Long Range Transit Plan

Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority

Long Range Service Plan

Spring, 2001

MULTISYSTEMS

Fish, Doron & Associates

The NorthStar Group

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (COTPA) identified the need to develop a vision and a clear plan for the future of public transit services in the greater Oklahoma City area. A Steering Committee was formed, consisting of civic leaders and citizens representing a broad spectrum of the metro area. COTPA Trustees also participated on the Steering Committee. In conjunction with staff and consultant assistance, a Long-Range Plan for the transit services of the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority, operating as Metro Transit, has been developed.

The development of the plan was guided by extensive public outreach, research into current and forecasted travel patterns in the metro area, demographic and development trends and the vision for the transit system adopted by the Board of Trustees.

Metro Transit currently has among the lowest amount of transit service provided per person of any similarly sized area. In addition to funding challenges, there are many other challenges facing the implementation of the recommendations of this Long-Range Plan. The focus of this Long-Range Plan is to improve existing services and to build support for service expansion both in terms of frequency as well as geographic coverage.

The purpose of this plan is to provide a clear picture of the transit service that makes sense for the greater Oklahoma City region. This plan is conservative, practical, detailed, incremental and well supported by data.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The research, public input and analysis conducted for the development of the Metro Transit Long-Range Plan has led to the following primary recommendations:

- Transit service in the greater Oklahoma City region should consist of a variety of types of services that are appropriate for the operating environment. A family of services ranging from trolleys, to fixed route buses, to express buses with park-and-ride lots, to carpools and vanpools, to demand responsive services, is recommended.

- In the short-term, Metro Transit must face the challenge of improving its image to the public and other local institutions. Improving information and communication about how to use the transit system is one key aspect of image. Flexibility and responsiveness are others. Active participation and partnerships throughout the community are another aspect associated with enhancement of image. Improved communication with non-English speaking people will also benefit Metro Transit's image.

- Transit services in the greater Oklahoma City area need to be expanded in a number of ways to contribute in a meaningful way to the economic vitality of the region. Provision of transit options need to be expanded to a broader area of the region than currently has transit service available, initially perhaps as express commuter buses or local circulator buses. In areas of the region that are currently served, service should be expanded to later hours and Sunday and the frequency of buses should be increased.

- Design of a network of hubs, where services meet for transfers and park-and-ride lots are available, is recommended. General hub locations are identified on Figure Two, the Service Concept Map. Connections between hubs permit more direct travel through the region.

- Public transportation for older adults and people with disabilities will need to be augmented and these populations will increase.

- Create several grid system routes that travel back and forth across the city without necessarily going downtown.

- An influential 'champion' of the Long-Range Plan must emerge in order to build support for the expanded and enhanced services recommended in this Plan. Pro-transit employers, agencies, and citizens would team with the champion to implement the plan.

- Significant enhancements to the current system, or expansion to other areas, will require a level of funds that is not currently available. Because of the scale of these improvements, implementation is recommended for the medium-term time frame.

- Funding for recommended services must be sought from sources beyond the current providers of funding. Partnerships, non-traditional sources and other communities should participate in funding of services that benefit them. New forms or categories of funding must be provided.

- Establishing the recommended hub network of services will begin to establish transit centers and transit corridors. Implementation of this plan should move in the direction of identifying the key corridors where fixed guideway may someday be feasible.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT SERVICE

Any Long-Range Plan must begin with an assessment of current service and how well it is performing. During the development of this plan, the consultants and steering committee have looked at current performance in several ways.

- We have evaluated how the services provided by Metro Transit compare to transit services provided in similar communities.
- We have looked at performance through the eyes of key decision leaders in the Oklahoma City region, transit riders and non-riders.
- We have scrutinized current service from an operational perspective.

It is this comprehensive review that guides our observations of current services.

PEER COMPARISONS

The purpose of the peer comparison is to establish a sense of the size and performance characteristics of Metro Transit with the transit agencies in other, similar cities. This provides a starting point for further inquiry. For this analysis, we identified 14 other cities with similar characteristics to the Oklahoma City area. We selected cities with urbanized area populations between 500,000 and 1 million. We skewed the sample towards cities in the Sunbelt and cities that were also state capitals. While there are always differences between areas, there are many observations that can be drawn from looking at a range of other similar transit properties.

Standard data sources were used. The transit data is the 1998 National Transit Database, where similar information can be gathered for different transit agencies. At the time of the analysis, the 1998 data was the most recent data available. In particular, we looked at the data for fixed route services for each of these properties. It should be noted that the Metro Transit budget has increased by nearly $3 million since the time of this data, however the relationship of the Oklahoma City data to other cities is unchanged.

Table 1 shows statistics for each of the peer cities, including population and area, as well as operating statistics representing all motor bus trips made on the peer system (including directly operated and purchased motorbus trips only). The operating statistics that we have included are; transit trips made, number of buses, hours of transit service and annual budget. Oklahoma City is mid-range in population, largest in area, and last in the number of hours of service provided and budgets, and next to last in number of transit trips taken[1]. Typically in a peer comparison, we normalize these statistics to compensate for differences in size of the area and create

[1] In order to make certain comparisons between cities, it is important to adjust for their population and physical size. For each city, we used the Urbanized Area (UZA) area and population. A separate analysis was done using smaller population and area statistics, to more closely represent the transit service area for only Oklahoma City. The result of that analysis was a slight improvement in some of the numbers, but Metro Transit was still in last place compared to the other properties.

indicators of performance to help better understand the comparisons. Table 2 shows the resultant performance indicators. Table 3 shows the results of a snapshot of service levels at many of the peer transit agencies. This shows that Oklahoma City and Tulsa are the only cities in the peer group that do not offer transit service on Sunday. Oklahoma City also has the next to highest average headway, or time between buses, among the peers.

Because of the wide variation in service levels among the peers, Figure 1 was produced to relate the amount of service provided (represented by the bars) and the level of trip making in that city (represented by the line). This graph shows that, in general, there is a fairly strong relationship between higher ridership and higher service levels.

Based on the information used in this analysis of the transit provided in similar cities, Metro Transit has a fixed route service budget that is less than one third of the average of the similar budget for transit agencies in other similar cities. The $8 million dollar fixed route service budget of Metro Transit is slightly less than the fixed route service budget for Tulsa Transit, an area less than half the physical size and about one-third less populous. The $52 million dollar budget for fixed route transit services in Austin, TX is the high end of the range. Metro Transit's budget is the lowest of the peer group. The total FY 1998 budget for Metro Transit as reported in the National Transit Database is $9.6 million, with the difference being primarily the budget for paratransit services. The FY 2001 Metro Transit budget is $14 million. Several new services that have been added attribute to most of the difference in budget. The new services include approximately $1 million of school service, $1 million for MetroLink service and $0.7 million for Sooner Ride.

Table 1: Selected Peer Statistics

City and State	Urbanized Area Population	Urbanized Area Sq. Miles	Vehicles in Max Service	Passenger Trips	Vehicle Miles	Hours of Service	Annual Operating Budget
Tucson, AZ	579,235	247	156	15,739,805	6,711,399	506,558	$24,743,290
Sacramento, CA	1,097,005	334	174	19,682,218	7,046,274	530,262	$41,824,629
Indianapolis, IN	914,791	469	116	10,130,503	5,745,172	386,477	$20,174,141
Louisville, KY	761,002	261	223	16,511,619	8,597,342	623,328	$35,555,899
Omaha, NE	544,292	193	110	5,471,168	3,798,341	289,276	$13,914,964
Albuquerque, NM	497,120	226	104	6,630,080	3,683,591	245,752	$15,492,193
Columbus, OH	945,237	345	258	18,326,115	8,323,748	654,377	$48,969,434
Dayton, OH	613,467	274	201	14,396,238	8,092,453	580,120	$38,188,550
Tulsa, OK	474,668	304	68	2,645,369	2,769,766	183,837	$8,712,736
Memphis, TN	825,193	374	155	10,592,874	6,156,937	407,107	$26,071,399
Nashville, TN	573,294	484	105	5,745,585	3,783,705	275,661	$16,773,447
Austin, TX	562,008	273	283	29,514,261	11,927,094	899,465	$52,001,743
El Paso, TX	571,017	220	115	13,327,526	5,744,578	445,684	$20,604,635
Richmond, VA	589,980	303	128	15,624,112	4,321,781	379,195	$19,973,340
Oklahoma City, OK	784,425	647	56	3,849,612	2,579,566	162,508	$8,170,139

Source: 1998 National Transit Database (MB & MBp only)

Table 2: Selected Peer Indicators

City and State	Population Per Square Mile	Miles Per Capita	Hours Per Capita	Trips Per Capita	Population Per Peak Vehicle	Operating Expense Per Capita	Operating Expense Per Rev Hr	Operating Expense Per Trip
Tucson, AZ	2,345	11.6	0.87	27.2	3,713	$42.72	$48.85	$1.57
Sacramento, CA	3,284	6.4	0.48	17.9	6,305	$38.13	$78.88	$2.12
Indianapolis, IN	1,951	6.3	0.42	11.1	7,886	$22.05	$52.20	$1.99
Louisville, KY	2,916	11.3	0.82	21.7	3,413	$46.72	$57.04	$2.15
Omaha, NE	2,820	7.0	0.53	10.1	4,948	$25.57	$48.10	$2.54
Albuquerque, NM	2,200	7.4	0.49	13.3	4,780	$31.16	$63.04	$2.34
Columbus, OH	2,740	8.8	0.69	19.4	3,664	$51.81	$74.83	$2.67
Dayton, OH	2,239	13.2	0.95	23.5	3,052	$62.25	$65.83	$2.65
Tulsa, OK	1,561	5.8	0.39	5.6	6,980	$18.36	$47.39	$3.29
Memphis, TN	2,206	7.5	0.49	12.8	5,324	$31.59	$64.04	$2.46
Nashville, TN	1,184	6.6	0.48	10.0	5,460	$29.26	$60.85	$2.92
Austin, TX	2,059	21.2	1.60	52.5	1,986	$92.53	$57.81	$1.76
El Paso, TX	2,596	10.1	0.78	23.3	4,965	$36.08	$46.23	$1.55
Richmond, VA	1,947	7.3	0.64	26.5	4,609	$33.85	$52.67	$1.28
Peer Average:	2,161	8.7	0.64	18.2	4,500	$38.53	$59.76	$2.12
Oklahoma City, OK	1,212	3.3	0.21	4.9	14,008	$10.42	$50.28	$2.12

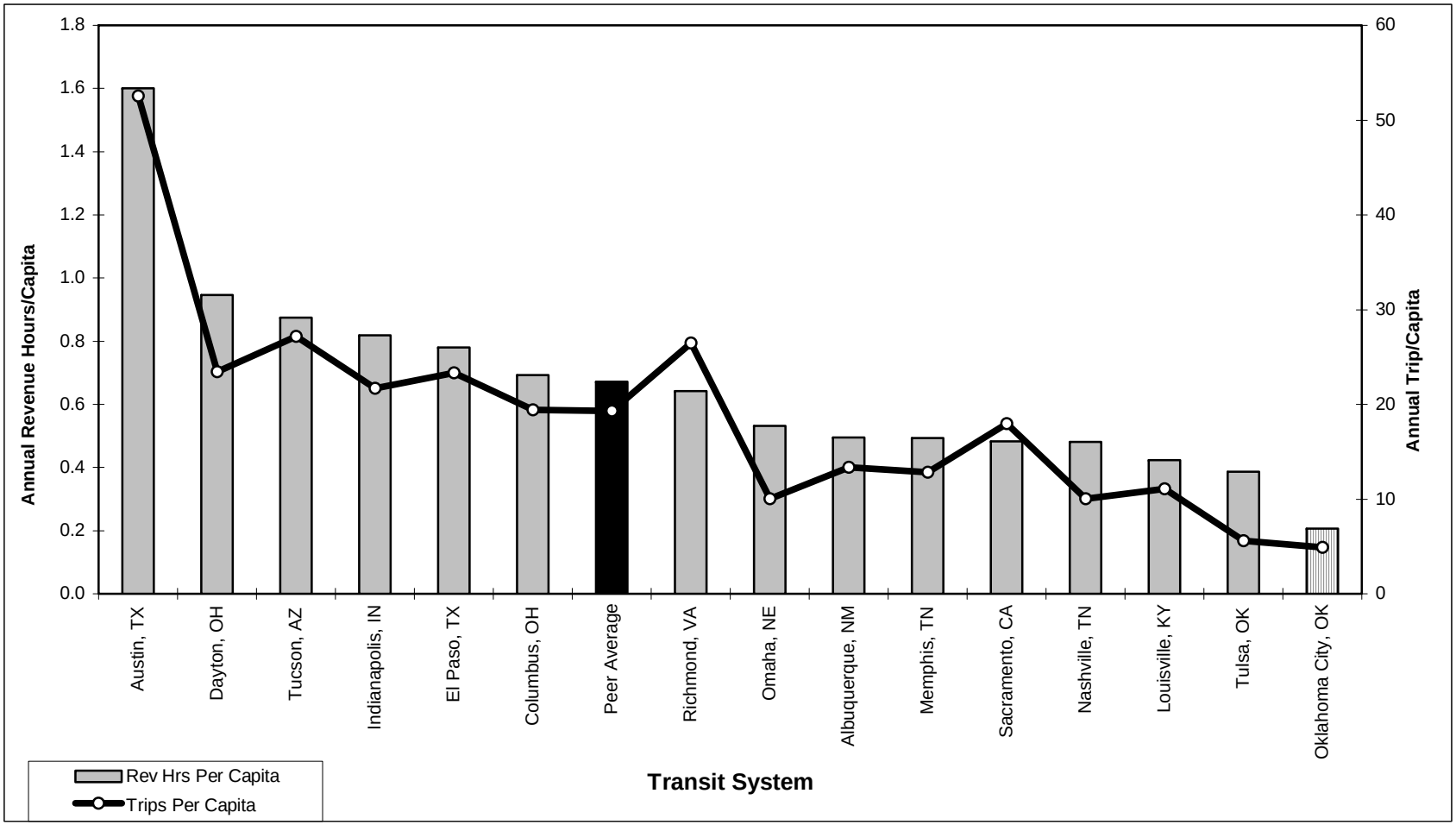
Source: 1998 National Transit Database (MB & MBp costs only)

Table 3: Summary of Peer Service Levels

	Number of Routes	Weekday Span (hrs)	Average Headway (min)	Sunday Service? Y / N
Austin, TX	66	20	18	Y
Dayton, OH	38	18	18	Y
Tucson, AZ	36	16	22	Y
Indianapolis, IN	36	17	40	Y
Columbus, OH	77	18	17	Y
Omaha, NE	33	16	29	Y
Albuquerque, NM	38	16	25	Y
Memphis, TN	37	18	30	Y
Sacramento, CA	67	15	30	Y
Nashville, TN	41	17	30	Y
Tulsa, OK	36	13	29	N
Oklahoma City	27	14	37	N*

* Limited MetroLink service is provided in some parts of the service area on Sundays.

