



motion 

# NASHVILLE MTA/RTA STRATEGIC PLAN



## STATE OF THE RTA SYSTEM REPORT

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING SERVICES



**N NELSON**  
NYGAARD



**CAMBRIDGE**  
SYSTEMATICS





FIGURE 2 MUSIC CITY STAR



### Service Levels

The Music City Star operates only during peak periods on weekdays. Monday through Thursday, there are six trips in each direction. The first trip from Lebanon to Nashville departs at 5:45 a.m. and the last trip from Nashville departs at 5:45 p.m. Two trips during each peak period travel only between Mt. Juliet and Nashville. On Friday, there is one additional trip in each direction that departs Lebanon at 6:40 p.m. and Nashville at 10:30 p.m.

TABLE 1 MUSIC CITY STAR SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

	Monday-Thursday	Friday
Span of Service	5:45 a.m. – 5:45 p.m.	5:45 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.
AM Trips	6	6
PM Trips	6	7

### Ridership

Current ridership averages approximately 1,000 passengers per weekday and 253,000 passengers per year.

### Productivity

Productivity averages 111.7 passengers per train hour.

## REGIONAL BUS SERVICE

RTA currently provides express bus service in five corridors—northeast, northwest, west, southwest, and southeast—that link Middle Tennessee’s larger communities to downtown Nashville (see Figures 3 and 4):

- Northeast: Gallatin and Hendersonville
- Northwest: Clarksville and Springfield
- West: Dickson
- Southwest: Spring Hill, Thompson’s Station, and Franklin
- Southeast: Murfreesboro, La Vergne, and Smyrna



FIGURE 3 RTA SYSTEM MAP

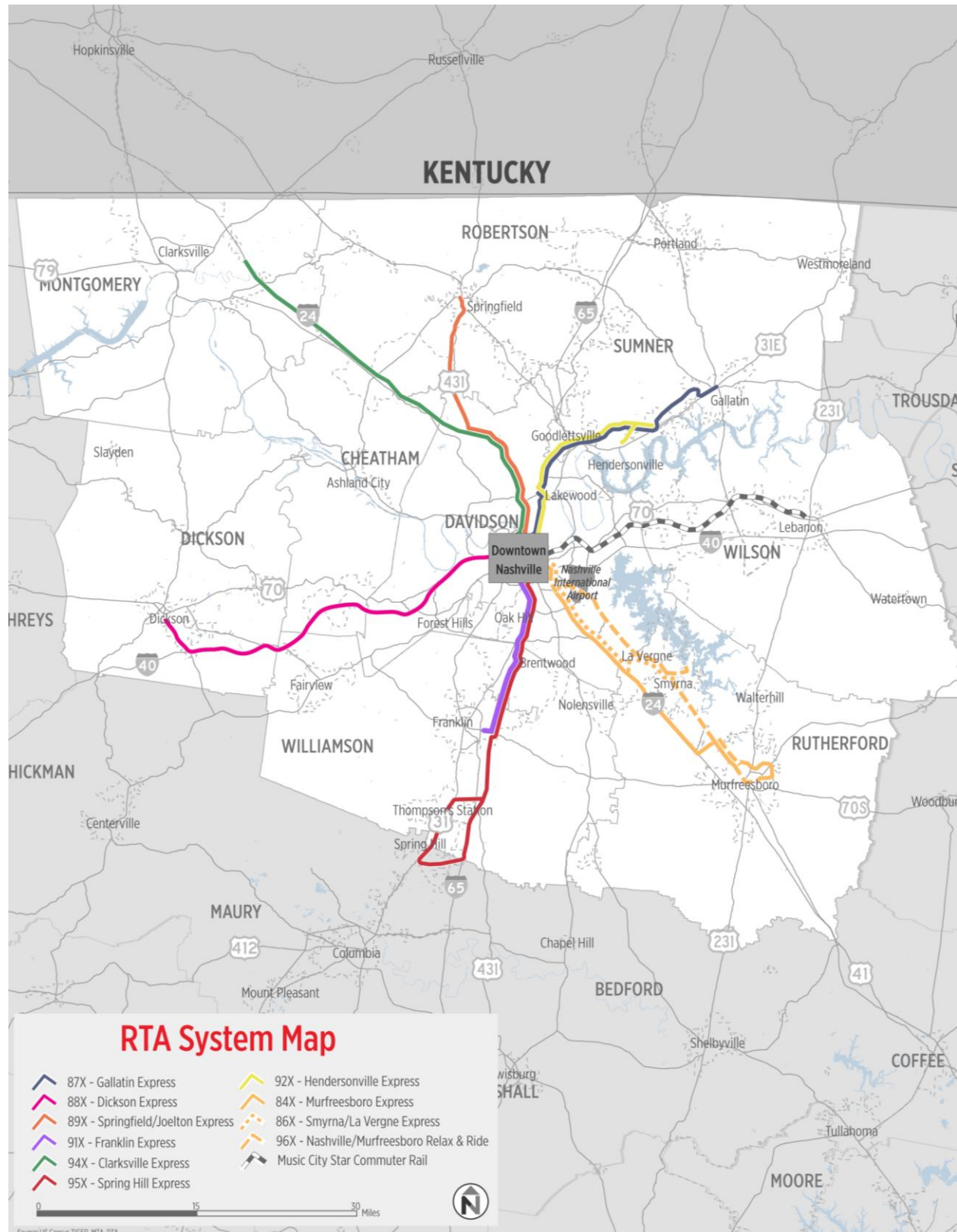


FIGURE 4 RTA EXPRESS SERVICE



RTA currently operates 10 routes in these corridors: three to the southeast; two each to the northeast, northwest, and southwest; and one to the west (see Table 2). All routes terminate at Music City Central in downtown Nashville, which serves as a major connection point to Nashville MTA routes. Four of the 10 regional routes also serve Vanderbilt Medical Center and Vanderbilt University.

TABLE 2 RTA EXPRESS SERVICE

Corridor	Communities	Routes
Northeast	Gallatin	87X Gallatin Express
	Hendersonville	92X Hendersonville Express
Northwest	Springfield	89X Springfield/Joelton Express
	Joelton	94X Clarksville Express
	Clarksville	
West	Dickson	88X Dickson Express
Southeast	Murfreesboro	84X Murfreesboro Express
	La Vergne	86X Smyrna/La Vergne Express
	Smyrna	96X Nashville/Murfreesboro Relax & Ride
Southwest	Franklin	91X Franklin Express
	Spring Hill	95X Spring Hill Express

Services are generally provided based on requests from the region's communities, which then fund a percentage of the cost for the services. Service is operated by two different providers: the three southeast corridor routes are directly operated by Nashville MTA, while the other seven routes are operated by Gray Line, a private contractor.

## SERVICE LEVELS

All regional routes operate only on weekdays. Nine of the 10 routes operate only during peak hours. Route 96X Nashville/Murfreesboro Relax & Ride provides midday and evening service, and operates from 5:13 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (see Table 3).

TABLE 3 EXPRESS BUS SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

Corridor	Route	Route Name	First Departure	Last Departure	Daily Trips
North	87X	Gallatin Express	5:46 a.m.	4:37 p.m.	5
	92X	Hendersonville Express	5:56 a.m.	4:38 p.m.	5
Northwest	89X	Springfield/Joelton Express	5:43 a.m.	4:37 p.m.	4
	94X	Clarksville Express	5:50 a.m.	5:10 p.m.	8
West	88X	Dickson Express	5:55 a.m.	4:50 p.m.	4
South	91X	Franklin Express	6:27 a.m.	4:55 p.m.	6
	95X	Spring Hill Express	5:41 a.m.	4:10 p.m.	4
Southeast	84X	Murfreesboro Express	5:33 a.m.	4:43 p.m.	6
	86X	Smyrna/La Vergne Express	5:45 a.m.	4:48 p.m.	6
	96X	Nashville/Murfreesboro Relax & Ride	5:13 a.m.	8:30 p.m.	19

Of the nine peak period-only routes, eight provide service only in the peak direction, and the 94X Clarksville Express provides reverse commute service (a single trip in each direction).

