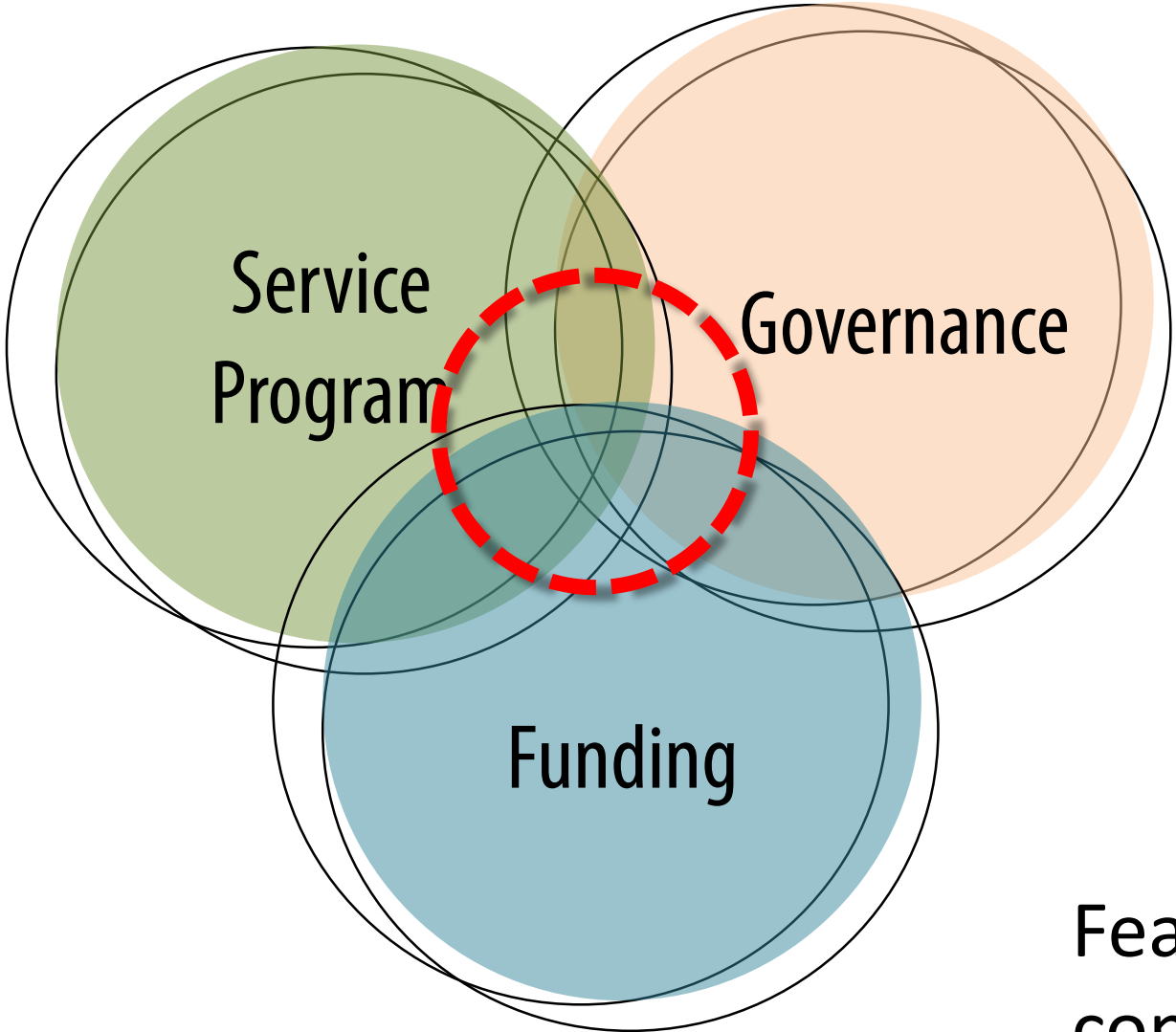
- FHWA process
- Link planning information directly to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)





Evaluate options that are based on:

- Existing enabling legislation
- Consistency with Michigan law
- Tools used by other transit authorities



Feasibility will occur with concurrence on all three elements.

Project Team

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Advisory Committee

- Federal Agencies
- State
- County
- Township
- City
- Downtown Development Authorities
- Chambers of Commerce
- Environmental Advocates
- Municipal/Land Use
- Economic Development/Business
- Communications

Interested Citizens + Community Participants

How does the Steering Committee contribute?

1. Meets as a group with the project team 5 times during the feasibility study.
2. Participates in advance reviews of the draft results of the study, and provides input to the Project Team.
3. Provides strategic recommendations and policy level input.
4. Brings to the Project Team the issues of the hour as they affect constituencies.

Steering Committee

SEMCOG	Carmine Palombo, Alex Bourgeau
WATS	Ryan Buck
MDOT	Tim Hoeffner
AAATA	Bob Guenzel
Livingston County	Donald Parker, Belinda Peters
Washtenaw County	Yousef Rabhi, Mary Jo Callan
City of Howell	Phil Campbell, Shea Charles
City of Brighton	Dana Foster
City of Ann Arbor	Christopher Taylor, Eli Cooper
Howell Township	Mike Coddington, Michael Tipton
Genoa Township	Gary McCririe
Hamburg Township	Pat Hohl
Northfield Township	Marilyn Engstrom, Howard Fink
University of Michigan	Sue Gott, Steve Dolen
Ann Arbor DDA	Roger Hewitt

How does the Advisory Committee contribute?

1. Meets as a group with the project team 3 times during the feasibility study.
2. Meets in a series of subgroups 2 times during the feasibility study.
3. Reviews and provides input into the results of the study relative to their own subject area of expertise and interest.

