



# Public Transportation in Novi: A SMART Overview

Novi City Council - August 27, 2018

# Overview

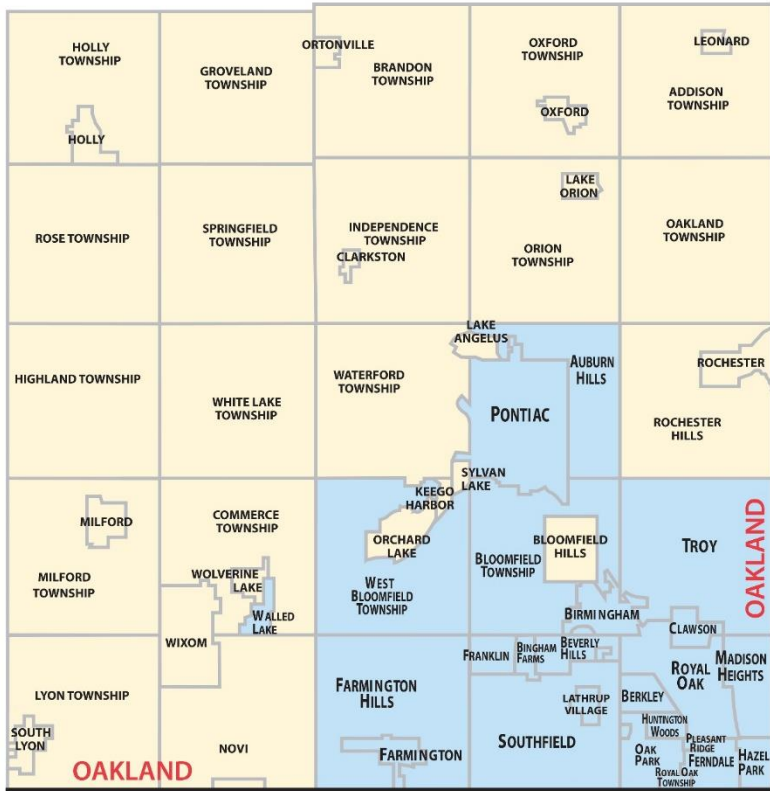
- Introduction to Public Transportation and SMART
- Transit context in Novi
- Finding the right mix of transit services for Novi



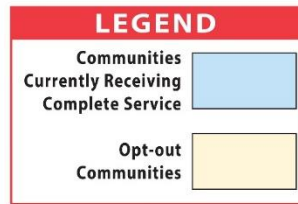
# What is SMART?

- **SMART** is Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (formerly known as SEMTA)
- Created by Michigan Public Act 204 of 1967
- 1 of 4 public transportation agencies in SE MI
- Operates transit service in Oakland, Macomb and Wayne Counties
- Annual ridership: 10 Million
- Full services funded by property tax millage