Figure 1: Hours and Trips per Capita



Another way to look at what this level of resources means is to look at other transit agencies that have similar budgets to Metro Transit. Table 4 displays a list of transit agencies with similar levels of funding. Regions such as Canton, Ohio, Savannah, Georgia, Des Moines, Iowa and Grand Rapids, Michigan are clearly very different from a major metropolitan area such as the greater Oklahoma City region. In most cases, the urbanized area of Oklahoma City is at least two to three times as large as cities with similar budgets for transit. The city's physical area is also significantly larger than these peers are. For example, Oklahoma City's service area is nearly four times as large as that in Savannah, an area with similar expenditures for transit service. The table also compares Oklahoma City to the group of transit agencies with similar budgets in terms of the operating expense per capita. The figure shows that Oklahoma City has a lower operating expense per resident than any of the other transit agencies in the table – nearly one quarter of the average.

PUBLIC INPUT: STAKEHOLDERS, FOCUS GROUPS EMPLOYERS AND COMMUNITY

This project has had the benefit of a substantial amount of input from the public. One-on-one stakeholder interviews were conducted with 24 key decision leaders from various backgrounds throughout the Oklahoma City area. Six focus groups were conducted. Employer workshops were held in six areas around the greater Oklahoma City area. Two community meetings were conducted in December, 2000 to receive input on the Long-Range Plan.

The stakeholder interviews took place in spring, 2000. Stakeholders represented senior level executives and elected leadership from Oklahoma City as well as suburban areas. Senior staff and Trustees of COTPA were interviewed. Other representatives of the OKC School Board, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, the Areawide Agency on Aging, Chambers of Commerce, Convention and Tourism, Metropolitan Library System as well as a number of business leaders were interviewed. The stakeholders were asked questions assessing current performance and identifying future directions for the transit agency.

The focus groups were conducted in June, 2000. The focus groups targeted three distinct markets. Two groups were held for each market. Two groups of riders were recruited from current bus riders. Two additional focus groups were held with potential riders. Potential riders were defined as people who lived and worked within the transit service area but did not use the bus for their commute. The third market researched was two groups of non-riders from throughout the metropolitan area. In the focus groups, attitudes and opinions towards transit, its role in the community, and how it is delivered were explored.

Table 4: Peer Group Comparison by Operating Expense

City	Annual Operating Expense (in millions)	Urbanized Area Population	Urbanized Area Sq. Miles	Vehicles in Max Service	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Operating Expense per Capita ($)	Vehicle Revenue Miles per Capita
Richland, WA	$7.80	116,118	97	49	2,473,050	$67.17	21
Palm Springs, CA	$8.50	129,025	90	28	1,721,810	$65.88	13
Duluth, MN	$7.80	122,971	143	71	1,876,390	$63.43	15
Salem, OR	$8.10	157,079	57	44	2,002,140	$51.57	13
Savannah, GA	$7.80	198,630	151	53	2,411,180	$39.27	12
Peer Average	$8.23	301,620	170	57	2,107,854	$36.57	10
Canton, OH	$7.90	244,576	109	55	2,825,430	$32.30	12
Des Moines, IA	$7.50	293,666	160	80	1,593,100	$25.54	5
Grand Rapids, MI	$9.30	436,336	223	70	2,132,570	$21.31	5
Bridgeport, CT	$8.60	413,863	161	39	1,850,970	$20.78	4
Allentown, PA	$7.80	410,436	142	57	1,981,930	$19.00	5
Tulsa, OK	$8.70	474,668	304	68	2,769,870	$18.33	6
Birmingham, AL	$8.90	622,074	399	64	1,655,810	$14.31	3
Oklahoma City, OK	**$8.20**	**784,425**	**647**	**56**	**2,579,566**	$10.45	**3**

Source: National Transit Database, 1998 (MB & MBp costs only)

Six employer workshops were held throughout the greater Oklahoma City area during summer, 2000. In all, over 50 large employers participated in these workshops. The workshops were held in the following locations:

- Downtown
- Northwest Expressway
- Midwest City/Rose State College
- Yukon/Mustang
- Moore
- The I-40 Meridian area

Their needs for transit services were identified. Opportunities to have employers work as partners and get information about transit to employees were discussed.

Two community workshops were held in early December to present the preliminary Long-Range Plan recommendations. Following these open house style meetings, we souhgt to refine the Plan recommendations based on input that we received from the community.

Focusing on the input received from these groups about current service, there are two nearly universal sentiments. Nearly everyone said:

"They do a good job with what they have"

and also

"They do not have enough to do the job we think should be done"

Beyond these comments, there was a great similarity between the opinions of the stakeholders, focus group participants, and employer groups. In general, comments focused around several themes:

- The *image* of the system is not good and must be improved
- *Information* about transit service and how to use it must be improved and made more available
- Service must be developed and delivered with the *customer* as the central focus
- Metro Transit must create / broaden *partnerships* throughout the community
- Reliable and available alternatives to driving enhance the *economic vitality* of a region

IMAGE

The current Metro Transit system is seen as a transportation system of last resort. It is not viewed as a resource for the entire community. This is a significant problem related to gaining support for increased levels of service. Special event services and the Oklahoma Spirit trolley were viewed much more favorably than transit service in general, suggesting the need to implement more services that are targeted to choice riders. Many people talked about being 'ashamed' of the low levels of service provided by transit. The current downtown transfer center was the cause of significant concern and was viewed as a lack of pride in the system. There was wide sentiment that a town like this deserves better. In order for Metro Transit to be able to make the significant expansions that are needed, it will be essential to turn the public image of transit. Public input indicated a level of support for a more innovative and realistic transit system, but support is thin for "more of the same."

INFORMATION

Stakeholders, focus group participants and employers all expressed strong feelings about the availability of information on how to use transit services. For those familiar with the materials that are available, there were concerns about the usefulness of the information that is provided. Oklahoma City does not have a deep tradition of transit ridership and therefore must be very aggressive about teaching people how to use the transit system. This also suggests that the system must be as simple to understand and travel as possible. Currently, the system needs simplification, but without additional resources this is not possible without jeopardizing the coverage of the current system.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

Keeping both eyes on the fact that the only reason services are provided is to serve customers is an essential focus for Metro Transit to adopt. This focus must be in place from the development of services through the implementation and delivery of services. Bus operators are the front line, in constant contact with the public. They must understand their essential role in the public image of the system. A respect for the passenger translates to the delivery of convenient, reliable, safe and friendly service. Every department and employee of the transit agency must be fully focused on how his or her job can be done to improve the experience for the customer or potential customer.

OPPORTUNITIES

The public understands that Metro Transit has taken steps to work in partnership with others in the region. The most current example of partnership is with providing service to a number of Oklahoma City District 89 public schools. Partnering is viewed positively and expansion of these types of opportunities should be aggressively pursued with others. Employers appear to be interested and willing to partner with Metro Transit. Special event services should be expanded, taking advantage of the new venues in downtown. Opportunities to work with the downtown community are also encouraged. Many of these opportunities are important in reaching the choice rider.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Many people that we spoke with see transit as a potential economic development tool. The availability of a high quality transit service that can provide access to labor and reduce parking needs can be a factor in business locational decisions. Most people believe that a major metropolitan area such as Oklahoma City deserves an improved transit system. Mobility of tourists and convention guests can also be enhanced with a responsive transit system. Access to tourist sites and between concentrations of hotel rooms and downtown attractions is another important function that transit can provide for the economic vitality of the Oklahoma City area.

OVERALL COMMENTS

Two additional points made through the public input are important to the overall success of implementation of the Long-Range Plan. The ability to gain momentum to shift public opinion will likely require two things:

- Early successes: Identifying, implementing and publicizing early successes
- The emergence of a person to be the "champion" for the message of change and the future vision of transit

Without these, the likelihood of obtaining the funding needed to implement the recommended system is limited.

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Our assessment of current operations fully supports the public input. With the funding that is available, COTPA staff puts an impressive amount of service on the street and at a low average cost. Costs are in line with their peers, leaning to the low side. Metro Transit management has done a good job to find cost effective ways to address service gaps and needs. The late 1999 introduction of the MetroLink services is a good example of how they have identified a clear need and developed a service that provides a mobility safety net.

We believe that the well-meaning emphasis on putting as many dollars as possible into service may be having a detrimental effect on the service that is provided. In order to increase coverage, some of the schedules make it fairly difficult for operators to keep schedule, and hence reliable service. Additionally, the emphasis on putting resources towards service has resulted in minimal back-up capacity – a situation that can jeopardize service reliability. It also has resulted in an administrative staff that is so small that absolutely essential activities such as marketing, planning, and community outreach have been under-funded. In a small market, without factors such as high parking prices or significant levels of congestion "pushing" people to consider transit, high levels of effective community outreach and marketing are essential to raise the community's awareness of transit and make it easy for them to try using the service. In the short-term, we recommend that Metro Transit focus on these important areas.

Throughout the transit industry, a number of smaller transit agencies have been able to achieve service improvements and innovations much more readily than larger properties. While considered to be a small system, Metro Transit does not seem to display the degree of flexibility and innovation found in some other small systems. There appear to be a number of reasons for Metro Transit's comparative lack of flexibility. A key component is related to the availability of staff and vehicle resources. To be able to take advantage of potential partnership opportunities in the short term, Metro Transit must have the staff available to become more attuned and responsive to the communities needs. Staff must have the vehicles and other resources available to take advantage of available opportunities.

LOOKING FORWARD

In reviewing the feedback on the current Metro Transit service we believe that without significant changes to the current system, including image, customer service and regional coverage, continued decline in the relevance of transit service in the Oklahoma City area should be expected.

The system must also provide coverage throughout the developed area to provide mobility and access to economic opportunity. Currently, some large parts of the region are unserved. Development is continuing outward and increasingly is where people who live in the central area will work. Providing access to these areas must be part of what a system that is designed to enhance the economic vitality of the region accomplishes.

IMPACT OF GROWTH AND TRAVEL PATTERNS

The long-range employment projections indicate an increased pattern of the growth of multiple activity centers. While great strides are being made in increasing the downtown employment market, many other areas of the region have very strong employment activity. Currently, there are five major employment activity centers in the Oklahoma City area that are home to more than 30,000 employees.[2] By the year 2025 the current areas will experience significant growth and three more areas will reach this level of employment.[3] The impact of this trend will be pressure to provide transit services to many different parts of the region more directly than having all services travel through the downtown.

IMPACT OF THE AGING OF THE POPULATION

In addition to the decentralizing employment trends, the next 20 years will witness a significant aging of the population in the Oklahoma City region, as shown in Table 5, with baby boomers reaching retirement age. Currently, the percent of the population that is over 65 years of age ranges from a low of 8% in Cleveland County, to 10% in Canadian County, and over 12% in Oklahoma County. All three of these counties are projected to have nearly 20% of their population over the age of 65 by the year 2020.

With aging being one of the primary causes of limitations in mobility, the aging of baby boomers will put pressure on transit systems to provide a wider array of mobility options to the public. People who have lived in areas that are primarily auto-dependent will increasingly find themselves without independent means of getting around. The ability to have mobility options, in many cases in areas that currently have little in the way of transit service alternatives, will become critically important during the time horizon of this Plan.

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[2] Downtown, Norman, Tinker / GM, NW Expressway /I-44 area, Capitol/Health Sciences Center

[3] Edmond, Airport, Turnpike / 164th St.

Table 5: Percent of Population 65 and Older

	1999 Census Estimate	2020 OK Dept. of Commerce Estimate
Oklahoma County	12.4%	19.5%
Canadian County	10.1%	19.5%
Cleveland County	8.2%	19.5%

NEED FOR ADDITIONAL MOBILITY ALTERNATIVES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Based on demographic analysis, COTPA faces significant increases over the next twenty years of people who are eligible for special services. This increase is expected to strongly impact ADA complementary paratransit service. Recent legal action indicates that service must be available to meet all demand for ADA service. This will require additional funding, primarily from local resources, and through coordination with other services that have funding. Work to identify funding and to meet the requirements of those funding sources should begin immediately.

Compared to peer systems, Oklahoma City is underserved for ADA complementary paratransit. ADA complementary paratransit also commands a significantly smaller portion of COTPA's operating budget than in peer systems. This indicates that people with disabilities have access to fewer trips than they do in peer systems, as a proportion of overall transit service available. This may also indicate that there is significant unmet demand in the Oklahoma City area, based on observations and on the experiences of peer transit systems.

As recommended in the *Review of ADA Complementary Paratransit and Other Paratransit Services Report*, completed as part of this Long Range Transit Plan project, the COTPA should move quickly to revise their current process for determination of eligibility for ADA services. In addition, a detailed plan to identify funding and increase the availability of services for people with disabilities needs to be developed. Increasing coordination with other services provided through COTPA will help to meet the growing demand for transportation.

