

---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

FEBRUARY 2026

---

# Wayne County Transit Evaluation

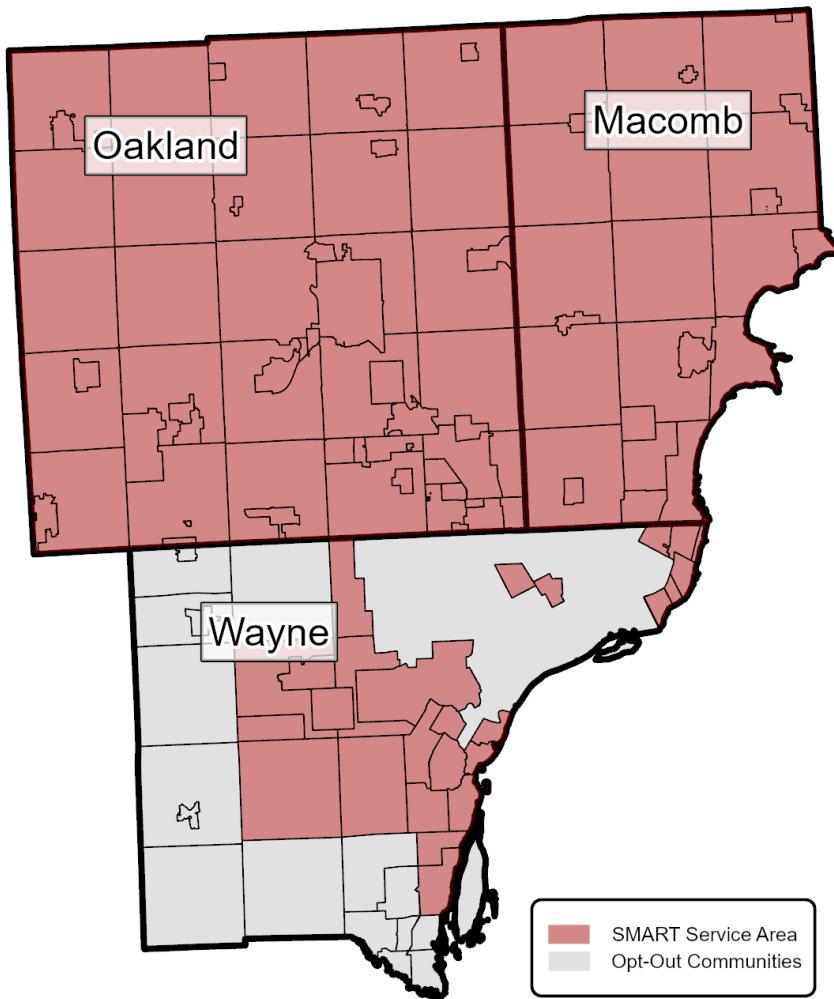
---

*This evaluation summarizes  
potential transit service  
expansions in Wayne County in  
preparation for a countywide  
transit ballot measure.*

SMART and Wayne County partnered to evaluate transit needs and mobility gaps in Wayne County communities that currently opt-out of SMART. Today, most of these 17 opt out communities<sup>1</sup> have limited or no fixed-route public transit, relying instead on specialized transportation providers. As Wayne County prepares for a 2026 countywide transit ballot measure, SMART conducted this evaluation to identify mobility gaps and future service scenarios; the measure will also require current Wayne opt-in communities to vote on renewing SMART services. **See page 4 for recommended service concepts.**

This analysis builds on SMART's existing regional network, which spans 1,742 square miles, serves 2.8 million residents, and operates 45 fixed routes and 5 Flex zones.

### SMART Service Area



**Evaluation goal:**  
*Identify where transit need is greatest and design service scenarios that expand access, improve equity, and strengthen regional mobility.*

### AUGUST 2026 BALLOT

Wayne County voters will decide whether to adopt a countywide transit funding model.

### If approved, SMART can:

- ✓ Implement new routes and existing route extensions in opt-out communities
- ✓ Provide microtransit services in opt-out communities
- ✓ Strengthen regional mobility

<sup>1</sup> Detroit is considered an opt-out Community; however, Detroit offers its own transit services.

To understand where new transit investment would have the greatest impact in the Wayne County opt-out communities, the project team conducted a **market analysis** focused on density threshold analysis and travel pattern hotspots. These methods, along with stakeholder engagement, guided the development of service concepts.

## Density Threshold Analysis

Demographic indicators, including population density and employment density, highlight areas where residents are most likely to use transit. This analysis also highlights where fixed-route transit could operate efficiently and where microtransit (SMART Flex service) would be more suitable.

## Travel Pattern Analysis

Origin-destination (O-D) analysis using location-based cell phone data illustrated where people are traveling within and between opt-out communities and the broader SMART service area.

## Market Analysis Key Findings

**Internal community trips dominate travel in 88% of opt-out communities** indicating demand for local transit options.

**Major travel flows exist between**

Livonia  $\leftrightarrow$  Detroit  
Livonia  $\leftrightarrow$  Westland  
Livonia  $\leftrightarrow$  Redford Township  
Canton Township  $\leftrightarrow$  Westland  
Plymouth Township  $\leftrightarrow$  Canton Township

**Short trips (< 5 miles) account for 59% of all travel**, highlighting the importance of local connections and first-/last-mile services.

**Most opt-out communities are primarily suitable for demand response or flexible route service.**

**Communities with the strongest potential for fixed-route service include:**

- Canton Township
- Livonia
- Northville
- Plymouth
- Plymouth Township

Key activity centers within these communities include *industrial corridors, education institutions, medical centers, mixed-use downtowns, and multifamily housing clusters*. These are all strong anchors for fixed-route connectivity.

