

Minutes of the Second Meeting

OZAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DATE: January 24, 2017
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE: Auditorium
Ozaukee County Administration Center
121 W Main Street
Port Washington, WI 53704

Members Present

Kathie Geracie County Board Supervisor/Chair Public Works Committee, Ozaukee County
Chair
Barbara Bates-Nelson Executive Director, United Way of Northern Ozaukee County
Kari Dombrowski.....Aging Services Manager,
Aging and Disability Resource Center of Ozaukee County
Jon Edgren Director, Ozaukee County Department of Public Works
Amber Koehler.....Manager, Ozaukee County Shared-Ride Taxi Services
Jennifer Rothstein Vice Chair, Ozaukee County Board of Supervisors/SEWRPC Commissioner
Kathleen Schilling..... Executive Director, Ozaukee Economic Development
Jeff Sponcia..... Manager of Planning, Milwaukee County Transit System
Maureen Squire..... Executive Director, Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County
Blaine Szudajski.....Operations Supervisor, GO Riteway Transportation Group
(representing R.J. Bast)
Steve Taylor Vice President of Student Life, Concordia University Wisconsin
Jason Wittek..... Transit Superintendent, Ozaukee County Department of Public Works

Guests and Staff Present

Ray deBruijn Superintendent, Department of Public Works, Village of Saukville
Joseph Delmagori..... Senior Transportation Planner, SEWRPC
David Franks.....Member, First Congregational Church Community Relation
Kim Kunz..... Program Manager, Care Wisconsin
Kevin J. Muhs Assistant Director, SEWRPC
Tom Richart County Board Supervisor, Ozaukee County

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairwoman Geracie called the meeting of the Ozaukee County Transit Development Plan Advisory Committee to order at 10:02 a.m. Attendance was taken by circulating a sign-in sheet. She then asked the Committee members, guests, and staff to introduce themselves.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 20, 2016 MEETING

Chairwoman Geracie indicated that the first item on the agenda was the consideration and approval of the minutes for the previous meeting of the Advisory Committee held on December 20, 2016. Ms. Schilling

made a motion to approve the December 20, 2016 meeting minutes. Ms. Rothstein seconded the motion and the Advisory Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

CONSIDERATION OF CHAPTER II, “EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES AND TRAVEL PATTERNS”, OF SEWRPC COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PLANNING REPORT NO. 331, “OZAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN”

Mr. Muhs reviewed the sections of the preliminary draft of Chapter II with the Committee members and referenced the corresponding tables, figures, and maps that related to specific sections of the chapter. He mentioned it would take approximately 18 months to complete the Transit Development Plan for Ozaukee County and the process would include at least two opportunities for public input.

Mr. Muhs explained that Chapter II summarizes the Ozaukee County Transit System, which includes the Express (Route 143) and the Shared-Ride Taxi. The chapter includes an overview of the history of these two services, an evaluation of progress implementing recommendations from the previous transit development plan, current routing and times of service, ridership, expenditures and revenues, and travel patterns of users. He indicated the chapter concludes with summaries of other major public transit services in the County, including a route serving the Milwaukee Area Technical College campus in the City of Mequon and human services transportation providers.

During the review of existing transit services in Ozaukee County, Committee members had the following questions or comments:

1. After Mr. Muhs summarized the history of the Ozaukee County Transit System, Mr. Wittek noted that the service to the south side of Milwaukee was eliminated in 2011 due to low ridership. In response to a question from Mr. Wittek, Ms. Koehler said some of the shuttles that were previously paired with the reverse commute service and connecting to the Villages of Grafton and Saukville operated one to two times each during both morning and evening commutes. Ms. Rothstein asked if the Federal funding through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) that was provided for the first three years was intended to permit the County the financial flexibility to experiment with providing different services. Chairperson Geracie responded that the transit system was initially viewed as a pilot project, and that she hoped that any future experimentation (such as new shuttle services) would include partnering with the businesses served to help the County pay the costs of the services.
2. During the discussion of the County’s progress implementing the recommendations in the previous transit development plan, Mr. Muhs noted that a recommendation to connect the Express service to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee via a transfer to Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) routes was never implemented. Mr. Sponcia said he recognized the importance of this option, but believed that implementation was likely prevented by concerns relating to adding delay to the trips of existing passengers in order to allow the proposed transfer.
3. Relating to the recommendation from the previous transit development plan to construct new park-ride lots as described on page 4, Mr. Sponcia said park-ride lots often require a detour of the route and are usually affected by traffic signals, which adds more time to the route. Ms. Rothstein said utilizing the former Pick ‘n Save on N. Port Washington Road for a new park-ride lot (recommended in the previous transit development plan) would still be a reasonable option

but questioned if it would add too much travel time to the route. Mr. Wittek responded that it likely would not add any time to the runs of the Express that currently travel on N. Port Washington Road in Mequon. Mr. Szudajski asked if surveys of existing riders have been conducted recently to learn more about preferences for more or less stops. Mr. Wittek said the County conducted a survey within the past two years, but suggested another rider survey could be part of this transit development plan effort.

