



**Planning & Technology Committee Members**

Mayor Rosalynn Bliss

Jack Hoffman  
Citizen Members:

Robert Postema  
Ryan Anderson

Terry Schweitzer (Chair)  
Dave Bulkowski

Paul Troost

**PLANNING & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

**Monday, November 16, 2020 – 2 p.m.**

**Virtual Meeting**

**AGENDA**

	<u>PRESENTER</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
1. PUBLIC COMMENT		
2. MINUTES REVIEW – August 17, 2020	Terry Schweitzer	Approval
3. DISCUSSION		
a. RCS Community Room Technology Update	Andy Prokopy	Information
b. COA Update	Nick Monoyios	Information
4. ADJOURNMENT		



**Future Planning & Technology Committee Members**

Mayor Rosalynn Bliss      Jack Hoffman      Robert Postema      Terry Schweitzer (Chair)      Paul Troost  
Citizen Members:      Ryan Anderson      Dave Bulkowski

**FUTURE PLANNING & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, August 17, 2020 – 8:30 a.m.**

**Virtual Meeting**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Committee Members Present:

Ryan Anderson, Dave Bulkowski, Jack Hoffman, Robert Postema, Terry Schweitzer, Paul Troost

Committee Members Absent:

Mayor Rosalynn Bliss

Staff Attendees:

Max Dillivan, Win Irwin, Julie Ilbrink, Deron Kippen, Nick Monoyios, Steve Schipper

Other Attendees:

Hank Kelly, Josh Naramore

---

Mr. Schweitzer called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were offered.

**2. MINUTES – June 1, 2020 Future Planning & Technology Committee Meeting**

Minutes from the June 1, 2020 Future Planning & Technology Committee Meeting were reviewed and approved.

**3. DISCUSSION**

**a. Fall 2020 Service Rollout**

Mr. Monoyios presented the Fall 2020 Service Rollout Plan.

Throughout Summer 2020, staff monitored emerging ridership patterns of the reduced COVID service on a daily basis to inform service provisions for Fall 2020. In addition to monitoring fixed route ridership recovery, staff also coordinated with our contracted partners to determine their preferred level of service.

Staff is anticipating a significant reduction in State operating assistance for FY21 (assuming 20% as compared to 31% for FY20) which will impact our operating budget for providing fixed route service as well as our contracted service rate per hour. Consequently, staff's Fall 2020 service level determination

required a prudent balance between pursuing a normalization of service levels against the financial impacts of the anticipated higher operating costs.

The overall service levels for Fall 2020 fixed route and contracted services are not to the normalized pre-COVID levels yet, but provide additional service from the Summer 2020. Moreover, the 15-passenger capacity on all vehicles will be removed for the Fall 2020 service. Face masks are required on all the vehicles, safety and sanitization protocols have been consistently demonstrated, and the capacity increase will encourage stronger ridership growth.

Once the State operating percentage is ascertained, staff will meet with contracted partners to discuss service level implications for developing the January 2021 service.

**b. COA Review and Next Steps**

Mr. Dillivan presented the COA Review.

At the June ITP Board meeting, the Board initiated a 60-day pause on progress of *Mobility for All* (COA). Planning staff would like to take advantage of this opportunity by providing an overview of public outreach received to-date, share important data findings regarding regional travel patterns, and detail key factors for consideration when determining next steps for the project moving forward. Lastly, this memo includes a recommendation from Planning staff for the Board's consideration regarding the project's next steps including a proposed timeline.

Continuing progress on *Mobility for All* will be essential to best-position the agency to maintain its fixed route system through this period of uncertain funding, ridership levels, and community needs. While the current climate and status of the pandemic may change frequently, continuing to move forward with a publicly-vetted, scalable plan will allow the agency to adjust service levels to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of the system as necessary.

**c. Laker Line Update**

Mr. Monoyios provided an update on the Laker Line. It is taking place on Monday, August 24 at 11 a.m. at Pugh Station. Invitations have gone out to the Board members, management team and congressional representatives. Responses have been coming in, and they are putting together the final plans for the event. Mr. Monoyios shared the entire project is still under budget. He also shared that Peter Varga and Tom Haas will be the first passengers on the first bus out of the station.

**d. TOD Study Update**

Mr. Monoyios provided an update on the TOD study. He shared they have reoriented the public outreach methods. They are putting together a framework of information which will be shared with the committee when ready.

