



## Metro Transit Advisory Committee

February 12, 2025

6:30 p.m.

*\*This meeting was open to the public. It was held virtually only due to inclement weather. Updates to the location were published on the Metro website and Facebook page as well as at the entrance to Metro's administrative offices.*

### Digital:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81362662191>

Meeting ID: 813 6266 2191

*Staff Facilitators: Bridget Battafarano (Civil Rights and Inclusion), Sara Moulton (Planning), Alicia Johnson, PhD (Civil Rights and Inclusion)*

*Committee Members: Rose Krekelberg, Sakura Yodogawa-Campbell, Leah Keator, Gab Rima, Alex Mendoza, Brian Neely, Joey Yamada, Clyde Anderson (Vice-chair), Marshall Maurer, Cedric Ludlow (Chair)*

*Members of the Public: Melissa Schop, Rod Brown, Raymond Williams*

### Opening: Public comment period (Limit to ten minutes total, please)

1. Joey: How is the construction on the Harney St. bridge effecting routes and how is that going? How are drivers being supported? Are buses keeping schedule or delayed? Clyde: westbound Farnam is open, then?
  - a. Bridget: Communications team distributed re-routing flyers to drivers of those routes to be available to riders. Information is also available on our MyRide app and our website (ometro.com).
  - b. Sarah: Demolition of the bridge has been delayed due to upcoming weather, will likely start next weekend (2/22 or 2/23.) Routes 15 and 30 are being detoured and will only close three stops per route. There are three stops along Douglas that these routes will serve instead. [See full route detour details at [myride.ometro.com/news](http://myride.ometro.com/news) or on the MyRide OMA app "News" tab.] Operators have known about the detour for months so that they were prepared. Road supervisors were out with operators that morning to offer support and answer

questions as operators navigated the changes. Farnam St. construction had been causing timing issues, but traffic is now moving more smoothly there. Further delays are not anticipated, but we will watch our On Time Performance and make timing changes if needed. The detour will last close to a year. Once Harney is done, the Farnam St. bridge will be demolished, so we will have to look at that closer to time. Westbound Farnam is not open yet but will be soon.

### Approval of previous meeting minutes

Motion: Clyde; Second: Joey

### New Business:

1. Paratransit appeals – None
2. Metro updates and upcoming events
  - a. Public engagement recap: We received 91 feedback forms and emails. A total of 118 people attended our 4 public meetings. Comment period is over, but we will keep everyone updated on future opportunities for engagement. Learn more about this process online: [Metro invites public to comment on microtransit pilot program | Metro](#). This page includes a video of our virtual public meeting with Spanish and ASL interpretation. A text version is also available.
  - b. Staff trained a small group of nonprofit staff on Transit Equity Day/Rosa Parks' birthday (2/4/2024) in launch of Train the Trainer program. Dug into details of trip planning options, how to best educate their clients, and applications for special programs. More of these trainings are to come.
  - c. TAC will proceed with meetings as prescribed by the Open Meetings Act. Only minor changes will apply.
  - d. Title VI Fare Equity Analysis presentation by Alicia Johnson, PhD.
    - i. In keeping with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, equity analyses are required by agencies which receive federal financial assistance, which Metro does. Metro uses census data and agency data to analyze the effects of changes we make. These could be changes in service (i.e. frequency of routes); fares; facilities; vehicle assignments (specific vehicles should not be assigned only to specific parts of the city); transit amenities (i.e. putting bus shelters in various parts of the city, not just wealthy white areas); and service standards (i.e. on time performance). Metro's triennial Title VI program plan is due this year and will go to the board in August. TAC will be asked to weigh in.
    - ii. Equity analysis for the microtransit pilot will go to the board in February for approval.
    - iii. Metro used census data to compare the minority, low-income, and stated disability populations of the city as a whole to these populations in each proposed microtransit zone.

1. The proposed North Omaha zone has a much higher percentage of residents in the minority population compared to the city as a whole. Percent of low-income and disabled residents in this zone are higher as well, though much less so.
  2. The proposed South Omaha zone has a much higher percentage of residents in the minority population compared to the city as a whole. Percent of low-income residents is higher as well. Percent of disabled residents in this area is very slightly lower than the city percentage.
  3. The proposed West Omaha zone has a lower percentage of residents in the minority population compared to the city as a whole. Percent of low-income and disabled residents in this area are very slightly lower than the city percentage.
- iv. Public comment on the proposed microtransit service indicated a 70% approval rate for the proposed \$3 rate for fare. Details about transfers, the use of Umo to pay, whether cash will be accepted, etc, are still to be decided.
  - v. No adverse effects, disparate impacts, or disproportionate burdens on these populations were found, so no mitigation strategies are necessary. Metro invites TAC to make a
  - vi. Q&A:
    1. Brian: Will the ¼ mile rule for paratransit apply to the microtransit service zones? Alicia: It will not – the proposed model is to pick people up from the closest intersection to their start and end locations. The contractor is required to provide equivalent service to those with disabilities. Those riders should not have to wait any longer for an accessible vehicle any longer than other riders or be restricted in times where others are not. It is a condition of the contract and we will monitor this very closely.
    2. Melissa Schop: What are next steps? Will the federal grant freeze affect the roll-out of this program? How much time is there, typically, between contract approval and launch? Alicia: The next steps are to bring the equity analysis and company contract before the board. The analysis will be before the board in February and the contract will hopefully be also. This particular project is entirely funded by philanthropic donors, so will not be affected by federal freezes.

3. Bus Stop Audit Report – Sara Moulton

- a. Between fall of 2023 and spring of 2024, we evaluated every one of our approximately 2200 bus stops for barriers to our service. We asked 63 questions about the environment at and surrounding each stop. This included lighting,

sidewalk conditions, what the ground looks like where riders are expected to get off, etc. One improvement we are looking to make is replacing our stop signs within the next couple of years, so we looked at where our signs are, what they are attached to, etc.

- b. Safety of nearby intersections assessed: Are there stop signs or stop lights? How many lanes of traffic do you have to cross? Are there barriers on sidewalks such as poles? There are many more barriers at perpendicular crossings than parallel crossings.
  - c. Identified opportunities to remove stops, add amenities (like benches or shelters), correct mismatched stops, etc. Clyde: What is a mismatched stop? Sarah: Examples might be that the city moved a pole with a sign on it or we moved a sign for safety and these were never updated in our data or software. Rod Brown: Did staff check charging ports at stations? Sarah: There are currently no charging ports at stations.
  - d. Identified opportunities to collaborate with the city and community partners like Keep Omaha Beautiful and Safe Streets for All to make improvements. Have already made safety improvements along parts of 24<sup>th</sup> St. by adding pedestrian islands to improve crossing safety. More similar improvements are planned.
  - e. Will look to TAC for input and recommendations for future improvements.
4. Committee report on public feedback
- a. Alex: Attended a community town hall which included discussion of transit. A list of concerns that came up:
    - i. Later service needed, especially for food service workers
    - ii. The \$55 30-day pass was not attractive – too expensive.
    - iii. Do not like fare collection app, apps are glitchy
    - iv. Drivers not polite when ORBT machines not working
    - v. Buses showing up early
    - vi. Recommended getting the city involved. Push city to get a pass program for their employees so they know the system better and can be better advocates
  - b. Clyde: Was approached during the North Omaha microtransit meeting by advocates for further service along McKinley Rd. to serve those who work at manufacturing companies there. There are no sidewalks along the road to 52<sup>nd</sup> and it is a busy highway, which makes bus service tricky. Evan [Planning department] clarified that the microtransit pilot will cover that area up to 48<sup>th</sup> St. Staff: Plastilite is one of the companies in that area and Metro has been speaking with them about how they are included. Thank you to Clyde for organizing conversations with so many stakeholders.
  - c. Brian: With the increases in ridership, when we have conversations about service changes, can we expect to get more frequency and/or more routes? Clyde: Do we think we'll be able to restore the frequency of routes we changed last spring? Staff: We are always looking to improve and increase service where and when we can. We must make sure that we are serving our highest demand areas and riders well before we can make improvements. When more resources become available,

we will always bring TAC into those conversations. We have a database for suggestions if you have specific requests you would like to make. With our new hires and new buses coming in, we are hopeful that we will be able to make improvements to services within the year.

