

2010 »

REGIONAL TRANSIT
PEER COMMUNITY INVENTORY
LESSONS FOR
THE MADISON REGION

ColumbusOhio

EugeneOregon

NashvilleTennessee

ColumbiaSouthCarolina

AustinTexas



Growing the region's economy in ways
that preserve and enhance quality of life



Introduction

As the economic development enterprise for the Madison Region, Thrive supports a comprehensive, regional, multi-modal transportation system. We supported the creation of a Dane County Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and in June 2010, we partnered with the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce to submit a set of Transit Plan Criteria to the RTA Board. Both Thrive and GMCC have urged the RTA Board to develop a plan that considers the future needs of the region and addresses those criteria, including financial feasibility, employment and development impacts, congestion and environment effects, and regional connectivity.

Expanding on the Transit Plan Criteria, Thrive has compiled this Peer Community Inventory, examining five comparable regions through the lens of the Criteria. The study is an objective, fact-based report designed to identify best practices and lessons learned. Research was collected by interviewing stakeholders in five communities that share key similarities with the Madison region.

All of the peer regions studied have engaged mass transit as an important part of their community's future. The experiences of other communities cannot

precisely predict what will take place in Dane County. However, learning about those experiences can be helpful as we map our own region's future.

Thrive is taking a proactive role in bringing a regional perspective to the discussion. While the RTA specifically addresses transit decisions in Dane County, its impact will be broader than the mass transit of one county. We will want to consider how our region's entire transportation infrastructure works with a regional transit plan, including state and federal highways and freight and passenger rail.

The communities in this study have implemented transit systems within the past five to ten years. Because these are long-term investments, we recognize that the full costs and benefits will accrue to a region over the long haul. This inventory is one step toward educating our community as it develops a comprehensive, multi-modal plan that helps to build the Madison Region's competitive edge.



Thrive is the economic development enterprise for the eight-county Madison Region, created to grow the region's economy in ways that preserve and enhance the quality of life. We see the value in initiatives that focus on long-term, sustainable results, aimed at building the region's competitive advantage.

For more information on Thrive, visit our website at www.thrivehere.org or contact us at (608) 443-1962 or by e-mail at info@thrivehere.org.

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Peer Community Inventory

In June 2010, Thrive and the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce submitted a set of **Transit Plan Criteria** to the Dane County RTA Board for consideration during the transit planning process. As a follow-up, Thrive has produced a Peer Community Inventory that applies the criteria to **five comparable regions**.

The information included in the inventory was compiled through secondary research and interviews with transit organizations, chambers of commerce, planners, and other groups within the peer community. The purpose of the inventory is to learn from the experiences of peer communities that have recently implemented transit plans and systems. This inventory provides key findings and lessons from multiple perspectives, information that can help inform the Madison Region as it works to develop an effective regional transit plan.

Community Selection

Peer cities were selected using a variety of criteria, including population, presence of a major university, state capital status, transit mode, and the existence of a transit plan or system that was adopted within the last 5–10 years. Larger cities represent the future anticipated growth of the Madison area.

Madison, WI	City	Columbus, Ohio**	Austin, Texas	Nashville, Tennessee	Columbia, South Carolina	Eugene, Oregon
570,025	2009 MSA Population*	1,801,848	1,705,075	1,582,264	744,730	351,109
14%	MSA Population Growth Rate, 2000–2009*	12%	36%	21%	15%	9%
University of Wisconsin - Madison	Major University	Ohio State University	University of Texas	Vanderbilt University	University of South Carolina	University of Oregon
40,000	University Enrollment	63,000	50,000	13,000	27,000	22,000
Yes	State Capital	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Madison Metro	Transit Organization	Columbus, Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)	Capital Metropolitan Transit Authority (CapMetro)	Metro and Regional Transit Authorities (MTA, RTA)	Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA)	Lane Transit District (LTD)
-	Focus of Study	Long-Range Transit Plan	“All Systems Go!” Long-Range Transit Plan	Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Rail	Creation of CMRTA and Strategic Transit Plan	BRT System
Bus	Transit Modes	Bus	Bus, Rail	Bus, Bus Rapid Transit, Rail	Bus	Bus, Bus Rapid Transit

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau; MSA = Metropolitan Statistical Area

**Thrive Peer Regions, per the annual *State of the Madison Region* report

Key Lessons for the Madison Region

- **Define Community Goals:** Different communities have different concerns and mobility needs. Some consider transit as a congestion relief strategy or a means of providing mobility options; others focus on its role of serving special needs groups. Identification and articulation of the needs and goals of a community is the first step to developing an effective transit system that community members will embrace.
- **Plan Comprehensively:** Develop a long-range transit plan as part of the comprehensive regional planning process. Ensure transit service is designed to address the community’s specific goals in conjunction with other transportation modes (such as personal vehicles, biking and walking) and planning elements (such as land use).
- **Consider All Options:** Consider not only alternative types of transit service, but also alternative combinations of services. Moreover, establish priorities that would be executed in phases when funding becomes available.
- **Secure Funding:** Financial sustainability is critical to the success of any transit system. The availability and level of dedicated funding need to be carefully assessed during the planning process.

Transit Plan Criteria	Key Findings from Peer Communities
<p>Planning Process Is the plan transparent to the public?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a long-range transit plan that informs the long-range transportation planning process by providing detailed identification and analysis of transit alternatives. • Incorporate public input throughout the process. Establish public ownership and identify the needs of riders and non-riders through surveys, focus groups and public meetings.
<p>Development Potential Will development potential change around the transit corridor?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all communities consider transit oriented development a priority in their transit plan. Among the communities in the inventory, there is little tracking to identify the impact of transit plans or systems on property values.
<p>Employment Impact What is the projected impact on jobs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The indirect effect of transit on employment statistics is rarely measured after service implementation. Recognizing the difficulty of isolating and accurately projecting this effect, some communities choose not to include employment metrics in their transit alternative analysis.
<p>Congestion To what extent will the proposal impact traffic congestion?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus travel time improvement is found in communities where buses have a dedicated right of way. The overall effect of transit on congestion ranges from little to moderate, often being hampered by continued traffic growth.
<p>Environment How will the proposal impact the environment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental impacts of transit services are rarely tracked. While some communities expect air quality improvement due to reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and hence reduced tailpipe emissions, other communities do not regard VMT as a representative measure of environmental impact.
<p>Financial Feasibility Is the proposal financially feasible to build and operate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax revenue (sales, vehicle, and payroll tax) is a primary funding source for sustaining transit operations in many of the communities. Financial analysis of transit alternatives should consider conservative tax revenue projections (e.g., in the event of a recession) to ensure long-term financial feasibility.
<p>Regional Connectivity Is there connectivity with other transit modes within and beyond the RTA boundaries?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Transit Authorities can generally play an effective role in introducing a regional fare system and coordinating neighboring transit services through transfer centers and park and ride facilities.



Columbus Ohio

Transit Organization: Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)

Current Transit Modes: Bus, Paratransit

Study Focus: Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)

Lessons from Columbus

- Transit agencies should encourage community ownership of a transit plan prior to adoption. Engage the public to identify priorities and areas of improvement.
- Work with the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to understand population, employment, and congestion growth projections. Create a plan that addresses these projections.
- MPOs are also a potential funding source. COTA receives money from the region's MPO to purchase new buses.
- Relying on federal funds to pay for operating expenses can delay future capital projects. COTA uses revenues from the sales tax and fares to pay for operations.

Background

The city of Columbus, capital of Ohio and home to Ohio State University, has a population of approximately 1.8 million within the MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area). The region's transit organization, the Central Ohio Transportation Authority (COTA) was created in 1971 and started service in 1974. It is the regional transit authority for Franklin County and surrounding communities and provides both bus and paratransit services. Soon after COTA was created, voters approved a sales tax levy to fund the organization. Since then, the sales tax has been put to referendum multiple times, passing five times and failing three times. A permanent .025% tax was approved in 1999, and an additional 10-year, .025% tax was approved in 2006 to fund COTA's Long-Range Transit Plan (LRTP). The plan was completed prior to the 2006 referendum and contains four main components: expansion of existing fixed-route bus service, expansion of paratransit services, planning for future strategic transit investments, and implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), including onboard automated stop announcements, passenger counters, and traffic signal priority systems.

