



*How Technology Is Reimagining Mobility*

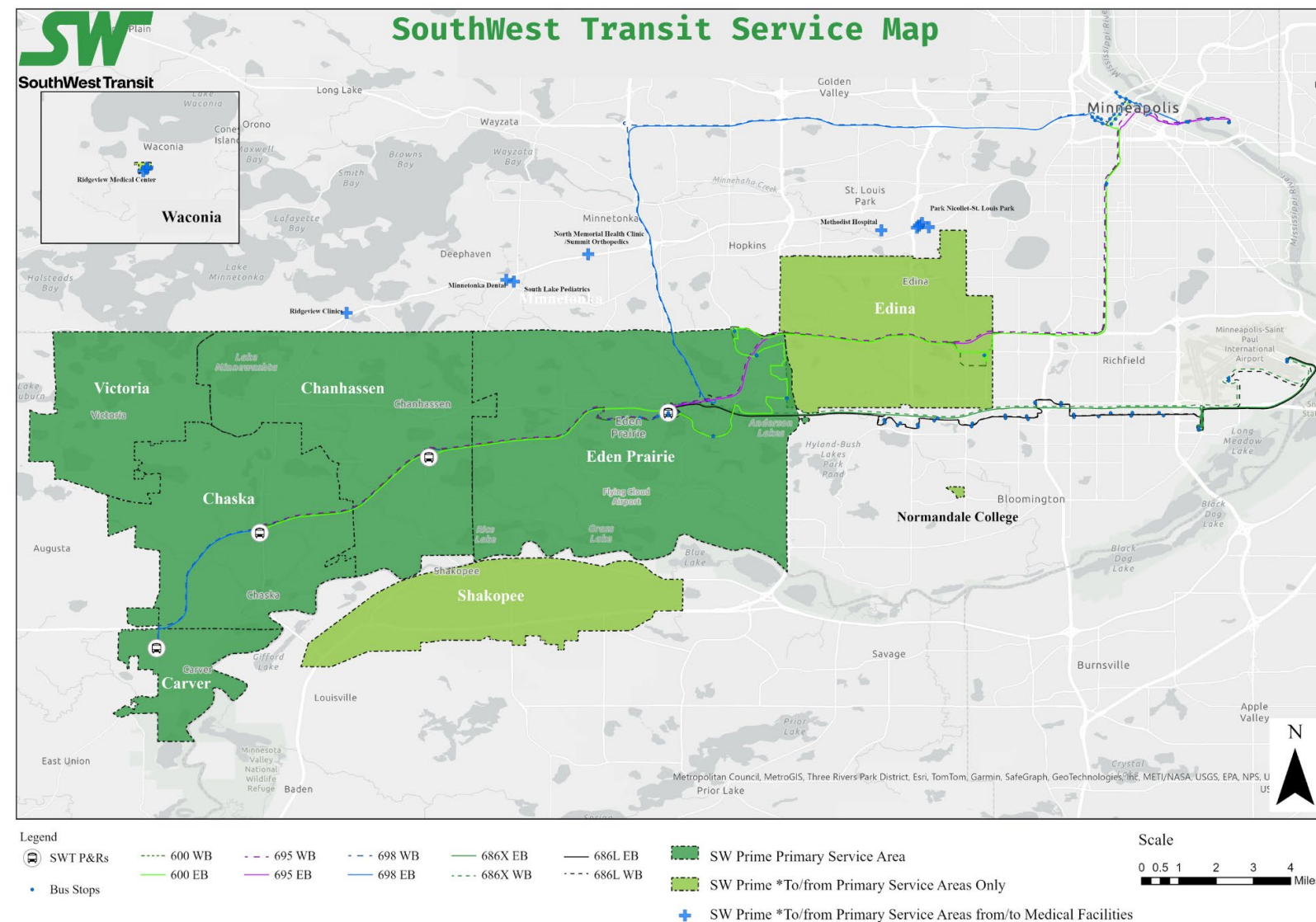
Erik Hansen, CEO



**SouthWest Transit**

# WHO WE ARE

- SouthWest Transit is a suburban transit agency serving the southwest suburbs with fixed route bus, microtransit (Prime), and special events shuttle services
- 537,878 ridership in 2024 with 147,922 of that microtransit trips
- 2024 MPTA transit system of the year
- Launched our autonomous service April 15, 2025



