

# Keeping the Bottom Line

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TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESSING ESSENTIAL SERVICES

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# Scope/Questions

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Accessibility issues facing rural US residents; infrastructure broadly conceived; individual effects

How accessible are a pre-determined set of essential services?

- Perceived distance for accessing essential services?
- Level of difficulty – does not/moderately/severely inhibits access?
- Variables that likely explain the research problem under investigation

When is road quality/condition/maintenance perceived as a barrier?

What strategies do rural households use to access essential services?

# Method

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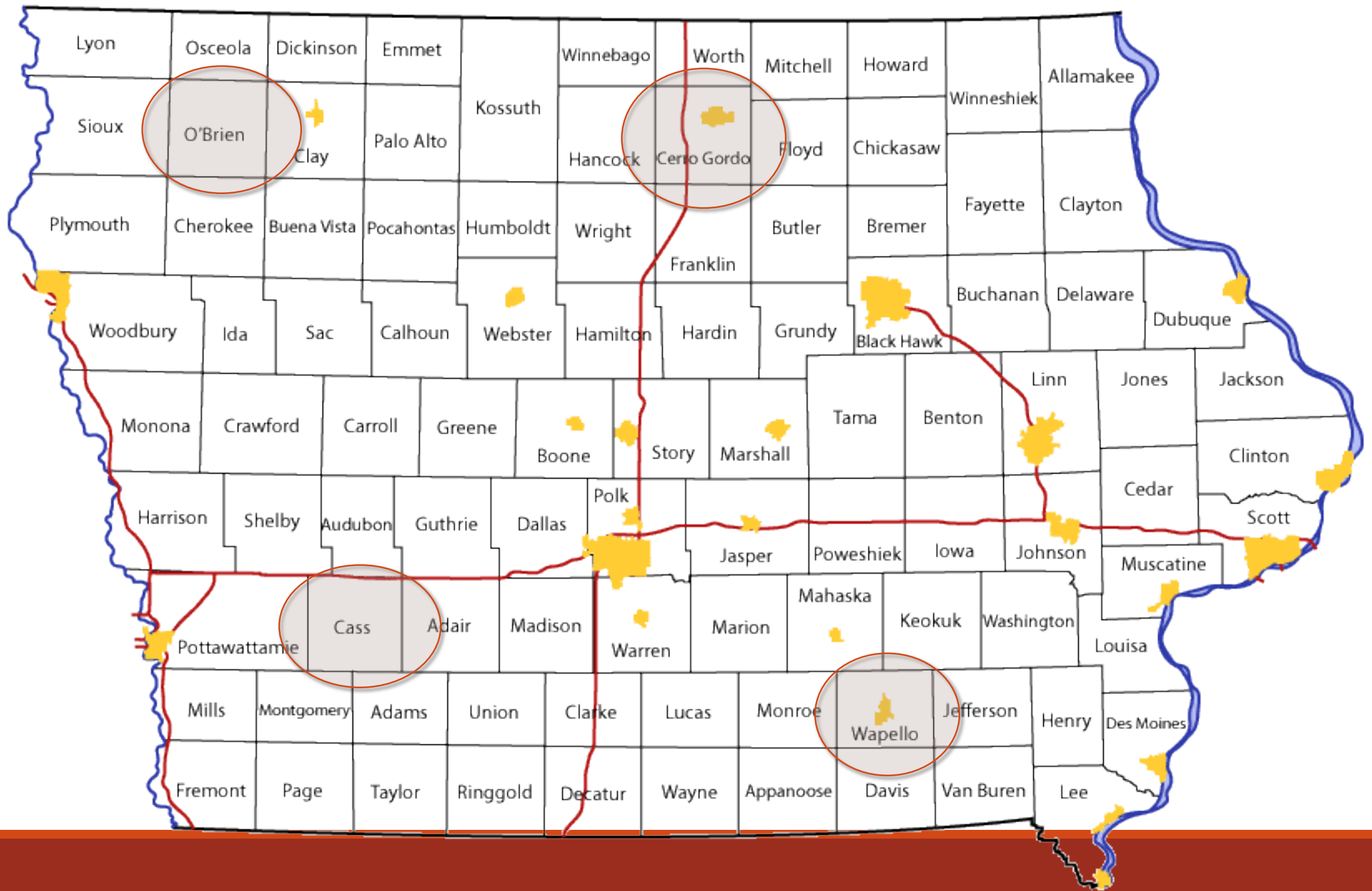
Four counties in Iowa selected based on demographic characteristics– paired (kind of)

