

*Welcome!*



# East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council Planning Meeting



Thursday, August 23, 2018

Meeting #1

# Karen Amundson

Community Development Planner

East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council Director



# From early on, transportation solutions – other than using our own two legs – were pursued...



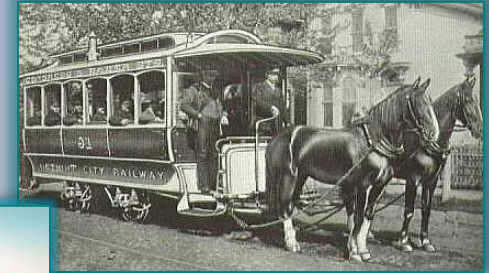
Horses



Buggies

Bicycles

Boats



Horse Cars

Trollies

Zeppelins

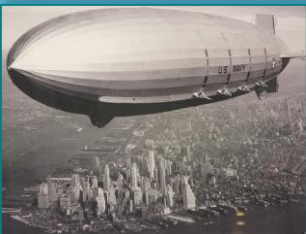
Trains

Gondolas

Planes

Automobiles

SegWays











Athletic Supporters

Horses and buggies are all well and good, but some of us in the outlying areas are unable to harness the horse or drive the car anymore.

How do I get to the Doctor? To the Supermarket? Hardware Store?

Do I have to ask my neighbor (again)?

Do I have to ask my daughter (again)?

Do I try to walk?

Do I try to drive?

Do I just stay home?



Who  
needs  
transit?

## Improving Mobility for *“Transportation Disadvantaged”*

Who are:

older adults,

individuals with disabilities,

individuals with low incomes,

and/or military veterans.





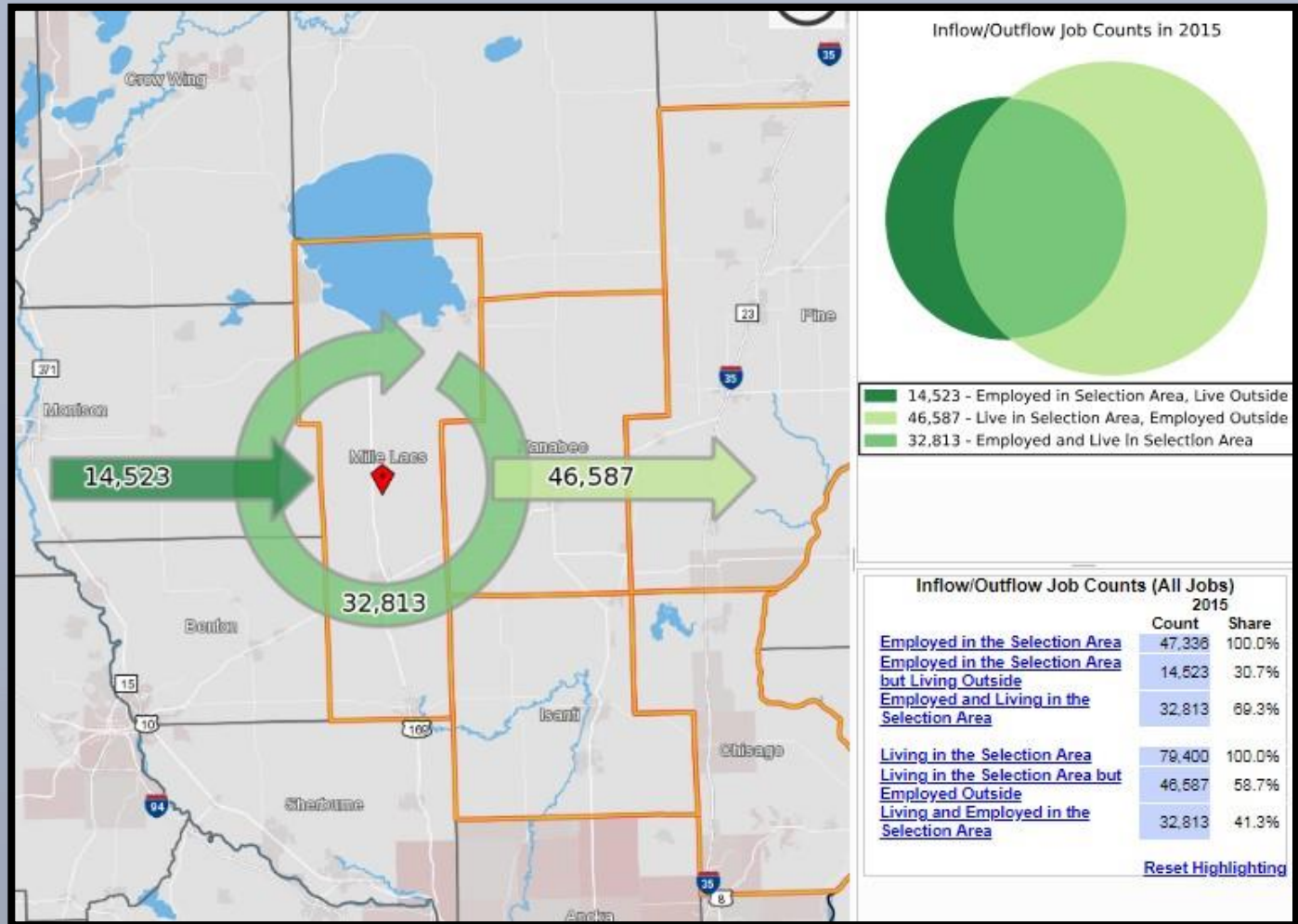
*Why must this issue be addressed??*

## Our Region's Demographics

- 🚌 Current average age: 25 – 64 years old
- 🚌 90% population growth of 65 year olds - now through 2035