4. In reviewing the recommendations from the previous transit development plan, Mr. Muhs noted that the vehicle fleet for the Shared-Ride Taxi service has expanded to 26 vehicles and has exceeded the recommended number of vehicles identified in the previous plan. Mr. Wittek said that despite having 26 vehicles in its fleet, having enough vehicles available to meet demand during peak hours is still a concern for the Shared-Ride Taxi service.
5. In response to a discussion regarding the relatively recent increase in spaces at some of the park-ride lots in the County, Mr. Szudajski asked if the public is made aware of the expansions to the park-ride lots. Mr. Wittek responded that the changes to the lots are noted in newsletters issued by the County. Mr. Wittek also said many of the lots are scheduled for new paving and other improvements later this year.

[Secretary's Note: As noted during the meeting, the Commission staff performed a field visit and revised the inventory of spaces for the Port Washington Park-Ride Lot at IH 43 and STH 32. Following recently completed paving work, the park-ride lot has marked spaces for 90 vehicles. Following the meeting, Ms. Wolff noted that the Express no longer stops at the Target parking lot just south of the Grafton Commons. Commission staff have revised the last bullet on page 7 to reflect this information.]

6. During the discussion of Table 2-1, Mr. Sponcia said ridership increased on the Express last year and provided an explanation on how MCTS ridership estimates will become more accurate and reliable in the future. He said cash fares and paper tickets, combined with automatic passenger counter data, were previously used for collecting ridership information, but introduction of the MCard is helping to refine the accuracy of ridership data. He said data samples are currently being collected twice a week for the development of a weekly average estimate, but the expectation is the MCard will eventually enable MCTS to transition from this sampling of ridership data to data that are collected every day. In response to a question by Mr. Szudajski about the MCard, Mr. Sponcia said the MCard can be used on all MCTS routes, allowing passengers to transfer easily.
7. Referring to the ridership narrative on page 8, Mr. Wittek noted that the strike by MCTS bus drivers during Summerfest in 2015 also attributed to the decline in ridership that year.

[Secretary's Note: After the third sentence in the first paragraph on page 8, the following note has been added: The decline is also attributed to a three day work stoppage by MCTS bus drivers during Summerfest in 2015, which is the highest ridership period for the Express.]

8. Referring to the Vehicle Fleet and Maintenance Facilities section on page 8, Mr. Sponcia clarified that the handicap-accessible transit buses serving Routes 143 and 42U have 35 seats rather than 40 and are maintained in the MCTS garage on Friebantz Avenue rather than on Fond du Lac Avenue. Mr. Muhs noted that the chapter would be revised to reflect this information.
9. Mr. Muhs highlighted the annual expenditures and revenues shown in Figure 2-2 and Figure 2-5 and explained that the variation in annual Federal and State funding is the result of the way in which the County budgets funding from these sources. Mr. Wittek said the figures are a reflection of how much funding the County decided to record under both the Express and Shared-Ride Taxi services for each year. He clarified that the figures are not showing a decline in combined Federal and State funding provided collectively for these two services.
10. Referring to Map 2-2, Mr. Muhs explained that the map was based on September 2016 ridership data obtained from MCTS. Mr. Sponcia asked if the data was showing the AM period. Mr. Muhs clarified that since the map was displaying produced-attracted trips, it was based on all trips during an average weekday in September 2016. Based on information on the map showing only one passenger traveling from their home in Milwaukee County to work near the Port Washington park-ride lot each day, Ms. Rothstein questioned whether the Express should be serving the park-ride lot during reverse commute trips. Mr. Muhs noted that the buses need to go to the Port Washington stop at that time to provide traditional commuter service from that lot to Milwaukee, and therefore providing reverse commute service to that location does not cost the County additional funds.

[Secretary's Note: Following the meeting, a comment was provided by Ms. Wolff requesting that the black squares in Map 2-2 include labels that identify the total number of trips at each stop on the Express. Commission staff have revised Map 2-2 to include this information.]