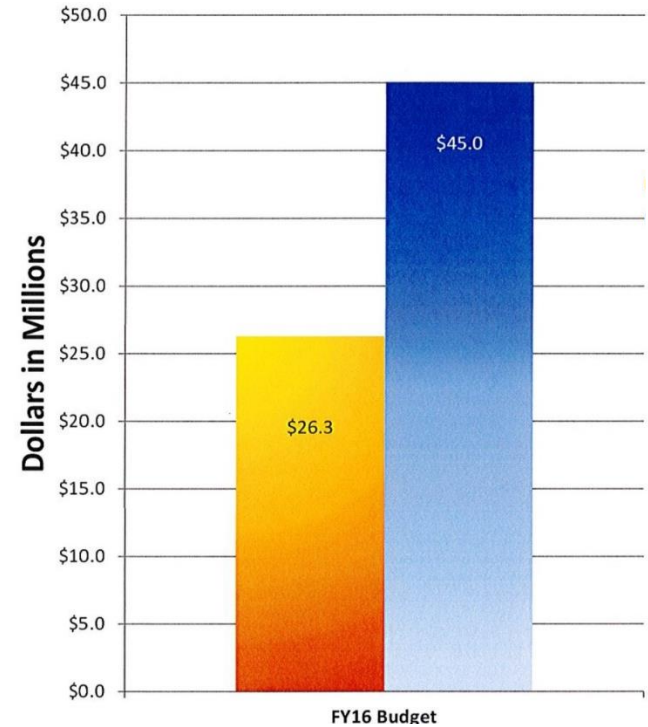
# SMART in Oakland County



## Oakland County Opt-in and Opt-out Communities



## Oakland County \$1.71 service returned per \$1 contributed



- Contribution from County
- SMART Services Provided

# What is “Opt-In”

- SMART agency established under PA 204 of 1967
  - By law, SMART cannot levy its own millage
- Oakland County Public Transportation Authority (OCPTA) established under PA 196 of 1986
  - OCPTA sets rate, collects millage and contracts with SMART to provide service in Oakland County
  - Opt in to OCPTA and millage by action of elected body, approval of millage by voters
  - Communities must opt in to the OCPTA to levy millage and receive full SMART services

# SMART service “layers”

- **Fixed-route bus** – local, regional, park and ride routes, and the new ***FAST service***
- **SMART Connector** – Reservation-based curbside small bus service for all residents
- **ADA Paratransit** – Curbside small bus service for approved disabled riders near bus routes
- **Community Partnership Program** - Millage dollars directly support community transportation in 70+ communities

# Service design basics

- Modes
- Headway
- Coverage vs Frequency
- Span
- Speed
- Vehicle Type
- Alternative Service Designs



# Fixed-route and other modes

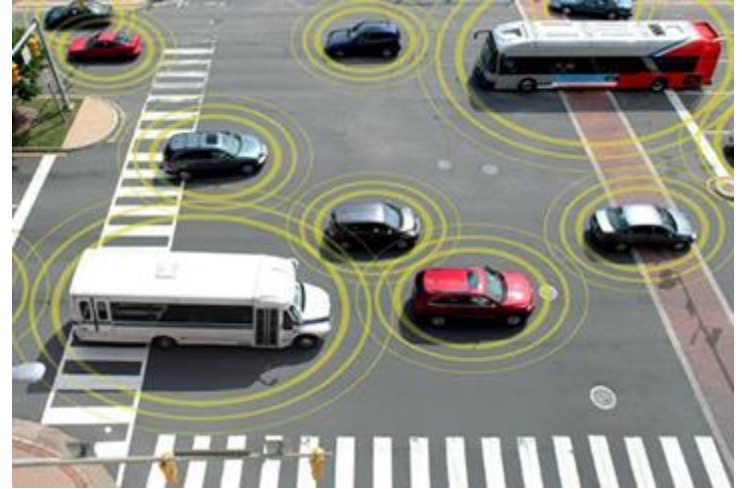
- Fixed-route
  - Major corridor vs. local coverage routes
  - Limited-stop routes
  - Peak-period commuter express routes
- Flexible and Demand-response
  - Flex or zone routes, ADA paratransit, Dial-a-Ride, etc.





# SMART benefits

- Improved access to regional workforce for local employers
- New fleet of buses
- Cutting-edge new mobility technology
- Works with communities to develop CPP service

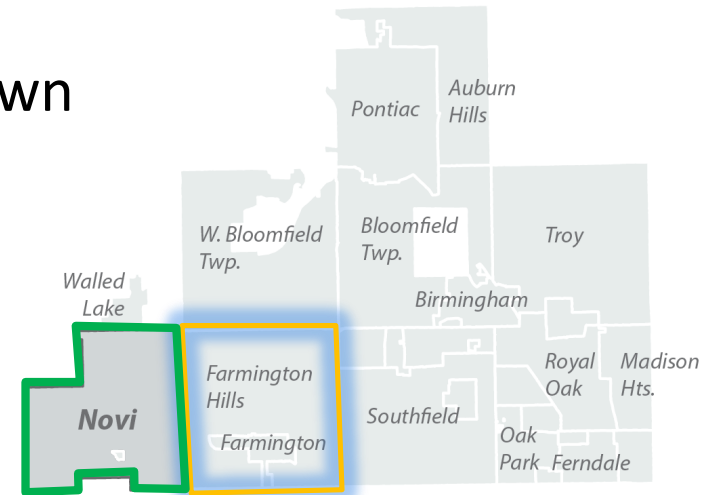


# Community Focus

## FARMINGTON HILLS



- Two park and ride routes to Downtown
- Multiple local bus routes connecting to neighboring communities
- SMART Connector service
- City-wide Dial-A-Ride service
- Community Transit run through joint Senior Center with Farmington