**4. PRESENTATION**

**a. Mobile GR Mobility Initiatives – Hank Kelly**

Hank Kelly from Mobile GR presented an overview of current and future initiatives. They shared the current relationship with The Rapid, and then reviewed present initiatives:

- Micromobility Pilot
- Go!Bus Plus
- AVGR
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

- DASH
- Transit Improvements
- Smart Growth American Curb Management Cohort

Hank continued with the future and wish-list initiatives which include:

- Low income pass program
- Mobility as a service integration
- Carshare pilot
- Dedicated bus lane pilot
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure expansion
- Traffic signal / ITS investments and modernizations
- Transportation demand management collaboration
- Shared ticket / work order management system with The Rapid

## 5. RIDERSHIP REPORTS

### a. July 2020 Ridership Recovery & On Time Performance

Since the pandemic's effects on system, ridership recovery has varied considerably on a route-by-route basis as the pandemic has hit certain geographic areas and socio-economic classes at various magnitudes. "Recovery" for the purposes of this memo indicates the percentage of ridership currently observed on the system as compared to the same time period during the previous year.

The Summer 2020 service plan focused on enhancing frequency along essential corridors and communities of concern, including Silver Line, Route 1 Division, Route 2 Kalamazoo, Route 4 Eastern (to 28th Street), Route 9 Alpine (to Greenridge Mall), and Route 28 28th Street Crosstown. Ridership has tended to respond positively to frequency increases and simplification of the routes (i.e., elimination of most route's peak short patterns).

## 4. AJOURNMENT

This meeting was adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 9, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Ilbrink, Board Secretary

# RCS Community Room Technology Update: Phase 2

## **Project Overview**

Back in 2019, ITP upgraded the audio capabilities as part of Phase 1 of the Rapid Central Station community conference room update to improve accessibility, sound quality, and audio recording options for meetings.

Phase 2 of the room upgrade is slated to replace the old, ceiling mounted projector and screen with large display monitors on mobile carts to enhance the presentation flexibility in the room.

While reviewing the options for this second phase of the room upgrade, additional considerations have been raised by members of the community in regards to streaming capabilities of board meetings online. Although meetings are currently accessible to the public through Zoom during this pandemic, there still may be health concerns and scheduling conflicts that may prevent members of the community from attending in-person public board meetings in the future.

ITP would like the committee's feedback and recommendation with the options outlined below for upgrading the video capabilities of the RCS community conference room.

Funding for this upgrade has been identified and will be derived from State and Federal grants.

## **Option #1**

**Cost: \$31,152**

### **Key Changes:**

- Retire old ceiling projector and screen, replace with (3) 86" monitors on mobile carts

### **Added Benefits:**

- Carts provide greater flexibility in the room setup regardless of meeting style, size, or configuration.
- Wireless presentation option added for monitors to eliminate wall input accessibility constraints.

## **Option #2**

**Cost: \$55,849**

### **Key Changes:**

- Retire old ceiling projector and screen, replace with (3) 86" monitors on mobile carts
- Install 4 cameras throughout the room to capture video for streaming service and archival purposes.
- Install and configure a video streaming appliance to allow events to be streamed to the Internet.

### **Added Benefits:**

- Carts provide greater flexibility in the room setup regardless of meeting style, size, or configuration.
- Wireless presentation option added for monitors to eliminate wall input accessibility constraints.
- Motorized pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) cameras mounted on 4 walls provide flexibility and complete room coverage.
- Camera controls and editable presets will be integrated into the existing room touch panel for ease of use.
- Video streaming capabilities to (Facebook, YouTube, etc.) allow for increased access to public meetings.



**Date:** November 11, 2020  
**To:** Future Planning & Technology Committee  
**From:** Nick Monoyios – Planning Department  
Max Dillivan – Planning Department  
**Subject:** COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS (COA) UPDATE

## **OVERVIEW**

Since the Board Retreat, staff has resumed our third phase of public outreach. This is primarily consisting of virtual stakeholder sessions, developing printed materials available on-board buses, and scheduling virtual forums for employers located in the proposed on-demand zones. So far, meetings have included:

- Cascade Township
- Alpine Township,
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce
- The Right Place
- Calvin University
- City of Walker planning staff
- The Essential Needs Task Force (ENTF),
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Grand Rapids Public Schools
- Southeast Kentwood Employers

While several additional virtual meetings are scheduled within the coming weeks, a public outreach summary of this third phase of engagement will be presented to the Board in December 2020.