# Labor Shed



# Health & well being issues that arise due to lack of transit...

Depression and loneliness

Impaired drivers on streets

Increased risk of serious illness or death due to the inability to get to medical help

Lack of mental and social stimulation

Anxiety

Most often if a person is transport poor, they are also technology poor as well (lack of internet service) – hence adding to isolation

Exclusion

Obligation causing estrangement



# Barriers to assisting those in need:

Uncertainty over the extent to which one should physically help a passenger

Fear of an accident

Time commitment

Additional costs

Frustration leading to indifference





# *What is leading this action right now?*

*In May of this year, grant monies were awarded to the East Central Regional Development Commission from Minnesota's Commissioner of Transportation to develop a platform on which to build Region 7E's East Central Regional Transportation Coordination Council.*

*This council will be comprised of stakeholders - public and private members of the region - who represent those who transport and those who need transportation, who are committed to the RTCC.*



*When are we going to get started?*

**NOW!**

*The deadline for this Phase 1 is July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019*



*Chisago*

*Mille Lacs*

*Kanabec*

*Pine*

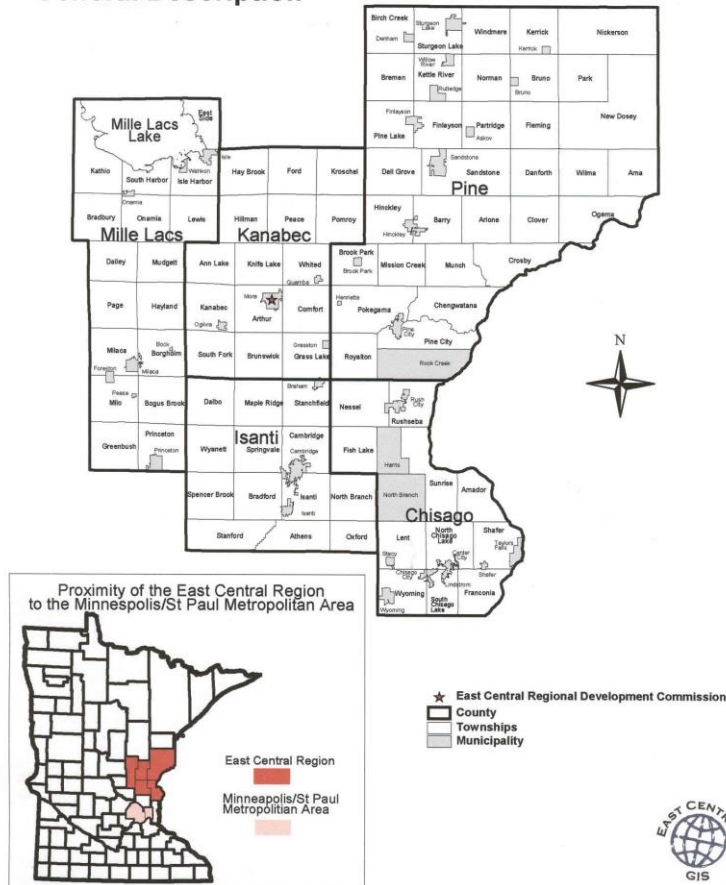
*Where?*

*Isanti*

*Our 5 County Region of East Central Minnesota*



## Region 7E General Description





*Why are You Here Today?*



# To Create the Formation of the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC)

We are on step #1 of 7, which is

*To establish a firmly rooted &  
committed  
stakeholder's committee.*



# *Steps 2 through 7:*

- 🚌 Establish the legal and organizational structure,
- 🚌 Initiate marketing and membership development,
- 🚌 Obtain initial funding commitments,
- 🚌 Identify and develop services – finding the gaps,
- 🚌 Generate awareness and interest amongst targeted markets,
- 🚌 Foster public-private relationships.



# The Responsibility of the Stakeholders

The Stakeholders will develop a formal structure and operational plan for the implementation of a

*Regional Transportation Coordinating Council*

*in accordance with all applicable federal, state,  
and local laws, rules and regulations.*





# Develop Efficiency Structures:

501(c)3 Non-Profit

vs.

501(c)6 Non-Profit

vs.

Joint Powers



*Who?*



# Introductions...

## *Who is in the room today?*

- Public Transportation Providers
- Private Transportation Providers
- City Officials
- County Officials
- Health, Family, Social & Human  
Service Providers
- Veteran Service Officers
- Habilitative Service Directors
- Health Care Providers
- Senior Service Administrators
- Workforce Administrators
- Area Representatives
- Business Owners
- Anyone else?*

*Are We Missing Anyone that Should be Here?*

Would you each please give examples of your experiences and who you serve?

*Please feel free to add any comments on what we've discussed already and/or the following:*

What do you feel is the basis for our transportation issues?

Where do you see that people need to go to?

Where are the people located that have transportation issues?

How has this been remedied so far?

How do you foresee that new implementation could be financially supported?