## Service and Geographic Gaps

The opt-out portions of Wayne County, including large, growing communities such as Canton Township, Plymouth Township, and Livonia have no fixed-route service provided by SMART despite strong population and employment density.

Areas with clear density clusters lack consistent fixed-route access such as industrial corridors, mixed-use downtowns, medical and educational hubs, and multifamily housing.

## High-Demand Travel Corridors Needing Transit

Travel pattern findings highlight several corridors with high trip volumes but no transit options today:

- Livonia to/from Detroit and Livonia to/from Westland
- Western Wayne County Ford Road corridor (Canton–Westland–Dearborn Heights)
- Plymouth–Ann Arbor Road (Plymouth–Canton)
- Southern Wayne County Telegraph Road north–south spine
- I-275 / Haggerty corridor serving industrial and tech parks

These corridors represent the strongest opportunities for introducing fixed-route service or connecting microtransit to regional anchors.

## SMARTer Mobility Plan

The *SMARTer Mobility Plan* is a planning initiative completed in 2025 for SMART's opt-in communities, designed to improve service efficiency, expand mobility options, and modernize the overall transit network. The *SMARTer Mobility Plan* is now moving into implementation and includes system improvements, such as expanded Flex Zones, enhanced fixed-route connectivity, and increased service frequency, which will also benefit riders throughout Wayne County. **See Table 3 for the recommended SMARTer Mobility network details in Wayne County.**

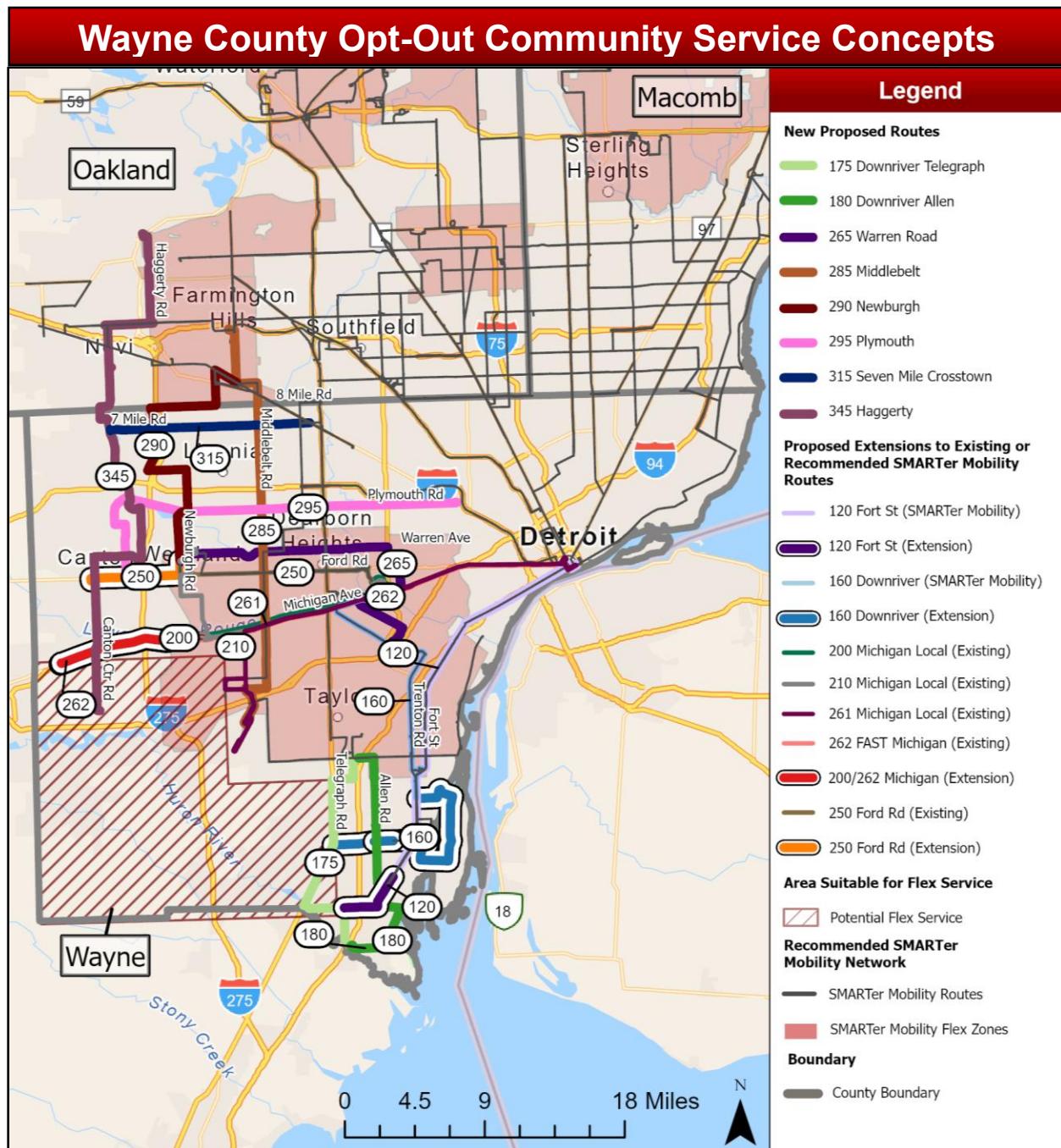
The Wayne County Transit Evaluation was developed specifically for opt-out communities and expands the assessment of transit services in Wayne County. It uses the SMARTer Mobility recommended network as the foundation for improving connectivity throughout the opt-out communities.