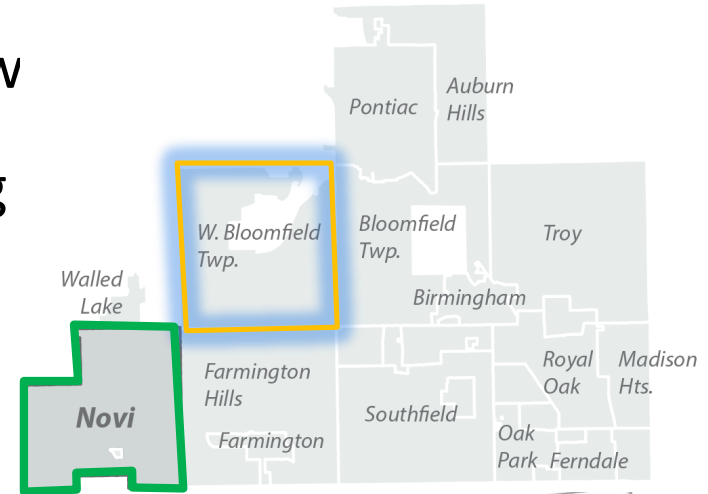


# Community Focus

## WEST BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP



- One park and ride route to Downtow
- Multiple local bus routes connecting to neighboring communities
- Crosstown service across southern Oakland, Macomb counties
- SMART Connector service
- Community Transit run through Parks & Recreation Department



# Gauging Support in Novi

- November 2016 RTA Ballot measure = first opportunity for Novi residents to vote on transit funding
  - 1995 “opt out” from SMART was not put to voters
- RTA defeated by just 1.5% in Novi
  - Less than 400 votes
- 26,000 votes cast

# Transit Millage Votes

## Millage Approval Rates

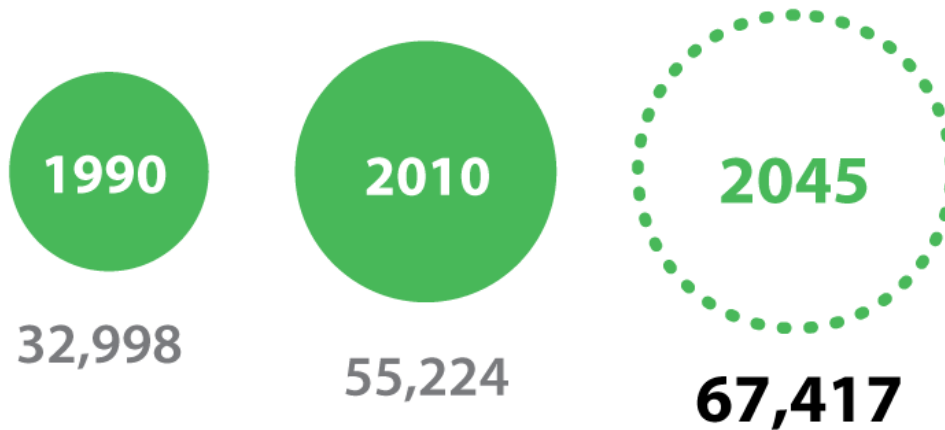
Community	SMART - 2014	RTA - 2016
Farmington	75%	59%
Farmington Hills	71%	55%
W. Bloomfield Twp.	71%	54%
Bloomfield Twp.	72%	53%
Novi	<i>opt out</i>	49%
Rochester	<i>opt out</i>	47%
Rochester Hills	<i>opt out</i>	47%

# SMART overview: Conclusions

- Many layers to public transit (not just buses)
- There are different types of bus service (not all buses are the same)
- Customized approach is important for each community (the right mix of services)
- There is a basic level of support for transit in Novi and similar communities

# Novi: Demographics

- Steady population growth in Novi since 1990, expected to continue through 2045.