# Past Planning and Outcomes:

Penny Simonsen and Bob Bollenbeck worked through the planning stages in 2006, updated in 2012 and then in 2017.

In 2006, there were key issues discovered, solutions were developed and ultimately put into place.

Feedback created more ideas as more resolutions established.





# 2006 Case Study in Customer Concerns, Needs and Expectations

- ▣ Lack of transportation when crossing county lines
- ▣ Low interest from older adults to ride a bus
- ▣ Need public transit availability in all five counties
- ▣ Providers must understand limitations – whether they are real limitations or not
- ▣ Consolidate/Coordinate operations of existing transportation
- ▣ There is the need to bring ALL TO THE TABLE: schools, long-term care providers
- ▣ *Blend ridership (share valuable resources)*
- ▣ Ridership cost
- ▣ Difficulty of reaching rural areas
- ▣ More effective marketing of existing transportation providers
- ▣ Developing needed funding
- ▣ Extended hours in evenings, weekends, emergency



# 2006 Conclusions:

## Strategies & Implementation:

1. Funding
  - a. Utilize 5311 public transit programs in Kanabec & Pine Counties
  - b. Coordinate funding, pool resources by hiring a Mobility Manager within the region
2. Increase education and coordination of available transportation through promotion
3. Expand the hours/days/area by developing expanded services for those in need



# Updates - 2011

- ☞ Pine County contracted with Arrowhead Transit
- ☞ In 2009, Kanabec County merged with Mille Lacs County and formed the new Timber Trails Transit as a direct result of the 2006 planning process
- ☞ Transit development in Pine, Kanabec, and Mille Lacs counties joined the movement of Chisago-Isanti Heartland Express which serves Chisago & Isanti Counties
- ☞ All counties are now provided with public provider service



# 2011 Goals:

- 🚌 Maintain existing level of transit
- 🚌 Develop regional volunteer driver's network
- 🚌 Expand coordination amongst public transit, private providers and 5311 providers
- 🚌 Enhance regional connectors to beyond the region's public transit providers service areas
- 🚌 Call center/dispatch coordination
- 🚌 Develop a transportation management association

Region 7E Local Human Service Transit Coordination Plan - 2011



# 2017 Needs Update...

- Regional Volunteer Driver Network
- Regional Transportation Manager/Organization that will work across jurisdictional boundaries
  - Sharing resources
  - Coordinating routes and dispatch services to meet needs

## & Opinions Survey:

- Buses are either too full or empty
- Grocery shopping overloads the buses
- School age children overload the buses
- Level of in-migration of older riders will continue to tax the current system
- Current system of differing rates for different passengers complicates the delivery of the service
- Lack of continuity between providers and volunteer driver's programs add confusion



# Development/Expansion of Service Obstacles:

- ▣ County-line barriers
- ▣ Heavy risk management has killed appetite for development or change
- ▣ “Unique” transit needs
- ▣ Low awareness of services
- ▣ No organized Uber-type service available





# 2017 Conclusions:

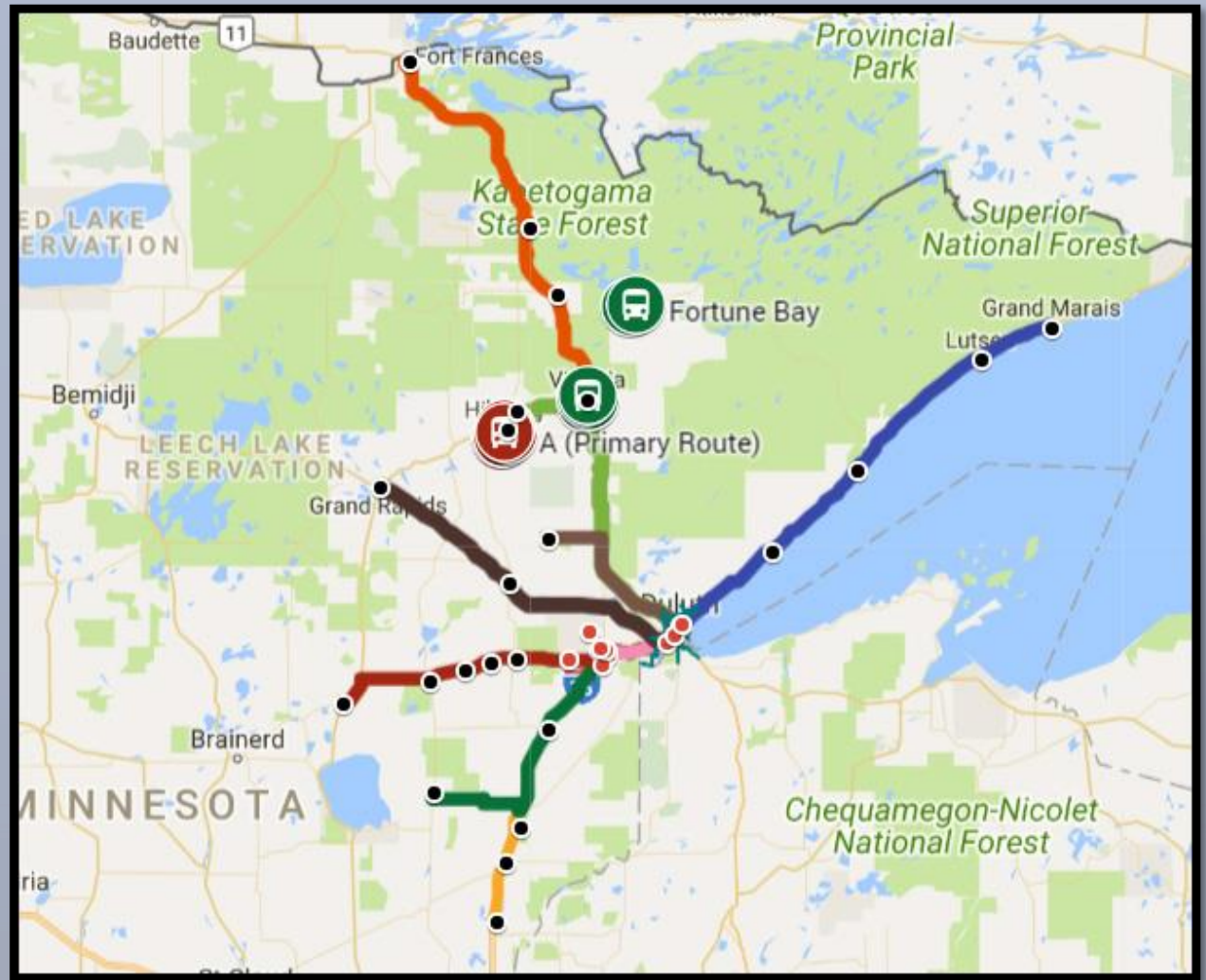
- 🚌 Riders in East Central MN desire longer service hours, consistent reliable services, access to public transportation, and the ability to go beyond the boundaries of East Central Minnesota.
- 🚌 Remain focused on delivering the most transit services in the most cost effective manner while maintaining the needs of riders as the guide to future decision making.



