

MISSISSIPPI'S UNIFIED LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN



2035



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FINAL REPORT

APPENDIX F: TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

MAY 2011

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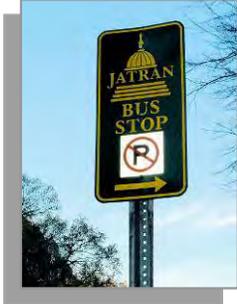
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Mississippi Unified Long Range Transportation Infrastructure Plan (MULTIPLAN) is a comprehensive analysis of transportation infrastructure and needs throughout the state. MULTIPLAN, with a horizon year of 2035, will guide MDOT efforts and initiatives to develop an efficient and effective intermodal transportation network for Mississippi’s citizens and economic development interests. The public transportation section is an important component of that planning effort.



MDOT’s Public Transit Division, as a part of the Office of Intermodal Planning, plans, programs and administers the provisions of rural and small urban transit systems, and services for elderly and people with disabilities in partnership with the federal government and local communities. The mission and goals of the Public Transit

Mission: The mission of the Public Transit Division is to plan, develop, implement, and administer sustainable transportation programs, projects, and plans that promote the most effective and efficient allocation of state, federal, and local resources throughout the state.

Goals:

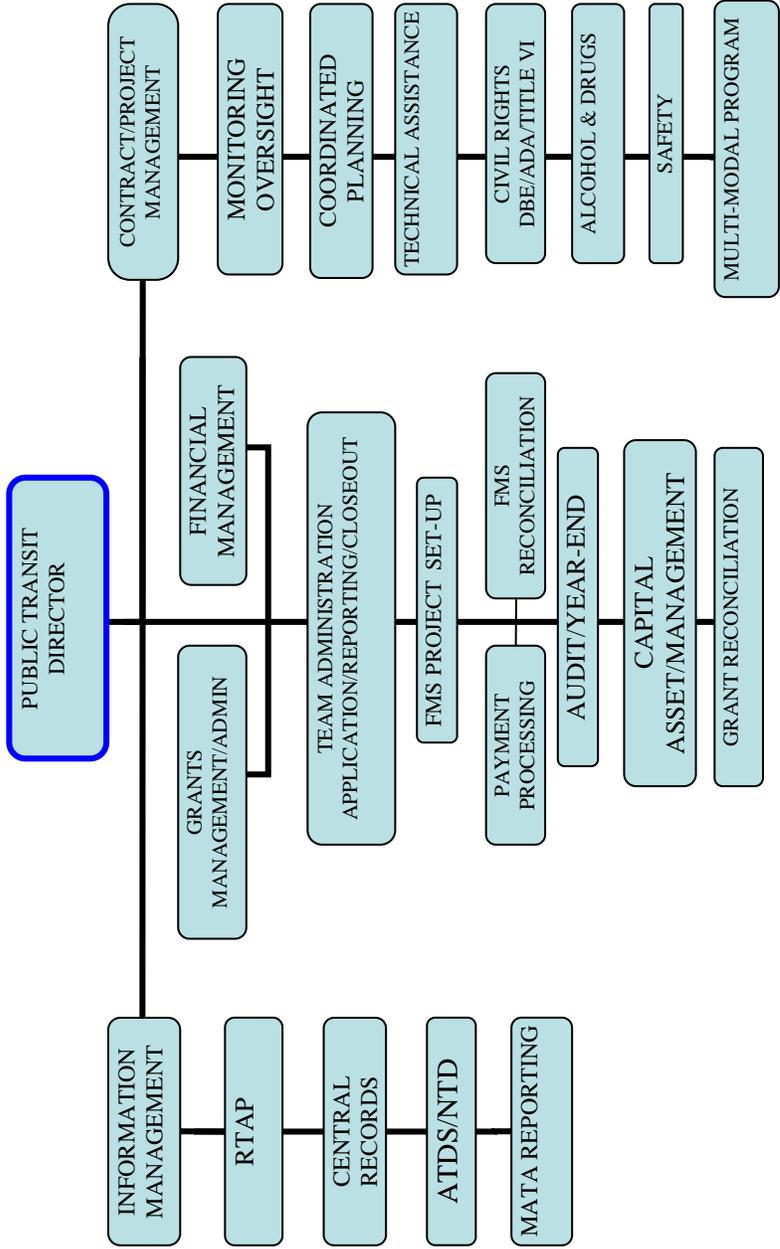
- Improve the availability and accessibility of public and specialized transportation resources for rural and small urban areas.
- Improve the level of coordination of transportation resources that are available through State Agencies, local community Action Agencies, other public bodies and the private sector.
- Incorporate technology solutions in public and specialized transportation program to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive transportation information data base.

Division are shown below.

The roles of the staff include the following: developing policies and programs that provide technical and financial assistance to local transit programs, developing initiatives and projects that increase the coordination of resources, developing and evaluating the performance of local transit systems, ensuring effective utilization of state and federal investment in public transportation, and monitoring compliance with all pertinent state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. **Figure 1-1** presents the MDOT Divisional functional area and staff organizational charts.



Figure 1-1: Functional Area Organization Chart
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Public Transit Division
Functional Area Organization Chart

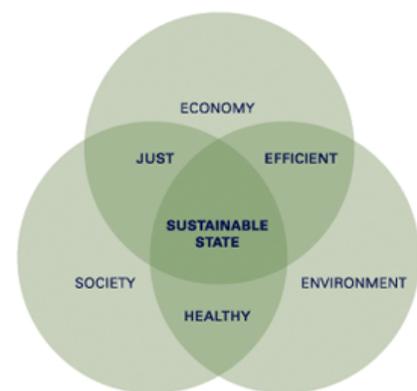


The MDOT Public Transit Division recognizes that public transportation empowers individuals to be independent, seek and retain employment, access medical care, and reach new opportunities including education, commercial activity, and recreation. With the federal funding programs in place, the DOT continues to work with local providers in meeting the Division’s goals and improving mobility alternatives to Mississippi residents. Most recently, this includes an overall policy emphasis on coordination, which began by developing a Statewide Coordination Plan along with locally-adopted coordination plans across the state resulting in the clustering of regions throughout the state. As a result of this, MDOT continues to lead the planning effort that is intended to implement a formal coordination framework. Stakeholders in this collaborative process are working on opportunities to better serve each region and effect public and human service transportation policies. One example of this process is a pilot project to develop a regional call center for the Delta Rides area, which would include processes and attributes for a framework that could be used and applied in other areas of the state. This activity is similar to programs in other states to better incorporate technology into the overall public transportation system and holds the possibilities of improved efficiency and effectiveness.

1.2 National Trends

Nationally, the role of public transportation is evolving from the perspective of a standalone resource to the consideration of how mobility can enhance economic development and improve quality of life in communities. As a result, in many regions, transit is developing new partnerships that are leading to improved mobility choices for customers for all services. This evolutionary process has resulted in the recognition that “community transportation networks” can add value to many facets of life for residents, tourists and workers.

Beginning in 2009 a new federal sustainability and livability partnership was developed with the goal of connecting policies, planning and resources within the Department of Transportation (USDOT), Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This partnership also recognizes that by considering housing and environmental concerns, transportation becomes more connected to the major issues of the day, such as energy, environment, economy, and quality of life, all of which can be positively affected by a broader public transportation program.



The United We Ride program, developed in the past decade, reinforced opportunities for improved coordination and collaboration with human service agencies. That program led to a requirement in SAFETEA-LU that local coordination plans be developed, establishing priorities for community transportation improvements with multiple partners, including programs for senior, persons with disabilities and the Job Access programs.

These former policy directives have been further enhanced by new more recent discussions regarding the next surface transportation reauthorization program to potentially expand the local coordination process to include new partners such as complete streets, transit oriented development, etc. For example, improved walking/biking pathways for livable communities also improve access to transit and paratransit services. In addition, the recent Draft *U.S. DOT Strategic Plan, Transportation for a New Generation*¹ contained several areas of emphasis that appear pertinent to the MULTIPLAN process including safety, state of good repair, economic competitiveness, and environmental sustainability, as well as livability. The ideas and concepts above are applicable to all areas – rural, suburban, and urban communities. From an MDOT Public Transit Division perspective, these concepts can provide opportunities to build upon the work that is already being accomplished through its current goals and programs to develop new partnerships and ideas for the future. There is an opportunity for public transportation to be communicated through this statewide plan with a vision that expands the division’s role to better convey the value of community transportation through enhancing current programs and embracing new ideas.

The following sections discuss existing public transportation within the state of Mississippi, the needs and gaps of service across the state, and future opportunities.

2. EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The current public transportation network in Mississippi includes a number of rural, small urban, and urban public transit systems. This network of public transit is a vital component of the overall transportation system serving the state, with grantees and providers serving the mobility needs of the general public including the elderly, persons with disabilities, low-income persons, commuters, students, and recreational users. Public transit service in Mississippi can be divided into three main categories of service:

- Elderly and persons with disabilities
- Rural transit
- Urban transit

In addition, there is a small inter-city transit program.

2.1 Federal Transit Administration Programs

These categories are consistent with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs, which provide the majority of funding for public transit in the state. While some federal monies are distributed on a discretionary basis, many programs use formula distribution including factors such as population, transit usage, and other characteristics. Each of these programs described

¹ Draft U.S. DOT Strategic Plan FY2010 – FY 2015, Transportation for a New Generation, April 15, 2010.

below is designated for certain types of eligible activities, and each program has limitations with regard to the purposes for which monies may be used. It is important to note that there are a number of policy and programmatic elements that can be used to support an inter-related mobility network at the state and regional levels.



- *Section 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula Grants)* – for public transportation capital investments (and operating expenses in areas under 200,000 population). These funds are distributed directly to the three urban transit agencies in the state and are not managed by MDOT.
- *Section 5310 (Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities)* – supports capital costs associated with providing transit services specifically for elderly persons and persons with disabilities.
- *Section 5311 (Other Than Urbanized Area Formula Program)* – supports general public transportation projects in areas with populations less than 50,000. Funds may be used for planning, capital purchases, administration and operating expenses in rural areas.
- *Section 5311(b) (Rural Transit Assistance Program)* – supports training and other technical activities targeted to rural areas.
- *5311(f) (Intercity Bus Program)* - meets a federal requirement for assistance to bus operators in providing connecting services between non-urbanized areas and larger regional or national bus routes.
- *Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute Program)* – supports capital and operating purposes for job access and reverse commute services including transportation for low income individuals.
- *Section 5317 (New Freedom Program)* – supports capital and operating costs for services and facility improvements to address the transportation needs of persons with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The following sections describe the existing transit services within the state. **Table 2-1** shows that public transportation agencies provided more than three million rides to Mississippi residents in the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

Public transit systems serve some portions of urban and rural communities for 76 of the 82 counties in Mississippi and provide a range of service options to residents. Fixed-route, route deviation, and demand response are the most common types of service. Sixty-four counties have Section 5310 service, and 46 counties have Section 5311 rural general public service. In addition there are three urban systems, Gulf Coast, Hattiesburg, and Jackson, and two intercity bus services are operated by Delta Bus Lines and Greyhound.

Table 2-1: Statewide Transit Statistics, 2008-2009

Mississippi Public Transit, 2008-2009					
FTA Program		Ridership	Rev Hrs	Rev Miles	Operating Budget
5307	Urban Transit Service	1,379,865	188,425	2,767,791	\$11,727,415
5310	Elderly & Persons with Disability Services	550,741	127,341	2,505,432	\$2,530,965
5311	Rural Transit Service	1,039,985	345,584	8,632,115	\$10,082,715
5311(f)	Intercity Bus Service	60,349	6,060	374,566	n/a
TOTAL		3,030,940	661,350	13,905,338	\$24,341,095

Source: MDOT Public Transit Division

2.2 MDOT-Managed Programs

2.2.1 Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Transportation

MDOT contracts with 43 grantees that receive some degree of federal funding by way of “pass-through” funds from the FTA Section 5310 Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program. This includes 28 grantees that are funded exclusively through the Section 5310 Program. This program supports capital purchases (e.g. vehicles) and requires a 20 percent local match. No supplemental MDOT monies are provided. Funding trends for the Section 5310 program are shown in **Table 2-2**. The state has received funding each year for the past five years.

Table 2-2: FTA 5310 Program Funding Trends

FTA 5310 Funding Trends (Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program)					
Program	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Section 5310	\$1,245,808	\$1,314,415	\$1,423,426	\$1,521,995	\$1,500,353

A major objective of the Section 5310 program is to provide financial assistance necessary to facilitate a coordinated approach to transportation services. The objectives of the MDOT Section 5310 program can be summarized as follows:

- To increase the mobility of elderly and disabled persons, especially those persons not served by a specific program or agency;
- To provide program targeted funds to operators of coordinated transportation projects;
- To coordinate provision of specialized transportation sources within communities; and;
- To encourage program participation by private sector service providers.

The 43 agencies provide service to 64 counties across the state, as shown in **Figure 2-1**. **Table 2-3** lists the 5310 grantees during the 2008-2009 program year. These capital resources resulted in approximately 551,000 passenger trips provided by the 28 agencies, with 127,300 annual revenue hours, and 2.5 million revenue miles.