## **ON-DEMAND ZONES**

### **TASK FORCE**

Staff is developing an internal task force to develop an exhaustive planning framework to ensure the optimum implementation that maximizes operational effectiveness. Additionally, staff is actively identifying employers of each zone to coordinate virtual meetings for assessing demand and introduce the proposed service.

## Kentwood/Airport Zone

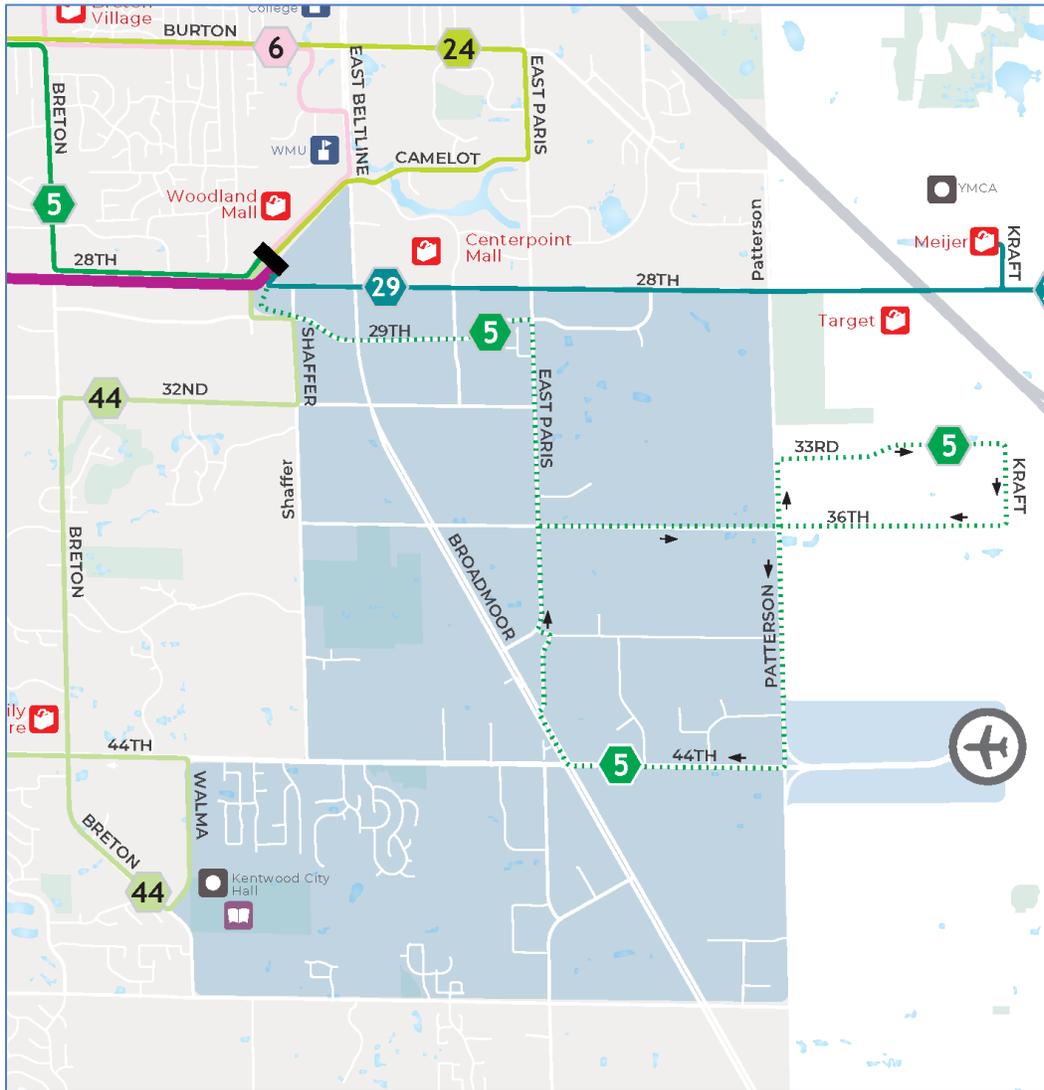


Figure 1 – Map on proposed Kentwood/Airport On-Demand Zone

Table 1 – Population & Employment access of the proposed Kentwood/Airport On-Demand Zone