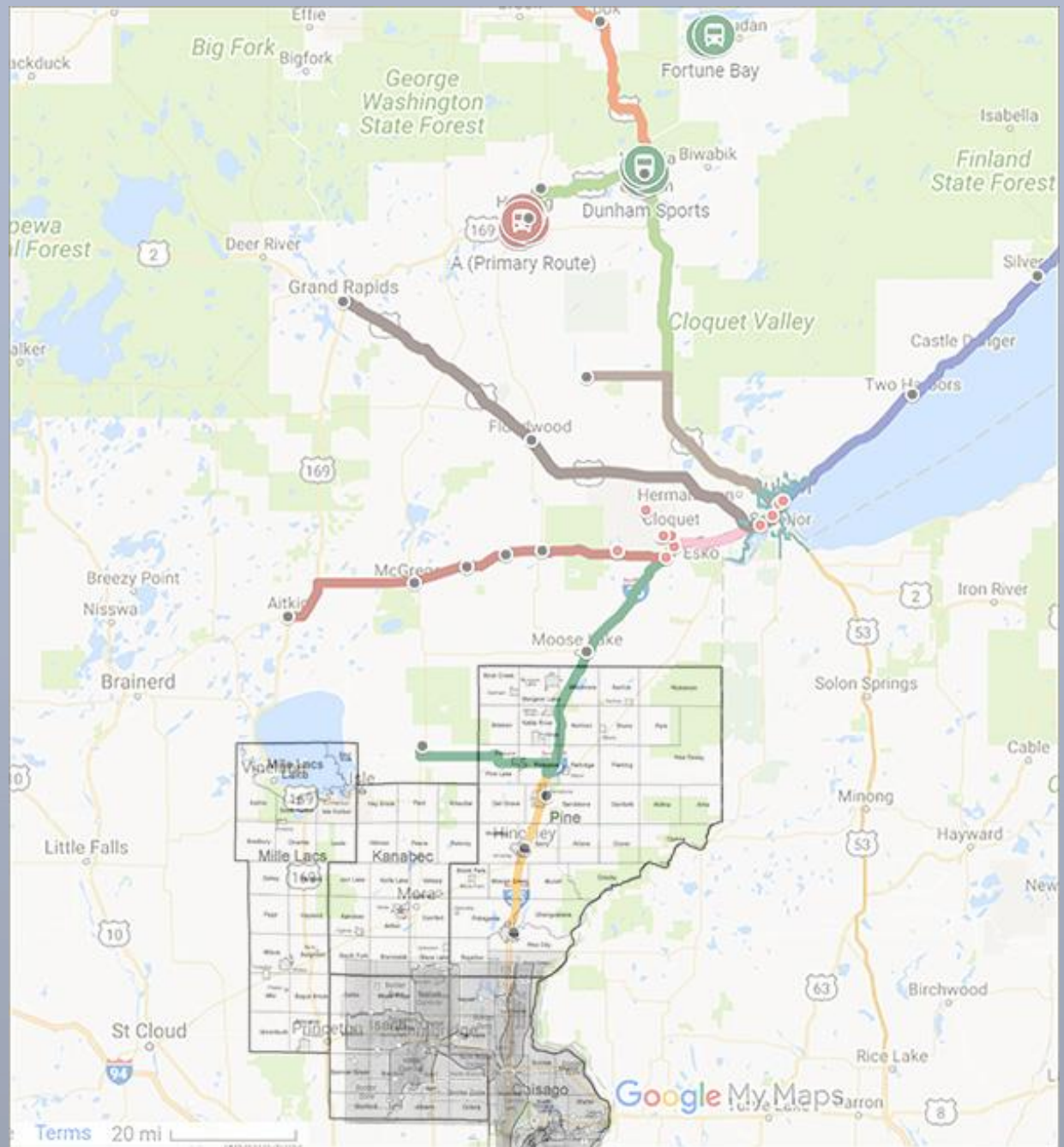
# Arrowhead Transit

*Connections to and from Duluth ~*

*From Grand Rapids, Grand Marais, Pine City, McGrath, Aitkin, Cloquet/Carlton, International Falls, Hibbing, & Meadowlands*