11. Ms. Schilling said she believed that the reverse commute often works well with job start times, but noted that ridership is surprisingly low. Mr. Sponcia said that promoting the Express more to residents of Milwaukee, emphasizing that jobs can be reached using this service, might result in increased ridership on the reverse commute runs. Mr. Muhs noted that a marketing effort could be modeled on the 'JobLines' concept, the name that MCTS uses to promote its routes that connect Milwaukee residents to suburban jobs. Ms. Squire stated it is important for local Chambers of Commerce to work with employers to promote these express and shared-ride taxi services to new and potential employees. Ms. Rothstein stated that a one pager describing these transit services and the places they serve would be helpful for spreading the word. Mr. Sponcia indicated that MCTS has developed partnerships with community organizations to help promote their routes to suburban job centers. He noted that coordination between business and transit providers is also important, specifically citing businesses in the City of New Berlin sharing shift time information with MCTS so route schedules could be adjusted to improve the usefulness of the route. Mr. Szudajski suggested that staff from Human Resources departments be invited to meetings so they can work together with the transit agencies to improve access to their job sites via transit. Mr. Muhs stated that business-targeted workshops are being planned with local Chambers of Commerce as part of this transit development plan process, and that Commission staff would work with the Chambers to determine who should be invited.

12. Mr. Szudajski suggested job sites located within close proximity to one another could share the costs of running shuttles that would connect these businesses to public transit routes. Ms. Schilling said this idea would be contingent on how much it would cost those businesses to contribute to the shuttle service. She also noted that employers would need to understand the long term value of partnering with transit. Chairperson Geracie said shuttle routes are contingent on developing consistent demand for the service, and noted that this transit development plan is expected to identify potential shuttle routes connecting the Express to employment centers.
13. Ms. Schilling suggested that the incentives to use the Express in the reverse commute direction are relatively weak, noting that there are already relatively strong incentives for riders to take transit into downtown Milwaukee, such as close connections to jobs and not having to pay for expensive downtown parking.
14. In reference to Table 2-6, Mr. Wittek indicated that the County has three new replacement vehicles for the Shared-Ride Taxi service that are not yet in service and therefore are not reflected in the table. During the discussion of the rate of vehicle replacement on page 12, Mr. Wittek explained that the lull in replacing vehicles in recent years was partially due to a change in policy at the County. Previously, vehicles had been replaced when they reached 200,000 miles. It was recently determined that the vehicles could be operated until 280,000 to 320,000 miles without a significant increase in maintenance costs. Therefore, the County now plans to replace vehicles when they reach 300,000 miles. In the coming years the County intends to replace five to seven vehicles per year.
15. Referring to Map 2-4, Mr. Wittek asked how many total trips were being shown on the map, and Mr. Muhs said he will provide that total in the minutes for this Committee meeting.

[Secretary's Note: The number of total trips using the Shared-Ride Taxi service on the average weekday in September 2016 is estimated to be 390 trips. Map 2-4 has been revised to include this information.]

16. Ms. Koehler pointed out that there is often a variation in trip purpose throughout the week by riders of the Shared-Ride Taxi, stating that people primarily use the service for work trips on weekdays, for shopping trips on Saturday, and for church and shopping trips on Sunday. Mr. Wittek suggested the travel pattern analysis be separated into average weekday, average Saturday, and average Sunday analyses. Mr. Muhs said Commission staff would revise Chapter II to include that information.

[Secretary's Note: Chapter II has been revised to separate the travel pattern analysis into weekday, Saturday, and Sunday analyses. Attachment A to these minutes shows the three maps.]

17. Referring to the section on other transit services in the County starting on page 14, Mr. Sponcia explained that Route 42U is not necessarily an attractive service with its 45 minute to one hour headways. He noted that MCTS may consider modifications to the route since it still provides an important service to the four higher education campuses.

18. Ms. Schilling indicated that the Columbia-St. Mary's transportation service shown in Table 2-10 no longer exists. Mr. Muhs said this service will be removed from the table and noted that ProHealth Care appears to be the only major health system in the area that still provides transportation for its patients. Ms. Squire asked if ProHealth Care's reimbursement rates have changed. Mr. Muhs explained that rates have recently increased considerably, as ProHealth Care patients now cover nearly all of the cost of their rides. He noted that this increase in rates and the elimination of similar services by other health systems has shifted the burden of providing these types of trips to public transit operators, county Health and Human Services departments, and non-profit transportation services in the Region.