	POPULATION	EMPLOYMENT
Existing Fixed Route (inside zone)	2,076	17,126
On-Demand Zone	5,930	27,031
Difference	3,854	9,905
% Change	185.65%	57.84%

Table 2 – Service characteristics of the proposed Kentwood/Airport On-Demand Zone

SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS	
Weekdays	6AM-10PM
Weekends	7AM-7PM
# of Vehicles	1 all day
Connections	Woodland Mall & Kentwood City Hall
	Route 5 would continue to operate in the on-demand zone during high-demand times of day

## Walker/Three Mile On-Demand Zone

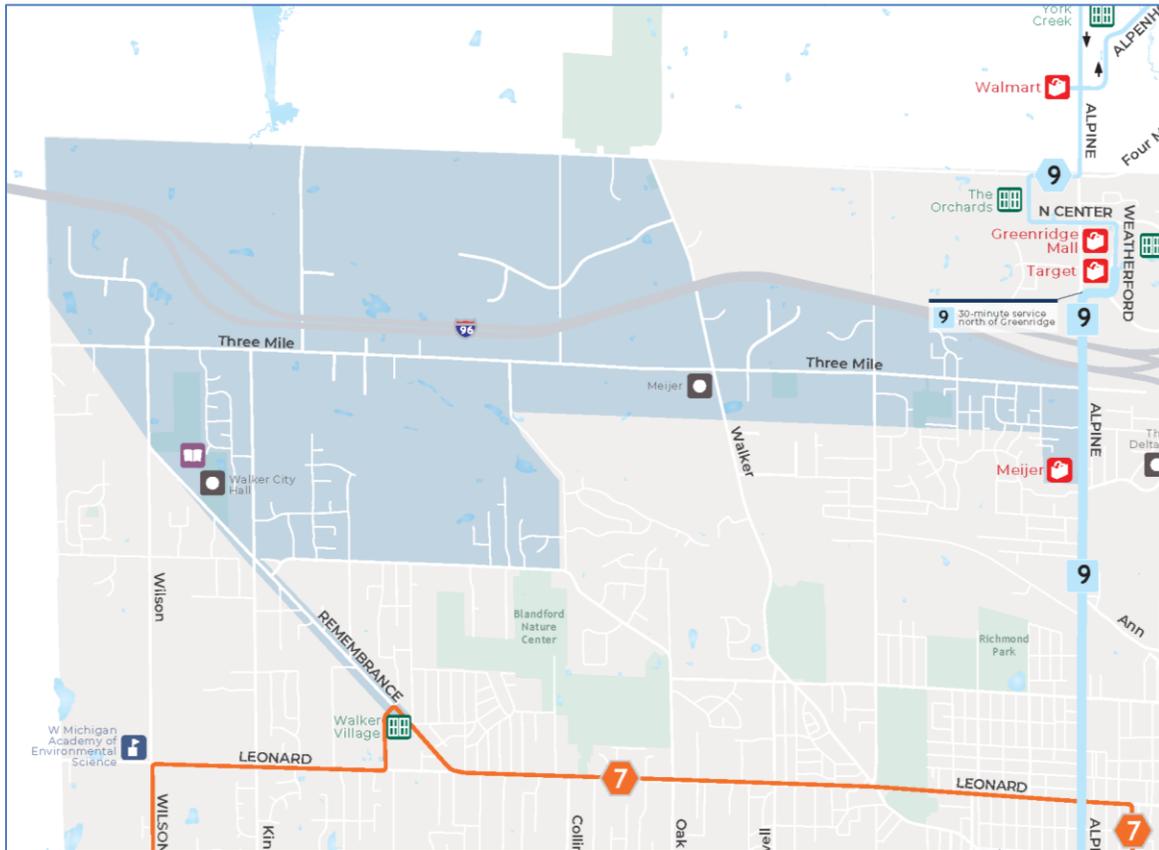


Figure 2 – Map on proposed Walker/Three Mile On-Demand Zone

Table 3 – Population & Employment access of the proposed Walker/Three Mile On-Demand Zone

	POPULATION	EMPLOYMENT
Existing Fixed Route (inside zone)	10,288	2,389
On-Demand Zone	13,003	14,544
Difference	2,715	12,155
<b>% Change</b>	<b>26.39%</b>	<b>508.79%</b>