Figure 2-1: Section 5310 Transit Providers

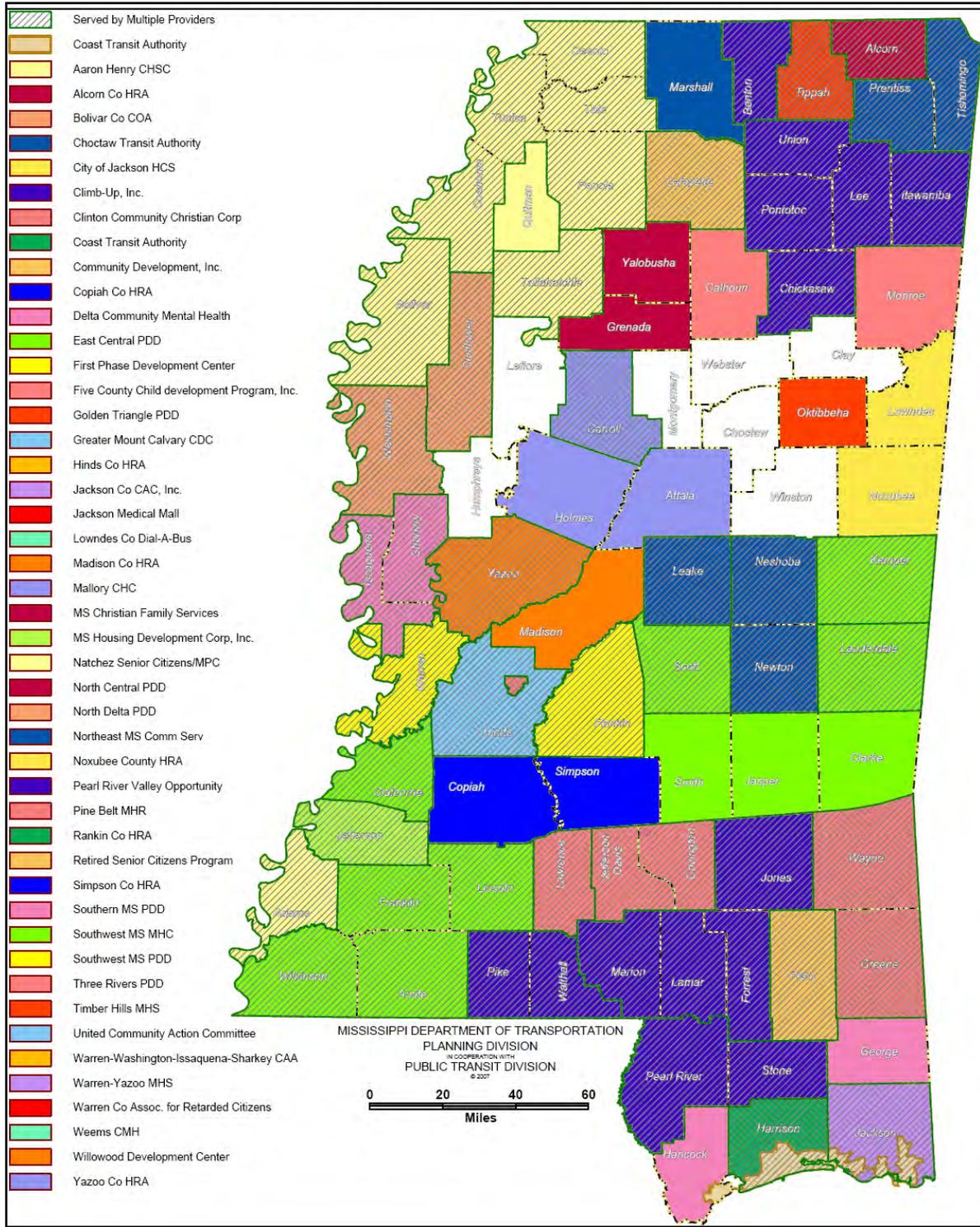


Table 2-3: Agencies Receiving 5310 Program Funding

	Transit Name	City	Service Area	Rider-ship	Avg # of Veh Oper	Rev Hours	Rev Miles	Operating Budget	O & A Cost/ Mile	O & A Cost/ Pass	Pass/ Hr
1	Alcorn County Human Resource Agency	Corinth	Alcorn County	18,278	6	1,231	23,365	\$6,285	\$0.27	\$0.34	14.8
2	City of Jackson - Human cultural Services	Jackson	Hinds County	14,994	4	17,853	207,714	\$41,740	\$0.20	\$2.78	0.8
3	Climb-Up, Inc	Tupelo	Lee Itawamba, Pontotoc, Union, Benton, Chickasaw Counties	48,878	11	7,067	224,962	\$140,339	\$0.62	\$2.87	6.9
4	Delta Community Mental Health	Greenville	Bolivar, Issaquena, Sharkey, Washington Counties	13,649	5	8,134	219,764	\$72,533	\$0.33	\$5.31	1.7
5	East Central Planning and Development District	Newton	Quitman, Stonewall, Shubuta, Pachuta (Clarke Co); Bay Springs, Heidelberg (Jasper Co); Dekalb, Scooba, Preston (Kemper Co); Collinsville, Meridian, Bailey (Lauderdale Co); Carthage, Lena, Walnut Grove, Smith (Leake Co); Philadelphia (Neshoba Co); Newton, Hickory, Union (Newton Co); Forest, Morton, Lake (Scott Co)	41,081	8	12,241	n/a	\$139,517	n/a	n/a	3.4
7	Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, Inc	Starkville	Oktibbeha County	2,081	2	2,000	19,052	\$41,706	\$2.19	\$20.04	1.0
8	Jackson Medical Mall	Jackson	Hinds County	1,808	7	895	9,250	\$15,315	\$1.66	\$8.47	2.0
9	Jackson County Civic Action Committee, Inc	Moss Point	Jackson County	32,684	7	4,578	53,800	\$197,257	\$3.67	\$6.04	7.1
10	Lowndes County Dial-A-Bus	Columbus	Lowndes County	23,322	5		16,889	\$19,023	\$1.13	\$0.82	
11	Mississippi Christian Family Services	Rolling Fork	Sharkey, Issaquena, Yazoo, Washington Counties; portions of Bolivar, Warren, and Hinds Counties	17,324	6	2,128	100,616	\$20,871	\$0.21	\$1.20	8.1
12	North Central Planning and Development District	Winona	Grenada, Yalobusha Counties	1,621	3					\$-	
13	North Delta Planning and Development District, Inc	Batesville	Tunica, Panola, Coahoma, Tate, Tallahatchie Counties	49,826	4	13,527	181,660	\$194,400	\$1.07	\$3.90	3.7
14	Noxubee County Human Resource Agency	Macon	Noxubee, Lowndes Counties	4,490	1					\$-	
15	Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources	Hattiesburg	Forrest, Jones, Lamar, Covington, Jefferson Davis, Marion, Wayne, Perry, Greene Counties	62,111	12	5,832	362,547	\$110,357	\$0.30	\$1.78	10.7
16	Rankin County Human Resource Agency	Brandon	Rankin County	19,526	3	2,914	46,907	\$120,165	\$2.56	\$6.15	6.7

Table 2-3: Agencies Receiving 5310 Program Funding (continued)

	Transportation Name	City	Service Area	Rider-ship	Avg # of Veh Oper	Rev Hours	Rev Miles	Operating Budget	O & A Cost/ Mile	O & A Cost/ Pass	Pass/ Hr
17	Retired Senior Citizen Program	Oxford	Lafayette County	6,771	1	1,929	22,016	\$28,748	\$1.31	\$4.25	3.5
18	Southern Mississippi Planning and Development Inc	Gulfport	Covington, Forrest, Marion, Pearl River, Jackson, Jefferson Davis, Jones, George, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Perry, Stone, Wayne, Lamar Counties	16,380	3	3,150	156,147	\$380,624	\$2.44	\$23.24	5.2
19	Southwest Mississippi Mental Health Complex	McComb	Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Walthall, Wilkinson, Pike Counties.	7,369	19	1,317	54,753	\$42,663	\$0.78	\$5.79	5.6
20	Southwest Miss. Planning and Development District	Natchez	Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Walthall, Wilkinson, Pike Counties	n/a	3		12,467		\$-		
21	Three Rivers Planning and Development District	Pontotoc	Lee, Lafayette, Union, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Monroe, Itawamba, Pontotoc Counties	58,298	13	4,927	114,176	\$173,955	\$1.52	\$2.98	11.8
22	Timber Hills Mental Health Services	Corinth	Alcorn, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo Counties	10,560	6	2,745	128,447	\$25,499	\$0.20	\$2.41	3.8
23	Warren County Association for Retarded Citizens	Vicksburg	Warren County	6,093	3	1,384	33,996	\$120,685	\$3.55	\$19.81	4.4
24	Warren-Yazoo Mental Health Services	Vicksburg	Warren County	57,065	5	22,637	168,234	\$327,264	\$1.95	\$5.73	2.5
25	Warren-Washington-Issaquena-Sharkey Community Action Agency	Greenville	Washington, Sharkey, Issaquena Counties	6,840	1	3,610	103,787	\$172,339	\$1.66	\$25.20	1.9
26	Weems Community Mental Health	Meridian	Lauderdale, Kemper Counties	5,078		1,680	8,632	\$22,791	\$2.64	\$4.49	3.0
27	Willowood Developmental Center	Jackson	Hinds, Rankin Counties	15,480	12	2,885	184,811	\$39,767	\$0.22	\$2.57	5.4
28	Yazoo County Human Resource Agency	Yazoo	Yazoo County	9,134	2	2,677	51,440	\$77,121	\$1.50	\$8.44	3.4

**Note: The following projects also receive 5310 Program support: Aaron Henry Community Health Services, Bolivar County Human Resource Agency; Community Development Incorporated; Copiah County Human Resource Agency; Claiborne County Human Resource Agency; Five County Child Development Program; Hinds County Human Resource Agency; Mallory Community Health Center; MS Band of Choctaw Indians; Natchez Senior Citizens Multipurpose Center; Northeast Mississippi Community Services; Simpson County; United Community Action Committee; and City of Tchula. These projects report performance as part of their coordinated 5311 programs.*

2.2.2 Rural General Public Service

The Census Bureau, based on low population density and clusters, classifies the majority of Mississippi as rural. Even the urbanized counties have portions that are considered rural. A network of 19 providers offers rural transit service funded by FTA’s Section 5311 Program. The agencies provide service to 46 of the 82 Mississippi counties. **Figure 2-2** illustrates the counties with rural general public service. **Table 2-4** presents the statewide funding trends for the Section 5311 program. Until FY2010, funding increased for the 5311 program each year. **Table 2-5** presents selected 2008-2009 Section 5311 rural agency performance data.

Table 2-4: FTA 5311 Program Funding Trends

FTA 5311 – Non-urbanized Area Formula Program					
Program	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Section 5311	\$9,619,297	\$10,115,947	\$10,911,756	\$11,527,065	\$11,516,933

The types of service offered by the rural providers vary from demand response and flexible route service to fixed-route service. Most providers operate a traditional demand-response rural service, typically relying on a 24-hour advance reservation. The summary table indicates the type of service by each agency.

The number of customers using these rural services varies from 12,000 passenger trips per year for HEGA Rural Transportation System and for Madison County Citizen Service Agency to approximately 133,000 annual trips for Bolivar County Council on Aging and for the City of Oxford. Approximately 1.04 million passenger trips were provided by the 19 rural transit agencies, with approximately 345,584 annual revenue hours, and 8.6 million revenue miles.

Data on the ridership, service levels and costs of the rural systems are shown in these tables. Many of these general public agencies also have additional vehicles funded by FTA under the Section 5310 Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program. The application process for both programs includes various opportunities and requirements to enhance coordination. This is directly attributed to the MDOT transit planning process, which emphasizes the federal policies of agency coordination, as discussed earlier in the report.

Figure 2-2: Existing 5311 Services by County

PUBLIC TRANSIT PROVIDER SERVICE AREAS

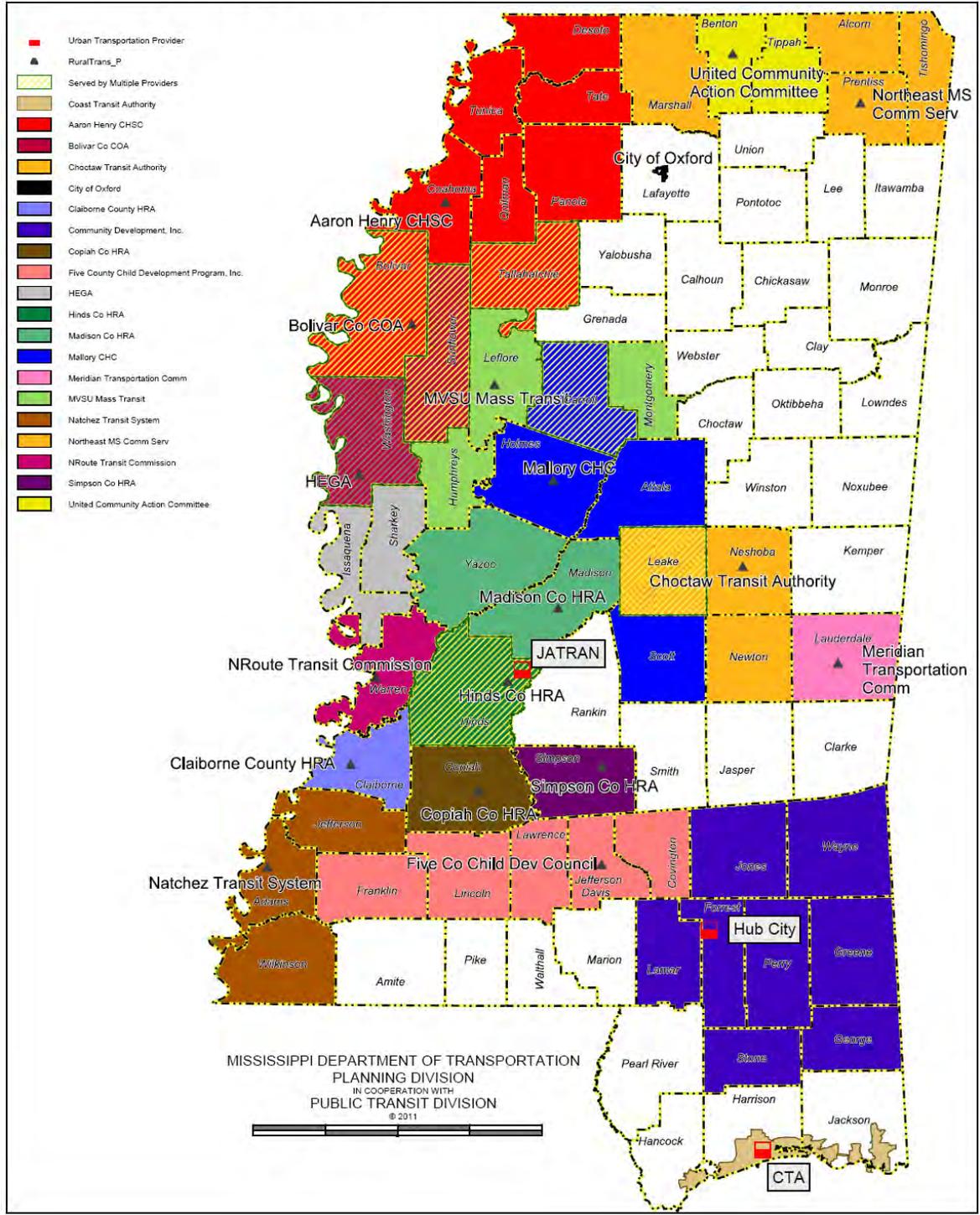


Table 2-5: Summary of FTA Section 5311 Rural Providers Performance 2008-2009

Transit Agency	City	Hours	Days	Type	Total Trips	Rev Hour	Rev Miles	Operating Cost
Delta AREA Rural Transit System (DARTS)	Clarksdale	5:30a- 2:30a	7	Demand Response, Flexible Route	99,314	21,419	458,109	\$768,528
Bolivar County Council on Aging Inc.	Cleveland	4a-3a	7	Demand Response, Flexible Route	133,559	90,563	2,623,882	\$853,385
City of Oxford	Oxford	M-F 6:15a-6:45p Sat 8:15a-5p	6	Fixed Routes; Paratransit	132,875	15,564	204,726	\$475,084
Clairborne County Human Resource Agency	Port Gibson	7:15a-5:45p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	50,300	6,670	300,153	\$361,258
Community Development Inc.	Richton	6:30a- 6:30p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	25,933	9,113	355,460	\$450,034
Copiah County Human Resource Agency	Hazlehurst	Sun-Fri 5a-2:30a Sat 6a-6p	7	Demand Response, Flexible Route	38,436	4,789	214,739	\$162,435
Five County Child Development Program, Inc	Prentiss	6a- 6p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	77,738	18,197	366,241	\$393,918
HEGA Rural Transportation Systems	Hollandale	7a-5p	5	Demand Response	12,665	7,143	170,660	\$97,392
Hinds County Human Resource Agency	Jackson	6a- 6p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	47,406	6,052	232,742	\$346,320
Madison County Citizen Service Agency	Canton	6a- 5p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	12,389	4,467	102,296	\$242,023
Mallory Community Health Center	Lexington	6a- 5p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	49,675	11,795	353,440	\$317,288
Meridian Transportation Commission	Meridian	M-F 6a-6p Sat 6a-2p	6	Fixed Routes, Flexible Routes and Demand Response	19,079	9,697	419,400	\$245,275
Choctaw transit	Choctaw	7:30a-5p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	91,389	44,603	1,064,093	\$966,030
Mississippi Valley State University Mass Transit	Itta Bena	6:30a-6:30p	7	Demand Response, Flexible Route	20,208	4,083	109,012	\$172,353
Natchez Transit System	Natchez	M-Th 6a-7p F-Sat 6a-10p	6	Demand Response, Flexible Route	51,548	17,222	368,029	\$566,989
Northeast Mississippi Community Services	Booneville	M-F 8a-4p	5	Demand Response, Flexible Route	73,504	34,756	555,242	\$557,431
NROUTE	Vicksburg	M-F 6a-7p Sat9a-5p	6	Fixed Routes; Paratransit	57,864	19,491	319,794	\$497,067
Simpson County Human Resource Agency	Mendenhall	M-F 6:30a-7p	5	Flexible Route, Demand Response	26,945	12,400	250,664	\$250,786
United Community Action Committee, Inc	Ashland	M-F8a-4:30p	5	Demand Response	19,158	7,560	163,433	\$184,649
Total					1,039,985	345,584	8,632,115	\$7,908,244