Following these discussions by the Committee members, Chairperson Geracie asked for a motion to approve Chapter II of SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 331, "Ozaukee County Transit Development Plan" based on the changes discussed. Ms. Rothstein made a motion, seconded by Mr. Edgren, and the Advisory Committee unanimously approved the motion.

FIGURE 3-1 FROM SEWRPC COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PLANNING REPORT NO. 317, "WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN: 2015-2019"

Due to time constraints, Chairperson Geracie postponed the discussion and review of the public transit service objectives and standards from the Washington County Transit Development Plan that would be used to assist the Advisory Committee with developing objectives and standards for Ozaukee County until the next meeting. Mr. Muhs stated that Commission staff would work on draft objectives and standards more specific to Ozaukee County in preparation for the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Muhs suggested the date of Tuesday, February 21st at 10:00 a.m. for the next meeting, to proceed no longer than 2 hours. The date was agreed upon by the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Ms. Schilling, seconded by Ms. Bates-Nelson, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

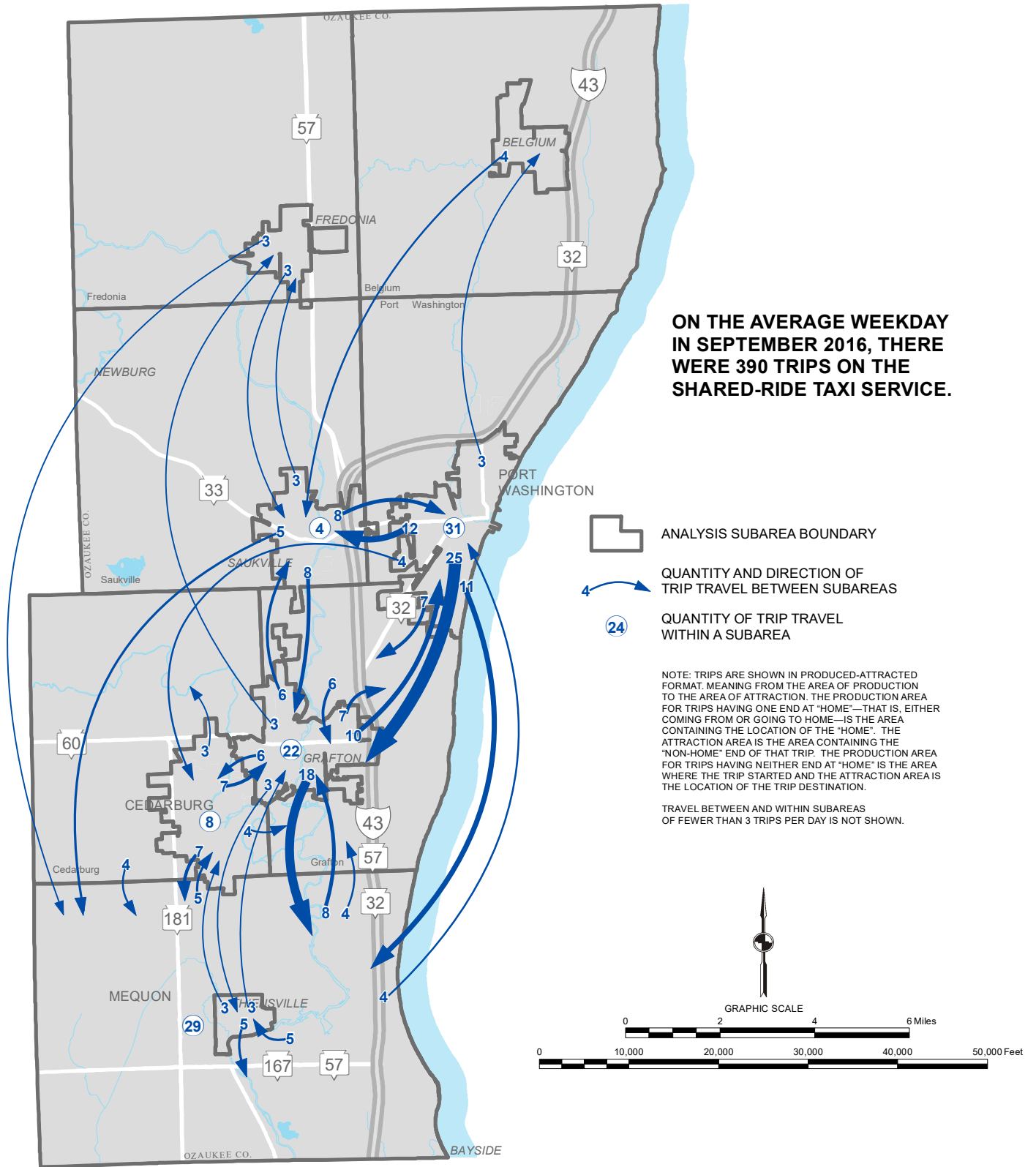
Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Muhs