Sample of drawn from household addresses – based on relative population – stratified by geography

5240 paper surveys mailed to households in the four counties

730 completed surveys returned

36 individual interviews selected from returned surveys – purposive sample from each county



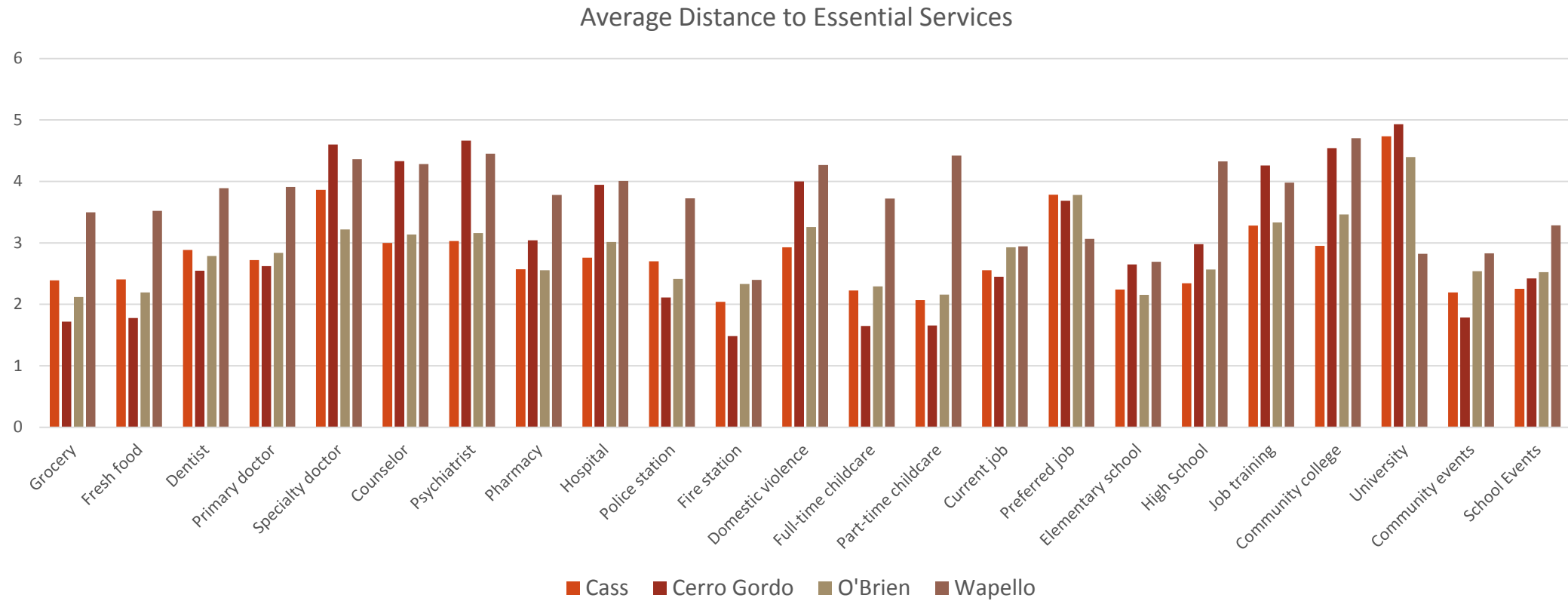
# Survey

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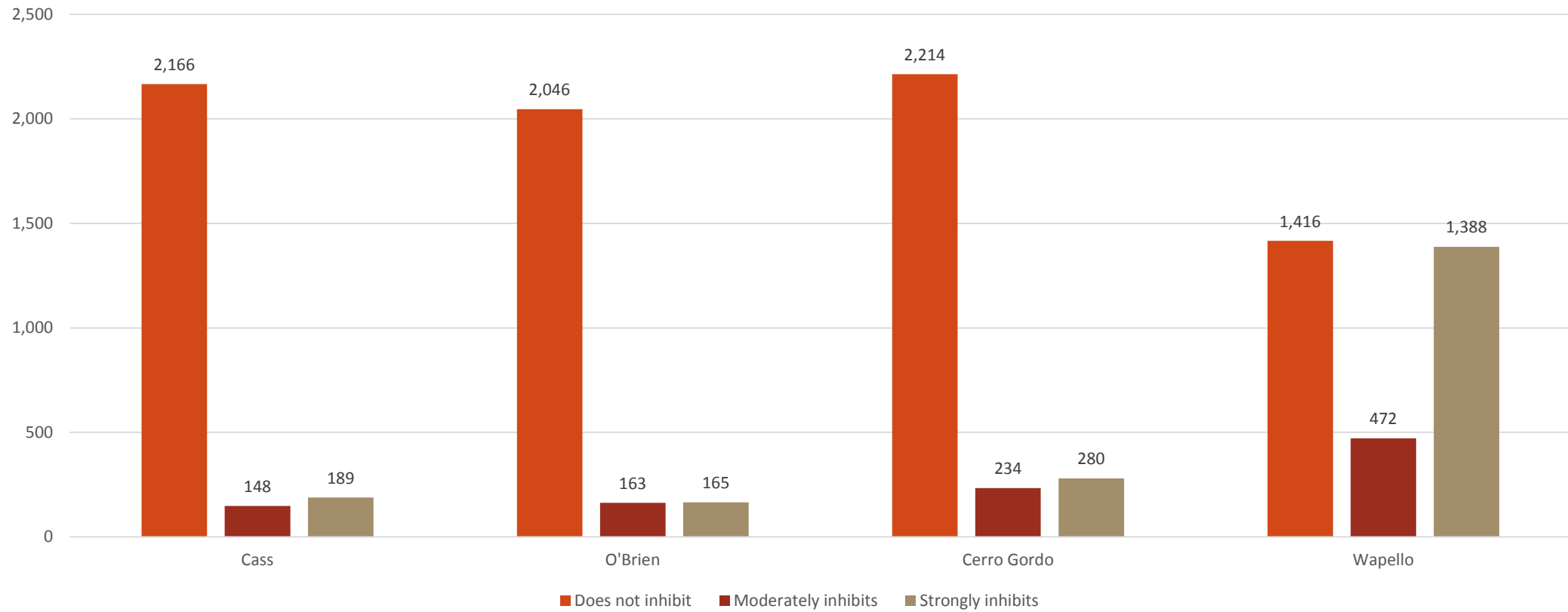
# Socioeconomic characteristics

	Cass County	Wapello County	O'Brien County	Cerro Gordo County	Study Region	Iowa Non-Metro
Survey Responses	165	187	189	189	730	
Population (2015*)	13,590	35,315	14,092	43,481	106,478	1,104,001
Population Percent Change (2010*-2015*)	-2.71%	-0.67%	-2.27%	-1.90%	-1.65%	-9.01%
Median Age^ (2015*)	44.7	39.8	44.0	44.2		43.6
White alone	97.52%	92.01%	94.80%	95.04%	94.32%	96.99%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	2.30%	9.91%	4.20%	4.23%	5.86%	2.41%
Black or African American alone	0.42%	2.06%	0.51%	1.25%	1.32%	0.59%
Worked 50-52 weeks annually	63.71%	57.00%	69.07%	64.36%	62.38%	65.95%
Per Capita Income (2015 \$s)	25,868	22,716	30,600	28,270		29,400
Median Household Income^ (2015 \$s)	43,750	42,095	55,227	46,122		58,075
People Below Poverty	13.9%	18.6%	7.3%	13.4%	14.4%	8.5%
Food Stamp/SNAP	14.5%	20.1%	9.5%	13.6%	15.2%	7.9%
No high school degree	8.16%	13.81%	7.88%	6.42%	9.23%	7.63%
Bachelor's degree or higher	19.86%	16.76%	18.78%	22.15%	19.67%	21.00%

# Average Distance to Services



# Transportation inhibits access?





# Key Takeaways from quantitative survey

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Distinction between Wapello and Cass/O'Brien/Cerro Gordo

Selected essential services more inaccessible than others

- Hospital, Specialty hospital, counsellor, mental health, domestic violence, psychiatrist, childcare, education

How do you get by without a vehicle?

- Use help from family and friends
- Bus
- Walk

Why don't you use bus?

Vehicle related expenses inhibit access to essential services

Overall, transportation access poses challenges based on

- Age?
- Income?
- Location within county?

# Interviews

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# Healthcare Access

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I: Okay, and do you notice that it presents a barrier to people?

P: Yes, it is. I'm just now starting to get introduced to some of the people that live there, and they have twenty-two units there. And there's a lot of them that don't have cars. They have to depend on somebody to take them to the doctor or grocery store or wherever, shopping, they have to depend on someone else. There is a neighbor next door to me who takes the another neighbor on the other side of me to the doctor's office. I know she did. Makes it rough down there.