5. Discuss communication with board
  - a. Clyde: Attended board meetings. Curt Simon was elected board chair. Board received orientation to departments, staff in the room were asked to introduce themselves. CEO Lauren Cencic reported that ridership in 2024 was restored to pre-covid levels at 3.2 million riders. Reported that Metro Leadership Academy (for employees from any department and level) looks to increase understanding between departments and has yielded promotions. Replacing skylights with solar panels, construction on parking lot on track to finish by summer. Of the 26 new buses we will receive by the end of this year, half will be diesel and half will be Compressed Natural Gas.
  - b. Bridget: Metro departments are reporting new Key Performance Indicators to the board to indicate progress and areas for improvement. The board meeting packets are available online and have a record of these indicators: [ometro.com/board](http://ometro.com/board).
6. Final questions and comments:
  - a. Melissa Schop: How will microtransit interact with MOBY? Alicia: The conversation is ongoing, but we hope to make the connections smooth between microtransit, fixed route service, and paratransit.
  - b. Alicia: Last month, Gab reported that a rider had asked an operator (of the 13) in Spanish if the route was the #13 and that the operator said no and drove away. During quarterly training, a reminder was issued to address operator customer service and a document was shared with the language assistance procedure. Asked operators to learn route numbers in Spanish if possible so they could recognize them.
  - c. Clyde: Has Metro considered bilingual announcements on the buses? Alicia: Bridget is currently performing stop announcement audits on each route to make recommendations to improve this feature. We can bring it to TAC for review and input.
  - d. Anonymous: Can we give drivers a translator app? Alicia: We cannot require operators to use their personal devices but we are looking at more ways to provide this service at a higher level.
7. Adjournment:
  - a. Sakura: Motion, Joey: Second

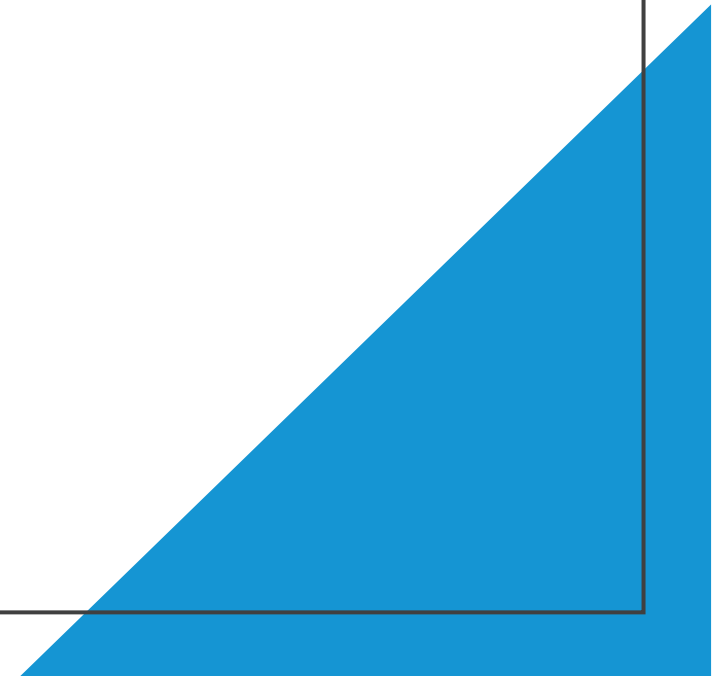
**Next meeting:**

- March 12, 6:30 p.m. at Metro administrative offices and on Zoom

*For questions, please contact Bridget Battafarano at 402-341-7560 ext. 2560*



Title VI Service and Fare Equity  
Analysis for Metro's Proposed  
Microtransit Pilot Program



# Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

# Environmental Justice

The just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, **regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability**, in agency decision-making and other Federal activities that affect human health and the environment so that people:

- (1) are fully protected from disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects (including risks) and hazards, including those related to climate change, the cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens, and the legacy of racism or other structural or systemic barriers; and
- (2) have equitable access to a healthy, sustainable, and resilient environment in which to live, play, work, learn, grow, worship, and engage in cultural and subsistence practices.



# Title VI Equity Analyses

Fares

Facilities

Service  
Changes

Vehicle  
Assignment

Transit  
Amenities

Service  
Standards

# Public Meetings

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
January 13	Omaha Public Library Charles B. Washington Branch	In person	24
January 16	Omaha Public Library South Omaha Branch	In person	20
January 18	Westroads Mall – The Lounge	In person	39
January 21	Virtual Meeting (Zoom)	Virtual (Live)	35
Views of virtual meeting recording through February 3, 2025		Online	63

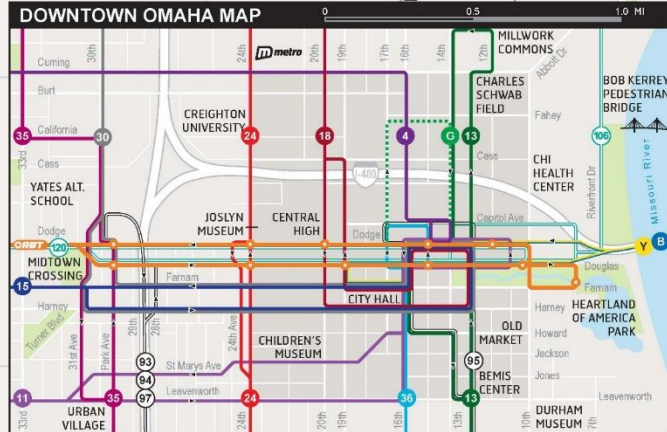
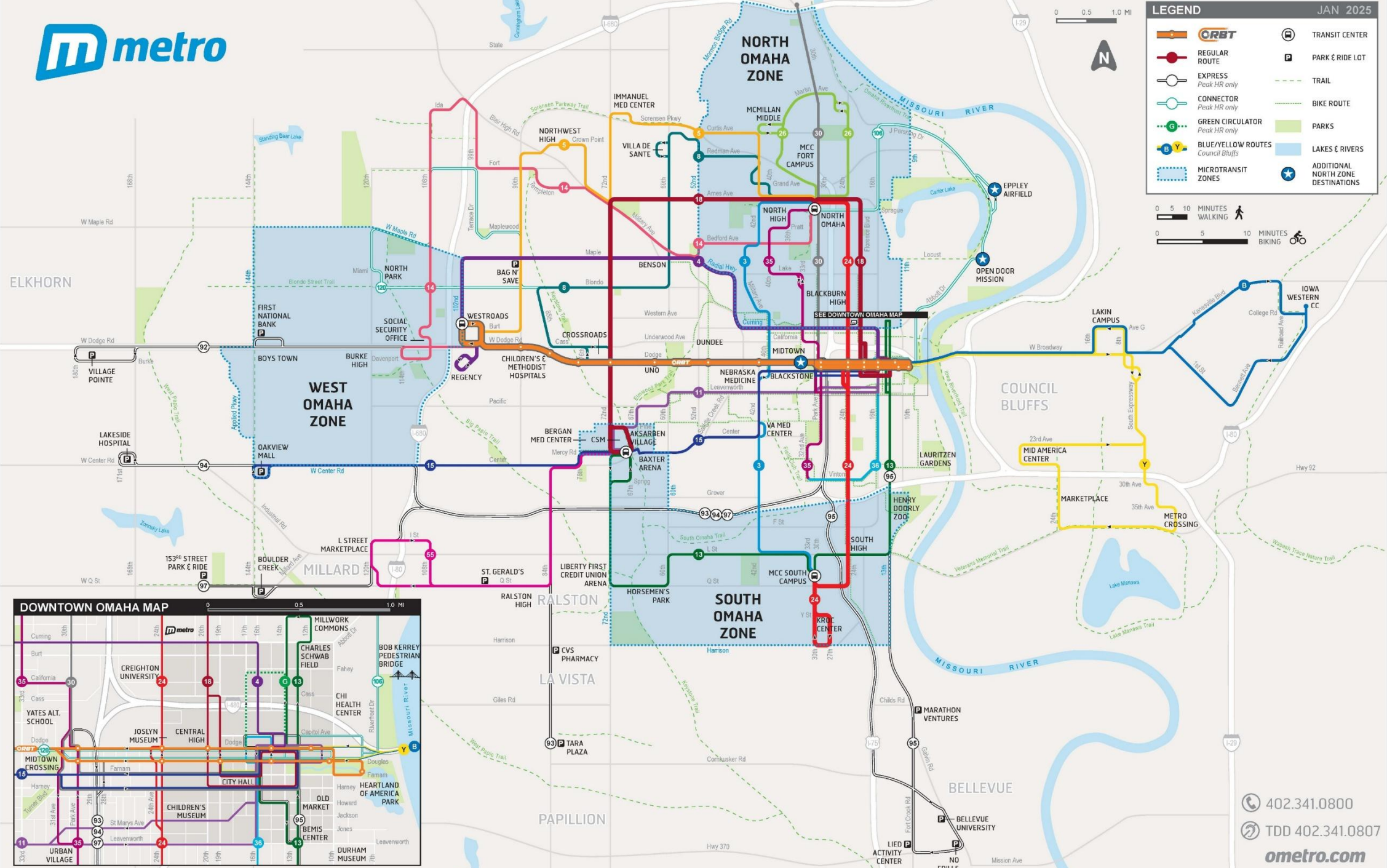


**LEGEND** JAN 2025

	<b>CRBT</b>		TRANSIT CENTER
	REGULAR ROUTE		PARK & RIDE LOT
	EXPRESS <i>Peak HR only</i>		TRAIL
	CONNECTOR <i>Peak HR only</i>		BIKE ROUTE
	GREEN CIRCULATOR <i>Peak HR only</i>		PARKS
	BLUE/YELLOW ROUTES <i>Council Bluffs</i>		LAKES & RIVERS
	MICROTRANSIT ZONES		ADDITIONAL NORTH ZONE DESTINATIONS