Table 2-5 Summary of FTA Section 5311 Rural Providers Performance 2008-2009 (continued)

Transit Agency	Admin Cost	O & A Cost	Capital Cost	Total Cost	Total Cost/Hr	Total Cost/mile	Total Cost/ Trip	Trip/ Hr	Total Revenue¹	Cost² Recovery	Federal Funding
Delta AREA Rural Transit System (DARTS)	\$236,559	\$1,005,086	\$61,038	\$1,066,124	\$49.77	\$2.19	\$ 10.12	4.64	\$348,811.00	33%	\$677,444
Bolivar County Council onAging Inc.	\$326,120	\$1,179,505	\$20,671	\$1,200,177	\$13.25	\$0.45	\$ 8.83	1.47	\$416,210.08	35%	\$522,519
City of Oxford	\$39,119	\$514,203	\$4,928	\$519,132	\$ 33.35	\$2.51	\$ 3.87	8.54	\$-	-	\$290,911
Clairborne County Human Resource Agency	\$115,845	\$477,103	\$11,787	\$488,890	\$73.30	\$1.59	\$ 9.49	7.54	\$137,999.49	28%	\$248,382
Community Development Inc.	\$121,361	\$571,395	-	\$571,395	\$ 62.70	\$1.61	\$ 22.03	2.85	\$264,856.72	46%	\$282,054
Copiah County Human Resource Agency	\$30,818	\$193,253	\$7,097	\$200,349	\$ 41.84	\$0.90	\$ 5.03	8.03	\$57,450.02	29%	\$165,497
Five County Child Development Program, Inc	\$101,802	\$495,721	-	\$495,721	\$27.24	\$1.35	\$ 6.38	4.27	\$240,850.85	49%	\$240,834
HEGA Rural Transportation Systems	\$29,385	\$126,777	-	\$126,777	\$17.75	\$0.74	\$10.01	1.77	\$28,083.32	22%	\$91,899
Hinds County HumanResource Agency	\$76,882	\$423,201	\$942,558	\$1,365,759	69.93	\$1.82	\$ 8.93	7.83	\$105,425.55	8%	\$196,563
Madison County Citizen Service Agency	\$75,284	\$317,307	\$8,694	\$326,001	\$72.98	\$3.10	\$ 25.61	2.77	\$67,025.35	21%	\$232,401
Mallory Community Health Center	\$56,218	\$373,506	\$6,450	\$379,956	\$ 32.21	\$1.06	\$ 7.52	4.21	\$152,165.54	40%	\$189,694
Meridian Transportation Commission	\$202,364	\$447,639	-	\$447,639	\$46.16	\$1.07	\$ 23.46	1.97	\$ 73,517.25	16%	\$243,962
Choctaw transit	\$222,993	\$1,189,024	\$2,845	\$1,191,869	\$26.72	\$1.12	\$ 13.01	2.05	\$182,660.42	15%	\$569,629
Mississippi valley State University mass Transit	\$147,476	\$319,829	\$4,800	\$324,629	\$ 79.51	\$ 2.93	\$ 15.83	4.95	\$60,989.54	19%	\$204,520
Natchez Transit System	\$40,461	\$607,450	\$3,817	\$611,267	\$ 35.49	\$1.65	\$ 11.78	2.99	\$95,573.42	16%	\$548,552
Northeast MississippiCommunity Services	\$60,521	\$617,952	\$2,143	\$620,095	\$17.84	\$1.11	\$ 8.41	2.11	\$214,525.34	35%	\$272,867
NROUTE	\$126,068	\$623,135	\$9,098	\$632,233	\$ 32.44	\$1.95	\$ 10.77	2.97	\$51,153.47	8%	\$359,620
Simpson County HumanResource Agency	\$104,584	\$355,370	\$2,793	\$358,163	\$ 28.88	\$1.42	\$ 13.19	2.17	\$126,032.03	35%	\$170,766
United Community ActionCommittee, Inc	\$60,609	\$245,258	\$1,903	\$247,161	\$ 32.69	\$1.50	\$ 12.80	2.53	\$52,943.84	21%	\$154,428
Total	\$2,174,471	\$10,082,715	\$1,090,622	\$11,173,337	\$50*	\$3.10 *	\$12.*	4.0*	\$2,676,273		

1 Total Revenue :Farebox+contract services + advertising+ other revenues

2 Cost Recovery: total revenue/total cost

3 City of Oxford operated a fare free system during their first full year of operation. Local match assistance was from the City and the University of MS.

*Average

2.2.3 Intercity Bus Service/Section 5311(f) Program

The MDOT has developed procedures to implement the provisions of Section 5311(f) as a part of the State's ongoing Section 5311 program. The primary goals of the MDOT's Intercity Bus activities are to support:

- Connections between non-urbanized areas of the state;
- Services that meet the intercity travel needs of the state's non-urbanized area residents; and;
- An intermodal intercity bus infrastructure network through planning, marketing and capital investment.

The MDOT coordinates with private intercity providers to identify specific needs for services. The Intercity Bus Application procedures are developed and disseminated with the Section 5311 program. Efforts are also being made to coordinate the Intercity Bus activities with those of contiguous states by reviewing plans, programs and studies.

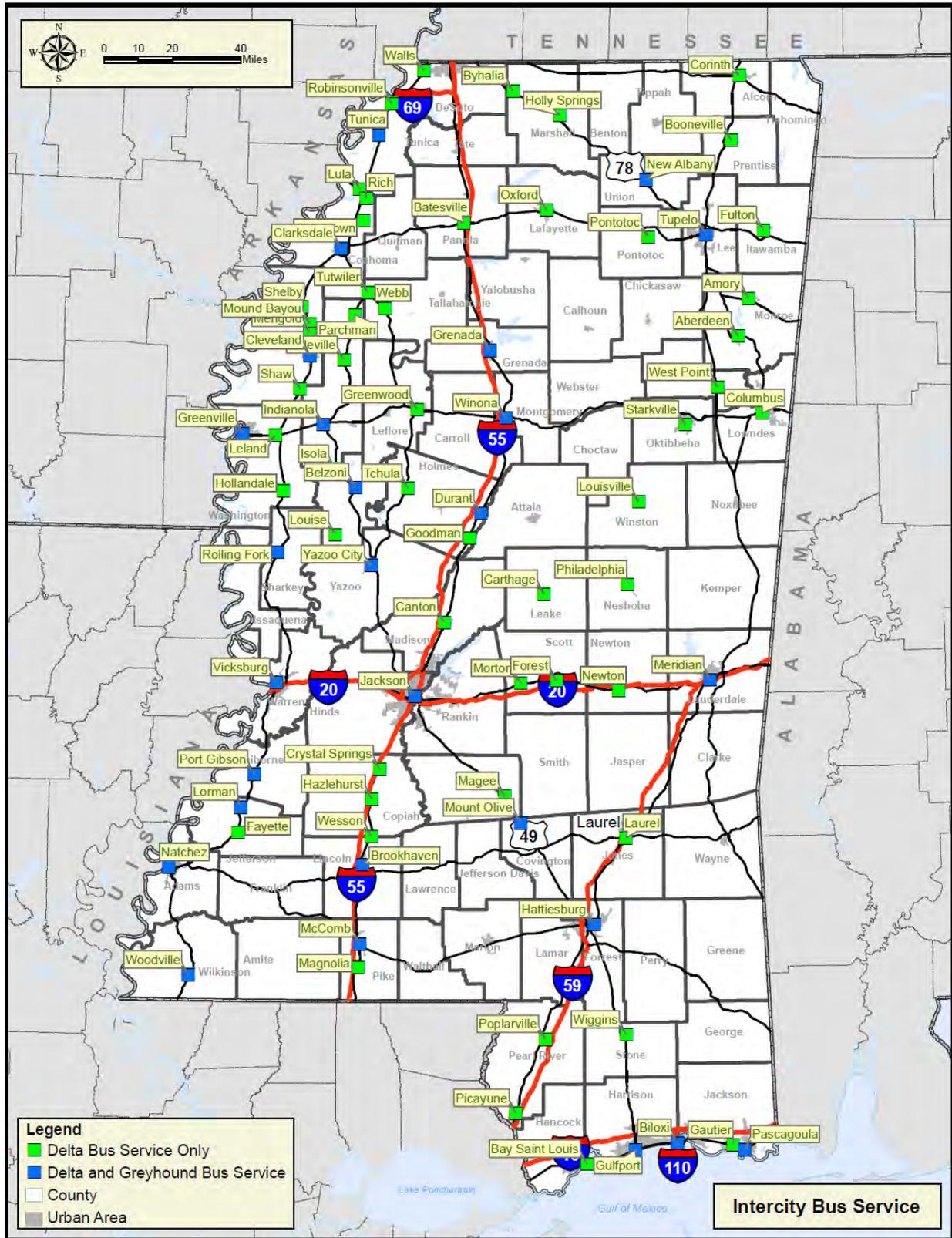
Greyhound and Delta Bus Lines, based in Greenville, MS, provide intercity bus service across the state. In 2008-2009, Delta Bus Lines received \$1.2 million in federal funds to operate their service. **Figure 2-4** shows the communities within the state with intercity transit service.

2.2.4 Job Access and Reverse Commute/Section 5316 Program

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program is authorized under provisions set forth in the 2005 SAFETEA-LU transportation legislation. Grants are awarded under the Section 5316 Program for access to jobs and reverse commute projects. In urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 and above, local urban transit organizations (i.e., JATRAM and Coast Transit) are the designated recipients. In small urban areas less than 200,000 and in non-urbanized areas, the State is the designated recipient. Acting as the designated recipient MDOT may apply directly to FTA for grant funds to support internal activities and as pass through funds for its sub-recipients. The MDOT goal for the JARC grant program is to increase access to and availability of transportation services specifically designed to support employment, training and educational activities.

In order for projects to be implemented by transit providers in small urbanized areas, the MDOT, after consultation with responsible local officials and publicly owned operators of public transportation, may transfer JARC funds to Section 5307 for administration of competitively selected JARC projects within a Section 5307 grant to an eligible recipient under that program. This transfer removes oversight responsibility to the grant recipient under Section 5307. MDOT would be responsible for the program requirements (such as competitive selection and certifying projects that were derived from a coordinated plan) and data collection for annual reporting purposes.

Figure 2-3: Intercity Bus Services



Funds from the JARC program are available for capital, planning, and operating expenses that support the development and maintenance of transportation services designed to transport low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment and to support reverse commute projects.

State funding apportionment trends for the 5316 Program in Mississippi are shown **Table 2-6**.

Table 2-5: FTA 5316 Program Funding Trends

FTA 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute					
Area	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Gulfport-Biloxi	\$116,718	\$123,033	\$133,286	\$156,443	\$149,578
Jackson	\$188,181	\$198,363	\$214,893	\$252,229	\$241,160
Small Urban Areas	\$142,431	\$150,126	\$162,636	\$190,892	\$182,515
Non-urbanized Areas	\$988,678	\$1,041,935	\$1,128,763	\$1,324,873	\$1,266,734

2.2.5 New Freedom /Section 5317 Program

The New Freedom Program was also in SAFETEA–LU. Grants are available for new public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 that assist individuals with disabilities with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs and employment support services. The funds are available for capital and operating expenses. The MDOT goal for the New Freedom grant program is to provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing persons with disabilities who are seeking integration into the work force and enhanced participation in society.

As the designated State agency, the MDOT responsibilities are:

- Notifying eligible local entities of funding availability;
- Developing project selection criteria;
- Determining applicant eligibility;
- Conducting the competitive selection process;
- Forwarding an annual program of projects (POP) and grant application to FTA;
- Ensuring that all sub-recipients comply with federal requirements;
- Documenting the state’s or designated recipient’s procedures in a state management plan or a program management plan as appropriate;
- Confirming that allocations of grants to sub-recipients are distributed on a fair and equitable basis; and
- Certifying that all projects are derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan developed through a process that consists of representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers with participation by the public.

State funding apportionments trends for the 5317 Program in Mississippi are shown in **Table 2-7**.

Table 2-6: FTA 5317 Program Funding Trends

FTA 5317 New Freedom Program					
Area	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Gulfport-Biloxi	\$55,793	\$73,167	\$79,038	\$91,106	\$89,415
Jackson	\$90,334	\$88,265	\$95,348	\$109,906	\$107,866
Small Urban Areas	\$66,132	\$69,215	\$74,770	\$86,185	\$84,586
Non-urbanized Areas	\$452,566	\$466,476	\$503,909	\$580,846	\$570,066

2.2.6 Urban Transit Service

The Section 5307 Program funds are distributed from the FTA directly to each of the urban area transit providers. Funding for the past five years is shown in **Table 2-8**.