ATTACHMENT A

Map 2-4

WEEKDAY TRAVEL PATTERNS ON THE OZAUKEE COUNTY SHARED-RIDE TAXI SERVICE: SEPTEMBER 2016

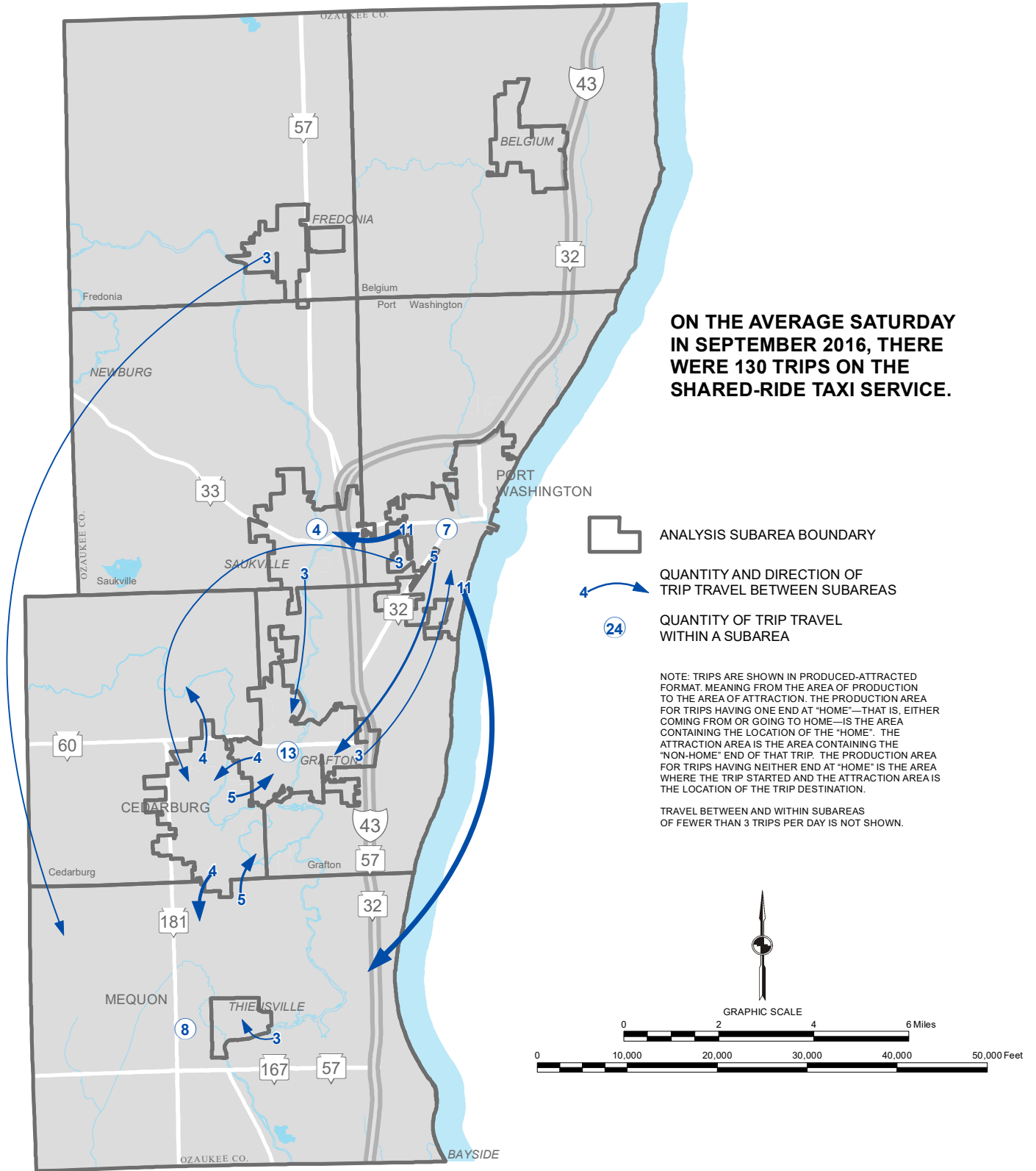


KWK
2/9/2017

ATTACHMENT A (CONTINUED)