## Wayne County Opt-Out Community Service Concepts

In response to the Market Analysis findings, service concepts were developed. The recommended service concept package combines fixed-route expansions of existing routes, new routes, and a potential for Flex service in southwest Wayne County (Belleville, Huron Township, Sumpter Township, and Van Buren Township) to efficiently fill mobility gaps. This network reflects where demand is strongest and where transit can operate most efficiently. **See Table 1 and Table 2 for route details.**

The concept package includes strategic investments that:

- ✓ Extend existing SMART routes into opt-out communities
- ✓ Introduce new crosstown service where strong travel flows exist
- ✓ Identify areas that are well suited for Flex zone service
- ✓ Improve access to key employers, retail centers, healthcare, and education institutions



**Table 1: Route Extensions into Opt-Out Communities**

Route	Extension Distance *	Total Additional Vehicles Needed **	Communities Served
120 – Fort St.	6.4 miles	3	Detroit, Lincoln Park, Wyandotte, Southgate, Riverview, Trenton, Gibraltar, Brownstown Township, Flat Rock
160 – Downriver	5.9 miles	0	Dearborn, Allen Park, Melvindale, Lincoln Park, Southgate, Riverview, Trenton, Grosse Ile Township, Woodhaven, Brownstown Township
200/210 – Michigan Local	10.7 miles	0	Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Inkster, Westland, Wayne, Canton Township
250 – Ford Rd	11.1 miles	5	Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Garden City, Westland, Canton Township
261/262 – FAST Michigan	10.7 miles	0	Detroit, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Inkster, Westland, Wayne, Romulus, Canton Township

\*Distances for overall routes are round trip

\*\*Includes spare vehicles

**Table 2: Recommended New Routes into Opt-Out Communities**

Route	Total Additional Vehicles Needed*	Communities Served
175 – Downriver Telegraph	3	Taylor, Brownstown Township, Flat Rock, Rockwood
180 – Downriver Allen	3	Taylor, Southgate, Brownstown Township, Woodhaven, Trenton, Gibraltar, Rockwood
265 – Warren Road	5	Allen Park, Dearborn, Detroit, Dearborn Heights, Garden City, Westland
285 – Middlebelt (Only)	3	Farmington Hills, Farmington, Livonia, Westland, Garden City, Inkster, Romulus

Route	Total Additional Vehicles Needed*	Communities Served
290 – Newburgh	3	Farmington, Farmington Hills, Livonia, Northville Township, Plymouth Township, Westland
295 – Plymouth	3	Detroit, Redford Township, Livonia, Plymouth Township, Plymouth, Canton Township
315 – 7 Mile Crosstown	3	Detroit, Redford Township, Livonia, Northville Township
345 - Haggerty	5	Commerce Township, Novi, Northville, Northville Township, Plymouth Township, Plymouth, Canton Township, Van Buren Township

\*Includes spare vehicles

**Table 3: New Routes and Flex Zones (Opt-In Communities)**

Category	Route/Zone	Service Recommendation	Timeline
New Route	100 – Hamtramck	New fixed-route providing service to the City of Hamtramck and connecting to Midtown/medical district.	Year 1
New Route	120 – Fort Street	New Trenton–Downtown Detroit route replacing coverage from 830 Park and Ride and strengthening Downriver–CBD access.	Year 1
New Route	500 – Mound Road	New corridor from Hamtramck (Wayne) north along Mound Rd to Sterling Heights, improving crosstown connectivity and job access.	Year 2–3
Flex (Modified)	Dearborn Flex	Split/resize the former zone; expand to Fairlane North and along Van Born Rd; connects to 160, 200/210, 250, 261, 275.	Year 1
Flex (New)	Downriver Flex	New microtransit zone for Allen Park, Lincoln Park, Taylor, Wyandotte, Southgate with hospital and WCCCD access; connects to 125, 160, 162, 275.	Year 1
Flex (Pilot)	Late-Night Flex Zone (Wayne County)	Pilot 11 pm–2 am daily covering DTW, Romulus, Wayne, Westland, Inkster, Dearborn, Allen Park, River Rouge, Wyandotte, Taylor; replaces late-night service on 200/210/250; connections to 125/160/162/261/275/280.	Pilot (program recommendation)
Flex (New)	Romulus Flex	New zone serving DTW, Amazon, GM Powertrain, Home Depot DC; connects to 261 FAST Michigan, 125, and 280.	Year 1

---

**The recommended service concepts advance SMART's goals for improved mobility, enhanced economic access, equity, and regional connectivity.**

---

### **Improved Regional Connectivity**

The network strengthens major travel flows—especially between Livonia–Detroit, Livonia–Westland, and Dearborn–Canton—supporting more reliable and efficient travel across the region. See **Appendix A** for a map showing the proposed network's regional connectivity to DDOT routes.

### **Workforce Access**

Fixed-route expansions and new Flex zones improve access to major employment centers, including Amazon facilities, Ford plants, hospitals, community colleges, and major retail corridors.

### **Increased Mobility Options**

Seniors, individuals without vehicles, and low-income households gain significantly expanded mobility options, reducing isolation and improving access to essential services.

### **Right-Sized Services for Each Geographic Context**

The potential Southwest Wayne Flex Zone offers a cost-effective, demand-responsive solution for rural and suburban areas where fixed-routes are not feasible.

---

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

From September through December 2025, SMART conducted a series of engagement activities to gather input and inform service planning. These efforts ensured that local perspectives meaningfully shaped the evaluation process. SMART conducted **13 stakeholder meetings with 19 communities**, including local community leaders, elected officials, city managers, and transportation staff in the Wayne County SMART service area.