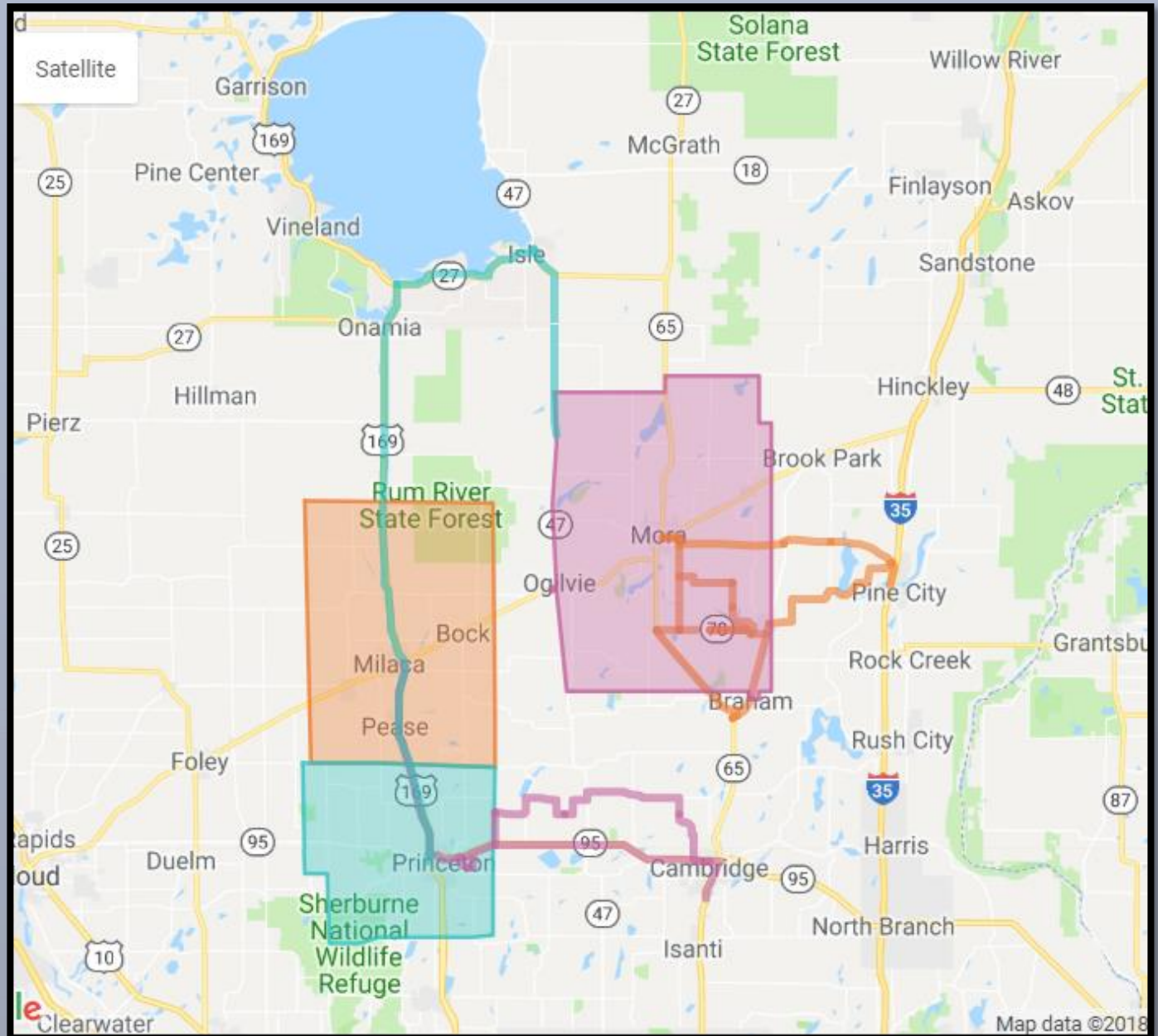
# Overlay of Arrowhead Transit in Region