Table 4 – Service characteristics of the proposed Walker/Three Mile On-Demand Zone

SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS	
Weekdays	6AM-10PM
Weekends	7AM-7PM
# of Vehicles	2 peak – 1 off-peak
Connections	Route 9 at Alpine Meijer – 30 mins at peak – 60 mins off-peak
	Route 7 at Walker Village – 30 mins at peak – 60 mins off-peak

## TOWNSHIP IMPLICATIONS

Current Board policy states that Townships are required to contractually agree to pay for the revenue hours of service within the respective Township. However, the Preferred Alternative has two (2) options for consideration that conflict with this current Board policy.

### Route 4 – Eastern

For over a decade, The Rapid has had a contractual relationship with Gaines Township for the revenue hours served to access Woodfield Apartments (60<sup>th</sup> St. & Eastern Ave.). In 2010, the Board authorized the addition of non-billable revenue service into Gaines Township to serve the Meijer, East Kentwood High School, and Celebration Cinema South due to the ample recovery time at the former terminus at the Clocktower Center at 60<sup>th</sup> & Kalamazoo.

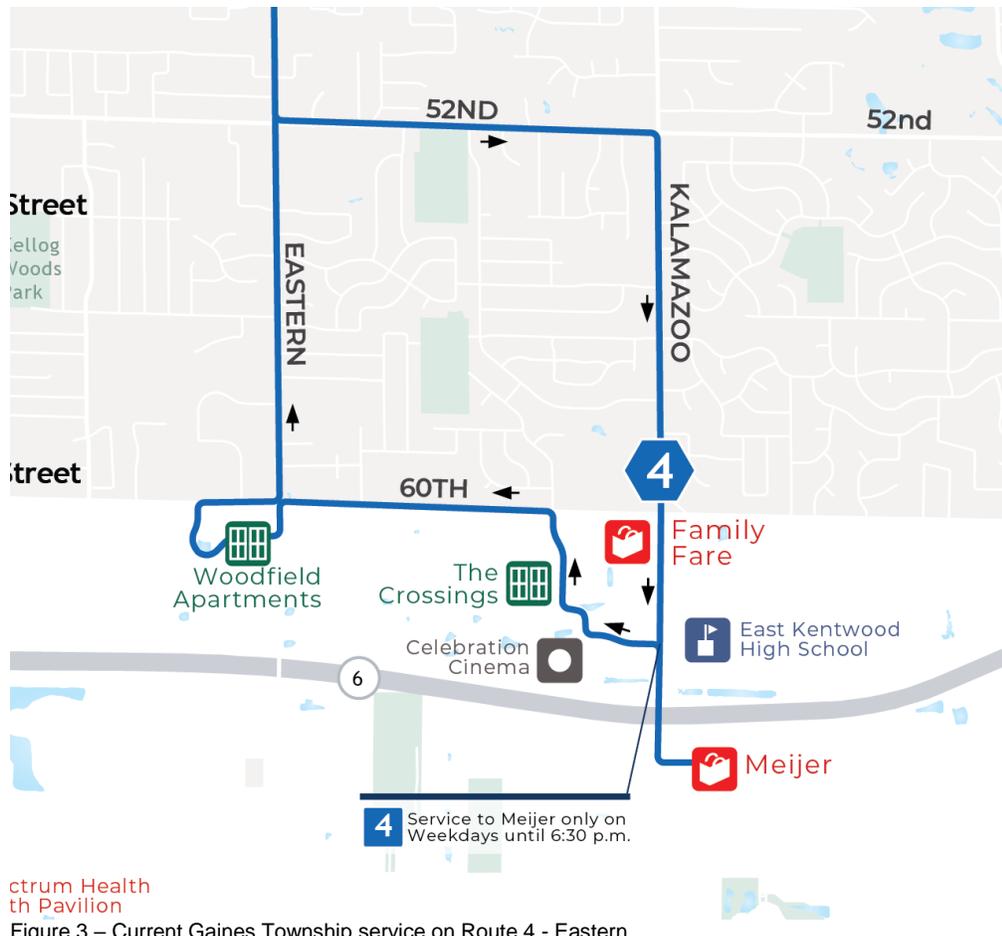




Figure 4 – Route 4 - Average Daily Ridership – Outbound