In addition to individual meetings, SMART hosted a virtual **Community Transit Visioning Session**. This session brought together transit agencies, advocacy organizations, and senior service providers for a collaborative discussion on market analysis findings and future mobility strategies.

## Implementation

The implementation strategy phases services from 2026-2029, beginning with services along high-demand corridors and regional links. **The estimated millage funding for Wayne County opt-out communities (excluding the City of Detroit) is approximately \$23.2M.<sup>2</sup>**

The financial plan allocates:

- Approximately **\$21.1M** in annual operating costs for the recommended fixed-route and potential Southwest Wayne Flex Zone.
- Approximately **\$1.2M** would support capital costs for new Flex service and additional funding for local transportation providers (such as Nankin Transit Commission and Liv&Go).
- Approximately **\$858,826** to support capital and operating expenses including vehicle purchases, staffing, and administration.

**Table 4: Financial Plan<sup>3</sup>**

<b>Financial Plan*</b>	
<b>Estimated Millage Funding**</b>	<b>\$23,200,744</b>
<b>Service Concepts</b>	<b>\$21,136,853</b>
New Routes	\$14,128,800
Existing/Extended Routes	\$6,352,988
Southwest Wayne Flex Zone – Operating Cost	\$655,065
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$1,205,065</b>
Southwest Wayne Flex Zone – Start Up/Capital Costs	\$655,065
Additional funding for Local Providers	\$550,000
<b>Remaining Funding</b>	<b>\$858,826</b>

*\*Based on an estimated millage rate of 0.9949, local revenue only. This does not include any potential federal or state funding.*

*\*\*Estimated Wayne County millage funding for opt-out communities, not including the City of Detroit.*