# MEET THE CEO

Erik Hansen has served as CEO of SouthWest Transit since 2023 and has worked in local government in rural and suburban locales for the past 24 years as a City Administrator, Mayor, and County Commissioner after a successful career in marketing and entrepreneurship in the private sector. A long-time advocate for transportation and transit, Erik is a member of the MPTA board, founded the transportation management organization Smart Commute in Denver and has served on the governing body of a metropolitan planning organization, public highway authority, airport authority, and numerous transportation committees.



# Technology Trends

- Artificial Intelligence
  - The global market for AI in transportation is expected to be \$3.5 billion in 2026
  - Used for AVs, driver monitoring, passenger counting, customer service transit & planning and more
- Connected and Automated Vehicles
- Open payment systems and smartphone apps
- Alternative fuel vehicles – sustainability
  - 42% of all vehicles produced worldwide in 2030 are expected to be electric (S&P Global Mobility)
- The pace of change can be overwhelming: it is a challenge to keep pace in this changing world.

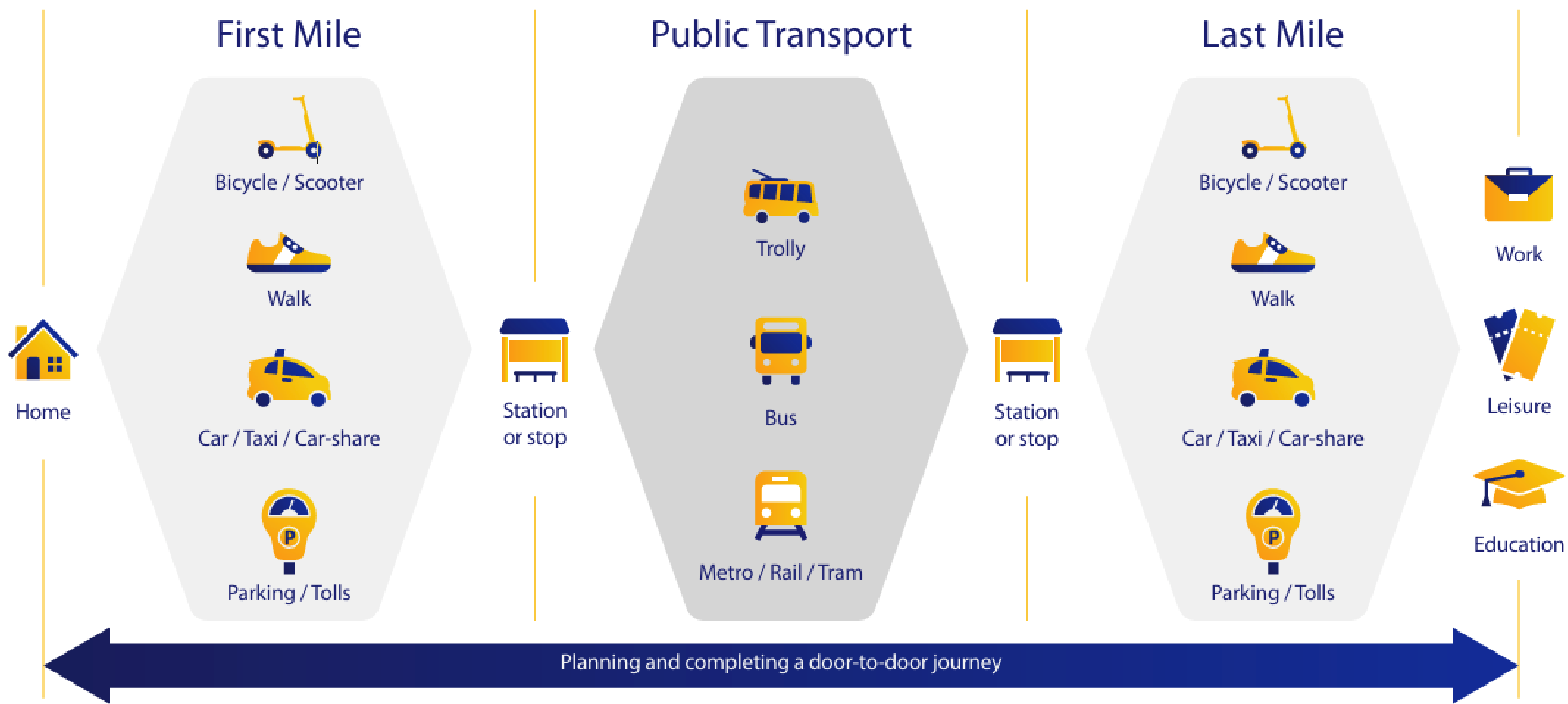


# WHY SHOULD TRANSIT ADAPT?



- To adapt to how people pay – 86% of all US transactions in 2024 were digital
- To address driver labor shortages – transit driver is 57 vs. average 42
- To connect with customers as individuals – people customize their buying experiences through apps like uber, Amazon, airlines and 95% of Americans own a smart phone; 79% of 65 plus age
- To be relevant as an industry – we can't serve people if we don't meet them where they are at
- **Challenge: can you implement one piece of technology to make your customers' transit journey more seamless?**

# SEAMLESS JOURNEYS



Source: Visa — [Transforming Urban Mobility](#)

# SEAMLESS JOURNEYS

- A travel experience that is smooth, efficient, and free of disruptions, often facilitated by technology
- Minimizing friction and maximizing convenience for the rider, from booking to arrival
- Transit agencies operating in silos
- Multimodal Transportation



# SEAMLESS JOURNEYS

- More focus on local trips to meet needs
  - First & last mile rides
  - Autonomous Vehicles
- More specialty services
  - Trips to airport, special events, one-off trips
- Enhanced and expanded customer service through AI
- Focus on user experience on our website and apps



# A seamless journey at Southwest Transit

- Automated vehicles
- AI passenger counters with live data stream
- Microtransit live data stream
- Open payment systems
- Integrate data into one app/website with public GTFS feeds