Table 2-7: FTA 5307 Program Funding Trends

FTA 5307 Funding Trends (Urbanized Area Formula Program)					
Area	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Gulfport-Biloxi	\$1,612,543	\$1,682,238	\$1,811,247	\$1,822,316	\$1,869,853
Jackson	\$2,181,289	\$2,277,259	\$2,452,419	\$2,603,818	\$2,550,896
Hattiesburg	\$617,141	\$647,302	\$702,739	\$747,872	\$745,627
Pascagoula	\$546,086	\$572,775	\$621,830	\$661,765	\$965,052

2.2.7 Coast Transit Authority

The Coast Transit Authority is the primary provider of public transportation in the Gulfport–Biloxi metropolitan area, including Ocean Springs, along the Mississippi gulf coast. Service was initiated in 1974, after the Mississippi State Legislature passed a bill authorizing the creation of public transit for the region. The area's previous private bus operator, Municipal Transit Lines, had been devastated by Hurricane Camille, and the area was left with no public transportation for a three-year period. Originally known as the Mississippi Coast Transit Authority, the agency changed its name to Coast Area Transit in 1985, before adopting its current name in 1992.



The CTA service area consists of the three coastal counties of Mississippi and all the incorporated cities in those counties. CTA currently provides fixed-route and ADA/Paratransit service in, Biloxi, Gautier, Gulfport, Ocean Springs, and Pascagoula. Special Route Services are provided in Harrison and Hancock counties. Three counties in the service area were affected by

Hurricane Katrina on August 28-29, 2005. The communities suffered significant high wind damage and flooding with destruction of homes, businesses, and infrastructure.

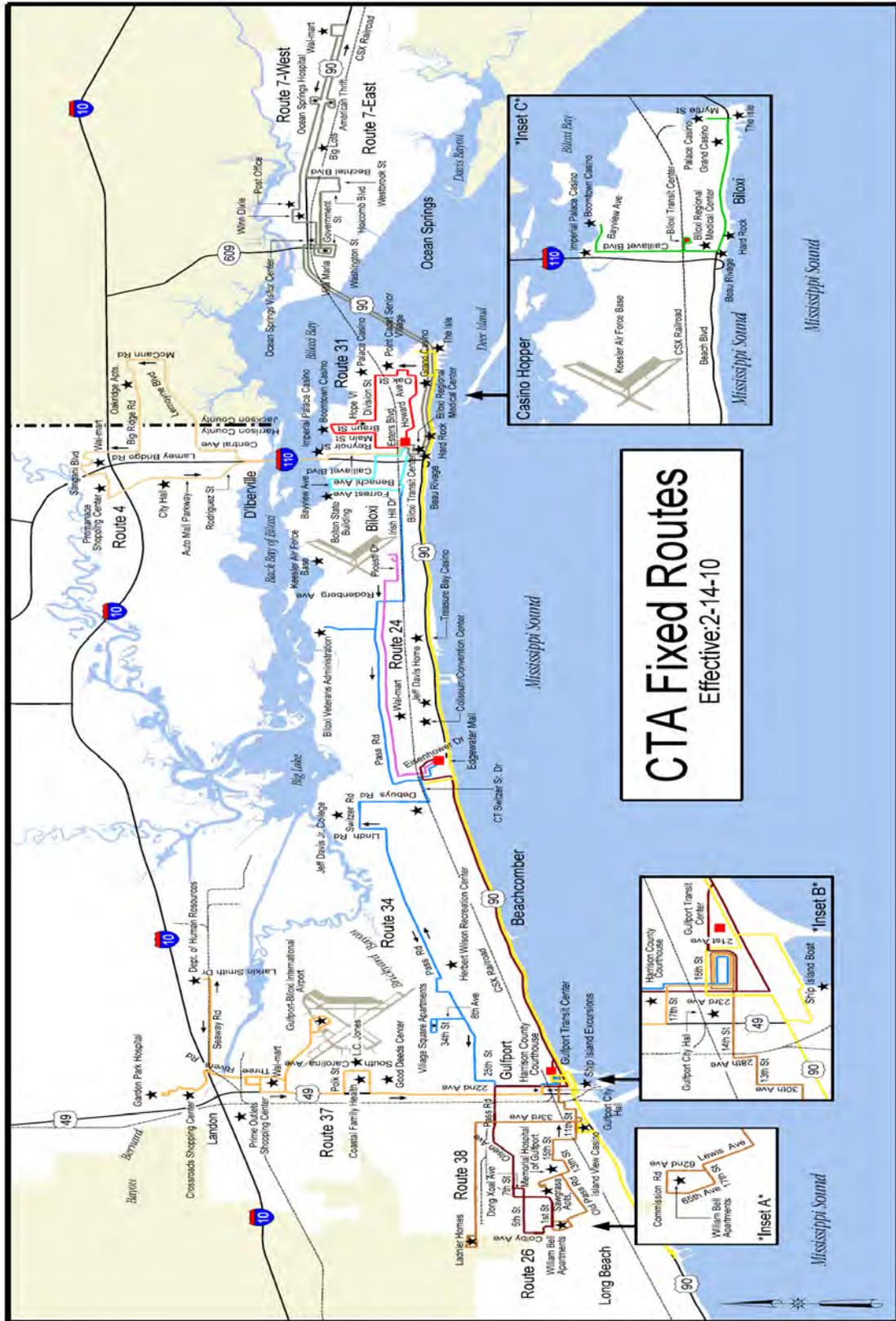
Post-Katrina, CTA completed the Gulf Coast Transit Development Plan in 2007 to provide direction for recovery, rebuilding, and renewal of the agency. Hurricane Katrina gave the community an opportunity to see how important CTA public transit was, as a key tool for mobilizing the labor force to rebuild, as well as continuing to provide vital services to senior citizens, persons with disabilities, low-income families and other transit dependent populations. The community also became aware that CTA needed service and infrastructure improvements to better position the Gulf Coast to compete with other communities and resort destinations throughout the United States for businesses, jobs, tourism, conventions, and conferences.

Today, the agency operates eight fixed-routes, plus the D’Iberville Shopper Express, the Casino Hopper route connecting gambling facilities on the Biloxi waterfront, and the Beachcomber route, serving tourists and service workers traveling to the attractions along US 90 between Biloxi and Gulfport. Five park and ride lots are used to support commuter ridership. Several routes operate seven days per week. Complementary ADA service is also provided. CTA has 23 vehicles operating during peak hour of services for fixed-route and paratransit service. **Figure 2-5** illustrates the existing CTA transit service, while **Table 2-9** shows service frequencies and hours of operation.

Table 2-8: Fixed Route Transit Services

CTA Current Route Service			
Route	Frequency (minutes)	Span of Service	Days Operated
Route 4 - D’Iberville/St. Martin	45	5:30 a.m. – 7:40 p.m.	Mon – Sun
Route 7 – Ocean Springs	90	5:30 a.m. – 8:20 p.m.	Mon – Sat
Route 24 – Keesler Express	60	5:30 p.m. – 9:24 p.m. 9:30 a.m. – 9:24 p.m. 11:30 a.m. – 6:24 p.m.	Mon – Fri Fri – Sat Sun
Route 26 – NCBC Navy Base	90	9:20 a.m. – 8:12 p.m.	Mon - Sun
Route 31 - Biloxi	45	5:30 a.m. – 7:40 p.m.	Mon – Sat
Route 34 – Pass Road	45	4:43 a.m. – 8:28 p.m.	Mon – Sun
Route 37 - Gulfport	90	5:40 a.m. – 6:55 p.m.	Mon - Sat
Route 38 – Gulfport	90	5:30 a.m. – 6:45 p.m.	Mon – Sat
D’Iberville Shopper Express	60	8:30 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.	Mon – Sun
Casino Hopper	15	5:30 a.m. – 9:25 p.m. 9:15 p.m. – 1:10 a.m.	Sun – Thurs Fri – Sat
Beachcomber	45	4:53 a.m. – 9:11 p.m.	Mon - Sun

Figure 2-4: CTA Fixed Route Transit Services



CTA Fixed Routes Effective 2-14-10

CTA is an independently managed public utility that is governed by a Board of Commissioners. Funding for the CTA operations and capital projects are currently provided by self-generated revenue, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), county and local governments. Self-generated funds consist of passenger fares, advertising revenue, charter revenue, contract revenue, vending revenue and sale of surplus equipment. **Table 2-10** presents operational statistics for CTA in 2008.

Table 2-9: CTA Statistics

Parameter	Values
Population	205,754
Service Area Population	106,592
Service Area Sq Miles	50
Peak Vehicle – FR	13
Paratransit – DR	10
Operating Budget – FR	\$3,142,197
Operating Budget – DR	\$940,558
Annual Miles – FR	772,151
Annual Miles – DR	229,727
Annual Trips – FR	617,741
Annual Trips – DR	43,319
Annual Rev Hours – FR	59,763
Annual Rev Hours – DR	23,229
Pass/Hour – FR	10.3
Cost/Hour – FR	\$52.58
Cost/Pass – FR	\$5.09
Trips per Capita – FR	5.8

Source: NTD, 2008.

2.2.8 Hub City Transit

The City of Hattiesburg owns and operates Hub City Transit. Within the city infrastructure, HCT is part of the City’s Department of Federal and State Programs, with one Director overseeing four programs, including Development Division, Grants Administration/Brownsfield, MPO, and HCT Public Transit Operations. The Director reports to the Mayor and City Council, which has five members representing the five Wards within the City. Funding for HCT is from a variety of sources, including FTA 5307, interest earnings, fares, advertising, and the city general fund.



The City of Hattiesburg provides fixed-route service, known as Hub City Transit, within the city limits. HCT operates a hub and spoke service from the Train Depot in downtown Hattiesburg. Four fixed-routes run from approximately 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. No Saturday or Sunday service is currently provided. **Figure 2-6** presents the existing HCT fixed-route service area. HCT operates 60-minute headways throughout the day on all routes.

HCT operates free demand response paratransit service, known as On-Demand Response Service, for the elderly and for persons with disabilities. The service is available for residents who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Are 62 years of age or older;
- Have an obvious physical impairment meeting the medical criteria for the program; or
- Are certified by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or audiologist at meeting or more medical criteria established for the program.

The paratransit service operates the same hours as the fixed-route service from approximately 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Two vehicles are operated by three full-time drivers. In 2008, the paratransit service provided 11,932 passenger trips, which is a 66 percent increase over 2007, with approximately 7,200 passenger trips. HCT is in the process of purchasing RouteMatch software to assist with paratransit scheduling and reporting efficiencies.

In 2009-2010, HCT completed a 5-year Mass Transit Study that gives direction for future transit services within the Hattiesburg area. **Table 2-11** presents a summary of HCT system wide performance.

Table 2-10: HCT System Statistics

Parameter	Values
Population	128,546
Service Area Population	44,800
Service Area Sq Miles	57
Peak Vehicle – FR	4
Paratransit – DR	2
Operating Budget – FR	\$657,381
Operating Budget – DR	\$233,735
Annual Miles – FR	184,223
Annual Miles – DR	49,082
Annual Trips – FR	60,034
Annual Trips – DR	11,932
Annual Rev Hours – FR	11,475
Annual Rev Hours – DR	4,080
Pass/Hour – FR	5.2
Cost/Hour – FR	\$57.29
Cost/Pass – FR	\$10.95
Trips per Capita – FR	1.3

Source: Mass Transit Plan, 2010.

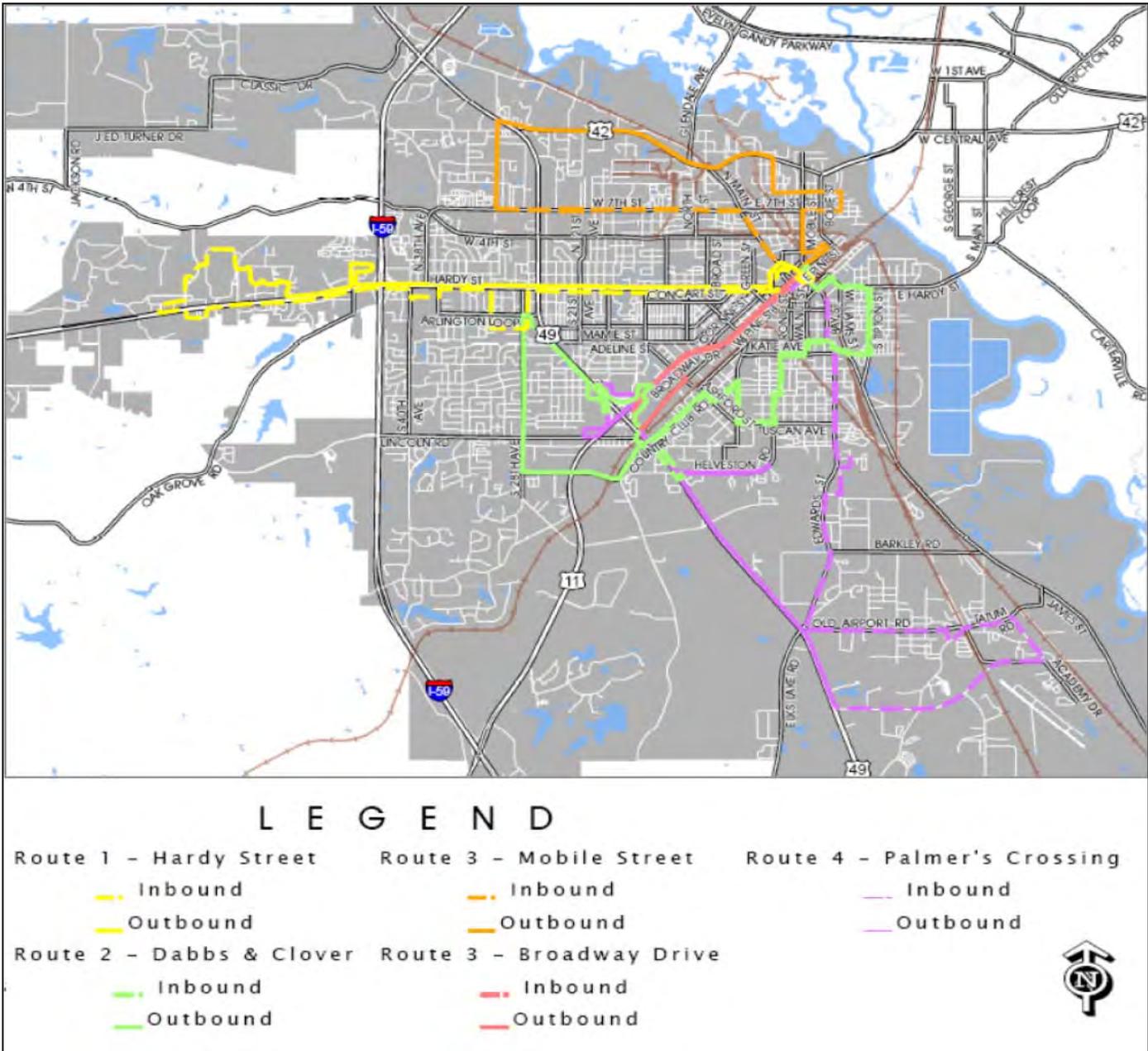


Figure 2-5: HCT Transit Service

2.2.9 JATRAN

The City of Jackson is served by JATRAN, which operates 13 fixed-routes, Monday through Saturday, from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The JATRAN service is operated under contract to the city, under the auspices of the City Planning Department, Transportation Planning Division. The city also operates HandiLift for persons with disabilities who are ADA paratransit eligible. The

fixed-route and paratransit services operate within the city limits of Jackson. The majority of services operate 30 minute headways during peak hours and hour headways during mid-day service and Saturdays.