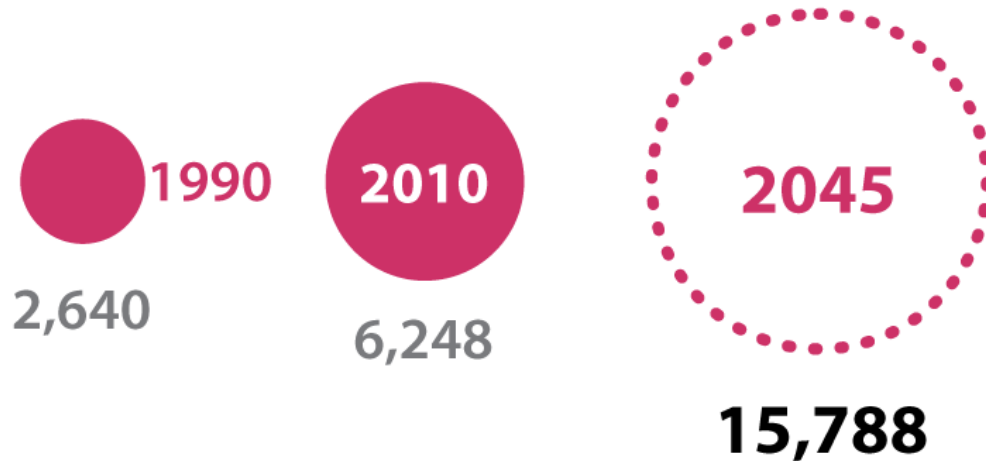


Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles



# Novi: Demographics

- Senior population in Novi could increase 150% by 2045.



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

# Novi: Former Transit Service

- SMART only served 12 Oaks Mall in 1993
- 22,000 fewer residents, 3,600 fewer seniors in Novi



1993

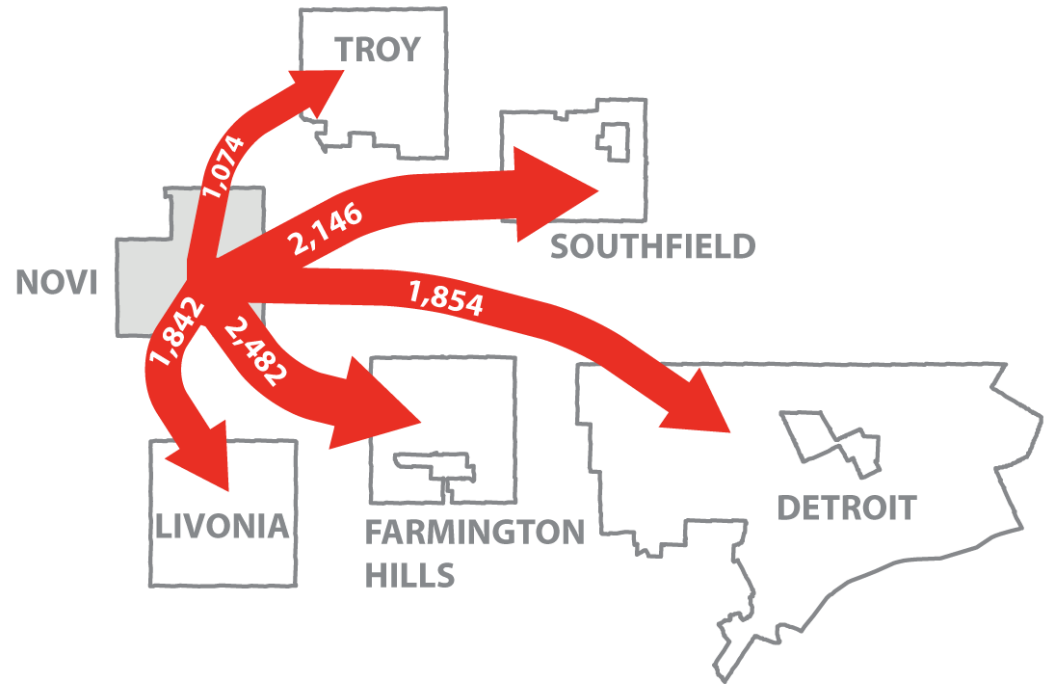
# Novi: Commuting Patterns

## Commuting In:

- 37,000 jobs in Novi
- **93% of jobs held by non residents**

## Commuting Out:

- 35% commute to five communities shown
- 10% live and work in Novi



*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau;  
Longitudinal Household-Employer  
Dynamics; 2015*