# Why autonomous vehicles?

## Collaboration

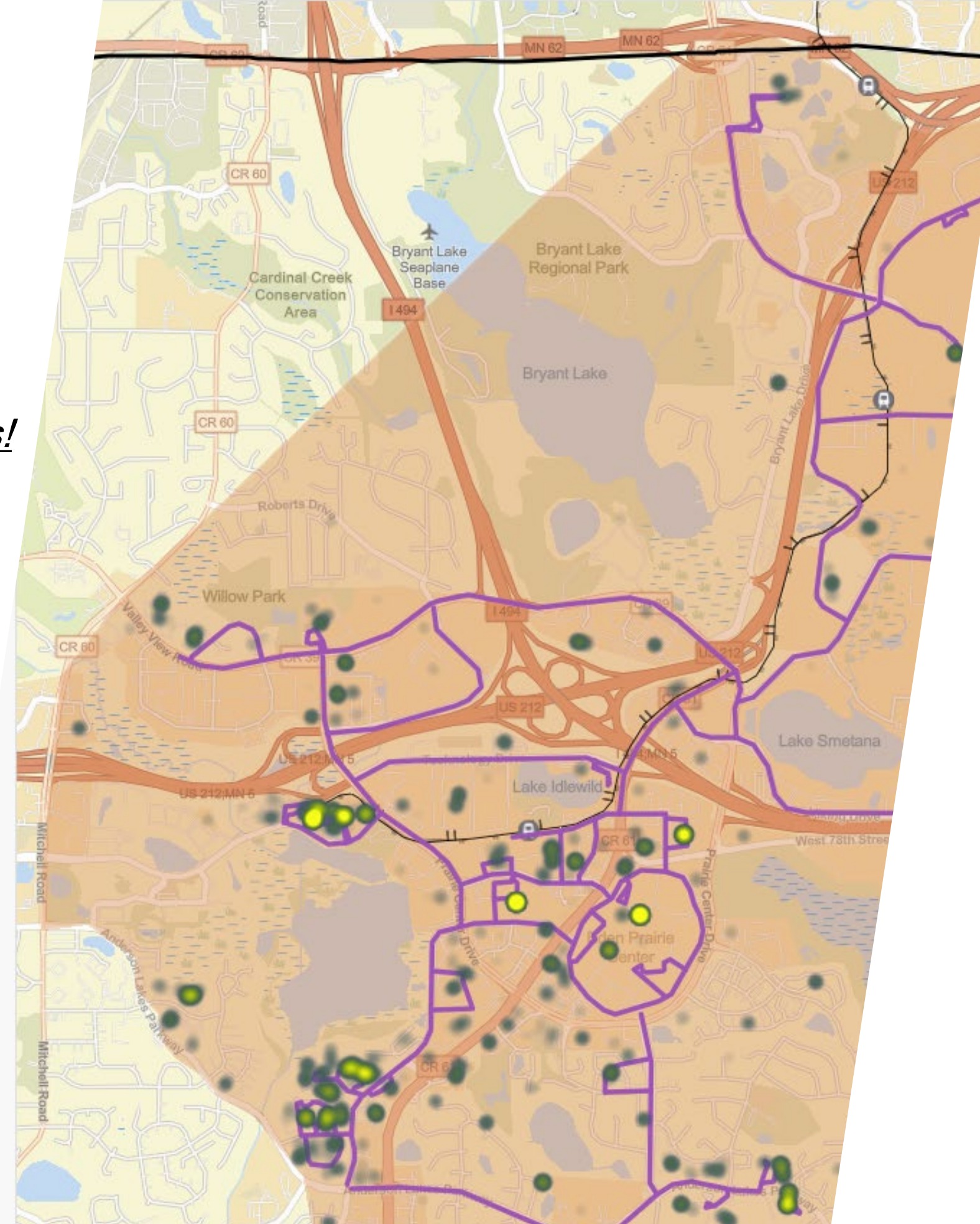
*CMAQ grant from FTA, action from Met Council, private sector deployment, City of Eden Prairie support, and SouthWest Transit all needed to pull this off from contract to deployment in 10 months!*

## Mobility

*Improved connectivity around SouthWest Station, the Green Line terminus and first/last mile service to the golden triangle business park area, shopping, and multifamily housing in a multimodal area that includes bus, light rail, e-bikes and microtransit .*

## Efficiency

*AV promises to remove the labor cost of microtransit which is 43% of our direct cost of this service; transit drivers are in short supply, and the workforce is aging rapidly, allowing us to maintain levels of service*



## By the Numbers!

- 11,815 trips, 18% of total microtransit trips
- 91.38% OTP
- 12.35m median wait time
- 96% thumbs up reviews with 73% repeat riders

## Lessons Learned

- Initial concerns about acceptance of the technology are unfounded
- Highly efficient performance metrics
- Lower autonomy levels than expected initially (16%) but increasing recently (60%)
- Community engagement is key to success