Schedules are largely designed for the early work start and end times of state employees, with service generally starting before 6:00 a.m. and ending before 5:00 p.m. As a result, more traditional 8:00 or 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. work schedules are not served, nor are less traditional work hours, such as midday or evening shifts. There is likely latent demand for service oriented toward a wider range of work times.

### Ridership

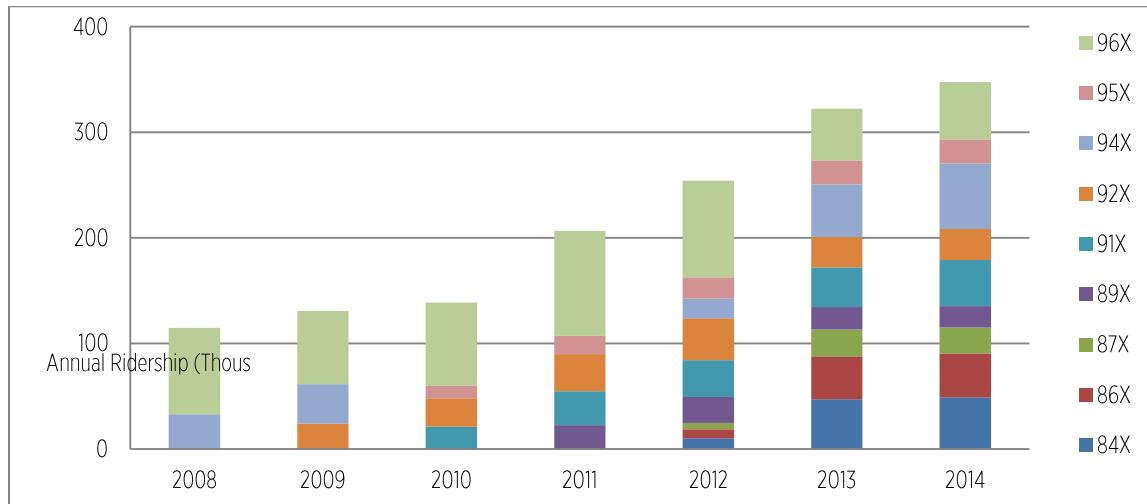
Express bus ridership has been increasing rapidly, in large part due to the development of new routes (see Figure 5). Total ridership increased 26.7% between 2012 and 2013, and by another 7.8% in 2014. Total ridership is approximately 1,400 passengers per weekday and 347,000 passengers per year.

Most routes carry over 100 riders per day, and two routes carry over 200 riders per day:

- Route 94X Clarksville Express has the highest daily ridership, at 246 passengers per day.
- Route 96X Nashville/Murfreesboro Relax & Ride carries the second-highest ridership, at 214 passengers per day.
- Routes 84X Murfreesboro Express and 86X Smyrna/La Vergne Express, both of which serve the southeast corridor along with Route 96X Nashville/Murfreesboro Relax & Ride, also have high ridership: Route 84X carries the third-highest ridership in the network at 172 daily riders, and Route 86X carries 163 daily riders.

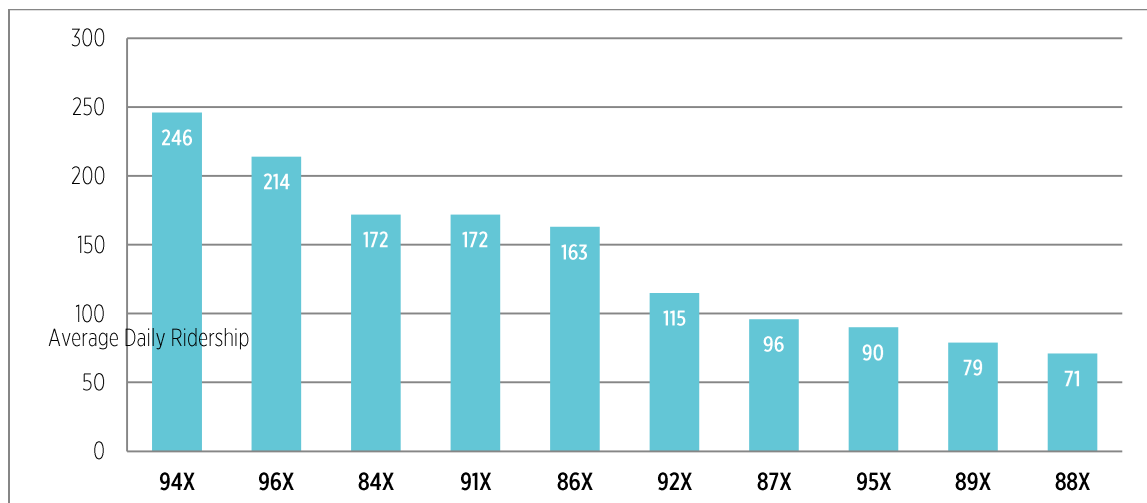
The newly implemented Route 88X Dickson Express is the only regional service to the west of Nashville. The route, which launched in January 2015, carried 1,414 riders in its first month. This translates to an average daily ridership of 71 riders.

FIGURE 5 RIDERSHIP BY YEAR, 2008-2014



Note: Route 88X is not included as service did not begin until January 2015. Route 91X includes service to Brentwood, which was discontinued in March 2015.

FIGURE 6 AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP BY ROUTE



Source: RTA ridership data, February 2014 to January 2015.

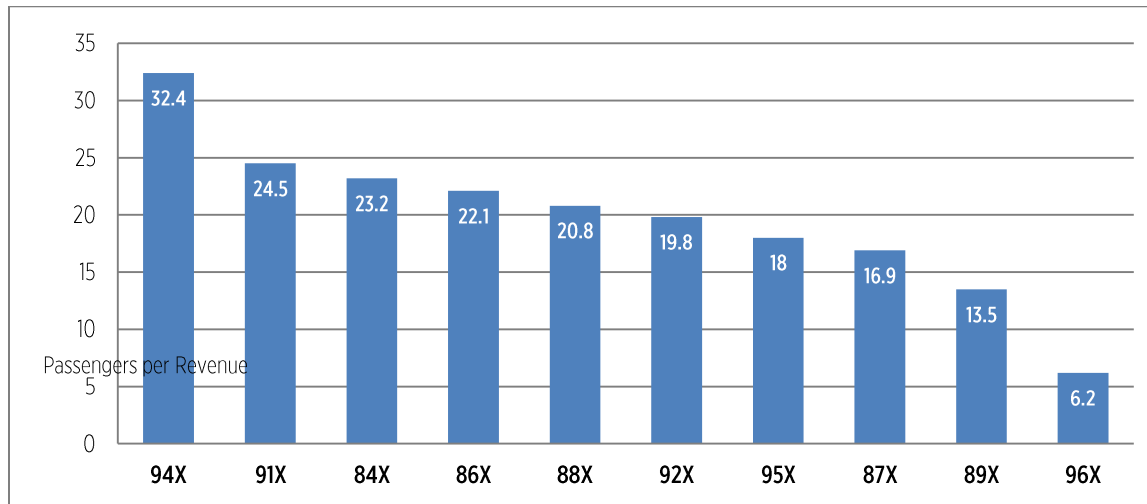
Note: Route 91X includes service to Brentwood, which was discontinued in March 2015.

## Productivity

Of the 10 RTA regional bus routes, Route 94X Clarksville Express is by far the most productive, in terms of both passengers per revenue hour (32.4) and passengers per trip (33) (see Figures 7 and 8). Route 87X Gallatin Express is also strong in terms of ridership per trip, with 32 passengers per trip.



