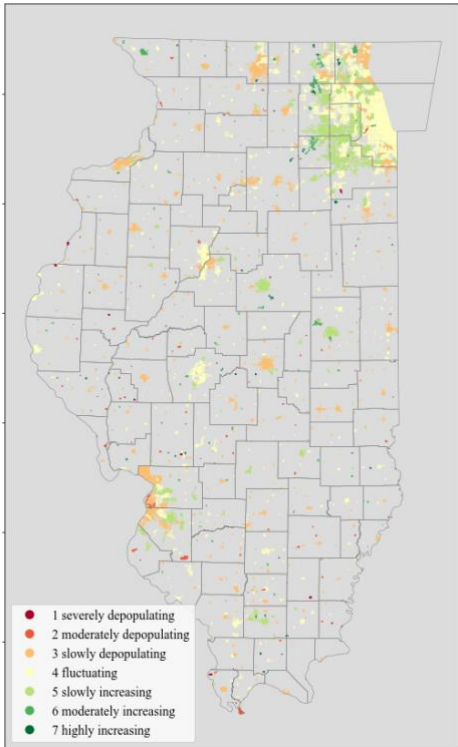




# Transportation Conditions in Depopulating Cities in Illinois

## Survey Findings



### Survey Design

The questions (**47 questions**, administered online using Qualtrics) can be classified into four broad groups:

- **General information,**
- **Challenges and possible solutions,**
- **Innovation impacts, and**
- **Miscellaneous.**

The primary participants of this survey are city mayors/ village presidents/ clerks from the depopulating cities in Illinois.

The data collection period: **5 months, from February 2022 to June 2022.**

### Response patterns vary based on City Size and Location

- Population trends alone do not define the mobility issues cities face.
- The availability of multiple travel modes provides higher accessibility in large cities and cities that are close to metro areas. Therefore, improved PT service is favored.
- In distant small cities, having access to mobility alternatives is the most prominent issue.

- **Access to funds** is vital, especially for small cities. To cope with funding shortages, city officials resurface their roadways instead of repaving them, posing safety challenges as well as drainage issues.
- Lack of well-maintained roads can act as a deterrence to attracting more employment opportunities.
- Cities with a very small population cannot promote PT because of the low demand.
- TNC-demand changes depending on city size and location.
- In some cases, PT services are provided, but residents are not aware of them.
- Survey respondents also underscored the need for **improved sidewalks** to make places more accessible for people without a car.
- City officials stressed the necessity of having **low-cost transport** services for their aging communities to access health care and shopping facilities.
- City officials highlighted the need of **special transport services** for specific communities and promoting local business.

#### Major economy

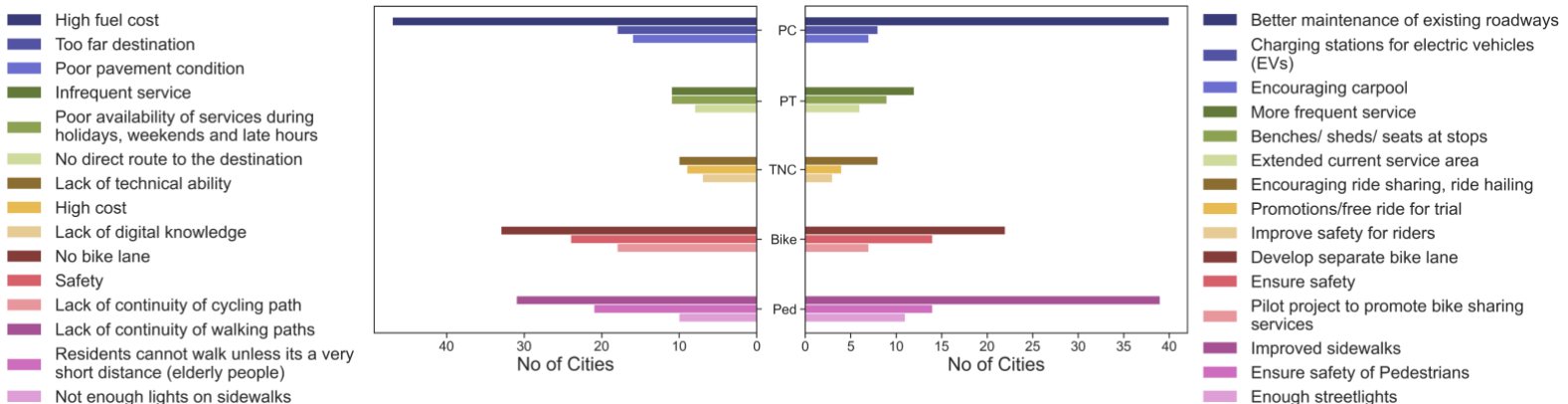
- **Farm employment**
- **Retail trade**
- **Healthcare and social assistance**