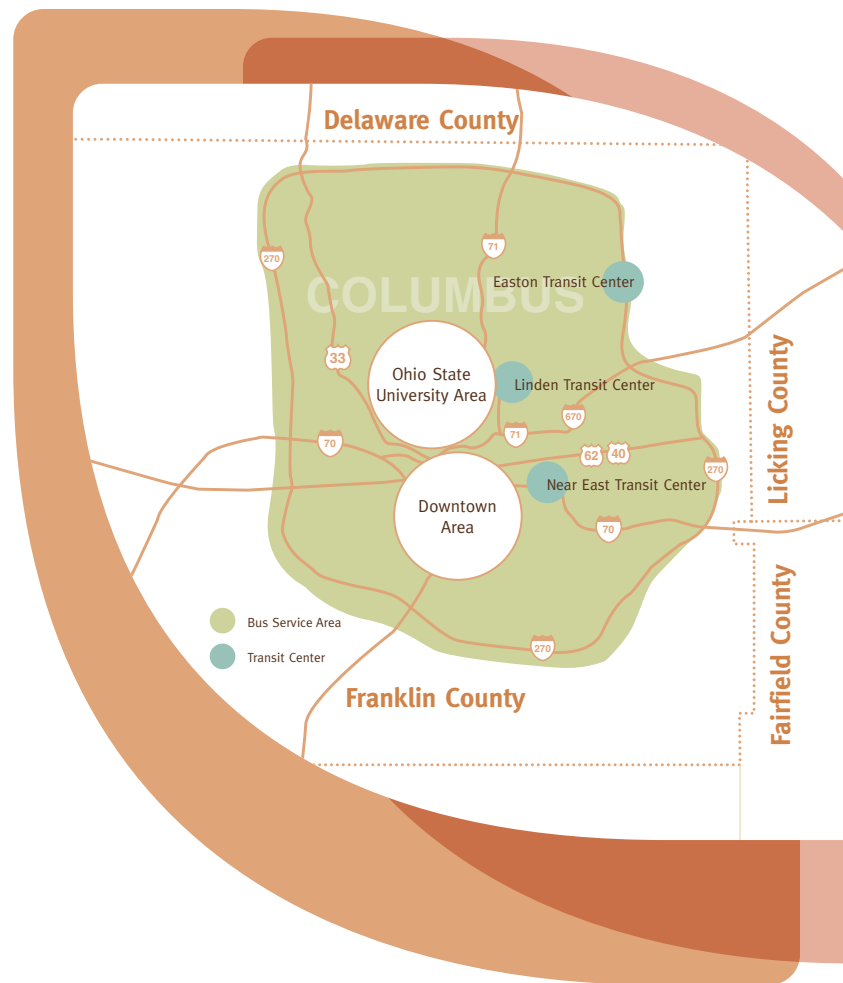


COTA Long-Range Transit Plan: the Process

COTA developed the LRTP to address the transportation needs of a growing Columbus region. According to the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPO), by 2030 the central Ohio area will experience a 35–50% increase in population, employment, and highway traffic congestion. When the plan was being developed, COTA was struggling to meet the region's existing needs. Between 2000 and 2005, the agency cut service hours by 25% due to declining sales tax receipts, decreases in government aid, and increasing fuel costs. Clearly, COTA would be unable to meet future needs unless the system was improved. The plan was intended to provide relief for overcrowded buses, serve a growing special-needs community, address future growth, and provide transportation options for consumers facing volatile gas prices. In addition to the LRTP, COTA develops a short-term transit plan every two years, which assesses its ability to serve the current market.

The Long-Range Transit Plan took two years to complete and included three phases: data analysis and needs assessment, transit alternatives analysis, and plan development. COTA explored four transit alternatives: light rail, streetcars, bus rapid transit, and a no-build option with expanded bus services. Criteria used to evaluate the alternatives included environmental effects, financial feasibility, ridership projections, capital costs, the potential for generating development, and necessary infrastructure improvements. The agency was unable to secure federal funding for light rail and bus rapid transit because the projects weren't considered cost-effective by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). After this process, COTA focused on the no-build option, expanding the existing bus service, which they could afford to implement with the proposed sales tax addition in the 2006 referendum.

The planning process included seven months of public input. COTA's President/CEO and other staff participated in weekly bus rides to gather input from riders. Planners convened public meetings (18 total), stakeholder meetings, and focus groups composed of senior citizens, minorities, developers, human service agencies, and COTA employees. Surveys were also posted on the COTA website. The objectives of this process were to solicit input on the components of the LRTP, provide information about opportunities and constraints, and instill the public with a sense of ownership in the LRTP. Ownership was regarded as a crucial element in successfully passing the sales tax referendum.



1995 Sales tax failed
1999 Permanent .025% tax approved
2005 LRTP planning process begins
2006 LRTP and sales tax is approved
2008 Additional .025% tax implemented
2018 Additional .025% tax expires

The Impact

Development

A modest amount of transit-oriented development has occurred around COTA's bus transit centers. COTA has three transit centers that focus on providing a mix of uses and services adjacent to bus stops: The Linden Transit Center, The Easton Transit Center, and the Near East Transit Center.

The Linden Transit Center, in a formerly blighted area, was built in 1999 by COTA and a neighborhood development corporation. It features a bus station, daycare center, bank, healthcare clinic, and community space. Other development soon followed, including office and retail

space. The Easton Transit Center also provides a daycare facility, and the Near East Transit Center includes a clinic and retail space. All of the centers were developed in partnership with a variety of community organizations. Aside from the centers, the bus system has not stimulated significant development. The effect of COTA's transit system on property values has not been measured.

Employment

COTA officials believe that the transit system affects employment in the region, but the impact is difficult to isolate and has not been measured. Employment metrics are occasionally projected in preparation for a referendum, but the estimates can be manipulated and are challenging to defend. According to a COTA representative, the employment benefits of public transit are often overstated and unrealistic.

Effects on Congestion and the Environment

In an effort to mitigate freeway congestion, COTA buses are allowed to travel on the shoulders during peak periods when speeds fall below 35 miles per hour. Beginning in 2006, the low-cost program reduces travel time for riders, improves reliability, and increases roadway capacity. COTA's bus system also alleviates congestion during major events by providing additional routes. The system's actual effect on congestion has not been measured. COTA officials

believe the current impact is minimal, despite the fact that the bus and paratransit systems serve close to 17 million riders annually. At most, the rate of congestion growth has slowed, but congestion itself continues to increase.

Similarly, the transit system's environmental effects are considered negligible and have not been measured. Environmental Impact Studies are completed for large capital projects, although metrics such as emissions are not projected or tracked. However, COTA has taken steps to become a more environmentally-friendly organization. The agency strives to attain LEED Silver certifications for new and renovated facilities, and they also recently purchased six new hybrid buses that achieve a 50% fuel savings. In 2004, after the EPA found that central Ohio failed to meet air quality standards for ozone, COTA partnered with the regional planning commission to research the use of biofuels. They conducted a pilot program using Ohio-grown soybean biodiesel fuel and found it improved fuel consumption and also cleaned the buses' engines. However, due to rising costs, COTA stopped using biodiesel in 2008.



Financial Conditions

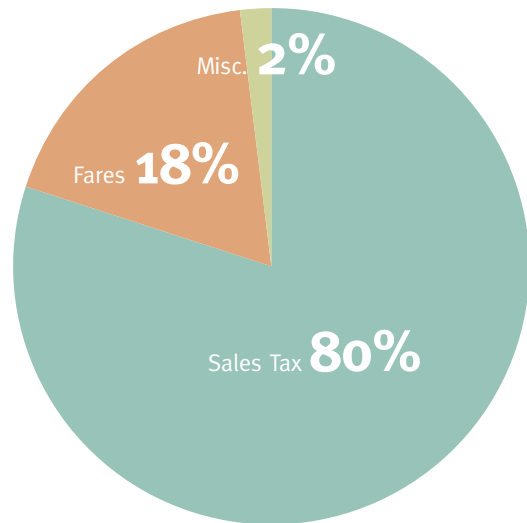
COTA is currently funded with a local .5% sales tax, .025% of which is a permanent tax. Gap financing is available from federal and state grants, fares, and miscellaneous revenues.