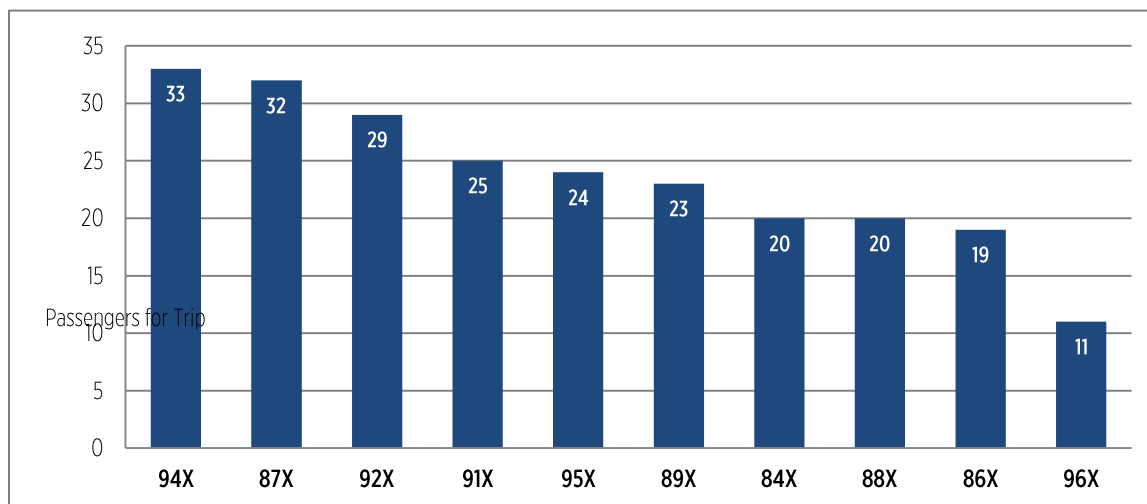
FIGURE 7 PASSENGERS PER REVENUE HOUR



Source: RTA ridership data, February 2014 to January 2015.

Note: Route 91X includes service to Brentwood, which was discontinued in March 2015.

FIGURE 8 PASSENGERS PER TRIP



Source: RTA ridership data, February 2014 to January 2015.

Note: Route 91X includes service to Brentwood, which was discontinued in March 2015.

Although Route 96X Nashville/Murfreesboro Relax & Ride has the highest overall ridership, it is the least productive route in terms of both riders per revenue hour and riders per trip. This is likely due to its midday service—as a commuter-oriented route, ridership is likely lower during the midday hours and affects the route’s overall productivity, as compared to the other routes that operate only during peak periods. For example, Route 84X Murfreesboro Express, which operates in the same corridor, carries the third-highest ridership per revenue hour since it operates for fewer hours per day than Route 96X.

## FARES

RTA fares have remained the same since 2011 but are scheduled to increase by 5% (to the nearest quarter) on September 28, 2015. The information below reflects RTA fares as of September 16, 2015, prior to the increase.

## Music City Star

Music City Star adult cash fares range from \$1.70 to \$5.00. Fares vary depending upon the station and whether the fare is purchased at the station or in advance (see Table 4). Ten-ride tickets range in price from \$17.00 to \$45.00, and monthly passes are available for \$64.00 to \$168.00.

TABLE 4 MUSIC CITY STAR FARES

	Riverfront	Donelson	Hermitage	Mt. Juliet	Martha	Lebanon
One-Ride Ticket	\$5.00	\$2.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Advance Purchase One-Ride Ticket	-	\$1.70	\$4.25	\$4.50	\$4.75	\$5.00
10-Ride Tickets	-	\$17.00	\$38.00	\$41.00	\$43.00	\$45.00
Monthly Pass	-	\$64.00	\$143.00	\$151.00	\$160.00	\$168.00

Source: Music City Star website

Discount tickets are available for \$2.00 for those 19 and younger and 65 and older, active and retired military personnel, people with disabilities, and Medicare cardholders.

## Express Bus

Express bus adult cash fares are \$4.00 per trip, and \$2.00 discount tickets are available for those 19 or younger and 65 or older, active and retired military personnel, people with disabilities, and Medicare cardholders. Children under four years of age ride free. Twenty-ride tickets are available for \$70.00.

## Transfers

Music City Star and express bus riders can transfer to and from Nashville MTA services with a Proximity Card, which is available free of charge. However, Proximity Cards are only available for commuting purposes, and customers must provide the name and address of their school or employer. The exception to this is that all transfers to Route 93 Music City Star West End Shuttle or to any of the Music City Circuit routes are free and do not require a Proximity Card.

# RTA TRANSIT FACILITIES

Major RTA transit facilities include Music City Star Stations and express bus park-and-ride lots.

## MUSIC CITY STAR STATIONS

RTA uses Nashville MTA facilities to serve downtown Nashville. Regional bus routes serve the Music City Central transit terminal, and Music City Star commuter rail serves Riverfront Regional Station. RTA customers can connect to Nashville MTA transit service at both facilities.

### Riverfront Regional Station

Riverfront Station is the Nashville terminal for the Music City Star (see Figure 9). It is located at the foot of Broadway in downtown Nashville, adjacent to the Flag Court and the Shelby Street Pedestrian Bridge. The station includes a station building, platforms, and bus connections.

FIGURE 9 RIVERFRONT REGIONAL STATION



## Outer Stations

The Music City Star serves five outer stations: Donelson, Hermitage, Mt. Juliet, Martha, and Lebanon. All stations have platforms, shelters, and commuter parking (see Table 5). Parking is free at all stations.

TABLE 5 MUSIC CITY STAR STATIONS

Station	Photo	Commuter Spaces
Donelson		230
Hermitage		280
Mt. Juliet		220
Martha		74
Lebanon		334

## RTA PARK-AND-RIDE LOTS

RTA provides free commuter parking at 20 express bus locations (see Table 6). All parking locations are privately owned, and RTA has negotiated various arrangements for their use. The lots are also available for use by vanpools and carpools. In addition, the Greensboro North Park-and-Ride in Gallatin was recently completed and will be served by Route 92X.

TABLE 6 RTA EXPRESS BUS PARK-AND-RIDE FACILITIES

Park-and-Ride	Location	Served by Route
Downtown Springfield Park & Ride	Springfield	89X
Dickson Walmart	Dickson	87X
Drakes Creek Park	Hendersonville	92X
Edge-O-Lake	Nashville	96X
Gallatin Farmers' Market	Gallatin	87X
Gallatin Walmart	Gallatin	87X
Hendersonville Kohl's	Hendersonville	92X
Joelton Park & Ride	Joelton	89X
La Vergne Kroger	La Vergne	86X, 96X
Lebanon Station	Lebanon	Music City Star
North Boulevard Church of Christ	Murfreesboro	84X, 96X
Pleasant View Park & Ride	Pleasant View	94X
Smyrna Kmart	Smyrna	86X, 96X
Springfield Walmart	Springfield	89X
Spring Hill Kroger	Spring Hill	95X
Thompson's Station Baptist Church	Thompson's Station	95X
People's Church	Franklin	91X

As the park-and-ride lot names imply, most are located in the parking lots of retail stores or other organizations such as churches or local governments that are willing to share their lots with commuters. This approach has allowed RTA to develop lots at lower cost. However, one disadvantage of this approach is that the lots are not always ideally located, which increases access and egress times, and thus total travel times. Another disadvantage is that the agreements are not permanent, and RTA occasionally must find new park-and-ride lot locations with little notice.

## RTA RIDESHARE PROGRAM

RTA manages a ride-matching database of over 3,000 people to coordinate carpools based on route and commute time details. Commuters are able to rotate drivers, host a carpool, or pay one driver a monthly fee based on how many other riders use the same carpool. Rides are typically organized around park-and-ride-lots throughout the region. Carpools are allowed to use high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes throughout Middle Tennessee. Regular carpoolers also qualify for RTA's Emergency Ride Home program (described below).

## RTA VANPOOL PROGRAM

RTA and its regional partners provide a fleet of over 110 commuter vans. Riders pay a monthly fare, and van drivers commute for free as long as they keep records of trips performed. RTA coordinates vanpools throughout the region, which riders can access at local park-and-ride lots. As with carpoolers, vanpoolers qualify for the Emergency Ride Home program.

