Springfield Mass Transit District Night Service Study

Final Report

Prepared for

Illinois Department of Transportation

Prepared by

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Disclaimer

This report was prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Illinois Department of Transportation. The contents reflect the views of the author who is responsible for the facts and accuracy presented. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official view or policies of IDOT or U.S. DOT. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or recommendation.

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1. Introduction

The Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) operates public transportation services throughout the City of Springfield, Illinois. This service includes fixed route bus service as well as Access Springfield service, the door to door Americans with Disability Act (ADA) required service. Transit service in Springfield operates on weekdays and Saturdays from about 6:00 AM until 6:00 PM. Members of the community have lobbied for evening night time service. As a result, area politicians have secured a grant for night time bus service and Illinois Department of Transportation is studying the issue of night time bus service in Springfield.

The study of night bus service in Springfield came from a community grassroots effort organized by the Central Illinois Organizing Project (CIOP) with the support of SMTD. The Springfield Night Bus Service Study was conducted in three phases. Phase 1 was a study of the feasibility for night bus service in Springfield. The findings of Phase 1 determined that night bus service is feasible. Phase 2 is the operations plan for night bus service. Phase 3 is the financial plan for night bus service.

Chapters 2 through 6 determined that night service is feasible. It incorporates a number of items to make this determination. The socio-economic and land use section presents a demographic profile of Springfield as well as presenting the locations/trip generators that would benefit from night time service. The transit system overview presents a brief overview of SMTD and the services that they provide. The Peer Group section presents how areas similar to Springfield address service in the evenings and night time periods. The public outreach section highlight the Phase 1 public outreach activities and presents the views of residents and groups in Springfield on the issue and need for night service. The conclusion section presents whether there is actually a need for night bus service in Springfield and for what reasons.

Chapters 7 through 9 present final route recommendations for the implementation of night bus service for the City of Springfield, which will be operated by the Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD). These chapters build on the feasibility study that was the first phase of the night bus service study that concluded that night bus service is feasible in Springfield. Chapter 10 presents the financial plan for service, which notes that grant money is available for the implementation of night time bus service in Springfield; however, the amount of money only allows for trial services. Chapter 12 presents the security concerns and responses. Chapter 12 of this report discusses implementing the service. This includes such things as marketing, management, and capital needs.

2. Demographic & Socioeconomic Characteristics, Land Use & Trip Generators

Introduction

The City of Springfield is both the capital of the State of Illinois and the seat of Sangamon County. It is located in central Illinois. Springfield is located on the Sangamon River 195 miles southwest of Chicago and 102 miles northeast of St. Louis. The City is served by Interstates 55 and 72 and an extensive network of state highways[1]. The Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) is the City of Springfield's transit provider and operates fixed route and paratransit service throughout the City. Figure 2-1 is an overview map of the SMTD service area.

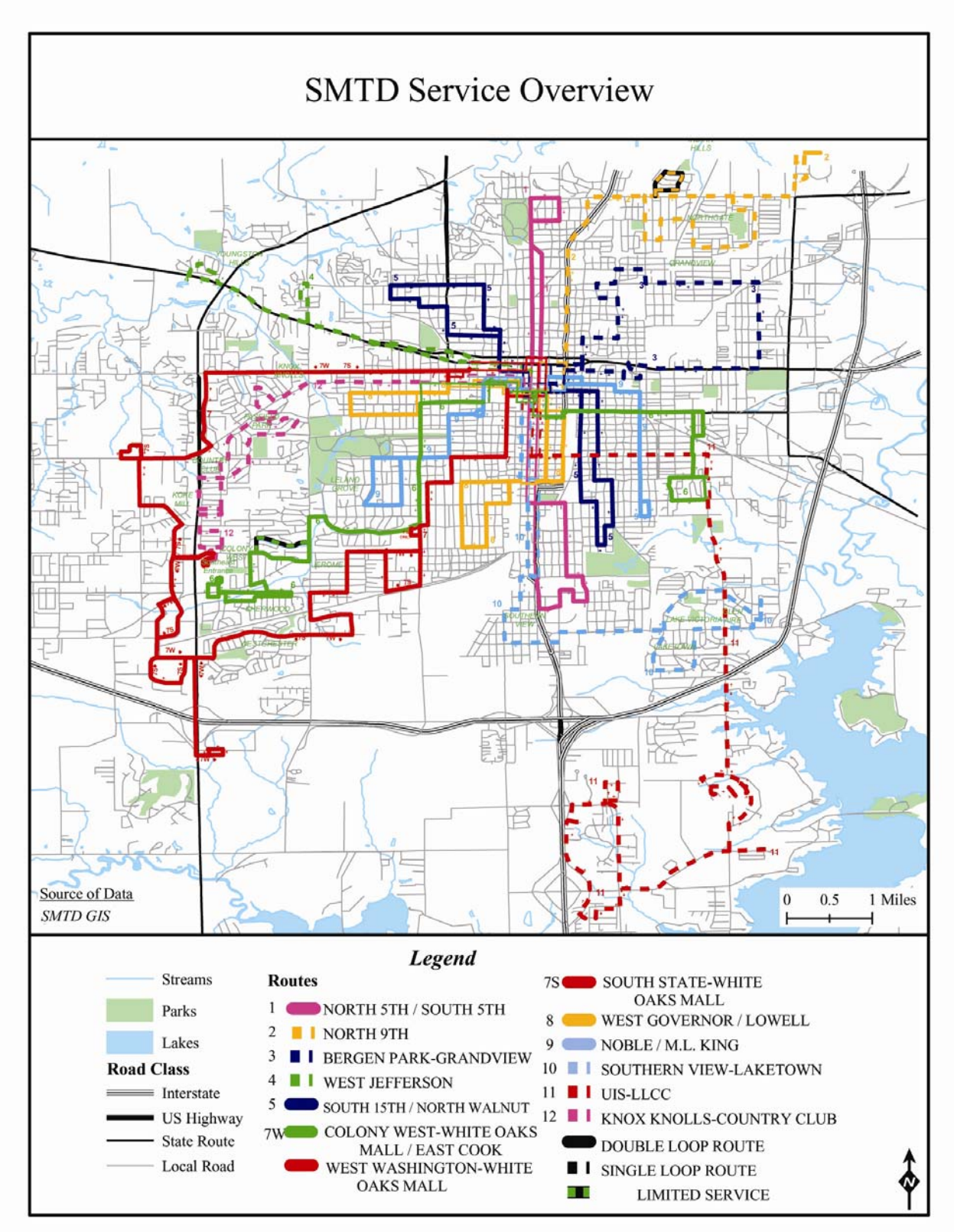
The Springfield Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) comprises all of Sangamon County. The City of Springfield contains 58% of the MSA population. Springfield has an estimated population of 115,668[2].

This chapter is split into three topics with regard to the City of Springfield: demographics, socioeconomics, and a combination of the two as a measurement of the potential for transit success. Past, present and future population statistics are discussed in the demographics section as are the concentrations of youth, senior, and disabled populations in the region. In the socioeconomics section, income, poverty, housing tenure and households without vehicles are discussed. In the third section, demographic and socioeconomic characteristics that are generally considered to be correlated to transit are evaluated for the region in order to produce a map of areas of potential transit success. The following chapter presents information on land use and trip generators.

This chapter provides an overview of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics based on data collected from the 2000 United States Census, the 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package, the United States Census Bureau, SMTD, and the 2005-2009 City of Springfield Consolidated Report. Where maps are used to present data in a spatial manner, Census block groups are the unit of analysis.

[1] City of Springfield Office of Planning and Economic Development. 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan.
[2] US Census Bureau. 2005 estimate.

Figure 2-1: SMTD Service Area Overview



Population – Past, Present, and Future

When looking at the demographics of an area, the current situation as well as the past and projected conditions must be studied. Why changes in transit service were made in the past and how transit needs to change in the future to meet changing demographics and demand can be better understood by looking at the patterns that emerge from such an analysis. The decennial Census provides a 'snapshot' of a region's demographics, which is very useful to understanding the current needs of a population, but does not speak to how the region got to that snapshot or what the future is expected to bring.

As noted, the 2005 population of Springfield is estimated at 115,668 people. The 2000 Census reported Springfield's population at 111,454. From 1980 to 1990 and from 1990 to 2000 the population increased by 6%. The City of Springfield's population is expected to grow steadily from 2000 to 2010 at about the same rate of growth (6%). Mobile Mapping, Inc. estimates the population in 2010 to be approximately 117,026[3]. For the Springfield metropolitan area, Sangamon County, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity estimates that the population will grow by 17% over the period between 2000 and 2030. Population projections for every five years during the period are listed in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Population Projections 2000-2030

Projection Year	Yr2000	Yr2005	Yr2010	Yr2015	Yr2020	Yr2025	Yr2030
Sangamon County	189,278	193,345	195,115	202,158	210,672	217,252	222,367

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Current Population (Total Count and Density)

Springfield's population count is presented in the map in Figure 2-2. Large numbers of people are located in the bigger block groups on the outskirts of Springfield. Moderate numbers of people are located in the downtown block groups. Population density is a more appropriate measure of the distribution of population in Springfield and is mapped in Figure 2-3.

Population density is an important demographic measure because of its inherent ability to show concentrations of people across a landscape. The most densely populated areas of Springfield are the downtown area, the northeastern section of the City as well as the central western portion of the City. The current daytime SMTD routes serve the concentrations of population in the City very well.

[3] City of Springfield Office of Planning and Economic Development. 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan.

Figure 2-2: Total Population

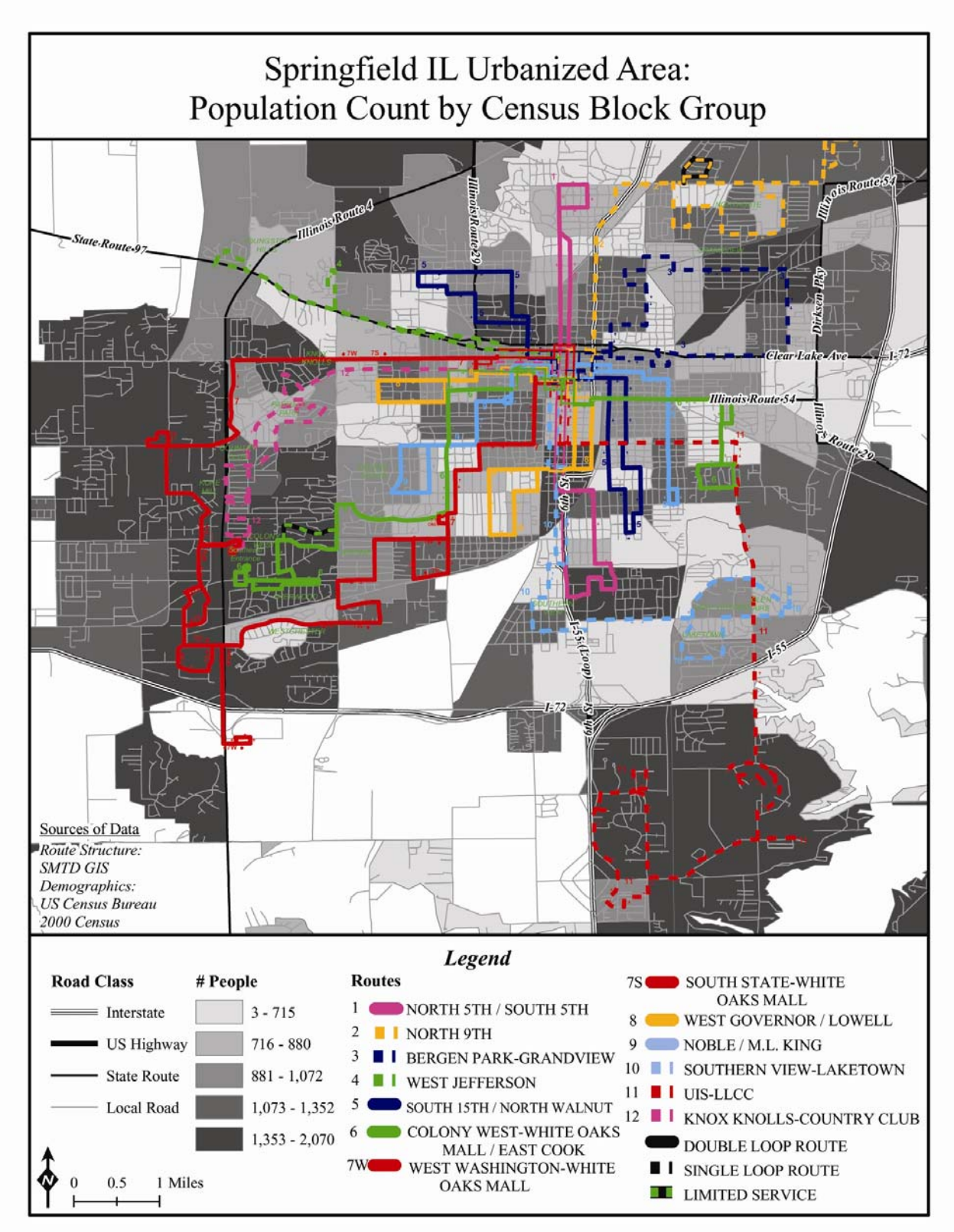
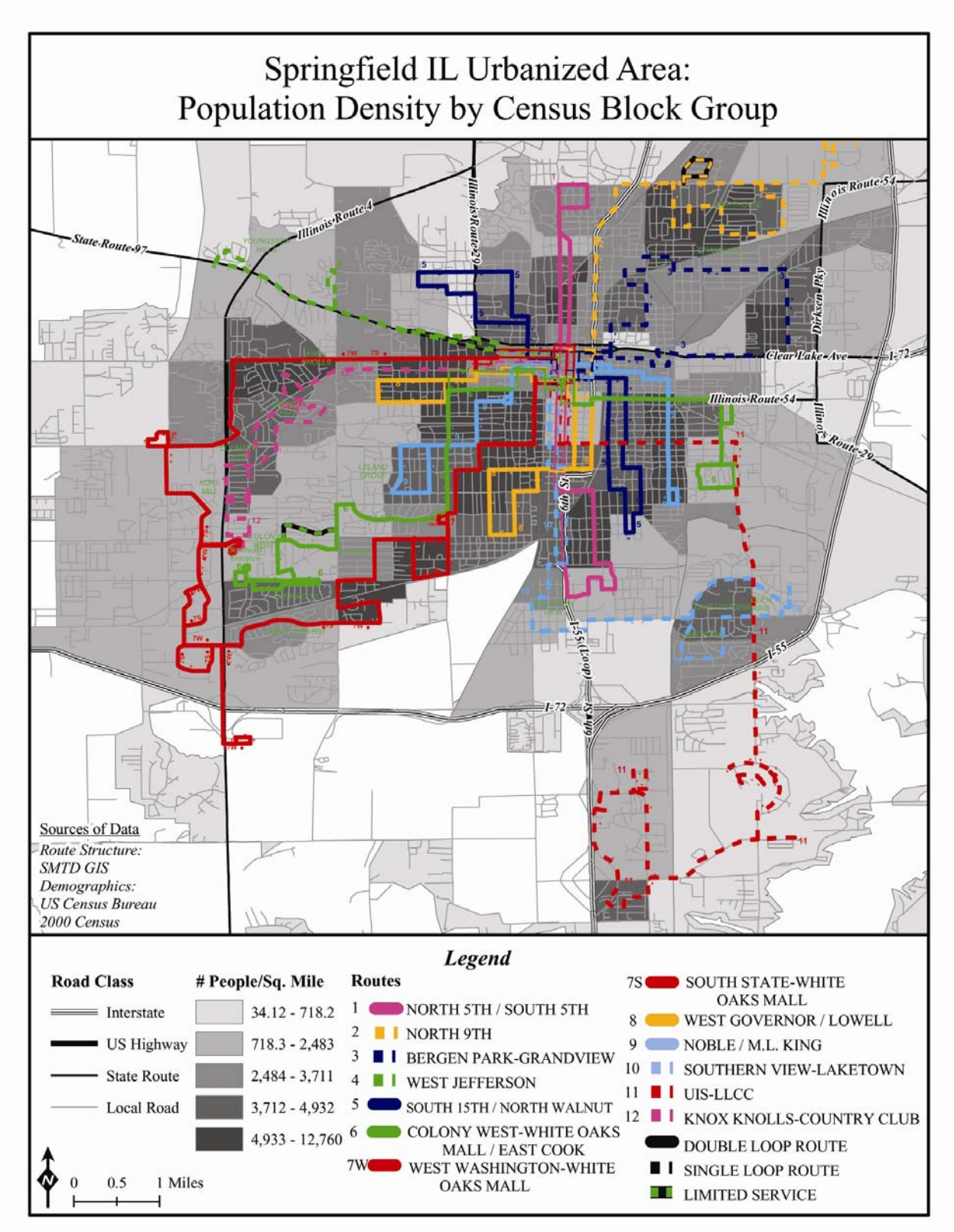


Figure 2-3: Population Density



For the younger and older segments of the population, age directly impacts mobility, and thus impacts transit usage. Identifying where these populations are concentrated can indicate areas of potential transit demand. Until the age of 16 youth are ineligible to drive, making them dependent on others or on non-motorized modes, such as walking and biking, for their mobility. Once youth turn 16, limited incomes often restrict their ability to own and maintain a vehicle. Youth and senior populations are discussed in the following sections.

Senior Citizen Population

Senior citizens tend to locate in the higher density urban areas, where access to health and activities are readily available. Figure 2-4 is a map of senior citizens as a percentage of the total population by Census block group. Senior citizens are generally concentrated to the north and west of downtown with smaller pockets in the south and east.