COTPA VISION AND GOALS

A key step in planning for the future of public transportation in the Oklahoma City area is defining the area's values in terms of a vision statement and goals. A vision statement is a concise statement of purpose, describing the reason for existence. Goals are general in nature to provide direction for the efforts of the organization in response to issues deemed to be important and are addressed in the Long-Range Transit Plan. The formulation of goals not only assists in the development of alternatives, but also provide a means of evaluating the effectiveness of various alternatives.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS IN THE REGION

As the provider of public transportation services in the greater Oklahoma City area, Metro Transit is one stakeholder in the overall transportation environment. The City of Oklahoma City and the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, along with other agencies, counties, and municipalities have a stake in developing and maintaining an efficient transportation system. Many of these groups also establish transportation related goals. It is important for Metro Transit to consider and be consistent with other defined goals. Clearly, the goals for Metro Transit will be more detailed in the area of public transportation.

OKC PLAN

The *1989 – 2010 OKC Plan* contained policies that call for a balance of transportation alternatives, based on regional cooperation, that include walking, driving, biking, and travel by bus, air, rail, and water. The *2000 OKC Plan Update* promotes continuing to pursue a more balanced transportation system. Additionally, the OKC Plan Update recommends: seek funding to increase Metro Transit's fleet to 150 vehicles and explore the possibilities of developing rail transit in Oklahoma City; increase the frequency of bus service and improve convenience for patrons; expand park and ride programs to improve transit ridership; use Welfare to Work funding to expand transit services for Sunday and evening routes; and, identify regional mobility corridors and develop supportive transit and land use strategies for each corridor.

ACOG

The *2025 Oklahoma City Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS), September 2000*, was prepared by the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG). As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Oklahoma City area, ACOG is responsible for preparing a long-range transportation plan for the movement of people and goods. Federal legislation requires this plan to be intermodal and address a 20-year planning horizon. The basis of the plan is that although automobile dependency or congestion will not be eliminated, they can be managed more efficiently with a cost-effective array of transportation choices. The following goals included in the draft plan are applicable to the vision and goals of Metro Transit.

Goal: *Improve the quality of transportation services and the transportation system.*

> ***Policy:*** The regional transportation system will provide and encourage choices among various modes for the movement of people and goods. The existing regional transportation system will be preserved and maintained by identifying and emphasizing corridors and facilities that enhance mobility and promote economic development.

Goal: *Increase the efficiency of transportation services and the transportation system.*

> ***Policy:*** The efficient and cost effective movement of people and goods will be accomplished by developing and maintaining an integrated, multimodal, and intermodal regional transportation system. In addition, convenient and efficient connections between modes and facilities will be emphasized.

Goal: *Provide a safe and environmentally, economically, and socially responsible transportation system.*

> ***Policy*:** Provide a transportation system accessible to the greatest number of people by: emphasizing mobility options for the transportation disadvantaged, improving personal mobility for system users by removing obstacles to utilization of transportation facilities, and coordinating with appropriate public and private agencies to increase mobility opportunities for those who have limited transportation options.

Goal: *Maintain a financially realistic regional transportation planning process.*

> ***Policy:*** Identify revenues available for the preservation and maintenance of existing transportation facilities and services, and for the provision of additional facilities and services to meet transportation needs. Support efforts to develop new and innovative transportation funding mechanisms.

PREVIOUS COPTA GOALS

In the *Shared Vision for COTPA 2005*, prepared in 1994, the COTPA management team identified five major components of a vision for COTPA that would help define COTPA's mission and goals and focus activities to achieve these goals. These components include the following:

- More attractive service delivery options
- Service attributes responsive to the consumers' need
- Regional organization as well as a finance mechanism to support transit
- Understanding of customer and customer needs
- Leadership role for transit in the community

For each of these components, specific characteristics of a 2005 transit system and related obstacles were identified along with strategies to overcome the obstacles. This goals

document has not been in active use in recent years. It was used as a starting point for the development of a vision and goals associated with this Long–Range Plan.

VISION AND GOALS GUIDING THE LONG-RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

The Metro Transit Long-Range Plan Steering Committee has assisted in the development of a vision and goals for Metro Transit. During the development of the vision and goals, committee members discussed the impact on competing issues, such as maintaining service in the core area while expanding the boundary of the existing service area, and providing a quality, dependable service while remaining affordable to the riders. Overall, the Steering Committee agreed that the key to a sustainable service is by developing a "riding culture", or a culture where using public transportation is seen as a regular and positive choice in transportation. In order to develop this riding culture, public transportation must address the following issues:

- Expansion of service area
- Range of services provided
- Information/education
- Customer focus

By elevating the image and perception of public transportation to a regular and usual mode choice, the role of transit is also elevated, and no longer considered to be a "mode of last resort". In response, the following vision statement was developed by the Long-Range Plan Project Steering Committee:

VISION STATEMENT

Metro Transit is a significant partner in meeting the transportation needs of the greater Oklahoma City area.

This vision statement not only addresses the concerns and recommendations of the Steering Committee that public transportation should be a regular and usual choice among various transportation modes, but also implies that all people in the greater Oklahoma City will have access to public transportation.

GOALS

The goals begin to provide a framework for developing, analyzing, and balancing competing issues. It is important that these goals are also consistent with the transportation goals of ACOG and the City of Oklahoma City. Each goal is presented below along with the key elements and implications discussed by the Project Steering Committee.

Goal 1: Access and Mobility

Metro Transit will provide a range of mobility options to serve the greater Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area.

Metro Transit will offer a broad range of shared use services, including fixed route buses, express buses, local area circulator service, van pools, carpool and dial-a-ride. Services in the core area will be expanded, and niche markets such as tourism and convention service will be pursued. Access to jobs will be enhanced.

Goal 2: Market

Metro Transit will deliver innovative services that are responsive to the market needs of the community and service that places the customer first.

Metro Transit will be proactive and responsive to the varied market needs of the community, including outreach to non-English speakers. Many different niche services will need to be developed in order to have a system that meets this goal.

Goal 3: Image

Metro Transit will offer services with a cohesive, positive, and energetic image with readily available information.

Metro Transit services will be presented in a clear and informative way, providing the information that is needed for a rider or a potential rider to make the choice to ride Metro Transit services. Extensive public relations and outreach are essential to achieve this.

Goal 4: Quality

Metro Transit will deliver services that are reliable, on time, safe, clean, and friendly

Customer defined measures of performance should be developed and measured over time as a commitment to providing a quality product.

Goal 5: Economic Development

Metro Transit will be an active partner in promoting the economic growth of the greater Oklahoma City metropolitan area.

Metro Transit must become a partner in local and regional economic development efforts, being seen as a true partner that can have an impact on tourism and convention business, providing improved access to large employers and other essential economic activities.

Goal 6: Financial

Metro Transit will provide services that efficiently uses financial resources and are responsible to the funders of the service.

> Metro Transit will be good financial stewards of any funding that it receives, making sure that funds are used efficiently and effectively for the designated purposes. They will work to grow the financial support of other jurisdictions and increase private sector participation.

The recommendations of the Long-Range Transit Plan are developed to support and implement the Vision and Goals of the COTPA Board of Trustees.

LONG-RANGE SERVICE CONCEPT

KEY REQUIREMENTS OF FUTURE SYSTEM

The COTPA Board has combined what has been learned about the current system with the input of stakeholders and future travel trends to establish a Vision and Goals for transit in the Oklahoma City region. This Statement of Vision and Goals has two overarching themes. These themes are as follows:

- Begin to create a 'riding culture' within the Oklahoma City region
- Guide all actions, from planning to implementation to operations, from the basis of serving the customer *and* potential customer

In order to develop a system that meets the vision and goals of the Board, there are a number of key requirements of the future system. The future system must:

- Attract a broader cross-section of the public to use transit as a mode of choice;
- Improve the availability and usefulness of information about transit;
- Enhance service in the current service area (longer service hours, more frequent service, Sunday service);
- Expand service to a wider geographic area;
- Make sure that service is provided later in the day where needed;
- Offer a "family" of transit services ranging from fixed route buses to ridesharing; and
- Achieve the Service Standards that have been adopted by the COTPA Trustees.

The system must be developed so that it attracts a broader cross-section of the public to use transit. This will be seen by the ability of the system to *attract choice riders*. Auto ownership and use is very high in the Oklahoma City region, as it is in most parts of the country. The ability of a transit system to attract and maintain public support is the relevance of the transit system for the majority of the region's residents. The success of the Oklahoma Spirit trolley service is a good example of choice riders using transit. The special event services offered by Metro Transit are another example of transit services used by choice riders. Expansion of these markets, and the identification of other opportunities to attract and market to this expanded market will be very important to a successful future of the transit system.

Improved availability of information about transit services and how to use them are essential in being able to attract additional riders. The current perception is that the existing printed and Internet marketing materials that are available are not very helpful.

Additionally, the availability of the materials is not widespread. Significant improvements in the area of public information are essential in most transit markets, but particularly in a market such as Oklahoma City where people do not have a tradition, or culture, of riding transit. If you have a car, it is there and available at almost any time. The potential rider must feel nearly as comfortable and confident in using transit as they do using their car in order to create in-roads in getting people to try transit.

The Metro Transit system must be able to provide access to a greater area than is currently served in order to be successful in providing relevant transit opportunities to both the current users and potential users of the system. This *expanded coverage* of the metro area is to keep up with the development patterns that have emerged in the metro area. In recent years, only minor service expansions to the newly developed areas have been possible because of the very limited funding available for transit. The rapid decentralization of the area has created many economic opportunities outside the reach of the current transit system. Employers outside of the current core transit service area have indicated interest in being served by transit as a way to increase their reach for labor.

In addition to an expanded coverage area for transit, there is a need to strategically *expand hours of service* in the Oklahoma City area. In late 1999, Metro Transit introduced "MetroLink" service that provided a curb-to-curb pre-scheduled service for the hours after most routes stopped running (after 7 p.m. and on Sundays). This has been a service that has received moderate use. The availability of the service does not seem to be widely known. This service provides a cost-effective method of providing a 'safety net' level of service throughout the covered part of the city; however it is not adequate for a future system. The growth of the 'call center' type of employment has been fairly dramatic in the Oklahoma City area in the past few years. The 24 hour nature of these businesses, along with health care / hospital facilities and the hospitality business (hotel, restaurants) are putting a growing demand for service beyond the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. than are typically served today. All three of these types of businesses are areas of economic expansion in the region. Greater detail on the recommendations for enhanced services in the current service area are provided in the "Overview of Service Concept" section which follows.

Transit must become associated *with providing a family of services.* Currently, transit is viewed as the service that is provided by traditional buses running on arterials. In the focus groups, and in many of the stakeholder interviews, people who used the Oklahoma Spirit trolleys did not view themselves as transit users. The diversification of services provided by the transit agency is an important element in developing a responsive family of services that can provide cost-effective and efficient service. In addition to traditional buses, examples of other members of the transit family that can be provided by Metro Transit include the following:

- Express buses, limited-stop routes and grid network fixed routes
- Smaller vehicles providing local circulator service, providing feeder/distribution service either on a fixed route or flexibly routed to respond to demand
- Demand responsive dial-a-ride service available to the general public

- Expanded services for seniors and people with disabilities
- The provision and administration of a vanpool program
- An expanded carpool effort

Additionally, the ability for the transit system to accommodate bicycles on buses would benefit this multi-modal market. The appropriate application of these different services will provide mobility to sections of the region that currently are unserved and be provide this in a cost-effective manner.

In developing this future system, it is important to work to *achieve the minimum service standards* that have been established by the Trustees in February 1997. The service standards include minimums for hours of operation, vehicle headways, and others. Currently, the system is far from achieving these minimum standards.

OVERVIEW OF SERVICE CONCEPT

The concept that has been identified to satisfy the future conditions, taking into account the observed and projected travel patterns, the input of the public and stakeholders is the development of a network of various types of transit services focused on hubs, or transfer points, throughout the Oklahoma City region.

The concept plan consists of two major elements:

- First, a restructuring and increased frequency of service within the current service area to implement a modified grid system
- Second, a service area expansion with limited new fixed route segments, non-traditional transit services in lower density areas and park-and-ride opportunities

The preliminary service concept weaves these two major elements together. The service concept is depicted in Figure 2. "Hubs" would be located at a number of key activity centers throughout the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. Each hub would be a place where transit services and/or park-and-ride facilities converge. Transit service directly between "hubs" would be provided.

HUBS

Hubs will be places where passengers can originate their trip or transfer between different services. It can be a neighborhood, or sub-regional, center. At a hub, timed transfers with service direct to other hubs will take place. Hubs can offer a variety of amenities, depending on the passenger volume through the hub. Some hubs may have park-n-ride lots and bike racks associated with them. They are likely to have some sort of a shelter or structure featuring user-friendly route and schedule information. There may be passenger amenities, based on passenger volumes, such as rest rooms, convenience stores, newspapers or vending machines.