## NASHVILLE MTA/RTA EMERGENCY RIDE HOME PROGRAM

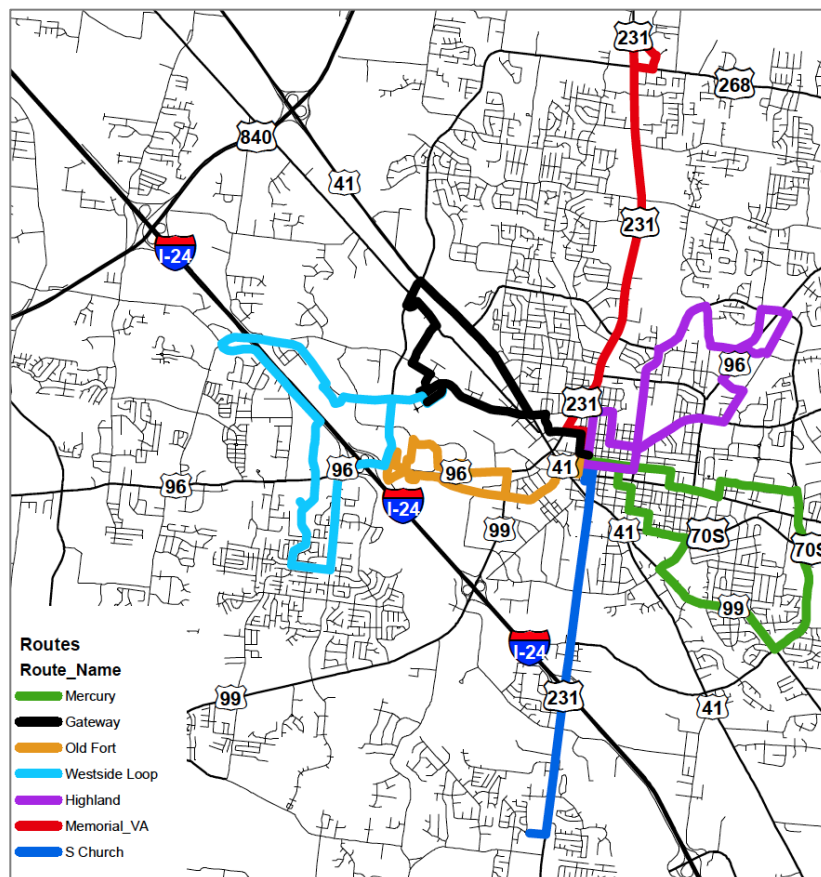
The Emergency Ride Home program is available to commuters who regularly use carpools, vanpools, Music City Star, or express bus service in the counties of Davidson, Cheatham, Dickson, Maury, Montgomery, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, or Wilson. To qualify for the program, commuters must use these services at least three times a week or 15 times a month. The Emergency Ride Home service provides six taxi trips per year for any person who has a sickness in their immediate family, is asked to work late by a supervisor, or cannot make their regular rideshare due to extenuating circumstances. Rental car coverage is also available to riders over the age of 21

## OTHER MIDDLE TENNESSEE TRANSIT PROVIDERS

### CITY OF MURFREESBORO: ROVER

The City of Murfreesboro Transportation Department provides local fixed-route transit service within the city of Murfreesboro. The system, called Rover, consists of seven routes that operate Monday through Friday between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. (see Figure 10). All routes originate and terminate at the Rover Transit Center in downtown Murfreesboro.

FIGURE 10 ROVER SYSTEM MAP



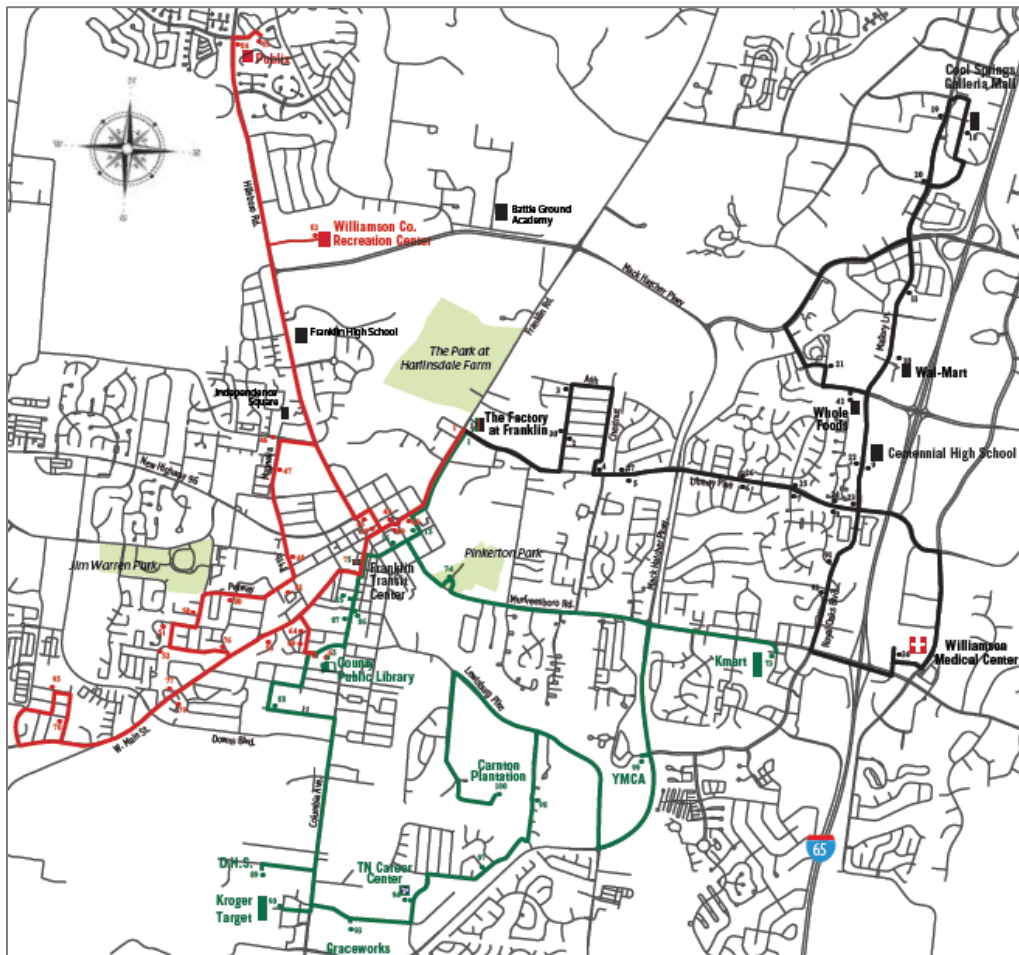


Regular adult cash fares are \$1.00, and 50¢ discount fares are provided to older adults, students, and people with disabilities. Transfers at designated locations are free. Paratransit service is available through the Mid-Cumberland Human Resource Agency (MCHRA), described on page 15.

## CITY OF FRANKLIN: FRANKLIN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

The Franklin Transit Authority provides fixed-route and demand-response service in Franklin and Cool Springs. There are three fixed routes that operate Monday through Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (see Figure 11). Each route operates every 60 minutes and connects on the hour at The Factory at Franklin, allowing for timed transfers between routes. Connections are also available with RTA's Route 91X Franklin Express for service to and from Nashville. Demand-response service, called Transit on Demand (TODD), provides pre-arranged curb-to-curb pick-up and drop-off service as well as access to Franklin's fixed-route services.

FIGURE 11 FRANKLIN TRANSIT SERVICE



Regular adult cash fares are \$1.00, and 50¢ discount fares are provided to older adults, students, and people with disabilities.