The main hub for JATTRAN services is at the Union Station, located at the corner of Gallatin and Capitol Streets in Downtown Jackson. Service at Union Station



includes JATTRAN and Greyhound buses, Amtrak trains and various cab services.

JATTRAN has two facilities to support its operations. The largest one where the majority of the employees work or report for their assignments is the main terminal located at 1025 Terry Road. The second facility is an administrative office used for customer service and ticket sales only, and is within the Union Station. The hours of operations are weekdays from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. **Table 2-12** presents the JATTRAN system wide statistics for 2008.

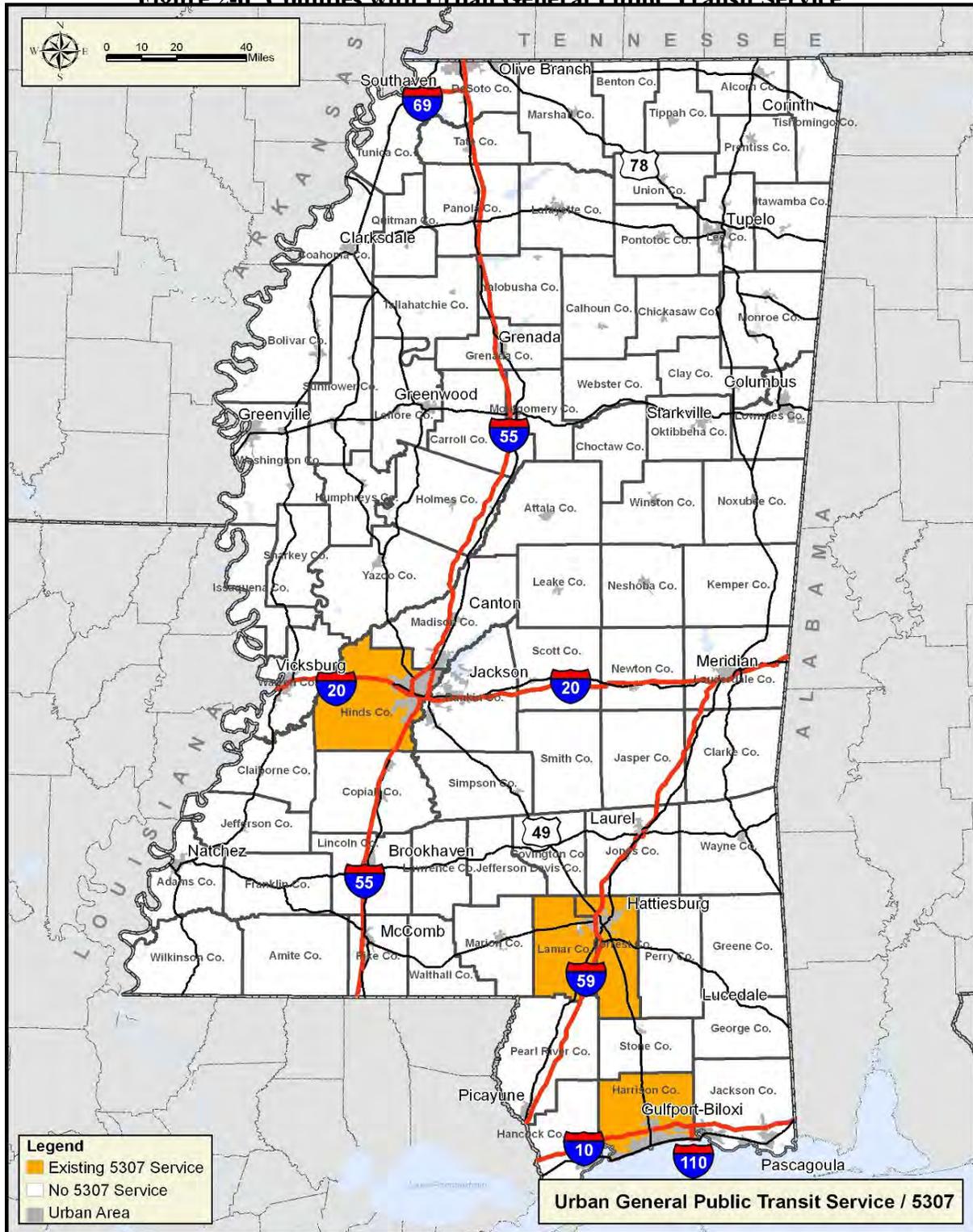
Table 2-11: JATTRAN System Statistics

Parameter	Values
Population	292,637
Service Area Population	196,000
Service Area Sq Miles	114
Peak Vehicle – FR	27
Paratransit – DR	10
Operating Budget – FR	\$5,078,508
Operating Budget – DR	\$1,354,461
Annual Miles – FR	953,368
Annual Miles – DR	245,960
Annual Trips – FR	567,216
Annual Trips – DR	30.108
Annual Rev Hours – FR	60,840
Annual Rev Hours – DR	22,776
Pass/Hour – FR	9.3
Cost/Hour – FR	\$83.47
Cost/Pass – FR	\$8.95
Trips per Capita – FR	2.9

Source: NTD, 2008.

Figure 2-7 illustrates the areas within the state with urban transit service.

Figure 2-6: Counties with Urban General Public Transit Service



3. TRANSIT GAPS AND NEEDS

The local coordination planning process, discussed previously in this report, includes thorough public and stakeholder input to identify transportation gaps and needs. The coordination plans were developed through the collaboration of representatives of public, private and non-profit transportation and human services providers, and participation by the public. This stakeholder involvement played a key role in the identification of overall needs for each region and for the state. This section includes the gaps and needs identified through several statewide planning efforts, such as the locally-adopted coordination plans and other statewide planning activities.

The MULTIPLAN engagement process has included government agencies, transit providers, human services organizations, healthcare organizations, business organizations, elected officials, and the general public, including meetings held throughout the state in April 2010. The purpose of those meetings was to provide information about the study and to receive feedback on local, regional and statewide needs and concerns for the state transportation network.

3.1 Local Coordination Plans

In addition to that feedback, the MDOT Public Transit Division has been working with communities across the state for the past few years to implement regional coordination. As discussed previously, SAFETEA-LU required local coordination plans to be developed as a condition to receive funding for specific FTA programs. The State recognized the importance of coordination, and sponsored or participated in several events to promote and reinforce the value of coordination as well as the development of regionalization as a focus of the agency, including:

- 2006 CTAAs Coordination Institute
- 2006 Statewide United We Ride Regional Meetings
 1. Collaborative Planning Workshop
 2. Framework for Action
- United We Ride Assessment
- Presentations before Legislative representatives
- Statewide Coordination Coalition
- Statewide Coordination Summits
- 2009 Regional Town Hall Meetings
- Regional Group Meetings

Coordination plans were completed in 2007 and 2008 for each of the seven regions established by the Public Transportation Division, and in addition, there was a statewide assessment of public and specialized transportation services completed in 2007, which included the identification of specific needs and gaps for each region.

Another source used to understand locally identified needs was public meetings held by the three urban area transit providers, Hattiesburg, Jackson, and Gulf Coast, that identified future needs as

part of their locally adopted transit development plans. The following discussion presents an overall summary of transit needs based upon the numerous sources listed above. **Table 3-1** presents the detailed needs by source.

A statewide summary of the detailed needs is provided below.

Mississippi Statewide Transit Needs Summary

- Increase in the level of need by elderly residents due to demographic changes.
- Increase demand for services to employment destinations for transit dependent resident, due to downturn in the economy.
- Expand evening and weekend services.
- Improve coordination among transit agencies, human service agencies, local entities, educational institutions, Medicaid providers, etc. to address the physical and institutional barriers.
- Develop innovative mobility options such as rideshare services, Park & Ride and flexible route services to improve connectivity between communities to attract choice riders, while still meeting the needs of transit-dependent riders.
- Implement advanced technology scheduling and routing software that could be shared with multiple providers to maximize efficiencies and coordination of services.
- Support initiatives for Complete Streets, Transit Oriented Development, land use zoning and development patterns supporting transit, and multimodal projects to increase accessibility.
- Coordinate resources, such as driver training, travel training programs, vehicle use, software, procurement of equipment.
- Improve outreach to the community, including local officials, staff, residents, etc. to promote the benefits of transit and address the negative perception of transit.
- Develop balanced multimodal transportation systems within the communities accommodating all modes of travel
- Need reliable funding sources at the local and state level to maintain and expand transit services and equipment, such as bus shelters, benches, etc.
- Need service to remote areas of the state.

Table 3-1: Itemized Transit Needs

No.	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals
1	Delta Rides Regional Transportation Preliminary Draft Coordination Plan, June 2007	Extended evening service	Shortage of drivers	Local match commitment	Enhance Transportation Access
		Weekend service	Travel training program		Minimize duplication
		In-county demand response service			Provide cost-efficient service
		Daily service to neighboring counties			
		Additional outreach and education			
		Service for under age 60, not Medicare eligible			
2	Golden Triangle Planning and Development District Regional Transportation Plan, June 2007	Education within community	Need formal regional coordinating group	Lack of local funding	Efficient, coordinated transit
		Expand current services	Increase coordination w/ MDOT	Lack of state funding even though multimodal legislation passed	
		Increase coordination with inter-county services	Need planning studies to understand future demand	Pursue other funding	
		Park & Ride services needed		Maximize local match money	
3	Northeast Mississippi Coordinated Transit Services, April 2008.	Transit service needed for elderly, disabled, and low-income workers.	Insurance for volunteer drivers	Need local funding support	Maintain existing ridership base while increasing coordination
		Access to medical facilities	Image of transit service	Pursue Medicaid funding	Economic sustainability
		Service needed in rural remote areas	Coordination among local and regional agencies		Provide high-quality customer service
		Service to VA	Scheduling inefficiencies		Provide efficient, effective, and safe services
		Service duplication	Lack of volunteers		Promote services
		School transportation	Turf issues		
			Accountability for service		
4	Regional Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Assessment, East Central Transit Action Group, MBCI Choctaw Transit, Meridian Transit System, East Central Planning and Development District, September 2008	Limited general public service	Coordination among local and regional agencies	Increased local funding	Expansion of service - ECPDD; more rural routes
		Duplication of service	Agency accountability and participation		Sharing of vehicles
		Park & ride services needed	Formal coordination		Outreach and marketing of service
		Coordination of carpooling programs	Coordinated scheduling software		
		Community outreach	Funding barriers to sharing vehicles		
			Need emergency transportation plan		
			211 coordination		

No.	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals
5	Southern Mississippi Transit, Coordinated Transportation Services, Regional Planning, 2007	Not enough vehicles	Single source training	Need local funding	
6	Southwest Mississippi Accessible Regional Transportation Coordinated Public Transportation Plan, 2007	24/7 public transit service	Coordination with all agencies - transit and non-transit providers	Increased funding for Medicaid and non-Medicaid residents	Enhance Transportation Access
		Limited general public service			Minimize duplication
					Provide cost-efficient service
7	Trans-Con Central Mississippi Transit Coalition, Coordinated Transportation Service Regional Planning, 2007	Expand weekday/weekend hours of service	Lack of CDL drivers		Maintain existing service and equipment
			Lack of vehicles		
			Funding restrictions		
			Participation of all agencies		
			Education of local governing boards		
			Maximize existing services		
8	Preliminary Statewide Assessment of Public and Specialized Transportation Services and Service Areas in Mississippi, 2007.	Duplication of service	Little sharing of resources	Funding source restrictions	
		Lack of service after hours and weekends	Perception of transit for the poor		
		Unserved areas of the state	Coordination with Medicaid		
		Underutilized capacity	Statewide transit needs study		
			Public outreach and education		
			Barrier with other state agencies		
9	April 2010 Gulf Coast MPO Public Meeting comments.	Trolley service on existing track			
		Transit service for seniors and transit dependent for Hancock County			
		Improve pedestrian access to transit routes			
10	April 2010 Central MS PDD Public Meeting comments		Develop rezoning efforts in conjunction with LRTP to lessen dependence on the car.	6% of attendees voted to give funds to improvements to public transportation	

No.	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals
11	June 2010 Statewide Coordination Summit	More comprehensive public transit system	<p>Increased demand for services to employment for transit dependent resident, due to downturn in the economy.</p> <p>Increased demand for expanded services for elderly and disabled individuals</p> <p>Implement advanced technology scheduling and routing software</p> <p>Develop a more formal coordination framework that is legislatively endorsed.</p> <p>Desire to see more balanced multimodal system w/ improved rail, transit, bike pedestrian facilities.</p>	Lack of funding to maintain current system	Focus on maintaining and enhancing current infrastructure
		BRT in Desoto County	Coordinated network of services linking communities	Spend more on transit	
		Park & Ride I-10	Coordination among local entities		
		N MS needs intercity bus service and rural transit system	Transit low priority		
			Support complete streets/livable communities		
12	Transit Study, Tupelo, MS July 2010	Expand existing Tupelo transit service			
13	Gulf Coast Transit Development Plan, 2007	I-10 Commuter and Park & Ride service	Transit services should support TOD	Need dedicated funding source	
		Carpool/vanpool program needs			
		Transit needed to decrease congestion			
		Job access via transit			
		More bus stop shelters			
		Service for transit dependent			

No.	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals
14	Mass Transit Study for the Hattiesburg Urbanized Area, 2010	More frequent service, longer hours, weekends	Increased outreach	Limited funding	
		Service to military base	Support complete streets		
		Need more shelters/benches	Increase coordination w/ Medicaid provider, colleges, neighboring communities		
			Scheduling software		
			Service planning assistance		

3.2 Capital and Operating Costs

3.2.1 Background and Methodology

Constrained and unconstrained capital and operating costs were developed for the public transit program using extensive data and statistics of the current public transportation providers in Mississippi as a basis. As stated previously, the recent studies listed below and previously mentioned in Table 3-1 were reviewed, which confirmed a wide range of service needs including expanding daily hours of service and more frequent service, extending the geographic reach of service, broadening coordination activities, and finding better ways of addressing commuter needs, etc.