Hubs (of various sizes) would be located at the following locations:

- The Downtown Transfer Center
- Capitol / Health Science Center
- Baptist Hospital/Deaconess
- Hotels/I-40 & Meridian
- Quail Springs Mall
- Along I-240 such as at Crossroads Mall
- Norman
- Edmond
- Rose State College
- Moore at I-35 / 19th
- Possibly other locations

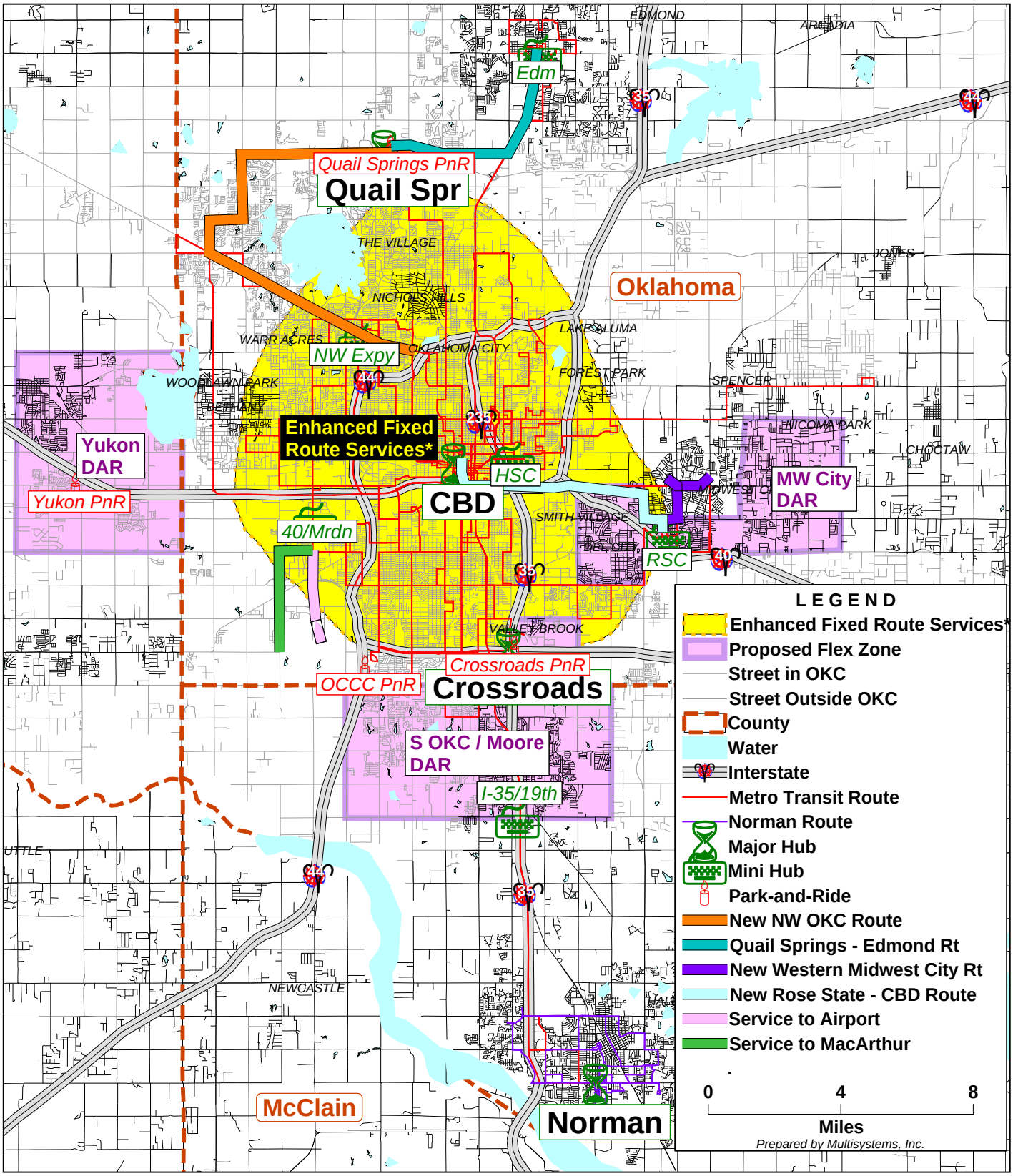
The hub concept works well to accommodate the evolution of a system. It provides a basic unifying service structure that is flexible over time. As plan implementation advances, pieces can be added to the network of hubs, services to and between hubs can be upgraded, and overall system enhancements can occur. For example, the first steps of establishing a hub network would be to make minor changes to the existing system, creating the direct hub-to-hub connections. This would require some additional route segments and strengthening (usually by frequency) other current route segments. The eventual development of grid-network routes will enable transfers at hubs or at other locations.

At this time, some park-and-ride facilities could be established in conjunction with some of the outer hubs and in other locations, such as near Memorial and I-235, on far west I-40, and near Oklahoma City Community College, creating strategic expansion of the service area. This would create a basic framework to build upon.

ENHANCEMENT OF SERVICES IN CURRENT SERVICE AREA

The next phase of development, in this hypothetical example, might be further restructuring of services in the current service area. This would require an increase in the frequency of some services and could include service hour expansion. At this time, some

Figure 2: Service Concept



new areas may be provided with flexible service zones[4]. Some additional express bus service could also be established. These enhancements to service in the current service area are recommended to include the following:

- An extended span of service (providing service for more hours per day)
- Greater frequency of buses and establishment of a modified grid network
- The provision of transit service on Sundays

The current design and frequency of service is a function of the resources that are available to provide transit service in the Oklahoma City region. By all accounts, if a significantly greater level of resources were available to provide bus service, the design and frequency of the service would differ from the current configuration. Referring to a common theme heard throughout the public outreach efforts, Metro Transit is seen as doing well with what it has – stretching the resources that are available to provide as much coverage and service as possible. According to Metro Transit service planners, service would look different if the funding situation were different.

In looking to the scenarios for the Long-Range Plan, the medium-range strategies include service enhancement in the central area of the Oklahoma City region. Service enhancements in this core transit service area, because of the size of the area and the amount of service that is required to add service hours or increase the average frequency, will be a high-cost element of the Long-Range Plan. Earlier estimates were a greater than two-fold increase in the level resources that are currently available – just to provide the enhanced service in the current service area. When you consider the impact of the influx of a much greater level of resources on the service design, you realize that the overall pattern of service delivered would need to be restructured.

With this proposed increase in level of service and the re-orientation of service that is necessary to implement the hub concept, significant changes to the current route structure are likely to be needed. These changes include the establishment of a network of grid routes, and associated changes to existing routes. Establishment of a modified grid network to permit improved directness of travel within the current service area as illustrated in Figure 3. The modified grid network would be operated as a series of arterial bus routes, providing service every 30-minutes on weekday, and about every 45 minutes on weekends. They would primarily follow the region's strong grid street pattern, but would be routed to serve proposed hubs when possible.

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[4] Various flexible services may operate within a flexible service zone. Flexible services take advantage of flexible routing, smaller vehicles, and demand-responsive scheduling in order to meet the travel needs of residents in low-to-moderate density suburban areas. These services can be implemented quickly and modified to accommodate changing demand. Examples of flexible services include dial-a-ride (where passengers generally pre-arrange for service), planned demand (where a single vehicle serves different destinations on different days), community circulators (fixed route service which operate within a neighborhood), and deviating shuttles (where deviations off of a fixed route are permitted). We envision flexible services providing access to transit hubs, where passengers can transfer to more traditional transit services.

Grid routes would not fully replace existing service. Instead, existing radial service to the central business district would be modified or maintained. While radial, CBD-based service would be maintained on existing routes, they would be modified to provide access to grid routes, and to operate more on arterial (rather than neighborhood) streets. Existing routes would also be modified to provide connections to hubs. The implementation of a grid route network and the associated modification of existing routes would only be realistic if additional resources became available.

NEW SERVICES

Nearly full development of the service concept could see direct, limited stop service between hubs, transition of some non-traditional service areas to local circulator fixed routes and an overall increase in services available throughout the service area. A more comprehensive network of park-and-ride facilities and express buses may be in place. All of these elements can be seen in Figure 2.

New services include service area expansions, fixed route services in new areas, express service, and flexible service zones.

New fixed route services are proposed to provide hub connections and to expand the service area. Most of these services should be operated using small size buses. As shown Figure 2, new fixed route services are proposed in the following areas:

- To connect Edmond and Quail Springs
- To connect Downtown and Rose State College
- To provide local shuttle service in Midwest City
- To provide service to the airport
- To provide service to the Hobby Lobby warehouse area

Express service is proposed between the following areas:

- Edmond and Downtown
- Norman and Downtown
- Northwest Expressway and Downtown

It is recommended that service run every 30 minutes during the peak period and every hour during off-peak times, including Saturday.

Flexible service zones are areas of community-based and community-sponsored service that is tailored to service demands. Flexible services operating within these zones can be demand responsive (such as MetroLift), planned demand (such as Monday afternoon shopping trips), or a community circulator. These services would connect to the regional system at the hubs.

Figure 3: Modified Grid

(Print out from TransCAD)

Flexible service zones are proposed for the following areas:

- Midwest City
- Moore/South OKC
- Yukon/Mustang

These new services all serve the purpose of expanding different, appropriate types of transit services to a larger portion of the greater Oklahoma City region than currently experiences these services.

Further into the future, there maybe the opportunity to have express services between hubs, or corridors may be identified for development where transit and land use are coordinated through either bus rapid transit initiatives or planning for rail alternatives. It is the consultant's opinion that any fixed guideway options would fall outside of the timeframe and possible funding resources that this plan is addressing, however, this plan should move in the direction of identifying the key corridors where fixed guideway may someday be feasible.

PHASING OF SERVICES – SHORT-, MEDIUM-, LONG-TERM

SHORT-RANGE STRATEGIES

DESCRIPTION OF SHORT-RANGE STRATEGIES

For the purposes of this project, short-range strategies are those that can be implemented in years 1 and 2 of the Plan. Follow-through will likely involve part or year 3 as well. In general, the activities undertaken in this time frame are oriented towards the following:

- Improving the image of COTPA
- Making information about the system and operations more user friendly and customer focused
- Implementing incremental improvements to existing service
- Identifying partnership opportunities to increase or introduce expanded services

Accomplishing these things can demonstrate the organization's commitment to meeting the expectations of decision leaders and residents in the Oklahoma City region.

Success in this period will set the stage for securing greater funding to implement the hub network of services proposed in the service concept. While there needs to be significant staff-level work to improve the public image of the transit system in the Oklahoma City region, a "champion" or leader *must* emerge to push for implementing an expanded public transit system in Oklahoma City. Without such an individual, prospects for significantly improving service, acknowledged by all that provided input, are unlikely to be realized.

Short-range recommendations are summarized into four categories: marketing, operations, service, and management. In application, many of these recommendations must work together; they are presented in the area where the primary effort will lie.

Marketing

- *Establish and apply a consistent image across all Metro Transit materials. This includes informational materials, advertising and promotion efforts.*

  A key goal of marketing efforts for Metro Transit in the short-range is to develop a renewed image. The stereotype of Metro Transit as "buses for poor people" has developed over time in the minds of the region's residents. Transit service needs to be presented as a modern, efficient, and convenient transportation alternative that provides a quality service for all residents of the region. The Oklahoma Spirit trolley

service is seen in this positive light, showing that transit services – when properly positioned – can alter the typical image of transit in the Oklahoma City marketplace. Marketing efforts must reinforce the idea that the range of transit alternatives will play an important role in the economic competitiveness of the Oklahoma City region's future. Key areas to pursue include the development and application of a consistent 'look' throughout the system.

- *Enhance the usability and access to materials describing transit for both current and potential transit users.*

  Significant improvements in the usability of, and access to, materials to help people understand how to use the transit system are necessary. Usage of transit requires research by potential riders. Testing future products for usability with both riders and non-riders is advisable. Metro Transit currently has a customer information line where operators are available to help with trip planning. Metro Transit also has its route and schedule information available on the Internet. These outlets are not well known and should be assessed and publicized. With respect to the Internet information, the establishment of a Web site that is easier to locate than the current site would be recommended. Many more outlets for route schedules, brochures and other information about the use of the transit system are needed. Marketing materials targeted at non-English speakers are also needed. The identification of additional ways to place detailed information into more people's hands must be accomplished. Options include directly mailing information to potential users as well as maintenance of and additional information racks.

- *Develop and implement a comprehensive "How to Use Transit" campaign*

  One of the most common pieces of input we received during the fact-finding for this project was the great need to get information into potential rider's hands so they had what they needed to be able to take action to ride the bus. We recommend the development of a campaign to make it easier for people to learn how to use transit. Such a program should be designed for non-English speakers as well. This may consist of a "How to Ride" guide and monthly seminars, clear information that connects bus routes to what people know – the roadways and shopping, employment, entertainment and tourism destinations. Route schedules can also be a part of this guide. There are opportunities to sell advertising on the booklet to cover or defray the costs of producing the guide. Other ways to spread information is to take a bus to major gatherings, fairs, shopping centers to give potential riders an opportunity to see the inside of the bus, learn how to pay fares, and how to learn how to get around the system. Capitalizing on the school service to get rider information to households is also recommended.

Operations

- *Enhance emphasis on customer care and information with front line operating personnel.*

Front line employees – operators, supervisors, and customer information representatives – are the face of the organization to the public. It is essential that these staff members be well trained in customer service techniques and well versed in information about the system, and understand the needs and concerns of new customers. Alignment in the rest of the organization to support, and encourage this customer focus is essential.

- *Establish on-going program of performance measurement that tracks service quality and customer satisfaction.*

  A very effective way of charting progress and communicating a message is to track system performance on attributes of the service that are meaningful to customers or potential customers. Follow-up with customers on a regular basis through surveys and on-board communications is an important way to track performance. Occasional surveys of non-riders are important to gauge how the performance of the organization is being seen in the community.

- *Improvements in vehicle reliability and quality.*

  The arrival of 16 new buses in 2001 will help make the bus fleet more reliable. Improved cleaning of bus interiors and replacement of seats and exterior message signs would improve several older buses.

- *Work in partnership with others to improve the transit pedestrian and waiting environment.*

  Every transit rider is a pedestrian during some part of his or her trip. If the pedestrian environment is unpleasant, or the waiting area for the bus is not hospitable, transit will not be a mode of choice. The pedestrian realm in Oklahoma City is not very favorable. Transit riders must negotiate walking and bicycling in areas without sidewalks, and waiting for the bus without shelter. Clearly these issues are beyond the sole responsibility of the transit operator – but just as clearly, the stake for intermodal improvements in the pedestrian realm is high for transit. Metro Transit should move aggressively to partner with the City and other groups to improve and maintain bus stop areas and enable bike and bus connections. Research of transit riders and potential riders can be conducted to learn of the amenity needs and wants. Neighbors of bus stop areas also have concerns such as maintenance issues and loitering. Determining an approach to satisfy both users and neighbors of the system should be researched and acted upon. Often, transit agencies partner with local businesses who “adopt-a-stop”. This type of approach, combined with efforts to work with the cities where transit service operates to add sidewalks and other pedestrian friendly features should be pursued. Hardware and policies needed to allow cyclists to bike and bus should also be pursued, especially for routes serving education facilities and campuses. Implementation of a real-time passenger information system at trolley shelters would provide digital messages to passengers who wait, and this would tell them when the next bus will arrive.