# Novi: Transit-favorable characteristics

- Areas of more compact residential development (condos, townhomes, apartments)
- Major regional employment and retail destinations
- Hotels and event centers
- Several senior housing developments throughout city
- Well-developed sidewalk infrastructure



# Novi: Transit-favorable characteristics

**Brownstones Novi**



**Mainstreet Village**



**Fox Run Senior Community**





# Novi: Transit-favorable characteristics



# Finding the “right mix” of transit services

# Possible ingredients to “mix”

- Park and ride commuter bus service to Detroit
- Local routes connecting to southern parts of Novi, Haggerty Rd corridor, 12 Mile
- **FAST** Grand River service to Farmington Hills, Detroit
- Traditional reservation-based SMART Connector
- Novi Senior Transportation enhancements
- Airport transportation

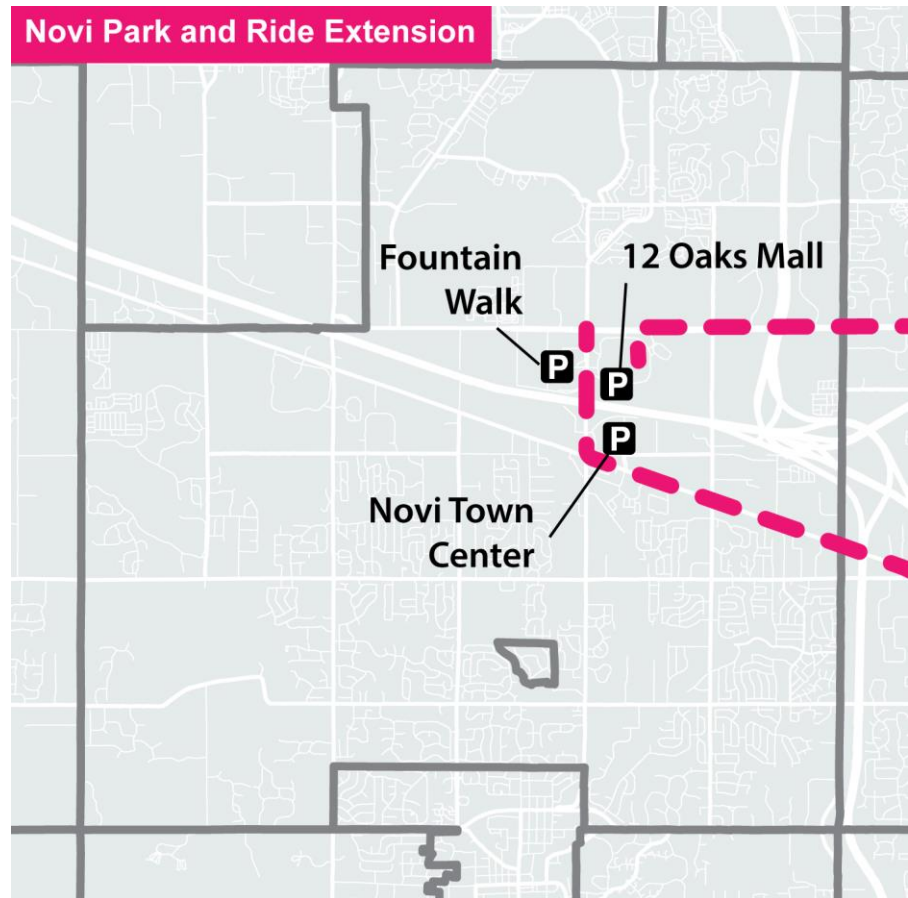


# Coverage vs. Frequency

- **Better frequency** means more convenience, less planning around transit schedule
  - Also means buses concentrated on fewer routes to achieve higher frequency but less coverage
- **Better coverage** means more routes covering larger area, reaching more destinations
  - Also means less convenient frequencies because buses spread out across more routes