- Existing coordination planning documents from seven statewide regions – Delta Rides, Golden Triangle, Northeast Mississippi, East Central, Southern Mississippi, Southwest Mississippi, Trans-Con Central
- Statewide Assessment of Public and Specialized Transportation Services
- Urban Area Transit Development Plans for Hattiesburg, Gulf Coast, Jackson, and Tupelo
- April 2010 public hearings held by Gulf Coast MPO and Central Mississippi MPO
- June 2010 Statewide Coordination Summit

The provider data and studies listed above were key to the statewide approach for developing future cost estimates for constrained and unconstrained transit needs. After understanding and collecting the needs, each project was grouped into one of two categories:

- Capital
- Operating

To develop accurate and consistent cost estimates for continuation of existing services and for future services, recent expenses from Mississippi providers were used, as well as other transit

industry national standards to identify an average cost that could be applied to the stated needs. The assumptions for developing the costs for transit agencies and regions across the state are:

- Existing operating and capital cost data for FY2008 was assumed as the base year.² An average hourly operating cost of \$50 for rural systems was used for service expansion, unless otherwise specified in a current plan.³
- For future needs, the regions that identified extending hours or adding service days while maintaining a similar level of service would only require operating costs. In these scenarios, no additional capital asset requirements were assumed. It was assumed the additional hours of service over the current levels would be provided using 30 percent of the current peak fleet, and implemented beginning in FY 2016.
- For future needs, the regions that identified adding additional vehicles and service during current hours of operation would require both operating and incremental capital costs. An assumption of 10 percent over the existing peak fleet is used for these locations, and services again are targeted for implementation in FY2016.
- An average cost of \$90,000 was used for small and mid-size vehicle purchases, unless otherwise specified in an existing plan. These vehicles were estimated to be replaced four times during the 28-year planning period to 2035. An average cost of \$350,000 was used for Trolley vehicle replacements, and 35' and 40' fixed-route buses had an assumed capital cost of \$350,000 per vehicle, and will be replaced two times during the planning period.
- An average of three percent of total operating costs was used for marketing, public outreach, and education activity costs.

3.2.2 Operating/Non-Operating Costs

The existing operating budget for the state is \$24,341,095 per year for the combined FTA Section 5307, 5310, and 5311 programs. The total constrained cost to maintain current services through 2035 is \$681,550,653. This calculation uses FY2008 constant dollars for the 28-year time period as a basis.

The operating budget developed for the statewide unconstrained needs consists of eight categories, as shown in **Table 3-2**. The 2035 total unconstrained operating costs for the unmet needs is \$357,882,730.

The total public transit operating constrained and unconstrained needs for 2035 are estimated at \$1,039,433,383. An assumption of 50 percent federal funding and 50 percent local funding is necessary to maintain existing services and to fund future unmet needs.

² MDOT Public Transit Division, 2010.

³ FY2008 Average cost per revenue hour, Section 5311 providers, MDOT.

Table 3-2: Operating Needs

Transit Needs	Constrained (maintain existing services)	Unconstrained (unmet needs)	Constrained and Unconstrained Needs	Fed 50%	Local 50%
Operating Categories	2035 Total Cost	2035 Total Cost	2035 Total Cost		
Service expansion		\$330,919,809			
Public Outreach/Education		\$13,542,921			
Travel Training Program		\$1,680,000			
Increase Coordination		\$8,680,000			
Planning Studies		\$700,000			
Scheduling Software Maintenance		\$560,000			
Rideshare Program		\$960,000			
Bus Stop Analysis		\$840,000			
Total Operating Needs	\$681,550,653	\$357,882,730	\$1,039,433,383	\$519,716,691	\$519,716,691

3.2.3 Capital Costs

The existing annual capital budget for the MDOT Public Transit Division was \$2,680,585 for FY2008. This includes Section 5310, 5311 and 5316 funds. The total constrained cost to maintain these services through 2035 is \$8,212,722, using FY2008 constant dollar for the 28-year time period as a basis.

The capital budget developed for the statewide unmet needs consists of six categories, as shown in **Table 3-3**. The 2035 total capital costs for the unconstrained needs is \$200,680,000, with 82 percent of the total budget identified for Bus Rapid Transit and Streetcar projects in the Gulf Coast area and 16 percent used for procurement of vehicles for service expansion across the state.

Table 3-3: Capital Needs

Transit Needs	Constrained (Existing Needs)	Unconstrained (Unmet Needs)	Constrained and Unconstrained Needs	Fed 80%	Local 20%
Capital	2035 Total Cost	2035 Total Cost	2035 Total Cost		
Vehicles for Service Expansion		\$31,830,000			
Scheduling Software		\$300,000			
Rideshare Software		\$100,000			
Transit Studies		\$850,000			
Park and Ride Lots		\$3,500,000			
BRT/Streetcar infrastructure		\$164,100,000			
Total Capital Needs	\$8,212,722	\$200,680,000	\$208,892,722	\$167,114,178	\$41,778,544

The total constrained and unconstrained capital needs for 2035 are estimated at \$208,892,722. An assumption of 80 percent federal funding and 20 percent local funding is needed to maintain existing services and to finance future unmet needs. Detailed information on future operating and capital needs is provided in **Table 3-4**.

Table 3-4: Transit Needs Summary

	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals		Project	Estimated Annual Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Notes
1	Delta Rides Regional Transportation Preliminary Draft Coordination Plan, June 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended evening service Weekend service In-county demand response service Daily service to neighboring counties Additional outreach and education Service for under age 60, not Medicare eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shortage of drivers Travel training program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local match commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance Transportation Access Minimize duplication Provide cost-efficient service 	1	Extended evening service	\$1,955,881		Assumed operating 36 veh (30% of peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21 per rev hr; additional 5 hours of service daily for 5 days per week
						2	Weekend service	\$1,251,764		Assumed operating 36 veh (30% of peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21 per rev hr; 16 total wkend hours, 52 weeks
						3	Increase intracounty service	\$1,303,921		Additional 12 peak vehicles (increase 10%); average cost of \$40.21; 5 days per week; 10 hrs per day
						4	Increase intercounty service	\$1,303,921		Additional 12 peak vehicles (increase 10%); average cost of \$40.21; 5 days per week; 10 hrs per day
						5	Additional outreach and education	\$80,073		3% of operating budget for the region
						6	Travel training program	\$60,000		2 positions for region + materials
						7	Vehicles for expanded service		\$8,640,000	24 vehicles @ \$90K each; replaced 4 x till 2035
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DARTS Bolivar County HEGA Mallory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miss Valley State Univ Delta Community Health Mississippi Christian NC PDD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ND PDD WWISCAA 	

	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals		Project	Estimated Annual Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Notes
2	Golden Triangle Planning and Development District Regional Transportation Plan, June 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education w/in community Expand current services Increase coordination w/ inter-county services Park & Ride services needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need formal regional coordinating group Increase coordination w/ MDOT Need planning studies to understand future demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of local funding Lack of state funding even though multimodal legislation passed Pursue other funding Maximize local match money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient, coordinated transit 	1	Education w/in community	\$1,822		3% of operating budget for the region
						2	Expand current services	\$217,320		Assuming 2 additional peak vehicles; 10 hrs day; 5 days wk; avg cost of \$40.21
						3	Increase coordination w/ inter-county services	\$40,000		One mobility manager position
						4	Need planning studies to understand future demand	\$25,000		Annual planning funds set aside for studies
						5	Vehicles for expanded service		\$720,000	2 vehicles @ \$90K each; replaced 4 x till 2035
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golden Triangle PDD Lowndes County DAB Noxubee C HRA 					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ridership Avg # of Veh operated Rev Hrs Rev Miles Operating Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29,893 8 2,000 35,941 \$60,729 		
3	Northeast Mississippi Coordinated Transit Services, April 2008.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit service needed for elderly, disabled, and low-income workers. Access to medical facilities Service needed in rural remote areas Service to VA Service duplication School transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance for volunteer drivers Image of transit service Coordination among local and regional agencies Scheduling inefficiencies Lack of volunteers Turf issues Accountability for service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need local funding support Pursue Medicaid funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain existing ridership base while increasing coordination Economic sustainability Provide high-quality customer service Provide efficient, effective, and safe services Promote services 	1	Expand services	\$760,620		Additional 7 peak vehicles (10% increase in peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21; 5 days per week; 10 hrs per day
						2	Increased coordination	\$40,000		One mobility manager position
						3	Scheduling software maintenance	\$10,000		Scheduling software maintenance
						4	Education w/in community	\$47,760		3% of operating budget for the region
						5	Scheduling software		\$150,000	
	6	Vehicles for expanded service		\$2,520,000	7 vehicles @ \$90K each; replaced 4 x till 2035					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NE MS Comm Services United Comm Action Comm Climb up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three Rivers Timber Hills City of Oxford 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retired Sr Citi Prog 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ridership Avg # of Veh operated Rev Hrs Rev Miles Operating Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 368,322 71 75,780 1,436,367 \$1,591,990 			

	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals		Project	Estimated Annual Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Notes
4	Regional Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Assessment, East Central Transit Action Group, MBCI Choctaw Transit, Meridian Transit System, East Central Planning and Development District, September 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited general public service Duplication of service Park & ride services needed Coordination of carpooling programs Community outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination among local and regional agencies Agency accountability and participation Formal coordination Coordinated scheduling software Funding barriers to sharing vehicles Need emergency transportation plan 211 coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased local funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of service - ECPDD; more rural routes Sharing of vehicles Outreach and marketing of service 	1	Expand services	\$543,300		Additional 5 peak vehicles (10% increase peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21; 5 days per week; 10 hrs per day
						2	Education w/in community	\$48,469		3% of operating budget for the region
						3	Rideshare Program	\$20,000		Part-time staff person
						4	Increased coordination	\$40,000		One mobility manager position
						5	Scheduling software maintenance	\$10,000		Scheduling software maintenance
						6	Rideshare Software Program		\$50,000	Software & startup promotional materials
						7	Scheduling software		\$150,000	
						8	Vehicles for expanded service		\$2,280,000	3 vehicles @ \$90K each; replaced 4 x till 2035; 2 vehicles @ \$300K, replaced 2 x till 2035
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Madison Co Citizen Serv Agency Meridian Transportation Comm Choctaw Transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Centr PDD Weems Comm Mental Health 				Ridership Avg # of Veh operated 48 Rev Hrs 72,688 Rev Miles 1,594,421 Operating Budget \$1,615,636			
5	Southern Mississippi Transit, Coordinated Transportation Services, Regional Planning, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not enough vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single source training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need local funding 		1	Expand Services	\$325,980		Additional 3 peak vehicles (10% increase peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21; 5 days per week; 10 hrs per day
						2	Vehicles for expanded service		\$1,080,000	3 vehicles @ \$90K each, replaced 4 x till 2035
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern MS PD Comm Development Inc Jackson Co Civic Action Comm Pine Belt Mental 					Ridership Avg # of Veh operated 33 Rev Hrs 22,673 Rev Miles 927,954 Operating Budget \$1,138,273			

	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals		Project	Estimated Annual Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Notes
6	Southwest Mississippi Accessible Regional Transportation Coordinated Public Transportation Plan, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 public transit service • Limited general public service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination w/ all agencies - transit and non-transit providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased funding for Medicaid and non-Medicaid residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Transportation Access • Minimize duplication • Provide cost-efficient service 	1	Expand Services	\$869,280		Additional 8 peak vehicles (10% increase peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21; 5 days per week; 10 hrs per day
						2	Extended hours of service	\$1,095,293		Assumed operating 24 veh (30% of peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21 per rev hr; additional 5 hours of service daily for 5 days per week and 16 hrs of wkend service
						3	Increased coordination	\$40,000		One mobility manager position
						4	Vehicles for expanded service		\$2,880,000	8 vehicles @ \$90K each, replaced 4 x till 2035
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clairborne Co HRA • Copiah Co HRA • Five Co Child Deve Prog • Natchez Transit System • Simpson Co HRA • SW MS Mental Health • SW MS PDD 					Ridership Avg # of Veh operated 79 Rev Hrs 60,595 Rev Miles 1,567,046 Operating Budget 1,778,049			
7	Trans-Con Central Mississippi Transit Coalition, Coordinated Transportation Service Regional Planning, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand weekday/weekend hours of service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of CDL drivers • Lack of vehicles • Funding restrictions • Participation of all agencies • Education of local governing boards • Maximize existing services • Coordinated driver training 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain existing service and equipment 	1	Expand service	\$1,369,117		Additional 9 peak vehicles (10% increase peak fleet); average cost of \$40.21; 7 days per week; 10 hrs per day
						2	Education/marketing w/in community	\$240,552		3% of operating budget for the region
						3	Increase coordination	\$40,000		One mobility manager position
						4	Vehicles for expanded service		\$3,240,000	9 vehicles @ \$90K each, replaced 4 x till 2035
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinds County HRA • NROUTE • City of Jackson - Human Cultural Services • Jackson Medical Mall • Rankin Co HRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warren Co Assoc for Retarded Cit • Warren-Yazoo Mental Health • Willowood Deve Ctr • Yazoo Co HRA • JATRAN 				Ridership Avg # of Veh operated 92 Rev Hrs 160,404 Rev Miles 2,454,216 Operating Budget 8,018,414			

	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals		Project	Estimated Annual Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Notes
8	Preliminary Statewide Assessment of Public and Specialized Transportation Services and Service Areas in Mississippi, 2007.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication of service • Lack of service after hours and weekends • Unserved areas of the state • Underutilized capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little sharing of resources • Perception of transit for the poor • Coordination w/ Medicaid • Statewide transit needs study • Public outreach and education • Barrier w/ other state agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding source restrictions 		1	Increased coordination	\$60,000		State mobility manager position for increasing coordination among other state agencies, including medicaid and for leading regional mobility managers
						2	Transit needs study - statewide		\$200,000	
						3	Public outreach and education	\$50,000		State and regional level education of officials
9	April 2010 Gulf Coast MPO Public Meeting comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trolley service on existing track • Transit service for seniors and transit dependent for Hancock County • Improve pedestrian access to transit routes 				1	Trolley service	\$864,262		(Year 5) 4 peak vehicles, 12 hrs per day, 7 days week; cost \$49.33 per hr
						2	Trolley vehicles		\$1,750,000	Procure 5 trolley vehicles @ \$350K
						3	Expand service area	\$256,516		Additional 2 peak vehicles, 10 hrs day, 5 days wk; cost \$49.33
						4	Vehicles for expanded service		\$800,000	2 vehicles @ \$200K each, replaced 2 x till 2035
10	April 2010 Central MS PDD Public Meeting comments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop rezoning efforts in conjunction w/ LRTP to lessen dependence on the car. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6% of attendees voted to give funds to improvements to public transportation 						
11	July 2010 Statewide Transportation Summit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More comprehensive public transit system • BRT in Desoto County • Park & Ride I-10 • N MS needs intercity bus service and rural transit system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to see more balanced multimodal system w/ improved rail, transit, bike ped facilities. • Coordinated network of services linking communities • Coordination among local entities • Transit low priority • Support complete streets/livable communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding to maintain current system • Spend more on transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on maintaining and enhancing current infrastructure 	1	Study & BRT implementation from Tunica Resorts to Memphis Rapid Transit Service		\$105,000,000	2008 earmark for Alternatives Study (\$70M federal/\$35M local)
						2	Park and Ride Study		\$300,000	
						3	Park and Ride Lots		\$3,500,000	Construct 7-10 park and ride lots
						4	Expand intercity and rural bus service - N MS	\$912,744		Additional 7 peak vehicles; 5 days wk, 12 hrs per day; cost \$40.21
						5	Vehicles for expanded service		\$2,520,000	7 vehicles @ \$90K each, replaced 4 x till 2035