Capital expenses are financed primarily with federal funds, including Section 5307 Urban Formula funds, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grants, Section 5309 Bus grants, and others. The state provides matching grants from similar federal sources for up to 10% of capital costs. In addition, the regional MPO typically pays for 25% of bus replacement costs. COTA has maintained a close relationship with the MPO to secure additional funding in the future. COTA chooses to use federal funds only for capital expenses, using other revenues to pay for operating costs. In the past, COTA utilized some federal funds for operations, which forced them to cut back on capital expenditures and became problematic. Federal discretionary funds, including recent stimulus funding, are also used for some of COTA's capital projects.

Operating costs are funded with the sales tax, fares, and miscellaneous revenues (advertising, investments, etc.). The sales tax is the primary revenue source for operations. Currently, fares are \$1.75 for local bus routes and \$2.50 for express routes. The percentage of actual costs funded by the tax and fares is close to what was projected in the LRTP.

Revenues to fund Operations

FY 2010 Operating Budget: \$93 million



Regional Connectivity

To foster regional transportation cooperation, the region's MPO holds quarterly meetings with COTA and four other surrounding transit agencies to discuss opportunities to collaborate. COTA also coordinates services with the neighboring Delaware Area Transit Agency and shares a park and ride facility with the Delaware agency for transfers between the bus systems. In addition, COTA offers a Universal Pass (U-Pass) program with The Ohio State University, The Columbus College of Art & Design, and Columbus Public Schools. In the future, COTA buses may connect to a regional rail system linking Columbus, Cleveland, Dayton, and Cincinnati. The project, headed by the Ohio DOT, is still in the planning process.



Eugene Oregon

Transit Organization: Lane Transit District (LTD)

Current Transit Mode: Bus, Paratransit, Bus Rapid Transit, Event Shuttle

Study Focus: Bus and BRT system

Lessons from Eugene

- Adopt transit modes and systems that can be supported by the region's size and population density.
- Plan bus rapid transit lines on current bus routes that are experiencing the highest ridership and congestion.
- Don't rely on federal funds to pay for operating expenses. LTD uses revenues from the payroll tax and fares to pay for operations.
- Be conservative when projecting future tax revenues. LTD has been forced to cut its operating budget due to a decline in payroll tax revenues.
- Measuring a corridor's transit share before and after implementation helps to illustrate a system's effect on congestion in the corridor. In the case of Eugene, the number of transit users was found to increase from 8% to 12–15%.
- Utilize GIS to track changes in employment and development in a transit corridor over time.

Background

The city of Eugene, Oregon, is located south of Portland and has a population of over 350,000 in the MSA. Eugene's transit agency, the Lane Transit District (LTD), started operations in 1970. It serves the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area and surrounding communities. Since 1972, LTD has been locally funded through a payroll tax on employers within the service district. The tax was established by the LTD Board under the authority of an Oregon state statute. The payroll tax rate was initially capped at .6%, or \$6 per \$1,000 of payroll. LTD's transit services include fixed-route bus, bus rapid transit, shuttles to University of Oregon football games and other events, vanpools, and paratransit.

The bus rapid transit system is known as Emerald Express (EmX). The first line opened in 2007 and had over 1.5 million boardings in the first year of service. EmX provides streamlined, direct service along a major corridor between downtown Eugene and Springfield that includes the University of Oregon and a major hospital. The route was previously served by

1970

LTD begins operations



1972

Payroll tax is implemented to fund LTD



1992

State law requiring VMTs reduction is passed



1993

Regional TransPlan process begins



1996

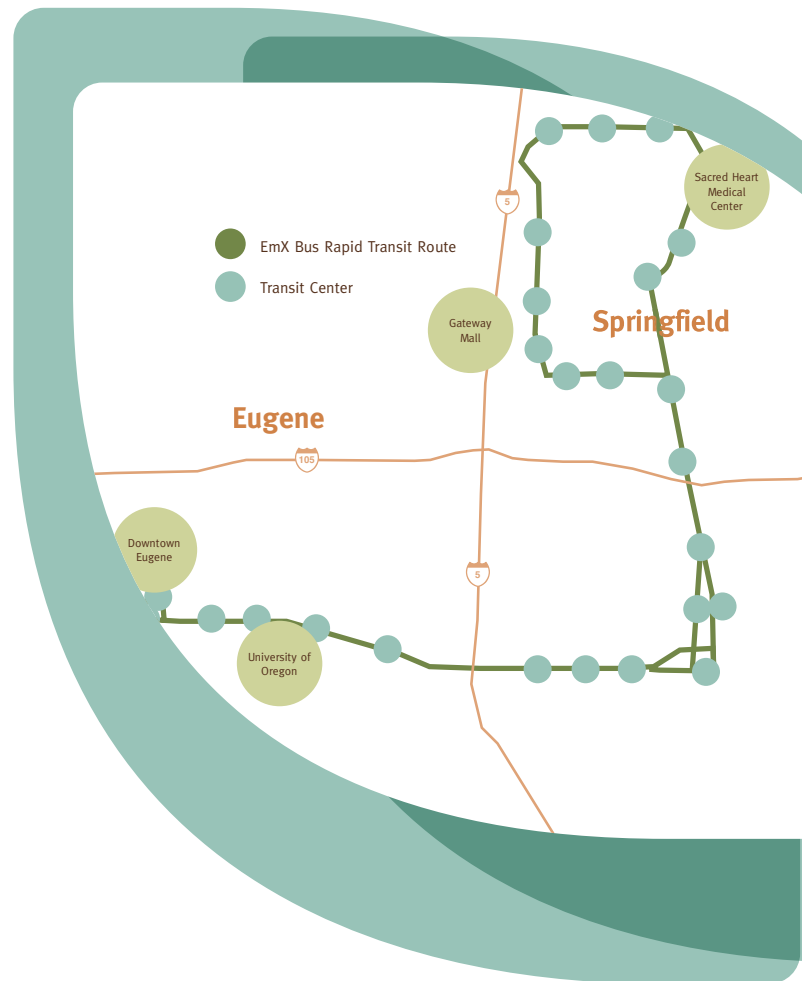
BRT concept is introduced

LTD's traditional bus service and historically has experienced high ridership. The corridor is four miles long and a one-way trip takes approximately 16 minutes. EmX buses receive traffic signal priority and 60% of the route contains exclusive bus lanes. The system has 10-minute service frequencies during peak periods. Each hybrid electric bus is 60 feet long and costs around \$960,000. Construction on a second EmX line is currently underway, and a third line is being planned.

EmX Bus Rapid Transit: the Process

The bus rapid transit concept was first considered during the development of a regional transit plan, known as the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan, or TransPlan. In 1992, the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission passed a statewide planning law that required the creation of regional land use and transit plans that would reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMTs). The planning process in Eugene was led by the region's MPO. Bus rapid transit was introduced in 1996, during the alternatives development phase of the process. LTD determined that congestion was increasing so much that fixed-route buses were slowing down. The agency was adding more buses to maintain the same level of service, which wasn't financially sustainable. Light rail was considered, but it was determined to be too expensive without significant federal funding. The region is not large or dense enough to support the necessary ridership. Further research led the Lane Transit District to a case study of Brazil's bus rapid transit system. Considered to be the first BRT system in the world, Brazil's system emulated light rail with a rubber-tired vehicle. In most cases, bus rapid transit is less expensive, easier to implement, and more flexible and mobile than rail. The system can be developed one line at a time, depending on demand and funding. Although the proposed line was not projected to meet VMT reduction goals, the state accepted a program of efficient bus rapid transit and bus routes, along with higher density mixed use development along or near the transit routes.

Public input was sought for development of the TransPlan and specifically for the BRT project. LTD staff and board members discussed the proposed EmX line with civic leaders, business owners, environmental groups,



neighborhood groups, and service groups. The agency educated the public through open houses, newspaper and television advertising, printed brochures, and postcards. An additional public involvement process consisting of meetings and workshops focused on corridor planning and design. LTD staff also made direct contact with every business along the corridor. In general, the business community and Eugene's Chamber of Commerce are supportive of EmX and believe it has a strong benefit to businesses and the local economy.