# Timber Trails Transit Lines

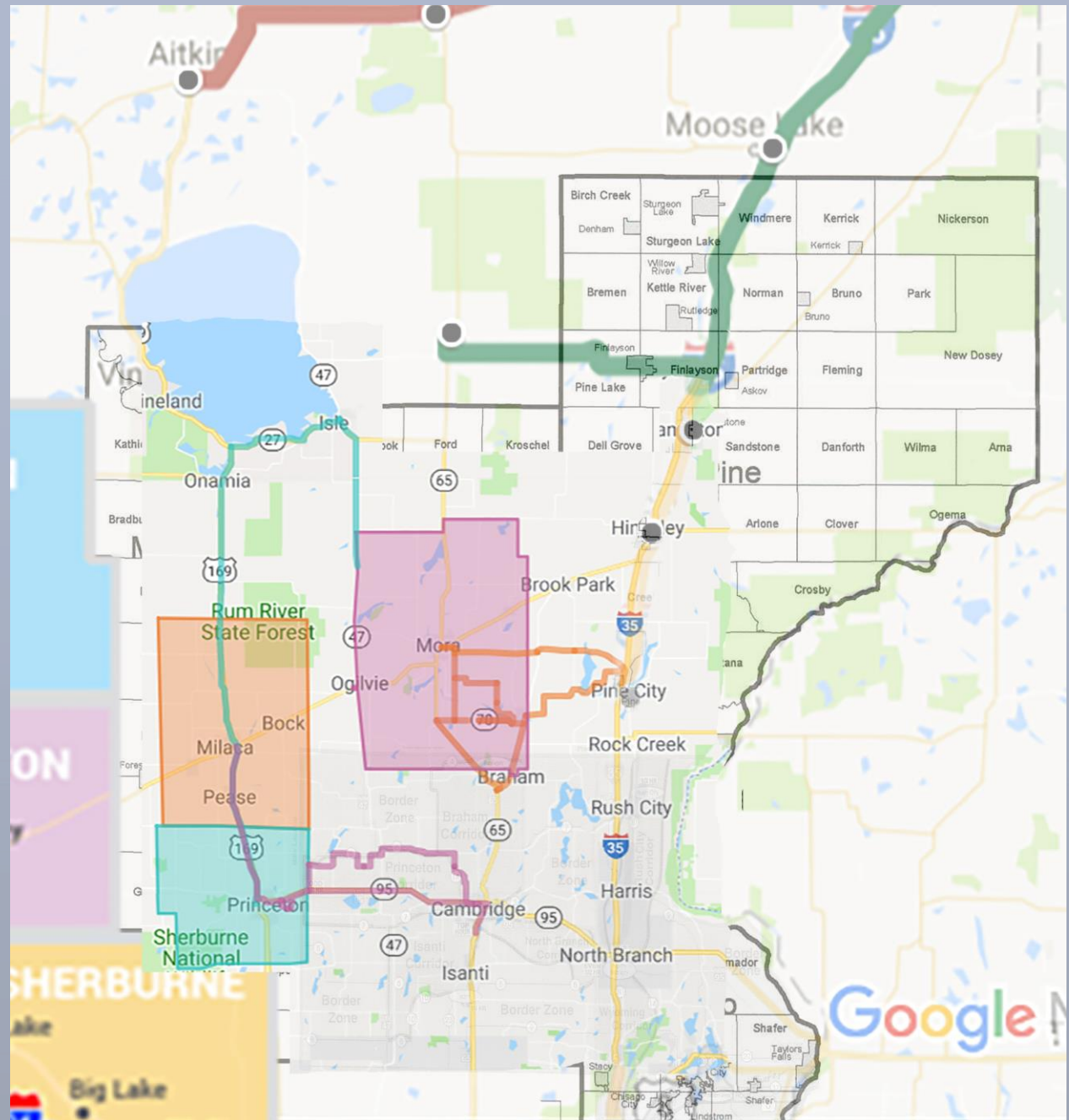
*Connections in and around Kanabec and Mille Lacs Counties*



# Overlay of Timber Trails within Region

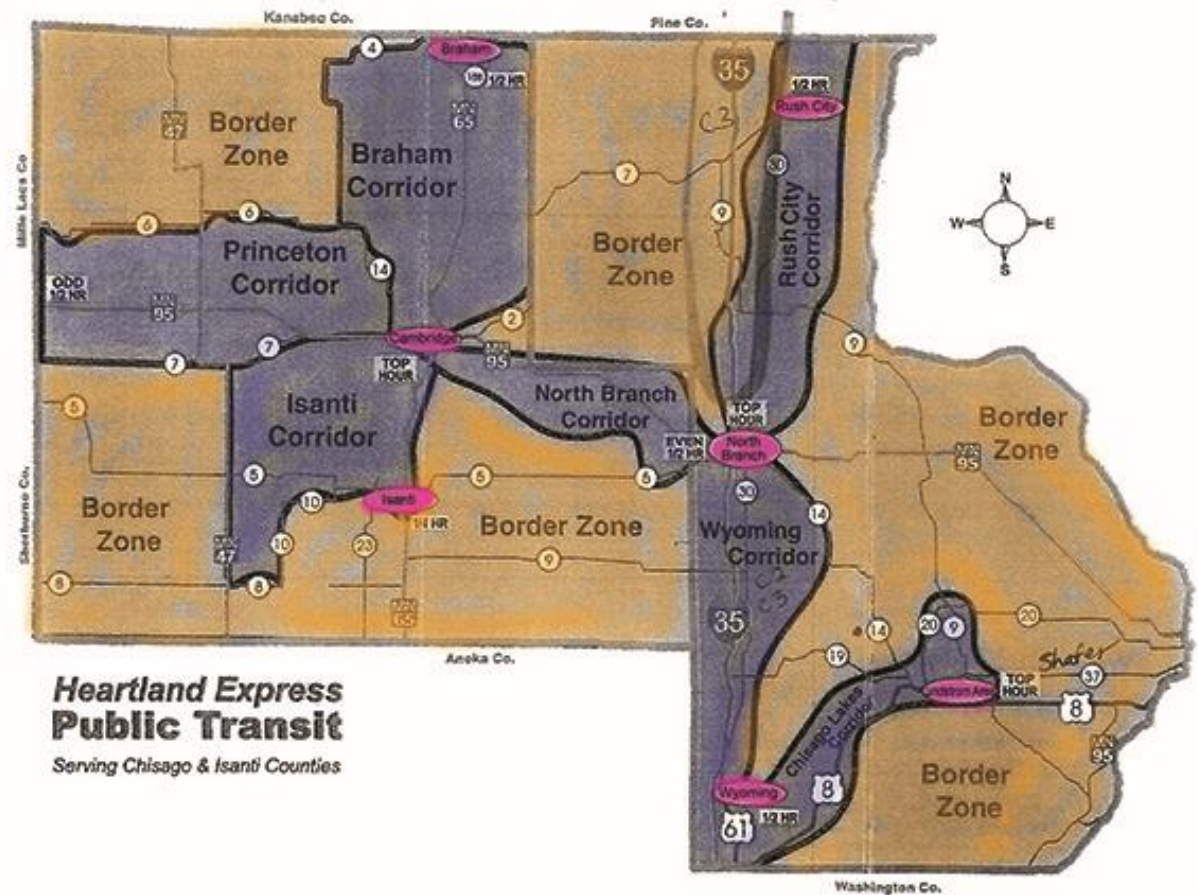
*Connectivity in and  
around Mora, Pine  
City, Braham*