	Source	Service	Institutional	Funding	Identified Goals		Project	Estimated Annual Operating Cost	Capital Cost	Notes
12	June 2010 MDOT Summit			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain existing infrastructure 					
13	Transit Study, Tupelo, MS July 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand existing Tupelo transit service 				1	Expand Tupelo transit service	\$989,300		Tupelo Transit Study, July 2010
						2	Vehicles & Startup Capital Costs		\$1,540,000	4 vehicles @ \$90K each, replaced 4 x till 2035
14	Gulf Coast Transit Development Plan, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I-10 Commuter and Park & Ride service Carpool/vanpool program needs Transit needed to decrease congestion Job access via transit More bus stop shelters Service for transit dependent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit services should support TOD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need dedicated funding source 		1	Park and Ride Service	\$513,032		5 peak vehicles; 8 hrs per day; 5 days wk; cost \$49.33
						2	Rideshare Software		\$50,000	Software and startup materials
						3	Rideshare Program	\$20,000		Half-time staff person
						4	Bus stop amenities	\$15,000		
						5	Expanded service	\$1,500,000		(Year 1-5) Gulf Coast TDP, April 2007
						6	BRT/Streetcar service	\$3,000,000		(Year 6-10) Gulf Coast TDP, April 2007
						7	Expanded BRT/Streetcar Service	\$4,700,000		(Year 11-15) Gulf Coast TDP, April 2007
						8	Expanded BRT/Streetcar Service	\$6,200,000		(Year 16-20) Gulf Coast TDP, April 2007
						9	Regional Rail Service/BRT/Streetcar	\$6,700,000		(Year 21-25) Gulf Coast TDP, April 2007
						10	Streetcar/Rail Shop, Maintenance yards		\$164,100,000	Year 11 - 25
						11	Vehicles for expanded service		\$3,500,000	5 vehicles @ \$350K each, replaced 2 x till 2035
15	Mass Transit Study for the Hattiesburg Urbanized Area, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More frequent service, longer hours, weekends Service to military base Need more shelters/benches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased outreach Support complete streets Increase coordination w/ Medicaid provider, colleges, neighboring communities Scheduling software Service planning assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited funding 		1	Increase service	\$348,000		HCT Mass Transit Plan, Aug 2010
						2	Bus stop amenities	\$15,000		HCT Mass Transit Plan, Aug 2010
						3	Increase public outreach/education	\$15,000		HCT Mass Transit Plan, Aug 2010
						4	Service planning studies		\$350,000	Study every 5 years
						5	Increase coordination	\$50,000		Mobility manager position
						6	Vehicle for expanded service		\$360,000	1 vehicle @ \$90K, replaced 4 x till 2035

3.2.4 Summary

To maintain existing urban and nonurban transit services within the state of Mississippi through 2035, there will be a total constrained cost of \$689,763,375 for operating and capital expenditures. Total unconstrained needs for the state equate to \$558,562,730 through 2035.

Table 3-5 presents the total operating and capital costs of \$1,248,326,105 for 2035.

Table 3-5: Total 2035 Public Transit Need

2035 Total Cost	Constrained (Existing Needs)	Unconstrained (Unmet Needs)	2035 Total Constrained and Unconstrained Needs
Operating	\$681,550,653	\$357,882,730	\$1,039,433,383
Capital	\$8,212,722	\$200,680,000	\$208,892,722
Total Operating/Capital	\$689,763,375	\$558,562,730	\$1,248,326,105

4. TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

4.1 Trends

There are a number of trends occurring at the state and national level that can be positively influenced by the development of a comprehensive, coordinated transportation network that includes a robust coordinated public transportation component that incorporates traditional general public and specialized transportation services. Coordinated public transportation at the local level provides mobility options for people who are not able or choose not to drive on their own.

Public transit as part of a comprehensive transportation network can enhance economic development, provide reliable consistent transportation to work and to school, access to medical and recreational opportunities for the young and the senior population, and contribute to encouraging energy conservation and an enhanced quality of life.

Each of the following trends can be positively influenced by continued MDOT sponsorship and development of a comprehensive public transportation network:

- Projected population growth in MS from 2000 to 2035 is anticipated to be approximately 380,000 additional persons, a 13.4 percent increase⁴
- Population age 65 and over is projected to increase over 50 percent, from 13 percent to 20 percent, through 2035

⁴ 1990 and 2008 populations from Census. The 2035 populations are US Census Bureau projections (nominal date of July 1).

- Pedestrian fatalities per 100,000
 - US Average 1.26
 - MS Average 1.92

- Annual metric tons of CO2 from transportation sources per capita
 - US average 6.9
 - MS average 8.7

- Percentage of population without drivers license
 - US average 32
 - MS average 34

- Percentage of income spent on fueling personal automobiles
 - US average 5.5
 - MS average 7.9

4.2 Challenges

Existing public transportation provides Mississippi residents with enhanced personal mobility and improved access to multiple destinations. However, there are significant challenges facing transit users and providers. These include such things as:

- Maintaining and expanding public transit services
- Meeting mobility needs of individuals and the workforce
- Addressing coordination of services among the many providers
- Exploring new transit service options and strategies

4.2.1 Maintain Existing Services and Expand

One of the biggest challenges facing public transportation agencies in Mississippi and across the country is finding sufficient and reliable sources of funds to not only operate and maintain existing systems, but also to expand service. Funding levels are subject to fluctuations as funds are appropriated annually at the federal level and local funds must be available to provide the required match. Mississippi is one of a few states that does not contribute state funds towards operating services, which puts additional requirements on local communities to both find matching funds for grant opportunities, and also have sufficient funds to operate local services.



In order to sustain and grow transit programs, there is a need for a stable source of funding to meet current and future needs. It cannot be stressed enough that in Mississippi, access to available federal funding sources continues to depend heavily on the availability of local funds, which will also depend heavily upon the availability of some source of state matching funds.

4.2.2 Changing Mobility Needs of Residents and Workers

Mobility needs in Mississippi are changing in response to a slow, but steadily growing population with evolving characteristics such as a significantly higher percentage of elderly and low-income residents than many other regions. Coordinated public transit is one mode of transportation available for residents who choose to use transit or those who are unable to drive. Background information on demographic conditions and economic trends that can be positively impacted by a sustained public transportation network within Mississippi is presented below.

These trends include a review of the demographic groups who are traditionally viewed as more dependent on the availability of public transportation, seniors, low-income persons, and persons with disabilities. As these populations increase and trip demands change, the challenge is how to implement transit services to meet their mobility needs.

Slow, but Steady Growing Population - Mississippi experienced rapid population growth in the 1990s of approximately one percent each year. That growth has slowed to approximately 0.4 percent annually in the 2000s. The state population continues to increase at a slow, but steady pace, which is projected to continue at the current pace, over the next 25 years. Population in 1990 was 2,573,000; 2,939,000 in 2008; and projected to be 3,225,000 by 2035.⁵

The above increase necessitates that housing, jobs, and other infrastructure must be built to accommodate the growth and development. In addition, land use decisions to accommodate this growth should incorporate concepts such as a jobs-housing balance that minimizing the distance individuals need to travel from home to work on a daily basis. Quality of life decisions, such as clustered and in-fill development can also be planned to better consolidate potential public transportation resources as well as promoting pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Ageing Population - As people age, isolation becomes a growing problem, and access and mobility become increasingly critical needs. For older Americans, affordable, reliable transportation options are essential. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that between 2010 and 2035 Mississippi’s senior population is projected to increase dramatically, as the baby boom generation born in the 20 years following World War II reaches the 65+ age group. Overall, the percentage of statewide population age 65 and over is projected to increase from 13 percent to 20 percent through 2035. This aging demographic trend will impact the need for transit services in the future. Further, it is anticipated that there will be a demand for more service options for both critical service trips, such as medical treatment, and also social and recreational activities.



⁵ 1990 and 2008 populations from Census. The 2035 populations are US Census Bureau projections (nominal date of July 1).

Transit Dependent Populations - Persons with disabilities comprised 21 percent of the total 2009 population in Mississippi.⁶ The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a person with a disability as an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. It is anticipated that this population will grow at a faster rate than the general population in future years due to the significant number of seniors with disabilities and the increasing trend for aging residents.

For many people with disabilities, life is severely limited by the lack of transportation. Some people with disabilities who are willing and able to work cannot do so because of inadequate transportation. Others cannot shop, socialize, enjoy recreational or spiritual activities, or even leave their homes due to limited mobility choices. Although ADA paratransit service is required to be offered to people with disabilities in areas with existing fixed-route service, in rural areas, limited funding for public transit service restricts the ability to meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

Persons below poverty level are also another population segment who historically has a high reliance upon public transportation. In 2008, the US Census Bureau reported approximately 21 percent of the total Mississippi population was below the poverty level.

Significant Trends

Through regional coordination efforts some significant progress has been made in addressing the needs of the transit dependent population. Regional planning efforts have brought together transit providers, human service agencies and disability advocacy groups to plan and develop viable transportation options that are intended to serve all population segments. Based on the feedback received from various stakeholders, this has resulted in a greater level of understanding of the various FTA funding resources and programmatic requirements. Perceived barriers to coordination are now beginning to be removed due to information sharing during regional meetings. Also the following positive changes can be attributed to the regional planning process:

- Expansion in days of service, hours and weekend services in some areas of the state;
- Increased coordination through contractual arrangements between transit and human service agencies.
- A better understanding by stakeholders of how FTA federal funds can be used to match other unrestricted federal funds to make more services available.

Within the next five years the Public Transit Division envisions that additional positive changes will include:

⁶ 2009 population estimate, US Census.

- More purchase of service arrangements between 5311 rural public transit providers and 5310 providers thereby increasing service efficiency and effectiveness.
- More demonstration projects utilizing New Freedom fund to increase service options for disabled individuals.
- Greater use of Mobility Management strategies to build sustainable regional collaborations.
- Technology to connect the transit dependent population to needed services will be more widely utilized in regional call centers and transit systems operations.

Commuting Employees - Between 1990 and 2000 the statewide percentage of employed persons, age 16 and over, working outside their county of residence, increased by 6.0 percent, from 25.9 to 31.9 percent. To date, the Census has not updated the 2000 estimates, but has produced statewide estimates of travel time to work and other commuting trends for 2008. **Table 4-1** presents the trends for Mississippi and for the US.

Table 4-1: Commuting Employees

Characteristic	Mississippi	USA
Mean travel time to work, 2008	24 minutes	25.3 minutes
Total workers over 16 years of age	1,198,616	140,261,584
Percentage of workers traveling to work alone	82 percent	75.8 percent
Percentage of workers carpooling	12 percent	10.6 percent
Percentage of workers riding public transportation	0.4 percent	4.9 percent
Percentage of workers walking to work	1.8 percent	2.8 percent
Percentage of workers working at home	2.3 percent	4 percent

Compared to nationwide averages, Mississippi workers have a slightly shorter commute, use public transportation less, carpool more, but generally reflect the characteristics of the rest of the nation’s commuters.

On a national basis, commuters make up a significant percentage of individuals who use public transportation. This market, once identified in various regions of Mississippi, could be a target for future transit program development. In addition, specialized work access needs are identified in many of the coordination plans, discussed below, and addressed through the JARC program.

Significant Trends

Economic downturns affect employment trends in Mississippi much the same as other low population density, highly rural parts of the nation. These downturns ultimately impact local transit providers as trips to employment destinations decrease in response to manufacturing plants closing or moving; and the downsizing of the gaming industry and other major employment facilities. Despite, employment trips being the second largest percentage (27%) of trip types taken in recent years, the downward changes in the workforce are expected to produce

a continued critical need to access job destinations especially in rural communities. This is due in large part to rural areas riders experiencing longer commutes for work and/or training.

For transit dependent riders, community transit service is a cost effective means to get to essential destinations. Regional planning efforts have spotlighted the importance of flexible commuting options for employment as well as the specialized needs of the elderly and disabled.

In the next five (5) years the Public Transit Division envisions:

- Collaborating with WIN and job training centers to achieve greater use of JARC funds to assist low-income riders to get to jobs and/or access job training/re-training.
- Park and ride, dedicated cross jurisdictional commuter buses, as well as van pooling becoming more viable options for commuters, especially as more multimodal/transit operations facilities are being constructed for providers.
- Increase use of technology to share resources between transit providers resulting in more connectivity to get transit dependent riders to needed services.
- Expansion of Mobility Management activities to build better relationships with private employers.
- Investments in capacity building that meet the changing travel demands and patterns.

4.2.3 Coordination of Services

Federal, state, and local governments, as well as community-based organizations, have created specialized programs to meet particular transportation needs. At the federal level, there are at least 62 separate programs that support some form of human service transportation. Coordinating services in the most cost-efficient and effective manner can be a challenge due to the variety of human service programs and public transit providers, often each with separate vehicles, infrastructure systems, and policies.

As part of the surface transportation act (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005, grantees under the New Freedom Initiative, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, and Elderly and Disabled Transportation Program (5310) were required to develop a “locally coordinated public transit/human service transportation plan,” which followed the guidelines established under the United We Ride initiative, in order to receive funding for fiscal year 2007 and beyond. These plans assisted state and community leaders, agencies, and stakeholders to develop programs and action plans for coordinated services.



Moving forward, another consideration in the area of coordination is the inclusion of the Medicaid transportation within the locally coordinated planning structure. Nationally, Medicaid spends over \$3 billion a year for Non-emergent Medical Transportation. The Community Transportation Association of America and the American Public Transportation Association

have been working at the national level to encourage Medicaid to be part of the local and regionally coordinated systems developed as part of the United We Ride process.

Historically, many states and locales have separated the Medicaid transportation program from other coordination activities, which has created a barrier for public transit providers to participate as operators of this service. In fact, public transit may be required to provide the trip, but only receive the passenger fare from the sponsoring entity, as opposed to the fully allocated cost of the service, which is a requirement. The passenger fare typically accounts for less than ten percent of the trip cost. There should be a more holistic view of the role of public transportation and non-emergent medical transportation program policies.

With regard to other coordination activities within Mississippi, themes that emerged from the regional plans included coordination of county services, overcoming regulatory barriers, and the need for mobility management.