## THE TMA GROUP

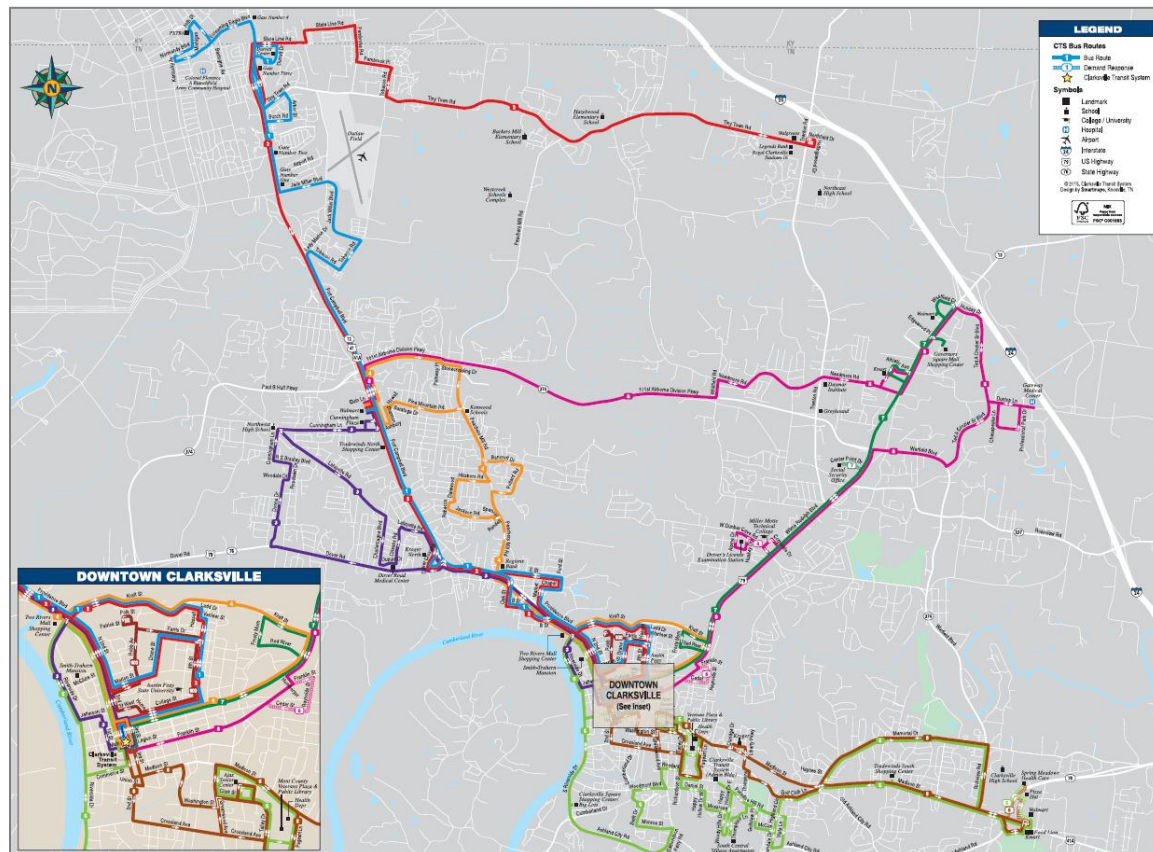
The Transportation Management Association (TMA) Group is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that was established in 1988 as a public-private partnership of business, governmental, and community leaders to provide transportation and transportation-related services in parts of Middle Tennessee. At present, the TMA Group operates fixed-route and paratransit service for Franklin Transit in Franklin and Cool Springs and manages VanStar vanpool on behalf of RTA and Williamson County.

## CITY OF CLARKSVILLE: CLARKSVILLE TRANSIT SYSTEM

Clarksville Transit System (CTS) provides fixed-route and demand-response service within the city of Clarksville. Service operates Monday through Saturday from 4:30 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. There are 10 routes, seven of which provide local service around Clarksville and all of which operate to and from the CTS Transit Center (see Figure 12). One of the routes—Route 812 Exit 8 to Nashville—provides timed transfers with RTA Route 94X Clarksville Express for service to and from Nashville. CTS also operates The Lift, which provides demand-response service for older adults and people with disabilities who are not able to use Clarksville Transit fixed-route service.

Regular adult cash fares are \$1.50. Student cash fares are \$1.00, and seniors, people with disabilities, and city employees can ride for 75¢. Various one-day, 10-ride, and 31-day passes are also available.

FIGURE 12 CLARKSVILLE TRANSIT SYSTEM



## MID-CUMBERLAND HUMAN RESOURCE AGENCY

The Mid-Cumberland Human Resource Agency (MCHRA) operates MCHRA Public Transit, which provides curb-to-curb rural transportation services to the 12-county Mid-Cumberland region, excluding Davidson County (see Figure 13). All members of the public can schedule a ride on a first-call, first-served basis, although priority is given to medical trips. Although MCHRA does transport customers to destinations in Davidson County from outside counties, it does not provide service within Davidson County.

Service operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Fares are \$2.00 for each one-way trip within a city and \$3.00 within one county; an additional \$5.00 is charged for each county line that is crossed. MCHRA also charges a flat rate fare for trips to Nashville, either \$10.00 or \$15.00 each way depending on the origin county.

FIGURE 13 MCHRA PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE AREA



## RELATED PLANS AND STUDIES

RTA and other agencies have conducted various planning and development efforts that have either focused directly on transit service in the Middle Tennessee region or have focused on related issues that impact regional planning for transit. This section provides an overview of some of the major plans and efforts that give context for the issues, challenges, and opportunities related to mobility in the Nashville area and Middle Tennessee region. These studies are as described below from the most recent to the oldest.

### NORTHWEST CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY (UNDERWAY)

RTA is currently conducting the Northwest Corridor Transit Study to evaluate transit options between Clarksville and Nashville. The study builds upon previous efforts and is examining cost-effective transit improvements in the northwest corridor to connect travelers to destinations (e.g., work, school, shopping, and entertainment) and address anticipated traffic growth and congestion along Interstate 24.

The study area consists of five corridors with potential accommodations for improved transit service between Clarksville and Nashville, including (see Figure 14):

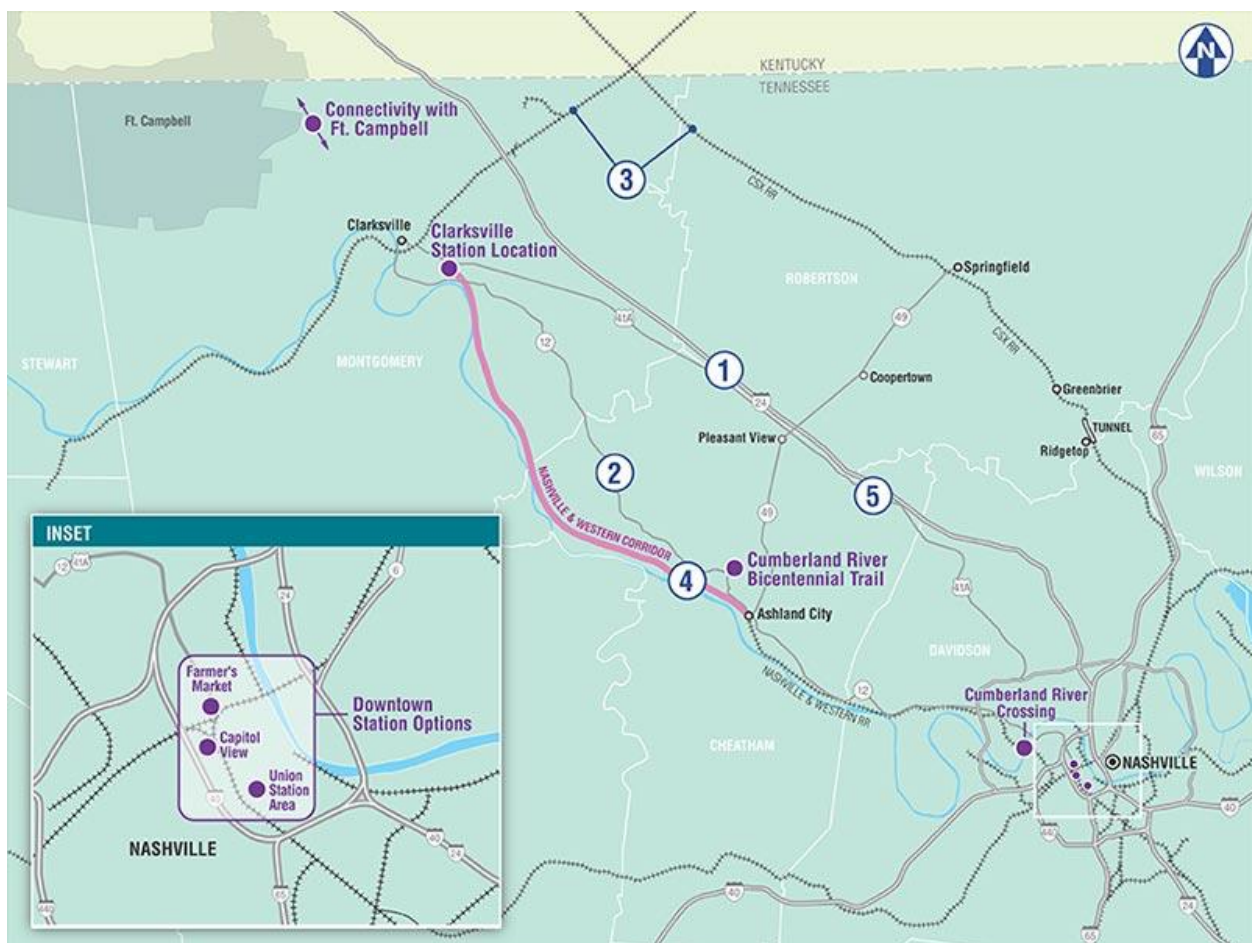
- The existing Interstate 24 highway corridor, linking Clarksville and downtown Nashville