After the anticipated August 2026 ballot measure, SMART would first launch route extensions to establish stronger regional connections. The next phases introduce new fixed-route services in growing activity centers and expand Flex coverage in lower-density townships, ensuring each community receives the type of service best suited to its travel patterns. The sequence is structured to build momentum year over year, starting with existing route extensions, adding routes along major corridors, and implementing the potential Southwest Wayne Flex Zone. This creates a scalable expansion for service across the Wayne County opt-out communities, see **Table 5.**

---

<sup>2</sup> The estimated millage funding for Wayne County opt-out communities excludes Detroit's portion.

<sup>3</sup> Millage funding is in FY24 dollars, service concept cost estimates use FY25/26 dollars.

**Table 5: Implementation Strategy**

	<b>2026 - Preprogrammed SMARTer Mobility Improvements</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>
Millage Vote	August 2026			
Existing/Extended Routes	<i>120 Fort St (new route)*</i> <i>250 Ford Rd (new Saturday service and improved frequency)*</i> <i>261 FAST Michigan (increased service hours)*</i>	120 Fort St (Extension) 250 Ford Rd (Extension) 261/262 FAST Michigan (Extension)	160 Downriver	200 Michigan Local
New Routes		265 Warren Rd 285 Middlebelt (Only) 295 Plymouth	175 Downriver Telegraph 180 Downriver Allen	290 Newburgh 315 7 Mile Crosstown 345 Haggerty
New Flex Service			Belleville / Van Buren Twp	Huron Twp Sumpter Twp
Flex Start Up/Capital Costs				
Local Providers Additional Funding				
<b>Total Costs per Year (in 2025 dollars)</b>	—	<b>\$12,530,365</b>	<b>\$3,674,724</b>	<b>\$6,136,829</b>

\*Included in Year 1 implementation in SMARTer Mobility Plan

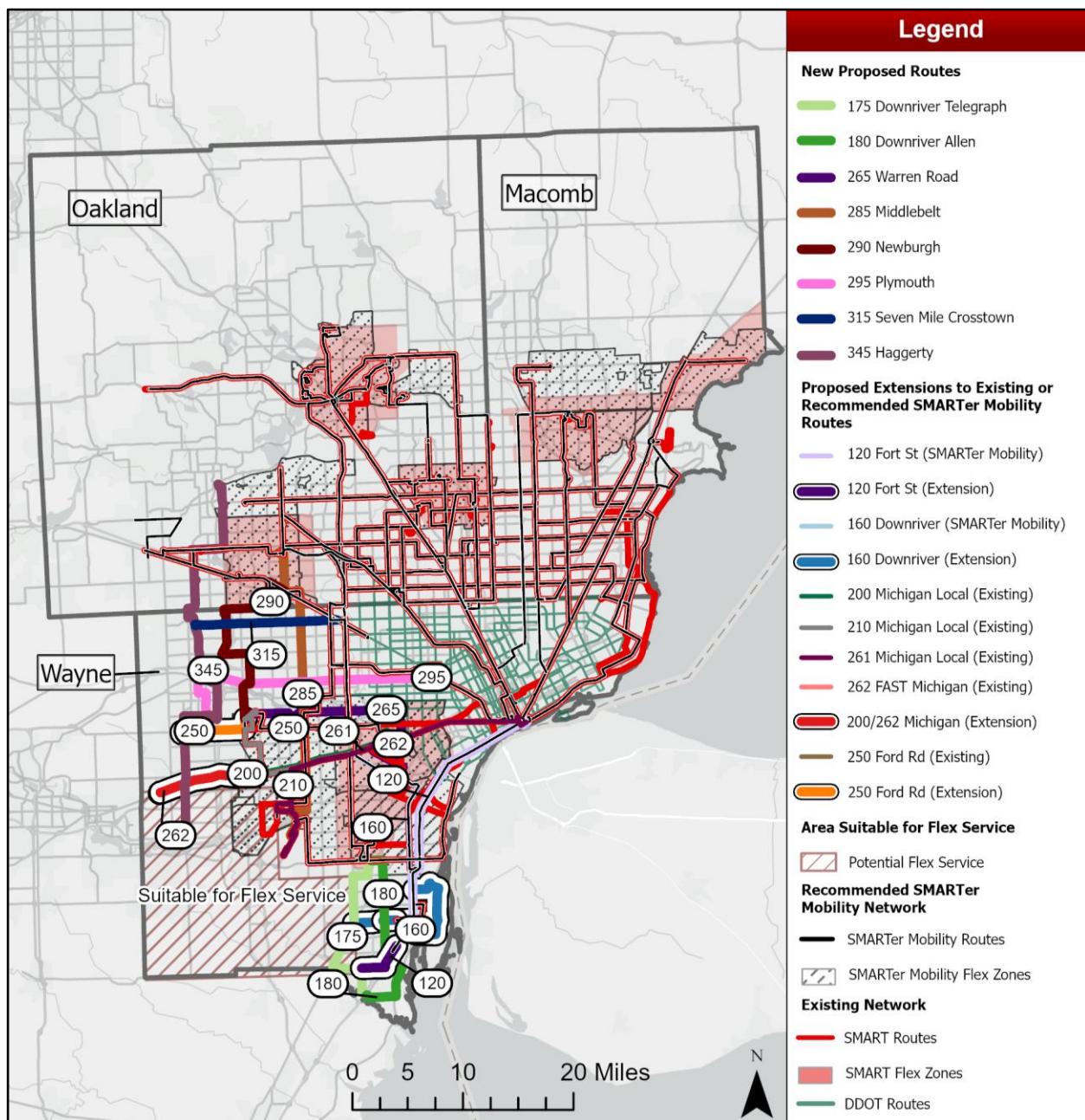
Note: *Italic font indicates SMARTer Mobility improvements that have already been budgeted for and are not included in this cost estimate.*