From 1970 to 2000, the median age in Springfield rose from 31 years to 36.9 years. Persons over 65 years of age make up16% of the population in Springfield, approximately 17,833 persons. A trend toward an aging population is evident with a 62% increase of citizens (baby boomers) between 35-54 years old. The highest concentrations of individuals over 65 are in CT 3, 14, 15, 10.02 and 20[4].

Table 2-2 presents population projection information from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for persons over the age of 65. The senior population is projected to more than double between 2000 and 2030.

Table 2-2: Senior Population Projections 2000-2030

Projection Year	Yr2000	Yr2005	Yr2010	Yr2015	Yr2020	Yr2025	Yr2030
Sangamon County	25,568	26,849	28,663	33,801	40,450	47,311	52,695

Source: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Youth Population

Youths for this discussion are considered to be any person under the age of 18. As of Census 2002, 24% of Springfield's population was under the age of 18 and 6.6% of the population was under the age of 5. Figure 2-5 is a spatial view of the youth population in Springfield. There are no concentrations of youths downtown. Generally, youths are distributed on the edges of Springfield, particularly in the northern area, western edge, and east of downtown.

The highest concentration of individuals under 18 is located in CT 8, 16, 17, 23 & 24, all within the 19 CT HUD Treatment Area. Children under 5 are primarily concentrated in CT 2.02, 6, 8, 15, 16, 17, 23, 24 and 25[5].

[4] Ibid
[5] Ibid

Figure 2-4: Senior Population

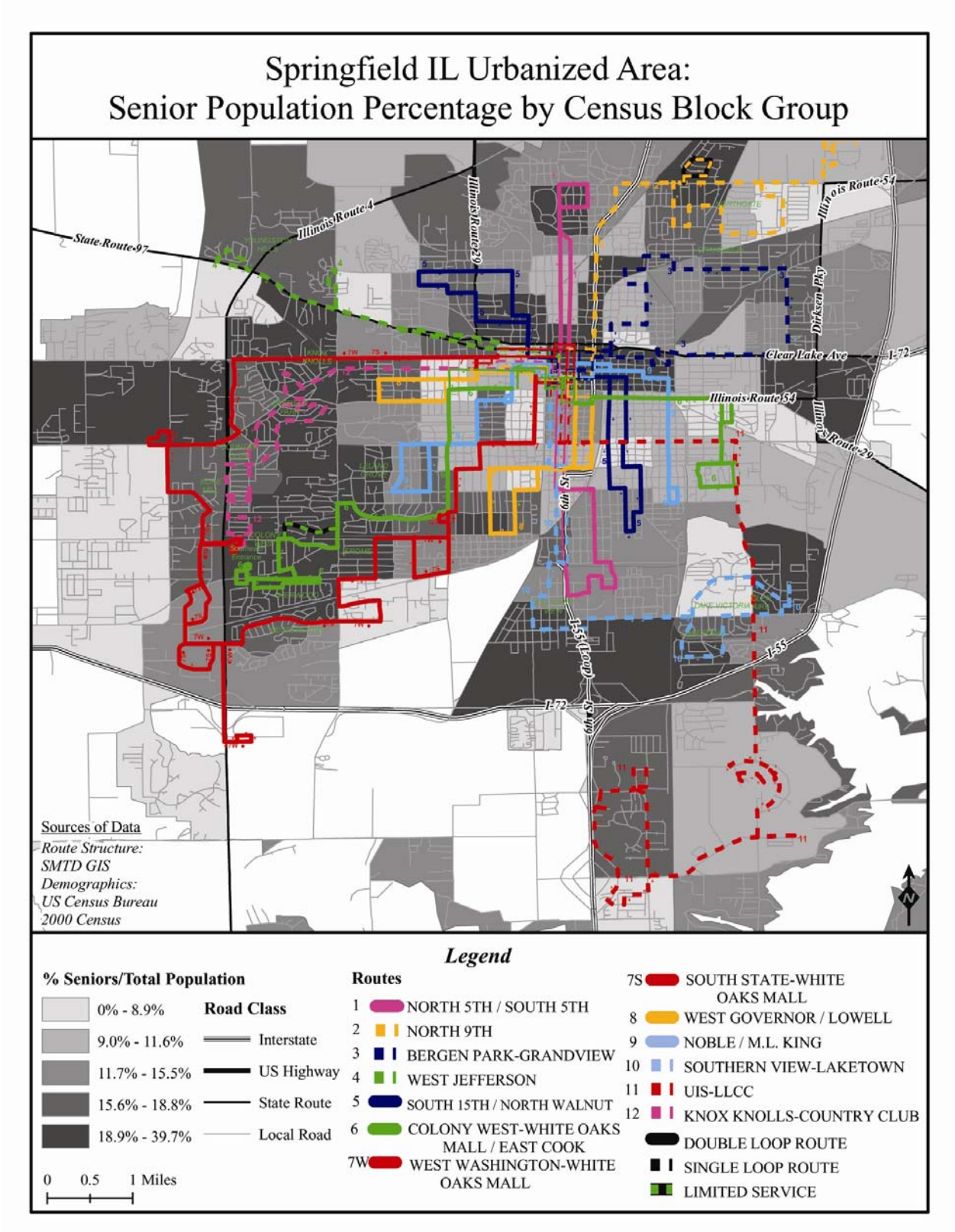
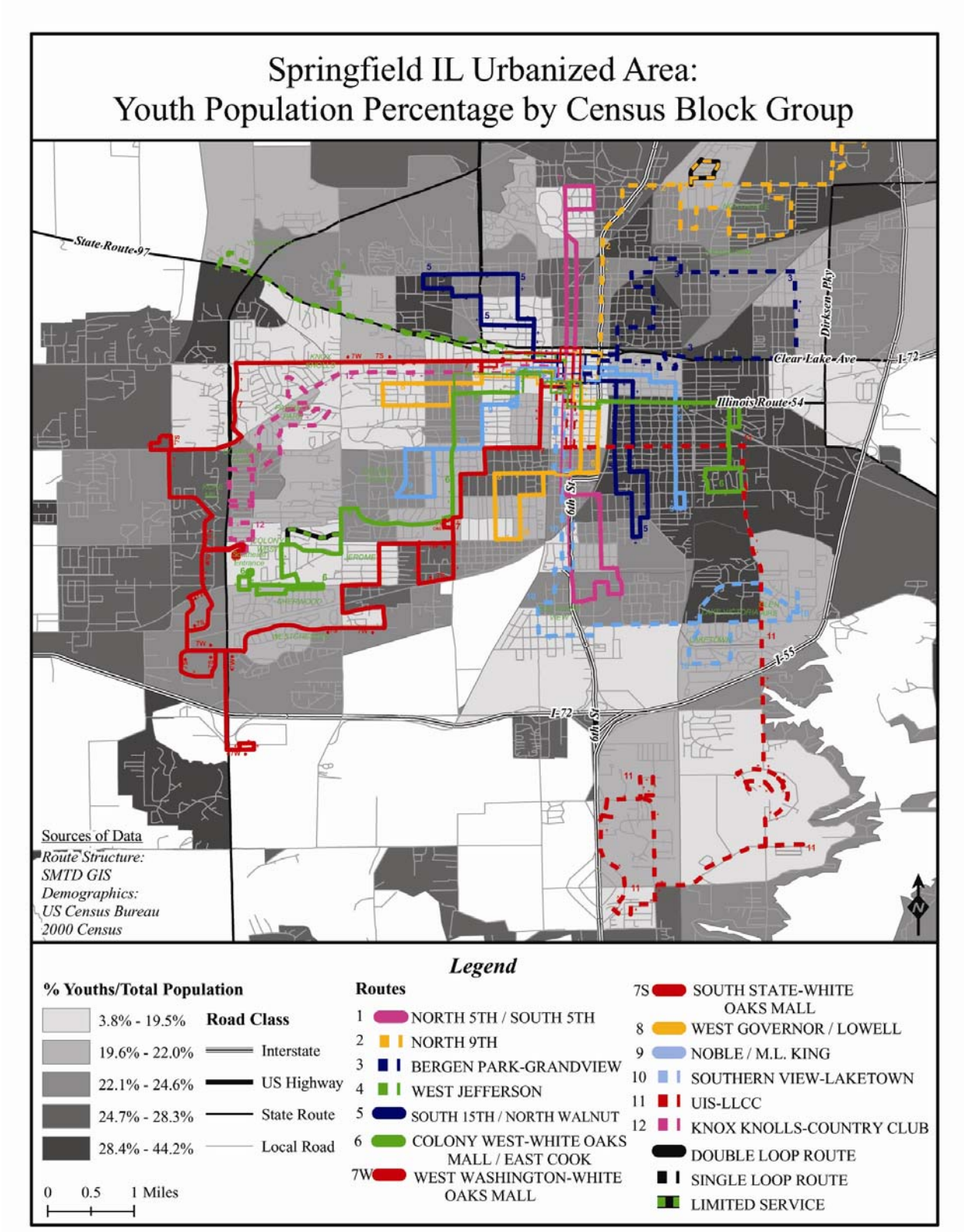


Figure 2-5: Youth Population



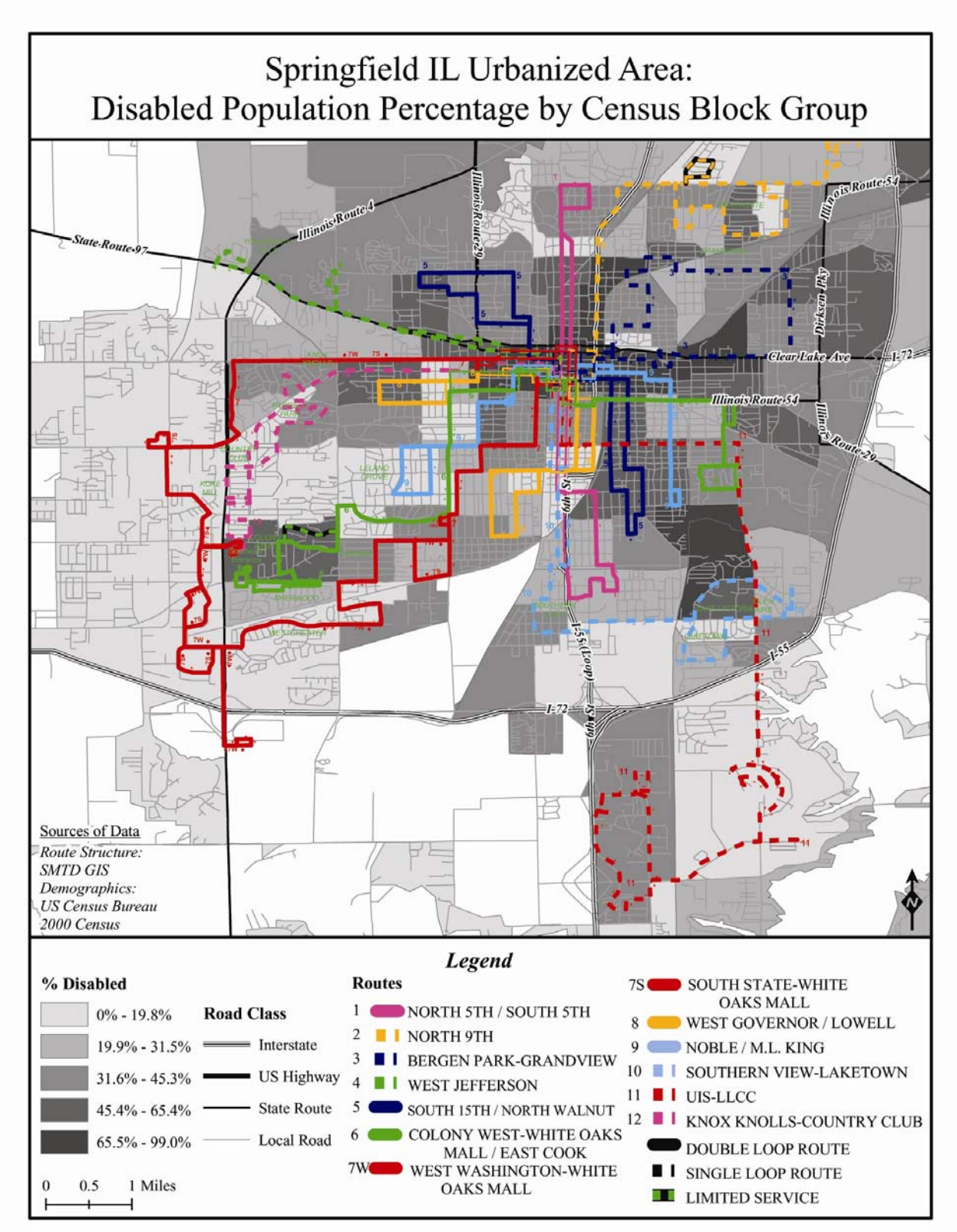
Disabled Population

For the City of Springfield, the 2000 Census estimates 18.7% of the population, or 19,331 persons who are civilian noninstitutionalized population with a disability 5 years of age and older. Forty-two percent of all females with disabilities are not employed compared to 40% of the males. The highest concentration of noninstitutionalized population with disabilities is located in CT 9, 14 and 15, with 38.7%, 54.8% and 46.4% respectively. CT 14 is the location of the Near North Village, independent downtown living for approximately 128 persons with disabilities and their families. Between the ages of 16 to 64 years of age, 7,049 or 33% persons with disabilities have an employment disability[6].

Figure 2-6 is a map of the distribution of disabled persons throughout Springfield based on the percentage of disabled people out of the total population and mapped by Census block group. Generally, there are concentrations of disabled people to the north and east of downtown.

[6] Ibid

Figure 2-6: Disabled Population



The following sections look at socioeconomic characteristics such as income and poverty.

Median Household Income

Income determines (in part) the type of transportation that people are able to use to get to work. People with lower incomes are more likely to be in need of public transportation options than people with higher incomes who can afford private transportation. Median household income describes the average income of households within the study area.

In Springfield, the Census 2000 median household income was $39,388. Median household income by block group for Census 2000 is mapped in Figure 2-7. In the City of Springfield, wealth is concentrated around the edges of the City and low incomes are centered downtown. Wealth is particularly concentrated in the western edge and southeast corner of the City.

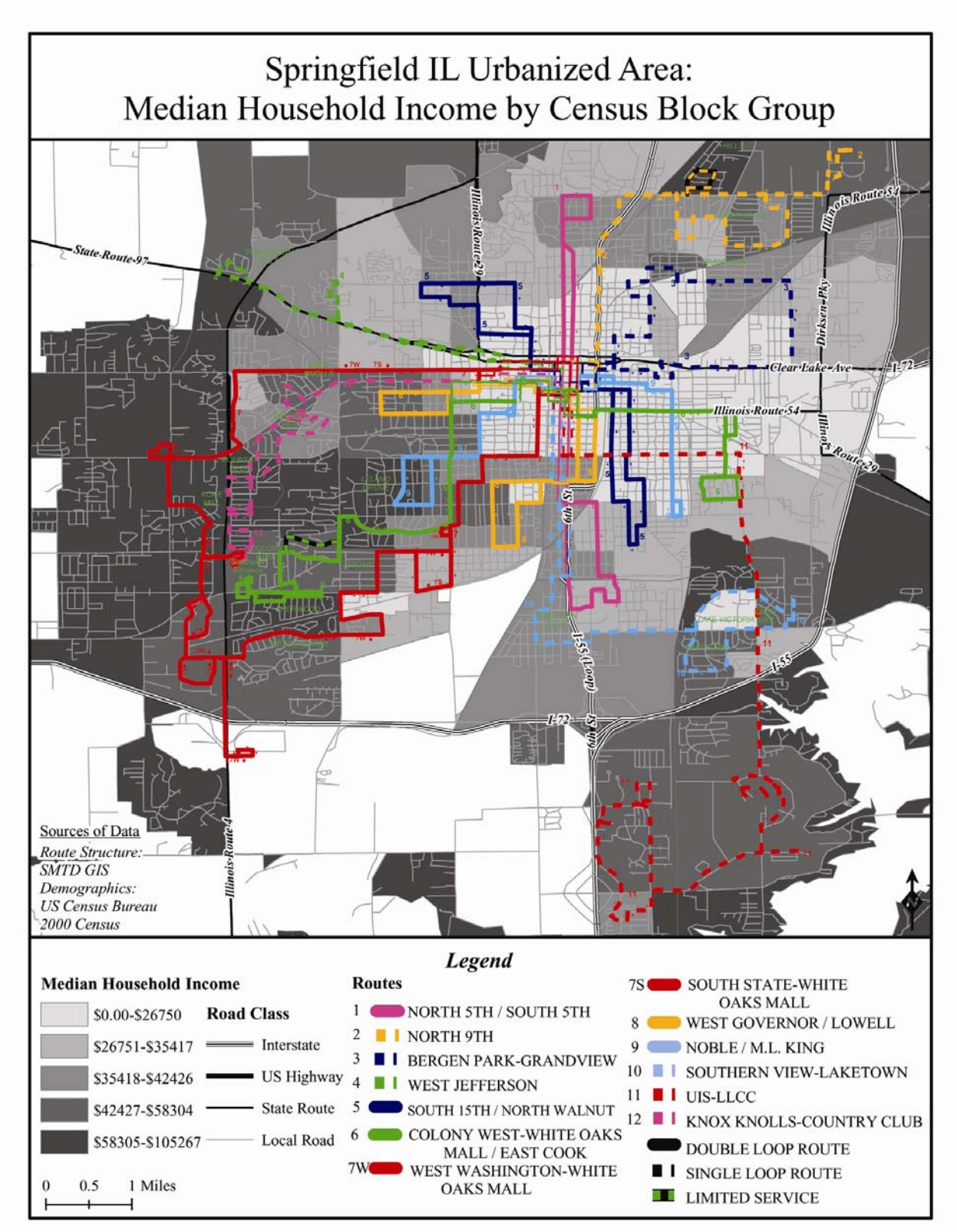
Springfield's median household income increased from $27,995 in 1989 to $39,388 in 1999 and is less than the Sangamon County median household income of $42,957 and the State of Illinois median household income of $46,590 in 1999. HUD estimates the median family income to be $61,400 as of 2005.