#### Difficult trips without a car

- **Work trips**
- **Trips to healthcare**
- **Trip to shopping facilities**

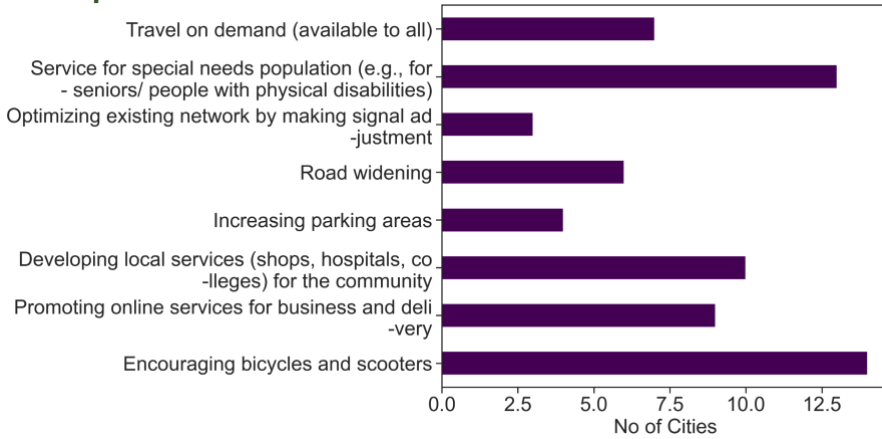
Considering the uniqueness of the cities as well as the challenges, this study provides a framework rather than specific solutions:

## Top three Challenges and Preferred Solutions for each Transport Mode

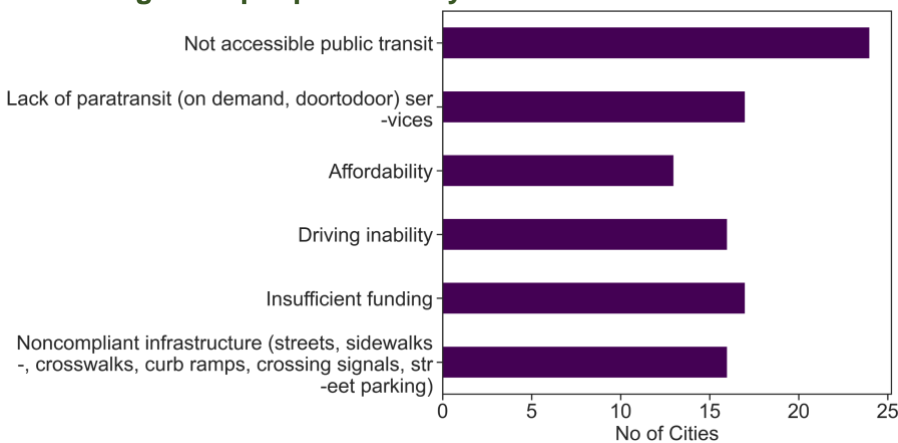


**Abbreviations:** PC: Passenger Car; PT: Public Transit; TNC: Transport Network Companies; Bike: Bicycle; Ped: Pedestrians