# Informal Transport

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P: I drive everywhere. And I'll drive people. I've got a couple that don't drive anymore. A couple of old ladies and I like to take them around. (laughs)

I: So, so they're umm...that's interesting. So, so you do carpool with people and...

P: Well I don't car...we didn't carpool.

I: You don't ride with them they ride with you?

P: I drive, I take them. Like this morning I had a meeting and she doesn't drive anymore so I had to pick her up but that's fine. And I took her over and she cooked everything for the, you know. She had things ready.

I: Mmhm. So, so what happens there? Do they just call you and say hey I'm going. Or do you say, do you reach out to them and say I'm going.

P: I usually reach out to them because this one that I'm going to pick-up in the morning, after my yoga class, and she has to go to the eye doctor.

# Network Isolation

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I: Yeah, do you think from your sense, at least your observations, is it family that gets together and help everyone out, or just in general all the community is just--

P2: Basically family.

P1: It's family.

P2: Cause see, we're from Omaha, and we've been out here 25 years, and we're still the people from Omaha.

I: Are you?

P1: Yeah. We're still the new people.

I: Are you? You're still referred to as "those people"?

P2: Yeah, there you go.

# Aging in Place

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I: And you were saying about society, that it needs to recognize the elderly?

P: They assume that senior citizens have family or they got people taking care of them. Just because they've got family in the area does not mean they got anybody taking care of them. A lot of people are too busy with their own kids to take time for the seniors. That's just like the guy on the far end who was dead. It was two days before anybody realized it.

# Take Away/Policy

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Uneven rural geography

Accessibility not always infrastructural

Healthcare accessibility planning

Information distribution gaps

Support informal transit networks

Transportation plans for aging communities





# Networks (O'Brien #2)

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I1: All right. Do you do you see that a lot in town at least of people taking their parents places?

P: Uh huh, uh huh.

I1: Picking people up?

P: Yeah, there's a lot of extended family, sobut again, you'll see an older retired farmer that moved to town and well, they're not going to live in town, retired farmers that, like Barb and Jerry, they'll, they're really they got their nose, their ear to the ground, you know? They know everything about town, and they'll call and say, "I heard you need a ride," or "Tell so and so I can take them on any time."

I1: Yeah.

P: And, actually, his mom said they're amazing transporters because they've just kind of got it down. They know how to make you comfortable. They know how much you want to talk or not talk. They just really easy.

# Surveys

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Basic HH demographics

Vehicle availability

Essential services distance

Perceived impediments to services

# Interviews

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Survey question requested participation in interview

Selected interviews based on returned surveys

Household level – typically one respondent

Interviews were 45 minutes to 2 hours in length

Recorded, transcribed verbatim

Identities kept confidential

# Health

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I: But..., do you ever find it difficult to manage your disability with your neck issues and you're, you know working with your parents?

P: Yes. Yeah

I: Can you tell me about that a bit?

P: Just umm, the pain, uhh. ..it's there, I take morphine on a regular basis.

I: Okay

P: So that helps.

I: Mmhm

P: But the driving's wicked, it is very wicked.

I: Mmhm

P: Umm, you know I will pick, I would pick my mom and dad up in Missouri Valley, which is an hour and 15 minutes.

I: Okay

P: And then drive them into Omaha or Council Bluffs...

I: Huh

P: for doctor's visits which another half hour, 45 minutes. So that's a lot of driving for me.

I: Yeah

P: And that definitely limits, umm, like the following day is miserable.

I: Mmhm

P: I'm a home-body that day. I don't do anything.

I: Oh really?

P: I'll just have real bad spasms from driving.

# Isolation

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I: How hard was it for you, I want to come back to this public transit thing but how hard was it for you to adjust to Eddyville in particular?

R: Oh my goodness, I am still adjusting. I still am adjusting. People are not friendly. When you move to a small town. When you are an outsider in a small town, you are always, "oh she's new to town". Or they can, they don't identify me for who I am but if I tell them where I live. They say oh well you live in Francis Evan's house. This is never going to be my house until I'm dead and gone. This will remain Francis Evan's house. Even though the house we bought is no longer in existence because we've changed it. It will forever be. I can tell them I live at Francis Evan's house, "oh I know where you live". And if I tell them my name and where I'm at, "oh well I don't know where that is at". I have to be real specific and you find that in a lot of your small towns. I mean, things are identified by people or certain things. And when your new, when your from out-of-state, your never trusted. Your just that new person from out-of-town.