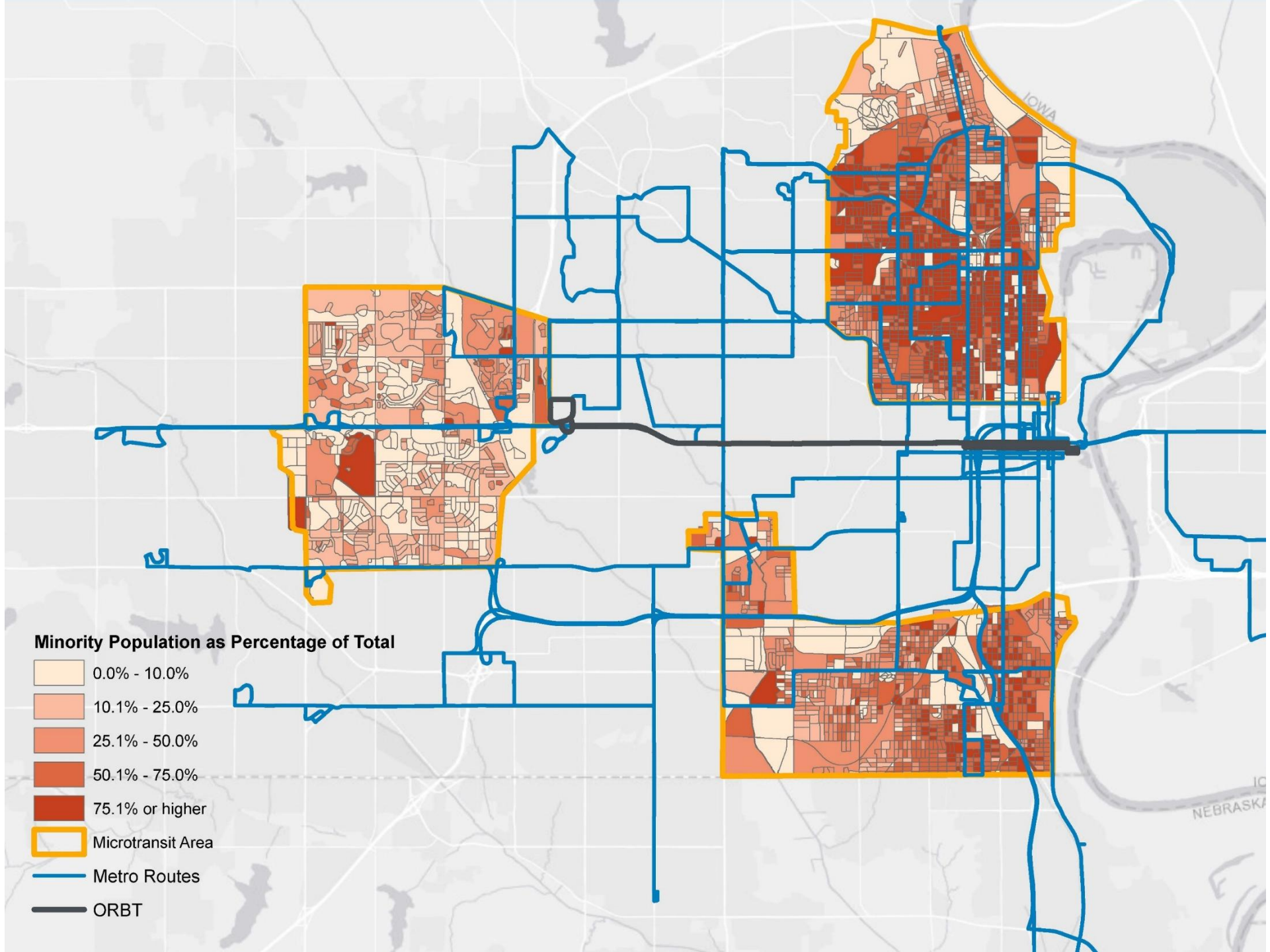
0 5 10 MINUTES WALKING

0 5 10 MINUTES BIKING



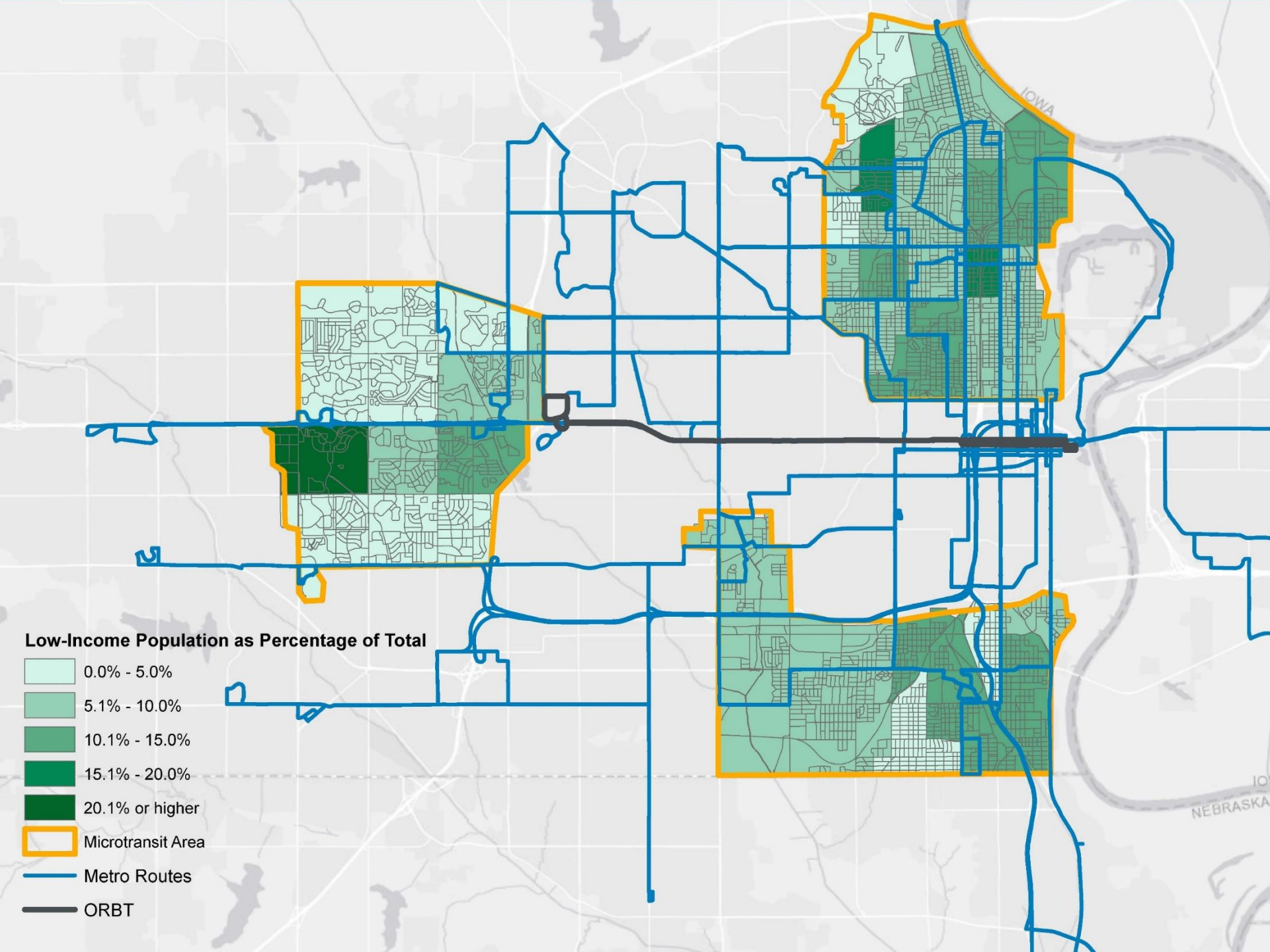
402.341.0800  
 TDD 402.341.0807  
 ometro.com