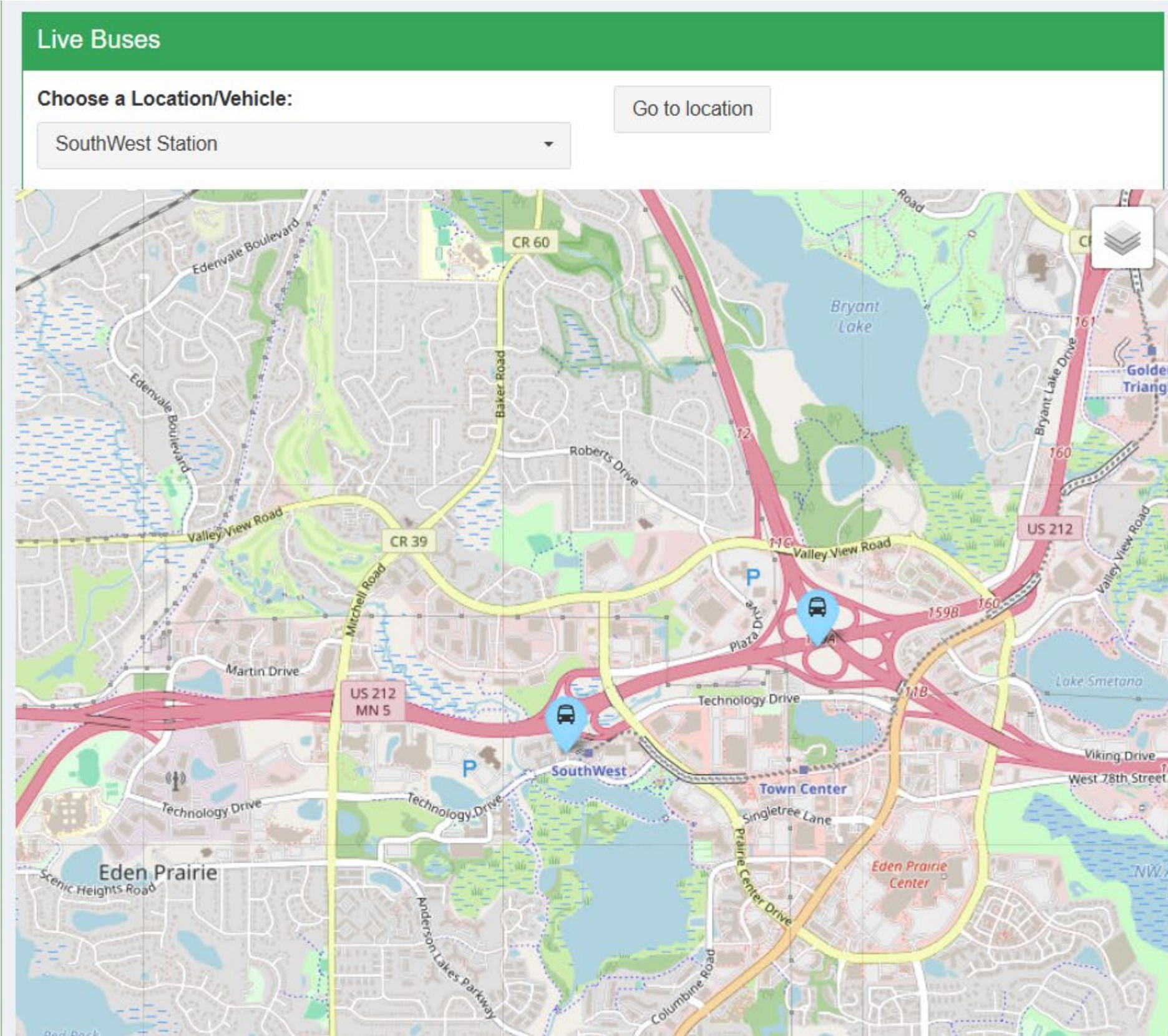


# AI Passenger Counters

- Partnered with Infodev – third system in the US to deploy after MTA and SEPTA
- System is an AI counter that recognizes people but not individuals through a camera and uploads data to the cloud in real time
- What this system gives us:
  - Real-time data for passenger counts
  - Know when and where people get on and off
  - Data stream feeds GTFS so that we can notify customers information about their trip
  - On time trip performance