# Network Isolation

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I1: Okay. So you always have someone, and you were talking about your daughter's husband before, right, when you said that he picks up groceries sometimes for you? In terms of there being a friend to take you around, is it someone that lives here?

P: I don't really have a lot of friends that can do that.

I1: Okay.

P: But, yes, I have one friend that will do stuff for me, yes, it's somebody who lives here.

I1: Okay.

P: Not in this apartment complex.

# Health

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P: And do you know traveling three hours is?

I1: It's just not going to happen?

P: It kills me.

I1: Does it? Do you drive at all? Can you drive?

P: I don't have a car.

I1: Okay. So

P: Yes, I drive, but I don't have a car.

I1: So when you go we'll break this down into, you know, when you go to different things that you need but specifically for healthcare, how do you get to these places?

P: I have to ask somebody to take me.

I1: And who do you ask?

P: Like my daughter, my son in law.

I1: Okay.

P: A friend, my sister.

# Informality (Wapello #?)

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I: Okay, and do you notice that it presents a barrier to people?

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# Informality (Cass #4)

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I: Your observations, your experiences as well if you've had it, but have you observed anybody having trouble with that, or negotiating travel to get there? Have you ever heard that being a problem for anyone?

P: Well, it is in that you got to make arrangements. You got to have people that can take you there and bring back. And there is a kind of support service. Because there is a need, there are people my age or a little older that transport people. There's kind of a service where they're just known that they will take people to either Des Moines or Omaha for surgeries.

I: You would volunteer your time...

P: They would volunteer their car and the whole 9 yards. And especially too for cancer treatments and stuff like that. Some of them you can handle here, but some of the treatments you have to go either to Des Moines or Omaha.

I: Is that a non-profit?

P: I don't know if it's truly-I think it's more informal that people just know that they can rely on. Having not had that situation and not having to help anybody, I don't know how they set that up. I've heard people say that "this is something I do for this particular person. I just take them to their appointments or treatments."

# Aging (Cass #2)

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I: Umm, can you think of a time when access to any of those services was, what you call difficult for you? Or even inaccessible? Where you couldn't get something that you absolutely needed. Couldn't access something, even healthcare or whatever else that you needed.

P: Ohh, I, I send, when my kids go out to Menards, if they need things out there. I, I'll say pick this or that up for me. So cause they go out pretty often.

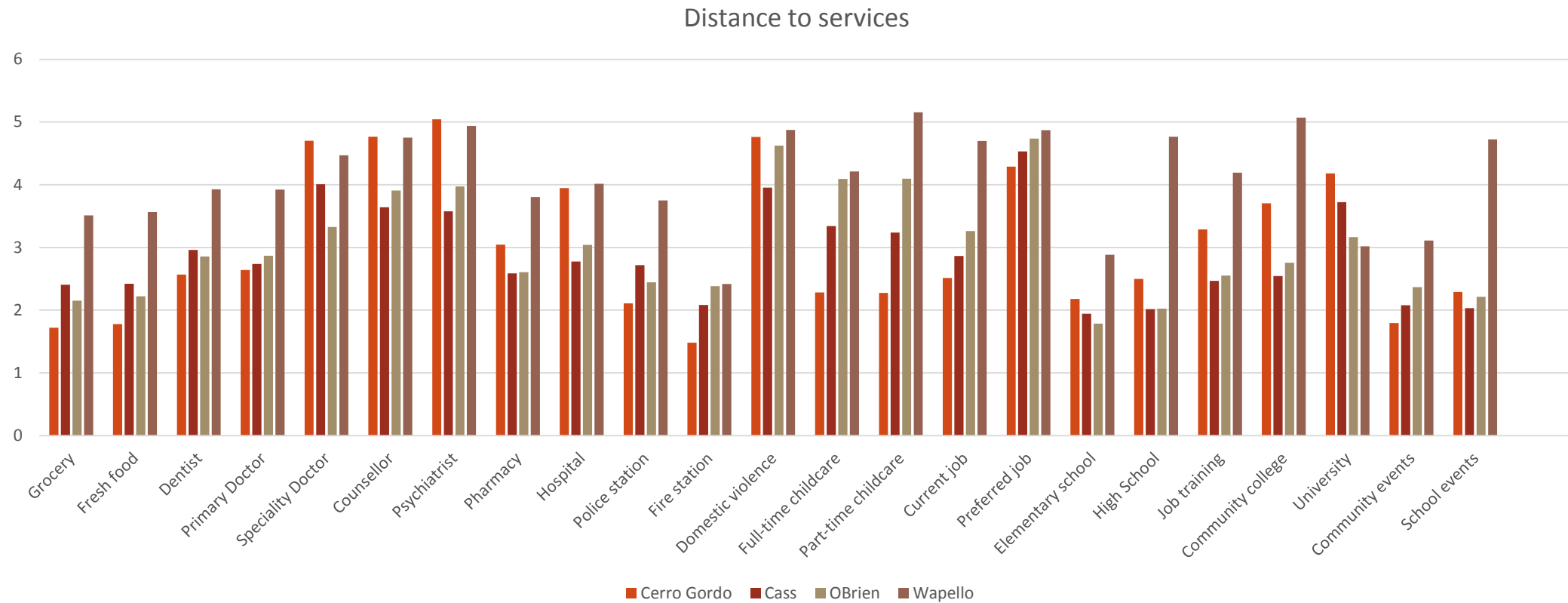
I: Mmhm.