- **Coordination of Inter-County Services:** A commonly identified theme is coordination of county services. Although transit customers often wish to complete trips between counties, county and other jurisdictional boundaries often act as barriers. Prior to the development of the plans, several regions stated that counties were unwilling to allow their vehicles and drivers to cross into other counties.
- **Overcoming Regulatory Barriers:** Regions expressed a desire to share vehicles between 5310 programs and public transit operations. The method by which each program is administered currently limits this potential coordination strategy.
- **Mobility Management:** Mobility management is an approach to transportation that maximizes resources through collaboration between transit providers and other agencies and organizations, with an emphasis on meeting customer needs with the most appropriate resource, option, or mode. The approach uses all of the community resources and types of transit systems to meet the demand for service, including public transit systems. Mobility management programs can be influenced by a variety of factors, including increased demand for services by individuals with disabilities, rapid growth in the senior population, reduced federal and state transportation funds, and changes in public policy. One of the most important features is the recognition that providing information regarding options and alternatives is a priority in meeting customer needs

Significant Trends

The Division has formulated strategies to improve participation in the planning process and increase awareness of not only service needs and gaps but also to take advantage of opportunities to more fully implement coordination. These strategies include:

- Extending the SAFETEA-LU requirement that projects funded through the New Freedom; Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and Elderly and Disabled

Transportation Program were required to be derived from a “locally developed coordinated public transit/human service transportation plan, to encompass projects funded through the Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Public Transportation Program.

- Supporting the creation of and providing ongoing administrative support for a network of six (6) Regional Coordination Groups.
- Sponsoring a series of regional Town hall meetings to gather stakeholder input.
- Continuation of the Annual Statewide Coordination Summit.

These strategies have provided a more defined framework upon which coordination arrangements (i.e. policies; procedures; planning documents and projects) can grow in effectiveness and impact. As an illustration, it can be noted that local elected official participation the Annual Coordination Transportation Summit and regional group process has grown. This demonstrates that education and awareness aimed at these very important stakeholders is working. It is this type of involvement that will maintain and increase the local commitments needed to implement the action plans contained in the State and Regional Coordination Plans.

Within the next five year the Public Transit Division envisions:

- Development and full implementation of regional call centers
- Implementation of intelligent transportation demonstration projects
- Development of better connectivity among existing providers to increase after hours and weekend services
- Expanded service hours, where feasible through existing and new service providers
- Development of service options that include contracting with local taxi services to respond to late night and weekend low volume service requests
- Provision of support components such as vouchers to expand consumer options
- Full service mobility managers for each of the Regional Work Groups
- Improvement to equipment and facility infrastructure.

4.2.4 Energy Conservation

There are a number of reasons that suggest that energy conservation from a public transit perspective is an important consideration in development of a statewide transportation strategy. These include reducing dependence on foreign oil, decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, easing congestion, and improving quality of life. Decisions regarding energy conservation also should be made in consideration of other factors such as economic development and land use. Public transportation is but one component of an overall transportation system that needs to work to the benefit of the communities. The Public Transit Division views energy conservation from a broader perspective of providing accessible and an affordable alternative to continued reliance on personal vehicle use.

While not as driven by some of the urgent environmental concerns faced by more densely populated regions, the Public Transit Division's overall energy conservation efforts are aimed at:

- Reducing congestion in urban areas;
- Providing local communities with new commuting options;
- Enhancing air quality in non-attainment areas;
- Addressing inadequate parking

4.2.5 Technology

Implementable technology systems and components have made significant advances in recent years. Many of the new technologies can enhance and support public transportation, including:

- Information and communication - communication between providers, and providers and customers are all critical to the success of public transportation programs. Information regarding how to access services, what services are available, when services operate, and how to schedule a trip are all critical to the users to participate, as well as for the safe and efficient operation of service
- Scheduling and dispatch - to coordinate multiple providers and multiple jurisdictions, managing information is critical to the successful execution of the transportation service
- Automatic vehicle location/mobile data terminals - knowing the exact location of vehicles is important from a management and a safety perspective and the ability to communicate with operators via a data line improves efficiency and reduces unnecessary communication
- Customer communication - the use of interactive voice response technology can confirm a customer ride and provide an update on vehicle scheduling
- Administration and Finance - with multiple programs and funding sources, effective and secure management of resources is important in a multi-agency environment.

These Intelligent Transportation Services options have been connected through Travel Management Coordination Centers funded through the USDOT Mobility Services for All Americans program. Mississippi has the potential to develop a statewide network of technology that can be tailored to the needs of each region.



Significant Trends

MDOT has made notable accomplishments in developing technologies for data reporting although there are still more to be done. Performance reporting applications have been developed for Sections 5311, 5310 and 5316 - JARC providers to report selected performance information. The automated system captures all performance measures as required by the National Transit Database and the Federal transit Administration and provides data that can be used to assist in

the implementation of performance based project management and grant administration strategies. Currently, all Section 5311 providers routinely submit fleet summaries electronically. Additional system upgrades are being developed for all subrecipients to routinely report critical performance data electronically.

MDOT acknowledges the need for further technological advancement especially inter-regional data communication, data storage, and efficient data processing. Looking forward, MDOT is looking into developing new technologies that will enhance data communication among providers and help improve productivity, increase, operational efficiencies, and improve customer satisfaction. Initial steps towards developing more robust ITS based system capabilities, especially through call center projects have began. Such a system is aimed at enhancing transit coordination provision within/across regions while allowing transit providers to efficiently capture other transit demands such as Medicaid and non-emergency services.

4.2.6 New Transit Service Options

The number of transit service options that are available today have increased with the recognition that public transportation does not need to be a 40' vehicle serving a residential neighborhood, but that a family of services can be more community friendly and customer focused. Services can be both flexible and fixed and range from community shuttles and circulators, volunteer programs for seniors, travel training, limited stop and express services from park and ride facilities, bus rapid transit, streetcar and trolley services up to fixed rail options, depending on needs identified and sustainable resources for capital and operating expenses. This family of services concept also works well with the principles of Mobility Management, which match services with customers, based on customer input and resources. A strategic approach to accessing transit opportunities and developing expanded internal and external partnerships is discussed further in Section 5 of this report.

Significant Trends

Working within the context of coordinated resources and the framework of regionalizing service delivery, the Public Transit Division has develop strategies and service options that increase the level and flexibility of new services. Sustainable Level of Service (LOS) improvements has been one of the central discussion points in the community assessment; series of regional meetings and the Annual Statewide Coordination Summits.

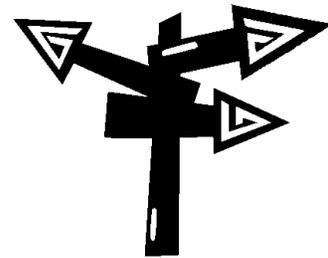
To Further Address LOS Concerns the Public Transit Division Envisions:

- Developing and fully implementing a series of regional call centers
- Implementing intelligent transportation demonstration projects
- Developing better connectivity among existing providers to increase after hours and weekend services

- Expanding service hours, where feasible through the existing service providers
- Developing service options that include contracting with local taxi services to respond to late night and weekend low volume service requests
- Providing support such as vouchers to expand consumer options
- Considering mobility managers for each of the Regional Work Groups
- Improving equipment and facility infrastructure.

5. LONG RANGE DIRECTION

As has been indicated in other sections within this report, the future role for many states, regions and counties is often directly influenced at the policy and funding level by federal policies and the funding provided by the Surface Transportation Act. The Mississippi Public Transit Division has been particularly adept at incorporating many prior federal initiatives into its programs, which, for example, most recently have included the development of local and regional coordination programs and plans, as required by the prior SAFETEA-LU legislation. These programs have already established new concepts such as mobility management and an initial review of the potential opportunity for program enhancement using Information Technology (IT).



5.1 Coordination and Partnerships

Although no new legislation has been developed thus far with regard to the successor of SAFETEA-LU, many of the programs developed by the Obama administration have taken the concept of coordination and partnerships beyond the human service transportation arena to other federal departments, such as the livability partnership of the Department of Transportation, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency in furtherance of the concepts of shared resources and community sustainability and livability. As part of that effort, there have been discussions with public works agencies on incorporating “complete streets” planning, for example, into the overall community planning process that would logically be anticipated to continue and expand in the future. Through these expanded partnerships, newly developed federal funding programs were made available over the last two years in programs, such as the FTA Tiger grants and the HUD Sustainable Communities programs.

In Section 4, there are references to other specific issues and trends that might impact linkages with the Public Transit Division. This section contains several recommendations suggesting some policy-based actions to assist in providing a long range direction for the Division based on the continuation of current activities and, as referenced above, expanding those activities to include more coordination and partnerships, both internal and external.

Office of Intermodal Planning - From an internal perspective, it appears that maximizing interaction within the other divisions in the Office of Intermodal Planning would be logical,

ensuring that staffs update their working collaboration to consider points of intersection of Public Transit with Aviation, Planning, Freight, Rails and Ports and Waterways. Although public transit will never be the dominant mode of transportation in Mississippi, it does offer the ability to connect with other modes and to provide access to jobs and infrastructure that can be significant from an economic development standpoint. Similarly, public transit can play an important role moving people, especially those that are limited in mobility options, between communities that are served by the highway network.

State of Good Repair - The transportation system should ensure that not only are the highways well maintained, but also that the transit system, especially the critical community to community transit network, is also maintained at a state of good repair. Based on experience in other states, there would likely be significant potential for the Public Transit Division to update its inventory practices to incorporate the regimen that is typically used to evaluate the state of good repair of the highway system. In so doing, Public Transit can continue the work to coordinate and partner within the MDOT infrastructure. It should be noted that from an infrastructure investment perspective, many organizations have adopted a performance-based planning process that includes commingling of resources to meet common objectives and performance measures that have been adopted by the affected agencies. This process often endeavors to capture community-based impacts, including non-traditional outcomes.

Regional Networks - It has been mentioned previously that the development of regional networks by the Public Transit Division staff has been beneficial in bringing agencies within regions together for additional communication and planning and also that the inter-regional interaction has improved the transit program components throughout the state. This combination of regional communication and involvement to assist in the future planning and programming activities of the Public Transit Division should be maintained and, if resources allow, expanded. The communities and organizations benefit by sharing and gathering information and MDOT staff benefits by understanding needs that can be addressed by a consistent statewide approach to a particular situation.

Partnerships - These interactions within the state can also be enhanced and improved through continued and expanded communications with other states, associations and other external bodies. These would include the traditional discussions with AASHTO, APTA, CTAA, TRB, TCRP, etc. but also blending in some non-traditional affiliations with connections to housing, climate change, and other community-based issues that connect to other agencies and organizations. Experience and time has shown that establishing lines of communication with human service agencies is difficult based on a variety of issues, yet the potential for more coordinated services to be both cost effective and expand the public transportation network has often been realized. Although developing other new partnerships also can be difficult and time consuming, the logic that public transportation can be an important means to connect and unite communities would appear to justify the effort. For example, it has been noted that a community

cannot have “Transit Oriented Development” if it does not have transit. Thus, it would appear that continually working with housing and land use agencies to communicate the benefits of better public transportation would be a key part of a long range direction for the Public Transit Division.

Therefore, from a long range direction perspective, the path forward for the Public Transit Division would be to start by continuing to build on prior work efforts that have established the current planning, programming, funding and implementation process. These activities would be augmented with enhanced communication and coordination with internal partners within MDOT and the state infrastructure and with external partners in the various regions within the state. The communication with others could expand the local coordination process to include the street and sidewalk access within the community to transit facilities; it could suggest the ways that technology could enhance information, communication and service delivery, etc.

The following text completes the Public Transit Division recommendations by suggesting some administrative and planning opportunities to facilitate communication of the existing public transportation program and the rationale to expand.

5.2 Administrative and Planning Potential

In the prior section, there was a brief overview of the performance-based planning techniques that have become more popular during the past few years, in many ways moving from strictly looking at a static measure, such as capacity, to a more dynamic perspective, such as the overall benefit to the community. However, in order to fully communicate the benefits of public transportation, there has to be a consistent data collection, data distribution and performance measurement program.

Creating Usable Data - The ease of access to recent and readily available information is often an indication of how efficiently data are collected and formatted. Currently, it is difficult to access many of the Public Transit Division data and to receive that data in a consistent and easy to access format. It also appears that some of the data are not available in electronic format, which also impedes ease of use and extends time to access. Thus, a high priority for the Division should be to improve the data collection and availability process. This process should also include rethinking the communicating of asset management and incorporating some of the concepts being developed regarding measuring the state of good repair. Using the results of the FTA planning work in this area would provide an up-to-date methodology that can then be sustained over time.



Performance Measurement - In addition to data and information availability, there has been a continuing emphasis on recording and tracking performance measures. These measures should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Division as well as reflect the goals and objectives of other partnering agencies, such as the FTA. Currently, Public Transit Division has

implemented a consistent process to record and communicate all aspects of performance over and above NTD and FTA requirements. However other measures need to be developed to capture regional coordination performance as it relates to regional goals and objectives. The local and Regional Coordination Plans indicated service gaps and unmet needs as described previously. However, it would also be beneficial to indicate how other gaps and needs have been addressed through the prior planning process, especially the benefits to be derived by communities that invest in public transportation.

Agencies such as HUD and the FTA are also working to develop new means to assess performance. There may be potential for the Public Transit Division to work with them to incorporate their thinking into the Public Transit Division process. Staff connections through AASHTO, CTAA and FTA could be used to initiate this process.

For example, the EPA is currently working on a Guide for Sustainable Transportation Performance Measures that contains the following measures:

- Transit Accessibility
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Mode Share
- Vehicle Miles Traveled per Capita
- Carbon Intensity
- Mixed Land Uses
- Transportation Affordability
- Distribution of Benefits by Income Group
- Land Consumption
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Activity and Safety
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Level of Service
- Average Vehicle Occupancy
- Transit Productivity

Similarly, AASHTO has also developed a performance measurement and management evaluation that has recommended the following national goals:

- Preservation and Renewal: highway, transit and rail
- Interstate Commerce: multi-modal freight
- Safety: reduce fatalities, injuries and property loss
- Congestion Reduction and Connectivity for Urban and Rural Areas: improve personal mobility, connectivity and accessibility
- System Operations: use advanced management and technology for increased trip reliability and response to emergencies

- Environment: enhance community quality of life and minimize impacts on environment and climate change

5.3 Expanded Vision for the Public Transit Division

The relevance of performance measures and management evaluation is that many of these goals and measures relate to the agencies contained in the Office of Intermodal Planning, as well as the remainder of MDOT, and also have the potential to connect better with existing partners and add new partners in the communities served by services sponsored by the Public Transit Division. Thus, there are opportunities to expand the vision for the Division, which would then provide more potential for public transportation investment within the state.

The extended transit vision for the state of Mississippi should align transportation planning with land use, economic development, environmental stewardship, and sustainable communities. Many local areas and regions adopt a vision to support a good quality of life for residents. The state vision should integrate regional transit visions, but also reflect statewide goals and priorities. In addition to these local efforts, the state should implement and maintain a statewide vision that guides decisions about major state investments. Coordination with statewide economic development partners and human service agencies is one method to ensure a unified vision for the future.

The Division has done an outstanding job in bringing the benefits of federal transit policies and programs to Mississippi. As the federal programs expand into multi-department initiatives, the role of public transit can also expand into a broader benefit to the communities and the people that visit, live, and work in Mississippi.