# Minority Population Comparison

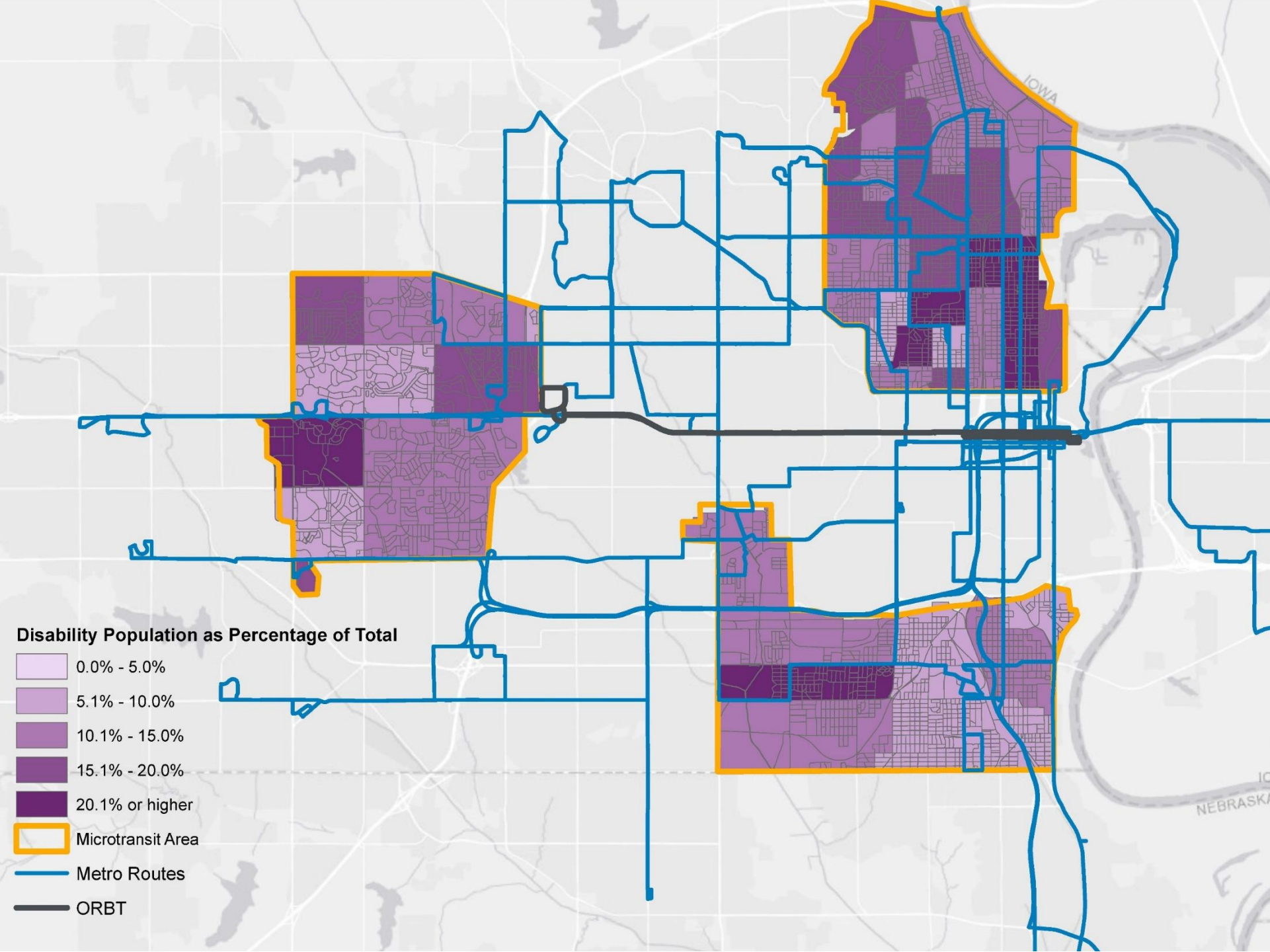
	Percent Minority	Difference between Percentage Minority in the City of Omaha and the Respective Proposed Zone
City of Omaha	33.77%	
North Omaha Zone	69.56%	+35.79% The North Omaha Zone has a <u>higher</u> population of minority residents than the City of Omaha as a whole.
South Omaha Zone	56.10%	+22.33% The South Omaha Zone has a <u>higher</u> population of minority residents than the City of Omaha as a whole.
West Omaha Zone	22.08%	-11.69% The West Omaha Zone has a <u>lower</u> population of minority residents than the City of Omaha as a whole.



# Low-Income Population Comparison

	Percent Low-Income	Difference between Percentage Low-Income in the City of Omaha and the Respective Proposed Zone
City of Omaha	6.02%	
North Omaha Zone	9.87%	+3.85% The North Omaha Zone has a higher population of low-income residents than the City of Omaha as a whole.
South Omaha Zone	17.58%	+11.56% The South Omaha Zone has a higher population of low-income residents than the City of Omaha as a whole.
West Omaha Zone	5.64%	-0.38% The West Omaha Zone has a slightly lower population of low-income residents than the City of Omaha as a whole.





**Disability Population as Percentage of Total**

- 0.0% - 5.0%
- 5.1% - 10.0%
- 10.1% - 15.0%
- 15.1% - 20.0%
- 20.1% or higher
- Microtransit Area
- Metro Routes
- ORBT

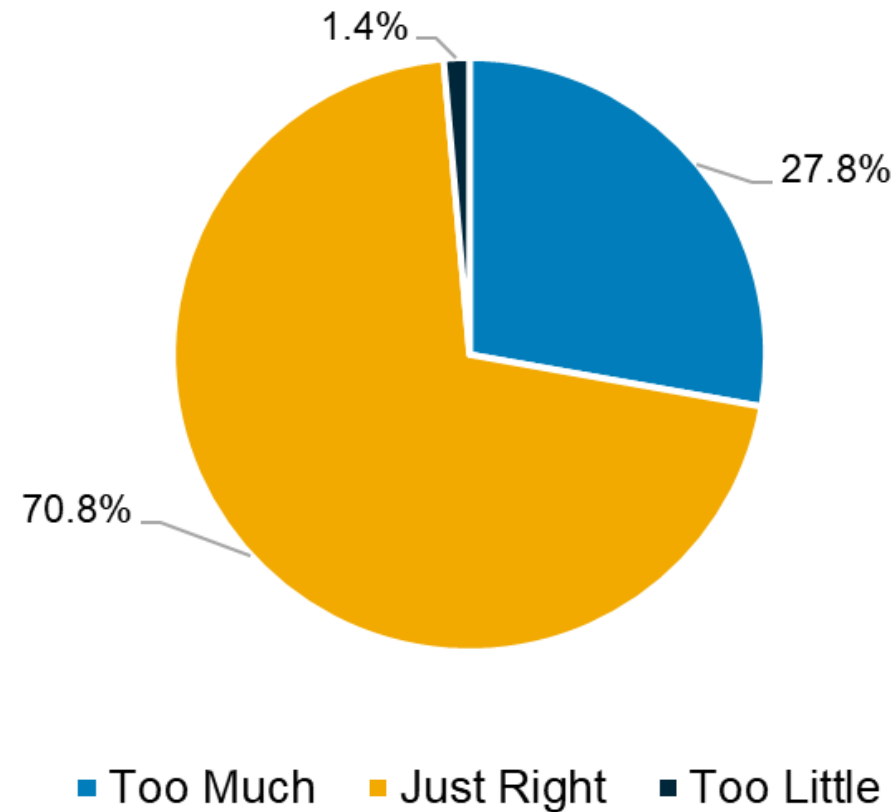




# Stated Disability Population Comparison

	Percent with Stated Disability	Difference between Percentage with Stated Disability in the City of Omaha and the Respective Proposed Zone
City of Omaha	11.30%	
North Omaha Zone	15.30%	+4.0% The North Omaha Zone has a higher population of residents with stated disabilities than the City of Omaha as a whole.
South Omaha Zone	11.06%	-0.24% The South Omaha Zone has a slightly lower population of residents with stated disabilities than the City of Omaha as a whole.
West Omaha Zone	11.98%	-0.02% The West Omaha Zone has a slightly lower population of residents with stated disabilities than the City of Omaha as a whole.

# Public Perception of \$3.00 Fare

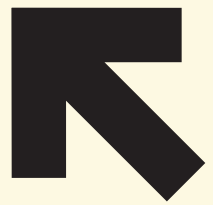


# Public Comments

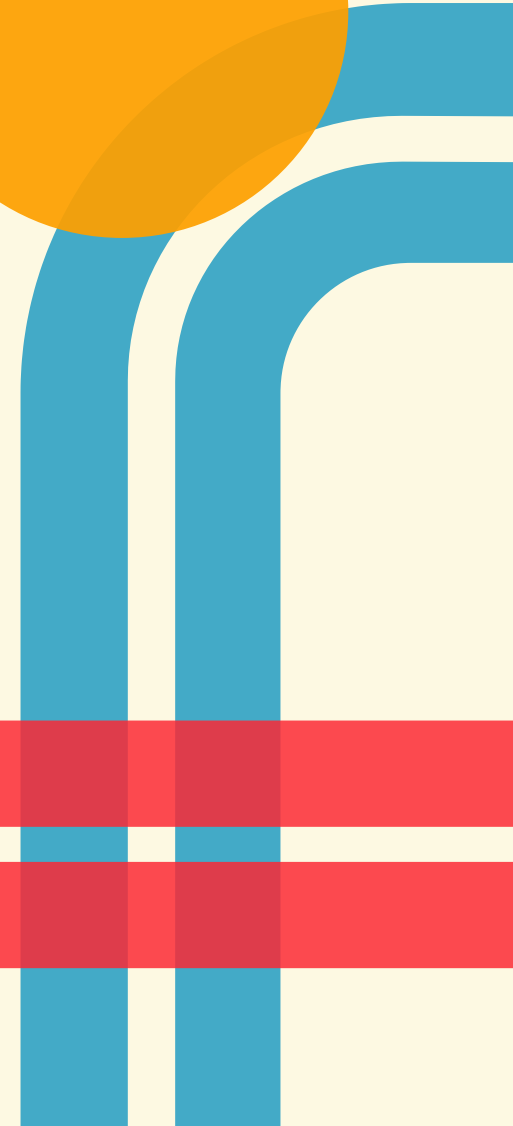
- A total of 91 public comments were received during the public meetings and open comment period
- Major themes:
  - Expansion of the west zone to at least 180
  - Later hours, especially on weekends
- Request for additional locations:
  - Healthcare facilities further west (Methodist Women's Hospital, Lakeside Hospital)
  - Village Pointe
  - L Street Market
  - And more