## Next Steps

Looking ahead, SMART will continue collaboration with stakeholders and further analyze service options. In parallel, SMART will begin public outreach and education to help Wayne County residents understand transit needs, proposed service concepts, and the details of the upcoming ballot measure.

The countywide transit funding proposal will be presented to voters in August 2026. If the measure is approved, SMART will be prepared to implement a phased rollout of new routes, extensions, and Flex zones.

## Appendix A: SMART and DDOT Network

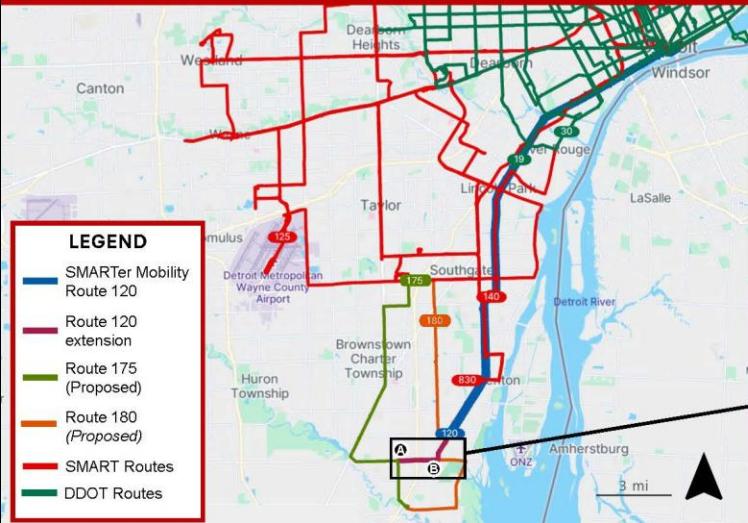


## Appendix B: Individual Route Profiles

### EXTEND: 120 – Fort St



#### Route Profile

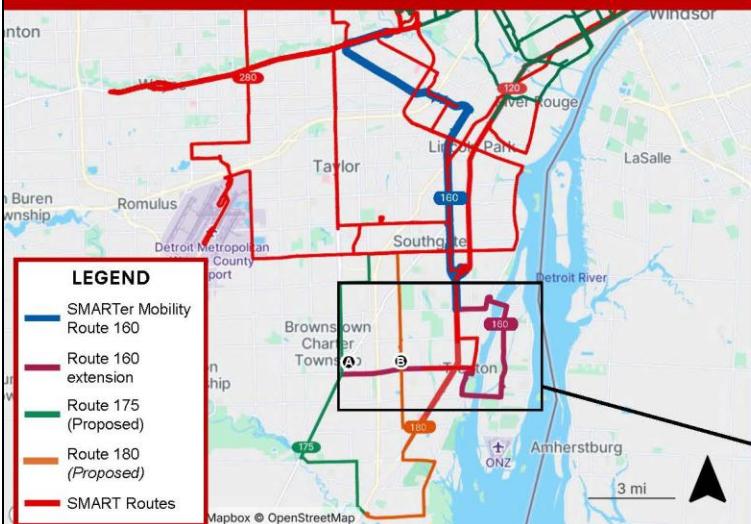


#### ROUTE EXTENSION

### EXTEND: 160 – Downriver



#### Route Profile

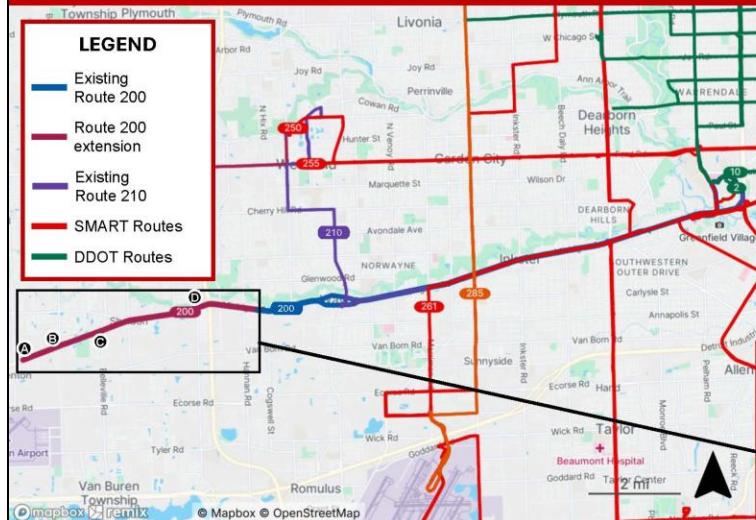


#### ROUTE EXTENSION

## EXTEND: 200/210 – Michigan Local



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

- Route 200 is patterned with Route 210, service plan changes impact both routes
- Extension extends Route 200 about 10.7 miles west (roundtrip distance)
- Route connects to Canton Township
- Route extension connects to:
  - A Amazon Warehouse
  - B Crossroad Villages shopping center
  - C Grocery stores near Belleville Rd
  - D Universal Technical Institute

### ROUTE EXTENSION



## EXTEND: 250 – Ford Road



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

- SMARTer Mobility includes a frequency change to 30 minutes on weekdays
- Extension extends about 11.1 miles west (roundtrip distance)
- Route connects to Canton Township
- Route extension connects to:
  - A Grocery and retail near Lotz Rd
  - B Retail and a medical facility at Willow Creek Center
  - C Retail and restaurants along Ford Rd
  - D Grocery and retail near Canton Center Rd

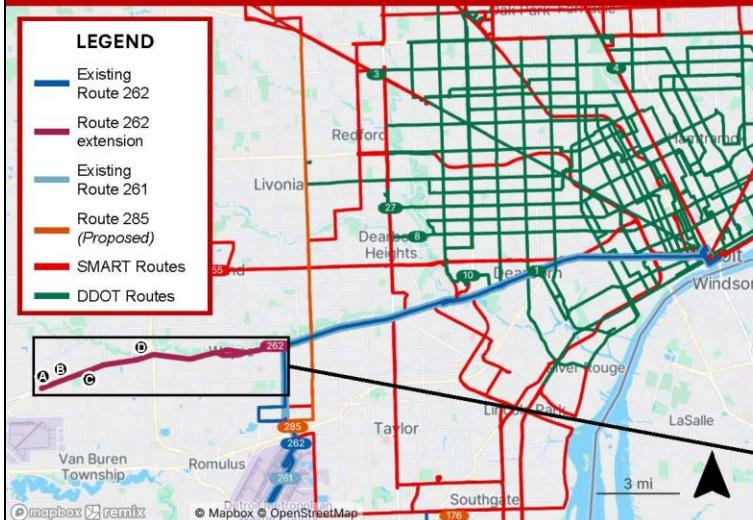
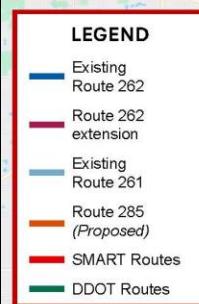
### ROUTE EXTENSION



## EXTEND: 261/262 – FAST Michigan



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

- Route 262 has two alternating patterns:
  - Existing Route 261 to DTW
  - New 262 extension
- Extension extends Route 262 about 10.7 miles west (roundtrip distance)
- Route connects to Canton Township
- Route extension connects to:
  - Amazon Warehouse
  - Crossroad Villages shopping center
  - Grocery stores near Belleville Rd
  - Universal Technical Institute