# AI Passenger Counters

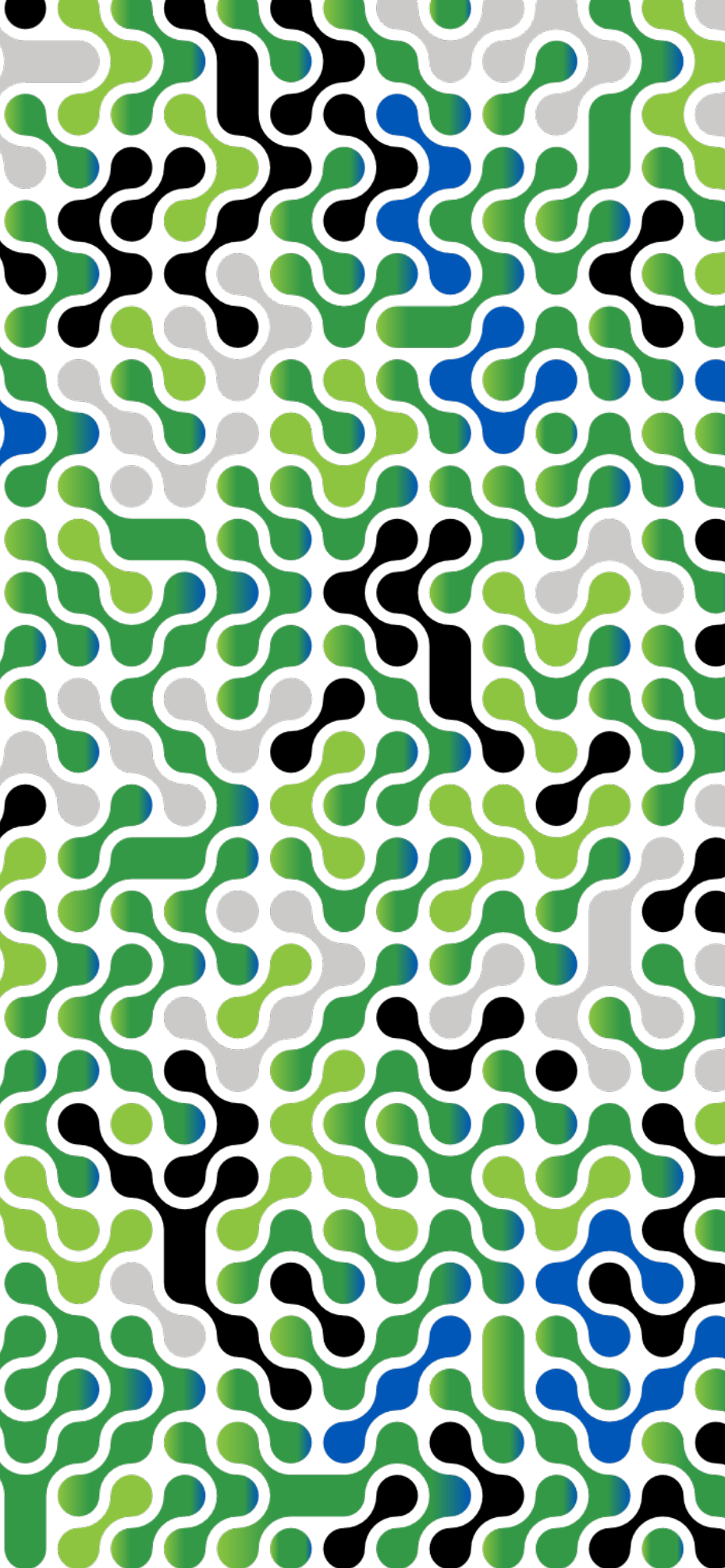


## Live Vehicle Status

Showing 1 to 10 of 10 entries (filtered from 65 total entries)