2004

Construction begins for first EmX route



2007

EmX service starts



2008

Construction begins for second EmX route



2011

Second EmX line expected to begin service

The Impact

Development

The first EmX line has generated only a modest amount of development, and effects on property values have not been measured. The system wasn't expected to initiate significant development, as the route is only four miles long. The first lines are designed to correlate with areas of growth, rather than directly generate growth. EmX did help facilitate economic growth around the downtown Springfield station, an area that had experienced little development in the past 25 years. Prior to construction of the first EmX line, LTD utilized GIS (Geographic Information System) to create a snapshot of existing development around the corridor. The agency expects to see more transit-oriented development in the future as the economy improves and more EmX lines are implemented. According to the city of Eugene, a small amount of development has already occurred along future EmX routes.

Employment

Each EmX line generates 400–450 construction jobs over a three-year construction period. The indirect effect of LTD's transit system on employment in the region has not been measured. However, LTD measured employment statistics prior to construction of the first EmX line, again using GIS. The agency plans to reassess employment numbers in the near future, particularly after additional lines are constructed.

Effects on Congestion and the Environment

Traffic congestion measures are projected within the region's TransPlan. The specific effects of LTD's bus and EmX system, however, have not been measured. The LTD system has an annual ridership of over 11 million. City and LTD officials believe that the first bus rapid transit line has prevented congestion from worsening in the corridor. The system has caused a larger transit mode share; prior to EmX, LTD buses were carrying 8% of the people within the corridor. Currently, EmX carries 12–15% of the total. The system has also added years to the road's lifespan.

LTD's individual impact on the environment has not been measured. LTD officials point out that EmX is a small part of the region's transportation system, and it's more effective to measure such impacts regionally. Bus rapid transit was introduced to satisfy state law and reduce vehicle miles traveled, although this goal has not been met. The use of VMTs as a measure for environmental impacts is often debated; the Lane Transit District contends that the economic recession accounts for a significant amount of current reductions. The organization has requested that the state evaluate with a variety of metrics, including the number of alternative transit modes available and the mode share, to help illustrate bus rapid transit's impact on congestion. LTD also conducts Environmental Assessments for all capital projects, including bus rapid transit. The assessments are required in order to be eligible for federal funding.



Financial Conditions

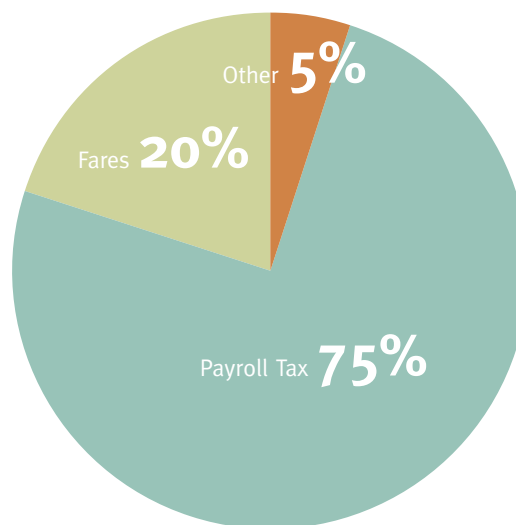
The Lane Transit District is locally funded with a payroll tax within its service boundaries. The current rate is .66% of the wages paid by employers and earnings from the self-employed.

Capital expenses are paid with a combination of federal funds, state grants, and reserve funds. The first EmX line cost \$24 million to construct and was financed with \$19.2 million of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. The LTD reserve fund, started in the 1980s, provided the remaining \$5 million. The next EmX line is currently under construction and will begin service in 2011. The project cost is approximately \$42 million, 80% of which was provided from FTA funds. The state of Oregon (13%) and LTD (7%) paid for the remaining capital costs.

Operating expenses are funded with the payroll tax, fares, advertising revenues, and investments. The payroll tax is the primary funding source. LTD tries to minimize its use of local funds for capital projects because the tax provides the foundation for operations. Receipts from the payroll tax have decreased in recent years due to private sector layoffs, forcing LTD to cut its operating budget. Since implementation of the first EmX line, LTD has found that EmX has a lower cost per passenger (\$1.15) than its traditional buses (\$3.10). This is mainly due to the fact that EmX buses can hold a greater number of passengers. Fares are \$1.50 (\$0.75 for youth) for both EmX and traditional bus service, which makes the system consistent and user-friendly.

Revenues to fund Operations

FY 2010 Operating Budget: \$44 million



Regional Connectivity

Coordinated regional planning, including transportation planning, is prevalent throughout the state of Oregon. The city of Eugene works with the neighboring city of Springfield to ensure connectivity of all transportation modes, including roads, bike and pedestrian paths, and future bus rapid transit routes. LTD's service limits closely resemble the Eugene-Springfield Urban Growth Boundary, which is intended to control sprawl by mandating high-density development within the boundary and lower-density development outside of the boundary. Long-term plans for LTD and the region include 61 miles of bus rapid transit and additional transit-oriented development.



Nashville Tennessee

Transit Organizations: Nashville Metro Transit Authority (MTA) and Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)

Current Transit Modes: Bus, Paratransit, BRT, Regional Commuter Rail

Study Focus: BRT and Regional Commuter Rail

Lessons from Nashville

- Consider opportunities for collaboration between transit agencies within the region. Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) staff also manages the Regional Transit Authority (RTA), although the MTA and RTA remain separate agencies.
- Adopt transit modes and systems that can be supported by the corridor's population density.
- Plan bus rapid transit lines on current bus routes that are experiencing the highest ridership and congestion.
- Failing to provide rail service to downtown destinations in the evening and on weekends limits ridership numbers.
- Don't rely on federal funds to pay for operating expenses. Nashville's RTA is currently relying on stimulus funds to finance operations, which is unsustainable. Secure dedicated funding for operations.
- Consider a regional fare system to better connect transit modes and systems.

Background

Nashville is the capital of Tennessee, with a metro area population of nearly 1.6 million. The Nashville Metro Transit Authority (MTA), created in 1973, provides public transit in Nashville and the rest of the county. The MTA operates traditional bus routes, as well as a new bus rapid transit line. Since 2008, staff with the MTA have also managed the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The RTA was formed in 1988 and serves nine counties, including Nashville in Davidson County. It provides regional bus service and commuter rail. The MTA and RTA remain separate agencies, but this coordination helps to maximize efficiencies during a tough economic time.

The MTA's bus rapid transit line started service in late 2009. The 12-mile Gallatin Road Corridor was previously served by a bus route and was the agency's busiest route with over 80,000 rides per month. Unlike traditional BRT lines, this

1973

MTA is created



1988

RTA is created



1990

State of Tennessee
introduces rail concept



1996

Rail feasibility
study completed

system has no dedicated lanes. However, stops on the route are limited, the buses hold more passengers, and green light extenders help time traffic lights. This has led to a 10-minute reduction in travel time for riders in the corridor.