The number of people in Springfield living in poverty decreased slightly over the past decade as well as the poverty rate; 13,065 people (12.6%) in 1990 to 12,847 people (11.7%) in 2000. Census poverty statistics exclude institutionalized persons, persons in military group quarters, students in college dormitories & unrelated individuals under 15 yrs old. Even though Springfield's poverty rate decreased slightly, it remains higher than the average for Sangamon County (9.3%) and Illinois (10.7%)[7].

Natural and socioeconomic characteristics, such as age and income, are central in determining the location and level of service for bus routes, but other material and behavioral characteristics, such as home and car ownership characteristics and commutation patterns, are also essential. The next sections deal with some material characteristics of the people living in Springfield.

[7] Ibid

Figure 2-7: Median Household Income



Owner-Occupied Housing

Owner-occupied housing is used as another surrogate for describing income and mobility of residents. People who own their homes generally have higher incomes and a greater number of mobility options. People who rent generally have lower incomes and are more dependent upon public transportation and tend live in areas where walking is possible and public transportation is easily accessible. Figure 2-8 shows the distribution of owner-occupied housing in Springfield. Owner-occupied housing is concentrated on the outskirts of the City on all sides. Renter-occupied housing dominates the downtown area.

From Census 2000, the home ownership rate in Springfield is 62.8%, less than the Illinois rate of 67.3%. The median home value is $88,600. Again, the Springfield value is much lower than the Illinois median of $130,800.

The Springfield Housing Authority has 2,691 units of affordable housing comprised of both Section 8 voucher assistance and public housing dwellings. It serves over 10,000 residents of the Springfield community. As of January, 2005, there are 567 families on the waiting list needing Section 8 housing and 266 families needing public housing[8].

Zero-Car Households

Numbers of cars per household is an important statistic to analyze because it describes transit dependence and in turn, transit demand in the region. Zero-car households are considered to be entirely dependent upon alternate transportation sources. In Springfield, 6,487 households have no vehicles available – 12.1% of total housing units. Figure 2-9 provides a map of zero-car households as a percentage of total households by Census 2000 block group.

Zero-car households are distributed throughout central and northern Springfield. There are also other small pockets in the southeast and southwest parts of the City.

[8] Ibid

Figure 2-8: Owner-Occupied Housing

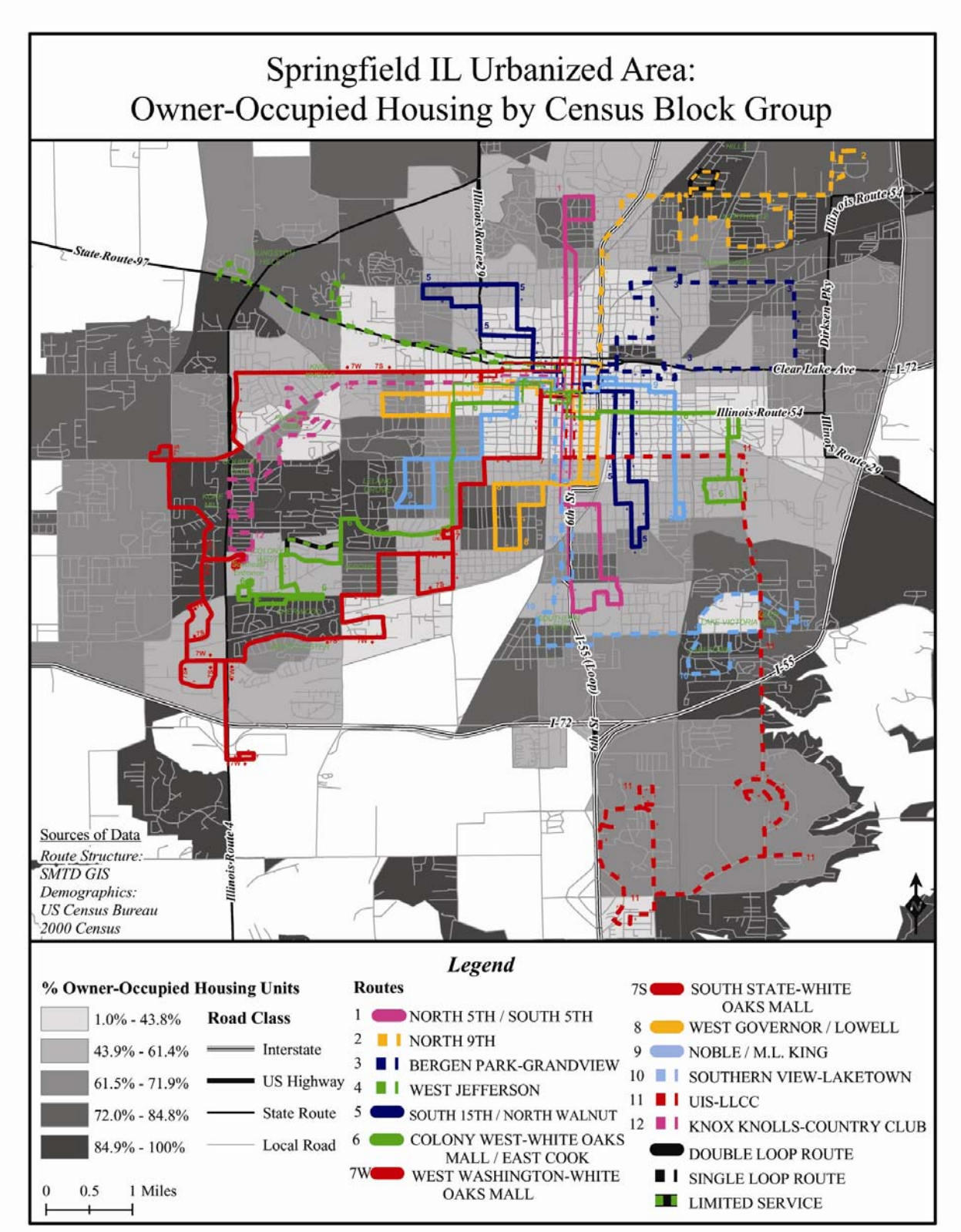
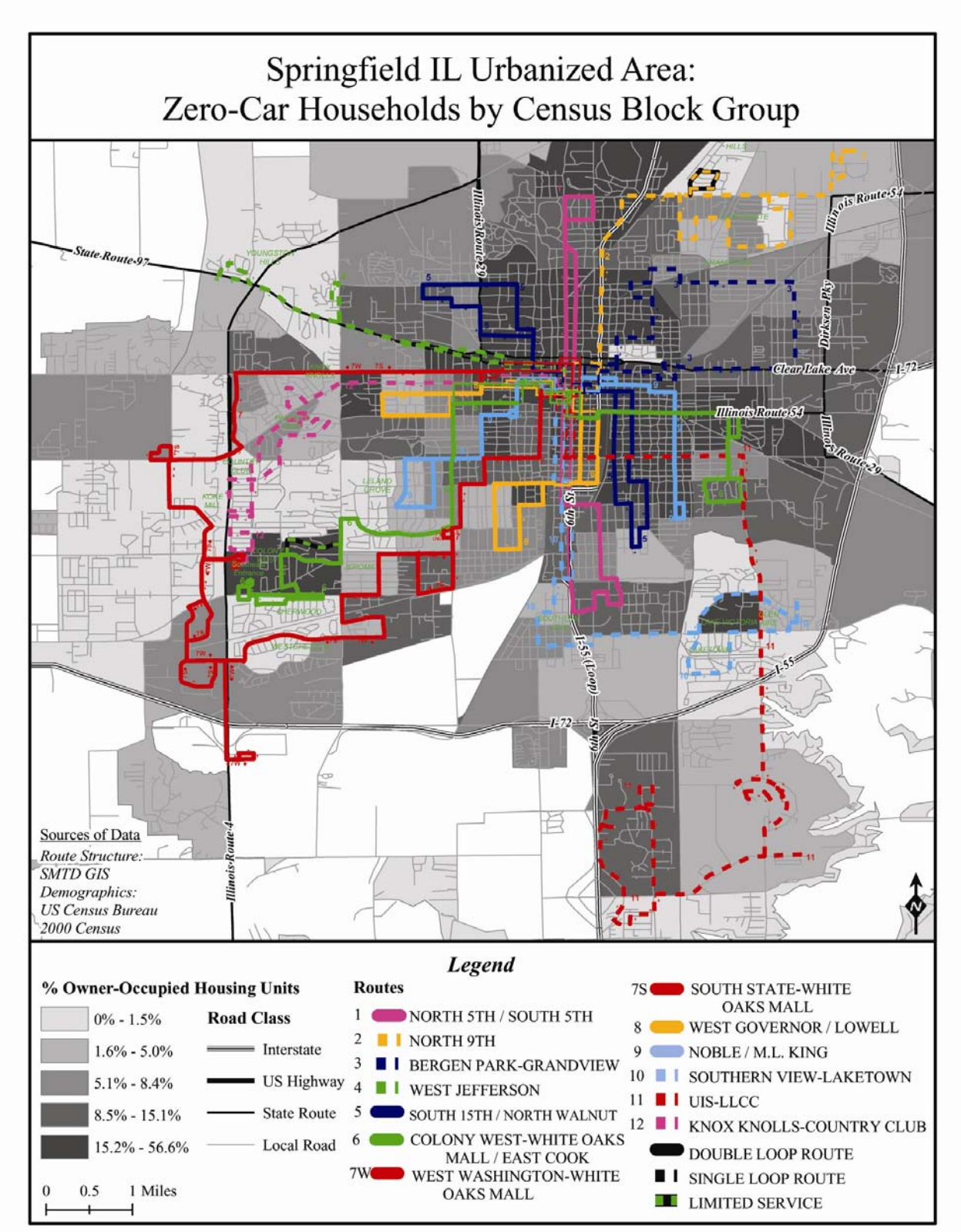


Figure 2-9: Zero-Car Households



Land Use and Major Trip Generators

Land use is used to describe where certain functions are performed throughout the City of Springfield. Land use categories include: parks and conservation areas, office space, redevelopment areas, community facilities, industrial and commercial uses, and residential (urban and low density) areas. Figure 2-10 is the Springfield 2020 land use map prepared by the Springfield Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission.

The Springfield Comprehensive Plan 2010 Land Use Analysis notes that the City's Land Use Plan limits growth to encourage infill development and orderly development. There are many older areas in the City that are residential on the Land Use Plan where lower cost housing could be built in place of what is now deteriorating housing stock. An investment could be made to improve the stock that currently exists, keeping it as good, but moderately priced housing[9].

As can be seen from the land use map, the category of land use with the most coverage is low density residential use. The downtown area is a mixture of office and service space along with commercial establishments. Other commercial, heavy commercial, service and office uses are located in pockets throughout the City. There are three large industrial complexes and several other smaller ones in addition to parks and conservation areas spread around the City.

While the land use map gives an idea of the major uses and development patterns, it does not determine what areas of Springfield will need transit service at night. The trip generators map, shown on Figure 2-11, shows the locations in Springfield that could generate a lot of transit trips. Major trip generators are locations frequented by a significant number of people, traveling by all modes, within the study area. Common transit generators include shopping centers, industrial parks, major employers, schools, public housing, and hospitals. These generators must be considered when evaluating transit service for a region. This section identifies and maps major trip generators in Springfield. Major trip generators specifically used in the evenings are also identified and mapped in this section.

Figure 2-11 provides a map of major trip generators in the City of Springfield The major trip generators are generally dispersed throughout the City. Not all of the trip generators presented on Figure 2-11 would need service at night. Many office and government buildings do not need night time bus service as they typically do not generate much activity at night. Generators that do need service include shopping destinations for workers and shoppers, outreach and educational institutions offering evening services, and social programs geared for night time clients. Certain employers that have night shift jobs, such as hospitals, are also important night time trip generators. Figure 2-12 is a map of major generators during the evening hours. Evening generators are also generally dispersed throughout the City. A complete list of evening generators identified for this study is provided in Table 2-3.