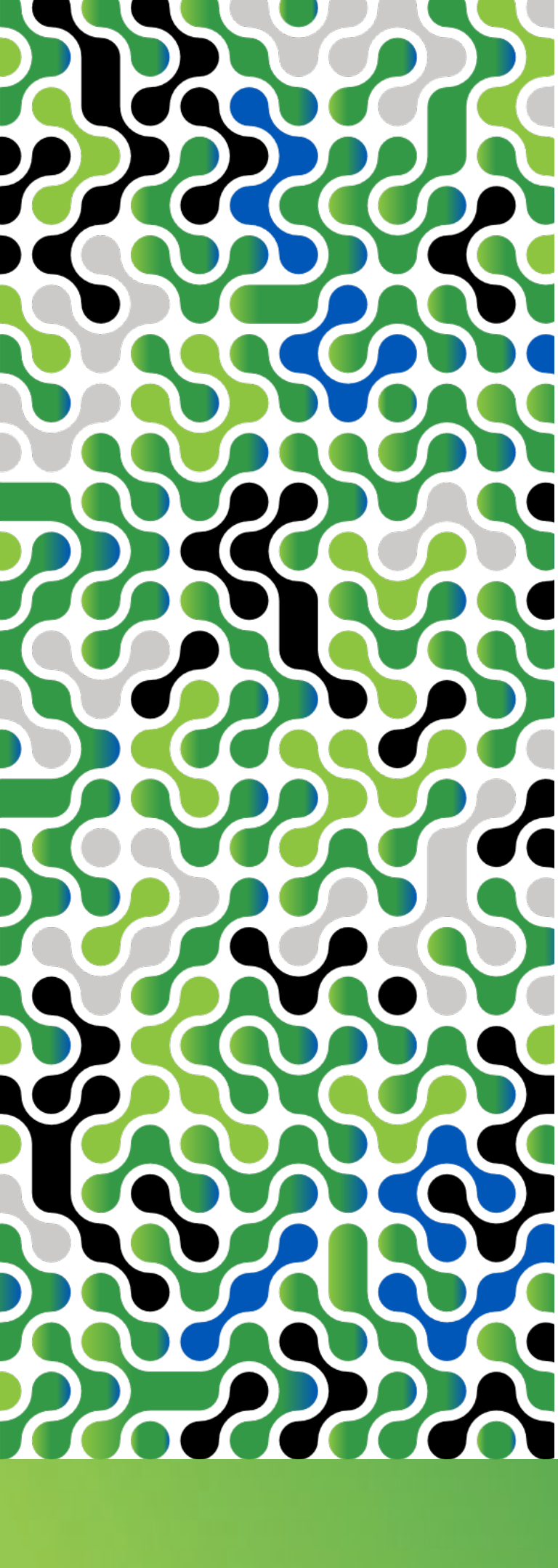
| VehCode | VehStatus | Latest_Load | ValidLoad | InfoAge_s | SeatOccupancy | Event |
|---------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| All     | ins ⓘ     | 1.03 ... ⓘ  | All       | All       | All           | All   |
| 121     | InService | 56          | 56        | 6         | 98%           | Both  |
| 235     | InService | 11          | 11        | 5         | 19%           | Both  |
| 239     | InService | 58          | 58        | 7         | 100%          | Both  |
| 429     | InService | 2           | 2         | 6         | 4%            | Both  |
| 452     | InService | 52          | 52        | 5         | 91%           | Both  |
| 475     | InService | 57          | 57        | 7         | 100%          | Both  |
| 477     | InService | 43          | 43        | 8         | 75%           | Both  |
| 505     | InService | 5           | 5         | 5         | 42%           | Both  |
| 707     | InService | 25          | 25        | 4         | 44%           | Both  |
| 846     | InService | 18          | 18        | 4         | 32%           | Both  |

Showing 1 to 10 of 10 entries (filtered from 65 total entries)



# One app project

- Consolidate all payment systems and fare purchases into one app with website integration
- Currently have three different apps for three different services plus Go-To transit cards through app – Spare for Microtransit, Token Transit for special events and parking, our own app for fixed route bus
- Fees for online payment purchasing are astronomical 8% -9% per transaction
- Multiple apps are confusing for the customers who don't know what to download for what service and don't allow cross - promotion of services
- Multiple apps do not allow you to purchase a fare for an entire journey