Service

- *Incremental improvements in existing services*

  In the short-range, Metro Transit will be able to make incremental improvements in existing services as funding and opportunities present themselves. Large scale improvements in the span of service or frequency of services that are at the heart of the needs for improvement will exceed the resources that are available in these first few years. The types of improvements that can be made will, in large part, depend on the ability of Metro Transit to forge partnerships and convince others – communities, employers, civic groups - to financially participate in the development and implementation of new services. Metro Transit can promote the establishment of formal park-and-ride lots. Some re-orientation of services to the hub structure can take place in the short term as well.

  Some specific service recommendations for the short term include:

  - Provide access to Will Rogers World Airport and in its vicinity via reallocation of existing resources or using newly identified funds;
  - Implementation of a van pool program;
  - Reprogram and/or expand the Midwest City area services, with an aim of developing one or a combination of new express service, an in-town fixed route shuttle and an expansion of the dial-a-ride flexible services. Local funding support would be expected in order to implement this service. Such support might come from one or some of the following, among others: Midwest City, Rose State College, Del City and Tinker Air Force Base; and
  - Pursue unexpected opportunities that may arise.

- *Aggressively seek out partnership opportunities through Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grants, employers purchasing passes, employer partnerships, synergies with parking garages etc.*

  Metro Transit's partnership with the Oklahoma City Public School system has been very beneficial. It has provided new riders, new resources, and good will in the community. Metro Transit must proactively pursue partnerships with other entities to be able to offer additional services that foster the longer-term objectives of the Plan. Key targets for partnerships are those that will help provide additional transit options to attract choice riders. Marketing efforts can work in harmony to help create and promote these partnerships and to capitalize on the resulting new riders. Some partnerships that might be pursued include:

  - Commuter Choice transit pass programs with larger employers and federal agencies.
  - Employer contribution towards local match for federal Job Access / Reverse Commute (JARC) grant funds for employer oriented services. A JARC plan will

need to be completed in conjunction with ACOG. Some services that have been recommended that could benefit from employer partnership are the potential extension of service to the Airport and the FAA; Northwest Expressway employers who expressed interest in services to access labor; hospitality, health care and other shift employers may be approached to assist with expansion of evening MetroLink service; various parties including Midwest City, Rose State College, Tinker AFB and human services groups to improve service and access to the Midwest City area.

- Downtown and near northeast interests may be interested in helping sponsor a distinctive service connecting the CBD, housing in Deep Deuce and the Health Science Center / Capitol.

- Establish a vanpool program. In conjunction with major employers, promote establish and monitor a vanpool program. The program would be managed either by a contractor or by in-house staff. Metro Transit can complete the groundwork for the vanpool program and make it operational.

- *Aggressively seek out partnership opportunities with other communities, special services for older adults, special events, tourism, etc.*

  - Community based mobility – local shuttles or flexible service zones provide opportunities for local communities to improve mobility within their community, with their financial and planning assistance. These also include the types of van services now provided in conjunction with the Areawide Aging Agency (AAA).

  - Special event services have been very successful with the public in the past. Identifying ways to be able to do more of these services would be important. University of Oklahoma football games, New Year's Eve celebrations and the new arena offer opportunities for joint sponsorship of park-n-ride shuttles. There are many innovative approaches being considered throughout the industry to fund and provide special event service ranging from event ticket surcharges to sports shuttles.

  - Tourism-related organizations might consider sponsorship of a tourist loop trolley, connecting the key northeast attractions with the downtown attractions.

- *Significant progress on Downtown Transit Center relocation and construction.*

  The relocation of the Downtown Transit Center, or CBD hub, is one of the most visible symbols of the need for change and renewal of the image of transit. In the next 1-2 years, significant progress towards a new downtown station is essential. It is important to emphasize that, as important as the downtown terminal is, it will have *much* greater impact when it is combined with many of the other recommendations that make services easier to use and understand. The new downtown terminal, alone, will not change the image of public transit in the Oklahoma City region – but it is one important component. The downtown terminal has the ability to communicate 'pride' in the system.

- *Increase ADA complementary paratransit service in the Metro Transit service area.*

  The current amount of ADA complementary paratransit service provided by Metro Transit is not sufficient. We recommend a five-year build up of approximately a 15% increase annually to bring the service levels in line with service needs. A review of alternative ways to provide ADA paratransit services should also be undertaken to see if there are feasible alternative delivery or coordination options, allowing more service to be delivered for the budget.

- *Implement a new ADA certification process.*

  It is important to assure that ADA paratransit services are being provided for those who are truly eligible for the service. Developing and implementing an in-person certification process for ADA services is recommended. In-person assessments have been shown to yield much more accurate determinations of eligibility for complementary paratransit services.

Management

- *Review organizational capacity to implement Long-Range Plan recommendations.*

  Upon completion of the Long-Range Plan it will be important to take a hard look at the current organization and staff to determine what changes will be necessary to successfully carry the Plan forward. Organizational alignments should be looked at, the training needs of staff assessed, and decisions about staff additions or changes made. As part of the final Plan, a Management and Institutional Issues report will be produced that will provide a starting point for this effort. Our observations suggest that, in the short-term, there may be a need for additional targeted staff resources in the areas of marketing, outreach and planning. Outreach is more than developing partnerships, it is the administration of partnerships and agreements.

- *Work with represented labor to identify ways to increase flexibility in delivery of current and proposed services in the short term.*

  One of the key attributes that stakeholders are looking for in the transit agency is the ability to be flexible and responsive. There are several recent issues that have affected the view of Metro Transit in the eyes of this important group. The delay in the permanent downtown terminal and the frustrations this past summer with the time it took for the changes to the trolley routing are representative issues that need to be overcome.

- *Actively work toward the development of a dedicated, broad-based funding source for transit services.*

  During the first two implementation years of this Long-Range Transit Plan, diligent work towards securing dedicated funding is essential for implementation of further Plan recommendations. Actively participating in community groups and activities, partnering with employers, mobilizing a coalition of groups, and seeking out

individuals who are supportive of expanded public transit services are all key actions to pursue.

COST OF SHORT-RANGE ACTIONS

This section estimates the costs of the short-term actions identified above. A summary of costs is shown in Table 6. All costs identified in this section are stated in constant dollars. Both constant and inflated dollars were analyzed in the Financial Plan.

Marketing

Marketing resources will need to be increased in the short-term in order to address the many issues of image, user-friendliness and availability of information, promoting a 'riding culture' and being involved with outreach efforts. The issues that need to be addressed through marketing and operations are clearly strategic in nature.

Metro Transit, approximately 1% of the budget is earmarked for marketing. There are many other transit agencies that have similar expenditures for this important function. However, the transit agencies that are making strides towards becoming a provider of mobility in the community, rather than just the operator of the buses, have marketing budgets more in line with other companies. It is a fairly well known rule of thumb that in order to conduct marketing that will increase ridership requires a minimum of 3% of the overall budget. This 3% figure is exclusive of salaries in the marketing department. Of course, it is essential that those resources get spent on the types of marketing that will provide information to people and move them to action. A budget of this size requires that marketing is more than advertising and promotion. This type of budget requires a strategic marketing approach and extensive coordination and cooperation throughout the organization. The cost of market research falls into this type of budget as well.

An increase over the next couple years to an annual level of 3% of the budget would yield a Marketing budget of $288,000. This represents an annual increase of approximately $190,000 over current expenditures.

There is also the need for additional staff (2-3 full-time equivalents) to assist in executing the marketing and planning programs. Such staff should be active in planning and service development outreach activities. They need to participate with planners in representing the organization to employers and assist in identifying the important partnership opportunities for near-term implementation. One full-time equivalent is needed in the area of operations for scheduling/data collection. Fully allocated costs of this staff expansion ranges from $200,000 – $300,000.

Operations

The cost associated with the short-term operations improvements is related to customer service training of front-line personnel, and improvements in the bus stop environment.

We estimate that an annual cost of $100,000, primarily to pay for replacement labor would cover operator and supervisor training in customer service skills. This training should take place once a supportive structure within the disciplinary process is in place

and clear expectations of performance can be articulated and followed through. An ongoing program of training, monitoring and employee awards should then be established.

A cost of $50,000 and one annual full-time equivalent should be allocated to develop and implement a customer focused performance monitoring and awards program that is supported by the Trustees.

Capital costs of $100,000 annually are recommended to fund Metro Transit's partnership efforts with other groups (like the City or adopt-a-stop groups) to implement a program of upgraded bus stop facilities in the service area.

Service

In the short term, $800,000 is identified in the Financial Plan for new services. During this time period, the specific services implemented are likely to arise by funding opportunity, rather than by design. Operating and maintenance costs of $200,000 annually are anticipated for the CBD hub. Annual costs of $400,000 are in the Financial Plan for service to the airport area. Some of this may be new funding, other may be a shifting of existing resources. The Midwest City Shuttle, $200,000 annually, is also planned for short-term implementation. Implementation would require partnership between Metro Transit and Midwest City for funding this service. Additional costs, would be incurred in order to initiate and operate a vanpool program.

ADA costs are estimated at $600,000 in the first year, and $1,130,000 in the second year. Components of these costs are additional service ($300,000 in the first year and $630,000 in the second year) and the implementation of the ADA recertification program (estimated at $600,000 over two years).

Table 6: Operating Cost Summary

	Short Term Recommendations (at full implementation)	Medium Term Recommendations (at full implementation)
Base Budget		
Fixed Route	$12,800,000	$12,800,000
ADA Paratransit	$1,900,000	$1,900,000
Base Budget Sub-total	$14,700,000	$14,700,000
Annual Cost of Recommendations		
Service		
Enhanced Service in Current Area	$0	$15,000,000
Hub O & M Costs	$200,000	$900,000
New Fixed Route Services	$600,000	$4,200,000
Flexible Service Zones	$300,000	$800,000
Express Buses	$0	$1,800,000
Incremental ADA	$600,000	$1,650,000
Other		
Marketing	$400,000	$400,000
Planning and Operations Programs	$40,000	$300,000
Admin / Other due to larger system	$0	$6,500,000
ADA Certification Program	$400,000	$200,000
Sub-total New Costs	$2,540,000	$31,750,000
TOTAL BUDGET NEEDED	$17,240,000	$46,450,000

MEDIUM-RANGE STRATEGIES

For the purposes of this plan, the medium-term is the 3-10 year time period. It is during this time period that the major increases to services are proposed. While the changes proposed look dramatic, they represent a very conservative level of service and funding for a system that has the ability to enhance the economic vitality of the region. In the Financial Plan, the medium-range recommendations are phased in over a three-year period. In order for this set of recommendations to be implemented, a broad-based dedicated funding source will have to be in place.

DESCRIPTION OF MEDIUM-RANGE STRATEGIES

In general, the medium-range recommendations accomplish the following:

- Establish a network of hubs to connect different services in the region, and hubs to one another
- Enhance services within the current service area to increase the number of hours during the day when service operates, increases the average frequency of service to 30 minutes, and adds Sunday service
- Expand the geographic area where transit services are available by installing bike racks on all buses, recommending some fixed route bus lines, and adding flexible service zones in South Oklahoma City, Moore and Yukon / Mustang
- Strengthen the express bus services to provide service throughout the day and on Saturdays
- Fund and conduct a regional fixed guideway study
- Expand the real-time passenger information system beyond the trolley systems and continue to improve passenger waiting and intermodal connections.

Detail on these general recommendations is found in the following sections of the report.

Hubs

Transit hubs are locations where passengers can access transit or transfer conveniently between various modes. These modes might include local Metro Transit or CART buses, express buses, paratransit vehicles, human service agency and other privately provided buses and vans, local circulator or flexible service zones, automobiles, bicycles, and walking.

Some hubs may occur in conjunction with park-and-ride facilities. In addition to a new Downtown Transit Center, several additional hubs are proposed to be located outside the downtown area and are important elements of this Long-Range Plan. A system of hubs will allow more bus transfer activity to occur outside of downtown, will facilitate

transfers between traditional bus routes and other services, and will provide a centralized source of transit information for area riders. It is logical to establish hubs at locations with a comparatively high level of passenger activity or interest, and in areas with several nearby routes so that the investment can benefit the greatest number of passengers. In general, transit hubs and transit centers are popular across the country, and can compliment a modified grid bus network in the Oklahoma City area for several reasons, including the following:

- Hubs allow for more convenient transfers between routes and services (i.e., neighborhood circulators and traditional fixed bus routes) for the greatest number of passengers and permits a more direct path of travel
- Hubs improve the passenger environment
- Hubs can provide efficient service by encouraging transfers between (more expensive) paratransit or flexible service zones and (less expensive) traditional fixed bus route service
- Hubs may increase awareness of public transit among non-riders
- Hubs begin to concentrate development and investment in particular locations

Major hubs are recommended to be located:

- Downtown
- Quail Springs Mall
- I-240 corridor near Crossroads Mall
- Norman

In addition to the major hubs, a series of "mini hubs" would be created. These mini hubs would have some of the passenger amenities found at major hubs. Mini hubs would not be enclosed structures or feature restrooms. However, since transfer activity would be encouraged to occur at these locations, mini hubs would be large, attractive, well-lit, secure passenger shelters with amenities such as route and schedule information, bicycle racks, and seats/benches.

Mini hubs would be located at the following locations and perhaps others in the central part of the city:

- The State Capitol area, but also serving the Health Science Center Area (HSC)
- Rose State College (RSC)
- Edmond
- Northwest Expressway / Hospitals

- Hotels near I-40 & Meridian (I-40/Meridian)
- I-35 & 19th Street in Moore (Moore)

Some major transfer locations within the City may also have amenities similar to minor hubs.

Hub-to-Hub Connections

Establishing direct connections between hubs is key to making the hub network function well. It is important that "trunk routes," which connect hubs to one another, operate no less frequently than every 30 minutes. In the cases where connections are by express bus service (Norman, Edmond), the frequency of service must be a minimum of 60 minutes, and preferably more frequent during peak periods.

In many cases, trunk routes are made by modifying and increasing frequencies on existing routes. Sometimes, adding a segment to an existing route can provide connections between hubs. There are also some cases where the trunk routes are entirely new service.