[9] Ibid

Figure 2-10: Springfield 2020 Land Use Map

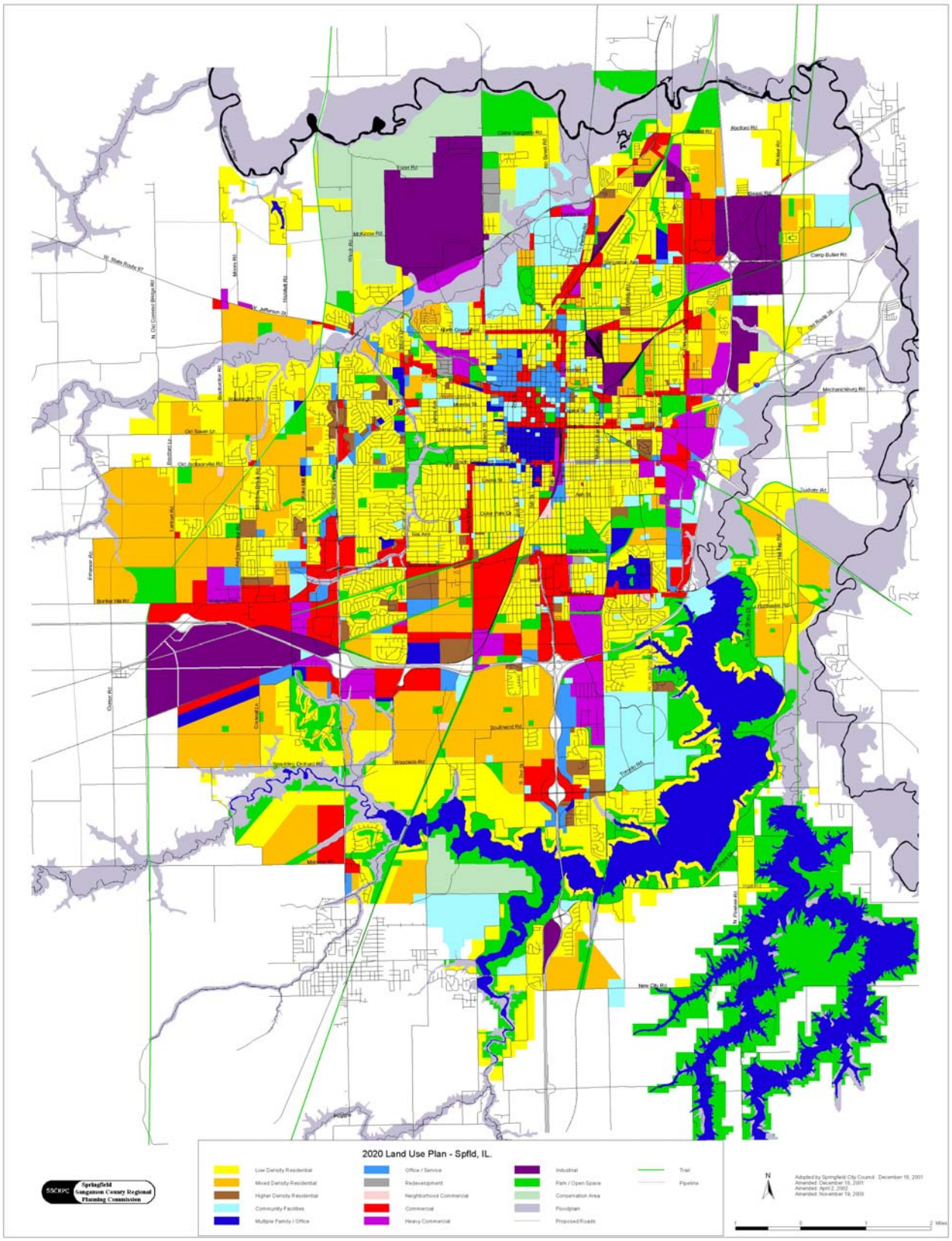


Figure 2-11: Major Trip Generators

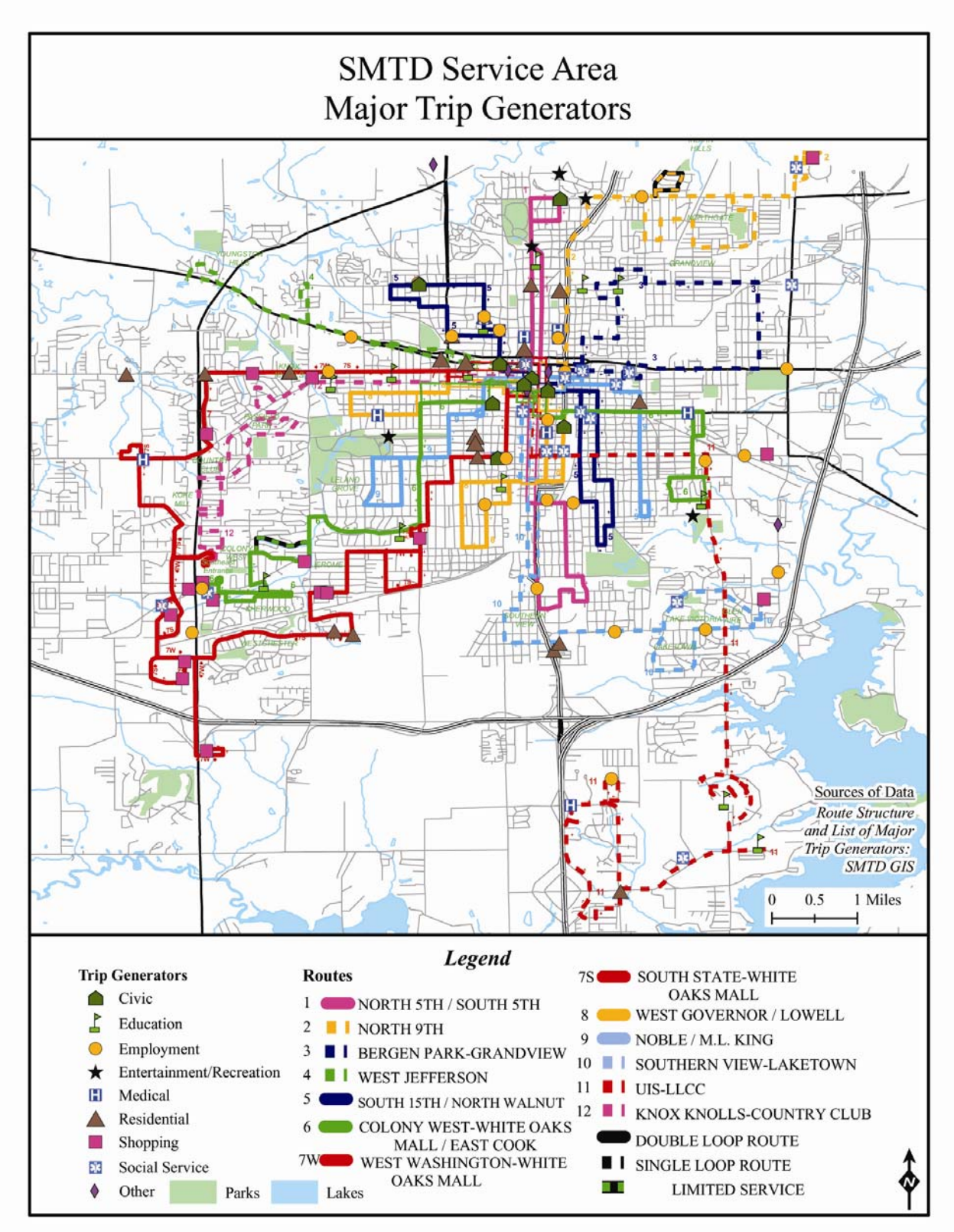


Figure 2-12: Major Evening Trip Generators

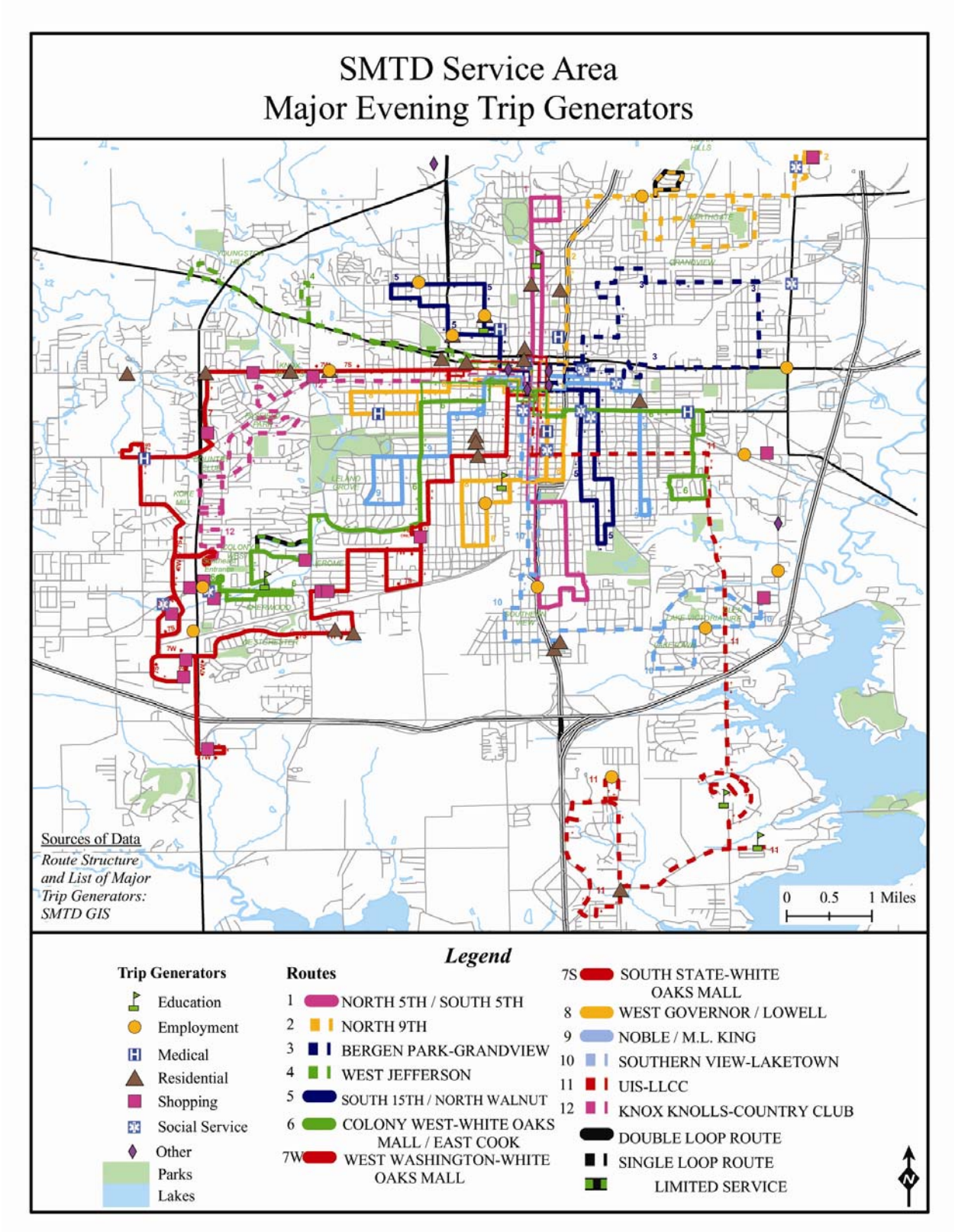


Table 2-3: Evening Generators by Category

Generator	Category
Lawrence Education Center	education
Lincoln Land Community College	education
Robert Morris College	education
SIU School of Medicine	education
Springfield College in Illinois	education
University of Illinois at Springfield	education
AIG American General	employment
Camp Lincoln (National Guard)	employment
CMT/IHOP	employment
Employment	employment
Industrial Park	employment
Sangamon Center North	employment
Sangamon County Community Resources - employment	employment
Capitol Community Health Center	medical
Memorial Medical Center	medical
Sparc-Epilepsy Resource Center	medical
St. John's Hospital (one block)	medical
Abraham Capital Airport	other
Amtrak Station	other
Downtown Transfer Center	other
Greyhound Bus Station	other
Lincoln Library	other
Prairie Capital Convention Center	other
Bonansinga Highrise	residential
Chatham Hills Apartments	residential
Hildebrandt Highrise	residential
Jefferson West Buildings	residential
Lake Pointe Apartments	residential
North Village Apartments	residential
Park Towers (2 blocks)	residential
Pope John Paul Plaza (highrise)	residential
Ravenwood Apartments	residential
Regency Nursing Home	residential
Sangamon Towers	residential
Sankey Highrises (2 blocks)	residential
St. Joseph's Home	residential
Transitional housing	residential
Transitional Housing	residential
Capital City Shopping Center	shopping
Chatham Square	shopping
Circuit City/Culvers	shopping
Clocktower Village	shopping
Fairhills Mall	shopping
Montvale Plaza	shopping
Parkway Pointe	shopping
Prairie Crossing	shopping
Sherwood Plaza	shopping
South Grand Pointe	shopping
Southwest Plaza	shopping
The Yard	shopping
Town & Country Shopping Center	shopping
Walmart	shopping
Wal-Mart/N Dirksen Pkwy Shopping Area	shopping
Washington Plaza	shopping
White Oaks Mall	shopping
White Oaks Plaza	shopping
Boys & Girls Clubs	social service
Elizabeth Ann Seton Program	social service
Family Service Center	social service
SCIL (Springfield Center for Independent Living)	social service
Springfield Community Federation - Youth programs	social service
Springfield Urban League	social service
Springfield Urban League Head Start	social service
YMCA	social service

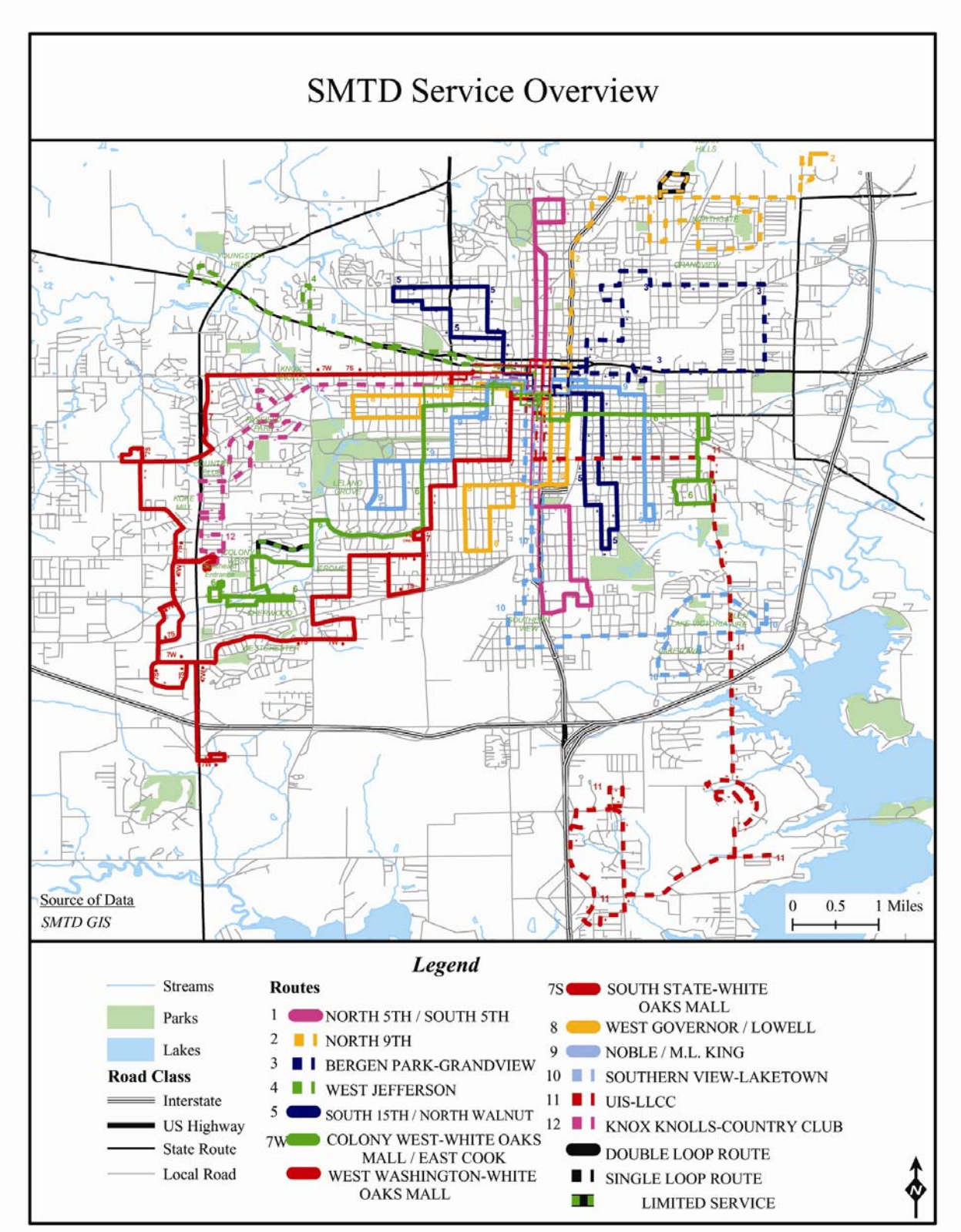
3. Transit System Overview

The Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) operates public transportation throughout the City of Springfield, which includes fixed route bus as well as Access Springfield ADA Paratransit service. This section provides a brief overview of the services that SMTD is operating today. Fixed route bus service is operated on 13 routes that originate at a transfer facility in Downtown Springfield and radiate to serve various neighborhoods and generators throughout the city. Service operates on weekdays and Saturdays from 6:00 AM until 6:00 PM depending on the route.

Route Network

Figure 3-1 presents the SMTD route network. This figure shows that service operates throughout the city of Springfield, and is focused on downtown. While most of the routes provide radial service along major corridors, a number of routes connect neighborhoods to downtown and provide circulation within the neighborhoods operating a circuitous routing. Most major transit generators within the city are served by the SMTD route network.

Figure 3-1: SMTD Service Overview



Frequency

Most SMTD routes operate every 30 minutes during peak periods and once an hour during the middays. A few routes operate 30 minute service all day. One route, route 3 operates more frequently during the peak periods and provides 40 minute service during the midday. All but two routes operate on Saturdays, operating every 30 or 60 minutes. Table 3-1 presents the frequency of service for each route in that SMTD operates.

Table 3-1: SMTD Route Frequency

Route	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Saturday
1 – North 5th/South 5th	30	60	30	60
2 – North 9th	30	30	30	60
3 – North Bergen Park – Grandview	20	40	20	35
4 – West Jefferson	30	60	30	-
5 – South 15th/North Walnut	30	60	30	60
6 – Colony West – White Oaks Mall/East Cook	30	60	30	30
7W – West Washington – White Oaks Mall	30	30	30	30
7S – South State – White Oaks Mall	30	30	30	30
8 – West Governor/Lowell	30	60	30	60
9 – Noble/M.L. King	30	60	30	60
10 – Southern View – Laketown	30	60	30	60
11 – UIS-LCC	30	30	30	30
12 – Knox Knolls-Country Club	30	60	30	-

Source: SMTD Public Timetables

Besides the fixed routes mentioned above, SMTD has recently started the Historic Sites bus. This service operates every 30 minutes from 8:15 AM to 5:45 PM on weekdays and Saturdays from April through October. From November through March, service is operated hourly on weekdays and Saturdays from 8:15 AM to 5:15 PM. This route provides service to locations within Springfield that are historically significant. This service costs $1.00 for an individual trip or a day ticket is available for $3.00.

Access Springfield

Access Springfield is the operating name for the ADA Paratransit system that compliments SMTD fixed routes. Access Springfield services are available throughout the transit district area. Service is provided as a curb to curb service, with passengers escorted onto and off of the vehicle but not to the door of their destination. Services are available the same times that fixed route services are operating, from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM on weekdays and Saturdays. The service is available to people who are disabled or are unable to use fixed route services. Fares for the service are double the base fare.

Fares

SMTD has a very simple fare structure. The base fare is $1.00 with $0.50 charged for seniors, disabled, children traveling with parents, and those who have a Medicare card. Transfers are available for passengers and are free. Besides the cash fares, multi-ride passes are available and are color coded based on eligibility to use the pass. Unlimited ride passes are not available. ADA fares are double the base fare, with $1.50 per trip for registered riders. People awaiting ADA eligibility are charged $3.50 per ride on Access Springfield services.

Table 3-2: Fare Structure

Fare Category	Fare
Cash Fares	
Base Fare	$1.00
Ages 4 and under	Free
Up to 2 children traveling with an adult	Free
Additional Children	$0.35
Age 65 or older	$0.35
Disabled	$0.50
Medicare Card Holders	$0.50
Transfers	Free
Multi-Ride Passes	
Yellow – Discount Pass (17 Rides)	$15.00
Pink – Senior Citizen (20 Rides)	$10.00
Blue – Disabled (20 Rides)	$10.00
Historic Sites Bus	
One Ride	$1.00
Day Pass	$3.00
Access Springfield	
Registered riders	$2.00
Other riders	$4.50

Source: SMTD

4. Peer Group Analysis

This chapter presents a peer and trend analysis, comparing SMTD to similar systems. A description of the peer systems and the method for choosing peers are discussed in the following section. Data for the peer analyses herein were taken from the 2005 National Transit Database (NTD) summary reports for fixed route service, the last full year for which data on all the peer systems is available.

In order to complete the peer review, a list of peers that are similar to Springfield has been identified. Peers were defined as cities with similar service area population size and reasonably similar peak vehicle requirements and service hours. It should be noted that every city and every agency have different organizational structures and different funding sources, characteristics which are excluded from this peer selection. Based on 2005 NTD data, Springfield has a service area population of 126,585, operates 91,417 revenue hours and utilizes 37 vehicles in the peak period.

In order to determine which cities would fit into a peer analysis with Springfield, certain criteria were set. First, all urbanized areas with populations between 125,000 and 175,000 were evaluated (41 urbanized areas). Second, transit agencies in these urbanized areas were identified (35 agencies). Third, the service area populations for the transit agencies were compared. Service area population limits were set between approximately 100,000 and 185,000 (21 agencies). Then approximate ranges were set on annual revenue hours (40,000 to 150,000) and peak vehicles (20-50. The final list of eleven peer cities includes:

- Lafayette, IN
- Medford, OR
- Racine, WI
- Macon, GA
- Saginaw, MI
- Topeka, KS
- Olympia-Lacey, WA
- New Bedford, MA
- Danbury, CT-NY
- Cedar Rapids, IA
- Binghamton, NY-PA

The goal in creating a peer group is to develop one in which the peers individually share many commonalities with Springfield, and which collectively have averages on key statistics regarding the operating environment – population – and on the level of service provided – particularly annual hours of service provided, but also to the extent possible on peak vehicles.