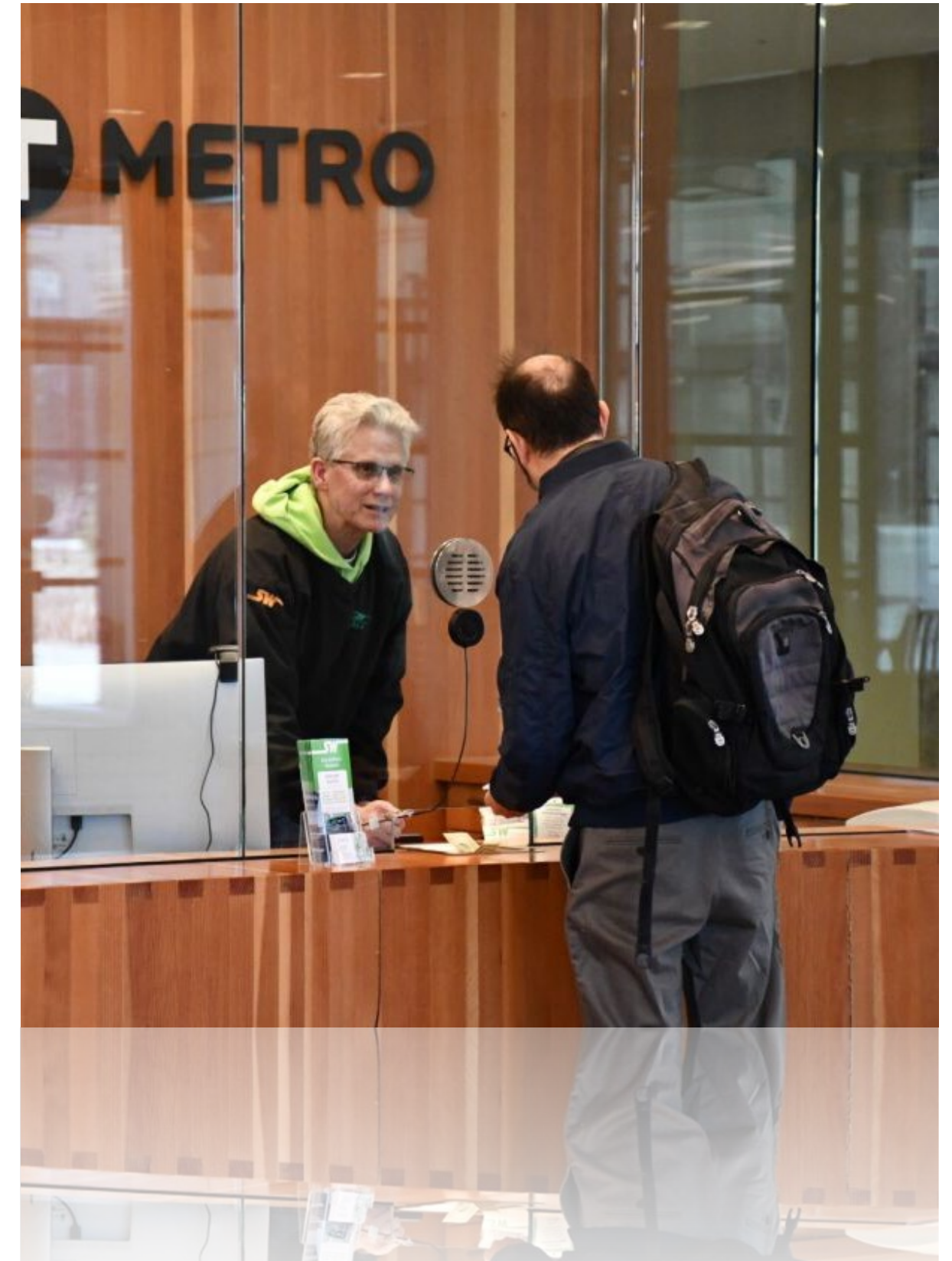


# One app project

- Licensing GoPassthrough DART ... developed by KUBA
- This product will allow SWT to integrate GTFS feeds from Spare and AI passenger counters so that customers can see where their buses are at and how full they are
- Will connect to website for fare purchases
- Will connect to a marketing CRM system for an integrated account - based system that allows us to personalize their transit experience and offer transit options for future purchase
  - Bus fares, microtransit fares, parking, and special events fares
- Will be able to integrate with Metro Transit's open payment systems with new fare boxes with tap to pay open payment systems through Genfare so that customers can purchase fares across agency platforms

# Rethinking transit in your service area

- We have made the strategic choice to jump in head-first but this may not be possible for everyone
- Challenge you to make the choice to adopt one piece of technology to improve your customers' transit journey
  - Could you connect your fixed route customers to dial and ride services through technology?
  - Could you make it easier for individuals to pay for fares through one app or website?
  - Could you use technology to reduce operational costs?



The background features a complex, abstract design composed of various shades of green and teal. These colors form large, overlapping, geometric shapes that resemble stylized letters or organic forms. The text "[questions]" is centered in a white, sans-serif font, with the brackets being slightly larger than the word itself. The overall composition is modern and visually engaging.

[questions]