In the Task 3 Technical Memorandum: Detailed Service Strategies, specifics about how to create the hub-to-hub connections are spelled out. Connections are established between the following pairs of hubs:

- CBD to Health Science Center/Capitol – enhance current service
- CBD to Rose State College – new route
- CBD to Crossroads – strengthen current service
- CBD to I-40/Meridian – modification of current service
- CBD to Northwest Expressway – strengthen, modify current service
- CBD to Quail Springs – use current service
- Quail Springs to Edmond – new route
- Northwest Expressway to Quail Springs – new route
- Northwest Expressway to I-40/Meridian – expanded service in current service area
- Edmond to CBD – enhanced express service
- Norman to Moore to CBD – enhanced express service

Modified Grid and Enhanced Service in Current Service Area

In a previous section of this report, some detail on the enhancement of service in the area currently served by transit was provided. (Refer to Figure 3 and related discussion) This

one recommendation nearly doubles the amount of service compared to the current levels.

A brief summary of this major element of the medium-range recommendations follows.

With this proposed increase in level of service and the re-orientation of service that is necessary to implement the hub concept, many changes are likely to be made to the current service design. Many of the following actions would need to be undertaken:

- Establishment of a modified grid network to permit improved directness of travel within the current service area
- Connections made from existing or restructured routes to feed the hub network
- Maintenance of a base level of radial service to the central business district
- Greater use of arterial, rather than neighborhood, streets for full size fixed route buses

New Services

In order to provide expanded coverage of the region, making many developing areas accessible by transit, several new fixed routes are proposed for implementation in the medium-range time frame.

Three new fixed bus routes are proposed to begin operation in the medium-term future. Two of these routes are in the rapidly growing northern sections of Oklahoma City and will provide service to the Quail Springs Hub. The other new route would provide service between Midwest City and the CBD from the Rose State College hub. Flexible service zones in South Oklahoma City / Moore and Yukon / Mustang are also proposed.

Proposed Northwest Expressway – Quail Springs Route

This route would provide service between Penn Square Mall and Quail Springs Hub via the Northwest Expressway and the NW Expressway / Hospital Mini Hub. Rather than a large bus, a small vehicle is recommended to operate on this route due to the many driveways and other travel conditions along Northwest Expressway. An alternative routing for this service might instead be a connection between Quail Springs and the Northwest Expressway hub east of Lake Hefner.

Proposed Quail Springs – Edmond Route

This route would provide service between the Quail Springs Hub and the Edmond Hub. Rather than a large bus, a small vehicle is recommended to operate this service initially, until demand reaches a level more appropriate for larger vehicles. This route would provide service to some of the very quickly developing areas of Northern Oklahoma City and Edmond.

Proposed Rose State College to CBD Route

A route is proposed to connect the Rose State College Mini Hub with the CBD Hub in Downtown Oklahoma City, through Bricktown. It may operate as an extension of the

Western Midwest City Shuttle (recommended for short-range implementation) or as an independent route.

Flexible Service Zones

Demand responsive services are recommended for the lower density areas of South Oklahoma City, Moore and Yukon / Mustang. There are many different ways that these community based services can operate. Any proposed services must be coordinated with other transportation options that currently exist in those areas. Local support of these services is also highly recommended. The demand responsive services in these areas would have connections to nearby hubs to provide access to the regional transit system.

Express bus service

Express bus service is proposed between the following areas:

- Edmond and Downtown
- Norman and Downtown
- Northwest Expressway and Downtown

It is recommended that service run every 30 minutes during the peak period and every hour during off-peak times including Saturday. Currently Edmond and Norman both have a limited level of express bus service operating between their location and downtown Oklahoma City. Other express buses might eventually be feasible, such as between Yukon/West I-40 and Downtown. Given the longer commute distances and the number of people traveling between the recommended locations, express bus service is seen as a valuable component of Metro Transit's family of services.

COST OF MEDIUM-RANGE STRATEGIES

A summary of costs is shown in Table 6. All costs discussed in this section are stated in constant dollars. The Financial Plan looked at both constant and inflated dollars. All costs discussed in the section represent full implementation. In the Financial Plan, the implementation of most medium-range recommendations is phased in over a three-year period.

Cost of Hub Facilities

For the purposes of this Plan, major hubs (with the exception of the Downtown Hub) are estimated to cost $1 million each and require two staff at each to provide information, maintenance and security. The operating costs are estimated to be $800,000 annually. Land acquisition is not included.

Minor hubs are estimated to cost $500,000 each in capital costs, again excluding land acquisition. One staff to maintain and secure the mini-hubs is estimated to cost $100,000 annually.

Cost of Enhanced Service in Current Service Area

Medium-range cost estimates to implement the restructuring and expansion of services in the current service area are estimated at $15 million annually for operating expenses, in current dollars, *over* the current expenditure for services in that area. An additional 40 buses plus spares, at a capital cost of $13.2 million would also be needed.

Cost of New Services

Medium-range operating costs for the proposed new fixed routes consist of annual operating expenses of $3.6 million, in current dollars, and capital costs of $1.4 million for vehicles.

Flexible service zones are estimated to cost $0.8 million annually.

Expanded frequency of express service is estimated to cost $1.8 million annually for operating expenses and $4 million in capital cost for vehicles.

Other Medium-Range Costs

In the medium-range, operating costs of short-term recommendations would, in most cases, carry through. Due to the magnitude of the proposed medium-range recommendations, the Financial Plan includes a line item for Administrative and Other costs that are due to the scale of the service increases. The cost of the service was calculated using a marginal cost model. This is a valid method when looking at incremental changes to the system. In the case of the medium-range recommendations, the scale of the recommendations exceeds the bounds of a marginal cost model. At full implementation, a cost of $6.5 million is shown to cover the difference between marginal costing and full costing. In effect, this figure accounts for necessary increases in office space, accounting, planning, marketing and other costs associated with a larger operation, but not explicitly budgeted for in other line items.

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIUM-RANGE STRATEGIES

Two key barriers to the implementation of the medium-range recommendations are as follows:

- *Funding:* The need to identify an incremental $21 million in annual operating funds (over current operating expenses) and an additional $19 million in capital funds poses a major barrier to implementation. Short-range recommendations have been made to put Metro Transit in a good position to make the case for this significant increase in funding level. Strong performance on short-range initiatives and the identification of a "champion" to carry forward this plan are essential to medium-range success.

- *Partnerships with other local communities and other groups:* Funding of these recommendations must come from as broad a base as the service benefits. The City of Oklahoma City is currently the primary funder of transit service. In order for broader service to be provided, a broader base of funding will be necessary.

LONG-RANGE STRATEGIES

In the long range (10 to 25 years), transit strategies should be focusing on the development of transit centers and transit corridors. The long-term recommendations build on all of the accomplishments that are to be made during the previous phases. In the long term, we have assumed that a stable funding source has been obtained, and that the recommended actions from the short and medium term have largely been achieved.

It is assumed that the following events have occurred during the near- and medium-term:

- The image of Metro Transit has improved, and transit is viewed as an integral part of the economic fabric of the region
- A system of hubs and connections between hubs have been established
- A system of fixed routes, community circulators and flexible service zones have been added to cover most of the development footprint of the greater Oklahoma City region
- Systemwide technological improvements, which include real-time information and personalized trip-planning applications
- A stable funding source has been identified
- Service has been expanded from the current levels by a factor of 2.5
- Transit is used by a wide cross section of the population to get to work, school, shopping, medical appointments and medical activities

The plan looks forward to a time, which we have defined as the "long term," where development policy and processes have evolved from current conditions. In the short-, medium- and long-term, we encourage increases in development patterns that support the transit hubs and transit corridors that emerge from the implementation of this Plan. More concentrated development along these corridors will improve the potential for a light rail or bus rapid transit service option. The Long-Range Plan recommends that a fixed guideway feasibility study take place during the medium time frame. Should the fixed guideway study conclude that a particular corridor(s) has the potential to support light rail or bus rapid transit services, additional work, both at the technical level and the political level, to identify funds above those called for in this Long-Range Plan will need to be pursued.

We further encourage a stronger recognition of the relationship between land use and transportation. It is our recommendation that a closer relationship between local planners and developers be encouraged. By working together, planners and developers can identify opportunities to create a more transit-oriented region, where a system of transit can provide viable option for residents and visitors to travel across the region.

FUNDING THE LONG-RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

Annually, transit systems experience both operating and capital costs. The operating costs are driven by the annual service levels and include items such as wages, fuel, parts, insurance and administrative costs. Capital costs include vehicle purchases, facility improvements, and passenger shelters and fluctuate depending on program requirements and vehicle replacement schedules. In FY01, approximately $14.7 million is projected to be spent in the operation of the bus and demand response services provided by COTPA. An additional $6,000,000 is projected to be spent on capital items - bus purchases and the downtown terminal account for approximately 90% of the projected capital expenses.

The following sections present a discussion of the funding sources supporting the operating and capital expenses of the existing transit services, the projected future operating and capital funding requirements, and the potential funding mechanisms that may be used to support the recommended service improvements.

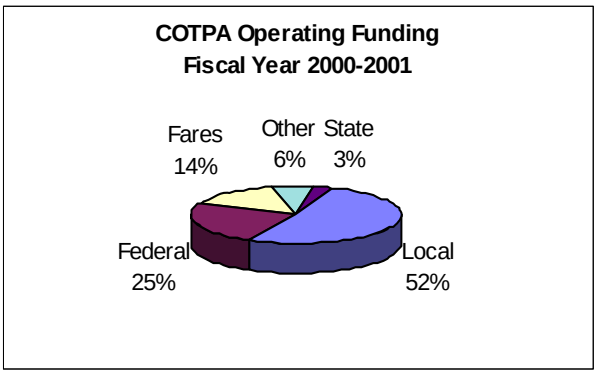
EXISTING FUNDING SOURCES: OPERATING AND CAPITAL

OPERATING FUNDING

The operating costs of the existing services are supported through passenger fares, other revenues, and a combination of local, state and federal operating assistance.

- Passenger fares are generated directly from passengers using the services. As shown in Figure 4, passenger fares account for approximately 14% of the operating funding. In FY01, passenger fares are projected to provide approximately $2.1 million of the operating budget. Although the FY01 passenger fares are slightly below the FY00 passenger fares, historically, passenger fares have been increasing annually. In the future, passenger fares are assumed to continue covering at least 14% of the operating costs.

Figure 4



- Other revenues are generated from advertising and other activities not directly associated with provision of transit. Other revenues account for approximately 6% of the operating funding. Although other revenues have fluctuated annually, ranging from $300,000 to $900,000, they have been increasing annually in recent years and are assumed to continue increasing.

- Local operating assistance is obtained from allocations from the general funds of local communities and from grants. At approximately $7.4 million, local operating assistance accounts for over 50% of the operating funding. Oklahoma City is the greatest contributor of local funds – providing approximately $6.9 million in FY01. Contributions from other local governments range from approximately $500 to just over $92,000 annually. Local grants range from $24,000 to $186,000. In the future, local revenues are projected to continue being the major source of operating funding.

- State operating assistance is obtained through the Transit Revolving Fund. In FY01, state funds are projected to provide approximately $400,000 towards operation of the transit service – accounting for 3% of the operating budget. Limited state operating assistance is projected to continue to be available in the future. Across the nation, state government typically provides 20%.

- Federal operating assistance is obtained through the Urbanized Area Formula Program (Section 5307) and special grants. Section 5307 funds are used to offset capitalized maintenance expenses. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Job Access/Reverse Commute and other grants are used to fund the start-up of new services but are available only for the initial 2 to 3 years of the new transit service. In FY01, federal operating funds are projected at approximately $3.6 million – accounting for 25% of the operating funding. At $2.2 million, Section 5307 funds account for the majority of the federal operating funding. Federal funding is assumed to grow modestly in future years.

CAPITAL FUNDING

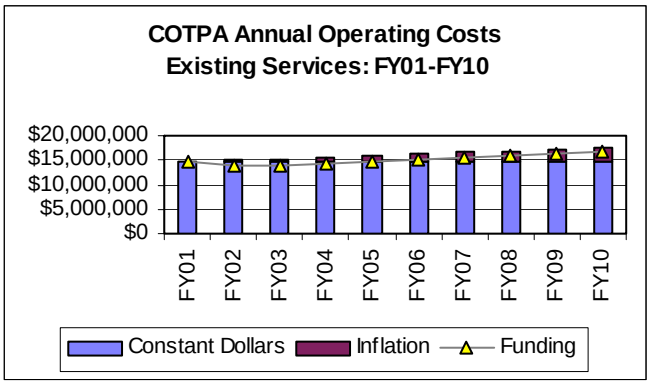
Capital funding is obtained primarily from federal formula programs and discretionary grants. In general, federal capital funding provides for 80% of the total capital costs – with the remaining 20% funded with state and local dollars. The City of Oklahoma City has generally been the source of the majority of the local capital match dollars.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS: OPERATING AND CAPITAL

OPERATING FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

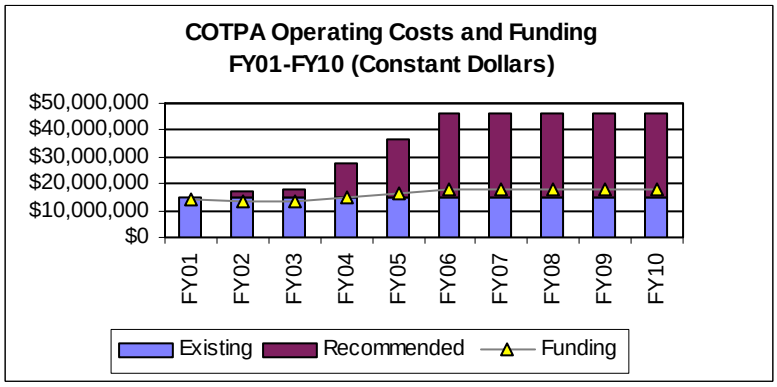
As shown in Figure 5, the current services are projected to experience annual inflationary cost increases that will raise the annual operating budget from the current $14.7 million to $17.6 million by FY10. Assuming that comparable annual inflationary cost increases apply to the funding from existing sources and that funding from demonstration grants is not extended, a revenue shortfall is projected as early as FY02. By FY10, the revenue shortfall will be approximately $700,000.