Map 2-5

SATURDAY TRAVEL PATTERNS ON THE OZAUKEE COUNTY SHARED-RIDE TAXI SERVICE: SEPTEMBER 2016

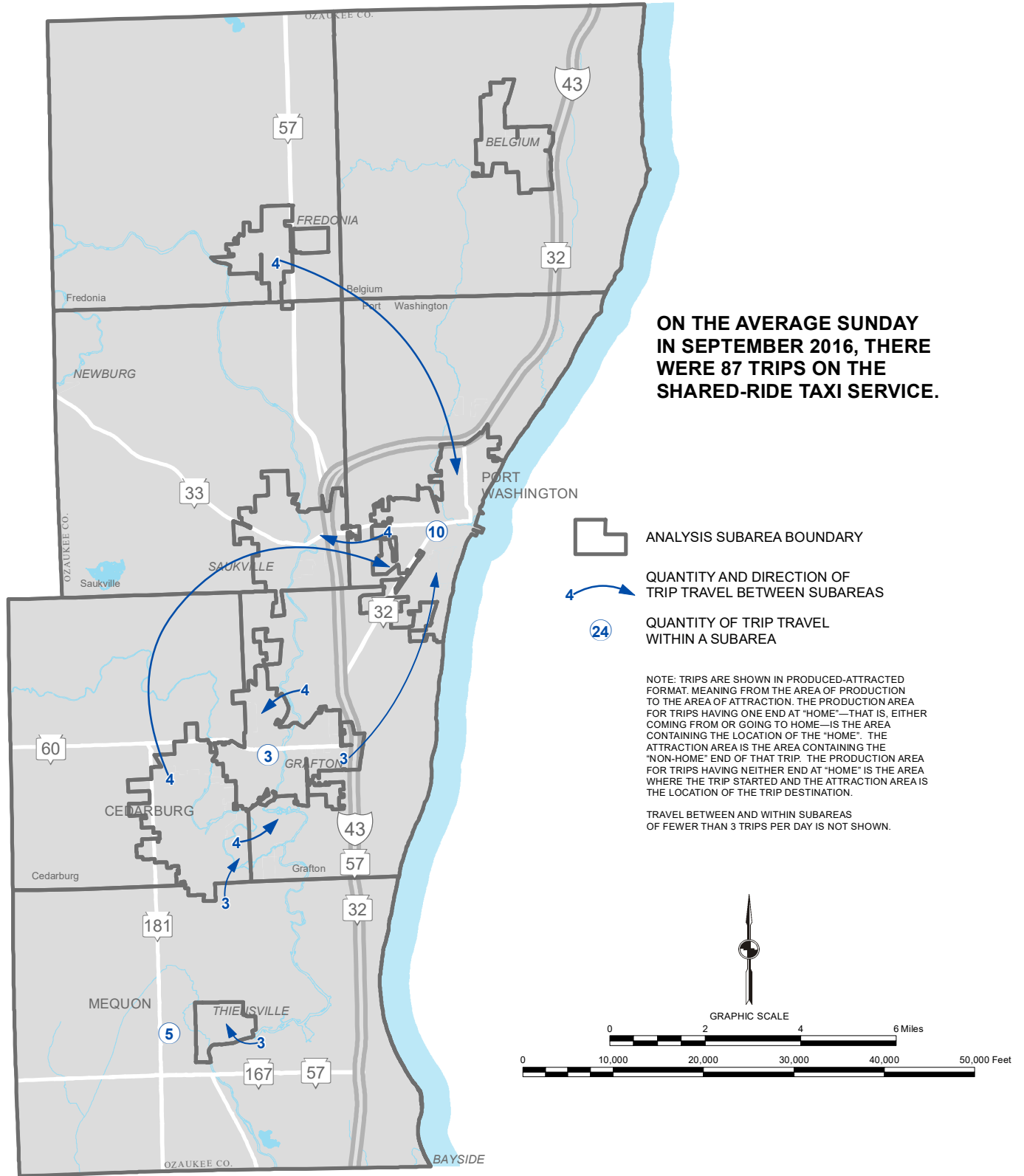


KWK
2/9/2017

ATTACHMENT A (CONTINUED)

Map 2-6

SUNDAY TRAVEL PATTERNS ON THE OZAUKEE COUNTY SHARED-RIDE TAXI SERVICE: SEPTEMBER 2016



KWK
2/9/2017