Table 4-1 describes the overview characteristics taken into consideration when identifying peer cities as well as the weekday, Saturday, and Sunday service spans.

Table 4-1: Characteristics of Peer Systems

Urbanized Area	2000 Urbanized Area Population	Transit Agency	Service Area Population	2005 Revenue Hours	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	Weekday Span	Saturday Span	Sunday Span
Lafayette, IN	125,738	Greater Lafayette Public Transportation Corporation (CityBus)	108,500	118,583	54	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM	7:00 AM - 7:00 PM	9:00 AM - 7:00 PM
Medford, OR	128,780	Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVTD)	128,779	54,548	18	5:00 AM - 6:30 PM	None	None
Racine, WI	*129,545*	*Belle Urban System - Racine (The Bus)*	*112,100*	*87,846*	*26*	*5:30 AM - 12:00 AM*	*5:30 AM - 10:30 PM*	*9:30 AM - 7:00 PM*
Macon, GA	*135,170*	*Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority*	*115,225*	*77,702*	*19*	*5:30 AM - 11:00 PM*	*5:30 AM - 11:00 PM*	*None*
Saginaw, MI	140,985	Saginaw Transit Authority Regional Service (STARS)	127,000	43,072	31	6:00 AM - 6:45 PM	8:00 AM - 5:55 PM	None
Topeka, KS	142,411	Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (Topeka Transit - TMTA)	122,377	56,216	25	5:45 AM - 6:45 PM	7:15 AM - 6:15 PM	None
Olympia-Lacey, WA	*143,826*	*Intercity Transit (I.T.)*	*139,480*	*151,652*	*44*	*6:00 AM - 11:30 PM*	*8:15 AM - 12:10 AM*	*8:15 AM - 8:55 PM*
New Bedford, MA*	146,730	Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA)	186,731	96,722	49	5:30 AM - 7:00 PM	5:50 AM - 7:00 PM	None
Danbury, CT-NY	*154,455*	*Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART)*	*154,855*	*56,804*	*22*	*6:05 AM - 10:35 PM*	*8:00 AM - 10:35 PM*	*9:05 AM - 7:05 PM*
Cedar Rapids, IA	155,334	Five Seasons Transportation and Parking (FSTP)	97,716	74,597	33	5:30 AM - 6:30 PM	8:30 AM - 5:00 PM	None
Binghamton, NY-PA	*158,884*	*Broome County Department of Public Transportation (Broome County)*	*165,000*	*114,506*	*38*	*5:20 AM - 12:20 AM*	*6:50 AM - 11:00 PM*	*10:20 AM - 6:15 PM*
Average	141,987		132,524	84,750	33			
Springfield, IL	**153,516**	**Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD)**	**126,585**	**91,417**	**37**	**6:00 AM - 6:00 PM**	**6:00 AM - 6:00 PM**	**None**

*Note: Only the Fall River-New Bedford route operates until 7 PM. All of the other routes end by 6:30 PM on weekdays and before 6:00 PM on Saturdays.

All of the peer systems operate later service than SMTD. Six of the eleven agencies only operate a few hours later than SMTD, operating to either 6:30 or 7:00 PM, which is significant because this allows extra time for people to leave work, or utilize the bus to pick up children from day care, before the service day ends. Five of the eleven agencies operate evening service (later than 7:00 PM). Those systems are italicized in Table 4-1. Evening service for these five peer systems is described in more detail in the following sections.

Racine, WI

The Belle Urban System (The Bus) in Racine, WI operates from 5:30 AM to 12:00 AM on weekdays, from 5:30 AM to 10:30 PM on Saturdays, and from 9:30 AM to 7:00 PM on Sundays. On weekdays, 6 of 11 routes operate after 6:30 PM. On Saturdays, 5 of 7 routes operate during evening hours.

Macon, GA

The Macon-Bibb County Transit Authority in Macon, GA operates service from 5:30 AM to 11:00 PM Mondays through Saturdays. The Authority operates the full system (9 routes) throughout the service span, even during the evening hours, except for Route 1, which ends service at 5:50 PM on weekdays and does not operate on Saturdays. The Bellevue/Log Cabin branch of Route 2 also does not operate on Saturdays, but does operate during weekday evening hours.

Olympia-Lacey, WA

Intercity Transit (I.T.) in Olympia-Lacey, WA operates 19 regular routes and 4 commuter shuttles. I.T. operates from 6:00 AM to 11:30 PM on weekdays, from 8:15 AM to 12:10 AM on Saturdays and from 8:15 AM to 8:55 PM on Sundays. I.T. operates 10 regular routes weekday evenings (past 8:00 PM) and 9 regular routes on Saturday evenings. Commuter services are also offered during evening hours and on Saturdays and Sundays.

Danbury, CT-NY

Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART) in Danbury, CT operates 7 regular routes from 6:05 AM to 6:45 PM on weekdays and from 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM on Saturdays. HART operates 3 separate loop routes during evening hours on weekdays and Saturdays and all day on Sundays. The loops run from 6:05 PM to 10:35 PM on weekdays, from 5:05 PM to 10:35 on Saturdays, and from 9:05 AM to 7:05 PM on Sundays.

Binghamton, NY-PA

Broome County Department of Public Transportation (Broome County) in Binghamton, NY operates from 5:20 AM to 12:20 AM weekdays, from 6:50 AM to 11:00 PM on Saturdays, and from 10:20 AM to 6:15 PM on Sundays. Broome County operates 13 regular fixed routes and 7 shuttles (for commuters, shoppers, and certain neighborhoods).

Broome County operates 9 regular routes and the Shoppers Special Shuttle later than 6:50 PM on weekdays and 9 regular routes later than 6:50 PM on Saturdays.

Conclusion

All of the peer systems operate service later than Springfield, however not all of the systems do offer night time bus service. The systems that do not operate into the evening provide service until 6:30 or 7:00 which allows enough time for people to get home without rushing for the bus, and allows for some early evening mobility. Based on this comparison, SMTD should operate service until 6:30 or 7:00 PM if service into the night is not provided.

5. Initial Public Outreach

Public outreach was a key task in determining the feasibility of nighttime service in Springfield. This task had a number of activities associated with it, all geared to determine whether or not night service is needed, how late it should operate, and where it should go. The activities were geared to allow as many people as possible to provide input into the process and have their needs heard. The activities included customer and student drop-in sessions, a public meeting, email and written letter comments, meetings with drivers, and stakeholder interviews. This outreach activity was conducted between and November 1 and November 4, 2006.

In total this outreach effort resulted in comments being received from about 420 individuals and groups. The breakdown by activity is as follows:

Drop-in Sessions		
SMTD Transfer Point Peak Period	61	
SMTD Transfer Point Midday Period	42	
Lincolnland Community College	12	
University of Illinois – Springfield	27	
Total		142
Public Meeting		
Total speakers	58	
Written Comments	52	
Total Attendance		175
E-Mail/Mailed Comments		49
Stakeholders		32
Drivers		28

The following sections provide a description of the outreach activities, process, and a summary of the comments from these activities.

Drop-In Session

A “drop-in” session is a session where the public talks directly to the consultant team on a one-on-one basis and offers suggestions for improvements or comments about the need for night service. Four drop-in sessions were held; one on the University of Illinois Campus on November 2, 2006, one at the Lincolnland Community College on November 2, 2006, and two at the SMTD transfer point in downtown on November 1, 2006 and November 3, 2006. Together, the four sessions produced comments from 142 individuals. Both users and non-users were targeted at the drop-in sessions.

Comments from the sessions are grouped into several categories for this summary, as follows:

- Need for service
- Current night transportation
- Locations to serve
- Evening hours
- Funding service
- Other concerns

Need for Service

Both people who ride the bus and those who do not mentioned that night time service is needed in Springfield. People mentioned many reasons why night service is needed including access to jobs, access to education, shopping, social life, access to cultural events, and economic development. A few other people mentioned that Springfield is the capital city and should set an example for the rest of the state, and support of night bus service would be an important message. A few people mentioned that night bus service is not a good idea since it is not likely to be used.

Most people who mentioned that night service is needed said that the primary need is for work opportunities. People mentioned that they had to turn down jobs or were fired from jobs because they did not have reliable transportation after buses stop running. Some people mentioned that they have to leave work early and have to schedule their work hours based on the bus schedule. Other people mentioned a desire to work overtime but are unable to because of no transportation home.

Education is another major reason that night time bus service is needed. People mentioned that they would like to take night classes at either Lincolnland Community College or University of Illinois but would not be able to get home after classes let out. Other educational opportunities exist in Springfield outside of the two colleges that people would like to take advantage of but the lack of night time service limits them. Students who live on campus mentioned that they would like to go into town in the evenings to take advantage of night life and cultural events in Springfield.

Besides work and school, people mentioned other night time transportation needs. Many people mentioned that shopping is important since the only other time they can shop is on Saturdays. A few people mentioned access to evening social services and support groups, as well as cultural events. Tourism and economic development were some of the other reasons mentioned as needing night service, especially with the opening of the Lincoln Library and redevelopment of the downtown area.

There is a large disabled population in Springfield who do not have access to automobiles. The disabled community which does not have any form of mobility besides the buses and are stranded during periods when buses are not running. Many disabled people would like night service to improve access to jobs, as well as attend cultural events and entertainment in Springfield, participate in the community as a whole, and be self sufficient. Night time bus service would help to achieve these goals.

A small number of people mentioned that they were against night time service. The primary reason is that they feel that night service is a waster of tax payer money. They feel that ridership is not high enough to sustain night service and that during the day many of the buses are running empty.

Current Night Transportation

The way people currently get around Springfield at night varies. Many people mentioned that for trips to work that they take taxis and that taxis are a rather expensive way to get around town, as well as unreliable. Other people mentioned that they currently depend on friends and family for a ride, which is very limiting and inconvenient. A few people mentioned that they do walk long distances at night and that there are safety issues about walking around at night. Walking is also an issue during inclement weather. Many people mentioned that they are completely unable to get around at night.

Locations to Serve

Locations all over Springfield were mentioned as needing service. The key locations included major shopping and employment generators such as Downtown, White Oaks Mall, and major retailers such as Wal-Mart and Meijer. Educational institutions, such as University of Illinois and Lincolnland Community College, were also mentioned as needing evening service so that members of the community could take night classes while working during the day. Other adult education programs operate at night and would need service. Hospitals are a major source of jobs as well as health services in the evenings. Intermodal connections such as to Greyhound or Amtrak were stated as being important, especially since Amtrak service to Springfield has increased recently.

Besides individual generators, neighborhoods were mentioned that need night service. Neighborhoods all over the city were mentioned as needing service, with more service needed in neighborhoods that tend to be lower income areas. Service to major apartment complexes was mentioned as needing night service. Major corridors that have retail and/or hotels need night service. Students mentioned that there is an on-campus housing segment of the population who need night service into downtown for entertainment and work/internship opportunities.

Most people recognize that SMTD would only be able to provide limited service at night. Some people mentioned that large routes that operate as loops covering a large area would be appropriate to serve the city. Other people mentioned that providing service to the neediest areas would be a good way to try out night service. A few people feel that service should be started on the highest ridership routes in town. A very small number of people believe that all routes should run into the night, with service cut back based on ridership. Other people believe service needs to connect major generators to important residential locations and routes should be designed with this in mind.

Span of Evening Service

Public opinion varied as to how late into the evening service is needed. Some people said that service is needed 24 hours a day while others mentioned only a few additional hours. At the colleges, students mentioned that service is needed until 10:00 since that is when the last classes of the evening wrap up. Shift workers mentioned that service is needed during shift change times and for certain shifts service may be needed beyond midnight. Shoppers mentioned that service is needed as late as stores are open. Store and mall employees mentioned that service is needed beyond store closing times so they can get home from work. People acknowledge that transfers will still have to occur and services need to run late enough to facilitate these transfers.

Funding the Service

Members of the public mentioned that they are concerned about how the service would be funded, and whether a fare increase would be needed. Homeowners mentioned that they would not be likely to support a tax increase to pay for night service, including those who are supportive of night service. Some students mentioned that they might be willing to pay for service through their student activity fees, but only if routes serve the colleges effectively. A few people also mentioned that they would be willing to pre-pay or buy night time bus passes.

Other Concerns

Safety is a concern for night time bus service. There is a concern about crime occurring on the bus or against passengers' while waiting for the bus or right after they get off of a bus. There is also a concern that drivers will be attacked or will not respond to crime. Drunk driving is another safety concern, both as something for bus drivers to be aware of and as a good reason to support night time bus service, preventing people from driving drunk.

Besides night time service, people mentioned other things that are a concern to them about the current transit network. Many people mentioned that Sunday service is needed, citing a variety of reasons such as access to churches and Sunday jobs. Others mentioned that having service operate hourly on Saturdays is insufficient. People mentioned that there are areas outside of the current SMTD service area where employers are locating. While nobody mentioned that the current fares were an issue, a few people mentioned that they would like an unlimited ride bus pass. People would also like to see bike racks on buses so people can access areas that are beyond bus routes. People also feel that public information is not available about SMTD services, especially at the college campuses.

College students at Lincolnland and University of Illinois have other concerns about the current route network. Since the colleges are located far from downtown, they are at the end of one route. This route only provides service into downtown and does not serve areas were college students are living, and in the case of White Oaks Mall, where they want to go. Some college users do find the transfer point in downtown a bit inconvenient and would prefer a direct ride to the mall with a satellite transfer facility there.

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held Saturday November 4th, 2006 at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Springfield. Approximately 175 members of the community attended this meeting. A brief presentation was made at the beginning of the meeting, with most of the time allotted for people to speak and voice their opinions and concerns about night time service. Verbal comments were made by 58 people at that meeting, while an additional 52 people submitted written comments. Comments included why night service is needed and where it should run. Below is a summary of the comments of the meeting, including both oral comments as well as written comments.

Overall Comments

Springfield is a changing community. Nowadays more activities are happening in the evening, which include jobs, school, entertainment, and social activities. A lot has done a lot to improve the downtown area of Springfield which has brought activity and tourists to the area. Stores are staying open later in the evening as well. As more things start occurring at night, there is a need for people who do not drive to have a way to access these activities.

Disabled Access

There is a large disabled community in Springfield. Many members of this community are reliant on the public transportation network, especially the Access Service, for mobility. At night when service is not operating this community is stranded. Members of this community would like later bus service in order to work later in the evening, attend night classes at area colleges and adult education centers, shop, and eat at area restaurants.

Access to Jobs

Access to jobs is one of the most important reasons that night service is needed. Many members of the community are having trouble finding jobs or maintaining jobs because many of the available jobs are during time periods that the buses are not running. Day time jobs at the hospitals are difficult to get, however there are many job opportunities at the hospitals in the evenings and nights that require bus transportation.

For those who already have jobs, night time bus service would allow for overtime work, which many people have to turn down since they are unable to get home. People are willing and desire the extra income from overtime work that could help their families. This is especially an issue during the holiday seasons when retail outlets are open later for holiday shoppers.

Access to Education

Besides work, many people would like access to education. Lincolnland Community College and University of Illinois at Springfield are two locations that are cited as places people go for educational purposes. Besides these two schools there are a number of adult education centers and a few smaller colleges that provide evening educational services.

College students also would need night service to enhance their education through internships. Often these are unpaid positions that require students to return to campus during times when the buses are not running. This hinders the ability for students to take these positions.

Access to Shopping and Entertainment

Shopping and entertainment was a reason that people stated that service is needed. Some people mentioned that due to the lack of bus service, the only time they are able to do their weekly errands is on Saturday, a time period that they would prefer to relax or access entertainment. Night time entertainment opportunities are growing in Springfield, especially in downtown and night time bus service should be provided to allow for access to entertainment venues.

Quality of Life

Many of the above comments refer to elements that affect quality of life. Night service is essential to Springfield in order to improve the quality of life of many of the disenfranchised members of poorer, primarily minority communities scattered through Springfield, and most concentrated on the east side and north side of town. Night service will allow for access to jobs and enrichment opportunities that will result in a higher quality of life for these communities. Also, access to entertainment and social activities will be important to give the youth of these community activities that can steer them away from illegal activities such as gangs and drugs.

Night bus service will help local neighborhoods in other ways. Many people who do work at night have to spend a good portion of their income on taxicab services to access these jobs. The money saved on taxis will improve the quality of life for people and families of night time workers, helping these families achieve economic freedom. A lot of the saved money will lead to increased economic activity which could help the entire city including smaller businesses in these neighborhoods.

Safety

Safety is an important issue to be considered for night time service. The safety issue may be a problem in attracting drivers to operate the service.

Locations to Serve

Many locations throughout the city will require bus service. Many of the neighborhoods on the east side and north side are the lower income neighborhoods that have a lot of workers that could fill many of the evening jobs. Many of the jobs are located at major retailers such as White Oaks Mall, Wal-Mart, Meijer, which will need night bus service. People would also like to shop at these retail establishments later in the evening. Hotels in the city will need night time bus service for the staff that works at these locations. Major educational institutions will need service including the colleges, adult education centers. Public schools were also mentioned as they sometimes have night programs, and parents need bus service to access parent-teacher meetings. Churches, social programs, and YMCA were mentioned as important generators so that people

can access these services in the evening. Other people also mentioned a need to access healthcare facilities at night.