## Preferred System-Based Solutions by City Officials Irrespective of Mode



## Challenges for people with Physical Disabilities



## Current Situation Public Transit

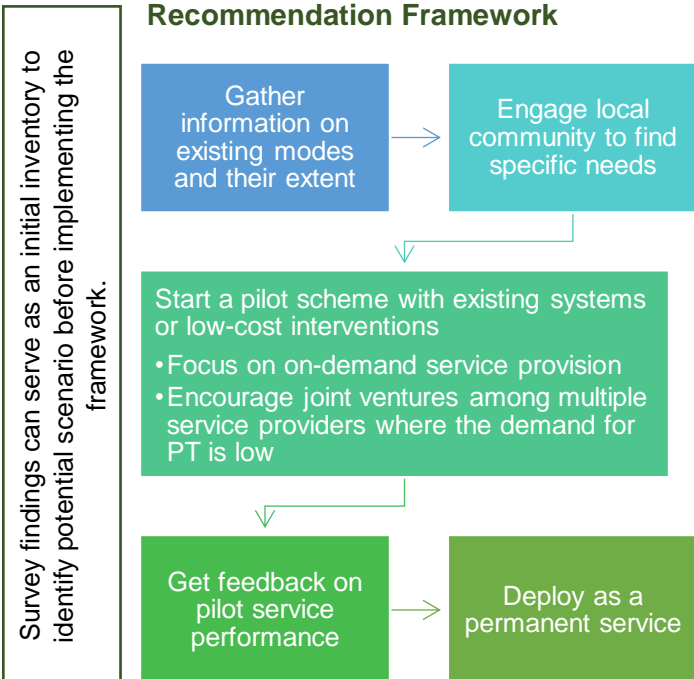
- Out of 66, 52 cities (79%) report that some of their residents face mobility challenges.
- In cities with PT services, fewer city officials reported that their residents face mobility challenges without a car.
- Out of 66, 37 cities (56%) do not offer any PT services.
- The remaining 29 cities (44%), PT service is offered, but it operates mostly regionally.
- Very few cities provide local van services for senior citizens.
- Regional transit services are systematically coordinated when they are provided by multiple operators. Coordination strategies include information, scheduling, facilities and vehicles, and inter-agency agreements.

## Transportation Network Companies (TNC)

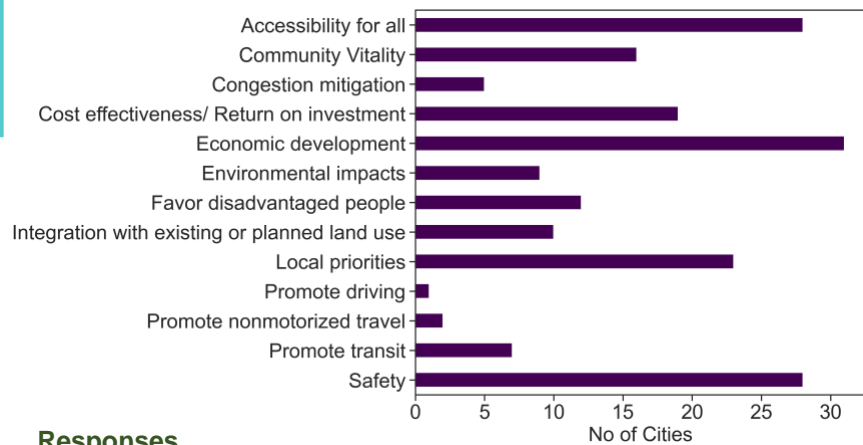
Out of 66, 23 cities (35%) offer TNC services. Some of these cities also have paratransit services and township services for special needs that can be booked via phone calls.

Most of the cities lack continuous and safe **Bikeways and Walkways**.

## Recommendation Framework



## How are Transport Projects invested: Conventional Selection Criteria



## Responses

Out of the 469 depopulating cities identified, 66 cities responded fully to the survey.

The study [protocol number: 2022-0047] was approved by the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) Institutional Review Board (IRB).

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