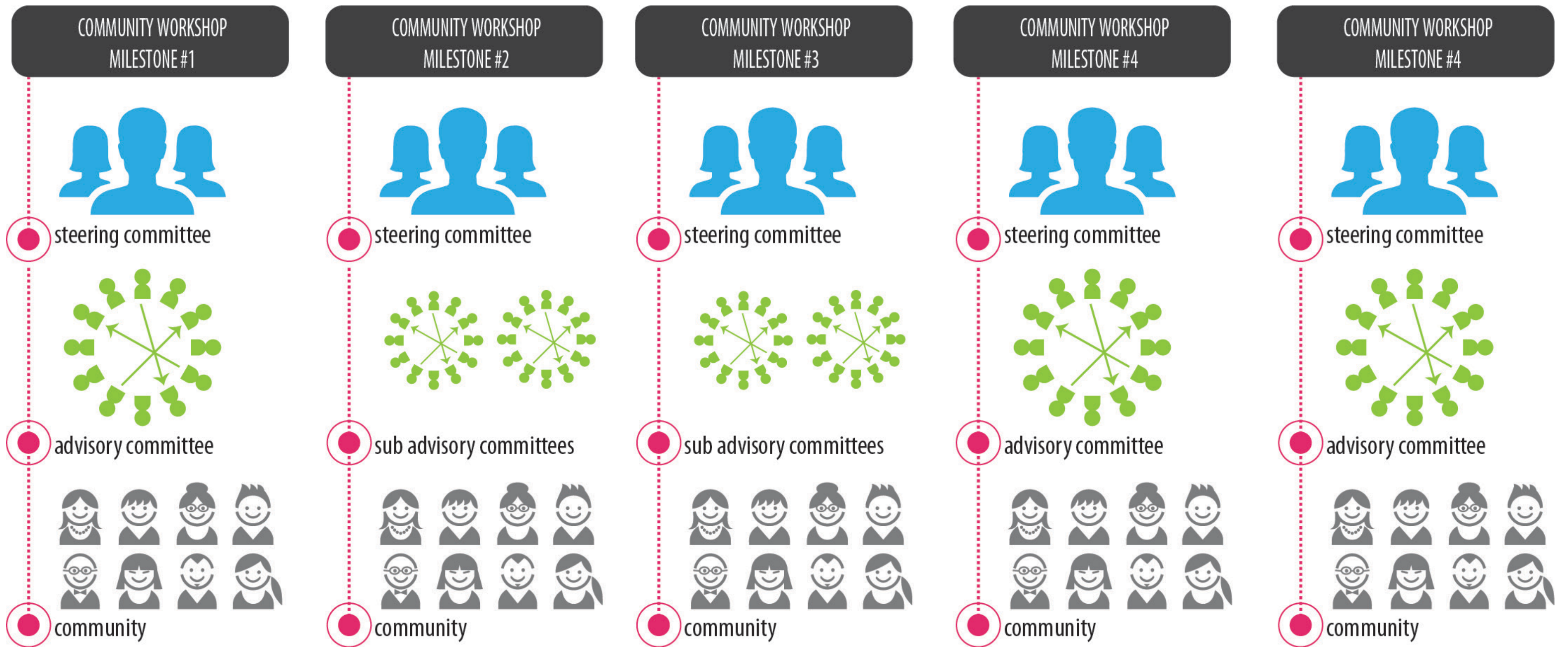
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- County
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- Chambers of Commerce
- Environmental Advocates
- Municipal/Land Use
- Transportation
- Host Railroads
- Economic Development/Business
- Communications

How can all of us contribute?

1. Be an active participant in the process.
2. Encourage participation from your friends and neighbors.
3. Ask questions!
4. Give us your feedback-in meetings, through the website, or write to us.
5. Communicate with your local officials.

Interested
Citizens +
Community
Participants



Kick-off Meeting
March 2015

Alternatives, Ridership + Station Locations
May 2015

Costs + Governance
July 2015

Governance + Funding
October 2015

Summary Presentation
December 2015

Welcome to The North-South Commuter Rail (WALLY) Study.

The purpose of this study is to assess the overall feasibility of the North-South Commuter Rail project.

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About this Site

Welcome to the North-South Commuter Rail Study

North-South Commuter Rail Overview

The North-South Commuter Rail (WALLY) project is a proposed 27-mile long commuter rail service that would connect Ann Arbor and Howell, with intermediate stops along the way. It is being evaluated as an alternative to driving in the US-23 corridor and as a way to promote economic development, sound land use and job creation in the region.

The concept for a proposed North-South Commuter Rail service originated almost 10 years ago when communities affected by roadway and traffic conditions on I-96 and US-23 between Howell and Ann Arbor learned of the prospective cost and impact of construction projects within this corridor. With estimated highway construction costs nearing \$500 million and predictions of multiple years of projects to improve capacity, a coalition of public and private entities developed a preliminary vision for rail service on existing state-owned track between Howell and the north side of Ann Arbor.

www.nsrailstudy.com



North-South Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

We have provided a project overview, explanation of the process and a review of the roles each of us will play – now that you see this all together, do you have any questions?



North-South Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

Our goal is to provide an objective and thorough assessment of feasibility. Are there important issues or concerns we have not discussed?



North-South Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

What issues related to the potential North-South Commuter Rail project concern you the most?



North-South Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

What elements of this feasibility study will be most important for you?



North-South Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

Community Meetings

March 12, 7:00-9:00
Brighton Community Center

March 16, 6:30-8:30
Ann Arbor District Library –
Downtown

Next Meetings – May, 2015

www.nsrailstudy.com