- The existing State Route 12 (Ashland City Highway) highway corridor, connecting downtown Clarksville and downtown Nashville via Ashland City
- The existing CSX Transportation and R.J. Corman Railroad Group railway corridor, connecting downtown Clarksville and downtown Nashville via Goodlettsville, Ridgetop, Springfield, Adams, and Guthrie, Kentucky
- The Nashville and Western railway corridor, currently operated in part by the Cheatham County Railway Authority (CCRA), between Nashville and Ashland City with former right-of-way and partially remaining infrastructure between Clarksville and Ashland City
- The existing State Route 112 (US Route 41 Alternate) highway corridor, running roughly parallel to and southwest of Interstate 24 and linking downtown Clarksville and downtown Nashville via Pleasant View with regional and national connections via the national highway system

The outcome of this study may be one or a combination of alternatives for the corridor that can be integrated and phased into an overall transit plan encompassing other corridors throughout Middle Tennessee.

FIGURE 14 STUDY AREA FOR THE NORTHWEST CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY



## NORTHEAST CORRIDOR MOBILITY STUDY (2011)

The Northeast Corridor, which extends from downtown Nashville to Gallatin, encompasses several communities and major transportation routes. The Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) conducted the study to identify mobility challenges along the corridor and investigate multimodal solutions to increasing transportation

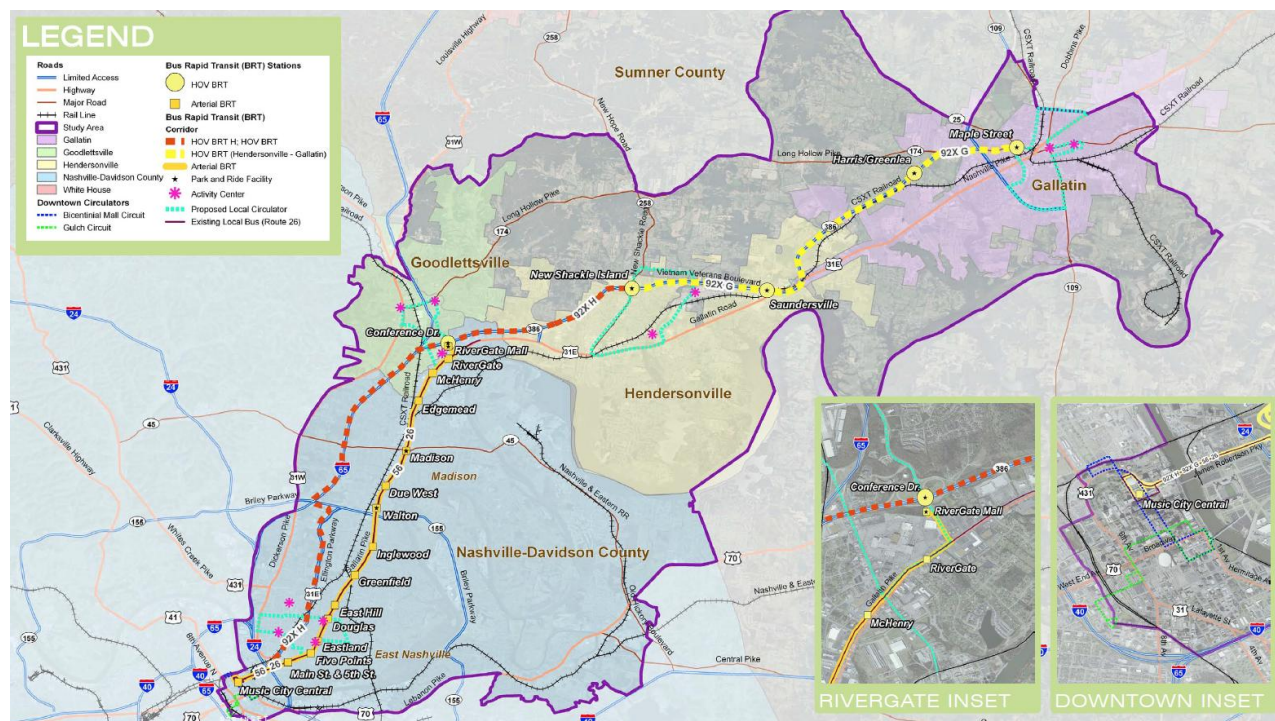
demand, which stems from locally preferred future land use patterns. The guiding principles of the study included protecting valuable resources, improving access to economic opportunities as well as goods and services, increasing housing choices, and improving aesthetics throughout the corridor.

Three alternatives included commuter rail along the CSX corridor, light rail along Ellington Parkway, and bus rapid transit (BRT) along Gallatin Pike.

Based on the findings of the study, the following actions were recommended (see Figure 15):

- **BRT/Express Buses in HOV Lanes:** Existing routes can provide express service from Nashville to Hendersonville and Gallatin. Operating in new HOV lanes with highway median stations and park-and-ride lots can provide express service designed to accommodate longer commutes.
- **Arterial BRT:** Increased frequency of service, enhanced stations, queue jumps, and dedicated bus lanes can enhance existing routes that have high ridership.
- **Local Bus:** It is important to continue providing local bus service aimed toward shorter trips and trips where convenient pedestrian access is important.
- **Circulator Bus:** Circulator service would provide transit connections to the major trip generators within each community and provide a direct connection to one or more of the high-quality services described above to accommodate longer transit trips.

FIGURE 15 NORTHEAST CORRIDOR MOBILITY STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



## NASHVILLE AREA MPO 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2010)

The 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), prepared by the Nashville Area MPO, provides an overarching vision and set of actions for meeting the existing and future transportation needs of the Nashville metropolitan area. The plan emphasizes four main goals: enhancing the region's livability, sustainability, prosperity, and diversity. Based on projected population growth, the plan sets forth a 25-year multimodal strategy and capital improvement program developed to guide the effective investment of public funds in transportation facilities.



The 2035 RTP outlines the following three major transportation initiatives:

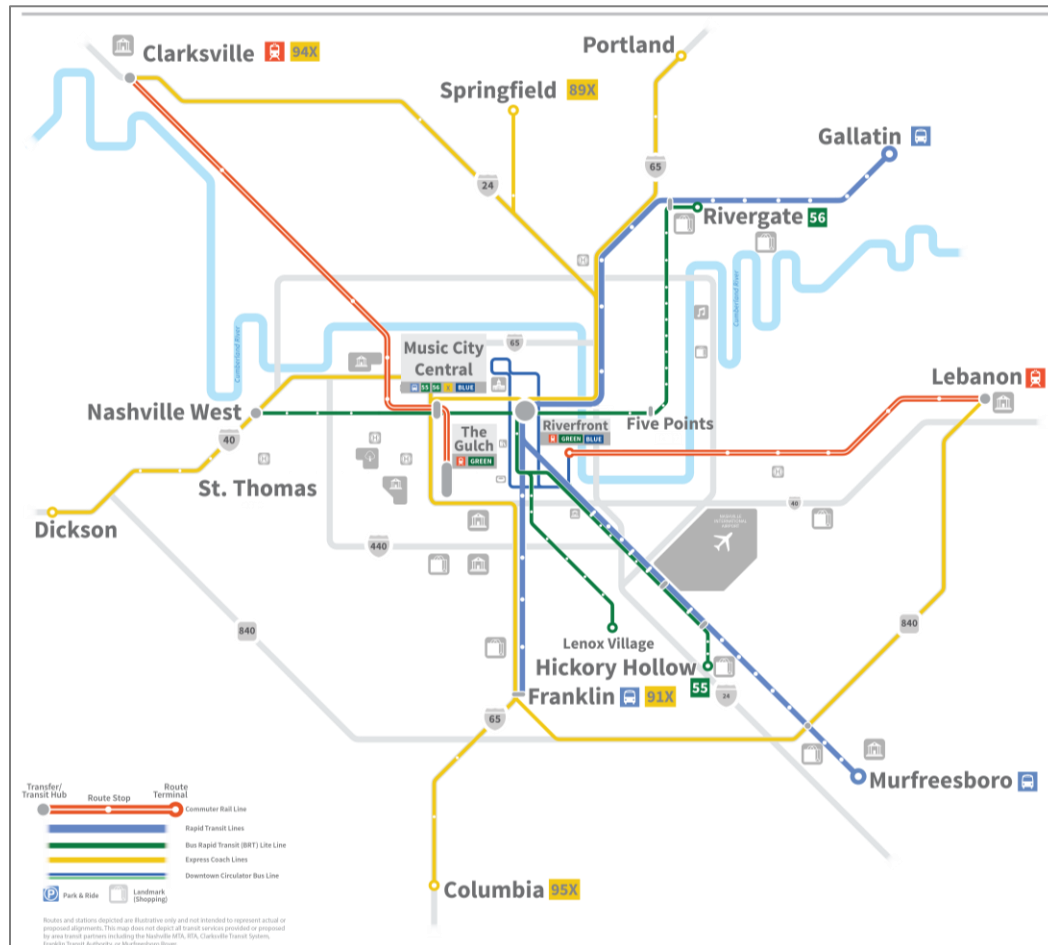
- **A Bold New Vision for Mass Transit:** This initiative focuses on expanding mass transit options, including BRT, light rail, and commuter rail.
- **Active Transportation Choices and Walkable Communities:** This initiative focuses on providing network connectivity for non-motorized modes of travel to promote safety and healthy activity in the region.
- **Preservation and Enhancement of Strategic Roadway Corridors:** This initiative prioritizes a “fix-it-first” approach to transportation investment, advocating demand management and complete streets strategies.

As stated in the RTP, the vision includes a variety of new and expanded services for regional corridors, urban centers, suburban communities, and the rural countryside. A strategic mix of transit options would range from high-frequency rapid transit service to the continued provision of rural transit services for those who do not live close to fixed-route options (see Figure 16):

- **Rapid Transit:** Three corridors are identified for future regional rapid transit service, including the region’s northeast, southeast, and south corridors. These areas are the most densely populated and fastest growing within the region and have a well-established pattern of cross-county travel. The long-range vision for rapid transit in these corridors includes the development of either light rail transit or dedicated lane BRT that would operate at high levels of service throughout the day. The specific mode or technology used will be determined by future study and depend heavily on development patterns, anticipated ridership, cost of construction, and public support for funding.
- **Commuter Rail:** The long-range vision calls for continued support for the Music City Star’s east corridor commuter rail service and the development of a new commuter rail line in the region’s northwest corridor to connect Clarksville and Nashville, two of Tennessee’s five most populous cities.
- **Express Coach Service:** In corridors with strong commuting patterns but without the land development patterns or traffic congestion to warrant dedicated-lane transit service, the vision calls for the implementation of premium express coach service. Such service will offer a comfortable and stress-free ride to and from work for commuters, providing enhanced amenities along the way including high-back seats, wireless internet access, onboard televisions, and restrooms.
- **Urban Fixed-Route Service:** By far the most critical piece of the long-range vision, the region must continue to expand the existing urban fixed-route services in Nashville, Clarksville, Franklin, and Murfreesboro. Urban services are the backbone of any regional transit system and must be optimized in order to ensure the success of investments in regional rapid transit or commuter rail. The vision calls for continued investment in existing local bus systems, the eventual introduction of fixed-route service in Springfield, Gallatin, Lebanon, Columbia, and Dickson, and the return of the urban streetcar in downtown Nashville, which serves as the central hub for the region.
- **Suburban and Commuter Circulators:** As the region begins to implement rapid transit, commuter rail, or express coach services in each of the regional corridors, the vision calls for the development of local circulators in markets where a full-fledged urban fixed-route system would not make sense. Such local circulation will be important to customers to access regional services from primary destinations within their community. Suburban circulators, which would operate throughout the day, are envisioned for places like Goodlettsville, Hendersonville, Smyrna, La Vergne, and Brentwood, while commuter circulators, which would operate during peak commuting times, are envisioned for places like Portland, Spring Hill, Kingston Springs, and Ashland City.
- **Other Regional Services:** In addition to the geographically defined train, bus, and circulator services described above, the vision also calls for the expansion of the regional vanpool program and rural paratransit services. The regional vanpool program has been a popular and cost-effective way to provide ridesharing opportunities to commuters who live too far from fixed-route lines. As the region’s population continues to grow older, rural paratransit services will be needed to ensure older Middle Tennesseans have transportation to and from life-sustaining services.

A 2040 Regional Transportation Plan is currently in development, and is expected to be unveiled for public comment in December 2015 and adopted in early 2016.

FIGURE 16 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN TRANSIT VISION

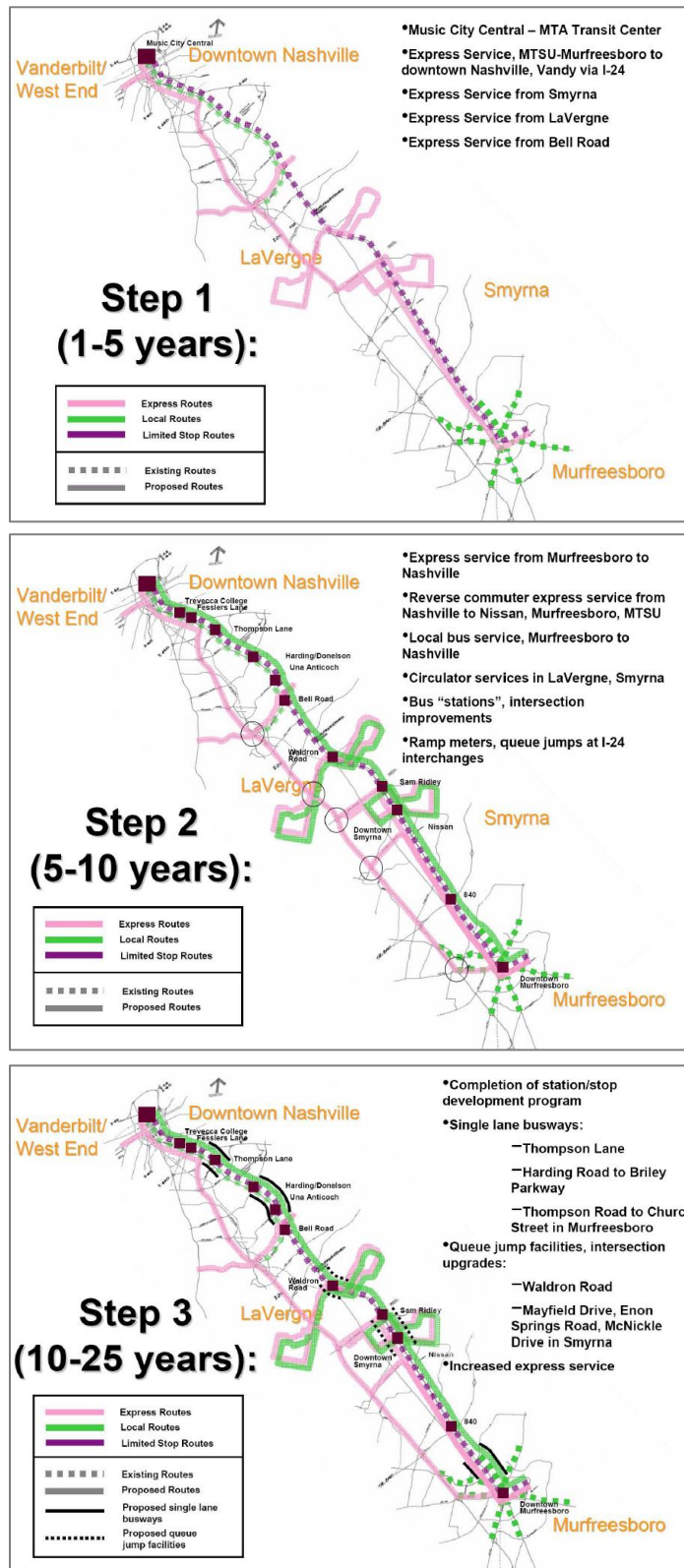


## NASHVILLE SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR HIGH-PERFORMANCE TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES STUDY (2007)

The Southeast Corridor is a 30-mile corridor connecting downtown Nashville to downtown Murfreesboro that has experienced tremendous growth in recent years. The Nashville Southeast Corridor Alternatives Analysis, prepared by the Nashville Area MPO, addressed the existing and future transportation needs of the corridor. Specifically, the study examined potential alternatives for bringing high capacity, high-quality transit service to the corridor. Key goals of the study included providing additional transportation options, improving mobility, establishing efficient land use policies, ensuring the efficient use of limited transportation funds, and addressing environmental concerns within the corridor.