# Conclusion

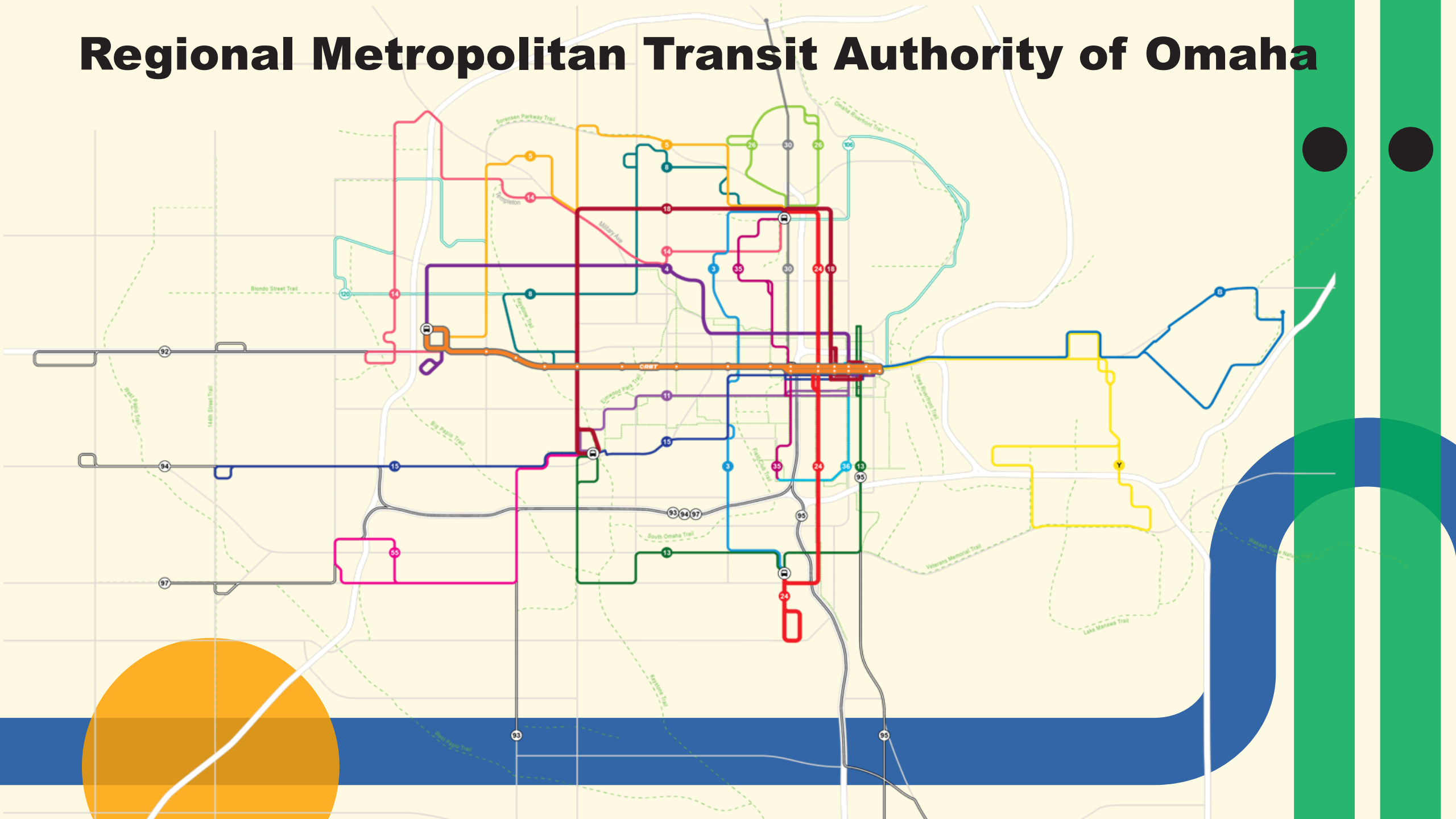
- The percentage of the minority, low-income, and stated disability population in each proposed zone is approximately equivalent to or exceeds the percentage of the minority, low-income, and stated disability population throughout the City of Omaha.
- The public largely concurred with a \$3.00 fare for the proposed microtransit service.
- When the fare media and type is further considered, the needs of the unbanked must be addressed.
- No adverse effects, disparate impacts, or disproportionate burdens were identified and thus no mitigation strategies are proposed at this time.



# **Omaha Metro Bus Stop Audit**



# Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha



# Primary audit goals

**Removing  
barriers to  
access**

## **Updates**

Planning on updating our **bus stop signs**

Inventory sign **attachments** and evaluate **amenity improvements**

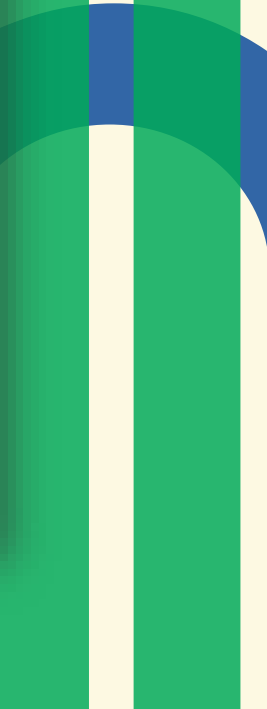
## **Data**

Database about **each individual stop**

**GPS** location confirmation





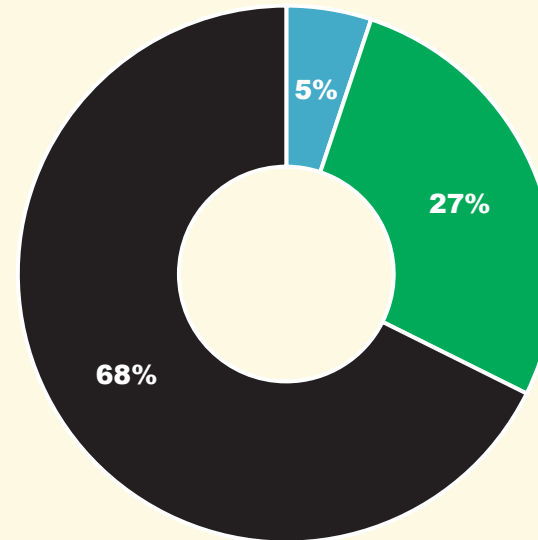




# By the numbers

	Numbers
<b>Data Points</b>	162,510
<b>Alternative stops</b>	44
<b>Stops for deeper review</b>	45
<b>Mismatched stops</b>	78
<b>Large Amenity Improvements</b>	36