Figure 5 – Route 4 - Average Daily Ridership - Inbound

Throughout the data collection phase and subsequent public outreach phases, the Preferred Alternative is recommending that the southern leg of Route 2 – Kalamazoo be realigned to serve the Gaines Twp. Meijer (as opposed to the Kentwood City Hall loop on Breton Ave. & Walma Ave.). There is increasing demand to serve this location at a higher level and will create a stronger connection point for transfers to Route 4 – Eastern. This realignment of Route 2 – Kalamazoo will provide all-day service to the Gaines Twp. Meijer at 15-minute frequencies, but will increase the non-billable service to Gaines Township by almost eight (8) times.

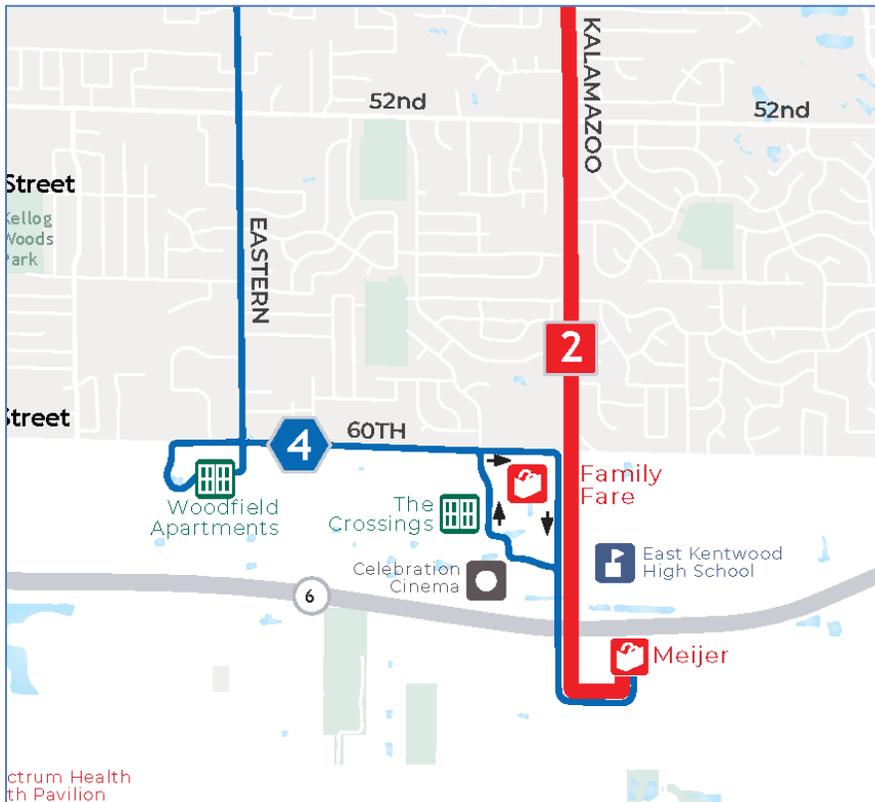


Figure 6 – COA Preferred Alternative – Gaines Township Meijer Terminus

## Route 11 – Plainfield

Additionally, the data collection phase and subsequent public outreach phases have identified that the Meijer in Plainfield Township demonstrates high demand. Overall, this is the highest requested location for service within our entire system and immediately adjacent Townships. Route 11 – Plainfield currently terminates at Elmdale St. just south of the Township border. The maps below indicate the level of demand further north on Plainfield.