Based on analysis of the many proposed alternatives, including potentially low levels of ridership, it became evident that a low-cost alternative and a phased approach would be necessary. The locally preferred alternative was a phased implementation package consisting of low-cost transit improvements, including enhanced express, limited stop, and local service in the I-24 and Murfreesboro Road corridors (see Figure 17). Many of the envisioned express bus services are in operation. However, limited stop and local services have yet to be implemented, and there are not any current plans to do so.

FIGURE 17 SOUTHEAST CORRIDOR RECOMMENDATIONS



## GALLATIN TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY (2005)

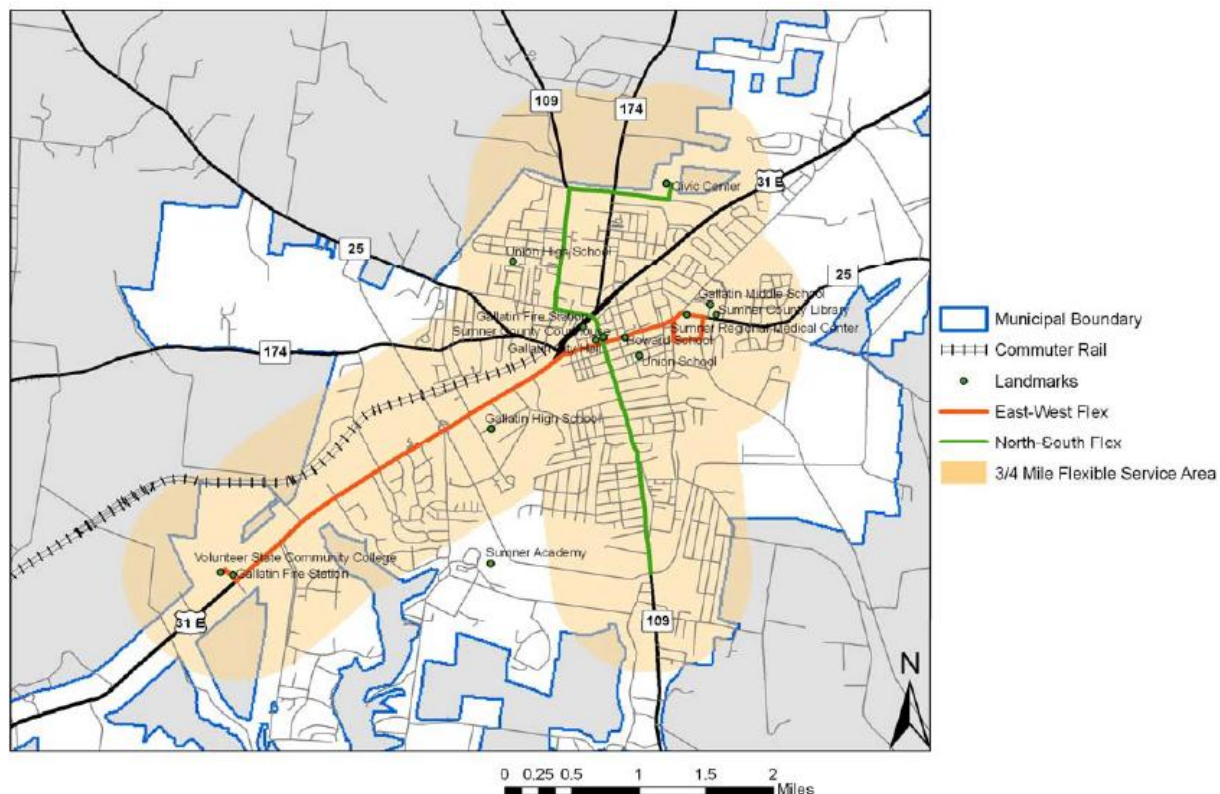
In light of recent population growth, the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) conducted a feasibility study to assess the need for transit services in Gallatin. Demographic data indicated a relatively high number of individuals with mobility needs in the Gallatin area, including people with disabilities and households that do not own vehicles. Based on this data as well as stakeholder input, it was determined that there is a mobility need in Gallatin that can be met with transit service.

Based on the study's findings, three alternatives were examined:

- **Expansion of existing demand-response service within Gallatin:** This option would require an expansion of service hours, service area, and staff. While this would provide those in need with adequate service, the high costs per passenger led to the rejection of this alternative.
- **Fixed-route bus service between Gallatin and Hendersonville:** This option would allow riders to transfer to express bus service between Hendersonville and Nashville. However, this option fails to provide service within Gallatin to those in need and, therefore, was rejected.
- **Flexible bus service within Gallatin:** This was the most favorable alternative for its ability to serve the lower-density community of Gallatin. In addition, further analysis proved that this service could also provide commuter service to Hendersonville.

The study recommended the implementation of flexible bus service within Gallatin (see Figure 18), plus feeder connections between Gallatin and Route 35X Rivergate's Shackle Island Park-and-Ride to provide connections to and from Nashville. To date, these recommendations have not been implemented. However, Mid-Cumberland Human Resources Agency does provide demand-response service in Gallatin as part of its overall service program.

FIGURE 18 GALLATIN TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



## MURFREESBORO TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES STUDY (2005)

The Murfreesboro Transit Alternatives Study built on a previous study of potential transit routes, providing a review and update of transit needs in the city of Murfreesboro. While demographic data indicated that the downtown area could support fixed-route transit service, there were few other areas with enough density to support service. A review of the existing transit services as well as stakeholder input highlighted a lack of transportation alternatives in the city of Murfreesboro.

Based on the study's findings, the following service alternatives were proposed:

- **Local Services:** Local flexible routes were proposed to meet the medical, shopping, educational, and recreational transportation needs of local residents. A two-route system was developed that connected housing, education, and retail destinations.
- **Vanpools:** Vanpools were suggested as a low-cost alternative for regular commuters without other transportation options.
- **Relax & Ride:** The final alternative proposed increasing the frequency of the Relax & Ride express service between Nashville and Murfreesboro. This alternative assumes latent demand that is currently unmet due to low service frequency.

The Murfreesboro Rover now provides local service within the city, express service has been expanded, and RTA operates region-wide vanpool service.

## LEBANON TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY (2005)

In response to continued population growth in Lebanon, TDOT conducted a feasibility study to assess the city's need for transit services. Previously, the Nashville Area Transit Development Plan recommended implementation of flexible-route transit service due to low vehicle ownership and a high number of trips within Lebanon. Analysis of the existing transportation options, in addition to stakeholder input, indicated that there is a demand for transit service to meet the mobility needs of residents.

The study evaluated the following three alternatives:

- **Expansion of existing demand-response service within Lebanon:** This option would require an expansion of service hours, service area, and staff. While this would provide those in need with adequate service, it would come with high costs per passenger.
- **Express bus service between Nashville and Lebanon:** This option would provide individuals with direct transportation to Nashville. However, this option fails to provide service within Lebanon to those in need. Additionally, the addition of Music City Star commuter rail presents the opportunity for feeder service, which this option does not provide.
- **Flexible bus service within Lebanon:** This alternative meets the service needs of Lebanon residents and is feasible in the relatively low-density community. In addition, this option can capitalize on commuter rail by providing feeder service.