### Stop Amenities

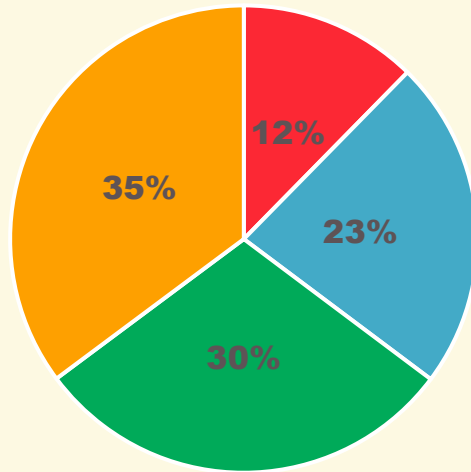


■ Shelter ■ Amenities ■ Nothing



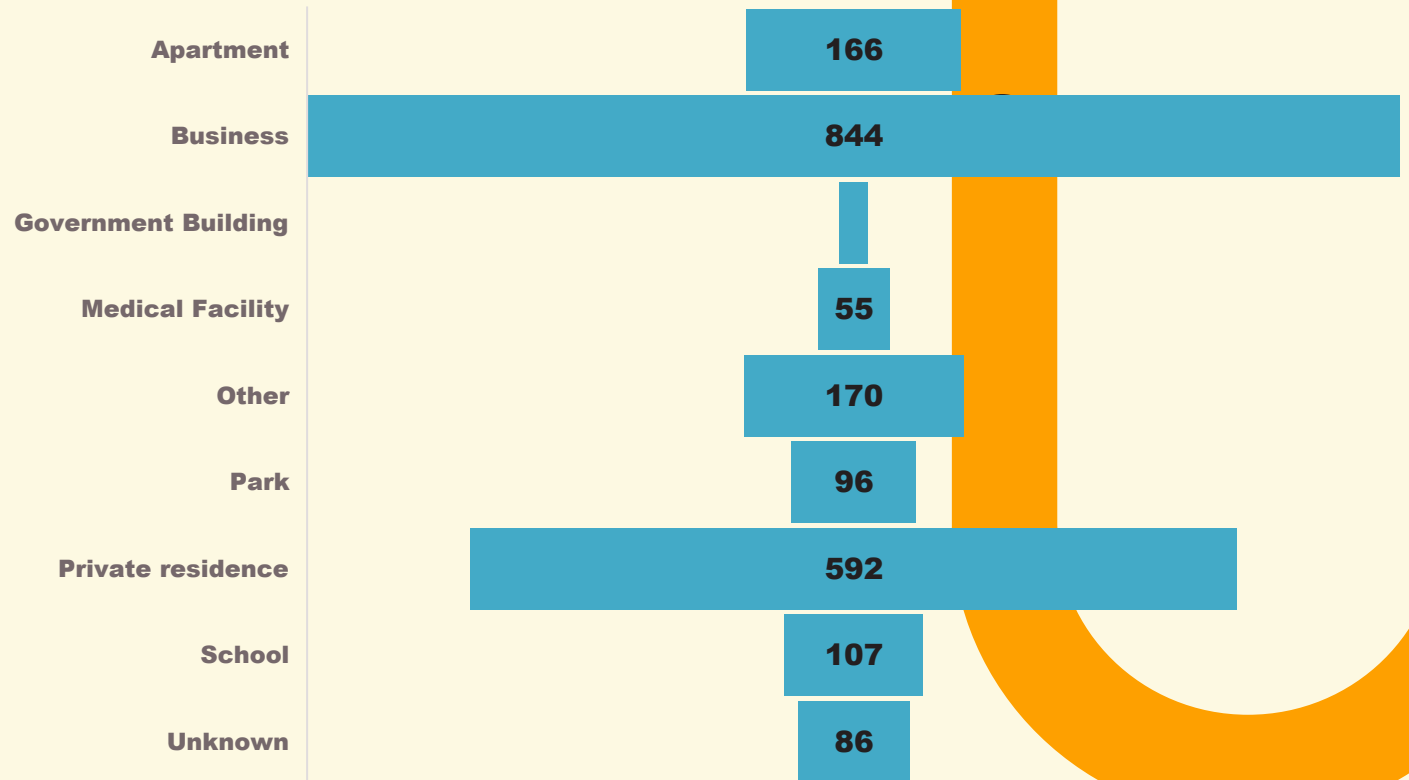
# By the numbers

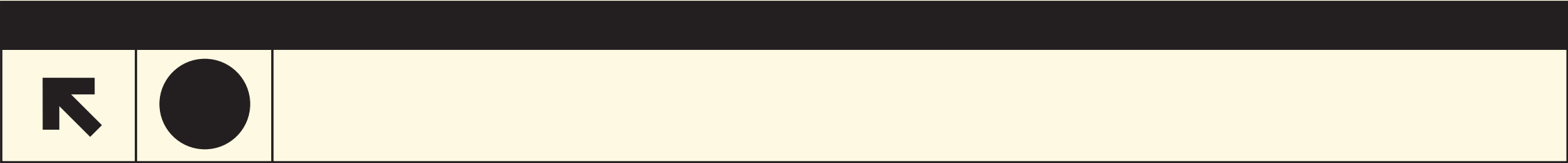
## Stop Size



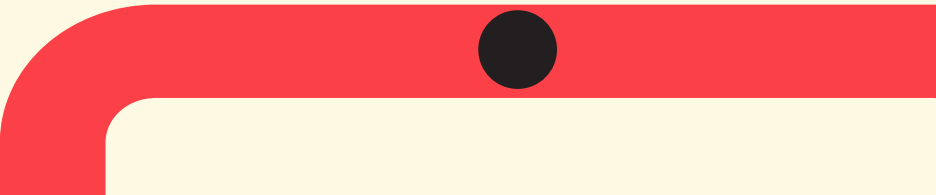
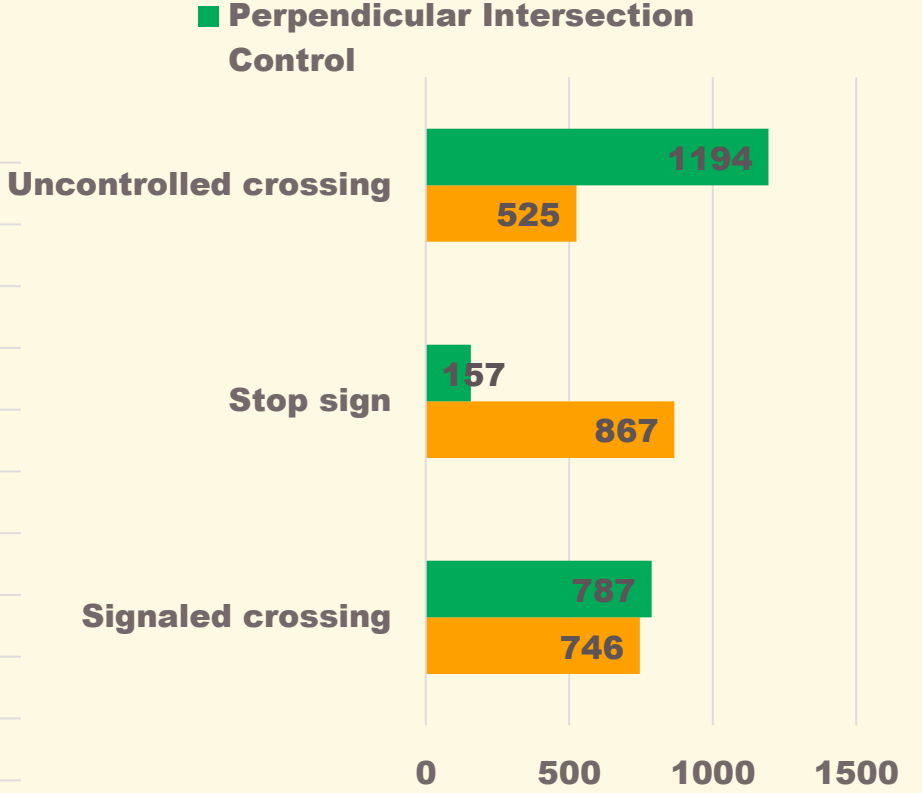
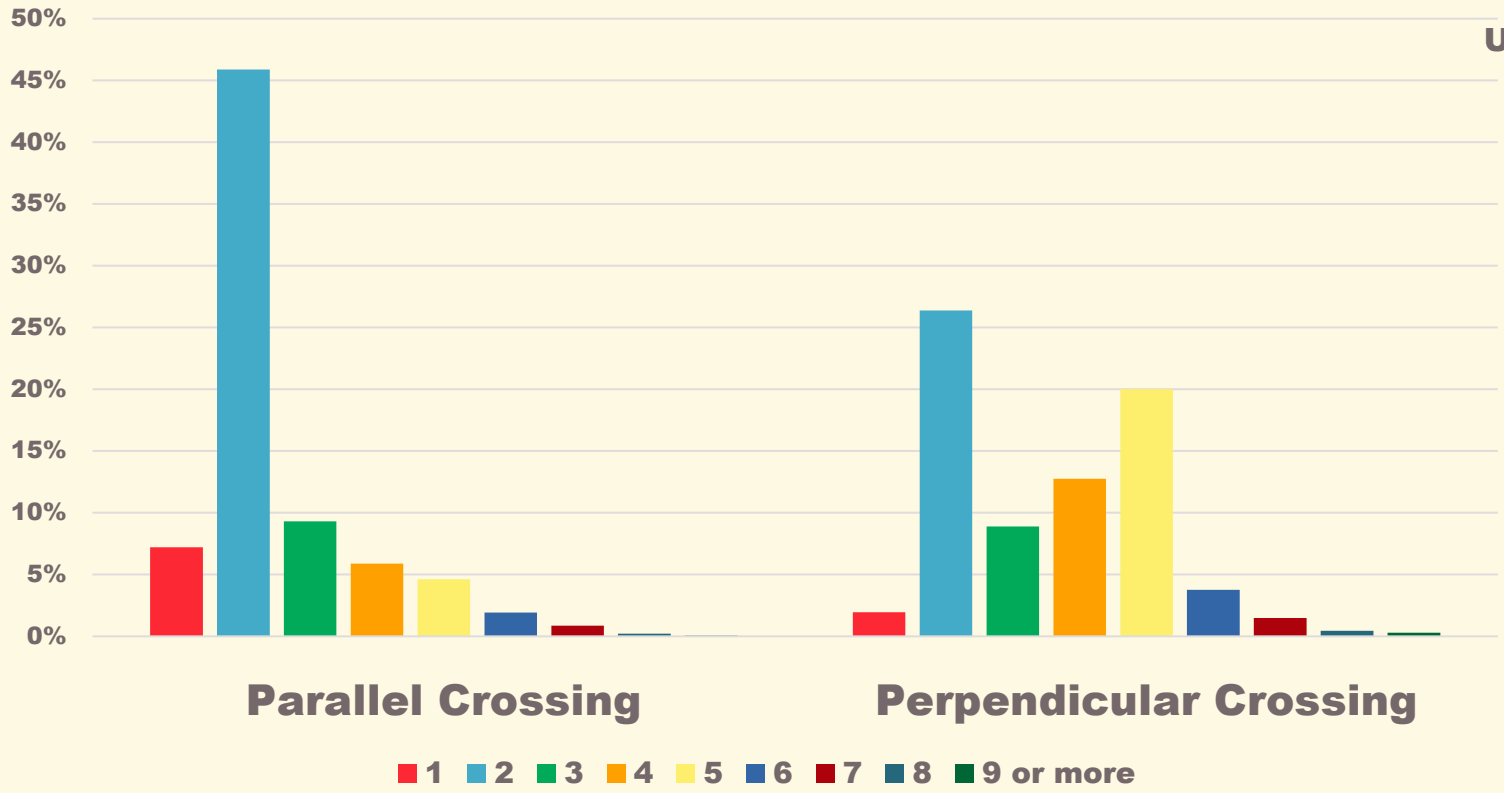
- Shelter (12-20')
- Large (6-11')
- Medium (3-5')
- Small (sign only)