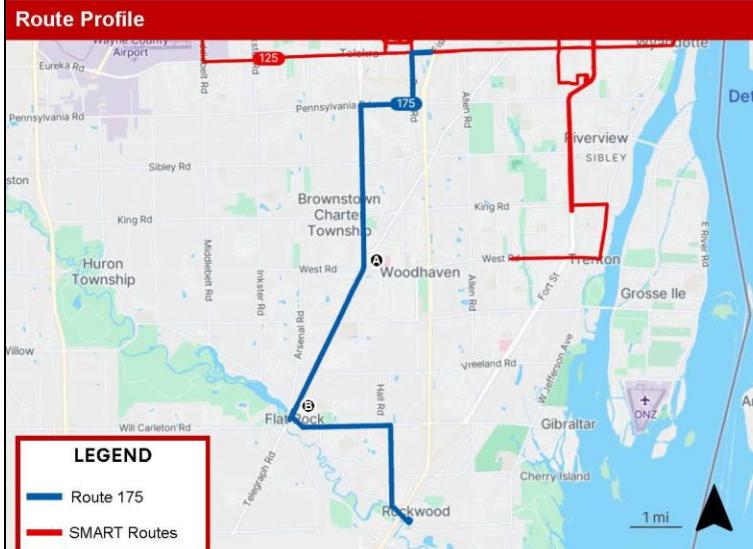
### ROUTE EXTENSION



## NEW: 175 – Downriver Telegraph



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

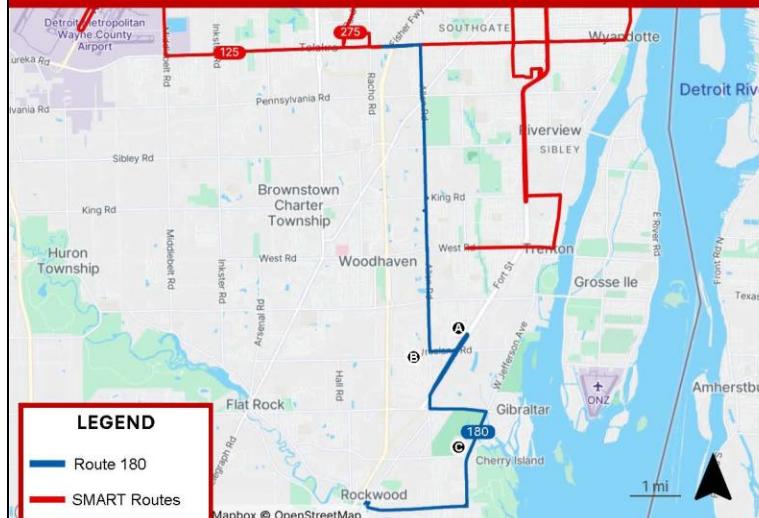
- New north-south route along Telegraph Rd
- Connects to 2 existing SMART routes (125 & 275)
- Connects the following communities: Brownstown Township, Flat Rock, Rockwood & Taylor
- Major destinations include:
  - Henry Ford Health Center – Brownstown
  - Flat Rock Community High School

24

## NEW: 180 – Downriver Allen



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

- New north-south route along Allen Rd
- Connects to 2 existing SMART routes (125 & 275)
- Connects the following communities: Brownstone Township, Gibraltar, Taylor, Trenton & Rockwood
- Major destinations include:
  - A** Beaumont Hospital Trenton
  - B** Woodhaven Village Square
  - C** Carlson High School

26

## NEW: 265 – Warren Road



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

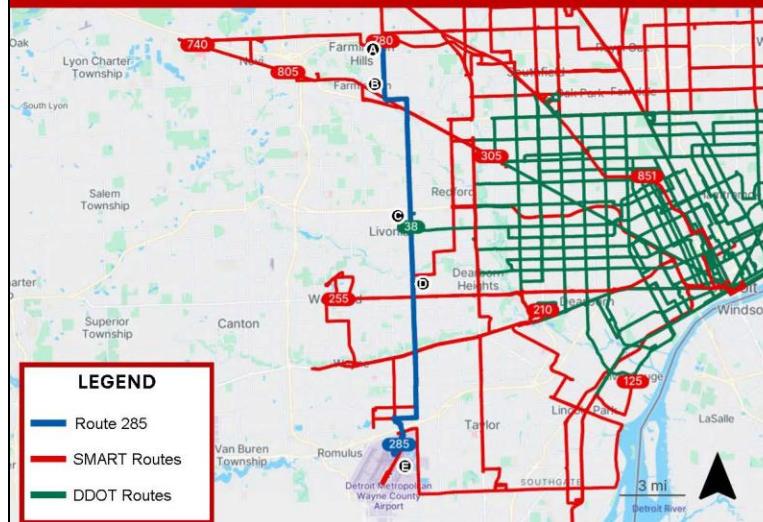
- New east-west route along Warren Rd
- Connects to 7 existing SMART routes (140, 210, 250, 255, 261, 275 & 280) and 5 existing DDOT routes (2, 8, 10, 46 & 60)
- Connects the following communities: Allen Park, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Detroit, Garden City & Westland
- Key destinations include:
  - A** Retail along Warren Rd
  - B** Residential along Warren Rd
  - C** Corewell Health Dearborn Hospital

28

## NEW: 285 – Middlebelt (Only)



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

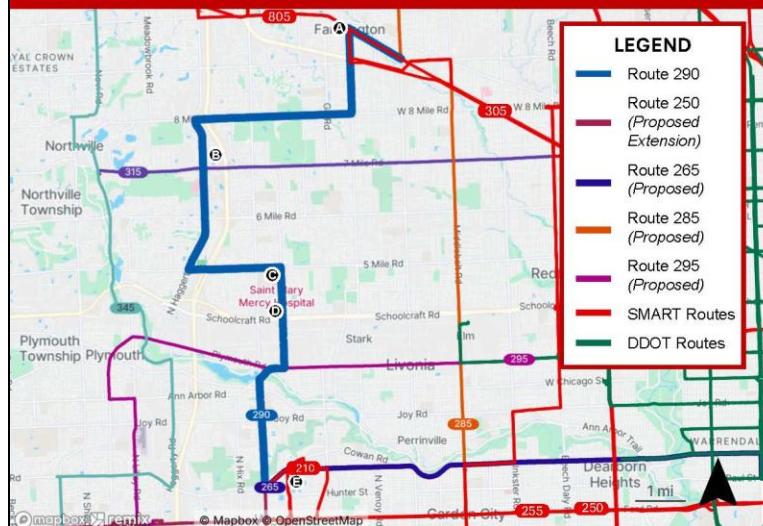
- New north-south route along Orchard Lake Rd and Middlebelt Rd
- Connects to 8 existing SMART routes (125, 210, 255, 305, 740, 780, 805 & 851) and 1 DDOT route (38)
- Connects the following communities: Farmington, Farmington Hills, Garden City, Inkster, Livonia, Romulus & Westland
- Major destinations include:
  - A** Oakland Community College at Orchard Ridge
  - B** Farmington High School
  - C** Residential and retail along Middlebelt Rd
  - D** Garden City High School
  - E** DTW