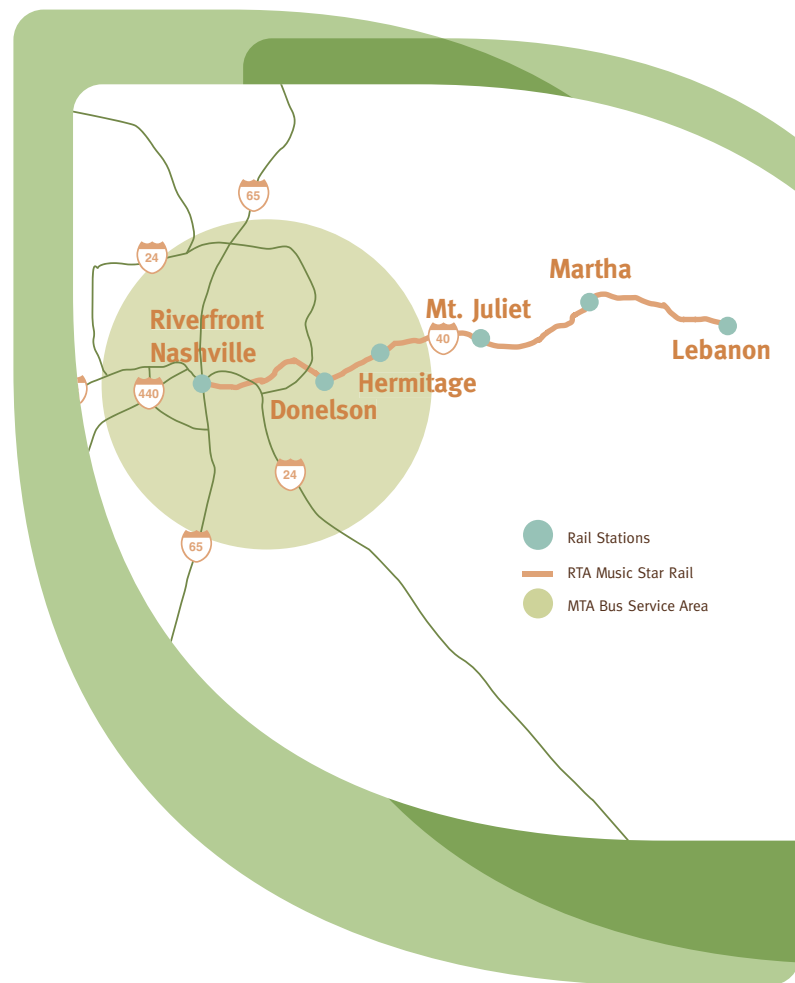
The RTA is responsible for regional bus and rail service. Express bus routes connect the surrounding areas to the Nashville MTA bus system. The rail system, known as the Music City Star, began service in 2006. The 32-mile route travels between Lebanon, a city east of Nashville in neighboring Wilson County, and downtown Nashville. It runs on existing freight tracks and has six stations. The train operates during rush hour Monday through Friday, and on Friday evenings. Weekend service is not offered. According to the RTA, the purpose of the rail system is to transport commuters. However, the limited schedule has contributed to low ridership.

Bus Rapid Transit and Regional Rail: the Process

Planning for the RTA's regional rail system began in the early 1990s. A feasibility study completed in 1996 by consultant R.L. Banks & Associates evaluated five potential corridors based on cost, ease of implementation, projected ridership, and other factors. The East Corridor, between Nashville and Lebanon, was chosen as the preferred alternative. Although the corridor had lower ridership and revenue projections than other alternatives, it was significantly more cost-effective because the freight tracks were easier to acquire than other potential routes. Total capital costs were close to \$41 million, making the Music City Star one of the most cost-effective rail systems in the country.

The MTA's Bus Rapid Transit route was a result of the organization's Strategic Transit Master Plan, approved in 2009. The plan establishes short- mid- and long-term recommendations and a list of projects to be implemented in those time periods. The MTA's previous transit plan was very expensive to implement and unrealistic. It called for a significant increase in service hours, new routes, and capital projects. This recent plan was intended to be more flexible by establishing priorities that would be executed when funding becomes available. The plan identified several possible bus rapid transit routes, and implementation on Gallatin Rd was a short-term recommendation. The BRT line started operations soon after the plan was approved.

Public input was sought for both the rail and bus rapid transit projects. The rail route passes through two counties and three cities, and the RTA worked closely with the various councils



and commissions. The organization also spent a considerable amount of time educating neighborhood associations. Residents were concerned about

crime and noise, so the RTA helped to implement quiet zones. The public was also involved in the design of the downtown Nashville station. The rail plan was presented to downtown businesses and the Nashville Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber was an early supporter of the RTA and regional rail system, and the organization continues to support improved transit infrastructure and mobility for the city and region through legislative support, policy positions, and education. Additional public input for the RTA's rail plan was limited due to a lack of funds.

Public participation was also an element of the MTA's Strategic Transit Master Plan. Early in the planning process, 10 workshops were held to engage the public and receive input, in addition to a stakeholder meeting. A final set of public meetings was held prior to approval of the plan. Questionnaires were distributed at meetings and respondents were asked to rate the proposed improvements. Throughout the process, increasing frequency of service appeared most important to the public. People asked for more buses to eliminate overcrowding, and for more service. Participants were interested in the BRT proposal, particularly because it would offer direct and frequent service.

The Impact

Development

The Music City Star has not generated as much development as the RTA originally envisioned. Multiple development projects have been proposed to the RTA's Board of Directors and have been turned down. The RTA Board has high expectations for development in the corridor and is very selective. Residents near some stations have resisted commercial development, preferring the areas remain primarily residential. The city of Lebanon, at the end of the line, has held several workshops to encourage TOD around the stations. The MTA's bus rapid transit line has not generated any development in the corridor, nor was it expected to do so.

Employment

The employment impacts of both the MTA and RTA systems have not been projected or tracked. The rail line generated construction jobs for both station construction and track rehabilitation. The bus rapid transit line required only a small amount of construction to update bus stops and sidewalks.

Effects on Congestion and the Environment

The MTA and RTA's impacts on congestion and environmental conditions in the region have also not been tracked, although they are thought to be negligible.

Current ridership on the Music City Star is 700–850 per day, compared to the projected value of 1,200–1,500 per day, which limits its effect on congestion. This discrepancy is a result of the limited schedule and the fact that the corridor was chosen for its cost-effectiveness, not potential ridership and density. Although the train may reduce emissions by removing some cars from the roads, it is diesel fueled and produces its own emissions. According to MTA officials, the bus rapid transit line has not caused a noticeable change in congestion in the corridor.



Financial Conditions

Funding for both the MTA and RTA is provided from a combination of local, state, and federal funds. The organizations do not receive any funding from a local dedicated tax.

Capital expenses for the RTA are funded with federal grants. The rail system cost \$41 million to construct, \$32 million of which was paid with federal funds. The remaining costs were paid by local governments and the railroad authority, which paid for track rehabilitation. The MTA's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is created annually and contains projects from the organization's Strategic Transit Master Plan. Funds for the CIP are requested from the Metropolitan Council, the legislative body of Nashville and Davidson County, during the council's budgeting process. The recent bus rapid transit project was funded with over \$3 million in federal stimulus funds.

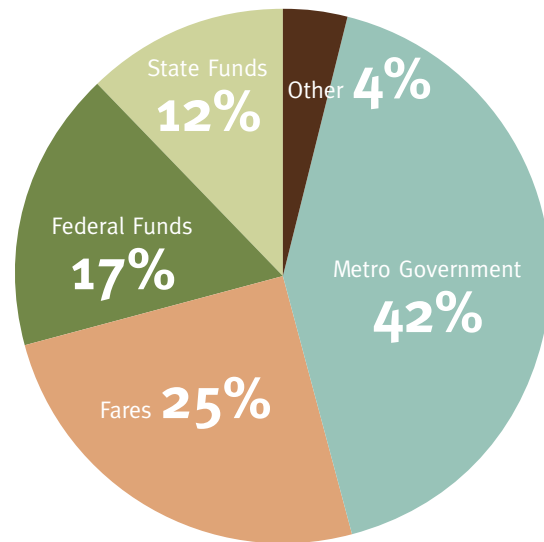
Operating expenses for the RTA are paid with funds from fares (14%), local governments (27%), state and federal grants (56%), and other revenues (3%). Cities and counties pay an annual formula fee. The formula, however, is based on revenue and expense projections that are no longer accurate. Expenses are higher than expected and revenues are down due to low ridership. The RTA's dependency on federal funds for operations is unsustainable. Thirty percent of the 2010 operating budget is supported with federal stimulus funds. The organization needs to secure additional dedicated local funding to maintain service.

Regional Connectivity

The MTA and RTA systems are well-connected, particularly since MTA staff started managing the RTA. When the Music City Star began service, bus routes were reconfigured to connect the rail station to other areas of employment. In 2008, the MTA opened a new transfer center for both MTA and RTA buses. In addition, the MTA has formed several transit partnerships with organizations that pay for employee or student transit commutes to and from work and school. Regionally, the RTA coordinates with surrounding transit authorities to connect bus routes at outlying park and rides. Connectivity within the region would be improved

Revenues to fund Operations (MTA)

FY 2010 Operating Budget: \$46 million



The majority of the MTA's operating expenses are funded by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Every year, the MTA requests funds from the Metro Council to support the operating budget. The organization is forced to compete for funding with other departments and agencies. Remaining expenses are financed with fares, state and federal funds, and other revenues.

if a regional fare system was introduced. Originally, the RTA planned on including the bus fare in the rail ticket, but it was more expensive than projected.