Figure 5



The implementation of the short and medium term recommended services result in additional increases in the annual operating budget. As shown in Figure 6, in constant dollars, the current operating budget is doubled after FY04 – the initial year of the medium term improvements. In FY06, the last year of implementation of the medium term recommendations, the operating budget reaches $46.5 million – more than triple the current budget in constant dollars. As also shown in Figure 6, in constant dollars, the increases in operating costs result in funding shortfalls ranging from $3.5 million in FY02 to $28.7 million by FY06 – with the majority of the shortfall resulting from the service improvements.

Figure 6

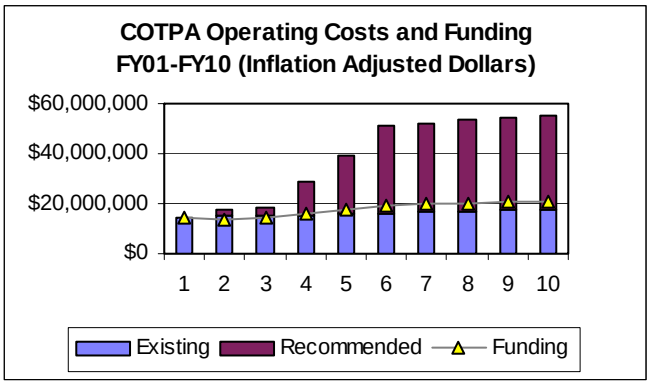


Note: Funding revenues include fares from recommended services

As shown in Figure 7, the annual operating costs, in inflation adjusted dollars, increase annually and reach $55.5 million in FY10. After the implementation of the last of the medium term improvements in FY06, the annual operating cost increases reflect only the inflationary cost increases. The annual funding shortfalls, in inflation adjusted dollars,

range from $3.6 million in FY02 to $34.5 million in FY10 – with the majority of the shortfall resulting from the service improvements.

Figure 7



Note: Funding revenues include fares from recommended services

CAPITAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Capital funding requirements for the existing services include bus and paratransit vehicle replacements and facility and equipment expenses. The project expenses for FY02 and FY03 have already been programmed by COTPA – although there are shortfalls in the local funds required to match the federal dollars. Later year expenses for the existing system are based on the expected vehicle replacement needs and average expenditures on facilities and equipment. Bus replacement expenses are estimated to be $6.4 million in FY09. Paratransit vehicle replacement expenses are estimated to be incurred in FY06, FY07 and FY08 and to total approximately $1.4 million. Facility and equipment expenses are estimated to average $300,000 per year. Capital costs associated with the recommended service improvements include expansion of the bus and paratransit fleets (and their future replacement), construction of transit centers, an AVL system, and passenger facility improvements. Annual capital costs for the existing and recommended services are illustrated in constant dollars in Figure 8 and in inflation adjusted dollars in Figure 9. Additional costs could be incurred implementing pedestrian improvements like ramps and sidewalks or programs like bike racks on buses.

The capital funding projected to be available from the federal formula program support an annual program averaging $3.1 million per year – with a required local match of $625,000 per year. As illustrated in Figures 8 and 9, the current sources of capital funding are sufficient to cover the average annual capital expenses of the current system. The capital requirements of the recommend services result in a total capital budget shortfall of approximately $17 million. Although additional capital dollars may be available from the federal discretionary capital program, a local match would be required. At present, the projected local capital funds are not sufficient to meet the full local match requirements. At $430,000, the estimated annual available local capital funds, in constant

dollars, support only a $2.15 million annual capital program – sufficient to support the existing system but not the recommended services.

Figure 8

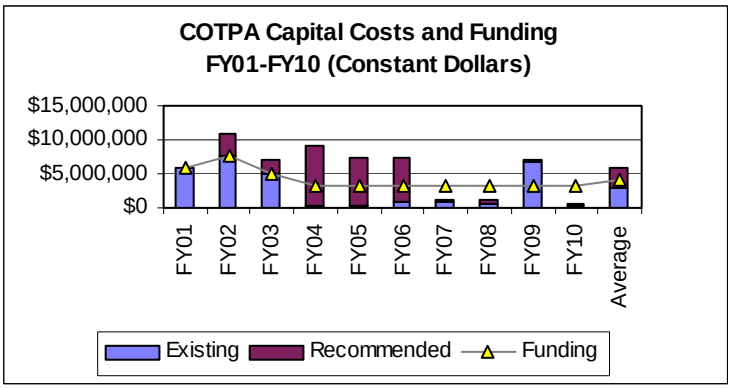
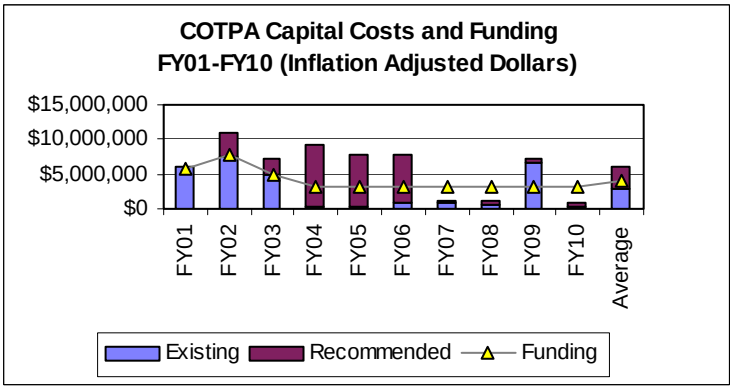


Figure 9



Detailed tables presenting the estimated annual operating and capital costs and funding shortfalls, in constant and inflation adjusted dollars, are contained in *the Funding Strategies and Requirements Report* submitted to Metro Transit as part of this project.

RECOMMENDED FUNDING STRATEGIES

A combination of funding strategies is proposed to fund the existing and recommended services. In the short-term, strategies that focus on revenues from purchase of service agreements, supplemental revenue sources, and pass programs are recommended. Revenues from these sources can support the initial service improvements and help build support for transit and improved transit funding. A dedicated sales tax is the only source of funding capable of generating the revenues needed to fund the operating and capital costs of the recommended medium term improvements. Such a tax should be regional in nature, collected in various local jurisdictions.

Detail of a number of different funding strategies is outlined in the Appendix to this report.

- Passenger fares are estimated to continue covering 14% of the operating costs – yielding over $7.8 million in inflation adjusted dollars by FY10. Refinements of the fare policy to obtain a higher cost recovery are possible, but are likely to be unpopular – especially when a dedicated sales tax is being proposed.

- Enhancements to existing service agreements/arrangements with local governments should be pursued to fund the short-term improvements and to support the current services. In the medium term, these agreements may be supported by revenues from the implementation of a dedicated sales tax in each of the affected communities. Although the goal of the service agreements should be to recover the operating costs, the service agreements should cover a minimum of 50% of the operating cost of the service.

- Enhancements to agreements with local universities and implementation of student pass programs should also be pursued and continued after a sales tax is obtained. These agreements should also aim to recover the operating costs and, at a minimum, 50% of the operating costs.

- Employer pass programs and employer subscription services should be pursued for new services and should be continued after a sales tax is obtained.

- Additional revenues should be generated from advertising and sponsorships – particular as new informational materials are being developed, new facilities built, and new vehicles put into service.

- State operating assistance such as the State Transit Revolving Fund should continue to be pursued, so that it is a stable source of funding.

- Federal operating assistance and special grants should continue to be attained. As local resources permit, federal formula dollars should be concentrated in the capital program – where they require a 20% local match.

In addition to the operating funding, additional capital funding will be required to build the transit hubs and acquire the additional vehicles. Funding for these projects should be attainable from existing federal formula and discretionary programs. In addition to local tax revenues, private investment and other capital strategies should be considered as potential match sources.

MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

The Plan recommends services that are practical and realistic for a region such as Oklahoma City. At the same time, these recommendations represent a tripling of transit services. Such an increase – especially when a funding source has not yet been identified – cannot be achieved without a substantial change in the way the agency approaches its business.

THE VISION

The COTPA Board of Trustees has established a vision for the transit agency:

> *Metro Transit is a significant partner in meeting the transportation needs of the greater Oklahoma City region.*

With this as the starting point, Metro Transit will have to:

- Adopt a more regional focus
- Be proactively engaged in partnering with organizations, employers and communities throughout the region
- Offer a broader array of shared use transportation services, appropriate to the area
- Be prepared to experience significant growth
- Identify and help secure a significant stable source of funding that matches the service area

Metro Transit has spent most of its history 'making do', 'getting by', and stretching every dollar to keep the maximum possible level of service on the street. Nobody doubts the commitment of staff to do the best with what they have. The shift from a 'survival' focus to a focus on preparing for expansion is a transition that can be very difficult for organizations.

THE VIEW FROM THE OUTSIDE

Input received from stakeholders, riders, non-riders, employers and others throughout the public outreach conducted for this plan provides a snapshot – or a view from outside. This is an important voice to listen to. Even when some of the perceptions held by outside parties might not be technically true – the fact that there is a prevalent perception creates a situation that must be reckoned with by the transit agency.

A brief summary of the public perception follows:

- Transit in Oklahoma City has a poor public image.

- Metro Transit needs to become more pro-active and involved in partnerships throughout the region. The partnership with schools is viewed very positively.

- Transit services need to be relevant to a broader segment of the population – trolleys were an example of a positive image service.

- Metro Transit needs to provide much more service.

The key to implementation of the Long-Range Plan recommendations, beyond the short term, is the establishment of a funding source that is not currently available. Without doubt, the public perception of transit will need to change prior to success in securing additional funding.

The COTPA Board's Vision and Goals is consistent the image the public expects. The difference between the Vision and Goals and the current public view of Metro Transit is where barriers to implementation of the Plan surface.

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS

Simplistically, the barrier to implementing the Long-Range Transit Plan recommendations is funding. In a way, the proverbial chicken and the egg analogy can be seen in the region's situation. To date, additional funding has not been available. The public mood to support additional funding for transit is not good today. In order to break out of this cycle, Metro Transit must become the architect of its own future, tackling the perception barriers to develop an even chance of unlocking future funding.

Two parallel tracks should be followed by Metro Transit. The short-term recommendations in the Long-Range Transit Plan are developed to support these tracks.

- Concentrated efforts should be undertaken to improve the image of transit and the transit agency. Success in this area will improve the public climate and generate more supporters of transit.

- The identification of a 'champion' to carry the long-range vision forward is essential. Achieving the funding to implement the medium-term recommendations will require someone influential with the public and with political leadership.

EFFORTS TO IMPROVE TRANSIT'S IMAGE

In the eyes of the public, stakeholders and decision leaders, Metro Transit must be viewed as a responsive, pro-active, energetic organization that gets things done. Many short-term recommendations of the Long-Range Transit Plan are designed to achieve quick successes and develop a track record for Metro Transit to point to. Others are important for Metro Transit to be viewed as an active and vital partner in the greater Oklahoma City region. The ability to expand relationships with other influential groups enhances potential support for future funding, and more strongly connects Metro Transit into the activities of the region.

Key management and institutional issues to address and unlock the potential of the organization are described in this section.

- *Conduct a comprehensive review of the organizational structure and staffing for alignment with the Vision and Goals and implementation of Long-Range Transit Plan recommendations.*

  It is highly recommended that a comprehensive review of the organization be conducted. Clear goals have been developed and a series of recommendations have been made. A thorough look at the organizational infrastructure, both structure and personnel – to align it with the goals and directions of the plan should take place.

- *At the highest levels of the organization, Metro Transit must become more pro-actively involved with the many civic, governmental and economic development groups and organizations in the region.*

  The need for a strong external focus at the highest levels of the organization cannot be overlooked at this time in history. Executive staff and Board members are all needed to be involved and conspicuous in the community. Active involvement in groups such as the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, Chambers of the surrounding communities, The Oklahoma City Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments and other similar groups in the region will be critical if Metro Transit is to move to implement the service expansion recommendations of the Long-Range Plan in the medium term.

- *Through staff efforts, aggressively pursue partnerships with employers to identify ways to work together for mutual benefit.*

  Employers have identified a strong willingness to work with Metro Transit to build support and opportunities for transit. Interest in commute benefits, vanpools, and development of some specialized services are all areas that should be pursued by Metro Transit in the near term.

- *Identify cross-functional teams empowered to identify transit agency response to potential partnership opportunities.*

  In the next few years, Metro Transit will have to be opportunistic. As partnership opportunities are identified – either initiated by staff or by the potential partner – Metro Transit must be fully prepared to quickly determine its course of action and be able to deliver. Responsiveness and follow through must be hallmarks of the first opportunities, or the opportunities will diminish.

- *Identify the organizational structure to accommodate the development of non-traditional transit services such as flexible services, general public dial-a-ride and vanpools.*

  As the transit industry moves more into the role of being mobility managers – providing a wider range of services to the public – it has struggled with how to handle these other services within their organizations. Services such as flexibly routed

services or demand responsive services for the general public fall somewhere in between the two types of services typically provided, these two being fixed route and ADA paratransit. It is important to view these services uniquely and staff them accordingly. Pulling together a staff group with some background in fixed route, paratransit and marketing usually presents the most successful implementation of the new services.

- *Develop and support a strategic marketing approach to the business that is integrated into all portions of the organization.*

  We recommend Metro Transit move towards a strategic marketing approach, integrating customer needs, research, outreach, involvement with product development, marketing and promotion.

- *Train, support, review and reward all staff – but especially front line staff – on their customer service performance.*

  In order for a customer focus to take root in an organization, the importance of the customer cannot be merely stated. Training must take place on an on-going basis, and the review of employee performance must also incorporate this emphasis.

- *Develop and implement clear performance measures representing system accountability to the public.*

  Implementing a system of reporting on progress towards improved system performance can be a very effective communication tool and a measure of organizational commitment to change. When the public is provided with reporting on performance measures that are meaningful to them, public perception can be moved.