# Park and Ride Express

- Limited-stop express service to Downtown & Midtown Detroit
- Park & ride lots
- Runs southbound in the morning, northbound in the evening
- Weekdays only



# FAST Grand River

- Limited-stop service runs 18-20 hours per day, 7 days a week
- Higher frequency, faster travel speeds
- New buses branded for FAST service
- On-board WiFi



# Local Bus – Grand River Circulator

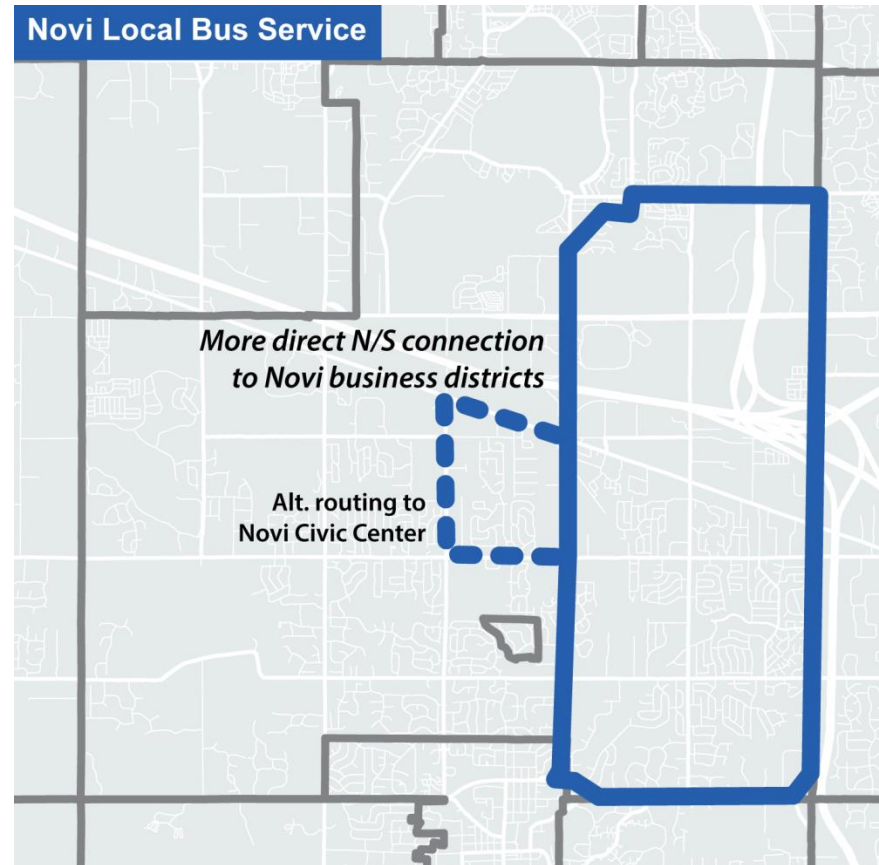
- Connects key Novi destinations
- Operates every 20-30 minutes, 7 days/week
- Pulls off of main road for enhanced convenience
- Closely-spaced stops maximize access





# Local Bus – Novi/Haggerty Rd.

- Alternate option – same characteristics
- Route would provide better N/S connection to major retail districts





# SMART Connector

- New access to SMART's region wide Connector service
- ADA certified riders can get a ride anywhere fixed route goes, system-wide
- Connector trips can be up to 10 miles



# Novi Senior Transportation

- Access to SMART CPP for maintenance work, operating funds
- Capacity to serve additional trips, extend Sunday service hours, reduce wait times
- Replace vehicles more quickly, purchase expansion vehicles





# Airport Transportation

- Explore partnerships with private transportation providers or operate through CPP
- Serve Detroit Metro Airport at lower fares for Novi residents



# Conclusion

- Support and need for transit exists in Novi and throughout Oakland County
- Novi has changed considerably since SMART last provided bus service there
- SMART can offer a wide range of transit service to meet Novi's needs



**Thank You!**

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