P: So they do that and I just know, if it weren't for my kids, I, or my son and his wife, I wouldn't be able to handle it here.

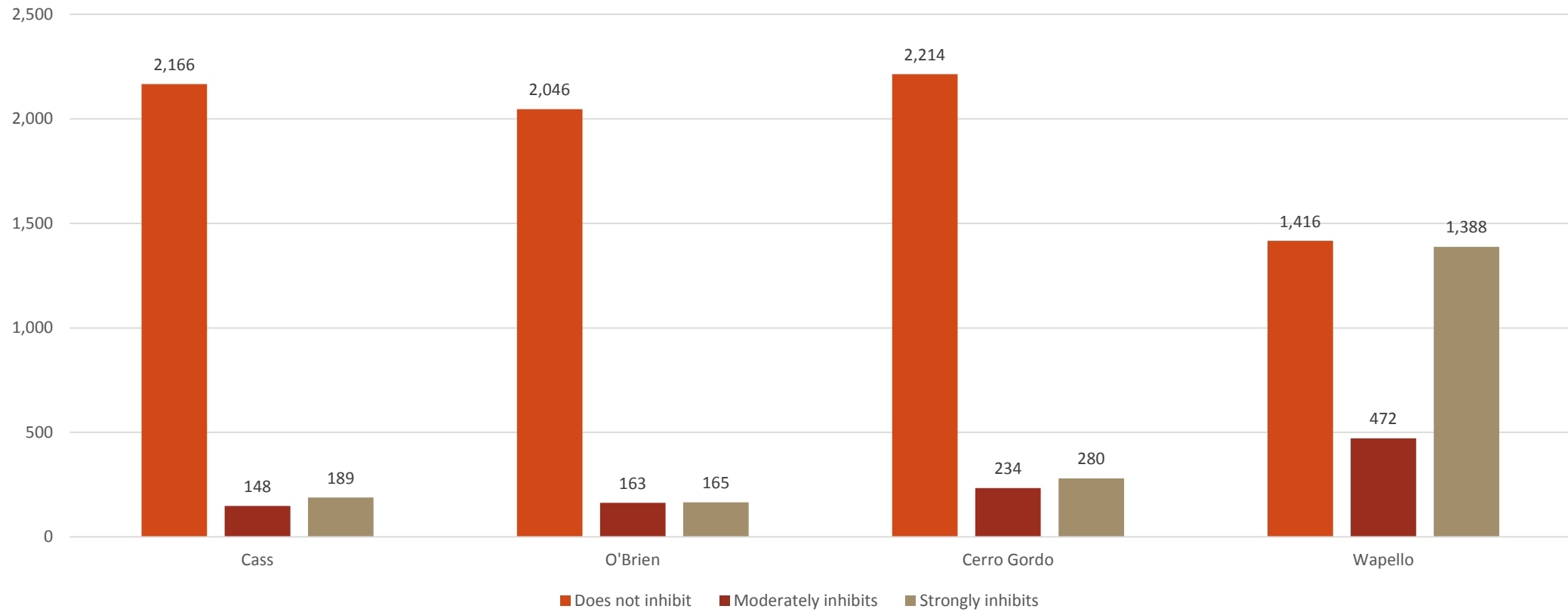
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