A few people mentioned that there is a need for bus service all over the city, and indeed the region, so buses should run everywhere buses during the daytime run, possibly to even more locations. Other people believe that buses should run throughout the city, but run only on the main streets, not neighborhood streets. Most people understand that service will have to start off small, serving select but essential parts of the city, but hopefully it will be successful and service will expand all over the city. Any service later than the current service would be a boon for riders.

Besides certain areas, people mentioned that group homes and apartments are locations that will need night service. These locations tend to have a lot of lower income individuals, or college students who would take advantage of bus service. Apartments and group homes are located throughout Springfield.

Span of Evening Service

There were a variety of comments about how late service should operate. Some people mentioned that service will be needed until about midnight for shift workers at various retailers. Other people mentioned that 24 hour service is needed in Springfield. A few people did say anything that runs later than current service will already be a big improvement.

Other Concerns

There were other comments related to night time bus service. People acknowledged that funding the service will be an issue. Other people talked about having a demand response service or deviated service so that service is provided when and where it is actually needed. Others wanted to ensure that Access Springfield services would be available in the evenings as well. Some think that it may be possible to save money by privatizing the service or utilizing smaller vehicles.

People mentioned other things about there need for bus service outside of service during the night time periods. Some people mentioned that there are locations outside of the current route network that need service, such as the airport. Other people mentioned that Sunday service is very important to them. People who attended the meeting did stress that transit in general is important due to environmental concerns and concerns about gasoline prices. Other people mentioned that it is important, however difficult to attract people from using their car to using the bus.

Mail and E-Mail

Forty-nine people sent letters or email to SMTD in order to provide comments about night time bus service in Springfield. All of the comments received via mail and e-mail showed support for night time bus service. The most commonly stated reasons mentioned that night service is needed is for access to employment and for night school. Many of the people who sent in email

comments were students who live on-campus at University of Illinois and they mentioned that they have no access to transportation once buses stop running and that taxis are expensive.

The email and letters mentioned other reasons that night service is needed. Some people mentioned that having night service will allow for economic development. Others want access to shopping or other entertainment. A few people mentioned access to doctors. Some people mentioned evening church programs.

The letters and emails mentioned a few issues with providing night service. ADA access will be an issue. Other people mentioned safety concerns, and asked if alternative transfer locations can be considered. Another person recommended that free rides be provided as part of the trial program.

Stakeholder Interviews

During the same week that drop-in sessions and the public meeting occurred, the consultant team met with a total of 32 stakeholders. These stakeholders are members of the Springfield community that represent a broad spectrum of interests, including elected officials; city, regional, and state department and agency staff; and members of the business community, human services sector, the college and university community, and citizen's groups. A list of participants is provided in Table 5-1. Discussions ranging in length from about 30 minutes to an hour covering topics including the role of public transportation in the community, public policy and finance, SMTD operations, community transportation needs, and other perceptions related to bus service and the direction of this project.

Table 5-1: Stakeholder Meeting Participants

Name	Organization/Agency
Linda Vehove, case manager	Contact Ministries
Estelle Smith, executive director	Contact Ministries
Kay Bechtel, assistant administrator	Regency Nursing Home
Timothy Davlin, mayor	Mayor of Springfield
Peter Roberts	Springfield Center for Independent Living (SCIL)
Deb Downs	Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities
Kathy Lee	Lawrence Adult Education Center
James Korte, Assistant Dean of Students	University of Illinois - Springfield
Samantha Drews, Student President	University of Illinois - Springfield
Cynthia Thompson, Dir. of Student Services	University of Illinois - Springfield
Sarah Doyle, Student Trustee	University of Illinois - Springfield
Sarah Wolin	United Way
Maureen Fischer, General Manager	White Oaks Mall
Tim Farley	Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau
Ken Rodendahl	Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau
Dr. Faye Fullerton, VP-Student Services	Lincolnland Community College
Barry Rowe, Student Trustee	Lincolnland Community College
Mike Farmer	Springfield Office of Planning and Economic Development
Nat Seiz	Springfield Chamber of Commerce
Victoria Clemons	Downtown Springfield
Brian Brewer	SMTD Trustee
Frank Squires	SMTD Trustee
Kristen Allen	Boys & Girls Club
Jill Young	Boys & Girls Club
Karen Wolderman	Illinois Employment and Training
Tracy Sayre	Saint John's Hospital
Mike Lelys	Springfield Housing Authority
Mike Geiger	Springfield Police Department
Doug Williams	Springfield Police Department
Nina Harris	Springfield Urban League
Beverly Hicks-Gibson	Springfield Urban League
Woody Hester	Memorial Hospital

As would be expected, the views among the participants were widely varied, and yet there were a large number of commonalities found in the discussion. The discussion that follows defines a number of overarching topics that were prevalent during the discussions, along with the range of thoughts that ran through each and shaped them. Many of the issues raised are the same issues mentioned in the other outreach activities.

Need for Service

Different organizations mentioned different needs for service. Some organizations have been organizing their members and clients in support of night service by passing out petitions or to help publicize the study. Many of these organizations mentioned a previous effort that they supported, and are willing to buy bus passes to support any form of night service. The reasons why many of these organizations stated night service is needed for access to jobs, schools, and the programs that the stakeholders provide. Stakeholders also mentioned access to child care facilities so parents can pick-up their children after working hours.

Stakeholders who are major employers mentioned that there is an issue attracting employees to evening and night shift jobs due to a lack of transportation. Many of their daytime employees do take the bus and have trouble affording taxis. Also taxis are not ADA accessible which hinders many people who need night transportation from using them, since approximately 30% of the population of Springfield is disabled. Many of the major employers mentioned that they would be willing to offer employees the option to enroll the federal program that allows for deducting transit fares, or even providing bus passes to entry level employees.

There has been an effort to revitalize the downtown area of Springfield. These efforts are starting to pay off and Springfield is seeing an increase in tourism to the downtown area. This has resulted in more jobs downtown, as well as evening jobs catering to downtown tourists. Night buses will help further entice businesses to locate in downtown, further improving the area. Night bus service would be useful for tourists staying at hotels in the fringes of town, as well as for downtown employees. How the buses circulate in downtown may have to be reconsidered in the evenings.

Locations for Service

Locations all around Springfield were mentioned as needing service. There are many retail jobs along major corridors that need access to night time bus service. Major retailers and grocery stores should be served so that people without automobiles can access these locations for shopping and jobs. Downtown is again becoming a major destination for both jobs and other activities such as shopping, tourism, culture, and entertainment and would need night time bus service. Growth in downtown has been spurred by the opening of the Lincoln Library.

Lower income residential neighborhoods, primarily on the east side and north side were mentioned as areas that would need access to a night bus. These locations are home to agency clientele who would use the night buses for a variety of purposes such as work, to run errands, shopping, entertainment, education, and access to agency programs. Major apartment complexes and senior housing complexes were also mentioned as locations were potential night time bus users live.

While higher income neighborhoods do not need night bus service, there may be evening and night jobs located in the vicinity of those neighborhoods, who do need night bus service, primarily in the southwest portions of town.

Service in downtown may be an issue. Service is needed downtown but the transfer point may not be a good location to have as a bus hub in the evening. While there is a need to serve the capital complex, having the transfer center closer to downtown activities would be better and safer.

Education institutes will need access to night service. University of Illinois at Springfield and Lincolnland Community College are two major educational institutes that serve Springfield residents, and are growing. While mostly commuter campuses, there is some on-campus housing, and most people who live on-campus rely on the bus for transportation. The need to access educational services goes beyond just accessing the two large institutions; it also extends to a

few smaller colleges, adult education centers, and other educational programs. These programs help better the lives, through education, of Springfield residents.

Safety

Safety and security will be an issue for night service. East side neighborhoods are of a particular concern due to high crime rates related to drugs and gangs. Bus passengers may be a target for robberies since criminals will have access to bus schedules. Bus stops should be in well lit areas to reduce the risk of crime. These issues will have to be taken into account when service is introduced. Uniformed police could be used to deter crime along bus routes.

Funding

Funding night time service will be an important issue, especially after the grant money is expended. Stakeholder mentioned that the state has increased funding to Amtrak yet is not giving more money to transit districts. The city currently does not fund SMTD services, since it is a taxing district, and is not likely to do so since there are other vital services that are competing for city funding. There is a concern that night service might not even be cost effective.

Other Issues

Stakeholders mentioned a number of additional issues besides evening service. There is a concern that many of the buses in Springfield are still not ADA accessible. Service at night in Springfield will have to be ADA accessible. Stakeholders also mentioned a desire for Sunday service since many programs and jobs are available on Sundays. SMTD currently does not serve important generators that are located outside of the transit district borders. Poor access to information about SMTD services was mentioned as an issue during all time periods.

Driver Meetings

On November 3, 2006 members of the consultant provided SMTD drivers the opportunity to have input into the study. 28 drivers met with the consultant in two separate sessions to talk about their thoughts and issues with night time bus service. For the most part, drivers supported the notion of night service in Springfield and would be willing to drive the night time routes. They provided input on safety concerns, were service should operate, and how lat the service should run.

Drivers recognize that a big issue in Springfield is access to jobs. They know that many jobs in Springfield are second and third shift jobs that have start and/or end times that are outside of the current span of bus service. Also, they recognize that there is a community benefit for night time service, with access to education, shopping trips, and overall mobility being key issues to people who do not drive. College students who live on-campus usually do not drive and need access to entertainment, recreational, and shopping opportunities throughout the city.

Safety is the primary concern about drivers. In response to safety issues, drivers would prefer to drive along lit main streets versus driving down neighborhood streets that are not as well lit.

Buses already have cameras and access to dispatcher to call police. Passengers should have the opportunity to transfer between buses outside of downtown since at night the downtown transfer location may not be a safe area. There may be an issue recruiting additional drivers to support service as the demands and requirements of the job may be a bit difficult to meet including such things as a clean driving record, drug screening, split shifts, and benefits.

The drivers mentioned a number of locations where bus service will be needed. They mentioned that neighborhoods on the east side and north side need service. People need access to such generators as the two major colleges and White Oaks Mall. Most major shopping areas will need night bus service. There are employment opportunities along corridors on the west side of town and along Dirkson Parkway. Not all the services that operate during the day will be needed. Routes can operate in loops or interlined in order to cover more area in the city.

Most drivers feel that service will need to run until midnight to be successful. This will allow students to get home from the area colleges and would serve most work shifts. Service would have to run every 45 minutes or every hour or 45.

A number of drivers have doubts that the service will be successful. One thought is that there are not enough businesses open late enough that will support bus operations. People might not feel safe getting off the bus at night in certain areas. Before operating service, SMTD should get a commitment from employers and members of the community that the service will be supported and used. One thought mentioned by the drivers is that instead of operating night service SMTD and city should subsidize taxi fares at night. Night bus service will need to be marketed. Even the most skeptical drivers feel that service should at least be given a fair opportunity to work.

Summary

All aspects of the outreach process yielded many opinions on why night service is needed, where it should go, how late it should run, and what some of the issues are. There is a consensus throughout the Springfield community that access to jobs, as well as access to education, will be a very important role for night time bus service. Thus major employers, concentrations of employers, and educational facilities will need access to night bus service. Shopping was another frequently mentioned reason why night service will be needed, thus serving major retailers or shopping centers will be important. There are residential areas throughout the city, whether they are lower income neighborhoods or apartment complexes/senior or group homes that will need access to service. Crime and safety will be an issue that will have to be dealt with for service to be successful.

6. Feasibility of Night Service

Based on data collected and discussions with the community, the consultant team believes that night time bus service in Springfield is feasible and necessary for the community. There are many reasons that service is needed which include access to jobs as well as access to educational facilities. Springfield has a number of employers that have a need for access to employees in the evening including hospitals and the hospitality industry. Besides being limited from night time employment, many employees who would like to put in overtime work are unable to do so due to a lack of transportation to get home. Night classes at the major colleges in Springfield are increasing, as well as the desire for residents to access night time education opportunities in order to get a higher education.

Many people who need night bus service currently rely taxi cabs or walk during the evening hours. The cost of taxis presents a hardship for wage workers, and the fact that taxis are unreliable is also an issue. Walking can be an issue during the winter months and safety for pedestrians is an issue when it gets dark.

When compared to its peers, SMTD has a very short span of operations. All of the peer systems operate later in the evening than SMTD. While some peer networks only operate an hour or two later than Springfield, a number of operations do operate much later into the evening. Some peers do have evening and night services that differ from the day time services.

The chapters will determine where and how late service will operate. The chapters present a service plan that will prioritize areas and generators that need to be served. Considerations will be made to the mode of service to best serve the city, as well as consideration of the ADA guidelines for Access Springfield services. This subsequent phase will determine the span of service and what days of the week service will operate.

Safety will be a key issue with regard to night bus service. Crime is a big issue in the neighborhoods that are in the most need for transit service. SMTD has done a lot to address this issue with regard to transit service including contacting dispatchers when there are passenger issues on the bus, and cameras onboard buses which record activities and are a deterrent to crime. Other ways the SMTD and the City of Springfield will have to address safety for bus passengers is by enacting certain policies in regards to where buses will stop, whether they are flag stops or just at locations that are well lit, or if the buses should deviate off of major streets to stop closer to a riders destination. A police presence onboard buses and in the neighborhoods will be a crime deterrent and make riding the buses at night a bit safer.

7. Nighttime Bus Service

This chapter focuses on the development of the night service route structure and what routes will be operated in Springfield. Routes were developed based on numerous comments and goals set forth by the technical advisory committee. The final routes were presented to the public at a forums held on September 4th through 8th in various parts of the city. Comments from the public were integrated into route modifications to prepare the final route network. The final night time bus route network consists of through loop routes, with one of the routes utilizing two vehicles to provide service in two directions. Performance standards to measure the success of night bus service are also presented in chapter 9.

Process for Developing the Night Service Network

The final bus route network was developed as an iterative process with the cooperation between the study technical advisory committee, the consulting team, the public, and the implementing agencies. The goals for the service were based on the public outreach process that was conducted in phase 1 of the study. Outreach activities conducted in phase 1 included interviews with major stakeholders in Springfield, interviews with bus drivers, drop-in sessions with passengers and college students, letters and emails, and a public meeting where people voiced their opinions on the need for night time bus service. The initial goal for night time bus service is to improve access to jobs and job opportunities, especially since there are many employment opportunities at times when the current bus service is not operating.

The actual development of the route network involved many inputs as well. The phase 1 outreach process the need for night bus service was confirmed and areas that need to be served were also determined. Demographic and major generator information from the phase 1 report was used to determine what areas and neighborhoods should be served. Bus drivers had created a sample night service network map, which was provided to the study team. This combined with the goal of access to jobs to create a draft route network.

Service parameters were developed by the technical advisory committee. It was determined that service should operate until midnight during weekdays during the trial period. Once night service proves to be successful and additional funding can be secured, service can be expanded until Saturdays. SMTD is legally obligated to provide Americans with Disability (ADA) paratransit, through the Access Springfield program whenever bus service is operating. Based on the size of the area, it was determined that two Access Springfield vehicles will be required at night.

Demand response and route deviation services were considered for the night time bus route network. These flexible services have numerous advantages, such as being able to meet the ADA requirements, increasing the coverage of bus service, and flexible services somewhat mitigate the safety concerns of riders.

It was decided not to use flexible services for a number of reasons including:

- These service types could be more difficult for users to understand
- Maintaining the bus schedule would be difficult due to the expected frequency of deviations
- Concerns with work driver work rules operating a different type of service than what is operated today.

Cost of operating night bus service was also an important consideration. The total amount of funding available in the operating grant is $371,250. Ideally, this would pay the operating costs of the service for approximately one year; however, the reality is that this amount of money would not be able to support service for a full year. This is because a portion of the grant money may be used for capital needs, such as security enhancements for night bus service. Also, night bus service can not have an adverse impact on the current daytime services. For these reasons, the grant money will not last a full year. It is intended that the grant money last a sufficient amount of time to demonstrate night time bus service and establish that it is successful.

Night Service Route Network

Based on the process presented in the previous section a preliminary route network was developed with four loop routes operating every 60 minutes. On April 18th, 2007 a workshop for the technical advisory committee was held and the route network was modified at this meeting. This created a route network with three loop routes, with one route having bi-directional service. Service is scheduled to operate every 60 minutes. SMTD road supervisors drove each route to ensure that service could indeed run within 60 minutes. In instances where service could not operate within 60 minutes, the supervisors recommended modifications to routes to allow them to run within 60 minutes. Night service will operate from 6:00 PM until Midnight on weekdays only, adding 6 hours of service to each weekday for each route operated. The final night time route network is presented on Figure 7-1. Route descriptions are presented below.

North Side

The North Side route operates a counterclockwise loop between Downtown Springfield and Wal-Mart on North Dirksen Parkway. This route serves neighborhoods on the north side of Springfield as well as on the eastern portion of town. Some of the locations served by this route include Saint John's Hospital, Memorial Hospital, the state fairgrounds, retail areas along Dirksen Parkway, and Wal-Mart. Service on this route will be provided utilizing one vehicle providing 60 minute service. Figure 7-2 presents the North Side route.

Southeast Side

The Southeast Side route operates a clockwise loop between Downtown Springfield and the Capital City Shopping Center in the southeast portion of town. This provides service to the east side neighborhoods and areas south of downtown. Some of the locations served by this route include hotels and retail along Dirksen Parkway, Capital City Shopping Center, and retail along

South 6th Street. Service on this route will be provided utilizing one vehicle providing 60 minute service. Figure 7-3 presents the Southeast route.