*Route in Isle,  
Onamia, Milaca,  
Pease, Princeton and  
Cambridge areas*



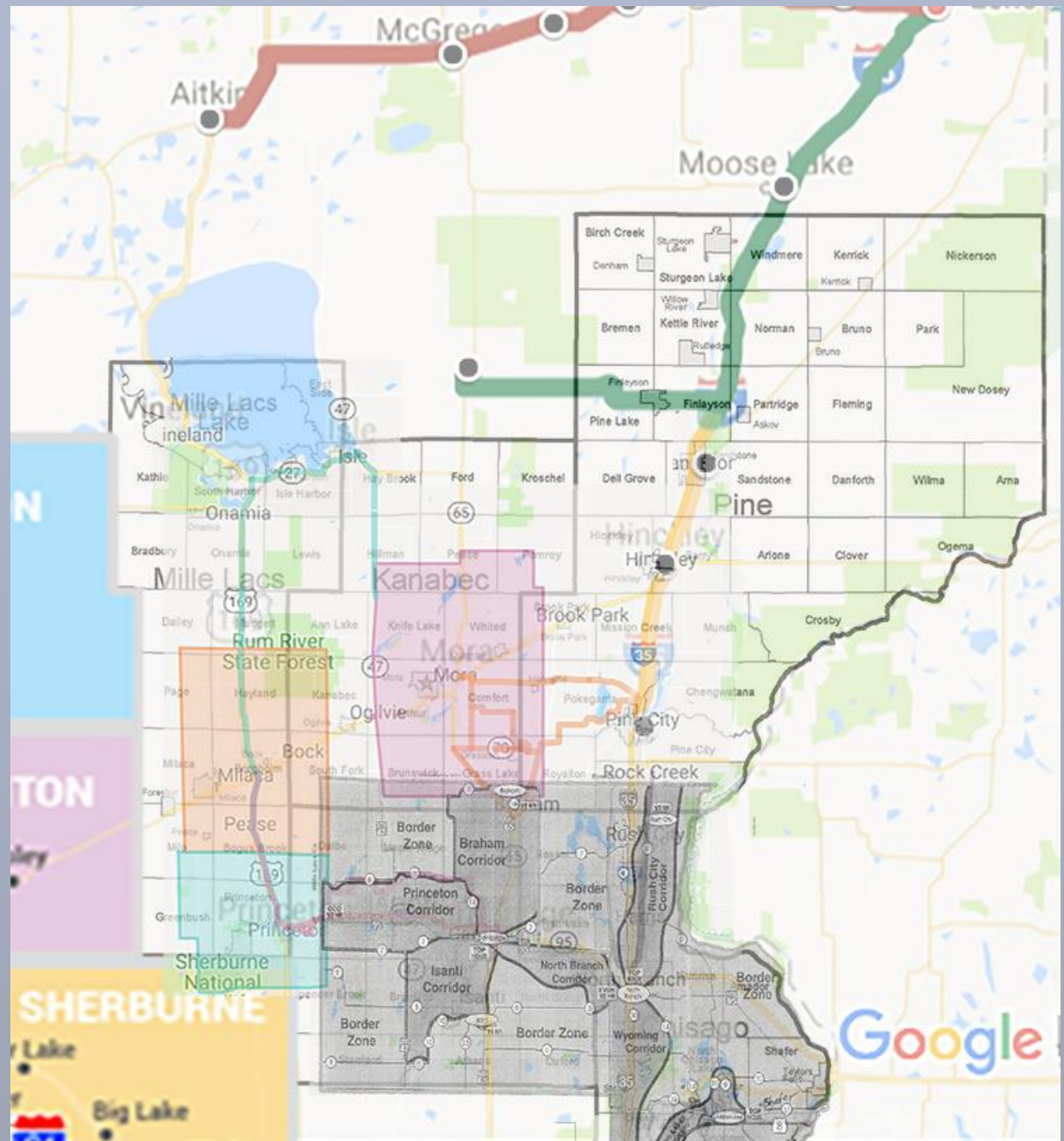
# Heartland Express

*Connections in  
and around  
Chisago &  
Isanti Counties*





# Overlay of Heartland Express in Region



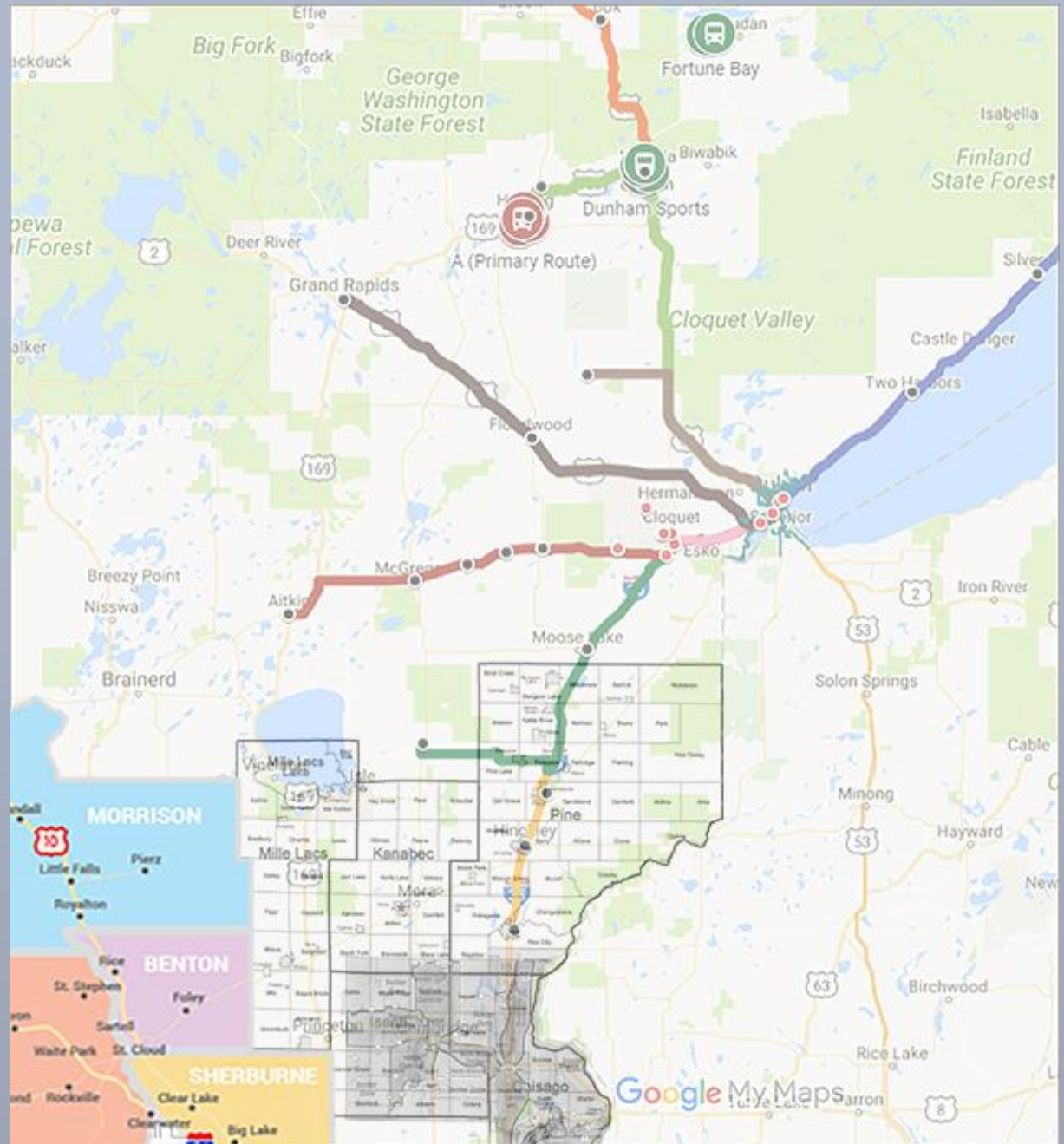
# Tri-CAP Transit

*Connections to  
and from  
Morrison,  
Stearns, Benton,  
Sherburne &  
soon to be Mille  
Lacs Counties*



# Overlay of Tri-CAP Transport in Region

*Connectivity  
into Mille Lacs  
County*



It's time –

With all of us together, with the previous plans accomplished, with MnDOT standing with us, *the Time is Right* to move forward towards implementation.

*Why?*





# Project Timeline:

1. Define Geographic Region and Describe the Project – *This has been completed.*
2. Prepare an Operational Implementation Plan – *between today and Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>.*
3. Stakeholder Involvement Strategies for Implementation – *between today and July 4<sup>th</sup>.*



The success of our progression will be through collaboration with MnDOT and with each other.

We will meet on a regular basis, coming to the table with innovative attitudes, conceptual ideas and realistic goals - delivering the, “Yes, we cans”, to the “No, we can’ts.”

*How?*





*What makes this “implementation” different?*

***YOU!***



Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!