The Nashville Area MPO works closely with both the MTA and RTA. In fact, the MPO funded the MTA's recent Strategic Transit Master Plan, which served as the basis for the Regional Transit Plan that the MPO is currently completing. The MPO also helped fund the initial feasibility report for the Music City Star Rail, and MPO staff served on a steering committee for the project.



Columbia South Carolina

Transit Organization: Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA)

Current Transit Modes: Bus, Paratransit

Study Focus: Creation of CMRTA and the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA)

Lessons from Columbia

- Involve the public and relevant organizations in the planning process. Identify main concerns and areas of improvement that need to be addressed.
- Identify multiple alternative funding mechanisms during the planning process. This can help prevent drastic service cuts in the future.
- Local matching funds are necessary to secure significant federal grants.
- Analyze ridership characteristics to identify possible route changes. This analysis led CMRTA to provide more crosstown routes.

Background

Columbia, South Carolina, has a population of approximately 750,000 within the MSA. It is home to the University of South Carolina and is also the state capital. The Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) operates fixed-route bus and paratransit service in and around the Columbia urbanized area. CMRTA was established in 2002 when the system was transferred from the SCANA Corporation, the parent company of a local utility that was required to provide transit service under a century-old state law. Negotiations between SCANA and the City of Columbia began in 1996, and the transfer to CMRTA was finalized six years later. As part of the agreement, SCANA made a significant monetary contribution toward transit operations, which subsidized the system through 2009. The recent loss of this income has created a considerable funding gap and has prevented CMRTA from expanding.

In early 2010, CMRTA conducted a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA). The COA assesses the existing state of the CMRTA system and provides a transit plan for the future. Data collection and public input revealed three

1996

Negotiations begin between SCANA and Columbia to transfer bus service



2002

Service is transferred from SCANA to newly-created CMRTA



2006

Mass transit committee is formed and recommends a COA is completed; sales tax fails to make referendum ballot; vehicle registration tax is implemented

main issues regarding CMRTA bus service: the service needs to be more reliable, routes need to connect more places together, and services need to be accessible to more people within the community. Recommendations within the COA address these issues and guide the near-term, short-range, and long-range service plans.

Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA): the Process

The COA process began in 2006, when the region formed a 33-member citizen committee to study the county's transportation needs. Three separate groups focused on roads, bikes, and mass transit. The mass transit committee recommended that a comprehensive analysis of CMRTA's operations be completed. The COA served as a snapshot of the CMRTA system, its efficiencies, and its inefficiencies. Recommendations from the COA are now beginning to be implemented. The Near-Term Service Plan, which focuses on improving service reliability, led CMRTA to revise the entire bus system in July 2010 with new routes, times, and frequencies. The Short-Range Service Plan seeks to improve connectivity between routes and destinations within the service area, and is meant to be implemented by 2014. The Long-Range Service Plan, to be implemented by 2020, focuses on increasing accessibility by implementing routes in areas that currently are not served and improving paratransit services.

The public was involved in the COA planning process in a variety of ways. CMRTA conducted interviews with board members, staff and community stakeholders, including the region's MPO, the South Carolina Department of Transportation, the City of Columbia and other municipalities, higher education institutions, and elected officials. A public workshop was held and two surveys, targeted towards riders and non-riders, were used to determine the public's view of CMRTA transit services. The majority of participants felt that public transit is an important community resource and a factor for continued economic growth. CMRTA's service levels were inadequate and only attracted the transit dependent population. It was agreed that increased funding for transit was

necessary to improve service. The Columbia Chamber of Commerce and business community supported the COA and the proposed improvements to CMRTA service because of transit's role in economic development, air quality, quality of life and workforce development.



2008

Sales tax fails to make referendum ballot



2009

Last SCANA subsidy payment



2010

Completion of COA and restructuring of bus routes; proposed sales tax on November referendum

The Impact

Development

CMRTA's failure to secure a dedicated funding source has constrained the system financially and prevented it from growing along with the community. As a result, the CMRTA bus system has not generated any development in the Columbia area.

Employment

The bus system's impact on employment in the region is not measured, nor is it expected to be significant. An economic impact analysis is currently being completed that studies the impact of the proposed sales tax, including its impact on CMRTA and transportation.

Effects on Congestion and the Environment

CMRTA's effect on congestion is not tracked, although it is thought to have a small impact. CMRTA estimates that the bus system takes around 30,000 cars off the roads annually. However, budget cuts in recent years have led to a decline in service and ridership. Between 2007 and 2009, ridership decreased by almost 13%. If the sales tax referendum passes, CMRTA will have the funds necessary to expand service and have a greater impact on congestion.

Environmental effects of the bus system are also not tracked. CMRTA has not conducted any Environmental Assessments or impact studies. However, the

organization has recently introduced several buses that run on compressed natural gas (CNG). The CNG buses generate fewer exhaust and greenhouse gas emissions than buses fueled with gasoline or diesel.



Financial Conditions

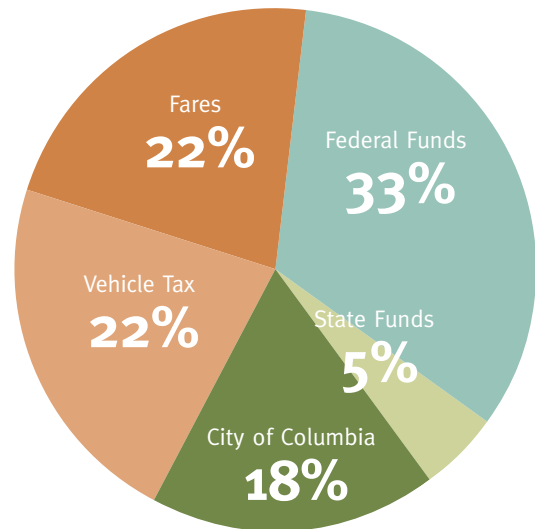
Until recently, CMRTA received significant funding from SCANA. As part of the transfer agreement, SCANA established a \$15 million fund to finance initial expenses, including staff and capital expenses. SCANA also committed to annual payments of close to \$2.5 million for seven years. The \$15 million fund was designed to support CMRTA for several years until the organization secured a permanent funding source. The fund has since been depleted and the last annual payment was made in 2009.

Capital expenses are paid with federal and state funds. In the past, funds from SCANA were used to provide local matching funds for federal grants toward capital expenditures.

Operating expenses are funded with fare revenues, funds from the City of Columbia, a local vehicle registration tax, and federal and state grants. The vehicle registration tax is approved on an annual basis by the Columbia City Council. It was first implemented in 2006, after a proposed 1% county-wide sales tax to fund CMRTA was voted down by the County Council and failed to make it on the referendum ballot. The sales tax will be up for referendum this November 2010. Securing permanent dedicated funding from either the vehicle tax or sales tax will provide the local matching funds necessary for federal grants and will prevent further service cuts.

Revenues to fund Operations

FY 2010 Operating Budget: \$11.5 million



Regional Connectivity

The recent Comprehensive Operational Analysis seeks to address some of the connectivity issues that CMRTA has faced. One of the main concerns expressed by the public during the COA process was that bus routes need to connect more places together and be accessible to more people within the community. Future planned networks provide more crosstown routes and allow riders to connect quickly from one part of the city to another. If funding is available, CMRTA plans to expand its service area to new areas and increase service in existing areas. Currently, CMRTA coordinates with a neighboring rural RTA to connect outlying bus routes. The organization has recently started planning with local colleges, the public school system, and nearby Fort Jackson. In addition, CMRTA works with the region's MPO, the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG), and the South Carolina DOT, to develop regional transportation plans and programs for the Columbia area.