West Side

The West Side route provides service between Downtown Springfield and White Oaks Mall. This route operates as a loop route, with service operating in both directions. This route provides service to the western portions of Springfield. This route serves the Macarthur Boulevard retail corridor, White Oaks Mall, retail and hotel areas along Veterans Highway, and Nursing Homes along Washington Street. Service on this route will be provided between utilizing two vehicles providing 60 minute service operating in both the clockwise and counter clockwise direction. This route has two vehicles in order to minimize the travel time for people who work along this route, since there are major employment locations throughout the route. The West Side route is presented on Figure 7-4.

The current bus transfer location in Downtown Springfield, located at East Capitol Avenue and South 5th Street, is not the ideal hub location for night time bus services. This is because it is removed from night time activity in Downtown Springfield and is a rather desolate location, since the block face that serves most of the bus routes houses a surface car parking lot. The idea location for the night service transfer hub is closer to the center of downtown where night time activity is occurring, thereby increasing the safety for waiting passengers. The ideal location would be adjacent to the Old Capital Building along Washington Street between 5th and 6th Streets. This area is ideal since it is at a central location in downtown that has a lot of activity and bus pullouts already exist in this location which are used by charter buses during daytime hours

Besides the regular fixed routes, Access Springfield service must be provided during the same time periods that fixed route bus services are provided based on the American's with Disability Act laws (ADA). Service legally has to be provided during the same time periods that regular fixed route buses are operating within ¾ of a mile of a fixed route bus. In order to ensure all ADA eligible users will have access to transit service, SMTD will operate Access Springfield service throughout the entire SMTD service area at night. In order to maintain coverage in the evening for the entire service area, SMTD will need to operate two Access Springfield vehicles. Service will operate six hours a day for each vehicle on weekdays only. The budget to operate Access Springfield service will come from the same demonstration grant money. As night service grows in Springfield, Access Springfield service will have to grow as well.

The two major colleges in Springfield, Lincolnland Community College and University of Illinois-Springfield will not be served by the initial night time bus routes. Both colleges have mentioned that they are interested in increasing the number of evening classes to better utilize their facilities. Also, many students mentioned an interest in taking night classes; however, a lack of bus access is an issue. A difficult decision was made that this area of town would not be served in the first year. The reasons are that night time bus service should initially be geared towards accessing jobs. Even though education opportunities will enhance employment options for Springfield residents, the immediate need is for accessing jobs. Also, the schools are in a location that would add significant running time and cost to a route, making them difficult to

serve. Once the demonstration of night time service is shown to be successful, additional services will likely be introduced, with the college areas likely to be among the first areas to receive expanded services. Night service to the colleges can be accelerated if funding can be found to serve this area.

Figure 7-1: Proposed Springfield Night Service Route Network

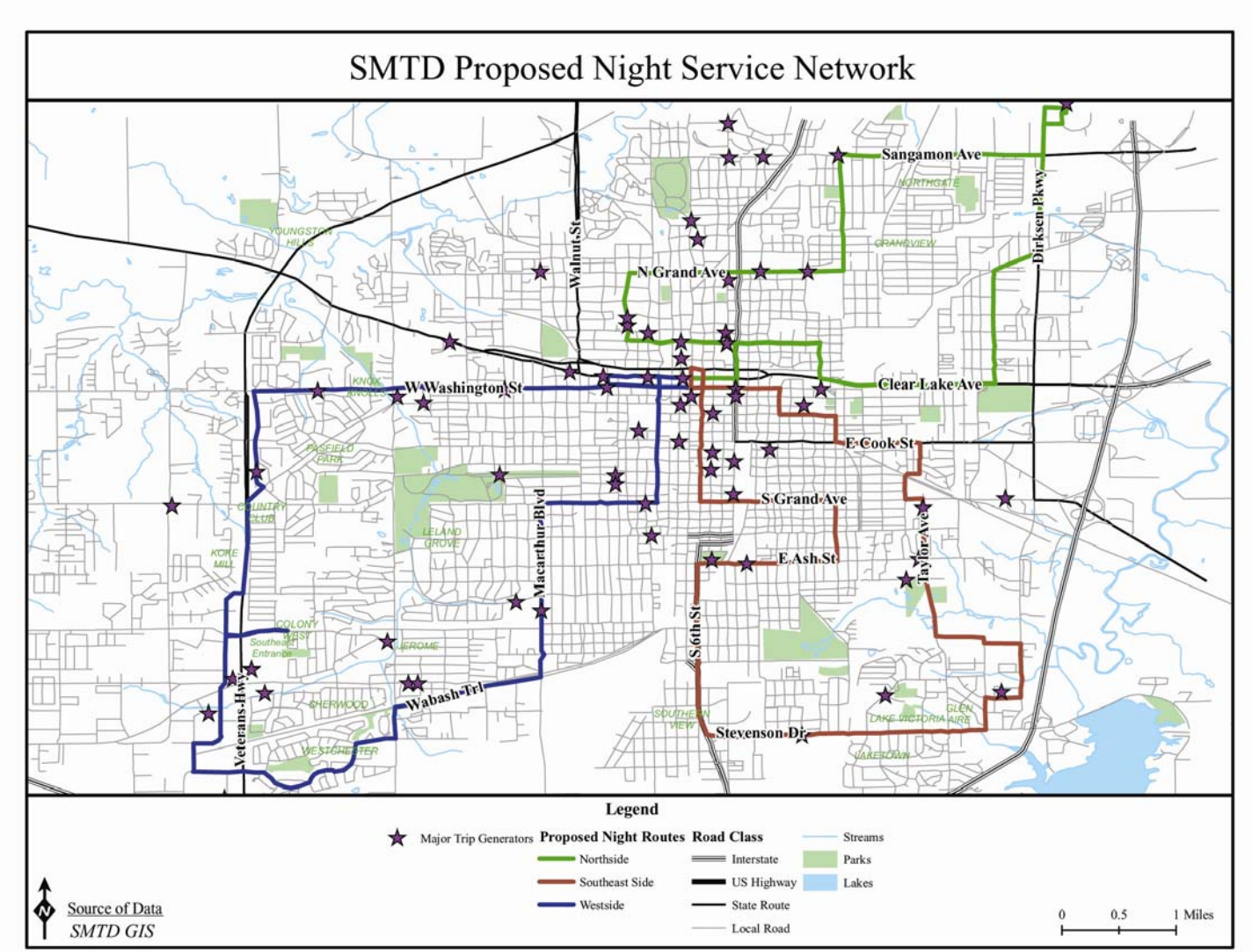


Figure 7-2: Proposed North Side Route

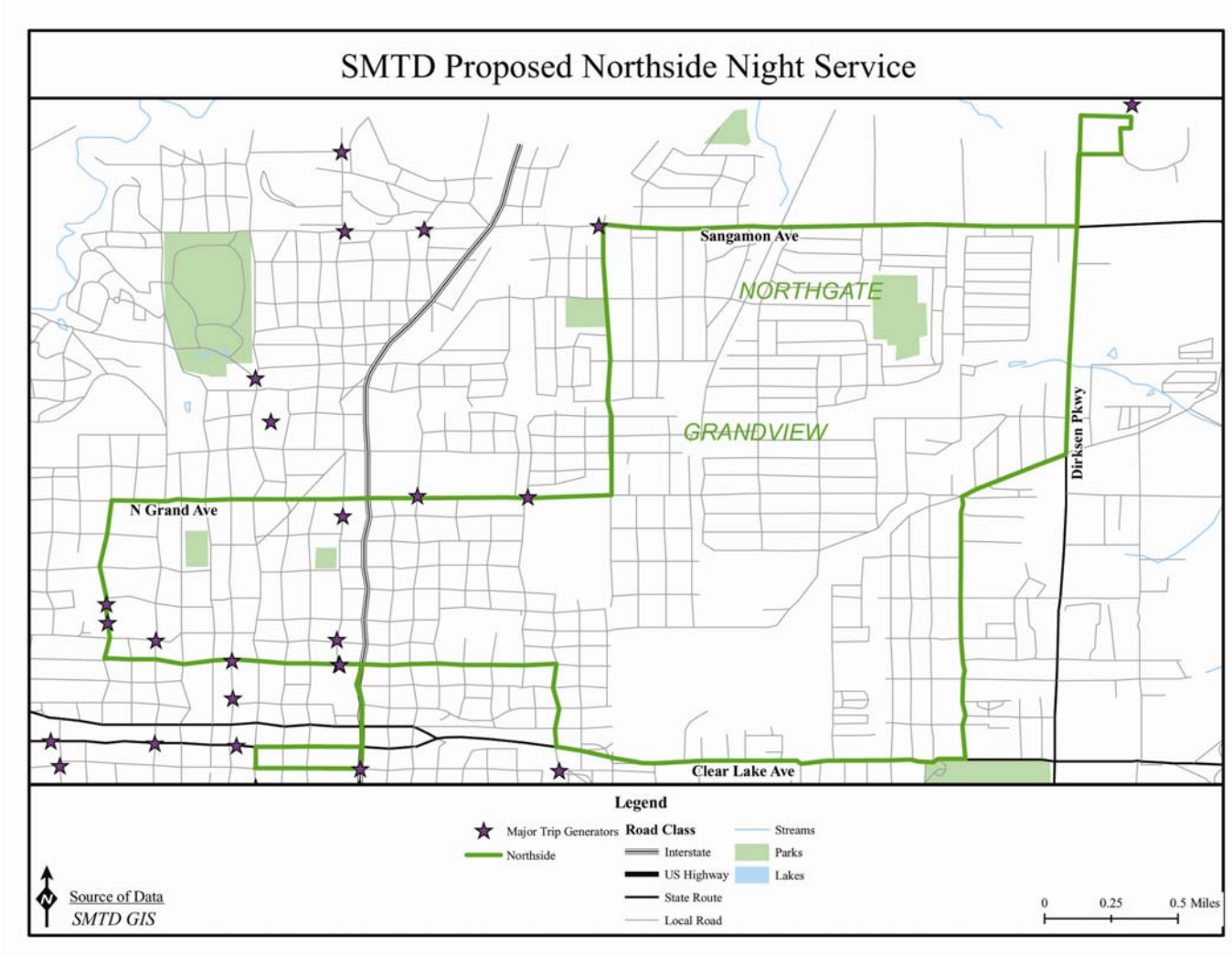


Figure 7-3: Southeast Route

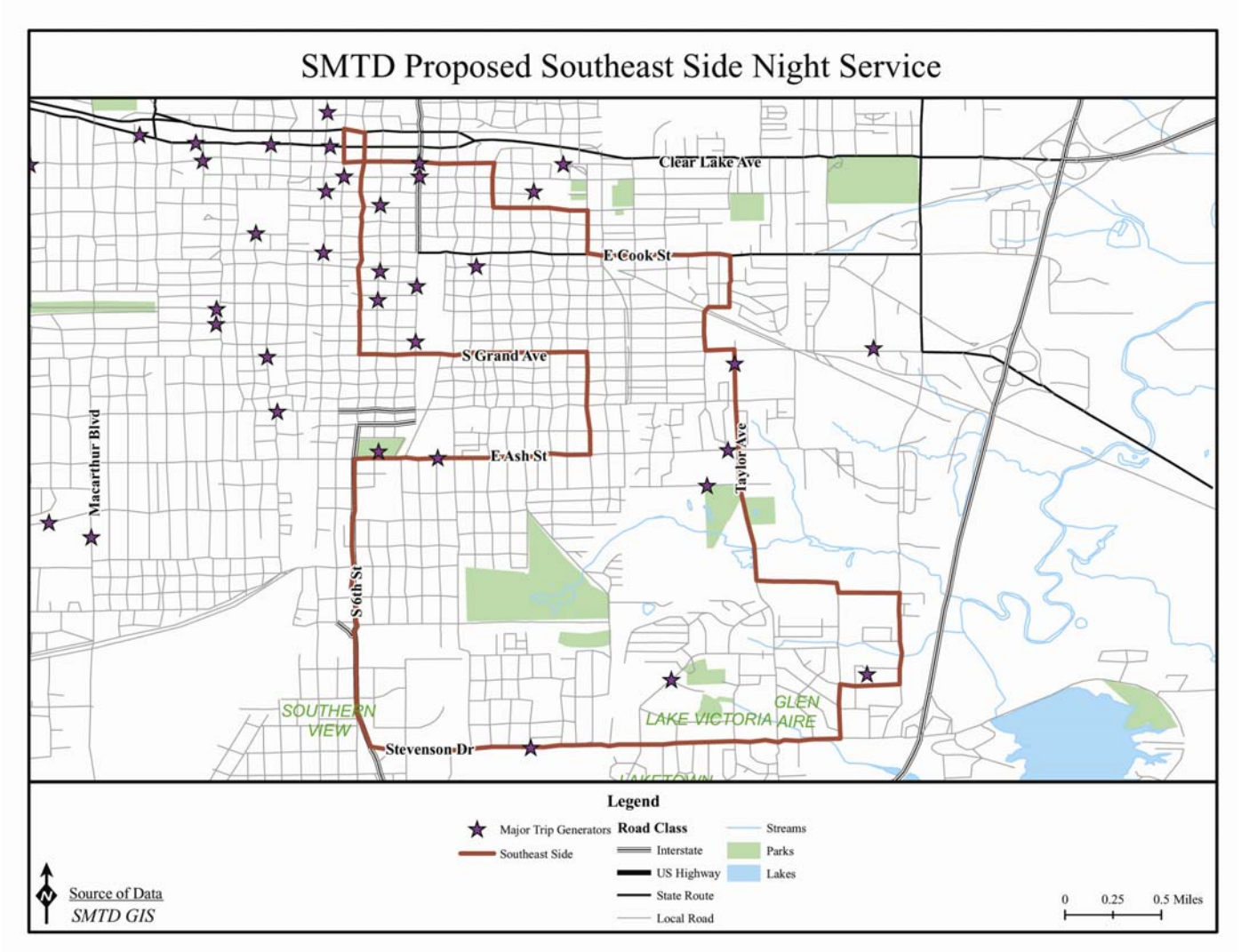
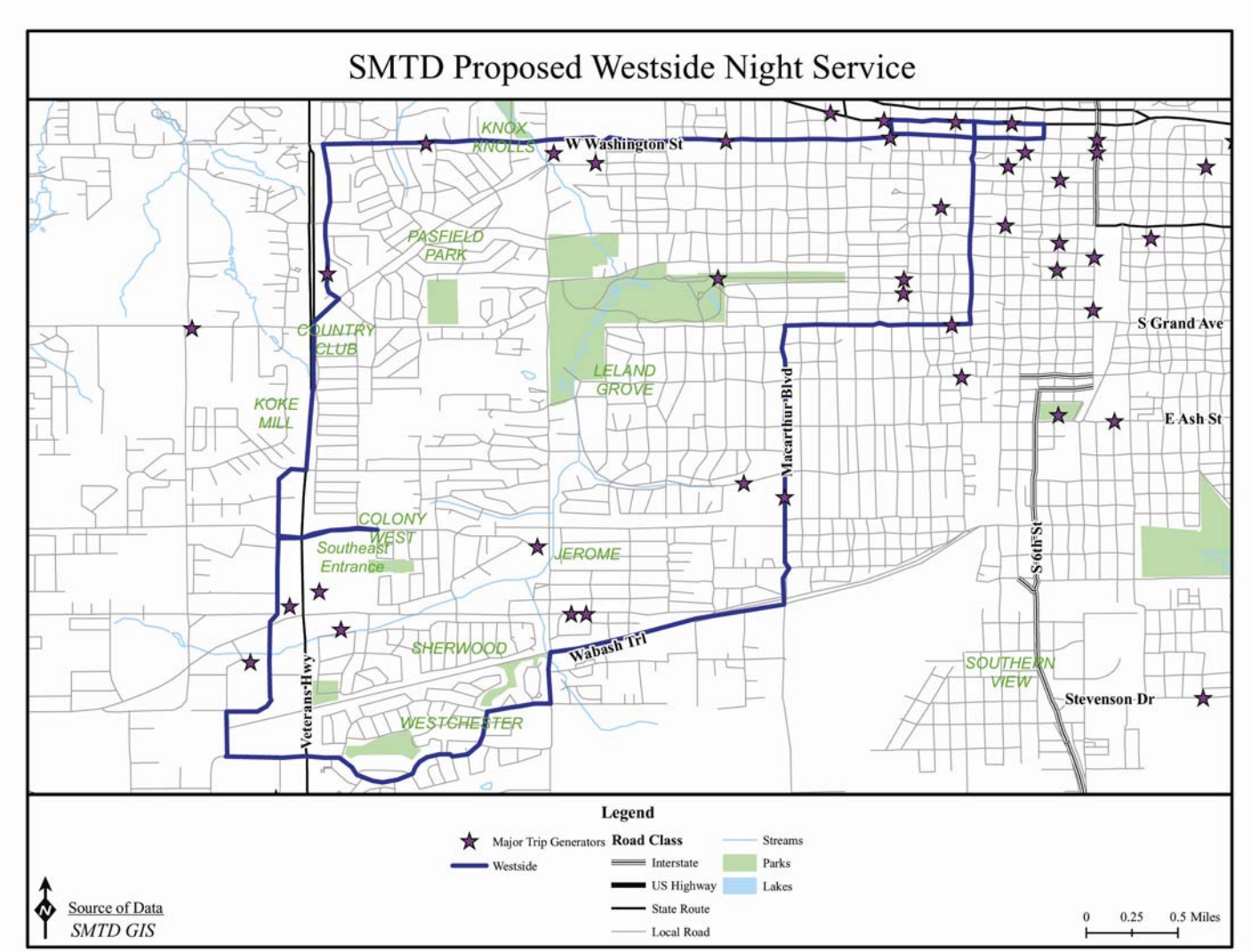


Figure 7-4: Westside Route



8. Night Service Planning Public Outreach

The night time route network was presented to the public at seven meetings held during the week of September 3rd through September 8th. The meetings were designed to be interactive with small groups allowing for a short presentation and discussion of the route proposals. The presentation mentioned the process of developing night service in Springfield and that the purpose of the meeting is to receive comments in order to modify the routes if needed. This route network was presented as a demonstration network, with the goal of expansion once night service is proven successful and additional funding can be secured. Approximately 65 people attended the seven meetings. Table 8-1 presents the meeting location, times, and attendance.