- *Work with represented labor to identify 'win-win' opportunities for the organization to help position the agency for significant expansion in the future.*

  The potential for a nearly three-fold increase in the level of transit service provided in the near future should hold the potential for some collaboration with represented labor. We recommend encouraging joint labor – management discussions of potential win-win opportunities that can assist the organization meet its goals of implementing increased levels of service and expanding the transit service area.

- *Establish clear and consistent goals between the COTPA Board of Trustees and the City of Oklahoma City as administrators of the Trust.*

  The nature of the relationship between the Board of Trustees (of the public trust), the City of Oklahoma City (the administrator of the public trust), and the senior staff members (employees of the City) is somewhat unique. A clear statement of expectations and ways to measure performance is recommended between the City, the Board and senior staff.

- *Partnerships and funding arrangements must be identified with other surrounding communities for service expansion to those areas. Metro Transit will need to develop*

ways to overcome inter-community biases and perceived negative ties to the City of Oklahoma City to facilitate these arrangements.

Today, absent a regional funding source, most transit service provided by Metro Transit is funded by the City of Oklahoma City, and correspondingly is operated in the City. The shift to a transit system with more regional coverage will require funding from additional communities prior to broad based funding being secured through a voter initiative or other means. A potential barrier to cooperation between communities is the perception that Metro Transit is just a City of Oklahoma City entity. This perception barrier will need to be aggressively addressed to succeed in opening the potential for funding cooperation.

DEVELOPING THE VOICE FOR THE FUTURE

The recommendations discussed so far in this report provide a framework to address the issues of organizational change and the need for greater external involvement of the organization. While the organization is working to demonstrate a new level of focus, energy and involvement in the community, Metro Transit must also find their 'voice for the future'.

This 'voice for the future' is critically important to Metro Transit securing the dedicated, broad based funding that is so important for a system expansion of the magnitude needed in the Oklahoma City region. Through the course of development of the Plan, no likely candidate for carrying the message for increased funding has yet emerged.

The characteristics of a successful 'champion' of the Long-Range Plan include:

- *Publicly influential* – someone of recognized and respected stature in the community.
- *Politically influential* – someone with strong political connections to those who may be able to affect major funding decisions.
- *Associated with business or economic development*

In other communities where a transformation of transit has occurred, there is a person, or group of people, who serve as the catalyst for the change. More often than not, that person or group is a leader in the business community. Sometimes, this leader comes from within the ranks of the Board. Other times, the leader is located outside of the transit agency but believes in the value of alternative mobility options to the community-at-large.

SUMMARY

Implementation of the Long-Range Transit Plan will require significant efforts by Metro Transit to demonstrate change and become more fully involved with the community. These efforts, coupled with success in identifying the 'voice for the future' hold the promise of unlocking the potential for full implementation of the Long-Range Transit Plan.

APPENDIX

ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES

The existing sources of operating and capital funding need to be enhanced to meet the operating costs of the current system and to benefit from all the federal capital dollars available. In addition to the existing funding sources, various types of funding and financing mechanisms and operating strategies should be considered to meet cash flow needs and defray the operating and capital costs of the recommended service improvements. The possible mechanisms and strategies fall into the following general categories:

- Purchase of service agreements
- Private donations and corporate sponsorship
- Supplemental revenue sources
- Employer-subsidized pass or voucher programs
- Refinement of fare policies and structures
- University pass programs
- Contracting for service
- Dedicated taxes and user charges
- Increased access to non-transit funds
- Innovative infrastructure financing mechanisms
- Issuance of debt/leverage of assets
- Turnkey development/equity partnerships
- Value recapture
- Use of property and property rights

PURCHASE OF SERVICE AGREEMENTS

Transit providers can make arrangements with third parties - either public or private - to provide specialized service on a contractual basis. For example, individual localities may contract with transit providers to purchase additional service at an agreed-upon rate. Transit providers may also work with private entities, such as employers or developers, to

provide dedicated subscription service for a specific workplace and/or housing development.

Local Service Agreements

A key option considered in developing the recommended strategies was the concept of incremental levels - or packages - of service for individual communities. One approach to funding the local services would be to allow the individual communities to purchase the service they desire. This arrangement allows the community to receive the amount - and presumably type - of service it desires. There are a number of examples around the country of individual communities/towns or private entities (e.g., developers) in a region purchasing service from the regional transit operator. In the St. Louis region, St. Clair County (IL) purchases all of its transit service from Bi-State Development Agency; a formula has been established for determining the amount the County pays each year.

COTPA already uses the concept of local service agreements to obtain operating funding from local communities. These arrangements should be revisited to ensure that COTPA is receiving fair compensation for the services provided to each community. Services to new areas should also be pursued using local service agreement approaches.

Subscription Service Agreements

Purchase of service agreements can also be applied to private entities, such as major employers or shopping centers, through "subscription bus" services. Costs are generally shared among the transit agency, passengers, and the private entity, although the specific arrangements can vary considerably. For example, in Syracuse, CNYRTA operates services sponsored by the University of Syracuse, Oswego State University, Veteran's Hospital and Crouse Hospital.

In particular, this "partnership" strategy could be used to provide operating funding for new services tailored to meet the needs of major employers, universities, hospitals, senior housing developments and other target service areas with concentrations of potential trip origins or destinations. This strategy could also be tied into welfare to work initiatives and social service programs.

PRIVATE DONATIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Private donations are contributions (of funds or land) by businesses, foundations, developers, or property owners for specific transit improvements (e.g., extending bus service or providing vehicles). The benefits to donors may include improved access, public acknowledgement, and possibly tax deductions. Such donations and initiatives have included merchant subsidies for transit use (similar to parking validation policies), and placement and maintenance of bus shelters and other transit amenities at private developments. Corporate sponsorship of transit centers and even vehicles is another opportunity for obtaining "non-transit" revenue. Sponsorship could involve providing transit center area landscaping, maintenance, design enhancements, or information displays in return for public acknowledgment of the gift or tax benefits for charitable contributions.

SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE SOURCES

These strategies involve generating new revenue streams by taking greater advantage of existing transit agency resources. For instance, advertising revenues have long been a source of additional income for transit providers. Advertising space may be sold in transit centers, in shelters, on and inside vehicles, and on reusable fare media. There may be potential for additional advertising revenue in conjunction with any new transit facilities proposed and with the information materials and marketing materials developed as new services are implemented. Transit providers can also secure additional income by negotiating extra payments from event sponsors - or charging premium fares - for providing augmented service to special events at facilities they serve.

Transit agencies can also contract to provide services such as maintenance, servicing, fueling, and towing to other area operators. In Syracuse, CNYRTA provides functions such as bus washing and cleaning for bus companies such as Quality Coach, New York Trailways, and Adirondack Trailways. Montauk Bus Company purchases fuels and vehicle servicing from CNYRTA. There may be opportunities to gain revenues and make more efficient use of existing facilities by providing services to other operators in the area – including small private operators and taxis.

EMPLOYER-SUBSIDIZED PASS OR VOUCHER PROGRAMS

Another potential source of additional revenue is employer-subsidized pass or voucher programs. If a pass is subsidized to any significant degree - or if a voucher is provided that effectively reduces the price of fare payment - some employees will buy a pass even if they do not use transit every day. In other words, if an employee can get, say, a $36 monthly pass for $24 due to a company subsidy, he/she only has to ride 12 days a month (at a cash fare of $1.00) to break even; the transit agency still receives the full $40. The difference between the amount the employee formerly paid (i.e., in cash or individual tickets) in using transit and the full price of the pass represents additional revenue to the agency.

With improved transit service to major employment areas, the notion of subsidizing transit for employees could be more appealing to at least some employers. The establishment of employer pass programs such as the CommuterChek voucher program should also be encouraged in conjunction with any welfare to work-related services. Finally, the willingness of employers to participate could increase if the administrative process of issuing passes was not time-consuming; for instance, passes could be issued for longer than a month at a time, thereby reducing the administrative cost. Several transit agencies have instituted annual pass programs.

UNIVERSITY PASS PROGRAMS

Another potential source of additional revenue is university pass programs. Under such programs, a transit fee is included in the student activity fee collected by the university from every student. The transit fee is provided to the transit operator to fund services. In exchange, the transit provider offers students presenting a valid university ID free unlimited rides. University pass programs have been successfully implemented in

various college campuses including those in Urbana-Champaign in Illinois and West Lafayette in Indiana.

REFINEMENT OF FARE STRUCTURES AND POLICIES

In general, system fare revenues can be increased through adjusting fare levels and/or payment procedures – or through the implementation of fares in the case of fare free systems. Fares can also be targeted to different market segments, based on rider characteristics such as frequency of transit use and willingness to prepay fares ("market-based" pricing). An increase in the cash fare can be linked with changes in pricing of various fare options to mitigate the normal loss of ridership accompanying a fare increase.

An electronic fare collection system can facilitate implementation and administration of additional options (e.g., stored value, as well as a more refined distance-based strategy or time-based pricing, such as peak/off-peak differentials). With debit cards, an agency may be able to implement a fare structure that accounts for differences in the services provided and the clients/communities served.

Stored value electronic fare media (particularly "smart cards") also offer the potential for transit providers to realize revenue through recruiting "merchants" to accept transit fare media for small purchases. The transit agency gains revenue through transaction fees from the merchants, and possibly through unused or expired value (i.e., where riders never fully expend the stored value on their cards).

COST REDUCTION STRATEGIES

One means of reducing a transit agency's operating and maintenance, and perhaps capital, costs is to contract for specific operating and/or maintenance services. This may entail contracting regular transit service, operations of a specific type (e.g., suburban routes or specialized senior and disabled/ADA service), some or all maintenance activities, or facility related activities (e.g., management, maintenance, or upkeep of grounds).

There is precedent to the contracting of portions of transit service in a region. The systems in Denver, Miami, Los Angeles and suburban Chicago contract for portions of their service. In some cases (e.g., St. Louis and Norfolk), the bidding out of small vehicle service has led to the establishment of a lower driver wage class at the transit agency for operators of small vehicles. This has enabled the union to submit low enough bids to retain the services in question.

DEDICATED TAXES AND USER CHARGES

Tax-based strategies have been widely used as dedicated sources of transit revenue. Where they are directly used to provide transit funding, such taxes are typically major sources of transit revenue - often the largest single source. The sales tax is the most popular type of tax used to support transit in the US. Sales tax rates range from a fraction of a cent to a full cent. An earlier study of dedicated transit funding options for

Oklahoma City indicated that a one-cent sales tax would generate over $51 million annually. Although the legislation to create a special taxing district is in place, a local election would be required to establish the tax amount.

Other types of taxes and user charges that have been used to fund transit include:

- *Payroll or Employee Income Tax:* Revenue from a corporate payroll or employee income tax can also be used to support transit. A corporate payroll tax is typically imposed on all employers (or those over a certain size) within a transit district, while an employee income tax is levied on all individuals living or working in the service district.

- *Taxes on Motor Vehicle Registration, Title and/or License Fees*: Taxes on motor vehicle registration, title and/or license fees represent other tax-based sources related to automobile use and/or purchase. In the study of dedicated transit options, it was determined that a $1.00 increase in the vehicle registration fee in Oklahoma County would generate approximately $750,000 annually but would require special legislation.

- *Utility Taxes or Fees:* Utility (e.g., electricity, gas, water, etc.) taxes or fees, based on rate of consumption, can be added to regular use charges and used for transit funding. The earlier study on dedicated transit options determined that a $1.00 increase in the monthly billing statement for water in Oklahoma City would generate approximately $1.9 million per year. It would require approval of the Oklahoma City Council.

- *Property Taxes*: Revenue from property taxes or Business Improvement Districts (B.I.D.) can also be distributed to transit agencies.

- *Mortgage Recording Taxes*: Mortgage recording fees provide revenues from real estate transactions by homeowners and businesses.

INCREASED ACCESS TO NON-TRANSIT PUBLIC FUNDS

Another possible approach to generating additional funding for transit is to increase public transit's share of funds currently used for other transportation purposes (e.g., for services for the poor, elderly or disabled) to transit. Examples include the purchase of transit passes for recipients of Medicaid transportation services and TANF recipients. In New Jersey, under the Work Pass Program, TANF recipients can receive a NJTransit monthly pass instead of reimbursements for transportation expenses. These programs result in additional revenues for transit agencies and reduced transportation expenses for Medicaid and social service programs.

CAPITAL-ORIENTED TOOLS OR MECHANISMS

In addition to mechanism providing operating funding, various funding tools, or mechanisms, have the potential to be used to generate capital funding. Although many of these mechanisms are better suited to projects larger than those recommended in this

study, they are presented because they might prove useful at a smaller scale and/or for projects considered in the future. Capital-oriented mechanisms include:

- *Innovative Infrastructure Financing Mechanisms* – mechanisms that augment debt financing techniques by loosening restrictions on how federal grant monies may be applied, and how and when local "matching" funds may be allocated. They include tapered non-federal share or deferred local match, flexible match requirements, and revolving loan funds.

- *Issuance of Debt/Leverage of Assets* - mechanisms using financing techniques to reduce the overall costs of purchasing equipment or constructing facilities. They include leasing, certificates of participation, cross-border leasing, bonds, grant or revenue anticipation notes and vendor financing.

- *Turnkey Development* – mechanism through which a private entity designs, builds and either manages a transit capital improvement (typically a fixed guideway line or extension or a garage) or turns it over to a public entity such as the transit operator, which guarantees a predetermined revenue stream to secure long term debt.

- *Value Recapture* - mechanisms through which revenues (or in-kind contributions) are collected from developers who benefit from and/or create the need for a specific transit project or improvement. The mechanisms involve either the assessment of special fees/charges or the negotiation of financing agreements, and are based on either 1) the increase in property value or other benefit that developers are expected to receive from improved transit access, or 2) the need to provide transit to serve the increased traffic that the development is expected to generate. They include special benefit assessments, tax increment financing, cost sharing arrangements and negotiated investments, impact fees/proffers/exactions and connector fees.

- *Use of Property and Property Rights* - mechanisms through which an agency can produce revenue through its land holdings. The strategies include leasing/selling development rights, transfer of development rights/density bonuses, lease or sale of existing assets, and parallel uses of Rights-of-Way.

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