30

## NEW: 290 – Newburgh



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

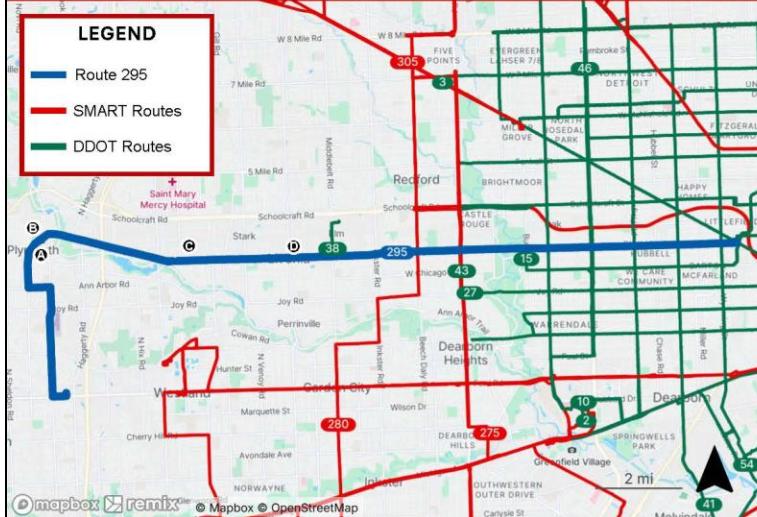
- New north-south route through Farmington, Livonia, and Westland
- Connects to proposed routes 250 (extension), 265, 285, and 295
- Connects to existing SMART routes 210, 250, 255, 305, and 805
- Major destinations include:
  - A** Downtown Farmington
  - B** Schoolcraft College
  - C** Trinity Health Livonia Hospital
  - D** Madonna University
  - E** Westland Meijer

32

## NEW: 295 – Plymouth



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

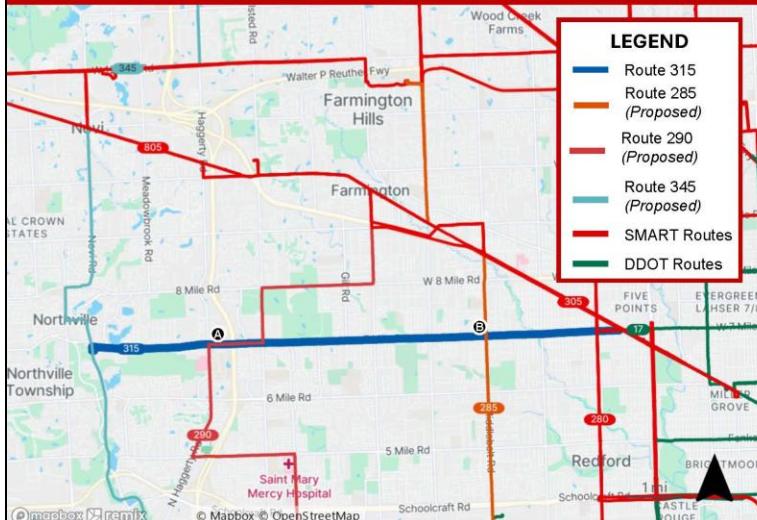
- New east-west route along Plymouth Rd
- Connects to 2 existing SMART routes (275, 280) and 8 DDOT routes (3, 10, 15, 38, 41, 43, 46 & 54)
- Connects the following communities: Canton Township, Detroit, Livonia, Plymouth, Plymouth Township, & Redford
- Major destinations include:
  - Downtown Plymouth
  - Plymouth Recreation Complex
  - Ford Livonia Transmission Plant
  - Retail along Ford Rd

34

## NEW: 315 – 7 Mile Crosstown



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

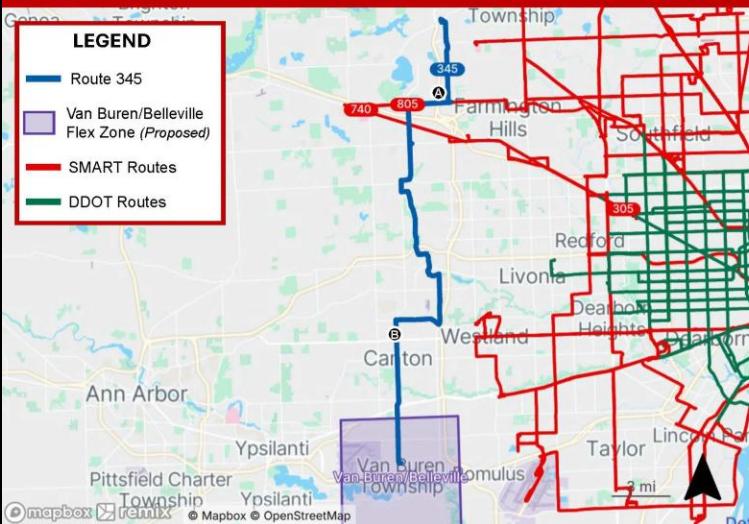
- New east-west route through Northville Township, Livonia, and Redford Township
- Connects to proposed routes 285, 290, and 345
- Connects to existing SMART routes 275, 280, 305, 375 and 805
- Major destinations include:
  - Retail and restaurants near Haggerty Rd
  - Retail near Middlebelt Rd

36

## NEW: 345 – Haggerty



### Route Profile



### Key Findings

- New north-south route along Northville Rd, Novi Rd, and Belleville Rd
- Connects to 3 existing SMART routes (305, 740 & 805)
- Connects the following communities: Canton Township, Commerce Township, Northville, Northville Township, Novi, Plymouth, Plymouth Township & Van Buren Township
- Provides a link to the proposed Van Buren/Belleville Flex Zone
- Major destinations include:
  - A Retail and restaurants in Commerce Township and Novi
  - B Retail, groceries, and residential along Canton Center Rd

38