Table 8-1: Night Service Public Outreach

Date	Location	Time	Attendance
Tuesday September 4th	Abundant Faith Church	3:30 to 5:30 PM	10
Tuesday September 4th	St. John's AME Church	6:30 to 8:30 PM	2
Wednesday September 5th	Memorial Medical Center	3:00 to 5:00 PM	12
Wednesday September 5th	St. John's Hospital	6:00 to 8:00 PM	10
Thursday September 6th	Hope Presbyterian Church	1:00 to 3:00 PM	11
Thursday September 6th	Hope Presbyterian Church	6:00 to 8:00 PM	8
Saturday September 8th	First Presbyterian Church	10:00 to 12:00 PM	12

People were given four methods of providing feedback on the night route network; they could vocalize their opinions at the meeting, return comment forms either to personnel at the meetings or via mail, email comments through SMTD's webpage, or make comments in person at SMTD's offices. Nine people returned comment forms to staff at the meetings. One person mailed comment forms to SMTD. About 28 people emailed comments to SMTD. There were no instances of people coming to the SMTD offices to provide comments on night service. People submitted questions on many of the comment forms asking about the parameters of service and if Access Springfield service will be provided.

There were quite a number of comments in support of night service. The people of Springfield are excited to be able to take the bus at night for work, shopping, and leisure activities. They are happy that service is going to be provided even if not all parts of the city are being served.

The biggest issue voiced by people at the meetings and via written and emailed comment forms was service to University of Illinois-Springfield (UIS) and Lincolnland Community College. The colleges do provide night education programs and cultural activities. Members of the Central Illinois Organizing Project (CIOP) and SMTD are working with the colleges to explore the operation of a night time campus shuttle that would meet one of the propose night service routes.

Security was mentioned as an issue to a few people. This was not mentioned as a hindrance to night service, rather as a note that Springfield can be a dangerous place. The notion of having

the key transfer point made at the Old State Capital was mentioned as something that will be beneficial since this area is less isolated than the current transfer location.

Additional issues mentioned were services to specific locations. Some people commented that Montvale Plaza would not be served directly. A few people asked why areas along West Jefferson Street in the northwest portion of Springfield are not going to be served. Robert Morris College was another location that was mentioned.

People made a few other comments about SMTD services in general. A few people mentioned that they would like to see bike racks on buses for environmental and recreational reasons. Other people want to see service extended to locations that are beyond the current SMTD routes due to jobs located outside the borders of the SMTD district. People also mentioned that they would like to see service operate twenty four hours a day and on Sundays.

None of the comments received from the public outreach process resulted in the need to change any of the proposed night service routes. The most frequent comment, about the lack of service to the college area, will be an issue that will be addressed with coordinating a potential campus shuttle route with a night service route instead of extending night bus service to the colleges.

9. Performance Standards

Performance standards are an important tool in measuring the effectiveness of any transit service. Performance standards for a transit system cover a broad range of topics including route coverage, revenue vehicle conditions, public information, loading, productivity, and fiscal condition. Most of these standards are relevant to the system in general and are not applicable to a specific service. This section presents the performance standards for night service in Springfield. Only standards that are relevant to night bus service in Springfield are presented in this section.

Night bus service should not be held to the same standards as daytime service since fewer people utilize transit services during the night periods. Typically night service productivity is about 50% of daytime service productivity. When looking at the effectiveness of night service, community impacts should be used as a metric outside of how the system performs in regards to service standards. The performance standards presented represent the expectations after night service matures, which takes approximately one year.

The performance standards for night bus service relate to passenger productivity. The three key metrics are productivity, cost per passenger, and farebox recovery. There are two ways of measuring productivity; passengers per revenue mile or passengers per revenue hour. Both of these measure the amount of service consumed based on unit of service provided, whether it is revenue miles or hours. For the purpose of developing standards, passengers per revenue hour is a better metric since it is based on the operation of the route instead of the length of the route. The second metric, cost per passengers, divides the cost of operating the system by the number of passengers carried, which presents the financial efficiency. Farebox recovery measures the percent of operating cost covered by fares and is an outcome heavily influenced by the ridership productivity of a route against its total operating cost, as well as the fare policy of the system. It is calculated by dividing fare revenue by operating cost. Table 9-1 presents the proposed night bus service performance standard categories, the daytime performance, and the expected night service expectation.

Table 9-1: SMTD Fixed Route Night Service Performance Standards

Category	Daytime Performance*	Evening Standard
Passengers per revenue hour	14.4	7 to 9
Cost per passenger	$2.10	$4.00 to $5.00
Farebox recovery	8.1%	4% to 5%

*Source 2006 National Transit Database Summary

A performance indictor regarding reasonable service levels is not relevant for night bus service. Service levels at night are guided by policy, with the number of routes and locations planned based on the needs of the community. ADA service is based on the policy of serving the entire SMTD service area. Crowding will not likely be an issue unless the proposed routes are performing well above the service standard. When crowding becomes an issue, additional service would be added and routes adjusted to meet the ridership needs.

One thing to note is that per unit costs should be marginally lower for night bus service versus daytime service. The main reason is that night bus service should have a lower overhead, since there is fewer administrative staff working during the night hours. While mechanics, dispatchers, and drivers are working during the overnight hours, the number of cleaners, customer service agents, and general administrative staff will not change. The difference between the night and daytime costs, on a cost per hour of service basis, will likely be minor, thus the daytime cost structure is assumed for the calculation of night bus service costs.

10. Financial Plan

One of the goals of night time bus service is that it has no negative impact to day time services operated by SMTD. For this reason, the grant money secured for Night Bus Service is expected to cover almost all of the operating costs for night time bus service. While SMTD will recoup some of the costs through cash fare payments, the amount will be very small and can not be expected to cover much of the cost of service.

Night bus service will require four fixed route vehicles and two paratransit vehicles to operate each night for six hours. Service will operate five nights per week in the first year, for a total of 120 fixed route hours per week and 60 paratransit hours per week. The costs for each week are based on a cost per hour calculation. The cost per hour for fixed route services is assumed to be around $65.00 an hour, and $35.00 an hour for paratransit services. This is an adjusted cost based on the fiscal year 2006 cost per hour. Table 10-1 presents the costs to operate the night service network.

Table 10-1: Cost to Operate Night Bus Service

	Fixed Route	Paratransit
Number of Vehicles	4	2
Hours per Day (each vehicle)	6	6
Total Hours per Week	120	60
Cost per Hour	$65.00	$35.00
Cost per Week	$7,800	$2,100
Cost per Year (year 1)	$405,600	$109,200

Funding

A grant of $371,250 has been provided to fund night bus service. However, this grant money will not be enough to support night bus service for a full year. Table 10-2 shows that in addition to the grant money, an additional $143,550 will be needed to support night bus service. Based on this cost estimate, the grant money should be able to support bus operations for approximately 37 weeks. This assumes that the grant will only be used to support bus operations and that capital and security costs will come from other sources. This also assumes that hourly operating costs do not grow significantly with the addition of night bus services.

Table 10-2: Funding Night Bus Service

Item	Amount
Fixed Route Annual Cost	$405,600
Paratransit Annual Cost	$109,200
Total Annual Cost	$514,800
Grant Amount	$371,250
Remaining Cost	$143,550

A majority of SMTD's funding comes from state funding sources. While grant money will be used to fund night bus service, a permanent funding solution will be needed to sustain night service. It is in SMTD's interest to find additional sources of revenue to fund both night bus service as well as daytime SMTD operations to ensure that services are able to continue to operate at present levels and expand. Listed below are a number of sources for additional funding sources that should be considered to fund SMTD services in Springfield.

Increase SMTD Funding

SMTD receives funding from a number of sources, including state, local, and federal sources in order to fund the transit services that they operate. Additional funding from these sources could be requested in order to support increased transit services. Funding will need to increase as the cost to provide transit service increases. Additional funding to SMTD can be in the form of operating grants, changes in funding structure, or expansion of the SMTD taxing district to incorporate new neighborhoods.

Night Service Surcharge

Another method of raising revenue to support night bus service is to charge a night time surcharge on evening buses. The surcharge would be charged on top of the base fare to account for the lower ridership and cost to operate service at night. The added surcharge may have the affect of discouraging usage of night bus service.

General Fare Increase

A fare increase is a method for increasing revenue; however, a fare increase usually results in a decline in ridership. A fare increase went into affect on September 1, 2006 thus a fare increase would not be warranted at this time. Regular fare increases do need to occur to ensure that operating funding keeps pace with the cost of delivering services.

Route Efficiency

A way to support evening bus service is to reallocate resources from daytime services to evening services. To do this a comprehensive study of daytime services should be done to ensure the system is running efficiently, modify duplicative services, and cutback or adjust services where they are not effective. The daytime route modifications should allow enough resources to continue operating night services.

JARC

Job access reverse commute (JARC) funds are used to fund transit programs that are geared towards improving access to jobs. This program provides funding for transit services that serve office parks, or job locations that are not accessible to transit. Night service would qualify for JARC funding as it allows for access to jobs when transit service is not available.

Parking Fees

A majority of people who work in Downtown Springfield do drive into the center of town and utilize parking facilities. A small surcharge of one or two dollars could be added to the cost of parking in downtown off-street parking lots, with the surcharge dedicated to support transit services in Springfield. This will have many benefits including it will provide a funding source for transit, reduce the demand for parking downtown, and may result in increased ridership on SMTD buses. Parking surcharges to support transit are a common method used to provide additional funding for transit systems, and would be a significant source of income for SMTD. Many college transit systems use parking fees to fund the college transit system or use parking fees to contribute to the local transit system for service on campus. One such town would be Madison, Wisconsin.

Business Fees

A downtown business fee to fund transit is based on the notion that those who benefit from transit service will share in the cost of operating the service. In the case of SMTD, downtown business owners, who are well served by transit, would pay a small fee to support transit services that bring workers and customers to their businesses.

Development Fees

Part of the fees charged to developers for developing property should be dedicated to transit. This is because there is a need to mitigate the impact of the development to the transit system. Development fees that are dedicated to transit have been implemented in many fast growing areas in California.

Rental Car Fees

Charging a fee for rental cars, with the money going towards transit service in Springfield, is another funding source to consider. This would be a daily surcharge applied to rental any rental car from a facility in the vicinity of Springfield. This surcharge would provide a modest amount of revenue for SMTD services. Both the States of Arkansas and Florida use revenue from a rental car fee to fund both capital needs and operations of transit throughout each of the states.

Hotel Occupancy Fee

In Savannah, Georgia a small surcharge is added to the cost of hotel rooms in the downtown area. The surcharge is applied to each occupied room for each night. The surcharge is used primarily to fund the free downtown shuttle in Savannah. A small surcharge for hotels within the city limits could be charged in Springfield, with revenue to support transit service. With Springfield being the center of government in Illinois, as well as tourists visiting historical sites, there are a lot of visitors staying in area hotels. Hotel operators may be willing to support a hotel occupancy fee if SMTD is able to provide hotel patrons with a daily bus pass that they could provide to guests.

Real Estate Title Transfer Fee

Transit agencies in New York collect revenue from a real estate title transfer fee. Every time a real estate property is bought or sold, fees are charged for transfer of the title. SMTD could charge a tax on title transfers, allowing for another revenue source. In New York, this is a very important source of revenue; however, it does fluctuate based on the number of properties bought and sold.

U-Pass

Most university communities have implemented a U-Pass program. A U-Pass program allows for free rides for university students with an additional fee that is added to the student activity fee. The fee goes directly to the transit operator and used as funding to operate service. A U-Pass has the benefit of giving students unlimited rides for a cost that they do not perceive since it is part of the fees that they pay the university. The benefit to SMTD is increased ridership on university routes as well as an additional funding source. Since a U-Pass program impacts the student activity fee, it needs to be approved by the university and the university students.

Public/Private Partnership

Public/private partnerships can be a valuable source of funding for a transit agency. A public/private partnership would involve private funding to help support public transit. An example would be in developing a transit hub, partnering with retailers to rent space at the transit hub, which is funding which can be used for operations. In rare instances, the public/private partnership can extend into operations, with a private party involved in funding services. Such is the case in Rochester, MN where the Mayo Clinic provides significant funding for the local transit agency.

11. Security Concerns

In order to address safety concerns in the night-time hours both onboard buses and at and around bus stops, there are several initiatives that SMTD could pursue. These include enforcement initiatives involving both police patrols and security guards, technology initiatives such as lighting and security cameras, and educational initiatives. A combination program including initiatives from each category could greatly reduce incidents of crime affecting night-time riders.

According to the Springfield Police Department, local concerns about security are focused less on crime onboard buses, but rather on crime committed against individuals walking to and from bus stops in the evening and night hours. These individuals could be likely targets for crime, exacerbated by the fact that bus schedules would be well publicized. Additionally, there is concern that low ridership on buses may lead to an isolated feeling, which could be a safety issue on buses.

The Police Department specifically recommended cameras on buses as a deterrent for crime onboard, good lighting at bus stops and radio communication on buses. Patrols are already more concentrated in locations where crime is highest, and regarding additional patrols, police officers would likely welcome the overtime pay.

Regarding police and security guards, SMTD would work with the Mayor and Police Department to see what options are available for police to patrol bus routes at night. While uniformed police would be the best deterrent, plain-clothes police would be more able to catch criminals. Additionally, an increased visible police presence on the street near bus stops, potentially including uniformed patrols traveling by foot, bicycle, or car could deter crimes against individuals traveling to and from bus stops. As a supplement or alternative to on-duty police officers, SMTD could hire off-duty police officers or a security firm to provide security for buses. Also, placing a fixed, uniformed security guard at major stops and transfer points could enhance security at these particular locations.

Regarding infrastructure and technology, SMTD would ensure that major bus stops are well lighted. This means that the current transfer location would not likely be appropriate for night-time service, and should be moved to a location in downtown that has more activity. Additionally, cameras should be installed on buses used for night service, as well as panic buttons should be installed on buses to alert the dispatcher and/or the Police Department of problems. This would work well in conjunction with an AVL system.

Additional safety initiatives could include training for bus drivers – if the Springfield Police Department is still holding the “Citizens Police Department”, night-time bus operators should be enrolled in this course. Specific training for bus operators and transit personnel regarding gang violence, particularly involving local gangs, could be helpful if gang violence is deemed a likely problem. Also, a night-time “request a stop program”, rather than regular bus stops for night service, could allow passengers to board and alight at any safe location along the route. This is done during night-time hours in many major cities and makes stop locations less predictable for criminals.

12. Final Plan

Management Plan

Night time bus service will have very little impact on the management structure at SMTD. Additional operators and dispatchers will need to be hired for the expanded number of shifts. Up to four fixed route operators and two Access Springfield operators will be needed for night bus service. A dispatcher/supervisor will be need for both the paratransit service and fixed route. Additional mechanics will not be needed as there is a mechanic on duty into the late evening hours; however, the shift time may need to be adjusted since buses will be returning to the garage near the end the mechanic's shift.

Capital Plan

The current SMTD capital program covers such items as vehicle replacement, maintenance equipment replacement, radio equipment replacement, and the design and construction of an off-street transfer facility. For night service, the capital equipment needed focuses on the vehicles and items, bus stop signs, and safety concerns. The revenue equipment in the capital plan will be sufficient to operate night bus service. Bus stops signs will be needed in certain locations that are served by night buses but not day time buses. Also, bus stops that have night bus service should be modified to show that night service is provided. This can be done by affixing a decal to the affected bus stops.

The other capital needs for night bus service focus on safety needs. Many of these items are items that should be installed onboard the buses regardless of night bus service. These include installing security cameras onboard buses, automatic vehicle locater systems (AVL) so bus locations can be tracked, and improving lighting at major night time bus stops. Funding for most of these projects should be available through security and transit enhancement sources.

Marketing Plan

Night time bus service will need to be marketed in order to educate the public about its existence, as well as where and when the buses do operate. Night bus service operations will be run on routes that are different than the daytime fixed routes, thus there will need to be an education process for people who use the routes. Marketing should be targeted to potential users who will use the service, as well as to employers who will benefit from the services. Marketing efforts should include direct education and promotional material to major employers and retailers in the region, such as the State of Illinois Government and area hospitals. Smaller employers who have a lot of night shift employees also should receive marketing and promotional materials. Night service marketing should be included in the overall marketing of the SMTD system.

Long Term

The night bus service route network developed for this study represents a first phase trial of night bus service in Springfield. As ridership grows on the night service network should expand to serve new generators and markets such as UIS and Lincolnland Community College. The night

network could be modified to serve new generators either by modifying the proposed routes or creating new route services. New routes have the advantage of providing more direct services for customers. Eventually the night bus network may serve many of the same areas as the daytime route network. All long term options for night bus service would be contingent on funding.

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