## Adjacent Property



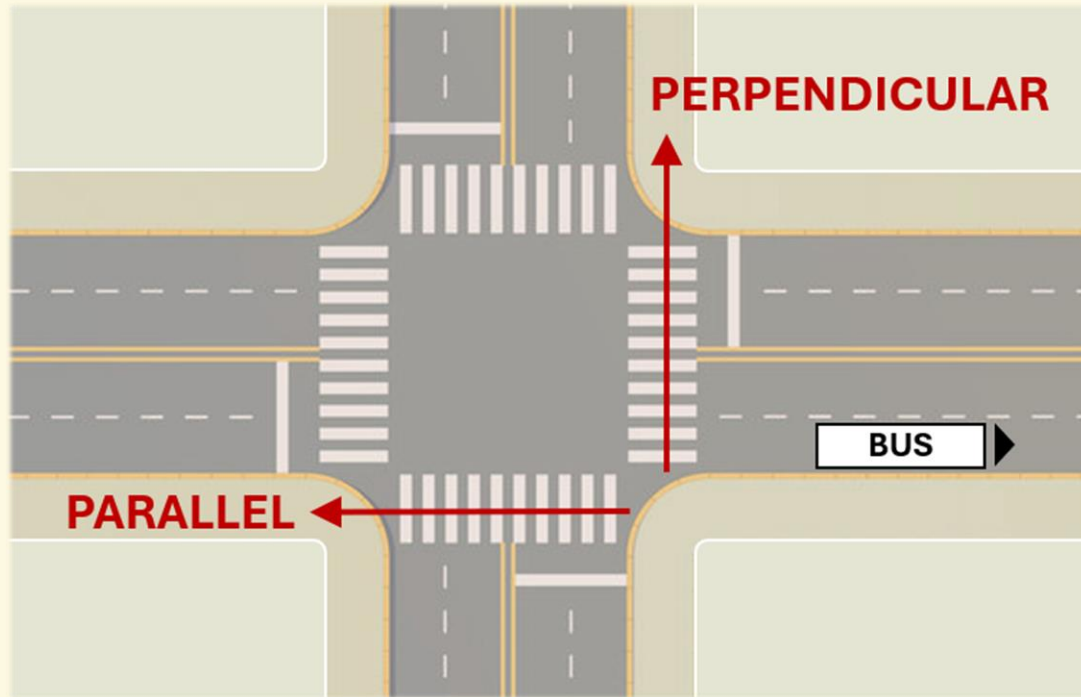


# Crossing Lanes

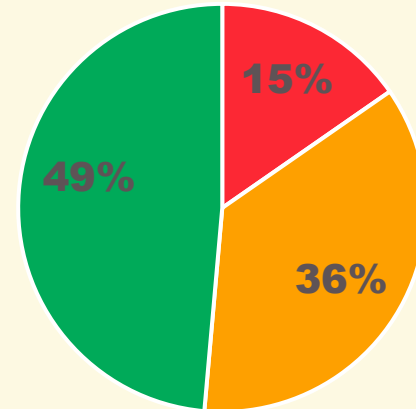




# Mobility



## Mobility Barriers Parallel to Stop

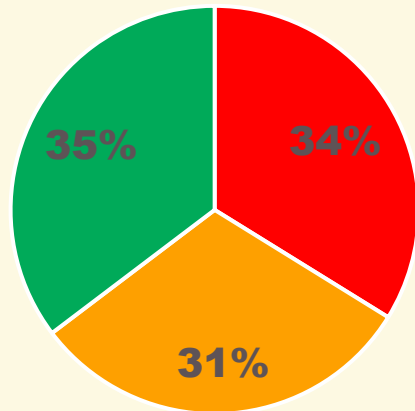


- Barriers exist that impact mobility
- Barriers may exist that impact mobility
- No barriers exist



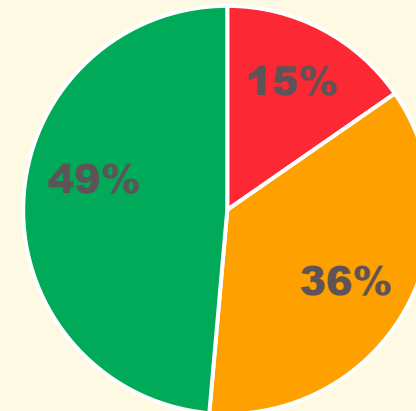
# Mobility

## Mobility Barriers Perpendicular to Stop



- Barriers exist that impact mobility
- Barriers may exist that impact mobility
- No barriers exist

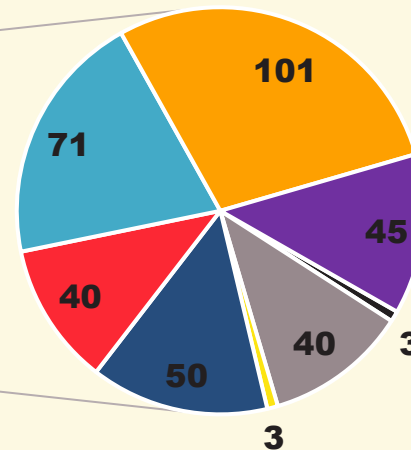
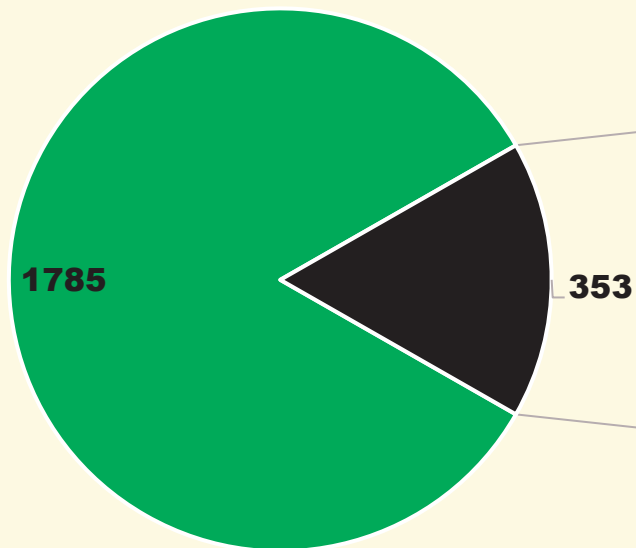
## Mobility Barriers Parallel to Stop



- Barriers exist that impact mobility
- Barriers may exist that impact mobility
- No barriers exist

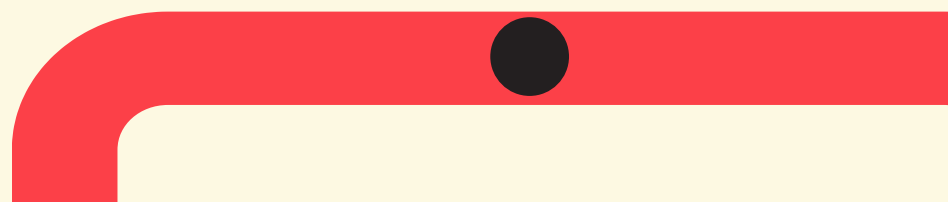


# Amenity Obstructions



- No obstruction
- Bus bench
- Fire hydrant
- Other
- Tension wire

- Bicycle rack
- Fencing
- Landscaping
- Pole (in addition to bus sign pole)