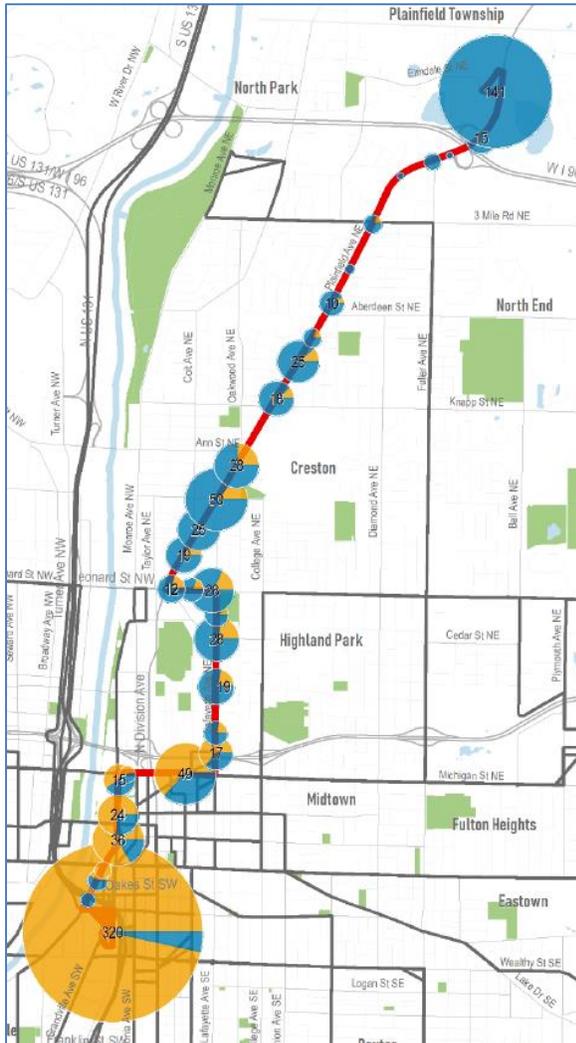


Figure 7 – Route 11 - Average Daily Ridership – Outbound



Figure 8 – Route 11 - Average Daily Ridership - Inbound

While the Preferred Alternative identifies Route 11 – Plainfield as having 15-minute all-day service, there is not enough time to stretch the alignment further north to serve Meijer. Therefore, a cost-neutral solution to serve Meijer would be to reduce the frequency to 20-minutes all day.

It is important to note that both Gaines and Plainfield Townships have not been approached to pay for these additional revenue hours for service, but the development of the Preferred Alternative recommends these options along with staff concurrence because of the significant levels of demand from the population within the six-cities.

Further Board consideration is requested prior to proceeding with this recommendation.

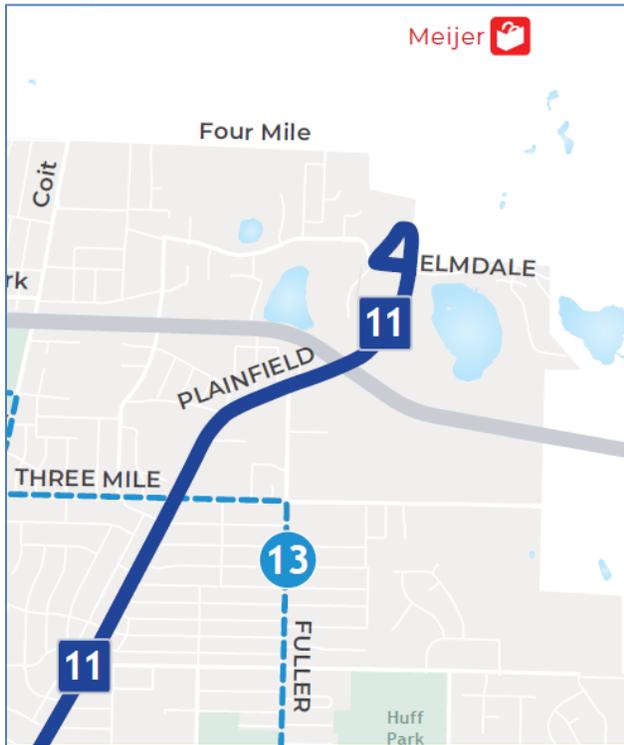


Figure 9 – Current COA Preferred Alternative – Route 11 - Plainfield

## **BOARD RETREAT FOLLOW-UP OPEN HOUSES**

Staff will be creating a series of four (4) 60-minute 'open house' format Zoom meetings in the next two weeks for Board members to have an open discussion with staff to address any outstanding questions and concerns. This 'open house' format would allow a Board member to log on at any time during the meeting duration with staff available and on standby for discussion. There is no intention of any guided presentation.

As an in-depth supplement to the Board retreat, staff feels that there is added value to further address:

1. A general overview of **public outreach and feedback** received since the Board retreat,
2. An overview of current **staff analysis/opinions** of some potentially difficult trade-off decisions,
3. A deeper dive into the specifics of the proposed **on-demand zones**, and
4. **Township policy implications** as it relates to service recommendations

Aside from these four (4) focus area items, staff proposes to use a majority of the session times dedicated to open discussion.