Austin Texas

Transit Organization: Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro)

Current Transit Modes: Bus, Paratransit, Commuter Rail

Study Focus: “All Systems Go!” Long-Range Transit Plan (LRTP)

Lessons from Austin

- Develop a transportation system plan that integrates multiple transit modes, rather than only one mode.
- Evaluate alternative transit options during the planning process.
- Complete a detailed financial analysis for all components of the proposed plan.
- Be conservative when projecting future tax revenues. Capital Metro has been forced to cut its budget due to a decline in sales tax revenues.
- Plan future bus rapid transit lines on current bus routes that are experiencing the highest ridership and congestion.
- Establish a strategy for providing paratransit services that are financially feasible.
- Implement a policy for extending service to surrounding communities.

Background

Austin is the capital of the state of Texas, is home to the University of Texas, and has a population of 1.7 million within the MSA. The Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Capital Metro) serves Austin and several surrounding communities. It was formed in 1985 when voters agreed to fund the agency with a 1% sales tax. Four years later, the Capital Metro Board voluntarily lowered the sales tax to .75% due to decreased ridership. For the last quarter of 1989, the authority completely eliminated fares in order to attract more riders. The program was extremely successful, and fares were reinstated the following year.

Since its creation, the Capital Metro organization has faced considerable criticism and scrutiny regarding its financial situation and employee relations. A 1997 investigation revealed poor cash management and an unfair contract award process that favored board member connections over competitive bids. Recently, the Texas legislature has

1985

Capital Metro is formed;
1% sales tax is approved



1989

Sales tax
lowered to .75%



1995

Sales tax restored to 1%



1997

FBI investigation



2000

Light rail plan fails
in referendum

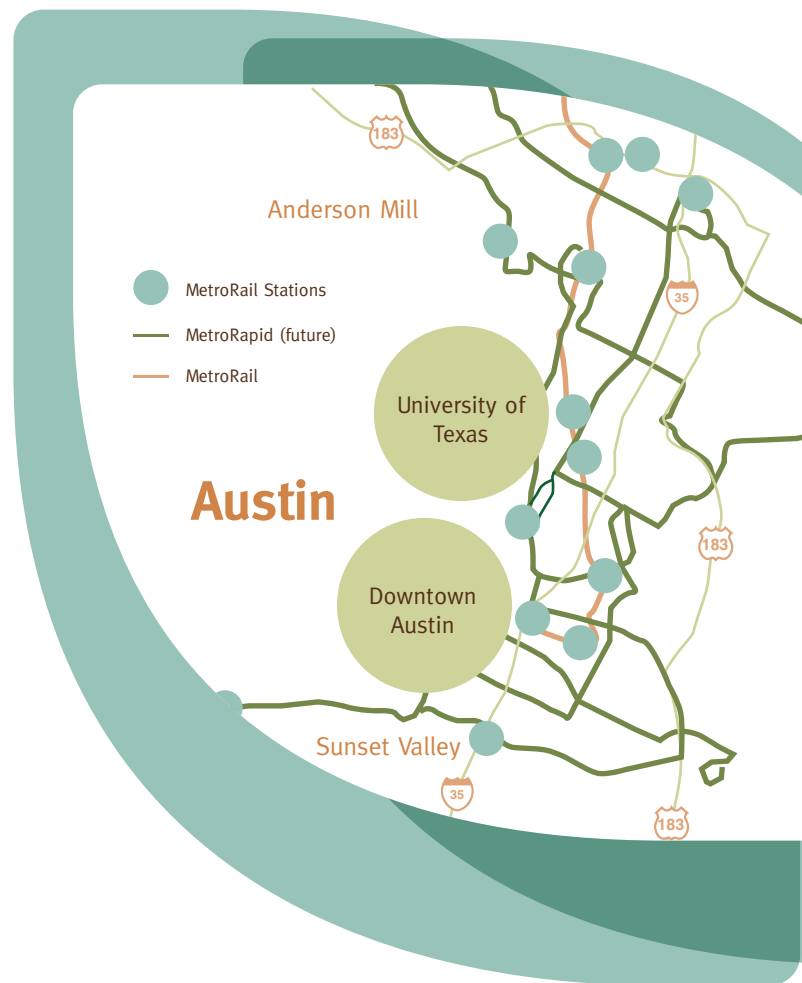
restructured the Board of Directors, reducing the number of elected officials and requiring financial experience. The restructuring is intended to facilitate responsible financial decisions and reduce the power of public officials who may put political aspirations before the agency's best interests. In addition, Capital Metro is now subject to audits by the State's Sunset Advisory Commission, whose purpose is to eliminate waste and inefficiencies in government agencies. In recent years, Capital Metro has also dealt with multiple strikes by its transit union.

In 1995, the local sales tax was restored to 1% in order to finance a proposed 52-mile regional light rail plan. The plan was voted down in a 2000 referendum by only 1,300 votes, with 50.4% of people voting against the rail plan and 49.6% voting for it. The increased sales tax allowed Capital Metro to compile a reserve fund. When the plan was turned down, political pressure led Capital Metro to reallocate some of the funds to surrounding areas for regional transportation projects, particularly roads. This loss of reserves has inhibited Capital Metro's ability to finance future transit projects.

Long-Range Transit Plan: the Process

Following the defeat of the rail plan in 2000, Capital Metro began planning an alternative long-term strategy. The agency worked with consultant Calthorpe Associates to focus on growth management and a comprehensive system plan, rather than planning for only one type of transit. In 2004, Capital Metro proposed a new Long-Range Transit Plan called "All Systems Go!" that was approved in referendum by a 62% to 38% margin. The plan calls for expanded bus service, the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit, and a new 32-mile commuter rail line on existing freight tracks that are owned and operated by Capital Metro. Bike and pedestrian paths are also included.

In 2005, after the plan was approved, an Environmental Assessment was conducted that analyzed transit alternatives within the proposed 32-mile rail corridor. Alternatives included bus route improvements, express bus, and various routes of commuter rail. The alternatives were evaluated using criteria such as mobility effects, social and economic impacts, environmental effects, cost, and other factors. Commuter rail was chosen as the preferred mode. The rail alternative was estimated to have shorter travel times and higher ridership, although the bus alternative cost significantly less. According to Capital Metro officials, a more detailed cost analysis of all the long-range plan components, prior to approval of the plan, could have prevented some of Capital Metro's current financial problems. When Capital Metro



2001
Long-Range
Transit Planning
process begins

2004
Long-Range Transit
Plan is approved

2006
MetroRail
construction begins

2009
State legislature review
and board restructuring

2010
MetroRail
begins service

2012
MetroRapid expected
to begin service

was writing the plan, the organization was doing well financially, and a detailed analysis wasn't completed.

The Capital MetroRail Red Line started service in March 2010, over a year later than anticipated due to disputes between the Federal Rail Administration, Texas DOT, and the rail contractor. The Red Line has nine stops over a 32-mile corridor, the same corridor that was originally proposed in the long-range plan. It operates in the morning and afternoon. The line cannot operate during the day or on weekends, when the tracks are used by freight trains. Each train holds up to 200 passengers and travels up to 60 mph. The next phase of the long-range plan is Capital MetroRapid, a Bus Rapid Transit system serving Capital Metro's busiest bus routes. The first MetroRapid route is scheduled to launch in 2012.

During the planning process for the Long-Range Transit Plan, Capital Metro involved the public through online surveys and meetings. Workshops, held on both weekdays and weekends, engaged participants in route planning and station design. Throughout its history, Capital Metro has struggled with public perception, and this process was no exception. It was a challenge to meet expectations and determine what parts of the plan resonated with the majority. Austin's Chamber of Commerce and business community were not involved in this process, focusing instead on roads and traditional transportation projects. Recently, the Chamber has tried to educate businesses about the value of public transit and its importance to the workforce.

The Impact

Development

MetroRail has facilitated some development around the corridor, although changes in property values or other metrics have not been tracked. Nine stations were constructed along the rail line and are designed to be unique to each neighborhood. A Transit-Ready Development Guide was developed by Capital Metro to encourage and guide Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) along transit corridors. Midtown Commons, located at the Crestview rail station, is an example of development that was driven by the rail line. The project is a 73-acre mixed-use transit village situated on a former brownfield site. In addition, the city of Leander, a fast-growing area at the end of the rail line, is currently planning a 160-acre mixed-use transit community. Additional development along the rail corridor has been stalled due to economic conditions.