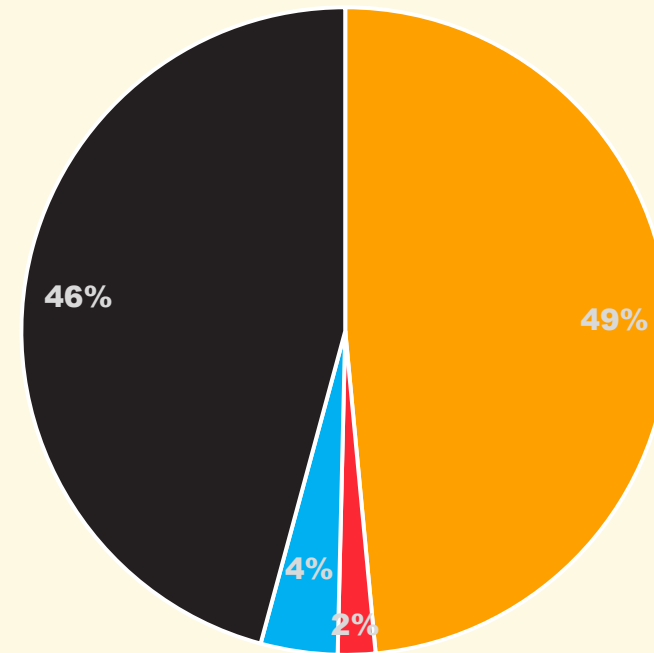


# Using the findings

## Internally

- **Adjustments to our system and stops to benefit everyone**
- **Adding amenities to the right locations**
- **Fixing physical and digital mismatches**
- **Bus signage ordering specifications**

## Light Conditions



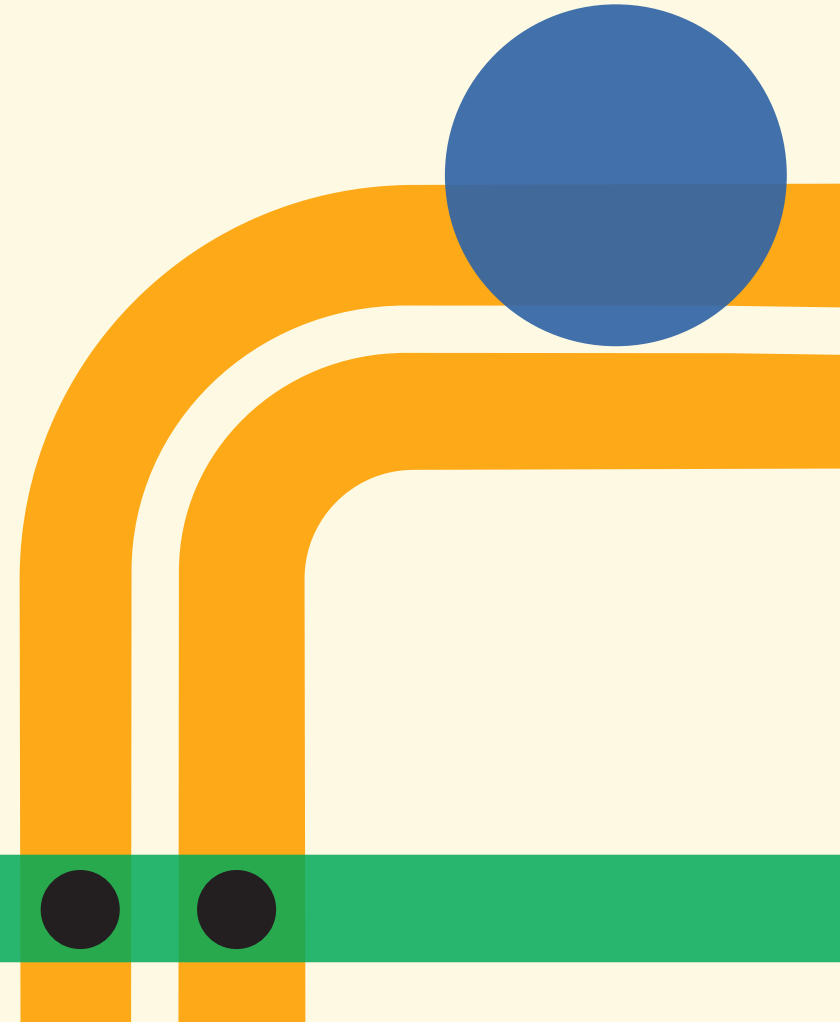
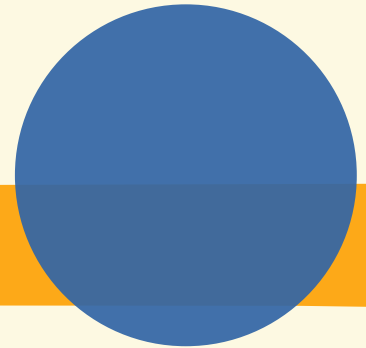
■ Street Light (within 10 ft) ■ Other ■ Bus Shelter ■ None



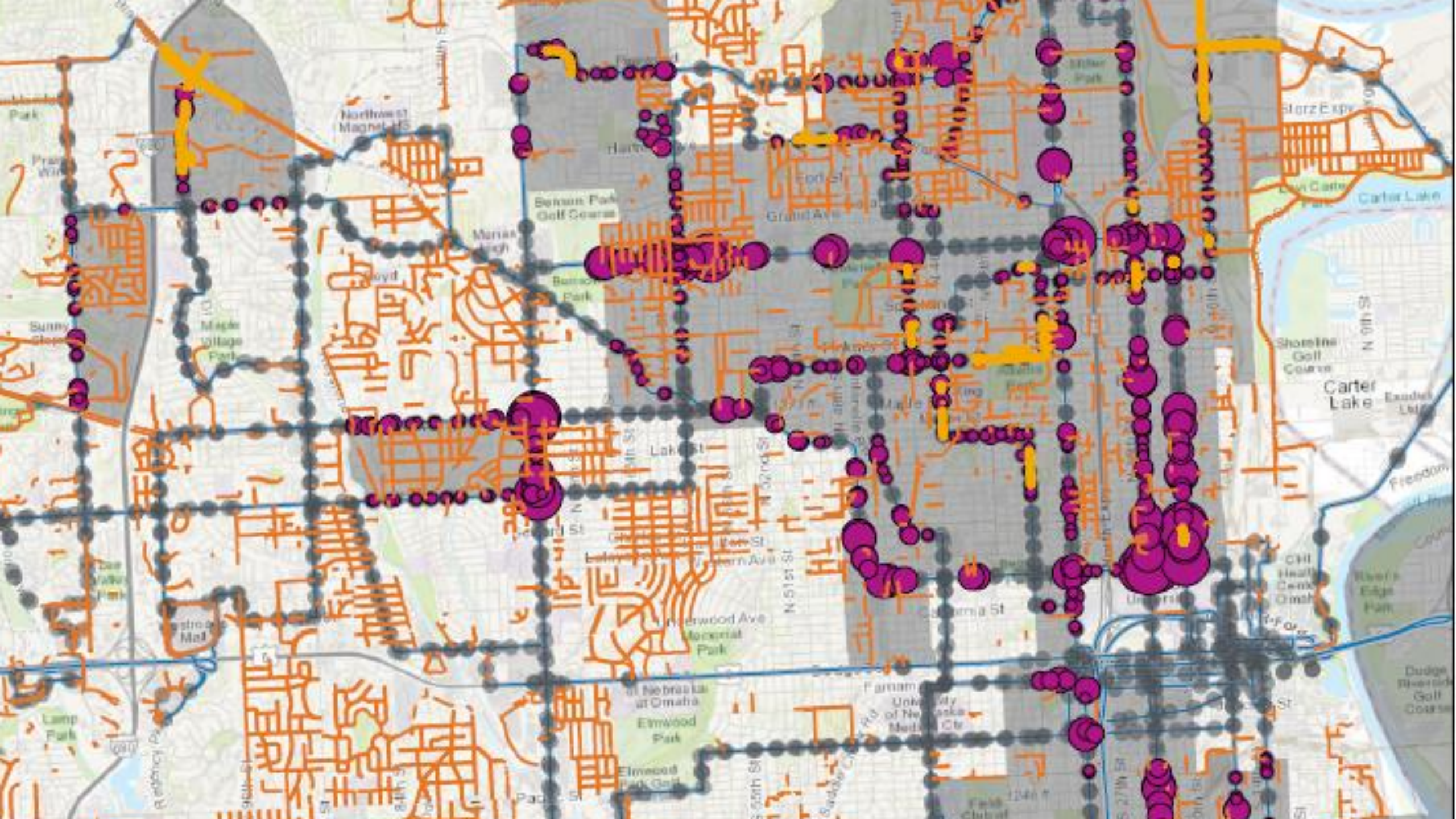
# Using the findings

## Externally

- **Working with community partners to make positive changes**
- **Feeling empowered to speak up with data to advocate for our system and riders**
- **Keep Omaha Beautiful, Vision Zero, and Metropolitan Area Planning Agency coordination**











## **TAP Funding**

- **The City has submitted a TAP funding application to MAPA for \$3 million to address sidewalk gaps along transit routes.**
- **The TAP funding has not been awarded, and acceptance of this project will depend on other competitive funding requests, but a very positive sign!**



# Vision Zero

- **Helped reinforce the need for traffic calming measures at two intersections**
  - **Installed pedestrian islands**
- **2 more projects**
  - **1 road diet**
  - **1 pedestrian infrastructure improvements**





# **Thank you**

**Sara Moulton**

**[smoulton@ometro.com](mailto:smoulton@ometro.com)**

**[www.ometro.com](http://www.ometro.com)**