Employment

Construction of the MetroRail Red Line generated approximately 400 construction jobs and 100 long-term operating jobs. As a whole, Capital Metro employs close to 1,500 people. Indirect employment impacts of the rail and bus systems have not been projected or tracked.

Effects on Congestion and the Environment

Capital Metro's effect on congestion has not been tracked, but the current impact is minimal. The initial ridership on MetroRail is much lower than expected, with about 800 boardings per day. Limited service hours may be a contributing factor. The system was projected to serve 1,700 riders per day by early 2011. Capital Metro anticipates that a combination of increased rail ridership, particularly from university students returning in the fall, and introduction of MetroRapid will have a greater impact on congestion.

Environmental effects of the transit system are also not tracked and are expected to be negligible. In 2005, an Environmental Assessment was completed for the MetroRail route. It assessed the effects of alternative transit options on land use, noise, air quality, water quality, and other factors. It was found that the rail line may contribute to a loss of habitat and a reduction in water quality. However, the project was expected to increase mobility and transportation alternatives, reduce regional congestion, and improve air quality by decreasing air emissions. The assessment provided no plan for tracking such impacts.

Financial Conditions

Capital Metro is funded with a 1% permanent sales tax. Additional financing is provided from federal and state grants, fares, and other revenues.

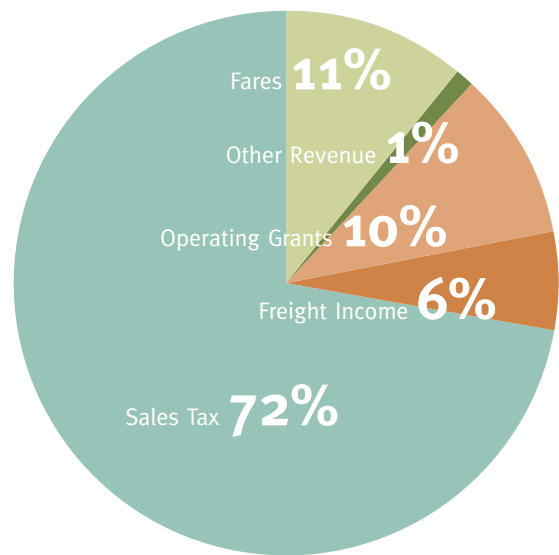
Capital expenses account for 20-25% of Capital Metro's total annual budget. They are funded through federal grants, including recent stimulus funds, and a portion of the sales tax. The current MetroRail line was locally funded with the sales tax. Although Capital Metro had secured federal stimulus funds for the rail line, the project was delayed and the money was spent elsewhere within the organization.

Operating expenses represent 75-80% of total expenses and are financed with revenues from fares, the sales tax, advertising, and income from freight operations on the rail line. Current MetroBus fares are \$1.00-2.50, and MetroRail fares are \$2.00-3.00. Fares account for only 8% of total revenues and 11% of revenues for operations, one of the lowest recovery rates in the country. Sales tax revenues are the primary funding source, and they have declined due to the recent recession. Between 2008 and 2009, sales tax revenues decreased by over 9%, although the long-range plan projected an increase of around 4% each year. This shortfall has delayed several projects. Capital Metro also struggles to pay for its

extensive paratransit service. Known as MetroAccess, it accounts for 20% of the operating budget and only 2% of total ridership. This translates to a \$42.00 subsidy per passenger, compared to \$3.50 for MetroBus.

Revenues to fund Operations

FY 2010 Operating Budget: \$165 million



Regional Connectivity

The various transit modes within Capital Metro connect in order to ensure service throughout the region. MetroBus routes were modified to serve the new rail stations, and bikes are allowed on both buses and MetroRail. The agency also coordinates with surrounding service providers to connect routes at outlying park and ride facilities. Capital Metro provides service only in areas where the 1% sales tax is collected. In the future, the organization hopes to extend service through agreements with municipalities. Current Texas state law limits local sales tax additions to 1%, so those municipalities who are using a tax to finance other projects are unable to join Capital Metro's service area.

The regional MPO, Capital Area MPO (CAMPO), serves a much larger area than Capital Metro, which makes it challenging for Capital Metro and CAMPO to coordinate

transportation plans and transit services. Capital Metro provides input on CAMPO's transit projects and programs, including the recently adopted CAMPO 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. Possible long-term plans for Capital Metro include up to 10 MetroRapid routes and additional MetroRail lines, subject to referendum. In addition, a regional commuter rail project has been proposed by the Lone Star Rail District that would operate between Austin and San Antonio.

Acknowledgements and Resources

ColumbusOhio

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- Michael Bradley, Director of Capital Projects and Planning, Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)
- Daniel Ricciardi, Executive Director, Columbus Region Logistics Council, Chamber of Commerce
- David Abel, Air Quality Program Coordinator, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
- Central Ohio Transit Authority: www.cota.com
- COTA 2007–2011 Short-Range Transit Plan: <http://www.cota.com/ShortRangeTransitPlan.aspx>
- COTA 2006 Long-Range Transit Plan: <http://www.cota.com/LongRangeTransitPlan.aspx>
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- *The Columbus Dispatch*, local newspaper: <http://www.dispatch.com>
- Photo credits: Derek Jensen (Tysto), COTA

AustinTexas

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- Molly Scarbrough, Principal Planner, City of Austin Planning & Development Review Dept.
- Beth Ann Ray, Vice President of Regional Infrastructure, Austin Chamber of Commerce
- Capital Metro website, www.capmetro.org
- “All Systems Go!” Long-Range Transit Plan: <http://allsystemsgo.capmetro.org/>
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- Midtown Commons: www.midtowncommons.com/
- The Village at Leander Station: <http://leandertransitvillage.com/>
- Lone Star Rail District: <http://www.lonestarrail.com/>
- Photo credits: Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau, Capital Metro

NashvilleTennessee

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- Debby Dale Mason, Chief Community Action Office, Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce

- Félix G. Castrodad, Senior Transportation Planner, Nashville Area MPO
- Nashville MTA: <http://www.nashvillemta.org>
- MTA's Strategic Transit Master Plan: <http://www.nashvillemta.org/setpage.asp?page=finalplan.html>
- Nashville RTA: <http://rtarelastrandride.com>
- RTA Music City Star Business Plan: <http://rtarelastrandride.com/downloads/Business%20Plan%20Update%20adopted%2008172005.pdf>
- Nashville MPO: www.nashvillempo.org
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- *The Tennessean*, local newspaper: www.tennessean.com
- *The City Paper*, local newspaper: <http://nashvillecitypaper.com>
- Photo credits: Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau, Nashville MTA and RTA

ColumbiaSouthCarolina

- Joyce Dickerson, Chair, Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) Board of Directors
- Brittany McMillan, Public Relations, Veolia Transportation/CMRTA
- Courtney Herring, Vice President of Public Policy, Columbia Chamber of Commerce
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- City of Columbia: www.columbiasc.net
- Central Midlands Council of Governments (MPO): www.centralmidlands.org
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- *Free Times*, local newspaper: www.free-times.com
- Photo credits: Columbia Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau, CMRTA

EugeneOregon

- Tom Schwetz, Director of Planning and Development, Lane Transit District
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- Jared Mason-Gere, Director of Business Advocacy, Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce
- Lane Transit District: www.ltd.org
- Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): www.thempo.org
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- Lane Council of Governments Transplan: <http://lcog.org/transplan.cfm>
- Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce: www.eugenechamber.com
- *The Register-Guard*, local newspaper: www.registerguard.com
- Photo credits: Cooper Zietz Engineers, Lane Transit District

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INVESTMENT IN OUR REGION'S FUTURE

CORNERSTONE PARTNERS

\$50,000–\$100,000 over 3 years

Alliant Energy Corporation
American Family Insurance
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AT&T
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Raymond Management Company
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Michelle Behnke & Associates
Monroe Clinic
Plantes Company
Potter Consulting
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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
Department of Commerce

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Dane County
City of Fitchburg
City of Madison
City of Middleton
City of Stoughton
Town of Bristol
Town of Primrose
Town of Vienna
Town of Westport
Village of Brooklyn
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Village of DeForest
Village of Marshall
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Village of Waunakee

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